SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

COLLECTION

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COLLECTION

50 BOOKS

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SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO COLLECTION

Augustine of Hippo, also known as Saint Augustine, Saint Austin, Blessed Augustine, and the Doctor of Grace, was an early Christian theologian and philosopher whose writings influenced the development of Western Christianity and Western philosophy. He was the bishop of Hippo Regius (modern-day Annaba, Algeria), located in Numidia (Roman province of Africa). He is viewed as one of the most important Church Fathers in Western Christianity for his writings in the Patristic Era. Among his most important works are The City of God and Confessions. According to his contemporary, Jerome, Augustine "established anew the ancient Faith." In his early years, he was heavily influenced by Manichaeism and afterward by the neo-Platonism of Plotinus. After his baptism and conversion to Christianity in 387, Augustine developed his own approach to philosophy and theology, accommodating a variety of methods and perspectives. Believing that the grace of Christ was indispensable to human freedom, he helped formulate the doctrine of original sin and made seminal contributions to the development of just war theory.

A TREATISE AGAINST TWO LETTERS OF THE PELAGIANS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(CONTRA DUAS EPISTOLAS PELAGIANORUM.)

EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN’S “RETRACTATIONS,”

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

IN FOUR BOOKS,

WRITTEN TO BONIFACE, BISHOP OF THE ROMAN CHURCH, IN OPPOSITION TO TWO LETTERS OF THE PELAGIANS, A.D. 420, OR A LITTLE LATER.

TRANSLATED BY DR. WALLIS

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Book II. Chap. 61, On the Following Treatise, “contra duas epistolas pelagianorum.”

Then follow four books which I wrote to Boniface, bishop of the Roman Church, in opposition to two letters of the Pelagians, because when they came into his hands he had sent them to me, finding in them a calumnious mention of my name. This work commences on this wise: “I had indeed known you by the praise of your renowned fame.”

A TREATISE AGAINST TWO LETTERS OF THE PELAGIANS

Book I

Augustin replies to a letter sent by Julian, as it was said, to Rome; and first of all vindicates the catholic doctrine from his calumnies; then discovers and confutes the heretical sense of the Pelagians hidden in that profession of faith which the author of the letter opposed to the catholics.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION: ADDRESS TO BONIFACE

I Had indeed known you by the praise of your renowned fame; and by very numerous and veracious messengers I had learned how full you were of the grace of God, most blessed and venerable Pope Boniface! But after my brother Alypius saw you even in bodily presence; and, having been received by you with all kindness and sincerity, held, at the bidding of affection, conversations with you; and living with you, and, although only for a short time, united with you in earnest affection, poured out to your mind both himself and me; and brought you back to me in his mind:—the more assured was your friendship, the greater became in me the conviction of your holiness. For you, who mind not high things, however loftily you are placed, did not disdain to be a friend of the lowly and to return the love bestowed upon you. For what else is friendship which has its name from no other source than love, and is nowhere faithful but in Christ, in whom alone it can be eternal and happy? Whence, also, having received a greater assurance by means of that brother, through whom I have learned to know you more familiarly, I have ventured to write something to your blessedness concerning those things which at this juncture are claiming by a later stimulus the episcopal care, as far as we are able, to vigilance on behalf of the Lord's flock.

CHAPTER 2

WHY HERETICAL WRITINGS MUST BE ANSWERED

For the new heretics, enemies of the grace of God which is given by Jesus Christ our Lord to small and great, although they are already shown more openly to need to be avoided by a manifest disapprobation, still do not cease by their writings to try the hearts of the less cautious and less learned. And these must certainly be answered, lest they should confirm themselves or their friends in that wicked error; even if we were not afraid that they might deceive some one of the catholics by their plausible discourse. But since they do not cease to growl at the entrances to the Lord's fold, and from every side to tear open approaches with a view to tear in pieces the sheep redeemed at such a price; and since the pastoral watch-tower is common to all of us who discharge the office of the episcopate (although you are prominent therein on a loftier height), I do what I can in respect of my small portion of the charge, as the Lord condescends by the aid of your prayers to grant me power, to oppose to their pestilent and crafty writings, healing and defensive writings, so that the madness with which they are raging may either itself be cured, or may be prevented from hurting others.

CHAPTER 3

WHY HE ADDRESSES HIS BOOK TO BONIFACE

But these words which I am answering to their two letters,—the one, to wit, which Julian is said to have sent to Rome, that by its means, as I believe, he might find or make as many allies as he could; and the other, which eighteen so-called bishops, sharers in his error, dared to write to Thessalonica, not to any and every body, but to the bishop of that place itself, with a view of tempting him by their craftiness and bringing him over, if it could be done, to their views;—these words which, as I said, I am writing in answer to those two letters of theirs in respect of that argument, I have determined to address especially to your sanctity, not so much for your learning as for your examination and, if perchance anything should displease you, for your correction. For my brother intimated to me that you yourself condescended to give those letters to him, which could not come into your hands except by the most watchful diligence of my brethren, your sons. And I thank your most sincere kindness to me that you have been unwilling that those letters of the enemies of God's grace should be hidden from me, seeing that in them you have found my name calumniously as well as openly expressed. But I hope from my Lord God that not without the reward which is in heaven do those tear me with their scurrilous teeth to whom I oppose myself on behalf of the little ones, that they may not be left for destruction to the deceitful flatterer Pelagius, but may be presented for deliverance to the truthful Saviour Christ.

CHAPTER 4 [II.]

THE CALUMNY OF JULIAN,—THAT THE CATHOLICS TEACH THAT FREE WILL IS TAKEN AWAY BY ADAM’S SIN

Let us now, therefore, reply to Julian’s letter. “Those Manicheans say,” says he, “with whom now we do not communicate,—that is, the whole of them with whom we differ,—that by the sin of the first man, that is, of Adam, free will perished: and that no one has now the power of living well, but that all are constrained into sin by the necessity of their flesh.” He calls the catholics Manicheans, after the manner of that Jovinian who a few years ago, as a new heretic, destroyed the virginity of the blessed Mary, and placed the marriage of the faithful on the same level with her sacred virginity. And he did not object this to the catholics on any other ground than that he wished them to seem to be either accusers or condemners of marriage.

CHAPTER 5

FREE CHOICE DID NOT PERISH WITH ADAM ‘S SIN. WHAT FREEDOM DID PERISH

But in defending free will they hasten to confide rather in it for doing righteousness than in God’s aid, and to glory every one in himself, and not in the Lord. But who of us will say that by the sin of the first man free will perished from the human race? Through sin freedom indeed perished, but it was that freedom which was in Paradise, to have a full righteousness with immortality; and it is on this account that human nature needs divine grace, since the Lord says, “If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed”—free of course to live well and righteously. For free will in the sinner up to this extent did not perish,—that by it all sin, especially they who sin with delight and with love of sin; what they are pleased to do gives them pleasure. Whence also the apostle says, “When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.” Behold, they are shown to have been by no means able to serve sin except by another freedom. They are not, then, free from righteousness except by the choice of the will, but they do not become free from sin save by the grace of the Saviour. For which reason the admirable Teacher also distinguished these very words: “For when ye were the servants,” says he, “of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye, then, in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being freed from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end eternal life.” He called them “free” from righteousness, not “freed;” but from sin not “free,” lest they should attribute this to themselves, but most watchfully he preferred to say “freed,” referring this to that declaration of the Lord, “If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed.” Since, then, the sons of men do not live well unless they are made the sons of God, why is it that this writer wishes to give the power of good living to free will, when this power is not given save by God’s grace through Jesus Christ our Lord, as the gospel says: “And as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God”?

CHAPTER 6 [III.]

GRACE IS NOT GIVEN ACCORDING TO MERITS

But lest perchance they say that they are aided to this,—that they may “have power to become the sons of God,” but that they may deserve to receive this power they have first “received Him” by free will with no assistance of grace (because this is the purpose of their endeavour to destroy grace, that they may contend that it is given according to our deservings); lest perchance, then, they so divide that evangelical statement as to refer merit to that portion of it wherein it is said, “But as many as received Him,” and then say that in that which follows, “He gave them power to become the sons of God,” grace is not given freely, but is repaid to this merit; if it is asked of them what is the meaning of “received Him,” will they say anything else than “believed on Him”? And in order, therefore, that they may know that this also pertains to grace, let them read what the apostle says: “And that ye be in nothing terrified by your adversaries, which indeed is to them a cause of perdition, but of your salvation, and that of

God; for unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” Certainly he said that both were given. Let them read what he said also: “Peace be to the brethren, and love, with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Let them also read what the Lord Himself says: “No man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me shall draw him.” Where, lest any one should suppose that anything else is said in the words “come to me” than “believe in me,” a little after, when He was speaking of His body and blood, and many were offended at His discourse, He says, “The words which I have spoken unto you are spirit and life; but there are some of you which believe not.” Then the Evangelist added, “For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed, and who should betray Him. And He said, Therefore I said unto you that no man can come unto me except it were given him of my Father.” He repeated, to wit, the saying in which He had said, “No man can come unto me, except the Father who hath sent me shall draw him.” And He declared that He said this for the sake of believers and unbelievers, explaining what He had said, “except the Father who hath sent me shall draw him,” by repeating the very same thing in other words in that which He said, “except it were given him of my Father.” Because he is drawn to Christ to whom it is given to believe on Christ. Therefore the power is given that they who believe on Him should become the sons of God, since this very thing is given, that they believe on Him. And unless this power be given from God, out of free will there can be none; because it will not be free for good if the deliverer have not made it free; but in evil he has a free will in whom a deceiver, either secret or manifest, has grafted the love of wickedness, or he himself has persuaded himself of it.

CHAPTER 7

HE CONCLUDES THAT HE DOES NOT DEPRIVE THE WICKED OF FREE WILL

It is not, therefore, true, as some affirm that we say, and as that correspondent of yours ventures moreover to write, that “all are forced into sin,” as if they were unwilling, “by the necessity of their flesh;” but if they are already of the age to use the choice of their own mind, they are both retained in sin by their own will, and by their own will are hurried along from sin to sin. For even he who persuades and deceives does not act in them, except that they may commit sin by their will, either by ignorance of the truth or by delight in iniquity, or by both evils,—as well of blindness as of weakness. But this will, which is free in evil things because it takes pleasure in evil, is not free in good things, for the reason that it has not been made free. Nor can a man will any good thing unless he is aided by Him who cannot will evil,—that is, by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. For "everything which is not of faith is sin." And thus the good will which withdraws itself from sin is faithful, because the just lives by faith. And it pertains to faith to believe on Christ. And no man can believe on Christ—that is, come to Him—unless it be given to him. No man, therefore, can have a righteous will, unless, with no foregoing merits, he has received the true, that is, the gratuitous grace from above.

CHAPTER 8 [IV.]

THE PELAGIANS DEMOLISH FREE WILL

These proud and haughty people will not have this; and yet they do not maintain free will by purifying it, but demolish it by exaggerating it. For they are angry with us who say these things, for no other reason than that they disdain to glory in the Lord. Yet Pelagius feared the episcopal judgment of Palestine; and when it was objected to him that he said that the grace of God is given according to our merits, he denied that he said so, and condemned those who said this with an anathema. And yet nothing else is found to be defended in the books which he afterwards wrote, thinking that he had made a fraud upon the men who were his judges, by lying or by hiding his meaning, I know not how, in ambiguous words.

CHAPTER 9 [V.]

ANOTHER CALUMNY OF JULIAN,—THAT "IT IS SAID THAT MARRIAGE IS NOT APPOINTED BY GOD."

But now let us see what follows. "They say also," he says, "that those marriages which are now celebrated were not appointed by God, and this is to be read in Augustin's book, against which I replied in four books. And the words of this Augustin our enemies have taken up by way of hostility to the truth." To these most calumnious words I see that a brief answer must be made, because he repeats them afterwards when he wishes to insinuate what such men as they would say, as if against my words. On that point, with God’s assistance, I must contend with him as far as the matter shall seem to demand. Now, therefore, I reply that marriage was ordained by God both then, when it was said, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh,” and now, wherefore it is written, “A woman is joined to a man by the Lord.” For nothing else is even now done than that a man cleave to his wife, and they become two in one flesh. Because concerning that very marriage which is now contracted, the Lord was consulted by the Jews whether it was lawful for any cause to put away a wife. And to the testimony of the law on the occasion mentioned, He added, “What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” The Apostle Paul also applied this witness of the law when he admonished husbands that their wives should be loved by them. Away, then, with the notion that in my book that man should read anything opposed to these divine testimonies! But either by not understanding, or rather by calumniating, he seeks to twist what he reads into another meaning. But I wrote my book, against which he mentions that he replied in four books, after the condemnation of Pelagius and Coelestius. And this, I have thought, must be said, because that man avers that my words had been taken up by his enemies in hostility to the truth, lest any one should think that these new heretics were condemned as enemies of the grace of Christ on account of this book of mine. But in that book is found the defence rather than the censure of marriage.

CHAPTER 10

THE THIRD CALUMNY,—THE ASSERTION THAT CONJUGAL INTERCOURSE IS CONDEMNED

“They say also,” says he, “that sexual impulse and the intercourse of married people were devised by the devil, and that therefore those who are born innocent are guilty, and that it is the work of the devil, not of God, that they are born of this diabolical intercourse. And this, without any ambiguity, is Manicheism.” Nay, as I say that marriage was appointed by God for the sake of the ordinance of the begetting of children, so I say that the propagation of children to be begotten could not have taken place without sexual impulse, and without intercourse of husband and wife, even in Paradise, if children were begotten there. But whether such impulse and intercourse would have existed, as is now the case with shameful lust, if no one had sinned, here is the question concerning which I shall argue hereafter, if God will.

CHAPTER 11 [VI.]

THE PURPOSE OF THE PELAGIANS IN PRAISING THE INNOCENCE OF CONJUGAL INTERCOURSE

Yet what it is they wish, what they purpose, to what result they are striving to bring the matter, the words that are added by that writer declare, when he asserts that I say, “that therefore they who are born innocent are guilty, and that it is the work of the devil, not of God, that they are born of this diabolical intercourse.” Since, therefore, I neither say that this intercourse of husband and wife is diabolical, especially in the case of believers, which is effected for the sake of generating children who are afterwards to be regenerated; nor that any men are made by the devil, but, in so far as they are men, by God; and nevertheless that even of believing husband and wife are born guilty persons (as if a wild olive were produced from an olive), on account of original sin, and on this account they are under the devil unless they are born again in Christ, because the devil is the author of the fault, not of the nature: what, on the other hand, are they labouring to bring about who say that infants inherit no original sin, and therefore are not under the devil, except that that grace of God in infants may be made of no effect, by which He has plucked us out, as the apostle says, from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love? [VII.] When, indeed, they deny that infants are in the power of darkness even before the help of the Lord the deliverer, they are in such wise praising in them the Creator’s work as to destroy the mercy of the Redeemer. And because I confess this both in grown-up people and in infants, he says that this is without any ambiguity Manicheism, although it is the most ancient catholic dogma by which the new heretical dogma of these men is overturned.

CHAPTER 12

THE FOURTH CALUMNY,—THAT THE SAINTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT ARE SAID TO BE NOT FREE FROM SINS

“They say,” says he, “that the saints in the Old Testament were not without sins,—that is that they were not free from crimes even by amendment, but they were seized by death in their guilt.” Nay, I say that either before the law, or in the time of the Old Testament, they were freed from sins,—not by their own power, because “cursed is every one that hath put his hope in man,” and without any doubt those are under this curse whom also the sacred Psalm notifies, “who trust in their own strength;” nor by the old covenant which gendereth to bondage, although it was divinely given by the grace of a sure dispensation; nor by that law itself, holy and just and good as it was, where it is written, “Thou shalt not covet,” since it was not given as being able to give life, but it was added for the sake of transgression until the seed should come to whom the promise was made; but I say that they were freed by the blood of the Redeemer Himself, who is the one Mediator of God and man, the man Christ Jesus. But those enemies of the grace of God, which is given to small and great through Jesus Christ our Lord, say that the men of God of old were of a perfect righteousness, lest they should be supposed to have needed the incarnation, the passion, and resurrection of Christ, by belief in whom they were saved.

CHAPTER 13 [VIII.]

THE FIFTH CALUMNY,—THAT IT IS SAID THAT PAUL AND THE REST OF THE APOSTLES WERE POLLUTED BY LUST

He says, “They say that even the Apostle Paul, even all the apostles, were always polluted by immoderate lust.” What man, however profane he may be, would dare to say this? But doubtless this man thus misrepresents because they contend that what the apostle said, “I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing, for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not,” and other such things, he said not of himself, but that he introduced the person of somebody else, I know not who, who was suffering these things. Wherefore that passage in his epistle must be carefully considered and investigated, that their error may not lurk in any obscurity of his. Although, therefore, the apostle is here arguing broadly, and with great and lasting conflict maintaining grace against those who were boasting in the law, yet we do come upon a few matters which pertain to the matter in hand. On which subject he says: “Because by the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight. For by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God by the faith of Jesus Christ unto all them that believe. For there is no difference. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” And again: “Where is boasting? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No; but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law.” And again: “For the promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but by the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. Because the law worketh wrath, for where no law is, there is no transgression.” And in another place: “Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound.” In still another place: “For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law, but under grace.” And again in another place: “Know ye not, brethren (for I speak to them that know the law), that the law hath dominion over a man so long as he liveth? For the woman which is under a husband is joined to her husband by the law so long as he liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is freed from the law of her husband.” And a little after: “Therefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should belong to another, who has risen from the dead that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh the passions of sins which are by the law did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death, but now we are delivered from the law of death in which we were held, so that we may serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” With these and such like testimonies that teacher of the Gentiles showed with sufficient evidence that the law could not take away sin, but rather increased it, and that grace takes it away; since the law knew how to command, to which command weakness gives way, while grace knows to assist, whereby love is infused. And lest any one, on account of these testimonies, should reproach the law, and contend that it is evil, the apostle, seeing what might occur to those who ill understand it, himself proposed to himself the same question. “What shall we say, then?” said he. “Is the law sin? Far from it. But I did not know sin except by the law.” He had already said before, “For by the law is the knowledge of sin.” It is not, therefore, the taking away, but the knowledge of sin.

CHAPTER 14

THAT THE APOSTLE IS SPEAKING IN HIS OWN PERSON AND THAT OF OTHERS WHO ARE UNDER GRACE, NOT STILL UNDER LAW

And from this point he now begins—and, it was on account of this that I undertook the consideration of these things—to introduce his own person, and to speak as if about himself; where the Pelagians will not have it that the apostle himself is to be understood, but say that he has transfigured another person into himself,—that is, a man placed still under the law, not yet freed by grace. And here, indeed, they ought at least to concede that “in the law no one is justified,” as the same apostle says elsewhere; but that the law avails for the knowledge of sin, and for the transgression of the law itself, so that sin, being known and increased, grace may be sought for through faith. But they do not fear that those things should be understood concerning the apostle which he might also say concerning his past, but they fear those things which follow. For here he says: “I had not known lust if the law had not said, Thou shall not covet. But the occasion being taken, sin wrought in me by the commandment all manner of lust. For without the law sin was dead. But I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died, and the commandment which was for life was found for me to be death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Therefore the law indeed is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good. Was, then, that which is good made death unto me? By no means. But sin, that it might appear sin, worked death to me by that which is good, that the sinner or the sin might become by the commandment excessive.” All these things, as I have said, the apostle can seem to have commemorated from his past life: so that from what he says, “For I was alive without the law once,” he may have wished his first age from infancy to be understood, before the years of reason; but in that he added, “But when the commandment came, sin revived, but I died,” he would fain show himself able to receive the commandment, but not to do it, and therefore a transgressor of the law.

CHAPTER 15 [IX.]

HE SINS IN WILL WHO IS ONLY DETERRED FROM SINNING BY FEAR

Nor let us be disturbed by what he wrote to the Philippians: “Touching the righteousness which is in the law, one who is without blame.” For he could be within in evil affections a transgressor of the law, and yet fulfil the open works of the law, either by the fear of men or of God Himself; but by terror of punishment, not by love and delight in righteousness. For it is one thing to do good with the will of doing good, and another thing to be so inclined by the will to do evil, that one would actually do it if it could be allowed without punishment. For thus assuredly he is sinning within in his will itself, who abstains from sin not by will but by fear. And knowing himself to have been such in these his internal affections, before the grace of God which is through Jesus Christ our Lord, the apostle elsewhere confesses this very plainly. For writing to the Ephesians, he says: “And you, though ye were dead in your trespasses and sins, wherein sometime ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of that spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, in whom also we all at one time had our conversation in the lusts of our flesh, doing the will of our flesh and our affections, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others also: but God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sins, quickened us together with Christ, by whose grace we are saved.” Again to Titus he says: “For we ourselves also were sometime foolish and unbelieving, erring, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and holding one another in hatred.” Such was Saul when he says that he was, touching the righteousness which is in the law, without reproach. For that he had not pressed on in the law, and changed his character so as to be without reproach after this hateful life, he plainly shows in what follows, when he says that he was not changed from these evils except by the grace of the Saviour. For adding also this very thing, here as well as to the Ephesians, he says: “But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour shone forth, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and of the renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He shed on us most abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by His grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

CHAPTER 16

HOW SIN DIED, AND HOW IT REVIVED

And what he says in that passage of the Epistle to the Romans, "Sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death to me by that which is good," agrees with the former passages where he said, "But I had not known sin but by the law, for I had not known lust unless the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." And previously, "By the law is the knowledge of sin," for he said this also here, "that it might appear sin;" that we might not understand what he had said, "For without law sin was dead," except in the sense as if it were not, "it lies hidden, it does not appear, it is completely ignored, as if it were buried in I know not what darkness of ignorance." And in that he says, "And I was alive once without the law," what does he say except, I seemed to myself to live? And with respect to what he added, "But when the commandment came, sin revived," what else is it but sin shone forth, became apparent? Nor yet does he say lived, but revived. For it had lived formerly in Paradise, where it sufficiently appeared, admitted in opposition to the command given; but when it is inherited by children coming into the world, it lies concealed, as if it were dead, until its evil, resisting righteousness, is felt by its prohibition, when one thing is commanded and approved, another thing delights and rules: then, in some measure sin revives in the knowledge of the man that is born, although it had lived already for some time in the knowledge of the man as at first made.

CHAPTER 17 [X.]

"THE LAW IS SPIRITUAL, BUT I AM CARNAL," TO BE UNDERSTOOD OF PAUL

But it is not so clear how what follows can be understood concerning Paul. "For we know," says he, "that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal." He does not say, "I was," but, "I am." Was, then, the apostle, when he wrote this, carnal? or does he say this with respect to his body? For he was still in the body of this death, not yet made what he speaks of elsewhere: “It is sown a natural body, it shall be raised a spiritual body.” For then, of the whole of himself, that is, of both parts of which he consists, he shall be a spiritual man, when even the body shall be spiritual. For it is not absurd that in that life even the flesh should be spiritual, if in this life in those who still mind earthly things even the spirit itself may be carnal. Thus, then, he said, “But I am carnal,” because the apostle had not yet a spiritual body, as he might say, “But I am mortal,” which assuredly he could not be understood to have said except in respect of his body, which had not yet been clothed with immortality. Moreover, in reference to what he added, “sold under sin,” lest any one think that he was not yet redeemed by the blood of Christ, this also may be understood in respect of that which he says: “And we ourselves, having the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” For if in this respect he says that he was sold under sin, that as yet his body has not been redeemed from corruption; or that he was sold once in the first transgression of the commandment so as to have a corruptible body which drags down the soul; what hinders the apostle here from being understood to say about himself that which he says in such wise that it may be understood also of himself, even if in his person he wishes not himself alone, but all, to be received who had known themselves as struggling, without consent, in spiritual delight with the affection of the flesh?

CHAPTER 18

HOW THE APOSTLE SAID THAT HE DID THE EVIL THAT HE WOULD NOT

Or by chance do we fear what follows, “For that which I do I know not, for what I will I do not, but what I hate that I do,” lest perhaps from these words some one should suspect that the apostle is consenting to the evil works of the concupiscence of the flesh? But we must consider what he adds: “But if I do that which I will not, I consent to the law that it is good.” For he says that he rather consents to the law than to the concupiscence of the flesh. For this he calls by the name of sin. Therefore he said that he acted and laboured not with the desire of consenting and fulfilling, but from the impulse of lusting itself. Hence, then, he says, “I consent to the law that it is good.” I consent because I do not will what it does not will. Afterwards he says, “Now, then, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me.” What does he mean by “now then,” but, now at length, under the grace which has delivered the delight of my will from the consent of lust? For, “it is not I that do it,” cannot be better understood than that he does not consent to set forth his members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. For if he lusts and consents and acts, how can he be said not to do the thing himself, even although he may grieve that he does it, and deeply groan at being overcome?

CHAPTER 19

WHAT IT IS TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT IS GOOD

And now does not what follows most plainly show whence he spoke? “For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing”? For if he had not explained what he said by the addition of “that is, in my flesh,” it might, perchance, be otherwise understood, when he said, “in me.” And therefore he repeats and urges the same thing in another form: “For to will is present with me, but to perform that which is good is not.” For this is to perform that which is good, that a man should not even lust. For the good is incomplete when one lusts, even although a man does not consent to the evil of lust. “For the good that I would,” says he, “I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” This he repeated impressively, and as it were to stir up the most slothful from slumber: “I find then that the law,” said he, “is for me wishing to do good, since evil is present with me.” The law, then, is for one who would do good, but evil is present from lust, though he does not consent to this who says, “It is no longer I that do it.”

CHAPTER 20

IN ME, THAT IS, IN MY FLESH

And he declares both more plainly in what follows: “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” But in that he said, “bringing me into captivity,” he can feel emotion without consenting to it. Whence, because of those three things, two, to wit, of which we have already argued, in that he says, “But I am carnal,” and “Sold under sin,” and this third, “Bringing me into captivity in the law of sin, which is in my members,” the apostle seems to be describing a man who is still living under the law, and is not yet under grace. But as I have expounded the former two sayings in respect of the still corruptible flesh, so also this latter may be understood as if he had said, “bringing me into captivity,” in the flesh, not in the mind; in emotion, not in consent; and therefore “bringing me into captivity,” because even in the flesh there is not an alien nature, but our own. As, therefore, he himself expounded what he had said, “For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,” so also now out of the exposition of that we ought to learn the meaning of this passage, as if he had said, “Bringing me into captivity,” that is, “my flesh,” “to the law of sin, which is in my members.”

CHAPTER 21

NO CONDEMNATION IN CHRIST JESUS

Then he adds the reason why he said all these things: “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!” And thence he concludes: “Therefore I myself with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” To wit, with the flesh, the law of sin, by lusting; but with the mind, the law of God, by not consenting to that lust. “For there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” For he is not condemned who does not consent to the evil of the lust of the flesh. “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made thee free from the law of sin and death,” so that, to wit, the lust of the flesh may not appropriate to itself thy consent. And what follows more and more demonstrates the same meaning. But moderation must be used.

CHAPTER 22

WHY THE PASSAGE REFERRED TO MUST BE UNDERSTOOD OF A MAN ESTABLISHED UNDER GRACE

And it had once appeared to me also that the apostle was in this argument of his describing a man under the law. But afterwards I was constrained to give up the idea by those words where he says, “Now, then, it is no more I that do it.” For to this belongs what he says subsequently also: “There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” And because I do not see how a man under the law should say, “I delight in the law of God after the inward man;” since this very delight in good, by which, moreover, he does not consent to evil, not from fear of penalty, but from love of righteousness (for this is meant by “delighting”), can only be attributed to grace.

CHAPTER 23 [XI.]

WHAT IT IS TO BE DELIVERED FROM THE BODY OF THIS DEATH

For when he says also, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” who can deny that when the apostle said this he was still in the body of this death? And certainly the wicked are not delivered from this, to whom the same bodies are returned for eternal torment. Therefore, to be delivered from the body of this death is to be healed of all the weakness of fleshly lust, and to receive the body, not for penalty, but for glory. With this passage also those words are sufficiently in harmony: “Ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption, of our body.” For surely we groan with that groaning wherein we say, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” That also where he says, “For what I do, I know not;” what else is it than: “I will not, I do not approve, I do not consent, I do not do”? Otherwise it is contrary to what he said above, “By the law is the knowledge of sin,” and, “I had not known sin but by the law,” and, “Sin, that it might appear sin, worked death in me by that which is good.” For how did he know sin, of which he was ignorant, by the law? How does sin which is not known appear? Therefore it is said, “I know not,” for “I do not,” because I myself commit it with no consent of mine; in the same way in which the Lord will say to the wicked, “I know you not,” although, beyond a doubt, nothing can be hid from Him; and as it is said, “Him who had not known sin,” which means who had not done sin, for He had not known what He condemned.

CHAPTER 24

HE CONCLUDES THAT THE APOSTLE SPOKE IN HIS OWN PERSON, AND THAT OF THOSE WHO ARE UNDER GRACE

On the careful consideration of these things, and things of the same kind in the context of that apostolical Scripture, the apostle is rightly understood to have signified not, indeed, himself alone in his own person, but others also established under grace, and with him not yet established in that perfect peace in which death shall be swallowed up in victory. And concerning this he afterwards says, “But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. If, then, the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” Therefore, after our mortal bodies have been quickened, not only will there be no consent to sinning, but even the lust of the flesh itself, to which there is no consent, will not remain. And not to have this resistance to the spirit in the mortal flesh, was possible only to that man who came not by the flesh to men. And that the apostles, because they were men, and carried about in the mortality of this life a body which is corrupted and weighs down the soul, were, therefore, “always polluted with excessive lust,” as that man injuriously affirms, be it far from me to say. But I do say that although they were free from consent to depraved lusts, they nevertheless groaned concerning the concupiscence of the flesh, which they bridled by restraint with such humility and piety, that they desired rather not to have it than to subdue it.

CHAPTER 25 [XII.]

THE SIXTH CALUMNY,—THAT AUGUSTIN ASSERTS THAT EVEN CHRIST WAS NOT FREE FROM SINS

In like manner as to what he added, that I say, “that Christ even was not free from sins, but that, from the necessity of the flesh, He spoke falsely, and was stained with other faults,” he should see from whom he heard these things, or in whose letters he read them; for that, indeed, he perchance did not understand them, and turned them by the deceitfulness of malice into calumnious meanings.

CHAPTER 26 [XIII.]

THE SEVENTH CALUMNY,—THAT AUGUSTIN ASSERTS THAT IN BAPTISM ALL SINS ARE NOT REMITTED

“They also say,” says he, “that baptism does not give complete remission of sins, nor take away crimes, but that it shaves them off, so that the roots of all sins are retained in the evil flesh.” Who but an unbeliever can affirm this against the Pelagians? I say, therefore, that baptism gives remission of all sins, and takes away guilt, and does not shave them off; and “that the roots of all sins are” not “retained in the evil flesh, as if of shaved hair on the head, whence the sins may grow to be cut down again.” For it was I that found out that similitude, too, for them to use for the purposes of their calumny, as if I thought and said this.

CHAPTER 27

IN WHAT SENSE LUST IS CALLED SIN IN THE REGENERATE

But concerning that concupiscence of the flesh of which they speak, I believe that they are deceived, or that they deceive; for with this even he that is baptized must struggle with a pious mind, however carefully he presses forward, and is led by the Spirit of God. But although this is called sin, it is certainly so called not because it is sin, but because it is made by sin, as a writing is said to be some one’s “hand” because the hand has written it. But they are sins which are unlawfully done, spoken, thought, according to the lust of the flesh, or to ignorance—things which, once done, keep their doers guilty if they are not forgiven. And this very concupiscence of the flesh is in such wise put away in baptism, that although it is inherited by all that are born, it in no respect hurts those that are born anew. And yet from these, if they carnally beget children, it is again derived; and again it will be hurtful to those that are born, unless by the same form it is remitted to them as born again, and remains in them in no way hindering the future life, because its guilt, derived by generation, has been put away by regeneration; and thus it is now no more sin, but is called so, whether because it became what it is by sin, or because it is stirred by the delight of sinning, although by the conquest of the delight of righteousness consent is not given to it. Nor is it on account of this, the guilt of which has already been taken away in the laver of regeneration, that the baptized say in their prayer, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors;” but on account of sins which are committed, whether in consentings to it, when what is right is overcome by that which pleases, or when by ignorance evil is accepted as if it were good. And they are committed, whether by acting, or by speaking, or—and this is the easiest and the quickest—by thinking. From all which things what believer ever will boast that he has his heart pure? or who will boast that he is pure from sin? Certainly that which follows in the prayer is said on account of concupiscence: “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” “For every one,” as it is written, “is tempted when he is drawn away of his own concupiscence, and enticed; then, when concupiscence hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.”

CHAPTER 28 [XIV.]

MANY WITHOUT CRIME, NONE WITHOUT SIN

All these products of concupiscence, and the old guilt of concupiscence itself, are put away by the washing of baptism. And whatever that concupiscence now brings forth, if they are not those products which are called not only sins, but even crimes, are purified by that method of daily prayer when we say, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive,” and by the sincerity of alms-giving. For no one is so foolish as to say that that precept of our Lord does not refer to baptized people: “Forgive and it shall be forgiven you, give and it shall be given you.” But none could rightly be ordained a minister in the Church if the apostle had said, “If any is without sin,” where he says, “If any is without crime;” or if he had said, “Having no sin,” where he says, “Having no crime.” Because many baptized believers are without crime, but I should say that no one in this life is without sin,—however much the Pelagians are inflated, and burst asunder in madness against me because I say this: not because there remains anything of sin which is not remitted in baptism; but because by us who remain in the weakness of this life such sins do not cease daily to be committed, as are daily remitted to those who pray in faith and work in mercy. This is the soundness of the catholic faith, which the Holy Spirit everywhere sows,—not the vanity and presumption of spirit of heretical pravity.

CHAPTER 29 [XV.]

JULIAN OPPOSES THE FAITH OF HIS FRIENDS TO THE OPINIONS OF CATHOLIC BELIEVERS. FIRST OF ALL, OF FREE WILL

Now therefore let us see, for the rest, in what way—after thinking that he might calumniously object against me what I believe, and feign what I do not believe—he himself professes his own faith or that of the Pelagians. “In opposition to these things,” he says, “we daily argue, and we are unwilling to yield our consent to transgressors, because we say that free will is in all by nature, and could not perish by the sin of Adam; which assertion is confirmed by the authority of all Scriptures.” If in any degree it is necessary to say this, you should not say it against the grace of God,—you should not give your consent to transgressors, but you should correct your opinion. But about this, as much as I could, and as far as it seemed to be sufficient, I have argued above.

CHAPTER 30

SECONDLY, OF MARRIAGE

“We say,” says he, “that that marriage which is now celebrated throughout the earth was ordained by God, and that married people are not guilty, but that fornicators and adulterers are to be condemned.” This is true and catholic doctrine; but what you want to gather from this, to wit, that from the intercourse of male and female those who are born derive no sin to be put away by the laver of regeneration,—this is false and heretical.

CHAPTER 31

THIRDLY, OF CONJUGAL INTERCOURSE

“We say,” says he, “that the sexual impulse—that is, that the virility itself, without which there can be no intercourse—is ordained by God.” To this I reply that the sexual impulse, and, to make use of his word, virility, without which there can be no intercourse, was so appointed by God that there was in it nothing to be ashamed of. For it was not fit that His creature should blush at the work of his Creator; but by a just punishment the disobedience of the members was the retribution to the disobedience of the first man, for which disobedience they blushed when they covered with fig-leaves those shameful parts which previously were not shameful.

CHAPTER 32 [XVI.]

THE APRONS WHICH ADAM AND EVE WORE

For they did not use for themselves tunics to cover their whole bodies after their sin, but aprons, which some of the less careful of our translators have translated as “coverings.” And this indeed is true; but “covering” is a general name, by which may be understood every kind of clothing and veil. And ambiguity ought to be avoided, so that, as the Greek called them perizomata, by which only the shameful parts of the body are covered, so also the Latin should either use the Greek word itself, because now custom has come to use it instead of the Latin, or, as some do, use the word aprons, or, as others have better named them, wrestling aprons. Because this name is taken from that ancient Roman custom whereby the youth covered their shameful parts when they were exercised naked in the field; whence even at this day they are called campestrati, since they cover those members with the girdle. Although, if those members by which sin was committed were to be covered after the sin, men ought not indeed to have been clothed in tunics, but to have covered their hand and mouth, because they sinned by taking and eating. What, then, is the meaning, when the prohibited food was taken, and the transgression of the precept had been committed, of the look turned towards those members? What unknown novelty is felt there, and compels itself to be noticed? And this is signified by the opening of the eyes. For their eyes were not closed, either when Adam gave names to the cattle and birds, or when Eve saw the trees to be beautiful and good; but they were made open—that is, attentive—to consider; as it is written of Agar, the handmaid of Sarah, that she opened her eyes and saw a well, although she certainly had not had them closed before. As, therefore, they were so suddenly ashamed of their nakedness, which they were daily in the habit of looking upon and were not confused, that they could now no longer bear those members naked, but immediately took care to cover them; did not they—he in the open, she in the hidden impulse—perceive those members to be disobedient to the choice of their will, which certainly they ought to have ruled like the rest by their voluntary command? And this they deservedly suffered, because they themselves also were not obedient to their Lord. Therefore they blushed that they in such wise had not manifested service to their Creator, that they should deserve to lose dominion over those members by which children were to be procreated.

CHAPTER 33

THE SHAME OF NAKEDNESS

This kind of shame—this necessity of blushing—is certainly born with every man, and in some measure is commanded by the very laws of nature; so that, in this matter, even virtuous married people are ashamed. Nor can any one go to such an extreme of evil and disgrace, as, because he knows God to be the author of nature and the ordainer of marriage, to have intercourse even with his wife in any one's sight, or not to blush at those impulses and seek secrecy, where he can shun the sight not only of strangers, but even of all his own relatives. Therefore let human nature be permitted to acknowledge the evil that happens to it by its own fault, lest it should be compelled either not to blush at its own impulses, which is most shameless, or else to blush at the work of its Creator, which is most ungrateful. Of this evil, nevertheless, virtuous marriage makes good use for the sake of the benefit of the begetting of children. But to consent to lust for the sake of carnal pleasure alone is sin, although it may be conceded to married people with permission.

CHAPTER 34 [XVII.]

WHETHER THERE COULD BE SENSUAL APPETITE IN PARADISE BEFORE THE FALL

But, while maintaining, ye Pelagians, the honourableness and fruitfulness of marriage, determine, if nobody had sinned, what you would wish to consider the life of those people in Paradise, and choose one of these four things. For beyond a doubt, either as often as ever they pleased they would have had intercourse; or they would bridle lust when intercourse was not necessary; or lust would arise at the summons of will, just at the time when chaste prudence would have perceived beforehand that intercourse was necessary; or, with no lust existing at all, as every other member served for its own work, so for its own work the organs of generation also would obey the commands of those that willed, without any difficulty. Of these four suppositions, choose which you please; but I think you will reject the two former, in which lust is either obeyed or resisted. For the first one would not be in accordance with so great a virtue, and the second not in harmony with so great a happiness. For be the idea far from us, that the glory of so great a blessedness as that should either be most basely enslaved by always following a preceding lust, or, by resisting it, should not enjoy the most abounding peace. Away, I say, with the thought that that mind should either be gratified by consenting to satisfy the concupiscence of the flesh, arising not opportunely for the sake of procreation, but with unregulated excitement, or that that quiet should find it necessary to restrain it by refusing.

CHAPTER 35

DESIRE IN PARADISE WAS EITHER NONE AT ALL, OR IT WAS OBEDIENT TO THE IMPULSE OF THE WILL

But whichever you choose of the two other alternatives, there is no necessity for striving against you with any disputation. For even if you should refuse to elect the fourth, in which there is the highest tranquillity of all the obedient members without any lust, since already the urgency of your arguments has made you hostile to it; that will doubtless please you which I have put in the third place, that that carnal concupiscence, whose impulse attains to the final pleasure which much delights you, should never arise in Paradise except at the bidding of the will when it would be necessary for procreation. If it is agreeable to you to arrange this in Paradise, and if, by means of such a concupiscence of the flesh which should neither anticipate, nor impede, nor exceed the bidding of the will, it appears to you that children could have been begotten, I have no objection. For, as far as I am concerned in this matter, it is enough for me that such a concupiscence of the flesh is not now among men, as you concede there might have been in that place of happiness. For what it now is, the sense of all men certainly confesses, although with modesty; because it both solicits with excessive and importunate uneasiness the chaste, even when they are unwilling and are checking it by moderation, and frequently withdraws itself from the willing and inflicts itself on the unwilling; so that, by its disobedience, it testifies that it is nothing else than the punishment of that first disobedience. Whence, reasonably, both then the first men when they covered their nakedness, and now whoever considers himself to be a man, every no less modest than immodest person is confounded at it—far be it from us to say by the work of God, but—by the penalty of the first and ancient sin. You, however, not for the sake of religious reasoning, but for excited contention,—not on behalf of human modesty, but for your own madness, that even the concupiscence of the flesh itself should not be thought to be currupted, and original sin to be derived from it,—are endeavouring by your argument to recall it absolutely, such as it now is, into Paradise; and to contend that that concupiscence could have been there which would either always be followed by a disgraceful consent, or would sometimes be restrained by a pitiable refusal. I, however, do not greatly care what it delights you to think of it. Still, whatever of men is born by its means, if he is not born again, without doubt he is damned; and he must be under the dominion of the devil, if he is not delivered thence by Christ.

CHAPTER 36 [XVIII.]

JULIAN’S FOURTH OBJECTION, THAT MAN IS GOD’S WORK, AND IS NOT CONSTRAINED TO EVIL OR GOOD BY HIS POWER

“We maintain,” says he, “that men are the work of God, and that no one is forced unwillingly by His power either into evil or good, but that man does either good or ill of his own will; but that in a good work he is always assisted by God’s grace, while in evil he is incited by the suggestions of the devil.” To this I answer, that men, in so far as they are men, are the work of God; but in so far as they are sinners, they are under the devil, unless they are plucked from thence by Him who became the Mediator between God and man, for no other reason than because He could not be a sinner from men. And that no one is forced by God’s power unwillingly either into evil or good, but that when God forsakes a man, he deservedly goes to evil, and that when God assists, without deserving he is converted to good. For a man is not good if he is unwilling, but by the grace of God he is even assisted to the point of being willing; because it is not vainly written, “For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do for His good pleasure,” and, “The will is prepared by God.”

CHAPTER 37 [XIX.]

THE BEGINNING OF A GOOD WILL IS THE GIFT OF GRACE

But you think that a man is so aided by the grace of God in a good work, that in stirring up his will to that very good work you believe that grace does nothing; for this your own words sufficiently declare. For why have you not said that a man is incited by God’s grace to a good work, as you have said that he is incited to evil by the suggestions of the devil, but have said that in a good work he is always aided by God’s grace?—as if by his own will, and without any grace of God, he undertook a good work, and were then divinely assisted in the work itself, for the sake, that is to say, of the merits of his good will; so that grace is rendered as due,—not given as not due,—and thus grace is made no more grace. But this is what, in the Palestinian judgment, Pelagius with a deceitful heart condemned,—that the grace of God, namely, is given according to our merits. Tell me, I beseech you, what good, Paul, while he was as yet Saul, willed, and not rather great evils, when breathing out slaughter he went, in horrible darkness of mind and madness, to lay waste the Christians? For what merits of a good will did God convert him by a marvellous and sudden calling from those evils to good things? What shall I say, when he himself cries, “Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us”? What is that which I have already mentioned as having been said by the Lord, “No one can come to me,”—which is understood as “believe on me,”—unless it were given him of my Father”? Whether is this given to him who is already willing to believe, for the sake of the merits of a good will? or rather is the will itself, as in the case of Saul, stirred up from above, that he may believe, even although he is so averse from the faith as even to persecute the believers? For how has the Lord commanded us to pray for those who persecute us? Do we pray thus that the grace of God may be recompensed them for the sake of their good will, and not rather that the evil will itself may be changed into a good one? Just as we believe that at that time the saints whom he was persecuting did not pray for Saul in vain, that his will might be converted to the faith which he was destroying. And indeed that his conversion was effected from above, appeared even by a manifest miracle. But how many enemies of Christ are at the present day suddenly drawn by God’s secret grace to Christ! And if I had not set down this word from the gospel, what things would that man have said in this behalf concerning me, since even now he is stirring, not against me, but against Him who cries, “No man can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him”! For He does not say, “except He lead him,” so that we can thus in any way understand that his will precedes. For who is “drawn,” if he was already willing? And yet no man comes unless he is willing. Therefore he is drawn in wondrous ways to will, by Him who knows how to work within the very hearts of men. Not that men who are unwilling should believe, which cannot be, but that they should be made willing from being unwilling.

CHAPTER 38 [XX.]

THE POWER OF GOD’S GRACE IS PROVED

That this is true we do not surmise by human conjecture, but we discern by the most evident authority of the divine Scriptures. It is read in the books of the Chronicles: “Also in Judah, the hand of God was made to give them one heart, to do the commandment of the king and of the princes in the word of the Lord.” Also by Ezekiel the prophet the Lord says, “I will give them another heart, and a new spirit will I give them; and I will take away their stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them an heart of flesh, that they may walk in my commandments and observe my judgments and do them.” And what is that which Esther the queen prays when she says, “Give me eloquent speech in my mouth, and enlighten my words in the sight of the lion, and turn his heart to hatred of him that fighteth against us”? How does she say such things as these in her prayer to God, if God does not work His will in men’s hearts? But perchance the woman was foolish in praying thus. Let us see, then, whether the desire of the petitioner was vainly sent on in advance, and whether the result did not follow as of one who heard. Lo, she goes in to the king. We need not say much. And because she did not approach him in her own order, under the compulsion of her great necessity, “he looked upon her,” as it is written, “like a bull in the impulse of his indignation. And the queen feared, and her colour was changed through faintness, and she bowed herself upon the head of her maid, who went before her. And God changed him, and converted his indignation into mildness.” Now what need is there to relate what follows, where the divine

Scripture testifies that God fulfilled what she had asked for by working in the heart of the king nothing other than the will by which he commanded, and it was done as the queen had asked of him? And now God had heard her that it should be done, who changed the heart of the king by a most secret and efficacious power before he had heard the address of the woman beseeching him, and moulded it from indignation to mildness,—that is, from the will to hurt, to the will to favour,—according to that word of the apostle, “God worketh in you to will also.” Did the men of God who wrote these things—nay, did the Spirit of God Himself, under whose guidance such things were written by them—assail the free will of man? Away with the notion! But He has commended both the most righteous judgment and the most merciful aid of the Omnipotent in all cases. For it is enough for man to know that there is no unrighteousness with God. But how He dispenses those benefits, making some deservedly vessels of wrath, others graciously vessels of mercy,—who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counsellor? If, then, we attain to the honour of grace, let us not be ungrateful by attributing to ourselves what we have received. “For what have we which we have not received?”

CHAPTER 39 [XXI.]

JULIAN’S FIFTH OBJECTION CONCERNING THE SAINTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

“We say,” says he, “that the saints of the Old Testament, their righteousness being perfected here, passed to eternal life,—that is, that by the love of virtue they departed from all sins; because those whom we read of as having committed any sin, we nevertheless know to have amended themselves.” Of whatever virtue you may declare that the ancient righteous men were possessed, nothing saved them but the belief in the Mediator who shed His blood for the remission of their sins. For their own word is, “I believed, and therefore I spoke.” Whence the Apostle Paul also says, “And we having the same Spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.” What is “the same Spirit,” but that Spirit whom these righteous men also had who said such things? The Apostle Peter also says, “Why do ye wish to put a yoke upon the heathen, which neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? But, by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we believe that we shall be saved, even as they.” You who are enemies to this grace do not wish this, that the ancients should be believed to have been saved by the same grace of Jesus Christ; but you distribute the times according to Pelagius, in whose books this is read, and you say that before the law men were saved by nature, then by the law, lastly by Christ, as if to men of the two former times, that is to say, before the law and under the law, the blood of Christ had not been necessary; making void what is said: “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

CHAPTER 40 [XXII.]

THE SIXTH OBJECTION, CONCERNING THE NECESSITY OF GRACE FOR ALL, AND CONCERNING THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS

They say, “We confess that the grace of Christ is necessary to all, both to grown-up people and to infants; and we anathematize those who say that a child born of two baptized people ought not to be baptized.” I know in what sense you say such things as these—not according to the Apostle Paul, but according to the heretic Pelagius;—to wit, that baptism is necessary for infants, not for the sake of the remission of sins, but only for the sake of the kingdom of heaven; for you give them outside the kingdom of heaven a place of salvation and life eternal, even if they have not been baptized. Nor do you regard what is written, “Whosoever believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he who believeth not shall be condemned.” For which reason, in the Church of the Saviour, infants believe by means of other people, even as they have derived those sins which are remitted them in baptism from other people. Nor do you think thus, that they cannot have life who have been without the body and blood of Christ, although He said Himself, “Unless ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye shall have no life in you.” Or if you are forced by the words of the gospel to confess that infants departing from the body cannot have either life or salvation unless they have been baptized, ask why those who are not baptized are compelled to undergo the judgment of the second death, by the judgment of Him who condemns nobody undeservingly, and you will find what you do not want, —original sin!

CHAPTER 41 [XXIII.]

THE SEVENTH OBJECTION, OF THE EFFECT OF BAPTISM

“We condemn,” says he, “those who affirm that baptism does not do away all sins, because we know that full cleansing is conferred by these mysteries.” We also say this; but you do not say that infants are also by those same mysteries freed from the bonds of their first birth and of their hateful descent. On which account it behoves you, like other heretics also, to be separated from the Church of Christ, which holds this of old time.

CHAPTER 42 [XXIV.]

HE REBUTS THE CONCLUSION OF JULIAN’S LETTER

But now the manner in which he concludes the letter by saying, “Let no one therefore seduce you, nor let the wicked deny that they think these things. But if they speak the truth, either let a hearing be given, or let those very bishops who now disagree with me condemn what I have above said that they hold with the Manicheans, as we condemn those things which they declare concerning us, and a full agreement shall be made; but if they will not, know ye that they are Manicheans, and abstain from their company;”—this is rather to be despised than rebuked. For which of us hesitates to pronounce an anathema against the Manicheans, who say that from the good God neither proceed men, nor was ordained marriage, nor was given the law, which was ministered to the Hebrew people by Moses! But against the Pelagians also, not without reason, we pronounce an anathema, for that they are so hostile to God’s grace, which comes through Jesus Christ our Lord, as to say that it is given not freely, but according to our merits, and thus grace is no more grace; and place so much in free will by which man is plunged into the abyss, as to say that by making good use of it man deserves grace,—although no man can make good use of it except by grace, which is not repaid according to debt, but is given freely by God’s mercy. And they so contend that infants are already saved, that they dare deny that they are to be saved by the Saviour. And holding and disseminating these execrable dogmas, they still over and above constantly demand a hearing, when, as condemned, they ought to repent.

Book II

He undertakes to examine the second letter of the Pelagians, filled, like the first, with calumnies against the Catholics—a letter that was sent by them to Thessalonica in the name of eighteen bishops; and, first of all, he shows, by the comparison of the heretical writings with one another, that the Catholics are by no means falling into the errors of the Manicheans in detesting the dogmas of the Pelagians. He repels the calumny of prevarication incurred by the Roman clergy in the latter condemnation of Pelagius and Coelestius by Zosimus, showing that the Pelagian dogmas were never approved at Rome, although for some time, by the clemency of Zosimus, Coelestius was mercifully dealt with, with a view to leading him to the correction of his errors. He shows that, under the name of grace, Catholics neither assert a doctrine of fate, nor attribute respect of persons to God; although they truly say that God's grace is not given according to human merits, and that the first desire of good is inspired by God; so that a man does not at all make a beginning of a change from bad to good, unless the unbought and gratuitous mercy of God effects that beginning in him.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION; THE PELAGIANS IMPEACH CATHOLICS AS MANICHEANS

Let me now consider a second letter, not of Julian's alone, but common to him with several bishops, which they sent to Thessalonica; and let me answer it, with God's help, as I best can. And lest this work of mine become longer than the necessity of the subject itself requires, what need is there to refute those things which do not contain the insidious poison of their doctrine, but seem only to plead for the acquiescence of the Eastern bishops for their assistance, or, on behalf of the catholic faith, against the profanity, as they say, of the Manicheans; with no other view except, a horrible heresy being presented to them, whose adversaries they profess themselves to be, to lie hid as the enemies of grace in praise of nature? For who at any time has stirred any question of these matters against them? or what catholic is displeased because they condemn those whom the apostle foretold as departing from the faith, having their conscience seared, forbidding to marry, abstaining from meats that they think unclean, not thinking that all things were created by God? Who at any time constrained them to deny that every creature of God is good, and there is no substance which the supreme God has not made, except God Himself, who was not made by any? It is not such things as these, which it is plain are catholic truths, that are rebuked and condemned in them; because not alone the catholic faith holds in detestation the Manichean impiety as exceedingly foolish and mischievous, but also all heretics who are not Manicheans. Whence even these Pelagians do well to utter an anathema against the Manicheans, and to speak against their errors. But they do two evil things, for which they themselves must also be anathematized—one, that they impeach catholics under the name of Manicheans, the other, that they themselves also are introducing the heresy of a new error. For they are not therefore sound in the faith because they are not labouring under the disease of the Manicheans. The kind of pestilence is not always one and the same—as in the bodies, so also in the minds. As, therefore, the physician of the body would not have pronounced a man free from peril of death whom he might have declared free from dropsy, if he had seen him to be sick of some other mortal disease; so truth is not acknowledged in their case because they are not Manicheans, if they are raving in some other kind of perversity. Wherefore what we anathematize with them is one thing, what we anathematize in them is another. For we hold in abhorrence with them what is rightly offensive to them also; just as, nevertheless, we hold in abhorrence in them that for which they themselves are rightly offensive.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

THE HERESIES OF THE MANICHEANS AND PELAGIANS ARE MUTUALLY OPPOSED, AND ARE ALIKE REPROBATED BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Manicheans say that the good God is not the Creator of all natures; the Pelagians that God is not the Purifier, the Saviour, the Deliverer of all ages among men. The catholic Church condemns both; as well maintaining God’s creation against the Manicheans, that no nature may be denied to be framed by Him, as maintaining against the Pelagians that in all ages human nature must be sought after as ruined. The Manicheans rebuke the concupiscence of the flesh, not as if it were an accidental vice, but as if it were a nature bad from eternity; the Pelagians approve it as if it were no vice, but even a natural good. The catholic faith condemns both, saying to the Manicheans, “It is not nature, but it is vice;” saying to the Pelagians, “It is not of the Father, but it is of the world;” in order that both may allow it as an evil sickness to be cured—the former by ceasing to believe it, as it were, incurable, the latter by ceasing to proclaim it as laudable. The Manicheans deny that to a good man the beginning of evil came from free will; the Pelagians say that even a bad man has free will sufficiently to perform the good commandment. The catholic Church condemns both, saying to the former, “God made man upright,” and saying to the latter, “If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” The Manicheans say that the soul, as a particle of God, has sin by the commixture of an evil nature; the Pelagians say that the soul is upright, not indeed a particle, but a creature of God, and has not even in this corruptible life any sin. The catholic Church condemns both, saying to the Manicheans, “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree evil and its fruit evil,” which would not be said to man who cannot make his own nature, unless because sin is not nature, but vice; and saying to the Pelagians, “If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” In these diseases, opposed as they are to one another, the Manicheans and the Pelagians are at issue, with dissimilar will but with similar vanity, separated by different opinions, but close together by a perverse mind.

CHAPTER 3

HOW FAR THE MANICHEANS AND PELAGIANS ARE JOINED IN ERROR; HOW FAR THEY ARE SEPARATED

Still, indeed, they alike oppose the grace of Christ, they alike make His baptism of no account, they alike dishonour His flesh; but, moreover, they do these things in different ways and for different reasons. For the Manicheans assert that divine assistance is given to the merits of a good nature, but the Pelagians, to the merits of a good will. The former say, God owes this to the labours of His members; the latter say, God owes this to the virtues of His servants. In both cases, therefore, the reward is not imputed according to grace, but according to debt. The Manicheans contend, with a profane heart, that the washing of regeneration—that is, the water itself—is superfluous, and is of no advantage. But the Pelagians assert that what is said in holy baptism for the putting away of sins is of no avail to infants, as they have no sin; and thus in the baptism of infants, as far as pertains to the remission of sins, the Manicheans destroy the visible element, but the Pelagians destroy even the invisible sacrament. The Manicheans dishonour Christ’s flesh by blaspheming the birth from the Virgin; but the Pelagians by making the flesh of those to be redeemed equal to the flesh of the Redeemer. Since Christ was born, not of course in sinful flesh, but in the likeness of sinful flesh, while the flesh of the rest of mankind is born sinful. The Manicheans, therefore, who absolutely abominate all flesh, take away the manifest truth from the flesh of Christ; but the Pelagians, who maintain that no flesh is born sinful, take away from Christ’s flesh its special and proper dignity.

CHAPTER 4

THE TWO CONTRARY ERRORS

Let the Pelagians, then, cease to object to the catholics that which they are not, but let them rather hasten to amend what they themselves are; and let them not wish to be considered deserving of approval because they are opposed to the hateful error of the Manicheans, but let them acknowledge themselves to be deservedly hateful because they do not put away their own error. For two errors may be opposed to one another, although both are to be reprobated because both are alike opposed to the truth. For if the Pelagians are to be loved because they hate the Manicheans, the Manicheans should also be loved because they hate the Pelagians. But be it far from our catholic mother to choose some to love on the ground that they hate others, when by the warning and help of the Lord she ought to avoid both, and should desire to heal both.

CHAPTER 5 [III.]

THE CALUMNY OF THE PELAGIANS AGAINST THE CLERGY OF THE ROMAN CHURCH

Moreover, they accuse the Roman clergy, writing, “That, driven by the fear of a command, they have not blushed to be guilty of the crime of prevarication; so that, contrary to their previous judgment, wherein by their proceedings they had assented to the catholic dogma, they subsequently pronounced that the nature of men is evil.” Nay, but the Pelagians had conceived, with a false hope, that the new and execrable dogma of Pelagius or Coelestius could be made acceptable to the catholic intelligences of certain Romans, when those crafty spirits—however perverted by a wicked error, yet not contemptible, since they appeared rather to be deserving of considerate correction than of easy condemnation—were treated with somewhat more of lenity than the stricter discipline of the Church required. For while so many and such important ecclesiastical documents were passing and repassing between the Apostolical See and the African bishops,—and, moreover, when the proceedings in this matter in that see were completed, with Coelestius present and making answer,—what sort of a letter, what decree, is found of Pope Zosimus, of venerable memory, wherein he prescribed that it must be believed that man is born without any taint of original sin? Absolutely he never said this—never wrote it at all. But since Coelestius had written this in his pamphlet, among those matters, merely, on which he confessed that he was still in doubt and desired to be instructed, the desire of amendment in a man of so acute an intellect, who, if he could be put right, would assuredly be of advantage to many, and not the falsehood of the doctrine, was approved. And therefore his pamphlet was called catholic, because this also is the part of a catholic disposition,—if by chance in any matters a man thinks differently from what the truth demands, not with the greatest accuracy to define those matters, but, if detected and demonstrated, to reject them. For it was not to heretics, but to catholics, that the apostle was speaking when he said, “Let us, therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.” This was thought to have been the case in him when he replied that he consented to the letters of Pope Innocent of blessed memory, in which all doubt about this matter was removed. And in order that this might be made fuller and more manifest in him, matters were delayed until letters should come from Africa, in which province his craftiness had in some sort become more evidently known. And afterwards these letters came to Rome containing this, that it was not sufficient for men of more sluggish and anxious minds that he confessed his general consent to the letters of Bishop Innocent, but that he ought openly to anathematize the mischievous statements which he had made in his pamphlet; lest if he did not do so, many people of better intelligence should rather believe that in his pamphlet those poisons of the faith had been approved by the catholic see, because it had been affirmed by that see that that pamphlet was catholic, than that they had been amended because of his answer that he consented to the letters of Pope Innocent. Then, therefore, when his presence was demanded, in order that by certain and clear answers either the craft of the man or his correction might plainly appear and remain doubtful to no one, he withdrew himself and refused the examination. Neither would the delay which had already been made for the advantage of others have taken place, if it could not be of advantage to the pertinacity and madness of those who were excessively perverse. But if, which be far from the case, it had so been judged in the Roman Church concerning Coelestius or Pelagius, that those dogmas of theirs, which in themselves and with themselves Pope Innocent had condemned, should be pronounced worthy of approval and maintenance, the mark of prevarication would rather have to be branded on the Roman clergy for this. But now, when the first letters of the most blessed Pope Innocent, in reply to the letters of the African bishops, would have equally condemned this error which these men are endeavouring to commend to us; and his successor, the holy Pope Zosimus, would never have said, never have written, that this dogma which these men think concerning infants is to be held; nay, would even have bound Coelestius by a repeated sentence, when he endeavoured to clear himself, to a consent to the above-mentioned letters of the Apostolic See;—assuredly, whatever in the meanwhile was done more leniently concerning Coelestius, provided the stability of the most ancient and robust faith were maintained, was the most merciful persuasion of correction, not the most pernicious approval of wickedness; and that afterwards, by the same priesthood, Coelestius and Pelagius were condemned by repeated authority, was the proof of a severity, for a little while intermitted, at length of necessity to be carried out, not a denial of a previously-known truth or a new acknowledgment of truth.

CHAPTER 6 [IV.]

WHAT WAS DONE IN THE CASE OF COELESTIUS AND ZOSIMUS

But what need is there for us to delay longer in speaking of this matter, when there are extant here and there proceedings and writings drawn up, where all those things just as they were transacted may be either learnt or recalled? For who does not see in what degree Coelestius was bound by the interrogations of your holy predecessor and by the answers of Coelestius, whereby he professed that he consented to the letters of Pope Innocent, and fastened by a most wholesome chain, so as not to dare any further to maintain that the original sin of infants is not put away in baptism? Because these are the words of the venerable Bishop Innocent concerning this matter to the Carthaginian Council: “For once,” he said, “he bore free will; but, using his advantage inconsiderately, and falling into the depths of apostasy, he was overwhelmed, and found no way whereby he could rise from thence; and, deceived for ever by his liberty, he would have lain under the oppression of this ruin, if the advent of Christ had not subsequently for his grace delivered him, and, by the purification of a new regeneration, purged all past sin by the washing of His baptism.” What could be more clear or more manifest than that judgment of the Apostolical See? To this Coelestius professed that he assented, when it was said to him by your holy predecessor, “Do you condemn all those things that are bandied about under your name?” and he himself replied, “I condemn them in accordance with the judgment of your predecessor Innocent, of blessed memory.” But among other things which had been uttered under his name, the deacon Paulinus had objected to Coelestius that he said “that the sin of Adam was prejudicial to himself alone, and not to the human race, and that infants newly born were in the same condition in which Adam was before his sin.” Accordingly, if he would condemn the views objected to by Paulinus with a truthful heart and tongue, according to the judgment of the blessed Pope Innocent, what could remain to him afterwards whence he could contend that there was no sin in infants resulting from the past transgression of the first man, which would be purged in holy baptism by the purification of the new regeneration? But he showed that he had answered deceitfully by the final event, when he withdrew himself from the examination, lest he should be compelled, according to the African rescripts, absolutely to mention and anathematize the very words themselves concerning this question which he wrote in his tractate.

CHAPTER 7

HE SUGGESTS A DILEMMA TO COELESTIUS

What was that which the same pope replied to the bishops of Numidia concerning this very cause, because he had received letters from both Councils, as well from the Council of Carthage as from the Council of Mileve—does he not speak most plainly concerning infants? For these are his words: “For what your Fraternity asserts that they preach, that infants can be endowed with the rewards of eternal life even without the grace of baptism, is excessively silly; for unless they shall eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, they shall not have life in themselves. And they who maintain this as being theirs without regeneration, appear to me to wish to destroy baptism itself, since they proclaim that these have that which we believe is not to be conferred on them without baptism.” What does the ungrateful man say to this, when the Apostolic See had already spared him on his profession, as if he were corrected by its most benignant lenity? What does he say to this? Will infants after the end of their life, even if while they live they are not baptized in Christ, be in eternal life, or will they not? If he should say, “They will,” how then did he answer that he had condemned what had been uttered under his name “according to the judgment of Innocent, of blessed memory”? Lo, Pope Innocent, of blessed memory, says that infants have not life without Christ’s baptism, and without partaking of Christ’s body and blood. If he should say, “They will not,” how then, if they do not receive eternal life, are they certainly by consequence condemned in eternal death if they derive no original sin?

CHAPTER 8

THE CATHOLIC FAITH CONCERNING INFANTS

What do they say to these things who dare also to write their mischievous impieties, and dare to send them to the Eastern bishops? Coelestius is held to have given consent to the letters of the venerable Innocent; the letters themselves of the prelate mentioned are read, and he writes that infants who are not baptized cannot have life. And who will deny that, as a consequence, they have death, if they have not life? Whence, then, in infants, is so wretched a penalty as that, if there is no original fault? How, then, are the Roman clergy charged with prevarication by those forsakers of the faith and opponents of grace under Bishop Zosimus, as if they had had any other view in the subsequent condemnation of Coelestius and Pelagius than that which they had in a former one under Innocent? Because, certainly, since by the letters of the venerable Innocent concerning the abode of infants in eternal death unless they were baptized in Christ, the antiquity of the catholic faith shone forth, assuredly he would rather be a prevaricator from the Roman Church who should deviate from that judgment; and since with God's blessing this did not happen, but that judgment itself was constantly maintained in the repeated condemnation of Coelestius and Pelagius, let them understand that they themselves are in the position wherein they accuse others of being, and let them hereafter be healed of their prevarication from the faith. Because the catholic faith does not say that the nature of man is bad in as far as he was made man at first by the Creator; nor now is what God creates in that nature when He makes men from men, his evil; but what he derives from that sin of the first man.

CHAPTER 9 [V.]

HE REPLIES TO THE CALUMNIES OF THE PELAGIANS

And now we must look to those things which they objected to us in their letters, and briefly mentioned. And to these this is my answer. We do not say that by the sin of Adam free will perished out of the nature of men; but that it avails for sinning in men subjected to the devil; while it is not of avail for good and pious living, unless the will itself of man should be made free by God's grace, and assisted to every good movement of action, of speech, of thought. We say that no one but the Lord God is the maker of those who are born, and that marriage was ordained not by the devil, but by God Himself; yet that all are born under sin on account of the fault of propagation, and that, therefore, all are under the devil until they are born again in Christ. Nor are we maintaining fate under the name of grace, because we say that the grace of God is preceded by no merits of man. If, however, it is agreeable to any to call the will of the Almighty God by the name of fate, while we indeed shun profane novelties of words, we have no use for contending about words.

CHAPTER 10

WHY THE PELAGIANS FALSELY ACCUSE CATHOLICS OF MAINTAINING FATE UNDER THE NAME OF GRACE

But, as I was somewhat more attentively considering for what reason they should think it well to object this to us, that we assert fate under the name of grace, I first of all looked into those words of theirs which follow. For thus they have thought that this was to be objected to us: “Under the name,” say they, “of grace, they so assert fate as to say that unless God inspired unwilling and resisting man with the desire of good, and that good imperfect, he would neither be able to decline from evil nor to lay hold of good.” Then a little after, where they mention what they maintain, I gave heed to what was said by them about this matter. “We confess,” say they, that baptism is necessary for all ages, and that grace, moreover, assists the good purpose of everybody; but yet that it does not infuse the love of virtue into a reluctant one, because there is no acceptance of persons with God.” From these words of theirs, I perceived that for this reason they either think, or wish it to be thought, that we assert fate under the name of grace, because we say that God’s grace is not given in respect of our merits, but according to His own most merciful will, in that He said, “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.” Where, by way of consequence, it is added, “Therefore it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” Here any one might be equally foolish in thinking or saying that the apostle is an assertor of fate. But here these people sufficiently lay themselves open; for when they malign us by saying that we maintain fate under the name of grace, because we say that God’s grace is not given on account of our merits, beyond a doubt they confess that they themselves say that it is given on account of our merits; thus their blindness could not conceal and dissimulate that they believe and think thus, although, when this view was objected to him, Pelagius, in the episcopal judgment of Palestine, with crafty fear condemned it. For it was objected to him from the words of his own disciple Coelestius, indeed, that he himself also was in the habit of saying that God’s grace is given on account of our merits. And he in abhorrence, or in pretended abhorrence, of this, did not delay, with his lips at least, to anathematize it; but, as his later writings indicate, and the assertion of those followers of his makes evident, he kept it in his deceitful heart, until afterwards his boldness might put forth in letters what the cunning of a denier had then hidden for fear. And still the Pelagian bishops do not dread, and at least are not ashamed, to send their letters to the catholic Eastern bishops, in which they charge us with being assertors of fate because we do not say that even grace is given according to our merits; although Pelagius, fearing the Eastern bishops, did not dare to say this, and so was compelled to condemn it.

CHAPTER 11 [VI.]

THE ACCUSATION OF FATE IS THROWN BACK UPON THE ADVERSARIES

But is it true, O children of pride, enemies of God’s grace, new Pelagian heretics, that whoever says that all man’s good deservings are preceded by God’s grace, and that God’s grace is not given to merits, lest it should not be grace if it is not given freely but be repaid as due to those who deserve it, seems to you to assert fate? Do not you yourselves also say, whatever be your purpose, that baptism is necessary for all ages? Have you not written in this very letter of yours that opinion concerning baptism, and that concerning grace, side by side? Why did not baptism, which is given to infants, by that very juxtaposition admonish you what you ought to think concerning grace? For these are your words: “We confess that baptism is necessary for all ages, and that grace, moreover, assists the good purpose of everybody; but yet that it does not infuse the love of virtue into a reluctant one, because there is no acceptance of persons with God.” In all these words of yours, I for the meanwhile say nothing of what you have said concerning grace. But give a reason concerning baptism, why you should say that it is necessary for all ages; say why it is necessary for infants. Assuredly because it confers some good upon them; and that same something is neither small nor moderate, but of great account. For although you deny that they contract the original sin which is remitted in baptism, yet you do not deny that in that laver of regeneration they are adopted from the sons of men unto the sons of God; nay, you even preach this. Tell us, then, how the infants, whoever they are, that are baptized in Christ and have departed from the body, received so lofty a gift as this, and with what preceding merits. If you should say that they have deserved this by the piety of their parents, it will be replied to you, Why is this benefit sometimes denied to the children of pious people and given to the children of the wicked? For sometimes the offspring born from religious people, in tender age, and thus fresh from the womb, is forestalled by death before it can be washed in the laver of regeneration, and the infant born of Christ's foes is baptized in Christ by the mercy of Christians,—the baptized mother bewails her own little one not baptized, and the chaste virgin gathers in to be baptized a foreign offspring, exposed by an unchaste mother. Here, certainly, the merits of parents are wanting, and even by your own confession the merits of the infants themselves are wanting also. For we know that you do not believe this of the human soul, that it has lived somewhere before it inhabited this earthly body, and has done something either of good or of evil for which it might deserve such difference in the flesh. What cause, then, has procured baptism for this infant, and has denied it to that? Do they have fate because they do not have merit? or is there in these things acceptance of persons with God? For you have said both,—first fate, afterwards acceptance of persons,—that, since both must be refuted, there may remain the merit which you wish to introduce against grace. Answer, then, concerning the merits of infants, why some should depart from their bodies baptized, others not baptized, and by the merits of their parents neither possess nor fail of so excellent a gift that they should become sons of God from sons of men, by no deserving of their parents, by no deservings of their own. You are silent, forsooth, and you find yourselves rather in the same position which you object to us. For if when there is no merit you say that consequently there is fate, and on this account wish the merit of man to be understood in the grace of God, lest you should be compelled to confess fate; see, you rather assert a fate in the baptism of infants, since you avow that in them there is no merit. But if, in the case of infants to be baptized, you deny that any merit at all precedes, and yet do not concede that there is a fate, why do you cry out,—when we say that the grace of God is therefore given freely, lest it should not be grace, and is not repaid as if it were due to preceding merits,—that we are assertors of fate?—not perceiving that in the justification of the wicked, as there are no merits because it is God’s grace, so that it is not fate because it is God’s grace, and so that it is not acceptance of persons because it is God’s grace.

CHAPTER 12

WHAT IS MEANT UNDER THE NAME OF FATE

Because they who affirm fate contend that not only actions and events, but, moreover, our very wills themselves depend on the position of the stars at the time in which one is conceived or born; which positions they call “constellations.” But the grace of God stands above not only all stars and all heavens, but, moreover, all angels. In a word, the assertors of fate attribute both men’s good and evil doings and fortunes to fate; but God in the ill fortunes of men follows up their merits with due retribution, while good fortunes He bestows by undeserved grace with a merciful will; doing both the one and the other not according to a temporal conjunction of stars, but according to the eternal and high counsel of His severity and goodness. We see, then, that neither belongs to fate. Here, if you answer that this very benevolence of God, by which He follows not merits, but bestows undeserved benefits with gratuitous bounty, should rather be called “fate,” when the apostle calls this “grace,” saying, “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, lest perchance any one should be lifted up,”—do you not consider, do you not perceive that it is not by us that fate is asserted under the name of grace, but it is rather by you that divine grace is called by the name of fate?

CHAPTER 13 [VII.]

HE REPELS THE CALUMNY CONCERNING THE ACCEPTANCE OF PERSONS

And, moreover, we rightly call it “acceptance of persons” where he who judges, neglecting the merit of the cause concerning which he is judging, favours the one against the other, because he finds something in his person which is worthy of honour or of pity. But if any one have two debtors, and he choose to remit the debt to the one, to require it of the other, he gives to whom he will and defrauds nobody; nor is this to be called “acceptance of persons,” since there is no injustice. The acceptance of persons may seem otherwise to those who are of small understanding, where the lord of the vineyard gave to those labourers who had done work therein for one hour as much as to those who had borne the burden and heat of the day, making them equal in wages in the labour of whom there had been such a difference. But what did he reply to those who murmured against the goodman of the house concerning this, as it were, acceptance of persons? “Friend,” said he, “I do thee no wrong. Hast not thou agreed with me for a denarius? Take what thine is, and go; but I choose to give to this last as to thee. Is it not lawful to me to do what I will? Is thine eye evil because I am good?” Here, forsooth, is the entire justice: “I choose this. To thee,” he says, “I have repaid; on him I have bestowed; nor have I taken anything away from thee to bestow it on him; nor have I either diminished or denied what I owed to you.” “May I not do what I will? Is thine eye evil because I am good?” As, therefore, here there is no acceptance of persons, because one is honoured freely in such wise as that another is not defrauded of what is due to him: so also when, according to the purpose of God, one is called, another is not called, a gratuitous benefit is bestowed on the one that is called, of which benefit the calling itself is the beginning,—an evil is repaid to him that is not called, because all are guilty, from the fact that by one man sin entered into the world. And in that parable of the labourers, indeed, where they received one denarius who laboured for one hour, as well as those who laboured twelve times as long,—though assuredly these latter, according to human reasonings, however vain, ought in proportion to the amount of their labour to have received twelve denarii,—both were put on an equality in respect of benefit, not some delivered and others condemned; because even those who laboured more had it from the goodman of the house himself, both that they were so called as to come, and that they were so fed as to have no want. But where it is said, “Therefore, on whom He will He has mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth,” who “maketh one vessel to honour and another to dishonour” it is given indeed without deserving, and freely, because he is of the same mass to whom it is not given; but evil is deservedly and of debt repaid, since in the mass of perdition evil is not repaid to the evil unjustly. And to him to whom it is repaid it is evil, because it is his punishment; while to Him by whom it is repaid it is good, because it is His right to do it. Nor is there any acceptance of persons in the case of two debtors equally guilty, if to the one is remitted and from the other is claimed that which is equally owed by both.

CHAPTER 14

HE ILLUSTRATES HIS ARGUMENT BY AN EXAMPLE

But that what I am saying may be made clear by the exhibition of an example, let us suppose certain twins, born of a certain harlot, and exposed that they might be taken up by others. One of them has expired without baptism; the other is baptized. What can we say was in this case the “fate” or the “fortune,” which are here absolutely nothing? What “acceptance of persons,” when with God there is none, even if there could be any such thing in these cases, seeing that they certainly had nothing for which the one could be preferred to the other, and no merits of their own,—whether good, for which the one might deserve to be baptized; or evil, for which the other might deserve to die without baptism? Were there any merits in their parents, when the father was a fornicator, the mother a harlot? But of whatever kind those merits were, there were certainly not any that were different in those who died in such different conditions, but all were common to both. If, then, neither fate, since no stars made them to differ; nor fortune, since no fortuitous accidents produce these things; nor the diversity of persons nor of merits have done this; what remains, so far as it refers to the baptized child, save the grace of God, which is given freely to vessels made unto honour; but, as it refers to the unbaptized child, the wrath of God, which is repaid to the vessels made for dishonour in respect of the deservings of the lump itself? But in that one which is baptized we constrain you to confess the grace of God, and convince you that no merit of its own preceded; but as to that one which died without baptism, why that sacrament should have been wanting to it, which even you confess to be needful for all ages, and what in that manner may have been punished in him, it is for you to see who will not have it that there is any original sin.

CHAPTER 15

THE APOSTLE MEETS THE QUESTION BY LEAVING IT UNSOLVED

Since in the case of those two twins we have without a doubt one and the same case, the difficulty of the question why the one died in one way, and the other in another, is solved by the apostle as it were by not solving it; for, when he had proposed something of the same kind about two twins, seeing that it was said (not of works, since they had not as yet done anything either of good or of evil, but of Him that calleth), “The older shall serve the younger,” and, “Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated;” and he had prolonged the horror of this deep thing even to the point of saying, “Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardeneth:” he perceived at once what the trouble was, and opposed to himself the words of a gainsayer which he was to check by apostolical authority. For he says, “You say, then, unto me, “Why doth He yet find fault? For who has resisted His will?” And to him who says this he answered, “O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Doth the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power of the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?” Then, following on, he opened up this great and hidden secret as far as he judged it fit that it should be disclosed to men, saying, “But if God, willing to show His wrath and to demonstrate His power, endured in much patience the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, even that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory.” This is not only the assistance, but, moreover, the proof of God’s grace—the assistance, namely, in the vessels of mercy, but the proof in the vessels of wrath; for in these He shows His anger and makes known His power, because His goodness is so mighty that He even uses the evil well; and in those He makes known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, because what the justice of a punisher requires from the vessels of wrath, the grace of the Deliverer remits to the vessels of mercy. Nor would the kindness which is bestowed on some freely appear, unless to other equally guilty and from the same mass God showed what was really due to both, and condemned them with a righteous judgment. “For who maketh thee to differ?” says the same apostle to a man as it were boasting concerning himself and his own benefits. “For who maketh thee to differ” from the vessels of wrath; of course, from the mass of perdition which has sent all by one into damnation? “Who maketh thee to differ?” And as if he had answered, “My faith maketh me to differ, —my purpose, my merit,”—he says, “For what hast thou which thou hast not received? But if thou hast received it, why dost thou boast as if thou receivedst it not?”—that is, as if that by which thou art made to differ were of thine own. Therefore He maketh thee to differ who bestows that whence thou art made to differ, by removing the penalty that is due, by conferring the grace which is not due. He maketh to differ, who, when the darkness was upon the face of the abyss, said, “Let there be light; and there was light, and divided”—that is, made to differ—”between the light and the darkness.” For when there was only darkness, He did not find what He should make to differ; but by making the light, He made to differ; so that it may be said to the justified wicked, “For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.” And thus he who glories must glory not in himself, but in the Lord. He makes to differ who—of those who are not yet born, and who have not yet done any good or evil, that His purpose, according to the election, might stand not of works, but of Himself that calleth—said, The older shall serve the younger, and commending that very purpose afterwards by the mouth of the prophet, said, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” Because he said “the election,” and in this God does not find made by another what He may choose, but Himself makes what He may find; just as it is written of the remnant of Israel: “There is made a remnant by the election of grace; but if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace.” On which account you are certainly foolish who, when the Truth declares, “Not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was said,” say that Jacob was loved on account of future works which God foreknew that he would do, and thus contradict the apostle when he says, “Not of works;” as if he could not have said, “Not of present, but of future works.” But he says, “Not of works,” that He might commend grace; “but if of grace, now is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace.” For grace, not due, but free, precedes, that by it good works may be done; but if good works should precede, grace should be repaid, as it were, to works, and thus grace should be no more grace.

CHAPTER 16

THE PELAGIANS ARE REFUTED BY THE CASE OF THE TWIN INFANTS DYING, THE ONE AFTER, AND THE OTHER WITHOUT, THE GRACE OF BAPTISM

But that every lurking-place of your darkness may be taken away from you, I have proposed to you the case of such twins as were not assisted by the merits of their parents, and both died in the very beginning of infancy, the one baptized, the other without baptism; lest you should say that God foreknew their future works, as you say of Jacob and Esau, in opposition to the apostle. For how did He foreknow that those things should be, which, in those infants who were to die in infancy, He rather foreknew as not to be, since His foreknowledge cannot be deceived? Or what does it profit those who are taken away from this life that wickedness may not change their understanding, nor deceit beguile their soul, if even the sin which has not been done, said, or thought, is thus punished as if it had been committed? Because, if it is most absurd, silly, and senseless, that certain men should have to be condemned for those sins, the guilt of which they could neither derive from their parents, as you say, nor could incur themselves, either by committing them, or even by conceiving of them, there comes back to you that unbaptized twin brother of the baptized one, and silently asks you for what reason he was made to differ from his brother in respect of happiness,—why he was punished with that infelicity, so that, while his brother was adopted into a child of God, he himself should not receive that sacrament which, as you confess, is necessary for every age, if, even as there is not a fortune or a fate, or an acceptance of persons with God, so there is no gift of grace without merits, and no original sin. To this dumb child you absolutely submit your tongue and voice; to this witness who says nothing,—you have nothing at all to say!

CHAPTER 17 [VIII.]

EVEN THE DESIRE OF AN IMPERFECT GOOD IS A GIFT OF GRACE, OTHERWISE GRACE WOULD BE GIVEN ACCORDING TO MERITS

Let us now see, as we can, the nature of this thing which they will have to precede in man, in order that he may be regarded as worthy of the assistance of grace, and to the merit of which in him grace is not given as if unearned, but is rendered as due; and thus grace is no more grace. Let us see, however, what this is. “Under the name,” say they, “of grace, they so assert fate as to say that unless God should have inspired the desire for good, and that, imperfect good, into unwilling and resisting man, he would neither be able to decline from evil nor to grasp after good.” I have already shown what empty things they speak about fate and grace. Now the question which I ought to consider is this, whether God inspires the desire of good into unwilling and resisting man, that he may be no longer unwilling, no longer resisting, but consenting to the good and willing the good. For those men will have it that the desire of good in man begins from man himself; that the merit of this beginning is, moreover, attended with the grace of completion—if, at least, they will allow so much as even this. For Pelagius says that what is good is “more easily” fulfilled if grace assists. By which addition—that is, by adding “more easily”—he certainly signifies that he is of the opinion that, even if the aid of grace should be wanting, yet good might be accomplished, although with greater difficulty, by free will. But let me prescribe to my present opponents what they should think in this matter, without speaking of the author of this heresy himself. Let us allow them, with their free will, to be free even from Pelagius himself, and rather give heed to their words which they have written in this letter to which I am replying.

CHAPTER 18

THE DESIRE OF GOOD IS GOD’S GIFT

For they have thought that it was to be objected to us that we say “that God inspires into unwilling and resisting man the desire,” not of any very great good, but “even of imperfect good.” Possibly, then, they themselves are keeping open, in some sense at least, a place for grace, as thinking that man may have the desire of good without grace, but only of imperfect good; while of perfect, he could not easily have the desire with grace, but except with it they could not have it at all. Truly, even in this way, too, they are saying that God’s grace is given according to our merits, which Pelagius, in the ecclesiastical meeting in the East, condemned, in the fear of being condemned. For if without God’s grace the desire of good begins with ourselves, merit itself will have begun—to which, as if of debt, comes the assistance of grace; and thus God’s grace will not be bestowed freely, but will be given according to our merit. But that he might furnish a reply to the future Pelagius, the Lord does not say, “Without me it is with difficulty that you can do anything,” but He says, “Without me ye can do nothing.” And, that He might also furnish an answer to these future heretics, in that very same evangelical saying He does not say, “Without me you can perfect nothing,” but “do” nothing. For if He had said “perfect,” they might say that God’s aid is necessary not for beginning good, which is of ourselves, but for perfecting it. But let them hear also the apostle. For when the Lord says, “Without me ye can do nothing,” in this one word He comprehends both the beginning and the ending. The apostle, indeed, as if he were an expounder of the Lord’s saying, distinguished both very clearly when he says, “Because He who hath begun a good work in you will perfect it even to the day of Christ Jesus.” But in the Holy Scriptures, in the writings of the same apostle, we find more about that of which we are speaking. For we are now speaking of the desire of good, and if they will have this to begin of ourselves and to be perfected by God, let them see what they can answer to the apostle when he says, “Not that we are sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.” “To think anything,” he says,—he certainly means, “to think anything good;” but is it less to think than to desire. Because we think all that we desire, but we do not desire all that we think; because sometimes also we think what we do not desire. Since, then, it is a smaller thing to think than to desire,—for a man may think good which he does not yet desire, and by advancing may afterwards desire what before without desire he thought of,—how are we not sufficient as of ourselves to that which is less, that is, to the thinking of something good, but our sufficiency is of God; while to that which is greater,—that is, to the desire of some good thing—without the divine help, we are sufficient of free will? For what the apostle says here is not, “Not that we are sufficient as of ourselves to think that which is perfect;” but he says, “to think anything,” to which “nothing” is the contrary. And this is the meaning of what the Lord says, “Without me ye can do nothing.”

CHAPTER 19 [IX.]

HE INTERPRETS THE SCRIPTURES WHICH THE PELAGIANS MAKE ILL USE OF

But assuredly, as to what is written, “The preparation of the heart is man’s part, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord,” they are misled by an imperfect understanding, so as to think that to prepare the heart—that is, to begin good—pertains to man without the aid of God’s grace. Be it far from the children of promise thus to understand it! As if, when they heard the Lord saying, “Without me ye can do nothing,” they would convict Him by saying, “Behold without Thee we can prepare the heart;” or when they heard from Paul the apostle, “Not that we are sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God," as if they would also convict him, saying, "Behold, we are sufficient of ourselves to prepare our heart, and thus also to think some good thing; for who can without good thought prepare his heart for good?" Be it far from any thus to understand the passage, except the proud maintainers of free will and forsakers of the catholic faith! Therefore, since it is written, "It is man's part to prepare the heart, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord," it is that man prepares his heart, not, however, without the aid of God, who so touches the heart that man prepares the heart. But in the answer of the tongue—that is, in that which the divine tongue answers to the prepared heart—man has no part; but the whole is from the Lord God.

CHAPTER 20

GOD'S AGENCY IS NEEDFUL EVEN IN MAN'S DOINGS

For as it is said, "It is man's part to prepare his heart, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord;" so also is it said, "Open thy mouth, and I will fill it." For although, save by His assistance without whom we can do nothing, we cannot open our mouth, yet we open it by His aid and by our own agency, while the Lord fills it without our agency. For what is to prepare the heart and to open the mouth, but to prepare the will? And yet in the same scriptures is read, "The will is prepared by the Lord," and, "Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise." So God admonishes us to prepare our will in what we read," It is man's part to prepare his heart;" and yet, that man may do this, God helps him, because the will is prepared by the Lord. And," Open thy mouth." This He so says by way of command, as that nobody can do this unless it is done by His aid, to whom it is said, "Thou shalt open my lips." Are any of these men so foolish as to contend that the mouth is one thing, the lips another; and to say with marvellous triviality that man opens his own mouth, and God opens man's lips? And yet God restrains them from even that absurdity where He says to Moses His servant, "I will open thy mouth, and I will instruct thee what thou oughtest to speak." In that clause, therefore, where He says, "Open thy mouth and I will fill it," it seems, as it were, that one of them pertains to man, the other to God. But in this, where it is said, "I will open thy mouth and will instruct thee," both belong to God. Why is this, except that in one of these cases He co-operates with man as the agent, in the other He does it alone?

CHAPTER 21

MAN DOES NO GOOD THING WHICH GOD DOES NOT CAUSE HIM TO DO

Wherefore God does many good things in man which man does not do; but man does none which God does not cause man to do. Accordingly, there would be no desire of good in man from the Lord if it were not a good; but if it is a good, we have it not save from Him who is supremely and incommunicably good. For what is the desire for good but love, of which John the apostle speaks without any ambiguity, and says, “Love is of God”? Nor is its beginning of ourselves, and its perfection of God; but if love is of God, we have the whole of it from God. May God by all means turn away this folly of making ourselves first in His gifts, Himself last,—because “His mercy shall prevent me.” And it is He to whom is faithfully and truthfully sung, “For Thou hast prevented him with the blessings of sweetness.” And what is here more fitly understood than that very desire of good of which we are speaking? For good begins then to be longed for when it has begun to grow sweet. But when good is done by the fear of penalty, not by the love of righteousness, good is not yet well done. Nor is that done in the heart which seems to be done in the act when a man would rather not do it if he could evade it with impunity. Therefore the “blessing of sweetness” is God’s grace, by which is caused in us that what He prescribes to us delights us, and we desire it,—that is, we love it; in which if God does not precede us, not only is it not perfected, but it is not even begun, from us. For, if without Him we are able to do nothing actually, we are able neither to begin nor to perfect,—because to begin, it is said “His mercy shall prevent me;” to finish, it is said, “His mercy shall follow me.”

CHAPTER 22 [X.]

ACCORDING TO WHOSE PURPOSE THE ELECT ARE CALLED

Why, then, is it that, in what follows, where they mention what they themselves think, they say they confess “That grace also assists the good purpose of every one, but that yet it does not infuse the desire of virtue into a reluctant heart”? Because they so say this as if man of himself, without God’s assistance, has a good purpose and a desire of virtue; and this precedent merit is worthy of being assisted by the subsequent grace of God. For they think, perchance, that the apostle thus said, “For we know that He worketh all things for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to the purpose,” so as to wish the purpose of man to be understood, which purpose, as a good merit, the mercy of the God that calleth might follow; being ignorant that it is said, “Who are called according to the purpose,” so that there may be understood the purpose of God, not man, whereby those whom He foreknew and predestinated as conformed to the image of His Son, He elected before the foundation of the world. For not all the called are called according to purpose, since “many are called, few are chosen.” They, therefore, are called according to the purpose, who were elected before the foundation of the world. Of this purpose of God, that also was said which I have already mentioned concerning the twins Esau and Jacob, “That according to the election the purpose of God might remain, not of works, but of Him that calleth; it was said, that the elder shall serve the younger.” This purpose of God is also mentioned in that place where, writing to Timothy, he says, “Labour with the gospel according to the power of God, who saves us and calls us with this holy calling; not according to our works, but according to His purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the eternal ages, but is now made manifest by the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ.” This, then, is the purpose of God, whereof it is said, “He worketh together all things for good for those who are called according to the purpose.” But subsequent grace indeed assists man’s good purpose, but the purpose would not itself exist if grace did not precede. The desire of man, also, which is called good, although in beginning to exist it is aided by grace, yet does not begin without grace, but is inspired by Him of whom the apostle says, “But thanks be to God, who has given the same desire for you in the heart of Titus.” If God gives desire that every one may have it for others, who else will give it that a man may have it for himself?

CHAPTER 23

NOTHING IS COMMANDED TO MAN WHICH IS NOT GIVEN BY GOD

Since these things are so, I see that nothing is commanded to man by the Lord in the Holy Scriptures, for the sake of trying his free will, which is not found either to begin by His goodness, or to be asked in order to demonstrate the aid of grace; nor does man at all begin to be changed by the beginning of faith from evil to good, unless the unbought and gratuitous mercy of God effects this in him. Of which one recalling his thought, as we read in the Psalms, says, “Shall God forget to be gracious? or will He restrain His mercies in His anger? And I said, Now have I begun; this change is of the right hand of the Most High.” When, therefore, he had said, “Now have I begun,” he does not say, “This change is of my will,” but “of the right hand of the Most High.” So, therefore, let God’s grace be thought of, that from the beginning of his good changing, even to the end of his completion, he who glorieth may glory in the Lord; because, as no one can perfect good without the Lord, so no one can begin it without the Lord. But let this be the end of this book, that the attention of the reader may be refreshed and strengthened for what follows.

Book III

Augustin goes on to refute other matters which are calumniously objected by the Pelagians in the same letter sent to Thessalonica; and expounds, in opposition to their heresy, what those who are truly Catholic say concerning the utility of the law; what they teach of the effect and virtue of baptism; what of the discrepancy between the two Testaments, the Old and the New; what concerning the righteousness and perfection of the prophets and apostles; what of the appellation of sin in Christ, when He is said in the likeness of sinful flesh concerning sin to have condemned sin, or to have become sin; and finally, what they profess concerning the fulfilment of the commandments in the future life.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

STATEMENT

There still follow things which they calumniously object to us; they do not yet begin to work out those things which they themselves think. But lest the prolixity of these writings should be an offence, I have divided those matters which they object into two Books,—the former of which being completed, which is the Second Book of this entire work, I am here commencing the other, and joining it as the Third to the First and Second.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

THE MISREPRESENTATION OF THE PELAGIANS CONCERNING THE USE OF THE OLD LAW

They declare "that we say that the law of the Old Testament was given not for the end that it might justify the obedient, but rather that it might become the cause of greater sin." Certainly, they do not understand what we say concerning the law; because we say what the apostle says, whom they do not understand. For who can say that they are not justified who are obedient to the law, when, unless they were justified, they could not be obedient? But we say, that by the law is effected that what God wills to be done is heard, but that by grace is effected that the law is obeyed. “For not the hearers of the law,” says the apostle, “are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.” Therefore the law makes hearers of righteousness, grace makes doers. “For what was impossible to the law,” says the same apostle, “in that it was weak through the flesh, God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.” This is what we say;—let them pray that they may one day understand it, and not dispute so as never to understand it. For it is impossible that the law should be fulfilled by the flesh, that is, by carnal presumption, in which the proud, who are ignorant of the righteousness of God,—that is, which is of God to man, that he may be righteous,—and desirous of establishing their own righteousness,—as if by their own will, unassisted from above, the law could be fulfilled,—are not subjected to the righteousness of God. Therefore the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them who walk not according to the flesh—that is, according to man, ignorant of the righteousness of God and desirous of establishing his own—but walk according to the Spirit. But who walks according to the Spirit, except whosoever is led by the Spirit of God? “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.” Therefore “the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive.” And the letter is not evil because it killeth; but it convicts the wicked of transgression. “For the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good. Was, then,” says he, “that which is good made death unto me? By no means; but sin, that it might appear sin, worked death in me by that which is good, that it might become above measure a sinner or a sin by the commandment.” This is what is the meaning of “the letter killeth.” “For the sting of death is sin, but the strength of sin is the law;” because by the prohibition it increases the desires of sin, and thence slays a man unless grace by coming to his assistance makes him alive.

CHAPTER 3

SCRIPTURAL CONFIRMATION OF THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

This is what we say; this is that about which they object to us that we say “that the law was so given as to be a cause of greater sin.” They do not hear the apostle saying, “For the law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression;” and, “The law was added for the sake of transgression until the seed should come to whom the promise was made;” and, “If there had been a law given which could have given life, righteousness should altogether have been by the law; but the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” Hence it is that the Old Testament, from the Mount Sinai, where the law was given, gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. “Now we,” says he, “are not children of the bondmaid but of the freewoman.” Therefore they are not children of the freewoman who have accepted the law of the letter, whereby they can be shown to be not only sinners, but moreover transgressors; but they who have received the Spirit of grace, whereby the law itself, holy and just and good, may be fulfilled. This is what we say: let them attend and not contend; let them seek enlightenment and not bring false accusations.

CHAPTER 4 [III.]

MISREPRESENTATION CONCERNING THE EFFECT OF BAPTISM

“They assert,” say they, “that baptism, moreover, does not make men new—that is, does not give complete remission of sins; but they contend that they are partly made children of God and partly remain children of the world, that is, of the devil.” They deceive; they lay traps; they shuffle; we do not say this. For we say that all men who are children of the devil are also children of the world; but not that all children of the world are also children of the devil. Far be it from us to say that the holy fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and others of this kind, were children of the devil when they were begetting in marriage, and those believers who until now and still hereafter continue to beget. And yet we cannot contradict the Lord when He says, “The children of this world marry and give in marriage.” Some, therefore, are children of this world, and yet are not children of the devil. For although the devil is the author and source of all sins, yet it is not every sin that makes children of the devil; for the children of God also sin, since if they say they have no sins they deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them. But they sin in virtue of that condition by which they are still children of this world; but by that grace wherewith they are the children of God they certainly sin not, because every one that is born of God sinneth not. But unbelief makes children of the devil; and unbelief is specially called sin, as if it were the only one, if it is not expressed what is the nature of the sin. As when the "apostle" is spoken of, if it be not expressed what apostle, none is understood but Paul; because he is better known by his many epistles, and he laboured more than they all. For which reason, in what the Lord said of the Holy Spirit, "He shall convict the world of sin," He meant unbelief to be understood; for He said this when He was explaining, "Of sin because they believed not on me," and when He says, "If I had not come and spoken to them, they should not have sin." For He meant not that before they had no sin, but He wished to indicate that very want of faith by which they did not believe Him even when He was present to them and speaking to them; since they belonged to him of whom the apostle says, "According to the prince of the power of the air, who now worketh in the children of unbelief." Therefore they in whom there is not faith are the children of the devil, because they have not in the inner man any reason why there should be forgiven them whatever is committed either by human infirmity, or by ignorance, or by any evil will whatever. But those are the children of God who certainly, if they should "say that they have no sin, deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them, but immediately" (as it continues) "when they confess their sins" (which the children of the devil do not do, or do not do according to the faith which is peculiar to the children of God), "He is faithful and just to forgive them their sins, and to cleanse them from all unrighteousness." And in order that what we say may be more fully understood, let Jesus Himself be heard, who certainly was speaking to the children of God when He said: "And if ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him." For if these were not the children of God, He would not say to them, "Your Father which is in heaven." And yet He says that they are evil, and that they know how to give good gifts to their children. Are they, then, evil in that they are the children of God? Away with the thought! But they are thence evil because they are still the children of this world, although now made children of God by the pledge of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 5

BAPTISM PUTS AWAY ALL SINS, BUT IT DOES NOT AT ONCE HEAL ALL INFIRMITIES

Baptism, therefore, washes away indeed all sins—absolutely all sins, whether of deeds or words or thoughts, whether original or added, whether such as are committed in ignorance or allowed in knowledge; but it does not take away the weakness which the regenerate man resists when he fights the good fight, but to which he consents when as man he is overtaken in any fault; on account of the former, rejoicing with thanksgiving, but on account of the latter, groaning in the utterance of prayers. On account of the former, saying, “What shall I render to the Lord for all that He has given me?” On account of the latter, saying, “Forgive us our debts.” On account of the former, saying, “I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength.” On account of the latter, saying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord; for I am weak.” On account of the former, saying, “Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord; for He shall pluck my feet out of the net.” On account of the latter, saying, “Mine eye is troubled with wrath.” And there are innumerable passages with which the divine writings are filled, which alternately, either in exultation over God’s benefits or in lamentation over our own evils, are uttered by children of God by faith as long as they are still children of this world in respect of the weakness of this life; whom, nevertheless, God distinguishes from the children of the devil, not only by the laver of regeneration, but moreover by the righteousness of that faith which worketh by love, because the just lives by faith. But this weakness with which we contend, with alternating failure and progress, even to the death of the body, and which is of great importance as to what it can overcome in us, shall be consumed by another regeneration, of which the Lord says, “In the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones,” etc. Certainly in this passage He without doubt calls the last resurrection the regeneration, which Paul the Apostle also calls both the adoption and the redemption, where he says, “But even we ourselves, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, ourselves also groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption, of our body.” Have we not been regenerated, adopted, and redeemed by the holy washing? And yet there remains a regeneration, an adoption, a redemption, which we ought now patiently to be waiting for as to come in the end, that we may then be in no degree any longer children of this world. Whosoever, then, takes away from baptism that which we only receive by its means, corrupts the faith; but whosoever attributes to it now that which we shall receive by its means indeed, but yet hereafter, cuts off hope. For if any one should ask of me whether we have been saved by baptism, I shall not be able to deny it, since the apostle says, “He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” But if he should ask whether by the same washing He has already absolutely in every way saved us, I shall answer: It is not so. Because the same apostle also says, “For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, we with patience wait for it.” Therefore the salvation of man is effected in baptism, because whatever sin he has derived from his parents is remitted, or whatever, moreover, he himself has sinned on his own account before baptism; but his salvation will hereafter be such that he cannot sin at all.

CHAPTER 6 [IV.]

THE CALUMNY CONCERNING THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE RIGHTEOUS MEN OF OLD

Now if these things are so, out of these things are rebutted those which they subsequently object to us. For what catholic would say that which they charge us with saying, “that the Holy Spirit was not the assister of virtue in the old testament,” unless when we so understand “the old testament” in the manner in which the apostle spoke of it as “gendering from Mount Sinai into bondage”? But because in it was prefigured the new testament, the men of God who at that time understood this according to the ordering of the times, were indeed the stewards and bearers of the old testament, but are shown to be the heirs of the new. Shall we deny that he belongs to the new testament who says, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me”? or he who says, “He hath set my feet upon a rock, and directed my goings; and he hath put a new song in my mouth, even a hymn to our God”? or that father of the faithful before the old testament which is from Mount Sinai, of whom the apostle says, “Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; yet even a man’s testament, when it is confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto. To Abraham and to his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one; and to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say," said he, "that the testament confirmed by God, the law which was made four hundred and thirty years after, does not weaken, so as to make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise."

CHAPTER 7

THE NEW TESTAMENT IS MORE ANCIENT THAN THE OLD; BUT IT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY REVEALED

Here, certainly, if we ask whether this testament, which, he says, being confirmed by God was not weakened by the law, which was made four hundred and thirty years after, is to be understood as the new or the old one, who can hesitate to answer "the new, but hidden in the prophetic shadows until the time should come wherein it should be revealed in Christ"? For if we should say the old, what will that be which genders from Mount Sinai to bondage? For there was made the law four hundred and thirty years after, by which law he asserts that this testament of the promise of Abraham could not be weakened; and he will have this which was made by Abraham to pertain rather to us, whom he will have to be children of the freewoman, not of the bondwoman, heirs by the promise, not by the law, when he says, "For if the inheritance be by the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise." So that, because the law was made four hundred and thirty years after, it might enter that the offence might abound; since by sin the pride of man presuming on his own righteousness is convinced of transgression, and where sin abounded grace much more abounded by the faith of the now humble man failing in the law and taking refuge in God's mercy. Therefore, when he had said, "For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no longer of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise," as if it might be said to him, "Why then was the law made afterwards? "he added and said, "What then is the law?" To which interrogation he immediately replied, "It was added because of transgression, until the seed should come to which the promise was made." This he says again, thus: "For if they who are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of none effect: because the law worketh wrath: for where there is no law, there is no transgression.” What he says in the former testimony: “For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise,” this he says in the latter: “For if they who are of the law be heirs, faith is made void; and the promise is made of none effect;” sufficiently showing that to our faith (which certainly is of the new testament) belongs what God gave to Abraham by promise. And what he says in the former testimony, “What then is the law?” and answered, “It was added for the sake of transgression,” this he instantly added in the latter testimony, “For the law worketh wrath: for where there is no law, there is no transgression.”

CHAPTER 8

ALL RIGHTEOUS MEN BEFORE AND AFTER ABRAHAM ARE CHILDREN OF THE PROMISE AND OF GRACE

Whether, then, Abraham, or righteous men before him or after him, even to Moses himself, by whom was given the testament gendering to bondage from Mount Sinai, or the rest of the prophets after him, and the holy men of God till John the Baptist, they are all children of the promise and of grace according to Isaac the son of the freewoman,—not of the law, but of the promise, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Far be it from us to deny that righteous Noah and the righteous men of the earlier times, and whoever from that time till the time of Abraham could be righteous, either manifestly or hiddenly, belong to the Jerusalem which is above, who is our mother, although they are found to be earlier in time than Sarah, who bore the prophecy and figure of the free mother herself. How much more evidently, then, after Abraham, to whom that promise was declared, that he should be called the father of many nations, must all, whoever have pleased God, be esteemed the children of the promise! For from Abraham, and the righteous men who followed him, the generation is not found more true, but the prophecy more plain.

CHAPTER 9

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE OLD COVENANT

But those belong to the old testament, “which gendereth from Mount Sinai to bondage,” which is Agar, who, when they have received a law which is holy and just and good, think that the letter can suffice them for life; and do not seek the divine mercy, so as they may become doers of the law, but, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and wishing to establish their own righteousness, are not subject to the righteousness of God. Of this kind was that multitude which murmured against God in the wilderness, and made an idol; and that multitude which even in the very land of promise committed fornication after strange gods. But this multitude, even in the old testament itself, was strongly rebuked. They, moreover, whoever they were at that time who followed after those earthly promises alone which God promises there, and who were ignorant of that which those promises signify under the new testament, and who kept God’s commandments with the desire of gaining and with the fear of losing those promises,—certainly did not observe them, but only seemed to themselves to observe. For there was no faith in them that worked by love, but earthly cupidity and carnal fear. But he who thus fulfils the commandments beyond a doubt fulfils them unwillingly, and then does not do them in his heart; for he would rather not do them at all, if in respect of those things which he desires and fears he might be allowed to neglect them with impunity. And thus, in the will itself within him, he is guilty; and it is here that God, who gives the command, looks. Such were the children of the earthly Jerusalem, concerning which the apostle says, “For she is in bondage with her children,” and belongs to the old testament “which gendereth to bondage from Mount Sinai, which is Agar.” Of that same kind were they who crucified the Lord, and continued in the same unbelief. Thence there are still their children in the great multitude of the Jews, although now the new testament as it was prophesied is made plain and confirmed by the blood of Christ; and the gospel is made known from the river where He was baptized and began His teachings, even to the ends of the earth. And these Jews, according to the prophecies which they read, are dispersed everywhere over all the earth, that even from their writings may not be wanting a testimony to Christian truth.

CHAPTER 10

THE OLD LAW ALSO GIVEN BY GOD

And it is for this reason that God made the old testament, because it pleased God to veil the heavenly promises in earthly promises, as if established in reward, until the fulness of time; and to give to a people which longed for earthly blessings, and therefore had a hard heart, a law, which, although spiritual, was yet written on tables of stone. Because, with the exception of the sacraments of the old books, which were only enjoined for the sake of their significance (although in them also, since they are to be spiritually understood, the law is rightly called spiritual), the other matters certainly which pertain to piety and to good living must not be referred by any interpretation to some significancy, but are to be done absolutely as they are spoken. Assuredly no one will doubt that that law of God was necessary not alone for that people at that time, but also is now necessary for us for the right ordering of our life. For if Christ took away from us that very heavy yoke of many observances, so that we are not circumcised according to the flesh, we do not immolate victims of the cattle, we do not rest even from necessary works on the Sabbath, retaining the seventh in the revolution of the days, and other things of this kind; but keep them as spiritually understood, and, the symbolizing shadows being removed, are watchful in the light of those things which are signified by them; shall we therefore say, that when it is written that whoever finds another man’s property of any kind that has been lost, should return it to him who has lost it, it does not pertain to us? and many other like things whereby people learn to live piously and uprightly? and especially the Decalogue itself, which is contained in those two tables of stone, apart from the carnal observance of the Sabbath, which signifies spiritual sanctification and rest? For who can say that Christians ought not to be observant to serve the one God with religious obedience, not to worship an idol, not to take the name of the Lord in vain, to honour one’s parents, not to commit adulteries, murders, thefts, false witness, not to covet another man’s wife, or anything at all that belongs to another man? Who is so impious as to say that he does not keep those precepts of the law because he is a Christian, and is established not under the law, but under grace?

CHAPTER 11

DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CHILDREN OF THE OLD AND OF THE NEW TESTAMENTS

But there is plainly this great difference, that they who are established under the law, whom the letter killeth, do these things either with the desire of gaining, or with the fear of losing earthly happiness; and that thus they do not truly do them, since fleshly desire, by which sin is rather bartered or increased, is not healed by desire of another kind. These pertain to the old testament, which genders to bondage; because carnal fear and desire make them servants, gospel faith and hope and love do not make them children. But they who are placed under grace, whom the Spirit quickens, do these things of faith which worketh by love in the hope of good things, not carnal but spiritual, not earthly but heavenly, not temporal but eternal; especially believing on the Mediator, by whom they do not doubt but that a Spirit of grace is ministered to them, so that they may do these things well, and that they may be pardoned when they sin. These pertain to the new testament, are the children of promise, and are regenerated by God the Father and a free mother. Of this kind were all the righteous men of old, and Moses himself, the minister of the old testament, the heir of the new,—because of the faith whereby we live, of one and the same they lived, believing the incarnation, passion, and resurrection of Christ as future, which we believe as already accomplished,—even until John the Baptist himself, as it were a certain limit of the old dispensation, who, signifying that the Mediator Himself would come, not with any shadow of the future or allegorical intimation, or with any prophetical announcement, but pointing Him out with his finger, said: “Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world.” As if saying, Whom many righteous men have desired to see, on whom, as about to come, they have believed from the beginning of the human race itself, concerning whom the promises were spoken to Abraham, of whom Moses wrote, of whom the law and the prophets are witnesses: “Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.” From this John and afterwards, all those things concerning Christ began to become past or present, which by all the righteous men of the previous time were believed, hoped for, desired, as future. Therefore the faith is the same as well in those who, although not yet in name, were in fact previously Christians, as in those who not only are so but are also called so; and in both there is the same grace by the Holy Spirit. Whence says the apostle: “We having the same Spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.”

CHAPTER 12

THE OLD TESTAMENT IS PROPERLY ONE THING—THE OLD INSTRUMENT ANOTHER

Therefore, by a custom of speech already prevailing, in one way the law and all the prophets who prophesied until John are called the “Old Testament;” although this is more definitely called the “Old Instrument” rather than the “Old Testament;” but this name is used in another way by the apostolical authority, whether expressly or impliedly. For the apostle is express when he says, “Until this day, as long as Moses is read, remaineth the same veil in the reading of the old testament; because it is not revealed, because it is made of no effect in Christ.” For thus certainly the old testament referred to the ministry of Moses. Moreover, he says, “That we should serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter,” signifying that same testament under the name of the letter. In another place also, “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive.” And here, by the mention of the new, he certainly meant the former to be understood as the old. But much more evidently, although he did not say either old or new, he distinguished the two testaments and the two sons of Abraham, the one of the bondwoman, the other of the free, as I have above mentioned. For what can be more express than his saying, “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, have ye not heard the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are in allegory; for these are the two testaments; the one in the Mount Sinai, gendering to bondage, which is Agar. For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia, which is associated with Jerusalem which now is, for it is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother?” What is more clear, what more certain, what more remote from all obscurity and ambiguity to the children of the promise? And a little after, “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.” Also a little after, “But we, brethren, are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free,” with the liberty with which Christ has made us free. Let us, therefore, choose whether to call the righteous men of old the children of the bondwoman or of the free. Be it far from us to say, of the bondwoman; therefore if of the free, they pertain to the new testament in the Holy Spirit, whom, as making alive, the apostle opposes to the killing letter. For on what ground do they not belong to the grace of the new testament, from whose words and looks we convict and rebut such most frantic and ungrateful enemies of the same grace as these?

CHAPTER 13

WHY ONE OF THE COVENANTS IS CALLED OLD, THE OTHER NEW

But some one will say, “In what way is that called the old which was given by Moses four hundred and thirty years after; and that called the new which was given so many years before to Abraham?” Let him who on this subject is disturbed, not litigiously but earnestly, first understand that when from its earlier time one is called “old,” and from its posterior time the other “new,” it is the revelation of them that is considered in their names, not their institution. Because the old testament was revealed through Moses, by whom the holy and just and good law was given, whereby should be brought about not the doing away but the knowledge of sin,—by which the proud might be convicted who were desirous of establishing their own righteousness, as if they had no need of divine help, and being made guilty of the letter, might flee to the Spirit of grace, not to be justified by their own righteousness, but by that of God—that is, by the righteousness which was given to them of God. For as the same apostle says, “By the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and by the prophets.” Because the law, by the very fact that in it no man is justified, affords a witness to the righteousness of God. For that in the law no man is justified before God is manifest, because “the just by faith lives.” Thus, therefore, although the law does not justify the wicked when he is convicted of transgression, it sends to the God who justifieth, and thus affords a testimony to the righteousness of God. Moreover, the prophets offer testimony to God’s righteousness by fore-announcing Christ, “who is made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” But that law was kept hidden from the beginning, when nature itself convicted wicked men, who did to others what they would not have done to themselves. But the revelation of the new testament in Christ was made when He was manifested in the flesh, wherein appeared the righteousness of God—that is, the righteousness which is to men from God. For hence he says, “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested.” This is the reason why the former is called the old testament, because it was revealed in the earlier time; and the latter the new, because it was revealed in the later time. In a word, it is because the old testament pertains to the old man, from which it is necessary that a man should make a beginning; but the new to the new man, by which a man ought to pass from his old state. Thus, in the former are earthly promises, in the latter heavenly promises; because this pertained to God’s mercy, that no one should think that even earthly felicity of any kind whatever could be conferred on anybody, save from the Lord, who is the Creator of all things. But if God is worshipped for the sake of that earthly happiness, the worship is that of a slave, belonging to the children of the bondmaid; but if for the sake of God Himself, so that in the life eternal God may be all things in all, it is a free service belonging to the children of the freewoman, who is our mother eternal in the heavens—who first seemed, as it were, barren, when she had not any children manifest; but now we see what was prophesied concerning her: “Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for there are many children of the desolate more than of her who has an husband,”—that is, more than of that Jerusalem, who in a certain manner is married in the bond of the law, and is in bondage with her children. In the time, then, of the old testament, we say that the Holy Spirit, in those who even then were the children of promise according to Isaac, was not only an assistant, which these men think is sufficient for their opinion, but also a bestower of virtue; and this they deny, attributing it rather to their free will, in contradiction to those fathers who knew how to cry unto God with truthful piety, “I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength.”

CHAPTER 14 [V.]

CALUMNY CONCERNING THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE PROPHETS AND APOSTLES

They say, moreover, “that all the apostles or prophets are not defined as entirely holy by us, but that we say that they were less wicked in comparison with those that were worse; and that this is the righteousness to which God affords His testimony, so that, as the prophet says that Sodom was justified in comparison with the Jews, so also we say that the saints exercised some goodness in comparison with criminal men.” Be it far from us to say such things; but either they are not able to understand, or they are unwilling to observe, or, for the sake of misrepresentation, they pretend that they do not know what we say. Let them hear, therefore, either themselves, or rather those whom, as inexperienced and unlearned persons, they are striving to deceive. Our faith—that is, the catholic faith—distinguishes the righteous from the unrighteous not by the law of works, but by that of faith, because the just by faith lives. By which distinction it results that the man who leads his life without murder, without theft, without false-witness, without coveting other men’s goods, giving due honour to his parents, chaste even to continence from all carnal intercourse whatever, even conjugal, most liberal in alms-giving, most patient of injuries; who not only does not deprive another of his goods, but does not even ask again for what has been taken away from himself; or who has even sold all his own property and appropriated it to the poor, and possesses nothing which belongs to him as his own;—with such a character as this, laudable as it seems to be, if he has not a true and catholic faith in God, must yet depart from this life to condemnation. But another, who has good works from a right faith which worketh by love, maintains his continency in the honesty of wedlock, although he does not, like the other, well refrain altogether, but pays and repays the debt of carnal connection, and has intercourse not only for the sake of offspring, but also for the sake of pleasure, although only with his wife, which the apostle allows to those that are married as pardonable;—does not receive injuries with so much patience, but is raised into anger with the desire of vengeance, although, in order that he may say, “As we also forgive our debtors,” forgives when he is asked;—possesses personal property, giving thence indeed some alms, but not as the former so liberally;—does not take away what belongs to another, but, although by ecclesiastical, not by civil judgment, yet contends for his own: certainly this man, who seems so inferior in morals to the former, on account of the right faith which he has in God, by which he lives, and according to which in all his wrong-doings he accuses himself, and in all his good works praises God, giving to himself the shame, to God the glory, and receiving from Him both forgiveness of sins and love of right deeds,—shall be delivered for this life, and depart to be received into the company of those who shall reign with Christ. Wherefore, if not on account of faith? Which, although without works it saves no man (for it is not a reprobate faith, since it worketh by love), yet by it even sins are loosed, because the just by faith liveth; but without it, even those things which seem good works are turned into sins: “For everything which is not of faith is sin.” And it is brought about, on account of this great difference, that although with no possibility of doubt a persevering integrity of virginity is preferable to conjugal chastity, yet a woman even twice married, if she be a catholic, is preferred to a professed virgin that is a heretic; nor is she in such wise preferred because this one is better in God’s kingdom, but because the other is not there at all. Now the former, indeed, whom we have described as being of better morals, if a true faith be his, surpasses the second one, although both will be in heaven; yet if the faith be wanting to him, he is so surpassed by him that he himself is not there at all.

CHAPTER 15

THE PERFECTION OF APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

Since, then, all righteous men, both the more ancient and the apostles, lived from a right faith which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; and had with their faith morals so holy, that although they might not be of such perfect virtue in this life as that which should be after this life, yet whatever of sin might creep in from human infirmity might be constantly done away by the piety of their faith itself: it results from this that, in comparison with the wicked whom God will condemn, it must be said that these were “righteous,” since by their pious faith they were so far removed into the opposite of those wicked men that the apostle cries out, “What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” But it is plain that the Pelagians, these modern heretics, seem to themselves to be religious lovers and praisers of the saints, since they do not dare to say that they were of an imperfect virtue; although that elected vessel confesses this, who, considering in what state he still was, and that the body which is corrupted drags down the soul, says, “Not that I have already attained or am yet perfect; brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended.” And yet a little after, he who had denied himself to be perfect says, “Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded,” in order that he might show that, according to the measure of this life, there is a certain perfection, and that to that perfection this also is to be attributed, even although any one may know that he is not yet perfect. For what is more perfect, or what was more excellent, than the holy priests among the ancient people? And yet God prescribed to them to offer sacrifice first of all for their own sins. And what is more holy among the new people than the apostles? And yet the Lord prescribed to them to say in their prayer, “Forgive us our debts.” For all the pious, therefore, who lie under this burden of a corruptible flesh, and groan in the infirmity of this life of theirs, there is one hope: “We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins.”

CHAPTER 16 [VI.]

MISREPRESENTATION CONCERNING SIN IN CHRIST

They have not a righteous advocate, who are (even if that were the only difference) distinguished absolutely and widely from the righteous. Be it far from us to say, as they themselves slanderously affirm, that this just Advocate “spoke falsely by the necessity of the flesh;” but we say that He, in the likeness of sinful flesh, in respect of sin, condemned sin. And they, perchance not understanding this, and being blinded by the desire of misrepresentation, and ignorant of the number of ways in which the name of sin is accustomed to be used in the Holy Scriptures, declare that we affirm sin of Christ. Therefore we assert that Christ both had no sin,—neither in soul nor in the body; and that, by taking upon Him flesh in the likeness of sinful flesh, in respect of sin He condemned sin. And this assertion, somewhat obscurely made by the apostle, is explained in two ways,—either that the likenesses of things are accustomed to be called by the names of those things to which they are like, so that the apostle may be understood to have intended to call this likeness of sinful flesh by the name of “sin;” or else that the sacrifices for sins were under the law called “sins,” all which things were figures of the flesh of Christ, which is the true and only sacrifice for sins,—not only for those which are all washed away in baptism, but also for those which afterwards creep in from the weakness of this life, on account of which the universal Church daily cries in prayer to God, “Forgive us our debts,” and they are forgiven us by means of that singular sacrifice for sins which the apostle, speaking according to the law, did not hesitate to call “sin.” Whence, moreover, is that much plainer passage of his, which is not uncertain by any twofold ambiguity, “We beseech you in Christ’s stead to be reconciled to God. He made Him to be sin for us, who had not known sin; that we might be the righteousness of God in Him.” For the passage which I have above mentioned, “In respect of sin, He condemned sin,” because it was not said, “In respect of his sin,” may be understood by any one, as if He said that He condemned sin in respect of the sin of the Jews; because in respect of their sin who crucified Him, it happened that He shed His blood for the remission of sins. But this passage, where God is said to have made Christ Himself “sin,” who had not known sin, does not seem to me to be more fittingly understood than that Christ was made a sacrifice for sins, and on this account was called “sin.”

CHAPTER 17 [VII.]

THEIR CALUMNY ABOUT THE FULFILMENT OF PRECEPTS IN THE LIFE TO COME

But who can bear their objecting to us, “that we say that after the resurrection such is to be our progress, that there men can begin to fulfil the commands of God, which they would not here;” since we say that there there will be no sin at all, no struggle with any desire of sin; as if they themselves would dare to deny this? That wisdom also and the knowledge of God, is then perfected in us, and that in the Lord there is such rejoicing that it is a full and a true security, who will deny, unless he is so averse from the truth that on this very account he cannot attain unto it? But these things will not be in precepts, but in reward of those precepts which should here be observed; the neglect of which precepts, indeed, does not lead thither to the reward. But here the grace of God gives the desire of keeping His commandments; and if anything in these commandments is less perfectly observed, He forgives it on account of what we say in prayer, as well “Thy will be done,” as “Forgive us our debts.” Here, then, it is prescribed that we sin not; there, the reward is that we cannot sin. Here, the precept is that we obey not the desires of sin; there, the reward that we have no desires of sin.

Here, the precept is, “Understand, ye senseless among the people; and ye fools, be at some time wise;” there, the reward is full wisdom and perfect knowledge. “For we see now through a glass in an enigma,” says the apostle, “but then face to face: now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I am known.” Here, the precept is, “Exult unto the Lord, our helper,” and, “Rejoice, ye righteous, in the Lord;” there, the reward is to rejoice with a perfect and unspeakable joy. Lastly, in the precept it is written, “Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness;” but in the reward, “Because they shall be filled.” Whence, I ask, shall they be filled, except with what they hunger and thirst after? Who, then, is so abhorrent, not only from the divine perception, but also from the human perception, as to say that in man there can be such righteousness while he is hungering and thirsting for it, as there will be when he shall be filled with it? But when we are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, if the faith of Christ is watchful in us, what is it to be believed that we are hungering and thirsting for, save Christ? “For He is made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” And because we only believe on Him not seeing Him, therefore we thirst and hunger after righteousness. For as long as we are in the body, we wander from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by appearance. But when we shall see Him, and attain certainly to the appearance, we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable; and then we shall be filled with righteousness, since now we say to Him with pious longing, “I shall be satisfied when Thy glory shall be manifested.”

CHAPTER 18

PERFECTION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND FULL SECURITY WAS NOT EVEN IN PAUL IN THIS LIFE

But how impudent I do not say, but how insane, is the pride which, not yet being equal to the angels of God, thinks itself already able to have a righteousness equal to the angels of God; and does not consider so great and holy a man, who assuredly hungered and thirsted after that very perfection of righteousness, when he was unwilling to be lifted up by the greatness of his revelations; and yet that he might not be lifted up, he was not left to his own choice and will, but received “the thorn in the flesh, a messenger of

Satan, to buffet him; on which account he besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him, and the Lord said unto him, My grace is sufficient for thee, for strength is made perfect in weakness.” What strength, save that to which it belongs not to be lifted up? And who doubts that this belongs to righteousness? The angels of God, then, are endowed with this perfection of righteousness, since they always behold the face of the Father, and thus of the entire Trinity, because they see through the Son, in the Holy Spirit. But nothing is more sublime than that revelation, nor yet does any of the angels in that contemplation of rejoicing ones find a messenger of Satan needful that he may be buffeted by him, lest so great a magnitude of revelation should lift him up. The apostle Paul certainly had not yet that perfection of virtue, nor yet was he equal to the angels of God; but there was in him the weakness of lifting himself up, which also had to be checked by the angel of Satan, lest he should be lifted up by the magnitude of his revelations. Although, then, the first lifting up cast down Satan, yet that greatest Physician, who well knew how to make use of even evil things, applied from the angel of Satan, against the mischief of elation, a wholesome, although a painful, medicament, just as an antidote used to be made even of serpents against the poisons of serpents. What, then, is the meaning of “My grace is sufficient for thee,” except that you may not by giving way succumb to the buffet of the messenger of Satan? And what is “Strength is made perfect in weakness,” except that in that place of weakness hitherto, there may be the perfection of virtue, so that in the very presence of infirmity, lifting-up may be repressed? Which infirmity assuredly shall be healed by future immortality. For how is that soundness to be called perfect where medicine is still needful, even from the buffet of an angel of Satan?

CHAPTER 19

IN WHAT SENSE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF MAN IN THIS LIFE IS SAID TO BE PERFECT

From this it results that the virtue which is now in the righteous man is named perfect up to this point, that to its perfection belong both the true knowledge and humble confession of even imperfection itself. For, in respect to this infirmity, that little righteousness of man’s is perfect according to its measure, when it understands even what it lacks. And therefore the apostle calls himself both perfect and imperfect,—imperfect, to wit, in the thought of how much is wanting to him for the righteousness for the fulness of which he is still hungering and thirsting; but perfect in that he does not blush to confess his own imperfection, and goes forward in good that he may attain. As we can say that the wayfarer is perfect whose approach is well forwarded, although his intention is not carried out unless his arrival be actually effected. Therefore, when he had said, “According to the righteousness which is in the law, I am one who has been without blame,” he immediately added, “What things were gain to me, those I counted but loss for Christ’s sake. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things to be loss for the sake of the eminent knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord: for whose sake I have believed all things not only to be losses, but I have thought them to be even as dung, that I might gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is by the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God in faith.” See! the apostle does not, of course, say falsely, that “according to the righteousness which is of the law he was without blame;” and yet those things which were gain to him, he casts away for Christ’s sake, and thinks them losses, injuries, dung. And not only these things, but all other things which he mentioned previously; not on account of any kind of knowledge, but, as he himself says, “the eminent knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord,” which, beyond a doubt, he had as yet in faith, but not yet in sight. For then the knowledge of Christ will be eminent, when He shall be so revealed that what is believed is seen. Whence, in another place, he thus says, “For ye have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” Hence, also, the Lord Himself says, “He who loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” Hence John the Evangelist says, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it has not yet appeared what we shall be: but we know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” Then shall the knowledge of Christ be eminent. For now it is, as it were, hidden away in faith; but it does not yet appear eminent in sight.

CHAPTER 20

WHY THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF THE LAW IS VALUED SLIGHTLY BY PAUL

Therefore the blessed Paul casts away those past attainments of his righteousness, as “losses” and “dung,” that “he may win Christ and be found in Him, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law.” Wherefore his own, if it is of the law? For that law is the law of God. Who has denied this, save Marcion and Manicheus, and such like pests? Since, then, that is the law of God, he says it is “his own” righteousness “which is of the law;” and this righteousness of his own he would not have, but cast it forth as “dung.” Why so, except because it is this which I have above demonstrated, that those are under the law who, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own, are not subject to the righteousness of God? For they think that, by the strength of their own will, they will fulfil the commands of the law; and wrapped up in their pride, they are not converted to assisting grace. Thus the letter killeth them either openly, as being guilty to themselves, by not doing what the law commands; or by thinking that they do it, although they do it not with spiritual love, which is of God. Thus they remain either plainly wicked or deceitfully righteous,—manifestly cut off in open unrighteousness, or foolishly elated in fallacious righteousness. And by this means—marvellous indeed, but yet true—the righteousness of the law is not fulfilled by the righteousness which is in the law, or by the law, but by that which is in the Spirit of grace. Because the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those, as it is written, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. But, according to the righteousness which is in the law, the apostle says that he was blameless in the flesh, not in the Spirit; and he says that the righteousness which is of the law was his, not God’s. It must be understood, therefore, that the righteousness of the law is not fulfilled according to the righteousness which is in the law or of the law, that is, according to the righteousness of man, but according to the righteousness which is in the Spirit of grace, therefore according to the righteousness of God, that is, which man has from God. Which may be thus more clearly and briefly stated: That the righteousness of the law is not fulfilled when the law commands, and man as it were of his own strength obeys; but when the Spirit aids, and man’s free will, but freed by the grace of God, performs. Therefore the righteousness of the law is to command what is pleasing to God, to forbid what is displeasing; but the righteousness in the law is to obey the letter, and beyond it to seek for no assistance of God for holy living. For when he had said, “Not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is by the faith of Christ,” he added, “Which is from God.” That, therefore, is itself the righteousness of God, being ignorant of which the proud go about to establish their own; for it is not called the righteousness of God because by it God is righteous, but because man has it from God.

CHAPTER 21

THAT RIGHTEOUSNESS IS NEVER PERFECTED IN THIS LIFE

Now, according to this righteousness of God, that is, which we have from God, faith now worketh by love. But it worketh that, in what way man can attain to Him on whom now, not seeing, he believes; and when he shall see Him, then that which was in faith through a glass enigmatically, shall at length be in sight face to face; and then shall be perfected even love itself. Because it is said with excessive folly, that God is loved as much before He is seen, as He will be loved when He is seen. Further, if in this life, as no religious person doubts, the more we love God, so much the more righteous we certainly are, who can doubt that pious and true righteousness will then be perfected when the love of God shall be perfect? Then the law, therefore, shall be fulfilled; so that nothing at all is wanting to it, of which law, according to the apostle, the fulfilling is Love. And thus, when he had said, “Not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, which is the righteousness from God in faith,” he then added, “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings.” All these things were not yet full and perfect in the apostle; but, as if he were placed on the way, he was running towards their fulness and perfection. For how had he already perfectly known Christ, who says in another place, “Now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known”? And how had he already perfectly known the power of His resurrection, to whom it remained to know it yet more fully by experience at the time of the resurrection of the flesh? And how had he perfectly known already the fellowship of His suffering, if he had not yet experienced for him the suffering of death? Finally, he adds and says, “If in any manner I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” And then he says, “Not that I have already received or am already perfected.”

What, then, does he confess that he has not yet received, and in what is he not yet perfected, except that righteousness which is of God, which he desired, not willing to have his own righteousness, which is of the law? For hence he was speaking, and such was the reason for his saying these things in resistance to the enemies of the grace of God, for the bestowal of which Christ was crucified; and of the race of whom are also these.

CHAPTER 22

NATURE OF HUMAN RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PERFECTION

For from the place in which he undertook to say these things, he thus began, “Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, who serve God in the Spirit,”—or, as some codices have it, “who serve God the Spirit,” or “the Spirit of God,”—”and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” Here it is manifest that he is speaking against the Jews, who, observing the law carnally, and going about to establish their own righteousness, were slain by the letter, and not made alive by the Spirit, and gloried in themselves while the apostles and all the children of the promise were glorying in Christ. Then he added, “Although I may have confidence in the flesh. If any one else thinks that he has confidence in the flesh, I more.” And enumerating all things which have glory according to the flesh, he ended at that point where he says, “According to the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.” And when he had said that he regarded all these things as altogether loss and disadvantage and dung that he might gain Christ, he added the passage which I am treating, “And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, but that which is by the faith of Christ, which is from God.” He confessed that he had not yet received the perfection of this righteousness, which will not be except in that excellent knowledge of Christ, on account of which he said that all things were loss to him; and he confessed, therefore, that he was not yet perfect. “But I follow on,” said he, “if I may apprehend that in which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus.” “I may apprehend that in which I also am apprehended,” is much the same as, “I may know, even as I also am known.” “Brethren,” says he, “I count not myself to have apprehended: but one thing, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those which are before, I follow on according to the purpose for the reward of the supreme calling of God in Christ Jesus.” The order of the words is, “But one thing I follow.” Of which one thing the Lord also is well understood to have admonished Martha, where he says, “Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful.” The apostle, wishing to apprehend this as if set in the way, said that he followed on to the reward of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. For who can delay when he would apprehend that which he declares that he is following, that he shall then have a righteousness equal to the righteousness of the holy angels, none of whom, of course, does any messenger of Satan buffet lest he should be lifted up with the greatness of his revelations? Then, admonishing those who might think themselves already perfect with the fulness of that righteousness, he says, “Let as many of us, therefore, as are perfect, be thus minded.” As if he should say, If, according to the capacity of mortal man for the little measure of this life, we are perfect, let us understand that it also belongs to that perfection that we perceive that we are not yet perfected in that angelical righteousness which we shall have in the manifestation of Christ. “And if in anything,” he said, “ye be otherwise minded, God shall also reveal even this unto you.” How, save to those that are walking and advancing in the way of the faith, until that wandering be finished and they come to the actual vision? Whence following on, he added, “Nevertheless, whereunto we have already attained, let us walk therein.” Then he concludes that they should be bewared of, concerning whom this passage treated at its beginning. “Brethren, be imitators of me, and mark them which so walk as ye have our example. For many walk, of whom I have spoken often, and now tell you even weeping, whose end is destruction,” and the rest. These are the very ones of whom, in the beginning, he had said, “Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers,” and what follows. Therefore all are enemies of the cross of Christ who, going about to establish their own righteousness, which is of the law,—that is, where only the letter commands, and the Spirit does not fulfil,—are not subject to the law of God. For if they who are of the law be heirs, faith is made an empty thing. “If righteousness is by the law, then Christ has died in vain: then is the offence of the cross done away.” And thus those are enemies of the cross of Christ who say that righteousness is by the law, to which it belongs to command, not to assist. But the grace of God through Jesus Christ the Lord in the Holy Spirit helpeth our infirmity.

CHAPTER 23

THERE IS NO TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT THE FAITH OF THE GRACE OF CHRIST

Wherefore he who lives according to the righteousness which is in the law, without the faith of the grace of Christ, as the apostle declares that he lived blameless, must be accounted to have no true righteousness; not because the law is not true and holy, but because to wish to obey the letter which commands, without the Spirit of God which quickens, as if of the strength of free will, is not true righteousness. But the righteousness according to which the righteous man lives by faith, since man has it from God by the Spirit of grace, is true righteousness. And although this is not undeservedly said to be perfect in some righteous men, according to the capacity of this life, yet it is but little to that great righteousness which the equality of the angels receives. And he who had not yet possessed this, on the one hand, in respect of that which was already in him, said that he was perfect; and in respect of that which was still wanting to him, said that he was imperfect. But manifestly that lower degree of righteousness makes merit, that higher kind becomes reward. Whence he who does not strive after the former does not attain unto the latter. Wherefore, after the resurrection of man, to deny that there will be a fulness of righteousness, and to think that the righteousness in the body of that life will be such as it can be in the body of this death, is singular folly. But it is most true that men do not there begin to fulfil those commands of God which here they have been unwilling to obey. For there will be the fulness of the most perfect righteousness, yet not of men striving after what is commanded, and making gradual endeavours after that fulness; but in the twinkling of an eye, even as shall be that resurrection of the dead itself, because that greatness of perfect righteousness will be given as a reward to those who here have obeyed the commandments, and will not itself be commanded to them as a thing to be accomplished. But I should in such wise say they have done the commandments, that we might remember that to these very commandments belongs the prayer in which the holy children of promise daily say with truth, “Thy will be done,” and “Forgive us our debts.”

CHAPTER 24 [VIII.]

THERE ARE THREE PRINCIPAL HEADS IN THE PELAGIAN HERESY

When, then, the Pelagians are pressed with these and such like testimonies and words of truth, not to deny original sin; not to say that the grace of God whereby we are justified is not given freely, but according to our merits; nor to say that in mortal man, however holy and well doing, there is so great righteousness that even after the washing of regeneration, until he finishes this life of his, forgiveness of sins is not necessary to him,—therefore when they are pressed not to make these three assertions, and by their means alienate men who believe them from the grace of the Saviour, and persuade the lifted-up unto pride to go headlong unto the judgment of the devil: they introduce the clouds of other questions in which their impiety—in the sight of men more simpleminded, whether that they are more slow or less instructed in the sacred writings—may be concealed. These are the misty questions of the praise of the creature, of the praise of marriage, of the praise of the law, of the praise of free will, of the praise of the saints; as if any one of our people were in the habit of disparaging those things, and not rather of announcing all things with due praises to the honour of the Creator and Saviour. But even the creature does not desire in such wise to be praised as to be unwilling to be healed. And the more marriage is to be praised, the less is to be attributed to it the shameful concupiscence of the flesh, which is not of the Father, but of the world; and which assuredly marriage found and did not make in men; because, moreover, it is actually in very many without marriage, and if nobody had sinned marriage itself might be without it. And the law, holy and just and good, is neither grace itself, nor is anything rightly done by it without grace; because the law is not given that it may give life, but it was added because of transgression, that it might conclude all persons convicted under sin, and that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. And the free will taken captive does not avail, except for sin; but for righteousness, unless divinely set free and aided, it does not avail. And thus, also, all the saints, whether from that ancient Abel to John the Baptist, or from the apostles themselves up to this time, and henceforth even to the end of the world, are to be praised in the Lord, not in themselves. Because the voice, even of those earlier ones, is, “In the Lord shall my soul be praised.” And the voice of the later ones is, “By the grace of God I am what I am.” And to all belongs, “That he that glorieth may glory in the Lord.” And it is the common confession of all, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

CHAPTER 25 [IX.]

HE SHOWS THAT THE OPINION OF THE CATHOLICS IS THE MEAN BETWEEN THAT OF THE MANICHEANS AND PELAGIANS, AND REFUTES BOTH

But since, in these five particulars which I have set forth, in which they seek lurking-places, and from which they weave misrepresentations, they are forsaken and convicted by the divine writings, they have thought to deter those whom they could by the hateful name of Manicheans, lest in opposition to their most perverse teachings their ears should be conformed to the truth; because doubtless the Manicheans blasphemously condemn the three former of those five dogmas, saying that neither the human creature, nor marriage, nor the law was ordained by the supreme and true God. But they do not receive what the truth says, that sin took its origin from free will, and that all evil, whether of angel or man, comes from it; because they prefer to believe, in their turning aside from God, that the nature of evil was always evil, and co-eternal with God. They, moreover, attack the holy patriarchs and prophets with as many execrations as they can. This is the way in which the modern heretics think, that by objecting the name of Manicheans, they evade the force of truth. But they do not evade it; because it follows them up, and overturns at once Manicheans and Pelagians. For in that when a man is born there is something good, so far as he is a man, he condemns the Manichean, and praises the Creator; but in so far as he derives original sin, he condemns the Pelagian, and holds a Saviour necessary. For even because that nature is said to be healable, it repels both teachings; because it would not, on the one hand, have need of medicine if it were sound, which is opposed to the Pelagian, nor could it be healed at all if the evil in it were eternal and immutable, which is opposed to the Manichean. Moreover, in that to marriage, which we praise as ordained of God, we do not say that the concupiscence of the flesh is to be attributed, this is both contrary to the Pelagians, who make this concupiscence itself a matter of praise, and contrary to the Manicheans, who attribute it to a foreign and evil nature, when it really is an evil accidental to our nature, not to be separated by the disjunction from God, but to be healed by the mercy of God. Moreover, in that we say that the law, holy and just and good, was given not for the justification of the wicked, but for the conviction of the proud, for the sake of transgressions,—this is, on the one hand, opposed to the Manicheans, in that according to the apostle the law is praised; and on the other opposed to the Pelagians, in that, in accordance with the apostle, no one is justified by the law; and therefore, for the sake of making alive those whom the letter has killed, that is, whom the law, enjoining good, makes guilty by transgressions, the Spirit of grace freely brings aid. Also in that we say that the will is free in evil, but for doing good it must be made free by God's grace, this is opposed to the Pelagians; but in that we say it originated from that which previously was not evil, this is opposed to the Manicheans. Again, that we honour the holy patriarchs and prophets with praises due to them in God, is in opposition to the Manicheans; but that we say that even to them, however righteous and pleasing to God they might have been, the propitiation of the Lord was necessary, this is in opposition to the Pelagians. The catholic faith, therefore, finds them both, as it does also other heretics, in opposition to it, and convicts both by the authority of the divine testimonies and by the light of truth.

CHAPTER 26 [X.]

THE PELAGIANS STILL STRIVE AFTER A HIDING-PLACE, BY INTRODUCING THE NEEDLESS QUESTION OF THE ORIGIN OF THE SOUL

The Pelagians, indeed, add to the clouds which envelop their lurking-places the unnecessary question concerning the origin of the soul, for the purpose of erecting a hiding-place by disturbing manifest things by the obscurity of other matters. For they say "that we guard the continuous propagation of souls with the continuous propagation of sin." And where and when they have read this, either in the addresses or in the writings of those who maintain the catholic faith against this, I do not know; because, although I find something written by catholics on the subject, yet the defence of the truth had not yet been undertaken against those men, neither was there any anxiety to answer them. But this I say, that according to the Holy Scriptures original sin is so manifest, and that this is put away in infants by the laver of regeneration is confirmed by such antiquity and authority of the catholic faith, notorious by such a clear concurrent testimony of the Church, that what is argued by the inquiry or affirmation of anybody concerning the origin of the soul, if it is contrary to this, cannot be true. Wherefore, whoever builds up, either concerning the soul or any other obscure matter, any edifice whence he may destroy this, which is true, best founded, and best known, whether he is a son or an enemy of the Church, must either be corrected or avoided. But let this be the end of this Book, that the things which follow may have another beginning.

Book IV

After having set aside in the former books the calumnies hurled against the Catholics, Augustin here proceeds to open up the snares which lie hidden in the remaining part of the second epistle of the Pelagians, in the five heads of their doctrine—in the praise, to wit, of the creature, the praise of marriage, the praise of the law, the praise of free will, and the praise of the saints; in connection with which heads the Pelagians malignantly boast that they are at issue not more with the Manicheans than with the Catholics. Hence these five points may bring us back to this, that they put forward their threefold error—namely, the two first, the denial of original sin; the two following, the assertion that grace is given according to merits; the fifth, their statement that the saints had not sinned in this life. Augustin shows that both heresies, that of the Manicheans and that of the Pelagians, are opposed and equally odious to the Catholic faith, whereby we profess, first, that the nature created by a good God was good, but that, nevertheless, it is in need of a Saviour because of original sin, which passed into all men from the transgression of the first man: then secondly, that marriage is good, truly instituted by God, but that that concupiscence is evil which was associated with marriage by sin: also thirdly that the law of God is good, but in such wise as only to manifest sin, not to take it away: that fourthly free will is assuredly inherent in the nature of man, but that now, however, it is so enslaved that it does not avail to the doing of righteousness, unless when it shall have been made free by grace: but that fifthly the saints, whether of the Old or New Testament, were indeed endued with a righteousness, which was true but not perfect, nor so full that they should be free from all sin. In conclusion, he brings forward the testimonies of Cyprian and Ambrose on behalf of the Catholic faith, some concerning original sin, others about the assistance of grace, and the last concerning the imperfection of present righteousness.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

THE SUBTERFUGES OF THE PELAGIANS ARE FIVE

After the matters which I have considered, and to which I have answered, they repeat the same things as those contained in the letter which I have refuted, but in a different manner. For before, they put them forward as objecting to us things which we think as it were falsely; but afterwards, as explaining what they themselves think, they have presented the same things from the opposite side, adding two certain points which they had not mentioned—that is, “that they say that baptism is necessary for all ages,” and “that by Adam death passed upon us, not sins,” which things must also themselves be considered in their own place. Hence, because in the former Book which I have just finished I said that they alleged hindrances of five matters in which lurk their dogmas hostile to God’s grace and to the catholic faith,—the praise, to wit, of the creature, the praise of marriage, the praise of the law, the praise of free will, the praise of the saints,—I think it is more convenient to make a general discrimination of all that they maintain, the contrary of which they object to us, and to show which of those things pertain to any of those five, that so my answer may be by that very distinction clearer and briefer.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

THE PRAISE OF THE CREATURE

They accomplish the praise of the creature, inasmuch as it pertains to the human race of which the question now is, in these statements: “That God is the Maker of all those that are born, and that the sons of men are God’s work; and that all sin descends not from nature, but from the will.” With this praise of the creature they connect, “that they say that baptism is necessary for every age, so that,” namely, “the creature itself may be adopted among the children of God; not because it derives anything from its parents which must be purified in the laver of regeneration.” To this praise they add also, “that they say that Christ the Lord was sprinkled with no stain of sin as far as pertains to His infancy;” because they assert that His flesh was most pure from all contagion of sin, not by His own excellence and singular grace, but by His fellowship with the nature which is shared by all infants. It also belongs to this that they introduce the question “of the origin of the soul,” thus endeavouring to make all the souls of infants equal to the soul of Christ, maintaining that they likewise are sprinkled with no stain of sin. On this account, also, they say, “that nothing of evil passed from Adam upon the rest of humanity except death, which,” they say, “is not always an evil, since to the martyrs, for instance, it is for the sake of rewards; and it is not the dissolution of the bodies, which in every kind of men shall be raised up, that can make death to be called either good or evil, but the diversity of merits which arises from human liberty.” These things they write in this letter concerning the praise of the creature.

They praise marriage truly according to the Scriptures, “because the Lord saith in the gospel, He who made men from the beginning made them male and female, and said, Increase and multiply, and replenish the earth.” Although this is not written in that passage of the gospel, yet it is written in the law. They add, moreover, “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” And these we acknowledge to be gospel words.

In the praise of the law they say, “that the old law was, according to the apostle, holy and just and good; that on those who keep its commandments, and live righteously by faith, such as the prophets and patriarchs, and all the saints, life eternal could be conferred.”

In the praise of free will they say, “that free will has not perished, since the Lord says by the prophets, If ye be willing and will hear me, ye shall eat the good things of the land: if ye are unwilling, and will not hear, the sword shall devour you.’ And thus, also, it is that grace assists the good purpose of any person, but yet does not infuse a desire of virtue into the reluctant heart, because there is no acceptance of persons with God.”

In the praise of the saints they conceal themselves, saying “that baptism perfectly renews men, inasmuch as the apostle is a witness who testifies that, by the washing of water, the Church is made out of the heathen holy and spotless; that the Holy Spirit also assisted pious souls in ancient times, even as the prophet says to God, Thy good Spirit shall lead me into the right way;’ that all the prophets, moreover, and apostles or saints, as well of the New as of the Old Testament, to whom God gives witness, were righteous, not in comparison with the wicked, but by the rule of virtue; and that in future time there is a reward as well of good works as of evil. But that no one can then perform the commandment which here he may have contemned, because the apostle said, We must be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things belonging to the body, according to what he has done, whether good or evil.'“

In all these points, whatever they say of the praise of the creature and of marriage, they endeavour to bring us back to this,—that there is no original sin; whatever of the praise of law and of free will, to this, that grace does not assist without merit, and that thus grace is no more grace; whatever of the praise of the saints, to this, that mortal life in the saints appears not to have sin, and that it is not necessary for them to pray God for the remitting of their debts.

CHAPTER 3 [III.]

THE CATHOLICS PRAISE NATURE, MARRIAGE, LAW, FREE WILL, AND THE SAINTS, IN SUCH WISE AS TO CONDEMN AS WELL PELAGIANS AS MANICHEANS

Let every one who, with a catholic mind, shudders at these impious and damnable doctrines, in this tripartite division, shun the lurking-places and snares of this fivefold error, and be so careful between one and another as in such wise to decline from the Manicheans as not to incline to the Pelagians; and again, so to separate himself from the Pelagians as not to associate himself with the Manicheans; or, if he should already be taken hold of in one or the other bondage, that he should not so pluck himself out of the hands of either as to rush into those of the other. Because they seem to be contrary to one another; since the Manicheans manifest themselves by vituperating these five points, and the Pelagians conceal themselves by praising them. Wherefore he condemns and shuns both, whoever he may be, who according to the rule of the catholic faith so glorifies the Creator in men, that are born of the good creature of flesh and soul (for this the Manichean will not have), as that he yet confesses that on account of the corruption which has passed over into them by the sin of the first man, even infants need a Saviour (for this the Pelagian will not have). He who so distinguishes the evil of shameful concupiscence from the blessing of marriage, as neither, like the Manicheans, to reproach the source of our birth, nor, like the Pelagians, to praise the source of our disorder. He who so maintains the law to have been given holy and just and good through Moses by a holy and just and good God (which Manicheus, in opposition to the apostle, denies), as to say that it both shows forth sin and yet does not take it away, and commands righteousness which yet it does not give (which, again, in opposition to the apostle, Pelagius denies). He who so asserts free will as to say that the evil of both angel and man began, not from I know not what nature always evil, which is no nature, but from the will itself, which overturns Manichean heresy, and nevertheless that even thus the captive will cannot breathe into a wholesome liberty save by God's grace, which overturns the Pelagian heresy. He who so praises in God the holy men of God, not only after Christ manifested in the flesh and subsequently, but even those of the former times, whom the Manicheans dare to blaspheme, as yet to believe their own confessions concerning themselves, more than the lies of the Pelagians. For the word of the saints is, "If we should say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

CHAPTER 4 [IV.]

PELAGIANS AND MANICHEANS ON THE PRAISE OF THE CREATURE

These things being so, what advantage is it to new heretics, enemies of the cross of Christ and opposers of divine grace, that they seem sound from the error of the Manicheans, if they are dying by another pestilence of their own? What advantage is it to them, that in the praise of the creature they say "that the good God is the maker of those that are born, by whom all things were made, and that the children of men are His work," whom the Manicheans say are the work of the prince of darkness; when between them both, or among them both, God's creation, which is in infants, is perishing? For both of them refuse to have it delivered by Christ's flesh and blood,—the one, because they destroy that very flesh and blood, as if He did not take upon Him these at all in man or of man; and the other, because they assert that there is no evil in infants from which they should be delivered by the sacrament of this flesh and blood. Between them lies the human creature in infants, with a good origination, with a corrupted propagation, confessing for its goods a most excellent Creator, seeking for its evils a most merciful Redeemer, having the Manicheans as disparagers of its benefits, having the Pelagians as deniers of its evils, and both as persecutors. And although in infancy there is no power to speak, yet with its silent look and its hidden weakness it addresses the impious vanity of both, saying to the one, “Believe that I am created by Him who creates good things;” and saying to the other, “Suffer me to be healed by Him who created me.” The Manicheans say, “There is nothing of this infant save the good soul to be delivered; the rest,” which belongs not to the good God, but to the prince of darkness, “is to be rejected.” The Pelagians say, “Certainly there is nothing of this infant to be delivered, because we have shown the whole to be safe.” Both lie; but now the accuser of the flesh alone is more bearable than the praiser, who is convicted of cruelty against the whole. But neither does the Manichean help the human soul by blaspheming God, the Author of the entire man; nor does the Pelagian permit the divine grace to come to the help of human infancy by denying original sin. Therefore it is by the catholic faith that God has mercy, seeing that by condemning both mischievous doctrines it comes to the help of the infant for salvation. It says to the Manicheans, “Hear the apostle crying, Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost in you?’ and believe that the good God is the Creator of bodies, because the temple of the Holy Ghost cannot be the work of the prince of darkness.” It says to the Pelagians, “The infant that you look upon was conceived in iniquity, and in sin its mother nourished it in the womb.’ Why, as if in defending it as free from all mischief, do you not permit it to be delivered by mercy? No one is pure from uncleanness, not even the infant whose life is of one day upon the earth. Allow the wretched creatures to receive remission of sins, through Him who alone neither as small nor great could have any sin.”

CHAPTER 5

WHAT IS THE SPECIAL ADVANTAGE IN THE PELAGIAN OPINIONS?

What advantage, then, is it to them that they say “that all sin descends not from nature, but from the will,” and resist by the truth of this judgment the Manicheans, who say that evil nature is the cause of sin; when by being unwilling to admit original sin although itself also descends from the will of the first man, they make infants to depart in guilt from the body? What advantage is it to them “that they confess that baptism is necessary for all ages,” while the Manicheans say that it is superfluous for every age, while they say that in infants it is false so far as it pertains to the forgiveness of sins? What advantage is it to them that they maintain “the flesh of Christ” (which the Manicheans contend was either no flesh at all, or a feigned flesh) to have been not only the true flesh, but also “that the soul itself was stained by no spot of sin,” when other infants are by them so put on the same level with His infancy, with not unequal purity, as that both that flesh does not appear to keep its own holiness in comparison with these, and these obtain no salvation from that?

CHAPTER 6

NOT DEATH ALONE, BUT SIN ALSO HAS PASSED INTO US BY MEANS OF ADAM

In that particular, indeed, wherein they say “that death passed to us by Adam, not sins,” they have not the Manicheans as their adversaries: since they, too, deny that original sin from the first man, at first of pure and upright body and spirit, and afterwards depraved by free will, subsequently passed and passes as sin into all with death; but they say that the flesh was evil from the beginning, and was created by an evil spirit and along with an evil spirit; but that a good soul—a portion, to wit, of God—for the deserts of its defilement by food and drink, in which it was before bound up, came into man, and thus by means of copulation was bound in the chain of the flesh. And thus the Manicheans agree with the Pelagians that it was not the guilt of the first man that passed into the human race—neither by the flesh, which they say was never good; nor by the soul, which they assert comes into the flesh of man with the merits of its own defilements with which it was polluted before the flesh. But how do the Pelagians say “that only death passed upon us by Adam’s means”? For if we die because he died, but he died because be sinned, they say that the punishment passed without the guilt, and that innocent infants are punished with an unjust penalty by deriving death without the deserts of death. This, the catholic faith has known of the one and only mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who condescended to undergo death—that is, the penalty of sin—without sin, for us. As He alone became the Son of man, in order that we might become through Him sons of God, so He alone, on our behalf, undertook punishment without ill deservings, that we through Him might obtain grace without good deservings. Because as to us nothing good was due so to Him nothing bad was due. Therefore, commending His love to them to whom He was about to give undeserved life, He was willing to suffer for them an undeserved death. This special prerogative of the Mediator the Pelagians endeavour to make void, so that this should no longer be special in the Lord, if Adam in such wise suffered a death due to him on account of his guilt, as that infants, drawing from him no guilt, should suffer undeserved death. For although very much good is conferred on the good by means of death, whence some have fitly argued even “of the benefit of death;” yet from this what can be declared except the mercy of God, since the punishment of sin is converted into beneficent uses?

CHAPTER 7

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF “IN WHOM ALL HAVE SINNED”?

But these speak thus who wish to wrest men from the apostle’s words into their own thought. For where the apostle says, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so passed upon all men,” they will have it there understood not that “sin” passed over, but “death.” What, then, is the meaning of what follows, “Whereto all have sinned”? For either the apostle says that in that “one man” all have sinned of whom he had said, “By one man sin entered into the world,” or else in that “sin,” or certainly in “death.” For it need not disturb us that he said not “in which” [using the feminine form of the pronoun], but “in whom” [using the masculine] all have sinned; since “death” in the Greek language is of the masculine gender. Let them, then, choose which they will,—for either in that “man” all have sinned, and it is so said because when he sinned all were in him; or in that “sin” all have sinned, because that was the doing of all in general which all those who were born would have to derive; or it remains for them to say that in that “death” all sinned. But in what way this can be understood, I do not clearly see. For all die in the sin; they do not sin in the death; for when sin precedes, death follows—not when death precedes, sin follows. Because sin is the sting of death—that is, the sting by whose stroke death occurs, not the sting with which death strikes. Just as poison, if it is drunk, is called the cup of death, because by that cup death is caused, not because the cup is caused by the death, or is given by death. But if “sin” cannot be understood by those words of the apostle as being that “wherein all have sinned,” because in Greek, from which the Epistle is translated, “sin” is expressed in the feminine gender, it remains that all men are understood to have sinned in that first “man,” because all men were in him when he sinned; and from him sin is derived by birth, and is not remitted save by being born again. For thus also the sainted Hilary understood what is written, “wherein all have sinned;” for he says, “wherein,” that is, in Adam, “all have sinned.” Then he adds, “It is manifest that all have sinned in Adam, as it were in the mass; for he himself was corrupted by sin, and all whom he begot were born under sin.” When he wrote this, Hilary, without any ambiguity, indicated how we should understand the words, “wherein all have sinned.”

CHAPTER 8

DEATH PASSED UPON ALL BY SIN

But on account of what does the same apostle say, that we are reconciled to God by Christ, except on account of what we had become enemies? And what is this but sin? Whence also the prophet says, “Your sins separate between you and God.” On account of this separation, therefore, the Mediator was sent, that He might take away the sin of the world, by which we were separated as enemies, and that we, being reconciled, might be made from enemies children. About this, certainly, the apostle was speaking; hence it happened that he interposed what he says, “That sin entered by one man.” For these are his former words. He says, “But God commendeth His love towards us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved in His life. And not only so, but glorying also in God through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom also we have now received reconciliation.” Then he subjoins, “Therefore, as by one man sin entered into this world, and death by sin, and so passed upon all men, for in him all have sinned.” Why do the Pelagians evade this matter? If reconciliation through Christ is necessary to all men, on all men has passed sin by which we have become enemies, in order that we should have need of reconciliation. This reconciliation is in the laver of regeneration and in the flesh and blood of Christ, without which not even infants can have life in themselves. For as there was one man for death on account of sin, so there is one man for life on account of righteousness; because “as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive;” and “as by the sin of one upon all men to condemnation, so also by the righteousness of one upon all men unto justification of life.” Who is there that has turned a deaf ear to these apostolical words with such hardiness of wicked impiety, as, having heard them, to contend that death passed upon us through Adam without sin, unless, indeed, they are opposers of the grace of God and enemies of the cross of Christ?—whose end is destruction if they continue in this obstinacy. But let it suffice to have said thus much for the sake of that serpentine subtlety of theirs, by which they wish to corrupt simple minds, and to turn them away from the simplicity of the faith, as if by the praise of the creature.

CHAPTER 9 [V.]

OF THE PRAISE OF MARRIAGE

But further, concerning the praise of marriage, what advantage is it to them that, in opposition to the Manicheans, who assign marriage not to the true and good God, but to the prince of darkness, these men resist the words of true piety, and say, “That the Lord speaks in the gospel, saying, Who from the beginning made them male and female, and said, Increase and multiply and replenish the earth. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder”? What does this profit them, by means of the truth to seduce to a falsehood? For they say this in order that infants may be thought to be born free from all fault, and thus that there is no need of their being reconciled to God through Christ, since they have no original sin, on account of which reconciliation is necessary to all by means of one who came into the world without sin, just as the enmities of all were caused by means of one through whom sin entered into the world. And this is believed by catholics for the sake of the salvation of the nature of men, without detracting from the praise of marriage; because the praise of marriage is a righteous intercourse of the sexes, not a wicked defence of vices. And thus, when, by their praise of marriage, these persons wish to draw over men from the Manicheans to themselves, they desire merely to change their disease, not to heal it.

CHAPTER 10

OF THE PRAISE OF THE LAW

Once more, in the praise of the law, what advantage is it to them that, in opposition to the Manicheans, they say the truth when they wish to bring men from that view to this which they hold falsely against the catholics? For they say, “We confess that even the old law, according to the apostle, is holy and just and good, and that this could confer eternal life on those that kept its commandments, and lived righteously by faith, like the prophets and patriarchs, and all the saints.” By which words, very craftily expressed, they praise the law in opposition to grace; for certainly that law, although just and holy and good, could not confer eternal life on all those men of God, but the faith which is in Christ. For this faith worketh by love, not according to the letter which killeth, but according to the Spirit which maketh alive, to which grace of God the law, as it were a schoolmaster, leads by deterring from transgression, that so that might be conferred upon man which it could not itself confer. For to those words of theirs in which they say “that the law was able to confer eternal life on the prophets and patriarchs, and all saints who kept its commandments,” the apostle replies, “If righteousness be by the law, then has Christ died in vain.” “If the inheritance be by the law, then is it no more of promise.” “If they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of none effect.” “But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident: for, The just by faith liveth.” “But the law is not of faith: but The man that doeth them shall live in them.” Which testimony, quoted by the apostle from the law, is understood in respect of temporal life, in respect of the fear of losing which, men were in the habit of doing the works of the law, not of faith; because the transgressors of the law were commanded by the same law to be put to death by the people. Or, if it must be understood more highly, that “He who doeth these things shall live in them” was written in reference to eternal life; the power of the law is so expressed that the weakness of man in himself, itself failing to do what the law commands, might seek help from the grace of God rather of faith, seeing that by His mercy even faith itself is bestowed. Because faith is thus possessed, according as God has given to every one the measure of faith. For if men have it not of themselves, but men receive the Spirit of power and of love and of continence, whence that very same teacher of the Gentiles says, “For we have not received the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of continence,”—assuredly also the Spirit of faith is received, of which he says, “Having also the same Spirit of faith.” Truly, then, says the law, “He who doeth these things shall live in them.” But in order to do these things, and live in them, there is necessary not law which ordains this, but faith which obtains this. Which faith, however, that it may deserve to receive these things, is itself given freely.

CHAPTER 11

THE PELAGIANS UNDERSTAND THAT THE LAW ITSELF IS GOD’S GRACE

But those enemies of grace never endeavour to lay more secret snares for more vehement opposition to that same grace than when they praise the law, which, without doubt, is worthy to be praised. Because, by their different modes of speaking, and by variety of words in all their arguments, they wish the law to be understood as “grace”—that, to wit, we may have from the Lord God the help of knowledge, whereby we may know those things which have to be done,—not the inspiration of love, that, when known, we may do them with a holy love, which is properly grace. For the knowledge of the law without love puffeth up, does not edify, according to the same apostle, who most openly says, “Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth.” Which saying is like to that in which it is said, “The letter killeth, the spirit maketh alive.” For “Knowledge puffeth up,” corresponds to “The letter killeth:” and, “Love edifieth,” to “The spirit maketh alive;” because “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us.” Therefore the knowledge of the law makes a proud transgressor; but, by the gift of charity, he delights to be a doer of the law. We do not then make void the law through faith, but we establish the law, which by terrifying leads to faith. Thus certainly the law worketh wrath, that the mercy of God may bestow grace on the sinner, frightened and turned to the fulfilment of the righteousness of the law through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is that wisdom of God of which it is written, “She carries law and mercy on her tongue,”—law whereby she frightens, mercy by which she may help,—law by His servant, mercy by Himself,—the law, as it were, in the staff which Elisha sent to raise up the son of the widow, and it failed to raise him up, “For if a law had been given which could have given life, righteousness would altogether have been by the law,” but mercy, as it were, in Elisha himself, who, wearing the figure of Christ, by giving life to the dead was joined in the signification of the great sacrament, as it were, of the New Testament.

CHAPTER 12 [VI.]

OF THE PRAISE OF FREE WILL

Moreover, that, in opposition to the Manicheans, they praise free will, making use of the prophetic testimony, “If ye shall be willing and will hear me, ye shall eat what is good in the land; but if ye shall be unwilling and will not hear me, the sword shall consume you:” what advantage is this to them, when, indeed, it is not so much against the Manicheans that they are maintaining, as against the catholics that they are extolling, free will? For they wish what is said, “If ye be willing and will hear me,” to be so understood, as if in the preceding will itself were the merit of the grace that follows; and thus grace were no more grace, seeing that it is not free when it is rendered as a debt. But if they should so understand what is written, “If ye be willing,” as to confess that He prepares even that good will itself of whom it is written, “The will is prepared by the Lord,” they would use this testimony as catholics, and not only would overcome the ancient heresy of the Manicheans, but would not found the new one of the Pelagians.

CHAPTER 13

GOD’S PURPOSES ARE EFFECTS OF GRACE

What does it profit them, that in the praise of that same free will “they say that grace assists the good purpose of every one”? This would be received without scruple as being said in a catholic spirit, if they did not attribute merit to the good purpose, to which merit now a wage is paid of debt, not according to grace, but would understand and confess that even that very good purpose, which the grace which follows assists could not have been in the man if grace had not preceded it. For how is there a good purpose in a man without the mercy of God first, since it is that very good will which is prepared by the Lord? But when they had said this, “that grace also assists every one’s good purpose,” and presently added, “yet does not infuse the love of virtue into a resisting heart,” it might be fitly understood, if it were not said by those whose meaning is known. For, for the resisting heart a hearing for the divine call is first procured by the grace of God itself, and then in that heart, now no more resisting, the desire of virtue is kindled. Nevertheless, in all things which any one does according to God, His mercy precedes him. And this they will not have, because they choose to be not catholics, but Pelagians. For it much delights a proud impiety, that even that which a man is forced to confess to be given by the Lord should seem to be not bestowed on himself, but repaid; so that, to wit, the children of perdition, not of the promise, may be thought themselves to have made themselves good, and God to have repaid to those who are now good, having been made so by themselves, the reward due for that their work.

CHAPTER 14

THE TESTIMONIES OF SCRIPTURE IN FAVOUR OF GRACE

For that very pride has so stopped the ears of their heart that they do not hear, “For what hast thou that thou hast not received?” They do not hear, “Without me ye can do nothing;” they do not hear, “Love is of God;” they do not hear, “God hath dealt the measure of faith;” they do not hear, “The Spirit breatheth where it will,” and, “They who are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;” they do not hear, “No one can come unto me, unless it were given him of my Father;” they do not hear what Esdras writes, “Blessed is the Lord of our fathers, who hath put into the heart of the king to glorify His house which is in Jerusalem;” they do not hear what the Lord says by Jeremiah, “And I will put my fear into their heart, that they depart not from me; and I will visit them to make them good;” and specially that word by Ezekiel the prophet, where God fully shows that He is induced by no good deservings of men to make them good, that is, obedient to His commands, but rather that He repays to them good for evil, by doing this for His own sake, and not for theirs. For He says, “These things saith the Lord God: I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine own holy name’s sake, which has been profaned among the nations, whither ye have gone in there; and I will sanctify my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord, saith Adonai the Lord, when I shall be sanctified among you before their eyes. And I will take you from among the nations, and gather you together out of all lands, and will bring you into your own land. And I will sprinkle upon you clean water, and ye shall be cleansed from all your filthiness, and I will cleanse you. And I will give unto you a new heart, and a new spirit will I put within you: and the stony heart shall be taken away out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and will cause you to walk in my righteousness, and to observe my judgments, and do them." And after a few words, by the same prophet He says, "Not for your sakes do I do this, saith the Lord God; it shall be known unto you: be ye confounded and blush for your ways, O house of Israel. These things saith the Lord God: In the day in which I shall cleanse you from all your iniquities, and shall ordain cities, and the wilderness shall be built, and the desolated land shall be tilled, whereas it was desolated before the eyes of every passer by. And they shall say, This land that was desolated has become as a garden of pleasure; and the wasted and desolated and ruined cities have settled down fortified. And whatever nations have been left round about you shall know that I the Lord have built the ruined places, I have planted the desolated places: I the Lord have spoken, and have done it. Thus saith the Lord: I will yet for this inquire of the house of Israel, that I may do it for them; I will multiply them men like sheep, as holy sheep, as the sheep of Jerusalem in the days of her feast; so shall be those desolated cities full of men as sheep: and they shall know that I am the Lord."

CHAPTER 15

FROM SUCH SCRIPTURES GRACE IS PROVED TO BE GRATUITOUS AND EFFECTUAL

What remained to the carrion skin whence it might be puffed up, and could disdain when it glories to glory in the Lord? What remained to it, when whatsoever it shall have said that it has done in such a way that after that preceding merit of man had originated from man, God should subsequently do that of which the man is deserving,—it shall be answered, it shall be exclaimed against, it shall be contradicted, "I do it; but for my own holy name's sake; not for your sakes, do I do it, saith the Lord God"? Nothing so overturns the Pelagians when they say that the grace of God is given in respect of our merits. Which, indeed, Pelagius himself condemned, and if not by correcting it, yet by being afraid of the Eastern judges. Nothing so overturns the presumption of men who say, “We do it, that we may deserve those things with which God may do it.” It is not Pelagius that answers you, but the Lord Himself, “I do it and not for your sakes, but for my own holy name’s sake.” For what good can ye do out of a heart which is not good? But that you may have a good heart, He says, “I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new Spirit within you.” Can you say, We will first walk in His righteousness, and will observe His judgment, and will do so that we may be worthy, such as He should give His grace to? But what good would ye evil men do, and how should you do those good things, unless you were yourselves good? But who causes that men should be good save Him who said, “And I will visit them to make them good”? and who said “I will put my Spirit within you, and will cause you to walk in my righteousness, and to observe my judgments, and do them”? Are ye thus not yet awake? Do ye not yet hear, “I will cause you to walk, I will make you to observe,” lastly, “I will make you to do”? What! are you still puffing yourselves up? We indeed walk, it is true; we observe; we do; but He makes us to walk, to observe, to do. This is the grace of God making us good; this is His mercy preventing us. What do waste and desolated and dug-up places deserve, which yet shall be built and tilled and fortified? Are these things for the merits of their wasteness, their desolation, their uprooting? Far from it. For such things as these are evil deservings, while those gifts are good. Therefore good things are given for evil ones—gratuitous, therefore; not of debt, and therefore grace. “I,” saith the Lord: “I, the Lord.” Does not such a word as that restrain you, O human pride, when you say, I do such things as to deserve from the Lord to be built and planted? Do you not hear, “I do it not on your account; I the Lord have built up the destroyed cities, and I have planted the desolated lands; I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, yet not for your sakes, but for my own holy name’s sake”? Who multiplies men as sheep, as holy sheep, as the sheep of Jerusalem? Who causes those desolated cities to be full of men as sheep, save He who goes on, and says, “And they shall know that I am the Lord”? But with what men as sheep does He fill the cities as He promised? those which He finds, or those which He makes? Let us interrogate the Psalm; lo, it answers; let us hear: “O come, let us worship and fall down before Him: and let us weep before the Lord who made us; because He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.” He therefore makes the sheep, with which He may fill the desolated cities. What wonder, when, indeed, to that single sheep, that is, the Church whose members are all the human sheep, it is said, “Because I am the Lord who make thee”? What do you pretend to me of free will, which will not be free to do righteousness, unless you should be a sheep? He then who makes men His sheep, He frees the wills of men for the obedience of piety.

CHAPTER 16

WHY GOD MAKES OF SOME SHEEP, OTHERS NOT

But wherefore does God make these men sheep, and those not, since with Him there is no acceptance of persons? This is the very question which the blessed apostle thus answers to those who propose it with more curiosity than propriety, “O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Does the thing formed say to him that formed it, Wherefore hast thou made me thus?” This is the very question which belongs to that depth desiring to look into which the same apostle was in a certain measure terrified, and exclaimed, “Oh the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? or who has been His counsellor? Or who has first given to Him, that it should be recompensed to Him again? Because of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things: to Him be glory for ages of ages.” Let them not, then, dare to pry into that unsearchable question who defend merit before grace, and therefore even against grace, and wish first to give unto God, that it may be given to them again,—first, of course, to give something of free will, that grace may be given them again as a reward; and let them wisely understand or faithfully believe that even what they think that they have first given, they have received from Him, from whom are all things, by whom are all things, in whom are all things. But why this man should receive, and that should not receive, when neither of them deserves to receive, and whichever of them receives, receives undeservingly,—let them measure their own strength, and not search into things too strong for them. Let it suffice them to know that there is no unrighteousness with God. For when the apostle could find no merits for which Jacob should take precedence of his twin-brother with God, he said, “What, then, shall we say? Is there unrighteousness with God? Away with the thought! For He says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will show compassion on whom I will show compassion. Therefore it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” Let, therefore, His free compassion be grateful to us, even although this profound question be still unsolved; which, nevertheless, is so far solved as the same apostle solves it, saying, “But if God, willing to show His wrath, and to demonstrate His power, endured in much patience the vessels of wrath which are fitted to destruction; and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He has prepared for glory.” Certainly wrath is not repaid unless it is due, lest there be unrighteousness with God; but mercy, even when it is bestowed, and not due, is not unrighteousness with God. And hence, let the vessels of mercy understand how freely mercy is afforded to them, because to the vessels of wrath with whom they have common cause and measure of perdition, is repaid wrath, righteous and due. This is now enough in opposition to those who, by freedom of will, desire to destroy the liberality of grace.

CHAPTER 17 [VII.]

OF THE PRAISE OF THE SAINTS

In that, indeed, in the praise of the saints, they will not drive us with the zeal of that publican to hunger and thirst after righteousness, but with the vanity of the Pharisees, as it were, to overflow with sufficiency and fulness; what does it profit them that—in opposition to the Manicheans, who do away with baptism—they say “that men are perfectly renewed by baptism,” and apply the apostle’s testimony for this,—”who testifies that, by the washing of water, the Church is made holy and spotless from the Gentiles,”—when, with a proud and perverse meaning, they put forth their arguments in opposition to the prayers of the Church itself. For they say this in order that the Church may be believed after holy baptism—in which is accomplished the forgiveness of all sins—to have no further sin; when, in opposition to them, from the rising of the sun even to its setting, in all its members it cries to God, “Forgive us our debts.” But if they are interrogated regarding themselves in this matter, they find not what to answer. For if they should say that they have no sin, John answers them, that they deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them. But if they confess their sins, since they wish themselves to be members of Christ's body, how will that body, that is, the Church, be even in this time perfectly, as they think, without spot or wrinkle, if its members without falsehood confess themselves to have sins? Wherefore in baptism all sins are forgiven, and, by that very washing of water in the word, the Church is set forth in Christ without spot or wrinkle; and unless it were baptized, it would fruitlessly say, "Forgive us our debts," until it be brought to glory, when there is in it absolutely no spot or wrinkle.

CHAPTER 18

THE OPINION OF THE SAINTS THEMSELVES ABOUT THEMSELVES

It is to be confessed that "the Holy Spirit, even in the old times," not only "aided good dispositions," which even they allow, but that it even made them good, which they will not have. "That all, also, of the prophets and apostles or saints, both evangelical and ancient, to whom God gives His witness, were righteous, not in comparison with the wicked, but by the rule of virtue," is not doubtful. And this is opposed to the Manicheans, who blaspheme the patriarchs and prophets; but what is opposed to the Pelagians is, that all of these, when interrogated concerning themselves while they lived in the body, with one most accordant voice would answer, "If we should say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." "But in the future time," it is not to be denied "that there will be a reward as well of good works as of evil, and that no one will be commanded to do the commandments there which here he has contemned," but that a sufficiency of perfect righteousness where sin cannot be, a righteousness which is here hungered and thirsted after by the saints, is here hoped for in precept, is there received as a reward, on the entreaty of alms and prayers; so that what here may have been wanting in fulfilment of the commandments may become unpunished for the forgiveness of sin.

CHAPTER 19

THE CRAFT OF THE PELAGIANS

And if these things be so, let the Pelagians cease by their most insidious praises of these five things—that is, the praise of the creature, the praise of marriage, the praise of the law, the praise of free will, the praise of the saints—from feigning that they desire to pluck men, as it were, from the little snares of the Manicheans, in order that they may entangle them in their own nets—that is, that they may deny original sin; may begrudge to infants the aid of Christ the physician; may say that the grace of God is given according to our merits, and thus that grace is no more grace; and may say that the saints in this life had not sin, and thus make the prayer of none effect which He gave to the saints who had no sin, and by which all sin is pardoned to the saints that pray unto Him. To these three evil doctrines, they by their deceitful praise of these five good things seduce careless and unlearned men. Concerning all which things, I think I have sufficiently censured their most cruel and wicked and proud vanity.

CHAPTER 20 [VIII.]

THE TESTIMONIES OF THE ANCIENTS AGAINST THE PELAGIANS

But since they say “that their enemies have taken up our words for hatred of the truth,” and complained that “throughout nearly the whole of the West a dogma not less foolish than impious is taken up, and from simple bishops sitting in their places without a Synodal congregation a subscription is extorted to confirm this dogma,”—although the Church of Christ, both Western and Eastern shuddered at the profane novelties of their words—I think it belongs to my care not only to avail myself of the sacred canonical Scriptures as witnesses against them, which I have already sufficiently done, but, moreover, to bring forward some proofs from the writings of the holy men who before us have treated upon those Scriptures with the most widespread reputation and great glory. Not that I would put the authority of any controversialist on a level with the canonical books, as if there were nothing which is better or more truly thought by one catholic than by another who likewise is a catholic; but that those may be admonished who think that these men say anything as it used to be said, before their empty talk on these subjects, by catholic teachers following the divine oracles, and may know that the true and anciently established catholic faith is by us defended against the receding presumption and mischief of the Pelagian heretics.

CHAPTER 21

PELAGIUS, IN IMITATION OF CYPRIAN, WROTE A BOOK OF TESTIMONIES

Even that heresiarch of these men, Pelagius himself, mentions with the honour that is certainly due to him, the most blessed Cyprian, most glorious with even the crown of martyrdom, not only in the African and the Western, but also in the Eastern Churches, well known by the report of fame, and by the diffusion far and wide of his writings,—when, writing a book of testimonies, he asserts that he is imitating him, saying that “he was doing to Romanus what Cypria had done to Quirinus.” Let us, then, see what Cyprian thought concerning original sin, which entered by one man into the world. In the epistle on “Works and Alms” he thus speaks: “When the Lord at His advent had cured these wounds which Adam had introduced, and had healed the old poisons of the serpent, He gave a law to the sound man, and bade him sin no more, lest a worse thing should happen to him if he sinned. We had been limited and shut up into a narrow space by the commandment of innocence; nor would the infirmity and weakness of human frailty have any resource unless the divine mercy coming once more in aid should open some way of securing salvation by pointing out works of justice and mercy, so that by alms-giving we may wash away whatever foulness we subsequently contract.” By this testimony this witness refutes two falsehoods of theirs,—the one, wherein they say that the human race draws no sin from Adam which needs cure and healing through Christ; the other, in which they say that the saints have no sin after baptism. Again, in the same epistle he says, “Let each one place before his eyes the devil with his servants,—that is, with the people of perdition and death,—as springing forth into the midst and provoking the people of Christ,—Himself being present and judging,—with the trial of comparison in these words: I, on behalf of those whom thou seest with me, neither received buffets, nor bore scourgings, nor endured the cross, nor shed my blood, nor redeemed my family at the price of my suffering and blood; but neither do I promise them a celestial kingdom, nor do I recall them to Paradise, having again restored to them immortality.'" Let the Pelagians answer and say when we could have been in the immortality of Paradise, and how we could have been expelled thence so as to be recalled thither by the grace of Christ. And, although they may be unable to find what they can answer in this case on behalf of their own perversity, let them observe in what manner Cyprian understood what the apostle says, "In whom all have sinned." And let not the Pelagian heretics, freed from the old Manichean heretics, dare to suggest any calumny against a catholic, lest they should be convicted of doing so wicked a wrong even to the ancient martyr Cyprian.

CHAPTER 22

FURTHER REFERENCES TO CYPRIAN

For he says also this in the epistle whose title is inscribed, "On the Mortality:" "The kingdom of God, beloved brethren, is beginning to be at hand; the reward of life, and the rejoicing of eternal salvation and perpetual gladness, and the possession formerly lost of Paradise, are now coming with the passing away of the world." This again, in the same epistle, he says: "Let us greet the day which assigns each of us to his own home, which snatches us hence and sets us free from the snares of the world, and restores us to Paradise and the kingdom." Moreover, he says in the epistle concerning Patience: "Let the judgment of God be pondered, which, even in the beginning of the world and of the human race, Adam, forgetful of the commandment and a transgressor of the law that had been given, received. Then we shall know how patient in this life we ought to be, who are born in such a state that we labour here with afflictions and contests. Because, says He, thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which alone I had charged thee that thou shouldest not eat, cursed shall be the ground in all thy works: in sorrow and in groaning shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it give forth to thee, and thou shall eat the food of the field. In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread, till thou return unto the ground from which thou wast taken: for earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou go.' We are all tied and bound with the chain of this sentence until, death being destroyed, we depart from this world." And, moreover, in the same epistle he says: "For, since in that first transgression of the commandment strength of body departed with immortality, and weakness came on with death, and strength cannot be received unless when immortality also has been received, it behoves us in this bodily frailty and weakness always to struggle and fight; and this struggle and encounter cannot be sustained but by the strength of patience.”

CHAPTER 23

FURTHER REFERENCES TO CYPRIAN

And in the epistle which he wrote with sixty-six of his joint-bishops to Bishop Fidus, when he was consulted by him in respect of the law of circumcision, whether an infant might be baptized before the eighth day, this matter is treated in such a way as if by a divine forethought the catholic Church would already confute the Pelagian heretics who would appear so long afterwards. For he who had consulted had no doubt on the subject whether children on birth inherited original sin, which they might wash away by being born again. For be it far from the Christian faith to have at any time doubted on this matter. But he was in doubt whether the washing of regeneration, by which he made no question but that original sin was put away, ought to be given before the eighth day. To which consultation the most blessed Cyprian in reply said: “But as regards the case of infants, which you say ought not to be baptized within the second or third day after their birth, and that the law of the ancient circumcision should be regarded, so that you think that one who is born should not be baptized and sanctified within the eighth day, we all thought very differently in our council. For to the course which you thought was to be taken no one agreed, but we all rather judged that the grace of a merciful God was not to be denied to any one born of men; for, as the Lord says in His gospel, the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.’ As far as we can, we must strive that, if possible, no soul be lost.” And a little afterwards he says: “Nor ought any of us to shudder at what God hath condescended to make. For although the infant is still fresh from its birth, yet it is not such that any one should shudder at kissing it in giving grace and in making peace, since in the kiss of an infant every one of us ought for his very religion’s sake to consider the still recent hands of God themselves, which in some sort we are kissing in the man just formed and newly born, when we are embracing that which God has made.” A little after, also, he says: “But if anything could hinder men from obtaining grace, their more heinous sins might rather hinder those who are mature and grown up and older. But again, if even to the greatest sinners, and to those who have before sinned much against God, when they have subsequently believed, remission of sins is granted, and nobody is hindered from baptism and from grace; how much rather ought we to shrink from hindering an infant, who, being lately born, has not sinned, except that, being born after the flesh according to Adam, he has contracted the contagion of the ancient death at his earliest birth; who approaches more easily on this very account to the reception of the forgiveness of sins, in that to him are remitted not his own sins, but the sins of another!”

CHAPTER 24

THE DILEMMA PROPOSED TO THE PELAGIANS

What will be said to such things as these, by those who are not only the forsakers, but also the persecutors of God’s grace? What will they say to such things as these? On what ground is the “possession of Paradise” restored to us? How are we restored to Paradise if we have never been there? Or how have we been there, except because we were there in Adam? And how do we belong to that “judgment” which was spoken against the transgressor, if we do not inherit injury from the transgressor? Finally, he thinks that infants are to be baptized, even before the eighth day; lest “by the contagion of the ancient death, contracted in the first birth,” the souls of the infants should perish. How do they perish if they who are born even of believing men are not held by the devil until they are born again in Christ, and plucked out from the power of darkness, and transferred into His kingdom? And who says that the souls of those who are born will perish unless they are born again? No other than he who so praises the Creator and the creature, the workman and the work, as to restrain and correct the horror of human feeling with which men refuse to kiss infants fresh from the womb, by interposing the veneration of the Creator Himself, saying that in the kiss of infants of that age the recent hands of God were to be considered! Did he, then, in confessing original sin, condemn either nature or marriage? Did he, because he applied to the infant born guilty from

Adam, the cleansing of regeneration, therefore deny God as the Creator of those that were born? Because, in his dread that souls of any age whatever should perish, he, with his council of colleagues, decided that even before the eighth day they were to be delivered by the sacrament of baptism, did he therefore accuse marriage, when, indeed, in the case of an infant,—whether born of marriage or of adultery, yet because it was born a man,—he declared that the recent hands of God were worthy even of the kiss of peace? If, then, the holy bishop and most glorious martyr Cyprian could think that original sin in infants must be healed by the medicine of Christ, without denying the praise of the creature, without denying the praise of marriage, why does a novel pestilence, although it does not dare to call such an one as him a Manichean, think that another person’s fault is to be objected against catholics who maintain these things, in order to conceal its own? So the most lauded commentator on the divine declarations, before even the slightest taint of the Manichean plague had touched our lands, without any reproach of the divine work and of marriage, confesses original sin,—not saying that Christ was stained with any spot of sin, nor yet comparing with Him the flesh of sin in others that were born, to whom by means of the likeness of sinful flesh He might afford the aid of cleansing; neither is he deterred by the obscure question of the origin of souls, from confessing that those who are made free by the grace of Christ return into Paradise. Does he say that the condition of death passed upon men from Adam without the contagion of sin? For it is not on account of avoiding the death of the body, but on account of the sin which entered by one man into the world, that he says that help is to be afforded by baptism to infants, however fresh they may be from the womb.

CHAPTER 25 [IX.]

CYPRIAN’S TESTIMONIES CONCERNING GOD’S GRACE

But now it plainly appears in what way Cyprian proclaims the grace of God against such as these, when he is arguing about the Lord’s Prayer. For he says: “We say, May Thy name be made holy,’ not that we wish for God that He may be made holy by our prayers, but that we beseech of Him that His name may be made holy in us. But by whom is God made holy, since He Himself makes holy? But, because He says, Be ye holy, because I also am holy,’ we ask and entreat this, that we who were made holy in baptism may continue in that which we have begun to be.” And in another place in the same epistle he says: “We add also, and say, Thy will be done in heaven, and in earth,’ not in order that God may do what He wills, but that we may be able to do what God wills. For who resists God that He may not do what He wills? But, since we are hindered by the devil from obeying God with our thought and deed in all things, we pray and ask that God’s will may be done in us. And that it may be done in us, we have need of God’s will, that is, of His help and protection; since no one is strong in his own strength, but he is safe by the indulgence and mercy of God.” In another place also: “Moreover, we ask that the will of God may be done both in heaven and in earth, each of which things pertains to the fulfilment of our safety and salvation. For since we possess the body from the earth, and the spirit from heaven, we are ourselves earth and heaven; and in both, that is, both in body and in spirit, we pray that God’s will be done. For between the flesh and the spirit there is a struggle, and there is a daily strife as they disagree one with the other; so that we cannot do the very things that we would, in that the spirit seeks heavenly and divine things, while the flesh lusts after earthly and temporal things. And, therefore, we ask that, by the help and assistance of God, agreement may be made between these two natures; so that while the will of God is done both in the spirit and in the flesh, the soul which is newborn by Him may be preserved. And this the Apostle Paul openly and manifestly declares by his words. The flesh,’ says he, lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.’“ And a little after he says: “And it may be thus understood, most beloved brethren, that since the Lord commands and teaches us even to love our enemies, and to pray even for those who persecute us, we should ask even for those who are still earth, and have not yet begun to be heavenly, that even in respect of these God’s will may be done, which Christ accomplished in preserving and renewing humanity.” And again, in another place he says: “But we ask that this bread should be given to us daily, that we who are in Christ, and daily receive the Eucharist for the food of salvation, may not, by the interposition of some more heinous sin,—by being prevented, as those abstaining and not communicating, from partaking of the heavenly bread,—be separated from Christ’s body.” And a little afterwards, in the same treatise he says: “But when we ask that we may not come into temptation, we are reminded of our infirmity and weakness, while we so ask as that no one should insolently vaunt himself; that none should proudly and arrogantly assume anything to himself; that none should take to himself the glory either of confession or of suffering as his own, when the Lord Himself teaching humility said, Watch and pray, that ye come not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak;' so that while a humble and submissive confession comes first, and all is attributed to God, whatever is sought for suppliantly, with fear and honour of God, may be granted by His own loving-kindness." Moreover, in his treatise addressed to Quirinus, in respect to which work Pelagius wishes himself to appear as his imitator, he says in the Third Book "that we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own." And subjoining the divine testimonies to this proposition, he added among others that apostolic word with which especially the mouths of such as these must be closed: "For what hast thou, which thou hast not received? But if thou hast received it, why boastest thou as if thou hadst not received it?" Also in the epistle concerning Patience he says: "For we have this virtue in common with God. From Him patience begins; from Him its glory and its dignity take their rise. The origin and greatness of patience proceed from God as its Author."

CHAPTER 26

FURTHER APPEALS TO CYPRIAN'S TEACHING

Does that holy and so memorable instructor of the Churches in the word of truth, deny that there is free will in men, because he attributes to God the whole of your righteous living? Does he reproach God's law, because he intimates that man is not justified by it, seeing that he declares that what that law commands must be obtained from the Lord God by prayers? Does he assert fate under the name of grace, by saying that we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own? Does he, like these, believe that the Holy Spirit is in such wise the aider of virtue, as if that very virtue which it assists springs from ourselves, when, asserting that nothing is our own, he mentions in this respect that the apostle said, "For what hast thou that thou hast not received?" and says that the most excellent virtue, that is, patience, does not begin from us, and afterwards receive aid by the Spirit of God, but from Him Himself takes its source, from Him takes its origin? Finally, he confesses that neither good purpose, nor desire of virtue, nor good dispositions, begin to be in men without God’s grace, when he says that “we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own.” What is so established in free will as what the law says, that we must not worship an idol, must not commit adultery, must do no murder? Nay, these crimes, and such like, are of such a kind that, if any one should commit them, he is removed from the communion of the body of Christ. And yet, if the blessed Cyprian thought that our own will was sufficient for not committing these crimes, he would not in such wise understand what we say in the Lord’s Prayer, “Give us this day our daily bread,” as that he should assert that we ask “that we may not by the interposition of some heinous sin—by being prevented as abstaining, and not communicating, from partaking of the heavenly bread—be separated from Christ’s body.” Let these new heretics answer of a surety what good merit precedes, in men who are enemies of the name of Christ? For not only have they no good merit, but they have, moreover, the very worst merit. And yet, Cyprian even thus understands what we say in the prayer, “Thy will be done in heaven, and in earth:” that we pray also for those very persons who in this respect are called earth. We pray, therefore, not only for the unwilling, but also for the objecting and resisting. What, then, do we ask, but that from unwilling they may be made willing; from objecting, consenting; from resisting, loving? And by whom, but by Him of whom it is written, “The will is prepared by God”? Let them, then, who disdain, if they do not do any evil and if they do any good, to glory, not in themselves, but in the Lord, learn to be catholics.

CHAPTER 27 [X.]

CYPRIAN’S TESTIMONIES CONCERNING THE IMPERFECTION OF OUR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Let us, then, see that third point, which in these men is not less shocking to every member of Christ and to His whole body,—that they contend that there are in this life, or that there have been, righteous men having absolutely no sin. In which presumption they most manifestly contradict the Lord’s Prayer, wherein, with truthful heart and with daily words, all the members of Christ cry aloud, “Forgive us our debts.” Let us see, then, what

Cyprian, most glorious in the Lord, thought of this,—what he not only said for the instruction of the Churches, not, of course, of the Manicheans, but of the catholics, but also committed to letters and to memory. In the epistle on “Works and Alms,” he says: “Let us then acknowledge, beloved brethren, the wholesome gift of the divine mercy, and let us who cannot be without some wound of conscience heal our wounds by the spiritual remedies for the cleansing and purging of our sins. Nor let any one so flatter himself with the notion of a pure and immaculate heart, as, in dependence on his own innocence, to think that the medicine needs not to be applied to his wounds; since it is written, Who shall boast that he hath a clean heart, or who shall boast that he is pure from sins?’ And again, in his epistle, John lays it down and says, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.’ But if no one can be without sin, and whoever should say that he is without fault is either proud or foolish, how needful, how kind is the divine mercy, which, knowing that there are still found some wounds in those that have been healed, has given even after their healing wholesome remedies for the curing and healing of their wounds anew!” Again, in the same treatise he says: “And since there cannot fail daily to be sins committed in the sight of God, there failed not daily sacrifices wherewith the sins might be cleansed away.” Also, in the treatise on the Mortality, he says: “Our warfare is with avarice, with immodesty, with anger, with ambition; our trying and toilsome wrestling with carnal vices, with the enticements of the world. The mind of man besieged, and on every hand invested with the onsets of the devil, scarcely meets the repeated attacks, scarcely resists them. If avarice is prostrated, lust springs up. If lust is overcome, ambition takes its place. If ambition is despised, anger exasperates, pride puffs up, wine-bibbing entices; envy breaks concord; jealousy cuts friendship; you are constrained to curse, which the divine law forbids; you are compelled to swear, which is not lawful. So many persecutions the soul suffers daily, with so many risks is the heart wearied; and yet it delights to abide here long among the devil’s weapons, although it should rather be our craving and wish to hasten to Christ by the aid of a quicker death.” Again, in the same treatise he says: “The blessed Apostle Paul in his epistle lays it down, saying, To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain;’ counting it the greatest gain no longer to be held by the snares of this world, no longer to be liable to the sins and vices of the flesh.” Moreover, on the Lord’s Prayer, explaining what it is we ask when we say, “Hallowed be thy name,” he says, among other matters: “For we have need of daily sanctification, that we, who daily fall away, may wash out our sins by continual sanctification.” Again, in the same treatise, when he would explain our saying, “Forgive us our debts,” he says: “And how necessarily, how providently and salutarily, are we admonished that we are sinners, since we are compelled to entreat for our sins; and while pardon is asked for from God, the soul recalls its own consciousness of guilt. Lest any one should flatter himself as being innocent, and by exalting himself should more deeply perish, he is instructed and taught that he sins daily, in that he is bidden to entreat daily for his sins. Thus, moreover, John also in his epistle warns us, and says: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.’“ Rightly, also, he proposed in his letter to Quirinus his own most absolute judgment on this subject, to which he subjoined the divine testimonies, “That no one is without filth and without sin.” There also he set down those testimonies by which original sin is confirmed, which these men endeavour to twist into I know not what new and evil meanings, whether what the holy Job says, “No one is pure from filth, not one even if his life be of one day upon the earth,” or what is read in the Psalm, “Behold, I was conceived in iniquity; and in sins hath my mother nourished me in the womb.” To which testimonies, on account of those also who are already holy in mature age, since even they are not without filth and sin, he added also that word of the most blessed John, which he often mentions in many other places besides, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves;” and other passages of the same sentiment, which are asserted by all catholics, by way of opposing those “who deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them.”

CHAPTER 28

CYPRIAN’S ORTHODOXY UNDOUBTED

Let the Pelagians say, if they dare, that this man of God was perverted by the error of the Manicheans, in so praising the saints as yet to confess that no one in this life had attained to such a perfection of righteousness as to have no sin at all, confirming his judgment by the clear truth and divine authority of the canonical testimonies. For does he deny that in baptism all sins are forgiven, because he confesses that there remain frailty and infirmity, whence he says that we sin after baptism and even to the end of this life, having unceasing conflict with the vices of the flesh? Or did he not remember what the apostle said about the Church without spot, that he prescribed that no one ought so to flatter himself in respect of a pure and spotless heart as to trust in his own innocence, and think that no medicine needed to be applied to his wounds? I think that these new heretics may concede to this catholic man that he knew “that the Holy Spirit even in the old times aided good dispositions;” nay, even, what they themselves will not allow, that they could not have possessed good dispositions except through the Holy Spirit. I think that Cyprian knew that all the prophets and apostles or saints of any kind soever who pleased the Lord at any time were righteous—”not in comparison with the wicked,” as they falsely assert that we say, “but by the rule of virtue,” as they boast that they say; although Cyprian says, nevertheless, no one can be without sin, and whoever should assert that he is blameless is either proud or a fool. Nor is it with reference to anything else that he understands the Scripture, “Who shall boast that he has a pure heart? or who shall boast that he is pure from sins?” I think that Cyprian would not have needed to be taught by such as these, what he very well knew, “that, in the time to come, there would be a reward of good works and a punishment of evil works, but that no one could then perform the commands which here he might have despised;” and yet he does not understand and assert the Apostle Paul, who was assuredly not a contemner of the divine commands, to have said, “To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain,” on any other account, except that he reckoned it the greatest gain after this life no longer to be held in worldly entanglements, no longer to be obnoxious to the sins and vices of the flesh. Therefore the most blessed Cyprian felt, and in the truth of the divine Scriptures saw, that even the life of the apostles themselves, however good, holy, and righteous, suffered some involvements of worldly entanglements, was obnoxious to some sins and vices of the flesh; and that they desired death that they might be free from those evils, and that they might attain to that perfect righteousness which would not suffer such things, and which would no more have to be achieved in the way of command merely, but to be received in the way of reward. For not even when that shall have come for which we pray when we say, “Thy kingdom come,” will there be in that kingdom of God no righteousness; since the apostle says, “The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” Certainly these three things are commanded among other divine precepts. Here righteousness is prescribed to us when it is said, “Do righteousness;” peace is prescribed when it is said, “Have peace among yourselves;” joy is prescribed when it is said, “Rejoice in the Lord always.” Let, then, the Pelagians deny that these things shall be in the kingdom of God, where we shall live without end; or let them be so mad, if it appears good, as to contend that righteousness, peace, and joy, will be such there as they are here to the righteous. But if they both shall be, and yet shall not be the same, assuredly here, in respect of the commandment of them, the doing is to be cared for,—there the perfection is to be hoped for in the way of reward; when, not being withheld by any earthly entanglements, and being liable to no sins and vices of the flesh (on account of which the apostle, as Cyprian received this testimony, said that to die would be to him gain), we may perfectly love God, the contemplation of whom will be face to face; we may also perfectly love our neighbour, since, when the thoughts of the heart are made manifest, no suspicion of any evil can disturb any one concerning any one.

CHAPTER 29 [XI.]

THE TESTIMONIES OF AMBROSE AGAINST THE PELAGIANS AND FIRST OF ALL CONCERNING ORIGINAL SIN

But now also to the most glorious martyr Cyprian, let me add, for the sake of more amply confuting these men, the most blessed Ambrose; because even Pelagius praised him so much as to say that in his writings could be found nothing to be blamed even by his enemies. Since, then, the Pelagians say that there is no original sin with which infants are born, and object to the catholics the guilt of the Manichean heresy, who withstand them on behalf of the most ancient faith of the Church, let this catholic man of God, Ambrose, praised even by Pelagius himself in the truth of the faith, answer them concerning this matter. When he was expounding the prophet Isaiah, he says: “Christ was, therefore, without spot, because He was not stained even in the usual condition itself of birth.” And in another place in the same work, speaking of the Apostle Peter, he says: “He offered himself, which he thought before to be sin, asking for himself that not only his feet but his head also should be washed, because he had directly understood that by the washing of the feet, for those who fell in the first man, the filth of the obnoxious succession was abolished.” Also in the same work he says: “It was preserved, therefore, that of a man and woman, that is, by that mingling of bodies, no one could be seen to be free from sin; but He who is free from sin is free also from this kind of conception.” Also writing against the Novatians he says: “All of us men are born under sin. And our very origin is in corruption, as you have it read in the words of David, For lo, I was conceived in iniquities; and in sins hath my mother brought me forth.’“ Also in the apology of the prophet David, he says: “Before we are born we are spotted with contagion, and before the use of light we receive the mischief of that origin. We are conceived in iniquity.” Also speaking of the Lord, he says: “It was certainly fitting that He who was not to have the sin of a bodily fall, should feel no natural contagion of generation. Rightly, therefore, David with weeping deplored in himself these defilements of nature, and the fact that the stain had begun in man before his life.” Again, in the Ark of Noah he says: “Therefore by one Lord Jesus the coming salvation is declared to the nations; for He only could be righteous, although every generation should go astray, nor for any other reason than that, being born of a virgin, He was not at all bound by the ordinance of a guilty generation. Behold,’ he says, I was conceived in iniquities; and in sins has my mother brought me forth;’ he who was esteemed righteous beyond others so speaks. Whom, then, should I now call righteous unless Him who is free from those chains, whom the bonds of our common nature do not hold fast?” Behold, this holy man, most approved, even by the witness of Pelagius, in the catholic faith, condemned the Pelagians who deny original sin with such evidence as this; and yet he does not with the Manicheans deny either God to be the Creator of those who are born, or condemn marriage, which God ordained and blessed.

CHAPTER 30

THE TESTIMONIES OF AMBROSE CONCERNING GOD’S GRACE

The Pelagians say that merit begins from man by free will, to which God repays the subsequent aid of grace. Let the venerable Ambrose here also refute them, when he says, in his exposition of the prophet Isaiah, “that human care without divine help is powerless for healing, and needs a divine helper.” Also, in the treatise which is inscribed, “On the Avoidance of the World,” he says: “Our discourse is frequent on the avoidance of this world; and I wish that our disposition were as cautious and careful as our discourse is easy. But what is worse, the enticement of earthly lusts frequently creeps in, and the flowing forth of vanities takes hold of the mind, so that the very thing that you desire to avoid you think upon, and turn over in your mind; and this it is difficult for a man to beware of, but to get rid of it is impossible. Finally, that that is rather a matter to be wished than to be accomplished the prophet testifies when he says, Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to avarice.’ For our heart and our thoughts are not in our power, seeing that they are suddenly forced forth and confuse the mind and the soul and draw them in other directions from those which you have proposed for them;—they recall to things of time, they suggest worldly things, they obtrude voluptuous thoughts, they inweave seducing thoughts, and, in the very season in which we are proposing to lift up our mind, vain thoughts are intruded upon us, and we are cast down for the most part to things of earth; and who is so happy as always to rise upwards in his heart? And how can this be done without the divine help? Absolutely in no manner. Finally, of old Scripture says the same thing, Blessed is the man whose help is of Thee, O Lord; in his heart is going up.’“ What can be said more openly and more sufficiently? But lest the Pelagians perchance should answer that, in that very point in which divine help is asked for, man’s merit precedes, saying that that very thing is merit, that by his prayer he is desiring that divine grace should come to his assistance, let them give heed to what the same holy man says in his exposition of Isaiah. He says: “And to pray God is a spiritual grace; for no man says that Jesus is the Lord, except in the Holy Spirit.” Whence also, expounding the Gospel according to Luke, he says: “You see certainly that everywhere the power of the Lord cooperates with human desires, so that no man can build without the Lord, no man can undertake anything without the Lord.” Because such a man as Ambrose says this, and commends God’s grace, as it is fitting for a son of promise to do, with grateful piety, does he therefore destroy free will? Or does he mean grace to be understood as the Pelagians in their different discourses will have to appear nothing but law—so that, for instance, God may be believed to help us not to do what we may know, but to know what we may do? If they think that such a man of God as this is of this mind, let them hear what he has said about the law itself. In the book "On the Avoidance of the World," he says: "The law could stop the mouth of all men; it could not convert their mind." In another place also, in the same treatise, he says: "The law condemns the deed; it does not take away its wickedness." Let them see that this faithful and catholic man agrees with the apostle who says, "Now we know that what things soever the law says, it says to those who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Because by the law no flesh shall be justified in His sight." For from that apostolic opinion Ambrose took and wrote these things.

CHAPTER 31

THE TESTIMONIES OF AMBROSE ON THE IMPERFECTION OF PRESENT RIGHTEOUSNESS

But now, since the Pelagians say that there either are or have been righteous men in this life who have lived without any sin, to such an extent that the future life which is to be hoped for as a reward cannot be more advanced or more perfect, let Ambrose here also answer them and refute them. For, expounding Isaiah the Prophet in reference to what is written, "I have begotten and brought up children, and they have despised me," he undertook to dispute concerning the generations which are of God, and in that argument he quoted the testimony of John when he says, "He that is born of God sinneth not." And, treating the same very difficult question, he says: "Since in this world there is none who is free from sin; since John himself says, If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar.' But if they that are born of God sin not,' and if these words refer to those of them who are in the world, it is necessary that we should regard them as those numberless people who have obtained God's grace by the regeneration of the laver. But yet, when the prophet says, All things are waiting upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them meat in season. That Thou givest them they gather for themselves; when Thou openest Thine hand, all things shall be filled with goodness. But when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled: Thou shall take away their breath, and they shall fail, and shall be turned into their dust. Thou shall send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created: and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth,' such things as these cannot seem to have been said of any time whatever but of that future time, in which there shall be a new earth and a new heaven. Therefore they shall be disturbed that they may take their beginning. And when Thou openest Thy hand all things shall be filled with goodness,' which is not easily characteristic of this age. For concerning this age what does Scripture say? There is none that doeth good, no, not one.' If, therefore, there are different generations,—and here the very entrance into this life is the receiver of sins to such an extent that even he who begot should be despised; while another generation does not receive sins;—let us consider whether by any means there may not be a regeneration for us after the course of this life,—of which regeneration it is said, In the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory.' For as that is called the regeneration of washing whereby we are renewed from the filth of sins washed away, so that seems to be called a regeneration by which we are purified from every stain of bodily materiality, and are regenerated in the pure sense of the soul to life eternal; so that every quality of regeneration may be purer than of that washing, so that no suspicion of sins can fall either on a man's doings, or even on his very thoughts themselves." Moreover, in another place in the same work he says: "We see it to be impossible that any person created in a body can be absolutely spotless, since even Paul says that he is imperfect. For thus he has it: Not that I have already received, or am already perfect;' and yet after a little he says, As many of us, therefore, as are perfect.' Unless, perchance, there is one perfection in this world, another after this is completed, of which he says to the Corinthians, When that which is perfect is come;' and elsewhere, Till we all come into the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, into the perfect man to the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ.' As, then, the apostle says that many are placed in this world who are perfect along with him, but who, if you have regard to true perfection, could not be perfect, since he says, We see now through a mirror, enigmatically; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I am known:' so also there both are those who are spotless' in this world, and will be those who are spotless' in the kingdom of God, although certainly, if you consider it accurately, no person can be spotless, because no person is without sin.” Also in the same he says: “We see that, while we live in this life, we ought to purify ourselves and to seek God; and to begin from the purification of our soul, and as it were to establish the foundations of virtue, so that we may deserve to attain the perfection of our purgation after this life.” And again, in the same he says: “But laden and groaning, who does not say, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?’ So with the same teacher we give all varieties of interpretation. For if he is unhappy who recognises himself as involved in the evils of the body, certainly everybody is unhappy; for I should not call that man happy who, being confused with any darkness of his mind, does not know his own condition. That, moreover, has not absurdly come to be understood; for if a man who knows himself is unhappy, assuredly all are wretched, because every one either recognises his weakness by wisdom, or by folly is ignorant of it.” Moreover, in the treatise “On the Benefit of Death,” he says: “Let death work in us, in order that that may work life also, a good life after death,—that is, a good life after victory, a good life after the contest is finished; so that now no longer the law of the flesh may know how to resist the law of the mind, that no longer we may have any contention with the body of death.” Again, in the same treatise he says: “Therefore, because the righteous have this reward, that they see the face of God, and that light which lightens every man, let us henceforth put on the desire of this kind of reward, that our soul may draw near to God, our prayer may draw near to Him, our desire may cleave to Him, that we be not separated from Him. And placed here as we are, let us by meditating, by reading, by seeking, be united with God. Let us know Him as we can. For we know Him in part here; because here all things are imperfect, there all are perfect; here we are infants, there we shall be strong men. We see,’ says he, now through a mirror in an enigma, but then face to face.’ Then, His face being revealed, we shall be allowed to look upon the glory of God, which now our souls, involved in the compacted dregs of this body, and shadowed by some stains and filth of this flesh, cannot clearly see. For who,’ He says, shall see my face and live?’ and rightly. For if our eyes cannot bear the rays of the sun,—and if any one should gaze too long on the region of the sun he is said to be blinded,—if a creature cannot look upon a creature without deceit and offence, how can he without his own peril look upon the glittering face of the eternal Creator, covered as he is with the clothing of this body? For who is justified in God’s sight, when even the infant of one day cannot be pure from sin, and no one can boast of his integrity and pureness of heart?”

CHAPTER 32 [XII.]

THE PELAGIAN’S HERESY AROSE LONG AFTER AMBROSE

It would be too long if I were to seek to mention everything which the holy Ambrose said and wrote against this heresy of the Pelagians, which was to arise so long afterwards; not indeed with a view to answer them, but with a view to declare the catholic faith, and to build up men in it. Moreover, I neither could nor ought to mention all those things which Cyprian, most glorious in the Lord, wrote in his letters, whereby it is shown how this which we hold is the true and truly Christian and catholic faith, as it was delivered of old by the Holy Scriptures, and so retained and kept by our fathers and even to this time, in which these heretics have attempted to destroy it, and as it will hereafter by God’s good will be retained and kept. For that these things and things of this kind were thus delivered to Cyprian, and by Cyprian, is testified by the testimonies produced from his letters; and that thus they were maintained up to our times is shown by these things which Ambrose wrote about these matters before these heretics had begun to rage, and catholic ears had shuddered at their profane novelties which are everywhere; and that thus, moreover, they shall be maintained hereafter, was declared with sufficient vigour partly by the condemnation of such opinions as these, partly by their correction. For whatever they may dare to mutter against the sound faith of Cyprian and Ambrose, I do not think that they will break out into such a madness as to dare to call those noted and memorable men of God, Manicheans.

CHAPTER 33

OPPOSITION OF THE MANICHEAN AND CATHOLIC DOGMAS

What is it, then, which in their raging blindness of mind they are now spreading about, “that almost throughout the entire West a dogma not less foolish than impious is taken up;” when by the mercy of God and by His merciful governance of His Church, the catholic faith has been so watchful that the dogma, “not less foolish than wicked,” as of the Manicheans, so also of these heretics, should not be taken up? So holy and learned catholic men, such as are attested to be so by the report of the whole Church, praise both God’s creation, and marriage as ordained by Him, and the law given by Him by means of the holy Moses, and the free will implanted into man’s nature, and the holy patriarchs and prophets, with due and fitting proclamation; all which five things the Manicheans condemn, partly by denying, and partly also by abominating. Whence it appears that these catholic doctors were far removed from the notions of the Manicheans, and yet they assert original sin; they assert God’s grace above free will, as antecedent to all merit, so as truly to afford a gratuitous divine assistance; they assert that the saints lived righteously in this flesh, in such wise that the help of prayer was necessary to them, by which their daily sins might be forgiven; and that a perfected righteousness which could not have sin would be in another life the reward of those who should live righteously here.

CHAPTER 34

THE CALLING TOGETHER OF A SYNOD NOT ALWAYS NECESSARY TO THE CONDEMNATION OF HERESIES

What is it, then, that they say, that “subscription was extorted from simple bishops sitting in their places without any Synodal congregation”? Was subscription extorted against such heretics as these from the most blessed and excellent men in the faith, Cyprian and Ambrose, before such heretics as these were in existence?—seeing that they overthrow their impious dogmas with such clearness that we can scarcely find anything more manifest to say against them. Or, indeed, was there any need of the congregation of a Synod to condemn this open pest, as if no heresy could at any time be condemned except by a Synodal congregation?—when, on the contrary, very few heresies can be found for the sake of condemning which any such necessity has arisen; and those have been many and incomparably more which have deserved to be accused and condemned in the place where they arose, and thence could be known and avoided over the rest of the lands. But the pride of such as these, which lifts itself up so much against God as not to be willing to glory in Him but rather in free will, is understood as grasping also at this glory, that a Synod of the East and West should be gathered together on their account. In fact, they endeavour, forsooth, to disturb the catholic world, because, the Lord being against them, they are unable to pervert it; when rather they ought to have been trodden out wherever those wolves might have appeared, by watchfulness and pastoral diligence, after a competent and sufficient judgment made concerning them; whether with a view of their being healed and changed, or with a view of their being shunned by the safety and soundness of others, by the help of the Shepherd of the sheep, who seeks the lost sheep also among the little ones, who makes the sheep holy and righteous freely; who both providently instructs them, although sanctified and justified, yet in their frailty and infirmity to pray for a daily remission for their daily sins, without which no one lives in this world, even although he may live well; and mercifully listens to their prayers.

A TREATISE CONCERNING MAN’S PERFECTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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“ON MAN’S PERFECTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.” ONE BOOK. WRITTEN ABOUT THE END OF 415.

(DE PERFECTIONE JUSTICIAE HOMINIS.)

TRANSLATED BY DR. HOLMES.

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Inchoate love, therefore, is inchoate holiness; advanced love is advanced holiness; great love is great holiness; "perfect love is perfect holiness,"—but this "love is out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," "which in this life is then the greatest, when life itself is contemned in comparison with it." I wonder, however, whether it has not a soil in which to grow after it has quitted this mortal life! But in what place and at what time soever it shall reach that state of absolute perfection, which shall admit of no increase, it is certainly not "shed abroad in our hearts" by any energies either of the nature or the volition that are within us, but "by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us," "and which both helps our infirmity and co-operates with our strength. For it is itself indeed the grace of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, appertaineth eternity, and all goodness, for ever and ever. Amen.

PREFACE

Augustin has made no mention of this treatise in his book of Retractations; for the reason, no doubt, that it belonged to the collection of the Epistles, for which he designed a separate statement of Retractations. In all the mss. this work begins with his usual epistolary salutation: "Augustin, to his holy brethren and fellow-bishops Eutropius and Paulus." And yet, by general consent, this epistle has been received as a treatise, not only in those volumes of his works which contain this work, but also in the writings of those ancient authors who quote it. Amongst these, the most renowned and acquainted with Augustin's writings, Possidius (In indiculo, 4) and Fulgentius (Ad Monimum, i. 3) expressly call this work "A Treatise on the Perfection of Man's Righteousness." So far nearly all the mss. agree, but a few (including the Codd. Audoeenensis and Pratellensis) add these words to the general title: "In opposition to those who assert that it is possible for a man to become righteous by his own sole strength." In a ms. belonging to the Church of Rheims there occurs this inscription: "A Treatise on what are called the definitions of Coelestius.” Prosper, in his work against the Collator, ch. 43, advises his reader to read, besides some other of Augustin’s “books,” that which he wrote “to the priests Paulus and Eutropius in opposition to the questions of Pelagius and Coelestius.”

From this passage of Prosper, however, in which he mentions, but with no regard to accurate order, some of the short treatises of Augustin against the Pelagians, nobody could rightly show that this work On the Perfection of Man’s Righteousness was later in time than his work On Marriage and Concupiscence, or than the six books against Julianus, which are mentioned previously in the same passage by Prosper. For, indeed, at the conclusion of the present treatise, Augustin hesitates as yet to censure those persons who affirmed that men are living or have lived in this life righteously without any sin at all: their opinion Augustin, in the passage referred to (just as in his treatises On Nature and Grace, n. 3, and On the Spirit and the Letter, nn. 49, 70), does not yet think it necessary stoutly to resist. Nothing had as yet, therefore, been determined on this point; nor were there yet enacted, in opposition to this opinion, the three well-known canons (6–8) of the Council of Carthage, which was held in the year 418. Afterwards, however, on the authority of these canons, he cautions people against the opinion as a pernicious error, as one may see from many passages in his books Against the two Epistles of the Pelagians, especially Book iv. ch. x. (27), where he says: “Let us now consider that third point of theirs, which each individual member of Christ as well as His entire body regards with horror, where they contend that there are in this life, or have been, righteous persons without any sin whatever.” Certainly, in the year 414, in an epistle (157) to Hilary, when answering the questions which were then being agitated in Sicily, he expresses himself in the same tone, and almost in the same language, on sinlessness, as that which he employs at the end of this present treatise. “But those persons,” says he (in ch. ii. n. 4 of that epistle), “however much one may tolerate them when they affirm that there either are, or have been, men besides the one Saint of saints who have been wholly free from sin; yet when they allege that man’s own free will is sufficient for fulfilling the Lord’s commandments, even when unassisted by God’s grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit for the performance of good works, the idea is altogether worthy of anathema and of perfect detestation.” On comparing these words with the conclusion of this treatise before us, nothing will appear more probable than that the work which supplies the refutation of Coelestius' questions, which were also brought over from Sicily, was written not long after the above-mentioned epistle. This work Possidius, in his index, places immediately after the treatise On Nature and Grace, and before the book On the Proceedings of Pelagius. Augustin, however, does not mention this work in his epistle (169) which he addressed to Evodius about the end of the year 415; but he intimates in it that he had published an answer to the Commonitorium of Orosius, wherein that author stated that "the bishops Eutropius and Paulus had already given information to Augustin about certain formidable heresies." Some suppose that this statement refers to the letter which they despatched to Augustin along with Coelestius' propositions. However that be, it is not unreasonable to believe that they, not long after Orosius' arrival in Africa (that is, before the midsummer of the year 415), had sent these propositions to him, and that Augustin soon afterwards wrote back to Eutropius and Paulus a refutation of them, his answer to Orosius having been previously given.

Furthermore, Coelestius, whose name is inscribed in the propositions, "wrote to his parents from his monastery," as Gennadius informs us in his work on Church writers (De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis), "before he fell in with the teaching of Pelagius, three letters in the shape of short treatises, necessary for all seekers after God." Afterwards he openly professed the Pelagian heresy, and published a short treatise, in which, besides other topics, he acknowledged in the Church of Carthage that even infants had redemption by being baptized into Christ,—an episcopal decision on the question having been obtained in that city about the commencement of the year 412, as we learn from an epistle to Pope Innocent (amongst the Epistles of Augustin [175, n. 1 and 6]), as well as from the epistle [157, n. 22] which we have referred to above; and from Augustin's work On the Merits of Sins, i. 62, and ii. 59; also from his treatise On Original Sin, 21; and his work Against Julianus, iii. 9. Another work by an anonymous writer, but which was commonly attributed to Coelestius, divided into chapters, is mentioned in the treatise which follows the present one, On the Proceedings of Pelagius; see chapters 29, 30, and 62. There were extant, moreover, in the year 417, several small books or tracts of Coelestius, which Augustin, in his work On the Grace of Christ, 31, 32, and 36, says were produced by Coelestius himself in some ecclesiastical proceedings at Rome under Zosimus. Augustin, at the commencement of the present work On the Perfection of Man’s Righteousness, mentions an undoubted work of Coelestius as having been seen by him, from which he discovered that the definitions or propositions therein examined by Augustin were not unsuited to the tone and temper of Coelestius. This was very probably the book which Jerome quotes in his Epistle to Ctesiphon, written in the year 413 or 414. These are Jerome’s words: “One of his followers [that is, Pelagius’], who was already in fact become the master and the leader of all that army, and a vessel of wrath,’ in opposition to the apostle, runs on through thickets, not of syllogisms, as his admirers are apt to boast, but of solecisms, and philosophizes and disputes to the following effect: If I do nothing without God’s help, and if everything which I shall achieve is owing to His operations solely, then it follows that it is not I who work, but only God’s work is to be crowned in me. In vain, therefore, has He conferred on me the power of will, if I am unable to exercise it fully without His incessant help. That volition, indeed, is destroyed which requires the assistance of another. But it is free will which God has given to me; and free it can only remain, if I do whatever I wish. The state of the case then is this: I either use once for all the power which has been bestowed on me, so that free will is preserved; or else, if I require the assistance of another, liberty of decision in me is destroyed.’“

A TREATISE CONCERNING MAN’S PERFECTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

A paper containing sundry definitions, said to have been drawn up by Coelestius, was put into the hands of Augustin. In this document, Coelestius, or some person who shared in his errors, had recklessly asserted that a man had it in his power to live here without sin. Augustin first refutes the several propositions in brief answers, showing that the perfect and plenary state of righteousness, in which a man exists absolutely without sin, is unattainable without grace by the mere resources of our corrupt nature, and never occurs in this present state of existence. He next proceeds to consider the authorities which the paper contained as gathered out of the Scriptures; some of them teaching man to be “unspotted” and “perfect;”

others mentioning the commandments of God as “not grievous;” while others again are quoted as opposed to the authoritative passages which the Catholics were accustomed to advance against the Pelagians.

Augustin to his holy brethren and fellow-bishops Eutropius and Paulus.

CHAPTER I

Your love, which in both of you is so great and so holy that it is a delight to obey its commands, has laid me under an obligation to reply to some definitions which are said to be the work of Coelestius; for so runs the title of the paper which you have given me, “The definitions, so it is said, of Coelestius.” As for this title, I take it that it is not his, but theirs who have brought this work from Sicily, where Coelestius is said not to be,—although many there make boastful pretension of holding views like his, and, to use the apostle’s word, “being themselves deceived, lead others also astray.” That these views are, however, his, or those of some associates of his, we, too, can well believe. For the above-mentioned brief definitions, or rather propositions, are by no means at variance with his opinion, such as I have seen it expressed in another work, of which he is the undoubted author. There was therefore good reason, I think, for the report which those brethren, who brought these tidings to us, heard in Sicily, that Coelestius taught or wrote such opinions. I should like, if it were possible, so to meet the obligation imposed on me by your brotherly kindness, that I, too, in my own answer should be equally brief. But unless I set forth also the propositions which I answer, who will be able to form a judgment of the value of my answer? Still I will try to the best of my ability, assisted, too, by God’s mercy, by your own prayers, so to conduct the discussion as to keep it from running to an unnecessary length.

CHAPTER II

(1.) THE FIRST BREVIATE OF COELESTIUS

I. “First of all,” says he, “he must be asked who denies man’s ability to live without sin, what every sort of sin is,—is it such as can be avoided? or is it unavoidable? If it is unavoidable, then it is not sin; if it can be avoided, then a man can live without the sin which can be avoided. No reason or justice permits us to designate as sin what cannot in any way be avoided.” Our answer to this is, that sin can be avoided, if our corrupted nature be healed by God’s grace, through our Lord Jesus Christ. For, in so far as it is not sound, in so far does it either through blindness fail to see, or through weakness fail to accomplish, that which it ought to do; “for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh,” so that a man does not do the things which he would.

(2.) The Second Breviate.

II. “We must next ask,” he says, “whether sin comes from will, or from necessity? If from necessity, it is not sin; if from will, it can be avoided.” We answer as before; and in order that we may be healed, we pray to Him to whom it is said in the psalm: “Lead Thou me out of my necessities.”

(3.) The Third Breviate.

III. “Again we must ask,” he says, “what sin is,—natural? or accidental? If natural, it is not sin; if accidental, it is separable; and if it is separable, it can be avoided; and because it can be avoided, man can be without that which can be avoided.” The answer to this is, that sin is not natural; but nature (especially in that corrupt state from which we have become by nature “children of wrath”) has too little determination of will to avoid sin, unless assisted and healed by God’s grace through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(4.) The Fourth Breviate.

IV. “We must ask, again,” he says, “What is sin,—an act, or a thing? If it is a thing, it must have an author; and if it be said to have an author, then another besides God will seem to be introduced as the author of a thing. But if it is impious to say this, we are driven to confess that every sin is an act, not a thing. If therefore it is an act, for this very reason, because it is an act, it can be avoided.” Our reply is, that sin no doubt is called an act, and is such, not a thing. But likewise in the body, lameness for the same reason is an act, not a thing, since it is the foot itself, or the body, or the man who walks lame because of an injured foot, that is the thing; but still the man cannot avoid the lameness, unless his foot be cured. The same change may take place in the inward man, but it is by God’s grace, through our Lord

Jesus Christ. The defect itself which causes the lameness of the man is neither the foot, nor the body, nor the man, nor indeed the lameness itself; for there is of course no lameness when there is no walking, although there is nevertheless the defect which causes the lameness whenever there is an attempt to walk. Let him therefore ask, what name must be given to this defect,—would he have it called a thing, or an act, or rather a bad property in the thing, by which the deformed act comes into existence? So in the inward man the soul is the thing, theft is an act, and avarice is the defect, that is, the property by which the soul is evil, even when it does nothing in gratification of its avarice, even when it hears the prohibition, “Thou shalt not covet,” and censures itself, and yet remains avaricious. By faith, however, it receives renovation; in other words, it is healed day by day,—yet only by God’s grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER III

(5.) THE FIFTH BREVIATE

V. “We must again,” he says, “inquire whether a man ought to be without sin. Beyond doubt he ought. If he ought, he is able; if he is not able, then he ought not. Now if a man ought not to be without sin, it follows that he ought to be with sin,—and then it ceases to be sin at all, if it is determined that it is owed. Or if it is absurd to say this, we are obliged to confess that man ought to be without sin; and it is clear that his obligation is not more than his ability.” We frame our answer with the same illustration that we employed in our previous reply. When we see a lame man who has the opportunity of being cured of his lameness, we of course have a right to say: “That man ought not to be lame; and if he ought, he is able.” And yet whenever he wishes he is not immediately able; but only after he has been cured by the application of the remedy, and the medicine has assisted his will. The same thing takes place in the inward man in relation to sin which is its lameness, by the grace of Him who “came not to call the righteous, but sinners;” since “the whole need not the physician, but only they that be sick.”

(6.) The Sixth Breviate.

VI. “Again,” he says, “we have to inquire whether man is commanded to be without sin; for either he is not able, and then he is not commanded; or else because he is commanded, he is able. For why should that be commanded which cannot at all be done?” The answer is, that man is most wisely commanded to walk with right steps, on purpose that, when he has discovered his own inability to do even this, he may seek the remedy which is provided for the inward man to cure the lameness of sin, even the grace of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(7.) The Seventh Breviate.

VII. “The next question we shall have to propose,” he says, “is, whether God wishes that man be without sin. Beyond doubt God wishes it; and no doubt he has the ability. For who is so foolhardy as to hesitate to believe that to be possible, which he has no doubt about God’s wishing?” This is the answer. If God wished not that man should be without sin, He would not have sent His Son without sin, to heal men of their sins. This takes place in believers who are being renewed day by day, until their righteousness becomes perfect, like fully restored health.

(8.) The Eighth Breviate.

VIII. “Again, this question must be asked,” he says, “how God wishes man to be,—with sin, or without sin? Beyond doubt, He does not wish him to be with sin. We must reflect how great would be the impious blasphemy for it to be said that man has it in his power to be with sin, which God does not wish; and for it to be denied that he has it in his power to be without sin, which God wishes: just as if God had created any man for such a result as this,—that he should be able to be what He would not have him, and unable to be what He would have him; and that he should lead an existence contrary to His will, rather than one which should be in accordance therewith.” This has been in fact already answered; but I see that it is necessary for me to make here an additional remark, that we are saved by hope. “But hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Full righteousness, therefore, will only then be reached, when fulness of health is attained; and this fulness of health shall be when there is fulness of love, for “love is the fulfilling of the law;” and then shall come fulness of love, when “we shall see Him even as He is.” Nor will any addition to love be possible more, when faith shall have reached the fruition of sight.

CHAPTER IV

(9.) THE NINTH BREVIATE

IX. “The next question we shall require to be solved,” says he, “is this: By what means is it brought about that man is with sin?—by the necessity of nature, or by the freedom of choice? If it is by the necessity of nature, he is blameless; if by the freedom of choice, then the question arises, from whom he has received this freedom of choice. No doubt, from God. Well, but that which God bestows is certainly good. This cannot be gainsaid. On what principle, then, is a thing proved to be good, if it is more prone to evil than to good? For it is more prone to evil than to good if by means of it man can be with sin and cannot be without sin.” The answer is this: It came by the freedom of choice that man was with sin; but a penal corruption closely followed thereon, and out of the liberty produced necessity. Hence the cry of faith to God, “Lead Thou me out of my necessities.” With these necessities upon us, we are either unable to understand what we want, or else (while having the wish) we are not strong enough to accomplish what we have come to understand. Now it is just liberty itself that is promised to believers by the Liberator. “If the Son,” says He, “shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” For, vanquished by the sin into which it fell by its volition, nature has lost liberty. Hence another scripture says, “For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” Since therefore “the whole need not the physician, but only they that be sick;” so likewise it is not the free that need the Deliverer, but only the enslaved. Hence the cry of joy to Him for deliverance, “Thou hast saved my soul from the straits of necessity.” For true liberty is also real health; and this would never have been lost, if the will had remained good. But because the will has sinned, the hard necessity of having sin has pursued the sinner; until his infirmity be wholly healed, and such freedom be regained, that there must needs be, on the one hand, a permanent will to live happily, and, on the other hand, a voluntary and happy necessity of living virtuously, and never sinning.

(10.) The Tenth Breviate.

X. “Since God made man good,” he says, “and, besides making him good, further commanded him to do good, how impious it is for us to hold that man is evil, when he was neither made so, nor so commanded; and to deny him the ability of being good, although he was both made so, and commanded to act so!” Our answer here is: Since then it was not man himself, but God, who made man good; so also is it God, and not man himself, who remakes him to be good, while liberating him from the evil which he himself did upon his wishing, believing, and invoking such a deliverance. But all this is effected by the renewal day by day of the inward man, by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, with a view to the outward man’s resurrection at the last day to an eternity not of punishment, but of life.

CHAPTER V

(11.) THE ELEVENTH BREVIATE

XI. “The next question which must be put,” he says, “is, in how many ways all sin is manifested? In two, if I mistake not: if either those things are done which are forbidden, or those things are not done which are commanded. Now, it is just as certain that all things which are forbidden are able to be avoided, as it is that all things which are commanded are able to be effected. For it is vain either to forbid or to enjoin that which cannot either be guarded against or accomplished. And how shall we deny the possibility of man’s being without sin, when we are compelled to admit that he can as well avoid all those things which are forbidden, as do all those which are commanded?” My answer is, that in the Holy Scriptures there are many divine precepts, to mention the whole of which would be too laborious; but the Lord, who on earth consummated and abridged His word, expressly declared that the law and the prophets hung on two commandments, that we might understand that whatever else has been enjoined on us by God ends in these two commandments, and must be referred to them: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” “On these two commandments,” says He, “hang all the law and the prophets.” Whatever, therefore, we are by God’s law forbidden, and whatever we are bidden to do, we are forbidden and bidden with the direct object of fulfilling these two commandments. And perhaps the general prohibition is, “Thou shalt not covet;” and the general precept, “Thou shalt love.” Accordingly the Apostle Paul, in a certain place, briefly embraced the two, expressing the prohibition in these words, “Be not conformed to this world,” and the command in these, “But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” The former falls under the negative precept, not to covet; the latter under the positive one, to love. The one has reference to continence, the other to righteousness. The one enjoins avoidance of evil; the other, pursuit of good. By eschewing covetousness we put off the old man, and by showing love we put on the new. But no man can be continent unless God endow him with the gift; nor is God’s love shed abroad in our hearts by our own selves, but by the Holy Ghost that is given to us. This, however, takes place day after day in those who advance by willing, believing, and praying, and who, “forgetting those things which are behind, reach forth unto those things which are before.” For the reason why the law inculcates all these precepts is, that when a man has failed in fulfilling them, he may not be swollen with pride, and so exalt himself, but may in very weariness betake himself to grace. Thus the law fulfils its office as “schoolmaster,” so terrifying the man as “to lead him to Christ,” to give Him his love.

CHAPTER VI

(12.) THE TWELFTH BREVIATE

XII. “Again the question arises,” he says, “how it is that man is unable to be without sin,—by his will, or by nature? If by nature, it is not sin; if by his will, then will can very easily be changed by will.” We answer by reminding him how he ought to reflect on the extreme presumption of saying—not simply that it is possible (for this no doubt is undeniable, when God’s grace comes in aid), but—that it is “very easy” for will to be changed by will; whereas the apostle says, “The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye do not the things that ye would.” He does not say, “These are contrary the one to the other, so that ye will not do the things that ye can,” but, “so that ye do not the things that ye would.” How happens it, then, that the lust of the flesh which of course is culpable and corrupt, and is nothing else than the desire for sin, as to which the same apostle instructs us not to let it "reign in our mortal body;" by which expression he shows us plainly enough that that must have an existence in our mortal body which must not be permitted to hold a dominion in it;—how happens it, I say, that such lust of the flesh has not been changed by that will, which the apostle clearly implied the existence of in his words, "So that ye do not the things that ye would," if so be that the will can so easily be changed by will? Not that we, indeed, by this argument throw the blame upon the nature either of the soul or of the body, which God created, and which is wholly good; but we say that it, having been corrupted by its own will, cannot be made whole without the grace of God.

(13.) The Thirteenth Breviate.

XIII. "The next question we have to ask," says he, "is this: If man cannot be without sin, whose fault is it,—man's own, or some one's else? If man's own, in what way is it his fault if he is not that which he is unable to be?" We reply, that it is man's fault that he is not without sin on this account, because it has by man's sole will come to pass that he has come into such a necessity as cannot be overcome by man's sole will.

(14.) The Fourteenth Breviate.

XIV. "Again the question must be asked," he says, "If man's nature is good, as nobody but Marcion or Manichaeus will venture to deny, in what way is it good if it is impossible for it to be free from evil? For that all sin is evil who can gainsay?" We answer, that man's nature is both good, and is also able to be free from evil. Therefore do we earnestly pray, "Deliver us from evil." This deliverance, indeed, is not fully wrought, so long as the soul is oppressed by the body, which is hastening to corruption. This process, however, is being effected by grace through faith, so that it may be said by and by, "O death, where is thy struggle? Where is thy sting, O death? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law;" because the law by prohibiting sin only increases the desire for it, unless the Holy Ghost spreads abroad that love, which shall then be full and perfect, when we shall see face to face.

(15.) The Fifteenth Breviate.

XV. “And this, moreover, has to be said,” he says: “God is certainly righteous; this cannot be denied. But God imputes every sin to man. This too, I suppose, must be allowed, that whatever shall not be imputed as sin is not sin. Now if there is any sin which is unavoidable, how is God said to be righteous, when He is supposed to impute to any man that which cannot be avoided?” We reply, that long ago was it declared in opposition to the proud, “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not sin.” Now He does not impute it to those who say to Him in faith, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” And justly does He withhold this imputation, because that is just which He says: “With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” That, however, is sin in which there is either not the love which ought to be, or where the love is less than it ought to be,—whether it can be avoided by the human will or not; because when it can be avoided, the man’s present will does it, but if it cannot be avoided his past will did it; and yet it can be avoided,—not, however, when the proud will is lauded, but when the humble one is assisted.

CHAPTER VII

(16.) THE SIXTEENTH BREVIATE

XVI. After all these disputations, their author introduces himself in person as arguing with another, and represents himself as under examination, and as being addressed by his examiner: “Show me the man who is without sin.” He answers: “I show you one who is able to be without sin.” His examiner then says to him: “And who is he?” He answers: “You are the man.” “But if,” he adds, “you were to say, I, at any rate, cannot be without sin,’ then you must answer me, Whose fault is that?’ If you then were to say, My own fault,’ you must be further asked, And how is it your fault, if you cannot be without sin?’“ He again represents himself as under examination, and thus accosted: “Are you yourself without sin, who say that a man can be without sin?” And he answers: “Whose fault is it that I am not without sin? But if,” continues he, “he had said in reply, The fault is your own;’ then the answer would be, How my fault, when I am unable to be without sin?’“ Now our answer to all this running argument is, that no controversy ought to have been raised between them about such words as these; because he nowhere ventures to affirm that a man (either any one else, or himself) is without sin, but he merely said in reply that he can be,—a position which we do not ourselves deny. Only the question arises, when can he, and through whom can he? If at the present time, then by no faithful soul which is enclosed within the body of this death must this prayer be offered, or such words as these be spoken, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” since in holy baptism all past debts have been already forgiven. But whoever tries to persuade us that such a prayer is not proper for faithful members of Christ, does in fact acknowledge nothing else than that he is not himself a Christian. If, again, it is through himself that a man is able to live without sin, then did Christ die in vain. But “Christ is not dead in vain.” No man, therefore, can be without sin, even if he wish it, unless he be assisted by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. And that this perfection may be attained, there is even now a training carried on in growing [Christians,] and there will be by all means a completion made, after the conflict with death is spent, and love, which is now cherished by the operation of faith and hope, shall be perfected in the fruition of sight and possession.

CHAPTER VIII

(17.) IT IS ONE THING TO DEPART FROM THE BODY, ANOTHER THING TO BE LIBERATED FROM THE BODY OF THIS DEATH

He next proposes to establish his point by the testimony of Holy Scripture. Let us carefully observe what kind of defence he makes. “There are passages,” says he, “which prove that man is commanded to be without sin.” Now our answer to this is: Whether such commands are given is not at all the point in question, for the fact is clear enough; but whether the thing which is evidently commanded be itself at all possible of accomplishment in the body of this death, wherein “the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things that we would.” Now from this body of death not every one is liberated who ends the present life, but only he who in this life has received grace, and given proof of not receiving it in vain by spending his days in good works. For it is plainly one thing to depart from the body, which all men are obliged to do in the last day of their present life, and another to be delivered from the body of this death,—which God’s grace alone, through our Lord Jesus Christ, imparts to His faithful saints. It is after this life, indeed, that the reward of perfection is bestowed, but only upon those by whom in their present life has been acquired the merit of such a recompense. For no one, after going hence, shall arrive at fulness of righteousness, unless, whilst here, he shall have run his course by hungering and thirsting after it. “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.”

(18.) The Righteousness of This Life Comprehended in Three Parts,—Fasting, Almsgiving, and Prayer.

As long, then, as we are “absent from the Lord, we walk by faith, not by sight;” whence it is said, “The just shall live by faith.” Our righteousness in this pilgrimage is this—that we press forward to that perfect and full righteousness in which there shall be perfect and full love in the sight of His glory; and that now we hold to the rectitude and perfection of our course, by “keeping under our body and bringing it into subjection,” by doing our alms cheerfully and heartily, while bestowing kindnesses and forgiving the trespasses which have been committed against us, and by “continuing instant in prayer;”—and doing all this with sound doctrine, whereon are built a right faith, a firm hope, and a pure charity. This is now our righteousness, in which we pass through our course hungering and thirsting after the perfect and full righteousness, in order that we may hereafter be satisfied therewith. Therefore our Lord in the Gospel (after saying, “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them,”) in order that we should not measure our course of life by the limit of human glory, declared in his exposition of righteousness itself that there is none except there be these three,—fasting, alms, prayers. Now in the fasting He indicates the entire subjugation of the body; in the alms, all kindness of will and deed, either by giving or forgiving; and in prayers He implies all the rules of a holy desire. So that, although by the subjugation of the body a check is given to that concupiscence, which ought not only to be bridled but to be put altogether out of existence (and which will not be found at all in that state of perfect righteousness, where sin shall be absolutely excluded),

—yet it often exerts its immoderate desire even in the use of things which are allowable and right. In that real beneficence in which the just man consults his neighbour's welfare, things are sometimes done which are prejudicial, although it was thought that they would be advantageous. Sometimes, too, through infirmity, when the amount of the kindness and trouble which is expended either falls short of the necessities of the objects, or is of little use under the circumstances, then there steals over us a disappointment which tarnishes that "cheerfulness" which secures to the "giver" the approbation of God. This trail of sadness, however, is the greater or the less, as each man has made more or less progress in his kindly purposes. If, then, these considerations, and such as these, be duly weighed, we are only right when we say in our prayers, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors." But what we say in our prayers we must carry into act, even to loving our very enemies; or if any one who is still a babe in Christ fails as yet to reach this point, he must at any rate, whenever one who has trespassed against him repents and craves his pardon, exercise forgiveness from the bottom of his heart, if he would have his heavenly Father listen to his prayer.

(19.) The Commandment of Love Shall Be Perfectly Fulfilled in the Life to Come.

And in this prayer, unless we choose to be contentious, there is placed before our view a mirror of sufficient brightness in which to behold the life of the righteous, who live by faith, and finish their course, although they are not without sin. Therefore they say, "Forgive us," because they have not yet arrived at the end of their course. Hence the apostle says, "Not as if I had already attained, either were already perfect . . . Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." In other words, let us, as many as are running perfectly, be thus resolved, that, being not yet perfected, we pursue our course to perfection along the way by which we have thus far run perfectly, in order that "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part may be done away;" that is, may cease to be but in part any longer, but become whole and complete. For to faith and hope shall succeed at once the very substance itself, no longer to be believed in and hoped for, but to be seen and grasped. Love, however, which is the greatest among the three, is not to be superseded, but increased and fulfilled,—contemplating in full vision what it used to see by faith, and acquiring in actual fruition what it once only embraced in hope. Then in all this plenitude of charity will be fulfilled the commandment, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” For while there remains any remnant of the lust of the flesh, to be kept in check by the rein of continence, God is by no means loved with all one’s soul. For the flesh does not lust without the soul; although it is the flesh which is said to lust, because the soul lusts carnally. In that perfect state the just man shall live absolutely without any sin, since there will be in his members no law warring against the law of his mind, but wholly will he love God, with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his mind which is the first and chief commandment. For why should not such perfection be enjoined on man, although in this life nobody may attain to it? For we do not rightly run if we do not know whither we are to run. But how could it be known, unless it were pointed out in precepts? Let us therefore “so run that we may obtain.” For all who run rightly will obtain,—not as in the contest of the theatre, where all indeed run, but only one wins the prize. Let us run, believing, hoping, longing; let us run, subjugating the body, cheerfully and heartily doing alms,—in giving kindnesses and forgiving injuries, praying that our strength may be helped as we run; and let us so listen to the commandments which urge us to perfection, as not to neglect running towards the fulness of love.

CHAPTER IX

(20.) WHO MAY BE SAID TO WALK WITHOUT SPOT; DAMNABLE AND VENIAL SINS

Having premised these remarks, let us carefully attend to the passages which he whom we are answering has produced, as if we ourselves had quoted them. “In Deuteronomy, Thou shalt be perfect before the Lord thy God.’ Again, in the same book, There shall be not an imperfect man among the sons of Israel.’ In like manner the Saviour says in the Gospel, Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.’ So the apostle, in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, says: Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect.’ Again, to the Colossians he writes: Warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ.’ And so to the Philippians: Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless, and harmless, as the immaculate sons of God.’ In like manner to the Ephesians he writes: Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.’ Then again to the Colossians he says in another passage: And you, that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death; present yourselves holy and unblameable and unreprovable in His sight.’ In the same strain, he says to the Ephesians: That He might present to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing but that it should be holy and without blemish.’ So in his first Epistle to the Corinthians he says Be ye sober, and righteous, and sin not.’ So again in the Epistle of St. Peter it is written: Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is offered to you: . . . as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.’ Whence blessed David likewise says: O Lord, who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle, or who shall rest on Thy holy mountain? He that walketh without blame, and worketh righteousness.’ And in another passage: I shall be blameless with Him.’ And yet again: Blessed are the blameless in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.’ To the same effect it is written in Solomon: The Lord loveth holy hearts, and all they that are blameless are acceptable unto Him.’“ Now some of these passages exhort men who are running their course that they run perfectly; others refer to the end thereof, that men may reach forward to it as they run. He, however, is not unreasonably said to walk blamelessly, not who has already reached the end of his journey, but who is pressing on towards the end in a blameless manner, free from damnable sins, and at the same time not neglecting to cleanse by almsgiving such sins as are venial. For the way in which we walk, that is, the road by which we reach perfection, is cleansed by clean prayer. That, however, is a clean prayer in which we say in truth, “Forgive us, as we ourselves forgive.” So that, as there is nothing censured when blame is not imputed, we may hold on our course to perfection without censure, in a word, blamelessly; and in this perfect state, when we arrive at it at last, we shall find that there is absolutely nothing which requires cleansing by forgiveness.

CHAPTER X

(21.) TO WHOM GOD’S COMMANDMENTS ARE GRIEVOUS; AND TO WHOM, NOT. WHY SCRIPTURE SAYS THAT GOD’S COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT GRIEVOUS; A COMMANDMENT IS A PROOF OF THE FREEDOM OF MAN’S WILL; PRAYER IS A PROOF OF GRACE

He next quotes passages to show that God’s commandments are not grievous. But who can be ignorant of the fact that, since the generic commandment is love (for “the end of the commandment is love,” and “love is the fulfilling of the law”), whatever is accomplished by the operation of love, and not of fear, is not grievous? They, however, are oppressed by the commandments of God, who try to fulfil them by fearing. “But perfect love casteth out fear;” and, in respect of the burden of the commandment, it not only takes off the pressure of its heavy weight, but it actually lifts it up as if on wings. In order, however, that this love may be possessed, even as far as it can possibly be possessed in the body of this death, the determination of will avails but little, unless it be helped by God’s grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. For as it must again and again be stated, it is “shed abroad in our hearts,” not by our own selves, but “by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” And for no other reason does Holy Scripture insist on the truth that God’s commandments are not grievous, than this, that the soul which finds them grievous may understand that it has not yet received those resources which make the Lord’s commandments to be such as they are commended to us as being, even gentle and pleasant; and that it may pray with groaning of the will to obtain the gift of facility. For the man who says, “Let my heart be blameless;” and, “Order Thou my steps according to Thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me;” and, “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven;” and, “Lead us not into temptation;” and other prayers of a like purport, which it would be too long to particularize, does in effect offer up a prayer for ability to keep God’s commandments. Neither, indeed, on the one hand, would any injunctions be laid upon us to keep them, if our own will had nothing to do in the matter; nor, on the other hand, would there be any room for prayer, if our will were alone sufficient. God’s commandments, therefore, are commended to us as being not grievous, in order that he to whom they are grievous may understand that he has not as yet received the gift which removes their grievousness; and that he may not think that he is really performing them, when he so keeps them that they are grievous to him. For it is a cheerful giver whom God loves. Nevertheless, when a man finds God’s commandments grievous, let him not be broken down by despair; let him rather oblige himself to seek, to ask, and to knock.

(22.) Passages to Show that God’s Commandments are Not Grievous.

He afterwards adduces those passages which represent God as recommending His own commandments as not grievous: let us now attend to their testimony. “Because,” says he, “God’s commandments are not only not impossible, but they are not even grievous. In Deuteronomy: The Lord thy God will again turn and rejoice over thee for good, as He rejoiced over thy fathers, if ye shall hearken to the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments, and His ordinances, and His judgments, written in the book of this law; if thou turn to the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. For this command, which I give thee this day, is not grievous, neither is it far from thee: it is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who will ascend into heaven, and obtain it for us, that we may hear and do it? neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who will cross over the sea, and obtain it for us, that we may hear and do it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thine heart, and in thine hands to do it.’ In the Gospel likewise the Lord says: Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’ So also in the Epistle of Saint John it is written: This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.’“ On hearing these testimonies out of the law, and the gospel, and the epistles, let us be built up unto that grace which those persons do not understand, who, “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and wishing to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” For, if they understand not the passage of Deuteronomy in the sense that the Apostle Paul quoted it,—that “with the heart men believe unto righteousness, and with their mouth make confession unto salvation;” since “they that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick,”—they certainly ought (by that very passage of the Apostle John which he quoted last to this effect: “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous”) to be admonished that God’s commandment is not grievous to the love of God, which is shed abroad in our hearts only by the Holy Ghost, not by the determination of man’s will by attributing to which more than they ought, they are ignorant of God’s righteousness. This love, however, shall then be made perfect, when all fear of punishment shall be cut off.

CHAPTER XI

(23.) PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE WHICH, WHEN OBJECTED AGAINST HIM BY THE CATHOLICS, COELESTIUS ENDEAVOURS TO ELUDE BY OTHER PASSAGES: THE FIRST PASSAGE

After this he adduced the passages which are usually quoted against them. He does not attempt to explain these passages, but, by quoting what seem to be contrary ones, he has entangled the questions more tightly. “For,” says he, “there are passages of Scripture which are in opposition to those who ignorantly suppose that they are able to destroy the liberty of the will, or the possibility of not sinning, by the authority of Scripture. For,” he adds, “they are in the habit of quoting against us what holy Job said: Who is pure from uncleanness? Not one; even if he be an infant of only one day upon the earth.’“ Then he proceeds to give a sort of answer to this passage by help of other quotations; as when Job himself said: “For although I am a righteous and blameless man, I have become a subject for mockery,”—not understanding that a man may be called righteous, who has gone so far towards perfection in righteousness as to be very near it; and this we do not deny to have been in the power of many even in this life, when they walk in it by faith.

(24.) To Be Without Sin, and to Be Without Blame—How Differing.

The same thing is affirmed in another passage, which he has quoted immediately afterwards, as spoken by the same Job: “Behold, I am very near my judgment, and I know that I shall be found righteous.” Now this is the judgment of which it is said in another scripture: “And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.” But he does not say, I am already there; but, “I am very near.” If, indeed, the judgment of his which he meant was not that which he would himself exercise, but that whereby he was to be judged at the last day, then in such judgment all will be found righteous who with sincerity pray: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” For it is through this forgiveness that they will be found righteous; on this account that whatever sins they have here incurred, they have blotted out by their deeds of charity. Whence the Lord says: “Give alms; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.” For in the end, it shall be said to the righteous, when about to enter into the promised kingdom: “I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat,” and so forth. However, it is one thing to be without sin, which in this life can only be predicated of the Only-begotten, and another thing to be without accusation, which might be said of many just persons even in the present life; for there is a certain measure of a good life, according to which even in this human intercourse there could no just accusation be possibly laid against him. For who can justly accuse the man who wishes evil to no one, and who faithfully does good to all he can, and never cherishes a wish to avenge himself on any man who does him wrong, so that he can truly say, “As we forgive our debtors?” And yet by the very fact that he truly says, “Forgive, as we also forgive,” he plainly admits that he is not without sin.

(25.) Hence the force of the statement: “There was no injustice in my hands, but my prayer was pure.” For the purity of his prayer arose from this circumstance, that it was not improper for him to ask forgiveness in prayer, when he really bestowed forgiveness himself.

(26.) Why Job Was So Great a Sufferer.

And when he says concerning the Lord, “For many bruises hath He inflicted upon me without a cause,” observe that his words are not, He hath inflicted none with a cause; but, “many without a cause.” For it was not because of his manifold sins that these many bruises were inflicted on him, but in order to make trial of his patience. For on account of his sins, indeed, without which, as he acknowledges in another passage, he was certainly not, he yet judges that he ought to have suffered less.

(27.) Who May Be Said to Keep the Ways of the Lord; What It is to Decline and Depart from the Ways of the Lord.

Then again, as for what he says, “For I have kept His ways, and have not turned aside from His commandments, nor will I depart from them;” he has kept God’s ways who does not so turn aside as to forsake them, but makes progress by running his course therein; although, weak as he is, he sometimes stumbles or falls, onward, however, he still goes, sinning less and less until he reaches the perfect state in which he will sin no more. For in no other way could he make progress, except by keeping His ways. The man, indeed, who declines from these and becomes an apostate at last, is certainly not he who, although he has sin, yet never ceases to persevere in fighting against it until he arrives at the home where there shall remain no more conflict with death. Well now, it is in our present struggle therewith that we are clothed with the righteousness in which we here live by faith,—clothed with it as it were with a breastplate. Judgment also we take on ourselves; and even when it is against us, we turn it round to our own behalf; for we become our own accusers and condemn our sins: whence that scripture which says, “The righteous man accuses himself at the beginning of his speech.” Hence also he says: “I put on righteousness, and clothed myself with judgment like a mantle.” Our vesture at present no doubt is wont to be armour for war rather than garments of peace, while concupiscence has still to be subdued; it will be different by and by, when our last enemy death shall be destroyed, and our righteousness shall be full and complete, without an enemy to molest us more.

(28.) When Our Heart May Be Said Not to Reproach Us; When Good is to Be Perfected.

Furthermore, concerning these words of Job, “My heart shall not reproach me in all my life,” we remark, that it is in this present life of ours, in which we live by faith, that our heart does not reproach us, if the same faith whereby we believe unto righteousness does not neglect to rebuke our sin. On this principle the apostle says: “The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.” Now it is a good thing to avoid concupiscence, and this good the just man would, who lives by faith; and still he does what he hates, because he has concupiscence, although “he goes not after his lusts;” if he has done this, he has himself at that time really done it, so as to yield to, and acquiesce in, and obey the desire of sin. His heart then reproaches him, because it reproaches himself, and not his sin which dwelleth in him. But whensoever he suffers not sin to reign in his mortal body to obey it in the lusts thereof, and yields not his members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, sin no doubt is present in his members, but it does not reign, because its desires are not obeyed. Therefore, while he does that which he would not,—in other words, while he wishes not to lust, but still lusts,—he consents to the law that it is good: for what the law would, that he also wishes; because it is his desire not to indulge concupiscence, and the law expressly says, “Thou shalt not covet.” Now in that he wishes what the law also would have done, he no doubt consents to the law: but still he lusts, because he is not without sin; it is, however, no longer himself that does the thing, but the sin which dwells within him. Hence it is that “his heart does not reproach him in all his life;” that is, in his faith, because the just man lives by faith, so that his faith is his very life. He knows, to be sure, that in himself dwells nothing good,—even in his flesh, which is the dwelling-place of sin. By not consenting, however, to it, he lives by faith, wherewith he also calls upon God to help him in his contest against sin. Moreover, there is present to him to will that no sin at all should be in him, but then how to perfect this good is not present. It is not the mere “doing” of a good thing that is not present to him, but the “perfecting” of it. For in this, that he yields no consent, he does good; he does good again, in this, that he hates his own lust; he does good also, in this, that he does not cease to give alms; and in this, that he forgives the man who sins against him, he does good; and in this, that he asks forgiveness for his own trespasses,—sincerely avowing in his petition that he also forgives those who trespass against himself, and praying that he may not be led into temptation, but be delivered from evil,—he does good. But how to perfect the good is not present to him; it will be, however, in that final state, when the concupiscence which dwells in his members shall exist no more. His heart, therefore, does not reproach him, when it reproaches the sin which dwells in his members; nor can it reproach unbelief in him. Thus “in all his life,”—that is, in his faith,—he is neither reproached by his own heart, nor convinced of not being without sin. And Job himself acknowledges this concerning himself, when he says, “Not one of my sins hath escaped Thee; Thou hast sealed up my transgressions in a bag, and marked if I have done iniquity unawares.” With regard, then, to the passages which he has adduced from the book of holy Job, we have shown to the best of our ability in what sense they ought to be taken. He, however, has failed to explain the meaning of the words which he has himself quoted from the same Job: “Who then is pure from uncleanness? Not one; even if he be an infant of only one day upon the earth.”

CHAPTER XII

(29.) THE SECOND PASSAGE. WHO MAY BE SAID TO ABSTAIN FROM EVERY EVIL THING

“They are in the habit of next quoting,” says he, “the passage: Every man is a liar.’“ But here again he offers no solution of words which are quoted against himself even by himself; all he does is to mention other apparently opposite passages before persons who are unacquainted with the sacred Scriptures, and thus to cast the word of God into conflict. This is what he says: “We tell them in answer, how in the book of Numbers it is said, Man is true.’ While of holy Job this eulogy is read: There was a certain man in the land of Ausis, whose name was Job; that man was true, blameless, righteous, and godly, abstaining from every evil thing.’“ I am surprised that he has brought forward this passage, which says that Job “abstained from every evil thing,” wishing it to mean “abstained from every sin;” because he has argued already that sin is not a thing, but an act. Let him recollect that, even if it is an act, it may still be called a thing. That man, however, abstains from every evil thing, who either never consents to the sin, which is always with him, or, if sometimes hard pressed by it, is never oppressed by it; just as the wrestling champion, who, although he is sometimes caught in a fierce grapple, does not for all that lose the prowess which constitutes him the better man. We read, indeed, of a man without blame, of one without accusation; but we never read of one without sin, except the Son of man, who is also the only-begotten Son of God.

(30.) “Every Man is a Liar,” Owing to Himself Alone; But “Every Man is True,” By Help Only of the Grace of God.

“Moreover,” says he, “in Job himself it is said: And he maintained the miracle of a true man.’ Again we read in Solomon, touching wisdom: Men that are liars cannot remember her, but men of truth shall be found in her.’ Again in the Apocalypse: And in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault.’“ To all these statements we reply with a reminder to our opponents, of how a man may be called true, through the grace and truth of God, who is in himself without doubt a liar. Whence it is said: “Every man is a liar.” As for the passage also which he has quoted in reference to Wisdom, when it is said, “Men of truth shall be found in her,” we must observe that it is undoubtedly not “in her,” but in themselves that men shall be found liars. Just as in another passage: “Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord,”—when he said, “Ye were darkness,” he did not add, “in the Lord;” but after saying, “Ye are now light,” he expressly added the phrase, “in the Lord,” for they could not possibly be “light” in themselves; in order that “he who glorieth may glory in the Lord.” The “faultless” ones, indeed, in the Apocalypse, are so called because “no guile was found in their mouth.” They did not say they had no sin: if they had said this, they would deceive themselves, and the truth would not be in them; and if the truth were not in them, guile and untruth would be found in their mouth. If, however, to avoid envy, they said they were not without sin, although they were sinless, then this very insincerity would be a lie, and the character given of them would be untrue: “In their mouth was found no guile.” Hence indeed “they are without fault;” for as they have forgiven those who have done them wrong, so are they purified by God’s forgiveness of themselves. Observe now how we have to the best of our power explained in what sense the quotations he has in his own behalf advanced ought to be understood. But how the passage, “Every man is a liar,” is to be interpreted, he on his part has altogether omitted to explain; nor is an explanation within his power, without a correction of the error which makes him believe that man can be true without the help of God’s grace, and merely by virtue of his own free will.

CHAPTER XIII

(31.) THE THIRD PASSAGE. IT IS ONE THING TO DEPART, AND ANOTHER THING TO HAVE DEPARTED, FROM ALL SIN. “THERE IS NONE THAT DOETH GOOD,”—OF WHOM THIS IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD

He has likewise propounded another question, as we shall proceed to show, but has failed to solve it; nay, he has rather rendered it more difficult, by first stating the testimony that had been quoted against him: “There is none that doeth good, no, not one;” and then resorting to seemingly contrary passages to show that there are persons who do good. This he succeeded, no doubt, in doing. It is, however, one thing for a man not to do good, and another thing not to be without sin, although he at the same time may do many good things. The passages, therefore, which he adduces are not really contrary to the statement that no person is without sin in this life. He does not, for his own part, explain in what sense it is declared that “there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” These are his words: “Holy David indeed says, Hope thou in the Lord and be doing good.’“ But this is a precept, and not an accomplished fact; and such a precept as is never kept by those of whom it is said, “There is none that doeth good, no, not one.” He adds: “Holy Tobit also said, Fear not, my son, that we have to endure poverty; we shall have many blessings if we fear God, and depart from all sin, and do that which is good.’“ Most true indeed it is, that man shall have many blessings when he shall have departed from all sin. Then no evil shall betide him; nor shall he have need of the prayer, “Deliver us from evil.” Although even now every man who progresses, advancing ever with an upright purpose, departs from all sin, and becomes further removed from it as he approaches nearer to the fulness and perfection of the righteous state; because even concupiscence itself, which is sin dwelling in our flesh, never ceases to diminish in those who are making progress, although it still remains in their mortal members. It is one thing, therefore, to depart from all sin,—a process which is even now in operation,—and another thing to have departed from all sin, which shall happen in the state of future perfection. But still, even he who has departed already from evil, and is continuing to do so, must be allowed to be a doer of good. How then is it said, in the passage which he has quoted and left unsolved, “There is none that doeth good, no, not one,” unless that the Psalmist there censures some one nation, amongst whom there was not a man that did good, wishing to remain “children of men,” and not sons of God, by whose grace man becomes good, in order to do good? For we must suppose the Psalmist here to mean that “good” which he describes in the context, saying, “God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.” Such good then as this, seeking after God, there was not a man found who pursued it, no, not one; but this was in that class of men which is predestinated to destruction. It was upon such that God looked down in His foreknowledge, and passed sentence.

CHAPTER XIV

(32.) THE FOURTH PASSAGE. IN WHAT SENSE GOD ONLY IS GOOD. WITH GOD TO BE GOOD AND TO BE HIMSELF ARE THE SAME THING

“They likewise,” says he, “quote what the Saviour says: Why callest thou me good? There is none good save one, that is, God?’“ This statement, however, he makes no attempt whatever to explain; all he does is to oppose to it sundry other passages which seem to contradict it, which he adduces to show that man, too, is good. Here are his remarks: “We must answer this text with another, in which the same Lord says, A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things.’ And again: He maketh His sun to rise on the good and on the evil.’ Then in another passage it is written, For the good things are created from the beginning;’ and yet again, They that are good shall dwell in the land.’“ Now to all this we must say in answer, that the passages in question must be understood in the same sense as the former one, “There is none good, save one, that is, God.” Either because all created things, although God made them very good, are yet, when compared with their Creator, not good, being in fact incapable of any comparison with Him. For in a transcendent, and yet very proper sense, He said of Himself, “I Am that I Am.” The statement therefore before us, “None is good save one, that is, God,” is used in some such way as that which is said of John, “He was not that light;” although the Lord calls him “a lamp,” just as He says to His disciples: “Ye are the light of the world: . . .

neither do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel.” Still, in comparison with that light which is “the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” he was not light. Or else, because the very sons of God even, when compared with themselves as they shall hereafter become in their eternal perfection, are good in such a way that they still remain also evil. Although I should not have dared to say this of them (for who would be so bold as to call them evil who have God for their Father?) unless the Lord had Himself said: “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?” Of course, by applying to them the words, “your Father,” He proved that they were already sons of God; and yet at the same time He did not hesitate to say that they were “evil.” Your author, however, does not explain to us how they are good, whilst yet “there is none good save one, that is, God.” Accordingly the man who asked “what good thing he was to do,” was admonished to seek Him by whose grace he might be good; to whom also to be good is nothing else than to be Himself, because He is unchangeably good, and cannot be evil at all.

(33.) The Fifth Passage.

“This,” says he, “is another text of theirs: Who will boast that he has a pure heart?’“ And then he answered this with several passages, wishing to show that there can be in man a pure heart. But he omits to inform us how the passage which he reported as quoted against himself must be taken, so as to prevent Holy Scripture seeming to be opposed to itself in this text, and in the passages by which he makes his answer. We for our part indeed tell him, in answer, that the clause, “Who will boast that he has a pure heart?” is a suitable sequel to the preceding sentence, “whenever a righteous king sits upon the throne.” For how great soever ever a man’s righteousness may be, he ought to reflect and think, lest there should be found something blameworthy, which has escaped indeed his own notice, when that righteous King shall sit upon His throne, whose cognizance no sins can possibly escape, not even those of which it is said, “Who understandeth his transgressions?” “When, therefore, the righteous King shall sit upon His throne, . . . who will boast that he has a pure heart? or who will boldly say that he is pure from sin?” Except perhaps those who wish to boast of their own righteousness, and not glory in the mercy of the Judge Himself.

CHAPTER XV

(34.) THE OPPOSING PASSAGES

And yet the passages are true which he goes on to adduce by way of answer, saying: “The Saviour in the gospel declares, Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.’ David also says, Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that is innocent in his hands, and pure in his heart;’ and again in another passage, Do good, O Lord, unto those that be good and upright in heart.’ So also in Solomon: Riches are good unto him that hath no sin on his conscience;’ and again in the same book, Leave off from sin, and order thine hands aright, and cleanse thy heart from wickedness.’ So in the Epistle of John, If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God; and whatsoever we ask, we shall receive of Him.’“ For all this is accomplished by the will, by the exercise of faith, hope, and love; by keeping under the body; by doing alms; by forgiving injuries; by earnest prayer; by supplicating for strength to advance in our course; by sincerely saying, “Forgive us, as we also forgive others,” and “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” By this process, it is certainly brought about that our heart is cleansed, and all our sin taken away; and what the righteous King, when sitting on His throne, shall find concealed in the heart and uncleansed as yet, shall be remitted by His mercy, so that the whole shall be rendered sound and cleansed for seeing God. For “he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy: yet mercy triumpheth against judgment.” If it were not so, what hope could any of us have? “When, indeed, the righteous King shall sit upon His throne, who shall boast that he hath a pure heart, or who shall boldly say that he is pure from sin?” Then, however, through His mercy shall the righteous, being by that time fully and perfectly cleansed, shine forth like the glorious sun in the kingdom of their Father.

(35.) The Church Will Be Without Spot and Wrinkle After the Resurrection.

Then shall the Church realize, fully and perfectly, the condition of “not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing,” because then also will it in a real sense be glorious. For inasmuch as he added the epithet “glorious,” when he said, “That He might present the Church to Himself, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing,” he signified sufficiently when the Church will be without spot, or wrinkle, or anything of this kind,—then of course when it shall be glorious. Because it is not so much when the Church is involved in so many evils, or amidst such offences, and in so great a mixture of very evil men, and amidst the heavy reproaches of the ungodly, that we ought to say that it is glorious, because kings serve it,—a fact which only produces a more perilous and a sorer temptation;—but then shall it rather be glorious, when that event shall come to pass of which the apostle also speaks in the words, “When Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” For since the Lord Himself, in that form of a servant by which He united Himself as Mediator to the Church, was not glorified except by the glory of His resurrection (whence it is said, “The Spirit was not yet given, because Christ was not yet glorified”), how shall His Church be described as glorious, before its resurrection? He cleanses it, therefore, now “by the laver of the water in the word,” washing away its past sins, and driving off from it the dominion of wicked angels; but then by bringing all its healthy powers to perfection, He makes it meet for that glorious state, where it shall shine without a spot or wrinkle. For “whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” It was under this mystery, as I suppose, that that was spoken, “Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be consummated,” or perfected. For He said this in the person of His body, which is His Church, putting days for distinct and appointed periods, which He also signified in “the third day” in His resurrection.

(36.) The Difference Between the Upright in Heart and the Clean in Heart.

I suppose, too, that there is a difference between one who is upright in heart and one who is clean in heart. A man is upright in heart when he “reaches forward to those things which are before, forgetting those things which are behind” so as to arrive in a right course, that is, with right faith and purpose, at the perfection where he may dwell clean and pure in heart. Thus, in the psalm, the conditions ought to be severally bestowed on each separate character, where it is said, “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that is innocent in his hands, and clean in his heart.” He shall ascend, innocent in his hands, and stand, clean in his heart,—the one state in present operation, the other in its consummation. And of them should rather be understood that which is written: “Riches are good unto him that hath no sin on his conscience.” Then indeed shall accrue the good, or true riches, when all poverty shall have passed away; in other words, when all infirmity shall have been removed. A man may now indeed “leave off from sin,” when in his onward course he departs from it, and is renewed day by day; and he may “order his hands,” and direct them to works of mercy, and “cleanse his heart from all wickedness,”—he may be so merciful that what remains may be forgiven him by free pardon. This indeed is the sound and suitable meaning, without any vain and empty boasting, of that which St. John said: “If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we shall receive of Him.” The warning which he clearly has addressed to us in this passage, is to beware lest our heart should reproach us in our very prayers and petitions; that is to say, lest, when we happen to resort to this prayer, and say, “Forgive us, even as we ourselves forgive, we should have to feel compunction for not doing what we say, or should even lose boldness to utter what we fail to do, and thereby forfeit the confidence of faithful and earnest prayer.

CHAPTER XVI

(37.) THE SIXTH PASSAGE

He has also adduced this passage of Scripture, which is very commonly quoted against his party: “For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.” And he makes a pretence of answering it by other passages,—how, “the Lord says concerning holy Job, Hast thou considered my servant Job? For there is none like him upon earth, a man who is blameless, true, a worshipper of God, and abstaining from every evil thing.’“ On this passage we have already made some remarks. But he has not even attempted to show us how, on the one hand, Job was absolutely sinless upon earth,—if the words are to bear such a sense; and, on the other hand, how that can be true which he has admitted to be in the Scripture, "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."

CHAPTER XVII

(38.) THE SEVENTH PASSAGE. WHO MAY BE CALLED IMMACULATE. HOW IT IS THAT IN GOD'S SIGHT NO MAN IS JUSTIFIED

"They also, says he, "quote the text: For in thy sight shall no man living be justified.'" And his affected answer to this passage amounts to nothing else than the showing how texts of Holy Scripture seem to clash with one another, whereas it is our duty rather to demonstrate their agreement. These are his words: "We must confront them with this answer, from the testimony of the evangelist concerning holy Zacharias and Elisabeth, when he says, And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.'" Now both these righteous persons had, of course, read amongst these very commandments the method of cleansing their own sins. For, according to what is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews of "every high priest taken from among men," Zacharias used no doubt to offer sacrifices even for his own sins. The meaning, however, of the phrase "blameless," which is applied to him, we have already, as I suppose, sufficiently explained. "And," he adds, "the blessed apostle says, That we should be holy, and without blame before Him.'" This, according to him, is said that we should be so, if those persons are to be understood by "blameless" who are altogether without sin. If, however, they are "blameless" who are without blame or censure, then it is impossible for us to deny that there have been, and still are, such persons even in this present life; for it does not follow that a man is without sin because he has not a blot of accusation. Accordingly the apostle, when selecting ministers for ordination, does not say, "If any be sinless," for he would be unable to find any such; but he says, "If any be without accusation," for such, of course, he would be able to find. But our opponent does not tell us how, in accordance with his views, we ought to understand the scripture, "For in Thy sight shall no man living be justified." The meaning of these words is plain enough, receiving as it does additional light from the preceding clause: "Enter not," says the Psalmist, "into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.” It is judgment which he fears, therefore he desires that mercy which triumphs over judgment. For the meaning of the prayer, “Enter not into judgment with Thy servant,” is this: “Judge me not according to Thyself,” who art without sin; “for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.” This without doubt is understood as spoken of the present life, whilst the predicate “shall not be justified” has reference to that perfect state of righteousness which belongs not to this life.

CHAPTER XVIII

(39.) THE EIGHTH PASSAGE. IN WHAT SENSE HE IS SAID NOT TO SIN WHO IS BORN OF GOD. IN WHAT WAY HE WHO SINS SHALL NOT SEE NOR KNOW GOD

“They also quote,” says he, “this passage, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” And this very clear testimony he has endeavoured to meet with apparently contradictory texts, saying thus: “The same St. John in this very epistle says, This, however, brethren, I say, that ye sin not. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin.’ Also elsewhere: Whosoever is born of God sinneth not; because his being born of God preserveth him, and the evil one toucheth him not.’ And again in another passage, when speaking of the Saviour, he says: Since He was manifested to take away sins, whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him.’ And yet again: Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope towards Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.’“ And yet, notwithstanding the truth of all these passages, that also is true which he has adduced, without, however, offering any explanation of it: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” Now it follows from the whole of this, that in so far as we are born of God we abide in Him who appeared to take away sins, that is, in Christ, and sin not,—which is simply that “the inward man is renewed day by day;” but in so far as we are born of that man “through whom sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men,” we are not without sin, because we are not as yet free from his infirmity, until, by that renewal which takes place from day to day (for it is in accordance with this that we were born of God), that infirmity shall be wholly repaired, wherein we were born from the first than, and in which we are not without sin. While the remains of this infirmity abide in our inward man, however much they may be daily lessened in those who are advancing, “we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, if we say that we have no sin.” Now, however true it is that “whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, nor known Him,” since with that vision and knowledge, which shall be realized in actual sight, no one can in this life see and know Him; yet with that vision and knowledge which come of faith, there may be many who commit sin,—even apostates themselves,—who still have believed in Him some time or other; so that of none of these could it be said, according to the vision and knowledge which as yet come of faith, that he has neither seen Him nor known Him. But I suppose it ought to be understood that it is the renewal which awaits perfection that sees and knows Him; whereas the infirmity which is destined to waste and ruin neither sees nor knows Him. And it is owing to the remains of this infirmity, of whatever amount, which remain firm in our inward man, that “we deceive ourselves, and have not the truth in us, when we say that we have no sin.” Although, then, by the grace of renovation “we are the sons of God,” yet by reason of the remains of infirmity within us “it doth not appear what we shall be; only we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” Then there shall be no more sin, because no infirmity shall any longer remain within us or without us. “And every man that hath this hope towards Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure,”—purifieth himself, not indeed by himself alone, but by believing in Him, and calling on Him who sanctifieth His saints; which sanctification, when perfected at last (for it is at present only advancing and growing day by day), shall take away from us for ever all the remains of our infirmity.

CHAPTER XIX

(40.) THE NINTH PASSAGE

“This passage, too,” says he, “is quoted by them: It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.’“ And he observes that the answer to be given to them is derived from the same apostle’s words in another passage: “Let him do what he will.” And he adds another passage from the Epistle to Philemon, where, speaking of Onesimus, [St. Paul says]: “Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel. But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.’ Likewise, in Deuteronomy: Life and death hath He set before thee, and good and evil: . . . choose thou life, that thou mayest live.’ So in the book of Solomon: God from the beginning made man, and left him in the hand of His counsel; and He added for him commandments and precepts: if thou wilt—to perform acceptable faithfulness for the time to come, they shall save thee. He hath set fire and water before thee: stretch forth thine hand unto whether thou wilt. Before man are good and evil, and life and death; poverty and honour are from the Lord God.’ So again in Isaiah we read: If ye be willing, and hearken unto me, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye be not willing, and hearken not to me, the sword shall devour you: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken this.’“ Now with all their efforts of disguise they here betray their purpose; for they plainly attempt to controvert the grace and mercy of God, which we desire to obtain whenever we offer the prayer, “Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven;” or again this, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” For indeed why do we present such petitions in earnest supplication, if the result is of him that willeth, and him that runneth, but not of God that showeth mercy? Not that the result is without our will, but that our will does not accomplish the result, unless it receive the divine assistance. Now the wholesomeness of faith is this, that it makes us “seek, that we may find; ask, that we may receive; and knock, that it may be opened to us.” Whereas the man who gainsays it, does really shut the door of God’s mercy against himself. I am unwilling to say more touching so important a matter, because I do better in committing it to the groans of the faithful, than to words of my own.

(41.) Specimens of Pelagian Exegesis.

But I beg of you to see what kind of objection, after all, he makes, that to him who “willeth and runneth” there is no necessity for God’s mercy, which actually anticipates him in order that he may run,—because, forsooth, the apostle says concerning a certain person, “Let him do what he will,”—in the matter, as I suppose, which he goes on to treat, when he says, “He sinneth not, let him marry!” As if indeed it should be regarded as a great matter to be willing to marry, when the subject is a laboured discussion concerning the assistance of God’s grace, or that it is of any great advantage to will it, unless God’s providence, which governs all things, joins together the man and the woman. Or, in the case of the apostle’s writing to Philemon, that “his kindness should not be as it were of necessity, but voluntary,”—as if any good act could indeed be voluntary otherwise than by God’s “working in us both to will and to do of His own good pleasure.” Or, when the Scripture says in Deuteronomy, “Life and death hath He set before man and good and evil,” and admonishes him “to choose life;” as if, forsooth, this very admonition did not come from God’s mercy, or as if there were any advantage in choosing life, unless God inspired love to make such a choice, and gave the possession of it when chosen, concerning which it is said: “For anger is in His indignation, and in His pleasure is life.”

Or again, because it is said, “The commandments, if thou wilt, shall save thee,”—as if a man ought not to thank God, because he has a will to keep the commandments, since, if he wholly lacked the light of truth, it would not be possible for him to possess such a will. “Fire and water being set before him, a man stretches forth his hand towards which he pleases;” and yet higher is He who calls man to his higher vocation than any thought on man’s own part, inasmuch as the beginning of correction of the heart lies in faith, even as it is written, “Thou shalt come, and pass on from the beginning of faith.” Every one makes his choice of good, “according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith;” and as the Prince of faith says, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” And that He spake this in reference to the faith which believes in Him, He subsequently explains with sufficient clearness, when He says: “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life; yet there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him. And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.”

(42.) God’s Promises Conditional. Saints of the Old Testament Were Saved by the Grace of Christ.

He, however, thought he had discovered a great support for his cause in the prophet Isaiah; because by him God said: “If ye be willing, and hearken unto me, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye be not willing, and hearken not to me, the sword shall devour you: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken this.” As if the entire law were not full of conditions of this sort; or as if its commandments had been given to proud men for any other reason than that “the law was added because of transgression, until the seed should come to whom the promise was made.” “It entered, therefore, that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” In other words, That man might receive commandments, trusting as he did in his own resources, and that, failing in these and becoming a transgressor, he might ask for a deliverer and a saviour; and that the fear of the law might humble him, and bring him, as a schoolmaster, to faith and grace. Thus “their weaknesses being multiplied, they hastened after;” and in order to heal them, Christ in due season came. In His grace even righteous men of old believed, and by the same grace were they holpen; so that with joy did they receive a foreknowledge of Him, and some of them even foretold His coming,—whether they were found among the people of Israel themselves, as Moses, and Joshua the son of Nun, and Samuel, and David, and other such; or outside that people, as Job; or previous to that people, as Abraham, and Noah, and all others who are either mentioned or not in Holy Scripture. “For there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus,” without whose grace nobody is delivered from condemnation, whether he has derived that condemnation from him in whom all men sinned, or has afterwards aggravated it by his own iniquities.

CHAPTER XX

(43.) NO MAN IS ASSISTED UNLESS HE DOES HIMSELF ALSO WORK. OUR COURSE IS A CONSTANT PROGRESS

But what is the import of the last statement which he has made: “If any one say, May it possibly be that a man sin not even in word?’ then the answer,” says he, “which must be given is, Quite possible, if God so will; and God does so will, therefore it is possible.'“ See how unwilling he was to say, “If God give His help, then it would be possible;” and yet the Psalmist thus addresses God: “Be Thou my helper, forsake me not;” where of course help is not sought for procuring bodily advantages and avoiding bodily evils, but for practising and fulfilling righteousness. Hence it is that we say: “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” Now no man is assisted unless he also himself does something; assisted, however, he is, if he prays, if he believes, if he is “called according to God's purpose;” for “whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” We run, therefore, whenever we make advance; and our wholeness runs with us in our advance (just as a sore is said to run when the wound is in process of a sound and careful treatment), in order that we may be in every respect perfect, without any infirmity of sin whatever,—a result which God not only wishes, but even causes and helps us to accomplish. And this God's grace does, in co-operation with ourselves, through Jesus Christ our Lord, as well by commandments, sacraments, and examples, as by His Holy Spirit also; through whom there is hiddenly shed abroad in our hearts that love, “which maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered,” until wholeness and salvation be perfected in us, and God be manifested to us as He will be seen in His eternal truth.

CHAPTER XXI

(44.) CONCLUSION OF THE WORK. IN THE REGENERATE IT IS NOT CONCUPISCENCE, BUT CONSENT, WHICH IS SIN

Whosoever, then, supposes that any man or any men (except the one Mediator between God and man) have ever lived, or are yet living in this present state, who have not needed, and do not need, forgiveness of sins, he opposes Holy Scripture, wherein it is said by the apostle: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in which all have sinned.” And he must needs go on to assert, with an impious contention, that there may possibly be men who are freed and saved from sin without the liberation and salvation of the one Mediator

Christ. Whereas He it is who has said: “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;” “I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” He, moreover, who says that any man, after he has received remission of sins, has ever lived in this body, or still is living, so righteously as to have no sin at all, he contradicts the Apostle John, who declares that “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” Observe, the expression is not we had, but “we have.” If, however, anybody contend that the apostle’s statement concerns the sin which dwells in our mortal flesh according to the defect which was caused by the will of the first man when he sinned, and concerning which the Apostle Paul enjoins us “not” to “obey it in the lusts thereof,—so that he does not sin who altogether withholds his consent from this same indwelling sin, and so brings it to no evil work,—either in deed, or word, or thought,—although the lusting after it may be excited (which in another sense has received the name of sin, inasmuch as consenting to it would amount to sinning), but excited against our will,—he certainly is drawing subtle distinctions, and should consider what relation all this bears to the Lord’s Prayer, wherein we say, “Forgive us our debts.” Now, if I judge aright, it would be unnecessary to put up such a prayer as this, if we never in the least degree consented to the lusts of the before-mentioned sin, either in a slip of the tongue, or in a wanton thought; all that it would be needful to say would be, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” Nor could the Apostle James say: “In many things we all offend.” For in truth only that man offends whom an evil concupiscence persuades, either by deception or by force, to do or say or think something which he ought to avoid, by directing his appetites or his aversions contrary to the rule of righteousness. Finally, if it be asserted that there either have been, or are in this present life, any persons, with the sole exception of our Great Head, “the Saviour of His body,” who are righteous, without any sin,—and this, either by not consenting to the lusts thereof, or because that must not be accounted as any sin which is such that God does not impute it to them by reason of their godly lives (although the blessedness of being without sin is a different thing from the blessedness of not having one’s sin imputed to him),—I do not deem it necessary to contest the point over much. I am quite aware that some hold this opinion, whose views on the subject I have not the courage to censure, although, at the same time, I cannot defend them. But if any man says that we ought not to use the prayer, “Lead us not into temptation” (and he says as much who maintains that God’s help is unnecessary to a person for the avoidance of sin, and that human will, after accepting only the law, is sufficient for the purpose), then I do not hesitate at once to affirm that such a man ought to be removed from the public ear, and to be anathematized by every mouth.

A TREATISE ON FAITH AND THE CREED

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DE FIDE ET SYMBOLO.

IN ONE BOOK.

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A DISCOURSE DELIVERED BEFORE A COUNCIL OF THE WHOLE NORTH AFRICAN EPISCOPATE ASSEMBLED AT HIPPO-REGIUS.

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A TREATISE ON FAITH AND THE CREED

CHAPTER 1

OF THE ORIGIN AND OBJECT OF THE COMPOSITION

1. Inasmuch as it is a position, written and established on the most solid foundation of apostolic teaching, “that the just lives of faith;” and inasmuch also as this faith demands of us the duty at once of heart and tongue,—for an apostle says, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,”—it becomes us to be mindful both of righteousness and of salvation. For, destined as we are to reign hereafter in everlasting righteousness, we certainly cannot secure our salvation from the present evil world, unless at the same time, while laboring for the salvation of our neighbors, we likewise with the mouth make our own profession of the faith which we carry in our heart. And it must be our aim, by pious and careful watchfulness, to provide against the possibility of the said faith sustaining any injury in us, on any side, through the fraudulent artifices [or, cunning fraud] of the heretics.

We have, however, the catholic faith in the Creed, known to the faithful and committed to memory, contained in a form of expression as concise as has been rendered admissible by the circumstances of the case; the purpose of which [compilation] was, that individuals who are but beginners and sucklings among those who have been born again in Christ, and who have not yet been strengthened by most diligent and spiritual handling and understanding of the divine Scriptures, should be furnished with a summary, expressed in few words, of those matters of necessary belief which were subsequently to be explained to them in many words, as they made progress and rose to [the height of] divine doctrine, on the assured and steadfast basis of humility and charity. It is underneath these few words, therefore, which are thus set in order in the Creed, that most heretics have endeavored to conceal their poisons; whom divine mercy has withstood, and still withstands, by the instrumentality of spiritual men, who have been counted worthy not only to accept and believe the catholic faith as expounded in those terms, but also thoroughly to understand and apprehend it by the enlightenment imparted by the Lord. For it is written, “Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand.” But the handling of the faith is of service for the protection of the Creed; not, however, to the intent that this should itself be given instead of the Creed, to be committed to memory and repeated by those who are receiving the grace of God, but that it may guard the matters which are retained in the Creed against the insidious assaults of the heretics, by means of catholic authority and a more entrenched defence.

CHAPTER 2

OF GOD AND HIS EXCLUSIVE ETERNITY

2. For certain parties have attempted to gain acceptance for the opinion that God the Father is not Almighty: not that they have been bold enough expressly to affirm this, but in their traditions they are convicted of entertaining and crediting such a notion. For when they affirm that there is a nature which God Almighty did not create, but of which at the same time He fashioned this world, which they admit to have been disposed in beauty, they thereby deny that God is almighty, to the effect of not believing that He could have created the world without employing, for the purpose of its construction, another nature, which had been in existence previously, and which He Himself had not made. Thus, forsooth, [they reason] from their carnal familiarity with the sight of craftsmen and house-builders, and artisans of all descriptions, who have no power to make good the effect of their own art unless they get the help of materials already prepared. And so these parties in like manner understand the Maker of the world not to be almighty, if thus He could not fashion the said world without the help of some other nature, not framed by Himself, which He had to use as His materials. Or if indeed they do allow God, the Maker of the world, to be almighty, it becomes matter of course that they must also acknowledge that He made out of nothing the things which He did make. For, granting that He is almighty, there cannot exist anything of which He should not be the Creator. For although He made something out of something, as man out of

clay, nevertheless He certainly did not make any object out of aught which He Himself had not made; for the earth from which the clay comes He had made out of nothing. And even if He had made out of some material the heavens and the earth themselves, that is to say, the universe and all things which are in it, according as it is written, “Thou who didst make the world out of matter unseen,” or also “without form,” as some copies give it; yet we are under no manner of necessity to believe that this very material of which the universe was made, although it might be “without form,” although it might be “unseen,” whatever might be the mode of its subsistence, could possibly have subsisted of itself, as if it were co-eternal and co-eval with God. But whatsoever that mode was which it possessed to the effect of subsisting in some manner, whatever that manner might be, and of being capable of taking on the forms of distinct things, this it did not possess except by the hand of Almighty God, by whose goodness it is that everything exists,—not only every object which is already formed, but also every object which is formable. This, moreover, is the difference between the formed and the formable, that the formed has already taken on form, while the formable is capable of taking the same. But the same Being who imparts form to objects, also imparts the capability of being formed. For of Him and in Him is the fairest figure of all things, unchangeable; and therefore He Himself is One, who communicates to everything its possibilities, not only that it be beautiful actually, but also that it be capable of being beautiful. For which reason we do most right to believe that God made all things of nothing. For, even although the world was made of some sort of material, this self-same material itself was made of nothing; so that, in accordance with the most orderly gift of God, there was to enter first the capacity of taking forms, and then that all things should be formed which have been formed. This, however, we have said, in order that no one might suppose that the utterances of the divine Scriptures are contrary the one to the other, in so far as it is written at once that God made all things of nothing, and that the world was made of matter without form.

3. As we believe, therefore, in God the Father Almighty, we ought to uphold the opinion that there is no creature which has not been created by the Almighty. And since He created all things by the Word, which Word is also designated the Truth, and the Power, and the Wisdom of God,—as also

under many other appellations the Lord Jesus Christ, who is commended to our faith, is presented likewise to our mental apprehensions, to wit, our Deliverer and Ruler, the Son of God; for that Word, by whose means all things were founded, could not have been begotten by any other than by Him who founded all things by His instrumentality;—

CHAPTER 3

OF THE SON OF GOD, AND HIS PECULIAR DESIGNATION AS THE WORD

—Since this is the case, I repeat, we believe also in Jesus Christ, the Son of God the Only-Begotten of the Father, that is to say, His Only Son, our Lord. This Word however, we ought not to apprehend merely in the sense in which we think of our own words, which are given forth by the voice and the mouth, and strike the air and pass on, and subsist no longer than their sound continues. For that Word remains unchangeably: for of this very Word was it spoken when of Wisdom it was said, “Remaining in herself, she maketh all things new.” Moreover, the reason of His being named the Word of the Father, is that the Father is made known by Him. Accordingly, just as it is our intention, when we speak truth, that by means of our words our mind should be made known to him who hears us, and that whatever we carry in secrecy in our heart may be set forth by means of signs of this sort for the intelligent understanding of another individual; so this Wisdom that God the Father begot is most appropriately named His Word, inasmuch as the most hidden Father is made known to worthy minds by the same.

4. Now there is a very great difference between our mind and those words of ours, by which we endeavor to set forth the said mind. We indeed do not beget intelligible words, but we form them; and in the forming of them the body is the underlying material. Between mind and body, however, there is the greatest difference. But God, when He begot the Word, begot that which He is Himself. Neither out of nothing, nor of any material already made and founded did He then beget; but He begot of Himself that which He is Himself. For we too aim at this when we speak, (as we shall see) if we carefully consider the inclination of our will; not when we lie, but when we speak the truth. For to what else do we direct our efforts then, but to bring our own very mind, if it can be done at all, in upon the mind of the hearer,

with the view of its being apprehended and thoroughly discerned by him; so that we may indeed abide in our very selves, and make no retreat from ourselves, and yet at the same time put forth a sign of such a nature as that by it a knowledge of us may be effected in another individual; that thus, so far as the faculty is granted us, another mind may be, as it were, put forth by the mind, whereby it may disclose itself? This we do, making the attempt both by words, and by the simple sound of the voice, and by the countenance, and by the gestures of the body,—by so many contrivances, in sooth, desiring to make patent that which is within; inasmuch as we are not able to put forth aught of this nature [in itself completely]: and thus it is that the mind of the speaker cannot become perfectly known; thus also it results that a place is open for falsehoods. God the Father, on the other hand, who possessed both the will and the power to declare Himself with the utmost truth to minds designed to obtain knowledge of Him, with the purpose of thus declaring Himself begot this [Word] which He Himself is who did beget; which [Person] is likewise called His Power and Wisdom, inasmuch as it is by Him that He has wrought all things, and in order disposed them; of whom these words are for this reason spoken: “She (Wisdom) reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth she order all things.”

CHAPTER 4

OF THE SON OF GOD AS NEITHER MADE BY THE FATHER NOR LESS THAN THE FATHER, AND OF HIS INCARNATION

5. Wherefore The Only-Begotten Son of God was neither made by the Father; for, according to the word of an evangelist, “all things were made by Him:” nor begotten instantaneously; since God, who is eternally wise, has with Himself His eternal Wisdom: nor unequal with the Father, that is to say, in anything less than He; for an apostle also speaks in this wise, “Who, although He was constituted in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” By this catholic faith, therefore, those are excluded, on the one hand, who affirm that the Son is the same [Person] as the Father; for [it is clear that] this Word could not possibly be with God, were it not with God the Father, and [it is just as evident that] He who is alone is equal to no one. And, on the other hand, those are equally excluded who affirm that the Son is a creature, although not such an one as the rest of the creatures are.

For however great they declare the creature to be, if it is a creature, it has been fashioned and made. For the terms fashion and create mean one and the same thing; although in the usage of the Latin tongue the phrase create is employed at times instead of what would be the strictly accurate word beget. But the Greek language makes a distinction. For we call that creatura (creature) which they call ktisma or ktisis; and when we desire to speak without ambiguity, we use not the word creare (create), but the word condere (fashion, found). Consequently, if the Son is a creature, however great that may be, He has been made. But we believe in Him by whom all things (omnia) were made, not in Him by whom the rest of things (cetera) were made. For here again we cannot take this term all things in any other sense than as meaning whatsoever things have been made.

6. But as “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” the same Wisdom which was begotten of God condescended also to be created among men. There is a reference to this in the word, “The Lord created me in the beginning of His ways.” For the beginning of His ways is the Head of the Church, which is Christ endued with human nature (homine indutus), by whom it was purposed that there should be given to us a pattern of living, that is, a sure way by which we might reach God. For by no other path was it possible for us to return but by humility, who fell by pride, according as it was said to our first creation, “Taste, and ye shall be as gods.” Of this humility, therefore, that is to say, of the way by which it was needful for us to return, our Restorer Himself has deemed it meet to exhibit an example in His own person, “who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant;” in order that He might be created Man in the beginning of His ways, the Word by whom all things were made. Wherefore, in so far as He is the Only-begotten, He has no brethren; but in so far as He is the First-begotten, He has deemed it worthy of Him to give the name of brethren to all those who, subsequently to and by means of His pre-eminence, are born again into the grace of God through the adoption of sons, according to the truth commended to us by apostolic teaching. Thus, then, the Son according to nature (naturalis filius) was born of the very substance of the Father, the only one so born, subsisting as that which the Father is, God of God, Light of Light. We, on the other hand, are not the light by nature, but are enlightened by that Light,

so that we may be able to shine in wisdom. For, as one says, “that was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” Therefore we add to the faith of things eternal likewise the temporal dispensation of our Lord, which He deemed it worthy of Him to bear for us and to minister in behalf of our salvation. For in so far as He is the only-begotten Son of God, it cannot be said of Him that He was and that He shall be, but only that He is; because, on the one hand, that which was, now is not; and, on the other, that which shall be, as yet is not. He, then, is unchangeable, independent of the condition of times and variation. And it is my opinion that this is the very consideration to which was due the circumstance that He introduced to the apprehension of His servant Moses the kind of name [which He then adopted]. For when he asked of Him by whom he should say that he was sent, in the event of the people to whom he was being sent despising him, he received his answer when He spake in this wise: “I Am that I Am.” Thereafter, too, He added this: “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, He that is (Qui est) has sent me unto you.”

7. From this, I trust, it is now made patent to spiritual minds that there cannot possibly exist any nature contrary to God. For if He is,—and this is a word which can be spoken with propriety only of God (for that which truly is remains unchangeably; inasmuch as that which is changed has been something which now it is not, and shall be something which as yet it is not),—it follows that God has nothing contrary to Himself. For if the question were put to us, What is contrary to white? we would reply, black; if the question were, What is contrary to hot? we would reply, cold; if the question were, What is contrary to quick? we would reply, slow; and all similar interrogations we would answer in like manner. When, however, it is asked, What is contrary to that which is? the right reply to give is, that which is not.

8. But whereas, in a temporal dispensation, as I have said, with a view to our salvation and restoration, and with the goodness of God acting therein, our changeable nature has been assumed by that unchangeable Wisdom of God, we add the faith in temporal things which have been done with salutary effect on our behalf, believing in that Son of God Who Was Born Through the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary. For by the gift of God, that is,

by the Holy Spirit, there was granted to us so great humility on the part of so great a God, that He deemed it worthy of Him to assume the entire nature of man (totum hominem) in the womb of the Virgin, inhabiting the material body so that it sustained no detriment (integrum), and leaving it without detriment. This temporal dispensation is in many ways craftily assailed by the heretics. But if any one shall have grasped the catholic faith, so as to believe that the entire nature of man was assumed by the Word of God, that is to say, body, soul, and spirit, he has sufficient defense against those parties. For surely, since that assumption was effected in behalf of our salvation, one must be on his guard lest, as he believes that there is something belonging to our nature which sustains no relation to that assumption, this something may fail also to sustain any relation to the salvation. And seeing that, with the exception of the form of the members, which has been imparted to the varieties of living objects with differences adapted to their different kinds, man is in nothing separated from the cattle but in [the possession of] a rational spirit (rationali spiritu), which is also named mind (mens), how is that faith sound, according to which the belief is maintained, that the Wisdom of God assumed that part of us which we hold in common with the cattle, while He did not assume that which is brightly illumined by the light of wisdom, and which is man’s peculiar gift?

9. Moreover, those parties also are to be abhorred who deny that our Lord Jesus Christ had in Mary a mother upon earth; while that dispensation has honored both sexes, at once the male and the female, and has made it plain that not only that sex which He assumed pertains to God’s care, but also that sex by which He did assume this other, in that He bore [the nature of] the man (virum gerendo), [and] in that He was born of the woman. Neither is there anything to compel us to a denial of the mother of the Lord, in the circumstance that this word was spoken by Him: “Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.” But He rather admonishesus to understand that, in respect of His being God, there was no mother for Him, the part of whose personal majesty (cujus majestatis personam) He was preparing to show forth in the turning of water into wine. But as regards His being crucified, He was crucified in respect of his being man; and that was the hour which had not come as yet, at the time when this word was spoken, “What have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come;” that is, the hour

at which I shall recognize thee. For at that period, when He was crucified as man, He recognized His human mother (hominem matrem), and committed her most humanely (humanissime) to the care of the best beloved disciple. Nor, again, should we be moved by the fact that, when the presence of His mother and His brethren was announced to Him, He replied, “Who is my mother, or who my brethren?” etc. But rather let it teach us, that when parents hinder our ministry wherein we minister the word of God to our brethren, they ought not to be recognized by us. For if, on the ground of His having said, “Who is my mother?” every one should conclude that He had no mother on earth, then each should as matter of course be also compelled to deny that the apostles had fathers on earth; since He gave them an injunction in these terms: “Call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven.”

10. Neither should the thought of the woman’s womb impair this faith in us, to the effect that there should appear to be any necessity for rejecting such a generation of our Lord for the mere reason that worthless men consider it unworthy (sordidi sordidam putant). For most true are these sayings of an apostle, both that “the foolishness of God is wiser than men,” and that “to the pure all things are pure.” Those, therefore, who entertain this opinion ought to ponder the fact that the rays of this sun, which indeed they do not praise as a creature of God, but adore as God, are diffused all the world over, through the noisomenesses of sewers and every kind of horrible thing, and that they operate in these according to their nature, and yet never become debased by any defilement thence contracted, albeit that the visible light is by nature in closer conjunction with visible pollutions. How much less, therefore, could the Word of God, who is neither corporeal nor visible, sustain defilement from the female body, wherein He assumed human flesh together with soul and spirit, through the incoming of which the majesty of the Word dwells in a less immediate conjunction with the frailty of a human body! Hence it is manifest that the Word of God could in no way have been defiled by a human body, by which even the human soul is not defiled. For not when it rules the body and quickens it, but only when it lusts after the mortal good things thereof, is the soul defiled by the body. But if these persons were to desire to avoid the defilements of the soul, they would dread rather these falsehoods and profanities.

CHAPTER 5

OF CHRIST’S PASSION, BURIAL, AND RESURRECTION

11. But little [comparatively] was the humiliation (humilitas) of our Lord on our behalf in His being born: it was also added that He deemed it meet to die in behalf of mortal men. For “He humbled Himself, being made subject even unto death, yea, the death of the cross:” lest any one of us, even were he able to have no fear of death [in general], should yet shudder at some particular sort of death which men reckon most shameful. Therefore do we believe in Him Who Under Pontius Pilate Was Crucified and Buried. For it was requisite that the name of the judge should be added, with a view to the cognizance of the times. Moreover, when that burial is made an object of belief, there enters also the recollection of the new tomb, which was meant to present a testimony to Him in His destiny to rise again to newness of life, even as the Virgin’s womb did the same to Him in His appointment to be born. For just as in that sepulchre no other dead person was buried, whether before or after Him; so neither in that womb, whether before or after, was anything mortal conceived.

12. We believe also, that On the Third Day He Rose Again from The Dead, the first-begotten for brethren destined to come after Him, whom He has called into the adoption of the sons of God, whom [also] He has deemed it meet to make His own joint-partners and joint-heirs.

CHAPTER 6

OF CHRIST’S ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN

13. We believe that He Ascended into Heaven, which place of blessedness He has likewise promised unto us, saying, “They shall be as the angels in the heavens,” in that city which is the mother of us all, the Jerusalem eternal in the heavens. But it is wont to give offense to certain parties, either impious Gentiles or heretics, that we should believe in the assumption of an earthly body into heaven. The Gentiles, however, for the most part, set themselves diligently to ply us with the arguments of the philosophers, to the effect of affirming that there cannot possibly be anything earthly in heaven. For they know not our Scriptures, neither do they understand how it

has been said, “It is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body.” For thus it has not been expressed, as if body were turned into spirit and became spirit; inasmuch as at present, too, our body, which is called animal (animale), has not been turned into soul and become soul (anima). But by a spiritual body is meant one which has been made subject to spirit in such wise that it is adapted to a heavenly habitation, all frailty and every earthly blemish having been changed and converted into heavenly purity and stability. This is the change concerning which the apostle likewise speaks thus: “We shall all rise, but we shall not all be changed.” And that this change is made not unto the worse, but unto the better, the same [apostle] teaches, when he says, “And we shall be changed.” But the question as to where and in what manner the Lord’s body is in heaven, is one which it would be altogether over-curious and superfluous to prosecute. Only we must believe that it is in heaven. For it pertains not to our frailty to investigate the secret things of heaven, but it does pertain to our faith to hold elevated and honorable sentiments on the subject of the dignity of the Lord’s body.

CHAPTER 7

OF CHRIST’S SESSION AT THE FATHER’S RIGHT HAND

14. We believe also that He Sitteth at the Right Hand of the Father. This, however, is not to lead us to suppose that God the Father is, as it were, circumscribed by a human form, so that, when we think of Him, a right side or a left should suggest itself to the mind. Nor, again, when it is thus said in express terms that the Father sitteth, are we to fancy that this is done with bended knees; lest we should fall into that profanity, in [dealing with] which an apostle execrates those who “changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of corruptible man.” For it is unlawful for a Christian to set up any such image for God in a temple; much more nefarious is it, [therefore], to set it up in the heart, in which truly is the temple of God, provided it be purged of earthly lust and error. This expression, “at the right hand,” therefore, we must understand to signify a position in supremest blessedness, where righteousness and peace and joy are; just as the kids are set on the left hand, that is to say, in misery, by reason of unrighteousness, labors, and torments. And in accordance with this, when it is said that God

"sitteth," the expression indicates not a posture of the members, but a judicial power, which that Majesty never fails to possess, as He is always awarding deserts as men deserve them (digna dignis tribuendo); although at the last judgment the unquestionable brightness of the only-begotten Son of God, the Judge of the living and the dead, is destined yet to be a thing much more manifest among men.

CHAPTER 8

OF CHRIST'S COMING TO JUDGMENT

15. We believe also, that at the most seasonable time He Will Come from Thence, and Will Judge the Quick and the Dead: whether by these terms are signified the righteous and sinners, or whether it be the case that those persons are here called the quick, whom at that period He shall find, previous to [their] death, upon the earth, while the dead denote those who shall rise again at His advent. This temporal dispensation not only is, as holds good of that generation which respects His being God, but also hath been and shall be. For our Lord hath been upon the earth, and at present He is in heaven, and [hereafter] He shall be in His brightness as the Judge of the quick and the dead. For He shall yet come, even so as He has ascended, according to the authority which is contained in the Acts of the Apostles. It is in accordance with this temporal dispensation, therefore, that He speaks in the Apocalypse, where it is written in this wise: "These things saith He, who is, and who was, and who is to come."

CHAPTER 9

OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE MYSTERY OF THE TRINITY

16. The divine generation, therefore, of our Lord, and his human dispensation, having both been thus systematically disposed and commended to faith, there is added to our Confession, with a view to the perfecting of the faith which we have regarding God, [the doctrine of] The Holy Spirit, who is not of a nature inferior to the Father and the Son, but, so to say, consubstantial and co-eternal: for this Trinity is one God, not to the effect that the Father is the same [Person] as the Son and the Holy Spirit, but to the effect that the Father is the Father, and the Son is the Son, and the

Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit; and this Trinity is one God, according as it is written, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is one God.” At the same time, if we be interrogated on the subject of each separately, and if the question be put to us, “Is the Father God?” we shall reply, “He is God.” If it be asked whether the Son is God, we shall answer to the same effect. Nor, if this kind of inquiry be addressed to us with respect to the Holy Spirit, ought we to affirm in reply that He is anything else than God; being earnestly on our guard, [however], against an acceptance of this merely in the sense in which it is applied to men, when it is said, “Ye are gods.” For of all those who have been made and fashioned of the Father, through the Son, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, none are gods according to nature. For it is this same Trinity that is signified when an apostle says, “For of Him, and in Him, and through Him, are all things.” Consequently, although, when we are interrogated on the subject of each [of these Persons] severally, we reply that that particular one regarding whom the question is asked, whether it be the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, is God, no one, notwithstanding this, should suppose that three Gods are worshipped by us.

17. Neither is it strange that these things are said in reference to an ineffable Nature, when even in those objects which we discern with the bodily eyes, and judge of by the bodily sense, something similar holds good. For take the instance of an interrogation on the subject of a fountain, and consider how we are unable then to affirm that the said fountain is itself the river; and how, when we are asked about the river, we are as little able to call it the fountain; and, again, how we are equally unable to designate the draught, which comes of the fountain or the river, either river or fountain. Nevertheless, in the case of this trinity we use the name water [for the whole]; and when the question is put regarding each of these separately, we reply in each several instance that the thing is water. For if I inquire whether it is water in the fountain, the reply is given that it is water; and if we ask whether it is water in the river, no different response is returned; and in the case of the said draught, no other answer can possibly be made: and yet, for all this, we do not speak of these things as three waters, but as one water. At the same time, of course, care must be taken that no one should conceive of the ineffable substance of that Majesty merely as he might think of this visible and material fountain, or river, or draught. For in the case of these

latter that water which is at present in the fountain goes forth into the river, and does not abide in itself; and when it passes from the river or from the fountain into the draught, it does not continue permanently there where it is taken from. Therefore it is possible here that the same water may be in view at one time under the appellation of the fountain and at another under that of the river, and at a third under that of the draught. But in the case of that Trinity, we have affirmed it to be impossible that the Father should be sometime the Son, and sometime the Holy Spirit: just as, in a tree, the root is nothing else than the root, and the trunk (robur) is nothing else than the trunk, and we cannot call the branches anything else than branches; for, what is called the root cannot be called trunk and branches; and the wood which belongs to the root cannot by any sort of transference be now in the root, and again in the trunk, and yet again in the branches, but only in the root; since this rule of designation stands fast, so that the root is wood, and the trunk is wood, and the branches are wood, while nevertheless it is not three woods that are thus spoken of, but only one. Or, if these objects have some sort of dissimilarity, so that on account of their difference in strength they may be spoken of, without any absurdity, as three woods; at least all parties admit the force of the former example,—namely, that if three cups be filled out of one fountain, they may certainly be called three cups, but cannot be spoken of as three waters, but only as one all together. Yet, at the same time, when asked concerning the several cups, one by one, we may answer that in each of them by itself there is water; although in this case no such transference takes place as we were speaking of as occurring from the fountain into the river. But these examples in things material (corporalia exempla) have been adduced not in virtue of their likeness to that divine Nature, but in reference to the oneness which subsists even in things visible, so that it may be understood to be quite a possibility for three objects of some sort, not only severally, but also all together, to obtain one single name; and that in this way no one may wonder and think it absurd that we should call the Father God, the Son God, the Holy Spirit God, and that nevertheless we should say that there are not three Gods in that Trinity, but one God and one substance.

18. And, indeed, on this subject of the Father and the Son, learned and spiritual men have conducted discussions in many books, in which, so far as

men could do with men, they have endeavored to introduce an intelligible account as to how the Father was not one personally with the Son, and yet the two were one substantially; and as to what the Father was individually (proprie), and what the Son: to wit, that the former was the Begetter, the latter the Begotten; the former not of the Son, the latter of the Father: the former the Beginning of the latter, whence also He is called the Head of Christ, although Christ likewise is the Beginning, but not of the Father; the latter, moreover, the Image of the former, although in no respect dissimilar, and although absolutely and without difference equal (omnino et indifferenter aequalis). These questions are handled with greater breadth by those who, in less narrow limits than ours are at present, seek to set forth the profession of the Christian faith in its totality. Accordingly, in so far as He is the Son, of the Father received He it that He is, while that other [the Father] received not this of the Son; and in so far as He, in unutterable mercy, in a temporal dispensation took upon Himself the [nature of] man (hominem),—to wit, the changeable creature that was thereby to be changed into something better,—many statements concerning Him are discovered in the Scriptures, which are so expressed as to have given occasion to error in the impious intellects of heretics, with whom the desire to teach takes precedence of that to understand, so that they have supposed Him to be neither equal with the Father nor of the same substance. Such statements [are meant] as the following: "For the Father is greater than I;" and, "The head of the woman is the man, the Head of the man is Christ, and the Head of Christ is God;" and, "Then shall He Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him;" and, "I go to my Father and your Father, my God and your God," together with some others of like tenor. Now all these have had a place given them, [certainly] not with the object of signifying an inequality of nature and substance; for to take them so would be to falsify a different class of statements, such as, "I and my Father are one" (unum); and, "He that hath seen me hath seen my Father also;" and, "The Word was God," for He was not made, inasmuch as "all things were made by Him;" and, "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God:" together with all the other passages of a similar order. But these statements have had a place given them, partly with a view to that administration of His assumption of human nature (administrationem suscepti hominis), in accordance with which it is said that "He emptied Himself:" not that that

Wisdom was changed, since it is absolutely unchangeable; but that it was His will to make Himself known in such humble fashion to men. Partly then, I repeat, it is with a view to this administration that those things have been thus written which the heretics make the ground of their false allegations; and partly it was with a view to the consideration that the Son owes to the Father that which He is,—thereby also certainly owing this in particular to the Father, to wit, that He is equal to the same Father, or that He is His Peer (eidem Patri aequalis aut par est), whereas the Father owes whatsoever He is to no one.

19. With respect to the Holy Spirit, however, there has not been as yet, on the part of learned and distinguished investigators of the Scriptures, a discussion of the subject full enough or careful enough to make it possible for us to obtain an intelligent conception of what also constitutes His special individuality (proprium): in virtue of which special individuality it comes to be the case that we cannot call Him either the Son or the Father, but only the Holy Spirit; excepting that they predicate Him to be the Gift of God, so that we may believe God not to give a gift inferior to Himself. At the same time they hold by this position, namely, to predicate the Holy Spirit neither as begotten, like the Son, of the Father; for Christ is the only one [so begotten]: nor as [begotten] of the Son, like a Grandson of the Supreme Father: while they do not affirm Him to owe that which He is to no one, but [admit Him to owe it] to the Father, of whom are all things; lest we should establish two Beginnings without beginning (ne duo constituamus principia isne principio), which would be an assertion at once most false and most absurd, and one proper not to the catholic faith, but to the error of certain heretics. Some, however, have gone so far as to believe that the communion of the Father and the Son, and (so to speak) their Godhead (deitatem), which the Greeks designate theotes, is the Holy Spirit; so that, inasmuch as the Father is God and the Son God, the Godhead itself, in which they are united with each other,—to wit, the former by begetting the Son, and the latter by cleaving to the Father,—should [thereby] be constituted equal with Him by whom He is begotten. This Godhead, then, which they wish to be understood likewise as the love and charity subsisting between these two [Persons], the one toward the other, they affirm to have received the name of the Holy Spirit. And this opinion of

theirs they support by many proofs drawn from the Scriptures; among which we might instance either the passage which says, “For the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who has been given unto us,” or many other proofs texts of a similar tenor: while they ground their position also upon the express fact that it is through the Holy Spirit that we are reconciled unto God; whence also, when He is called the Gift of God, they will have it that sufficient indication is offered of the love of God and the Holy Spirit being identical. For we are not reconciled unto Him except through that love in virtue of which we are also called sons: as we are no more “under fear, like servants,” because “love, when it is made perfect, casteth out fear;” and [as] “we have received the spirit of liberty, wherein we cry, Abba, Father.” And inasmuch as, being reconciled and called back into friendship through love, we shall be able to become acquainted with all the secret things of God, for this reason it is said of the Holy Spirit that “He shall lead you into all truth.” For the same reason also, that confidence in preaching the truth, with which the apostles were filled at His advent, is rightly ascribed to love; because diffidence also is assigned to fear, which the perfecting of love excludes. Thus, likewise, the same is called the Gift of God, because no one enjoys that which he knows, unless he also love it. To enjoy the Wisdom of God, however, implies nothing else than to cleave to the same in love (ei dilectione cohaerere). Neither does any one abide in that which he apprehends, but by love; and accordingly the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of sanctity (Spiritus Sanctus), inasmuch as all things that are sanctioned (sanciuntur) are sanctioned with a view to their permanence, and there is no doubt that the term sanctity (sanctitatem) is derived from sanction (a sanciendo). Above all, however, that testimony is employed by the upholders of this opinion, where it is thus written, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;” “for God is a Spirit.” For here He speaks of our regeneration, which is not, according to Adam, of the flesh, but, according to Christ, of the Holy Spirit. Wherefore, if in this passage mention is made of the Holy Spirit, when it is said, “For God is a Spirit,” they maintain that we must take note that it is not said, “for the Spirit is God,” but, “for God is a Spirit;” so that the very Godhead of the Father and the Son is in this passage called God, and that is the Holy Spirit. To this is added another testimony which the Apostle John offers, when he says, “For God is love.” For here, in like manner, what he says is not, “Love is God,” but, “God is love;” so that the very Godhead is taken to be love. And with respect to the circumstance that, in that enumeration of mutually connected objects which is given when it is said, “All things are yours, and ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s,” as also, “The head of the woman is the man, the Head of the man is Christ, and the Head of Christ is God,” there is no mention of the Holy Spirit; this they affirm to be but an application of the principle that, in general, the connection itself is not wont to be enumerated among the things which are connected with each other. Whence, also, those who read with closer attention appear to recognize the express Trinity likewise in that passage in which it is said, “For of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things.” “Of Him,” as if it meant, of that One who owes it to no one that He is: “through Him,” as if the idea were, through a Mediator; “in Him,” as if it were, in that One who holds together, that is, unites by connecting.

20. Those parties oppose this opinion who think that the said communion, which we call either Godhead, or Love, or Charity, is not a substance. Moreover, they require the Holy Spirit to be set forth to them according to substance; neither do they take it to have been otherwise impossible for the expression “God is Love” to have been used, unless love were a substance. In this, indeed, they are influenced by the wont of things of a bodily nature. For if two bodies are connected with each other in such wise as to be placed in juxtaposition one with the other, the connection itself is not a body: inasmuch as when these bodies which had been connected are separated, no such connection certainly is found [any more]; while, at the same time, it is not understood to have departed, as it were, and migrated, as is the case with those bodies themselves. But men like these should make their heart pure, so far as they can, in order that they may have power to see that in the substance of God there is not anything of such a nature as would imply that therein substance is one thing, and that which is accident to substance (aliud quod accidat subsantioe) another thing, and not substance; whereas whatsoever can be taken to be therein is substance. These things, however, can easily be spoken and believed; but seen, so as to reveal how they are in themselves, they absolutely cannot be, except by the pure heart. For which reason, whether the opinion in question be true, or something else be the case, the faith ought to be maintained unshaken, so that we should call the

Father God, the Son God, the Holy Spirit God, and yet not affirm three Gods, but hold the said Trinity to be one God; and again, not affirm these [Persons] to be different in nature, but hold them to be of the same substance; and further uphold it, not as if the Father were sometime the Son, and sometime the Holy Spirit, but in such wise that the Father is always the Father, and the Son always the Son, and the Holy Spirit always the Holy Spirit. Neither should we make any affirmation on the subject of things unseen rashly, as if we had knowledge, but [only modestly] as believing. For these things cannot be seen except by the heart made pure; and [even] he who in this life sees them "in part," as it has been said, and "in an enigma," cannot secure it that the person to whom he speaks shall also see them, if he is hampered by impurities of heart. "Blessed," however, "are they of a pure heart, for they shall see God." This is the faith on the subject of God our Maker and Renewer.

21. But inasmuch as love is enjoined upon us, not only toward God, when it was said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;" but also toward our neighbor, for "thou shalt love," saith He, "thy neighbor as thyself;" and inasmuch, moreover, as the faith in question is less fruitful, if it does not comprehend a congregation and society of men, wherein brotherly charity may operate;—

CHAPTER 10

OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE REMISSION OF SINS, AND THE RESURRECTION OF THE FLESH

—Inasmuch, I repeat, as this is the case, we believe also in The Holy Church, [intending thereby] assuredly the Catholic. For both heretics and schismatics style their congregations churches. But heretics, in holding false opinions regarding God, do injury to the faith itself; while schismatics, on the other hand, in wicked separations break off from brotherly charity, although they may believe just what we believe. Wherefore neither do the heretics belong to the Church catholic, which loves God; nor do the schismatics form a part of the same, inasmuch as it loves the neighbor, and consequently readily forgives the neighbor's sins, because it prays that forgiveness may be extended to itself by Him who has reconciled us to

Himself, doing away with all past things, and calling us to a new life. And until we reach the perfection of this new life, we cannot be without sins. Nevertheless it is a matter of consequence of what sort those sins may be.

22. Neither ought we only to treat of the difference between sins, but we ought most thoroughly to believe that those things in which we sin are in no way forgiven us, if we show ourselves severely unyielding in the matter of forgiving the sins of others. Thus, then, we believe also in The Remission of Sins.

23. And inasmuch as there are three things of which man consists,—namely, spirit, soul, and body,—which again are spoken of as two, because frequently the soul is named along with the spirit; for a certain rational portion of the same, of which beasts are devoid, is called spirit: the principal part in us is the spirit; next, the life whereby we are united with the body is called the soul; finally, the body itself, as it is visible, is the last part in us. This "whole creation" (creatura), however, "groaneth and travaileth until now." Nevertheless, He has given it the first-fruits of the Spirit, in that it has believed God, and is now of a good will. This spirit is also called the mind, regarding which an apostle speaks thus: "With the mind I serve the law of God." Which apostle likewise expresses himself thus in another passage: "For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit." Moreover, the soul, when as yet it lusts after carnal good things, is called the flesh. For a certain part thereof resists the Spirit, not in virtue of nature, but in virtue of the custom of sins; whence it is said, "With the mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." And this custom has been turned into a nature, according to mortal generation, by the sin of the first man. Consequently it is also written in this wise, "And we were sometime by nature the children of wrath," that is, of vengeance, through which it has come to pass that we serve the law of sin. The nature of the soul, however, is perfect when it is made subject to its own spirit, and when it follows that spirit as the same follows God. Therefore "the animal man receiveth not the things which are of the Spirit of God." But the soul is not so speedily subdued to the spirit unto good action, as is the spirit to God unto true faith and goodwill; but sometimes its impetus, whereby it moves downwards into things carnal and temporal, is more tardily bridled. But

inasmuch as this same soul is also made pure, and receives the stability of its own nature, under the dominance of the spirit, which is the head for it, which head of the said soul has again its own head in Christ, we ought not to despair of the restoration of the body also to its own proper nature. But this certainly will not be effected so speedily as is the case with the soul; just as the soul too, is not restored so speedily as the spirit. Yet it will take place in the appropriate season, at the last trump, when “the dead shall rise uncorrupted, and we shall be changed.” And accordingly we believe also in The Resurrection of the Flesh, to wit, not merely that that soul, which at present by reason of carnal affections is called the flesh, is restored; but that it shall be so likewise with this visible flesh, which is the flesh according to nature, the name of which has been received by the soul, not in virtue of nature, but in reference to carnal affections: this visible flesh, then, I say, which is the flesh properly so called, must without doubt be believed to be destined to rise again. For the Apostle Paul appears to point to this, as it were, with his finger, when he says, “This corruptible must put on incorruption.” For when he says this, he, as it were, directs his finger toward it. Now it is that which is visible that admits of being pointed out with the finger; since the soul might also have been called corruptible, for it is itself corrupted by vices of manners. And when it is read, “and this mortal [must] put on immortality,” the same visible flesh is signified, inasmuch as at it ever and anon the finger is thus as it were pointed. For the soul also may thus in like manner be called mortal, even as it is designated corruptible in reference to vices of manners. For assuredly it is “the death of the soul to apostatize from God;” which is its first sin in Paradise, as it is contained in the sacred writings.

24. Rise again, therefore, the body will, according to the Christian faith, which is incapable of deceiving. And if this appears incredible to any one, [it is because] he looks simply to what the flesh is at present, while he fails to consider of what nature it shall be hereafter. For at that time of angelic change it will no more be flesh and blood, but only body. For when the apostle speaks of the flesh, he says, “There is one flesh of cattle, another of birds, another of fishes, another of creeping things: there are also both celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies.” Now what he has said here is not “celestial flesh,” but “both celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies.” For all

flesh is also body; but every body is not also flesh. In the first instance, [for example, this holds good] in the case of those terrestrial bodies, inasmuch as wood is body, but not flesh. In the case of man, again, or in that of cattle, we have both body and flesh. In the case of celestial bodies, on the other hand, there is no flesh, but only those simple and lucent bodies which the apostle designates spiritual, while some call them ethereal. And consequently, when he says, “Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God,” that does not contradict the resurrection of the flesh; but the sentence predicates what will be the nature of that hereafter which at present is flesh and blood. And if any one refuses to believe that the flesh is capable of being changed into the sort of nature thus indicated, he must be led on, step by step, to this faith. For if you require of him whether earth is capable of being changed into water, the nearness of the thing will make it not seem incredible to him. Again, if you inquire whether water is capable of being changed into air, he replies that this also is not absurd, for the elements are near each other. And if, on the subject of the air, it is asked whether that can be changed into an ethereal, that is, a celestial body, the simple fact of the nearness at once convinces him of the possibility of the thing. But if, then, he concedes that through such gradations it is quite a possible thing that earth should be changed into an ethereal body, why does he refuse to believe, when that will of God, too, enters in addition, whereby a human body had power to walk upon the waters, that the same change is capable of being effected with the utmost rapidity, precisely in accordance with the saying, “in the twinkling of an eye,” and without any such gradations, even as, according to common wont, smoke is changed into flame with marvellous quickness? For our flesh assuredly is of earth. But philosophers, on the ground of whose arguments opposition is for the most part offered to the resurrection of the flesh, so far as in these they assert that no terrene body can possibly exist in heaven, yet concede that any kind of body may be converted and changed into every [other] sort of body. And when this resurrection of the body has taken place, being set free then from the condition of time, we shall fully enjoy Eternal Life in ineffable love and steadfastness, without corruption. For “then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. Where is, O death, thy sting? Where is, O death, thy contention?”

25. This is the faith which in few words is given in the Creed to Christian novices, to be held by them. And these few words are known to the faithful, to the end that in believing they may be made subject to God; that being made subject, they may rightly live; that in rightly living, they may make the heart pure; that with the heart made pure, they may understand that which they believe.

A TREATISE ON GRACE AND FREE WILL

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE GRATIA ET LIBERO ARBITRIO.)

EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN'S "RETRACTATIONS,"

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

ADDRESSED TO VALENTINUS AND THE MONKS OF ADRUMETUM, AND COMPLETED IN ONE BOOK.

WRITTEN IN A.D. 426 OR A.D. 427

TRANSLATED BY DR. HOLMES.

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Book II. Chap. 66, On the Following Treatise, “de gratia et libero arbitrio.”

There are some persons who suppose that the freedom of the will is denied whenever God’s grace is maintained, and who on their side defend their liberty of will so peremptorily as to deny the grace of God. This grace, as they assert, is bestowed according to our own merits. It is in consequence of their opinions that I wrote the book entitled On Grace and Free Will. This work I addressed to the monks of Adrumetum, in whose monastry first arose the controversy on that subject, and that in such a manner that some of them were obliged to consult me thereon. The work begins with these words: “With reference to those persons who so preach the liberty of the human will.”

TWO LETTERS WRITTEN BY AUGUSTIN TO VALENTINUS AND THE MONKS OF ADRUMETUM, AND FORWARDED WITH THE FOLLOWING TREATISE

Letter I

[The 214th of Augustin’s Epistles.]

To my very dear lord and most honoured brother among the members of Christ, Valentinus, and to the brethren that are with you, Augustin sends greeting in the Lord.

1. Two young men, Cresconius and Felix, have found their way to us, and, introducing themselves as belonging to your brotherhood, have told us that your monastery was disturbed with no small commotion, because certain amongst you preach grace in such a manner as to deny that the will of man is free; and maintain—a more serious matter—that in the day of judgment God will not render to every man according to his works. At the same time, they have pointed out to us, that many of you do not entertain this opinion, but allow that free will is assisted by the grace of God, so as that we may think and do aright; so that, when the Lord shall come to render unto every

man according to his works, He shall find those works of ours good which God has prepared in order that we may walk in them. They who think this think rightly.

2. “I beseech you therefore, brethren,” even as the apostle besought the Corinthians, “by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you.” For, in the first place, the Lord Jesus, as it is written in the Gospel of the Apostle John, “came not to condemn the world, but that the world by Himself might be saved.” Then, afterwards, as the Apostle Paul writes, “God shall judge the world when He shall come,” as the whole Church confesses in the Creed, “to judge the quick and the dead.” Now, I would ask, if there is no grace of God, how does He save the world? and if there is no free will, how does He judge the world? That book of mine, therefore, or epistle, which the above-mentioned brethren have brought with them to you, I wish you to understand in accordance with this faith, so that you may neither deny God’s grace, nor uphold free will in such wise as to separate the latter from the grace of God, as if without this we could by any means either think or do anything according to God,—which is quite beyond our power. On this account, indeed, it is, that the Lord when speaking of the fruits of righteousness said, “Without me ye can do nothing.”

3. From this you may understand why I wrote the letter which has been referred to, to Sixtus, presbyter of the Church at Rome, against the new Pelagian heretics, who say that the grace of God is bestowed according to our own merits, so that he who glories has to glory not in the Lord, but in himself,—that is to say, in man, not in the Lord. This, however, the apostle forbids in these words: “Let no man glory in man;” while in another passage he says, “He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.” But these heretics, under the idea that they are justified by their own selves, just as if God did not bestow on them this gift, but they themselves obtained it by themselves, glory of course in themselves, and not in the Lord. Now, the apostle says to such, “Who maketh thee to differ from another?” and this he does on the ground that out of the mass of perdition which arose from Adam, none but God distinguishes a man to make him a vessel to honour, and not to dishonour. Lest, however, the carnal man in his foolish pride

should, on hearing the question, “Who maketh thee to differ from another?” either in thought or in word answer and say: My faith, or my prayer, or my righteousness makes me to differ from other men, the apostle at once adds these words to the question, and so meets all such notions, saying, “What hast thou that thou didst not receive? now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou didst not receive it?” Now, they boast as if they did not receive their gifts by grace, who think that they are justified of their own selves, and who, on this account, glory in themselves, and not in the Lord.

4. Therefore I have in this letter, which has reached you, shown by passages of Holy Scripture, which you can examine for yourselves, that our good works and pious prayers and right faith could not possibly have been in us unless we had received them all from Him, concerning whom the Apostle James says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.” And so no man can say that it is by the merit of his own works, or by the merit of his own prayers, or by the merit of his own faith, that God’s grace has been conferred upon him; nor suppose that the doctrine is true which those heretics hold, that the grace of God is given us in proportion to our own merit. This is altogether a most erroneous opinion; not, indeed, because there is no desert, good in pious persons, or evil in impious ones (for how else shall God judge the world?), but because a man is converted by that mercy and grace of God, of which the Psalmist says, “As for my God, His mercy shall prevent me;” so that the unrighteous man is justified, that is, becomes just instead of impious, and begins to possess that good desert which God will crown when the world shall be judged.

5. There were many things which I wanted to send you, by the perusal whereof you would have been able to gain a more exact and full knowledge of all that has been done by the bishops in their councils against these Pelagian heretics. But the brethren were in haste who came to us from your company. By them we have sent you this letter; which is, however, not an answer to any communication, because, in truth, they brought us no epistle from your beloved selves. Yet we had no hesitation in receiving them; for their simple manners proved to us clearly enough that there could have been nothing unreal or deceptive in their visit to us. They were, however, in

much haste, as wishing to spend Easter at home with you; and my earnest prayer is, that so sacred a day may, by the Lord’s help, bring peace to you, and not dissension.

6. You will, indeed, take the better course (as I earnestly request you), if you will not refuse to send to me the very person by whom they say they have been disturbed. For either he does not understand my book, or else, perhaps, he is himself misunderstood, when he endeavours to solve and explain a question which is a very difficult one, and intelligible to few. For it is none other than the question of God’s grace which has caused persons of no understanding to think that the Apostle Paul prescribes it to us as a rule, “Let us do evil that good may come.” It is in reference to these that the Apostle Peter writes in his second Epistle; “Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless and account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things: in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.”

7. Take good heed, then, to these fearful words of the great apostle; and when you feel that you do not understand, put your faith in the meanwhile in the inspired word of God, and believe both that man’s will is free, and that there is also God’s grace, without whose help man’s free will can neither be turned towards God, nor make any progress in God. And what you piously believe, that pray that you may have a wise understanding of. And, indeed, it is for this very purpose,—that is, that we may have a wise understanding, that there is a free will. For unless we understood and were wise with a free will, it would not be enjoined to us in the words of Scripture, “Understand now, ye simple among the people; and ye fools, at length be wise.” The very precept and injunction which calls on us to be intelligent and wise, requires also our obedience; and we could exercise no obedience without free will. But if it were in our power to obey this precept to be understanding and wise by free will, without the help of God’s grace, it would be unnecessary to say to God, “Give me understanding, that I may

learn Thy commandments;” nor would it have been written in the gospel, “Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures;” nor should the Apostle James address us in such words as, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” But the Lord is able to grant, both to you and to us, that we may rejoice over very speedy tidings of your peace and pious unanimity. I send you greeting, not in my own name only, but of the brethren also who are with me; and I ask you to pray for us with one accord and with all earnestness. The Lord be with you.

Letter II

[The 215th of Augustin’s Epistles.]

To my very dear lord and most honoured brother among the members of Christ, Valentinus, and to the brethren that are with you, Augustin sends greeting in the Lord.

1. That Cresconius and Felix, and another Felix, the servants of God, who came to us from your brotherhood, have spent Easter with us is known to your Love. We have detained them somewhile longer in order that they might return to you better instructed against the new Pelagian heretics, into whose error every one falls who supposes that it is according to any human merits that the grace of God is given to us, which alone delivers a man through Jesus Christ our Lord. But he, too, is no less in error who thinks that, when the Lord shall come to judgment, a man is not judged according to his works who has been able to use throughout his life free choice of will. For only infants, who have not yet done any works of their own, either good or bad, will be condemned on account of original sin alone, when they have not been delivered by the Saviour’s grace in the laver of regeneration. As for all others who, in the use of their free will, have added to original sin, sins of their own commission, but who have not been delivered by God’s grace from the power of darkness and removed into the kingdom of Christ, they will receive judgment according to the deserts not of their original sin only, but also of the acts of their own will. The good, indeed, shall receive their reward according to the merits of their own good-will, but then they received this very good-will through the grace of God; and

thus is accomplished that sentence of Scripture, “Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile: but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.”

2. Touching the very difficult question of will and grace, I have felt no need of treating it further in this letter, having given them another letter also when they were about to return in greater haste. I have written a book likewise for you, and if you, by the Lord’s help, read it, and have a lively understanding of it, I think that no further dissension on this subject will arise among you. They take with them other documents besides, which, as we supposed, ought to be sent to you, in order that from these you may ascertain what means the catholic Church has adopted for repelling, in God’s mercy, the poison of the Pelagian heresy. For the letters to Pope Innocent, Bishop of Rome, from the Council of the province of Carthage, and from the Council of Numidia, and one written with exceeding care by five bishops, and what he wrote back to these three; our letter also to Pope Zosimus about the African Council, and his answer addressed to all bishops throughout the world; and a brief constitution, which we drew up against the error itself at a later plenary Council of all Africa; and the above-mentioned book of mine, which I have just written for you,—all these we have both read over with them, while they were with us, and have now despatched by their hands to you.

3. Furthermore, we have read to them the work of the most blessed martyr Cyprian on the Lord’s Prayer, and have pointed out to them how He taught that all things pertaining to our morals, which constitute right living, must be sought from our Father which is in heaven, lest, by presuming on free will, we fall from divine grace. From the same treatise we have also shown them how the same glorious martyr has taught us that it behoves us to pray even for our enemies who have not yet believed in Christ, that they may believe; which would of course be all in vain unless the Church believed that even the evil and unbelieving wills of men might, by the grace of God, be converted to good. This book of St. Cyprian, however, we have not sent you, because they told us that you possessed it among yourselves already. My letter, also, which had been sent to Sixtus, presbyter of the Church at

Rome and which they brought with them to us, we read over with them, and pointed out how that it had been written in opposition to those who say that God's grace is bestowed according to our merits,—that is to say, in opposition to the same Pelagians.

4. As far, then, as lay in our power, we have used our influence with them, as both your brethren and our own, with a view to their persevering in the soundness of the catholic faith, which neither denies free will whether for an evil or a good life, nor attributes to it so much power that it can avail anything without God's grace, whether that it may be changed from evil to good, or that it may persevere in the pursuit of good, or that it may attain to eternal good when there is no further fear of failure. To yourselves, too, my most dearly beloved, I also, in this letter, give the same exhortation which the apostle addresses to us all, "not to think of yourselves more highly than you ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

5. Mark well the counsel which the Holy Ghost gives us by Solomon: "Make straight paths for thy feet, and order thy ways aright. Turn not aside to the right hand nor to the left, but turn away thy foot from the evil way; for the Lord knoweth the ways on the right hand, but those on the left are perverse. He will make thy ways straight, and will direct thy steps in peace." Now consider, my brethren, that in these words of Holy Scripture, if there were no free will, it would not be said, "Make straight paths for thy feet, and order thy ways; turn not aside to the right hand, nor to the left." Nor yet, were this possible for us to achieve without the grace of God, would it be afterwards added, "He will make thy ways straight, and will direct thy steps in peace."

6. Decline, therefore, neither to the right hand nor to the left, although the paths on the right hand are praised, and those on the left hand are blamed. This is why he added, "Turn away thy foot from the evil way,"—that is, from the left-hand path. This he makes manifest in the following words, saying, "For the Lord knoweth the ways on the right hand; but those on the left are perverse." In those ways we ought surely to walk which the Lord knows; and it is of these that we read in the Psalm, "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish;" for this way,

which is on the left hand, the Lord does not know. As He will also say at last to such as are placed on His left hand at the day of judgment: “I know you not.” Now what is that which He knows not, who knows all things, both good and evil, in man? But what is the meaning of the words, “I know you not,” unless it be that you are now such as I never made you? Precisely as that passage runs, which is spoken of the Lord Jesus Christ, that “He knew no sin.” How knew it not, except that He had never made it? And, therefore, how is to be understood the passage, “The ways which are on the right hand the Lord knoweth,” except in the sense that He made those ways Himself,—even “the paths of the righteous,” which no doubt are “those good works that God,” as the apostle tells us, “hath before ordained that we should walk in them”? Whereas the left-hand ways—those perverse paths of the unrighteous—He truly knows nothing of, because He never made them for man, but man made them for himself. Wherefore He says, “The perverse ways of the wicked I utterly abhor; they are on the left hand.”

7. But the reply is made: Why did He say, “Turn not aside to the right hand, nor to the left,” when he clearly ought rather to have said, Keep to the right hand, and turn not off to the left, if the right-hand paths are good? Why, do we think, except this, that the paths on the right hand are so good that it is not good to turn off from them, even to the right? For that man, indeed, is to be understood as declining to the right who chooses to attribute to himself, and not to God, even those good works which appertain to right-hand ways. Hence it was that after saying, “For the Lord knoweth the ways on the right hand, but those on the left hand are perverse,” as if the objection were raised to Him, Wherefore, then, do you not wish us to turn aside to the right? He immediately added as follows: “He will Himself make thy paths straight, and will direct thy ways in peace.” Understand, therefore, the precept, “Make straight paths for thy feet, and order thy ways aright,” in such a sense as to know that whenever you do all this, it is the Lord God who enables you to do it. Then you will not turn off to the right, although you are walking in right-hand paths, not trusting in your own strength; and He will Himself be your strength, who will make straight paths for your feet, and will direct your ways in peace.

8. Wherefore, most dearly beloved, whosoever says, My will suffices for me to perform good works, declines to the right. But, on the other hand, they who think that a good way of life should be forsaken, when they hear God’s grace so preached as to lead to the supposition and belief that it of itself makes men’s wills from evil to good, and it even of itself keeps them what it has made them; and who, as the result of this opinion, go on to say, “Let us do evil that good may come,”—these persons decline to the left. This is the reason why he said to you, “Turn not aside to the right hand, nor to the left;” in other words, do not uphold free will in such wise as to attribute good works to it without the grace of God, nor so defend and maintain grace as if, by reason of it, you may love evil works in security and safety,—which may God’s grace itself avert from you! Now it was the words of such as these which the apostle had in view when he said, “What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” And to this cavil of erring men, who know nothing about the grace of God, he returned such an answer as he ought in these words: “God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” Nothing could have been said more succinctly, and yet to the point. For what more useful gift does the grace of God confer upon us, in this present evil world, than our dying unto sin? Hence he shows himself ungrateful to grace itself who chooses to live in sin by reason of that whereby we die unto sin. May God, however, who is rich in mercy, grant you both to think soundly and wisely, and to continue perseveringly and progressively to the end in every good determination and purpose. For yourselves, for us, for all who love you, and for those who hate you, pray that this gift may be attained,—pray earnestly and vigilantly in brotherly peace. Live unto God. If I deserve any favour at your hands, let brother Florus come to me.

A TREATISE ON GRACE AND FREE WILL

In this treatise Augustin teaches us to beware of maintaining grace by denying free will, or free will by denying grace; for that it is evident from the testimony of Scripture that there is in man a free choice of will; and there are also in the same Scriptures inspired proofs given of that very grace of God without which we can do nothing good. Afterwards, in opposition to the Pelagians, he proves that grace is not bestowed according to our merits.

He explains how eternal life, which is rendered to good works, is really of grace. He then goes on to show that the grace which is given to us through our Lord Jesus Christ is neither the knowledge of the law, nor nature, nor simply remission of sins; but that it is grace that makes us fulfil the law, and causes nature to be liberated from the dominion of sin. He demolishes that vain subterfuge of the Pelagians, to the effect that “grace, although it is not bestowed according to the merits of good works, is yet given according to the merits of the antecedent good-will of the man who believes and prays.” He incidentally touches the question, why God commands what He means Himself to give, and whether He imposes on us any commands which we are unable to perform. He clearly shows that the love which is indispensable for fulfilling the commandments is only within us from God Himself. He points out that God works in men’s hearts to incline their wills whithersoever He willeth, either to good works according to His mercy, or to evil ones in return for their deserving; His judgment, indeed, being sometimes manifest, sometimes hidden, but always righteous. Lastly, he teaches us that a clear example of the gratuitousness of grace, not given in return for our deserts, is supplied to us in the case of those infants which are saved, while others perish though their case is identical with that of the rest.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

THE OCCASION AND ARGUMENT OF THIS WORK

With reference to those persons who so preach and defend man’s free will, as boldly to deny, and endeavour to do away with, the grace of God which calls us to Him, and delivers us from our evil deserts, and by which we obtain the good deserts which lead to everlasting life: we have already said a good deal in discussion, and committed it to writing, so far as the Lord has vouchsafed to enable us. But since there are some persons who so defend God’s grace as to deny man’s free will, or who suppose that free will is denied when grace is defended, I have determined to write somewhat on this point to your Love, my brother Valentinus, and the rest of you, who are serving God together under the impulse of a mutual love. For it has been told me concerning you, brethren, by some members of your brotherhood who have visited us, and are the bearers of this communication of ours to you, that there are dissensions among you on this subject. This, then, being the case, dearly beloved, that you be not disturbed by the obscurity of this question, I counsel you first to thank God for such things as you understand; but as for all which is beyond the reach of your mind, pray for understanding from the Lord, observing, at the same time peace and love among yourselves; and until He Himself lead you to perceive what at present is beyond your comprehension, walk firmly on the ground of which you are sure. This is the advice of the Apostle Paul, who, after saying that he was not yet perfect, a little later adds, “Let us, therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded,”—meaning perfect to a certain extent, but not having attained to a perfection sufficient for us; and then immediately adds, “And if, in any thing, ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule.” For by walking in what we have attained, we shall be able to advance to what we have not yet attained,—God revealing it to us if in anything we are otherwise minded,—provided we do not give up what He has already revealed.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

HE PROVES THE EXISTENCE OF FREE WILL IN MAN FROM THE PRECEPTS ADDRESSED TO HIM BY GOD

Now He has revealed to us, through His Holy Scriptures, that there is in a man a free choice of will. But how He has revealed this I do not recount in human language, but in divine. There is, to begin with, the fact that God’s precepts themselves would be of no use to a man unless he had free choice of will, so that by performing them he might obtain the promised rewards. For they are given that no one might be able to plead the excuse of ignorance, as the Lord says concerning the Jews in the gospel: “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.” Of what sin does He speak but of that great one which He foreknew, while speaking thus, that they would make their own—that is, the death they were going to inflict upon Him? For they did not have “no sin” before Christ came to them in the flesh. The apostle also says: “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold back the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him are from the creation of the world clearly seen—being understood by the things that are made—even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are inexcusable.” In what sense does he pronounce them to be “inexcusable,” except with reference to such excuse as human pride is apt to allege in such words as, “If I had only known, I would have done it; did I not fail to do it because I was ignorant of it?” or, “I would do it if I knew how; but I do not know, therefore I do not do it”? All such excuse is removed from them when the precept is given them, or the knowledge is made manifest to them how to avoid sin.

CHAPTER 3

SINNERS ARE CONVICTED WHEN ATTEMPTING TO EXCUSE THEMSELVES BY BLAMING GOD, BECAUSE THEY HAVE FREE WILL

There are, however, persons who attempt to find excuse for themselves even from God. The Apostle James says to such: “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” Solomon, too, in his book of Proverbs, has this answer for such as wish to find an excuse for themselves from God Himself: “The folly of a man spoils his ways; but he blames God in his heart.” And in the book of Ecclesiasticus we read: “Say not thou, It is through the Lord that I fell away; for thou oughtest not to do the things that He hateth: nor do thou say, He hath caused me to err; for He hath no need of the sinful man. The Lord hateth all abomination, and they that fear God love it not. He Himself made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of His counsel. If thou be willing, thou shalt keep His commandments, and perform true fidelity. He hath set fire and water before thee: stretch forth thine hand unto whether thou wilt. Before man is life and death, and whichsoever pleaseth him shall be given to him.” Observe how very plainly is set before our view the free choice of the human will.

CHAPTER 4

THE DIVINE COMMANDS WHICH ARE MOST SUITED TO THE WILL ITSELF ILLUSTRATE ITS FREEDOM

What is the import of the fact that in so many passages God requires all His commandments to be kept and fulfilled? How does He make this requisition, if there is no free will? What means "the happy man," of whom the Psalmist says that "his will has been the law of the Lord"? Does he not clearly enough show that a man by his own will takes his stand in the law of God? Then again, there are so many commandments which in some way are expressly adapted to the human will; for instance, there is, "Be not overcome of evil," and others of similar import, such as, "Be not like a horse or a mule, which have no understanding;" and, "Reject not the counsels of thy mother;" and, "Be not wise in thine own conceit;" and, "Despise not the chastening of the Lord;" and, "Forget not my law;" and, "Forbear not to do good to the poor;" and, "Devise not evil against thy friend;" and, "Give no heed to a worthless woman;" and, "He is not inclined to understand how to do good;" and, "They refused to attend to my counsel;" with numberless other passages of the inspired Scriptures of the Old Testament. And what do they all show us but the free choice of the human will? So, again, in the evangelical and apostolic books of the New Testament what other lesson is taught us? As when it is said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth;" and, "Fear not them which kill the body;" and, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself;" and again, "Peace on earth to men of good will." So also that the Apostle Paul says: "Let him do what he willeth; he sinneth not if he marry. Nevertheless, he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well." And so again, "If I do this willingly, I have a reward;" while in another passage he says, "Be ye sober and righteous, and sin not;" and again, "As ye have a readiness to will, so also let there be a prompt performance;" then he remarks to Timothy about the younger widows, "When they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they choose to marry." So in another passage, "All that will to live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;" while to Timothy himself he says, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee." Then to Philemon he addresses this explanation:

"That thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but of thine own will." Servants also he advises to obey their masters "with a good will." In strict accordance with this, James says: "Do not err, my beloved brethren . . . and have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect to persons;" and, "Do not speak evil one of another." So also John in his Epistle writes, "Do not love the world," and other things of the same import. Now wherever it is said, "Do not do this," and "Do not do that," and wherever there is any requirement in the divine admonitions for the work of the will to do anything, or to refrain from doing anything, there is at once a sufficient proof of free will. No man, therefore, when he sins, can in his heart blame God for it, but every man must impute the fault to himself. Nor does it detract at all from a man's own will when he performs any act in accordance with God. Indeed, a work is then to be pronounced a good one when a person does it willingly; then, too, may the reward of a good work be hoped for from Him concerning whom it is written, "He shall reward every man according to his works."

CHAPTER 5

HE SHOWS THAT IGNORANCE AFFORDS NO SUCH EXCUSE AS SHALL FREE THE OFFENDER FROM PUNISHMENT; BUT THAT TO SIN WITH KNOWLEDGE IS A GRAVER THING THAN TO SIN IN IGNORANCE

The excuse such as men are in the habit of alleging from ignorance is taken away from those persons who know God's commandments. But neither will those be without punishment who know not the law of God. "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law." Now the apostle does not appear to me to have said this as if he meant that they would have to suffer something worse who in their sins are ignorant of the law than they who know it. [III.] It is seemingly worse, no doubt, "to perish" than "to be judged;" but inasmuch as he was speaking of the Gentiles and of the Jews when he used these words, because the former were without the law, but the latter had received the law, who can venture to say that the Jews who sin in the law will not perish, since they refused to believe in Christ, when it was of them that the apostle said, "They shall be judged by the law"? For without faith in Christ no man can be delivered; and therefore they will be so judged that they perish. If, indeed, the condition of those who are ignorant of the law of God is worse than the condition of those who know it, how can that be true which the Lord says in the gospel: “The servant who knows not his lord’s will, and commits things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; whereas the servant who knows his lord’s will, and commits things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with many stripes”? Observe how clearly He here shows that it is a graver matter for a man to sin with knowledge than in ignorance. And yet we must not on this account betake ourselves for refuge to the shades of ignorance, with the view of finding our excuse therein. It is one thing to be ignorant, and another thing to be unwilling to know. For the will is at fault in the case of the man of whom it is said, “He is not inclined to understand, so as to do good.” But even the ignorance, which is not theirs who refuse to know, but theirs who are, as it were, simply ignorant, does not so far excuse any one as to exempt him from the punishment of eternal fire, though his failure to believe has been the result of his not having at all heard what he should believe; but probably only so far as to mitigate his punishment. For it was not said without reason: “Pour out Thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known Thee;” nor again according to what the apostle says: “When He shall come from heaven in a flame of fire to take vengeance on them that know not God.” But yet in order that we may have that knowledge that will prevent our saying, each one of us, “I did not know,” “I did not hear,” “I did not understand;” the human will is summoned, in such words as these: “Wish not to be as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding;” although it may show itself even worse, of which it is written, “A stubborn servant will not be reproved by words; for even if he understand, yet he will not obey.” But when a man says, “I cannot do what I am commanded, because I am mastered by my concupiscence,” he has no longer any excuse to plead from ignorance, nor reason to blame God in his heart, but he recognises and laments his own evil in himself; and still to such an one the apostle says: “Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good;” and of course the very fact that the injunction, “Consent not to be overcome,” is addressed to him, undoubtedly summons the determination of his will. For to consent and to refuse are functions proper to will.

CHAPTER 6 [IV.]

GOD’S GRACE TO BE MAINTAINED AGAINST THE PELAGIANS; THE PELAGIAN HERESY NOT AN OLD ONE

It is, however, to be feared lest all these and similar testimonies of Holy Scripture (and undoubtedly there are a great many of them), in the maintenance of free will, be understood in such a way as to leave no room for God’s assistance and grace in leading a godly life and a good conversation, to which the eternal reward is due; and lest poor wretched man, when he leads a good life and performs good works (or rather thinks that he leads a good life and performs good works), should dare to glory in himself and not in the Lord, and to put his hope of righteous living in himself alone; so as to be followed by the prophet Jeremiah’s malediction when he says, “Cursed is the man who has hope in man, and maketh strong the flesh of his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.” Understand, my brethren, I pray you, this passage of the prophet. Because the prophet did not say, “Cursed is the man who has hope in his own self,” it might seem to some that the passage, “Cursed is the man who has hope in man,” was spoken to prevent man having hope in any other man but himself. In order, therefore, to show that his admonition to man was not to have hope in himself, after saying, “Cursed is the man who has hope in man,” he immediately added, “And maketh strong the flesh of his arm.” He used the word “arm” to designate power in operation. By the term “flesh,” however, must be understood human frailty. And therefore he makes strong the flesh of his arm who supposes that a power which is frail and weak (that is, human) is sufficient for him to perform good works, and therefore puts not his hope in God for help. This is the reason why he subjoined the further clause, “And whose heart departeth from the Lord.” Of this character is the Pelagian heresy, which is not an ancient one, but has only lately come into existence. Against this system of error there was first a good deal of discussion; then, as the ultimate resource, it was referred to sundry episcopal councils, the proceedings of which, not, indeed, in every instance, but in some, I have despatched to you for your perusal. In order, then, to our performance of good works, let us not have hope in man, making strong the flesh of our arm; nor let our heart ever depart from the Lord, but let it say to him, “Be Thou my helper; forsake me not, nor despise me, O God of my salvation.”

CHAPTER 7

GRACE IS NECESSARY ALONG WITH FREE WILL TO LEAD A GOOD LIFE

Therefore, my dearly beloved, as we have now proved by our former testimonies from Holy Scripture that there is in man a free determination of will for living rightly and acting rightly; so now let us see what are the divine testimonies concerning the grace of God, without which we are not able to do any good thing. And first of all, I will say something about the very profession which you make in your brotherhood. Now your society, in which you are leading lives of continence, could not hold together unless you despised conjugal pleasure. Well, the Lord was one day conversing on this very topic, when His disciples remarked to Him, “If such be the case of a man with his wife, it is not good to marry.” He then answered them, “All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.” And was it not to Timothy’s free will that the apostle appealed, when he exhorted him in these words: “Keep thyself continent”? He also explained the power of the will in this matter when He said, “Having no necessity, but possessing power over his own will, to keep his virgin.” And yet “all men do not receive this saying, except those to whom the power is given.” Now they to whom this is not given either are unwilling or do not fulfil what they will; whereas they to whom it is given so will as to accomplish what they will. In order, therefore, that this saying, which is not received by all men, may yet be received by some, there are both the gift of God and free will.

CHAPTER 8

CONJUGAL CHASTITY IS ITSELF THE GIFT OF GOD

It is concerning conjugal chastity itself that the apostle treats, when he says, “Let him do what he will, he sinneth not if he marry;” and yet this too is God’s gift, for the Scripture says, “It is by the Lord that the woman is joined to her husband.” Accordingly the teacher of the Gentiles, in one of his discourses, commends both conjugal chastity, whereby adulteries are prevented, and the still more perfect continence which foregoes all cohabitation, and shows how both one and the other are severally the gift of God. Writing to the Corinthians, he admonished married persons not to defraud each other; and then, after his admonition to these, he added: “But I could wish that all men were even as I am myself,”—meaning, of course, that he abstained from all cohabitation; and then proceeded to say: “But every man hath his own gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.” Now, do the many precepts which are written in the law of God, forbidding all fornication and adultery, indicate anything else than free will? Surely such precepts would not be given unless a man had a will of his own, wherewith to obey the divine commandments. And yet it is God’s gift which is indispensable for the observance of the precepts of chastity. Accordingly, it is said in the Book of Wisdom: “When I knew that no one could be continent, except God gives it, then this became a point of wisdom to know whose gift it was.” “Every man,” however, “is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed” not to observe and keep these holy precepts of chastity. If he should say in respect of these commandments, “I wish to keep them, but am mastered by my concupiscence,” then the Scripture responds to his free will, as I have already said: “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” In order, however, that this victory may be gained, grace renders its help; and were not this help given, then the law would be nothing but the strength of sin. For concupiscence is increased and receives greater energies from the prohibition of the law, unless the spirit of grace helps. This explains the statement of the great Teacher of the Gentiles, when he says, “The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.” See, then, I pray you, whence originates this confession of weakness, when a man says, “I desire to keep what the law commands, but am overcome by the strength of my concupiscence.” And when his will is addressed, and it is said, “Be not overcome of evil,” of what avail is anything but the succour of God’s grace to the accomplishment of the precept? This the apostle himself afterwards stated; for after saying “The strength of sin is the law,” he immediately subjoined, “But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” It follows, then, that the victory in which sin is vanquished is nothing else than the gift of God, who in this contest helps free will.

CHAPTER 9

ENTERING INTO TEMPTATION. PRAYER IS A PROOF OF GRACE

Wherefore, our Heavenly Master also says: “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.” Let every man, therefore, when fighting against his own concupiscence, pray that he enter not into temptation; that is, that he be not drawn aside and enticed by it. But he does not enter into temptation if he conquers his evil concupiscence by good will. And yet the determination of the human will is insufficient, unless the Lord grant it victory in answer to prayer that it enter not into temptation. What, indeed, affords clearer evidence of the grace of God than the acceptance of prayer in any petition? If our Saviour had only said, “Watch that ye enter not into temptation,” He would appear to have done nothing further than admonish man’s will; but since He added the words, “and pray,” He showed that God helps us not to enter into temptation. It is to the free will of man that the words are addressed: “My son, remove not thyself from the chastening of the Lord.” And the Lord said: “I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not.” So that a man is assisted by grace, in order that his will may not be uselessly commanded.

CHAPTER 10 [V.]

FREE WILL AND GOD’S GRACE ARE SIMULTANEOUSLY COMMENDED

When God says, “Turn ye unto me, and I will turn unto you,” one of these clauses—that which invites our return to God—evidently belongs to our will; while the other, which promises His return to us, belongs to His grace. Here, possibly, the Pelagians think they have a justification for their opinion which they so prominently advance, that God’s grace is given according to our merits. In the East, indeed, that is to say, in the province of Palestine, in which is the city of Jerusalem, Pelagius, when examined in person by the bishop, did not venture to affirm this. For it happened that among the objections which were brought up against him, this in particular was objected, that he maintained that the grace of God was given according to our merits,—an opinion which was so diverse from catholic doctrine, and so hostile to the grace of Christ, that unless he had anathematized it, as laid to his charge, he himself must have been anathematized on its account. He pronounced, indeed, the required anathema upon the dogma, but how insincerely his later books plainly show; for in them he maintains absolutely no other opinion than that the grace of God is given according to our merits. Such passages do they collect out of the Scriptures,—like the one which I just now quoted, “Turn ye unto me, and I will turn unto you,”—as if it were owing to the merit of our turning to God that His grace were given us, wherein He Himself even turns unto us. Now the persons who hold this opinion fail to observe that, unless our turning to God were itself God’s gift, it would not be said to Him in prayer, “Turn us again, O God of hosts;” and, “Thou, O God, wilt turn and quicken us;” and again, “Turn us, O God of our salvation,”—with other passages of similar import, too numerous to mention here. For, with respect to our coming unto Christ, what else does it mean than our being turned to Him by believing? And yet He says: “No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.”

CHAPTER 11

OTHER PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE WHICH THE PELAGIANS ABUSE

Then, again, there is the Scripture contained in the second book of the Chronicles: “The Lord is with you when ye are with Him: and if ye shall seek Him ye shall find Him; but if ye forsake Him, He also will forsake you.” This passage, no doubt, clearly manifests the choice of the will. But they who maintain that God’s grace is given according to our merits, receive these testimonies of Scripture in such a manner as to believe that our merit lies in the circumstance of our “being with God,” while His grace is given according to this merit, so that He too may be with us. In like manner, that our merit lies in the fact of “our seeking God,” and then His grace is given according to this merit, in order that we may find Him.” Again, there is a passage in the first book of the same Chronicles which declares the choice of the will: “And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever.” But these people find some room for human merit in the clause, “If thou seek Him,” and then the grace is thought to be given according to this merit in what is said in the ensuing words, “He will be found of thee.” And so they labour with all their might to show that God’s grace is given according to our merits,—in other words, that grace is not grace. For, as the apostle most expressly says, to them who receive reward according to merit “the recompense is not reckoned of grace but of debt.”

CHAPTER 12

HE PROVES OUT OF ST. PAUL THAT GRACE IS NOT GIVEN ACCORDING TO MEN’S MERITS

Now there was, no doubt, a decided merit in the Apostle Paul, but it was an evil one, while he persecuted the Church, and he says of it: “I am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.” And it was while he had this evil merit that a good one was rendered to him instead of the evil; and, therefore, he went on at once to say, “But by the grace of God I am what I am.” Then, in order to exhibit also his free will, he added in the next clause, “And His grace within me was not in vain, but I have laboured more abundantly than they all.” This free will of man he appeals to in the case of others also, as when he says to them, “We beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.” Now, how could he so enjoin them, if they received God’s grace in such a manner as to lose their own will? Nevertheless, lest the will itself should be deemed capable of doing any good thing without the grace of God, after saying, “His grace within me was not in vain, but I have laboured more abundantly than they all,” he immediately added the qualifying clause, “Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” In other words, Not I alone, but the grace of God with me. And thus, neither was it the grace of God alone, nor was it he himself alone, but it was the grace of God with him. For his call, however, from heaven and his conversion by that great and most effectual call, God’s grace was alone, because his merits, though great, were yet evil. Then, to quote one passage more, he says to Timothy: “But be thou a co-labourer with the gospel, according to the power of God, who saveth us and calleth us with His holy calling,—not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus.” Then, elsewhere, he enumerates his merits, and gives us this description of their evil character: “For we ourselves also were formerly foolish, unbelieving, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.” Nothing, to be sure, but punishment was due to such a course of evil desert! God, however, who returns good for evil by His grace, which is not given according to our merits, enabled the apostle to conclude his statement and say: “But when the kindness and love of our Saviour God shone upon us,—not of works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the laver of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Ghost, whom He shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

CHAPTER 13 [VI.]

THE GRACE OF GOD IS NOT GIVEN ACCORDING TO MERIT, BUT ITSELF MAKES ALL GOOD DESERT

From these and similar passages of Scripture, we gather the proof that God’s grace is not given according to our merits. The truth is, we see that it is given not only where there are no good, but even where there are many evil merits preceding: and we see it so given daily. But it is plain that when it has been given, also our good merits begin to be,—yet only by means of it; for, were that only to withdraw itself, man falls, not raised up, but precipitated by free will. Wherefore no man ought, even when he begins to possess good merits, to attribute them to himself, but to God, who is thus addressed by the Psalmist: “Be Thou my helper, forsake me not.” By saying, “Forsake me not,” he shows that if he were to be forsaken, he is unable of himself to do any good thing. Wherefore also he says: “I said in my abundance, I shall never be moved,” for he thought that he had such an abundance of good to call his own that he would not be moved. But in order that he might be taught whose that was, of which he had begun to boast as if it were his own, he was admonished by the gradual desertion of God’s grace, and says: “O Lord, in Thy good pleasure Thou didst add strength to my beauty. Thou didst, however, turn away Thy face, and then I was troubled and distressed.” Thus, it is necessary for a man that he should be not only justified when unrighteous by the grace of God,—that is, be changed from unholiness to righteousness,—when he is requited with good for his evil; but that, even after he has become justified by faith, grace should accompany him on his way, and he should lean upon it, lest he fall. On this account it is written concerning the Church herself in the book of Canticles: “Who is this that cometh up in white raiment, leaning upon her kinsman?” Made white is she who by herself alone could not be white. And by whom has she been made white except by Him who says by the prophet, “Though your sins be as purple, I will make them white as snow”? At the time, then, that she was made white, she deserved nothing good; but now that she is made white, she walketh well;—but it is only by her continuing ever to lean upon Him by whom she was made white. Wherefore, Jesus Himself, on whom she leans that was made white, said to His disciples, “Without me ye can do nothing.”

CHAPTER 14

PAUL FIRST RECEIVED GRACE THAT HE MIGHT WIN THE CROWN

Let us return now to the Apostle Paul, who, as we have found, obtained God’s grace, who recompenses good for evil, without any good merits of his own, but rather with many evil merits. Let us see what he says when his final sufferings were approaching, writing to Timothy: “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith.” He enumerates these as, of course, now his good merits; so that, as after his evil merits he obtained grace, so now, after his good merits, he might receive the crown. Observe, therefore, what follows: “There is henceforth laid up for me,” he says, “a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.” Now, to whom should the righteous Judge award the crown, except to him on whom the merciful Father had bestowed grace? And how could the crown be one “of righteousness,” unless the grace had preceded which “justifieth the ungodly”? How, moreover, could these things now be awarded as of debt, unless the other had been before given as a free gift?

CHAPTER 15

THE PELAGIANS PROFESS THAT THE ONLY GRACE WHICH IS NOT GIVEN ACCORDING TO OUR MERITS IS THAT OF THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

When, however, the Pelagians say that the only grace which is not given according to our merits is that whereby his sins are forgiven to man, but that that which is given in the end, that is, eternal life, is rendered to our preceding merits: they must not be allowed to go without an answer. If, indeed, they so understand our merits as to acknowledge them, too, to be the gifts of God, then their opinion would not deserve reprobation. But inasmuch as they so preach human merits as to declare that a man has them of his own self, then most rightly the apostle replies: “Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou, that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?” To a man who holds such views, it is perfect truth to say: It is His own gifts that God crowns, not your merits,—if, at least, your merits are of your own self, not of Him. If, indeed, they are such, they are evil; and God does not crown them; but if they are good, they are God’s gifts, because, as the Apostle James says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.” In accordance with which John also, the Lord’s forerunner, declares: “A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven”—from heaven, of course, because from thence came also the Holy Ghost, when Jesus ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men. If, then, your good merits are God’s gifts, God does not crown your merits as your merits, but as His own gifts.

CHAPTER 16 [VII.]

PAUL FOUGHT, BUT GOD GAVE THE VICTORY: HE RAN, BUT GOD SHOWED MERCY

Let us, therefore, consider those very merits of the Apostle Paul which he said the Righteous Judge would recompense with the crown of righteousness; and let us see whether these merits of his were really his own—I mean, whether they were obtained by him of himself, or were the gifts of God. “I have fought,” says he, “the good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith.” Now, in the first place, these good works were nothing, unless they had been preceded by good thoughts. Observe, therefore, what he says concerning these very thoughts. His words, when writing to the Corinthians, are: “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.” Then let us look at each several merit. “I have fought the good fight.” Well, now, I want to know by what power he fought. Was it by a power which he possessed of himself, or by strength given to him from above? It is impossible to suppose that so great a teacher as the apostle was ignorant of the law of God, which proclaims the following in Deuteronomy: “Say not in thine heart, My own strength and energy of hand hath wrought for me this great power; but thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, how it is He that giveth thee strength to acquire such power.” And what avails “the good fight,” unless followed by victory? And who gives the victory but He of whom the apostle says himself, “Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”? Then, in another passage, having quoted from the Psalm these words: “Because for Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for slaughter,” he went on to declare: “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us.” Not by ourselves, therefore, is the victory accomplished, but by Him who hath loved us. In the second clause he says, “I have finished my course.” Now, who is it that says this, but he who declares in another passage, “So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” And this sentence can by no means be transposed, so that it could be said: It is not of God, who showeth mercy, but of the man who willeth and runneth. If any person be bold enough to express the matter thus, he shows himself most plainly to be at issue with the apostle.

CHAPTER 17

THE FAITH THAT HE KEPT WAS THE FREE GIFT OF GOD

His last clause runs thus: “I have kept the faith.” But he who says this is the same who declares in another passage, “I have obtained mercy that I might be faithful.” He does not say, “I obtained mercy because I was faithful,” but “in order that I might be faithful,” thus showing that even faith itself cannot be had without God’s mercy, and that it is the gift of God. This he very expressly teaches us when he says, “For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.” They might possibly say, “We received grace because we believed;” as if they would attribute the faith to themselves, and the grace to God. Therefore, the apostle having said, “Ye are saved through faith,” added,” And that not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God.” And again, lest they should say they deserved so great a gift by their works, he immediately added, “Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Not that he denied good works, or emptied them of their value, when he says that God renders to every man according to his works; but because works proceed from faith, and not faith from works. Therefore it is from Him that we have works of righteousness, from whom comes also faith itself, concerning which it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

CHAPTER 18

FAITH WITHOUT GOOD WORKS IS NOT SUFFICIENT FOR SALVATION

Unintelligent persons, however, with regard to the apostle’s statement: “We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law,” have thought him to mean that faith suffices to a man, even if he lead a bad life, and has no good works. Impossible is it that such a character should be deemed “a vessel of election” by the apostle, who, after declaring that “in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision,” adds at once, “but faith which worketh by love.” It is such faith which severs God’s faithful from unclean demons,—for even these “believe and tremble,” as the Apostle James says; but they do not do well. Therefore they possess not the faith by which the just man lives,—the faith which works by love in such wise, that God recompenses it according to its works with eternal life. But inasmuch as we have even our good works from God, from whom likewise comes our faith and our love, therefore the selfsame great teacher of the Gentiles has designated “eternal life” itself as His gracious “gift.”

CHAPTER 19 [VIII.]

HOW IS ETERNAL LIFE BOTH A REWARD FOR SERVICE AND A FREE GIFT OF GRACE?

And hence there arises no small question, which must be solved by the Lord’s gift. If eternal life is rendered to good works, as the Scripture most openly declares: “Then He shall reward every man according to his works:” how can eternal life be a matter of grace, seeing that grace is not rendered to works, but is given gratuitously, as the apostle himself tells us: “To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt;” and again: “There is a remnant saved according to the election of grace;” with these words immediately subjoined: “And if of grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace”? How, then, is eternal life by grace, when it is received from works? Does the apostle perchance not say that eternal life is a grace? Nay, he has so called it, with a clearness which none can possibly gainsay. It requires no acute intellect, but only an attentive reader, to discover this. For after saying, “The wages of sin is death,” he at once added, “The grace of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

CHAPTER 20

THE QUESTION ANSWERED. JUSTIFICATION IS GRACE SIMPLY AND ENTIRELY, ETERNAL LIFE IS REWARD AND GRACE

This question, then, seems to me to be by no means capable of solution, unless we understand that even those good works of ours, which are recompensed with eternal life, belong to the grace of God, because of what is said by the Lord Jesus: “Without me ye can do nothing.” And the apostle himself, after saying, “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast;” saw, of course, the possibility that men would think from this statement that good works are not necessary to those who believe, but that faith alone suffices for them; and again, the possibility of men’s boasting of their good works, as if they were of themselves capable of performing them. To meet, therefore, these opinions on both sides, he immediately added, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” What is the purport of his saying, “Not of works, lest any man should boast,” while commending the grace of God? And then why does he afterwards, when giving a reason for using such words, say, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works”? Why, therefore, does it run, “Not of works, lest any man should boast”? Now, hear and understand. “Not of works” is spoken of the works which you suppose have their origin in yourself alone; but you have to think of works for which God has moulded (that is, has formed and created) you. For of these he says, “We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.” Now he does not here speak of that creation which made us human beings, but of that in reference to which one said who was already in full manhood, “Create in me a clean heart, O

God;" concerning which also the apostle says, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God." We are framed, therefore, that is, formed and created, "in the good works which" we have not ourselves prepared, but "God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." It follows, then, dearly beloved, beyond all doubt, that as your good life is nothing else than God's grace, so also the eternal life which is the recompense of a good life is the grace of God; moreover it is given gratuitously, even as that is given gratuitously to which it is given. But that to which it is given is solely and simply grace; this therefore is also that which is given to it, because it is its reward;—grace is for grace, as if remuneration for righteousness; in order that it may be true, because it is true, that God "shall reward every man according to his works."

CHAPTER 21 [IX.]

ETERNAL LIFE IS "GRACE FOR GRACE."

Perhaps you ask whether we ever read in the Sacred Scriptures of "grace for grace." Well you possess the Gospel according to John, which is perfectly clear in its very great light. Here John the Baptist says of Christ: "Of His fulness have we all received, even grace for grace." So that out of His fulness we have received, according to our humble measure, our particles of ability as it were for leading good lives—"according as God hath dealt to every man his measure of faith;" because "every man hath his proper gift of God; one after this manner, and another after that." And this is grace. But, over and above this, we shall also receive "grace for grace," when we shall have awarded to us eternal life, of which the apostle said: "The grace of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," having just said that "the wages of sin is death." Deservedly did he call it "wages," because everlasting death is awarded as its proper due to diabolical service. Now, when it was in his power to say, and rightly to say: "But the wages of righteousness is eternal life," he yet preferred to say: "The grace of God is eternal life;" in order that we may hence understand that God does not, for any merits of our own, but from His own divine compassion, prolong our existence to everlasting life. Even as the Psalmist says to his soul, "Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion." Well, now, is not a crown given as the reward of good deeds? It is, however, only because He works good works in good men, of whom it is said, “It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure,” that the Psalm has it, as just now quoted: “He crowneth thee with mercy and compassion,” since it is through His mercy that we perform the good deeds to which the crown is awarded. It is not, however, to be for a moment supposed, because he said, “It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure,” that free will is taken away. If this, indeed, had been his meaning, he would not have said just before, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” For when the command is given “to work,” their free will is addressed; and when it is added, “with fear and trembling,” they are warned against boasting of their good deeds as if they were their own, by attributing to themselves the performance of anything good. It is pretty much as if the apostle had this question put to him: “Why did you use the phrase, with fear and trembling’?” And as if he answered the inquiry of his examiners by telling them, “For it is God which worketh in you.” Because if you fear and tremble, you do not boast of your good works—as if they were your own, since it is God who works within you.

CHAPTER 22 [X.]

WHO IS THE TRANSGRESSOR OF THE LAW? THE OLDNESS OF ITS LETTER. THE NEWNESS OF ITS SPIRIT

Therefore, brethren, you ought by free will not do evil but do good; this, indeed, is the lesson taught us in the law of God, in the Holy Scriptures—both Old and New. Let us, however, read, and by the Lord’s help understand, what the apostle tells us: “Because by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Observe, he says “the knowledge,” not “the destruction,” of sin. But when a man knows sin, and grace does not help him to avoid what he knows, undoubtedly the law works wrath. And this the apostle explicitly says in another passage. His words are: “The law worketh wrath.” The reason of this statement lies in the fact that God’s wrath is greater in the case of the transgressor who by the law knows sin, and yet commits it; such a man is thus a transgressor of the law, even as the apostle says in another sentence, “For where no law is, there is no transgression.” It is in accordance with this principle that he elsewhere says, “That we may serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter;” wishing the law to be here understood by “the oldness of the letter,” and what else by “newness of spirit” than grace? Then, that it might not be thought that he had brought any accusation, or suggested any blame, against the law, he immediately takes himself to task with this inquiry: “What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? God forbid.” He then adds the statement: “Nay, I had not known sin but by the law;” which is of the same import as the passage above quoted: “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” Then: “For I had not known lust,” he says, “except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.’ But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy; and the commandment holy, just, and good. Was, then, that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, worked death in me by that which is good,—in order that the sinner, or the sin, might by the commandment become beyond measure.” And to the Galatians he writes: “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, except through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

CHAPTER 23 [XI.]

THE PELAGIANS MAINTAIN THAT THE LAW IS THE GRACE OF GOD WHICH HELPS US NOT TO SIN

Why, therefore, do those very vain and perverse Pelagians say that the law is the grace of God by which we are helped not to sin? Do they not, by making such an allegation, unhappily and beyond all doubt contradict the great apostle? He, indeed, says, that by the law sin received strength against man; and that man, by the commandment, although it be holy, and just, and good, nevertheless dies, and that death works in him through that which is good, from which death there is no deliverance unless the Spirit quickens him, whom the letter had killed,—as he says in another passage, “The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.” And yet these obstinate persons, blind to God’s light, and deaf to His voice, maintain that the letter which kills gives life, and thus gainsay the quickening Spirit. “Therefore, brethren” (that I may warn you with better effect in the words of the apostle himself), “we are debtors not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; for if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” I have said this to deter your free will from evil, and to exhort it to good by apostolic words; but yet you must not therefore glory in man,—that is to say, in your own selves,—and not in the Lord, when you live not after the flesh, but through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh. For in order that they to whom the apostle addressed this language might not exalt themselves, thinking that they were themselves able of their own spirit to do such good works as these, and not by the Spirit of God, after saying to them, “If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live,” he at once added, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” When, therefore, you by the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, that you may have life, glorify Him, praise Him, give thanks to Him by whose Spirit you are so led as to be able to do such things as show you to be the children of God; “for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

CHAPTER 24 [XII.]

WHO MAY BE SAID TO WISH TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS. “GOD’S RIGHTEOUSNESS,” SO CALLED, WHICH MAN HAS FROM GOD

As many, therefore, as are led by their own spirit, trusting in their own virtue, with the addition merely of the law’s assistance, without the help of grace, are not the sons of God. Such are they of whom the same apostle speaks as “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and wishing to establish their own righteousness, who have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.” He said this of the Jews, who in their self-assumption rejected grace, and therefore did not believe in Christ. Their own righteousness, indeed, he says, they wish to establish; and this righteousness is of the law,—not that the law was established by themselves, but that they had constituted their righteousness in the law which is of God, when they supposed themselves able to fulfil that law by their own strength, ignorant of God's righteousness,—not indeed that by which God is Himself righteous, but that which man has from God. And that you may know that he designated as theirs the righteousness which is of the law, and as God's that which man receives from God, hear what he says in another passage, when speaking of Christ: "For whose sake I counted all things not only as loss, but I deemed them to be dung, that I might win Christ, and be found in Him—not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, which is of God." Now what does he mean by "not having my own righteousness, which is of the law," when the law is really not his at all, but God's,—except this, that he called it his own righteousness, although it was of the law, because he thought he could fulfil the law by his own will, without the aid of grace which is through faith in Christ? Wherefore, after saying, "Not having my own righteousness, which is of the law," he immediately subjoined, "But that which is through the faith of Christ, which is of God." This is what they were ignorant of, of whom he says, "Being ignorant of God's righteousness,"—that is, the righteousness which is of God (for it is given not by the letter, which kills, but by the life-giving Spirit), "and wishing to establish their own righteousness," which he expressly described as the righteousness of the law, when he said, "Not having my own righteousness, which is of the law;" they were not subject to the righteousness of God,—in other words, they submitted not themselves to the grace of God. For they were under the law, not under grace, and therefore sin had dominion over them, from which a man is not freed by the law, but by grace. On which account he elsewhere says, "For sin shall not have dominion over you; because ye are not under the law, but under grace." Not that the law is evil; but because they are under its power, whom it makes guilty by imposing commandments, not by aiding. It is by grace that any one is a doer of the law; and without this grace, he who is placed under the law will be only a hearer of the law. To such persons he addresses these words: "Ye who are justified by the law are fallen from grace."

CHAPTER 25 [XIII.]

AS THE LAW IS NOT, SO NEITHER IS OUR NATURE ITSELF THAT GRACE BY WHICH WE ARE CHRISTIANS

Now who can be so insensible to the words of the apostle, who so foolishly, nay, so insanely ignorant of the purport of his statement, as to venture to affirm that the law is grace, when he who knew very well what he was saying emphatically declares, “Ye who are justified by the law are fallen from grace”? Well, but if the law is not grace, seeing that in order that the law itself may be kept, it is not the law, but only grace which can give help, will not nature at any rate be grace? For this, too, the Pelagians have been bold enough to aver, that grace is the nature in which we were created, so as to possess a rational mind, by which we are enabled to understand,—formed as we are in the image of God, so as to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that creepeth upon the earth. This, however, is not the grace which the apostle commends to us through the faith of Jesus Christ. For it is certain that we possess this nature in common with ungodly men and unbelievers; whereas the grace which comes through the faith of Jesus Christ belongs only to them to whom the faith itself appertains. “For all men have not faith.” Now, as the apostle, with perfect truth, says to those who by wishing to be justified by the law have fallen from grace, “If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain;” so likewise, to those who think that the grace which he commends and faith in Christ receives, is nature, the same language is with the same degree of truth applicable: if righteousness come from nature, then Christ is dead in vain. But the law was in existence up to that time, and it did not justify; and nature existed too, but it did not justify. It was not, then, in vain that Christ died, in order that the law might be fulfilled through Him who said, “I am come not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it;” and that our nature, which was lost through Adam, might through Him be recovered, who said that “He was come to seek and to save that which was lost;” in whose coming the old fathers likewise who loved God believed.

CHAPTER 26

THE PELAGIANS CONTEND THAT THE GRACE, WHICH IS NEITHER THE LAW NOR NATURE, AVAILS ONLY TO THE REMISSION OF PAST SINS, BUT NOT TO THE AVOIDANCE OF FUTURE ONES

They also maintain that God’s grace, which is given through the faith of Jesus Christ, and which is neither the law nor nature, avails only for the remission of sins that have been committed, and not for the shunning of future ones, or the subjugation of those which are now assailing us. Now if all this were true, surely after offering the petition of the Lord’s Prayer, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” we could hardly go on and say, “And lead us not into temptation.” The former petition we present that our sins may be forgiven; the latter, that they may be avoided or subdued,—a favour which we should by no means beg of our Father who is in heaven if we were able to accomplish it by the virtue of our human will. Now I strongly advise and earnestly require your Love to read attentively the book of the blessed Cyprian which he wrote On the Lord’s Prayer. As far as the Lord shall assist you, understand it, and commit it to memory. In this work you will see how he so appeals to the free will of those whom he edifies in his treatise, as to show them, that whatever they have to fulfil in the law, they must ask for in the prayer. But this, of course, would be utterly empty if the human will were sufficient for the performance without the help of God.

CHAPTER 27 [XIV.]

GRACE EFFECTS THE FULFILMENT OF THE LAW, THE DELIVERANCE OF NATURE, AND THE SUPPRESSION OF SIN’S DOMINION

It has, however, been shown to demonstration that instead of really maintaining free will, they have only inflated a theory of it, which, having no stability, has fallen to the ground. Neither the knowledge of God’s law, nor nature, nor the mere remission of sins is that grace which is given to us through our Lord Jesus Christ; but it is this very grace which accomplishes the fulfilment of the law, and the liberation of nature, and the removal of the dominion of sin. Being, therefore, convicted on these points, they resort to another expedient, and endeavour to show in some way or other that the grace of God is given us according to our merits. For they say: “Granted that it is not given to us according to the merits of good works, inasmuch as it is through it that we do any good thing, still it is given to us according to the merits of a good will; for,” say they, “the good will of him who prays precedes his prayer, even as the will of the believer preceded his faith, so that according to these merits the grace of God who hears, follows.”

CHAPTER 28

FAITH IS THE GIFT OF GOD

I have already discussed the point concerning faith, that is, concerning the will of him who believes, even so far as to show that it appertains to grace,—so that the apostle did not tell us, “I have obtained mercy because I was faithful;” but he said, “I have obtained mercy in order to be faithful.” And there are many other passages of similar import,—among them that in which he bids us “think soberly, according as God hath dealt out to every man the proportion of faith;” and that which I have already quoted: “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God;” and again another in the same Epistle to the Ephesians: “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ;” and to the same effect that passage in which he says, “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” Both alike are therefore due to the grace of God,—the faith of those who believe, and the patience of those who suffer, because the apostle spoke of both as given. Then, again, there is the passage, especially noticeable, in which he says, “We, having the same spirit of faith,” for his phrase is not “the knowledge of faith,” but “the spirit of faith;” and he expressed himself thus in order that we might understand how that faith is given to us, even when it is not sought, so that other blessings may be granted to it at its request. For “how,” says he, “shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed?” The spirit of grace, therefore, causes us to have faith, in order that through faith we may, on praying for it, obtain the ability to do what we are commanded. On this account the apostle himself constantly puts faith before the law; since we are not able to do what the law commands unless we obtain the strength to do it by the prayer of faith.

CHAPTER 29

GOD IS ABLE TO CONVERT OPPOSING WILLS, AND TO TAKE AWAY FROM THE HEART ITS HARDNESS

Now if faith is simply of free will, and is not given by God, why do we pray for those who will not believe, that they may believe? This it would be absolutely useless to do, unless we believe, with perfect propriety, that Almighty God is able to turn to belief wills that are perverse and opposed to faith. Man's free will is addressed when it is said, "Today, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." But if God were not able to remove from the human heart even its obstinacy and hardness, He would not say, through the prophet, "I will take from them their heart of stone, and will give them a heart of flesh." That all this was foretold in reference to the New Testament is shown clearly enough by the apostle when he says, "Ye are our epistle, . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." We must not, of course, suppose that such a phrase as this is used as if those might live in a fleshly way who ought to live spiritually; but inasmuch as a stone has no feeling, with which man's hard heart is compared, what was there left Him to compare man's intelligent heart with but the flesh, which possesses feeling? For this is what is said by the prophet Ezekiel: "I will give them another heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, saith the Lord." Now can we possibly, without extreme absurdity, maintain that there previously existed in any man the good merit of a good will, to entitle him to the removal of his stony heart, when all the while this very heart of stone signifies nothing else than a will of the hardest kind and such as is absolutely inflexible against God? For where a good will precedes, there is, of course, no longer a heart of stone.

CHAPTER 30

THE GRACE BY WHICH THE STONY HEART IS REMOVED IS NOT PRECEDED BY GOOD DESERTS, BUT BY EVIL ONES

In another passage, also, by the same prophet, God, in the clearest language, shows us that it is not owing to any good merits on the part of men, but for His own name's sake, that He does these things. This is His language: "This I do, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle you with clean water, and ye shall be clean: from all your own filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and the stony heart shall be taken away out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and will cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Now who is so blind as not to see, and who so stone-like as not to feel, that this grace is not given according to the merits of a good will, when the Lord declares and testifies, "It is I, O house of Israel, who do this, but for my holy name's sake"? Now why did He say "It is I that do it, but for my holy name's sake," were it not that they should not think that it was owing to their own good merits that these things were happening, as the Pelagians hesitate not unblushingly to say? But there were not only no good merits of theirs, but the Lord shows that evil ones actually preceded; for He says, "But for my holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen." Who can fail to observe how dreadful is the evil of profaning the Lord's own holy name? And yet, for the sake of this very name of mine, says He, which ye have profaned, I, even I, will make you good, but not for your own sakes; and, as He adds, "I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them." He says that He sanctifies His name, which He had already declared to be holy. Therefore, this is just what we pray for in the Lord's Prayer—"Hallowed be Thy name." We ask for the hallowing among men of that which is in itself undoubtedly always holy. Then it follows, "And the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you." Although, then, He is Himself always holy, He is, nevertheless, sanctified in those on whom He bestows

His grace, by taking from them that stony heart by which they profaned the name of the Lord.

CHAPTER 31 [XV.]

FREE WILL HAS ITS FUNCTION IN THE HEART'S CONVERSION; BUT GRACE TOO HAS ITS

Lest, however, it should be thought that men themselves in this matter do nothing by free will, it is said in the Psalm, “Harden not your hearts;” and in Ezekiel himself, “Cast away from you all your transgressions, which ye have impiously committed against me; and make you a new heart and a new spirit; and keep all my commandments. For why will ye die, O house of Israel, saith the Lord? for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: and turn ye, and live.” We should remember that it is He who says, “Turn ye and live,” to whom it is said in prayer, “Turn us again, O God.” We should remember that He says, “Cast away from you all your transgressions,” when it is even He who justifies the ungodly. We should remember that He says, “Make you a new heart and a new spirit,” who also promises, “I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I put within you.” How is it, then, that He who says, “Make you,” also says, “I will give you”? Why does He command, if He is to give? Why does He give if man is to make, except it be that He gives what He commands when He helps him to obey whom He commands? There is, however, always within us a free will,—but it is not always good; for it is either free from righteousness when it serves sin,—and then it is evil,—or else it is free from sin when it serves righteousness,—and then it is good. But the grace of God is always good; and by it it comes to pass that a man is of a good will, though he was before of an evil one. By it also it comes to pass that the very good will, which has now begun to be, is enlarged, and made so great that it is able to fulfil the divine commandments which it shall wish, when it shall once firmly and perfectly wish. This is the purport of what the Scripture says: “If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments;” so that the man who wills but is not able knows that he does not yet fully will, and prays that he may have so great a will that it may suffice for keeping the commandments. And thus, indeed, he receives assistance to perform what he is commanded. Then is the will of use when we have ability; just as ability is also then of use when we have the will. For what does it profit us if we will what we are unable to do, or else do not will what we are able to do?

CHAPTER 32 [XVI.]

IN WHAT SENSE IT IS RIGHTLY SAID THAT, IF WE LIKE, WE MAY KEEP GOD’S COMMANDMENTS

The Pelagians think that they know something great when they assert that “God would not command what He knew could not be done by man.” Who can be ignorant of this? But God commands some things which we cannot do, in order that we may know what we ought to ask of Him. For this is faith itself, which obtains by prayer what the law commands. He, indeed, who said, “If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments,” did in the same book of Ecclesiasticus afterwards say, “Who shall give a watch before my mouth, and a seal of wisdom upon my lips, that I fall not suddenly thereby, and that my tongue destroy me not.” Now he had certainly heard and received these commandments: “Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.” Forasmuch, then, as what he said is true: “If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments,” why does he want a watch to be given before his mouth, like him who says in the Psalm, “Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth”? Why is he not satisfied with God’s commandment and his own will; since, if he has the will, he shall keep the commandments? How many of God’s commandments are directed against pride! He is quite aware of them; if he will, he may keep them. Why, therefore, does he shortly afterwards say, “O God, Father and God of my life, give me not a proud look”? The law had long ago said to him, “Thou shalt not covet;” let him then only will, and do what he is bidden, because, if he has the will, he shall keep the commandments. Why, therefore, does he afterwards say, “Turn away from me concupiscence”? Against luxury, too, how many commandments has God enjoined! Let a man observe them; because, if he will, he may keep the commandments. But what means that cry to God, “Let not the greediness of the belly nor lust of the flesh take hold on me!”? Now, if we were to put this question to him personally, he would very rightly answer us and say, From that prayer of mine, in which I offer this particular petition to God, you may understand in what sense I said, “If thou wilt, thou mayest keep the commandments.” For it is certain that we keep the commandments if we will; but because the will is prepared by the Lord, we must ask of Him for such a force of will as suffices to make us act by the willing. It is certain that it is we that will when we will, but it is He who makes us will what is good, of whom it is said (as he has just now expressed it), “The will is prepared by the Lord.” Of the same Lord it is said, “The steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and his way doth He will.” Of the same Lord again it is said, “It is God who worketh in you, even to will!” It is certain that it is we that act when we act; but it is He who makes us act, by applying efficacious powers to our will, who has said, “I will make you to walk in my statutes, and to observe my judgments, and to do them.” When he says, “I will make you . . . to do them,” what else does He say in fact than, “I will take away from you your heart of stone,” from which used to arise your inability to act, “and I will give you a heart of flesh,” in order that you may act? And what does this promise amount to but this: I will remove your hard heart, out of which you did not act, and I will give you an obedient heart, out of which you shall act? It is He who causes us to act, to whom the human suppliant says, “Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth.” That is to say: Make or enable me, O Lord, to set a watch before my mouth,—a benefit which he had already obtained from God who thus described its influence: “I set a watch upon my mouth.”

CHAPTER 33 [XVII.]

A GOOD WILL MAY BE SMALL AND WEAK; AN AMPLE WILL, GREAT LOVE. OPERATING AND CO-OPERATING GRACE

He, therefore, who wishes to do God’s commandment, but is unable, already possesses a good will, but as yet a small and weak one; he will, however, become able when he shall have acquired a great and robust will. When the martyrs did the great commandments which they obeyed, they acted by a great will,—that is, with great love. Of this love the Lord Himself thus speaks: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” In accordance with this, the apostle also says, “He that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law. For this: Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." This love the Apostle Peter did not yet possess, when he for fear thrice denied the Lord. "There is no fear in love," says the Evangelist John in his first Epistle, "but perfect love casteth out fear." But yet, however small and imperfect his love was, it was not wholly wanting when he said to the Lord, "I will lay down my life for Thy sake;" for he supposed himself able to effect what he felt himself willing to do. And who was it that had begun to give him his love, however small, but He who prepares the will, and perfects by His co-operation what He initiates by His operation? Forasmuch as in beginning He works in us that we may have the will, and in perfecting works with us when we have the will. On which account the apostle says, "I am confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." He operates, therefore, without us, in order that we may will; but when we will, and so will that we may act, He co-operates with us. We can, however, ourselves do nothing to effect good works of piety without Him either working that we may will, or co-working when we will. Now, concerning His working that we may will, it is said: "It is God which worketh in you, even to will." While of His co-working with us, when we will and act by willing, the apostle says, "We know that in all things there is co-working for good to them that love God." What does this phrase, "all things," mean, but the terrible and cruel sufferings which affect our condition? That burden, indeed, of Christ, which is heavy for our infirmity, becomes light to love. For to such did the Lord say that His burden was light, as Peter was when he suffered for Christ, not as he was when he denied Him.

CHAPTER 34

THE APOSTLE'S EULOGY OF LOVE. CORRECTION TO BE ADMINISTERED WITH LOVE

This charity, that is, this will glowing with intensest love, the apostle eulogizes with these words: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? (As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” And in another passage he says, “And yet I show unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth.” And a little afterwards he says, “And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. Follow after love.” He also says to the Galatians, “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” This is the same in effect as what he writes to the Romans: “He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.” In like manner he says to the Colossians, “And above all these things, put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.” And to Timothy he writes, “Now the end of the commandment is love;” and he goes on to describe the quality of this grace, saying, “Out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” Moreover, when he says to the Corinthians, “Let all your things be done with love,” he shows plainly enough that even those chastisements which are deemed sharp and bitter by those who are corrected thereby, are to be administered with love. Accordingly, in another passage, after saying, “Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men,” he immediately added, “See that none render evil for evil unto any man.” Therefore, even when the unruly are corrected, it is not rendering evil for evil, but contrariwise, good. However, what but love worketh all these things?

CHAPTER 35

COMMENDATIONS OF LOVE

The Apostle Peter, likewise, says, “And, above all things, have fervent love among yourselves: for love shall cover the multitude of sins.” The Apostle James also says, “If ye fulfil the royal law, according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.” So also the Apostle John says, “He that loveth his brother abideth in the right;” again, in another passage, “Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother; for this is the message which we have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.” Then he says again, “This is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another.” Once more: “And this commandment have we from Him that he who loveth God love his brother also.” Then shortly afterwards he adds, “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments; for this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.” While, in his second Epistle, it is written, “Not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.”

CHAPTER 36

LOVE COMMENDED BY OUR LORD HIMSELF

Moreover, the Lord Jesus Himself teaches us that the whole law and the prophets hang upon the two precepts of love to God and love to our neighbour. Concerning these two commandments the following is written in the Gospel according to St. Mark: “And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him: Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him: The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.” Also, in the Gospel according to St.

John, He says, “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love to one another.”

CHAPTER 37 [XVIII.]

THE LOVE WHICH FULFILS THE COMMANDMENTS IS NOT OF OURSELVES, BUT OF GOD

All these commandments, however, respecting love or charity (which are so great, and such that whatever action a man may think he does well is by no means well done if done without love) would be given to men in vain if they had not free choice of will. But forasmuch as these precepts are given in the law, both old and new (although in the new came the grace which was promised in the old, but the law without grace is the letter which killeth, but in grace the Spirit which giveth life), from what source is there in men the love of God and of one’s neighbour but from God Himself? For indeed, if it be not of God but of men, the Pelagians have gained the victory; but if it come from God, then we have vanquished the Pelagians. Let, then, the Apostle John sit in judgment between us; and let him say to us, “Beloved, let us love one another.” Now, when they begin to extol themselves on these words of John, and to ask why this precept is addressed to us at all if we have not of our own selves to love one another, the same apostle proceeds at once, to their confusion, to add, “For love is of God.” It is not of ourselves, therefore, but it is of God. Wherefore, then, is it said, “Let us love one another, for love is of God,” unless it be as a precept to our free will, admonishing it to seek the gift of God? Now, this would be indeed a thoroughly fruitless admonition if the will did not previously receive some donation of love, which might seek to be enlarged so as to fulfil whatever command was laid upon it. When it is said, “Let us love one another,” it is law; when it is said, “For love is of God,” it is grace. For God’s “wisdom carries law and mercy upon her tongue.” Accordingly, it is written in the Psalm, “For He who gave the law will give blessings.”

CHAPTER 38

WE WOULD NOT LOVE GOD UNLESS HE FIRST LOVED US. THE APOSTLES CHOSE CHRIST BECAUSE THEY WERE CHOSEN; THEY WERE NOT CHOSEN BECAUSE THEY CHOSE CHRIST

Let no one, then, deceive you, my brethren, for we should not love God unless He first loved us. John again gives us the plainest proof of this when he says, “We love Him because He first loved us.” Grace makes us lovers of the law; but the law itself, without grace, makes us nothing but breakers of the law. And nothing else than this is shown us by the words of our Lord when He says to His disciples, Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” For if we first loved Him, in order that by this merit He might love us, then we first chose Him that we might deserve to be chosen by Him. He, however, who is the Truth says otherwise, and flatly contradicts this vain conceit of men. “You have not chosen me,” He says. If, therefore, you have not chosen me, undoubtedly you have not loved me (for how could they choose one whom they did not love?). “But I,” says He, “have chosen you.” And then could they possibly help choosing Him afterwards, and preferring Him to all the blessings of this world? But it was because they had been chosen, that they chose Him; not because they chose Him that they were chosen. There could be no merit in men’s choice of Christ, if it were not that God’s grace was prevenient in His choosing them. Whence the Apostle Paul pronounces in the Thessalonians this benediction: “The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men.” This benediction to love one another He gave us, who had also given us a law that we should love each other. Then, in another passage addressed to the same church, seeing that there now existed in some of its members the disposition which he had wished them to cultivate, he says, “We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth.” This he said lest they should make a boast of the great good which they were enjoying from God, as if they had it of their own mere selves. Because, then, your faith has so great a growth (this is the purport of his words), and the love of every one of you all toward each other so greatly abounds, we ought to thank God concerning you, but not to praise you, as if you possessed these gifts of yourselves.

CHAPTER 39

THE SPIRIT OF FEAR A GREAT GIFT OF GOD

The apostle also says to Timothy, “For God hath not given to us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” Now in respect of this passage of the apostle, we must be on our guard against supposing that we have not received the spirit of the fear of God, which is undoubtedly a great gift of God, and concerning which the prophet Isaiah says, “The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon thee, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and piety, the spirit of the fear of the Lord.” It is not the fear with which Peter denied Christ that we have received the spirit of, but that fear concerning which Christ Himself says, “Fear Him who hath power to destroy both soul and body in hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him.” This, indeed, He said, lest we should deny Him from the same fear which shook Peter; for such cowardice he plainly wished to be removed from us when He, in the preceding passage, said, “Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.” It is not of this fear that we have received the spirit, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. And of this spirit the same Apostle Paul discourses to the Romans: “We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.” Not by ourselves, therefore, but by the Holy Ghost which is given to us, does it come to pass that, through that very love, which he shows us to be the gift of God, tribulation does not do away with patience, but rather produces it. Again, he says to the Ephesians, “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith.” Great blessings these! Let him tell us, however, whence they come. “From God the Father,” says he immediately afterwards, “and the Lord Jesus Christ.” These great blessings, therefore, are nothing else than God’s gifts to us.

CHAPTER 40 [XIX.]

THE IGNORANCE OF THE PELAGIANS IN MAINTAINING THAT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAW COMES FROM GOD, BUT THAT LOVE COMES FROM OURSELVES

It is no wonder that light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. In John’s Epistle the Light declares, “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” And in the Pelagian writings the darkness says, “Love comes to us of our own selves.” Now, if they only possessed the true, that is, Christian love, they would also know whence they obtained possession of it; even as the apostle knew when he said, “But we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” John says, “God is love.” And thus the Pelagians affirm that they actually have God Himself, not from God, but from their own selves! and although they allow that we have the knowledge of the law from God, they will yet have it that love is from our very selves. Nor do they listen to the apostle when he says, “Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth.” Now what can be more absurd, nay, what more insane and more alien from the very sacredness of love itself, than to maintain that from God proceeds the knowledge which, apart from love, puffs us up, while the love which prevents the possibility of this inflation of knowledge springs from ourselves? And again, when the apostle speaks of “the love of Christ as surpassing knowledge,” what can be more insane than to suppose that the knowledge which must be subordinated to love comes from God, while the love which surpasses knowledge comes from man? The true faith, however, and sound doctrine declare that both graces are from God; the Scripture says, “From His face cometh knowledge and understanding;” and another Scripture says, “Love is of God.” We read of “the Spirit of wisdom and understanding.” Also of “the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” But love is a greater gift than knowledge; for whenever a man has the gift of knowledge, love is necessary by the side of it, that he be not puffed up. For “love envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.”

CHAPTER 41 [XX.]

THE WILLS OF MEN ARE SO MUCH IN THE POWER OF GOD, THAT HE CAN TURN THEM WHITHERSOEVER IT PLEASES HIM

I think I have now discussed the point fully enough in opposition to those who vehemently oppose the grace of God, by which, however, the human will is not taken away, but changed from bad to good, and assisted when it is good. I think, too, that I have so discussed the subject, that it is not so much I myself as the inspired Scripture which has spoken to you, in the clearest testimonies of truth; and if this divine record be looked into carefully, it shows us that not only men's good wills, which God Himself converts from bad ones, and, when converted by Him, directs to good actions and to eternal life, but also those which follow the world are so entirely at the disposal of God, that He turns them whithersoever He wills, and whensoever He wills,—to bestow kindness on some, and to heap punishment on others, as He Himself judges right by a counsel most secret to Himself, indeed, but beyond all doubt most righteous. For we find that some sins are even the punishment of other sins, as are those "vessels of wrath" which the apostle describes as "fitted to destruction;" as is also that hardening of Pharaoh, the purpose of which is said to be to set forth in him the power of God; as, again, is the flight of the Israelites from the face of the enemy before the city of Ai, for fear arose in their heart so that they fled, and this was done that their sin might be punished in the way it was right that it should be; by reason of which the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, "The children of Israel shall not be able to stand before the face of their enemies." What is the meaning of, "They shall not be able to stand"? Now, why did they not stand by free will, but, with a will perplexed by fear, took to flight, were it not that God has the lordship even over men's wills, and when He is angry turns to fear whomsoever He pleases? Was it not of their own will that the enemies of the children of Israel fought against the people of God, as led by Joshua, the son of Nun? And yet the Scripture says, "It was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that they might be exterminated." And was it not likewise of his own will that the wicked son of Gera cursed King David? And yet what says David, full of true, and deep, and pious wisdom? What did he say to him who wanted to smite the reviler? "What," said he, "have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? Let him alone and let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who, then, shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" And then the inspired Scripture, as if it would confirm the king's profound utterance by repeating it once more, tells us: "And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth from my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more may this Benjamite do it! Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on my humiliation, and will requite me good for his cursing this day.” Now what prudent reader will fail to understand in what way the Lord bade this profane man to curse David? It was not by a command that He bade him, in which case his obedience would be praiseworthy; but He inclined the man’s will, which had become debased by his own perverseness, to commit this sin, by His own just and secret judgment. Therefore it is said, “The Lord said unto him.” Now if this person had obeyed a command of God, he would have deserved to be praised rather than punished, as we know he was afterwards punished for this sin. Nor is the reason an obscure one why the Lord told him after this manner to curse David. “It may be,” said the humbled king, “that the Lord will look on my humiliation, and will requite me good for his cursing this day.” See, then, what proof we have here that God uses the hearts of even wicked men for the praise and assistance of the good. Thus did He make use of Judas when betraying Christ; thus did He make use of the Jews when they crucified Christ. And how vast the blessings which from these instances He has bestowed upon the nations that should believe in Him! He also uses our worst enemy, the devil himself, but in the best way, to exercise and try the faith and piety of good men,—not for Himself indeed, who knows all things before they come to pass, but for our sakes, for whom it was necessary that such a discipline should be gone through with us. Did not Absalom choose by his own will the counsel which was detrimental to him? And yet the reason of his doing so was that the Lord had heard his father’s prayer that it might be so. Wherefore the Scripture says that “the Lord appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring all evils upon Absalom.” It called Ahithophel’s counsel “good,” because it was for the moment of advantage to his purpose. It was in favour of the son against his father, against whom he had rebelled; and it might have crushed him, had not the Lord defeated the counsel which Ahithophel had given, by acting on the heart of Absalom so that he rejected this counsel, and chose another which was not expedient for him.

CHAPTER 42 [XXI]

GOD DOES WHATSOEVER HE WILLS IN THE HEARTS OF EVEN WICKED MEN

Who can help trembling at those judgments of God by which He does in the hearts of even wicked men whatsoever He wills, at the same time rendering to them according to their deeds? Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, rejected the salutary counsel of the old men, not to deal harshly with the people, and preferred listening to the words of the young men of his own age, by returning a rough answer to those to whom he should have spoken gently. Now whence arose such conduct, except from his own will? Upon this, however, the ten tribes of Israel revolted from him, and chose for themselves another king, even Jeroboam, that the will of God in His anger might be accomplished which He had predicted would come to pass. For what says the Scripture? “The king hearkened not unto the people; for the turning was from the Lord, that He might perform His saying, which the Lord spake to Ahijah the Shilonite concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat.” All this, indeed, was done by the will of man, although the turning was from the Lord. Read the books of the Chronicles, and you will find the following passage in the second book: “Moreover, the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that were neighbours to the Ethiopians; and they came up to the land of Judah, and ravaged it, and carried away all the substance which was found in the king’s house.” Here it is shown that God stirs up enemies to devastate the countries which He adjudges deserving of such chastisement. Still, did these Philistines and Arabians invade the land of Judah to waste it with no will of their own? Or were their movements so directed by their own will that the Scripture lies which tells us that “the Lord stirred up their spirit” to do all this? Both statements to be sure are true, because they both came by their own will, and yet the Lord stirred up their spirit; and this may also with equal truth be stated the other way: The Lord both stirred up their spirit, and yet they came of their own will. For the Almighty sets in motion even in the innermost hearts of men the movement of their will, so that He does through their agency whatsoever He wishes to perform through them,—even He who knows not how to will anything in unrighteousness. What, again, is the purport of that which the man of God said to King Amaziah: “Let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the Lord is not with Israel, even with all the children of Ephraim: for if thou shalt think to obtain with these, the Lord shall put thee to flight before thine enemies: for God hath power either to strengthen or to put to flight”? Now, how does the power of God help some in war by giving them confidence, and put others to flight by injecting fear into them, except it be that He who has made all things according to His own will, in heaven and on earth, also works in the hearts of men? We read also what Joash, king of Israel, said when he sent a message to Amaziah, king of Judah, who wanted to fight with him. After certain other words, he added, “Now tarry at home; why dost thou challenge me to thine hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?” Then the Scripture has added this sequel: “But Amaziah would not hear; for it came of God, that he might be delivered into their hands, because they sought after the gods of Edom.” Behold, now, how God, wishing to punish the sin of idolatry, wrought this in this man’s heart, with whom He was indeed justly angry, not to listen to sound advice, but to despise it, and go to the battle, in which he with his army was routed. God says by the prophet Ezekiel, “If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet: I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.” Then there is the book of Esther, who was a woman of the people of Israel, and in the land of their captivity became the wife of the foreign King Ahasuerus. In this book it is written, that, being driven by necessity to interpose in behalf of her people, whom the king had ordered to be slain in every part of his dominions, she prayed to the Lord. So strongly was she urged by the necessity of the case, that she even ventured into the royal presence without the king’s command, and contrary to her own custom. Now observe what the Scripture says: “He looked at her like a bull in the vehemence of his indignation; and the queen was afraid, and her colour changed as she fainted; and she bowed herself upon the head of her delicate maiden which went before her. But God turned the king, and transformed his indignation into gentleness.” The Scripture says in the Proverbs of Solomon, “Even as the rush of water, so is the heart of a king in God’s hand; He will turn it in whatever way He shall choose.” Again, in the 104th Psalm, in reference to the Egyptians, one reads what God did to them: “And He turned their heart to hate His people, to deal subtilly with His servants.” Observe, likewise, what is written in the letters of the apostles. In the

Epistle of Paul, the Apostle, to the Romans occur these words: “Wherefore God gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts;” and a little afterwards: “For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections;” again, in the next passage: “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.” So also in his second Epistle to the Thessalonians, the apostle says of sundry persons, “Inasmuch as they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved; therefore also God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

CHAPTER 43

GOD OPERATES ON MEN’S HEARTS TO INCLINE THEIR WILLS WHITHERSOEVER HE PLEASES

From these statements of the inspired word, and from similar passages which it would take too long to quote in full, it is, I think, sufficiently clear that God works in the hearts of men to incline their wills whithersoever He wills, whether to good deeds according to His mercy, or to evil after their own deserts; His own judgment being sometimes manifest, sometimes secret, but always righteous. This ought to be the fixed and immoveable conviction of your heart, that there is no unrighteousness with God. Therefore, whenever you read in the Scriptures of Truth, that men are led aside, or that their hearts are blunted and hardened by God, never doubt that some ill deserts of their own have first occurred, so that they justly suffer these things. Thus you will not run counter to that proverb of Solomon: “The foolishness of a man perverteth his ways, yet he blameth God in his heart.” Grace, however, is not bestowed according to men’s deserts; otherwise grace would be no longer grace. For grace is so designated because it is given gratuitously. Now if God is able, either through the agency of angels (whether good ones or evil), or in any other way whatever, to operate in the hearts even of the wicked, in return for their deserts,—whose wickedness was not made by Him, but was either derived originally from Adam, or increased by their own will,—what is there to wonder at if, through the Holy Spirit, He works good in the hearts of the elect, who has wrought it that their hearts become good instead of evil?

CHAPTER 44 [XXII.]

GRATUITOUS GRACE EXEMPLIFIED IN INFANTS

Men, however, may suppose that there are certain good deserts which they think are precedent to justification through God's grace; all the while failing to see, when they express such an opinion, that they do nothing else than deny grace. But, as I have already remarked, let them suppose what they like respecting the case of adults, in the case of infants, at any rate, the Pelagians find no means of answering the difficulty. For these in receiving grace have no will; from the influence of which they can pretend to any precedent merit. We see, moreover, how they cry and struggle when they are baptized, and feel the divine sacraments. Such conduct would, of course, be charged against them as a great impiety, if they already had free will in use; and notwithstanding this, grace cleaves to them even in their resisting struggles. But most certainly there is no prevenient merit, otherwise the grace would be no longer grace. Sometimes, too, this grace is bestowed upon the children of unbelievers, when they happen by some means or other to fall, by reason of God's secret providence, into the hands of pious persons; but, on the other hand, the children of believers fail to obtain grace, some hindrance occurring to prevent the approach of help to rescue them in their danger. These things, no doubt, happen through the secret providence of God, whose judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out. These are the words of the apostle; and you should observe what he had previously said, to lead him to add such a remark. He was discoursing about the Jews and Gentiles, when he wrote to the Romans—themselves Gentiles—to this effect: "For as ye, in times past, have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy; for God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all." Now, after he had thought upon what he said, full of wonder at the certain truth of his own assertion, indeed, but astonished at its great depth, how God concluded all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all,—as if doing evil that good might come,—he at once exclaimed, and said, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” Perverse men, who do not reflect upon these unsearchable judgments and untraceable ways, indeed, but are ever prone to censure, being unable to understand, have supposed the apostle to say, and censoriously gloried over him for saying, “Let us do evil, that good may come!” God forbid that the apostle should say so! But men, without understanding, have thought that this was in fact said, when they heard these words of the apostle: “Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” But grace, indeed, effects this purpose—that good works should now be wrought by those who previously did evil; not that they should persevere in evil courses and suppose that they are recompensed with good. Their language, therefore, ought not to be: “Let us do evil, that good may come;” but: “We have done evil, and good has come; let us henceforth do good, that in the future world we may receive good for good, who in the present life are receiving good for evil.” Wherefore it is written in the Psalm, “I will sing of mercy and judgment unto Thee, O Lord.” When the Son of man, therefore, first came into the world, it was not to judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. And this dispensation was for mercy; by and by, however, He will come for judgment—to judge the quick and the dead. And yet even in this present time salvation itself does not eventuate without judgment—although it be a hidden one; therefore He says, “For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not may see, and that they which see may be made blind.”

CHAPTER 45 [XXIII]

THE REASON WHY ONE PERSON IS ASSISTED BY GRACE, AND ANOTHER IS NOT HELPED, MUST BE REFERRED TO THE SECRET JUDGMENTS OF GOD

You must refer the matter, then, to the hidden determinations of God, when you see, in one and the same condition, such as all infants unquestionably have,—who derive their hereditary evil from Adam,—that one is assisted so as to be baptized, and another is not assisted, so that he dies in his very bondage; and again, that one baptized person is left and forsaken in his present life, who God foreknew would be ungodly, while another baptized person is taken away from this life, “lest that wickedness should alter his understanding;” and be sure that you do not in such cases ascribe unrighteousness or unwisdom to God, in whom is the very fountain of righteousness and wisdom, but, as I have exhorted you from the commencement of this treatise, “whereto you have already attained, walk therein,” and “even this shall God reveal unto you,”—if not in this life, yet certainly in the next, “for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed.” When, therefore, you hear the Lord say, “I the Lord have deceived that prophet,” and likewise what the apostle says: “He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth,” believe that, in the case of him whom He permits to be deceived and hardened, his evil deeds have deserved the judgment; whilst in the case of him to whom He shows mercy, you should loyally and unhesitatingly recognise the grace of the God who “rendereth not evil for evil; but contrariwise blessing.” Nor should you take away from Pharaoh free will, because in several passages God says, “I have hardened Pharaoh;” or,” I have hardened or I will harden Pharaoh’s heart;” for it does not by any means follow that Pharaoh did not, on this account, harden his own heart. For this, too, is said of him, after the removal of the fly-plague from the Egyptians, in these words of the Scripture: “And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also; neither would he let the people go.” Thus it was that both God hardened him by His just judgment, and Pharaoh by his own free will. Be ye then well assured that your labour will never be in vain, if, setting before you a good purpose, you persevere in it to the last. For God, who fails to render, according to their deeds, only to those whom He liberates, will then “recompense every man according to his works.” God will, therefore, certainly recompense both evil for evil, because He is just; and good for evil, because He is good; and good for good, because He is good and just; only, evil for good He will never recompense, because He is not unjust. He will, therefore, recompense evil for evil—punishment for unrighteousness; and He will recompense good for evil—grace for unrighteousness; and He will recompense good for good—grace for grace.

CHAPTER 46 [XXIV.]

UNDERSTANDING AND WISDOM MUST BE SOUGHT FROM GOD

Peruse attentively this treatise, and if you understand it, give God the praise; but where you fail to understand it, pray for understanding, for God will give you understanding. Remember what the Scriptures say: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given to him.” Wisdom itself cometh down from above, as the Apostle James himself tells us. There is, however, another wisdom, which you must repel from you, and pray against its remaining in you; this the same apostle expressed his detestation of when he said, “But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, . . . this is not the wisdom which descendeth from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For wherever there is envying and strife, there is also confusion, and every evil work. But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good works, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” What blessing, then, will that man not have who has prayed for this wisdom and obtained it of the Lord? And from this you may understand what grace is; because if this wisdom were of ourselves, it would not be from above; nor would it be an object to be asked for of the God who created us. Brethren, pray ye for us also, that we may live “soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,” to whom belong the honour, and the glory, and the kingdom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

A TREATISE ON THE GIFT OF PERSEVERANCE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE DONO PERSEVERANTIAE.)

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

BEING THE SECOND BOOK,

OF THE TREATISE “ON THE PREDESTINATION OF THE SAINTS.”

ADDRESSED TO PROSPER AND HILARY.

A.D. 428 OR 429

TRANSLATED BY DR. HOLMES.

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Preface

In the first part of the book he proves that the perseverance by which a man perseveres in Christ to the end is God's gift; for that it is a mockery to ask of God that which is not believed to be given by God. Moreover, that in the Lord's prayer scarcely anything is asked for but perseverance, according to the exposition of the martyr Cyprian, by which exposition the enemies to this grace were convicted before they were born. He teaches that the grace of perseverance is not given according to the merits of the receivers, but to some it is given by God's mercy; to others it is not given, by His righteous judgment. That it is inscrutable why, of adults, one rather than another should be called; just as, moreover, of two infants it is inscrutable why the one should be taken, the other left. But that it is still more inscrutable why, of two pious persons, to one it should be given to persevere, to the other it should not be given; but that this is most certain, that the former is of the predestinated, the latter is not. He observes that the mystery of predestination is set forth in our Lord's words concerning the people of Tyre and Sidon, who would have repented if the same miracles had been done among them which had been done in Chorazin. He shows that the case of infants is of force to confirm the truth of predestination and grace in older people; and he answers the passage of his third book on free will, unsoundly alleged on this point by his adversaries. Subsequently, in the second part of this work, he rebuts what they say,—to wit, that the definition of predestination is opposed to the usefulness of exhortation and rebuke. He asserts, on the other hand, that it is advantageous to preach predestination, so that man may not glory in himself, but in the Lord. As to the objections, however, which they make against predestination, he shows that the same objections may be twisted in no unlike manner either against God's foreknowledge or against that grace which they all agree to be necessary for other good things (with the exception of the beginning of faith and the completion of perseverance). For that the predestination of the saints is nothing else than God's foreknowledge and preparation for His benefits, by which whoever are delivered are most certainly delivered. But he bids that predestination should be preached in a harmonious manner, and not in such a way as to seem to an unskilful multitude as if it were disproved by its very preaching. Lastly, he commends to us Jesus Christ, as placed before our eyes, as the most eminent instance of predestination.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

OF THE NATURE OF THE PERSEVERANCE HERE DISCOURSED OF

I Have now to consider the subject of perseverance with greater care; for in the former book also I said some things on this subject when I was discussing the beginning of faith. I assert, therefore, that the perseverance by which we persevere in Christ even to the end is the gift of God; and I call that the end by which is finished that life wherein alone there is peril of falling. Therefore it is uncertain whether any one has received this gift so long as he is still alive. For if he fall before he dies, he is, of course, said not to have persevered; and most truly is it said. How, then, should he be said to have received or to have had perseverance who has not persevered? For if any one have continence, and fall away from that virtue and become incontinent,—or, in like manner, if he have righteousness, if patience, if even faith, and fall away, he is rightly said to have had these virtues and to have them no longer; for he was continent, or he was righteous, or he was patient, or he was believing, as long as he was so; but when he ceased to be so, he no longer is what he was. But how should he who has not persevered have ever been persevering, since it is only by persevering that any one shows himself persevering,—and this he has not done? But lest any one should object to this, and say, If from the time at which any one became a believer he has lived—for the sake of argument—ten years, and in the midst of them has fallen from the faith, has he not persevered for five years? I am not contending about words. If it be thought that this also should be called perseverance, as it were for so long as it lasts, assuredly he is not to be said to have had in any degree that perseverance of which we are now discoursing, by which one perseveres in Christ even to the end. And the believer of one year, or of a period as much shorter as may be conceived of, if he has lived faithfully until he died, has rather had this perseverance than the believer of many years' standing, if a little time before his death he has fallen away from the stedfastness of his faith.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

FAITH IS THE BEGINNING OF A CHRISTIAN MAN. MARTYRDOM FOR CHRIST'S SAKE IS HIS BEST ENDING

This matter being settled, let us see whether this perseverance, of which it was said, "He that persevereth unto the end, the same shall be saved," is a gift of God. And if it be not, how is that saying of the apostle true: "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake"? Of these things, certainly, one has respect to the beginning, the other to the end. Yet each is the gift of God, because both are said to be given; as, also, I have already said above. For what is more truly the beginning for a Christian than to believe in Christ? What end is better than to suffer for Christ? But so far as pertains to believing in Christ, whatever kind of contradiction has been discovered, that not the beginning but the increase of faith should be called God's gift,—to this opinion, by God's gift, I have answered enough, and more than enough. But what reason can be given why perseverance to the end should not be given in Christ to him to whom it is given to suffer for Christ, or, to speak more distinctly, to whom it is given to die for Christ? For the Apostle Peter, showing that this is the gift of God, says, "It is better, if the will of God be so, to suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing." When he says, "If the will of God be so," he shows that this is divinely given, and yet not to all saints, to suffer for Christ's sake. For certainly those whom the will of God does not will to attain to the experience and the glory of suffering, do not fail to attain to the kingdom of God if they persevere in Christ to the end. But who can say that this perseverance is not given to those who die in Christ from any weakness of body, or by any kind of accident, although a far more difficult perseverance is given to those by whom even death itself is undergone for Christ's sake? Because perseverance is much more difficult when the persecutor is engaged in preventing a man's perseverance; and therefore he is sustained in his perseverance unto death. Hence it is more difficult to have the former perseverance,—easier to have the latter; but to Him to whom nothing is difficult it is easy to give both. For God has promised this, saying, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they may not depart from me." And what else is this than, "Such and so great shall be my fear that I will put into their hearts that they will perseveringly cleave to me"?

CHAPTER 3

GOD IS BESOUGHT FOR IT, BECAUSE IT IS HIS GIFT

But why is that perseverance asked for from God if it is not given by God? Is that, too, a mocking petition, when that is asked from Him which it is known that He does not give, but, though He gives it not, is in man's power; just as that giving of thanks is a mockery, if thanks are given to God for that which He did not give nor do? But what I have said there, I say also here again: "Be not deceived," says the apostle, "God is not mocked." O man, God is a witness not only of your words, but also of your thoughts. If you ask anything in truth and faith of one who is so rich, believe that you receive from Him from whom you ask, what you ask. Abstain from honouring Him with your lips and extolling yourself over Him in your heart, by believing that you have from yourself what you are pretending to beseech from Him. Is not this perseverance, perchance, asked for from Him? He who says this is not to be rebuked by any arguments, but must be overwhelmed with the prayers of the saints. Is there any of these who does not ask for himself from God that he may persevere in Him, when in that very prayer which is called the Lord's—because the Lord taught it—when it is prayed by the saints, scarcely anything else is understood to be prayed for but perseverance?

CHAPTER 4

THREE LEADING POINTS OF THE PELAGIAN DOCTRINE

Read with a little more attention its exposition in the treatise of the blessed martyr Cyprian, which he wrote concerning this matter, the title of which is, On the Lord's Prayer; and see how many years ago, and what sort of an antidote was prepared against those poisons which the Pelagians were one day to use. For there are three points, as you know, which the catholic Church chiefly maintains against them. One of these is, that the grace of God is not given according to our merits; because even every one of the merits of the righteous is God's gift, and is conferred by God's grace. The second is, that no one lives in this corruptible body, however righteous he may be, without sins of some kind. The third is, that man is born obnoxious to the first man's sin, and bound by the chain of condemnation, unless the guilt which is contracted by generation be loosed by regeneration. Of these three points, that which I have placed last is the only one that is not treated of in the above-named book of the glorious martyr; but of the two others the discourse there is of such perspicuity, that the above-named heretics, modern enemies of the grace of Christ, are found to have been convicted long before they were born. Among these merits of the saints, then, which are no merits unless they are the gifts of God, he says that perseverance also is God's gift, in these words: "We say, Hallowed be Thy name;' not that we ask for God that He may be hallowed by our prayers, but that we beseech of Him that His name may be hallowed in us. But by whom is God sanctified, since He Himself sanctifies? Well, because He says, Be ye holy because I also am holy, we ask and entreat that we, who were sanctified in baptism, may persevere in that which we have begun to be." And a little after, still arguing about that self-same matter, and teaching that we entreat perseverance from the Lord, which we could in no wise rightly and truly do unless it were His gift, he says: "We pray that this sanctification may abide in us; and because our Lord and Judge warns the man that was healed and quickened by Him to sin no more, lest a worse thing happen unto him, we make this supplication in our constant prayers; we ask this, day and night, that the sanctification and quickening which is received from the grace of God may be preserved by His protection." That teacher, therefore, understands that we are asking from Him for perseverance in sanctification, that is, that we should persevere in sanctification, when we who are sanctified say, "Hallowed be Thy name." For what else is it to ask for what we have already received, than that it be given to us also not to cease from its possession? As, therefore, the saint, when he asks God that he may be holy, is certainly asking that he may continue to be holy, so certainly the chaste person also, when he asks that he may be chaste, the continent that he may be continent, the righteous that he may be righteous, the pious that he may be pious, and the like,—which things, against the Pelagians, we maintain to be God's gifts,—are asking, without doubt, that they may persevere in those good things which they have acknowledged that they have received. And if they receive this, assuredly they also receive perseverance itself, the great gift of God, whereby His other gifts are preserved.

CHAPTER 5

THE SECOND PETITION IN THE LORD’S PRAYER

What, when we say, “Thy kingdom come,” do we ask else, but that that should also come to us which we do not doubt will come to all saints? And therefore here also, what do they who are already holy pray for, save that they may persevere in that holiness which has been given them? For no otherwise will the kingdom of God come to them; which it is certain will come not to others, but to those who persevere to the end.

CHAPTER 6 [III.]

THE THIRD PETITION. HOW HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE UNDERSTOOD IN THE LORD’S PRAYER

The third petition is, “Thy will be done in heaven and in earth;” or, as it is read in many codices, and is more frequently made use of by petitioners, “As in heaven, so also in earth,” which many people understand, “As the holy angels, so also may we do thy will.” That teacher and martyr will have heaven and earth, however, to be understood as spirit and flesh, and says that we pray that we may do the will of God with the full concord of both. He saw in these words also another meaning, congruous to the soundest faith, of which meaning I have already spoken above,—to wit, that for unbelievers, who are as yet earth, bearing in their first birth only the earthly man, believers are understood to pray, who, being clothed with the heavenly man, are not unreasonably called by the name of heaven; where he plainly shows that the beginning of faith also is God’s gift, since the holy Church prays not only for believers, that faith may be increased or may continue in them, but, moreover, for unbelievers, that they may begin to have what they have not had at all, and against which, besides, they were indulging hostile feelings. Now, however, I am arguing not concerning the beginning of faith, of which I have already spoken much in the former book, but of that perseverance which must be had even to the end,—which assuredly even the saints, who do the will of God, seek when they say in prayer, “Thy will be done.” For, since it is already done in them, why do they still ask that it may be done, except that they may persevere in that which they have begun to be? Nevertheless, it may here be said that the saints do not ask that the will of God may be done in heaven, but that it may be done in earth as in heaven,—that is to say, that earth may imitate heaven, that is, that man may imitate the angel, or that an unbeliever may imitate a believer; and thus that the saints are asking that that may be which is not yet, not that that which is may continue. For, by whatever holiness men may be distinguished, they are not yet equal to the angels of God; not yet, therefore, is the will of God done in them as it is in heaven. And if this be so, in that portion indeed in which we ask that men from unbelievers may become believers, it is not perseverance, but beginning, that seems to be asked for; but in that in which we ask that men may be made equal to the angels of God in doing God’s will,—where the saints pray for this, they are found to be praying for perseverance; since no one attains to that highest blessedness which is in the kingdom, unless he shall persevere unto the end in that holiness which he has received on earth.

CHAPTER 7 [IV.]

THE FOURTH PETITION

The fourth petition is, “Give us this day our daily bread,” where the blessed Cyprian shows how here also perseverance is understood to be asked for. Because he says, among other things, “And we ask that this bread should be given to us daily, that we who are in Christ, and daily receive the Eucharist for the food of salvation, may not by the interposition of some heinous sin be separated from Christ’s body by being withheld from communicating and prevented from partaking of the heavenly bread.” These words of the holy man of God indicate that the saints ask for perseverance directly from God, when with this intention they say, “Give us this day our daily bread,” that they may not be separated from Christ’s body, but may continue in that holiness in which they allow no crime by which they may deserve to be separated from it.

CHAPTER 8 [V.]

THE FIFTH PETITION. IT IS AN ERROR OF THE PELAGIANS THAT THE RIGHTEOUS ARE FREE FROM SIN

In the fifth sentence of the prayer we say, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors,” in which petition alone perseverance is not found to be asked for. For the sins which we ask to be forgiven us are past, but perseverance, which saves us for eternity, is indeed necessary for the time of this life; but not for the time which is past, but for that which remains even to its end. Yet it is worth the labour to consider for a little, how even already in this petition the heretics who were to arise long after were transfixed by the tongue of Cyprian, as if by the most invincible dart of truth. For the Pelagians dare to say even this: that the righteous man in this life has no sin at all, and that in such men there is even at the present time a Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, which is the one and only bride of Christ; as if she were not His bride who throughout the whole earth says what she has learnt from Him, “Forgive us our debts.” But observe how the most glorious Cyprian destroys these. For when he was expounding that very clause of the Lord’s Prayer, he says among other things: “And how necessarily, how providently, and salutarily are we admonished that we are sinners, since we are compelled to entreat for our sins; and while pardon is asked for from God, the soul recalls its own consciousness. Lest any one should flatter himself that he is innocent, and by exalting himself should more deeply perish, he is instructed and taught that he sins daily, in that he is bidden daily to entreat for his sins. Thus, moreover, John also in his Epistle warns us, and says, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.’“ And the rest, which it would be long to insert in this place.

CHAPTER 9

WHEN PERSEVERANCE IS GRANTED TO A PERSON, HE CANNOT BUT PERSEVERE

Now, moreover, when the saints say, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,” what do they pray for but that they may persevere in holiness? For, assuredly, when that gift of God is granted to them,—which is sufficiently plainly shown to be God’s gift, since it is asked of Him,—that gift of God, then, being granted to them that they may not be led into temptation, none of the saints fails to keep his perseverance in holiness even to the end. For there is not any one who ceases to persevere in the Christian purpose unless he is first of all led into temptation. If, therefore, it be granted to him according to his prayer that he may not be led, certainly by the gift of God he persists in that sanctification which by the gift of God he has received.

CHAPTER 10 [VI.]

THE GIFT OF PERSEVERANCE CAN BE OBTAINED BY PRAYER

But you write that "these brethren will not have this perseverance so preached as that it cannot be obtained by prayer or lost by obstinacy." In this they are little careful in considering what they say. For we are speaking of that perseverance whereby one perseveres unto the end, and if this is given, one does persevere unto the end; but if one does not persevere unto the end, it is not given, which I have already sufficiently discussed above. Let not men say, then, that perseverance is given to any one to the end, except when the end itself has come, and he to whom it has been given has been found to have persevered unto the end. Certainly, we say that one whom we have known to be chaste is chaste, whether he should continue or not in the same chastity; and if he should have any other divine endowment which may be kept and lost, we say that he has it as long as he has it; and if he should lose it, we say that he had it. But since no one has perseverance to the end except he who does persevere to the end, many people may have it, but none can lose it. For it is not to be feared that perchance when a man has persevered unto the end, some evil will may arise in him, so that he does not persevere unto the end. This gift of God, therefore, may be obtained by prayer, but when it has been given, it cannot be lost by contumacy. For when any one has persevered unto the end, he neither can lose this gift, nor others which he could lose before the end. How, then, can that be lost, whereby it is brought about that even that which could be lost is not lost?

CHAPTER 11

EFFECT OF PRAYER FOR PERSEVERANCE

But, lest perchance it be said that perseverance even to the end is not indeed lost when it has once been given,—that is, when a man has persevered unto the end,—but that it is lost, in some sense, when a man by contumacy so acts that he is not able to attain to it; just as we say that a man who has not persevered unto the end has lost eternal life or the kingdom of God, not because he had already received and actually had it, but because he would have received and had it if he had persevered;—let us lay aside controversies of words, and say that some things even which are not possessed, but are hoped to be possessed, may be lost. Let any one who dares, tell me whether God cannot give what He has commanded to be asked from Him. Certainly he who affirms this, I say not is a fool, but he is mad. But God commanded that His saints should say to Him in prayer, “Lead us not into temptation.” Whoever, therefore, is heard when he asks this, is not led into the temptation of contumacy, whereby he could or would be worthy to lose perseverance in holiness.

CHAPTER 12

OF HIS OWN WILL A MAN FORSAKES GOD, SO THAT HE IS DESERVEDLY FORSAKEN OF HIM

But, on the other hand, “of his own will a man forsakes God, so as to be deservedly forsaken by God.” Who would deny this? But it is for that reason we ask not to be led into temptation, so that this may not happen. And if we are heard, certainly it does not happen, because God does not allow it to happen. For nothing comes to pass except what either He Himself does, or Himself allows to be done. Therefore He is powerful both to turn wills from evil to good, and to convert those that are inclined to fall, or to direct them into a way pleasing to Himself. For to Him it is not said in vain, “O God, Thou shalt turn again and quicken us;” it is not vainly said, “Give not my foot to be moved;” it is not vainly said, “Give me not over, O Lord, from my desire to the sinner;” finally, not to mention many passages, since probably more may occur to you, it is not vainly said, “Lead us not into temptation.” For whoever is not led into temptation, certainly is not led into the temptation of his own evil will; and he who is not led into the temptation of his own evil will, is absolutely led into no temptation. For “every one is tempted,” as it is written, “when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed;” “but God tempteth no man,”—that is to say, with a hurtful temptation. For temptation is moreover beneficial by which we are not deceived or overwhelmed, but proved, according to that which is said, “Prove me, O Lord, and try me.” Therefore, with that hurtful temptation which the apostle signifies when he says, “Lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain,” “God tempteth no man,” as I have said,—that is, He brings or leads no one into temptation. For to be tempted and not to be led into temptation is not evil,—nay, it is even good; for this it is to be proved. When, therefore, we say to God, “Lead us not into temptation,” what do we say but, “Permit us not to be led”? Whence some pray in this manner, and it is read in many codices, and the most blessed Cyprian thus uses it: “Do not suffer us to be led into temptation.” In the Greek gospel, however, I have never found it otherwise than, “Lead us not into temptation.” We live, therefore, more securely if we give up the whole to God, and do not entrust ourselves partly to Him and partly to ourselves, as that venerable martyr saw. For when he would expound the same clause of the prayer, he says among other things, “But when we ask that we may not come into temptation, we are reminded of our infirmity and weakness while we thus ask, lest any should insolently vaunt himself,—lest any should proudly and arrogantly assume anything to himself,—lest any should take to himself the glory either of confession or suffering as his own; since the Lord Himself, teaching humility, said, Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’ So that when a humble and submissive confession comes first and all is attributed to God, whatever is sought for suppliantly, with the fear of God, may be granted by His own loving-kindness.”

CHAPTER 13 [VII.]

TEMPTATION THE CONDITION OF MAN

If, then, there were no other proofs, this Lord’s Prayer alone would be sufficient for us on behalf of the grace which I am defending; because it leaves us nothing wherein we may, as it were, glory as in our own, since it shows that our not departing from God is not given except by God, when it shows that it must be asked for from God. For he who is not led into temptation does not depart from God. This is absolutely not in the strength of free will, such as it now is; but it had been in man before he fell. And yet how much this freedom of will availed in the excellence of that primal state appeared in the angels; who, when the devil and his angels fell, stood in the truth, and deserved to attain to that perpetual security of not falling, in which we are most certain that they are now established. But, after the fall of man, God willed it to pertain only to His grace that man should approach to Him; nor did He will it to pertain to aught but His grace that man should not depart from Him.

CHAPTER 14

IT IS GOD’S GRACE BOTH THAT MAN COMES TO HIM, AND THAT MAN DOES NOT DEPART FROM HIM

This grace He placed “in Him in whom we have obtained a lot, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things.” And thus as He worketh that we come to Him, so He worketh that we do not depart. Wherefore it was said to Him by the mouth of the prophet, “Let Thy hand be upon the man of Thy right hand, and upon the Son of man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself, and we will not depart from Thee.” This certainly is not the first Adam, in whom we departed from Him, but the second Adam, upon whom His hand is placed, so that we do not depart from Him. For Christ altogether with His members is—for the Church’s sake, which is His body—the fulness of Him. When, therefore, God’s hand is upon Him, that we depart not from God, assuredly God’s work reaches to us (for this is God’s hand); by which work of God we are caused to be abiding in Christ with God—not, as in Adam, departing from God. For “in Christ we have obtained a lot, being predestinated according to His purpose who worketh all things.” This, therefore, is God’s hand, not ours, that we depart not from God. That, I say, is His hand who said, “I will put my fear in their hearts, that they depart not from me.”

CHAPTER 15

WHY GOD WILLED THAT HE SHOULD BE ASKED FOR THAT WHICH HE MIGHT GIVE WITHOUT PRAYER

Wherefore, also He willed that He should be asked that we may not be led into temptation, because if we are not led, we by no means depart from Him. And this might have been given to us even without our praying for it, but by our prayer He willed us to be admonished from whom we receive these benefits. For from whom do we receive but from Him from whom it is right for us to ask? Truly in this matter let not the Church look for laborious disputations, but consider its own daily prayers. It prays that the unbelieving may believe; therefore God converts to the faith. It prays that believers may persevere; therefore God gives perseverance to the end. God foreknew that He would do this. This is the very predestination of the saints, “whom He has chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and unspotted before Him in love; predestinating them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, in which He hath shown them favour in His beloved Son, in whom they have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace, which has abounded towards them in all wisdom and prudence; that He might show them the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Him, in the dispensation of the fulness of times to restore all things in Christ which are in heaven and which are in earth; in Him, in whom also we have obtained a lot, being predestinated according to His purpose who worketh all things.” Against a trumpet of truth so clear as this, what man of sober and watchful faith can receive any human arguments?

CHAPTER 16 [VIII.]

WHY IS NOT GRACE GIVEN ACCORDING TO MERIT?

But “why,” says one, “is not the grace of God given according to men’s merits?” I answer, Because God is merciful. “Why, then,” it is asked, “is it not given to all?” And here I reply, Because God is a Judge. And thus grace is given by Him freely; and by His righteous judgment it is shown in some what grace confers on those to whom it is given. Let us not then be ungrateful, that according to the good pleasure of His will a merciful God delivers so many to the praise of the glory of His grace from such deserved perdition; as, if He should deliver no one therefrom, He would not be unrighteous. Let him, therefore, who is delivered love His grace. Let him who is not delivered acknowledge his due. If, in remitting a debt, goodness is perceived, in requiring it, justice—unrighteousness is never found to be with God.

CHAPTER 17

THE DIFFICULTY OF THE DISTINCTION MADE IN THE CHOICE OF ONE AND THE REJECTION OF ANOTHER

“But why,” it is said, “in one and the same case, not only of infants, but even of twin children, is the judgment so diverse?” Is it not a similar question, “Why in a different case is the judgment the same?” Let us recall, then, those labourers in the vineyard who worked the whole day, and those who toiled one hour. Certainly the case was different as to the labour expended, and yet there was the same judgment in paying the wages. Did the murmurers in this case hear anything from the householder except, Such is my will? Certainly such was his liberality towards some, that there could be no injustice towards others. And both these classes, indeed, are among the good. Nevertheless, so far as it concerns justice and grace, it may be truly said to the guilty who is condemned, also concerning the guilty who is delivered, “Take what thine is, and go thy way;” “I will give unto this one that which is not due;” “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will? is thine eye evil because I am good?” And how if he should say, “Why not to me also?” He will hear, and with reason, “Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?” And although assuredly in the one case you see a most benignant benefactor, and in your own case a most righteous exactor, in neither case do you behold an unjust God. For although He would be righteous even if He were to punish both, he who is delivered has good ground for thankfulness, he who is condemned has no ground for finding fault.

CHAPTER 18

BUT WHY SHOULD ONE BE PUNISHED MORE THAN ANOTHER?

“But if,” it is said, “it was necessary that, although all were not condemned, He should still show what was due to all, and so He should commend His grace more freely to the vessels of mercy; why in the same case will He punish me more than another, or deliver him more than me?” I say not this. If you ask wherefore; because I confess that I can find no answer to make. And if you further ask why is this, it is because in this matter, even as His anger is righteous and as His mercy is great, so His judgments are unsearchable.

CHAPTER 19

WHY DOES GOD MINGLE THOSE WHO WILL PERSEVERE WITH THOSE WHO WILL NOT?

Let the inquirer still go on, and say, “Why is it that to some who have in good faith worshipped Him He has not given to persevere to the end?” Why except because he does not speak falsely who says, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, doubtless they would have continued with us.” Are there, then, two natures of men? By no means. If there were two natures there would not be any grace, for there would be given a gratuitous deliverance to none if it were paid as a debt to nature. But it seems to men that all who appear good believers ought to receive perseverance to the end. But God has judged it to be better to mingle some who would not persevere with a certain number of His saints, so that those for whom security from temptation in this life is not desirable may not be secure. For that which the apostle says, checks many from mischievous elation: “Wherefore let him who seems to stand take heed lest he fall.” But he who falls, falls by his own will, and he who stands, stands by God’s will. “For God is able to make him stand;” therefore he is not able to make himself stand, but God. Nevertheless, it is good not to be high-minded, but to fear. Moreover, it is in his own thought that every one either falls or stands. Now, as the apostle says, and as I have mentioned in my former treatise, “We are not sufficient to think anything of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.” Following whom also the blessed Ambrose ventures to say, “For our heart is not in our own power, nor are our thoughts.” And this everybody who is humbly and truly pious feels to be most true.

CHAPTER 20

AMBROSE ON GOD’S CONTROL OVER MEN’S THOUGHTS

And when Ambrose said this, he was speaking in that treatise which he wrote concerning Flight from the World, wherein he taught that this world was to be fled not by the body, but by the heart, which he argued could not be done except by God’s help. For he says: “We hear frequent discourse concerning fleeing from this world, and I would that the mind was as careful and solicitous as the discourse is easy; but what is worse, the enticement of earthly lusts constantly creeps in, and the pouring out of vanities takes possession of the mind; so that what you desire to avoid, this you think of and consider in your mind. And this is difficult for a man to beware of, but impossible to get rid of. Finally, the prophet bears witness that it is a matter of wish rather than of accomplishment, when he says, Incline my heart to Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.’ For our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power, and these, poured forth unexpectedly, confuse our mind and soul, and draw them in a different direction from that which you have proposed to yourself; they recall you to worldly things, they interpose things of time, they suggest voluptuous things, they inweave enticing things, and in the very moment when we are seeking to elevate our mind, we are for the most part filled with vain thoughts and cast down to earthly things.” Therefore it is not in the power of men, but in that of God, that men have power to become sons of God. Because they receive it from Him who gives pious thoughts to the human heart, by which it has faith, which worketh by love; for the receiving and keeping of which benefit, and for carrying it on perseveringly unto the end, we are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, in whose power is our heart and our thoughts.

CHAPTER 21 [IX.]

INSTANCES OF THE UNSEARCHABLE JUDGMENTS OF GOD

Therefore, of two infants, equally bound by original sin, why the one is taken and the other left; and of two wicked men of already mature years, why this one should be so called as to follow Him that calleth, while that one is either not called at all, or is not called in such a manner,—the judgments of God are unsearchable. But of two pious men, why to the one should be given perseverance unto the end, and to the other it should not be given, God's judgments are even more unsearchable. Yet to believers it ought to be a most certain fact that the former is of the predestinated, the latter is not. "For if they had been of us," says one of the predestinated, who had drunk this secret from the breast of the Lord, "certainly they would have continued with us." What, I ask, is the meaning of, "They were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would certainly have continued with us"? Were not both created by God—both born of Adam—both made from the earth, and given from Him who said, "I have created all breath," souls of one and the same nature? Lastly, had not both been called, and followed Him that called them? and had not both become, from wicked men, justified men, and both been renewed by the laver of regeneration? But if he were to hear this who beyond all doubt knew what he was saying, he might answer and say: These things are true. In respect of all these things, they were of us. Nevertheless, in respect of a certain other distinction, they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they certainly would have continued with us. What then is this distinction? God's books lie open, let us not turn away our view; the divine Scripture cries aloud, let us give it a hearing. They were not of them, because they had not been "called according to the purpose;" they had not been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; they had not gained a lot in Him; they had not been predestinated according to His purpose who worketh all things. For if they had been this, they would have been of them, and without doubt they would have continued with them.

CHAPTER 22

IT IS AN ABSURDITY TO SAY THAT THE DEAD WILL BE JUDGED FOR SINS WHICH THEY WOULD HAVE COMMITTED IF THEY HAD LIVED

For not to say how possible it may be for God to convert the wills of men averse and opposed to His faith, and to operate on their hearts so that they yield to no adversities, and are overcome by no temptation so as to depart from Him,—since He also can do what the apostle says, namely, not allow them to be tempted above that which they are able;—not, then, to say this, God foreknowing that they would fall, was certainly able to take them away from this life before that fall should occur. Are we to return to that point of still arguing how absurdly it is said that dead men are judged even for those sins which God foreknew that they would have committed if they had lived? which is so abhorrent to the feelings of Christians, or even of human beings, that one is even ashamed to rebut it. Why should it not be said that even the gospel itself has been preached, with so much labour and sufferings of the saints, in vain, or is even still preached in vain, if men could be judged, even without hearing the gospel, according to the contumacy or obedience which God foreknew that they would have had if they had heard it? Tyre and Sidon would not have been condemned, although more slightly than those cities in which, although they did not believe, wonderful works were done by Christ the Lord; because if they had been done in them, they would have repented in dust and ashes, as the utterances of the Truth declare, in which words of His the Lord Jesus shows to us the loftier mystery of predestination.

CHAPTER 23

WHY FOR THE PEOPLE OF TYRE AND SIDON, WHO WOULD HAVE BELIEVED, THE MIRACLES WERE NOT DONE WHICH WERE DONE IN OTHER PLACES WHICH DID NOT BELIEVE

For if we are asked why such miracles were done among those who, when they saw them, would not believe them, and were not done among those who would have believed them if they had seen them, what shall we answer? Shall we say what I have said in that book wherein I answered some six questions of the Pagans, yet without prejudice of other matters which the wise can inquire into? This indeed I said, as you know, when it was asked why Christ came after so long a time: “that at those times and in those places in which His gospel was not preached, He foreknew that all men would, in regard of His preaching, be such as many were in His bodily presence,—people, namely, who would not believe on Him, even though the dead were raised by Him.” Moreover, a little after in the same book, and on the same question, I say, “What wonder, if Christ knew in former ages that the world was so filled with unbelievers, that He was, with reason, unwilling for His gospel to be preached to them whom He foreknew to be such as would not believe either His words or His miracles”? Certainly we cannot say this of Tyre and Sidon; and in their case we recognise that those divine judgments had reference to those causes of predestination, without prejudice to which hidden causes I said that I was then answering such questions as those. Certainly it is easy to accuse the unbelief of the Jews, arising as it did from their free will, since they refused to believe in such great wonders done among themselves. And this the Lord, reproaching them, declares when He says, “Woe unto thee, Chorazin and Bethsaida, because if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which have been done in you, they would long ago have repented in dust and ashes.” But can we say that even the Tyrians and Sidonians would have refused to believe such mighty works done among them, or would not have believed them if they had been done, when the Lord Himself bears witness to them that they would have repented with great humility if those signs of divine power had been done among them? And yet in the day of judgment they will be punished; although with a less punishment than those cities which would not believe the mighty works done in them. For the Lord goes on to say, “Nevertheless, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.” Therefore the former shall be punished with greater severity, the latter with less; but yet they shall be punished. Again, if the dead are judged even in respect of deeds which they would have done if they had lived, assuredly since these would have been believers if the gospel had been preached to them with so great miracles, they certainly ought not to be punished; but they will be punished. It is therefore false that the dead are judged in respect also of those things which they would have done if the gospel had reached them when they were alive. And if this is false, there is no ground for saying, concerning infants who perish because they die without baptism, that this happens in their case deservedly, because God foreknew that if they should live and the gospel should be preached to them, they would hear it with unbelief. It remains, therefore, that they are kept bound by original sin alone, and for this alone they go into condemnation; and we see that in others in the same case this is not remitted, except by the gratuitous grace of God in regeneration; and that, by His secret yet righteous judgment—because there is no unrighteousness with God—that some, who even after baptism will perish by evil living, are yet kept in this life until they perish, who would not have perished if bodily death had forestalled their lapse into sin, and so come to their help. Because no dead man is judged by the good or evil things which he would have done if he had not died, otherwise the Tyrians and Sidonians would not have suffered the penalties according to what they did; but rather according to those things that they would have done, if those evangelical mighty works had been done in them, they would have obtained salvation by great repentance, and by the faith of Christ.

CHAPTER 24 [X.]

IT MAY BE OBJECTED THAT THE PEOPLE OF TYRE AND SIDON MIGHT, IF THEY HAD HEARD, HAVE BELIEVED, AND HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY LAPSED FROM THEIR FAITH

A certain catholic disputant of no mean reputation so expounded this passage of the gospel as to say, that the Lord foreknew that the Tyrians and Sidonians would have afterwards departed from the faith, although they had believed the miracles done among them; and that in mercy He did not work those miracles there, because they would have been liable to severer punishment if they had forsaken the faith which they had once held, than if they had at no time held it. In which opinion of a learned and exceedingly acute man, why am I now concerned to say what is still reasonably to be asked, when even this opinion serves me for the purpose at which I aim? For if the Lord in His mercy did not do mighty works among them, since by these works they might possibly become believers, so that they might not be more severely punished when they should subsequently become unbelievers, as He foreknew that they would,—it is sufficiently and plainly shown that no dead person is judged for those sins which He foreknew that he would have done, if in some manner he were not helped not to do them; just as Christ is said to have come to the aid of the Tyrians and Sidonians, if that opinion be true, who He would rather should not come to the faith at all, than that by a much greater wickedness they should depart from the faith, as, if they had come to it, He foresaw they would have done. Although if it be said, “Why was it not provided that they should rather believe, and this gift should be bestowed on them, that before they forsook the faith they should depart from this life”? I am ignorant what reply can be made. For he who says that to those who would forsake their faith it would have been granted, as a kindness, that they should not begin to have what, by a more serious impiety, they would subsequently forsake, sufficiently indicates that a man is not judged by that which it is foreknown he would have done ill, if by any act of kindness he may be prevented from doing it. Therefore it is an advantage also to him who is taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding. But why this advantage should not have been given to the Tyrians and Sidonians, that they might believe and be taken away, lest wickedness should alter their understanding, he perhaps might answer who was pleased in such a way to solve the above question; but, as far as concerns what I am discussing, I see it to be enough that, even according to that very opinion, men are shown not to be judged in respect of those things which they have not done, even although they may have been foreseen as certain to have done them. However, as I have said, let us think shame even to refute this opinion, whereby sins are supposed to be punished in people who die or have died because they have been foreknown as certain to do them if they had lived; lest we also may seem to have thought it to be of some importance, although we would rather repress it by argument than pass it over in silence.

CHAPTER 25 [XI.]

GOD’S WAYS, BOTH IN MERCY AND JUDGMENT, PAST FINDING OUT

Accordingly, as says the apostle, “It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,” who both comes to the help of such infants as He will, although they neither will nor run, since He chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world as those to whom He intended to give His grace freely,—that is, with no merits of theirs, either of faith or of works, preceding; and does not come to the help of those who are more mature, although He foresaw that they would believe His miracles if they should be done among them, because He wills not to come to their help, since in His predestination He, secretly indeed, but yet righteously, has otherwise determined concerning them. For “there is no unrighteousness with God;” but “His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways are past finding out; all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth.”

Therefore the mercy is past finding out by which He has mercy on whom He will, no merits of his own preceding; and the truth is unsearchable by which He hardeneth whom He will, even although his merits may have preceded, but merits for the most part common to him with the man on whom He has mercy. As of two twins, of which one is taken and the other left, the end is unequal, while the deserts are common, yet in these the one is in such wise delivered by God's great goodness, that the other is condemned by no injustice of God's. For is there unrighteousness with God? Away with the thought! but His ways are past finding out. Therefore let us believe in His mercy in the case of those who are delivered, and in His truth in the case of those who are punished, without any hesitation; and let us not endeavour to look into that which is inscrutable, nor to trace that which cannot be found out. Because out of the mouth of babes and sucklings He perfects His praise, so that what we see in those whose deliverance is preceded by no good deservings of theirs, and in those whose condemnation is only preceded by original sin, common alike to both,—this we by no means shrink from as occurring in the case of grown-up people, that is, because we do not think either that grace is given to any one according to his own merits, or that any one is punished except for his own merits, whether they are alike who are delivered and who are punished, or have unequal degrees of evil; so that he who thinketh he standeth may take heed lest he fall, and he who glorieth may glory not in himself, but in the Lord.

CHAPTER 26

THE MANICHEANS DO NOT RECEIVE ALL THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND OF THE NEW ONLY THOSE THAT THEY CHOOSE

But wherefore is "the case of infants not allowed," as you write, "to be alleged as an example for their elders," by men who do not hesitate to affirm against the Pelagians that there is original sin, which entered by one man into the world, and that from one all have gone into condemnation? This, the Manicheans, too, do not receive, who not only reject all the Scriptures of the Old Testament as of authority, but even receive those which belong to the New Testament in such a manner as that each man, by his own prerogative as it were, or rather by his own sacrilege, takes what he likes, and rejects what he does not like,—in opposition to whom I treated in my writings on Free Will, whence they think that they have a ground of objection against me. I have been unwilling to deal plainly with the very laborious questions that occurred, lest my work should become too long, in a case which, as opposed to such perverse men, I could not have the assistance of the authority of the sacred Scriptures. And I was able,—as I actually did, whether anything of the divine testimonies might be true or not, seeing that I did not definitely introduce them into the argument,—nevertheless, by certain reasoning, to conclude that God in all things is to be praised, without any necessity of believing, as they would have us, that there are two co-eternal, confounded substances of good and evil.

CHAPTER 27

REFERENCE TO THE “RETRACTATIONS.”

Finally, in the first book of the Retractations, which work of mine you have not yet read, when I had come to the reconsidering of those same books, that is, on the subject of Free Will, I thus spoke: “In these books,” I say, “many things were so discussed that on the occurring of some questions which either I was not able to elucidate, or which required a long discussion at once, they were so deferred as that from either side, or from all sides, of those questions in which what was most in harmony with the truth did not appear, yet my reasoning might be conclusive for this, namely, that whichever of them might be true, God might be believed, or even be shown, to be worthy of praise. Because that discussion was undertaken for the sake of those who deny that the origin of evil is derived from the free choice of the will, and contend that God,—if He be so,—as the Creator of all natures, is worthy of blame; desiring in that manner, according to the error of their impiety (for they are Manicheans), to introduce a certain immutable nature of evil co-eternal with God.” Also, after a little time, in another place I say: “Then it was said, From this misery, most righteously inflicted on sinners, God’s grace delivers, because man of his own accord, that is, by free will, could fall, but could not also rise. To this misery of just condemnation belong the ignorance and the difficulty which every man suffers from the beginning of his birth, and no one is delivered from that evil except by the grace of God. And this misery the Pelagians will not have to descend from a just condemnation, because they deny original sin; although even if the ignorance and difficulty were the natural beginnings of man, God would not even thus deserve to be reproached, but to be praised, as I have argued in the same third book. Which argument must be regarded as against the Manicheans, who do not receive the holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, in which original sin is narrated; and whatever thence is read in the apostolic epistles, they contend was introduced with a detestable impudence by the corrupters of the Scriptures, assuming that it was not said by the apostles. But against the Pelagians that must be maintained which both Scriptures commend, as they profess to receive them." These things I said in my first book of Retractations, when I was reconsidering the books on Free Will. Nor, indeed, were these things all that were said by me there about these books, but there were many others also, which I thought it would be tedious to insert in this work for you, and not necessary; and this I think you also will judge when you have read all. Although, therefore, in the third book on Free Will I have in such wise argued concerning infants, that even if what the Pelagians say were true,—that ignorance and difficulty, without which no man is born, are elements, not punishments, of our nature,—still the Manicheans would be overcome, who will have it that the two natures, to wit, of good and evil, are co-eternal. Is, therefore, the faith to be called in question or forsaken, which the catholic Church maintains against those very Pelagians, asserting as she does that it is original sin, the guilt of which, contracted by generation, must be remitted by regeneration? And if they confess this with us, so that we may at once, in this matter of the Pelagians, destroy error, why do they think that it must be doubted that God can deliver even infants, to whom He gives His grace by the sacrament of baptism, from the power of darkness, and translate them into the kingdom of the Son of His love? In the fact, therefore, that He gives that grace to some, and does not give it to others, why will they not sing to the Lord His mercy and judgment? Why, however, is it given to these, rather than to those,—who has known the mind of the Lord? who is able to look into unsearchable things? who to trace out that which is past finding out?

CHAPTER 28 [XII.]

GOD’S GOODNESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS SHOWN IN ALL

It is therefore settled that God’s grace is not given according to the deserts of the recipients, but according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise and glory of His own grace; so that he who glorieth may by no means glory in himself, but in the Lord, who gives to those men to whom He will, because He is merciful, what if, however, He does not give, He is righteous: and He does not give to whom He will not, that He may make known the riches of His glory to the vessels of mercy. For by giving to some what they do not deserve, He has certainly willed that His grace should be gratuitous, and thus genuine grace; by not giving to all, He has shown what all deserve. Good in His goodness to some, righteous in the punishment of others; both good in respect of all, because it is good when that which is due is rendered, and righteous in respect of all, since that which is not due is given without wrong to any one.

CHAPTER 29

GOD’S TRUE GRACE COULD BE DEFENDED EVEN IF THERE WERE NO ORIGINAL SIN, AS PELAGIUS MAINTAINS

But God’s grace, that is, true grace without merits, is maintained, even if infants, when baptized, according to the view of the Pelagians, are not plucked out of the power of darkness, because they are held guilty of no sin, as the Pelagians think, but are only transferred into the Lord’s kingdom: for even thus, without any good merits, the kingdom is given to those to whom it is given; and without any evil merits it is not given to them to whom it is not given. And this we are in the habit of saying in opposition to the same Pelagians, when they object to us that we attribute God’s grace to fate, when we say that it is given not in respect to our merits. For they themselves rather attribute God’s grace to fate in the case of infants, if they say that when there is no merit it is fate. Certainly, even according to the Pelagians themselves, no merits can be found in infants to cause that some of them should be admitted into the kingdom, and others should be alienated from the kingdom. But now, just as in order to show that God’s grace is not given according to our merits, I preferred to maintain this truth in accordance with both opinions,—both in accordance with our own, to wit, who say that infants are bound by original sin, and according to that of the Pelagians, who deny that there is original sin, and yet I cannot on that account doubt that infants have what He can pardon them who saves His people from their sins: so in the third book on Free Will, according to both views, I have withstood the Manicheans, whether ignorance and difficulty be punishments or elements of nature without which no man is born; and yet I hold one of these views. There, moreover, it is sufficiently evidently declared by me, that that is not the nature of man as he was ordained, but his punishment as condemned.

CHAPTER 30

AUGUSTIN CLAIMS THE RIGHT TO GROW IN KNOWLEDGE

Therefore it is in vain that it is prescribed to me from that old book of mine, that I may not argue the case as I ought to argue it in respect of infants; and that thence I may not persuade my opponents by the light of a manifest truth, that God's grace is not given according to men's merits. For if, when I began my books concerning Free Will as a layman, and finished them as a presbyter, I still doubted of the condemnation of infants not born again, and of the deliverance of infants that were born again, no one, as I think, would be so unfair and envious as to hinder my progress, and judge that I must continue in that uncertainty. But it can more correctly be understood that it ought to be believed that I did not doubt in that matter, for the reason that they against whom my purpose was directed seemed to me in such wise to be rebutted, as that whether there was a punishment of original sin in infants, according to the truth, or whether there was not, as some mistaken people think, yet in no degree should such a confusion of the two natures be believed in, to wit, of good and evil, as the error of the Manicheans introduces. Be it therefore far from us so to forsake the case of infants as to say to ourselves that it is uncertain whether, being regenerated in Christ, if they die in infancy they pass into eternal salvation; but that, not being regenerated, they pass into the second death. Because that which is written, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men," cannot be rightly understood in any other manner; nor from that eternal death which is most righteously repaid to sin does any deliver any one, small or great, save He who, for the sake of remitting our sins, both original and personal, died without any sin of His own, either original or personal. But why some rather than others? Again and again we say, and do not shrink from it, “O man, who art thou that repliest against God?” “His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out.” And let us add this, “Seek not out the things that are too high for thee, and search not the things that are above thy strength.”

CHAPTER 31

INFANTS ARE NOT JUDGED ACCORDING TO THAT WHICH THEY ARE FOREKNOWN AS LIKELY TO DO IF THEY SHOULD LIVE

For you see, beloved, how absurd it is, and how foreign from soundness of faith and sincerity of truth, for us to say that infants, when they die, should be judged according to those things which they are foreknown to be going to do if they should live. For to this opinion, from which certainly every human feeling, on however little reason it may be founded, and especially every Christian feeling, revolts, they are compelled to advance who have chosen in such wise to be withdrawn from the error of the Pelagians as still to think that they must believe, and, moreover, must profess in argument, that the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by which alone after the fall of the first man, in whom we all fell, help is afforded to us, is given according to our merits. And this belief Pelagius himself, before the Eastern bishops as judges, condemned in fear of his own condemnation. And if this be not said of the good or bad works of those who have died, which they would have done if they had lived,—and thus of no works, and works that would never exist, even in the foreknowledge of God,—if this, therefore, be not said, and you see under how great a mistake it is said, what will remain but that we confess, when the darkness of contention is removed, that the grace of God is not given according to our merits, which position the catholic Church defends against the Pelagian heresy; and that we see this in more evident truth especially in infants? For God is not compelled by fate to come to the help of these infants, and not to come to the help of those,—since the case is alike to both. Or shall we think that human affairs in the case of infants are not managed by Divine Providence, but by fortuitous chances, when rational souls are either to be condemned or delivered, although, indeed, not a sparrow falls to the ground without the will of our Father which is in heaven? Or must we so attribute it to the negligence of parents that infants die without baptism, as that heavenly judgments have nothing to do with it; as if they themselves who in this way die badly had of their own will chosen the negligent parents for themselves of whom they were born? What shall I say when an infant expires some time before he can possibly be advantaged by the ministry of baptism? For often when the parents are eager and the ministers prepared for giving baptism to the infants, it still is not given, because God does not choose; since He has not kept it in this life for a little while in order that baptism might be given it. What, moreover, when sometimes aid could be afforded by baptism to the children of unbelievers, that they should not go into perdition, and could not be afforded to the children of believers? In which case it is certainly shown that there is no acceptance of persons with God; otherwise He would rather deliver the children of His worshippers than the children of His enemies.

CHAPTER 32 [XIII.]

THE INSCRUTABILITY OF GOD’S FREE PURPOSES

But now, since we are now treating of the gift of perseverance, why is it that aid is afforded to the person about to die who is not baptized, while to the baptized person about to fall, aid is not afforded, so as to die before? Unless, perchance, we shall still listen to that absurdity by which it is said that it is of no advantage to any one to die before his fall, because he will be judged according to those actions which God foreknew that he would have done if he had lived. Who can hear with patience this perversity, so violently opposed to the soundness of the faith? Who can bear it? And yet they are driven to say this who do not confess that God’s grace is not bestowed in respect of our deservings. They, however, who will not say that any one who has died is judged according to those things which God foreknew that he would have done if he had lived, considering with how manifest a falsehood and how great an absurdity this would be said, have no further reason to say, what the Church condemned in the Pelagians, and caused to be condemned by Pelagius himself,—that the grace of God, namely, is given according to our merits,—when they see some infants not regenerated taken from this life to eternal death, and others regenerated, to eternal life; and those themselves that are regenerated, some going hence, persevering even to the end, and others kept in this life even until they fall, who certainly would not have fallen if they had departed hence before their lapse; and again some falling, but not departing from this life until they return, who certainly would have perished if they had departed before their return.

CHAPTER 33

GOD GIVES BOTH INITIATORY AND PERSEVERING GRACE ACCORDING TO HIS OWN WILL

From all which it is shown with sufficient clearness that the grace of God, which both begins a man's faith and which enables it to persevere unto the end, is not given according to our merits, but is given according to His own most secret and at the same time most righteous, wise, and beneficent will; since those whom He predestinated, them He also called, with that calling of which it is said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." To which calling there is no man that can be said by men with any certainty of affirmation to belong, until he has departed from this world; but in this life of man, which is a state of trial upon the earth, he who seems to stand must take heed lest he fall. Since (as I have already said before) those who will not persevere are, by the most foreseeing will of God, mingled with those who will persevere, for the reason that we may learn not to mind high things, but to consent to the lowly, and may "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do for His good pleasure." We therefore will, but God worketh in us to will also. We therefore work, but God worketh in us to work also for His good pleasure. This is profitable for us both to believe and to say,—this is pious, this is true, that our confession be lowly and submissive, and that all should be given to God. Thinking, we believe; thinking, we speak; thinking, we do whatever we do; but, in respect of what concerns the way of piety and the true worship of God, we are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God. For "our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power;" whence the same Ambrose who says this says also: "But who is so blessed as in his heart always to rise upwards? And how can this be done without divine help? Assuredly, by no means. Finally," he says, "the same Scripture affirms above, Blessed is the man whose help is of Thee; O Lord, ascent is in his heart.'" Assuredly, Ambrose was not only enabled to say this by reading in the holy writings, but as of such a man is to be without doubt believed, he felt it also in his own heart. Therefore, as is said in the sacraments of believers, that we should lift up our hearts to the Lord, is God's gift; for which gift they to whom this is said are admonished by the priest after this word to give thanks to our Lord God Himself; and they answer that it is "meet and right so to do." For, since our heart is not in our own power, but is lifted up by the divine help, so that it ascends and takes cognizance of those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, and, not those things that are upon the earth, to whom are thanks to be given for so great a gift as this unless to our Lord God who doeth this,—who in so great kindness has chosen us by delivering us from the abyss of this world, and has predestinated us before the foundation of the world?

CHAPTER 34 [XIV.]

THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION NOT OPPOSED TO THE ADVANTAGE OF PREACHING

But they say that the "definition of predestination is opposed to the advantage of preaching,"—as if, indeed, it were opposed to the preaching of the apostle! Did not that teacher of the heathen so often, in faith and truth, both commend predestination, and not cease to preach the word of God? Because he said, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure," did he not also exhort that we should both will and do what is pleasing to God? or because he said, "He who hath begun a good work in you shall carry it on even unto the day of Christ Jesus," did he on that account cease to persuade men to begin and to persevere unto the end? Doubtless, our Lord Himself commanded men to believe, and said, "Believe in God, believe also in me:" and yet His opinion is not therefore false, nor is His definition idle when He says, "No man cometh unto me"—that is, no man believeth in me—"except it has been given him of my Father." Nor, again, because this definition is true, is the former precept vain. Why, therefore, do we think the definition of predestination useless to preaching, to precept, to exhortation, to rebuke,—all which things the divine Scripture repeats frequently,—seeing that the same Scripture commends this doctrine?

CHAPTER 35

WHAT PREDESTINATION IS

Will any man dare to say that God did not foreknow those to whom He would give to believe, or whom He would give to His Son, that of them He should lose none? And certainly, if He foreknew these things, He as certainly foreknew His own kindnesses, wherewith He condescends to deliver us. This is the predestination of the saints,—nothing else; to wit, the foreknowledge and the preparation of God's kindnesses, whereby they are most certainly delivered, whoever they are that are delivered. But where are the rest left by the righteous divine judgment except in the mass of ruin, where the Tyrians and the Sidonians were left? who, moreover, might have believed if they had seen Christ's wonderful miracles. But since it was not given to them to believe, the means of believing also were denied them. From which fact it appears that some have in their understanding itself a naturally divine gift of intelligence, by which they may be moved to the faith, if they either hear the words or behold the signs congruous to their minds; and yet if, in the higher judgment of God, they are not by the predestination of grace separated from the mass of perdition, neither those very divine words nor deeds are applied to them by which they might believe if they only heard or saw such things. Moreover, in the same mass of ruin the Jews were left, because they could not believe such great and eminent mighty works as were done in their sight. For the gospel has not been silent about the reason why they could not believe, since it says: "But though He had done such great miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him; that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? And, therefore, they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." Therefore the eyes of the Tyrians and Sidonians were not so blinded nor was their heart so hardened, since they would have believed if they had seen such mighty works, as the Jews saw.

But it did not profit them that they were able to believe, because they were not predestinated by Him whose judgments are inscrutable and His ways past finding out. Neither would inability to believe have been a hindrance to them, if they had been so predestinated as that God should illuminate those blind eyes, and should will to take away the stony heart from those hardened ones. But what the Lord said of the Tyrians and Sidonians may perchance be understood in another way: that no one nevertheless comes to Christ unless it were given him, and that it is given to those who are chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, he confesses beyond a doubt who hears the divine utterance, not with the deaf ears of the flesh, but with the ears of the heart; and yet this predestination, which is plainly enough unfolded even by the words of the gospels, did not prevent the Lord's saying as well in respect of the commencement, what I have a little before mentioned, "Believe in God; believe also in me," as in respect of perseverance, "A man ought always to pray, and not to faint." For they hear these things and do them to whom it is given; but they do them not, whether they hear or do not hear, to whom it is not given. Because, "To you," said He, "it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Of these, the one refers to the mercy, the other to the judgment of Him to whom our soul cries, "I will sing of mercy and judgment unto Thee, O Lord."

CHAPTER 36

THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL AND THE PREACHING OF PREDESTINATION THE TWO PARTS OF ONE MESSAGE

Therefore, by the preaching of predestination, the preaching of a persevering and progressive faith is not to be hindered; and thus they may hear what is necessary to whom it is given that they should obey. For how shall they hear without a preacher? Neither, again, is the preaching of a progressive faith which continues even to the end to hinder the preaching of predestination, so that he who is living faithfully and obediently may not be lifted up by that very obedience, as if by a benefit of his own, not received; but that he that glorieth may glory in the Lord. For "we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own." And this, Cyprian most faithfully saw and most fearlessly explained, and thus he pronounced predestination to be most assured. For if we must boast in nothing, seeing that nothing is our own, certainly we must not boast of the most persevering obedience. Nor is it so to be called our own, as if it were not given to us from above. And, therefore, it is God's gift, which, by the confession of all Christians, God foreknew that He would give to His people, who were called by that calling whereof it was said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." This, then, is the predestination which we faithfully and humbly preach. Nor yet did the same teacher and doer, who both believed on Christ and most perseveringly lived in holy obedience, even to suffering for Christ, cease on that account to preach the gospel, to exhort to faith and to pious manners, and to that very perseverance to the end, because he said, "We must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own;" and here he declared without ambiguity the true grace of God, that is, that which is not given in respect of our merits; and since God foreknew that He would give it, predestination was announced beyond a doubt by these words of Cyprian; and if this did not prevent Cyprian from preaching obedience, it certainly ought not to prevent us.

CHAPTER 37

EARS TO HEAR ARE A WILLINGNESS TO OBEY

Although, therefore, we say that obedience is the gift of God, we still exhort men to it. But to those who obediently hear the exhortation of truth is given the gift of God itself—that is, to hear obediently; while to those who do not thus hear it is not given. For it was not some one only, but Christ who said, "No man cometh unto me, except it were given him of my Father;" and, "To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." And concerning continence He says, "Not all receive this saying, but they to whom it is given." And when the apostle would exhort married people to conjugal chastity, he says, "I would that all men were even as I myself; but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, another after that;" where he plainly shows not only that continence is a gift of God, but even the chastity of those who are married. And although these things are true, we still exhort to them as much as is given to any one of us to be able to exhort, because this also is His gift in whose hand are both ourselves and our discourses. Whence also says the apostle, “According to this grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise architect, I have laid the foundation.” And in another place he says, “Even as the Lord hath given to every man: I have planted, Apollos has watered, but God has given the increase. Therefore neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.” And thus as only he preaches and exhorts rightly who has received this gift, so assuredly he who obediently hears him who rightly exhorts and preaches is he who has received this gift. Hence is what the Lord said, when, speaking to those who had their fleshly ears open, He nevertheless told them, “He that hath ears to hear let him hear;” which beyond a doubt he knew that not all had. And from whom they have, whosoever they be that have them, the Lord Himself shows when He says, “I will give them a heart to know me, and ears to hear.” Therefore, having ears is itself the gift of obeying, so that they who had that came to Him, to whom “no one comes unless it were given to him of His Father.” Therefore we exhort and preach, but they who have ears to hear obediently hear us, while in them who have them not, it comes to pass what is written, that hearing they do not hear,—hearing, to wit, with the bodily sense, they do not hear with the assent of the heart. But why these should have ears to hear, and those have them not,—that is, why to these it should be given by the Father to come to the Son, while to those it should not be given,—who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counsellor? Or who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Must that which is manifest be denied, because that which is hidden cannot be comprehended? Shall we, I say, declare that what we see to be so is not so, because we cannot find out why it is so?

CHAPTER 38 [XV.]

AGAINST THE PREACHING OF PREDESTINATION THE SAME OBJECTIONS MAY BE ALLEGED AS AGAINST PREDESTINATION

But they say, as you write: “That no one can be aroused by the incentives of rebuke if it be said in the assembly of the Church to the multitude of hearers: The definite meaning of God’s will concerning predestination stands in such wise, that some of you will receive the will to obey and will come out of unbelief unto faith, or will receive perseverance and abide in the faith; but others who are lingering in the delight of sins have not yet arisen, for the reason that the aid of pitying grace has not yet indeed raised you up. But yet, if there are any whom by His grace He has predestinated to be chosen, who are not yet called, ye shall receive that grace by which you may will and be chosen; and if any obey, if ye are predestinated to be rejected, the strength to obey shall be withdrawn from you, so that you may cease to obey.” Although these things may be said, they ought not so to deter us from confessing the true grace of God,—that is, the grace which is not given to us in respect of our merits,—and from confessing the predestination of the saints in accordance therewith, even as we are not deterred from confessing God’s foreknowledge, although one should thus speak to the people concerning it, and say: “Whether you are now living righteously or unrighteously, you shall be such by and by as the Lord has foreknown that you will be,—either good, if He has foreknown you as good, or bad, if He has foreknown you as bad.” For if on the hearing of this some should be turned to torpor and slothfulness, and from striving should go headlong to lust after their own desires, is it therefore to be counted that what has been said about the foreknowledge of God is false? If God has foreknown that they will be good, will they not be good, whatever be the depth of evil in which they are now engaged? And if He has foreknown them evil, will they not be evil, whatever goodness may now be discerned in them? There was a man in our monastery, who, when the brethren rebuked him for doing some things that ought not to be done, and for not doing some things that ought to be done, replied, “Whatever I may now be, I shall be such as God has foreknown that I shall be.” And this man certainly both said what was true, and was not profited by this truth for good, but so far made way in evil as to desert the society of the monastery, and become a dog returned to his vomit; and, nevertheless, it is uncertain what he is yet to become. For the sake of souls of this kind, then, is the truth which is spoken about God’s foreknowledge either to be denied or to be kept back,—at such times, for instance, when, if it is not spoken, other errors are incurred?

CHAPTER 39 [XVI]

PRAYER AND EXHORTATION

There are some, moreover, who either do not pray at all, or pray coldly, because, from the Lord's words, they have learnt that God knows what is necessary for us before we ask it of Him. Must the truth of this declaration be given up, or shall we think that it should be erased from the gospel because of such people? Nay, since it is manifest that God has prepared some things to be given even to those who do not pray for them, such as the beginning of faith, and other things not to be given except to those who pray for them, such as perseverance even unto the end, certainly he who thinks that he has this latter from himself does not pray to have it. Therefore we must take care lest, while we are afraid of exhortation growing lukewarm, prayer should be stifled and arrogance stimulated.

CHAPTER 40

WHEN THE TRUTH MUST BE SPOKEN, WHEN KEPT BACK

Therefore let the truth be spoken, especially when any question impels us to declare it; and let them receive it who are able, lest, perchance, while we are silent on account of those who cannot receive it, they be not only defrauded of the truth but be taken captive by falsehood, who are able to receive the truth whereby falsehood may be avoided. For it is easy, nay, and it is useful, that some truth should be kept back because of those who are incapable of apprehending it. For whence is that word of our Lord: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now"? And that of the apostle: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal: as if unto babes in Christ I have given you to drink milk, and not meat, for hitherto ye were not able, neither yet indeed now are ye able"? Although, in a certain manner of speaking, it might happen that what is said should be both milk to infants and meat for grown-up persons. As "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," what Christian can keep it back? Who can receive it? Or what in sound doctrine can be found more comprehensive? And yet this is not kept back either from infants or from grown-up people, nor is it hidden from infants by those who are mature. But the reason of keeping back the truth is one, the necessity of speaking the truth is another. It would be a tedious business to inquire into or to put down all the reasons for keeping back the truth; of which, nevertheless, there is this one,—lest we should make those who do not understand worse, while wishing to make those who do understand more learned; although these latter do not become more learned when we withhold any such thing on the one hand, but also do not become worse. When, however, a truth is of such a nature that he who cannot receive it is made worse by our speaking it, and he who can receive it is made worse by our silence concerning it, what do we think is to be done? Must we not speak the truth, that he who can receive it may receive it, rather than keep silence, so that not only neither may receive it, but that even he who is more intelligent should himself be made worse? For if he should hear and receive it, by his means also many might learn. For in proportion as he is more capable of learning, he is the more fitted for teaching others. The enemy of grace presses on and urges in all ways to make us believe that grace is given according to our deservings, and thus grace is no more grace; and are we unwilling to say what we can say by the testimony of Scripture? Do we fear, forsooth, to offend by our speaking him who is not able to receive the truth? and are we not afraid lest by our silence he who can receive the truth may be involved in falsehood?

CHAPTER 41

PREDESTINATION DEFINED AS ONLY GOD’S DISPOSING OF EVENTS IN HIS FOREKNOWLEDGE

For either predestination must be preached, in the way and degree in which the Holy Scripture plainly declares it, so that in the predestinated the gifts and calling of God may be without repentance; or it must be avowed that God’s grace is given according to our merits,—which is the opinion of the Pelagians; although that opinion of theirs, as I have often said already, may be read in the Proceedings of the Eastern bishops to have been condemned by the lips of Pelagius himself. Further, those on whose account I am discoursing are only removed from the heretical perversity of the Pelagians, inasmuch as, although they will not confess that they who by God’s grace are made obedient and so abide, are predestinated, they still confess, nevertheless, that this grace precedes their will to whom it is given; in such a way certainly as that grace may not be thought to be given freely, as the truth declares, but rather according to the merits of a preceding will, as the Pelagian error says, in contradiction to the truth. Therefore, also, grace precedes faith; otherwise, if faith precedes grace, beyond a doubt will also precedes it, because there cannot be faith without will. But if grace precedes faith because it precedes will, certainly it precedes all obedience; it also precedes love, by which alone God is truly and pleasantly obeyed. And all these things grace works in him to whom it is given, and in whom it precedes all these things. [XVII.] Among these benefits there remains perseverance unto the end, which is daily asked for in vain from the Lord, if the Lord by His grace does not effect it in him whose prayers He hears. See now how foreign it is from the truth to deny that perseverance even to the end of this life is the gift of God; since He Himself puts an end to this life when He wills, and if He puts an end before a fall that is threatening, He makes the man to persevere even unto the end. But more marvellous and more manifest to believers is the largess of God's goodness, that this grace is given even to infants, although there is no obedience at that age to which it may be given. To whomsoever, therefore, God gives His gifts, beyond a doubt He has foreknown that He will bestow them on them, and in His foreknowledge He has prepared them for them. Therefore, those whom He predestinated, them He also called with that calling which I am not reluctant often to make mention of, of which it is said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." For the ordering of His future works in His foreknowledge, which cannot be deceived and changed, is absolute, and is nothing but, predestination. But, as he whom God has foreknown to be chaste, although he may regard it as uncertain, so acts as to be chaste, so he whom He has predestinated to be chaste, although he may regard that as uncertain, does not, therefore, fail to act so as to be chaste because he hears that he is to be what he will be by the gift of God. Nay, rather, his love rejoices, and he is not puffed up as if he had not received it. Not only, therefore, is he not hindered from this work by the preaching of predestination, but he is even assisted to it, so that although he glories he may glory in the Lord.

CHAPTER 42

THE ADVERSARIES CANNOT DENY PREDESTINATION TO THOSE GIFTS OF GRACE WHICH THEY THEMSELVES ACKNOWLEDGE, AND THEIR EXHORTATIONS ARE NOT HINDERED BY THIS PREDESTINATION NEVERTHELESS

And what I said of chastity, can be said also of faith, of piety, of love, of perseverance, and, not to enumerate single virtues, it may be said with the utmost truthfulness of all the obedience with which God is obeyed. But those who place only the beginning of faith and perseverance to the end in such wise in our power as not to regard them as God's gifts, nor to think that God works on our thoughts and wills so as that we may have and retain them, grant, nevertheless, that He gives other things,—since they are obtained from Him by the faith of the believer. Why are they not afraid that exhortation to these other things, and the preaching of these other things, should be hindered by the definition of predestination? Or, perchance, do they say that such things are not predestinated? Then they are not given by God, or He has not known that He would give them. Because, if they are both given, and He foreknew that He would give them, certainly He predestinated them. As, therefore, they themselves also exhort to chastity, charity, piety, and other things which they confess to be God's gifts, and cannot deny that they are also foreknown by Him, and therefore predestinated; nor do they say that their exhortations are hindered by the preaching of God's predestination, that is, by the preaching of God's foreknowledge of those future gifts of His: so they may see that neither are their exhortations to faith or to perseverance hindered, even although those very things may be said, as is the truth, to be gifts of God, and that those things are foreknown, that is, predestinated to be given; but let them rather see that by this preaching of predestination only that most pernicious error is hindered and overthrown, whereby it is said that the grace of God is given according to our deservings, so that he who glories may glory not in the Lord, but in himself.

CHAPTER 43

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOREGOING ARGUMENT

And in order that I may more openly unfold this for the sake of those who are somewhat slow of apprehension, let those who are endowed with an intelligence that flies in advance bear with my delay. The Apostle James says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." It is written also in the Proverbs of Solomon, "Because theLord giveth wisdom." And of continency it is read in the book of Wisdom, whose authority has been used by great and learned men who have commented upon the divine utterances long before us; there, therefore, it is read, "When I knew that no one can be continent unless God gives it, and that this was of wisdom, to know whose gift this was." Therefore these are God's gifts,—that is, to say nothing of others, wisdom and continency. Let those also acquiesce: for they are not Pelagians, to contend against such a manifest truth as this with hard and heretical perversity. "But," say they, "that these things are given to us of God is obtained by faith, which has its beginning from us;" and both to begin to have this faith, and to abide in it even to the end, they contend is our own doing, as if we received it not from the Lord. This, beyond a doubt, is in contradiction to the apostle when he says, "For what hast thou that thou hast not received?" It is in contradiction also to the saying of the martyr Cyprian, "That we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own." When we have said this, and many other things which it is wearisome to repeat, and have shown that both the commencement of faith and perseverance to the end are gifts of God; and that it is impossible that God should not foreknow any of His future gifts, as well what should be given as to whom they should be given; and that thus those whom He delivers and crowns are predestinated by Him; they think it well to reply, "that the assertion of predestination is opposed to the advantage of preaching, for the reason that when this is heard no one can be stirred up by the incentives of rebuke." When they say this, "they are unwilling that it should be declared to men, that coming to the faith and abiding in the faith are God's gifts, lest despair rather than encouragement should appear to be suggested, inasmuch as they who hear think that it is uncertain to human ignorance on whom God bestows, or on whom He does not bestow, these gifts." Why, then, do they themselves also preach with us that wisdom and continency are God's gifts? But if, when these things are declared to be God's gifts, there is no hindrance of the exhortation with which we exhort men to be wise and continent; what is after all the reason for their thinking that the exhortation is hindered wherewith we exhort men to come to the faith, and to abide in it to the end, if these also are said to be God's gifts, as is proved by the Scriptures, which are His witnesses?

CHAPTER 44

EXHORTATION TO WISDOM, THOUGH WISDOM IS GOD’S GIFT

Now, to say nothing more of continency, and to argue in this place of wisdom alone, certainly the Apostle James above mentioned says, “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, modest, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, inestimable, without simulation.” Do you not see, I beseech you, how this wisdom descends from the Father of Lights, laden with many and great benefits? Because, as the same apostle says, “Every excellent gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of Lights.” Why, then—to set aside other matters—do we rebuke the impure and contentious, to whom we nevertheless preach that the gift of God is wisdom, pure and peaceable; and are not afraid that they should be influenced, by the uncertainty of the divine will, to find in this preaching more of despair than of exhortation; and that they should not be stirred up by the incentives of rebuke rather against us than against themselves, because we rebuke them for not having those things which we ourselves say are not produced by human will, but are given by the divine liberality? Finally, why did the preaching of this grace not deter the Apostle James from rebuking restless souls, and saying, “If ye have bitter envying, and contentions are in your hearts, glory not, and be not liars against the truth. This is not the wisdom that cometh down from above, but is earthly, animal, devilish; for where envying and contention are, there are inconstancy and every evil work”? As, therefore, the restless are to be rebuked, both by the testimony of the divine declarations, and by those very impulses of ours which they have in common with ourselves; and is it no argument against this rebuke that we declare the peaceful wisdom, whereby the contentions are corrected and healed, to be the gift of God; unbelievers are in such wise to be rebuked, as those who do not abide in the faith, without any hindrance to that rebuke from the preaching of God’s grace, although that preaching commends that very grace and the continuance in it as the gifts of God. Because, although wisdom is obtained from faith, even as James himself, when he had said, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given,” immediately added, “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering:” it is not, nevertheless, because faith is given before it is asked for by him to whom it is given, that it must therefore be said not to be the gift of God, but to be of ourselves, because it is given to us without our asking for it! For the apostle very plainly says, “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” From whom, therefore, are peace and love, from Him also is faith; wherefore, from Him we ask not only that it may be increased to those that possess it, but also that it may be given to those that possess it not.

CHAPTER 45

EXHORTATION TO OTHER GIFTS OF GOD IN LIKE MANNER

Nor do those on whose account I am saying these things, who cry out that exhortation is checked by the preaching of predestination and grace, exhort to those gifts alone which they contend are not given by God, but are from ourselves, such as are the beginning of faith, and perseverance in it even to the end. This certainly they ought to do, in such a way as only to exhort unbelievers to believe, and believers to continue to believe. But those things which with us they do not deny to be God’s gifts, so as that with us they demolish the error of the Pelagians, such as modesty, continence, patience, and other virtues that pertain to a holy life, and are obtained by faith from the Lord, they ought to show as needing to be prayed for, and to pray for only, either for themselves or others; but they ought not to exhort any one to strive after them and retain them. But when they exhort to these things, according to their ability, and confess that men ought to be exhorted,—certainly they show plainly enough that exhortations are not hindered by that preaching, whether they are exhortations to faith or to perseverance to the end, because we also preach that such things are God’s gifts, and are not given by any man to himself, but are given by God.

CHAPTER 46

A MAN WHO DOES NOT PERSEVERE FAILS BY HIS OWN FAULT

But it is said, “It is by his own fault that any one deserts the faith, when he yields and consents to the temptation which is the cause of his desertion of the faith.” Who denies it? But because of this, perseverance in the faith is not to be said not to be a gift of God. For it is this that a man daily asks for when he says, “Lead us not into temptation;” and if he is heard, it is this that he receives. And thus as he daily asks for perseverance, he assuredly places the hope of his perseverance not in himself, but in God. I, however, am loth to exaggerate the case with my words, but I rather leave it to them to consider, and see what it is of which they have persuaded themselves—to wit, “that by the preaching of predestination, more of despair than of exhortation is impressed upon the hearers.” For this is to say that a man then despairs of his salvation when he has learned to place his hope not in himself, but in God, although the prophet cries, “Cursed is he who has his hope in man.”

CHAPTER 47

PREDESTINATION IS SOMETIMES SIGNIFIED UNDER THE NAME OF FOREKNOWLEDGE

These gifts, therefore, of God, which are given to the elect who are called according to God’s purpose, among which gifts is both the beginning of belief and perseverance in the faith to the termination of this life, as I have proved by such a concurrent testimony of reasons and authorities,—these gifts of God, I say, if there is no such predestination as I am maintaining, are not foreknown by God. But they are foreknown. This, therefore, is the predestination which I maintain. [XVIII.] Consequently sometimes the same predestination is signified also under the name of foreknowledge; as says the apostle, “God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.” Here, when he says, “He foreknew,” the sense is not rightly understood except as “He predestinated,” as is shown by the context of the passage itself. For he was speaking of the remnant of the Jews which were saved, while the rest perished. For above he had said that the prophet had declared to Israel, “All day long I have stretched forth my hands to an unbelieving and a gainsaying people.” And as if it were answered, What, then, has become of the promises of God to Israel? he added in continuation, “I say, then, has God cast away His people? God forbid! for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.” Then he added the words which I am now treating: “God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew.” And in order to show that the remnant had been left by God’s grace, not by any merits of their works, he went on to add, “Know ye not what the Scripture saith in Elias, in what way he maketh intercession with

God against Israel?” and the rest. “But what,” says he, “saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee before Baal.’“ For He says not, “There are left to me,” or “They have reserved themselves to me,” but, “I have reserved to myself.” “Even so, then, at this present time also there is made a remnant by the election of grace. And if of grace, then it is no more by works; otherwise grace is no more grace.” And connecting this with what I have above quoted, “What then?” and in answer to this inquiry, he says, “Israel hath not obtained that which he was seeking for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” Therefore, in the election, and in this remnant which were made so by the election of grace, he wished to be understood the people which God did not reject, because He foreknew them. This is that election by which He elected those, whom He willed, in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without spot in His sight, in love, predestinating them unto the adoption of sons. No one, therefore, who understands these things is permitted to doubt that, when the apostle says, “God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew,” He intended to signify predestination. For He foreknew the remnant which He should make so according to the election of grace. That is, therefore, He predestinated them; for without doubt He foreknew if He predestinated; but to have predestinated is to have foreknown that which He should do.

CHAPTER 48 [XIX.]

PRACTICE OF CYPRIAN AND AMBROSE

What, then, hinders us, when we read of God’s foreknowledge in some commentators on God’s word, and they are treating of the calling of the elect, from understanding the same predestination? For they would perchance have rather used in this matter this word which, moreover, is better understood, and which is not inconsistent with, nay, is in accordance with, the truth which is declared concerning the predestination of grace. This I know, that no one has been able to dispute, except erroneously, against that predestination which I am maintaining in accordance with the Holy Scriptures. Yet I think that they who ask for the opinions of commentators on this matter ought to be satisfied with men so holy and so laudably celebrated everywhere in the faith and Christian doctrine as

Cyprian and Ambrose, of whom I have given such clear testimonies; and that for both doctrines—that is, that they should both believe absolutely and preach everywhere that the grace of God is gratuitous, as we must believe and declare it to be; and that they should not think that preaching opposed to the preaching whereby we exhort the indolent or rebuke the evil; because these celebrated men also, although they were preaching God's grace in such a manner as that one of them said, "That we must boast in nothing, because nothing is our own;" and the other, "Our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power;" yet ceased not to exhort and rebuke, in order that the divine commands might be obeyed. Neither were they afraid of its being said to them, "Why do you exhort us, and why do you rebuke us, if no good thing that we have is from us, and if our hearts are not in our own power?" These holy men could by no means fear that such things should be said to them, since they were of the mind to understand that it is given to very few to receive the teaching of salvation through God Himself, or through the angels of heaven, without any human preaching to them; but that it is given to many to believe in God through human agency. Yet, in whatever manner the word of God is spoken to man, beyond a doubt for man to hear it in such a way as to obey it, is God's gift.

CHAPTER 49

FURTHER REFERENCES TO CYPRIAN AND AMBROSE

Wherefore, the above-mentioned most excellent commentators on the divine declarations both preached the true grace of God as it ought to be preached,—that is, as a grace preceded by no human deservings,—and urgently exhorted to the doing of the divine commandments, that they who might have the gift of obedience should hear what commands they ought to obey. For if any merits of ours precede grace, certainly it is the merit of some deed, or word, or thought, wherein also is understood a good will itself. But he very briefly summed up the kinds of all deservings who said, "We must glory in nothing, because nothing is our own." And he who says, "Our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power," did not pass over acts and words also, for there is no act or word of man which does not proceed from the heart and the thought. But what more could that most glorious martyr and most luminous doctor Cyprian say concerning this matter, than when he impressed upon us that it behoves us to pray, in the Lord’s Prayer, even for the adversaries of the Christian faith, showing what he thought of the beginning of the faith, that it also is God’s gift, and pointing out that the Church of Christ prays daily for perseverance unto the end, because none but God gives that perseverance to those who have persevered? Moreover, the blessed Ambrose, when he was expounding the passage where the Evangelist Luke says, “It seemed good to me also,” says, “What he declares to have seemed good to himself cannot have seemed good to him alone. For not alone by human will did it seem good, but as it pleased Him who speaks in me, Christ, who effects that that which is good may also seem good to us: for whom He has mercy on He also calls. And therefore he who follows Christ may answer, when he is asked why he wished to become a Christian, It seemed good to me also.’ And when he says this, he does not deny that it seemed good to God; for the will of men is prepared by God. For it is God’s grace that God should be honoured by the saint.” Moreover, in the same work,—that is, in the exposition of the same Gospel, when he had come to that place where the Samaritans would not receive the Lord when His face was as going to Jerusalem,—he says, “Learn at the same time that He would not be received by those who were not converted in simpleness of mind. For if He had been willing, He would have made them devout who were undevout. And why they would not receive Him, the evangelist himself mentioned, saying, Because His face was as of one going towards Jerusalem.’ But the disciples earnestly desired to be received into Samaria. But God calls those whom He makes worthy, and makes religious whom He will.” What more evident, what more manifest do we ask from commentators on God’s word, if we are pleased to hear from them what is clear in the Scriptures? But to these two, who ought to be enough, let us add also a third, the holy Gregory, who testifies that it is the gift of God both to believe in God and to confess what we believe, saying, “I beg of you confess the Trinity of one godhead; but if ye wish otherwise, say that it is of one nature, and God will be besought that a voice shall be given to you by the Holy Spirit;” that is, God will be besought to allow a voice to be given to you by which you may confess what you believe. “For He will give, I am certain. He who gave what is first, will give also what is second.” He who gave belief, will also give confession.

CHAPTER 50

OBEDIENCE NOT DISCOURAGED BY PREACHING GOD’S GIFTS

Such doctors, and so great as these, when they say that there is nothing of which we may boast as if of our own which God has not given us, and that our very heart and our thoughts are not in our own power; and when they give the whole to God, and confess that from Him we receive that we are converted to Him in such wise as to continue,—that that which is good appears also to us to be good, and we wish for it,—that we honour God and receive Christ,—that from undevout people we are made devout and religious,—that we believe in the Trinity itself, and also confess with our voice what we believe:—certainly attribute all these things to God’s grace, acknowledge them as God’s gifts, and testify that they come to us from Him, and are not from ourselves. But will any one say that they in such wise confessed that grace of God as to venture to deny His foreknowledge, which not only learned but unlearned men also confess? Again, if they had so known that God gives these things that they were not ignorant that He foreknew that He would give them, and could not have been ignorant to whom He would give them: beyond a doubt they had known the predestination which, as preached by the apostles, we laboriously and diligently maintain against the modern heretics. Nor would it be with any manner of justice said, nevertheless, to them because they preach obedience, and fervently exhort, to the extent of the ability of each one, to its practice, “If you do not wish that the obedience to which you are stirring us up should grow cold in our heart, forbear to preach to us that grace of God by which you confess that God gives what you are exhorting us to do.”

CHAPTER 51 [XX.]

PREDESTINATION MUST BE PREACHED

Wherefore, if both the apostles and the teachers of the Church who succeeded them and imitated them did both these things,—that is, both truly preached the grace of God which is not given according to our merits, and inculcated by wholesome precepts a pious obedience,—what is it which these people of our time think themselves rightly bound by the invincible force of truth to say, “Even if what is said of the predestination of God’s benefits be true, yet it must not be preached to the people”? It must absolutely be preached, so that he who has ears to hear, may hear. And who has them if he has not received them from Him who says, “I will give them a heart to know me, and ears to hear?” Assuredly, he who has not received may reject; while, yet, he who receives may take and drink, may drink and live. For as piety must be preached, that, by him who has ears to hear, God may be rightly worshipped; modesty must be preached, that, by him who has ears to hear, no illicit act may be perpetrated by his fleshly nature; charity must be preached, that, by him who has ears to hear, God and his neighbours may be loved;—so also must be preached such a predestination of God’s benefits that he who has ears to hear may glory, not in himself, but in the Lord.

CHAPTER 52

PREVIOUS WRITINGS ANTICIPATIVELY REFUTED THE PELAGIAN HERESY

But in respect of their saying “that it was not necessary that the hearts of so many people of little intelligence should be disquieted by the uncertainty of this kind of disputation, since the catholic faith has been defended for so many years, with no less advantage, without this definition of predestination, as well against others as especially against the Pelagians, in so many books that have gone before, as well of catholics and others as our own;”—I much wonder that they should say this, and not observe—to say nothing of other writings in this place—that those very treatises of mine were both composed and published before the Pelagians had begun to appear; and that they do not see in how many passages of those treatises I was unawares cutting down a future Pelagian heresy, by preaching the grace by which God delivers us from evil errors and from our habits, without any preceding merits of ours,—doing this according to His gratuitous mercy. And this I began more fully to apprehend in that disputation which I wrote to Simplicianus, the bishop of the Church of Milan, of blessed memory, in the beginning of my episcopate, when, moreover, I both perceived and asserted that the beginning of faith is God’s gift.

CHAPTER 53

AUGUSTIN’S “CONFESSIONS.”

And which of my smaller works has been able to be more generally and more agreeably known than the books of my Confessions? And although I published them before the Pelagian heresy had come into existence, certainly in them I said to my God, and said it frequently, “Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou willest.” Which words of mine, Pelagius at Rome, when they were mentioned in his presence by a certain brother and fellow bishop of mine, could not bear; and contradicting somewhat too excitedly, nearly came to a quarrel with him who had mentioned them. But what, indeed, does God primarily and chiefly command, but that we believe on Him? And this, therefore, He Himself gives, if it is well said to Him, “Give what Thou commandest.” And, moreover, in those same books, in respect of what I have related concerning my conversion, when God converted me to that faith which, with a most miserable and raging talkativeness, I was destroying, do you not remember that it was so narrated how I showed that I was granted to the faithful and daily tears of my mother, that I should not perish? Where certainly I declared that God by His grace converted to the true faith the wills of men, which were not only averse to it, but even adverse to it. Further, in what manner I besought God concerning my growth in perseverance, you know, and you are able to review if you wish it. Therefore, that all the gifts of God which in that work I either asked for or praised, were foreknown by God that He would give, and that He could never be ignorant of the persons to whom He would give them, who can dare, I will not say to deny, but even to doubt? This is the manifest and assured predestination of the saints, which subsequently necessity compelled me more carefully and laboriously to defend when I was already disputing against the Pelagians. For I learnt that each special heresy introduced its own peculiar questions into the Church—against which the sacred Scripture might be more carefully defended than if no such necessity compelled their defence. And what compelled those passages of Scripture in which predestination is commended to be defended more abundantly and clearly by that labour of mine, than the fact that the Pelagians say that God’s grace is given according to our merits; for what else is this than an absolute denial of grace?

CHAPTER 54 [XXI.]

BEGINNING AND END OF FAITH IS OF GOD

Therefore that this opinion, which is unpleasing to God, and hostile to those gratuitous benefits of God whereby we are delivered, may be destroyed, I maintain that both the beginning of faith and the perseverance therein, even to the end, are, according to the Scriptures—of which I have already quoted many—God’s gifts. Because if we say that the beginning of faith is of ourselves, so that by it we deserve to receive other gifts of God, the Pelagians conclude that God’s grace is given according to our merits. And this the catholic faith held in such dread, that Pelagius himself, in fear of condemnation, condemned it. And, moreover, if we say that our perseverance is of ourselves, not of God, they answer that we have the beginning of our faith of ourselves in such wise as the end, thus arguing that we have that beginning of ourselves much more, if of ourselves we have the continuance unto the end, since to perfect is much greater than to begin; and thus repeatedly they conclude that the grace of God is given according to our merits. But if both are God’s gifts, and God foreknew that He would give these His gifts (and who can deny this?), predestination must be preached,—that God’s true grace, that is, the grace which is not given according to our merits, may be maintained with insuperable defence.

CHAPTER 55

TESTIMONY OF HIS PREVIOUS WRITINGS AND LETTERS

And, indeed, in that treatise of which the title is, Of Rebuke and Grace, which could not suffice for all my lovers, I think that I have so established that it is the gift of God also to persevere to the end, as I have either never before or almost never so expressly and evidently maintained this in writing, unless my memory deceives me. But I have now said this in a way in which no one before me has said it. Certainly the blessed Cyprian, in the Lord’s Prayer, as I have already shown, so explained our petitions as to say that in its very first petition we were asking for perseverance, asserting that we pray for it when we say, “Hallowed be Thy name,” although we have been already hallowed in baptism,—so that we may persevere in that which we have begun to be. Let those, however, to whom, in their love for me, I ought not to be ungrateful, who profess that they embrace, over and above that which comes into the argument, all my views, as you write,—let those, I say, see whether, in the latter portions of the first book of those two which I wrote in the beginning of my episcopate, before the appearance of the Pelagian heresy, to Simplicianus, the bishop of Milan, there remained anything whereby it might be called in question that God’s grace is not given according to our merits; and whether I have not there sufficiently argued that even the beginning of faith is God’s gift; and whether from what is there said it does not by consequence result, although it is not expressed, that even perseverance to the end is not given, except by Him who has predestinated us to His kingdom and glory. Then, did not I many years ago publish that letter which I had already written to the holy Paulinus, bishop of Nola, against the Pelagians, which they have lately begun to contradict? Let them also look into that letter which I sent to Sixtus, the presbyter of the Roman Church when we contended in a very sharp conflict against the Pelagians, and they will find it such as is that one to Paulinus. Whence they may gather that the same sort of things were already said and written several years ago against the Pelagian heresy, and that it is to be wondered at that these should now displease them; although I should wish that no one would so embrace all my views as to follow me, except in those things in which he should see me not to have erred. For I am now writing treatises in which I have undertaken to retract my smaller works, for the purpose of demonstrating that even I myself have not in all things followed myself; but I think that, with God’s mercy, I have written progressively, and not begun from perfection; since, indeed, I speak more arrogantly than truly, if even now I say that I have at length in this age of mine arrived at perfection, without any error in what I write. But the difference is in the extent and the subject of an error, and in the facility with which any one corrects it, or the pertinacity with which one endeavours to defend his error. Certainly there is good hope of that man whom the last day of this life shall find so progressing that whatever was wanting to his progress may be added to him, and that he should be adjudged rather to need perfecting than punishment.

CHAPTER 56

GOD GIVES MEANS AS WELL AS END

Wherefore if I am unwilling to appear ungrateful to men who have loved me, because some advantage of my labour has attained to them before they loved me, how much rather am I unwilling to be ungrateful to God, whom we should not love unless He had first loved us and made us to love Him! since love is of Him, as they have said whom He made not only His great lovers, but also His great preachers. And what is more ungrateful than to deny the grace of God itself, by saying that it is given to us according to our merits? And this the catholic faith shuddered at in the Pelagians, and this it objected to Pelagius himself as a capital crime; and this Pelagius himself condemned, not indeed from love of God's truth, but yet for fear of his own condemnation. But whoever as a faithful catholic is horrified to say that the grace of God is given according to our merits, let him not withdraw faith itself from God's grace, whereby he obtained mercy that he should be faithful; and thus let him attribute also perseverance to the end to God's grace, whereby he obtains the mercy which he daily asks for, not to be led into temptation. But between the beginning of faith and the perfection of perseverance there are those means whereby we live righteously, which they themselves are agreed in regarding as given by God to us at the prayer of faith. And all these things—the beginning of faith, to wit, and His other gifts even to the end—God foreknew that He would bestow on His called. It is a matter therefore, of too excessive contentiousness to contradict predestination, or to doubt concerning predestination.

CHAPTER 57 [XXII.]

HOW PREDESTINATION MUST BE PREACHED SO AS NOT TO GIVE OFFENCE

And yet this doctrine must not be preached to congregations in such a way as to seem to an unskilled multitude, or a people of slower understanding, to be in some measure confuted by that very preaching of it. Just as even the foreknowledge of God, which certainly men cannot deny, seems to be refuted if it be said to them, "Whether you run or sleep, you shall be that which He who cannot be deceived has foreknown you to be." And it is the part of a deceitful or an unskilled physician so to compound even a useful medicament, that it either does no good or does harm. But it must be said, “So run that you may lay hold; and thus by your very running you may know yourselves to be foreknown as those who should run lawfully:” and in whatever other manner the foreknowledge of God may be so preached, that the slothfulness of man may be repulsed.

CHAPTER 58

THE DOCTRINE TO BE APPLIED WITH DISCRIMINATION

Now, therefore, the definite determination of God’s will concerning predestination is of such a kind that some from unbelief receive the will to obey, and are converted to the faith or persevere in the faith, while others who abide in the delight of damnable sins, even if they have been predestinated, have not yet arisen, because the aid of pitying grace has not yet lifted them up. For if any are not yet called whom by His grace He has predestinated to be elected, they will receive that grace whereby they may will to be elected, and may be so; and if any obey, but have not been predestinated to His kingdom and glory, they are for a season, and will not abide in the same obedience to the end. Although, then, these things are true, yet they must not be so said to the multitude of hearers as that the address may be applied to themselves also, and those words of those people may be said to them which you have set down in your letter, and which I have above introduced: “The definite determination of God’s will concerning predestination is of such a kind that some of you from unbelief shall receive the will to obey, and come to the faith.” What need is there for saying, “Some of you”? For if we speak to God’s Church, if we speak to believers, why do we say that “some of them” had come to the faith, and seem to do a wrong to the rest, when we may more fittingly say the definite determination of the will of God concerning predestination is of such a kind that from unbelief you shall receive the will to obey, and come to the faith, and shall receive perseverance, and abide to the end?

CHAPTER 59

OFFENCE TO BE AVOIDED

Neither is what follows by any means to be said,—that is, “But others of you who abide in the delight of sins have not yet arisen, because the aid of pitying grace has not yet lifted you up;” when it may be and ought to be well and conveniently said, “But if any of you are still delaying in the delightfulness of damnable sins, lay hold of the most wholesome discipline; and yet when you have done this be not lifted up, as if by your own works, nor boast as if you had not received this. For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do for His good will, and your steps are directed by the Lord, so that you choose His way. But of your own good and righteous course, learn carefully that it is attributable to the predestination of divine grace.”

CHAPTER 60

THE APPLICATION TO THE CHURCH IN GENERAL

Moreover, what follows where it is said, “But yet if any of you are not yet called, whom by his grace He has predestinated to be called, you shall receive that grace whereby you shall will to be, and be, elected,” is said more hardly than it could be said if we consider that we are speaking not to men in general, but to the Church of Christ. For why is it not rather said thus: “And if any of you are not yet called, let us pray for them that they may be called. For perchance they are so predestinated as to be granted to our prayers, and to receive that grace whereby they may will, and be made elected”? For God, who fulfilled all that He predestinated, has willed us also to pray for the enemies of the faith, that we might hence understand that He Himself also gives to the unbelievers the gift of faith, and makes willing men out of those that were unwilling.

CHAPTER 61

USE OF THE THIRD PERSON RATHER THAN THE SECOND

But now I marvel if any weak brother among the Christian congregation can hear in any way with patience what is connected with these words, when it is said to them, “And if any of you obey, if you are predestinated to be rejected, the power of obeying will be withdrawn from you, that you may cease to obey.” For what does saying this seem, except to curse, or in a certain way to predict evils? But if, however, it is desirable or necessary to say anything concerning those who do not persevere, why is it not rather at least said in such a way as was a little while ago said by me,—first of all, so that this should be said, not of them who hear in the congregation, but about others to them; that is, that it should not be said, “If any of you obey, if you are predestinated to be rejected,” but, “If any obey,” and the rest, using the third person of the verb, not the second? For it is not to be said to be desirable, but abominable, and it is excessively harsh and hateful to fly as it were into the face of an audience with abuse, when he who speaks to them says, “And if there are any of you who obey, and are predestinated to be rejected, the power of obedience shall be withdrawn from you, that you may cease to obey.” For what is wanting to the doctrine if it is thus expressed: “But if any obey, and are not predestinated to His kingdom and glory, they are only for a season, and shall not continue in that obedience unto the end”? Is not the same thing said both more truly and more fittingly, so that we may seem not as it were to be desiring so much for them, as to relate of others the evil which they hate, and think does not belong to them, by hoping and praying for better things? But in that manner in which they think that it must be said, the same judgment may be pronounced almost in the same words also of God’s foreknowledge, which certainly they cannot deny, so as to say, “And if any of you obey, if you are foreknown to be rejected you shall cease to obey.” Doubtless this is very true, assuredly it is; but it is very monstrous, very inconsiderate, and very unsuitable, not by its false declaration, but by its declaration not wholesomely applied to the health of human infirmity.

CHAPTER 62

PRAYER TO BE INCULCATED, NEVERTHELESS

But I do not think that manner which I have said should be adopted in the preaching of predestination ought to be sufficient for him who speaks to the congregation, except he adds this, or something of this kind, saying, “You, therefore, ought also to hope for that perseverance in obedience from the Father of Lights, from whom cometh down every excellent gift and every perfect gift, and to ask for it in your daily prayers; and in doing this ought to trust that you are not aliens from the predestination of His people, because it is He Himself who bestows even the power of doing this. And far be it from you to despair of yourselves, because you are bidden to have your hope in Him, not in yourselves. For cursed is every one who has hope in man; and it is good rather to trust in the Lord than to trust in man, because blessed are all they that put their trust in Him. Holding this hope, serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling. Because no one can be certain of the life eternal which God who does not lie has promised to the children of promise before the times of eternity,—no one, unless that life of his, which is a state of trial upon the earth, is completed. But He will make us to persevere in Himself unto the end of that life, since we daily say to Him, Lead us not into temptation.'" When these things and things of this kind are said, whether to few Christians or to the multitude of the Church, why do we fear to preach the predestination of the saints and the true grace of God,—that is, the grace which is not given according to our merits,—as the Holy Scripture declares it? Or, indeed, must it be feared that a man should then despair of himself when his hope is shown to be placed in God, and should not rather despair of himself if he should, in his excess of pride and unhappiness, place it in himself?

CHAPTER 63 [XXIII.]

THE TESTIMONY OF THE WHOLE CHURCH IN HER PRAYERS

And I wish that those who are slow and weak of heart, who cannot, or cannot as yet, understand the Scriptures or the explanations of them, would so hear or not hear our arguments in this question as to consider more carefully their prayers, which the Church has always used and will use, even from its beginnings until this age shall be completed. For of this matter, which I am now compelled not only to mention, but even to protect and defend against these new heretics, the Church has never been silent in its prayers, although in its discourses it has not thought that it need be put forth, as there was no adversary compelling it. For when was not prayer made in the Church for unbelievers and its opponents that they should believe? When has any believer had a friend, a neighbour, a wife, who did not believe, and has not asked on their behalf from the Lord for a mind obedient to the Christian faith? And who has there ever been who has not prayed for himself that he might abide in the Lord? And who has dared, not only with his voice, but even in thought, to blame the priest who invokes the Lord on behalf of believers, if at any time he has said, “Give to them, O Lord, perseverance in Thee to the end!” and has not rather responded, over such a benediction of his, as well with confessing lips as believing heart, “Amen”? Since in the Lord’s Prayer itself the believers do not pray for anything else, especially when they say that petition, “Lead us not into temptation,” save that they may persevere in holy obedience. As, therefore, the Church has both been born and grows and has grown in these prayers, so it has been born and grows and has grown in this faith, by which faith it is believed that God’s grace is not given according to the merits of the receivers. For, certainly, the Church would not pray that faith should be given to unbelievers, unless it believed that God converts to Himself both the averse and adverse wills of men. Nor would the Church pray that it might persevere in the faith of Christ, not deceived nor overcome by the temptations of the world, unless it believed that the Lord has our heart in His power, in such wise as that the good which we do not hold save by our own will, we nevertheless do not hold except He worketh in us to will also. For if the Church indeed asks these things from Him, but thinks that the same things are given to itself by itself, it makes use of prayers which are not true, but perfunctory,—which be far from us! For who truly groans, desiring to receive what he prays for from the Lord, if he thinks that he receives it from himself, and not from the Lord?

CHAPTER 64

IN WHAT SENSE THE HOLY SPIRIT SOLICITS FOR US, CRYING, ABBA, FATHER

And this especially since “we know not what to pray for as we ought,” says the apostle, “but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered; and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to God.” What is “the Spirit Himself maketh intercession,” but, “causes to make intercession,” “with groanings that cannot be uttered,” but “truthful,” since the Spirit is truth? For He it is of whom the apostle says in another place, “God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, “crying, Abba, Father!” And here what is the meaning of “crying,” but “making to cry,” by that figure of speech whereby we call a day that makes people glad, a glad day? And this he makes plain elsewhere when he says, “For you have not received the Spirit of bondage again in fear, but you have received the Spirit of the adoption of sons, in whom we cry, Abba, Father.” He there said, “crying,” but here, “in whom we cry;” opening up, that is to say, the meaning with which he said “crying,”—that is, as I have already explained, “causing to cry,” when we understand that this is also itself the gift of God, that with a true heart and spiritually we cry to God. Let them, therefore, observe how they are mistaken who think that our seeking, asking, knocking is of ourselves, and is not given to us; and say that this is the case because grace is preceded by our merits; that it follows them when we ask and receive, and seek and find, and it is opened to us when we knock. And they will not understand that this is also of the divine gift, that we pray; that is, that we ask, seek, and knock. For we have received the spirit of adoption of sons, in which we cry, Abba, Father. And this the blessed Ambrose also said. For he says, “To pray to God also is the work of spiritual grace, as it is written, No one says, Jesus is the Lord, but in the Holy Spirit.”

CHAPTER 65

THE CHURCH’S PRAYERS IMPLY THE CHURCH’S FAITH

These things, therefore, which the Church asks from the Lord, and always has asked from the time she began to exist, God so foreknew that He would give to His called, that He has already given them in predestination itself; as the apostle declares without any ambiguity. For, writing to Timothy, he says, “Labour along with the gospel according to the power of God, who saves us, and calls us with His holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the times of eternity, but is now made manifest by the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ.” Let him, therefore, say that the Church at any time has not had in its belief the truth of this predestination and grace, which is now maintained with a more careful heed against the late heretics; let him say this who dares to say that at any time it has not prayed, or not truthfully prayed, as well that unbelievers might believe, as that believers might persevere. And if the Church has always prayed for these benefits, it has always believed them to be certainly God’s gifts; nor was it ever right for it to deny that they were foreknown by Him. And thus Christ’s Church has never failed to hold the faith of this predestination, which is now being defended with new solicitude against these modern heretics.

CHAPTER 66 [XXIV.]

RECAPITULATION AND EXHORTATION

But what more shall I say? I think that I have taught sufficiently, or rather more than sufficiently, that both the beginning of faith in the Lord, and continuance in the Lord unto the end, are God’s gifts. And other good things which pertain to a good life, whereby God is rightly worshipped, even they themselves on whose behalf I am writing this treatise concede to be God’s gifts. Further, they cannot deny that God has foreknown all His gifts, and the people on whom He was going to bestow them. As, therefore, other things must be preached so that he who preaches them may be heard with obedience, so predestination must be preached so that he who hears these things with obedience may glory not in man, and therefore not in himself, but in the Lord; for this also is God’s precept, and to hear this precept with obedience—to wit, that he who glories should glory in the Lord—in like manner as the rest, is God’s gift. And he who has not this gift,—I shrink not from saying it,—whatever others he has, has them in vain. That the Pelagians may have this we pray, and that our own brethren may have it more abundantly. Let us not, therefore, be prompt in arguments and indolent in prayers. Let us pray, dearly beloved, let us pray that the God of grace may give even to our enemies, and especially to our brethren and lovers, to understand and confess that after that great and unspeakable ruin wherein we have all fallen in one, no one is delivered save by God’s grace, and that grace is not repaid according to the merits of the receivers as if it were due, but is given freely as true grace, with no merits preceding.

CHAPTER 67

THE MOST EMINENT INSTANCE OF PREDESTINATION IS CHRIST JESUS

But there is no more illustrious instance of predestination than Jesus Himself, concerning which also I have already argued in the former treatise; and in the end of this I have chosen to insist upon it. There is no more eminent instance, I say, of predestination than the Mediator Himself. If any believer wishes thoroughly to understand this doctrine, let him consider Him, and in Him he will find himself also. The believer, I say; who in Him believes and confesses the true human nature that is our own, however singularly elevated by assumption by God the Word into the only Son of God, so that He who assumed, and what He assumed, should be one person in Trinity. For it was not a Quaternity that resulted from the assumption of man, but it remained a Trinity, inasmuch as that assumption ineffably made the truth of one person in God and man. Because we say that Christ was not only God, as the Manichean heretics contend; nor only man, as the Photinian heretics assert; nor in such wise man as to have less of anything which of a certainty pertains to human nature,—whether a soul, or in the soul itself a rational mind, or flesh not taken of the woman, but made from the Word converted and changed into flesh,—all which three false and empty notions have made the three various and diverse parties of the Apollinarian heretics; but we say that Christ was true God, born of God the Father without any beginning of time; and that He was also true or very man, born of human mother in the certain fulness of time; and that His humanity, whereby He is less than the Father, does not diminish aught from His divinity, whereby He is equal to the Father. For both of them are One Christ—who, moreover, most truly said in respect of the God, “I and the Father are one;” and most truly said in respect of the man, “My Father is greater than I.” He, therefore, who made of the seed of David this righteous man, who never should be unrighteous, without any merit of His preceding will, is the same who also makes righteous men of unrighteous, without any merit of their will preceding; that He might be the head, and they His members. He, therefore, who made that man with no precedent merits of His, neither to deduce from His origin nor to commit by His will any sin which should be remitted to Him, the same makes believers on Him with no preceding merits of theirs, to whom He forgives all sin. He who made Him such that He never had or should have an evil will, the same makes in His members a good will out of an evil one. Therefore He predestinated both Him and us, because both in Him that He might be our head, and in us that we should be His body, He foreknew that our merits would not precede, but that His doings should.

CHAPTER 68

CONCLUSION

Let those who read this, if they understand, give God thanks, and let those who do not understand, pray that they may have the inward Teacher, from whose presence comes knowledge and understanding. But let those who think that I am in error, consider again and again carefully what is here said, lest perchance they themselves may be mistaken. And when, by means of those who read my writings, I become not only wiser, but even more perfect, I acknowledge God’s favour to me; and this I especially look for at the hands of the teachers of the Church, if what I write comes into their hands, and they condescend to acknowledge it.

A TREATISE ON THE GRACE OF CHRIST, AND ON ORIGINAL SIN

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE GRATIA CHRISTI, ET DE PECCATO ORIGINALI, CONTRA PELAGIUM.)

EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN'S "RETRACTATIONS,"

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

IN TWO BOOKS,

WRITTEN AGAINST PELAGIUS AND COELESTIUS IN THE YEAR A.D. 418.

TRANSLATED BY DR. HOLMES.

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Book II. Chap. 50, On the Following Treatise, “De gratia christi, et de peccato originali.”

“After the conviction and condemnation of the Pelagian heresy with its authors by the bishops of the Church of Rome,—first Innocent, and then Zosimus,—with the co-operation of letters of African councils, I wrote two books against them: one On the Grace of Christ, and the other On Original Sin. The work began with the following words: How greatly we rejoice on account of your bodily, and, above all, because of your Spiritual welfare.’“

A TREATISE ON THE GRACE OF CHRIST, AND ON ORIGINAL SIN

Book I

On the Grace of Christ

Wherein he shows that Pelagius is disingenuous in his confession of grace, inasmuch as he places grace either in nature and free will, or in law and teaching; and, moreover, asserts that it is merely the “possibility” (as he calls it) of will and action, and not the will and action itself, which is assisted by divine grace; and that this assisting grace, too, is given by God according to men’s merits; whilst he further thinks that they are so assisted for the sole purpose of being able the more easily to fulfil the commandments. Augustin examines those passages of his writings in which he boasted that he had bestowed express commendation on the grace of God, and points out how they can be interpreted as referring to law and teaching,—in other words, to the divine revelation and the example of Christ which are alike included in “the teaching,”—or else to the remission of sins; nor do they afford any evidence whatever that Pelagius really acknowledged Christian grace, in the sense of help rendered for the performance of right action to natural faculty and instruction, by the inspiration of a most glowing and luminous love; and he concludes with a request that Pelagius would seriously listen to Ambrose, whom he is so very fond of quoting, in his excellent eulogy in commendation of the grace of God.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

INTRODUCTORY

How greatly we rejoice on account of your bodily, and, above all, your spiritual welfare, my most sincerely attached brethren and beloved of God, Albina, Pinianus, and Melania, we cannot express in words; we therefore leave all this to your own thoughts and belief, in order that we may now rather speak of the matters on which you consulted us. We have, indeed, had to compose these words to the best of the ability which God has vouchsafed to us, while our messenger was in a hurry to be gone, and amidst many occupations, which are much more absorbing to me at Carthage than in any other place whatever.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER OF PELAGIUS' CONFESSION AS TO THE NECESSITY OF GRACE FOR EVERY SINGLE ACT OF OURS

You informed me in your letter, that you had entreated Pelagius to express in writing his condemnation of all that had been alleged against him; and that he had said, in the audience of you all: "I anathematize the man who either thinks or says that the grace of God, whereby Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,' is not necessary not only for every hour and for every moment, but also for every act of our lives: and those who endeavour to disannul it deserve everlasting punishment." Now, whoever hears these words, and is ignorant of the opinion which he has clearly enough expressed in his books,—not those, indeed, which he declares to have been stolen from him in an incorrect form, nor those which he repudiates, but those even which he mentions in his own letter which he forwarded to Rome,—would certainly suppose that the views he holds are in strict accordance with the truth. But whoever notices what he openly declares in them, cannot fail to regard these statements with suspicion. Because, although he makes that grace of God whereby Christ came into the world to save sinners to consist simply in the remission of sins, he can still accommodate his words to this meaning, by alleging that the necessity of such grace for every hour and for every moment and for every action of our life, comes to this, that while we recollect and keep in mind the forgiveness of our past sins, we sin no more, aided not by any supply of power from without, but by the powers of our own will as it recalls to our mind, in every action we do, what advantage has been conferred upon us by the remission of sins. Then, again, whereas they are accustomed to say that Christ has given us assistance for avoiding sin, in that He has left us an example by living righteously and teaching what is right Himself, they have it in their power here also to accommodate their words, by affirming that this is the necessity of grace to us for every moment and for every action, namely, that we should in all our conversation regard the example of the Lord’s conversation. Your own fidelity, however, enables you clearly to perceive how such a profession of opinion as this differs from that true confession of grace which is now the question before us. And yet how easily can it be obscured and disguised by their ambiguous statements!

CHAPTER 3 [III.]

GRACE ACCORDING TO THE PELAGIANS

But why should we wonder at this? For the same Pelagius, who in the Proceedings of the episcopal synod unhesitatingly condemned those who say “that God’s grace and assistance are not given for single acts, but consist in free will, or in law and teaching,” upon which points we were apt to think that he had expended all his subterfuges; and who also condemned such as affirm that the grace of God is bestowed in proportion to our merits:—is proved, notwithstanding, to hold, in the books which he has published on the freedom of the will, and which he mentions in the letter he sent to Rome, no other sentiments than those which he seemingly condemned. For that grace and help of God, by which we are assisted in avoiding sin, he places either in nature and free will, or else in the gift of the law and teaching; the result of which of course is this, that whenever God helps a man, He must be supposed to help him to turn away from evil and do good, by revealing to him and teaching him what he ought to do, but not with the additional assistance of His co-operation and inspiration of love, that he may accomplish that which he had discovered it to be his duty to do.

CHAPTER 4

PELAGIUS’ SYSTEM OF FACULTIES

In his system, he posits and distinguishes three faculties, by which he says God’s commandments are fulfilled,—capacity, volition, and action: meaning by “capacity,” that by which a man is able to be righteous; by “volition” that by which he wills to be righteous; by “action,” that by which he actually is righteous. The first of these, the capacity, he allows to have been bestowed on us by the Creator of our nature; it is not in our power, and we possess it even against our will. The other two, however, the volition and the action, he asserts to be our own; and he assigns them to us so strictly as to contend that they proceed simply from ourselves. In short, according to his view, God's grace has nothing to do with assisting those two faculties which he will have to be altogether our own, the volition and the action, but that only which is not in our own power and comes to us from God, namely the capacity; as if the faculties which are our own, that is, the volition and the action, have such avail for declining evil and doing good, that they require no divine help, whereas that faculty which we have of God, that is to say, the capacity, is so weak, that it is always assisted by the aid of grace.

CHAPTER 5 [IV.]

PELAGIUS' OWN ACCOUNT OF THE FACULTIES, QUOTED

Lest, however, it should chance to be said that we either do not correctly understand what he advances, or malevolently pervert to another meaning what he never meant to bear such a sense, I beg of you to consider his own actual words: "We distinguish," says he, "three things, arranging them in a certain graduated order. We put in the first place ability;' in the second, volition;' and in the third, actuality.' The ability' we place in our nature, the volition' in our will, and the actuality' in the effect. The first, that is, the ability,' properly belongs to God, who has bestowed it on His creature; the other two, that is, the volition' and the actuality,' must be referred to man, because they flow forth from the fountain of the will. For his willing, therefore, and doing a good work, the praise belongs to man; or rather both to man, and to God who has bestowed on him the capacity' for his will and work, and who evermore by the help of His grace assists even this capacity. That a man is able to will and effect any good work, comes from God alone. So that this one faculty can exist, even when the other two have no being; but these latter cannot exist without that former one. I am therefore free not to have either a good volition or action; but I am by no means able not to have the capacity of good. This capacity is inherent in me, whether I will or no; nor does nature at any time receive in this point freedom for itself. Now the meaning of all this will be rendered clearer by an example or two. That we are able to see with our eyes is not of us; but it is our own that we make a good or a bad use of our eyes. So again (that I may, by applying a general case in illustration, embrace all), that we are able to do, say, think, any good thing, comes from Him who has endowed us with this ability,’ and who also assists this ability;’ but that we really do a good thing, or speak a good word, or think a good thought, proceeds from our own selves, because we are also able to turn all these into evil. Accordingly,—and this is a point which needs frequent repetition, because of your calumniation of us,—whenever we say that a man can live without sin, we also give praise to God by our acknowledgment of the capacity which we have received from Him, who has bestowed such ability’ upon us; and there is here no occasion for praising the human agent, since it is God’s matter alone that is for the moment treated of; for the question is not about willing,’ or effecting,’ but simply and solely about that which may possibly be.”

CHAPTER 6 [V.]

PELAGIUS AND PAUL OF DIFFERENT OPINIONS

The whole of this dogma of Pelagius, observe, is carefully expressed in these words, and none other, in the third book of his treatise in defence of the liberty of the will, in which he has taken care to distinguish with so great subtlety these three things,—the “capacity,” the “volition,” and the “action,” that is, the “ability,” the “volition,” and the “actuality,”—that, whenever we read or hear of his acknowledging the assistance of divine grace in order to our avoidance of evil and accomplishment of good,—whatever he may mean by the said assistance of grace, whether law and the teaching or any other thing,—we are sure of what he says; nor can we run into any mistake by understanding him otherwise than he means. For we cannot help knowing that, according to his belief, it is not our “volition” nor our “action” which is assisted by the divine help, but solely our “capacity” to will and act, which alone of the three, as he affirms, we have of God. As if that faculty were infirm which God Himself placed in our nature; while the other two, which, as he would have it, are our own, are so strong and firm and self-sufficient as to require none of His help! so that He does not help us to will, nor help us to act, but simply helps us to the possibility of willing and acting. The apostle, however, holds the contrary, when he says, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” And that they might be sure that it was not simply in their being able to work (for this they had already received in nature and in teaching), but in their actual working, that they were divinely assisted, the apostle does not say to them, “For it is God that worketh in you to be able,” as if they already possessed volition and operation among their own resources, without requiring His assistance in respect of these two; but he says, “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to perform of His own good pleasure;” or, as the reading runs in other copies, especially the Greek, “both to will and to operate.” Consider, now, whether the apostle did not thus long before foresee by the Holy Ghost that there would arise adversaries of the grace of God; and did not therefore declare that God works within us those two very things, even “willing” and “operating,” which this man so determined to be our own, as if they were in no wise assisted by the help of divine grace.

CHAPTER 7 [VI.]

PELAGIUS POSITS GOD’S AID ONLY FOR OUR “CAPACITY.”

Let not Pelagius, however, in this way deceive incautious and simple persons, or even himself; for after saying, “Man is therefore to be praised for his willing and doing a good work,” he added, as if by way of correcting himself, these words: “Or rather, this praise belongs to man and to God.” It was not, however, that he wished to be understood as showing any deference to the sound doctrine, that it is “God which worketh in us both to will and to do,” that he thus expressed himself; but it is clear enough, on his own showing, why he added the latter clause, for he immediately subjoins: “Who has bestowed on him the capacity’ for this very will and work.” From his preceding words it is manifest that he places this capacity in our nature. Lest he should seem, however, to have said nothing about grace, he added these words: “And who evermore, by the help of His grace, assists this very capacity,”—”this very capacity,” observe; not “very will,” or “very action;” for if he had said so much as this, he would clearly not be at variance with the teaching of the apostle. But there are his words: “this very capacity;” meaning that very one of the three faculties which he had placed in our nature. This God “evermore assists by the help of His grace.” The result, indeed, is, that “the praise does not belong to man and to God,” because man so wills that yet God also inspires his volition with the ardour of love, or that man so works that God nevertheless also cooperates with him,—and without His help, what is man? But he has associated God in this praise in this wise, that were it not for the nature which God gave us in our creation wherewith we might be able to exercise volition and action, we should neither will nor act.

CHAPTER 8

GRACE, ACCORDING TO THE PELAGIANS, CONSISTS IN THE INTERNAL AND MANIFOLD ILLUMINATION OF THE MIND

As to this natural capacity which, he allows, is assisted by the grace of God, it is by no means clear from the passage either what grace he means, or to what extent he supposes our nature to be assisted by it. But, as is the case in other passages in which he expresses himself with more clearness and decision, we may here also perceive that no other grace is intended by him as helping natural capacity than the law and the teaching. [VII.] For in one passage he says: “We are supposed by very ignorant persons to do wrong in this matter to divine grace, because we say that it by no means perfects sanctity in us without our will,—as if God could have imposed any command on His grace, without also supplying the help of His grace to those on whom he imposed His commands, so that men might more easily accomplish through grace what they are required to do by their free will.” Then, as if he meant to explain what grace he meant, he immediately went on to add these words: “And this grace we for our part do not, as you suppose, allow to consist merely in the law, but also in the help of God.” Now who can help wishing that he would show us what grace it is that he would have us understand? Indeed, we have the strongest reason for desiring him to tell us what he means by saying that he does not allow grace merely to consist in the law. Whilst, however, we are in the suspense of our expectation, observe, I pray you, what he has further to tell us: “God helps us,” says he, “by His teaching and revelation, whilst He opens the eyes of our heart; whilst He points out to us the future, that we may not be absorbed in the present; whilst He discovers to us the snares of the devil; whilst He enlightens us with the manifold and ineffable gift of heavenly grace.” He then concludes his statement with a kind of absolution: “Does the man,” he asks, “who says all this appear to you to be a denier of grace? Does he not acknowledge both man’s free will and God’s grace?” But, after all, he has not got beyond his commendation of the law and of teaching; assiduously inculcating this as the grace that helps us, and so following up the idea with which he had started, when he said, “We, however, allow it to consist in the help of God.” God’s help, indeed, he supposed must be recommended to us by manifold lures; by setting forth teaching and revelation, the opening of the eyes of the heart, the demonstration of the future, the discovery of the devil’s wiles, and the illumination of our minds by the varied and indescribable gift of heavenly grace,—all this, of course, with a view to our learning the commandments and promises of God. And what else is this than placing God’s grace in “the law and the teaching”?

CHAPTER 9 [VIII.]

THE LAW ONE THING, GRACE ANOTHER. THE UTILITY OF THE LAW

Hence, then, it is clear that he acknowledges that grace whereby God points out and reveals to us what we are bound to do; but not that whereby He endows and assists us to act, since the knowledge of the law, unless it be accompanied by the assistance of grace, rather avails for producing the transgression of the commandment. “Where there is no law,” says the apostle, “there is no transgression;” and again: “I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” Therefore so far are the law and grace from being the same thing, that the law is not only unprofitable, but it is absolutely prejudicial, unless grace assists it; and the utility of the law may be shown by this, that it obliges all whom it proves guilty of transgression to betake themselves to grace for deliverance and help to overcome their evil lusts. For it rather commands than assists; it discovers disease, but does not heal it; nay, the malady that is not healed is rather aggravated by it, so that the cure of grace is more earnestly and anxiously sought for, inasmuch as “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” To what extent, however, the law gives assistance, the apostle informs us when he says immediately afterwards: “The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” Wherefore, says the apostle, “the law was our schoolmaster in Christ Jesus.” Now this very thing is serviceable to proud men, to be more firmly and manifestly “concluded under sin,” so that none may pre-sumptuously endeavour to accomplish their justification by means of free will as if by their own resources; but rather “that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Because by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.” How then manifested without the law, if witnessed by the law? For this very reason the phrase is not, “manifested without the law,” but “the righteousness without the law,” because it is “the righteousness of God;” that is, the righteousness which we have not from the law, but from God,—not the righteousness, indeed, which by reason of His commanding it, causes us fear through our knowledge of it; but rather the righteousness which by reason of His bestowing it, is held fast and maintained by us through our loving it,—”so that he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

CHAPTER 10 [IX.]

WHAT PURPOSE THE LAW SUBSERVES

What object, then, can this man gain by accounting the law and the teaching to be the grace whereby we are helped to work righteousness? For, in order that it may help much, it must help us to feel our need of grace. No man, indeed, is able to fulfil the law through the law. “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” And the love of God is not shed abroad in our hearts by the law, but by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Grace, therefore, is pointed at by the law, in order that the law may be fulfilled by grace. Now what does it avail for Pelagius, that he declares the self-same thing under different phrases, that he may not be understood to place in law and teaching that grace which, as he avers, assists the “capacity” of our nature? So far, indeed, as I can conjecture, the reason why he fears being so understood is, because he condemned all those who maintain that God’s grace and help are not given for a man’s single actions, but exist rather in his freedom, or in the law and teaching. And yet he supposes that he escapes detection by the shifts he so constantly employs for disguising what he means by his formula of “law and teaching” under so many various phrases.

CHAPTER 11 [X.]

PELAGIUS’ DEFINITION OF HOW GOD HELPS US: “HE PROMISES US FUTURE GLORY.”

For in another passage, after asserting at length that it is not by the help of God, but out of our own selves, that a good will is formed within us, he confronted himself with a question out of the apostle’s epistle; and he asked this question: “How will this stand consistently with the apostle’s words, It is God that worketh in you both to will and to perfect’?” Then, in order to obviate this opposing authority, which he plainly saw to be most thoroughly contrasted with his own dogma, he went on at once to add: “He works in us to will what is good, to will what is holy, when He rouses us from our devotion to earthly desires, and from our love of the present only, after the manner of brute animals, by the magnitude of the future glory and the promise of its rewards; when by revealing wisdom to us He stirs up our sluggish will to a longing after God; when (what you are not afraid to deny in another passage) he persuades us to everything which is good.” Now what can be plainer, than that by the grace whereby God works within us to will what is good, he means nothing else than the law and the teaching? For in the law and the teaching of the holy Scriptures are promised future glory and its great rewards. To the teaching also appertains the revelation of wisdom, whilst it is its further function to direct our thoughts to everything that is good. And if between teaching and persuading (or rather exhorting) there seems to be a difference, yet even this is provided for in the general term “teaching,” which is contained in the several discourses or letters; for the holy Scriptures both teach and exhort, and in the processes of teaching and exhorting there is room likewise for man’s operation. We, however, on our side would fain have him sometime confess that grace, by which not only future glory in all its magnitude is promised, but also is believed in and hoped for; by which wisdom is not only revealed, but also loved; by which everything that is good is not only recommended, but pressed upon us until we accept it. For all men do not possess faith, who hear the Lord in the Scriptures promising the kingdom of heaven; nor are all men persuaded, who are counselled to come to Him, who says, “Come unto me, all ye that labour.” They, however, who have faith are the same who are also persuaded to come to Him. This He Himself set forth most plainly, when He said, “No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him.” And some verses afterwards, when speaking of such as believe not, He says, “Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me except it were given unto him of my Father.” This is the grace which Pelagius ought to acknowledge, if he wishes not only to be called a Christian, but to be one.

CHAPTER 12 [XI.]

THE SAME CONTINUED: “HE REVEALS WISDOM.”

But what shall I say about the revelation of wisdom? For there is no man who can in the present life very well hope to attain to the great revelations which were given to the Apostle Paul; and of course it is impossible to suppose that anything was accustomed in these revelations to be made known to him but what appertained to wisdom. Yet for all this he says: “Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that He would take it away from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” Now, undoubtedly, if there were already in the apostle that perfection of love which admitted of no further addition, and which could be puffed up no more, there could have been no further need of the messenger of Satan to buffet him, and thereby to repress the excessive elation which might arise from abundance of revelations. What means this elation, however, but a being puffed up? And of love it has been indeed most truly said, “Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.” This love, therefore, was still in process of constant increase in the great apostle, day by day, as long as his “inward man was renewed day by day,” and would then be perfected, no doubt, when he was got beyond the reach of all further vaunting and elation. But at that time his mind was still in a condition to be inflated by an abundance of revelations before it was perfected in the solid edifice of love; for he had not arrived at the goal and apprehended the prize, to which he was reaching forward in his course.

CHAPTER 13 [XII.]

GRACE CAUSES US TO DO

To him, therefore, who is reluctant to endure the troublesome process, whereby this vaunting disposition is restrained, before he attains to the ultimate and highest perfection of charity, it is most properly said, “My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness,”—in weakness, that is, not of the flesh only, as this man supposes, but both of the flesh and of the mind; because the mind, too, was, in comparison of that last stage of complete perfection, weak, and to it also was assigned, in order to check its elation, that messenger of Satan, the thorn in the flesh; although it was very strong, in contrast with the carnal or animal faculties, which as yet understand not the things of the Spirit of God. Inasmuch, then, as strength is made perfect in weakness, whoever does not own himself to be weak, is not in the way to be perfected. This grace, however, by which strength is perfected in weakness, conducts all who are predestinated and called according to the divine purpose to the state of the highest perfection and glory. By such grace it is effected, not only that we discover what ought to be done, but also that we do what we have discovered,—not only that we believe what ought to be loved, but also that we love what we have believed.

CHAPTER 14 [XII.]

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF GOD, AND THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF THE LAW

If this grace is to be called “teaching,” let it at any rate be so called in such wise that God may be believed to infuse it, along with an ineffable sweetness, more deeply and more internally, not only by their agency who plant and water from without, but likewise by His own too who ministers in secret His own increase,—in such a way, that He not only exhibits truth, but likewise imparts love. For it is thus that God teaches those who have been called according to His purpose, giving them simultaneously both to know what they ought to do, and to do what they know. Accordingly, the apostle thus speaks to the Thessalonians: “As touching love of the brethren, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.” And then, by way of proving that they had been taught of God, he subjoined: “And indeed ye do it towards all the brethren which are in all Macedonia.” As if the surest sign that you have been taught of God, is that you put into practice what you have been taught. Of that character are all who are called according to God's purpose, as it is written in the prophets: "They shall be all taught of God." The man, however, who has learned what ought to be done, but does it not, has not as yet been "taught of God" according to grace, but only according to the law,—not according to the spirit, but only according to the letter. Although there are many who appear to do what the law commands, through fear of punishment, not through love of righteousness; and such righteousness as this the apostle calls "his own which is after the law,"—a thing as it were commanded, not given. When, indeed, it has been given, it is not called our own righteousness, but God's; because it becomes our own only so that we have it from God. These are the apostle's words: "That I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ the righteousness which is of God by faith." So great, then, is the difference between the law and grace, that although the law is undoubtedly of God, yet the righteousness which is "of the law" is not "of God," but the righteousness which is consummated by grace is "of God." The one is designated "the righteousness of the law," because it is done through fear of the curse of the law; while the other is called "the righteousness of God," because it is bestowed through the beneficence of His grace, so that it is not a terrible but a pleasant commandment, according to the prayer in the psalm: "Good art Thou, O Lord, therefore in Thy goodness teach me Thy righteousness;" that is, that I may not be compelled like a slave to live under the law with fear of punishment; but rather in the freedom of love may be delighted to live with law as my companion. When the freeman keeps a commandment, he does it readily. And whosoever learns his duty in this spirit, does everything that he has learned ought to be done.

CHAPTER 15 [XIV.]

HE WHO HAS BEEN TAUGHT BY GRACE ACTUALLY COMES TO CHRIST

Now as touching this kind of teaching, the Lord also says: "Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Of the man, therefore, who has not come, it cannot be correctly said: "Has heard and has learned that it is his duty to come to Him, but he is not willing to do what he has learned." It is indeed absolutely improper to apply such a statement to that method of teaching, whereby God teaches by grace. For if, as the Truth says, “Every man that hath learned cometh,” it follows, of course, that whoever does not come has not learned. But who can fail to see that a man’s coming or not coming is by the determination of his will? This determination, however, may stand alone, if the man does not come; but if he does come, it cannot be without assistance; and such assistance, that he not only knows what it is he ought to do, but also actually does what he thus knows. And thus, when God teaches, it is not by the letter of the law, but by the grace of the Spirit. Moreover, He so teaches, that whatever a man learns, he not only sees with his perception, but also desires with his choice, and accomplishes in action. By this mode, therefore, of divine instruction, volition itself, and performance itself, are assisted, and not merely the natural “capacity” of willing and performing. For if nothing but this “capacity” of ours were assisted by this grace, the Lord would rather have said, “Every man that hath heard and hath learned of the Father may possibly come unto me.” This, however, is not what He said; but His words are these: “Every man that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me.” Now the possibility of coming Pelagius places in nature, or even—as we found him attempting to say some time ago—in grace (whatever that may mean according to him),—when he says, “whereby this very capacity is assisted;” whereas the actual coming lies in the will and act. It does not, however, follow that he who may come actually comes, unless he has also willed and acted for the coming. But every one who has learned of the Father not only has the possibility of coming, but comes; and in this result are already included the motion of the capacity, the affection of the will, and the effect of the action.

CHAPTER 16 [XV.]

WE NEED DIVINE AID IN THE USE OF OUR POWERS. ILLUSTRATION FROM SIGHT

Now what is the use of his examples, if they do not really accomplish his own promise of making his meaning clearer to us; not, indeed, that we are bound to admit their sense, but that we may discover more plainly and openly what is his drift and purpose in using them? “That we are able,” says he, “to see with our eyes is not of us; but it is of us that we make a good or a bad use of our sight.” Well, there is an answer for him in the psalm, in which the psalmist says to God, “Turn Thou away mine eyes, that they behold not iniquity.” Now although this was said of the eyes of the mind, it still follows from it, that in respect of our bodily eyes there is either a good use or a bad use that may be made of them: not in the literal sense merely of a good sight when the eyes are sound, and a bad sight when they are bleared, but in the moral sense of a right sight when it is directed towards succouring the helpless, or a bad sight when its object is the indulgence of lust. For although both the pauper who is succoured, and the woman who is lusted after, are seen by these external eyes; it is after all from the inner eyes that either compassion in the one case or lust in the other proceeds. How then is it that the prayer is offered to God, “Turn Thou away mine eyes, that they behold not iniquity”? Or why is that asked for which lies within our own power, if it be true that God does not assist the will?

CHAPTER 17 [XVI.]

DOES PELAGIUS DESIGNEDLY REFRAIN FROM OPENLY SAYING THAT ALL GOOD ACTION IS FROM GOD?

“That we are able to speak,” says he, “is of God; but that we make a good or a bad use of speech is of ourselves.” He, however, who has made the most excellent use of speech does not teach us so. “For,” says He, “it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.” “So, again,” adds Pelagius, “that I may, by applying a general case in illustration, embrace all,—that we are able to do, say, think, any good thing, comes from Him who has endowed us with this ability, and who also assists it.” Observe how even here he repeats his former meaning—that of these three, capacity, volition, action, it is only the capacity which receives help. Then, by way of completely stating what he intends to say, he adds: “But that we really do a good thing, or speak a good word, or think a good thought, proceeds from our own selves.” He forgot what he had before said by way of correcting, as it were, his own words; for after saying, “Man is to be praised therefore for his willing and doing a good work,” he at once goes on to modify his statement thus: “Or rather, this praise belongs both to man, and to God who has given him the capacity of this very will and work.” Now what is the reason why he did not remember this admission when giving his examples, so as to say this much at least after quoting them:

“That we are able to do, say, think any good thing, comes from Him who has given us this ability, and who also assists it. That, however, we really do a good thing, or speak a good word, or think a good thought, proceeds both from ourselves and from Him!” This, however, he has not said. But, if I am not mistaken, I think I see why he was afraid to do so.

CHAPTER 18 [XVII.]

HE DISCOVERS THE REASON OF PELAGIUS’ HESITATION SO TO SAY

For, when wishing to point out why this lies within our own competency, he says: “Because we are able to turn all these actions into evil.” This, then, was the reason why he was afraid to admit that such an action proceeds “both from ourselves and from God,” lest it should be objected to him in reply: “If the fact of our doing, speaking, thinking anything good, is owing both to ourselves and to God, because He has endowed us with this ability, then it follows that our doing, thinking, speaking evil things, is due to ourselves and to God, because He has here also endowed us with ability of indifferency; the conclusion from this being—and God forbid that we should admit any such—that just as God is associated with ourselves in the praise of good actions, so must He share with us the blame of evil actions.” For that “capacity” with which He has endowed us makes us capable alike of good actions and of evil ones.

CHAPTER 19 [XVIII.]

THE TWO ROOTS OF ACTION, LOVE AND CUPIDITY; AND EACH BRINGS FORTH ITS OWN FRUIT

Concerning this “capacity,” Pelagius thus writes in the first book of his Defence of Free Will: “Now,” says he, “we have implanted in us by God a capacity for either part. It resembles, as I may say, a fruitful and fecund root which yields and produces diversely according to the will of man, and which is capable, at the planter’s own choice, of either shedding a beautiful bloom of virtues, or of bristling with the thorny thickets of vices.” Scarcely heeding what he says, he here makes one and the same root productive both of good and evil fruits, in opposition to gospel truth and apostolic teaching. For the Lord declares that “a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit;” and when the Apostle Paul says that covetousness is “the root of all evils,” he intimates to us, of course, that love may be regarded as the root of all good things. On the supposition, therefore, that two trees, one good and the other corrupt, represent two human beings, a good one and a bad, what else is the good man except one with a good will, that is, a tree with a good root? And what is the bad man except one with a bad will, that is, a tree with a bad root? The fruits which spring from such roots and trees are deeds, are words, are thoughts, which proceed, when good, from a good will, and when evil, from an evil one.

CHAPTER 20 [XIX.]

HOW A MAN MAKES A GOOD OR A BAD TREE

Now a man makes a good tree when he receives the grace of God. For it is not by himself that he makes himself good instead of evil; but it is of Him, and through Him, and in Him who is always good. And in order that he may not only be a good tree, but also bear good fruit, it is necessary for him to be assisted by the self-same grace, without which he can do nothing good. For God Himself cooperates in the production of fruit in good trees, when He both externally waters and tends them by the agency of His servants, and internally by Himself also gives the increase. A man, however, makes a corrupt tree when he makes himself corrupt, when he falls away from Him who is the unchanging good; for such a declension from Him is the origin of an evil will. Now this decline does not initiate some other corrupt nature, but it corrupts that which has been already created good. When this corruption, however, has been healed, no evil remains; for although nature no doubt had received an injury, yet nature was not itself a blemish.

CHAPTER 21 [XX.]

LOVE THE ROOT OF ALL GOOD THINGS; CUPIDITY, OF ALL EVIL ONES

The “capacity,” then, of which we speak is not (as he supposes) the one identical root both of good things and evil. For the love which is the root of good things is quite different from the cupidity which is the root of evil things—as different, indeed, as virtue is from vice. But without doubt this “capacity” is capable of either root: because a man is not only able to possess love, whereby the tree becomes a good one; but he is likewise able to have cupidity, which makes the tree evil. This human cupidity, however, which is a vice, has for its author man, or man's deceiver, but not man's Creator. It is indeed that "lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world." And who can be ignorant of the usage of the Scripture, which under the designation of "the world" is accustomed to describe those who inhabit the world?

CHAPTER 22 [XXI.]

LOVE IS A GOOD WILL

That love, however, which is a virtue, comes to us from God, not from ourselves, according to the testimony of Scripture, which says: "Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God: for God is love." It is on the principle of this love that one can best understand the passage, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;" as well as the sentence, "And he cannot sin." Because the love according to which we are born of God "doth not behave itself unseemly," and "thinketh no evil." Therefore, whenever a man sins, it is not according to love: but it is according to cupidity that he commits sin; and following such a disposition, he is not born of God. Because, as it has been already stated, "the capacity" of which we speak is capable of either root. When, therefore, the Scripture says, "Love is of God," or still more pointedly, "God is love;" when the Apostle John so very emphatically exclaims, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and be, the sons of God!" with what face can this writer, on hearing that "God is love," persist in maintaining his opinion, that we bare of God one only of those three, namely, "the capacity;" whereas it is of ourselves that we have "the good will" and "the good action?" As if, indeed, this good will were a different thing from that love which the Scripture so loudly proclaims to have come to us from God, and to have been given to us by the Father, that we might become His children.

CHAPTER 23 [XXII.]

PELAGIUS’ DOUBLE DEALING CONCERNING THE GROUND OF THE CONFERRENCE OF GRACE

Perhaps, however, our own antecedent merits caused this gift to be bestowed upon us; as this writer has already suggested in reference to God’s grace, in that work which he addressed to a holy virgin, whom he mentions in the letter sent by him to Rome. For, after adducing the testimony of the Apostle James, in which he says, “Submit yourselves unto God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you,” he goes on to say: “He shows us how we ought to resist the devil, if we submit ourselves indeed to God and by doing His will merit His divine grace, and by the help of the Holy Ghost more easily withstand the evil spirit.” Judge, then, how sincere was his condemnation in the Palestine Synod of those persons who say that God’s grace is conferred on us according to our merits! Have we any doubt as to his still holding this opinion, and most openly proclaiming it? Well, how could that confession of his before the bishops have been true and real? Had he already written the book in which he most explicitly alleges that grace is bestowed on us according to our deserts—the very position which he without any reservation condemned at that Synod in the East? Let him frankly acknowledge that he once held the opinion, but that he holds it no longer; so should we most frankly rejoice in his improvement. As it is, however, when, besides other objections, this one was laid to his charge which we are now discussing, he said in reply: “Whether these are the opinions of Coelestius or not, is the concern of those who affirm that they are. For my own part, indeed, I never entertained such views; on the contrary, I anathematize every one who does entertain them.” But how could he “never have entertained such views,” when he had already composed this work? Or how does he still “anathematize everybody who entertains these views,” if he afterwards composed this work?

CHAPTER 24

PELAGIUS PLACES FREE WILL AT THE BASIS OF ALL TURNING TO GOD FOR GRACE

But perhaps he may meet us with this rejoinder, that in the sentence before us he spoke of our “meriting the divine grace by doing the will of God,” in the sense that grace is added to those who believe and lead godly lives, whereby they may boldly withstand the tempter; whereas their very first reception of grace was, that they might do the will of God. Lest, then, he make such a rejoinder, consider some other words of his on this subject: “The man,” says he, “who hastens to the Lord, and desires to be directed by Him, that is, who makes his own will depend upon God’s, who moreover cleaves so closely to the Lord as to become (as the apostle says) one spirit’ with Him, does all this by nothing else than by his freedom of will.” Observe how great a result he has here stated to be accomplished only by our freedom of will; and how, in fact, he supposes us to cleave to God without the help of God: for such is the force of his words, “by nothing else than by his own freedom of will.” So that, after we have cleaved to the Lord without His help, we even then, because of such adhesion of our own, deserve to be assisted. [XXIII.] For he goes on to say: “Whosoever makes a right use of this” (that is, rightly uses his freedom of will), “does so entirely surrender himself to God, and does so completely mortify his own will, that he is able to say with the apostle, Nevertheless it is already not I that live, but Christ liveth in me;’ and He placeth his heart in the hand of God, so that He turneth it whithersoever He willeth.’“ Great indeed is the help of the grace of God, so that He turns our heart in whatever direction He pleases. But according to this writer’s foolish opinion, however great the help may be, we deserve it all at the moment when, without any assistance beyond the liberty of our will, we hasten to the Lord, desire His guidance and direction, suspend our own will entirely on His, and by close adherence to Him become one spirit with Him. Now all these vast courses of goodness we (according to him) accomplish, forsooth, simply by the freedom of our own free will; and by reason of such antecedent merits we so secure His grace, that He turns our heart which way soever He pleases. Well, now, how is that grace which is not gratuitously conferred? How can it be grace, if it is given in payment of a debt? How can that be true which the apostle says, “It is not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast;” and again, “If it is of grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace:” how, I repeat, can this be true, if such meritorious works precede as to procure for us the bestowal of grace? Surely, under the circumstances, there can be no gratuitous gift, but only the recompense of a due reward. Is it the case, then, that in order to find their way to the help of

God, men run to God without God’s help? And in order that we may receive God’s help while cleaving to Him, do we without His help cleave to God? What greater gift, or even what similar gift, could grace itself bestow upon any man, if he has already without grace been able to make himself one spirit with the Lord by no other power than that of his own free will?

CHAPTER 25 [XXIV.]

GOD BY HIS WONDERFUL POWER WORKS IN OUR HEARTS GOOD DISPOSITIONS OF OUR WILL

Now I want him to tell us whether that king of Assyria, whose holy wife Esther “abhorred his bed,” whilst sitting upon the throne of his kingdom, and clothed in all his glorious apparel, adorned all over with gold and precious stones, and dreadful in his majesty when he raised his face, which was inflamed with anger, in the midst of his splendour, and beheld her, with the glare of a wild bull in the fierceness of his indignation; and the queen was afraid, and her colour changed as she fainted, and she bowed herself upon the head of the maid that went before her;—I want him to tell us whether this king had yet “hastened to the Lord, and had desired to be directed by Him, and had subordinated his own will to His, and had, by cleaving fast to God, become one spirit with Him, simply by the force of his own free will.” Had he surrendered himself wholly to God, and entirely mortified his own will, and placed his heart in the hand of God? I suppose that anybody who should think this of the king, in the state he was then in, would be not foolish only, but even mad. And yet God converted him, and turned his indignation into gentleness. Who, however, can fail to see how much greater a task it is to change and turn wrath completely into gentleness, than to bend the heart to something, when it is not preoccupied with either affection, but is indifferently poised between the two? Let them therefore read and understand, observe and acknowledge, that it is not by law and teaching uttering their lessons from without, but by a secret, wonderful, and ineffable power operating within, that God works in men’s hearts not only revelations of the truth, but also good dispositions of the will.

CHAPTER 26 [XXV.]

THE PELAGIAN GRACE OF “CAPACITY” EXPLODED. THE SCRIPTURE TEACHES THE NEED OF GOD’S HELP IN DOING, SPEAKING, AND THINKING, ALIKE

Let Pelagius, therefore, cease at last to deceive both himself and others by his disputations against the grace of God. It is not on account of only one of these three—that is to say, of the “capacity” of a good will and work—that the grace of God towards us ought to be proclaimed; but also on account of the good “will” and “work” themselves. This “capacity,” indeed, according to his definition, avails for both directions; and yet our sins must not also be attributed to God in consequence, as our good actions, according to his view, are attributed to Him owing to the same capacity. It is not only, therefore, on this account that the help of God’s grace is maintained, because it assists our natural capacity. He must cease to say, “That we are able to do, say, think any good, is from Him who has given us this ability, and who also assists this ability; whereas that we really do a good thing, or speak a good word, or think a good thought, proceeds from our own selves.” He must, I repeat, cease to say this. For God has not only given us the ability and aids it, but He further works in us “to will and to do.” It is not because we do not will, or do not do, that we will and do nothing good, but because we are without His help. How can he say, “That we are able to do good is of God, but that we actually do it is of ourselves,” when the apostle tells us that he “prays to God” in behalf of those to whom he was writing, “that they should do no evil, but that they should do that which is good?” His words are not, “We pray that ye be able to do nothing evil;” but, “that ye do no evil.” Neither does he say, “that ye be able to do good;” but, “that ye do good.” Forasmuch as it is written, “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,” it follows that, in order that they may do that which is good, they must be led by Him who is good. How can Pelagius say, “That we are able to make a good use of speech comes from God; but that we do actually make this good use of speech proceeds from ourselves,” when the Lord declares, “It is the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you”? He does not say, “It is not you who have given to yourselves the power of speaking well;” but His words are, “It is not ye that speak.” Nor does He say, “It is the Spirit of your Father which giveth, or hath given, you the power to speak well;” but He says, “which speaketh in you.” He does not allude to the motion of “the capacity,” but He asserts the effect of the co-operation. How can this arrogant asserter of free will say, “That we are able to think a good thought comes from God, but that we actually think a good thought proceeds from ourselves”? He has his answer from the humble preacher of grace, who says, “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.” Observe he does not say, “to be able to think anything;” but, “to think anything.”

CHAPTER 27 [XXVI.]

WHAT TRUE GRACE IS, AND WHEREFORE GIVEN. MERITS DO NOT PRECEDE GRACE

Now even Pelagius should frankly confess that this grace is plainly set forth in the inspired Scriptures; nor should he with shameless effrontery hide the fact that he has too long opposed it, but admit it with salutary regret; so that the holy Church may cease to be harassed by his stubborn persistence, and rather rejoice in his sincere conversion. Let him distinguish between knowledge and love, as they ought to be distinguished; because “knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth.” And then knowledge no longer puffeth up when love builds up. And inasmuch as each is the gift of God (although one is less, and the other greater), he must not extol our righteousness above the praise which is due to Him who justifies us, in such a way as to assign to the lesser of these two gifts the help of divine grace, and to claim the greater one for the human will. And should he consent that we receive love from the grace of God, he must not suppose that any merits of our own preceded our reception of the gift. For what merits could we possibly have had at the time when we loved not God? In order, indeed, that we might receive that love whereby we might love, we were loved while as yet we had no love ourselves. This the Apostle John most expressly declares: “Not that we loved God,” says he, “but that He loved us;” and again, “We love Him, because He first loved us.” Most excellently and truly spoken! For we could not have wherewithal to love Him, unless we received it from Him in His first loving us. And what good could we possibly do if we possessed no love? Or how could we help doing good if we have love? For although God’s commandment appears sometimes to be kept by those who do not love Him, but only fear Him; yet where there is no love, no good work is imputed, nor is there any good work, rightly so called; because “whatsoever is not of faith is sin,” and “faith worketh by love.” Hence also that grace of God, whereby “His love is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us,” must be so confessed by the man who would make a true confession, as to show his undoubting belief that nothing whatever in the way of goodness pertaining to godliness and real holiness can be accomplished without it. Not after the fashion of him who clearly enough shows us what he thinks of it when he says, that “grace is bestowed in order that what God commands may be the more easily fulfilled;” which of course means, that even without grace God’s commandments may, although less easily, yet actually, be accomplished.

CHAPTER 28 [XXVII.]

PELAGIUS TEACHES THAT SATAN MAY BE RESISTED WITHOUT THE HELP OF THE GRACE OF GOD

In the book which he addressed to a certain holy virgin, there is a passage which I have already mentioned, wherein he plainly indicates what he holds on this subject; for he speaks of our “deserving the grace of God, and by the help of the Holy Ghost more easily resisting the evil spirit.” Now why did he insert the phrase “more easily”? Was not the sense already complete: “And by the help of the Holy Ghost resisting the evil spirit”? But who can fail to perceive what an injury he has done by this insertion? He wants it, of course, to be supposed, that so great are the powers of our nature, which he is in such a hurry to exalt, that even without the assistance of the Holy Ghost the evil spirit can be resisted—less easily it may be, but still in a certain measure.

CHAPTER 29 [XXVIII.]

WHEN HE SPEAKS OF GOD’S HELP, HE MEANS IT ONLY TO HELP US DO WHAT WITHOUT IT WE STILL COULD DO

Again, in the first book of his Defence of the Freedom of the Will, he says: “But while we have within us a free will so strong and so stedfast against sinning, which our Maker has implanted in human nature generally, still, by His unspeakable goodness, we are further defended by His own daily help.”

What need is there of such help, if free will is so strong and so stedfast against sinning? But here, as before, he would have it understood that the purpose of the alleged assistance is, that that may be more easily accomplished by grace which he nevertheless supposes may be effected, less easily, no doubt, but yet actually, without grace.

CHAPTER 30 [XXIX.]

WHAT PELAGIUS THINKS IS NEEDFUL FOR EASE OF PERFORMANCE IS REALLY NECESSARY FOR THE PERFORMANCE

In like manner, in another passage of the same book, he says: “In order that men may more easily accomplish by grace that which they are commanded to do by free will.” Now, expunge the phrase “more easily,” and you leave not only a full, but also a sound sense, if it be regarded as meaning simply this: “That men may accomplish through grace what they are commanded to do by free will.” The addition of the words “more easily,” however, tacitly suggests the possibility of accomplishing good works even without the grace of God. But such a meaning is disallowed by Him who says, “Without me ye can do nothing.”

CHAPTER 31 [XXX.]

PELAGIUS AND COELESTIUS NOWHERE REALLY ACKNOWLEDGE GRACE

Let him amend all this, that if human infirmity has erred in subjects so profound, he may not add to the error diabolical deception and wilfulness, either by denying what he has really believed, or by maintaining what he has rashly believed, after he has once discovered, on recollecting the light of truth, that he ought never to have so believed. As for that grace, indeed, by which we are justified,—in other words, whereby “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us,”—I have nowhere, in those writings of Pelagius and Coelestius which I have had the opportunity of reading, found them acknowledging it as it ought to be acknowledged. In no passage at all have I observed them recognising “the children of the promise,” concerning whom the apostle thus speaks: “They which are children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” For that which God promises we do not ourselves bring about by our own choice or natural power, but He Himself effects it by grace.

CHAPTER 32

WHY THE PELAGIANS DEEMED PRAYERS TO BE NECESSARY. THE LETTER WHICH PELAGIUS DESPATCHED TO POPE INNOCENT WITH AN EXPOSITION OF HIS BELIEF

Now I will say nothing at present about the works of Coelestius, or those tracts of his which he produced in those ecclesiastical proceedings, copies of the whole of which we have taken care to send to you, along with another letter which we deemed it necessary to add. If you carefully examine all these documents, you will observe that he does not posit the grace of God, which helps us whether to avoid evil or to do good, beyond the natural choice of the will, but only in the law and teaching. Thus he even asserts that their very prayers are necessary for the purpose of showing men what to desire and love. All these documents, however, I may omit further notice of at present; for Pelagius himself has lately forwarded to Rome both a letter and an exposition of his belief, addressing it to Pope Innocent, of blessed memory, of whose death he was ignorant. Now in this letter he says that “there are certain subjects about which some men are trying to vilify him. One of these is, that he refuses to infants the sacrament of baptism, and promises the kingdom of heaven to some, independently of Christ’s redemption. Another of them is, that he so speaks of man’s ability to avoid sin as to exclude God’s help, and so strongly confides in free will that he repudiates the help of divine grace.” Now, as touching the perverted opinion he holds about the baptism of infants (although he allows that it ought to be administered to them), in opposition to the Christian faith and catholic truth, this is not the place for us to enter on an accurate discussion, for we must now complete our treatise on the assistance of grace, which is the subject we undertook. Let us see what answer he makes out of this very letter to the objection which he has proposed concerning this matter. Omitting his invidious complaints about his opponents, we approach the subject before us; and find him expressing himself as follows.

CHAPTER 33 [XXXI.]

PELAGIUS PROFESSES NOTHING ON THE SUBJECT OF GRACE WHICH MAY NOT BE UNDERSTOOD OF THE LAW AND TEACHING

“See,” he says, “how this epistle will clear me before your Blessedness; for in it we clearly and simply declare, that we possess a free will which is unimpaired for sinning and for not sinning; and this free will is in all good works always assisted by divine help.” Now you perceive, by the understanding which the Lord has given you, that these words of his are inadequate to solve the question. For it is still open to us to inquire what the help is by which he would say that the free will is assisted; lest perchance he should, as is usual with him, maintain that law and teaching are meant. If, indeed, you were to ask him why he used the word “always,” he might answer: Because it is written, And in His law will he meditate day and night.” Then, after interposing a statement about the condition of man, and his natural capacity for sinning and not sinning, he added the following words: “Now this power of free will we declare to reside generally in all alike—in Christians, in Jews, and in Gentiles. In all men free will exists equally by nature, but in Christians alone is it assisted by grace.” We again ask: “By what grace?” And again he might answer: “By the law and the Christian teaching.”

CHAPTER 34

PELAGIUS SAYS THAT GRACE IS GIVEN ACCORDING TO MEN’S MERITS. THE BEGINNING, HOWEVER, OF MERIT IS FAITH; AND THIS IS A GRATUITOUS GIFT, NOT A RECOMPENSE FOR OUR MERITS

Then, again, whatever it is which he means by “grace,” he says is given even to Christians according to their merits, although (as I have already mentioned above), when he was in Palestine, in his very remarkable vindication of himself, he condemned those who hold this opinion. Now these are his words: “In the one,” says he, “the good of their created condition is naked and defenceless;” meaning in those who are not Christians. Then adding the rest: “In these, however, who belong to Christ, there is defence afforded by Christ’s help.” You see it is still uncertain what the help is, according to the remark we have already made on the same subject. He goes on, however, to say of those who are not Christians:

“Those deserve judgment and condemnation, because, although they possess free will whereby they could come to have faith and deserve God’s grace, they make a bad use of the freedom which has been granted to them. But these deserve to be rewarded, who by the right use of free will merit the Lord’s grace, and keep His commandments.” Now it is clear that he says grace is bestowed according to merit, whatever and of what kind soever the grace is which he means, but which he does not plainly declare. For when he speaks of those persons as deserving reward who make a good use of their free will, and as therefore meriting the Lord’s grace, he asserts in fact that a debt is paid to them. What, then, becomes of the apostle’s saying, “Being justified freely by His grace”? And what of his other statement too, “By grace are ye saved”?—where, that he might prevent men’s supposing that it is by works, he expressly added, “by faith.” And yet further, lest it should be imagined that faith itself is to be attributed to men independently of the grace of God, the apostle says: “And that not of yourselves; for it is the gift of God.” It follows, therefore, that we receive, without any merit of our own, that from which everything which, according to them, we obtain because of our merit, has its beginning—that is, faith itself. If, however, they insist on denying that this is freely given to us, what is the meaning of the apostle’s words: “According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith”? But if it is contended that faith is so bestowed as to be a recompense for merit, not a free gift, what then becomes of another saying of the apostle: “Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake”? Each is by the apostle’s testimony made a gift,—both that he believes in Christ, and that each suffers for His sake. These men however, attribute faith to free will in such a way as to make it appear that grace is rendered to faith not as a gratuitous gift, but as a debt—thus ceasing to be grace any longer, because that is not grace which is not gratuitous.

CHAPTER 35 [XXXII.]

PELAGIUS BELIEVES THAT INFANTS HAVE NO SIN TO BE REMITTED IN BAPTISM

But Pelagius would have the reader pass from this letter to the book which states his belief. This he has made mention of to yourselves, and in it he has discoursed a good deal on points about which no question was raised as to his views. Let us, however, look simply at the subjects about which our own controversy with them is concerned. Having, then terminated a discussion which he had conducted to his heart's content,—from the Unity of the Trinity to the resurrection of the flesh, on which nobody was questioning him,—he goes on to say: "We hold likewise one baptism, which we aver ought to be administered to infants in the same sacramental formula as it is to adults." Well, now, you have yourselves affirmed that you heard him admit at least as much as this in your presence. What, however, is the use of his saying that the sacrament of baptism is administered to children "in the same words as it is to adults," when our inquiry concerns the thing, not merely the words? It is a more important matter, that (as you write) with his own mouth he replied to your own question, that "infants receive baptism for the remission of sins." For he did not say here, too, "in words of remission of sins," but he acknowledged that they are baptized for the remission itself; and yet for all this, if you were to ask him what the sin is which he supposes to be remitted to them, he would contend that they had none whatever.

CHAPTER 36 [XXXIII.]

COELESTIUS OPENLY DECLARES INFANTS TO HAVE NO ORIGINAL SIN

Who would believe that, under so clear a confession, there is concealed a contrary meaning, if Coelestius had not exposed it? He who in that book of his, which he quoted at Rome in the ecclesiastical proceedings there, distinctly acknowledged that "infants too are baptized for the remission of sins," also denied "that they have any original sin." But let us now observe what Pelagius thought, not about the baptism of infants, but rather about the assistance of divine grace, in this exposition of his belief which he forwarded to Rome. "We confess," says he, "free will in such a sense that we declare ourselves to be always in need of the help of God." Well, now, we ask again, what the help is which he says we require; and again we find ambiguity, since he may possibly answer that he meant the law and the teaching of Christ, whereby that natural "capacity" is assisted. We, however, on our side require them to acknowledge a grace like that which the apostle describes, when he says: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind;" although it does not follow by any means that the man who has the gift of knowledge, whereby he has discovered what he ought to do, has also the grace of love so as to do it.

CHAPTER 37 [XXXIV.]

PELAGIUS NOWHERE ADMITS THE NEED OF DIVINE HELP FOR WILL AND ACTION

I also have read those books or writings of his which he mentions in the letter which he sent to Pope Innocent, of blessed memory, with the exception of a brief epistle which he says he sent to the holy Bishop Constantius; but I have nowhere been able to find in them that he acknowledges such a grace as helps not only that "natural capacity of willing and acting" (which according to him we possess, even when we neither will a good thing nor do it), but also the will and the action itself, by the ministration of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER 38 [XXXV.]

A DEFINITION OF THE GRACE OF CHRIST BY PELAGIUS

"Let them read," says he, "the epistle which we wrote about twelve years ago to that holy man Bishop Paulinus: its subject throughout in some three hundred lines is the confession of God's grace and assistance alone, and our own inability to do any good thing at all without God." Well, I have read this epistle also, and found him dwelling throughout it on scarcely any other topic than the faculty and capacity of nature, whilst he makes God's grace consist almost entirely in this. Christ's grace, indeed, he treats with great brevity, simply mentioning its name, so that his only aim seems to have been to avoid the scandal of ignoring it altogether. It is, however, absolutely uncertain whether he means Christ's grace to consist in the remission of sins, or even in the teaching of Christ, including also the example of His life (a meaning which he asserts in several passages of his treatises); or whether he believes it to be a help towards good living, in addition to nature and teaching, through the inspiring influence of a burning and shining love.

CHAPTER 39 [XXXVI]

A LETTER OF PELAGIUS UNKNOWN TO AUGUSTIN

“Let them also read,” says he, “my epistle to the holy Bishop Constantius, wherein I have—briefly no doubt, but yet plainly—conjoined the grace and help of God with man’s free will.” This epistle, as I have already stated, I have not read; but if it is not unlike the other writings which he mentions, and with which I am acquainted, even this work does nothing for the subject of our present inquiry.

CHAPTER 40 [XXXVII]

THE HELP OF GRACE PLACED BY PELAGIUS IN THE MERE REVELATION OF TEACHING

“Let them read moreover” says he, “what I wrote, when I was in the East, to Christ’s holy virgin Demetrias, and they will find that we so commend the nature of man as always to add the help of God’s grace.” Well, I read this letter too; and it had almost persuaded me that he did acknowledge therein the grace about which our discussion is concerned, although he did certainly seem in many passages of this work to contradict himself. But when there also came to my hands those other treatises which he afterwards wrote for more extensive circulation, I discovered in what sense he must have intended to speak of grace,—concealing what he believed under an ambiguous generality, but employing the term “grace” in order to break the force of obloquy, and to avoid giving offence. For at the very commencement of this work (where he says: “Let us apply ourselves with all earnestness to the task which we have set before us, nor let us have any misgiving because of our own humble ability; for we believe that we are assisted by the mother’s faith and her daughter’s merit”) he appeared to me at first to acknowledge the grace which helps us to individual action; nor did I notice at once the fact that he might possibly have made this grace consist simply in the revelation of teaching.

CHAPTER 41

RESTORATION OF NATURE UNDERSTOOD BY PELAGIUS AS FORGIVENESS OF SINS

In this same work he says in another passage: “Now, if even without God men show of what character they have been made by God, see what Christians have it in their power to do, whose nature has been through Christ restored to a better condition, and who are, moreover, assisted by the help of divine grace.” By this restoration of nature to a better state he would have us understand the remission of sins. This he has shown with sufficient clearness in another passage of this epistle, where he says: “Even those who have become in a certain sense obdurate through their long practice of sinning, can be restored through repentance.” But he may even here too make the assistance of divine grace consist in the revelation of teaching.

CHAPTER 42 [XXXVIII.]

GRACE PLACED BY PELAGIUS IN THE REMISSION OF SINS AND THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

Likewise in another place in this epistle of his he says: “Now, if even before the law, as we have already remarked, and long previous to the coming of our Lord and Saviour, some men are related to have lived righteous and holy lives; how much more worthy of belief is it that we are capable of doing this since the illumination of His coming, who have been restored by the grace of Christ, and born again into a better man? How much better than they, who lived before the law, ought we to be, who have been reconciled and cleansed by His blood, and by His example encouraged to the perfection of righteousness!” Observe how even here, although in different language, he has made the assistance of grace to consist in the remission of sins and the example of Christ. He then completes the passage by adding these words: “Better than they were even who lived under the law; according to the apostle, who says, Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.’ Now, inasmuch as we have,” says he, “said enough, as I suppose, on this point, let us describe a perfect virgin, who shall testify the good at once of nature and of grace by the holiness of her conduct, evermore warmed with the virtues of both.” Now you ought to notice that in these words also he wished to conclude what he was saying in such a way that we might understand the good of nature to be that which we received when we were created; but the good of grace to be that which we receive when we regard and follow the example of Christ,—

as if sin were not permitted to those who were or are under the law, on this account, because they either had not Christ's example, or else do not believe in Him.

CHAPTER 43 [XXXIX.]

THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND EXAMPLE OF CHRIST HELD BY PELAGIUS ENOUGH TO SAVE THE MOST HARDENED SINNER

That this, indeed, is his meaning, other words also of his show us,—not contained in this work, but in the third book of his Defence of Free Will, wherein he holds a discussion with an opponent, who had insisted on the apostle's words when he says, "For what I would, that do I not;" and again, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind." To this he replied in these words: "Now that which you wish us to understand of the apostle himself, all Church writers assert that he spoke in the person of the sinner, and of one who was still under the law,—such a man as was, by reason of a very long custom of vice, held bound, as it were, by a certain necessity of sinning, and who, although he desired good with his will, in practice indeed was hurried headlong into evil. In the person, however, of one man," he continues, "the apostle designates the people who still sinned under the ancient law. This nation he declares was to be delivered from this evil of custom through Christ, who first of all remits all sins in baptism to those who believe in Him, and then urges them by an imitation of Himself to perfect holiness, and by the example of His own virtues overcomes the evil custom of their sins." Observe in what way he supposes them to be assisted who sin under the law: they are to be delivered by being justified through Christ's grace, as if the law alone were insufficient for them, without some reinforcement from Christ, owing to their long habit of sinning; not the inspiration of love by His Holy Spirit, but the contemplation and copy of His example in the inculcation of virtue by the gospel. Now here, at any rate, there was the very greatest call on him to say plainly what grace he meant, seeing that the apostle closed the very passage which formed the ground of discussion with these telling words: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now, when he places this grace, not in the aid of His power, but in His example for imitation, what further hope must we entertain of him, since everywhere the word “grace” is mentioned by him under an ambiguous generality?

CHAPTER 44 [XL.]

PELAGIUS ONCE MORE GUARDS HIMSELF AGAINST THE NECESSITY OF GRACE

Then, again, in the work addressed to the holy virgin, of which we have spoken already, there is this passage: “Let us submit ourselves to God, and by doing His will let us merit the divine grace; and let us the more easily, by the help of the Holy Ghost, resist the evil spirit.” Now, in these words of his, it is plain enough that he regards us as assisted by the grace of the Holy Ghost, not because we are unable to resist the tempter without Him by the sheer capacity of our nature, but in order that we may resist more easily. With respect, however, to the quantity and quality, whatever these might be, of this assistance, we may well believe that he made them consist of the additional knowledge which the Spirit reveals to us through teaching, and which we either cannot, or scarcely can, possess by nature. Such are the particulars which I have been able to discover in the book which he addressed to the virgin of Christ, and wherein he seems to confess grace. Of what purport and kind these are, you of course perceive.

CHAPTER 45 [XLI.]

TO WHAT PURPOSE PELAGIUS THOUGHT PRAYERS OUGHT TO BE OFFERED

“Let them also read,” says he, “my recent little treatise which we were obliged to publish a short while ago in defence of free will, and let them acknowledge how unfair is their determination to disparage us for a denial of grace, when we throughout almost the whole work acknowledge fully and sincerely both free will and grace.” There are four books in this treatise, all of which I read, marking such passages as required consideration, and which I proposed to discuss: these I examined as well as I was able, before we came to that epistle of his which was sent to Rome. But even in these four books, that which he seems to regard as the grace which helps us to turn aside from evil and to do good, he describes in such a manner as to keep to his old ambiguity of language, and thus have it in his power so to explain to his followers, that they may suppose the assistance which is rendered by grace, for the purpose of helping our natural capacity, consists of nothing else than the law and the teaching. Thus our very prayers (as, indeed, he most plainly affirms in his writings) are of no other use, in his opinion, than to procure for us the explanation of the teaching by a divine revelation, not to procure help for the mind of man to perfect by love and action what it has learned should be done. The fact is, he does not in the least relinquish that very manifest dogma of his system in which he sets forth those three things, capacity, volition, action; maintaining that only the first of these, the capacity, is favoured with the constant assistance of divine help, but supposing that the volition and the action stand in no need of God’s assistance. Moreover, the very help which he says assists our natural capacity, he places in the law and teaching. This teaching, he allows, is revealed or explained to us by the Holy Ghost, on which account it is that he concedes the necessity of prayer. But still this assistance of law and teaching he supposes to have existed even in the days of the prophets; whereas the help of grace, which is properly so called, he will have to lie simply in the example of Christ. But this example, you can plainly see, pertains after all to “teaching,”—even that which is preached to us as the gospel. The general result, then, is the pointing out, as it were, of a road to us by which we are bound to walk, by the powers of our free will, and needing no assistance from any one else, may suffice to ourselves not to faint or fail on the way. And even as to the discovery of the road itself, he contends that nature alone is competent for it; only the discovery will be more easily effected if grace renders assistance.

CHAPTER 46 [XLII]

PELAGIUS PROFESSES TO RESPECT THE CATHOLIC AUTHORS

Such are the particulars which, to the best of my ability, I have succeeded in obtaining from the writings of Pelagius, whenever he makes mention of grace. You perceive, however, that men who entertain such opinions as we have reviewed are “ignorant of God’s righteousness, and desire to establish their own,” and are far off from “the righteousness which we have of God” and not of ourselves; and this they ought to have discovered and recognised in the very holy canonical Scriptures. Forasmuch, however, as they read these Scriptures in a sense of their own, they of course fail to observe even the most obvious truths therein. Would that they would but turn their attention in no careless mood to what might be learned concerning the help of God’s grace in the writings, at all events, of catholic authors; for they freely allow that the Scriptures were correctly understood by these, and that they would not pass them by in neglect, out of an overweening fondness for their own opinions. For note how this very man Pelagius, in that very treatise of his so recently put forth, and which he formally mentions in his self-defence (that is to say, in the third book of his Defence of Free Will), praises St. Ambrose.

CHAPTER 47 [XLIII.]

AMBROSE MOST HIGHLY PRAISED BY PELAGIUS

“The blessed Bishop Ambrose,” says he, “in whose writings the Roman faith shines forth with especial brightness, and whom the Latins have always regarded as the very flower and glory of their authors, and who has never found a foe bold enough to censure his faith or the purity of his understanding of the Scriptures.” Observe the sort as well as the amount of the praises which he bestows; nevertheless, however holy and learned he is, he is not to be compared to the authority of the canonical Scripture. The reason of this high commendation of Ambrose lies in the circumstance, that Pelagius sees proper to quote a certain passage from his writings to prove that man is able to live without sin. This, however, is not the question before us. We are at present discussing that assistance of grace which helps us towards avoiding sin, and leading holy lives.

CHAPTER 48 [XLIV]

AMBROSE IS NOT IN AGREEMENT WITH PELAGIUS

I wish, indeed, that he would listen to the venerable bishop when, in the second book of his Exposition of the Gospel according to Luke, he expressly teaches us that the Lord co-operates also with our wills. “You see, therefore,” says he, “because the power of the Lord co-operates everywhere with human efforts, that no man is able to build without the Lord, no man to watch without the Lord, no man to undertake anything without the Lord. Whence the apostle thus enjoins: Whether ye eat, or whether ye drink, do all to the glory of God.'" You observe how the holy Ambrose takes away from men even their familiar expressions,—such as, "We undertake, but God accomplishes,"—when he says here that "no man is able to undertake anything without the Lord." To the same effect he says, in the sixth book of the same work, treating of the two debtors of a certain creditor: "According to men's opinions, he perhaps is the greater offender who owed most. The case, however, is altered by the Lord's mercy, so that he loves the most who owes the most, if he yet obtains grace." See how the catholic doctor most plainly declares that the very love which prompts every man to an ampler love appertains to the kindly gift of grace.

CHAPTER 49 [XLV.]

AMBROSE TEACHES WITH WHAT EYE CHRIST TURNED AND LOOKED UPON PETER

That repentance, indeed, itself, which beyond all doubt is an action of the will, is wrought into action by the mercy and help of the Lord, is asserted by the blessed Ambrose in the following passage in the ninth book of the same work: "Good, says he, "are the tears which wash away sin. They upon whom the Lord at last turns and looks, bewail. Peter denied Him first, and did not weep, because the Lord had not turned and looked upon him. He denied Him a second time, and still wept not, because the Lord had not even yet turned and looked upon him. The third time also he denied Him, Jesus turned and looked, and then he wept most bitterly." Let these persons read the Gospel; let them consider how that the Lord Jesus was at that moment within, having a hearing before the chief of the priests; whilst the Apostle Peter was outside, and down in the hall, sitting at one time with the servants at the fire, at another time standing, as the most accurate and consistent narrative of the evangelists shows. It cannot therefore be said that it was with His bodily eyes that the Lord turned and looked upon him by a visible and apparent admonition. That, then, which is described in the words, "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter," was effected internally; it was wrought in the mind, wrought in the will. In mercy the Lord silently and secretly approached, touched the heart, recalled the memory of the past, with His own internal grace visited Peter, stirred and brought out into external tears the feelings of his inner man. Behold in what manner God is present with His help to our wills and actions; behold how “He worketh in us both to will and to do.”

CHAPTER 50

AMBROSE TEACHES THAT ALL MEN NEED GOD’S HELP

In the same book the same St. Ambrose says again: “Now if Peter fell, who said, Though all men shall be offended, yet will I never be offended,’ who else shall rightly presume concerning himself? David, indeed, because he had said, In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved,’ confesses how injurious his confidence had proved to himself: Thou didst turn away Thy face,’ he says, and I was troubled.’“ Pelagius ought to listen to the teaching of so eminent a man, and should follow his faith, since he has commended his teaching and faith. Let him listen humbly; let him follow with fidelity; let him indulge no longer in obstinate presumption, lest he perish. Why does Pelagius choose to be sunk in that sea whence Peter was rescued by the Rock?

CHAPTER 51 [XLVI.]

AMBROSE TEACHES THAT IT IS GOD THAT DOES FOR MAN WHAT PELAGIUS ATTRIBUTES TO FREE WILL

Let him lend an ear also to the same godly bishop, who says, in the sixth book of this same book: “The reason why they would not receive Him is mentioned by the evangelist himself in these words, Because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem.’ But His disciples had a strong wish that He should be received into the Samaritan town. God, however, calls whomsoever He deigns, and whom He wills He makes religious.” What wise insight of the man of God, drawn from the very fountain of God’s grace! “God,” says he, “calls whomsoever He deigns, and whom He wills He makes religious.” See whether this is not the prophet’s own declaration: “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and will show pity on whom I will be pitiful;” and the apostle’s deduction therefrom: “So then,” says he, “it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” Now, when even his model man of our own times says, that “whomsoever God deigns He calls, and whom He wills He makes religious,” will any one be bold enough to contend that that man is not yet religious “who hastens to the Lord, and desires to be directed by Him, and makes his own will depend upon God’s; who, moreover, cleaves so closely to the Lord, that he becomes (as the apostle says) one spirit’ with Him?” Great, however, as is this entire work of a “religious man,” Pelagius maintains that “it is effected only by the freedom of the will.” But his own blessed Ambrose, whom he so highly commends in word, is against him, saying, “The Lord God calls whomsoever He deigns, and whom He wills He makes religious.” It is God, then, who makes religious whomsoever He pleases, in order that he may “hasten to the Lord, and desire to be directed by Him, and make his own will depend upon God’s, and cleave so closely to the Lord as to become (as the apostle says) one spirit’ with Him;” and all this none but a religious man does. Who, then, ever does so much, unless he be made by God to do it?

CHAPTER 52 [XLVII.]

IF PELAGIUS AGREES WITH AMBROSE, AUGUSTIN HAS NO CONTROVERSY WITH HIM

Inasmuch, however, as the discussion about free will and God’s grace has such difficulty in its distinctions, that when free will is maintained, God’s grace is apparently denied; whilst when God’s grace is asserted, free will is supposed to be done away with,—Pelagius can so involve himself in the shades of this obscurity as to profess agreement with all that we have quoted from St. Ambrose, and declare that such is, and always has been, his opinion also; and endeavour so to explain each, that men may suppose his opinion, to be in fair accord with Ambrose’s. So far therefore, as concerns the questions of God’s help and grace, you are requested to observe the three things which he has distinguished so very plainly, under the terms “ability,” “will,” and “actuality,” that is, “capacity,” “volition,” and “action.” If, then, he has come round to an agreement with us, then not the “capacity” alone in man, even if he neither wills nor performs the good, but the volition and the action also,—in other words, our willing well and doing well,—things which have no existence in man, except when he has a good will and acts rightly:—if, I repeat, he thus consents to hold with us that even the volition and the action are assisted by God, and so assisted that we can neither will nor do any good thing without such help; if, too, he believes that this is that very grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ which makes us righteous through His righteousness, and not our own, so that our true righteousness is that which we have of Him,—then, so far as I can judge, there will remain no further controversy between us concerning the assistance we have from the grace of God.

CHAPTER 53 [XLVIII.]

IN WHAT SENSE SOME MEN MAY BE SAID TO LIVE WITHOUT SIN IN THE PRESENT LIFE

But in reference to the particular point in which he quoted the holy Ambrose with so much approbation,—because he found in that author’s writings, from the praises he accorded to Zacharias and Elisabeth, the opinion that a man might possibly in this life be without sin; although this cannot be denied if God wills it, with whom all things are possible, yet he ought to consider more carefully in what sense this was said. Now, so far as I can see, this statement was made in accordance with a certain standard of conduct, which is among men held to be worthy of approval and praise, and which no human being could justly call in question for the purpose of laying accusation or censure. Such a standard Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth are said to have maintained in the sight of God, for no other reason than that they, by walking therein, never deceived people by any dissimulation; but as they in their sincerity appeared to men, so were they known in the sight of God. The statement, however, was not made with any reference to that perfect state of righteousness in which we shall one day live truly and absolutely in a condition of spotless purity. The Apostle Paul, indeed, has told us that he was “blameless, as touching the righteousness which is of the law;” and it was in respect of the same law that Zacharias also lived a blameless life. This righteousness, however, the apostle counted as “dung” and “loss,” in comparison with the righteousness which is the object of our hope, and which we ought to “hunger and thirst after,” in order that hereafter we may be satisfied with the vision thereof, enjoying it now by faith, so long as “the just do live by faith.”

CHAPTER 54 [XLIX.]

AMBROSE TEACHES THAT NO ONE IS SINLESS IN THIS WORLD

Lastly, let him give good heed to his venerable bishop, when he is expounding the Prophet Isaiah, and says that “no man in this world can be without sin.” Now nobody can pretend to say that by the phrase “in this world” he simply meant, in the love of this world. For he was speaking of the apostle, who said, “Our conversation is in heaven;” and while unfolding the sense of these words, the eminent bishop expressed himself thus: “Now the apostle says that many men, even while living in the present world, are perfect with themselves, who could not possibly be deemed perfect, if one looks at true perfection. For he says himself: We now see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know, even as also I am known.’ Thus, there are those who are spotless in this world, there are those who will be spotless in the kingdom of God; although, of course, if you sift the thing minutely, no one could be spotless, because no one is without sin.” That passage, then, of the holy Ambrose, which Pelagius applies in support of his own opinion, was either written in a qualified sense, probable, indeed, but not expressed with minute accuracy; or if the holy and lowly-minded author did think that Zacharias and Elisabeth lived according to the highest and absolutely perfect righteousness, which was incapable of increase or addition, he certainly corrected his opinion on a minuter examination of it.

CHAPTER 55 [L.]

AMBROSE WITNESSES THAT PERFECT PURITY IS IMPOSSIBLE TO HUMAN NATURE

He ought, moreover, carefully to note that, in the very same context from which he quoted that passage of Ambrose’s, which seemed so satisfactory for his purpose, he also said this: “To be spotless from the beginning is an impossibility to human nature.” In this sentence the venerable Ambrose does undoubtedly predicate feebleness and infirmity of that natural “capacity,” which Pelagius refuses faithfully to regard as corrupted by sin, and therefore boastfully extols. Beyond question, this runs counter to this man’s will and inclination, although it does not contravene the truthful confession of the apostle, wherein he says: “We too were once by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” For through the sin of the first man, which came from his free will, our nature became corrupted and ruined; and nothing but God’s grace alone, through Him who is the Mediator between God and men, and our Almighty Physician, succours it. Now, since we have already prolonged this work too far in treating of the assistance of the divine grace towards our justification, by which God co-operates in all things for good with those who love Him, and whom He first loved—giving to them that He might receive from them: we must commence another treatise, as the Lord shall enable us, on the subject of sin also, which by one man has entered into the world, along with death, and so has passed upon all men, setting forth as much as shall seem needful and sufficient, in opposition to those persons who have broken out into violent and open error, contrary to the truth here stated.

Book II

On Original Sin

Wherein Augustin shows that Pelagius really differs in no respect, on the question of original sin and the baptism of infants, from his follower Coelestius, who, refusing to acknowledge original sin and even daring to deny the doctrine in public, was condemned in trials before the bishops—first at Carthage, and afterwards at Rome; for this question is not, as these heretics would have it, one wherein persons might err without danger to the faith. Their heresy, indeed, aimed at nothing else than the very foundations of Christian belief. He afterwards refutes all such as maintained that the blessing of matrimony is disparaged by the doctrine of original depravity, and an injury done to God himself, the Creator of man who is born by means of matrimony.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

CAUTION NEEDED IN ATTENDING TO PELAGIUS' DELIVERANCES ON INFANT BAPTISM

Next I beg of you, carefully to observe with what caution you ought to lend an ear, on the question of the baptism of infants, to men of this character, who dare not openly deny the laver of regeneration and the forgiveness of sins to this early age, for fear that Christian ears would not bear to listen to them; and who yet persist in holding and urging their opinion, that the carnal generation is not held guilty of man's first sin, although they seem to allow infants to be baptized for the remission of sins. You have, indeed, yourselves informed me in your letter, that you heard Pelagius say in your presence, reading out of that book of his which he declared that he had also sent to Rome, that they maintain that "infants ought to be baptized with the same formula of sacramental words as adults." Who, after that statement, would suppose that one ought to raise any question at all on this subject? Or if he did, to whom would he not seem to indulge a very calumnious disposition—previous to the perusal of their plain assertions, in which they deny that infants inherit original sin, and contend that all persons are born free from all corruption?

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

COELESTIUS, ON HIS TRIAL AT CARTHAGE, REFUSES TO CONDEMN HIS ERROR; THE WRITTEN STATEMENT WHICH HE GAVE TO ZOSIMUS

Coelestius, indeed, maintained this erroneous doctrine with less restraint. To such an extent did he push his freedom as actually to refuse, when on trial before the bishops at Carthage, to condemn those who say, “That Adam’s sin injured only Adam himself, and not the human race; and that infants at their birth are in the same state that Adam was in before his transgression.” In the written statement, too, which he presented to the most blessed Pope Zosimus at Rome, he declared with especial plainness, “that original sin binds no single infant.” Concerning the ecclesiastical proceedings at Carthage we copy the following account of his words.

CHAPTER 3 [III.]

PART OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL OF CARTHAGE AGAINST COELESTIUS

“The bishop Aurelius said: Let what follows be recited.’ It was accordingly recited, That the sin of Adam was injurious to him alone, and not to the human race.’ Then, after the recital, Coelestius said: I said that I was in doubt about the transmission of sin, but so as to yield assent to any man whom God has gifted with the grace of knowledge; for I have heard different opinions from those who have been even appointed presbyters in the Catholic Church.’ The deacon Paulinus said: Tell us their names.’ Coelestius answered: The holy presbyter Rufinus, who lived at Rome with the holy Pammachius. I have heard him declare that there is no transmission of sin.’ The deacon Paulinus then asked: Is there any one else?’ Coelestius replied: I have heard more say the same.’ The deacon Paulinus rejoined: Tell us their names.’ Coelestius said: Is not one priest enough for you?’“ Then afterwards in another place we read: “The bishop Aurelius said: Let the rest of the accusation be read.’ It then was recited That infants at their birth are in the same state that Adam was before the transgression;’ and they read to the very end of the brief accusation which had been previously put in. [IV.] The bishop Aurelius inquired: Have you, Coelestius, taught at any time, as the deacon Paulinus has stated, that infants are at their birth in the same state that Adam was before his transgression?’ Coelestius answered: Let him explain what he meant when he said, “before the transgression.’“ The deacon Paulinus then said: Do you on your side deny that you ever taught this doctrine? It must be one of two things: he must either say that he never so taught, or else he must now condemn the opinion.’ Coelestius rejoined: I have already said, Let him explain the words he mentioned, “before the transgression.”‘ The deacon Paulinus then said: You must deny ever having taught this.’ The bishop Aurelius said: I ask, What conclusion I have on my part to draw from this man’s obstinacy; my affirmation is, that although Adam, as created in Paradise, is said to have been made immortal at first, he afterwards became corruptible through transgressing the commandment. Do you say this, brother Paulinus?’ I do, my lord,’ answered the deacon Paulinus. Then the bishop Aurelius said: As regards the condition of infants before baptism at the present day, the deacon Paulinus wishes to be informed whether it is such as Adam’s was before the transgression; and whether it derives the guilt of transgression from the same origin of sin from which it is born?’ The deacon Paulinus asked: Let him deny whether he taught this, or not.’ Coelestius answered: As touching the transmission of sin, I have already asserted, that I have heard many persons of acknowledged position in the catholic Church deny it altogether; and on the other hand, others affirm it: it may be fairly deemed a matter for inquiry, but not a heresy. I have always maintained that infants require baptism, and ought to be baptized. What else does he want?’“

CHAPTER 4

COELESTIUS CONCEDES BAPTISM FOR INFANTS, WITHOUT AFFIRMING ORIGINAL SIN

You, of course, see that Coelestius here conceded baptism for infants only in such a manner as to be unwilling to confess that the sin of the first man, which is washed away in the laver of regeneration, passes over to them, although at the same time he did not venture to deny this; and on account of this doubt he refused to condemn those who maintain “That Adam’s sin injured only himself, and not the human race;” and “that infants at their birth are in the same condition wherein Adam was before the transgression.”

CHAPTER 5 [V.]

COELESTIUS’ BOOK WHICH WAS PRODUCED IN THE PROCEEDINGS AT ROME

But in the book which he published at Rome, and produced in the proceedings before the church there, he so speaks on this question as to show that he really believes what he had professed to be in doubt about. For these are his words: “That infants, however, ought to be baptized for the remission of sins, according to the rule of the Church universal, and according to the meaning of the Gospel, we confess. For the Lord has determined that the kingdom of heaven should only be conferred on baptized persons; and since the resources of nature do not possess it, it must necessarily be conferred by the gift of grace.” Now if he had not said anything elsewhere on this subject, who would not have supposed that he acknowledged the remission of original sin even in infants at their baptism, by saying that they ought to be baptized for the remission of sins? Hence the point of what you have stated in your letter, that Pelagius’ answer to you was on this wise, “That infants are baptized with the same words of sacramental formula as adults,” and that you were rejoiced to hear the very thing which you were desirous of hearing, and yet that you preferred holding a consultation with us concerning his words.

CHAPTER 6 [VI.]

COELESTIUS THE DISCIPLE IS IN THIS WORK BOLDER THAN HIS MASTER

Carefully observe, then, what Coelestius has advanced so very openly, and you will discover what amount of concealment Pelagius has practised upon you. Coelestius goes on to say as follows: “That infants, however, must be baptized for the remission of sins, was not admitted by us with the view of our seeming to affirm sin by transmission. This is very alien from the catholic meaning, because sin is not born with a man,—it is subsequently committed by the man for it is shown to be a fault, not of nature, but of the will. It is fitting, therefore, to confess this, lest we should seem to make different kinds of baptism; it is, moreover, necessary to lay down this preliminary safeguard, lest by the occasion of this mystery evil should, to the disparagement of the Creator, be said to be conveyed to man by nature, before that it has been committed by man." Now Pelagius was either afraid or ashamed to avow this to be his own opinion before you; although his disciple experienced neither a qualm nor a blush in openly professing it to be his, without any obscure subterfuges, in presence of the Apostolic See.

CHAPTER 7

POPE ZOSIMUS KINDLY EXCUSES HIM

The bishop, however, who presides over this See, upon seeing him hurrying headlong in so great presumption like a madman, chose in his great compassion, with a view to the man's repentance, if it might be, rather to bind him tightly by eliciting from him answers to questions proposed by himself, than by the stroke of a severe condemnation to drive him over the precipice, down which he seemed to be even now ready to fall. I say advisedly, "down which he seemed to be ready to fall," rather than "over which he had actually fallen," because he had already in this same book of his forecast the subject with an intended reference to questions of this sort in the following words: "If it should so happen that any error of ignorance has stolen over us human beings, let it be corrected by your decisive sentence."

CHAPTER 8 [VII.]

COELESTIUS CONDEMNED BY ZOSIMUS

The venerable Pope Zosimus, keeping in view this deprecatory preamble, dealt with the man, puffed up as he was with the blasts of false doctrine, so as that he should condemn all the objectionable points which had been alleged against him by the deacon Paulinus, and that he should yield his assent to the rescript of the Apostolic See which had been issued by his predecessor of sacred memory. The accused man, however, refused to condemn the objections raised by the deacon, yet he did not dare to hold out against the letter of the blessed Pope Innocent; indeed, he went so far as to "promise that he would condemn all the points which the Apostolic See condemned.” Thus the man was treated with gentle remedies, as a delirious patient who required rest; but, at the same time, he was not regarded as being yet ready to be released from the restraints of excommunication. The interval of two months being granted him, until communications could be received from Africa, a place for recovery was conceded to him, under the mild restorative of the sentence which had been pronounced. For in truth, if he would have laid aside his vain obstinacy, and be now willing to carry out what he had undertaken, and would carefully read the very letter to which he had replied by promising submission, he would yet come to a better mind. But after the rescripts were duly issued from the council of the African bishops, there were very good reasons why the sentence should be carried out against him, in strictest accordance with equity. What these reasons were you may read for yourselves, for we have sent you all the particulars.

CHAPTER 9 [VIII.]

PELAGIUS DECEIVED THE COUNCIL IN PALESTINE, BUT WAS UNABLE TO DECEIVE THE CHURCH AT ROME

Wherefore Pelagius, too, if he will only reflect candidly on his own position and writings, has no reason for saying that he ought not to have been banned with such a sentence. For although he deceived the council in Palestine, seemingly clearing himself before it, he entirely failed in imposing on the church at Rome (where, as you well know, he is by no means a stranger), although he went so far as to make the attempt, if he might somehow succeed. But, as I have just said, he entirely failed. For the most blessed Pope Zosimus recollected what his predecessor, who had set him so worthy an example, had thought of these very proceedings. Nor did he omit to observe what opinion was entertained about this man by the trusty Romans, whose faith deserved to be spoken of in the Lord, and whose consistent zeal in defence of catholic truth against this heresy he saw prevailing amongst them with warmth, and at the same time most perfect harmony. The man had lived among them for a long while, and his opinions could not escape their notice; moreover, they had so completely found out his disciple Coelestius, as to be able at once to adduce the most trustworthy and irrefragable evidence on this subject. Now what was the solemn judgment which the holy Pope Innocent formed respecting the proceedings in the Synod of Palestine, by which Pelagius boasts of having been acquitted, you may indeed read in the letter which he addressed to me. It is duly mentioned also in the answer which was forwarded by the African Synod to the venerable Pope Zosimus and which, along with the other instructions, we have despatched to your loving selves. But it seems to me, at the same time, that I ought not to omit producing the particulars in the present work.

CHAPTER 10 [IX.]

THE JUDGMENT OF INNOCENT RESPECTING THE PROCEEDINGS IN PALESTINE

Five bishops, then, of whom I was one, wrote him a letter, wherein we mentioned the proceedings in Palestine, of which the report had already reached us. We informed him that in the East, where this man lived, there had taken place certain ecclesiastical proceedings, in which he was thought to have been acquitted on all the charges. To this communication from us Innocent replied in a letter which contains the following among other words: "There are," says he, "sundry positions, as stated in these very Proceedings, which, when they were objected against him, he partly suppressed by avoiding them, and partly confused in absolute obscurity, by wresting the sense of many words; whilst there are other allegations which he cleared off,—not, indeed, in the honest way which he might seem at the time to use, but rather by methods of sophistry, meeting some of the objections with a flat denial, and tampering with others by a fallacious interpretation. Would, however, that he would even now adopt what is the far more desirable course of turning from his own error back to the true ways of catholic faith; that he would also, duly considering God's daily grace, and acknowledging the help thereof, be willing and desirous to appear, amidst the approbation of all men, to be truly corrected by the method of open conviction,—not, indeed, by judicial process, but by a hearty conversion to the catholic faith. We are therefore unable either to approve of or to blame their proceedings at that trial; for we cannot tell whether the proceedings were true, or even, if true, whether they do not really show that the man escaped by subterfuge, rather than that he cleared himself by entire truth." You see clearly from these words, how that the most blessed Pope Innocent without doubt speaks of this man as of one who was by no means unknown to him. You see what opinion he entertained about his acquittal. You see, moreover, what his successor the holy Pope Zosimus was bound to recollect,—as in truth he did,—so as to confirm without hesitation the judgment of his predecessor in this case.

CHAPTER 11 [X.]

HOW THAT PELAGIUS DECEIVED THE SYNOD OF PALESTINE

Now I pray you carefully to observe by what evidence Pelagius is shown to have deceived his judges in Palestine, not to mention other points, on this very question of the baptism of infants, lest we should seem to any one to have used calumny and suspicion, rather than to have ascertained the certain fact, when we alleged that Pelagius concealed the opinion which Coelestius expressed with greater frankness, while at the same time he actually entertained the same views. Now, from what has been stated above, it has been clearly seen that Coelestius refused to condemn the assertion that "Adam's sin injured only himself, and not the human race, and that infants at their birth are in the same state that Adam was before the transgression," because he saw that, if he condemned these propositions, he would affirm that there was in infants a transmission of sin from Adam. When, however, it was objected to Pelagius that he was of one mind with Coelestius on this point, he condemned the words without hesitation. I am quite aware that you have read all this before. Since, however, we are not writing this account for you alone, we proceed to transcribe the very words of the synodal acts, lest the reader should be unwilling either to turn to the record for himself, or if he does not possess it, take the trouble to procure a copy. Here, then, are the words:—

CHAPTER 12 [XI.]

A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE SYNOD OF PALESTINE IN THE CAUSE OF PELAGIUS

"The synod said: Now, forasmuch as Pelagius has pronounced his anathema on this uncertain utterance of folly, rightly replying that a man by God's help and grace is able to live anamartetos, that is to say, without sin, let him give us his answer on other articles also. Another particular in the teaching of Coelestius, disciple of Pelagius, selected from the heads which were mentioned and heard at Carthage before the holy Aurelius bishop of Carthage, and other bishops, was to this effect: That Adam was made mortal, and that he would have died, whether he sinned or did not sin; that Adam's sin injured himself alone, and not the human race; that the law no less than the gospel leads us to the kingdom; that before the coming of Christ there were persons without sin; that newborn infants are in the same condition that Adam was before the transgression; that, on the one hand, the entire human race does not die on account of Adam's death and transgression, nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ; that the holy bishop Augustin wrote a book in answer to his followers in Sicily, on articles which were subjoined, and in this book, which was addressed to Hilary, are contained the following statements: That a man is able to be without sin if he wishes; that infants, even if they are unbaptized, have eternal life; that rich men, even if they are baptized, unless they renounce and give up all, have, whatever good they may seem to have done, nothing of it reckoned unto them, neither can they possess the kingdom of heaven.' Pelagius then said: As regards man's ability to be without sin, my opinion has been already spoken. With respect, however, to the allegation that there were even before the Lord's coming persons who lived without sin, we also on our part say, that before the coming of Christ there certainly were persons who passed their lives in holiness and righteousness, according to the accounts which have been handed down to us in the Holy Scriptures. As for the other points, indeed, even on their own showing, they are not of a character which obliges me to be answerable for them; but yet, for the satisfaction of the sacred Synod, I anathematize those who either now hold or have ever held these opinions."

CHAPTER 13 [XII.]

COELESTIUS THE BOLDER HERETIC; PELAGIUS THE MORE SUBTLE

You see, indeed, not to mention other points, how that Pelagius pronounced his anathema against those who hold that "Adam's sin injured only himself, and not the human race; and that infants are at their birth in the same condition in which Adam was before the transgression." Now what else could the bishops who sat in judgment on him have possibly understood him to mean by this, but that the sin of Adam is transmitted to infants? It was to avoid making such an admission that Coelestius refused to condemn this statement, which this man on the contrary anathematized. If, therefore, I shall show that he did not really entertain any other opinion concerning infants than that they are born without any contagion of a single sin, what difference will there remain on this question between him and Coelestius, except this, that the one is more open, the other more reserved; the one more pertinacious, the other more mendacious; or, at any rate, that the one is more candid, the other more astute? For, the one before the church of Carthage refused to condemn what he afterwards in the church at Rome publicly confessed to be a tenet of his own; at the same time professing himself "ready to submit to correction if an error had stolen over him, considering that he was but human;" whereas the other both condemned this dogma as being contrary to the truth lest he should himself be condemned by his catholic judges, and yet kept it in reserve for subsequent defence, so that either his condemnation was a lie, or his interpretation a trick.

CHAPTER 14 [XIII.]

HE SHOWS THAT, EVEN AFTER THE SYNOD OF PALESTINE, PELAGIUS HELD THE SAME OPINIONS AS COELESTIUS ON THE SUBJECT OF ORIGINAL SIN

I see, however, that it may be most justly demanded of me, that I do not defer my promised demonstration, that he actually entertains the same views as Coelestius. In the first book of his more recent work, written in defence of free will (which work he mentions in the letter he despatched to Rome), he says: "Everything good, and everything evil, on account of which we are either laudable or blameworthy, is not born with us but done by us: for we are born not fully developed, but with a capacity for either conduct; and we are procreated as without virtue, so also without vice; and previous to the action of our own proper will, that alone is in man which God has formed." Now you perceive that in these words of Pelagius, the dogma of both these men is contained, that infants are born without the contagion of any sin from Adam. It is therefore not astonishing that Coelestius refused to condemn such as say that Adam's sin injured only himself, and not the human race; and that infants are at their birth in the same state in which Adam was before the transgression. But it is very much to be wondered at, that Pelagius had the effrontery to anathematize these opinions. For if, as he alleges, “evil is not born with us, and we are procreated without fault, and the only thing in man previous to the action of his own will is what God has formed,” then of course the sin of Adam did only injure himself, inasmuch as it did not pass on to his offspring. For there is not any sin which is not an evil; or a sin that is not a fault; or else sin was created by God. But he says: “Evil is not born with us, and we are procreated without fault; and the only thing in men at their birth is what God has formed.” Now, since by this language he supposes it to be most true, that, according to the well-known sentence of his: “Adam’s sin was injurious to himself alone, and not to the human race,” why did Pelagius condemn this, if it were not for the purpose of deceiving his catholic judges? By parity of reasoning, it may also be argued: “If evil is not born with us, and if we are procreated without fault, and if the only thing found in man at the time of his birth is what God has formed,” it follows beyond a doubt that “infants at their birth are in the same condition that Adam was before the transgression,” in whom no evil or fault was inherent, and in whom that alone existed which God had formed. And yet Pelagius pronounced anathema on all those persons “who hold now, or have at any time held, that newborn babes are placed by their birth in the same state that Adam was in before the transgression,”—in other words, are without any evil, without any fault, having that only which God had formed. Now, why again did Pelagius condemn this tenet also, if it were not for the purpose of deceiving the catholic Synod, and saving himself from the condemnation of an heretical innovator?

CHAPTER 15 [XIV.]

PELAGIUS BY HIS MENDACITY AND DECEPTION STOLE HIS ACQUITTAL FROM THE SYNOD IN PALESTINE

For my own part, however, I, as you are quite aware, and as I also stated in the book which I addressed to our venerable and aged Aurelius on the proceedings in Palestine, really felt glad that Pelagius in that answer of his had exhausted the whole of this question. To me, indeed, he seemed most plainly to have acknowledged that there is original sin in infants, by the anathema which he pronounced against those persons who supposed that by the sin of Adam only himself, and not the human race, was injured, and who entertained the opinion that infants are in the same state in which the first man was before the transgression. When, however, I had read his four books (from the first of which I copied the words which I have just now quoted), and discovered that he was still cherishing thoughts which were opposed to the catholic faith touching infants, I felt all the greater surprise at a mendacity which he so unblushingly maintained in a synod of the Church, and on so great a question. For if he had already written these books, how did he profess to anathematize those who had ever entertained the opinions alluded to? If he purposed, however, afterwards to publish such a work, how could he anathematize those who at the time were holding the opinions? Unless, to be sure, by some ridiculous subterfuge he meant to say that the objects of his anathema were such persons as had in some previous time held, or were then holding, these opinions; but that in respect of the future—that is, as regarded those persons who were about to take up with such views—he felt that it would be impossible for him to prejudge either himself or other people, and that therefore he was guilty of no lie when he was afterwards detected in the maintenance of similar errors. This plea, however, he does not advance, not only because it is a ridiculous one, but because it cannot possibly be true; because in these very books of his he both argues against the transmission of sin from Adam to infants, and glories in the proceedings of the Synod in Palestine, where he was supposed to have sincerely anathematized such as hold the opinions in dispute, and where he, in fact, stole his acquittal by practising deceit.

CHAPTER 16 [XV.]

PELAGIUS’ FRAUDULENT AND CRAFTY EXCUSES

For what is the significance to the matter with which we now have to do of his answers to his followers, when he tells them that “the reason why he condemned the points which were objected against him, is because he himself maintains that primal sin was injurious not only to the first man, but to the whole human race, not by transmission, but by example;” in other words, not because those who have been propagated from him have derived any fault from him, but because all who afterwards have sinned, have imitated him who committed the first sin? Or when he says that "the reason why infants are not in the same state in which Adam was before the transgression, is because they are not yet able to receive the commandment, whereas he was able; and because they do not yet make use of that choice of a rational will which he certainly made use of, since otherwise no commandment would have been given to him"? How does such an exposition as this of the points alleged against him justify him in thinking that he rightly condemned the propositions, "Adam's sin injured only himself, and not the whole race of man;" and "infants at their birth are in the self-same state in which Adam was before he sinned;" and that by the said condemnation he is not guilty of deceit in holding such opinions as are found in his subsequent writings, how that "infants are born without any evil or fault, and that there is nothing in them but what God has formed,"—no wound, in short, inflicted by an enemy?

CHAPTER 17

HOW PELAGIUS DECEIVED HIS JUDGES

Now, is it by making such statements as these, meeting objections which are urged in one sense with explanations which are meant in another, that he designs to prove to us that he did not deceive those who sat in judgment on him? Then he utterly fails in his purpose. In proportion to the craftiness of his explanations, was the stealthiness with which he deceived them. For, just because they were catholic bishops, when they heard the man pouring out anathemas upon those who maintained that "Adam's sin was injurious to none but himself, and not to the human race," they understood him to assert nothing but what the catholic Church has been accustomed to declare, on the ground of which it truly baptizes infants for the remission of sins—not, indeed, sins which they have committed by imitation owing to the example of the first sinner, but sins which they have contracted by their very birth, owing to the corruption of their origin. When, again, they heard him anathematizing those who assert that "infants at their birth are in the same state in which Adam was before the transgression," they supposed him to refer to none others than those persons who "think that infants have derived no sin from Adam, and that they are accordingly in that state that he was in before his sin." For, of course, no other objection would be brought against him than that on which the question turned. When, therefore, he so explains the objection as to say that infants are not in the same state that Adam was in before he sinned, simply because they have not yet arrived at the same firmness of mind or body, not because of any propagated fault that has passed on to them, he must be answered thus: "When the objections were laid against you for condemnation, the catholic bishops did not understand them in this sense; therefore, when you condemned them, they believed that you were a catholic. That, accordingly, which they supposed you to maintain, deserved to be released from censure; but that which you really maintained was worthy of condemnation. It was not you, then, that were acquitted, who held tenets which ought to be condemned; but that opinion was freed from censure which you ought to have held and maintained. You could only be supposed to be acquitted by having been believed to entertain opinions worthy to be praised; for your judges could not suppose that you were concealing opinions which merited condemnation. Rightly have you been adjudged an accomplice of Coelestius, in whose opinions you prove yourself to be a sharer. And though you kept your books shut during your trial, you published them to the world after it was over."

CHAPTER 18 [XVII.]

THE CONDEMNATION OF PELAGIUS

This being the case, you of course feel that episcopal councils, and the Apostolic See, and the whole Roman Church, and the Roman Empire itself, which by God's gracious favour has become Christian, has been most righteously moved against the authors of this wicked error, until they repent and escape from the snares of the devil. For who can tell whether God may not give them repentance to discover, and acknowledge, and even proclaim His truth, and to condemn their own damnable error? But whatever may be the bent of their own will, we cannot doubt that the merciful kindness of the Lord has sought the good of many persons who followed them, for no other reason than because they saw them associated in communion with the catholic Church.

CHAPTER 19

PELAGIUS’ ATTEMPT TO DECEIVE THE APOSTOLIC SEE; HE INVERTS THE BEARINGS OF THE CONTROVERSY

But I would have you carefully observe the way in which Pelagius endeavoured by deception to overreach even the judgment of the bishop of the Apostolic See on this very question of the baptism of infants. He sent a letter to Rome to Pope Innocent of blessed memory; and when it found him not in the flesh, it was handed to the holy Pope Zosimus, and by him directed to us. In this letter he complains of being “defamed by certain persons for refusing the sacrament of baptism to infants, and promising the kingdom of heaven irrespective of Christ’s redemption.” The objections, however, are not urged against them in the manner he has stated. For they neither deny the sacrament of baptism to infants, nor do they promise the kingdom of heaven to any irrespective of the redemption of Christ. As regards, therefore, his complaint of being defamed by sundry persons, he has set it forth in such terms as to be able to give a ready answer to the alleged charge against him, without injury to his own dogma. [XVIII.] The real objection against them is, that they refuse to confess that unbaptized infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin has been transmitted to them and requires to be purged by regeneration; their contention being that infants must be baptized solely for being admitted into the kingdom of heaven, as if they could only have eternal death apart from the kingdom of heaven, who cannot have eternal life without partaking of the Lord’s body and blood. This, I would have you know, is the real objection to them respecting the baptism of infants; and not as he has represented it, for the purpose of enabling himself to save his own dogmas while answering what is actually a proposition of his own, under colour of meeting an objection.

CHAPTER 20

PELAGIUS PROVIDES A REFUGE FOR HIS FALSEHOOD IN AMBIGUOUS SUBTERFUGES

And then observe how he makes his answer, how he provides in the obscure mazes of his double sense retreats for his false doctrine, quenching the truth in his dark mist of error; so that even we, on our first perusal of his words, almost rejoiced at their propriety and correctness. But the fuller discussions in his books, in which he is generally forced, in spite of all his efforts at concealment, to explain his meaning, have made even his better statements suspicious to us, lest on a closer inspection of them we should detect them to be ambiguous. For, after saying that “he had never heard even an impious heretic say this” (namely, what he set forth as the objection) “about infants,” he goes on to ask: “Who indeed is so unacquainted with Gospel lessons, as not only to attempt to make such an affirmation, but even to be able to lightly say it or even let it enter his thought? And then who is so impious as to wish to exclude infants from the kingdom of heaven, by forbidding them to be baptized and to be born again in Christ?”

CHAPTER 21 [XIX.]

PELAGIUS AVOIDS THE QUESTION AS TO WHY BAPTISM IS NECESSARY FOR INFANTS

Now it is to no purpose that he says all this. He does not clear himself thereby. Not even they have ever denied the impossibility of infants entering the kingdom of heaven without baptism. But this is not the question; what we are discussing concerns the obliteration of original sin in infants. Let him clear himself on this point, since he refuses to acknowledge that there is anything in infants which the laver of regeneration has to cleanse. On this account we ought carefully to consider what he has afterwards to say. After adducing, then, the passage of the Gospel which declares that “whosoever is not born again of water and the Spirit cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven” (on which matter, as we have said, they raise no question), he goes on at once to ask: “Who indeed is so impious as to have the heart to refuse the common redemption of the human race to an infant of any age whatever?” But this is ambiguous language; for what redemption does he mean? Is it from evil to good? or from good to better? Now even Coelestius, at Carthage, allowed a redemption for infants in his book; although, at the same time, he would not admit the transmission of sin to them from Adam.

CHAPTER 22 [XX.]

ANOTHER INSTANCE OF PELAGIUS’ AMBIGUITY

Then, again, observe what he subjoins to the last remark: “Can any one,” says he, “forbid a second birth to an eternal and certain life, to him who has been born to this present uncertain life?” In other words: “Who is so impious as to forbid his being born again to the life which is sure and eternal, who has been born to this life of uncertainty?” When we first read these words, we supposed that by the phrase “uncertain life” he meant to designate this present temporal life; although it appeared to us that he ought rather to have called it “mortal” than “uncertain,” because it is brought to a close by certain death. But for all this, we thought that he had only shown a preference for calling this mortal life an uncertain one, because of the general view which men take that there is undoubtedly not a moment in our lives when we are free from this uncertainty. And so it happened that our anxiety about him was allayed to some extent by the following consideration, which rose almost to a proof, notwithstanding the fact of his unwillingness openly to confess that infants incur eternal death who depart this life without the sacrament of baptism. We argued: “If, as he seems to admit, eternal life can only accrue to them who have been baptized, it follows of course that they who die unbaptized incur everlasting death. This destiny, however, cannot by any means justly befall those who never in this life committed any sins of their own, unless on account of original sin.”

CHAPTER 23 [XXI.]

WHAT HE MEANS BY OUR BIRTH TO AN “UNCERTAIN” LIFE

Certain brethren, however, afterwards failed not to remind us that Pelagius possibly expressed himself in this way, because on this question he is represented as having his answer ready for all inquirers, to this effect: “As for infants who die unbaptized, I know indeed whither they go not; yet whither they go, I know not;” that is, I know they do not go into the kingdom of heaven. But as to whither they go, he was (and for the matter of that, still is) in the habit of saying that he knew not, because he dared not say that those went to eternal death, who he was persuaded had never committed sin in this life, and whom he would not admit to have inherited original sin. Consequently those very words of his which were forwarded to Rome to secure his absolute acquittal, are so steeped in ambiguity that they afford a shelter for their doctrine, out of which may sally forth an heretical sense to entrap the unwary straggler; for when no one is at hand who can give the answer, any solitary man may find himself weak.

CHAPTER 24

PELAGIUS’ LONG RESIDENCE AT ROME

The truth indeed is, that in the book of his faith which he sent to Rome with this very letter to the before-mentioned Pope Innocent, to whom also he had written the letter, he only the more evidently exposed himself by his efforts at concealment. He says: “We hold one baptism, which we say ought to be administered in the same sacramental words in the case of infants as in the case of adults.” He did not, however, say, “in the same sacrament” (although if he had so said, there would still have been ambiguity), but “in the same sacramental words,”—as if remission of sins in infants were declared by the sound of the words, and not wrought by the effect of the acts. For the time, indeed, he seemed to say what was agreeable with the catholic faith; but he had it not in his power permanently to deceive that see. Subsequent to the rescript of the African Council, into which province this pestilent doctrine had stealthily made its way—without, however, spreading widely or sinking deeply—other opinions also of this man were by the industry of some faithful brethren discovered and brought to light at Rome, where he had dwelt for a very long while, and had already engaged in sundry discourses and controversies. In order to procure the condemnation of these opinions, Pope Zosimus, as you may read, annexed them to his letter, which he wrote for publication throughout the catholic world. Among these statements, Pelagius, pretending to expound the Apostle Paul’s Epistle to the Romans, argues in these words: “If Adam’s sin injured those who have not sinned, then also Christ’s righteousness profits those who do not believe.” He says other things, too, of the same purport; but they have all been refuted and answered by me with the Lord’s help in the books which I wrote, On the Baptism of Infants. But he had not the courage to make those objectionable statements in his own person in the fore-mentioned so-called exposition. This particular one, however, having been enunciated in a place where he was so well known, his words and their meaning could not be disguised. In those books, from the first of which I have already before quoted, he treats this point without any suppression of his views. With all the energy of which he is capable, he most plainly asserts that human nature in infants cannot in any wise be supposed to be corrupted by propagation; and by claiming salvation for them as their due, he does despite to the Saviour.

CHAPTER 25 [XXII.]

THE CONDEMNATION OF PELAGIUS AND COELESTIUS

These things, then, being as I have stated them, it is now evident that there has arisen a deadly heresy, which, with the Lord's help, the Church by this time guards against more directly—now that those two men, Pelagius and Coelestius, have been either offered repentance, or on their refusal been wholly condemned. They are reported, or perhaps actually proved, to be the authors of this perversion; at all events, if not the authors (as having learnt it from others), they are yet its boasted abettors and teachers, through whose agency the heresy has advanced and grown to a wider extent. This boast, too, is made even in their own statements and writings, and in unmistakeable signs of reality, as well as in the fame which arises and grows out of all these circumstances. What, therefore, remains to be done? Must not every catholic, with all the energies wherewith the Lord endows him, confute this pestilential doctrine, and oppose it with all vigilance; so that whenever we contend for the truth, compelled to answer, but not fond of the contest, the untaught may be instructed, and that thus the Church may be benefited by that which the enemy devised for her destruction; in accordance with that word of the apostle's, “There must be heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you”?

CHAPTER 26 [XXIII.]

THE PELAGIANS MAINTAIN THAT RAISING QUESTIONS ABOUT ORIGINAL SIN DOES NOT ENDANGER THE FAITH

Therefore, after the full discussion with which we have been able to rebut in writing this error of theirs, which is so inimical to the grace of God bestowed on small and great through our Lord Jesus Christ, it is now our duty to examine and explode that assertion of theirs, which in their desire to avoid the odious imputation of heresy they astutely advance, to the effect that “calling this subject into question produces no danger to the faith,”—in order that they may appear, forsooth, if they are convicted of having deviated from it, to have erred not criminally, but only, as it were, courteously. This, accordingly, is the language which Coelestius used in the ecclesiastical process at Carthage: “As touching the transmission of sin,” he said, “I have already said that I have heard many persons of acknowledged position in the catholic Church deny it, and on the other hand many affirm it; it may fairly, indeed, be deemed a matter for inquiry, but not a heresy. I have always maintained that infants require baptism, and ought to be baptized. What else does he want?” He said this, as if he wanted to intimate that only then could he be deemed chargeable with heresy, if he were to assert that they ought not to be baptized. As the case stood, however, inasmuch as he acknowledged that they ought to be baptized, he thought that he had not erred [criminally], and therefore ought not to be adjudged a heretic, even though he maintained the reason of their baptism to be other than the truth holds, or the faith claims as its own. On the same principle, in the book which he sent to Rome, he first explained his belief, so far as it suited his pleasure, from the Trinity of the One Godhead down to the kind of resurrection of the dead that is to be; on all which points, however, no one had ever questioned him, or been questioned by him. And when his discourse reached the question which was under consideration, he said: “If, indeed, any questions have arisen beyond the compass of the faith, on which there might be perhaps dissension on the part of a great many persons, in no case have I pretended to pronounce a decision on any dogma, as if I possessed a definitive authority in the matter myself; but whatever I have derived from the fountain of the prophets and the apostles, I have presented for approbation to the judgment of your apostolic office; so that if any error has crept in among us, human as we are, through our ignorance, it may be corrected by your sentence.” You of course clearly see that in this action of his he used all this deprecatory preamble in order that, if he had been discovered to have erred at all, he might seem to have erred not on a matter of faith, but on questionable points outside the faith; wherein, however necessary it may be to correct the error, it is not corrected as a heresy; wherein also the person who undergoes the correction is declared indeed to be in error, but for all that is not adjudged a heretic.

CHAPTER 27 [XXIII.]

ON QUESTIONS OUTSIDE THE FAITH—WHAT THEY ARE, AND INSTANCES OF THE SAME

But he is greatly mistaken in this opinion. The questions which he supposes to be outside the faith are of a very different character from those in which, without any detriment to the faith whereby we are Christians, there exists either an ignorance of the real fact, and a consequent suspension of any fixed opinion, or else a conjectural view of the case, which, owing to the infirmity of human thought, issues in conceptions at variance with truth: as when a question arises about the description and locality of that Paradise where God placed man whom He formed out of the ground, without any disturbance, however, of the Christian belief that there undoubtedly is such a Paradise; or as when it is asked where Elijah is at the present moment, and where Enoch—whether in this Paradise or in some other place, although we doubt not of their existing still in the same bodies in which they were born; or as when one inquires whether it was in the body or out of the body that the apostle was caught up to the third heaven,—an inquiry, however, which betokens great lack of modesty on the part of those who would fain know what he who is the subject of the mystery itself expressly declares his ignorance of, without impairing his own belief of the fact; or as when the question is started, how many are those heavens, to the “third” of which he tells us that he was caught up; or whether the elements of this visible world are four or more; what it is which causes those eclipses of the sun or the moon which astronomers are in the habit of foretelling for certain appointed seasons; why, again, men of ancient times lived to the age which Holy Scripture assigns to them; and whether the period of their puberty, when they begat their first son, was postponed to an older age, proportioned to their longer life; or where Methuselah could possibly have lived, since he was not in the Ark, inasmuch as (according to the chronological notes of most copies of the Scripture, both Greek and Latin) he is found to have survived the deluge; or whether we must follow the order of the fewer copies—and they happen to be extremely few—which so arrange the years as to show that he died before the deluge. Now who does not feel, amidst the various and innumerable questions of this sort, which relate either to God’s most hidden operations or to most obscure passages of the Scriptures, and which it is difficult to embrace and define in any certain way, that ignorance may on many points be compatible with sound Christian faith, and that occasionally erroneous opinion may be entertained without any room for the imputation of heretical doctrine?

CHAPTER 28 [XXIV.]

THE HERESY OF PELAGIUS AND COELESTIUS AIMS AT THE VERY FOUNDATIONS OF OUR FAITH

This is, however, in the matter of the two men by one of whom we are sold under sin, by the other redeemed from sins—by the one have been precipitated into death, by the other are liberated unto life; the former of whom has ruined us in himself, by doing his own will instead of His who created him; the latter has saved us in Himself, by not doing His own will, but the will of Him who sent Him: and it is in what concerns these two men that the Christian faith properly consists. For “there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;” since “there is none other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved;” and “in Him hath God defined unto all men their faith, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.” Now without this faith, that is to say, without a belief in the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; without faith, I say, in His resurrection by which God has given assurance to all men and which no man could of course truly believe were it not for His incarnation and death; without faith, therefore, in the incarnation and death and resurrection of Christ, the Christian verity unhesitatingly declares that the ancient saints could not possibly have been cleansed from sin so as to have become holy, and justified by the grace of God. And this is true both of the saints who are mentioned in Holy Scripture, and of those also who are not indeed mentioned therein, but must yet be supposed to have existed,—either before the deluge, or in the interval between that event and the giving of the law, or in the period of the law itself,—not merely among the children of Israel, as the prophets, but even outside that nation, as for instance Job. For it was by the self-same faith in the one Mediator that the hearts of these, too, were cleansed, and there also was “shed abroad in them the love of God by the Holy Ghost,” “who bloweth where He listeth,” not following men’s merits, but even producing these very merits Himself. For the grace of God will in no wise exist unless it be wholly free.

CHAPTER 29

THE RIGHTEOUS MEN WHO LIVED IN THE TIME OF THE LAW WERE FOR ALL THAT NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE. THE GRACE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT HIDDEN UNDER THE OLD

Death indeed reigned from Adam until Moses, because it was not possible even for the law given through Moses to overcome it: it was not given, in fact, as something able to give life; but as something that ought to show those that were dead and for whom grace was needed to give them life, that they were not only prostrated under the propagation and domination of sin, but also convicted by the additional guilt of breaking the law itself: not in order that any one might perish who in the mercy of God understood this even in that early age; but that, destined though he was to punishment, owing to the dominion of death, and manifested, too, as guilty through his own violation of the law, he might seek God’s help, and so where sin abounded, grace might much more abound, even the grace which alone delivers from the body of this death. [XXV.] Yet, notwithstanding this, although not even the law which Moses gave was able to liberate any man from the dominion of death, there were even then, too, at the time of the law, men of God who were not living under the terror and conviction and punishment of the law, but under the delight and healing and liberation of grace. Some there were who said, “I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me;” and, “There is no rest in my bones, by reason of my sins;” and, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit in my inward parts;” and, “Stablish me with Thy directing Spirit;” and, “Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.” There were some, again, who said: “I believed, therefore have I spoken.” For they too were cleansed with the self-same faith with which we ourselves are. Whence the apostle also says: “We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believe, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.” Out of very faith was it said, “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel,” “which is, being interpreted, God with us.” Out of very faith too was it said concerning Him: “As a bridegroom He cometh out of His chamber; as a giant did He exult to run His course. His going forth is from the extremity of heaven, and His circuit runs to the other end of heaven; and no one is hidden from His heat." Out of very faith, again, was it said to Him: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." By the self-same Spirit of faith were all these things foreseen by them as to happen, whereby they are believed by us as having happened. They, indeed, who were able in faithful love to foretell these things to us were not themselves partakers of them. The Apostle Peter says, "Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Now on what principle does he make this statement, if it be not because even they were saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and not the law of Moses, from which comes not the cure, but only the knowledge of sin? Now, however, the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. If, therefore, it is now manifested, it even then existed, but it was hidden. This concealment was symbolized by the veil of the temple. When Christ was dying, this veil was rent asunder, to signify the full revelation of Him. Even of old, therefore there existed amongst the people of God this grace of the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; but like the rain in the fleece which God sets apart for His inheritance, not of debt, but of His own will, it was latently present, but is now patently visible amongst all nations as its "floor," the fleece being dry,—in other words, the Jewish people having become reprobate.

CHAPTER 30 [XXVI]

PELAGIUS AND COELESTIUS DENY THAT THE ANCIENT SAINTS WERE SAVED BY CHRIST

We must not therefore divide the times, as Pelagius and his disciples do, who say that men first lived righteously by nature, then under the law, thirdly under grace,—by nature meaning all the long time from Adam before the giving of the law. "For then," say they, "the Creator was known by the guidance of reason; and the rule of living rightly was carried written in the hearts of men, not in the law of the letter, but of nature. But men’s manners became corrupt; and then,” they say, “when nature now tarnished began to be insufficient, the law was added to it whereby as by a moon the original lustre was restored to nature after its blush was impaired. But after the habit of sinning had too much prevailed among men, and the law was unequal to the task of curing it, Christ came; and the Physician Himself, through His own self, and not through His disciples, brought relief to the malady at its most desperate development.”

CHAPTER 31

CHRIST’S INCARNATION WAS OF AVAIL TO THE FATHERS, EVEN THOUGH IT HAD NOT YET HAPPENED

By disputation of this sort, they attempt to exclude the ancient saints from the grace of the Mediator, as if the man Christ Jesus were not the Mediator between God and those men; on the ground that, not having yet taken flesh of the Virgin’s womb, He was not yet man at the time when those righteous men lived. If this, however, were true, in vain would the apostle say: “By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” For inasmuch as those ancient saints, according to the vain conceits of these men, found their nature self-sufficient, and required not the man Christ to be their Mediator to reconcile them to God, so neither shall they be made alive in Him, to whose body they are shown not to belong as members, according to the statement that it was on man’s account that He became man. If, however, as the Truth says through His apostles, even as all die in Adam, even so shall all be made alive in Christ; forasmuch as the resurrection of the dead comes through the one man, even as death comes through the other man; what Christian man can be bold enough to doubt that even those righteous men who pleased God in the more remote periods of the human race are destined to attain to the resurrection of eternal life, and not eternal death, because they shall be made alive in Christ? that they are made alive in Christ, because they belong to the body of Christ? that they belong to the body of Christ, because Christ is the head even to them? and that Christ is the head even to them, because there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus? But this He could not have been to them, unless through His grace they had believed in His resurrection. And how could they have done this, if they had been ignorant that He was to come in the flesh, and if they had not by this faith lived justly and piously? Now, if the incarnation of Christ could be of no concern to them, on the ground that it had not yet come about, it must follow that Christ's judgment can be of no concern to us, because it has not yet taken place. But if we shall stand at the right hand of Christ through our faith in His judgment, which has not yet transpired, but is to come to pass, it follows that those ancient saints are members of Christ through their faith in His resurrection, which had not in their day happened, but which was one day to come to pass.

CHAPTER 32 [XXVII.]

HE SHOWS BY THE EXAMPLE OF ABRAHAM THAT THE ANCIENT SAINTS BELIEVED IN THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST

For it must not be supposed that those saints of old only profited by Christ's divinity, which was ever existent, and not also by the revelation of His humanity, which had not yet come to pass. What the Lord Jesus says, "Abraham desired to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad," meaning by the phrase his day to understand his time, affords of course a clear testimony that Abraham was fully imbued with belief in His incarnation. It is in respect of this that He has a "time;" for His divinity exceeds all time, for it was by it that all times were created. If, however, any one supposes that the phrase in question must be understood of that eternal "day" which is limited by no morrow, and preceded by no yesterday,—in a word, of the very eternity in which He is co-eternal with the Father,—how would Abraham really desire this, unless he was aware that there was to be a future mortality belonging to Him whose eternity he wished for? Or, perhaps, some one would confine the meaning of the phrase so far as to say, that nothing else is meant in the Lord's saying, "He desired to see my day," than "He desired to see me," who am the never-ending Day, or the unfailing Light, as when we mention the life of the Son, concerning which it is said in the Gospel: "So hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." Here the life is nothing less than Himself. So we understand the Son Himself to be the life, when He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life;" of whom also it was said, “He is the true God, and eternal life.” Supposing, then, that Abraham desired to see this equal divinity of the Son’s with the Father, without any precognition of His coming in the flesh—as certain philosophers sought Him, who knew nothing of His flesh—can that other act of Abraham, when he orders his servant to place his hand under his thigh, and to swear by the God of heaven, be rightly understood by any one otherwise than as showing that Abraham well knew that the flesh in which the God of heaven was to come was the offspring of that very thigh?

CHAPTER 33 [XVIII.]

HOW CHRIST IS OUR MEDIATOR

Of this flesh and blood Melchizedek also, when he blessed Abram himself, gave the testimony which is very well known to Christian believers, so that long afterwards it was said to Christ in the Psalms: “Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.” This was not then an accomplished fact, but was still future; yet that faith of the fathers, which is the self-same faith as our own, used to chant it. Now, to all who find death in Adam, Christ is of this avail, that He is the Mediator for life. He is, however, not a Mediator, because He is equal with the Father; for in this respect He is Himself as far distant from us as the Father; and how can there be any medium where the distance is the very same? Therefore the apostle does not say, “There is one Mediator between God and men, even Jesus Christ;” but his words are, “The Man Christ Jesus.” He is the Mediator, then, in that He is man,—inferior to the Father, by so much as He is nearer to ourselves, and superior to us, by so much as He is nearer to the Father. This is more openly expressed thus: “He is inferior to the Father, because in the form of a servant;” superior to us, because without spot of sin.

CHAPTER 34 [XXIX.]

NO MAN EVER SAVED SAVE BY CHRIST

Now, whoever maintains that human nature at any period required not the second Adam for its physician, because it was not corrupted in the first Adam, is convicted as an enemy to the grace of God; not in a question where doubt or error might be compatible with soundness of belief, but in that very rule of faith which makes us Christians. How happens it, then, that the human nature, which first existed, is praised by these men as being so far less tainted with evil manners? How is it that they overlook the fact that men were even then sunk in so many intolerable sins, that, with the exception of one man of God and his wife, and three sons and their wives, the whole world was in God's just judgment destroyed by the flood, even as the little land of Sodom was afterwards with fire? From the moment, then, when "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all sinned," the entire mass of our nature was ruined beyond doubt, and fell into the possession of its destroyer. And from him no one—no, not one—has been delivered, or is being delivered, or ever will be delivered, except by the grace of the Redeemer.

CHAPTER 35 [XXX.]

WHY THE CIRCUMCISION OF INFANTS WAS ENJOINED UNDER PAIN OF SO GREAT A PUNISHMENT

The Scripture does not inform us whether before Abraham's time righteous men or their children were marked by any bodily or visible sign. Abraham himself, indeed, received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith. And he received it with this accompanying injunction: All the male infants of his household were from that very time to be circumcised, while fresh from their mother's womb, on the eighth day from their birth; so that even they who were not yet able with the heart to believe unto righteousness, should nevertheless receive the seal of the righteousness of faith. And this command was imposed with so fearful a sanction, that God said: "That soul shall be cut off from his people, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised on the eighth day." If inquiry be made into the justice of so terrible a penalty, will not the entire argument of these men about free will, and the laudable soundness and purity of nature, however cleverly maintained, fall to pieces, struck down and fractured to atoms? For, pray tell me, what evil has an infant committed of his own will, that, for the negligence of another in not circumcising him, he himself must be condemned, and with so severe a condemnation, that that soul must be cut off from his people? It was not of any temporal death that this fear was inflicted, since of righteous persons, when they died, it used rather to be said, “And he was gathered unto his people;” or, “He was gathered to his fathers:” for no attempt to separate a man from his people is long formidable to him, when his own people is itself the people of God.

CHAPTER 36 [XXXI]

THE PLATONISTS’ OPINION ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF THE SOUL PREVIOUS TO THE BODY REJECTED

What, then, is the purport of so severe a condemnation, when no wilful sin has been committed? For it is not as certain Platonists have thought, because every such infant is thus requited in his soul for what it did of its own wilfulness previous to the present life, as having possessed previous to its present bodily state a free choice of living either well or ill; since the Apostle Paul says most plainly, that before they were born they did neither good nor evil. On what account, therefore, is an infant rightly punished with such ruin, if it be not because he belongs to the mass of perdition, and is properly regarded as born of Adam, condemned under the bond of the ancient debt unless he has been released from the bond, not according to debt, but according to grace? And what grace but God’s, through our Lord Jesus Christ? Now there was a forecast of His coming undoubtedly contained not only in other sacred institutions of the ancient Jews, but also in their circumcision of the foreskin. For the eighth day, in the recurrence of weeks, became the Lord’s day, on which the Lord arose from the dead; and Christ was the rock whence was formed the stony blade for the circumcision; and the flesh of the foreskin was the body of sin.

CHAPTER 37 [XXXII.]

IN WHAT SENSE CHRIST IS CALLED “SIN.”

There was a change of the sacramental ordinances made after the coming of Him whose advent they prefigured; but there was no change in the Mediator’s help, who, even previous to His coming in the flesh, all along delivered the ancient members of His body by their faith in His incarnation; and in respect of ourselves too, though we were dead in sins and in the uncircumcision of our flesh, we are quickened together in Christ, in whom we are circumcised with the circumcision not made with the hand, but such as was prefigured by the old manual circumcision, that the body of sin might be done away which was born with us from Adam. The propagation of a condemned origin condemns us, unless we are cleansed by the likeness of sinful flesh, in which He was sent without sin, who nevertheless concerning sin condemned sin, having been made sin for us. Accordingly the apostle says: “We beseech you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled unto God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” God, therefore, to whom we are reconciled, has made Him to be sin for us,—that is to say, a sacrifice by which our sins may be remitted; for by sins are designated the sacrifices for sins. And indeed He was sacrificed for our sins, the only one among men who had no sins, even as in those early times one was sought for among the flocks to prefigure the Faultless One who was to come to heal our offences. On whatever day, therefore, an infant may be baptized after his birth, he is as if circumcised on the eighth day; inasmuch as he is circumcised in Him who rose again the third day indeed after He was crucified, but the eighth according to the weeks. He is circumcised for the putting off of the body of sin; in other words, that the grace of spiritual regeneration may do away with the debt which the contagion of carnal generation contracted. “For no one is pure from uncleanness” (what uncleanness, pray, but that of sin?), “not even the infant, whose life is but that of a single day upon the earth.”

CHAPTER 38 [XXXIII.]

ORIGINAL SIN DOES NOT RENDER MARRIAGE EVIL

But they argue thus, saying: “Is not, then, marriage an evil, and the man that is produced by marriage not God’s work?” As if the good of the married life were that disease of concupiscence with which they who know not God love their wives—a course which the apostle forbids; and not rather that conjugal chastity, by which carnal lust is reduced to the good purposes of the appointed procreation of children. Or as if, forsooth, a man could possibly be anything but God’s work, not only when born in wedlock, but even if he be produced in fornication or adultery. In the present inquiry, however, when the question is not for what a Creator is necessary, but for what a Saviour, we have not to consider what good there is in the procreation of nature, but what evil there is in sin, whereby our nature has been certainly corrupted. No doubt the two are generated simultaneously—both nature and nature's corruption; one of which is good, the other evil. The one comes to us from the bounty of the Creator, the other is contracted from the condemnation of our origin; the one has its cause in the good-will of the Supreme God, the other in the depraved will of the first man; the one exhibits God as the maker of the creature, the other exhibits God as the punisher of disobedience: in short, the very same Christ was the maker of man for the creation of the one, and was made man for the healing of the other.

CHAPTER 39 [XXXIV.]

THREE THINGS GOOD AND LAUDABLE IN MATRIMONY

Marriage, therefore, is a good in all the things which are proper to the married state. And these are three: it is the ordained means of procreation, it is the guarantee of chastity, it is the bond of union. In respect of its ordination for generation the Scripture says, "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house;" as regards its guaranteeing chastity, it is said of it, "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife;" and considered as the bond of union: "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Touching these points, we do not forget that we have treated at sufficient length, with whatever ability the Lord has given us, in other works of ours, which are not unknown to you. In relation to them all the Scripture has this general praise: "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled." For, inasmuch as the wedded state is good, insomuch does it produce a very large amount of good in respect of the evil of concupiscence; for it is not lust, but reason, which makes a good use of concupiscence. Now lust lies in that law of the "disobedient" members which the apostle notes as "warring against the law of the mind;" whereas reason lies in that law of the wedded state which makes good use of concupiscence. If, however, it were impossible for any good to arise out of evil, God could not create man out of the embraces of adultery. As, therefore, the damnable evil of adultery, whenever man is born in it, is not chargeable on God, who certainly amidst man's evil work actually produces a good work; so, likewise, all which causes shame in that rebellion of the members which brought the accusing blush on those who after their sin covered these members with the fig-tree leaves, is not laid to the charge of marriage, by virtue of which the conjugal embrace is not only allowable, but is even useful and honourable; but it is imputable to the sin of that disobedience which was followed by the penalty of man's finding his own members emulating against himself that very disobedience which he had practised against God. Then, abashed at their action, since they moved no more at the bidding of his rational will, but at their own arbitrary choice as it were, instigated by lust, he devised the covering which should conceal such of them as he judged to be worthy of shame. For man, as the handiwork of God, deserved not confusion of face; nor were the members which it seemed fit to the Creator to form and appoint by any means designed to bring the blush to the creature. Accordingly, that simple nudity was displeasing neither to God nor to man: there was nothing to be ashamed of, because nothing at first accrued which deserved punishment.

CHAPTER 40 [XXXV.]

MARRIAGE EXISTED BEFORE SIN WAS COMMITTED. HOW GOD'S BLESSING OPERATED IN OUR FIRST PARENTS

There was, however, undoubtedly marriage, even when sin had no prior existence; and for no other reason was it that woman, and not a second man, was created as a help for the man. Moreover, those words of God, "Be fruitful and multiply," are not prophetic of sins to be condemned, but a benediction upon the fertility of marriage. For by these ineffable words of His, I mean by the divine methods which are inherent in the truth of His wisdom by which all things were made, God endowed the primeval pair with their seminal power. Suppose, however, that nature had not been dishonoured by sin, God forbid that we should think that marriages in Paradise must have been such, that in them the procreative members would be excited by the mere ardour of lust, and not by the command of the will for producing offspring,—as the foot is for walking, the hand for labour, and the tongue for speech. Nor, as now happens, would the chastity of virginity be corrupted to the conception of offspring by the force of a turbid heat, but it would rather be submissive to the power of the gentlest love;

and thus there would be no pain, no blood-effusion of the concumbent virgin, as there would also be no groan of the parturient mother. This, however, men refuse to believe, because it has not been verified in the actual condition of our mortal state. Nature, having been vitiated by sin, has never experienced an instance of that primeval purity. But we speak to faithful men, who have learnt to believe the inspired Scriptures, even though no examples are adduced of actual reality. For how could I now possibly prove that a man was made of the dust, without any parents, and a wife formed for him out of his own side? And yet faith takes on trust what the eye no longer discovers.

CHAPTER 41 [XXXVI.]

LUST AND TRAVAIL COME FROM SIN. WHENCE OUR MEMBERS BECAME A CAUSE OF SHAME

Granted, therefore, that we have no means of showing both that the nuptial acts of that primeval marriage were quietly discharged, undisturbed by lustful passion, and that the motion of the organs of generation, like that of any other members of the body, was not instigated by the ardour of lust, but directed by the choice of the will (which would have continued such with marriage had not the disgrace of sin intervened); still, from all that is stated in the sacred Scriptures on divine authority, we have reasonable grounds for believing that such was the original condition of wedded life. Although, it is true, I am not told that the nuptial embrace was unattended with prurient desire; as also I do not find it on record that parturition was unaccompanied with groans and pain, or that actual birth led not to future death; yet, at the same time, if I follow the verity of the Holy Scriptures, the travail of the mother and the death of the human offspring would never have supervened if sin had not preceded. Nor would that have happened which abashed the man and woman when they covered their loins; because in the same sacred records it is expressly written that the sin was first committed, and then immediately followed this hiding of their shame. For unless some indelicacy of motion had announced to their eyes—which were of course not closed, though not open to this point, that is, not attentive—that those particular members should be corrected, they would not have perceived anything on their own persons, which God had entirely made worthy of all praise, that called for either shame or concealment. If, indeed, the sin had not first occurred which they had dared to commit in their disobedience, there would not have followed the disgrace which their shame would fain conceal.

CHAPTER 42 [XXXVII.]

THE EVIL OF LUST OUGHT NOT TO BE ASCRIBED TO MARRIAGE. THE THREE GOOD RESULTS OF THE NUPTIAL ORDINANCE: OFFSPRING, CHASTITY, AND THE SACRAMENTAL UNION

It is then manifest that that must not be laid to the account of marriage, even in the absence of which, marriage would still have existed. The good of marriage is not taken away by the evil, although the evil is by marriage turned to a good use. Such, however, is the present condition of mortal men, that the connubial intercourse and lust are at the same time in action; and on this account it happens, that as the lust is blamed, so also the nuptial commerce, however lawful and honourable, is thought to be reprehensible by those persons who either are unwilling or unable to draw the distinction between them. They are, moreover, inattentive to that good of the nuptial state which is the glory of matrimony; I mean offspring, chastity, and the pledge. The evil, however, at which even marriage blushes for shame is not the fault of marriage, but of the lust of the flesh. Yet because without this evil it is impossible to effect the good purpose of marriage, even the procreation of children, whenever this process is approached, secrecy is sought, witnesses removed, and even the presence of the very children which happen to be born of the process is avoided as soon as they reach the age of observation. Thus it comes to pass that marriage is permitted to effect all that is lawful in its state, only it must not forget to conceal all that is improper. Hence it follows that infants, although incapable of sinning, are yet not born without the contagion of sin,—not, indeed, because of what is lawful, but on account of that which is unseemly: for from what is lawful nature is born; from what is unseemly, sin. Of the nature so born, God is the Author, who created man, and who united male and female under the nuptial law; but of the sin the author is the subtlety of the devil who deceives, and the will of the man who consents.

CHAPTER 43 [XXXVIII.]

HUMAN OFFSPRING, EVEN PREVIOUS TO BIRTH, UNDER CONDEMNATION AT THE VERY ROOT. USES OF MATRIMONY UNDERTAKEN FOR MERE PLEASURE NOT WITHOUT VENIAL FAULT

Where God did nothing else than by a just sentence to condemn the man who wilfully sins, together with his stock; there also, as a matter of course, whatsoever was even not yet born is justly condemned in its sinful root. In this condemned stock carnal generation holds every man; and from it nothing but spiritual regeneration liberates him. In the case, therefore, of regenerate parents, if they continue in the same state of grace, it will undoubtedly work no injurious consequence, by reason of the remission of sins which has been bestowed upon them, unless they make a perverse use of it,—not alone all kinds of lawless corruptions, but even in the marriage state itself, whenever husband and wife toil at procreation, not from the desire of natural propagation of their species, but are mere slaves to the gratification of their lust out of very wantonness. As for the permission which the apostle gives to husbands and wives, “not to defraud one another, except with consent for a time, that they may have leisure for prayer,” he concedes it by way of indulgent allowance, and not as a command; but this very form of the concession evidently implies some degree of fault. The connubial embrace, however, which marriage-contracts point to as intended for the procreation of children, considered in itself simply, and without any reference to fornication, is good and right; because, although it is by reason of this body of death (which is unrenewed as yet by the resurrection) impracticable without a certain amount of bestial motion, which puts human nature to the blush, yet the embrace is not after all a sin in itself, when reason applies the concupiscence to a good end, and is not overmastered to evil.

CHAPTER 44 [XXXIX.]

EVEN THE CHILDREN OF THE REGENERATE BORN IN SIN. THE EFFECT OF BAPTISM

This concupiscence of the flesh would be prejudicial, just in so far as it is present in us, if the remission of sins were not so beneficial that while it is present in men, both as born and as born again, it may in the former be prejudicial as well as present, but in the latter present simply but never prejudicial. In the unregenerate it is prejudicial to such an extent indeed, that, unless they are born again, no advantage can accrue to them from being born of regenerate parents. The fault of our nature remains in our offspring so deeply impressed as to make it guilty, even when the guilt of the self-same fault has been washed away in the parent by the remission of sins—until every defect which ends in sin by the consent of the human will is consumed and done away in the last regeneration. This will be identical with that renovation of the very flesh itself which is promised in its future resurrection, when we shall not only commit no sins, but be even free from those corrupt desires which lead us to sin by yielding consent to them. To this blessed consummation advances are even now made by us, through the grace of that holy laver which we have put within our reach. The same regeneration which now renews our spirit, so that all our past sins are remitted, will by and by also operate, as might be expected, to the renewal to eternal life of that very flesh, by the resurrection of which to an incorruptible state the incentives of all sins will be purged out of our nature. But this salvation is as yet only accomplished in hope: it is not realized in fact; it is not in present possession, but it is looked forward to with patience. [XL.] And thus there is a whole and perfect cleansing, in the self-same baptismal laver, not only of all the sins remitted now in our baptism, which make us guilty owing to the consent we yield to wrong desires, and to the sinful acts in which they issue; but of these said wrong desires also, which, if not consented to by us, would contract no guilt of sin, and which, though not in this present life removed, will yet have no existence in the life beyond.

CHAPTER 45

MAN’S DELIVERANCE SUITED TO THE CHARACTER OF HIS CAPTIVITY

The guilt, therefore, of that corruption of which we are speaking will remain in the carnal offspring of the regenerate, until in them also it be washed away in the laver of regeneration. A regenerate man does not regenerate, but generates, sons according to the flesh; and thus he transmits to his posterity, not the condition of the regenerated, but only of the generated. Therefore, be a man guilty of unbelief, or a perfect believer, he does not in either case beget faithful children, but sinners; in the same way that the seeds, not only of a wild olive, but also of a cultivated one, produce not cultivated olives, but wild ones. So, likewise, his first birth holds a man in that bondage from which nothing but his second birth delivers him. The devil holds him, Christ liberates him: Eve's deceiver holds him, Mary's Son frees him: he holds him, who approached the man through the woman; He frees him, who was born of a woman that never approached a man: he holds him, who injected into the woman the cause of lust; He liberates him, who without any lust was conceived in the woman. The former was able to hold all men in his grasp through one; nor does any deliver them out of his power but One, whom he was unable to grasp. The very sacraments indeed of the Church, which she administers with due ceremony, according to the authority of very ancient tradition (so that these men, notwithstanding their opinion that the sacraments are imitatively rather than really used in the case of infants, still do not venture to reject them with open disapproval),—the very sacraments, I say, of the holy Church show plainly enough that infants, even when fresh from the womb, are delivered from the bondage of the devil through the grace of Christ. For, to say nothing of the fact that they are baptized for the remission of sins by no fallacious, but by a true and faithful mystery, there is previously wrought on them the exorcism and the exsufflation of the hostile power, which they profess to renounce by the mouth of those who bring them to baptism. Now, by all these consecrated and evident signs of hidden realities, they are shown to pass from their worst oppressor to their most excellent Redeemer, who, by taking on Himself our infirmity in our behalf, has bound the strong man, that He may spoil his goods; seeing that the weakness of God is stronger, not only than men, but also than angels. While, therefore, God delivers small as well as great, He shows in both instances that the apostle spoke under the direction of the Truth. For it is not merely adults, but little babes too whom He rescues from the power of darkness, in order to transfer them to the kingdom of God's dear Son.

CHAPTER 46

DIFFICULTY OF BELIEVING ORIGINAL SIN. MAN'S VICE IS A BEAST'S NATURE

No one should feel surprise, and ask: “Why does God’s goodness create anything for the devil’s malignity to take possession of?” The truth is, God’s gift is bestowed on the seminal elements of His creature with the same bounty wherewith “He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” It is with so large a bounty that God has blessed the very seeds, and by blessing has constituted them. Nor has this blessing been eliminated out of our excellent nature by a fault which puts us under condemnation. Owing, indeed, to God’s justice, who punishes, this fatal flaw has so far prevailed, that men are born with the fault of original sin; but yet its influence has not extended so far as to stop the birth of men. Just so does it happen in persons of adult age: whatever sins they commit, do not eliminate his manhood from man; nay, God’s work continues still good, however evil be the deeds of the impious. For although “man being placed in honour abideth not; and being without understanding, is compared with the beasts, and is like them,” yet the resemblance is not so absolute that he becomes a beast. There is a comparison, no doubt, between the two; but it is not by reason of nature, but through vice—not vice in the beast, but in nature. For so excellent is a man in comparison with a beast, that man’s vice is beast’s nature; still man’s nature is never on this account changed into beast’s nature. God, therefore, condemns man because of the fault wherewithal his nature is disgraced, and not because of his nature, which is not destroyed in consequence of its fault. Heaven forbid that we should think beasts are obnoxious to the sentence of condemnation! It is only proper that they should be free from our misery, inasmuch as they cannot partake of our blessedness. What, then, is there surprising or unjust in man’s being subjected to an impure spirit—not on account of nature, but on account of that impurity of his which he has contracted in the stain of his birth, and which proceeds, not from the divine work, but from the will of man;—since also the impure spirit itself is a good thing considered as spirit, but evil in that it is impure? For the one is of God, and is His work, while the other emanates from man’s own will. The stronger nature, therefore, that is, the angelic one, keeps the lower, or human, nature in subjection, by reason of the association of vice with the latter. Accordingly the Mediator, who was stronger than the angels, became weak for man’s sake. So that the pride of the Destroyer is destroyed by the humility of the Redeemer; and he who makes his boast over the sons of men of his angelic strength, is vanquished by the Son of God in the human weakness which He assumed.

CHAPTER 47 [XLI.]

SENTENCES FROM AMBROSE IN FAVOUR OF ORIGINAL SIN

And now that we are about to bring this book to a conclusion, we think it proper to do on this subject of Original Sin what we did before in our treatise On Grace,—adduce in evidence against the injurious talk of these persons that servant of God, the Archbishop Ambrose, whose faith is proclaimed by Pelagius to be the most perfect among the writers of the Latin Church; for grace is more especially honoured in doing away with original sin. In the work which the saintly Ambrose wrote, Concerning the Resurrection, he says: “I fell in Adam, in Adam was I expelled from Paradise, in Adam I died; and He does not recall me unless He has found me in Adam,—so as that, as I am obnoxious to the guilt of sin in him, and subject to death, I may be also justified in Christ.” Then, again, writing against the Novatians, he says: “We men are all of us born in sin; our very origin is in sin; as you may read when David says, Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.’ Hence it is that Paul’s flesh is a body of death;’ even as he says himself, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?’ Christ’s flesh, however, has condemned sin, which He experienced not by being born, and which by dying He crucified, that in our flesh there might be justification through grace, where previously there was impurity through sin.” The same holy man also, in his Exposition of Isaiah, speaking of Christ, says: “Therefore as man He was tried in all things, and in the likeness of men He endured all things; but as born of the Spirit, He was free from sin. For every man is a liar, and no one but God alone is without sin. It is therefore an observed and settled fact, that no man born of a man and a woman, that is, by means of their bodily union, is seen to be free from sin. Whosoever, indeed, is free from sin, is free also from a conception and birth of this kind.” Moreover, when expounding the Gospel according to Luke, he says: “It was no cohabitation with a husband which opened the secrets of the Virgin’s womb; rather was it the Holy Ghost which infused immaculate seed into her unviolated womb. For the Lord Jesus alone of those who are born of woman is holy, inasmuch as He experienced not the contact of earthly corruption, by reason of the novelty of His immaculate birth; nay, He repelled it by His heavenly majesty.”

CHAPTER 48

PELAGIUS RIGHTLY CONDEMNED AND REALLY OPPOSED BY AMBROSE

These words, however, of the man of God are contradicted by Pelagius, notwithstanding all his commendation of his author, when he himself declares that “we are procreated, as without virtue, so without vice.” What remains, then, but that Pelagius should condemn and renounce this error of his; or else be sorry that he has quoted Ambrose in the way he has? Inasmuch, however, as the blessed Ambrose, catholic bishop as he is, has expressed himself in the above-quoted passages in accordance with the catholic faith, it follows that Pelagius, along with his disciple Coelestius, was justly condemned by the authority of the catholic Church for having turned aside from the true way of faith, since he repented not for having bestowed commendation on Ambrose, and for having at the same time entertained opinions in opposition to him. I know full well with what insatiable avidity you read whatever is written for edification and in confirmation of the faith; but yet, notwithstanding its utility as contributing to such an end, I must at last bring this treatise to a conclusion.

A TREATISE ON THE MERITS AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS, AND ON THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN’S “RETRACTATIONS,”

BOOK II. CHAP. 23,

ON THE FOLLOWING TREATISE,

“DE PECCATORUM MERITIS ET REMISSIONE.”

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

IN THREE BOOKS,

ADDRESSED TO MARCELLINUS, A.D. 412.

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Preface

A Necessity arose which compelled me to write against the new heresy of Pelagius. Our previous opposition to it was confined to sermons and conversations, as occasions suggested, and according to our respective abilities and duties; but it had not yet assumed the shape of a controversy in writing. Certain questions were then submitted to me [by our brethren] at Carthage, to which I was to send them back answers in writing; I accordingly wrote first of all three books, under the title "On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins," in which I mainly discussed the baptism of infants because of original sin, and the grace of God by which we are justified, that is, made righteous; but [I remarked] no man in this life can so keep the commandments which prescribe holiness of life, as to be beyond the necessity of using this prayer for his sins: "Forgive us our trespasses." It is in direct opposition to these principles that they have devised their new heresy. Now throughout these three books I thought it right not to mention any of their names, hoping and desiring that by such reserve they might the more readily be set right; nay more, in the third book (which is really a letter, but reckoned amongst the books, because I wished to connect it with the two previous ones) I actually quoted Pelagius' name with considerable commendation, because his conduct and life were made a good deal of by many persons; and those statements of his which I refuted, he had himself adduced in his writings, not indeed in his own name, but had quoted them as the words of other persons. However, when he was afterwards confirmed in heresy, he defended them with most persistent animosity. Coelestius, indeed, a disciple of his, had already been excommunicated for similar opinions at Carthage, in a council of bishops, at which I was not present. In a certain passage of my second book I used these words: "Upon some there will be bestowed this blessing at the last day, that they shall not perceive the actual suffering of death in the suddenness of the change which shall happen to them;"—reserving the passage for a more careful consideration of the subject; for they will either die, or else by a most rapid transition from this life to death, and then from death to eternal life, as in the twinkling of an eye, they will not undergo the feeling of mortality. This work of mine begins with this sentence: “However absorbing and intense the anxieties and annoyances.”

Book I

In which he refutes those who maintain, that Adam must have died even if he had never sinned; and that nothing of his sin has been transmitted to his posterity by natural descent. He also shows, that death has not accrued to man by any necessity of his nature, but as the penalty of sin; He then proceeds to prove that in Adam's sin his entire offspring is implicated, showing that infants are baptized for the express purpose of receiving the remission of original sin.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

INTRODUCTORY, IN THE SHAPE OF AN INSCRIPTION TO HIS FRIEND MARCELLINUS

Howeverabsorbing and intense the anxieties and annoyances in the whirl and warmth of which we are engaged with sinful men who forsake the law of God,—even though we may well ascribe these very evils to the fault of our own sins,—I am unwilling, and, to say the truth, unable, any longer to remain a debtor, my dearest Marcellinus, to that zealous affection of yours, which only enhances my own grateful and pleasant estimate of yourself. I am under the impulse [of a twofold emotion]: on the one hand, there is that very love which makes us unchangeably one in the one hope of a change for the better; on the other hand, there is the fear of offending God in yourself, who has given you so earnest a desire; in gratifying which I shall be only serving Him who has given it to you. And so strongly has this impulse led and attracted me to solve, to the best of my humble ability, the questions which you have submitted to me in writing, that my mind has gradually admitted this inquiry to an importance transcending that of all others; [and it will now give me no rest] until I accomplish something which shall make it manifest that I have yielded, if not a sufficient, yet at any rate an obedient, compliance with your own kind wish and the desire of those to whom these questions are a source of anxiety.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

IF ADAM HAD NOT SINNED, HE WOULD NEVER HAVE DIED

They who say that Adam was so formed that he would even without any demerit of sin have died, not as the penalty of sin, but from the necessity of his being, endeavour indeed to refer that passage in the law, which says: "On the day ye eat thereof ye shall surely die," not to the death of the body, but to that death of the soul which takes place in sin. It is the unbelievers who have died this death, to whom the Lord pointed when He said, "Let the dead bury their dead." Now what will be their answer, when we read that God, when reproving and sentencing the first man after his sin, said to him, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return?" For it was not in respect of his soul that he was "dust," but clearly by reason of his body, and it was by the death of the self-same body that he was destined to "return to dust." Still, although it was by reason of his body that he was dust, and although he bare about the natural body in which he was created, he would, if he had not sinned, have been changed into a spiritual body, and would have passed into the incorruptible state, which is promised to the faithful and the saints, without the peril of death. And for this issue we not only are conscious in ourselves of having an earnest desire, but we learn it from the apostle's intimation, when he says: "For in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven; if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life." Therefore, if Adam had not sinned, he would not have been divested of his body, but would have been clothed upon with immortality and incorruption, that "mortality might have been swallowed up of life;" that is, that he might have passed from the natural body into the spiritual body.

CHAPTER 3 [III.]

IT IS ONE THING TO BE MORTAL, ANOTHER THING TO BE SUBJECT TO DEATH

Nor was there any reason to fear that if he had happened to live on here longer in his natural body, he would have been oppressed with old age, and have gradually, by increasing age, arrived at death. For if God granted to the clothes and the shoes of the Israelites that “they waxed not old” during so many years, what wonder if for obedience it had been by the power of the same [God] allowed to man, that although he had a natural and mortal body, he should have in it a certain condition, in which he might grow full of years without decrepitude, and, whenever God pleased, pass from mortality to immortality without the medium of death? For even as this very flesh of ours, which we now possess, is not therefore invulnerable, because it is not necessary that it should be wounded; so also was his not therefore immortal, because there was no necessity for its dying. Such a condition, whilst still in their natural and mortal body, I suppose, was granted even to those who were translated hence without death. For Enoch and Elijah were not reduced to the decrepitude of old age by their long life. But yet I do not believe that they were then changed into that spiritual kind of body, such as is promised in the resurrection, and which the Lord was the first to receive; only they probably do not need those aliments, which by their use minister refreshment to the body; but ever since their translation they so live, as to enjoy such a sufficiency as was provided during the forty days in which Elijah lived on the cruse of water and the cake, without substantial food; or else, if there be any need of such sustenance, they are, it may be, sustained in Paradise in some such way as Adam was, before he brought on himself expulsion therefrom by sinning. And he, as I suppose, was supplied with sustenance against decay from the fruit of the various trees, and from the tree of life with security against old age.

CHAPTER 4 [IV.]

EVEN BODILY DEATH IS FROM SIN

But in addition to the passage where God in punishment said, “Dust thou art, unto dust shalt thou return,”—a passage which I cannot understand how any one can apply except to the death of the body,—there are other testimonies likewise, from which it most fully appears that by reason of sin the human race has brought upon itself not spiritual death merely, but the death of the body also. The apostle says to the Romans: “But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. If therefore the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” I think that so clear and open a sentence as this only requires to be read, and not expounded. The body, says he, is dead, not because of earthly frailty, as being made of the dust of the ground, but because of sin; what more do we want? And he is most careful in his words: he does not say “is mortal,” but “dead.”

CHAPTER 5 [V.]

THE WORDS, MORTALE (CAPABLE OF DYING), MORTUUM (DEAD), AND MORITURUS (DESTINED TO DIE)

Now previous to the change into the incorruptible state which is promised in the resurrection of the saints, the body could be mortal (capable of dying), although not destined to die (moriturus); just as our body in its present state can, so to speak, be capable of sickness, although not destined to be sick. For whose is the flesh which is incapable of sickness, even if from some accident it die before it ever is sick? In like manner was man’s body then mortal; and this mortality was to have been superseded by an eternal incorruption, if man had persevered in righteousness, that is to say, obedience: but even what was mortal (mortale) was not made dead (mortuum), except on account of sin. For the change which is to come in at the resurrection is, in truth, not only not to have death incidental to it, which has happened through sin, but neither is it to have mortality, [or the very possibility of death,] which the natural body had before it sinned. He does not say: “He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your dead bodies” (although he had previously said, “the body is dead”); but his words are: “He shall quicken also your mortal bodies;” so that they are not only no longer dead, but no longer mortal [or capable of dying], since the natural is raised spiritual, and this mortal body shall put on immortality, and mortality shall be swallowed up in life.

CHAPTER 6 [VI.]

HOW IT IS THAT THE BODY DEAD BECAUSE OF SIN

One wonders that anything is required clearer than the proof we have given. But we must perhaps be content to hear this clear illustration gainsaid by the contention, that we must understand “the dead body” here in the sense of the passage where it is said, “Mortify your members which are upon the earth.” But it is because of righteousness and not because of sin that the body is in this sense mortified; for it is to do the works of righteousness that we mortify our bodies which are upon the earth. Or if they suppose that the phrase, “because of sin,” is added, not that we should understand “because sin has been committed,” but “in order that sin may not be committed”—as if it were said, “The body indeed is dead, in order to prevent the commission of sin:” what then does he mean in the next clause by adding the words, “because of righteousness,” to the statement, “The spirit is life?” For it would have been enough simply to have adjoined “the spirit is life,” to have secured that we should supply here too, “in order to prevent the commission of sin;” so that we should thus understand the two propositions to point to one thing—that both “the body is dead,” and “the spirit is life,” for the one common purpose of “preventing the commission of sin.” So likewise if he had merely meant to say, “because of righteousness,” in the sense of “for the purpose of doing righteousness,” the two clauses might possibly be referred to this one purpose—to the effect, that both “the body is dead,” and “the spirit is life,” “for the purpose of doing righteousness.” But as the passage actually stands, it declares that “the body is dead because of sin,” and “the spirit is life because of righteousness,” attributing different merits to different things—the demerit of sin to the death of the body, and the merit of righteousness to the life of the spirit. Wherefore if, as no one can doubt, “the spirit is life because of righteousness,” that is, as the desert, of righteousness; how ought we, or can we, understand by the statement, “The body is dead because of sin,” anything else than that the body is dead as the desert of sin, unless indeed we try to pervert or wrest the plainest sense of Scripture to our own arbitrary will? But besides this, additional light is afforded by the words which follow. For it is with limitation to the present time, when he says, that on the one hand “the body is dead because of sin,” since, whilst the body is unrenovated by the resurrection, there remains in it the desert of sin, that is, the necessity of dying; and on the other hand, that “the spirit is life because of righteousness,” since, notwithstanding the fact of our being still burdened with “the body of this death,” we have already by the renewal which is begun in our inner man, new aspirations after the righteousness of faith. Yet, lest man in his ignorance should fail to entertain hope of the resurrection of the body, he says that the very body which he had just declared to be “dead because of sin” in this world, will in the next world be made alive “because of righteousness,”—and that not only in such a way as to become alive from the dead, but immortal from its mortality.

CHAPTER 7 [VII.]

THE LIFE OF THE BODY THE OBJECT OF HOPE, THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT BEING A PRELUDE TO IT

Although I am much afraid that so clear a matter may rather be obscured by exposition, I must yet request your attention to the luminous statement of the apostle. “But if Christ,” says he, “be in you, the body indeed is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.” Now this is said, that men may not suppose that they derive no benefit, or but scant benefit, from the grace of Christ, seeing that they must needs die in the body. For they are bound to remember that, although their body still bears that desert of sin, which is irrevocably bound to the condition of death, yet their spirit has already begun to live because of the righteousness of faith, although it had actually become extinct by the death, as it were, of unbelief. No small gift, therefore, he says, must you suppose to have been conferred upon you, by the circumstance that Christ is in you; inasmuch as in the body, which is dead because of sin, your spirit is even now alive because of righteousness; so that therefore you should not despair of the life even of your body. “For if the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” How is it that fumes of controversy still darken so clear a light? The apostle distinctly tells you, that although the body is dead because of sin within you, yet even your mortal bodies shall be made alive because of righteousness, because of which even now your spirit is life,—the whole of which process is to be perfected by the grace of Christ, that is, by His Spirit dwelling in you: and men still contradict! He goes on to tell us how it comes to pass that life converts death into itself by mortifying it. “Therefore, brethren,” says he, “we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; for if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.” What else does this mean but this: If ye live according to death, ye shall wholly die; but if by living according to life ye mortify death, ye shall wholly live?

CHAPTER 8 [VIII.]

BODILY DEATH FROM ADAM’S SIN

When to the like purport he says: “By man came death, by man also the resurrection of the dead,” in what other sense can the passage be understood than of the death of the body; for having in view the mention of this, he proceeded to speak of the resurrection of the body, and affirmed it in a most earnest and solemn discourse? In these words, addressed to the Corinthians: “By man came death, and by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,”—what other meaning is indeed conveyed than in the verse in which he says to the Romans, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin?” Now they will have it, that the death here meant is the death, not of the body, but of the soul, on the pretence that another thing is spoken of to the Corinthians, where they are quite unable to understand the death of the soul, because the subject there treated is the resurrection of the body, which is the antithesis of the death of the body. The reason, moreover, why only death is here mentioned as caused by man, and not sin also, is because the point of the discourse is not about righteousness, which is the antithesis of sin, but about the resurrection of the body, which is contrasted with the death of the body.

CHAPTER 9 [IX.]

SIN PASSES ON TO ALL MEN BY NATURAL DESCENT, AND NOT MERELY BY IMITATION

You tell me in your letter, that they endeavour to twist into some new sense the passage of the apostle, in which he says: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin;” yet you have not informed me what they suppose to be the meaning of these words. But so far as I have discovered from others, they think that the death which is here mentioned is not the death of the body, which they will not allow Adam to have deserved by his sin, but that of the soul, which takes place in actual sin; and that this actual sin has not been transmitted from the first man to other persons by natural descent, but by imitation. Hence, likewise, they refuse to believe that in infants original sin is remitted through baptism, for they contend that no such original sin exists at all in people by their birth. But if the apostle had wished to assert that sin entered into the world, not by natural descent, but by imitation, he would have mentioned as the first offender, not Adam indeed, but the devil, of whom it is written, that "he sinneth from the beginning;" of whom also we read in the Book of Wisdom: "Nevertheless through the devil's envy death entered into the world." Now, forasmuch as this death came upon men from the devil, not because they were propagated by him, but because they imitated his example, it is immediately added: "And they that do hold of his side do imitate him." Accordingly, the apostle, when mentioning sin and death together, which had passed by natural descent from one upon all men, set him down as the introducer thereof from whom the propagation of the human race took its beginning.

CHAPTER 10

THE ANALOGY OF GRACE

No doubt all they imitate Adam who by disobedience transgress the commandment of God; but he is one thing as an example to those who sin because they choose; and another thing as the progenitor of all who are born with sin. All His saints, also, imitate Christ in the pursuit of righteousness; whence the same apostle, whom we have already quoted, says: "Be ye imitators of me, as I am also of Christ." But besides this imitation, His grace works within us our illumination and justification, by that operation concerning which the same preacher of His [name] says: "Neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." For by this grace He engrafts into His body even baptized infants, who certainly have not yet become able to imitate any one. As therefore He, in whom all are made alive, besides offering Himself as an example of righteousness to those who imitate Him, gives also to those who believe on Him the hidden grace of His Spirit, which He secretly infuses even into infants; so likewise he, in whom all die, besides being an example for imitation to those who wilfully transgress the commandment of the Lord, depraved also in his own person all who come of his stock by the hidden corruption of his own carnal concupiscence. It is entirely on this account, and for no other reason, that the apostle says: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so passed upon all men; in which all have sinned.” Now if I were to say this, they would raise an objection, and loudly insist that I was incorrect both in expression and sense; for they would perceive no sense in these words when spoken by an ordinary man, except that sense which they refuse to see in the apostle. Since, however, these are the words of him to whose authority and doctrine they submit, they charge us with slowness of understanding, while they endeavour to wrest to some unintelligible sense words which were written in a clear and obvious purport. “By one man,” says he, “sin entered into the world, and death by sin.” This indicates propagation, not imitation; for if imitation were meant, he would have said, “By the devil.” But as no one doubts, he refers to that first man who is called Adam: “And so,” says he, “it passed upon all men.”

CHAPTER 11 [X.]

DISTINCTION BETWEEN ACTUAL AND ORIGINAL SIN

Again, in the clause which follows, “In which all have sinned,” how cautiously, rightly, and unambiguously is the statement expressed! For if you understand that sin to be meant which by one man entered into the world, “In which [sin] all have sinned,” it is surely clear enough, that the sins which are peculiar to every man, which they themselves commit and which belong simply to them, mean one thing; and that the one sin, in and by which all have sinned, means another thing; since all were that one man. If, however, it be not the sin, but that one man that is understood, “In which [one man] all have sinned,” what again can be plainer than even this clear statement? We read, indeed, of those being justified in Christ who believe in Him, by reason of the secret communion and inspiration of that spiritual grace which makes every one who cleaves to the Lord “one spirit” with Him, although His saints also imitate His example; can I find, however, any similar statement made of those who have imitated His saints? Can any man be said to be justified in Paul or in Peter, or in any one whatever of those excellent men whose authority stands high among the people of God? We are no doubt said to be blessed in Abraham, according to the passage in which it was said to him, “In thee shall all nations be blessed”—for Christ’s sake, who is his seed according to the flesh; which is still more clearly expressed in the parallel passage: “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” I do not believe that any one can find it anywhere stated in the Holy Scriptures, that a man has ever sinned or still sins “in the devil,” although all wicked and impious men “imitate” him. The apostle, however, has declared concerning the first man, that “in him all have sinned;” and yet there is still a contest about the propagation of sin, and men oppose to it I know not what nebulous theory of “imitation.”

CHAPTER 12

THE LAW COULD NOT TAKE AWAY SIN

Observe also what follows. Having said, “In which all have sinned,” he at once added, “For until the law, sin was in the world.” This means that sin could not be taken away even by the law, which entered that sin might the more abound, whether it be the law of nature, under which every man when arrived at years of discretion only proceeds to add his own sins to original sin, or that very law which Moses gave to the people. “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But sin is not imputed where there is no law.” Now what means the phrase “is not imputed,” but “is ignored,” or “is not reckoned as sin?” Although the Lord God does not Himself regard it as if it had never been, since it is written: “As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law.”

CHAPTER 13 [XI.]

MEANING OF THE APOSTLE’S PHRASE “THE REIGN OF DEATH.”

“Nevertheless,” says he, “death reigned from Adam even unto Moses,”—that is to say, from the first man even to the very law which was promulged by the divine authority, because even it was unable to abolish the reign of death. Now death must be understood “to reign,” whenever the guilt of sin so dominates in men that it prevents their attainment of that eternal life which is the only true life, and drags them down even to the second death which is penally eternal. This reign of death is only destroyed in any man by the Saviour’s grace, which wrought even in the saints of the olden time, all of whom, though previous to the coming of Christ in the flesh, yet lived in relation to His assisting grace, not to the letter of the law, which only knew how to command, but not to help them. In the Old Testament, indeed, that was hidden (conformably to the perfectly just dispensation of the times) which is now revealed in the New Testament. Therefore “death reigned from Adam unto Moses,” in all who were not assisted by the grace of Christ, that in them the kingdom of death might be destroyed, “even in those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression,” that is, who had not yet sinned of their own individual will, as Adam did, but had drawn from him original sin, “who is the figure of him that was to come,” because in him was constituted the form of condemnation to his future progeny, who should spring from him by natural descent; so that from one all men were born to a condemnation, from which there is no deliverance but in the Saviour’s grace. I am quite aware, indeed, that several Latin copies of the Scriptures read the passage thus: “Death reigned from Adam to Moses over them who have sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression;” but even this version is referred by those who so read it to the very same purport, for they understood those who have sinned in him to have sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression; so that they are created in his likeness, not only as men born of a man, but as sinners born of a sinner, dying ones of a dying one, and condemned ones to a condemned one. However, the Greek copies from which the Latin version was made, have all, without exception or nearly so, the reading which I first adduced.

CHAPTER 14

SUPERABUNDANCE OF GRACE

“But,” says he, “not as the offence so also is the free gift. For if, through the offence of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by One Man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.” Not many more, that is, many more men, for there are not more persons justified than condemned; but it runs, much more hath abounded; inasmuch as, while Adam produced sinners from his one sin, Christ has by His grace procured free forgiveness even for the sins which men have of their own accord added by actual transgression to the original sin in which they were born. This he states more clearly still in the sequel.

CHAPTER 15 [XII.]

THE ONE SIN COMMON TO ALL MEN

But observe more attentively what he says, that “through the offence of one, many are dead.” For why should it be on account of the sin of one, and not rather on account of their own sins, if this passage is to be understood of imitation, and not of propagation? But mark what follows: “And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the grace is of many offences unto justification.” Now let them tell us, where there is room in these words for imitation. “By one,” says he, “to condemnation.” By one what except one sin? This, indeed, he clearly implies in the words which he adds: “But the grace is of many offences unto justification.” Why, indeed, is the judgment from one offence to condemnation, while the grace is from many offences to justification? If original sin is a nullity, would it not follow, that not only grace withdraws men from many offences to justification, but judgment leads them to condemnation from many offences likewise? For assuredly grace does not condone many offences, without judgment in like manner having many offences to condemn. Else, if men are involved in condemnation because of one offence, on the ground that all the offences which are condemned were committed in imitation of that one offence; there is the same reason why men should also be regarded as withdrawn from one offence unto justification, inasmuch as all the offences which are remitted to the justified were committed in imitation of that one offence. But this most certainly was not the apostle’s meaning, when he said: “The judgment, indeed, was from one offence unto condemnation, but the grace was from many offences unto justification.” We on our side, indeed, can understand the apostle, and see that judgment is predicated of one offence unto condemnation entirely on the ground that, even if there were in men nothing but original sin, it would be sufficient for their condemnation. For however much heavier will be their condemnation who have added their own sins to the original offence (and it will be the more severe in individual cases, in proportion to the sins of individuals); still, even that sin alone which was originally derived unto men not only excludes from the kingdom of God, which infants are unable to enter (as they themselves allow), unless they have received the grace of Christ before they die, but also alienates from salvation and everlasting life, which cannot be anything else than the kingdom of God, to which fellowship with Christ alone introduces us.

CHAPTER 16 [XIII.]

HOW DEATH IS BY ONE AND LIFE BY ONE

And from this we gather that we have derived from Adam, in whom we all have sinned, not all our actual sins, but only original sin; whereas from Christ, in whom we are all justified, we obtain the remission not merely of that original sin, but of the rest of our sins also, which we have added. Hence it runs: “Not as by the one that sinned, so also is the free gift.” For the judgment, certainly, from one sin, if it is not remitted—and that the original sin—is capable of drawing us into condemnation; whilst grace conducts us to justification from the remission of many sins,—that is to say, not simply from the original sin, but from all others also whatsoever.

CHAPTER 17

WHOM SINNERS IMITATE

“For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of righteousness shall reign in life by one, even Jesus Christ.” Why did death reign on account of the sin of one, unless it was that men were bound by the chain of death in that one man in whom all men sinned, even though they added no sins of their own? Otherwise it was not on account of the sin of one that death reigned through one; rather it was on account of the manifold offences of many, [operating] through each individual sinner. For if the reason why men have died for the transgression of another be, that they have imitated him by following him as their predecessor in transgression, it must even result, and that “much more,” that that one died on account of the transgression of another, whom the devil so preceded in transgression as himself to persuade him to commit the transgression. Adam, however, used no influence to persuade his followers; and the many who are said to have imitated him have, in fact, either not heard of his existence at all or of his having committed any such sin as is ascribed to him, or altogether disbelieve it. How much more correctly, therefore, as I have already remarked, would the apostle have set forth the devil as the author, from which “one” he would say that sin and death had passed upon all, if he had in this passage meant to speak, not of propagation, but of imitation? For there is much stronger reason for saying that Adam is an imitator of the devil, since he had in him an actual instigator to sin; if one may be an imitator even of him who has never used any such persuasion, or of whom he is absolutely ignorant. But what is implied in the clause, “They which receive abundance of grace and righteousness,” but that the grace of remission is given not only to that sin in which all have sinned, but to those offences likewise which men have actually committed besides; and that on these [men] so great a righteousness is freely bestowed, that, although Adam gave way to him who persuaded him to sin, they do not yield even to the coercion of the same tempter? Again, what mean the words, “Much more shall they reign in life,” when the fact is, that the reign of death drags many more down to eternal punishment, unless we understand those to be really mentioned in both clauses, who pass from Adam to Christ, in other words, from death to life; because in the life eternal they shall reign without end, and thus exceed the reign of death which has prevailed within them only temporarily and with a termination?

CHAPTER 18

ONLY CHRIST JUSTIFIES

“Therefore as by the offence of one upon all men to condemnation, even so by the justification of One upon all men unto justification of life.” This “offence of one,” if we are bent on “imitation,” can only be the devil’s offence. Since, however, it is manifestly spoken in reference to Adam and not the devil, it follows that we have no other alternative than to understand the principle of natural propagation, and not that of imitation, to be here implied. [XIV.] Now when he says in reference to Christ, “By the justification of one,” he has more expressly stated our doctrine than if he were to say, “By the righteousness of one;” inasmuch as he mentions that justification whereby Christ justifies the ungodly, and which he did not propose as an object of imitation, for He alone is capable of effecting this. Now it was quite competent for the apostle to say, and to say rightly: “Be ye imitators of me, as I also am of Christ;” but he could never say: Be ye justified by me, as I also am by Christ;—since there may be, and indeed actually are and have been, many who were righteous and worthy of imitation; but no one is righteous and a justifier but Christ alone. Whence it is said: “To the man that believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Now if any man had it in his power confidently to declare, “I justify you,” it would necessarily follow that he could also say, “Believe in me.” But it has never been in the power of any of the saints of God to say this except the Saint of saints, who said: “Ye believe in God, believe also in me;” so that, inasmuch as it is He that justifies the ungodly, to the man who believes in him that justifieth the ungodly his faith is imputed for righteousness.

CHAPTER 19 [XV.]

SIN IS FROM NATURAL DESCENT, AS RIGHTEOUSNESS IS FROM REGENERATION; HOW “ALL” ARE SINNERS THROUGH ADAM, AND “ALL” ARE JUST THROUGH CHRIST

Now if it is imitation only that makes men sinners through Adam, why does not imitation likewise alone make men righteous through Christ? “For,” he says, “as by the offence of one upon all men to condemnation; even so by the justification of one upon all men unto justification of life.” [On the theory of imitation], then, the “one” and the “one,” here, must not be regarded as Adam and Christ, but Adam and Abel. For although many sinners have preceded us in the time of this present life, and have been imitated in their sin by those who have sinned at a later date, yet they will have it, that only Adam is mentioned as he in whom all have sinned by imitation, since he was the first of men who sinned. And on the same principle, Abel ought certainly to have been mentioned, as he “in which one” all likewise are justified by imitation, inasmuch as he was himself the first man who lived justly. If, however, it be thought necessary to take into the account some critical period having relation to the beginning of the New Testament, and Christ be taken as the leader of the righteous and the object of their imitation, then Judas, who betrayed Him, ought to be set down as the leader of the class of sinners. Moreover, if Christ alone is He in whom all men are justified, on the ground that it is not simply the imitation of His example which makes men just, but His grace which regenerates men by the Spirit, then also Adam is the only one in whom all have sinned, on the ground that it is not the mere following of his evil example that makes men sinners, but the penalty which generates through the flesh. Hence the terms “all men” and “all men.” For not they who are generated through Adam are actually the very same as those who are regenerated through Christ; but yet the language of the apostle is strictly correct, because as none partakes of carnal generation except through Adam, so no one shares in the spiritual except through Christ. For if any could be generated in the flesh, yet not by Adam; and if in like manner any could be generated in the Spirit, and not by Christ; clearly “all” could not be spoken of either in the one class or in the other. But these “all” the apostle afterwards describes as “many;” for obviously, under certain circumstances, the “all” may be but a few. The carnal generation, however, embraces “many,” and the spiritual generation also includes “many;” although the “many” of the spiritual are less numerous than the “many” of the carnal. But as the one embraces all men whatever, so the other includes all righteous men; because as in the former case none can be a man without the carnal generation, so in the other class no one can be a righteous man without the spiritual generation; in both instances, therefore, there are “many:” “For as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

CHAPTER 20

ORIGINAL SIN ALONE IS CONTRACTED BY NATURAL BIRTH

“Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound.” This addition to original sin men now made of their own wilfulness, not through Adam; but even this is done away and remedied by Christ, because “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death”—even that sin which men have not derived from Adam, but have added of their own will—”even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life.” There is, however, other righteousness apart from Christ, as there are other sins apart from Adam. Therefore, after saying, “As sin hath reigned unto death,” he did not add in the same clause “by one,” or “by

Adam,” because he had already spoken of that sin which was abounding when the law entered, and which, of course, was not original sin, but the sin of man’s own wilful commission. But after he has said: “Even so might grace also reign through righteousness unto eternal life,” he at once adds, “through Jesus Christ our Lord;” because, whilst by the generation of the flesh only that sin is contracted which is original; yet by the regeneration of the Spirit there is effected the remission not of original sin only, but also of the sins of man’s own voluntary and actual commission.

CHAPTER 21 [XVI.]

UNBAPTIZED INFANTS DAMNED, BUT MOST LIGHTLY; THE PENALTY OF ADAM’S SIN, THE GRACE OF HIS BODY LOST

It may therefore be correctly affirmed, that such infants as quit the body without being baptized will be involved in the mildest condemnation of all. That person, therefore, greatly deceives both himself and others, who teaches that they will not be involved in condemnation; whereas the apostle says: “Judgment from one offence to condemnation,” and again a little after: “By the offence of one upon all persons to condemnation.” When, indeed, Adam sinned by not obeying God, then his body—although it was a natural and mortal body—lost the grace whereby it used in every part of it to be obedient to the soul. Then there arose in men affections common to the brutes which are productive of shame, and which made man ashamed of his own nakedness. Then also, by a certain disease which was conceived in men from a suddenly injected and pestilential corruption, it was brought about that they lost that stability of life in which they were created, and, by reason of the mutations which they experienced in the stages of life, issued at last in death. However many were the years they lived in their subsequent life, yet they began to die on the day when they received the law of death, because they kept verging towards old age. For that possesses not even a moment’s stability, but glides away without intermission, which by constant change perceptibly advances to an end which does not produce perfection, but utter exhaustion. Thus, then, was fulfilled what God had spoken: “In the day that ye eat thereof, ye shall surely die.” As a consequence, then, of this disobedience of the flesh and this law of sin and death, whoever is born of the flesh has need of spiritual regeneration—not only that he may reach the kingdom of God, but also that he may be freed from the damnation of sin. Hence men are on the one hand born in the flesh liable to sin and death from the first Adam, and on the other hand are born again in baptism associated with the righteousness and eternal life of the second Adam; even as it is written in the book of Ecclesiasticus: “Of the woman came the beginning of sin, and through her we all die.” Now whether it be said of the woman or of Adam, both statements pertain to the first man; since (as we know) the woman is of the man, and the two are one flesh. Whence also it is written: “And they twain shall be one flesh; wherefore,” the Lord says, “they are no more twain, but one flesh.”

CHAPTER 22 [XVII.]

TO INFANTS PERSONAL SIN IS NOT TO BE ATTRIBUTED

They, therefore, who say that the reason why infants are baptized, is, that they may have the remission of the sin which they have themselves committed in their life, not what they have derived from Adam, may be refuted without much difficulty. For whenever these persons shall have reflected within themselves a little, uninfluenced by any polemical spirit, on the absurdity of their statement, how unworthy it is, in fact, of serious discussion, they will at once change their opinion. But if they will not do this, we shall not so completely despair of men’s common sense, as to have any fears that they will induce others to adopt their views. They are themselves driven to adopt their opinion, if I am not mistaken, by their prejudice for some other theory; and it is because they feel themselves obliged to allow that sins are remitted to the baptized, and are unwilling to allow that the sin was derived from Adam which they admit to be remitted to infants, that they have been obliged to charge infancy itself with actual sin; as if by bringing this charge against infancy a man could become the more secure himself, when accused and unable to answer his assailant! However, let us, as I suggested, pass by such opponents as these; indeed, we require neither words nor quotations of Scripture to prove the sinlessness of infants, so far as their conduct in life is concerned; this life they spend, such is the recency of their birth, within their very selves, since it escapes the cognizance of human perception, which has no data or support whereon to sustain any controversy on the subject.

CHAPTER 23 [XVIII.]

HE REFUTES THOSE WHO ALLEGE THAT INFANTS ARE BAPTIZED NOT FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, BUT FOR THE OBTAINING OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

But those persons raise a question, and appear to adduce an argument deserving of consideration and discussion, who say that new-born infants receive baptism not for the remission of sin, but that, since their procreation is not spiritual, they may be created in Christ, and become partakers of the kingdom of heaven, and by the same means children and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. And yet, when you ask them, whether those that are not baptized, and are not made joint-heirs with Christ and partakers of the kingdom of heaven, have at any rate the blessing of eternal life in the resurrection of the dead, they are extremely perplexed, and find no way out of their difficulty. For what Christian is there who would allow it to be said, that any one could attain to eternal salvation without being born again in Christ,—[a result] which He meant to be effected through baptism, at the very time when such a sacrament was purposely instituted for regenerating in the hope of eternal salvation? Whence the apostle says: “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the laver of regeneration.” This salvation, however, he says, consists in hope, while we live here below, where he says, “For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Who then could be so bold as to affirm, that without the regeneration of which the apostle speaks, infants could attain to eternal salvation, as if Christ died not for them? For “Christ died for the ungodly.” As for them, however, who (as is manifest) never did an ungodly act in all their own life, if also they are not bound by any bond of sin in their original nature, how did He die for them, who died for the ungodly? If they were hurt by no malady of original sin, how is it they are carried to the Physician Christ, for the express purpose of receiving the sacrament of eternal salvation, by the pious anxiety of those who run to Him? Why rather is it not said to them in the Church: Take hence these innocents: “they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;”—Christ “came not to call the righteous, but sinners?” There never has been heard, there never is heard, there never will be heard in the Church, such a fiction concerning Christ.

CHAPTER 24 [XIX.]

INFANTS SAVED AS SINNERS

And let no one suppose that infants ought to be brought to baptism, on the ground that, as they are not sinners, so they are not righteous; how then do some remind us that the Lord commends this tender age as meritorious; saying, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven?” For if this [“of such”] is not said because of likeness in humility (since humility makes [us] children), but because of the laudable life of children, then of course infants must be righteous persons; otherwise, it could not be correctly said, “Of such is the kingdom of heaven,” for heaven can only belong to the righteous. But perhaps, after all, it is not a right opinion of the meaning of the Lord’s words, to make Him commend the life of infants when He says, “Of such is the kingdom of heaven;” inasmuch as that may be their true sense, which makes Christ adduce the tender age of infancy as a likeness of humility. Even so, however, perhaps we must revert to the tenet which I mentioned just now, that infants ought to be baptized, because, although they are not sinners, they are yet not righteous. But when He had said: “I came not to call the righteous,” as if responding to this, Whom, then, didst Thou come to call? immediately He goes on to say: “—but sinners to repentance.” Therefore it follows, that, however righteous they may be, if also they are not sinners, He came not to call them, who said of Himself: “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” They therefore seem, not vainly only, but even wickedly to rush to the baptism of Him who does not invite them,—an opinion which God forbid that we should entertain. He calls them, then, as a Physician who is not needed for those that are whole, but for those that are sick; and who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Now, inasmuch as infants are not held bound by any sins of their own actual life, it is the guilt of original sin which is healed in them by the grace of Him who saves them by the laver of regeneration.

CHAPTER 25

INFANTS ARE DESCRIBED AS BELIEVERS AND AS PENITENTS. SINS ALONE SEPARATE BETWEEN GOD AND MEN

Some one will say: How then are mere infants called to repentance? How can such as they repent of anything? The answer to this is: If they must not be called penitents because they have not the sense of repenting, neither must they be called believers, because they likewise have not the sense of believing. But if they are rightly called believers, because they in a certain sense profess faith by the words of their parents, why are they not also held to be before that penitents when they are shown to renounce the devil and this world by the profession again of the same parents? The whole of this is done in hope, in the strength of the sacrament and of the divine grace which the Lord has bestowed upon the Church. But yet who knows not that the baptized infant fails to be benefited from what he received as a little child, if on coming to years of reason he fails to believe and to abstain from unlawful desires? If, however, the infant departs from the present life after he has received baptism, the guilt in which he was involved by original sin being done away, he shall be made perfect in that light of truth, which, remaining unchangeable for evermore, illumines the justified in the presence of their Creator. For sins alone separate between men and God; and these are done away by Christ's grace, through whom, as Mediator, we are reconciled, when He justifies the ungodly.

CHAPTER 26 [XX.]

NO ONE, EXCEPT HE BE BAPTIZED, RIGHTLY COMES TO THE TABLE OF THE LORD

Now they take alarm from the statement of the Lord, when He says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" because in His own explanation of the passage He affirms, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." And so they try to ascribe to unbaptized infants, by the merit of their innocence, the gift of salvation and eternal life, but at the same time, owing to their being unbaptized, to exclude them from the kingdom of heaven. But how novel and astonishing is such an assumption, as if there could possibly be salvation and eternal life without heirship with Christ, without the kingdom of heaven! Of course they have their refuge, whither to escape and hide themselves, because the Lord does not say, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot have life, but—"he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." If indeed He had said the other, there could have risen not a moment’s doubt. Well, then, let us remove the doubt; let us now listen to the Lord, and not to men’s notions and conjectures; let us, I say, hear what the Lord says—not indeed concerning the sacrament of the laver, but concerning the sacrament of His own holy table, to which none but a baptized person has a right to approach: “Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye shall have no life in you.” What do we want more? What answer to this can be adduced, unless it be by that obstinacy which ever resists the constancy of manifest truth?

CHAPTER 27

INFANTS MUST FEED ON CHRIST

Will, however, any man be so bold as to say that this statement has no relation to infants, and that they can have life in them without partaking of His body and blood—on the ground that He does not say, Except one eat, but “Except ye eat;” as if He were addressing those who were able to hear and to understand, which of course infants cannot do? But he who says this is inattentive; because, unless all are embraced in the statement, that without the body and the blood of the Son of man men cannot have life, it is to no purpose that even the elder age is solicitous of it. For if you attend to the mere words, and not to the meaning, of the Lord as He speaks, this passage may very well seem to have been spoken merely to the people whom He happened at the moment to be addressing; because He does not say, Except one eat; but Except ye eat. What also becomes of the statement which He makes in the same context on this very point: “The bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world?” For, it is according to this statement, that we find that sacrament pertains also to us, who were not in existence at the time the Lord spoke these words; for we cannot possibly say that we do not belong to “the world,” for the life of which Christ gave His flesh. Who indeed can doubt that in the term world all persons are indicated who enter the world by being born? For, as He says in another passage, “The children of this world beget and are begotten.” From all this it follows, that even for the life of infants was His flesh given, which He gave for the life of the world; and that even they will not have life if they eat not the flesh of the Son of man.

CHAPTER 28

BAPTIZED INFANTS, OF THE FAITHFUL; UNBAPTIZED, OF THE LOST

Hence also that other statement: “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; while he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” Now in which of these classes must we place infants—amongst those who believe on the Son, or amongst those who believe not the Son? In neither, say some, because, as they are not yet able to believe, so must they not be deemed unbelievers. This, however, the rule of the Church does not indicate, for it joins baptized infants to the number of the faithful. Now if they who are baptized are, by virtue of the excellence and administration of so great a sacrament, nevertheless reckoned in the number of the faithful, although by their own heart and mouth they do not literally perform what appertains to the action of faith and confession; surely they who have lacked the sacrament must be classed amongst those who do not believe on the Son, and therefore, if they shall depart this life without this grace, they will have to encounter what is written concerning such—they shall not have life, but the wrath of God abideth on them. Whence could this result to those who clearly have no sins of their own, if they are not held to be obnoxious to original sin?

CHAPTER 29 [XXI.]

IT IS AN INSCRUTABLE MYSTERY WHY SOME ARE SAVED, AND OTHERS NOT

Now there is much significance in that He does not say, “The wrath of God shall come upon him,” but “abideth on him.” For from this wrath (in which we are all involved under sin, and of which the apostle says, “For we too were once by nature the children of wrath, even as others”) nothing delivers us but the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. The reason why this grace comes upon one man and not on another may be hidden, but it cannot be unjust. For “is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.” But we must first bend our necks to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, in order that we may each arrive at knowledge and understanding through faith. For it is not said in vain, “Thy judgments are a great deep.” The profundity of this “deep” the apostle, as if with a feeling of dread, notices in that exclamation: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!” He had indeed previously pointed out the meaning of this marvellous depth, when he said: “For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all.” Then struck, as it were, with a horrible fear of this deep: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.” How utterly insignificant, then, is our faculty for discussing the justice of God’s judgments, and for the consideration of His gratuitous grace, which, as men have no prevenient merits for deserving it, cannot be partial or unrighteous, and which does not disturb us when it is bestowed upon unworthy men, as much as when it is denied to those who are equally unworthy!

CHAPTER 30

WHY ONE IS BAPTIZED AND ANOTHER NOT, NOT OTHERWISE INSCRUTABLE

Now those very persons, who think it unjust that infants which depart this life without the grace of Christ should be deprived not only of the kingdom of God, into which they themselves admit that none but such as are regenerated through baptism can enter, but also of eternal life and salvation,—when they ask how it can be just that one man should be freed from original sin and another not, although the condition of both of them is the same, might answer their own question, in accordance with their own opinion of how it can be so frequently just and right that one should have baptism administered to him whereby to enter into the kingdom of God, and another not be so favoured, although the case of both is alike. For if the question disturbs him, why, of the two persons, who are both equally sinners by nature, the one is loosed from that bond, on whom baptism is conferred, and the other is not released, on whom such grace is not bestowed; why is he not similarly disturbed by the fact that of two persons, innocent by nature, one receives baptism, whereby he is able to enter into the kingdom of God, and the other does not receive it, so that he is incapable of approaching the kingdom of God? Now in both cases one recurs to the apostle’s outburst of wonder “O the depth of the riches!” Again, let me be informed, why out of the body of baptized infants themselves, one is taken away, so that his understanding undergoes no change from a wicked life, and the other survives, destined to become an impious man? Suppose both were carried off, would not both enter the kingdom of heaven? And yet there is no unrighteousness with God. How is it that no one is moved, no one is driven to the expression of wonder amidst such depths, by the circumstance that some children are vexed by the unclean spirit, while others experience no such pollution, and others again, as Jeremiah, are sanctified even in their mother’s womb; whereas all men, if there is original sin, are equally guilty; or else equally innocent if there is original sin? Whence this great diversity, except in the fact that God’s judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out?

CHAPTER 31 [XXII.]

HE REFUTES THOSE WHO SUPPOSE THAT SOULS, ON ACCOUNT OF SINS COMMITTED IN ANOTHER STATE, ARE THRUST INTO BODIES SUITED TO THEIR MERITS, IN WHICH THEY ARE MORE OR LESS TORMENTED

Perhaps, however, the now exploded and rejected opinion must be resumed, that souls which once sinned in their heavenly abode, descend by stages and degrees to bodies suited to their deserts, and, as a penalty for their previous life, are more or less tormented by corporeal chastisements. To this opinion Holy Scripture indeed presents a most manifest contradiction; for when recommending divine grace, it says: “For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was said, The elder shall serve the younger.” And yet they who entertain such an opinion are actually unable to escape the perplexities of this question, but, embarrassed and straitened by them, are compelled to exclaim like others, “O the depth!” For whence does it come to pass that a person shall from his earliest boyhood show greater moderation, mental excellence, and temperance, and shall to a great extent conquer lust, shall hate avarice, detest luxury, and rise to a greater eminence and aptitude in the other virtues, and yet live in such a place as to be unable to hear the grace of Christ preached?—for “how shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? or how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” While another man, although of a slow mind, addicted to lust, and covered with disgrace and crime, shall be so directed as to hear, and believe, and be baptized, and be taken away,—or, if permitted to remain longer here, lead the rest of his life in a manner that shall bring him praise? Now where did these two persons acquire such diverse deserts,—I do not say, that the one should believe and the other not believe, for that is a matter for a man’s own will; but that the one should hear in order to believe, and that the other should not hear, for this is not within man’s power? Where, I say, did they acquire diverse deserts? If they had indeed passed any part of their life in heaven, so as to be thrust down, or to sink down, to this world, and to tenant such bodily receptacles as are congruous to their own former life, then of course that man ought to be supposed to have led the better life previous to his present mortal body, who did not much deserve to be burdened with it, so as both to have a good disposition, and to be importuned by milder desires which he could easily overcome; and yet he did not deserve to have that grace preached to him whereby alone he could be delivered from the ruin of the second death. Whereas the other, who was hampered with a grosser body, as a penalty—so they suppose—for worse deserts, and was accordingly possessed of obtuser affections, whilst he was in the violent ardour of his lust succumbing to the snares of the flesh, and by his wicked life aggravating his former sins, which had brought him to such a pass, by a still more abandoned course of earthly pleasures,—either heard upon the cross, “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise,” or else joined himself to some apostle, by whose preaching he became a changed man, and was saved by the washing of regeneration,—so that where sin once abounded, grace did much more abound. I am at a loss to know what answer they can give to this who wish to maintain God’s righteousness by human conjectures, and, knowing nothing of the depths of grace, have woven webs of improbable fable.

CHAPTER 32

THE CASE OF CERTAIN IDIOTS AND SIMPLETONS

Now a good deal may be said of men’s strange vocations,—either such as we have read about, or have experienced ourselves,—which go to overthrow the opinion of those persons who think that, previous to the possession of their bodies, men’s souls passed through certain lives peculiar to themselves, in which they must come to this, and experience in the present life either good or evil, according to the difference of their individual deserts. My anxiety, however, to bring this work to an end does not permit me to dwell longer on these topics. But on one point, which among many I have found to be a very strange one, I will not be silent. If we follow those persons who suppose that souls are oppressed with earthly bodies in a greater or a less degree of grossness, according to the deserts of the life which had been passed in celestial bodies previous to the assumption of the present one, who would not affirm that those had sinned previous to this life with an especial amount of enormity, who deserve so to lose all mental light, that they are born with faculties akin to brute animals,—who are (I will not say most slow in intellect, for this is very commonly said of others also, but) so silly as to make a show of their fatuity for the amusement of clever people, even with idiotic gestures, and whom the vulgar call, by a name, derived from the Greek, Moriones? And yet there was once a certain person of this class, who was so Christian, that although he was patient to the degree of strange folly with any amount of injury to himself, he was yet so impatient of any insult to the name of Christ, or, in his own person, to the religion with which he was imbued, that he could never refrain, whenever his gay and clever audience proceeded to blaspheme the sacred name, as they sometimes would in order to provoke his patience, from pelting them with stones; and on these occasions he would show no favour even to persons of rank. Well, now, such persons are predestinated and brought into being, as I suppose, in order that those who are able should understand that God’s grace and the Spirit, “which bloweth where it listeth,” does not pass over any kind of capacity in the sons of mercy, nor in like manner does it pass over any kind of capacity in the children of Gehenna, so that “he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” They, however, who affirm that souls severally receive different earthly bodies, more or less gross according to the merits of their former life, and that their abilities as men vary according to the self-same merits, so that some minds are sharper and others more obtuse, and that the grace of God is also dispensed for the liberation of men from their sins according to the deserts of their former existence:—what will they have to say about this man? How will they be able to attribute to him a previous life of so disgraceful a character that he deserved to be born an idiot, and at the same time of so highly meritorious a character as to entitle him to a preference in the award of the grace of Christ over many men of the acutest intellect?

CHAPTER 33

CHRIST IS THE SAVIOUR AND REDEEMER EVEN OF INFANTS

Let us therefore give in and yield our assent to the authority of Holy Scripture, which knows not how either to be deceived or to deceive; and as we do not believe that men as yet unborn have done any good or evil for raising a difference in their moral deserts, so let us by no means doubt that all men are under sin, which came into the world by one man and has passed through unto all men; and from which nothing frees us but the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. [XXIII.] His remedial advent is needed by those that are sick, not by the whole: for He came not to call the righteous, but sinners; and into His kingdom shall enter no one that is not born again of water and the Spirit; nor shall any one attain salvation and eternal life except in His kingdom,—since the man who believes not in the Son, and eats not His flesh, shall not have life, but the wrath of God remains upon him. Now from this sin, from this sickness, from this wrath of God (of which by nature they are children who have original sin, even if they have none of their own on account of their youth), none delivers them, except the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world; except the Physician, who came not for the sake of the sound, but of the sick; except the Saviour, concerning whom it was said to the human race: “Unto you there is born this day a Saviour;” except the Redeemer, by whose blood our debt is blotted out. For who would dare to say that Christ is not the Saviour and Redeemer of infants? But from what does He save them, if there is no malady of original sin within them? From what does He redeem them, if through their origin from the first man they are not sold under sin? Let there be then no eternal salvation promised to infants out of our own opinion, without Christ’s baptism; for none is promised in that Holy Scripture which is to be preferred to all human authority and opinion.

CHAPTER 34 [XXIV.]

BAPTISM IS CALLED SALVATION, AND THE EUCHARIST, LIFE, BY THE CHRISTIANS OF CARTHAGE

The Christians of Carthage have an excellent name for the sacraments, when they say that baptism is nothing else than "salvation," and the sacrament of the body of Christ nothing else than "life." Whence, however, was this derived, but from that primitive, as I suppose, and apostolic tradition, by which the Churches of Christ maintain it to be an inherent principle, that without baptism and partaking of the supper of the Lord it is impossible for any man to attain either to the kingdom of God or to salvation and everlasting life? So much also does Scripture testify, according to the words which we already quoted. For wherein does their opinion, who designate baptism by the term salvation, differ from what is written: "He saved us by the washing of regeneration?" or from Peter's statement: "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us?" And what else do they say who call the sacrament of the Lord's Supper life, than that which is written: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven;" and "The bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world;" and "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye shall have no life in you?" If, therefore, as so many and such divine witnesses agree, neither salvation nor eternal life can be hoped for by any man without baptism and the Lord's body and blood, it is vain to promise these blessings to infants without them. Moreover, if it be only sins that separate man from salvation and eternal life, there is nothing else in infants which these sacraments can be the means of removing, but the guilt of sin,—respecting which guilty nature it is written, that "no one is clean, not even if his life be only that of a day." Whence also that exclamation of the Psalmist: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me!" This is either said in the person of our common humanity, or if of himself only David speaks, it does not imply that he was born of fornication, but in lawful wedlock. We therefore ought not to doubt that even for infants yet to be baptized was that precious blood shed, which previous to its actual effusion was so given, and applied in the sacrament, that it was said, "This is my blood, which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins." Now they who will not allow that they are under sin, deny that there is any liberation. For what is there that men are liberated from, if they are held to be bound by no bondage of sin?

CHAPTER 35

UNLESS INFANTS ARE BAPTIZED, THEY REMAIN IN DARKNESS

“I am come,” says Christ, “a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.” Now what does this passage show us, but that every person is in darkness who does not believe on Him, and that it is by believing on Him that he escapes from this permanent state of darkness? What do we understand by the darkness but sin? And whatever else it may embrace in its meaning, at any rate he who believes not in Christ will “abide in darkness,”—which, of course, is a penal state, not, as the darkness of the night, necessary for the refreshment of living beings. [XXV.] So that infants, unless they pass into the number of believers through the sacrament which was divinely instituted for this purpose, will undoubtedly remain in this darkness.

CHAPTER 36

INFANTS NOT ENLIGHTENED AS SOON AS THEY ARE BORN

Some, however, understand that as soon as children are born they are enlightened; and they derive this opinion from the passage: “That was the true Light, which lighteth every one that cometh into the world.” Well, if this be the case, it is quite astonishing how it can be that those who are thus enlightened by the only-begotten Son, who was in the beginning the Word with God, and [Himself] God, are not admitted into the kingdom of God, nor are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. For that such an inheritance is not bestowed upon them except through baptism, even they who hold the opinion in question do acknowledge. Then, again, if they are (though already illuminated) thus unfit for entrance into the kingdom of God, they at all events ought gladly to receive the baptism, by which they are fitted for it; but, strange to say, we see how reluctant infants are to submit to baptism, resisting even with strong crying. And this ignorance of theirs we think lightly of at their time of life, so that we fully administer the sacraments, which we know to be serviceable to them, even although they struggle against them. And why, too, does the apostle say, “Be not children in understanding,” if their minds have been already enlightened with that true Light, which is the Word of God?

CHAPTER 37

HOW GOD ENLIGHTENS EVERY PERSON

That statement, therefore, which occurs in the gospel, “That was the true Light, which lighteth every one that cometh into the world,” has this meaning, that no man is illuminated except with that Light of the truth, which is God; so that no person must think that he is enlightened by him whom he listens to as a learner, although that instructor happen to be—I will not say, any great man—but even an angel himself. For the word of truth is applied to man externally by the ministry of a bodily voice, but yet “neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.” Man indeed hears the speaker, be he man or angel, but in order that he may perceive and know that what is said is true, his mind is internally besprinkled with that light which remains for ever, and which shines even in darkness. But just as the sun is not seen by the blind, though they are clothed as it were with its rays, so is the light of truth not understood by the darkness of folly.

CHAPTER 38

WHAT “LIGHTETH” MEANS

But why, after saying, “which lighteth every man,” should he add, “that cometh into the world,”—the clause which has suggested the opinion that He enlightens the minds of newly-born babes while the birth of their bodies from their mother’s womb is still a recent thing? The words, no doubt, are so placed in the Greek, that they may be understood to express that the light itself “cometh into the world.” If, nevertheless, the clause must be taken as expressing the man who cometh into this world, I suppose that it is either a simple phrase, like many others one finds in the Scriptures, which may be removed without impairing the general sense; or else, if it is to be regarded as a distinctive addition, it was perhaps inserted in order to distinguish spiritual illumination from that bodily one which enlightens the eyes of the flesh either by means of the luminaries of the sky, or by the lights of ordinary fire. So that he mentioned the inner man as coming into the world, because the outward man is of a corporeal nature, just as this world itself; as if he said, “Which lighteth every man that cometh into the body,” in accordance with that which is written: “I obtained a good spirit, and I came in a body undefiled.” Or again, the passage, “Which lighteth every one that cometh into the world,”—if it was added for the sake of expressing some distinction,—might perhaps mean: Which lighteth every inner man, because the inner man, when he becomes truly wise, is enlightened only by Him who is the true Light. Or, once more, if the intention was to designate reason herself, which causes the human soul to be called rational (and this reason, although as yet quiet and as it were asleep, for all that lies hidden in infants, innate and, so to speak, implanted), by the term illumination, as if it were the creation of an inner eye, then it cannot be denied that it is made when the soul is created; and there is no absurdity in supposing this to take place when the human being comes into the world. But yet, although his eye is now created, he himself must needs remain in darkness, if he does not believe in Him who said: “I am come a Light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.” And that this takes place in the case of infants, through the sacrament of baptism, is not doubted by mother Church, which uses for them the heart and mouth of a mother, that they may be imbued with the sacred mysteries, seeing that they cannot as yet with their own heart “believe unto righteousness,” nor with their own mouth make “confession unto salvation.” There is not indeed a man among the faithful, who would hesitate to call such infants believers merely from the circumstance that such a designation is derived from the act of believing; for although incapable of such an act themselves, yet others are sponsors for them in the sacraments.

CHAPTER 39 [XXVI.]

THE CONCLUSION DRAWN, THAT ALL ARE INVOLVED IN ORIGINAL SIN

It would be tedious, were we fully to discuss, at similar length, every testimony bearing on the question. I suppose it will be the more convenient course simply to collect the passages together which may turn up, or such as shall seem sufficient for manifesting the truth, that the Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh, and, in the form of a servant, became obedient even to the death of the cross, for no other reason than, by this dispensation of His most merciful grace, to give life to all those to whom, as engrafted members of His body, He becomes Head for laying hold upon the kingdom of heaven: to save, free, redeem, and enlighten them,—who had aforetime been involved in the death, infirmities, servitude, captivity, and darkness of sin, under the dominion of the devil, the author of sin: and thus to become the Mediator between God and man, by whom (after the enmity of our ungodly condition had been terminated by His gracious help) we might be reconciled to God unto eternal life, having been rescued from the eternal death which threatened such as us. When this shall have been made clear by more than sufficient evidence, it will follow that those persons cannot be concerned with that dispensation of Christ which is executed by His humiliation, who have no need of life, and salvation, and deliverance, and redemption, and illumination. And inasmuch as to this belongs baptism, in which we are buried with Christ, in order to be incorporated into Him as His members (that is, as those who believe in Him): it of course follows that baptism is unnecessary for them, who have no need of the benefit of that forgiveness and reconciliation which is acquired through a Mediator. Now, seeing that they admit the necessity of baptizing infants,—finding themselves unable to contravene that authority of the universal Church, which has been unquestionably handed down by the Lord and His apostles,—they cannot avoid the further concession, that infants require the same benefits of the Mediator, in order that, being washed by the sacrament and charity of the faithful, and thereby incorporated into the body of Christ, which is the Church, they may be reconciled to God, and so live in Him, and be saved, and delivered, and redeemed, and enlightened. But from what, if not from death, and the vices, and guilt, and thraldom, and darkness of sin? And, inasmuch as they do not commit any sin in the tender age of infancy by their actual transgression, original sin only is left.

CHAPTER 40 [XXVII.]

A COLLECTION OF SCRIPTURE TESTIMONIES. FROM THE GOSPELS

This reasoning will carry more weight, after I have collected the mass of Scripture testimonies which I have undertaken to adduce. We have already quoted: “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” To the same purport [the Lord] says, on entering the home of Zaccheus: “To-day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham; for the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” The same truth is declared in the parable of the lost sheep and the ninety and nine which were left until the missing one was sought and found; as it is also in the parable of the lost one among the ten silver coins. Whence, as He said, “it behoved that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” Mark likewise, at the end of his Gospel, tells us how that the Lord said: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Now, who can be unaware that, in the case of infants, being baptized is to believe, and not being baptized is not to believe? From the Gospel of John we have already adduced some passages. However, I must also request your attention to the following: John Baptist says of Christ, “Behold the Lamb of God, Behold Him which taketh away the sin of the world;” and He too says of Himself, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish.” Now, inasmuch as infants are only able to become His sheep by baptism, it must needs come to pass that they perish if they are not baptized, because they will not have that eternal life which He gives to His sheep. So in another passage He says: “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

CHAPTER 41

FROM THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

See with what earnestness the apostles declare this doctrine, when they received it. Peter, in his first Epistle, says: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to His abundant mercy, who hath regenerated us unto the hope of eternal life, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, to an inheritance immortal, and undefiled, flourishing, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.” And a little afterwards he adds: “May ye be found unto the praise and honour of Jesus Christ: of whom ye were ignorant; but in whom ye believe, though now ye see Him not; and in whom also ye shall rejoice, when ye shall see Him, with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.” Again, in another place he says: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” Once more he says: “Christ hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God:” and, after mentioning the fact of eight persons having been saved in Noah’s ark, he adds: “And by the like figure baptism saveth you.” Now infants are strangers to this salvation and light, and will remain in perdition and darkness, unless they are joined to the people of God by adoption, holding to Christ who suffered the just for the unjust, to bring them unto God.

CHAPTER 42

FROM THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

Moreover, from John’s Epistle I meet with the following words, which seem indispensable to the solution of this question: “But if,” says he, “we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” To the like import he says, in another place: “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God, which is greater because He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believed not in the testimony that God testified of His Son. And this is the testimony, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” It seems, then, that it is not only the kingdom of heaven, but life also, which infants are not to have, if they have not the Son, whom they can only have by His baptism. So again he says: “For this cause the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” Therefore infants will have no interest in the manifestation of the Son of God, if He do not in them destroy the works of the devil.

CHAPTER 43

FROM THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

Let me now request your attention to the testimony of the Apostle Paul on this subject. And quotations from him may of course be made more abundantly, because he wrote more epistles, and because it fell to him to recommend the grace of God with especial earnestness, in opposition to those who gloried in their works, and who, ignorant of God's righteousness, and wishing to establish their own, submitted not to the righteousness of God. In his Epistle to the Romans he writes: "The righteousness of God is upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; since all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness; that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Then in another passage he says: "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth no sin." And then after no long interval he observes: "Now, it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus Christ our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Then a little after he writes: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." In another passage he says: "We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I know not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Let them, who can, say that men are not born in the body of this death, that so they may be able to affirm that they have no need of God’s grace through Jesus Christ in order to be delivered from the body of this death. Therefore he adds, a few verses afterwards: “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” Let them say, who dare, that Christ must have been born in the likeness of sinful flesh, if we were not born in sinful flesh.

CHAPTER 44

FROM THE EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS

Likewise to the Corinthians he says: “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.” Again, in his Second Epistle to these Corinthians: “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if One died for all, then all died: and for all did Christ die, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet from henceforth know we Him so no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation. To what effect? That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and putting on us the ministry of reconciliation. Now then are we ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ’s stead, to be reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For He saith, I have heard thee in an acceptable time, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" Now, if infants are not embraced within this reconciliation and salvation, who wants them for the baptism of Christ? But if they are embraced, then are they reckoned as among the dead for whom He died; nor can they be possibly reconciled and saved by Him, unless He remit and impute not unto them their sins.

CHAPTER 45

FROM THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

Likewise to the Galatians the apostle writes: "Grace be to you, and peace, from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world." While in another passage he says to them: "The law was added because of transgressions, until the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator belongs not to one party; but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."

CHAPTER 46

FROM THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

To the Ephesians he addresses words of the same import: "And you when ye were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit of him that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; by whose grace ye are saved."

Again, a little afterwards, he says: “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” And again, after a short interval: “At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who were sometimes far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having in Himself slain the enmity; and He came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” Then in another passage he thus writes: “As the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” And again: “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

CHAPTER 47

FROM THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

To the Colossians he addresses these words: “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son; in whom we have redemption in the remission of our sins.” And again he says: “And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead. And you, when ye were dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of the decree that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; and putting the flesh off Him, He made a show of principalities and powers, confidently triumphing over them in Himself."

CHAPTER 48

FROM THE EPISTLES TO TIMOTHY

And then to Timothy he says: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting." He also says: "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all." In his second Epistle to the same Timothy, he says: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou a fellow-labourer for the gospel, according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now manifested by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

CHAPTER 49

FROM THE EPISTLE TO TITUS

Then again he writes to Titus as follows: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." And to the like effect in another passage: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

CHAPTER 50

FROM THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

Although the authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews is doubted by some, nevertheless, as I find it sometimes thought by persons, who oppose our opinion touching the baptism of infants, to contain evidence in favour of their own views, we shall notice the pointed testimony it bears in our behalf; and I quote it the more confidently, because of the authority of the Eastern Churches, which expressly place it amongst the canonical Scriptures. In its very exordium one thus reads: “God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who, being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” And by and by the writer says: “For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” And again in another passage: “Forasmuch then,” says he, “as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Again, shortly after, he says: “Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” And in another place he writes: “Let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Again he says: “He hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a

High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily (as those high priests) to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's: for this He did once, when He offered up Himself." And once more: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; (for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world;) but now once, in the end of the world, hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."

CHAPTER 51

FROM THE APOCALYPSE

The Revelation of John likewise tells us that in a new song these praises are offered to Christ: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

CHAPTER 52

FROM THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

To the like effect, in the Acts of the Apostles, the Apostle Peter designated the Lord Jesus as "the Author of life," upbraiding the Jews for having put Him to death in these words: "But ye dishonoured and denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you, and ye killed the Author of life." While in another passage he says: "This is the stone which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." And again, elsewhere: "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, by hanging on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” Once more: “To Him give all the prophets witness, that, through His name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.” Whilst in the same Acts of the Apostles Paul says: “Be it known therefore unto you, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him every one that believeth is justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”

CHAPTER 53

THE UTILITY OF THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Under so great a weight of testimony, who would not be oppressed that should dare lift up his voice against the truth of God? And many other testimonies might be found, were it not for my anxiety to bring this tract to an end,—an anxiety which I must not slight. I have deemed it superfluous to quote from the books of the Old Testament, likewise, many attestations to our doctrine in inspired words, since what is concealed in them under the veil of earthly promises is clearly revealed in the preaching of the New Testament. Our Lord Himself briefly demonstrated and defined the use of the Old Testament writings, when He said that it was necessary that what had been written concerning Himself in the Law, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, should be fulfilled, and that this was that Christ must suffer, and rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. In agreement with this is that statement of Peter which I have already quoted, how that all the prophets bear witness to Christ, that at His hands every one that believes in Him receives remission of his sins.

CHAPTER 54

BY THE SACRIFICES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, MEN WERE CONVINCED OF SINS AND LED TO THE SAVIOUR

And yet it is perhaps better to advance a few testimonies out of the Old Testament also, which ought to have a supplementary, or rather a cumulative value. The Lord Himself, speaking by the Psalmist, says: “As for my saints which are upon earth, He hath caused all my purposes to be admired in them.” Not their merits, but “my purposes.” For what is theirs except that which is afterwards mentioned,—”their weaknesses are multiplied,”—above the weakness that they had? Moreover, the law also entered, that the offence might abound. But why does the Psalmist immediately add: “They hastened after?” When their sorrows and infirmities multiplied (that is, when their offence abounded), they then sought the Physician more eagerly, in order that, where sin abounded, grace might much more abound. He then says: “I will not gather their assemblies together [with their offerings] of blood;” for by their many sacrifices of blood, when they gathered their assemblies into the tabernacle at first, and then into the temple, they were rather convicted as sinners than cleansed. I shall no longer, He says, gather their assemblies of blood-offerings together; because there is one blood-shedding given for many, whereby they may be truly cleansed. Then it follows: “Neither will I make mention of their names with my lips,” as if they were the names of renewed ones. For these were their names at first: children of the flesh, children of the world, children of wrath, children of the devil, unclean, sinners, impious; but afterwards, children of God,—a new name to the new man, a new song to the singer of what is new, by means of the New Testament. Men must not be ungracious with God’s grace, mean with great things; [but be ever rising] from the less to the greater. The cry of the whole Church is, “I have gone astray like a lost sheep.” From all the members of Christ the voice is heard: “All we, as sheep, have gone astray; and He hath Himself been delivered up for our sins.” The whole of this passage of prophecy is that famous one in Isaiah which was expounded by Philip to the eunuch of Queen Candace, and he believed in Jesus. See how often he commends this very subject, and, as it were, inculcates it again and again on proud and contentious men: “He was a man under misfortune, and one who well knows to bear infirmities; wherefore also He turned away His face, He was dishonoured, and was not much esteemed. He it is that bears our weaknesses, and for us is involved in pains: and we accounted Him to be in pains, and in misfortune, and in punishment. But it was He who was wounded for our sins, was weakened for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and by His bruise we are healed. All we, as sheep, have gone astray; and the Lord delivered Him up for our sins. And although He was evilly entreated, yet He opened not His mouth: as a sheep was He led to the slaughter, and as a lamb is dumb before the shearer, so He opened not His mouth. In His humiliation His judgment was taken away: His generation who shall declare? For His life shall be taken away from the earth, and for the iniquities of my people was He led to death. Therefore I will give the wicked for His burial, and the rich for His death; because He did no iniquity, nor deceit with His mouth. The Lord is pleased to purge Him from misfortune. If you could yourselves have given your soul on account of your sins, ye should see a seed of a long life. And the Lord is pleased to rescue His soul from pains, to show Him light, and to form it through His understanding; to justify the Just One, who serves many well; and He shall Himself bear their sins. Therefore He shall inherit many, and He shall divide the spoils of the mighty; and He was numbered amongst the transgressors; and Himself bare the sins of many, and He was delivered for their iniquities." Consider also that passage of this same prophet which Christ actually declared to be fulfilled in Himself, when He recited it in the synagogue, in discharging the function of the reader: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me: to preach glad tidings to the poor hath He sent me, that so I may refresh all who are broken-hearted,—to preach deliverance to the captives, and to the blind sight." Let us then all acknowledge Him; nor should there be one exception among persons like ourselves, who wish to cleave to His body, to enter through Him into the sheepfold, and to attain to that life and eternal salvation which He has promised to His own.—Let us, I repeat, all of us acknowledge Him who did no sin, who bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we might live with righteousness separate from sins; by whose scars we are healed, when we were weak—like wandering sheep.

CHAPTER 55 [XXVIII.]

HE CONCLUDES THAT ALL MEN NEED THE DEATH OF CHRIST, THAT THEY MAY BE SAVED. UNBAPTIZED INFANTS WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE CONDEMNATION OF THE DEVIL. HOW ALL MEN THROUGH ADAM ARE UNTO CONDEMNATION; AND THROUGH CHRIST UNTO JUSTIFICATION. NO ONE IS RECONCILED WITH GOD, EXCEPT THROUGH CHRIST

In such circumstances, no man of those who have come to Christ by baptism has ever been regarded, according to sound faith and the true doctrine, as excepted from the grace of forgiveness of sins; nor has eternal life been ever thought possible to any man apart from His kingdom. For this [eternal life] is ready to be revealed at the last time, that is, at the resurrection of the dead who are reserved not for that eternal death which is called “the second death,” but for the eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promises to His saints and faithful servants. Now none who shall partake of this life shall be made alive except in Christ, even as all die in Adam. For as none whatever, of all those who belong to the generation according to the will of the flesh, die except in Adam, in whom all sinned; so, out of these, none at all who are regenerated by the will of the Spirit are endowed with life except in Christ, in whom all are justified. Because as through one all to condemnation, so through One all to justification. Nor is there any middle place for any man, and so a man can only be with the devil who is not with Christ. Accordingly, also the Lord Himself (wishing to remove from the hearts of wrong-believers that vague and indefinite middle condition, which some would provide for unbaptized infants,—as if, by reason of their innocence, they were embraced in eternal life, but were not, because of their unbaptized state, with Christ in His kingdom) uttered that definitive sentence of His, which shuts their mouths: “He that is not with me is against me.” Take then the case of any infant you please: If he is already in Christ, why is he baptized? If, however, as the Truth has it, he is baptized just that he may be with Christ, it certainly follows that he who is not baptized is not with Christ; and because he is not “with” Christ, he is “against” Christ; for He has pronounced His own sentence, which is so explicit that we ought not, and indeed cannot, impair it or change it. And how can he be “against” Christ, if not owing to sin? for it cannot possibly be from his soul or his body, both of these being the creation of God. Now if it be owing to sin, what sin can be found at such an age, except the ancient and original sin? Of course that sinful flesh in which all are born to condemnation is one thing, and that Flesh which was made “after the likeness of sinful flesh,” whereby also all are freed from condemnation, is another thing. It is, however, by no means meant to be implied that all who are born in sinful flesh are themselves actually cleansed by that Flesh which is “like” sinful flesh; “for all men have not faith;” but that all who are born from the carnal union are born entirely of sinful flesh, whilst all who are born from the spiritual union are cleansed only by the Flesh which is in the likeness of sinful flesh. In other words, the former class are in Adam unto condemnation, the latter are in Christ unto justification. This is as if we should say, for example, that in such a city there is a certain midwife who delivers all; and in the same place there is an expert teacher who instructs all. By all, in the one case, only those who are born can possibly be understood; by all, in the other, only those who are taught: and it does not follow that all who are born also receive the instruction. But it is obvious to every one, that in the one case it is correctly said, "she delivers all," since without her aid no one is born; and in the other, it is rightly said, "he teaches all," since without his tutoring, no one learns.

CHAPTER 56

NO ONE IS RECONCILED TO GOD EXCEPT THROUGH CHRIST

Taking into account all the inspired statements which I have quoted,—whether I regard the value of each passage one by one, or combine their united testimony in an accumulated witness or even include similar passages which I have not adduced,—there can be nothing discovered, but that which the catholic Church holds, in her dutiful vigilance against all profane novelties: that every man is separated from God, except those who are reconciled to God through Christ the Mediator; and that no one can be separated from God, except by sins, which alone cause separation; that there is, therefore, no reconciliation except by the remission of sins, through the one grace of the most merciful Saviour,—through the one sacrifice of the most veritable Priest; and that none who are born of the woman, that trusted the serpent and so was corrupted through desire, are delivered from the body of this death, except by the Son of the virgin who believed the angel and so conceived without desire.

CHAPTER 57 [XXIX.]

THE GOOD OF MARRIAGE; FOUR DIFFERENT CASES OF THE GOOD AND THE EVIL USE OF MATRIMONY

The good, then, of marriage lies not in the passion of desire, but in a certain legitimate and honourable measure in using that passion, appropriate to the propagation of children, not the gratification of lust. That, therefore, which is disobediently excited in the members of the body of this death, and endeavours to draw into itself our whole fallen soul, (neither arising nor subsiding at the bidding of the mind), is that evil of sin in which every man is born. When, however, it is curbed from unlawful desires, and is permitted only for the orderly propagation and renewal of the human race, this is the good of wedlock, by which man is born in the union that is appointed. Nobody, however, is born again in Christ's body, unless he be previously born in the body of sin. But inasmuch as it is evil to make a bad use of a good thing, so is it good to use well a bad thing. These two ideas therefore of good and evil, and those other two of a good use and an evil use, when they are duly combined together, produce four different conditions:—[1] A man makes a good use of a good thing, when he dedicates his continence to God; [2.] He makes a bad use of a good thing, when he dedicates his continence to an idol; [3.] He makes a bad use of an evil thing, when he loosely gratifies his concupiscence by adultery; [4.] He makes a good use of an evil thing, when he restrains his concupiscence by matrimony. Now, as it is better to make good use of a good thing than to make good rise of an evil thing,—since both are good,—so "he that giveth his virgin in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better." This question, indeed, I have treated at greater length, and more sufficiently, as God enabled me according to my humble abilities, in two works of mine,—one of them, On the Good of Marriage, and the other, On Holy Virginity. They, therefore, who extol the flesh and blood of a sinful creature, to the prejudice of the Redeemer's flesh and blood, must not defend the evil of concupiscence through the good of marriage; nor should they, from whose infant age the Lord has inculcated in us a lesson of humility, be lifted up into pride by the error of others. He only was born without sin whom a virgin conceived without the embrace of a husband,—not by the concupiscence of the flesh, but by the chaste submission of her mind. She alone was able to give birth to One who should heal our wound, who brought forth the germ of a pure offspring without the wound of sin.

CHAPTER 58 [XXX.]

IN WHAT RESPECT THE PELAGIANS REGARDED BAPTISM AS NECESSARY FOR INFANTS

Let us now examine more carefully, so far as the Lord enables us, that very chapter of the Gospel where He says, “Except a man be born again,—of water and the Spirit,—he shall not enter into the kingdom of God.” If it were not for the authority which this sentence has with them, they would not be of opinion that infants ought to be baptized at all. This is their comment on the passage: “Because He does not say, Except a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he shall not have salvation or eternal life,’ but He merely said, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God,’ therefore infants are to be baptized, in order that they may be with Christ in the kingdom of God, where they will not be unless they are baptized. Should infants die, however, even without baptism, they will have salvation and eternal life, seeing that they are bound with no fetter of sin.” Now in such a statement as this, the first thing that strikes one is, that they never explain where the justice is of separating from the kingdom of God that “image of God” which has no sin. Next, we ought to see whether the Lord Jesus, the one only good Teacher, has not in this very passage of the Gospel intimated, and indeed shown us, that it only comes to pass through the remission of their sins that baptized persons reach the kingdom of God; although to persons of a right understanding, the words, as they stand in the passage, ought to be sufficiently explicit: “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;” and: “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” For why should he be born again, unless to be renewed? From what is he to be renewed, if not from some old condition? From what old condition, but that in which “our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed?” Or whence comes it to pass that “the image of God” enters not into the kingdom of God, unless it be that the impediment of sin prevents it? However, let us (as we said before) see, as earnestly and diligently as we are able, what is the entire context of this passage of the Gospel, on the point in question.

CHAPTER 59

THE CONTEXT OF THEIR CHIEF TEXT

“Now there was,” we read, “a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto Him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." Thus far the Lord's discourse wholly relates to the subject of our present inquiry; from this point the sacred historian digresses to another matter.

CHAPTER 60 [XXXI.]

CHRIST, THE HEAD AND THE BODY; OWING TO THE UNION OF THE NATURES IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST, HE BOTH REMAINED IN HEAVEN, AND WALKED ABOUT ON EARTH; HOW THE ONE CHRIST COULD ASCEND TO HEAVEN; THE HEAD, AND THE BODY, THE ONE CHRIST

Now when Nicodemus understood not what was being told him, he inquired of the Lord how such things could be. Let us look at what the Lord said to him in answer to his inquiry; for of course, as He deigns to answer the question, How can these things be? He will in fact tell us how spiritual regeneration can come to a man who springs from carnal generation. After noticing briefly the ignorance of one who assumed a superiority over others as a teacher, and having blamed the unbelief of all such, for not accepting His witness to the truth, He went on to inquire and wonder whether, as He had told them about earthly things and they had not believed they would believe heavenly things. He nevertheless pursues the subject, and gives an answer such as others should believe—though these refuse—to the question that he was asked, How these things can be? “No man,” says He, “hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” Thus, He says, shall come the spiritual birth,—men, from being earthly, shall become heavenly; and this they can only obtain by being made members of me; so that he may ascend who descended, since no one ascends who did not descend. All, therefore, who have to be changed and raised must meet together in a union with Christ, so that the Christ who descended may ascend, reckoning His body (that is to say, His Church) as nothing else than Himself, because it is of Christ and the Church that this is most truly understood: “And they twain shall be one flesh;” concerning which very subject He expressly said Himself, “So then they are no more twain, but one flesh.” To ascend, therefore, they would be wholly unable, since “no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” For although it was on earth that He was made the Son of man, yet He did not deem it unworthy of that divinity, in which, although remaining in heaven, He came down to earth, to designate it by the name of the Son of man, as He dignified His flesh with the name of Son of God: that they might not be regarded as if they were two Christs,—the one God, the other man,—but one and the same God and man,—God, because “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;” and man, inasmuch as “the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” By this means—by the difference between His divinity and His humiliation—He remained in heaven as Son of God, and as Son of man walked on earth; whilst, by that unity of His person which made His two natures one Christ, He both walked as Son of God on earth, and at the same time as the very Son of man remained in heaven. Faith, therefore, in more credible things arises from the belief of such things as are more incredible. For if His divine nature, though a far more distant object, and more sublime in its incomparable diversity, had ability so to take upon itself the nature of man on our account as to become one Person, and whilst appearing as Son of man on earth in the weakness of the flesh, was able to remain all the while in heaven in the divinity which partook of the flesh, how much easier for our faith is it to suppose that other men, who are His faithful saints, become one Christ with the Man Christ, so that, when all ascend by His grace and fellowship, the one Christ Himself ascends to heaven who came down from heaven? It is in this sense that the apostle says, “As we have many members in one body, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so likewise is Christ.” He did not say, “So also is Christ’s”—meaning Christ’s body, or Christ’s members—but his words are, “So likewise is Christ,” thus calling the head and body one Christ.

CHAPTER 61 [XXXII.]

THE SERPENT LIFTED UP IN THE WILDERNESS PREFIGURED CHRIST SUSPENDED ON THE CROSS; EVEN INFANTS THEMSELVES POISONED BY THE SERPENT’S BITE

And since this great and wonderful dignity can only be attained by the remission of sins, He goes on to say, “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” We know what at that time happened in the wilderness. Many were dying of the bite of serpents: the people then confessed their sins, and, through Moses, besought the Lord to take away from them this poison; accordingly, Moses, at the Lord’s command, lifted up a brazen serpent in the wilderness, and admonished the people that every one who had been serpent-bitten should look upon the uplifted figure. When they did so they were immediately healed. What means the uplifted serpent but the death of Christ, by that mode of expressing a sign, whereby the thing which is effected is signified by that which effects it? Now death came by the serpent, which persuaded man to commit the sin, by which he deserved to die. The Lord, however, transferred to His own flesh not sin, as the poison of the serpent, but He did transfer to it death, that the penalty without the fault might transpire in the likeness of sinful flesh, whence, in the sinful flesh, both the fault might be removed and the penalty. As, therefore, it then came to pass that whoever looked at the raised serpent was both healed of the poison and freed from death, so also now, whosoever is conformed to the likeness of the death of Christ by faith in Him and His baptism, is freed both from sin by justification, and from death by resurrection. For this is what He says: “That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” What necessity then could there be for an infant’s being conformed to the death of Christ by baptism, if he were not altogether poisoned by the bite of the serpent?

CHAPTER 62 [XXXIII.]

NO ONE CAN BE RECONCILED TO GOD, EXCEPT BY CHRIST

He then proceeds thus, saying: “God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Every infant, therefore, was destined to perish, and to lose everlasting life, if through the sacrament of baptism he believed not in the only-begotten Son of God; while nevertheless, He comes not so that he may judge the world, but that the world through Him may be saved. This especially appears in the following clause, wherein He says, “He that believeth in Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.” In what class, then, do we place baptized infants but amongst believers, as the authority of the catholic Church everywhere asserts? They belong, therefore, among those who have believed; for this is obtained for them by virtue of the sacrament and the answer of their sponsors. And from this it follows that such as are not baptized are reckoned among those who have not believed. Now if they who are baptized are not condemned, these last, as not being baptized, are condemned. He adds, indeed: “But this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light. Of what does He say, “Light is come into the world,” if not of His own advent? and without the sacrament of His advent, how are infants said to be in the light? And why should we not include this fact also in “men’s love of darkness,” that as they do not themselves believe, so they refuse to think that their infants ought to be baptized, although they are afraid of their incurring the death of the body? “In God,” however, he declares are the “works of him wrought, who cometh to the light,” because he is quite aware that his justification results from no merits of his own, but from the grace of God. “For it is God,” says the apostle, “who worketh in you both to will and to do of His own good pleasure.” This then is the way in which spiritual regeneration is effected in all who come to Christ from their carnal generation. He explained it Himself, and pointed it out, when He was asked, How these things could be? He left it open to no man to settle such a question by human reasoning, lest infants should be deprived of the grace of the remission of sins. There is no other passage leading to Christ; no man can be reconciled to God, or can come to God otherwise, than through Christ.

CHAPTER 63 [XXXIV.]

THE FORM, OR RITE, OF BAPTISM. EXORCISM

What shall I say of the actual form of this sacrament? I only wish some one of those who espouse the contrary side would bring me an infant to be baptized. What does my exorcism work in that babe, if he be not held in the devil’s family? The man who brought the infant would certainly have had to act as sponsor for him, for he could not answer for himself. How would it be possible then for him to declare that he renounced the devil, if there was no devil in him? that he was converted to God, if he had never been averted from Him? that he believed, besides other articles, in the forgiveness of sins, if no sins were attributable to him? For my own part, indeed, if I thought that his opinions were opposed to this faith, I could not permit him to bring the infant to the sacraments. Nor can I imagine with what countenance before men, or what mind before God, he can conduct himself in this. But I do not wish to say anything too severe. That a false or fallacious form of baptism should be administered to infants, in which there might be the sound and semblance of something being done, but yet no remission of sins actually ensue, has been seen by some amongst them to be as abominable and hateful a thing as it was possible to mention or conceive. Then, again, in respect of the necessity of baptism to infants, they admit that even infants stand in need of redemption,—a concession which is made in a short treatise written by one of their party,—but yet there is not found in this work any open admission of the forgiveness of a single sin. According, however, to an intimation dropped in your letter to me, they now acknowledge, as you say, that a remission of sins takes place even in infants through baptism. No wonder; for it is impossible that redemption should be understood in any other way. Their own words are these: "It is, however, not originally, but in their own actual life, after they have been born, that they have begun to have sin."

CHAPTER 64

A TWOFOLD MISTAKE RESPECTING INFANTS

You see how great a difference there is amongst those whom I have been opposing at such length and persistency in this work,—one of whom has written the book which contains the points I have refuted to the best of my ability. You see as I was saying, the important difference existing between such of them as maintain that infants are absolutely pure and free from all sin, whether original or actual; and those who suppose that so soon as born infants have contracted actual sins of their own, from which they need cleansing by baptism. The latter class, indeed, by examining the Scriptures, and considering the authority of the whole Church as well as the form of the sacrament itself, have clearly seen that by baptism remission of sins accrues to infants; but they are either unwilling or unable to allow that the sin which infants have is original sin. The former class, however, have clearly seen (as they easily might) that in the very nature of man, which is open to the consideration of all men, the tender age of which we speak could not possibly commit any sin whatever in its own proper conduct; but, to avoid acknowledging original sin, they assert that there is no sin at all in infants. Now in the truths which they thus severally maintain, it so happens that they first of all mutually agree with each other, and subsequently differ from us in material aspect. For if the one party concede to the other that remission of sins takes place in all infants which are baptized, whilst the other concedes to their opponents that infants (as infant nature itself in its silence loudly proclaims) have as yet contracted no sin in their own living, then both sides must agree in conceding to us, that nothing remains but original sin, which can be remitted in baptism to infants.

CHAPTER 65 [XXXV.]

IN INFANTS THERE IS NO SIN OF THEIR OWN COMMISSION

Will this also be questioned, and must we spend time in discussing it, in order to prove and show how that by their own will—without which there can be no sin in their own life—infants could never commit an offence, whom all, for this very reason, are in the habit of calling innocent? Does not their great weakness of mind and body, their great ignorance of things, their utter inability to obey a precept, the absence in them of all perception and impression of law, either natural or written, the complete want of reason to impel them in either direction,—proclaim and demonstrate the point before us by a silent testimony far more expressive than any argument of ours? The very palpableness of the fact must surely go a great way to persuade us of its truth; for there is no place where I do not find traces of what I say, so ubiquitous is the fact of which we are speaking,—clearer, indeed, to perceive than any thing we can say to prove it.

CHAPTER 66

INFANTS’ FAULTS SPRING FROM THEIR SHEER IGNORANCE

I should, however, wish any one who was wise on the point to tell me what sin he has seen or thought of in a new-born infant, for redemption from which he allows baptism to be already necessary; what kind of evil it has in its own proper life committed by its own mind or body. If it should happen to cry and to be wearisome to its elders, I wonder whether my informant would ascribe this to iniquity, and not rather to unhappiness. What, too, would he say to the fact that it is hushed from its very weeping by no appeal to its own reason, and by no prohibition of any one else? This, however, comes from the ignorance in which it is so deeply steeped, by reason of which, too, when it grows stronger, as it very soon does, it strikes its mother in its little passion, and often her very breasts which it sucks when it is hungry. Well, now, these small freaks are not only borne in very young children, but are actually loved,—and this with what affection except that of the flesh, by which we are delighted by a laugh or a joke, seasoned with fun and nonsense by clever persons, although, if it were understood literally, as it is spoken, they would not be laughed with as facetious, but at as simpletons? We see, also, how those simpletons whom the common people call Moriones are used for the amusement of the sane; and that they fetch higher prices than the sane when appraised for the slave market. So great, then, is the influence of mere natural feeling, even over those who are by no means simpletons, in producing amusement at another's misfortune. Now, although a man may be amused by another man's silliness, he would still dislike to be a simpleton himself; and if the father, who gladly enough looks out for, and even provokes, such things from his own prattling boy, were to foreknow that he would, when grown up, turn out a fool, he would without doubt think him more to be grieved for than if he were dead. While, however, hope remains of growth, and the light of intellect is expected to increase with the increase of years, then the insults of young children even to their parents seem not merely not wrong, but even agreeable and pleasant. No prudent man, doubtless, could possibly approve of not only not forbidding in children such conduct in word or deed as this, as soon as they are able to be forbidden, but even of exciting them to it, for the vain amusement of their elders. For as soon as children are of an age to know their father and mother, they dare not use wrong words to either, unless permitted or bidden by either, or both. But such things can only belong to such young children as are just striving to lisp out words, and whose minds are just able to give some sort of motion to their tongue. Let us, however, consider the depth of the ignorance rather of the new-born babes, out of which, as they advance in age, they come to this merely temporary stuttering folly,—on their road, as it were, to knowledge and speech.

CHAPTER 67 [XXXVI.]

ON THE IGNORANCE OF INFANTS, AND WHENCE IT ARISES

Yes, let us consider that darkness of their rational intellect, by reason of which they are even completely ignorant of God, whose sacraments they actually struggle against, while being baptized. Now my inquiry is, When and whence came they to be immersed in this darkness? Is it then the fact that they incurred it all here, and in this their own proper life forgat God through too much negligence, after a life of wisdom and religion in their mother's womb? Let those say so who dare; let them listen to it who wish to; let them believe it who can. I, however, am sure that none whose minds are not blinded by an obstinate adherence to a foregone conclusion can possibly entertain such an opinion. Is there then no evil in ignorance,—nothing which needs to be purged away? What means that prayer "Remember not the sins of my youth and of my ignorance?" For although those sins are more to be condemned which are knowingly committed, yet if there were no sins of ignorance, we should not have read in Scripture what I have quoted, "Remember not the sins of my youth and of my ignorance." Seeing now that the soul of an infant fresh from its mother's womb is still the soul of a human being,—nay, the soul of a rational creature,—not only untaught, but even incapable of instruction, I ask why, or when, or whence, it was plunged into that thick darkness of ignorance in which it lies? If it is man's nature thus to begin, and that nature is not already corrupt, then why was not Adam created thus? Why was he capable of receiving a commandment? and able to give names to his wife, and to all the animal creation? For of her he said, "She shall be called Woman;" and in respect of the rest we read: "Whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." Whereas this one, although he is ignorant where he is, what he is, by whom created, of what parents born, is already guilty of offence, incapable as yet of receiving a commandment, and so completely involved and overwhelmed in a thick cloud of ignorance, that he cannot be aroused out of his sleep, so as to recognize even these facts; but a time must be patiently awaited, until he can shake off this strange intoxication, as it were, (not indeed in a single night, as even the heaviest drunkenness usually can be, but) little by little, through many months, and even years; and until this be accomplished, we have to bear in little children so many things which we punish in older persons, that we cannot enumerate them. Now, as touching this enormous evil of ignorance and weakness, if in this present life infants have contracted it as soon as they were born, where, when, how, have they by the perpetration of some great iniquity become suddenly implicated in such darkness?

CHAPTER 68 [XXXVII.]

IF ADAM WAS NOT CREATED OF SUCH A CHARACTER AS THAT IN WHICH WE ARE BORN, HOW IS IT THAT CHRIST, ALTHOUGH FREE FROM SIN, WAS BORN AN INFANT AND IN WEAKNESS?

Some one will ask, If this nature is not pure, but corrupt from its origin, since Adam was not created thus, how is it that Christ, who is far more excellent, and was certainly born without any sin of a virgin, nevertheless appeared in this weakness, and came into the world in infancy? To this question our answer is as follows: Adam was not created in such a state, because, as no sin from a parent preceded him, he was not created in sinful flesh. We, however, are in such a condition, because by reason of his preceding sin we are born in sinful flesh. While Christ was born in such a state, because, in order that He might for sin condemn sin, He assumed the likeness of sinful flesh. The question which we are now discussing is not about Adam in respect of the size of his body, why he was not made an infant but in the perfect greatness of his members. It may indeed be said that the beasts were thus created likewise,—nor was it owing to their sin that their young were born small. Why all this came to pass we are not now asking. But the question before us has regard to the vigor of man’s mind and his use of reason, by virtue of which Adam was capable of instruction, and could apprehend God’s precept and the law of His commandment, and could easily keep it if he would; whereas man is now born in such a state as to be utterly incapable of doing so, owing to his dreadful ignorance and weakness, not indeed of body, but of mind,—although we must all admit that in every infant there exists a rational soul of the self-same substance (and no other) as that which belonged to the first man. Still this great infirmity of the flesh, clearly, in my opinion, points to a something, whatever it may be, that is penal. It raises the doubt whether, if the first human beings had not sinned, they would have had children who could use neither tongue, nor hands, nor feet. That they should be born children was perhaps necessary, on account of the limited capacity of the womb. But, at the same time, it does not follow, because a rib is a small part of a man’s body, that God made an infant wife for the man, and then built her up into a woman. In like manner, God's almighty power was competent to make her children also, as soon as born, grown up at once.

CHAPTER 69 [XXXVIII.]

THE IGNORANCE AND THE INFIRMITY OF AN INFANT

But not to dwell on this, that was at least possible to them which has actually happened to many animals, the young of which are born small, and do not advance in mind (since they have no rational soul) as their bodies grow larger, and yet, even when most diminutive, run about, and recognize their mothers, and require no external help or care when they want to suck, but with remarkable ease discover their mothers' breasts themselves, although these are concealed from ordinary sight. A human being, on the contrary, at his birth is furnished neither with feet fit for walking, nor with hands able even to scratch; and unless their lips were actually applied to the breast by the mother, they would not know where to find it; and even when close to the nipple, they would, notwithstanding their desire for food, be more able to cry than to suck. This utter helplessness of body thus fits in with their infirmity of mind; nor would Christ's flesh have been "in the likeness of sinful flesh," unless that sinful flesh had been such that the rational soul is oppressed by it in the way we have described,—whether this too has been derived from parents, or created in each case for the individual separately, or inspired from above,—concerning which I forbear from inquiring now.

CHAPTER 70 [XXXIX.]

HOW FAR SIN IS DONE AWAY IN INFANTS BY BAPTISM, ALSO IN ADULTS, AND WHAT ADVANTAGE RESULTS THEREFROM

In infants it is certain that, by the grace of God, through His baptism who came in the likeness of sinful flesh, it is brought to pass that the sinful flesh is done away. This result, however, is so effected, that the concupiscence which is diffused over and innate in the living flesh itself is not removed all at once, so as to exist in it no longer; but only that that might not be injurious to a man at his death, which was inherent at his birth. For should an infant live after baptism, and arrive at an age capable of obedience to a law, he finds there somewhat to fight against, and, by God’s help, to overcome, if he has not received His grace in vain, and if he is not willing to be a reprobate. For not even to those who are of riper years is it given in baptism (except, perhaps, by an unspeakable miracle of the almighty Creator), that the law of sin which is in their members, warring against the law of their mind, should be entirely extinguished, and cease to exist; but that whatever of evil has been done, said, or thought by a man whilst he was servant to a mind subject to its concupiscence, should be abolished, and regarded as if it had never occurred. The concupiscence itself, however, (notwithstanding the loosening of the bond of guilt in which the devil, by it, used to keep the soul, and the destruction of the barrier which separated man from his Maker,) remains in the contest in which we chasten our body and bring it into subjection, whether to be relaxed for lawful and necessary uses, or to be restrained by continence. But inasmuch as the Spirit of God, who knows so much better than we do all the past, and present, and future of the human race, foresaw and foretold that the life of man would be such that “no man living should be justified in God’s sight,” it happens that through ignorance or infirmity we do not exert all the powers of our will against it, and so yield to it in the commission of sundry unlawful things,—becoming worse in proportion to the greatness and frequency of our surrender; and better, in proportion to its unimportance and infrequency. The investigation, however, of the point in which we are now interested—whether there could possibly be (or whether in fact there is, has been, or ever will be) a man without sin in this present life, except Him who said, “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me”—requires a much fuller discussion; and the arrangement of the present treatise is such as to make us postpone the question to the commencement of another book.

Book II

In which Augustin argues against such as say that in the present life there are, have been, and will be, men who have absolutely no sin at all. He lays down four propositions on this head: and teaches, first, that a man might possibly live in the present life without sin, by the grace of God and his own free will; he next shows that nevertheless in fact there is no man who lives quite free from sin in this life; thirdly, he sets forth the reason of this,—because there is no man who exactly confines his wishes within the limits of the just requirement of each case, which just requirement he either fails to perceive, or is unwilling to carry out in practice; in the fourth place, he proves that there is not, nor has been, nor ever will be, a human being—except the one mediator, Christ—who is free from all sin.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

WHAT HAS THUS FAR BEEN DWELT ON; AND WHAT IS TO BE TREATED IN THIS BOOK

We have, my dearest Marcellinus, discussed at sufficient length, I think, in the former book the baptism of infants,—how that it is given to them not only for entrance into the kingdom of God, but also for attaining salvation and eternal life, which none can have without the kingdom of God, or without that union with the Saviour Christ, wherein He has redeemed us by His blood. I undertake in the present book to discuss and explain the question, Whether there lives in this world, or has yet lived, or ever will live, any one without any sin whatever, except “the one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all;”—with as much care and ability as He may Himself vouchsafe to me. And should there occasionally arise in this discussion, either inevitably or casually from the argument, any question about the baptism or the sin of infants, I must neither be surprised nor must I shrink from giving the best answer I can, at such emergencies, to whatever point challenges my attention.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

SOME PERSONS ATTRIBUTE TOO MUCH TO THE FREEDOM OF MAN’S WILL; IGNORANCE AND INFIRMITY

A solution is extremely necessary of this question about a human life unassailed by any deception or preoccupation of sin, in consequence even of our daily prayers. For there are some persons who presume so much upon the free determination of the human will, as to suppose that it need not sin, and that we require no divine assistance,—attributing to our nature, once for all, this determination of free will. An inevitable consequence of this is, that we ought not to pray “not to enter into temptation,”—that is, not to be overcome of temptation, either when it deceives and surprises us in our ignorance, or when it presses and importunes us in our weakness. Now how hurtful, and how pernicious and contrary to our salvation in Christ, and how violently adverse to the religion itself in which we are instructed, and to the piety whereby we worship God, it cannot but be for us not to beseech the Lord for the attainment of such a benefit, but be rather led to think that petition of the Lord’s Prayer, “Lead us not into temptation,” a vain and useless insertion,—it is beyond my ability to express in words.

CHAPTER 3 [III.]

IN WHAT WAY GOD COMMANDS NOTHING IMPOSSIBLE. WORKS OF MERCY, MEANS OF WIPING OUT SINS

Now these people imagine that they are acute (as if none among us knew it) when they say, that “if we have not the will, we commit no sin; nor would God command man to do what was impossible for human volition.” But they do not see, that in order to overcome certain things, which are the objects either of an evil desire or an ill-conceived fear, men need the strenuous efforts, and sometimes even all the energies, of the will; and that we should only imperfectly employ these in every instance, He foresaw who willed so true an utterance to be spoken by the prophet: “In Thy sight shall no man living be justified.” The Lord, therefore, foreseeing that such would be our character, was pleased to provide and endow with efficacious virtue certain healthful remedies against the guilt and bonds even of sins committed after baptism,—for instance, the works of mercy,—as when he says: “Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you.” For who could quit this life with any hope of obtaining eternal salvation, with that sentence impending: “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all,” if there did not soon after follow: “So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty: for he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment?”

CHAPTER 4 [IV.]

CONCUPISCENCE, HOW FAR IN US; THE BAPTIZED ARE NOT INJURED BY CONCUPISCENCE, BUT ONLY BY CONSENT THEREWITH

Concupiscence, therefore, as the law of sin which remains in the members of this body of death, is born with infants. In baptized infants, it is deprived of guilt, is left for the struggle [of life], but pursues with no condemnation, such as die before the struggle. Unbaptized infants it implicates as guilty and as children of wrath, even if they die in infancy, draws into condemnation. In baptized adults, however, endowed with reason, whatever consent their mind gives to this concupiscence for the commission of sin is an act of their own will. After all sins have been blotted out, and that guilt has been cancelled which by nature bound men in a conquered condition, it still remains,—but not to hurt in any way those who yield no consent to it for unlawful deeds,—until death is swallowed up in victory and, in that perfection of peace, nothing is left to be conquered. Such, however, as yield consent to it for the commission of unlawful deeds, it holds as guilty; and unless, through the medicine of repentance, and through works of mercy, by the intercession in our behalf of the heavenly High Priest, they be healed, it conducts us to the second death and utter condemnation. It was on this account that the Lord, when teaching us to pray, advised us, besides other petitions, to say: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into tempation, but deliver us from evil.” For evil remains in our flesh, not by reason of the nature in which man was created by God and wisdom, but by reason of that offence into which he fell by his own will, and in which, since its powers are lost, he is not healed with the same facility of will as that with which he was wounded. Of this evil the apostle says: “I know that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing;” and it is likewise to the same evil that he counsels us to give no obedience, when he says: “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to obey the lusts thereof.” When, therefore, we have by an unlawful inclination of our will yielded consent to these lusts of the flesh, we say, with a view to the cure of this fault, “Forgive us our debts;” and we at the same time apply the remedy of a work of mercy, in that we add, “As we forgive our debtors.” That we may not, however, yield such consent, let us pray for assistance, and say, “And lead us not into temptation;”—not that God ever Himself tempts any one with such temptation, “for God is not a tempter to evil, neither tempteth He any man;” but in order that whenever we feel the rising of temptation from our concupiscence, we may not be deserted by His help, in order that thereby we may be able to conquer, and not be carried away by enticement. We then add our request for that which is to be perfected at the last, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life: “But deliver us from evil.” For then there will exist no longer a concupiscence which we are bidden to struggle against, and not to consent to. The whole substance, accordingly, of these three petitions may be thus briefly expressed: “Pardon us for those things in which we have been drawn away by concupiscence; help us not to be drawn away by concupiscence; take away concupiscence from us.”

CHAPTER 5 [V.]

THE WILL OF MAN REQUIRES THE HELP OF GOD

Now for the commission of sin we get no help from God; but we are not able to do justly, and to fulfil the law of righteousness in every part thereof, except we are helped by God. For as the bodily eye is not helped by the light to turn away therefrom shut or averted, but is helped by it to see, and cannot see at all unless it help it; so God, who is the light of the inner man, helps our mental sight, in order that we may do some good, not according to our own, but according to His righteousness. But if we turn away from Him, it is our own act; we then are wise according to the flesh, we then consent to the concupiscence of the flesh for unlawful deeds. When we turn to Him, therefore, God helps us; when we turn away from Him, He forsakes us. But then He helps us even to turn to Him; and this, certainly, is something that light does not do for the eyes of the body. When, therefore, He commands us in the words, “Turn ye unto me, and I will turn unto you,” and we say to Him, “Turn us, O God of our salvation,” and again, “Turn us, O God of hosts;” what else do we say than, “Give what Thou commandest?” When He commands us, saying, “Understand now, ye simple among the people,” and we say to Him, “Give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments;” what else do we say than, “Give what Thou commandest?” When He commands us, saying, “Go not after thy lusts,” and we say to Him, “We know that no man can be continent, except God gives it to him;” what else do we say than, “Give what Thou commandest?” When He commands us, saying, “Do justice,” and we say, “Teach me Thy judgments, O Lord;” what else do we say than, “Give what Thou commandest?” In like manner, when He says: “Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled,” from whom ought we to seek for the meat and drink of righteousness, but from Him who promises His fulness to such as hunger and thirst after it?

CHAPTER 6

WHEREIN THE PHARISEE SINNED WHEN HE THANKED GOD; TO GOD’S GRACE MUST BE ADDED THE EXERTION OF OUR OWN WILL

Let us then drive away from our ears and minds those who say that we ought to accept the determination of our own free will and not pray God to help us not to sin. By such darkness as this even the Pharisee was not blinded; for although he erred in thinking that he needed no addition to his righteousness, and supposed himself to be saturated with abundance of it, he nevertheless gave thanks to God that he was not “like other men, unjust, extortioners, adulterers, or even as the publican; for he fasted twice in the week, he gave tithes of all that he possessed.” He wished, indeed, for no addition to his own righteousness; but yet, by giving thanks to God, he confessed that all he had he had received from Him. Notwithstanding, he was not approved, both because he asked for no further food of righteousness, as if he were already filled, and because he arrogantly preferred himself to the publican, who was hungering and thirsting after righteousness. What, then, is to be said of those who, whilst acknowledging that they have no righteousness, or no fulness thereof, yet imagine that it is to be had from themselves alone, not to be besought from their Creator, in whom is its store and its fountain? And yet this is not a question about prayers alone, as if the energy of our will also should not be strenuously added. God is said to be “our Helper;” but nobody can be helped who does not make some effort of his own accord. For God does not work our salvation in us as if he were working in insensate stones, or in creatures in whom nature has placed neither reason nor will. Why, however, He helps one man, but not another; or why one man so much, and another so much; or why one man in one way, and another in another,—He reserves to Himself according to the method of His own most secret justice, and to the excellency of His power.

CHAPTER 7 [VI.]

FOUR QUESTIONS ON THE PERFECTION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: (1.) WHETHER A MAN CAN BE WITHOUT SIN IN THIS LIFE

Now those who aver that a man can exist in this life without sin, must not be immediately opposed with incautious rashness; for if we should deny the possibility, we should derogate both from the free will of man, who in his wish desires it, and from the power or mercy of God, who by His help effects it. But it is one question, whether he could exist; and another question, whether he does exist. Again, it is one question, if he does not exist when he could exist, why he does not exist; and another question, whether such a man as had never sinned at all, not only is in existence, but also could ever have existed, or can ever exist. Now, if in the order of this fourfold set of interrogative propositions, I were asked, [1st,] Whether it be possible for a man in this life to be without sin? I should allow the possibility, through the grace of God and the man’s own free will; not doubting that the free will itself is ascribable to God’s grace, in other words, to the gifts of God,—not only as to its existence, but also as to its being good, that is, to its conversion to doing the commandments of God. Thus it is that God’s grace not only shows what ought to be done, but also helps to the possibility of doing what it shows. “What indeed have we that we have not received?” Whence also Jeremiah says: “I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man to walk and direct his steps.” Accordingly, when in the Psalms one says to God, “Thou hast commanded me to keep Thy precepts diligently,” he at once adds not a word of confidence concerning himself but a wish to be able to keep these precepts:

“O that my ways,” says he, “were directed to keep Thy statutes! Then should I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all Thy commandments? Now who ever wishes for what he has already so in his own power, that he requires no further help for attaining it? To whom, however, he directs his wish,—not to fortune, or fate, or some one else besides God,—he shows with sufficient clearness in the following words, where he says: “Order my steps in Thy word; and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.” From the thraldom of this execrable dominion they are liberated, to whom the Lord Jesus gave power to become the sons of God. From so horrible a domination were they to be freed, to whom He says, “If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed.” From these and many other like testimonies, I cannot doubt that God has laid no impossible command on man; and that, by God’s aid and help, nothing is impossible, by which is wrought what He commands. In this way may a man, if he pleases, be without sin by the assistance of God.

CHAPTER 8 [VII.]

(2) WHETHER THERE IS IN THIS WORLD A MAN WITHOUT SIN

CHAPTER 9

THE BEGINNING OF RENEWAL; RESURRECTION CALLED REGENERATION; THEY ARE THE SONS OF GOD WHO LEAD LIVES SUITABLE TO NEWNESS OF LIFE

And hence in the passage, “Whosoever is born of God doth not sin, and he cannot sin, for His seed remaineth in him,” and in every other passage of like import, they much deceive themselves by an inadequate consideration of the Scriptures. For they fail to observe that men severally become sons of God when they begin to live in newness of spirit, and to be renewed as to the inner man after the image of Him that created them. For it is not from the moment of a man’s baptism that all his old infirmity is destroyed, but renovation begins with the remission of all his sins, and so far as he who is now wise is spiritually wise. All things else, however, are accomplished in hope, looking forward to their being also realized in fact, even to the renewal of the body itself in that better state of immortality and incorruption with which we shall be clothed at the resurrection of the dead.

For this too the Lord calls a regeneration,—though, of course, not such as occurs through baptism, but still a regeneration wherein that which is now begun in the spirit shall be brought to perfection also in the body. "In the regeneration," says He, "when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." For however entire and full be the remission of sins in baptism, nevertheless, if there was wrought by it at once, an entire and full change of the man into his everlasting newness,—I do not mean change in his body, which is now most clearly tending evermore to the old corruption and to death, after which it is to be renewed into a total and true newness,—but, the body being excepted, if in the soul itself, which is the inner man, a perfect renewal was wrought in baptism, the apostle would not say: "Even though our outward man perishes, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Now, undoubtedly, he who is still renewed day by day is not as yet wholly renewed; and in so far as he is not yet wholly renewed, he is still in his old state. Since, then, men, even after they are baptized, are still in some degree in their old condition, they are on that account also still children of the world; but inasmuch as they are also admitted into a new state, that is to say, by the full and perfect remission of their sins, and in so far as they are spiritually-minded, and behave correspondingly, they are the children of God. Internally we put off the old man and put on the new; for we then and there lay aside lying, and speak truth, and do those other things wherein the apostle makes to consist the putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Now it is men who are already baptized and faithful whom he exhorts to do this, —an exhortation which would be unsuitable to them, if the absolute and perfect change had been already made in their baptism. And yet made it was, since we were then actually saved; for "He saved us by the laver of regeneration." In another passage, however, he tells us how this took place. "Not they only," says he, "but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

CHAPTER 10 [VIII.]

PERFECTION, WHEN TO BE REALIZED

Our full adoption, then, as children, is to happen at the redemption of our body. It is therefore the first-fruits of the Spirit which we now possess, whence we are already really become the children of God; for the rest, indeed, as it is by hope that we are saved and renewed, so are we the children of God. But inasmuch as we are not yet actually saved, we are also not yet fully renewed, nor yet also fully sons of God, but children of the world. We are therefore advancing in renewal and holiness of life,—and it is by this that we are children of God, and by this also we cannot commit sin;—until at last the whole of that by which we are kept as yet children of this world is changed into this;—for it is owing to this that we are as yet able to sin. Hence it comes to pass that "whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;" and as well, "if we were to say that we have no sin, we should deceive ourselves, and the truth would not be in us." There shall be then an end put to that within us which keeps us children of the flesh and of the world; whilst that other shall be perfected which makes us the children of God, and renews us by His Spirit. Accordingly the same John says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." Now what means this variety in the expressions, "we are," and "we shall be," but this—we are in hope, we shall be in reality? For he goes on to say, "We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." We have therefore even now begun to be like Him, having the first-fruits of the Spirit; but yet we are still unlike Him, by reason of the remainders of the old nature. In as far, then, as we are like Him, in so far are we, by the regenerating Spirit, sons of God; but in as far as we are unlike Him, in so far are we the children of the flesh and of the world. On the one side, we cannot commit sin; but, on the other, if we say that we have no sin, we only deceive ourselves,—until we pass entirely into the adoption, and the sinner be no more, and you look for his place and find it not.

CHAPTER 11 [IX.]

AN OBJECTION OF THE PELAGIANS: WHY DOES NOT A RIGHTEOUS MAN BEGET A RIGHTEOUS MAN?

In vain, then, do some of them argue: “If a sinner begets a sinner, so that the guilt of original sin must be done away in his infant son by his receiving baptism, in like manner ought a righteous man to beget a righteous son.” Just as if a man begat children in the flesh by reason of his righteousness, and not because he is moved thereto by the concupiscence which is in his members, and the law of sin is applied by the law of his mind to the purpose of procreation. His begetting children, therefore, shows that he still retains the old nature among the children of this world; it does not arise from the fact of his promotion to newness of life among the children of God. For “the children of this world beget and are begotten.” Hence also what is born of them is like them; for “that which is born of the flesh is flesh.” Only the children of God, however, are righteous; but in so far as they are the children of God, they do not carnally beget, because it is of the Spirit, and not of the flesh, that they are themselves begotten. But as many of them as become parents, beget children from the circumstance that they have not yet put off the entire remains of their old nature in exchange for the perfect renovation which awaits them. It follows, therefore, that every son who is born in this old and infirm condition of his father’s nature, must needs himself partake of the same old and infirm condition. In order, then, that he may be begotten again, he must also himself be renewed by the Spirit through the remission of sin; and if this change does not take place in him, his righteous father will be of no use to him. For it is by the Spirit that he is righteous, but it is not by the Spirit that he begat his son. On the other hand, if this change does accrue to him, he will not be damaged by an unrighteous father: for it is by the grace of the Spirit that he has passed into the hope of the eternal newness; whereas it is owing to his carnal mind that his father has wholly remained in the old nature.

CHAPTER 12 [X.]

HE RECONCILES SOME PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE

The statement, therefore, “He that is born of God sinneth not,” is not contrary to the passage in which it is declared by those who are born of God, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” For however complete may be a man’s present hope, and however real may be his renewal by spiritual regeneration in that part of his nature, he still, for all that, carries about a body which is corrupt, and which presses down his soul; and so long as this is the case, one must distinguish even in the same individual the relation and source of each several action. Now, I suppose it is not easy to find in God's Scripture so weighty a testimony of holiness given of any man as that which is written of His three servants, Noah, Daniel, and Job, whom the Prophet Ezekiel describes as the only men able to be delivered from God's impending wrath. In these three men he no doubt prefigures three classes of mankind to be delivered: in Noah, as I suppose, are represented righteous leaders of nations, by reason of his government of the ark as a type of the Church; in Daniel, men who are righteous in continence; in Job, those who are righteous in wedlock;—to say nothing of any other view of the passage, which it is unnecessary now to consider. It is, at any rate, clear from this testimony of the prophet, and from other inspired statements, how eminent were these worthies in righteousness. Yet no man must be led by their history to say, for instance, that drunkenness is not sin, although so good a man was overtaken by it; for we read that Noah was once drunk, but God forbid that it should be thought that he was an habitual drunkard.

CHAPTER 13

A SUBTERFUGE OF THE PELAGIANS

Daniel, indeed, after the prayer which he poured out before God, actually says respecting himself, “Whilst I was praying and confessing my sins, and the sins of my people, before the Lord my God.” This is the reason, if I am not mistaken, why in the above-mentioned Prophet Ezekiel a certain most haughty person is asked, “Art thou then wiser than Daniel?” Nor on this point can that be possibly said which some contend for in opposition to the Lord's Prayer: “For although,” they say, “that prayer was offered by the apostles, after they became holy and perfect, and had no sin whatever, yet it was not in behalf of their own selves, but of imperfect and still sinful men that they said, Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.’ They used the word our,” they say, “in order to show that in one body are contained both those who still have sins, and themselves, who were already altogether free from sin.” Now this certainly cannot be said in the case of Daniel, who (as I suppose) foresaw as a prophet this presumptuous opinion, when he said so often in his prayer, “We have sinned;” and explained to us why he said this, not so as that we should hear from him, Whilst I was praying and confessing the sins of my people to the Lord, my God; nor yet confounding distinction, so as that it would be uncertain whether he had said, on account of the fellowship of one body, While I was confessing our sins to the Lord my God; but he expresses himself in language so distinct and precise, as if he were full of the distinction himself, and wanted above all things to commend it to our notice: “My sins,” says he, “and the sins of my people.” Who can gainsay such evidence as this, but he who is more pleased to defend what he thinks than to find out what he ought to think?

CHAPTER 14

JOB WAS NOT WITHOUT SIN

But let us see what Job has to say of himself, after God’s great testimony of his righteousness. “I know of a truth,” he says, “that it is so: for how shall a mortal man be just before the Lord? For if He should enter into judgment with him, he would not be able to obey Him.” And shortly afterwards he asks: “Who shall resist His judgment? Even if I should seem righteous, my mouth will speak profanely.” And again, further on, he says: “I know He will not leave me unpunished. But since I am ungodly, why have I not died? If I should wash myself with snow, and be purged with clean hands, thou hadst thoroughly stained me with filth.” In another of his discourses he says: “For Thou hast written evil things against me, and hast compassed me with the sins of my youth; and Thou hast placed my foot in the stocks. Thou hast watched all my works, and hast inspected the soles of my feet, which wax old like a bottle, or like a moth-eaten garment. For man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of wrath; like a flower that hath bloomed, so doth he fall; he is gone like a shadow, and continueth not. Hast Thou not taken account even of him, and caused him to enter into judgment with Thee? For who is pure from uncleanness? Not even one; even should his life last but a day.” Then a little afterwards he says: “Thou hast numbered all my necessities; and not one of my sins hath escaped Thee. Thou hast sealed up my transgressions in a bag, and hast marked whatever I have done unwillingly.” See how Job, too, confesses his sins, and says how sure he is that there is none righteous before the Lord. So he is sure of this also, that if we say we have no sin, the truth is not in us. While, therefore, God bestows on him His high testimony of righteousness, according to the standard of human conduct, Job himself, taking his measure from that rule of righteousness, which, as well as he can, he beholds in God, knows of a truth that so it is; and he goes on at once to say, “How shall a mortal man be just before the Lord? For if He should enter into judgment with him, he would not be able to obey Him;” in other words, if, when challenged to judgment, he wished to show that nothing could be found in him which He could condemn, “he would not be able to obey him,” since he misses even that obedience which might enable him to obey Him who teaches that sins ought to be confessed. Accordingly [the Lord] rebukes certain men, saying, “Why will ye contend with me in judgment?” This [the Psalmist] averts, saying, “Enter not into judgment with Thy servant; for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.” In accordance with this, Job also asks: “For who shall resist his judgment? Even if I should seem righteous, my mouth will speak profanely;” which means: If, contrary to His judgment, I should call myself righteous, when His perfect rule of righteousness proves me to be unrighteous, then of a truth my mouth would speak profanely, because it would speak against the truth of God.

CHAPTER 15

CARNAL GENERATION CONDEMNED ON ACCOUNT OF ORIGINAL SIN

He sets forth that this absolute weakness, or rather condemnation, of carnal generation is from the transgression of original sin, when, treating of his own sins, he shows, as it were, their causes, and says that “man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of wrath.” Of what wrath, but of that in which all are, as the apostle says, “by nature,” that is, by origin, “children of wrath,” inasmuch as they are children of the concupiscence of the flesh and of the world? He further shows that to this same wrath also pertains the death of man. For after saying, “He hath but a short time to live, and is full of wrath,” he added, “Like a flower that hath bloomed, so doth he fall; he is gone like a shadow, and continueth not.” He then subjoins: “Hast Thou not caused him to enter into judgment with Thee? For who is pure from uncleanness? Not even one; even should his life last but a day.” In these words he in fact says, Thou hast thrown upon man, short-lived though he be, the care of entering into judgment with Thee. For how brief soever be his life,—even if it last but a single day,—he could not possibly be clean of filth; and therefore with perfect justice must he come under Thy judgment. Then, when he says again, “Thou hast numbered all my necessities, and not one of my sins hath escaped Thee: Thou hast sealed up my transgressions in a bag, and hast marked whatever I have done unwillingly;” is it not clear enough that even those sins are justly imputed which are not committed through allurement of pleasure, but for the sake of avoiding some trouble, or pain, or death? Now these sins, too, are said to be committed under some necessity, whereas they ought all to be overcome by the love and pleasure of righteousness. Again, what he said in the clause, “Thou hast marked whatever I have done unwillingly,” may evidently be connected with the saying: “For what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I.”

CHAPTER 16

JOB FORESAW THAT CHRIST WOULD COME TO SUFFER; THE WAY OF HUMILITY IN THOSE THAT ARE PERFECT

Now it is remarkable that the Lord Himself, after bestowing on Job the testimony which is expressed in Scripture, that is, by the Spirit of God, “In all the things which happened to him he sinned not with his lips before the Lord,” did yet afterwards speak to him with a rebuke, as Job himself tells us: “Why do I yet plead, being admonished, and hearing the rebukes of the Lord?” Now no man is justly rebuked unless there be in him something which deserves rebuke. [XI.] And what sort of rebuke is this,—which, moreover, is understood to proceed from the person of Christ our Lord? He re-counts to him all the divine operations of His power, rebuking him under this idea,—that He seems to say to him, “Canst thou effect all these mighty works as I can?” But to what purpose is all this but that Job might understand (for this instruction was divinely inspired into him, that he might foreknow Christ’s coming to suffer),—that he might understand how patiently he ought to endure all that he went through, since Christ, although, when He became man for us, He was absolutely without sin, and although as God He possessed so great power, did for all that by no means refuse to obey even to the suffering of death? When Job understood this with a purer intensity of heart, he added to his own answer these words: “I used before now to hear of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but behold now mine eye seeth Thee: therefore I abhor myself and melt away, and account myself but dust and ashes.” Why was he thus so deeply displeased with himself? God’s work, in that he was man, could not rightly have given him displeasure, since it is even said to God Himself, “Despise not Thou the work of Thine own hands.” It was indeed in view of that righteousness, in which he had discovered his own unrighteousness, that he abhorred himself and melted away, and deemed himself dust and ashes,—beholding, as he did in his mind, the righteousness of Christ, in whom there could not possibly be any sin, not only in respect of His divinity, but also of His soul and His flesh. It was also in view of this righteousness which is of God that the Apostle Paul, although as “touching the righteousness which is of the law he was blameless,” yet “counted all things” not only as loss, but even as dung.

CHAPTER 17 [XII.]

NO ONE RIGHTEOUS IN ALL THINGS

That illustrious testimony of God, therefore, in which Job is commended, is not contrary to the passage in which it is said, “In Thy sight shall no man living be justified;” for it does not lead us to suppose that in him there was nothing at all which might either by himself truly or by the Lord God rightly be blamed, although at the same time he might with no untruth be said to be a righteous man, and a sincere worshipper of God, and one who keeps himself from every evil work. For these are God’s words concerning him: “Hast thou diligently considered my servant Job? For there is none like him on the earth, blameless, righteous, a true worshipper of God, who keeps himself from every evil work.” First, he is here praised for his excellence in comparison with all men on earth. He therefore excelled all who were at that time able to be righteous upon earth; and yet, because of this superiority over others in righteousness, he was not therefore altogether without sin. He is next said to be “blameless”—no one could fairly bring an accusation against him in respect of his life; “righteous”—he had advanced so greatly in moral probity, that no man could be mentioned on a par with him; “a true worshipper of God”—because he was a sincere and humble confessor of his own sins; “who keeps himself from every evil work”—it would have been wonderful if this had extended to every evil word and thought. How great a man indeed Job was, we are not told; but we know that he was a just man; we know, too, that in the endurance of terrible afflictions and trials he was great; and we know that it was not on account of his sins, but for the purpose of demonstrating his righteousness, that he had to bear so much suffering. But the language in which the Lord commends Job might also be applied to him who “delights in the law of God after the inner man, whilst he sees another law in his members warring against the law of his mind;” especially as he says, “The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” Observe how he too after the inward man is separate from every evil work, because such work he does not himself effect, but the evil which dwells in his flesh; and yet, since he does not have even that ability to delight in the law of God except from the grace of God, he, as still in want of deliverance, exclaims, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? God’s grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

CHAPTER 18 [XIII.]

PERFECT HUMAN RIGHTEOUSNESS IS IMPERFECT

There are then on earth righteous men, there are great men, brave, prudent, chaste, patient, pious, merciful, who endure all kinds of temporal evil with an even mind for righteousness’ sake. If, however, there is truth—nay, because there is truth—in these words, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,” and in these, “In Thy sight shall no man living be justified,” they are not without sin; nor is there one among them so proud and foolish as not to think that the Lord’s Prayer is needful to him, by reason of his manifold sins.

CHAPTER 19

ZACHARIAS AND ELISABETH, SINNERS

Now what must we say of Zacharias and Elisabeth, who are often alleged against us in discussions on this question, except that there is clear evidence in the Scripture that Zacharias was a man of eminent righteousness among the chief priests, whose duty it was to offer up the sacrifices of the Old Testament? We also read, however, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in a passage which I have already quoted in my previous book, that Christ was the only High Priest who had no need, as those who were called high priests, to offer daily a sacrifice for his own sins first, and then for the people. “For such a High Priest,” it says, “became us, righteous, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins.” Amongst the priests here referred to was Zacharias, amongst them was Phinehas, yea, Aaron himself, from whom this priesthood had its beginning, and whatever others there were who lived laudably and righteously in this priesthood; and yet all these were under the necessity, first of all, of offering sacrifice for their own sins,—Christ, of whose future coming they were a type, being the only one who, as an incontaminable priest, had no such necessity.

CHAPTER 20

PAUL WORTHY TO BE THE PRINCE OF THE APOSTLES, AND YET A SINNER

What commendation, however, is bestowed on Zacharias and Elisabeth which is not comprehended in what the apostle has said about himself before he believed in Christ? He said that, “as touching the righteousness which is in the law, he had been blameless.” The same is said also of them: “They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.” It was because whatever righteousness they had in them was not a pretence before men that it is said accordingly, “They walked before the Lord.” But that which is written of Zacharias and his wife in the phrase, in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, the apostle briefly expressed by the words, in the law. For there was not one law for him and another for them previous to the gospel. It was one and the same law which, as we read, was given by Moses to their fathers, and according to which, also, Zacharias was priest, and offered sacrifices in his course. And yet the apostle, who was then endued with the like righteousness, goes on to say: “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; for whose sake I have not only thought all things to be only detriments, but I have even counted them as dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering, being made comformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." So far, then, is it from being true that we should, from the words in which Scripture describes them, suppose that Zacharias and Elisabeth had a perfect righteousness without any sin, that we must even regard the apostle himself, according to the selfsame rule, as not perfect, not only in that righteousness of the law which he possessed in common with them, and which he counts as loss and dung in comparison with that most excellent righteousness which is by the faith of Christ, but also in the very gospel itself, wherein he deserved the pre-eminence of his great apostleship. Now I would not venture to say this if I did not deem it very wrong to refuse credence to himself. He extends the passage which we have quoted, and says: "Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect; but I follow after, if I may comprehend that for which also I am apprehended in Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Here he confesses that he has not yet attained, and is not yet perfect in that plenitude of righteousness which he had longed to obtain in Christ; but that he was as yet pressing towards the mark, and, forgetting what was past, was reaching out to the things which are before him. We are sure, then, that what he says elsewhere is true even of himself: "Although our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Although he was already a perfect traveller, he had not yet attained the perfect end of his journey. All such he would fain take with him as companions of his course. This he expresses in the words which follow our former quotation: "Let as many, then, of us as are perfect, be thus minded: and if ye be yet of another mind, God will reveal even this also to you. Nevertheless, whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by that rule." This "walk" is not performed with the legs of the body, but with the affections of the soul and the character of the life, so that they who possess righteousness may arrive at perfection, who, advancing in their renewal day by day along the straight path of faith, have by this time become perfect as travellers in the selfsame righteousness.

CHAPTER 21 [XIV.]

ALL RIGHTEOUS MEN SINNERS

In like manner, all who are described in the Scriptures as exhibiting in their present life good will and the actions of righteousness, and all who have lived like them since, although lacking the same testimony of Scripture; or all who are even now so living, or shall hereafter so live: all these are great, they are all righteous, and they are all really worthy of praise,—yet they are by no means without sin: inasmuch as, on the authority of the same Scriptures which make us believe in their virtues, we believe also that in "God's sight no man living is justified," whence all ask that He will "not enter into judgment with His servants:" and that not only to all the faithful in general, but to each of them in particular, the Lord's Prayer is necessary, which He delivered to His disciples.

CHAPTER 22 [XV.]

AN OBJECTION OF THE PELAGIANS; PERFECTION IS RELATIVE; HE IS RIGHTLY SAID TO BE PERFECT IN RIGHTEOUSNESS WHO HAS MADE MUCH PROGRESS THEREIN

"Well, but," they say, "the Lord says, Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,'—an injunction which He would not have given, if He had known that what He enjoined was impracticable." Now the present question is not whether it be possible for any men, during this present life, to be without sin if they receive that perfection for the purpose; for the question of possibility we have already discussed:—but what we have now to consider is, whether any man in fact achieves perfection. We have, however, already recognised the fact that no man wills as much as the duty demands, as also the testimony of the Scriptures, which we have quoted so largely above, declares. When, indeed, perfection is ascribed to any particular person, we must look carefully at the thing in which it is ascribed. For I have just above quoted a passage of the apostle, wherein he confesses that he was not yet perfect in the attainment of righteousness which he desired; but still he immediately adds, “Let as many of us as are perfect be thus minded.” Now he would certainly not have uttered these two sentences if he had not been perfect in one thing, and not in another. For instance, a man may be perfect as a scholar in the pursuit of wisdom: and this could not yet be said of those to whom [the apostle] said, “I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye have not been able to bear it, neither are ye yet able;” whereas to those of whom it could be said he says, “Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect,”—meaning, of course, “perfect pupils” to be understood. It may happen, therefore, as I have said, that a man may be already perfect as a scholar, though not as yet perfect as a teacher of wisdom; may be perfect as a learner, though not as yet perfect as a doer of righteousness; may be perfect as a lover of his enemies, though not as yet perfect in bearing their wrong. Even in the case of him who is so far perfect as to love all men, inasmuch as he has attained even to the love of his enemies, it still remains a question whether he be perfect in that love,—in other words, whether he so loves those whom he loves as is prescribed to be exercised towards those to be loved, by the unchangeable love of truth. Whenever, then, we read in the Scriptures of any man’s perfection, it must be carefully considered in what it is asserted, since a man is not therefore to be understood as being entirely without sin because he is described as perfect in some particular thing; although the term may also be employed to show, not, indeed, that there is no longer any point left for a man to reach his way to perfection, but that he has in fact advanced a very great way, and on that account may be deemed worthy of the designation. Thus, a man may be said to be perfect in the science of the law, even if there be still something unknown to him; and in the same manner the apostle called men perfect, to whom he said at the same time, “Yet if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule.”

CHAPTER 23 [XXI.]

WHY GOD PRESCRIBES WHAT HE KNOWS CANNOT BE OBSERVED

We must not deny that God commands that we ought to be so perfect in doing righteousness, as to have no sin at all. Now that cannot be sin, whatever it may be, unless God has enjoined that it shall not be. Why then, they ask, does He command what He knows no man living will perform? In this manner it may also be asked, Why He commanded the first human beings, who were only two, what He knew they would not obey? For it must not be pretended that He issued that command, that some of us might obey it, if they did not; for, that they should not partake of the fruit of the particular tree, God commanded them, and none besides. Because, as He knew what amount of righteousness they would fail to perform, so did He also know what righteous measures He meant Himself to adopt concerning them. In the same way, then, He orders all men to commit no sin, although He knows beforehand that no man will fulfil the command; in order that He may, in the case of all who impiously and condemnably despise His precepts, Himself do what is just in their condemnation; and, in the case of all who while obediently and piously pressing on in his precepts, though failing to observe to the utmost all things which He has enjoined, do yet forgive others as they wish to to be forgiven themselves, Himself do what is good in their cleansing. For how can forgiveness be bestowed by God's mercy on the forgiving, when there is no sin? or how prohibition fail to be given by the justice of God, when there is sin?

CHAPTER 24

AN OBJECTION OF THE PELAGIANS. THE APOSTLE PAUL WAS NOT FREE FROM SIN SO LONG AS HE LIVED

"But see," say they, "how the apostle says, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my course: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness;' which he would not have said if he had any sin." It is for them, then, to explain how he could have said this, when there still remained for him to encounter the great conflict, the grievous and excessive weight of that suffering which he had just said awaited him. In order to finish his course, was there yet wanting only a small thing, when that in fact was still left to suffer wherein would be a fiercer and more cruel foe? If, however, he uttered such words of joy feeling sure and secure, because he had been made sure and secure by Him who had revealed to him the imminence of his suffering, then he spoke these words, not in the fulness of realization, but in the firmness of hope, and represents what he foresees is to come as if it had already been done. If, therefore, he had added to those words the further statement, “I have no longer any sin,” we must have understood him as even then speaking of a perfection arising from a future prospect, not from an accomplished fact. For his having no sin, which they suppose was completed when he spoke these words, pertained to the finishing of his course; just in the same way as his triumphing over his adversary in the decisive conflict of his suffering had also reference to the finishing of his course, although this they must needs themselves allow remained yet to be effected, when he was speaking these words. The whole of this, therefore, we declare to have been as yet awaiting its accomplishment, at the time when the apostle, with his perfect trust in the promise of God, spoke of it all as having been already realized. For it was in reference to the finishing of his course that he forgave the sins of those who sinned against him, and prayed that his own sins might in like manner be forgiven him; and it was in his most certain confidence in this promise of the Lord, that he believed he should have no sin in that last end, which was still future, even when in his trustfulness he spoke of it as already accomplished. Now, omitting all other considerations, I wonder whether, when he uttered the words in which he is thought to imply that he had no sin, that “thorn of the flesh” had been already removed from him, for the taking away of which he had three times entreated the Lord, and had received this answer: “My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” For bringing so great a man to perfection, it was needful that that “messenger of Satan” should not be taken away by whom he was therefore to be buffeted, “lest he should be unduly exalted by the abundance of his revelations,” and is there then any man so bold as either to think or to say, that any one who has to bend beneath the burden of this life is altogether clean from all sin whatever?

CHAPTER 25

GOD PUNISHES BOTH IN WRATH AND IN MERCY

Although there are some men who are so eminent in righteousness that God speaks to them out of His cloudy pillar, such as “Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among them that call upon His name,” the latter of whom is much praised for his piety and purity in the Scriptures of truth, from his earliest childhood, in which his mother, to accomplish her vow, placed him in God's temple, and devoted him to the Lord as His servant;—yet even of such men it is written, "Thou, O God, wast propitious unto them, though Thou didst punish all their devices." Now the children of wrath God punishes in anger; whereas it is in mercy that He punishes the children of grace; since "whom He loveth He correcteth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." However, there are no punishments, no correction, no scourge of God, but what are owing to sin, except in the case of Him who prepared His back for the smiter, in order that He might experience all things in our likeness without sin, in order that He might be the saintly Priest of saints, making intercession even for saints, who with no sacrifice of truth say each one even for himself, "Forgive us our trespasses, even as we also forgive them that trespass against us." Wherefore even our opponents in this controversy, whilst they are chaste in their life, and commendable in character, and although they do not hesitate to do that which the Lord enjoined on the rich man, who inquired of Him about the attainment of eternal life, after he had told Him, in answer to His first question, that he had already fully kept every commandment in the law,—that "if he wished to be perfect, he must sell all that he had and give to the poor, and transfer his treasure to heaven;" yet they do not in any one instance venture to say that they are without sin. But this, as we believe, they refrain from saying, with deceitful intent; but if they are lying, in this very act they begin either to augment or commit sin.

CHAPTER 26 [XVII.]

(3) WHY NO ONE IN THIS LIFE IS WITHOUT SIN

CHAPTER 27

THE DIVINE REMEDY FOR PRIDE

You cannot therefore attribute to God the cause of any human fault. For of all human offences, the cause is pride. For the conviction and removal of this a great remedy comes from heaven. God in mercy humbles Himself, descends from above, and displays to man, lifted up by pride, pure and manifest grace in very manhood, which He took upon Himself out of vast love for those who partake of it. For, not even did even this One, so conjoined to the Word of God that by that conjunction he became at once the one Son of God and the same One the one Son of man, act by the antecedent merits of His own will. It behoved Him, without doubt, to be one; had there been two, or three, or more, if this could have been done, it would not have come from the pure and simple gift of God, but from man's free will and choice. This, then, is especially commended to us; this, so far as I dare to think, is the divine lesson especially taught and learned in those treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are hidden in Christ. Every one of us, therefore, now knows, now does not know—now rejoices, now does not rejoice—to begin, continue, and complete our good work, in order that he may know that it is due not to his own will, but to the gift of God, that he either knows or rejoices; and thus he is cured of vanity which elated him, and knows how truly it is said not of this earth of ours, but spiritually, "The Lord will give kindness and sweet grace, and our land shall yield her fruit." A good work, moreover, affords greater delight, in proportion as God is more and more loved as the highest unchangeable Good, and as the Author of all good things of every kind whatever. And that God may be loved, "His love is shed abroad in our hearts," not by ourselves, but "by the Holy Ghost that is given unto us."

CHAPTER 28 [XVIII.]

A GOOD WILL COMES FROM GOD

Men, however, are laboring to find in our own will some good thing of our own,—not given to us by God; but how it is to be found I cannot imagine. The apostle says, when speaking of men's good works, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" But, besides this, even reason itself, which may be estimated in such things by such as we are, sharply restrains every one of us in our investigations so as that we may not so defend grace as to seem to take away free will, or, on the other hand, so assert free will as to be judged ungrateful to the grace of God, in our arrogant impiety.

CHAPTER 29

A SUBTERFUGE OF THE PELAGIANS

Now, with reference to the passage of the apostle which I have quoted, some would maintain it to mean that "whatever amount of good will a man has, must be attributed to God on this account,—namely, because even this amount could not be in him if he were not a human being. Now, inasmuch as he has from God alone the capacity of being any thing at all, and of being human, why should there not be also attributed to God whatever there is in him of a good will, which could not exist unless he existed in whom it is?" But in this same manner it may also be said that a bad will also may be attributed to God as its author; because even it could not exist in man unless he were a man in whom it existed; but God is the author of his existence as man; and thus also of his bad will, which could have no existence if it had not a man in whom it might exist. But to argue thus is blasphemy.

CHAPTER 30

ALL WILL IS EITHER GOOD, AND THEN IT LOVES RIGHTEOUSNESS, OR EVIL, WHEN IT DOES NOT LOVE RIGHTEOUSNESS

Unless, therefore, we obtain not simply determination of will, which is freely turned in this direction and that, and has its place amongst those natural goods which a bad man may use badly; but also a good will, which has its place among those goods of which it is impossible to make a bad use:—unless the impossibility is given to us from God, I know not how to defend what is said: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" For if we have from God a certain free will, which may still be either good or bad; but the good will comes from ourselves; then that which comes from ourselves is better than that which comes from Him. But inasmuch as it is the height of absurdity to say this, they ought to acknowledge that we attain from God even a good will. It would indeed be a strange thing if the will could so stand in some mean as to be neither good nor bad; for we either love righteousness, and it is good, and if we love it more, more good,—if less, it is less good; or if we do not love it at all, it is not good. And who can hesitate to affirm that, when the will loves not righteousness in any way at all, it is not only a bad, but even a wholly depraved will? Since therefore the will is either good or bad, and since of course we have not the bad will from God, it remains that we have of God a good will; else, I am ignorant, since our justification is from it, in what other gift from Him we ought to rejoice. Hence, I suppose, it is written, “The will is prepared of the Lord;” and in the Psalms, “The steps of a man will be rightly ordered by the Lord, and His way will be the choice of his will;” and that which the apostle says, “For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His own good pleasure.”

CHAPTER 31

GRACE IS GIVEN TO SOME MEN IN MERCY; IS WITHHELD FROM OTHERS IN JUSTICE AND TRUTH

Forasmuch then as our turning away from God is our own act, and this is evil will; but our turning to God is not possible, except He rouses and helps us, and this is good will,—what have we that we have not received? But if we received, why do we glory as if we had not received? Therefore, as “he that glorieth must glory in the Lord,” it comes from His mercy, not their merit, that God wills to impart this to some, but from His truth that He wills not to impart it to others. For to sinners punishment is justly due, because “the Lord God loveth mercy and truth,” and “mercy and truth are met together;” and “all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth.” And who can tell the numberless instances in which Holy Scripture combines these two attributes? Sometimes, by a change in the terms, grace is put for mercy, as in the passage, “We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” Sometimes also judgment occurs instead of truth, as in the passage, “I will sing of mercy and judgment unto Thee, O Lord.”

CHAPTER 32

GOD’S SOVEREIGNITY IN HIS GRACE

As to the reason why He wills to convert some, and to punish others for turning away,—although nobody can justly censure the merciful One in conferring His blessing, nor can any man justly find fault with the truthful One in awarding His punishment (as no one could justly blame Him, in the parable of the labourers, for assigning to some their stipulated hire, and to others unstipulated largess), yet, after all, the purpose of His more hidden judgment is in His own power. [XIX.] So far as it has been given us, let us have wisdom, and let us understand that the good Lord God sometimes withholds even from His saints either the certain knowledge or the triumphant joy of a good work, just in order that they may discover that it is not from themselves, but from Him that they receive the light which illuminates their darkness, and the sweet grace which causes their land to yield her fruit.

CHAPTER 33

THROUGH GRACE WE HAVE BOTH THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD, AND THE DELIGHT WHICH IT AFFORDS

But when we pray Him to give us His help to do and accomplish righteousness, what else do we pray for than that He would open what was hidden, and impart sweetness to that which gave no pleasure? For even this very duty of praying to Him we have learned by His grace, whereas before it was hidden; and by His grace have come to love it, whereas before it gave us no pleasure,—so that "he who glorieth must glory not in himself, but in the Lord." To be lifted up, indeed, to pride, is the result of men's own will, not of the operation of God; for to such a thing God neither urges us nor helps us. There first occurs then in the will of man a certain desire of its own power, to become disobedient through pride. If it were not for this desire, indeed, there would be nothing difficult; and whenever man willed it, he might refuse without difficulty. There ensued, however, out of the penalty which was justly due such a defect, that henceforth it became difficult to be obedient unto righteousness; and unless this defect were overcome by assisting grace, no one would turn to holiness; nor unless it were healed by efficient grace would any one enjoy the peace of righteousness. But whose grace is it that conquers and heals, but His to whom the prayer is directed: "Convert us, O God of our salvation, and turn Thine anger away from us?" And both if He does this, He does it in mercy, so that it is said of Him, "Not according to our sins hath He dealt with us, nor hath He recompensed us according to our iniquities;" and when He refrains from doing this to any, it is in judgment that He refrains. And who shall say to Him, “What hast Thou done?” when with pious mind the saints sing to the praise of His mercy and judgment? Wherefore even in the case of His saints and faithful servants He applies to them a tardier cure in certain of their failings, in order that, while they are involved in these, a less pleasure than is sufficient for the fulfilling of righteousness in all its perfection may be experienced by them at any good they may achieve, whether hidden or manifest; so that in respect of His most perfect rule of equity and truth “no man living can be justified in His sight.” He does not in His own self, indeed, wish us to fall under condemnation, but that we should become humble; and He displays to us all the self-same grace of His own. Let us not, however, after we have attained facility in all things, suppose that to be our own which is really His; for that would be an error most antagonistic to religion and piety. Nor let us think that we should, because of His grace, continue in the same sins as of old; but against that very pride, on account of which we are humiliated in them, let us, above all things, both vigilantly strive and ardently pray Him, knowing at the same time that it is by His gift that we have the power thus to strive and thus to pray; so that in every case, while we look not at ourselves, but raise our hearts above, we may render thanks to the Lord our God, and whenever we glory, glory in Him alone.

CHAPTER 34 [XX.]

(4) THAT NO MAN, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CHRIST, HAS EVER LIVED, OR CAN LIVE WITHOUT SIN

CHAPTER 35 [XXI.]

ADAM AND EVE; OBEDIENCE MOST STRONGLY ENJOINED BY GOD ON MAN

When the first human beings—the one man Adam, and his wife Eve who came out of him—willed not to obey the commandment which they had received from God, a just and deserved punishment overtook them. The Lord had threatened that, on the day they ate the forbidden fruit, they should surely die. Now, inasmuch as they had received the permission of using for food every tree that grew in Paradise, among which God had planted the tree of life, but had been forbidden to partake of one only tree, which He called the tree of knowledge of good and evil, to signify by this name the consequence of their discovering whether what good they would experience if they kept the prohibition, or what evil if they transgressed it: they are no doubt rightly considered to have abstained from the forbidden food previous to the malignant persuasion of the devil, and to have used all which had been allowed them, and therefore, among all the others, and before all the others, the tree of life. For what could be more absurd than to suppose that they partook of the fruit of other trees, but not of that which had been equally with others granted to them, and which, by its especial virtue, prevented even their animal bodies from undergoing change through the decay of age, and from aging into death, applying this benefit from its own body to the man's body, and in a mystery demonstrating what is conferred by wisdom (which it symbolized) on the rational soul, even that, quickened by its fruit, it should not be changed into the decay and death of iniquity? For of her it is rightly said, “She is a tree of life to them that lay hold of her.” Just as the one tree was for the bodily Paradise, the other is for the spiritual; the one affording a vigour to the senses of the outward man, the other to those of the inner man, such as will abide without any change for the worse through time. They therefore served God, since that dutiful obedience was committed to them, by which alone God can be worshipped. And it was not possible more suitably to intimate the inherent importance of obedience, or its sole sufficiency securely to keep the rational creature under the Creator, than by forbidding a tree which was not in itself evil. For God forbid that the Creator of good things, who made all things, “and behold they were very good,” should plant anything evil amidst the fertility of even that material Paradise. Still, however, in order that he might show man, to whom submission to such a Master would be very useful, how much good belonged simply to obedience (and this was all that He had demanded of His servant, and this would be of advantage not so much for the lordship of the Master as for the profit of the servant), they were forbidden the use of a tree, which, if it had not been for the prohibition, they might have used without suffering any evil result whatever; and from this circumstance it may be clearly understood, that whatever evil they brought on themselves because they made use of it in spite of the prohibition, the tree did not produce from any noxious or pernicious quality in its fruit, but entirely on account of their violated obedience.

CHAPTER 36 [XXII.]

MAN’S STATE BEFORE THE FALL

Before they had thus violated their obedience they were pleasing to God, and God was pleasing to them; and though they carried about an animal body, they yet felt in it no disobedience moving against themselves. This was the righteous appointment, that inasmuch as their soul had received from the Lord the body for its servant, as it itself obeyed the Lord, even so its body should obey Him, and should exhibit a service suitable to the life given it without resistance. Hence “they were both naked, and were not ashamed.” It is with a natural instinct of shame that the rational soul is now indeed affected, because in that flesh, over whose service it received the right of power, it can no longer, owing to some indescribable infirmity, prevent the motion of the members thereof, notwithstanding its own unwillingness, nor excite them to motion even when it wishes. Now these members are on this account, in every man of chastity, rightly called “pudenda,” because they excite themselves, just as they like, in opposition to the mind which is their master, as if they were their own masters; and the sole authority which the bridle of virtue possesses over them is to check them from approaching impure and unlawful pollutions. Such disobedience of the flesh as this, which lies in the very excitement, even when it is not allowed to take effect, did not exist in the first man and woman whilst they were naked and not ashamed. For not yet had the rational soul, which rules the flesh, developed such a disobedience to its Lord, as by a reciprocity of punishment to bring on itself the rebellion of its own servant the flesh, along with that feeling of confusion and trouble to itself which it certainly failed to inflict upon God by its own disobedience to Him; for God is put to no shame or trouble when we do not obey Him, nor are we able in any wise to lessen His very great power over us; but we are shamed in that the flesh is not submissive to our government,—a result which is brought about by the infirmity which we have earned by sinning, and is called “the sin which dwelleth in our members.” But this sin is of such a character that it is the punishment of sin. As soon, indeed, as that transgression was effected, and the disobedient soul turned away from the law of its Lord, then its servant, the body, began to cherish a law of disobedience against it; and then the man and the woman grew ashamed of their nakedness, when they perceived the rebellious motion of the flesh, which they had not felt before, and which perception is called “the opening of their eyes;” for, of course, they did not walk about among the trees with closed eyes. The same thing is said of Hagar: “Her eyes were opened, and she saw a well.” Then the man and the woman covered their parts of shame, which God had made for them as members, but they had made parts of shame.

CHAPTER 37 [XXIII.]

THE CORRUPTION OF NATURE IS BY SIN, ITS RENOVATION IS BY CHRIST

From this law of sin is born the flesh of sin, which requires cleansing through the sacrament of Him who came in the likeness of sinful flesh, that the body of sin might be destroyed, which is also called “the body of this death,” from which only God’s grace delivers wretched man through Jesus Christ our Lord. For this law, the origin of death, passed on from the first pair to their posterity, as is seen in the labour with which all men toil in the earth, and the travail of women in the pains of childbirth. For these sufferings they merited by the sentence of God, when they were convicted of sin; and we see them fulfilled not only in them, but also in their descendants, in some more, in others less, but nevertheless in all. Whereas, however, the primeval righteousness of the first human beings consisted in obeying God, and not having in their members the law of their own concupiscence against the law of their mind; now, since their sin, in our sinful flesh which is born of them, it is obtained by those who obey God, as a great acquisition, that they do not obey the desires of this evil concupiscence, but crucify in themselves the flesh with its affections and lusts, in order that they may be Jesus Christ’s, who on His cross symbolized this, and who gave them power through His grace to become the sons of God. For it is not to all men, but to as many as have received Him, that He has given to be born again to God of the Spirit, after they were born to the world by the flesh. Of these indeed it is written: “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God; which were born, not of the flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God.”

CHAPTER 38 [XXIV.]

WHAT BENEFIT HAS BEEN CONFERRED ON US BY THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD; CHRIST'S BIRTH IN THE FLESH, WHEREIN IT IS LIKE AND WHEREIN UNLIKE OUR OWN BIRTH

He goes on to add, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;" as much as to say, A great thing indeed has been done among them, even that they are born again to God of God, who had before been born of the flesh to the world, although created by God Himself; but a far more wonderful thing has been done that, although it accrued to them by nature to be born of the flesh, but by the divine goodness to be born of God,—in order that so great a benefit might be imparted to them, He who was in His own nature born of God, vouchsafed in mercy to be also born of the flesh;—no less being meant by the passage, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Hereby, he says in effect, it has been wrought that we who were born of the flesh as flesh, by being afterwards born of the Spirit, may be spirit and dwell in God; because also God, who was born of God, by being afterwards born of the flesh, became flesh, and dwelt among us. For the Word, which became flesh, was in the beginning, and was God with God. But at the same time His participation in our inferior condition, in order to our participation in His higher state, held a kind of medium in His birth of the flesh; so that we indeed were born in sinful flesh, but He was born in the likeness of sinful flesh,—we not only of flesh and blood, but also of the will of man, and of the flesh, but He was born only of flesh and blood, not of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God: we, therefore, to die on account of sin, He, to die on our account without sin. So also, just as His inferior circumstances, into which He descended to us, were not in every particular exactly the same with our inferior circumstances, in which He found us here; so our superior state, into which we ascend to Him, will not be quite the same with His superior state, in which we are there to find Him. For we by His grace are to be made the sons of God, whereas He was evermore by nature the Son of God; we, when we are converted, shall cleave to God, though not as His equals; He never turned from God, and remains ever equal to God; we are partakers of eternal life, He is eternal life. He, therefore, alone having become man, but still continuing to be God, never had any sin, nor did he assume a flesh of sin, though born of a maternal flesh of sin. For what He then took of flesh, He either cleansed in order to take it, or cleansed by taking it. His virgin mother, therefore, whose conception was not according to the law of sinful flesh (in other words, not by the excitement of carnal concupiscence), but who merited by her faith that the holy seed should be framed within her, He formed in order to choose her, and chose in order to be formed from her. How much more needful, then, is it for sinful flesh to be baptized in order to escape the judgment, when the flesh which was untainted by sin was baptized to set an example for imitation?

CHAPTER 39 [XXV.]

AN OBJECTION OF PELAGIANS

The answer, which we have already given, to those who say, “If a sinner has begotten a sinner, a righteous man ought also to have begotten a righteous man,” we now advance in reply to such as argue that one who is born of a baptized man ought himself to be regarded as already baptized. “For why,” they ask, “could he not have been baptized in the loins of his father, when, according to the Epistle to the Hebrews, Levi, was able to pay tithes in the loins of Abraham?” They who propose this argument ought to observe that Levi did not on this account subsequently not pay tithes, because he had paid tithes already in the loins of Abraham, but because he was ordained to the office of the priesthood in order to receive tithes, not to pay them; otherwise neither would his brethren, who all contributed their tithes to him, have been tithed—because they too, whilst in the loins of Abraham, had already paid tithes to Melchisedec.

CHAPTER 40

AN ARGUMENT ANTICIPATED

And let no one contend that the descendants of Abraham might fairly enough have paid tithes, although they had already paid tithes in the loins of their forefather, seeing that paying tithes was an obligation of such a nature as to require constant repetition from each several person, just as the Israelites used to pay such contributions every year all through life to their Levites, to whom were due various tithes from all kinds of produce;

whereas baptism is a sacrament of such a nature as is administered once for all, and if one had already received it when in his father, he must be considered as no other than baptized, since he was born of a man who had been himself baptized. Well, whoever thus argues (I will simply say, without discussing the point at length,) should look at circumcision, which was administered once for all, and yet was administered to each person separately and individually. Just as therefore it was necessary in the time of that ancient sacrament for the son of a circumcised man to be himself circumcised, so now the son of one who has been baptized must himself also receive baptism.

CHAPTER 41

CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS ARE CALLED “CLEAN” BY THE APOSTLE

The apostle indeed says, “Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy;” and “therefore” they infer “there was no necessity for the children of believers to be baptized.” I am surprised at the use of such language by persons who deny that original sin has been transmitted from Adam. For, if they take this passage of the apostle to mean that the children of believers are born in a state of holiness, how is it that even they have no doubt about the necessity of their being baptized? Why, in fine, do they refuse to admit that any original sin is derived from a sinful parent, if some holiness is received from a holy parent? Now it certainly does not contravene our assertion, even if from the faithful “holy” children are propagated, when we hold that unless they are baptized those go into damnation, to whom our opponents themselves shut the kingdom of heaven, although they insist that they are without sin, whether actual or original. Or, if they think it an unbecoming thing for “holy ones” to be damned, how can it be a becoming thing to exclude “holy ones” from the kingdom of God? They should rather pay especial attention to this point, How can something sinful help being derived from sinful parents, if something holy is derived from holy parents, and uncleanness from unclean parents? For the twofold principle was affirmed when he said, “Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.” They should also explain to us how it is right that the holy children of believers and the unclean children of unbelievers are, notwithstanding their different circumstances, equally prohibited from entering the kingdom of God, if they have not been baptized. What avails that sanctity of theirs to the one? Now if they were to maintain that the unclean children of unbelievers are damned, but that the holy children of believers are unable to enter the kingdom of heaven unless they are baptized,—but nevertheless are not damned, because they are "holy,"—that would be some sort of a distinction; but as it is, they equally declare respecting the holy children of holy parents and the unclean offspring of unclean parents, that they are not damned, since they have not any sin; and that they are excluded from the kingdom of God because they are unbaptized. What an absurdity! Who can suppose that such splendid geniuses do not perceive it?

CHAPTER 42

SANCTIFICATION MANIFOLD; SACRAMENT OF CATECHUMENS

Our opinions on this point are strictly in unison with the apostle's himself, who said, "From one all to condemnation," and "from one all to justification of life." Now how consistent these statements are with what he elsewhere says, when treating of another point, "Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy," consider a while. [XXVI.] Sanctification is not of merely one measure; for even catechumens, I take it, are sanctified in their own measure by the sign of Christ, and the prayer of imposition of hands; and what they receive is holy, although it is not the body of Christ,—holier than any food which constitutes our ordinary nourishment, because it is a sacrament. However, that very meat and drink, wherewithal the necessities of our present life are sustained, are, according to the same apostle, "sanctified by the word of God and prayer," even the prayer with which we beg that our bodies may be refreshed. Just as therefore this sanctification of our ordinary food does not hinder what enters the mouth from descending into the belly, and being ejected into the draught, and partaking of the corruption into which everything earthly is resolved, whence the Lord exhorts us to labour for the other food which never perishes: so the sanctification of the catechumen, if he is not baptized, does not avail for his entrance into the kingdom of heaven, nor for the remission of his sins. And, by parity of reasoning, that sanctification likewise, of whatever measure it be, which, according to the apostle, is in the children of believers, has nothing whatever to do with the question of baptism and of the origin or the remission of sin. The apostle, in this very passage which has occupied our attention, says that the unbeliever of a married couple is sanctified by a believing partner: “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband. Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.” Now, I should say, there is not a man whose mind is so warped by unbelief, as to suppose that, whatever sense he gives to these words, they can possibly mean that a husband who is not a Christian should not be baptized, because his wife is a Christian, and that he has already obtained remission of his sins, with the certain prospect of entering the kingdom of heaven, because he is described as being sanctified by his wife.

CHAPTER 43 [XXVII.]

WHY THE CHILDREN OF THE BAPTIZED SHOULD BE BAPTIZED

If any man, however, is still perplexed by the question why the children of baptized persons are baptized, let him briefly consider this: Inasmuch as the generation of sinful flesh through the one man, Adam, draws into condemnation all who are born of such generation, so the generation of the Spirit of grace through the one man Jesus Christ, draws to the justification of eternal life all who, because predestinated, partake of this regeneration. But the sacrament of baptism is undoubtedly the sacrament of regenation: Wherefore, as the man who has never lived cannot die, and he who has never died cannot rise again, so he who has never been born cannot be born again. From which the conclusion arises, that no one who has not been born could possibly have been born again in his father. Born again, however, a man must be, after he has been born; because, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” Even an infant, therefore, must be imbued with the sacrament of regeneration, lest without it his would be an unhappy exit out of this life; and this baptism is not administered except for the remission of sins. And so much does Christ show us in this very passage; for when asked, How could such things be? He reminded His questioner of what Moses did when he lifted up the serpent. Inasmuch, then, as infants are by the sacrament of baptism conformed to the death of Christ, it must be admitted that they are also freed from the serpent’s poisonous bite, unless we wilfully wander from the rule of the Christian faith. This bite, however, they did not receive in their own actual life, but in him on whom the wound was primarily inflicted.

CHAPTER 44

AN OBJECTION OF THE PELAGIANS

Nor do they fail to see this point, that his own sins are no detriment to the parent after his conversion; they therefore raise the question: “How much more impossible is it that they should be a hinderance to his son?” But they who thus think do not attend to this consideration, that as his own sins are not injurious to the father for the very reason that he is born again of the Spirit, so in the case of his son, unless he be in the same manner born again, the sins which he derived from his father will prove injurious to him. Because even renewed parents beget children, not out of the first-fruits of their renewed condition, but carnally out of the remains of the old nature; and the children who are thus the offspring of their parents’ remaining old nature, and are born in sinful flesh, escape from the condemnation which is due to the old man by the sacrament of spiritual regeneration and renewal. Now this is a consideration which, on account of the controversies that have arisen, and may still arise, on this subject, we ought to keep in our view and memory,—that a full and perfect remission of sins takes place only in baptism, that the character of the actual man does not at once undergo a total change, but that the first-fruits of the Spirit in such as walk worthily change the old carnal nature into one of like character by a process of renewal, which increases day by day, until the entire old nature is so renovated that the very weakness of the natural body attains to the strength and incorruptibility of the spiritual body.

CHAPTER 45 [XXVIII.]

THE LAW OF SIN IS CALLED SIN; HOW CONCUPISCENCE STILL REMAINS AFTER ITS EVIL HAS BEEN REMOVED IN THE BAPTIZED

This law of sin, however, which the apostle also designates “sin,” when he says, “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof,” does not so remain in the members of those who are born again of water and the Spirit, as if no remission thereof has been made, because there is a full and perfect remission of our sins, all the enmity being slain, which separated us from God; but it remains in our old carnal nature, as if overcome and destroyed, if it does not, by consenting to unlawful objects, somehow revive, and recover its own reign and dominion. There is, however, so clear a distinction to be seen between this old carnal nature, in which the law of sin, or sin, is already repealed, and that life of the Spirit, in the newness of which they who are baptized are through God's grace born again, that the apostle deemed it too little to say of such that they were not in sin; unless he also said that they were not in the flesh itself, even before they departed out of this mortal life. "They that are in the flesh," says he, "cannot please God; but ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." And indeed, as they turn to good account the flesh itself, however corruptible it be, who apply its members to good works, and no longer are in that flesh, since they do not mould their understanding nor their life according to its principles; and as they in like manner make even a good use of death, which is the penalty of the first sin, who encounter it with fortitude and patience for their brethren's sake, and for the faith, and in defence of whatever is true and holy and just,—so also do all "true yokefellows" in the faith turn to good account that very law of sin which still remains, though remitted, in their old carnal nature, who, because they have the new life in Christ, do not permit lust to have dominion over them. And yet these very persons, because they still carry about Adam's old nature, mortally generate children to be immortally regenerated, with that propagation of sin, in which such as are born again are not held bound, and from which such as are born are released by being born again. As long, then, as the law by concupiscence dwells in the members, although it remains, the guilt of it is released; but it is released only to him who has received the sacrament of regeneration, and has already begun to be renewed. But whatsoever is born of the old nature, which still abides with its concupiscence, requires to be born again in order to be healed. Seeing that believing parents, who have been both carnally born and spiritually born again, have themselves begotten children in a carnal manner, how could their children by any possibility, previous to their first birth, have been born again?

CHAPTER 46

GUILT MAY BE TAKEN AWAY BUT CONCUPISCENCE REMAIN

You must not be surprised at what I have said, that although the law of sin remains with its concupiscence, the guilt thereof is done away through the grace of the sacrament. For as wicked deeds, and words, and thoughts have already passed away, and cease to exist, so far as regards the mere movements of the mind and the body, and yet their guilt remains after they have passed away and no longer exist, unless it be done away by the remission of sins; so, contrariwise, in this law of concupiscence, which is not yet done away but still remains, its guilt is done away, and continues no longer, since in baptism there takes place a full forgiveness of sins. Indeed, if a man were to quit this present life immediately after his baptism, there would be nothing at all left to hold him liable, inasmuch as all which held him is released. As, on the one hand, therefore, there is nothing strange in the fact that the guilt of past sins of thought, and word, and deed remains before their remission; so, on the other hand, there ought to be nothing to create surprise, that the guilt of remaining concupiscence passes away after the remission of sin.

CHAPTER 47 [XXIX.]

ALL THE PREDESTINATED ARE SAVED THROUGH THE ONE MEDIATOR CHRIST, AND BY ONE AND THE SAME FAITH

This being the case, ever since the time when by one man sin thus entered into this world and death by sin, and so it passed through to all men, up to the end of this carnal generation and perishing world, the children of which beget and are begotten, there never has existed, nor ever will exist, a human being of whom, placed in this life of ours, it could be said that he had no sin at all, with the exception of the one Mediator, who reconciles us to our Maker through the forgiveness of sins. Now this same Lord of ours has never yet refused, at any period of the human race, nor to the last judgment will He ever refuse, this His healing to those whom, in His most sure foreknowledge and future loving-kindness, He has predestinated to reign with Himself to life eternal. For, previous to His birth in the flesh, and weakness in suffering, and power in His own resurrection, He instructed all who then lived, in the faith of those then future blessings, that they might inherit everlasting life; whilst those who were alive when all these things were being accomplished in Christ, and who were witnessing the fulfilment of prophecy, He instructed in the faith of these then present blessings; whilst again, those who have since lived, and ourselves who are now alive, and all those who are yet to live, He does not cease to instruct, in the faith of these now past blessings. It is therefore “one faith” which saves all, who after their carnal birth are born again of the Spirit, and it terminates in Him, who came to be judged for us and to die,—the Judge of quick and dead. But the sacraments of this “one faith” are varied from time to time in order to its suitable signification.

CHAPTER 48

CHRIST THE SAVIOUR EVEN OF INFANTS; CHRIST, WHEN AN INFANT, WAS FREE FROM IGNORANCE AND MENTAL WEAKNESS

He is therefore the Saviour at once of infants and of adults, of whom the angel said, “There is born unto you this day a Saviour;” and concerning whom it was declared to the Virgin Mary, “Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins,” where it is plainly shown that He was called Jesus because of the salvation which He bestows upon us,—Jesus being tantamount to the Latin Salvator, “Saviour.” Who then can be so bold as to maintain that the Lord Christ is Jesus only for adults and not for infants also? who came in the likeness of sinful flesh, to destroy the body of sin, with infants’ limbs fitted and suitable for no use in the extreme weakness of such body, and His rational soul oppressed with miserable ignorance! Now that such entire ignorance existed, I cannot suppose in the infant in whom the Word was made flesh, that He might dwell among us; nor can I imagine that such weakness of the mental faculty ever existed in the infant Christ which we see in infants generally. For it is owing to such infirmity and ignorance that infants are disturbed with irrational affections, and are restrained by no rational command or government, but by pains and penalties, or the terror of such; so that you can quite see that they are children of that disobedience, which excites itself in the members of our body in opposition to the law of the mind,—and refuses to be still, even when the reason wishes; nay, often is either repressed only by some actual infliction of bodily pain, as for instance by flogging; or is checked only by fear, or by some such mental emotion, but not by any admonishing of the will. Inasmuch, however, as in Him there was the likeness of sinful flesh, He willed to pass through the changes of the various stages of life, beginning even with infancy, so that it would seem as if even His flesh might have arrived at death by the gradual approach of old age, if He had not been killed while young. Nevertheless, the death is inflicted in sinful flesh as the due of disobedience, but in the likeness of sinful flesh it was undergone in voluntary obedience. For when He was on His way to it, and was soon to suffer it, He said, "Behold, the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. But that all may know that I am doing my Father's will, arise, let us go hence." Having said these words, He went straightway, and encountered His undeserved death, having become obedient even unto death.

CHAPTER 49 [XXX.]

AN OBJECTION OF THE PELAGIANS

They therefore who say, "If through the sin of the first man it was brought about that we must die, by the coming of Christ it should be brought about that, believing in Him, we shall not die;" and they add what they deem a reason, saying, "For the sin of the first transgressor could not possibly have injured us more than the incarnation or redemption of the Saviour has benefited us." But why do they not rather give an attentive ear, and an unhesitating belief, to that which the apostle has stated so unambiguously: "Since by man came death, by Man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive?" For it is of nothing else than of the resurrection of the body that he was speaking. Having said that the bodily death of all men has come about through one man, he adds the promise that the bodily resurrection of all men to eternal life shall happen through one, even Christ. How can it therefore be that "the one has injured us more by sinning than the other has benefited us by redeeming," when by the sin of the former we die a temporal death, but by the redemption of the latter we rise again not to a temporal, but to a perpetual life? Our body, therefore, is dead because of sin, but Christ's body only died without sin, in order that, having poured out His blood without fault, “the bonds” which contain the register of all faults “might be blotted out,” by which they who now believe in Him were formerly held as debtors by the devil. And accordingly He says, “This is my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

CHAPTER 50 [XXXI.]

WHY IT IS THAT DEATH ITSELF IS NOT ABOLISHED, ALONG WITH SIN, BY BAPTISM

He might, however, have also conferred this upon believers, that they should not even experience the death of their body. But if He had done this, there might no doubt have been added a certain felicity to the flesh, but the fortitude of faith would have been diminished; for men have such a fear of death, that they would declare Christians happy, for nothing else than their mere immunity from dying. And no one would, for the sake of that life which is to be so happy after death, hasten to the grace of Christ by the power of his contempt of death itself; but with a view to remove the trouble of death, would rather resort to a more delicate mode of believing in Christ. More grace, therefore, than this has He conferred on those who believe on Him; and a greater gift, undoubtedly, has He vouchsafed to them! What great matter would it have been for a man, on seeing that people did not die when they became believers, himself also to believe that he was not to die? How much greater a thing is it, how much braver, how much more laudable, so to believe, that although one is sure to die, he can still hope to live hereafter for evermore! At last, upon some there will be bestowed this blessing at the last day, that they shall not feel death itself in sudden change, but shall be caught up along with the risen in the clouds to meet Christ in the air, and so shall they ever live with the Lord. And rightly shall it be these who receive this grace, since there will be no posterity after them to be led to believe, not by the hope of what they see not, but by the love of what they see. This faith is weak and nerveless, and must not be called faith at all, inasmuch as faith is thus defined: “Faith is the firmness of those who hope, the clear proof of things which they do not see.” Accordingly, in the same Epistle to the Hebrews, where this passage occurs, after enumerating in subsequent sentences certain worthies who pleased God by their faith, he says: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but seeing them afar off, and hailing them, and confessing that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” And then afterwards he concluded his eulogy on faith in these words: “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, did not indeed receive God’s promises; for they foresaw better things for us, and that without us they could not themselves become perfect.” Now this would be no praise for faith, nor (as I said) would it be faith at all, were men in believing to follow after rewards which they could see,—in other words, if on believers were bestowed the reward of immortality in this present world.

CHAPTER 51

WHY THE DEVIL IS SAID TO HOLD THE POWER AND DOMINION OF DEATH

Hence the Lord Himself willed to die, “in order that,” as it is written of Him, “through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” From this passage it is shown with sufficient clearness that even the death of the body came about by the instigation and work of the devil,—in a word, from the sin which he persuaded man to commit; nor is there any other reason why he should be said in strictness of truth to hold the power of death. Accordingly, He who died without any sin, original or actual, said in the passage I have already quoted: “Behold, the prince of this world,” that is, the devil, who had the power of death, “cometh and findeth nothing in me,”—meaning, he shall find no sin in me, because of which he has caused men to die. As if the question were asked Him: Why then should you die? He says, “That all may know that I am doing the will of my Father, arise, let us go hence;” that is, that I may die, though I have no cause of death from sin under the author of sin, but only from obedience and righteousness, having become obedient unto death. Proof is likewise afforded us by this passage, that the fact of the faithful overcoming the fear of death is a part of the struggle of faith itself; for all struggle would indeed be at an end, if immortality were at once to become the reward of them that believe.

CHAPTER 52 [XXXII.]

WHY CHRIST, AFTER HIS RESURRECTION, WITHDREW HIS PRESENCE FROM THE WORLD

Although, therefore, the Lord wrought many visible miracles in order that faith might sprout at first and be fed by infant nourishment, and grow to its full strength by and by out of this softness (for as faith becomes stronger the less does it seek such help); He nevertheless wished us to wait quietly, without visible inducements, for the promised hope, in order that “the just might live by faith;” and so great was this wish of His, that though He rose from the dead the third day, He did not desire to remain among men, but, after leaving a proof of his resurrection by showing Himself in the flesh to those whom He deigned to have for His witnesses of this event, He ascended into heaven, withdrawing Himself thus from their sight, and conferring no such thing on the flesh of any one of them as He had displayed in His own flesh, in order that they too “might live by faith,” and in the present world might wait in patience and without visible inducements for the reward of that righteousness in which men live by faith,—a reward which should hereafter be visibly and openly bestowed. To this signification I believe that passage must be referred which He speaks concerning the Holy Ghost: “He will not come, unless I depart.” For this was in fact saying Ye shall not be able to live righteously by faith, which ye shall have as a gift of mine,—that is, from the Holy Ghost,—unless I withdraw from your eyes that which ye now gaze upon, in order that your heart may advance in spiritual growth by fixing its faith on invisible things. This righteousness of faith He constantly commends to them. Speaking of the Holy Ghost, He says, “He shall reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they have not believed on me: of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye shall see me no more.” What is that righteousness, whereby men were not to see Him, except that “the just is to live by faith,” and that we, not looking at the things which are seen, but at those which are not seen, are to wait in the Spirit for the hope of the righteousness that is by faith?

CHAPTER 53 [XXXIII.]

AN OBJECTION OF THE PELAGIANS

But those persons who say, “If the death of the body has happened by sin, we of course ought not to die after that remission of sins which the Redeemer has bestowed upon us,” do not understand how it is that some things, whose guilt God has cancelled in order that they may not stand in our way after this life, He yet permits to remain for the contest of faith, in order that they may become the means of instructing and exercising those who are advancing in the struggle after holiness. Might not some man, by not understanding this, raise a question and ask, If God has said to man because of his sin, “In the sweat of thy brow thou shall eat thy bread: thorns also and thistles shall the ground bring forth to thee,” how comes it to pass that this labour and toil continues since the remission of sins, and that the ground of believers yields them this rough and terrible harvest? Again, since it was said to the woman in consequence of her sin, “In sorrow shall thou bring forth children,” how is it that believing women, notwithstanding the remission of their sins, suffer the same pains in the process of parturition? And nevertheless it is an incontestable fact, that by reason of the sin which they had committed, the primeval man and woman heard these sentences pronounced by God, and deserved them; nor does any one resist these words of the sacred volume, which I have quoted about man’s labour and woman’s travail, unless some one who is utterly hostile to the catholic faith, and an adversary to the inspired writings.

CHAPTER 54 [XXXIV.]

WHY PUNISHMENT IS STILL INFLICTED, AFTER SIN HAS BEEN FORGIVEN

But, inasmuch as there are not wanting persons of such character, just as we say in answer to those who raise this question, that those things are punishments of sins before remission, which after remission become contests and exercises of the righteous; so again to such persons as are similarly perplexed about the death of the body, our answer ought to be so drawn as to show both that we acknowledge it to have accrued because of sin, and that we are not discouraged by the punishment of sins having been bequeathed to us for an exercise of discipline, in order that our great fear of it may be overcome by us as we advance in holiness. For if only small virtue accrued to “the faith which worketh by love” in conquering the fear of death, there would be no great glory for the martyrs; nor could the Lord say, “Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends;” which John in his epistle expresses in these terms: “As He laid down His life for us, so ought we to lay down our lives for the brethren.” In vain, therefore, would commendation be bestowed on the most eminent suffering in encountering or despising death for righteousness’ sake, if there were not in death itself a really great and very severe trial. And the man who overcomes the fear of it by his faith, procures a great glory and just recompense for his faith itself. Wherefore it ought to surprise no one, either that the death of the body could not possibly have happened to man unless sin had been previously committed, since it was of this that it was to become the punishment; nor that after the remission of their sins it comes to the faithful, in order that in their triumphing over the fear of it, the fortitude of righteousness may be exercised.

CHAPTER 55

TO RECOVER THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH HAD BEEN LOST BY SIN, MAN HAS TO STRUGGLE, WITH ABUNDANT LABOUR AND SORROW

The flesh which was originally created was not that sinful flesh in which man refused to maintain his righteousness amidst the delights of Paradise, wherefore God determined that sinful flesh should propagate itself after it had sinned, and struggle for the recovery of holiness, in many toils and troubles. Therefore, after Adam was driven out of Paradise, he had to dwell over against Eden,—that is, over against the garden of delights,—to indicate that it is by labours and sorrows, which are the very contraries of delights, that sinful flesh had to be educated, after it had failed amidst its first pleasures to maintain its holiness, previous to its becoming sinful flesh. As therefore our first parents, by their subsequent return to righteous living, by which they are supposed to have been released from the worst penalty of their sentence through the blood of the Lord, were still not deemed worthy to be recalled to Paradise during their life on earth, so in like manner our sinful flesh, even if a man lead a righteous life in it after the remission of his sins, does not deserve to be immediately exempted from that death which it has derived from its propagation of sin.

CHAPTER 56

THE CASE OF DAVID, IN ILLUSTRATION

Some such thought has occurred to us about the patriarch David, in the Book of Kings. After the prophet was sent to him, and threatened him with the evils which were to arise from the anger of God on account of the sin which he had committed, he obtained pardon by the confession of his sin, and the prophet replied that the shame and crime had been remitted to him; but yet, for all that, the evils with which God had threatened him followed in due course, so that he was brought low by his son. Now why is not an objection at once raised here: “If it was on account of his sin that God threatened him, why, when the sin was forgiven, did He fulfil His threat?” except because, if the cavil had been raised, it would have been most correctly answered, that the remission of the sin was given that the man might not be hindered from gaining the life eternal, but the threatened evil was still carried into effect, in order that the man’s piety might be exercised and approved in the lowly condition to which he was reduced. Thus also God has both inflicted on man the death of his body, because of his sin, and, after his sins are forgiven, has not released him in order that he may be exercised in righteousness.

CHAPTER 57 [XXXV.]

TURN TO NEITHER HAND

Let us hold fast, then, the confession of this faith, without faltering or failure. One alone is there who was born without sin, in the likeness of sinful flesh, who lived without sin amid the sins of others, and who died without sin on account of our sins. “Let us turn neither to the right hand nor to the left.” For to turn to the right hand is to deceive oneself, by saying that we are without sin; and to turn to the left is to surrender oneself to one’s sins with a sort of impunity, in I know not how perverse and depraved a recklessness. “God indeed knoweth the ways on the right hand,” even He who alone is without sin, and is able to blot out our sins; “but the ways on the left hand are perverse,” in friendship with sins. Of such inflexibility were those youths of twenty years, who foretokened in figure God’s new people; they entered the land of promise; they, it is said, turned neither to the right hand nor to the left. Now this age of twenty is not to be compared with the age of children's innocence, but if I mistake not, this number is the shadow and echo of a mystery. For the Old Testament has its excellence in the five books of Moses, while the New Testament is most refulgent in the authority of the four Gospels. These numbers, when multiplied together, reach to the number twenty: four times five, or five times four, are twenty. Such a people (as I have already said), instructed in the kingdom of heaven by the two Testaments—the Old and the New—turning neither to the right hand, in a proud assumption of righteousness, nor to the left hand, in a reckless delight in sin, shall enter into the land of promise, where we shall have no longer either to pray that sins may be forgiven to us, or to fear that they may be punished in us, having been freed from them all by that Redeemer, who, not being "sold under sin," "hath redeemed Israel out of all his iniquities," whether committed in the actual life, or derived from the original transgression.

CHAPTER 58 [XXXVI.]

"LIKENESS OF SINFUL FLESH" IMPLIES THE REALITY

It is no small concession to the authority and truthfulness of the inspired pages which those persons have made, who, although unwilling to admit openly in their writings that remission of sins is necessary for infants, have yet confessed that they need redemption. Nothing that they have said differs indeed from another word, even that which is derived from Christian instruction. Whilst by those who faithfully read, faithfully hear, and faithfully hold fast the Holy Scriptures, it cannot be doubted that from that flesh, which first became sinful flesh by the choice of sin, and which has been subsequently transmitted to all through successive generations, there has been propagated a sinful flesh, with the single exception of that "likeness of sinful flesh,"—which likeness, however, there could not have been, had there not been also the reality of sinful flesh.

CHAPTER 59

WHETHER THE SOUL IS PROPAGATED; ON OBSCURE POINTS, CONCERNING WHICH THE SCRIPTURES GIVE US NO ASSISTANCE, WE MUST BE ON OUR GUARD AGAINST FORMING HASTY JUDGMENTS AND OPINIONS; THE SCRIPTURES ARE CLEAR ENOUGH ON THOSE SUBJECTS WHICH ARE NECESSARY TO SALVATION

Concerning the soul, indeed, the question arises, whether it, too, is propagated in the same way [as the flesh,] and bound by the same guilt, which is forgiven to it—for we cannot say that it is only the flesh of the infant, and not his soul also, which requires the help of a Saviour and Redeemer, or that the latter must not be included in that thanksgiving in the Psalms, where we read and repeat, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction.” Or if it be not likewise propagated, we may ask, whether, by the very fact of its being mingled with and weighed down by the sinful flesh, it still has need of the remission of its own sin, and of a redemption of its own, God being judge, in the height of His foreknowledge, what infants do not deserve to be absolved from that guilt, even before they are born, or have in any instance ever done anything good or evil. The question also arises, how God (even if He does not create souls by natural propagation) can yet not be the Author of that very guilt, on account of which redemption by the sacrament is necessary to the infant’s soul. The subject is a wide and important one, and requires another treatise. The discussion, however, so far as I can judge, ought to be conducted with temper and moderation, so as to deserve the praise of cautious inquiry, rather than the censure of headstrong assertion. For whenever a question arises on an unusually obscure subject, on which no assistance can be rendered by clear and certain proofs of the Holy Scriptures, the presumption of man ought to restrain itself; nor should it attempt anything definite by leaning to either side. But if I must indeed be ignorant concerning any points of this sort, as to how they can be explained and proved, this much I should still believe, that from this very circumstance the Holy Scriptures would possess a most clear authority, whenever a point arose which no man could be ignorant of, without imperilling the salvation which has been promised him. You have now before you, [my dear Marcellinus,] this treatise, worked out to the best of my ability. I only wish that its value equalled its length; for its length I might probably be able to justify, only I should fear that, by adding the justification, I should stretch the prolixity beyond your endurance.

Book III

In the Shape of a Letter Addressed to the Same Marcellinus.

In which Augustin refutes some errors of Pelagius on the question of the merits of sins and the baptism of infants—being sundry arguments of his which he had interspersed among his expositions of Saint Paul, in opposition to original sin.

To his beloved son Marcellinus, Augustin, bishop and servant of Christ and of the servants of Christ, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

PELAGIUS ESTEEMED A HOLY MAN; HIS EXPOSITIONS ON SAINT PAUL

The questions which you proposed that I should write to you about, in opposition to those persons who say that Adam would have died even if he had not sinned, and that nothing of his sin has passed to his posterity by natural transmission; and especially on the subject of the baptism of infants, which the universal Church, with most pious and maternal care, maintains in constant celebration; and whether in this life there are, or have been, or ever will be, children of men without any sin at all—I have already discussed in two lengthy books. And I venture to think that if in them I have not met all the points which perplex all men’s minds on such matters (an achievement which, I apprehend,—nay, which I have no doubt,—lies beyond the power either of myself, or of any other person), I have at all events prepared something in the shape of a firm ground on which those who defend the faith delivered to us by our fathers, against the novel opinions of its opponents, may at any time take their stand, not unarmed for the contest. However, within the last few days I have read some writings by Pelagius,—a holy man, as I am told, who has made no small progress in the Christian life,—containing some very brief expository notes on the epistles of the Apostle Paul; and therein I found, on coming to the passage where the apostle says, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin;

and so it passed upon all men," an argument which is used by those who say that infants are not burdened with original sin. Now I confess that I have not refuted this argument in my lengthy treatise, because it did not indeed once occur to me that anybody was capable of thinking such sentiments. Being, however, unwilling to add to that work, which I had concluded, I have thought it right to insert in this epistle both the argument itself in the very words in which I read it, and the answer which it seems to me proper to give to it.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

PELAGIUS' OBJECTION; INFANTS RECKONED AMONG THE NUMBER OF BELIEVERS AND THE FAITHFUL

In these terms, then, the argument is stated:—"But they who deny the transmission of sin endeavour to impugn it thus: If (say they) Adam's sin injured even those who do not sin, therefore Christ's righteousness also profits even those who do not believe; because In like manner, nay, much more,' he says, are men saved by one, than they had previously perished by one.'" Now to this argument, I repeat, I advanced no reply in the two books which I previously addressed to you; nor, indeed, had I proposed to myself such a task. But now I beg you first of all to observe, when they say, "If Adam's sin injures even those who do not sin, then Christ's righteousness also profits even those who do not believe," how absurd and false they judge it to be, that the righteousness of Christ should profit even those who do not believe; and that thence they think to put together such an argument as this: That no more could the first man's sin possibly do injury to infants who commit no sin, than the righteousness of Christ can benefit any who do not believe. Let them therefore tell us what is the benefit of Christ's righteousness to baptized infants; let them by all means tell us what they mean. For of course, since they do not forget that they are Christians themselves, they have no doubt that there is some benefit. But whatever be this benefit, it is incapable (as they themselves assert) of benefiting those who do not believe. Whence they are compelled to class baptized infants in the number of believers, and to assent to the authority of the Holy Universal Church, which does not account those unworthy of the name of believers, to whom the righteousness of Christ could be, according to them, of no use except as believers. As, therefore, by the answer of those, through whose agency they are born again, the Spirit of righteousness transfers to them that faith which, of their own will, they could not yet have; so the sinful flesh of those, through whose agency they are born, transfers to them that injury, which they have not yet contracted in their own life. And even as the Spirit of life regenerates them in Christ as believers, so also the body of death had generated them in Adam as sinners. The one generation is carnal, the other Spiritual; the one makes children of the flesh, the other children of the Spirit; the one children of death, the other children of the resurrection; the one the children of the world, the other the children of God; the one children of wrath, the other children of mercy; and thus the one binds them under original sin, the other liberates them from the bond of every sin.

CHAPTER 3

PELAGIUS MAKES GOD UNJUST

We are driven at last to yield our assent on divine authority to that which we are unable to investigate with even the clearest intellect. It is well that they remind us themselves that Christ's righteousness is unable to profit any but believers, while they yet allow that it somewhat profits infants; according to this (as we have already said) they must, without evasion, find room for baptized infants among the number of believers. Consequently, if they are not baptized, they will have to rank amongst those who do not believe; and therefore they will not even have life, but "the wrath of God abideth on them," inasmuch as "he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him;" and they are under judgment, since "he that believeth not is condemned already;" and they shall be condemned, since "he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Let them, now, then see to it with what justice they can hold or strive to maintain that human beings have no part in eternal life, but in the wrath of God, and incur the divine judgment and condemnation, who are without sin; if, that is, as they cannot have any actual sin, so also they have within them no original sin.

CHAPTER 4

To the other points which Pelagius makes them urge who argue against original sin, I have already, I think, sufficiently and clearly replied in the two former books of my lengthy treatise. Now if my reply should seem to any persons to be brief or obscure, I beg their pardon, and request the favour of their coming to terms with those who perhaps censure my treatise, not for being too brief, but rather as being too long; whilst any who still do not understand the points which I cannot help thinking I have explained as clearly as the nature of the subject allowed me, shall certainly hear no blame or reproach from me for indifference, or want of understanding me. I would rather that they should pray God to give them intelligence.

CHAPTER 5 [III.]

PELAGIUS PRAISED BY SOME; ARGUMENTS AGAINST ORIGINAL SIN PROPOSED BY PELAGIUS IN HIS COMMENTARY

But we must not indeed omit to observe that this good and praiseworthy man (as they who know him describe him to be) has not advanced this argument against the natural transmission of sin in his own person, but has reproduced what is alleged by those persons who disapprove of the doctrine, and this, not merely so far as I have just quoted and confuted the allegation, but also as to those other points on which I have now further undertaken to furnish a reply. Now, after saying, “If (they say) Adam’s sin injured even those who do not sin, therefore Christ’s righteousness also profits even those who do not believe,”—which sentence, you will perceive from what I have said in answer to it, is not only not repugnant to what we hold, but even reminds us what we ought to hold,—he at once goes on to add, “Then they contend, if baptism cleanses away that old sin, those children who are born of two baptized parents must needs be free from this sin, for they could not have transmitted to their children what they did not possess themselves. Besides,” says he, “if the soul is not of transmission, but only the flesh, then only the latter has the transmission of sin, and it alone deserves punishment; for they allege that it would be unjust for the soul, which is only now born, and comes not of the lump of Adam, to bear the burden of so old an alien sin. They say, likewise,” says Pelagius, “that it cannot by any means be conceded that God, who remits to a man his own sins, should impute to him another’s.”

CHAPTER 6

WHY PELAGIUS DOES NOT SPEAK IN HIS OWN PERSON

Pray, don’t you see how Pelagius has inserted the whole of this paragraph in his writings, not in his own person, but in that of others, knowing so well the novelty of this unheard-of doctrine, which is now beginning to raise its voice against the ancient ingrafted opinion of the Church, that he was ashamed or afraid to acknowledge it himself? And perhaps he does not himself think that a man is born without sin for whom he confesses that baptism to be necessary by which comes the remission of sins; or that the man is condemned without sin who must be reckoned, when unbaptized, in the class of non-believers, since the gospel of course cannot deceive us, when it most clearly asserts, “He that believeth not shall be damned;” or, lastly, that the image of God, when without sin, is not admitted into the kingdom of God, forasmuch as “except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,”—and so must either be precipitated into eternal death without sin, or, what is still more absurd, must have eternal life outside the kingdom of God; for the Lord, when foretelling what He should say to His people at last,—”Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world,”—also clearly indicated what the kingdom was of which He was speaking, by concluding thus: “So these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.” These opinions, then, and others which spring from the central error, I believe so worthy a man, and so good a Christian, does not at all accept, as being too perverse and repugnant to Christian truth. But it is quite possible that he may, by the very arguments of those who deny the transmission of sin, be still so far distressed as to be anxious to hear or know what can be said in reply to them; and on this account he was both unwilling to keep silent the tenets propounded by them who deny the transmission of sin, in order that he might get the question in due time discussed, and, at the same time, declined to report the opinions in his own person, lest he should be supposed to entertain them himself.

CHAPTER 7 [IV.]

PROOF OF ORIGINAL SIN IN INFANTS

Now, although I may not be able myself to refute the arguments of these men, I yet see how necessary it is to adhere closely to the clearest statements of the Scriptures, in order that the obscure passages may be explained by help of these, or, if the mind be as yet unequal to either perceiving them when explained, or investigating them whilst abstruse, let them be believed without misgiving. But what can be plainer than the many weighty testimonies of the divine declarations, which afford to us the clearest proof possible that without union with Christ there is no man who can attain to eternal life and salvation; and that no man can unjustly be damned,—that is, separated from that life and salvation,—by the judgment of God? The inevitable conclusion from these truths is this, that, as nothing else is effected when infants are baptized except that they are incorporated into the church, in other words, that they are united with the body and members of Christ, unless this benefit has been bestowed upon them, they are manifestly in danger of damnation. Damned, however, they could not be if they really had no sin. Now, since their tender age could not possibly have contracted sin in its own life, it remains for us, even if we are as yet unable to understand, at least to believe that infants inherit original sin.

CHAPTER 8

JESUS IS THE SAVIOUR EVEN OF INFANTS

And therefore, if there is an ambiguity in the apostle’s words when he says, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so it passed upon all men;” and if it is possible for them to be drawn aside, and applied to some other sense,—is there anything ambiguous in this statement: “Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God?” Is this, again, ambiguous: “Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins?” Is there any doubt of what this means: “The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick?”—that is, Jesus is not needed by those who have no sin, but by those who are to be saved from sin. Is there anything, again, ambiguous in this: “Except men eat the flesh of the Son of man,” that is, become partakers of

His body, “they shall not have life?” By these and similar statements, which I now pass over,—absolutely clear in the light of God, and absolutely certain by His authority,—does not truth proclaim without ambiguity, that unbaptized infants not only cannot enter into the kingdom of God, but cannot have everlasting life, except in the body of Christ, in order that they may be incorporated into which they are washed in the sacrament of baptism? Does not truth, without any dubiety, testify that for no other reason are they carried by pious hands to Jesus (that is, to Christ, the Saviour and Physician), than that they may be healed of the plague of their sin by the medicine of His sacraments? Why then do we delay so to understand the apostle’s very words, of which we perhaps used to have some doubt, that they may agree with these statements of which we can have no manner of doubt?

CHAPTER 9

THE AMBIGUITY OF “ADAM IS THE FIGURE OF HIM TO COME.”

To me, however, no doubt presents itself about the whole of this passage, in which the apostle speaks of the condemnation of many through the sin of one, and the justification of many through the righteousness of One, except as to the words, “Adam is the figure of Him that was to come.” For this phrase in reality not only suits the sense which understands that Adam’s posterity were to be born of the same form as himself along with sin, but the words are also capable of being drawn out into several distinct meanings. For we have ourselves perhaps actually contended for various senses from the words in question at different times, and very likely we shall propound yet another view, which, however, will not be incompatible with the sense here mentioned; and even Pelagius has not always expounded the passage in one way. All the rest, however, of the passage in which these doubtful words occur, if its statements are carefully examined and treated, as I have tried my best to do in the first book of this treatise, will not (in spite of the obscurity of style necessarily engendered by the subject itself) fail to show the incompatibility of any other meaning than that which has secured the adhesion of the universal Church from the earliest times—that believing infants have obtained through the baptism of Christ the remission of original sin.

CHAPTER 10 [V.]

HE SHOWS THAT CYPRIAN HAD NOT DOUBTED THE ORIGINAL SIN OF INFANTS

Accordingly, it is not without reason that the blessed Cyprian carefully shows how from the very first the Church has held this as a well understood article of faith. When he was asserting the fitness of infants only just born to receive Christ’s baptism, on a certain occasion when he was consulted whether this ought to be administered before the eighth day, he endeavoured, as far as he could, to prove that they were perfect, lest any one should suppose, from the number of the days (because it was on the eighth day that infants were before circumcised), that they so far lacked perfection. However, after bestowing upon them the full support of his argument, he still confessed that they were not free from original sin; because if he had denied this, he would have removed all reason for the very baptism which he was maintaining their fitness to receive. You can, if you wish, read for yourself the epistle of the illustrious martyr On the Baptism of Little Children; for it cannot fail to be within reach at Carthage. But I have deemed it right to transcribe some few statements of it into this letter of mine, so far as applies to the question before us; and I pray you to mark them carefully. “Now with respect,” says he, “to the case of infants, whom you declared it would be improper to baptize if presented within the second and third day after their birth, since that due regard ought to be paid to the law of circumcision of old, so that you thought that the infant should not be baptized and sanctified before the eighth day after its birth,—a far different view has been formed of the question in our council. Not a man there assented to what you thought ought to be done; but the whole of us rather determined that to no one born of men ought God’s mercy and grace to be denied. For since the Lord in His gospel says, The Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them,’ so far as in us lies, not a soul ought, if possible, to be lost.” You observe how in these words he supposes that it is fraught with ruin and death, not only to the flesh, but also to the soul, for one to depart this life without that saving sacrament. Wherefore, if he said nothing else, it was competent to us to conclude from his words that without sin the soul could not perish. See, however, what (when he shortly afterwards maintains the innocence of infants) he at the same time allows concerning them in the plainest terms: “But if,” says he, “anything could hinder men from the attainment of grace, then their heavier sins might rather hinder those who have reached the stages of adults, and advanced life, and old age. Since, however, remission of sins is given even to the greatest sinners after they have believed, however much they have previously sinned against God, and since nobody is forbidden baptism and grace, how much more ought an infant not to be forbidden who newborn has done no sin, except that from having been born carnally after Adam he has contracted from his very birth the contagion of the primeval death! How, too, does this fact contribute in itself the more easily to their reception of the forgiveness of sins, that the remission which they have is not of their own sins, but of those of another!”

CHAPTER 11

THE ANCIENTS ASSUMED ORIGINAL SIN

You see with what confidence this great man expresses himself after the ancient and undoubted rule of faith. In advancing such very certain statements, his object was by help of these firm conclusions to prove the uncertain point which had been submitted to him by his correspondent, and concerning which he informs him that a decree of a council had been passed, to the effect that, if an infant were brought even before the eighth day after his birth, no one should hesitate to baptize him. Now it was not then determined or confirmed by the council that infants were held bound by original sin as if it were new, or as if it were attacked by the opposition of some one; but when another controversy was being conducted, and the question was discussed, in reference to the law of the circumcision of the flesh, whether they ought to be baptized before the eighth day. None agreed with the person who denied this; because it was not an open question admitting of discussion, but was fixed and unassailable, that the soul would forfeit eternal salvation if it ended this life without obtaining the sacrament of baptism: but at the same time infants fresh from the womb were held to be affected only by the guilt of original sin. On this account, although remission of sins was easier in their case, because the sins were derived from another, it was nevertheless indispensable. It was on sure grounds like these that the uncertain question of the eighth day was solved, and the council decided that after a man was born, not a day ought to be lost in rendering him that succour which should prevent his perishing for ever. When also a reason was given for the circumcision of the flesh as being itself a shadow of what was to be, its purport was not that we should understand that baptism ought to be administered on the eighth day after birth, but rather that we are spiritually circumcised in the resurrection of Christ, who rose from the dead on the third day, indeed, after His passion, but among the days of the week, by which time is counted, on the eighth, that is, on the first day after the Sabbath.

CHAPTER 12 [VI.]

THE UNIVERSAL CONSENSUS RESPECTING ORIGINAL SIN

And now, again, with a strange boldness in new controversy, certain persons are endeavouring to make us uncertain on a point which our forefathers used to bring forward as most certainly fixed, whenever they would solve such questions as seemed uncertain to some. When this controversy, indeed, first began, I am unable to say; but one thing I know, that even the holy Jerome, who is in our own day renowned for great industry and learning in ecclesiastical literature, for the solution of sundry questions treated in his writings, makes use of the same most certain assumption without exhibition of proofs. For instance, in his commentary on the prophet Jonah, when he comes to the passage where the infants were mentioned as chastened by the fast, he says: “The greatest age comes first, and then all the rest is pervaded down to the least. For there is no man without sin, whether the span of his age be but that of a single day, or he reckon many years to his life. For if the very stars are unclean in the sight of God, how much more is a worm and corruption, such as are they who are held subject to the sin of the offending Adam?” If, indeed, we could readily interrogate this most learned man, how many authors who have treated of the divine Scriptures. in both languages, and have written on Christian controversies, would he mention to us, who have never held any other opinion since the Church of Christ was founded,—who neither received any other from their forefathers, nor handed down any other to their posterity? My own reading, indeed, has been far more limited, but yet I do not recollect ever having heard of any other doctrine on this point from Christians, who accept the two Testaments, whether established in the

Catholic Church, or in any heretical or schismatic body whatever. I do not remember, I say, that I have at any time found any other doctrine in such writers as have contributed anything to literature of this kind, whether they have followed the canonical Scriptures, or have supposed that they have followed them, or had wished to be so supposed. From what quarter this question has suddenly come upon us I know not. A short time ago, in a passing conversation with certain persons while we were at Carthage, my ears were suddenly offended with such a proposition as this: "That infants are not baptized for the purpose of receiving remission of sin, but that they may be sanctified in Christ." Although I was much disturbed by so novel an opinion, still, as there was no opportunity afforded me for gainsaying it, and as its propounders were not persons whose influence gave me anxiety, I readily let the subject slip into neglect and oblivion. And lo! it is now maintained with burning zeal against the Church; lo! it is committed to our permanent notice by writing; nay, the matter is brought to such a pitch of distracting influence, that we are even consulted on it by our brethren; and we are actually obliged to oppose its progress both by disputation and by writing.

CHAPTER 13 [VII.]

THE ERROR OF JOVINIANUS DID NOT EXTEND SO FAR

A few years ago there lived at Rome one Jovinian, who is said to have persuaded nuns of even advanced age to marry,—not, indeed, by seduction, as if he wanted to make any of them his wife, but by contending that virgins who dedicated themselves to the ascetic life had no more merit before God than believing wives. It never entered his mind, however, along with this conceit, to venture to affirm that children of men are born without original sin. If, indeed, he had added such an opinion, the women might have more readily consented to marry, to give birth to such pure offspring. When this man's writings (for he dared to write) were by the brethren forwarded to Jerome to refute, he not only discovered no such error in them, but, while looking out his conceits for refutation, he found among other passages this very clear testimony to the doctrine of man's original sin, from which Jerome indeed felt satisfied of the man's belief of that doctrine. These are his words when treating of it: "He who says that he abides in Christ, ought himself also to walk even as He walked. We give our opponent the option to choose which alternative he likes. Does he abide in Christ, or does he not? If he does, then, let him walk like Christ. If, however, it is a rash thing to undertake to resemble the excellences of Christ, he abides not in Christ, because he walks not as Christ did. He did no sin, neither was any guile found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; and as a lamb before its shearer is dumb, so He opened not His mouth; to whom the prince of this world came, and found nothing in Him; whom, though He had done no sin, God made sin for us. We, however, according to the Epistle of James, all commit many sins; and none of us is pure from uncleanness, even if his life should be but of one day. For who shall boast that he has a clean heart? Or who shall be confident that he is pure from sins? We are held guilty according to the likeness of Adam's transgression. Accordingly David also says: Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.'"

CHAPTER 14

THE OPINIONS OF ALL CONTROVERSIALISTS WHATEVER ARE NOT, HOWEVER, CANONICAL AUTHORITY; ORIGINAL SIN, HOW ANOTHER'S; WE WERE ALL ONE MAN IN ADAM

I have not quoted these words as if we might rely upon the opinions of every disputant as on canonical authority; but I have done it, that it may be seen how, from the beginning down to the present age, which has given birth to this novel opinion, the doctrine of original sin has been guarded with the utmost constancy as a part of the Church's faith, so that it is usually adduced as most certain ground whereon to refute other opinions when false, instead of being itself exposed to refutation by any one as false. Moreover, in the sacred books of the canon, the authority of this doctrine is vigorously asserted in the clearest and fullest way. The apostle exclaims: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so it passed upon all men, in which all have sinned. Now from these words it cannot certainly be said, that Adam's sin has injured even those who commit no sin, for the Scripture says, "In which all have sinned." Nor, indeed, are those sins of infancy so said to be another's, as if they did not belong to the infants at all, inasmuch as all then sinned in Adam, when in his nature, by virtue of that innate power whereby he was able to produce them, they were all as yet the one Adam; but they are called another’s, because as yet they were not living their own lives, but the life of the one man contained whatsoever was in his future posterity.

CHAPTER 15 [VIII.]

WE ALL SINNED ADAM’S SIN

“It is,” they say, “by no means conceded that God who remits to a man his own sins imputes to him another’s.” He remits, indeed, but it is to those regenerated by the Spirit, not to those generated by the flesh; but He imputes to a man no longer the sins of another, but only his own. They were no doubt the sins of another, whilst as yet they were not in existence who bore them when propagated; but now the sins belong to them by carnal generation, to whom they have not yet been remitted by spiritual regeneration.

CHAPTER 16

ORIGIN OF ERRORS; A SIMILE SOUGHT FROM THE FORESKIN OF THE CIRCUMCISED, AND FROM THE CHAFF OF WHEAT

“But surely,” say they, “if baptism cleanses the primeval sin, they who are born of two baptized parents ought to be free from this sin; for these could not have transmitted to their children that thing which they did not themselves possess.” Now observe whence error usually thrives: it is when persons are able to start subjects which they are not able to understand. For before what audience, and in what words, can I explain how it is that sinful mortal beginnings bring no obstacle to those who have inaugurated other, immortal, beginnings, and at the same time prove an obstacle to those whom those very persons, against whom it was not an obstacle, have begotten out of the self-same sinful beginnings? How can a man understand these things, whose labouring mind is impeded both by its own prejudiced opinions and by the chain of its own stolid obstinacy? If indeed I had undertaken my cause in opposition to those who either altogether forbid the baptism of infants, or else contend that it is superfluous to baptize them alleging that as they are born of believing parents, they must needs enjoy the merit of their parents; then it would have been my duty to have roused myself perhaps to greater labour and effort for the purpose of refuting their opinion. In that case, if I encountered a difficulty before obtuse and contentious men in refuting error and inculcating truth, owing to the obscurity which besets the nature of the subject, I should probably resort to such illustrations as were palpable and at hand; and I should in my turn ask them some questions,—how, for instance, if they were puzzled to know in what way sin, after being cleansed by baptism, still remained in those who were begotten of baptized parents, they would explain how it is that the foreskin, after being removed by circumcision, should still remain in the sons of the circumcised? or again, how it happens that the chaff which is winnowed off so carefully by human labour still keeps its place in the grain which springs from the winnowed wheat?

CHAPTER 17 [IX.]

CHRISTIANS DO NOT ALWAYS BEGET CHRISTIAN, NOR THE PURE, PURE CHILDREN

With these and such like palpable arguments, should I endeavour, as I best could, to convince those persons who believed that sacraments of cleansing were superfluously applied to the children of the cleansed, how right is the judgment of baptizing the infants of baptized parents, and how it may happen that to a man who has within him the twofold seed—of death in the flesh, and of immortality in the spirit—that may prove no obstacle, regenerated as he is by the Spirit, which is an obstacle to his son, who is generated by the flesh; and that that may be cleansed in the one by remission, which in the other still requires cleansing by like remission, just as in the case supposed of circumcision, and as in the case of the winnowing and thrashing. But now, when we are contending with those who allow that the children of the baptized ought to be baptized, we may much more conveniently conduct our discussion, and can say: You who assert that the children of such persons as have been cleansed from the pollution of sin ought to have been born without sin, why do you not perceive that by the same rule you might just as well say that the children of Christian parents ought to have been born Christians? Why, therefore, do you rather maintain that they ought to become Christians? Was there not in their parents, to whom it is said, “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?” a Christian body? Perhaps you suppose that a Christian body may be born of Christian parents, without having received a Christian soul? Well, this would render the case much more wonderful still. For you would think of the soul one of two things as you pleased,—because, of course, you hold with the apostle, that before birth it had done nothing good or evil:—either that it was derived by transmission, and just as the body of Christians is Christian, so should also their soul be Christian; or else that it was created by Christ, either in the Christian body, or for the sake of the Christian body, and it ought therefore to have been created or given in a Christian condition. Unless perchance you shall pretend that, although Christian parents had it in their power to beget a Christian body, yet Christ Himself was not able to produce a Christian soul. Believe then the truth, and see that, as it has been possible (as you yourselves admit) for one who is not a Christian to be born of Christian parents, for one who is not a member of Christ to be born of members of Christ, and (that we may answer all, who, however falsely, are yet in some sense possessed with a sense of religion) for a man who is not consecrated to be born of parents who are consecrated; so also it is quite possible for one who is not cleansed to be born of parents who are cleansed. Now what account will you give us, of why from Christian parents is born one who is not a Christian, unless it be that not generation, but regeneration makes Christians? Resolve therefore your own question with a like reason, that cleansing from sin comes to no one by being born, but to all by being born again. And thus any child who is born of parents who are cleansed, because born again, must himself be born again, in order that he too may be cleansed. For it has been quite possible for parents to transmit to their children that which they did not possess themselves,—thus resembling not only the wheat which yielded the chaff, and the circumcised the foreskin, but also the instance which you yourselves adduce, even that of believers who convey unbelief to their posterity; which, however, does not accrue to the faithful as regenerated by the Spirit, but it is owing to the fault of the mortal seed by which they have been born of the flesh. For in respect of the infants whom you judge it necessary to make believers by the sacrament of the faithful you do not deny that they were born in unbelief although of believing parents.

CHAPTER 18 [X.]

IS THE SOUL DERIVED BY NATURAL PROPAGATION?

Well, but “if the soul is not propagated, but the flesh alone, then the latter alone has propagation of sin, and it alone deserves punishment:” this is what they think, saying “that it is unjust that the soul which is only recently produced, and that not out of Adam’s substance, should bear the sin of another committed so long ago.” Now observe, I pray you, how the circumspect Pelagius felt the question about the soul to be a very difficult one, and acted accordingly,—for the words which I have just quoted are copied from his book. He does not say absolutely, “Because the soul is not propagated,” but hypothetically, If the soul is not propagated, rightly determining on so obscure a subject (on which we can find in Holy Scriptures no certain and obvious testimonies, or with very great difficulty discover any) to speak with hesitation rather than with confidence. Wherefore I too, on my side, answer this proposition with no hasty assertion: If the soul is not propagated, where is the justice that, what has been but recently created and is quite free from the contagion of sin, should be compelled in infants to endure the passions and other torments of the flesh, and, what is more terrible still, even the attacks of evil spirits? For never does the flesh so suffer anything of this kind that the living and feeling soul does not rather undergo the punishment. If this, indeed, is shown to be just, it may be shown, on the same terms, with what justice original sin comes to exist in our sinful flesh, to be subsequently cleansed by the sacrament of baptism and God’s gracious mercy. If the former point cannot be shown, I imagine that the latter point is equally incapable of demonstration. We must therefore either bear with both positions in silence, and remember that we are human, or else we must prepare, at some other time, another work on the soul, if it shall appear necessary, discussing the whole question with caution and sobriety.

CHAPTER 19 [XI.]

SIN AND DEATH IN ADAM, RIGHTEOUSNESS AND LIFE IN CHRIST

What the apostle says: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so it passed upon all men, in which all have sinned;” we must, however, for the present so accept as not to seem rashly and foolishly to oppose the many great passages of Holy Scripture, which teach us that no man can obtain eternal life without that union with Christ which is effected in Him and with Him, when we are imbued with His sacraments and incorporated with the members of His body. Now this statement which the apostle addresses to the Romans, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so it passed upon all men, in which all have sinned,” tallies in sense with his words to the Corinthians: “Since by man came death, by Man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” For nobody doubts that the subject here referred to is the death of the body, because the apostle was with much earnestness dwelling on the resurrection of the body; and he seems to be silent here about sin for this reason, namely, because the question was not about righteousness. Both points are mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans, and both points are, at very great length, insisted on by the apostle,—sin in Adam, righteousness in Christ; and death in Adam, life in Christ. However, as I have observed already, I have thoroughly examined and opened, in the first book of this treatise, all these words of the apostle’s argument, as far as I was able, and as much as seemed necessary.

CHAPTER 20

THE STING OF DEATH, WHAT?

But even in the passage to the Corinthians, where he had been treating fully of the resurrection, the apostle concludes his statement in such a way as not to permit us to doubt that the death of the body is the result of sin. For after he had said, “This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality: so when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality, then,” he added, “shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?” and at last he subjoined these words: “The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.” Now, because (as the apostle’s words most plainly declare) death shall then be swallowed up in victory when this corruptible and mortal shall have put on incorruption and immortality,—that is, when “God shall quicken even our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us,"—it manifestly follows that the sting of the body of this death, which is the contrary of the resurrection of the body, is sin. The sting, however, is that by which death was made, and not that which death made, since it is by sin that we die, and not by death that we sin. It is therefore called "the sting of death" on the principle which originated the phrase "the tree of life,"—not because the life of man produced it, but because by it the life of man was made. In like manner "the tree of knowledge" was that whereby man's knowledge was made, not that which man made by his knowledge. So also "the sting of death" is that by which death was produced, not that which death made. We similarly use the expression "the cup of death," since by it some one has died, or might die,—not meaning, of course, a cup made by a dying or dead man. The sting of death is therefore sin, because by the puncture of sin the human race has been slain. Why ask further: the death of what,—whether of the soul, or of the body? Whether the first which we are all of us now dying, or the second which the wicked hereafter shall die? There is no occasion for plying the question so curiously; there is no room for subterfuge. The words in which the apostle expresses the case answer the questions: "When this mortal," says he, "shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." He was treating of the resurrection of the body, wherein death shall be swallowed up in victory, when this mortal shall have put on immortality. Then over death itself shall be raised the shout of triumph, when at the resurrection of the body it shall be swallowed up in victory; then shall be said to it, "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" To the death of the body, therefore, is this said. For victorious immortality shall swallow it up, when this mortal shall put on immortality. I repeat it, to the death of the body shall it be said, "Where is thy victory?"—that victory in which thou didst conquer all, so that even the Son of God engaged in conflict with thee, and by not shrinking but grappling with thee overcame. In these that die thou hast conquered; but thou art thyself conquered in these that rise again. Thy victory was but temporal, in which thou didst swallow up the bodies of them that die. Our victory will abide eternal, in which thou art swallowed up in the bodies of them that rise again. "Where is thy sting?”—that is, the sin wherewithal we are punctured and poisoned, so that thou didst fix thyself in our very bodies, and for so long a time didst hold them in possession. “The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.” We all sinned in one, so that we all die in one; we received the law, not by amendment according to its precepts to put an end to sin, but by transgression to increase it. For “the law entered that sin might abound;” and “the Scripture hath concluded all under sin;” but “thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,” in order that “where sin abounded, grace might much more abound;” and “that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe;” and that we might overcome death by a deathless resurrection, and sin, “the sting” thereof, by a free justification.

CHAPTER 21 [XII.]

THE PRECEPT ABOUT TOUCHING THE MENSTRUOUS WOMAN NOT TO BE FIGURATIVELY UNDERSTOOD; THE NECESSITY OF THE SACRAMENTS

Let no one, then, on this subject be either deceived or a deceiver. The manifest sense of Holy Scripture which we have considered, removes all obscurities. Even as death is in this our mortal body derived from the beginning, so from the beginning has sin been drawn into this sinful flesh of ours, for the cure of which, both as it is derived by propagation and augmented by wilful transgression, as well as for the quickening of our flesh itself, our Physician came in the likeness of sinful flesh, who is not needed by the sound, but only by the sick,—and who came not to call the righteous, but sinners. Therefore the saying of the apostle, when advising believers not to separate themselves from unbelieving partners: “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy,” must be either so understood as both we ourselves elsewhere, and as Pelagius in his notes on this same Epistle to the Corinthians, has expounded it, according to the purport of the passages already mentioned, that sometimes wives gained husbands to Christ, and sometimes husbands converted wives, whilst the Christian will of even one of the parents prevailed towards making their children Christians; or else (as the apostle’s words seem rather to indicate, and to a certain degree compel us) some particular sanctification is to be here understood, by which an unbelieving husband or wife was sanctified by the believing partner, and by which the children of the believing parents were sanctified,—whether it was that the husband or the wife, during the woman's menstruation, abstained from cohabiting, having learned that duty in the law (for Ezekiel classes this amongst the precepts which were not to be taken in a metaphorical sense), or on account of some other voluntary sanctification which is not there expressly prescribed,—a sprinkling of holiness arising out of the close ties of married life and children. Nevertheless, whatever be the sanctification meant, this must be steadily held: that there is no other valid means of making Christians and remitting sins, except by men becoming believers through the sacrament according to the institution of Christ and the Church. For neither are unbelieving husbands and wives, notwithstanding their intimate union with holy and righteous spouses, cleansed of the sin which separates men from the kingdom of God and drives them into condemnation, nor are the children who are born of parents, however just and holy, absolved from the guilt of original sin, unless they have been baptized into Christ; and in behalf of these our plea should be the more earnest, the less able they are to urge one themselves.

CHAPTER 22 [XIII.]

WE OUGHT TO BE ANXIOUS TO SECURE THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS

For this is the point aimed at by the controversy, against the novelty of which we have to struggle by the aid of ancient truth: that it is clearly altogether superfluous for infants to be baptized. Not that this opinion is avowed in so many words, lest so firmly established a custom of the Church should be unable to endure its assailants. But if we are taught to render help to orphans, how much more ought we to labour in behalf of those children who, though under the protection of parents, will still be left more destitute and wretched than orphans, should that grace of Christ be denied them, which they are all unable to demand for themselves?

CHAPTER 23

EPILOGUE

As for what they say, that some men, by the use of their reason, have lived, and do live, in this world without sin, we should wish that it were true, we should strive to make it true, we should pray that it be true; but, at the same time, we should confess that it is not yet true. For to those who wish and strive and worthily pray for this result, whatever sins remain in them are daily remitted because we sincerely pray, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” Whosoever shall deny that this prayer is in this life necessary for every righteous man who knows and does the will of God, except the one Saint of saints, greatly errs, and is utterly incapable of pleasing Him whom he praises. Moreover, if he supposes himself to be such a character, “he deceives himself, and the truth is not in him,”—for no other reason than that he thinks what is false. That Physician, then, who is not needed by the sound, but by the sick, knows how to heal us, and by healing to perfect us unto eternal life; and He does not in this world take away death, although inflicted because of sin, from those whose sins He remits, in order that they may enter on their conflict, and overcome the fear of death with full sincerity of faith. In some cases, too, He declines to help even His righteous servants, so long as they are capable of still higher elevation, to the attainment of a perfect righteousness, in order that (while in His sight no man living is justified) we may always feel it to be our duty to give Him thanks for mercifully bearing with us, and so, by holy humility, be healed of that first cause of all our failings, even the swellings of pride. This letter, as my intention first sketched it, was to have been a short one; it has grown into a lengthy book. Would that it were as perfect as it has at last become complete!

A TREATISE ON THE PREDESTINATION OF THE SAINTS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE PRAEDESTINATIONE SANCTORUM.)

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

THE FIRST BOOK,

ADDRESSED TO PROSPER AND HILARY.

A.D. 428 OR 429

TRANSLATED BY DR. HOLMES.

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Preface

Wherein the truth of predestination and grace is defended against the semi-Pelagians,—those people to wit, who by no means withdraw altogether from the Pelagian heresy, in that they contend that the beginning of salvation and of faith is of ourselves; so that in virtue, as it were, of this precedent merit, the other good gifts of God are attained. Augustin shows that not only the increase, but the very beginning also of faith is in God's gift. On this matter he does not disavow that he once thought differently, and that in some small works, written before his episcopate, he was in error, as in that exposition, which they object to him, of propositions from the epistle to the Romans. But he points out that he was subsequently convinced chiefly by this testimony, "but what hast thou that thou hast not received?" which he proves is to be taken as a testimony concerning faith itself also. He says that faith is to be counted among other works, which the apostle denies to anticipate God's grace when He says, "not of works." He declares that the hardness of the heart is taken away by grace, and that all come to Christ who are taught to come by the Father; but that those whom He teaches, He teaches in mercy, while those whom He teaches not, in judgment He teaches not. That the passage from his hundred and second epistle, Question 2, "concerning the time of the Christian religion" which is alleged by the semi-Pelagians, may rightly be explained without detriment to the doctrine of grace and predestination. He teaches what is the difference between grace and predestination. Further, he says that God in his predestination foreknew what he had purposed to do. He marvels greatly that the adversaries of predestination, who are said to be unwilling to be dependent on the uncertainty of God's will, prefer rather to trust themselves to their own weakness than to the strength of God's promise. He clearly points out that they abuse this authority, "If thou believest, thou shalt be saved." That the truth of grace and perseverance shines forth in the case of infants that are saved, who are distinguished by no merits of their own from others who perish. For that there is no difference between them arising from the foreknowledge of merits which they would have had if they had lived longer. That testimony is wrongfully rejected by the adversaries as being uncanonical, which he adduced for the purpose of this discussion, “he was taken away lest wickedness,” etc. That the most illustrious instance of predestination and grace is the Saviour Himself, in whom a man obtained the privilege of being the Saviour and the Only-begotten Son of God, through being assumed into oneness of person by the Word co-eternal with the Father, on account of no precedent merits, either of works or of faith. That the predestinated are called by some certain calling peculiar to the elect, and that they have been elected before the foundation of the world; not because they were foreknown as men who would believe and would be holy, but in order that by means of that very election of grace they might be such, etc.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

INTRODUCTION

We know that in the Epistle to the Philippians the apostle said, “To write the same things to you to me indeed is not grievous but for you it is safe;” yet the same apostle writing to the Galatians when he saw that he had done enough among them of what he regarded as being needful for them, by the ministry of his preaching, said, “For the rest let no man cause me labour,” or as it is read in many codices, “Let no one be troublesome to me.” But although I confess that it causes me trouble that the divine word in which the grace of God is preached (which is absolutely no grace if it is given according to our merits), great and manifest as it is, is not yielded to, nevertheless my dearest sons, Prosper and Hilary, your zeal and brotherly affection—which makes you so reluctant to see any of the brethren in error, as to wish that, after so many books and letters of mine on this subject, I should write again from here—I love more than I can tell, although I do not dare to say that I love it as much as I ought. Wherefore, behold, I write to you again. And although not with you, yet through you I am still doing what I thought I had done sufficiently.

CHAPTER 2

TO WHAT EXTENT THE MASSILIANS WITHDRAW FROM THE PELAGIANS

For on consideration of your letters, I seem to see that those brethren on whose behalf you exhibit a pious care that they may not hold the poetical opinion in which it is affirmed, “Every one is a hope for himself,” and so fall under that condemnation which is, not poetically, but prophetically, declared, “Cursed is every man that hath hope in man,” must be treated in that way wherein the apostle dealt with those to whom he said, “And if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.” For as yet they are in darkness on the question concerning the predestination of the saints, but they have that whence, “if in anything they are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this unto them,” if they are walking in that to which they have attained. For which reason the apostle, when he had said, “If ye are in anything otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you,” says, “Nevertheless whereunto we have attained, let us walk in the same.” And those brethren of ours, on whose behalf your pious love is solicitous, have attained with Christ’s Church to the belief that the human race is born obnoxious to the sin of the first man, and that none can be delivered from that evil save by the righteousness of the Second Man. Moreover, they have attained to the confession that men’s wills are anticipated by God’s grace; and to the agreement that no one can suffice to himself either for beginning or for completing any good work. These things, therefore, unto which they have attained, being held fast, abundantly distinguish them from the error of the Pelagians. Further, if they walk in them, and beseech Him who giveth understanding, if in anything concerning predestination they are otherwise minded, He will reveal even this unto them. Yet let us also spend upon them the influence of our love, and the ministry of our discourse, according to His gift, whom we have asked that in these letters we might say what should be suitable and profitable to them. For whence do we know whether by this our service, wherein we are serving them in the free love of Christ, our God may not perchance will to effect that purpose?

CHAPTER 3 [II.]

EVEN THE BEGINNING OF FAITH IS OF GOD’S GIFT

Therefore I ought first to show that the faith by which we are Christians is the gift of God, if I can do that more thoroughly than I have already done in so many and so large volumes. But I see that I must now reply to those who say that the divine testimonies which I have adduced concerning this matter are of avail for this purpose, to assure us that we have faith itself of ourselves, but that its increase is of God; as if faith were not given to us by Him, but were only increased in us by Him, on the ground of the merit of its having begun from us. Thus there is here no departure from that opinion which Pelagius himself was constrained to condemn in the judgment of the bishops of Palestine, as is testified in the same Proceedings, “That the grace of God is given according to our merits,” if it is not of God’s grace that we begin to believe, but rather that on account of this beginning an addition is made to us of a more full and perfect belief; and so we first give the beginning of our faith to God, that His supplement may also be given to us again, and whatever else we faithfully ask.

CHAPTER 4

CONTINUATION OF THE PRECEDING

But why do we not in opposition to this, rather hear the words, “Who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed to him again? since of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things.” And from whom, then, is that very beginning of our faith if not from Him? For this is not excepted when other things are spoken of as of Him; but “of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things.” But who can say that he who has already begun to believe deserves nothing from Him in whom he has believed? Whence it results that, to him who already deserves, other things are said to be added by a divine retribution, and thus that God’s grace is given according to our merits. And this assertion when put before him, Pelagius himself condemned, that he might not be condemned. Whoever, then, wishes on every side to avoid this condemnable opinion, let him understand that what the apostle says is said with entire truthfulness, “Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” He shows that both are the gifts of God, because he said that both were given. And he does not say, “to believe on Him more fully and perfectly,” but, “to believe on Him.” Neither does he say that he himself had obtained mercy to be more faithful, but “to be faithful,” because he knew that he had not first given the beginning of his faith to God, and had its increase given back to him again by Him; but that he had been made faithful by God, who also had made him an apostle. For the beginnings of his faith are recorded, and they are very well known by being read in the church on an occasion calculated to distinguish them: how, being turned away from the faith which he was destroying, and being vehemently opposed to it, he was suddenly by a more powerful grace converted to it, by the conversion of Him, to whom as One who would do this very thing it was said by the prophet, “Thou wilt turn and quicken us;” so that not only from one who refused to believe he was made a willing believer, but, moreover, from being a persecutor, he suffered persecution in defence of that faith which he persecuted. Because it was given him by Christ “not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”

CHAPTER 5

TO BELIEVE IS TO THINK WITH ASSENT

And, therefore, commending that grace which is not given according to any merits, but is the cause of all good merits, he says, “Not that we are sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.” Let them give attention to this, and well weigh these words, who think that the beginning of faith is of ourselves, and the supplement of faith is of God. For who cannot see that thinking is prior to believing? For no one believes anything unless he has first thought that it is to be believed. For however suddenly, however rapidly, some thoughts fly before the will to believe, and this presently follows in such wise as to attend them, as it were, in closest conjunction, it is yet necessary that everything which is believed should be believed after thought has preceded; although even belief itself is nothing else than to think with assent. For it is not every one who thinks that believes, since many think in order that they may not believe; but everybody who believes, thinks,—both thinks in believing and believes in thinking. Therefore in what pertains to religion and piety (of which the apostle was speaking), if we are not capable of thinking anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, we are certainly not capable of believing anything as of ourselves, since we cannot do this without thinking; but our sufficiency, by which we begin to believe, is of God. Wherefore, as no one is sufficient for himself, for the beginning or the completion of any good work whatever,—and this those brethren of yours, as what you have written intimates, already agree to be true, whence, as well in the beginning as in the carrying out of every good work, our sufficiency is of God,—so no one is sufficient for himself, either to begin or to perfect faith; but our sufficiency is of God. Because if faith is not a matter of thought, it is of no account; and we are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.

CHAPTER 6

PRESUMPTION AND ARROGANCE TO BE AVOIDED

Care must be taken, brethren, beloved of God, that a man do not lift himself up in opposition to God, when he says that he does what God has promised. Was not the faith of the nations promised to Abraham, “and he, giving glory to God, most fully believed that what He promised He is able also to perform”? He therefore makes the faith of the nations, who is able to do what He has promised. Further, if God works our faith, acting in a wonderful manner in our hearts so that we believe, is there any reason to fear that He cannot do the whole; and does man on that account arrogate to himself its first elements, that he may merit to receive its last from God? Consider if in such a way any other result be gained than that the grace of God is given in some way or other, according to our merit, and so grace is no more grace. For on this principle it is rendered as debt, it is not given gratuitously; for it is due to the believer that his faith itself should be increased by the Lord, and that the increased faith should be the wages of the faith begun; nor is it observed when this is said, that this wage is assigned to believers, not of grace, but of debt. And I do not at all see why the whole should not be attributed to man,—as he who could originate for himself what he had not previously, can himself increase what he had originated,—except that it is impossible to withstand the most manifest divine testimony by which faith, whence piety takes its beginning, is shown also to be the gift of God: such as is that testimony that “God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith;” and that one, “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ,” and other similar passages. Man, therefore, unwilling to resist such clear testimonies as these, and yet desiring himself to have the merit of believing, compounds as it were with God to claim a portion of faith for himself, and to leave a portion for Him; and, what is still more arrogant, he takes the first portion for himself and gives the subsequent to Him; and so in that which he says belongs to both, he makes himself the first, and God the second!

CHAPTER 7 [III.]

AUGUSTIN CONFESSES THAT HE HAD FORMERLY BEEN IN ERROR CONCERNING THE GRACE OF GOD

It was not thus that that pious and humble teacher thought—I speak of the most blessed Cyprian—when he said “that we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own.” And in order to show this, he appealed to the apostle as a witness, where he said, “For what hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received it, why boastest thou as if thou hadst not received it?” And it was chiefly by this testimony that I myself also was convinced when I was in a similar error, thinking that faith whereby we believe on God is not God’s gift, but that it is in us from ourselves, and that by it we obtain the gifts of God, whereby we may live temperately and righteously and piously in this world. For I did not think that faith was preceded by God’s grace, so that by its means would be given to us what we might profitably ask, except that we could not believe if the proclamation of the truth did not precede; but that we should consent when the gospel was preached to us I thought was our own doing, and came to us from ourselves. And this my error is sufficiently indicated in some small works of mine written before my episcopate. Among these is that which you have mentioned in your letters wherein is an exposition of certain propositions from the Epistle to the Romans. Eventually, when I was retracting all my small works, and was committing that retractation to writing, of which task I had already completed two books before I had taken up your more lengthy letters,—when in the first volume I had reached the retractation of this book, I then spoke thus:—”Also discussing, I say, what God could have chosen in him who was as yet unborn, whom He said that the elder should serve; and what in the same elder, equally as yet unborn, He could have rejected; concerning whom, on this account, the prophetic testimony is recorded, although declared long subsequently, “Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated,”‘ I carried out my reasoning to the point of saying: God did not therefore choose the works of any one in foreknowledge of what He Himself would give them, but he chose the faith, in the foreknowledge that He would choose that very person whom He foreknew would believe on Him,—to whom He would give the Holy Spirit, so that by doing good works he might obtain eternal life also.’ I had not yet very carefully sought, nor had I as yet found, what is the nature of the election of grace, of which the apostle says, A remnant are saved according to the election of grace.’ Which assuredly is not grace if any merits precede it; lest what is now given, not according to grace, but according to debt, be rather paid to merits than freely given. And what I next subjoined: For the same apostle says, “The same God which worketh all in all;” but it was never said, God believeth all in all;’ and then added, Therefore what we believe is our own, but what good thing we do is of Him who giveth the Holy Spirit to them that believe:’ I certainly could not have said, had I already known that faith itself also is found among those gifts of God which are given by the same Spirit. Both, therefore, are ours on account of the choice of the will, and yet both are given by the spirit of faith and love. For faith is not alone but as it is written, Love with faith, from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.’ And what I said a little after, For it is ours to believe and to will, but it is His to give to those who believe and will, the power of doing good works through the Holy Spirit, by whom love is shed abroad in our hearts,’—is true indeed; but by the same rule both are also God’s, because God prepares the will; and both are ours too, because they are only brought about with our good wills. And thus what I subsequently said also: Because we are not able to will unless we are called; and when, after our calling, we would will, our willing is not sufficiently nor our running, unless God gives strength to us that run, and leads us whither He calls us;’ and thereupon added: It is plain, therefore, that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, that we do good works’—this is absolutely most true. But I discovered little concerning the calling itself, which is according to God’s purpose; for not such is the calling of all that are called, but only of the elect. Therefore what I said a little afterwards: For as in those whom God elects it is not works but faith that begins the merit so as to do good works by the gift of God, so in those whom He condemns, unbelief and impiety begin the merit of punishment, so that even by way of punishment itself they do evil works’—I spoke most truly. But that even the merit itself of faith was God’s gift, I neither thought of inquiring into, nor did I say. And in another place I say: For whom He has mercy upon, He makes to do good works, and whom He hardeneth He leaves to do evil works; but that mercy is bestowed upon the preceding merit of faith, and that hardening is applied to preceding iniquity.’ And this indeed is true; but it should further have been asked, whether even the merit of faith does not come from God’s mercy,—that is, whether that mercy is manifested in man only because he is a believer, or whether it is also manifested that he may be a believer? For we read in the apostle’s words: I obtained mercy to be a believer.’ He does not say, Because I was a believer.’ Therefore although it is given to the believer, yet it has been given also that he may be a believer. Therefore also, in another place in the same book I most truly said: Because, if it is of God’s mercy, and not of works, that we are even called that we may believe and it is granted to us who believe to do good works, that mercy must not be grudged to the heathen;’—although I there discoursed less carefully about that calling which is given according to God’s purpose.”

CHAPTER 8 [IV.]

WHAT AUGUSTIN WROTE TO SIMPLICIANUS, THE SUCCESSOR OF AMBROSE, BISHOP OF MILAN

You see plainly what was at that time my opinion concerning faith and works, although I was labouring in commending God’s grace; and in this opinion I see that those brethren of ours now are, because they have not been as careful to make progress with me in my writings as they were in reading them. For if they had been so careful, they would have found that question solved in accordance with the truth of the divine Scriptures in the first book of the two which I wrote in the very beginning of my episcopate to Simplicianus, of blessed memory, Bishop of the Church of Milan, and successor to St. Ambrose. Unless, perchance, they may not have known these books; in which case, take care that they do know them. Of this first of those two books, I first spoke in the second book of the Retractations; and what I said is as follows: “Of the books, I say, on which, as a bishop, I have laboured, the first two are addressed to Simplicianus, president of the Church of Milan, who succeeded the most blessed Ambrose, concerning divers questions, two of which I gathered into the first book from the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans. The former of them is about what is written: What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? By no means;’ as far as the passage where he says, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.’ And therein I have expounded those words of the apostle: The law is spiritual; but I am carnal,’ and others in which the flesh is declared to be in conflict against the Spirit in such a way as if a man were there described as still under law, and not yet established under grace. For, long afterwards, I perceived that those words might even be (and probably were) the utterance of a spiritual man. The latter question in this book is gathered from that passage where the apostle says, And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one act of intercourse, even by our father Isaac,’ as far as that place where he says, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we should be as Sodoma, and should have been like unto Gomorrah.’ In the solution of this question I laboured indeed on behalf of the free choice of the human will, but God’s grace overcame, and I could only reach that point where the apostle is perceived to have said with the most evident truth, For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou hast not received? Now, if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou receivedst it not?’ And this the martyr Cyprian was also desirous of setting forth when he compressed the whole of it in that title: That we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own.’“ This is why I previously said that it was chiefly by this apostolic testimony that I myself had been convinced, when I thought otherwise concerning this matter; and this God revealed to me as I sought to solve this question when I was writing, as I said, to the Bishop Simplicianus. This testimony, therefore, of the apostle, when for the sake of repressing man’s conceit he said, “For what hast thou which thou hast not received?” does not allow any believer to say, I have faith which I received not. All the arrogance of this answer is absolutely repressed by these apostolic words. Moreover, it cannot even be said, “Although I have not a perfected faith, yet I have its beginning, whereby I first of all believed in Christ.” Because here also is answered: “But what hast thou that thou hast not received? Now, if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou receivedst it not?”

CHAPTER 9 [V.]

THE PURPOSE OF THE APOSTLE IN THESE WORDS

The notion, however, which they entertain, “that these words, What hast thou that thou hast not received?’ cannot be said of this faith, because it has remained in the same nature, although corrupted, which at first was endowed with health and perfection,” is perceived to have no force for the purpose that they desire if it be considered why the apostle said these words. For he was concerned that no one should glory in man, because dissensions had sprung up among the Corinthian Christians, so that every one was saying, “I, indeed, am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, and another, I am of Cephas;” and thence he went on to say: “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong things; and God hath chosen the ignoble things of the world, and contemptible things, and those things which are not, to make of no account things which are; that no flesh should glory before God.” Here the intention of the apostle is of a certainty sufficiently plain against the pride of man, that no one should glory in man; and thus, no one should glory in himself. Finally, when he had said “that no flesh should glory before God,” in order to show in what man ought to glory, he immediately added, “But it is of Him that ye are in Christ Jesus, who is made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” Thence that intention of his progressed, till afterwards rebuking them he says, “For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there are among you envying and contention, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man? For while one saith I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not men? What, then, is Apollos, and what Paul? Ministers by whom you believed; and to every one as the Lord has given. I have planted, and Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. Therefore, neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.” Do you not see that the sole purpose of the apostle is that man may be humbled, and God alone exalted? Since in all those things, indeed, which are planted and watered, he says that not even are the planter and the waterer anything, but God who giveth the increase: and the very fact, also, that one plants and another waters he attributes not to themselves, but to

God, when he says, “To every one as the Lord hath given; I have planted, Apollos watered.” Hence, therefore, persisting in the same intention he comes to the point of saying, “Therefore let no man glory in man,” for he had already said, “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” After these and some other matters which are associated therewith, that same intention of his is carried on in the words: “And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes, that ye might learn in us that no one of you should be puffed up for one against another above that which is written. For who maketh thee to differ? And what hast thou which thou hast not received? Now, if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou receivedst it not?”

CHAPTER 10

IT IS GOD’S GRACE WHICH SPECIALLY DISTINGUISHES ONE MAN FROM ANOTHER

In this the apostle’s most evident intention, in which he speaks against human pride, so that none should glory in man but in God, it is too absurd, as I think, to suppose God’s natural gifts, whether man’s entire and perfected nature itself as it was bestowed on him in his first state, or the remains, whatever they may be, of his degraded nature. For is it by such gifts as these, which are common to all men, that men are distinguished from men? But here he first said, “For who maketh thee to differ?” and then added, “And what hast thou that thou hast not received?” Because a man, puffed up against another, might say, “My faith makes me to differ,” or “My righteousness,” or anything else of the kind. In reply to such notions, the good teacher says, “But what hast thou that thou hast not received?” And from whom but from Him who maketh thee to differ from another, on whom He bestowed not what He bestowed on thee? “Now if,” says he, “thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou receivedst it not?” Is he concerned, I ask, about anything else save that he who glorieth should glory in the Lord? But nothing is so opposed to this feeling as for any one to glory concerning his own merits in such a way as if he himself had made them for himself, and not the grace of God,—a grace, however, which makes the good to differ from the wicked, and is not common to the good and the wicked. Let the grace, therefore, whereby we are living and reasonable creatures, and are distinguished from cattle, be attributed to nature; let that grace also by which, among men themselves, the handsome are made to differ from the ill-formed, or the intelligent from the stupid, or anything of that kind, be ascribed to nature. But he whom the apostle was rebuking did not puff himself up as contrasted with cattle, nor as contrasted with any other man, in respect of any natural endowment which might be found even in the worst of men. But he ascribed to himself, and not to God, some good gift which pertained to a holy life, and was puffed up therewith when he deserved to hear the rebuke, “Who hath made thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou receivedst not?” For though the capacity to have faith is of nature, is it also of nature to have it? “For all men have not faith,” although all men have the capacity to have faith. But the apostle does not say, “And what hast thou capacity to have, the capacity to have which thou receivedst not?” but he says, “And what hast thou which thou receivedst not?” Accordingly, the capacity to have faith, as the capacity to have love, belongs to men’s nature; but to have faith, even as to have love, belongs to the grace of believers. That nature, therefore, in which is given to us the capacity of having faith, does not distinguish man from man, but faith itself makes the believer to differ from the unbeliever. And thus, when it is said, “For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou receivedst not?” if any one dare to say, “I have faith of myself, I did not, therefore, receive it,” he directly contradicts this most manifest truth,—not because it is not in the choice of man’s will to believe or not to believe, but because in the elect the will is prepared by the Lord. Thus, moreover, the passage, “For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou receivedst not?” refers to that very faith which is in the will of man.

CHAPTER 11 [VI.]

THAT SOME MEN ARE ELECTED IS OF GOD’S MERCY

“Many hear the word of truth; but some believe, while others contradict. Therefore, the former will to believe; the latter do not will.” Who does not know this? Who can deny this? But since in some the will is prepared by the Lord, in others it is not prepared, we must assuredly be able to distinguish what comes from God’s mercy, and what from His judgment. “What Israel sought for,” says the apostle, “he hath not obtained, but the election hath obtained it; and the rest were blinded, as it is written, God gave to them the spirit of compunction,—eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, even to this day. And David said, Let their table be made a snare, a retribution, and a stumblingblock to them; let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see; and bow down their back always." Here is mercy and judgment,—mercy towards the election which has obtained the righteousness of God, but judgment to the rest which have been blinded. And yet the former, because they willed, believed; the latter, because they did not will believed not. Therefore mercy and judgment were manifested in the very wills themselves. Certainly such an election is of grace, not at all of merits. For he had before said, "So, therefore, even at this present time, the remnant has been saved by the election of grace. And if by grace, now it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." Therefore the election obtained what it obtained gratuitously; there preceded none of those things which they might first give, and it should be given to them again. He saved them for nothing. But to the rest who were blinded, as is there plainly declared, it was done in recompense. "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth." But His ways are unsearchable. Therefore the mercy by which He freely delivers, and the truth by which He righteously judges, are equally unsearchable.

CHAPTER 12 [VII.]

WHY THE APOSTLE SAID THAT WE ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH AND NOT BY WORKS

But perhaps it may be said: "The apostle distinguishes faith from works; he says, indeed, that grace is not of works, but he does not say that it is not of faith." This, indeed, is true. But Jesus says that faith itself also is the work of God, and commands us to work it. For the Jews said to Him, "What shall we do that we may work the work of God? Jesus answered, and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." The apostle, therefore, distinguishes faith from works, just as Judah is distinguished from Israel in the two kingdoms of the Hebrews, although Judah is Israel itself. And he says that a man is justified by faith and not by works, because faith itself is first given, from which may be obtained other things which are specially characterized as works, in which a man may live righteously. For he himself also says, "By grace ye are saved through faith; and this not of yourselves; but it is the gift of God,"—that is to say, "And in saying through faith,’ even faith itself is not of yourselves, but is God’s gift.” “Not of works,” he says, “lest any man should be lifted up.” For it is often said, “He deserved to believe, because he was a good man even before he believed.” Which may be said of Cornelius since his alms were accepted and his prayers heard before he had believed on Christ; and yet without some faith he neither gave alms nor prayed. For how did he call on him on whom he had not believed? But if he could have been saved without the faith of Christ the Apostle Peter would not have been sent as an architect to build him up; although, “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it.” And we are told, Faith is of ourselves; other things which pertain to works of righteousness are of the Lord; as if faith did not belong to the building,—as if, I say, the foundation did not belong to the building. But if this primarily and especially belongs to it, he labours in vain who seeks to build up the faith by preaching, unless the Lord in His mercy builds it up from within. Whatever, therefore, of good works Cornelius performed, as well before he believed in Christ as when he believed and after he had believed, are all to be ascribed to God, lest, perchance any man be lifted up.

CHAPTER 13 [VIII.]

THE EFFECT OF DIVINE GRACE

Accordingly, our only Master and Lord Himself, when He had said what I have above mentioned,—”This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent,”—says a little afterwards in that same discourse of His, “I said unto you that ye also have seen me and have not believed. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.” What is the meaning of “shall come to me,” but, “shall believe in me”? But it is the Father’s gift that this may be the case. Moreover, a little after He says, “Murmur not among yourselves. No one can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all teachable of God. Every man that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me.” What is the meaning of, “Every man that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me,” except that there is none who hears from the Father, and learns, who cometh not to me? For if every one who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes, certainly every one who does not come has not heard from the Father; for if he had heard and learned, he would come. For no one has heard and learned, and has not come; but every one, as the Truth declares, who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes. Far removed from the senses of the flesh is this teaching in which the Father is heard, and teaches to come to the Son. Engaged herein is also the Son Himself, because He is His Word by which He thus teaches; and He does not do this through the ear of the flesh, but of the heart. Herein engaged, also, at the same time, is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son; and He, too, teaches, and does not teach separately, since we have learned that the workings of the Trinity are inseparable. And that is certainly the same Holy Spirit of whom the apostle says, “We, however, having the same Spirit of faith.” But this is especially attributed to the Father, for the reason that of Him is begotten the Only Begotten, and from Him proceeds the Holy Spirit, of which it would be tedious to argue more elaborately; and I think that my work in fifteen books on the Trinity which God is, has already reached you. Very far removed, I say, from the senses of the flesh is this instruction wherein God is heard and teaches. We see that many come to the Son because we see that many believe on Christ, but when and how they have heard this from the Father, and have learned, we see not. It is true that that grace is exceedingly secret, but who doubts that it is grace? This grace, therefore, which is hiddenly bestowed in human hearts by the Divine gift, is rejected by no hard heart, because it is given for the sake of first taking away the hardness of the heart. When, therefore, the Father is heard within, and teaches, so that a man comes to the Son, He takes away the heart of stone and gives a heart of flesh, as in the declaration of the prophet He has promised. Because He thus makes them children and vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory.

CHAPTER 14

WHY THE FATHER DOES NOT TEACH ALL THAT THEY MAY COME TO CHRIST

Why, then, does He not teach all that they may come to Christ, except because all whom He teaches, He teaches in mercy, while those whom He teaches not, in judgment He teaches not? Since, “On whom He will He has mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.” But He has mercy when He gives good things. He hardens when He recompenses what is deserved. Or if, as some would prefer to distinguish them, those words also are his to whom the apostle says, “Thou sayest then unto me,” so that he may be regarded as having said, “Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardeneth,” as well as those which follow,—to wit, “What is it that is still complained of? for who resists His will?” does the apostle answer, “O man, what thou hast said is false?” No; but he says, “O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Doth the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump?” and what follows, which you very well know. And yet in a certain sense the Father teaches all men to come to His Son. For it was not in vain that it was written in the prophets, “And they shall all be teachable of God.” And when He too had premised this testimony, He added, “Every man, therefore, who has heard of the Father, and has learned, cometh to me.” As, therefore, we speak justly when we say concerning any teacher of literature who is alone in a city, He teaches literature here to everybody,—not that all men learn, but that there is none who learns literature there who does not learn from him,—so we justly say, God teaches all men to come to Christ, not because all come, but because none comes in any other way. And why He does not teach all men the apostle explained, as far as he judged that it was to be explained, because, “willing to show His wrath, and to exhibit His power, He endured with much patience the vessels of wrath which were perfected for destruction; and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory.” Hence it is that the “word of the cross is foolishness to them that perish; but unto them that are saved it is the power of God.” God teaches all such to come to Christ, for He wills all such to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. And if He had willed to teach even those to whom the word of the cross is foolishness to come to Christ, beyond all doubt these also would have come. For He neither deceives nor is deceived when He says, “Everyone that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh to me.” Away, then, with the thought that any one cometh not, who has heard of the Father and has learned.

CHAPTER 15

IT IS BELIEVERS THAT ARE TAUGHT OF GOD

“Why,” say they, “does He not teach all men?” If we should say that they whom He does not teach are unwilling to learn, we shall be met with the answer: And what becomes of what is said to Him, “O God, Thou wilt turn us again, and quicken us”? Or if God does not make men willing who were not willing, on what principle does the Church pray, according to the Lord’s commandment, for her persecutors? For thus also the blessed Cyprian would have it to be understood that we say, “Thy will be done, as in heaven so in earth,”—that is, as in those who have already believed, and who are, as it were, heaven, so also in those who do not believe, and on this account are still the earth. What, then, do we pray for on behalf of those who are unwilling to believe, except that God would work in them to will also? Certainly the apostle says, “Brethren, my heart’s good will, indeed, and my prayer to God for them, is for their salvation.” He prays for those who do not believe,—for what, except that they may believe? For in no other way do they obtain salvation. If, then, the faith of the petitioners precede the grace of God, does the faith of them on whose behalf prayer is made that they may believe precede the grace of God?—since this is the very thing that is besought for them, that on them that believe not—that is, who have not faith—faith itself may be bestowed? When, therefore, the gospel is preached, some believe, some believe not; but they who believe at the voice of the preacher from without, hear of the Father from within, and learn; while they who do not believe, hear outwardly, but inwardly do not hear nor learn;—that is to say, to the former it is given to believe; to the latter it is not given. Because “no man,” says He, “cometh to me, except the Father which sent me draw him.” And this is more plainly said afterwards. For after a little time, when He was speaking of eating his flesh and drinking His blood, and some even of His disciples said, “This is a hard saying, who can hear it? Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples murmured at this, said unto them, Doth this offend you?” And a little after He said, “The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and life; but there are some among you which believe not.” And immediately the evangelist says, “For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the believers, and who should betray Him; and He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me except it were given him of my Father.” Therefore, to be drawn to Christ by the Father, and to hear and learn of the Father in order to come to Christ, is nothing else than to receive from the Father the gift by which to believe in Christ. For it was not the hearers of the gospel that were distinguished from those who did not hear, but the believers from those who did not believe, by Him who said, “No man cometh to me except it were given him of my Father.”

CHAPTER 16

WHY THE GIFT OF FAITH IS NOT GIVEN TO ALL

Faith, then, as well in its beginning as in its completion, is God’s gift; and let no one have any doubt whatever, unless he desires to resist the plainest sacred writings, that this gift is given to some, while to some it is not given. But why it is not given to all ought not to disturb the believer, who believes that from one all have gone into a condemnation, which undoubtedly is most righteous; so that even if none were delivered therefrom, there would be no just cause for finding fault with God. Whence it is plain that it is a great grace for many to be delivered, and to acknowledge in those that are not delivered what would be due to themselves; so that he that glorieth may glory not in his own merits, which he sees to be equalled in those that are condemned, but in the Lord. But why He delivers one rather than another, —”His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out.” For it is better in this case for us to hear or to say, “O man, who art thou that repliest against God?” than to dare to speak as if we could know what He has chosen to be kept secret. Since, moreover, He could not will anything unrighteous.

CHAPTER 17 [IX.]

HIS ARGUMENT IN HIS LETTER AGAINST PORPHYRY, AS TO WHY THE GOSPEL CAME SO LATE INTO THE WORLD

But that which you remember my saying in a certain small treatise of mine against Porphyry, under the title of The Time of the Christian Religion, I so said for the sake of escaping this more careful and elaborate argument about grace; although its meaning, which could be unfolded elsewhere or by others, was not wholly omitted, although I had been unwilling in that place to explain it. For, among other matters, I spoke thus in answer to the question proposed, why it was after so long a time that Christ came: “Accordingly, I say, since they do not object to Christ that all do not follow His teaching (for even they themselves feel that this could not be objected at all with any justice, either to the wisdom of the philosophers or even to the deity of their own gods), what will they reply, if—leaving out of the question that depth of God’s wisdom and knowledge where perchance some other divine plan is far more secretly hidden, without prejudging also other causes, which cannot be traced out by the wise—we say to them only this, for the sake of brevity in the arguing of this question, that Christ willed to appear to men, and that His doctrine should be preached among them, at that time when He knew, and at that place where He knew, that there were some who would believe on Him. For at those times, and in those places, at which His gospel was not preached, He foreknew that all would be in His preaching such as, not indeed all, but many were in His bodily presence, who would not believe on Him, even when the dead were raised by Him; such as we see many now, who, although the declarations of the prophets concerning Him are fulfilled by such manifestations, are still unwilling to believe, and prefer to resist by human astuteness, rather than yield to divine authority so clear and perspicuous, and so lofty, and sublimely made known, so long as the human understanding is small and weak in its approach to divine truth. What wonder is it, then, if Christ knew the world in former ages to be so full of unbelievers, that He should reasonably refuse to appear, or to be preached to them, who, as He foreknew, would believe neither His words nor His miracles? For it is not incredible that all at that time were such as from His coming even to the present time we marvel that so many have been and are. And yet from the beginning of the human race, sometimes more hiddenly, sometimes more evidently, even as to Divine Providence the times seemed to be fitting, there has neither been a failure of prophecy, nor were there wanting those who believed on Him; as well from Adam to Moses, as in the people of Israel itself which by a certain special mystery was a prophetic people; and in other nations before He had come in the flesh. For as some are mentioned in the sacred Hebrew books, as early as the time of Abraham,—neither of his fleshly race nor of the people of Israel nor of the foreign society among the people of Israel,—who were, nevertheless, sharers in their sacrament, why may we not believe that there were others elsewhere among other people, here and there, although we do not read any mention of them in the same authorities? Thus the salvation of this religion, by which only true one true salvation is truly promised, never failed him who was worthy of it; and whoever it failed was not worthy of it. And from the very beginning of the propagation of man, even to the end, the gospel is preached, to some for a reward, to some for judgment; and thus also those to whom the faith was not announced at all were foreknown as those who would not believe; and those to whom it was announced, although they were not such as would believe, are set forth as an example for the former; while those to whom it is announced who should believe, are prepared for the kingdom of heaven, and the company of the holy angels."

CHAPTER 18

THE PRECEDING ARGUMENT APPLIED TO THE PRESENT TIME

Do you not see that my desire was, without any prejudgment of the hidden counsel of God, and of other reasons, to say what might seem sufficient about Christ's foreknowledge, to convince the unbelief of the pagans who had brought forward this question? For what is more true than that Christ foreknew who should believe on Him, and at what times and places they should believe? But whether by the preaching of Christ to themselves by themselves they were to have faith, or whether they would receive it by God's gift,—that is, whether God only foreknew them, or also predestinated them, I did not at that time think it necessary to inquire or to discuss. Therefore what I said, "that Christ willed to appear to men at that time, and that His doctrine should be preached among them when He knew, and where He knew, that there were those who would believe on Him," may also thus be said, "That Christ willed to appear to men at that time, and that His gospel should be preached among those, whom He knew, and where He knew, that there were those who had been elected in Himself before the foundation of the world." But since, if it were so said, it would make the reader desirous of asking about those things which now by the warning of Pelagian errors must of necessity be discussed with greater copiousness and care, it seemed to me that what at that time was sufficient should be briefly said, leaving to one side, as I said, the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and without prejudging other reasons, concerning which I thought that we might more fittingly argue, not then, but at some other time.

CHAPTER 19 [X]

IN WHAT RESPECTS PREDESTINATION AND GRACE DIFFER

Moreover, that which I said, “That the salvation of this religion has never been lacking to him who was worthy of it, and that he to whom it was lacking was not worthy,”—if it be discussed and it be asked whence any man can be worthy, there are not wanting those who say—by human will. But we say, by divine grace or predestination. Further, between grace and predestination there is only this difference, that predestination is the preparation for grace, while grace is the donation itself. When, therefore the apostle says, “Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus in good works,” it is grace; but what follows—”which God hath prepared that we should walk in them”—is predestination, which cannot exist without foreknowledge, although foreknowledge may exist without predestination; because God foreknew by predestination those things which He was about to do, whence it was said, “He made those things that shall be.” Moreover, He is able to foreknow even those things which He does not Himself do,—as all sins whatever. Because, although there are some which are in such wise sins as that they are also the penalties of sins, whence it is said, “God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient,” it is not in such a case the sin that is God’s, but the judgment. Therefore God’s predestination of good is, as I have said, the preparation of grace; which grace is the effect of that predestination. Therefore when God promised to Abraham in his seed the faith of the nations, saying, “I have established thee a father of many nations,” whence the apostle says, “Therefore it is of faith, that the promise, according to grace, might be established to all the seed,” He promised not from the power of our will but from His own predestination. For He promised what He Himself would do, not what men would do. Because, although men do those good things which pertain to God’s worship, He Himself makes them to do what He has commanded; it is not they that cause Him to do what He has promised. Otherwise the fulfilment of God’s promises would not be in the power of God, but in that of men; and thus what was promised by God to Abraham would be given to Abraham by men themselves. Abraham, however, did not believe thus, but “he believed, giving glory to God, that what He promised He is able also to do.” He does not say, “to foretell”—he does not say, “to foreknow;” for He can foretell and foreknow the doings of strangers also; but he says, “He is able also to do;” and thus he is speaking not of the doings of others, but of His own.

CHAPTER 20

DID GOD PROMISE THE GOOD WORKS OF THE NATIONS AND NOT THEIR FAITH, TO ABRAHAM?

Did God, perchance, promise to Abraham in his seed the good works of the nations, so as to promise that which He Himself does, but did not promise the faith of the Gentiles, which men do for themselves; but so as to promise what He Himself does, did He foreknow that men would effect that faith? The apostle, indeed, does not speak thus, because God promised children to Abraham, who should follow the footsteps of his faith, as he very plainly says. But if He promised the works, and not the faith of the Gentiles certainly since they are not good works unless they are of faith (for “the righteous lives of faith,” and, “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin,” and, “Without faith it is impossible to please”), it is nevertheless in man’s power that God should fulfil what He has promised. For unless man should do what without the gift of God pertains to man, he will not cause God to give, —that is, unless man have faith of himself. God does not fulfil what He has promised, that works of righteousness should be given by God. And thus that God should be able to fulfil His promises is not in God’s power, but man’s. And if truth and piety do not forbid our believing this, let us believe with Abraham, that what He has promised He is able also to perform. But He promised children to Abraham; and this men cannot be unless they have faith, therefore He gives faith also.

CHAPTER 21

IT IS TO BE WONDERED AT THAT MEN SHOULD RATHER TRUST TO THEIR OWN WEAKNESS THAN TO GOD’S STRENGTH

Certainly, when the apostle says, “Therefore it is of faith that the promise may be sure according to grace,” I marvel that men would rather entrust themselves to their own weakness, than to the strength of God’s promise. But sayest thou, God’s will concerning myself is to me uncertain? What then? Is thine own will concerning thyself certain to thee? and dost thou not fear,—”Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall”? Since, then, both are uncertain, why does not man commit his faith, hope, and love to the stronger will rather than to the weaker?

CHAPTER 22

GOD’S PROMISE IS SURE

“But,” say they, “when it is said, If thou believest, thou shalt be saved,’ one of these things is required; the other is offered. What is required is in man’s power; what is offered is in God’s.” Why are not both in God’s, as well what He commands as what He offers? For He is asked to give what He commands. Believers ask that their faith may be increased; they ask on behalf of those who do not believe, that faith may be given to them; therefore both in its increase and in its beginnings, faith is the gift of God. But it is said thus: “If thou believest, thou shalt be saved,” in the same way that it is said, “If by the Spirit ye shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.” For in this case also, of these two things one is required, the other is offered. It is said, “If by the Spirit ye shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.” Therefore, that we mortify the deeds of the flesh is required, but that we may live is offered. Is it, then, fitting for us to say, that to mortify the deeds of the flesh is not a gift of God, and not to confess it to be a gift of God, because we hear it required of us, with the offer of life as a reward if we shall do it? Away with this being approved by the partakers and champions of grace! This is the condemnable error of the Pelagians, whose mouths the apostle immediately stopped when he added, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;” lest we should believe that we mortify the deeds of the flesh, not by God’s Spirit, but by our own. And of this Spirit of God, moreover, he was speaking in that place where he says, “But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing unto every man what is his own, as He will;” and among all these things, as you know, he also named faith. As, therefore, although it is the gift of God to mortify the deeds of the flesh, yet it is required of us, and life is set before us as a reward; so also faith is the gift of God, although when it is said, “If thou believest, thou shalt be saved,” faith is required of us, and salvation is proposed to us as a reward. For these things are both commanded us, and are shown to be God’s gifts, in order that we may understand both that we do them, and that God makes us to do them, as He most plainly says by the prophet Ezekiel. For what is plainer than when He says, “I will cause you to do”? Give heed to that passage of Scripture, and you will see that God promises that He will make them to do those things which He commands to be done. He truly is not silent as to the merits but as to the evil deeds, of those to whom He shows that He is returning good for evil, by the very fact that He causeth them thenceforth to have good works, in causing them to do the divine commands.

CHAPTER 23 [XII.]

REMARKABLE ILLUSTRATIONS OF GRACE AND PREDESTINATION IN INFANTS, AND IN CHRIST

But all this reasoning, whereby we maintain that the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord is truly grace, that is, is not given according to our merits, although it is most manifestly asserted by the witness of the divine declarations, yet, among those who think that they are withheld from all zeal for piety unless they can attribute to themselves something, which they first give that it may be recompensed to them again, involves somewhat of a difficulty in respect of the condition of grown-up people, who are already exercising the choice of will. But when we come to the case of infants, and to the Mediator between God and man Himself, the man Christ Jesus, there is wanting all assertion of human merits that precede the grace of God, because the former are not distinguished from others by any preceding good merits that they should belong to the Deliverer of men; any more than He Himself being Himself a man, was made the Deliverer of men by virtue of any precedent human merits.

CHAPTER 24

THAT NO ONE IS JUDGED ACCORDING TO WHAT HE WOULD HAVE DONE IF HE HAD LIVED LONGER

For who can hear that infants, baptized in the condition of mere infancy, are said to depart from this life by reason of their future merits, and that others not baptized are said to die in the same age because their future merits are foreknown,—but as evil; so that God rewards or condemns in them not their good or evil life, but no life at all? The apostle, indeed, fixed a limit which man's incautious suspicion, to speak gently, ought not to transgress, for he says, "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive according to the things which he has done by means of the body, whether it be good or evil." "Has done," he said; and he did not add, "or would have done." But I know not whence this thought should have entered the minds of such men, that infants' future merits (which shall not be) should be punished or honoured. But why is it said that a man is to be judged according to those things which he has done by means of the body, when many things are done by the mind alone, and not by the body, nor by any member of the body; and for the most part things of such importance, that a most righteous punishment would be due to such thought, such as,—to say nothing of others,—that "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God"? What, then, is the meaning of, "According to those things that he hath done by means of the body," except according to those things which he has done during that time in which he was in the body, so that we may understand "by means of the body" as meaning "throughout the season of bodily life"? But after the body, no one will be in the body except at the last resurrection,—not for the purpose of establishing any claims of merit, but for the sake of receiving recompenses for good merits, and enduring punishments for evil merits. But in this intermediate period between the putting off and the taking again of the body, the souls are either tormented or they are in repose, according to those things which they have done during the period of the bodily life. And to this period of the bodily life moreover pertains, what the Pelagians deny, but Christ's Church confesses, original sin; and according to whether this is by God's grace loosed, or by God's judgment not loosed, when infants die, they pass, on the one hand, by the merit of regeneration from evil to good, or on the other, by the merit of their origin from evil to evil. The catholic faith acknowledges this, and even some heretics, without any contradiction, agree to this. But in the height of wonder and astonishment I am unable to discover whence men, whose intelligence your letters show to be by no means contemptible, could entertain the opinion that any one should be judged not according to the merits that he had as long as he was in the body, but according to the merits which he would have had if he had lived longer in the body; and I should not dare to believe that there were such men, if I could venture to disbelieve you. But I hope that God will interpose, so that when they are admonished they may at once perceive, that if those sins which, as is said, would have been, can rightly be punished by God's judgment in those who are not baptized, they may alo be rightly remitted by God's grace in those who are baptized. For whoever says that future sins can only be punished by God's judgment, but cannot be pardoned by God's mercy, ought to consider how great a wrong he is doing to God and His grace; as if future sin could be foreknown, and could not be foregone. And if this is absurd, it is the greater reason that help should be afforded to those who would be sinners if they lived longer, when they die in early life, by means of that laver wherein sins are washed away.

CHAPTER 25 [XIII.]

POSSIBLY THE BAPTIZED INFANTS WOULD HAVE REPENTED IF THEY HAD LIVED, AND THE UNBAPTIZED NOT

But if, perchance, they say that sins are re-remitted to penitents, and that those who die in infancy are not baptized because they are foreknown as not such as would repent if they should live, while God has foreknown that those who are baptized and die in infancy would have repented if they had lived, let them observe and see that if it be so it is not in this case original sins which are punished in infants that die without baptism, but what would have been the sins of each one had he lived; and also in baptized infants, that it is not original sins that are washed away, but their own future sins if they should live, since they could not sin except in more mature age; but that some were foreseen as such as would repent, and others as such as would not repent, therefore some were baptized, and others departed from this life without baptism. If the Pelagians should dare to say this, by their denial of original sin they would thus be relieved of the necessity of seeking, on behalf of infants outside of the kingdom of God, for some place of I know not what happiness of their own; especially since they are convinced that they cannot have eternal life because they have not eaten the flesh nor drank the blood of Christ; and because in them who have no sin at all, baptism, which is given for the remission of sins, is falsified. For they would go on to say that there is no original sin, but that those who as infants are released are either baptized or not baptized according to their future merits if they should live, and that according to their future merits they either receive or do not receive the body and blood of Christ, without which they absolutely cannot have life; and are baptized for the true remission of sins although they derived no sins from Adam, because the sins are remitted unto them concerning which God foreknew that they would repent. Thus with the greatest ease they would plead and would win their cause, in which they deny that there is any original sin, and contend that the grace of God is only given according to our merits. But that the future merits of men, which merits will never come into existence are beyond all doubt no merits at all, it is certainly most easy to see: for this reason even the Pelagians were not able to say this; and much rather these ought not to say it. For it cannot be said with what pain I find that they who with us on catholic authority condemn the error of those heretics, have not seen this, which the Pelagians themselves have seen to be most false and absurd.

CHAPTER 26 [XIV]

REFERENCE TO CYPRIAN'S TREATISE "ON THE MORTALITY."

Cyprian wrote a work On the Mortality, known with approval to many and almost all who love ecclesiastical literature, wherein he says that death is not only not disadvantageous to believers, but that it is even found to be advantageous, because it withdraws men from the risks of sinning, and establishes them in a security of not sinning. But wherein is the advantage of this, if even future sins which have not been committed are punished? Yet he argues most copiously and well that the risks of sinning are not wanting in this life, and that they do not continue after this life is done; where also he adduces that testimony from the book of Wisdom: "He was taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding." And this was also adduced by me, though you said that those brethren of yours had rejected it on the ground of its not having been brought forward from a canonical book; as if, even setting aside the attestation of this book, the thing itself were not clear which I wished to be taught therefrom. For what

Christian would dare to deny that the righteous man, if he should be prematurely laid hold of by death, will be in repose? Let who will, say this, and what man of sound faith will think that he can withstand it? Moreover, if he should say that the righteous man, if he should depart from his righteousness in which he has long lived, and should die in that impiety after having lived in it, I say not a year, but one day, will go hence into the punishment due to the wicked, his righteousness having no power in the future to avail him,—will any believer contradict this evident truth? Further, if we are asked whether, if he had died then at the time that he was righteous, he would have incurred punishment or repose, shall we hesitate to answer, repose? This is the whole reason why it is said,—whoever says it,—"He was taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding." For it was said in reference to the risks of this life, not with reference to the foreknowledge of God, who foreknew that which was to be, not that which was not to be—that is, that He would bestow on him an untimely death in order that he might be withdrawn from the uncertainty of temptations; not that he would sin, since he was not to remain in temptation. Because, concerning this life, we read in the book of Job, "Is not the life of man upon earth a temptation?" But why it should be granted to some to be taken away from the perils of this life while they are righteous, while others who are righteous until they fall from righteousness are kept in the same risks in a more lengthened life,—who has known the mind of the Lord? And yet it is permitted to be understood from this, that even those righteous people who maintain good and pious characters, even to the maturity of old age and to the last day of this life, must not glory in their own merits, but in the Lord, since He who took away the righteous man from the shortness of life, lest wickedness should alter his understanding, Himself guards the righteous man in any length of life, that wickedness may not alter his understanding. But why He should have kept the righteous man here to fall, when He might have withdrawn him before,—His judgments, although absolutely righteous, are yet unsearchable.

CHAPTER 27

THE BOOK OF WISDOM OBTAINS IN THE CHURCH THE AUTHORITY OF CANONICAL SCRIPTURE

And since these things are so, the judgment of the book of Wisdom ought not to be repudiated, since for so long a course of years that book has deserved to be read in the Church of Christ from the station of the readers of the Church of Christ, and to be heard by all Christians, from bishops downwards, even to the lowest lay believers, penitents, and catechumens, with the veneration paid to divine authority. For assuredly, if, from those who have been before me in commenting on the divine Scriptures, I should bring forward a defence of this judgment, which we are now called upon to defend more carefully and copiously than usual against the new error of the Pelagians,—that is, that God's grace is not given according to our merits, and that it is given freely to whom it is given, because it is neither of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy; but that by righteous judgment it is not given to whom it is not given, because there is no unrighteousness with God;—if, therefore, I should put forth a defence of this opinion from catholic commentators on the divine oracles who have preceded us, assuredly these brethren for whose sake I am now discoursing would acquiesce, for this you have intimated in your letters. What need is there, then, for us to look into the writings of those who, before this heresy sprang up, had no necessity to be conversant in a question so difficult of solution as this, which beyond a doubt they would have done if they had been compelled to answer such things? Whence it arose that they touched upon what they thought of God's grace briefly in some passages of their writings, and cursorily; but on those matters which they argued against the enemies of the Church, and in exhortations to every virtue by which to serve the living and true God for the purpose of attaining eternal life and true happiness, they dwelt at length. But the grace of God, what it could do, shows itself artlessly by its frequent mention in prayers; for what God commands to be done would not be asked for from God, unless it could be given by Him that it should be done.

CHAPTER 28

CYPRIAN'S TREATISE "ON THE MORTALITY."

But if any wish to be instructed in the opinions of those who have handled the subject, it behoves them to prefer to all commentators the book of Wisdom, where it is read, "He was taken away, that wickedness should not alter his understanding;” because illustrious commentators, even in the times nearest to the apostles, preferred it to themselves, seeing that when they made use of it for a testimony they believed that they were making use of nothing but a divine testimony; and certainly it appears that the most blessed Cyprian, in order to commend the advantage of an earlier death, contended that those who end this life, wherein sin is possible, are taken away from the risks of sins. In the same treatise, among other things, he says, “Why, when you are about to be with Christ, and are secure of the divine promise, do you not embrace being called to Christ, and rejoice that you are free from the devil?” And in another place he says, “Boys escape the peril of their unstable age.” And again, in another place, he says, “Why do we not hasten and run, that we may see our country, that we may hail our relatives? A great number of those who are dear to us are expecting us there,—a dense and abundant crowd of parents, brethren, sons, are longing for us; already secure of their own safety, but still anxious about our salvation.” By these and such like sentiments, that teacher sufficiently and plainly testifies, in the clearest light of the catholic faith, that perils of sin and trials are to be feared even until the putting off of this body, but that afterwards no one shall suffer any such things. And even if he did not testify thus, when could any manner of Christian be in doubt on this matter? How, then, should it not have been of advantage to a man who has lapsed, and who finishes his life wretchedly in that same state of lapse, and passes into the punishment due to such as he,—how, I say, should it not have been of the greatest and highest advantage to such an one to be snatched by death from this sphere of temptations before his fall?

CHAPTER 29

GOD’S DEALING DOES NOT DEPEND UPON ANY CONTINGENT MERITS OF MEN

And thus, unless we indulge in reckless disputation, the entire question is concluded concerning him who is taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding. And the book of Wisdom, which for such a series of years has deserved to be read in Christ’s Church, and in which this is read, ought not to suffer injustice because it withstands those who are mistaken on behalf of men’s merit, so as to come in opposition to the most manifest grace of God: and this grace chiefly appears in infants, and while some of these baptized, and some not baptized, come to the end of this life, they sufficiently point to God’s mercy and His judgment,—His mercy, indeed, gratuitous, His judgment, of debt. For if men should be judged according to the merits of their life, which merits they have been prevented by death from actually having, but would have had if they had lived, it would be of no advantage to him who is taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding; it would be of no advantage to those who die in a state of lapse if they should die before. And this no Christian will venture to say. Wherefore our brethren, who with us on behalf of the catholic faith assail the pest of the Pelagian error, ought not to such an extent to favour the Pelagian opinion, wherein they conceive that God’s grace is given according to our merits, as to endeavour (which they cannot dare) to invalidate a true sentiment, plainly and from ancient times Christian,—”He was taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding;” and to build up that which we should think, I do not say, no one would believe, but no one would dream,—to wit, that any deceased person would be judged according to those things which he would have done if he had lived for a more lengthened period. Surely thus what we say manifests itself clearly to be incontestable,—that the grace of God is not given according to our merits; so that ingenious men who contradict this truth are constrained to say things which must be rejected from the ears and from the thoughts of all men.

CHAPTER 30 [XV.]

THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS INSTANCE OF PREDESTINATION IS CHRIST JESUS

Moreover, the most illustrious Light of predestination and grace is the Saviour Himself,—the Mediator Himself between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. And, pray, by what preceding merits of its own, whether of works or of faith, did the human nature which is in Him procure for itself that it should be this? Let this have an answer, I beg. That man, whence did He deserve this—to be assumed by the Word co-eternal with the Father into unity of person, and be the only-begotten Son of God? Was it because any kind of goodness in Him preceded? What did He do before? What did He believe? What did He ask, that He should attain to this unspeakable excellence? Was it not by the act and the assumption of the Word that that man, from the time He began to be, began to be the only Son of God? Did not that woman, full of grace, conceive the only Son of God? Was He not born the only Son of God, of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,—not of the lust of the flesh, but by God's peculiar gift? Was it to be feared that as age matured this man, He would sin of free will? Or was the will in Him not free on that account? and was it not so much the more free in proportion to the greater impossibility of His becoming the servant of sin? Certainly, in Him human nature—that is to say, our nature—specially received all those specially admirable gifts, and any others that may most truly be said to be peculiar to Him, by virtue of no preceding merits of its own. Let a man here answer to God if he dare, and say, Why was it not I also? And if he should hear, "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" let him not at this point restrain himself, but increase his impudence and say, "How is it that I hear, Who art thou, O man? since I am what I hear,—that is, a man, and He of whom I speak is but the same? Why should not I also be what He is? For it is by grace that He is such and so great; why is grace different when nature is common? Assuredly, there is no respect of persons with God." I say, not what Christian man, but what madman will say this?

CHAPTER 31

CHRIST PREDESTINATED TO BE THE SON OF GOD

Therefore in Him who is our Head let there appear to be the very fountain of grace, whence, according to the measure of every man, He diffuses Himself through all His members. It is by that grace that every man from the beginning of his faith becomes a Christian, by which grace that one man from His beginning became Christ. Of the same Spirit also the former is born again of which the latter was born. By the same Spirit is effected in us the remission of sins, by which Spirit it was effected that He should have no sin. God certainly foreknew that He would do these things. This, therefore, is that same predestination of the saints which most especially shone forth in the Saint of saints; and who is there of those who rightly understand the declarations of the truth that can deny this predestination? For we have learned that the Lord of glory Himself was predestinated in so far as the man was made the Son of God. The teacher of the Gentiles exclaims, in the beginning of his epistles, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God (which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures) concerning His Son, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was predestinated the Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of sanctification by the resurrection of the dead.” Therefore Jesus was predestinated, so that He who was to be the Son of David according to the flesh should yet be in power the Son of God, according to the Spirit of sanctification, because He was born of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary. This is that ineffably accomplished sole taking up of man by God the Word, so that He might truly and properly be called at the same time the Son of God and the Son of man,—Son of man on account of the man taken up, and the Son of God on account of the God only-begotten who took Him up, so that a Trinity and not a Quaternity might be believed in. Such a transporting of human nature was predestinated, so great, so lofty, and so sublime that there was no exalting it more highly,—just as on our behalf that divinity had no possibility of more humbly putting itself off, than by the assumption of man’s nature with the weakness of the flesh, even to the death of the cross. As, therefore, that one man was predestinated to be our Head, so we being many are predestinated to be His members. Here let human merits which have perished through Adam keep silence, and let that grace of God reign which reigns through Jesus Christ our Lord, the only Son of God, the one Lord. Let whoever can find in our Head the merits which preceded that peculiar generation, seek in us His members for those merits which preceded our manifold regeneration. For that generation was not recompensed to Christ, but given; that He should be born, namely, of the Spirit and the Virgin, separate from all entanglement of sin. Thus also our being born again of water and the Spirit is not recompensed to us for any merit, but freely given; and if faith has brought us to the laver of regeneration, we ought not therefore to suppose that we have first given anything, so that the regeneration of salvation should be recompensed to us again; because He made us to believe in Christ, who made for us a Christ on whom we believe. He makes in men the beginning and the completion of the faith in Jesus who made the man Jesus the beginner and finisher of faith; for thus, as you know, He is called in the epistle which is addressed to the Hebrews.

CHAPTER 32 [XVI.]

THE TWOFOLD CALLING

God indeed calls many predestinated children of His, to make them members of His only predestinated Son,—not with that calling with which they were called who would not come to the marriage, since with that calling were called also the Jews, to whom Christ crucified is an offence, and the Gentiles, to whom Christ crucified is foolishness; but with that calling He calls the predestinated which the apostle distinguished when he said that he preached Christ, the wisdom of God and the power of God, to them that were called, Jews as well as Greeks. For thus he says "But unto them which are called," in order to show that there were some who were not called; knowing that there is a certain sure calling of those who are called according to God's purpose, whom He has foreknown and predestinated before to be conformed to the image of His Son. And it was this calling he meant when he said, "Not of works, but of Him that calleth; it was said unto her, That the elder shall serve the younger." Did he say, "Not of works, but of him that believeth"? Rather, he actually took this away from man, that he might give the whole to God. Therefore he said, "But of Him that calleth,"—not with any sort of calling whatever, but with that calling wherewith a man is made a believer.

CHAPTER 33

IT IS IN THE POWER OF EVIL MEN TO SIN; BUT TO DO THIS OR THAT BY MEANS OF THAT WICKEDNESS IS IN GOD'S POWER ALONE

Moreover, it was this that he had in view when he said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." And in that saying also consider for a little what was its purport. For when he had said, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, that ye may not be wise in yourselves, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel should be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion one who shall deliver, and turn away impiety from Jacob: and this is the covenant to them from me, when I shall take away their sins;" he immediately added, what is to be very carefully understood, "As concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sakes: but as concerning the election, they are beloved for their fathers' sakes." What is the meaning of, "as concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sake," but that their enmity wherewith they put Christ to death was, without doubt, as we see, an advantage to the gospel? And he shows that this came about by God's ordering, who knew how to make a good use even of evil things; not that the vessels of wrath might be of advantage to Him, but that by His own good use of them they might be of advantage to the vessels of mercy. For what could be said more plainly than what is actually said, "As concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sakes"? It is, therefore, in the power of the wicked to sin; but that in sinning they should do this or that by that wickedness is not in their power, but in God's, who divides the darkness and regulates it; so that hence even what they do contrary to God's will is not fulfilled except it be God's will. We read in the Acts of the Apostles that when the apostles had been sent away by the Jews, and had come to their own friends, and shown them what great things the priests and elders said to them, they all with one consent lifted up their voices to the Lord and said, "Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein; who, by the mouth of our father David, thy holy servant, hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the peoples imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ. For in truth, there have assembled together in this city against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, Herod and Pilate, and the people of Israel, to do whatever Thy hand and counsel predestinated to be done." See what is said: "As concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sakes." Because God's hand and counsel predestinated such things to be done by the hostile Jews as were necessary for the gospel, for our sakes. But what is it that follows? "But as concerning the election, they are beloved for their fathers' sakes." For are those enemies who perished in their enmity and those of the same people who still perish in their opposition to Christ,—are those chosen and beloved? Away with the thought! Who is so utterly foolish as to say this? But both expressions, although contrary to one another—that is, "enemies" and "beloved"—are appropriate, though not to the same men, yet to the same Jewish people, and to the same carnal seed of lsrael, of whom some belonged to the falling away, and some to the blessing of Israel himself. For the apostle previously explained this meaning more clearly when he said, “That which lsrael wrought for, he hath not obtained; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded?” Yet in both cases it was the very same Israel. Where, therefore, we hear, “Israel hath not obtained,” or, “The rest were blinded,” there are to be understood the enemies for our sakes; but where we hear, “that the election hath obtained it,” there are to be understood the beloved for their father’s sakes, to which fathers those things were assuredly promised; because “the promises were made to Abraham and his seed,” whence also in that olive-tree is grafted the wild olive-tree of the Gentiles. Now subsequently we certainly ought to fall in with the election, of which he says that it is according to grace, not according to debt, because “there was made a remnant by the election of grace” This election obtained it, the rest being blinded. As concerning this election, the Israelites were beloved for the sake of their fathers. For they were not called with that calling of which it is said, “Many are called,” but with that whereby the chosen are called. Whence also after he had said, “But as concerning the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes,” he went on to add those words whence this discussion arose: “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance,”—that is, they are firmly established without change. Those who belong to this calling are all teachable by God; nor can any of them say, “I believed in order to being thus called,” because the mercy of God anticipated him, because he was so called in order that he might believe. For all who are teachable of God come to the Son because they have heard and learned from the Father through the Son, who most clearly says, “Every one who has heard of the Father, and has learned, cometh unto me.” But of such as these none perishes, because “of all that the Father hath given Him, He will lose none.” Whoever, therefore, is of these does not perish at all; nor was any who perishes ever of these. For which reason it is said, “They went out from among us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would certainly have continued with us.”

CHAPTER 34 [XVII.]

THE SPECIAL CALLING OF THE ELECT IS NOT BECAUSE THEY HAVE BELIEVED, BUT IN ORDER THAT THEY MAY BELIEVE

Let us, then, understand the calling whereby they become elected,—not those who are elected because they have believed, but who are elected that they may believe. For the Lord Himself also sufficiently explains this calling when He says, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” For if they had been elected because they had believed, they themselves would certainly have first chosen Him by believing in Him, so that they should deserve to be elected. But He takes away this supposition altogether when He says, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” And yet they themselves, beyond a doubt, chose Him when they believed on Him. Whence it is not for any other reason that He says, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you,” than because they did not choose Him that He should choose them, but He chose them that they might choose Him; because His mercy preceded them according to grace, not according to debt. Therefore He chose them out of the world while He was wearing flesh, but as those who were already chosen in Himself before the foundation of the world. This is the changeless truth concerning predestination and grace. For what is it that the apostle says, “As He hath chosen us in Himself before the foundation of the world”? And assuredly, if this were said because God foreknew that they would believe, not because He Himself would make them believers, the Son is speaking against such a foreknowledge as that when He says, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you;” when God should rather have foreknown this very thing, that they themselves would have chosen Him, so that they might deserve to be chosen by Him. Therefore they were elected before the foundation of the world with that predestination in which God foreknew what He Himself would do; but they were elected out of the world with that calling whereby God fulfilled that which He predestinated. For whom He predestinated, them He also called, with that calling, to wit, which is according to the purpose. Not others, therefore, but those whom He predestinated, them He also called; nor others, but those whom He so called, them He also justified; nor others, but those whom He predestinated, called, and justified, them He also glorified; assuredly to that end which has no end. Therefore God elected believers; but He chose them that they might be so, not because they were already so. The Apostle James says: “Has not God chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him?” By choosing them, therefore; He makes them rich in faith, as

He makes them heirs of the kingdom; because He is rightly said to choose that in them, in order to make which in them He chose them. I ask, who can hear the Lord saying, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you,” and can dare to say that men believe in order to be elected, when they are rather elected to believe; lest against the judgment of truth they be found to have first chosen Christ to whom Christ says, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you”?

CHAPTER 35 [XVIII.]

ELECTION IS FOR THE PURPOSE OF HOLINESS

Who can hear the apostle saying, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us in all spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ; as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without spot in His sight; in love predestinating us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will, wherein He hath shown us favour in His beloved Son; in whom we have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins according to the riches of His grace, which hath abounded to us in all wisdom and prudence; that He might show to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He hath purposed in Himself, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, to restore all things in Christ, which are in heaven, and in the earth, in Him: in whom also we have obtained a share, being predestinated according to the purpose; who worketh all things according to the counsel of His will, that we should be to the praise of his glory;”—who, I say, can hear these words with attention and intelligence, and can venture to have any doubt concerning a truth so clear as this which we are defending? God chose Christ’s members in Him before the foundation of the world; and how should He choose those who as yet did not exist, except by predestinating them? Therefore He chose us by predestinating us. Would he choose the unholy and the unclean? Now if the question be proposed, whether He would choose such, or rather the holy and unstained, who can ask which of these he may answer, and not give his opinion at once in favour of the holy and pure?

CHAPTER 36

GOD CHOSE THE RIGHTEOUS; NOT THOSE WHOM HE FORESAW AS BEING OF THEMSELVES, BUT THOSE WHOM HE PREDESTINATED FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING SO

“Therefore,” says the Pelagian, “He foreknew who would be holy and immaculate by the choice of free will, and on that account elected them before the foundation of the world in that same foreknowledge of His in which He foreknew that they would be such. Therefore He elected them,” says he, “before they existed, predestinating them to be children whom He foreknew to be holy and immaculate. Certainly He did not make them so; nor did He foresee that He would make them so, but that they would be so.” Let us, then, look into the words of the apostle and see whether He chose us before the foundation of the world because we were going to be holy and immaculate, or in order that we might be so. “Blessed,” says he, “be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us in all spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ; even as He hath chosen us in Himself before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted.” Not, then, because we were to be so, but that we might be so. Assuredly it is certain,—assuredly it is manifest. Certainly we were to be such for the reason that He has chosen us, predestinating us to be such by His grace. Therefore “He blessed us with spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ Jesus, even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and immaculate in His sight, in order that we might not in so great a benefit of grace glory concerning the good pleasure of our will. “In which,” says he, “He hath shown us favour in His beloved Son,”—in which, certainly, His own will, He hath shown us favour. Thus, it is said, He hath shown us grace by grace, even as it is said, He has made us righteous by righteousness. “In whom,” he says, “we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace, which has abounded to us in all wisdom and prudence; that he might show to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure.” In this mystery of His will, He placed the riches of His grace, according to His good pleasure, not according to ours, which could not possibly be good unless He Himself, according to His own good pleasure, should aid it to become so. But when he had said, “According to His good pleasure,” he added, “which He purposed in Him,” that is, in His beloved Son, “in the dispensation of the fulness of times to restore all things in Christ, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, in Him: in whom also we too have obtained a lot, being predestinated according to His purpose who worketh all things according to the counsel of His will; that we should be to the praise of His glory.”

CHAPTER 37

WE WERE ELECTED AND PREDESTINATED, NOT BECAUSE WE WERE GOING TO BE HOLY, BUT IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT BE SO

It would be too tedious to argue about the several points. But you see without doubt, you see with what evidence of apostolic declaration this grace is defended, in opposition to which human merits are set up, as if man should first give something for it to be recompensed to him again. Therefore God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, predestinating us to the adoption of children, not because we were going to be of ourselves holy and immaculate, but He chose and predestinated us that we might be so. Moreover, He did this according to the good pleasure of His will, so that nobody might glory concerning his own will, but about God’s will towards himself. He did this according to the riches of His grace, according to His good-will, which He purposed in His beloved Son; in whom we have obtained a share, being predestinated according to the purpose, not ours, but His, who worketh all things to such an extent as that He worketh in us to will also. Moreover, He worketh according to the counsel of His will, that we may be to the praise of His glory. For this reason it is that we cry that no one should glory in man, and, thus, not in himself; but whoever glorieth let him glory in the Lord, that he may be for the praise of His glory. Because He Himself worketh according to His purpose that we may be to the praise of His glory, and, of course, holy and immaculate, for which purpose He called us, predestinating us before the foundation of the world. Out of this, His purpose, is that special calling of the elect for whom He co-worketh with all things for good, because they are called according to His purpose, and “the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

CHAPTER 38 [XIX.]

WHAT IS THE VIEW OF THE PELAGIANS, AND WHAT OF THE SEMI-PELAGIANS, CONCERNING PREDESTINATION

But these brethren of ours, about whom and on whose behalf we are now discoursing, say, perhaps, that the Pelagians are refuted by this apostolical testimony in which it is said that we are chosen in Christ and predestinated before the foundation of the world, in order that we should be holy and immaculate in His sight in love. For they think that “having received God’s commands we are of ourselves by the choice of our free will made holy and immaculate in His sight in love; and since God foresaw that this would be the case,” they say, “He therefore chose and predestinated us in Christ before the foundation of the world.” Although the apostle says that it was not because He foreknew that we should be such, but in order that we might be such by the same election of His grace, by which He showed us favour in His beloved Son. When, therefore, He predestinated us, He foreknew His own work by which He makes us holy and immaculate. Whence the Pelagian error is rightly refuted by this testimony. “But we say,” say they, “that God did not foreknow anything as ours except that faith by which we begin to believe, and that He chose and predestinated us before the foundation of the world, in order that we might be holy and immaculate by His grace and by His work.” But let them also hear in this testimony the words where he says, “We have obtained a lot, being predestinated according to His purpose who worketh all things.” He, therefore, worketh the beginning of our belief who worketh all things; because faith itself does not precede that calling of which it is said: “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance;” and of which it is said: “Not of works, but of Him that calleth” (although He might have said, “of Him that believeth”); and the election which the Lord signified when He said: “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” For He chose us, not because we believed, but that we might believe, lest we should be said first to have chosen Him, and so His word be false (which be it far from us to think possible), “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” Neither are we called because we believed, but that we may believe; and by that calling which is without repentance it is effected and carried through that we should believe. But all the many things which we have said concerning this matter need not to be repeated.

CHAPTER 39

THE BEGINNING OF FAITH IS GOD’S GIFT

Finally, also, in what follows this testimony, the apostle gives thanks to God on behalf of those who have believed;—not, certainly, because the gospel has been declared to them, but because they have believed. For he says, “In whom also after ye had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the pledge of our inheritance, to the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory. Wherefore I also, after I had heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and with reference to all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you.” Their faith was new and recent on the preaching of the gospel to them, which faith when he hears of, the apostle gives thanks to God on their behalf. If he were to give thanks to man for that which he might either think or know that man had not given, it would be called a flattery or a mockery, rather than a giving of thanks. “Do not err, for God is not mocked;” for His gift is also the beginning of faith, unless the apostolic giving of thanks be rightly judged to be either mistaken or fallacious. What then? Does that not appear as the beginning of the faith of the Thessalonians, for which, nevertheless, the same apostle gives thanks to God when he says, “For this cause also we thank God without ceasing, because when ye had received from us the word of the hearing of God, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh in you and which ye believed”? What is that for which he here gives thanks to God? Assuredly it is a vain and idle thing if He to whom he gives thanks did not Himself do the thing. But, since this is not a vain and idle thing, certainly God, to whom he gave thanks concerning this work, Himself did it; that when they had received the word of the hearing of God, they received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God. God, therefore, worketh in the hearts of men with that calling according to His purpose, of which we have spoken a great deal, that they should not hear the gospel in vain, but when they heard it, should be converted and believe, receiving it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God.

CHAPTER 40 [XX.]

APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY TO THE BEGINNING OF FAITH BEING GOD’S GIFT

Moreover, we are admonished that the beginning of men’s faith is God’s gift, since the apostle signifies this when, in the Epistle to the Colossians, he says, “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same in giving of thanks. Withal praying also for us that God would open unto us the door of His word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which also I am in bonds, that I may so make it manifest as I ought to speak.” How is the door of His word opened, except when the sense of the hearer is opened so that he may believe, and, having made a beginning of faith, may admit those things which are declared and reasoned, for the purpose of building up wholesome doctrine, lest, by a heart closed through unbelief, he reject and repel those things which are spoken? Whence, also, he says to the Corinthians: “But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. For a great and evident door is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.” What else can be understood here, save that, when the gospel had been first of all preached there by him, many had believed, and there had appeared many adversaries of the same faith, in accordance with that saying of the Lord, “No one cometh unto me, unless it were given him of my Father;” and, “To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given”? Therefore, there is an open door in those to whom it is given, but there are many adversaries among those to whom it is not given.

CHAPTER 41

FURTHER APOSTOLIC TESTIMONIES

And again, the same apostle says to the same people, in his second Epistle: “When I had come to Troas for the gospel of Christ, and a door had been opened unto me in the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus, my brother: but, making my farewell to them, I went away into Macedonia.” To whom did he bid farewell but to those who had believed,—to wit, in whose hearts the door was opened for his preaching of the gospel?

But attend to what he adds, saying, “Now thanks be unto God, who always causes us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place: because we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them who are saved, and in them who perish: to some, indeed, we are the savour of death unto death, but to some the savour of life unto life.” See concerning what this most zealous soldier and invincible defender of grace gives thanks. See concerning what he gives thanks,—that the apostles are a sweet savour of Christ unto God, both in those who are saved by His grace, and in those who perish by His judgment. But in order that those who little understand these things may be less enraged, he himself gives a warning when he adds the words: “And who is sufficient for these things?” But let us return to the opening of the door by which the apostle signified the beginning of faith in his hearers. For what is the meaning of, “Withal praying also for us that God would open unto us a door of the word,” unless it is a most manifest demonstration that even the very beginning of faith is the gift of God? For it would not be sought for from Him in prayer, unless it were believed to be given by Him. This gift of heavenly grace had descended to that seller of purple for whom, as Scripture says in the Acts of the Apostles, “The Lord opened her heart, and she gave heed unto the things which were said by Paul;” for she was so called that she might believe. Because God does what He will in the hearts of men, either by assistance or by judgment; so that, even through their means, may be fulfilled what His hand and counsel have predestinated to be done.

CHAPTER 42

OLD TESTAMENT TESTIMONIES

Therefore also it is in vain that objectors have alleged, that what we have proved by Scripture testimony from the books of Kings and Chronicles is not pertinent to the subject of which we are discoursing: such, for instance, as that when God wills that to be done which ought only to be done by the willing men, their hearts are inclined to will this,—inclined, that is to say, by His power, who, in a marvellous and ineffable manner, worketh in us also to will. What else is this than to say nothing, and yet to contradict? Unless perchance, they have given some reason to you for the view that they have taken, which reason you have preferred to say nothing about in your letters. But what that reason can be I do not know. Whether, possibly, since we have shown that God has so acted on the hearts of men, and has induced the wills of those whom He pleased to this point, that Saul or David should be established as king,—do they not think that these instances are appropriate to this subject, because to reign in this world temporally is not the same thing as to reign eternally with God? And so do they suppose that God inclines the wills of those whom He pleases to the attainment of earthly kingdoms, but does not incline them to the attainment of a heavenly kingdom? But I think that it was in reference to the kingdom of heaven, and not to an earthly kingdom, that it was said, “Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies;” or, “The steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and He will will His way;” or, “The will is prepared by the Lord;” or, “Let our Lord be with us as with our fathers; let Him not forsake us, nor turn Himself away from us; let Him incline our hearts unto Him, that we may walk in all His ways;” or, “I will give them a heart to know me, and ears that hear;” or, “I will give them another heart, and a new spirit will I give them.” Let them also hear this, “I will give my Spirit within you, and I will cause you to walk in my righteousness; and ye shall observe my judgments, and do them.” Let them hear, “Man’s goings are directed by the Lord, and how can a man understand His ways?” Let them hear, “Every man seemeth right to himself, but the Lord directeth the hearts.” Let them hear, “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” Let them hear these passages, and whatever others of the kind I have not mentioned in which God is declared to prepare and to convert men’s wills, even for the kingdom of heaven and for eternal life. And consider what sort of a thing it is to believe that God worketh men’s wills for the foundation of earthly kingdoms, but that men work their own wills for the attainment of the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER 43 [XXI.]

CONCLUSION

I have said a great deal, and, perchance, I could long ago have persuaded you what I wished, and am still speaking this to such intelligent minds as if they were obtuse, to whom even what is too much is not enough. But let them pardon me, for a new question has compelled me to this. Because, although in my former little treatises I had proved by sufficiently appropriate proofs that faith also was the gift of God, there was found this ground of contradiction, viz., that those testimonies were good for this purpose, to show that the increase of faith was God's gift, but that the beginning of faith, whereby a man first of all believes in Christ, is of the man himself, and is not the gift of God,—but that God requires this, so that when it has preceded, other gifts may follow, as it were on the ground of this merit, and these are the gifts of God; and that none of them is given freely, although in them God's grace is declared, which is not grace except as being gratuitous. And you see how absurd all this is. Wherefore I determined, as far as I could, to set forth that this very beginning also is God's gift. And if I have done this at a greater length than perhaps those on whose account I did it might wish, I am prepared to be reproached for it by them, so long as they nevertheless confess that, although at greater length than they wished, although with the disgust and weariness of those that understand, I have done what I have done: that is, I have taught that even the beginning of faith, as continence, patience, righteousness, piety, and the rest, concerning which there is no dispute with them, is God's gift. Let this, therefore, be the end of this treatise, lest too great length in this one may give offence.

A TREATISE ON THE SOUL AND ITS ORIGIN

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE ANIMA ET EJUS ORIGINE.)

EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN'S "RETRACTATIONS,"

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

IN FOUR BOOKS,

WRITTEN TOWARDS THE END OF 419.

TRANSLATED BY DR. HOLMES.

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Book II. Chap. 56, On the Following Treatise, “De anima et ejus origine.”

“At that time one Vincentius discovered in the possesion of a certain presbyter called Peter, in Mauritania Caesariensis, a little work of mine, in a particular passage of which, touching the origin of souls in individual men, I had confessed that I knew not whether they are propagated from the primeval soul of the first man, and from that by parental descent, or whether they are severally assigned to each person without propogation, as the first was to Adam; but that I was, at the same time, quite sure that the soul was not body, but spirit. In opposition to these opinions of mine, he addressed to this Peter two books, which were sent to me from Caesarea by the monk Renatus. Having read these books, I replied in four others,—one addressed to the monk Renatus, another to the presbyter Peter, and two more to Victor himself. That to Peter, however, though it has all the lengthiness of a book, is yet only a letter, which I did not like to be kept separate from the other three works. In all of them, while discussing many points which were unavoidable, I defended my hesitancy on the point of the origin of the souls which are given to individual men; and I pointed out this man’s many errors and presumptuous pravity. At the same time, I treated the young man as gently as I could,—not as one who ought to be denounced all out of hand, but as one who ought to be still instructed; and I accepted the account of his conduct which he wrote back to me. In this work of mine, the book addressed to Renatus begins with these words: “Your sincerity towards us;” while that which was written to Peter begins thus: “To his Lordship, my dearly beloved brother and co-presbyter Peter.” Of the last two books, which are addressed to Vincentius Victor, the former one thus opens: “As to that which I have thought it my duty to write to you.”

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER ON THE FOLLOWING TREATISE

The occasion of these four books was furnished by a young man named Vincentius Victor, a native of Mauritania Caesariensis, a convert to the catholic Church from the Rogatian faction (which split off from the Donatist schism, and inhabited that part of Mauritania which lay around Cartenna). This Victor, they say, had previously so high an opinion of the Vincentius who succeeded Rogatus as the head of the before-mentioned faction, that he adopted his name as his own. Happening to meet with a certain work of Augustin's, in which the writer acknowledged himself to be incapable of saying whether all souls were propagated from Adam's soul simply, or whether every man severally had his soul given to him by God, even as Adam himself had, without propagation, although he declared, for all that, his conviction that the soul was in its nature spirit, not body, Victor was equally offended with both statements: he wondered that so great a man as Augustin did not unhesitatingly teach what one ought to hold concerning the origin of the soul, especially as he thought its propagation probable; and also that he did state with so great assurance the nature of the soul to be incorporeal. He accordingly published two books written to one Peter, a presbyter of Spain, against Augustin on this subject, containing some conceits of the Pelagian heretics, and other things even worse than these.

A monk called Renatus happened then to be at Caesarea. It appears that this man had shown to Augustin, who was staying at the same place in the autumn of the year 418, a letter of the Bishop Optatus consulting him about the origin of the soul. This monk, of the order of laymen, but perfectly orthodox in the faith, induced by the circumstance, carefully copied the books of Victor, and forwarded them from Caesarea to Hippo the next summer; Augustin, however, only received them at the end of autumn of the year 419, as is supposed. As soon as the holy doctor read them, he without delay wrote the first of the four following books to the good monk, and then the second, in the shape of a letter, to the presbyter Peter, and the two last books to Victor himself, but after a considerable interval, as it appears from the following words of the fourth chapter of the second book: “If, indeed, the Lord will that I should write to the young man, as I desire to do.” In the Retractations this little work of Augustin is placed immediately after the treatises of the year 419, i.e. in the fifth place after the Proceedings with Emeritus, which were completed in the month of September in the year 418. It belongs, therefore, to the termination of the year 419 or to the commencement of the year 420, having been written after “the condemnation of the Pelagians by the authority of catholic Councils and of the Apostolic See,” but “very soon after,” as that happy event had happened in the year of Christ 418.

In Book I., written to Renatus, he points out his own opinion about the nature of the soul, and his hesitation as to its origin, which had been unjustly blamed by Victor. He reproves the man’s juvenile forwardness, shows him he had fallen into grave and unheard-of errors while venturing to take upon himself the solution of a question which exceeded his abilities, and points out that he adduced only doubtful passages of Scripture, and such as were not applicable to the subject, in his endeavour to prove that souls are not propagated, but that entirely new ones are breathed by God into every man at his separate birth.

In Book II., he advises Peter not to incur the imputation of having approved of the books which had been addressed to him by Victor On the Origin of the Soul by any use he might make of them, nor to take as catholic doctrines that person’s rash utterances contrary to the Christian faith. Victor’s various and very serious errors he points out and briefly confutes, and he concludes with advising Peter himself to try to persuade Victor to correct his errors.

In Book III., which was written to Victor himself, he points out the corrections which Victor ought to make in his books if he wished to be deemed a catholic; those opinions also and paradoxes of his, which had been already refuted in the preceding books to Renatus and Peter, the author briefly censures in this third book, and classifies under eleven heads of error.

In Book IV., addressed to the same Victor, he first shows that his hesitation on the subject of the origin of souls was undeservedly blamed, and that he was wrongly compared with cattle, because he had refrained from any bold conclusions on the subject. Then again, with regard to his own unhesitating statement, that the soul was spirit, not body, he points out how rashly Victor disapproved of this assertion, especially when he was vainly expending his efforts to prove that the soul was corporeal in its own nature, and that the spirit in man was distinct from the soul itself.

A TREATISE ON THE SOUL AND ITS ORIGIN

Book I

Addressed to Renatus, the Monk

On receiving from Renatus the two books of Vincentius Victor, who disapproved of Augustin's opinion touching the nature of the soul, and of his hesitation in respect of its origin, Augustin points out how the young objector, in his self-conceit in aiming to decide on so abstruse a subject, had fallen into insufferable mistakes. He then proceeds to show that those passages of Scripture by which Victor thought he could prove that human souls are not derived by propagation, but are breathed by God afresh into each man at birth, are ambiguous, and inadequate for the confirmation of this opinion of his.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

RENATUS HAD DONE HIM A KINDNESS BY SENDING HIM THE BOOKS WHICH HAD BEEN ADDRESSED TO HIM

Your sincerity towards us, dearest brother Renatus, and your brotherly kindness, and the affection of mutual love between us, we already had clear proof of; but now you have afforded us a still clearer proof, by sending me two books, written by a person whom I knew, indeed, nothing of,—though he was not on that account to be despised,—called Vincentius Victor (for in such form did I find his name placed at the head of his work): this you did in the summer of last year; but owing to my absence from home, it was the end of autumn before they found their way to me. How, indeed, would you be likely with your very great affection for me to fail either in means or inclination to bring under my notice any writings of the kind, by whomsoever composed, if they fell into your hands, even if they were addressed to some one else? How much less likely, when my own name was mentioned and read—and that in a context of gainsaying some words of mine, which I had published in certain little treatises? Now you have done all this in the way you were sure to act as my very sincere and beloved friend.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

HE RECEIVES WITH A KINDLY AND PATIENT FEELING THE BOOKS OF A YOUNG AND INEXPERIENCED MAN WHO WROTE AGAINST HIM IN A TONE OF ARROGANCE. VINCENTIUS VICTOR CONVERTED FROM THE SECT OF THE ROGATIANS

I am somewhat pained, however, at being thus far less understood by your Holiness than I should like to be; forasmuch as you supposed that I should so receive your communication, as if you did me an injury, by making known to me what another had done. You may see, indeed, how far this feeling is from my mind, in that I have no complaint to make of having suffered any wrong even from him. For, when he entertained views different from my own, was he bound to preserve silence? It ought, no doubt, to be even pleasant to me, that he broke silence in such a way as to put it in our power to read what he had to say. He ought, I certainly think, to have written simply to me, rather than to another concerning me; but as he was unknown to me, he did not venture to intrude personally on me in refuting my words. He thought there was no necessity for applying to me in a matter on which he seemed to himself least of all liable to be doubted, but to be holding a perfectly well-known and certain opinion. He moreover, acted in obedience to a friend of his by whom he tells us he was compelled to write. And if he expressed any sentiment during the controversy which was contumelious to me, I would prefer supposing that he did this, not with any wish to treat me with incivility, but from the necessity of thinking differently from me. For in all cases where a person’s animus towards one is indeterminate and unknown, I think it better to suppose the existence of the kindlier motive, than to find fault with an undiscovered one. Perhaps, too, he acted from love to me, as knowing that what he had written might possibly reach me; being at the same time unwilling that I should be in error on such points as he especially thinks himself to be free from error regarding. I ought, therefore, to be grateful for his kindness, although I feel obliged to disapprove of his opinion. Accordingly, as regards the points on which he does not entertain right views, he appears to me to deserve gentle correction rather than severe disapproval; more especially because, if I am rightly informed, he has lately become a catholic—a matter in which he is to be congratulated. For he has freed himself from the schism and errors of the Donatists (or rather the Rogatists) in which he was previously implicated; and if he understands the catholic verity as he ought, we may really rejoice at his conversion.

CHAPTER 3 [III]

THE ELOQUENCE OF VINCENTIUS, ITS DANGERS AND ITS TOLERABLENESS

For he has an eloquence by which he is able to explain what he thinks. He must, therefore, be dealt with accordingly; and we must hope that he may entertain right sentiments, and that he may not turn useless things into objects of desire; that he may not seem to have propounded as true whatever he may have expressed with eloquence. But in his very outspokenness he may have much to correct, and to prune of redundant verbiage. And this characteristic of his has actually given offence to you, who are a person of gravity, as your own writings indicate. This fault, however, is either easily corrected, or, if it be resorted to with fondness by light minds, and borne with by serious ones, it is not attended with any injury to their faith. For we have already amongst us men who are frothy in speech, but sound in the faith. We need not then despair that this quality even in him (it might be endurable, however, even if it proved permanent) may be tempered and cleansed—in fact, may be either extended or recalled to an entire and solid criterion; especially as he is said to be young, so that diligence may supply to him whatever defect his inexperience may possess, and ripeness of age may digest what crude loquacity finds indigestible. The troublesome, dangerous, and pernicious thing is, when folly is set off by the commendation which is accorded to eloquence, and when a poisonous draught is drunk out of a precious goblet.

CHAPTER 4 [IV.]

THE ERRORS CONTAINED IN THE BOOKS OF VINCENTIUS VICTOR. HE SAYS THAT THE SOUL COMES FROM GOD, BUT WAS NOT MADE EITHER OUT OF NOTHING OR OUT OF ANY CREATED THING

I will now proceed to point out what things are chiefly to be avoided in his contentious statement. He says that the soul was made, indeed, by God, but that it is not a portion of God or of the nature of God,—which is an entirely true statement. When, however, he refuses to allow that it is made out of nothing, and mentions no other created thing out of which it was made; and makes God its author, in such a sense that He must be supposed to have made it, neither out of any non-existing things, that is, out of nothing, nor out of anything which exists other than God, but out of His very self: he is little aware that in the revolution of his thoughts he has come back to the position which he thinks he has avoided, even that the soul is nothing else than the nature of God; and consequently that there is an actual something made out of the nature of God by the self-same God, for the making of which the material of which He makes it is His own very self who makes it; and that thus God's nature is changeable, and by being changed for the worse the very nature of God Himself incurs condemnation at the hands of the self-same God! How far all this is from being fit for your intelligent faith to suppose, how alien it is from the heart of a catholic, and how much to be avoided, you can readily see. For the soul is either so made out of the breath, or God's breath is so made into it, that it was not created out of Himself, but by Himself out of nothing. It is not, indeed, like the case of a human being, when he breathes: he cannot form a breath out of nothing, but he restores to the air the breath which he inhaled out of it. We may in some such manner suppose that certain airs surrounded the Divine Being, and that He inhaled a particle of it by breathing, and exhaled it again by respiration, when He breathed into man's face, and so formed for him a soul. If this were the process, it could not have been out of His very self, but out of the circumambient airy matter, that what He breathed forth must have arisen. Far be it, however, from us to say, that the Almighty could not have made the breath of life out of nothing, by which man might become a living soul; and to crowd ourselves into such straits, as that we must either think that something already existed other than Himself, out of which He formed breath, or else suppose that He formed out of Himself that which we see was made subject to change. Now, whatever is out of Himself, must necessarily be of the self-same nature as Himself, and therefore immutable: but the soul (as all allow) is mutable. Therefore it is not out of Him, because it is not immutable, as He is. If, however, it was not made of anything else, it was undoubtedly made out of nothing—but by Himself.

CHAPTER 5 [V.]

ANOTHER OF VICTOR'S ERRORS, THAT THE SOUL IS CORPOREAL

But as regards his contention, "that the soul is not spirit, but body," what else can he mean to make out, than that we are composed, not of soul and body, but of two or even three bodies? For inasmuch as he says that we consist of spirit, soul and body, and asserts that all the three are bodies; it follows, that he supposes us to be made up of three bodies. How absurd this conclusion is, I think ought rather to be demonstrated to him than to you. But this is not an intolerable error on the part of a person who has not yet discovered that there is in existence a something, which, though it be not corporeal, yet may wear somewhat of the similitude of a body.

CHAPTER 6 [VI.]

ANOTHER ERROR OUT OF HIS SECOND BOOK, TO THE EFFECT, THAT THE SOUL DESERVED TO BE POLLUTED BY THE BODY

But he is plainly past endurance in what he says in his second book, when he endeavours to solve a very difficult question on original sin, how it belongs to body and soul, if the soul is not derived by parental descent but is breathed afresh by God into a man. Striving to explain this troublesome and profound point, he thus expresses his view: "Through the flesh the soul fitly recovers its primitive condition, which it seemed to have gradually lost through the flesh, in order that it may begin to be regenerated by the very flesh by which it had deserved to be polluted." You observe how this person, having been so bold as to undertake what exceeds his powers, has fallen down such a precipice as to say, that the soul deserved to be defiled by the body; although he could in no wise declare whence it drew on itself this desert, before it put on flesh. For if it first had from the flesh its desert of sin, let him tell us (if he can) whence (previous to sin) it derived its desert to be contaminated by the flesh. For this desert, which projected it into sinful flesh to be polluted by it, it of course had either from itself, or, which is much more offensive to our mind, from God. It certainly could not, previous to its being invested with the flesh, have received from that flesh that ill desert by reason of which it was projected into the flesh, in order to be defiled by it. Now, if it had the ill desert from its own self, how did it get it, seeing that it did no sin previous to its assumption of flesh? But if it be alleged that it had the ill desert from God, then, I ask, who could listen to such blasphemy? Who could endure it? Who could permit it to be alleged with impunity? For the question which arises here, remember, is not, what was the ill desert which adjudged the soul to be condemned after it became incarnate, but what was its ill desert prior to the flesh, which condemned it to the investiture of the flesh, that it might be thereby polluted? Let him explain this to us, if he can, seeing that he has dared to say that the soul deserved to be defiled by the flesh.

CHAPTER 7 [VII.]

VICTOR ENTANGLES HIMSELF IN AN EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT QUESTION. GOD’S FOREKNOWLEDGE IS NO CAUSE OF SIN

In another passage, also, on proposing for explanation the very same question in which he had entangled himself, he says, speaking in the person of certain objectors: “Why, they ask, did God inflict upon the soul so unjust a punishment as to be willing to relegate it into a body, when, by reason of its association with the flesh, that begins to be sinful which could not have been sinful?” Now, amidst the reefy sea of such a question, it was surely his duty to beware of shipwreck; nor to commit himself to dangers which he could not hope to escape by passing over them, and where his only chance of safety lay in putting back again—in a word, by repentance. He tries to free himself by means of the foreknowledge of God, but to no purpose. For God’s foreknowledge only marks beforehand those sinners whom He purposes to heal. For if He liberates from sin those souls which He Himself involved in sin when innocent and pure, He then heals a wound which Himself inflicted on us, not which He found in us. May God, however, forbid it, and may it be altogether far from us to say, that when God cleanses the souls of infants by the laver of regeneration, He then corrects evils which He Himself made for them, when He commingled them, which had no sin before, with sinful flesh, that they might be contaminated by its original sin. As regards, however, the souls which this calumniator alleges to have deserved pollution by the flesh, he is quite unable to tell us how it is they deserved so vast an evil, previous to their connection with the flesh.

CHAPTER 8 [VIII.]

VICTOR’S ERRONEOUS OPINION, THAT THE SOUL DESERVED TO BECOME SINFUL

Vainly supposing, then, that he was able to solve this question from the foreknowledge of God, he keeps floundering on, and says: “If the soul deserved to be sinful which could not have been sinful, yet neither did it remain in sin, because, as prefigured in Christ, it was not bound to be in sin, even as it was unable to be.” Now what can he mean when he says, “which could not have been sinful,” or “was unable to be in sin,” except, as I suppose, this, if it did not come into the flesh? For, of course, it could not have been sinful through original sin, or have been at all involved in original sin, except through the flesh, if it is not derived from the parent. We see it, then, liberated from sin through grace, but we do not see how it deserved to be involved in sin. What, then, is the meaning of these words of his, “If the soul deserved to be sinful, yet neither did it remain in sin”? For if I were to ask him, why it did not remain in sin, he would very properly answer, Because the grace of Christ delivered it therefrom. Since, then, he tells us how it came to pass that an infant’s soul was liberated from its sinfulness, let him further tell us how it happened that it deserved to be sinful.

CHAPTER 9

VICTOR UTTERLY UNABLE TO EXPLAIN HOW THE SINLESS SOUL DESERVED TO BE MADE SINFUL

But what does he mean by that, which in his introduction he says has befallen him? For previous to proposing that question of his, and as introducing it, he affirms: “There are other opprobrious expressions underlying the querulous murmurings of those who rail at us; and, shaken about as in a hurricane, we are again and again dashed amongst enormous rocks.” Now, if I were to express myself about him in this style, he would probably be angry. The words are his; and after premising them, he propounded his question, by way of showing us the very rocks against which he struck and was wrecked. For to such lengths was he carried, and against such frightful reefs was he borne, drifted, and struck, that his escape was a perfect impossibility without a retreat—a correction, in short, of what he had said; since he was unable to show by what desert the soul was made sinful; though he was not afraid to say, that previous to any sin of its own it had deserved to become sinful. Now, who deserves, without committing any sin, so immense a punishment as to be conceived in the sin of another, before leaving his mother's womb, and then to be no longer free from sin? But from this punishment the free grace of God delivers the souls of such infants as are regenerated in Christ, with no previous merits of their own—otherwise grace is no grace." With regard, then, to this person, who is so vastly intelligent, and who in the great depth of his wisdom is displeased at our hesitation, which, if not well informed, is at all events circumspect, let him tell us, if he can, what the merit was which brought the soul into such a punishment, from which grace delivers it without any merit. Let him speak, and, if he can, defend his assertion with some show of reason. I would not, indeed, require so much of him, if he had not himself declared that the soul deserved to become sinful. Let him tell us what the desert was—whether good desert or evil? If good, how could well-deserving lead to evil? If evil, whence could arise any ill desert previous to the commission of any sin? I have also to remark, that if there be a good desert, then the liberation of the soul would not be of free grace, but it would be due to the previous merit, and thus "grace would be no more grace." If there be, however, an evil desert, then I ask what it is. Is it true that the soul has come into the flesh; and that it would not have so come unless He in whom there is no sin had Himself sent it? Never, therefore, except by floundering worse and worse, will he contrive to set up this view of his, in which he predicates of the soul that it deserved to be sinful. In the case of those infants, too, in whose baptism original sin is washed away, he found something to say after a fashion,—to the effect, that being involved in the sin of another could not possibly have been detrimental to them, predestinated as they were to eternal life in the foreknowledge of God. This might admit of a tolerably good sense, if he had not entangled himself in that formula of his, in which he asserts that the soul deserved to be sinful: from this difficulty he can only extricate himself by revoking his words, with regret at having expressed them.

CHAPTER 10 [IX.]

ANOTHER ERROR OF VICTOR’S, THAT INFANTS DYING UNBAPTIZED MAY ATTAIN TO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. ANOTHER, THAT THE SACRIFICE OF THE BODY OF CHRIST MUST BE OFFERED FOR INFANTS WHO DIE BEFORE THEY ARE BAPTIZED

But when he wished to answer with respect, however, to those infants who are prevented by death from being first baptized in Christ, he was so bold as to promise them not only paradise, but also the kingdom of heaven,—finding no way else of avoiding the necessity of saying that God condemns to eternal death innocent souls which, without any previous desert of sin, He introduces into sinful flesh. He saw, however, to some extent what evil he was giving utterance to, in implying that without any grace of Christ the souls of infants are redeemed to everlasting life and the kingdom of heaven, and that in their case original sin may be cancelled without Christ’s baptism, in which is effected the forgiveness of sins: observing all this, and into what a depth he had plunged in his sea of shipwreck, he says, “I am of opinion that for them, indeed, constant oblations and sacrifices must be continually offered up by holy priests.” You may here behold another danger, out of which he will never escape except by regret and a recall of his words. For who can offer up the body of Christ for any except for those who are members of Christ? Moreover, from the time when He said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven;” and again, “He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it;” no one becomes a member of Christ except it be either by baptism in Christ, or death for Christ.

CHAPTER 11

MARTYRDOM FOR CHRIST SUPPLIES THE PLACE OF BAPTISM. THE FAITH OF THE THIEF WHO WAS CRUCIFIED ALONG WITH CHRIST TAKEN AS MARTYRDOM AND HENCE FOR BAPTISM

Accordingly, the thief, who was no follower of the Lord previous to the cross, but His confessor upon the cross, from whose case a presumption is sometimes taken, or attempted, against the sacrament of baptism, is reckoned by St. Cyprian among the martyrs who are baptized in their own blood, as happens to many unbaptized persons in times of hot persecution. For to the fact that he confessed the crucified Lord so much weight is attributed and so much availing value assigned by Him who knows how to weigh and value such evidence, as if he had been crucified for the Lord. Then, indeed, his faith on the cross flourished when that of the disciples failed, and that without recovery if it had not bloomed again by the resurrection of Him before the terror of whose death it had drooped. They despaired of Him when dying,—he hoped when joined with Him in dying; they fled from the author of life,—he prayed to his companion in punishment; they grieved as for the death of a man,—he believed that after death He was to be a king; they forsook the sponsor of their salvation,—he honoured the companion of His cross. There was discovered in him the full measure of a martyr, who then believed in Christ when they fell away who were destined to be martyrs. All this, indeed, was manifest to the eyes of the Lord, who at once bestowed so great felicity on one who, though not baptized, was yet washed clean in the blood, as it were, of martyrdom. But even of ourselves, who cannot reflect with how much faith, how much hope, how much charity he might have undergone death for Christ when living, who begged life of Him when dying? Besides all this, there is the circumstance, which is not incredibly reported, that the thief who then believed as he hung by the side of the crucified Lord was sprinkled, as in a most sacred baptism, with the water which issued from the wound of the Saviour’s side. I say nothing of the fact that nobody can prove, since none of us knows that he had not been baptized previous to his condemnation. However, let every man take this in the sense he may prefer; only let no rule about baptism affecting the Saviour’s own precept be taken from this example of the thief; and let no one promise for the case of unbaptized infants, between damnation and the kingdom of heaven, some middle place of rest and happiness, such as he pleases and where he pleases. For this is what the heresy of Pelagius promised them: he neither fears damnation for infants, whom he does not regard as having any original sin, nor does he give them the hope of the kingdom of heaven, since they do not approach to the sacrament of baptism. As for this man, however, although he acknowledges that infants are involved in original sin, he yet boldly promises them, even without baptism, the kingdom of heaven. This even the Pelagians had not the boldness to do, though asserting infants to be absolutely without sin. See, then, what a network of presumptuous opinion he entangles, unless he regret having committed such views to writing.

CHAPTER 12 [X.]

DINOCRATES, BROTHER OF THE MARTYR ST. PERPETUA, IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN DELIVERED FROM THE STATE OF CONDEMNATION BY THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINT

Concerning Dinocrates, however, the brother of St. Perpetua, there is no record in the canonical Scripture; nor does the saint herself, or whoever it was that wrote the account, say that the boy, who had died at the age of seven years, died without baptism; in his behalf she is believed to have had, when her martyrdom was imminent, her prayers effectually heard that he should be removed from the penalties of the lost to rest. Now, boys at that time of life are able both to lie, and, saying the truth, both to confess and deny. Therefore, when they are baptized they say the Creed, and answer in their behalf to such questions as are proposed to them in examination. Who can tell, then, whether that boy, after baptism, in a time of persecution was estranged from Christ to idolatry by an impious father, and on that account incurred mortal condemnation, from which he was only delivered for Christ’s sake, given to the prayers of his sister when she was at the point of death?

CHAPTER 13 [XI.]

THE SACRIFICE OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST WILL NOT AVAIL FOR UNBAPTIZED PERSONS, AND CAN NOT BE OFFERED FOR THE MAJORITY OF THOSE WHO DIE UNBAPTIZED

But even if it be conceded to this man (what cannot by any means be allowed with safety to the catholic faith and the rule of the Church), that the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ may be offered for unbaptized persons of every age, as if they were to be helped by this kind of piety on the part of their friends to reaching the kingdom of heaven: what will he have to say to our objections respecting the thousands of infants who are born of impious parents and never fall, by any mercy of God or man, into the hands of pious friends, and who depart from that wretched life of theirs at their most tender age without the washing of regeneration? Let him tell us, if he only can, how it is that those souls deserved to be made sinful to such a degree as certainly never afterwards to be delivered from sin. For if I ask him why they deserve to be condemned if they are not baptized, he will rightly answer me: On account of original sin. If I then inquire whence they derived original sin, he will answer, From sinful flesh, of course. If I go on to ask why they deserved to be condemned to a sinful flesh, seeing they had done no evil before they came in the flesh, and to be so condemned to undergo the contagion of the sin of another, that neither baptism shall regenerate them, born as they are in sin, nor sacrifices expiate them in their pollution: let him find something to reply to this! For in such circumstances and of such parents have these infants been born, or are still being born, that it is not possible for them to be reached with such help. Here, at any rate, all argument is lacking. Our question is not, why souls have deserved to be condemned subsequently to their consorting with sinful flesh? But we ask, how it is that souls have deserved to be condemned to undergo at all this association with sinful flesh, seeing that they have no sin previous to this association. There is no room for him to say: “It was no detriment to them that they shared for a season the contagion of another’s sin, since in the prescience of God redemption had been provided for them.” For we are now speaking of those to whom no redemption brings help, since they depart from the body before they are baptized. Nor is there any propriety in his saying: “The souls which baptism does not cleanse, the many sacrifices which are offered up for them will cleanse. God foreknew this, and willed that they should for a little while be implicated in the sins of another without incurring eternal damnation, and with the hope of eternal happiness.” For we are now speaking of those whose birth among impious persons and of impious parents could by no possibility find such defences and helps. And even if these could be applied, they would, it is certain, be unable to benefit any who are unbaptized; just as the sacrifices which he has mentioned out of the book of the Maccabees could be of no use for the sinful dead for whom they were offered, inasmuch as they had not been circumcised.

CHAPTER 14

VICTOR’S DILEMMA: HE MUST EITHER SAY ALL INFANTS ARE SAVED, OR ELSE GOD SLAYS THE INNOCENT

Let him, then, find an answer, if he can, when the question is asked of him, why it was that the soul, without any sin whatever, either original or personal, deserved so to be condemned to undergo the original sin of another as to be unable to be delivered from it; let him see which he will choose of two alternatives: Either to say that even the souls of dying infants who depart hence without the washing of regeneration, and for whom no sacrifice of the Lord's body is offered, are absolved from the bond of original sin—although the apostle teaches that "from one all go into condemnation,"—all, that is, of course, to whom grace does not find its way to help, in order that by One all might escape into redemption. Or else to say that souls which have no sin, either their own or original, and are in every respect innocent, simple, and pure, are punished with eternal damnation by the righteous God when He inserts them Himself into sinful flesh without any deliverance therefrom.

CHAPTER 15 [XII.]

GOD DOES NOT JUDGE ANY ONE FOR WHAT HE MIGHT HAVE DONE IF HIS LIFE HAD BEEN PROLONGED, BUT SIMPLY FOR THE DEEDS HE ACTUALLY COMMITS

For my own part, indeed, I affirm that neither of the alternative cases ought to be admitted, nor that third opinion which would have it that souls sinned in some other state previous to the flesh, and so deserved to be condemned to the flesh; for the apostle has most distinctly stated that "the children being not yet born, had done neither good nor evil." So it is evident that infants can have contracted none but original sin to require remission of sins. Nor, again, that fourth position, that the souls of infants who will die without baptism are by the righteous God banished and condemned to sinful flesh, since He foreknew that they would lead evil lives if they grew old enough for the use of free will. But this not even he has been daring enough to affirm, though embarrassed in such perplexities. On the contrary, he has declared, briefly indeed, yet manifestly, against this vain opinion in these words: "God would have been unrighteous if He had willed to judge any man yet unborn, who had done nothing whatever of his own free will." This was his answer when treating a question in opposition to those persons who ask why God made man, when in His foreknowledge He knew that he would not be good? He would be judging a man before he was born if He had been unwilling to create him because He knew beforehand that he would not turn out good. And there can be no doubt about it, even as this person himself thought, that the proper course would be for the Almighty to judge a man for his works when accomplished, not for such as might be foreseen, nor such as might be permitted to be done some time or other. For if the sins which a man would have committed if he were alive are condemned in him when dead, even when they have not been committed, no benefit is conferred on him when he is taken away that no wickedness might change his mind; inasmuch as judgment will be given upon him according to the wickedness which might have developed in him, not according to the uprightness which was actually found in him. Nor will any man possibly be safe who dies after baptism, because even after baptism men may, I will not say sin in some way or other, but actually go so far as to commit apostasy. What then? Suppose a man who has been taken away after baptism should, if he had lived, have become an apostate, are we to think that no benefit was conferred even upon him in that he was removed and was saved from the misery of his mind being changed by wickedness? And are we to imagine that he will have to be judged, by reason of God's foreknowledge, as an apostate, and not as a faithful member of Christ? How much better, to be sure, would it have been—if sins are punished not as they have been committed or contemplated by the human agent, but foreknown and to happen in the cognizance of the Almighty—if the first pair had been cast forth from paradise previous to their fall, and so sin have been prevented in so holy and blessed a place! What, too, is to be said about the entire nullification of foreknowledge itself, when what is foreknown is not to happen? How, indeed, can that be rightly called the prescience of something to be, which in fact will not come to pass? And how are sins punished which are none, that is to say, which are not committed before the assumption of flesh, since life itself is not yet begun; nor after the assumption, since death has prevented?

CHAPTER 16 [XIII.]

DIFFICULTY IN THE OPINION WHICH MAINTAINS THAT SOULS ARE NOT BY PROPAGATION

This means, then, of settling the point whereby the soul was sent into the flesh until what time it should be delivered from the flesh,—seeing that the soul of an infant, which has not grown old enough for the will to become free, is the case supposed,—makes no discovery of the reason why condemnation should overtake it without the reception of baptism, except the reason of original sin. Owing to this sin, we do not deny that the soul is righteously condemned, because for sin God’s righteous law has appointed punishment. But then we ask, why the soul has been made to undergo this sinful state, if it is not derived from that one primeval soul which sinned in the first father of the human race. Wherefore, if God does not condemn the innocent,—if He does not make guilty those whom He sees to be innocent,—and if nothing liberates souls from either original sins or personal ones but Christ’s baptism in Christ’s Church,—and if sins, before they are committed, and much more when they have never been committed, cannot be condemned by any righteous law: then this writer cannot adduce any of these four cases; he must, if he can, explain, in respect to the souls of infants, which, as they quit life without baptism, are sent into condemnation, by what desert of theirs it is that they, without having ever sinned, are consigned to a sinful flesh, there to find the sin which is to secure their just condemnation. Moreover, if he shrinks from these four cases which sound doctrine condemns,—that is to say, if he has not the courage to maintain that souls, when they are even without sin, are made sinful by God, or that they are freed from the original sin that is in them without Christ’s sacrament, or that they committed sin in some other state before they were sent into the flesh, or that sins which they never committed are condemned in them,—if, I say, he has not the courage to tell us these things because they really do not deserve to be mentioned but should affirm that infants do not inherit original sin, and have no reason why they should be condemned should they depart hence without receiving the sacrament of regeneration, he will without doubt, to his own condemnation, run into the damnable heresy of Pelagius. To avoid this, how much better is it for him to share my hesitation about the soul’s origin, without daring to affirm that which he cannot comprehend by human reason nor defend by divine authority! So shall he not be obliged to utter foolishness, whilst he is afraid to confess his ignorance.

CHAPTER 17 [XIV.]

HE SHOWS THAT THE PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE ADDUCED BY VICTOR DO NOT PROVE THAT SOULS ARE MADE BY GOD IN SUCH A WAY AS NOT TO BE DERIVED BY PROPAGATION: FIRST PASSAGE

Here, perhaps, he may say that his opinion is backed by divine authority, since he supposes that he proves by passages of the Holy Scriptures that souls are not made by God by way of propagation, but that they are by distinct acts of creation breathed afresh into each individual. Let him prove this if he can, and I will allow that I have learnt from him what I was trying to find out with great earnestness. But he must go in quest of other defences, which, perhaps, he will not find, for he has not proved his point by the passages which he has thus far advanced. For all he has applied to the subject are to some extent undoubtedly suitable, but they afford only doubtful demonstration to the point which he raises respecting the soul's origin. For it is certain that God has given to man breath and spirit, as the prophet testifies: "Thus saith the Lord, who made the heaven, and founded the earth, and all that is therein; who giveth breath to the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk over it." This passage he wishes to be taken in his own sense, which he is defending; so that the words, "who giveth breath to the people," may be understood as implying that He creates souls for people not by propagation, but by insufflation of new souls in every case. Let him, then, boldly maintain at this rate that He does not give us flesh, on the ground that our flesh derives its original from our parents. In the instance, too, which the apostle adduces, "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him," let him deny, if he dares, that corn springs from corn, and grass from grass, from the seed, each after its kind. And if he dares not deny this, how does he know in what sense it is said, "He giveth breath to the people"?—whether by derivation from parents, or by fresh breathing into each individual?

CHAPTER 18

BY "BREATH" IS SIGNIFIED SOMETIMES THE HOLY SPIRIT

How, again, does he know whether the repetition of the idea in the sentence, "who giveth breath to the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk over it," may not be understood of only one thing under two expressions, and may not mean, not the life or spirit whereby human nature lives, but the Holy Spirit? For if by the "breath" the Holy Ghost could not be signified, the Lord would not, when He "breathed upon" His disciples after His resurrection, have said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Nor would it have been thus written in the Acts of the Apostles, “Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as if a mighty breath were borne in upon them; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.” Suppose, now, that it was this which the prophet foretold in the words, “who giveth breath unto the people upon it;” and then, as an exposition of what he had designated “breath,” he went on to say, “and spirit to them that walk over it.” Surely this prediction was most manifestly fulfilled when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. If, however, the term “people” is not yet applicable to the one hundred and twenty persons who were then assembled together in one place, at all events, when the number of believers amounted to four or five thousand, who when they were baptized received the Holy Ghost, can any doubt that the recipients of the Holy Ghost were then “the people,” even “the men walking in the earth”? For that spirit which is given to man as appertaining to his nature, whether it be given by propagation or be inbreathed as something new to individuals (and I do not determine which of these two modes ought to be affirmed, at least until one of the two can be clearly ascertained beyond a doubt), is not given to men when they “walk over the earth,” but whilst they are still shut up in their mother’s womb. “He gave breath, therefore, to the people upon the earth, and spirit to them that walk over it,” when many became believers together, and were together filled with the Holy Ghost. And He gives Him to His people, although not to all at the same time, but to every one in His own time, until, by departing from this life, and by coming into it, the entire number of His people be fulfilled. In this passage of Holy Scripture, therefore, breath is not one thing, and spirit another thing; but there is a repetition of one and the same idea. Just as “He that sitteth in the heavens” is not one, and “the Lord” is not another; nor, again, is it one thing “to laugh,” and another thing “to hold in derision;” but there is only a repetition of the same meaning in the passage where we read, “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.” So, in precisely the same manner, in the passage, “I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession,” it is certainly not meant that “inheritance” is one thing, and “possession” another thing; nor that “the heathen” means one thing, and “the uttermost parts of the earth” another; there is only a repetition of the self-same thing. He will, indeed, discover innumerable expressions of this sort in the sacred writings, if he will only attentively consider what he reads.

CHAPTER 19

THE MEANING OF “BREATH” IN SCRIPTURE

The term, however, that is used in the Greek version, pnoe, is variously rendered in Latin: sometimes by flatus, breath; sometimes by spiritus, spirit; sometimes by inspiratio, inspiration. This term occurs in the Greek editions of the passage which we are now reviewing, “Who giveth breath to the people upon it,” the word for breath being pnoe. The same word is used in the narrative where man was endued with life: “And God breathed upon his face the breath of life.” Again, in the psalm the same term occurs: “Let every thing that hath spirit praise the Lord.” It is the same word also in the Book of Job: “The inspiration of the Almighty is that which teaches.” The translator refused the word flatus, breath, for adspiratio, inspiration, although he had before him the very term pnoe, which occurs in the text of the prophet which we are considering. We can hardly doubt, I think, that in this passage of Job the Holy Ghost is signified. The question discussed was concerning wisdom, whence it comes to men: “It cometh not from number of years; but the Spirit is in mortals, and the inspiration of the Almighty is that which teaches.” By this repetition of terms it may be quite understood that he did not speak of man’s own spirit in the clause, “The Spirit is in mortals.” He wanted to show whence men have wisdom,—that it is not from their own selves; so by using a duplicate expression he explains his idea; “The inspiration of the Almighty is that which teaches.” Similarly, in another passage of the same book, he says, “The understanding of my lips shall meditate purity. The divine Spirit is that which formed me, and the breath of the Almighty is that which teacheth me.” Here, likewise, what he calls adspiratio, or “inspiration,” is in Greek pnoe, the same word which is translated flatus, “breath,” in the passage quoted from the prophet. Therefore, although it is rash to deny that the passage, “Who giveth breath to the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk over it,” has reference to the soul or spirit of man,—although the Holy Ghost may with greater credibility be understood as referred to in the passage: yet I ask on what ground anybody can boldly determine that the prophet meant in these words to intimate that the soul or spirit whereby our nature possesses vitality [is not given to us by God through the process of propagation?] Of course if the prophet had very plainly said, “Who giveth soul to the people upon earth,” it still would remain to be asked whether God Himself gives it from an origin in the preceding generation, just as He gives the body out of such prior material, and that not only to men or cattle, but also to the seed of corn, or to any other body whatever, just as it pleases Him; or whether He bestows it by inbreathing as a new gift to each individual, as the first man received it from Him?

CHAPTER 20

OTHER WAYS OF TAKING THE PASSAGE

There are also some persons who understand the prophet’s words, “He gave breath to the people upon it,” that is to say, upon the earth, as if the word “breath,” flatus, were simply equivalent to “soul,” anima; while they construe the next clause, “and spirit to them that walk over it,” as referring to the Holy Ghost; and they suppose that the same order is observed by the prophet that is mentioned by the apostle: “That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.” Now from this view of the prophet’s words an elegant interpretation may, no doubt, be formed consistent with the apostle’s sense. The phrase, “to them that walk over it,” is in the Latin, “calcantibus eam;” and as the literal meaning of these words is “treading upon it,” we may understand the idea of contempt of it to be implied. For they who receive the Holy Ghost despise earthly things in their love of heavenly things. None of these opinions, however, is contrary to the faith, whether one regards the two terms, breath and spirit, to pertain to human nature, or both of them to the Holy Ghost, or one of them, breath, to the soul, and the other, spirit, to the Holy Ghost. If, however, the soul and spirit of the human being be the meaning here, since undoubtedly it ought to be, as the gift of God to him, then we must further inquire, in what way does God bestow this gift? Is it by propagation, as He gives us our bodily limbs by this process? Or is it bestowed on each person severally by God’s inbreathing, not by propagation, but as always a fresh creation? These questions are not ambiguous, as this man would make them; but we wish that they be defended by the most certain warrant of the divine Scriptures.

CHAPTER 21

THE SECOND PASSAGE QUOTED BY VICTOR

On the same principle we treat the passage in which God says: “For my Spirit shall go forth from me; and I have created every breath.” Here the former clause, “My Spirit shall go forth from me, must be taken as referring to the Holy Ghost, of whom the Saviour similarly says, “He proceedeth from the Father.” But the other clause, “I have created every breath,” is undeniably spoken of each individual soul. Well; but God also creates the entire body of man; and, as nobody doubts, He makes the human body by the process of propagation: it is therefore, of course, still open to inquiry concerning the soul (since it is evidently God’s work), whether He creates it as He does the body; by propagation, or by inbreathing, as He made the first soul.

CHAPTER 22

VICTOR’S THIRD QUOTATION

He proceeds to favour us with a third passage, in which it is written: “Who forms the spirit of man within him.” As if any one denied this! No; all our question is as to the mode of the formation. Now let us take the eye of the body, and ask, who but God forms it? I suppose that He forms it not externally, but in itself, and yet, most certainly, by propagation. Since, then, He also forms “the human spirit in him,” the question still remains, whether it be derived by a fresh insufflation in every instance, or by propagation.

CHAPTER 23

HIS FOURTH QUOTATION

We have read all about the mother of the Maccabean youths, who was really more fruitful in virtues when her children suffered than of children when they were born; how she exhorted them to constancy, speaking in this wise: “I cannot tell, my sons, how ye came into my womb. For it was not I who gave you spirit and soul, nor was it I that formed the members of every one of you; but it was God, who also made the world, and all things that are therein; who, moreover, formed the generation of men; and searches the action of all; and who will Himself of His great mercy restore to you your spirit and soul." All this we know; but how it supports this man's assertion we do not see. For what Christian would deny that God gives to men soul and spirit? But similarly, I suppose that he cannot deny that God gives to men their tongue, and ear, and hand, and foot, and all their bodily sensations, and the form and nature of all their limbs. For how is he going to deny all these to be the gifts of God, unless he forgets that he is a Christian? As, however, it is evident that these were made by Him, and bestowed on man by propagation; so also the question must arise, by what means man's spirit and soul are formed by Him; by what efficiency given to man—from the parents, or from nothing, or (as this man asserts, in a sense which we must by all means guard against) from some existing nature of the divine breath, not created out of nothing, but out of His own self?

CHAPTER 24 [XV.]

WHETHER OR NO THE SOUL IS DERIVED BY NATURAL DESCENT (EX TRADUCE), HIS CITED PASSAGES FAIL TO SHOW

Forasmuch, then, as the passages of Scripture which he mentions by no means show what he endeavours to enforce (since, indeed, they express nothing at all on the immediate question before us), what can be the meaning of these words of his: "We firmly maintain that the soul comes from the breath of God, not from natural generation, because it is given from God"? As if, forsooth, the body could be given from another, than from Him by whom it is created, "Of whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things;" not that they are of His nature, but of His workmanship. "Nor is it from nothing," says he, "because it comes forth from God." Whether this be so, is (we must say) not the question to be here entertained. At the same time, we do not hesitate to affirm, that the proposition which he advances, that the soul comes to man neither out of descent nor out of nothing, is certainly not true: this, I say, we affirm to be without doubt not true. For it is one of two things: if the soul is not derived by natural descent from the parent, it comes out of nothing. To pretend that it is derived from God in such wise as to be a portion of His nature, is simply sacrilegious blasphemy. But we solicit and seek up to the present time some plain passages of Scripture bearing on the point, whether the soul does not come by parental descent; but we do not want such passages as he has adduced, which yield no illustration of the question now before us.

CHAPTER 25

JUST AS THE MOTHER KNOWS NOT WHENCE COMES HER CHILD WITHIN HER, SO WE KNOW NOT WHENCE COMES THE SOUL

How I wish that, on so profound a question, so long as he is ignorant what he should say, he would imitate the mother of the Maccabean youths! Although she knew very well that she had conceived children of her husband, and that they had been created for her by the Creator of all, both in body and in soul and spirit, yet she says, “I cannot tell, my sons, how ye came into my womb.” Well now, I only wish this man would tell us that which she was ignorant of! She, of course, knew (on the points I have mentioned) how they came into her womb as to their bodily substance, because she could not possibly doubt that she had conceived them by her husband. She furthermore confessed—because this, too, she was, of course, well aware of—that it was God who gave them their soul and spirit, and that it was He also who formed for them their features and their limbs. What was it, then, that she was so ignorant of? Was it not probably (what we likewise are equally unable to determine) whether the soul and spirit, which God no doubt bestowed upon them, was derived to them from their parents, or breathed into them separately as it had been into the first man? But whether it was this, or some other particular respecting the constitution of human nature, of which she was ignorant, she frankly confessed her ignorance; and did not venture to defend at random what she knew nothing about. Nor would this man say to her, what he has not been ashamed to say to us: “Man being in honour doth not understand; he is compared to the senseless cattle, and is like unto them.” Behold how that woman said of her sons, “I cannot tell how ye came into my womb,” and yet she is not compared to the senseless brutes. “I cannot tell,” she said; then, as if they would inquire of her why she was ignorant, she went on to say, “For it was not I who gave you spirit and soul.” He, therefore, who gave them that gift, knows whence He made what He gave, whether He communicated it by propagation, or breathed it as a fresh creation,—a point which (this man says) I for my part know nothing of. “Nor was it I that formed the features and members of every one of you.” He, however, who formed them, knows whether He formed them with the soul, or gave the soul to them after they had been formed. She had no idea of the manner, this or that, in which her sons came into her womb; only one thing was she sure of, that He who gave her all she had would restore to her what He gave. But this man would choose out what that woman was ignorant of, on so profound and abstruse a fact of our nature; only he would not judge her, if in error; nor compare her, if ignorant, to the senseless cattle. Whatever the point was about which she was ignorant, it certainly pertained to man’s nature; and yet anybody would be blameless for such ignorance. Wherefore, I too, on my side, say concerning my soul, I have no certain knowledge how it came into my body; for it was not I who gave it to myself. He who gave it to me knows whether He imparted it to me from my father, or created it afresh for me, as He did for the first man. But even I shall know, when He Himself shall teach me, in His own good time. Now, however, I do not know; nor am I ashamed, like him, to confess my ignorance of what I know not.

CHAPTER 26 [XVI.]

THE FIFTH PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE QUOTED BY VICTOR

“Learn,” says he, “for, behold the apostle teaches you.” Yes, indeed, I will learn, if the apostle teaches; since it is God alone who teaches by the apostle. But, pray, what is it which the apostle teaches? “Behold,” he adds, “how, when speaking to the men of Athens, he strongly set forth this truth, saying: Seeing He giveth to all life and spirit.’“ Well, who thinks of denying this? “But understand,” he says, “what it is the apostle states: He giveth; not, He hath given. He refers us to continuous and indefinite time, and does not proclaim past and completed time. Now that which he gives without cessation, He is always giving; just as He who gives is Himself ever existent.” I have quoted his words precisely as I found them in the second of the books which you sent me. First, I beg you to notice to what lengths he has gone, while endeavouring to affirm what he knows nothing about. For he has dared to say, that God, without any cessation, and not merely in the present time, but for ever and ever, gives souls to persons when they are born. “He is always giving,” says he, “just as He who gives is Himself ever existent.” Far be it from me to say that I do not understand what the apostle said, for it is plain enough. But what this man says, he even ought himself to know, is contrary to the Christian faith; and he should be on his guard against going any further in such assertions. For, of course, when the dead shall rise again, there will be no more persons to be born; therefore God will bestow no longer any souls at any birth; but those which He is now giving to men along with their bodies He will judge. So that He is not always giving, although He is ever existent, who at present is giving. Nor, indeed, is that at all derivable from the apostle’s expression, who giveth (not hath given), which this writer wishes to deduce, namely, that God does not give men souls by propagation. For souls are still given by Him, even if it be by propagation; even as bodily endowments, such as limbs, and sensations, and shape, and, in fact, the whole substance, are given by God Himself to human beings, although it be by propagation that He gives them. Nor again, because the Lord says, “If God so clothes the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven” (not using the preterite time, hath clothed, as when He first formed the material; but employing the present form, clothes, which, indeed, He still is doing), shall we on that account say, that the lilies are not produced from the original source of their own kind. What, therefore, if the soul and spirit of a human being in like manner is given by God Himself, whenever it is given; and given, too, by propagation from its own kind? Now this is a position which I neither maintain nor refute. Nevertheless, if it must be defended or confuted, I certainly recommend its being done by clear, and not doubtful proofs. Nor do I deserve to be compared with senseless cattle because I avow myself to be as yet incapable of determining the question, but rather with cautious persons, because I do not recklessly teach what I know nothing about. But I am not disposed on my own part to return railing for railing and compare this man with brutes; but I warn him as a son to acknowledge that he is really ignorant of that which he knows nothing about; nor to attempt to teach that which he has not yet learnt, lest he should deserve to be compared with those persons whom the apostle mentions as “desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm.”

CHAPTER 27 [XVII.]

AUGUSTIN DID NOT VENTURE TO DEFINE ANYTHING ABOUT THE PROPAGATION OF THE SOUL

For whence comes it that he is so careless about the Scriptures, which he talks of, as not to notice that when he reads of human beings being from God, it is not merely, as he contends, in respect of their soul and spirit, but also as regards their body? For the apostle’s statement, “We are His offspring,” this man supposes must not be referred to the body, but only to the soul and spirit. If, indeed, our human bodies are not of God, then that is false which the Scripture says: “For of Him are all things, through Him are all things, and in Him are all things.” Again, with reference to the same apostle’s statement, “For as the woman is of the man, so also is the man by the woman,” let him explain to us what propagation he would choose to be meant in the process,—that of the soul, or of the body, or of both? But he will not allow that souls come by propagation: it remains, therefore, that, according to him and all who deny the propagation of souls, the apostle signified the masculine and feminine body only, when he said, “As the woman is of the man, so also is the man by the woman;” the woman having been made out of the man, in order that the man might afterwards, by the process of birth, come out of the woman. If, therefore, the apostle, when he said this, did not intend the soul and spirit also to be understood, but only the bodies of the two sexes, why does he immediately add, “But all things are of God,” unless it be that bodies also are of God? For so runs his entire statement: “As the woman is of the man, so also is the man by the woman; but all things are of God.” Let, then, our disputant determine of what this is said. If of men’s bodies, then, of course, even bodies are of God. How comes it to pass, therefore, that whenever this person reads in Scripture the phrase, “of God,” when man is in question, he will have the words understood, not in reference to men’s bodies, but only as concerning their souls and spirits? But if the expression, “All things are of God,” was spoken both of the body of the two sexes, and of their soul and spirit, it follows that in all things the woman is of the man, for the woman comes from the man, and the man is by the woman: but all things of God. What “all things” are meant, except those he was speaking of, namely, the man of whom came the woman, and the woman who was of the man, and also the man who came by the woman? For that man came not by woman, out of whom came the woman; but only he who afterwards was born of man by woman, just as men are now born. Hence it follows that if the apostle, when he said the words we have quoted from him, spoke of men's bodies, undoubtedly the bodies of persons of both sexes are of God. Furthermore, if he insists that nothing in man comes from God except their souls and spirits, then, of course, the woman is of the man even as regards her soul and spirit; so that nothing is left to those who dispute against the propagation of souls. But if he is for dividing the subject in such a manner as to say that the woman is of the man as regards her body, but is of God in respect of her soul and spirit, how, then, will that be true which the apostle says, "All things of God," if the woman's body is of the man in such a sense that it is not of God? Wherefore, allowing that the apostle is more likely to speak the truth than that this person must be preferred as an authority to the apostle, the woman is of the man, whether in regard to her body only, or in reference to the entire whole of which human nature consists (but we assert nothing on these points as an absolute certainty, but are still inquiring after their truth); and the man is through the woman, whether it be that his whole nature as man is derived to him from his father, and is born in him through the woman, or the flesh alone; about which points the question is still undecided. "All things, however, are of God," and about this there is no question; and in this phrase are included the body, soul, and spirit, both of the man and the woman. For even if they were not born or derived from God, or emanated from Him as portions of His nature, yet they are of God, inasmuch as whatever is created, formed, and made by Him, has from Him the reality of its existence.

CHAPTER 28

A NATURAL FIGURE OF SPEECH MUST NOT BE LITERALLY PRESSED

He goes on to remark: "But the apostle, by saying, And He Himself giveth life and spirit to all,' and then by adding the words, And hath made the whole race of men of one blood,' has referred this soul and spirit to the Creator in respect of their origin, and the body to propagation." Now, certainly any one who does not wish to deny at random the propagation of souls, before ascertaining clearly whether the opinion is correct or not, has ground for understanding, from the apostle's words, that he meant the expression, of one blood, to be equivalent to of one man, by the figure of speech which understands the whole from its part. Well, then, if it be allowable for this man to take the whole from a part in the passage, "And man became a living soul," as if the spirit also was understood to be implied, about which the Scripture there said nothing, why is it not allowable to others to attribute an equally comprehensive sense to the expression, of one blood, so that the soul and spirit may be considered as included in it, on the ground that the human being who is signified by the term "blood" consists not of body alone, but also of soul and spirit? For just as the controversialist who maintains the propagation of souls, ought not, on the one hand, to press this man too hard, because the Scripture says concerning the first man, "In whom all have sinned" (for the expression is not, In whom the flesh of all has sinned, but "all," that is, "all men," seeing that man is not flesh only);—as, I repeat, he ought not to be too hard pressed himself, because it happens to be written "all men," in such a way that they might be understood simply in respect of the flesh; so, on the other hand, he ought not to bear too hard on those who hold the propagation of souls, on the ground of the phrase, "The whole race of men of one blood," as if this passage proved that flesh alone was transmitted by propagation. For if it is true, as they assert, that soul does not descend from soul, but flesh only from flesh, then the expression, "of one blood," does not signify the entire human being, on the principle of a part for the whole, but merely the flesh of one person alone; while that other expression, "In whom all have sinned," must be so understood as to indicate merely the flesh of all men, which has been handed on from the first man, the Scripture signifying a part by the whole. If, on the other hand, it is true that the entire human being is propagated of each man, himself also entire, consisting of body, soul, and spirit, then the passage, "In whom all have sinned," must be taken in its proper literal sense; and the other phrase, "of one blood," is used metaphorically, the whole being signified by a part, that is to say, the whole man who consists of soul and flesh; or rather (as this person is fond of putting it) of soul, and spirit, and flesh. For both modes of expression the Holy Scriptures are in the habit of employing, putting both a part for the whole and the whole for a part. A part, for instance, implies the whole, in the place where it is said, "Unto Thee shall all flesh come;" the whole man being understood by the term flesh. And the whole sometimes implies a part, as when it is said that Christ was buried, whereas it was only His flesh that was buried. Now as regards the statement which is made in the apostle’s testimony, to the effect that “He giveth life and spirit to all,” I suppose that nobody, after the foregoing discussion, will be moved by it. No doubt “He giveth;” the fact is not in dispute; our question is, How does He give it? By fresh inbreathing in every instance, or by propagation? For with perfect propriety is He said to give the substance of the flesh to the human being, though at the same time it is not denied that He gives it by means of propagation.

CHAPTER 29 [XVIII.]

THE SIXTH PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE QUOTED BY VICTOR

Let us now look at the quotation from Genesis, where the woman was created out of the side of the man, and was brought to him, and he said: “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.” Our opponent thinks that “Adam ought to have said, Soul of my soul, or spirit of my spirit,’ if this, too, had been derived from him.” But, in fact, they who maintain the opinion of the propagation of souls feel that they possess a more impregnable defence of their position in the fact that in the Scripture narrative which informs us that God took a rib out of the man’s side and formed it into a woman, it is not added that He breathed into her face the breath of life; for this reason, as they say, because she had already been ensouled from the man. If, indeed, she had not, they say, the sacred Scripture would certainly not have kept us in ignorance of the circumstance. With regard to the fact that Adam says, “This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh,” without adding, Spirit or soul, from my spirit or soul, they may answer, just as it has been already shown, that the expression, “my flesh and bone,” may be understood as indicating the whole by a part, only that the portion that was taken out of man was not dead, but ensouled; for no good ground for denying that the Almighty was able to do all this is furnished by the circumstance that not a human being could be found capable of cutting off a part of a man’s flesh along with the soul. Adam went on, however, to say, “She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.” Now, why does he not rather say (and thus confirm the opinion of our opponents), “Since her flesh was taken out of man”? As the case stands, indeed, they who hold the opposite view may well contend, from the fact that it is written, not woman’s flesh, but the woman herself was taken out of man, that she must be considered in her entire nature endued with soul and spirit. For although the soul is undistinguished by sex, yet when women are mentioned it is not necessary to regard them apart from the soul. On no other principle would they be thus admonished with respect to self-adornment. “Not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but which (says the apostle) becometh women professing godliness with a good conversation.” Now, “godliness,” of course, is an inner principle in the soul or spirit; and yet they are called women, although the ornamentation concerns that internal portion of their nature which has no sex.

CHAPTER 30

THE DANGER OF ARGUING FROM SILENCE

Now, while the disputants are thus contending with one another in alternate argument, I so judge between them that they must not rely on uncertain evidence; nor make bold assertions on points of which they are ignorant. For if the Scripture had said, “God breathed into the woman’s face the breath of life, and she became a living soul,” it would not have followed even then that the human soul is not derived by propagation from parents, except the same statement were likewise made concerning their son. For it might have been that whilst an unensouled member taken from the body might require to be ensouled, yet that the soul of the son might be derived from the father, transfused by propagation through the mother. There is, however, an absolute silence on the point; it is entirely concealed from our view. Nothing is denied, but at the same time nothing is affirmed. And thus, if in any place the Scripture is possibly not quite silent, the point requires to be supported by clearer proofs. Whence it follows, that neither they who maintain the propagation of souls receive any assistance from the circumstance that God did not breathe into the woman’s face; nor ought they, who deny this doctrine on the ground that Adam did not say, “This is soul of my soul,” to persuade themselves to believe what they know nothing of. For just as it has been possible for the Scripture to be silent on the point of the woman’s having received her soul, like the man, by the inbreathing of God, without the question before us being solved, but, on the contrary, remaining open; so has it been possible for the same question to remain open and unsolved, notwithstanding the silence of Scripture, as to whether or not Adam said, This is soul of my soul. And hence, if the soul of the first woman comes from the man, a part signifies the whole in his exclamation, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh;” inasmuch as not her flesh alone, but the entire woman, was taken out of man. If, however, it is not from the man, but came by God’s inbreathing it into her, as at first into the man, then the whole signifies a part in the passage, “She was taken out of the man;” since on the supposition it was not her whole self, but her flesh that was taken.

CHAPTER 31

THE ARGUMENT OF THE APOLLINARIANS TO PROVE THAT CHRIST WAS WITHOUT THE HUMAN SOUL OF THIS SAME SORT

Although, then, this question remains unsolved by these passages of Scripture, which are certainly indecisive so far as pertains to the point before us, yet I am quite sure of this, that those persons who think that the soul of the first woman did not come from her husband’s soul, on the ground of its being only said, “Flesh of my flesh,” and not, “Soul of my soul,” do, in fact, argue in precisely the same manner as the Apollinarians argue, and all such gainsayers, in opposition to the Lord’s human soul, which they deny for no other reason than because they read in the Scripture, “The Word was made flesh.” For if, say they, there was a soul in Him also, it ought to have been said, “The Word was made man.” But the reason why the great truth is stated in the terms in question really is, that under the designation flesh, Holy Scripture is accustomed to describe the entire human being, as in the passage, “And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” For flesh alone without the soul cannot see anything. Besides, many other passages of the Holy Scriptures go to make it manifest, without any ambiguity, that in the man Christ there is not only flesh, but a human—that is, a reasonable—soul also. Whence they, who maintain the propagation of souls might also understand that a part is put for the whole in the passage, “Bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh,” in such wise that the soul, too, be understood as implied in the words, in the same manner as we believe that the Word became flesh, not without the soul. All that is wanted is, that they should support their opinion of the propagation of souls on passages which are unambiguous; just as other passages of Scripture show us that Christ possesses a human soul. On precisely the same principle we advise the other side also, who do away with the opinion of the propagation of souls, that they should produce certain proofs for their assertion that souls are created by God in every fresh case by insufflation, and that they should then maintain the position that the saying, “This is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh,” was not spoken figuratively as a part for the whole, including the soul in its signification, but in a bare literal sense of the flesh alone.

CHAPTER 32 [XIX.]

THE SELF-CONTRADICTION OF VICTOR AS TO THE ORIGIN OF THE SOUL

Under these circumstances, I find that this treatise of mine must now be closed. It contains, in fact, all that seemed to me chiefly necessary to the subject under discussion. They who peruse its contents will know how to be on their guard against agreeing with the person whose two books you sent me, so as not to believe with him, that souls are produced by the breath of God in such wise as not to be made out of nothing. The man, indeed, who supposes this, however much he may in words deny the conclusion, does in reality affirm that souls have the substance of God, and are His offspring, not by endowment, but by nature. For from whomsoever a man derives the origin of his nature, from him, in all sober earnestness, it must needs be admitted, that he also derives the kind of his nature. But this author is, after all, self-contradictory: at one time he says that “souls are the offspring of God,—not, indeed, by nature, but by endowment;” and at another time he says, that “they are not made out of nothing, but derive their origin from God.” Thus he does not hesitate to refer them to the nature of God, a position which he had previously denied.

CHAPTER 33

AUGUSTIN HAS NO OBJECTION TO THE OPINION ABOUT THE PROPAGATION OF SOULS BEING REFUTED, AND THAT ABOUT THEIR INSUFFLATION BEING MAINTAINED

As for the opinion, that new souls are created by inbreathing without being propagated, we certainly do not in the least object to its maintenance,—only let it be by persons who have succeeded in discovering some new evidence, either in the canonical Scriptures, in the shape of unambiguous testimony towards the solution of a most knotty question, or else in their own reasonings, such as shall not be opposed to catholic truth, but not by such persons as this man has shown himself to be. Unable to find anything worth saying, and at the same time unwilling to suspend his disputatious propensity, without measuring his strength at all, in order to avoid saying nothing, he boldly affirmed that "the soul deserved to be polluted by the flesh," and that "the soul deserved to become sinful;" though previous to its incarnation he was unable to discover any merit in it, whether good or evil. Moreover, that "in infants departing from the body without baptism original sin may be remitted, and that the sacrifice of Christ's body must be offered for them," who have not been incorporated into Christ through His sacraments in His Church, and that "they, quitting this present life without the laver of regeneration, not only can go to rest, but can even attain to the kingdom of heaven." He has propounded a good many other absurdities, which it would be evidently tedious to collect together, and to consider in this treatise. If the doctrine of the propagation of souls is false, may its refutation not be the work of such disputants; and may the defence of the rival principle of the insufflation of new souls in every creative act, proceed from better hands.

CHAPTER 34

THE MISTAKES WHICH MUST BE AVOIDED BY THOSE WHO SAY THAT MEN'S SOULS ARE NOT DERIVED FROM THEIR PARENTS, BUT ARE AFRESH INBREATHED BY GOD IN EVERY INSTANCE

All, therefore, who wish to maintain that new souls are rightly said to be breathed into persons at their birth, and not derived from their parents, must by all means be cautious on each of the four points which I have already mentioned. That is to say, do not let them affirm that souls become sinful by another’s original sin; do not let them affirm that infants who died unbaptized can possibly reach eternal life and the kingdom of heaven by the remission of original sin in any other way whatever; do not let them affirm that souls had sinned in some other place previous to their incarnation, and that on this account they were forcibly introduced into sinful flesh; nor let them affirm that the sins which were not actually found in them were, because they were foreknown, deservedly punished, although they were never permitted to reach that life where they could be committed. Provided that they affirm none of these points, because each of them is simply false and impious, they may, if they can, produce any conclusive testimonies of the Holy Scriptures on this question; and they may maintain their own opinion, not only without any prohibition from me, but even with my approbation and best thanks. If, however, they fail to discover any very decided authority on the point in the divine oracles, and are obliged to propound any one of the four opinions by reason of their failure, let them restrain their imagination, lest they should be driven in their difficulty to enunciate the now damnable and very recently condemned heresy of Pelagius, to the effect that the souls of infants have not original sin. It is, indeed, better for a man to confess his ignorance of what he knows nothing about, than either to run into heresy which has been already condemned, or to found some new heresy, while recklessly daring to defend over and over again opinions which only display his ignorance. This man has made some other absurd mistakes, indeed many, in which he has wandered out of the beaten track of truth, without going, however, to dangerous lengths; and I would like, if the Lord be willing, to write even to himself something on the subject of his books; and probably I shall point them all out to him, or a good many of them if I should be unable to notice all.

CHAPTER 35 [XX.]

CONCLUSION

As for this present treatise, which I have thought it proper to address to no other person in preference to yourself, who have taken a kindly and true interest both in our common faith and my character, as a true catholic and a good friend, you will give it to be read or copied by any persons you may be able to find interested in the subject, or may deem worthy to be trusted. In it I have thought proper to repress and confute the presumption of this young man, in such a way, however, as to show that I love him, wishing him to be amended rather than condemned, and to make such progress in the great house which is the catholic Church, whither the divine compassion has conducted him, that he may be therein "a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work," both by holy living and sound teaching. But I have this further to say: if it behoves me to bestow my love upon him, as I sincerely do, how much more ought I to love you, my brother, whose affection towards me and whose catholic faith I have found by the best of proofs to be cautious and sober! The result of your loyalty has been, that you have, with a brother's real love and duty, taken care to have the books, which displeased you, and wherein you found my name treated in a way which ran counter to your liking, copied out and forwarded to me. Now, I am so far from feeling offended at this charitable act of yours, because you did it, that I think I should have had a right, on the true claims of friendship, to have been angry with you if you had not done it. I therefore give you my most earnest thanks. Moreover, I have afforded a still plainer indication of the spirit in which I have accepted your service, by instantly composing this treatise for your consideration, as soon as I had read those books of his.

Book II

In the Shape of a Letter Addressed to the Presbyter Peter

He advises Peter not to incur the imputation of having approved of the books which had been addressed to him by Victor on the origin of the soul, by any use he might make of them, nor to take as Catholic doctrines that person's rash utterances contrary to the Christian faith. Victor's various errors, and those, too, of a very serious character, he points out and briefly confutes; and he concludes with advising Peter himself to try to persuade Victor to amend his errors.

To his Lordship, my dearly beloved brother and fellow-presbyter Peter, Augustin, bishop, sendeth greeting in the Lord.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

DEPRAVED ELOQUENCE AN INJURIOUS ACCOMPLISHMENT

There have reached me the two books of Vincentius Victor, which he addressed in writing to your Holiness; they have been forwarded to me by our brother Renatus, a layman indeed, but a person who has a prudent and religious care about the faith both of himself and of all he loves. On reading these books, I saw that their author was a man of great resources in speech, of which he had enough, and more than enough; but that on the subjects of which he wished to teach, he was as yet insufficiently instructed. If, however, by the gracious gift of the Lord this qualification were also conferred upon him, he would be serviceable to many. For he possesses in no slight degree the faculty of explaining and beautifying what he thinks; all that is wanted is, that he should first take care to think rightly. Depraved eloquence is a hurtful accomplishment; for to persons of inadequate information it always carries the appearance of truth in its readiness of speech. I know not, indeed, how you received his books; but if I am correctly informed, you are said, after reading them, to have been so greatly overjoyed, that you (though an elderly man and a presbyter) kissed the face of this youthful layman, and thanked him for having taught you what you had been previously ignorant of. Now, in this conduct of yours I do not disapprove of your humility; indeed, I rather commend it; for it was not the man whom you praised, but the truth itself which deigned to speak to you through him: only I wish you were able to point out to me what was the truth which you received through him. I should, therefore, be glad if you would show me, in your answer to this letter, what it was he taught you. Be it far from me to be ashamed to learn from a presbyter, since you did not blush to be instructed by a layman, in proclaiming and imitating your humble conduct, if the lessons were only true in which you received instruction.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

HE ASKS WHAT THE GREAT KNOWLEDGE IS THAT VICTOR IMPARTS

Therefore, brother greatly beloved, I desire to know what you learned of him, in order that, if I have already possessed the knowledge, I may participate in your joy; but if I happen to be ignorant, I may be instructed by you. Did you not then understand that there are two somethings, soul and spirit, according as it is said in Scripture, “Thou wilt separate my soul from my spirit”? And that both of them pertain to man’s nature, so that the whole man consists of spirit, and soul, and body? Sometimes, however, these two are combined together under the designation of soul; for instance, in the passage, “And man became a living soul.” Now, in this place the spirit is implied. Similarly in sundry passages the two are described under the name of spirit, as when it is written, “And He bowed His head and gave up the spirit;” in which passage it is the soul that must also be understood. And that the two are of one and the same substance? I suppose that you already knew all this. But if you did not, then you may as well know that you have not acquired any great knowledge, the ignorance of which would be attended with much danger. And if there must be any more subtle discussion on such points it would be better to carry on the controversy with himself, whose wordy qualities we have already discovered. The questions we might consider are: whether, when mention is made of the soul, the spirit is also implied in the term in such a way that the two comprise the soul, the spirit being, as it were, some part of it,—whether, in fact (as this person seemed to think), under the designation soul, the whole is so designated from only a part; or else, whether the two together make up the spirit, that which is properly called soul being a part thereof; whether again, in fact, the whole is not called from only a part, when the term spirit is used in such a wide sense as to comprehend the soul also, as this man supposes. These, however, are but subtle distinctions, and ignorance about them certainly is not attended with any great danger.

CHAPTER 3

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SENSES OF THE BODY AND SOUL

Again, I wonder whether this man taught you the difference between the bodily senses and the sensibilities of the soul; and whether you, who were a person of considerable age and position before you took lessons of this man, used to consider to be one and the same that faculty by which white and black are distinguished, which sparrows even see as well as ourselves, and that by which justice and injustice are discriminated, which Tobit also perceived even after he lost the sight of his eyes. If you held the identity, then, of course, when you heard or read the words, “Lighten my eyes, that I sleep not in death,” you merely thought of the eyes of the body. Or if this were an obscure point, at all events when you recalled the words of the apostle, “The eyes of your heart being enlightened,” you must have supposed that we possessed a heart somewhere between our forehead and cheeks. Well, I am very far from thinking this of you, so that this instructor of yours could not have given you such a lesson.

CHAPTER 4

TO BELIEVE THE SOUL IS A PART OF GOD IS BLASPHEMY

And if you happened to suppose, before receiving the instruction from this teacher, which you are rejoicing to have received, that the human soul is a portion of God’s nature, then you were ignorant how false and terribly dangerous this opinion was. And if you only were taught by this person that the soul is not a portion of God, then I bid you thank God as earnestly as you can that you were not taken away out of the body before learning so important a lesson. For you would have quitted life a great heretic and a terrible blasphemer. However, I never could have believed this of you, that a man who is both a catholic and a presbyter of no contemptible position like yourself, could by any means have thought that the soul's nature is a portion of God. I therefore cannot help expressing to your beloved self my fears that this man has by some means or other taught you that which is decidedly opposed to the faith which you were holding.

CHAPTER 5 [III.]

IN WHAT SENSE CREATED BEINGS ARE OUT OF GOD

Now, just because I do not suppose that you, a member of the catholic Church, ever believed the human soul to be a portion of God, or that the soul's nature is in any degree identical with God's, I have some apprehension lest you may have been induced to fall in with this man's opinion, that "God did not make the soul from nothing, but that the soul is so far out of Him as to have emanated from Him." For he has put out such a statement as this, with his other opinions, which have led him out of the usual track on this subject to a huge precipice. Now, if he has taught you this, I do not want you to teach it to me; nay, I should wish you to unlearn what you have been taught. For it is not enough to avoid believing and saying that the soul is a part of God. We do not even say that the Son or the Holy Ghost is a part of God, although we affirm that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all of one and the same nature. It is not, then, enough for us to avoid saying that the soul is a part of God, but it is of indispensable importance that we should say that the soul and God are not of one and the self-same nature. This person is therefore right in declaring that "souls are God's offspring, not by nature, but by gift;" and then, of course, not the souls of all men, but of the faithful. But afterwards he returned to the statement from which he had shrunk, and affirmed that God and the soul are of the same nature—not, indeed, in so many words, but plainly and manifestly to such a purport. For when he says that the soul is out of God, in such a manner that God created it not out of any other nature, nor out of nothing, but out of His own self, what would he have us believe but the very thing which he denies, in other words, even that the soul is of the self-same nature as God Himself is? For every nature is either God, who has no author; or out of God, as having Him for its Author. But the nature which has for its author God, out of whom it comes, is either not made, or made. Now, that nature which is not made and yet is out of Him, is either begotten by Him or proceeds from Him. That which is begotten is His only Son, that which proceedeth is the Holy Ghost, and this Trinity is of one and the self-same nature. For these three are one, and each one is God, and all three together are one God, unchangeable, eternal, without any beginning or ending of time. That nature, on the other hand, which is made is called "creature;" God is its Creator, even the blessed Trinity. The creature, therefore, is said to be out of God in such wise as not to be made out of His nature. It is predicated as out of Him, inasmuch as it has in Him the author of its being, not so as to have been born of Him, or to have proceeded from Him, but as having been created, moulded, and formed by Him, in some cases, out of no other substance,—that is, absolutely out of nothing, as, for instance, the heaven and the earth, or rather the whole material of the universe coeval in its creation with the world—but, in some cases, out of another nature already created and in existence, as, for instance, man out of the dust, woman out of the man, and man out of his parents. Still, every creature is out of God,—but out of God as its creator either out of nothing, or out of something previously existing, not, however, as its begetter or its producer from His own very self.

CHAPTER 6

SHALL GOD'S NATURE BE MUTABLE, SINFUL, IMPIOUS, EVEN ETERNALLY DAMNED

All this, however, I am saying to a catholic: advising with him rather than teaching him. For I do not suppose that these things are new to you; or that they have been long heard of by you, but not believed. This epistle of mine, you will, I am sure, so read as to recognise in its statement your own faith also, which is by the gracious gift of the Lord the common property of us all in the catholic Church. Since, then (as I was saying), I am now speaking to a catholic, whence I pray you tell me, do you suppose that the soul, I will not say your soul or my own soul, but the soul of the first man, was given to him? If you admit that it came from nothing, made, however, and inbreathed into him by God, then your belief tallies with my own. If, on the contrary, you suppose that it came out of some other created thing, which served as the material, as it were, for the divine Artificer to make the soul out of, just as the dust was the material of which Adam was formed, or the rib whence Eve was made, or the waters whence the fishes and the fowls were created, or the ground out of which the terrestrial animals were formed: then this opinion is not catholic, nor is it true. But further, if you think, which may God forbid, that the divine Creator made, or is still making, human souls neither out of nothing, nor out of some other created thing, but out of His own self, that is, out of His own nature, then you have learnt this of your new instructor; but I cannot congratulate you, or flatter you, on the discovery. You have wandered along with him very far from the catholic faith. Better would it be, though it would be untrue, yet it would be better, I say, and more tolerable, that you should believe the soul to have been made out of some other created substance which God had already formed, than out of God's own uncreated substance, so that what is mutable, and sinful, and impious, and if persistent to the end in the impiety will have to suffer eternal damnation, should not with horrible blasphemy be referred to the nature of God! Away, brother, I beseech you, away with this, I will not call it faith, but execrably impious error. May God avert from you, a man of gravity and a presbyter, the misery of being seduced by a youthful layman; and, while supposing that your opinion is the catholic faith, of being lost from the number of the faithful. For I must not deal with you as I might with him; nor does this tremendous error, when yours, deserve the same indulgence as being that of this young man, although you may have derived it from him. He has but just now found his way to the catholic fold to get healing and safety; you have a rank among the very shepherds of that fold. But we would not that a sheep which comes to the Lord's flock for shelter from error, should be healed of his sores in such a way, as first to infect and destroy the shepherd by his contagious presence.

CHAPTER 7

TO THINK THE SOUL CORPOREAL AN ERROR

But if you say to me, He has not taught me this; nor have I by any means given my assent to this erroneous opinion of his, however much I was enchanted by the sweetness of his eloquent and elegant discourse; then I earnestly thank God. Still I cannot help asking, why, even with kisses, as the report goes, you expressed your gratitude to him for having taught you what you were ignorant of, previous to hearing his discussion. Now if it be a false report which makes you to have done and said so much, then I beg you to be kind enough to give me this assurance, that the idle rumour may be stopped by your own written authority. If, however, it is true that you bestowed your thanks with such humility upon this man, I should rejoice, indeed, if he has not taught you to believe the opinion which I have already pointed out as a detestable one, and to be carefully avoided as such. Nor shall I find fault [IV.] if your humble thanks to your instructor were further earned by your having acquired from discussions with him some other true and useful knowledge. But may I ask you what it is? Is it that the soul is not spirit, but body? Well, I really do not think ignorance on such a point is any great injury to Christian learning; and if you indulge in more subtle disputes about the different kinds of bodily substance, I think the information you obtain is more difficult than serviceable. If, however, the Lord will that I should write to this young man himself, as I desire to do, then perhaps your loving self will know to what extent you are not indebted to him for your instruction; although you rejoice in what you have learnt from him. And now I request you not to feel annoyance in writing me an answer; so that what is clearly useful and pertinent to our indispensable faith may not by any chance turn out to be something different.

CHAPTER 8

THE THIRST OF THE RICH MAN IN HELL DOES NOT PROVE THE SOUL TO BE CORPOREAL

Now with regard to the point, which with perfect propriety and great soundness of view he believes, that souls after quitting the body are judged, before they come to that final judgment to which they must submit when their bodies are restored to them, and are either tormented or glorified in the very same flesh wherein they once lived here on earth; is it, let me ask you, the case that you were really ignorant of this? Who ever had his mind so obstinately set against the gospel as not to hear these truths, and after hearing to believe them, in the parable of the poor man who was carried away after death to Abraham's bosom, and of the rich man who is set forth as suffering torment in hell? But has this man taught you how it was that the soul apart from the body could crave from the beggar's finger a drop of water; when he himself confessed, that the soul did not require bodily aliment except for the purpose of protecting the perishing body which encloses it from dissolution? These are his words: "Is it," asks he, "because the soul craves meat and drink, that we suppose material food passes into it?" Then shortly afterwards he says: "From this circumstance it is understood and proved, that the sustenance of meat and drink is not wanted for the soul, but for the body: for which clothing also, in addition to food, is provided in like manner; so that the supplying of food seems to be necessary to that nature, which is also fitted for wearing clothes." This opinion of his he expounds clearly enough; but he adds some illustrative similes, and says: "Now what do we suppose the occupier of a house does on an inspection of his dwelling? If he observe the tenement has a shaky roof, or a nodding wall, or a weak foundation, does he not fetch girders and build up buttresses, in order that he may succeed in propping up by his care and diligence the fabric which threatened to fall, so that in the dangerous plight of the residence the peril which evidently overhung the occupier might be warded off? From this simile," says he, "see how the soul craves for its flesh, from which it undoubtedly conceives the craving itself." Such are the very lucid and adequate words in which this young person has explained his ideas: he asserts that it is not the soul, but the body, which requires food; out of a careful regard, no doubt, of the former for the latter, as one that occupies a dwelling-house, and by a prudent repair prevents the downfall with which the fleshly tenement was threatened. Well, now, let him go on to explain to you what probable ruin this particular soul of the rich man was so eager to prevent by propping up, seeing that it no longer possessed a mortal body, and yet suffered thirst, and begged for the drop of water from the poor man's finger. Here is a good knotty question for this astute instructor of elderly men to exercise himself on; let him inquire, and find a solution if he can: for what purpose did that soul in hell beg the aliment of ever so small a drop of water, when it had no ruinous tenement to support?

CHAPTER 9 [V.]

HOW COULD THE INCORPOREAL GOD BREATHE OUT OF HIMSELF A CORPOREAL SUBSTANCE?

In that he believes God to be truly incorporeal, I congratulate him that herein, at all events, he has kept himself uninfluenced by the ravings of Tertullian. For he insisted, that as the soul is corporeal, so likewise is God. It is therefore specially surprising that our author, who differs from Tertullian in this point, yet labours to persuade us that the incorporeal God does not make the soul out of nothing, but exhales it as a corporeal breath out of Himself. What a wonderful learning that must be to which every age erects its attentive ears, and which contrives to gain for its disciples men of advanced years, and even presbyters! Let this eminent man read what he has written, read it in public; let him invite to hear the reading well-known persons and unknown ones, learned and unlearned. Old men, assemble with your younger instructors; learn what you used to know nothing about; hear now what you had never heard before. Behold, according to the teaching of this scribe, God creates a breath, not out of something else which exists in some way or other, and not out of that which absolutely has no existence; but out of that which He is Himself, perfectly incorporeal, He breathes a body so that He actually changes His own incorporeal nature into a body, before it undergoes the change into the body of sin. Does he say, that He does not change something out of His own nature, when He creates breath? Then, of course, He does not make that breath out of Himself: for He is not Himself one thing, and His nature another thing. What is this insane man thinking of? But if he says that God creates breath out of His own nature in such a way as to remain absolutely entire Himself, this is not the question. The question is, whether that which comes not of some previously created substance, nor from nothing, but from Him, is not what He is, that is, of the same nature and essence? Now He remains absolutely entire after the generation of His Son; but because He begat Him of His own nature, He did not beget a something which was different from that which He is Himself. For, putting to one side the circumstance that the Word took on Himself a human nature and became flesh, the Word who is the Son of God is another but not another thing: that is, He is another person but not a different nature. And whence does this come to pass, except from the fact that He is not created out of something else, or out of nothing, but was begotten out of Himself; not that He might be better than He was, but that He might be altogether even what He is of whom He is begotten; that is, of one and the same nature, equal, co-eternal, in every way like, equally unchangeable, equally invisible, equally incorporeal, equally God; in a word, that He might be altogether what the Father is, except that He actually is Himself the Son, and not the Father? But if He remains Himself the same God entire and unimpaired, but yet creates something different from Himself, and worse than Himself, not out of nothing, nor out of some other creature, but out of His very self; and that something emanates as a body out ofthe incorporeal God; then God forbid that a catholic should imbibe such an opinion, for it does not flow from the divine fountain, but it is a mere fiction of the human mind.

CHAPTER 10 [VI.]

CHILDREN MAY BE FOUND OF LIKE OR OF UNLIKE DISPOSITIONS WITH THEIR PARENTS

Then, again, how ineptly he labours to free the soul, which he supposes to be corporeal, from the passions of the body, raising questions about the soul’s infancy; about the soul’s emotions, when paralysed and oppressed; about the amputation of bodily limbs, without cutting or dividing the soul. But in dealing with such points as these, my duty is to treat rather with him than with you; it is for him to labour to assign a reason for all he says. In this way we shall not seem to wish to be too importunate with an elderly man’s gravity on the subject of a young man’s work. As to the similarity of disposition to the parents which is discovered in their children, he does not dispute its coming from the soul’s seed. Accordingly, this is the opinion also of those persons who do away with the soul’s propagation; but the opposite party who entertain this theory do not place on this the weight of their assertion. For they observe also that children are unlike their parents in disposition; and the reason of this, as they suppose, is, that one and the same person very often has various dispositions himself, unlike each other, —not, of course, that he has received another soul, but that his life has undergone a change for the better or for the worse. So they say that there is no impossibility in a soul’s not possessing the same disposition which he had by whom it was propagated, seeing that the selfsame soul may have different dispositions at different times. If, therefore, you think that you have learnt this of him, that the soul does not come to us by natural transmission at birth,—I only wish that you had discovered from him the truth of the case,—I would with the greatest pleasure resign myself to your hands to learn the whole truth. But really to learn is one thing, and to seem to yourself to have learned is another thing. If, then, you suppose that you have learned what you still are ignorant of, you have evidently not learnt, but given a random credence to a pleasant hearsay. Falsity has stolen over you in the suavity. Now I do not say this from feeling as yet any certainty as to the proposition being false, which asserts that souls are created afresh by God's inbreathing rather than derived from the parents at birth; for I think that this is a point which still requires proof from those who find themselves able to teach it. No; my reason for saying it is, that this person has discussed the whole subject in such a way as not only not to solve the point still in dispute, but even to indulge in statements which leave no doubt as to their falsity. In his desire to prove things of doubtful import, he has boldly stated things which undoubtedly merit reprobation.

CHAPTER 11 [VII.]

VICTOR IMPLIES THAT THE SOUL HAD A "STATE" AND "MERIT" BEFORE INCARNATION

Would you hesitate yourself to reprobate what he has said concerning the soul? "You will not have it," he says, "that the soul contracts from the sinful flesh the health, to which holy state you can see it in due course pass by means of the flesh, so as to amend its state through that by which it had lost its merit? Or is it because baptism washes the body that what is believed to be conferred by baptism does not pass on to the soul or spirit? It is only right, therefore, that the soul should, by means of the flesh, repair that old condition which it had seemed to have gradually lost through the flesh, in order that it may begin a regenerate state by means of that whereby it had deserved to be polluted." Now, do observe how grave an error this teacher has fallen into! He says that "the soul repairs its condition by means of the flesh through which it had lost its merit." The soul, then, must have possessed some state and some good merit previous to the flesh, which he would have that it recovers through the flesh, when the flesh is cleansed in the laver of regeneration. Therefore, previous to the flesh, the soul had lived somewhere in a good state and merit, which state and merit it lost when it came into the flesh. His words are, “that the soul repairs by means of the flesh that primitive condition which it had seemed to have gradually lost through the flesh.” The soul, then, possessed before the flesh, an ancient condition (for his term “primitive” describes the antiquity of the state); and what could that ancient condition have possibly been, but a blessed and laudable state? Now, he avers that this happiness is recovered through the sacrament of baptism, although he will not admit that the soul derives its origin through propagation from that soul which was once manifestly happy in paradise. How is it, then, that in another passage he says that “he constantly affirms of the soul that it exists not by propagation, nor comes out of nothing, nor exists by its own self, nor previous to the body”? You see how in this place he insists that souls do exist prior to the body somewhere or other, and that in so happy a state that the same happiness is restored to them by means of baptism. But, as if forgetful of his own views, he goes on to speak of its “beginning a regenerate state by means of that,” meaning the flesh, “whereby it had deserved to be polluted.” In a previous statement he had indicated some good desert which had been lost by means of the flesh; now, however, he speaks of some evil desert, by means of which it had happened that the soul had to come, or be sent, into the flesh; for his words are, “By which it had deserved to be polluted;” and if it deserved to be polluted, its merits could not, of course, have been good. Pray let him tell us what sin it had committed previous to its pollution by the flesh, in consequence of which it merited such pollution by the flesh. Let him, if he can, explain to us a matter which is utterly beyond his power, because it is certainly far above his reach to discover what to tell us on this subject which shall be true.

CHAPTER 12 [VIII.]

HOW DID THE SOUL DESERVE TO BE INCARNATED?

He also says some time afterwards: “The soul therefore, if it deserved to be sinful, although it could not have been sinful, yet did not remain in sin; because, as it was prefigured in Christ, it was bound not to be in a sinful state, even as it was unable to be.” Now, my brother, do you, I ask, really think thus? At any rate, have you formed such an opinion, after having read and duly considered his words, and after having reflected upon what extorted from you praise during his reading, and the expression of your gratitude after he had ended? I pray you, tell me what this means: “Although the soul deserved to be sinful, which could not have been sinful.” What mean his phrases, deserved and could not? For it could not possibly have deserved its alleged fate, unless it had been sinful; nor would it have been, unless it could have been, sinful,—so as, by committing sin previous to any evil desert, it might make for itself a position whence it might, under God’s desertion, advance to the commission of other sins. When he said, “which could not have been sinful,” did he mean, which would not have been able to be sinful, unless it came in the flesh? But how did it deserve a mission at all into a state where it could be sinful, when it could not possibly have become capable of sinning anywhere else, unless it entered that particular state? Let him, then, tell us how it so deserved. For if it deserved to become capable of sinning, it must certainly have already committed some sin, in consequence of which it deserved to be sinful again. These points, however, may perhaps appear to be obscure, or may be tauntingly said to be of such a character, but they are really most plain and clear. The truth is, he ought not to have said that “the soul deserved to become sinful through the flesh,” when he will never be able to discover any desert of the soul, either good or bad, previous to its being in the flesh.

CHAPTER 13 [IX.]

VICTOR TEACHES THAT GOD THWARTS HIS OWN PREDESTINATION

Let us now go on to plainer matters. For while he was confined within these great straits, as to how souls can be held bound by the chain of original sin, when they derive not their origin from the soul which first sinned, but the Creator breathes them afresh at every birth into sinful flesh,—pure from all contagion and propagation of sin:—in order that he might avoid the objection being brought against his argument, that thus God makes them guilty by such insufflation, he first of all had recourse to the theory drawn from God’s prescience, that “He had provided redemption for them.” Infants are by the sacrament of this redemption baptized, so that the original sin which they contracted from the flesh is washed away, as if God were remedying His own acts for having made these souls polluted. But afterwards, when he comes to speak of those who receive no such assistance, but expire before they are baptized, he says: “In this place I do not offer myself as an authority, but I present you with an example by way of conjecture. We say, then, that some such method as this must be had recourse to in the case of infants, who, being predestinated for baptism, are yet, by the failing of this life, hurried away before they are born again in Christ. We read,” adds he, “it written of such, Speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul. Therefore He hasted to take him away from among the wicked, for his soul pleased the Lord; and, being made perfect in a short time, he fulfilled a long time.” Now who would disdain having such a teacher as this? Is it the case, then, with infants, whom people usually wish to have baptized, even hurriedly, before they die, that, if they should be detained ever so short a time in this life, that they might be baptized, and then at once die, wickedness would alter their understanding, and deceit beguile their soul; and to prevent this happening to them, a hasty death came to their rescue, so that they were suddenly taken away before they were baptized? By their very baptism, then, they were changed for the worse, and beguiled by deceit, if it was after baptism that they were snatched away. O excellent teaching, worthy to be admired and closely followed! But he presumed greatly on the prudence of all you who were present at his reading, and especially on yours, to whom he addressed this treatise and handed it after the reading, in supposing that you would believe that the scripture he quoted was intended for the case of unbaptized infants, although it was written of the immature ages of all those saints whom foolish men deem to be hardly dealt with, whenever they are suddenly removed from the present life and are not permitted to attain to the years which people covet for themselves as a great gift of God. What, however, is the meaning of these words of his: “Infants predestinated for baptism, who are yet, by the failing of this life, hurried away before they are born again in Christ,” as if some power of fortune, or fate, or anything else you please, did not permit God to fulfil what He had fore-ordained? And how is it that He hurries them Himself away, when they have pleased Him? Then, does He really predestinate them to be baptized, and then Himself hinder the accomplishment of the very thing which He has predestinated?

CHAPTER 14 [X.]

VICTOR SENDS THOSE INFANTS WHO DIE UNBAPTIZED TO PARADISE AND THE HEAVENLY MANSIONS, BUT NOT TO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

But I beg you mark how bold he is, who is displeased with hesitancy, which prefers to be cautious rather than overknowing in a question so profound as this: “I would be bold to say”—such are his words—”that they can attain to the forgiveness of their original sins, yet not so as to be admitted into the kingdom of heaven. Just as in the case of the thief on the cross, who confessed but was not baptized, the Lord did not give him the kingdom of heaven, but paradise; the words remaining accordingly in full force, Except a man be born again of water and of the Holy Ghost, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.’ This is especially true, inasmuch as the Lord acknowledges that in His Father’s house are many mansions, by which are indicated the many different merits of those who dwell in them; so that in these abodes the unbaptized is brought to forgiveness, and the baptized to the reward which by grace has been prepared for him.” You observe how the man keeps paradise and the mansions of the Father’s house distinct from the kingdom of heaven, so that even unbaptized persons may have an abundant provision in places of eternal happiness. Nor does he see, when he says all this, that he is so unwilling to distinguish the future abode of a baptized infant from the kingdom of heaven as to have no fear in keeping distinct therefrom the very house of God the Father, or the several parts thereof. For the Lord Jesus did not say: In all the created universe, or in any portion of that universe, but, “In my Father’s house, are many mansions.” But in what way shall an unbaptized person live in the house of God the Father, when he cannot possibly have God for his Father, except he be born again? He should not be so ungrateful to God, who has vouchsafed to deliver him from the sect of the Donatists or Rogatists, as to aim at dividing the house of God the Father, and to put one portion of it outside the kingdom of heaven, where the unbaptized may be able to dwell. And on what terms does he himself presume that he is to enter into the kingdom of heaven, when from that kingdom he excludes the house of the King

Himself, in what part soever He pleases? From the case, however, of the thief who, when crucified at the Lord's side, put his hope in the Lord who was crucified with him, and from the case of Dinocrates, the brother of St. Perpetua, he argues that even to the unbaptized may be given the remission of sins and an abode with the blessed; as if any one unbelief in whom would be a sin, had shown him that the thief and Dinocrates had not been baptized. Concerning these cases, however, I have more fully explained my views in the book which I wrote to our brother Renatus. This your loving self will be able to ascertain if you will condescend to read the book; for I am sure our brother will not find it in his heart to refuse you, if you ask him the loan of it.

CHAPTER 15 [XI.]

VICTOR "DECIDES" THAT OBLATIONS SHOULD BE OFFERED UP FOR THOSE WHO DIE UNBAPTIZED

Still he chafes with indecision, and is well-nigh suffocated in the terrible straits of his theory; for very likely he descries with a more sensitive eye than you, the amount of evil which he enunciates, to the effect that original sin in infants is effaced without Christ's sacrament of baptism. It is, indeed, for the purpose of finding an escape to some extent, and tardily, in the Church's sacraments that he says: "In their behalf I most certainly decide that constant oblations and incessant sacrifices must be offered up on the part of the holy priests." Well, then, you may take him if you like for your arbiter, if it were not enough to have him as your instructor. Let him decide that you must offer up the sacrifice of Christ's body even for those who have not been incorporated into Christ. Now this is quite a novel idea, and foreign to the Church's discipline and the rule of truth: and yet, when daring to propound it in his books, he does not modestly say, I rather think; he does not say, I suppose; he does not say, I am of opinion; nor does he say, I at least would suggest, or mention;—but he says, I give it as my decision; so that, should we be (as might be likely) offended by the novelty or the perverseness of his opinion, we might be overawed by the authority of his judicial determination. It is your own concern, my brother, how to be able to bear him as your instructor in these views. Catholic priests, however, of right feeling (and among them you ought to take your place) could never keep quiet—God forbid it—and hear this man pronounce his decisions, when they would wish him rather to recover his senses, and be sorry both for having entertained such opinions, and for having gone so far as to commit them to writing, and chastise himself with the most wholesome discipline of repentance. “Now it is,” says he; “on this example of the Maccabees who fell in battle that I ground the necessity of doing this. When they offered stealthily some interdicted sacrifices, and after they had fallen in the battle, we find,” says he, “that this remedial measure was at once resorted to by the priests,—sacrifices were offered up to liberate their souls, which had been bound by the guilt of their forbidden conduct.” But he says all this, as if (according to his reading of the story) those atoning sacrifices were offered up for uncircumcised persons, as he has decided that these sacrifices of ours must be offered up for unbaptized persons. For circumcision was the sacrament of that period, which prefigured the baptism of our day.

CHAPTER 16 [XII.]

VICTOR PROMISES TO THE UNBAPTIZED PARADISE AFTER THEIR DEATH, AND THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN AFTER THEIR RESURRECTION, ALTHOUGH HE ADMITS THAT THIS OPPOSES CHRIST’S STATEMENT

But your friend, in comparison with what he has shown himself to be further on, thus far makes mistakes which one may somewhat tolerate. He apparently felt some disposition to relent; not, to be sure, at what he ought to have misgivings about, namely, for having ventured to assert that original sin is relaxed even in the case of the unbaptized, and that remission is given to them of all their sins, so that they are admitted into paradise, that is, to a place of great happiness, and possess a claim to the happy mansions in our Father’s house; but he seems to have entertained some regret at having conceded to them abodes of lesser blessedness outside the kingdom of heaven. Accordingly he goes on to say, “Or if any one is perhaps reluctant to believe that paradise is bestowed as a temporary and provisional gift on the soul of the thief or of Dinocrates (for there remains for them still, in the resurrection, the reward of the kingdom of heaven), although that principal passage stands in the way,—Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God.’—he may yet hold my assent as ungrudgingly given to this point; only let him magnify both the aim and the effect of the divine compassion and fore-knowledge.” These words have I copied, as I read them in his second book. Well, now, could any one have shown on this erroneous point greater boldness, recklessness, or presumption? He actually quotes and calls attention to the Lord’s weighty sentence, encloses it in a statement of his own, and then says, “Although the opinion is opposed to the principal passage,’ Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God;’“ he dares then to lift his haughty head in censure against the Prince’s judgment: “He may yet hold my assent as ungrudgingly given to this point;” and he explains his point to be, that the souls of unbaptized persons have a claim to paradise as a temporary gift; and in this class he mentions the dying thief and Dinocrates, as if he were prescribing, or rather prejudging, their destination; moreover, in the resurrection, he will have them transferred to a better provision, even making them receive the reward of the kingdom of heaven. “Although,” says he, “this is opposed to the sentence of the Prince.” Now, do you, my brother, I pray you, seriously consider this question: What sentence of the Prince shall that man deserve to have passed upon him, who imposes on any person an assent of his own which runs counter to the authority of the Prince Himself?

CHAPTER 17

DISOBEDIENT COMPASSION AND COMPASSIONATE DISOBEDIENCE REPROBATED. MARTYRDOM IN LIEU OF BAPTISM

The new-fangled Pelagian heretics have been most justly condemned by the authority of catholic councils and of the Apostolic See, on the ground of their having dared to give to unbaptized infants a place of rest and salvation, even apart from the kingdom of heaven. This they would not have dared to do, if they did not deny their having original sin, and the need of its remission by the sacrament of baptism. This man, however, professes the catholic belief on this point, admitting that infants are tied in the bonds of original sin, and yet he releases them from these bonds without the laver of regeneration, and after death, in his compassion, he admits them into paradise; while, with a still ampler compassion, he introduces them after the resurrection even to the kingdom of heaven. Such compassion did Saul see fit to assume when he spared the king whom God commanded to be slain; deservedly, however, was his disobedient compassion, or (if you prefer it) his compassionate disobedience, reprobated and condemned, that man may be on his guard against extending mercy to his fellow-man, in opposition to the sentence of Him by whom man was made. Truth, by the mouth of Itself incarnate, proclaims as if in a voice of thunder: “Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” And in order to except martyrs from this sentence, to whose lot it has fallen to be slain for the name of Christ before being washed in the baptism of Christ, He says in another passage, “He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” And so far from promising the abolition of original sin to any one who has not been regenerated in the laver of Christian faith, the apostle exclaims, “By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.” And as a counterbalance against this condemnation, the Lord exhibits the help of His salvation alone, saying, “He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Now the mystery of this believing in the case of infants is completely effected by the response of the sureties by whom they are taken to baptism; and unless this be effected, they all pass by the offence of one into condemnation. And yet, in opposition to such clear declarations uttered by the Truth, forth marches before all men a vanity which is more foolish than pitiful, and says: Not only do infants not pass into condemnation, though no laver of Christian faith absolves them from the chain of original sin, but they even after death have an intermediate enjoyment of the felicities of paradise, and after the resurrection they shall possess even the happiness of the kingdom of heaven. Now, would this man dare to say all this in opposition to the firmly-established catholic faith, if he had not presumptuously undertaken to solve a question which transcends his powers touching the origin of the soul?

CHAPTER 18 [XIII.]

VICTOR’S DILEMMA AND FALL

For he is hemmed in within terrible straits by those who make the natural inquiry: “Why has God visited on the soul so unjust a punishment as to have willed to relegate it into a body of sin, since by its consorting with the flesh that began to be sinful, which else could not have been sinful?” For, of course, they say: “The soul could not have been sinful, if God had not commingled it in the participation of sinful flesh.” Well, this opponent of mine was unable to discover the justice of God’s doing this, especially in consequence of the eternal damnation of infants who die without the remission of original sin by baptism; and his inability was equally great in finding out why the good and righteous God both bound the souls of infants, who He foresaw would derive no advantage from the sacrament of Christian grace, with the chain of original sin, by sending them into the body which they derive from Adam,—the souls themselves being free from all taint of propagation,—and by this means also made them amenable to eternal damnation. No less was he unwilling to admit that these very souls likewise derived their sinful origin from that one primeval soul. And so he preferred escaping by a miserable shipwreck of faith, rather than to furl his sails and steady his oars, in the voyage of his controversy, and by such prudent counsel check the fatal rashness of his course. Worthless in his youthful eye was our aged caution; just as if this most troublesome and perilous question of his was more in need of a torrent of eloquence than the counsel of prudence. And this was foreseen even by himself, but to no purpose; for, as if to set forth the points which were objected to him by his opponents, he says: “After them other reproachful censures are added to the querulous murmurings of those who rail against us; and, as if tossed about in a whirlwind, we are dashed repeatedly among huge rocks.” After saying this, he propounded for himself the very dangerous question, which we have already treated, wherein he has wrecked the catholic faith, unless by a real repentance he shall have repaired the faith which he had shattered. That whirlwind and those rocks I have myself avoided, unwilling to entrust my frail barque to their dangers; and when writing on this subject I have expressed myself in such a way as rather to explain the grounds of my hesitancy, than to exhibit the rashness of presumption. This little work of mine excited his derision, when he met with it at your house, and in utter recklessness he flung himself upon the reef: he showed more spirit than wisdom in his conduct. To what lengths, however, that over-confidence of his led him, I suppose that you can now yourself perceive. But I give heartier thanks to God, since you even before this descried it. For all the while he was refusing to check his headlong career, when the issue of his course was still in doubt, he alighted on his miserable enterprise, and maintained that God, in the case of infants who died without Christian regeneration, conferred upon them paradise at once, and ultimately the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER 19 [XIV.]

VICTOR RELIES ON AMBIGUOUS SCRIPTURES

The passages of Scripture, indeed, which he has adduced in the attempt to prove from them that God did not derive human souls by propagation from the primitive soul, but as in that first instance that He formed them by breathing them into each individual, are so uncertain and ambiguous, that they can with the utmost facility be taken in a different sense from that which he would assign to them. This point I have already demonstrated with sufficient clearness, I think in the book which I addressed to that friend o ours, of whom I have made mention above. The passages which he has used for his proofs inform us that God gives, or makes, or fashion men’s souls; but whence He gives them, or of what He makes or fashions them, they tell us nothing: they leave untouched the question whether it be by propagation from the first soul or by insufflation, like the first soul. This writer however, simply because he reads that God “giveth” souls, “hath made” souls, “formeth” souls, supposes that these phrases amount to a denial of the propagation of souls; whereas, by the testimony of the same scripture, God gives men their bodies, or makes them, or fashions and forms them; although no one doubts that the said bodies are given, made, and formed by Him by seminal propagation.

CHAPTER 20

VICTOR QUOTES SCRIPTURES FOR THEIR SILENCE, AND NEGLECTS THE BIBLICAL USAGE

As for the passage which affirms that “God hath made of one blood all nations of men,” and that in which Adam says, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh,” inasmuch as it is not said in the one, “of one soul,” and in the other, “soul of my soul,” he supposes that it is denied that children’s souls come from their parents, or the first woman’s from her husband just as if, forsooth, had the sentence run in the way suggested, “of one soul,” instead of “of one blood,” anything else than the whole human being could be understood, without any denial of the propagation of the body. So likewise, if it had been said, “soul of my soul,” the flesh would not be denied, of course, which evidently had been taken out of the man. Constantly does Holy Scripture indicate the whole by a part, and a part by the whole. For certainly, if in the passage which this man has quoted as his proof it had been said that the human race had been made, not “of one blood,” but “of one man,” it could not have prejudiced the opinion of those who deny the propagation of souls, although man is not soul alone, nor only flesh, but both. For they would have their answer ready to this effect, that the Scripture here might have meant to indicate a part by the whole, that is to say, the flesh only by the entire human being. In like manner, they who maintain the propagation of souls contend that in the passage where it is said, “of one blood,” the human being is implied by the term “blood,” on the principle of the whole being expressed by a part. For just as the one party seems to be assisted by the expression, “of one blood,” instead of the phrase, “of one man,” so the other side evidently gets countenance from the statement being so plainly written, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all sinned,” instead of its being said, “in whom the flesh of all sinned.” Similarly, as one party seems to receive assistance from the fact that Scripture says, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh,” on the ground that a part covers the whole; so, again, the other side derives some advantage from what is written in the immediate sequel of the passage, “She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of her husband.” For, according to their contention, the latter clause should have run, “Because her flesh was taken out of her husband,” if it was not true that the entire woman, soul and all, but only her flesh, was taken out of man. The fact, however, of the whole matter is simply this, that after hearing both sides, anybody whose judgment is free from party prejudice sees at once that loose quotation is unavailing in this controversy; for against one party, which maintains the opinion of the propagation of souls, those passages must not be adduced which mention only a part, inasmuch as the Scripture might mean by the part to imply the whole in all such passages; as, for instance, when we read, “The Word was made flesh,” we of course understand not the flesh only, but the entire human being; nor against the other party, who deny this doctrine of the soul’s propagation, is it of any avail to quote those passages which do not mention a part of the human being, but the whole; because in these the Scripture might possibly mean to imply a part by the whole; as we confess that Christ was buried, whereas it was only His flesh that was laid in the sepulchre. We therefore say, that on such grounds there is no ground on the one hand for rashly constructing, nor on the other hand for, with equal rashness, demolishing the theory of propagation; but we add this advice, that other passages be duly looked out, such as admit of no ambiguity.

CHAPTER 21 [XV.]

VICTOR’S PERPLEXITY AND FAILURE

For these reasons I fail thus far to discover what this instructor has taught you, and what grounds you have for the gratitude you have lavished upon him. For the question remains just as it was, which inquires about the origin of souls, whether God gives, forms, and makes them for men by propagating them from that one soul which He breathed into the first man, or whether it is by His own inbreathing that He does this in every case, as He did for the first man. For that God does form, and make, and bestow souls on men, the Christian faith does not hesitate to aver. Now, when this person endeavoured to solve the question without gauging his own resources, by denying the propagation of souls, and asserting that the Creator inbreathed them into men pure from all contagion of sin,—not out of nothing, but out of Himself,—He dishonoured the very nature of God by opprobriously attributing mutability to it, an imputation which was necessarily untenable. Then, desirous of avoiding all implication which might lead to God’s being deemed unrighteous, if He ties with the bond of original sin souls which are pure of all actual sin, although not redeemed by Christian regeneration, he has given utterance to words and sentiments which I only wish he had not taught you. For he has accorded to unbaptized infants such happiness and salvation as even the Pelagian heresy could not have ventured on doing. And yet for all this, when the question touches the many thousands of infants who are born of the ungodly, and die among the ungodly,—I do not mean those whom charitable persons are unable to assist by baptism, however desirous of doing so, but those of whose baptism nobody either has been able or shall be able to think, and for whom no one has offered or is likely to offer the sacrifice which, as this instructor of yours thought, ought to be offered even for those who have not been baptized,—he has discovered no means of solving it. If he were questioned concerning them, what their souls deserved that God should involve them in sinful flesh to incur eternal damnation, never to be washed in the laver of baptism, nor atoned for by the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood, he will then either feel himself at an utter loss, and so will regard our hesitation with a real, though tardy favour; or else will determine that Christ's body must be offered for all those infants which all the world over die without Christian baptism (their names having been never heard of, since they are unknown in the Church of Christ), although not incorporated into the body of Christ.

CHAPTER 22 [XVI.]

PETER'S RESPONSIBILITY IN THE CASE OF VICTOR

Far be it from you, my brother, that such views should be pleasant to you, or that you should either feel pleasure in having acquired them, or presume ever to teach them. Otherwise, even he would be a far better man than yourself. Because at the commencement of his first book he has prefixed the following modest and humble preface: "Though I desire to comply with your request, I am only affording a clear proof of my presumption." And a little further on he says, "Inasmuch as I am, indeed, by no means confident of being able to prove what I may have advanced; and moreover I should always be anxious not to insist on any opinion of my own, if it is found to be an improbable one; and it would be my hearty desire, in case my own judgment is condemned, earnestly to follow better and truer views. For as it shows evidence of the best intention, and a laudable purpose, to permit yourself to be easily led to truer views of a subject; so it betokens an obstinate and depraved mind to refuse to turn quickly aside into the pathway of reason." Now, as he said all this sincerely, and still feels as he spoke, he no doubt entertains a very hopeful feeling about a right issue. In similar strain he concludes his second book: "You must not think," says he, "that there is any chance of its ever recoiling invidiously against you, that I constitute you the judge of my words. And lest by chance the sharp eye of some inquisitive reader may have opportunity of turning up and encountering any possible vestiges of elemental error which may be left behind on my illegal sheets, I beg you to tear up page after page with unsparing hand, if need be; and after expending on me your critical censure, punish me further, by smearing out the very ink which has given form to my worthless words; so that, having your full opportunity, you may prevent all ridicule, on the score either of the favourable opinion you so strongly entertain of me, or of the inaccuracies which lurk in my writings."

CHAPTER 23 [XVII.]

WHO THEY ARE THAT ARE NOT INJURED BY READING INJURIOUS BOOKS

Forasmuch, then, as he has both commenced and terminated his books with such safeguards, and has placed on your shoulders the religious burden of their correction and emendation, I only trust that he may find in you all that he has asked you for, that you may "correct him righteously in mercy, and reprove him; whilst the oil of the sinner which anoints his head" is absent from your hands and eyes,—even the indecent compliance of the flatterer, and the deceitful leniency of the sycophant. If, however, you decline to apply correction when you see anything to amend, you offend against love; but if he does not appear to you to require correction, because you think him to be right in his opinions, then you are wise against truth. He, therefore, is a better man (since he is only too ready to be corrected, if a true censurer be at hand) than yourself, if either knowing him to be in error you despise him with derision, or ignorant of his wandering course you at the same time closely follow his error. Everything, therefore, which you find in the books that he has addressed and forwarded to you, I beg you to consider with sobriety and vigilance; and you will perhaps make fuller discoveries than I have myself of statements which deserve to be censured. And as for such of their contents as are worthy of praise and approbation,—whatever good you have learnt therein, and by his instruction, which perhaps you were really ignorant of before, tell us plainly what it is, that all may know that it was for this particular benefit that you expressed your obligations to him, and not for the manifold statements in his books which call for their disapproval,—all, I mean, who, like yourself, heard him read his writings, or who afterwards read the same for themselves: lest in his ornate style they may drink poison, as out of a choice goblet, at your instance, though not after your own example, because they know not precisely what it is you have drunk yourself, and what you have left untasted, and because, from your high character, they suppose that whatever is drunk out of this fountain would be for their health. For what else are hearing, and reading, and copiously depositing things in the memory, than several processes of drinking? The Lord, however, foretold concerning His faithful followers, that even "if they should drink any deadly thing, it should not hurt them." And thus it happens that they who read with judgment, and bestow their approbation on whatever is commendable according to the rule of faith, and disapprove of things which ought to be reprobated, even if they commit to their memory statements which are declared to be worthy of disapproval, they receive no harm from the poisonous and depraved nature of the sentences. To myself, through the Lord's mercy, it can never become a matter of the least regret, that, actuated by our previous love, I have given your reverend and religious self advice and warning on these points, in whatever way you may receive the admonition for which I have regarded you as possessing the first claim upon me. Abundant thanks, indeed, shall I give unto Him in whose mercy it is most salutary to put one's trust, if this letter of mine shall either find or else make your faith both free from the depraved and erroneous opinions which I have been able herein to point out from this man's books, and sound in catholic integrity.

Book III

Addressed to Vincentius Victor

Augustin points out to Vincentius Victor the corrections which he ought to make in his books concerning the origin of the soul, if he wishes to be a Catholic. Those opinions also which had been already refuted in the preceding books addressed to Renatus and Peter, Augustin briefly censures in this third book, which is written to Victor himself: moreover, he classifies them under eleven heads of error.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

AUGUSTIN'S PURPOSE IN WRITING

As to that which I have thought it my duty to write to you, my much-loved son Victor, I would have you to entertain this above all other thoughts in your mind, if I seemed to despise you, that it was certainly not my intention to do so. At the same time I must beg of you not to abuse our condescension in such a way as to suppose that you possess my approval merely because you have not my contempt. For it is not to follow, but to correct you, that I give you my love; and since I by no means despair of the possibility of your amendment, I do not want you to be surprised at my inability to despise the man who has my love. Now, since it was my bounden duty to love you before you had united with us, in order that you might become a catholic; how much more ought I now to love you since your union with us, to prevent your becoming a new heretic, and that you may become so firm a catholic that no heretic may be able to withstand you! So far as appears from the mental endowments which God has largely bestowed upon you, you would be undoubtedly a wise man if you only did not believe that you were one already, and begged of Him who maketh men wise, with a pious, humble, and earnest prayer, that you might become one, and preferred not to be led astray with error rather than to be honoured with the flattery of those who go astray.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

WHY VICTOR ASSUMED THE NAME OF VINCENTIUS. THE NAMES OF EVIL MEN OUGHT NEVER TO BE ASSUMED BY OTHER PERSONS

The first thing which caused me some anxiety about you was the title which appeared in your books with your name; for on inquiring of those who knew you, and were probably your associates in opinion, who Vincentius Victor was, I found that you had been a Donatist, or rather a Rogatist, but had lately come into communion with the catholic Church. Now, while I was rejoicing, as one naturally does at the recovery of those whom he sees rescued from that system of error,—and in your case my joy was all the greater because I saw that your ability, which so much delighted me in your writings, had not remained behind with the enemies of truth,—additional information was given me by your friends which caused me sorrow amid my joy, to the effect that you wished to have the name Vincentius prefixed to your own name, inasmuch as you still held in affectionate regard the successor of Rogatus, who bore this name, as a great and holy man, and that for this reason you wished his name to become your surname. Some persons also told me that you had, moreover, boasted about his having appeared in some sort of a vision to you, and assisted you in composing those books the subject of which I have discussed with you in this small work of mine, and to such an extent as to dictate to you himself the precise topics and arguments which you were to write about. Now, if all this be true, I no longer wonder at your having been able to make those statements which, if you will only lend a patient ear to my admonition, and with the attention of a catholic duly consider and weigh those books, you will undoubtedly come to regret having ever advanced. For he who, according to the apostle's portrait, "transforms himself into an angel of light," has transformed himself before you into a shape which you believe to have been, or still to be, an angel of light. In this way, indeed, he is less able to deceive catholics when his transformations are not into angels of light, but into heretics; now, however, that you are a catholic, I should be sorry for you to be beguiled by him. He will certainly feel torture at your having learnt the truth, and so much the more in proportion to the pleasure he formerly experienced in having persuaded you to believe error. With a view, however, to your refraining from loving a dead person, when the love can neither be serviceable to yourself nor profitable to him, I advise you to consider for a moment this one point—that he is not, of course, a just and holy man, since you withdrew yourself from the snares of the Donatists or Rogatists on the score of their heresy; but if you do think him to be just and holy, you ruin yourself by holding communion with catholics. You are, indeed, only feigning yourself a catholic if you are in mind the same as he was on whom you bestow your love; and you are aware how terribly the Scripture has spoken on this subject: "The Holy Spirit of discipline will flee from the man who feigns." If, however, you are sincere in communicating with us, and do not merely pretend to be a catholic, how is it that you still love a dead man to such a degree as to be willing even now to boast of the name of one in whose errors you no longer permit yourself to be held? We really do not like your having such a surname, as if you were the monument of a dead heretic. Nor do we like your book to have such a title as we should say was a false one if we read it on his tomb. For we are sure Vincentius is not Victor, the conqueror, but Victus, the conquered;—may it be, however, with fruitful effect, even as we wish you to be conquered by the truth! And yet your thought was an astute and skilful one, when you designated the books, which you wish us to suppose were dictated to you by his inspiration, by the name of Vincentius Victor; as much as to intimate that it was rather he than you who wished to be designated by the victorious appellation, as having been himself the conqueror of error, by revealing to you what were to be the contents of your written treatise. But of what avail is all this to you, my son? Be, I pray you, a true catholic, not a feigned one, lest the Holy Spirit should flee from you, and that Vincentius be unable to profit you at all, into whom the most malignant spirit of error has transformed himself for the purpose of deceiving you; for it is from that one that all these evil opinions have proceeded, notwithstanding the artful fraud which has persuaded you to the contrary. If this admonition shall only induce you to correct these errors with the humility of a God-fearing man and the peaceful submission of a catholic, they will be regarded as the mistakes of an over-zealous young man, who is eager rather to amend them than to persevere in them. But if he shall have by his influence prevailed on you to contend for these opinions with obstinate perseverance, which God forbid, it will in such a case be necessary to condemn them and their author as heretical, as is required by the pastoral and remedial nature of the Church’s charge, to check the dire contagion before it quietly spreads through the heedless masses, while wholesome correction is neglected, under the name but without the reality of love.

CHAPTER 3 [III.]

HE ENUMERATES THE ERRORS WHICH HE DESIRES TO HAVE AMENDED IN THE BOOKS OF VINCENTIUS VICTOR. THE FIRST ERROR

If you ask me what the particular errors are, you may read what I have written to our brethren, that servant of God Renatus, and the presbyter Peter, to the latter of whom you yourself thought it necessary to write the very works of which we are now treating, “in obedience,” as you allege, “to his own wish and request.” Now, they will, I doubt not, lend you my treatises for your perusal if you should like it, and even press them upon your attention without being asked. But be that as it may, I will not miss this present opportunity of informing you what amendments I desire to have made in these writings of yours, as well as in your belief. The first is, that you will have it that “The soul was not so made by God that He made it out of nothing, but out of His own very self.” Here you do not reflect what the necessary conclusion is, that the soul must be of the nature of God; and you know very well, of course, how impious such an opinion is. Now, to avoid such impiety as this, you ought so to say that God is the Author of the soul as that it was made by Him, but not of Him. For whatever is of Him (as, for instance, His only-begotten Son) is of the self-same nature as Himself. But, that the soul might not be of the same nature as its Creator, it was made by Him, but not of Him. Or, then, tell me whence it is, or else confess that it is of nothing. What do you mean by that expression of yours, “That it is a certain particle of an exhalation from the nature of God”? Do you mean to say, then, that the exhalation itself from the nature of God, to which the particle in question belongs, is not of the same nature as God is Himself? If this be your meaning, then God made out of nothing that exhalation of which you will have the soul to be a particle. Or, if not out of nothing, pray tell me of what God made it? If He made it out of Himself, it follows that

He is Himself (what should never be affirmed) the material of which His own work is formed. But you go on to say: “When however, He made the exhalation or breath out of Himself, He remained at the same time whole and entire;” just as if the light of a candle did not also remain entire when another candle is lighted from it, and yet be of the same nature, and not another.

CHAPTER 4 [IV.]

VICTOR’S SIMILE TO SHOW THAT GOD CAN CREATE BY BREATHING WITHOUT IMPARTATION OF HIS SUBSTANCE

“But,” you say, “when we inflate a bag, no portion of our nature or quality is poured into the bag, while the very breath, by the current of which the filled bag is extended, is emitted from us without the least diminution of ourselves.” Now, you enlarge and dwell upon these words of yours, and inculcate the simile as necessary for our understanding how it is that God, without any injury to His own nature, makes the soul out of His own self, and how, when it is thus made out of Himself, it is not what Himself is. For you ask: “Is this inflation of the bag a portion of our own soul? Or do we create human beings when we inflate bags? Or do we suffer any injury in anything at all when we impart our breath by inflation on diverse things? But we suffer no injury when we transfer breath from ourselves to anything, nor do we ever remember experiencing any damage to ourselves from inflating a bag, the full quality and entire quantity of our breath remaining in us notwithstanding the process.” Now, however elegant and applicable this simile seems to you, I beg you to consider how greatly it misleads you. For you affirm that the incorporeal God breathes out a corporeal soul,—not made out of nothing, but out of Himself,—whereas the breath which we ourselves emit is corporeal, although of a more subtle nature than our bodies; nor do we exhale it out of our soul, but out of the air through internal functions in our bodily structure. Our lungs, like a pair of bellows, are moved by the soul (at the command of which also the other members of the body are moved), for the purpose of inhaling and exhaling the atmospheric air. For, besides the aliments, solid or fluid, which constitute our meat and drink, God has surrounded us with this third aliment of the atmosphere which we breathe; and that with so good effect, that we can live for some time without meat and drink, but we could not possibly subsist for a moment without this third aliment, which the air, surrounding us on all sides, supplies us with as we breathe and respire. And as our meat and drink have to be not only introduced into the body, but also to be expelled by passages formed for the purpose, to prevent injury accruing either way (from either not entering or not quitting the body); so this third airy aliment (not being permitted to remain within us, and thus not becoming corrupt by delay, but being expelled as soon as it is introduced) has been furnished, not with different, but with the self-same channels both for its entrance and for its exit, even the mouth, or the nostrils, or both together.

CHAPTER 5

EXAMINATION OF VICTOR’S SIMILE: DOES MAN GIVE OUT NOTHING BY BREATHING?

Prove now yourself what I say, for your own satisfaction in your own case; emit breath by exhalation, and see whether you can continue long without catching back your breath; then again catch it back by inhalation, and see what discomfort you experience unless you again emit it. Now, when we inflate a bag, as you prescribe, we do, in fact, the same thing which we do to maintain life, except that in the case of the artificial experiment our inhalation is somewhat stronger, in order that we may emit a stronger breath, so as to fill and distend the bag by compressing the air we blow into it, rather in the manner of a hard puff than of the gentle process of ordinary breathing and respiration. On what ground, then, do you say, “We suffer no injury whenever we transfer breath from ourselves to any object, nor do we ever remember experiencing any damage to ourselves from inflating a bag, the full quality and entire quantity of our own breath remaining in us notwithstanding the process”? It is very plain, my son, if ever you have inflated a bag, that you did not carefully observe your own performance. For you do not perceive what you lose by the act of inflation by reason of the immediate recovery of your breath. But you can learn all this with the greatest ease if you would simply prefer doing so to stiffly maintaining your own statements for no other reason than because you have made them—not inflating the bag, but inflated yourself to the full, and inflating your hearers (whom you should rather edify and instruct by veritable facts) with the empty prattle of your turgid discourse. In the present case I do not send you to any other teacher than your own self. Breathe, then, a good breath into the bag; shut your mouth instantly, hold tight your nostrils, and in this way discover the truth of what I say to you. For when you begin to suffer the intolerable inconvenience which accompanies the experiment, what is it you wish to recover by opening your mouth and releasing your nostrils? Surely there would be nothing to recover if your supposition be a correct one, that you have lost nothing whenever you breathe. Observe what a plight you would be in, if by inhalation you did not regain what you had parted with by your breathing outwards. See, too, what loss and injury the insufflation would produce, were it not for the repair and reaction caused by respiration. For unless the breath which you expend in filling the bag should all return by the re-opened channel to discharge its function of nourishing yourself, what, I wonder, would be left remaining to you,—I will not say to inflate another bag, but to supply your very means of living?

CHAPTER 6

THE SIMILE REFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH TRUTH

Well, now, you ought to have thought of all this when you were writing, and not to have brought God before our eyes in that favourite simile of yours, of inflated and inflateable bags, breathing forth souls out of some other nature which was already in existence, just as we ourselves make our breath from the air which surrounds us; or certainly you should not, in a manner which is really as diverse from your similitude as it is abundant in impiety, have represented God as either producing some changeable thing without injury, indeed, to Himself, but yet out of His own substance; or what is worse, creating it in such wise as to be Himself the material of His own work. If, however, we are to employ a similitude drawn from our breathing which shall suitably illustrate this subject, the following one is more credible: Just as we, whenever we breathe, make a breath, not out of our own nature, but, because we are not omnipotent, out of that air that surrounds us, which we inhale and discharge whenever we breathe and respire; and the said breath is neither living nor sentient, although we are ourselves living and sentient; so God can—not, indeed, out of His own nature, but (as being so omnipotent as to be able to create whatever He wills) even out of that which has no existence at all, that is to say, out of nothing—make a breath that is living and sentient, but evidently mutable, though He be Himself immutable.

CHAPTER 7 [V.]

VICTOR APPARENTLY GIVES THE CREATIVE BREATH TO MAN ALSO

But what is the meaning of that, which you have thought proper to add to this simile, with regard to the example of the blessed Elisha because he raised the dead by breathing into his face? Now, do you really suppose that Elisha’s breath was made the soul of the child? I could not believe that even you could stray so far away from the truth. If, now, that soul which was taken from the living child so as to cause his death, was itself afterwards restored to him so as to cause his restoration to life: where, I ask, is the pertinence of your remark when you say “that no diminution accrued to Elisha,” as if it could be imagined that anything had been transferred from the prophet to the child to cause his revival? But if you meant no more than that the prophet breathed and remained entire, where was the necessity for your saying that of Elisha, when raising the dead child, which you might with no less propriety say of any one whatever when emitting a breath, and reviving no one? Then, again, you spoke unadvisedly (though God forbid that you should believe the breath of Elisha to have become the soul of the resuscitated child!) when you intimated your meaning to be a desire to keep separate what was first done by God from this that was done by the prophet, in that the One breathed but once, and the other thrice. These are your words: “Elisha breathed into the face of the deceased child of the Shunammite, after the manner of the original creation. And when by the prophet’s breathing a divine force inspired the dead limbs, reanimated to their original vigour, no diminution accrued to Elisha, through whose breathing the dead body recovered its revived soul and spirit. Only there is this difference, the Lord breathed but once into man’s face and he lived, while Elisha breathed three times into the face of the dead and he lived again.” Thus your words sound as if the number of the breathings alone made all the difference, why we should not believe that the prophet actually did what God did. This statement, then, requires to be entirely revised. There was so complete a difference between that work of God and this of Elisha, that the former breathed the breath of life whereby man became a living soul, and the latter breathed a breath which was not itself sentient nor endued with life, but was figurative for the sake of some signification. The prophet did not really cause the child to live again by giving him life, but he procured God's doing that by giving him love. As to what you allege, that he breathed three times, either your memory, as often happens, or a faulty reading of the text, must have misled you. Why need I enlarge? You ought not to be seeking for examples and arguments to establish your point, but rather to amend and change your opinion. I beg of you neither to believe, nor to say, nor to teach "that God made the human soul not out of nothing, but out of His own substance," if you wish to be a catholic.

CHAPTER 8 [VI.]

VICTOR'S SECOND ERROR. (SEE ABOVE IN BOOK I. 26 [XVI.].)

Do not, I pray you, believe, say, or teach that "Thus is God ever giving souls through infinite time, just as He who gives is Himself ever existent," if you wish to be a catholic. For a time will come when God will not give souls, although He will not therefore Himself cease to exist. Your phrase, "is ever giving," might be understood "to give without cessation," so long as men are born and get offspring, even as it is said of certain men that they are "ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth." For this term "ever" is not in this passage taken to mean "never ceasing to learn," inasmuch as they do cease to learn when they have ceased to exist in this body, or have begun to suffer the fiery pains of hell. You, however, did not allow your word to be understood in this sense when you said "is ever giving," since you thought that it must be applied to infinite time. And even this was a small matter; for, as if you had been asked to explain your phrase, "ever giving," more explicitly, you went on to say, "just as He is Himself ever existent who gives." This assertion the sound and catholic faith utterly condemns. For be it far from us to believe that God is ever giving souls, just as He is Himself, who gives them, ever existent. He is Himself ever existent in such a sense as never to cease to exist; souls, however, He will not be ever giving; but He will beyond doubt cease to give them when the age of generation ceases, and children are no longer born to whom they are to be given.

CHAPTER 9 [VII.]

HIS THIRD ERROR. (SEE ABOVE IN BOOK II. 11 [VII.].)

Again, do not, I pray you, believe, say, or teach that “the soul deservedly lost something by the flesh, although it was of good merit previous to the flesh,” if you wish to be a catholic. For the apostle declares that “children who are not yet born, have done neither good nor evil.” How, therefore, could their soul, previous to its participation of flesh, have had anything like good desert, if it had not done any good thing? Will you by any chance venture to assert that it had, previous to the flesh, lived a good life, when you cannot actually prove to us that it even existed at all? How, then, can you say: “You will not allow that the soul contracts health from the sinful flesh; and to this holy state, then, you can see it in due course pass, with the view of amending its condition, through that very flesh by which it had lost merit”? Perhaps you are not aware that these opinions, which attribute to the human soul a good state and a good merit previous to the flesh, have been already condemned by the catholic Church, not only in the case of some ancient heretics, whom I do not here mention, but also more recently in the instance of the Priscillianists.

CHAPTER 10

HIS FOURTH ERROR. (SEE ABOVE IN BOOK I. 6 [VI.] AND BOOK II. 11 [VII.].)

Neither believe, nor say, nor teach that “the soul, by means of the flesh, repairs its ancient condition, and is born again by the very means through which it had deserved to be polluted,” if you wish to be a catholic. I might, indeed, dwell upon the strange discrepancy with your own self which you have exhibited in the next sentence, wherein you said that the soul through the flesh deservedly recovers its primitive condition, which it had seemed to have gradually lost through the flesh, in order that it may begin to be regenerated by the very flesh through which it had deserved to be polluted.” Here you—the very man who had just before said that the soul repairs its condition through the flesh, by reason of which it had lost its desert (where nothing but good desert can be meant, which you will have to be recovered in the flesh, by baptism, of course)—said in another turn of your thought, that through the flesh the soul had deserved to be polluted (in which statement it is no longer the good desert, but an evil one, which must be meant). What flagrant inconsistency! but I will pass it over, and content myself with observing, that it is absolutely uncatholic to believe that the soul, previous to its incarnate state, deserved either good or evil.

CHAPTER 11 [VIII.]

HIS FIFTH ERROR. (SEE ABOVE IN BOOK I. 8 [VIII.] AND BOOK II. 12 [VIII.].)

Neither believe, nor say, nor teach, if you wish to be a catholic, that “the soul deserved to be sinful before any sin.” It is, to be sure, an extremely bad desert to have deserved to be sinful. And, of course, it could not possibly have incurred so bad a desert previous to any sin, especially prior to its coming into the flesh, when it could have possessed no merit either way, either evil or good. How, then, can you say: “If, therefore, the soul, which could not be sinful, deserved to be sinful, it yet did not remain in sin, because as it was prefigured in Christ it was bound not to be in a sinful state, even as it was unable to be”? Now, just for a little consider what it is you say, and desist from repeating such a statement. How did the soul deserve, and how was it unable, to be sinful? How, I pray you tell me, did that deserve to be sinful which never lived sinfully? How, I ask again, was that made sinful which was not able to be sinful? Or else, if you mean your phrase, “was unable,” to imply inability apart from the flesh, how in that case did the soul deserve to be sinful, and by reason of what desert was it sent into the flesh, when previous to its union with the flesh it was not able to be sinful, so as to deserve any evil at all?

CHAPTER 12 [IX.]

HIS SIXTH ERROR. (SEE ABOVE IN BOOK I. 10–12 [IX., X.], AND IN BOOK II. 13, 14 [IX., X.].)

If you wish to be a catholic, refrain from believing, or saying, or teaching that “infants which are forestalled by death before they are baptized may yet attain to forgiveness of their original sins.” For the examples by which you are misled—that of the thief who confessed the Lord upon the cross, or that of Dinocrates the brother of St. Perpetua—contribute no help to you in defence of this erroneous opinion. As for the thief, although in God’s judgment he might be reckoned among those who are purified by the confession of martyrdom, yet you cannot tell whether he was not baptized. For, to say nothing of the opinion that he might have been sprinkled with the water which gushed at the same time with the blood out of the Lord's side, as he hung on the cross next to Him, and thus have been washed with a baptism of the most sacred kind, what if he had been baptized in prison, as in after times some under persecution were enabled privately to obtain? or what if he had been baptized previous to his imprisonment? If, indeed, he had been, the remission of his sins which he would have received in that case from God would not have protected him from the sentence of public law, so far as appertained to the death of the body. What if, being already baptized, he had committed the crime and incurred the punishment of robbery and lawlessness, but yet received, by virtue of repentance added to his baptism, forgiveness of the sins which, though baptized, he had committed? For beyond doubt his faith and piety appeared to the Lord clearly in his heart, as they do to us in his words. If, indeed, we were to conclude that all those who have quitted life without a record of their baptism died unbaptized, we should calumniate the very apostles themselves; for we are ignorant when they were, any of them, baptized, except the Apostle Paul. If, however, we could regard as an evidence that they were really baptized the circumstance of the Lord's saying to St. Peter, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet," what are we to think of the others, of whom we do not read even so much as this,—Barnabas, Timothy, Titus, Silas, Philemon, the very evangelists Mark and Luke, and innumerable others, about whose baptism God forbid that we should entertain any doubt, although we read no record of it? As for Dinocrates, he was a child of seven years of age; and as children who are baptized so old as that can now recite the creed and answer for themselves in the usual examination, I know not why he may not be supposed after his baptism to have been recalled by his unbelieving father to the sacrilege and profanity of heathen worship, and for this reason to have been condemned to the pains from which he was liberated at his sister's intercession. For in the account of him you have never read, either that he was never a Christian, or died a catechumen. But for the matter of that, the account itself that we have of him does not occur in that canon of Holy Scripture whence in all questions of this kind our proofs ought always to be drawn.

CHAPTER 13 [X]

HIS SEVENTH ERROR. (SEE ABOVE IN BOOK II. 13 [IX.].)

If you wish to be a catholic, do not venture to believe, to say, or to teach that “they whom the Lord has predestinated for baptism can be snatched away from his predestination, or die before that has been accomplished in them which the Almighty has predestined.” There is in such a dogma more power than I can tell assigned to chances in opposition to the power of God, by the occurrence of which casualties that which He has predestinated is not permitted to come to pass. It is hardly necessary to spend time or earnest words in cautioning the man who takes up with this error against the absolute vortex of confusion into which it will absorb him, when I shall sufficiently meet the case if I briefly warn the prudent man who is ready to receive correction against the threatening mischief. Now these are your words: “We say that some such method as this must be had recourse to in the case of infants who, being predestinated for baptism, are yet, by the failing of this life, hurried away before they are born again in Christ.” Is it then really true that any who have been predestinated to baptism are forestalled before they come to it by the failing of this life? And could God predestinate anything which He either in His foreknowledge saw would not come to pass, or in ignorance knew not that it could not come to pass, either to the frustration of His purpose or the discredit of His foreknowledge? You see how many weighty remarks might be made on this subject; but I am restrained by the fact of having treated on it a little while ago, so that I content myself with this brief and passing admonition.

CHAPTER 14

HIS EIGHTH ERROR. (SEE ABOVE IN BOOK II. 13 [IX.].)

Refuse, if you wish to be a catholic, to believe, or to say, or to teach that “it is of infants, who are forestalled by death before they are born again in Christ, that the Scripture says, Speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul. Therefore God hastened to take him away from among the wicked; for his soul pleased the Lord; and being made perfect in a short time he fulfilled long seasons.’“ For this passage has nothing to do with those to whom you apply it, but rather belongs to those who, after they have been baptized and have progressed in pious living, are not permitted to tarry long on earth,—having been made perfect, not with years, but with the grace of heavenly wisdom. This error however, of yours, by which you think that this scripture was spoken of infants who die unbaptized, does an intolerable wrong to the holy laver itself, if an infant, who could have been "hurried away" after baptism, has been "hurried away" before this, for this reason:—"lest wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul." As if this "wickedness," and this "deceit which beguiles the soul," and changes it for the worse, if it be not before taken away, is to be believed to be in baptism itself! In a word, since his soul had pleased God, He hastened to remove him out of the midst of iniquity; and he tarried not for ever so little while, in order to fulfil in him what He had predestinated; but preferred to act in opposition to His predestined purpose, and actually hastened lest what had pleased Him so well in the unbaptized child should be exterminated by his baptism! As if the dying infant would perish in that, whither we ought to run with him in our arms in order to save him from perdition. Who, therefore, in respect of these words of the Book of Wisdom, could believe, or say, or write, or quote them as having been written concerning infants who die without baptism, if he only reflected upon them with proper consideration?

CHAPTER 15 [XI.]

HIS NINTH ERROR. (SEE ABOVE IN BOOK II. 14 [X.].)

If you wish to be a catholic, I pray you, neither believe, nor say, nor teach that "there are some mansions outside the kingdom of God which the Lord said were in His Father's house." For He does not affirm, as you have adduced his testimony, "There are with my Father (apud Patrem meum) many mansions;" although, if He had even expressed Himself so, the mansions could hardly be supposed to have any other situation than in the house of His Father; but He plainly says, "In my Father's house are many mansions." Now, who would be so reckless as to separate some parts of God's house from the kingdom of God; so that, whilst the kings of the earth are found reigning, not in their house only, nor only in their own country, but far and wide, even in regions across the sea, the King who made the heaven and the earth is not described as reigning even over all His own house?

CHAPTER 16

GOD RULES EVERYWHERE: AND YET THE “KINGDOM OF HEAVEN” MAY NOT BE EVERYWHERE

You may, however, not improbably contend that all things, it is true, belong to the kingdom of God, because He reigns in heaven, reigns on earth, in the depths beneath, in paradise, in hell (for where does He not reign, since His power is everywhere supreme?); but that the kingdom of heaven is one thing, into which none are permitted to enter, according to the Lord’s own true and settled sentence, unless they are washed in the laver of regeneration, while quite another thing is the kingdom over the earth, or over any other parts of creation, in which there may be some mansions of God’s house; but these, although appertaining to the kingdom of God, belong not to that kingdom of heaven where God’s kingdom exists with an especial excellence and blessedness; and that it hence happens that, while no parts and mansions of God’s house can be rudely separated from the kingdom of God, yet not all the mansions are prepared in the kingdom of heaven; and still, even in the abodes which are not situated in the kingdom of heaven, those may live happily, to whom, if they are even unbaptized, God has willed to assign such habitations. They are no doubt in the kingdom of God, although (as not having been baptized) they cannot possibly be in the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER 17

WHERE THE KINGDOM OF GOD MAY BE UNDERSTOOD TO BE

Now, they who say this, do no doubt seem to themselves to say a good deal, because theirs is only a slight and careless view of Scripture; nor do they understand in what sense we use the phrase, “kingdom of God,” when we say of it in our prayers, “Thy kingdom come;” for that is called the kingdom of God, in which His whole family shall reign with Him in happiness and for ever. Now, in respect of the power which He possesses over all things, he is of course even now reigning. What, therefore, do we intend when we pray that His kingdom may come unless that we may deserve to reign with Him? But even they will be under His power who shall have to suffer the pains of eternal fire. Well, then, do we mean to predicate of these unhappy beings that they too will be in the kingdom of God? Surely it is one thing to be honoured with the gifts and privileges of the kingdom of God, and another thing to be restrained and punished by the laws of the same. However, that you may have a very manifest proof that on the one hand the kingdom of heaven must not be parcelled out to the baptized, and other portions of the kingdom of God be given to the unbaptized, as you seem to have determined, I beg of you to hear the Lord's own words; He does not say, "Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom or heaven;" but His words are, "he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." His discourse with Nicodemus on the subject before us runs thus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Observe, He does not here say, the kingdom of heaven, but the kingdom of God. And then, on Nicodemus asking Him in reply, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" the Lord, in explanation, repeats His former statement more plainly and openly: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Observe again, He uses the same phrase, the kingdom of God, notthe kingdom of heaven. It is worthy of remark, that while He varies two expressions in explaining them the second time (for after saying, "Except a man be born again," He interprets that by the fuller expression, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit;" and in like manner He explains, "he cannot see," by the completer phrase, "he cannot enter into"), He yet makes no variation here; He said "the kingdom of God" the first time, and He afterwards repeated the same phrase exactly. It is not now necessary to raise and discuss the question, whether the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven must be understood as involving different senses, or whether only one thing is described under two designations. It is enough to find that no one can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be washed in the laver of regeneration. I suppose you perceive by this time how wide of the truth it is to separate from the kingdom of God any mansions that are placed in the house of God. And as to the idea which you have entertained that there will be found dwelling among the various mansions, which the Lord has told us abound in His Father's house, some who have not been born again of water and the Spirit, I advise you, if you will permit me, not to defer amending it, in order that you may hold the catholic faith.

CHAPTER 18 [XII.]

HIS TENTH ERROR. (SEE ABOVE IN BOOK I. 13 [XI.] AND BOOK II. 15 [XI.])

Again, if you wish to be a catholic, I pray you, neither believe, nor say, nor teach that "the sacrifice of Christians ought to be offered in behalf of those who have departed out of the body without having been baptized." Because you fail to show that the sacrifice of the Jews, which you have quoted out of the books of the Maccabees, was offered in behalf of any who had departed this life without circumcision. In this novel opinion of yours, which you have advanced against the authority and teaching of the whole Church, you have used a very arrogant mode of expression. You say, "In behalf of these, I most certainly decide that constant oblations and incessant sacrifices must be offered up on the part of the holy priests." Here you show, as a layman, no submission to God's priests for instruction; nor do you associate yourself with them (the least you could do) for inquiry; but you put yourself before them by your proud assumption of judgment. Away, my son, with all this pretension; men walk not so arrogantly in the Way, which the Humble Christ taught that He Himself is. No man enters through His narrow gate with so proud a disposition as this.

CHAPTER 19 [XIII.]

HIS ELEVENTH ERROR. (SEE ABOVE IN BOOK I. 15 [XII.] AND BOOK II. 16.)

Once more, if you desire to be a catholic, do not believe, or say, or teach that "some of those persons who have departed this life without Christ's baptism, do not in the meantime go into the kingdom of heaven, but into paradise; yet afterwards in the resurrection of the dead they attain also to the blessedness of the kingdom of heaven." Even the Pelagian heresy was not daring enough to grant them this, although it holds that infants do not contract original sin. You, however, as a catholic, confess that they are born in sin; and yet by some unaccountable perverseness in the novel opinion you put forth, you assert that they are absolved from that sin with which they were born, and admitted into the kingdom of heaven without the baptism which saves. Nor do you seem to be aware how much below Pelagius himself you are in your views on this point. For he, being alarmed by that sentence of the Lord which does not permit unbaptized persons to enter into the kingdom of heaven, does not venture to send infants thither, although he believes them to be free from all sin; whereas you have so little regard for what is written, "Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," that (to say nothing of the error which induces you recklessly to sever paradise from the kingdom of God) you do not hesitate to promise to certain persons, whom you, as a catholic, believe to be born under guilt, both absolution from this guilt and the kingdom of heaven, even when they die without baptism. As if you could possibly be a true catholic because you build up the doctrine of original sin against Pelagius, if you show yourself a new heretic against the Lord, by pulling down His statement respecting baptism. For our own part, beloved brother, we do not desire thus to gain victories over heretics: vanquishing one error by another, and, what is still worse, a less one by a greater. You say, "Should any one perhaps be reluctant to allow that paradise was temporarily bestowed in the meantime on the souls of the dying thief and of Dinocrates, while there still remains to them the reversion of the kingdom of heaven at the resurrection, seeing that the principal passage stands in the way of the opinion, Except a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven,' he may still hold my ungrudging assent on this point; only let him do full honour to both the effect and the aim of the divine mercy and foreknowledge." These are your own words, and in them you express your agreement with the man who says that paradise is conferred on certain unbaptized for a time, in such a sense that at the resurrection there is in store for them the reward of the kingdom of heaven, in opposition to "that principal passage" which has determined that none shall enter into that kingdom who has not been born again of water and the Holy Ghost. Pelagius was afraid to oppose himself to this "principal passage" of the Gospel, and he did not believe that any (whom he still did not suppose to be sinners) would enter into the kingdom of heaven unbaptized. You, on the contrary, acknowledge that infants have original sin, and yet you absolve them from it without the laver of regeneration, and send them for a temporary residence in paradise, and subsequently permit them to enter even into the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER 20 [XIV.]

AUGUSTIN CALLS ON VICTOR TO CORRECT HIS ERRORS. (SEE ABOVE IN BOOK II. 22 [XVI.].)

Now these errors, and such as these, with whatever others you may perhaps be able to discover in your books on a more attentive and leisurely perusal, I beg of you to correct, if you possess a catholic mind; in other words, if you spoke in perfect sincerity when you said, that you were not over-confident in yourself that what statements you had made were all capable of proof; and that your constant aim was not to maintain even your own opinion, if it were shown to be improbable; and that it gave you much pleasure, if your own judgment were condemned, to adopt and pursue better and truer sentiments. Well now, my dear brother, show that you said this in no fallacious sense; so that the catholic Church may rejoice in your capacity and character, as possessing not only genius, but prudence withal, and piety, and moderation, rather than that the madness of heresy should be kindled by your contentious persistence in these errors. Now you have an opportunity of showing also how sincerely you expressed your feelings in the passage which immediately follows the satisfactory statement which I have just now mentioned of yours. “For,” you say, “as it is the mark of every highest aim and laudable purpose to transfer one’s self readily to truer views; so it shows a depraved and obstinate judgment to refuse to return promptly to the pathway of reason.” Well, then, show yourself to be influenced by this high aim and laudable purpose, and transfer your mind readily to truer views; and do not display a depraved and obstinate judgment by refusing to return promptly to the pathway of reason. For if your words were uttered in frank sincerity, if they were not mere sound of the lips, if you really felt them in your heart, then you cannot but abhor all delay in accomplishing the great good of correcting yourself. It was not, indeed, much for you to allow, that it showed a depraved and obstinate judgment to refuse to return to the pathway of reason, unless you had added “promptly.” By adding this, you showed us how execrable is his conduct who never accomplishes the reform; inasmuch as even he who effects it but tardily appears to you to deserve so severe a censure, as to be fairly described as displaying a depraved and obstinate mind. Listen, therefore, to your own admonition, and turn to good account mainly and largely the fruitful resources of your eloquence; that so you may promptly return to the pathway of reason, more promptly, indeed, than when you declined therefrom, at an unstable period of your age, when you were fortified with too little prudence and less learning.

CHAPTER 21

AUGUSTIN COMPLIMENTS VICTOR’S TALENTS AND DILIGENCE

It would take me too long a time to handle and discuss fully all the points which I wish to be amended in your books, or rather in your own self, and to give you even a brief reason for the correction of each particular. And yet you must not because of them despise yourself, so as to suppose that your ability and powers of speech are to be thought lightly of. I have discovered in you no small recollection of the sacred Scriptures; but your erudition is less than was proportioned to your talent, and the labour you bestowed on them. My desire, therefore, is that you should not, on the one hand, grow vain by attributing too much to yourself; nor, on the other hand, become cold and indifferent by prostration or despair. I only wish that I could read your writings in company with yourself, and point out the necessary emendations in conversation rather than by writing. This is a matter which could be more easily accomplished by oral communication between ourselves than in letters. If the entire subject were to be treated in writing, it would require many volumes. Those chief errors, however, which I have wished to sum up comprehensively in a definite number, I at once call your attention to, in order that you may not postpone the correction of them, but banish them entirely from your preaching and belief; so that the great faculty which you possess of disputation, may, by God’s grace, be employed by you usefully for edification, not for injuring and destroying sound and wholesome doctrine.

CHAPTER 22 [XV.]

A SUMMARY RECAPITULATION OF THE ERRORS OF VICTOR

What these particular errors are, I have, to the best of my ability, already explained. But I will run over them again with a brief recapitulation. One is, "That God did not make the soul out of nothing, but out of His own self." A second is, that "just as God who gives is Himself ever existent, so is He ever giving souls through infinite time." The third is, that "the soul lost some merit by the flesh, which it had had previous to the flesh." The fourth is, that "the soul by means of the flesh recovers its ancient condition, and is born again through the very same flesh by which it had deserved to be polluted." The fifth is, that "the soul deserved to be sinful, previous to any sin." The sixth is, that "infants which are forestalled by death before they are baptized, may yet attain to forgiveness of their original sins." The seventh is, that "they whom the Lord has predestinated to be baptized may be taken away from his predestination, or die before that has been accomplished in them which the Almighty has predestined." The eighth is, that "it is of infants who are fore-stalled by death, before they are born again in Christ, that the Scripture says, Speedily was he taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding,'" with the remainder of the passage to the same effect in the Book of Wisdom. The ninth is, that "there are outside the kingdom of God some of those mansions which the Lord said were in His Father's house." The tenth is, that "the sacrifice of Christians ought to be offered in behalf of those who have departed out of the body without being baptized." The eleventh is, that "some of those persons who have departed this life without the baptism of Christ do not in the meanwhile go into the kingdom, but into paradise; afterwards, however, in the resurrection of the dead, they attain even to the blessedness of the kingdom of heaven."

CHAPTER 23

OBSTINACY MAKES THE HERETIC

Well, now, as for these eleven propositions, they are extremely and manifestly perverse and opposed to the catholic faith; so that you should no longer hesitate to root them out and cast them away from your mind, from your words, and from your pen, if you are desirous that we should rejoice not only at your having come over to our catholic altars, but at your being really and truly a catholic. For if these dogmas of yours are severally maintained with pertinacity, they may possibly engender as many heresies as they number opinions. Wherefore consider, I pray you, how dreadful it is that they should be all concentrated in one person, when they would, if held severally by various persons, be every one of them damnable in each holder. If, however, you would in your own person cease to fight contentiously in their defence, nay, would turn your arms against them by faithful words and writings, you would acquire more praise as the censurer of your own self than if you directed any amount of right criticism against any other person; and your amendment of your own errors would bring you more admiration than if you had never entertained them. May the Lord be present to your heart and mind, and by His Spirit pour into your soul such readiness in humility, such light of truth, such sweetness of love, and such peaceful piety, that you may prefer being a conqueror of your own spirit in the truth, than of any one else who gainsays it with his errors. But I do not by any means wish you to think, that by holding these opinions you have departed from the catholic faith, although they are unquestionably opposed to the catholic faith; if so be you are able, in the presence of that God whose eye infallibly searches every man’s heart, to look back on your own words as being truly and sincerely expressed, when you said that you were not over-confident in yourself as to the opinions you had broached, that they were all capable of proof; and that your constant aim was not to persist in your own sentiments, if they were shown to be improbable; inasmuch as it was a real pleasure to you, when any judgment of yours was condemned, to adopt and pursue better and truer thoughts. Now such a temper as this, even in relation to what may have been said in an uncatholic form through ignorance, is itself catholic by the very purpose and readiness of amendment which it premeditates. With this remark, however, I must now end this volume, where the reader may rest a while, ready to renew his attention to what is to follow, when I begin my next book.

Book IV

Addressed to Vincentius Victor

He first shows, that his hesitation on the subject of the origin of souls was undeservedly blamed, and that he was wrongly compared with cattle, because he had refrained from any rash conclusions on the subject. Then, again, with regard to his own unhesitating statement, that the soul was spirit, not body, he points out how rashly Victor disapproved of this assertion, especially when he was vainly expending his efforts to prove that the soul was corporeal in its own nature, and that the spirit in man was distinct from the soul itself.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

THE PERSONAL CHARACTER OF THIS BOOK

I Must now, in the sequel of my treatise, request you to hear what I desire to say to you concerning myself—as I best can; or rather as He shall enable me in whose hand are both ourselves and our words. For you blamed me on two several occasions, even going so far as to mention my name. In the beginning of your book you spoke of yourself as being perfectly conscious of your own want of skill, and as being destitute of the support of learning; and, when you mentioned me, bestowed on me the complimentary phrases of “most learned” and “most skilful.” But yet, all the while, on those subjects in which you seemed to yourself to be perfectly acquainted with what I either confess my ignorance of, or presume with no unbecoming liberty to have some knowledge of, you—young as you are, and a layman too—did not hesitate to censure me, an old man and a bishop, and a person withal whom in your own judgment you had pronounced most learned and most skilful. Well, for my own part, I know nothing about my great learning and skill; nay, I am very certain that I possess no such eminent qualities; moreover, I have no doubt that it is quite within the scope of possibility, that it may fall to the lot of even an unskilful and unlearned man occasionally to know what a learned and skilful person is ignorant of; and in this I plainly commend you, that you have preferred to merely personal regard a love of truth,—for if you have not understood the truth, yet at any rate you have thought it such. This you have done no doubt with temerity, because you thought you knew what you were really ignorant of; and without restraint, because, having no respect of persons, you chose to publish abroad whatever was in your mind. You ought therefore to understand how much greater our care should be to recall the Lord's sheep from their errors; since it is evidently wrong for even the sheep to conceal from the shepherds whatever faults they have discovered in them. O that you censured me in such things as are indeed worthy of just blame! For I must not deny that both in my conduct and in my writings there are many points which may be censured by a sound judge without temerity. Now, if you would select any of these for your censure, I might be able by them to show you how I should like you to behave in those particulars which you judiciously and fairly condemned; moreover, I should have (as an elder to a younger, and as one in authority to him who has to obey) an opportunity of setting you an example under correction which should not be more humble on my part than wholesome to both of us. With respect, however, to the points on which you have actually censured me, they are not such as humility obliges me to correct, but such as truth compels me partly to acknowledge and partly to defend.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

THE POINTS WHICH VICTOR THOUGHT BLAMEWORTHY IN AUGUSTIN

And they are these: The first, that I did not venture to make a definite statement touching the origin of those souls which have been given, or are being given, to human beings, since the first man—because I confess my ignorance of the subject; the second, because I said I was sure the soul was spirit, not body. Under this second point, however, you have included two grounds of censure: one, because I refused to believe the soul to be corporeal; the other, because I affirmed it to be spirit. For to you the soul appears both to be body and not to be spirit. I must therefore request your attention to my own defence against your censure, and ask you to embrace the opportunity which my self-defence affords you of learning what points there are in yourself also which require your amendment. Recall, then, the words of your book in which you first mentioned my name. “I know,” you say, “many men of very great reputation who when consulted have kept silence, or admitted nothing clearly, but have withdrawn from their discussions everything definite when they commence their exposition. Of such character are the contents of sundry writings which I have read at your house by a very learned man and renowned bishop, called Augustin. The truth is, I suppose, they have with an overweening modesty and diffidence investigated the mysteries of this subject, and have consumed within themselves the judgment of their own treatises, and have professed themselves incapable of determining anything on this point. But, I assure you, it appears to me excessively absurd and unreasonable that a man should be a stranger to himself; or that a person who is supposed to have acquired the knowledge of all things, should regard himself as unknown to his very self. For what difference is there between a man and a brute beast, if he knows not how to discuss and determine his own quality and nature? so that there may justly be applied to him the statement of Scripture: Man, although he was in honour, understood not; he is like the cattle, and is compared with them.’ For when the good and gracious God created everything with reason and wisdom, and produced man as a rational animal, capable of understanding, endowed with reason, and lively with sensation, —because by His prudent arrangement He assigns their place to all creatures which do not participate in the faculty of reason,—what more incongruous idea could be suggested, than that God had withheld from him the simple knowledge of himself? The wisdom of this world, indeed, is ever aiming with much effort to attain to the knowledge of truth; its researches, no doubt, fall short of the aim, from its inability to know through what agency it is permitted that truth should be ascertained; but yet there are some things on the nature of the soul, near (I might even say, akin) to the truth which it has attempted to discern. Under these circumstances, how unbecoming and even shameful a thing it is, that any man of religious principle should either have no intelligent views on this very subject, or prohibit himself from acquiring any!”

CHAPTER 3

HOW MUCH DO WE KNOW OF THE NATURE OF THE BODY?

Well, now, this extremely lucid and eloquent castigation which you have inflicted on our ignorance lays you so strictly under the necessity of knowing every possible thing which appertains to the nature of man, that, should you unhappily be ignorant of any particular, you must (and remember it is not I, but you, that have made the necessity) be compared with “the cattle.” For although you appear to aim your censure at us more especially, when you quote the passage, “Man, although he was in honour, understood not,” inasmuch as we (unlike yourself) hold an honourable place in the Church; yet even you occupy too honourable a rank in nature, not to be preferred above the cattle, with which according to your own judgment you will have to be compared, if you should happen to be ignorant on any of the points which manifestly appertain to your nature. For you have not merely aspersed with your censure those who are affected with the same ignorance as I am myself labouring under, that is to say, concerning the origin of the human soul (although I am not indeed absolutely ignorant even on this point, for I know that God breathed into the face of the first man, and that “man then became a living soul,”—a truth, however, which I could never have known by myself, unless I had read of it in the Scripture); but you asked in so many words, “What difference is there between a man and a brute beast, if he knows not how to discuss and determine his own quality and nature?” And you seem to have entertained your opinion so distinctly, as to have thought that a man ought to be able to discuss and determine the facts of his own entire quality and nature so clearly, that nothing concerning himself should escape his observation. Now, if this is really the truth of the matter, I must now compare you to “the cattle,” if you cannot tell me the precise number of the hairs of your head. But if, however far we may advance in this life, you allow us to be ignorant of sundry facts appertaining to our nature, I then want to know how far your concession extends, lest, perchance, it may include the very point we are now raising, that we do not by any means know the origin of our soul; although we know,—a thing which belongs to faith,—beyond all doubt, that the soul is a gift to man from God, and that it still is not of the same nature as God Himself. Do you, moreover, think that each person’s ignorance of his own nature must be exactly on the same level as your ignorance of it? Must everybody’s knowledge, too, of the subject be equal to what you have been able to attain to? So that if he is so unfortunate as to possess a slightly larger amount of ignorance than yourself, you must compare him with cattle; and on the same principle, if any one shall be ever so little wiser than yourself on this subject, he will have the pleasure of comparing you with equal justice to the aforesaid cattle. I must therefore request you to tell me, to what extent you permit us to be ignorant of our nature so as to save our distance from the formidable cattle; and I beg you besides duly to reflect, whether he is not further removed from cattle who knows his ignorance of any part of the subject, than he is who thinks he knows what in fact he knows not. The entire nature of man is certainly spirit, soul, and body; therefore, whoever would alienate the body from man’s nature, is unwise. Those medical men, however, who are called anatomists have investigated with careful scrutiny, by dissecting processes, even living men, so far as men have been able to retain any life in the hands of the examiners; their researches have penetrated limbs, veins, nerves, bones, marrow, the internal vitals; and all to discover the nature of the body. But none of these men have ever thought of comparing us with the cattle, because of our ignorance of their subject. But perhaps you will say that it is those who are ignorant of the nature of the soul, not of the body, who are to be compared with the brute beasts. Then you ought not to have expressed yourself at starting in the way you have done. Your words are not, “For what difference is there between a man and cattle, if he is ignorant of the nature and quality of the soul;” but you say, “if he knows not how to discuss and determine his own nature and quality.” Of course our quality and our nature must be taken account of together with the body, but at the same time the investigation of the several elements of which we are composed is conducted in each case separately. For my own part, indeed, if I wished to display how far it was in my power to treat scientifically and intelligently the entire field of man’s nature, I should have to fill many volumes; not to mention how many topics there are which I must confess my ignorance of.

CHAPTER 4 [III.]

IS THE QUESTION OF BREATH ONE THAT CONCERNS THE SOUL, OR BODY, OR WHAT?

But to what, in your judgment, does that which we discussed in our former book concerning the breath of man belong?—to the nature of the soul, seeing that it is the soul which effects it in man; or to that of the body, since the body is moved by the soul to effect it; or to that of this air, by whose alternation of action it is discovered to effect it; or rather to all three, that is to say, to the soul as that which moves the body, and to the body which by its motion receives and emits the breath, and also to the circumambient air which raises by its entrance, and by its departure depresses? And yet you were evidently ignorant of all this, learned and eloquent though you are, when you supposed, and said, and wrote, and read in the presence of the crowd assembled to hear your opinion, that it was out of our own nature that we inflated a bag, and yet had no diminution of our nature at all by the operation; although you might most easily ascertain how we accomplish the process, not by any tedious examination of the pages either of human or of inspired writings, but by a simple investigation of your own physical action, whenever you liked. This, then, being the case, how can I trust you to teach me concerning the origin of souls,—a subject which I confess myself to be ignorant of,—you who are actually ignorant of what you are doing unintermittingly with your nose and mouth, and of why you are doing it? May the Lord bring it to pass that you may be advised by me, and accept rather than resist so manifest a truth, and one so ready to your hand. May you also not interrogate your lungs about the bag inflation in such a temper as to prefer inflating them in opposition to me, rather than acquiesce in their tuition, when they answer your inquiry with entire truth,—not by speech and altercation, but by breath and respiration. Then I could bear with you patiently while you correct and reproach me for my ignorance of the origin of souls; nay, I could even warmly thank you, if, besides inflicting on me rebuke, you would convince me with truth. For if you could teach me the truth I am ignorant of, it would be my duty to bear with all patience any blows you might deal against me, not in word only, but even with hand.

CHAPTER 5 [IV.]

GOD ALONE CAN TEACH WHENCE SOULS COME

Now with respect to the question between us, I confess to your loving self I greatly desire to know one of two things if I can,—either concerning the origin of souls, of which I am ignorant, or whether this knowledge is within our reach so long as we are in the present life. For what if our controversy touches the very points of which it is enjoined to us, “Seek not out the things that are too high for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength; but whatever things the Lord hath commanded and taught thee, think thereupon for evermore.” This, then, is what I desire to know, either from God Himself, who knows what He creates, or even from some competently learned man who knows what he is saying, not from a person who is ignorant of the breath he heaves. It is not everybody who recollects his own infancy; and do you suppose that a man is able, without divine instruction, to know whence he began to exist in his mother’s womb,—especially if the knowledge of human nature has so completely eluded him as to leave him ignorant, not only of what is within him, but of that also which is added to his nature from without? Will you, my dearest brother, be able to teach me, or any one else, whence human beings at their birth are ensouled, when you still know not how it is that their life is so sustained by food, that they are certain to die if the aliment is withdrawn for a while? Or will you be able to teach me, or any one else, whence men obtain their souls, when you are still actually ignorant whence bags, when inflated, get the filling? My only wish, as you are ignorant whence souls have their origin, is, that I may on my side know whether such knowledge is attainable by me in this present life. If this be one of the things which are too high for us, and which we are forbidden to seek out or search into, then we have good grounds for fearing lest we should sin, not by our ignorance of it, but our quest after it. For we ought not to suppose that a subject, to fall under the category of the things which are too high for us, must appertain to the nature of God, and not to our own.

CHAPTER 6 [V.]

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE BODY ARE SUFFICIENTLY MYSTERIOUS, AND YET NOT HIGHER THAN THOSE OF THE SOUL

What do you say to the statement, that amongst the works of God there are some which it is more difficult to know than even God Himself,—so far, indeed, as He can be an object of knowledge to us at all? For we have learnt that God is a Trinity; but to this very day we do not know how many kinds of animals, not even of land animals which were able to enter Noah’s ark, He has created—unless by some happy chance you have ascertained this fact. Again, in the Book of Wisdom it is written, “For if they were able to prevail so much, that they could know and estimate the world; how is it that they did not more easily find out the Lord thereof?” Is it because the subject before us is within us that it is therefore not too high for us? For it must be granted that the nature of our soul is a more internal thing than our body. As if the soul has been no better able to explore the body itself externally by the eyes of that body than internally by its own means. For what is there in the inward parts of the body where the soul does not exist? But yet, even with regard to these several inner and vital portions of our frame, the soul has examined and searched them out by the bodily eyes; and all that it has succeeded in learning of them it has acquired by means of the eyes of the body; and, without doubt, all the material substance was there, even when the soul knew not of it. Since also our inward parts are incapable of living without the soul, it follows that the soul has been more able to give them life than to know them. Well, then, is the soul’s body a higher object for its knowledge than the soul’s own self? And therefore if it wishes to inquire and consider when human seed is converted into blood, when into solid flesh; when the bones begin to harden, and when to fill with marrow; how many kinds of veins and nerves there are; by what channels and circuits the former serve for irrigation and the latter for ligature to the entire body; whether the skin is to be reckoned among the nerves, and the teeth among the bones,—for they show some difference, inasmuch as they have no marrow; and in what respect the nails differ from both, being similar to them in hardness, while they possess a quality in common with the hair, in being capable of growing and being cut; what, again, is the use of those veins wherein air, instead of blood, circulates, which they call the arteries—if, I repeat, the soul desired to come to know these and similar points respecting the nature of its body, ought it then to be said to a man, “Seek not out the things that are too high for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength?” But, if the inquiry be made into the soul’s own origin, of which subject it knows nothing, the matter then, forsooth, is not too high or beyond one’s strength to be capable of apprehension? And you deem it an absurd thing, and incompatible with reason, for the soul not to know whether it is inbreathed by God, or whether it is derived from the parents, although it does not remember this event as soon as it is past, and reckons it among the things which it has forgotten beyond recall,—like infancy, and all other stages of life which followed close upon birth, though doubtless, when they happened, they were not unaccompanied with sensation. But yet you do not deem it absurd or unreasonable that it should be ignorant of the body which is subject to it, and should know nothing whatever about incidents pertaining to it which are not in the category of things that are past, but of present facts,—as to whether it sets the veins in motion in order to produce life in the body, but the nerves in order to operate by the limbs of the body; and if so, why it does not move the nerves except at its especial will, whereas it affects the pulsations of the veins without intermission, even without willing; from what part of the body that which they call the hegemonikon (the authoritative part of the soul, the reason) exercises its universal rule, whether from the heart or from the brain, or by a distribution, the motions from the heart and the sensations from the brain,—or from the brain, both the sensations and voluntary motions, but from the heart, the involuntary pulsations of the veins; and once more, if it does both of these from the brain, how is it that it has the sensations, even without willing, while it does not move the limbs except it wills? Inasmuch, then, as only the soul itself does all this in the body, how is it that it knows not what it does? or whence its power to do it? And it is no disgrace to it to be so ignorant. Then do you suppose it to be a discredit if it knows not whence or how it was itself made, since it certainly did not make itself? Well, then, none know how or whence the soul effects all its action in the body; do you not therefore think that it, too, appertains to those things which are said to be “too high for us, and above our strength”?

CHAPTER 7 [VI.]

WE OFTEN NEED MORE TEACHING AS TO WHAT IS MOST INTIMATELY OURS THAN AS TO WHAT IS FURTHER FROM US

But I have to put to you a far wider question arising out of our subject. Why should only a very few know why all men do what they do? Perhaps you will tell me, Because they have learnt the art of anatomy or experiment, which are both comprised in the physician’s education, which few obtain, while others have refused to acquire the information, although they might, of course, if they had liked. Here, then, I say nothing of the point why many try to acquire this information, but cannot, because they are hindered by a slow intellect (which, however, is a very strange fact) from learning of others what is done by their own selves and in their own selves. But this is a very important question which I now ask, Why I should have no need of art to know that there is a sun in the heavens, and a moon, and other stars; but must have the aid of art to know, on moving my finger, whence the act begins,—from the heart, or the brain, or from both, or from neither: why I do not require a teacher to know what is so much higher than me; but must yet wait for some one else to learn whence that is done by me which is done within me? For although we are said to think in our heart, and although we know what our thoughts are, without the knowledge of any other person, yet we know not in what part of the body we have the heart itself, where we do our thinking, unless we are taught it by some other person, who yet is ignorant of what we think. I am not unaware that when we hear that we should love God with our whole heart, this is not said of that portion of our flesh which lies under our ribs, but of that power that originates our thoughts. And this is properly designated by this name, because, as motion does not cease in the heart whence the pulsation of the veins radiates in every direction, so in the process of thought we do not rest in the act itself and abstain from further pondering. But although every sensation is imparted even to the body by the soul, how is it that we can count our external limbs, even in the dark and with closed eyes, by the bodily sense which is called "touch," but we know nothing of our internal functions in the very central region of the soul itself, where that power is present which imparts life and animation to all else,—a mystery this which, I apprehend, no medical men of any kind, whether empirics, or anatomists, or dogmatists, or methodists, or any man living, have any knowledge of?

CHAPTER 8

WE HAVE NO MEMORY OF OUR CREATION

And whosoever shall have attempted to fathom such knowledge may not improperly have addressed to him the words we have before quoted, "Seek not out the things that are too high for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength." Now it is not a question of mere altitude, such as is beyond our stature, but it is an elevation which our intelligence cannot reach, and a strength which our mental power cannot cope with. And yet it is neither the heaven of heavens, nor the measure of the stars, nor the scope of sea and land, nor the nethermost hell; it is our own selves that we are incapable of comprehending; it is our own selves, who, in our too great height and strength, transcend the humble limits of our own knowledge; it is our own selves, whom we are incapable of embracing, although we are certainly not beside ourselves. But we are not to be compared with cattle simply because we do not perfectly discover what we ourselves are: and yet you think that we deserve the humiliating comparison, if we have forgotten what we were, even though we knew it once. My soul is not now being derived from my parents, is not now receiving insufflation from God. Whichever of these two processes He used, He used when He created me; He is not at this moment using it of me, or within me. It is past and gone,—not a present thing, nor a recent one to me. I do not even know whether I was aware of it and then forgot it; or whether I was unable, even at the time when it was done, to feel and to know it.

CHAPTER 9 [VII.]

OUR IGNORANCE OF OURSELVES ILLUSTRATED BY THE REMARKABLE MEMORY OF ONE SIMPLICIUS

Observe now, while we are, while we live, while we know that we live, while we are certain that we possess memory, understanding, and will; who boast of ourselves as having a great knowledge of our own nature;—observe, I say, how entirely ignorant we are of what avail to us is our memory, or our understanding, or our will. A certain man who from his youth has been a friend of mine, named Simplicius, is a person of accurate and astonishing memory. I once asked him to tell me what were the last lines but one of all the books of Virgil; he immediately answered my question without the least hesitation, and with perfect accuracy. I then asked him to repeat the preceding lines; he did so. And I really believe that he could have repeated Virgil line after line backward. For wherever I wished, I made trial whether he could do it, and he did it. Similarly in prose, from any of Cicero’s orations, which he had learnt by heart, he would perform a similar feat at our request, by reciting backwards as far as we wished. Upon our expressing astonishment, he called God to witness that he had no idea of this ability of his previous to that trial. So far, therefore, as memory is concerned, his mind only then learnt its own power; and such discovery would at no time be possible except by trial and experiment. Moreover, he was of course the very same man before he tried his powers; how was it, then, that he was ignorant of himself?

CHAPTER 10

THE FIDELITY OF MEMORY; THE UNSEARCHABLE TREASURE OF MEMORY; THE POWERS OF A MAN'S UNDERSTANDING SUFFICIENTLY UNDERSTOOD BY NONE

We often assume that we shall retain a thing in our memory; and so thinking, we do not write it down. But afterwards, when we wish to recall it, it refuses to come to mind; and we are then sorry that we thought it would return to memory, or that we did not secure it in writing so as to prevent its escape; and lo, on a sudden, without our seeking it, it occurs to us. Then does it follow that we were not ourselves when we thought this? And that we cease to be the same thing that we were, when we are no longer able to think it? Now how does it happen that I know not how we are abstracted from, and denied to, ourselves; and similarly am ignorant how we are restored and returned to ourselves? As if we are other persons, and elsewhere, when we seek, but fail to find, what we deposited in our memory; and are ourselves incapable of returning to ourselves, as if we were situated somewhere else; but afterwards return again, on finding ourselves out. For where do we make our quest, except in our own selves? And what is it we search for, except our own selves? As if we were not actually at home in our persons, but had gone somewhither. Do you not observe, even with alarm, so deep a mystery? And what is all this but our own nature—not what it has been, but such as it now is? And observe how much more we seek than we comprehend. I have often believed that I could understand a question which had been submitted to me, if I were to bestow thought upon it. Well, I have bestowed the thought, but have not been able to solve the question; and many a time I have not so believed, and yet have been able to determine the point. The powers, then, of my own understanding have not been really known to me; nor, I apprehend, have they been to you either.

CHAPTER 11

THE APOSTLE PETER TOLD NO LIE, WHEN HE SAID HE WAS READY TO LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR THE LORD, BUT ONLY WAS IGNORANT OF HIS WILL

But perhaps you despise me for confessing all this, and will in consequence compare me with “cattle.” For myself, however, I will not cease to advise you, or (if you refuse to listen to me) at all events to warn you, to acknowledge rather this common infirmity, in which virtue is perfected; lest, by assuming unknown things to be known, you fail to attain to the truth. For I suppose that there is something which even you wish to understand, but are unable; which you would never seek to understand, unless you hoped some day to succeed in your research. Thus you also are ignorant of the powers of your own understanding, who profess to know all about your own nature, and decline to follow me in my confession of ignorance. Well, there is also the will; what am I to say about that, where certainly free choice is ostentatiously claimed by us? The blessed Apostle Peter, indeed, was willing to lay down his life for the Lord. He was no doubt sincere in his willingness; nor was he treacherous to the Lord when he made the promise. But his will was entirely ignorant of its own powers. Therefore the great apostle, who had discovered his Master to be the Son of God, was unknown to himself. Thus we are quite aware respecting ourselves that we will a thing, or “nill” it; but although our will is a good one, we are ignorant, my dear son, unless we deceive ourselves, of its strength, of its resources, of what temptations it may yield to, or of what it may resist.

CHAPTER 12 [VIII.]

THE APOSTLE PAUL COULD KNOW THE THIRD HEAVEN AND PARADISE, BUT NOT WHETHER HE WAS IN THE BODY OR NOT

See therefore how many facts of our nature, not of the past but of the present time, and not pertaining to the body only, but also to our inner man, we know nothing about, without deserving to be compared with the brute beasts. And yet this is the opprobrious comparison which you have thought me worthy of, because I have not complete knowledge of the past origin of my soul—although I am not wholly ignorant of it, inasmuch as I know that it was given me by God, and yet that it is not out of God. But when can I enumerate all the particulars relating to the nature of our spirit and our soul of which we are ignorant? Whereas we ought rather to utter that exclamation before God, which the Psalmist uttered: “The knowledge of Thee is too wonderful for me; it is very difficult, I cannot attain to it.” Now why did he add the words for me, except because he conjectured how incomprehensible was the knowledge of God for himself, inasmuch as he was unable to comprehend even his own self? The apostle was caught up into the third heaven, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter; and whether this had happened to him in the body or out of the body, he declares himself unable to say; but yet he has no fear of encountering from you comparison with the cattle. His spirit knew that it was in the third heaven, in paradise; but knew not whether it was in the body. The third heaven, of course, and paradise were not the Apostle Paul himself; but his body and soul and spirit were himself. Behold, then, the curious fact: he knew the great things—lofty and divine—which were not himself; but that which appertained to his own nature he was ignorant of. Who in the vast knowledge of such occult things can help being astonished at his great ignorance of his own existence? Who, in short, would believe it possible, if one who errs not had not told us, that “we know not what we should pray for as we ought”? Where, then, ought our bent and purpose mainly to be—to “reach forth to those things which are before”? And yet you compare me to cattle, if among the things which are behind I have forgotten anything concerning my own origin—although you hear the same apostle say: “Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

CHAPTER 13 [IX.]

IN WHAT SENSE THE HOLY GHOST IS SAID TO MAKE INTERCESSION FOR US

Do you perhaps also think me ridiculous and like the irrational beasts, because I said, “We know not what we should pray for as we ought”? Perhaps this is not quite so intolerable. For since, in the dictates of a sound and righteous judgment, we prefer our future to our past; and since our prayer must have reference not to what we have been, but what we shall be, it is of course much more injurious not to know what we should pray for, than to be ignorant of the manner of our origin. But recollect whose words I repeated, or read them again for yourself, and reflect whence they come; and do not pelt me with your reproaches, lest the stone you throw should alight on a head you would not wish. For it is the great teacher of the Gentiles, the Apostle Paul himself, who said, “For we know not what we should pray for as we ought.” And he not only taught this lesson by word, but also illustrated it by his example. For, contrary to his own advantage and the promotion of his own salvation, he once in his ignorance prayed that “the thorn in the flesh might depart from him,” which he said had been given to him “lest he should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations which were given him.” But the Lord loved him, and so did not do what he had requested Him to do. Nevertheless, when the apostle said, “We know not what we should pray for as we ought,” he immediately added, “But the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God”—that is to say, He makes the saints offer intercessions. He, of course, is that Spirit “whom God hath sent into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father;” and “by whom we cry, Abba, Father;” for both expressions are used by the apostle—both that we have received the Spirit who cries, Abba, Father; and also that it is through Him that we cry, Abba, Father. His object is to explain by these varied statements in what sense he used the word “crying:” he meant causing to cry; so that it is we who cry at His instance and impulse. Let Him therefore teach me this too, whenever He pleases, if He knows it to be expedient for me, that I should know whence I derive my origin as regards my soul. But let me be taught by that Spirit who searches the deep things of God; not by a man who knows nothing of the breath which inflates a bag. However, be it far from me to compare you with brutes because of this piece of ignorance; because it arose not from incurable inability, but from sheer inadvertence.

CHAPTER 14 [X.]

IT IS MORE EXCELLENT TO KNOW THAT THE FLESH WILL RISE AGAIN AND LIVE FOR EVERMORE, THAN TO LEARN WHATEVER SCIENTIFIC MEN HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TEACH US CONCERNING ITS NATURE

But although the questions which arise touching the origin of souls are "higher," no doubt, than that which treats of the source whence the breath comes which we inhale and exhale, you yet believe that those things are "higher" which you have learnt out of the Holy Scriptures, from which we derive what we learn by faith; and such as are not traceable by any human minds. Of course it is far more excellent to know that the flesh will rise again and will live for evermore, than any thing that scientific men have been able to discover in it by careful examination, which the soul perceives by no outward sense, although its presence quickens all the things of which it is ignorant. It is also far better to know that the soul, which has been born again and renewed in Christ, will be blessed for ever, than to discover all that we are ignorant of touching its memory, understanding, and will. Now these subjects, which I have designated as more excellent and as better, we could by no means find out, unless we believed them on the testimony of the inspired Scriptures. These Scriptures you perhaps think you so thoroughly believe, that you do not hesitate to draw out of them a definite theory about the origin of souls. Well, then, first of all, if it be as you suppose, you ought never to have attributed to human nature itself what man knows by discussion and inquiry about his own nature and quality, but to God's gift. Now you asked: "Wherein does a man differ from the cattle, if he is ignorant of this?" But why need we read any thing, in order to know this, if we ought already to know it by the very fact that we are different from cattle? For just as you do not read anything to me for the purpose of teaching me that I am alive (my own nature making it impossible that I should be ignorant of this fact), so if it is an attribute of nature to know this other matter, why do you produce passages of Scripture for me to believe concerning this subject? Is it then only those persons who read them that differ from the cattle? Are we not so created as to be different from brute animals, even before we can acquire the art of reading? Pray, tell me how it is that you put in so high a claim for our nature, that by the very circumstance of its differing from cattle it already knows how to discuss and inquire into the origin of souls; while at the same time you make it so inexpert in this knowledge, as to be unable by human endowment to know this without it believe the divine testimonies.

CHAPTER 15 [XI.]

WE MUST NOT BE WISE ABOVE WHAT IS WRITTEN

But then, again, you are mistaken in this matter; for the passages of Scripture which you chose to produce for the solution of this question of yours, do not prove the point. For it is another thing which they prove, without which we cannot really lead a pious life, namely, that we have in God the giver, creator, and fashioner of our souls. But how He does this for them, whether by inbreathing them as new, or by deriving them from the parents, they do not tell us—except in the instance of that one soul which He gave to the first man. Read attentively what I have written to that servant of God, our brother Renatus; for inasmuch as I have pointed it all out to him there, it is not necessary for me to repeat my proofs here. But you would like me to follow your example in definiteness of theory, and so thrust myself into such difficulties as you have surrounded yourself with. Involved in these, you have spoken many stout words against the catholic faith; if, however, you would faithfully and humbly bethink yourself and consider, you would assuredly see how greatly it would have profited you, if you had only known how to be natural and consistent in your ignorance; and how this advantage is still open to you, if you were even now able to maintain such propriety. Now, since understanding so pleases you in man's nature (for, truly enough, if our nature were without it, we should not be different from brute beasts, so far as our souls are concerned), understand, I beg of you, what it is that you do not understand, lest you should understand nothing: and do not despise any man who, in order that he may truly understand, understands that he does not understand that which he does not understand. With regard, however, to the passage in the inspired psalm, "Man, being in honour, understandeth not; he is compared to the senseless cattle, and is like unto them;" read and understand these words, that you may rather with a humble spirit guard against the opprobrium yourself, than arrogantly throw it out against another person. The passage applies to those who regard only that as a life worth living which they live in the flesh—having no hope after death—just like "cattle;" it has no reference to those who never deny their knowledge of what they actually know, and always acknowledge their ignorance of what they really do not know; who, in point of fact, are aware of their weakness, rather than confident of their strength.

CHAPTER 16

IGNORANCE IS BETTER THAN ERROR. PREDESTINATION TO ETERNAL LIFE, AND PREDESTINATION TO ETERNAL DEATH

Do not, my son, let senile timidity displease your youthful confidence. For my own part, indeed, if I proved unequal, either under the teaching of God or of some spiritual instructor, to the task of understanding the subject of our present inquiry on the origin of souls, I am more prepared to vindicate God's righteous will, that we should remain in ignorance on this point, as on many others, than to say in my rashness what either is so obscure that I can neither bring it home to the intelligence of other people, nor understand it myself; or certainly even to help the cause of the heretics who endeavour to persuade us that the souls of infants are entirely free from guilt, on the ground, forsooth, that such guilt would only recoil on God as its Author, for having compelled innocent souls (for the help of which He knew beforehand no laver of regeneration was prepared) to become sinful, by assigning them to sinful flesh without any provision for that grace of baptism which should prevent their incurring eternal damnation. For the fact undoubtedly is, that numberless souls of infants pass out of the body before they are baptized. God forbid that I should cast about for any futile effort to dilute this stern fact, and say what you have yourself said: "That the soul deserved to be polluted by the flesh, and to become sinful, though it previously had no sin, by reason of which it could be rightly said to have incurred this desert." And again: "That even without baptism original sins may be remitted." And once more: "That even the kingdom of heaven is at last bestowed on those who have not been baptized." Now, if I were not afraid to utter these and similar poisonous allegations against the faith, I should probably not be afraid to propound some definite theory on this subject. How much better, then, is it, that I should not separately dispute and affirm about the soul, what I am ignorant of; but simply hold what I see the apostle has most plainly taught us: That owing to one man all pass into condemnation who are born of Adam unless they are born again in Christ, even as He has appointed them to be regenerated, before they die in the body, whom He predestinated to everlasting life, as the most merciful bestower of grace; whilst to those whom He has predestinated to eternal death, He is also the most righteous awarder of punishment not only on account of the sins which they add in the indulgence of their own will, but also because of their original sin, even if, as in the case of infants, they add nothing thereto. Now this is my definite view on that question, so that the hidden things of God may keep their secret, without impairing my own faith.

CHAPTER 17 [XII.]

A TWOFOLD QUESTION TO BE TREATED CONCERNING THE SOUL; IS IT “BODY”? AND IS IT “SPIRIT”? WHAT BODY IS

And now, as far as the Lord vouchsafes to enable me, I must reply also to that allegation of yours, in which, speaking of the soul, you again mention my name, and say, “We do not, as the very able and learned bishop Augustin professes, allow it to be incorporeal and also a spirit.” We have therefore, first, to discuss the question, whether the soul is to be deemed incorporeal, as I have said; or corporeal, as you hold. Then, secondly, whether in our Scriptures it is called a spirit—although not the whole but its own separate part is also properly called spirit. Well, I should, to begin with, like to know how you define body. For if that is not “body” which does not consist of limbs of flesh, then the earth cannot be a body, nor the sky, nor a stone, nor water, nor the stars, nor anything of the kind. If, however, a “body” is whatever consists of parts, whether greater or less, which occupy greater or smaller local spaces, then all the things which I have just mentioned are bodies; the air is a body; the visible light is a body; and so are all the things which the apostle has in view, when he says, “There are celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial.”

CHAPTER 18

THE FIRST QUESTION, WHETHER THE SOUL IS CORPOREAL; BREATH AND WIND, NOTHING ELSE THAN AIR IN MOTION

Now whether the soul is such a substance, is an extremely nice and subtle question. You, indeed, with a promptitude for which I very greatly congratulate you, affirm that God is not a body. But then, again, you give me some anxiety when you say, “If the soul lacks body, so as to be (as some persons are pleased to suppose) of hollow emptiness, of airy and futile substance.” Now, from these words you seem to believe, that everything which lacks body is of an empty substance. Well, if this is the case, how do you dare to say that God lacks body, without fearing the consequence that He is of an empty substance? If, however, God has not a body, as you have just allowed; and if it be profane to say that He is of an empty substance; then not everything which lacks body is an empty substance. And therefore a person who contends that the soul is incorporeal does not necessarily mean, that it is of an empty and futile substance; for he allows that God, who is not an empty being, is at the same time incorporeal. But observe what great difference there is between my actual assertion, and what you suppose me to say. I do not say that the soul is an airy substance; if I did, I should admit that it is a body. For air is a body; as all who understand what they say declare, whenever they speak concerning bodily substances. But you, because I called the soul incorporeal, supposed me not only to predicate mere emptiness of it, but, as the result of such predication, to say that it is “an airy substance;” whereas I must have said both that it has not corporeity, which air has, and that what is filled with air could not be empty. And your own bag similes failed to remind you of this. For when the bags are inflated, what is it but air that is pressed into them? And they are so far from being empty, that by reason of their distension they become even ponderous. But perhaps the breath seems to you to be a different thing from air; although your very breath is nothing else than air in motion; and what this is, can be seen from the shaking of a fan. With respect to any hollow vessels, which you may suppose to be empty, you may ascertain with certainty that they are really full, by lowering them straight into the water, with the mouth downwards. You see no water can get in, by reason of the air with which they are filled. If, however, they are lowered either in the opposite way, with mouth upward, or aslant, they then fill, as the water enters at the same opening where the air passes out and escapes. This could be, of course, more easily proved by performing the experiment, than by a description in writing. This, however, is not the time or place for longer delay on the subject; for whatever may be your perception of the nature of the air, as to whether it has corporeity or not, you certainly ought not to suppose me to have said that the soul is an aerial thing, but absolutely incorporeal. And this even you acknowledge God to be, whom you do not dare to describe as an empty substance, while you cannot but admit that He has an essence which is unchangeable and almighty. Now, why should we fear that the soul is an empty void, if it be incorporeal, when we confess that God is incorporeal, and at the same time deny Him to be an empty void? Thus it was within the competency of an Incorporeal Being to create an incorporeal soul, even as the living God made living man; although, as the unchangeable and the almighty, He communicated not these attributes to the changeable and far inferior creature.

CHAPTER 19 [XIII.]

WHETHER THE SOUL IS A SPIRIT

But again, why you would have the soul to be a body, and refuse to deem it a spirit, I cannot see. For if it is not a spirit, on the ground that the apostle named it with distinction from the spirit, when he said, “I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved,” the same is a good reason why it is not a body, inasmuch as he named the body, too, as distinct from it. If you affirm that the soul is a body, although they are both distinctly named; you should allow it to be a spirit, although these are also distinctly named. Indeed, the soul has a much greater claim to be regarded by you as a spirit than a body; because you acknowledge the spirit and the soul to be of one substance, but deny the soul and the body to be of one substance. On what principle, then, is the soul a body, when its nature is different from that of a body; and not a spirit, although its nature and a spirit’s is one and the same? Why, according to your argument, must you not confess that even the spirit is a body? For otherwise, if the spirit is not a body, and the soul is a body, the soul and the spirit are not of one and the same substance. You, however, allow them both (although believing them to be two separate things) to have one substance. Therefore, if the soul is a body, the spirit is a body also; for under no other condition can they be regarded as being of one and the same nature. On your own principles, therefore, the statement of the apostle, who mentions, “Your spirit, and soul, and body,” must imply three bodies; yet the body, which has likewise the name of flesh, is of a different nature. And of these three bodies, as you would call them, of which one is of a different, and the other two of one and the same substance, the entire human being is composed—one thing and one existence. Now, although you assert this, yet you will not allow that the two which are of one and the same substance, that is, the soul and the spirit, should have the one designation of spirit; whilst the two things which are not of one and the same substance ought, as you suppose, to have the one name of body.

CHAPTER 20 [XIV.]

THE BODY DOES NOT RECEIVE GOD'S IMAGE

But I pass by all this, lest the discussion between us should degenerate into one of names rather than things. Let us, then, see whether the inner man be the soul, or the spirit, or both. I observe, however, that you have expressed your opinion on the point in writing, calling the inner man the soul; for of this you spoke when you said: "And as the substance congealed, which was incapable of comprehension, it would produce another body within the body rounded and amassed by the force and twirl of its own nature, and thus an inner man would begin to appear, who, being moulded in a corporeal sheath would in its lineaments be shaped after the likeness of its outer man." And from this you draw the following inference: "God's breath, therefore, made the soul; yea, that breath from God was made the soul, an image, substantial, corporeal according to its own nature, like its own body, and conformed to its image." After this you proceed to speak of the spirit, and say: "This soul which had its origin from the breath of God could not exist without an innermost sense and intellect of its own; and such is the spirit." As I, then, understand your statement, you mean the inner man to be the soul, and the inmost one to be the spirit; as if the latter were inferior to the soul, as this is to the body. Whence it comes to pass, that just as the body receives another body pervading its own inner cavity, which (as you suppose) is the soul; so in its turn must the soul be regarded as having its interior emptiness also, where it could receive the third body, even the spirit; and thus the whole man consists of three, the outer, the inner, and the inmost. Now, do you not yet perceive what great absurdities follow in your wake, when you attempt the asseveration that the soul is corporeal? Tell me, I pray you, which of the two is it that is to be renewed in the knowledge of

God, after the image of Him that created him? The inner, or the inmost? For my own part, indeed, I do not see that the apostle, besides the inner and the outer man, knows anything of another man inside the inner one, that is, of an inmost man. But you must decide which it is you would have to be renewed after the image of God. How is he to receive this, who has already got the image of the outer man? For if the inner man has run throughout the limbs of the outward one, and congealed (for this is the term you have used; as if a molten shape were formed out of soft clay, which was thickened out of the dust), how, if this same figure which has been impressed upon it, or rather expressed out of a body, is to retain its place, could it be refashioned after the image of God? Is it to have two images—God's from above, that of the body from below—as is said in the case of money, "Heads and Tails"? Will you perhaps say, that the soul received the bodily image, and that the spirit takes God's image, as if the former were contiguous to the body, and the latter to God; and that, therefore, it is really the inmost man which is refashioned after the image of God, and not the inner man? Well, but this pretence is useless. For if the inmost man is as entirely diffused through all the members of the soul, as the inner man of the soul is through the limbs of the body; even it has now, through the soul, received the image of the body, as the soul moulded the same; and thus it results that it has no means whereby to receive God's image, while the afore-mentioned image of the body remains impressed upon it; except as in the case of the money which I have just quoted, where there is one form on the upper surface, and another on the lower one. These are the absurd lengths to which you are driven, whether you will or no, when you apply to the consideration of the soul the material ideas of bodily substances. But, as even you yourself with perfect propriety confess, God is not a body. How, then, could a body receive His image? "I beseech you, brother, that you be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind;" and cherish not "the carnal mind, which is death."

CHAPTER 21 [XV.]

RECOGNITION AND FORM BELONG TO SOULS AS WELL AS BODIES

But you say: "If the soul is incorporeal, what was it that the rich man saw in hell? He certainly recognised Lazarus; he did [not] know Abraham.

Whence arose to him the knowledge of Abraham, who had died so long before?” By using these words, I suppose that you do not think a man can be recognised and known without his bodily form. To know yourself, therefore, I imagine that you often stand before your looking-glass, lest by forgetting your features you should be unable to recognise yourself. But let me ask you, what man does anybody know more than himself; and whose face can he see less than his own? But who could possibly know God, whom even you do not doubt to be incorporeal, if knowledge could not (as you suppose) accrue without bodily shape; that is, if bodies alone can be recognised? What Christian, however, when discussing subjects of such magnitude and difficulty, can give such little heed to the inspired word as to say, “If the soul be incorporeal, it must of necessity lack form”? Have you forgotten that in that word you have read of “a form of doctrine”? Have you forgotten, too, that it is written concerning Christ Jesus, previous to His clothing Himself with humanity, that He was “in the form of God”? How, then, can you say, “If the soul is incorporeal, it must of necessity lack form;” when you hear of “the form of God,” whom you acknowledge to be incorporeal; and so express yourself, as if form could not possibly exist except in bodies?

CHAPTER 22

NAMES DO NOT IMPLY CORPOREITY

You also say, that “names cease to be given, when form is not distinguished; and that, where there is no designation of persons, there is no giving of names.” Your aim is to prove that Abraham’s soul was corporeal, inasmuch as he could be addressed as “Father Abraham.” Now, we have already said, that there is form even where there is no body. If, however, you think that where there are not bodies there is no assigning of names, I must beg of you to count the names which occur in this passage of Scripture, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance,” and tell me whether you do not recognise the very things of which these are the names; or whether you recognise them so as to descry some outlines of bodies. Come, tell me, to mention only love, for instance, what are its members, its figure, its colour? For if you are not yourself empty-headed, these appurtenances cannot possibly be regarded by you as an empty thing. Then you go on to say: “The look and form must, of course, be corporeal of him whose help is implored.” Well, let men hear what you say; and let no one implore God’s help, because no one can possibly see anything corporeal in Him.

CHAPTER 23 [XVI.]

FIGURATIVE SPEECH MUST NOT BE TAKEN LITERALLY

“In short,” you say, “members are in this parable ascribed to the soul, as if it were really a body.” You will have it, that “by the eye the whole head is understood,” because it is said, that “he lifted up his eyes.” Again you say, that “by tongues are meant jaws, and by finger the hand,” because it is said, “Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue.” And yet to save yourself from the inconsistency of ascribing corporeal qualities to God, you say that “by these terms must be understood incorporeal functions and powers;” because with the greatest propriety you insist on it, that God is not corporeal. What is the reason, therefore, that the names of these limbs do not argue corporeity in God, although they do in the case of the soul? Is it that these terms must be understood literally when spoken of the creature, and only metaphorically and figuratively when predicated of the Creator? Then you will have to give us wings of literal bodily substance, since it is not the Creator, but only a human creature, who said, “If I should take my wings like a dove.” Moreover, if the rich man of the parable had a bodily tongue, on the ground of his exclaiming, “Let him cool my tongue,” it would look very much as if our tongue, even while we are in the flesh, itself possessed material hands, because it is written, “Death and life are in the hands of the tongue.” I suppose it is even to yourself self-evident, that sin is neither a creature nor a bodily substance; why, then, has it a face? For do you not hear the psalmist say, “There is no peace in my bones, in the face of my sins”?

CHAPTER 24

ABRAHAM’S BOSOM—WHAT IT MEANS

As to your supposing that “the Abraham’s bosom referred to is corporeal,” and your further assertion, that “by it is meant his whole body,” I fear that you must be regarded (even in such a subject) as trying to joke and raise a laugh, instead of acting gravely and seriously. For you could not else be so foolish as to think that the material bosom of one person could receive so many souls; nay, to use your own words, “bear the bodies of as many meritorious men as the angels carry thither, as they did Lazarus.” Unless it happen to be your opinion, that his soul alone deserved to find its way to the said bosom. If you are not, then, in fun, and do not wish to make childish mistakes, you must understand by “Abraham’s bosom” that remote and separate abode of rest and peace in which Abraham now is; and that what was said to Abraham did not merely refer to him personally, but had reference to his appointment as the father of many nations, to whom he was presented for imitation as the first and principal example of faith; even as God willed Himself to be called “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,” although He is the God of an innumerable company.

CHAPTER 25 [XVII.]

THE DISEMBODIED SOUL MAY THINK OF ITSELF UNDER A BODILY FORM

You must not, however, suppose that I say all this as if denying it to be possible that the soul of a dead man, like a person asleep, may think either good or evil thoughts in the similitude of his body. For, in dreams, when we suffer anything harsh and troublesome, we are, of course, still ourselves; and if the distress do not pass away when we awake, we experience very great suffering. But to suppose that they are veritable bodies in which we are hurried, or flit, about hither and thither in dreams, is the idea of a person who has thought only carelessly on such subjects; for it is in fact mainly by these imaginary sights that the soul is proved to be non-corporeal; unless you choose to call even the objects which we see so often in our dreams, besides ourselves, bodies, such as the sky, the earth, the sea, the sun, the moon, the stars, and rivers, mountains, trees, or animals. Whoever takes these phantoms to be bodies, is incredibly foolish; although they are certainly very like bodies. Of this character also are those phenomena which are demonstrably of divine significance, whether seen in dreams or in a trance. Who can possibly trace out or describe their origin, or the material of which they consist? It is, beyond question, spiritual, not corporeal. Now things of this kind, which look like bodies, but are not really corporeal, are formed in the thoughts of persons when they are awake, and are held in the depths of their memories, and then out of these secret recesses, by some wonderful and ineffable process, they come out to view in the operation of our memory, and present themselves as if palpably before our eyes. If, therefore, the soul were a material body, it could not possibly contain so many things and such large forms of bodily substances in its scope of thought, and in the spaces of its memory; for, according to your own definition, “it does not exceed this external body in its own corporeal substance.” Possessing, therefore, no magnitude of its own, what capacity has it to hold the images of vast bodies, spaces, and regions? What wonder is it, then, if it actually itself appears to itself in the likeness of its own body, even when it appears without a body? For it never appears to itself in dreams with its own body; and yet in the very similitude of its own body it runs hither and thither through known and unknown places, and beholds many sad and joyous sights. I suppose, however, that you really would not, yourself, be so bold as to maintain that there is true corporeity in that form of limb and body which the soul seems to itself to possess in dreams. For at that rate that will be a real mountain which it appears to ascend; and that a material house which it seems to enter; and that a veritable tree, with real wood and bulk, beneath which it apparently reclines; and that actual water which it imagines itself to drink. All the things with which it is conversant, as if they were corporeal, would be undoubted bodies, if the soul were itself corporeal, as it ranges about amongst them all in the likeness of a body.

CHAPTER 26 [XVIII.]

ST. PERPETUA SEEMED TO HERSELF, IN SOME DREAMS, TO HAVE BEEN TURNED INTO A MAN, AND THEN HAVE WRESTLED WITH A CERTAIN EGYPTIAN

Some notice must be taken of sundry accounts of martyrs’ visions, because you have thought proper to derive some of your evidence therefrom. St. Perpetua, for instance, seemed to herself in dreams to be wrestling with an Egyptian, after being changed into a man. Now, who can doubt that it was her soul in that apparent bodily form, not her body, which, of course, remained in her own sex as a woman, and lay on the bed with her senses steeped in sleep, whilst her soul was struggling in the similitude of a man’s body? What have you to say to this? Was that male likeness a veritable body, or was it no body at all, although possessing the appearance of a body? Choose your alternative. If it was a body, why did it not maintain its sexual integrity? For in that woman's flesh were found no virile functions of generation, whence by any such process as that which you call congelation could be moulded this similitude of a man's body. We will conclude then, if you please, that, as her body was still alive while she slept, notwithstanding the wrestling of her soul, she remained in her own natural sex, enclosed, of course, in all her proper limbs which belong to her in her living state, and was still in possession of that bodily shape and the lineaments of which she had been originally formed. She had not resigned, as she would by death, her joints and limbs; nor had she withdrawn from the transposing power, which arises from the operation of the power of death, any of her members which had already received their fixed form. Whence, then, did her soul get that virile body in which she seemed to wrestle with her adversary? If, however, this [male likeness] was not a body, although such a semblance of one as admitted the sensation in it of a real struggle or a real joy, do you not by this time see, as far as may be, that there can be in the soul a certain resemblance of a bodily substance, while the soul is not itself a body?

CHAPTER 27

IS THE SOUL WOUNDED WHEN THE BODY IS WOUNDED?

What, then, if some such thing is exhibited among the departed; and souls recognise themselves among them, not, indeed, by bodies, but by the semblances of bodies? Now, when we suffer pain, if only in our dreams, although it is only the similitude of bodily limbs which is in action, and not the bodily limbs themselves, still the pain is not merely in semblance, but in reality; as is also the case in the instance of joyous sensations. Inasmuch, however, as St. Perpetua was not yet dead, you probably are unwilling to lay down a precise rule for yourself from that circumstance (although it bears strongly on the question), as to what nature you will suppose those semblances of bodies to partake of, which we have in our dreams. If you allow them to be like bodies, but not bodies actually, then the entire question would be settled. But her brother Dinocrates was dead; she saw him with the wound which he received while alive, and which caused his death. Where is the ground for the earnest contention to which you devoted your efforts, when you laboured to show, that when a limb is cut off, the soul must not be supposed as suffering a like amount of loss by amputation? Observe, the wound was inflicted on the soul of Dinocrates, expelling it by its force from his body, when it was inhabiting that body. How, then, can your opinion be correct, that "when the limbs of the body are cut off, the soul withdraws itself from the stroke, and after condensation retires to other parts, so that no portion of it is amputated with the wound inflicted on the body," even if the person be asleep and unconscious when the loss of limb is suffered? So great is the vigilance which you have ascribed to the soul, that even should the stroke fall on any part of the flesh without its knowledge, when it is absorbed in the visions of dreams, it would instantly, and by a providential instinct, withdraw itself, and so render it impossible for any blow, or injury, or mutilation to be inflicted upon it. However, you may, as much as you will, ransack your ingenuity for an answer to the natural question, how the soul withdraws the portions of its own existence, and retreats within itself, so that, whenever a limb of the body is cut off or broken, it does not suffer any amputation or fracture in itself; but I cannot help asking you to look at the case of Dinocrates, and to explain to me why his soul did not withdraw from that part of his body which received the mortal wound, and so escape from suffering in itself what was plainly enough seen in his face, even after his body was dead? Is it, perchance, your good pleasure that we should suppose the phenomena in question to be rather the semblances of bodies than the reality; so that as that which is really no wound seems to be a wound, so that which is no body at all wears the appearance of corporeity? If, indeed, the soul can be wounded by those who wound the body, should we not have good reason to fear that it can be killed also by those who kill the body? This, however, is a fate which the Lord Himself most plainly declares it to be impossible to happen. And the soul of Dinocrates could not at any rate have died of the blow which killed his body: its wound, too, was only an apparent one; for not being corporeal, it was not really wounded, as the body had been; possessing the likeness of the body, it shared also the resemblance of its wound. Still it may be further said, that in its unreal body the soul felt a real misery, which was signified by the shadow of the body’s wound. It was from this real misery that he earned deliverance by the prayers of his holy sister.

CHAPTER 28

IS THE SOUL DEFORMED BY THE BODY’S IMPERFECTIONS?

Now, again, what means it that you say, “The soul acquires form from the body, and grows and extends with the increase of the body,” without keeping in view what a monstrosity the soul of either a young man or an old man would become if his arm had been amputated when he was an infant? “The hand of the soul,” you say, “contracts itself, so that it is not amputated with the hand of the body, and by condensation it shrinks into other parts of the body.” At this rate the aforesaid arm of the soul will be kept, wherever it holds its ground, as short as it was at first when it received the form of the body, because it has lost the form by the growth of which it might itself have increased at an equal degree of expansion. Thus the soul of the young man or the old man who lost his hand in his infancy advances with two hands, indeed (because the one which shrank back escaped the amputation of the bodily limb), but one of these was the hand of an adult, young or old, according to the hypothesis, while the other was only an infant’s hand, just as it was when the amputation happened. Such souls, believe me, are not made in the mould and form of the body, but they are fictitiously framed under the deformed stamp of error. It seems to me impossible for you to be rescued from this error, unless with God’s help you fully and calmly examine the visions of those who dream, and from these convince yourself that some forms are not real bodies, but only the semblances of bodies. Now, although even those objects which we suppose to be like bodies are of the same class, yet so far as the dead are concerned, we can form an after guess about them from persons who are asleep. For it is not in vain that Holy Scripture describes as “asleep” those who are dead were it only because in a certain sense “sleep is akin to death.”

CHAPTER 29 [XIX.]

DOES THE SOUL TAKE THE BODY’S CLOTHES ALSO AWAY WITH IT?

If, indeed, the soul were body, and the form were also a corporeal figure in which it sees itself in dreams, on the ground that it received its expression from the body in which it is enclosed: not a human being, if he lost a limb, would in dreams see himself bereft of the amputated member, although actually deprived of it. On the contrary, he would always appear to himself entire and unmutilated, from the circumstance that no part has been cut away from the soul itself. But since persons sometimes see themselves whole and sometimes mutilated in limb, when this happens to be their actual plight, what else does this fact show than that the soul, both in respect of other things seen by it in dreams and in reference to the body, bears about, hither and thither, not their reality, but only their resemblance? The soul’s joy, however, or sadness, its pleasure or pain, are severally real emotions, whether experienced in actual or in apparent bodies. Have you not yourself said (and with perfect truth): “Aliments and vestments are not wanted by the soul, but only by the body”? Why, then, did the rich man in hell crave for the drop of water? Why did holy Samuel appear after his death (as you have yourself noticed) clothed in his usual garments? Did the one wish to repair the ruins of the soul, as of the flesh, by the aliment of water? Did the other quit life with his clothes on him? Now in the former case there was a real suffering, which tormented the soul; but not a real body, such as required food. While the latter might have seemed to be clothed, not as being a veritable body, but a soul only, having the semblance of a body with a dress. For although the soul extends and contracts itself to suit the members of the body, it does not similarly adapt itself to the clothes, so as to fit its form to them.

CHAPTER 30

IS CORPOREITY NECESSARY FOR RECOGNITION?

But who is able to trace out what capacity of recognition even souls which are not good possess after death when relieved of the corruptible bodies, so as to be able by an inner sense to observe and recognise either souls that are evil like themselves, or even good ones, either in states which are actually not corporeal, but the semblances of bodies; or else in good or evil affections of the mind, in which there occur no lineaments whatever of bodily members? Whence arises the fact that the rich man in the parable, though in torments, recognised “Father Abraham,” whose face and figure he had never seen, but the semblance of whose body his soul, though incorporeal, was able to comprehend? But who could rightly say that he had known any man, except in so far as he has had means of knowing his life and disposition, which have, of course, neither material substance nor colours? It is in this way that we know ourselves more certainly than any others, because our own consciousness and disposition are all before us. This we plainly perceive, and yet we see therein no similitude of a bodily substance. But we do not perceive this inner quality of our nature in another man, even if he be present before our eyes; though in his absence we recollect his features, and recognise them, and think of them. Our own features, however, we cannot in the same manner recollect, and recognise, and think of; and yet with most perfect truth we say that we are ourselves better known to ourselves than he is, so manifest is it where lies the stronger and truer knowledge of man.

CHAPTER 31 [XX.]

MODES OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE SOUL DISTINGUISHED

Forasmuch, then, as there is one function in the soul, by which we perceive real bodies, which we do by the five bodily senses; another, which enables us to discern apart from these non-corporeal likenesses of bodies (and by this we can have a view of ourselves also, as not otherwise than like to bodies); and a third, by which we gain a still surer and stronger insight into objects fitted for its faculty, which are neither corporeal nor are like bodily substances,—such as faith, hope, charity,—things which have neither complexion, nor passion, nor any such thing: on which of these functions ought we to dwell more intently, and to some degree more familiarly, and where be renewed in the knowledge of God after the image of Him who created us? Is it not on and in that which I have now put in the third place? And here we shall certainly experience neither sexual difference nor the semblance thereof.

CHAPTER 32

INCONSISTENCY OF GIVING THE SOUL ALL THE PARTS OF SEX AND YET NO SEX

For that form of the soul, whether masculine or feminine, which has the distinction of members characteristic of man and woman, being no semblance merely of body, but actual body, is either a male or a female, whether you will or no, precisely as it appears to be a man or a woman. But if your opinion be correct, and the soul is a body, even a living body, then it both possesses swelling and pendent breasts, and lacks a beard, it has a womb, and all the generative organs of a woman, yet is not a woman after all. Will not mine, then, be a statement more consistent with truth: the soul, indeed, has an eye and has a tongue, has a finger, and all other members which resemble those of the body, and yet the whole is the semblance of a body, not a body really? My statement is open to a general test; everybody can prove it in himself, when he brings home to his mind the image of absent friends; he can prove it with certainty when he recalls the figures both of himself and other persons, which have occurred to him in his dreams. On your part, however, no example can throughout nature be produced of such a monstrosity as you have imagined, where there is a woman's real and living body, but not a woman's sex.

CHAPTER 33

THE PHENIX AFTER DEATH COMING TO LIFE AGAIN

Now, what you say about the phenix has nothing whatever to do with the subject before us. For the phenix symbolizes the resurrection of the body; it does not do away with the sex of souls; if indeed, as is thought, he is born afresh after his death. I suppose, however, that you thought your discourse would not be sufficiently plausible unless you declaimed a good deal about the phenix, after the fashion of young people. Now do you find in the body of your bird male organs of generation and not a male bird; or female ones, and not a female? But, I beg of you, reflect on what it is you say,—what theory you are trying to construct, and to recommend for our acceptance. You say that the soul, spread through all the limbs of the body, grew stiff by congelation, and received the entire shape of the whole body from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, and from the inmost marrow to the skin's outward surface. At this rate it must have received, in the case of a female body, all the inner appurtenances of a woman's body, and yet not be a woman! Why, pray, are all the members feminine in a true living body, and yet the whole no woman? And why all be male, and the result not a man? Who can be so presumptuous as to believe, and profess, and teach all this? Is it that souls never generate? Then, of course, mules and she-mules are not male and female. Is it that souls without bodies of flesh would be unable to cohabit? Well, but this deprivation is shared by castrated men; and yet, although both the process and the motion be taken from them, their sex is not removed—some slender remnant of their male members being still left to them. Nobody ever said that a eunuch is not a male. What now becomes of your opinion, that the souls even of eunuchs have the generative organs unimpaired, and that these organs will remain entire, on your principle, in their souls, even when they are clean removed from their bodily structure? For you say, the soul knows how to withdraw itself when that part of the flesh begins to be cut off, so that the form which has been removed when amputated is not lost; but although spread over it by condensation, it retires by an extremely rapid movement, and so buries itself within as to be kept quite safe; yet that cannot, forsooth, be a male in the other world which carries with it thither the whole appendage of male organs of generation, and which, if it had not even other signs in the body, was a male by reason of those organs alone. These opinions, my son, have no truth in them; if you will not allow that there is sex in the soul, there cannot be a body either.

CHAPTER 34 [XXI.]

PROPHETIC VISIONS

Not every semblance of a body is itself a body. Fall asleep and you will see this; but when you awake again, carefully discern what it is you have seen. For in your dreams you will appear to yourself as if endued with a body; but it really is not your body, but your soul; nor is it a real body, but the semblance of a body. Your body will be lying on the bed, but the soul walking; the tongue of your body will be silent, but that of your soul in the dream will talk; your eyes will be shut, but your soul will be awake; and, of course, the limbs of your body stretched out in your bed will be alive, not dead. Consequently that congealed form, as you regard it, of your soul is not yet extracted, as it were, out of its sheath; and yet in it is seen the whole and perfect semblance of your fleshly frame. Belonging to this class of similitudes of corporeity, which are not real bodies, though they seem to be such, are all those appearances which you read of in the Holy Scriptures in the visions even of the prophets, without, however, understanding them; by which are also signified the things which come to pass in all time—present, past, and future. You make mistakes about these, not because they are in themselves deceptive, but because you do not accept them as they ought to be taken. For in the same apocalyptic vision where "the souls of the martyrs" are seen, there is also beheld "a lamb as it were slain, having seven horns:" there are also horses and other animals figuratively described with all consistency; and lastly, there were the stars falling, and the earth rolled up like a book; nor does the world, in spite of all, then actually collapse. If therefore we understand all these things wisely, although we say they are true apparitions, yet we do not call them real bodies.

CHAPTER 35

DO ANGELS APPEAR TO MEN IN REAL BODIES?

It would, however, require too lengthy a discourse to enter very carefully on a discussion concerning this kind of corporeal semblances; whether angels even, either good ones or evil ones, appear in this manner, whenever they appear in the likeness of human beings or of any bodies whatever; or whether they possess real bodies, and show themselves in this veritable state of corporeity; or, again, whether by persons when dreaming, indeed, or in a trance they are perceived in these forms—not in bodies, but in the likeness of bodies—while to persons when awake they present real bodies which can be seen, and, if necessary, actually touched. Such questions as these, however, I do not deem it at all requisite to investigate and fully treat in this book. By this time enough has been advanced respecting the soul's incorporeity. If you would rather persist in your opinion that it is corporeal, you must first of all define what "body" means; lest, peradventure, it may turn out that we are agreed about the thing itself, but labouring to no purpose about its name. The absurd conclusions, however, to which you would be reduced if you thought of such a body in the soul, as are those substances which are called "bodies" by all learned men,—I mean such as occupy portions of space, smaller ones for their smaller parts, and larger ones for their larger,—by means of the different relations of length and breadth and thickness, I venture to think you are by this time able intelligently to observe.

CHAPTER 36 [XXII.]

HE PASSES ON TO THE SECOND QUESTION ABOUT THE SOUL, WHETHER IT IS CALLED SPIRIT

It now remains for me to show how it is that while the designation spirit is rightly predicated of a part of the soul, not the whole of it,—even as the apostle says, “Your whole spirit, and soul, and body;” or, according to the much more expressive statement in the Book of Job, “Thou wilt separate my soul from my spirit,”—yet the whole soul is also called by this name; although this question seems to be much more a question of names than of things. For since it is certainly a fact that there is a something in the soul which is properly called “spirit,” while (this being left out of question) it is also designated with equal propriety “soul,” our present contention is not about the things themselves; mainly because I on my side certainly admit, and you on your part say the same, that that is properly called spirit by which we reason and understand, and yet that these things are distinguishingly designated, as the apostle says “your whole spirit, and soul, and body.” This spirit, however, the same apostle appears also to describe as mind; as when he says, “So then with the mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” Now the meaning of this is precisely what he expresses in another passage thus: “For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.” What he designates mind in the former place, he must be understood to call spirit in the latter passage. Not as you interpret the statement, “The whole mind is meant, which consists of soul and spirit,”—a view which I know not where you obtained. By our “mind,” indeed, we usually understand nothing but our rational and intellectual faculty; and thus, when the apostle says, “Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind,” what else does he mean than, Be ye renewed in your mind? “The spirit of the mind” is, accordingly, nothing else than the mind, just as “the body of the flesh” is nothing but the flesh; thus it is written, “In putting off the body of the flesh,” where the apostle calls the flesh “the body of the flesh.” He designates it, indeed, in another point of view as the spirit of man, which he quite distinguishes from the mind: “If,” says he, “I pray with the tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my mind is unfruitful.” We are not now, however, speaking of that spirit which is distinct from the mind; and this involves a question relating to itself which is really a difficult one. For in many ways and in divers senses the Holy Scriptures make mention of the spirit; but with respect to that we are now speaking of, by which we exercise reason, intelligence, and wisdom, we are both agreed that it is called (and indeed rightly called) “spirit,” in such a sense as not to include the entire soul, but a part of it. If, however, you contend that the soul is not the spirit, on the ground that the understanding is distinctly called “spirit,” you may as well deny that the whole seed of Jacob is called Israel, since, apart from Judah, the same appellation was distinctly and separately borne by the ten tribes which were then organized in Samaria. But why need we linger any longer here on this subject?

CHAPTER 37 [XXIII.]

WIDE AND NARROW SENSE OF THE WORD “SPIRIT.”

But now, with a view to our easier elucidation, I beg you to observe that what is the soul is also designated spirit in the scripture which narrates an incident in our Lord’s death, thus, “He bowed His head and gave up the spirit.” Now, when you hear or read these words, you wish to understand them as if the whole were signified by a part, and not because that which is the soul may also be called spirit. But I shall, for the purpose of being able the more readily to prove what I say, actually summon yourself with all promptitude and convenience as my witness. For you have defined spirit in such terms that cattle appear not to have a spirit, but a soul. Irrational animals are so called, because they have not the power of intelligence and reason. Accordingly, when you admonished man himself to know his own nature, you spoke as follows: “Now, inasmuch as the good God has made nothing without a purpose, He has produced man himself as a rational animal, capable of intelligence, endowed with reason, and enlivened by sensibility, so as to be able to distribute in a wise arrangement all things that are void of reason.” In these words of yours you have plainly asserted what is certainly most true, that man is endowed with reason and capable of intelligence, which, of course, animals void of reason are not. And you have, in accordance with this view, quoted a passage of Scripture, and, adopting its language, have compared men of no understanding to the cattle, which, of course, have not intellect. A statement the like to which occurs in another passage of Scripture: “Be ye not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding.” This being the case, I want you also to observe in what terms you have defined and described the spirit when trying to distinguish it from the soul: “This soul,” you say, “which has its origin from the breath of God, could not have possibly been without an inner sense and intellect of its own; and this is the spirit.” A little afterwards you add: “And although the soul animates the body, yet inasmuch as it possesses sense, and wisdom, and vigour, there must needs be a spirit.” And then somewhat further on you say: “The soul is one thing, and the spirit—which is the soul’s wisdom and sense—is another.” In these words you plainly enough indicate what you take the spirit of man to mean; that it is even our rational faculty, whereby the soul exercises sense and intelligence,—not, indeed, the sensation which is felt by the bodily senses, but the operation of that innermost sense from which arises the term sentiment. Owing to this it is, no doubt, that we are placed above brute animals, since these are unendowed with reason. These animals therefore have not spirit,—that is to say, intellect and a sense of reason and wisdom,—but only soul. For it is of these that it was spoken, “Let the waters bring forth the creeping creatures that have a living soul;” and again, “Let the earth bring forth the living soul.” In order, indeed, that you may have the fullest and clearest assurance that what is the soul is in the usage of the Holy Scriptures also called spirit, the soul of a brute animal has the designation of spirit. And of course cattle have not that spirit which you, my beloved brother, have defined as being distinct from the soul. It is therefore quite evident that the soul of a brute animal could be rightly called “spirit” in a general sense of the term; as we read in the Book of Ecclesiastes, “Who knoweth the spirit of the sons of men, whether it goeth upward; and the spirit of the beast, whether it goeth downward into the earth?” In like manner, touching the devastation of the deluge, the Scripture testifies, “All flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: and all things which have the spirit of life.” Here, if we remove all the windings of doubtful disputation, we understand the term spirit to be synonymous with soul in its general sense. Of so wide a signification is this term, that even God is called “a spirit;”

and a stormy blast of the air, although it has material substance, is called by the psalmist the “spirit” of a tempest. For all these reasons, therefore, you will no longer deny that what is the soul is called also spirit; I have, I think, adduced enough from the pages of Holy Scripture to secure your assent in passages where the soul of the very brute beast, which has no understanding, is designated spirit. If, then, you take and wisely consider what has been advanced in our discussion about the incorporeity of the soul, there is no further reason why you should take offence at my having said that I was sure the soul was not body, but spirit,—both because it is proved to be not corporeal, and because in its general sense it is denominated spirit.

CHAPTER 38 [XXIV.]

VICTOR’S CHIEF ERRORS AGAIN POINTED OUT

Wherefore if you take these books, which I have with a sincere and affectionate interest written in answer to your opinions, and read them with a reciprocal love for me; if you attend to what you have yourself declared in the beginning of your first book, and “are anxious not to insist on any opinion of your own, if it be found an improbable one,” then I beseech you to beware especially of those eleven errors which I warned you of in the preceding book of this treatise. Do not say, that “the soul is of God in such a sense that He created it not out of no, nor out of another, but out of His own nature;” or that, “as God who gives is Himself ever existent, so is He ever giving souls through infinite time;” or that “the soul lost some merit through the flesh, which it had previous to the flesh;” or that “the soul by means of the flesh repairs its ancient condition, and is born again through the very same flesh, by which it had deserved to be polluted;” or that “the soul deserved to be sinful even prior to sin;” or that “infants who die without the regeneration of baptism, may yet attain to forgiveness of their original sins;” or that “they whom the Lord has predestinated to be baptized can be taken away from His predestination, or die before that has been accomplished in them which the Almighty had predetermined;” or that “it is of those who expire before they are baptized that the Scripture says, Speedily was he taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding,’“—with the remainder of the passage to the same effect; or that “there are some mansions outside the kingdom of God, belonging to the many,’ which the Lord said were in His Father’s house;” or that “the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ ought to be offered in behalf of those who have departed out of the body without being baptized;” or that “any of those persons who die without Christ’s baptism, are received for a while into paradise, and afterwards attain even to the blessedness of the kingdom of heaven.” Above all things, beware of these opinions, my son, and, as you wish to be the vanquisher of error, do not rejoice in the surname of “Vincentius.” And when you are ignorant on any subject, do not think that you know it; but in order to get real knowledge, learn how to be ignorant. For we commit a sin by affecting to be ignorant of nothing among “the secret things of God;” by constructing random theories about unknown things, and taking them for known; and by producing and defending errors as if they were truth. As for my own ignorance on the question whether the souls of men are created afresh at every birth, or are transmitted by the parents (an ignorance which is, however, modified by my belief, which it would be impious to falter in, that they are certainly made by the Divine Creator, though not of His own substance), I think that your loving self will by this time be persuaded that it either ought not to be censured at all, or, if it ought, that it should be done by a man who is capable by his learning of removing it altogether; and so also with respect to my other opinions, that while souls have in them the incorporeal semblances of bodies, they are not themselves bodies; and that, without impairing the natural distinction between soul and spirit, the soul is in a general sense actually designated spirit. If, indeed, I have unfortunately failed to persuade you, I must leave it rather to my readers to determine whether what I have advanced ought not to have convinced you.

CHAPTER 39

CONCLUDING ADMONITION

If, as may possibly be the case, you desire to know whether there are many other points which appear to me to require emendation in your books, it cannot be troublesome for you to come to me,—not, indeed, as a scholar to his master, but as a person in his prime to one full of years, and as a strong man to a weak one. And although you ought not to have published your books, still there is a greater and a truer glory in a man’s being censured, when he confesses with his own lips the justice of his correction, than in being lauded out of the mouth of any defender of error. Now, while I should be unwilling to believe that all those who listened to your reading of the afore-mentioned books, and lavished their praises on you, had either previously held for themselves the opinions which sound doctrine disapproves of, or were induced by you to entertain them, I still cannot help thinking that they had the keenness of their mind blunted by the impetuous and constant flow of your elocution, and so were unable to bestow adequate attention on the contents of your discourse; or else, that when they were in any case capable of understanding what you said, it was less for any very clear statement of the truth that they praised you than for the affluence of your language, and the facility and resources of your mental powers. For praise, and fame, and kindly regard are very commonly bestowed on a young man's eloquence in anticipation of the future, though as yet it lacks the mellowed perfection and fidelity of a fully-informed instructor. In order, then, that you may attain to true wisdom yourself, and that what you say may be able not only to delight, but even edify other people, it behoves you, after removing from your mind the dangerous applause of others, to keep conscientious watch over your own words.

A TREATISE ON THE SPIRIT AND THE LETTER

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE SPIRITU ET LITTERA.)

EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN'S "RETRACTATIONS,"

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

IN ONE BOOK,

ADDRESSED TO MARCELLINUS, A.D. 412.

TRANSLATED BY DR. HOLMES.

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Book II. Chap. 37, On the Following Treatise, “De spiritu et littera.”

The person to whom I had addressed the three books entitled De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione, in which I carefully discussed also the baptism of infants, informed me, when acknowledging my communication, that he was much distrurbed because I declared it to be possible that a man might be without sin, if he wanted not the will, by the help of God, although no man either had lived, was living, or would live in this life so perfect in righteousness. He asked how I could say that it was possible of which no example could be adduced. Owing to this inquiry on the part of this person, I wrote the treatise entitled De Spiritu et Littera, in which I considered at large the apostle’s statement, “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” In this work, so far as God enabled me, I earnestly disputed with those who oppose that grace of God which justifies the servances of the Jews, who abstain from sundry meats and drinks in accordance with their ancient law, I mentioned the “ceremonies of certain meats” [quarumdam escarum cerimoniae]—a phrase which, though not used in Holy Scriptures, seemed to me very convenient, because I remembered that cerimoniae is tantamount to carimoniae, as if from carere, to be without, and expresses the abstinence of the worshippers from certain things. If however, there is any other derivation of the word, which is inconsistent with the true religion, I meant no refernce whatever to it; I confined my use to the sense above indicated. This work of mine begins thus: “After reading the short treatise which I lately drew up for you, my beloved son Marcellinus,” etc.

A TREATISE ON THE SPIRIT AND THE LETTER

Marcellinus, in a letter to Augustin, had expressed some surprise at having read, in the preceding work, of the possibility being allowed of a man continuing if he willed it, by God’s help, without sin in the present life, although not a single human example anywhere of such perfect righteousness has ever existed. Augustin takes the opportunity of discussing, in opposition to the Pelagians, the subject of the aid of God’s grace; and he shows that the divine help to the working of righteousness by us does not lie in the fact of God’s having given us a law which is full of good and holy precepts; but in the fact that our will itself, without which we can do nothing good, is assisted and elevated by the Spirit of grace being imparted to us, without the aid of which the teaching of the law is “the letter that killeth,” because instead of justifying the ungodly, it rather holds them guilty of transgression. He begins to treat of the question proposed to him at the commencement of this work, and returns to it towards its conclusion; he shows that, as all allow, many things are possible with God’s help, of which there occurs indeed no example; and then concludes that, although a perfect righteousness is unexampled among men, it is for all that not impossible.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

THE OCCASION OF WRITING THIS WORK; A THING MAY BE CAPABLE OF BEING DONE, AND YET MAY NEVER BE DONE

After reading the short treatises which I lately drew up for you, my beloved son Marcellinus, about the baptism of infants, and the perfection of man’s righteousness,—how that no one in this life seems either to have attained or to be likely to attain to it, except only the Mediator, who bore humanity in the likeness of sinful flesh, without any sin whatever,—you wrote me in answer that you were embarrassed by the point which I advanced in the second book, that it was possible for a man to be without sin, if he wanted not the will, and was assisted by the aid of God; and yet that except One in whom “all shall be made alive,” no one has ever lived or will live by whom this perfection has been attained whilst living here. It appeared to you absurd to say that anything was possible of which no example ever occurred,—although I suppose you would not hesitate to admit that no camel ever passed through a needle’s eye, and yet He said that even this was possible with God; you may read, too, that twelve thousand legions of angels could possibly have fought for Christ and rescued Him from suffering, but in fact did not; you may read that it was possible for the nations to be exterminated at once out of the land which was given to the children of Israel, and yet that God willed it to be gradually effected. And one may meet with a thousand other incidents, the past or the future possibility of which we might readily admit, and yet be unable to produce any proofs of their having ever really happened. Accordingly, it would not be right for us to deny the possibility of a man's living without sin, on the ground that amongst men none can be found except Him who is in His nature not man only, but also God, in whom we could prove such perfection of character to have existed.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

THE EXAMPLES APPOSITE

Here, perhaps, you will say to me in answer, that the things which I have instanced as not having been realized, although capable of realization, are divine works; whereas a man's being without sin falls in the range of a man's own work,—that being indeed his very noblest work which effects a full and perfect righteousness complete in every part; and therefore that it is incredible that no man has ever existed, or is existing, or will exist in this life, who has achieved such a work, if the achievement is possible for a human being. But then you ought to reflect that, although this great work, no doubt, belongs to human agency to accomplish, yet it is also a divine gift, and therefore, not doubt that it is a divine work; "for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

CHAPTER 3

THEIRS IS COMPARATIVELY A HARMLESS ERROR, WHO SAY THAT A MAN LIVES HERE WITHOUT SIN

They therefore are not a very dangerous set of persons and they ought to be urged to show, if they are able, that they are themselves such, who hold that man lives or has lived here without any sin whatever. There are indeed passages of Scripture, in which I apprehend it is definitely stated that no man who lives on earth, although enjoying freedom of will, can be found without sin; as, for instance, the place where it is written, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified." If, however, anybody shall have succeeded in showing that this text and the other similar ones ought to be taken in a different sense from their obvious one, and shall have proved that some man or men have spent a sinless life on earth,—whoever does not, not merely refrain from much opposing him, but also does not rejoice with him to the full, is afflicted by extraordinary goads of envy. Moreover, if there neither is, has been, nor will be any man endowed with such perfection of purity (which I am more inclined to believe), and yet it is firmly set forth and thought there is or has been, or is to be,—so far as I can judge, no great error is made, and certainly not a dangerous one, when a man is thus carried away by a certain benevolent feeling; provided that he who thinks so much of another, does not think himself to be such a being, unless he has ascertained that he really and clearly is such.

CHAPTER 4

THEIRS IS A MUCH MORE SERIOUS ERROR, REQUIRING A VERY VIGOROUS REFUTATION, WHO DENY GOD’S GRACE TO BE NECESSARY

They, however, must be resisted with the utmost ardor and vigor who suppose that without God’s help, the mere power of the human will in itself, can either perfect righteousness, or advance steadily towards it; and when they begin to be hard pressed about their presumption in asserting that this result can be reached without the divine assistance, they check themselves, and do not venture to utter such an opinion, because they see how impious and insufferable it is. But they allege that such attainments are not made without God’s help on this account, namely, because God both created man with the free choice of his will, and, by giving him commandments, teaches him, Himself, how man ought to live; and indeed assists him, in that He takes away his ignorance by instructing him in the knowledge of what he ought to avoid and to desire in his actions: and thus, by means of the free-will naturally implanted within him, he enters on the way which is pointed out to him, and by persevering in a just and pious course of life, deserves to attain to the blessedness of eternal life.

CHAPTER 5 [III.]

TRUE GRACE IS THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST, WHICH KINDLES IN THE SOUL THE JOY AND LOVE OF GOODNESS

We, however, on our side affirm that the human will is so divinely aided in the pursuit of righteousness, that (in addition to man’s being created with a free-will, and in addition to the teaching by which he is instructed how he ought to live) he receives the Holy Ghost, by whom there is formed in his mind a delight in, and a love of, that supreme and unchangeable good which is God, even now while he is still “walking by faith” and not yet “by sight;” in order that by this gift to him of the earnest, as it were, of the free gift, he may conceive an ardent desire to cleave to his Maker, and may burn to enter upon the participation in that true light, that it may go well with him from Him to whom he owes his existence. A man’s free-will, indeed, avails for nothing except to sin, if he knows not the way of truth; and even after his duty and his proper aim shall begin to become known to him, unless he also take delight in and feel a love for it, he neither does his duty, nor sets about it, nor lives rightly. Now, in order that such a course may engage our affections, God’s “love is shed abroad in our hearts,” not through the free-will which arises from ourselves, but “through the Holy Ghost, which is given to us.”

CHAPTER 6 [IV.]

THE TEACHING OF LAW WITHOUT THE LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT IS “THE LETTER THAT KILLETH.”

For that teaching which brings to us the command to live in chastity and righteousness is “the letter that killeth,” unless accompanied with “the spirit that giveth life.” For that is not the sole meaning of the passage, “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life,” which merely prescribes that we should not take in the literal sense any figurative phrase which in the proper meaning of its words would produce only nonsense, but should consider what else it signifies, nourishing the inner man by our spiritual intelligence, since “being carnally-minded is death, whilst to be spiritually-minded is life and peace.” If, for instance, a man were to take in a literal and carnal sense much that is written in the Song of Solomon, he would minister not to the fruit of a luminous charity, but to the feeling of a libidinous desire. Therefore, the apostle is not to be confined to the limited application just mentioned, when he says, “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life;” but this is also (and indeed especially) equivalent to what he says elsewhere in the plainest words: “I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet;” and again, immediately after: “Sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.” Now from this you may see what is meant by “the letter that killeth.” There is, of course, nothing said figuratively which is not to be accepted in its plain sense, when it is said, “Thou shall not covet;” but this is a very plain and salutary precept, and any man who shall fulfil it will have no sin at all. The apostle, indeed, purposely selected this general precept, in which he embraced everything, as if this were the voice of the law, prohibiting us from all sin, when he says, “Thou shalt not covet;” for there is no sin committed except by evil concupiscence; so that the law which prohibits this is a good and praiseworthy law. But, when the Holy Ghost withholds His help, which inspires us with a good desire instead of this evil desire (in other words, diffuses love in our hearts), that law, however good in itself, only augments the evil desire by forbidding it. Just as the rush of water which flows incessantly in a particular direction, becomes more violent when it meets with any impediment, and when it has overcome the stoppage, falls in a greater bulk, and with increased impetuosity hurries forward in its downward course. In some strange way the very object which we covet becomes all the more pleasant when it is forbidden. And this is the sin which by the commandment deceives and by it slays, whenever transgression is actually added, which occurs not where there is no law.

CHAPTER 7 [V.]

WHAT IS PROPOSED TO BE HERE TREATED

We will, however, consider, if you please, the whole of this passage of the apostle and thoroughly handle it, as the Lord shall enable us. For I want, if possible, to prove that the apostle’s words, “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life,” do not refer to figurative phrases,—although even in this sense a suitable signification might be obtained from them,—but rather plainly to the law, which forbids whatever is evil. When I shall have proved this, it will more manifestly appear that to lead a holy life is the gift of God,—not only because God has given a free-will to man, without which there is no living ill or well; nor only because He has given him a commandment to teach him how he ought to live; but because through the Holy Ghost He sheds love abroad in the hearts of those whom he foreknew, in order to predestinate them; whom He predestinated, that He might call them; whom He called, that he might justify them; and whom he justified, that He might glorify them. When this point also shall be cleared, you will, I think, see how vain it is to say that those things only are unexampled possibilities, which are the works of God,—such as the passage of the camel through the needle’s eye, which we have already referred to, and other similar cases, which to us no doubt are impossible, but easy enough to God; and that man’s righteousness is not to be counted in this class of things, on the ground of its being properly man’s work, not God’s; although there is no reason for supposing, without an example, that his perfection exists, even if it is possible. That these assertions are vain will be clear enough, after it has been also plainly shown that even man’s righteousness must be attributed to the operation of God, although not taking place without man’s will; and we therefore cannot deny that his perfection is possible even in this life, because all things are possible with God,—both those which He accomplishes of His own sole will, and those which He appoints to be done with the cooperation with Himself of His creature’s will. Accordingly, whatever of such things He does not effect is no doubt without an example in the way of accomplished facts, although with God it possesses both in His power the cause of its possibility, and in His wisdom the reason of its unreality. And should this cause be hidden from man, let him not forget that he is a man; nor charge God with folly simply because he cannot fully comprehend His wisdom.

CHAPTER 8

ROMANS INTERPRETS CORINTHIANS

Attend, then, carefully, to the apostle while in his Epistle to the Romans he explains and clearly enough shows that what he wrote to the Corinthians, “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life,” must be understood in the sense which we have already indicated,—that the letter of the law, which teaches us not to commit sin, kills, if the life-giving spirit be absent, forasmuch as it causes sin to be known rather than avoided, and therefore to be increased rather than diminished, because to an evil concupiscense there is now added the transgression of the law.

CHAPTER 9 [VI]

THROUGH THE LAW SIN HAS ABOUNDED

The apostle, then, wishing to commend the grace which has come to all nations through Jesus Christ, lest the Jews should extol themselves at the expense of the other peoples on account of their having received the law, first says that sin and death came on the human race through one man, and that righteousness and eternal life came also through one, expressly mentioning Adam as the former, and Christ as the latter; and then says that “the law, however, entered, that the offence might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Then, proposing a question for himself to answer, he adds, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid.” He saw, indeed, that a perverse use might be made by perverse men of what he had said: “The law entered, that the offence might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,”—as if he had said that sin had been of advantage by reason of the abundance of grace. Rejecting this, he answers his question with a “God forbid!” and at once adds: “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” as much as to say, When grace has brought it to pass that we should die unto sin, what else shall we be doing, if we continue to live in it, than showing ourselves ungrateful to grace? The man who extols the virtue of a medicine does not contend that the diseases and wounds of which the medicine cures him are of advantage to him; on the contrary, in proportion to the praise lavished on the remedy are the blame and horror which are felt of the diseases and wounds healed by the much-extolled medicine. In like manner, the commendation and praise of grace are vituperation and condemnation of offences. For there was need to prove to man how corruptly weak he was, so that against his iniquity, the holy law brought him no help towards good, but rather increased than diminished his iniquity; seeing that the law entered, that the offence might abound; that being thus convicted and confounded, he might see not only that he needed a physician, but also God as his helper so to direct his steps that sin should not rule over him, and he might be healed by betaking himself to the help of the divine mercy; and in this way, where sin abounded grace might much more abound,—not through the merit of the sinner, but by the intervention of his Helper.

CHAPTER 10

CHRIST THE TRUE HEALER

Accordingly, the apostle shows that the same medicine was mystically set forth in the passion and resurrection of Christ, when he says, “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is justified from sin. Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Now it is plain enough that here by the mystery of the Lord’s death and resurrection is figured the death of our old sinful life, and the rising of the new; and that here is shown forth the abolition of iniquity and the renewal of righteousness. Whence then arises this vast benefit to man through the letter of the law, except it be through the faith of Jesus Christ?

CHAPTER 11 [VII.]

FROM WHAT FOUNTAIN GOOD WORKS FLOW

This holy meditation preserves “the children of men, who put their trust under the shadow of God’s wings,” so that they are “drunken with the fatness of His house, and drink of the full stream of His pleasure. For with Him is the fountain of life, and in His light shall they see light. For He extendeth His mercy to them that know Him, and His righteousness to the upright in heart.” He does not, indeed, extend His mercy to them because they know Him, but that they may know Him; nor is it because they are upright in heart, but that they may become so, that He extends to them His righteousness, whereby He justifies the ungodly. This meditation does not elevate with pride: this sin arises when any man has too much confidence in himself, and makes himself the chief end of living. Impelled by this vain feeling, he departs from that fountain of life, from the draughts of which alone is imbibed the holiness which is itself the good life,—and from that unchanging light, by sharing in which the reasonable soul is in a certain sense inflamed, and becomes itself a created and reflected luminary; even as "John was a burning and a shining light," who notwithstanding acknowledged the source of his own illumination in the words, "Of His fulness have all we received." Whose, I would ask, but His, of course, in comparison with whom John indeed was no light at all? For "that was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Therefore, in the same psalm, after saying, "Extend Thy mercy to them that know Thee, and Thy righteousness to the upright in heart," he adds, "Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hands of sinners move me. There have fallen all the workers of iniquity: they are cast out, and are not able to stand." Since by that impiety which leads each to attribute to himself the excellence which is God's, he is cast out into his own native darkness, in which consist the works of iniquity. For it is manifestly these works which he does, and for the achievement of such alone is he naturally fit. The works of righteousness he never does, except as he receives ability from that fountain and that light, where the life is that wants for nothing, and where is "no variableness, nor the shadow of turning."

CHAPTER 12

PAUL, WHENCE SO CALLED; BRAVELY CONTENDS FOR GRACE

Accordingly Paul, who, although he was formerly called Saul, chose this new designation, for no other reason, as it seems to me, than because he would show himself little,—the "least of the apostles,"—contends with much courage and earnestness against the proud and arrogant, and such as plume themselves on their own works, in order that he may commend the grace of God. This grace, indeed, appeared more obvious and manifest in his case, inasmuch as, while he was pursuing such vehement measures of persecution against the Church of God as made him worthy of the greatest punishment, he found mercy instead of condemnation, and instead of punishment obtained grace. Very properly, therefore, does he lift voice and hand in defence of grace, and care not for the envy either of those who understood not a subject too profound and abstruse for them, or of those who perversely misinterpreted his own sound words; whilst at the same time he unfalteringly preaches that gift of God, whereby alone salvation accrues to those who are the children of the promise, children of the divine goodness, children of grace and mercy, children of the new covenant. In the salutation with which he begins every epistle, he prays: “Grace be to you, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ;” whilst this forms almost the only topic discussed for the Romans, and it is plied with so much persistence and variety of argument, as fairly to fatigue the reader’s attention, yet with a fatigue so useful and salutary, that it rather exercises than breaks the faculties of the inner man.

CHAPTER 13 [VIII.]

KEEPING THE LAW; THE JEWS’ GLORYING; THE FEAR OF PUNISHMENT; THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART

Then comes what I mentioned above; then he shows what the Jew is, and says that he is called a Jew, but by no means fulfils what he promises to do. “But if,” says he, “thou callest thyself a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest His will, and triest the things that are different, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou art thyself a guide of the blind, a light of them that are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore who teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonorest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written. Circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore, if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Here he plainly showed in what sense he said, "Thou makest thy boast of God." For undoubtedly if one who was truly a Jew made his boast of God in the way which grace demands (which is bestowed not for merit of works, but gratuitously), then his praise would be of God, and not of men. But they, in fact, were making their boast of God, as if they alone had deserved to receive His law, as the Psalmist said: "He did not the like to any nation, nor His judgments has He displayed to them." And yet, they thought they were fulfilling the law of God by their righteousness, when they were rather breakers of it all the while! Accordingly, it "wrought wrath" upon them, and sin abounded, committed as it was by them who knew the law. For whoever did even what the law commanded, without the assistance of the Spirit of grace, acted through fear of punishment, not from love of righteousness, and hence in the sight of God that was not in the will, which in the sight of men appeared in the work; and such doers of the law were held rather guilty of that which God knew they would have preferred to commit, if only it had been possible with impunity. He calls, however, "the circumcision of the heart" the will that is pure from all unlawful desire; which comes not from the letter, inculcating and threatening, but from the Spirit, assisting and healing. Such doers of the law have their praise therefore, not of men but of God, who by His grace provides the grounds on which they receive praise, of whom it is said, "My soul shall make her boast of the Lord;" and to whom it is said, "My praise shall be of Thee:" but those are not such who would have God praised because they are men; but themselves, because they are righteous.

CHAPTER 14

IN WHAT RESPECT THE PELAGIANS ACKNOWLEDGE GOD AS THE AUTHOR OF OUR JUSTIFICATION

“But,” say they, “we do praise God as the Author of our righteousness, in that He gave the law, by the teaching of which we have learned how we ought to live.” But they give no heed to what they read: “By the law there shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God.” This may indeed be possible before men, but not before Him who looks into our very heart and inmost will, where He sees that, although the man who fears the law keeps a certain precept, he would nevertheless rather do another thing if he were permitted. And lest any one should suppose that, in the passage just quoted from him, the apostle had meant to say that none are justified by that law, which contains many precepts, under the figure of the ancient sacraments, and among them that circumcision of the flesh itself, which infants were commanded to receive on the eighth day after birth; he immediately adds what law he meant, and says, “For by the law is the knowledge of sin.” He refers then to that law of which he afterwards declares, “I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” For what means this but that “by the law comes the knowledge of sin?”

CHAPTER 15 [IX.]

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD MANIFESTED BY THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS

Here, perhaps, it may be said by that presumption of man, which is ignorant of the righteousness of God, and wishes to establish one of its own, that the apostle quite properly said, “For by the law shall no man be justified,” inasmuch as the law merely shows what one ought to do, and what one ought to guard against, in order that what the law thus points out may be accomplished by the will, and so man be justified, not indeed by the power of the law, but by his free determination. But I ask your attention, O man, to what follows. “But now the righteousness of God,” says he, “without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.” Does this then sound a light thing in deaf ears? He says, “The righteousness of God is manifested.” Now this righteousness they are ignorant of, who wish to establish one of their own; they will not submit themselves to it. His words are, “The righteousness of God is manifested:” he does not say, the righteousness of man, or the righteousness of his own will, but the “righteousness of God,”—not that whereby He is Himself righteous, but that with which He endows man when He justifies the ungodly. This is witnessed by the law and the prophets; in other words, the law and the prophets each afford it testimony. The law, indeed, by issuing its commands and threats, and by justifying no man, sufficiently shows that it is by God's gift, through the help of the Spirit, that a man is justified; and the prophets, because it was what they predicted that Christ at His coming accomplished. Accordingly he advances a step further, and adds, "But righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ," that is by the faith wherewith one believes in Christ for just as there is not meant the faith with which Christ Himself believes, so also there is not meant the righteousness whereby God is Himself righteous. Both no doubt are ours, but yet they are called God's, and Christ's, because it is by their bounty that these gifts are bestowed upon us. The righteousness of God then is without the law, but not manifested without the law; for if it were manifested without the law, how could it be witnessed by the law? That righteousness of God, however, is without the law, which God by the Spirit of grace bestows on the believer without the help of the law,—that is, when not helped by the law. When, indeed, He by the law discovers to a man his weakness, it is in order that by faith he may flee for refuge to His mercy, and be healed. And thus concerning His wisdom we are told, that "she carries law and mercy upon her tongue,"—the "law," whereby she may convict the proud, the "mercy," wherewith she may justify the humbled. "The righteousness of God," then, "by faith of Jesus Christ, is unto all that believe; for there is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"—not of their own glory. For what have they, which they have not received? Now if they received it, why do they glory as if they had not received it? Well, then, they come short of the glory of God; now observe what follows: "Being justified freely by His grace." It is not, therefore, by the law, nor is it by their own will, that they are justified; but they are justified freely by His grace,—not that it is wrought without our will; but our will is by the law shown to be weak, that grace may heal its infirmity; and that our healed will may fulfil the law, not by compact under the law, nor yet in the absence of law.

CHAPTER 16 [X.]

HOW THE LAW WAS NOT MADE FOR A RIGHTEOUS MAN

Because “for a righteous man the law was not made;” and yet “the law is good, if a man use it lawfully.” Now by connecting together these two seemingly contrary statements, the apostle warns and urges his reader to sift the question and solve it too. For how can it be that “the law is good, if a man use it lawfully,” if what follows is also true: “Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man?” For who but a righteous man lawfully uses the law? Yet it is not for him that it is made, but for the unrighteous. Must then the unrighteous man, in order that he may be justified,—that is, become a righteous man,—lawfully use the law, to lead him, as by the schoolmaster’s hand, to that grace by which alone he can fulfil what the law commands? Now it is freely that he is justified thereby,—that is, on account of no antecedent merits of his own works; “otherwise grace is no more grace,” since it is bestowed on us, not because we have done good works, but that we may be able to do them,—in other words, not because we have fulfilled the law, but in order that we may be able to fulfil the law. Now He said, “I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it,” of whom it was said, “We have seen His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” This is the glory which is meant in the words, “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” and this the grace of which he speaks in the next verse, “Being justified freely by His grace.” The unrighteous man therefore lawfully uses the law, that he may become righteous; but when he has become so, he must no longer use it as a chariot, for he has arrived at his journey’s end,—or rather (that I may employ the apostle’s own simile, which has been already mentioned) as a schoolmaster, seeing that he is now fully learned. How then is the law not made for a righteous man, if it is necessary for the righteous man too, not that he may be brought as an unrighteous man to the grace that justifies, but that he may use it lawfully, now that he is righteous? Does not the case perhaps stand thus,—nay, not perhaps, but rather certainly,—that the man who is become righteous thus lawfully uses the law, when he applies it to alarm the unrighteous, so that whenever the disease of some unusual desire begins in them, too, to be augmented by the incentive of the law’s prohibition and an increased amount of transgression, they may in faith flee for refuge to the grace that justifies, and becoming delighted with the sweet pleasures of holiness, may escape the penalty of the law’s menacing letter through the spirit’s soothing gift? In this way the two statements will not be contrary, nor will they be repugnant to each other: even the righteous man may lawfully use a good law, and yet the law be not made for the righteous man; for it is not by the law that he becomes righteous, but by the law of faith, which led him to believe that no other resource was possible to his weakness for fulfilling the precepts which "the law of works" commanded, except to be assisted by the grace of God.

CHAPTER 17

THE EXCLUSION OF BOASTING

Accordingly he says, "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith." He may either mean, the laudable boasting, which is in the Lord; and that it is excluded, not in the sense that it is driven off so as to pass away, but that it is clearly manifested so as to stand out prominently. Whence certain artificers in silver are called "exclusores." In this sense it occurs also in that passage in the Psalms: "That they may be excluded, who have been proved with silver,"—that is, that they may stand out in prominence, who have been tried by the word of God. For in another passage it is said: "The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver which is tried in the fire." Or if this be not his meaning, he must have wished to mention that vicious boasting which comes of pride—that is, of those who appear to themselves to lead righteous lives, and boast of their excellence as if they had not received it,—and further to inform us, that by the law of faith, not by the law of works, this boasting was excluded, in the other sense of shut out and driven away; because by the law of faith every one learns that whatever good life he leads he has from the grace of God, and that from no other source whatever can he obtain the means of becoming perfect in the love of righteousness.

CHAPTER 18 [XI.]

PIETY IS WISDOM; THAT IS CALLED THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD, WHICH HE PRODUCES

Now, this meditation makes a man godly, and this godliness is true wisdom. By godliness I mean that which the Greeks designate theosebeia,—that very virtue which is commended to man in the passage of Job, where it is said to him, “Behold, godliness is wisdom.” Now if the word theosebeia be interpreted according to its derivation, it might be called “the worship of God;” and in this worship the essential point is, that the soul be not ungrateful to Him. Whence it is that in the most true and excellent sacrifice we are admonished to “give thanks unto our Lord God.” Ungrateful however, our soul would be, were it to attribute to itself that which it received from God, especially the righteousness, with the works of which (the especial property, as it were, of itself, and produced, so to speak, by the soul itself for itself) it is not puffed up in a vulgar pride, as it might be with riches, or beauty of limb, or eloquence, or those other accomplishments, external or internal, bodily or mental, which wicked men too are in the habit of possessing, but, if I may say so, in a wise complacency, as of things which constitute in an especial manner the good works of the good. It is owing to this sin of vulgar pride that even some great men have drifted from the sure anchorage of the divine nature, and have floated down into the shame of idolatry. Whence the apostle again in the same epistle, wherein he so firmly maintains the principle of grace, after saying that he was a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, to the wise and to the unwise, and professing himself ready, so far as to him pertained, to preach the gospel even to those who lived in Rome, adds: “I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” This is the righteousness of God, which was veiled in the Old Testament, and is revealed in the New; and it is called the righteousness of God, because by His bestowal of it He makes us righteous, just as we read that “salvation is the Lord’s,” because He makes us safe. And this is the faith “from which” and “to which” it is revealed,—from the faith of them who preach it, to the faith of those who obey it. By this faith of Jesus Christ—that is, the faith which Christ has given to us—we believe it is from God that we now have, and shall have more and more, the ability of living righteously; wherefore we give Him thanks with that dutiful worship with which He only is to be worshipped.

CHAPTER 19 [XII]

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THROUGH THE CREATION

And then the apostle very properly turns from this point to describe with detestation those men who, light-minded and puffed up by the sin which I have mentioned in the preceding chapter, have been carried away of their own conceit, as it were, through empty space where they could find no resting-place, only to fall shattered to pieces against the vain figments of their idols, as against stones. For, after he had commended the piety of that faith, whereby, being justified, we must needs be pleasing to God, he proceeds to call our attention to what we ought to abominate as the opposite. “For the wrath of God,” says he, “is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them: for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood through the things that are made, even His eternal power and divinity; so that they are without excuse: because, knowing God, they yet glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; and they changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four footed beasts, and to creeping things.” Observe, he does not say that they were ignorant of the truth, but that they held down the truth in unrighteousness. For it occurred to him, that he would inquire whence the knowledge of the truth could be obtained by those to whom God had not given the law; and he was not silent on the source whence they could have obtained it: for he declares that it was through the visible works of creation that they arrived at the knowledge of the invisible attributes of the Creator. And, in very deed, as they continued to possess great faculties for searching, so they were able to find. Wherein then lay their impiety? Because “when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, nor gave Him thanks, but became vain in their imaginations.” Vanity is a disease especially of those who mislead themselves, and “think themselves to be something, when they are nothing.” Such men, indeed, darken themselves in that swelling pride, the foot of which the holy singer prays that it may not come against him, after saying, “In Thy light shall we see light;” from which very light of unchanging truth they turn aside, and “their foolish heart is darkened.” For theirs was not a wise heart, even though they knew God; but it was foolish rather, because they did not glorify Him as God, or give Him thanks; for “He said unto man, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom.” So by this conduct, while “professing themselves to be wise” (which can only be understood to mean that they attributed this to themselves), “they became fools.”

CHAPTER 20

THE LAW WITHOUT GRACE

Now why need I speak of what follows? For why it was that by this their impiety those men—I mean those who could have known the Creator through the creature—fell (since “God resisteth the proud”) and whither they plunged, is better shown in the sequel of this epistle than we can here mention. For in this letter of mine we have not undertaken to expound this epistle, but only mainly on its authority, to demonstrate, so far as we are able, that we are assisted by divine aid towards the achievement of righteousness,—not merely because God has given us a law full of good and holy precepts, but because our very will without which we cannot do any good thing, is assisted and elevated by the importation of the Spirit of grace, without which help mere teaching is “the letter that killeth,” forasmuch as it rather holds them guilty of transgression, than justifies the ungodly. Now just as those who come to know the Creator through the creature received no benefit towards salvation, from their knowledge,—because “though they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, nor gave Him thanks, although professing themselves to be wise;”—so also they who know from the law how man ought to live, are not made righteous by their knowledge, because, “going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”

CHAPTER 21 [XIII.]

THE LAW OF WORKS AND THE LAW OF FAITH

The law, then, of deeds, that is, the law of works, whereby this boasting is not excluded, and the law of faith, by which it is excluded, differ from each other; and this difference it is worth our while to consider, if so be we are able to observe and discern it. Hastily, indeed, one might say that the law of works lay in Judaism, and the law of faith in Christianity; forasmuch as circumcision and the other works prescribed by the law are just those which the Christian system no longer retains. But there is a fallacy in this distinction, the greatness of which I have for some time been endeavoring to expose; and to such as are acute in appreciating distinctions, especially to yourself and those like you, I have possibly succeeded in my effort. Since, however, the subject is an important one, it will not be unsuitable, if with a view to its illustration, we linger over the many testimonies which again and again meet our view. Now, the apostle says that that law by which no man is justified, entered in that the offence might abound, and yet in order to save it from the aspersions of the ignorant and the accusations of the impious, he defends this very law in such words as these: “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin but by the law: for I had not known concupiscence, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet. But sin, taking occasion, wrought, by the commandment, in me all manner of concupiscence.” He says also: “The law indeed is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good; but sin, that it might appear sin, worked death in me by that which is good.” It is therefore the very letter that kills which says, “Thou shalt not covet,” and it is of this that he speaks in a passage which I have before referred to: “By the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: seeing that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God: being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare His righteousness at this time; that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” And then he adds the passage which is now under consideration: “Where, then, is your boasting? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.” And so it is the very law of works itself which says, “Thou shalt not covet;” because thereby comes the knowledge of sin. Now I wish to know, if anybody will dare to tell me, whether the law of faith does not say to us, “Thou shalt not covet”? For if it does not say so to us, what reason is there why we, who are placed under it, should not sin in safety and with impunity? Indeed, this is just what those people thought the apostle meant, of whom he writes: “Even as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil, that good may come; whose damnation is just.” If, on the contrary, it too says to us, “Thou shall not covet” (even as numerous passages in the gospels and epistles so often testify and urge), then why is not this law also called the law of works? For it by no means follows that, because it retains not the “works” of the ancient sacraments,—even circumcision and the other ceremonies,—it therefore has no “works” in its own sacraments, which are adapted to the present age; unless, indeed, the question was about sacramental works, when mention was made of the law, just because by it is the knowledge of sin, and therefore nobody is justified by it, so that it is not by it that boasting is excluded, but by the law of faith, whereby the just man lives. But is there not by it too the knowledge of sin, when even it says, “Thou shall not covet?”

CHAPTER 22

NO MAN JUSTIFIED BY WORKS

What the difference between them is, I will briefly explain. What the law of works enjoins by menace, that the law of faith secures by faith. The one says, “Thou shalt not covet;” the other says, “When I perceived that nobody could be continent, except God gave it to him; and that this was the very point of wisdom, to know whose gift she was; I approached unto the Lord, and I besought Him.” This indeed is the very wisdom which is called piety, in which is worshipped “the Father of lights, from whom is every best giving and perfect gift.” This worship, however, consists in the sacrifice of praise and giving of thanks, so that the worshipper of God boasts not in himself, but in Him. Accordingly, by the law of works, God says to us, Do what I command thee; but by the law of faith we say to God, Give me what Thou commandest. Now this is the reason why the law gives its command,—to admonish us what faith ought to do, that is, that he to whom the command is given, if he is as yet unable to perform it, may know what to ask for; but if he has at once the ability, and complies with the command, he ought also to be aware from whose gift the ability comes. “For we have received not the spirit of this world,” says again that most constant preacher of grace, “but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” What, however, “is the spirit of this world,” but the spirit of pride? By it their foolish heart is darkened, who, although knowing God, glorified Him not as God, by giving Him thanks. Moreover, it is really by this same spirit that they too are deceived, who, while ignorant of the righteousness of God, and wishing to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to God’s righteousness. It appears to me, therefore, that he is much more “a child of faith” who has learned from what source to hope for what he has not yet, than he who attributes to himself whatever he has; although, no doubt, to both of these must be preferred the man who both has, and at the same time knows from whom he has it, if nevertheless he does not believe himself to be what he has not yet attained to. Let him not fall into the mistake of the Pharisee, who, while thanking God for what he possessed, yet failed to ask for any further gift, just as if he stood in want of nothing for the increase or perfection of his righteousness. Now, having duly considered and weighed all these circumstances and testimonies, we conclude that a man is not justified by the precepts of a holy life, but by faith in Jesus Christ,—in a word, not by the law of works, but by the law of faith; not by the letter, but by the spirit; not by the merits of deeds, but by free grace.

CHAPTER 23 [XIV.]

HOW THE DECALOGUE KILLS, IF GRACE BE NOT PRESENT

Although, therefore, the apostle seems to reprove and correct those who were being persuaded to be circumcised, in such terms as to designate by the word “law” circumcision itself and other similar legal observances, which are now rejected as shadows of a future substance by Christians who yet hold what those shadows figuratively promised; he at the same time nevertheless would have it to be clearly understood that the law, by which he says no man is justified, lies not merely in those sacramental institutions which contained promissory figures, but also in those works by which whosoever has done them lives holily, and amongst which occurs this prohibition: “Thou shalt not covet.” Now, to make our statement all the clearer, let us look at the Decalogue itself. It is certain, then, that Moses on the mount received the law, that he might deliver it to the people, written on tables of stone by the finger of God. It is summed up in these ten commandments, in which there is no precept about circumcision, nor anything concerning those animal sacrifices which have ceased to be offered by Christians. Well, now, I should like to be told what there is in these ten commandments, except the observance of the Sabbath, which ought not to be kept by a Christian,—whether it prohibit the making and worshipping of idols and of any other gods than the one true God, or the taking of God’s name in vain; or prescribe honour to parents; or give warning against fornication, murder, theft, false witness, adultery, or coveting other men’s property? Which of these commandments would any one say that the Christian ought not to keep? Is it possible to contend that it is not the law which was written on those two tables that the apostle describes as “the letter that killeth,” but the law of circumcision and the other sacred rites which are now abolished? But then how can we think so, when in the law occurs this precept, “Thou shall not covet,” by which very commandment, notwithstanding its being holy, just, and good, “sin,” says the apostle, “deceived me, and by it slew me?” What else can this be than “the letter” that “killeth”?

CHAPTER 24

THE PASSAGE IN CORINTHIANS

In the passage where he speaks to the Corinthians about the letter that kills, and the spirit that gives life, he expresses himself more clearly, but he does not mean even there any other “letter” to be understood than the Decalogue itself, which was written on the two tables. For these are His words: “Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who hath made us fit, as ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more shall the ministration of righteousness abound in glory. A good deal might be said about these words; but perhaps we shall have a more fitting opportunity at some future time. At present, however, I beg you to observe how he speaks of the letter that killeth, and contrasts therewith the spirit that giveth life. Now this must certainly be “the ministration of death written and engraven in stones,” and “the ministration of condemnation,” since the law entered that sin might abound. But the commandments themselves are so useful and salutary to the doer of them, that no one could have life unless he kept them. Well, then, is it owing to the one precept about the Sabbath-day, which is included in it, that the Decalogue is called “the letter that killeth?” Because, forsooth, every man that still observes that day in its literal appointment is carnally wise, but to be carnally wise is nothing else than death? And must the other nine commandments, which are rightly observed in their literal form, not be regarded as belonging to the law of works by which none is justified, but to the law of faith whereby the just man lives? Who can possibly entertain so absurd an opinion as to suppose that “the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones,” is not said equally of all the ten commandments, but only of the solitary one touching the Sabbath-day? In which class do we place that which is thus spoken of: “The law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression?” and again thus: “Until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law?” and also that which we have already so often quoted: “By the law is the knowledge of sin?” and especially the passage in which the apostle has more clearly expressed the question of which we are treating: “I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet?”

CHAPTER 25

THE PASSAGE IN ROMANS

Now carefully consider this entire passage, and see whether it says anything about circumcision, or the Sabbath, or anything else pertaining to a foreshadowing sacrament. Does not its whole scope amount to this, that the letter which forbids sin fails to give man life, but rather “killeth,” by increasing concupiscence, and aggravating sinfulness by transgression, unless indeed grace liberates us by the law of faith, which is in Christ Jesus, when His love is “shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us?” The apostle having used these words: “That we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter,” goes on to inquire, “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay; I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, worked death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual; whereas I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. But then it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing. To will, indeed, is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that which I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ out Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”

CHAPTER 26

NO FRUIT GOOD EXCEPT IT GROW FROM THE ROOT OF LOVE

It is evident, then, that the oldness of the letter, in the absence of the newness of the spirit, instead of freeing us from sin, rather makes us guilty by the knowledge of sin. Whence it is written in another part of Scripture, “He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow,”—not that the law is itself evil, but because the commandment has its good in the demonstration of the letter, not in the assistance of the spirit; and if this commandment is kept from the fear of punishment and not from the love of righteousness, it is servilely kept, not freely, and therefore it is not kept at all. For no fruit is good which does not grow from the root of love. If, however, that faith be present which worketh by love, then one begins to delight in the law of God after the inward man, and this delight is the gift of the spirit, not of the letter; even though there is another law in our members still warring against the law of the mind, until the old state is changed, and passes into that newness which increases from day to day in the inward man, whilst the grace of God is liberating us from the body of this death through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER 27 [XV.]

GRACE, CONCEALED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, IS REVEALED IN THE NEW

This grace hid itself under a veil in the Old Testament, but it has been revealed in the New Testament according to the most perfectly ordered dispensation of the ages, forasmuch as God knew how to dispose all things. And perhaps it is a part of this hiding of grace, that in the Decalogue, which was given on Mount Sinai, only the portion which relates to the Sabbath was hidden under a prefiguring precept. The Sabbath is a day of sanctification; and it is not without significance that, among all the works which God accomplished, the first sound of sanctification was heard on the day when He rested from all His labours. On this, indeed, we must not now enlarge. But at the same time I deem it to be enough for the point now in question, that it was not for nothing that the nation was commanded on that day to abstain from all servile work, by which sin is signified; but because not to commit sin belongs to sanctification, that is, to God’s gift through the

Holy Spirit. And this precept alone among the others, was placed in the law, which was written on the two tables of stone, in a prefiguring shadow, under which the Jews observe the Sabbath, that by this very circumstance it might be signified that it was then the time for concealing the grace, which had to be revealed in the New Testament by the death of Christ,—the rending, as it were, of the veil. "For when," says the apostle, "it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."

CHAPTER 28 [XVI]

WHY THE HOLY GHOST IS CALLED THE FINGER OF GOD

"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Now this Spirit of God, by whose gift we are justified, whence it comes to pass that we delight not to sin,—in which is liberty; even as, when we are without this Spirit, we delight to sin,—in which is slavery, from the works of which we must abstain;—this Holy Spirit, through whom love is shed abroad in our hearts, which is the fulfilment of the law, is designated in the gospel as "the finger of God." Is it not because those very tables of the law were written by the finger of God, that the Spirit of God by whom we are sanctified is also the finger of God, in order that, living by faith, we may do good works through love? Who is not touched by this congruity, and at the same time diversity? For as fifty days are reckoned from the celebration of the Passover (which was ordered by Moses to be offered by slaying the typical lamb, to signify, indeed, the future death of the Lord) to the day when Moses received the law written on the tables of stone by the finger of God, so, in like manner, from the death and resurrection of Him who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, there were fifty complete days up to the time when the finger of God—that is, the Holy Spirit—gathered together in one perfect company those who believed.

CHAPTER 29 [XVII.]

A COMPARISON OF THE LAW OF MOSES AND OF THE NEW LAW

Now, amidst this admirable correspondence, there is at least this very considerable diversity in the cases, in that the people in the earlier instance were deterred by a horrible dread from approaching the place where the law was given; whereas in the other case the Holy Ghost came upon them who were gathered together in expectation of His promised gift. There it was on tables of stone that the finger of God operated; here it was on the hearts of men. There the law was given outwardly, so that the unrighteous might be terrified; here it was given inwardly, so that they might be justified. For this, “Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment,”—such, of course, as was written on those tables,—”it is briefly comprehended,” says he, “in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” Now this was not written on the tables of stone, but “is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.” God’s law, therefore, is love. “To it the carnal mind is not subject, neither indeed can be;” but when the works of love are written on tables to alarm the carnal mind, there arises the law of works and “the letter which killeth” the transgressor; but when love itself is shed abroad in the hearts of believers, then we have the law of faith, and the spirit which gives life to him that loves.

CHAPTER 30

THE NEW LAW WRITTEN WITHIN

Now, observe how consonant this diversity is with those words of the apostle which I quoted not long ago in another connection, and which I postponed for a more careful consideration afterwards: “Forasmuch,” says he, “as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.” See how he shows that the one is written without man, that it may alarm him from without; the other within man himself, that it may justify him from within. He speaks of the “fleshy tables of the heart,” not of the carnal mind, but of a living agent possessing sensation, in comparison with a stone, which is senseless. The assertion which he subsequently makes,—that “the children of Israel could not look stedfastly on the end of the face of Moses,” and that he accordingly spoke to them through a veil,—signifies that the letter of the law justifies no man, but that rather a veil is placed on the reading of the Old Testament, until it shall be turned to Christ, and the veil be removed;—in other words, until it shall be turned to grace, and be understood that from Him accrues to us the justification, whereby we do what He commands. And He commands, in order that, because we lack in ourselves, we may flee to Him for refuge. Accordingly, after most guardedly saying, “Such trust have we through Christ to God-ward,” the apostle immediately goes on to add the statement which underlies our subject, to prevent our confidence being attributed to any strength of our own. He says: “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us fit to be ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”

CHAPTER 31 [XVIII.]

THE OLD LAW MINISTERS DEATH; THE NEW, RIGHTEOUSNESS

Now, since, as he says in another passage, “the law was added because of transgression,” meaning the law which is written externally to man, he therefore designates it both as “the ministration of death,” and “the ministration of condemnation;” but the other, that is, the law of the New Testament, he calls “the ministration of the Spirit” and “the ministration of righteousness,” because through the Spirit we work righteousness, and are delivered from the condemnation due to transgression. The one, therefore, vanishes away, the other abides; for the terrifying schoolmaster will be dispensed with, when love has succeeded to fear. Now “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” But that this ministration is vouchsafed to us, not on account of our deserving, but from His mercy, the apostle thus declares: “Seeing then that we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, let us faint not; but let us renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor adulterating the word of God with deceit.” By this “craftiness” and “deceitfulness” he would have us understand the hypocrisy with which the arrogant would fain be supposed to be righteous. Whence in the psalm, which the apostle cites in testimony of this grace of God, it is said, “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin, and in whose mouth is no guile.” This is the confession of lowly saints, who do not boast to be what they are not. Then, in a passage which follows not long after, the apostle writes thus: “For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” This is the knowledge of His glory, whereby we know that He is the light which illumines our darkness. And I beg you to observe how he inculcates this very point: “We have,” says he, “this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” When further on he commends in glowing terms this same grace, in the Lord Jesus Christ, until he comes to that vestment of the righteousness of faith, “clothed with which we cannot be found naked,” and whilst longing for which “we groan, being burdened” with mortality, “earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from Heaven,” “that mortality might be swallowed up of life;”—observe what he says: “Now He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit;” and after a little he thus briefly draws the conclusion of the matter: “That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” This is not the righteousness whereby God is Himself righteous, but that whereby we are made righteous by Him.

CHAPTER 32 [XIX.]

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH TOUCHING THE ASSISTANCE OF GRACE

Let no Christian then stray from this faith, which alone is the Christian one; nor let any one, when he has been made to feel ashamed to say that we become righteous through our own selves, without the grace of God working this in us,—because he sees, when such an allegation is made, how unable pious believers are to endure it,—resort to any subterfuge on this point, by affirming that the reason why we cannot become righteous without the operation of God’s grace is this, that He gave the law, He instituted its teaching, He commanded its precepts of good. For there is no doubt that, without His assisting grace, the law is “the letter which killeth;” but when the life-giving spirit is present, the law causes that to be loved as written within, which it once caused to be feared as written without.

CHAPTER 33

THE PROPHECY OF JEREMIAH CONCERNING THE NEW TESTAMENT

Observe this also in that testimony which was given by the prophet on this subject in the clearest way: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will consummate a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt. Because they continued not in my covenant, I also have rejected them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” What say we to this? One nowhere, or hardly anywhere, except in this passage of the prophet, finds in the Old Testament Scriptures any mention so made of the New Testament as to indicate it by its very name. It is no doubt often referred to and foretold as about to be given, but not so plainly as to have its very name mentioned. Consider then carefully, what difference God has testified as existing between the two testaments—the old covenant and the new.

CHAPTER 34

THE LAW; GRACE

After saying, “Not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt,” observe what He adds: “Because they continued not in my covenant.” He reckons it as their own fault that they did not continue in God’s covenant, lest the law, which they received at that time, should seem to be deserving of blame. For it was the very law that Christ “came not to destroy, but to fulfil.” Nevertheless, it is not by that law that the ungodly are made righteous, but by grace; and this change is effected by the life-giving Spirit, without whom the letter kills. “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” Out of this promise, that is, out of the kindness of God, the law is fulfilled, which without the said promise only makes men transgressors, either by the actual commission of some sinful deed, if the flame of concupiscence have greater power than even the restraints of fear, or at least by their mere will, if the fear of punishment transcend the pleasure of lust. In what he says, “The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe,” it is the benefit of this “conclusion” itself which is asserted. For what purposes “hath it concluded,” except as it is expressed in the next sentence: “Before, indeed, faith came, we were kept under the law, concluded for the faith which was afterwards revealed?” The law was therefore given, in order that grace might be sought; grace was given, in order that the law might be fulfilled. Now it was not through any fault of its own that the law was not fulfilled, but by the fault of the carnal mind; and this fault was to be demonstrated by the law, and healed by grace. “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Accordingly, in the passage which we cited from the prophet, he says, “I will consummate a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah,”—and what means I will consummate but I will fulfil?—”not, according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt.”

CHAPTER 35 [XX.]

THE OLD LAW; THE NEW LAW

The one was therefore old, because the other is new. But whence comes it that one is old and the other new, when the same law, which said in the Old Testament, “Thou shalt not covet,” is fulfilled by the New Testament? “Because,” says the prophet, “they continued not in my covenant, I have also rejected them, saith the Lord.” It is then on account of the offence of the old man, which was by no means healed by the letter which commanded and threatened, that it is called the old covenant; whereas the other is called the new covenant, because of the newness of the spirit, which heals the new man of the fault of the old. Then consider what follows, and see in how clear a light the fact is placed, that men who bare faith are unwilling to trust in themselves: “Because,” says he, “this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.” See how similarly the apostle states it in the passage we have already quoted: “Not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart,” because “not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God.” And I apprehend that the apostle in this passage had no other reason for mentioning “the New Testament” (“who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit”), than because he had an eye to the words of the prophet, when he said “Not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart,” inasmuch as in the prophet it runs: “I will write it in their hearts.”

CHAPTER 36 [XXI.]

THE LAW WRITTEN IN OUR HEARTS

What then is God’s law written by God Himself in the hearts of men, but the very presence of the Holy Spirit, who is “the finger of God,” and by whose presence is shed abroad in our hearts the love which is the fulfilling of the law, and the end of the commandment? Now the promises of the Old Testament are earthly; and yet (with the exception of the sacramental ordinances which were the shadow of things to come, such as circumcision, the Sabbath and other observances of days, and the ceremonies of certain meats, and the complicated ritual of sacrifices and sacred things which suited “the oldness” of the carnal law and its slavish yoke) it contains such precepts of righteousness as we are even now taught to observe, which were especially expressly drawn out on the two tables without figure or shadow: for instance, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” “Thou shalt do no murder,” “Thou shalt not covet,” “and whatsoever other commandment is briefly comprehended in the saying, Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself.” Nevertheless, whereas as in the said Testament earthly and temporal promises are, as I have said, recited, and these are goods of this corruptible flesh (although they prefigure those heavenly and everlasting blessings which belong to the New Testament), what is now promised is a good for the heart itself, a good for the mind, a good of the spirit, that is, an intellectual good; since it is said, “I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their hearts will I write them,"—by which He signified that men would not fear the law which alarmed them externally, but would love the very righteousness of the law which dwelt inwardly in their hearts.

CHAPTER 37 [XXII.]

THE ETERNAL REWARD

He then went on to state the reward: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." This corresponds to the Psalmist's words to God: "It is good for me to hold me fast by God." "I will be," says God, "their God, and they shall be my people." What is better than this good, what happier than this happiness,—to live to God, to live from God, with whom is the fountain of life, and in whose light we shall see light? Of this life the Lord Himself speaks in these words: "This is life eternal that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent,"—that is, "Thee and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent," the one true God. For no less than this did Himself promise to those who love Him: "He that loveth me, keepeth my commandments; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him"—in the form, no doubt, of God, wherein He is equal to the Father; not in the form of a servant, for in this He will display Himself even to the wicked also. Then, however, shall that come to pass which is written, "Let the ungodly man be taken away, that he see not the glory of the Lord." Then also shall "the wicked go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal." Now this eternal life, as I have just mentioned, has been defined to be, that they may know the one true God. Accordingly John again says: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." This likeness begins even now to be reformed in us, while the inward man is being renewed from day to day, according to the image of Him that created him.

CHAPTER 38 [XXIII.]

THE RE-FORMATION WHICH IS NOW BEING EFFECTED, COMPARED WITH THE PERFECTION OF THE LIFE TO COME

But what is this change, and how great, in comparison with the perfect eminence which is then to be realized? The apostle applies some sort of illustration, derived from well-known things, to these indescribable things, comparing the period of childhood with the age of manhood. “When I was a child,” says he, “I used to speak as a child, to understand as a child, to think as a child; but when I became a man, I put aside childish things.” He then immediately explains why he said this in these words: “For now we see by means of a mirror, darkly but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”

CHAPTER 39 [XXIV]

THE ETERNAL REWARD WHICH IS SPECIALLY DECLARED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, FORETOLD BY THE PROPHET

Accordingly, in our prophet likewise, whose testimony we are dealing with, this is added, that in God is the reward, in Him the end, in Him the perfection of happiness, in Him the sum of the blessed and eternal life. For after saying, “I will be their God, and they shall be my people,” he at once adds, “And they shall no more teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least even unto the greatest of them.” Now, the present is certainly the time of the New Testament, the promise of which is given by the prophet in the words which we have quoted from his prophecy. Why then does each man still say even now to his neighbour and his brother, “Know the Lord?” Or is it not perhaps meant that this is everywhere said when the gospel is preached, and when this is its very proclamation? For on what ground does the apostle call himself “a teacher of the Gentiles,” if it be not that what he himself implies in the following passage becomes realized: “How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” Since, then, this preaching is now everywhere spreading, in what way is it the time of the New Testament of which the prophet spoke in the words, “And they shall not every man teach his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them,” unless it be that he has included in his prophetic forecast the eternal reward of the said New Testament, by promising us the most blessed contemplation of God Himself?

CHAPTER 40

HOW THAT IS TO BE THE REWARD OF ALL; THE APOSTLE EARNESTLY DEFENDS GRACE

What then is the import of the “All, from the least unto the greatest of them,” but all that belong spiritually to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah,—that is, to the children of Isaac, to the seed of Abraham? For such is the promise, wherein it was said to him, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called; for they which are the children of the flesh are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth,) it was said unto her, “The elder shall serve the younger.” This is the house of Israel, or rather the house of Judah, on account of Christ, who came of the tribe of Judah. This is the house of the children of promise,—not by reason of their own merits, but of the kindness of God. For God promises what He Himself performs: He does not Himself promise, and another perform; which would no longer be promising, but prophesying. Hence it is “not of works, but of Him that calleth,” lest the result should be their own, not God’s; lest the reward should be ascribed not to His grace, but to their due; and so grace should be no longer grace which was so earnestly defended and maintained by him who, though the least of the apostles, laboured more abundantly than all the rest,—yet not himself, but the grace of God that was with him. “They shall all know me,” He says,—”All,” the house of Israel and house of Judah. “All,” however, “are not Israel which are of Israel,” but they only to whom it is said in “the psalm concerning the morning aid” (that is, concerning the new refreshing light, meaning that of the new testament), “All ye the seed of Jacob, glorify Him; and fear Him, all ye the seed of Israel.” All the seed, without exception, even the entire seed of the promise and of the called, but only of those who are the called according to His purpose. “For whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” “Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed: not to that only which is of the law,”—that is, which comes from the Old Testament into the New,—”but to that also which is of faith,” which was indeed prior to the law, even “the faith of Abraham,”—meaning those who imitate the faith of Abraham,—”who is the father of us all; as it is written, I have made thee the father of many nations.” Now all these predestinated, called, justified, glorified ones, shall know God by the grace of the new testament, from the least to the greatest of them.

CHAPTER 41

THE LAW WRITTEN IN THE HEART, AND THE REWARD OF THE ETERNAL CONTEMPLATION OF GOD, BELONG TO THE NEW COVENANT; WHO AMONG THE SAINTS ARE THE LEAST AND THE GREATEST

As then the law of works, which was written on the tables of stone, and its reward, the land of promise, which the house of the carnal Israel after their liberation from Egypt received, belonged to the old testament, so the law of faith, written on the heart, and its reward, the beatific vision which the house of the spiritual Israel, when delivered from the present world, shall perceive, belong to the new testament. Then shall come to pass what the apostle describes: “Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away,”—even that imperfect knowledge of “the child” in which this present life is passed, and which is but “in part,” “by means of a mirror darkly.” Because of this, indeed, “prophecy” is necessary, for still to the past succeeds the future; and because of this, too, “tongues” are required,—that is, a multiplicity of expressions, since it is by different ones that different things are suggested to him who does not as yet contemplate with a perfectly purified mind the everlasting light of transparent truth. “When that, however, which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away,” then, what appeared to the flesh in assumed flesh shall display Itself as It is in Itself to all who love It; then, there shall be eternal life for us to know the one very God; then shall we be like Him, because “we shall then know, even as we are known;” then “they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest of them.” Now this may be understood in several ways: Either, that in that life the saints shall differ one from another in glory, as star from star. It matters not how the expression runs,—whether (as in the passage before us) it be, “From the least unto the greatest of them,” or the other way, From the greatest unto the least. And, in like manner, it matters not even if we understand “the least” to mean those who simply believe, and “the greatest” those who have been further able to understand—so far as may be in this world—the light which is incorporeal and unchangeable. Or, “the least” may mean those who are later in time; whilst by “the greatest” He may have intended to indicate those who were prior in time. For they are all to receive the promised vision of God hereafter, since it was for us that they foresaw the future which would be better than their present, that they without us should not arrive at complete perfection. And so the earlier are found to be the lesser, because they were less deferred in time; as in the case of the gospel “penny a day,” which is given for an illustration. This penny they are the first to receive who came last into the vineyard. Or, “the least and the greatest” ought perhaps to be taken in some other sense, which at present does not occur to my mind.

CHAPTER 42 [XXV.]

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTAMENTS

I beg of you, however, carefully to observe, as far as you can, what I am endeavouring to prove with so much effort. When the prophet promised a new covenant, not according to the covenant which had been formerly made with the people of Israel when liberated from Egypt, he said nothing about a change in the sacrifices or any sacred ordinances, although such change, too, was without doubt to follow, as we see in fact that it did follow, even as the same prophetic scripture testifies in many other passages; but he simply called attention to this difference, that God would impress His laws on the mind of those who belonged to this covenant, and would write them in their hearts, whence the apostle drew his conclusion,—”not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart;” and that the eternal recompense of this righteousness was not the land out of which were driven the Amorites and Hittites, and other nations who dwelt there, but God Himself, "to whom it is good to hold fast," in order that God's good that they love, may be the God Himself whom they love, between whom and men nothing but sin produces separation; and this is remitted only by grace. Accordingly, after saying, "For all shall know me, from the least to the greatest of them," He instantly added, "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." By the law of works, then, the Lord says, "Thou shalt not covet:" but by the law of faith He says, "Without me ye can do nothing;" for He was treating of good works, even the fruit of the vine-branches. It is therefore apparent what difference there is between the old covenant and the new,—that in the former the law is written on tables, while in the latter on hearts; so that what in the one alarms from without, in the other delights from within; and in the former man becomes a transgressor through the letter that kills, in the other a lover through the life-giving spirit. We must therefore avoid saying, that the way in which God assists us to work righteousness, and "works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure," is by externally addressing to our faculties precepts of holiness; for He gives His increase internally, by shedding love abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us."

CHAPTER 43 [XXVI.]

A QUESTION TOUCHING THE PASSAGE IN THE APOSTLE ABOUT THE GENTILES WHO ARE SAID TO DO BY NATURE THE LAW'S COMMANDS, WHICH THEY ARE ALSO SAID TO HAVE WRITTEN ON THEIR HEARTS

Now we must see in what sense it is that the apostle says, "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts," lest there should seem to be no certain difference in the new testament, in that the Lord promised that He would write His laws in the hearts of His people, inasmuch as the Gentiles have this done for them naturally. This question therefore has to be sifted, arising as it does as one of no inconsiderable importance. For some one may say, "If God distinguishes the new testament from the old by this circumstance, that in the old He wrote His law on tables, but in the new He wrote them on men’s hearts, by what are the faithful of the new testament discriminated from the Gentiles, which have the work of the law written on their hearts, whereby they do by nature the things of the law, as if, forsooth, they were better than the ancient people, which received the law on tables, and before the new people, which has that conferred on it by the new testament which nature has already bestowed on them?”

CHAPTER 44

THE ANSWER IS, THAT THE PASSAGE MUST BE UNDERSTOOD OF THE FAITHFUL OF THE NEW COVENANT

Has the apostle perhaps mentioned those Gentiles as having the law written in their hearts who belong to the new testament? We must look at the previous context. First, then, referring to the gospel, he says, “It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” Then he goes on to speak of the ungodly, who by reason of their pride profit not by the knowledge of God, since they did not glorify Him as God, neither were thankful. He then passes to those who think and do the very things which they condemn,—having in view, no doubt, the Jews, who made their boast of God’s law, but as yet not mentioning them expressly by name; and then he says, “Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile: but glory, honour, and peace, to every soul that doeth good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law; for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.” Who they are that are treated of in these words, he goes on to tell us: “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law,” and so forth in the passage which I have quoted already. Evidently, therefore, no others are here signified under the name of Gentiles than those whom he had before designated by the name of “Greek” when he said, “To the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” Since then the gospel is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and, also to the Greek;” and since “indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, are upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek: but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that doeth good; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek;” since, moreover, the Greek is indicated by the term “Gentiles” who do by nature the things contained in the law, and which have the work of the law written in their hearts: it follows that such Gentiles as have the law written in their hearts belong to the gospel, since to them, on their believing, it is the power of God unto salvation. To what Gentiles, however, would he promise glory, and honour, and peace, in their doing good works, if living without the grace of the gospel? Since there is no respect of persons with God, and since it is not the hearers of the law, but the doers thereof, that are justified, it follows that any man of any nation, whether Jew or Greek, who shall believe, will equally have salvation under the gospel. “For there is no difference,” as he says afterwards; “for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God: being justified freely by His grace.” How then could he say that any Gentile person, who was a doer of the law, was justified without the Saviour’s grace?

CHAPTER 45

IT IS NOT BY THEIR WORKS, BUT BY GRACE, THAT THE DOERS OF THE LAW ARE JUSTIFIED; GOD’S SAINTS AND GOD’S NAME HALLOWED IN DIFFERENT SENSES

Now he could not mean to contradict himself in saying, “The doers of the law shall be justified,” as if their justification came through their works, and not through grace; since he declares that a man is justified freely by His grace without the works of the law, intending by the term “freely” nothing else than that works do not precede justification. For in another passage he expressly says, “If by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace.” But the statement that “the doers of the law shall be justified” must be so understood, as that we may know that they are not otherwise doers of the law, unless they be justified, so that justification does not subsequently accrue to them as doers of the law, but justification precedes them as doers of the law. For what else does the phrase “being justified” signify than being made righteous,—by Him, of course, who justifies the ungodly man, that he may become a godly one instead? For if we were to express a certain fact by saying, “The men will be liberated,” the phrase would of course be understood as asserting that the liberation would accrue to those who were men already; but if we were to say, The men will be created, we should certainly not be understood as asserting that the creation would happen to those who were already in existence, but that they became men by the creation itself. If in like manner it were said, The doers of the law shall be honoured, we should only interpret the statement correctly if we supposed that the honour was to accrue to those who were already doers of the law: but when the allegation is, “The doers of the law shall be justified,” what else does it mean than that the just shall be justified? for of course the doers of the law are just persons. And thus it amounts to the same thing as if it were said, The doers of the law shall be created,—not those who were so already, but that they may become such; in order that the Jews who were hearers of the law might hereby understand that they wanted the grace of the Justifier, in order to be able to become its doers also. Or else the term “They shall be justified” is used in the sense of, They shall be deemed, or reckoned as just, as it is predicated of a certain man in the Gospel, “But he, willing to justify himself,”—meaning that he wished to be thought and accounted just. In like manner, we attach one meaning to the statement, “God sanctifies His saints,” and another to the words, “Sanctified be Thy name;” for in the former case we suppose the words to mean that He makes those to be saints who were not saints before, and in the latter, that the prayer would have that which is always holy in itself be also regarded as holy by men,—in a word, be feared with a hallowed awe.

CHAPTER 46

HOW THE PASSAGE OF THE LAW AGREES WITH THAT OF THE PROPHET

If therefore the apostle, when he mentioned that the Gentiles do by nature the things contained in the law, and have the work of the law written in their hearts, intended those to be understood who believed in Christ,—who do not come to the faith like the Jews, through a precedent law,—there is no good reason why we should endeavour to distinguish them from those to whom the Lord by the prophet promises the new covenant, telling them that He will write His laws in their hearts, inasmuch as they too, by the grafting which he says had been made of the wild olive, belong to the self-same olive-tree,—in other words, to the same people of God. There is therefore a good agreement of this passage of the apostle with the words of the prophet so that belonging to the new testament means having the law of God not written on tables, but on the heart,—that is, embracing the righteousness of the law with innermost affection, where faith works by love. Because it is by faith that God justifies the Gentiles; and the Scripture foreseeing this, preached the gospel before to Abraham, saying, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed,” in order that by this grace of promise the wild olive might be grafted into the good olive, and believing Gentiles might be made children of Abraham, “in Abraham’s seed, which is Christ,” by following the faith of him who, without receiving the law written on tables, and not yet possessing even circumcision, “believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.” Now what the apostle attributed to Gentiles of this character,—how that “they have the work of the law written in their hearts;” must be some such thing as what he says to the Corinthians: “not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.” For thus do they become of the house of Israel, when their uncircumcision is accounted circumcision, by the fact that they do not exhibit the righteousness of the law by the excision of the flesh, but keep it by the charity of the heart. “If,” says he, “the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?” And therefore in the house of the true Israel, in which is no guile, they are partakers of the new testament, since God puts His laws into their mind, and writes them in their hearts with his own finger, the Holy Ghost, by whom is shed abroad in them the love which is the” fulfilling of the law.”

CHAPTER 47 [XXVII.]

THE LAW “BEING DONE BY NATURE” MEANS, DONE BY NATURE AS RESTORED BY GRACE

Nor ought it to disturb us that the apostle described them as doing that which is contained in the law “by nature,”—not by the Spirit of God, not by faith, not by grace. For it is the Spirit of grace that does it, in order to restore in us the image of God, in which we were naturally created. Sin, indeed, is contrary to nature, and it is grace that heals it,—on which account the prayer is offered to God, “Be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned against Thee.” Therefore it is by nature that men do the things which are contained in the law; for they who do not, fail to do so by reason of their sinful defect. In consequence of this sinfulness, the law of God is erased out of their hearts; and therefore, when, the sin being healed, it is written there, the prescriptions of the law are done “by nature,”—not that by nature grace is denied, but rather by grace nature is repaired. For “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men; in which all have sinned;” wherefore “there is no difference: they all come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace.” By this grace there is written on the renewed inner man that righteousness which sin had blotted out; and this mercy comes upon the human race through our Lord Jesus Christ. “For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.”

CHAPTER 48

THE IMAGE OF GOD IS NOT WHOLLY BLOTTED OUT IN THESE UNBELIEVERS; VENIAL SINS

According to some, however, they who do by nature the things contained in the law must not be regarded as yet in the number of those whom Christ’s grace justifies, but rather as among those some of whose actions (although they are those of ungodly men, who do not truly and rightly worship the true God) we not only cannot blame, but even justly and rightly praise, since they have been done—so far as we read, or know, or hear—according to the rule of righteousness; though at the same time, were we to discuss the question with what motive they are done, they would hardly be found to be such as deserve the praise and defence which are due to righteous conduct. [XXVIII.] Still, since God’s image has not been so completely erased in the soul of man by the stain of earthly affections, as to have left remaining there not even the merest lineaments of it whence it might be justly said that man, even in the ungodliness of his life, does, or appreciates, some things contained in the law; if this is what is meant by the statement that “the Gentiles, which have not the law” (that is, the law of God), “do by nature the things contained in the law,” and that men of this character “are a law to themselves,” and “show the work of the law written in their hearts,”—that is to say, what was impressed on their hearts when they were created in the image of God has not been wholly blotted out:—even in this view of the subject, that wide difference will not be disturbed, which separates the new covenant from the old, and which lies in the fact that by the new covenant the law of God is written in the hearts of believers, whereas in the old it was inscribed on tables of stone. For this writing in the heart is effected by renovation, although it had not been completely blotted out by the old nature. For just as that image of God is renewed in the mind of believers by the new testament, which impiety had not quite abolished (for there had remained undoubtedly that which the soul of man cannot be except it be rational), so also the law of God, which had not been wholly blotted out there by unrighteousness, is certainly written thereon, renewed by grace. Now in the Jews the law which was written on tables could not effect this new inscription, which is justification, but only transgression. For they too were men, and there was inherent in them that power of nature, which enables the rational soul both to perceive and do what is lawful; but the godliness which transfers to another life happy and immortal has “a spotless law, converting souls,” so that by the light thereof they may be renewed, and that be accomplished in them which is written, “There has been manifested over us, O Lord, the light of Thy countenance.” Turned away from which, they have deserved to grow old, whilst they are incapable of renovation except by the grace of Christ,—in other words, without the intercession of the Mediator; there being “one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all.” Should those be strangers to His grace of whom we are treating, and who (after the manner of which we have spoken with sufficient fulness already) “do by nature the things contained in the law,” of what use will be their “excusing thoughts” to them “in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men,” unless it be perhaps to procure for them a milder punishment? For as, on the one hand, there are certain venial sins which do not hinder the righteous man from the attainment of eternal life, and which are unavoidable in this life, so, on the other hand, there are some good works which are of no avail to an ungodly man towards the attainment of everlasting life, although it would be very difficult to find the life of any very bad man whatever entirely without them. But inasmuch as in the kingdom of God the saints differ in glory as one star does from another, so likewise, in the condemnation of everlasting punishment, it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that other city; whilst some men will be twofold more the children of hell than others. Thus in the judgment of God not even this fact will be without its influence,—that one man will have sinned more, or less, than another, even when both are involved in the ungodliness that is worthy of damnation.

CHAPTER 49

THE GRACE PROMISED BY THE PROPHET FOR THE NEW COVENANT

What then could the apostle have meant to imply by,—after checking the boasting of the Jews, by telling them that “not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified,”—immediately afterwards speaking of them “which, having not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law,” if in this description not they are to be understood who belong to the Mediator’s grace, but rather they who, while not worshipping the true God with true godliness, do yet exhibit some good works in the general course of their ungodly lives? Or did the apostle perhaps deem it probable, because he had previously said that “with God there is no respect of persons,” and had afterwards said that “God is not the God of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles,”—that even such scanty little works of the law, as are suggested by nature, were not discovered in such as received not the law, except as the result of the remains of the image of God; which He does not disdain when they believe in Him, with whom there is no respect of persons? But whichever of these views is accepted, it is evident that the grace of God was promised to the new testament even by the prophet, and that this grace was definitively announced to take this shape,—God’s laws were to be written in men’s hearts; and they were to arrive at such a knowledge of God, that they were not each one to teach his neighbour and brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all were to know Him, from the least to the greatest of them. This is the gift of the Holy Ghost, by which love is shed abroad in our hearts,—not, indeed, any kind of love, but the love of God, “out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an unfeigned faith,” by means of which the just man, while living in this pilgrim state, is led on, after the stages of “the glass,” and “the enigma,” and “what is in part,” to the actual vision, that, face to face, he may know even as he is known. For one thing has he required of the Lord, and that he still seeks after, that he may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, in order to behold the pleasantness of the Lord.

CHAPTER 50 [XXIX.]

RIGHTEOUSNESS IS THE GIFT OF GOD

Let no man therefore boast of that which he seems to possess, as if he had not received it; nor let him think that he has received it merely because the external letter of the law has been either exhibited to him to read, or sounded in his ear for him to hear. For "if righteousness is by the law, then Christ has died in vain." Seeing, however, that if He has not died in vain, He has ascended up on high, and has led captivity captive, and has given gifts to men, it follows that whosoever has, has from this source. But whosoever denies that he has from Him, either has not, or is in great danger of being deprived of what he has. "For it is one God which justifies the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith;" in which clauses there is no real difference in the sense, as if the phrase "by faith" meant one thing, and "through faith" another, but only a variety of expression. For in one passage, when speaking of the Gentiles,—that is, of the uncircumcision,—he says, "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen by faith;" and again, in another, when speaking of the circumcision, to which he himself belonged, he says, "We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed in Jesus Christ." Observe, he says that both the uncircumcision are justified by faith, and the circumcision through faith, if, indeed, the circumcision keep the righteousness of faith. For the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith,—by obtaining it of God, not by assuming it of themselves. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. And why? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by works—in other words, working it out as it were by themselves, not believing that it is God who works within them. "For it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of His own good pleasure." And hereby "they stumbled at the stumbling-stone." For what he said, "not by faith, but as it were by works," he most clearly explained in the following words: "They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Then are we still in doubt what are those works of the law by which a man is not justified, if he believes them to be his own works, as it were, without the help and gift of God, which is "by the faith of Jesus Christ?" And do we suppose that they are circumcision and the other like ordinances, because some such things in other passages are read concerning these sacramental rites too? In this place, however, it is certainly not circumcision which they wanted to establish as their own righteousness, because God established this by prescribing it Himself. Nor is it possible for us to understand this statement, of those works concerning which the Lord says to them, "Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition;" because, as the apostle says, Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness." He did not say, Which followed after their own traditions, framing them and relying on them. This then is the sole distinction, that the very precept, "Thou shalt not covet," and God's other good and holy commandments, they attributed to themselves; whereas, that man may keep them, God must work in him through faith in Jesus Christ, who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." That is to say, every one who is incorporated into Him and made a member of His body, is able, by His giving the increase within, to work righteousness. It is of such a man's works that Christ Himself has said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

CHAPTER 51

FAITH THE GROUND OF ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS

The righteousness of the law is proposed in these terms,—that whosoever shall do it shall live in it; and the purpose is, that when each has discovered his own weakness, he may not by his own strength, nor by the letter of the law (which cannot be done), but by faith, conciliating the Justifier, attain, and do, and live in it. For the work in which he who does it shall live, is not done except by one who is justified. His justification, however, is obtained by faith; and concerning faith it is written, “Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring down Christ therefrom;) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is (says he), the word of faith which we preach: That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” As far as he is saved, so far is he righteous. For by this faith we believe that God will raise even us from the dead,—even now in the spirit, that we may in this present world live soberly, righteously, and godly in the renewal of His grace; and by and by in our flesh, which shall rise again to immortality, which indeed is the reward of the Spirit, who precedes it by a resurrection which is appropriate to Himself,—that is, by justification. “For we are buried with Christ by baptism unto death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” By faith, therefore, in Jesus Christ we obtain salvation,—both in so far as it is begun within us in reality, and in so far as its perfection is waited for in hope; “for whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” “How abundant,” says the Psalmist, “is the multitude of Thy goodness, O Lord, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee, and hast perfected for them that hope in Thee!” By the law we fear God; by faith we hope in God: but from those who fear punishment grace is hidden. And the soul which labours under this fear, since it has not conquered its evil concupiscence, and from which this fear, like a harsh master, has not departed,—let it flee by faith for refuge to the mercy of God, that He may give it what He commands, and may, by inspiring into it the sweetness of His grace through His Holy Spirit, cause the soul to delight more in what He teaches it, than it delights in what opposes His instruction. In this manner it is that the great abundance of His sweetness,—that is, the law of faith,—His love which is in our hearts, and shed abroad, is perfected in them that hope in Him, that good may be wrought by the soul, healed not by the fear of punishment, but by the love of righteousness.

CHAPTER 52 [XXX.]

GRACE ESTABLISHES FREE WILL

Do we then by grace make void free will? God forbid! Nay, rather we establish free will. For even as the law by faith, so free will by grace, is not made void, but established. For neither is the law fulfilled except by free will; but by the law is the knowledge of sin, by faith the acquisition of grace against sin, by grace the healing of the soul from the disease of sin, by the health of the soul freedom of will, by free will the love of righteousness, by love of righteousness the accomplishment of the law. Accordingly, as the law is not made void, but is established through faith, since faith procures grace whereby the law is fulfilled; so free will is not made void through grace, but is established, since grace cures the will whereby righteousness is freely loved. Now all the stages which I have here connected together in their successive links, have severally their proper voices in the sacred Scriptures. The law says: "Thou shall not covet." Faith says: "Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee." Grace says: "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." Health says: "O Lord my God, I cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed me." Free will says: "I will freely sacrifice unto Thee." Love of righteousness says: "Transgressors told me pleasant tales, but not according to Thy law, O Lord." How is it then that miserable men dare to be proud, either of their free will, before they are freed, or of their own strength, if they have been freed? They do not observe that in the very mention of free will they pronounce the name of liberty. But "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." If, therefore, they are the slaves of sin, why do they boast of free will? For by what a man is overcome, to the same is he delivered as a slave. But if they have been freed, why do they vaunt themselves as if it were by their own doing, and boast, as if they had not received? Or are they free in such sort that they do not choose to have Him for their Lord who says to them: "Without me ye can do nothing;" and "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed?"

CHAPTER 53 [XXXI.]

VOLITION AND ABILITY

Some one will ask whether the faith itself, in which seems to be the beginning either of salvation, or of that series leading to salvation which I have just mentioned, is placed in our power. We shall see more easily, if we first examine with some care what “our power” means. Since, then, there are two things,—will and ability; it follows that not every one that has the will has therefore the ability also, nor has every one that possesses the ability the will also; for as we sometimes will what we cannot do, so also we sometimes can do what we do not will. From the words themselves when sufficiently considered, we shall detect, in the very ring of the terms, the derivation of volition from willingness, and of ability from ableness. Therefore, even as the man who wishes has volition, so also the man who can has ability. But in order that a thing may be done by ability, the volition must be present. For no man is usually said to do a thing with ability if he did it unwillingly. Although, at the same time, if we observe more precisely, even what a man is compelled to do unwillingly, he does, if he does it, by his volition; only he is said to be an unwilling agent, or to act against his will, because he would prefer some other thing. He is compelled, indeed, by some unfortunate influence, to do what he does under compulsion, wishing to escape it or to remove it out of his way. For if his volition be so strong that he prefers not doing this to not suffering that, then beyond doubt he resists the compelling influence, and does it not. And accordingly, if he does it, it is not with a full and free will, but yet it is not without will that he does it; and inasmuch as the volition is followed by its effect, we cannot say that he lacked the ability to do it. If, indeed, he willed to do it, yielding to compulsion, but could not, although we should allow that a coerced will was present, we should yet say that ability was absent. But when he did not do the thing because he was unwilling, then of course the ability was present, but the volition was absent, since he did it not, by his resistance to the compelling influence. Hence it is that even they who compel, or who persuade, are accustomed to say, Why don’t you do what you have in your ability, in order to avoid this evil? While they who are utterly unable to do what they are compelled to do, because they are supposed to be able usually answer by excusing themselves, and say, I would do it if it were in my ability. What then do we ask more, since we call that ability when to the volition is added the faculty of doing? Accordingly, every one is said to have that in his ability which he does if he likes, and does not if he dislikes.

CHAPTER 54

WHETHER FAITH BE IN A MAN’S OWN POWER

Attend now to the point which we have laid down for discussion: whether faith is in our own power? We now speak of that faith which we employ when we believe anything, not that which we give when we make a promise; for this too is called faith. We use the word in one sense when we say, “He had no faith in me,” and in another sense when we say, “He did not keep faith with me.” The one phrase means, “He did not believe what I said;” the other, “He did not do what he promised.” According to the faith by which we believe, we are faithful to God; but according to that whereby a thing is brought to pass which is promised, God Himself even is faithful to us; for the apostle declares, “God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.” Well, now, the former is the faith about which we inquire, Whether it be in our power? even the faith by which we believe God, or believe on God. For of this it is written, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” And again, “To him that believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Consider now whether anybody believes, if he be unwilling; or whether he believes not, if he shall have willed it. Such a position, indeed, is absurd (for what is believing but consenting to the truth of what is said? and this consent is certainly voluntary): faith, therefore, is in our own power. But, as the apostle says: “There is no power but comes from God,” what reason then is there why it may not be said to us even of this: “What hast thou which thou hast not received?”—for it is God who gave us even to believe. Nowhere, however, in Holy Scripture do we find such an assertion as, There is no volition but comes from God. And rightly is it not so written, because it is not true: otherwise God would be the author even of sins (which Heaven forbid!), if there were no volition except what comes from Him; inasmuch as an evil volition alone is already a sin, even if the effect be wanting,—in other words, if it has not ability. But when the evil volition receives ability to accomplish its intention, this proceeds from the judgment of God, with whom there is no unrighteousness. He indeed punishes after this manner; nor is His chastisement unjust because it is secret. The ungodly man, however, is not aware that he is being punished, except when he unwillingly discovers by an open penalty how much evil he has willingly committed. This is just what the apostle says of certain men: “God hath given them up to the evil desires of their own hearts, . . . to do those things that are not convenient.” Accordingly, the Lord also said to Pilate: “Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.” But still, when the ability is given, surely no necessity is imposed. Therefore, although David had received ability to kill Saul, he preferred sparing to striking him. Whence we understand that bad men receive ability for the condemnation of their depraved will, while good men receive ability for trying of their good will.

CHAPTER 55 [XXXII.]

WHAT FAITH IS LAUDABLE

Since faith, then, is in our power, inasmuch as every one believes when he likes, and, when he believes, believes voluntarily; our next inquiry, which we must conduct with care, is, What faith it is which the apostle commends with so much earnestness? For indiscriminate faith is not good. Accordingly we find this caution: “Brethren, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God.” Nor must the clause in commendation of love, that it “believeth all things,” be so understood as if we should detract from the love of any one, if he refuses to believe at once what he hears. For the same love admonishes us that we ought not readily to believe anything evil about a brother; and when anything of the kind is said of him, does it not judge it to be more suitable to its character not to believe? Lastly, the same love, “which believeth all things,” does not believe every spirit. Accordingly, charity believes all things no doubt, but it believes in God. Observe, it is not said, Believes in all things. It cannot therefore be doubted that the faith which is commended by the apostle is the faith whereby we believe in God.

CHAPTER 56

THE FAITH OF THOSE WHO ARE UNDER THE LAW DIFFERENT FROM THE FAITH OF OTHERS

But there is yet another distinction to be observed,—since they who are under the law both attempt to work their own righteousness through fear of punishment, and fail to do God’s righteousness, because this is accomplished by the love to which only what is lawful is pleasing, and never by the fear which is forced to have in its work the thing which is lawful, although it has something else in its will which would prefer, if it were only possible, that to be lawful which is not lawful. These persons also believe in God; for if they had no faith in Him at all, neither would they of course have any dread of the penalty of His law. This, however, is not the faith which the apostle commends. He says: “Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” The fear, then, of which we speak is slavish; and therefore, even though there be in it a belief in the Lord, yet righteousness is not loved by it, but condemnation is feared. God’s children, however, exclaim, “Abba, Father,”—one of which words they of the circumcision utter; the other, they of the uncircumcision,—the Jew first, and then the Greek; since there is “one God, which justifieth the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.” When indeed they utter this call, they seek something; and what do they seek, but that which they hunger and thirst after? And what else is this but that which is said of them, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled?” Let, then, those who are under the law pass over hither, and become sons instead of slaves; and yet not so as to cease to be slaves, but so as, while they are sons, still to serve their Lord and Father freely. For even this have they received; for the Only-begotten “gave them power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name;” and He advised them to ask, to seek, and to knock, in order to receive, to find, and to have the gate opened to them, adding by way of rebuke, the words : “If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?” When, therefore, that strength of sin, the law, inflamed the sting of death, even sin, to take occasion and by the commandment work all manner of concupiscence in them, of whom were they to ask for the gift of continence but of Him who knows how to give good gifts to His children? Perhaps, however, a man, in his folly, is unaware that no one can be continent except God give him the gift. To know this, indeed, he requires Wisdom herself. Why, then, does he not listen to the Spirit of his Father, speaking through Christ’s apostle, or even Christ Himself, who says in His gospel, “Seek and ye shall find;” and who also says to us, speaking by His apostle: “If any one of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given to him. Let him, however, ask in faith, nothing wavering?” This is the faith by which the just man lives; this is the faith whereby he believes on Him who justifies the ungodly; this is the faith through which boasting is excluded, either by the retreat of that with which we become self-inflated, or by the rising of that with which we glory in the Lord. This, again, is the faith by which we procure that largess of the Spirit, of which it is said: “We indeed through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.” But this admits of the further question, Whether he meant by “the hope of righteousness” that by which righteousness hopes, or that whereby righteousness is itself hoped for? For the just man, who lives by faith, hopes undoubtedly for eternal life; and the faith likewise, which hungers and thirsts for righteousness, makes progress therein by the renewal of the inward man day by day, and hopes to be satiated therewith in that eternal life, where shall be realized that which is said of God by the psalm: “Who satisfieth thy desire with good things.” This, moreover, is the faith whereby they are saved to whom it is said: “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” This, in short, is the faith which works not by fear, but by love; not by dreading punishment, but by loving righteousness. Whence, therefore, arises this love,—that is to say, this charity,—by which faith works, if not from the source whence faith itself obtained it? For it would not be within us, to what extent soever it is in us, if it were not diffused in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given to us. Now “the love of God” is said to be shed abroad in our hearts, not because He loves us, but because He makes us lovers of Himself; just as “the righteousness of God” is used in the sense of our being made righteous by His gift; and “the salvation of the Lord,” in that we are saved by Him; and “the faith of Jesus Christ,” because He makes us believers in Him. This is that righteousness of God, which He not only teaches us by the precept of His law, but also bestows upon us by the gift of His Spirit.

CHAPTER 57 [XXXIII.]

WHENCE COMES THE WILL TO BELIEVE?

But it remains for us briefly to inquire, Whether the will by which we believe be itself the gift of God, or whether it arise from that free will which is naturally implanted in us? If we say that it is not the gift of God, we must then incur the fear of supposing that we have discovered some answer to the apostle's reproachful appeal: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"—even some such an answer as this: "See, we have the will to believe, which we did not receive. See in what we glory,—even in what we did not receive!" If, however, we were to say that this kind of will is nothing but the gift of God, we should then have to fear lest unbelieving and ungodly men might not unreasonably seem to have some fair excuse for their unbelief, in the fact that God has refused to give them this will. Now this that the apostle says, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His own good pleasure," belongs already to that grace which faith secures, in order that good works may be within the reach of man,—even the good works which faith achieves through the love which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given to us. If we believe that we may attain this grace (and of course believe voluntarily), then the question arises whence we have this will?—if from nature, why it is not at everybody's command, since the same God made all men? if from God's gift, then again, why is not the gift open to all, since "He will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth?"

CHAPTER 58

THE FREE WILL OF MAN IS AN INTERMEDIATE POWER

Let us then, first of all, lay down this proposition, and see whether it satisfies the question before us: that free will, naturally assigned by the Creator to our rational soul, is such a neutral power, as can either incline towards faith, or turn towards unbelief. Consequently a man cannot be said to have even that will with which he believes in God, without having received it; since this rises at the call of God out of the free will which he received naturally when he was created. God no doubt wishes all men to be saved and to come into the knowledge of the truth; but yet not so as to take away from them free will, for the good or the evil use of which they may be most righteously judged. This being the case, unbelievers indeed do contrary to the will of God when they do not believe His gospel; nevertheless they do not therefore overcome His will, but rob their own selves of the great, nay, the very greatest, good, and implicate themselves in penalties of punishment, destined to experience the power of Him in punishments whose mercy in His gifts they despised. Thus God’s will is for ever invincible; but it would be vanquished, unless it devised what to do with such as despised it, or if these despises could in any way escape from the retribution which He has appointed for such as they. Suppose a master, for example, who should say to his servants, I wish you to labour in my vineyard, and, after your work is done, to feast and take your rest but who, at the same time, should require any who refused to work to grind in the mill ever after. Whoever neglected such a command would evidently act contrary to the master’s will; but he would do more than that,—he would vanquish that will, if he also escaped the mill. This, however, cannot possibly happen under the government of God. Whence it is written, “God hath spoken once,”—that is, irrevocably,—although the passage may refer also to His one only Word. He then adds what it is which He had irrevocably uttered, saying: “Twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God. Also unto Thee, O Lord, doth mercy belong: because Thou wilt render to every man according to his work.” He therefore will be guilty unto condemnation under God’s power, who shall think too contemptuously of His mercy to believe in Him. But whosoever shall put his trust in Him, and yield himself up to Him, for the forgiveness of all his sins, for the cure of all his corruption, and for the kindling and illumination of his soul by His warmth and light, shall have good works by his grace; and by them he shall be even in his body redeemed from the corruption of death, crowned, satisfied with blessings,—not temporal, but eternal,—above what we can ask or understand.

CHAPTER 59

MERCY AND PITY IN THE JUDGMENT OF GOD

This is the order observed in the psalm, where it is said: “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His recompenses; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercy; who satisfieth thy desire with good things.” And lest by any chance these great blessings should be despaired of under the deformity of our old, that is, mortal condition, the Psalmist at once says, “Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle’s;” as much as to say, All that you have heard belongs to the new man and to the new covenant. Now let us consider together briefly these things, and with delight contemplate the praise of mercy, that is, of the grace of God. “Bless the Lord, O my soul,” he says, “and forget not all His recompenses.” Observe, he does not say blessings, but recompenses; because He recompenses evil with good. “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities:” this is done in the sacrament of baptism. “Who healeth all thy diseases:” this is effected by the believer in the present life, while the flesh so lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, that we do not the things we would; whilst also another law in our members wars against the law of our mind; whilst to will is present indeed to us but not how to perform that which is good. These are the diseases of a man’s old nature which, however, if we only advance with persevering purpose, are healed by the growth of the new nature day by day, by the faith which operates through love. “Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;” this will take place at the resurrection of the dead in the last day. “Who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercy;” this shall be accomplished in the day of judgment; for when the righteous King shall sit upon His throne to render to every man according to his works, who shall then boast of having a pure heart? or who shall glory of being clean from sin? It was therefore necessary to mention God’s loving-kindness and tender mercy there, where one might expect debts to be demanded and deserts recompensed so strictly as to leave no room for mercy. He crowns, therefore, with loving-kindness and tender mercy; but even so according to works. For he shall be separated to the right hand, to whom, it is said, “I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat.” There will, however, be also “judgment without mercy;” but it will be for him “that hath not showed mercy.” But “blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy” of God. Then, as soon as those on the left hand shall have gone into eternal fire, the righteous, too, shall go into everlasting life, because He says: “This is life eternal, that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” And with this knowledge, this vision, this contemplation, shall the desire of their soul be satisfied; for it shall be enough for it to have this and nothing else,—there being nothing more for it to desire, to aspire to, or to require. It was with a craving after this full joy that his heart glowed who said to the Lord Christ, “Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us;” and to whom the answer was returned, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” Because He is Himself the eternal life, in order that men may know the one true God, Thee and whom Thou hast sent, Jesus Christ. If, however, he that has seen the Son has also seen the Father, then assuredly he who sees the Father and the Son sees also the Holy Spirit of the Father and the Son. So we do not take away free will, whilst our soul blesses the Lord and forgets not all His recompenses; nor does it, in ignorance of God’s righteousness, wish to set up one of its own; but it believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, and until it arrives at sight, it lives by faith,—even the faith which works by love. And this love is shed abroad in our hearts, not by the sufficiency of our own will, nor by the letter of the law, but by the Holy Ghost who has been given to us.

CHAPTER 60 [XXXIV.]

THE WILL TO BELIEVE IS FROM GOD

Let this discussion suffice, if it satisfactorily meets the question we had to solve. It may be, however, objected in reply, that we must take heed lest some one should suppose that the sin would have to be imputed to God which is committed by free will, if in the passage where it is asked, “What hast thou which thou didst not receive?” the very will by which we believe is reckoned as a gift of God, because it arises out of the free will which we received at our creation. Let the objector, however, attentively observe that this will is to be ascribed to the divine gift, not merely because it arises from our free will, which was created naturally with us; but also because God acts upon us by the incentives of our perceptions, to will and to believe, either externally by evangelical exhortations, where even the commands of the law also do something, if they so far admonish a man of his infirmity that he betakes himself to the grace that justifies by believing;

or internally, where no man has in his own control what shall enter into his thoughts, although it appertains to his own will to consent or to dissent. Since God, therefore, in such ways acts upon the reasonable soul in order that it may believe in Him (and certainly there is no ability whatever in free will to believe, unless there be persuasion or summons towards some one in whom to believe), it surely follows that it is God who both works in man the willing to believe, and in all things prevents us with His mercy. To yield our consent, indeed, to God's summons, or to withhold it, is (as I have said) the function of our own will. And this not only does not invalidate what is said, "For what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" but it really confirms it. For the soul cannot receive and possess these gifts, which are here referred to, except by yielding its consent. And thus whatever it possesses, and whatever it receives, is from God; and yet the act of receiving and having belongs, of course, to the receiver and possessor. Now, should any man be for constraining us to examine into this profound mystery, why this person is so persuaded as to yield, and that person is not, there are only two things occurring to me, which I should like to advance as my answer: "O the depth of the riches!" and "Is there unrighteousness with God?" If the man is displeased with such an answer, he must seek more learned disputants; but let him beware lest he find presumptuous ones.

CHAPTER 61 [XXXV.]

CONCLUSION OF THE WORK

Let us at last bring our book to an end. I hardly know whether we have accomplished our purpose at all by our great prolixity. It is not in respect of you, [my Marcellinus,] that I have this misgiving, for I know your faith; but with reference to the minds of those for whose sake you wished me to write,—who so much in opposition to my opinion, but (to speak mildly, and not to mention Him who spoke in His apostles) certainly against not only the opinion of the great Apostle Paul, but also his strong, earnest, and vigilant conflict, prefer maintaining their own views with tenacity to listening to him, when he "beseeches them by the mercies of God," and tells them, "through the grace of God which was given to him, not to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God had dealt to every man the measure of faith."

CHAPTER 62

HE RETURNS TO THE QUESTION WHICH MARCELLINUS HAD PROPOSED TO HIM

But I beg of you to advert to the question which you proposed to me, and to what we have made out of it in the lengthy process of this discussion. You were perplexed how I could have said that it was possible for a man to be without sin, if his will were not wanting, by the help of God's aid, although no man in the present life had ever lived, was living, or would live, of such perfect righteousness. Now, in the books which I formerly addressed to you, I set forth this very question. I said: "If I were asked whether it be possible for a man to be without sin in this life, I should allow the possibility, by the grace of God, and his own free will; for I should have no doubt that the free will itself is of God's grace,—that is, has its place among the gifts of God,—not only as to its existence, but also in respect of its goodness; that is, that it applies itself to doing the commandments of God. And so, God's grace not only shows what ought to be done, but also helps to the possibility of doing what it shows." You seemed to think it absurd, that a thing which was possible should be unexampled. Hence arose the subject treated of in this book; and thus did it devolve on me to show that a thing was possible although no example of it could be found. We accordingly adduced certain cases out of the gospel and of the law, at the beginning of this work,—such as the passing of a camel through the eye of a needle; and the twelve thousand legions of angels, who could fight for Christ, if He pleased; and those nations which God said He could have exterminated at once from the face of His people,—none of which possibilities were ever reduced to fact. To these instances may be added those which are referred to in the Book of Wisdom, suggesting how many are the strange torments and troubles which God was able to employ against ungodly men, by using the creature which was obedient to His beck, which, however, He did not employ. One might also allude to that mountain, which faith could remove into the sea, although, nevertheless, it was never done, so far as we have ever read or heard. Now you see how thoughtless and foolish would be the man who should say that any one of these things is impossible with God, and how opposed to the sense of Scripture would be his assertion. Many other cases of this kind may occur to anybody who reads or thinks, the possibility of which with God we cannot deny, although an example of them be lacking.

CHAPTER 63

AN OBJECTION

But inasmuch as it may be said that the instances which I have been quoting are divine works, whereas to live righteously is a work that belongs to ourselves, I undertook to show that even this too is a divine work. This I have done in the present book, with perhaps a fuller statement than is necessary, although I seem to myself to have said too little against the opponents of the grace of God. And I am never so much delighted in my treatment of a subject as when Scripture comes most copiously to my aid; and when the question to be discussed requires that “he that glorieth should glory in the Lord;” and that we should in all things lift up our hearts and give thanks to the Lord our God, from whom, “as the Father of lights, every good and every perfect gift cometh down.” Now if a gift is not God’s gift, because it is wrought by us, or because we act by His gift, then it is not a work of God that “a mountain should be removed into the sea,” inasmuch as, according to the Lord’s statement, it is by the faith of men that this is possible. Moreover, He attributes the deed to their actual operation: “If ye have faith in yourselves as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, “Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and it shall be done, and nothing shall be impossible to you.” Observe how He said “to you,” not “to Me” or “to the Father;” and yet it is certain that no man does such a thing without God’s gift and operation. See how an instance of perfect righteousness is unexampled among men, and yet is not impossible. For it might be achieved if there were only applied so much of will as suffices for so great a thing. There would, however, be so much will, if there were hidden from us none of those conditions which pertain to righteousness; and at the same time these so delighted our mind, that whatever hindrance of pleasure or pain might else occur, this delight in holiness would prevail over every rival affection. And that this is not realized, is not owing to any intrinsic impossibility, but to God’s judicial act. For who can be ignorant, that what he should know is not in man’s power; nor does it follow that what he has discovered to be a desirable object is actually desired, unless he also feel a delight in that object, commensurate with its claims on his affection? For this belongs to health of soul.

CHAPTER 64 [XXXVI.]

WHEN THE COMMANDMENT TO LOVE IS FULFILLED

But somebody will perhaps think that we lack nothing for the knowledge of righteousness, since the Lord, when He summarily and briefly expounded His word on earth, informed us that the whole law and the prophets depend on two commandments; nor was He silent as to what these were, but declared them in the plainest words: “Thou shall love,” said He, “the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” What is more surely true than that, if these be fulfilled, all righteousness is fulfilled? But the man who sets his mind on this truth must also carefully attend to another,—in how many things we all of us offend, while we suppose that what we do is pleasant, or, at all events, not unpleasing, to God whom we love; and afterwards, having (through His inspired word, or else by being warned in some clear and certain way) learned what is not pleasing to Him, we pray to Him that He would forgive us on our repentance. The life of man is full of examples of this. But whence comes it that we fall short of knowing what is pleasing to Him, if it be not that He is to that extent unknown to us? “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face.” Who, however, can make so bold, on arriving far enough, to say: “Then shall I know even as also I am known,” as to think that they who shall see God will have no greater love towards Him than they have who now believe in Him? or that the one ought to be compared to the other, as if they were very near to each other? Now, if love increases just in proportion as our knowledge of its object becomes more intimate, of course we ought to believe that there is as much wanting now to the fulfilment of righteousness as there is defective in our love of it. A thing may indeed be known or believed, and yet not loved; but it is an impossibility that a thing can be loved which is neither known nor believed. But if the saints, in the exercise of their faith, could arrive at that great love, than which (as the Lord Himself testified) no greater can possibly be exhibited in the present life,—even to lay down their lives for the faith, or for their brethren,—then after their pilgrimage here, in which their walk is by “faith,” when they shall have reached the “sight” of that final happiness which we hope for, though as yet we see it not, and wait for in patience, then undoubtedly love itself shall be not only greater than that which we here experience, but far higher than all which we ask or think; and yet it cannot be possibly more than “with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind.” For there remains in us nothing which can be added to the whole; since, if anything did remain, there would not be the whole. Therefore the first commandment about righteousness, which bids us love the Lord with all our heart, and soul, and mind (the next to which is, that we love our neighbour as ourselves), we shall completely fulfil in that life when we shall see face to face. But even now this commandment is enjoined upon us, that we may be reminded what we ought by faith to require, and what we should in our hope look forward to, and, “forgetting the things which are behind, reach forth to the things which are before.” And thus, as it appears to me, that man has made a far advance, even in the present life, in the righteousness which is to be perfected hereafter, who has discovered by this very advance how very far removed he is from the completion of righteousness.

CHAPTER 65

IN WHAT SENSE A SINLESS RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THIS LIFE CAN BE ASSERTED

Forasmuch, however, as an inferior righteousness may be said to be competent to this life, whereby the just man lives by faith although absent from the Lord, and, therefore, walking by faith and not yet by sight,—it may be without absurdity said, no doubt, in respect of it, that it is free from sin; for it ought not to be attributed to it as a fault, that it is not as yet sufficient for so great a love to God as is due to the final, complete, and perfect condition thereof. It is one thing to fail at present in attaining to the fulness of love, and another thing to be swayed by no lust. A man ought therefore to abstain from every unlawful desire, although he loves God now far less than it is possible to love Him when He becomes an object of sight; just as in matters connected with the bodily senses, the eye can receive no pleasure from any kind of darkness, although it may be unable to look with a firm sight amidst refulgent light. Only let us see to it that we so constitute the soul of man in this corruptible body, that, although it has not yet swallowed up and consumed the motions of earthly lust in that super-eminent perfection of the love of God, it nevertheless, in that inferior righteousness to which we have referred, gives no consent to the aforesaid lust for the purpose of effecting any unlawful thing. In respect, therefore, of that immortal life, the commandment is even now applicable: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might;” but in reference to the present life the following: “Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” To the one, again, belongs, “Thou shalt not covet;” to the other, “Thou shalt not go after thy lusts.” To the one it appertains to seek for nothing more than to continue in its perfect state; to the other it belongs actively to do the duty committed to it, and to hope as its reward for the perfection of the future life,—so that in the one the just man may live forevermore in the sight of that happiness which in this life was his object of desire; in the other, he may live by that faith whereon rests his desire for the ultimate blessedness as its certain end. (These things being so, it will be sin in the man who lives by faith ever to consent to an unlawful delight,—by committing not only frightful deeds and crimes, but even trifling faults; sinful, if he lend an ear to a word that ought not to be listened to, or a tongue to a phrase which should not be uttered; sinful, if he entertains a thought in his heart in such a way as to wish that an evil pleasure were a lawful one, although known to be unlawful by the commandment,—for this amounts to a consent to sin, which would certainly be carried out in act, unless fear of punishment deterred.) Have such just men, while living by faith, no need to say: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors?” And do they prove this to be wrong which is written, “In Thy sight shall no man living be justified?” and this: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?” and, “There is no man that sinneth not;” and again, “There is not on the earth a righteous man, who doeth good and sinneth not” (for both these statements are expressed in a general future sense,—”sinneth not,” “will not sin,”—not in the past time, “has not sinned”)?—and all other places of this purport contained in the Holy Scripture? Since, however, these passages cannot possibly be false, it plainly follows, to my mind, that whatever be the quality or extent of the righteousness which we may definitely ascribe to the present life, there is not a man living in it who is absolutely free from all sin; and that it is necessary for every one to give, that it may be given to him; and to forgive, that it may be forgiven him; and whatever righteousness he has, not to presume that he has it of himself, but from the grace of God, who justifies him, and still to go on hungering and thirsting for righteousness from Him who is the living bread, and with whom is the fountain of life; who works in His saints, whilst labouring amidst temptation in this life, their justification in such manner that He may still have somewhat to impart to them liberally when they ask, and something mercifully to forgive them when they confess.

CHAPTER 66

ALTHOUGH PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS BE NOT FOUND HERE ON EARTH, IT IS STILL NOT IMPOSSIBLE

But let objectors find, if they can, any man, while living under the weight of this corruption, in whom God has no longer anything to forgive; unless nevertheless they acknowledge that such an individual has been aided in the attainment of his good character not merely by the teaching of the law which God gave, but also by the infusion of the Spirit of grace—they will incur the charge of ungodliness itself, not of this or that particular sin. Of course they are not at all able to discover such a man, if they receive in a becoming manner the testimony of the divine writings. Still, for all that, it must not by any means be said that the possibility is lacking to God whereby the will of man can be so assisted, that there can be accomplished in every respect even now in a man, not that righteousness only which is of faith, but that also in accordance with which we shall by and by have to live for ever in the very vision of God. For if he should now wish even that this corruptible in any particular man should put on incorruption, and to command him so to live among mortal men (not destined himself to die) that his old nature should be wholly and entirely withdrawn, and there should be no law in his members warring against the law of his mind,—moreover, that he should discover God to be everywhere present, as the saints shall hereafter know and behold Him,—who will madly venture to affirm that this is impossible? Men, however, ask why He does not do this; but they who raise the question consider not duly the fact that they are human. I am quite certain that, as nothing is impossible with God so also there is no iniquity with Him. Equally sure am I that He resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble. I know also that to him who had a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure, it was said, when he besought God for its removal once, twice, nay thrice: “My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” There is, therefore, in the hidden depths of God’s judgments, a certain reason why every mouth even of the righteous should be shut in its own praise, and only opened for the praise of God. But what this certain reason is, who can search, who investigate, who know? So “unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

A TREATISE ON NATURE AND GRACE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE NATURA ET GRATIA, CONTRA PELAGIUM.)

EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN’S “RETRACTATIONS,”

A TREATISE ON NATURE AND GRACE, AGAINST PELAGIUS;

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

CONTAINED IN ONE BOOK, ADDRESSED TO TIMASIUS AND JACOBUS.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 415.

TRANSLATED BY DR. HOLMES.

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Book II. Chap. 42, On the Following Treatise, “De natura et gratia.”

“At that time also there came into my hands a certain book of Pelagius,’ in which he defends, with all the argumentative skill he could muster, the nature of man, in opposition to the grace of God whereby the unrighteous is justified and we become Christians. The treatise which contains my reply to him, and in which I defend grace, not indeed as in opposition to nature, but as that which liberates and controls nature, I have entitled On Nature and Grace. In this work sundry short passages, which were quoted by Pelagius as the words of the Roman bishop and martyr, Xystus, were vindicated by myself as if they really were the words of this Sixtus. For this I thought them at the time; but I afterwards discovered, that Sextus the heathen philosopher, and not Xystus the Christian bishop, was their author. This treatise of mine begins with the words: The book which you sent me.’“

NOTE ON THE FOLLOWING WORK

In a letter (169th) to Evodius, written in the course of the year A.D. 415, Augustin assigned to this work, On Nature and Grace, the last place of several treatises written in that year. “I have also written,” says he, “an extensive book in opposition to the heresy of Pelagius, at the request of some brethren, whom he had persuaded to accept a very pernicious opinion against the grace of Christ.” The work had been begun, but was not completed, when Orosius sailed from Africa to Palestine, in the spring of this year of 415; for, shortly after his arrival there, at a council in Jerusalem, where Pelagius was present, he expressly affirmed, “that the blessed Augustin had prepared a very complete answer to Pelagius’ book, two of whose followers had presented the work to him, and requested him to reply to it.” Jerome, also, at this time mentioned a certain production of Augustin’s, which he had not yet seen, wherein it was said that he had expressly opposed Pelagius. His words, which occur in his third dialogue against the heresy of Pelagius, are these: “It is said that he is preparing other treatises likewise, especially against your name.” Augustin, however, did not actually employ in this work of his the name of Pelagius, whose book he was refuting, in order that (as he says in his letter [186th] to Paulinus) he might not by personal irritation drive him into a more incurable degree of opposition; for he hoped to be of some service to his opponent, if by still maintaining friendly terms with him he might be able to spare his feelings, although he could not in duty show leniency to his writings. Thus, at least, he expresses his mind, in his book On the Proceedings of Pelagius, ch. xxiii. No. 47. In this latter passage he subjoins a letter which he had received from Timasius and Jacobus, containing the expression of great gratitude to Augustin on receiving his volume On Nature and Grace, in which they expressed “their agreeable surprise” at the answers he had furnished to them “on every point” of the Pelagian controversy.

In the following year Augustin despatched this work, along with Pelagius’ own book, to John, bishop of Jerusalem, in order that that prelate might at length become acquainted with the views of the new heresiarch, accompanying the books with a letter to the bishop [179th]. In the course of this year 416, he had the same two treatises (his own and Pelagius’) forwarded to Pope Innocent, with a letter [177th] sent in the name of five bishops, to which Innocent returned an answer [183d]. It may be here stated, that in this last-mentioned letter [183, n. 5], and in the foregoing epistle [177, n. 6], there is honourable mention made of Timasius and Jacobus, as “conscientious and honourable young men, servants of God, who had relinquished the hope which they had in the world, and continued diligently to serve God.” The same persons are described in another epistle [179, n. 2] as “young men of very honourable birth, and highly educated;” and in the work On the Proceedings of Pelagius, ch. xxiii. No. 47, they are called “servants of God, good, and honourable men.”

Julianus [who espoused the side of Pelagius], in his work addressed to Florus (book iv. n. 112, of the Imperfect Work), quotes this treatise of Augustin’s as addressed to Timasius, and calumniously pronounces it to be written “against free will.”

A TREATISE ON NATURE AND GRACE

He begins with a statement of what is to be investigated concerning nature and grace; he shows that nature, as propagated from the flesh of the sinful Adam, being no longer what God made it at first,—faultless and sound,—requires the aid of grace, in order that it may be redeemed from the wrath of God and regulated for the perfection of righteousness: that the penal fault of nature leads to a most righteous retribution: whilst grace itself is not rendered to any deserts of ours, but is given gratuitously; and they who are not delivered by it are justly condemned. He afterwards refutes, with answers on every several point, a work by Pelagius, who supports this self-same nature in opposition to grace; among other things especially, in his desire to recommend the opinion that a man can live without sin, he contended that nature had not been weakened and changed by sin; for, otherwise, the matter of sin (which he thinks absurd) would be its punishment, if the sinner were weakened to such a degree that he committed more sin. He goes on to enumerate sundry righteous men both of the Old and of the New Testaments: deeming these to have been free from sin, he alleged the possibility of not sinning to be inherent in man; and this he attributed to God's grace, on the ground that God is the author of that nature in which is inseparably inherent this possibility of avoiding sin. Towards the end of this treatise there is an examination of sundry extracts from old writers, which Pelagius adduced in support of his views, and expressly from Hilary, Ambrose, and even Augustin himself.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

THE OCCASION OF PUBLISHING THIS WORK; WHAT GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS

The book which you sent to me, my beloved sons, Timasius and Jacobus, I have read through hastily, but not indifferently, omitting only the few points which are plain enough to everybody; and I saw in it a man inflamed with most ardent zeal against those, who, when in their sins they ought to censure human will, are more forward in accusing the nature of men, and thereby endeavour to excuse themselves. He shows too great a fire against this evil, which even authors of secular literature have severely censured with the exclamation: "The human race falsely complains of its own nature!" This same sentiment your author also has strongly insisted upon, with all the powers of his talent. I fear, however, that he will chiefly help those “who have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge,” who, “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.” Now, what the righteousness of God is, which is spoken of here, he immediately afterwards explains by adding: “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” This righteousness of God, therefore, lies not in the commandment of the law, which excites fear, but in the aid afforded by the grace of Christ, to which alone the fear of the law, as of a schoolmaster, usefully conducts. Now, the man who understands this understands why he is a Christian. For “If righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” If, however He did not die in vain, in Him only is the ungodly man justified, and to him, on believing in Him who justifies the ungodly, faith is reckoned for righteousness. For all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His blood. But all those who do not think themselves to belong to the “all who have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” have of course no need to become Christians, because “they that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;” whence it is, that He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

FAITH IN CHRIST NOT NECESSARY TO SALVATION, IF A MAN WITHOUT IT CAN LEAD A RIGHTEOUS LIFE

Therefore the nature of the human race, generated from the flesh of the one transgressor, if it is self-sufficient for fulfilling the law and for perfecting righteousness, ought to be sure of its reward, that is, of everlasting life, even if in any nation or at any former time faith in the blood of Christ was unknown to it. For God is not so unjust as to defraud righteous persons of the reward of righteousness, because there has not been announced to them the mystery of Christ’s divinity and humanity, which was manifested in the flesh. For how could they believe what they had not heard of; or how could they hear without a preacher? For “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” But I say (adds he): Have they not heard? “Yea, verily; their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” Before, however, all this had been accomplished, before the actual preaching of the gospel reaches the ends of all the earth—because there are some remote nations still (although it is said they are very few) to whom the preached gospel has not found its way,—what must human nature do, or what has it done—for it had either not heard that all this was to take place, or has not yet learnt that it was accomplished—but believe in God who made heaven and earth, by whom also it perceived by nature that it had been itself created, and lead a right life, and thus accomplish His will, uninstructed with any faith in the death and resurrection of Christ? Well, if this could have been done, or can still be done, then for my part I have to say what the apostle said in regard to the law: “Then Christ died in vain.” For if he said this about the law, which only the nation of the Jews received, how much more justly may it be said of the law of nature, which the whole human race has received, “If righteousness come by nature, then Christ died in vain.” If, however, Christ did not die in vain, then human nature cannot by any means be justified and redeemed from God’s most righteous wrath—in a word, from punishment—except by faith and the sacrament of the blood of Christ.

CHAPTER 3 [III.]

NATURE WAS CREATED SOUND AND WHOLE; IT WAS AFTERWARDS CORRUPTED BY SIN

Man’s nature, indeed, was created at first faultless and without any sin; but that nature of man in which every one is born from Adam, now wants the Physician, because it is not sound. All good qualities, no doubt, which it still possesses in its make, life, senses, intellect, it has of the Most High God, its Creator and Maker. But the flaw, which darkens and weakens all those natural goods, so that it has need of illumination and healing, it has not contracted from its blameless Creator—but from that original sin, which it committed by free will. Accordingly, criminal nature has its part in most righteous punishment. For, if we are now newly created in Christ, we were, for all that, children of wrath, even as others, “but God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by whose grace we were saved.”

CHAPTER 4 [IV.]

FREE GRACE

This grace, however, of Christ, without which neither infants nor adults can be saved, is not rendered for any merits, but is given gratis, on account of which it is also called grace. “Being justified,” says the apostle, “freely through His blood.” Whence they, who are not liberated through grace, either because they are not yet able to hear, or because they are unwilling to obey; or again because they did not receive, at the time when they were unable on account of youth to hear, that bath of regeneration, which they might have received and through which they might have been saved, are indeed justly condemned; because they are not without sin, either that which they have derived from their birth, or that which they have added from their own misconduct. “For all have sinned”—whether in Adam or in themselves—”and come short of the glory of God.”

CHAPTER 5 [V.]

IT WAS A MATTER OF JUSTICE THAT ALL SHOULD BE CONDEMNED

The entire mass, therefore, incurs penalty and if the deserved punishment of condemnation were rendered to all, it would without doubt be righteously rendered. They, therefore, who are delivered therefrom by grace are called, not vessels of their own merits, but “vessels of mercy.” But of whose mercy, if not His who sent Christ Jesus into the world to save sinners, whom He foreknew, and foreordained, and called, and justified, and glorified? Now, who could be so madly insane as to fail to give ineffable thanks to the Mercy which liberates whom it would? The man who correctly appreciated the whole subject could not possibly blame the justice of God in wholly condemning all men whatsoever.

CHAPTER 6 [VI.]

THE PELAGIANS HAVE VERY STRONG AND ACTIVE MINDS

If we are simply wise according to the Scriptures, we are not compelled to dispute against the grace of Christ, and to make statements attempting to show that human nature both requires no Physician,—in infants, because it is whole and sound; and in adults, because it is able to suffice for itself in attaining righteousness, if it will. Men no doubt seem to urge acute opinions on these points, but it is only word-wisdom, by which the cross of Christ is made of none effect. This, however, “is not the wisdom which descendeth from above.” The words which follow in the apostle’s statement I am unwilling to quote; for we would rather not be thought to do an injustice to our friends, whose very strong and active minds we should be sorry to see running in a perverse, instead of an upright, course.

CHAPTER 7 [VII.]

HE PROCEEDS TO CONFUTE THE WORK OF PELAGIUS; HE REFRAINS AS YET FROM MENTIONING PELAGIUS’ NAME

However ardent, then, is the zeal which the author of the book you have forwarded to me entertains against those who find a defence for their sins in the infirmity of human nature; not less, nay even much greater, should be our eagerness in preventing all attempts to render the cross of Christ of none effect. Of none effect, however, it is rendered, if it be contended that by any other means than by Christ’s own sacrament it is possible to attain to righteousness and everlasting life. This is actually done in the book to which I refer—I will not say by its author wittingly, lest I should express the judgment that he ought not to be accounted even a Christian, but, as I rather believe, unconsciously. He has done it, no doubt, with much power; I only wish that the ability he has displayed were sound and less like that which insane persons are accustomed to exhibit.

CHAPTER 8

A DISTINCTION DRAWN BY PELAGIUS BETWEEN THE POSSIBLE AND ACTUAL

For he first of all makes a distinction: “It is one thing,” says he, “to inquire whether a thing can be, which has respect to its possibility only; and another thing, whether or not it is.” This distinction, nobody doubts, is true enough; for it follows that whatever is, was able to be; but it does not therefore follow that what is able to be, also is. Our Lord, for instance, raised Lazarus; He unquestionably was able to do so. But inasmuch as He did not raise up Judas must we therefore contend that He was unable to do so? He certainly was able, but He would not. For if He had been willing, He could have effected this too. For the Son quickeneth whomsoever He will. Observe, however, what he means by this distinction, true and manifest enough in itself, and what he endeavours to make out of it. “We are treating,” says he, “of possibility only; and to pass from this to something else, except in the case of some certain fact, we deem to be a very serious and extraordinary process.” This idea he turns over again and again, in many ways and at great length, so that no one would suppose that he was inquiring about any other point than the possibility of not committing sin. Among the many passages in which he treats of this subject, occurs the following: “I once more repeat my position: I say that it is possible for a man to be without sin. What do you say? That it is impossible for a man to be without sin? But I do not say,” he adds, “that there is a man without sin; nor do you say, that there is not a man without sin. Our contention is about what is possible, and not possible; not about what is, and is not.” He then enumerates certain passages of Scripture, which are usually alleged in opposition to them, and insists that they have nothing to do with the question, which is really in dispute, as to the possibility or impossibility of a man’s being without sin. This is what he says: “No man indeed is clean from pollution; and, There is no man that sinneth not; and, There is not a just man upon the earth; and, There is none that doeth good. There are these and similar passages in Scripture,” says he, “but they testify to the point of not being, not of not being able; for by testimonies of this sort it is shown what kind of persons certain men were at such and such a time, not that they were unable to be something else. Whence they are justly found to be blameworthy. If, however, they had been of such a character, simply because they were unable to be anything else, they are free from blame.”

CHAPTER 9 [VIII.]

EVEN THEY WHO WERE NOT ABLE TO BE JUSTIFIED ARE CONDEMNED

See what he has said. I, however, affirm that an infant born in a place where it was not possible for him to be admitted to the baptism of Christ, and being overtaken by death, was placed in such circumstances, that is to say, died without the bath of regeneration, because it was not possible for him to be otherwise. He would therefore absolve him, and, in spite of the Lord’s sentence, open to him the kingdom of heaven. The apostle, however, does not absolve him, when he says: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; by which death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Rightly, therefore, by virtue of that condemnation which runs throughout the mass, is he not admitted into the kingdom of heaven, although he was not only not a Christian, but was unable to become one.

CHAPTER 10 [IX.]

HE COULD NOT BE JUSTIFIED, WHO HAD NOT HEARD OF THE NAME OF CHRIST; RENDERING THE CROSS OF CHRIST OF NONE EFFECT

But they say: “He is not condemned; because the statement that all sinned in Adam, was not made because of the sin which is derived from one’s birth, but because of imitation of him.” If, therefore, Adam is said to be the author of all the sins which followed his own, because he was the first sinner of the human race, then how is it that Abel, rather than Christ, is not placed at the head of all the righteous, because he was the first righteous man? But I am not speaking of the case of an infant. I take the instance of a young man, or an old man, who has died in a region where he could not hear of the name of Christ. Well, could such a man have become righteous by nature and free will; or could he not? If they contend that he could, then see what it is to render the cross of Christ of none effect, to contend that any man without it, can be justified by the law of nature and the power of his will. We may here also say, then is Christ dead in vain forasmuch as all might accomplish so much as this, even if He had never died; and if they should be unrighteous, they would be so because they wished to be, not because they were unable to be righteous. But even though a man could not be justified at all without the grace of Christ, he would absolve him, if he dared, in accordance with his words, to the effect that, “if a man were of such a character, because he could not possibly have been of any other, he would be free from all blame.”

CHAPTER 11 [X.]

GRACE SUBTLY ACKNOWLEDGED BY PELAGIUS

He then starts an objection to his own position, as if, indeed, another person had raised it, and says: “A man,’ you will say, may possibly be [without sin]; but it is by the grace of God.’“ He then at once subjoins the following, as if in answer to his own suggestion: “I thank you for your kindness, because you are not merely content to withdraw your opposition to my statement, which you just now opposed, or barely to acknowledge it; but you actually go so far as to approve it. For to say, A man may possibly, but by this or by that,’ is in fact nothing else than not only to assent to its possibility, but also to show the mode and condition of its possibility. Nobody, therefore, gives a better assent to the possibility of anything than the man who allows the condition thereof; because, without the thing itself, it is not possible for a condition to be.” After this he raises another objection against. himself: “But, you will say, you here seem to reject the grace of God, inasmuch as you do not even mention it;’“ and he then answers the objection: “Now, is it I that reject grace, who by acknowledging the thing must needs also confess the means by which it may be effected, or you, who by denying the thing do undoubtedly also deny whatever may be the means through which the thing is accomplished?” He forgot that he was now answering one who does not deny the thing, and whose objection he had just before set forth in these words: “A man may possibly be [without sin]; but it is by the grace of God.” How then does that man deny the possibility, in defence of which his opponent earnestly contends, when he makes the admission to that opponent that “the thing is possible, but only by the grace of God?” That, however, after he is dismissed who already acknowledges the essential thing, he still has a question against those who maintain the impossibility of a man’s being without sin, what is it to us? Let him ply his questions against any opponents he pleases, provided he only confesses this, which cannot be denied without the most criminal impiety, that without the grace of God a man cannot be without sin. He says, indeed: “Whether he confesses it to be by grace, or by aid, or by mercy, whatever that be by which a man can be without sin,—every one acknowledges the thing itself.”

CHAPTER 12 [XI.]

IN OUR DISCUSSIONS ABOUT GRACE, WE DO NOT SPEAK OF THAT WHICH RELATES TO THE CONSTITUTION OF OUR NATURE, BUT TO ITS RESTORATION

I confess to your love, that when I read those words I was filled with a sudden joy, because he did not deny the grace of God by which alone a man can be justified; for it is this which I mainly detest and dread in discussions of this kind. But when I went on to read the rest, I began to have my suspicions, first of all, from the similes he employs. For he says: “If I were to say, man is able to dispute; a bird is able to fly; a hare is able to run; without mentioning at the same time the instruments by which these acts can be accomplished—that is, the tongue, the wings, and the legs; should I then have denied the conditions of the various offices, when I acknowledged the very offices themselves?” It is at once apparent that he has here instanced such things as are by nature efficient; for the members of the bodily structure which are here mentioned are created with natures of such a kind—the tongue, the wings, the legs. He has not here posited any such thing as we wish to have understood by grace, without which no man is justified; for this is a topic which is concerned about the cure, not the constitution, of natural functions. Entertaining, then, some apprehensions, I proceeded to read all the rest, and I soon found that my suspicions had not been unfounded.

CHAPTER 13 [XII.]

THE SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE LAW’S THREATENINGS; “PERFECT WAYFARERS.”

But before I proceed further, see what he has said. When treating the question about the difference of sins, and starting as an objection to himself, what certain persons allege, “that some sins are light by their very frequency, their constant irruption making it impossible that they should be all of them avoided;” he thereupon denied that it was “proper that they should be censured even as light offences, if they cannot possibly be wholly avoided.” He of course does not notice the Scriptures of the New Testament, wherein we learn that the intention of the law in its censure is this, that, by reason of the transgressions which men commit, they may flee for refuge to the grace of the Lord, who has pity upon them—”the schoolmaster” “shutting them up unto the same faith which should afterwards be revealed;” that by it their transgressions may be forgiven, and then not again be committed, by God’s assisting grace. The road indeed belongs to all who are progressing in it; although it is they who make a good advance that are called “perfect travellers.” That, however, is the height of perfection which admits of no addition, when the goal to which men tend has begun to be possessed.

CHAPTER 14 [XIII.]

REFUTATION OF PELAGIUS

But the truth is, the question which is proposed to him—”Are you even yourself without sin?”—does not really belong to the subject in dispute. What, however, he says,—that “it is rather to be imputed to his own negligence that he is not without sin,” is no doubt well spoken; but then he should deem it to be his duty even to pray to God that this faulty negligence get not the dominion over him,—the prayer that a certain man once put up, when he said: “Order my steps according to Thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me,”—lest, whilst relying on his own diligence as on strength of his own, he should fail to attain to the true righteousness either by this way, or by that other method in which, no doubt, perfect righteousness is to be desired and hoped for.

CHAPTER 15 [XIV.]

NOT EVERYTHING [OF DOCTRINAL TRUTH] IS WRITTEN IN SCRIPTURE IN SO MANY WORDS

That, too, which is said to him, “that it is nowhere written in so many words, A man can be without sin,” he easily refutes thus: “That the question here is not in what precise words each doctrinal statement is made.” It is perhaps not without reason that, while in several passages of Scripture we may find it said that men are without excuse, it is nowhere found that any man is described as being without sin, except Him only, of whom it is plainly said, that “He knew no sin.” Similarly, we read in the passage where the subject is concerning priests: “He was in all points tempted like as we are, only without sin,”—meaning, of course, in that flesh which bore the likeness of sinful flesh, although it was not sinful flesh; a likeness, indeed, which it would not have borne if it had not been in every other respect the same as sinful flesh. How, however, we are to understand this: “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; neither can he sin, for his seed remaineth in him;” while the Apostle John himself, as if he had not been born of God, or else were addressing men who had not been born of God, lays down this position: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,”—I have already explained, with such care as I was able, in those books which I wrote to Marcellinus on this very subject. It seems, moreover, to me to be an interpretation worthy of acceptance to regard the clause of the above quoted passage: “Neither can he sin,” as if it meant: He ought not to commit sin. For who could be so foolish as to say that sin ought to be committed, when, in fact, sin is sin, for no other reason than that it ought not to be committed?

CHAPTER 16 [XV.]

PELAGIUS CORRUPTS A PASSAGE OF THE APOSTLE JAMES BY ADDING A NOTE OF INTERROGATION

Now that passage, in which the Apostle James says: “But the tongue can no man tame,” does not appear to me to be capable of the interpretation which he would put upon it, when he expounds it, “as if it were written by way of reproach; as much as to say: Can no man then, tame the tongue? As if in a reproachful tone, which would say: You are able to tame wild beasts; cannot you tame the tongue? As if it were an easier thing to tame the tongue than to subjugate wild beasts.” I do not think that this is the meaning of the passage. For, if he had meant such an opinion as this to be entertained of the facility of taming the tongue, there would have followed in the sequel of the passage a comparison of that member with the beasts. As it is, however, it simply goes on to say: “The tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison,”—such, of course, as is more noxious than that of beasts and creeping things. For while the one destroys the flesh, the other kills the soul. For, “The mouth that belieth slayeth the soul.” It is not, therefore, as if this is an easier achievement than the taming of beasts that St. James pronounced the statement before us, or would have others utter it; but he rather aims at showing what a great evil in man his tongue is—so great, indeed, that it cannot be tamed by any man, although even beasts are tameable by human beings. And he said this, not with a view to our permitting, through our neglect, the continuance of so great an evil to ourselves, but in order that we might be induced to request the help of divine grace for the taming of the tongue. For he does not say: “None can tame the tongue;” but “No man;” in order that, when it is tamed, we may acknowledge it to be effected by the mercy of God, the help of God, the grace of God. The soul, therefore, should endeavour to tame the tongue, and while endeavouring should pray for assistance; the tongue, too, should beg for the taming of the tongue,—He being the tamer who said to His disciples: “It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” Thus, we are warned by the precept to do this,—namely, to make the attempt, and, failing in our own strength, to pray for the help of God.

CHAPTER 17 [XVI.]

EXPLANATION OF THIS TEXT CONTINUED

Accordingly, after emphatically describing the evil of the tongue—saying, among other things: “My brethren, these things ought not so to be”—he at once, after finishing some remarks which arose out of his subject, goes on to add this advice, showing by what help those things would not happen, which (as he said) ought not: “Who is a wise man and endowed with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where there is envying and strife, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” This is the wisdom which tames the tongue; it descends from above, and springs from no human heart. Will any one, then, dare to divorce it from the grace of God, and with most arrogant vanity place it in the power of man? Why should I pray to God that it be accorded me, if it may be had of man? Ought we not to object to this prayer lest injury be done to free will which is self-sufficient in the possibility of nature for discharging all the duties of righteousness? We ought, then, to object also to the Apostle James himself, who admonishes us in these words: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him; but let him ask in faith, nothing doubting.” This is the faith to which the commandments drive us, in order that the law may prescribe our duty and faith accomplish it. For through the tongue, which no man can tame, but only the wisdom which comes down from above, “in many things we all of us offend.” For this truth also the same apostle pronounced in no other sense than that in which he afterwards declares: “The tongue no man can tame.”

CHAPTER 18 [XVII.]

WHO MAY BE SAID TO BE IN THE FLESH

There is a passage which nobody could place against these texts with the similar purpose of showing the impossibility of not sinning: “The wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God;” for he here mentions the wisdom of the flesh, not the wisdom which cometh from above: moreover, it is manifest, that in this passage, by the phrase, “being in the flesh,” are signified, not those who have not yet quitted the body, but those who live according to the flesh. The question, however, we are discussing does not lie in this point. But what I want to hear from him, if I can, is about those who live according to the Spirit, and who on this account are not, in a certain sense, in the flesh, even while they still live here,—whether they, by God’s grace, live according to the Spirit, or are sufficient for themselves, natural capability having been bestowed on them when they were created, and their own proper will besides. Whereas the fulfilling of the law is nothing else than love; and God’s love is shed abroad in our hearts, not by our own selves, but by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.

CHAPTER 19

SINS OF IGNORANCE; TO WHOM WISDOM IS GIVEN BY GOD ON THEIR REQUESTING IT

He further treats of sins of ignorance, and says that “a man ought to be very careful to avoid ignorance; and that ignorance is blameworthy for this reason, because it is through his own neglect that a man is ignorant of that which he certainly must have known if he had only applied diligence;” whereas he prefers disputing all things rather than to pray, and say: “Give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments.” It is, indeed, one thing to have taken no pains to know what sins of negligence were apparently expiated even through divers sacrifices of the law; it is another thing to wish to understand, to be unable, and then to act contrary to the law, through not understanding what it would have done. We are accordingly enjoined to ask of God wisdom, “who giveth to all men liberally;” that is, of course, to all men who ask in such a manner, and to such an extent, as so great a matter requires in earnestness of petition.

CHAPTER 20 [XVIII.]

WHAT PRAYER PELAGIUS WOULD ADMIT TO BE NECESSARY

He confesses that “sins which have been committed do notwithstanding require to be divinely expiated, and that the Lord must be entreated because of them,”—that is, for the purpose, of course, of obtaining pardon; “because that which has been done cannot,” it is his own admission, “be undone,” by that “power of nature and will of man” which he talks about so much. From this necessity, therefore, it follows that a man must pray to be forgiven. That a man, however, requires to be helped not to sin, he has nowhere admitted; I read no such admission in this passage; he keeps a strange silence on this subject altogether; although the Lord’s Prayer enjoins upon us the necessity of praying both that our debts may be remitted to us, and that we may not be led into temptation,—the one petition entreating that past offences may be atoned for; the other, that future ones may be avoided. Now, although this is never done unless our will be assistant, yet our will alone is not enough to secure its being done; the prayer, therefore, which is offered up to God for this result is neither superfluous nor offensive to the Lord. For what is more foolish than to pray that you may do that which you have it in your own power to do.

CHAPTER 21 [XIX.]

PELAGIUS DENIES THAT HUMAN NATURE HAS BEEN DEPRAVED OR CORRUPTED BY SIN

You may now see (what bears very closely on our subject) how he endeavours to exhibit human nature, as if it were wholly without fault, and how he struggles against the plainest of God’s Scriptures with that “wisdom of word” which renders the cross of Christ of none effect. That cross, however, shall certainly never be made of none effect; rather shall such wisdom be subverted. Now, after we shall have demonstrated this, it may be that God’s mercy may visit him, so that he may be sorry that he ever said these things: “We have,” he says, “first of all to discuss the position which is maintained, that our nature has been weakened and changed by sin. I think,” continues he, “that before all other things we have to inquire what sin is,—some substance, or wholly a name without substance, whereby is expressed not a thing, not an existence, not some sort of a body, but the doing of a wrongful deed.” He then adds: “I suppose that this is the case; and if so,” he asks, “how could that which lacks all substance have possibly weakened or changed human nature?” Observe, I beg of you, how in his ignorance he struggles to overthrow the most salutary words of the remedial Scriptures: “I said, O Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.” Now, how can a thing be healed, if it is not wounded nor hurt, nor weakened and corrupted? But, as there is here something to be healed, whence did it receive its injury? You hear [the Psalmist] confessing the fact; what need is there of discussion? He says: “Heal my soul.” Ask him how that which he wants to be healed became injured, and then listen to his following words: “Because I have sinned against Thee.” Let him, however, put a question, and ask what he deemed a suitable inquiry, and say: “O you who exclaim, Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee! pray tell me what sin is? Some substance, or wholly a name without substance, whereby is expressed, not a thing, not an existence, not some sort of a body, but merely the doing of a wrongful deed?” Then the other returns for answer: “It is even as you say; sin is not some substance; but under its name there is merely expressed the doing of a wrongful deed.” But he rejoins: “Then why cry out, Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee? How could that have possibly corrupted your soul which lacks all substance?” Then would the other, worn out with the anguish of his wound, in order to avoid being diverted from prayer by the discussion, briefly answer and say: “Go from me, I beseech you; rather discuss the point, if you can, with Him who said: They that are whole need no physician, but they that are sick; I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners,’“—in which words, of course, He designated the righteous as the whole, and sinners as the sick.

CHAPTER 22 [XX.]

HOW OUR NATURE COULD BE VITIATED BY SIN, EVEN THOUGH IT BE NOT A SUBSTANCE

Now, do you not perceive the tendency and direction of this controversy? Even to render of none effect the Scripture where it is said “Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.” For how is He to save where there is no malady? For the sins, from which this gospel says Christ’s people have to be saved, are not substances, and according to this writer are incapable of corrupting. O brother, how good a thing it is to remember that you are a Christian! To believe, might perhaps be enough; but still, since you persist in discussion, there is no harm, nay there is even benefit, if a firm faith precede it; let us not suppose, then, that human nature cannot be corrupted by sin, but rather, believing, from the inspired Scriptures, that it is corrupted by sin, let our inquiry be how this could possibly have come about. Since, then, we have already learnt that sin is not a substance, do we not consider, not to mention any other example, that not to eat is also not a substance? Because such abstinence is withdrawal from a substance, inasmuch as food is a substance. To abstain, then, from food is not a substance; and yet the substance of our body, if it does altogether abstain from food, so languishes, is so impaired by broken health, is so exhausted of strength, so weakened and broken with very weariness, that even if it be in any way able to continue alive, it is hardly capable of being restored to the use of that food, by abstaining from which it became so corrupted and injured. In the same way sin is not a substance; but God is a substance, yea the height of substance and only true sustenance of the reasonable creature. The consequence of departing from Him by disobedience, and of inability, through infirmity, to receive what one ought really to rejoice in, you hear from the Psalmist, when he says: “My heart is smitten and withered like grass, since I have forgotten to eat my bread.”

CHAPTER 23 [XXI.]

ADAM DELIVERED BY THE MERCY OF CHRIST

But observe how, by specious arguments, he continues to oppose the truth of Holy Scripture. The Lord Jesus, who is called Jesus because He saves His people from their sins, in accordance with this His merciful character, says: “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; I am come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Accordingly, His apostle also says: “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” This man, however, contrary to the “faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation,” declares that “this sickness ought not to have been contracted by sins, lest the punishment of sin should amount to this, that more sins should be committed.” Now even for infants the help of the Great Physician is sought. This writer asks: “Why seek Him? They are whole for whom you seek the Physician. Not even was the first man condemned to die for any such reason, for he did not sin afterwards.” As if he had ever heard anything of his subsequent perfection in righteousness, except so far as the Church commends to our faith that even Adam was delivered by the mercy of the Lord Christ. “As to his posterity also,” says he, “not only are they not more infirm than he, but they actually fulfilled more commandments than he ever did, since he neglected to fulfil one,”—this posterity which he sees so born (as Adam certainly was not made), not only incapable of commandment, which they do not at all understand, but hardly capable of sucking the breast, when they are hungry! Yet even these would He have to be saved in the bosom of Mother Church by His grace who saves His people from their sins; but these men gainsay such grace, and, as if they had a deeper insight into the creature than ever He possesses who made the creature, they pronounce [these infants] sound with an assertion which is anything but sound itself.

CHAPTER 24 [XXII.]

SIN AND THE PENALTY OF SIN THE SAME

“The very matter,” says he, “of sin is its punishment, if the sinner is so much weakened that he commits more sins.” He does not consider how justly the light of truth forsakes the man who transgresses the law. When thus deserted he of course becomes blinded, and necessarily offends more; and by so falling is embarrassed and being embarrassed fails to rise, so as to hear the voice of the law, which admonishes him to beg for the Saviour’s grace. Is no punishment due to them of whom the apostle says: “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened?” This darkening was, of course, already their punishment and penalty; and yet by this very penalty—that is, by their blindness of heart, which supervenes on the withdrawal of the light of wisdom—they fell into more grievous sins still. “For giving themselves out as wise, they became fools.” This is a grievous penalty, if one only understands it; and from such a penalty only see to what lengths they ran: “And they changed,” he says, “the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.” All this they did owing to that penalty of their sin, whereby “their foolish heart was darkened.” And yet, owing to these deeds of theirs, which, although coming in the way of punishment, were none the less sins (he goes on to say): “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts.” See how severely God condemned them, giving them over to uncleanness in the very desires of their heart. Observe also the sins they commit owing to such condemnation: “To dishonour,” says he, “their own bodies among themselves.” Here is the punishment of iniquity, which is itself iniquity; a fact which sets forth in a clearer light the words which follow: “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.” “For this cause,” says he, “God gave them up unto vile affections.” See how often God inflicts punishment; and out of the self-same punishment sins, more numerous and more severe, arise. “For even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature; and likewise the men also, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly.” Then, to show that these things were so sins themselves, that they were also the penalties of sins, he further says: “And receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.” Observe how often it happens that the very punishment which God inflicts begets other sins as its natural offspring. Attend still further: “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge,” says he, “God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, odious to God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful.” Here, now, let our opponent say: “Sin ought not so to have been punished, that the sinner, through his punishment, should commit even more sins.”

CHAPTER 25 [XXIII.]

GOD FORSAKES ONLY THOSE WHO DESERVE TO BE FORSAKEN. WE ARE SUFFICIENT OF OURSELVES TO COMMIT SIN; BUT NOT TO RETURN TO THE WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. DEATH IS THE PUNISHMENT, NOT THE CAUSE OF SIN

Perhaps he may answer that God does not compel men to do these things, but only forsakes those who deserve to be forsaken. If he does say this, he says what is most true. For, as I have already remarked, those who are forsaken by the light of righteousness, and are therefore groping in darkness, produce nothing else than those works of darkness which I have enumerated, until such time as it is said to them, and they obey the command: “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” The truth designates them as dead; whence the passage: “Let the dead bury their dead.” The truth, then, designates as dead those whom this man declares to have been unable to be damaged or corrupted by sin, on the ground, forsooth, that he has discovered sin to be no substance! Nobody tells him that “man was so formed as to be able to pass from righteousness to sin, and yet not able to return from sin to righteousness.” But that free will, whereby man corrupted his own self, was sufficient for his passing into sin; but to return to righteousness, he has need of a Physician, since he is out of health; he has need of a Vivifier, because he is dead. Now about such grace as this he says not a word, as if he were able to cure himself by his own will, since this alone was able to ruin him. We do not tell him that the death of the body is of efficacy for sinning, because it is only its punishment; for no one sins by undergoing the death of his body; but the death of the soul is conducive to sin, forsaken as it is by its life, that is, its God; and it must needs produce dead works, until it revives by the grace of Christ. God forbid that we should assert that hunger and thirst and other bodily sufferings necessarily produce sin. When exercised by such vexations, the life of the righteous only shines out with greater lustre, and procures a greater glory by overcoming them through patience; but then it is assisted by the grace, it is assisted by the Spirit, it is assisted by the mercy of God; not exalting itself in an arrogant will, but earning fortitude by a humble confession. For it had learnt to say unto God: “Thou art my hope; Thou art my trust.” Now, how it happens that concerning this grace, and help and mercy, without which we cannot live, this man has nothing to say, I am at a loss to know; but he goes further, and in the most open manner gainsays the grace of Christ whereby we are justified, by insisting on the sufficiency of nature to work righteousness, provided only the will be present. The reason, however, why, after sin has been released to the guilty one by grace, for the exercise of faith, there should still remain the death of the body, although it proceeds from sin, I have already explained, according to my ability, in those books which I wrote to Marcellinus of blessed memory.

CHAPTER 26 [XXIV.]

CHRIST DIED OF HIS OWN POWER AND CHOICE

As to his statement, indeed, that “the Lord was able to die without sin;” His being born also was of the ability of His mercy, not the demand of His nature: so, likewise, did He undergo death of His own power; and this is our price which He paid to redeem us from death. Now, this truth their contention labours hard to make of none effect; for human nature is maintained by them to be such, that with free will it wants no such ransom in order to be translated from the power of darkness and of him who has the power of death, into the kingdom of Christ the Lord. And yet, when the

Lord drew near His passion, He said, “Behold, the prince of this world cometh and shall find nothing in me,”—and therefore no sin, of course, on account of which he might exercise dominion over Him, so as to destroy Him. “But,” added He, “that the world may know that I do the will of my Father, arise, let us go hence;” as much as to say, I am going to die, not through the necessity of sin, but in voluntariness of obedience.

CHAPTER 27

EVEN EVILS, THROUGH GOD’S MERCY, ARE OF USE

He asserts that “no evil is the cause of anything good;” as if punishment, forsooth, were good, although thereby many have been reformed. There are, then, evils which are of use by the wondrous mercy of God. Did that man experience some good thing, when he said, “Thou didst hide Thy face from me, and I was troubled?” Certainly not; and yet this very trouble was to him in a certain manner a remedy against his pride. For he had said in his prosperity, “I shall never be moved;” and so was ascribing to himself what he was receiving from the Lord. “For what had he that he did not receive?” It had, therefore, become necessary to show him whence he had received, that he might receive in humility what he had lost in pride. Accordingly, he says, “In Thy good pleasure, O Lord, Thou didst add strength to my beauty.” In this abundance of mine I once used to say, “I shall not be moved;” whereas it all came from Thee, not from myself. Then at last Thou didst turn away Thy face from me, and I became troubled.

CHAPTER 28 [XXV.]

THE DISPOSITION OF NEARLY ALL WHO GO ASTRAY. WITH SOME HERETICS OUR BUSINESS OUGHT NOT TO BE DISPUTATION, BUT PRAYER

Man’s proud mind has no relish at all for this; God, however, is great, in persuading even it how to find it all out. We are, indeed, more inclined to seek how best to reply to such arguments as oppose our error, than to experience how salutary would be our condition if we were free from error. We ought, therefore, to encounter all such, not by discussions, but rather by prayers both for them and for ourselves. For we never say to them, what this opponent has opposed to himself, that “sin was necessary in order that there might be a cause for God’s mercy.” Would there had never been misery to render that mercy necessary! But the iniquity of sin,—which is so much the greater in proportion to the ease wherewith man might have avoided sin, whilst no infirmity did as yet beset him,—has been followed closely up by a most righteous punishment; even that [offending man] should receive in himself a reward in kind of his sin, losing that obedience of his body which had been in some degree put under his own control, which he had despised when it was the right of his Lord. And, inasmuch as we are now born with the self-same law of sin, which in our members resists the law of our mind, we ought never to murmur against God, nor to dispute in opposition to the clearest fact, but to seek and pray for His mercy instead of our punishment.

CHAPTER 29 [XXVI.]

A SIMILE TO SHOW THAT GOD’S GRACE IS NECESSARY FOR DOING ANY GOOD WORK WHATEVER. GOD NEVER FORSAKES THE JUSTIFIED MAN IF HE BE NOT HIMSELF FORSAKEN

Observe, indeed, how cautiously he expresses himself: “God, no doubt, applies His mercy even to this office, whenever it is necessary because man after sin requires help in this way, not because God wished there should be a cause for such necessity.” Do you not see how he does not say that God’s grace is necessary to prevent us from sinning, but because we have sinned? Then he adds: “But just in the same way it is the duty of a physician to be ready to cure a man who is already wounded; although he ought not to wish for a man who is sound to be wounded.” Now, if this simile suits the subject of which we are treating, human nature is certainly incapable of receiving a wound from sin, inasmuch as sin is not a substance. As therefore, for example’s sake, a man who is lamed by a wound is cured in order that his step for the future may be direct and strong, its past infirmity being healed, so does the Heavenly Physician cure our maladies, not only that they may cease any longer to exist, but in order that we may ever afterwards be able to walk aright,—to which we should be unequal, even after our healing, except by His continued help. For after a medical man has administered a cure, in order that the patient may be afterwards duly nourished with bodily elements and ailments, for the completion and continuance of the said cure by suitable means and help, he commends him to God’s good care, who bestows these aids on all who live in the flesh, and from whom proceeded even those means which [the physician] applied during the process of the cure. For it is not out of any resources which he has himself created that the medical man effects any cure, but out of the resources of Him who creates all things which are required by the whole and by the sick. God, however, whenever He—through “the one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus”—spiritually heals the sick or raises the dead, that is, justifies the ungodly, and when He has brought him to perfect health, in other words, to the fulness of life and righteousness, does not forsake, if He is not forsaken, in order that life may be passed in constant piety and righteousness. For, just as the eye of the body, even when completely sound, is unable to see unless aided by the brightness of light, so also man, even when most fully justified, is unable to lead a holy life, if he be not divinely assisted by the eternal light of righteousness. God, therefore, heals us not only that He may blot out the sin which we have committed, but, furthermore, that He may enable us even to avoid sinning.

CHAPTER 30 [XXVII.]

SIN IS REMOVED BY SIN

He no doubt shows some acuteness in handling, and turning over and exposing, as he likes, and refuting a certain statement, which is made to this effect, that “it was really necessary to man, in order to take from him all occasion for pride and boasting, that he should be unable to exist without sin.” He supposes it to be “the height of absurdity and folly, that there should have been sin in order that sin might not be; inasmuch as pride is itself, of course, a sin.” As if a sore were not attended with pain, and an operation did not produce pain, that pain might be taken away by pain. If we had not experienced any such treatment, but were only to hear about it in some parts of the world where these things had never happened, we might perhaps use this man’s words, and say, It is the height of absurdity that pain should have been necessary in order that a sore should have no pain.

CHAPTER 31

THE ORDER AND PROCESS OF HEALING OUR HEAVENLY PHYSICIAN DOES NOT ADOPT FROM THE SICK PATIENT, BUT DERIVES FROM HIMSELF. WHAT CAUSE THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE FOR FEARING

“But God,” they say, “is able to heal all things.” Of course His purpose in acting is to heal all things; but He acts on His own judgment, and does not take His procedure in healing from the sick man. For undoubtedly it was His wish to endow His apostle with very great power and strength, and yet He said to him: “My strength is made perfect in weakness;” nor did He remove from him, though he so often entreated Him to do so, that mysterious “thorn in the flesh,” which He told him had been given to him “lest he should be unduly exalted through the abundance of the revelation.” For all other sins only prevail in evil deeds; pride only has to be guarded against in things that are rightly done. Whence it happens that those persons are admonished not to attribute to their own power the gifts of God, nor to plume themselves thereon, lest by so doing they should perish with a heavier perdition than if they had done no good at all, to whom it is said: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” Why, then, must it be with fear and trembling, and not rather with security, since God is working; except it be because there so quickly steals over our human soul, by reason of our will (without which we can do nothing well), the inclination to esteem simply as our own accomplishment whatever good we do; and so each one of us says in his prosperity: “I shall never be moved?” Therefore, He who in His good pleasure had added strength to our beauty, turns away His face, and the man who had made his boast becomes troubled, because it is by actual sorrows that the swelling pride must be remedied.

CHAPTER 32 [XXVIII.]

GOD FORSAKES US TO SOME EXTENT THAT WE MAY NOT GROW PROUD

Therefore it is not said to a man: “It necessary for you to sin that you may not sin;” but it is said to a man: “God in some degree forsakes you, in consequence of which you grow proud, that you may know that you are not your own,’ but are His, and learn not to be proud.” Now even that incident in the apostle’s life, of this kind, is so wonderful, that were it not for the fact that he himself is the voucher for it whose truth it is impious to contradict, would it not be incredible? For what believer is there who is ignorant that the first incentive to sin came from Satan, and that he is the first author of all sins? And yet, for all that, some are “delivered over unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.” How comes it to pass, then, that Satan’s work is prevented by the work of Satan? These and such like questions let a man regard in such a light that they seem not to him to be too acute; they have somewhat of the sound of acuteness, and yet when discussed are found to be obtuse. What must we say also to our author’s use of similes whereby he rather suggests to us the answer which we should give to him? “What” (asks he) “shall I say more than this, that we may believe that fires are quenched by fires, if we may believe that sins are cured by sins?” What if one cannot put out fires by fires: but yet pains can, for all that, as I have shown, be cured by pains? Poisons can also, if one only inquire and learn the fact, be expelled by poisons. Now, if he observes that the heats of fevers are sometimes subdued by certain medicinal warmths, he will perhaps also allow that fires may be extinguished by fires.

CHAPTER 33 [XXIX.]

NOT EVERY SIN IS PRIDE. HOW PRIDE IS THE COMMENCEMENT OF EVERY SIN

“But how,” asks he, “shall we separate pride itself from sin?” Now, why does he raise such a question, when it is manifest that even pride itself is a sin? “To sin,” says he, “is quite as much to be proud, as to be proud is to sin; for only ask what every sin is, and see whether you can find any sin without the designation of pride.” Then he thus pursues this opinion, and endeavours to prove it thus: “Every sin,” says he, “if I mistake not, is a contempt of God, and every contempt of God is pride. For what is so proud as to despise God? All sin, then, is also pride, even as Scripture says, Pride is the beginning of all sin.” Let him seek diligently, and he will find in the law that the sin of pride is quite distinguished from all other sins. For many sins are committed through pride; but yet not all things which are wrongly done are done proudly,—at any rate, not by the ignorant, not by the infirm, and not, generally speaking, by the weeping and sorrowful. And indeed pride, although it be in itself a great sin, is of such sort in itself alone apart from others, that, as I have already remarked, it for the most part follows after and steals with more rapid foot, not so much upon sins as upon things which are actually well done. However, that which he has understood in another sense, is after all most truly said: “Pride is the commencement of all sin;” because it was this which overthrew the devil, from whom arose the origin of sin; and afterwards, when his malice and envy pursued man, who was yet standing in his uprightness, it subverted him in the same way in which he himself fell. For the serpent, in fact, only sought for the door of pride whereby to enter when he said, “Ye shall be as gods.” Truly then is it said, “Pride is the commencement of all sin;” and, “The beginning of pride is when a man departeth from God.”

CHAPTER 34 [XXX.]

A MAN’S SIN IS HIS OWN, BUT HE NEEDS GRACE FOR HIS CURE

Well, but what does he mean when he says: “Then again, how can one be subjected to God for the guilt of that sin, which he knows is not his own? For,” says he, “his own it is not, if it is necessary. Or, if it is his own, it is voluntary: and if it is voluntary, it can be avoided.” We reply: It is unquestionably his own. But the fault by which sin is committed is not yet in every respect healed, and the fact of its becoming permanently fixed in us arises from our not rightly using the healing virtue; and so out of this faulty condition the man who is now growing strong in depravity commits many sins, either through infirmity or blindness. Prayer must therefore be made for him, that he may be healed, and that he may thenceforward attain to a life of uninterrupted soundness of health; nor must pride be indulged in, as if any man were healed by the self-same power whereby he became corrupted.

CHAPTER 35 [XXXI.]

WHY GOD DOES NOT IMMEDIATELY CURE PRIDE ITSELF. THE SECRET AND INSIDIOUS GROWTH OF PRIDE. PREVENTING AND SUBSEQUENT GRACE

But I would indeed so treat these topics, as to confess myself ignorant of God’s deeper counsel, why He does not at once heal the very principle of pride, which lies in wait for man’s heart even in deeds rightly done; and for the cure of which pious souls, with tears and strong crying, beseech Him that He would stretch forth His right hand and help their endeavours to overcome it, and somehow tread and crush it under foot. Now when a man has felt glad that he has even by some good work overcome pride, from the very joy he lifts up his head and says: “Behold, I live; why do you triumph? Nay, I live because you triumph.” Premature, however, this forwardness of his to triumph over pride may perhaps be, as if it were now vanquished, whereas its last shadow is to be swallowed up, as I suppose, in that noontide which is promised in the scripture which says, “He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday;” provided that be done which was written in the preceding verse: “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass,”—not, as some suppose, that they themselves bring it to pass. Now, when he said, “And He shall bring it to pass,” he evidently had none other in mind but those who say, We ourselves bring it to pass; that is to say, we ourselves justify our own selves. In this matter, no doubt, we do ourselves, too, work; but we are fellow-workers with Him who does the work, because His mercy anticipates us. He anticipates us, however, that we may be healed; but then He will also follow us, that being healed we may grow healthy and strong. He anticipates us that we may be called; He will follow us that we may be glorified. He anticipates us that we may lead godly lives; He will follow us that we may always live with Him, because without Him we can do nothing. Now the Scriptures refer to both these operations of grace. There is both this: “The God of my mercy shall anticipate me,” and again this: “Thy mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.” Let us therefore unveil to Him our life by confession, not praise it with a vindication. For if it is not His way, but our own, beyond doubt it is not the right one. Let us therefore reveal this by making our confession to Him; for however much we may endeavour to conceal it, it is not hid from Him. It is a good thing to confess unto the Lord.

CHAPTER 36 [XXXII.]

PRIDE EVEN IN SUCH THINGS AS ARE DONE ARIGHT MUST BE AVOIDED. FREE WILL IS NOT TAKEN AWAY WHEN GRACE IS PREACHED

So will He bestow on us whatever pleases Him, that if there be anything displeasing to Him in us, it will also be displeasing to us. “He will,” as the Scripture has said, “turn aside our paths from His own way,” and will make that which is His own to be our way; because it is by Himself that the favour is bestowed on such as believe in Him and hope in Him that we will do it. For there is a way of righteousness of which they are ignorant “who have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge,” and who, wishing to frame a righteousness of their own, “have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.” “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;” and He has said, “I am the way.” Yet God’s voice has alarmed those who have already begun to walk in this way, lest they should be lifted up, as if it were by their own energies that they were walking therein. For the same persons to whom the apostle, on account of this danger, says, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure,” are likewise for the self-same reason admonished in the psalm: “Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in Him with trembling. Accept correction, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye perish from the righteous way, when His wrath shall be suddenly kindled upon you.” He does not say, “Lest at any time the Lord be angry and refuse to show you the righteous way,” or, “refuse to lead you into the way of righteousness;” but even after you are walking therein, he was able so to terrify as to say, “Lest ye perish from the righteous way.” Now, whence could this arise if not from pride, which (as I have so often said, and must repeat again and again) has to be guarded against even in things which are rightly done, that is, in the very way of righteousness, lest a man, by regarding as his own that which is really God’s, lose what is God’s and be reduced merely to what is his own? Let us then carry out the concluding injunction of this same psalm, “Blessed are all they that trust in Him,” so that He may Himself indeed effect and Himself show His own way in us, to whom it is said, “Show us Thy mercy, O Lord;” and Himself bestow on us the pathway of safety that we may walk therein, to whom the prayer is offered, “And grant us Thy salvation;” and Himself lead us in the self-same way, to whom again it is said, “Guide me, O Lord, in Thy way, and in Thy truth will I walk;” Himself, too, conduct us to those promises whither His way leads, to whom it is said, “Even there shall Thy hand lead me and Thy right hand shall hold me;” Himself pasture therein those who sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of whom it is said, “He shall make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.” Now we do not, when we make mention of these things, take away freedom of will, but we preach the grace of God. For to whom are those gracious gifts of use, but to the man who uses, but humbly uses, his own will, and makes no boast of the power and energy thereof, as if it alone were sufficient for perfecting him in righteousness?

CHAPTER 37 [XXXIII.]

BEING WHOLLY WITHOUT SIN DOES NOT PUT MAN ON AN EQUALITY WITH GOD

But God forbid that we should meet him with such an assertion as he says certain persons advance against him: “That man is placed on an equality with God, if he is described as being without sin;” as if indeed an angel, because he is without sin, is put in such an equality. For my own part, I am of this opinion that the creature will never become equal with God, even when so perfect a holiness shall be accomplished in us, that it shall be quite incapable of receiving any addition. No; all who maintain that our progress is to be so complete that we shall be changed into the substance of God, and that we shall thus become what He is, should look well to it how they build up their opinion; for myself I must confess that I am not persuaded of this.

CHAPTER 38 [XXXIV.]

WE MUST NOT LIE, EVEN FOR THE SAKE OF MODERATION. THE PRAISE OF HUMILITY MUST NOT BE PLACED TO THE ACCOUNT OF FALSEHOOD

I am favourably disposed, indeed, to the view of our author, when he resists those who say to him, “What you assert seems indeed to be reasonable, but it is an arrogant thing to allege that any man can be without sin,” with this answer, that if it is at all true, it must not on any account be called an arrogant statement; for with very great truth and acuteness he asks, “On what side must humility be placed? No doubt on the side of falsehood, if you prove arrogance to exist on the side of truth.” And so he decides, and rightly decides, that humility should rather be ranged on the side of truth, not of falsehood. Whence it follows that he who said, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,” must without hesitation be held to have spoken the truth, and not be thought to have spoken falsehood for the sake of humility. Therefore he added the words, “And the truth is not in us;” whereas it might perhaps have been enough if he merely said, “We deceive ourselves,” if he had not observed that some were capable of supposing that the clause “we deceive ourselves” is here employed on the ground that the man who praises himself is even extolled for a really good action. So that, by the addition of “the truth is not in us,” he clearly shows (even as our author most correctly observes) that it is not at all true if we say that we have no sin, lest humility, if placed on the side of falsehood, should lose the reward of truth.

CHAPTER 39

PELAGIUS GLORIFIES GOD AS CREATOR AT THE EXPENSE OF GOD AS SAVIOUR

Beyond this, however, although he flatters himself that he vindicates the cause of God by defending nature, he forgets that by predicating soundness of the said nature, he rejects the Physician’s mercy. He, however, who created him is also his Saviour. We ought not, therefore, so to magnify the Creator as to be compelled to say, nay, rather as to be convicted of saying, that the Saviour is superfluous. Man’s nature indeed we may honour with worthy praise, and attribute the praise to the Creator’s glory; but at the same time, while we show our gratitude to Him for having created us, let us not be ungrateful to Him for healing us. Our sins which He heals we must undoubtedly attribute not to God’s operation, but to the wilfulness of man, and submit them to His righteous punishment; as, however, we acknowledge that it was in our power that they should not be committed, so let us confess that it lies in His mercy rather than in our own power that they should be healed. But this mercy and remedial help of the Saviour, according to this writer, consists only in this, that He forgives the transgressions that are past, not that He helps us to avoid such as are to come. Here he is most fatally mistaken; here, however unwittingly—here he hinders us from being watchful, and from praying that “we enter not into temptation,” since he maintains that it lies entirely in our own control that this should not happen to us.

CHAPTER 40 [XXXV.]

WHY THERE IS A RECORD IN SCRIPTURE OF CERTAIN MEN’S SINS, RECKLESSNESS IN SIN ACCOUNTS IT TO BE SO MUCH LOSS WHENEVER IT FALLS SHORT IN GRATIFYING LUST

He who has a sound judgment says soundly, “that the examples of certain persons, of whose sinning we read in Scripture, are not recorded for this purpose, that they may encourage despair of not sinning, and seem somehow to afford security in committing sin,”—but that we may learn the humility of repentance, or else discover that even in such falls salvation ought not to be despaired of. For there are some who, when they have fallen into sin, perish rather from the recklessness of despair, and not only neglect the remedy of repentance, but become the slaves of lusts and wicked desires, so far as to run all lengths in gratifying these depraved and abandoned dispositions,—as if it were a loss to them if they failed to accomplish what their lust impelled them to, whereas all the while there awaits them a certain condemnation. To oppose this morbid recklessness, which is only too full of danger and ruin, there is great force in the record of those sins into which even just and holy men have before now fallen.

CHAPTER 41

WHETHER HOLY MEN HAVE DIED WITHOUT SIN

But there is clearly much acuteness in the question put by our author, “How must we suppose that those holy men quitted this life,—with sin, or without sin?” For if we answer, “With sin,” condemnation will be supposed to have been their destiny, which it is shocking to imagine; but if it be said that they departed this life “without sin,” then it would be a proof that man had been without sin in his present life, at all events, when death was approaching. But, with all his acuteness, he overlooks the circumstance that even righteous persons not without good reason offer up this prayer: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;” and that the Lord Christ, after explaining the prayer in His teaching, most truly added: “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Father will also forgive you your trespasses.” Here, indeed, we have the daily incense, so to speak, of the Spirit, which is offered to God on the altar of the heart, which we are bidden “to lift up,”—

implying that, even if we cannot live here without sin, we may yet die without sin, when in merciful forgiveness the sin is blotted out which is committed in ignorance or infirmity.

CHAPTER 42 [XXXVI.]

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY MAY HAVE LIVED WITHOUT SIN. NONE OF THE SAINTS BESIDES HER WITHOUT SIN

He then enumerates those “who not only lived without sin, but are described as having led holy lives,—Abel, Enoch, Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joshua the son of Nun, Phinehas, Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, Joseph, Elisha, Micaiah, Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, Mordecai, Simeon, Joseph to whom the Virgin Mary was espoused, John.” And he adds the names of some women,—”Deborah, Anna the mother of Samuel, Judith, Esther, the other Anna, daughter of Phanuel, Elisabeth, and also the mother of our Lord and Saviour, for of her,” he says, “we must needs allow that her piety had no sin in it.” We must except the holy Virgin Mary, concerning whom I wish to raise no question when it touches the subject of sins, out of honour to the Lord; for from Him we know what abundance of grace for overcoming sin in every particular was conferred upon her who had the merit to conceive and bear Him who undoubtedly had no sin. Well, then, if, with this exception of the Virgin, we could only assemble together all the forementioned holy men and women, and ask them whether they lived without sin whilst they were in this life, what can we suppose would be their answer? Would it be in the language of our author, or in the words of the Apostle John? I put it to you, whether, on having such a question submitted to them, however excellent might have been their sanctity in this body, they would not have exclaimed with one voice: “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?” But perhaps this their answer would have been more humble than true! Well, but our author has already determined, and rightly determined, “not to place the praise of humility on the side of falsehood.” If, therefore, they spoke the truth in giving such an answer, they would have sin, and since they humbly acknowledged it, the truth would be in them; but if they lied in their answer, they would still have sin, because the truth would not be in them.

CHAPTER 43 [XXXVII.]

WHY SCRIPTURE HAS NOT MENTIONED THE SINS OF ALL

“But perhaps,” says he, “they will ask me: Could not the Scripture have mentioned sins of all of these?” And surely they would say the truth, whoever should put such a question to him; and I do not discover that he has anywhere given a sound reply to them, although I perceive that he was unwilling to be silent. What he has said, I beg of you to observe: “This,” says he, “might be rightly asked of those whom Scripture mentions neither as good nor as bad; but of those whose holiness it commemorates, it would also without doubt have commemorated the sins likewise, if it had perceived that they had sinned in anything.” Let him say, then, that their great faith did not attain to righteousness in the case of those who comprised “the multitudes that went before and that followed” the colt on which the Lord rode, when “they shouted and said, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord,” even amidst the malignant men who with murmurs asked why they were doing all this! Let him then boldly tell us, if he can, that there was not a man in all that vast crowd who had any sin at all. Now, if it is most absurd to make such a statement as this, why has not the Scripture mentioned any sins in the persons to whom reference has been made, especially when it has carefully recorded the eminent goodness of their faith?

CHAPTER 44

PELAGIUS ARGUES THAT ABEL WAS SINLESS

This, however, even he probably observed, and therefore he went on to say: “But, granted that it has sometimes abstained, in a numerous crowd, from narrating the sins of all; still, in the very beginning of the world, when there were only four persons in existence, what reason (asks he) have we to give why it chose not to mention the sins of all? Was it in consideration of the vast multitude, which had not yet come into existence? or because, having mentioned only the sins of those who had transgressed, it was unable to record any of him who had not yet committed sin?” And then he proceeds to add some words, in which he unfolds this idea with a fuller and more explicit illustration. “It is certain,” says he, “that in the earliest age Adam and Eve, and Cain and Abel their sons, are mentioned as being the only four persons then in being. Eve sinned,—the Scripture distinctly says so much; Adam also transgressed, as the same Scripture does not fail to inform us; whilst it affords us an equally clear testimony that Cain also sinned: and of all these it not only mentions the sins, but also indicates the character of their sins. Now if Abel had likewise sinned, Scripture would without doubt have said so. But it has not said so, therefore he committed no sin; nay, it even shows him to have been righteous. What we read, therefore, let us believe; and what we do not read, let us deem it wicked to add."

CHAPTER 45 [XXXVIII.]

WHY CAIN HAS BEEN BY SOME THOUGHT TO HAVE HAD CHILDREN BY HIS MOTHER EVE. THE SINS OF RIGHTEOUS MEN. WHO CAN BE BOTH RIGHTEOUS, AND YET NOT WITHOUT SIN

When he says this, he forgets what he had himself said not long before: "After the human race had multiplied, it was possible that in the crowd the Scripture may have neglected to notice the sins of all men." If indeed he had borne this well in mind, he would have seen that even in one man there was such a crowd and so vast a number of slight sins, that it would have been impossible (or, even if possible, not desirable) to describe them. For only such are recorded as the due bounds allowed, and as would, by few examples, serve for instructing the reader in the many cases where he needed warning. Scripture has indeed omitted to mention concerning the few persons who were then in existence, either how many or who they were,—in other words, how many sons and daughters Adam and Eve begat, and what names they gave them; and from this circumstance some, not considering how many things are quietly passed over in Scripture, have gone so far as to suppose that Cain cohabited with his mother, and by her had the children which are mentioned, thinking that Adam's sons had no sisters, because Scripture failed to mention them in the particular place, although it afterwards, in the way of recapitulation, implied what it had previously omitted,—that "Adam begat sons and daughters," without, however, dropping a syllable to intimate either their number or the time when they were born. In like manner it was unnecessary to state whether Abel, notwithstanding that he is rightly styled "righteous," ever indulged in immoderate laughter, or was ever jocose in moments of relaxation, or ever looked at an object with a covetous eye, or ever plucked fruit to extravagance, or ever suffered indigestion from too much eating, or ever in the midst of his prayers permitted his thoughts to wander and call him away from the purpose of his devotion; as well as how frequently these and many other similar failings stealthily crept over his mind. And are not these failings sins, about which the apostle's precept gives us a general admonition that we should avoid and restrain them, when he says: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof?" To escape from such an obedience, we have to struggle in a constant and daily conflict against unlawful and unseemly inclinations. Only let the eye be directed, or rather abandoned, to an object which it ought to avoid, and let the mischief strengthen and get the mastery, and adultery is consummated in the body, which is committed in the heart only so much more quickly as thought is more rapid than action and there is no impediment to retard and delay it. They who in a great degree have curbed this sin, that is, this appetite of a corrupt affection, so as not to obey its desires, nor to "yield their members to it as instruments of unrighteousness," have fairly deserved to be called righteous persons, and this by the help of the grace of God. Since, however, sin often stole over them in very small matters, and when they were off their guard, they were both righteous, and at the same time not sinless. To conclude, if there was in righteous Abel that love of God whereby alone he is truly righteous who is righteous, to enable him, and to lay him under a moral obligation, to advance in holiness, still in whatever degree he fell short therein was of sin. And who indeed can help thus falling short, until he come to that mighty power thereof, in which man's entire infirmity shall be swallowed up?

CHAPTER 46 [XXXIX.]

SHALL WE FOLLOW SCRIPTURE, OR ADD TO ITS DECLARATIONS?

It is, to be sure, a grand sentence with which he concluded this passage, when he says: "What we read, therefore, let us believe; and what we do not read, let us deem it wicked to add; and let it suffice to have said this of all cases." On the contrary, I for my part say that we ought not to believe even everything that we read, on the sanction of the apostle's advice: "Read all things; hold fast that which is good.” Nor is it wicked to add something which we have not read; for it is in our power to add something which we have bona fideexperienced as witnesses, even if it so happens that we have not read about it. Perhaps he will say in reply: “When I said this, I was treating of the Holy Scriptures.” Oh how I wish that he were never willing to add, I will not say anything but what he reads in the Scriptures, but in opposition to what he reads in them; that he would only faithfully and obediently hear that which is written there: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men; in which all have sinned;” and that he would not weaken the grace of the great Physician,—all by his unwillingness to confess that human nature is corrupted! Oh how I wish that he would, as a Christian, read the sentence, “There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved;” and that he would not so uphold the possibility of human nature, as to believe that man can be saved by free will without that Name!

CHAPTER 47 [XL.]

FOR WHAT PELAGIUS THOUGHT THAT CHRIST IS NECESSARY TO US

Perhaps, however, he thinks the name of Christ to be necessary on this account, that by His gospel we may learn how we ought to live; but not that we may be also assisted by His grace, in order withal to lead good lives. Well, even this consideration should lead him at least to confess that there is a miserable darkness in the human mind, which knows how it ought to tame a lion, but knows not how to live. To know this, too, is it enough for us to have free will and natural law? This is that wisdom of word, whereby “the cross of Christ is rendered of none effect.” He, however, who said, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,” since that cross cannot be made of none effect, in very deed overthrows that wisdom by the foolishness of preaching whereby believers are healed. For if natural capacity, by help of free will, is in itself sufficient both for discovering how one ought to live, and also for leading a holy life, then “Christ died in vain,” and therefore also “the offence of the cross is ceased.” Why also may I not myself exclaim?—nay, I will exclaim, and chide them with a Christian’s sorrow,—”Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by nature; ye are fallen from grace;” for, “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and wishing to establish your own righteousness, you have not submitted yourselves to the righteousness of God.” For even as “Christ is the end of the law,” so likewise is He the Saviour of man’s corrupted nature, “for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

CHAPTER 48 [XLI.]

HOW THE TERM “ALL” IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD

His opponents adduced the passage, “All have sinned,” and he met their statement founded on this with the remark that “the apostle was manifestly speaking of the then existing generation, that is, the Jews and the Gentiles;” but surely the passage which I have quoted, “By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men; in which all have sinned,” embraces in its terms the generations both of old and of modern times, both ourselves and our posterity. He adduces also this passage, whence he would prove that we ought not to understand all without exception, when “all” is used:—”As by the offence of one,” he says, “upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One, upon all men unto justification of life.” “There can be no doubt,” he says, “that not all men are sanctified by the righteousness of Christ, but only those who are willing to obey Him, and have been cleansed in the washing of His baptism.” Well, but he does not prove what he wants by this quotation. For as the clause, “By the offence of one, upon all men to condemnation,” is so worded that not one is omitted in its sense, so in the corresponding clause, “By the righteousness of One, upon all men unto justification of life,” no one is omitted in its sense,—not, indeed, because all men have faith and are washed in His baptism, but because no man is justified unless he believes in Christ and is cleansed by His baptism. The term “all” is therefore used in a way which shows that no one whatever can be supposed able to be saved by any other means than through Christ Himself. For if in a city there be appointed but one instructor, we are most correct in saying: That man teaches all in that place; not meaning, indeed, that all who live in the city take lessons of him, but that no one is instructed unless taught by him. In like manner no one is justified unless Christ has justified him.

CHAPTER 49 [XLII.]

A MAN CAN BE SINLESS, BUT ONLY BY THE HELP OF GRACE. IN THE SAINTS THIS POSSIBILITY ADVANCES AND KEEPS PACE WITH THE REALIZATION

“Well, be it so,” says he, “I agree; he testifies to the fact that all were sinners. He says, indeed, what they have been, not that they might not have been something else. Wherefore,” he adds, “if all then could be proved to be sinners, it would not by any means prejudice our own definite position, in insisting not so much on what men are, as on what they are able to be.” He is right for once to allow that no man living is justified in God’s sight. He contends, however, that this is not the question, but that the point lies in the possibility of a man’s not sinning,—on which subject it is unnecessary for us to take ground against him; for, in truth, I do not much care about expressing a definite opinion on the question, whether in the present life there ever have been, or now are, or ever can be, any persons who have had, or are having, or are to have, the love of God so perfectly as to admit of no addition to it (for nothing short of this amounts to a most true, full, and perfect righteousness). For I ought not too sharply to contend as to when, or where, or in whom is done that which I confess and maintain can be done by the will of man, aided by the grace of God. Nor do I indeed contend about the actual possibility, forasmuch as the possibility under dispute advances with the realization in the saints, their human will being healed and helped; whilst “the love of God,” as fully as our healed and cleansed nature can possibly receive it, “is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us.” In a better way, therefore, is God’s cause promoted (and it is to its promotion that our author professes to apply his warm defence of nature) when He is acknowledged as our Saviour no less than as our Creator, than when His succour to us as Saviour is impaired and dwarfed to nothing by the defence of the creature, as if it were sound and its resources entire.

CHAPTER 50 [XLIII.]

GOD COMMANDS NO IMPOSSIBILITIES

What he says, however, is true enough, “that God is as good as just, and made man such that he was quite able to live without the evil of sin, if only he had been willing.” For who does not know that man was made whole and faultless, and endowed with a free will and a free ability to lead a holy life? Our present inquiry, however, is about the man whom “the thieves” left half dead on the road, and who, being disabled and pierced through with heavy wounds, is not so able to mount up to the heights of righteousness as he was able to descend therefrom; who, moreover, if he is now in “the inn,” is in process of cure. God therefore does not command impossibilities; but in His command He counsels you both to do what you can for yourself, and to ask His aid in what you cannot do. Now, we should see whence comes the possibility, and whence the impossibility. This man says: “That proceeds not from a man’s will which he can do by nature.” I say: A man is not righteous by his will if he can be by nature. He will, however, be able to accomplish by remedial aid what he is rendered incapable of doing by his flaw.

CHAPTER 51 [XLIV.]

STATE OF THE QUESTION BETWEEN THE PELAGIANS AND THE CATHOLICS. HOLY MEN OF OLD SAVED BY THE SELF-SAME FAITH IN CHRIST WHICH WE EXERCISE

But why need we tarry longer on general statements? Let us go into the core of the question, which we have to discuss with our opponents solely, or almost entirely, on one particular point. For inasmuch as he says that “as far as the present question is concerned, it is not pertinent to inquire whether there have been or now are any men in this life without sin, but whether they had or have the ability to be such persons;” so, were I even to allow that there have been or are any such, I should not by any means therefore affirm that they had or have the ability, unless justified by the grace of God through our Lord “Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” For the same faith which healed the saints of old now heals us,—that is to say, faith “in the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,”—faith in His blood, faith in His cross, faith in His death and resurrection. As we therefore have the same spirit of faith, we also believe, and on that account also speak.

CHAPTER 52

THE WHOLE DISCUSSION IS ABOUT GRACE

Let us, however, observe what our author answers, after laying before himself the question wherein he seems indeed so intolerable to Christian hearts. He says: “But you will tell me this is what disturbs a great many,—that you do not maintain that it is by the grace of God that a man is able to be without sin.” Certainly this is what causes us disturbance; this is what we object to him. He touches the very point of the case. This is what causes us such utter pain to endure it; this is why we cannot bear to have such points debated by Christians, owing to the love which we feel towards others and towards themselves. Well, let us hear how he clears himself from the objectionable character of the question he has raised. “What blindness of ignorance,” he exclaims, “what sluggishness of an uninstructed mind, which supposes that that is maintained and held to be without God’s grace which it only hears ought to be attributed to God!” Now, if we knew nothing of what follows this outburst of his, and formed our opinion on simply hearing these words, we might suppose that we had been led to a wrong view of our opponents by the spread of report and by the asseveration of some suitable witnesses among the brethren. For how could it have been more pointedly and truly stated that the possibility of not sinning, to whatever extent it exists or shall exist in man, ought only to be attributed to God? This too is our own affirmation. We may shake hands.

CHAPTER 53 [XLV.]

PELAGIUS DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN A POWER AND ITS USE

Well, are there other things to listen to? Yes, certainly; both to listen to, and correct and guard against. “Now, when it is said,” he says, “that the very ability is not at all of man’s will, but of the Author of nature,—that is, God,—how can that possibly be understood to be without the grace of God which is deemed especially to belong to God?” Already we begin to see what he means; but that we may not lie under any mistake, he explains himself with greater breadth and clearness: “That this may become still plainer, we must,” says he, “enter on a somewhat fuller discussion of the point. Now we affirm that the possibility of anything lies not so much in the ability of a man’s will as in the necessity of nature.” He then proceeds to illustrate his meaning by examples and similes. “Take,” says he, “for instance, my ability to speak. That I am able to speak is not my own; but that I do speak is my own,—that is, of my own will. And because the act of my speaking is my own, I have the power of alternative action,—that is to say, both to speak and to refrain from speaking. But because my ability to speak is not my own, that is, is not of my own determination and will, it is of necessity that I am always able to speak; and though I wished not to be able to speak, I am unable, nevertheless, to be unable to speak, unless perhaps I were to deprive myself of that member whereby the function of speaking is to be performed.” Many means, indeed, might be mentioned whereby, if he wish it, a man may deprive himself of the possibility of speaking, without removing the organ of speech. If, for instance, anything were to happen to a man to destroy his voice, he would be unable to speak, although the members remained; for a man’s voice is of course no member. There may, in short, be an injury done to the member internally, short of the actual loss of it. I am, however, unwilling to press the argument for a word; and it may be replied to me in the contest, Why, even to injure is to lose. But yet we can so contrive matters, by closing and shutting the mouth with bandages, as to be quite incapable of opening it, and to put the opening of it out of our power, although it was quite in our own power to shut it while the strength and healthy exercise of the limbs remained.

CHAPTER 54 [XLVI.]

THERE IS NO INCOMPATIBILITY BETWEEN NECESSITY AND FREE WILL

Now how does all this apply to our subject? Let us see what he makes out of it. “Whatever,” says he, “is fettered by natural necessity is deprived of determination of will and deliberation.” Well, now, here lies a question; for it is the height of absurdity for us to say that it does not belong to our will that we wish to be happy, on the ground that it is absolutely impossible for us to be unwilling to be happy, by reason of some indescribable but amiable coercion of our nature; nor dare we maintain that God has not the will but the necessity of righteousness, because He cannot will to sin.

CHAPTER 55 [XLVII.]

THE SAME CONTINUED

Mark also what follows. “We may perceive,” says he, “the same thing to be true of hearing, smelling, and seeing,—that to hear, and to smell, and to see is of our own power, while the ability to hear, and to smell, and to see is not of our own power, but lies in a natural necessity.” Either I do not understand what he means, or he does not himself. For how is the possibility of seeing not in our own power, if the necessity of not seeing is in our own power because blindness is in our own power, by which we can deprive ourselves, if we will, of this very ability to see? How, moreover, is it in our own power to see whenever we will, when, without any loss whatever to our natural structure of body in the organ of sight, we are unable, even though we wish, to see,—either by the removal of all external lights during the night, or by our being shut up in some dark place? Likewise, if our ability or our inability to hear is not in our own power, but lies in the necessity of nature, whereas our actual hearing or not hearing is of our own will, how comes it that he is inattentive to the fact that there are so many things which we hear against our will, which penetrate our sense even when our ears are stopped, as the creaking of a saw near to us, or the grunt of a pig? Although the said stopping of our ears shows plainly enough that it does not lie within our own power not to hear so long as our ears are open; perhaps, too, such a stopping of our ears as shall deprive us of the entire sense in question proves that even the ability not to hear lies within our own power. As to his remarks, again, concerning our sense of smell, does he not display no little carelessness when he says “that it is not in our own power to be able or to be unable to smell, but that it is in our own power”—that is to say, in our free will—”to smell or not to smell?” For let us suppose some one to place us, with our hands firmly tied, but yet without any injury to our olfactory members, among some bad and noxious smells; in such a case we altogether lose the power, however strong may be our wish, not to smell, because every time we are obliged to draw breath we also inhale the smell which we do not wish.

CHAPTER 56 [XLVIII.]

THE ASSISTANCE OF GRACE IN A PERFECT NATURE

Not only, then, are these similes employed by our author false, but so is the matter which he wishes them to illustrate. He goes on to say: “In like manner, touching the possibility of our not sinning, we must understand that it is of us not to sin, but yet that the ability to avoid sin is not of us.” If he were speaking of man’s whole and perfect nature, which we do not now possess (“for we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope. But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it”), his language even in that case would not be correct to the effect that to avoid sinning would be of us alone, although to sin would be of us, for even then there must be the help of God, which must shed itself on those who are willing to receive it, just as the light is given to strong and healthy eyes to assist them in their function of sight. Inasmuch, however, as it is about this present life of ours that he raises the question, wherein our corruptible body weighs down the soul, and our earthly tabernacle depresses our sense with all its many thoughts, I am astonished that he can with any heart suppose that, even without the help of our Saviour’s healing balm, it is in our own power to avoid sin, and the ability not to sin is of nature, which gives only stronger evidence of its own corruption by the very fact of its failing to see its taint.

CHAPTER 57 [XLIX.]

IT DOES NOT DETRACT FROM GOD’S ALMIGHTY POWER, THAT HE IS INCAPABLE OF EITHER SINNING, OR DYING, OR DESTROYING HIMSELF

“Inasmuch,” says he, “as not to sin is ours, we are able to sin and to avoid sin.” What, then, if another should say: “Inasmuch as not to wish for unhappiness is ours, we are able both to wish for it and not to wish for it?” And yet we are positively unable to wish for it. For who could possibly wish to be unhappy, even though he wishes for something else from which unhappiness will ensue to him against his will? Then again, inasmuch as, in an infinitely greater degree, it is God’s not to sin, shall we therefore venture to say that He is able both to sin and to avoid sin? God forbid that we should ever say that He is able to sin! For He cannot, as foolish persons suppose, therefore fail to be almighty, because He is unable to die, or because He cannot deny Himself. What, therefore, does he mean? by what method of speech does he try to persuade us on a point which he is himself loth to consider? For he advances a step further, and says: “Inasmuch as, however, it is not of us to be able to avoid sin; even if we were to wish not to be able to avoid sin, it is not in our power to be unable to avoid sin.” It is an involved sentence, and therefore a very obscure one. It might, however, be more plainly expressed in some such way as this: “Inasmuch as to be able to avoid sin is not of us, then, whether we wish it or do not wish it, we are able to avoid sin!” He does not say, “Whether we wish it or do not wish it, we do not sin,”—for we undoubtedly do sin, if we wish;—but yet he asserts that, whether we will or not, we have the capacity of not sinning,—a capacity which he declares to be inherent in our nature. Of a man, indeed, who has his legs strong and sound, it may be said admissibly enough, “whether he will or not he has the capacity of walking;” but if his legs be broken, however much he may wish, he has not the capacity. The nature of which our author speaks is corrupted. “Why is dust and ashes proud?” It is corrupted. It implores the Physician’s help. “Save me, O Lord,” is its cry; “Heal my soul,” it exclaims. Why does he check such cries so as to hinder future health, by insisting, as it were, on its present capacity?

CHAPTER 58 [L.]

EVEN PIOUS AND GOD-FEARING MEN RESIST GRACE

Observe also what remark he adds, by which he thinks that his position is confirmed: “No will,” says he, “can take away that which is proved to be inseparably implanted in nature.” Whence then comes that utterance: “So then ye cannot do the things that ye would?” Whence also this: “For what good I would, that I do not; but what evil I hate, that do I?” Where is that capacity which is proved to be inseparably implanted in nature? See, it is human beings who do not what they will; and it is about not sinning, certainly, that he was treating,—not about not flying, because it was men not birds, that formed his subject. Behold, it is man who does not the good which he would, but does the evil which he would not: “to will is present with him, but how to perform that which is good is not present.” Where is the capacity which is proved to be inseparably implanted in nature? For whomsoever the apostle represents by himself, if he does not speak these things of his own self, he certainly represents a man by himself. By our author, however, it is maintained that our human nature actually possesses an inseparable capacity of not at all sinning. Such a statement, however, even when made by a man who knows not the effect of his words (but this ignorance is hardly attributable to the man who suggests these statements for unwary though God-fearing men), causes the grace of Christ to be "made of none effect," since it is pretended that human nature is sufficient for its own holiness and justification.

CHAPTER 59 [LI.]

IN WHAT SENSE PELAGIUS ATTRIBUTED TO GOD'S GRACE THE CAPACITY OF NOT SINNING

In order, however, to escape from the odium wherewith Christians guard their salvation, he parries their question when they ask him, "Why do you affirm that man without the help of God's grace is able to avoid sin?" by saying, "The actual capacity of not sinning lies not so much in the power of will as in the necessity of nature. Whatever is placed in the necessity of nature undoubtedly appertains to the Author of nature, that is, God. How then," says he, "can that be regarded as spoken without the grace of God which is shown to belong in an especial manner to God?" Here the opinion is expressed which all along was kept in the background; there is, in fact, no way of permanently concealing such a doctrine. The reason why he attributes to the grace of God the capacity of not sinning is, that God is the Author of nature, in which, he declares, this capacity of avoiding sin is inseparably implanted. Whenever He wills a thing, no doubt He does it; and what He wills not, that He does not. Now, wherever there is this inseparable capacity, there cannot accrue any infirmity of the will; or rather, there cannot be both a presence of will and a failure in "performance." This, then, being the case, how comes it to pass that "to will is present, but how to perform that which is good" is not present? Now, if the author of the work we are discussing spoke of that nature of man, which was in the beginning created faultless and perfect, in whatever sense his dictum be taken, "that it has an inseparable capacity,"—that is, so to say, one which cannot be lost, —then that nature ought not to have been mentioned at all which could be corrupted, and which could require a physician to cure the eyes of the blind, and restore that capacity of seeing which had been lost through blindness. For I suppose a blind man would like to see, but is unable; but, whenever a man wishes to do a thing and cannot, there is present to him the will, but he has lost the capacity.

CHAPTER 60 [LII.]

PELAGIUS ADMITS “CONTRARY FLESH” IN THE UNBAPTIZED

See what obstacles he still attempts to break through, if possible, in order to introduce his own opinion. He raises a question for himself in these terms: “But you will tell me that, according to the apostle, the flesh is contrary to us;” and then answers it in this wise: “How can it be that in the case of any baptized person the flesh is contrary to him, when according to the same apostle he is understood not to be in the flesh? For he says, But ye are not in the flesh.’“ Very well; we shall soon see whether it be really true that this says that in the baptized the flesh cannot be contrary to them; at present, however, as it was impossible for him quite to forget that he was a Christian (although his reminiscence on the point is but slight), he has quitted his defence of nature. Where then is that inseparable capacity of his? Are those who are not yet baptized not a part of human nature? Well, now, here by all means, here at this point, he might find his opportunity of awaking out of his sleep; and he still has it if he is careful. “How can it be,” he asks, “that in the case of a baptized person the flesh is contrary to him?” Therefore to the unbaptized the flesh can be contrary! Let him tell us how; for even in these there is that nature which has been so stoutly defended by him. However, in these he does certainly allow that nature is corrupted, inasmuch as it was only among the baptized that the wounded traveller left his inn sound and well, or rather remains sound in the inn whither the compassionate Samaritan carried him that he might become cured. Well, now, if he allows that the flesh is contrary even in these, let him tell us what has happened to occasion this, since the flesh and the spirit alike are the work of one and the same Creator, and are therefore undoubtedly both of them good, because He is good,—unless indeed it be that damage which has been inflicted by man’s own will. And that this may be repaired in our nature, there is need of that very Saviour from whose creative hand nature itself proceeded. Now, if we acknowledge that this Saviour, and that healing remedy of His by which the Word was made flesh in order to dwell among us, are required by small and great,—by the crying infant and the hoary-headed man alike,—then, in fact, the whole controversy of the point between us is settled.

CHAPTER 61 [LIII.]

PAUL ASSERTS THAT THE FLESH IS CONTRARY EVEN IN THE BAPTIZED

Now let us see whether we anywhere read about the flesh being contrary in the baptized also. And here, I ask, to whom did the apostle say, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye do not the things that ye would?" He wrote this, I apprehend, to the Galatians, to whom he also says, "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?" It appears, therefore, that it is to Christians that he speaks, to whom, too, God had given His Spirit: therefore, too, to the baptized. Observe, therefore, that even in baptized persons the flesh is found to be contrary; so that they have not that capacity which, our author says, is inseparably implanted in nature. Where then is the ground for his assertion, "How can it be that in the case of a baptized person the flesh is contrary to him?" in whatever sense he understands the flesh? Because in very deed it is not its nature that is good, but it is the carnal defects of the flesh which are expressly named in the passage before us. Yet observe, even in the baptized, how contrary is the flesh. And in what way contrary? So that, "They do not the things which they would." Take notice that the will is present in a man; but where is that "capacity of nature?" Let us confess that grace is necessary to us; let us cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And let our answer be, "The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

CHAPTER 62

CONCERNING WHAT GRACE OF GOD IS HERE UNDER DISCUSSION. THE UNGODLY MAN, WHEN DYING, IS NOT DELIVERED FROM CONCUPISCENCE

Now, whereas it is most correctly asked in those words put to him, “Why do you affirm that man without the help of God’s grace is able to avoid sin?” yet the inquiry did not concern that grace by which man was created, but only that whereby he is saved through Jesus Christ our Lord. Faithful men say in their prayer, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” But if they already have capacity, why do they pray? Or, what is the evil which they pray to be delivered from, but, above all else, “the body of this death?” And from this nothing but God’s grace alone delivers them, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Not of course from the substance of the body, which is good; but from its carnal offences, from which a man is not liberated except by the grace of the Saviour,—not even when he quits the body by the death of the body. If it was this that the apostle meant to declare, why had he previously said, “I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members?” Behold what damage the disobedience of the will has inflicted on man’s nature! Let him be permitted to pray that he may be healed! Why need he presume so much on the capacity of his nature? It is wounded, hurt, damaged, destroyed. It is a true confession of its weakness, not a false defence of its capacity, that it stands in need of. It requires the grace of God, not that it may be made, but that it may be re-made. And this is the only grace which by our author is proclaimed to be unnecessary; because of this he is silent! If, indeed, he had said nothing at all about God’s grace, and had not proposed to himself that question for solution, for the purpose of removing from himself the odium of this matter, it might have been thought that his view of the subject was consistent with the truth, only that he had refrained from mentioning it, on the ground that not on all occasions need we say all we think. He proposed the question of grace, and answered it in the way that he had in his heart; the question has been defined,—not in the way we wished, but according to the doubt we entertained as to what was his meaning.

CHAPTER 63 [LIV.]

DOES GOD CREATE CONTRARIES?

He next endeavours, by much quotation from the apostle, about which there is no controversy, to show “that the flesh is often mentioned by him in such a manner as proves him to mean not the substance, but the works of the flesh.” What is this to the point? The defects of the flesh are contrary to the will of man; his nature is not accused; but a Physician is wanted for its defects. What signifies his question, “Who made man’s spirit?” and his own answer thereto, “God, without a doubt?” Again he asks, “Who created the flesh?” and again answers, “The same God, I suppose.” And yet a third question, “Is the God good who created both?” and the third answer, “Nobody doubts it.” Once more a question, “Are not both good, since the good Creator made them?” and its answer, “It must be confessed that they are.” And then follows his conclusion: “If, therefore, both the spirit is good, and the flesh is good, as made by the good Creator, how can it be that the two good things should be contrary to one another?” I need not say that the whole of this reasoning would be upset if one were to ask him, “Who made heat and cold?” and he were to say in answer, “God, without a doubt.” I do not ask the string of questions. Let him determine himself whether these conditions of climate may either be said to be not good, or else whether they do not seem to be contrary to each other. Here he will probably object, “These are not substances, but the qualities of substances.” Very true, it is so. But still they are natural qualities, and undoubtedly belong to God’s creation; and substances, indeed, are not said to be contrary to each other in themselves, but in their qualities, as water and fire. What if it be so too with flesh and spirit? We do not affirm it to be so; but, in order to show that his argument terminates in a conclusion which does not necessarily follow, we have said so much as this. For it is quite possible for contraries not to be reciprocally opposed to each other, but rather by mutual action to temper health and render it good; just as, in our body, dryness and moisture, cold and heat,—in the tempering of which altogether consists our bodily health. The fact, however, that “the flesh is contrary to the Spirit, so that we cannot do the things that we would,” is a defect, not nature. The Physician’s grace must be sought, and their controversy must end.

CHAPTER 64

PELAGIUS’ ADMISSION AS REGARDS THE UNBAPTIZED, FATAL

Now, as touching these two good substances which the good God created, how, against the reasoning of this man, in the case of unbaptized persons, can they be contrary the one to the other? Will he be sorry to have said this too, which he admitted out of some regard to the Christians' faith? For when he asked, "How, in the case of any person who is already baptized, can it be that his flesh is contrary to him?" he intimated, of course, that in the case of unbaptized persons it is possible for the flesh to be contrary. For why insert the clause, "who is already baptized," when without such an addition he might have put his question thus: "How in the case of any person can the flesh be contrary?" and when, in order to prove this, he might have subjoined that argument of his, that as both body and spirit are good (made as they are by the good Creator), they therefore cannot be contrary to each other? Now, suppose unbaptized persons (in whom, at any rate, he confesses that the flesh is contrary) were to ply him with his own arguments, and say to him, Who made man's spirit? he must answer, God. Suppose they asked him again, Who created the flesh? and he answers, The same God, I believe. Suppose their third question to be, Is the God good who created both? and his reply to be, Nobody doubts it. Suppose once more they put to him his yet remaining inquiry, Are not both good, since the good Creator made them? and he confesses it. Then surely they will cut his throat with his own sword, when they force home his conclusion on him, and say: Since therefore the spirit of man is good, and his flesh good, as made by the good Creator, how can it be that the two being good should be contrary to one another? Here, perhaps, he will reply: I beg your pardon, I ought not to have said that the flesh cannot be contrary to the spirit in any baptized person, as if I meant to imply that it is contrary in the unbaptized; but I ought to have made my statement general, to the effect that the flesh in no man's case is contrary. Now see into what a corner he drives himself. See what a man will say, who is unwilling to cry out with the apostle, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." "But why," he asks, "should I so exclaim, who am already baptized in Christ? It is for them to cry out thus who have not yet received so great a benefit, whose words the apostle in a figure transferred to himself,—if indeed even they say so much." Well, this defence of nature does not permit even these to utter this exclamation! For in the baptized, there is no nature; and in the unbaptized, nature is not! Or if even in the one class it is allowed to be corrupted, so that it is not without reason that men exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?” to the other, too, help is brought in what follows: “The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord;” then let it at last be granted that human nature stands in need of Christ for its Physician.

CHAPTER 65 [LV.]

”THIS BODY OF DEATH,” SO CALLED FROM ITS DEFECT, NOT FROM ITS SUBSTANCE

Now, I ask, when did our nature lose that liberty, which he craves to be given to him when he says: “Who shall liberate me?” For even he finds no fault with the substance of the flesh when he expresses his desire to be liberated from the body of this death, since the nature of the body, as well as of the soul, must be attributed to the good God as the author thereof. But what he speaks of undoubtedly concerns the offences of the body. Now from the body the death of the body separates us; whereas the offences contracted from the body remain, and their just punishment awaits them, as the rich man found in hell. From these it was that he was unable to liberate himself, who said: “Who shall liberate me from the body of this death?” But whensoever it was that he lost this liberty, at least there remains that “inseparable capacity” of nature,—he has the ability from natural resources, —he has the volition from free will. Why does he seek the sacrament of baptism? Is it because of past sins, in order that they may be forgiven, since they cannot be undone? Well, suppose you acquit and release a man on these terms, he must still utter the old cry; for he not only wants to be mercifully let off from punishment for past offences, but to be strengthened and fortified against sinning for the time to come. For he “delights in the law of God, after the inward man; but then he sees another law in his members, warring against the law of his mind.” Observe, he sees that there is, not recollects that there was. It is a present pressure, not a past memory. And he sees the other law not only “warring,” but even “bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, which is”(not which was) “in his members.” Hence comes that cry of his: “O wretched man that I am! who shall liberate me from the body of this death?” Let him pray, let him entreat for the help of the mighty Physician. Why gainsay that prayer? Why cry down that entreaty? Why shall the unhappy suitor be hindered from begging for the mercy of Christ,—and that too by Christians? For, it was even they who were accompanying Christ that tried to prevent the blind man, by clamouring him down, from begging for light; but even amidst the din and throng of the gainsayers He hears the suppliant; whence the response: “The grace of God, through Jesus Christ out Lord.”

CHAPTER 66

THE WORKS, NOT THE SUBSTANCE, OF THE “FLESH” OPPOSED TO THE “SPIRIT.”

Now if we secure even this concession from them, that unbaptized persons may implore the assistance of the Saviour’s grace, this is indeed no slight point against that fallacious assertion of the self-sufficiency of nature and of the power of free will. For he is not sufficient to himself who says, “O wretched man that I am! who shall liberate me?” Nor can he be said to have full liberty who still asks for liberation. [LVI.] But let us, moreover, see to this point also, whether they who are baptized do the good which they would, without any resistance from the lust of the flesh. That, however, which we have to say on this subject, our author himself mentions, when concluding this topic he says: “As we remarked, the passage in which occur the words, The flesh lusteth against the Spirit,’ must needs have reference not to the substance, but to the works of the flesh.” We too allege that this is spoken not of the substance of the flesh, but of its works, which proceed from carnal concupiscence,—in a word, from sin, concerning which we have this precept: “Not to let it reign in our mortal body, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof.”

CHAPTER 67 [LVII.]

WHO MAY BE SAID TO BE UNDER THE LAW

But even our author should observe that it is to persons who have been already baptized that it was said: “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” And lest he should make them slothful for the actual conflict, and should seem by this statement to have given them laxity in sinning, he goes on to tell them: “If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are no longer under the law.” For that man is under the law, who, from fear of the punishment which the law threatens, and not from any love for righteousness, obliges himself to abstain from the work of sin, without being as yet free and removed from the desire of sinning. For it is in his very will that he is guilty, whereby he would prefer, if it were possible, that what he dreads should not exist, in order that he might freely do what he secretly desires. Therefore he says, “If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law,”—even the law which inspires fear, but gives not love. For this “love is shed abroad in our hearts,” not by the letter of the law, but “by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” This is the law of liberty, not of bondage; being the law of love, not of fear; and concerning it the Apostle James says: “Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty.” Whence he, too, no longer indeed felt terrified by God’s law as a slave, but delighted in it in the inward man, although still seeing another law in his members warring against the law of his mind. Accordingly he here says: “If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” So far, indeed, as any man is led by the Spirit, he is not under the law; because, so far as he rejoices in the law of God, he lives not in fear of the law, since “fear has torment,” not joy and delight.

CHAPTER 68 [LVIII.]

DESPITE THE DEVIL, MAN MAY, BY GOD’S HELP, BE PERFECTED

If, therefore, we feel rightly on this matter, it is our duty at once to be thankful for what is already healed within us, and to pray for such further healing as shall enable us to enjoy full liberty, in that most absolute state of health which is incapable of addition, the perfect pleasure of God. For we do not deny that human nature can be without sin; nor ought we by any means to refuse to it the ability to become perfect, since we admit its capacity for progress,—by God’s grace, however, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By His assistance we aver that it becomes holy and happy, by whom it was created in order to be so. There is accordingly an easy refutation of the objection which our author says is alleged by some against him: “The devil opposes us.” This objection we also meet in entirely identical language with that which he uses in reply: “We must resist him, and he will flee. Resist the devil,’ says the blessed apostle, and he will flee from you.’ From which it may be observed, what his harming amounts to against those whom he flees; or what power he is to be understood as possessing, when he prevails only against those who do not resist him.” Such language is my own also; for it is impossible to employ truer words. There is, however, this difference between us and them, that we, whenever the devil has to be resisted, not only do not deny, but actually teach, that God’s help must be sought; whereas they attribute so much power to will as to take away prayer from religious duty. Now it is certainly with a view to resisting the devil and his fleeing from us that we say when we pray, “Lead us not into temptation;” to the same end also are we warned by our Captain, exhorting us as soldiers in the words: “Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.”

CHAPTER 69 [LIX.]

PELAGIUS PUTS NATURE IN THE PLACE OF GRACE

In opposition, however, to those who ask, “And who would be unwilling to be without sin, if it were put in the power of a man?” he rightly contends, saying “that by this very question they acknowledge that the thing is not impossible; because so much as this, many, if not all men, certainly desire.” Well then, let him only confess the means by which this is possible, and then our controversy is ended. Now the means is “the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ;” by which he nowhere has been willing to allow that we are assisted when we pray, for the avoidance of sin. If indeed he secretly allows this, he must forgive us if we suspect otherwise. For he himself works this result, who, though encountering so much obloquy on this subject, wishes to entertain the secret opinion, and yet is unwilling to confess or profess it. It would surely be no great matter were he to speak out, especially since he has undertaken to handle and open this point, as if it had been objected against him on the side of opponents. Why on such occasions did he choose only to defend nature, and assert that man was so created as to have it in his power not to sin if he wished not to sin; and, from the fact that he was so created, definitely say that the power was owing to God’s grace which enabled him to avoid sin, if he was unwilling to commit it; and yet refuse to say anything concerning the fact that even nature itself is either, because disordered, healed by God’s grace through our Lord Jesus Christ or else assisted by it, because in itself it is so insufficient?

CHAPTER 70 [LX.]

WHETHER ANY MAN IS WITHOUT SIN IN THIS LIFE

Now, whether there ever has been, or is, or ever can be, a man living so righteous a life in this world as to have no sin at all, may be an open question among true and pious Christians; but whoever doubts the possibility of this sinless state after this present life; is foolish. For my own part, indeed, I am unwilling to dispute the point even as respects this life. For although that passage seems to me to be incapable of bearing any doubtful sense, wherein it is written, “In thy sight shall no man living be justified” (and so of similar passages), yet I could wish it were possible to show either that such quotations were capable of bearing a better signification, or that a perfect and plenary righteousness, to which it were impossible for any accession to be made, had been realized at some former time in some one whilst passing through this life in the flesh, or was now being realized, or would be hereafter. They, however, are in a great majority, who, while not doubting that to the last day of their life it will be needful to them to resort to the prayer which they can so truthfully utter, “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us,” still trust that in Christ and His promises they possess a true, certain, and unfailing hope. There is, however, no method whereby any persons arrive at absolute perfection, or whereby any man makes the slightest progress to true and godly righteousness, but the assisting grace of our crucified Saviour Christ, and the gift of His Spirit; and whosoever shall deny this cannot rightly, I almost think, be reckoned in the number of any kind of Christians at all.

CHAPTER 71 [LXI.]

AUGUSTIN REPLIES AGAINST THE QUOTATIONS WHICH PELAGIUS HAD ADVANCED OUT OF THE CATHOLIC WRITERS. LACTANTIUS

Accordingly, with respect also to the passages which he has adduced,—not indeed from the canonical Scriptures, but out of certain treatises of catholic writers,—I wish to meet the assertions of such as say that the said quotations make for him. The fact is, these passages are so entirely neutral, that they oppose neither our own opinion nor his. Amongst them he wanted to class something out of my own books, thus accounting me to be a person who seemed worthy of being ranked with them. For this I must not be ungrateful, and I should be sorry—so I say with unaffected friendliness—for him to be in error, since he has conferred this honour upon me. As for his first quotation, indeed, why need I examine it largely, since I do not see here the author's name, either because he has not given it, or because from some casual mistake the copy which you forwarded to me did not contain it? Especially as in writings of such authors I feel myself free to use my own judgment (owing unhesitating assent to nothing but the canonical Scriptures), whilst in fact there is not a passage which he has quoted from the works of this anonymous author that disturbs me. "It behooved," says he, "for the Master and Teacher of virtue to become most like to man, that by conquering sin He might show that man is able to conquer sin." Now, however this passage may be expressed, its author must see to it as to what explanation it is capable of bearing. We, indeed, on our part, could not possibly doubt that in Christ there was no sin to conquer,—born as He was in the likeness of sinful flesh, not in sinful flesh itself. Another passage is adduced from the same author to this effect: "And again, that by subduing the desires of the flesh He might teach us that it is not of necessity that one sins, but of set purpose and will." For my own part, I understand these desires of the flesh (if it is not of its unlawful lusts that the writer here speaks) to be such as hunger, thirst, refreshment after fatigue, and the like. For it is through these, however faultless they be in themselves, that some men fall into sin,—a result which was far from our blessed Saviour, even though, as we see from the evidence of the gospel, these affections were natural to Him owing to His likeness to sinful flesh.

CHAPTER 72 [LXI.]

HILARY. THE PURE IN HEART BLESSED. THE DOING AND PERFECTING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

He quotes the following words from the blessed Hilary: "It is only when we shall be perfect in spirit and changed in our immortal state, which blessedness has been appointed only for the pure in heart, that we shall see that which is immortal in God." Now I am really not aware what is here said contrary to our own statement, or in what respect this passage is of any use to our opponent, unless it be that it testifies to the possibility of a man’s being “pure in heart.” But who denies such possibility? Only it must be by the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, and not merely by our freedom of will. He goes on to quote also this passage: “This Job had so effectually read these Scriptures, that he kept himself from every wicked work, because he worshipped God purely with a mind unmixed with offences: now such worship of God is the proper work of righteousness.” It is what Job had done which the writer here spoke of, not what he had brought to perfection in this world,—much less what he had done or perfected without the grace of that Saviour whom he had actually foretold. For that man, indeed, abstains from every wicked work, who does not allow the sin which he has within him to have dominion over him; and who, whenever an unworthy thought stole over him, suffered it not to come to a head in actual deed. It is, however, one thing not to have sin, and another to refuse obedience to its desires. It is one thing to fulfil the command, “Thou shalt not covet;” and another thing, by an endeavour at any rate after abstinence, to do that which is also written, “Thou shalt not go after thy lusts.” And yet one is quite aware that he can do nothing of all this without the Saviour’s grace. It is to work righteousness, therefore, to fight in an internal struggle with the internal evil of concupiscence in the true worship of God; whilst to perfect it means to have no adversary at all. Now he who has to fight is still in danger, and is sometimes shaken, even if he is not overthrown; whereas he who has no enemy at all rejoices in perfect peace. He, moreover, is in the highest truth said to be without sin in whom no sin has an indwelling,—not he who, abstaining from evil deeds, uses such language as “Now it is no longer I that do it, but the sin that dwelleth in me.”

CHAPTER 73

HE MEETS PELAGIUS WITH ANOTHER PASSAGE FROM HILARY

Now even Job himself is not silent respecting his own sins; and your friend, of course, is justly of opinion that humility must not by any means “be put on the side of falsehood.” Whatever confession, therefore, Job makes, inasmuch as he is a true worshipper of God, he undoubtedly makes it in truth. Hilary, likewise, while expounding that passage of the psalm in which it is written, “Thou hast despised all those who turn aside from Thy commandments,” says: “If God were to despise sinners, He would despise indeed all men, because no man is without sin; but it is those who turn away from Him, whom they call apostates, that He despises.” You observe his statement: it is not to the effect that no man was without sin, as if he spoke of the past; but no man is without sin; and on this point, as I have already remarked, I have no contention with him. But if one refuses to submit to the Apostle John,—who does not himself declare, “If we were to say we have had no sin,” but “If we say we have no sin,”—how is he likely to show deference to Bishop Hilary? It is in defence of the grace of Christ that I lift up my voice, without which grace no man is justified,—just as if natural free will were sufficient. Nay, He Himself lifts up His own voice in defence of the same. Let us submit to Him when He says: “Without me ye can do nothing.”

CHAPTER 74 [LXIII.]

AMBROSE

St. Ambrose, however, really opposes those who say that man cannot exist without sin in the present life. For, in order to support his statement, he avails himself of the instance of Zacharias and Elisabeth, because they are mentioned as “having walked in all the commandments and ordinances” of the law “blameless.” Well, but does he for all that deny that it was by God’s grace that they did this through our Lord Jesus Christ? It was undoubtedly by such faith in Him that holy men lived of old, even before His death. It is He who sends the Holy Ghost that is given to us, through whom that love is shed abroad in our hearts whereby alone whosoever are righteous are righteous. This same Holy Ghost the bishop expressly mentioned when he reminds us that He is to be obtained by prayer (so that the will is not sufficient unless it be aided by Him); thus in his hymn he says:

“Votisque praestat sedulis,

Sanctum mereri Spiritum,”—

“To those who sedulously seek He gives to gain the Holy Spirit.”

CHAPTER 75

AUGUSTIN ADDUCES IN REPLY SOME OTHER PASSAGES OF AMBROSE

I, too, will quote a passage out of this very work of St. Ambrose, from which our opponent has taken the statement which he deemed favourable for citation: “It seemed good to me,’“ he says; “but what he declares seemed good to him cannot have seemed good to him alone. For it is not simply to his human will that it seemed good, but also as it pleased Him, even Christ, who, says he, speaketh in me, who it is that causes that which is good in itself to seem good to ourselves also. For him on whom He has mercy He also calls. He, therefore, who follows Christ, when asked why he wished to be a Christian, can answer: It seemed good to me.’ In saying this he does not deny that it also pleased God; for from God proceeds the preparation of man’s will inasmuch as it is by God’s grace that God is honoured by His saint.” See now what your author must learn, if he takes pleasure in the words of Ambrose, how that man’s will is prepared by God, and that it is of no importance, or, at any rate, does not much matter, by what means or at what time the preparation is accomplished, provided no doubt is raised as to whether the thing itself be capable of accomplishment without the grace of Christ. Then, again, how important it was that he should observe one line from the words of Ambrose which he quoted! For after that holy man had said, “Inasmuch as the Church has been gathered out of the world, that is, out of sinful men, how can it be unpolluted when composed of such polluted material, except that, in the first place, it be washed of sins by the grace of Christ, and then, in the next place, abstain from sins through its nature of avoiding sin?”—he added the following sentence, which your author has refused to quote for a self-evident reason; for [Ambrose] says: “It was not from the first unpolluted, for that was impossible for human nature: but it is through God’s grace and nature that because it no longer sins, it comes to pass that it seems unpolluted.” Now who does not understand the reason why your author declined adding these words? It is, of course, so contrived in the discipline of the present life, that the holy Church shall arrive at last at that condition of most immaculate purity which all holy men desire; and that it may in the world to come, and in a state unmixed with anything of evil men, and undisturbed by any law of sin resisting the law of the mind, lead the purest life in a divine eternity.

Still he should well observe what Bishop Ambrose says,—and his statement exactly tallies with the Scriptures: “It was not from the first unpolluted, for that condition was impossible for human nature.” By his phrase, “from the first,” he means indeed from the time of our being born of Adam. Adam no doubt was himself created immaculate; in the case, however, of those who are by nature children of wrath, deriving from him what in him was corrupted, he distinctly averred that it was an impossibility in human nature that they should be immaculate from the first.

CHAPTER 76 [LXIV.]

JOHN OF CONSTANTINOPLE

He quotes also John, bishop of Constantinople, as saying “that sin is not a substance, but a wicked act.” Who denies this? “And because it is not natural, therefore the law was given against it, and because it proceeds from the liberty of our will.” Who, too, denies this? However, the present question concerns our human nature in its corrupted state; it is a further question also concerning that grace of God whereby our nature is healed by the great Physician, Christ, whose remedy it would not need if it were only whole. And yet your author defends it as capable of not sinning, as if it were sound, or as if its freedom of will were self-sufficient.

CHAPTER 77

XYSTUS

What Christian, again, is unaware of what he quotes the most blessed Xystus, bishop of Rome and martyr of Christ, as having said, “God has conferred upon men liberty of their own will, in order that by purity and sinlessness of life they may become like unto God?” But the man who appeals to free will ought to listen and believe, and ask Him in whom he believes to give him His assistance not to sin. For when he speaks of “becoming like unto God,” it is indeed through God’s love that men are to be like unto God,—even the love which is “shed abroad in our hearts,” not by any ability of nature or the free will within us, but “by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Then, in respect of what the same martyr further says, “A pure mind is a holy temple for God, and a heart clean and without sin is His best altar," who knows not that the clean heart must be brought to this perfection, whilst "the inward man is renewed day by day," but yet not without the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord? Again, when he says, "A man of chastity and without sin has received power from God to be a son of God," he of course meant it as an admonition that on a man's becoming so chaste and sinless (without raising any question as to where and when this perfection was to be obtained by him,—although in fact it is quite an interesting question among godly men, who are notwithstanding agreed as to the possibility of such perfection on the one hand, and on the other hand its impossibility except through "the one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus");—nevertheless, as I began to say, Xystus designed his words to be an admonition that, on any man's attaining such a high character, and thereby being rightly reckoned to be among the sons of God, the attainment must not be thought to have been the work of his own power. This indeed he, through grace, received from God, since he did not have it in a nature which had become corrupted and depraved,—even as we read in the Gospel, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God;" which they were not by nature, nor could at all become, unless by receiving Him they also received power through His grace. This is the power which is claimed for itself by the fortitude of that love which is only communicated to us by the Holy Ghost bestowed upon us.

CHAPTER 78 [LXV.]

JEROME

We have next a quotation of some words of the venerable presbyter Jerome, from his exposition of the passage where it is written: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.' These are they whom no consciousness of sin reproves," he says, and adds: "The pure man is seen by his purity of heart; the temple of God cannot be defiled." This perfection is, to be sure, wrought in us by endeavour, by labour, by prayer, by effectual importunity therein that we may be brought to the perfection in which we may be able to look upon God with a pure heart, by His grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. As to his quotation, that the forementioned presbyter said, "God created us with free will; we are drawn by necessity neither to virtue nor to vice; otherwise, where there is necessity there is no crown;”—who would not allow this? Who would not cordially accept it? Who would deny that human nature was so created? The reason, however, why in doing a right action there is no bondage of necessity, is that liberty comes of love.

CHAPTER 79 [LXVI.]

A CERTAIN NECESSITY OF SINNING

But let us revert to the apostle’s assertion: “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” By whom given if not by Him who “ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men?” Forasmuch, however, as there is, owing to the defects that have entered our nature, not to the constitution of our nature, a certain necessary tendency to sin, a man should listen, and in order that the said necessity may cease to exist, learn to say to God, “Bring Thou me out of my necessities;” because in the very offering up of such a prayer there is a struggle against the tempter, who fights against us concerning this very necessity; and thus, by the assistance of grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, both the evil necessity will be removed and full liberty be bestowed.

CHAPTER 80 [LXVII.]

AUGUSTIN HIMSELF. TWO METHODS WHEREBY SINS, LIKE DISEASES, ARE GUARDED AGAINST

Let us now turn to our own case. “Bishop Augustin also,” says your author, “in his books on Free Will has these words: Whatever the cause itself of volition is, if it is impossible to resist it, submission to it is not sinful; if, however, it may be resisted, let it not be submitted to, and there will be no sin. Does it, perchance, deceive the unwary man? Let him then beware that he be not deceived. Is the deception, however, so potent that it is not possible to guard against it? If such is the case, then there are no sins. For who sins in a case where precaution is quite impossible? Sin, however, is committed; precaution therefore is possible.’“ I acknowledge it, these are my words; but he, too, should condescend to acknowledge all that was said previously, seeing that the discussion is about the grace of God, which helps us as a medicine through the Mediator; not about the impossibility of righteousness. Whatever, then, may be the cause, it can be resisted. Most certainly it can. Now it is because of this that we pray for help, saying, “Lead us not into temptation,” and we should not ask for help if we supposed that the resistance were quite impossible. It is possible to guard against sin, but by the help of Him who cannot be deceived. For this very circumstance has much to do with guarding against sin that we can unfeignedly say, “Forgive us our debt, as we forgive our debtors.” Now there are two ways whereby, even in bodily maladies, the evil is guarded against,—to prevent its occurrence, and, if it happen, to secure a speedy cure. To prevent its occurrence, we may find precaution in the prayer, “Lead us not into temptation;” to secure the prompt remedy, we have the resource in the prayer, “Forgive us our debts.” Whether then the danger only threaten or be inherent, it may be guarded against.

CHAPTER 81

AUGUSTIN QUOTES HIMSELF ON FREE WILL

In order, however, that my meaning on this subject may be clear not merely to him, but also to such persons as have not read those treatises of mine on Free Will, which your author has read, and who have not only not read them, but perchance do read him; I must go on to quote out of my books what he has omitted, but which, if he had perceived and quoted in his book, no controversy would be left between us on this subject. For immediately after those words of mine which he has quoted, I expressly added, and (as fully as I could) worked out, the train of thought which might occur to any one’s mind, to the following effect: “And yet some actions are disapproved of, even when they are done in ignorance, and are judged deserving of chastisement, as we read in the inspired authorities.” After taking some examples out of these, I went on to speak also of infirmity as follows: “Some actions also deserve disapprobation, that are done from necessity; as when a man wishes to act rightly and cannot. For whence arise those utterances: For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do’?” Then, after quoting some other passages of the Holy Scriptures to the same effect, I say: “But all these are the sayings of persons who are coming out of that condemnation of death; for if this is not man’s punishment, but his nature, then those are no sins.” Then, again, a little afterwards I add: “It remains, therefore, that this just punishment come of man’s condemnation. Nor ought it to be wondered at, that either by ignorance man has not free determination of will to choose what he will rightly do, or that by the resistance of carnal habit (which by force of mortal transmission has, in a certain sense, become engrafted into his nature), though seeing what ought rightly to be done and wishing to do it, he yet is unable to accomplish it. For this is the most just penalty of sin, that a man should lose what he has been unwilling to make good use of, when he might with ease have done so if he would; which, however, amounts to this, that the man who knowingly does not do what is right loses the ability to do it when he wishes. For, in truth, to every soul that sins there accrue these two penal consequences—ignorance and difficulty. Out of the ignorance springs the error which disgraces; out of the difficulty arises the pain which afflicts. But to approve of falsehoods as if they were true, so as to err involuntarily, and to be unable, owing to the resistance and pain of carnal bondage, to refrain from deeds of lust, is not the nature of man as he was created, but the punishment of man as under condemnation. When, however, we speak of a free will to do what is right, we of course mean that liberty in which man was created.” Some men at once deduce from this what seems to them a just objection from the transfer and transmission of sins of ignorance and difficulty from the first man to his posterity. My answer to such objectors is this: “I tell them, by way of a brief reply, to be silent and to cease from murmuring against God. Perhaps their complaint might have been a proper one, if no one from among men had stood forth a vanquisher of error and of lust; but when there is everywhere present One who calls off from himself, through the creature by so many means, the man who serves the Lord, teaches him when believing, consoles him when hoping, encourages him when loving, helps him when endeavouring, hears him when praying,—it is not reckoned to you as a fault that you are involuntarily ignorant, but that you neglect to search out what you are ignorant of; nor is it imputed to you in censure that you do not bind up the limbs that are wounded, but that you despise him who wishes to heal them.” In such terms did I exhort them, as well as I could, to live righteously; nor did I make the grace of God of none effect, without which the now obscured and tarnished nature of man can neither be enlightened nor purified. Our whole discussion with them on this subject turns upon this, that we frustrate not the grace of God which is in

Jesus Christ our Lord by a perverted assertion of nature. In a passage occurring shortly after the last quoted one, I said in reference to nature: “Of nature itself we speak in one sense, when we properly describe it as that human nature in which man was created faultless after his kind; and in another sense as that nature in which we are born ignorant and carnally minded, owing to the penalty of condemnation, after the manner of the apostle, We ourselves likewise were by nature children of wrath, even as others.’“

CHAPTER 82 [LXVIII.]

HOW TO EXHORT MEN TO FAITH, REPENTANCE, AND ADVANCEMENT

If, therefore, we wish “to rouse and kindle cold and sluggish souls by Christian exhortations to lead righteous lives,” we must first of all exhort them to that faith whereby they may become Christians, and be subjects of His name and authority, without whom they cannot be saved. If, however, they are already Christians but neglect to lead holy lives, they must be chastised with alarms and be aroused by the praises of reward,—in such a manner, indeed, that we must not forget to urge them to godly prayers as well as to virtuous actions, and furthermore to instruct them in such wholesome doctrine that they be induced thereby to return thanks for being able to accomplish any step in that holy life which they have entered upon, without difficulty, and whenever they do experience such “difficulty,” that they then wrestle with God in most faithful and persistent prayer and ready works of mercy to obtain from Him facility. But provided they thus progress, I am not over-anxious as to the where and the when of their perfection in fulness of righteousness; only I solemnly assert, that wheresoever and whensoever they become perfect, it cannot be but by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. When, indeed, they have attained to the clear knowledge that they have no sin, let them not say they have sin, lest the truth be not in them; even as the truth is not in those persons who, though they have sin, yet say that they have it not.

CHAPTER 83 [LXIX.]

GOD ENJOINS NO IMPOSSIBILITY, BECAUSE ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE AND EASY TO LOVE

But “the precepts of the law are very good,” if we use them lawfully. Indeed, by the very fact (of which we have the firmest conviction) “that the just and good God could not possibly have enjoined impossibilities,” we are admonished both what to do in easy paths and what to ask for when they are difficult. Now all things are easy for love to effect, to which (and which alone) “Christ’s burden is light,”—or rather, it is itself alone the burden which is light. Accordingly it is said, “And His commandments are not grievous;” so that whoever finds them grievous must regard the inspired statement about their “not being grievous” as having been capable of only this meaning, that there may be a state of heart to which they are not burdensome, and he must pray for that disposition which he at present wants, so as to be able to fulfil all that is commanded him. And this is the purport of what is said to Israel in Deuteronomy, if understood in a godly, sacred, and spiritual sense, since the apostle, after quoting the passage, “The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart” (and, as the verse also has it, in thine hands, for in man’s heart are his spiritual hands), adds in explanation, “This is the word of faith which we preach.” No man, therefore, who “returns to the Lord his God,” as he is there commanded, “with all his heart and with all his soul,” will find God’s commandment “grievous.” How, indeed, can it be grievous, when it is the precept of love? Either, therefore, a man has not love, and then it is grievous; or he has love, and then it is not grievous. But he possesses love if he does what is there enjoined on Israel, by returning to the Lord his God with all his heart and with all his soul. “A new commandment,” says He, “do I give unto you, that ye love one another;” and “He that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law;” and again, “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” In accordance with these sayings is that passage, “Had they trodden good paths, they would have found, indeed, the ways of righteousness easy.” How then is it written, “Because of the words of Thy lips, I have kept the paths of difficulty,” except it be that both statements are true: These paths are paths of difficulty to fear; but to love they are easy?

CHAPTER 84 [LXX.]

THE DEGREES OF LOVE ARE ALSO DEGREES OF HOLINESS

By Aurelius Augustin, Bishop Of Hippo;

In One Book,

Addressed To Eutropius And Paulus, A.D. 415.

A TREATISE ON REBUKE AND GRACE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE CORREPTIONE ET GRATIA.)

EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN'S "RETRACTATIONS,"

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

IN ONE BOOK,

ADDRESSED TO VALENTINE, AND WITH HIM TO THE MONKS OF ADRUMETUM.

A.D. 426 OR 427

TRANSLATED BY DR. WALLIS

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Book II. Chap. 67, On the Following Treatise, “de correptione et gratia.”

I Wrote again to the same persons another treatise, which I entitled On Rebuke and Grace, because I had been told that some one there had said that no man ought to be rebuked for not doing God’s commandments, but that prayer only should be made on his behalf, that he may do them. This book begins on this wise, “I have read your letters, dearly beloved brother Valentine.”

A TREATISE ON REBUKE AND GRACE

In the beginning the writer sets forth what is the Catholic faith concerning law, concerning free will, and concerning grace. He teaches that the grace of God by Jesus Christ is that by which alone men are delivered from evil, and without which they do absolutely no good; and this not only by the fact that it points out what is to be done, but that it also supplies the means of doing it with love, since God bestows on men the inspiration of a good will and deed. He teaches that the rebuke of evil men who have not received this grace is neither unjust—since they are evil by their own will—nor useless, although it must be confessed that it is only by God’s agency that it can avail. That perseverance in good is truly a great gift of God, but that still the rebuke of one who has not persevered must not on that account be neglected; and that if a man who has not received this gift should relapse of his own will into sin, he is not only deserving of rebuke, but if he should continue in evil until his death, he is moreover worthy of eternal damnation. That it is inscrutable why one should receive this gift and another should not receive it. That of those who are predestinated none can perish. And that the perseverance, which all do not receive who are here called children of God, is constantly given to all those who are truly children by God’s foreknowledge and predestination. He answers the question which suggests itself concerning Adam—in what way he sinned by not persevering, since he did not receive perseverance. He shows that such assistance was at the first given to him, as that without it he could not continue if he would, not as that with it it must result that he would. But that now through Christ is given us not only such help as that without it we cannot continue even if we will, but moreover such and so great as that by it we will. He proves that the number of the predestinated, to whom a gift of this kind is appropriated, is certain, and can neither be increased nor diminished. And since it is unknown who belongs to that number, and who does not, that medicinal rebuke must be applied to all who sin, lest they should either themselves perish, or be the ruin of others. Finally, he concludes that neither is rebuke prohibited by grace, nor is grace denied by rebuke.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

INTRODUCTORY

I Have read your letter—Valentine, my dearly beloved brother, and you who are associated with him in the service of God—which your Love sent by brother Florus and those who came to us with him; and I gave God thanks that I have known your peace in the Lord and agreement in the truth and ardour in love, by your discourse delivered to us. But that an enemy has striven among you to the subversion of some, has, by the mercy of God and His marvellous goodness in turning his arts to the advantage of His servants, rather availed to this result, that while none of you were cast down for the worse, some were built up for the better. There is therefore no need to reconsider again and again all that I have already transmitted to you, sufficiently argued out in a lengthy treatise; for your replies indicate how you have received this. Nevertheless, do not in any wise suppose that, when once read, it can have become sufficiently well known to you. Therefore if you desire to have it exceedingly productive, do not count it a grievance by re-perusal to make it thoroughly familiar; so that you may most accurately know what and what kind of questions they are, for the solution and satisfaction of which there arises an authority not human but divine, from which we ought not to depart if we desire to attain to the point whither we are tending.

CHAPTER 2

THE CATHOLIC FAITH CONCERNING LAW, GRACE, AND FREE WILL

Now the Lord Himself not only shows us what evil we should shun, and what good we should do, which is all that the letter of the law is able to effect; but He moreover helps us that we may shun evil and do good, which none can do without the Spirit of grace; and if this be wanting, the law comes in merely to make us guilty and to slay us. It is on this account that the apostle says, “The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.” He, then, who lawfully uses the law learns therein evil and good, and, not trusting in his own strength, flees to grace, by the help of which he may shun evil and do good. But who is there who flees to grace except when “the steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and He shall determine his way”? And thus also to desire the help of grace is the beginning of grace; of which, says he, “And I said, Now I have begun; this is the change of the right hand of the Most High.” It is to be confessed, therefore, that we have free choice to do both evil and good; but in doing evil every one is free from righteousness and a servant of sin, while in doing good no one can be free, unless he have been made free by Him who said, “If the Son shall make you free, then you shall be free indeed.” Neither is it thus, that when any one has been made free from the dominion of sin, he no longer needs the help of his Deliverer; but rather thus, that hearing from Him, “Without me ye can do nothing,” he himself also says to Him, “Be thou my helper! Forsake me not.” I rejoice that I have found in our brother Florus also this faith, which without doubt is the true and prophetical and apostolical and catholic faith; whence those are the rather to be corrected—whom indeed I now think to have been corrected by the favour of God—who did not understand him.

CHAPTER 3 [II.]

WHAT THE GRACE OF GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST IS

For the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord must be apprehended,—as that by which alone men are delivered from evil, and without which they do absolutely no good thing, whether in thought, or will and affection, or in action; not only in order that they may know, by the manifestation of that grace, what should be done, but moreover in order that, by its enabling, they may do with love what they know. Certainly the apostle asked for this inspiration of good will and work on behalf of those to whom he said, “Now we pray to God that ye do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is good.” Who can hear this and not awake and confess that we have it from the Lord God that we turn aside from evil and do good?—since the apostle indeed says not, We admonish, we teach, we exhort, we rebuke; but he says, “We pray to God that ye do no evil, but that ye should do that which is good.” And yet he was also in the habit of speaking to them, and doing all those things which I have mentioned,—he admonished, he taught, he exhorted, he rebuked. But he knew that all these things which he was doing in the way of planting and watering openly were of no avail unless He who giveth the increase in secret should give heed to his prayer on their behalf. Because, as the same teacher of the Gentiles says, “Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.”

CHAPTER 4

THE CHILDREN OF GOD ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD

Let those, therefore, not deceive themselves who ask, “Wherefore is it preached and prescribed to us that we should turn away from evil and do good, if it is not we that do this, but God who worketh in us to will and to do it’?” But let them rather understand that if they are the children of God, they are led by the Spirit of God to do that which should be done; and when they have done it, let them give thanks to Him by whom they act. For they are acted upon that they may act, not that they may themselves do nothing; and in addition to this, it is shown them what they ought to do, so that when they have done it as it ought to be done—that is, with the love and the delight of righteousness—they may rejoice in having received “the sweetness which the Lord has given, that their land should yield her increase.” But when they do not act, whether by not doing at all or by not doing from love, let them pray that what as yet they have not, they may receive. For what shall they have which they shall not receive? or what have they which they have not received?

CHAPTER 5 [III.]

REBUKE MUST NOT BE NEGLECTED

“Then,” say they, “let those who are over us only prescribe to us what we ought to do, and pray for us that we may do it; but let them not rebuke and censure us if we should not do it.” Certainly let all be done, since the teachers of the churches, the apostles, were in the habit of doing all,—as well prescribing what things should be done, as rebuking if they were not done, and praying that they might be done. The apostle prescribes, saying, “Let all your things be done with love.” He rebukes, saying, “Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye have judgments among yourselves. For why do ye not rather suffer wrong? Why are ye not rather defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong and defraud; and that, your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not possess the kingdom of God?” Let us hear him also praying: “And the Lord,” says he, “multiply you, and make you to abound in love one towards another and towards all men.” He prescribes, that love should be maintained; he rebukes, because love is not maintained; he prays, that love may abound. O man! learn by his precept what you ought to have; learn by his rebuke that it is by your own fault that you have it not; learn by his prayer whence you may receive what you desire to have.

CHAPTER 6 [IV.]

OBJECTIONS TO THE USE OF REBUKE

“How,” says he, “is it my fault that I have not what I have not received from Him, when unless it is given by Him, there is no other at all whence such and so great a gift can be had?” Suffer me a little, my brethren, not as against you whose heart is right with God, but as against those who mind earthly things, or as against those human modes of thinking themselves, to contend for the truth, of the heavenly and divine grace. For they who say this are such as in their wicked works are unwilling to be rebuked by those who proclaim this grace. “Prescribe to me what I shall do, and if I should do it, give thanks to God for me who has given me to do it; but if I do it not, I must not be rebuked, but He must be besought to give what He has not given; that is, that very believing love of God and of my neighbour by which His precepts are observed. Pray, then, for me that I may receive this, and may by its means do freely and with good will that which He commands. But I should be justly rebuked if by my own fault I had it not; that is, if I myself could give it to myself, or could receive it, and did not do so, or if He should give it and I should be unwilling to receive it. But since even the will itself is prepared by the Lord, why dust thou rebuke me because thou seeest me unwilling to do His precepts, and dust not rather ask Him Himself to work in me the will also?"

CHAPTER 7 [V.]

THE NECESSITY AND ADVANTAGE OF REBUKE

To this we answer: Whoever you are that do not the commandments of God that are already known to you, and do not wish to be rebuked, you must be rebuked even for that very reason that you do not wish to be rebuked. For you do not wish that your faults should be pointed out to you; you do not wish that they should be touched, and that such a useful pain should be caused you that you may seek the Physician; you do not desire to be shown to yourself, that, when you see yourself to be deformed, you may wish for the Reformer, and may supplicate Him that you may not continue in that repulsiveness. For it is your fault that you are evil; and it is a greater fault to be unwilling to be rebuked because you are evil, as if faults should either be praised, or regarded with indifference so as neither to be praised nor blamed, or as if, indeed, the dread, or the shame, or the mortification of the rebuked man were of no avail, or were of any other avail in healthfully stimulating, except to cause that He who is good may be besought, and so out of evil men who are rebuked may make good men who may be praised. For what he who will not be rebuked desires to be done for him, when he says, "Pray for me rather,"—he must be rebuked for that very reason that he may himself also do for himself; because that mortification with which he is dissatisfied with himself when he feels the sting of rebuke, stirs him up to a desire for more earnest prayer, that, by God's mercy, he may be aided by the increase of love, and cease to do things which are shameful and mortifying, and do things praiseworthy and gladdening. This is the benefit of rebuke that is wholesomely applied, sometimes with greater, sometimes with less severity, in accordance with the diversity of sins; and it is then wholesome when the supreme Physician looks. For it is of no profit unless when it makes a man repent of his sin. And who gives this but He who looked upon the Apostle Peter when he denied, and made him weep? Whence also the Apostle Paul, after he said that they were to be rebuked with moderation who thought otherwise, immediately added, “Lest perchance God give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth, and they recover themselves out of the snares of the devil.”

CHAPTER 8

FURTHER REPLIES TO THOSE WHO OBJECT TO REBUKE

But wherefore do they, who are unwilling be rebuked, say, “Only prescribe to me, and pray for me that I may do what you prescribe?” Why do they not rather, in accordance with their own evil inclination, reject these things also, and say, “I wish you neither to prescribe to me, nor to pray for me”? For what man is shown to have prayed for Peter, that God should give him the repentance wherewith he bewailed the denial of his Lord? What man instructed Paul in the divine precepts which pertain to the Christian faith? When, therefore, he was heard preaching the gospel, and saying, “For I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it from man, nor did I learn it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ,”—would it be replied to him: “Why are you troubling us to receive and to learn from you that which you have not received nor learnt from man? He who gave to you is able also to give to us in like manner as to you.” Moreover, if they dare not say this, but suffer the gospel to be preached to them by man, although it cannot be given to man by man, let them concede also that they ought to be rebuked by those who are set over them, by whom Christian grace is preached; although it is not denied that God is able, even when no man rebukes, to correct whom He will, and to lead him on to the wholesome mortification of repentance by the most hidden and mighty power of His medicine. And as we are not to cease from prayer on behalf of those whom we desire to be corrected,—even although without any man’s prayer on behalf of Peter, the Lord looked upon him and caused him to bewail his sin,—so we must not neglect rebuke, although God can make those whom He will to be corrected, even when not rebuked. But a man then profits by rebuke when He pities and aids who makes those whom He will to profit even without rebuke. But wherefore these are called to be reformed in one way, those in another way, and others in still another way, after different and innumerable manners, be it far from us to assert that it is the business of the clay to judge, but of the potter.

CHAPTER 9 [VI]

WHY THEY MAY JUSTLY BE REBUKED WHO DO NOT OBEY GOD, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED THE GRACE OF OBEDIENCE

“The apostle says,” say they, “For who maketh thee to differ? And what hast thou that thou hast not received? Now also if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?’ Why, then, are we rebuked, censured, reproved, accused? What do we do, we who have not received?” They who say this wish to appear without blame in respect of their not obeying God, because assuredly obedience itself is His gift; and that gift must of necessity be in him in whom dwells love, which without doubt is of God, and the Father gives it to His children. “This,” say they, “we have not received. Why, then, are we rebuked, as if we were able to give it to ourselves, and of our own choice would not give it?” And they do not observe that, if they are not yet regenerated, the first reason why, when they are reproached because they are disobedient to God, they ought to be dissatisfied with themselves is, that God made man upright from the beginning of the human creation, and there is no unrighteousness with God. And thus the first depravity, whereby God is not obeyed, is of man, because, falling by his own evil will from the rectitude in which God at first made him, he became depraved. Is, then, that depravity not to be rebuked in a man because it is not peculiar to him who is rebuked, but is common to all? Nay, let that also be rebuked in individuals, which is common to all. For the circumstance that none is altogether free from it is no reason why it should not attach to each man. Those original sins, indeed, are said to be the sins of others, because individuals derived them from their parents; but they are not unreasonably said to be our own also, because in that one, as the apostle says, all have sinned. Let, then, the damnable source be rebuked, that from the mortification of rebuke may spring the will of regeneration,—if, indeed, he who is rebuked is a child of promise,—in order that, by the noise of the rebuke sounding and lashing from without, God may by His hidden inspiration work in him from within to will also. If, however, being already regenerate and justified, he relapses of his own will into an evil life, assuredly he cannot say, “I have not received,” because of his own free choice to evil he has lost the grace of God, that he had received. And if, stung with compunction by rebuke, he wholesomely bewails, and returns to similar good works, or even better, certainly here most manifestly appears the advantage of rebuke. But yet for rebuke by the agency of man to avail, whether it be of love or not, depends only upon God.

CHAPTER 10

ALL PERSEVERANCE IS GOD’S GIFT

Is such an one as is unwilling to be rebuked still able to say, “What have I done,—I who have not received?” when it appears plainly that he has received, and by his own fault has lost that which he has received? “I am able,” says he, “I am altogether able,—when you reprove me for having of my own will relapsed from a good life into a bad one,—still to say, What have I done,—I who have not received? For I have received faith, which worketh by love, but I have not received perseverance therein to the end. Will any one dare to say that this perseverance is not the gift of God, and that so great a possession as this is ours in such wise that if any one have it the apostle could not say to him, For what hast thou which thou hast not received?’ since he has this in such a manner as that he has not received it?” To this, indeed, we are not able to deny, that perseverance in good, progressing even to the end, is also a great gift of God; and that it exists not save it come from Him of whom it is written, “Every best gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.” But the rebuke of him who has not persevered must not on that account be neglected, “lest God perchance give unto him repentance, and he recover from the snares of the devil;” since to the usefulness of rebuke the apostle has subjoined this decision, saying, as I have above mentioned, “Rebuking with moderation those that think differently, lest at any time God give them repentance.” For if we should say that such a perseverance, so laudable and so blessed, is man’s in such wise as that he has it not from God, we first of all make void that which the Lord says to Peter: “I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.” For what did He ask for him, but perseverance to the end? And assuredly, if a man could have this from man, it should not have been asked from God. Then when the apostle says, “Now we pray to God that ye do no evil,” beyond a doubt he prays to God on their behalf for perseverance. For certainly he does not “do no evil” who forsakes good, and, not persevering in good, turns to the evil, from which he ought to turn aside. In that place, moreover, where he says, “I thank my God in every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making quest with joy for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ,”—what else does he promise to them from the mercy of God than perseverance in good to the end? And again where he says, “Epaphras saluteth you, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, always striving for you in prayer, that you may stand perfect and fulfilled in all the will of God,”—what is “that you may stand” but “that you may persevere”? Whence it was said of the devil, “He stood not in the truth;” because he was there, but he did not continue. For assuredly those were already standing in the faith. And when we pray that he who stands may stand, we do not pray for anything else than that he may persevere. Jude the apostle, again, when he says, “Now unto Him that is able to keep you without offence, and to establish you before the presence of His glory, immaculate in joy,” does he not most manifestly show that perseverance in good unto the end is God’s gift? For what but a good perseverance does He give who preserves without offence that He may place before the presence of His glory immaculate in joy? What is it, moreover, that we read in the Acts of the Apostles: “And when the Gentiles heard, they rejoiced and received the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed”? Who could be ordained to eternal life save by the gift of perseverance? And when we read, “He that shall persevere unto the end shall be saved;” with what salvation but eternal? And when, in the Lord’s Prayer, we say to God the Father, “Hallowed be Thy name,” what do we ask but that His name may be hallowed in us? And as this is already accomplished by means of the laver of regeneration, why is it daily asked by believers, except that we may persevere in that which is already done in us? For the blessed Cyprian also understands this in this manner, inasmuch as, in his exposition of the same prayer, he says: “We say, Hallowed be Thy name,’ not that we wish for God that He may be hallowed by our prayers, but that we ask of God that His name may be hallowed in us. But by whom is God hallowed; since He Himself hallows? Well, because He said, Be ye holy, since I also am holy;’ we ask and entreat that we who have been hallowed in baptism may persevere in that which we have begun to be.” Behold the most glorious martyr is of this opinion, that what in these words Christ’s faithful people are daily asking is, that they may persevere in that which they have begun to be. And no one need doubt, but that whosoever prays from the Lord that he may persevere in good, confesses thereby that such perseverance is His gift.

CHAPTER 11 [VII.]

THEY WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED THE GIFT OF PERSEVERANCE, AND HAVE RELAPSED INTO MORTAL SIN AND HAVE DIED THEREIN, MUST RIGHTEOUSLY BE CONDEMNED

If, then, these things be so, we still rebuke those, and reasonably rebuke them, who, although they were living well, have not persevered therein; because they have of their own will been changed from a good to an evil life, and on that account are worthy of rebuke; and if rebuke should be of no avail to them, and they should persevere in their ruined life until death, they are also worthy of divine condemnation for ever. Neither shall they excuse themselves, saying,—as now they say, “Wherefore are we rebuked?”—so then, “Wherefore are we condemned, since indeed, that we might return from good to evil, we did not receive that perseverance by which we should abide in good?” They shall by no means deliver themselves by this excuse from righteous condemnation. For if, according to the word of truth, no one is delivered from the condemnation which was incurred through Adam except through the faith of Jesus Christ, and yet from this condemnation they shall not deliver themselves who shall be able to say that they have not heard the gospel of Christ, on the ground that “faith cometh by hearing,” how much less shall they deliver themselves who shall say, “We have not received perseverance!” For the excuse of those who say, “We have not received hearing,” seems more equitable than that of those who say, “We have not received perseverance;” since it may be said, O man, in that which thou hadst heard and kept, in that thou mightest persevere if thou wouldest;

but in no wise can it be said, That which thou hadst not heard thou mightest believe if thou wouldest.

CHAPTER 12

THEY WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED PERSEVERANCE ARE NOT DISTINGUISHED FROM THE MASS OF THOSE THAT ARE LOST

And, consequently, both those who have not heard the gospel, and those who, having heard it and been changed by it for the better, have not received perseverance, and those who, having heard the gospel, have refused to come to Christ, that is, to believe on Him, since He Himself says, “No man cometh unto me, except it were given him of my Father,” and those who by their tender age were unable to believe, but might be absolved from original sin by the sole laver of regeneration, and yet have not received this laver, and have perished in death: are not made to differ from that lump which it is plain is condemned, as all go from one into condemnation. Some are made to differ, however, not by their own merits, but by the grace of the Mediator; that is to say, they are justified freely in the blood of the second Adam. Therefore, when we hear, “For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou hast not received? Now, if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?” we ought to understand that from that mass of perdition which originated through the first Adam, no one can be made to differ except he who has this gift, which whosoever has, has received by the grace of the Saviour. And this apostolical testimony is so great, that the blessed Cyprian writing to Quirinus put it in the place of a title, when he says, “That we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own.”

CHAPTER 13

ELECTION IS OF GRACE, NOT OF MERIT

Whosoever, then, are made to differ from that original condemnation by such bounty of divine grace, there is no doubt but that for such it is provided that they should hear the gospel, and when they hear they believe, and in the faith which worketh by love they persevere unto the end; and if, perchance, they deviate from the way, when they are rebuked they are amended and some of them, although they may not be rebuked by men, return into the path which they had left; and some who have received grace in any age whatever are withdrawn from the perils of this life by swiftness of death. For He worketh all these things in them who made them vessels of mercy, who also elected them in His Son before the foundation of the world by the election of grace: “And if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace.” For they were not so called as not to be elected, in respect of which it is said, “For many are called but few are elected;” but because they were called according to the purpose, they are of a certainty also elected by the election, as it is said, of grace, not of any precedent merits of theirs, because to them grace is all merit.

CHAPTER 14

NONE OF THE ELECT AND PREDESTINATED CAN PERISH

Of such says the apostle, “We know that to those that love God He worketh together all things for good, to them who are called according to His purpose; because those whom He before foreknew, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” Of these no one perishes, because all are elected. And they are elected because they were called according to the purpose—the purpose, however, not their own, but God’s; of which He elsewhere says, “That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was said unto her that the elder shall serve the younger.” And in another place he says, “Not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace.” When, therefore, we hear, “Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called,” we ought to acknowledge that they were called according to His purpose; since He thence began, saying, “He worketh together all things for good to those who are called according to His purpose,” and then added, “Because those whom He before foreknew, He also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.” And to these promises He added, “Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called.” He wishes these, therefore, to be understood whom He called according to His purpose, lest any among them should be thought to be called and not elected, on account of that sentence of the Lord’s: “Many the called but few are elected.” For whoever are elected are without doubt also called; but not whosoever are called are as a consequence elected. Those, then, are elected, as has often been said, who are called according to the purpose, who also are predestinated and foreknown. If any one of these perishes, God is mistaken; but none of them perishes, because God is not mistaken. If any one of these perish, God is overcome by human sin; but none of them perishes, because God is overcome by nothing. Moreover, they are elected to reign with Christ, not as Judas was elected, to a work for which he was fitted. Because he was chosen by Him who well knew how to make use even of wicked men, so that even by his damnable deed that venerable work, for the sake of which He Himself had come, might be accomplished. When, therefore, we hear, “Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” we ought to understand that the rest were elected by mercy, but he by judgment; those to obtain His kingdom, he to shed His blood!

CHAPTER 15

PERSEVERANCE IS GIVEN TO THE END

Rightly follows the word to the kingdom of the elect: “If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how has He not also with Him given us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? God who justifieth? Who condemneth? Christ who died? yea, rather who rose again also, who is at the right hand of God, who also soliciteth on our behalf?” And of how stedfast a perseverance even to the end they have received the gift, let them follow on to say: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, Because for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. But in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that hath loved us. For I am certain, that neither death, nor life, nor angel, nor principality, nor things present, nor things to come, nor power, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

CHAPTER 16

WHOSOEVER DO NOT PERSEVERE ARE NOT DISTINGUISHED FROM THE MASS OF PERDITION BY PREDESTINATION

Such as these were they who were signified to Timothy, where, when it had been said that Hymenaeus and Philetus had subverted the faith of some, it is presently added, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord has known them that are His." The faith of these, which worketh by love, either actually does not fail at all, or, if there are any whose faith fails, it is restored before their life is ended, and the iniquity which had intervened is done away, and perseverance even to the end is allotted to them. But they who are not to persevere, and who shall so fall away from Christian faith and conduct that the end of this life shall find them in that case, beyond all doubt are not to be reckoned in the number of these, even in that season wherein they are living well and piously. For they are not made to differ from that mass of perdition by the foreknowledge and predestination of God, and therefore are not called according to God's purpose, and thus are not elected; but are called among those of whom it was said, "Many are called," not among those of whom it was said, "But few are elected." And yet who can deny that they are elect, since they believe and are baptized, and live according to God? Manifestly, they are called elect by those who are ignorant of what they shall be, but not by Him who knew that they would not have the perseverance which leads the elect forward into the blessed life, and knows that they so stand, as that He has foreknown that they will fall.

CHAPTER 17 [VIII.]

WHY PERSEVERANCE SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ONE AND NOT ANOTHER IS INSCRUTABLE

Here, if I am asked why God should not have given them perseverance to whom He gave that love by which they might live Christianly, I answer that I do not know. For I do not speak arrogantly, but with acknowledgment of my small measure, when I hear the apostle saying, “O man, who art thou that repliest against God?” and, “O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways untraceable!” So far, therefore, as He condescends to manifest His judgments to us, let us give thanks; but so far as He thinks fit to conceal them, let us not murmur against His counsel, but believe that this also is the most wholesome for us. But whoever you are that are hostile to His grace, and thus ask, what do you yourself say? it is well that you do not deny yourself to be a Christian and boast of being a catholic. If, therefore, you confess that to persevere to the end in good is God’s gift, I think that equally with me you are ignorant why one man should receive this gift and another should not receive it; and in this case we are both unable to penetrate the unsearchable judgments of God. Or if you say that it pertains to man’s free will—which you defend, not in accordance with God’s grace, but in opposition to it—that any one should persevere in good, or should not persevere, and it is not by the gift of God if he persevere, but by the performance of human will, why will you strive against the words of Him who says, “I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not”? Will you dare to say that even when Christ prayed that Peter’s faith might not fail, it would still have failed if Peter had willed it to fail; that is, if he had been unwilling that it should continue even to the end? As if Peter could in any measure will otherwise than Christ had asked for him that he might will. For who does not know that Peter’s faith would then have perished if that will by which he was faithful should fail, and that it would have continued if that same will should abide? But because “the will is prepared by the Lord,” therefore Christ’s petition on his behalf could not be a vain petition. When, then, He prayed that his faith should not fail, what was it that he asked for, but that in his faith he should have a most free, strong, invincible, persevering will! Behold to what an extent the freedom of the will is defended in accordance with the grace of God, not in opposition to it; because the human will does not attain grace by freedom, but rather attains freedom by grace, and a delightful constancy, and an insuperable fortitude that it may persevere.

CHAPTER 18

SOME INSTANCES OF GOD’S AMAZING JUDGMENTS

It is, indeed, to be wondered at, and greatly to be wondered at, that to some of His own children—whom He has regenerated in Christ—to whom He has given faith, hope, and love, God does not give perseverance also, when to children of another He forgives such wickedness, and, by the bestowal of His grace, makes them His own children. Who would not wonder at this? Who would not be exceedingly astonished at this? But, moreover, it is not less marvellous, and still true, and so manifest that not even the enemies of God’s grace can find any means of denying it, that some children of His friends, that is, of regenerated and good believers, departing this life as infants without baptism,—although He certainly might provide the grace of this laver if He willed, since in His power are all things,—He alienates from His kingdom into which He introduces their parents; and some children of His enemies He causes to come into the hands of Christians, and by means of this laver introduces into the kingdom, from which their parents are aliens; although, as well to the former infants there is no evil deserving, as to the latter there is no good, of their own proper will. Certainly, in this case the judgments of God, because they are righteous and deep, may neither be blamed nor penetrated. Among these also is that concerning perseverance, of which we are now discoursing. Of both, therefore, we may exclaim, “O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments!”

CHAPTER 19

GOD’S WAYS PAST FINDING OUT

Nor let us wonder that we cannot trace His unsearchable ways. For, to say nothing of innumerable other things which are given by the Lord God to some men, and to others are not given, since with Him is no respect of persons; such things as are not conferred on the merits of will, as bodily swiftness, strength, good health, and beauty of body, marvellous intellects and mental natures capable of many arts, or such as fall to man’s lot from without, such as are wealth, nobility, honours, and other things of this kind, which it is in the power of God alone that a man should have; not to dwell even on the baptism of infants (which none of those objectors can say does not pertain, as might be said of those other matters, to the kingdom of God), why it is given to this infant and not given to that, since both of them are equally in God's power, and without that sacrament none can enter into the kingdom of God;—to be silent, then, on these matters, or to leave them on one side, let men consider those very special cases of which we are treating. For we are discoursing of such as have not perseverance in goodness, but die in the decline of their good will from good to evil. Let the objectors answer, if they can, why, when these were living faithfully and piously, God did not then snatch them from the perils of this life, "lest wickedness should change their understanding, and lest deceit should beguile their souls"? Had He not this in His power, or was He ignorant of their future sinfulness? Assuredly, nothing of this kind is said, except most perversely and insanely. Why, then, did He not do this? Let them reply who mock at us when in such matters we exclaim, "How inscrutable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" For either God giveth this to whom He will, or certainly that Scripture is wrong which says concerning the immature death of the righteous man, "He was taken away lest wickedness should change his understanding, or lest deceit should beguile his soul." Why, then, does God give this so great benefit to some, and not give it to others, seeing that in Him is no unrighteousness nor acceptance of persons, and that it is in His power how long every one may remain in this life, which is called a trial upon earth? As, then, they are constrained to confess that it is God's gift for a man to end this life of his before it can be changed from good to evil, but they do not know why it is given to some and not given to others, so let them confess with us that perseverance in good is God's gift, according to the Scriptures, from which I have already set down many testimonies; and let them condescend with us to be ignorant, without a murmur against God, why it is given to some and not given to others.

CHAPTER 20 [IX.]

SOME ARE CHILDREN OF GOD ACCORDING TO GRACE TEMPORALLY RECEIVED, SOME ACCORDING TO GOD'S ETERNAL FOREKNOWLEDGE

Nor let it disturb us that to some of His children God does not give this perseverance. Be this far from being so, however, if these were of those who are predestinated and called according to His purpose,—who are truly the children of the promise. For the former, while they live piously, are called children of God; but because they will live wickedly, and die in that impiety, the foreknowledge of God does not call them God’s children. For they are children of God whom as yet we have not, and God has already, of whom the Evangelist John says, “that Jesus should die for that nation, and not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God which were scattered abroad;” and this certainly they were to become by believing, through the preaching of the gospel. And yet before this had happened they had already been enrolled as sons of God with unchangeable stedfastness in the memorial of their Father. And, again, there are some who are called by us children of God on account of grace received even in temporal things, yet are not so called by God; of whom the same John says, “They went out from us, but they were not of us, because if they had been of us they would, no doubt, have continued with us.” He does not say, “They went out from us, but because they did not abide with us they are no longer now of us;” but he says, “They went out from us, but they were not of us,”—that is to say, even when they appeared among us, they were not of us. And as if it were said to him, Whence do you prove this? he says, “Because if they had been of us, they would assuredly have continued with us.” It is the word of God’s children; John is the speaker, who was ordained to a chief place among the children of God. When, therefore, God’s children say of those who had not perseverance, “They went out from us, but they were not of us,” and add, “Because if they had been of us, they would assuredly have continued with us,” what else do they say than that they were not children, even when they were in the profession and name of children? Not because they simulated righteousness, but because they did not continue in it. For he does not say, “For if they had been of us, they would assuredly have maintained a real and not a feigned righteousness with us;” but he says, “If they had been of us, they would assuredly have continued with us.” Beyond a doubt, he wished them to continue in goodness. Therefore they were in goodness; but because they did not abide in it,—that is, they did not persevere unto the end,—he says, They were not of us, even when they were with us,—that is, they were not of the number of children, even when they were in the faith of children; because they who are truly children are foreknown and predestinated as conformed to the image of His Son, and are called according to His purpose, so as to be elected. For the son of promise does not perish, but the son of perdition.

CHAPTER 21

WHO MAY BE UNDERSTOOD AS GIVEN TO CHRIST

Those, then, were of the multitude of the called, but they were not of the fewness of the elected. It is not, therefore, to His predestinated children that God has not given perseverance for they would have it if they were in that number of children; and what would they have which they had not received, according to the apostolical and true judgment? And thus such children would be given to Christ the Son just as He Himself says to the Father, “That all that Thou hast given me may not perish, but have eternal life.” Those, therefore, are understood to be given to Christ who are ordained to eternal life. These are they who are predestinated and called according to the purpose, of whom not one perishes. And therefore none of them ends this life when he has changed from good to evil, because he is so ordained, and for that purpose given to Christ, that he may not perish, but may have eternal life. And again, those whom we call His enemies, or the infant children of His enemies, whomever of them He will so regenerate that they may end this life in that faith which worketh by love, are already, and before this is done, in that predestination His children, and are given to Christ His Son, that they may not perish, but have everlasting life.

CHAPTER 22

TRUE CHILDREN OF GOD ARE TRUE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

Finally, the Saviour Himself says, “If ye continue in my word, ye are indeed my disciples.” Is Judas, then, to be reckoned among them, since he did not continue in His word? Are they to be reckoned among them of whom the gospel speaks in such wise, where, when the Lord had commanded His flesh to be eaten and His blood to be drunk, the Evangelist says, “These things said He in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum. Many, therefore, of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it? But Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples were murmuring at it, said to them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascending where He was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth, but the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and life. But there are some of you who believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the believing ones, and who should betray Him; and He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man cometh unto me except it were given of my Father. From this time many of His disciples went away back from Him, and no longer walked with Him." Are not these even in the words of the gospel called disciples? And yet they were not truly disciples, because they did not continue in His word, according to what He says: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye indeed my disciples." Because, therefore, they possessed not perseverance, as not being truly disciples of Christ, so they were not truly children of God even when they appeared to be so, and were so called. We, then, call men elected, and Christ's disciples, and God's children, because they are to be so called whom, being regenerated, we see to live piously; but they are then truly what they are called if they shall abide in that on account of which they are so called. But if they have not perseverance,—that is, if they continue not in that which they have begun to be,—they are not truly called what they are called and are not; for they are not this in the sight of Him to whom it is known what they are going to be,—that is to say, from good men, bad men.

CHAPTER 23

THOSE WHO ARE CALLED ACCORDING TO THE PURPOSE ALONE ARE PREDESTINATED

For this reason the apostle, when he had said, "We know that to those who love God He worketh all things together for good,"—knowing that some love God, and do not continue in that good way unto the end,—immediately added, "to them who are the called according to His purpose." For these in their love for God continue even to the end; and they who for a season wander from the way return, that they may continue unto the end what they had begun to be in good. Showing, however, what it is to be called according to His purpose, he presently added what I have already quoted above, "Because whom He did before foreknow, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called," to wit, according to His purpose; "and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." All those things are already done: He foreknew, He predestinated, He called, He justified; because both all are already foreknown and predestinated, and many are already called and justified; but that which he placed at the end, "them He also glorified" (if, indeed, that glory is here to be understood of which the same apostle says, "When Christ your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory"), this is not yet accomplished. Although, also, those two things—that is, He called, and He justified—have not been effected in all of whom they are said,—for still, even until the end of the world, there remain many to be called and justified,—nevertheless, He used verbs of the past tense, even concerning things future, as if God had already arranged from eternity that they should come to pass. For this reason, also, the prophet Isaiah says concerning Him, "Who has made the things that shall be." Whosoever, therefore, in God's most providential ordering, are foreknown, predestinated, called, justified, glorified,—I say not, even although not yet born again, but even although not yet born at all, are already children of God, and absolutely cannot perish. These truly come to Christ, because they come in such wise as He Himself says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will not cast out;" and a little after He says, "This is the will of the Father who hath sent me, that of all that He hath given me I shall lose nothing." From Him, therefore, is given also perseverance in good even to the end; for it is not given save to those who shall not perish, since they who do not persevere shall perish.

CHAPTER 24

EVEN THE SINS OF THE ELECT ARE TURNED BY GOD TO THEIR ADVANTAGE

To such as love Him, God co-worketh with all things for good; so absolutely all things, that even if any of them go astray, and break out of the way, even this itself He makes to avail them for good, so that they return more lowly and more instructed. For they learn that in the right way itself they ought to rejoice with trembling; not with arrogation to themselves of confidence of abiding as if by their own strength; not with saying, in their abundance, “We shall not be moved for ever.” For which reason it is said to them, “Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling, lest at any time the Lord should be angry, and ye perish from the right way.” For He does not say, “And ye come not into the right way;” but He says, “Lest ye perish from the right way.” And what does this show, but that those who are already walking in the right way are reminded to serve God in fear; that is, “not to be high-minded, but to fear”? which signifies, that they should not be haughty, but humble. Whence also He says in another place, “not minding high things, but consenting with the lowly;” let them rejoice in God, but with trembling; glorying in none, since nothing is ours, so that he who glorieth may glory in the Lord, lest they perish from the right way in which they have already begun to walk, while they are ascribing to themselves their very presence in it. These words also the apostle made use of when he says, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” And setting forth why with fear and trembling, he says, “For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do for His good pleasure.” For he had not this fear and trembling who said in his abundance, “I shall not be moved for ever.” But because he was a child of the promise, not of perdition, he experienced in God’s desertion for a little while what he himself was: “Lord,” said he, “in Thy favour Thou gavest strength to my honour; Thou turnedst away Thy face from me, and I became troubled.” Behold how much better instructed, and for this reason also more humble, he held on his way, at length seeing and confessing that by His will God had endowed his honour with strength; and this he had attributed to himself and presumed to be from himself, in such abundance as God had afforded it, and not from Him who had given it, and so had said, “I shall not be moved for ever!” Therefore he became troubled so that he found himself, and being lowly minded learnt not only of eternal life, but, moreover, of a pious conversation and perseverance in this life, as that in which hope should be maintained. This might moreover be the word of the Apostle Peter, because he also had said in his abundance, “I will lay down my life for Thy sake;” attributing to himself, in his eagerness, what was afterwards to be bestowed on him by his Lord. But the Lord turned away His face from him, and he became troubled, so that in his fear of dying for Him he thrice denied Him. But the Lord again turned His face to him, and washed away his sin with his tears. For what else is, “He turned and looked upon him,” but, He restored to him the face which, for a little while, He had turned away from him? Therefore he had become troubled; but because he learned not to be confident concerning himself, even this was of excellent profit to him, by His agency who co-works for good with all things to those who love Him; because he had been called according to the purpose, so that no one could pluck him out of the hand of Christ, to whom he had been given.

CHAPTER 25

THEREFORE REBUKE IS TO BE USED

Let no one therefore say that a man must not be rebuked when he deviates from the right way, but that his return and perseverance must only be asked for from the Lord for him. Let no considerate and believing man say this. For if such an one is called according to the purpose, beyond all doubt God is co-working for good to him even in the fact of his being rebuked. But since he who rebukes is ignorant whether he is so called, let him do with love what he knows ought to be done; for he knows that such an one ought to be rebuked. God will show either mercy or judgment; mercy, indeed, if he who is rebuked is “made to differ” by the bestowal of grace from the mass of perdition, and is not found among the vessels of wrath which are completed for destruction, but among the vessels of mercy which God has prepared for glory; but judgment, if among the former he is condemned, and is not predestinated among the latter.

CHAPTER 26 [X.]

WHETHER ADAM RECEIVED THE GIFT OF PERSEVERANCE

Here arises another question, not reasonably to be slighted, but to be approached and solved in the help of the Lord in whose hand are both we and our discourses. For I am asked, in respect of this gift of God which is to persevere in good to the end, what I think of the first man himself, who assuredly was made upright without any fault. And I do not say: If he had not perseverance, how was he without fault, seeing that he was in want of so needful a gift of God? For to this interrogatory the answer is easy, that he had not perseverance, because he did not persevere in that goodness in which he was without sin; for he began to have sin from the point at which he fell; and if he began, certainly he was without sin before he had begun. For it is one thing not to have sin, and it is another not to abide in that goodness in which there is no sin. Because in that very fact, that he is not said never to have been without sin, but he is said not to have continued without sin, beyond all doubt it is demonstrated that he was without sin, seeing that he is blamed for not having continued in that goodness. But it should rather be asked and discussed with greater pains in what way we can answer those who say, “If in that uprightness in which he was made without sin he had perseverance, beyond all doubt he persevered in it; and if he persevered, he certainly did not sin, and did not forsake that his uprightness. But that he did sin, and was a forsaker of goodness, the Truth declares. Therefore he had not perseverance in that goodness; and if he had it not, he certainly received it not. For how should he have both received perseverance, and not have persevered? Further, if he had it not because he did not receive it, what sin did he commit by not persevering, if he did not receive perseverance? For it cannot be said that he did not receive it, for the reason that he was not separated by the bestowal of grace from the mass of perdition. Because that mass of perdition did not as yet exist in the human race before he had sinned from whom the corrupted source was derived.”

CHAPTER 27

THE ANSWER

Wherefore we most wholesomely confess what we most correctly believe, that the God and Lord of all things, who in His strength created all things good, and foreknew that evil things would arise out of good, and knew that it pertained to His most omnipotent goodness even to do good out of evil things rather than not to allow evil things to be at all, so ordained the life of angels and men that in it He might first of all show what their free will was capable of, and then what the kindness of His grace and the judgment of His righteousness was capable of. Finally, certain angels, of whom the chief is he who is called the devil, became by free will outcasts from the Lord God. Yet although they fled from His goodness, wherein they had been blessed, they could not flee from His judgment, by which they were made most wretched. Others, however, by the same free will stood fast in the truth, and merited the knowledge of that most certain truth that they should never fall. For if from the Holy Scriptures we have been able to attain the knowledge that none of the holy angels shall fall evermore, how much more have they themselves attained this knowledge by the truth more sublimely revealed to them! Because to us is promised a blessed life without end, and equality with the angels, from which promise we are certified that when after judgment we shall have come to that life, we shall not fall from it; but if the angels are ignorant of this truth concerning themselves, we shall not be their equals, but more blessed than they. But the Truth has promised us equality with them. It is certain, then, that they have known this by sight, which we have known by faith, to wit, that there shall be now no more any fall of any holy angel. But the devil and his angels, although they were blessed before they fell, and did not know that they should fall unto misery,—there was still something which might be added to their blessedness, if by free will they had stood in the truth, until they should receive that fulness of the highest blessing as the reward of that continuance; that is, that by the great abundance of the love of God, given by the Holy Spirit, they should absolutely not be able to fall any more, and that they should know this with complete certainty concerning themselves. They had not this plenitude of blessedness; but since they were ignorant of their future misery, they enjoyed a blessedness which was less, indeed, but still without any defect. For if they had known their future fall and eternal punishment, they certainly could not have been blessed; since the fear of so great an evil as this would compel them even then to be miserable.

CHAPTER 28

THE FIRST MAN HIMSELF ALSO MIGHT HAVE STOOD BY HIS FREE WILL

Thus also He made man with free will; and although ignorant of his future fall, yet therefore happy, because he thought it was in his own power both not to die and not to become miserable. And if he had willed by his own free will to continue in this state of uprightness and freedom from sin, assuredly without any experience of death and of unhappiness he would have received by the merit of that continuance the fulness of blessing with which the holy angels also are blessed; that is, the impossibility of falling any more, and the knowledge of this with absolute certainty. For even he himself could not be blessed although in Paradise, nay, he would not be there, where it would not become him to be miserable, if the foreknowledge of his fall had made him wretched with the dread of such a disaster. But because he forsook God of his free will, he experienced the just judgment of God, that with his whole race, which being as yet all placed in him had sinned with him, he should be condemned. For as mary of this race as are delivered by God's grace are certainly delivered from the condemnation in which they are already held bound. Whence, even if none should be delivered, no one could justly blame the judgment of God. That, therefore, in comparison of those that perish few, but in their absolute number many, are delivered, is effected by grace, is effected freely: thanks must be given, because it is effected, so that no one may be lifted up as of his own deservings, but that every mouth may be stopped, and he that glorieth may glory in the Lord.

CHAPTER 29 [XI.]

DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE GRACE GIVEN BEFORE AND AFTER THE FALL

What then? Did not Adam have the grace of God? Yes, truly, he had it largely, but of a different kind. He was placed in the midst of benefits which he had received from the goodness of his Creator; for he had not procured those benefits by his own deservings; in which benefits he suffered absolutely no evil. But saints in this life, to whom pertains this grace of deliverance, are in the midst of evils out of which they cry to God, "Deliver us from evil." He in those benefits needed not the death of Christ: these, the blood of that Lamb absolves from guilt, as well inherited as their own. He had no need of that assistance which they implore when they say, "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and making me captive in the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Because in them the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and as they labour and are imperilled in such a contest, they ask that by the grace of Christ the strength to fight and to conquer may be given them. He, however, tempted and disturbed in no such conflict concerning himself against himself, in that position of blessedness enjoyed his peace with himself.

CHAPTER 30

THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD

Hence, although these do not now require a grace more joyous for the present, they nevertheless need a more powerful grace; and what grace is more powerful than the only-begotten Son of God, equal to the Father and co-eternal, made man for them, and, without any sin of His own, either original or actual, crucified by men who were sinners? And although He rose again on the third day, never to die any more, He yet bore death for men and gave life to the dead, so that redeemed by His blood, having received so great and such a pledge, they could say, “If God be for us, who is against us? He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how has He not with Him also given to us all things?” God therefore took upon Him our nature—that is, the rational soul and flesh of the man Christ—by an undertaking singularly marvellous, or marvellously singular; so that with no preceding merits of His own righteousness He might in such wise be the Son of God from the beginning, in which He had begun to be man, that He, and the Word which is without beginning, might be one person. For there is no one blinded by such ignorance of this matter and the Faith as to dare to say that, although born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary the Son of man, yet of His own free will by righteous living and by doing good works, without sin, He deserved to be the Son of God; in opposition to the gospel, which says, “The Word was made flesh.” For where was this made flesh except in the Virginal womb, whence was the beginning of the man Christ? And, moreover, when the Virgin asked how that should come to pass which was told her by the angel, the angel answered, “The Holy Ghost shall come over on to thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” “Therefore,” he said; not because of works of which certainly of a yet unborn infant there are none; but “therefore,” because “the Holy Ghost shall come over on to thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” That nativity, absolutely gratuitous, conjoined, in the unity of the person, man to God, flesh to the Word! Good works followed that nativity; good works did not merit it. For it was in no wise to be feared that the human nature taken up by God the

Word in that ineffable manner into a unity of person, would sin by free choice of will, since that taking up itself was such that the nature of man so taken up by God would admit into itself no movement of an evil will. Through this Mediator God makes known that He makes those whom He redeemed by His blood from evil, everlastingly good; and Him He in such wise assumed that He never would be evil, and, not being made out of evil, would always be good.

CHAPTER 31

THE FIRST MAN HAD RECEIVED THE GRACE NECESSARY FOR HIS PERSEVERANCE, BUT ITS EXERCISE WAS LEFT IN HIS FREE CHOICE

The first man had not that grace by which he should never will to be evil; but assuredly he had that in which if he willed to abide he would never be evil, and without which, moreover, he could not by free will be good, but which, nevertheless, by free will he could forsake. God, therefore, did not will even him to be without His grace, which He left in his free will; because free will is sufficient for evil, but is too little for good, unless it is aided by Omnipotent Good. And if that man had not forsaken that assistance of his free will, he would always have been good; but he forsook it, and he was forsaken. Because such was the nature of the aid, that he could forsake it when he would, and that he could continue in it if he would; but not such that it could be brought about that he would. This first is the grace which was given to the first Adam; but more powerful than this is that in the second Adam. For the first is that whereby it is affected that a man may have righteousness if he will; the second, therefore, can do more than this, since by it it is even effected that he will, and will so much, and love with such ardour, that by the will of the Spirit he overcomes the will of the flesh, that lusteth in opposition to it. Nor was that, indeed, a small grace by which was demonstrated even the power of free will, because man was so assisted that without this assistance he could not continue in good, but could forsake this assistance if he would. But this latter grace is by so much the greater, that it is too little for a man by its means to regain his lost freedom; it is too little, finally, not to be able without it either to apprehend the good or to continue in good if he will, unless he is also made to will.

CHAPTER 32

THE GIFTS OF GRACE CONFERRED ON ADAM IN CREATION

At that time, therefore, God had given to man a good will, because in that will He had made him, since He had made him upright. He had given help without which he could not continue therein if he would; but that he should will, He left in his free will. He could therefore continue if he would, because the help was not wanting whereby he could, and without which he could not, perseveringly hold fast the good which he would. But that he willed not to continue is absolutely the fault of him whose merit it would have been if he had willed to continue; as the holy angels did, who, while others fell by free will, themselves by the same free will stood, and deserved to receive the due reward of this continuance—to wit, such a fulness of blessing that by it they might have the fullest certainty of always abiding in it. If, however, this help had been wanting, either to angel or to man when they were first made, since their nature was not made such that without the divine help it could abide if it would, they certainly would not have fallen by their own fault, because the help would have been wanting without which they could not continue. At the present time, however, to those to whom such assistance is wanting, it is the penalty of sin; but to those to whom it is given, it is given of grace, not of debt; and by so much the more is given through Jesus Christ our Lord to those to whom it has pleased God to give it, that not only we have that help without which we cannot continue even if we will, but, moreover, we have so great and such a help as to will. Because by this grace of God there is caused in us, in the reception of good and in the persevering hold of it, not only to be able to do what we will, but even to will to do what we are able. But this was not the case in the first man; for the one of these things was in him, but the other was not. For he did not need grace to receive good, because he had not yet lost it; but he needed the aid of grace to continue in it, and without this aid he could not do this at all; and he had received the ability if he would, but he had not the will for what he could; for if he had possessed it, he would have persevered. For he could persevere if he would; but that he would not was the result of free will, which at that time was in such wise free that he was capable of willing well and ill. For what shall be more free than free will, when it shall not be able to serve sin? and this should be to man also as it was made to the holy angels, the reward of deserving. But now that good deserving has been lost by sin, in those who are delivered that has become the gift of grace which would have been the reward of deserving.

CHAPTER 33 [XII.]

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ABILITY NOT TO SIN, TO DIE, AND FORSAKE GOOD, AND THE INABILITY TO SIN, TO DIE, AND TO FORSAKE GOOD?

On which account we must consider with diligence and attention in what respect those pairs differ from one another,—to be able not to sin, and not to be able to sin; to be able not to die, and not to be able to die; to be able not to forsake good, and not to be able to forsake good. For the first man was able not to sin, was able not to die, was able not to forsake good. Are we to say that he who had such a free will could not sin? Or that he to whom it was said, “If thou shalt sin thou shalt die by death,” could not die? Or that he could not forsake good, when he would forsake this by sinning, and so die? Therefore the first liberty of the will was to be able not to sin, the last will be much greater, not to be able to sin; the first immortality was to be able not to die, the last will be much greater, not to be able to die; the first was the power of perseverance, to be able not to forsake good—the last will be the felicity of perseverance, not to be able to forsake good. But because the last blessings will be preferable and better, were those first ones, therefore, either no blessings at all, or trifling ones?

CHAPTER 34

THE AID WITHOUT WHICH A THING DOES NOT COME TO PASS, AND THE AID WITH WHICH A THING COMES TO PASS

Moreover, the aids themselves are to be distinguished. The aid without which a thing does not come to pass is one thing, and the aid by which a thing comes to pass is another. For without food we cannot live; and yet although food should be at hand, it would not cause a man to live who should will to die. Therefore the aid of food is that without which it does not come to pass that we live, not that by which it comes to pass that we live. But, indeed, when the blessedness which a man has not is given him, he becomes at once blessed. For the aid is not only that without which that does not happen, but also with which that does happen for the sake of which it is given. Wherefore this is an assistance both by which it comes to pass, and without which it does not come to pass; because, on the one hand, if blessedness should be given to a man, he becomes at once blessed; and, on the other, if it should never be given he will never be so. But food does not of necessity cause a man to live, and yet without it he cannot live. Therefore to the first man, who, in that good in which he had been made upright, had received the ability not to sin, the ability not to die, the ability not to forsake that good itself, was given the aid of perseverance,—not that by which it should be brought about that he should persevere, but that without which he could not of free will persevere. But now to the saints predestinated to the kingdom of God by God's grace, the aid of perseverance that is given is not such as the former, but such that to them perseverance itself is bestowed; not only so that without that gift they cannot persevere, but, moreover, so that by means of this gift they cannot help persevering. For not only did He say, "Without me ye can do nothing," but He also said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." By which words He showed that He had given them not only righteousness, but perseverance therein. For when Christ thus ordained them that they should go and bring forth fruit, and that their fruit should remain, who would dare to say, It shall not remain? Who would dare to say, Perchance it will not remain? "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance;" but the calling is of those who are called according to the purpose. When Christ intercedes, therefore, on behalf of these, that their faith should not fail, doubtless it will not fail unto the end. And thus it shall persevere even unto the end; nor shall the end of this life find it anything but continuing.

CHAPTER 35

THERE IS A GREATER FREEDOM NOW IN THE SAINTS THAN THERE WAS BEFORE IN ADAM

Certainly a greater liberty is necessary in the face of so many and so great temptations, which had no existence in Paradise,—a liberty fortified and confirmed by the gift of perseverance, so that this world, with all its loves, its fears, its errors, may be overcome: the martyrdoms of the saints have taught this. In fine, he [Adam], not only with nobody to make him afraid, but, moreover, in spite of the authority of God’s fear, using free will, did not stand in such a state of happiness, in such a facility of [not] sinning. But these [the saints], I say, not under the fear of the world, but in spite of the rage of the world lest they should stand, stood firm in the faith; while he could see the good things present which he was going to forsake, they could not see the good things future which they were going to receive. Whence is this, save by the gift of Him from whom they obtained mercy to be faithful; from whom they received the spirit, not of fear, whereby they would yield to the persecutors, but of power, and of love, and of continence, in which they could overcome all threatenings, all seductions, all torments? To him, therefore, without any sin, was given the free will with which he was created; and he made it to serve sin. But although the will of these had been the servant of sin, it was delivered by Him who said, “If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed.” And by that grace they receive so great a freedom, that although as long as they live here they are fighting against sinful lusts, and some sins creep upon them unawares, on account of which they daily say, “Forgive us our debts,” yet they do not any more obey the sin which is unto death, of which the Apostle John says, “There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.” Concerning which sin (since it is not expressed) many and different notions may be entertained. I, however, say, that sin is to forsake even unto death the faith which worketh by love. This sin they no longer serve who are not in the first condition, as Adam, free; but are freed by the grace of God through the second Adam, and by that deliverance have that free will which enables them to serve God, not that by which they may be made captive by the devil. From being made free from sin they have become the servants of righteousness, in which they will stand till the end, by the gift to them of perseverance from Him who foreknew them, and predestinated them, and called them according to His purpose, and justified them, and glorified them, since He has even already formed those things that are to come which He promised concerning them. And when He promised, “Abraham believed Him, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” For “he gave glory to God, most fully believing,” as it is written, “that what He has promised He is able also to perform.”

CHAPTER 36

GOD NOT ONLY FOREKNOWS THAT MEN WILL BE GOOD, BUT HIMSELF MAKES THEM SO

It is He Himself, therefore, that makes those men good, to do good works. For He did not promise them to Abraham because He foreknew that of themselves they would be good. For if this were the case, what He promised was not His, but theirs. But it was not thus that Abraham believed, but “he was not weak in faith, giving glory to God;” and “most fully believing that what He has promised He is able also to perform.” He does not say, “What He foreknew, He is able to promise;” nor “What He foretold, He is able to manifest;” nor “What He promised, He is able to foreknow:” but “What He promised, He is able also to do.” It is He, therefore, who makes them to persevere in good, who makes them good. But they who fall and perish have never been in the number of the predestinated. Although, then, the apostle might be speaking of all persons regenerated and living piously when he said, “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth;” yet he at once had regard to the predestinated, and said, “But he shall stand;” and that they might not arrogate this to themselves, he says, “For God is able to make him stand.” It is He Himself, therefore, that gives perseverance, who is able to establish those who stand, so that they may stand fast with the greatest perseverance; or to restore those who have fallen, for “the Lord setteth up those who are broken down.”

CHAPTER 37

TO A SOUND WILL IS COMMITTED THE POWER OF PERSEVERING OR OF NOT PERSEVERING

As, therefore, the first man did not receive this gift of God,—that is, perseverance in good, but it was left in his choice to persevere or not to persevere, his will had such strength,—inasmuch as it had been created without any sin, and there was nothing in the way of concupiscence of himself that withstood it,—that the choice of persevering could worthily be entrusted to such goodness and to such facility in living well. But God at the same time foreknew what he would do in unrighteousness; foreknew, however, but did not compel him to this; but at the same time He knew what He Himself would do in righteousness concerning him. But now, since that great freedom has been lost by the desert of sin, our weakness has remained to be aided by still greater gifts. For it pleased God, in order most effectually to quench the pride of human presumption, “that no flesh should glory in His presence”—that is, “no man.” But whence should flesh not glory in His presence, save concerning its merits? Which, indeed, it might have had, but lost; and lost by that very means whereby it might have had them, that is, by its free will; on account of which there remains nothing to those who are to be delivered, save the grace of the Deliverer. Thus, therefore, no flesh glories in His presence. For the unrighteous do not glory, since they have no ground of glory; nor the righteous, because they have a ground from Him, and have no glory of theirs, but Himself, to whom they say, “My glory, and the lifter up of my head.” And thus it is that what is written pertains to every man, “that no flesh should glory in His presence.” To the righteous, however, pertains that Scripture: “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” For this the apostle most manifestly showed, when, after saying “that no flesh should glory in His presence,” lest the saints should suppose that they had been left without any glory, he presently added, “But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” Hence it is that in this abode of miseries, where trial is the life of man upon the earth, “strength is made perfect in weakness.” What strength, save “that he that glorieth should glory in the Lord”?

CHAPTER 38

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE GIFT OF PERSEVERANCE THAT IS NOW GIVEN TO THE SAINTS

And thus God willed that His saints should not—even concerning perseverance in goodness itself—glory in their own strength, but in Himself, who not only gives them aid such as He gave to the first man, without which they cannot persevere if they will, but causes in them also the will; that since they will not persevere unless they both can and will, both the capability and the will to persevere should be bestowed on them by the liberality of divine grace. Because by the Holy Spirit their will is so much enkindled that they therefore can, because they so will; and they therefore so will because God works in them to will. For if in so much weakness of this life (in which weakness, however, for the sake of checking pride, strength behoved to be perfected) their own will should be left to themselves, that they might, if they willed, continue in the help of God, without which they could not persevere, and God should not work in them to will, in the midst of so many and so great weaknesses their will itself would give way, and they would not be able to persevere, for the reason that failing from infirmity they would not will, or in the weakness of will they would not so will that they would be able. Therefore aid is brought to the infirmity of human will, so that it might be unchangeably and invincibly influenced by divine grace; and thus, although weak, it still might not fail, nor be overcome by any adversity. Thus it happens that man's will, weak and incapable, in good as yet small, may persevere by God's strength; while the will of the first man, strong and healthful, having the power of free choice, did not persevere in a greater good; because although God's help was not wanting, without which it could not persevere if it would, yet it was not such a help as that by which God would work in man to will. Certainly to the strongest He yielded and permitted to do what He willed; to those that were weak He has reserved that by His own gift they should most invincibly will what is good, and most invincibly refuse to forsake this. Therefore when Christ says, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not," we may understand that it was said to him who is built upon the rock. And thus the man of God, not only because he has obtained mercy to be faithful, but also because faith itself does not fail, if he glories, must glory in the Lord.

CHAPTER 39 [XIII.]

THE NUMBER OF THE PREDESTINATED IS CERTAIN AND DEFINED

I speak thus of those who are predestinated to the kingdom of God, whose number is so certain that one can neither be added to them nor taken from them; not of those who, when He had announced and spoken, were multiplied beyond number. For they may be said to be called but not chosen, because they are not called according to the purpose. But that the number of the elect is certain, and neither to be increased nor diminished,—although it is signified by John the Baptist when he says, “Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham,” to show that they were in such wise to be cut off if they did not produce fruit, that the number which was promised to Abraham would not be wanting,—is yet more plainly declared in the Apocalypse: “Hold fast that which thou hast, lest another take thy crown.” For if another would not receive unless one should have lost, the number is fixed.

CHAPTER 40

NO ONE IS CERTAIN AND SECURE OF HIS OWN PREDESTINATION AND SALVATION

But, moreover, that such things as these are so spoken to saints who will persevere, as if it were reckoned uncertain whether they will persevere, is a reason that they ought not otherwise to hear these things, since it is well for them “not to be high-minded, but to fear.” For who of the multitude of believers can presume, so long as he is living in this mortal state, that he is in the number of the predestinated? Because it is necessary that in this condition that should be kept hidden; since here we have to beware so much of pride, that even so great an apostle was buffetted by a messenger of Satan, lest he should be lifted up. Hence it was said to the apostles, “If ye abide in me;” and this He said who knew for a certainty that they would abide; and through the prophet, “If ye shall be willing, and will hear me,” although He knew in whom He would work to will also. And many similar things are said. For on account of the usefulness of this secrecy, lest, perchance, any one should be lifted up, but that all, even although they are running well, should fear, in that it is not known who may attain,—on account of the usefulness of this secrecy, it must be believed that some of the children of perdition, who have not received the gift of perseverance to the end, begin to live in the faith which worketh by love, and live for some time faithfully and righteously, and afterwards fall away, and are not taken away from this life before this happens to them. If this had happened to none of these, men would have that very wholesome fear, by which the sin of presumption is kept down, only so long as until they should attain to the grace of Christ by which to live piously, and afterwards would for time to come be secure that they would never fall away from Him. And such presumption in this condition of trials is not fitting, where there is so great weakness, that security may engender pride. Finally, this also shall be the case; but it shall be at that time, in men also as it already is in the angels, when there cannot be any pride. Therefore the number of the saints, by God's grace predestinated to God's kingdom, with the gift of perseverance to the end bestowed on them, shall be guided thither in its completeness, and there shall be at length without end preserved in its fullest completeness, most blessed, the mercy of their Saviour still cleaving to them, whether in their conversion, in their conflict, or in their crown!

CHAPTER 41

EVEN IN JUDGMENT GOD'S MERCY WILL BE NECESSARY TO US

For the Holy Scripture testifies that God's mercy is then also necessary for them, when the Saint says to his soul concerning the Lord its God, "Who crowneth thee in mercy and compassion." The Apostle James also says: "He shall have judgment without mercy who hath showed no mercy;" where he sets forth that even in that judgment in which the righteous are crowned and the unrighteous are condemned, some will be judged with mercy, others without mercy. On which account also the mother of the Maccabees says to her son, "That in that mercy I may receive thee with thy brethren." "For when a righteous king," as it is written, "shall sit on the throne, no evil thing shall oppose itself to him. Who will boast that he has a pure heart? or who will boast that he is pure from sin?" And thus God's mercy is even then necessary, by which he is made "blessed to whom the Lord has not imputed sin." But at that time even mercy itself shall be allotted in righteous judgment in accordance with the merits of good works. For when it is said, "Judgment without mercy to him that hath showed no mercy," it is plainly shown that in those in whom are found the good works of mercy, judgment shall be executed with mercy; and thus even that mercy itself shall be returned to the merits of good works. It is not so now; when not only no good works, but many bad works precede, His mercy anticipates a man so that he is delivered from evils,—as well from evils which he has done, as from those which he would have done if he were not controlled by the grace of God; and from those, too, which he would have suffered for ever if he were not plucked from the power of darkness, and transferred into the kingdom of the Son of God’s love. Nevertheless, since even that life eternal itself, which, it is certain, is given as due to good works, is called by so great an apostle the grace of God, although grace is not rendered to works, but is given freely, it must be confessed without any doubt, that eternal life is called grace for the reason that it is rendered to those merits which grace has conferred upon man. Because that saying is rightly understood which in the gospel is read, “grace for grace,”—that is, for those merits which grace has conferred.

CHAPTER 42

THE REPROBATE ARE TO BE PUNISHED FOR MERITS OF A DIFFERENT KIND

But those who do not belong to this number of the predestinated, whom—whether that they have not yet any free choice of their will, or with a choice of will truly free, because freed by grace itself—the grace of God brings to His kingdom,—those, then, who do not belong to that most certain and blessed number, are most righteously judged according to their deservings. For either they lie under the sin which they have inherited by original generation, and depart hence with that inherited debt which is not put away by regeneration, or by their free will have added other sins besides; their will, I say, free, but not freed,—free from righteousness, but enslaved to sin, by which they are tossed about by divers mischievous lusts, some more evil, some less, but all evil; and they must be adjudged to diverse punishments, according to that very diversity. Or they receive the grace of God, but they are only for a season, and do not persevere; they forsake and are forsaken. For by their free will, as they have not received the gift of perseverance, they are sent away by the righteous and hidden judgment of God.

CHAPTER 43 [XIV.]

REBUKE AND GRACE DO NOT SET ASIDE ONE ANOTHER

Let men then suffer themselves to be rebuked when they sin, and not conclude against grace from the rebuke itself, nor from grace against rebuke; because both the righteous penalty of sin is due, and righteous rebuke belongs to it, if it is medicinally applied, even although the salvation of the ailing man is uncertain; so that if he who is rebuked belongs to the number of the predestinated, rebuke may be to him a wholesome medicine; and if he does not belong to that number, rebuke may be to him a penal infliction. Under that very uncertainty, therefore, it must of love be applied, although its result is unknown; and prayer must be made on his behalf to whom it is applied, that he may be healed. But when men either come or return into the way of righteousness by means of rebuke, who is it that worketh salvation in their hearts but that God who giveth the increase, whoever plants and waters, and whoever labours on the fields or shrubs,—that God whom no man's will resists when He wills to give salvation? For so to will or not to will is in the power of Him who willeth or willeth not, as not to hinder the divine will nor overcome the divine power. For even concerning those who do what He wills not, He Himself does what He will.

CHAPTER 44

IN WHAT WAY GOD WILLS ALL MEN TO BE SAVED

And what is written, that "He wills all men to be saved," while yet all men are not saved, may be understood in many ways, some of which I have mentioned in other writings of mine; but here I will say one thing: "He wills all men to be saved," is so said that all the predestinated may be understood by it, because every kind of men is among them. Just as it was said to the Pharisees, "Ye tithe every herb;" where the expression is only to be understood of every herb that they had, for they did not tithe every herb which was found throughout the whole earth. According to the same manner of speaking, it was said, "Even as I also please all men in all things." For did he who said this please also the multitude of his persecutors? But he pleased every kind of men that assembled in the Church of Christ, whether they were already established therein, or were to be introduced into it.

CHAPTER 45

SCRIPTURAL INSTANCES WHEREIN IT IS PROVED THAT GOD HAS MEN'S WILLS MORE IN HIS POWER THAN THEY THEMSELVES HAVE

It is not, then, to be doubted that men’s wills cannot, so as to prevent His doing what he wills, withstand the will of God, “who hath done all things whatsoever He pleased in heaven and in earth,” and who also “has done those things that are to come;” since He does even concerning the wills themselves of men what He will, when He will. Unless, perchance (to mention some things among many), when God willed to give the kingdom to Saul, it was so in the power of the Israelites, as it certainly was placed in their will, either to subject themselves or not to the man in question, that they could even prevail to withstand God. God, however, did not do this, save by the will of the men themselves, because he beyond doubt had the most omnipotent power of inclining men’s hearts whither it pleased Him. For thus it is written: “And Samuel sent the people away, and every one went away unto his own place. And Saul went away to his house in Gibeah: and there went away with Saul mighty men, whose hearts the Lord touched. And pestilent children said, Who shall save us? This man? And they despised him, and brought him no presents.” Will any one say that any of those whose hearts the Lord touched to go with Saul would not have gone with him, or that any of those pestilent fellows, whose hearts He did not touch to do this, would have gone? Of David also, whom the Lord ordained to the kingdom in a more prosperous succession, we read thus: “And David continued to increase, and was magnified, and the Lord was with him.” This having been premised, it is said a little afterwards, “And the Spirit clothed Amasai, chief of the thirty, and he said, We are thine, O David, and we will be with thee, O son of Jesse: Peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thy helpers; because the Lord has helped thee.” Could he withstand the will of God, and not rather do the will of Him who wrought in his heart by His Spirit, with which he was clothed, to will, speak, and do thus? Moreover, a little afterwards the same Scripture says, “All these warlike men, setting the battle in array, came with a peaceful heart to Hebron to establish David over all Israel.” By their own will, certainly, they appointed David king. Who cannot see this? Who can deny it? For they did not do it under constraint or without good-will, since they did it with a peaceful heart. And yet He wrought this in them who worketh what He will in the hearts of men. For which reason the Scripture premised, “And David continued to increase, and was magnified, and the Lord Omnipotent was with him.” And thus the Lord Omnipotent, who was with him, induced these men to appoint him king. And how did He induce them? Did He constrain thereto by any bodily fetters? He wrought within; He held their hearts; He stirred their hearts, and drew them by their own wills, which He Himself wrought in them. If, then, when God wills to set up kings in the earth, He has the wills of men more in His power than they themselves have, who else causes rebuke to be wholesome and correction to result in the heart of him that is rebuked, that he may be established in the kingdom of heaven?

CHAPTER 46 [XV.]

REBUKE MUST BE VARIED ACCORDING TO THE VARIETY OF FAULTS. THERE IS NO PUNISHMENT IN THE CHURCH GREATER THAN EXCOMMUNICATION

Therefore, let brethren who are subject be rebuked by those who are set over them, with rebukes that spring from love, varied according to the diversity of faults, whether smaller or greater. Because that very penalty that is called condemnation, which episcopal judgment inflicts, than which there is no greater punishment in the Church, may, if God will, result and be of advantage for most wholesome rebuke. For we know not what may happen on the coming day; nor must any one be despaired of before the end of this life; nor can God be contradicted, that He may not look down and give repentance, and receive the sacrifice of a troubled spirit and a contrite heart, and absolve from the guilt of condemnation, however just, and so Himself not condemn the condemned person. Yet the necessity of the pastoral office requires, in order that the terrible contagion may not creep through the many, that the diseased sheep should be separated from the sound ones; perchance, by that very separation, to be healed by Him to whom nothing is impossible. For as we know not who belongs to the number of the predestinated, we ought in such wise to be influenced by the affection of love as to will all men to be saved. For this is the case when we endeavour to lead every individual to that point where they may meet with those agencies by which we may prevail, to the accomplishment of the result, that being justified by faith they may have peace with God,—which peace, moreover, the apostle announced when he said, “Therefore, we discharge an embassage for Christ, as though God were exhorting by us, we pray you in Christ’s stead to be reconciled to God.” For what is “to be reconciled” to Him but to have peace with Him? For the sake of which peace, moreover, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself said to His disciples, “Into whatsoever house ye enter first, say, Peace be to this house; and if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; but if not, it shall return to you again.” When they preach the gospel of this peace of whom it is predicted, “How beautiful are the feet of those that publish peace, that announce good things!” to us, indeed, every one then begins to be a son of peace who obeys and believes this gospel, and who, being justified by faith, has begun to have peace towards God; but, according to God’s predestination, he was already a son of peace. For it was not said, Upon whomsoever your peace shall rest, he shall become a son of peace; but Christ says, “If the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon that house.” Already, therefore, and before the announcement of that peace to him, the son of peace was there, as he had been known and foreknown, by —not the evangelist, but—God. For we need not fear lest we should lose it, if in our ignorance he to whom we preach is not a son of peace, for it will return to us again—that is, that preaching will profit us, and not him; but if the peace proclaimed shall rest upon him, it will profit both us and him.

CHAPTER 47

ANOTHER INTERPRETATION OF THE APOSTOLIC PASSAGE, “WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED.”

That, therefore, in our ignorance of who shall be saved, God commands us to will that all to whom we preach this peace may be saved, and Himself works this in us by diffusing that love in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us,—may also thus be understood, that God wills all men to be saved, because He makes us to will this; just as “He sent the Spirit of His Son, crying, Abba, Father;” that is, making us to cry, Abba, Father. Because, concerning that same Spirit, He says in another place, “We have received the Spirit of adoption, in whom we cry, Abba, Father!” We therefore cry, but He is said to cry who makes us to cry. If, then, Scripture rightly said that the Spirit was crying by whom we are made to cry, it rightly also says that God wills, when by Him we are made to will. And thus, because by rebuke we ought to do nothing save to avoid departure from that peace which is towards God, or to induce return to it of him who had departed, let us do in hope what we do. If he whom we rebuke is a son of peace, our peace shall rest upon him; but if not, it shall return to us again.

CHAPTER 48

THE PURPOSE OF REBUKE

Although, therefore, even while the faith of some is subverted, the foundation of God standeth sure, since the Lord knoweth them that are His, still, we ought not on that account to be indolent and negligent in rebuking those who should be rebuked. For not for nothing was it said, “Evil communications corrupt good manners;” and, “The weak brother shall perish in thy knowledge, on account of whom Christ died.” Let us not, in opposition to these precepts, and to a wholesome fear, pretend to argue, saying, “Well, let evil communications corrupt good manners, and let the weak brother perish. What is that to us? The foundation of God standeth sure, and no one perishes but the son of perdition.” [XVI.] Be it far from us to babble in this wise, and think that we ought to be secure in this negligence. For it is true that no one perishes except the son of perdition, but God says by the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel: “He shall surely die in his sin, but his blood will I require at the hand of the watchman.”

CHAPTER 49

CONCLUSION

Hence, as far as concerns us, who are not able to distinguish those who are predestinated from those who are not, we ought on this very account to will all men to be saved. Severe rebuke should be medicinally applied to all by us that they perish not themselves, or that they may not be the means of destroying others. It belongs to God, however, to make that rebuke useful to them whom He Himself has foreknown and predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. For, if at any time we abstain from rebuking, for fear lest by rebuke a man should perish, why do we not also rebuke, for fear lest a man should rather perish by our withholding it? For we have no greater bowels of love than the blessed apostle who says, “Rebuke those that are unruly; comfort the feeble-minded; support the weak; be patient towards all men. See that none render to any man evil for evil.” Where it is to be understood that evil is then rather rendered for evil when one who ought to be rebuked is not rebuked, but by a wicked dissimulation is neglected. He says, moreover, “Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear;” which must be received concerning those sins which are not concealed, lest he be thought to have spoken in opposition to the word of the Lord. For He says, “If thy brother shall sin against thee, rebuke him between thee and him.” Notwithstanding, He Himself carries out the severity of rebuke to the extent of saying, “If he will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.” And who has more loved the weak than He who became weak for us all, and of that very weakness was crucified for us all? And since these things are so, grace neither restrains rebuke, nor does rebuke restrain grace; and on this account righteousness is so to be prescribed that we may ask in faithful prayer, that, by God’s grace, what is prescribed may be done; and both of these things are in such wise to be done that righteous rebuke may not be neglected. But let all these things be done with love, since love both does not sin, and does cover the multitude of sins.

A WORK ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF PELAGIUS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE GESTIS PELAGII.)

EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN’S “RETRACTATIONS,”

IN ONE BOOK,

ADDRESSED TO BISHOP AURELIUS [OF CARTHAGE], BY

AURELIUS AUGUSTIN;

WRITTEN ABOUT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE YEAR, A.D. 417.

TRANSLATED BY DR. HOLMES.

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Book II. Chap. 45, On the Following Treatise, “De gestis pelagii.”

“About the same time, in the East (that is to say, in Palestinian Syria), Pelagius was summoned by certain catholic brethren before a tribunal of bishops, and was heard on his trial by fourteen prelates, in the absence of his accusers, who were unable to be present on the day of the synod. On his condemning the very dogmas which were read from the indictment against him, as assailing the grace of Christ, they pronounced him to be a catholic. But when the Acts of this synod found their way into our hands, I wrote a treatise on them, to prevent the idea gaining ground that, because he had been in a manner acquitted, his opinions also were approved by the bishops; or that the accused could by any chance have escaped condemnation at their hands, unless he had condemned the opinions charged against him. This treatise of mine begins with these words: After there came into my hands.’“

PREFACE

In the year of Christ 415, Pelagius was accused of heresy in Palestine, and brought to trial on one or two occasions. At the first trial, which was held on or about the 30th of July, at a congress of his presbyters, by John, bishop of Jerusalem, no regular record was kept of the proceedings, as we are informed by Augustin in the following work (sec. 39 and 55). The hour and the day of this assembly we may learn from Orosius, a presbyter of Spain, who was present at the congress, and has in his Apology committed to writing some of its most memorable acts. We are informed by him that “after a great deal of earnest proceeding on both sides, the bishop John proposed the last resolution, that certain brethren should be sent with a letter to blessed Innocent, Pope of Rome, to the intent that he might decide on all the points which were to follow.”

The second trial took place afterwards at Diospolis, a city in Palestine, before fourteen bishops, at which was kept an accurate record of the proceedings. The bishops are severally mentioned by Augustin in his work against Julianus, Book i. chs. v. and vii. (19, 32), in the following order: “Eulogius, John, Ammonianus, Porphyry, Eutonius, another Porphyry, Fidus, Zoninus, Zoboennus, Nymphidius, Chromatius, Jovinus, Eleutherius, and Clematius.” There can be no doubt that Eulogius, bishop of Caesarea, was also primate of the province of Palestine, because he is constantly mentioned by Augustin as occupying the first place before the other thirteen bishops, and even before John himself, bishop of Jerusalem.

We find from the epistle of Lucian, De revelatione corporis Stephani martyris, that this synod was held at the approach of Christmas. In this epistle he tells us of three visions which God had shown him in the year 415,—the first on December 3d, and the other two on the 10th and 17th of the same month; that he then reported the matter to John, bishop of Jerusalem, who sent him in quest of the martyr’s sepulchre. He further informs us that he discovered the sepulchre, and at once returned to John, “who (says he) was attending a synod at Lydda, which is Diospolis.” This must have happened about the 21st of the month, since Lucian goes on to say that John came, in the company of two more bishops, Eutonius of Sebaste and Eleutherius of Jericho, and that in their presence the relics of the martyr were removed on the 26th day of the same month of December.

A certain deacon, called Annianus, is supposed to have pleaded the cause of Pelagius at the synod; some learned men finding it easier to interpret of this deacon than of Pelagius what Jerome writes in a letter addressed to Alypius and Augustin (Epist. Augustinian. 202, 2): “For every thing which he denies having ever uttered in that miserable synod of Diospolis he professes to hold in this work.” Jerome bestowed the epithet of “miserable” on this synod of Diospolis, for no other reason (as we suppose) than because he discovered from its Acts how miserably the synod had been duped by Pelagius. Pope Innocent, after a sight of these Acts, expressly owned (see Epist. Augustinian. 183, 4) that “he could not bring himself to refuse either blame or praise of those bishops.” Augustin, however, in the following treatise (see chs. 4 and 8), does not hesitate to call them “pious judges,” and (in his first book against Julianus, i. ch. v. 19) “catholic judges,” who, when Pelagius abjured the errors attributed to him, pronounced him a catholic, and acquitted him; indeed, he frequently cites these fourteen bishops as witnesses of the catholic faith in opposition to Julianus.

In his letters addressed to Pope Innocent in the year 416 (see Epist. Augustinian. 175, 4, and 177, 2), Augustin intimated that he knew nothing of the Proceedings of the synod except from hearsay; and in a letter to John, bishop of Jerusalem (Epist. 179, 4), he earnestly requested him to forward them to him. But the report was in his hands about midsummer in 417, when he wrote his Epistle to Paulinus (Epist. 186, 31); so that the date of the following treatise is thus traced to the commencement of the year 417, supposing it to have been published immediately after he had received the Proceedings.

The title given to this work by Augustin, in his book On Original Sin (15), stands De Gestis Palaestinis [On the Proceedings which took place in Palestine]; by this title Prosper likewise refers to the work (in his book Adv. Collatorem, 43); but yet we ought to retain the inscription De Gestis Pelagii which is prefixed both to the ancient editions and to the particular Retractation in which Augustin reviewed this work. The treatise had this title given to it, no doubt, either because it had been already commonly accepted as a description of these proceedings of Pelagius and his vindication, which led to his boast that he had been acquitted; or else from the fact that an examination had become necessary of those proceedings, which the accused party had himself published in an abridged and garbled form. Hence Possidonius named the treatise by the title, Contra Gesta Pelagii [A Protest, or Vindication, against the Proceedings of Pelagius].

Out of this book Photius copied a very accurate account of the Synod of Diospolis and inserted it in his Bibliotheca (cod. 54). One may therefore conclude that this work of Augustin’s is one of those which Possidonius, in his Life, ch. xi. or xxi., No. 59, mentions as having been “translated into the Greek tongue.” The Aurelius to whom the work is dedicated is mentioned by Photius in the passage just cited, and by Prosper before him (in the 43d chapter of the above-quoted Adversus Collatorem), as “the bishop of Carthage.” If the title-page of old did not give them this information, they could both of them discover it from reading this book, especially ch. 23 [XI.].

A WORK ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF PELAGIUS

The several heads of error which were alleged against Pelagius at the Synod in Palestine, with his answers to each charge, are minutely discussed. Augustin shows that, although Pelagius was acquitted by the synod, there still clave to him the suspicion of heresy; and that the acquittal of the accused by the synod was so contrived, that the heresy itself with which he was charged was unhesitatingly condemned.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

After there came into my hands, holy father Aurelius, the ecclesiastical proceedings, by which fourteen bishops of the province of Palestine pronounced Pelagius a catholic, my hesitation, in which I was previously reluctant to make any lengthy or confident statement about the defence which he had made, came to an end. This defence, indeed, I had already read in a paper which he himself forwarded to me. Forasmuch, however, as I received no letter therewith from him, I was afraid that some discrepancy might be detected between my statement and the record of the ecclesiastical proceedings; and that, should Pelagius perhaps deny that he had sent me any paper (and it would have been difficult for me to prove that he had, when there was only one witness), I should rather seem guilty in the eyes of those who would readily credit his denial, either of an underhanded falsification, or else (to say the least) of a reckless credulity. Now, however, when I am to treat of matters which are shown to have actually transpired, and when, as it appears to me, all doubt is removed whether he really acted in the way described, your holiness, and everybody who reads these pages, will no doubt be able to judge, with greater readiness and certainty, both of his defence and of this my treatment of it.

CHAPTER 2 [I.]

THE FIRST ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION, AND PELAGIUS’ ANSWER

First of all, then, I offer to the Lord my God, who is also my defence and guide, unspeakable thanks, because I was not misled in my views respecting our holy brethren and fellow-bishops who sat as judges in that case. His answers, indeed, they not without reason approved; because they had not to consider how he had in his writings stated the points which were objected against him, but what he had to say about them in his reply at the pending examination. A case of unsoundness in the faith is one thing, one of incautious statement is another thing. Now sundry objections were urged against Pelagius out of a written complaint, which our holy brethren and fellow-bishops in Gaul, Heros and Lazarus, presented, being themselves unable to be present, owing (as we afterwards learned from credible information) to the severe indisposition of one of them. The first of these was, that he writes, in a certain book of his, this: “No man can be without sin unless he has acquired a knowledge of the law.” After this had been read out, the synod inquired: “Did you, Pelagius, express yourself thus?” Then in answer he said: “I certainly used the words, but not in the sense in which they understand them. I did not say that a man is unable to sin who has acquired a knowledge of the law; but that he is by the knowledge of the law assisted towards not sinning, even as it is written, He hath given them a law for help’“ Upon hearing this, the synod declared: “The words which have been spoken by Pelagius are not different from the Church.” Assuredly they are not different, as he expressed them in his answer; the statement, however, which was produced from his book has a different meaning. But this the bishops, who were Greek-speaking men, and who heard the words through an interpreter, were not concerned with discussing. All they had to consider at the moment was, what the man who was under examination said was his meaning,—not in what words his opinion was alleged to have been expressed in his book.

CHAPTER 3

DISCUSSION OF PELAGIUS’ FIRST ANSWER

Now to say that “a man is by the knowledge of the law assisted towards not sinning,” is a different assertion from saying that “a man cannot be without sin unless he has acquired a knowledge of the law.” We see, for example, that corn-floors may be threshed without threshing-sledges,—however much these may assist the operation if we have them; and that boys can find their way to school without the pedagogue,—however valuable for this may be the office of pedagogues; and that many persons recover from sickness without physicians,—although the doctor’s skill is clearly of greatest use; and that men sometimes live on other aliments besides bread,—however valuable the use of bread must needs be allowed to be; and many other illustrations may occur to the thoughtful reader, without our prompting. From which examples we are undoubtedly reminded that there are two sorts of aids. Some are indispensable, and without their help the desired result could not be attained. Without a ship, for instance, no man could take a voyage; no man could speak without a voice; without legs no man could walk; without light nobody could see; and so on in numberless instances. Amongst them this also may be reckoned, that without God’s grace no man can live rightly. But then, again, there are other helps, which render us assistance in such a way that we might in some other way effect the object to which they are ordinarily auxiliary in their absence. Such are those which I have already mentioned,—the threshing-sledges for threshing corn, the pedagogue for conducting the child, medical art applied to the recovery of health, and other like instances. We have therefore to inquire to which of these two classes belongs the knowledge of the law,—in other words, to consider in what way it helps us towards the avoidance of sin. If it be in the sense of indispensable aid without which the end cannot be attained; not only was Pelagius’ answer before the judges true, but what he wrote in his book was true also. If, however, it be of such a character that it helps indeed if it is present, but even if it be absent, then the result is still possible to be attained by some other means,—his answer to the judges was still true, and not unreasonably did it find favour with the bishops that “man is assisted not to sin by the knowledge of the law;” but what he wrote in his book is not true, that “there is no man without sin except him who has acquired a knowledge of the law,”—a statement which the judges left undiscussed, as they were ignorant of the Latin language, and were content with the confession of the man who was pleading his cause before them, especially as no one was present on the other side who could oblige the interpreter to expose his meaning by an explanation of the words of his book, and to show why it was that the brethren were not groundlessly disturbed. For but very few persons are thoroughly acquainted with the law. The mass of the members of Christ, who are scattered abroad everywhere, being ignorant of the very profound and complicated contents of the law, are commended by the piety of simple faith and unfailing hope in God, and sincere love. Endowed with such gifts, they trust that by the grace of God they may be purged from their sins through our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 4 [II.]

THE SAME CONTINUED

If Pelagius, as he possibly might, were to say in reply to this, that that very thing was what he meant by “the knowledge of the law, without which a man is unable to be free from sins,” which is communicated by the teaching of faith to converts and to babes in Christ, and in which candidates for baptism are catechetically instructed with a view to their knowing the creed, certainly this is not what is usually meant when any one is said to have a knowledge of the law. This phrase is only applied to such persons as are skilled in the law. But if he persists in describing the knowledge of the law by the words in question, which, however few in number, are great in weight, and are used to designate all who are faithfully baptized according to the prescribed rule of the Churches; and if he maintains that it was of this that he said, “No one is without sin, but the man who has acquired the knowledge of the law,”—a knowledge which must needs be conveyed to believers before they attain to the actual remission of sins,—even in such case there would crowd around him a countless multitude, not indeed of angry disputants, but of crying baptized infants, who would exclaim,—not, to be sure, in words, but in the very truthfulness of innocence,—”What is it, O what is it that you have written: He only can be without sin who has acquired a knowledge of the law?’ See here are we, a large flock of lambs, without sin, and yet we have no knowledge of the law.” Now surely they with their silent tongue would compel him to silence, or, perhaps, even to confess that he was corrected of his great perverseness; or else (if you will), that he had already for some time entertained the opinion which he acknowledged before his ecclesiastical examiners, but that he had failed before to express his opinion in words of sufficient care,—that his faith, therefore, should be approved, but this book revised and amended. For, as the Scripture says: “There is that slippeth in his speech, but not in his heart.” Now if he would only admit this, or were already saying it, who would not most readily forgive those words which he had committed to writing with too great heedlessness and neglect, especially on his declining to defend the opinion which the said words contain, and affirming that to be his proper view which the truth approves? This we must suppose would have been in the minds of the pious judges themselves, if they could only have duly understood the contents of his Latin book, thoroughly interpreted to them, as they understood his reply to the synod, which was spoken in Greek, and therefore quite intelligible to them, and adjudged it as not alien from the Church. Let us go on to consider the other cases.

CHAPTER 5 [III.]

THE SECOND ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION; AND PELAGIUS' ANSWER

The synod of bishops then proceeded to say: "Let another section be read." Accordingly there was read the passage in the same book wherein Pelagius had laid down the position that "all men are ruled by their own will." On this being read, Pelagius said in answer: "This I stated in the interest of free will. God is its helper whenever it chooses good; man, however, when sinning is himself in fault, as under the direction of a free will." Upon hearing this, the bishops exclaimed: "Nor again is this opposed to the doctrine of the Church." For who indeed could condemn or deny the freedom of the will, when God's help is associated with it? His opinion, therefore, as thus explained in his answer, was, with good reason, deemed satisfactory by the bishops. And yet, after all, the statement made in his book, "All men are ruled by their own will," ought without doubt to have deeply disturbed the brethren, who had discovered what these men are accustomed to dispute against the grace of God. For it is said, "All men are ruled by their own will," as if God rules no man, and the Scripture says in vain, "Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance; rule them, and lift them up for ever." They would not, of course, stay, if they are ruled only by their own will without God, even as sheep which have no shepherd: which, God forbid for us. For, unquestionably to be led is something more compulsory than to be ruled. He who is ruled at the same time does something himself,—indeed, when ruled by God, it is with the express view that he should also act rightly; whereas the man who is led can hardly be understood to do any thing himself at all. And yet the Saviour's helpful grace is so much better than our own wills and desires, that the apostle does not hesitate to say: “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” And our free will can do nothing better for us than to submit itself to be led by Him who can do nothing amiss; and after doing this, not to doubt that it was helped to do it by Him of whom it is said in the psalm, “He is my God, His mercy shall go before me.”

CHAPTER 6

PELAGIUS’ ANSWER EXAMINED

Indeed, in this very book which contains these statements, after laying down the position, “All men are governed by their own will, and every one is submitted to his own desire,” Pelagius goes on to adduce the testimony of Scripture, from which it is evident enough that no man ought to trust to himself for direction. For on this very subject the Wisdom of Solomon declares: “I myself also am a mortal man like unto all; and the offspring of him that was first made of the earth,”—with other similar words to the conclusion of the paragraph, where we read: “For all men have one entrance into life, and the like going out therefrom: wherefore I prayed and understanding was given to me; I called, and the Spirit of Wisdom came into me.” Now is it not clearer than light itself, how that this man, on duly considering the wretchedness of human frailty, did not dare to commit himself to his own direction, but prayed, and understanding was given to him, concerning which the apostle says: “But we have the understanding of the Lord;” and called, and the Spirit of Wisdom entered into him? Now it is by this Spirit, and not by the strength of their own will, that they who are God’s children are governed and led.

CHAPTER 7

THE SAME CONTINUED

As for the passage from the psalm, “He loved cursing, and it shall come upon him; and he willed not blessing, so it shall be far removed from him,” which he quoted in the same book of Chapters, as if to prove that “all men are ruled by their own will,” who can be ignorant that this is a fault not of nature as God created it, but of human will which departed from God? The fact indeed is, that even if he had not loved cursing, and had willed blessing, he would in this very case, too, deny that his will had received any assistance from God; in his ingratitude and impiety, moreover, he would submit himself to be ruled by himself, until he found out by his penalties that, sunk as he was into ruin, without God to govern him he was utterly unable to direct his own self. In like manner, from the passage which he quoted in the same book under the same head, "He hath set fire and water before thee; stretch forth thy hand unto whether thou wilt; before man are good and evil, life and death, and whichever he liketh shall be given to him," it is manifest that, if he applies his hand to fire, and if evil and death please him, his human will effects all this; but if, on the contrary, he loves goodness and life, not alone does his will accomplish the happy choice, but it is assisted by divine grace. The eye indeed is sufficient for itself, for not seeing, that is, for darkness; but for seeing, it is in its own light not sufficient for itself unless the assistance of a clear external light is rendered to it. God forbid, however, that they who are "the called according to His purpose, whom He also foreknew, and predestinated to be conformed to the likeness of His Son," should be given up to their own desire to perish. This is suffered only by "the vessels of wrath," who are perfected for perdition; in whose very destruction, indeed, God "makes known the riches of His glory on the vessels of His mercy." Now it is on this account that, after saying, "He is my God, His mercy shall go before me," he immediately adds, "My God will show me vengeance upon my enemies." That therefore happens to them which is mentioned in Scripture, "God gave them up to the lusts of their own heart." This, however, does not happen to the predestinated, who are ruled by the Spirit of God, for not in vain is their cry: "Deliver me not, O Lord, to the sinner, according to my desire." With regard, indeed, to the evil lusts which assail them, their prayer has ever assumed some such shape as this: "Take away from me the concupiscence of the belly; and let not the desire of lust take hold of me." Upon those whom He governs as His subjects does God bestow this gift; but not upon those who think themselves capable of governing themselves, and who, in the stiff-necked confidence of their own will, disdain to have Him as their ruler.

CHAPTER 8

THE SAME CONTINUED

This being the case, how must God’s children, who have learned the truth of all this and rejoice at being ruled and led by the Spirit of God, have been affected when they heard or read that Pelagius had declared in writing that “all men are governed by their own will, and that every one is submitted to his own desire?” And yet, when questioned by the bishops, he fully perceived what an evil impression these words of his might produce, and told them in answer that “he had made such an assertion in the interest of free will,”—adding at once, “God is its helper whenever it chooses good; whilst man is himself in fault when he sins, as being under the influence of a free will.” Although the pious judges approved of this sentiment also, they were unwilling to consider or examine how incautiously he had written, or indeed in what sense he had employed the words found in his book. They thought it was enough that he had made such a confession concerning free will, as to admit that God helped the man who chose the good, whereas the man who sinned was himself to blame, his own will sufficing for him in this direction. According to this, God rules those whom He assists in their choice of the good. So far, then, as they rule anything themselves, they rule it rightly, since they themselves are ruled by Him who is right and good.

CHAPTER 9

THE THIRD ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION; AND PELAGIUS’ ANSWER

Another statement was read which Pelagius had placed in his book, to this effect: “In the day of judgment no forbearance will be shown to the ungodly and the sinners, but they will be consumed in eternal fires.” This induced the brethren to regard the statement as open to the objection, that it seemed so worded as to imply that all sinners whatever were to be punished with an eternal punishment, without excepting even those who hold Christ as their foundation, although “they build thereupon wood, hay, stubble,” concerning whom the apostle writes: “If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he shall himself be saved, yet so as by fire.” When, however, Pelagius responded that “he had made his assertion in accordance with the Gospel, in which it is written concerning sinners, These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal,’“ it was impossible for Christian judges to be dissatisfied with a sentence which is written in the Gospel, and was spoken by the Lord; especially as they knew not what there was in the words taken from Pelagius’ book which could so disturb the brethren, who were accustomed to hear his discussions and those of his followers. Since also they were absent who presented the indictment against Pelagius to the holy bishop Eulogius, there was no one to urge him that he ought to distinguish, by some exception, between those sinners who are to be saved by fire, and those who are to be punished with everlasting perdition. If, indeed, the judges had come to understand by these means the reason why the objection had been made to his statement, had he then refused to allow the distinction, he would have been justly open to blame.

CHAPTER 10

PELAGIUS’ ANSWER EXAMINED. ON ORIGEN’S ERROR CONCERNING THE NON-ETERNITY OF THE PUNISHMENT OF THE DEVIL AND THE DAMNED

But what Pelagius added, “Who believes differently is an Origenist,” was approved by the judges, because in very deed the Church most justly abominates the opinion of Origen, that even they whom the Lord says are to be punished with everlasting punishment, and the devil himself and his angels, after a time, however protracted, will be purged, and released from their penalties, and shall then cleave to the saints who reign with God in the association of blessedness. This additional sentence, therefore, the synod pronounced to be “not opposed to the Church,”—not in accordance with Pelagius, but rather in accordance with the Gospel, that such ungodly and sinful men shall be consumed by eternal fires as the Gospel determines to be worthy of such a punishment; and that he is a sharer in Origen’s abominable opinion, who affirms that their punishment can possibly ever come to an end, when the Lord has said it is to be eternal. Concerning those sinners, however, of whom the apostle declares that “they shall be saved, yet so as by fire, after their work has been burnt up,” inasmuch as no objectionable opinion in reference to them was manifestly charged against Pelagius, the synod determined nothing. Wherefore he who says that the ungodly and sinner, whom the truth consigns to eternal punishment, can ever be liberated therefrom, is not unfitly designated by Pelagius as an

"Origenist." But, on the other hand, he who supposes that no sinner whatever deserves mercy in the judgment of God, may be designated by whatever name Pelagius is disposed to give to him, only it must at the same time be quite understood that this error is not received as truth by the Church. "For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy."

CHAPTER 11

THE SAME CONTINUED

But how this judgment is to be accomplished, it is not easy to understand from Holy Scripture; for there are many modes therein of describing that which is to come to pass only in one mode. In one place the Lord declares that He will "shut the door" against those whom He does not admit into His kingdom; and that, on their clamorously demanding admission, "Open unto us, . . . we have eaten and drunk in Thy presence," and so forth, as the Scripture describes, "He will say unto them in answer, I know you not, . . . all ye workers of iniquity." In another passage He reminds us that He will command "all which would not that He should reign over them to be brought to Him, and be slain in His presence." In another place, again, He tells us that He will come with His angels in His majesty; and before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another; some He will set on His right hand, and after enumerating their good works, will award to them eternal life; and others on His left hand, whose barrenness in all good works He will expose, will He condemn to everlasting fire. In two other passages He deals with that wicked and slothful servant, who neglected to trade with His money, and with the man who was found at the feast without the wedding garment,—and He orders them to be bound hand and foot, and to be cast into outer darkness. And in yet another scripture, after admitting the five virgins who were wise, He shuts the door against the other five foolish ones. Now these descriptions,—and there are others which at the instant do not occur to me,—are all intended to represent to us the future judgment, which of course will be held not over one, or over five, but over multitudes. For if it were a solitary case only of the man who was cast into outer darkness for not having on the wedding garment, He would not have gone on at once to give it a plural turn, by saying: “For many are called, but few are chosen;” whereas it is plain that, after the one was cast out and condemned, many still remained behind in the house. However, it would occupy us too long to discuss all these questions to the full. This brief remark, however, I may make, without prejudice (as they say in pecuniary affairs) to some better discussion, that by the many descriptions which are scattered throughout the Holy Scriptures there is signified to us but one mode of final judgment, which is inscrutable to us,—with only the variety of deservings preserved in the rewards and punishments. Touching the particular point, indeed, which we have before us at present, it is sufficient to remark that, if Pelagius had actually said that all sinners whatever without exception would be punished in an eternity of punishment by everlasting fire, then whosoever had approved of this judgment would, to begin with, have brought the sentence down on his own head. “For who will boast that he is pure from sins?” Forasmuch, however, as he did not say all, nor certain, but made an indefinite statement only,—and afterwards, in explanation, declared that his meaning was according to the words of the Gospel,—his opinion was affirmed by the judgment of the bishops to be true; but it does not even now appear what Pelagius really thinks on the subject, and in consequence there is no indecency in inquiring further into the decision of the episcopal judges.

CHAPTER 12 [IV.]

THE FOURTH ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION; AND PELAGIUS’ ANSWER

It was further objected against Pelagius, as if he had written in his book, that “evil does not enter our thoughts.” In reply, however, to this charge, he said: “We made no such statement. What we did say was, that the Christian ought to be careful not to have evil thoughts.” Of this, as it became them, the bishops approved. For who can doubt that evil ought not to be thought of? And, indeed, if what he said in his book about “evil not being thought” runs in this form, “neither is evil to be thought of,” the ordinary meaning of such words is “that evil ought not even to be thought of.” Now if any person denies this, what else does he in fact say, than that evil ought to be thought of? And if this were true, it could not be said in praise of love that “it thinketh no evil!” But after all, the phrase about “not entering into the thoughts” of righteous and holy men is not quite a commendable one, for this reason, that what enters the mind is commonly called a thought, even when assent to it does not follow. The thought, however, which contracts blame, and is justly forbidden, is never unaccompanied with assent. Possibly those men had an incorrect copy of Pelagius’ writings, who thought it proper to object to him that he had used the words: “Evil does not enter into our thoughts;” that is, that whatever is evil never enters into the thoughts of righteous and holy men. Which is, of course, a very absurd statement. For whenever we censure evil things, we cannot enunciate them in words, unless they have been thought. But, as we said before, that is termed a culpable thought of evil which carries with it assent.

CHAPTER 13 [V.]

THE FIFTH ITEM OF THE ACCUSATION; AND PELAGIUS’ ANSWER

After the judges had accorded their approbation to this answer of Pelagius, another passage which he had written in his book was read aloud: “The kingdom of heaven was promised even in the Old Testament.” Upon this, Pelagius remarked in vindication: “This can be proved by the Scriptures: but heretics, in order to disparage the Old Testament, deny this. I, however, simply followed the authority of the Scriptures when I said this; for in the prophet Daniel it is written: The saints shall receive the kingdom of the Most. High.’“ After they had heard this answer, the synod said: “Neither is this opposed to the Church’s faith.”

CHAPTER 14

EXAMINATION OF THIS POINT. THE PHRASE “OLD TESTAMENT” USED IN TWO SENSES. THE HEIR OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT THERE WERE HEIRS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Was it therefore without reason that our brethren were moved by his words to include this charge among the others against him? Certainly not. The fact is, that the phrase Old Testament is constantly employed in two different ways,—in one, following the authority of the Holy Scriptures; in the other, following the most common custom of speech. For the Apostle Paul says, in his Epistle to the Galatians: “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman. . . . Which things are an allegory: for these are the two testaments; the one which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and is conjoined with the Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children; whereas the Jerusalem which is above is free, and is the mother of us all.” Now, inasmuch as the Old Testament belongs to bondage, whence it is written, “Cast out the bond-woman and her son, for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac,” but the kingdom of heaven to liberty; what has the kingdom of heaven to do with the Old Testament? Since, however, as I have already remarked, we are accustomed, in our ordinary use of words, to designate all those Scriptures of the law and the prophets which were given previous to the Lord’s incarnation, and are embraced together by canonical authority, under the name and title of the Old Testament, what man who is ever so moderately informed in ecclesiastical lore can be ignorant that the kingdom of heaven could be quite as well promised in those early Scriptures as even the New Testament itself, to which the kingdom of heaven belongs? At all events, in those ancient Scriptures it is most distinctly written: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will consummate a new testament with the house of Israel and with the house of Jacob; not according to the testament that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to lead them out of the land of Egypt.” This was done on Mount Sinai. But then there had not yet risen the prophet Daniel to say: “The saints shall receive the kingdom of the Most High.” For by these words he foretold the merit not of the Old, but of the New Testament. In the same manner did the same prophets foretell that Christ Himself would come, in whose blood the New Testament was consecrated. Of this Testament also the apostles became the ministers, as the most blessed Paul declares: “He hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not in its letter, but in spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” In that testament, however, which is properly called the Old, and was given on Mount Sinai, only earthly happiness is expressly promised. Accordingly that land, into which the nation, after being led through the wilderness, was conducted, is called the land of promise, wherein peace and royal power, and the gaining of victories over enemies, and an abundance of children and of fruits of the ground, and gifts of a similar kind are the promises of the Old Testament. And these, indeed, are figures of the spiritual blessings which appertain to the New Testament; but yet the man who lives under God's law with those earthly blessings for his sanction, is precisely the heir of the Old Testament, for just such rewards are promised and given to him, according to the terms of the Old Testament, as are the objects of his desire according to the condition of the old man. But whatever blessings are there figuratively set forth as appertaining to the New Testament require the new man to give them effect. And no doubt the great apostle understood perfectly well what he was saying, when he described the two testaments as capable of the allegorical distinction of the bond-woman and the free,—attributing the children of the flesh to the Old, and to the New the children of the promise: "They," says he, "which are the children of the flesh, are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." The children of the flesh, then, belong to the earthly Jerusalem, which is in bondage with her children; whereas the children of the promise belong to the Jerusalem above, the free, the mother of us all, eternal in the heavens. Whence we can easily see who they are that appertain to the earthly, and who to the heavenly kingdom. But then the happy persons, who even in that early age were by the grace of God taught to understand the distinction now set forth, were thereby made the children of promise, and were accounted in the secret purpose of God as heirs of the New Testament; although they continued with perfect fitness to administer the Old Testament to the ancient people of God, because it was divinely appropriated to that people in God's distribution of the times and seasons.

CHAPTER 15

THE SAME CONTINUED

How then should there not be a feeling of just disquietude entertained by the children of promise, children of the free Jerusalem, which is eternal in the heavens, when they see that by the words of Pelagius the distinction which has been drawn by Apostolic and catholic authority is abolished, and Agar is supposed to be by some means on a par with Sarah? He therefore does injury to the scripture of the Old Testament with heretical impiety, who with an impious and sacrilegious face denies that it was inspired by the good, supreme, and very God,—as Marcion does, as Manichaeus does, and other pests of similar opinions. On this account (that I may put into as brief a space as I can what my own views are on the subject), as much injury is done to the New Testament, when it is put on the same level with the Old Testament, as is inflicted on the Old itself when men deny it to be the work of the supreme God of goodness. Now, when Pelagius in his answer gave as his reason for saying that even in the Old Testament there was a promise of the kingdom of heaven, the testimony of the prophet Daniel, who most plainly foretold that the saints should receive the kingdom of the Most High, it was fairly decided that the statement of Pelagius was not opposed to the catholic faith, although not according to the distinction which shows that the earthly promises of Mount Sinai are the proper characteristics of the Old Testament; nor indeed was the decision an improper one, considering that mode of speech which designates all the canonical Scriptures which were given to men before the Lord's coming in the flesh by the title of the "Old Testament." The kingdom of the Most High is of course none other than the kingdom of God; otherwise, anybody might boldly contend that the kingdom of God is one thing, and the kingdom of heaven another.

CHAPTER 16 [VI.]

THE SIXTH ITEM OF THE ACCUSATION, AND PELAGIUS' REPLY

The next objection was to the effect that Pelagius in that same book of his wrote thus: "A man is able, if he likes, to be without sin;" and that writing to a certain widow he said, flatteringly: "In thee piety may find a dwelling-place, such as she finds nowhere else; in thee righteousness, though a stranger, can find a home; truth, which no one any longer recognises, can discover an abode and a friend in thee; and the law of God, which almost everybody despises, may be honoured by thee alone." And in another sentence he writes to her: "O how happy and blessed art thou, when that righteousness which we must believe to flourish only in heaven has found a shelter on earth only in thy heart!" In another work addressed to her, after reciting the prayer of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and teaching her in what manner saints ought to pray, he says: "He worthily raises his hands to God, and with a good conscience does he pour out his prayer, who is able to say, Thou, O Lord, knowest how holy, and harmless, and pure from all injury and iniquity and violence, are the hands which I stretch out to Thee;

how righteous, and pure, and free from all deceit, are the lips with which I offer to Thee my supplication, that Thou wouldst have mercy upon me.’“ To all this Pelagius said in answer: “We asserted that a man could be without sin, and could keep God’s commandments if he wished; for this capacity has been given to him by God. But we never said that any man could be found who at no time whatever, from infancy to old age, had committed sin: but that if any person were converted from his sins, he could by his own labour and God’s grace be without sin; and yet not even thus would he be incapable of change ever afterwards. As for the other statements which they have made against us, they are not to be found in our books, nor have we at any time said such things.” Upon hearing this vindication, the synod put this question to him: “You have denied having ever written such words; are you therefore ready to anathematize those who do hold these opinions?” Pelagius answered: “I anathematize them as fools, not as heretics, for there is no dogma.” The bishops then pronounced their judgment in these words: “Since now Pelagius has with his own mouth anathematized this vague statement as foolish verbiage, justly declaring in his reply, That a man is able with God’s assistance and grace to be without sin,’ let him now proceed to answer the other heads of accusation against him.”

CHAPTER 17

EXAMINATION OF THE SIXTH CHARGE AND ANSWERS

Well, now, had the judges either the power or the right to condemn these unrecognised and vague words, when no person on the other side was present to assert that Pelagius had written the very culpable sentences which were alleged to have been addressed by him to the widow? In such a matter, it surely could not be enough to produce a manuscript, and to read out of it words as his, if there were not also witnesses forthcoming in case he denied, on the words being read out, that they ever dropped from his pen. But even here the judges did all that lay in their power to do, when they asked Pelagius whether he would anathematize the persons who held such sentiments as he declared he had never himself propounded either in speech or in writing. And when he answered that he did anathematize them as fools, what right had the judges to push the inquiry any further on the matter, in the absence of Pelagius’ opponents?

CHAPTER 18

THE SAME CONTINUED

But perhaps the point requires some consideration, whether he was right in saying that “such as held the opinions in question deserved anathema, not as heretics, but as fools, since it was no dogma.” The question, when fairly confronted, is no doubt far from being an unimportant one,—how far a man deserves to be described as a heretic; on this occasion, however, the judges acted rightly in abstaining from it altogether. If any one, for example, were to allege that eaglets are suspended in the talons of the parent bird, and so exposed to the rays of the sun, and such as wink are flung to the ground as spurious, the light being in some mysterious way the gauge of their genuine nature, he is not to be accounted a heretic, if the story happens to be untrue. And, since it occurs in the writings of the learned and is very commonly received as fact, ought it to be considered a foolish thing to mention it, even though it be not true? much less ought our credit, which gains for us the name of being trustworthy, to be affected, on the one hand injuriously if the story be believed by us, or beneficially if disbelieved. If, to go a step further in illustration, any one were from this opinion to contend that there existed in birds reasonable souls, from the notion that human souls at intervals passed into them, then indeed we should have to reject from our mind and ears alike an idea like this as the rankest heresy; and even if the story about the eagles were true (as there are many curious facts about bees before our eyes, that are true), we should still have to consider, and demonstrate, the great difference that exists between the condition of creatures like these, which are quite irrational, however surprising in their powers of sensation, and the nature which is common (not to men and beasts, but) to men and angels. There are, to be sure, a great many foolish things said by foolish and ignorant persons, which yet fail to prove them heretics. One might instance the silly talk so commonly heard about the pursuits of other people, from persons who have never learned these pursuits,—equally hasty and untenable whether in the shape of excessive and indiscriminate praise of those they love, or of blame in the case of those they happen to dislike. The same remark might be made concerning the usual curent of human conversation: whenever it does touch on a subject which requires dogmatic acuracy of statement, but is thrown out at random or suggested by the passing moment, it is too often pervaded by foolish levity, whether uttered by the mouth or expressed in writing. Many persons, indeed, when gently reminded of their reckless gossip, have afterwards much regretted their conduct; they scarcely recollected what they had never uttered with a fixed purpose, but had poured forth in a sheer volley of casual and unconsidered words. It is, unhappily, almost impossible to be quite clear of such faults. Who is he “that slippeth not in his tongue,” and “offendeth not in word?” It, however, makes all the difference in the world, to what extent, and from what motive, and whether in fact at all, a man when warned of his fault corrects it, or obstinately clings to it so as to make a dogma and settled opinion of that which he had not at first uttered on purpose, but only in levity. Although, then, it turns out eventually that every heretic is a fool, it does not follow that every fool must immediately be named a heretic. The judges were quite right in saying that Pelagius had anathematized the vague folly under consideration by its fitting designation for even if it were heresy, there could be no doubt of its being foolish prattle. Whatever, therefore, it was, they designated the offence under a general name. But whether the quoted words had been used with any definitely dogmatic purpose, or only in a vague and indeterminate sense, and with an unmeaningness which should be capable of an easy correction, they did not deem it necessary to discuss on the present occasion, since the man who was on his trial before them denied that the words were his at all, in whatever sense they had been employed.

CHAPTER 19

THE SAME CONTINUED

Now it so happened that, while we were reading this defence of Pelagius in the small paper which we received at first, there were present certain holy brethren, who said that they had in their possession some hortatory or consolatory works which Pelagius had addressed to a widow lady whose name did not appear, and they advised us to examine whether the words which he had abjured for his own occurred anywhere in these books. They were not themselves aware whether they did or not. The said books were accordingly read through, and the words in question were actually discovered in them. Moreover, they who had produced the copy of the book, affirmed that for now almost four years they had had these books as Pelagius,’ nor had they once heard a doubt expressed about his authorship. Considering, then, from the integrity of these servants of God, which was very well known to us, how impossible it was for them to use deceit in the matter, the conclusion seemed inevitable, that Pelagius must be supposed by us to have rather been the deceiver at his trial before the bishops; unless we should think it possible that something may have been published, even for so many years, in his name, although not actually composed by him; for our informants did not tell us that they had received the books from Pelagius himself, nor had they ever heard him admit his own authorship. Now, in my own case, certain of our brethren have told me that sundry writings have found their way into Spain under my name. Such persons, indeed, as had read my genuine writings could not recognise those others as mine; although by other persons my authorship of them was quite believed.

CHAPTER 20

THE SAME CONTINUED. PELAGIUS ACKNOWLEDGES THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE IN DECEPTIVE TERMS

There can be no doubt that what Pelagius has acknowledged as his own is as yet very obscure. I suppose, however, that it will become apparent in the subsequent details of these proceedings. Now he says: “We have affirmed that a man is able to be without sin, and to keep the commandments of God if he wishes, inasmuch as God has given him this ability. But we have not said that any man can be found, who from infancy to old age has never committed sin; but that if any person were converted from his sins, he could by his own exertion and God’s grace be without sin; and yet not even thus would he be incapable of change afterwards.” Now it is quite uncertain what he means in these words by the grace of God; and the judges, catholic as they were, could not possibly understand by the phrase anything else than the grace which is so very strongly recommended to us in the apostle’s teaching. Now this is the grace whereby we hope that we can be delivered from the body of this death through our Lord Jesus Christ, [VII.] and for the obtaining of which we pray that we may not be led into temptation. This grace is not nature, but that which renders assistance to frail and corrupted nature. This grace is not the knowledge of the law, but is that of which the apostle says: “I will not make void the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” Therefore it is not “the letter that killeth, but the life-giving spirit.” For the knowledge of the law, without the grace of the Spirit, produces all kinds of concupiscence in man; for, as the apostle says, “I had not known sin but by the law: I had not known lust, unless the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence.” By saying this, however, he blames not the law; he rather praises it, for he says afterwards: “The law indeed is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” And he goes on to ask: “Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death in me by that which is good.” And, again, he praises the law by saying: “We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I know not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.” Observe, then, he knows the law, praises it, and consents to it; for what it commands, that he also wishes; and what it forbids, and condemns, that he also hates: but for all that, what he hates, that he actually does. There is in his mind, therefore, a knowledge of the holy law of God, but still his evil concupiscence is not cured. He has a good will within him, but still what he does is evil. Hence it comes to pass that, amidst the mutual struggles of the two laws within him,—”the law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and making him captive to the law of sin,”—he confesses his misery; and exclaims in such words as these: “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

CHAPTER 21 [VIII.]

THE SAME CONTINUED

It is not nature, therefore, which, sold as it is under sin and wounded by the offence, longs for a Redeemer and Saviour; nor is it the knowledge of the law—through which comes the discovery, not the expulsion, of sin—which delivers us from the body of this death; but it is the Lord’s good grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 21 [IX.]

THE SAME CONTINUED

This grace is not dying nature, nor the slaying letter, but the vivifying spirit; for already did he possess nature with freedom of will, because he said: “To will is present with me.” Nature, however, in a healthy condition and without a flaw, he did not possess, for he said: “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth nothing good.” Already had he the knowledge of God’s holy law, for he said: “I had not known sin but through the law;” yet for all that, he did not possess strength and power to practise and fulfil righteousness, for he complained: “What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.” And again, “How to accomplish that which is good I find not.” Therefore it is not from the liberty of the human will, nor from the precepts of the law, that there comes deliverance from the body of this death; for both of these he had already,—the one in his nature, the other in his learning; but all he wanted was the help of the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER 22 [X.]

THE SAME CONTINUED. THE SYNOD SUPPOSED THAT THE GRACE ACKNOWLEDGED BY PELAGIUS WAS THAT WHICH WAS SO THOROUGHLY KNOWN TO THE CHURCH

This grace, then, which was most completely known in the catholic Church (as the bishops were well aware), they supposed Pelagius made confession of, when they heard him say that “a man, when converted from his sins, is able by his own exertion and the grace of God to be without sin.” For my own part, however, I remembered the treatise which had been given to me, that I might refute it, by those servants of God, who had been Pelagius’ followers. They, notwithstanding their great affection for him, plainly acknowledged that the passage was his; when, on this question being proposed, because he had already given offence to very many persons from advancing views against the grace of God, he most expressly admitted that “what he meant by God’s grace was that, when our nature was created, it received the capacity of not sinning, because it was created with free will." On account, therefore, of this treatise, I cannot help feeling still anxious, whilst many of the brethren who are well acquainted with his discussions, share in my anxiety, lest under the ambiguity which notoriously characterizes his words there lies some latent reserve, and lest he should afterwards tell his followers that it was without prejudice to his own doctrine that he made any admissions,—discoursing thus: "I no doubt asserted that a man was able by his own exertion and the grace of God to live without sin; but you know very well what I mean by grace; and you may recollect reading that grace is that in which we are created by God with a free will." Accordingly, while the bishops understood him to mean the grace by which we have by adoption been made new creatures, not that by which we were created (for most plainly does Holy Scripture instruct us in the former sense of grace as the true one), ignorant of his being a heretic, they acquitted him as a catholic. I must say that my suspicion is excited also by this, that in the work which I answered, he most openly said that "righteous Abel never sinned at all." Now, however, he thus expresses himself: "But we did not say that any man could be found who at no time whatever, from infancy to old age, has committed sin; but that, if any man were converted from his sins, he could by his own labour and God's grace be without sin." When speaking of righteous Abel, he did not say that after being converted from his sins he became sinless in a new life, but that he never committed sin at all. If, then, that book be his, it must of course be corrected and amended from his answer. For I should be sorry to say that he was insincere in his more recent statement; lest perhaps he should say that he had forgotten what he had previously written in the book we have quoted. Let us therefore direct our view to what afterwards occurred. Now, from the sequel of these ecclesiastical proceedings, we can by God's help show that, although Pelagius, as some suppose, cleared himself in his examination, and was at all events acquitted by his judges (who were, however, but human beings after all), that this great heresy, which we should be most unwilling to see making further progress or becoming aggravated in guilt, was undoubtedly itself condemned.

CHAPTER 23 [XI.]

THE SEVENTH ITEM OF THE ACCUSATION: THE BREVIATES OF COELESTIUS OBJECTED TO PELAGIUS

Then follow sundry statements charged against Pelagius, which are said to be found among the opinions of his disciple Coelestius: how that "Adam was created mortal, and would have died whether he had sinned or not sinned; that Adam's sin injured only himself and not the human race; that the law no less than the gospel leads us to the kingdom; that there were sinless men previous to the coming of Christ; that new-born infants are in the same condition as Adam was before the fall; that the whole human race does not, on the one hand, die through Adam's death or transgression, nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ." These have been so objected to, that they are even said to have been, after a full hearing, condemned at Carthage by your holiness and other bishops associated with you. I was not present on that occasion, as you will recollect; but afterwards, on my arrival at Carthage, I read over the Acts of the synod, some of which I perfectly well remember, but I do not know whether all the tenets now mentioned occur among them. But what matters it if some of them were possibly not mentioned, and so not included in the condemnation of the synod when it is quite clear that they deserve condemnation? Sundry other points of error were next alleged against him, connected with the mention of my own name. They had been transmitted to me from Sicily, some of our Catholic brethren there being perplexed by questions of this kind; and I drew up a reply to them in a little work addressed to Hilary, who had consulted me respecting them in a letter. My answer, in my opinion, was a sufficient one. These are the errors referred to: "That a man is able to be without sin if he wishes. That infants, even if they die unbaptized, have eternal life. That rich men, even if they are baptized, unless they renounce all, have, whatever good they may seem to have done, nothing of it reckoned to them; neither can they possess the kingdom of God."

CHAPTER 24

PELAGIUS' ANSWER TO THE CHARGES BROUGHT TOGETHER UNDER THE SEVENTH ITEM

The following, as the proceedings testify, was Pelagius’ own answer to these charges against him: “Concerning a man’s being able indeed to be without sin, we have spoken,” says he, “already; concerning the fact, however, that before the Lord’s coming there were persons without sin, we say now that, previous to Christ’s advent, some men lived holy and righteous lives, according to the teaching of the sacred Scriptures. The rest were not said by me, as even their testimony goes to show, and for them, I do not feel that I am responsible. But for the satisfaction of the holy synod, I anathematize those who either now hold, or have ever held, these opinions.” After hearing this answer of his, the synod said: “With regard to these charges aforesaid, Pelagius has in our presence given us sufficient and proper satisfaction, by anathematizing the opinions which were not his.” We see, therefore, and maintain that the most pernicious evils of this heresy have been condemned, not only by Pelagius, but also by the holy bishops who presided over that inquiry:—that “Adam was made mortal;” (and, that the meaning of this statement might be more clearly understood, it was added, “and he would have died whether he had sinned or not sinned;”) that his sin injured only himself and not the human race; that the law, no less than the gospel, leads us to the kingdom of heaven; that new born infants are in the same condition that Adam was before the fall; that the entire human race does not, on the one hand, die through Adam’s death and transgression, nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ; that infants, even if they die unbaptized, have eternal life; that rich men even if baptized, unless they renounce and give up all, have, whatever good they may seem to have done, nothing of it reckoned to them, neither can they possess the kingdom of God;”—all these opinions, at any rate, were clearly condemned in that ecclesiastical court,—Pelagius pronouncing the anathema, and the bishops the interlocutory sentence.

CHAPTER 25

THE PELAGIANS FALSELY PRETENDED THAT THE EASTERN CHURCHES WERE ON THEIR SIDE

Now, by reason of these questions, and the very contentious assertions of these tenets, which are everywhere accompanied with heated feelings, many weak brethren were disturbed. We have accordingly, in the anxiety of that love which it becomes us to feel towards the Church of Christ through His grace, and out of regard to Marcellinus of blessed memory (who was extremely vexed day by day by these disputers, and who asked my advice by letter), been obliged to write on some of these questions, and especially on the baptism of infants. On this same subject also I afterwards, at your request, and assisted by your prayers, delivered an earnest address, to the best of my ability, in the church of the Majores, holding in my hands an epistle of the most glorious martyr Cyprian, and reading therefrom and applying his words on the very matter, in order to remove this dangerous error out of the hearts of sundry persons, who had been persuaded to take up with the opinions which, as we see, were condemned in these proceedings. These opinions it has been attempted by their promoters to force upon the minds of some of the brethren, by threatening, as if from the Eastern Churches, that unless they adopted the said opinions, they would be formally condemned by those Churches. Observe, however, that no less than fourteen bishops of the Eastern Church, assembled in synod in the land where the Lord manifested His presence in the days of His flesh, refused to acquit Pelagius unless he condemned these opinions as opposed to the Catholic faith. Since, therefore, he was then acquitted because he anathematized such views, it follows beyond a doubt that the said opinions were condemned. This, indeed, will appear more clearly still, and on still stronger evidence, in the sequel.

CHAPTER 26

THE ACCUSATIONS IN THE SEVENTH ITEM, WHICH PELAGIUS CONFESSED

Let us now see what were the two points out of all that were alleged which Pelagius was unwilling to anathematize, and admitted to be his own opinions, but to remove their offensive aspect explained in what sense he held them. “That a man,” says he, “is able to be without sin has been asserted already.” Asserted no doubt, and we remember the assertion quite well; but still it was mitigated, and approved by the judges, in that God’s grace was added, concerning which nothing was said in the original draft of his doctrine. Touching the second, however, of these points, we ought to pay careful attention to what he said in answer to the charge against him.

"Concerning the fact, indeed," says he, "that before the Lord's coming there were persons without sin, we now again assert that previous to Christ's advent some men lived holy and righteous lives, according to the teaching of the sacred Scriptures." He did not dare to say: "We now again assert that previous to Christ's advent there were persons without sin," although this had been laid to his charge after the very words of Coelestius. For he perceived how dangerous such a statement was, and into what trouble it would bring him. So he reduced the sentence to these harmless dimensions: "We again assert that before the coming of Christ there were persons who led holy and righteous lives." Of course there were: who would deny it? But to say this is a very different thing from saying that they lived "without sin." Because, indeed, those ancient worthies lived holy and righteous lives, they could for that very reason better confess: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." In the present day, also, many men live holy and righteous lives; but yet it is no untruth they utter when in their prayer they say: "Forgive us our debts, even as we forgive our debtors." This avowal was accordingly acceptable to the judges, in the sense in which Pelagius solemnly declared his belief; but certainly not in the sense which Coelestius, according to the original charge against him, was said to hold. We must now treat in detail of the topics which still remain, to the best of our ability.

CHAPTER 27 [XII.]

THE EIGHTH ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION

Pelagius was charged with having said: "That the Church here is without spot or wrinkle." It was on this point that the Donatists also were constantly at conflict with us in our conference. We used, in their case, to lay especial stress on the mixture of bad men with good, like that of the chaff with the wheat; and we were led to this idea by the similitude of the threshing-floor. We might apply the same illustration in answer to our present opponents, unless indeed they would have the Church consist only of good men, whom they assert to be without any sin whatever, that so the Church might be without spot or wrinkle. If this be their meaning, then I repeat the same words as I quoted just now; for how can they be members of the Church, of whom the voice of a truthful humility declares, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?” or how could the Church offer up that prayer which the Lord taught her to use, “Forgive us our debts,” if in this world the Church is without a spot or blemish? In short, they must themselves submit to be strictly catechised respecting themselves: do they really allow that they have any sins of their own? If their answer is in the negative, then they must be plainly told that they are deceiving themselves, and the truth is not in them. If, however, they shall acknowledge that they do commit sin, what is this but a confession of their own wrinkle and spot? They therefore are not members of the Church; because the Church is without spot and wrinkle, while they have both spot and wrinkle.

CHAPTER 28

PELAGIUS’ REPLY TO THE EIGHTH ITEM OF ACCUSATION

But to this objection he replied with a watchful caution such as the catholic judges no doubt approved. “It has,” says he, “been asserted by me,—but in such a sense that the Church is by the laver cleansed from every spot and wrinkle, and in this purity the Lord wishes her to continue.” Whereupon the synod said: “Of this also we approve.” And who amongst us denies that in baptism the sins of all men are remitted, and that all believers come up spotless and pure from the laver of regeneration? Or what catholic Christian is there who wishes not, as his Lord also wishes, and as it is meant to be, that the Church should remain always without spot or wrinkle? For in very deed God is now in His mercy and truth bringing it about, that His holy Church should be conducted to that perfect state in which she is to remain without spot or wrinkle for evermore. But between the laver, where all past stains and deformities are removed, and the kingdom, where the Church will remain for ever without any spot or wrinkle, there is this present intermediate time of prayer, during which her cry must of necessity be: “Forgive us our debts.” Hence arose the objection against them for saying that “the Church here on earth is without spot or wrinkle;” from the doubt whether by this opinion they did not boldly prohibit that prayer whereby the Church in her present baptized state entreats day and night for herself the forgiveness of her sins. On the subject of this intervening period between the remission of sins which takes place in baptism, and the perpetuity of sinlessness which is to be in the kingdom of heaven, no proceedings ensued with Pelagius, and no decision was pronounced by the bishops. Only he thought that some brief indication ought to be given that he had not expressed himself in the way which the accusation against him seemed to state. As to his saying, “This has been asserted by me,—but in such a sense,” what else did he mean to convey than the idea that he had not in fact expressed himself in the same manner as he was supposed to have done by his accusers? That, however, which induced the judges to say that they were satisfied with his answer was baptism as the means of being washed from our sins; and the kingdom of heaven, in which the holy Church, which is now in process of cleansing, shall continue in a sinless state for ever: this is clear from the evidence, so far as I can form an opinion.

CHAPTER 29 [XIII.]

THE NINTH ITEM OF THE ACCUSATION; AND PELAGIUS’ REPLY

The next objections were urged out of the book of Coelestius, following the contents of each several chapter, but rather according to the sense than the words. These indeed he expatiates on rather fully; they, however, who presented the indictment against Pelagius said that they had been unable at the moment to adduce all the words. In the first chapter, then, of Coelestius’ book they alleged that the following was written: “That we do more than is commanded us in the law and the gospel.” To this Pelagius replied: “This they have set down as my statement. What we said, however, was in keeping with the apostle’s assertion concerning virginity, of which Paul writes: I have no commandment of the Lord.’“ Upon this the synod said: “This also the Church receives.” I have read for myself the meaning which Coelestius gives to this in his book,—for he does not deny that the book is his. Now he made this statement obviously with the view of persuading us that we possess through the nature of free will so great an ability for avoiding sin, that we are able to do more than is commanded us; for a perpetual virginity is maintained by very many persons, and this is not commanded; whereas, in order to avoid sin, it is sufficient to fulfil what is commanded. When the judges, however, accepted Pelagius’ answer, they did not take it to convey the idea that those persons keep all the commandments of the law and the gospel who over and above maintain the state of virginity, which is not commanded,—but only this, that virginity, which is not commanded, is something more than conjugal chastity, which is commanded; so that to observe the one is of course more than to keep the other; whereas, at the same time, neither can be maintained without the grace of God, inasmuch as the apostle, in speaking of this very subject, says: “But I would that all men were even as I myself. Every man, however, hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.” And even the Lord Himself, upon the disciples remarking, “If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry” (or, as it may be better expressed in Latin, “it is not expedient to take a wife”), said to them: “All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given.” This, therefore, is the doctrine which the bishops of the synod declared to be received by the Church, that the state of virginity, persevered in to the last, which is not commanded, is more than the chastity of married life, which is commanded. In what view Pelagius or Coelestius regarded this subject, the judges were not aware.

CHAPTER 30 [XIV.]

THE TENTH ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION. THE MORE PROMINENT POINTS OF COELESTIUS’ WORK CONTINUED

After this we find objected against Pelagius some other points of Coelestius’ teaching,—prominent ones, and undoubtedly worthy of condemnation; such, indeed, as would certainly have involved Pelagius in condemnation, if he had not anathematized them in the synod. Under his third head Coelestius was alleged to have written: “That God’s grace and assistance is not given for single actions, but is imparted in the freedom of the will, or in the law and in doctrine.” And again: “That God’s grace is given in proportion to our deserts; because, were He to give it to sinful persons, He would seem to be unrighteous.” And from these words he inferred that “therefore grace itself has been placed in my will, according as I have been either worthy or unworthy of it. For if we do all things by grace, then whenever we are overcome by sin, it is not we who are overcome, but God’s grace, which wanted by all means to help us, but was not able.” And once more he says: “If, when we conquer sin, it is by the grace of God; then it is He who is in fault whenever we are conquered by sin, because He was either altogether unable or unwilling to keep us safe.” To these charges Pelagius replied: “Whether these are really the opinions of Coelestius or not, is the concern of those who say that they are. For my own part, indeed, I never entertained such views; on the contrary, I anathematize every one who does entertain them.” Then the synod said: “This holy synod accepts you for your condemnation of these impious words.” Now certainly there can be no mistake, in regard to these opinions, either as to the clear way in which Pelagius pronounced on them his anathema, or as to the absolute terms in which the bishops condemned them. Whether Pelagius or Coelestius, or both of them, or neither of them, or other persons with them or in their name, have ever held or still hold these sentiments,—may be doubtful or obscure; but nevertheless by this judgment of the bishops it has been declared plainly enough that they have been condemned, and that Pelagius would have been condemned along with them, unless he had himself condemned them too. Now, after this trial, it is certain that whenever we enter on a controversy touching opinions of this kind, we only discuss an already condemned heresy.

CHAPTER 31

REMARKS ON THE TENTH ITEM

I shall make my next remark with greater satisfaction. In a former section I expressed a fear that, when Pelagius said that “a man was able by the help of God’s grace to live without sin,” he perhaps meant by the term “grace” the capability possessed by nature as created by God with a free will, as it is understood in that book which I received as his and to which I replied; and that by these means he was deceiving the judges, who were ignorant of the circumstances. Now, however, since he anathematizes those persons who hold that “God’s grace and assistance is not given for single actions, but is imparted in the freedom of the will, or in the law and in doctrine,” it is quite evident that he really means the grace which is preached in the Church of Christ, and is conferred by the ministration of the Holy Ghost for the purpose of helping us in our single actions, whence it is that we pray for needful and suitable grace that we enter not into any temptation. Nor, again, have I any longer a fear that, when he said, “No man can be without sin unless he has acquired a knowledge of the law,” and added this explanation of his words, that “he posited in the knowledge of the law, help towards the avoidance of sin,” he at all meant the said knowledge to be considered as tantamount to the grace of God; for, observe, he anathematizes such as hold this opinion. See, too, how he refuses to hold our natural free will, or the law and doctrine, as equivalent to that grace of God which helps us through our single actions. What else then is left to him but to understand that grace which the apostle tells us is given by “the supply of the Spirit?” and concerning which the Lord said: “Take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” Nor, again, need I be under any apprehension that, when he asserted, “All men are ruled by their own will,” and afterwards explained that he had made that statement “in the interest of the freedom of our will, of which God is the helper whenever it makes choice of good,” that he perhaps here also held God’s helping grace as synonymous with our natural free will and the teaching of the law. For inasmuch as he rightly anathematized the persons who hold that God’s grace or assistance is not given for single actions, but lies in the gift of free will, or in the law and doctrine, it follows, of course, that God’s grace or assistance is given us for single actions,—free will, or the law and the doctrine, being left out of consideration; and thus through all the single actions of our life, when we act rightly, we are ruled and directed by God; nor is our prayer a useless one, wherein we say: “Order my steps according to Thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.”

CHAPTER 32

THE ELEVENTH ITEM OF THE ACCUSATION

But what comes afterwards again fills me with anxiety. On its being objected to him, from the fifth chapter of Coelestius’ book, that “they say that every individual has the ability to possess all powers and graces, thus taking away that diversity of graces,’ which the apostle teaches,” Pelagius replied: “We have certainly said so much; but yet they have laid against us a malignant and blundering charge. We do not take away the diversity of graces; but we declare that God gives to the person, who has proved himself worthy to receive them, all graces, even as He conferred them on the

Apostle Paul." Hereupon the Synod said: "You accordingly do yourself hold the doctrine of the Church touching the gift of the graces, which are collectively possessed by the apostle." Here some one may say, "Why then is he anxious? Do you on your side deny that all the powers and graces were combined in the apostle?" For my own part, indeed, if all those are to be understood which the apostle has himself mentioned together in one passage,—as, I suppose, the bishops understood Pelagius to mean when they approved of his answer, and pronounced it to be in keeping with the sense of the Church,—then I do not doubt that the apostle had them all; for he says: "And God hath set some in the Church, first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers; after that miracles; then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." What then? shall we say that the Apostle Paul did not possess all these gifts himself? Who would be bold enough to assert this? The very fact that he was an apostle showed, of course, that he possessed the grace of the apostolate. He possessed also that of prophecy; for was not that a prophecy of his in which he says: "In the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils?" He was, moreover, "the teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." He performed miracles also and cures; for he shook off from his hand, unhurt, the biting viper; and the cripple stood upright on his feet at the apostle's word, and his strength was at once restored. It is not clear what he means by helps, for the term is of very wide application; but who can say that he was wanting even in this grace, when through his labours such helps were manifestly afforded towards the salvation of mankind? Then as to his possessing the grace of "government," what could be more excellent than his administration, when the Lord at that time governed so many churches by his personal agency, and governs them still in our day through his epistles? And in respect of the "diversities of tongues," what tongues could have been wanting to him, when he says himself: "I thank my God that I speak with tongues more than you all?" It being thus inevitable to suppose that not one of these was wanting to the Apostle Paul, the judges approved of Pelagius' answer, wherein he said "that all graces were conferred upon him." But there are other graces in addition to these which are not mentioned here. For it is not to be supposed, however greatly the Apostle Paul excelled others as a member of Christ's body, that the very Head itself of the entire body did not receive more and ampler graces still, whether in His flesh or His soul as man; for such a created nature did the Word of God assume as His own into the unity of His Person, that He might be our Head, and we His body. And in very deed, if all gifts could be in each member, it would be evident that the similitude, which is used to illustrate this subject, of the several members of our body is inapplicable; for some things are common to the members in general, such as life and health, whilst other things are peculiar to the separate members, since the ear has no perception of colours, nor the eye of voices. Hence it is written: “If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?” Now this of course is not said as if it were impossible for God to impart to the ear the sense of seeing, or to the eye the function of hearing. However, what He does in Christ’s body, which is the Church, and what the apostle meant by diversity of graces as if through the different members, there might be gifts proper even to every one separately, is clearly known. Why, too, and on what ground they who raised the objection were so unwilling to have taken away all difference in graces, why, moreover, the bishops of the synod were able to approve of the answer given by Pelagius in deference to the Apostle Paul, in whom we admit the combination of all those graces which he mentioned in the one particular passage, is by this time clear also.

CHAPTER 33

DISCUSSION OF THE ELEVENTH ITEM CONTINUED

What, then, is the reason why, as I said just now, I felt anxious on the subject of this head of his doctrine? It is occasioned by what Pelagius says in these words: “That God gives to the man who has proved himself worthy to receive them, all graces, even as He conferred them on the Apostle Paul.” Now, I should not have felt any anxiety about this answer of Pelagius, if it were not closely connected with the cause which we are bound to guard with the utmost care—even that God’s grace may never be attacked, while we are silent or dissembling in respect of so great an evil. As, therefore, he does not say, that God gives to whom He will, but that “God gives to the man who has proved himself worthy to receive them, all these graces,” I could not help being suspicious, when I read such words. For the very name of grace, and the thing that is meant by it, is taken away, if it is not bestowed gratuitously, but he only receives it who is worthy of it. Will anybody say that I do the apostle wrong, because I do not admit him to have been worthy of grace? Nay, I should indeed rather do him wrong, and bring on myself a punishment, if I refused to believe what he himself says. Well, now, has he not pointedly so defined grace as to show that it is so called because it is bestowed gratuitously? These are his own very words: “And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace.” In accordance with this, he says again: “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.” Whosoever, therefore, is worthy, to him it is due; and if it is thus due to him, it ceases to be grace; for grace is given, but a debt is paid. Grace, therefore, is given to those who are unworthy, that a debt may be paid to them when they become worthy. He, however, who has bestowed on the unworthy the gifts which they possessed not before, does Himself take care that they shall have whatever things He means to recompense to them when they become worthy.

CHAPTER 34

THE SAME CONTINUED. ON THE WORKS OF UNBELIEVERS; FAITH IS THE INITIAL PRINCIPLE FROM WHICH GOOD WORKS HAVE THEIR BEGINNING; FAITH IS THE GIFT OF GOD’S GRACE

He will perhaps say to this: “It was not because of his works, but in consequence of his faith, that I said the apostle was worthy of having all those great graces bestowed upon him. His faith deserved this distinction, but not his works, which were not previously good.” Well, then, are we to suppose that faith does not work? Surely faith does work in a very real way, for it “worketh by love.” Preach up, however, as much as you like, the works of unbelieving men, we still know how true and invincible is the statement of this same apostle: “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” The very reason, indeed, why he so often declares that righteousness is imputed to us, not out of our works, but our faith, whereas faith rather works through love, is that no man should think that he arrives at faith itself through the merit of his works; for it is faith which is the beginning whence good works first proceed; since (as has already been stated) whatsoever comes not from faith is sin. Accordingly, it is said to the Church, in the Song of Songs: “Thou shalt come and pass by from the beginning of faith.” Although, therefore, faith procures the grace of producing good works, we certainly do not deserve by any faith that we should have faith itself; but, in its bestowal upon us, in order that we may follow the Lord by its help, “His mercy has prevented us.” Was it we ourselves that gave it to us? Did we ourselves make ourselves faithful? I must by all means say here, emphatically: “It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves.” And indeed nothing else than this is pressed upon us in the apostle’s teaching, when he says: “For I declare, through the grace that is given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.” Whence, too, arises the well-known challenge: “What hast thou that thou didst not receive?” inasmuch as we have received even that which is the spring from which everything we have of good in our actions takes its beginning.

CHAPTER 35

THE SAME CONTINUED

“What, then, is the meaning of that which the same apostle says: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day;’ if these are not recompenses paid to the worthy, but gifts, bestowed on the unworthy?” He who says this, does not consider that the crown could not have been given to the man who is worthy of it, unless grace had been first bestowed on him whilst unworthy of it. He says indeed: “I have fought a good fight;” but then he also says: “Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.” He says too: “I have finished my course;” but he says again: “It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” He says, moreover: “I have kept the faith;” but then it is he too who says again: “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep my deposit against that day”—that is, “my commendation;” for some copies have not the word depositum, but commendatum, which yields a plainer sense. Now, what do we commend to God’s keeping, except the things which we pray Him to preserve for us, and amongst these our very faith? For what else did the Lord procure for the

Apostle Peter by His prayer for him, of which He said, “I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not,” than that God would preserve his faith, that it should not fail by giving way to temptation? Therefore, blessed Paul, thou great preacher of grace, I will say it without fear of any man (for who will be less angry with me for so saying than thyself, who hast told us what to say, and taught us what to teach?)—I will, I repeat, say it, and fear no man for the assertion: Their own crown is recompensed to their merits; but thy merits are the gifts of God!

CHAPTER 36

THE SAME CONTINUED. THE MONK PELAGIUS. GRACE IS CONFERRED ON THE UNWORTHY

His due reward, therefore, is recompensed to the apostle as worthy of it; but still it was grace which bestowed on him the apostleship itself, which was not his due, and of which he was not worthy. Shall I be sorry for having said this? God forbid! For under his own testimony shall I find a ready protection from such reproach; nor will any man charge me with audacity, unless he be himself audacious enough to charge the apostle with mendacity. He frankly says, nay he protests, that he commends the gifts of God within himself, so that he glories not in himself at all, but in the Lord; he not only declares that he possessed no good deserts in himself why he should be made an apostle, but he even mentions his own demerits, in order to manifest and preach the grace of God. “I am not meet,” says he, “to be called an apostle;” and what else does this mean than “I am not worthy”—as indeed several Latin copies read the phrase. Now this, to be sure, is the very gist of our question; for undoubtedly in this grace of apostleship all those graces are contained. For it was neither convenient nor right that an apostle should not possess the gift of prophecy, nor be a teacher, nor be illustrious for miracles and the gifts of healings, nor furnish needful helps, nor provide governments over the churches, nor excel in diversities of tongues. All these functions the one name of apostleship embraces. Let us, therefore, consult the man himself, nay listen wholly to him. Let us say to him: “Holy Apostle Paul, the monk Pelagius declares that thou wast worthy to receive all the graces of thine apostleship. What dost thou say thyself?” He answers: “I am not worthy to be called an apostle.” Shall I then, under pretence of honouring Paul, in a matter concerning Paul, dare to believe Pelagius in preference to Paul? I will not do so; for if I did, I should only prove to be more onerous to myself than honouring to him. Let us hear also why he is not worthy to be called an apostle: “Because,” says he, “I persecuted the Church of God.” Now, were we to follow up the idea here expressed, who would not judge that he rather deserved from Christ condemnation, instead of an apostolic call? Who could so love the preacher as not to loathe the persecutor? Well, therefore, and truly does he say of himself: “I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.” As thou wroughtest then such evil, how camest thou to earn such good? Let all men hear his answer: “But by the grace of God, I am what I am.” Is there, then, no other way in which grace is commended, than because it is conferred on an unworthy recipient? “And His grace,” he adds, “which was bestowed on me was not in vain.” He says this as a lesson to others also, to show the freedom of the will, when he says: “We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.” Whence however does he derive his proof, that “His grace bestowed on himself was not in vain,” except from the fact which he goes on to mention: “But I laboured more abundantly than they all?” So it seems he did not labour in order to receive grace, but he received grace in order that he might labour. And thus, when unworthy, he gratuitously received grace, whereby he might become worthy to receive the due reward. Not that he ventured to claim even his labour for himself; for, after saying: “I laboured more abundantly than they all,” he at once subjoined: “Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” O mighty teacher, confessor, and preacher of grace! What meaneth this: “I laboured more, yet not I?” Where the will exalted itself ever so little, there piety was instantly on the watch, and humility trembled, because weakness recognised itself.

CHAPTER 37

THE SAME CONTINUED. JOHN, BISHOP OF JERUSALEM, AND HIS EXAMINATION

With great propriety, as the proceedings show, did John, the holy overseer of the Church of Jerusalem, employ the authority of this same passage of the apostle, as he himself told our brethren the bishops who were his assessors at that trial, on their asking him what proceedings had taken place before him previous to the trial. He told them that “on the occasion in question, whilst some were whispering, and remarking on Pelagius’ statement, that without God’s grace man was able to attain perfection’ (that is, as he had previously expressed it, man was able to be without sin’), he censured the statement, and reminded them besides, that even the Apostle Paul, after so many labours—not indeed in his own strength, but by the grace of God—said: I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me;’ and again: It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy;’ and again: Except the Lord build the house, they labour but in vain who build it.’ And,” he added, “we quoted several other like passages out of the Holy Scriptures. When, however, they did not receive the quotations which we made out of the Holy Scriptures, but continued their murmuring noise, Pelagius said: This is what I also believe; let him be anathema, who declares that a man is able, without God’s help, to arrive at the perfection of all virtues.’“

CHAPTER 38 [XV.]

THE SAME CONTINUED

Bishop John narrated all this in the hearing of Pelagius; but he, of course, might respectfully say: “Your holiness is in error; you do not accurately remember the facts. It was not in reference to the passages of Scripture which you have quoted that I uttered the words: This is what I also believe.’ Because this is not my opinion of them. I do not understand them to say, that God’s grace so co-operates with man, that his abstinence from sin is due, not to him that willeth, nor to him that runneth, but to God that showeth mercy.’“

CHAPTER 39 [XVI.]

THE SAME CONTINUED. HEROS AND LAZARUS; OROSIUS

Now there are some expositions of Paul’s Epistle to the Romans which are said to have been written by Pelagius himself,—in which he asserts, that the passage: “Not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,” was “not said in Paul’s own person; but that he therein employed the language of questioning and refutation, as if such a statement ought not to be made." No safe conclusion, therefore, can be drawn, although the bishop John plainly acknowledged the passage in question as conveying the mind of the apostle, and mentioned it for the very purpose of hindering Pelagius from thinking that any man can avoid sin without God's grace, and declared that Pelagius said in answer: "This is what I also believe," and did not, upon hearing all this, repudiate his admission by replying: "This is not my belief." He ought, indeed, either to deny altogether, or unhesitatingly to correct and amend this perverse exposition, in which he would have it, that the apostle must not be regarded as entertaining the sentiment, but rather as refuting it. Now, whatever Bishop John said of our brethren who were absent—whether our brother bishops Heros and Lazarus, or the presbyter Orosius, or any others whose names are not there registered,—I am sure that he did not mean it to operate to their prejudice. For, had they been present, they might possibly (I am far from saying it absolutely) have convicted him of untruth; at any rate they might perhaps have reminded him of something he had forgotten, or something in which he might have been deceived by the Latin interpreter—not, to be sure, for the purpose of misleading him by untruth, but at least, owing to some difficulty occasioned by a foreign language, only imperfectly understood; especially as the question was not treated in the Proceedings, which were drawn up for the useful purpose of preventing deceit on the part of evil men, and of preserving a record to assist the memory of good men. If, however, any man shall be disposed by this mention of our brethren to introduce any question or doubt on the subject, and summon them before the Episcopal judgment, they will not be wanting to themselves, as occasion shall serve. Why need we here pursue the point, when not even the judges themselves, after the narrative of our brother bishop, were inclined to pronounce any definite sentence in consequence of it?

CHAPTER 40 [XVII.]

THE SAME CONTINUED

Since, then, Pelagius was present when these passages of the Scriptures were discussed, and by his silence acknowledged having said that he entertained the same view of their meaning, how happens it, that, after reconsidering the apostle's testimony, as he had just done, and finding that he said: “I am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God; but by the grace of God I am what I am,” he did not perceive that it was improper for him to say, respecting the question of the abundance of the graces which the said apostle received, that he had shown himself “worthy to receive them,” when the apostle himself not only confessed, but added a reason to prove, that he was unworthy of them—and by this very fact set forth grace as grace indeed? If he could not for some reason or other consider or recollect the narrative of his holiness the bishop John, which he had heard some time before, he might surely have respected his own very recent answer at the synod, and remembered how he anathematized, but a short while before, the opinions which had been alleged against him out of Coelestius. Now among these it was objected to him that Coelestius had said: “That the grace of God is bestowed according to our merits.” If, then, Pelagius truthfully anathematized this, why does he say that all those graces were conferred on the apostle because he deserved them? Is the phrase “worthy to receive” of different meaning from the expression “to receive according to merit”? Can he by any disputatious subtlety show that a man is worthy who has no merit? But neither Coelestius, nor any other, all of whose opinions he anathematized, has any intention to allow him to throw clouds over the phrase, and to conceal himself behind them. He presses home the matter, and plainly says: “And this grace has been placed in my will, according as I have been either worthy or unworthy of it.” If, then, a statement, wherein it is declared that “God’s grace is given in proportion to our deserts, to such as are worthy,” was rightly and truly condemned by Pelagius, how could his heart permit him to think, or his mouth to utter, such a sentence as this: “We say that God gives to the person who has proved himself worthy to receive them, all graces?” Who that carefully considers all this can help feeling some anxiety about his answer or defence?

CHAPTER 41

AUGUSTIN INDULGENTLY SHOWS THAT THE JUDGES ACTED INCAUTIOUSLY IN THEIR OFFICIAL CONDUCT OF THE CASE OF PELAGIUS

Why, then (some one will say), did the judges approve of this? I confess that I hardly even now understand why they did. It is, however, not to be wondered at, if some brief word or phrase too easily escaped their attention and ear; or if, because they thought it capable of being somehow interpreted in a correct sense, from seeming to have from the accused himself such clear confessions of truth on the subject, they decided it to be hardly worth while to excite a discussion about a word. The same feeling might have occurred to ourselves also, if we had sat with them at the trial. For if, instead of the term worthy, the word predestinated had been used, or some such word, my mind would certainly not have entertained any doubt, much less have been disquieted by it; and yet if it were asserted, that he who is justified by the election of grace is called worthy, through no antecedent merits of good indeed, but by destination, just as he is called "elect," it would be really difficult to determine whether he might be so designated at all, or at least without some offence to an intelligent view of the subject.

As for myself, indeed, I might readily pass on from the discussion on this word, were it not that the treatise which called forth my reply, and in which he says that there is no God's grace at all except our own nature gratuitously created with free will, made me suspicious and anxious about the actual meaning of Pelagius—whether he had procured the introduction of the term into the argument without any accurate intention as to its sense, or else as a carefully drawn dogmatic expression. The last remaining statements had such an effect on the judges, that they deemed them worthy of condemnation, without waiting for Pelagius' answer.

CHAPTER 42 [XVIII.]

THE TWELFTH ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION. OTHER HEADS OF COELESTIUS' DOCTRINE ABJURED BY PELAGIUS

For it was objected that in the sixth chapter of Coelestius' work there was laid down this position: "Men cannot be called sons of God, unless they have become entirely free from all sin." It follows from this statement, that not even the Apostle Paul is a child of God, since he said: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." In the seventh chapter he makes this statement: "Forgetfulness and ignorance have no connection with sin, as they do not happen through the will, but through necessity;" although David says: "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my sins of ignorance;” although too, in the law, sacrifices are offered for ignorance, as if for sin. In his tenth chapter he says: “Our will is free, if it needs the help of God; inasmuch as every one in the possession of his proper will has either something to do or to abstain from doing.” In the twelfth he says: “Our victory comes not from God’s help, but from our own free will.” And this is a conclusion which he was said to draw in the following terms: “The victory is ours, seeing that we took up arms of our own will; just as, on the other hand, being conquered is our own, since it was of our own will that we neglected to arm ourselves.” And, after quoting the phrase of the Apostle Peter, “partakers of the divine nature,” he is said to have made out of it this argument: “Now if our spirit or soul is unable to be without sin, then even God is subject to sin, since this part of Him, that is to say, the soul, is exposed to sin.” In his thirteenth chapter he says: “That pardon is not given to penitents according to the grace and mercy of God, but according to their own merits and effort, since through repentance they have been worthy of mercy.”

CHAPTER 43 [XIX.]

THE ANSWER OF THE MONK PELAGIUS AND HIS PROFESSION OF FAITH

After all these sentences were read out, the synod said: “What says the monk Pelagius to all these heads of opinion which have been read in his presence? For this holy synod condemns the whole, as does also God’s Holy Catholic Church.” Pelagius answered: “I say again, that these opinions, even according to their own testimony, are not mine; nor for them, as I have already said, ought I to be held responsible. The opinions which I have confessed to be my own, I maintain are sound; those, however, which I have said are not my own, I reject according to the judgment of this holy synod, pronouncing anathema on every man who opposes and gainsays the doctrines of the Holy Catholic Church. For I believe in the Trinity of the one substance, and I hold all things in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Catholic Church. If indeed any man entertains opinions different from her, let him be anathema.”

CHAPTER 44 [XX.]

THE ACQUITTAL OF PELAGIUS

The synod said: “Now since we have received satisfaction on the points which have come before us touching the monk Pelagius, who has been present; since, too, he gives his consent to the pious doctrines, and even anathematizes everything that is contrary to the Church’s faith, we confess him to belong to the communion of the Catholic Church.”

CHAPTER 45 [XXI.]

PELAGIUS’ ACQUITTAL BECOMES SUSPECTED

If these are the proceedings by which Pelagius’ friends rejoice that he was exculpated, we, on our part,—since he certainly took much pains to prove that we were well affected towards him, by going so far as to produce even our private letters to him, and reading them at the trial,—undoubtedly wish and desire his salvation in Christ; but as regards his exculpation, which is rather believed than clearly shown, we ought not to be in a hurry to exult. When I say this, indeed, I do not charge the judges either with negligence or connivance, or with consciously holding unsound doctrine—which they most certainly would be the very last to entertain. But although by their sentence Pelagius is held by those who are on terms of fullest and closest intimacy with him to have been deservedly acquitted, with the approval and commendation of his judges, he certainly does not appear to me to have been cleared of the charges brought against him. They conducted his trial as of one whom they knew nothing of, especially in the absence of those who had prepared the indictment against him, and were quite unable to examine him with diligence and care; but, in spite of this inability, they completely destroyed the heresy itself, as even the defenders of his perverseness must allow, if they only follow the judgment through its particulars. As for those persons, however, who well know what Pelagius has been in the habit of teaching, or who have had to oppose his contentious efforts, or those who, to their joy, have escaped from his erroneous doctrine, how can they possibly help suspecting him, when they read the affected confession, wherein he acknowledges past errors, but so expresses himself as if he had never entertained any other opinion than those which he stated in his replies to the satisfaction of the judges?

CHAPTER 46 [XXII.]

HOW PELAGIUS BECAME KNOWN TO AUGUSTIN; COELESTIUS CONDEMNED AT CARTHAGE

Now, that I may especially refer to my own relation to him, I first became acquainted with Pelagius' name, along with great praise of him, at a distance, and when he was living at Rome. Afterwards reports began to reach us, that he disputed against the grace of God. This caused me much pain, for I could not refuse to believe the statements of my informants; but yet I was desirous of ascertaining information on the matter either from himself or from some treatise of his, that, in case I should have to discuss the question with him, it should be on grounds which he could not disown. On his arrival, however, in Africa, he was in my absence kindly received on our coast of Hippo, where, as I found from our brethren, nothing whatever of this kind was heard from him; because he left earlier than was expected. On a subsequent occasion, indeed, I caught a glimpse of him, once or twice, to the best of my recollection, when I was very much occupied in preparing for the conference which we were to hold with the heretical Donatists; but he hastened away across the sea. Meanwhile the doctrines connected with his name were warmly maintained, and passed from mouth to mouth, among his reputed followers—to such an extent that Coelestius found his way before an ecclesiastical tribunal, and reported opinions well suited to his perverse character. We thought it would be a better way of proceeding against them, if, without mentioning any names of individuals, the errors themselves were met and refuted; and the men might thus be brought to a right mind by the fear of a condemnation from the Church rather than be punished by the actual condemnation. And so both by books and by popular discussions we ceased not to oppose the evil doctrines in question.

CHAPTER 47 [XXIII.]

PELAGIUS' BOOK, WHICH WAS SENT BY TIMASIUS AND JACOBUS TO AUGUSTIN, WAS ANSWERED BY THE LATTER IN HIS WORK "ON NATURE AND GRACE."

But when there was actually placed in my hands, by those faithful servants of God and honourable men, Timasius and Jacobus, the treatise in which Pelagius dealt with the question of God's grace, it became very evident to me—too evident, indeed, to admit of any further doubt—how hostile to salvation by Christ was his poisonous perversion of the truth. He treated the subject in the shape of an objection started, as if by an opponent, in his own terms against himself; for he was already suffering a good deal of obloquy from his opinions on the question, which he now appeared to solve for himself in no other way than by simply describing the grace of God as nature created with a free will, occasionally combining therewith either the help of the law, or even the remission of sins; although these additional admissions were not plainly made, but only sparingly suggested by him. And yet, even under these circumstances, I refrained from inserting Pelagius' name in my work, wherein I refuted this book of his; for I still thought that I should render a prompter assistance to the truth if I continued to preserve a friendly relation to him, and so to spare his personal feelings, while at the same time I showed no mercy, as I was bound not to show it, to the productions of his pen. Hence, I must say, I now feel some annoyance, that in this trial he somewhere said: "I anathematize those who hold these opinions, or have at any time held them." He might have been contented with saying, "Those who hold these opinions," which we should have regarded in the light of a self-censure; but when he went on to say, "Or have at any time held them," in the first place, how could he dare to condemn so unjustly those harmless persons who no longer hold the errors, which they had learnt either from others, or actually from himself? And, in the second place, who among all those persons that were aware of the fact of his not only having held the opinions in question, but of his having taught them, could help suspecting, and not unreasonably, that he must have acted insincerely in condemning those who now hold those opinions, seeing that he did not hesitate to condemn in the same strain and at the same moment those also who had at any time previously held them, when they would be sure to remember that they had no less a person than himself as their instructor in these errors? There are, for instance, such persons as Timasius and Jacobus, to say nothing of any others. How can he with unblushing face look at them, his dear friends (who have never relinquished their love of him) and his former disciples? These are the persons to whom I addressed the work in which I replied to the statements of his book. I think I ought not to pass over in silence the style and tone which they observed towards me in their correspondence, and I have here added a letter of theirs as a sample.

CHAPTER 48 [XXIV.]

A LETTER WRITTEN BY TIMASIUS AND JACOBUS TO AUGUSTIN ON RECEIVING HIS TREATISE "ON NATURE AND GRACE."

"To his lordship, the truly blessed and deservedly venerable father, Bishop Augustin, Timasius and Jacobus send greeting in the Lord. We have been so greatly refreshed and strengthened by the grace of God, which your word has ministered to us, my lord, our truly blessed and justly venerated father, that we may with the utmost sincerity and propriety say, He sent His word and healed them.' We have found, indeed, that your holiness has so thoroughly sifted the contents of his little book as to astonish us with the answers with which even the slightest points of his error have been confronted, whether it be on matters which every Christian ought to rebut, loathe, and avoid, or on those in which he is not with sufficient certainty found to have erred,—although even in these he has, with incredible subtlety, suggested his belief that God's grace should be kept out of sight. There is, however, one consideration which affects us under so great a benefit,—that this most illustrious gift of the grace of God has, however slowly, so fully shone out upon us. If, indeed, it has happened that some are removed from the influence of this clearest light of truth, whose blindness required its illumination, yet even to them, we doubt not, the same grace will find its steady way, however late, by the merciful favour of that God who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.' As for ourselves, indeed, thanks to that loving spirit which is in you, we have, in consequence of your instruction, some time since thrown off our subjection to his errors; but we still have even now cause for continued gratitude in the fact that, as we have been informed, the false opinions which we formerly believed are now becoming apparent to others—a way of escape opening out to them in the extremely precious discourse of your holiness." Then, in another hand: "May the mercy of our God keep your blessedness in safety, and mindful of us, for His eternal glory."

CHAPTER 49 [XXV.]

PELAGIUS’ BEHAVIOUR CONTRASTED WITH THAT OF THE WRITERS OF THE LETTER

If now that man, too, were to confess that he had once been implicated in this error as a person possessed, but that he now anathematized all that hold these opinions, whoever should withhold his congratulation from him, now that he was in possession of the way of truth, would surely surrender all the bowels of love. As the case, however, now stands, he has not only not acknowledged his liberation from his pestilential error; but, as if that were a small thing, he has gone on to anathematize men who have reached that freedom, who love him so well that they would fain desire his own emancipation. Amongst these are those very men who have expressed their good-will towards him in the letter, which they forwarded to me. For he it was whom they had chiefly in view when they said how much they were affected at the fact of my having at last written that work. “If, indeed, it has happened,” they say, “that some are removed from the influence of this clearest light of truth, whose blindness required its illumination, yet even to them,” they go on to remark, “we doubt not, the self-same grace will find its way, by the merciful favour of God.” Any name, or names, even they, too, thought it desirable as yet to suppress, in order that, if friendship still lived on, the error of the friends might the more surely die.

CHAPTER 50

PELAGIUS HAS NO GOOD REASON TO BE ANNOYED IF HIS NAME BE AT LAST USED IN THE CONTROVERSY, AND HE BE EXPRESSLY REFUTED

But now if Pelagius thinks of God, if he is not ungrateful for His mercy in having brought him before this tribunal of the bishops, that thus he might be saved from the hardihood of afterwards defending these anathematized opinions, and be at once led to acknowledge them as deserving of abhorrence and rejection, he will be more thankful to us for our book, in which, by mentioning his name, we shall open the wound in order to cure it, than for one in which we were afraid to cause him pain, and, in fact, only produced irritation,—a result which causes us regret. Should he, however, feel angry with us, let him reflect how unfair such anger is; and, in order to subdue it, let him ask God to give him that grace which, in this trial, he has confessed to be necessary for each one of our actions, that so by His assistance he may gain a real victory. For of what use to him are all those great laudations contained in the letters of the bishops, which he thought fit to be mentioned, and even to be read and quoted in his favour,—as if all those persons who heard his strong and, to some extent, earnest exhortations to goodness of life could not have easily discovered how perverse were the opinions which he was entertaining?

CHAPTER 51 [XXVI.]

THE NATURE OF AUGUSTIN’S LETTER TO PELAGIUS

For my own part, indeed, in my letter which he produced, I not only abstained from all praises of him, but I even exhorted him, with as much earnestness as I could, short of actually mooting the question, to cultivate right views about the grace of God. In my salutation I called him “lord”—a title which, in our epistolary style, we usually apply even to some persons who are not Christians,—and this without untruth, inasmuch as we do, in a certain sense, owe to all such persons a service, which is yet freedom, to help them in obtaining the salvation which is in Christ. I added the epithet “most beloved;” and as I now call him by this term, so shall I continue to do so, even if he be angry with me; because, if I ceased to retain my love towards him, because of his feeling the anger, I should only injure myself rather than him. I, moreover, styled him “most longed for,” because I greatly longed to have a conversation with him in person; for I had already heard that he was endeavouring publicly to oppose grace, whereby we are justified, whenever any mention was made of it. The brief contents of the letter itself indeed show all this; for, after thanking him for the pleasure he gave me by the information of his own health and that of his friends (whose bodily health we are bound of course to wish for, however much we may desire their amendment in other respects), I at once expressed the hope that the Lord would recompense him with such blessings as do not appertain to physical welfare, but which he used to think, and probably still thinks, consist solely in the freedom of the will and his own power,—at the same time, and for this reason, wishing him “eternal life.” Then again, remembering the many good and kind wishes he had expressed for me in his letter, which I was answering, I went on to beg of him, too, that he would pray for me, that the Lord would indeed make me such a man as he believed me to be already; that so I might gently remind him, against the opinion he was himself entertaining, that the very righteousness which he had thought worthy to be praised in me was “not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” This is the substance of that short letter of mine, and such was my purpose when I dictated it. This is a copy of it:

CHAPTER 52 [XXVII. AND XXVIII.]

THE TEXT OF THE LETTER

“To my most beloved lord, and most longed-for brother Pelagius, Augustin sends greeting in the Lord. I thank you very much for the pleasure you have kindly afforded me by your letter, and for informing me of your good health. May the Lord requite you with blessings, and may you ever enjoy them, and live with Him for evermore in all eternity, my most beloved lord, and most longed-for brother. For my own part, indeed, although I do not admit your high encomiums of me, which the letter of your Benignity conveys, I yet cannot be insensible of the benevolent view you entertain towards my poor deserts; at the same time requesting you to pray for me, that the Lord would make me such a man as you suppose me to be already.” Then, in another hand, it follows: “Be mindful of us; may you be safe, and find favour with the Lord, my most beloved lord, and most longed-for brother.”

CHAPTER 53 [XXIX.]

PELAGIUS’ USE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

As to that which I placed in the postscript,—that he might “find favour with the Lord,”—I intimated that this lay rather in His grace than in man’s sole will; for I did not make it the subject either of exhortation, or of precept, or of instruction, but simply of my wish. But just in the same way as I should, if I had exhorted or enjoined, or even instructed him, simply have shown that all this appertained to free will, without, however, derogating from the grace of God; so in like manner, when I expressed the matter in the way of a wish, I asserted no doubt the grace of God, but at the same time I did not quench the liberty of the will. Wherefore, then, did he produce this letter at the trial? If he had only from the beginning entertained views in accordance with it, very likely he would not have been at all summoned before the bishops by the brethren, who, with all their kindness of disposition, could yet not help being offended with his perverse contentiousness. Now, however, as I have given on my part an account of this letter of mine, so would they, whose epistles he quoted, explain theirs also, if it were necessary;—they would tell us either what they thought, or what they were ignorant of, or with what purpose they wrote to him. Pelagius, therefore, may boast to his heart's content of the friendship of holy men, he may read their letters recounting his praises, he may produce whatever synodal acts he pleases to attest his own acquittal,—there still stands against him the fact, proved by the testimony of competent witnesses, that he has inserted in his books statements which are opposed to that grace of God whereby we are called and justified; and unless he shall, after true confession, anathematize these statements, and then go on to contradict them both in his writings and discussions, he will certainly seem to all those who have a fuller knowledge of him to have laboured in vain in his attempt to set himself right.

CHAPTER 54 [XXX.]

ON THE LETTER OF PELAGIUS, IN WHICH HE BOASTS THAT HIS ERRORS HAD BEEN APPROVED BY FOURTEEN BISHOPS

For I will not be silent as to the transactions which took place after this trial, and which rather augment the suspicion against him. A certain epistle found its way into our hands, which was ascribed to Pelagius himself, writing to a friend of his, a presbyter, who had kindly admonished him (as appears from the same epistle) not to allow any one to separate himself from the body of the Church on his account. Among the other contents of this document, which it would be both tedious and unnecessary to quote here, Pelagius says: "By the sentence of fourteen bishops our statement was received with approbation, in which we affirmed that a man is able to be without sin, and easily to keep the commandments of God, if he wishes.' This sentence," says he, "has filled the mouths of the gainsayers with confusion, and has separated asunder the entire set which was conspiring together for evil."

Whether, indeed, this epistle was really written by Pelagius, or was composed by somebody in his name, who can fail to see, after what manner this error claims to have achieved a victory, even in the judicial proceedings where it was refuted and condemned? Now, he has adduced the words we have just quoted according to the form in which they occur in his book of “Chapters,” as it is called, not in the shape in which they were objected to him at his trial, and even repeated by him in his answer. For even his accusers, through some unaccountable inaccuracy, left out a word in their indictment, concerning which there is no small controversy. They made him say, that “a man is able to be without sin, if he wishes; and, if he wishes, to keep the commandments of God.” There is nothing said here about this being “easily” done. Afterwards, when he gave his answer, he spake thus: “We said, that a man is able to be without sin, and to keep the commandments of God, if he wishes;” he did not then say, “easily keep,” but only “keep.” So in another place, amongst the statements about which Hilary consulted me, and I gave him my views, it was objected to Pelagius that he had said, “A man is able, if he wishes, to live without sin.” To this he himself responded, “That a man is able to be without sin has been said above.” Now, on this occasion, we do not find on the part either of those who brought the objection or of him who rebutted it, that the word “easily” was used at all. Then, again, in the narrative of the holy Bishop John, which we have partly quoted above, he says, “When they were importunate and exclaimed, He is a heretic, because he says, It is true that a man is able, if he only will, to live without sin;’ and then, when we questioned him on this point, he answered, I did not say that man’s nature has received the power of being impeccable,—but I said, whosoever is willing, in the pursuit of his own salvation, to labour and struggle to abstain from sinning and to walk in the commandments of God, receives the ability to do so from God.’ Then, whilst some were whispering, and remarking on the statement of Pelagius, that without God’s grace man was able to attain perfection,’ I censured the statement, and reminded them, besides, that even the Apostle Paul, after so many labours,—not, indeed, in his own strength, but by the grace of God,—said, I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.’“ And so on, as I have already mentioned.

CHAPTER 55

PELAGIUS’ LETTER DISCUSSED

What, then, is the meaning of those vaunting words of theirs in this epistle, wherein they boast of having induced the fourteen bishops who sat in that trial to believe not merely that a man has ability but that he has “facility” to abstain from sinning, according to the position laid down in the “Chapters” of this same Pelagius,—when, in the draft of the proceedings, notwithstanding the frequent repetition of the general charge and full consideration bestowed on it, this is nowhere found? How, indeed, can this word fail to contradict the very defence and answer which Pelagius made; since the Bishop John asserted that Pelagius put in this answer in his presence, that “he wished it to be understood that the man who was willing to labour and agonize for his salvation was able to avoid sin,” while Pelagius himself, at this time engaged in a formal inquiry and conducting his defence, said, that “it was by his own labour and the grace of God that a man is able to be without sin?” Now, is a thing easy when labour is required to effect it? For I suppose that every man would agree with us in the opinion, that wherever there is labour there cannot be facility. And yet a carnal epistle of windiness and inflation flies forth, and, outrunning in speed the tardy record of the proceedings, gets first into men’s hands; so as to assert that fourteen bishops in the East have determined, not only “that a man is able to be without sin, and to keep God’s commandments,” but “easily to keep.” Nor is God’s assistance once named: it is merely said, “If he wishes;” so that, of course, as nothing is affirmed of the divine grace, for which the earnest fight was made, it remains that the only thing one reads of in this epistle is the unhappy and self-deceiving—because represented as victorious—human pride. As if the Bishop John, indeed, had not expressly declared that he censured this statement, and that, by the help of three inspired texts of Scripture, he had, as if by thunderbolts, struck to the ground the gigantic mountains of such presumption which they had piled up against the still over-towering heights of heavenly grace; or as if again those other bishops who were John’s assessors could have borne with Pelagius, either in mind or even in ear, when he pronounced these words: “We said that a man is able to be without sin and to keep the commandments of God, if he wishes,” unless he had gone on at once to say: “For the ability to do this God has given to him" (for they were unaware that he was speaking of nature, and not of that grace which they had learnt from the teaching of the apostle); and had afterwards added this qualification: "We never said, however, that any man could be found, who at no time whatever from his infancy to his old age had committed sin, but that if any person were converted from his sins, he could by his own exertion and the grace of God be without sin." Now, by the very fact that in their sentence they used these words, "he has answered correctly, that a man can, when he has the assistance and grace of God, be without sin;'" what else did they fear than that, if he denied this, he would be doing a manifest wrong not to man's ability, but to God's grace? It has indeed not been defined when a man may become without sin; it has only been judicially settled, that this result can only be reached by the assisting grace of God; it has not, I say, been defined whether a man, whilst he is in this flesh which lusts against the Spirit, ever has been, or now is, or ever can be, by his present use of reason and free will, either in the full society of man or in monastic solitude, in such a state as to be beyond the necessity of offering up the prayer, not in behalf of others, but for himself personally: "Forgive us our debts;" or whether this gift shall be consummated at the time when "we shall be like Him, when we shall see Him as He is,"—when it shall be said, not by those that are fighting: "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind," but by those that are triumphing: "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" Now, this is perhaps hardly a question which ought to be discussed between catholics and heretics, but only among catholics with a view to a peaceful settlement.

CHAPTER 56 [XXXI.]

IS PELAGIUS SINCERE?

How, then, can it be believed that Pelagius (if indeed this epistle is his) could have been sincere, when he acknowledged the grace of God, which is not nature with its free will, nor the knowledge of the law, nor simply the forgiveness of sins, but a something which is necessary to each of our actions; or could have sincerely anathematized everybody who entertained the contrary opinion:—seeing that in his epistle he set forth even the ease wherewith a man can avoid sinning (concerning which no question had arisen at this trial) just as if the judges had come to an agreement to receive even this word, and said nothing about the grace of God, by the confession and subsequent addition of which he escaped the penalty of condemnation by the Church?

CHAPTER 57 [XXXII.]

FRAUDULENT PRACTICES PURSUED BY PELAGIUS IN HIS REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS IN PALESTINE, IN THE PAPER WHEREIN HE DEFENDED HIMSELF TO AUGUSTIN

There is yet another point which I must not pass over in silence. In the paper containing his defence which he sent to me by a friend of ours, one Charus, a citizen of Hippo, but a deacon in the Eastern Church, he has made a statement which is different from what is contained in the Proceedings of the Bishops. Now, these Proceedings, as regards their contents, are of a higher and firmer tone, and more straightforward in defending the catholic verity in opposition to this heretical pestilence. For, when I read this paper of his, previous to receiving a copy of the Proceedings, I was not aware that he had made use of those words which he had used at the trial, when he was present for himself; they are few, and there is not much discrepancy, and they do not occasion me much anxiety. [XXXIII.] But I could not help feeling annoyance that he can appear to have defended sundry sentences of Coelestius, which, from the Proceedings, it is clear enough that he anathematized. Now, some of these he disavowed for himself, simply remarking, that “he was not in any way responsible for them.” In his paper, however, he refused to anathematize these same opinions, which are to this effect: “That Adam was created mortal, and that he would have died whether he had sinned or not sinned. That Adam’s sin injured only himself, and not the human race. That the law, no less than the gospel, leads us to the kingdom. That new-born infants are in the same condition that Adam was before he fell. That, on the one hand, the entire human race does not die owing to Adam’s death and transgression; nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ. That infants, even if they die unbaptized, have eternal life. That rich men, even if they are baptized, unless they renounce and give up all, have, whatever good they may seem to have done, nothing of it reckoned to them; neither shall they possess the kingdom of heaven.” Now, in his paper, the answer which he gives to all this is: “All these statements have not been made by me, even on their own testimony, nor do I hold myself responsible for them.” In the Proceedings, however, he expressed himself as follows on these points: “They have not been made by me, as even their testimony shows, and for them I do not feel that I am at all responsible. But yet, for the satisfaction of the holy synod, I anathematize those who either now hold, or have ever held, them.” Now, why did he not express himself thus in his paper also? It would not, I suppose, have cost much ink, or writing, or delay; nor have occupied much of the paper itself, if he had done this. Who, however, can help believing that there is a purpose in all this, to pass off this paper in all directions as an abridgment of the Episcopal Proceedings. In consequence of which, men might think that his right still to maintain any of these opinions which he pleased had not been taken away,—on the ground that they had been simply laid to his charge but had not received his approbation, nor yet had been anathematized and condemned by him.

CHAPTER 58

THE SAME CONTINUED

He has, moreover, in this same paper, huddled together afterwards many of the points which were objected against him out of the “Chapters,” of Coelestius’ book; nor has he kept distinct, at the intervals which separate them in the Proceedings, the two answers in which he anathematized these very heads; but has substituted one general reply for them all. This, I should have supposed, had been done for the sake of brevity, had I not perceived that he had a very special object in the arrangement which disturbs us. For thus has he closed this answer: “I say again, that these opinions, even according to their own testimony, are not mine; nor, as I have already said, am I to be held responsible for them. The opinions which I have confessed to be my own, I maintain are sound and correct; those, however, which I have said are not my own, I reject according to the judgment of the holy Church, pronouncing anathema on every man that opposes and gainsays the doctrines of the holy and catholic Church; and likewise on those who by inventing false opinions have excited odium against us.” This last paragraph the Proceedings do not contain; it has, however, no bearing on the matter which causes us anxiety. By all means let them have his anathema who have excited odium against him by their invention of false opinions. But, when first I read, “Those opinions, however, which I have said are not my own, I reject in accordance with the judgment of the holy Church,” being ignorant that any judgment had been arrived at on the point by the Church, since there is here nothing said about it, and I had not then read the Proceedings, I really thought that nothing else was meant than that he promised that he would entertain the same view about the “Chapters” as the Church, which had not yet determined the question, might some day decide respecting them; and that he was ready to reject the opinions which the Church had not yet indeed rejected, but might one day have occasion to reject; and that this, too, was the purport of what he further said: “Pronouncing anathema on every man that opposes and gainsays the doctrines of the holy catholic Church.” But in fact, as the Proceedings testify, a judgment of the Church had already been pronounced on these subjects by the fourteen bishops; and it was in accordance with this judgment that he professed to reject all these opinions, and to pronounce his anathema against those persons who, by reason of the said opinions, were contravening the judgment which had already, as the Proceedings show, been actually settled. For already had the judges asked: “What says the monk Pelagius to all these heads of opinion which have been read in his presence? For this holy synod condemns them, as does also God’s holy catholic Church.” Now, they who know nothing of all this, and only read this paper of his, are led to suppose that some one or other of these opinions may lawfully be maintained, as if they had not been determined to be contrary to catholic doctrine, and as if Pelagius had declared himself to be ready to hold the same sentiments concerning them which the Church had not as yet determined, but might have to determine. He has not, therefore, expressed himself in this paper, to which we have so often referred, straightforwardly enough for us to discover the fact, of which we find a voucher in the Proceedings, that all those dogmas by means of which this heresy has been stealing along and growing strong with contentious audacity, have been condemned by fourteen bishops presiding in an ecclesiastical synod! Now, if he was afraid that this fact would become known, as is the case, he has more reason for self-correction than for resentment at the vigilance with which we are watching the controversy to the best of our ability, however late. If, however, it is untrue that he had any such fears, and we are only indulging in a suspicion which is natural to man, let him forgive us; but, at the same time, let him continue to oppose and resist the opinions which were rejected by him with anathemas in the proceedings before the bishops, when he was on his defence; for if he now shows any leniency to them, he would seem not only to have believed these opinions formerly, but to be cherishing them still.

CHAPTER 59 [XXXIV.]

ALTHOUGH PELAGIUS WAS ACQUITTED, HIS HERESY WAS CONDEMNED

Now, with respect to this treatise of mine, which perhaps is not unreasonably lengthy, considering the importance and extent of its subject, I have wished to inscribe it to your Reverence, in order that, if it be not displeasing to your mind, it may become known to such persons as I have thought may stand in need of it under the recommendation of your authority, which carries so much more weight than our own poor industry. Thus it may avail to crush the vain and contentious thoughts of those persons who suppose that, because Pelagius was acquited, those Eastern bishops who pronounced the judgment approved of those dogmas which are beginning to shed very pernicious influences against the Christian faith, and that grace of God whereby we are called and justified. These the Christian verity never ceases to condemn, as indeed it condemned them even by the authoritative sentence of the fourteen bishops; nor would it, on the occasion in question, have hesitated to condemn Pelagius too, unless he had anathematized the heretical opinions with which he was charged. But now, while we render to this man the respect of brotherly affection (and we have all along expressed with all sincerity our anxiety for him and interest in him), let us observe, with as much brevity as is consistent with accuracy of observation, that, notwithstanding the undoubted fact of his having been acquitted by a human verdict, the heresy itself has ever been held worthy of condemnation by divine judgment, and has actually been condemned by the sentence of these fourteen bishops of the Eastern Church.

CHAPTER 60 [XXXV.]

THE SYNOD'S CONDEMNATION OF HIS DOCTRINES

This is the concluding clause of their judgment. The synod said: "Now forasmuch as we have received satisfaction in these inquiries from the monk Pelagius, who has been present, who yields assent to godly doctrines, and rejects and anathematizes those which are contrary to the Church, we confess him still to belong to the communion of the catholic Church." Now, there are two facts concerning the monk Pelagius here contained with entire perspicuity in this brief statement of the holy bishops who judged him: one, that "he yields assent to godly doctrines;" the other, that "he rejects and anathematizes those which are contrary to the Church." On account of these two concessions, Pelagius was pronounced to be "in the communion of the catholic Church." Let us, in pursuit of our inquiry, briefly recapitulate the entire facts, in order to discover what were the words he used which made those two points so clear, as far as men were able at the moment to form a judgment as to what were manifest points. For among the allegations which were made against him, he is said to have rejected and anathematized, as "contrary," all the statements which in his answer he denied were his. Let us, then, summarize the whole case as far as we can.

CHAPTER 61

HISTORY OF THE PELAGIAN HERESY. THE PELAGIAN HERESY WAS RAISED BY SUNDRY PERSONS WHO AFFECTED THE MONASTIC STATE

Since it was necessary that the Apostle Paul's prediction should be accomplished,—"There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you,"—after the older heresies, there has been just now introduced, not by bishops or presbyters or any rank of the clergy, but by certain would-be monks, a heresy which disputes, under colour of defending free will, against the grace of God which we have through our Lord Jesus Christ; and endeavours to overthrow the foundation of the Christian faith of which it is written, "By one man, death, and by one man the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" and denies God's help in our actions, by affirming that, "in order to avoid sin and to fulfil righteousness, human nature can be sufficient, seeing that it has been created with free will; and that God's grace lies in the fact that we have been so created as to be able to do this by the will, and in the further fact that God has given to us the assistance of His law and commandments, and also in that He forgives their past sins when men turn to Him;" that "in these things alone is God's grace to be regarded as consisting, not in the help He gives to us for each of our actions,"—"seeing that a man can be without sin, and keep God's commandments easily if he wishes."

CHAPTER 62

THE HISTORY CONTINUED. COELESTIUS CONDEMNED AT CARTHAGE BY EPISCOPAL JUDGMENT. PELAGIUS ACQUITTED BY BISHOPS IN PALESTINE, IN CONSEQUENCE OF HIS DECEPTIVE ANSWERS; BUT YET HIS HERESY WAS CONDEMNED BY THEM

After this heresy had deceived a great many persons, and was disturbing the brethren whom it had failed to deceive, one Coelestius, who entertained these sentiments, was brought up for trial before the Church of Carthage, and was condemned by a sentence of the bishops. Then, a few years afterwards, Pelagius, who was said to have been this man's instructor, having been accused of holding his heresy, found also his way before an episcopal tribunal. The indictment was prepared against him by the Gallican bishops, Heros and Lazarus, who were, however, not present at the proceedings, and were excused from attendance owing to the illness of one of them. After all the charges were duly recited, and Pelagius had met them by his answers, the fourteen bishops of the province of Palestine pronounced him, in accordance with his answers, free from the perversity of this heresy; while yet without hesitation condemning the heresy itself. They approved indeed of his answer to the objections, that "a man is assisted by a knowledge of the law, towards not sinning; even as it is written, He hath given them a law for a help;'" but yet they disapproved of this knowledge of the law being that grace of God concerning which the Scripture says: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Nor did Pelagius say absolutely: "All men are ruled by their own will," as if God did not rule them; for he said, when questioned on this point: "This I stated in the interest of the freedom of our will; God is its helper, whenever it makes choice of good. Man, however, when sinning, is himself in fault, as being under the direction of his free will.” They approved, moreover, of his statement, that “in the day of judgment no forbearance will be shown to the ungodly and sinners, but they will be punished in everlasting fires;” because in his defence he said, “that he had made such an assertion in accordance with the gospel, in which it is written concerning sinners, These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.’“ But he did not say, all sinners are reserved for eternal punishment, for then he would evidently have run counter to the apostle, who distinctly states that some of them will be saved, “yet so as by fire.” When also Pelagius said that “the kingdom of heaven was promised even in the Old Testament,” they approved of the statement, on the ground that he supported himself by the testimony of the prophet Daniel, who thus wrote: “The saints shall take the kingdom of the Most High.” They understood him, in this statement of his, to mean by the term “Old Testament,” not simply the Testament which was made on Mount Sinai, but the entire body of the canonical Scriptures which had been given previous to the coming of the Lord. His allegation, however, that “a man is able to be without sin, if he wishes,” was not approved by the bishops in the sense which he had evidently meant it to bear in his book—as if this was solely in a man’s power by free will (for it was contended that he must have meant no less than this by his saying: “if he wishes”),—but only in the sense which he actually gave to the passage on the present occasion in his answer; in the very sense, indeed, in which the episcopal judges mentioned the subject in their own interlocution with especial brevity and clearness, that a man is able to be without sin with the help and grace of God. But still it was left undetermined when the saints were to attain to this state of perfection,—whether in the body of this death, or when death shall be swallowed up in victory.

CHAPTER 63

THE SAME CONTINUED. THE DOGMAS OF COELESTIUS LAID TO THE CHARGE OF PELAGIUS, AS HIS MASTER, AND CONDEMNED

Of the opinions which Coelestius has said or written, and which were objected against Pelagius, on the ground that they were the dogmas of his disciple, he acknowledged some as entertained also by himself; but, in his vindication, he said that he held them in a different sense from that which was alleged in the indictment. One of these opinions was thus stated: “Before the advent of Christ some men lived holy and righteous lives.” Coelestius, however, was stated to have said that “they lived sinless lives.” Again, it was objected that Coelestius declared “the Church to be without spot and wrinkle.” Pelagius, however, said in his reply, “that he had made such an assertion, but as meaning that the Church is by the laver cleansed from every spot and wrinkle, and that in this purity the Lord would have her continue.” Respecting that statement of Coelestius: “That we do more than is commanded us in the law and the gospel,” Pelagius urged in his own vindication, that “he spoke concerning virginity,” of which Paul says: “I have no commandment of the Lord.” Another objection alleged that Coelestius had maintained that “every individual has the ability to possess all powers and graces,” thus annulling that “diversity of gifts” which, the apostle sets forth. Pelagius, however, answered, that “he did not annul the diversity of gifts, but declared that God gives to the man who has proved himself worthy to receive them, all graces, even as He gave the Apostle Paul.”

CHAPTER 64

HOW THE BISHOPS CLEARED PELAGIUS OF THOSE CHARGES

These four dogmas, thus connected with the name of Coelestius, were therefore not approved by the bishops in their judgment, in the sense in which Coelestius was said to have set them forth but in the sense which Pelagius gave to them in his reply. For they saw clearly enough, that it is one thing to be without sin, and another thing to live holily and righteously, as Scripture testifies that some lived even before the coming of Christ. And that although the Church here on earth is not without spot or wrinkle, she is yet both cleansed from every spot and wrinkle by the laver of regeneration, and in this state the Lord would have her continue. And continue she certainly will, for without doubt she shall reign without spot or wrinkle in an everlasting felicity. And that the perpetual virginity, which is not commanded, is unquestionably more than the purity of wedded life, which is commanded—although virginity is persevered in by many persons, who, notwithstanding, are not without sin. And that all those graces which he enumerates in a certain passage were possessed by the Apostle Paul; and yet, for all that, either they could quite understand, in regard to his having been worthy to receive them, that the merit was not according to his works, but rather, in some way, according to predestination (for the apostle says himself: “I am not meet to be called an apostle;”) or else their attention was not arrested by the sense which Pelagius gave to the word, as he himself viewed it. Such are the points on which the bishops pronounced the agreement of Pelagius with the doctrines of godly truth.

CHAPTER 65

RECAPITULATION OF WHAT PELAGIUS CONDEMNED

Let us now, by a like recapitulation, bestow a little more attention on those subjects which the bishops said he rejected and condemned as “contrary;” for herein especially lies the whole of that heresy. We will entirely pass over the strange terms of adulation which he is reported to have put into writing in praise of a certain widow; these he denied having ever inserted in any of his writings, or ever given utterance to, and he anathematized all who held the opinions in question not indeed as heretics, but as fools. The following are the wild thickets of this heresy, which we are sorry to see shooting out buds, nay growing into trees, day by day:—”That Adam was made mortal, and would have died whether he had sinned or not; that Adam’s sin injured only himself, and not the human race; that the law no less than the gospel leads to the kingdom; that new-born infants are in the same condition that Adam was before the transgression; that the whole human race does not, on the one hand, die in consequence of Adam’s death and transgression, nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ; that infants, even if they die unbaptized, have eternal life; that rich men, even if baptized, unless they renounce and surrender everything, have, whatever good they may seem to have done, nothing of it reckoned to them, neither can they possess the kingdom of God; that God’s grace and assistance are not given for single actions, but reside in free will, and in the law and teaching; that the grace of God is bestowed according to our merits, so that grace really lies in the will of man, as he makes himself worthy or unworthy of it; that men cannot be called children of God, unless they have become entirely free from sin; that forgetfulness and ignorance do not come under sin, as they do not happen through the will, but of necessity; that there is no free will, if it needs the help of God, inasmuch as every one has his proper will either to do something, or to abstain from doing it; that our victory comes not from God's help, but from free will; that from what Peter says, that we are partakers of the divine nature,' it must follow that the soul has the power of being without sin, just in the way that God Himself has." For this have I read in the eleventh chapter of the book, which bears no title of its author, but is commonly reported to be the work of Coelestius,—expressed in these words: "Now how can anybody," asks the author, "become a partaker of the thing from the condition and power of which he is distinctly declared to be a stranger?" Accordingly, the brethren who prepared these objections understood him to have said that man's soul and God are of the same nature, and to have asserted that the soul is part of God; for thus they understood that he meant that the soul partakes of the same condition and power as God. Moreover in the last of the objections laid to his charge there occurs this position: "That pardon is not given to penitents according to the grace and mercy of God, but according to their own merits and effort, since through repentance they have been worthy of mercy." Now all these dogmas, and the arguments which were advanced in support of them, were repudiated and anathematized by Pelagius, and his conduct herein was approved of by the judges, who accordingly pronounced that he had, by his rejection and anathema, condemned the opinions in question as contrary to the faith. Let us therefore rejoice—whatever may be the circumstances of the case, whether Coelestius laid down these theses or not, or whether Pelagius believed them or not—that the injurious principles of this new heresy were condemned before that ecclesiastical tribunal; and let us thank God for such a result, and proclaim His praises.

CHAPTER 66

THE HARSH MEASURES OF THE PELAGIANS AGAINST THE HOLY MONKS AND NUNS WHO BELONGED TO JEROME'S CHARGE

Certain followers of Pelagius are said to have carried their support of his cause after these judicial proceedings to an incredible extent of perverseness and audacity. They are said to have most cruelly beaten and maltreated the servants and handmaidens of the Lord who lived under the care of the holy presbyter Jerome, slain his deacon, and burnt his monastic houses; whilst he himself, by God’s mercy, narrowly escaped the violent attacks of these impious assailants in the shelter of a well-defended fortress. However, I think it better becomes me to say nothing of these matters, but to wait and see what measures our brethren the bishops may deem it their duty to adopt concerning such scandalous enormities; for nobody can suppose that it is possible for them to pass them over without notice. Impious doctrines put forth by persons of this character it is no doubt the duty of all catholics, however remote their residence, to oppose and refute, and so to hinder all injury from such opinions wheresoever they may happen to find their way; but impious actions it belongs to the discipline of the episcopal authority on the spot to control, and they must be left for punishment to the bishops of the very place or immediate neighbourhood, to be dealt with as pastoral diligence and godly severity may suggest. We, therefore, who live at so great a distance, are bound to hope that such a stop may there be put to proceedings of this kind, that there may be no necessity elsewhere of further invoking judicial remedies. But what rather befits our personal activity is so to set forth the truth, that the minds of all those who have been severely wounded by the report, so widely spread everywhere, may be healed by the mercy of God following our efforts. With this desire, I must now at last terminate this work, which, should it succeed, as I hope, in commending itself to your mind, will, I trust, with the Lord’s blessing, become serviceable to its readers—recommended to them rather by your name than by my own, and through your care and diligence receiving a wider circulation.

ACTS OR DISPUTATION AGAINST FORTUNATUS THE MANICHAEAN

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(ACTA SEU DISPUTATIO CONTRA FORTUNATUM MANICHAEUM)

A.D. 392.

ST. AUGUSTIN

TRANSLATED BY

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On the fifth of September, the most renowned men Arcadius Augustus (the second time) and Rufinus being consuls, a disputation against Fortunatus, an elder of the Manichaeans, was held in the city of Hippo Regius, in the baths of Sossius, in the presence of the people.

1. Augustin said: I now regard as error what formerly I regarded as truth. I desire to hear from you who are present whether my supposition is correct. First of all I regard it as the height of error to believe that Almighty God, in whom is our one hope, is in any part either violable, or contaminable, or corruptible. This I know your heresy affirms, not indeed in the words that I now use; for when you are questioned you confess that God is incorruptible, and absolutely inviolable, and incontaminable; but when you begin to expound the rest of your system, we are compelled to declare Him corruptible, penetrable, contaminable. For you say that another race of darkness, whatever it may be, has rebelled against the kingdom of God; but that Almighty God, when He saw what ruin and desolation threatened his domains, unless he should make some opposition to the adverse race and resist it, sent this virtue, from whose commingling with evil and the race of darkness the world was framed. Hence it is that here good souls labor, serve, err, are corrupted: that they may see the need of a liberator, who should purge them from error, loose them from this commingling with evil, and liberate them from servitude. I think it impious to believe that Almighty God ever feared any adverse race, or was under necessity to precipitate us into afflictions.

Fortunatus said: Because I know that you have been in our midst, that is, have lived as an adherent among the Manichaeans, these are the principles of our faith. The matter now to be considered is our mode of living, the falsely alleged crimes for which we are maltreated. Therefore let the good men present hear from you whether these things with which we are charged and which we have thrown in our teeth are true or false. For from your instruction, and from your exposition and explanation, they will have been able to gain more correct information about our mode of life, if it shall have been set forth by you.

2. Augustin said: I was among you, but faith and morals are different questions. I proposed to discuss faith. But if those present prefer to hear about morals, I do not decline that question.

Fortunatus said: I wish first to purge myself in your conscience in which we are polluted, by the testimony of a competent man, (who even now is competent for me), and in view of the future examination of Christ, the just judge, whether he saw in us, or himself practiced by imitation, the things that are now thrown in our teeth?

3. Augustin said: You call me to something else, when I had proposed to discuss faith, but concerning your morals only those who are your Elect can fully know. But you know that I was not your Elect, but an Auditor. Hence though I was present at your prayer meetings, as you have asked (whether separately among yourselves you have any prayer meetings, God alone and yourselves can know); yet in your prayer meetings where I have been present I have seen nothing shameful take place; but only that the faith that I afterwards learned and approved is denounced, and that you perform your services facing the sun. Besides this I found out nothing new in your meetings, but whoever raises any question of morals against you, raises it against your Elect. But what you who are Elect do among yourselves, I have no means of knowing. For I have often heard from you that you receive the Eucharist. But since the time of receiving it was concealed from me, how could I know what you receive? So keep the question about morals, if you please, for discussion among your Elect, if it can be discussed. You gave me a faith that I today disapprove. This I proposed to discuss. Let a response be made to my proposition.

Fortunatussaid: And our profession is this very thing: that God is incorruptible, lucid, unapproachable, intenible, impassible, that He inhabits His own eternal lights, that nothing corruptible proceeds from Him, neither darkness, demons, Satan, nor anything adverse can be found in His kingdom. But that He sent forth a Saviour like Himself; that the Word born from the foundation of the world, when He had formed the world, after the formation of the world came among men; that He has chosen souls worthy of Himself according to His own holy will, sanctified by celestial command, imbued with the faith and reason of celestial things; that under His leadership those souls will return hence again to the kingdom of God according to the holy promise of Him who said: “I am the way, the truth, and the door;” and “No one can come unto the Father, except through me.” These things we believe because otherwise, that is, through another mediator, souls cannot return to the kingdom of God, unless they find Him as the way, the truth, and the door. For Himself said: “He that hath seen me, hath seen my Father also;” and “whosoever shall have believed on me shall not taste death forever, but has passed from death unto life, and shall not come into judgment.” These things we believe and this is the reason of our faith, and according to the strength of our mind we endeavor to act according to His commandments, following after the one faith of this Trinity, Father and Son and Holy Spirit.

4. Augustin said: What was the cause of those souls being precipitated into death, whom you confess come through Christ from death to life?

Fortunatus said: Hence now deign to go on and to contradict, if there is nothing besides God.

5. Augustin said: Nay, do you deign to answer the question put to you: What cause has given these souls to death?

Fortunatus said: Nay but do you deign to say whether there is anything besides God, or all things are in God.

6. Augustin said: This I can reply, that the Lord wished me to know that God cannot suffer any necessity, nor be violated or corrupted in any part. Which, since you also acknowledge, I ask by what necessity He sent hither souls that you say return through Christ?

Fortunatus said: What you have said: that thus far God has revealed to you, that He is incorruptible, as He has also revealed to me; the reason must be sought, how and wherefore souls have come into this world, so that now of right God should liberate them from this world through his Son only begotten and like Himself, if besides Himself there is nothing?

7. Augustin said: We ought not to disappoint those present, being men of note, and from the question proposed for discussion go to another. So we both confess, so we concede to ourselves, that God is incorruptible and inviolable, and could have in no way suffered. From which it follows, that your heresy is false, which says that God, when He saw desolation and ruin threaten His kingdom, sent forth a power that should do battle with the race of darkness, and that out of this commingling our souls are laboring. My argument is brief, and as I suppose, perfectly clear to any one. If God could have suffered nothing from the race of darkness because He is inviolable, without cause He sent us hither that we might here suffer distress. But if anything can suffer, it is not inviolable, and you deceive those to whom you say that God is inviolable. For this your heresy denies when you expound the rest of it.

Fortunatussaid: We are of that mind in which the Apostle Paul instructs us, who says: “Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus, who when He had been constituted in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied Himself receiving the form of a servant, having been made in the likeness of men, and having been found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and was made obedient even unto death.” We have this mind therefore about ourselves, which we have also about Christ, who when He was constituted in the form of God, was made obedient even unto death that He might show the similitude of our souls. And like as He showed in Himself the similitude of death, and having been raised from the midst of the dead showed that He was from the Father, in the same manner we think it will be with our souls, because through Him we shall have been able to be freed from this death, which is either alien from God, or if it belongs to God, His mercy ceases, and the name of liberator, and the works of Him who liberates.

8. Augustin said: I ask how we came into death, and you tell how we may be liberated from death.

Fortunatus said: So the apostle said that we ought to have that mind concerning ourselves which Christ has shown us. If Christ was in suffering and death, so also are we.

9. Augustin said: It is known to all that the Catholic faith is to the effect that our Lord, that is the Power and Wisdom of God, and the Word through whom all things have been made and without whom was not anything made, took upon Himself man to liberate us. In the man whom He took upon Himself, He demonstrated those things that you spoke of. But we now ask concerning the substance of God Himself and of Unspeakable Majesty, whether anything can injure it or not. For if anything can injure it, He is not inviolable. If nothing can injure the substance of God, what was the race of darkness about to do to it, against which you say war was waged by God before the foundation of the world; in which war you assert that we, that is souls that are now manifestly in need of a liberator, have been commingled with every evil and implicated in death. For I return to that very brief statement: If He could be injured, He is not inviolable; if He could not, He acted cruelly in sending us hither to suffer these things.

Fortunatus said: Does the soul belong to God, or not?

10. Augustin said: If it is just that you should fail to respond to my questions, and that I should be questioned, I will reply.

Fortunatus said: Does the soul act independently? This I ask of you.

11. Augustin said: I indeed will tell what you have asked; only remember this, that while you have refused to respond to my questions, I have responded to yours. If you ask whether the soul descended from God, it is indeed a great question; but whether it descends from God or not, I make this reply concerning the soul, that it is not God; that God is one thing, the soul another. That God is inviolable, incorruptible, and impenetrable, and incontaminable, who also could be corrupted in no part and to whom no injury can be done in any part. But we see also that the soul is sinful, and is conversant with misery, and seeks the truth, and is in want of a liberator. This changing condition of the soul shows me that the soul is not God. For if the soul is the substance of God, the substance of God errs, the substance of God is corrupted, the substance of God is violated, the substance of God is deceived; which it is impious to say.

Fortunatus said: Therefore you have denied that the soul is of God, so long as it serves sins, and vices, and earthly things, and is led by error, because it cannot happen that either God or His substance should suffer this thing. For God is incorruptible and His substance immaculate and holy. But here it is inquired of you whether the soul is of God, or not? Which we confess, and show from the advent of the Saviour, from His holy preaching, from His election; while He pitied souls, and the soul is said to have come according to His will, that He might free it from death and might bring it to eternal glory, and restore it to the Father. But what do you say and hope concerning the soul; is it from God or not? Can the substance of God, from which you deny that the soul has its being, be subject to no passions?

12. Augustin said: I have denied that the soul is the substance of God in the sense of its being God; but yet I hold that it is from God as its author, because it was made by God. The Maker is one thing, the thing made is another. He who made cannot be corruptible at all, but what He made cannot be at all equal to Him who made it.

Fortunatus said: Nor have I said that the soul is like God. But because you have said that the soul is an artificial thing, and that there is nothing besides God, I ask whence then God invented the substance of the soul?

13. Augustin said: Only bear in mind that I reply to your interrogations, but that you do not reply to mine. I say that the soul was made by God as all other things that were made by God; and that among the things that God Almighty made the principal place was given to the soul. But if you ask whence God made the soul, remember that you and I agree in confessing that God is almighty. But he is not almighty who seeks the assistance of any material whence he may make what he will. From which it follows, that according to our faith, all things that God made through His Word and Wisdom, He made out of nothing. For so we read: “He ordered and they were made; He commanded and they were created.”

Fortunatus said: Do all things have their existence from God’s command?

14. Augustin said: So I believe, but all things which were made.

Fortunatus said: As things made they agree, but because they are unsuitable to themselves, therefore on this account it follows, that there is not one substance, although from the same order of the One they came to the composition and fashioning of this world. But it is plain in the things themselves that there is no similarity between darkness and light, truth and falsehood, death and life, soul and body, and other similar things which differ from each other both in names and appearances. And for good reason did our Lord say: “The tree which my heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up and cast into the fire, because it brings not forth good fruit:” ^ and that the tree has been rooted up. Hence truly it follows from the reason of things that there are two substances in this world which agree in forms and in names, of which one belongs to corporeal natures, but the other is the eternal substance of the omnipotent Father, which we believe to be God’s substance.

15. Augustin said: Those contrary things that move you so that we think adversely, have happened on account of our sin, that is, on account of the sin of man. For God made all things good, and ordered them well; but He did not make sin, and our voluntary sin is the only thing that is called evil. There is another kind of evil, which is the penalty of sin. Since therefore there are two kinds of evil, sin and the penalty of sin, sin does not pertain to God; the penalty of sin pertains to the avenger. For as God is good who constituted all things, so He is just in taking vengeance on sin. Since therefore all things are ordered in the best possible way, which seem to us now to be adverse, it has deservedly happened to fallen man who was unwilling to keep the law of God. For God gave free will to the rational soul which is in man. For thus it would have been possible to have merit, if we should be good voluntarily and not of necessity. Since therefore it behooves us to be good not of necessity but voluntarily, it behooved God to give to the soul free will. But to this soul obeying His laws, He subjected all things without adversity, so that the rest of the things that God made should serve it, if also the soul itself had willed to serve God. But if it should refuse to serve God, those things that served it should be converted into its punishment. Wherefore if all things are rightly ordered by God, and are good, neither does God suffer evil.

Fortunatus said: He does not suffer, but prevents evil.

16. Augustin said: From whom then was He about to suffer it?

Fortunatus said: This is my point, that He wished to prevent it, not rashly, but by power and prescience. But deny evil to be apart from God, when other precepts can be shown which are done apart from His will. A precept is not introduced, unless where there is contrariety. The free faculty of living is not given except where there is a fall according to the argument of the apostle who says: “And you did he quicken, when ye were dead in your trespasses and sins, wherein aforetime ye walked according to the rulership of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the souls of disobedience; among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the counsels of the flesh, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest: but God, who is rich in all mercy, had mercy on us. And when we were dead by sins, quickened us together in Christ, by whose grace ye have been saved; and at the same time also raised us up, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places with Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, for it is a gift of God; not of works, lest any one should glory. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus in good works, which God prepared that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that aforetime ye were Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision, by that which is called circumcision in flesh made by hands, because ye were at that time without Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers of the covenant, having no hope of the promise, and without God in this world. But now in Christ Jesus, ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who made both one, and breaking down the middle wall of partition, the enmities in His flesh, making void by His decrees the law of commandments, that in Himself He might unite the two into one new man, making peace, that He might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, slaying the enmities in Himself. And He came and preached peace unto you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father.”

17. Augustin said: This passage from the apostle, which you have thought fit to recite, if I mistake not, makes very strongly for my faith and against

yours. In the first place, because free will itself, on which I have said that the possibility of the soul’s sinning depends, is here sufficiently expressed, when sins are mentioned, and it is said that our reconciliation with God takes place through Jesus Christ. For by sinning we were brought into opposition to God; but by holding to the precepts of Christ we are reconciled to God; so that we who were dead in sins may be made alive by keeping His precepts, and may have peace with Him in one Spirit, from whom we were alienated, by failure to keep His precepts; as is set forth in our faith concerning the man who was first created. I ask of you, therefore, according to that passage which has been read, how can we have sins if contrary nature compels us to do what we do? For he who is compelled by nature to do anything, does not sin. But he who sins, sins by free will. Wherefore would repentance be enjoined upon us, if we have done nothing evil, but only the race of darkness? Likewise, I ask, to whom is forgiveness of sins granted, to us or to the race of darkness? If to the race of darkness, their race will also reign with Him, receiving the forgiveness of sin; but if to us it is manifest that we have sinned voluntarily. For it is the height of folly for him to be pardoned who has done no evil. But he has done no evil, who has done nothing of his own will. Therefore the soul that today promises itself forgiveness of sins and reconciliation to God, if it should cease to sin, and repent of past sins: if it should answer according to your faith and should say: In what have I sinned? In what am I guilty? Why hast Thou expelled me from Thy domains, that I might do battle with some sort of race? I have been trodden under foot, I have been mixed up, I have been corrupted, I am worn out, my free will has not been preserved. Thou knowest the necessity by which I am preserved: Why dost Thou impute to me the wounds that I have received? Wherefore dost Thou compel me to repentance when Thou art the cause of my wounds; when Thou knowest what I have suffered, what the race of darkness has done against me, Thou being the author who couldst suffer no harm and yet wishing to save the domains which nothing could injure, Thou didst thrust me down into these miseries. If indeed I am a part of Thee, who have proceeded from Thy bowels, if I am from Thy kingdom and Thy mouth, I ought not to suffer anything in this race of darkness, so that I being uncorrupted that race should be subjected, if I was a part of the Lord. But now since it cannot be controlled except by my corruption, how can I either be said to be a part of

Thee, or Thou remain inviolable, or not be cruel in wishing me to suffer for those domains, that could in no way be injured by that race of darkness? Respond to this if you please, and deign also to explain to me how it was said by the apostle, “We were by nature children of wrath,” who, he says, have been reconciled to God. If therefore they were by nature children of wrath, how do you say that the soul is by nature a daughter and portion of God?

Fortunatussaid: If with regard to the soul the apostle had said that we are by nature children of wrath, the soul would have been alienated by the mouth of the apostle from God. From this argument you only show that the soul does not belong to God, because, the apostle says, “We are by nature children of wrath.” But if it is said in view of the fact that the apostle was held by the law, descending as he himself testifies, from the seed of Abraham, it follows that he has said corporeally, that we [i.e., Jews] were children of wrath even as the rest of mankind. But he shows that the substance of the soul is of God, and that the soul cannot otherwise be reconciled to God than through the Master, who is Christ Jesus. For the enmity having been slain, the soul seemed to God unworthy to have existed. But that it was sent, this we confess, by God yet omnipotent, both deriving its origin from Him and sent for the sealing of His will. In the same way we believe also that Christ the Saviour came from heaven to fulfill the will of the Father. Which will of the Father was this, to free our souls from the same enmity, this enmity having been slain, which if it had not been opposed to God could neither be called enmity where there was unity, nor could slaying be spoken of or take place where there was life.

18. Augustin said: Remember that the apostle said that we are alienated from God by our manner of life.

Fortunatus said: I submit, that there were two substances. In the substance of light, as we have above said, God is to be held incorruptible; but that there was a contrary nature of darkness, that which I also today confess is vanquished by the power of God, and that Christ has been sent forth as a Saviour for my restoration, as previously the same apostle says.

19. Augustin said: That we should discuss on rational grounds the belief in two natures, has been made obligatory by those who are hearing us. But inasmuch as you have again betaken yourself to the Scriptures, I descend to them, and demand that nothing be passed by, lest using certain statements we should bring confusion into the minds of those to whom the Scriptures are not well known. Let us therefore consider a statement that the apostle has in his epistle to the Romans. For on the first page is what is strongly against you. For he says: "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which He promised aforetime by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning his Son, who was made unto Him of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was predestinated to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness from the resurrection from the dead of our Lord Jesus Christ." We see that the apostle teaches us concerning our Lord Jesus Christ that before the flesh he was predestinated by the power of God, and according to the flesh was made unto Him of the seed of David. Since you have always denied and always will deny this, how do you so earnestly demand the Scriptures that we should discuss rather according to them.

Fortunatussaid: You assert that according to the flesh Christ was of the seed of David, when it should be asserted that he was born of a virgin, and should be magnified as Son of God. For this cannot be, unless as what is from spirit may be held to be spirit, so also what is from flesh may be known to be flesh. Against which is the authority of the Gospel in which it is said, that "flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God, neither shall corruption inherit incorruption."

Here a clamor was made by the audience who wished the argument to be conducted on rational grounds, because they saw that Fortunatus was not willing to receive all things that are written in the Codex of the apostle. Then little discussions began to be held here and there by all, until Fortunatus said that the Word of God has been fettered in the race of darkness. At which, when those present had expressed their horror, the meeting was closed.

Disputation of the Second Day

The next day, a notary having again been summoned, the discussion was conducted as follows:

Fortunatus said: I say that God Almighty brings forth from Himself nothing evil, and that the things that are His remain incorrupt, having sprung and being born from an inviolable source; but other contrary things which have their being in this world, do not flow from God nor have appeared in this world with God as their author; that is to say, they do not derive their origin from God. These things therefore we have received in the belief that evil things are foreign to God.

20. Augustin said: And our faith is this, that God is not the progenitor of evil things, neither has He made any evil nature. But since both of us agree that God is incorruptible and incontaminable, it is the part of the prudent and faithful to consider, which faith is purer and worthier of the majesty of God; that in which it is asserted that either the power of God, or some part of God, or the Word of God, can be changed, violated, corrupted, fettered; or that in which it is said that Almighty God and His entire nature and substance can never be corrupted in any part, but that evils have their being by the voluntary sin of the soul, to which God gave free will. Which free will if God had not given, there could be no just penal judgment, nor merit of righteous conduct, nor divine instruction to repent of sins, nor the forgiveness of sins itself which God has bestowed upon us through our Lord Jesus Christ. Because he who sins not voluntarily, sins not at all. This I suppose to be open and perspicuous to all. Wherefore it ought not to trouble us if according to our deserts we suffer some inconveniences in the things God has made. For as He is good, that He should constitute all things; so He is just, that He may not spare sins, which sins, as I have said, unless free will were in us, would not be sins. For if any one, so to speak, should be bound by some one in his other members, and with his hand something false should be written without his own will, I ask whether if this were laid open before a judge, he could condemn this one for the crime of falsehood.

Wherefore, if it is manifest that there is no sin where there is not free exercise of will, I wish to hear what evil the soul which you call either part, or power, or word, or something else, of God, has done, that it should be punished by God, or repent of sin, or merit forgiveness, since it has in no way sinned?

Fortunatus said: I proposed concerning substances, that God is to be regarded as creator only of good things, but as the avenger of evil things, for the reason that evil things are not of Him. Therefore for good reason I think this, and that God avenges evil things because they are not of Himself. But if they were from Him, either He would give them license to sin, as you say that God has given free will, He would be already found a participator in my fault, because He would be the author of my fault; or ignorant what I should be, he left me whom he did not constitute worthy of Himself. This therefore is proposed by me, and what I ask now is, whether God instituted evil or not? and whether He Himself instituted the end of evils. For it appears from these things, and the evangelical faith teaches, that the things which we have said were made by God Himself as God the Creator, as having been created and begotten by Him, are to be esteemed incorruptible. These things I also proposed which belong to our belief, and which can be confirmed by you in that profession of ours, without prejudice to the authority of the Christian faith. And because I can in no way show that I rightly believe, unless I should confirm that belief by the authority of the Scriptures, this is therefore what I have insinuated, what I have said. Either if evil things have appeared in the world with God as their author, deign to say so yourself; or if it is right to believe that evil things are not of God, this also the contemplation of those present ought to honor and receive. I have spoken about substances, not about sin that dwells in us. For if what we think to make faults had no origin, we should not be compelled to come to sin or to fault. For because we sinned unwillingly, and are compelled by a substance contrary and hostile to ourselves, therefore we follow the knowledge of things. By which knowledge the soul admonished and restored to pristine memory, recognizes the source from which it derives its existence, in what evil it dwells, by what good works emending again that in which unwillingly it sinned, it may be able through the emendation of its faults, for the sake of good works, to secure for itself the merit of reconciliation with God, our Saviour being the author of it, who teaches us also to practice good things and to flee from evil. For you ask us to believe that not by some contrary nature, but by his own choice, man either serves righteousness or becomes involved in sins; since, no contrary race existing, if the soul, to which as you say God has given free will, having been constituted in the body, dwells alone, it would be without sin, nor would it become involved in sins.

21. Augustin said: I say it is not sin, if it be not committed by one's own will; hence also there is reward, because of our own will we do right. Or if he who sins unwillingly deserves punishment, he who unwillingly does well ought to deserve reward. But who doubts that reward is only bestowed upon him who does something of good will? From which we know that punishment also is inflicted upon him who does something of ill will. But since you recall me to primordial natures and substances, my faith is that God Almighty—which must especially be attended to and fixed in the mind—that God Almighty has made good things. But the things made by Him cannot be such as is He who made them. For it is unjust and foolish to believe that works are equal to the workman, things made to the maker. Wherefore if it is reverential to believe that God made all good things, than which nevertheless He is by far more excellent and by far more pre-eminent; the origin and head of evil is sin, as the apostle said: "Covetousness is the root of all evils; which some following after have made shipwreck of the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows." For if you seek the root of all evils, you have the apostle saying that covetousness is the root of all evils. But the root of a root I cannot seek. Or if there is another evil, whose root covetousness is not, covetousness will not be the root of all evils. But if it is true that covetousness is the root of all evils, in vain do we seek some other kind of evil. But as regards that contrary nature of yours which you introduce, since I have responded to your objections, I ask that you deign to tell me whether it is wholly evil, whether there can be no sin apart from it, whether by this alone punishment is deserved, not by the soul by which no sin has been committed. But if you say that this contrary nature alone deserves punishment, and not the soul, I ask to which is repentance, which is commanded, vouchsafed. If the soul is commanded to repent, sin is from

the soul, and the soul has sinned voluntarily. For if the soul is compelled to do evil, that which it does is not evil. Is it not foolish and most absurd to say that the race of darkness has sinned and that I repent of the sins. Is it not most absurd to say that the race of darkness has sinned and that forgiveness of sins is vouchsafed to me, who according to your faith may well say: What have I done? What have I committed? I was with Thee, I was in a state of integrity, I was contaminated with no pollution. Thou didst send me hither, Thou didst suffer necessity, Thou didst protect Thy domains when great pollution and desolation threatened them. Since therefore Thou knowest the necessity by which I have been here oppressed, by reason of which I could not breathe, which I could not resist; why dost Thou accuse me as if sinning? or why dost Thou promise forgiveness of sins? Reply to this without evasion, if you please, as I have replied to you.

Fortunatussaid: We say this, that the soul is compelled by contrary nature to transgress, for which transgression you maintain there is no root save the evil that dwells in us; for it is certain that apart from our bodies evil things dwell in the whole world. For not those things alone that we have in our bodies, dwell in the whole world, and are known by their names as good; an evil root also inheres. For your dignity said that this covetousness that dwells in our bodies is the root of evils; since therefore there is no desire of evil out of our bodies, from that source contrary nature dwells in the whole world. For the apostle designated that, namely covetousness, as the root of evils, not one evil which you have called the root of all evils. But not in one manner is covetousness, which you have said is the root of all evils, understood, as if of that which dwells in our bodies alone; for it is certain that this evil which dwells in us descends from an evil author and that this root as you call it is a small portion of evil, so that it is not the root itself, but is a small portion of evil, of that evil which dwells everywhere. Which root and tree our Lord called evil, as never bearing good fruit, which his Father did not plant, and which is deservedly rooted up and cast into the fire. For as you say, that sin ought to be imputed to the contrary nature, that nature belongs to evil; and that this is sin of the soul, if after the warning of our Saviour and his wholesome instruction, the soul shall have segregated itself from its contrary and hostile race, adorning itself also with purer things; that otherwise it cannot be restored to its own substance. For it is said: “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin. But now that I have come and spoken, and they have refused to believe me, they shall have no excuse for their sin.” Whence it is perfectly plain, that repentance has been given after the Saviour’s advent, and after this knowledge of things, by which the soul can, as if washed in a divine fountain from the filth and vices as well of the whole world as of the bodies in which the same soul dwells, be restored to the kingdom of God whence it has gone forth. For it is said by the apostle, that “the mind of the flesh is hostile to God; is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Therefore it is evident from these things that the good soul seems to sin not voluntarily, but by the doing of that which is not subject to the law of God. For it likewise follows that “the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; so that ye may not do the things that ye will.” Again: “I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and leading me captive in the law of sin and of death. Therefore I am a miserable man; who shall deliver me from the body of this death, unless it be the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” “through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world?”

22. Augustin said: I recognize and embrace the testimonies of the divine Scriptures, and I will show in a few words, as God may deign to grant, how they are consistent with my faith. I say that there was free exercise of will in that man who was first formed. He was so made that absolutely nothing could resist his will, if he had willed to keep the precepts of God. But after he voluntarily sinned, we who have descended from his stock were plunged into necessity. But each one of us can by a little consideration find that what I say is true. For today in our actions before we are implicated by any habit, we have free choice of doing anything or not doing it. But when by that liberty we have done something and the pernicious sweetness and pleasure of that deed has taken hold upon the mind, by its own habit the mind is so implicated that afterwards it cannot conquer what by sinning it has fashioned for itself. We see many who do not wish to swear, but because the tongue has already become habituated, they are not able to prevent those things from going forth from the mouth which we cannot but ascribe to the root of evil. For that I may discuss with you those words, which as they do not withdraw from your mouth so may they be understood by your heart:

you swear by the Paraclete. If therefore you wish to find out experimentally whether what I say is true, determine not to swear. You will see, that that habit is borne along as it has become accustomed to be. And this is what wars against the soul, habit formed in the flesh. This is indeed the mind of the flesh, which, as long as it cannot thus be subject to the law of God, so long is it the mind of the flesh; but when the soul has been illuminated it ceases to be the mind of the flesh. For thus it is said the mind of the flesh cannot be subject to the law of God, just as if it were said, that snow cannot be warm. For so long as it is snow, it can in no way be warm. But as the snow is melted by heat, so that it may become warm, so the mind of the flesh, that is, habit formed with the flesh, when our mind has become illuminated, that is, when God has subjected for Himself the whole man to the choice of the divine law, instead of the evil habit of the soul, makes a good habit. Accordingly it is most truly said by the Lord of the two trees, the one good and the other evil, which you have called to mind, that they have their own fruits; that is, neither can the good tree yield evil fruit, nor the evil tree good fruit, but so long as it is evil. Let us take two men, a good and a bad. As long as he is good he cannot yield evil fruit; as long as he is bad he cannot yield good fruit. But that you may know that those two trees are so placed by the Lord, that free choice may be there signified, that these two trees are not natures but our wills, He Himself says in the gospel: “Either make the tree good, or make the tree evil.” Who is it that can make nature? If therefore we are commanded to make a tree either good or evil, it is ours to choose what we will. Therefore concerning that sin of man and concerning that habit of soul formed with the flesh the apostle says: “Let no one seduce you;” “Every creature that has been made by God is good.” The same apostle whom you also have cited says: “As through the disobedience of the one the many were constituted sinners; so also through the obedience of the one the many are constituted righteous.” “Since through man is death, through man also is resurrection of the dead.” As long therefore as we bear the image of the earthly man, that is, as long as we live according to the flesh, which is also called the old man, we have the necessity of our habit, so that we may not do what we will. But when the grace of God has breathed the divine love into us and has made us subject to His will, to us it is said: “Ye are called for freedom,” and “the grace of God has made me free from the law of sin and of death.” But the law of sin is that whoever has sinned shall die. From this law we are freed when we have begun to be righteous. The law of death is that by which it was said to man: “Earth thou art and into earth thou shalt go.” For from this very fact we are all so born, because we are earth, and from the fact that we are all so born because we are earth, we shall all go into earth on account of the desert of the sins of the first man. But on account of the grace of God, which frees us from the law of sin and of death, having been converted to righteousness we are freed; so that afterwards this same flesh tortures us with its punishment so long as we remain in sins, is subjected to us in resurrection, and shakes us by no adversity from keeping the law of God and His precepts. Whence, since I have replied to your questions, deign to reply as I desire, how it can happen, that if nature is contrary to God, sin should be imputed to us, who were sent into that nature not voluntarily, but by God Himself, whom nothing could injure?

Fortunatussaid: Just as also the Lord said to His disciples: “Behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves.” Hence it must be known that not with hostile intent did our Saviour send forth His lambs, that is His disciples, into the midst of wolves, unless there had been some contrariety, which He would indicate by the similitude of wolves, where also He had sent His disciples; that the souls which perchance might be deceived in the midst of wolves might be recalled to their proper substance. Hence also may appear the antiquity of our times to which we return, and of our years, that before the foundation of the world souls were sent in this way against the contrary nature, that subjecting the same by their passion, victory might be restored to God. For the same apostle said, that not only there should be a struggle against flesh and blood, but also against principalities and powers, and the spiritual things of wickedness, and the domination of darkness.” If therefore in both places evils dwell and are esteemed wickednesses, not only now is evil in our bodies, but in the whole world, where souls appear to dwell, which dwell beneath yonder heaven and are fettered.

23. Augustin said: The Lord sent His lambs into the midst of wolves, that is, just men into the midst of sinners for the preaching of the gospel received in the time of man from the inestimable divine Wisdom, that He might call us from sin to righteousness. But what the apostle says, that our

struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and the other things that have been quoted, this signifies that the devil and his angels, as also we, have fallen and lapsed by sin, and have secured possession of earthly things, that is, sinful men, who, as long as we are sinners, are under their yoke, just as when we shall be righteous, we shall be under the yoke of righteousness; and against them we have a struggle, that passing over to righteousness we may be freed from their dominion. Do you also therefore deign to reply to the one question that I ask: Could God suffer injury, or not? But I ask you to reply: He could not.

Fortunatus said: He could not suffer injury.

24. Augustin said: Wherefore then did He send us hither, according to your faith?

Fortunatus said: My profession is this, that God could not be injured, and that He directed us hither. But since this is contrary to your view, do you tell how you account for the soul being here, which our God desires to liberate both by His commandments and by His own Son whom He has sent.

25. Augustin said: Since I see that you cannot answer my inquiries, and wish to ask me something, behold I satisfy you, provided only that you bear in mind that you have not replied to my question. Why the soul is here in this world involved in miseries has been explained by me not just now, but again and again a little while ago. The soul sinned, and therefore is miserable. It accepted free choice, used free choice, as it willed; it fell, was cast out from blessedness, was implicated in miseries. As bearing upon this I recited to you the testimony of the apostle who says: “As through one man death, so also through one man came the resurrection of the dead.” What more do you ask? Hence do you reply, wherefore did He, who could not suffer injury, send us hither?

Fortunatus said: The cause must be sought, why the soul came hither, or wherefore God desires hence to liberate the soul that lives in the midst of evils?

26. Augustin said: This cause I ask of you, that is, if God could not suffer injury, wherefore He sent us hither?

Fortunatus said: It is inquired of us, if evil cannot injure God, wherefore the soul was sent hither, or for what reason was it mingled with the world? Which is manifest in what the apostle says: “Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou formed me thus?” If therefore this cause must be pleaded, He must be asked, why He sent the soul, no necessity compelling Him. But if there was necessity for sending the soul, of right is there also the will of liberating it.

27. Augustin said: Then God is pressed by necessity, is He?

Fortunatus said: Now this is it. Do not seek to bring odium upon what has been said because we do not make God subject to necessity, but to have voluntarily sent the soul.

28. Augustin said: Recall what was said above. And it runs: “But if there was necessity for sending the soul, of right is there also the will of liberating it. Augustin said: We have heard: But if there was necessity for sending the soul, of right is there also the will of liberating it.” You, therefore, said that there was necessity for sending the soul. But if you only wish to say “a will to send,” I add this also: He who could suffer no injury, had the cruel will to send the soul to so great miseries. Because I speak for the sake of refuting this statement, I ask pardon from the mercy of that One in whom we have hope of liberation from all the errors of heretics.

Fortunatus said: You asseverate that we say that God is cruel in sending the soul, but that God made man, breathed into him a soul which assuredly He foreknew to be involved in future misery, and not to be able by reason of evils to be restored to its inheritance. This belongs either to one who is ignorant, or who gives the soul up to these aforesaid evils. This I have cited because you said not long since, that God adopted the soul, not that it is from Him; for to adopt is a different matter.

29. Augustin said: Concerning adoption I remember that I spoke some days ago according to the testimony of the apostle, who says that we have been called into the adoption of sons. This was not my reply, therefore, but the apostle’s, concerning which thing, that is, that adoption, we may inquire, if we please, in its own time; and concerning that I will reply without delay, when you shall have answered my objections.

Fortunatus said: I say that there was a going forth of the soul against a contrary nature, which nature could not injure God.

30. Augustin said: What need was there for that going forth, when God whom nothing could injure had nothing to protect?

Fortunatus said: Do you conscientiously hold that Christ came from God?

31. Augustin said: Again you are questioning me. Reply to my inquiries.

Fortunatus said: So I have received in faith, that by the will of God He came hither.

32. Augustin said: And I say: Why did God, omnipotent, inviolable, immutable, whom nothing could injure, send hither the soul, to miseries, to error, to those things that we suffer?

Fortunatussaid: For it has been said: “I have power to lay down my soul and I have power to take it again.” Now He said that by the will of God the soul went forth.

33. Augustin said: I ask for the reason why God, when He can in no way suffer injury, sent the soul hither?

Fortunatus said: We have already said that God can in no way suffer injury, and we have said that the soul is in a contrary nature, therefore that it imposes a limit on the contrary nature. The restraint having been imposed on the contrary nature, God takes the same. For He Himself said, “I have power to lay down my soul and power to take it.” The Father gave to me the power of laying down my soul, and of taking it. To what soul, therefore, did God who spoke in the Son refer? Evidently our soul, which is held in these bodies, which came of His will, and of His will is again taken up.

34. Augustin said: Why our Lord said: “I have power to lay down my soul and power to take it,” is known to all; because He was about to suffer and to rise again. But I ask of you again and again, If God could in no way suffer injury, why did he send souls hither?

Fortunatus said: To impose a limit on contrary nature.

35. Augustin said: And did God omnipotent, merciful and supreme, that He might impose a restraint on contrary nature, wish it to be limited so that He might make us unrestrained?

Fortunatus said: But so He calls us back to Himself.

36. Augustin said: If He recalls to Himself from an unrestrained state, if from sin, from error, from misery, what need was there for the soul to suffer so great evils through so long a time till the world ends? since God by whom you say it was sent could in no way suffer injury.

Fortunatus said: What then am I to say?

37. Augustin said: I know that you have nothing to say, and that I, when I was among you, never found anything to say on this question, and that I was thus admonished from on high to leave that error and to be converted to the Catholic faith or rather to recall it, by the indulgence of Him who did not permit me to inhere forever in this fallacy. But if you confess that you have nothing to reply, I will expound the Catholic faith to all those hearing and investigating, seeing that they are believers, if they permit and wish.

Fortunatus said: Without prejudice to my profession I might say: when I shall have reconsidered with my superiors the things that have been opposed by you, if they fail to respond to this question of mine, which is now in like manner proposed to me by you, it will be in my contemplation (since I desire my soul to be liberated by an assured faith) to come to the investigation of this thing that you have proposed to me and that you promise you will show.

Augustin said: Thanks be to God.

AGAINST LYING

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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CONTRA MENDACIUM.

TO CONSENTIUS.

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. H. BROWNE, M.A. OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, LATE PRINCIPAL OF THE DIOCESAN COLLEGE, CHICHESTER.

FROM THE RETRACTATIONS, BOOK II. CHAP. 60

“ Then also I wrote a Book against Lying, the occasion of which work was this. In order to discover the Priscillianist heretics, who think it right to conceal their heresy not only by denial and lies, but even by perjury, it seemed to certain Catholics that they ought to pretended themselves Priscillianists, in order that they might penetrate their lurking places. In prohibition of which thing, I composed this book. It begins: Multa mihi legenda misisti.”

1. A great deal for me to read hast thou sent, my dearest brother Consentius: a great deal for me to read: to the which while I am preparing an answer, and am drawn off first by one, then by another, more urgent occupation, the year has measured out its course, and has thrust me into such straits, that I must answer in what sort I may, lest the time for sailing being now favorable, and the bearer desirous to return, I should too long detain him. Having therefore unrolled and read through all that Leonas, servant of God, brought me from thee, both soon after I received it, and afterwards when about to dictate this reply, and having weighed it with all the consideration in my power, I am greatly delighted with thy eloquence, and memory of the holy Scripture, and cleverness of wit, and the resentment with which thou bitest negligent Catholics, and the zeal with which thou gnashest against even latent heretics. But I am not persuaded that it is right to unearth them

out of their hiding places by our telling lies. For to what end do we take such pains in tracking them out and running them down, but that having taken them and brought them forth into open day, we may either teach them the truth, or at least having convicted them by the truth, may not allow them to hurt others? to this end, therefore, that their lie may be blotted out, or shunned, and God's truth increased. How then by a lie shall I rightly be able to prosecute lies? Or is it by robbery that robberies and by sacrilege that sacrileges, and by adultery that adulteries, are to be prosecuted? "But if the truth of God shall abound by my lie," are we too to say, "Let us do evil that good may come?" A thing which thou seest how the Apostle detesteth. For what else is, "Let us lie, that we may bring heretic liars to the truth," but, "Let us do evil that good may come?" Or, is a lie sometimes good, or sometimes a lie not evil? Why then is it written, "Thou hatest, Lord, all that work iniquity; Thou wilt destroy all that speak leasing." For he hath not excepted some, or said indefinitely, "Thou wilt destroy them that speak leasing;" so as to permit some, not all, to be understood: but it is an universal sentence that he hath passed, saying, "Thou wilt destroy all who speak leasing." Or, because it is not said, Thou wilt destroy all who speak all leasing, or, who speak any leasing whatsoever; is it therefore to be thought that there is place allowed for some lie; to wit, that there should be some leasing, and them who speak it, God should not destroy, but destroy them all which speak unjust leasing, not what lie soever, because there is found also a just lie, which as such ought to be matter of praise, not of crime?

2. Perceivest thou not how much this reasoning aideth the very persons whom as great game we make ado to catch by our lies? For, as thyself hast shown, this is the sentiment of the Priscillianists to prove which, they apply testimonies from the Scriptures exhorting their followers to lie, as though by the examples of Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Angels; not hesitating to add even the Lord Christ Himself; and deeming that they cannot otherwise prove their falsehood truthful, unless they pronounce Truth to be a liar. It must be refuted, this; not imitated: nor ought we to be partners with the Priscillianists in that evil in which they are convicted to be worse than other heretics. For they alone, or at least they in the greatest degree, are found to make a dogma of lying for the purpose of hiding their truth, as they call it:

and this so great evil therefore to esteem just, because they say that in the heart must be held that which is true, but with the mouth to utter unto aliens a false thing, is no sin; and that this is written, “Who speaketh the truth in his heart:” as though this were enough for righteousness, even though a person do with his mouth speak a lie, when not his neighbor but a stranger is he that heareth it. On this account they think the Apostle Paul, when he had said, “Putting away lying, speak ye truth,” to have immediately added, “Every man with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.” Meaning, that with them who are not our neighbors in society of the truth, nor, so to say, our co-members, it is lawful and right to speak a lie.

3. Which sentence dishonoreth the holy Martyrs, nay rather taketh away holy martyrdoms altogether. For they would do more justly and wisely, according to these men, not to confess to their persecutors that they were Christians, and by confessing make them murderers: but rather by telling a lie, and denying what they were, should both themselves keep safe the convenience of the flesh and purpose of the heart, and not allow those to accomplish the wickedness which they had conceived in their mind. For they were not their neighbors in the Christian faith, that with them it should be their duty to speak the truth in their mouth which they spake in their heart; but moreover enemies of Truth itself. For if Jehu (whom it seems they do prudently to single out unto themselves to look unto as an example of lying) falsely gave himself out for a servant of Baal, that he might slay Baal’s servants: how much more justly, according to their perversity, might, in time of persecution, the servants of Christ falsely give themselves out, for servants of demons, that the servants of demons might not slay servants of Christ; and sacrifice to idols that men might not be killed, if Jehu sacrificed to Baal that he might kill men? For what harm would it do them, according to the egregious doctrine of these speakers of lies, if they should lyingly pretend a worship of the Devil in the body, when the worship of God was preserved in the heart? But not so have the Martyrs understood the Apostle, the true, the holy Martyrs. They saw and held that which is written, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation;” and, “In their mouth was found no lie:” and so they departed irreproachable, to that place where to be tempted by liars any further they will not fear; because they will not have liars any

more in their heavenly assemblies, either for strangers or neighbors. As for that Jehu, by an impious lie and a sacrilegious sacrifice making inquisition for impious and sacrilegious men for to kill them, they would not imitate him, no, not though the Scripture had said nothing concerning him, what manner of man he was. But, seeing it is written that he had not his heart right with God; what profited it him, that for some obedience which, concerning the utter destruction of the house of Ahab, he exhibited for the lust of his own domination. he received some amount of transitory wages in a temporal kingdom? Let, rather, the truth-telling sentence of the Martyrs be thine to defend: to this I exhort thee, my brother, that thou mayst be against liars, not a teacher of lying, but an asserter of truth. For, I pray thee, attend diligently to what I say, that thou mayest find how needful to be shunned is that which, with laudable zeal indeed towards impious men, that they may be caught and corrected, or avoided, but yet too incautiously, is thought fit to be taught.

4. Of lies are many sorts, which indeed all, universally, we ought to hate. For there is no lie that is not contrary to truth. For, as light and darkness, piety and impiety, justice and iniquity, sin and right-doing, health and weakness, life and death, so are truth and a lie contrary the one to the other. Whence by how much we love the former, by so much ought we to hate the latter. Yet in truth there be some lies which to believe does no harm: although even by such sort of lie to wish to deceive, is hurtful to him that tells it, not to him that believes it. As though, if that brother, the servant of God, Fronto, in the information which he gave thee, should (though far be the thought!) say some things falsely; he would have hurt himself assuredly, not thee, although thou, without iniquity of thine, hadst believed all, upon his telling it. Because, whether those things did so take place or not so, yet they have not any thing, which if a person believe to have been so, though it were not so, he by the rule of truth and doctrine of eternal salvation should be judged worthy of blame. Whereas, if a person tell a lie which if any believe he will be an heretic against the doctrine of Christ, by so much is he who tells the lie more hurtful, by how much he that believes it is more miserable. See then, what manner of thing it is, if against the doctrine of Christ we shall tell a lie which whoso believes shall perish, in order that we may catch the enemies of the same doctrine, to the end we may bring them

to the truth, while we recede from it; nay rather, when we catch liars by lying, teach worse lies. For it is one thing what they say when they lie, another when they are deceived. For, when they teach their heresy, they speak the things in which they are deceived; but when they say that they think what they do not think, or that they do not think what they do think, they say the things in which they lie. In that any believeth them, what though he do not find them out, himself perisheth not. For it is no receding from the catholic rule, if, when a heretic lyingly professes the catholic doctrines, one believes him to be a catholic: and therefore it is not pernicious to him; because he is mistaken in the mind of a man, of which, when latent, he cannot judge, not in the faith of God which it is his duty to keep safe planted within him. Moreover, when they teach their heresy, whoso shall believe them, in thinking it truth, will be partaker, as of their error, so of their damnation. So it comes to pass, that when they fable their nefarious dogmas in which they are with deadly error deceived, then whoso believeth them is lost: whereas when we preach catholic dogmas, in which we hold the right faith, then if he shall believe, that man is found, whoso was lost. But when, they being Priscillianists, do, in order that they may not betray their venom, lyingly give themselves out to be of us; whoever of us believes them, even while they escape detection, himself perseveres a Catholic: we on the other hand, if, in order to attain to the discovery of them, we falsely give ourselves out for Priscillianists, because we shall praise their dogmas as though they were our own, whoso shall believe the same, will either be confirmed among them, or will be transferred to them in the meantime straightway: but what the coming hour may bring forth, whether they shall be afterwards set free therefrom by us when speaking true things, who were deceived by us when speaking false; and whether they will be willing to hear one teaching whom they have thus experienced telling a lie, who can know for certain? who can be ignorant that this is uncertain? Whence it is gathered, that it is more pernicious, or to speak more mildly, that it is more perilous for Catholics to lie that they may catch heretics, than for heretics to lie that they may not be found out by Catholics. Because, whoso believes Catholics when they tell a lie to tempt people, is either made or confirmed a heretic; but whoso believes heretics when they tell a lie to conceal themselves, doth not cease to be a Catholic. But that this may become more plain, let us propose some cases by way of example, and from those writings in preference which thou hast sent me to read.

5. Well then, let us set before our eyes a cunning spy as he makes up to the person whom he has already perceived to be a Priscillianist; he begins with Dictinius the bishop, and lyingly bepraises either his life, if he knew him, or his fame, if he knew him not; this is more tolerable thus far, because Dictinius is accounted to have been a Catholic, and to have been corrected of that error. Then, passing on to Priscillian, (for this comes next in the art of lying,) he shall make reverend mention of him, of an impious and detestable person, condemned for his nefarious wickedness and crimes! In which reverend mention, if haply the person for whom this sort of net is spread, had not been a firm Priscillianist, by this preaching of him, he will be confirmed. But when the spy shall go on to discourse of the other matters, and saying that he pities them whom the author of darkness hath invoked in such darkness of error, that they acknowledge not the honor of their own soul, and the brightness of their divine ancestry: then speaking of Dictinius's Book, which is called "the Pound," because it treats, first and last, of a dozen questions, being as the ounces which go to the pound, shall extol it with such praise, as to protest that such a "Pound" (in which awful blasphemies are contained) is more precious than many thousands of pounds of gold; truly, this astuteness of him who tells the lie slays the soul of him who believes it, or, that being slain already, doth in the same death sink, and hold it down. But, thou wilt say, "afterwards it shall be set at liberty." What if it come not to pass, either upon something intervening that prevents what was begun from being completed, or through obstinacy of an heretical mind denying the same things over again, although of some it had already begun to make confession? especially because, if he shall find out that he has been tampered with by a stranger, he will just the more boldy study to conceal his sentiments by a lie, when he shall have learned much more certainly that this is done without blame, even by the example of the very person who tampered with him. This, truly, in a man who thinks it right to hide the truth by telling a lie, with what face can we blame, and dare to condemn what we teach?

6. It remains, then, that what the Priscillianists think, according to the nefarious falsity of their heresy, of God, of the soul, of the body, and the rest, we hesitate not with truthful pity to condemn; but what they think of the right of telling a lie to hide the truth is to be to us and them (which God forbid!) a common dogma. This is so great an evil, that even though this attempt of ours, whereby we desire by means of a lie to catch them and change them, should so prosper that we do catch and change them, there is no gain that can compensate the damage of making ourselves wrong with them in order to set them right. For through this lie shall both we be in that respect perverse, and they but half corrected; seeing that their thinking it right to tell a lie on behalf of the truth is a fault which we do not correct in them, because we have learned and do teach the same thing, and lay it down that it is fit to be done, in order that we may be able to attain to the amending of them. Whom yet we amend not, for their fault, with which they think right to hide the truth, we take not away, rather we make ourselves faulty when by such a fault we seek them; nor do we find how we can believe them, when converted, to whom, while perverted, we have lied; lest haply what was done to them that they might be caught, they do to us when caught; not only because to do it hath been their wont, but because in us also, to whom they come, they find the same.

7. And, what is more miserable, even they, already made as it were our own, cannot find how they may believe us. For if they suspect that even in the catholic doctrines themselves we speak lyingly, that we may conceal I know not what other thing which we think true; of course to one suspecting the like thou shalt say, I did this then only to catch thee: but what wilt thou answer when he says, Whence then do I know whether thou art not doing it even now, lest thou be caught by me? Or indeed, can any man be made to believe that a man does not lie not to be caught, who lies to catch? Seest thou whither this evil tends? that is, that not only we to them, and they to us, but every brother to every brother shall not undeservedly become suspected? And so while that which is aimed at by means of the lie, is that faith may be taught, the thing which is brought about is, rather, that there shall be no having faith in any man. For if we speak even against God when we tell a lie, what so great evil will people be able to discover in any lie,

that, as though it were a most wretched thing, we should be bound in every way to eschew it?

8. But now observe how more tolerable in comparison with us is the lying of the Priscillianists, when they know that they speak deceitfully: whom by our own lying we think right to deliver from those false things in which they by erring are decayed. A Priscillianist saith, that the soul is a part of God, and of the same nature and substance with Him. This is a great and detestable blasphemy. For it follows that the nature of God may be taken captive, deceived, cheated, disturbed, and defiled, condemned and tortured. But if that man also saith this, who from so great an evil desires to deliver a man by a lie, let us see what is the difference between the one blasphemer and the other. “Very much,” sayest thou: “for this the Priscillianist saith, also believing it so: but the catholic not so believing, though so speaking.” The one, then, blasphemes without knowing, the other with knowledge: the one against science, the other against conscience; the one hath the blindness of thinking false things, but in them hath at least the will of saying true things; the other in secret seeth truth, and willingly speaketh false. “But the one;” thou wilt say, “teacheth this, that he may make men partakers of his error and madness: the latter saith it that from that error and madness he may deliver men.” Now I have already shown above how hurtful is this very thing which people believe will do good: but meanwhile if we weigh in these two the present evils, (for the future good which a catholic seeks from correcting a heretic is uncertain,) who sins worse? who deceives a man without knowing it, or he who blasphemes God, knowing it? Assuredly which is the worse, that man understands, who with solicitous piety preferreth God to man. Add to this, that, if God may be blasphemed in order that we may bring men to praise Him, without doubt we do by our example and doctrine invite men not only to praise, but also to blaspheme God: because they whom through blasphemies against God we plot to bring to the praises of God, verily, if we do bring them, will learn not only to praise, but also to blaspheme. These be the benefits we confer on them whom, by blaspheming not ignorantly but with knowledge, we deliver from heretics! And whereas the Apostle delivered men to Satan himself that they might learn not to blaspheme, we endeavor to rescue men from Satan, that they may learn to blaspheme not with ignorance, but with knowledge. And upon

ourselves, their masters, we bring this so great bane, that, for the sake of catching heretics, we first become, which is certain, blasphemers of God, in order that we may for the sake of delivering them, which is uncertain, be able to be teachers of His truth.

9. When therefore we teach ours to blaspheme God that the Priscillianists may believe them theirs, let us see what evil themselves say when they therefore lie that we may believe them ours. They anathematize Priscillian, and detest him according to our mind; they say that the soul is a creature of God, not a part; they execrate the Priscillianists' false martyrdoms; the catholic bishops by whom that heresy has been stripped, attacked, prostrated, they extol with great praises, and so forth. Behold, themselves speak truth when they lie: not that the very thing which is a lie can be true at the same time; but when in one thing they lie, in another they speak truth: for when, in saying they are of us, they lie, of the catholic faith they speak truth. And therefore they, that they may not be found out for Priscillianists, speak in lying manner the truth: but we, that we may find them out, not only speak lyingly, that we may be believed to belong to them; but we also speak false things which we know to belong to their error. Therefore as for them, when they wish to be thought of us, it is both false in part, and true in part, what they say; for it is false that they are of us, but true that the soul is not a part of God: but as for us, when we wish to be thought to belong to them, it is false, both the one and the other that we say, both that we are Priscillianists, and that the soul is a part of God. They, then, praise God, not blaspheme, when they conceal themselves; and when they do not so, but utter their own sentiments, they know not that they blaspheme. So that if they be converted to the catholic faith, they console themselves, because they can say what the Apostle said: who when among other things he had said, "I was before a blasphemer; but," saith he, "I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly." We on the contrary, in order that they may open themselves to us, if we utter this as if it were a just lie for deceiving and catching them, do assuredly both say that we belong to the blaspheming Priscillianists, and that they may believe us, do without excuse of ignorance blaspheme. For a catholic, who by blaspheming wishes to be thought a heretic, cannot say, "I did it ignorantly."

10. Ever, my brother, in such cases, it behoves with fear to recollect, "Whoso shall deny Me before men, I will deny him before My Father which is in heaven." Or truly is it no denying of Christ before men, to deny Him before Priscillianists, that when they hide themselves, one may by a blasphemous lie strip them and catch them? But who doubts, I pray thee, that Christ is denied, when so as He is in truth, we say that He is not; and so as the Priscillianist believes Him, we say that He is?

11. "But, hidden wolves," thou wilt say, "clad in sheep's clothing, and privily and grievously wasting the Lord's flock, can we no otherwise find out." Whence then have the Priscillianists become known, ere this way of hunting for them with lies was ex-cogitated? Whence was their very author, more cunning doubtless, and therefore more covert, got at in his bed? Whence so many and so great persons made manifest and condemned, and the others innumerable partly corrected, partly as if corrected, and in the Church's compassion gathered into her fold? For many ways giveth the Lord, when He hath compassion, whereby we may come to the discovery of them: two of which are more happy than others; namely, that either they whom they have wished to seduce, or they whom they had already seduced, shall, when they repent and are converted, point them out. Which is more easily effected, if their nefarious error, not by lying tricks, but by truthful reasonings be overthrown. In the writing of which it behoves thee to bestow thy pains, since God hath bestowed the gift that thou canst do this: which wholesome writings whereby their insane perversity is destroyed, becoming more and more known, and being by catholics, whether prelates who speak in the congregations, or any studious men full of zeal for God, every where diffused, these will be holy nets in which they may be caught truthfully, not with lies hunted after. For so being taken, either, of their own accord, they will confess what they have been, and others whom they know to be of the evil fellowship they will either kindly correct, or mercifully betray. Or else, if they shall be ashamed to confess what with long-continued simulation they have concealed, by the hidden hand of God healing them shall they be made whole.

12. "But," thou wilt say, "we more easily penetrate their concealment if we pretend to be ourselves what they are." If this were lawful or expedient,

Christ might have instructed his sheep that they should come clad in wolves' clothing to the wolves, and by the cheat of this artifice discover them: which He hath not said, no, not when He foretold that He would send them forth in the midst of wolves. But thou wilt say: "They needed not at that time to have inquisition made for them, being most manifest wolves; but their bite and savageness were to be endured." What, when foretelling later times, He said that ravening wolves would come in sheep's clothing? Was there not room there to give this advice and say, And do ye, that ye may find them out, assume wolves' clothing, but within be ye sheep still? Not this saith He: but when he had said, "Many will come to you in sheep's clothing, but within are ravening wolves;" He went on to say, not, By your lies, but, "By their fruits ye shall know them." By truth must we beware of, by truth must we take, by truth must we kill, lies. Be it far from us, that the blasphemies of the ignorant we by wittingly blaspheming should overcome: far from us, that the evils of deceitful men we by imitating should guard against. For how shall we guard against them if in order to guard against them we shall have them? For if in order that he may be caught who blasphemes unwittingly, I shall blaspheme wittingly, worse is the thing I do than that which I catch. If in order that he may be found who denies Christ unwittingly, I shall deny Him wittingly, to his undoing will he follow me whom I shall so find, since in order that I may find him out, I first am undone.

13. Or haply is it so, that he who plots in this way to find out Priscillianists, denies not Christ, forasmuch as with his mouth he utters what with his heart he believes not? As if truly (which I also said a little above) when it was said, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness," it was added to no purpose, "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation?" Is it not so that almost all who have denied Christ before the persecutors, held in their heart what they believed of Him? And yet, by not confessing with the mouth unto salvation, they perished, save they which through penitence have lived again? Who can be so vain, as to think that the Apostle Peter had that in his heart which he had on his lips when he denied Christ? Surely in that denial he held the truth within and uttered the lie without. Why then did he wash away with tears the denial which he uttered with his mouth, if that sufficed for salvation that with the heart he believed? Why, speaking the

truth in his heart, did he punish with so bitter weeping the lie which he brought forth with his mouth, unless because he saw it to be a great and deadly evil, that while with his heart he believed unto righteousness, with his mouth he made not confession unto salvation?

14. Wherefore, that which is written, “Who speaketh the truth in his heart,” is not so to be taken, as if, truth being retained in the heart, in the mouth one may speak a lie. But the reason why it is said, is, because it is possible that a man may speak with his mouth a truth which profiteth him nothing, if he hold it not in his heart, that is, if what he speaketh, himself believe not; as the heretics, and, above all, these same Priscillianists do, when they do, not indeed believe the catholic faith, but yet speak it, that they may be believed to be of us. They speak therefore the truth in their mouth, not in their heart. On this account were they to be distinguished from him of whom it is written, “He that speaketh truth in his heart.” Now this truth the catholic as in his heart he speaketh, because so he believeth, so also in his mouth ought he, that so he may preach it; but against it, neither in heart nor in mouth have falsehood, that both with the heart he may believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth may make confession unto salvation. For also in that psalm, after it had been said, “Who speaketh truth in his heart,” presently this is added, “Who hath used no deceit in his tongue.”

>15. And as for that saying of the Apostle, “Putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another,” far be it that we should so understand it, as though he had permitted to speak a lie with those who are not yet with us members of the body of Christ. But the reason why it is said, is, because each one of us ought to account every man to be that which he wishes him to become, although he be not yet become such; as the Lord showed the alien Samaritan to be neighbor to him unto whom he showed mercy.” A neighbor then, and not an alien, is that man to be accounted, with whom our concern is that he remain not an alien; and if on the score of his not being yet made partaker of our Faith and Sacrament, there be some truths that must be concealed from him, yet is that no reason why false things should be told him.

16. For there were even in the Apostles’ times some who preached the truth not in truth, that is, not with truthful mind: of whom the Apostle saith that

they preached Christ not chastely, but of envy and strife. And on this account even at that time some were tolerated while preaching truth not with a chaste mind: yet not any have been praised as preaching falsehood with a chaste mind. Lastly, he saith of those, “Whether in pretence or in truth Christ be preached:” but in no wise would he say, In order that Christ may after be preached, let Him be first denied.

17. Wherefore, though there be indeed many ways in which latent heretics may be sought out, without vituperating the catholic faith or praising heretical impiety, yet if there were no other way at all of drawing out heretical impiety from its caverns, but that the catholic tongue should deviate from the straight path of truth; more tolerable were it that that should be hid, than that this should be precipitated; more tolerable that the foxes should lurk in their pits unseen, than for the sake of catching them the huntsmen should fall into the pit of blasphemy; more tolerable that the perfidy of Priscillianists should be covered with the veil of truth, than that the faith of catholics, lest it should of lying Priscillianists be praised, should of believing catholics be denied. For if lies, not of whatsoever kind, but blasphemous lies, are therefore just because they are committed with intent to detect hidden heretics; it will be possible at that rate, if they be commuted with the same intention, that there should be chaste adulteries. For put the case that of a number of lewd Priscillianists, some woman should cast her eye upon a catholic Joseph, and promise him that she will betray their hidden retreats if she obtain from him that he lie with her, and it be certain that if he consent unto her she will make good her promise: shall we judge that it ought to be done? Or shall we understand that by no means must such a price be paid in purchase of that kind of merchandise? Why then do we not rout out heretics, in order to their being caught, by the flesh committing lasciviousness in adultery, and yet think right to rout them out by a mouth committing fornication in blasphemy? For either it will be lawful to defend both the one and the other with equal reason, that these things be therefore said to be not unjust, because they were done with intention of finding out the unjust: or if sound doctrine willeth not even for the sake of finding out heretics that we should have to do with unchaste women, albeit only in body, not in mind, assuredly not even for the sake of finding out heretics willeth it that by us, albeit only in voice not in mind,

either unclean heresy were preached, or the chaste Catholic Church blasphemed. Because even the very sovereignty of the mind, to which every inferior motion of the man ought to be obedient, will not lack deserved opprobrium, when a thing is done that ought not to be done, whether by member or by word. Although even when it is done by word, it is done by member: because the tongue is a member, by which the word is made; nor is any deed of ours by any member brought to the birth unless it is first conceived in the heart; or rather being by our inwardly thinking upon and consenting unto it already brought to the birth, it is brought forth abroad in our doing of it, by a member. It is therefore no excusing the mind from the deed, when any thing is said to be done not after the purpose of the mind, which yet were not done, unless the mind decreed it to be done.

18. It does indeed make very much difference, for what cause, with what end, with what intention a thing be done: but those things which are clearly sins, are upon no plea of a good cause, with no seeming good end, no alleged good intention, to be done. Those works, namely of men, which are not in themselves sins, are now good, now evil, according as their causes are good or evil; as, to give food to a poor man is a good work, if it be done because of pity, with right faith; as to lie with a wife, when it is done for the sake of generation, if it be done with faith to beget subjects for regeneration. These and the like works according to their causes are good or evil, because the self-same, if they have evil causes, are turned into sins: as, if for boasting sake a poor man is fed; or for lasciviousness a man lies with his wife; or children are begotten, not that they may be nurtured for God, but for the devil. When, however, the works in themselves are evil, such as thefts, fornications, blasphemies, or other such; who is there that will say, that upon good causes they may be done, so as either to be no sins, or, what is more absurd, just sins? Who is there that would say, That we may have to give to the poor, let us commit thefts upon the rich: or, Let us sell false witness, especially if innocent men are not hurt thereby, but rather guilty men are rescued from the judges who would condemn them? For two good things are done by selling of this lie, that money may be taken wherewith a poor man may be fed, and a judge deceived that a man be not punished. Even in the matter of wills, if we can, why not suppress the true, and forge false wills that inheritances or legacies may not come to unworthy persons,

who do no good with them; but rather to those by whom the hungry are fed, the naked clothed, strangers entertained, captives redeemed, Churches builded? For why should not those evil things be done for the sake of these good things, if, for the sake of these good things, those are not evil at all? Nay, further, if lewd and rich women are likely to enrich moreover their lovers and paramours, why should not even these parts and arts be undertaken by a man of merciful heart, to use them for so good a cause as that he may have whence to bestow upon the needy; and not hear the Apostle saying, "Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands that which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth?" If indeed not only theft itself, but also false witness and adultery and every evil work will be not evil but good, if it be done for the sake of being the means of doing good. Who can say these things, except one who endeavors to subvert human affairs and all manners and laws? For of what most heinous deed, what most foul crime, what most impious sacrilege, may it not be said that it is possible for it to be done rightly and justly; and not only with impunity, but even gloriously, that in perpetrating thereof not only no punishments should be feared, but there should be hope even of rewards: if once we shall concede in all evil works of men, that not what is done, but wherefore done, must be the question; and this, to the end that whatever are found to have been done for good causes, not even they should be judged to be evil? But if justice deservedly punisheth a thief, albeit he shall say and shew that he therefore withdrew superfluities from a rich that he might afford necessaries to a poor man; if deservedly she punisheth a forger, albeit he prove that he therefore corrupted another's will, that he might be heir, who should thence make large alms, not he who should make none; if deservedly she punisheth an adulterer yea, though he shall demonstrate that of mercy he did commit adultery, that through her with whom he did it he might deliver a man from death; lastly, to draw nearer to the matter in question, if deservedly she punishment him who hath with that intent mixed in adulterous embrace with some woman, privy to the turpitude of the Priscillianists, that he might enter into their concealments; I pray thee, when the Apostle saith, "Neither yield ye your members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin;" and therefore neither hands, nor members of generation, nor other members, can it be right to yield unto flagitious deeds with intent that we may be able to find out

Priscillanists; what hath our tongue, what our whole mouth, what the organ of the voice, offended us, that we should yield these as instruments to sin, and to so great a sin, in which, that we may apprehend and rescue Priscillianists from blaspheming in ignorance, we, without excuse of ignorance, are to blaspheme our God?

19. Some man will say, “So then any thief whatever is to be accounted equal with that thief who steals with will of mercy?” Who would say this? But of these two it does not follow that any is good, because one is worse. He is worse who steals through coveting, than he who steals through pity: but if all theft be sin, from all theft we must abstain. For who can say that people may sin, even though one sin be damnable, another venial? but now we are asking, if a man shall do this or that, who will not sin or will sin? not, who will sin more heavily or lightly. For even thefts themselves are more lightly punished by law than crimes of lust: they are, however, both sins, albeit the one lighter, the other heavier; so that a theft which is committed of concupiescence is held to be lighter than an act of lust which is committed for doing a good turn. Namely, in their own kind these become lighter than other sins of the same kind, which appear to be committed with a good intention; when yet the same compared with sins of another kind lighter in respect of the kind itself, are found to be heavier. It is a heavier sin to commit theft of avarice than of mercy; and likewise it is a heavier sin to perpetrate lewdness of luxury, than of mercy; and yet is it a heavier sin to commit adultery of mercy, than to commit theft of avarice. Nor is it our concern now, what is lighter or what heavier, but what are sins or are not. For no man can say that it was a duty for a sin to be done, where it is clearly a sin; but we say that it is a duty, if the sin were done so or so, to forgive or not to forgive.

20. But, what must be confessed, to human minds certain compensative sins do cause such embarrassment, that they are even thought meet to be praised, and rather to be called right deeds. For who can doubt it to be a great sin, if a father prostitute his own daughters to the fornications of the impious? And yet hath there arisen a case in which a just man thought it his duty to do this, when the Sodomites with nefarious onset of lust were rushing upon his guests. For he said, “I have two daughters which have not

known man; I will bring them out to you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do ye no wrong, for that they have come under covering of my roof." What shall we say here? Do we not so abhor the wickedness which the Sodomites were attempting to do to the guests of the just man, that, whatever were done so this were not done, he should deem right to be done? Very much also moveth us the person of the doer, which by merit of righteousness was obtaining deliverance from Sodom, to say that, since it is a less evil for women to suffer lewdness than for men, it even pertained to the righteousness of that just man, that to his daughters he chose this rather to be done, than to his guests; not only willing this in his mind, but also offering it in word, and, if they should assent, ready to fulfill it in deed. But then, if we shall open this way to sins, that we are to commit less sins, in order that others may not commit greater; by a broad boundary, nay rather, with no boundary at all, but with a tearing up and removing of all bounds, in infinite space, will all sins enter in and reign. For, when it shall be defined, that a man is to sin less, that another may not sin more; then, of course, by our committing thefts shall other men's committing of lewdness be guarded against, and incest by lewdness; and if any impiety shall seem even worse than incest, even incest shall be pronounced meet to be done by us, if in such wise it can be wrought that that impiety be not committed by others: and in each several kind of sins, both thefts for thefts, and lewdness for lewdness, and incest for incest, shall be accounted meet to be done: our own sins for other men's, not only less for greater, but even if it come to the very highest and worst, fewer for more; if the stress of affairs so turns, that otherwise other men would not abstain from sin unless by our sinning, somewhat less indeed, but still sinning; so that in every case where an enemy who shall have power of this sort shall say, "Unless thou be wicked, I will be more wicked, or unless thou do this wickedness, I will do more such," we must seem to admit wickedness in ourselves, if we wish to refrain (others) from wickedness. To be wise in this sort, what is it but to lose one's wits, or rather, to be downright mad? Mine own iniquity, not another's, whether perpetrated upon me or upon others, is that from which I must beware of damnation. For "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

21. If then to sin, that others may not commit a worse sin, either against us or against any, without doubt we ought not; it is to be considered in that

which Lot did, whether it be an example which we ought to imitate, or rather one which we ought to avoid. For it seems meet to be more looked into and noted, that, when so horrible an evil from the most flagitious impiety of the Sodomites was impending over his guests, which he wished to ward off and was not able, to such a degree may even that just man's mind have been disturbed, that he was willing to do that which, not man's fear with its misty temper, but God's Law in its tranquil serenity, if it be consulted by us, will cry aloud, must not be done, and will command rather that we be so cautious not to sin ourselves, that we sin not through fear of any sins whatever of other men. For that just man, by fearing other men's sins, which cannot defile except such as consent thereto, was so perturbed that he did not attend to his own sin, in that he was willing to subject his daughters to the lusts of impious men. These things, when we read in holy Scriptures, we must not, for that we believe them done, therefore believe them meet to be done; lest we violate precepts while we indiscriminately follow precedents. Or, truly, because David swore to put Nabal to death, and, upon more considerate clemency, did it not, shall we therefore say that he is to be imitated, so that we may swear to do a thing which afterwards we may see to be not meet to be done? But as fear perturbed the one, so that he was willing to prostitute his daughters, so did anger the other, that he swore rashly. In short, if it were allowed us to inquire of them both, by asking them to tell us why they did these things, the one might answer, "Fearfulness and trembling came upon me, and darkness covered me;" the other too might say, "Mine eye was troubled through wrath:" so that we should not marvel either that the one in the darkness of fear, or the other with troubled eye, saw not what was meet to have been seen, that they might not do what was not meet to have been done.

22. And to holy David indeed it might more justly be said, that he ought not to have been angry; no, not with one however ungrateful and rendering evil for good; yet if, as man, anger did steal over him, he ought not to have let it so prevail, that he should swear to do a thing which either by giving way to his rage he should do, or by breaking his oath leave undone. But to the other, set as he was amid the libidinous frenzy of the Sodomites, who would dare to say, "Although thy guests in thine own house, whither to enter in thou by most violent humanity hast compelled them, be laid hold upon by

lewd men, and being deforced be carnally known as women, fear thou not a whit, care for it not a whir, have no dread, no horror, no trembling?” What man, even a companion of those wretches, would dare to say this to the pious host? But assuredly it would be most rightly said, “Do what thou canst, that the thing be not done which thou deservedly fearest: but let not this fear of thine drive thee to do a thing which if thy daughters be willing that it be done unto them, they will through thee do wickedness with the Sodomites, if unwilling, will through thee from the Sodomites suffer violence. Commit not thou a great crime of thine own, while thou dreadest a greater crime of other men; for be the difference as great as thou wilt between thine own and that of others, this will be thine own, that other men’s.” Unless perchance in defending this man one should so crowd himself into a corner, as to say, “Since to receive a wrong is better than to do one, and those guests were not about to do but to suffer a wrong, that just man chose that his daughters should suffer wrong rather than his guests, acting upon his rights as his daughters’ lord; and he knew that it would be no sin in them if the thing were done, because they would but bear them which did the sin, not consenting unto them, and so without sin of their own. In fine, they did not offer themselves (albeit better females than males) to be carnally known instead of those guests, lest they should be rendered guilty, not by the suffering of others’ lust, but by consenting of their own will: nor yet did their father permit it to be done unto himself, when they essayed to do it, because he would not betray his guests to them, (albeit there had been less of evil, if it were done to one man than to two;) but as much as he could he resisted, lest himself also should be defiled by any assent of his own, though even if the frenzy of others’ lust had prevailed by strength of body, it would not have defiled him so long as he consented not. Now as the daughters sinned not, neither did he sin in their persons, because he was not making them to sin, if they should be deforced against their will, but only to bear them that did the sin. Just as if he should offer his slaves to be beaten by ruffians, that his guests might not suffer the wrong of beating.” Of which matter I shall not dispute, because it would take long to argue, whether even a master may justly use his right of power over his slave, so as to cause an unoffending slave to be smitten, that his unoffending friend may not be beaten in his house by violent bad men. But certainly, as concerning David, it is no wise right to say that he ought to have sworn to do a thing which afterwards he would perceive that he ought not to do. Whence it is clear that we ought not to take all that we read to have been done by holy or just men, and transfer the same to morals, but hence too we must learn how widely that saying of the Apostle extends, and even to what persons it reaches: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself also, lest thou be tempted." The being overtaken in a fault happens, either while one does not see at the time what is right to be done, or while, seeing it, one is overcome; that is, that a sin is done, either for that the truth is hidden, or for that infirmity compelleth.

23. But in all our doings, even good men are very greatly embarrassed in the matter of compensative sins; so that these are not esteemed to be sins, if they have such causes for the which they be done, and in the which it may seem to be rather sin, if they be left undone. And chiefly as concerning lies hath it come to this pass in the opinion of men that those lies are not accounted sins, nay rather are believed to be rightly done, when one tells a lie for the benefit of him for whom it is expedient to be deceived, or lest a person should hurt others, who seems likely to hurt unless he be got rid of by lies. In defense of these kinds of lies, very many examples from holy Scripture are accounted to lend their support. It is not, however, the same thing to hide the truth as it is to utter a lie. For although every one who lies wishes to hide what is true, yet not every one who wishes to hide what is true, tells a lie. For in general we hide truths not by telling a lie, but by holding our peace. For the Lord lied not when He said, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." He held His peace from true things, not spoke false things; for the hearing of which truths He judged them to be less fit. But if He had not indicated this same to them, that is, that they were not able to bear the things which He was unwilling to speak, He would indeed hide nevertheless somewhat of truth but that this may be rightly done we should peradventure not know, or not have so great an example to confirm us. Whence, they who assert that it is sometimes meet to lie, do not conveniently mention that Abraham did this concerning Sarah, whom he said to be his sister. For he did not say, She is not my wife, but he said, "She is my sister;" because she was in truth so near akin, that she might without a lie be called a sister. Which also afterwards he confirmed,

after she had been given back by him who had taken her, answering him and saying, “And indeed she is my sister, by father, not by mother;” that is, by the father’s kindred, not the mother’s. Somewhat therefore of truth he left untold, not told aught of falsehood, when he left wife untold, and told of sister. This also did his son Isaac: for him too we know to have gotten a wife near of kin. It is not then a lie, when by silence a true thing is kept back, but when by speech a false thing is put forward.

24. Touching Jacob, however, that which he did at his mother’s bidding, so as to seem to deceive his father, if with diligence and in faith it be attended to, is no lie, but a mystery. The which if we shall call lies, all parables also, and figures designed for the signifying of any things soever, which are not to be taken according to their proper meaning, but in them is one thing to be understood from another, shall be said to be lies: which be far from us altogether. For he who thinks this, may also in regard of tropical expressions of which there are so many, bring in upon all of them this calumny; so that even metaphor, as it is called, that is, the usurped transferring of any word from its proper object to an object not proper, may at this rate be called a lie. For when he speaks of waving corn-fields, of vines putting forth gems, of the bloom of youth, of snowy hairs; without doubt the waves, the gems, the bloom, the snow, for that we find them not in those objects to which we have from other transferred these words, shall by these persons be accounted lies. And Christ a Rock, and the stony heart of the Jews; also, Christ a Lion, and the devil a lion, and innumerable such like, shall be said to be lies. Nay, this tropical expression reaches even to what is called antiphrasis, as when a thing is said to abound which does not exist, a thing said to be sweet which is sour; “lucus quod non luceat, Parcae quod non parcant.” Of which kind is that in holy Scripture, “If he will not bless Thee to Thy face;” which the devil saith to the Lord concerning holy Job, and the meaning is “curse.” By which word also the feigned crime of Naboth is named by his calumniators; for it is said that he “blessed the king,” that is, cursed. All these modes of speaking shall be accounted lies, if figurative speech or action shall be set down as lying. But if it be no lie, when things which signify one thing by another are referred to the understanding of a truth, assuredly not only that which Jacob did or said to his father that he might be blessed, but that too which Joseph spoke as if in

mockery of his brothers, and David's feigning of madness, must be judged to be no lies, but prophetical speeches and actions, to be referred to the understanding of those things which are true; which are covered as it were with a garb of figure on purpose to exercise the sense of the pious inquirer, and that they may not become cheap by lying bare and on the surface. Though even the things which we have learned from other places, where they are spoken openly and manifestly, these, when they are brought out from their hidden retreats, do, by our (in some sort) discovering of them, become renewed , and by renewal sweet. Nor is it that they are begrudged to the learners, in that they are in these ways obscured; but are presented in a more winning manner, that being as it were withdrawn, they may be desired more ardently, and being desired may with more pleasure be found. Yet true things, not false, are spoken; because true things, not false, are signified, whether by word or by deed; the things that are signified namely, those are the things spoken. They are accounted lies only because people do not understand that the true things which are signified are the things said, but believe that false things are the things said. To make this plainer by examples, attend to this very thing that Jacob did. With skins of the kids, no doubt, he did cover his limbs; if we seek the immediate cause, we shall account him to have lied; for he did this, that he might be thought to be the man he was not: but if this deed be referred to that for the signifying of which it was really done, by skins of the kids are signified sins; by him who covered himself therewith, He who bare not His own, but others' sins. The truthful signification, therefore, can in no wise be rightly called a lie. And as in deed, so also in word. Namely, when his father said to him, "Who art thou my son?" he answered, "I am Esau, thy first-born." This, if it be referred to those two twins, will seem a lie; but if to that for the signifying of which those deeds and words are written, He is here to be understood, in His body, which is His Church, Who, speaking of this thing, saith, "When ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves cast out. And they shall come from the east and from the west and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God; and, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last." For so in a certain sort the younger brother did bear off the primacy of the elder brother, and transfer it to himself. Since then things so true, and so truthfully, be signified, what is there here that ought to be accounted to have been done or said lyingly? For when the things which are signified are not in truth things which are not, but which are, whether past or present or future, without doubt it is a true signification, and no lie. But it takes too long in the matter of this prophetical signification by stripping off the shell to search out all, wherein truth hath the palm, because as by being signified they were fore-announced, so by ensuing have they become clear.

25. Nor have I undertaken that in the present discourse, as it more pertains to thee, who hast laid open the hiding-places of the Priscillianists, so far as relates to their false and perverse dogmas; that they may not seem to have been in such sort investigated as if they were meet to be taught, not to be argued against. Make it therefore more thy work that they be beaten down and laid low, as thou hast made it, that they should be betrayed and laid open; lest while we wish to get at the discovery of men practising falsehood, we allow the falsehoods themselves, as if insuperable, to stand their ground; when we ought rather even in the hearts of latent heretics to destroy falsehoods, than by sparing falsehoods to find out the deceivers who practise falsehood. Moreover, among those dogmas of theirs which are to be subverted, is this which they dogmatize, namely, that in order to hide religion religious people ought to lie, to that degree that not only concerning other matters, not pertaining to doctrine of religion, but concerning religion itself, it is meet to lie, that it may not become exposed to aliens; to wit, that one may deny Christ, in order that one may in the midst of His enemies be in secret a Christian. This impious and nefarious dogma do thou likewise, I beseech thee, overthrow; to bolster up which they in their argumentations do gather from the Scriptures testimonies to make it appear that lies are not only to be pardoned and tolerated, but even honored. To thee therefore it pertains, in refuting that detestable sect, to show that those testimonies of Scripture are so to be received, that either thou shalt teach those to be no lies which are accounted to be such, if they be understood in that manner in which they ought to be understood; or, that those are not to be imitated which be manifestly lies; or in any wise at last, that concerning those matters at least which pertain to doctrine of religion, it is in no wise meet to tell a lie. For thus are they truly from the very foundation overthrown, while that is overthrown wherein they lurk: that in that very matter they be judged

least fit for us to follow, most fit to be shunned, in that they, for the hiding of their heresy, do profess themselves liars. This it is in them that must from the very first be assaulted, this which is, as it were, their fitting bulwark must with blows of Truth be battered and cast down. Nor must we afford them another lurking-place, which they had not, wherein they may take refuge, to wit, that being perhaps betrayed of them whom they have essayed to seduce but could not, they should say, “We only wanted to try them, because prudent Catholics have taught that to find out heretics it is right to do this.” But it is necessary with somewhat more earnest be-speaking of thy favor to say why this seems to me a tripartite method of disputing against those who want to apply the divine Scriptures as advocates of their lies; to wit, by showing that some which are there accounted to be lies, are not what they are accounted, if rightly understood; next, that if there be there any manifest lies, they are not meet to be imitated; thirdly, contrary to all opinions of all persons who think it pertains to the duty of a good man sometimes to lie, that it must in every way be held that in doctrine of religion there must in no wise a lie be told. For these are the three things to follow up which I shortly before recommended, and in some sort enjoined thee.

26. To show then that some things in the Scriptures which are thought to be lies are not what they are thought, if they be rightly understood, let it not seem to thee to tell little against them, that it is not from Apostolic but from Prophetical books that they find as it were precedents of lying. For all those which they mention by name, in which each lied, are read in those books in which not only words but many deeds of a figurative meaning are recorded, because it was also in a figurative sense that they were done. But in figures that which is spoken as a seeming lie, being well understood, is found to be a truth. The Apostles, however, in their Epistles spoke in another sort, and in another sort are written the Acts of the Apostles, to wit, because now the New Testament was revealed, which was veiled in those prophetic figures. In short, in all those Apostolic Epistles, and in that large book in which their acts are narrated with canonical truth, we do not find any person lying, such that from him a precedent can be set forth by these men for license of lying. For that simulation of Peter and Barnabas with which they were compelling the Gentiles to Judaize, was deservedly reprehended and set right, both that

it might not do harm at the time, and that it might not weigh with posterity as a thing to be imitated. For when the Apostle Paul saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, he said to Peter in the presence of them all, “If thou, being a Jew, livest as the Gentiles; and not as do the Jews, how compellest thou the Gentiles to Judaize?” But in that which himself did, to the intent that by retaining and acting upon certain observances of the law after the Jewish custom he might show that he was no enemy to the Law and to the Prophets, far be it from us to believe that he did so as a liar. As indeed concerning this matter his sentence is sufficiently well known, whereby it was settled that neither Jews who then believed in Christ were to be prohibited from the traditions of their fathers, nor Gentiles when they became Christians to be compelled thereunto: in order that those sacred rites which were well known to have been of God enjoined, should not be shunned as sacrileges; nor yet accounted so necessary, now that the New Testament was revealed, as though without them whoso should be converted unto God, could not be saved. For there were some who thought so and preached, albeit after Christ’s Gospel received; and to these had feignedly consented both Peter and Barnabas, and so were compelling the Gentiles to Judaize. For it was a compelling, to preach them to be so necessary as if, even after the Gospel received, without them were no salvation in Christ. This the error of certain did suppose, this Peter’s fear did feign, this Paul’s liberty did beat down. What therefore he saith, “I am made all things to all, that I might gain all,” that did he, by suffering with others, not by lying. For each becomes as though he were that person whom he would fain succor, when he succoreth with the same pity wherewith he would wish himself to be succored, if himself were set in the same misery. Therefore he becomes as though he were that person, not for that he deceives him, but for that he thinks himself as him. Whence is that of the Apostle, which I have before rehearsed, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted.” For if, because he said, “To the Jews became I as a Jew, and to them which were under the law as under the law,” he is therefore to be accounted to have in a lying manner taken up the sacraments of the old law, he ought in the same manner to have taken up, in a lying way, the idolatry of the Gentiles, because he hath said that to them which were without law he became as without law; which thing in any wise he did not. For he did not any where sacrifice to idols or adore those figments and not rather freely as a martyr of Christ show that they were to be detested and eschewed. From no apostolic acts or speeches, therefore, do these men allege things meet for imitation as examples of lying. From prophetical deeds or words, then, the reason why they seem to themselves to have what they may allege, is only for that they take figures prenunciative to be lies, because they are sometimes like unto lies. But when they are referred to those things for the signifying of which they were so done or said, they are found to be significations full of truth, and therefore in no wise to be lies. A lie, namely, is a false signification with will of deceiving. But that is no false signification, where, although one thing is signified by another, yet the thing signified is a true thing, if it be rightly understood.

27. There are some things of this sort even of our Saviour in the Gospel, because the Lord of the Prophets deigned to be Himself also a Prophet. Such are those where, concerning the woman which had an issue of blood, He said, “Who touched Me?” and of Lazarus. “Where have ye laid him?” He asked, namely, as if not knowing that which in any wise He knew. And He did on this account feign that He knew not, that He might signify somewhat else by that His seeming ignorance: and since this signification was truthful, it was assuredly not a lie. For those were signified, whether by her which had the issue, or by him which had been four days dead, whom even He Who knew all things did in a certain sort know not. For both she bore the type of the people of the Gentiles, whereof the prophecy had gone before, “A people whom I have not known hath served Me:” and Lazarus, removed from the living, did as it were in that place lie in significative similitude where He lay, Whose voice that is, “I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes.” And with that intent, as though it were not known by Christ, both who she was and where he was laid, by His words of interrogating a figure was enacted and by truthful signification all lying left apart.

28. Hence is also that which thou hast mentioned that they speak of, that the Lord Jesus, after He was risen, walked in the way with two disciples; and upon their drawing near to the village whither they were going, He made as though He would have gone farther: where the Evangelist, saying, “But He

Himself feigned that He would go further,” hath put that very word in which liars too greatly delight, that they may with impunity lie: as if every thing that is feigned is a lie, whereas in a truthful way, for the sake of signifying one thing by another, so many things use to be feigned. If then there had been no other thing that Jesus signified, in that He feigned to be going further, with reason might it be judged to be a lie: but then if it be rightly understood and referred to that which He willed to signify, it is a mystery. Else will all things be lies which, on account of a certain similitude of things to be signified, although they never were done, are related to have been done. Of which sort is that concerning the two sons of one man, the elder who tarried with his father, and the younger who went into a far country, which is narrated so much at length. In which sort of fiction, men have put even human deeds or words to irrational animals and things without sense, that by this sort of feigned narrations but true significations, they might in more winning manner intimate the things which they wished. Nor is it only in authors of secular letters, as in Horace, that mouse speaks to mouse, and weasel to fox, that through a fictitious narration a true signification may be referred to the matter in hand; whence the like fables of AEsop being referred to the same end, there is no man so untaught as to think they ought to be called lies: but in Holy Writ also, as in the book of Judges, the trees seek them a king, and speak to the olive, to the fig and to the vine and to the bramble. Which, in any wise, is all feigned, with intent that one may get to the thing which is intended, by a feigned narration indeed, yet not a lying one, but with a truthful signification. This I have said on account of that which is written concerning Jesus, “And Himself feigned to be going further:” lest any from this word, like the Priscillianists, wishing to have license of lying, should contend that beside others even Christ did lie. But whoso would understand what He by feigning that did prefigure, let him attend to that which He by acting did effect. For when afterwards He did go further, above all heavens, yet deserted He not His disciples. In order to signify this which in the future He did as God, at the present He feigned to do that as Man. And therefore was a veritable signification caused in that feigning to go before, because in this departure the verity of that signification did follow after. Let him therefore contend that Christ did lie by feigning, who denieth that He fulfilled by doing that which He signified.

29. Because, therefore, lying heretics find not in the books of the New Testament any precedents of lying which are meet to be imitated, they esteem themselves to be most copious in their disputation wherein they opine that it is right to lie, when from the old prophetical books, because it doth not appear therein, save to the few who understand, to what must be referred the significative sayings and doings which as such be true, they seem to themselves to find out and allege many that be lies. But desiring to have, wherewith they may defend themselves, precedents of deceit seemingly meet to be imitated, they deceive themselves, and “their iniquity lieth unto itself.” Those persons, however, of whom it is not there to be believed that they wished to prophesy, if in doing or saying they feigned aught with will of deceiving, however it may be that from the very things also which they did or said somewhat prophetical may be shapen out, being by His omnipotence afore deposited therein as a seed and pre-disposed, Who knoweth how to turn to good account even the ill-deeds of men, yet as far as regards the persons themselves, without doubt they lied. But they ought not to be esteemed meet for imitation simply for that they are found in those books which are deservedly called holy and divine: for those books contain the record of both the ill deeds and the good deeds of men; the one to be eschewed, the other to be followed after: and some are so put, that upon them is also sentence passed; some, with no judgment there expressed, are left permitted for us to judge of: because it was meet that we should not only be nourished by that which is plain, but exercised by that which is obscure.

30. But why do these persons think they may imitate Tamar telling a lie, and not think they may imitate Judah committing fornication? For there they have read both, and nought of these hath that Scripture either blamed or praised, but has merely narrated both, and to our judgment dismissed both: but it is marvellous if it hath permitted aught of these to be imitated with impunity. For, that Tamar not through lust of playing the harlot, but through wish of conceiving seed, did tell the lie, we know. But fornication also, howbeit Judah’s was not such, yet some man’s may be such whereby to procure that a man may be delivered, just as her lie was in order that a man might be conceived; is it right then to commit fornication on this account, if on that account it is thought that it was right to lie? Not therefore

concerning lying only, but concerning all works of men in which there arise as it were compensative sins, must we consider what sentence we ought to pass; lest we open a way not only to small sins whatsoever, but even to all wickednesses, and there remain no outrageous, flagitious, sacrilegious deed, in which there may not arise a cause upon which it may rightly seem a thing meet to be done, and so universal probity of life be by that opinion subverted.

31. But he who says that some lies are just, must be judged to say no other than that some sins are just, and therefore some things are just which are unjust: than which what can be more absurd? For whence is a thing a sin, but for that it is contrary to justice? Be it said then that some sins are great, some small, because it is true; and let us not listen to the Stoics who maintain all to be equal: but to say that some sins are unjust, some just, what else is it than to say that there be some unjust, some just iniquities? When the Apostle John saith, “Every man who doeth sin, doeth also iniquity and sin is iniquity.” It is impossible therefore that a sin should be just, unless when we put the name of sin upon another thing in which one doth not sin, but either doeth or suffereth aught for sin. Namely, both sacrifices for sins are named “sins,” and the punishments of sins are sometimes called sins. These doubtless can be understood to be just sins, when just sacrifices are spoken of, or just punishments. But those things which are done against God’s law cannot be just. It is said unto God, “Thy law is truth:” and consequently, what is against truth cannot be just. Now who can doubt that every lie is against truth? Therefore there can be no just lie. Again, what man doth not see clearly that every thing which is just is of the truth? And John crieth out, “No lie is of the truth.” No lie therefore is just. Wherefore, when from holy Scriptures are proposed to us examples of lying, either they are not lies, but are thought to be so while they are not understood; or, if lies they be, they are not meet to be imitated, because they cannot be just.

32. But, as for that which is written, that God did good to the Hebrew midwives, and to Rahab the harlot of Jericho, this was not because they lied, but because they were merciful to God’s people. That therefore which was rewarded in them was, not their deceit, but their benevolence; benignity

of mind, not iniquity of lying. For, as it would not be marvellous and absurd if God on account of good works after done by them should be willing to forgive some evil works at another time before committed, so it is not to be marvelled at that God beholding at one time, in one cause, both these, that is, the thing done of mercy and the thing done of deceit, did both reward the good, and for the sake of this good forgive that evil. For if sins which are done of carnal concupiscence, not of mercy, are for the sake of after works of mercy remitted, why are not those through merit of mercy remitted which of mercy itself are committed? For more grievous is a sin which with purpose of hurting, than that which with purpose of helping, is wrought. And consequently if that is blotted out by a work of mercy thereafter following, why is this, which is less heinous, not blotted out by the mercy itself of the man, both going before that he may sin, and going along with him while he sins? So indeed it may seem: but in truth it is one thing to say, "I ought not to have sinned, but I will do works of mercy whereby I may blot out the sin which I did before;" and another to say, "I ought to sin, because I cannot else show mercy." It is, I say, one thing to say, "Because we have already sinned, let us do good," and another to say, "Let us sin, that we may do good." There it is said, "Let us do good, because we have done evil;" but here, "Let us do evil that good may come." And, consequently, there we have to drain off the sink of sin, here to beware of a doctrine which teacheth to sin.

33. It remains then that we understand as concerning those women, whether in Egypt or in Jericho, that for their humanity and mercy they received a reward, in any wise temporal, which indeed itself, while they wist not of it, should by prophetical signification prefigure somewhat eternal. But whether it be ever right, even for the saving of a man's life, to tell a lie, as it is a question in resolving which even the most learned do weary themselves, it did vastly surpass the capacity of those poor women, set in the midst of those nations, and accustomed to those manners. Therefore their ignorance in this as well as in those other things of which they were alike unknowing, but which are to be known by the children not of this world but of that which is to come, the patience of God did bear withal: Who yet, for their human kindness which they had shown to His servants, rendered unto them rewards of an earthly sort, albeit signifying somewhat of an heavenly. And

Rahab, indeed, delivered out of Jericho, made transition into the people of God, where, being proficient, she might attain to eternal and immortal prizes which are not to be sought by any lie. Yet at that time when she did for the Israelite spies that good, and, for her condition of life, laudable work, she was not as yet such that it should be required of her, “In your mouth let Yea be yea, Nay nay.” But as for those midwives, albeit Hebrewesses, if they savored only after the flesh, what or how great is the good they got of their temporal reward in that they made them houses, unless by making proficiency they attained unto that house of which is sung unto God, “Blessed are they that dwell in thine house; for ever and ever they will praise thee?” It must be confessed, however, that it approacheth much unto righteousness, and though not yet in reality, even now in respect of hopefulness and disposition that mind is to be praised, which never lies except with intention and will to do good to some man, but to hurt no man. But as for us, when we ask whether it be the part of a good man sometimes to lie, we ask not concerning a person pertaining to Egypt, or to Jericho, or to Babylon, or still to Jerusalem itself, the earthly, which is in bondage with her children; but concerning a citizen of that city which is above and free, our mother, eternal in the heavens. And to our asking it is answered, “No lie is of the truth.” The sons of that city, are sons of the Truth. That city’s sons are they of whom it is written,”In their mouth was found no lie:” son of that city is he of whom is also written, “A son receiving the word shall be far from destruction: but receiving, he hath received that for himself, and nothing false proceedeth out of his mouth.” These sons of Jerusalem on high, and of the holy city eternal, if ever, as they be men, a lie of what kind soever doth worm itself into them, they ask humbly for pardon, not therefrom seek moreover glory.

34. But some man will say, Would then those midwives and Rahab have done better if they had shown no mercy, by refusing to lie? Nay verily, those Hebrew women, if they were such as that sort of persons of whom we ask whether they ought ever to tell a lie, would both eschew to say aught false, and would most frankly refuse that foul service of killing the babes. But, thou wilt say, themselves would die. Yea, but see what follows. They would die with an heavenly habitation for their incomparably more ample reward than those houses which they made them on earth could be: they

would die, to be in eternal felicity, after enduring of death for most innocent truth. What of her in Jericho? Could she do this? Would she not, if she did not by telling a lie deceive the inquiring citizens, by speaking truth betray the lurking guests? Or could she say to their questionings, I know where they are; but I fear God, I will not betray them? She could indeed say this, were she already a true Israelitess in whom was no guile: which thing she was about to be, when through the mercy of God passing over into the city of God. But they, hearing this (thou wilt say), would slay her, would search the house. But did it follow that they would also find them, whom she had diligently concealed? For in the foresight of this, that most cautious woman had placed them where they would have been able to remain undiscovered if she, telling a lie, should not be believed. So both she, if after all she had been slain by her countrymen for the work of mercy, would have ended this life, which must needs come to an end, by a death precious in the sight of the Lord, and towards them her benefit had not been in vain. But, thou wilt say, "What if the men who sought them, in their thorough-going search had come to the place where she had concealed them?" In this fashion it may be said: What if a most vile and base woman, not only telling, but swearing a lie, had not got them to believe her? Of course even so would the things have been like to come to pass, through fear of which she lied. And where do we put the will and power of God? or haply was He not able to keep both her, neither telling a lie to her own townsmen, nor betraying men of God, and them, being His, safe from all harm? For by Whom also after the woman's lie they were guarded, by Him could they, even if she had not lied, have in any wise been guarded. Unless perchance we have forgotten that this did come to pass in Sodom, where males burning towards males with hideous lust could not so much as find the door of the house in which were the men they sought; when that just man, in a case altogether most similar, would not tell a lie for his guests, whom he knew not to be Angels, and feared lest they should suffer a violence worse than death. And doubtless, he might have given the seekers the like answer as that woman gave in Jericho. For it was in precisely the like manner that they sought by interrogating. But that just person was not willing that for the bodies of his guests his soul should be spotted by his own telling of a lie, for which bodies he was willing that the bodies of his daughters by iniquity of others' lust should be deforced. Let then a man do even for the temporal safety of men what he can; but when it comes to that point that to consult for such saving of them except by sinning is not in his power, thenceforth let him esteem himself not to have what he may do, when he shall perceive that only to be left him which he may not rightly do. Therefore, touching Rahab in Jericho, because she entertained strangers, men of God, because in entertaining of them she put herself in peril, because she believed on their God, because she diligently hid them where she could, because she gave them most faithful counsel of returning by another way, let her be praised as meet to be imitated even by the citizens of Jerusalem on high. But in that she lied, although somewhat therein as prophetical be intelligently expounded, yet not as meet to be imitated is it wisely propounded: albeit that God hath those good things memorably honored, this evil thing mercifully overlooked.

35. Since these things are so, because it were too long to treat thoroughly of all that in that “Pound” of Dictinius are set down as precedents of lying, meet to be imitated, it seemeth to me that this is the rule to which not only these, but whatever such there be, must be reduced. Namely, either what is believed to be a lie must be shown not to be such; whether it be where a truth is left untold, and yet no falsehood told; or where a true signification willeth one thing to be understood of another, which kind of figurative either sayings or doings abounds in the prophetical writings. Or, those which are convicted to be lies, must be proved to be not meet to be imitated: and if any (as other sins) should stealthily creep in upon us, we are not to attribute righteousness to them, but to ask pardon for them. So indeed it seems to me, and to this sentence the things above disputed do compel me.

36. But for that we are men and among men do live, and I confess that I am not yet in the number of them whom compensative sins embarrass not, it oft befalleth me in human affairs to be overcome by human feeling, nor am I able to resist when it is said to me, “Lo, here is a sick man in peril of his life with a grievous disease, whose strength will no more be able to bear it, if the death of his only and most dear son be announced to him; he asks of thee whether his son liveth, and thou knowest that he is departed this life; what wilt thou reply, when, whatever thou shall say beside one of these

three; either, He is dead; or, He liveth; or, I know not; he believes no other than that he is dead; which thing he perceives thee to be afraid to tell, and unwilling to tell a lie?” It comes to the same thing, if thou altogether hold thy peace. But of those three, two are false, He liveth, and, I know not; and they cannot be said by thee but by telling a lie. Whereas if thou shall say that one thing which is true, that is, that he is dead, and the man be so perturbed that death follow, people will cry out that thou hast killed him. And who can bear men casting up to him what a mischief it is to shun a lie that might save life, and to choose truth which murders a man? I am moved by these objections exceedingly, but it were marvelous whether also wisely. For, when I shall set before the eyes of my heart (such as they be) the intellectual beauty of Him out of Whose mouth nothing false proceedeth, albeit where truth in her radiance doth more and more brighten upon me, there my weak and throbbing sense is beaten back: yet I am with love of that surpassing comeliness so set on fire, that I despise all human regards which would thence recall me. But it is much that this affection persevere to that degree, that in temptation it lack not its effect. Nor doth it move me while contemplating that luminous Good in which is no darkness of a lie, that, when we refuse to lie, and men through hearing of a truth do die, truth is called a murderer. For if a lewd woman crave of thee the gratification of her lust, and, when thou consentest not, she perturbed with the fierceness of her love should die, will chastity also be a murderer? Or, truly, because we read, “We are a sweet savor of Christ in every place, both in them which are saved and in them which perish;” to the one, indeed, a savor of life unto life, to others a savor of death unto death; shall we pronounce even the savor of Christ to be a murderer? But, for that we, being men, are in questions and contradictions of this sort for the most part overcome or wearied out by our feeling as men, for that very reason hath the Apostle also presently subjoined, “And who is sufficient for these things?”

37. Add to this, (and here is cause to cry out more piteously,) that, if once we grant it to have been right for the saving of that sick man’s life to tell him the lie, that his son was alive, then, by little and little and by minute degrees, the evil so grows upon us, and by slight accesses to such a heap of wicked lies does it, in its almost imperceptible encroachments, at last come, that no place can ever be any where found on which this huge mischief, by

smallest additions rising into boundless strength, might be resisted. Wherefore, most providently is it written, “He that despiseth small things shall fall by little and little.” Nay more: for these persons who are so enamored of this life, that they hesitate not to prefer it to truth, that a man may not die, say rather, that a man who must some time die may die somewhat later, would have us not only to lie, but even to swear fasely; to wit, that, lest the vain health of man should somewhat more quickly pass away, we should take the name of the Lord our God in vain! And there are among them learned men who even fix rules, and set bounds when it is a duty, when not a duty, to commit perjury! O, where are ye, fountains of tears? And what shall we do? whither go? where hide us from the ire of truth, if we not only neglect to shun lies, but dare moreover to teach perjuries? For look they well to it, who uphold and defend lying, what kind, or what kinds, of lying they shall delight to justify: at least in the worship of God let them grant that there must be no lying; at least let them keep themselves from perjuries and blasphemies; at least there, where God’s name, where God as witness, where God’s oath is interposed, where God’s religion is the matter of discourse or colloquy, let none lie, none praise, none teach and enjoin, none justify a lie: of the other kinds of lies let him choose him out that which he accounteth to be the mildest and most innocent kind of lying, he who will have it to be right to lie. This I know, that even he who teaches that it is meet to tell lies, wishes to be thought to teach a truth. For if it be false which he teaches, who would care to give heed to false doctrine, in which both he deceives that teaches and he is deceived that learns? But if, in order that he may be able to find some disciple, he upholds that he teaches a truth when he teaches that it is meet to lie, how will that lie be of the truth, when the Apostle John reclaimeth, “No lie is of the truth?” It is therefore not true, that it is sometimes right to lie; and that which is not true to no man is at all to be persuaded.

38. But infirmity pleadeth its part, and with favor of the crowds proclaims itself to have a cause invincible. Where it contradicts, and says, “What way is there among men, who without doubt by being deceived are turned aside from a deadly harm to others or themselves, to succor men in peril, if our affection as men may not incline us to lie?” If it will hear me patiently, this crowd of mortality, crowd of infirmity, I will say somewhat in answer on

the behalf of truth. Surely at the least pious, true, holy chastity is not otherwise than of the truth: and whoso acts against it, acts against truth. Why then, if otherwise it be not possible to succor men in peril, do I not also commit whoredom, which is therefore contrary to truth, for that it is contrary to chastity, and yet, to succor men in peril, do speak a lie which most openly is contrary to truth itself? Wherein hath chastity so highly deserved at our hands, and truth offended us? When all chastity is of the truth, and not the body's but the mind's chastity is truth, yea, in the mind dwelleth even the body's chastity. Lastly, as I shortly before said, and say again, whoever for the recommending and defending of any lie speaks against me, what speaks he, if he speaks not truth? Now if he is therefore to be heard because he speaks truth, how wishes he to make me, by speaking truth, a liar? How does lying take unto itself truth as its patroness? Or, is it for her own adversary that she conquers, that by herself she may be conquered? Who can bear this absurdity? In no wise therefore may we say, that they who assert that it is sometimes right to lie, in asserting that are truthful; lest, what is most absurd and foolish to believe, truth should teach us to be liars. For what sort of thing is it, that no man learns of chastity that we may commit adultery; that we may offend God none learns of piety; that we may do any man harm, none learns of kindness; and that we may tell lies, we are to learn of truth! But then if this thing truth teaches not, it is not true; if not true, it is not meet to be learned; if not meet to be learned, never therefore is it meet to tell a lie.

39. But, some man will say, “Strong meat is for them that are perfect.” For in many things a relaxation by way of indulgence is allowed to infirmity, although in her utmost sincerity the things be nowise pleasing to truth. Let him say this, whoever dreads not the consequences which are to be dreaded, if once there shall be in any way any lies permitted. In nowise, however, must they be permitted to climb up to such a height as to reach to perjuries and blasphemies: nor must any plea whatever be held out, for which it should be right that perjury should be committed, or, what is more execrable, that God should be blasphemed. For it does not follow that because the blaspheming is only in pretence and a lie, therefore He is not blasphemed. For at this rate it might be said that perjury is not committed, because it is by a lie that it is committed: for who can be by truth a perjurer?

So also by truth can no man be a blasphemer. Doubtless it is a milder kind of false swearing, when a person does not know that thing to be false and believes it to be true, which he swears: like as also Saul blasphemed more excusably, because he did it ignorantly. But the reason why it is worse to blaspheme than to perjure one's self, is, that in false swearing God is taken to witness a false thing, but in blaspheming false things are spoken of God Himself. Now by so much is a man more inexcusable, whether perjurer or blasphemer, by how much the more, while asserting the things wherein they perjure or blaspheme, they know or believe them to be false. Whoever therefore says that for an imperilled man's temporal safety or life a lie may be told, doth too much himself swerve from the path of eternal safety and life, if he says that on that behalf one may even swear by God, or even blaspheme God.

40. But sometimes a peril to eternal salvation itself is put forth against us; which peril, they cry out, we by telling a lie, if otherwise it cannot be, must ward off. As, for instance, if a person who is to be baptized be in the power of impious and infidel men, and cannot be got at that he may be washed with the laver of regeneration, but by deceiving his keepers with a lie. From this most invidious cry, by which we are compelled, not for a man's wealth or honors in this world which are fleeting by, not for the life itself of this present time, but for the eternal salvation of a human being, to tell a lie, whither shall I betake me for refuge but unto thee, O truth? And by thee is put forth before me, Chastity. For why, if those keepers may be enticed to admit us to baptize the man, by our committing lewdness, do we refuse to do things contrary to chastity, and yet, if by a lie they may be deceived, consent to do things contrary to truth? when without doubt no man would faithfully think chastity amiable, but because it is enjoined of truth? So then, to get at a man to baptize him, let the keepers be deceived by lying, if truth bid it. But how can truth bid in order that a man may be baptized, that we should tell a lie, if chastity biddeth not, in order that a man be baptized, that we should commit whoredom? Now why doth chastity not bid this, but because this truth teacheth not? If then, save what truth teacheth, we ought not to do, when truth teacheth not even for the sake of baptizing a man to do what is contrary to chastity, how shall she teach us to do for the sake of baptizing a man what is contrary to herself, the truth? But like as eyes not

strong enough to look upon the sun yet do gladly look upon the objects which are by the sun enlightened, so, souls which have already strength to delight in the beauty of chastity are yet not straightway able to consider in her very self that truth whence charity hath her light, insomuch that when it cometh to the doing of somewhat that is adverse to truth, they should so start back in horror as they do start back in horror if aught be proposed to be done that is adverse to chastity. But that son, who, receiving the word shall be far from perdition, and nothing false cometh forth of his mouth, accounts it as much debarred from him if, to the succoring of his fellow man he be urged to pass through a lie, as if it were through the deed of lewdness. And the Father heareth and granteth his prayer that he may avail without a lie to succor whom the Father Himself, Whose judgments are unsearchable, willeth to be succored. Such a son therefore so keeps watch against a lie, as he doth against sin. For indeed sometimes the name of lie is put for the name of sin: whence is that saying, "All men are liars." For it is so said, as if it were said, "All men are sinners." And that: "But if the truth of God hath abounded through my lie." And therefore, when he lies as a man he sins as a man, and will be held by that sentence in which it is said, "All men are liars;" and, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." But when nothing false cometh forth of his mouth, according to that grace will it so be, of which is said: "He that is born of God, sinneth not." For were this nativity by itself alone in us, no man would sin: and when it shall be alone, no man will sin. But now, we as yet drag on that which we were born corruptible: although, according to that which we are new-born, if we walk aright, from day to day we are renewed inwardly. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, life will swallow it up wholly, and not a sting of death will remain. Now this sting of death is sin.

41. Either then we are to eschew lies by right doing, or to confess them by repenting: but not, while they unhappily abound in our living, to make them more by teaching also. But let him who thinks this, choose out whereby he may help his fellow man being in peril, to what safety he will, what kinds soever of lies; provided yet even of such men we obtain our demand, that upon no cause must we be carried on to false-swearing and to blaspheming. These wickednesses at least let us judge either greater than deeds of

lewdness, or certainly not smaller. For indeed it is worth thinking of, that very often men, where they suspect them of adultery, challenge their wives to an oath: which surely they would not do, unless they believed that even they who were not afraid to perpetrate adultery, might be afraid of perjury. Because in fact also some lewd women who were not afraid by unlawful embraces to deceive their husbands, have been afraid to call God deceitfully to witness unto those same husbands whom they had deceived. What cause then can there be, that a chaste and religious person should be unwilling by adultery to help a man to baptism, yet be willing to help him by perjury, which even adulterers are wont to dread? And then, if it be shocking to do this by perjuring one's self, how much rather by blaspheming? Far be it then from a Christian to deny and blaspheme Christ, that he may make another man a Christian; and by losing himself seek to find one, whom, if he teach him such things, he may cause to be lost when found. The book then which is called "the Pound," thou must in this method refute and destroy; namely, that head of it in which they dogmatize that for the purpose of concealing religion a lie may be told, this thou shall understand must be the first to be amputated; in such manner, that their testimonies by which they labor to advance the Holy Books as patrons of their lies, thou must demonstrate partly not to be lies, partly, even those which are such, to be not meet to be imitated: and if infirmity usurps to herself thus much, that somewhat shall be venially permitted unto her which truth approve not, yet that thou unshakenly hold and defend, that in divine religion it is at no time whatever right to tell a lie. And, as for concealed heretics, that, as we are not to find out concealed adulterers by committing of adulteries, nor murderers by committing of murders, nor practisers of black arts by practising of black arts, so neither must we seek to find out liars by telling lies or blasphemers by blaspheming: according to the reasonings which we have in this volume so copiously set forth, that unto the goal of the same, which we fixed to be in this place, we have with difficulty come at last.

AGAINST THE EPISTLE OF MANICHAEUS, CALLED FUNDAMENTAL

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(CONTRA EPISTOLAM MANICHAEI QUAM VOCANT FUNDAMENTI)

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ST. AUGUSTIN

TRANSLATED BY

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AGAINST THE EPISTLE OF MANICHAEUS, CALLED FUNDAMENTAL

CHAPTER 1

TO HEAL HERETICS IS BETTER THAN TO DESTROY THEM

1. My prayer to the one true, almighty God, of whom, and through whom, and in whom are all things, has been, and is now, that in opposing and refuting the heresy of you Manichaeans, as you may after all be heretics more from thoughtlessness than from malice, He would give me a mind calm and composed, and aiming at your recovery rather than at your discomfiture. For while the Lord, by His servants, overthrows the kingdoms of error, His will concerning erring men, as far as they are men, is that they should be amended rather than destroyed. And in every case where, previous to the final judgment, God inflicts punishment, whether through the wicked or the righteous, whether through the unintelligent or through the intelligent, whether in secret or openly, we must believe that the designed effect is the healing of men, and not their ruin; while there is a preparation for the final doom in the case of those who reject the means of recovery. Thus, as the universe contains some things which serve for bodily punishment, as fire, poison, disease, and the rest, and other things, in which the mind is punished, not by bodily distress, but by the entanglements of its own passions, such as loss, exile, bereavement, reproach, and the like; while other things, again, without tormenting are fitted to comfort and soothe the languishing, as, for example, consolations, exhortations, discussions, and such things; in all these the supreme justice of God makes use sometimes even of wicked men, acting in ignorance, and sometimes of good men, acting intelligently. It is ours, accordingly, to desire in preference the better part, that we might attain our end in your correction, not by contention, and strife, and persecutions, but by kindly consolation, by friendly exhortation, by quiet discussion; as it is written, “The servant of the

Lord must not strive; but be gentle toward all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.” It is ours, I say, to desire to obtain this part in the work; it belongs to God to give what is good to those who desire it and ask for it.

CHAPTER 2

WHY THE MANICHAEANS SHOULD BE MORE GENTLY DEALT WITH

2. Let those rage against you who know not with what labor the truth is to be found and with what difficulty error is to be avoided. Let those rage against you who know not how rare and hard it is to overcome the fancies of the flesh by the serenity of a pious disposition. Let those rage against you who know not the difficulty of curing the eye of the inner man that he may gaze upon his Sun,—not that sun which you worship, and which shines with the brilliance of a heavenly body in the eyes of carnal men and of beasts,—but that of which it is written through the prophet, “The Sun of righteousness has arisen upon me;” and of which it is said in the gospel, “That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” Let those rage against you who know not with what sighs and groans the least particle of the knowledge of God is obtained. And, last of all, let those rage against you who have never been led astray in the same way that they see that you are.

CHAPTER 3

AUGUSTIN ONCE A MANICHAEAN

3. For my part, I,—who, after much and long-continued bewilderment, attained at last, to the discovery of the simple truth, which is learned without being recorded in any fanciful legend; who, unhappy that I was, barely succeeded, by God’s help, in refuting the vain imaginations of my mind, gathered from theories and errors of various kinds; who so late sought the cure of my mental obscuration, in compliance with the call and the tender persuasion of the all-merciful Physician; who long wept that the immutable and inviolable Existence would vouchsafe to convince me inwardly of Himself, in harmony with the testimony of the sacred books; by whom, in fine, all those fictions which have such a firm hold on you, from

your long familiarity with them, were diligently examined, and attentively heard, and too easily believed, and commended at every opportunity to the belief of others, and defended against opponents with determination and boldness,—I can on no account rage against you; for I must bear with you now as formerly I had to bear with myself, and I must be as patient towards you as my associates were with me, when I went madly and blindly astray in your beliefs.

4. On the other hand, all must allow that you owe it to me, in return, to lay aside all arrogance on your part too, that so you may be the more disposed to gentleness, and may not oppose me in a hostile spirit, to your own hurt. Let neither of us assert that he has found truth; let us seek it as if it were unknown to us both. For truth can be sought with zeal and unanimity if by no rash presumption it is believed to have been already found and ascertained. But if I cannot induce you to grant me this, at least allow me to suppose myself a stranger now for the first time hearing you, for the first time examining your doctrines. I think my demand a just one. And it must be laid down as an understood thing that I am not to join you in your prayers, or in holding conventicles, or in taking the name of Manichaeus, unless you give me a clear explanation, without any obscurity, of all matters touching the salvation of the soul.

CHAPTER 4

PROOFS OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH

5. For in the Catholic Church, not to speak of the purest wisdom, to the knowledge of which a few spiritual men attain in this life, so as to know it, in the scantiest measure, indeed, because they are but men, still without any uncertainty (since the rest of the multitude derive their entire security not from acuteness of intellect, but from simplicity of faith,)—not to speak of this wisdom, which you do not believe to be in the Catholic Church, there are many other things which most justly keep me in her bosom. The consent of peoples and nations keeps me in the Church; so does her authority, inaugurated by miracles, nourished by hope, enlarged by love, established by age. The succession of priests keeps me, beginning from the very seat of the Apostle Peter, to whom the Lord, after His resurrection, gave it in

charge to feed His sheep, down to the present episcopate. And so, lastly, does the name itself of Catholic, which, not without reason, amid so many heresies, the Church has thus retained; so that, though all heretics wish to be called Catholics, yet when a stranger asks where the Catholic Church meets, no heretic will venture to point to his own chapel or house. Such then in number and importance are the precious ties belonging to the Christian name which keep a believer in the Catholic Church, as it is right they should, though from the slowness of our understanding, or the small attainment of our life, the truth may not yet fully disclose itself. But with you, where there is none of these things to attract or keep me, the promise of truth is the only thing that comes into play. Now if the truth is so clearly proved as to leave no possibility of doubt, it must be set before all the things that keep me in the Catholic Church; but if there is only a promise without any fulfillment, no one shall move me from the faith which binds my mind with ties so many and so strong to the Christian religion.

CHAPTER 5

AGAINST THE TITLE OF THE EPISTLE OF MANICHAEUS

6. Let us see then what Manichaeus teaches me; and particularly let us examine that treatise which he calls the Fundamental Epistle, in which almost all that you believe is contained. For in that unhappy time when we read it we were in your opinion enlightened. The epistle begins thus:—”Manichaeus, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the providence of God the Father. These are wholesome words from the perennial and living fountain.” Now, if you please, patiently give heed to my inquiry. I do not believe Manichaeus to be an apostle of Christ. Do not, I beg of you, be enraged and begin to curse. For you know that it is my rule to believe none of your statements without consideration. Therefore I ask, who is this Manichaeus? You will reply, An apostle of Christ. I do not believe it. Now you are at a loss what to say or do; for you promised to give knowledge of the truth, and here you are forcing me to believe what I have no knowledge of. Perhaps you will read the gospel to me, and will attempt to find there a testimony to Manichaeus. But should you meet with a person not yet believing the gospel, how would you reply to him were he to say, I do not believe? For my part, I should not believe the gospel except as moved by

the authority of the Catholic Church. So when those on whose authority I have consented to believe in the gospel tell me not to believe in Manichaeus, how can I but consent? Take your choice. If you say, Believe the Catholics: their advice to me is to put no faith in you; so that, believing them, I am precluded from believing you;—If you say, Do not believe the Catholics: you cannot fairly use the gospel in bringing me to faith in Manichaeus; for it was at the command of the Catholics that I believed the gospel;—Again, if you say, You were right in believing the Catholics when they praised the gospel, but wrong in believing their vituperation of Manichaeus: do you think me such a fool as to believe or not to believe as you like or dislike, without any reason? It is therefore fairer and safer by far for me, having in one instance put faith in the Catholics, not to go over to you, till, instead of bidding me believe, you make me understand something in the clearest and most open manner. To convince me, then, you must put aside the gospel. If you keep to the gospel, I will keep to those who commanded me to believe the gospel; and, in obedience to them, I will not believe you at all. But if haply you should succeed in finding in the gospel an incontrovertible testimony to the apostleship of Manichaeus, you will weaken my regard for the authority of the Catholics who bid me not to believe you; and the effect of that will be, that I shall no longer be able to believe the gospel either, for it was through the Catholics that I got my faith in it; and so, whatever you bring from the gospel will no longer have any weight with me. Wherefore, if no clear proof of the apostleship of Manichaeus is found in the gospel, I will believe the Catholics rather than you. But if you read thence some passage clearly in favor of Manichaeus, I will believe neither them nor you: not them, for they lied to me about you; nor you, for you quote to me that Scripture which I had believed on the authority of those liars. But far be it that I should not believe the gospel; for believing it, I find no way of believing you too. For the names of the apostles, as there recorded, do not include the name of Manichaeus. And who the successor of Christ's betrayer was we read in the Acts of the Apostles; which book I must needs believe if I believe the gospel, since both writings alike Catholic authority commends to me. The same book contains the well-known narrative of the calling and apostleship of Paul. Read me now, if you can, in the gospel where Manichaeus is called an apostle, or in any other book in which I have professed to believe. Will you read the passage where the Lord promised the Holy Spirit as a Paraclete, to the apostles? Concerning which passage, behold how many and how great are the things that restrain and deter me from believing in Manichaeus.

CHAPTER 6

WHY MANICHAEUS CALLED HIMSELF AN APOSTLE OF CHRIST

7. For I am at a loss to see why this epistle begins, “Manichaeus, an apostle of Jesus Christ,” and not Paraclete, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Or if the Paraclete sent by Christ sent Manichaeus, why do we read, “Manichaeus, an apostle of Jesus Christ,” instead of Manichaeus, an apostle of the Paraclete? If you say that it is Christ Himself who is the Holy Spirit, you contradict the very Scripture, where the Lord says, “And I will send you another Paraclete.” Again, if you justify your putting of Christ’s name, not because it is Christ Himself who is also the Paraclete, but because they are both of the same substance,—that is, not because they are one person, but one existence [non quia unus est, sed quia unum sunt],—Paul too might have used the words, Paul, an apostle of God the Father; for the Lord said, “I and the Father are one.” Paul nowhere uses these words; nor does any of the apostles write himself an apostle of the Father. Why then this new fashion? Does it not savor of trickery of some kind or other? For if he thought it made no difference, why did he not for the sake of variety in some epistles call himself an apostle of Christ, and in others of the Paraclete? But in every one that I know of, he writes, of Christ; and not once, of the Paraclete. What do we suppose to be the reason of this, but that pride, the mother of all heretics, impelled the man to desire to seem to have been sent by the Paraclete, but to have been taken into so close a relation as to get the name of Paraclete himself? As the man Jesus Christ was not sent by the Son of God, that is, the power and wisdom of God—by which all things were made, but, according to the Catholic faith, was taken into such a relation as to be Himself the Son of God—that is, that in Himself the wisdom of God was displayed in the healing of sinners,—so Manichaeus wished it to be thought that he was so taken up by the Holy Spirit, whom Christ promised, that we are henceforth to understand that the names Manichaeus and Holy Spirit alike signify the apostle of Jesus Christ,—that is, one sent by Jesus

Christ, who promised to send him. Singular audacity this! and unutterable sacrilege!

CHAPTER 7

IN WHAT SENSE THE FOLLOWERS OF MANICHAEUS BELIEVE HIM TO BE THE HOLY SPIRIT

8. Besides, you should explain how it is that, while the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are united in equality of nature, as you also acknowledge, you are not ashamed to speak of Manichaeus, a man taken into union with the Holy Spirit, as born of ordinary generation; and yet you shrink from believing that the man taken into union with the only-begotten Wisdom of God was born of a Virgin. If human flesh, if generation [concubitus viri], if the womb of a woman could not contaminate the Holy Spirit, how could the Virgin's womb contaminate the Wisdom of God? This Manichaeus, then, who boasts of a connection with the Holy Spirit, and of being spoken of in the gospel, must produce his claim to either of these two things,—that he was sent by the Spirit, or that he was taken into union with the Spirit. If he was sent, let him call himself the apostle of the Paraclete; if taken into union, let him allow that He whom the only-begotten Son took upon Himself had a human mother, since he admits a human father as well as mother in the case of one taken up by the Holy Spirit. Let him believe that the Word of God was not defiled by the virgin womb of Mary, since he exhorts us to believe that the Holy Spirit could not be defiled by the married life of his parents. But if you say that Manichaeus was united to the Spirit, not in the womb or before conception, but after his birth, still you must admit that he had a fleshly nature derived from man and woman. And since you are not afraid to speak of the blood and the bodily substance of Manichaeus as coming from ordinary generation, or of the internal impurities contained in his flesh, and hold that the Holy Spirit, who took on Himself, as you believe, this human being, was not contaminated by all those things, why should I shrink from speaking of the Virgin's womb and body undefiled, and not rather believe that the Wisdom of God in union with the human being in his mother's flesh still remained free from stain and pollution? Wherefore, as, whether your Manichaeus professes to be sent by or to be united with the Paraclete, neither statement can hold good, I

am on my guard, and refuse to believe either in his mission or in his susception.

CHAPTER 8

THE FESTIVAL OF THE BIRTH-DAY OF MANICHAEUS

9. In adding the words, “by the providence of God the Father,” what else did Manichaeus design but that, having got the name of Jesus Christ, whose apostle he calls himself, and of God the Father, by whose providence he says he was sent by the Son, we should believe himself, as the Holy Spirit, to be the third person? His words are: “Manichaeus, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the providence of God the Father.” The Holy Spirit is not named, though He ought specially to have been named by one who quotes to us in favor of his apostleship the promise of the Paraclete, that he may prevail upon ignorant people by the authority of the gospel. In reply to this, you of course say that in the name of the Apostle Manichaeus we have the name of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, because He condescended to come into Manichaeus. Why then, I ask again, should you cry out against the doctrine of the Catholic Church, that He in whom divine Wisdom came was born of a virgin, when you do not scruple to affirm the birth by ordinary generation of him in whom you say the Holy Spirit came? I cannot but suspect that this Manichaeus, who uses the name of Christ to gain access to the minds of the ignorant, wished to be worshipped instead of Christ Himself. I will state briefly the reason of this conjecture. At the time when I was a student of your doctrines, to my frequent inquiries why it was that the Paschal feast of the Lord was celebrated generally with no interest, though sometimes there were a few languid worshippers, but no watchings, no prescription of any unusual fast,—in a word, no special ceremony,—while great honor is paid to your Bema, that is, the day on which Manichaeus was killed, when you have a platform with fine steps, covered with precious cloth, placed conspicuously so as to face the votaries,—the reply was, that the day to observe was the day of the passion of him who really suffered, and that Christ, who was not born, but appeared to human eyes in an unreal semblance of flesh, only feigned suffering, without really bearing it. Is it not deplorable, that men who wish to be called Christians are afraid of a virgin’s womb as likely to defile the truth, and yet are not afraid of

falsehood? But to go back to the point, who that pays attention can help suspecting that the intention of Manichaeus in denying Christ’s being born of a woman, and having a human body, was that His passion, the time of which is now a great festival all over the world, might not be observed by the believers in himself, so as to lessen the devotion of the solemn commemoration which he wished in honor of the day of his own death? For to us it was a great attraction in the feast of the Bema that it was held during Pascha, since we used all the more earnestly to desire that festal day [the Bema], that the other which was formerly most sweet had been withdrawn.

CHAPTER 9

WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS SENT

10. Perhaps you will say to me, When, then, did the Paraclete promised by the Lord come? As regards this, had I nothing else to believe on the subject, I should rather look for the Paraclete as still to come, than allow that He came in Manichaeus. But seeing that the advent of the Holy Spirit is narrated with perfect clearness in the Acts of the Apostles, where is the necessity of my so gratuitously running the risk of believing heretics? For in the Acts it is written as follows: “The former treatise have we made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, in the day in which He chose the apostles by the Holy Spirit, and commanded them to preach the gospel. By those to whom He showed Himself alive after His passion by many proofs in the daytime, He was seen forty days, teaching concerning the kingdom of God. And how He conversed with them, and commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of me. For John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall begin to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, whom also ye shall receive after not many days, that is, at Pentecost. When they had come, they asked him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time manifest Thyself? And when will be the kingdom of Israel? And He said unto them, No one can know the time which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Behold you have here the Lord reminding His disciples of the promise of the Father, which they

had heard from His mouth, of the coming of the Holy Spirit. Let us now see when He was sent; for shortly after we read as follows: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. And when the sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed, and marvelled, saying one to another, Are not all these which speak Galilaeans? and how heard we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Armenia, and in Cappadocia, in Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the regions of Africa about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews, natives, Cretes, and Arabians, they heard them speak in their own tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt on account of what had happened, saying, What meaneth this? But others, mocking, said, These men are full of new wine.” You see when the Holy Spirit came. What more do you wish? If the Scriptures are credible, should not I believe most readily in these Acts, which have the strongest testimony in their support, and which have had the advantage of becoming generally known, and of being handed down and of being publicly taught along with the gospel itself, which contains the promise of the Holy Spirit, which also we believe? On reading, then, these Acts of the Apostles, which stand, as regards authority, on a level with the gospel, I find that not only was the Holy Spirit promised to these true apostles, but that He was also sent so manifestly, that no room was left for errors on this subject.

CHAPTER 10

THE HOLY SPIRIT TWICE GIVEN

11. For the glorification of our Lord among men is His resurrection from the dead and His ascension to heaven. For it is written in the Gospel

according to John: “The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” Now if the reason why He was not given was that Jesus was not yet glorified, He was given immediately on the glorification of Jesus. And since that glorification was twofold, as regards man and as regards God, twice also was the Holy Spirit given: once, when, after His resurrection from the dead, He breathed on the face of His disciples, saying, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost;” and again, ten days after His ascension to heaven. This number ten signifies perfection; for to the number seven which embraces all created things, is added the trinity of the Creator. On these things there is much pious and sober discourse among spiritual men. But I must keep to my point; for my business at present is not to teach you, which you might think presumptuous, but to take the part of an inquirer, and learn from you, as I tried to do for nine years without success. Now, therefore, I have a document to believe on the subject of the Holy Spirit’s advent; and if you bid me not to believe this document, as your usual advice is not to believe ignorantly, without consideration, much less will I believe your documents. Away, then, with all books, and disclose the truth with logical clearness, so as to leave no doubt in my mind; or bring forward books where I shall find not an imperious demand for my belief, but a trustworthy statement of what I may learn. Perhaps you say this epistle is also of this character. Let me, then, no longer stop at the threshold: let us see the contents.

CHAPTER 11

MANICHAEUS PROMISES TRUTH, BUT DOES NOT MAKE GOOD HIS WORD

12. “These,” he says, “are wholesome words from the perennial and living fountain; and whoever shall have heard them, and shall have first believed them, and then shall have observed the truths they set forth, shall never suffer death, but shall enjoy eternal life in glory. For he is to be judged truly blessed who has been instructed in this divine knowledge, by which he is made free and shall abide in everlasting life.” And this, as you see, is a promise of truth, but not the bestowal of it. And you yourselves can easily see that any errors whatever might be dressed up in this fashion, so as under cover of a showy exterior to steal in unawares into the minds of the ignorant. Were he to say, These are pestiferous words from a poisonous

fountain; and whoever shall have heard them, and shall have first believed them, and then have observed what they set forth, shall never be restored to life, but shall suffer a woful death as a criminal: for assuredly he is to be pronounced miserable who falls into this infernal error, in which he will sink so as to abide in everlasting torments;—were he to say this, he would say the truth; but instead of gaining any readers for his book, he would excite the greatest aversion in the minds of all into whose hands the book might come. Let us then pass on to what follows; nor let us be deceived by words which may be used alike by good and bad, by learned and unlearned. What, then, comes next?

13. "May the peace," he says, "of the invisible God, and the knowledge of the truth, be with the holy and beloved brethren who both believe and also yield obedience to the divine precepts." Amen, say we. For the prayer is a most amiable and commendable one. Only we must bear in mind that these words might be used by false teachers as well as by good ones. So, if he said nothing more than this, all might safely read and embrace it. Nor should I disapprove of what follows: "May also the right hand of light protect you, and deliver you from every hostile assault, and from the snares of the world." In fact, I have no fault to find with the beginning of this epistle, till we come to the main subject of it. For I wish not to spend time on minor points. Now, then, for this writer's plain statement of what is to be expected from him.

CHAPTER 12

THE WILD FANCIES OF MANICHAEUS. THE BATTLE BEFORE THE CONSTITUTION OF THE WORLD

14. "Of that matter," he says, "beloved brother of Patticus, of which you told me, saying that you desired to know the manner of the birth of Adam and Eve, whether they were produced by a word or sprung from matter, I will answer you as is fit. For in various writings and narratives we find different assertions made and different descriptions given by many authors. Now the real truth on the subject is unknown to all peoples, even to those who have long and frequently treated of it. For had they arrived at a clear knowledge of the generation of Adam and Eve, they would not have

remained liable to corruption and death.” Here, then, is a promise to us of clear knowledge of this matter, so that we shall not be liable to corruption and death. And if this does not suffice, see what follows: “Necessarily,” he says, “many things have to be said by way of preface, before a discovery of this mystery free from all uncertainty can be made.” This is precisely what I asked for, to have such evidence of the truth as to free my knowledge of it from all uncertainty. And even were the promise not made by this writer himself, it was proper for me to demand and to insist upon this, so that no opposition should make me ashamed of becoming a Manichaean from a Catholic Christian, in view of such a gain as that of perfectly clear and certain truth. Now, then, let us hear what he has to state.

15. “Accordingly,” he says, “hear first, if you please, what happened before the constitution of the world, and how the battle was carried on, that you may be able to distinguish the nature of light from that of darkness.” Such are the utterly false and incredible statements which this writer makes. Who can believe that any battle was fought before the constitution of the world? And even supposing it credible, we wish now to get something to know, not to believe. For to say that the Persians and Scythians long ago fought with one another is a credible statement; but while we believe it when we read or hear it, we cannot know it as a fact of experience or as a truth of the understanding. So, then, as I would repudiate any such statement on the ground that I have been promised something, not that I must believe on authority, but that I shall understand without any ambiguity; still less will I receive statements which are not only uncertain, but incredible. But what if he have some evidence to make these things clear and intelligible? Let us hear, then, if we can, what follows with all possible patience and forbearance.

CHAPTER 13

TWO OPPOSITE SUBSTANCES. THE KINGDOM OF LIGHT. MANICHAEUS TEACHES UNCERTAINTIES INSTEAD OF CERTAINTIES

16. “In the beginning, then,” he says, “these two substances were divided. The empire of light was held by God the Father, who is perpetual in holy origin, magnificent in virtue, true in His very nature, ever rejoicing in His

own eternity, possessing in Himself wisdom and the vital senses, by which He also includes the twelve members of His light, which are the plentiful resources of his kingdom. Also in each of His members are stored thousands of untold and priceless treasures. But the Father Himself, chief in praise, incomprehensible in greatness, has united to Himself happy and glorious worlds, incalculable in number and duration, along with which this holy and illustrious Father and Progenitor resides, no poverty or infirmity being admitted in His magnificent realms. And these matchless realms are so founded on the region of light and bliss, that no one can ever move or disturb them."

17. Where is the proof of all this? And where did Manichaeus learn it? Do not frighten me with the name of the Paraclete. For, in the first place, I have come not to put faith in unknown things, but to get the knowledge of undoubted truths, according to the caution enjoined on me by yourselves. For you know how bitterly you taunt those who believe without consideration. And what is more, this writer, who here begins to tell of very doubtful things, himself promised a little before to give complete and well-grounded knowledge.

CHAPTER 14

MANICHAEUS PROMISES THE KNOWLEDGE OF UNDOUBTED THINGS, AND THEN DEMANDS FAITH IN DOUBTFUL THINGS

In the next place, if faith is what is required of me, I should prefer to keep to the Scripture, which tells me that the Holy Spirit came and inspired the apostles, to whom the Lord had promised to send Him. You must therefore prove, either that what Manichaeus says is true, and so make clear to me what I am unable to believe; or that Manichaeus is the Holy Spirit, and so lead me to believe in what you cannot make clear. For I profess the Catholic faith, and by it I expect to attain certain knowledge. Since, then, you try to overthrow my faith, you must supply me with certain knowledge, if you can, that you may convict me of having adopted my present belief without consideration. You make two distinct propositions,—one when you say that the speaker is the Holy Spirit, and another when you say that what the speaker teaches is evidently true. I might fairly ask undeniable proof for both propositions. But I am not greedy and require to be convinced only of one. Prove this person to be the Holy Spirit, and I will believe what he says to be true, even without understanding it; or prove that what he says is true, and I will believe him to be the Holy Spirit, even without evidence. Could anything be fairer or kinder than this? But you cannot prove either one or other of these propositions. You can find nothing better than to praise your own faith and ridicule mine. So, after having in my turn praised my belief and ridiculed yours, what result do you think we shall arrive at as regards our judgment and our conduct, but to part company with those who promise the knowledge of indubitable things, and then demand from us faith in doubtful things? while we shall follow those who invite us to begin with believing what we cannot yet fully perceive, that, strengthened by this very faith, we may come into a position to know what we believe by the inward illumination and confirmation of our minds, due no longer to men, but to God Himself.

18. And as I have asked this writer to prove these things to me, I ask him now where he learned them himself. If he replies that they were revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, and that his mind was divinely enlightened that he might know them to be certain and evident, he himself points to the distinction between knowing and believing. The knowledge is his to whom these things are fully made known as proved; but in the case of those who only hear his account of these things, there is no knowledge imparted, but only a believing acquiescence required. Whoever thoughtlessly yields this becomes a Manichaean, not by knowing undoubted truth, but by believing doubtful statements. Such were we when in our inexperienced youth we were deceived. Instead, therefore, of promising knowledge, or clear evidence, or the settlement of the question free from all uncertainty, Manichaeus ought to have said that these things were clearly proved to him, but that those who hear his account of them must believe him without evidence. But were he to say this, who would not reply to him, If I must believe without knowing, why should I not prefer to believe those things which have a widespread notoriety from the consent of learned and unlearned, and which among all nations are established by the weightiest authority? From fear of having this said to him, Manichaeus bewilders the inexperienced by first promising the knowledge of certain truths, and then

demanding faith in doubtful things. And then, if he is asked to make it plain that these things have been proved to himself, he fails again, and bids us believe this too. Who can tolerate such imposture and arrogance?

CHAPTER 15

THE DOCTRINE OF MANICHAEUS NOT ONLY UNCERTAIN, BUT FALSE. HIS ABSURD FANCY OF A LAND AND RACE OF DARKNESS BORDERING ON THE HOLY REGION AND THE SUBSTANCE OF GOD. THE ERROR, FIRST OF ALL, OF GIVING TO THE NATURE OF GOD LIMITS AND BORDERS, AS IF GOD WERE A MATERIAL SUBSTANCE, HAVING EXTENSION IN SPACE

19. What if I shall have shown, with the help of God and of our Lord, that this writer’s statements are false as well as uncertain? What more unfortunate thing can be found than that superstition which not only fails to impart the knowledge and the truth which it promises, but also teaches what is directly opposed to knowledge and truth? This will appear more clearly from what follows: “In one direction on the border of this bright and holy land there was a land of darkness deep and vast in extent, where abode fiery bodies, destructive races. Here was boundless darkness, flowing from the same source in immeasurable abundance, with the productions properly belonging to it. Beyond this were muddy turbid waters with their inhabitants; and inside of them winds terrible and violent with their prince and their progenitors. Then again a fiery region of destruction, with its chiefs and peoples. And similarly inside of this a race full of smoke and gloom, where abode the dreadful prince and chief of all, having around him innumerable princes, himself the mind and source of them all. Such are the five natures of the pestiferous land.”

20. To speak of God as an aerial or even as an ethereal body is absurd in the view of all who, with a clear mind, possessing some measure of discernment, can perceive the nature of wisdom and truth as not extended or scattered in space, but as great, and imparting greatness without material size, nor confined more or less in any direction, but throughout co-extensive with the Father of all, nor having one thing here and another there, but everywhere perfect, everywhere present.

CHAPTER 16

THE SOUL, THOUGH MUTABLE, HAS NO MATERIAL FORM. IT IS ALL PRESENT IN EVERY PART OF THE BODY

But why speak of truth and wisdom which surpass all the powers of the soul, when the nature of the soul itself, which is known to be mutable, still has no kind of material extension in space? For whatever consists of any kind of gross matter must necessarily be divisible into parts, having one in one place, and another in another. Thus, the finger is less than the whole hand, and one finger is less than two; and there is one place for this finger, and another for that, and another for the rest of the hand. And this applies not to organized bodies only, but also to the earth, each part of which has its own place, so that one cannot be where the other is. So in moisture, the smaller quantity occupies a smaller space, and the larger quantity a larger space; and one part is at the bottom of the cup, and another part near the mouth. So in air, each part has its own place; and it is impossible for the air in this house to have along with itself, in the same house at the same moment, the air that the neighbors have. And even as regards light itself, one part pours through one window, and another through another; and a greater through the larger, and a smaller through the smaller. Nor, in fact, can there be any bodily substance, whether celestial or terrestrial, whether aerial or moist, which is not less in part than in whole, or which can possibly have one part in the place of another at the same time; but, having one thing in one place and another in another, its extension in space is a substance which has distinct limits and parts, or, so to speak, sections. The nature of the soul, on the other hand, though we leave out of account its power of perceiving truth, and consider only its inferior power of giving unity to the body, and of sensation in the body, does not appear to have any material extension in space. For it is all present in each separate part of its body when it is all present in any sensation. There is not a smaller part in the finger, and a larger in the arm, as the bulk of the finger is less than that of the arm; but the quantity everywhere is the same, for the whole is present everywhere. For when the finger is touched, the whole mind feels, though the sensation is not through the whole body. No part of the mind is unconscious of the touch, which proves the presence of the whole. And yet it is not so present in the finger or in the sensation as to abandon the rest of the body, or to gather itself up into the one place where the sensation occurs. For when it is all present in the sensation in a finger, if another part, say the foot, be touched, it does not fail to be all present in this sensation too: so that at the same moment it is all present in different places, without leaving one in order to be in the other, and without having one part in one, and another in the other; but by this power showing itself to be all present at the same moment in separate places. Since it is all present in the sensations of these places, it proves that it is not bound by the conditions of space.

CHAPTER 17

THE MEMORY CONTAINS THE IDEAS OF PLACES OF THE GREATEST SIZE

Again, if we consider the mind's power of remembering not the objects of the intellect, but material objects, such as we see brutes also remembering (for cattle find their way without mistake in familiar places, and animals return to their cribs, and dogs recognize the persons of their masters, and when asleep they often growl, or break out into a bark, which could not be unless their mind retained the images of things before seen or perceived by some bodily sense), who can conceive rightly where these images are contained, where they are kept, or where they are formed? If, indeed, these images were no larger than the size of our body, it might be said that the mind shapes and retains them in the bodily space which contains itself. But while the body occupies a small material space, the mind revolves images of vast extent, of heaven and earth, with no want of room, though they come and go in crowds; so that clearly, the mind is not diffused through space: for instead of being contained in images of the largest spaces, it rather contains them; not, however, in any material receptacle, but by a mysterious faculty or power, by which it can increase or diminish them, can contract them within narrow limits, or expand them indefinitely, can arrange or disarrange them at pleasure, can multiply them or reduce them to a few or to one.

CHAPTER 18

THE UNDERSTANDING JUDGES OF THE TRUTH OF THINGS, AND OF ITS OWN ACTION

What, then, must be said of the power of perceiving truth, and of making a vigorous resistance against these very images which take their shape from impressions on the bodily senses, when they are opposed to the truth? This power discerns the difference between, to take a particular example, the true Carthage and its own imaginary one, which it changes as it pleases with perfect ease. It shows that the countless worlds of Epicurus, in which his fancy roamed without restraint, are due to the same power of imagination, and, not to multiply examples, that we get from the same source that land of light, with its boundless extent, and the five dens of the race of darkness, with their inmates, in which the fancies of Manichaeus have dared to usurp for themselves the name of truth. What then is this power which discerns these things? Clearly, whatever its extent may be, it is greater than all these things, and is conceived of without any such material images. Find, if you can, space for this power; give it a material extension; provide it with a body of huge size. Assuredly if you think well, you cannot. For of everything of this corporeal nature your mind forms an opinion as to its divisibility, and you make of such things one part greater and another less, as much as you like; while that by which you form a judgment of these things you perceive to be above them, not in local loftiness of place, but in dignity of power.

CHAPTER 19

IF THE MIND HAS NO MATERIAL EXTENSION, MUCH LESS HAS GOD

21. So then, if the mind, so liable to change, whether from a multitude of dissimilar desires, or from feelings varying according to the abundance or the want of desirable things, or from these endless sports of the fancy, or from forgetfulness and remembrance, or from learning and ignorance; if the mind, I say, exposed to frequent change from these and the like causes, is perceived to be without any local or material extension, and to have a vigor of action which surmounts these material conditions, what must we think or conclude of God Himself, who remains superior to all intelligent beings in His freedom from perturbation and from change, giving to every one what is due? Him the mind dares to express more easily than to see; and the clearer the sight, the less is the power of expression. And yet this God, if, as the Manichaean fables are constantly asserting, He were limited in

extension in one direction and unlimited in others, could be measured by so many subdivisions or fractions of greater or less size, as every one might fancy; so that, for example, a division of the extent of two feet would be less by eight parts than one of ten feet. For this is the property of all natures which have extension in space, and therefore cannot be all in one place. But even with the mind this is not the case; and this degrading and perverted idea of the mind is found among people who are unfit for such investigations.

CHAPTER 20

REFUTATION OF THE ABSURD IDEA OF TWO TERRITORIES

22. But perhaps, instead of thus addressing carnal minds, we should rather descend to the views of those who either dare not or are as yet unfit to turn from the consideration of material things to the study of an immaterial and spiritual nature, and who thus are unable to reflect upon their own power of reflection, so as to see how it forms a judgment of material extension without itself possessing it. Let us descend then to these material ideas, and let us ask in what direction, and on what border of the shining and sacred territory, to use the expressions of Manichaeus, was the region of darkness? For he speaks of one direction and border, without saying which, whether the right or the left. In any case, it is clear that to speak of one side implies that there is another. But where there are three or more sides, either the figure is bounded in all directions, or if it extends infinitely in one direction, still it must be limited in the directions where it has sides. If, then, on one side of the region of light there was the race of darkness, what bounded it on the other side or sides? The Manichaeans say nothing in reply to this; but when pressed, they say that on the other sides the region of light, as they call it, is infinite, that is, extends throughout boundless space. They do not see, what is plain to the dullest understanding, that in that case there could be no sides? For the sides are where it is bounded. What, then, he says, though there are no sides? But what you said of one direction or side, implied of necessity the existence of another direction and side, or other directions and sides. For if there was only one side, you should have said, on the side, not on one side; as in reference to our body we say properly, By one eye, because there is another; or on one breast, because there is another.

But if we spoke of a thing as being on one nose, or one navel, we should be ridiculed by learned and unlearned, since there is only one. But I do not insist on words, for you may have used one in the sense of the only one.

CHAPTER 21

THIS REGION OF LIGHT MUST BE MATERIAL IF IT IS JOINED TO THE REGION OF DARKNESS. THE SHAPE OF THE REGION OF DARKNESS JOINED TO THE REGION OF LIGHT

What, then, bordered on the side of the region which you call shining and sacred? The region, you reply, of darkness. Do you then allow this latter region to have been material? Of course you must, since you assert that all bodies derive their origin from it. How then is it that, dull and carnal as you are, you do not see that unless both regions were material, they could not have their sides joined to one another? How could you ever be so blinded in mind as to say that only the region of darkness was material, and that the so-called region of light was immaterial and spiritual? My good friends, let us open our eyes for once, and see, now that we are told of it, what is most obvious, that two regions cannot be joined at their sides unless both are material.

23. Or if we are too dull and stupid to see this, let us hear whether the region of darkness too has one side, and is boundless in the other directions, like the region of light. They do not hold this from fear of making it seem equal to God. Accordingly they make it boundless in depth and in length; but upwards, above it, they maintain that there is an infinity of empty space. And lest this region should appear to be a fraction equal in amount to half of that representing the region of light, they narrow it also on two sides. As if, to give the simplest illustration, a piece of bread were made into four squares, three white and one black; then suppose the three white pieces joined as one, and conceive them as infinite upwards and downwards, and backwards in all directions: this represents the Manichaean region of light. Then conceive the black square infinite downwards and backwards, but with infinite emptiness above it: this is their region of darkness. But these are secrets which they disclose to very eager and anxious inquirers.

CHAPTER 22

THE FORM OF THE REGION OF LIGHT THE WORSE OF THE TWO

Well, then, if this is so, the region of darkness is clearly touched on two sides by the region of light. And if it is touched on two sides, it must touch on two. So much for its being on one side, as we were told before.

24. And what an unseemly appearance is this of the region of light!—like a cloven arch, with a black wedge inserted below, bounded only in the direction of the cleft, and having a void space interposed where the boundless emptiness stretches above the region of darkness. Indeed, the form of the region of darkness is better than that of the region of light: for the former cleaves, the latter is cloven; the former fills the gap which is made in the latter; the former has no void in it, while the latter is undefined in all directions, except that where it is filled up by the wedge of darkness. In an ignorant and greedy notion of giving more honor to a number of pans than to a single one, so that the region of light should have six, three upwards and three downwards, they have made this region be split up, instead of sundering the other. For, according to this figure, though there may be no commixture of darkness with light, there is certainly penetration.

CHAPTER 23

THE ANTHROPOMORPHITES NOT SO BAD AS THE MANICHAEANS

25. Compare, now, not spiritual men of the Catholic faith, whose mind, as far as is possible in this life, perceives that the divine substance and nature has no material extension, and has no shape bounded by lines, but the carnal and weak of our faith, who, when they hear the members of the body used figuratively, as, when God’s eyes or ears are spoken of, are accustomed, in the license of fancy, to picture God to themselves in a human form; compare these with the Manichaeans, whose custom it is to make known their silly stories to anxious inquirers as if they were great mysteries: and consider who have the most allowable and respectable ideas of God,—those who think of Him as having a human form which is the most excellent of its kind, or those who think of Him as having boundless material extension, yet not in all directions, but with three parts infinite and solid, while in one part

He is cloven, with an empty void, and with undefined space above, while the region of darkness is inserted wedge-like below. Or perhaps the proper expression is, that He is unconfined above in His own nature, but encroached on below by a hostile nature. I join with you in laughing at the folly of carnal men, unable as yet to form spiritual conceptions, who think of God as having a human form. Do you too join me, if you can, in laughing at those whose unhappy conceptions represent God as having a shape cloven or cut in such an unseemly and unbecoming way, with such an empty gap above, and such a dishonorable curtailment below. Besides, there is this difference, that these carnal people, who think of God as having a human form, if they are content to be nourished with milk from the breast of the Catholic Church, and do not rush headlong into rash opinions, but cultivate in the Church the pious habit of inquiry, and there ask that they may receive, and knock that it may be opened to them, begin to understand spiritually the figures and parables of the Scriptures, and gradually to perceive that the divine energies are suitably set forth under the name, sometimes of ears, sometimes of eyes, sometimes of hands or feet, or even of wings and feathers a shield too, and sword, and helmet, and all the other innumerable things. And the more progress they make in this understanding, the more are they confirmed as Catholics. The Manichaeans, on the other hand, when they abandon their material fancies, cease to be Manichaeans. For this is the chief and special point in their praises of Manichaeus, that the divine mysteries which were taught figuratively in books from ancient times were kept for Manichaeus, who was to come last, to solve and demonstrate; and so after him no other teacher will come from God, for he has said nothing in figures or parables, but has explained ancient sayings of that kind, and has himself taught in plain, simple terms. Therefore, when the Manichaeans hear these words of their founder, on one side and border of the shining and sacred region was the region of darkness, they have no interpretations to fall back on. Wherever they turn, the wretched bondage of their own fancies brings them upon clefts or sudden stoppages and joinings or sunderings of the most unseemly kind, which it would be shocking to believe as true of any immaterial nature, even though mutable, like the mind, not to speak of the immutable nature of God. And yet if I were unable to rise to higher things, and to bring my thoughts from the entanglement of false imaginations which are impressed on the memory by the bodily senses, into the freedom and purity of spiritual existence, how much better would it be to think of God as in the form of a man, than to fasten that wedge of darkness to His lower edge, and, for want of a covering for the boundless vacuity above to leave it void and unoccupied throughout infinite space! What notion could be worse than this? What darker error can be taught or imagined?

CHAPTER 24

OF THE NUMBER OF NATURES IN THE MANICHAEAN FICTION

26. Again, I wish to know, when I read of God the Father and His kingdoms founded on the shining and happy region, whether the Father and His kingdoms, and the region, are all of the same nature and substance. If they are, then it is not another nature or sort of body of God which the wedge of the race of darkness cleaves and penetrates, which itself is an unspeakably revolting thing, but it is actually the very nature of God which undergoes this. Think of this, I beseech you: as you are men, think of it, and flee from it; and if by tearing open your breasts you can cast out by the roots such profane fancies from your faith, I pray you to do it. Or will you say that these three are not of one and the same nature, but that the Father is of one, the kingdoms of another, and the region of another, so that each has a peculiar nature and substance, and that they are arranged according to their degree of excellence? If this is true, Manichaeus should have taught that there are four natures, not two; or if the Father and the kingdoms have one nature, and the region only one of its own, he should have made three. Or if he made only two, because the region of darkness does not belong to God, in what sense does the region of light belong to God? For if it has a nature of its own, and if God neither generated nor made it, it does not belong to Him, and the seat of His kingdom is in what belongs to another. Or if it belongs to Him because of its vicinity, the region of darkness must do so too; for it not only borders on the region of light, but penetrates it so as to sever it in two. Again, if God generated it, it cannot have a separate nature. For what is generated by God must be what God is, as the Catholic Church believes of the only begotten Son. So you are brought back of necessity to that shocking and detestable profanity, that the wedge of darkness sunders not a region distinct and separate from God, but the very nature of God. Or

if God did not generate, but make it, of what did He make it? Or if of Himself, what is this but to generate? If of some other nature, was this nature good or evil? If good, there must have been some good nature not belonging to God; which you will scarcely have the boldness to assert. If evil, the race of darkness cannot have been the only evil nature. Or did God take a part of that region and turn it into a region of light, in order to found His kingdom upon it? If He had, He would have taken the whole, and there would have been no evil nature left. If God, then, did not make the region of light of a substance distinct from His own, He must have made it of nothing.

CHAPTER 25

OMNIPOTENCE CREATES GOOD THINGS DIFFERING IN DEGREE. IN EVERY DESCRIPTION WHATSOEVER OF THE JUNCTION OF THE TWO REGIONS THERE IS EITHER IMPROPRIETY OR ABSURDITY

27. If, then, you are now convinced that God is able to create some good thing out of nothing, come into the Catholic Church, and learn that all the natures which God has created and founded in their order of excellence from the highest to the lowest are good, and some better than others; and that they were made of nothing, though God, their Maker, made use of His own wisdom as an instrument, so to speak, to give being to what was not, and that as far as it had being it might be good, and that the limitation of its being might show that it was not begotten by God, but made out of nothing. If you examine the matter, you will find nothing to keep you from agreeing to this. For you cannot make your region of light to be what God is, without making the dark section an infringement on the very nature of God. Nor can you say that it was generated by God, without being reduced to the same enormity, from the necessity of concluding that as begotten of God, it must be what God is. Nor can you say that it was distinct from Him, lest you should be forced to admit that God placed His kingdom in what did not belong to Him, and that there are three natures. Nor can you say that God made it of a substance distinct from His own, without making something good besides God, or something evil besides the race of darkness. It remains, therefore that you must confess that God made the region of light out of nothing: and you are unwilling to believe this; because if God could

make out of nothing some great good which yet was inferior to Himself, He could also, since He is good, and grudges no good, make another good inferior to the former, and again a third inferior to the second, and so on, in order down to the lowest good of created natures, so that the whole aggregate, instead of extending indefinitely without number or measure should have a fixed and definite consistency. Again, if you will not allow this either, that God made the region of light out of nothing, you will have no escape from the shocking profanities to which your opinions lead.

28. Perhaps, since the carnal imagination can fancy any shapes it likes, you might be able to devise some other form for the junction of the two regions, instead of presenting to the mind such a disagreeable and painful description as this, that the region of God, whether it be of the same nature as God or not, where at least God's kingdoms are founded, lies through immensity in such a huge mass that its members stretch loosely to an infinite extent, and that on their lower part that wedge of the region of darkness, itself of boundless size encroaches upon them. But whatever other form you contrive for the junction of these two regions, you cannot erase what Manichaeus has written. I refer not to other treatises where a more particular description is given,—for perhaps, because they are in the hands of only a few, there might not be so much difficulty with them,—but to this Fundamental Epistle which we are now considering, with which all of you who are called enlightened are usually quite familiar. Here the words are: "On one side the border of the shining and sacred region was the region of darkness, deep and boundless in extent."

CHAPTER 26

THE MANICHAEANS ARE REDUCED TO THE CHOICE OF A TORTUOUS, OR CURVED, OR STRAIGHT LINE OF JUNCTION. THE THIRD KIND OF LINE WOULD GIVE SYMMETRY AND BEAUTY SUITABLE TO BOTH REGIONS

What more is to be got? we have now heard what is on the border. Make what shape you please, draw any kind of lines you like, it is certain that the junction of this boundless mass of the region of darkness to the region of light must have been either by a straight line, or a curved, or a tortuous one. If the line of junction is tortuous the side of the region of light must also be tortuous; otherwise its straight side joined to a tortuous one would leave gaps of infinite depth, instead of having vacuity only above the land of darkness, as we were told before. And if there were such gaps, how much better it would have been for the region of light to have been still more distant, and to have had a greater vacuity between, so that the region of darkness might not touch it at all! Then there might have been such a gap of bottomless depth, that, on the rise of any mischief in that race, although the chiefs of darkness might have the foolhardy wish to cross over, they would fall headlong into the gap (for bodies cannot fly without air to support them); and as there is infinite space downwards, they could do no more harm, though they might live for ever, for they would be for ever falling. Again, if the line of junction was a curved one, the region of light must also have had the disfigurement of a curve to answer it. Or if the land of darkness were curved inwards like a theatre, there would be as much disfigurement in the corresponding line in the region of light. Or if the region of darkness had a curved line, and the region of light a straight one, they cannot have touched at all points. And certainly, as I said before, it would have been better if they had not touched, and if there was such a gap between that the regions might be kept distinctly separate, and that rash evildoers might fall headlong so as to be harmless. If, then, the line of junction was a straight one, there remain, of course, no more gaps or grooves, but, on the contrary, so perfect a junction as to make the greatest possible peace and harmony between the two regions. What more beautiful or more suitable than that one side should meet the other in a straight line, without bends or breaks to disturb the natural and permanent connection throughout endless space and endless duration? And even though there was a separation, the straight sides of both regions would be beautiful in themselves, as being straight; and besides, even in spite of an interval, their correspondence, as running parallel, though not meeting, would give a symmetry to both. With the addition of the junction, both regions become perfectly regular and harmonious; for nothing can be devised more beautiful in description or in conception than this junction of two straight lines.

CHAPTER 27

THE BEAUTY OF THE STRAIGHT LINE MIGHT BE TAKEN FROM THE REGION OF DARKNESS WITHOUT TAKING ANYTHING FROM ITS SUBSTANCE. SO EVIL NEITHER TAKES FROM NOR ADDS TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SOUL. THE STRAIGHTNESS OF ITS SIDE WOULD BE SO FAR A GOOD BESTOWED ON THE REGION OF DARKNESS BY GOD THE CREATOR

29. What is to be done with unhappy minds, perverse in error, and held fast by custom? These men do not know what they say when they say those things; for they do not consider. Listen to me; no one forces you, no one quarrels with you, no one taunts you with past errors, unless some one who has not experienced the divine mercy in deliverance from error: all we desire is that the errors should some time or other be abandoned. Think a little without animosity or bitterness. We are all human beings: let us hate, not one another, but errors and lies. Think a little, I pray you. God of mercy, help them to think, and kindle in the minds of inquirers the true light. If anything is plain, is not this, that right is better than wrong? Give me, then, a calm and quiet answer to this, whether making crooked the right line of the region of darkness which joins on to the right line of the region of light, would not detract from its beauty. If you will not be dogged, you must confess that not only is beauty taken from it by its being made crooked, but also the beauty which it might have had from connection with the right line of the region of light. Is it the case, then, that in this loss of beauty, in which right is made crooked, and harmony becomes discord, and agreement disagreement, there is any loss of substance? Learn, then, from this that substance is not evil; but as in the body, by change of form for the worse, beauty is lost, or rather lessened, and what was called fair before is said to be ugly, and what was pleasing becomes displeasing, so in the mind the seemliness of a right will, which makes a just and pious life, is injured when the will changes for the worse; and by this sin the mind becomes miserable, instead of enjoying as before the happiness which comes from the ornament of a right will, without any gain or loss of substance.

30. Consider, again, that though we admit that the border of the region of darkness was evil for other reasons, such as that it was dim and dark, or any other reason, still it was not evil in being straight. So, if I admit that there was some evil in its color, you must admit that there was some good in its

straightness. Whatever the amount of this good, it is not allowable to attribute it to any other than God the Maker, from whom we must believe that all good in whatsoever nature comes, if we are to escape deadly error. It is absurd, then, to say that this region is perfect evil, when in its straightness of border is found the good of not a little beauty of a material kind; and also to make this region to be altogether estranged, from the almighty and good God, when this good which we find in it can be attributed to no other but the author of all good things. But this border, too, we are told, was evil. Well, suppose it evil: it would surely have been worse had it been crooked instead of straight. And how can that be the perfection of evil than which something worse than itself can be thought of? And to be worse implies that there is some good, the want of which makes the thing worse. Here the want of straightness would make the line worse. Therefore its straightness is something good. And you will never answer the question whence this goodness comes, without reference to Him from whom we must acknowledge that all good things come, whether small or great. But now we shall pass on from considering this border to something else.

CHAPTER 28

MANICHAEUS PLACES FIVE NATURES IN THE REGION OF DARKNESS

31. “There dwelt,” he says, “in that region fiery bodies, destructive races.” By speaking of dwelling, he must mean that those bodies were animated and in life. But, not to appear to cavil at a word, let us see how he divides into five classes all these inhabitants of this region. “Here,” he says, “was boundless darkness, flowing from the same source in immeasurable abundance, with the productions properly belonging to it. Beyond this were muddy turbid waters, with their inhabitants; and inside of them winds terrible and violent, with their prince and their progenitors. Then, again, a fiery region of destruction, with its chiefs and peoples. And, similarly, inside of this a race full of smoke and gloom, where abode the dreadful prince and chief of all, having around him innumerable princes, himself the mind and source of them all. Such are the five natures of the pestiferous region.” We find here five natures mentioned as part of one nature, which he calls the pestiferous region. The natures are darkness, waters, winds, fire, smoke; which he so arranges as to make darkness first, beginning at the

outside. Inside of darkness he puts the waters; inside of the waters, the winds; inside of the winds, the fire; inside of the fire, the smoke. And each of these natures had its peculiar kind of inhabitants, which were likewise five in number. For to the question, Whether there was only one kind in all, or different kinds corresponding to the different natures; the reply is, that they were different: as in other books we find it stated that the darkness had serpents; the waters swimming creatures, such as fish; the winds flying creatures, such as birds; the fire quadrupeds, such as horses, lions, and the like; the smoke bipeds, such as men.

CHAPTER 29

THE REFUTATION OF THIS ABSURDITY

32. Whose arrangement, then, is this? Who made the distinctions and the classification? Who gave the number, the qualities, the forms, the life? For all these things are in themselves good, nor could each of the natures have them except from the bestowal of God, the author of all good things. For this is not like the descriptions or suppositions of poets about an imaginary chaos, as being a shapeless mass, without form, without quality, without measurement, without weight and number, without order and variety; a confused something, absolutely destitute of qualities, so that some Greek writers call it apoion. So far from being like this is the Manichaean description of the region of darkness, as they call it, that, in a directly contrary style, they add side to side, and join border to border; they number five natures; they separate, arrange, and assign to each its own qualities. Nor do they leave the natures barren or waste, but people them with their proper inhabitants; and to these, again, they give suitable forms, and adapted to their place of habitation, besides giving the chief of all endowments, life. To recount such good things as these, and to speak of them as having no connection with God, the author of all good things, is to lose sight of the excellence of the order in the things, and of the great evil of the error which leads to such a conclusion.

CHAPTER 30

THE NUMBER OF GOOD THINGS IN THOSE NATURES WHICH MANICHAEUS PLACES IN THE REGION OF DARKNESS

33. “But,” is the reply, “the orders of beings inhabiting those five natures were fierce and destructive.” As if I were praising their fierceness and destructiveness. I, you see, join with you in condemning the evils you attribute to them; join you with me in praising the good things which you ascribe to them: so it will appear that there is a mixture of good and evil in what you call the last extremity of evil. If I join you in condemning what is mischievous in this region, you must join with me in praising what is beneficial. For these beings could not have been produced, or nourished, or have continued to inhabit that region, without some salutary influence. I join with you in condemning the darkness; join with me in praising the productiveness. For while you call the darkness immeasurable, you speak of “suitable productions.” Darkness, indeed, is not a real substance, and means no more than the absence of light, as nakedness means the want of clothing, and emptiness the want of material contents: so that darkness could produce nothing, although a region in darkness—that is, in the absence of light—might produce something. But passing over this for the present, it is certain that where productions arise there must be a beneficent adaptation of substances, as well as a symmetrical arrangement and construction in unity of the members of the beings produced,—a wise adjustment making them agree with one another. And who will deny that all these things are more to be praised than darkness is to be condemned? If I join with you in condemning the muddiness of the waters, you must join with me in praising the waters as far as they possessed the form and quality of water, and also the agreement of the members of the inhabitants swimming in the waters, their life sustaining and directing their body, and every particular adaptation of substances for the benefit of health. For though you find fault with the waters as turbid and muddy, still, in allowing them the quality of producing and maintaining their living inhabitants, you imply that there was some kind of bodily form, and similarity of parts, giving unity and congruity of character; otherwise there could be no body at all: and, as a rational being, you must see that all these things are to be praised. And however great you make the ferocity of these inhabitants, and their massacrings and

devastations in their assaults, you still leave them the regular limits of form, by which the members of each body are made to agree together, and their beneficial adaptations, and the regulating power of the living principle binding together the parts of the body in a friendly and harmonious union. And if all these are regarded with common sense it will be seen that they are more to be commended than the faults are to be condemned. I join with you in condemning the frightfulness of the winds; join with me in praising their nature, as giving breath and nourishment, and their material form in its continuousness and diffusion by the connection of its parts: for by these things these winds had the power of producing and nourishing, and sustaining in vigor these inhabitants you speak of; and also in these inhabitants—besides the other things which have already been commended in all animated creatures—this particular power of going quickly and easily whence and whither they please, and the harmonious stroke of their wings in flight, and their regular motion. I join with you in condemning the destructiveness of fire; join with me in commending the productiveness of this fire, and the growth of these productions, and the adaptation of the fire to the beings produced, so that they had coherence, and came to perfection in measure and shape, and could live and have their abode there: for you see that all these things deserve admiration and praise, not only in the fire which is thus habitable, but in the inhabitants too. I join with you in condemning the denseness of smoke, and the savage character of the prince who, as you say, abode in it; join with me in praising the similarity of all the parts in this very smoke, by which it preserves the harmony and proportion of its parts among themselves, according to its own nature, and has an unity which makes it what it is: for no one can calmly reflect on these things without wonder and praise. Besides, even to the smoke you give the power and energy of production, for you say that princes inhabited it; so that in that region the smoke is productive, which never happens here, and, moreover, affords a wholesome dwelling place to its inhabitants.

CHAPTER 31

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED

34. And even in the prince of smoke himself, instead of mentioning only his ferocity as a bad quality, ought you not to have taken notice of the other

things in his nature which you must allow to be commendable? For he had a soul and a body; the soul life-giving, and the body endowed with life. Since the soul governed and the body obeyed, the soul took the lead and the body followed; the soul gave consistency, the body was not dissolved; the soul gave harmonious motion, and the body was constructed of a well-proportioned framework of members. In this single prince are you not induced to express approval of the orderly peace or the peaceful order? And what applies to one applies to all the rest. You say he was fierce and cruel to others. This is not what I commend, but the other important things which you will not take notice of. Those things, when perceived and considered,—after advice by any one who has without consideration put faith in Manichaeus,—lead him to a clear conviction that, in speaking of those natures, he speaks of things good in a sense, not perfect and un-created, like God the one Trinity, nor of the higher rank of created things, like the holy angels and the ever-blessed powers; but of the lowest class, and ranked according to the small measure of their endowments. These things are thought to be blameworthy by the uninstructed when they compare them with higher things; and in view of their want of some good, the good they have gets the name of evil, because it is defective. My reason also for thus discussing the natures enumerated by Manichaeus is that the things named are things familiar to us in this world. We are familiar with darkness, waters, winds, fire, smoke; we are familiar, too, with animals, creeping, swimming, flying; with quadrupeds and biped. With the exception of darkness (which, as I have said already, is nothing but the absence of light, and the perception of it is only the absence of sight, as the perception of silence is the absence of hearing; not that darkness is anything, but that light is not, as neither that silence is anything, but that sound is not), all the other things are natural qualities and are familiar to all; and the form of those natures, which is commendable and good as far as it exists, no wise man attributes to any other author than God, the author of all good things.

CHAPTER 32

MANICHAEUS GOT THE ARRANGEMENT OF HIS FANCIFUL NOTIONS FROM VISIBLE OBJECTS

35. For in giving to these natures which he has learned from visible things, an arrangement according to his fanciful ideas, to represent the race of darkness, Manichaeus is clearly in error. First of all, he makes darkness productive, which is impossible. But, he replies, this darkness was unlike what you are familiar with. How, then, can you make me understand about it? After so many promises to give knowledge, will you force me to take your word for it? Suppose I believe you, this at least is certain, that if the darkness had no form, as darkness usually has not, it could produce nothing; if it had form, it was better than ordinary darkness: whereas, when you call it different from the ordinary kind, you wish us to believe that it is worse. You might as well say that silence, which is the same to the ear as darkness to the eyes, produced some deaf or dumb animals in that region; and then, in reply to the objection that silence is not a nature, you might say that it was different silence from ordinary silence; in a word, you might say what you pleased to those whom you have once misled into believing you. No doubt, the obvious facts relating to the origin of animal life led Manichaeus to say that serpents were produced in darkness. However, there are serpents which have such sharp sight, and such pleasure in light, that they seem to give evidence of the most weighty kind against this idea. Then the idea of swimming things in the water might easily be got here, and applied to the fanciful objects in that region; and so of flying things in the winds, for the motion of the lower air in this world, where birds fly, is called wind. Where he got the idea of the quadrupeds in fire, no one can tell. Still he said this deliberately, though without sufficient thought, and from great misconception. The reason usually given is, that quadrupeds are voracious and salacious. But many men surpass any quadruped in voracity, though they are bipeds, and are called children of the smoke, and not of fire. Geese, too, are as voracious as any animal; and though he might place them in fire as bipeds, or in the water because they love to swim, or in the winds because they have wings and sometimes fly, they certainly have nothing to do with fire in this classification. As regards salaciousness, I suppose he was thinking of neighing horses, which sometimes bite through the bridle and rush at the mares; and writing hastily, with this in his mind, he forgot the common sparrow, in comparison of which the hottest stallion is cold. The reason they give for assigning bipeds to the smoke is, that bipeds are conceited and proud, for men are derived from this class; and the idea,

which is a plausible one, is that smoke resembles proud people in rising up into the air, round and swelling. This idea might warrant a figurative description of proud men, or an allegorical expression or explanation, but not the belief that bipeds are born in smoke and of smoke. They might with equal reason be said to be born in dust, for it often rises up to the heaven with a similar circling and lofty motion; or in the clouds, for they are often drawn up from the earth in such a way, that those looking from a distance are uncertain whether they are clouds or smoke. Once more, why, in the case of the waters and the winds, does he suit the inhabitants to the character of the place, as we see swimming things in water, and flying things in the wind; whereas, in the face of fire and smoke, this bold liar is not ashamed to assign to these places the most unlikely inhabitants? For fire burns quadrupeds, and consumes them, and smoke suffocates and kills bipeds. At least he must acknowledge that he has made these natures better in the race of darkness than they are here, though he wishes us to think everything to be worse. For, according to this, the fire there produced and nourished quadrupeds, and gave them a lodging not only harmless, but most convenient. The smoke, too, provided room for the offspring of its own benign bosom, and cherished them up to the rank of prince. Thus we see that these lies, which have added to the number of heretics, arose from the perception by carnal sense, only without care or discernment, of visible objects in this world, and when thus conceived, were brought forth by fancy, and then presumptuously written and published.

CHAPTER 33

EVERY NATURE, AS NATURE, IS GOOD

36. But the consideration we wish most to urge is the truth of the Catholic doctrine, if they can understand it, that God is the author of all natures. I urged this before when I said, I join with you in your condemnation of destructiveness, of blindness, of dense muddiness, of terrific violence, of perishableness, of the ferocity of the princes, and so on; join with me in commending form, classification, arrangement, harmony, unity of structure, symmetry and correspondence of members, provision for vital breath and nourishment, wholesome adaptation, regulation and control by the mind, and the subjection of the bodies, and the assimilation and agreement of

parts in the natures, both those inhabiting and those inhabited, and all the other things of the same kind. From this, if they would only think honestly, they would understand that it implies a mixture of good and evil, even in the region where they suppose evil to be alone and in perfection: so that if the evils mentioned were taken away, the good things will remain, without anything to detract from the commendation given to them; whereas, if the good things are taken away, no nature is left. From this every one sees, who can see, that every nature, as far as it is nature, is good; since in one and the same thing in which I found something to praise, and he found something to blame, if the good things are taken away, no nature will remain; but if the disagreeable things are taken away, the nature will remain unimpaired. Take from waters their thickness and muddiness, and pure clear water remains; take from them the consistence of their parts, and no water will be left. If then, after the evil is removed, the nature remains in a purer state, and does not remain at all when the good is taken away, it must be the good which makes the nature of the thing in which it is, while the evil is not nature, but contrary to nature. Take from the winds their terribleness and excessive force, with which you find fault, you can conceive of winds as gentle and mild; take from them the similarity of their parts which gives them continuity of substance, and the unity essential to material existence, and no nature remains to be conceived of. It would be tedious to go through all the cases; but all who consider the subject free from party spirit must see that in their list of natures the disagreeable things mentioned are additions to the nature; and when they are removed, the natures remain better than before. This shows that the natures, as far as they are natures, are good; for when you take from them the good instead of the evil, no natures remain. And attend, you who wish to arrive at a correct judgment, to what is said of the fierce prince himself. If you take away his ferocity, see how many excellent things will remain; his material frame, the symmetry of the members on one side with those on the other, the unity of his form, the settled continuity of his parts, the orderly adjustment of the mind as ruling and animating, and the body as subject and animated. The removal of these things, and of others I may have omitted to mention, will leave no nature remaining.

CHAPTER 34

NATURE CANNOT BE WITHOUT SOME GOOD. THE MANICHAEANS DWELL UPON THE EVILS

37. But perhaps you will say that these evils cannot be removed from the natures, and must therefore be considered natural. The question at present is not what can be taken away, and what cannot; but it certainly helps to a clear perception that these natures, as far as they are natures, are good, when we see that the good things can be thought of without these evil things, while without these good things no nature can be conceived of. I can conceive of waters without muddy commotion; but without settled continuity of parts no material form is an object of thought or of sensation in any way. Therefore even these muddy waters could not exist without the good which was the condition of their material existence. As to the reply that these evil things cannot be taken from such natures, I rejoin that neither can the good things be taken away. Why, then, should you call these things natural evils, on account of the evil things which you suppose cannot be taken away, and yet refuse to call them natural good things, on account of the good things which, as has been proved, cannot be taken away?

38. You may next ask, as you usually do for a last resource, whence come these evils which I have said that I too disapprove of. I shall perhaps tell you, if you first tell me whence are those good things which you too are obliged to commend, if you would not be altogether unreasonable. But why should I ask this, when we both acknowledge that all good things whatever, and how great soever, are from the one God, who is supremely good? You must therefore yourselves oppose Manichaeus who has placed all these important good things which we have mentioned and justly commended,—the continuity and agreement of parts in each nature, the health and vigor of the animated creatures, and the other things which it would be wearisome to repeat,—(in an imaginary region of darkness, so as to separate them altogether from that God whom he allows to be the author of all good things.) He lost sight of those good things, while taking notice only of what was disagreeable; as if one, frightened by a lion's roaring, and seeing him dragging away and tearing the bodies of cattle or human beings which he had seized, should from childish pusillanimity be so overpowered with fear

as to see nothing but the cruelty and ferocity of the lion; and overlooking or disregarding all the other qualities, should exclaim against the nature of this animal as not only evil, but a great evil, his fear adding to his vehemence. But were he to see a tame lion, with its ferocity subdued, especially if he had never been frightened by a lion, he would have leisure, in the absence of danger and terror, to observe and admire the beauty of the animal. My only remark on this is one closely connected with our subject: that any nature may be in some case disagreeable, so as to excite hatred towards the whole nature; though it is clear that the form of a real living beast, even when it excites terror in the woods, is far better than that of the artificial imitation which is commended in a painting on the wall. We must not then be misled into this error by Manichaeus, or be hindered from observing the forms of the natures, by his finding fault with some things in them in such a way as to make us disapprove of them entirely, when it is impossible to show that they deserve entire disapproval. And when our minds are thus composed and prepared to form a just judgment, we may ask whence come those evils which I have said that I condemn. It will be easier to see this if we class them all under one name.

CHAPTER 35

EVIL ALONE IS CORRUPTION. CORRUPTION IS NOT NATURE, BUT CONTRARY TO NATURE. CORRUPTION IMPLIES PREVIOUS GOOD

39. For who can doubt that the whole of that which is called evil is nothing else than corruption? Different evils may, indeed, be called by different names; but that which is the evil of all things in which any evil is perceptible is corruption. So the corruption of an educated mind is ignorance; the corruption of a prudent mind is imprudence; the corruption of a just mind, injustice; the corruption of a brave mind, cowardice; the corruption of a calm, peaceful mind, cupidity, fear, sorrow, pride. Again, in a living body, the corruption of health is pain and disease; the corruption of strength is exhaustion; the corruption of rest is toil. Again, in any corporeal thing, the corruption of beauty is ugliness; the corruption of straightness is crookedness; the corruption of order is confusion; the corruption of entireness is disseverance, or fracture, or diminution. It would be long and laborious to mention by name all the corruptions of the things here

mentioned, and of countless other things; for in many cases the words may apply to the mind as well as to the body, and in innumerable cases the corruption has a distinct name of its own. But enough has been said to show that corruption does harm only as displacing the natural condition; and so, that corruption is not nature, but against nature. And if corruption is the only evil to be found anywhere, and if corruption is not nature, no nature is evil.

40. But if, perchance, you cannot follow this, consider again, that whatever is corrupted is deprived of some good: for if it were not corrupted, it would be incorrupt; or if it could not in any way be corrupted, it would be incorruptible. Now, if corruption is an evil, both incorruption and incorruptibility must be good things. We are not, however, speaking at present of incorruptible nature, but of things which admit of corruption, and which, while not corrupted, may be called incorrupt, but not incorruptible. That alone can be called incorruptible which not only is not corrupted, but also cannot in any part be corrupted. Whatever things, then, being incorrupt, but liable to corruption, begin to be corrupted, are deprived of the good which they had as incorrupt. Nor is this a slight good, for corruption is a great evil. And the continued increase of corruption implies the continued presence of good, of which they may be deprived. Accordingly, the natures supposed to exist in the region of darkness must have been either corruptible or incorruptible. If they were incorruptible, they were in possession of a good than which nothing is higher. If they were corruptible, they were either corrupted or not corrupted. If they were not corrupted, they were incorrupt, to say which of anything is to give it great praise. If they were corrupted, they were deprived of this great good of incorruption; but the deprivation implies the previous possession of the good they are deprived of; and if they possessed this good, they were not the perfection of evil, and consequently all the Manichaean story is a falsehood.

CHAPTER 36

THE SOURCE OF EVIL OR OF CORRUPTION OF GOOD

41. After thus inquiring what evil is, and learning that it is not nature, but against nature, we must next inquire whence it is. If Manichaeus had done

this, he might have escaped falling into the snare of these serious errors. Out of time and out of order, he began with inquiring into the origin of evil, without first asking what evil was; and so his inquiry led him only to the reception of foolish fancies, of which the mind, much fed by the bodily senses, with difficulty rids itself. Perhaps, then, some one, desiring no longer argument, but delivery from error, will ask, Whence is this corruption which we find to be the common evil of good things which are not incorruptible? Such an inquirer will soon find the answer if he seeks for truth with great earnestness, and knocks reverently with sustained assiduity. For while man can use words as a kind of sign for the expression of his thoughts, teaching is the work of the incorruptible Truth itself, who is the one true, the one internal Teacher. He became external also, that He might recall us from the external to the internal; and taking on Himself the form of a servant, that He might bring down His height to the knowledge of those rising up to Him, He condescended to appear in lowliness to the low. In His name let us ask, and through Him let us seek mercy of the Father while making this inquiry. For to answer in a word the question, Whence is corruption? it is hence, because these natures that are capable of corruption were not begotten by God, but made by Him out of nothing; and as we already proved that those natures are good, no one can say with propriety that they were not good as made by God. If it is said that God made them perfectly good, it must be remembered that the only perfect good is God Himself, the maker of those good things.

CHAPTER 37

GOD ALONE PERFECTLY GOOD

42. What harm, you ask, would follow if those things too were perfectly good? Still, should any one, who admits and believes the perfect goodness of God the Father, inquire what source we should reverently assign to any other perfectly good thing, supposing it to exist, our only correct reply would be, that it is of God the Father, who is perfectly good. And we must bear in mind that what is of Him is born of Him, and not made by Him out of nothing, and that it is therefore perfectly, that is, incorruptibly, good like God Himself. So we see that it is unreasonable to require that things made out of nothing should be as perfectly good as He who was begotten of God

Himself, and who is one as God is one, otherwise God would have begotten something unlike Himself. Hence it shows ignorance and impiety to seek for brethren for this only-begotten Son through whom all good things were made by the Father out of nothing, except in this, that He condescended to appear as man. Accordingly in Scripture He is called both only-begotten and first-begotten; only-begotten of the Father, and first-begotten from the dead. “And we beheld,” says John, “His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” And Paul says, “that He might be the first-born among many brethren.”

43. But should we say, These things made out of nothing are not good things, but only God’s nature is good, we shall be unjust to good things of great value. And there is impiety in calling it a defect in anything not to be what God is, and in denying a thing to be good because it is inferior to God. Pray submit then, thou nature of the rational soul, to be somewhat less than God, but only so far less, that after Him nothing else is above thee. Submit, I say, and yield to Him, lest He drive thee still lower into depths where the punishment inflicted will continually detract more and more from the good which thou hast. Thou exaltest thyself against God, if thou art indignant at His preceding thee; and thou art very contumacious in thy thoughts of Him, if thou dost not rejoice unspeakably in the possession of this good, that He alone is above thee. This being settled as certain, thou art not to say, God should have made me the only nature: there should be no good thing after me. It could not be that the next good thing to God should be the last. And in this is seen most clearly how great dignity God conferred on thee, that He who in the order of nature alone rules over thee, made other good things for thee to rule over. Nor be surprised that they are not now in all respects subject to thee, and that sometimes they pain thee; for thy Lord has greater authority over the things subject to thee than thou hast, as a master over the servants of his servants. What wonder, then, if, when thou sinnest, that is, disobeyest thy Lord, the things thou before ruledst over are made instrumental in thy punishment? For what is so just, or what is more just than God? For this befell human nature in Adam, of whom this is not the place to speak. Suffice it to say, the righteous Ruler acts in character both in just rewards and in just punishments, in the happiness of those who live rightly, and in the penalty inflicted on sinners. Nor yet art thou left without

mercy, since by an appointed distribution of things and times thou art called to return. Thus the righteous control of the supreme Creator extends even to earthly good things, which are corrupted and restored, that thou mightest have consolations mingled with punishments; that thou mightest both praise God when delighted by the order of good things, and mightest take refuge in Him when tried by experience of evils. So, as far as earthly things are subject to thee, they teach thee that thou art their ruler; as far as they distress thee, they teach thee to be subject to thy Lord.

CHAPTER 38

NATURE MADE BY GOD; CORRUPTION COMES FROM NOTHING

44. In this way, though corruption is an evil, and though it comes not from the Author of natures, but from their being made out of nothing, still, in God's government and control over all that He has made, even corruption is so ordered that it hurts only the lowest natures, for the punishment of the condemned, and for the trial and instruction of the returning, that they may keep near to the incorruptible God, and remain incorrupt, which is our only good; as is said by the prophet, "But it is good for me that I keep near to God." And you must not say, God did not make corruptible natures: for, as far as they are natures, God made them; but as far as they are corruptible, God did not make them: for corruption cannot come from Him who alone is incorruptible. If you can receive this, give thanks to God; if you cannot, be quiet and do not condemn what you do not yet understand, but humbly wait on Him who is the light of the mind that thou mayest know. For in the expression "corruptible nature" there are two words, and not one only. So, in the expression, God made out of nothing, "God" and "nothing" are two separate words. Render therefore to each of these words that which belongs to each, so that the word "nature" may go with the word "God,"and the word "corruptible" with the word "nothing." And yet even the corruptions, though they have not their origin from God, are to be overruled by Him in accordance with the order of inanimate things and the deserts of His intelligent creatures. Thus we say rightly that reward and punishment are both from God. For God's not making corruption is consistent with His giving over to corruption the man who deserves to be corrupted, that is, who has begun to corrupt himself by sinning, that he who has wilfully

yielded to the allurements of corruption may, against his will, suffer its pains.

CHAPTER 39

IN WHAT SENSE EVILS ARE FROM GOD

45. Not only is it written in the Old Testament, “I make good, and create evil;” but more clearly in the New Testament, where the Lord says, “Fear not them which kill the body, and have no more that they can do; but fear him who, after he has killed the body, has power to cast the soul into hell.” And that to voluntary corruption penal corruption is added in the divine judgment, is plainly declared by the Apostle Paul, when he says, “The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are; whoever corrupts the temple of God, him will God corrupt.” If this had been said in the Old Law, how vehemently would the Manichaeans have denounced it as making God a corrupter! And from fear of the word, many Latin translators make it, “him shall God destroy,” instead of corrupt, avoiding the offensive word without any change of meaning. Although these would inveigh against any passage in the Old Law or the prophets if God was called in it a destroyer. But the Greek original here shows that corrupt is the true word; for it is written distinctly, “Whoever corrupts the temple of God, him will God corrupt.” If the Manichaeans are asked to explain the words, they will say, to escape making God a corrupter, that corrupt here means to give over to corruption, or some such explanation. Did they read the Old Law in this spirit, they would both find many admirable things in it; and instead of spitefully attacking passages which they did not understand, they would reverently postpone the inquiry.

CHAPTER 40

CORRUPTION TENDS TO NON-EXISTENCE

46. But if any one does not believe that corruption comes from nothing, let him place before himself existence and non-existence—one, as it were, on one side, and the other on the other (to speak so as not to outstrip the slow to understand); then let him set something, say the body of an animal, between them, and let him ask himself whether, while the body is being

formed and produced, while its size is increasing, while it gains nourishment, health, strength, beauty, stability, it is tending, as regards its duration and permanence, to this side or that, to existence or non-existence. He will see without difficulty, that even in the rudimentary form there is an existence, and that the more the body is established and built up in form, and figure and strength, the more does it come to exist, and to tend to the side of existence. Then, again, let the body begin to be corrupted; let its whole condition be enfeebled, let its vigor languish, its strength decay, its beauty be defaced, its framework be sundered, the consistency of its parts give way and go to pieces; and let him ask now where the body is tending in this corruption, whether to existence or non-existence: he will not surely be so blind or stupid as to doubt how to answer himself, or as not to see that, in proportion as anything is corrupted, in that proportion it approaches decease. But whatever tends to decease tends to non-existence. Since, then, we must believe that God exists immutably and incorruptibly, while what is called nothing is clearly altogether nonexistent; and since, after setting before yourself existence and non-existence, you have observed that the more a visible object increases the more it tends towards existence, while the more it is corrupted the more it tends towards non-existence, why are you at a loss to tell regarding any nature what in it is from God, and what from nothing; seeing that visible form is natural, and corruption against nature? The increase of form leads to existence, and we acknowledge God as supreme existence; the increase of corruption leads to non-existence, and we know that what is non-existent is nothing. Why then, I say, are you at a loss to tell regarding a corruptible nature, when you have both the words nature and corruptible, what is from God, and what from nothing? And why do you inquire for a nature contrary to God, since, if you confess that He is the supreme existence, it follows that non-existence is contrary to Him?

CHAPTER 41

CORRUPTION IS BY GOD’S PERMISSION, AND COMES FROM US

47. You ask, Why does corruption take from nature what God has given to it? It takes nothing but where God permits; and He permits in righteous and well-ordered judgment, according to the degrees of non-intelligent and the deserts of intelligent creatures. The word uttered passes away as an object

of sense, and perishes in silence; and yet the coming and going of these passing words make our speech, and the regular intervals of silence give pleasing and appropriate distinction; and so it is with temporal natures which have this lowest form of beauty, that transition gives them being, and the death of what they give birth to gives them individuality. And if our sense and memory could rightly take in the order and proportions of this beauty, it would so please us, that we should not dare to give the name of corruptions to those imperfections which give rise to the distinction. And when distress comes to us through their peculiar beauty, by the loss of beloved temporal things passing away, we both pay the penalty of our sins, and are exhorted to set our affection on eternal things.

CHAPTER 42

EXHORTATION TO THE CHIEF GOOD

48. Let us, then, not seek in this beauty for what has not been given to it (and from not having what we seek for, this is the lowest form of beauty); and in that which has been given to it, let us praise God, because He has bestowed this great good of visible form even on the lowest degree of beauty. And let us not cleave as lovers to this beauty, but as praisers of God let us rise above it; and from this superior position let us pronounce judgment on it, instead of so being bound up in it as to be judged along with it. And let us hasten on to that good which has no motion in space or advancement in time, from which all natures in space and time receive their sensible being and their form. To see this good let us purify our heart by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, who says, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” For the eyes needed in order to see this good are not those with which we see the light spread through space, which has part in one place and part in another, instead of being all in every place. The sight and the discernment we are to purify is that by which we see, as far as is allowed in this life, what is just, what is pious, what is the beauty of wisdom. He who sees these things, values them far above the fullness of all regions in space, and finds that the vision of these things requires not the extension of his perception through distances in space, but its invigoration by an immaterial influence.

CHAPTER 43

CONCLUSION

49. And as this vision is greatly hindered by those fancies which are originated by the carnal sense, and are retained and modified by the imagination, let us abhor this heresy which has been led by faith in its fancies to represent the divine substance as extended and diffused through space, even through infinite space, and to cut short one side so as to make room for evil,—not being able to perceive that evil is not nature, but against nature; and to beautify this very evil with such visible appearance, and forms, and consistency of parts prevailing in its several natures, not being able to conceive of any nature without those good things, that the evils found fault with in it are buried under a countless abundance of good things.

Here let us close this part of the treatise. The other absurdities of Manichaeus will be exposed in what follows, by the permission and help of God.

ANSWER TO THE LETTERS OF PETILIAN, THE DONATIST

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(CONTRA LITTERAS PETILIANI DONATISTAE CIRTENSIS EPISCOPI, LIBRI III)

CIRCA A.D. 400.

TRANSLATED BY THE

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Preface

Written c. 400 A.D., some say 398 A.D., but Augustin places it some time after the treatise on Baptism: Retractt. Bk. ii. xxv. From the same, we gather the following points as to the origin of this treatise: Before A. had finished his books on the Trinity and his word-for-word commentary on Genesis, a reply to a letter which Petilian had addressed to his followers, only a small part of which however had come into A.'s hands, demanded immediate preparation. This constitutes Book First. Subsequently the whole document was obtained, and he was engaged in preparing the second Book, c. 401; but even before the full treatise of Petilian had been secured, the latter had obtained A.'s first book, and afterwards put an epistle abusive of A. in circulation. The answer to this latter is Book Third, c. 402. Petilian was originally an advocate. The opponents charged him with having become a Donatist by compulsion, with assuming the title of Paraclete, and with endeavoring to prevent all access on their part to his writings.

Book I

Written in the form of a letter addressed to the Catholics, in which the first portion of the letter which Petilian had written to his adherents is examined and refuted.

Augustin, to the well-beloved brethren that belong to the care of our charge, greeting in the Lord:

CHAPTER 1

1. Ye know that we have often wished to bring forward into open notoriety, and to confute, not so much from our own arguments as from theirs, the sacrilegious error of the Donatist heretics; whence it came to pass that we wrote letters even to some of their leaders,—not indeed for purposes of communion with them, for of that they had already in times past rendered themselves unworthy by dissenting from the Church; nor yet in terms of reproach, but of a conciliatory character, with the view that, having discussed the question with us which caused them to break off from the holy communion of the whole world, they might, on consideration of the truth, be willing to be corrected, and might not defend the headstrong perversity of their predecessors with a yet more foolish obstinacy, but might be reunited to the Catholic stock, so as to bring forth the fruits of charity. But as it is written, "With those who have hated peace I am more peaceful," so they rejected my letters, just as they hate the very name of peace, in whose interests they were written. Now, however, as I was in the church of Constantina, Absentius being present, with my colleague Fortunatus, his bishop, the brethren brought before my notice a letter, which they said that a bishop of the said schism had addressed to his presbyters, as was set forth in the superscription of the letter itself. When I had read it, I was so amazed to find that in his very first words he cut away the very roots of the whole claims of his party to communion, that I was unwilling to believe that it could be the letter of a man who, if fame speaks truly, is especially conspicuous among them for learning and eloquence. But some of those

who were present when I read it, being acquainted with the polish and embellishment of his composition, gradually persuaded me that it was undoubtedly his address. I thought, however, that whoever the author might be, it required refutation, lest the writer should seem to himself, in the company of the inexperienced, to have written something of weight against the Catholic Church

2. The first point, then, that he lays down in his letter is the statement, “that we find fault with them for the repetition of baptism, while we ourselves pollute our souls with a laver stained with guilt.” But to what profit is it that I should reproduce all his insulting terms? For, since it is one thing to strengthen proofs, another thing to meddle with abusive words by way of refutation, let us rather turn our attention to the mode in which he has sought to prove that we do not possess baptism, and that therefore they do not require the repetition of what was already present, but confer what hitherto was wanting. For he says: “What we look for is the conscience of the giver to cleanse that of the recipient.” But supposing the conscience of the giver is concealed from view, and perhaps defiled with sin, how will it be able to cleanse the conscience of the recipient, if, as he says, “what we look for is the conscience of the giver to cleanse that of the recipient?” For if he should say that it makes no matter to the recipient what amount of evil may lie concealed from view in the conscience of the giver, perhaps that ignorance may have such a degree of efficacy as this, that a man cannot be defiled by the guilt of the conscience of him from whom he receives baptism, so long as he is unaware of it. Let it then be granted that the guilty conscience of his neighbor cannot defile a man so long as he is unaware of it, but is it therefore clear that it can further cleanse him from his own guilt?

CHAPTER 2

3. Whence, then, is a man to be cleansed who receives baptism, when the conscience of the giver is polluted without the knowledge of him who is to receive it? Especially when he goes on to say, “For he who receives faith from the faithless receives not faith, but guilt.” There stands before us one that is faithless ready to baptize, and he who should be baptized is ignorant of his faithlessness: what think you that he will receive? Faith, or guilt? If you answer faith, then you will grant that it is possible that a man should

receive not guilt, but faith, from him that is faithless; and the former saying will be false, that “he who receives faith from the faithless receives not faith, but guilt.” For we find that it is possible that a man should receive faith even from one that is faithless, if he be not aware of the faithlessness of the giver. For he does not say, He who receives faith from one that is openly and notoriously faithless; but he says, “He who receives faith from the faithless receives not faith, but guilt;” which certainly is false when a person is baptized by one who hides his faithlessness. But if he shall say, Even when the faithlessness of the baptizer is concealed, the recipient receives not faith from him, but guilt, then let them rebaptize those who are well known to have been baptized by men who in their own body have long concealed a life of guilt, but have eventually been detected, convicted, and condemned

CHAPTER 3

For, so long as they escaped detection, they could not bestow faith on any whom they baptized, but only guilt, if it be true that whosoever receives faith from one that is faithless receives not faith, but guilt. Let them therefore be baptized by the good, that they may be enabled to receive not guilt, but faith

4. But how, again, shall they have any certainty about the good who are to give them faith, if what we look to is the conscience of the giver, which is unseen by the eyes of the proposed recipient? Therefore, according to their judgment, the salvation of the spirit is made uncertain, so long as in opposition to the holy Scriptures, which say, “It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man,” and, “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man,” they remove the hope of those who are to be baptized from the Lord their God, and persuade them that it should be placed in man; the practical result of which is, that their salvation becomes not merely uncertain, but actually null and void. For “salvation belongeth unto the Lord,” and “vain is the help of man.” Therefore, whosoever places his trust in man, even in one whom he knows to be just and innocent, is accursed. Whence also the Apostle Paul finds fault with those who said they were of Paul saying, “Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?”

CHAPTER 4

5. Wherefore, if they were in error, and would have perished had they not been corrected, who wished to be of Paul, what must we suppose to be the hope of those who wished to be of Donatus? For they use their utmost endeavors to prove that the origin, root, and head of the baptized person is none other than the individual by whom he is baptized. The result is, that since it is very often a matter of uncertainty what kind of man the baptizer is, the hope therefore of the baptized being of uncertain origin, of uncertain root, of uncertain head, is of itself uncertain altogether. And since it is possible that the conscience of the giver may be in such a condition as to be accursed and defiled without the knowledge of the recipient, it results that, being of an accursed origin, accursed root, accursed head, the hope of the baptized may prove to be vain and ungrounded. For Petilian expressly states in his epistle, that “everything consists of an origin and root; and if it have not something for a head, it is nothing.” And since by the origin and root and head of the baptized person he wishes to be understood the man by whom he is baptized, what good does the unhappy recipient derive from the fact that he does not know how bad a man his baptizer really is? For he does not know that he himself has a bad head, or actually no head at all. And yet what hope can a man have, who, whether he is aware of it or not, has either a very bad head or no head at all? Can we maintain that his very ignorance forms a head, when his baptizer is either a bad head or none at all? Surely any one who thinks this is unmistakeably without a head

CHAPTER 5

6. We ask, therefore, since he says, “He who receives faith from the faithless receives not faith, but guilt,” and immediately adds to this the further statement, that “everything consists of an origin and root; and if it have not something for a head, it is nothing;”—we ask, I say, in a case where the faithlessness of the baptizer is undetected: If then, the man whom he baptizes receives faith, and not guilt; if, then, the baptizer is not his origin and root and head, who is it from whom he receives faith? where is the origin from which he springs? where is the root of which he is a shoot? where the head which is his starting-point? Can it be, that when he who is baptized is unaware of the faithlessness of his baptizer, it is then Christ who

gives faith, it is then Christ who is the origin and root and head? Alas for human rashness and conceit! Why do you not allow that it is always Christ who gives faith, for the purpose of making a man a Christian by giving it? Why do you not allow that Christ is always the origin of the Christian, that the Christian always plants his root in Christ, that Christ is the head of the Christian? Do we then maintain that, even when spiritual grace is dispensed to those that believe by the hands of a holy and faithful minister, it is still not the minister himself who justifies, but that One of whom it is said, that “He justifieth the ungodly?” But unless we admit this, either the Apostle Paul was the head and origin of those whom he had planted, or Apollos the root of those whom he had watered, rather than He who had given them faith in believing; whereas the same Paul says, “I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase: so then neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.” Nor was the apostle himself their root, but rather He who says, “I am the vine, ye are the branches.” How, too, could he be their head, when he says, that “we, being many, are one body in Christ,” and expressly declares in many passages that Christ Himself is the head of the whole body?

CHAPTER 6

7. Wherefore, whether a man receive the sacrament of baptism from a faithful or a faithless minister, his whole hope is in Christ, that he fall not under the condemnation that “cursed is he that placeth his hope in man.” Otherwise, if each man is born again in spiritual grace of the same sort as he by whom he is baptized, and if when he who baptizes him is manifestly a good man, then he himself gives faith, he is himself the origin and root and head of him who is being born; whilst, when the baptizer is faithless without its being known, then the baptized person receives faith from Christ, then he derives his origin from Christ, then he is rooted in Christ, then he boasts in Christ as his head,—in that case all who are baptized should wish that they might have faithless baptizers, and be ignorant of their faithlessness: for however good their baptizers might have been, Christ is certainly beyond comparison better still; and He will then be the head of the baptized, if the faithlessness of the baptizer shall escape detection

CHAPTER 7

8. But if it is perfect madness to hold such a view (for it is Christ always that justifieth the ungodly, by changing his ungodliness into Christianity; it is from Christ always that faith is received, Christ is always the origin of the regenerate and the head of the Church), what weight, then, will those words have, which thoughtless readers value by their sound, without inquiring what their inner meaning is? For the man who does not content himself with hearing the words with his ear, but considers the meaning of the phrase, when he hears, “What we look to is the conscience of the giver, that it may cleanse the conscience of the recipient,” will answer, The conscience of man is often unknown to me, but I am certain of the mercy of Christ: when he hears, “He who receives faith from the faithless receives not faith, but guilt,” will answer, Christ is not faithless, from whom I receive not guilt, but faith: when he hears, “Everything consists of an origin and root; and if it have not something for a head, is nothing,” will answer, My origin is Christ, my root is Christ, my head is Christ. When he hears, “Nor does anything well receive second birth, unless it be born again of good seed,” he will answer, The seed of which I am born again is the Word of God, which I am warned to hear with attention, even though he through whom I hear it does not himself do what he preaches; according to the words of the Lord, which make me herein safe, “All whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.” When he hears, “What perversity must it be, that he who is guilty through his own sins should make another free from guilt!” he will answer, No one makes me free from guilt but He who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. For I believe, not in the minister by whose hands I am baptized, but in Him who justifieth the ungodly, that my faith may be counted unto me for righteousness

CHAPTER 8

9. When he hears, “Every good tree bringeth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit: do men gather grapes of thorns?” and, “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things;” he will answer, This therefore is good fruit, that I should be a good tree, that is, a good man,

that I should show forth good fruit, that is, good works. But this will be given to me, not by him that planteth, nor by him that watereth, but by God that giveth the increase. For if the good tree be the good baptizer, so that his good fruit should be the man whom he baptizes, then any one who has been baptized by a bad man, even if his wickedness be not manifest, will have no power to be good, for he is sprung from an evil tree. For a good tree is one thing; a tree whose quality is concealed, but yet bad, is another. Or if, when the tree is bad, but hides its badness, then whosoever is baptized by it is born not of it, but of Christ; then they are justified with more perfect holiness who are baptized by the bad who hide their evil nature, than they who are baptized by the manifestly good

CHAPTER 9

10. Again, when he hears, “He that is washed by one dead, his washing profiteth him nought,” he will answer, “Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him:” of whom it is said, “The same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” But they are baptized by the dead, who are baptized in the temples of idols. For even they themselves do not suppose that they receive the sanctification which they look for from their priests, but from their gods; and since these were men, and are dead in such sort as to be now neither upon earth nor in the rest of heaven, they are truly baptized by the dead: and the same answer will hold good if there be any other way in which these words of holy Scripture may be examined, and profitably discussed and understood. For if in this place I understand a baptizer who is a sinner, the same absurdity will follow, that whosoever has been baptized by an ungodly man, even though his ungodliness be undiscovered, is yet washed in vain, as though baptized by one dead. For he does not say, He that is baptized by one manifestly dead, but absolutely, “by one dead.” And if they consider any man to be dead whom they know to be a sinner, but any one in their communion to be alive, even though he manages most adroitly to conceal a life of wickedness, in the first place with accursed pride they claim more for themselves than they ascribe to God, that when a sinner is unveiled to them he should be called dead, but when he is known by God he is held to be alive. In the next place, if that sinner is to be called dead who is known to

be such by men, what answer will they make about Optatus, whom they were afraid to condemn though they had long known his wickedness? Why are those who were baptized by him not said to have been baptized by one dead? Did he live because the Count was his faith?—an elegant and well-turned saying of some early colleagues of their own, which they themselves are wont to quote with pride, not understanding that at the death of the haughty Goliath it was his own sword by which his head was cut off

CHAPTER 10

11. Lastly, if they are willing to give the name of dead neither to the wicked man whose sin is hidden, nor to him whose sin is manifest, but who has yet not been condemned by them, but only to him whose sin is manifest and condemned, so that whosoever is baptized by him is himself baptized by the dead, and his washing profits him nothing; what are we to say of those whom their own party have condemned "by the unimpeachable voice of a plenary Council," together with Maximianus and the others who ordained him,—I mean Felicianus of Musti, and Praetextatus of Assura, of whom I speak in the meantime, who are counted among the twelve ordainers of Maximianus, as erecting an altar in opposition to their altar at which Primianus stands? They surely are reckoned by them among the dead. To this we have the express testimony of the noble decree of that Council of theirs which formerly called forth shouts of unreserved applause when it was recited among them for the purpose of being decreed, but which would now be received in silence if we should chance to recite it in their ears; whereas they should rather have been slow at first to rejoice in its eloquence, lest they should afterwards come to mourn over it when its credit was destroyed. For in it they speak in the following terms of the followers of Maximianus, who were shut out from their communion: "Seeing that the shipwrecked members of certain men have been dashed by the waves of truth upon the sharp rocks, and after the fashion of the Egyptians, the shores are covered with the bodies of the dying; whose punishment is intensified in death itself, since after their life has been wrung from them by the avenging waters, they fail to find so much as burial." In such gross terms indeed, do they insult those who were guilty of schism from their body, that they call them dead and unburied; but certainly

they ought to have wished that they might obtain burial, if it were only that they might not have seen Optatus Gildonianus advancing with a military force, and like a sweeping wave that dashes beyond its fellows, sucking back Felicianus and Praetextatus once again within their pale, out of the multitude of bodies lying unburied on the shore

CHAPTER 11

12. Of these I would ask, whether by coming to their sea they were restored to life, or whether they are still dead there? For if still they are none the less corpses, then the laver cannot in any way profit those who are baptized by such dead men. But if they have been restored to life, yet how can the laver profit those whom they baptized before outside, while they were lying without life, if the passage, "He who is baptized by the dead, of what profit is his baptism to him," is to be understood in the way in which they think? For those whom Praetextatus and Felicianus baptized while they were yet in communion with Maximianus are now retained among them, sharing in their communion, without being again baptized, together with the same men who baptized them—I mean Felicianus and Praetextatus: taking occasion by which fact, if it were not that they cherish the beginning of their own obstinacy, instead of considering the certain end of their spiritual salvation, they would certainly be bound to vigilance, and ought to recover the soundness of their senses, so as to breathe again in Catholic peace; if only, laying aside the swelling of their pride, and overcoming the madness of their stubbornness, they would take heed and see what monstrous sacrilege it is to curse the baptism of the foreign churches, which we have learned from the sacred books were planted in primitive times, and to receive the baptism of the followers of Maximianus, whom they have condemned with their own lips

CHAPTER 12

13. But our brethren themselves, the sons of the aforesaid churches, were both ignorant at the time, and still are ignorant, of what has been done so many years ago in Africa: wherefore they at any rate cannot be defiled by the charges which have been brought, on the part of the Donatists, against the Africans, without even knowing whether they were true. But the

Donatists having openly separated and divided themselves off, although they are even said to have taken part in the ordination of Primianus, yet condemned the said Primianus, ordained another bishop in opposition to Primianus, baptized outside the communion of Primianus, rebaptized after Primianus, and returned to Primianus with their disciples who had been baptized by themselves outside, and never rebaptized by any one inside. If such a union with the party of Maximianus does not pollute the Donatists, how can the mere report concerning the Africans pollute the foreigners? If the lips meet together without offense in the kiss of peace, which reciprocally condemned each other, why is each man that is condemned by them in the churches very far removed by the intervening sea from their jurisdiction, not saluted with a kiss as a faithful Catholic, but driven forth with a blast of indignation as an impious pagan? And if, in receiving the followers of Maximianus, they made peace in behalf of their own unity, far be it from us to find fault with them, save that they cut their own throats by their decision, that whereas, to preserve unity in their schism, they collect together again what had been parted from themselves, they yet scorn to reunite their schism itself to the true unity of the Church

CHAPTER 13

14. If, in the interests of the unity of the party of Donatus, no one rebaptizes those who were baptized in a wicked schism, and men, who are guilty of a crime of such enormity as to be compared by them in their Council to those ancient authors of schism whom the earth swallowed up alive, are either unpunished after separation, or restored again to their position after condemnation; why is it that, in defence of the unity of Christ, which is spread throughout the whole inhabited world, of which it has been predicted that it shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth,—a prediction which seems from actual proof to be in process of fulfillment; why is it that, in defence of this unity, they do not acknowledge the true and universal law of that inheritance which rings forth from the books that are common to us all: “I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession?” In behalf of the unity of Donatus, they are not compelled to call together again what they have scattered abroad, but are warned to hear the cry of the

Scriptures: why will they not understand that they meet with such treatment through the mercy of God, that since they brought false charges against the Catholic Church, by contact as it were with which they were unwilling to defile their own excessive sanctity, they should be compelled by the sovereign authority of Optatus Gildonianus to receive again and associate with themselves true offenses of the greatest enormity, condemned by the true voice, as they say, of their own plenary Council? Let them at length perceive how they are filled with the true crimes of their own party, after inventing fictitious crimes wherewith to charge their brethren, when, even if the charges had been true, they ought at length to feel how much should be endured in the cause of peace, and in behalf of Christ's peace to return to a Church which did not condemn crimes undiscovered, if on behalf of the peace of Donatus they were ready to pardon such as were condemned

CHAPTER 14

15. Therefore, brethren, let it suffice us that they should be admonished and corrected on the one point of their conduct in the matter of the followers of Maximianus. We do not ransack ancient archives, we do not bring to light the contents of time honored libraries, we do not publish our proofs to distant lands; but we bring in, as arbiters betwixt us, all the proofs derived from our ancestors, we spread abroad the witness that cries aloud throughout the world

CHAPTER 15

16. Look at the states of Musti and Assura: there are many still remaining in this life and in this province who have severed themselves, and many from whom they have severed themselves; many who have erected an altar, and many against whom that altar has been erected; many who have condemned, and many who have been condemned; who have received, and who have been received; who have been baptized outside, and not baptized again within: if all these things in the cause of unity defile, let the defiled hold their tongues; if these things in the cause of unity do not defile, let them submit to correction, and terminate their strife

CHAPTER 16

17. As for the words which follow in his letter, the writer himself could scarcely fail to laugh at them, when, having made an unlearned and lying use of the proof in which he quotes the words of Scripture, “He who is washed by the dead, what profiteth him his washing?” he endeavors to show to us “how far a traditor being still in life may be accounted dead.” And then he goes on further to say: “That man is dead who has not been worthy to be born again in true baptism; he is likewise dead who, although born in genuine baptism, has joined himself to a traditor.” If, therefore, the followers of Maximianus are not dead, why do the Donatists say, in their plenary Council, that “the shores are covered with their dying bodies?” But if they are dead, whence is there life in the baptism which they gave? Again, if Maximianus is not dead, why is a man baptized again who had been baptized by him? But if he is dead why is not also Felicianus of Musti dead with him, who ordained him, and might have died beyond the sea with some African colleague or another who was a traditor? Or, if he also is himself dead, how is there life with him in your society in those who, having been baptized outside by him who is dead, have never been baptized again within?

CHAPTER 17

18. Then he further adds: “Both are without the life of baptism, both he who never had it at all, and he who had it but has lost it.” He therefore never had it, whom Felicianus, the follower of Maximianus or Praetextatus, baptized outside; and these men themselves have lost what once they had when, therefore, these were received with their followers, who gave to those whom they baptized what previously they did not have? and who restored to themselves what they had lost? But they took away with them the form of baptism, but lost the veritable excellence of baptism by their wicked schism. Why do you repudiate the form itself, which is holy at all times and all places, in the Catholics whom you have not heard, whilst you are willing to acknowledge it in the followers of Maximianus whom you have punished?

19. But whatever he seemed to himself to say by way of accusation about the traitor Judas, I see not how it can concern us, who are not proved by them to have betrayed our trust; nor, indeed, if such treason were proved on

the part of any who before our time have died in our communion, would that treason in any way defile us by whom it was disavowed, and to whom it was displeasing. For if they themselves are not defiled by offenses condemned by themselves, and afterwards condoned, how much less can we be defiled by what we have disavowed so soon as we have heard of them! However weighty, therefore, his invective against traditors, let him be assured that they are condemned by me in precisely the same terms. But yet I make a distinction; for he accuses one on my side who has long been dead without having been condemned in any investigation made by me. I point to a man adhering closely to his side, who had been condemned by him, or at least had been separated by a sacrilegious schism, and whom he received again with undiminished honor.

CHAPTER 18

20. He says: “You who are a most abandoned traditor have come out in the character of a persecutor and murderer of us who keep the law.” If the followers of Maximianus kept the law when they separated from you, then we may acknowledge you as a keeper of the law, when you are separated from the Church spread abroad throughout the world. But if you raise the question of persecutions, I at once reply: If you have suffered anything unjustly, this does not concern those who, though they disapprove of men who act in such a way, yet endure them for the peace that is in unity, in a manner deserving of all praise. Wherefore you have nothing to bring up against the Lord’s wheat, who endure the chaff that is among them till the last winnowing, from whom you never would have separated yourself, had you not shown yourself lighter than chaff by flying away under the blast of temptation before the coming of the Winnower. But not to leave this one example, which the Lord hath thrust back in their teeth, to close the mouths of these men, for their correction if they will show themselves to be wise, but for their confusion if they remain in their folly: if those are more just that suffer persecution than those who inflict it, then those same followers of Maximianus are the more just, whose basilica was utterly overthrown, and who were grievously maltreated by the military following of Optatus, when the mandates of the proconsul, ordering that all of them should be shut out of the basilicas, were manifestly procured by the followers of

Primianus. Wherefore, if, when the emperors hated their communion, they ventured on such violent measures for the persecution of the followers of Maximianus, what would they do if they were enabled to work their will by being in communion with kings? And if they did such things as I have mentioned for the correction of the wicked, why are they surprised that Catholic emperors should decree with greater power that they should be worked upon and corrected who endeavor to rebaptize the whole Christian world, when they have no ground for differing from them? seeing that they, themselves bear witness that it is right to bear with wicked men even where they have true charges to bring against them in the cause of peace, since they received those whom they had themselves condemned, acknowledging the honors conferred among themselves, and the baptism administered in schism. Let them at length consider what treatment they deserve at the hands of the Christian powers of the world, who are the enemies of Christian unity throughout the world. If, therefore, correction be bitter, yet let them not fail to be ashamed; lest when they begin to read what they themselves have written, they be overcome with laughter, when they do not find in themselves what they wish to find in others, and fail to recognize in their own case what they find fault with in their neighbors

CHAPTER 19

21. What, then, does he mean by quoting in his letter the words with which our Lord addressed the Jews: “Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge?” For if by the wise men and the scribes and the prophets they would have themselves be understood, while we were as it were the persecutors of the prophets and wise men, why are they unwilling to speak with us, seeing they are sent to us? For, indeed, if the man who wrote that epistle which we are at this present moment answering, were to be pressed by us to acknowledge it as his own, stamping its authenticity with his signature, I question much whether he would do it, so thoroughly afraid are they of our possessing any words of theirs. For when we were anxious by some means or other to procure the latter part of this same letter, because those from whom we obtained it were unable to describe the whole of it, no one who was asked for it was willing to give it

to us, so soon as they knew that we were making a reply to the portion which we had. Therefore, when they read how the Lord says to the prophet, “Cry aloud, spare not, and write their sins with my pen,” these men who are sent to us as prophets have no fears on this score, but take every precaution that their crying may not be heard by us: which they certainly would not fear if what they spoke of us were true. But their apprehension is not groundless, as it is written in the Psalm, “The mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.” For if the reason that they do not receive our baptism be that we are a generation of vipers—to use the expression in his epistle—why did they receive the baptism of the followers of Maximianus, of whom their Council speaks in the following terms: “Because the enfolding of a poisoned womb has long concealed the baneful offspring of a viper’s seed, and the moist concretions of conceived iniquity have by slow heat flowed forth into the members of serpents”? Is it not therefore of themselves also that it is said in the same Council, “The poison of asps is under their lips, their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and unhappiness is in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known”? And yet they now hold these men themselves in undiminished honor, and receive within their body those whom these men had baptized without

CHAPTER 20

22. Wherefore all this about the generation of vipers, and the poison of asps under their lips, and all the other things which they have said against those which have not known the way of peace, are really, if they would but speak the truth, more strictly applicable to themselves, since for the sake of the peace of Donatus they received the baptism of these men, in respect of which they used the expressions quoted above in the wording of the decree of the Council; but the baptism of the Church of Christ dispersed throughout the world, from which peace itself came into Africa, they repudiate, to the sacrilegious wounding of the peace of Christ. Which, therefore, are rather the false prophets, who come in sheep’s clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves,—they who either fail to detect the wicked in the Catholic Church, and communicate with them in all innocence, or else for the sake of the peace of unity are bearing with those

whom they cannot separate from the threshing-floor of the Lord before the Winnower shall come, or they who do in schism what they censure in the Catholic Church, and receive in their own separation, when manifest to all and condemned by their own voice, what they profess that they shun in the unity of the Church when it calls for toleration, and does not even certainly exist?

CHAPTER 21

23. Lastly, it has been said, as he himself has also quoted, “Ye shall know them by their fruits:” let us therefore examine into their fruits. You bring up against our predecessors their delivery of the sacred books. This very charge we urge with greater probability against their accusers themselves. And not to carry our search too far, in the same city of Constantina your predecessors ordained Silvanus bishop at the very outset of his schism. He, while he was still a subdeacon, was most unmistakeably entered as a traditor in the archives of the city. If you on your side bring forward documents against our predecessors, all that we ask is equal terms, that we should either believe both to be true or both to be false. If both are true, you are unquestionably guilty of schism, who have pretended that you avoid offenses in the communion of the whole world, which you had commonly among you in the small fragment of your own sect. But again, if both are false, you are unquestionably guilty of schism, who, on account of the false charges of giving up the sacred books, are staining yourselves with the heinous offence of severance from the Church. But if we have something to urge in accusation while you have nothing, or if our charges are true whilst yours are false, it is no longer matter of discussion how thoroughly your mouths are closed

CHAPTER 22

24. What if the holy and true Church of Christ were to convince and overcome you, even if we held no documents in support of our cause, or only such as were false, while you had possession of some genuine proofs of delivery of the sacred books? what would then remain for you, except that, if you would, you should show your love of peace, or otherwise should hold your tongues? For whatever, in that case, you might bring forward in

evidence, I should be able to say with the greatest ease and the most perfect truth, that then you are bound to prove as much to the full and catholic unity of the Church already spread abroad and established throughout so many nations, to the end that you should remain within, and that those whom you convict should be expelled. And if you have endeavored to do this, certainly you have not been able to make good your proof; and being vanquished or enraged, you have separated yourselves, with all the heinous guilt of sacrilege, from the guiltless men who could not condemn on insufficient proof. But if you have not even endeavored to do this, then with most accursed and unnatural blindness you have cut yourselves off from the wheat of Christ, which grows throughout His whole fields, that is, throughout the whole world, until the end, because you have taken offense at a few tares in Africa

CHAPTER 23

25. In conclusion, the Testament is said to have been given to the flames by certain men in the time of persecution. Now let its lessons be read, from whatever source it has been brought to light. Certainly in the beginning of the promises of the Testator this is found to have been said to Abraham: “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;” and this saying is truthfully interpreted by the apostle: “To thy seed,” he says, “which is Christ.” No betrayal on the part of any man has made the promises of God of none effect. Hold communion with all the nations of the earth, and then you may boast that you have preserved the Testament from the destruction of the flames. But if you will not do so, which party is the rather to be believed to have insisted on the burning of the Testament, save that which will not assent to its teaching when it is brought to light? For how much more certainly, without any sacrilegious rashness, can he be held to have joined the company of traditors who now persecutes with his tongue the Testament which they are said to have persecuted with the flames! You charge us with the persecution: the true wheat of the Lord answers you, “Either it was done justly, or it was done by the chaff that was among us.” What have you to say to this? You object that we have no baptism: the same true wheat of the Lord answers you, that the form of the sacrament even within the Church fails to profit some, as it did no good to Simon Magus

when he was baptized, much more it fails to profit those who are without. Yet that baptism remains in them when they depart, is proved from this, that it is not restored to them when they return. Never, therefore, except by the greatest shamelessness, will you be able to cry out against that wheat, or to call them false prophets clad in sheep's clothing, whilst inwardly they are ravening wolves; since either they do not know the wicked in the unity of the Catholic Church, or for the sake of unity bear with those whom they know

CHAPTER 24

26. But let us turn to the consideration of your fruits. I pass over the tyrannous exercise of authority in the cities, and especially in the estates of other men; I pass over the madness of the Circumcelliones, and the sacrilegious and profane adoration of the bodies of those who had thrown themselves of their own accord over precipices, the revellings of drunkenness, and the ten years' groaning of the whole of Africa under the cruelty of the one man Optatus Gildonanius: all this I pass over, because there are certain among you who cry out that these things are, and have ever been displeasing to them. But they say that they bore with them in the cause of peace, because they could not put them down; wherein they condemn themselves by their own judgment: for if indeed they felt such love for peace, they never would have rent in twain the bond of unity. For what madness can be greater, than to be willing to abandon peace in the midst of peace itself, and to be anxious to retain it in the midst of discord? Therefore, for the sake of those who pretend that they do not see the evils of this same faction of Donatus, which all men see and blame, ignoring them even to the extent of saying of Optatus himself, "What did he do?" "Who accused him?" "Who convicted him?" "I know nothing," "I saw nothing," "I heard nothing,"—for the sake of these, I say, who pretend that they are ignorant of what is generally notorious, the party of Maximianus has arisen, through whom their eyes are opened, and their mouths are closed: for they openly sever themselves; they openly erect altar against altar; they are openly in a Council called sacrilegious and vipers, and swift to shed blood, to be compared with Dathan and Abiram and Korah, and are condemned in cutting terms of abhorrence; and are as openly received again with

undiminished honors in company with those whom they have baptized. Such are the fruits of these men, who do all this for the peace of Donatus, that they may clothe themselves in sheep’s clothing, and reject the peace of Christ throughout the world that they may be ravening wolves within the fold

CHAPTER 25

27. I think that I have left unanswered none of the statements in the letter of Donatus, so far at least as relates to what I have been able to find in that part of which we are in possession. I should be glad if they would produce the other part as well, in case there should be anything in it which does not admit of refutation. But as for these answers which we have made to him, with the help of God, I admonish your Christian love, that ye not only communicate them to those who seek for them, but also force them on those who show no longing for them. Let them answer anything they will; and if they shrink from sending a reply to us, let them at any rate send letters to their own party, only not forbidding that the contents should be shown to us. For if they do this, they show their fruits most openly, by which they are proved to demonstration to be ravening wolves disguised in sheep’s clothing, in that they secretly lay snares for our sheep, and openly shrink from giving any answer to the shepherds. We only lay to their charge the sin of schism, in which they are all most thoroughly involved,—not the offenses of certain of their party, which some of them declare to be displeasing to themselves. If they, on the other hand, abstain from charging us with the sins of other men, they have nothing they can lay to our charge, and therefore they are wholly unable to defend themselves from the charge of schism; because it is by a wicked severance that they have separated themselves from the threshing-floor of the Lord, and from the innocent company of the corn that is growing throughout the world, on account of charges which either are false, and invented by themselves, or even if true, involve the chaff alone

CHAPTER 26

28. But it is possible that you may expect of me that I should go on to refute what he has introduced about Manichaeus. Now, in respect of this, the only

thing that offends me is that he has censured a most pestilent and pernicious error—I mean the heresy of the Manichaeans—in terms of wholly inadequate severity, if indeed they amount to censure at all, though the Catholic Church has broken down his defenses by the strongest evidence of truth. For the inheritance of Christ, established in all nations, is secure against heresies which have been shut out from the inheritance; but, as the Lord says, “How can Satan cast out Satan?” so how can the error of the Donatists have power to overthrow the error of the Manichaeans?

CHAPTER 27

29. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, though that error is exposed and overcome in many ways, and dare not oppose the truth on any show of reason whatsoever, but only with the unblushing obstinacy of impudence; yet, not to load your memory with a multitude of proofs, I would have you bear in mind this one action of the followers of Maximianus, confront them with this one fact, thrust this in their teeth, to make them their treacherous tongues, destroy their calumny with this, as it were a three-pronged dart destroying a three-headed monster. They charge us with betrayal of the sacred books; they charge us with persecution; they charge us with false baptism: to all their charges make the same answer about the followers of Maximianus. For they think that the proofs are lost which show that their predecessors gave the sacred volumes to the flames; but this at least they cannot hide, that they have received with unimpaired honors those who were stained with the sacrilege of schism. Also they think that those most violent persecutions are hidden, which they direct against any who oppose them whenever they are able; but whilst spiritual persecution surpasses bodily persecution, they received with undiminished honors the followers of Maximianus, whom they themselves persecuted in the body, and of whom they themselves said, “Their feet are swift to shed blood;” and this at any rate they cannot hide

CHAPTER 28

Finally, they think that the question of baptism is hidden, with which they deceive wretched souls. But whilst they say that none have baptism who were baptized outside the communion of the one Church, they received with undiminished honors the followers of Maximianus, with those whom they baptized in schism outside the Donatist communion, and this at least they cannot hide

30. “But these things,” they say, “bring no pollution in the cause of peace; and it is well to bend to mercy the rigor of extreme severity, that broken branches may be grafted in anew.” Accordingly, in this way the whole question is settled, by defeat in them, by the impossibility of defeat for us; for if the name of peace be assumed for even the faintest shadow of defense to justify the bearing with wicked men in schism, then beyond all doubt the violation of true peace itself involves detestable guilt, with nothing to be said in its defence throughout the unity of the world.

CHAPTER 29

31. These things, brethren, I would have you retain as the basis of your action and preaching with untiring gentleness: love men, while you destroy errors; take of the truth without pride; strive for the truth without cruelty. Pray for those whom you refute and convince of error. For the prophet prays to God for mercy upon such as these, saying, “Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek Thy name, O Lord.” And this, indeed, the Lord has done already, so as to fill the faces of the followers of Maximianus with shame in the sight of all mankind: it only remains that they should learn how to blush to their soul’s health. For so they will be able to seek the name of the Lord, from which they are turned away to their utter destruction, whilst they exalt their own name in the place of that of Christ. May ye live and persevere in Christ, and be multiplied, and abound in the love of God, and in love towards one another, and towards all men, brethren well beloved

Book II

In which Augustin replies to all the several statements in the letter of Petilianus, as though disputing with an adversary face to face.

CHAPTER 1

1. That we made a full and sufficient answer to the first part of the letter of Petilianus, which was all that we had been able to find, will be remembered by all who were able to read or hear what we replied. But since the whole of it was afterwards found and copied by our brethren, and sent to us with the view that we should answer it as a whole, this task was one which our pen could not escape,—not that he says anything new in it, to which answer has not been already made in many ways and at various times; but still, on account of the brethren of slower comprehension, who, when they read a matter in any place, cannot always refer to everything that has been said upon the same subject, I will comply with those who urge me by all means to reply to every point, and that as though we were carrying on the discussion face to face in the form of a dialogue. I will set down the words of his epistle under his name, and I will give the answer under my own name, as though it had all been taken down by reporters while we were debating. And so there will be no one who can complain either that I have passed anything over, or that they have been unable to understand it for want of distinction between the parties to the discussion; at the same time that the Donatists themselves, who are unwilling to argue the question in our presence, as is shown by the letters which they have circulated among their party, may thus not fail to find the truth answering them point by point, just as though they were discussing the matter with us face to face

2. In the very beginning of the letter Petilianus said: “Petilianus, a bishop, to his well-beloved brethren, fellow-priests, and deacons, appointed ministers with us throughout our diocese in the gospel, grace be to you and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.”

3. Augustin answered: I acknowledge the apostolic greeting. You see who you are that employ it, but see from what source you have learned what you say. For in these terms Paul salutes the Romans, and in the same terms the Corinthians, the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Colossians, the Philippians, the Thessalonians. What madness is it, therefore, to be unwilling to share the salvation of peace with those very Churches in whose epistles you learned its form of salutation?

CHAPTER 2

4. Petilianus said: “Those who have polluted their souls with a guilty laver, under the name of baptism, reproach us with baptizing twice,—than whose obscenity, indeed, any kind of filth is more cleanly, seeing that through a perversion of cleanliness they have come to be made fouler by their washing.”

5. Augustin answered: We are neither made fouler by our washing, nor cleaner by yours. But when the water of baptism is given to any one in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, it is neither ours nor yours, but His of whom it was said to John, “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.”

CHAPTER 3

6. Petilianus said: “For what we look to is the conscience of the giver, to cleanse that of the recipient.”

7. Augustin answered: We therefore need have no anxiety about the conscience of Christ. But if you assert any man to be the giver, be he who he may, there will be no certainty about the cleansing of the recipient, because there is no certainty about the conscience of the giver.

CHAPTER 4

8. Petilianus said: “For he who receives faith from the faithless, receives not faith but guilt.”

9. Augustin answered: Christ is not faithless, from whom the faithful man receives not guilt but faith. For he believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, that his faith may be counted for righteousness.

CHAPTER 5

10. Petilianus said: “For everything consists of an origin and root; and if it have not something for a head, it is nothing: nor does anything well receive second birth, unless it be born again of good seed.”

11. Augustin answered: Why will you put yourself forward in the room of Christ, when you will not place yourself under Him? He is the origin, and root, and head of him who is being born, and in Him we feel no fear, as we must in any man, whoever he may be, lest he should prove to be false and of abandoned character, and we should be found to be sprung from an abandoned source, growing from an abandoned root, united to an abandoned head. For what man can feel secure about a man, when it is written, “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man?” But the seed of which we are born again is the word of God, that is, the gospel. Whence the apostle says, “For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.” And yet he allows even those to preach the gospel who were preaching it not in purity, and rejoices in their preaching; because, although they were preaching it not in purity, but seeking their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s, yet the gospel which they preached was pure. And the Lord had said of certain of like character, “Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not yet after their works: for they say, and do not.” If, therefore, what is in itself pure is preached in purity, then the preacher himself also, in that he is a partner with the word, has his share in begetting the believer; but if he himself be not regenerate, and yet what he preaches be pure, then the believer is born not from the barrenness of the minister but from the fruitfulness of the word.

CHAPTER 6

12. Petilianus said: “This being the case, brethren, what perversity must it be, that he who is guilty through his own sins should make another free from guilt, when the Lord Jesus Christ says, Every good tree bringeth forth

good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit: do men gather grapes of thorns?’ And again: A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.’“

13. Augustin answered: No man, even though he be not guilty through his own sins, can make his neighbor free from sin, because he is not God. Otherwise, if we were to expect that out of the innocence of the baptizer should be produced the innocence of the baptized, then each will be the more innocent in proportion as he may have found a more innocent person by whom to be baptized; and will himself be the less innocent in proportion as he by whom he is baptized is less innocent. And if the man who baptizes happens to entertain hatred against another man, this will also be imputed to him who is baptized. Why, therefore, does the wretched man hasten to be baptized,—that his own sins may be forgiven him, or that those of others may be reckoned against him? Is he like a merchant ship, to discharge one burden, and to take on him another? But by the good tree and its good fruit, and the corrupt tree and its evil fruit, we are wont to understand men and their works, as is consequently shown in those other words which you also quoted: “A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.” But when a man preaches the word of God, or administers the sacraments of God, he does not, if he is a bad man, preach or minister out of his own treasure; but he will be counted among those of whom it is said, “Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works:” for they bid you observe what is God’s, but their works are their own. For if it is as you say, that is, if the fruit of those who baptize consist in the baptized persons themselves, you declare a great woe against Africa, if a young Optatus has sprung up for every one that Optatus baptized.

CHAPTER 7

14. Petilianus said: “And again, He who is baptized by one that is dead, his washing profiteth him nothing.’ He did not mean that the baptizer was a corpse, a lifeless body, the remains of a man ready for burial, but one lacking the Spirit of God, who is compared to a dead body, as He declares

to a disciple in another place, according to the witness of the gospel. For His disciple says, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.’ The father of the disciple was not baptized. He declared him as a pagan to belong to the company of pagans; unless he said this of the unbelieving, The dead cannot bury the dead. He was dead, therefore, not as smitten by some death, but as smitten even during life. For he who so lives as to be doomed to eternal death is tortured by a death in life. To be baptized, therefore, by the dead, is to have received not life but death. We must therefore consider and declare how far the traditor is to be accounted dead while yet alive. He is dead who has not deserved to be born again with a true baptism; he is likewise dead who, having been born again with a true baptism, has become involved with a traditor. Both are wanting in the life of baptism,—both he who never had it at all, and he who had it and has lost it. For the Lord Jesus Christ says, There shall come to that man seven spirits more wicked than the former one, and the last state of that man shall be worse than the first.’“

15. Augustin answered: Seek with greater care to know in what sense the words which you have quoted from Scripture in proof of your position were really uttered, and how they should be understood. For that all unrighteous persons are wont to be called dead in a mystical sense is clear enough; but Christ, to whom true baptism belongs, which you say is false because of the faults of men, is alive, sitting at the right hand of the Father, and He will not die any more through any infirmity of the flesh: death will no more have dominion over Him. And they who are baptized with His baptism are not baptized by one who is dead. And if it so happen that certain ministers, being deceitful workers, seeking their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s, proclaiming the gospel not in purity, and preaching Christ of contention and envy, are to be called dead because of their unrighteousness, yet the sacrament of the living God does not die even in one that is dead. For that Simon was dead who was baptized by Philip in Samaria, who wished to purchase the gift of God for money; but the baptism which he had lived in him still to work his punishment.

16. But how false the statement is which you make, that “both are wanting in the life of baptism, both he who never had it at all, and he who had it and

has lost it,” you may see from this, that in the case of those who apostatize after having been baptized, and who return through penitence, baptism is not restored to them, as it would be restored if it were lost. In what manner, indeed, do your dead men baptize according to your interpretation? Must we not reckon the drunken among the dead (to say nothing of the rest, and to mention only what is well known and of daily experience among all), seeing that the apostle says of the widow, “But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth?” In the next place, in that Council of yours, in which you condemned Maximianus with his advisers or his ministers, have you forgotten with what eloquence you said, “Even after the manner of the Egyptians, the shores are full of the bodies of the dying, on whom the weightier punishment falls in death itself, in that, after their life has been wrung from them by the avenging waters, they have not found so much as burial?” And yet you yourselves may see whether or no one of them, Felicianus, has been brought to life again; yet he has with him within the communion of your body those whom he baptized outside. As therefore he is baptized by One that is alive, who is clothed with the baptism of the living Christ, so he is baptized by the dead who is wrapped in the baptism of the dead Saturn, or any one like him; that we may set forth in the meanwhile, with what brevity we may, in what sense the words which you have quoted may be understood without any cavilling on the part of any one of us. For, in the sense in which they are received by you, you make no effort to explain them, but only strive to entangle us together with yourselves.

CHAPTER 8

17. Petilianus said: “We must consider, I say, and declare how far the treacherous traditor is to be accounted dead while yet in life. Judas was an apostle when he betrayed Christ; and the same man was already dead, having spiritually lost the office of an apostle, being destined afterwards to die by hanging himself, as it is written: I have sinned,’ says he, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood; and he departed, and went and hanged himself.’ The traitor perished by the rope: he left the rope for others like himself, of whom the Lord Christ cried aloud to the Father, Father, those that Thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of

perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.’ For David of old had passed this sentence on him who was to betray Christ to the unbelievers: Let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.’ See how mighty is the spirit of the prophets, that it was able to see all future things as though they were present, so that a traitor who was to be born hereafter should be condemned many centuries before. Finally, that the said sentence should be completed, the holy Matthias received the bishopric of that lost apostle. Let no one be so dull, no one so faithless, as to dispute this: Matthias won for himself a victory, not a wrong, in that he carried off the spoils of the traitor from the victory of the Lord Christ. Why then, after this, do you claim to yourself a bishopric as the heir of a worse traitor? Judas betrayed Christ in the flesh to the unbelievers; you in the spirit madly betrayed the holy gospel to the flames of sacrilege. Judas betrayed the Lawgiver to the unbelievers; you, as it were, betraying all that he had left, gave up the law of God to be destroyed by men. Whilst, had you loved the law, like the youthful Maccabees, you would have welcomed death for the sake of the laws of God (if indeed that can be said to be death to men which makes them immortal because they died for the Lord); for of those brethren we learn that one replied to the sacrilegious tyrant with these words of faith: Thou like a fury takest us out of this present life; but the King of the world (who reigns for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end) shall raise us up who have died for His laws, unto everlasting life.’ If you were to burn with fire the testament of a dead man, would you not be punished as the falsifier of a will? What therefore is likely to become of you who have burned the most holy law of our God and Judge? Judas repented of his deed even in death; you not only do not repent, but stand forth as a persecutor and butcher of us who keep the law, whilst you are the most wicked of traditors.”

18. Augustin answered: See what a difference there is between your calumnious words and our truthful assertions. Listen for a little while. See how you have exaggerated the sin of delivering up the sacred books, comparing us in most odious terms, like some sophistical inventor of charges, with the traitor Judas. But when I shall have answered you on this point with the utmost brevity,—I did not do what you assert; I did not deliver up the sacred books; your charge is false; you will never be able to

prove it,—will not all that smoke of mighty words presently vanish away? Or will you perchance endeavor to prove the truth of what you say? This, then, you should do first; and then you might rise against us, as against men who were already convicted, with whatever mass of invective you might choose. Here is one absurdity: behold again a second.

19. You yourself, when speaking of the foretelling of the condemnation of Judas, used these expressions: “See how mighty is the spirit of the prophets, that it was able to see all future things as though they were present, so that a traitor who was to be born hereafter should be condemned many centuries before;” and yet you did not see that in the same sure prophecy, and certain and unshaken truth, in which it was foretold that one of the disciples should hereafter betray the Christ; it was also foretold that the whole world should hereafter believe in Christ. Why did you pay attention in the prophecy to the man who betrayed Christ, and in the same place give no heed to the world for which Christ was betrayed? Who betrayed Christ? Judas. To whom did he betray Him? To the Jews. What did the Jews do to Him? “They pierced my hands and my feet,” says the Psalmist. “I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.” Of what importance, then, that is which is bought at such a price, I would have you read a little later in the psalm itself: “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord’s; and He is the governor among the nations.” But who is able to suffice for the quotation of all the other innumerable prophetic passages which bear witness to the world that is destined to believe? Yet you quote a prophecy because you see in it the man who sold Christ: you do not see in it the possession which Christ bought by being sold. Here is the second absurdity: behold again the third.

20. Among the many other expressions in your invective, you said: “If you were to burn with fire the testament of a dead man, would you not be punished as the falsifier of a will? What therefore is likely to become of you who have burned the most holy law of our God and Judge?” In these words you have paid no attention to what certainly ought to have moved you, to the question of how it might be that we should burn the testament, and yet

stand fast in the inheritance which was described in that testament; but it is marvellous that you have preserved the testament and lost the inheritance. Is it not written in that testament, “Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession”? Take part in this inheritance, and you may bring what charges you will against me about the testament. For what madness is it, that while you shrank from committing the testament to the flames, you should yet strive against the words of the testator! We, on the other hand, though we hold in our hands the records of the Church and of the State, in which we read that those who ordained a rival bishop in opposition to Caecilianus were rather the betrayers of the sacred books, yet do not on this account insult you, or pursue you with invectives, or mourn over the ashes of the sacred pages in your hands, or contrast the burning torments of the Maccabees with the sacrilege of your fear, saying, “You should deliver your own limbs to the flames rather than the utterances of God.” For we are unwilling to be so absurd as to excite an empty uproar against you on account of the deeds of others, which you either know nothing of, or else repudiate. But in that we see you separated from the communion of the whole world (a sin both of the greatest magnitude, and manifest to all mankind, and common to you all), if I were desirous of exaggerating, I should find time failing me sooner than words. And if you should seek to defend yourself on this charge, it could only be by bringing accusations against the whole world, of such a kind that, if they could be maintained, you would simply be furnishing matter for further accusation against yourself; if they could not be maintained, there is in them no defence for you. Why therefore do you puff yourself up against me about the betrayal of the sacred books, which concerns neither you nor me if we abide by the agreement not to charge each other with the sins of other men: and which, if that agreement does not stand, affects you rather than me? And, yet, even without any violation of that agreement, I think I may say with perfect justice that he should be deemed a partner with him who delivered up Christ who has not delivered himself up to Christ in company with the whole world. “Then,” says the apostle, “then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” And again he says, “Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” And the same apostle shows that the seed of Abraham belongs to all nations from the promise which was given to Abraham, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” Wherefore I consider that I am only making a fair demand in asking that we should for a moment consider the testament of God, which has already long been opened, and that we should consider every one to be himself an heir of the traitor whom we do not find to be a joint-heir with Him whom he betrayed; that every one should belong to him who sold Christ who denies that Christ has bought the whole world. For when He showed Himself after His resurrection to His disciples, and gave His limbs to those who doubted, that they should handle them, He says this to them, “For thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” See from what an inheritance you estrange yourselves! see what an Heir you resist! Can it really be that a man would spare Christ if He were walking here on earth who speaks against Him while He sits in heaven? Do you not yet understand that whatever you allege against us you allege against His words? A Christian world is promised and believed in: the promise is fulfilled, and it is denied. Consider, I entreat of you, what you ought to suffer for such impiety. And yet, if I know not what you have suffered,—if I have not seen it, have not wrought it,—then do you to-day, who do not suffer the violence of my persecution, render to me an account of your separation. But you are likely to say over and over again what, unless you prove it, can affect no one, and if you prove it, has no bearing upon me.

CHAPTER 9

21. Petilianus said: “Hemmed in, therefore, by these offenses, you cannot be a true bishop.”

22. Augustin answered: By what offenses? What have you shown? What have you proved? And if you have proved charges on the part of I know not whom, what has that to do with the seed of Abraham, in which all the nations of the earth are blessed?

CHAPTER 10

23. Petilianus said: “Did the apostle persecute any one? or did Christ betray any one?”

24. Augustin answered: I might indeed say that Satan himself was worse than all wicked men; and yet the apostle delivered a man over to him for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. And in the same way he delivered over others, of whom he says, “Whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.” And the Lord Christ drove out the impious merchants from the temple with scourges; in which connection we also find advanced the testimony of Scripture, where it says, “The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up.” So that we do find the apostle delivering over to condemnation, and Christ a persecutor. All this I might say, and put you into no small heat and perturbation, so that you would be compelled to inquire, not into the complaints of those who suffer, but into the intention of those who cause the suffering. But do not trouble yourself about this; I do not say this. But I do say that it has nothing to do with the seed of Abraham, which is in all nations, if anything has been done to you which ought not to have been done, perhaps by the chaff among the harvest of the Lord, which in spite of this is found among all nations. Do you therefore render an account of your separation. But first, consider what kind of men you have among you, with whom you would not wish to be reproached; and see how unjustly you act, when you cast in our teeth the acts of other men, even if you proved what you assert. Therefore it will be found that there is no ground for your separation.

CHAPTER 11

25. Petilianus said: “Yet some will be found to say, We are not the sons of a traditor. Any one is the son of that man whose deeds he imitates. For those are most assuredly sons, and at the same time bear a strong resemblance to their parents, who are born in the likeness of their parents, not only as being of their flesh and blood, but in respect of their characters and deeds.”

26. Augustin answered: A little while ago you were saying nothing contrary to us, now you even begin to say something in our favor. For this proposition of yours binds you to as much as this, that if you shall fail to-

day to convict us, with whom you are arguing, of being traditors and murderers, and anything else with which you charge us, you will then be wholly powerless to hurt us by any charge of the kind which you may prove against those who have gone before us. For we cannot be the sons of those to whose deeds our actions bear no resemblance. And see to what you have committed yourself. If you should be so successful as to convict some man, even of our own times, and living with us, of any guilt of the kind, that is in no way to the prejudice of all the nations of the earth who are blessed in the seed of Abraham, by separating yourself from whom you are found to be guilty of sacrilege. Accordingly, unless (as is altogether impossible) you are acquainted with all men that exist throughout the world, and have not only made yourself familiar with all their characters and deeds, but have also proved that they are as bad as you describe, you have no ground for reproaching all the world, which is among the saints, with parentage of I know not what description, to whom you prove that they are like. Nor will it help you at all, even if you are able to show that those who are not of the same character take the holy sacraments in common with those who are. In the first place, because you ought yourselves to look at those with whom you celebrate those sacraments, to whom you give them, from whom you receive them, and whom you would be unwilling to have cast up against you as a reproach. And again, if all those are the sons of Judas, who was the devil among the apostles, who imitate his deeds, why do we not call those of the sons of the apostles who make such men partakers, not in their own deeds, but in the sacraments of the Lord, as the apostles partook of the supper of the Lord in company with that traitor? and in this way they are very different from you, who cast in the teeth of men who are striving for the preservation of unity the very thing that you do to the rending asunder of unity.

CHAPTER 12

27. Petilianus said: “The Lord Jesus said to the Jews concerning Himself, If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.’“

28. Augustin answered: I have already answered above, This is both true, and makes for us against you.

CHAPTER 13

29. Petilianus said: Over and over again He reproaches the false speakers and liars in such terms as these: Ye are the children of the devil, for he also was a slanderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth.'"

30. Augustin answered: We are not wont to say, "He was a slanderer," but "He was a murderer." But we ask how it was that the devil was a murderer from the beginning; and we find that he slew the first man, not by drawing a sword, nor by applying to him any bodily violence, but by persuading him to sin, and thus driving him from the happiness of Paradise. What, then, was Paradise is now represented by the Church. Therefore those are the sons of the devil who slay men by withdrawing them from the Church. But as by the words of God we know what was the situation of Paradise, so now by the words of Christ we have learned where the Church is to be found: "Throughout all nations," He says, "beginning at Jerusalem." Whosoever, therefore, separates a man from that complete whole to place him in any single part, is proved to be a son of the devil and a murderer. But see, further, what is the application of the expression which you yourself employed in saying of the devil, "He was a slanderer, and abode not in the truth." For you bring an accusation against the whole world on account of the sins of others, though even those others themselves you were more able to accuse than to convict; and you abode not in the truth of Christ. For He says that the Church is "throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem;" but ye say that it is in the party of Donatus.

CHAPTER 14

31. Petilianus said: "In the third place, also, He calls the madness of persecutors in like manner by this name, Ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.' Are they then really the sons of vipers according to the flesh, and not

rather serpents in mind, and three-tongued malice, and deadliness of touch, and burning with the spirit of poison? They have truly become vipers, who by their bites have vomited forth death against the innocent people.”

32. Augustin answered: If I were to say that this is said of men of character like unto yourselves, you would reply, “Prove it.” What then, have you proved it? Or if you think that it is proved by the mere fact of its being uttered, there is no need to repeat the same words. Pronounce the same judgment against yourselves as coming from us to you. See you not that I too have proved it, if this amounts to proof? And yet I would have you learn what is really meant by proof. For indeed I do not even seek for evidence from without to enable me to prove you vipers. For be well assured that this very fact marks in you the nature of vipers, that you have not in your mouth the foundation of truth, but the poison of slanderous abuse, as it is written, “The poison of asps is under their lips.” And because this might be said indiscriminately by any one against any one, as though it were asked, Under whose lips? he immediately adds, “Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.” When, therefore, you say such things as this against men dispersed throughout the whole world, of whom you know nothing whatsoever, and many of whom have never heard the name either of Caecilianus or of Donatus, and when you do not hear them answering amid silence, Nothing of what you say has reference to us; we never saw it; we never did it; we are totally at a loss to understand what you are saying,—seeing that you desire nothing else than to say what you are entirely powerless to prove, how can you help allowing that your mouth is full of cursing and bitterness? See, therefore, whether you can possibly show that you are not vipers, unless you show that all Christians throughout all nations of the world are traditors, and murderers, and anything but Christians. Nay, in very truth, even though you should be able to know and set before us the lives and deeds of every individual man throughout the world, yet before you can do that, seeing that you act as you do without any consideration, your mouth is that of a viper, your mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Show to us now, if you can, what prophet, what wise man, what scribe we have slain, or crucified, or scourged in our synagogues. Look how much labor you have expended without in any way being able to prove that Donatus and Marculus were prophets, or wise men, or scribes,

because, in fact, they were nothing of the sort. But even if you could prove as much as this, what progress would you have made towards proving that they had been killed by us, when even we ourselves did not so much as know them? and how much less the whole world, whom you calumniate with poisonous mouth? Or whence will you be able to prove that we have a spirit like that of those who murdered them, when you actually cannot show that they were murdered by any one at all? Look carefully to all these points, see whether you can prove any single one of them either about the whole world, or to the satisfaction of the whole world,—in your persevering calumnies against which you show that the charges are true in you, which you falsely propagate against the world.

33. Further, even if we should desire to prove you to be slayers of the prophets, it would be too long a task to collect the evidence through all the several instances of the slaughter which your infuriated leaders of the Circumcelliones, and the actual crowd of men inflamed by wine and madness, not only have committed since the beginning of your schism, but even continue to commit at the present time. To take the case nearest at hand. Let the divine utterances be produced, which are commonly in the hands of both of us. Let us consider those to be murderers of the prophets whom we find contradicting the words of the prophets. What more learned definition could be given? What could admit of speedier proof? You would be acting less cruelly in piercing the bodies of the prophets with a sword, than in endeavoring to destroy the words of the prophets with your tongue. The prophet says, “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord.” Behold and see how this is being done, how it is being fulfilled. But you not only close your ears in disbelief against what is said, but you even thrust out your tongues in madness to speak against what is already being done. Abraham heard the promise, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,” and “he believed, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” You see the fact accomplished, and you cry out against it; and you will not that it should be counted unto you for unrighteousness, as it fairly would be counted, even if your refusal to believe was not on the accomplishment, but only on the utterance of the prophecy. Nay, not only are you not willing that it should be counted unto you for unrighteousness, but even what you suffer as the punishment of this impiety you would fain

have counted unto you for righteousness. Or if your conduct is not a persecution of the prophets, because your instrument is not the sword but the tongue, what was the reason of its being said under divine inspiration, “The sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword”? But what time would suffice me to collect from all the prophets all the testimonies to the Church dispersed throughout the world, all of which you endeavor to destroy and render nought by contradicting them? But you are caught; for “their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words to the end of the world.” I will, however, advance this one saying from the mouth of the Lord, who is the Witness of witnesses. “All things must be fulfilled,” He says, “which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.” And what these were let us hear from Himself: “Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” See what it is that is written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning the Lord. See what the Lord Himself revealed about Himself and about the Church, making Himself manifest, uttering promises about the Church. But for you, see that you resist such manifest proofs as these, and as you cannot destroy them, endeavor to pervert them, what would you do, if you were to come across the bodies of the prophets, when you rage so madly against the utterances of the prophets, as not even to hearken to the Lord when He is fulfilling, and making manifest, and expounding the prophets? For do you not, to the utmost of’your power, strive to slay the Lord Himself, since even to Himself you will not yield?

CHAPTER 15

34. Petilianus said: “David also spoke of you as persecutors in the following terms: Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues have they deceived; the poison of asps is under their lips. Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and unhappiness is in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known:

there is no fear of God before their eyes. Have all the workers of wickedness no knowledge, who eat up my people as they eat bread?'"

35. Augustin answered: Their throat is an open sepulchre, whence they breathe out death by lies. For "the mouth that belieth slayeth the soul." But if nothing is more true than that which Christ said, that His Church should be throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, then there is nothing more false than that which you say, that it is in the party of Donatus. But the tongues which have deceived are the tongues of those who, whilst they are acquainted with their own deeds, not only say that they are just men, but that they are justifiers of men, which is said of One only "that justifieth the ungodly," and that because "He is just and the justifier." As regards the poison of asps, and the mouth full of cursing and bitterness, we have said enough already. But you have yourselves said that the followers of Maximianus had feet swift to shed blood, as is testified by the sentence of your plenary Council, so often quoted in the records of the proconsular province and of the state. But they, so far as we hear, never killed any one in the body. You evidently, therefore, understood that the blood of the soul was shed in spiritual murder by the sword of schism, which you condemned in Maximianus. See then if your feet are not swift to shed blood, when you cut off men from the unity of the whole world, if you were right in saying it of the followers of Maximianus, because they cut off some from the party of Donatus. Are we again without the knowledge of the way of peace, who study to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? and yet do you possess that knowledge, who resist the discourse which Christ held with His disciples after His resurrection, of so peaceful a nature that He began it with the greeting, "Peace be unto you;" and that so strenuously that you are proved to be saying nothing less to Him than this, "What Thou saidst of the unity of all nations is false; what we say of the offense of all nations is true"? Who would say such things as this if they had the fear of God before their eyes? See, therefore, if in daily saying things like this you are not trying to destroy the people of God dispersed throughout the world, eating them up as it were bread.

CHAPTER 16

36. Petilianus said: “The Lord Christ also warns us, saying, Beware of false prophets, which come unto you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves; and ye shall not know them by their fruits.’“

37. Augustin answered: If I were to inquire of you by what fruits you know us to be ravening wolves, you are sure to answer by charging us with the sins of other men, and these such as were never proved against those who are said to have been guilty of them. But if you should ask of me by what fruits we know you rather to be ravening wolves, I bring against you the charge of schism, which you will deny, but which I will straightway go on to prove; for, as a matter of fact, you do not communicate with all the nations of the earth, nor with those Churches which were founded by the labor of the apostles. Hereupon you will say, “I do not communicate with traditors and murderers.” The seed of Abraham answers you, “These are those charges which you made, which are either not true, or have no reference to me.” But these I set aside for the present; do you meanwhile show me the Church. Now that voice will sound in my ears which the Lord showed was to be avoided in the false prophets who made a show of their several parties, and strove to estrange men from the Catholic Church, “Lo, here is Christ, or there.” But do you think that the true sheep of Christ are so utterly destitute of sense, who are told, “Believe it not,” that they will hearken to the wolf when he says, “Lo, here is Christ,” and will not hearken to the Shepherd when He says, “Throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem?”

CHAPTER 17

38. Petilianus said: “Thus, thus, thou wicked persecutor, under whatsoever cloak of righteousness thou hast concealed thyself, under whatsoever name of peace thou wagest war with kisses, under whatsoever title of unity thou endeavorest to ensnare the race of men—thou, who up to this time art cheating and deceiving, thou art the true son of the devil, showing thy parentage by thy character.”

39. Augustin answered: Consider in reply that these things have been said by us against you; and that you may know to which of us they are more appropriate, call to mind what I have said before.

CHAPTER 18

40. Petilianus said: “Nor is it, after all, so strange that you assume to yourself the name of bishop without authority. This is the true custom of the devil, to choose in preference a mode of deceiving by which he usurps to himself a word of holy meaning, as the apostle declares to us: And no marvel,’ he says: for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness.’ Nor is it therefore a marvel if you falsely call yourself a bishop. For even those fallen angels, lovers of the maidens of the world, who were corrupted by the corruption of their flesh, though, from having stripped themselves of divine excellence, they have ceased to be angels, yet retain the name of angels, and always esteem themselves as angels, though, being released from the service of God, they have passed from the likeness of their character into the army of the devil, as the great God declares, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh.’ To those guilty ones and to you the Lord Christ will say, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.’ If there were no evil angels, the devil would have no angels; of whom the apostle says, that in the judgment of the resurrection they shall be condemned by the saints: Know ye not,’ says he, that we shall judge angels?’ If they were true angels, men would not have authority to judge the angels of God. So too those sixty apostles, who, when the twelve were left alone with the Lord Christ, departed in apostasy from the faith, are so far yet considered among wretched men to be apostles, that from them Manichaeus and the rest entangle many souls in many devilish sects which they destroyed that they might take them in their snares. For indeed the fallen Manichaeus, if fallen he was, is not to be reckoned among those sixty, if it be that we can find his name as an apostle among the twelve, or if he was ordained by the voice of Christ when Matthias was elected into the place of the traitor Judas, or another thirteenth like Paul, who calls himself the last of the apostles, expressly that any one who was later than himself might not be held to be an apostle. For these are his words: For I am the last of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.’ And do not flatter yourselves in this: he was a Jew that had done this. You too, as Gentiles, may work destruction upon

us. For you carry on war without license, against whom we may not fight in turn. For you desire to live when you have murdered us; but our victory is either to escape or to be slain.”

41. Augustin answered: See how you have quoted the testimony of holy Scripture, or how you have understood it, when it has no bearing at all upon the present point at issue. For all that you have brought forward was simply said to prove that there are false bishops, just as there are false angels and false apostles. Now we too know quite well that there are false angels and false apostles, and false bishops, and, as the true apostle says, false brethren also; but, seeing that charges such as yours may be brought by either side against the other, what is required is a certain degree of proof, and not mere empty words. But if you would see to which of us the charge of falseness more truly applies, recall to mind what we have said before, and you will see it there set forth, that we may not become tedious to our readers by repeating the same thing over and over again. And yet how is the Church dispersed throughout the world affected either by what you may have found to say about its chaff, which is mixed with it throughout the whole world; or by what you said of Manichaeus and the other devilish sects? For if the wheat is not affected by anything which is said even about the chaff which is still mingled with it, how much less are the members of Christ dispersed throughout the whole world affected by monstrosities which have been so long and so openly separated from it?

CHAPTER 19

42. Petilianus said: “The Lord Jesus Christ commands us, saying, When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another; and if they persecute you in that, flee yet into a third; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.’ If He gives us this warning in the case of Jews and pagans, you who call yourself a Christian ought not to imitate the dreadful deeds of the Gentiles. Or do you serve God in such wise that we should be murdered at your hands? You do err, you do err, if you are wretched enough to entertain such a belief as this. For God does not have butchers for His priests.”

43. Augustin answered: To flee from one state to another from the face of persecution has not been enjoined as precept or permission on heretics or schismatics, such as you are; but it was enjoined on the preachers of the gospel, whom you resist. And this we may easily prove in this wise: you are now in your own cities, and no man persecutes you. You must therefore come forth, and give an account of your separation. For it cannot be maintained that, as the weakness of the flesh is excused when it yields before the violence of persecution, so truth also ought to yield to falsehood. Furthermore, if you are suffering persecution, why do you not retire from the cities in which you are, that you may fulfill the instructions which you quote out of the gospel? But if you are not suffering persecution, why are you unwilling to reply to us? Or if the fact be that you are afraid lest, when you should have made reply, you then should suffer persecution, in that case how are you following the example of those preachers to whom it was said, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves?" To whom it was also further said "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." And how do you escape the charge of acting contrary to the injunction of the Apostle Peter, who says, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the faith and hope that is in you?" And, lastly, wherefore are you ever eager to annoy the Catholic Churches by the most violent disturbances, whenever it is in your power, as is proved by innumerable instances of simple fact? But you say that you must defend your places, and that you resist with cudgels and massacres and with whatever else you can. Wherefore in such a case did you not hearken to the voice of the Lord, when He says, "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil"? Or, allowing that it is possible that in some cases it should be right for violent men to be resisted by bodily force, and that it does not violate the precept which we receive from the Lord, "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil," why may it not also be that a pious man should eject an impious man, or a just man him that is unjust, in the exercise of duly and lawfully constituted authority, from seats which are unlawfully usurped, or retained to the despite of God? For you would not say that the false prophets suffered persecution at the hands of Elijah, in the same sense that Elijah suffered persecution from the wickedest of kings? Or that because the Lord was scourged by His persecutors, therefore those whom He Himself drove out of the temple with scourges are to be put in comparison

with His sufferings? It remains, therefore, that we should acknowledge that there is no other question requiring solution, except whether you have been pious or impious in separating yourselves from the communion of the whole world. For if it shall be found that you have acted impiously, you would not be surprised if there should be no lack of ministers of God by whom you might be scourged, seeing that you suffer persecution not from us, but as it is written, from their own abominations.

CHAPTER 20

44. Petilianus said: “The Lord Christ cries again from heaven to Paul, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.’ He was then called Saul, that he might afterwards receive his true name in baptism. But for you it is not hard so often to persecute Christ in the persons of His priests, though the Lord Himself cries out, Touch not mine anointed.’ Reckon up all the deaths of the saints, and so often have you murdered Christ, who lives in each of them. Lastly, if you are not guilty of sacrilege, then a saint cannot be a murderer.”

45. Augustin answered: Defend yourselves from the charge of the persecution which those men suffered at the hands of your party who separated themselves from you with the followers of Maximianus, and therein you will find our defence. For if you say that you committed no such deeds, we simply read to you the records of the pro-consular province and the state. If you say that you were right in persecuting them, why are you unwilling to suffer the like yourselves? If you say, “But we caused no schism,” then let this be inquired into, and, till it is decided whether it be so or not, let no one make accusation against persecutors. If you say that even schismatics ought not to have suffered persecution, I ask whether it is also the case that they ought not to have been driven out of the basilicas, in which they lay snares for the leading astray of the weak, even though it were done by duly constituted authorities? If you say that this also should not have been done, first restore the basilicas to the followers of Maximianus, and then discuss the point with us. If you say that it was right, then see what they ought to suffer at the hands of duly constituted authority, who, in resisting it, “resist the ordinance of God.” Wherefore the apostle expressly says, “For he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister

of God, a revenger to execute wrath on him that doeth evil.” But even if this had been discovered after the truth had been searched out with all diligence, that not even after public trial ought schismatics to undergo any punishment, or be driven from the positions which they have occupied, for their treachery and deceit; and if you should say that you are vexed that the followers of Maximianus should have suffered such conduct at the hands of some of you,—why does not the wheat of the Lord cry out with the more freedom from the whole field of the Lord, that is, from the world, and say, Neither are we at all affected by what the tares and the chaff amongst us do, seeing that it is contrary to our wish? If you confess that it is sufficient to clear you of responsibility, that all the evil that is done by men of your party is done in opposition to your wishes, why then have you separated yourselves? For if your reason for not separating from the unrighteous among the party of Donatus is that each man bears his own burden, why have you separated yourselves from those throughout the world whom you think, or profess to think, to be unrighteous? Is it that you might all share equally in bearing the burden of schism?

46. And when we ask of you which of your party you can prove to have been slain by us, I indeed can remember no law issued by the emperors to the effect that you should be put to death. Those indeed whose deaths you quote most frequently to bring us into odium, Marculus and Donatus, present a great question,—whether they threw themselves down a precipice, as your teaching does not hesitate to encourage by examples of daily occurrence, or whether they were thrown down by the true command of some authority. For if it is a thing incredible that the leaders of the Circumcelliones should have wrought upon themselves a death in accordance with their custom, how much more incredible it is that the Roman authorities should have been able to condemn them to a punishment at variance with custom! Accordingly, in considering this matter, which you think excessive in its hatefulness, supposing what you say is true, what is there in it which bears upon the Lord’s wheat? Let the chaff which flew away outside accuse the chaff which yet remained within for it is not possible that it should all be separated till the winnowing at the last day. But if what you say is false, what wonder is it if, when the chaff is carried away as it were by a light blast of dissension, it even attacks the wheat of the

Lord with false accusations? Wherefore, on the consideration of all such odious accusations, the wheat of Christ, which is ordered to grow together with the tares throughout the field, that is, throughout the whole world, makes this answer to you with a free and fearless voice: If you cannot prove what you say, it has no application to any one; and if you prove it, it yet does not apply to me. The result of which is, that whosoever has separated himself from the unity of the wheat on account of the offenses chargeable against the tares, or against the chaff, is unable to defend himself from the charge of murder which is involved in the mere offense of dissension and schism, as the Scripture says, “Whoso hateth his brother is a murderer.”

CHAPTER 21

47. Petilianus said: “Accordingly, as we have said, the Lord Christ cried, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he said, Who art Thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Christ of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.’ And so presently it goes on, But Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man.’ See here how blindness, coming in punishment of madness, obscures the light in the eyes of the persecutor, not to be again expelled except by baptism! Let us see, therefore, what he did in the city. Ananias,’ it is said, entered into the house to Saul, and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.’ Seeing therefore that Paul, being freed by baptism from the offense of persecution, received again his eyesight freed from guilt, why will not you, a persecutor and traditor, blinded by false baptism be baptized by those whom you persecute?”

48. Augustin answered: You do not prove that I, whom you wish to baptize afresh, am either a persecutor or a traditor. And if you prove this charge against any one, yet the persecutor and traditor is not to be baptized afresh, if he had been baptized already with the baptism of Christ. For the reason

why it was necessary that Paul should be baptized was that he had never been washed in any baptism of the kind. Therefore what you have chosen to insert about Paul has no point of resemblance with the case which you are arguing with us. But if you had not inserted this, you would have found no place for your childish declamation, “See how blindness comes in punishment of madness, not to be again expelled except by baptism!” For with how much more force might one exclaim against you, See how blindness comes in punishment of madness, which, finding its similitude in Simon, not in Paul, is not expelled from you even when you have received baptism? For if persecutors ought to be baptized by those whom they persecute, then let Primianus be baptized by the followers of Maximianus, whom he persecuted with the utmost eagerness.

CHAPTER 22

49. Petilianus said: “It may be urged that Christ said to His apostles, as you are constantly quoting against us, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.’ Now if you discuss those words in all their fullness, you are bound by what immediately follows. For this is what He said, in His very words: He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. But this he said on account of Judas, who should betray Him; therefore said He, Ye are not all clean.’ Whosoever, therefore, has incurred the guilt of treason, has forfeited, like you, his baptism. Again, after that the betrayer of Christ had himself been condemned, He thus more fully confirmed His words to the eleven apostles: Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you.’ And again He said to these same eleven, Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.’ Seeing, then, that these things were said to the eleven apostles, when the traitor, as we have seen, had been condemned, you likewise, being traditors, are similarly without both peace and baptism.”

50. Augustin answered: If therefore every traditor has forfeited his baptism, it will follow that every one who, having been baptized by you, has afterwards become a traditor, ought to be baptized afresh. And if you do not do this, you yourselves sufficiently prove the falseness of the saying, “Whosoever therefore has incurred the guilt of treason, has forfeited, like

you, his baptism.” For if he has forfeited it, let him return and receive it again; but if he returns and does not receive it, it is clear that he had not forfeited it. Again, if the reason why it was said to the apostles, “Now are ye clean,” and “My peace I give unto you,” was that the traitor had already left the room, then was not that supper of so great a sacrament clean and able to give peace, which He distributed to all before his going out? And if you venture to say this with your eyes closed against the truth, what can we do save exclaim the more, See how blindness comes in punishment of the madness of those who wish to be, as the apostle says, “teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm?” And yet, unless blindness came in the way of their pertinacity, it was not a very difficult matter that you should understand and see that the Lord did not say in the presence of Judas, Ye are not yet clean, but “Now are ye clean.” He added, however, “But not all,” because there was one there who was not clean; yet if he had been polluting the others by his presence, it would not have been declared to them, “Now are ye clean,” but, as I said before, Ye are not yet clean. But, after Judas had gone out, He said to them, “Now are ye clean,” and did not add the words, But not all, because he had now departed in whose presence indeed, as had been said to them, they were already clean, but not all, because there was one there unclean. Wherefore in these words the Lord rather declared that in the one company of men receiving the same sacraments, the uncleanness of some members cannot hurt the clean. Certainly, if you think that there are among us men like Judas, you might apply to us the words, “Ye are clean, but not all.” But this is not what you say; but you say that because of the presence of some who are unclean, therefore we are all unclean. This the Lord did not say to the disciples in the presence of Judas, and therefore whoever says this has not learned from the good Master what He says.

CHAPTER 23

51. Petilianus said: “But if you say that we give baptism twice over, truly it is rather you who do this, who slay men who have been baptized; and this we do not say because you baptize them, but because you cause each one of them, by the act of slaying him, to be baptized in his own blood. For the baptism of water or of the Spirit is as it were doubled when the blood of the

martyr is wrung from him. And so our Saviour also Himself, after being baptized in the first instance by John, declared that He must be baptized again, not this time with water nor with the Spirit, but with the baptism of blood, the cross of suffering, as it is written, Two disciples, the sons of Zebedee, came unto Him, saying, Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom grant that we may sit, one on Thy right hand, and the other on Thy left hand. But Jesus said unto them, Ye ask a difficult thing: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They said unto Him, We are able. And He said unto them, Ye can indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized,' and so forth. If these are two baptisms, you commend us by your malice, we must needs confess. For when you kill our bodies, then we do celebrate a second baptism; but it is that we are baptized with our baptism and with blood, like Christ. Blush, blush, ye persecutors. Ye make martyrs like unto Christ, who are sprinkled with the baptism of blood after the water of the genuine baptism."

52. Augustin answered: In the first place, we reply without delay that we do not kill you, but you kill yourselves by a true death, when you cut yourselves off from the living root of unity. In the next place, if all who are killed are baptized in their own blood, then all robbers, all unrighteous, impious, accursed men, who are put to death by the sentence of the law, are to be considered martyrs, because they are baptized in their own blood. But if only those are baptized in their own blood who are put to death for righteousness' sake, since theirs is the kingdom of heaven, you have already seen that the first question is why you suffer, and only afterwards should we ask what you suffer. Why therefore do you puff out your cheeks before you have shown the righteousness of your deeds? Why, does your tongue resound before your character is approved? If you have made a schism, you are impious; if you are impious, you die as one guilty of sacrilege, when you are punished for impiety; if you die as one guilty of sacrilege, how are you baptized in your blood? Or do you say, I have not made a schism? Let us then inquire into this. Why do you make an outcry before you prove your case?

53. Or do you say, Even if I am guilty of sacrilege, I ought not to be slain by you? It is one question as to the enormity of my action, which you never prove with any truth, another as to the baptism of your blood, from whence you derive your boast. For I never killed you, nor do you prove that you are killed by any one. Nor even if you were to prove it would it in any way affect me, whoever it was that killed you, whether he did it justly in virtue of power lawfully given by the Lord, or committed the crime of murder, like the chaff of the Lord's harvest, through some evil desire; just as you are in no way concerned with him who in recent times, with an intolerable tyranny, attended even by a company of soldiers, not because he feared any one, but that he might be feared by all, oppressed widows, destroyed pupils, betrayed the patrimonies of other men, annulled the marriages of other men, contrived the sale of the property of the innocent, divided the price of the property when sold with its mourning owners. I should seem to be saying all this out of the invention of my own head, if it were not sufficiently obvious of whom I speak without the mention of his name. And if all this is undoubtedly true, then just as you are not concerned with this, so neither are we concerned with anything you say, even though it were true. But if that colleague of yours, being really a just and innocent man, is maligned by a lying tale, then should we also learn in no way to give credit to reports, which have been spread abroad of innocent men, as though they had delivered up the sacred books, or murdered any of their fellow-men. To this we may add, that I refer to a man who lived with you, whose birthday you were wont to celebrate with such large assemblies, with whom you joined in the kiss of peace in the sacraments, in whose hands you placed the Eucharist, to whom in turn you extended your hands to receive it from his ministering, whose ears, when they were deaf amid the groanings of all Africa, you durst not offend by free speech; for paying to whom, even indirectly, a most witty compliment, by saying that in the Count he had a god for his companion, some one of your party was extolled to the skies. But you reproach us with the deeds of men with whom we never lived, whose faces we never saw, in whose lifetime we were either boys, or perhaps as yet not even born. What is the meaning, then, of your great unfairness and perversity, that you should wish to impose on us the burdens of those whom we never knew, whilst you will not bear the burdens of your friends? The divine Scriptures exclaim: “When thou sawest a thief, then

thou consentedst with him.” If he whom you saw did not pollute you, why do you reproach me with one whom I could not have seen? Or do you say, I did not consent with him, because his deeds were displeasing to me? But, at any rate, you went up to the altar of God with him. Come now, if you would defend yourself, make a distinction between your two positions, and say that it is one thing to consent together for sin, as the two elders consented together when they laid a plot against the chastity of Susannah, and another thing to receive the sacrament of the Lord in company with a thief, as the apostles received even that first supper in company with Judas. I am all in favor of your defense. But why do you not consider how much more easily, in the course of your defense, you have acquitted all the nations and boundaries of the earth, throughout which the inheritance of Christ is dispersed? For if it was possible for you to see a thief, and to share the sacraments with the thief whom you saw, and yet not to share his sin, how much less was it possible for the remotest nations of the earth to have anything in common with the sins of African traditors and persecutors, supposing your charges and assertions to be true, even though they held the sacraments in common with them? Or do you say, I saw in him the bishop, I did not see in him the thief? Say what you will. I allow this defense also, and in this the world is acquitted of the charges which you brought against it. For if it was permitted you to ignore the character of a man whom you knew, why is the whole world not allowed to be ignorant of those it never knew, unless, indeed, the Donatists are allowed to be ignorant of what they do not wish to know, while the nations of the earth may not be ignorant of what they cannot know?

54. Or do you say, Theft is one thing, delivery of the sacred books or persecution is another? I grant there is a difference, nor is it worth while now to show wherein that difference consists. But listen to the summary of the argument. If he could not make you a thief, because his thieving was displeasing in your sight, who can make men traditors or murderers to whom such treachery or murder is abhorrent? First, then, confess that you share in all the evil of Optatus, whom you knew, and even so reproach me with any evil which was found in those whom I knew not. And do not say to me, But my charges are serious, yours but trifling. You must first acknowledge them, however trifling they may be in your case, not before I

on my side confess the charges against me, but before I can allow you to say these serious things about me at all. Did Optatus, whom you knew make you a thief by being your colleague, or not? Answer me one or the other. If you say he did not, I ask why he did not,—because he was not a thief himself? or because you do not know it? or because you disapprove of it? If you say, Because he himself was not a thief, much more ought we not to believe that those with whom you reproach us were of such a character as you assert. For if we must not believe of Optatus what both Christians and pagans and Jews, ay, and what both our party and yours assert, how much less should we believe what you assert of any one? But if you say, Because you do not know it, all the nations of the earth answer you, Much more do we not know of all that you reproach us with in these men. But if you say, Because you disapproved of it, they answer you with the same voice, Although you have never proved the truth of what you say, yet acts like these are viewed by us with disapproval. But if you say, Lo, Optatus, whom I knew, made me a thief because he was my colleague, and I was in the habit of going to the altar with him when he committed those deeds; but I do not greatly heed it, because the fault was trivial, but your party made you a traditor and a murderer,—I answer that I do not allow that I too am made a traditor and a murderer by the sins of other men, just because you confess that you are made a thief by the sin of another man; for it must be remembered that you are proved a thief, not by our judgment, but by your own confession. For we say that every man must bear his own burden, as the apostle is our witness. But you, of your own accord, have taken the burden of Optatus on your own shoulders, not because you committed the theft, or consented to it, but because you declared your conviction that what another did applied to you. For, as the apostle says, when speaking of food, “I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean;” by the same rule, it may be said that the sins of others cannot implicate those who disapprove of them; but if any one thinks that they affect him, then he is affected by them. Wherefore you do not convict us of being traditors or murderers, even though you were to prove something of the sort against those who share the sacraments with us; but the guilt of theft is fastened on you, even if you disapprove of everything that Optatus did, not in virtue of our accusation, but by your own decision. And that you may not think this a trivial fault, read what the apostle says, “Nor shall thieves inherit the kingdom of God.” But those who shall not inherit the kingdom of God will certainly not be on His right hand among those whom it shall be said, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” If they are not there, where will they be except on the left hand? Therefore among those to whom it shall be said, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” In vain, therefore, do you indulge in your security, thinking it a trivial fault which separates you from the kingdom of God, and sends you into everlasting fire. How much better will you do to betake yourself to true confusion, saying, Every one of us shall bear his own burden, and the winnowing fan at the last day shall separate the chaff from the wheat!

55. But it is evident that you are afraid of its being forthwith said to you, “Why then, whilst you attempt to place on some men’s backs the burdens of their neighbors, have you dared to separate yourselves from the Lord’s corn, dispersed throughout the world, before the winnowing at the last day?” Accordingly, you who disapprove of the deeds of your party, whilst you are taking precautions against being charged with the schism which you all have made, are involving yourselves also in their sins which you did not commit; and while the shrewd Petilianus is afraid of my being able to say that am I not such as he thinks Caecilianus was, he is obliged to confess that he himself is such as he knows Optatus to have been. Or are you not such as the common voice of Africa proclaims him to have been? Then neither are we such as those with whom you reproach us are either suspected to have been by your mistake, or calumniously asserted to have been by your madness, or proved to have been by the truth. Much less is the wheat of the Lord in all the nations of the earth of such a character, seeing that it never heard the names of those of whom you speak. There is therefore no reason why you should perish in such sin of separation and such sacrilege of schism. And yet, if you are made to suffer for this great impiety by the judgment of God, you say that you are even baptized in your blood; so that you are not content with feeling no remorse for your division, but you must even glory in your punishment.

CHAPTER 24

56. Petilianus said: “But you will answer that you abide by the same declaration, He that is once washed needeth not save to wash his feet.’ Now the once’ is once that has authority, once that is confirmed by the truth.”

57. Augustin answered: Baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost has Christ for its authority, not any man, whoever he may be; and Christ is the truth, not any man.

CHAPTER 25

58. Petilianus said: “For when you in your guilt perform what is false, I do not celebrate baptism twice, which you have never celebrated once.”

59. Augustin answered: In the first place, you do not convict us of guilt. And if a guilty man baptizes with a false baptism, then none of those have true baptism who are baptized by men in your party, that are, I do not say openly, but even secretly guilty. For if he who gives baptism gives something that is God’s, if he is already guilty in the sight of God, how can he be giving something that is God’s if a guilty man cannot give true baptism? But in reality you wait till he is guilty in your sight as well, as though what he proposes to confer were something that belonged to you.

CHAPTER 26

60. Petilianus said: “For if you mix what is false with what is true, falsehood often imitates the truth by treading in its steps. Just in the same way a picture imitates the true man of nature, depicting with its colors the false resemblance of truth. And in the same way, too, the brilliancy of a mirror catches the countenance, so as to represent the eyes of him who gazes on it. In this way it presents to each comer his own countenance, so that the very features of the comer meet themselves in turn; and of such virtue is the falsehood of a clear mirror, that the very eyes which see themselves recognize themselves as though in some one else. And even when a shadow stands before it, it doubles the reflection, dividing its unity in great part through a falsehood. Must we then hold that anything is true, because a lying representation is given of it? But it is one thing to paint a

man, another to give birth to one. For does any one represent fictitious children to a man who wishes for an heir? or would any one look for true heirs in the falsehood of a picture? Truly it is a proof of madness to fall in love with a picture, letting go one's hold of what is true."

61. Augustin answered: Are you then really not ashamed to call the baptism of Christ a lie, even when it is found in the most false of men? Far be it from any one to suppose that the wheat of the Lord, which has been commanded to grow among the tares throughout the whole field, that is, throughout the whole of this world, until the harvest, that is, until the end of the world, can have perished in consequence of your evil words. Nay, even among the very tares themselves, which are commanded not to be gathered, but to be tolerated even to the end, and among the very chaff, which shall only be separated from the wheat by the winnowing at the last day, does any one dare to say that any baptism is false which is given and received in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost? Would you say that those whom you depose from their office, whether as your colleagues or your fellow-priests, on the testimony of women whom they have seduced (since examples of this kind are not wanting anywhere), were false or true before their crime was proved against them? You will certainly answer, False. Why then were they able both to have and to give true baptism? Why did not their falseness as men corrupt in them the truth of God? Is it not most truly written, "For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit?" Seeing then that the Holy Spirit fled from them, how came it that the truth of baptism was in them, except because what the Holy Spirit fled from was the falseness of man, not the truth of the sacrament? Further, if even the deceitful have the true baptism, how do they have it who possess it in truthfulness? Whence you ought to observe that it is rather your conversation which is colored with childish pigments; and accordingly, he who neglects the living Word to take pleasure in such coloring is himself loving the picture in the place of the reality.

CHAPTER 27

62. Petilianus said: "It will be urged against us, that the Apostle Paul said, One Lord, one faith, one baptism.' We profess that there is only one; for it is certain that those who declare that there are two are mad."

63. Augustin replied: These words of yours are arguments against yourselves; but in your madness you are not aware of it. For the men who say there are two baptisms are those who declare their opinion that the just and the unjust have different baptisms; whereas it belongs neither to one party nor the other, but in both of them is one, being Christ's, although they themselves are not one: and yet the baptism, which is one, the just have to salvation, the unjust to their destruction.

CHAPTER 28

64. Petilianus said: "But yet, if I may be allowed the comparison, it is certain that the sun appears double to the insane, although it only be that a dark blue cloud often meets it, and its discolored surface, being struck by the brightness, while the rays of the sun are reflected from it, seems to send forth as it were rays of its own. So in the same way in the faith of baptism, it is one thing to seek for reflections, another to recognize the truth."

65. Augustin answered: What are you saying, if I may ask? When a dark blue cloud reflects the rays of the sun with which it is struck, is it only to the insane, and not to all who look on it, that there appear to be two suns? But when it appears so to the insane as such, it appears to them alone. But if I may say so without being troublesome, I would have you take care lest saying such things and talking in such a way should be itself a sign of madness. I suppose, however, that what you meant to say was this,—that the just had the truth of baptism, the unjust only its reflection. And if this be so, I venture to say that the reflection was found in that man of our party, to whom not God, but a certain Count, was God; but that the truth was either in you or in him who uttered the witty saying against Optatus, when he said that "in the Count he had a god for his companion." And distinguish between those who were baptized by either of these, and in the one party approve the true baptism, in the others exclude the reflection, and introduce the truth.

CHAPTER 29

66. Petilianus said: "But to pass rapidly through these minor points: can he be said to lay down the law who is not a magistrate of the court? or is what

he lays down to be considered law, when in the character of a private person he disturbs public rights? Is it not rather the case that he not only involves himself in guilt, but is held to be a forger, and that which he composes a forgery?"

67. Augustin answered: What if your private person, whom you deem a forger, were to set forth to any one the law of the emperor? Would not the man, when he had compared it with the law of those who have the genuine law, and found it to be identically the same, lay aside all care about the source from which he had obtained it, and consider only what he had obtained? For what the forger gives is false when he gives it of his own falseness; but when something true is given by any person, even though he be a forger, yet, although the giver be not truthful, the gift is notwithstanding true.

CHAPTER 30

68. Petilianus said: "Or if any one chance to recollect the chants of a priest, is he therefore to be deemed a priest, because with sacrilegious mouth he publishes the strain of a priest?"

69. Augustin answered: In this question you are speaking just as though we were at present inquiring what constituted a true priest, not what constituted true baptism. For that a man should be a true priest, it is requisite that he should be clothed not with the sacrament alone, but with righteousness, as it is written, "Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness." But if a man be a priest in virtue of the sacrament alone, as was the high priest Caiaphas, the persecutor of the one most true Priest, then even though he himself be not truthful, yet what he gives is true, if he gives not what is his own but what is God's; as it is said of Caiaphas himself, "This spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied." And yet, to use the same simile which you employed yourself: if you were to hear even from any one that was profane the prayer of the priest couched in the words suitable to the mysteries of the gospel, can you possibly say to him, Your prayer is not true, though he himself may be not only no true priest, but not a priest at all? seeing that the Apostle Paul said that certain testimony of I know not what Cretan prophet was true, though he was not reckoned among the

prophets of God for he says, “One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said the Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies: this witness is true.” If, therefore, the apostle even himself bore witness to the testimony of some obscure prophet of a foreign race, because he found it to be true, why do not we, when we find in any one what belongs to Christ, and is true even though the man with whom it may be found be deceitful and perverse, why do not we in such a case make a distinction between the fault which is found in the man, and the truth which he has not of his own but of God’s? and why do we not say, This sacrament is true, as Paul said, “This witness is true”? Does it at all follow that we say, The man himself also is truthful, because we say, This sacrament is true? Just as I would ask whether the apostle counted that prophet among the prophets of the Lord, because he confirmed the truth of what he found to be true in him. Likewise the same apostle, when he was at Athens, perceived a certain altar among the altars of the false gods, on which was this inscription, “To the unknown God.” And this testimony he made use of to build them up in Christ, to the extent of quoting the inscription in his sermon, and adding, “Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.” Did he, because he found that altar among the altars of idols, or set up by sacrilegious hands, therefore condemn or reject what he found in it that was true? or did he, because of the truth which he found upon it, therefore persuade them that they ought also to follow the sacrilegious practices of the pagans? Surely he did neither of the two; but presently, when, as he judged fitting, he wished to introduce to their knowledge the Lord Himself unknown to them, but known to him, he says among other things, that “He is not far from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said.” Can it be said that here also, because he found among the sacrilegious, the evidence of truth, he either approved their wickedness because of the evidence, or condemned the evidence because of their wickedness? But it is unavoidable that you should be always in the wrong, so long as you do despite to the sacraments of God because of the faults of men, or think that we take upon ourselves the sacrilege even of your schism, for the sake of the sacraments of God, to which we are unwilling to do despite in you.

CHAPTER 31

70. Petilianus said: “For there is no power but of God,” none in any man of power; as the Lord Jesus Christ answered Pontius Pilate, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.’ And again, in the words of John, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.’ Tell us, therefore, traditor, when you received the power of imitating the mysteries.”

71. Augustin answered: Tell us rather thyself when the power of baptizing was lost by the whole world through which is dispersed the inheritance of Christ, and by all that multitude of nations in which the apostles founded the Churches. You will never be able to tell us,—not only because you have calumniated them, and do not prove them to be traditors, but because, even if you did prove this, yet no guilt on the part of any evil-doers, whether they be unsuspected, or deceitful, or be tolerated as the tares or as the chaff, can possibly overthrow the promises, so that all the nations of the earth should not be blessed in the seed of Abraham; in which promises you deprive them of their share when you will not have the communion of unity with all nations of the earth.

CHAPTER 32

72. Petilianus said: “For although there is only one baptism, yet it is consecrated in three several grades. John gave water without the name of the Trinity, as he declared himself, saying, I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.’ Christ gave the Holy Spirit, as it is written, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost,’ And the Comforter Himself came on the apostles as a fire burning with rustling flames. O true divinity, which seemed to blaze, not to burn! as it is written, And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where the apostles were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.’ But you, O persecutor, have not even the water of repentance, seeing that you hold the power not of the murdered John, but of the murderer Herod. You therefore, O traditor, have not the Holy Spirit of

Christ; for Christ did not betray others to death, but was Himself betrayed. For you, therefore, the fire in the spirit in Hades is full of life,—that fire which, surging with hungry tongues of flame, will be able to burn your limbs to all eternity without consuming them, as it is written of the punishment of the guilty in hell, Neither shall their fire be quenched.'“

73. Augustin answered: You are the calumnious slanderer, not the truthful arguer. Will you not at length cease to make assertions of a kind which, if you do not prove them, can apply to nobody; and even if you prove them, certainly cannot apply to the unity of the whole world, which is in the saints as in the wheat of God? If we too were pleased to return calumnies for calumnies, we too might possibly be able to give vent to eloquent slanderers. We too might use the expression, “With rustling flames;” but to me an expression never sounds in any way eloquent which is inappropriate in its use. We too might say, “Surging with hungry tongues of flame;” but we do not wish that the tongues of flame in our writings, when they are read by any one in his senses, should be judged hungry for want of the sap of weightiness, or that the reader himself, while he finds in them no food of useful sentiments, should be left to suffer from the hunger of excessive emptiness. See, I declare that your Circumcelliones are burning, not with rustling but with headlong flames. If you answer, What is that to us? why do not you, when you reproach with any one whom you will, not listen in turn to our answer, We too know nothing of it? If you answer, You do not prove the fact, why may not the whole world answer you in turn, Neither do you prove it? Let us agree, therefore, if you please, that you should not charge us with the guilt of the wicked men whom you consider to belong to us, and that we should abstain from similar charges against you. So you will see, by this just agreement, confirmed and ratified, that you have no charge which you can bring against the seed of Abraham, as found in all the nations of the earth. But I find without difficulty a grievous charge to bring against you: Why have you impiously separated yourselves from the seed of Abraham, which is in all nations of the earth? Against this charge you certainly have no means whereby you may defend yourselves. For we each of us clear ourselves of the sins of other men; but this, that you do not hold communion with all the nations of the earth, which are blessed in the seed

of Abraham, is a very grievous crime, of which not some but all of you are guilty.

74. And yet you know, as you prove by your quotation, that the Holy Spirit descended in such wise, that those who were then filled with it spake with divers tongues: what was the meaning of that sign and prodigy? Why then is the Holy Spirit given now in such wise, that no one to whom it is given speaks with divers tongues, except because that miracle then prefigured that all nations of the earth should believe, and that thus the gospel should be found to be in every tongue? Just as it was foretold in the psalm so long before: “There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.” This was said with reference to those men who were destined, after receiving the Holy Spirit, to speak with every kind of tongue. But because this passage itself signified that the gospel should be found hereafter in all nations and languages, and that the body of Christ should sound forth throughout all the world in every tongue, therefore he goes on to say, “Their sound is gone out throughout all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.” Hence it is that the true Church is hidden from no one. And hence comes that which the Lord Himself says in the gospel, “A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.” And therefore David continues in the same psalm, “In the sun hath He placed His tabernacle,” that is, in the open light of day; as we read in the Book of Kings, “For thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.” And He Himself is “as a bridegroom coming out of His chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run His race. His going forth is from the end of heaven:” here you have the coming of the Lord in the flesh. “And His circuit unto the ends of it:” here you have His resurrection and ascension. “And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof:” here you have the coming of the Holy Spirit, whom He sent in tongues of fire, that He might make manifest the glowing heat of charity, which he certainly cannot have who does not keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace with the Church, which is throughout all languages.

75. Next, however, with regard to your statement that there is indeed one baptism, but that it is consecrated in three several grades, and to your having distributed the three forms of it to three persons after such fashion, that you ascribe the water to John, the Holy Spirit to the Lord Jesus Christ,

and, in the third place, the fire to the Comforter sent down from above,—consider for a moment in how great an error you are involved. For you were brought to entertain such an opinion simply from the words of John: “I indeed baptize you with water: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” Nor were you willing to take into consideration that the three things are not attributed to three persons taken one by one,—water to John, the Holy Spirit to Christ, fire to the Comforter,—but that the three should rather be referred to two persons—one of them to John, the other two to our Lord. For neither is it said, I indeed baptize you with water: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost: and the Comforter, who is to come after Him, He shall baptize you with fire; but “I indeed,” He says, “with water: but He that cometh after me with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” One he attributes to himself, two to Him that cometh after him. You see, therefore, how you have been deceived in the number. Listen further. You said that there was one baptism consecrated in three stages—water, the Holy Spirit, and fire; and you assigned three persons to the three stages severally—John to the water, Christ to the Spirit, the Comforter to the fire. If, therefore, the water of John bears reference to the same baptism which is commended as being one, it was not right that those should have been baptized a second time by the command of the Apostle Paul whom he found to have been baptized by John. For they already had water, belonging, as you say, to the same baptism; so that it remained that they should receive the Holy Spirit and fire, because these were wanting in the baptism of John, that their baptism might be completed, being consecrated, as you assert, in three stages. But since they were ordered to be baptized by the authority of an apostle, it is sufficiently made manifest that that water with which John baptized had no reference to the baptism of Christ, but belonged to another dispensation suited to the exigencies of the times.

76. Lastly, when you wished to prove that the Holy Spirit was given by Christ, and had brought forward as a proof from the gospel, that Jesus on rising from the dead breathed into the face of His disciples, saying, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost;” and when you wished to prove that that last fire which was named in connection with baptism was found in the tongues

of fire which were displayed on the coming of the Holy Ghost, how came it into your head to say, “And the Comforter Himself came upon the apostles as a fire burning with rustling flames,” as though there were one Holy Spirit whom He gave by breathing on the face of His disciples, and another who, after His ascension, came on the apostles? Are we to suppose, therefore, that there are two Holy Spirits? Who will be found so utterly mad as to assert this? Christ therefore Himself gave the same Holy Spirit, whether by breathing on the face of the disciples, or by sending Him down from heaven on the day of Pentecost, with undoubted commendation of His holy sacrament. Accordingly it was not that Christ gave the Holy Spirit, and the Comforter gave the fire, that the saying might be fulfilled, “With the Holy Spirit, and with fire;” but the same Christ Himself gave the Holy Spirit in both cases, making it manifest while He was yet on earth by His breathing, and when He was ascended into heaven by the tongues of flame. For that you may know that the words of John, “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost,” were not fulfilled at the time when He breathed on His disciples face, so that they should require to be baptized, when the Comforter should come, not with the Spirit any longer, but with fire, I would have you remember the most outspoken words of Scripture, and see what the Lord Himself said to them when He ascended into heaven: “John truly baptized you with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, whom ye shall receive not many days hence at Pentecost.” What could be plainer than this testimony? But according to your interpretation, what He should have said was this: John verily baptized you with water; but ye were baptized with the Holy Spirit when I breathed on your faces; and next in due order shall ye be baptized with fire, which ye shall receive not many days hence;—in order that by this means the three stages should be completed, in which you say that the one baptism was consecrated. And so it proves to be the case that you are still ignorant of the meaning of the words, “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire;” and you are rash enough to be williing to teach what you do not know yourselves.

CHAPTER 33

77. Petilianus said: “But that I may thoroughly investigate the baptism in the name of the Trinity, the Lord Christ said to His apostles: Go ye, and

baptize the nations, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you.’ Whom do you teach, traditor? Him whom you condemn? Whom do you teach, traditor? Him whom you slay? Once more, whom do you teach? Him whom you have made a murderer? How then do you baptize in the name of the Trinity? You cannot call God your Father. For when the Lord Christ said, Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God,’ you who have not peace of soul cannot have God for your Father. Or how, again, can you baptize in the name of the Son, who betray that Son Himself, who do not imitate the Son of God in any of His sufferings or crosses? Or how, again, can you baptize in the name of the Holy Ghost, when the Holy Ghost came only on those apostles who were not guilty of treason? Seeing, therefore, that God is not your Father, neither are you truly born again with the water of baptism. No one of you is born perfectly. You in your impiety have neither father nor mother. Seeing, then, that you are of such a kind, ought I not to baptize you, even though you wash yourselves a thousand times, after the similitude of the Jews, who as it were baptize the flesh?”

78. Augustin answered: certainly you had proposed thoroughly to investigate the baptism in the name of the Trinity, and you had set us to listen with much attention; but following, as it would seem, what is the easiest course to you, how soon have you returned to your customary abuse! This you carry out with genuine fluency. For you set before yourself what victims you please, against whom to inveigh with whatsoever bitterness you please: in the midst of which last latitude of discourse you are driven into the greatest straits if any one does but use the little word, Prove it. For this is what is said to you by the seed of Abraham; and since in him all nations of the earth are blessed, they care but little when they are cursed by you. But yet, since you are treating of baptism, which you consider to be true when it is found in a just man, but false when it is found in the unjust, see how I too, if I were to investigate baptism in the name of the Trinity, according to your rule, might say, with great fullness, as it seems to me, that he has not God for his father who in a Count has God for his companion, nor believes that any is his Christ, save him for whose sake he has endured suffering; and that he has not the Holy Ghost who burned the wretched

Africa in so very different a fashion with tongues of fire. How then can they have baptism, or how can they administer it in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost? Surely you must now perceive that baptism can exist in an unrighteous man, and be administered by an unrighteous man, and that no unrighteous baptism, but such as is just and true,—not because it belongs to the unrighteous man, but because it is of God. And herein I am uttering no calumny against you, as you never cease to do, on some pretense or other, against the whole world; and, what is even more intolerable, you do not even bring any proof about the very points on which you found your calumnies. But I know not how this can possibly be endured, because you not only bring calumnies against holy men about unrighteous men, but you even bring a charge against the holy baptism itself, which must needs be holy in any man, however unrighteous he may be, from a comparison with the infection arising from the sins of wicked men, so that you say that baptism partakes of the character of him by whom it is possessed, or administered, or received. Furthermore, if a man partakes of the character of him in whose company he approaches sacred mysteries, and if the sacraments themselves partake of the character of the men in whom they are, holy men may well be satisfied to find consolation in the thought that they only fare like holy baptism itself in hearing false accusations from your lips. But it would be well for you to see how you are condemned out of your own mouths, if both the sober among you are counted as drunken from the infection of the drunken in your ranks, and the merciful among you become robbers from the infection of the robbers, and whatever evil is found among you in the persons of wicked men is perforce shared by those who are not wicked; and if baptism itself is unclean in all of you who are unclean, and if it is of different kinds according to the varying character of uncleanness itself, as it must be if it is perforce of the same character as the man by whom it is possessed or administered. These suppositions most undoubtedly are false, and accordingly they in no wise injure us, when you bring them forward against us without looking back upon yourselves. But they do injure you, because, when you bring them forward falsely, they do not fall on us; but since you imagine them to be true, they recoil upon yourselves.

CHAPTER 34

79. Petilianus said: “For if the apostles were allowed to baptize those whom John had washed with the baptism of repentance, shall it not likewise be allowed to me to baptize men guilty of sacrilege like yourselves?”

80. Augustin answered: Where then is what you said above, that there was not one baptism of John and another of Christ, but that there was one baptism, consecrated in three stages, of which three stages John gave the water, Christ the Spirit, and the Comforter the fire? Why then did the apostles repeat the water in the case of those to whom John had already administered water belonging to the one baptism which is consecrated in three stages? Surely you must see how necessary it is that every one should understand the meaning of what he is discussing.

CHAPTER 35

81. Petilianus said: “Nor indeed will it be possible that the Holy Spirit should be implanted in the heart of any one by the laying on of the hands of the priest, unless the water of a pure conscience has gone before to give him birth.”

82. Augustin answered: In these few words of yours two errors are involved; and one of them, indeed, has no great bearing on the question which is being discussed between us, but yet it helps to convict you of want of skill. For the Holy Spirit came upon a hundred and twenty men, without the laying on of any person’s hands, and again upon Cornelius the centurion and those who were with him, even before they were baptized. But the second error in these words of yours entirely overthrows your whole case. For you say that the water of a pure conscience must necessarily precede to give new birth, before the Holy Spirit can follow on it. Accordingly, either all the water consecrated in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is water of a pure conscience, not for the merits of those by whom it is administered, or by whom it is received, but in virtue of the stainless merits of Him who instituted this baptism; or else if only a pure conscience on the part both of the ministrant and the recipient can produce the water of a pure conscience, what do you make of those whom you find to have been baptized by men who bore a conscience stained with as yet undiscovered guilt, especially if there exist among the said baptized persons

any one that should confess that he at the time when he was baptized had a bad conscience, in that he might possbily have desired to use that opportunity for the accomplishment of some sinful act? When, therefore, it shall be made clear to you that neither the man who administered baptism, nor the man who received it, had a pure conscience, will you give your judgment that he ought to be baptized afresh? You will assuredly neither say nor do anything of the sort. The purity therefore of baptism is entirely unconnected with the purity or impurity of the conscience either of the giver or the recipient. Will you therefore dare to say that the deceiver, or the robber, or the oppressor of the fatherless and widows, or the sunderer of marriages, or the betrayer, the seller, the divider of the patrimony of other men, was a man of pure conscience? Or will you further dare to say that those were men of pure conscience, whom it is hard to imagine wanting in such times, men who made interest with the man I have described, that they might be baptized, not for the sake of Christ, nor for the sake of eternal life, but to conciliate earthly friendships, and to satisfy earthly desires? Further, if you do not venture to say that these were men of pure conscience, then if you find any of their number who have been baptized, give to them the water of a pure conscience, which they as yet have not received; and if you will not do this, then leave off casting in our teeth a matter which you do not understand, lest you should be forced to answer in reply to us about a matter which you know full well.

CHAPTER 36

83. Petilianus said: “Which Holy Spirit certainly cannot come on you, who have not been washed even with the baptism of repentance; but the water of the traditor, which most truly needs to be repented of, does but work pollution.”

84. Augustin answered: As a matter of fact, not only do you not prove us to be traditors, but neither did your fathers prove that our fathers were guilty of that sin; though, even if that had been proved, the consequence would have been that they would not be our fathers, according to your earlier assertion, seeing that we had not followed their deeds: yet neither should we on their account be severed from the companionship of unity, and from the seed of Abraham, in which all nations of the earth are blessed. However, if

the water of Christ be one thing, and the water of the traditor another, because Christ was not a traditor, why should not the water of Christ be one thing, and the water of a robber another, since certainly Christ was not a robber? Do you therefore baptize again after baptism by your robber, and I will baptize again after the traditor, who is neither mine nor yours; or, if one must believe the documents which are produced, who is both mine and yours; or, if we are to believe the communion of the whole world rather than the party of Donatus, who is not mine, but yours. But, by a better and a sounder judgment, because it is according to the words of the apostle, every one of us shall bear his own burden; nor is either that robber yours, if you are not yourselves robbers; nor does any traditor belong to any one either of us or you, who is not himself a traditor. And yet we are Catholics, who, following the spirit of that judgment, do not desert the unity of the Church; but you are heretics, who, on account of charges, whether true or false, which you have brought against certain men, are unwilling to maintain Christian charity with the seed of Abraham.

CHAPTER 37

85. Petilianus said: “But that the truth of this may be made manifest from the apostles, we are taught by their actions, as it is written: It came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus; and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.’ If, therefore, they were baptized that they might receive the Holy Ghost, why do not you, if you wish to receive the Holy Ghost, take measures to obtain a true renewing, after your falsehoods? And if we do ill in urging this, why do you seek after us? or at any rate, if it is an offense, condemn Paul in the first

instance; the Paul who certainly washed off what had already existed, whereas we in you give baptism which as yet does not exist. For you do not, as we have often said before, wash with a true baptism; but you bring on men an ill repute by your empty name of a false baptism.”

86. Augustin answered: “We bring no accusation against Paul, who gave to men the baptism of Christ because they had not the baptism of Christ, but the baptism of John, according to their own reply; for, being asked, Unto what were ye baptized? they answered, Unto John’s baptism; which has nothing to do with the baptism of Christ, and is neither a part of it nor a step towards it. Otherwise, either at that time the water of the baptism of Christ was renewed a second time, or if the baptism of Christ was then made perfect by the two waters, the baptism is less perfect which is given now, because it is not given with the water which was given at the hands of John. But either one of these opinions it is impious and sacrilegious to entertain. Therefore Paul gave the baptism of Christ to those who had not the baptism of Christ, but only the baptism of John.

87. But why the baptism of John, which is not necessary now, was necessary at that time, I have explained elsewhere; and the question has no bearing on the point at issue between us at the present time, except so far as that it may appear that the baptism of John was one thing, the baptism of Christ another,—just as that baptism was a different thing with which the apostle says that our fathers were baptized in the cloud and in the sea, when they passed through the Red Sea under the guidance of Moses. For the law and the prophets up to the time of John the Baptist had sacraments which foreshadowed things to come; but the sacraments of our time bear testimony that that has come already which the former sacraments foretold should come. John therefore was a foreteller of Christ nearer to Him in time than all who went before him. And because all the righteous men and prophets of former times desired to see the fulfillment of what, through the revelation of the Spirit, they foresaw would come to pass,—whence also the Lord Himself says, “That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them,”—therefore it was said of John that he was more than a prophet, and that among all that were born of

women there was none greater than he; because to the righteous men who went before him it was only granted to foretell the coming of Christ, but to John it was given both to foretell Him in His absence and to behold His presence, so that it should be found that to him was made manifest what the others had desired. And therefore the sacrament of his baptism is still connected with the foretelling of Christ's coming, though as of something very soon to be fulfilled, seeing that up to his time there were still foretellings of the first coming of our Lord, of which coming we have now announcements, but no longer predictions. But the Lord, teaching the way of humility, condescended to make use of the sacraments which He found here in reference to the foretelling of His coming, not in order to assist the operation of His cleansing, but as an example for our piety, that so He might show to us with what reverence we ought to receive those sacraments which bear witness that He is already come, when He did not disdain to make use of those which foreshadowed His coming in the future. And John, therefore, though the nearest to Christ in point of time, and within one year of the same age with Him, yet, while he was baptizing, went before the way of Christ who was still to come; for which reason it was said of him, "Behold, I send my messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee." And he himself preached, saying, "There cometh one mightier than I after me." In like manner, therefore, the circumcision on the eighth day, which was given to the patriarchs, foretold our justification, to the putting away of carnal lusts through the resurrection of our Lord, which took place after the seventh day, which is the Sabbath-day, on the eighth, that is, the Lord's day, which fell on the third day after His burial; yet the infant Christ received the same circumcision of the flesh, with its prophetic signification. And as the Passover, which was celebrated by the Jews with the slaying of a lamb, prefigured the passion of our Lord and His departure from this world to the Father, yet the same Lord celebrated the same Passover with His disciples, when they reminded Him of it, saying, Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Passover? so too He Himself also received the baptism of John, which formed a part of the latest foretelling of His coming. But as the Jews' circumcision of the flesh is one thing, and the ceremony which we observe on the eighth day after persons are baptized is another; and the Passover which the Jews still celebrate with the slaying of a lamb is one thing, and that which we receive in the body and blood of our Lord is another,—so the baptism of John was one thing, the baptism of Christ is another. For by the former series of rites the latter were foretold as destined to arrive; by these latter the others are declared to be fulfilled. And even though Christ received the others, yet are they not necessary for us, who have received the Lord Himself who was foretold in them. But when the coming of our Lord was as yet recent, it was necessary for any one who had received the former that he should be imbued with the latter also; but it was wholly needless that any one who had been so imbued should be compelled to go back to the former rites.

88. Wherefore do not seek to raise confusion out of the baptism of John, the source and intention of which was either such as I have here set forth; or if any other better explanation of it can be given, this much still is clear, that the baptism of John and the baptism of Christ are two distinct and separate things, and that the former was expressly called the baptism of John, as is clear both from the answer of those men whose case you quoted, and from the words of our Lord Himself, when he says, "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" But the latter is never called the baptism of Caecilianus, or of Donatus, or of Augustin, or of Petilianus, but the baptism of Christ. For if you think that we are shameless, because we will not allow that any one should be baptized after baptism from us, although we see that men were baptized again who had received the baptism of John, who certainly is incomparably greater than ourselves, will you maintain that John and Optatus were of equal dignity? The thing appears ridiculous. And yet I fancy that you do not hold them to be equals, but consider Optatus the greater of the two. For the apostle baptized after baptism by John: you venture to baptize no one after baptism by Optatus. Was it because Optatus was in unity with you? I know not with what heart a theory like this can be maintained, if the friend of the Count, who had in the Count a god for his companion, is said to have been in unity, and the friend of the Bridegroom to have been excluded from it. But if John was preeminently in unity, and far more excellent and greater than all of us and all of you, and yet the Apostle Paul baptized after him, why do you then not baptize after Optatus? Unless indeed it be that your blindness brings you into such a strait that you should say that Optatus had the power of giving the Holy Spirit, and that John had not! And if you do not say this, for fear of

being ridiculed for your madness even by the insane themselves, what answer will you be able to make when you are asked why men should have required to be baptized after receiving baptism from John, while no one needs to be baptized after receiving it from Optatus, unless it be that the former were baptized with the baptism of John, while, whenever any one is baptized with the baptism of Christ, whether he be baptized by Paul or by Optatus, there is no difference in the nature of his baptism, though there is so great a difference between Paul and Optatus? Return then, O ye transgressors, to a right mind, and do not seek to weigh the sacraments of God by considerations of the characters and deeds of men. For the sacraments are holy through Him to whom they belong; but when taken in hand worthily, they bring reward, when unworthily, judgment. And although the men are not one who take in hand the sacrament of God worthily or unworthily, yet that which is taken in hand, whether worthily or unworthily, is the same; so that it does not become better or worse in itself, but only turns to the life or death of those who handle it in either case. And in respect of what you said, that “in those whom Paul baptized after they had received the baptism of John, he washed off what had already existed,” you certainly would not have said it had you taken a moment to consider what you were saying. For if the baptism of John required washing off, it must, beyond all doubt, have had some foulness in it. Why then should I press you further? Recollect or read, and see whence John received it, so shall you see against whom you have uttered that blasphemy; and when you have discovered this, your heart will surely be beaten, if a rein be not set on your tongue.

89. To come next to what you think you say against us with so much point: “If we do ill in urging this, why do you seek after us?” cannot you even yet call to mind that only those are sought after who have perished? Or is the incapacity for seeing this an element in your ruin? For the sheep might say to the shepherd with equal absurdity, If I do wrong in straying from the flock, why do you search after me? not understanding that the very reason why it is being sought is because it thinks there is no need for seeking it. But who is there that seeks for you, either through His Scriptures, or by catholic and conciliatory voices, or by the scourgings of temporal afflictions, save only Him who dispenses that mercy to you in all things?

We therefore seek you that we may find you; for we love you that you should have life, with the same intensity with which we hate your error, that it might be destroyed which seeks to ruin you, so long as it is not itself involved in your destruction. And would to God that we might seek you in such a manner as even to find, and be able to say with rejoicing of each one of you, “He was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found!”

CHAPTER 38

90. Petilianus said: “If you declare that you hold the Catholic Church, the word catholic’ is merely the Greek equivalent for entire or whole. But it is clear that you are not in the whole, because you have gone aside into the part.”

91. Augustin answered: I too indeed have attained to a very slight knowledge of the Greek language, scarcely to be called knowledge at all, yet I am not shameless in saying that I know that holon means not “one,” but “the whole;” and that kath’ holon means “according to the whole:” whence the Catholic Church received its name, according to the saying of the Lord, “It is not for you to know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and even in the whole earth.” Here you have the origin of the name “Catholic.” But you are so bent upon running with your eyes shut against the mountain which grew out of a small stone, according to the prophecy of Daniel, and filled the whole earth, that you actually tell us that we have gone aside into a part, and are not in the whole among those whose communion is spread throughout the whole earth. But just in the same way as, supposing you were to say that I was Petilianus, I should not be able to find any method of refuting you unless I were to laugh at you as being in jest, or mourn over you as being mad, so in the present case I see that I have no other choice but this; and since I do not believe that you are in jest, you see what alternative remains.

CHAPTER 39

92. Petilianus said: “But there is no fellowship of darkness with light, nor any fellowship of bitterness with the sweet of honey; there is no fellowship of life with death, of innocence with guilt, of water with blood; the lees have no fellowship with oil though they are related to it as being its dregs, but everything that is reprobate will flow away. It is the very sink of iniquity; according to the saying of John, They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.’ There is no gold among their pollution: all that is precious has been purged away. For it is written, As gold is tried in the furnace, so also are the just tried by the harassing of tribulation.’ Cruelty is not a part of gentleness, nor religion a part of sacrilege; nor can the party of Macarius in any way be part of us, because he pollutes the likeness of our rite. For the enemy’s line, which fills up an enemy’s name, is no part of the force to which it is opposed; but if it is truly to be called a part, it will find a suitable motto in the judgment of Solomon, Let their part be cut off from the earth.’“

93. Augustin answered: What is it but sheer madness to utter these taunts without proving anything? You look at the tares throughout the world, and pay no heed to the wheat, although both have been bidden to grow together throughout the whole of it. You look at the seed sown by the wicked one, which shall be separated in the time of harvest, and you pay no heed to the seed of Abraham, in which all nations of the earth shall be blessed. Just as though you were already a purged mass, and virgin honey, and refined oil, and pure gold, or rather the very similitude of a whited wall. For, to say nothing of your other faults, do the drunken form a portion of the sober, or are the covetous reckoned among the portion of the wise? If men of gentle temper appropriate the term of light, where shall the madness of the Circumcelliones be esteemed to be, excepting in the darkness? Why then is baptism, given by men like these, held valid among you, and the same baptism of Christ not held valid, by whatsoever men it may be administered throughout the world? You see, in fact, that you are separated from the communion of the whole world in so far as this, that you are not indeed all drunk, nor all of you covetous, nor all men of violence, but that you are all heretics, and, in virtue of this, are all impious and all sacrilegious.

94. But as to your saying that the whole world that rejoices in Christian communion is the party of Macarius, who with any remnant of sanity in his brain could make such a statement? But because we say that you are of the party of Donatus, you therefore seek for a man of whose party you may say we are; and, being in a great strait, you mention the name of some obscure person, who, if he is known in Africa, is certainly unknown in any other quarter of the globe. And therefore hearken to the answer made to you by all the seed of Abraham from every corner of the earth: Of that Macarius, to whose party you assert us to belong, we know absolutely nothing. Can you reply in turn that you know nothing of Donatus? But even if we were to say that you are the party of Optatus, which of you can say that he is unacquainted with Optatus, unless in the sense that he does not know him personally, as perhaps he does not know Donatus either? But you acknowledge that you rejoice in the name of Donatus, do you also take any pleasure in the name of Optatus? What then can the name of Donatus profit you, when all of you alike are polluted by Optatus? What advantage can you derive from the sobriety of Donatus, when you are defiled by the drunkenness of the Circumcelliones? What, according to your views, are you profited by the innocence of Donatus, when you are stained by the rapacity of Optatus? For this is your mistake, that you think that the unrighteousness of a man has more power in infecting his neighbor than the righteousness of a man has in purifying those around him. Therefore, if two share in common the sacraments of God, the one a just man, the other an unrighteous one, but so that neither the former should imitate the unrighteousness of the latter, nor the latter the righteousness of the former, you say that the result is not that both are made just, but that both are made unrighteous; so that also that holy thing, which both receive in common, becomes unclean and loses its original holiness. When does unrighteousness find for herself such advocates as these, through whose madness she is esteemed victorious? How comes it then that, in the midst of such mistaken perversity, you congratulate yourselves upon the name of Donatus, when it shows not that Petilianus deserves to be what Donatus is, but that Donatus is compelled to be what Optatus is? But let the house of Israel say, “God is my portion for ever;” let the seed of Abraham say in all nations “The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance.” For they know how to speak through the gospel of the glory of the blessed God. For you, too,

through the sacrament which is in you, like Caiaphas the persecutor of the Lord, prophesy without being aware of it. For what in Greek is expressed by the word Macharios is in our language simply “Blessed;” and in this way certainly we are of the party of Macarius, the Blessed One. For what is more blessed than Christ, of whose party we are, after whom all the ends of the earth are called, and to whom they all are turned, and in whose sight all the countries of the nations worship? Therefore the party of this Macarius, that is to say, of this Blessed One, feels no apprehension at your last curse, distorted from the words of Solomon, lest it should perish from the earth. For what is said by him of the impious you endeavor to apply to the inheritance of Christ, and you strive to prove that this has been achieved with inexpressible impiety; for when he was speaking of the impious, he says, “Let their portion perish from off the earth.” But when you say, with reference to the words of Scripture, “I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance,” and “all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord,” that the promise contained in them has already perished from the earth, you are seeking to turn against the inheritance of Christ what was foretold about the lot of the impious; but so long as the inheritance of Christ endures and increases, you are perishing in saying such things. For you are not in every case prophesying through the sacrament of God, since in this case you are merely uttering evil wishes through your own madness. But the prophecy of the true prophets is more powerful than the evil speaking of the false prophets.

CHAPTER 40

95. Petilianus said: “Paul the apostle also bids us, Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?’“

96. Augustin answered: I recognize the words of the apostle; but how they can help you I cannot see at all. For which of us says that there is any fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness, even though the righteous and the unrighteous, as in the case of Judas and Peter, should be alike partakers of the sacraments? For from one and the same holy thing

Judas received judgment to himself and Peter salvation, just as you received the sacrament with Optatus, and, if you were unlike him, were not therefore partakers in his robberies. Or is robbery not unrighteousness? Who would be mad enough to assert that? What fellowship was there, then, on the part of your righteousness with his unrighteousness, when you approached together to the same altar?

CHAPTER 41

97. Petilianus said: “And, again, he taught us that schisms should not arise, in the following terms: Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?’“

98. Augustin answered: Remember all of you who read this, it was Petilianus who quoted these words from the apostle. For who could have believed that he would have brought forward words which tell so much for us against himself?

CHAPTER 42

99. Petilianus said: “If Paul uttered these words to the unlearned and to the righteous, I say this to you who are unrighteous, Is Christ divided, that you should separate yourselves from the Church?”

100. Augustin answered: I am afraid lest any one should think that in this work of mine the writer has made a mistake, and has written the heading Petilianus said, when he ought to have written Augustin answered. But I see what your object is: you wished, as it were, to preoccupy the ground, lest we should bring those words in testimony against you. But what have you really done, except to cause them to be quoted twice? If, therefore, you are so much pleased with hearing the words which make against you, as to render it necessary that they should be repeated, hear, I pray you, these words as coming from me, Petilianus: Is Christ divided, that you should separate yourselves from the Church?

CHAPTER 43

101. Petilianus said: “Can it be that the traitor Judas hung himself for you, or did he imbue you with his character, that, following his deeds, you should seize on the treasures of the Church, and sell for money to the powers of this world us who are the heirs of Christ?”

102. Augustin answered: Judas did not die for us, but Christ, to whom the Church dispersed throughout the world says, “So shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me: for I trust in Thy word.” When, therefore, I hear the words of the Lord, saying, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and even in the whole earth,” and through the voice of His prophet, “Their sound is gone out through all the earth, and their words into the ends of the world,” no bodily admixture of evil ever is able to disturb me, if I know how to say, “Be surety for Thy servant for good: let not the proud oppress me.” I do not, therefore, concern myself about a vain calumniation when I have a substantial promise. But if you complain about matters or places appertaining to the Church, which you used once to hold, and hold no longer, then the Jews also may say that they are righteous, and reproach us with unrighteousness, because the Christians now occupy the place in which of old they impiously reigned. What then is there unfitting, if, according to a similar will of the Lord, the Catholics now hold the things which formerly the heretics used to have? For against all such men as this, that is to say, against all impious and unrighteous men, those words of the Lord have force, “The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof;” or is it written in vain, “The righteous shall eat of the labors of the impious”? Wherefore you ought rather to be amazed that you still possess something, than that there is something which you have lost. But neither need you wonder even at this, for it is by degrees that the whitened wall falls down. Yet look back at the followers of Maximianus, see what places they possessed, and by whose agency and under whose attacks they were driven from them, and do you venture, if you can, to say that to suffer things like these is righteousness, while to do them is unrighteousness. In the first place, because you did the deed, and they suffered them; and secondly, because, according to the rule of this righteousness, you are found to be inferior. For they were driven from the ancient palaces by Catholic emperors acting through judges, while you are not even driven forth by the

mandates of the emperors themselves from the basilicas of unity. For what reason is this, save that you are of less merit, not only than the rest of your colleagues, but even than those very men whom you assuredly condemned as guilty of sacrilege by the mouth of your plenary Council?

CHAPTER 44

103. Petilianus said: “For we, as it is written, when we are baptized, put on Christ who was betrayed; you, when you are infected, put on Judas the betrayer.”

104. Augustin answered: I also might say, You when you are infected put on Optatus the betrayer, the robber, the oppressor, the separater of husband and wife; but far be it from me that the desire of returning an evil word should provoke me into any falsehood: for neither do you put on Optatus, nor we Judas. Therefore, if each one who comes to us shall answer to our questions that he has been baptized in the name of Optatus, he shall be baptized in the name of Christ; and if you baptized any that came from us and said that they had been baptized in the name of the traitor Judas, in that case we have no fault to find with what you have done. But if they had been baptized in the name of Christ, do you not see what an error you commit in thinking that the sacraments of God can undergo change through any changeableness of human sins, or be polluted by defilement in the life of any man?

CHAPTER 45

105. Petilianus said: “But if these are the parties, the name of member of a party is no prejudice against us. For there are two ways, the one narrow, in which we walk; the other is for the impious, wherein they shall perish. And yet, though the designations be alike, there is a great difference in the reality, that the way of righteousness should not be defiled by fellowship in a name. “

106. Augustin answered: You have been afraid of the comparison of your numbers with the multitude throughout the world; and therefore, in order to win praise for the scantiness of your party, you have sought to bring in the comparison of yourself walking in the narrow path. Would to God that you

had betaken yourself not to its praise, but to the path itself! Truly you would have seen that there was the same scantiness in the Church of all nations; but that the righteous are said to be few in comparison with the multitude of the unrighteous, just as, in comparison with the chaff, there may be said to be few grains of corn in the most abundant crop, and yet these very grains of themselves, when brought into a heap, fill the barn. For the followers of Maximianus themselves will surpass you in this scantiness of number, if you think that righteousness consists in this, as well as in the persecution involved in the loss of places which they held.

CHAPTER 46

107. Petilianus said: “In the first Psalm David separates the blessed from the impious, not indeed making them into parties, but excluding all the impious from holiness. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners.’ Let him who had strayed from the path of righteousness, so that he should perish, return to it again. Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.’ When he gives this warning, O ye miserable men, why do you sit in that seat? But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.’ He blindeth their eyes, so that they should not see. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.’“

108. Augustin answered: Who is there in the Scriptures that would not distinguish between these two classes of men? But you slanderously charge the corn with the offenses of the chaff; and being yourselves mere chaff, you boast yourselves to be the only corn. But the true prophets declare that both these classes have been mingled together throughout the whole world, that is, throughout the whole corn-field of the Lord, until the winnowing which is to take place on the day of judgment. But I advise you to read that first Psalm in the Greek version, and then you will not venture to reproach the whole world with being of the party of Macarius; because you will

perhaps come to understand of what Macarius there is a party among all the saints, who throughout all nations are blessed in the seed of Abraham. For what stands in our language as “Blessed is the man,” is in Greek Macharios aner. But that Macarius who offends you, if he is a bad man, neither belongs to this division, nor is to its prejudice. But if he is a good man, let him prove his own work, that he may have glory in himself alone, and not in another.

CHAPTER 47

109. Petilianus said: “But the same Psalmist has sung the praises of our baptism. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in the green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,’—though the persecutor, he means, should slay me,—I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me.’ It was by this that it conquered Goliath, being armed with the anointing oil. Thou hast prepared a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.’“

110. Augustin answered: This psalm speaks of those who receive baptism aright, and use as holy what is so holy. For those words have no reference even to Simon Magus, who yet received the same holy baptism; and because he would not use it in a holy way, he did not therefore pollute it, or show that in such cases it should be repeated. But since you have made mention of Goliath, listen to the psalm which treats of Goliath himself, and see that he is portrayed in a new song; for there it is said, “I will sing a new song unto Thee, O God: upon a psaltery, and an instrument of ten strings, will I sing praise unto Thee.” And see whether he belongs to this song who refuses to communicate with the whole earth. For elsewhere it is said, “O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth.” Therefore the whole earth, with whom you are not in unity, sings the new song. And these too are the words of the whole earth, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want,” etc. These are not the words of the tares, though they be

endured until the harvest in the same crop. They are not the words of the chaff, but of the wheat, although they are nourished by one and the same rain, and are threshed out on the same threshing-floor at the same time, till they shall be separated the one from the other by the winnowing at the last day. And yet these both assuredly have the same baptism, though they are not the same themselves. But if your party also were the Church of God, you would certainly confess that this psalm has no application to the infuriated bands of the Circumcelliones. Or if they too themselves are led through the paths of righteousness, why do you deny that they are your associates, when you are reproached with them, although, for the most part, you console yourselves for the scantiness of your section, not by the rod and staff of the Lord, but by the cudgels of the Circumcelliones, with which you think that you are safe even against the Roman laws,—to bring oneself into collision with which is surely nothing less than to walk through the valley of the shadow of death? But he with whom the Lord is, fears no evils. Surely, however, you will not venture to say that the words which are sung in this song belong even to those infuriated men, and yet you not only acknowledge, but ostentatiously set forth the fact that they have baptism. These words, therefore, are not used by any who are not refreshed by the holy water, as are all the righteous men of God; not by those who are brought to destruction by using it, as was that magician when baptized by Philip: and yet the water itself in both kinds of men is the same, and of the same degree of sanctity. These words are not used except by those who will belong to the right hand; but yet both sheep and goats feed in the same pasture under one Shepherd, until they shall be separated, that they may receive their due reward. These words are not used except by those who, like Peter, receive life from the table of the Lord, not judgment, as did Judas; and yet the supper was itself the same to both, but it was not of the same profit to both, because they were not one. These words are not used except by those who, by being anointed with the sacred oil, are blessed in spirit also, as was David; not merely consecrated in the body only, as was Saul: and yet, as they had both received the same outward sign, it was not the sacrament, but the personal merit that was different in the two cases. These words are not used except by those who, with converted heart, receive the cup of the Lord unto eternal life; not by those who eat and drink damnation to themselves, as the apostle says: and yet, though they are not one, the cup which they receive is one, exerting its power on the martyrs that they should obtain a heavenly reward, not on the Circumcelliones, that they should mark precipices with death. Remember, therefore, that the characters of bad men in no wise interfere with the virtue of the sacraments, so that their holiness should either be destroyed, or even diminished; but that they injure the unrighteous men themselves, that they should have them as witnesses of their damnation, not as aids to health. For beyond all doubt you should have taken into consideration the actual concluding words of this psalm, and have understood that, on account of those who forsake the faith after they have been baptized, it cannot be said by all who receive holy baptism that "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever:" and yet, whether they abide in the faith, or whether they have fallen away, though they themselves are not one, their baptism is one, and though they themselves are not both holy, yet the baptism in both is holy; because even apostates, if they return, are not baptized as though they had lost the sacrament, but undergo humiliation, because they have done a despite to it which remains in them.

CHAPTER 48

111. Petilianus said: "Yet that you should not call yourselves holy, in the first place, I declare that no one has holiness who has not led a life of innocence."

112. Augustin answered: Show us the tribunal where you have been enthroned as judge, that the whole world should stand for trial before you, and with what eyes you have inspected and discussed, I do not say the consciences, but even the acts of all men, that you should say that the whole world has lost its innocence. He who was carried up as far as the third heaven says, "Yea, I judge not mine own self;" and do you venture to pronounce sentence on the whole world, throughout which the inheritance of Christ is spread abroad? In the next place, if what you have said appears to you to be sufficiently certain, that "no one has holiness who has not led a life of innocence," I would ask you, if Saul had not the holiness of the sacrament, what was in him that David reverenced? But if he had innocence, why did he persecute the innocent? For it was on account of the sanctity of his anointing that David honored him while alive, and avenged

him after he was dead; and because he cut off so much as a scrap from his garment, he trembled with a panic-stricken heart. Here you see that Saul had not innocence, and yet he had holiness,—not the personal holiness of a holy life (for that no one can have without innocence), but the holiness of the sacrament of God, which is holy even in unrighteous men.

CHAPTER 49

113. Petilianus said: “For, granting that you faithless ones are acquainted with the law, without any prejudice to the law itself, I may say so much as this, the devil knows it too. For in the case of righteous Job he answered the Lord God concerning the law as though he were himself righteous, as it is written, “And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a man without malice, a true worshipper of God abstaining from every evil; and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause?” And Satan answered the Lord, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. Behold he speaks in legal phrase, even when he is striving against the law. And a second time he endeavored thus to tempt the Lord Christ with his discourse, as it is written, The devil taketh Jesus into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto Him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shall not tempt the Lord thy God.’ You know the law, I say, as did the devil, who is conquered in his endeavors, and blushes in his deeds.”

114. Augustin answered: I might indeed ask of you in what law the words are written which the devil used when he was uttering calumnies against the holy man Job, if the position which I am set to prove were this, that you yourself are unacquainted with the law which you assert the devil to have known, but as this is not the question at issue between us, I pass it by. But you have endeavored in such sort to prove that the devil is skilled in the law, as though we maintained that all who know the law are just. Accordingly, I do not see in what manner you are assisted by what you have chosen to quote concerning the devil,—unless, indeed, it may be that we

should be thereby reminded how you imitate the devil himself. For as he brought forward the words of the law against the Author of the law, so you also out of the words of the law bring accusation against men whom you do not know, that you may resist the promises of God which are made in that very self-same law. Then I should be glad if you would tell me in whose honor do those confessors of yours achieve their martyrdom, when they throw themselves over precipices,—in honor of Christ, who thrust the devil from Him when he made a like suggestion, or rather in honor of the devil himself, who suggested such a deed to Christ? There are two especially vile and customary deaths resorted to by those who kill themselves,—hanging and the precipice. You assuredly said in the earlier part of this epistle, "The traitor hung himself: he left this death to all who are like him." This has no application whatever to us; for we refuse to reverence with the name of martyr any who have strangled themselves. With how much greater show of reason might we say against you, That master of all traitors, the devil, wished to persuade Christ to throw Himself headlong down, and was repulsed! What, therefore, must we say of those whom he persuaded with success? What, indeed, except that they are the enemies of Christ, the friends of the devil, the disciples of the seducer, the fellow-disciples of the traitor? For both have learned to kill themselves from the same master,—Judas by hanging himself, the others by throwing themselves over precipices.

CHAPTER 50

115. Petilianus said: "But that we may destroy your arguments one by one, if you call yourselves by the name of priests, it was said by the Lord God, through the mouth of His prophet, The vengeance of the Lord is upon the false priests.'"

116. Augustin answered: Seek rather what you may say with truth, not whence you may derive abusive words; and what you may teach, not what reproaches you may cast in our teeth.

CHAPTER 51

117. Petilianus said: “If you wretched men claim for yourselves a seat, as we said before, you assuredly have that one of which the prophet and psalmist David speaks as being the seat of the scornful. For to you it is rightly left, seeing that the holy cannot sit therein.”

118. Augustin answered: Here again you do not see that this is no kind of argument, but empty abuse. For this is what I said a little while ago, You utter the words of the law, but take no heed against whom you utter them; just as the devil uttered the words of the law, but failed to perceive to whom he uttered them. He wished to thrust down our Head, who was presently to ascend on high; but you wish to reduce to a small fraction the body of that same Head which is dispersed throughout the entire world. Certainly you yourself said a little time before that we know the law, and speak in legal terms, but blush in our deeds. Thus much indeed you say without a proof of anything; but even though you were to prove it of some men, you would not be entitled to assert it of these others. However, if all men throughout all the world were of the character which you most vainly charge them with, what has the chair done to you of the Roman Church, in which Peter sat, and which Anastasius fills to-day; or the chair of the Church of Jerusalem, in which James once sat, and in which John sits today, with which we are united in catholic unity, and from which you have severed yourselves by your mad fury? Why do you call the apostolic chair a seat of the scornful? If it is on account of the men whom you believe to use the words of the law without performing it, do you find that our Lord Jesus Christ was moved by the Pharisees, of whom He says, “They say, and do not,” to do any despite to the seat in which they sat? Did He not commend the seat of Moses, and maintain the honor of the seat, while He convicted those that sat in it? For He says, “They sit in Moses’ seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.” If you were to think of these things, you would not, on account of men whom you calumniate, do despite to the apostolic seat, in which you have no share. But what else is conduct like yours but ignorance of what to say, combined with want of power to abstain from evil-speaking?

CHAPTER 52

119. Petilianus said: “If you suppose that you can offer sacrifice, God Himself thus speaks of you as most abandoned sinners: The wicked man,’ He says, that sacrificeth a calf is as if he cut off a dog’s neck; and he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine’s blood.’ Recognize herein your sacrifice, who have already poured out human blood. And again He says, Their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted.’“

120. Augustin answered: We say that in the case of every man the sacrifice that is offered partakes of the character of him who approaches to offer it, or approaches to partake of it; and that those eat of the sacrifices of such men, who in approaching to them partake of the character of those who offer them. Therefore, if a bad man offer sacrifice to God, and a good man receive it at his hands, the sacrifice is to each man of such character as he himself has shown himself to be, since we find it also written that “unto the pure all things are pure.” In accordance with this true and catholic judgment, you too are free from pollution by the sacrifice of Optatus, if you disapproved of his deeds. For certainly his bread was the bread of mourners, seeing that all Africa was mourning under his iniquities. But the evil involved in the schism of all your party makes this bread of mourners common to you all. For, according to the judgment of your Council, Felicianus of Musti was a shedder of man’s blood. For you said, in condemning them, “Their feet are swift to shed blood.” See therefore what kind of sacrifice he offers whom you hold to be a priest, when you have yourselves convicted him of sacrilege. And if you think that this is in no way to your prejudice, I would ask you how the emptiness of your calumnies can be to the prejudice of the whole world?

CHAPTER 53

121. Petilianus said: “If you make prayer to God, or utter supplication, it profits you absolutely nothing whatsoever. For your blood-stained conscience makes your feeble prayers of no effect; because the Lord God regards purity of conscience more than the words of supplication, according to the saying of the Lord Christ, Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.’ The will of God unquestionably is good, for

therefore we pray as follows in the holy prayer, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,’ that, as His will is good, so it may confer on us whatever may be good. You therefore do not do the will of God, because you do what is evil every day.”

122. Augustin answered: If we on our side were to utter against you all that you assert against us, would not any one who heard us consider that we were rather insane litigants than Christian disputants, if he himself were in his senses? We do not, therefore, render for railing. For it is not fitting that the servant of the Lord should strive; but he should be gentle unto all men, willing to learn, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves. If, therefore, we reproach you with those who daily do what is evil among you, we are guilty of striving unbefittingly, accusing one for the sins of another. But if we admonish you, that as you are unwilling that these things should be brought against yourselves, so you should abstain from bringing against us the sins of other men, we then in meekness are instructing you, solely in the hope that some time you will return to a better mind.

CHAPTER 54

123. Petilianus said: “But if it should so happen, though whether it be so I cannot say, that you cast out devils, neither will this in you do any good; because the devils themselves yield neither to your faith nor to your merits, but are driven out in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

124. Augustin answered: God be thanked that you have at length confessed that the invocation of the name of Christ may be of profit for the salvation of others, even though it be invoked by sinners! Hence, therefore, you may understand that when the name of Christ is invoked, the sins of one man do not stand in the way of the salvation of another. But to determine in what manner we invoke the name of Christ, we require not your judgment, but the judgment of Christ Himself who is invoked by us; for He alone can know in what spirit He is invoked. Yet from His own words we are assured that He is invoked to their salvation by all nations, who are blessed in the seed of Abraham.

CHAPTER 55

125. Petilianus said: “Even though you do very virtuous actions, and perform miraculous works, yet on account of your wickedness the Lord does not know you; even so, according to the words of the Lord Himself, Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.’“

126. Augustin answered: We acknowledge the word of the Lord. Hence also the apostle says, “Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.” Here therefore we must inquire who it is that has charity: you will find that it is no one else but those who are lovers of unity. For as to the driving out of devils, and as to the working of miracles, seeing that very many do not do such things who yet belong to the kingdom of God, and very many do them who do not belong to it, neither our party nor your party have any cause for boasting, if any of them chance to have this power, since the Lord did not think it right that even the apostles, who could truly do such things both to profit and salvation, should boast in things like this, when He says to them, “In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.” Wherefore all those things which you have advanced from the writings of the gospel I also might repeat to you, if I saw you working the powerful acts of signs and miracles; and so might you repeat them to me, if you saw me doing things of a like sort. Let us not, therefore, say one to another what may equally be said on the other side as well; and, putting aside all quibbles, since we are inquiring where the Church of Christ is to be found, let us listen to the words of Christ Himself, who redeemed it with His own blood: “Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and even in the whole earth.” You see then who it is with whom a man refuses to communicate who will not communicate with this Church, which is spread throughout all the world, if at least you hear whose words these are. For what is a greater proof of madness than to hold communion with the sacraments of the Lord, and to refuse to hold communion with the words of the Lord? Such men at any rate are likely to say, In Thy name have we eaten and drunken, and to hear the words, “I never knew you,” seeing that they eat His body and drink His

blood in the sacrament, and do not recognize in the gospel His members which are spread abroad throughout the earth, and therefore are not themselves counted among them in the judgment.

CHAPTER 56

127. Petilianus said: “But even if, as you yourselves suppose, you are following the law of the Lord in purity, let us nevertheless consider the question of the most holy law itself in a legal form. The Apostle Paul says, The law is good, if a man use it lawfully.’ What then does the law say? Thou shalt not kill.’ What Cain the murderer did once, you have often done in slaying your brethren.”

128. Augustin answered: We do not wish to be like you: for there are not wanting words which might be uttered, as you too utter these; and known also, for you do not know these; and set forth in the conduct of a life, as these are not set forth by you.

CHAPTER 57

129. Petilianus said: “It is written, Thou shalt not commit adultery.’ Each one of you, even though he be chaste in his body, yet in spirit is an adulterer, because he pollutes his holiness.”

130. Augustin answered: These words also might be spoken with truth against certain both of our number and of yours; but if their deeds are condemned by us and you alike, they belong to neither us nor you. But you wish that what you say against certain men, without proving it even in their especial case, should be taken just as if you had established it,—not in the case of some who have fallen away from the seed of Abraham, but in reference to all the nations of the earth who are blessed in the seed of Abraham.

CHAPTER 58

131. Petilianus said: “It is written, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.’ When you falsely declare to the kings of this world that we hold your opinions, do you not make up a falsehood?”

132. Augustin answered: If those are not our opinions which you hold, neither were they your opinions which you received from the followers of Maximianus. But if they were therefore yours, because they were guilty of a sacrilegious schism in not communicating with the party of Donatus, take heed what ground you occupy, and with whose inheritance you refuse communion, and consider what answer you can make, not to the kings of this world, but to Christ your King. Of Him it is said, “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.” From what river does it mean, save that where He was baptized, and where the dove descended on Him, that mighty token of charity and unity? But you refuse communion with this unity, and occupy as yet the place of unity; and you bring us into disfavor with the kings of this world in making use of the edicts of the proconsul to expel your schismatics from the place of the party of Donatus. These are not mere words flying at random through the empty void: the men are still alive, the states bear witness to the fact, the archives of the proconsuls and of the several towns are quoted in evidence of it. Let then the voice of calumny be at length silent, which would bring up against the whole earth the kings of this world, through whose proconsuls you, yourselves a fragment, would not spare the fragment which was separated from you. When then we say that you hold our opinions, we are not shown to be bearing false witness, unless you can show that we are not in the Church of Christ, which indeed you never cease alleging, but never will be able to establish; nay, in real truth, when you say this, you are bringing a charge of false witness no longer against us, but against the Lord Himself. For we are in the Church which was foretold by His own testimony, and where He bore witness to His witnesses, saying, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and even in the whole earth.” But you show yourselves to be false witnesses not only from this, that you resist this truth, but also in the very trial in which you joined issue with the schism of Maximianus. For if you were acting according to the law of Christ, how much more consistently do certain Christian emperors frame ordinances in accordance with it, if even pagan proconsuls can follow its behests in passing judgment? But if you thought that even the laws of an earthly empire were to be summoned to your aid, we do not blame you for this. It is what Paul did when he bore witness before his adversaries that he was a Roman citizen. But I would ask by what

earthly laws it is ordained that the followers of Maximianus should be driven from their place? You will find no law whatever to this effect. But, in point of fact, you have chosen to expel them under laws which have been passed against heretics, and against yourselves among their number. You, as though by superior strength, have prevailed against the weak. Whence they, being wholly powerless, say that they are innocent, like the wolf in the power of the lion. Yet surely you could not use laws which were passed against yourselves as instruments against others, except by the aid of false witness. For if those laws are founded on truth, then do you come down from the position which you occupy; but if on falsehood, why did you use them to drive others from the Church? But how if they both are founded on truth, and could not be used by you for the expulsion of others except with the aid of falsehood? For that the judges might submit to their authority, they were willing to expel heretics from the Church, from which they ought first to have expelled yourselves; but you declared yourselves to be Catholics, that you might escape the severity of the laws which you employed to oppress others. It is for you to determine what you appear to yourselves among yourselves; at any rate, under those laws you are not Catholics. Why then have you either made them false, if they are true, by your false witness, or made use of them, if they are false, for the oppression of others?

CHAPTER 59

133. Petilianus said: “It is written, Thou shalt not covet anything that is thy neighbor’s.’ You plunder what is ours, that you may have it for your own.”

134. Augustin answered: All things of which unity was in possession belong to none other than ourselves, who remain in unity, not in accordance with the calumnies of men, but with the words of Christ, in whom all the nations of the whole earth are blessed. Nor do we separate ourselves from the society of the wheat, on account of the unrighteous men whom we cannot separate from the wheat of the Lord before the winnowing at the judgment; and if there are any things which you who are cut off begin already to possess, we do not, because the Lord has given to us what has been taken away from you, therefore covet our neighbors’ goods, seeing that they have been made ours by the authority of Him to whom all things

belong; and they are rightly ours, for you were wont to use them for purposes of schism, but we use them for the promotion of unity. Otherwise your party might reproach even the first people of God with coveting their neighbors' goods, seeing that they were driven forth before their face by the power of God, because they used the land amiss; and the Jews in turn themselves, from whom the kingdom was taken away, according to the words of the Lord, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof, may bring a charge against that nation, of coveting their neighbors' goods, because the Church of Christ is in possession where the persecutors of Christ were wont to reign. And, after all, when it has been said to yourselves, You are coveting the goods of other men, because you have driven out from the basilicas the followers of Maximianus, you are at a loss to find any answer that you can make.

CHAPTER 60

135. Petilianus said: "Under what law, then, do you make out that you are Christians, seeing that you do what is contrary to the law?"

136. Augustin answered: You are anxious for strife, and not for argument.

CHAPTER 61

137. Petilianus said: "But the Lord Christ says, Whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.' But He condemns you wretched men as follows: Whosoever shall break one of these commandments, he shalt be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.'"

138. Augustin answered: When you happen to quote the testimony of Scripture as other than it really is, and it does not bear on the question which is at issue between us, I am not greatly concerned; but when it interferes with the matter on hand, unless it is quoted truly, then I think that you have no right to find fault if I remind you how the passage really stands. For you must be aware that the verse which you quoted is not as you quoted it, but rather thus: "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall

be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” And immediately He continues, “For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” For elsewhere He shows and proves of the Pharisees that they say and do not. It is these, therefore, to whom He is referring also here, when He said, “Whosoever shall break one of these commandments, and shall teach men so,”—that is, shall teach in words what he has violated in deeds; whose righteousness He says that our righteousness must excel, in that we must both keep the commandments and teach men so. And yet not even on account of those Pharisees, with whom you compare us,—not from any motives of prudence, but from malice,—did our Lord enjoin that the seat of Moses should be deserted, which seat He doubtless meant to be a figure of His own; for He said indeed that they who sat in Moses’ seat were ever saying and not doing, but warns the people to do what they say, and not to do what they do, lest the chair, with all its holiness, should be deserted, and the unity of the flock divided through the faithlessness of the shepherds.

CHAPTER 62

139. Petilianus said: “And again it is written, Every sin which a man shall sin is without the body; but he that sinneth in the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.’“

140. Augustin answered: This too is not written as you have quoted it, and see how far it has led you astray. The apostle, writing to the Corinthians, says, “Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.” But this is one thing, and that is another which the Lord said in the gospel: “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” But you have begun a sentence from the writing of the apostle, and ended it as though it were one from the gospel, which I fancy you have done not with any intention to deceive, but through mistake; for neither passage has any bearing on the matter in hand. And why you have said this, and in what sense you have said it, I am wholly unable to perceive, unless it be that, whereas you had said above that all were

condemned by the Lord who had broken any one of His commandments, you have considered since how many there are in your party who break not one but many of them; and lest an objection should be brought against you on that score, you have sought, by way of surpassing the difficulty, to bring in a distinction of sins, whereby it might be seen that it is one thing to break a commandment in respect of which pardon may easily be obtained, another thing to sin against the Holy Ghost, which shall receive no forgiveness, either in this world or in the world to come. In your dread, therefore, of infection from sin, you were unwilling to pass this over in silence; and again, in your dread of a question too deep for your powers, you wish to touch cursorily on it in passing, in such a state of agitation, that, just as men who are setting about a task in haste, and consequent confusion, are wont to fasten their dress or shoes awry, so you have not thought fit either to see what belongs to what, or in what context or what sense the passage which you quote occurs. But what is the nature of that sin which shall not be forgiven, either in this world or in the world to come, you are so far from knowing, that, though you believe that we are actually living in it, you yet promise us forgiveness of it through your baptism. And yet how could this be possible, if the sin be of such a nature that it cannot be forgiven, either in this world or in the world to come?

CHAPTER 63

141. Petilianus said: “But wherein do you fulfill the commandments of God? The Lord Christ said, Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’ But you by your malice in persecution breathe forth the riches of madness.”

142. Augustin answered: Address that rather to your own Circumcelliones.

CHAPTER 64

143. Petilianus said: “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.’ You therefore, not being meek, have lost both heaven and earth alike.”

144. Augustin answered: Again and again you may hear the Lord saying, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and even in the whole earth.” How is it, then, that those men have

not lost heaven and earth, who, in order to avoid communicating with all the nations of the earth, despise the words of Him that sitteth in heaven? For, in proof of your meekness, it is not your words but the cudgels of the Circumcelliones which should be examined. You will say, What has that to do with us? Just as though we were making the remark with any other object except to extract that answer from you. For the reason that your schism is a valid charge against you is that you do not allow that you are chargeable with another's sin, whereas you have separated from us for no other reason but that you charge us with the sins of other men.

CHAPTER 65

145. Petilianus said: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.' You, our butchers, are the cause of mourning in others: you do not mourn yourselves."

146. Augustin answered: Consider for a short space to how many, and with what intensity, the cry of "Praises be to God," proceeding from your armed men, has caused others to mourn. Do you say again, What is that to us? Then I too will rejoin again your own words, What is that to us? What is it to all the nations of the earth? What is it to those who praise the name of the Lord from the rising of the sun to the setting of the same? What is it to all the earth, which sings a new song? What is it to the seed of Abraham, in which all the nations of the earth are blessed? And so the sacrilege of your schism is chargeable on you, just because the evil deeds of your companions are not chargeable on you; and because you are from this that the deeds of those on whose account you separated from the world, even if you proved your charges to be true, do not involve the world in sin.

CHAPTER 66

147. Petilianus said: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.' To you it seems to be righteousness that you thirst after our blood."

148. Augustin answered: What shall I say unto thee, O man, except that thou art calumnious? The unity of Christ, indeed, is hungering and thirsting

after all of you; and I would that it might swallow you up, for then would you be no longer heretics.

CHAPTER 67

149. Petilianus said: “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.’ But how shall I call you merciful when you inflict punishment on the righteous? Shall I not rather call you a most unrighteous communion, so long as you pollute souls?”

150. Augustin answered: You have proved neither point,—neither that you yourselves are righteous, nor that we inflict punishment on even the unrighteous; and yet, even as false flattery is generally cruel, so just correction is ever merciful. For whence is that which you do not understand: “Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me”? For while he says this of the severity of merciful correction, the Psalmist immediately went on to say of the gentleness of destructive flattery, “But the oil of sinners shall not break my head.” Do you therefore consider whither you are called, and from what you are summoned away. For how do you know what feelings he entertains towards you whom you suppose to be cruel? But whatever be his feelings, every one must bear his own burden both with us and with you. But I would have you cast away the burden of schism which you all of you are bearing, that you may bear your good burdens in unity; and I would bid you mercifully correct, if you should have the power, all those who are bearing evil burdens; and, if this be beyond your power, I would bid you bear with them in peace.

CHAPTER 68

151. Petilianus said: “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.’ When will you see God, who are possessed with blindness in the impure malice of your hearts?”

152. Augustin answered: Wherefore say you this? Can it be that we reproach all nations with the dark and hidden things which are declared by men, and do not choose to understand the manifest sayings which God spake in olden time of all the nations of the earth? This is indeed great

blindness of heart; and if you do not recognize it in yourselves, that is even greater blindness.

CHAPTER 69

153. Petilianus said: “Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.’ You make a pretence of peace by your wickedness, and seek unity by war.”

154. Augustin answered: We do not make a pretense of peace by wickedness, but we preach peace out of the gospel; and if you were at peace with it, you would be at peace also with us. The risen Lord, when presenting Himself to the disciples, not only that they should gaze on Him with their eyes, but also that they should handle Him with their hands, began His discourse to them with the words, “Peace be unto you.” And how this peace itself was to be maintained, He disclosed to them in the words which followed. For “then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus is it written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” If you will keep peace with these words, you will not be at variance with us. For if we seek unity by war, our war could not be praised in more glorious terms, seeing that it is written, “Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself.” And again it is written, “No man ever yet hated his own flesh.” And yet the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. But if no man ever yet hated his own flesh, and yet a man lusteth against his own flesh, here you have unity sought by war, that the body, being subject to correction, may be brought under submission. But what the spirit does against the flesh, waging war with it, not in hatred but in love, this those who are spiritual do against those who are carnal, that they may do towards them what they do towards themselves, because they love their neighbors as neighbors indeed. But the war which the spiritual wage is that correction which is in love: their sword is the word of God. To such a war they are aroused by the trumpet of the apostle sounding with a mighty force: “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.” See then that we act not with the sword, but with the word. But you answer what is not

true, while you accuse us falsely. You do not correct your own faults, and you bring against us those of other men. Christ bears true witness concerning the nations of the earth; you, in opposition to Christ, bear false witness against the nations of the earth. If we were to believe you rather than Christ, you would call us peacemakers; because we believe Christ rather than you, we are said to make a pretense of peace by our wickedness. And while you say and do such things as this, you have the further impudence to quote the words, “Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.”

CHAPTER 70

155. Petilianus said: “Though the Apostle Paul says, I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you, brethren, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.’“

156. Augustin answered: If you would not only say these words, but hearken to them as well, you would put up even with known evils for the sake of peace, instead of inventing new ones for the sake of quarreling, if it were only because you subsequently learned, for the sake of the peace of Donatus, to put up with the most flagrant and notorious wickedness of Optatus. What madness is this that you display? Those who are known are borne with, that a fragment may not be further split up; those of whom nothing is known are defamed, that they themselves may not remain in the undivided whole.

CHAPTER 71

157. Petilianus said: “To you the prophet says, Peace, peace; and where is there peace?’“

158. Augustin answered: It is you that say this to us, not the prophet. We therefore answer you: If you ask where peace is to be found, open your eyes, and see of whom it is said, “He maketh wars to cease in all the world.” If you ask where peace is to be found, open your eyes to see that city which cannot be hidden, because it is built upon a hill; open your eyes

to see the mountain itself, and let Daniel show it to you, growing out of a small stone, and filling the whole earth. But when the prophet says to you, “Peace, peace; and where is there peace?” what will you show? Will you show the party of Donatus, unknown to the countless nations to whom Christ is known? It is surely not the city which cannot be hid; and whence is this, except that it is not founded on the mountain? “For He is our peace, who hath made both one,”—not Donatus, who has made one into two.

CHAPTER 72

159. Petilianus said: “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’ You are not blessed; but you make martyrs to be blessed, with whose souls the heavens are filled, and the earth has flourished with their memory. You therefore do not honor them yourselves, but you provide us with objects of honor.”

160. Augustin answered: The plain fact is, that if it had not been said, “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,” but had been said instead, Blessed are they who throw themselves over precipices, then heaven would have been filled with your martyrs. Of a truth we see many flowers on the earth blooming from their bodies; but, as the saying goes, the flower is dust and ashes.

CHAPTER 73

161. Petilianus said: “Since then you are not blessed by falsifying the commands of God, the Lord Christ condemns you by His divine decrees: Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for

ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.’“

162. Augustin answered: Tell me whether you have said anything which may not equally be said against you in turn by any slanderous and evil-speaking tongue. But from what has been said by me before, any one who wishes may find out that these things may be said against you, not by way of empty abuse, but with the support of truthful testimony. As, however, the opportunity is presented to us we must not pass this by. There is no doubt that to the ancient people of God circumcision stood in the place of baptism. I ask, therefore, putting the case that the Pharisees against whom those words you quote are spoken, had made some proselyte, who, if he were to imitate them, would, as it is said, become twofold more the child of hell than themselves, supposing that he were to be converted, and desire to imitate Simeon, or Zacharias, or Nathanael, would it be necessary that he should be circumcised again by them? And if it is absurd to put this case why, although in empty fashion and with empty sounds you compare us to men like this, do you nevertheless baptize after us? But if you are really men like this, how much better and how much more in accordance with truth do we act in not baptizing after you, as neither was it right that those whom I have mentioned should be circumcised after the worst of Pharisees! Furthermore, when such men sit in the seat of Moses, for which the Lord preserved its due honor, why do you blaspheme the apostolic chair on account of men whom, justly or unjustly, you compare with these?

CHAPTER 74

163. Petilianus said: “But these things do not alarm us Christians; for of the evil deeds which you are destined to commit we have before a warning given us by the Lord Christ. Behold,’ He says, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.’ You fill up the measure of the madness of wolves, who either lay or are preparing to lay snares against the Churches in precisely the same way in which wolves, with their mouths wide open against the fold, even with destructive eagerness, breathe forth panting anger from their jaws, suffused with blood.”

164. Augustin answered: I should be glad to utter the same sentiment against you, but not in the words which you have used: they are too inappropriate, or rather mad. But what was required was, that you should show that we were wolves and that you were sheep, not by the emptiest of evil-speaking, but by some distinct proofs. For when I too have said, We are sheep, and you are wolves, do you think that there is any difference caused by the fact that you express the idea in swelling words? But listen whilst I prove what I assert. For the Lord says in the gospel, as you know full well, whether you please it or not, "My sheep hear my voice, and follow me." There are many sayings of the Lord on different subjects; but supposing, for example, that any one were in doubt whether the same Lord had risen in the body, and His words were to be quoted where He says, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have;"—if even after this he should be unwilling to acquiesce in the belief that His body had risen from the dead, surely such a man could not be reckoned among the sheep of the Lord, because he would not hear His voice. And so too now, when the question between us is, Where is the Church? whilst we quote the words that follow in the same passage of the gospel, where, after His resurrection, He gave His body even to be handled by those who were in doubt, in which He showed the future wide extent of the Church, saying, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem;" whereas you will not communicate with all nations, in whom these words have been fulfilled, how are you the sheep of this Shepherd, whose words you not only do not obey when you have heard them, but even fight against them? And so we show to you from this that you are not sheep. But listen further whence we show you that, on the contrary, you are wolves. For necessarily, when it is shown by His own words where the Church is to be found, it is also clear where we must look for the fold of Christ. Whenever, therefore, any sheep separate themselves from this fold, which is expressly pointed out and shown to us by the unmistakeable declaration of the Lord,—and that, I will not say because of charges falsely brought, but on account of charges brought, as no one can deny, with great uncertainty against their fellow-men, and consequently slay those sheep which they have torn and alienated from the life of unity and Christian love—is it not evident that

they are ravening wolves? But it will be said that these very men themselves praise and preach the Lord Christ. They are therefore those of whom He says Himself, “They come unto you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them.” The sheep’s clothing is seen in the praises of Christ; the fruits of their wolfish nature in their slanderous teeth.

CHAPTER 75

165. Petilianus said: “O wretched traditors! Thus indeed it was fitting that Scripture should be fulfilled. But in you I grieve for this, that you have shown yourselves worthy to fulfill the part of wickedness.”

166. Augustin answered: I might rather say, O wretched traditors! if I were minded, or rather if justice urged me to cast up against all of you the deeds of some among your number. But as regards what bears on all of you, O wretched heretics, I on my part will quote the remainder of your words; for it is written, “There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.” Therefore “it was fitting thus that Scripture should be fulfilled. But in you I grieve for this, that you have shown yourselves worthy to fulfill the part of wickedness.”

CHAPTER 76

167. Petilianus said: “But to us the Lord Christ, in opposition to your deadly commands, commanded simple patience and harmlessness. For what says He? A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.’ And again, By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.’“

168. Augustin answered: If you did not transfer these words, so widely differing from your character, to the surface of your talk, how could you be covering yourselves with sheep’s clothing?

CHAPTER 77

169. Petilianus said: “Paul also, the apostle, whilst he was suffering fearful persecutions at the hands of all nations, endured even more grievous

troubles at the hands of false brethren, as he bears witness of himself, being oftentimes afflicted: In perils by the heathen, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils among false brethren.’ And again he says, Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.’ When, therefore, false brethren like yourselves assault us, we imitate the patience of our master Paul under our dangers.”

170. Augustin answered: Certainly those of whom you speak are false brethren, of whom the apostle thus complains in another place, where he is extolling the natural sincerity of Timothy: “I have no man,” he says, “like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.” Undoubtedly he was speaking of those who were with him at the time when he was writing that epistle; for it could not be that all Christians in every quarter of the earth were seeking their own, and not the things which were Jesus Christ’s. It was of those, therefore, as I said, who were with him at the time when he was writing the words which you have quoted, that he uttered this lamentation. For who else was it to whom he referred, when he says in another place, “Without were fightings, within were fears,” except those whom he feared all the more intensely because they were within? If, therefore, you would imitate Paul, you would be tolerant of false brethren within, not a slanderer of the innocent without.

CHAPTER 78

171. Petilianus said: “For what kind of faith is that which is in you which is devoid of charity? when Paul himself says, Though I speak with the tongues of men, and have the knowledge of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.’“

172. Augustin answered: This is what I said just now, that you were desirous to be clad in sheep’s clothing, that, if possible, the sheep might feel your bite before it had any consciousness of your approach. Is it not that

praise of charity in which you indulge that commonly proves your calumny in the clearest light of truth? Will you bring it about that those arms shall be no longer ours, because you endeavor to appropriate them first? Furthermore, these arms are endowed with life: from whatever quarter they are launched, they recognize whom they should destroy. If they have been sent forth from our hands, they will fix themselves in you; if they are aimed by you, they recoil upon yourselves. For in these apostolic words, which commend the excellence of charity, we are wont to show to you how profitless it is to man that he should be in possession of faith or of the sacraments, when he has not charity, that, when you come to Catholic unity, you may understand what it is that is conferred on you, and how great a thing it is of which you were at least to some extent in want; for Christian charity cannot be preserved except in the unity of the Church: and that so you may see that without it you are nothing, even though you may be in possession of baptism and faith, and through this latter may be able even to remove mountains. But if this is your opinion as well, let us not repudiate and reject in you either the sacraments of God which we know, or faith itself, but let us hold fast charity, without which we are nothing even with the sacraments and with faith. But we hold fast charity if we cling to unity; while we cling to unity, if we do not make a fictitious unity in a party by our own words, but recognize it in a united whole through the words of Christ.

CHAPTER 79

173. Petilianus said: “And again, Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own.’ But you seek what belongs to other men. Is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth.’ This is to say, in short, Charity does not persecute, does not inflame emperors to take away the lives of other men; does not plunder other men’s goods; does not go on to murder men whom it has spoiled.”

174. Augustin answered: How often must I tell you the same thing? If you do not prove these charges, they tell against no one in the world; and if you prove them, they have no bearing upon us; just as those things have no

bearing upon you which are daily done by the furious deeds of the insane, by the luxury of the drunken, by the blindness of the suicides, by the tyranny of robbers. For who can fail to see that what I say is true? But now if charity were in you, it would rejoice in the truth. For how neatly it is said under covering of the sheep's clothing, "Charity beareth all things, endureth all things!" but when you come to the test, the wolf's teeth cannot be concealed. For when, in obedience to the words of Scripture, "forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," charity would compel you, even if you knew of any evils within the Church, I do not say to consent to them, but yet to tolerate them if you could not prevent them, lest, on account of the wicked who are to be separated by the winnowing-fan at the last day, you should at the present time sever the bond of peace by breaking off from the society of good men, you, resisting her influence, and being cast out by the wind of levity, charge the wheat with being chaff, and declare that what you invent of the wicked holds good through the force of contagion even in the righteous. And when the Lord has said, "The field is the world, the harvest is the end of the world," though He said of the wheat and of the tares, "Let both grow together until the harvest," you endeavor by your words to bring about a belief that the wheat has perished throughout the main portion of the field, and only continued to exist in your little corner,—being desirous that Christ should be proved a liar, but you the man of truth. And you speak, indeed, against your own conscience; for no one who in any way looks truly at the gospel will venture in his heart to say that in all the many nations throughout which is heard the response of Amen, and among whom Alleluia is sung almost with one single voice, no Christians are to be found. And yet, that it may not appear that the party of Donatus, which does not communicate with the several nations of the world, is involved in error, if any angel from heaven, who could see the whole world, were to declare that outside your communion good and innocent men were nowhere to be found, there is little doubt that you would rejoice over the iniquity of the human race, and boast of having told the truth before you had received assurance of it. How then is there in you that charity which rejoices not in iniquity? But be not deceived. Throughout the field, that is, throughout the world, there will be found the wheat of the Lord growing till the end of the world. Christ has said this: Christ is truth. Let charity be in you, and let it rejoice in the truth. Though an angel from heaven preach unto you another gospel contrary to His gospel, let him be accursed.

CHAPTER 80

175. Petilianus said: “Lastly, what is the justification of persecution? I ask you, you wretched men, if it so be that you think that your sin rests on any authority of law.”

176. Augustin answered: He who sins, sins not on the authority of the law, but against the authority of the law. But since you ask what is the justification of persecution, I ask you in turn whose voice it is that says in the psalm, “Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I cut off.” Seek therefore the reason or the measure of the persecution, and do not display your gross ignorance by finding fault in general terms with those who persecute the unrighteous.

CHAPTER 81

177. Petilianus said: “But I answer you, on the other hand, that Jesus Christ never persecuted any one. And when the apostle found fault with certain parties, and suggested that He should have recourse to persecution (He Himself having come to create faith by inviting men to Him, rather than by compelling them), those apostles say, Many lay on hands in Thy name, and are not with us:’ but Jesus said, Let them alone; if they are not against you, they are on your side.’“

178. Augustin answered: You say truly that you will bring forth out of your store with greater abundance things which are not written in the Scriptures. For if you wish to bring forth proofs from holy Scripture, will you bring forth even those which you cannot find therein? But it is in your own power to multiply your lies according to your will. For where is what you quoted written? or when was that either suggested to our Lord, or answered by our Lord? “Many lay on hands in Thy name, and are not with us,” are words that no one of the disciples ever uttered to the Son of God; and therefore neither could the answer have been made by Him, “Let them alone: if they are not against you, they are on your side.” But there is something somewhat like it which we really do read in the gospel,—that a suggestion

was made to the Lord about a certain man who was casting out devils in His name, but did not follow Him with His disciples; and in that case the Lord does say, “Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.” But this has nothing to do with pointing out parties whom the Lord is supposed to have spared. And if you have been deceived by an apparent resemblance of sentiment, this is not a lie, but merely human infirmity. But if you wished to cast a mist of falsehood over those who are unskilled in holy Scripture, then may you be pricked to the heart, and covered with confusion and corrected. Yet there is a point which we would urge in respect of this very man of whom the suggestion was made to our Lord. For even as at that time, beyond the communion of the disciples, the holiness of Christ was yet of the greatest efficacy, even so now, beyond the communion of the Church, the holiness of the sacraments is of avail. For neither is baptism consecrated save in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. But who will be so utterly insane as to declare that the name of the Son may be of avail even beyond the communion of the Church, but that this is not possible with the names of the Father and of the Holy Ghost? or that it may be of avail in healing a man, but not in consecrating baptism? But it is manifest that outside the communion of the Church, and the most holy bond of unity, and the most excellent gift of charity, neither he by whom the devil is cast out nor he who is baptized obtains eternal life; just as those do not obtain it, who through communion in the sacraments seem indeed to be within, and through the depravity of their character are understood to be without. But that Christ persecuted even with bodily chastisement those whom He drove with scourges from the temple, we have already said above.

CHAPTER 82

179. Petilianus said: “But the holy apostle said this: In any way, whatsoever it may be,’ he says, let Christ be preached.’“

180. Augustin answered: You speak against yourself; but yet, since you speak on the side of truth, if you love it, let what you say be counted for you. For I ask of you of whom it was that the Apostle Paul said this? Let us, if you please, trace this a little further back. “Some,” he says, “preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will, some of love, knowing

that I am set for the defense of the gospel. But some indeed preach Christ even of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds. What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.” We see that they preached what was in itself holy, and pure, and true, but yet not in a pure manner, but of envy and contention, without charity, without purity. Certainty a short time ago you appeared to be urging the praises of charity as against us, according to the witness of the apostle, that where there is no charity, whatever there is is of no avail; and yet you see that in those there is no charity, and there was with them the preaching of Christ, of which the apostle says here that he rejoices. For it is not that he rejoices in what is evil in them, but in what is good in the name of Jesus Christ. In him assuredly there was the charity which “rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.” The envy, moreover, which was in them is an evil proceeding from the devil, for by this he has both killed and cast down. Where then were these wicked men whom the apostle thus condemns, and in whom there was so much that was good to cause him to rejoice? Were they within, or without? Choose which you will. If they were within, then Paul knew them, and yet they did not pollute him. And so you would not be polluted in the unity of the whole world by those of whom you make certain charges, whether these be true, or falsehoods invented by yourselves. Wherefore do you separate yourself? Why do you destroy yourself by the criminal sacrilege of schism? But if they were without, then you see that even in those who were without, and who certainly cannot belong to everlasting life, since they have not charity, and do not abide in unity, there is yet found the holiness of the name of Christ, so that the apostle joyfully confirms their teaching, on account of the intrinsic holiness of the name, although he repudiates them. We are right, therefore, in not doing wrong to the actual name, when those come to us who were without; but we correct the individuals, while we do honor to the name. Do you therefore take heed, and see how wickedly you act in the case of those whose acts as it seems you condemn, by treating as naught the sacrament of the name of Christ, which is holy in them. And you, indeed, as is shown by your words, think that those men of whom the apostle spoke were outside the limits of the Church. Therefore, when you fear persecution from the Catholics, of which you speak in order to create odium against us, you have confirmed in heretics the name of Christ to which you do despite by rebaptizing.

CHAPTER 83

181. Petilianus said: “If then there are not some to whom all this power of faith is found to be in opposition, on what principle do you persecute, so as to compel men to defile themselves:?”

182. Augustin answered: We neither persecute you, except so far as truth persecutes falsehood; nor has it anything to do with us if any one has persecuted you in other ways, just as it has nothing to do with you if any of your party do likewise; nor do we compel you to defile yourselves, but we persuade you to be cured.

CHAPTER 84

183. Petilianus said: “But if authority had been given by some law for persons to be compelled to what is good, you yourselves, unhappy men, ought to have been compelled by us to embrace the purest faith. But far be it, far be it from our conscience to compel any one to embrace our faith.”

184. Augustin answered: No one is indeed to be compelled to embrace the faith against his will; but by the severity, or one might rather say, by the mercy of God, it is common for treachery to be chastised with the scourge of tribulation. Is it the case, because the best morals are chosen by freedom of will, that therefore the worst morals are not punished by integrity of law? But yet discipline to punish an evil manner of living is out of the question, except where principles of good living which had been learned have come to be despised. If any laws, therefore, have been enacted against you, you are not thereby forced to do well, but are only prevented from doing ill. For no one can do well unless he has deliberately chosen, and unless he has loved what is in free will; but the fear of punishment, even if it does not share in the pleasures of a good conscience, at any rate keeps the evil desire from escaping beyond the bounds of thought. Who are they, however, that have enacted adverse laws by which your audacity could be repressed? Are they not those of whom the apostle says that “they bear not the sword in vain; for they are the ministers of God, revengers to execute wrath upon

them that do evil?” The whole question therefore is, whether you are not doing ill, who are charged by the whole world with the sacrilege of so great a schism. And yet, neglecting the discussion of this question, you talk on irrelevant matters; and while you live as robbers, you boast that you die as martyrs. And, through fear either of the laws themselves, or of the odium which you might incur, or else because you are unequal to the task of resisting, I do not say so many men, but so many Catholic nations, you even glory in your gentleness, that you do not compel any to join your party. According to your way of talking, the hawk, when he has been prevented by flight from carrying off the fowls, might call himself a dove. For when have you ever had the power without using it? And hence you show how you would do more if you only could. When Julian, envying the peace of Christ, restored to you the churches which belonged to unity, who could tell of all the massacres which were committed by you, when the very devils rejoiced with you at the opening of their temples? In the war with Firmus and his party, let Mauritania Caesariensis itself be asked to tell us what the Moor Rogatus suffered at your hands. In the time of Gildo, because one of your colleagues was his intimate friend, let the followers of Maximianus be our witnesses to their sufferings. For if one might appeal to Felicianus himself, who is now with you, on his oath, whether Optatus did not compel him against his will to return to your communion, he would not dare to open his lips, especially if the people of Musti could behold his face, who were witnesses to everything that was done. But let them, as I have said, be witnesses to what they have suffered at the hands of those with whom they acted in such wise towards Rogatus. The Catholic Church herself, though strengthened by the assistance of Catholic princes ruling by land and sea, was savagely attacked by hostile troops in arms under Optatus. It was this that first made it necessary to urge before the vicar Seranus that the law should be put in force against you which imposes a fine of ten pounds of gold, which none of you have ever paid to this very day, and yet you charge us with cruelty. But where could you find a milder course of proceeding, than that crimes of such magnitude on your part should be punished by the imposition of a pecuniary fine? Or who could enumerate all the deeds which you commit in the places which you hold, of your own sovereign will and pleasure, each one as he can, without any friendship on the part of judges or any others in authority? Who is there of our party, among the inhabitants of our towns, who has not either learned something of this sort from those who came before him, or experienced it for himself? Is it not the case that at Hippo, where I am, there are not wanting some who remember that your leader Faustinus gave orders, in the time of his supreme power, in consequence of the scanty numbers of the Catholics in the place, that no one should bake their bread for them, insomuch that a baker, who was the tenant of one of our deacons, threw away the bread of his landlord unbaked, and though he was not sentenced to exile under any law, he cut him off from all share in the necessaries of life not only in a Roman state, but even in his own country, and not only in his own country, but in his own house? Why, even lately, as I myself recall with mourning to this day, did not Crispinus of Calama, one of your party, having bought a property, and that only copy-hold, boldly and unhesitatingly immerse in the waters of a second baptism no less than eighty souls, murmuring with miserable groans under the sole influence of terror; and this in a farm belonging to the Catholic emperors, by whose laws you were forbidden even to be in any Roman city? But what else was it, save such deeds as these of yours, that made it necessary for the very laws to be passed of which you complain? The laws, indeed, are very far from being proportionate to your offenses; but, such as they are, you may thank yourselves for their existence. Indeed, should we not certainly be driven on all sides from the country by the furious attacks of your Circumcelliones, who fight under your command in furious troops, unless we held you as hostages in the towns, who might well be unwilling to endure under any circumstances the mere gaze of the people, and the censure of all honorable men. from very shame, if not from fear? Do not therefore say, “Far be it, far be it from our conscience, to force any one to embrace our faith.” For you do it when you can; and when you do not do it, it is because you are unable, either from fear of the laws or the odium which would accompany it, or because of the numbers of those who would resist.

CHAPTER 85

185. Petilianus said: “For the Lord Christ says, No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.’ But why do we not permit each several person to follow his free will, since the Lord God Himself has

given free will to men, showing to them, however, the way of righteousness, lest any one by chance should perish from ignorance of it? For He said, I have placed before thee good and evil. I have set fire and water before thee; choose which thou wilt.’ From which choice, you wretched men, you have chosen for yourselves not water, but rather fire. But yet,’ He says, choose the good, that thou mayest live.’ You who will not choose the good, have, by your own sentence, declared that you do not wish to live.”

186. Augustin answered: If I were to propose to you the question how God the Father draws men to the Son, when He has left them to themselves in freedom of action, you would perhaps find it difficult of solution. For how does He draw them to Him if He leaves them to themselves, so that each should choose what he pleases? And yet both these facts are true; but this is a truth which few have intellect enough to penetrate. As therefore it is possible that, after leaving men to themselves in free will, the Father should yet draw them to the Son, so is it also possible that those warnings which are given by the correction of the laws do not take away free will. For whenever a man suffers anything that is harsh and unpleasing, he is warned to consider why it is that he is suffering, so that, if he shall discover that he is suffering in the cause of justice, he may choose the good that consists in the very act of suffering as he does in the cause of justice; but if he sees that it is unrighteousness for which he suffers, he may be induced, from the consideration that he is suffering and being tormented most fruitlessly, to change his purpose for the better, and may at the same time escape both the fruitless annoyance and the unrighteousness itself, which is likely to prove yet more hurtful and pernicious in the mischief it produces. And so you, when kings make any enactments against you, should consider that you are receiving a warning to consider why this is being done to you. For if it is for righteousness’ sake, then are they truly your persecutors; but you are the blessed ones, who, being persecuted for righteousness’ sake, shall inherit the kingdom of heaven: but if it is because of the iniquity of your schism, what are they more than your correctors; while you, like all the others who are guilty of various crimes, and pay the penalty appointed by the law, are undoubtedly unhappy both in this world and in that which is to come? No one, therefore, takes away from you your free will. But I would urge you

diligently to consider which you would rather choose,—whether to live corrected in peace, or, by persevering in malice, to undergo real punishment under the false name of martyrdom. But I am addressing you just as though you were suffering something proportionate to your sin, whereas you are committing sins of such enormity and reigning in such impunity. You are so furious, that you cause more terror than a war trumpet with your cry of "Praise to God;" so full of calumny, that even when you throw yourselves over precipices without any provocation, you impute it to our persecutions.

187. He says also, like the kindest of teachers, "You who will not choose the good, have, by your own sentence, declared that you do not wish to live." According to this, if we were to believe your accusations, we should live in kindness; but because we believe the promises of God, we declare by our own sentence that we do not wish to live. You remember well, it seems to me, what the apostles answered to the Jews when they were desired to abstain from preaching Christ. This therefore we also say, that you should answer us whether we ought rather to obey God or man. Traditors, offerers of incense, persecutors: these are the words of men against men. Christ remained only in the love of Donatus: these are the words of men extolling the glory of a man under the name of Christ, that the glory of Christ Himself may be diminished. For it is written, "In the multitude of people is the king's honor: but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince:" these, therefore, are the words of men. But those words in the gospel, "It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," are the words of Christ, showing forth the glory which He received from His Father in the wideness of His kingdom. When we have heard them both, we choose in preference the communion of the Church, and prefer the words of Christ to the words of men. I ask, who is there that can say that we have chosen what is evil, except one who shall say that Christ taught what was evil?

CHAPTER 86

188. Petilianus said: "Is it then the case that God has ordered the massacre even of schismatics? and if He were to issue such an order at all, you ought to be slain by some barbarians and Scythians, not by Christians."

189. Augustin answered: Let your Circumcelliones remain quiet, and let me entreat you not to terrify us about barbarians. But as to whether we or you are schismatics, let the question be put neither to you nor to me, but to Christ, that He may show where His Church is to be found. Read the gospel then, and there you find the answer, “In Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria and even in the whole earth.” If any one, therefore, is not found within the Church, let not any further question be put to him, but let him either be corrected or converted, or else, being detected, let him not complain.

CHAPTER 87

190. Petilianus said: “For neither has the Lord God at any time rejoiced in human blood, seeing that He was even willing that Cain, the murderer of his brother, should continue to exist in his murderer’s life.”

191. Augustin answered: If God was unwilling that death should be inflicted on him who slew his brother, preferring that he should continue to exist in his murderer’s life, see whether this be not the cause why, seeing that the heart of the king is in the hand of God, whereby he has himself enacted many laws for your correction and reproof, yet no law of the king has commanded that you should be put to death, perhaps with this very object, that any one of you who persists in the obstinate self-will of his sacrilegious madness should be tortured with the punishment of the fratricide Cain, that is to say, with the life of a murderer. For we read that many were slain in mercy by Moses the servant of the Lord; for in that he prayed thus in intercession to the Lord for their wicked sacrilege, saying, “O Lord, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which Thou hast written,” his unspeakable charity and mercy are plainly shown. Could it be, then, that he was suddenly changed to cruelty, when, on descending from the mount, he ordered so many thousands to be slain? Consider, therefore, whether it may not be a sign of greater anger on the part of God, that, whilst so many laws have been enacted against you, you have not been ordered by any emperor to be put to death. Or do you think that you are not to be compared to that fratricide? Hearken to the Lord speaking through His prophet: “From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among

the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.” On this brother’s sacrifice you show that you look with malignant eyes, over and above the respect which God pays to it; and if ye have ever heard that “from the rising of the sun, unto the going down of the same, the Lord’s name is to be praised,” which is that living sacrifice of which it is said, “Offer unto God thanksgiving,” then will your countenance fall like that of yonder murderer. But inasmuch as you cannot kill the whole world, you are involved in the same guilt by your mere hatred, according to the words of John, “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.” And I would that any innocent brother might rather fall into the hands of your Circumcelliones, to be murdered by their weapons, than be subjected to the poison of your tongue and rebaptized.

CHAPTER 88

192. Petilianus said: “We advise you, therefore, if so be that you will hear it willingly, and even though you do not willingly receive it, yet we warn you that the Lord Christ instituted for Christians, not any form of slaying, but one of dying only. For if He loved men who thus delight in battle, He would not have consented to be slain for us.”

193. Augustin answered: Would that your martyrs would follow the form that He prescribed! they would not throw themselves over precipices, which He refused to do at the bidding of the devil. But when you persecute our ancestors with false witness even now that they are dead, whence have you received this form? In that you endeavor to stain us with the crimes of men we never knew, while you are unwilling that the most notorious misdeeds of your own party should be reckoned against you, whence have you received this form? But we are too much yielding to our own conceit if we find fault about ourselves, when we see that you utter false testimony against the Lord Himself, since He Himself both promised and made manifest that His Church should extend throughout all nations, and you maintain the contrary. This form, therefore, you did not receive even from the Jewish persecutors themselves, for they persecuted His body while He was walking on the earth: you persecute His gospel as He is seated in heaven. Which gospel endured more meekly the flames of furious kings than it can possibly

endure your tongues; for while they blazed, unity remained, and this it cannot do amid your words. They who desired that the word of God should perish in the flames did not believe that it could be despised if read. They would not, therefore, set their flames to work upon the gospel, if you would let them use your tongues against the gospel. In the earlier persecution the gospel of Christ was sought by some in their rage, it was betrayed by others in their fear; it was burned by some in their rage, it was hidden by others in their love; it was attacked, but none were found to speak against its truth. The more accursed share of persecution was reserved for you when the persecution of the heathen was exhausted. Those who persecuted the name of Christ believed in Christ: now those who are honored for the name of Christ are found to speak against His truth.

CHAPTER 89

194. Petilianus said: “Here you have the fullest possible proof that a Christian may take no part in the destruction of another. But the first establishing of this principle was in the case of Peter, as it is written, Simon Peter having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath. For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.’“

195. Augustin answered: Why then do you not restrain the weapons of the Circumcelliones with such words as these? Should you think that you were going beyond the words of the gospel if you should say, All they that take the cudgel shall perish with the cudgel? Withhold not then your pardon, if our ancestors were unable to restrain the men by whom you complain that Marculus was thrown down a precipice; for neither is it written in the gospel, He that useth to throw men down a precipice shall be cast therefrom. And would that, as your charges are either false or out of date, so the cudgels of those friends of yours would cease! And yet, perhaps, you take it ill that, if not by force of law, at any rate in words, we take away their armor from your legions in saying that they manifest their rage with sticks alone. For that was the ancient fashion of their wickedness, but now they have advanced too far. For amid their drunken revellings, and amid the free license of assembling together, wandering in the streets, jesting, drinking, passing the whole night in company with women who have no

husbands, they have learned not only to brandish cudgels, but to wield swords and whirl slings. But why should I not say to them (God knows with what feelings I say it and with what feelings they receive it!), Madmen, the sword of Peter, though drawn from motives not yet free from fleshly impurity, was yet drawn in defence of the body of Christ against the body of His persecutor, but your arms are portioned out against the cause of Christ; but the body of which He is the head, that is, His Church, extends throughout all nations. He Himself has said this, and has ascended into heaven, whither the fury of the Jews could not follow Him; and it is your fury which attacks His members in the body, which on His ascension He commended to our care. In defense of those members all men rage against you, all men resist you, as many as being in the Catholic Church, and possessing as yet but little faith, are influenced by the same motives as Peter was when he drew his sword in the name of Christ. But there is a great difference between your persecution and theirs. You are like the servant of the Jews' high priest; for in the service of your princes you arm yourselves against the Catholic Church, that is, against the body of Christ. But they are such as Peter then was, fighting even with the strength of their bodies for the body of Christ, that is, the Church. But if they are bidden to be still, as Peter then was bidden, how much more should you be warned that, laying aside the madness of heresy, you should join the unity of those members for which they so fight? But, being wounded by such men as these, you hate us also; and, as though you had lost your right ears, you do not hear the voice of Christ as He sits at the right hand of the Father. But to whom shall I address myself, or how shall I address myself to them, seeing that in them I find no time wherein to speak? for even early in the morning they are reeking with wine, drunk, it may be already in the day, it may be still from overnight. Moreover, they utter threats, and not they only, but their own bishops utter threats concerning them, being ready to deny that what they have done has any bearing on them. May the Lord grant to us a song of degrees, in which we may say, "When I am with those who hate peace, I am peaceful. When I would speak with them, they are wont to fight me without cause." For thus says the body of Christ, which throughout the whole world is assailed by heretics, by some here, by others there, and by all alike wherever they may be.

CHAPTER 90

196. Petilianus said: “Therefore I say, He ordained that we should undergo death for the faith, which each man should do for the communion of the Church. For Christianity makes progress by the deaths of its followers. For if death were feared by the faithful, no man would be found to live with perfect faith. For the Lord Christ says, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.’“

197. Augustin answered: I should be glad to know which of your party it was who first threw himself over a precipice. For truly that grain of corn was fruitful from which so great a crop of similar suicides has sprung. Tell me, when you make mention of the words of the Lord, that He says a grain of wheat shall die and bring forth much fruit, why do you envy the real fruit, which has most truly sprung up throughout the whole world, and bring up against it all the charges of the tares or chaff which you have ever either heard of or invented?

CHAPTER 91

198. Petilianus said: “But you scatter thorns and tares, not seeds of corn so that you ought to be burned together with them at the last judgment. We do not utter curses; but every thorny conscience is bound under this penalty by the sentence which God has pronounced.”

199. Augustin answered: Surely, when you mention tares, it might bring to your minds the thought of wheat as well; for both have been commanded to grow together in the field until the harvest. But you fix the eye of malice fiercely on the tares, and maintain, in opposition to the express declaration of Christ, that they alone have grown throughout the earth, with the exception of Africa alone.

CHAPTER 92

200. Petilianus said: “Where is the saying of the Lord Christ, Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also’? Where is the patience which He displayed when they spat upon His face, who Himself with His most holy spittle opened the eyes of the blind? Where is the saying

of the Apostle Paul, If a man smite you in the face?’ Where is that other saying of the same apostle, In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft’? He makes mention of the sufferings which he underwent, not of the deeds which he performed. It had been enough for the Christian faith that these things should be done by the Jews: why do you, wretched men, do these others in addition?”

201. Augustin answered: Is it then really so, that when men smite you on the one cheek, you turn to them the other? This is not the report that your furious bands won for you by wandering everywhere throughout the whole of Africa with dreadful wickedness. I would fain have it that men should make a bargain with you, that, in accordance with the old law, you should seek but “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,” instead of bringing out cudgels in return for the words which greet your ears.

CHAPTER 93

202. Petilianus said: “But what have you to do with the kings of this world, in whom Christianity has never found anything save envy towards her? And to teach you shortly the truth of what I say, A king persecuted the brethren of the Maccabees. A king also condemned the three children to the sanctifying flames, being ignorant what he did, seeing that he himself was fighting against God. A king sought the life of the infant Saviour. A king exposed Daniel, as he thought, to be eaten by wild beasts. And the Lord Christ Himself was slain by a king’s most wicked judge. Hence it is that the apostle cries out, We speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, which was hidden, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.’ But grant that this was said of the heathen kings of old. Yet you, rulers of this present age, because you desire to be Christians, do not allow men to be Christians, seeing that, when they are believing in all honesty of heart, you draw them by the defilement and mist of your falsehood wholly over to your wickedness, that with their arms, which were provided against the enemies of the state, they should assail the Christians, and should think that, at your instigation, they are doing the work of Christ

if they kill us whom you hate, according to the saying of the Lord Christ: The time cometh,’ He says, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.’ It makes no matter therefore to you, false teachers, whether the kings of this world desire to be heathens, which God forbid, or Christians, so long as you cease not in your efforts to arm them against the family of Christ. But do you not know, or rather, have you not read, that the guilt of one who instigates a murder is greater than the guilt of him who carries it out? Jezebel had excited the king her husband to the murder of a poor and righteous man, yet husband and wife alike perished by an equal punishment. Nor indeed is your mode of urging on kings different from that by which the subtle persuasion of women has often urged kings on to guilt. For the wife of Herod earned and obtained the boon by means of her daughter, that the head of John should be brought to table in a charger. Similarly the Jews forced on Pontius Pilate that he should crucify the Lord Jesus, whose blood Pilate prayed might remain in vengeance upon them and on their children. So therefore you also overwhelm yourselves with our blood by your sin. For it does not follow that because it is the hand of the judge that strikes the blow, your calumnies therefore are not rather guilty of the deed. For the prophet David says, speaking in the person of Christ, Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.’ And he warned the kings themselves in the following precepts, that they should not, like ignorant men devoid of understanding, seek to persecute the Christians, lest they should themselves be destroyed,—which precepts I would that we could teach them, seeing that they are ignorant of them; or, at least, that you would show them to them, as doubtless you would do if you desired that they should live; or, at any rate, if neither of the other courses be allowed, that your malice would have permitted them to read them for themselves. The first Psalm of David would certainly have persuaded them that they should live and reign as Christians; but meanwhile you deceive them, so long as they entrust themselves to you. For you represent to them things that are evil, and you hide from them what is good. Let them then at length read this, which they should have read already long ago. For what does he say, Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Lay hold of instruction lest the Lord be angry, and ye perish from the right way. Since how quickly has His wrath kindled over you? Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.' You urge on emperors, I say, with your persuasions, even as Pilate, whom, as we showed above, the Jews urged on, though he himself cried aloud, as he washed his hands before them all, I am innocent of the blood of this just person,'—as though a person could be clear from the guilt of a sin who had himself committed it. But, to say nothing of ancient examples, observe, from instances taken from your own party, how very many of your emperors and judges have perished in persecuting us. To pass over Nero, who was the first to persecute the Christians, Domitian perished almost in the same way as Nero, as also did Trajan, Geta, Decius, Valerian, Diocletian; Maximian also perished, at whose command that men should burn incense to their gods, burning the sacred volumes, Marcellinus indeed first, but after him also Mensurius of Carthage, and Caecilianus, escaped death from the sacrilegious flames, surviving like some ashes or cinders from the burning. For the consciousness of the guilt of burning incense involved you all, as many as agreed with Mensurius. Macarius perished, Ursacius perished, and all your counts perished in like manner by the vengeance of God. For Ursacius was slain in a battle with the barbarians, after which birds of prey with their savage talons, and the greedy teeth of dogs with their biting, tore him limb from limb. Was not he too a murderer at your suggestion, who, like king Ahab, whom we showed to have been persuaded by a woman, slew a poor and righteous man? So you too do not cease to murder us, who are just and poor (poor, that is, in worldly wealth; for in the grace of God no one of us is poor). For even if you do not murder a man with your hands, you do not cease to do so with your butcherous tongues. For it is written, Death and life are in the power of the tongue.' All, therefore, who have been murdered, you, the instigator of the deed, have slain. Nor indeed does the hand of the butcher glow save at the instigation of your tongue; and that terrible heat of the breast is inflamed by your words to take the blood of others,—blood that shall take a just vengeance upon him who shed it.”

203. Augustin answered: If I were to answer adequately, and as I ought, to this passage, which has been exaggerated and arranged at such length by you, where you speak in invidious terms against us concerning the kings of this world, I am much afraid that you would accuse me too of having wished to excite the anger of kings against you. And yet, whilst you are borne after your own fashion by the violence of this invective against all Catholics, you certainly do not pass me by. I will endeavor, however, to show, if I can, that it is rather you who have been guilty of this offense by speaking as you have done, than myself by answering as I shall do. And first of all, see how you yourself oppose your self; for certainly you prefaced the passage which you quoted with the words, “What have you to do with the kings of this world, in whom Christianity has never found anything save envy towards her?” In these words you certainly cut off from us all access to the kings of this world. And a little later you say, “And he warned the kings themselves in the following precepts, that they should not, like ignorant men devoid of understanding, seek to persecute the Christians, lest they should be themselves destroyed,—which precepts I would that we could teach them, seeing that they are ignorant of them; or, at least, that you would show them to them, as doubtless you would do if you desired that they should live.” In what way then do you wish us to be the instructors of kings? And indeed those of our body who have any friendship with Christian kings commit no sin if they make a right use of that friendship; but if any are elated by it, they yet sin far less grievously than you. For what had you, who thus reproach us,—what had you to do with a heathen king, and what is worse, with Julian, the apostate and enemy of the name of Christ, to whom, when you were begging that the basilicas should be restored to you as though they were your own, you ascribed this meed of praise, “that in him justice alone was found to have a place”?—in which words (for I believe that you understand the Latin tongue) both the idolatry and the apostasy of Julian are styled justice. I hold in my hands the petition which your ancestors presented; the memorial which embodied their

request; the chronicles, where they made their representation. Watch and attend. To the enemy of Christ, to the apostate, the antagonist of Christians, the servant of the devil, that friend, that representative, that Pontius of yours, made supplication in such words as these: “Go to then, and say to us, What have you to do with the kings of this world?” that as deaf men you may read to the deaf nations what you as well as they refuse to hear;” Thou beholdest the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye.”

204. “What,” say you, “have you to do with the kings of this world, in whom Christianity has never found anything save envy towards her?” Having said this, you endeavored to reckon up what kings the righteous had found to be their enemies, and did not consider how many more might be enumerated who have proved their friends. The patriarch Abraham was both most friendly treated, and presented with a token of friendship, by a king who had been warned from heaven not to defile his wife. Isaac his son likewise found a king most friendly to him. Jacob, being received with honor by a king in Egypt, went so far as to bless him. What shall I say of his son Joseph, who, after the tribulation of a prison, in which his chastity was tried as gold is tried in the fire, being raised by Pharaoh to great honors, even swore by the life of Pharaoh,—not as though puffed up with vain conceit, but being not unmindful of his kindness. The daughter of a king adopted Moses. David took refuge with a king of another race, compelled thereto by the unrighteousness of the king of Israel. Elijah ran before the chariot of a most wicked king,—not by the king’s command, but from his own loyalty. Elisha thought it good to offer of his own accord to the woman who had sheltered him anything that she might wish to have obtained from the king through his intercession. But I will come to the actual times when the people of God were in captivity, in which, to use a mild expression, a strange forgetfulness came over you. For, wishing to prove that Christianity has never found anything in kings saving envy towards her, you made mention of the three children and Daniel, who suffered at the hands of persecuting kings, and you could not derive instruction from circumstances not occurring near, but in the very same passages, viz., from the conduct of the king himself after the miracle of the flames which did no hurt, whether as shown in praising and setting forth the name of God, or in honoring the

three children themselves, or from the esteem in which the king held Daniel, and the gifts with which he honored him, nothing loth to receive them, when he, rendering the honor that was due to the king's power, as sufficiently appears from his own words, did not hesitate to use the gift with which he was endowed by God, in interpreting the king's dream. And when, in consequence, the king was compelled by the men who envied the holy prophet, and heaped calumnies upon him with sacrilegious madness, most unwillingly to cast him into the den of lions, sadly though he did it, yet he had the conviction that he would be safe through the help and protection of his God. Accordingly, when Daniel, by the miraculous repression of the lions' rage, had been preserved unhurt, when the friendly voice of the king spoke first to him, in accents of anxiety, he himself replied with benediction from the den, "O king, live for ever!" How came it that, when your argument was turning on the very same subject, when you were yourself quoting the examples of the servants of God in whose case these things were done, you either failed to see, or were unwilling to see, or seeing and knowing, were silent, in a manner which I know not how you will defend, about those instances of friendship felt by kings for the saints? But if it were not that, as a defender of the basest cause, you are hindered by the desire of building up falsehood, and thereby turned away either as unwilling or as ignorant from the light of truth, there can be no doubt that you could, without any difficulty, recall some good kings as well as some bad ones, and some friendly to the saints as well as some unfriendly. And we cannot but wonder that your Circumcelliones thus throw themselves from precipices. Who was running after you, I pray? What Macarius, what soldier was pursuing you? Certainly none of our party thrust you into this abyss of falsehood. Why then did you thus run headlong with your eyes shut, so that when you said, "What have you to do with the kings of this world?" you did not add, In whom Christianity has often found envy towards herself, instead of boldly venturing to say, "In whom Christianity has never found anything save envy towards her?" Was it really true that you neither thought yourself, nor considered that those who read your writings would think, how many instances of kings there were that went against your views? Does he not know what he says?

205. Or do you think that, because those whom I have mentioned belonged to olden times, therefore they form no argument against you, because you did not say, In whom righteousness has never found anything save envy towards her, but “In whom Christianity has never found anything saving envy towards her,”—meaning, perhaps, that it should be understood that they began to show envy towards the righteous from the time when they began to bear the name of Christians? What then is the meaning of those examples from olden times, by which you even more imprudently wished to prove what you had so imprudently ventured to assert? For was it not before Christ was born in the world that the Maccabees, and the three children, and Daniel, did and suffered what you told of them? And again, why was it, as I asked just now, that you offered a petition to Julian, the undoubted foe of Christianity? Why did you seek to recover the basilicas from him? Why did you declare that only righteousness found a place with him? If it is the foe of Christianity that hears such things as these, what then are they from whom he hears them? But it should be observed that Constantine, who was certainly no foe to the name of Christian, but rather rendered glorious by it, being mindful of the hope which he maintained in Christ, and deciding most justly on behalf of His unity, was not worthy to be acknowledged by you, even when you yourselves appealed to him. Both these were emperors in Christian times, but yet not both of them were Christians. But if both of them were foes of Christianity, why did you thus appeal to one of them? why did you thus present a petition to the other? For on your ancestors making their petition, Constantine had given an episcopal judgment both at Rome and at Arles; and yet the first of them you accused before him, from the other you appealed to him. But if, as is the case, one of them had believed in Christ, the other had apostatized from Christ, why is the Christian despised while furthering the interests of unity, the apostate praised while favoring deceit? Constantine ordered that the basilicas should be taken from you, Julian that they should be restored. Do you wish to know which of these actions is conducive to Christian peace? The one was done by a man who had believed in Christ, the other by one who had abandoned Christ. O how you would wish that you could say, It was indeed ill done that supplication should so be made to Julian, but what has that to do with us? But if you were to say this, the Catholic Church would also conquer in these same words, whose saints dispersed throughout the world

are much less concerned with what you say of those towards whom you feel as you may be disposed to feel. But it is beyond your power to say, It was ill done that supplication should so be made to Julian. Your throat is closed; your tongue is checked by an authority close at home. It was Pontius that did it. Pontius presented the petition; Pontius declared that the apostate was most righteous; Pontius set forth that only righteousness found a place with the apostate. That Pontius made a petition to him in these words, we have the express evidence of Julian himself, mentioning him by name, without any disguise. Your representations still exist. It is no uncertain rumor, but public documents that bear witness to the fact. Can it be, that because the apostate made some concession to your prayer, to the detriment of the unity of Christ, you therefore find truth in what was said, that only righteousness found a place with him? but because Christian emperors decide against your wishes, since this appears to them most likely to contribute to the unity of Christ, therefore they are called the foes of Christianity? Such folly may all heretics display; and may they regain wisdom, so that they should be no longer heretics.

206. And when is that fulfilled, you will say, which the Lord declares, “The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service”? At any rate neither can this be said of the heathen, who persecuted Christians, not for the sake of God, but for the sake of their idols. You do not see that if this had been said of these emperors who rejoice in the name of Christian, their chief command would certainly have been this, that you should have been put to death; and this command they never gave at all. But the men of your party, by opposing the laws in hostile fashion, bring deserved punishment on themselves; and their own voluntary deaths, so long as they think that they bring odium on us, they consider in no wise ruinous to themselves. But if they think that that saying of Christ refers to kings who honor the name of Christ, let them ask what the Catholic Church suffered in the East, when, Valens the Arian was emperor. There indeed I might find what I should understand to be sufficient fulfillment of the saying of the Lord, “The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service,” that heretics should not claim, as conducing to their especial glory, the injunctions issued against their errors by Catholic emperors. But we remember that that time was fulfilled after the ascension

of our Lord, of which holy Scripture is known by all to be a witness. The Jews thought that they were doing a service to God when they put the apostles to death. Among those who thought that they were showing service to God was even our Saul, though not ours as yet; so that among his causes for confidence which were past and to be forgotten, he enumerates the following: “An Hebrew,” he says, “of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the Church.” Here was one who thought that he did God service when he did what presently he suffered himself. For forty Jews bound themselves by an oath that they would slay him, when he caused that this should be made known to the tribune, so that under the protection of a guard of armed men he escaped their snares. But there was no one yet to say to him, What have you to do (not with kings, but) with tribunes and the arms of kings? There was no one to say to him, Dare you seek protection at the hand of soldiers, when your Lord was dragged by them to undergo His sufferings? There were as yet no instances of madness such as yours; but there were already examples being prepared, which should be sufficient for their refutation.

207. Moreover, with what terrible force did you venture to set forth and utter the following: “But to say nothing of ancient examples, observe, from instances taken from your own party, how very many of your emperors and judges have perished in persecuting us.” When I read this in your letter, I waited with the most earnest expectation to see what you were going to say, and whom you were going to enumerate, when, lo and behold! as though passing them over; you began to quote to me Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Geta, Decius, Valerian, Diocletian, Maximian. I acknowledge that there were more; but you have altogether forgotten against whom you are arguing. Were not all of these pagans, persecuting generally the Christian name on behalf of their idols? Be vigilant, then; for the men whom you mention were not of our communion. They were persecuting the whole aggregate of unity itself, from which we as you think, or you, as Christ teaches, have gone forth. But you had proposed to show that our emperors and judges had perished in consequence of persecuting you. Or is it that you yourself do not require that we should reckon these, because, in mentioning them, you passed them over, saying, “To pass over Nero;” and with this reservation did you mean to run through all the rest? What then was the use of their

being quoted, if they had nothing to do with the matter? But what has it to do with me? I now join with you in leaving these. Next, let that larger number which you promised to us be produced, unless, indeed, it may be that they cannot be found, inasmuch as you said that they had perished.

208. For now you go on to make mention of the bishops whom you are wont to accuse of having delivered up the sacred books, concerning whom we on our part are wont to answer: Either you fail in your proof, and so it concerns no one at all; or you succeed and then it still has no concern with us. For they have borne their own burden, whether it be good or bad; and we indeed believe that it was good. But of whatever character it was, yet it was their own; just as your bad men have borne their own burden, and neither you theirs nor they yours. But the common and most evil burden of you all is schism. This we have already often said before. Show us, therefore, not the names of bishops, but the names of our emperors and judges, who have perished in persecuting you. For this, is what you had proposed, this is what you had promised, this is what you had caused us most eagerly to expect. "Hear," he says, "Macarius perished, Ursacius perished, and all your counts perished in like manner, by the vengeance of God." You have mentioned only two by name, and neither of them was emperor. Who would be satisfied with this, I ask? Are you not utterly dissatisfied with yourself? You promise that you will mention a vast number of emperors and judges of our party who perished in persecuting you; and then, without a word of emperors, you mention two who were either judges or counts. For as to what you add, "And all your counts perished in like manner by the vengeance of God," it has nothing to do with the matter. For on this principle you might some time ago have closed your argument, without mentioning the name of any one at all. Why then have you not made mention of our emperors, that is to say, of emperors of our communion? Were you afraid that you should be indicted for high treason? Where is the fortitude that marks the Circumcelliones? And further, what do you mean by introducing those whom you mentioned above in such numbers? They might with more right say to you, Why did you seek us out? For they did nothing to assist your cause, and yet you mentioned them by name. What kind of man, then, must you be, who fear to mention those by name, who, as you say, have perished? At any rate, you might mention

more of the judges and counts, of whom you seem to feel no fear. But yet you stopped at Macarius and Ursacius. Are these two whom you mention the vast number of whom you spoke? Are you thinking of the lesson which we learned as boys? For if you were to ask of me what number two is, singular or plural, what could I answer, except that it was plural? But even so I am still not without the means of reply. I take away Macarius from your list; for you certainly have not told us how he perished. Or do you maintain that any one who persecutes you, unless he be immortal on the face of this earth, is to be deemed when he dies to have died because of you? What if Constantine had not lived to enjoy so long a reign, and such prolonged prosperity, who was the first to pass many decrees against your errors? And what if Julian, who gave you back the basilicas, had not been so speedily snatched away from life? In that case, when would you make an end of talking such nonsense as you do, seeing that even now you are unwilling to hold your tongues? And yet neither do we say that Julian died so soon because he gave back the basilicas to you. For we might be equally prolix with you in this, but we are unwilling to be equally foolish. Well, then, as I had begun to say, from these two we will take away Macarius. For when you had mentioned the names of two, Macarius and Ursacius, you repeated the name of Ursacius with the view of showing us how he deserved his death; and you said, “For Ursacius was slain in a battle with the barbarians, after which birds of prey with their savage talons, and the greedy teeth of dogs with their biting, tore him limb from limb.” Whence it is quite clear, since it is your custom to excite greater odium against us on account of Macarius, insomuch that you call us not Ursacians but Macarians, that you would have been sure to say by far the most concerning him, had you been able to say anything of the sort about his death. Of these two, therefore, when you used the plural number, if you take away Macarius, there remains Ursacius alone, a proper name of the singular number. Where is therefore the fulfillment of your threatening and tremendous promise of so many who should support your argument?

209. By this time all men who are in any degree acquainted with the meaning of words must understand, it seems to me, how ridiculous it is that, when you had said, “Macarius perished, Ursacius perished, and all your counts perished in like manner, by the vengeance of God,” as though men

were calling upon you to prove the fact, whereas, in reality, neither hearer nor reader was calling on you for anything further whatsoever, you immediately strung together a long argument in order to prove that all our counts perished in like manner by the vengeance of God. “For Ursacius,” you say, “was slain in a battle with the barbarians, after which birds of prey with their savage talons, and the greedy teeth of dogs with their biting, tore him limb from limb.” In the same way, any one else, who was similarly ignorant of the meaning of what he says, might assert that all your bishops perished in prison by the vengeance of God; and when asked how he could prove this fact, he might at once add, For Optatus, having been accused of belonging to the company of Gildo, was put to death in a similar way. Frivolous charges such as these we are compelled to listen to, to consider, to refute; only we are apprehensive for the weak, lest, from the greater slowness of their intellect, they should fall speedily into your toils. But Ursacius, of whom you speak, if it be the case that he lived a good life, and really died as you assert, will receive consolation from the promise of God, who says, “Surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it.”

210. But as to the calumnious charges which you bring against us, saying that by us the wrath of the kings of the world is excited against you, so long as we do not teach them the lesson of holy Scripture, but rather suggest our own desire of war, I do not imagine that you are so absolutely deaf to the eloquence of the sacred books themselves as that you should not rather fear that they should be acquainted with it. But whether you so will or no, they gain entrance to the Church; and even if we hold our tongues, they give heed to the readers; and, to say nothing of the rest, they especially listen with the most marked attention to that very psalm which you quoted. For you said that we do not teach them, nor, so far as we can help it, allow them to become acquainted with the words of Scripture: “Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Take hold of instruction lest the Lord be angry, etc. Believe that even this is sung, and that they hear it. But, at any rate, they hear what is written above in the same psalm, which you, unless I am mistaken, were only unwilling to pass over, for fear you should be understood to be afraid. They hear therefore this as well “The Lord hath

said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.” On hearing which, they cannot but marvel that some should be found to speak against this inheritance of Christ, endeavoring to reduce it to a little corner of the earth; and in their marvel they perhaps ask, on account of what they hear in what follows, “Serve the Lord with fear,” wherein they can serve Him, in so far as they are kings. For all men ought to serve God,—in one sense, in virtue of the condition common to them all, in that they are men; in another sense, in virtue of their several gifts, whereby this man has one function on the earth, and that man has another. For no man, as a private individual, could command that idols should be taken from the earth, which it was so long ago foretold should come to pass. Accordingly, when we take into consideration the social condition of the human race, we find that kings, in the very fact that they are kings, have a service which they can render to the Lord in a manner which is impossible for any who have not the power of kings.

211. When, therefore, they think over what you quote, they hear also what you yourself quoted concerning the three children, and hear it with circumstances of marvellous solemnity. For that same Scripture is most of all sung in the Church at a time when the very festal nature of the season excites additional fervor even in those who, during the rest of the year, are more given to be sluggish. What then do you think must be the feelings of Christian emperors, when they hear of the three children being cast into the burning fiery furnace because they were unwilling to consent to the wickedness of worshipping the image of the king, unless you suppose that they consider that the pious liberty of the saints cannot be overcome either by the power of kings, or by any enormity of punishment, and that they rejoice that they are not of the number of those kings who used to punish men that despised idols as though they were guilty of sacrilege? But, further, when they hear in what follows that the same king, terrified by the marvellous sight of, not only the three children, but the very flames performing service unto God, himself too began to serve God in fear, and to rejoice with reverence, and to lay hold of instruction, do they not understand that the reason that this was recorded, and set forth with such

publicity, was that an example might be set both before the servants of God, to prevent them from committing sacrilege in obedience to kings, and before kings themselves, that they should show themselves religious by belief in God? Being willing, therefore, on their part, from the admonition of the very psalm which you yourself inserted in your writings, both to be wise, and to receive instruction, and to serve God with fear and to rejoice unto Him with reverence, and to lay hold of instruction, with what attention do they listen to what that king said afterwards! For he said that he would make a decree for all the people over whom he ruled, that whosoever should speak blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego should perish, and their house be utterly destroyed. And if they know that he made this decree that blasphemy should not be uttered against the God who tempered the force of the fire, and liberated the three children, they surely go on to consider what decrees they ought to make in their kingdom, that the same God who has granted remission of sins, and given freedom to the whole earth, should not be treated with scorn among the faithful in their realm.

212. See therefore, when Christian kings make any decree against you in defence of Catholic unity, that it be not the case that with your lips you are accusing them of being unlearned, as it were, in holy Scripture, while in your hearts you are grieving that they are so well acquainted with its teaching. For who could put up with the sacrilegious and hateful fallacy which you advance in the case of one and the same Daniel, to find fault with kings because he was cast into the den of lions, and to refuse praise to kings in that he was raised to exalted honor, seeing that, even when he was cast into the den of lions, the king himself was more inclined to believe that he would be safe than that he would be destroyed, and, in anxiety for him, refused to eat his food? And then do you dare to say to Christians, “What have you to do with the kings of the world?” because Daniel suffered persecution at a king’s hands, and yet not look back upon the same Daniel faithfully interpreting dreams to kings, calling a king lord, receiving gifts and honors from a king? And so again do you dare, in the case of the aforesaid three children, to excite the flames of odium against kings, because, when they refused to worship the statue, they were cast into the flames, while at the same time you hold your tongue, and say nothing about

their being thus extolled and honored by the king? Granted that the king was a persecutor when he cast Daniel into the lions' den; but when, on receiving him safely out again, in his joy and congratulations he cast in his enemies to be torn in pieces and devoured by the same lions, what was he then,—a persecutor, or not? I call on you to answer me. For if he was, why did not Daniel himself resist him, as he might so easily have done in virtue of his great friendship for him, while yet you bid us restrain kings from persecuting men? But if he was not a persecutor, because he avenged with prompt justice the outrage committed against a holy man, what kind of vengeance, I would ask, must be exacted from kings for indignities offered to the sacraments of Christ, if the limbs of the prophet required such a vengeance because they were exposed to danger? Again, I acknowledge that the king, as indeed is manifest, was a persecutor when he cast the three children into the furnace because they refused to worship his image; but I ask whether he was still a persecutor when he set forth the decree that all who should blaspheme against the one true God should be destroyed, and their whole house laid waste? For if he was a persecutor, why do you answer Amen to the words of a persecutor? But if he was not a persecutor, why do you call those persecutors who deter you from the madness of blasphemy? For if they compel you to worship an idol, then they are like the impious king, and you are like the three children; but if they are preventing you from fighting against Christ, it is you who are impious if you attempt to do this. But what they may be if they forbid this with terrible threats, I do not presume to say. Do you find some other name for them, if you will not call them pious emperors.

213. If I had been the person to bring forward these examples of Daniel and the three children, you would perhaps resist, and declare that they ought not to have been brought from those times in illustration of our days; but God be thanked that you yourself brought them forward, to prove the point, it is true, which you desired to establish, but you see that their force was rather in favor of what you least would wish to prove. Perhaps you will say that this proceeds from no deceit of yours, but from the fallibility of human nature. Would that this were true! Amend it, then You will not lose in reputation nay, it marks unquestionably the higher mind to extinguish the

fire of animosity by a frank confession, than merely to escape the mist of falsehood by acuteness of the understanding.

CHAPTER 94

214. Petilianus said: “Where is the law of God? where is your Christianity, if you not only commit murders and put men to death, but also order such things to be done?”

215. Augustin answered: In reply to this, see what the fellow-heirs of Christ say throughout the world. We neither commit murders, and put men to death, nor order such things to be done; and you are raging much more madly than those who do such things, in that you put such things into the minds of men in opposition to the hopes of everlasting life.

CHAPTER 95

216. Petilianus said: “If you wish that we should be your friends, why do you drag us to you against our will? But if you wish that we should be your foes, why do you kill your foes?”

217. Augustin answered: We neither drag you to us against your will, nor do we kill our foes; but whatever we do in our dealings with you, though we may do it contrary to your inclination, yet we do it from our love to you, that you may voluntarily correct yourselves, and live an amended life. For no one lives against his will; and yet a boy, in order to learn this lesson of his own free will, is beaten contrary to his inclination, and that often by the very man that is most dear to him. And this, indeed, is what the kings would desire to say to you if they were to strike you, for to this end their power has been ordained of God. But you cry out even when they are not striking you.

CHAPTER 96

218. Petilianus said: “But what reason is there, or what inconsistency of emptiness, in desiring communion with us so eagerly, when all the time you call us by the false title of heretics?”

219. Augustin answered: If we so eagerly desired communion with heretics, we should not be anxious that you should be converted from the error of heresy; but when the very object of our negotiations with you is that you should cease to be heretics, how are we eagerly desiring communion with heretics? For, in fact, it is dissension and division that make you heretics; but peace and unity make men Catholics. When, then, you come over from your heresy to us, you cease to be what we hate, and begin to be what we love.

CHAPTER 97

220. Petilianus said: “Choose, in short, which of the two alternatives you prefer. If innocence is on your side, why do you persecute us with the sword? Or if you call us guilty, why do you, who are yourselves innocent, seek for our company?”

221. Augustin answered: O most ingenious dilemma, or rather most foolish verbosity! Is it not usual for the choice of two alternatives to be offered to an antagonist, when it is impossible that he should adopt both? For if you should offer me the choice of the two propositions, that I should say either that we were innocent, or that we were guilty; or, again, of the other pair of propositions, viz., those concerning you, I could not escape choosing either one or the other. But as it is, you offer me the choice of these two, whether we are innocent or you are guilty, and wish me to say which of these two I choose for my reply. But I refuse to make a choice; for I assert them both, that we are innocent, and that you are guilty. I say that we are innocent of the false and calumnious accusations which you bring against us, so far as any of us, being in the Catholic Church, can say with a safe conscience that we have neither given up the sacred books, nor taken part in the worship of idols, nor murdered any man, nor been guilty of any of the other crimes which you allege against us; and that any who may have committed any such offenses, which, however, you have not proved in any case, have thereby shut the doors of the kingdom of heaven, not against us, but against themselves; “for every man shall bear his own burden.” Here you have your answer on the first head. And I further say that you are all guilty and accursed,—not some of you owing to the sins of others, which are wrought among you by certain of your number, and are censured by certain others,

but all of you by the sin of schism; from which most heinous sacrilege no one of you can say that he is free, so long as he refuses to hold communion with the unity of all nations, unless, indeed, he be compelled to say that Christ has told a lie concerning the Church which is spread abroad among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And so you have my second answer. See how I have made you two replies, of which you were desirous that we should be reduced to choose the one. At any rate, you should have taken notice that both assertions might be made by us; and certainly, if this was what you wished, you should have asked it as a favor of us that we should choose one or the other, when you saw that it was in our power to choose both.

222. But "if innocence is on your side, why do you persecute us with the sword?" Look back for a moment on your troops, which are not now armed after the ancient fashion of their fathers only with cudgels, but have further added to their equipment axes and lances and swords, and determine for yourselves to which of us the question best belongs, "Why do you persecute us with the sword?" "Or if you call us guilty," say you, "why do you, who are yourselves innocent, seek for our company?" Here I answer very briefly. The reason why you, being guilty, are sought after by the innocent, is that you may cease to be guilty, and begin to be innocent. Here then I have chosen both of the alternatives concerning us, and answered both of those concerning you, only do you in turn choose one of the two. Are you innocent or guilty? Here you cannot choose to make the two assertions, and yet choose both, if so it pleases you. For at any rate you cannot be innocent in reference to the same circumstances in respect of which you are guilty. If therefore you are innocent do not be surprised that you are invited to be at peace with your brethren; but if you are guilty, do not be surprised that you are sought for punishment by kings. But since of these two alternatives you assume one for yourselves, and the other is alleged of you by us,—for you assume to yourselves innocence and it is alleged of you by us that you are living impiously,—hear again once more what I shall say on either head. If you are innocent, why do you speak against the testimony of Christ? But if you are guilty, why do you not fly for refuge to His mercy? For His testimony, on the one hand, is to the unity of the world, and His mercy, on the other, is in brotherly love.

CHAPTER 98

223. Petilianus said: “Lastly, as we have often said before, how great is your presumption, that you should speak as you presume to do of kings, when David says, It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man: it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes?’“

224. Augustin answered: We put no confidence in man, but, so far as we can, we warn men to place their trust in the Lord; nor do we put confidence in princes, but, so far as we can, we warn princes to put confidence in the Lord. And though we may seek aid from princes to promote the advantage of the Church, yet do we not put confidence in them. For neither did the apostle himself put confidence in that tribune, in the sense in which the Psalmist talks of putting confidence in princes, from whom he obtained for himself that an escort of armed men should be assigned to him; nor did he put confidence in the armed men, by whose protection he escaped the snares of the wicked ones, in any such sense as that of the Psalmist where he speaks of putting confidence in men. But neither do we find fault with you yourselves, because you sought from the emperor that the basilicas should be restored to you, as though you had put your trust in Julian the prince; but we find fault with you, that you have despaired of the witness of Christ, from whose unity you have separated the basilicas themselves. For you received them at the bidding of an enemy of Christ, that in them you should despise the commands of Christ, whilst you find force and truth in what Julian ordained, saying, “This, moreover, on the petition of Rogatianus, Pontius, Cassianus, and other bishops, not without an intermixture of clergy, is added to complete the whole, that those proceedings which were taken to their prejudice wrongly and without authority being all annulled, everything should be restored to its former position;” and yet you find nothing that has either force or truth in what Christ ordained, saying, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and even in the whole earth.” We entreat you, let yourselves be reformed. Return to this most manifest unity of the whole world; and let all things be restored to their former position, not in accordance with the words of the apostate Julian, but in accordance with the words of our Saviour Christ. Have pity on your own soul. We are not now comparing Constantine and Julian in order to show how different they are.

We are not saying, If you have not placed confidence in a man and in a prince, when you said to a pagan and apostate emperor, that “in him justice only found a place,” seeing that the party of Donatus has universally employed the prayers and the rescript in which those words occur, as is proved by the records of the audience; much less ought we to be accused by you, as though we put our confidence in any man or prince, if without any blasphemous flattery we obtained any request from Constantine or from the other Christian emperors; or if they themselves, without our asking for it, but remembering the account which they shall render to the Lord, under whose words they tremble when they hear what you yourself have quoted, “Be wise now therefore, O ye kings,” etc., and many other sayings of the sort, make any ordinance of their own accord in support of the unity of the Catholic Church. But I say nothing about Constantine. It is Christ and Julian that we contrast before you; nay, more than this, it is God and man, the Son of God and the son of hell, the Saviour of our souls and the destroyer of his own. Why do you maintain the rescript of Julian in the occupation of the basilicas, and yet not maintain the gospel of Christ in embracing the peace of the Church? We too cry out, “Let all things that have been done amiss be restored to their ancient condition.” The gospel of Christ is of greater antiquity than the rescript of Julian; the unity of Christ is of greater antiquity than the party of Donatus; the prayers of the Church to the Lord on behalf of the unity of the Church are of greater antiquity than the prayers of Rogatianus, and Pontius, and Cassianus, to Julian on behalf of the party of Donatus. Are proceedings wrongly taken when kings forbid division? and are they not wrongly taken when bishops divide unity? Is that wrong action when kings minister to the witness of Christ in defence of the Church? and is it not wrong action when bishops contradict the witness of Christ in order to deny the Church? We entreat you, therefore, that the words of Julian himself, to whom you thus made supplication, may be listened to, not in opposition to the gospel, but in accordance with the gospel, and that “all things which have been done amiss may be restored to their former condition.”

CHAPTER 99

225. Petilianus said: “On you, yes you, you wretched men, I call, who, being dismayed with the fear of persecution, whilst you seek to save your riches, not your souls, love not so much the faithless faith of the traitors, as the wickedness of the very men whose protection you have won unto yourselves,—just in the same way as sailors, shipwrecked in the waves, plunge into the waves by which they must be overwhelmed, and in the great danger of their lives seek unmistakeably the very object of their dread; just as the madness of a tyrant, that he may be free from apprehension of any person whatsoever, desires to be feared, though this is fraught with peril to himself: so, so you fly for refuge to the citadel of wickedness, being willing to look on the loss or punishment of the innocent if you may escape fear for yourselves. If you consider that you escape danger when you plunge into ruin, truly also it is a faith that merits condemnation to observe the faith of a robber. Lastly, it is trafficking in a madman’s gains to lose your own souls in order not to lose your wealth. For the Lord Christ says, If a man shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?’“

226. Augustin answered: That exhortation of yours would be useful, I cannot but acknowledge, if any one were to employ it in a good cause. It is undoubtedly well that you have tried to deter men from preferring their riches to their souls. But I would have you, who have heard these words, listen also for a time to us; for we also say this, but listen in what sense. If kings threaten to take away your riches, because you are not Jews according to the flesh, or because you do not worship idols or devils, or because you are not carried about into any heresies, but abide in Catholic unity, then choose rather that your riches should perish, that you perish not yourselves; but be careful to prefer neither anything else, nor the life of this world itself, to eternal salvation, which is in Christ. But if kings threaten you with loss or condemnation, simply on the ground that you are heretics, such things are terrifying you not in cruelty, but in mercy; and your determination not to fear is a sign not of bravery, but of obstinacy. Hear then the words of Peter, where he says, “What glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently?” so that herein you have neither consolation upon earth, nor in the world to come life everlasting; but you have here the miseries of the unfortunate, and there the hell of heretics. Do you see, therefore, my

brother, with whom I am now arguing, that you ought first to show whether you hold the truth, and then to exhort men that in upholding it they should be ready to give up all the blessings which they possess in this present world? And so, when you do not show this, because you cannot,—not that the talent is wanting, but because the cause is bad,—why do you hasten by your exhortations to make men both beggars and ignorant, both in want and wandering from the truth, in rags and contentions, household drudges and heretics, both losing their temporal goods in this world, and finding eternal evils in the judgment of Christ? But the cautious son, who, while he stands in dread of his father’s rod, keeps away from the lair of the serpent, escapes both blows and destruction; whereas he who despises the pains of discipline, when set in rivalry with his own pernicious will, is both beaten and destroyed. Do you not now understand, O learned man, that he who has resigned all earthly goods in order to maintain the peace of Christ, possesses God; whereas he who has lost even a very few coins in behalf of the party of Donatus is devoid of heart?

CHAPTER 100

227. Petilianus said: “But we who are poor in spirit are not apprehensive for our wealth, but rather feel a dread of wealth. We, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things,’ look on our soul as our wealth, and by our punishments and blood purchase to ourselves the everlasting riches of heaven. So again the same Lord says, Whosoever shall lose his substance, shall find it again an hundred fold.’“

228. Augustin answered: It is not beside the purpose to inquire into the true meaning of this passage also. For where my purpose is not interfered with by any mistake which you make, or any false impression which you convey in quoting from the Scriptures, I do not concern myself about the matter. It is not then written, “Whosoever shall lose his substance,” but “Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake.” And the passage about substance is not, “Whosoever shall lose,” but “Every one that hath forsaken;” and that not only with reference to substance of money, but many other things besides. But you meanwhile have not lost your substance; but whether you have forsaken it, in that you so boast of poverty, I cannot say. And if by any chance my colleague Fortunatus may know this, being in the same city with

you, he never told me, because I had never asked him. However, even if you had done this, you have yet yourself quoted the testimony of the apostle against yourself in this very epistle which you have written: “Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” For if you had charity, you would not bring charges against the whole world, which knows nothing of you, and of which you know no more,—no, not even such charges as are founded on the proved offenses of the Africans. If you had charity, you would not picture to yourself a false unity in your calumnies, but you would learn to recognize the unity that is most clearly set forth in the words of the Lord: “even in the whole earth.” But if you did not do this, why do you boast as though you had done it? Are you really so filled with fear of riches, that, having nothing, you possess all things? Tell that to your colleague Crispinus, who lately bought a farm near our city of Hippo, that he might there plunge men into the lowest abyss. Whence I too know this all too well. You perhaps are not aware of it, and therefore shout out in security, “We stand in fear of riches.” And hence I am surprised that that cry of yours has been allowed to pass Crispinus, so as to reach us. For between Constantina, where you are, and Hippo, where I am, lies Calama, where he is, nearer indeed to our side, but still between us. I wonder, therefore, how it was that he did not first intercept this cry, and strike it back so that it should not reach to our ears; and that he did not, in opposition to you, recite in much more copious phrase a eulogy on riches. For he not only stands in no fear of riches, but he actually loves them. And certainly, before you utter anything about the rest, you should rehearse such views to him. If he makes no corrections, then we have our answer ready. But for yourself, if it be true that you are poor, you have with you my brother Fortunatus. You will be more likely with such sentiments to please him, who is my colleague, than Crispinus, who is your own.

CHAPTER 101

229. Petilianus said: “Inasmuch as we live in the fear of God, we have no fear of the punishments and executions which you wreak with the sword; but the only thing which we avoid is that by your most wicked communion you destroy men’s souls, according to the saying of the Lord Himself: Fear

not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.'"

230. Augustin answered: You do the destruction which you speak of, not with a visible sword, but with that of which it is said, "The sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword." For with this sword of accusation and calumny against the world of which you are wholly ignorant, you destroy the souls of those who lack experience. But if you find fault with a most wicked communion, as you term it, I would bid you presently, not with my words, but with your own, to ascend, descend, enter, turn yourself about, change sides, be such as was Optatus. But if you return to your senses, and shall find that you are not such as he, not because he refused to partake of the sacraments with you, but because you took offense at what he did, then you will acquit the world of crimes which do not belong to it, and you will find yourself involved in the sin of schism.

CHAPTER 102

231. Petilianus said: "You, therefore, who prefer rather to be washed with the most false of baptisms than to be regenerate, not only do not lay aside your sins, but also load your souls with the offenses of criminals. For as the water of the guilty has been abandoned by the Holy Spirit, so it is clearly filled full of the offenses of the traditors. To any wretched man, then, who is baptized by one of this sort, we would say, If you have wished to be free from falsehood, you are really drenched with falsity. If you desired to shut out the sins of the flesh, you will, as the conscience of the guilty comes upon you, be partakers likewise of their guilt. If you wished to extinguish the flames of avarice, you are drenched with deceit, you are drenched with wickedness, you are drenched also with madness. Lastly, if you believe that faith is identical in the giver and the receiver, you are drenched with the blood of a brother by him who slays a man. And so it comes to pass that you, who had come to baptism free from sin, return from baptism guilty of the sin of murder."

232. Augustin answered: I should like to come to argument with those who shouted assent when they either heard or read those words of yours. For

such men have not ears in their hearts, but their heart in their ears. Yet let them read again and again, and consider, and find out for themselves, not what the sound of those words is, but what they mean. First of all, to sift the meaning of the last clause, "So it comes to pass," you say, "that you who had come to baptism free from sin, return from baptism guilty of the sin of murder:" tell me, to begin with, who there is that comes to baptism free from sin, with the single exception of Him who came to be baptized, not that His iniquity should be purged away, but that an example of humility might be given us? For what shall be forgiven to one free from sin? Or are you indeed endowed with such an eloquence, that you can show to us some innocence which yet committeth sin? Do you not hear the words of Scripture saying, "No one is clean from sin in Thy sight, not even the infant whose life is but of a single day upon the earth?" For whence else is it that one hastens even with infants to seek remission of their sins? Do you not hear the words of another Scripture, "In sin did my mother conceive me?" In the next place, if a man returns a murderer, who had come without the guilt of murder, merely because he receives baptism at a murderer's hands, then all they who returned from receiving baptism at the hands of Optatus were made partakers with Optatus. Go now, and see with what face you cast in our teeth that we excite the wrath of kings against you. Are you not afraid that as many satellites of Gildo will be sought for among you, as there are men who may have been baptized by Optatus? Do you see at length how that sentence of yours, like an empty bladder, has rattled not only with a meaningless sound, but on your own head?

233. To go on to the other earlier arguments which you have set before us to be refuted, they are of such a nature that we must needs allow that every one returns from baptism endued with the character of him by whom he is baptized; but God forbid that those whom you baptize should return from you infected with the same madness as possesses you when you make such a statement! And what a dainty sound there was in your words, "You are drenched with deceit, you are drenched with wickedness, you are drenched also with madness!" Surely you would never pour forth words like this unless you were, not drenched, but filled even to repletion with madness. Is it then true, to say nothing of the rest, that all who come untainted with covetousness to receive baptism at the hands of your covetous colleagues,

or the priests of your party, return guilty of covetousness, and that those who run in soberness to the whirlpool of intoxication to be baptized return in drunkenness? If you entertain and teach such views as this, you will have the effrontery even to quote, as making against us, the passage which you advanced some little time ago: “It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.” What is the meaning of your teaching, I would ask, save only this, that we should put our confidence not in the Lord, but in man, when you say that the baptized person is made to resemble him who has baptized him? And since you assume this as the fundamental principle of your baptism, are men to place their trust in you? and are those to place their trust in princes who were disposed to place it in the Lord? Truly I would bid them hearken not to you, but rather to those proofs which you have urged against ourselves, ay, and to words more awful yet; for not only is it written, “It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man,” but also, “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man.”

CHAPTER 103

234. Petilianus said: “Imitate indeed the prophets, who feared to have their holy souls deceived with false baptism. For Jeremiah says of old that among impious men water is as one that lies. Water,’ he says, that lies has not faith.’“

235. Augustin answered: Any one that hears these words, without being acquainted with the Scriptures, and who does not believe that you are either so far astray as not to know what you are saying, or deceiving in such wise that he whom you have deceived should not know what he says, would believe that the prophet Jeremiah, wishing to be baptized, had taken precautions not to be baptized by impious men, and had used these words with this intent. For what was your object in saying, previous to your quotation of this passage, “Imitate indeed the prophets, who feared to have their holy souls deceived with false baptism?” Just as though, in the days of Jeremiah, any one were washed with the sacrament of baptism, except so far as the Pharisees almost every moment bathed themselves, and their couches and cups and platters, with the washings which the Lord condemned, as we read in the gospel. How then could Jeremiah have said

this, as though he desired to be baptized, and sought to avoid being baptized by impious men? He said it, then, when he was complaining of a faithless people, by the corruption of whose morals he was vexed, not wishing to associate with their deeds; and yet he did not separate himself bodily from their congregation, nor seek other sacraments than those which the people received as suitable to that time, according to the law of Moses. To this people, therefore, in their evil mode of life, he gave the name of "a wound," with which the heart of the righteous man was grievously smitten, whether speaking thus of himself, or foreshadowing in himself what he foresaw would come to pass. For he speaks as follows: "O Lord, remember me, and visit me; make clear my innocence before those who persecute me in no spirit of long-suffering: know that for Thy sake I have suffered rebuke from those that scorn Thy words. Make their portion complete; and Thy word shall be unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts. I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, but was afraid of the presence of Thy hand; I sat alone, because I was filled with bitterness. Why do those who make me sad prevail against me? My wound is grievous; whence shall I be healed? It is become unto me as lying water, that has no faith." In all this it is manifest what the prophet wished to be understood, but manifest only to those who do not wish to distort to their own perverse cause the meaning of what they read. For Jeremiah says that his wound has become unto him as lying water, which cannot inspire faith; but he wished that by his wound those should be understood who made him sad by the evil conduct of their lives. Whence also the apostle says, "Without were fightings, within were fears;" and again, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" And because he had no hopes that they could be reformed, therefore he said, "Whence shall I be healed?" as though his own pain must needs continue so long as those among whom he was compelled to live continued what they were. But that a people is commonly understood under the appellation of water is shown in the Apocalypse, where we understand "many waters" to mean "many peoples," not by any conjecture of our own, but by an express explanation in the place itself. Abstain then from blaspheming the sacrament of baptism from any misunderstanding, or rather error, even when found in a man of most abandoned character; for not even in the lying Simon was the baptism which he received a lying water, nor do all the liars of your party administer a lying water when they baptize in the name of the Trinity. For neither do they begin to be liars only when they are betrayed and convicted, and so forced to acknowledge their misdeeds; but rather they were already liars, when, being adulterers and accursed, they pretended to be chaste and innocent.

CHAPTER 104

236. Petilianus said: “David also said, The oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head.’ Who is it, therefore, that he calls a sinner? Is it I who suffer your violence, or you who persecute the innocent?”

237. Augustin answered: As representing the body of Christ, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and mainstay of the truth, dispersed throughout the world, on account of the gospel which was preached, according to the words of the apostle, “to every creature which is under heaven:” as representing the whole world, of which David, whose words you cannot understand, has said, “The world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved;” whereas you contend that it not only has been moved, but has been utterly destroyed: as representing this, I answer, I do not persecute the innocent. But David said, “The oil of the sinner,” not of the traditor; not of him who offers incense, not of the persecutor, but “of the sinner.” What then will you make of your interpretation? See first whether you are not yourself a sinner. It is nothing to the point if you should say, I am not a traditor, I am not an offerer of incense, I am not a persecutor. I myself, by the grace of God, am none of these, nor is the world, which cannot be moved. But say, if you dare, I am not a sinner. For David says, “The oil of the sinner.” For so long as any sin, however light, be found in you, what ground have you for maintaining that you are not concerned in the expression that is used, “The oil of the sinner”? For I would ask whether you use the Lord’s prayer in your devotions? For if you do not use that prayer, which our Lord taught His disciples for their use, where have you learned another, proportioned to your merits, as exceeding the merits of the apostles? But if you pray, as our great Master deigned to teach us, how do you say, “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us?” For in this petition we are not referring to those sins which have already been forgiven us in baptism. Therefore these words in the prayer

either exclude you from being a petitioner to God, or else they make it manifest that you too are a sinner. Let those then come and kiss your head who have been baptized by you, whose heads have perished through your oil. But see to yourself, both what you are and what you think about yourself. Is it really true that Optatus, whom pagans, Jews, Christians, men of our party, men of your party, all proclaim throughout the whole of Africa to have been a thief, a traitor, an oppressor, a contriver of schism; not a friend, not a client, but a tool of him whom one of your party declared to have been his count, companion, and god,—is it true that he was not a sinner in any conceivable interpretation of the term? What then will they do whose heads were anointed by one guilty of a capital offense? Do not those very men kiss your heads, on whose heads you pass so serious a judgment by this interpretation which you place upon the passage? Truly I would bid you bring them forth, and admonish them to heal themselves. Or is it rather your heads which should be healed, who run so grievously astray? What then, you will ask, did David really say: Why do you ask me: rather ask himself. He answers you in the verse above: “The righteous shall smite me in kindness, and shall reprove me; but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head.” What could be plainer? what more manifest? I had rather, he says, be healed by a rebuke administered in kindness, than be deceived and led astray by smooth flattery, coming on me as an ointment on my head. The self-same sentiment is found elsewhere in Scripture under other words: “Better are the wounds of a friend than the proffered kisses of an enemy.”

CHAPTER 105

238. Petilianus said: “But he thus praises the ointment of concord among brethren: Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.’ Thus, he says, is unity anointed, even as the priests are anointed.”

239. Augustin answered: What you say is true. For that priesthood in the body of Christ had an anointing, and its salvation is secured by the bond of

unity. For indeed Christ Himself derives His name from chrism, that is, from anointing. Him the Hebrews call the Messiah, which word is closely akin to the Phoenician language, as is the case with very many other Hebrew words, if not with almost all. What then is meant by the head in that priesthood, what by the beard, what by the skirts of the garments? So far as the Lord enables me to understand, the head is none other than the Saviour of the body, of whom the apostle says, “And He is the head of the body, the Church.” By the beard is not unsuitably understood fortitude. Therefore, on those who show themselves to be brave in His Church, and cling to the light of His countenance, to preach the truth without fear, there descends from Christ Himself, as from the head, a sacred ointment, that is to say, the sanctification of the Spirit. By the skirts of the garments we are here given to understand that which is at the top of the garments, through which the head of Him who gives the clothing enters. By this are signified those who are perfected in faith within the Church. For in the skirts is perfection. And I presume you must remember what was said to a certain rich man: “If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shall have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me.” He indeed went away sorrowful, slighting what was perfect, choosing what was imperfect. But does it follow that there were wanting those who were so made perfect by such a surrender of earthly things, that the ointment of unity descended upon them, as from the head upon the skirts of the garments? For, putting aside the apostles, and those who were immediately associated with those leaders and teachers of the Church, whom we understand to be represented with greater dignity and more conspicuous fortitude in the beard, read in the Acts of the Apostles, and see those who “brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles’ feet. Neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own: but they had all things common: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.” I doubt not that you are aware that it is so written. Recognize, therefore, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Recognize the beard of Aaron; recognize the skirts of the spiritual garments. Search the Scriptures themselves, and see where those things began to be done; you will find that it was in Jerusalem. From this skirt of the garment is woven together the whole fabric of unity throughout all nations. By this the Head entered into the garment, that Christ should be clothed with all the variety of the several nations of the earth, because in this skirt of the garment appeared the actual variety of tongues. Why, therefore, is the Head itself, whence that ointment of unity descended, that is, the spiritual fragrance of brotherly love,—why, I say, is the Head itself exposed to your resistance, while it testifies and declares that “repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem”? And by this ointment you wish the sacrament of chrism to be understood, which is indeed holy as among the class of visible signs, like baptism itself, but yet can exist even among the worst of men, wasting their life in the works of the flesh, and never destined to possess the kingdom of heaven, and having therefore nothing to do either with the beard of Aaron, or with the skirts of his garments, or with any fabric of priestly clothing. For where do you intend to place what the apostle enumerates as “the manifest works of the flesh, which,” he says, “are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, poisonings, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God?” I put aside fornications, which are committed in secret; interpret uncleanness as you please, I am willing to put it aside as well. Let us put on one side also poisons, since no one is openly a compounder or giver of poisons. I put aside also heresies, since you will have it so. I am in doubt whether I ought to put aside idolatry, since the apostle classes with it covetousness, which is openly rife among you. However, setting aside all these, are there none among you lascivious, none covetous, none open in their indulgence of enmities, none fond of strife, or fond of emulation, wrathful, given to seditions, envious, drunken, wasting their time in revellings? Are none of such a character anointed among you? Do none die well known among you to be given to such things, or openly indulging in them? If you say there are none, I would have you consider whether you do not come under the description yourself, since you are manifestly telling lies in the desire for strife. But if you are yourself severed from men of this sort, not by bodily separation, but by dissimilarity of life, and if you behold with lamentation crowds like these around your altars, what shall we say, since they are anointed with holy oil, and yet, as the apostle assures us with the clearness of truth, shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Must we do such impious despite to the beard of Aaron and to the skirts of his garments, as to suppose that they are to be placed there? Far be that from us. Separate therefore the visible holy sacrament, which can exist both in the good and in the bad,—in the former for their reward, in the latter for judgment; separate it from the invisible unction of charity, which is the peculiar property of the good. Separate them, separate them, ay, and may God separate you from the party of Donatus, and call you back again into the Catholic Church, whence you were torn by them while yet a catechumen, to be bound by them in the bond of a deadly distinction. Now are ye not in the mountains of Zion, the dew of Hermon on the mountains of Zion, in whatever sense that be received by you; for you are not in the city upon a hill, which has this as its sure sign, that it cannot be hid. It is known therefore unto all nations. But the party of Donatus is unknown to the majority of nations, therefore is it not the true city.

CHAPTER 106

240. Petilianus said: “Woe unto you, therefore, who, by doing violence to what is holy, cut away the bond of unity; whereas the prophet says, If the people shall sin, the priest shall pray for them: but if the priest shall sin, who will pray for him?’“

241. Augustin answered: I seemed too a little while ago, when we were disputing about the oil of the sinner, to anoint your forehead, in order that you might say, if you dared, whether you yourself were not a sinner. You have had the hardihood to say as much. What a portentous sin! For in that you assert yourself to be a priest, what else have you maintained by quoting this testimony of the prophet, save that you are wholly without sin? For if you have sin, who is there that shall pray for you, according to your understanding of the words? For thus you blazon yourselves among the wretched people, quoting from the prophet: “If the people shall sin, the priest shall pray for them: but if the priest shall sin, who will pray for him? to the intent that they may believe you to be without sin, and entrust the wiping away their sins to your prayers. Truly ye are great men, exalted above your fellows, heavenly, godlike, angels indeed rather than men, who pray for the people, and will not have the people pray for you! Are you

more righteous than Paul, more perfect than that great apostle, who was wont to commend himself to the prayers of those whom he taught? “Continue,” he says, “in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.” See how prayer is made for an apostle, which you would have not made for a bishop. Do you perceive of how devilish a nature your pride is? Prayer is made for an apostle, that he may make manifest the mystery of Christ as he ought to speak. Accordingly, if you had a pious people under you, you ought to have exhorted them to pray for you, that you might not give utterance as you ought not. Are you more righteous than the evangelist John, who says, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?” Finally, are you more righteous than Daniel, whom you yourself quoted in this very epistle, going so far as to say, “The most righteous king cast forth Daniel, as he supposed, to be devoured by wild beasts?”—a thing which he never did suppose, since he said to Daniel himself, in the most friendly spirit, as the context of the lesson shows, “Thy God, whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee.” But on this subject we have already said much. With regard to the question now before us, viz., that Daniel was most righteous, it is proved not by your testimony, though that might be sufficient for me in the argument which I hold with you, but by the testimony of the Spirit of God, speaking also by the mouth of Ezekiel, where he named three men of most eminent righteousness, Noah, Daniel, and Job, who, he said, were the only men that could be saved from a certain excessive wrath of God, which was hanging over all the rest. A man, therefore, of the highest righteousness, one of three conspicuous for righteousness, prays, and says, “While I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin, and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God.” And you say that you are without sin, because forsooth you are a priest; and if the people sin, you pray for them: but if you sin, who shall pray for you? For clearly by the impiety of such arrogance you show yourself to be unworthy of the mediation of that Priest whom the prophet would have to be understood in these words, which you do not understand. For now that no one may ask why this was said, I will explain it so far as by God’s grace I shall be able. God was preparing the minds of men, by His prophet, to desire a Priest of such a sort that none should pray for Him. He was Himself prefigured in the times of the first people and the first temple, in which all things were figures for our ensample. Therefore the high priest used to enter alone into the holy of holies, that he might make supplication for the people, which did not enter with the priest into that inner sanctuary; just as our High Priest is entered into the secret places of the heavens, into that truer holy of holies, whilst we for whom He prays are still placed here. It is with this reference that the prophet says, “If the people shall sin, the priest shall pray for them: but if the priest shall sin, who will pray for him?” Seek therefore a priest of such a kind that he cannot sin, nor need that one should pray for him. And for this reason prayer is made for the apostles by the people; but for that Priest who is the Master and Lord of the apostles is prayer not made. Hear John confessing this, and saying, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins.” “We have,” he says; and “for our sins.” I pray you, learn humility, that you may not fall, or rather, that in time you may arise again. For had you not already fallen, you never would have used such words.

CHAPTER 107

242. Petilianus said: “And that none who is a layman may claim to be free from sin, they are all bound by this prohibition: Be not partakers of other men’s sins.’“

243. Augustin answered: You are mistaken toto caelo, as the saying is, by reason of your pride, whilst, by reason of your humility, you are unwilling to communicate with the whole world. For, in the first place, this was not spoken to a layman; and, in the second place, you are wholly ignorant in what sense it was spoken. The apostle, writing to Timothy, gives this warning to none other than Timothy himself, to whom he says in another place, “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.” And by many other proofs it is made clear that he was not a layman. But in that he says, “Be not partaker of other men’s sins,” he means, Be not partaker voluntarily, or with consent. And hence he immediately subjoins directions

how he shall obey the injunction, saying, “Keep thyself pure.” For neither was Paul himself partaker of other men’s sins, because he endured false brethren, over whom he groans, in bodily unity; nor did the apostles who preceded him partake of the thievery and crime of Judas, because they partook of the holy supper with him when he had already sold his Lord, and been pointed out as the traitor by that Lord.

CHAPTER 108

244. Petilianus said: “By this sentence, again, the apostle places in the same category those who have fellowship in the consciousness of evil. Worthy of death,’ he says, are both those who do such things, and those who consent with those that do them.’“

245. Augustin answered: I care not in what manner you have used these words, they are true. And this is the substance of the teaching of the Catholic Church, that there is a great difference between those who consent because they take pleasure in such things, and those who tolerate while they dislike them. The former make themselves chaff, while they follow the barrenness of the chaff; the latter are the grain. Let them wait for Christ, who bears the winnowing-fan, that they may be separated from the chaff.

CHAPTER 109

246. Petilianus said: “Come therefore to the Church, all ye people, and flee the company of traditors, if you would not also perish with them. For that you may the more readily know that, while they are themselves guilty, they yet entertain an excellent opinion of our faith, let me inform you that I baptize their polluted ones; they, though may God never grant them such an opportunity, receive those who are made mine by baptism,—which certainly they would not do if they recognized any defects in our baptism. See therefore how holy that is which we give, when even our sacrilegious enemy fears to destroy it.”

247. Augustin answered: Against this error I have said much already, both in this work and elsewhere. But since you think that in this sentence you have so strong a confirmation of your vain opinions, that you deemed it right to end your epistle with these words, that they might remain as it were

the fresher in the minds of your readers, I think it well to make a short reply. We recognize in heretics that baptism, which belongs not to the heretics but to Christ, in such sort as in fornicators, in unclean persons or effeminate, in idolaters, in poisoners, in those who retain enmity, in those who are fond of contention, in the credulous, in the proud, given to seditions, in the envious, in drunkards, in revellers; and in men like these we hold valid the baptism which is not theirs but Christ's. For of men like these, and among them are included heretics also, none, as the apostle says, shall inherit the kingdom of heaven. Nor are they to be considered as being in the body of Christ, which is the Church, simply because they are materially partakers of the sacraments. For the sacraments indeed are holy, even in such men as these, and shall be of force in them to greater condemnation, because they handle and partake of them unworthily. But the men themselves are not within the constitution of the Church, which increases in the increase of God in its members through connection and contact with Christ. For that Church is founded on a rock, as the Lord says, "Upon this rock I will build my Church." But they build on the sand, as the same Lord says, "Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand." But that you may not suppose that the Church which is upon a rock is in one part only of the earth, and does not extend even to its furthest boundaries, hear her voice groaning from the psalm, amid the evils of her pilgrimage. For she says, "From the end of the earth have I cried unto Thee; when my heart was distressed Thou didst lift me up upon the rock; Thou hast led me, Thou, my hope, hast become a tower of courage from the face of the enemy." See how she cries from the end of the earth. She is not therefore in Africa alone, nor only among the Africans, who send a bishop from Africa to Rome to a few Montenses, and into Spain to the house of one lady. See how she is exalted on a rock. All, therefore, are not to be deemed to be in her which build upon the sand, that is, which hear the words of Christ and do them not, even though both among us and among you they have and transmit the sacrament of baptism. See how her hope is in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,—not in Peter or in Paul, still less in Donatus or Petilianus. What we fear, therefore, to destroy, is not yours, but Christ's; and it is holy of itself, even in sacrilegious hands. For we cannot receive those who come from you, unless we destroy in them whatsoever appertains to you. For we destroy the treachery of the deserter, not the stamp of the sovereign. Accordingly, do you yourself consider and annul what you said: “I,” say you, “baptize their polluted ones; they, though may God never grant them such an opportunity, receive those who are made mine by baptism.” For you do not baptize men who are infected, but you rebaptize them, so as to infect them with the fraud of your error. But we do not receive men who are made yours by baptism; but we destroy that error of yours whereby they are made yours, and we receive the baptism of Christ, by which they are baptized. Therefore it is not without significance that you introduce the words, “Though may God never grant them such an opportunity.” For you said, “They, though may God never grant them such an opportunity, receive those who are made mine by baptism.” For while you in your fear that we may receive your followers desire to be understood, “may God never give them the opportunity of receiving such as are mine,” I suppose that, without knowing what it meant, you said, “May God never make them mine that you should receive them.” For we pray that those may not be really yours who come over at the present moment to the Catholic Church. Nor do they come over so as to be ours by right of baptism, but by fellowship with us, and that with us they may belong to Christ, in virtue of their baptism.

Book III

In this book Augustin refutes the second letter which Petilianus wrote to him after having seen the first of Augustin’s earlier books. This letter had been full of violent language; and Augustin rather shows that the arguments of Petilianus had been deficient and irrelevant, than brings forward arguments in support of his own statements.

CHAPTER 1

1. Being able to read, Petilianus, I have read your letter, in which you have shown with sufficient clearness that, in supporting the party of Donatus against the Catholic Church, you have neither been able to say anything to the purpose, nor been allowed to hold your tongue. What violent emotions did you endure, what a storm of feelings surged within your heart, on reading the answer which I made, with all possible brevity and clearness, to that portion of your letter which alone at that time had come into my hands! For you saw that the truth which we maintain and defend was confirmed with such strength of argument, and illustrated with such abundant light, that you could not find anything which could be said against it, whereby the charges which we make might be refuted. You observed, also, that the attention of many who had read it was fixed on you, since they desired to know what you would say, what you would do, how you would escape from the difficulty, how you would make your way out of the strait in which the word of God had encompassed you. Hereupon you, when you ought to have shown contempt for the opinion of the foolish ones, and to have gone on to adopt sound and truthful sentiments, preferred rather to do what Scripture has foretold of men like you: “Thou hast loved evil more than good, and lying rather than to speak righteousness.” Just as if I in turn were willing to recompense unto you railing for railing; in which case, what should we be but two evil speakers, so that those who read our words would either preserve their self-respect by throwing us aside with abhorrence, or eagerly devour what we wrote to gratify their malice? For my own part, since I answer every one, whether in writing or by word of mouth, even when I

have been attacked with insulting accusations, in such language as the Lord puts in my mouth, restraining and crushing the stings of empty indignation in the interests of my hearer or reader, I do not strive to prove myself superior to my adversary by abusing him, but rather to be a source of health in him by convicting him of his error

2. For if those who take into consideration what you have written have any feelings whatsoever, how did it serve you in the cause which is at issue between us respecting the Catholic communion and the party of Donatus, that, leaving a matter which was in a certain sense of public interest, you should have been led by private animosity to attack the life of an individual with malicious revilings, just as though that individual were the question in debate? Did you think so badly, I do not say of Christians, but of the whole human race, as not to suppose that your writings might come into the hands of some prudent men, who would lay aside all thoughts of individuals like us, and inquire rather into the question which was at issue between us, and pay heed, not to who and what we were, but to what we might be able to advance in defense of the truth or against error? You should have paid respect to these men's judgment, you should have guarded yourself against their censure, lest they should think that you could find nothing to say, unless you set before yourself some one whom you might abuse by any means within your power. But one may see by the thoughtlessness and foolishness of some men, who listen eagerly to the quarrels of any learned disputants, that while they take notice of the eloquence wherewith you lavish your abuse, they do not perceive with what truth you are refuted. At the same time, I think your object partly was that I might be driven, by the necessity of defending myself, to desert the very cause which I had undertaken; and that so, while men's attention was turned to the words of opponents who were engaged not in disputation, but in quarrelling, the truth might be obscured, which you are so afraid should come to light and be well known among men. What therefore was I to do in opposing such a design as this, except to keep strictly to my subject, neglecting rather my own defense, praying withal that no personal calumny may lead me to withdraw from it? I will exalt the house of my God, whose honor I have loved, with the tribute of a faithful servant's voice, but myself I will humiliate and hold of no account. “I had rather be a door-keeper in the

house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of heretics.” I will therefore turn my discourse from you, Petilianus, for a time, and direct it rather to those whom you have endeavored to turn away from me by your revilings, as though my endeavor rather were that men should be converted unto me, and not rather with me unto God.

CHAPTER 2

3. Hear therefore, all ye who have read his revilings, what Petilianus has vented against me with more anger than consideration. To begin with, I will address you in the words of the apostle, which certainly are true, whatever I myself may be: “Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.” With regard to what immediately follows, although I do not venture to apply to myself the words, “For I am conscious of nothing in myself,” yet I say confidently in the sight of God, that I am conscious in myself of none of those charges which Petilianus has brought against my life since the time when I was baptized in Christ; “yet am I not hereby justified, but He that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God. And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.” “Therefore let no man glory in men: for all things are yours; and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.” Again I say, “Let no man glory in men;” nay, oftentimes I repeat it, “Let no man glory in men.” If you perceive anything in us which is deserving of praise, refer it all to His praise, from whom is every good gift and every perfect gift; for it is “from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” For what have we which we did not receive? and if we have received it, let us not boast as though we had not received it. And in all these things which you know to be good in us, be ye our followers, at any rate, if we are Christ’s; but if, on the other hand,

you either suspect, or believe, or see that any evil is in us, hold fast to that saying of the Lord's, in which you may safely resolve not to desert His Church because of men's ill deeds. Whatsoever we bid you observe, that observe and do; but whatsoever evil works you think or know to be in us, those do ye not. For this is not the time for me to justify myself before you, when I have undertaken, neglecting all considerations of self, to recommend to you what is for your salvation, that no one should make his boast of men. For "cursed be the man that trusteth in man." So long as this precept of the Lord and His apostle be adhered to and observed, the cause which I serve will be victorious, even if I myself, as my enemy would fain have thought, am faint and oppressed in my own cause. For if you cling most firmly to what I urge on you with all my might, that every one is cursed who places his trust in man, so that none should make his boast of man, then you will in no wise desert the threshing-floor of the Lord on account of the chaff which either is now being dispersed beneath the blast of the wind of pride, or will be separated by the final winnowing; nor will you fly from the great house on account of the vessels made to dishonor; nor will you quit the net through the breaches made in it because of the bad fish which are to be separated on the shore; nor will you leave the good pastures of unity, because of the goats which are to be placed on the left when the Good Shepherd shall divide the flock; nor will you separate yourselves by an impious secession, because of the mixture of the tares, from the society of that good wheat, whose source is that grain that dies and is multiplied thereby, and that grows together throughout the world until the harvest. For the field is the world,—not only Africa; and the harvest is the end of the world,—not the era of Donatus

CHAPTER 3

4. These comparisons of the gospel you doubtless recognize. Nor can we suppose them given for any other purpose, except that no one should make his boast in man, and that no one should be puffed up for one against another, or divided one against another, saying, "I am of Paul," when certainly Paul was not crucified for you, nor were you baptized in the name of Paul, much less in that of Caecilianus, or of any one of us, that you may learn, that so long as the chaff is being bruised with the corn, so long as the

bad fishes swim together with the good in the nets of the Lord, till the time of separation shall come, it is your duty rather to endure the admixture of the bad out of consideration for the good, than to violate the principle of brotherly love towards the good from any consideration of the bad. For this admixture is not for eternity, but for time alone; nor is it spiritual, but corporal. And in this the angels will not be liable to err, when they shall collect the bad from the midst of the good, and commit them to the burning fiery furnace. For the Lord knoweth those which are His. And if a man cannot depart bodily from those who practise iniquity so long as time shall last, at any rate, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity itself. For in the meantime he may separate himself from the wicked in life, and in morals, and in heart and will, and in the same respects depart from his society; and separation such as this should always be maintained. But let the separation in the body be waited for till the end of time, faithfully, patiently, bravely. In consideration of which expectation it is said, “Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, upon the Lord.” For the greatest palm of toleration is won by those who, among false brethren that have crept in unawares, seeking their own, and not the things of Jesus Christ, yet show that they on their part seek not to disturb the love which is not their own, but Jesus Christ’s, by any turbulent or rash dissension, nor to break the unity of the Lord’s net, in which are gathered together fish of every kind; till it is drawn to the shore, that is, till the end of time, by any wicked strife fostered in the spirit of pride: whilst each might think himself to be something, being really nothing, and so might lead himself astray, and wish that sufficient reason might be found for the separation of Christian peoples in the judgment of himself or of his friends, who declare that they know beyond all question certain wicked men unworthy of communion in the sacraments of the Christian religion: though whatever it may be that they know of them, they cannot persuade the universal Church, which, as it was foretold, is spread abroad throughout all nations, to give credit to their tale. And when they refuse communion with these men, as men whose character they know, they desert the unity of the Church; whereas they ought rather, if there really were in them that charity which endureth all things, themselves to bear what they know in one nation, lest they should separate themselves from the good whom they were unable throughout all nations to fill with the teaching of evil alien to them. Whence even, without discussing the case, in which they are convicted by the weightiest proofs of having uttered calumnies against the innocent, they are believed with greater probability to have invented false charges of giving up the sacred books, when they are found to have themselves committed the far more heinous crime of wicked division in the Church. For even, if whatever imputations they have cast of giving up the sacred books were true, yet they in no wise ought to have abandoned the society of Christians, who are commended by holy Scripture even to the ends of the world, on considerations which they have been familiar with, while these men showed that they were not acquainted with them

CHAPTER 4

5. Nor would I therefore be understood to urge that ecclesiastical discipline should be set at naught, and that every one should be allowed to do exactly as he pleased, without any check, without a kind of healing chastisement, a lenity which should inspire fear, the severity of love. For then what will become of the precept of the apostle, “Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men; see that none render evil for evil unto any man?” At any rate, when he added these last words, “See that none render evil for evil unto any man,” he showed with sufficient clearness that there is no rendering of evil for evil when one chastises those that are unruly, even though for the fault of unruliness be administered the punishment of chastising. The punishment of chastising therefore is not an evil, though the fault be an evil. For indeed it is the steel, not of an enemy inflicting a wound, but of a surgeon performing an operation. Things like this are done within the Church, and that spirit of gentleness within its pale burns with zeal towards God, lest the chaste virgin which is espoused to one husband, even Christ, should in any of her members be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ, as Eve was beguiled by the subtilty of the serpent. Notwithstanding, far be it from the servants of the father of the family that they should be unmindful of the precept of their Lord, and be so inflamed with the fire of holy indignation against the multitude of the tares, that while they seek to gather them in bundles before the time, the wheat should be rooted up together with them.

And of this sin these men would be held to be guilty, even though they showed that those were true charges which they brought against the traditors whom they accused; because they separated themselves in a spirit of impious presumption, not only from the wicked, whose society they professed to be avoiding, but also from the good and faithful in all nations of the world, to whom they could not prove the truth of what they said they knew; and with themselves they drew away into the same destruction many others over whom they had some slight authority, and who were not wise enough to understand that the unity of the Church dispersed throughout the world was on no account to be forsaken for other men's sins. So that, even though they themselves knew that they were pressing true charges against certain of their neighbors, yet in this way a weak brother, for whom Christ died, was perishing through their knowledge; whilst, being offended at other men's sins, he was destroying in himself the blessing of peace which he had with the good brethren, who partly had never heard such charges, partly had shrunk from giving hasty credence to what was neither discussed nor proved, partly, in the peaceful spirit of humility, had left these charges, whatsoever they might be, to the cognizance of the judges of the Church, to whom the whole matter had been referred, across the sea

CHAPTER 5

6. Do you, therefore, holy scions of our one Catholic mother, beware with all the watchfulness of which you are capable, in due submission to the Lord, of the example of crime and error such as this. With however great light of learning and of reputation he may shine, however much he may boast himself to be a precious stone, who endeavors to lead you after him, remember always that that brave woman who alone is lovely only to her husband, whom holy Scripture portrays to us in the last chapter of the Book of Proverbs, is more precious than any precious stones. Let no one say, I will follow such an one, for it was even he that made me a Christian; or, I will follow such an one, for it was even he that baptized me. For "neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." And "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." No one also that preaches the name of Christ, and handles or administers the sacrament of Christ, is to be followed in opposition to the

unity of Christ. “Let every man prove his own work; and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden,”—the burden, that is, of rendering an account; for “every one of shall give an account of himself. Let us not therefore judge one another any more.” For, so far as relates to the burdens of mutual love, “bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.” Let us therefore “forbear one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;” for no one who gathers outside that peace is gathering with Christ; but “he that gathering not with Him scattereth abroad.”

CHAPTER 6

7. Furthermore, whether concerning Christ, or concerning His Church, or any other matter whatsoever which is connected with your faith and life, to say nothing of ourselves, who are by no means to be compared with him who said, “Though we,” at any rate, as he went on to say, “Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which” ye have received in the lawful and evangelical Scripture, “let him be accursed.” While carrying out this principle of action in our dealings with you, and with all whom we desire to gain in Christ, and, amongst other things, while preaching the holy Church which we read of as promised in the epistles of God, and see to be fulfilled according to the promises in all nations of the world, we have earned, not the rendering of thanks, but the flames of hatred, from those whom we desire to have attracted into His most peaceful bosom; as though we had bound them fast in that party for which they cannot find any defense that they should make; or as though we so long before had given injunctions to prophets and apostles that they should insert in their books no proofs by which it might be shown that the party of Donatus was the Church of Christ. And we indeed, dear brethren, when we hear false charges brought against us by those whom we have offended by preaching the eloquence of truth, and confuting the vanity of error, have, as you know, the most abundant consolation. For if, in the matters which they lay to my charge, the testimony of my conscience does not stand against me in the sight of God, where no mortal eye can reach, not only ought I not to

be cast down, but I should even rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is my reward in heaven. For in fact I ought to consider, not how bitter, but how false is what I hear, and how true He is in defense of whose name I am exposed to it, and to whom it is said, “Thy name is as ointment poured forth.” And deservedly does it smell sweet in all nations, though those who speak evil of us endeavor to confine its fragrance within one corner of Africa. Why therefore should we take amiss that we are reviled by men who thus detract from the glory of Christ, whose party and schism find offense in what was foretold so long before of His ascent into the heavens, and of the pouring forth of His name, as of the savor of ointment: “Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let Thy glory be above all the earth”?

CHAPTER 7

8. Whilst we bear the testimony of God to this and the like effect against the vain speaking of men, we are forced to undergo bitter insults from the enemies of the glory of Christ. Let them say what they will, whilst He exhorts us, saying, “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.” What He says in the first instance, “for righteousness’ sake,” He has repeated in the words that He uses afterwards, “for my sake;” seeing that He “is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” And when He says, “Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven,” if I hold in a good conscience what is said “for righteousness’ sake,” and “for my sake,” whosoever willfully detracts from my reputation is against his will contributing to my reward. For neither did He only instruct me by His word, without also confirming me by His example. Follow the faith of the holy Scriptures, and you will find that Christ rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father. Follow the charges brought by His enemies, and you will presently believe that He was stolen from the sepulchre by His disciples. Why then should we, while defending His house to the best of the abilities given us by God, expect to meet with any other treatment from His enemies? “If they have called the Master of

the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household?” If, therefore, we suffer, we shall also reign with Him. But if it be not only the wrath of the accuser that strikes the ear, but also the truth of the accusation that stings the conscience, what does it profit me if the whole world were to exalt me with perpetual praise? So neither the eulogy of him who praises has power to heal a guilty conscience, nor does the insult of him, who reviles wound the good conscience. Nor, however, is your hope which is in the Lord deceived, even though we chance to be in secret what our enemies wish us to be thought; for you have not placed your hope in us, nor have you ever heard from us any doctrine of the kind. You therefore are safe, whatever we may be, who have learned to say, “I have trusted in the Lord; therefore I shall not slide;” and “In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.” And to those who endeavor to lead you astray to the earthly heights of proud men, you know how to answer, “In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?”

CHAPTER 8

9. Nor is it only you that are safe, whatever we may be, because you are satisfied with the very truth of Christ which is in us, in so far as it is preached through us, and everywhere throughout the world, and because, listening to it willingly, so far as it is set forth by the humble ministry of our tongue, you also think well and kindly of us,—for so your hope is in Him whom we preach to you out of His loving-kindness, which extends over you,—but further, all of you, who also received the sacrament of holy baptism from our ministering, may well rejoice in the same security, seeing that you were baptized, not into us, but into Christ. You did not therefore put on us, but Christ; nor did I ask you whether you were converted unto me, but unto the living God; nor whether you believed in me, but in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But if you answered my question with truthful hearts, you were placed in a state of salvation, not by the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but by the answer of a good conscience towards God; not by a fellow-servant, but by the Lord; not by the herald, but by the judge. For it is not true, as Petilianus inconsiderately said, that “the conscience of the giver,” or, as he added “the conscience of him who

gives in holiness is what we look for to wash the conscience of the recipient.” For when something is given that is of God, it is given in holiness, even by a conscience which is not holy. And certainly it is beyond the power of the recipient to discern whether the said conscience is holy or not holy; but that which is given he can discern with clearness. That which is known to Him who is ever holy is received with perfect safety, whatever be the character of the minister at whose hands it is received. For unless the words which are spoken from Moses’ seat were necessarily holy, He that is the Truth would never have said, “Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do.” But if the men who uttered holy words were themselves holy, He would not have said, “Do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.” For it is true that in no way do men gather grapes of thorns, because grapes never spring from the root of a thorn; but when the shoot of the vine has entwined itself in a thorn hedge, the fruit which hangs upon it is not therefore looked upon with dread, but the thorn is avoided, while the grape is plucked

CHAPTER 9

10. Therefore, as I have often said before, and am desirous to bring home to you, whatsoever we may be, you are safe, who have God for your Father and His Church for your mother. For although the goats may feed in company with the sheep, yet they shall not stand on the right hand; although the chaff may be bruised together with the wheat, it shall not be gathered into the barn; although the bad fish may swim in company with the good within the Lord’s nets, they shall not be gathered into vessels. Let no man make his boast even in a good man: let no man shun the good gifts of God even in a bad man

CHAPTER 10

11. Let these things suffice you, my beloved Christian brethren of the Catholic Church, so far as the present business is concerned; and if you hold fast to this in Catholic affection, so long as you are one sure flock of the one Shepherd, I am not too much concerned with the abuse that any enemy may lavish on me, your partner in the flock, or, at any rate, your watch-dog, so long as he compels me to bark rather in your defense than in

my own. And yet, if it were necessary for the cause that I should enter on my own defense, I should do so with the greatest brevity and the greatest ease, joining freely with all men in condemning and bearing witness against the whole period of my life before I received the baptism of Christ, so far as relates to my evil passions and my errors, lest, in defending that period, I should seem to be seeking my own glory, not His, who by His grace delivered me even from myself. Wherefore, when I hear that life of mine abused, in whatever spirit he may be acting who abuses it, I am not so thankless as to be grieved. However much he finds fault with any vice of mine, I praise him in the same degree as my physician. Why then should I disturb myself about defending those past and obsolete evils in my life, in respect of which, though Petilianus has said much that is false, he has yet left more that is true unsaid? But concerning that period of my life which is subsequent to my baptism, to you who know me I speak unnecessarily in telling of those things which might be known to all mankind; but those who know me not ought not to act with such unfairness towards me as to believe Petilianus rather than you concerning me. For if one should not give credence to the panegyrics of a friend, neither should one believe the detraction of an enemy. There remain, therefore, those things which are hidden in a man, in which conscience alone can bear testimony, which cannot be a witness before men. Herein Petilianus says that I am a Manichaean, speaking of the conscience of another man; I, speaking of my own conscience, aver that I am not. Choose which of us you had sooner believe. Notwithstanding, since there is not any need even of this short and easy defense on my part, where the question at issue is not concerning the merits of any individual, whoever he may be, but concerning the truth of the whole Church, I have more also to say to any of you, who, being of the party of Donatus, have read the evil words which Petilianus has written about me, which I should not have heard from him if I had had no care about the loss of your salvation; but then I should have been wanting in the bowels of Christian love

CHAPTER 11

12. What wonder is it then, if, when I draw in the grain that has been shaken forth from the threshing-floor of the Lord, together with the soil and

chaff, I suffer injury from the dust that rebounds against me; or that, when I am diligently seeking after the lost sheep of my Lord, I am torn by the briars of thorny tongues? I entreat you, lay aside for a time all considerations of party feeling, and judge with some degree of fairness between Petilianus and myself. I am desirous that you should be acquainted with the cause of the Church; he, that you should be familiar with mine. For what other reason than because he dares not bid you disbelieve my witnesses, whom I am constantly citing in the cause of the Church,—for they are prophets and apostles, and Christ Himself, the Lord of prophets and apostles,—whereas you easily give him credit in whatever he may choose to say concerning me, a man against a man, and one, moreover, of your own party against a stranger to you? And should I adduce any witnesses to my life, however important the thing he might say would be, it would not be believed by them, and of this Petilianus would quickly persuade you; especially when any one would bring forward a plea for me. Since he is an enemy of the Donatist party, in virtue of this fact he would also continually be considered your enemy. Petilianus therefore reigns supreme. Whenever he aims any abuse at me, of whatever character it may be, you all applaud and shout assent. This cause he has found wherein the victory is possible for him, but only with you for judges. He will seek for neither proof nor witness; for all that he has to prove in his words is this, that he lavishes most copious abuse on one whom you most cordially hate. For whereas, when the testimony of divine Scripture is quoted in such abundance and in such express terms in favor of the Catholic Church, he remains silent amidst your grief, he has chosen for himself a subject on which he may speak amidst applause from you; and though really conquered, yet, pretending that he stands unmoved, he may make statements concerning me like this, and even worse than this. It is enough for me, in respect of the cause which I am now pleading, that whatsoever I may be found to be, yet the Church for which I speak unconquered

CHAPTER 12

13. For I am a man of the threshing-floor of Christ: if a bad man, then part of the chaff; if good, then of the grain. The winnowing-fan of this threshing-floor is not the tongue of Petilianus; and hereby, whatever evil he

may have uttered, even with truth, against the chaff of this threshing-floor, this in no way prejudices its grain. But whereinsoever he has cast any revilings or calumnies against the grain itself, its faith is tried on earth, and its reward increased in the heavens. For where men are holy servants of the Lord, and are fighting with holiness for God, not against Petilianus, or any flesh and blood like him, but against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, such as are all enemies of the truth, to whom I would that we could say, "Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord,"—where the servants of God, I say, are waging such a war as this, then all the calumnious revilings that are uttered by their enemies, which cause an evil report among the malicious and those that are rash in believing, are weapons on the left hand: it is with such as these that even the devil is defeated. For when we are tried by good report, whether we resist the exaltation of ourselves to pride, and are tried by evil report, whether we love even those very enemies by whom it is invented against us, then we overcome the devil by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. For when the apostle had used the expression, "By the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left," he at once goes on to say, as if in explanation of the terms, "By honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report," and so forth,—reckoning honor and good report among the armor on the right hand, dishonor and evil report among that upon the left

CHAPTER 13

14. If, therefore, I am a servant of the Lord, and a soldier that is not reprobate, with whatever eloquence Petilianus stands forth reviling me, ought I in any way to be annoyed that he has been appointed for me as a most accomplished craftsman of the armor on the left? It is necessary that I should fight in this armor as skillfully as possible in defence of my Lord, and should smite with it the enemy against whom I wage an unseen fight, who in all cunning strives and endeavors, with the most perverse and ancient craftiness, that this should lead me to hate Petilianus, and so be unable to fulfill the command which Christ has given, that we should "love our enemies." But from this may I be saved by the mercy of Him who loved me, and gave Himself for me, so that, as He hung upon the cross, He said,

“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do;” and so taught me to say of Petilianus and all other enemies of mine like him “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.’

CHAPTER 14

15. Furthermore, if I have obtained from you, in accordance with my earnest endeavors, that, laying aside from your minds all prejudice of party, you should be impartial judges between Petilianus and myself, I will show to you that he has not replied to what I wrote, that you may understand that he has been compelled by lack of truth to abandon the dispute, and also see what revilings he has allowed himself to utter against the man who so conducted it that he had no reply to make. And yet what I am going to say displays itself with such manifest clearness, that, even though your minds were estranged from me by party prejudice and personal hatred, yet, if you would only read what is written on both sides, you could not but confess among yourselves, in your inmost hearts, that I have spoken truth

16. For, in replying to the former part of his writings, which then alone had come into my hands, without taking any notice of his wordy and sacrilegious revilings, where he says, “Let those men cast in our teeth our twice-repeated baptism, who, under the name of baptism, have polluted their souls with a guilty washing; whom I hold to be so obscene that no manner of filth is less clean than they; whose lot it has been, by a perversion of cleanliness, to be defiled by the water wherein they washed;” I thought that what follows was worthy of discussion and refutation, where he says, “For what we look for is the conscience of the giver, that the conscience of the recipient may thereby be cleansed;” and I asked what means were to be found for cleansing one who receives baptism when the conscience of the giver is polluted, without the knowledge of him who is to receive the sacrament at his hands.

CHAPTER 15

17. Read now the most profuse revilings which he has poured forth whilst puffed up with indignation against me, and see whether he has given me any answer, when I ask what means are to be found for cleansing one who

receives baptism when the conscience of the giver is polluted, without the knowledge of him who receives the sacrament at his hands. I beg of you to search minutely, to examine every page, to reckon every line, to ponder every word, to sift the meaning of each syllable, and tell me, if you can discover it, where he has made answer to the question, What means are to be found for cleansing the conscience of the recipient who is unaware that the conscience of the giver is polluted?

18. For how did it bear upon the point that he added a phrase which he said was suppressed by me, maintaining that he had written in the following terms: "The conscience of him who gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient?" For to prove to you that it was not suppressed by me, its addition in no way hinders my inquiry, or makes up the deficiency which was found in him. For in the face of those very words I ask again, and I beg of you to see whether he has given any answer, If "the conscience of him who gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient," what means are to be found for cleansing the conscience of the recipient when the conscience of the giver is stained with guilt, without the knowledge of him who is to receive the sacrament at his hands? I insist upon an answer being given to this. Do not allow that any one should be prejudiced by revilings irrelevant to the matter in hand. If the conscience of him who gives in holiness is what we look for,—observe that I do not say "the conscience of him who gives," but that I added the words, "of him who gives in holiness,"—if the conscience, then, of him who gives in holiness is what we look for, what means are to be found for cleansing one who receives baptism when the conscience of the giver is polluted, without the knowledge of him who is to receive the sacrament at his hands?

CHAPTER 16

19. Let him go now, and with panting lungs and swollen throat find fault with me as a mere dialectician. Nay, let him summon, not me, but the science of dialectics itself, to the bar of popular opinion as a forger of lies, and let him open his mouth to its widest against it, with all the noisiest uproar of a special pleader. Let him say whatever he pleases before the inexperienced, that so the learned may be moved to wrath, while the ignorant are deceived. Let him call me, in virtue of my rhetoric, by the

name of the orator Tertullus, by whom Paul was accused; and let him give himself the name of Advocate, in virtue of the pleading in which he boasts his former power, and for this reason delude himself with the notion that he is, or rather was, a namesake of the Holy Ghost. Let him, with all my heart, exaggerate the foulness of the Manichaeans, and endeavor to divert it on to me by his barking. Let him quote all the exploits of those who have been condemned, whether known or unknown to me; and let him turn into the calumnious imputation of a prejudged crime, by some new right entirely his own, the fact that a former friend of mine there named me in my absence to the better securing of his own defense. Let him read the titles that have been placed upon my letters by himself or by his friends, as suited their pleasure, and boast that he has, as it were, involved me hopelessly in their expressions. When I acknowledge certain eulogies of bread, uttered in all simplicity and merriment, let him take away my character with the absurd imputations of poisonous baseness and madness. And let him entertain so bad an opinion of your understanding, as to imagine that he can be believed when he declares that pernicious love-charms were given to a woman, not only with the knowledge, but actually with the complicity of her husband. What the man who was afterwards to ordain me bishop wrote about me in anger, while I was as yet a priest, he may freely seek to use as evidence against me. That the same man sought and obtained forgiveness from a holy Council for the wrong he thus had done me, he is equally at liberty to ignore as being in my favor,—being either so ignorant or so forgetful of Christian gentleness, and the commandment of the gospel, that he brings as an accusation against a brother what is wholly unknown to that brother himself, as he humbly entreats that pardon may in kindness be extended to him

CHAPTER 17

20. Let him further go on, in his discourse of many but manifestly empty words, to matters of which he is wholly ignorant, or in which rather he abuses the ignorance of the mass of those who hear him, and from the confession of a certain woman, that she had called herself a catechumen of the Manichaeans, being already a full member of the Catholic Church, let him say or write what he pleases concerning their baptism,—not knowing,

or pretending not to know, that the name of catechumen is not bestowed among them upon persons to denote that they are at some future time to be baptized, but that this name is given to such as are also called Hearers, on the supposition that they cannot observe what are considered the higher and greater commandments, which are observed by those whom they think right to distinguish and honor by the name of Elect. Let him also maintain with wonderful rashness, either as himself deceived or as seeking to deceive, that I was a presbyter among the Manichaeans. Let him set forth and refute, in whatever sense seems good to him, the words of the third book of my Confessions, which, both in themselves, and from much that I have said before and since, are perfectly clear to all who read them. Lastly, let him triumph in my stealing his words, because I have suppressed two of them, as though the victory were his upon their restoration

CHAPTER 18

21. Certainly in all these things, as you can learn or refresh your memory by reading his letter, he has given free scope to the impulse of his tongue, with all the license of boasting which he chose to use, but nowhere has he told us where means are to be found for cleansing the conscience of the recipient, when that of the giver has been stained with sin without his knowing it. But amid all his noise, and after all his noise, serious as it is, too terrible as he himself supposes it to be, I deliberately, as it is said, and to the purpose, ask this question once again: If the conscience of him who gives in holiness is what we look for, what means are to be found for cleansing one who receives baptism without knowing that the conscience of the giver is stained with sin? And throughout his whole epistle I find nothing said in answer to this question

CHAPTER 19

22. For perhaps some one of you will say to me, All these things which he said against you he wished to have force for this purpose, that he might take away your character, and through you the character of those with whom you hold communion, that neither they themselves, nor those whom you endeavor to bring over to your communion, may hold you to be of any further importance. But, in deciding whether he has given no answer to the

words of your epistle, we must look at them in the light of the passage in which he proposed them for consideration. Let us then do so: let us look at his writings in the light of that very passage. Passing over, therefore, the passage in which I sought to introduce my subject to the reader, and to ignore those few prefatory words of his, which were rather insulting than revelant to the subject under discussion, I go on to say, “He says, What we look for is the conscience of the giver, to cleanse that of the recipient.’ But supposing the conscience of the giver is concealed from view, and perhaps defiled with sin, how will it be able to cleanse the conscience of the recipient, if, as he says, what we look for is the conscience of the giver, to cleanse that of the recipient?’ For if he should say that it makes no matter to the recipient what amount of evil may be concealed from view in the conscience of the giver, perhaps that ignorance may have such a degree of efficacy as this, that a man cannot be defiled by the guilt of the conscience of him from whom he receives baptism, so long as he is unaware of it. Let it then be granted that the guilty conscience of his neighbor cannot defile a man so long as he is unaware of it; but is it therefore clear that it can further cleanse him from his own guilt? Whence then is a man to be cleansed who receives baptism, when the conscience of the giver is polluted without the knowledge of him who is to receive it, especially when he goes on to say, For he who receives faith from the faithless receives not faith but guilt?’“

CHAPTER 20

23. All these statements in my letter Petilianus set before himself for refutation. Let us see, therefore, whether he has refuted them; whether he has made any answer to them at all. For I add the words which he calumniously accuses me of having suppressed, and, having done so, I ask him again the same question in an even shorter form; for by adding these two words he has helped me much in shortening this proposition. If the conscience of him who gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse that of the recipient, and if he who has received his faith wittingly from one that is faithless, receives not faith but guilt, where shall we find means to cleanse the conscience of the recipient, when he has not known that the conscience of the giver is stained with guilt, and when he receives his faith unwittingly from one that is faithless? I ask, where shall we find means to

cleanse it? Let him tell us; let him not pass off into another subject; let him not cast a mist over the eyes of the inexperienced. To end with, at any rate, after many tortuous circumlocutions have been interposed and thoroughly worked out, let him at last tell us where we shall find means to cleanse the conscience of the recipient when the stains of guilt in the conscience of the faithless baptizer are concealed from view, if the conscience of him who gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse that of the recipient, and if he who has received his faith wittingly from one that is faithless, receives not faith but guilt? For the man in question receives it from a faithless man who has not the conscience of one who gives in holiness, but a conscience stained with guilt, and veiled from view. Where then shall we find means to cleanse his conscience? whence then does he receive his faith? For if he is neither then cleansed, nor then receives faith, when the faithlessness and guilt of the baptizer are concealed, why, when these are afterwards brought to light and condemned, is he not then baptized afresh, that he may be cleansed and receive faith? But if, while the faithlessness and guilt of the other are concealed, he is cleansed and does receive faith, whence does he obtain his cleansing, whence does he receive faith, when there is not the conscience of one that gives in holiness to cleanse the conscience of the recipient? Let him tell us this; let him make reply to this: Whence does he obtain his cleansing, whence does he receive faith, if the conscience of him that gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient, seeing that this does not exist, when the baptizer conceals his character of faithlessness and guilt? To this no answer has been made whatever

CHAPTER 21

24. But see, when he is reduced to straits in the argument, he again makes an attack on me full of mist and wind, that the calm clearness of the truth may be obscured; and through the extremity of his want he becomes full of resources, shown not in saying what is true, but in unbought empty revilings. Hold fast, with the keenest attention and utmost perseverance, what he ought to answer,—that is, where means may be found for cleansing the conscience of the recipient when the stains in that of the giver are concealed,—lest possibly the blast of his eloquence should wrest this from

your hands, and you in turn should be carried away by the dark tempest of his turgid discourse, so as wholly to fail in seeing whence he has digressed, and to what point he should return; and see where the man can wander, whilst he cannot stand in the matter which he has undertaken. For see how much he says, through having nothing that he ought to say. He says "that I slide in slippery places, but am held up; that I neither destroy nor confirm the objections that I make; that I devise uncertain things in the place of certainty; that I do not permit my readers to believe what is true, but cause them to look with increased suspicion on what is doubtful." He says "that I have the accursed talents of the Academic philosopher Carneades." He endeavors to insinuate what the Academics think of the falseness or the falsehood of human sensation, showing in this also that he is wholly without knowledge of what he says. He declares that "it is said by them that snow is black, whereas it is white; and that silver is black; and that a tower is round, or free from projections, when it is really angular; that an oar is broken in the water, while it is whole." And all this because, when he had said that "the conscience of him that gives," or "of him that gives in holiness, is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient," I said in reply, What if the conscience of the giver be hidden from sight, and possibly be stained with guilt? Here you have his black snow, and black silver, and his tower round instead of angular, and the oar in the water broken while yet whole, in that I suggested a state of the case which might be conceived, and could not really exist, that the conscience of the giver might be hidden from view, and possibly might be stained with guilt!

25. Then he continues in the same strain, and cries out: "What is that what if? what is that possibly? except the uncertain and wavering hesitation of one who doubts, of whom your poet says'—

What if I now return to those who say, What if the sky should fall?'"

Does he mean that when I said, What if the conscience of the giver be hidden from sight, and possibly be stained with guilt? that it is much the same as if I had said, What if the sky should fall? There certainly is the phrase What if, because it is possible that it may be hidden from view, and it is possible that it may not. For when it is not known what the giver is thinking of, or what crime he has committed, then his conscience is certainly hidden from the view of the recipient; but when his sin is plainly manifest, then it is not hidden. I used the expression, And possibly may be stained with guilt, because it is possible that it may be hidden from view and yet be pure; and again, it is possible that it may be hidden from view and be stained with guilt. This is the meaning of the What if; this the meaning of the Possibly. Is this at all like "What if the sky should fall?" O how often have men been convicted, how often have they confessed themselves that they had consciences stained with guilt and adultery, whilst men were unwittingly baptized by them after they were degraded by the sin subsequently brought to light, and yet the sky did not fall! What have we here to do with Pilus and Furius, who defended the cause of injustice against justice? What have we here to do with the atheist Diagoras, who denied that there was any God, so that he would seem to be the man of whom the prophet spoke beforehand, "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God?" What have we here to do with these? Why were their names brought in, except that they might make a diversion in favor of a man who had nothing to say? that while he is at any rate saying something, though needlessly, about these, the matter in hand may seem to be progressing, and an answer may be supposed to be made to a question which remains without an answer?

CHAPTER 22

26. Lastly, if these two or three words, What if, and Possibly, are so absolutely intolerable, that on their account we should have aroused from their long sleep the Academics, and Carneades, and Pilus, and Furius, and Diagoras, and black snow, and the falling of the sky, and everything else that is equally senseless and absurd, let them be removed from our argument. For, as a matter of fact, it is by no means impossible to express what we desire to say without them. There is quite sufficient for our purpose in what is found a little later, and has been introduced by himself from my letter: "By what means then is he to be cleansed who receives baptism when the conscience of the giver is polluted, and that without the knowledge of him who is to receive the sacrament?" Do you acknowledge that here there is no What if, no Possibly? Well then, let an answer be given. Give close heed, lest he be found to answer this in what follows. "But,"

says he, “I bind you in your cavilling to the faith of believing, that you may not wander further from it. Why do you turn away your life from errors by arguments of folly? Why do you disturb the system of belief in respect of matters without reason? By this one word I bind and convince you.” It was Petilianus that said this, not I. These words are from the letter of Petilianus; but from that letter, to which I just now added the two words which he accuses me of having suppressed, showing that, notwithstanding their addition, the pertinency of my question, to which he makes no answer, remains with greater brevity and simplicity. It is beyond dispute that these two words are, In holiness, and Wittingly: so that it should not be, “The conscience of him who gives,” but “The conscience of him who gives in holiness;” and that it should not be, “He who has received his faith from one that is faithless,” but “He who has wittingly received his faith from one that is faithless.” And yet I had not really suppressed these words; but I had not found them in the copy which was placed in my hands. It is possible enough that it was incorrect; nor indeed is it wholly beyond the possibility of belief that even by this suggestion Academic grudge should be roused against me, and that it should be asserted that, in declaring the copy to be incorrect, I had said much the same sort of thing as if I had declared that snow was black. For why should I repay in kind his rash suggestion, and say that, though he pretends that I suppressed the words, he really added them afterwards himself, since the copy, which is not angry, can confirm that mark of incorrectness, without any abusive rashness on my part?

CHAPTER 23

27. And, in the first place, with regard to that first expression, “Of him who gives in holiness,” it does not interfere in the least with my inquiry, by which he is so much distressed, whether I use the expression, “If the conscience of him that gives is what we look for,” or the fuller phrase, “If the conscience of him that gives in holiness is what we look for, to cleanse the conscience of the recipient,” by what means then is he to be cleansed who receives baptism if the conscience of the giver is polluted, without the knowledge of him who is to receive the sacrament? And with regard to the other word that is added, “wittingly,” so that the sentence should not run, “He who has received his faith from one that is faithless,” but “He who has

wittingly received his faith from one that is faithless, receives not faith but guilt," I confess that I had said some things as though the word were absent, but I can easily afford to do without them; for they caused more hindrance to the facility of my argument than they gave assistance to its power. For how much more readily, how much more plainly and shortly, can I put the question thus: "If the conscience of him who gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient," and "if he who has wittingly received his faith from one that is faithless receives not faith but guilt," by what means is he cleansed, from whom the stain on the conscience of him who gives, but not in holiness, is hidden? and whence does he receive true faith, who is baptized unwittingly by one that is faithless? Let it be declared whence this shall be, and then the whole theory of baptism will be disclosed; then all that is matter of investigation will be brought to light,—but only if it be declared, not if the time be consumed in evil-speaking

CHAPTER 24

28. Whatever, therefore, he finds in these two words,—whether he brings calumnious accusations about their suppression, or boasts of their being added,—you perceive that it in no way hinders my question, to which he can find no answer that he can make; and therefore, not wishing to remain silent, he takes the opportunity of making an attack upon my character,—retiring, I should have said, from the discussion, except that he had never entered on it. For just as though the question were about me, and not about the truth of the Church, or of baptism, therefore he says that I, by suppressing these two words, have argued as though it were no stumblingblock in the way of my conscience, that I have ignored what he calls the sacrilegious conscience of him who polluted me. But if this were so, the addition of the word "wittingly," which is thus introduced, would be in my favor, and its suppression would tell against me. For if I had wished that my defense should be urged on the ground that I should be supposed to have been unacquainted with the conscience of the man that baptized me, then I would accept Petilianus as having spoken in my behalf, since he does not say in general terms, "He that has received his faith from one that is faithless," but "He that has wittingly received his faith from one that is

faithless, receives not faith but guilt;” so that hence I might boast that I had received not guilt, but faith, since I could say I did not receive it wittingly from one that was faithless, but was unacquainted with the conscience of him that gave it. See, therefore, and reckon carefully, if you can, what an amount of superfluous words he wastes on the one phrase, “I was unacquainted with” which he declares that I have used; whereas I never used it at all,—partly because the question under discussion was not concerning me, so that I should need to use it; partly because no fault was apparent in him that baptized me, so that I should be forced to say in my defense that I had been unacquainted with his conscience

CHAPTER 25

29. And yet Petilianus, to avoid answering what I have said, sets before himself what I have not, and draws men’s attention away from the consideration of his debt, lest they should exact the answer which he ought to make. He constantly introduces the expressions, “I have been unacquainted with,” “I say,” and makes answer, “But if you were unacquainted with;” and, as though convicting me, so that it should be out of my power to say, “I was unacquainted with,” he quotes Mensurius, Caecilianus, Macarius, Taurinus, Romanus, and declares that “they had acted in opposition to the Church of God, as I could not fail to know, seeing that I am an African, and already well advanced in years,” whereas, so far as I hear, Mensurius died in the unity of the communion of the Church, before the faction of Donatus separated itself therefrom; whilst I had read the history of Caecilianus, that they themselves had referred his case to Constantine, and that he had been once and again acquitted by the judges whom that emperor had appointed to try the matter, and again a third time by the sovereign himself, when they appealed to him. But whatever Macarius and Taurinus and Romanus did, either in their judicial or executive functions, in behalf of unity as against their pertinacious madness, it is beyond doubt that it was all done in accordance with the laws, which these same persons made it unavoidable should be passed and put in force, by referring the case of Caecilianus to the judgment of the emperor

30. Among many other things which are wholly irrevelant, he says that “I was so hard hit by the decision of the proconsul Messianus, that I was forced to fly from Africa.” And in consequence of this falsehood (to which, if he was not the author of it, he certainly lent malicious ears when others maliciously invented it), how many other falsehoods had he the hardihood not only to utter, but actually to write with wondrous rashness, seeing that I went to Milan before the consulship of Banto, and that, in pursuance of the profession of rhetorician which I then followed, I recited a panegyric in his honor as consul on the first of January, in the presence of a vast assembly of men; and after that journey I only returned to Africa after the death of the tyrant Maximus: whereas the proconsul Messianus heard the case of the Manichaeans after the consulship of Banto, as the day of the chronicles inserted by Petilianus himself sufficiently shows. And if it were necessary to prove this for the satisfaction of those who are in doubt, or believe the contrary, I could produce many men, illustrious in their generation, as most sufficient witnesses to all that period of my life.

CHAPTER 26

31. But why do we make inquiry into these points? Why do we both suffer and cause unnecessary delay? Are we likely to find out by such a course as this what means we are to use for cleansing the conscience of the recipient, who does not know that the conscience of the giver is stained with guilt: whence the man is to receive faith who is unwittingly baptized by one that is faithless?—the question which Petilianus had proposed to himself to answer in my epistle, then going on to say anything else he pleased except what the matter in hand required. How often has he said, “If ignorant you were,”—as though I had said, what I never did say, that I was unacquainted with the conscience of him who baptized me. And he seemed to have no other object in all that his evil-speaking mouth poured forth, except that he should appear to prove that I had not been ignorant of the misdeeds of those among whom I was baptized, and with whom I was associated in communion, understanding fully, it would seem, that ignorance did not convict me of guilt. See then that if I were ignorant, as he has repeated so often, beyond all doubt I should be innocent of all these crimes. Whence therefore should I be cleansed, who am unacquainted with the conscience of

him who gives but not in holiness, so that I may be least ensnared by his offenses? Whence then should I receive faith, seeing that I was baptized unwittingly by one that was faithless? For he has not repeated “If ignorant you were” so often without purpose, but simply to prevent my being reputed innocent, esteeming beyond all doubt that no man’s innocence is violated if he unwittingly receives his faith from one that is faithless, and is not acquainted with the stains on the conscience of him that gives, but not in holiness. Let him say, therefore, by what means such men are to be cleansed, whence they are to receive not guilt but faith. But let him not deceive you. Let him not, while uttering much, say nothing; or rather, let him not say much while saying nothing. Next, to urge a point which occurs to me, and must not be passed over,—if I am guilty because I have not been ignorant, to use his own phraseology, and I am proved not to have been ignorant, because I am an African, and already advanced in years, let him grant that the youths of other nations throughout the world are not guilty, who had no opportunity either from their race, or from that age you bring against me, of knowing the points that are laid to our charge, be they true, or be they false; and yet they, if they have fallen into your hands, are rebaptized without any considerations of such a kind

CHAPTER 27

32. But this is not what we are now inquiring. Let him rather answer (what he wanders off into the most irrelevant matters in order to avoid answering) by what means the conscience of the recipient is cleansed who is unacquainted with the stain on the conscience of the giver, if the conscience of one that gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient? and from what source he receive faith who is unwittingly baptized by one that is faithless, if he that has wittingly received his faith from one that is faithless receives not faith but guilt? Omitting, therefore, his revilings, which he has cast at me without any sound consideration, let us still notice that he does not say what we demand in what follows. But I should like to look at the garrulous mode in which he has set this forth, as though he were sure to overwhelm us with confusion. “But let us return,” he says, “to that argument of your fancy, whereby you seem to have represented to yourself in a form of words the persons you baptize. For

since you do not see the truth, it would have been more seemly to have imagined what was probable.” These words of his own, Petilianus put forth by way of preface, being about to state the words that I had used. Then he went on to quote: “Behold, you say, the faithless man stands ready to baptize, but he who is to be baptized knows nothing of his faithlessness.” He has not quoted the whole of my proposition and question; and presently he begins to ask me in his turn, saying, “Who is the man, and from what corner has he started up, that you propose to us? Why do you seem to see a man who is the produce of your imagination, in order to avoid seeing one whom you are bound to see, and to examine and test most carefully? But since I see that you are unacquainted with the order of the sacrament, I tell you this as shortly as I can: you were bound both to examine your baptizer, and to be examined by him.” What is it, then, that we were waiting for? That he should tell us by what means the conscience of the recipient is to be cleansed, who is unacquainted with the stain on the conscience of him that gives but not in holiness, and whence the man is to receive not guilt but faith, who has received baptism unwittingly from one that is faithless. All that we have heard is that the baptizer ought most diligently to be examined by him who wishes to receive not guilt but faith, that the latter may make himself acquainted with the conscience of him that gives in holiness, which is to cleanse the conscience of the recipient. For the man that has failed to make this examination, and has unwittingly received baptism from one that is faithless, from the very fact that he did not make the examination, and therefore did not know of the stain on the conscience of the giver, was incapacitated from receiving faith instead of guilt. Why therefore did he add what he made so much of adding,—the word wittingly, which he calumniously accused me of having suppressed? For in his unwillingness that the sentence should run, “He who has received his faith from one that is faithless, receives not faith but guilt,” he seems to have left some hope to the man that acts unwittingly. But now, when he is asked whence that man is to receive faith who is baptized unwittingly by one that is faithless, he has answered that he ought to have examined his baptizer; so that, beyond all doubt, he refuses the wretched man permission even to be ignorant, by not finding out from what source he may receive faith, unless he has placed his trust in the man that is baptizing him

CHAPTER 28

33. This is what we look upon with horror in your party; this is what the sentence of God condemns, crying out with the utmost truth and the utmost clearness, “Cursed is every one that trusteth in man.” This is what is most openly forbidden by holy humility and apostolic love, as Paul declares, “Let no man glory in men.” This is the reason that the attack of empty calumnies and of the bitterest invectives grows even fiercer against us, that when human authority is as it were overthrown, there may remain no ground of hope for those to whom we administer the word and sacrament of God in accordance with the dispensation entrusted unto us. We make answer to them: How long do you rest your support on man? The venerable society of the Catholic Church makes answer to them: “Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from Him cometh my salvation. He only is my God and my helper; I shall not be moved.” For what other reason have they had for removing from the house of God, except that they pretended that they could not endure those vessels made to dishonor, from which the house shall not be free until the day of judgment? whereas all the time they rather appear, by their deeds and by the records of the time, to have themselves been vessels of this kind, while they threw the imputation in the teeth of others; of which said vessels made unto dishonor, in order that no one should on their account remove in confusion of mind from the great house, which alone belongs to the great Father of our family, the servant of God, one who was good and faithful, or was capable of receiving faith in baptism, as I have shown above, expressly says, “Truly my soul waiteth upon God” (on God, you see, and not on man): “from Him cometh my salvation” (not from man). But Petilianus would refuse to ascribe to God the cleansing and purifying of a man, even when the stain upon the conscience of him who gives, but not in holiness, is hidden from view, and any one receives his faith unwittingly from one that is faithless. “I tell you this,” he says, “as shortly as I can: you were bound both to examine your baptizer, and to be examined by him.”

CHAPTER 29

34. I entreat of you, pay attention to this: I ask where the means shall be found for cleansing the conscience of the recipient, when he is not

acquainted with the stain upon the conscience of him that gives but not in holiness, if the conscience of him that gives in holiness is waited for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient? and from what source he is to receive faith, who is unwittingly baptized by one that is faithless, if, whosoever has received his faith wittingly from one that is faithless, receives not faith but guilt? and he answers me, that both the baptizer and the baptized should be subjected to examination. And for the proof of this point, out of which no question arises, he adduces the example of John, in that he was examined by those who asked him who he claimed to be, and that he also in turn examined those to whom he says, “O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” What has this to do with the subject? What has this to do with the question under discussion? God had vouchsafed to John the testimony of most eminent holiness of life, confirmed by the previous witness of the noblest prophecy, both when he was conceived, and when he was born. But the Jews put their question, already believing him to be a saint, to find out which of the saints he maintained himself to be, or whether he was himself the saint of saints, that is, Christ Jesus. So much favor indeed was shown to him, that credence would at once have been given to whatever he might have said about himself. If, therefore, we are to follow this precedent in declaring that each several baptizer is now to be examined, then each must also be believed, whatever he may say of himself. But who is there that is made up of deceit, whom we know that the Holy Spirit flees from, in accordance with the Scripture, who would not wish the best to be believed of him, or who would hesitate to bring this about by the use of any words within his reach? Accordingly, when he shall have been asked who he is, and shall have answered that he is the faithful dispenser of God’s ordinances, and that his conscience is not polluted with the stain of any crime, will this be the whole examination, or will there be a further more careful investigation into his character and life? Assuredly there will. But it is not written that this was done by those who in the desert of Jordan asked John who he was

CHAPTER 30

35. Accordingly this precedent is wholly without bearing on the matter in hand. We might rather say that the declaration of the apostle sufficiently

inculcates this care, when he says, “Let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.” And since this is done anxiously and habitually in both parties, by almost all concerned, how comes it that so many are found to be reprobates subsequently to the time of having undertaken this ministry, except that, on the one hand, human care is often deceived, and, on the other hand, those who have begun well occasionally deteriorate? And since things of this sort happen so frequently as to allow no man to hide them or to forget them, what is the reason that Petilianus now teaches us insultingly, in a few words, that the baptizer ought to be examined by the candidate for baptism, since our question is, by what means the conscience of the recipient is to be cleansed, when the stain on the conscience of him that gives, but not in holiness, has been concealed from view, if the conscience of one that gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient. “Since I see,” he says, “that you are unacquainted with the order of the sacrament, I tell you this as shortly as I can: you were bound both to examine your baptizer, and to be examined by him.” What an answer to make! He is surrounded in so many places by such a multitude of men that have been baptized by ministers who, having in the first instance seemed righteous and chaste, have subsequently been convicted and degraded in consequence of the disclosure of their faults: and he thinks that he is avoiding the force of this question, in which we ask by what means the conscience of the recipient is to be cleansed, when he is unacquainted with the stain upon the conscience of him that gives but not in holiness, if the conscience of one that gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient,—he thinks, I say, that he is avoiding the force of this question, by saying shortly that the baptizer ought to be examined. Nothing is more unfortunate than not to be consistent with truth, by which every one is so shut in, that he cannot find a means of escape. We ask from whom he is to receive faith who is baptized by one that is faithless? The answer is, “He ought to have examined his baptizer.” Is it therefore the case that, since he does not examine him, and so even unwittingly receives his faith from one that is faithless, he receives not faith but guilt? Why then are those men not baptized afresh, who are found to have been baptized by men that are detected and convicted reprobates, while their true character was yet concealed?

36. “And where,” he says, “is the word that I added, wittingly?so that I did not say, He that has received his faith from one that is faithless; but, He that has received his faith wittingly from one that is faithless, receives not faith but guilt.” He therefore who received his faith unwittingly from one that was faithless, received not guilt but faith; and accordingly I ask from what source he has received it? And being thus placed in a strait, he answers, “He ought to have examined him.” Granted that he ought to have done so; but, as a matter of fact, he did not, or he was not able: what is your verdict about him? Was he cleansed, or was he not? If he was cleansed, I ask from what source? For the polluted conscience of him that gave but not in holiness, with which he was unacquainted, could not cleanse him. But if he was not cleansed, command that he be so now. You give no such orders, therefore he was cleansed. Tell me by what means? Do you at any rate tell me what Petilianus has failed to tell. For I propose to you the very same words which he was unable to answer. “Behold the faithless man stands ready to baptize; but he who is to be baptized knows nothing of his faithlessness: what do you think that he will receive—faith, or guilt?” This is sufficient as a constant form of question: answer, or search diligently to find what he has answered. You will find abuse that has already been convicted. He finds fault with me, as though in derision, maintaining that I ought to suggest what is probable for consideration, since I cannot see the truth. For, repeating my words, and cutting my sentence in two, he says, “Behold, you say, the faithless man stands ready to baptize; but he who is to be baptized knows nothing of his faithlessness.” Then he goes on to ask, “Who is the man, and from what corner has he started up, that you propose to us?” Just as though there were some one or two individuals, and such cases were not constantly occurring everywhere on either side! Why does he ask of me who the man in question is, and from what corner he has started up, instead of looking round, and seeing that the churches are few and far between, whether in cities or in country districts, which do not contain men detected in crimes, and degraded from the ministry? While their true character was concealed, while they wished to be thought good, though really bad, and to be reputed chaste, though really guilty of adultery, so long they were involved in deceit; and so the Holy Spirit, according to the Scripture, was

fleeing from them. It is from the crowd, therefore, of these men who hitherto concealed their character that the faithless man whom I suggested started up. Why does he ask me whence he started up, shutting his eyes to all this crowd, from which sufficient noise arises to satisfy the blind, if we take into consideration none but those who might have been convicted and degraded from their office?

CHAPTER 32

37. What shall we say of what he himself advanced in his epistle, that “Quodvultdeus, having been convicted of two adulteries, and cast out from among you, was received by those of our party?” What then (I would speak without prejudice to this man, who proved his case to be a good one, or at least persuaded men that it was so), when such men among you, being as yet undetected, administer baptism, what is received at their hands,—faith, or guilt? Surely not faith, because they have not the conscience of one who gives in holiness to cleanse the conscience of the recipient. But yet not guilt either, in virtue of that added word: “For he that has received his faith wittingly from one that is faithless, receives not faith but guilt.” But when men were baptized by those of whom I speak, they were surely ignorant what sort of men they were. Furthermore, not receiving faith from their baptizers, who had not the conscience of one that gives in holiness, and not receiving guilt, because they were baptized not knowing but in ignorance of their faults, they therefore remained without faith and without guilt. They are not, therefore, in the number of men of such abandoned character. But neither can they be in the number of the faithful, because, as they could not receive guilt, so neither could they receive faith from their baptizers. But we see that they are reputed by you in the number of the faithful, and that no one of you declares his opinion that they ought to be baptized, but all of you hold valid the baptism which they have already received. They have therefore received faith; and yet they have not received it from those who had not the conscience of one that gives in holiness, to cleanse the conscience of the recipient. Whence then did they receive it? This is the point from which I make my effort; this is the question that I press most earnestly; to this I do most urgently demand an answer

CHAPTER 33

38. See now how Petilianus, to avoid answering this question, or to avoid being proved to be incapable of answering it, wanders off vainly into irrelevant matter in abuse of us, accusing us and proving nothing; and when he chances to make an endeavor to resist, with something like a show of fighting for his cause, he is everywhere overcome with the greatest ease. But yet he nowhere gives an answer of any kind to this one question which we ask: If the conscience of one that gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient, by what means is he to be cleansed who received baptism while the conscience of the giver was polluted, without the knowledge of him who was to receive it? for in these words, which he quoted from my epistle, he set me forth as asking a question, while he showed himself as giving no answer. For after saying what I have just now recited, and when, on being brought into a great strait on every side, he had been compelled to say that the baptizer ought to be examined by the candidate for baptism, and the candidate in turn by the baptizer; and when he had tried to fortify this statement by the example of John, in hopes that he might find auditors either of the greatest negligence or of the greatest ignorance, he then went on to advance other testimonies of Scripture wholly irrelevant to the matter in hand, as the saying of the eunuch to Philip, “See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?” “inasmuch as he knew,” says he, “that those of abandoned character were prevented;” arguing that the reason why Philip did not forbid him to be baptized was because he had proved, in his reading of the Scriptures, how far he believed in Christ,—as though he had prohibited Simon Magus. And again, he urges that the prophets were afraid of being deceived by false baptism, and that therefore Isaiah said, “Lying water that has not faith,” as though showing that water among faithless men is lying; whereas it is not Isaiah but Jeremiah that says this of lying men, calling the people in a figure water, as is most clearly shown in the Apocalypse. And again, he quotes as words of David, “Let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head,” when David has been speaking of the flattery of the smooth speaker deceiving with false praise, so as to lead the head of the man praised to wax great with pride. And this meaning is made manifest by the words immediately preceding in the same psalm. For he says, “Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a

kindness; and let him reprove me: but the oil of the sinner shall not break my head.” What can be clearer than this sentence? what more manifest? For he declares that he had rather be reproved in kindness with the sharp correction of the righteous, so that he may be healed, than anointed with the soft speaking of the flatterer, so as to be puffed up with pride

CHAPTER 34

39. Petilianus quotes also the warning of the Apostle John, that we should not believe every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, as though this care should be bestowed in order that the wheat should be separated from the chaff in this present world before its time, and not rather for fear that the wheat should be deceived by the chaff; or as though, even if the lying spirit should have said something that was true, it was to be denied, because the spirit whom we should abominate had said it. But if any one thinks this, he is mad enough to contend that Peter ought not to have said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” because the devils had already said something to the same effect. Seeing, therefore, that the baptism of Christ, whether administered by an unrighteous or a righteous man, is nothing but the baptism of Christ what a cautious man and faithful Christian should do is to avoid the unrighteousness of man, not to condemn the sacraments of God

40. Assuredly in all these things Petilianus gives no answer to the question, If the conscience of one that gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient, by what means is he to be cleansed who receives baptism, when the conscience of the giver is polluted without the knowledge of the proposed recipient? A certain Cyprian, a colleague of his from Thubursicubur, was caught in a brothel with a woman of most abandoned character, and was brought before Primianus of Carthage, and condemned. Now, when this man baptized before he was detected and condemned, it is manifest that he had not the conscience of one that gives in holiness, so as to cleanse the conscience of the recipient. By what means then have they been cleansed who at this day, after he has been condemned, are certainly not washed again? It was not necessary to name the man save only to prevent Petilianus from repeating, “Who is the man, and from what corner has he started up, that you propose to us?” Why did not your party

examine that baptizer, as John, in the opinion of Petilianus, was examined? Or was the real fact this, that they examined him so far as man can examine man, but were unable to find him out, as he long lay hid with cunning falseness?

CHAPTER 35

Was the water administered by this man not lying? or is the oil of the fornicator not the oil of the sinner? or must we hold what the Catholic Church says, and what is true, that that water and that oil are not his by whom they were administered, but His whose name was then invoked? Why did they who were baptized by that hypocrite, whose sins were concealed, fail to try the spirit, to prove that it was not of God? For the Holy Spirit of discipline was even then fleeing from the hypocrite. Was it that He was fleeing from him, but at the same time not deserting His sacraments, though ministered by him? Lastly, since you do not deny that those men have been already cleansed, whom you take no care to have cleansed now that he is condemned, see whether, after shedding over the subject so many mists in so many different ways, Petilianus, after all, in any place gives any answer to the question by what means these men have been cleansed, if what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient is the conscience of one that gives in holiness, such as the man who was secretly unclean could not have had

41. Making then, no answer to this which is so urgently asked of him, and, in the next place, even seeking for himself a latitude of speech, he says, “since both prophets and apostles have been cautious enough to fear these things, with what face do you say that the baptism of the sinner is holy to those who believe with a good conscience?” Just as though I or any Catholic maintained that that baptism was of the sinner which is administered or received with a sinner to officiate, instead of being His in virtue of belief in whose name the candidate is baptized! Then he goes off to an invective against the traitor Judas, saying against him whatever he can, quoting the testimony of the prophets uttered concerning him so long a time before, as though he would steep the Church of Christ dispersed throughout the world, whose cause is involved in this discussion, in the impiety of the traitor Judas,—not considering what this very thing should

have recalled to his mind, that we ought no more to doubt that that is the Church of Christ which is spread abroad throughout the world, since this was prophesied with truth so many years before, than we ought to doubt that it was necessary that Christ should be betrayed by one of His disciples, because this was prophesied in like manner.

CHAPTER 36

42. But after this, when Petilianus came to that objection of ours, that they allowed the baptism of the followers of Maximianus, whom they had condemned,—although in the statement of this question he thought it right to use his own words rather than mine; for neither do we assert that the baptism of sinners is of profit to us, seeing that we maintain it to belong not only to no sinners, but to no men whatsoever, in that we are satisfied that it is Christ's alone,—having put the question in this form, he says, "Yet you obstinately aver that it is right that the baptism of sinners should be of profit to you, because we too, according to your statement, maintained the baptism of criminals whom we justly condemned." When he came to this question, as I said before, even all the show of fight which he had made deserted him. He could not find any way to go, any means of escape, any path by which, either through subtle watching or bold enterprise, he could either secretly steal away, or sally forth by force. "Although this," he says, "I will demonstrate in my second book, how great the difference is between those of our party and those of yours whom you call innocent, yet, in the meantime, first extricate yourselves from the offenses with which you are acquainted in your colleagues, and then seek out the mode of dealing with those whom we cast out." Would any one, any man upon the earth, give an answer like this, save one who is setting himself against the truth, against which he cannot find any answer that can be made? Accordingly, if we too were to use the same words: In the meantime, first extricate yourselves from the offenses with which you are acquainted in your colleagues, and then bring up against us any charge connected with those whom you hold to be wicked amongst us,—what is the result? Have we both won the victory, or are we both defeated? Nay, rather He has gained the victory for His Church and in His Church, who has taught us in His Scriptures that no man should glory in men, and that he that glorieth should glory in the Lord. For

behold in our case who assert with the eloquence of truth that the man who believes is not justified by him by whom he is baptized, but by Him of whom it is written, “To him that believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness,” since we do not glory in men, and strive, when we glory, to glory in the Lord in virtue of His own gift, how wholly safe are we, whatever fault or charge Petilianus may have been able to prove concerning certain men of our communion! For among us, whatever wicked men are either wholly undetected, or, being known to certain persons, are yet tolerated for the sake of the bond of unity and peace, in consideration of other good men to whom their wickedness is unknown, and before whom they could not be convicted, in order that the wheat may not be rooted up together with the tares, yet they so bear the burden of their own wickedness, that no one shares it with them except those who are pleased with their unrighteousness. Nor indeed have we any apprehension that those whom they baptize cannot be justified, since they believe in Him that justifieth the ungodly that their faith may be counted for righteousness

CHAPTER 37

43. Furthermore, according to our tenets, neither he of whom Petilianus said that he was cast forth by us for the sin of the men of Sodom, another being appointed in his place, and that afterwards he was actually restored to our college,—talking all the time without knowing what he was saying,—nor he whom he declares to have been penitent among you, in whatever degree their respective cases do or do not admit of any defense, can neither of them prejudice the Church, which is spread abroad throughout all nations, and increases in the world until the harvest. For if they were really wicked members of it that you accuse, then they were already not in it, but among the chaff; but if they are good, while you defame their character with unrighteous accusations, they are themselves being tried like gold, while you burn after the similitude of chaff. Yet the sins of other men do not defile the Church, which is spread abroad throughout the whole world, according to most faithful prophesies, waiting for the end of the world as for its shore, on which, when it is landed, it will be freed from the bad fish, in company with which the inconvenience of nature might be borne without

sin within the same nets of the Lord, so long as it was not right to be impatiently separated from them. Nor yet is the discipline of the Church on this account neglected by constant and diligent and prudent ministers of Christ, in whose province crimes are in such wise brought to light that they cannot be defended on any plea of probability. Innumerable proofs of this may be found in those who have been bishops or clergy of the second degree of orders, and now, being degraded, have either gone abroad into other lands through shame, or have gone over to you yourselves or to other heresies, or are known in their own districts; of whom there is so great a multitude dispersed throughout the earth, that if Petilianus, bridling for a time his rashness in speaking, had taken them into consideration, he would never have fallen into so manifestly false and groundless a misconception, as to think that we ought to join in what he says: None of you is free from guilt, where no one that is guilty is condemned

CHAPTER 38

44. For, to pass over others dwelling in different quarters of the earth,—for you will scarcely find any place in which this kind of men is not represented, from whom it may appear that overseers and ministers are wont to be condemned even in the Catholic Church,—we need not look far to find the example of Honorius of Milevis. But take the case of Splendonius, whom Petilianus ordained priest after he had been condemned in the Catholic Church, and rebaptized by himself, whose condemnation in Gaul, communicated to us by our brethren, our colleague Fortunatus caused to be publicly read in Constantina, and whom the same Petilianus afterwards cast forth on experience of his abominable deceit. From the case of this Splendonius, when was there a time when he might not have been reminded after what fashion wicked men are degraded from their office even in the Catholic Church? I wonder on what precipice of rashness his heart was resting when he dictated those words in which he ventured to say, “No one of you is free from guilt, where no one that is guilty is condemned.” Wherefore the wicked, being bodily intermingled with the good, but spiritually separated from them in the Catholic Church, both when they are undetected through the infirmity of human nature, and when they are condemned from considerations of discipline, in every case bear

their own burden. And in this way those are free from danger who are baptized by them with the baptism of Christ, if they keep free from share in their sins either by imitation or consent; seeing that in like manner, if they were baptized by the best of men, they would not be justified except by Him that justifieth the ungodly: since to those that believe on Him that justifieth the ungodly their faith is counted for righteousness

CHAPTER 39

45. But as for you, when the case of the followers of Maximianus is brought up against you, who, after being condemned by the sentence of a Council of 310 bishops; after being utterly defeated in the same Council, quoted in the records of so many proconsuls, in the chronicles of so many municipal towns; after being driven forth from the basilicas of which they were in possession, by the order of the judges, enforced by the troops of the several cities, were yet again received with all honor by you, together with those whom they had baptized outside the pale of your communion, without any question respecting their baptism,—when confronted, I say, with their case, you can find no reply to make. Indeed, you are vanquished by an expressed opinion, not indeed true, but proceeding from yourselves, by which you maintain that men perish for the faults of others in the same communion of the sacraments, and that each man's character is determined by that of the man by whom he is baptized,—that he is guilty if his baptizer is guilty, innocent if he is innocent. But if these views are true, there can be no doubt that, to say nothing of innumerable others, you are destroyed by the sins of the followers of Maximianus, whose guilt your party, in so large a Council, has exaggerated even to the proportions of the sin of those whom the earth swallowed up alive. But if the faults of the followers of Maximianus have not destroyed you, then are these opinions false which you entertain; and much less have certain indefinite unproved faults of the Africans been able to destroy the entire world. And accordingly, as the apostle says, "Every man shall bear his own burden;" and the baptism of Christ is no one's except Christ's; and it is to no purpose that Petilianus promises that he will take as the subject of his second book the charges which we bring concerning the followers of Maximianus, entertaining too low an opinion of men's intellects, as though they do not perceive that he has nothing to say

CHAPTER 40

46. For if the baptism which Praetextatus and Felicianus administered in the communion of Maximianus was their own, why was it received by you in those whom they baptized as though it were the baptism of Christ? But if it is truly the baptism of Christ, as indeed it is, and yet could not profit those who had received it with the guilt of schism, what do you say that you could have granted to those whom you have received into your body with the same baptism, except that, now that the offense of their accursed division is wiped out by the bond of peace, they should not be compelled to receive the sacrament of the holy laver as though they had it not, but that, as what they had was before for their destruction, so it should now begin to be of profit to them? Or if this is not granted to them in your communion, because it could not possibly be that it should be granted to schismatics among schismatics, it is at any rate granted to you in the Catholic communion, not that you should receive baptism as though it were lacking in you, but that the baptism which you have actually received should be of profit to you. For all the sacraments of Christ, if not combined with the love which belongs to the unity of Christ, are possessed not unto salvation, but unto judgment. But since it is not a true verdict, but your verdict, "that through the baptism of certain traditors the baptism of Christ has perished from the world in general," it is with good reason that you cannot find any answer to make respecting the recognition of the baptism of the followers of Maximianus

47. See therefore, and remember with the most watchful care, how Petilianus has made no answer to that very question, which he proposes to himself in such terms as to seem to make it a starting-point from which to say something. For the former question he has dismissed altogether, and has not wished to speak of it to us, because I suppose it was beyond his power; nor is he at any time, up to the very end of his volume, going to say anything about it, though he quoted it from the first part of my epistle as though it were a matter calling for refutation. For even though he has added the two words which he accused me of having suppressed, as though they were the strongest bulwarks of his position, he yet lies wholly defenseless, unable to find any answer to make when he is asked, If the conscience of one that gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of

the recipient, where are we to find means for cleansing the conscience of the man who is unacquainted with the conscience of him gives, but not in holiness? and if it be the case that any one who has received his faith from one that is faithless, receives not faith but guilt, from what source is he to receive not guilt but faith, who is unwittingly baptized by one that is faithless? To this question it has long been manifest from what he says that he has made no answer.

48. In the next place, he has gone on, with calumnious mouth, to abuse monasteries and monks, finding fault also with me, as having been the founder of this kind of life. And what this kind of life really is he does not know at all, or rather, though it is perfectly well known throughout all the world, he pretends that he is unacquainted with it. Then, asserting that I had said that Christ was the baptizer, he has also added certain words from my epistle as though I had set this forth as my own sentiment, when I had really quoted it as his and yours, and it was inveighed against with most copious harshness, as if it were I who had said these things against myself, when what he reprehended was not mine, but his and your sentiment, as I will presently show clearly to the best of my ability. Then he has endeavored to show us, in many unnecessary words, that Christ does not baptize, but that baptism is administered in His name, at once in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; of which Trinity itself he has said, either because it was what he wished, or because it was all that he could say, that “Christ is the centre of the Trinity.” In the next place, he has taken occasion of the names of the sorcerers Simon and Barjesus to vent against us what insults he thought fit. Then he goes on, keeping in guarded suspense the case of Optatus of Thamugas, that he might not be steeped in the odium that arose from it, denying that neither he or his party could have passed judgment upon him, and actually intimating in respect of him, that he was crushed in consequence of suggestions from myself.

CHAPTER 41

49. Lastly, he has ended his epistle with an exhortation and warning to his own party, that they should not be deceived by us, and with a lamentation over those of our party, that we had made them worse than they had been before. Having therefore carefully considered and discussed these points, as

appears with sufficient clearness from the words of the epistle which he wrote, Petilianus has made no answer at all to the position which I advanced to begin with in my epistle, when I asked, Supposing it to be true, as he asserts, that the conscience of one that gives—or rather, to add what he considers so great a support to his argument—that the conscience of one that gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient, by what means he who receives baptism is to be cleansed, when, if the conscience of the giver is polluted, it is without the knowledge of the proposed recipient? Whence it is not surprising that a man resisting in the cause of falsehood, pressed hard in the straits of the truth that contradicts it, should have chosen rather to gasp forth mad abuse, than to walk in the path of that truth which cannot be overcome

50. And now I would beg of you to pay especial attention to the next few words, that I may show you clearly what he has been afraid of in not answering this, and that I may bring into the light what he has endeavored to shroud in obscurity. It certainly was in his power, when we asked by what means he is to be cleansed, who receives baptism when the conscience of the giver is polluted without the knowledge of the proposed recipient, to answer with the greatest ease, From our Lord God; and at any rate to say with the utmost confidence, God wholly cleanses the conscience of the recipient, when he is unacquainted with the stain upon the conscience of him that gives but not in holiness. But when a man had already been compelled by the tenets of your sect to rest the cleansing of the recipient on the conscience of the giver, in that he had said, “For the conscience of him that gives,” or “of him that gives in holiness, is looked for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient,” he was naturally afraid lest any one should seem to be better baptized by a wicked man who concealed his wickedness, than by one that was genuinely and manifestly good; for in the former case his cleansing would depend not on the conscience of one that gave in holiness, but on the most excellent holiness of God Himself. With this apprehension, therefore, that he might not be involved in so great an absurdity, or rather madness, as not to know where he could make his escape, he was unwilling to say by what means the conscience of the recipient should be cleansed, when he does not know of the stain upon the conscience of him that gives but not in holiness; and he thought it better, by

making a general confusion with his quarrelsome uproar, to conceal what was asked of him, than to give a reply to his question, which should at once discomfit him; never, however, thinking that our letter could be read by men of such good understanding, or that his would be read by those who had read ours as well, to which he has professed to make an answer.

CHAPTER 42

51. For what I just now said is put with the greatest clearness in that very epistle of mine, in answering which he has said nothing; and I would beg of you to listen for a few moments to what he there has done. And although you are partisans of his, and hate us, yet, if you can, bear it with equanimity. For in his former epistle, to the first portion of which—the only portion which had then come into our hands—I had in the first instance made my reply, he had so rested the hope that is found in baptism in the baptizer, as to say, “For everything consists of an origin and root; and if anything has not a head, it is nothing.” Since then Petilianus had said this, not wishing anything to be understood by the origin and root and head of baptizing a man, except the man by whom he might be baptized, I made a comment, and said “We ask, therefore, in a case where the faithlessness of the baptizer is undetected, if then the man whom he baptizes receives faith and not guilt? if then the baptizer is not his origin and root and head, who is it from whom he receives faith? where is the origin from which he springs? where is the root of which he is a shoot? where the head which is his starting-point? Can it be that, when he who is baptized is unaware of the faithlessness of his baptizer, it is then Christ who is the origin and root and head?” This therefore I say and exclaim now also, as I did there as well: “Alas for human rashness and conceit! Why do you not allow that it is always Christ who gives faith, for the purpose of making a man a Christian by giving it? Why do you not allow that Christ is always the origin of the Christian, that the Christian always plants his root in Christ, that Christ is the Head of the Christian? Will it then be urged that, even where spiritual grace is dispensed to those that believe by the hands of a holy and faithful minister, it is still not the minister himself who justifies, but that One of whom it is said, He justifieth the ungodly’? But unless we admit this, either the Apostle Paul was the head and origin of those whom he had planted, or

Apollos the root of those whom he had watered, rather than He who had given them faith in briefing; whereas the same Paul says, I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So that neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.’ Nor was the apostle himself their root, but rather He who says, I am the vine, ye are the branches.’ How, too, could he be their head, when he says that we, being many, are one body in Christ,’ and expressly declares in many passages that Christ Himself is the Head of the whole body? Wherefore, whether a man receives the sacrament of baptism from a faithful or a faithless minister his whole hope is in Christ, that he fall not under the condemnation, that Cursed is he that placeth his hope in man!’“

CHAPTER 43

52. These things, I think, I put with clearness and truth in my former epistle, when I made answer to Petilianus. These things I have also now quoted, intimating and commending to you the truth that our faith rests on something else altogether than man, and that we believe that the Lord Christ is the cleanser and the justifier of men that believe in Him that justifieth the ungodly, that their faith may be counted unto them for righteousness, whether the man who administers the baptism be righteous, or such an impious and deceitful man as the Holy Spirit flees. Then I went on to point out what absurdity would follow were it otherwise, and I said, as I say now: “Otherwise, if each man is born again in spiritual grace of the same sort as he by whom he is baptized, and if, when he who baptizes him is manifestly a good man, then he himself gives faith, he is himself the origin and root and head of him who is being born; whilst, when the baptizer is faithless without its being known, then the baptized person receives faith from Christ, then derives his origin from Christ, then he is rooted in Christ then he boasts in Christ as his head; in that case all who are baptized should wish that they might have faithless baptizers, and be ignorant of their faithlessness. For however good their baptizers might have been, Christ is certainly beyond comparison better still, and He will then be the Head of the baptized if the faithlessness of the baptizer shall escape detection. But if it be perfect madness to hold such a view (for it is Christ always that justifieth the ungodly, by changing his ungodliness into Christianity; it is

from Christ always that faith is received; Christ is always the origin of the regenerate, and the Head of the Church), what weight then will those words have, which thoughtless readers value by their sound, without inquiring what their inner meaning is?” This much I said at that time; this is written in my epistle

CHAPTER 44

53. Then a little after, as he had said, “This being so, brethren, what perversity must that be, that he who is guilty by reason of his own faults should make another free from guilt, whereas the Lord Jesus Christ says, Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit: do men gather grapes of thorns?’ and again, A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things,’“—by which words Petilianus showed with sufficient clearness, that the man who baptizes is to be looked on as the tree, and he who is baptized as the fruit: to this I had answered, If the good tree is the good baptizer, and his good fruit he whom he has baptized, then any one who has been baptized by a bad man, even if his wickedness be not manifest, cannot by any possibility be good, for he is sprung from an evil tree. For a good tree is one thing; a tree whose quality is concealed, but yet bad, is another. What else did I wish to be understood by those words, except what I had stated a little above, that the tree and its fruit do not represent him that baptizes and him that is baptized; but that the man ought to be received as signified by the tree, his works and his life by the fruit, which are always good in the good man, and evil in the evil man, lest this absurdity should follow, that a man should be bad when baptized by a bad man, even though his wickedness were concealed, being, as it were, the fruit of a tree whose quality was unknown, but yet bad? To which he has answered nothing whatsoever

CHAPTER 45

54. But that neither he nor any one of you might say that, when any one of concealed bad character is the baptizer, then he whom he baptizes is not his fruit, but the fruit of Christ, I went on immediately to point out what a foolish error is consequent also on that opinion; and I repeated, though in

other words, what I had said shortly before: If, when the quality of the tree is concealed, but evil, any one who may have been baptized by it is born, not of it but of Christ, then they are justified with greater holiness who are baptized by wicked men, whose wickedness is concealed, than they who are baptized by men that are genuinely and manifestly good. Petilianus then, being hemmed in by these embarrassing straits, said nothing about the earlier part on which these remarks depended, and in his answer so quoted his absurd consequence of his error as though I had stated it as my own opinion, whereas it was really stated in order that he might perceive the amount of evil consequent on his opinion, and so be forced to alter it. Imposing, therefore, this deceit on those who hear and read his words, and never for a moment supposing that what we have written could be read, he begins a vehement and petulant invective against me, as though I had thought that all who are baptized ought to wish that they might have as their baptizers men who are faithless, without knowing this themselves, since, however good the men might be whom they had to baptize them, Christ is incomparably better, who will then be the head of the person baptized, if the faithless baptizer conceal his true character. As though, too, I had thought that those were justified with greater holiness who are baptized by evil men, whose character is concealed, than those who are baptized by men that are genuinely and manifestly good; when this marvellous piece of madness was only mentioned by me as following necessarily on the opinion of those who think with Petilianus, that a man, when baptized, bears the same relation to his baptizer as fruit does to the tree from which it springs,—good fruit springing from a good tree, evil fruit from an evil tree,—seeing that they, when they are bidden by me to answer whose fruit they think a man that is baptized to be when he is baptized by one of secretly bad character, since they do not venture to rebaptize him, are compelled to answer, that then he is not the fruit of that man of secretly bad character, but that he is the fruit of Christ. And so they are followed by a consequence contrary to their inclination, which none but a madman would entertain,—that if a man is the fruit of his baptizer when he is baptized by one that is genuinely and manifestly good, but when he is baptized by one of secretly bad character, he is then not his fruit, but the fruit of Christ,—it cannot but follow that they are justified with greater holiness who are baptized by men of secretly bad character, than those who are baptized by men who are genuinely and manifestly good

CHAPTER 46

55. Now, seeing that when Petilianus attributes this to me as though it were my opinion, he makes it an occasion for a serious and vehement invective against me, he at any rate shows, by the very force of his indignation, how great a sin it is in his opinion to entertain such views; and, accordingly, whatever he has wished it to appear that he said against me for holding this opinion will be found to have been really said against himself, who is proved to entertain the view. For he shows herein by how great force on the side of truth he is overcome, when he cannot find any other door of escape except to pretend that it was I who entertained the views which really are his own. Just as if those whom the apostle confutes for maintaining that there was no resurrection from the dead, were to wish to bring an accusation against the same apostle, on the ground that he said, “Then is Christ not risen,” and to maintain that the preaching of the apostle was vain, and the faith of those who believed in it was also vain, and that false witnesses were found against God in those who had said that He raised up Christ from the dead. This is what Petilianus wished to do to me, never expecting that any one could read what I had written, which he could not answer, though very anxious that men should believe him to have answered it. But just as, if any one had done this to the apostle, the whole calumnious accusation would have recoiled on the head of those who made it so soon as the entire passage in his epistle was read, and the preceding words restored, on which any one who reads them must perceive that those which I have quoted depend, in the same way, so soon as the preceding words of my epistle are restored, the accusation which Petilianus brings against me is cast back with all the greater force upon his own head, from which he had striven to remove it

56. For the apostle, in confuting those who denied that there was any resurrection of the dead, corrects their view by showing the absurdity which follows those who entertain this view, however loth they may be to admit the consequence, in order that, while they shrink in abhorrence from what is impious to say, they may correct what they have ventured to believe. His

argument continues thus: “But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God: because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ; whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.” In order that, while they fear to say that Christ had not risen, with the other wicked and accursed conclusions which follow from such a statement, they may correct what they said in a spirit of folly and infidelity, that there is no resurrection of the dead. If, therefore, you take away what stands at the head of this argument, “If there be no resurrection of the dead,” the rest is spoken amiss, and yet must be ascribed to the apostle. But if you restore the supposition on which the rest depends, and place as the hypothesis from which you start, “There is no resurrection of the dead,” then the conclusion will follow rightly, “Then is Christ not risen, and our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain,” with all the rest that is appended to it. And all these statements of the apostle are wise and good, since whatever evil they have in them is to be imputed to those who denied the resurrection of the dead. In the same manner also, in my epistle, take away my supposition, If every one is born again in spiritual grace of the same character as he by whom he is baptized, and if, when the man who baptizes is genuinely and manifestly good, he does of himself give faith, he is the origin and root and head of him who is being born again; but when the baptizer is a wicked man, and undetected in his wickedness, then each man who is baptized receives his faith from Christ, derives his origin from Christ, is rooted in Christ, makes his boast in Christ as his Head:—take away, I say, this hypothesis, on which all that follows depends, and there remains a saying of the worst description which must fairly be ascribed to me, viz., that all who are baptized should desire that they should have faithless men to baptize them, and be ignorant of their faithlessness. For however good men they may have to baptize them, Christ is incomparably better who will then be the Head of the baptized, if the baptizer be a faithless man, but undetected. But let the statements that you make be restored, and then it will forthwith be found that this which depends upon it and follows in close connection from it is not my sentiment, and that any evil which it contains is retorted on the opinion which you maintain. In like manner, take away the supposition, If the good baptizer is the good tree, so that he whom he has baptized is his good fruit, and if, when the character of an evil tree is concealed, then any one that has been baptized by it is born, not of it, but of Christ,—take away this hypothesis, which you were compelled to confess had its origin in your sect and in the letter of Petilianus, and the mad conclusion which follows from it will be mine, to be ascribed to me alone, then they are justified with greater holiness who are baptized by undetected evil men, than they who are baptized by men that are genuinely and manifestly good. But restore the hypothesis on which this depends, and you will at once see both that I have been right in making this statement for your correction, and that all that with good reason displeases you in this opinion has recoiled upon your own head.

CHAPTER 47

57. Furthermore, in like manner as those who denied the resurrection of the dead could in no way defend themselves from the evil consequences which the apostle proved to follow from their premises, in order to refute their error, saying, “Then is not Christ raised,” with the other conclusions of similar atrocity, unless they changed their opinions, and acknowledged that there was a resurrection of the dead; so is it necessary that you should change your opinion, and cease to rest on man the hope of those who are baptized, if you do not wish to have imputed to you what we say for your refutation and correction, that they are justified with greater holiness who are baptized by undetected evil men than those that are baptized by men that are genuinely and manifestly good. For if you make your first assertion, see what I say, unless some one shall suppress this a second time, and make out that I have entertained the opinion which I quote for your refutation and correction. See what I lay down as my premiss, from which hangs the statement which I shall subsequently make: If you rest the hope of those who are to be baptized on the man by whom they are baptized, and if you maintain, as Petilianus wrote, that the man who baptizes is the origin and root and head of him that is baptized; if you receive as the good tree the good man who baptizes, and as his good fruit the man who has been baptized by him; then you put it into our heads to ask from what origin he springs, from what root he shoots up, to what head he is joined, from what tree he is born, who is baptized by an undetected bad man? For to this

inquiry, belongs also the following, to which I have over and over again maintained that Petilianus has given no reply: By what means is a man to be cleansed who receives baptism while he is ignorant of the stain upon the conscience of him that gives but not in holiness? for this conscience of him that gives, or of him that gives in holiness, Petilianus wishes to be the origin, root, head, seed, tree from which the sanctification of the baptized has its existence,—springs, begins, sprouts forth, is born

CHAPTER 48

58. When we ask, therefore, by what means the man is to be cleansed whom you do not baptize again in your communion, even when it has been made clear that he has been baptized by some one who, on account of some concealed iniquity, did not at the time possess the conscience of one that gives in holiness, what answer do you intend to make, except that he is cleansed by Christ or by God, although, indeed, Christ is Himself God over all, blessed for ever, or by the Holy Spirit since He too is Himself God, because this Trinity of Persons is one God? Whence Peter, after saying to a man, “Thou hast dared to lie to the Holy Ghost,” immediately went on to add what was the nature of the Holy Ghost, saying, “Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.” Lastly, even if you were to say that he was cleansed and purified by an angel when he is unacquainted with the pollution in the conscience of him that gives but not in holiness, take notice that it is said of the saints, when they shall have risen to eternal life, that they shall then be equal to the angels of God. Any one, therefore, that is cleansed even by an angel is cleansed with greater holiness than if he were cleansed by any kind of conscience of man. Why then are you unwilling that it should be said to you, If cleaning is wrought by the hands of a man when he is genuinely and manifestly good; but when the man is evil, but undetected in his wickedness, then since he has not the conscience of one that gives in holiness, it is no longer he, but God, or an angel, that cleanses; therefore they who are baptized by undetected evil men are justified with greater holiness than those who are baptized by men that are genuinely and manifestly good? And if this opinion is displeasing to you, as in reality it ought to be displeasing to every one, then take away the source from which

it springs, correct the premiss to which it is indissolubly bound; for if these do not precede as hypotheses, the other will not follow as a consequence

CHAPTER 49

59. Do not therefore any longer say, “The conscience of one that gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient,” lest you be asked, When a stain on the conscience of the giver is concealed, who cleanses the conscience of the recipient? And when you shall have answered, Either God or an angel (since there is no other answer which you possibly can make), then should follow a consequence whereby you would be confounded: Those then are justified with greater holiness who are baptized by undetected evil men, so as to be cleansed by God or by an angel, than those who are baptized by men who are genuinely and manifestly good, who cannot be compared with God or with the angels. But prevail upon yourselves to say what is said by Truth and by the Catholic Church, that not only when the minister of baptism is evil, but also when he is holy and good, hope is still not to be placed in man, but in Him that justifieth the ungodly, in whom if any man believe, his faith is counted for righteousness. For when we say, Christ baptizes, we do not mean by a visible ministry, as Petilianus believes, or would have men think that he believes, to be our meaning, but by a hidden grace, by a hidden power in the Holy Spirit as it is said of Him by John the Baptist, “The same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” Nor has He, as Petilianus says, now ceased to baptize; but He still does it, not by any ministry of the body, but by the invisible working of His majesty. For in that we say, He Himself baptizes, we do not mean, He Himself holds and dips in the water the bodies of the believers; but He Himself invisibly cleanses, and that He does to the whole Church without exception. Nor, indeed, may we refuse to believe the words of the Apostle Paul who says concerning Him, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.” Here you see that Christ sanctifies; here you see that Christ also Himself washes, Himself purifies with the self-same washing of water by the word, wherein the ministers are seen to do their work in the body. Let no one, therefore, claim unto himself what is of God. The hope of

men is only sure when it is fixed on Him who cannot deceive, since "Cursed be every one that trusteth in man," and "Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord His trust." For the faithful steward shall receive as his reward eternal life; but the unfaithful steward, when he dispenses his lord's provisions to his fellow-servants, must in no wise be conceived to make the provisions useless by his own unfaithfulness. For the Lord says, "Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works." And this is therefore the injunction that is given us against evil stewards, that the good things of God should be received at their hands, but that we should beware of their own evil life, by reason of its unlikeness to what they thus dispense

CHAPTER 50

60. But if it is clear that Petilianus has made no answer to those first words of my epistle, and that, when he has endeavored to make an answer, he has shown all the more clearly how incapable he was of answering, what shall I say in respect of those portions of my writings which he has not even attempted to answer, on which he has not touched at all? And yet if any one shall be willing to review their character, having in his possession both my writings and those of Petilianus, I think he will understand by what confirmation they are supported. And that I may show you this as shortly as I can, I would beg you to call to mind the proofs that were advanced from holy Scripture, or refresh your memory by reading both what he has brought forward as against me, and what I have brought forward in my answer as against you, and see how I have shown that the passages which he has brought forward are antagonistic not to me, but rather to yourselves; whilst he has altogether failed to touch those which I brought forward as especially necessary, and in that one passage of the apostle which he has endeavored to make use of as though it favored him, you will see how he found himself without the means of making his escape

61. For the portion of this epistle which he wrote to his adherents—from the beginning down to the passage in which he says, "This is the commandment of the Lord to us, When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another;' and if they persecute you in that also, flee ye to a third"—came first into my hands, and to it I made a reply; and when this reply of ours had

fallen, in turn, into his hands, he wrote in answer to it this which I am now refuting, showing that he has made no reply to mine. In that first portion, therefore, of his writings to which I first replied, these are the passages of Scripture which he conceives to be opposed to us: “Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. Do men gather grapes of thorns?” And again: “A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.” And again: “When a man is baptized by one that is dead, his washing profiteth him nothing.” From these passages he is anxious to show that the man who is baptized is made to partake of the character of him by whom he is baptized; I on the other hand, have shown in what sense these passages should be received, and that they could in no wise aid his view. But as for the other expressions which he has used against evil and accursed men, I have sufficiently shown that they are applicable to the Lord’s wheat, dispersed, as was foretold and promised, throughout the world, and that they might rather be used by us against you. Examine them again, and you will find it so.

62. But the passages which I have advanced to assert the truth of the Catholic Church, are the following: As regards the question of baptism, that our being born again, cleansed, justified by the grace of God, should not be ascribed to the man who administered the sacrament, I quoted these: “It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man:” and “Cursed be every one that trusteth in man;” and that, “Salvation belongeth unto the Lord;” and that, “Vain is the help of man;” and that, “Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase;” and that He in whom men believe justifieth the ungodly, that his faith may be counted to him for righteousness. But in behalf of the unity of the Church itself, which is spread abroad throughout all the world, with which you do not hold communion, I urged that the following passages were prophesied of Christ: that “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth;” and, “I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession;” and that the covenant of God made with Abraham may be quoted in behalf of our, that is, of the Catholic communion, in which it is written, “In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed;” which seed

the apostle interprets, saying, “And to thy seed, which is Christ.” Whence it is evident that in Christ not only Africans or Africa, but all the nations through which the Catholic Church is spread abroad, should receive the blessing which was promised so long before. And that the chaff is to be with the wheat even to the time of the last winnowing, that no one may excuse the sacrilege of his own separation from the Church by calumnious accusations of other men’s offenses, if he shall have left or deserted the communion of all nations; and to show that the society of Christians may not be divided on account of evil ministers, that is, evil rulers in the Church, I further quoted the passage, “All whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not.” With regard to these passages of holy Scripture which I advanced to prove my points, he neither showed how they ought to be otherwise interpreted, so as to prove that they neither made for us nor against you, nor was he willing to touch them in any way. Nay, his whole object was could it have been achieved, that by the tumultuous outpouring of his abuse, it might never occur to any one at all, who after reading my epistle might have been willing to read his as well, that these things had been said by me.

CHAPTER 51

63. Next, listen for a short time to the kind of way in which he has tried to use, in his own behalf, the passages which I had advanced from the writings of the Apostle Paul. “For you asserted,” he says, “that the Apostle Paul finds fault with those who used to say that they were of the Apostle Paul, saying, Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?’ Wherefore, if they were in error, and would have perished had they not been corrected, because they wished to be of Paul, what hope can there possibly be for those who have wished to be of Donatus? For this is their sole object, that the origin, and root, and head of him that is baptized should be none other than he by whom he is baptized.” These words, and this confirmation from the writings of the apostle, he has quoted from my epistle, and he has proposed to himself the task of refuting them. Go on then, I beg of you, to see how he has fulfilled the task. For he says, “This assertion is meaningless, and inflated, and childish, and foolish, and something very far from a true exposition of our faith. For you would only

be right in asserting this, if we were to say, We have been baptized in the name of Donatus, or Donatus was crucified for us, or we have been baptized in our own name. But since such things as this neither have been said nor are said by us,—seeing that we follow the formula of the holy Trinity,—it is clear that you are mad to bring such accusations against us. Or if you think that we have been baptized in the name of Donatus, or in our own name, you are miserably deceived, and at the same time confess in your sacrilege that you on your part defile your wretched selves in the name of Caecilianus.” This is the answer which Petilianus has made to those arguments of mine, not supposing—or rather making a noise that no one might suppose—that he has made no answer at all which could bear in any way upon the question which is under discussion. For who could fail to see that this witness of the apostle has been adduced by us with all the more propriety, in that you do not say that you were baptized in the name of Donatus, or that Donatus was crucified for you, and yet separate yourselves from the communion of the Catholic Church out of respect to the party of Donatus; as also those whom Paul was rebuking certainly did not say that they had been baptized in the name of Paul, or that Paul has been crucified for them, and yet they were making a schism in the name of Paul. As therefore in their case, for whom Christ, not Paul, was crucified, and who were baptized in the name of Christ, not of Paul, and who yet said, “I am of Paul,” the rebuke is used with all the more propriety, “Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” to make them cling to Him who was crucified for them, and in whose name they were baptized, and not be guilty of division in the name of Paul; so in your case, also, the rebuke, Was Donatus crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Donatus? is used all the more appositely, because you do not say, We were baptized in the name of Donatus, and yet desire to be of the party of Donatus. For you know that it was Christ who was crucified for you, and Christ in whose name you were baptized; and yet, out of respect to the name and party of Donatus, you show such obstinacy in fighting against the unity of Christ, who was crucified for you, and in whose name you were baptized

CHAPTER 52

64. But if you wish to see that the object of Petilianus in his writings really was to prove “that the origin, and root, and head of him that is baptized is none other than he by whom he is baptized,” and that this has not been asserted by me without meaning, or childishly, or foolishly, review the beginning of the epistle itself to which I made my reply, or rather pay careful attention to me as I quote it. “The conscience,” he says, “of one that gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient; for he who has received his faith from one that is faithless, receives not faith but guilt.” And as though some one had said to him, Whence do you derive your proof of this? he goes on to say, “For everything has its existence from a source and root; and if anything has not a head, it is nothing; nor does anything well confer a new birth, unless it be born again of good seed. And this being so, brethren, what perversity must it be to maintain that he who is guilty by reason of his own offenses should make another free from guilt; whereas our Lord Jesus Christ says, A good tree bringeth forth good fruit: do men gather grapes of thorns?’ And again, A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.’ And again, When a man is baptized by one that is dead, his washing profiteth him nothing.’“ You see to what end all these things tend, viz., that the conscience of him that gives in holiness (lest any one, by receiving his faith from one that is faithless, should receive not faith but guilt) should be itself the origin, and root, and head, and seed of him that is baptized. For, wishing to prove that the conscience of one that gives in holiness is what we look for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient, and that he receives not faith but guilt, who wittingly receives his faith from one that is faithless, he has added immediately afterwards, “For everything has its existence from a source and root; and if anything has not a head, it is nothing; nor does anything well confer a new birth, unless it be born again of good seed.” And for fear that any one should be so dull as still not to understand that in each case he is speaking of the man by whom a person is baptized, he explains this afterwards, and says, “This being so, brethren, what perversity must it be to maintain that he who is guilty by reason of his own offenses should make another free from guilt; whereas our Lord Jesus Christ says, A good tree bringeth forth good fruit: do men gather grapes of thorns?’“ And lest, by some incredible stupidity of understanding, the

hearer or seer should be blind enough not to see that he is speaking of the man that baptizes, he adds another passage, where he actually specifies the man. “And again,” he says, “A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things;’ and again, When a man is baptized by one that is dead, his washing profiteth him nothing,’“ Certainly it is now plain, certainly he needs no longer any interpreter, or disputant, or demonstrator, to show that the object of his party is to prove that the origin, and root, and head of him that is baptized is none other than he by whom he is baptized. And yet, being overwhelmed by the force of truth, and as though forgetful of what he had said before, Petilianus acknowledges afterwards to me that Christ is the origin and root of them that are regenerate, and the Head of the Church, and not any one that may happen to be the dispenser and minister of baptism. For having said that the apostles used to baptize in the name of Christ, and set forth Christ as the foundation of their faith, to make men Christians, and being fain to prove this, too, by passages and examples from holy Scripture, just as though we were denying it, he says, “Where is now that voice, from which issued the noise of those minute and constant petty questionings, wherein, in the spirit of envy and self-conceit, you uttered many involved sayings about Christ, and for Christ, and in Christ, in opposition to the rashness and haughtiness of men? Lo, Christ is the origin, Christ is the head, Christ is the root of the Christian.” When, therefore, I heard this, what could I do but give thanks to Christ, who had compelled the man to make confession? All those things, therefore, are false which he said in the beginning of his epistle, when he wished to persuade us that the conscience of one that gives in holiness must be looked for to cleanse the conscience of the recipient; and that when one has wittingly received his faith from one that is faithless he receives not faith but guilt. For, wishing as it were to show clearly how much rested in the man that baptizes, he had added what he seems to think most weighty proofs, saying “For everything has its existence from a source and root; and if anything has not a head, it is nothing.” But afterwards, when he says what we also say, “Lo, Christ is the origin, Christ is the head, Christ is the root of the Christian,” he wipes out what he had said before, “that the conscience of one that gives in holiness is the origin, and root, and head of the recipient.” The truth, therefore, has prevailed, so that the man who is desirous to receive the baptism of Christ should not rest his hope upon the man who administers the sacrament, but should approach in all security to Christ Himself, as to the source which is not changed, to the root which is not plucked up, to the head which is not cast down

CHAPTER 53

65. Then who is there that could fail to perceive from what a vein of conceit it proceeds, that in explaining as it were the declaration of the apostle, he says, “He who said, I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase,’ surely meant nothing else than this, that I made a man a catechumen in Christ, Apollo baptized him; God confirmed what we had done?’“ Why then did not Petilianus add what the apostle added, and I especially took pains to quote, “So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase”? And if he be willing to interpret this on the same principle as what he has set down above, it follows beyond all doubt, that neither is he that baptizeth anything but God that giveth the increase. For what matter does it make in reference to the question now before us, in what sense it has been said, “I planted, Apollos watered,”—whether it is really to be taken as equivalent to his saying, “I made a catechumen, Apollos baptized him;” or whether there be any other truer and more congruous understanding of it?—for in the mean time, according to his own interpretation of the words, neither is he that makes the catechumen anything, neither he that baptizes, but God that gives the increase. But there is a great difference between confirming what another does, and doing anything oneself. For He who gives the increase does not confirm a tree or a vine, but creates it. For by that increase it comes to pass that even a piece of wood planted in the ground produces and establishes a root; by that increase it comes to pass that a seed cast into the earth puts forth a shoot. But why should we make a longer dissertation on this point? It is enough that, according to Petilianus himself neither he that maketh a catechumen, nor he that baptizes, is anything, but God that gives the increase. But when would Petilianus say this, so that we should understand that he meant, Neither is Donatus of Carthage anything, neither Januarius, neither Petilianus? When would the swelling of his pride permit him to say

this, which now causes the man to think himself to be something, when he is nothing, deceiving himself?

CHAPTER 54

66. Finally, again, a little afterwards, when he resolved and was firmly purposed, as it were, to reconsider once more the words of the apostle which he had brought up against him, he was unwilling to set down this that I had said, preferring something else in which by some means or other the swelling of human pride might find means to breathe. “For to reconsider,” he says, “those words of the apostle, on which you founded an argument against us; he said, What is Apollos, what is Paul, save only ministers of Him in whom ye have believed?’ What else for example, does he say to all of us than this, What is Donatus of Carthage, what is Januarius, what is Petilianus, save only ministers of Him in whom ye have believed?” I did not bring forward this passage of the apostle, but I did bring forward that which he has been unwilling to quote, “Neither he that planteth is anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.” But Petilianus was willing to insert those words of the apostle, in which he asks what is Paul, and what is Apollos, and answers that “They are ministers of Him in whom ye have believed.” This the muscles of the heretic’s neck could bear; but he was wholly unable to endure the other, in which the apostle did not ask and answer what he was, but said that he was nothing. But now I am willing to ask whether it be true that the minister of Christ is nothing. Who will say so much as this? In what sense, therefore, is it true that “Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase,” except that he who is something in one point of view may be nothing in another? For ministering and dispensing the word and sacrament he is something, but for purifying and justifying he is nothing, seeing that this is not accomplished in the inner man, except by Him by whom the whole man was created, and who while He remained God was made man,—by Him, that is, of whom it was said, “Purifying their hearts by faith;” and “To him that believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly.” And this testimony Petilianus has been willing to set forth in my words, whilst in his own he has neither handled it nor even touched it

67. A minister, therefore, that is a dispenser of the word and sacrament of the gospel, if he is a good man, becomes a fellow-partner in the working of the gospel; but if he is a bad man, he does not therefore cease to be a dispenser of the gospel. For if he is good, he does it of his own free will; but if he is a bad man,—that is, one who seeks his own and not the things of Jesus Christ,—he does it unwillingly, for the sake of other things which he is seeking after. See, however, what the same apostle has said: “For if I do this thing willingly,” he says, “I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me;” as though he were to say, If I, being good, announce what is good, I attain unto it also myself; but if, being evil, I announce it, yet I announce what is good. For has he in any way said, If I do it against my will, then shall I not be a dispenser of the gospel? Peter and the other disciples announce the good tidings, as being good themselves. Judas did it against his will, but yet, when he was sent, he announced it in common with the rest. They have a reward; to him a dispensation of the gospel was committed. But they who received the gospel at the mouth of all those witnesses, could not be cleansed and justified by him that planted, or by him that watered, but by Him alone that gives the increase. For neither are we going to say that Judas did not baptize, seeing that he was still among the disciples when that which is written was being accomplished, “Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples.” Are we to suppose that, because he had not betrayed Christ, therefore he who had the bag, and bare what was put therein, was still enabled to dispense grace without prejudice to those who received it, though he could not be an upright guardian of the money entrusted to his care? Or if he did not baptize, at any rate we must acknowledge that he preached the gospel. But if you consider this a trifling function, and of no importance, see what you must think of the Apostle Paul himself, who said, “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.” To this we may add, that according to this, Apollos begins to be more important, who watered by baptizing, than Paul, who planted by preaching the gospel, though Paul claims to himself the relation of father towards the Corinthians in virtue of this very act, and does not grant this title to those who came to them after him. For he says, “Though ye have ten thousand instructors in

Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.” He says, “I have begotten you” to the same men to whom he says in another place, “I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, and I baptized also the household of Stephanus.” He had begotten them, therefore, not through himself, but through the gospel. And even though he had been seeking his own, and not the things of Jesus Christ, and had been doing this unwillingly, so as to receive no reward for himself, yet he would have been dispensing the treasure of the Lord; and this, though evil himself, he would not have been making evil or useless to those who received it well

CHAPTER 56

68. And if this is rightly said of the gospel, with how much greater certainty should it be said of baptism, which belongs to the gospel in such wise, that without it no one can reach the kingdom of heaven, and with it only if to the sacrament be added righteousness? For He who said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,” said Himself also, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” The form of the sacrament is given through baptism, the form of righteousness through the gospel. Neither one without the other leads to the kingdom of heaven. Yet even men of inferior learning can baptize perfectly, but to preach the gospel perfectly is a task of much greater difficulty and rarity. Therefore the teacher of the Gentiles, that was superior in excellence to the majority, was sent to preach the gospel, not to baptize; because the latter could be done by many, the former only by a few, of whom he was chief. And yet we read that he said in certain places, “My gospel;” but he never called baptism either his, or any one’s else by whom it was administered. For that baptism alone which John gave is called John’s baptism. This that man received as the special pledge of his ministry, that the preparatory sacrament of washing should even be called by the name of him by whom it was administered; whereas the baptism which the disciples of Christ administered was never called by the name of any one of them, that it should be understood to be His alone of whom it is said, “Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and

cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.” If, therefore, the gospel, which is Christ’s, but so that a minister also may call it his in virtue of his office of administering it, can be received by a man even at the hands of an evil minister without danger to himself, if he does according to what he says, and not after the example of what he does, how much more may any one who comes in good faith to Christ receive without fear of contagion from an evil minister the baptism of Christ, which none of the apostles so administered as to dare to call it his own?

CHAPTER 57

69. Furthermore, if, while I have continued without intermission to prove how entirely the passages of Scripture which Petilianus has quoted against us have failed to hurt our cause, he himself has in some cases not touched at all what I have quoted, and partly, when he has endeavored to handle them, has shown that the only thing that he could do was to fail in finding an escape from them, you require no long exhortation or advice in order to see what you ought to maintain, and what you should avoid. But it may be that this has been the kind of show that he has made in dealing with the testimony of holy Scripture, but that he has not been without force in the case of the documentary evidence found in the records of the schism itself. Let us then see in the case of these too, though it is superfluous to inquire into them after testimony from the word of God, what he has quoted, or what he has proved. For, after pouring forth a violent invective against traditors, and quoting loudly many passages against them from the holy books themselves, he yet said nothing which could prove his opponents to be traditors. But I quoted the case of Silvanus of Cirta, who held his own see some little time before himself, who was expressly declared in the Municipal Chronicles to have been a traditor while he was yet a sub-deacon. Against this fact he did not venture to whisper a syllable. And yet you cannot fail to see how strong the pressure was which must have been urging him to reply that he might show a man, who was his predecessor, not only one of his party, but a partner, so to speak, in his see, to have been innocent of the crime of delivering up the sacred books, especially as you rest the whole strength of your cause on the fact that you give the name of traditor to all whom you either pretend or believe to have been the

successors of traditors in the path of their communion. Although, then, the very exigencies of your cause would seem to compel him to undertake the defence of a citizen even of Russicadia, or Calama, or any other city of your party, whom I should declare to be a traditor, on the authority of the Municipal Chronicles, yet he did not open his mouth even in defense of his own predecessor. For what reason, except that he could not find any mist dark enough to deceive the minds of even the slowest and sleepiest of men? For what could he have said, except that the charges brought against Silvanus were false? But we quote the words of the Chronicles, both as to the date of the fact, and as to the time of the information laid before Zenophilus the ex-consul. And how could he resist this evidence, being encompassed on every side by the most excellent cause of the Catholics, while yours was bad as bad could be? For which reason I quote these words from my epistle to which he would fain be thought to have replied in this which I am now refuting, that you may see for yourselves how impregnable the position must be against which he has been able to find no safer weapon than silence

CHAPTER 58

70. For when he quoted a passage from the gospel as making against us, where our Lord says, “They will come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves; ye shall know them by their fruits,”—I answered and said, “Then let us consider their fruits;” and then I at once went on to add the following words: “You bring up against them their delivery of the sacred books. This very charge we urge with greater probability, against their accusers themselves. And not to carry our search too far: in the same city of Constantina, your predecessors ordained Silvanus bishop at the very outset of his schism. He, while he was still a sub-deacon, was most unmistakably entered as a traditor in the archives of the city. If you, on your side, bring forward documents against our predecessors, all that we ask is equal terms, that we should either believe both to be true, or both to be false. If both are true, you are unquestionably guilty of schism, who have pretended that you avoid offenses in the communion of the whole world, though these were common among you in your own fragmentary sect. But again, if both are false, you are

unquestionably guilty of schism, who, on account of the false charges of traditors, are staining yourselves with the heinous offense of severance from the Church. But if we have something to urge in accusation, while you have nothing, or if our charges are true, while yours are false, it is no longer matter of discussion how thoroughly your mouths are closed. What if the holy and true Church of Christ were to convince and overcome you, even if we held no documents in support of our cause, or only such as were false, while you had possession of some genuine proof of delivery of the sacred books, what would then remain for you, except that, if you would, you should show your love of peace, or otherwise should hold your tongues? For whatever in that case you might bring forward in evidence, I should be able to say with the greatest ease and with the most perfect truth, that then you are bound to prove as much to the full and Catholic unity of the Church, already spread abroad and established throughout so many nations, to the end that you should remain within, and that those whom you convict should be expelled. And if you have endeavored to do this, certainly you have not been able to make good your proof; and, being vanquished or enraged, you have separated yourselves, with all the heinous guilt of sacrilege, from the guiltless men who could not condemn on insufficient proof. But if you have not even endeavored to do this, then with most accursed and unnatural blindness you have cut yourselves off from the wheat of Christ, which grows throughout His whole fields, that is, throughout the whole world until the end, because you have taken offense at a few tares in Africa.” To this, which I have quoted from my former epistle, Petilianus has made no answer whatsoever. And, at all events, you see that in these few words is comprised the whole question which is at issue between us. For what should he endeavor to say, when, whatever course he chose, he was sure to be debated?

71. For when documents are brought forward relating to the traditors, both by us against the men of your party, and by you against the men of our party, (if indeed any really are brought forward on your side, for to this very day we are left in total ignorance of them; nor indeed can we believe that Petilianus would have omitted to insert them in his letter, seeing that he has taken so much pain to secure the quotation and insertion of those portions of the Chronicles which bear on the matter in opposition to me),—but still,

as I began to say, if such documents are brought forward both by us and by you, documents of whose existence we are wholly ignorant to this very day,—surely you must acknowledge that either both are true, or both false, or ours true and yours false, or yours true and ours false; for there is no further alternative that can be suggested.

CHAPTER 59

But according to all these four hypotheses, the truth is on the side of the communion of the Catholic Church. For if both are true, then you certainly should not have deserted the communion of the whole world on account of men such as you too had among yourselves. But if both are false, you should have guarded against the guilt of most accursed division, which had not even any pretext to allege of any delivery of the sacred books. If ours are true and yours are false, you have long been without anything to say for yourselves. If yours are true and ours are false, we have been liable to be deceived, in common with the whole world, not about the truth of the faith, but about the unrighteousness of men. For the seed of Abraham, dispersed throughout the world, was bound to pay attention, not to what you said you knew, but to what you proved to the judges. Whence have we any knowledge of what was done by those men who were accused by your ancestors, even if the allegations made against them were true, so long as they were held to be not true but false, either by the judges who took cognizance of the case, or at least by the general body of the Church dispersed throughout the world, which was only bound to pay heed to the sentence of the judges? God does not necessarily pardon any human guilt that others in the weakness of human judgment fail to discover; yet I maintain that no one is rightly deemed guilty for having believed a man to be innocent who was not convicted. How then do you prove the world to be guilty, merely because it did not know what possibly was really guilt in the Africans,—its ignorance arising either from the fact that no one reported the sin to it, or from its having given credence, in respect of the information which was given, rather to the judges who took cognizance of the case, than to the murmurers who were defeated? So far then, Petilianus deserves all praise, in that, when he saw that on this point I was absolutely impregnable, he passed it by in silence. Yet he does not deserve praise for his attempts to obscure in a mist of words other points which were equally impregnable, which yet he thought could be obscured; or for having put me in the place of his cause, when the cause left him nothing to say; while even about myself he could say nothing except what was either altogether false, or undeserving of any blame, or without any bearing whatsoever upon me. But, in the meantime, are you, whom I have made judges between Petilianus and myself, possessed of discrimination enough to decide in any degree between what is true and what is false, between what is mere empty swelling and what is solid, between what is troubled and what is calm, between inflammation and soundness, between divine predictions and human assumptions, between bringing an accusation and establishing it, between proofs and fictions, between pleading a cause and leading one away from it? If you have such power of discrimination, well and good; but if you have it not, we shall not repent of having bestowed our pains on you, for even though your heart be not converted unto peace, yet our peace shall return unto ourselves

CONCERNING FAITH OF THINGS NOT SEEN

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DE FIDE RERUM QUAE NON VIDENTUR.

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. C. L. CORNISH, M.A.

This tract was thought spurious by some, but is known to be St. Augustin's by his mention of it in Ep. ccxxxi. ad Darium Comitem. It seems to have been written after 399, from what is said about Idols, S: 10; for in that year Honorius enacted laws against them.—From Bened. Ed.

The reader of Butler's Analogy will recognise many similar turns of thought.

1. There are those who think that the Christian religion is what we should smile at rather than hold fast, for this reason, that, in it, not what may be seen, is shown, but men are commanded faith of things which are not seen. We therefore, that we may refute these, who seem to themselves through prudence to be unwilling to believe what they cannot see, although we are not able to show unto human sight those divine things which we believe, yet do show unto human minds that even those things which are not seen are to be believed. And first they are to be admonished, (whom folly hath so made subject to their carnal eyes, as that, whatsoever they see not through them, they think not that they are to believe,) how many things they not only believe but also know, which cannot be seen by such eyes. Which things being without number in our mind itself, (the nature of which mind is incapable of being seen,) not to mention others, the very faith whereby we believe, or the thought whereby we know that we either believe any thing, or believe not, being as it is altogether alien from the sight of those eyes; what so naked, so clear, what so certain is there to the inner eyes of our

minds? How then are we not to believe what we see not with the eyes of the body, whereas, either that we believe, or that we believe not, in a case where we cannot apply the eyes of the body, we without any doubt see?

2. But, say they, those things which are in the mind, in that we can by the mind itself discern them, we have no need to know through the eyes of the body; but those things, which you say unto us that we should believe, you neither point to without, that through the eyes of the body we may know them; nor are they within, in our own mind, that by exercising thought we may see them. And these things they so say, as though any one would be bidden to believe, if that, which is believed, he could already see set before him. Therefore certainly ought we to believe certain temporal things also, which we see not, that we may merit to see eternal things also, which we believe. But, whosoever thou art who wilt not believe save what thou seest, lo, bodies that are present thou seest with the eyes of the body, wills and thoughts of thine own that are present, because they are in thine own mind, thou seest by the mind itself; tell me, I pray thee, thy friend’s will towards thee by what eyes seest thou? For no will can be seen by the eyes of the body. What? see you in your own mind this also which is going on in the mind of another? But if you see it not, how do you repay in turn the good will of your friend, if what you cannot see, you believe not? Will you haply say that you see the will of another through his works? Therefore you will see acts, and hear words, but concerning your friend’s will, that which cannot be seen and heard you will believe. For that will is not color or figure, so as to be thrown upon the eyes; or sound or strain, so as to glide into the ears; nor indeed is it your own, so as to be perceived by the motion of your own heart. It remains therefore that, being neither seen, nor heard, nor beheld within thyself, it be believed, that thy life be not left deserted without any friendship, or affection bestowed upon thee be not repaid by thee in return. Where then is that which thou saidest, that thou oughtest not to believe, save what thou sawest either outwardly in the body, or inwardly in the heart? Lo, out of thine own heart, thou believest an heart not thine own; and lendest thy faith, where thou dost not direct the glance of thy body or of thy mind. Thy friend’s face thou discernest by thy own body, thy own faith thou discernest by thine own mind; but thy friend’s faith is not loved by thee, unless there be in thee in return that faith, whereby thou mayest

believe that which in him thou seest not. Although a man may also deceive by feigning good will, and hiding malice: or, if he have no thought to do harm, yet by expecting some benefit from thee, feigns, because he has not, love.

3. But you say, that you therefore believe your friend, whose heart you cannot see, because you have proved him in your trials, and have come to know of what manner of spirit he was towards you in your dangers, wherein he deserted you not. Seemeth it therefore to you that we must wish for our own affliction, that our friend's love towards us may be proved? And shall no man be happy in most sure friends, unless he shall be unhappy through adversity? so that, forsooth, he enjoy not the tried love of the other, unless he be racked by pain and fear of his own? And how in the having of true friends can that happiness be wished for, and not rather feared, which nothing save unhappiness can put to the proof? And yet it is true that a friend may be had also in prosperity, but proved more surely in adversity. But assuredly in order to prove him, neither would you commit yourself to dangers of your own, unless you believed; and thus, when you commit yourself in order to prove, you believe before you prove. For surely, if we ought not to believe things not seen, since indeed we believe the hearts of our friends, and that, not yet surely proved; and, after we shall have proved them good by our own ills, even then we believe rather than see their good will towards us: except that so great is faith, that, not unsuitably, we judge that we see, with certain eyes of it, that which we believe, whereas we ought therefore to believe, because we cannot see.

4. If this faith be taken away from human affairs, who but must observe how great disorder in them, and how fearful confusion must follow? For who will be loved by any with mutual affection, (being that the loving itself is invisible,) if what I see not, I ought not to believe? Therefore will the whole of friendship perish, in that it consists not save of mutual love. For what of it will it be able to receive from any, if nothing of it shall be believed to be shown? Further, friendship perishing, there will be preserved in the mind the bonds neither of marriages, nor of kindreds and relations; because in these also there is assuredly a friendly union of sentiment. Spouse therefore will not be able to love spouse in turn, inasmuch as each

believes not the other’s love, because the love itself cannot be seen. Nor will they long to have sons, who they believe not will make them a return. And if these be born and grow up, much less will the parents themselves love their own children, whose love towards themselves in those children’s hearts they will not see, it being invisible; if it be not praiseworthy faith, but blameable rashness, to believe those things which are not seen. Why should I now speak of the other connections, of brothers, sisters, sons-in-law, and fathers-in-law, and of them who are joined together by any kindred or affinity, if love is uncertain, and the will suspected, that of parents by sons, and that of sons by parents, whilst due benevolence is not rendered; because neither is it thought to be due, that which is not seen in another not being thought to exist. Further, if this caution be not a mark of ability, but be hateful, wherein we believe not that we are loved, because we see not the love of them who love, and repay not them, unto whom we think not that we owe a return; to that degree are human affairs thrown into disorder, if what we see not we believe not, as to be altogether and utterly overthrown, if we believe no wills of men, which assuredly we cannot see. I omit to mention in how many things they, who find fault with us because we believe what we see not, believe report or history; or concerning places where they have not themselves been; and say not, we believe not, because we have not seen. Since if they say this, they are obliged to confess that their own parents are not surely known to them: because on this point also they have believed the accounts of others telling of it, who yet are unable to show it, because it is a thing already past; retaining themselves no sense of that time, and yet yielding assent without any doubting to others speaking of that time: and unless this be done, there must of necessity be incurred a faithless impiety towards parents, whilst we are, as it were, showing a rashness of belief in those things which we cannot see. Since therefore, if we believe not those things which we cannot see, human society itself, through concord perishing, will not stand how much more is faith to be applied to divine things, although they be not seen; failing the application of which, it is not the friendship of some men or other, but the very chiefest bond of piety that is violated, so as for the chiefest misery to follow.

5. But you will say, the good will of a friend towards me, although I cannot see it, yet can I trace it out by many proofs; but you, what things you will us

to believe not being seen, you have no proofs whereby to show them. In the mean time it is no slight thing, that you confess that by reason of the clearness of certain proofs, some things, even such as are not seen, ought to be believed: for even thus it is agreed, that not all things which are not seen, are not to be believed; and that saying, "that we ought not to believe things which we see not," falls to the ground, cast away, and refuted. But they are much deceived, who think that we believe in Christ without any proofs concerning Christ. For what are there clearer proofs than those things, which we now see to have been foretold and fulfilled? Wherefore do ye, who think that there are no proofs why ye ought to believe concerning Christ those things which ye have not seen, give heed to what things ye see. The Church herself addresses you out of the mouth of a mother's love: "I, whom ye view with wonder throughout the whole world, bearing fruit and increasing, was not once such as ye now behold me." But, "In thy Seed shall all nations be blessed." When God blessed Abraham, He gave the promise of me; for throughout all nations in the blessing of Christ am I shed abroad. That Christ is the Seed of Abraham, the order of successive generations bears witness. Shortly to sum up which, Abraham begat Isaac, Isaac begat Jacob, Jacob begat twelve sons, of whom sprung the people Israel. For Jacob himself was called Israel. Among these twelve sons he begat Judah, whence the Jews have their name, of whom was born the Virgin Mary, who bore Christ. And, lo, in Christ, that is, in the seed of Abraham, that all the nations are blessed, ye see and are amazed: and do ye still fear to believe in Him, in Whom ye ought rather to have feared not to believe? What? doubt ye, or refuse ye to believe, the travail of a Virgin, whereas ye ought rather to believe that it was fitting that so God should be born Man. For this also receive ye to have been foretold by the Prophet; "Behold, a Virgin shall conceive in the womb, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel, which is, being interpreted, God with us." Ye will not therefore doubt of a Virgin bringing forth, if ye be willing to believe of a God being born; leaving not the governance of the world, and coming unto men in the flesh; unto His Mother bringing fruitfulness, not taking away maidenhood. For thus behoved it that He should be born as Man, albeit He was ever God, by which birth He might become a God unto us. Hence again the Prophet says concerning Him, "Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of right, the sceptre of Thy

Kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." This anointing is spiritual, wherewith God anointed God, the Father, that is, the Son: whence called from the "Chrism," that is, from the anointing, we know Him as Christ. I am the Church, concerning whom it is said unto Him in the same Psalm, and what was future foretold as already done; "There stood at Thy right hand the Queen, in a vesture of gold, in raiment of divers colors;" that is, in the mystery of wisdom, "adorned with divers tongues." There it said unto me, "Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear, and forget thy own people and thy father's house: for the King hath desired thy beauty: seeing that He is the Lord thy God: and the daughters of Tyre shall worship Him with gifts, thy face shall all the rich of the people entreat. All the glory of that King's daughter is within, in fringes of gold, with raiment of divers colors. There shall be brought unto the King the maidens after her; her companions shall be brought unto Thee. They shall be brought with joy and gladness, they shall be brought into the Temple of the King. Instead of thy fathers, there are born unto thee sons, thou shall set them as princes over the whole earth. They shall be mindful of thy name, even from generation to generation. Therefore shall the people confess unto thee for ever, and for ever and ever.

6. If this Queen ye see not, now rich also with royal progeny. If she see not that fulfilled which she heard to have been promised, she, unto whom it was said, "Hear, O daughter, and see." If she hath not left the ancient rites of the world, she, unto whom it was said, "Forget thy own people and thy Father's house." If she confesses not every where Christ the Lord, she, unto whom it was said, "The King hath desired thy beauty, for He is the Lord thy God." If she sees not the cities of the nations pour forth prayers and offer gifts unto Christ, concerning Whom it was said unto her, "There shall worship Him the daughters of Tyre with gifts." If the pride also of the rich is not laid aside, and they do not entreat help of the Church, unto whom it was said, "Thy face shall all the rich of the people entreat." If He acknowledges not the King's daughter, unto Whom she was bidden to say, "Our Father Who art in Heaven;" and in her saints in the inner man she is not renewed from day to day, concerning whom it was said, "All the glory of that King's daughter is within:" although she strike upon the eyes of them also that are

without with the blaze of the fame of her preachers, in diversity of tongues, as “in fringes of gold, and raiment of divers colors.” If there be not, now that His fame is spread abroad in every place by His good odor, virgins also brought unto Christ to be consecrated, of Whom it is said, and to Whom it is said, “There shall be brought unto the King the virgins after her, her companions shall be brought unto Thee.” And that they might not seem to be brought like captives, into some, as it were, prison, he says, “They shall be brought in joy and gladness, they shall be brought into the King’s temple.” If she brings not forth sons, that of them she may have, as it were, fathers, whom she may appoint unto herself every where as rulers, she, unto whom it is said, “Instead of thy fathers there are born unto thee sons, thou shall set them as princes over the whole earth:” unto whose prayers their mother both preferred and made subject, commends herself, “They shall be mindful of thy name, even from generation to generation.” If, by reason of the preaching of those same fathers, wherein they have without ceasing made mention of her name, there are not so great multitudes in her gathered together, and without end in their own tongues unto her confess the praise of grace, unto whom it is said, “Therefore shall the people confess unto thee for ever, and for ever and ever.” If these things are not so shown to be clear, as that the eyes of enemies find not in what direction to turn aside, where the same clearness strikes them not, so as by it to be obliged to confess what is evident: you perhaps assert with reason, that no proofs are shown to you, by seeing which you may believe those things also which you see not. But if those things, which you see, both have been foretold long before, and are so clearly fulfilled; if the truth itself makes itself clear to you, by effects going before and following after, O remnant of unbelief, that ye may believe the things which you see not, blush at those things which ye see.

7. “Give heed unto me,” the Church says unto you; give heed unto me, whom ye see, although to see ye be unwilling. For the faithful, who were in those times in the land of Judaea, were present at, and learnt as present, Christ’s wonderful birth of a virgin, and His passion, resurrection, ascension; all His divine words and deeds. These things ye have not seen, and therefore ye refuse to believe. Therefore behold these things, fix your eyes on these things, these things which ye see reflect on, which are not told you as things past, nor foretold you as things future, but are shown you as

things present. What? seemeth it to you a vain or a light thing. and think you it to be none, or a little, divine miracle, that in the name of One Crucified the whole human race runs? Ye saw not what was foretold and fulfilled concerning the human birth of Christ, "Behold, a Virgin shall conceive in the womb, and shall bear a Son;" but you see the Word of God which was foretold and fulfilled unto Abraham, "In thy seed shall all nations be blessed." Ye saw not what was foretold concerning the wonderful works of Christ, "Come ye, and see the works of the Lord, what wonders He hath set upon the earth:" but ye see that which was foretold, "The Lord said unto Me, My Son art Thou, I have this day begotten Thee; demand of Me and I will give Thee nations as Thy inheritance, and as Thy possession the bounds of the earth." Ye saw not that which was foretold and fulfilled concerning the Passion of Christ, "They pierced My hands and My feet, they numbered all My bones; but they themselves regarded and beheld Me; they divided among them My garments, and upon My vesture they cast the lot;" but ye see that which was in the same Psalm foretold, and now is clearly fulfilled; "All the ends of the earth shall remember and be turned unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight; for the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the nations." Ye saw not what was foretold and fulfilled concerning the Resurrection of Christ, the Psalm speaking, in His Person, first concerning His betrayer and persecutors: "They went forth out of doors, and spake together: against Me whispered all My enemies, against Me thought they evil for Me;" they set in order an unrighteous word against Me. Where, to show that they availed nothing by slaying Him Who was about to rise again, He adds and says; "What? will not He, that sleeps, add this, that He rise again?" And a little after, when He had foretold, by means of the same prophecy, concerning His betrayer himself, that which is written in the Gospel also, "He that did eat of My bread, enlarged his heel upon Me," that is, trampled Me under foot: He straightway added, "But do Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon Me, and raise Thou Me up again, and I shall repay them." This was fulfilled, Christ slept and awoke, that is, rose again: Who through the same prophecy in another Psalm says, "I slept and took my rest; and I rose again, for the Lord will uphold Me." But this ye saw not, but ye see His Church, concerning whom it is written in like manner, and fulfilled, "O Lord My God, the nations shall come unto Thee from the extremity of the earth and shall say, Truly our fathers worshipped lying images, and there is not in them any profit.” This certainly, whether ye will or no, ye behold; even although ye yet believe, that there either is, or was, in those idols some profit; yet certainly unnumbered peoples of the nations, after having left, or cast away, or broken in pieces such like vanities, ye have heard say, “Truly our fathers worshipped lying images, and there is not in them any profit; shall a man make gods, and, lo, they are no gods?” Nor think that it was foretold that the nations should come unto some one place of God, in that it was said, “Unto Thee shall the nations come from the extremity of the earth.” Understand, if you can, that unto the God of the Christians, Who is the Supreme and True God, the peoples of the nations come, not by walking but by believing. For the same thing was by another prophet thus foretold, “The Lord,” saith he, “shall prevail against them, and shall utterly destroy all the gods of the nations of the earth: and all the isles of the nations shall worship Him, each man from his place.” Whereas the one says, “Unto Thee all nations shall come;” this the other says, “They shall worship Him, each man from his place.” Therefore they shall come unto Him, not departing from their own place, because believing in Him they shall find Him in their hearts. Ye saw not what was foretold and fulfilled concerning the ascension of Christ; “Be Thou exalted above the Heavens, O God;” but ye see what follows immediately after, “And above all the earth Thy Glory.” Those things concerning Christ already done and past, all of them ye have not seen; but these things present in His Church ye deny not that ye see. Both things we point out to you as foretold; but the fulfillment of both we are therefore unable to point out for you to see, because we cannot bring back into sight things past.

8. But as the wills of friends, which are not seen, are believed through tokens which are seen; thus the Church, which is now seen, is, of all things which are not seen, but which are shown forth in those writings wherein itself also is foretold, an index of the past, and a herald of the future. Because both things past, which cannot now be seen, and things present which cannot be seen all of them, at the time at which they were foretold, no one of these could then be seen. Therefore, since they have begun to come to pass as they were foretold, from those things which have come to pass unto those which are coming to pass, those things which were foretold

concerning Christ and the Church have run on in an ordered series: unto which series these pertain concerning the day of Judgment, concerning the resurrection of the dead, concerning the eternal damnation of the ungodly with the devil, and concerning the eternal recompense of the godly with Christ, things which, foretold in like manner, are yet to come. Why therefore should we not believe the first and the last things which we see not, when we have, as witnesses of both, the things between, which we see, and in the books of the Prophets either hear or read both the first things, and the things between, and the last things, foretold before they came to pass? Unless haply unbelieving men judge those things to have been written by Christians, in order that those things which they already believed might have greater weight of authority, if they should be thought to have been promised before they came.

9. If they suspect this, let them examine carefully the copies of our enemies the Jews. There let them read those things of which we have made mention, foretold concerning Christ in Whom we believe, and the Church whom we discern from the toilsome beginning of faith even unto the eternal blessedness of the kingdom. But, whilst they read, let them not wonder that they, whose are the books, understand not by reason of the darkness of enmity. For that they would not understand was foretold beforehand by the same Prophets; which it behoved should be fulfilled in like manner as the rest, and that by the secret and just judgment of God due punishment should be rendered to their deserts. He indeed, Whom they crucified, and unto Whom they gave gall and vinegar, although when hanging upon the Tree, by reason of those whom He had been about to lead forth from darkness into light, He said unto the Father, “Forgive them, for they know not what they do;” yet by reason of those whom through more hidden causes He had been about to desert, by the Prophet so long before foretold, “They gave Me gall for My meat, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink; let their table become a snare before them, and a recompense, and a stumbling-block: let their eyes be darkened that they see not, and ever bow Thou down their back.” Thus, having with them the clearest testimonies of our cause, they walk round about with eyes darkened, that by their means those testimonies may be proved, wherein they themselves are disapproved. Therefore was it brought to pass, that they should not be so blotted out, as

that this same sect should altogether exist not: but it was scattered abroad upon the earth, in order that, carrying with it the prophecies of the grace conferred upon us, more surely to convince unbelievers, it might every where profit us. And this very thing which I assert, receive ye after what manner it was prophesied of: “Slay them not,” saith He, “lest at any time they forget Thy law, but scatter them abroad in Thy might.” Therefore they were not slain, in that they forgot not those things which were read and heard among them. For if they were altogether to forget, albeit they understand not, the Holy Scriptures, they would be slain in the Jewish ritual itself; because, when the Jews should know nothing of the Law and of the Prophets, they would be unable to profit us. Therefore they were not slain, but scattered abroad; in order that, although they should not have in faith, whence they might be saved; yet they should retain in their memory, whence we might be helped; in their books our supporters, in their hearts our enemies, in their copies our witnesses.

10. Although, even if there went before no testimonies concerning Christ and the Church, whom ought it not to move unto belief, that the Divine brightness hath on a sudden shone on the human race, when we see, (the false gods now abandoned, and their images every where broken in pieces, their temples overthrown or changed into other uses, and so many vain rites plucked out by the roots from the most inveterate usage of men,) the One True God invoked by all? And that this hath been brought to pass-by One Man, by men mocked, seized, bound, scourged, smitten with the palms of the hand, reviled, crucified, slain: His disciples, (whom He chose common men, and unlearned, and fishermen, and publicans, that by their means His teaching might be set forth,) proclaiming His Resurrection, His Ascension, which they asserted that they had seen, and being filled with the Holy Ghost, sounded forth this Gospel, in all tongues which they had not learned. And of them who heard them, part believed, part, believing not, fiercely withstood them who preached. Thus while they were faithful even unto death for the truth, strove not by returning evil, but by enduring, overcame not by killing, but by dying; thus was the world changed unto this religion, thus unto this Gospel were the hearts of mortals turned, of men and women, of small and great, of learned and unlearned, of wise and foolish, of mighty and weak, of noble and ignoble, of high and low, and, throughout all nations

the Church shed abroad so increased, that even against the Catholic faith itself there arises not any perverse sect, any kind of error, which is found so to oppose itself to Christian truth, as that it affect not and go not about to glory in the name of Christ: which very error would not be suffered to spring up throughout the earth, were it not that the very gainsaying exercised an wholesome discipline. How would The Crucified have availed so greatly, had He not been God that took upon Him Man, even if He had through the Prophet foretold no such things to come? But when now this so great mystery of godliness hath had its prophets and heralds going before, by whose divine voices it was afore proclaimed; and when it hath come in such manner as it was afore proclaimed, who is there so mad as to assert that the Apostles lied concerning Christ, of Whom they preached that He was come in such manner as the Prophets foretold afore that He should come, which Prophets were not silent as to true things to come concerning the Apostles themselves? For concerning these they had said, “There is neither speech nor language, whereof their voices are not heard; their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” And this at any rate we see fulfilled in the world, although we have not yet seen Christ in the flesh. Who therefore, unless blinded by amazing madness, or hard and steeled by amazing obstinacy, would be unwilling to put faith in the sacred Scriptures, which have foretold the faith of the whole world?

11. But you, beloved, who possess this faith, or who have begun now newly to have it, let it be nourished and increase in you. For as things temporal have come, so long before foretold, so will things eternal also come, which are promised. Nor let them deceive you, either the vain heathen, or the false Jews, or the deceitful heretics, or also within the Catholic (Church) itself evil Christians, enemies by so much the more hurtful, as they are the more within us. For, lest on this subject also the weak should be troubled, divine prophecy hath not been silent, where in the Song of Songs the Bridegroom speaking unto the Bride, that is, Christ the Lord unto the Church, saith, “As a lily in the midst of thorns, so is my best Beloved in the midst of the daughters.” He said not, in the midst of them that are without; but, “in the midst of daughters. Whoso hath ears to hear, let him hear:” and whilst the net which is cast into the sea, and gathers together all kinds of fishes, as saith the holy Gospel, is being drawn unto the shore, that is, unto the end of

the world, let him separate himself from the evil fishes, in heart, not in body; by changing evil habits, not by breaking sacred nets; lest they who now seem being approved to be mingled with the reprobate, find, not life, but punishment everlasting, when they shall begin on the shore to be separated.

CONCERNING THE NATURE OF GOOD, AGAINST THE MANICHAEANS

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(DE NATURA BONI CONTRA MANICHAEOS)

CIRCA A.D. 495.

ST. AUGUSTIN

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IN ONE BOOK.

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Preface

Written after the year 404. It is put in the Retractations immediately after the De Actis cum Felice Manichaeo, which was written about the end of the year 404. It is one of the most argumentative of the Anti-Manichaean treatises, and so one of the most abstruse and difficult. The lines of argument here pursued have already been employed in part in the earlier treatises. The most interesting portions of the contents of the treatise, and the most damaging to the Manichaeans, are the long extracts from Mani's Thesaurus, and his Fundamental Epistle.—A.H.N.

CHAPTER 1

GOD THE HIGHEST AND UNCHANGEABLE GOOD, FROM WHOM ARE ALL OTHER GOOD THINGS, SPIRITUAL AND CORPOREAL

The highest good, than which there is no higher, is God, and consequently He is unchangeable good, hence truly eternal and truly immortal. All other good things are only from Him, not of Him. For what is of Him, is Himself. And consequently if He alone is unchangeable, all things that He has made, because He has made them out of nothing, are changeable. For He is so omnipotent, that even out of nothing, that is out of what is absolutely non-existent, He is able to make good things both great and small, both celestial and terrestrial, both spiritual and corporeal. But because He is also just, He has not put those things that He has made out of nothing on an equality with that which He begat out of Himself. Because, therefore, no good things whether great or small, through whatever gradations of things, can exist except from God; but since every nature, so far as it is nature, is good, it follows that no nature can exist save from the most high and true God: because all things even not in the highest degree good, but related to the highest good, and again, because all good things, even those of most recent origin, which are far from the highest good, can have their existence only from the highest good. Therefore every spirit, though subject to change, and every corporeal entity, is from God, and all this, having been made, is nature. For every nature is either spirit or body. Unchangeable spirit is God, changeable spirit, having been made, is nature, but is better than body; but body is not spirit, unless when the wind, because it is invisible to us and yet its power is felt as something not inconsiderable, is in a certain sense called spirit.

CHAPTER 2

HOW THIS MAY SUFFICE FOR CORRECTING THE MANICHAEANS

But for the sake of those who, not being able to understand that all nature, that is, every spirit and every body, is naturally good, are moved by the iniquity of spirit and the mortality of body, and on this account endeavor to bring in another nature of wicked spirit and mortal body, which God did not make, we determine thus to bring to their understanding what we say can be brought. For they acknowledge that no good thing can exist save from the highest and true God, which also is true and suffices for correcting them, if they are willing to give heed.

CHAPTER 3

MEASURE, FORM, AND ORDER, GENERIC GOODS IN THINGS MADE BY GOD

For we Catholic Christians worship God, from whom are all good things whether great or small; from whom is all measure great or small; from whom is all form great or small; from whom is all order great or small. For all things in proportion as they are better measured, formed, and ordered, are assuredly good in a higher degree; but in proportion as they are measured, formed, and ordered in an inferior degree, are they the less good. These three things, therefore, measure, form, and order,—not to speak of innumerable other things that are shown to pertain to these three,—these three things, therefore, measure, form, order, are as it were generic goods in things made by God, whether in spirit or in body. God is, therefore, above every measure of the creature, above every form, above every order, nor is He above by local spaces, but by ineffable and singular potency, from whom is every measure, every form, every order. These three things, where they are great, are great goods, where they are small, are small goods; where they are absent, there is no good. And again where these things are great, there are great natures, where they are small, there are small natures, where they are absent, there is no nature. Therefore all nature is good.

CHAPTER 4

EVIL IS CORRUPTION OF MEASURE, FORM, OR ORDER

When accordingly it is inquired, whence is evil, it must first be inquired, what is evil, which is nothing else than corruption, either of the measure, or the form, or the order, that belong to nature. Nature therefore which has been corrupted, is called evil, for assuredly when incorrupt it is good; but even when corrupt, so far as it is nature it is good, so far as it is corrupted it is evil.

CHAPTER 5

THE CORRUPTED NATURE OF A MORE EXCELLENT ORDER SOMETIMES BETTER THAN AN INFERIOR NATURE EVEN UNCORRUPTED

But it may happen, that a certain nature which has been ranked as more excellent by reason of natural measure and form, though corrupt, is even yet better than another incorrupt which has been ranked lower by reason of an inferior natural measure and form: as in the estimation of men, according to the quality which presents itself to view, corrupt gold is assuredly better than incorrupt silver, and corrupt silver than incorrupt lead; so also in more powerful spiritual natures a rational spirit even corrupted through an evil will is better than an irrational though incorrupt, and better is any spirit whatever even corrupt than any body whatever though incorrupt. For better is a nature which, when it is present in a body, furnishes it with life, than that to which life is furnished. But however corrupt may be the spirit of life that has been made, it can furnish life to a body, and hence, though corrupt, it is better than the body though incorrupt.

CHAPTER 6

NATURE WHICH CANNOT BE CORRUPTED IS THE HIGHEST GOOD; THAT WHICH CAN, IS SOME GOOD

But if corruption take away all measure, all form, all order from corruptible things, no nature will remain. And consequently every nature which cannot be corrupted is the highest good, as is God. But every nature that can be corrupted is also itself some good; for corruption cannot injure it, except by taking away from or diminishing that which is good.

CHAPTER 7

THE CORRUPTION OF RATIONAL SPIRITS IS ON THE ONE HAND VOLUNTARY, ON THE OTHER PENAL

But to the most excellent creatures, that is, to rational spirits, God has offered this, that if they will not they cannot be corrupted; that is, if they should maintain obedience under the Lord their God, so should they adhere to his incorruptible beauty; but if they do not will to maintain obedience, since willingly they are corrupted in sins, unwillingly they shall be corrupted in punishment, since God is such a good that it is well for no one who deserts Him, and among the things made by God the rational nature is so great a good, that there is no good by which it may be blessed except God. Sinners, therefore, are ordained to punishment; which ordination is punishment for the reason that it is not conformable to their nature, but it is justice because it is conformable to their fault.

CHAPTER 8

FROM THE CORRUPTION AND DESTRUCTION OF INFERIOR THINGS IS THE BEAUTY OF THE UNIVERSE

But the rest of things that are made of nothing, which are assuredly inferior to the rational soul, can be neither blessed nor miserable. But because in proportion to their fashion and appearance are things themselves good, nor could there be good things in a less or the least degree except from God, they are so ordered that the more infirm yield to the firmer, the weaker to the stronger, the more impotent to the more powerful; and so earthly things harmonize with celestial, as being subject to the things that are pre-eminent. But to things falling away, and succeeding, a certain temporal beauty in its kind belongs, so that neither those things that die, or cease to be what they were, degrade or disturb the fashion and appearance and order of the universal creation; as a speech well composed is assuredly beautiful, although in it syllables and all sounds rush past as it were in being born and in dying.

CHAPTER 9

PUNISHMENT IS CONSTITUTED FOR THE SINNING NATURE THAT IT MAY BE RIGHTLY ORDERED

What sort of punishment, and how great, is due to each fault, belongs to Divine judgment, not to human; which punishment assuredly when it is remitted in the case of the converted, there is great goodness on the part of God, and when it is deservedly inflicted, there is no injustice on the part of God; because nature is better ordered by justly smarting under punishment than by rejoicing with impunity in sin; which nature nevertheless, even thus having some measure, form, and order, in whatever extremity there is as yet some good, which things, if they were absolutely taken away, and utterly consumed, there will be accordingly no good, because no nature will remain.

CHAPTER 10

NATURES CORRUPTIBLE, BECAUSE MADE OF NOTHING

All corruptible natures therefore are natures at all only so far as they are from God, nor would they be corruptible if they were of Him; because they would be what He himself is. Therefore of whatever measure, of whatever form, of whatever order, they are, they are so because it is God by whom they were made; but they are not immutable, because it is nothing of which they were made. For it is sacrilegious audacity to make nothing and God equal, as when we wish to make what has been born of God such as what has been made by Him out of nothing.

CHAPTER 11

GOD CANNOT SUFFER HARM, NOR CAN ANY OTHER NATURE EXCEPT BY HIS PERMISSION

Wherefore neither can God’s nature suffer harm, nor can any nature under God suffer harm unjustly: for when by sinning unjustly some do harm, an unjust will is imputed to them; but the power by which they are permitted to do harm is from God alone, who knows, while they themselves are ignorant, what they ought to suffer, whom He permits them to harm.

CHAPTER 12

ALL GOOD THINGS ARE FROM GOD ALONE

All these things are so perspicuous, so assured, that if they who introduce another nature which God did not make, were willing to give attention, they would not be filled with so great blasphemies, as that they should place so great good things in supreme evil, and so great evil things in God. For what the truth compels them to acknowledge, namely, that all good things are from God alone, suffices for their correction, if they were willing to give heed, as I said above. Not, therefore, are great good things from one, and small good things from another; but good things great and small are from the supremely good alone, which is God.

CHAPTER 13

INDIVIDUAL GOOD THINGS, WHETHER SMALL OR GREAT, ARE FROM GOD

Let us, therefore, bring before our minds good things however great, which it is fitting that we attribute to God as their author, and these having been eliminated let us see whether any nature will remain. All life both great and small, all power great and small, all safety great and small, all memory great and small, all virtue great and small, all intellect great and small, all tranquillity great and small, all plenty great and small, all sensation great and small, all light great and small, all suavity great and small, all measure great and small, all beauty great and small, all peace great and small, and whatever other like things may occur, especially such as are found throughout all things, whether spiritual or corporeal, every measure, every form, every order both great and small, are from the Lord God. All which good things whoever should wish to abuse, pays the penalty by divine judgment; but where none of these things shall have been present at all, no nature will remain.

CHAPTER 14

SMALL GOOD THINGS IN COMPARISON WITH GREATER ARE CALLED BY CONTRARY NAMES

But in all these things, whatever are small are called by contrary names in comparison with greater things; as in the form of a man because the beauty is greater, the beauty of the ape in comparison with it is called deformity. And the imprudent are deceived, as if the former is good, and the latter evil, nor do they regard in the body of the ape its own fashion, the equality of members on both sides, the agreement of parts, the protection of safety, and other things which it would be tedious to enumerate.

CHAPTER 15

IN THE BODY OF THE APE THE GOOD OF BEAUTY IS PRESENT, THOUGH IN A LESS DEGREE

But that what we have said may be understood, and may satisfy those too slow of comprehension, or that even the pertinacious and those repugnant to the most manifest truth may be compelled to confess what is true, let them be asked, whether corruption can harm the body of an ape? But if it can, so that it may become more hideous, what diminishes but the good of beauty? Whence as long as the nature of the body subsists, so long something will remain. If, accordingly, good having been consumed, nature is consumed, the nature is therefore good. So also we say that slow is contrary to swift, but yet he who does not move at all cannot even be called slow. So we say that a heavy voice is contrary to a sharp voice, or a harsh to a musical; but if you completely remove any kind of voice, there is silence where there is no voice, which silence, nevertheless, for the simple reason that there is no voice, is usually opposed to voice as something contrary thereto. So also lucid and obscure are called as it were two contrary things, yet even obscure things have something of light, which being absolutely wanting, darkness is the absence of light in the same way in which silence is the absence of voice.

CHAPTER 16

PRIVATIONS IN THINGS ARE FITTINGLY ORDERED BY GOD

Yet even these privations of things are so ordered in the universe of nature, that to those wisely considering they not unfittingly have their vicissitudes. For by not illuminating certain places and times, God has also made the darkness as fittingly as the day. For if we by restraining the voice fittingly interpose silence in speaking, how much more does He, as the perfect framer of all things, fittingly make privations of things? Whence also in the hymn of the three children, light and darkness alike praise God, that is, bring forth praise in the hearts of those who well consider.

CHAPTER 17

NATURE, IN AS FAR AS IT IS NATURE, NO EVIL

No nature, therefore, as far as it is nature, is evil; but to each nature there is no evil except to be diminished in respect of good. But if by being diminished it should be consumed so that there is no good, no nature would be left; not only such as the Manichaeans introduce, where so great good things are found that their exceeding blindness is wonderful, but such as any one can introduce.

CHAPTER 18

HYLE, WHICH WAS CALLED BY THE ANCIENTS THE FORMLESS MATERIAL OF THINGS, IS NOT AN EVIL

For neither is that material, which the ancients called Hyle, to be called an evil. I do not say that which Manichaeus with most senseless vanity, not knowing what he says, denominates Hyle, namely, the former of corporeal beings; whence it is rightly said to him, that he introduces another god. For nobody can form and create corporeal beings but God alone; for neither are they created unless there subsist with them measure, form, and order, which I think that now even they themselves confess to be good things, and things that cannot be except from God. But by Hyle I mean a certain material absolutely formless and without quality, whence those qualities that we perceive are formed, as the ancients said. For hence also wood is called in Greek hule, because it is adapted to workmen, not that itself may make anything, but that it is the material of which something may be made. Nor is that Hyle, therefore, to be called an evil which cannot be perceived through any appearance, but can scarcely be thought of through any sort of privation of appearance. For this has also a capacity of forms; for if it cannot receive the form imposed by the workman, neither assuredly may it be called material. Hence if form is some good, whence those who excel in it are called beautiful, as from appearance they are called handsome, even the capacity of form is undoubtedly something good. As because wisdom is a good, no one doubts that to be capable of wisdom is a good. And because every good is from God, no one ought to doubt that even matter, if there is any, has its existence from God alone.

CHAPTER 19

TO HAVE TRUE EXISTENCE IS AN EXCLUSIVE PREROGATIVE OF GOD

Magnificently and divinely, therefore, our God said to his servant: “I am that I am,” and “Thou shalt say to the children of Israel, He who is sent me to you.” For He truly is because He is unchangeable. For every change makes what was not, to be: therefore He truly is, who is unchangeable; but all other things that were made by Him have received being from Him each in its own measure. To Him who is highest, therefore nothing can be contrary, save what is not; and consequently as from Him everything that is good has its being, so from Him is everything that by nature exists; since everything that exists by nature is good. Thus every nature is good, and everything good is from God; therefore every nature is from God.

CHAPTER 20

PAIN ONLY IN GOOD NATURES

But pain which some suppose to be in an especial manner an evil, whether it be in mind or in body, cannot exist except in good natures. For the very fact of resistance in any being leading to pain, involves a refusal not to be what it was, because it was something good; but when a being is compelled to something better, the pain is useful, when to something worse, it is useless. Therefore in the case of the mind, the will resisting a greater power causes pain; in the case of the body, sensation resisting a more powerful body causes pain. But evils without pain are worse: for it is worse to rejoice iniquity than to bewail corruption; yet even such rejoicing cannot exist save from the attainment of inferior good things. But iniquity is the desertion of better things. Likewise in a body, a wound with pain is better than painless putrescence, which is especially called the corruption which the dead flesh of the Lord did not see, that is, did not suffer, as was predicted in prophecy: “Thou shall not suffer Thy Holy one to see corruption.” For who denies that He was wounded by the piercing of the nails, and that He was stabbed with the lance? But even what is properly called by men corporeal corruption, that is, putrescence itself, if as yet there is anything left to consume, increases by the diminution of the good. But if corruption shall have absolutely consumed it, so that there is no good, no nature will remain, for there will be nothing that corruption may corrupt; and so there will not even be putrescence, for there will be nowhere at all for it to be.

CHAPTER 21

FROM MEASURE THINGS ARE SAID TO BE MODERATE-SIZED

Therefore now by common usage things small and mean are said to have measure, because some measure remains in them, without which they would no longer be moderate-sized, but would not exist at all. But those things that by reason of too much progress are called immoderate, are blamed for very excessiveness; but yet it is necessary that those things themselves be restrained in some manner under God who has disposed all things in extension, number, and weight.

CHAPTER 22

MEASURE IN SOME SENSE IS SUITABLE TO GOD HIMSELF

But God cannot be said to have measure, lest He should seem to be spoken of as limited. Yet He is not immoderate by whom measure is bestowed upon all things, so that they may in any measure exist. Nor again ought God to be called measured, as if He received measure from any one. But if we say that He is the highest measure, by chance we say something; if indeed in speaking of the highest measure we mean the highest good. For every measure in so far as it is a measure is good; whence nothing can be called measured, modest, modified, without praise, although in another sense we use measure for limit, and speak of no measure where there is no limit, which is sometimes said with praise as when it is said: “And of His kingdom there shall be no limit.” For it might also be said, “There shall be no measure,” so that measure might be used in the sense of limit; for He who reigns in no measure, assuredly does not reign at all.

CHAPTER 23

WHENCE A BAD MEASURE, A BAD FORM, A BAD ORDER MAY SOMETIMES BE SPOKEN OF

Therefore a bad measure, a bad form, a bad order, are either so called because they are less than they should be, or because they are not adapted to those things to which they should be adapted; so that they may be called bad as being alien and incongruous; as if any one should be said not to have done in a good measure because he has done less than he ought, or because he has done in such a thing as he ought not to have done, or more than was fitting, or not conveniently; so that the very fact of that being reprehended which is done in a bad measure, is justly reprehended for no other cause than that the measure is not there maintained. Likewise a form is called bad either in comparison with something more handsome or more beautiful, this form being less, that greater, not in size but in comeliness; or because it is out of harmony with the thing to which it is applied, so that it seems alien and unsuitable. As if a man should walk forth into a public place naked, which nakedness does not offend if seen in a bath. Likewise also order is called bad when order itself is maintained in an inferior degree. Hence not order, but rather disorder, is bad; since either the ordering is less than it should be, or not as it should be. Yet where there is any measure, any form, any order, there is some good and some nature; but where there is no measure, no form, no order, there is no good, no nature.

CHAPTER 24

IT IS PROVED BY THE TESTIMONIES OF SCRIPTURE THAT GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE. THE SON OF GOD BEGOTTEN, NOT MADE

Those things which our faith holds and which reason in whatever way has traced out, are fortified by the testimonies of the divine Scriptures, so that those who by reason of feebler intellect are not able to comprehend these things, may believe the divine authority, and so may deserve to know. But let not those who understand, but are less instructed in ecclesiastical literature, suppose that we set forth these things from our own intellect rather than what are in those Books. Accordingly, that God is unchangeable is written in the Psalms: “Thou shalt change them and they shall be changed; but Thou thyself art the same.” And in the book of Wisdom, concerning wisdom: “Remaining in herself, she renews all things.” Whence also the Apostle Paul: “To the invisible, incorruptible, only God.” And the Apostle James: “Every best giving and every perfect gift is from above, descending from the Father of light, with whom there is no changeableness, neither obscuring of influence.” Likewise because what He begat of Himself is what He Himself is, it is said in brief by the Son Himself: “I and the Father are one.” But because the Son was not made, since through Him were all things made, thus it is written: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word; this was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was made nothing;” that is, without Him was not anything made.

CHAPTER 25

THIS LAST EXPRESSION MISUNDERSTOOD BY SOME

For no attention should be paid to the ravings of men who think that nothing should be understood to mean something, and moreover think to compel any one to vanity of this kind on the ground that nothing is placed at the end of the sentence. Therefore, they say, it was made, and because it was made, nothing is itself something. They have lost their senses by zeal in contradicting, and do not understand that it makes no difference whether it be said: “Without Him was made nothing,” or “without Him nothing was made.” For even if the order were the last mentioned, they could nevertheless say, that nothing is itself something because it was made. For in the case of what is in truth something, what difference does it make if it be said “Without him a house was made,” so long as it is understood that something was made without him, which something is a house? So also because it is said: “Without Him was made nothing,” since nothing is assuredly not anything, when it is truly and properly spoken, it makes no difference whether it be said: “Without Him was made nothing or Without

Him nothing was made," or "nothing was made." But who cares to speak with men who can say of this very expression of mine "It makes no difference," "Therefore it makes some difference, for nothing itself is something?" But those whose brains are not addled, see it as a thing most manifest that this something is to be understood when it says "It makes no difference," as when I say "It matters in no respect." But these, if they should say to any one, "What hast thou done?" and he should reply that he has done nothing, would, according to this mode of disputation, falsely accuse him saying, "Thou hast done something, therefore, because thou hast done nothing; for nothing is itself something." But they have also the Lord Himself placing this word at the end of a sentence, when He says: "And in secret have I spoken nothing." Let them read, therefore, and be silent.

CHAPTER 26

THAT CREATURES ARE MADE OF NOTHING

Because therefore God made all things which He did not beget of Himself, not of those things that already existed, but of those things that did not exist at all, that is, of nothing," the Apostle Paul says: "Who calls the things that are not as if they are." But still more plainly it is written in the book of Maccabees: "I pray thee, son, look at the heaven and the earth and all the things that are in them; see and know that it was not these of which the Lord God made us." And from this that is written in the Psalm: "He spake, and they were made." It is manifest, that not of Himself He begat these things, but that He made them by word and command. But what is not of Himself is assuredly of nothing. For there was not anything of which he should make them, concerning which the apostle says most openly: "For from Him, and through Him, and in Him are all things."

CHAPTER 27

"FROM HIM" AND "OF HIM" DO NOT MEAN THE SAME THING

But "from Him" does not mean the same as "of Him." For what is of Him may be said to be from Him; but not everything that is from Him is rightly said to be of Him. For from Him are heaven and earth, because He made them; but not of Him because they are not of His substance. As in the case of a man who begets a son and makes a house, from himself is the son, from himself is the house, but the son is of him, the house is of earth and wood. But this is so, because as a man he cannot make something even of nothing; but God of whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things, had no need of any material which He had not made to assist His omnipotence.

CHAPTER 28

SIN NOT FROM GOD, BUT FROM THE WILL OF THOSE SINNING

But when we hear: “All things are from Him, and through Him, and in Him,” we ought assuredly to understand all natures which naturally exist. For sins, which do not preserve but vitiate nature, are not from Him; which sins, Holy Scripture in many ways testifies, are from the will of those sinning, especially in the passage where the apostle says: “But dost thou suppose this, O man, that judgest those who do such things, and doest them, that thou shall escape the judgment of God? Or dost thou despise the riches of His goodness, and patience, and long-suffering, not knowing that the patience of God leadeth thee to repentance? But according to the hardness of thy heart and thy impenitent heart, thou treasurest up for thyself wrath against the day of wrath and of the revelation of the just judgment of God, who will render unto every one according to his works.”

CHAPTER 29

THAT GOD IS NOT DEFILED BY OUR SINS

And yet, though all things that He established are in Him, those who sin do not defile Him, of whose wisdom it is said: “She touches all things by reason of her purity, and nothing defiled assails her.” For it behooves us to believe that as God is incorruptible and unchangeable, so also is He consequently undefilable.

CHAPTER 30

THAT GOOD THINGS, EVEN THE LEAST, AND THOSE THAT ARE EARTHLY, ARE BY GOD

But that God made even the least things, that is, earthly and mortal things, must undoubtedly be understood from that passage of the apostle, where, speaking of the members of our flesh: “For if one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it, and if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it;” also this he then says: “God has placed the members each one of them in the body as he willed;” and “God has tempered the body, giving to that to which it was wanting greater honor, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another.” But what the apostle thus praises in the measure and form and order of the members of the flesh, you find in the flesh of all animals, alike the greatest and the least; for all flesh is among earthly goods, and consequently is esteemed among the least.

CHAPTER 31

TO PUNISH AND TO FORGIVE SINS BELONG EQUALLY TO GOD

Likewise because it belongs to divine judgment, not human, what sort of punishment and how great is due to every fault, it is thus written: “O the height of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how inscrutable are His judgments and his ways past finding out!” Likewise because by the goodness of God sins are forgiven to the converted, the very fact that Christ was sent sufficiently shows, who not in His own nature as God, but in our nature, which He assumed from a woman, died for us; which goodness of God with reference to us, and which love of God, the apostle thus sets forth: “But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us; much more now being justified in His blood we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved in His life.” But because even when due punishment is rendered to sinners, there is no unrighteousness on God’s part, he thus says: “What shall we say? Is God unrighteous who visiteth with wrath?” But in one place he has briefly admonished that goodness and severity are alike from Him, saying: “Thou seest then the goodness and severity of God; toward them that have fallen, severity, but towards thee goodness, if thou shouldst continue in goodness.”

CHAPTER 32

FROM GOD ALSO IS THE VERY POWER TO BE HURTFUL

Likewise because the power even of those that are hurtful is from God alone, thus it stands written, Wisdom speaking: “Through me kings reign and tyrants hold the land through me.” The apostle also says: “For there is no power but of God.” But that it is worthily done is written in the book of Job: “Who maketh to reign a man that is a hypocrite, on account of the perversity of the people.” And concerning the people of Israel God says: “I gave them a king in my wrath.” For it is not unrighteous, that the wicked receiving the power of being hurtful, both the patience of the good should be proved and the iniquity of the evil punished. For through power given to the Devil both Job was proved so that he might appear righteous, and Peter was tempted lest he should be presumptuous, and Paul was buffeted lest he should be exalted, and Judas was damned so that he should hang himself. When, therefore, through the power which He has given the Devil, God Himself shall have done all things righteously, nevertheless punishment shall at last be rendered to the Devil not for these things justly done, but for the unrighteous willing to be hurtful, which belonged to himself, when it shall be said to the impious who persevered in consenting to his wickedness, “Go ye into everlasting fire which my God has prepared for the Devil and his angels.”

CHAPTER 33

THAT EVIL ANGELS HAVE BEEN MADE EVIL, NOT BY GOD, BUT BY SINNING

But because evil angels also were not constituted evil by God, but were made evil by sinning, Peter in his epistle says: “For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but casting them down into the dungeons of smoky hell, He delivered them to be reserved for punishment in judgment.” Hence Peter shows that there is still due to them the penalty of the last judgment, concerning which the Lord says: “Go ye into everlasting fire, which has been prepared for the Devil and his angels.” Although they have already penally received this hell, that is, an inferior smoky air as a prison, which nevertheless since it is also called heaven, is not that heaven in which there are stars, but this lower heaven by the smoke of which the clouds are conglobulated, and where the birds fly; for both a cloudy heaven is spoken of, and flying things are called heavenly. As when the Apostle Paul calls those evil angels, against whom as enemies by living piously we contend, “spiritual things of wickedness in heavenly places.” That this may not be understood of the upper heavens, he plainly says elsewhere: “According to the presence of the prince of this air, who now worketh in the sons of disobedience.”

CHAPTER 34

THAT SIN IS NOT THE STRIVING FOR AN EVIL NATURE, BUT THE DESERTION OF A BETTER

Likewise because sin, or unrighteousness, is not the striving after evil nature but the desertion of better, it is thus found written in the Scriptures: “Every creature of God is good.” And accordingly every tree also which God planted in Paradise is assuredly good. Man did not therefore strive after an evil nature when he touched the forbidden tree; but by deserting what was better, he committed an evil deed. Since the Creator is better than any creature which He has made, His command should not have been deserted, that the thing forbidden, however good, might be touched; since the better having been deserted, the good of the creature was striven for, which was touched contrary to the command of the Creator. God did not plant an evil tree in Paradise; but He Himself was better who prohibited its being touched.

CHAPTER 35

THE TREE WAS FORBIDDEN TO ADAM NOT BECAUSE IT WAS EVIL, BUT BECAUSE IT WAS GOOD FOR MAN TO BE SUBJECT TO GOD

For besides, He had made the prohibition, in order to show that the nature of the rational soul ought not to be in its own power, but in subjection to God, and that it guards the order of its salvation through obedience, corrupting it through disobedience. Hence also He called the tree, the touching of which He forbade, the tree “of the knowledge of good and evil;” because when man should have touched it in the face of the prohibition, he would experience the penalty of sin, and so would know the difference between the good of obedience, and the evil of disobedience.

CHAPTER 36

NO CREATURE OF GOD IS EVIL, BUT TO ABUSE A CREATURE OF GOD IS EVIL

For who is so foolish as to think a creature of God, especially one planted in Paradise, blameworthy; when indeed not even thorns and thistles, which the earth brought forth, according to the judiciary judgment of God, for wearing out the sinner in labor, should be blamed? For even such herbs have their measure and form and order, which whoever considers soberly will find praiseworthy; but they are evil to that nature which ought thus to be restrained as a recompense for sin. Therefore, as I have said, sin is not the striving after an evil nature, but the desertion of a better, and so the deed itself is evil, not the nature which the sinner uses amiss. For it is evil to use amiss that which is good. Whence the apostle reproves certain ones as condemned by divine judgment, “Who have worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.” He does not reprove the creature, which he who should do would act injuriously towards the Creator, but those who, deserting the better, have used amiss the good.

CHAPTER 37

GOD MAKES GOOD USE OF THE EVIL DEEDS OF SINNERS

Accordingly, if all natures should guard their own proper measure and form and order, there would be no evil: but if any one should wish to misuse these good things, not even thus does he vanquish the will of God, who knows how to order righteously even the unrighteous; so that if they themselves through the iniquity of their will should misuse His good things, He through the righteousness of His power may use their evil deeds, rightly ordaining to punishment those who have perversely ordained themselves to sins.

CHAPTER 38

ETERNAL FIRE TORTURING THE WICKED, NOT EVIL

For neither is eternal fire itself, which is to torture the impious, an evil nature, since it has its measure, its form and its order depraved by no iniquity; but it is an evil torture for the damned, to whose sins it is due. For neither is yonder light, because it tortures the blear-eyed, an evil nature.

CHAPTER 39

FIRE IS CALLED ETERNAL, NOT AS GOD IS, BUT BECAUSE WITHOUT END

But fire is eternal, not as God is eternal, because, though without end, yet is not without beginning; but God is also without beginning. Then, although it may be employed perpetually for the punishment of sinners, yet it is mutable nature. But that is true eternity which is true immortality, that is that highest immutability, which cannot be changed at all. For it is one thing not to suffer change, when change is possible, and another thing to be absolutely incapable of change. Therefore, just as man is called good, yet not as God, of whom it was said, “There is none good save God alone;” and just as the soul is called immortal, yet not as God, of whom it was said, “Who alone hath immortality;” and just as a man is called wise, yet not as God, of whom it was said, “To God the only wise;” so fire is called eternal, yet not as God, whose alone is immortality itself and true eternity.

CHAPTER 40

NEITHER CAN GOD SUFFER HURT, NOR ANY OTHER, SAVE BY THE JUST ORDINATION OF GOD

Since these things are so, according to the Catholic faith, and wholesome doctrine, and truth perspicuous to those of good understanding, neither can any one hurt the nature of God, nor can the nature of God unrighteously hurt any one, or suffer any one to do hurt with impunity. “For he that doeth hurt shall receive,” says the apostle, “according to the hurt that he has done; and there is no accepting of persons with God.”

CHAPTER 41

HOW GREAT GOOD THINGS THE MANICHAEANS PUT IN THE NATURE OF EVIL, AND HOW GREAT EVIL THINGS IN THE NATURE OF GOOD

But if the Manichaeans were willing, without pernicious zeal for defending their error, and with the fear of God, to think, they would not most criminally blaspheme by supposing two natures, the one good, which they call God, the other evil, which God did not make: so erring, so delirious, nay so insane, are they that they do not see, that even in what they call the nature of supreme evil they place so great good things: life, power, safety, memory, intellect, temperance, virtue, plenty, sense, light, suavity, extensions, numbers, peace, measure, form, order; but in what they call supreme good, so many evil things: death, sickness, forgetfulness, foolishness, confusion, impotence, need, stolidity, blindness, pain, unrighteousness, disgrace, war, intemperance, deformity, perversity. For they say that the princes of darkness also have been alive in their own nature, and in their own kingdom were safe, and remembered and understood. For they say that the Prince of Darkness harangued in such a manner, that neither could he have said such things, nor could he have been heard by those by whom he was said to have been heard, without memory and understanding; and to have had a temper suitable to his mind and body, and to have ruled by virtue of power, and to have had abundance and fruitfulness with respect to his elements, and they are said to have perceived themselves mutually and the light as near at hand, and to have had eyes by which they could see the light afar off; which eyes assuredly could not have seen the light without some light (whence also they are rightly called light); and they are said to have enjoyed exceedingly the sweetness of their pleasures, and to have been determined by measured members and dwelling-places. But unless there had been some sort of beauty there, they would not have loved their wives, nor would their bodies have been steady by adaptation of parts; without which, those things could not have been done there which the Manichaeans insanely say were done. And unless some peace had been there, they would not have obeyed their Prince. Unless measure had been there, they would have done nothing else than eat or drink, or rage, or whatever they might have done, without any society: although not even those that did these things would have had determinate forms, unless measure had been there. But now the Manichaeans say that they did such things that they cannot be denied to have had in all their actions measures suitable to themselves. But if form had not been there, no natural quality would have there subsisted. But if there had been no order there, some would not have ruled, others been ruled; they would not have lived harmoniously in their element; in fine, they would not have had their members adapted to their places, so that they could not do all those things that the Manichaeans vainly fable. But if they say that God’s nature does not die, what according to their vanity does Christ raise from the dead? If they say that it does not grow sick, what does He cure? If they say that it is not subject to forgetfulness, what does He remind? If they say that it is not deficient in wisdom, what does He teach? If they say that it is not confused, what does He restore? If they say that it was not vanquished and taken captive, what does He liberate? If they say that it was not in need, to what does He minister aid? If they say that it did not lose feeling, what does He animate? If they say that it has not been blinded, what does He illuminate? If it is not in pain, to what does He give relief? If it is not unrighteous, what does He correct through precepts? If it is not in disgrace, what does He cleanse? If it is not in war, to what does He promise peace? If it is not deficient in moderation, upon what does He impose the measure of law? If it is not deformed, what does He reform? If it is not perverse, what does He emend? For all these things done by Christ, they say, are to be attributed not to that thing which was made by God, and which has become depraved by its own free choice in sinning, but to the very nature, yea to the very substance of God, which is what God Himself is.

CHAPTER 42

MANICHAEAN BLASPHEMIES CONCERNING THE NATURE OF GOD

What can be compared to those blasphemies? Absolutely nothing, unless the errors of other sectaries be considered; but if that error be compared with itself in another aspect, of which we have not yet spoken, it will be convicted of far worse and more execrable blasphemy. For they say that some souls, which they will have to be of the substance of God and of absolutely the same nature, which have not sinned of their own accord, but have been overcome and oppressed by the race of darkness, which they call evil, for combating which they descended not of their own accord, but at the command of the Father, are fettered forever in the horrible sphere of darkness. So according to their sacrilegious vaporings, God liberated Himself in a certain part from a great evil, but again condemned Himself in another part, which He could not liberate, and triumphed over the enemy itself as if it had been vanquished from above. O criminal, incredible audacity, to believe, to speak, to proclaim such things about God! Which when they endeavor to defend, that with their eyes shut they may rush headlong into yet worse things, they say that the commingling of the evil nature does these things, in order that the good nature of God may suffer so great evils: for that this good nature in its own sphere could or can suffer no one of these things. As if a nature were lauded as incorruptible, because it does not hurt itself, and not because it cannot suffer hurt from another. Then if the nature of God hurt the nature of darkness, and the nature of darkness hurt the nature of God, there are therefore two evil things which hurt each other in turn, and the race of darkness was the better disposed, because if it committed hurt it did it unwillingly; for it did not wish to commit hurt, but to enjoy the good which belonged to God. But God wished to extinguish it, as Manichaeus most openly raves forth in his epistle of the ruinous Foundation. For forgetting that he had shortly before said: “But His most resplendent realms were so founded upon the shining and happy land, that they could never be either moved or shaken by any one;” he afterwards said: “But the Father of the most blessed light, knowing that great ruin and desolation which would arise from the darkness, threaten his holy worlds, unless he should send in opposition a deity excellent and renowned, mighty in strength, by whom he might at the same time overcome and destroy the race of darkness, which having been extinguished, the inhabitants of light would enjoy perpetual rest.” Behold, he feared ruin and desolation that threatened his worlds! Assuredly they were so founded upon the shining and happy land that they never could be either moved or shaken by any one? Behold, from fear he wished to hurt the neighboring race, which he endeavored to destroy and extinguish, in order that the inhabitants of light might enjoy perpetual rest. Why did he not add, and perpetual bondage? Were not these souls that he fettered forever in the sphere of darkness, the inhabitants of light, of whom he says plainly, that “they have suffered themselves to err from their former bright nature?” when against his will he is compelled to say, that they sinned by free will, while he wishes to ascribe sin only to the necessity of the contrary nature: everywhere ignorant what to say, and as if he were himself already in the sphere of darkness which he invented, seeking, and not finding, how he may escape. But let him say what he will to the seduced and miserable men by whom he is honored far more highly than Christ, that at this price he may sell to them such long and sacrilegious fables. Let him say what he will, let him shut up, as it were, in a sphere, as in a prison, the race of darkness, and let him fasten outside the nature of light, to which he promised perpetual rest on the extinction of the enemy: behold, the penalty of light is worse than that of darkness; the penalty of the divine nature is worse than that of the adverse race. But since although the latter is in the midst of darkness it pertains to its nature to dwell in darkness; but souls which are the very same thing that God is, cannot be received, he says, into those peaceful realms, and are alienated from the life and liberty of the holy light, and are fettered in the aforesaid horrible sphere: whence he says, "Those souls shall adhere to the things that they have loved, having been left in the same sphere of darkness, bringing this upon themselves by their own deserts." Is not this assuredly free voluntary choice? See how insanely he ignores what he says, and by making self-contradictory statements wages a worse war against himself than against the God of the race of darkness itself. Accordingly, if the souls of light are damned, because they loved darkness, the race of darkness, which loved light, is unjustly damned. And the race of darkness indeed loved light from the beginning, violently, it may be, but yet so as to wish for its possession, not its extinction: but the nature of light wished to extinguish in war the darkness; therefore when vanquished it loved darkness. Choose which you will: whether it was compelled by necessity to love darkness, or seduced by free will. If by necessity, wherefore is it damned? if by free will, wherefore is the nature of God involved in so great iniquity? If the nature of God was compelled by necessity to love darkness, it did not vanquish, but was vanquished: if by free will, why do the wretches hesitate any longer to attribute the will to sin to the nature which God made out of nothing, lest they should thereby attribute it to the light which He begat?

CHAPTER 43

MANY EVILS BEFORE HIS COMMINGLING WITH EVIL ARE ATTRIBUTED TO THE NATURE OF GOD BY THE MANICHAEANS

What if we should also show that before the commingling of evil, which stupid fable they have most madly believed, great evils were in what they call the nature of light? what will it seem possible to add to these blasphemies? For before the conflict, there was the hard and inevitable necessity of fighting: here is truly a great evil, before evil is commingled with good. Let them say whence this is, when as yet no commingling had taken place? But if there was no necessity, there was therefore free will: whence also this so great evil, that God himself should wish to hurt his own nature, which could not be hurt by the enemy, by sending it to be cruelly commingled, to be basely purged, to be unjustly damned? Behold, the great evil of a pernicious, noxious, and savage will, before any evil from the contrary nature was mingled with it! Or perchance he did not know that this would happen to his members, that they should love darkness and become hostile to holy light, as Manichaeus says, that is, not only to their own God, but also to the Father from whom they had their being? Whence therefore this so great evil of ignorance, before any evil from the nature of darkness was mingled with it? But if he knew that this would happen, either there was in him everlasting cruelty, if he did not grieve over the contamination and damnation of his own nature that was to take place, or everlasting misery, if he did so grieve: whence also this so great evil of your supreme good before any commingling with your supreme evil? Assuredly that part of the nature itself which was fettered in the eternal chain of that sphere, if it knew not that this fate awaited it, even so was there everlasting ignorance in the nature of God, but if it knew, then everlasting misery: whence this so great evil before any evil from the contrary nature was commingled? Or perchance did it, in the greatness of its love (charity), rejoice that through its punishment perpetual rest was prepared for the residue of the inhabitants of light? Let him who sees how abominable it is to say this, pronounce an anathema. But if this should be done so that at least the good nature itself should not become hostile to the light, it might be possible, perchance, not for the nature of God indeed, but for some man, as it were, to be regarded as praiseworthy, who for the sake of his country should be willing to suffer something of evil, which evil indeed could be only for a time, and not forever: but now also they speak of that fettering in the sphere of darkness as eternal, and not indeed of a certain thing but of the nature of God; and assuredly it were a most unrighteous, and execrable, and ineffably sacrilegious joy, if the nature of God rejoiced that it should love darkness, and should become hostile to holy light. Whence this so monstrous and abominable evil before any evil from the contrary nature was commingled? Who can endure insanity so perverse and so impious, as to attribute so great good things to supreme evil, and so great evils to supreme good, which is God?

CHAPTER 44

INCREDIBLE TURPITUDES IN GOD IMAGINED BY MANICHAEUS

But now when they speak of that part of the nature of God as everywhere mixed up in heaven, in earth, in all bodies dry and moist, in all sorts of flesh, in all seeds of trees, herbs, men, and animals: not as present by the power of divinity, for administering and ruling all things, undefilably, inviolably, incorruptibly, without any connection with them, which we say of God; but fettered, oppressed, polluted, to be loosed and liberated, as they say, not only through the running to and fro of the sun and the moon, and through the powers of light, but also through their Elect: what sacrilegious and incredible turpitudes this kind of error recommends to them even if it does not induce them to accept, it is horrible to speak of. For they say that the powers of light are transformed into beautiful males and are set over against the women of the race of darkness; and that the same powers again are transformed into beautiful females and are set over against the males of the race of darkness; that through their beauty they enkindle the foulest lust of the princes of darkness, and in this manner vital substance, that is, the nature of God, which they say is held fettered in their bodies, having been loosed from their members relaxed through lust, flies away, and when it has been taken up or cleansed, is liberated. This the wretches read, this they say, this they hear, this they believe, this they put as follows, in the seventh book of their Thesaurus (for so they call a certain writing of Manichaeus, in which these blasphemies stand written): “Then the blessed Father, who has bright ships, little apartments, dwelling-places, or magnitudes, according to his indwelling clemency, brings the help by which he is drawn out and liberated from the impious bonds, straits, and torments of his vital substance. And so by his own invisible nod he transforms those powers of his, which are held in this most brilliant ship, and makes them to bring forth adverse powers, which have been arranged in the various tracts of the heavens. Since these consist of both sexes, male and female, he orders the aforesaid powers to bring forth partly in the form of beardless youths, for the adverse race of females, partly in the form of bright maidens, for the contrary race of males: knowing that all these hostile powers on account of the deadly and most foul lust innate in them, are very easily taken captive, delivered up to these most beautiful forms which appear, and in this manner they are dissolved. But you may know that this same blessed Father of ours is identical with his powers, which for a necessary reason he transforms into the undefiled likeness of youths and maidens. But these he uses as his own arms, and through them he accomplishes his will. But there are bright ships full of these divine powers, which are stationed after the likeness of marriage over against the infernal races, and who with alacrity and ease effect at the very moment what they have planned. Therefore, when reason demands that these same holy powers should appear to males, straightway also they show by their dress the likeness of most beautiful maidens. Again when females are to be dealt with, putting aside the forms of maidens, they show the forms of beardless youths. But by this handsome appearance of theirs, ardor and lust increase, and in this way the chain of their worst thoughts is loosed, and the living soul which was held by their members, relaxed by this occasion escapes, and is mingled with its own most pure air; when the souls thoroughly cleansed ascend to the bright ships, which have been prepared for conveying them and for ferrying them over to their own country. But that which still bears the stains of the adverse race, descends little by little through billows and fires, and is mingled with trees and other plants and with all seeds, and is plunged into divers fires. And in what manner the figures of youths and maidens from that great and most glorious ship appear to the contrary powers which live in the heavens and have a fiery nature; and from that handsome appearance, part of the life which is held in their members having been released is conducted away through fires into the earth: in the same manner also, that most high power, which dwells in the ship of vital waters appears in the likeness of youths and holy maidens to those powers whose nature is cold and moist, and which are arranged in the heavens. And indeed to those that are females, among these the form of youths appears, but to the males, the form of maidens. By his changing and diversity of divine and most beautiful persons, the princes male and female of the moist and cold race are loosed, and what is vital in them escapes; but whatever should remain, having been relaxed, is conducted into the earth through cold, and is mingled with all the races of darkness” Who can endure this? Who can believe, not indeed that it is true, but that it could even be said? Behold those who fear to anathematize Manichaeus teaching these things, and do not fear to believe in a God doing them and suffering them!

CHAPTER 45

CERTAIN UNSPEAKABLE TURPITUDES BELIEVED, NOT WITHOUT REASON, CONCERNING THE MANICHAEANS THEMSELVES

But they say, that through their own Elect that same commingled part and nature of God is purged, by eating and drinking forsooth, (because they say that it is held fettered in all foods); that when they are taken up by the Elect for the nourishment of the body in eating and drinking, it is loosed, sealed, and liberated through their sanctity. Nor do the wretches pay heed to the fact that this is believed about them not without good reason, and they deny it in vain, so long as they do not anathematize the books of Manichaeus and cease to be Manichaeans. For if, as they say, a part of God is fettered in all seeds, and is purged by eating on the part of the Elect; who may not properly believe, that they do what they read in the Thesaurus was done among the powers of heaven and the princes of darkness; since indeed they say that their flesh is also from the race of darkness, and since they do not hesitate to believe and to affirm that the vital substance fettered in them is a part of God? Which assuredly if it is to be loosed, and purged by eating, as their lamentable error compels them to acknowledge; who does not see, who does not shudder at the greatness and the unspeakableness of what follows?

CHAPTER 46

THE UNSPEAKABLE DOCTRINE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL EPISTLE

For they even say that Adam, the first man, was created by certain princes of darkness so that the light might be held by them lest it should escape. For in the epistle which they call Fundamental, Manichaeus wrote as follows respecting the way in which the Prince of Darkness, whom they represent as the father of the first man, spoke to the rest of his allied princes of darkness, and how he acted: “Therefore with wicked inventions he said to those present: What does this huge light that is rising seem to you to be? See how the pole moves, how it shakes most of the powers. Wherefore it is right for me rather to ask you beforehand for whatever light you have in your powers: since thus I will form an image of that great one who has appeared in his glory, through which we may be able to rule, freed in some measure from the conversation of darkness. Hearing these things, and deliberating for a long time among themselves, they thought it most just to furnish what was demanded of them. For they did not have confidence in being able to retain the light that they had forever; hence they thought it better to offer it to their Prince, by no means without hope that in this way they would rule. It must be considered therefore how they furnished the light that they had. For this also is scattered throughout all the divine scriptures and the heavenly secrets; but to the wise it is easy enough to know how it was given: for it is known immediately and openly by him who should truly and faithfully wish to consider. Since there was a promiscuous throng of those who had come together, females and males of course, he impelled them to copulate among themselves: in which copulation the males emitted seed, the females were made pregnant. But the offspring were like those who had begotten them, the first obtaining as it were the largest portion of the parents’ strength. Taking these as a special gift their Prince rejoiced. And just as even now we see take place, that the nature of evil taking thence strength forms the fashioner of bodies, so also the aforesaid Prince, taking the offspring of his companions, which had the senses of their parents, sagacity, light, procreated at the same time with themselves in the process of generation, devoured them; and very many powers having been taken from food of this kind, in which there was present not only fortitude, but much more astuteness and depraved sensibilities from the ferocious race of the progenitors, he called his own spouse to himself, springing from the same stock as himself, emitted, like the rest the abundance of evils that he had devoured, himself also adding something from his own thought and power, so that his disposition became the former and arranger of all the things that he had poured forth; whose consort received these things as soil cultivated in the best way is accustomed to receive seed. For in her were constructed and woven together the images of all heavenly and earthly powers, so that what was formed obtained the likeness, so to speak, of a full orb.”

CHAPTER 47

HE COMPELS TO THE PERPETRATION OF HORRIBLE TURPITUDES

O abominable monster! O execrable perdition and ruin of deluded souls! I am not speaking of the blasphemy of saying these things about the nature of God which is thus fettered. Let the wretches deluded and hunted by deadly error give heed to this at least, that if a part of their God is fettered by the copulation of males and females which they profess to loose and purge by eating it, the necessity of this unspeakable error compels them not only to loose and purge the part of God from bread and vegetables and fruits, which alone they are seen publicly to partake of, but also from that which might be fettered through copulation, if conception should take place. That they do this some are said to have confessed before a public tribunal, not only in Paphlagonia, but also in Gaul, as I heard in Rome from a certain Catholic Christian; and when they were asked by the authority of what writing they did these things, they betrayed this fact concerning the Thesaurus that I have just mentioned. But when this is cast in their teeth, they are in the habit of replying, that some enemy or other has withdrawn from their number, that is from the number of their Elect, and has made a schism, and has founded a most foul heresy of this kind. Whence it is manifest that even if they do not themselves practise this thing, some who do practise it do it on the basis of their books. Therefore let them reject the books, if they abhor the crime, which they are compelled to commit, if they hold to the books; or if they do not commit them, they endeavor in opposition to the books to live more purely. But what do they do when it is said to them, either purge the light from whatever seeds you can, so that you cannot refuse to do that which you assert that you do not do; or else anathematize Manichaeus, when he says that a part of God is in all seeds, and that it is fettered by copulation, but that whatever of light, that is, of the aforesaid part of God, should become the food of the Elect, is purged by being eaten. Do you see what he compels you to believe, and do you still hesitate to anathematize him? What do they do, I say, when this is said to them? To what subterfuges do they betake themselves, when either so nefarious a doctrine is to be anathematized, or so nefarious a turpitude committed, in comparison with which all those intolerable evils to which I have already called attention, seem tolerable, namely, that they say of the nature of God that it was pressed by necessity to wage war, that it was either secure by everlasting ignorance, or was disturbed by everlasting grief and fear, when the corruption of commingling and the chain of everlasting damnation should come upon it, that finally as a result of the conflict it should be taken captive, oppressed, polluted, that after a false victory it should be fettered forever in a horrible sphere and separated from its original blessedness, while if considered in themselves they cannot be endured?

CHAPTER 48

AUGUSTIN PRAYS THAT THE MANICHAEANS MAY BE RESTORED TO THEIR SENSES

O great is Thy patience, Lord, full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy, and true; who makest Thy sun to rise upon the good and the evil, and who sendest rain upon the just and the unjust; who willest not the death of the sinner, so much as that he return and live; who reproving in parts, dost give place to repentance, that wickedness having been abandoned, they may believe on Thee, O Lord; who by Thy patience dost lead to repentance, although many according to the hardness of their heart and their impenitent heart treasure up for themselves wrath against the day of wrath and of the revelation of Thy righteous judgment, who wilt render to every man according to his works; who in the day when a man shall have turned from his iniquity to Thy mercy and truth, wilt forget all his iniquities: stand before us, grant unto us that through our ministry, by which Thou hast been pleased to refute this execrable and too horrible error, as many have already been liberated, many also may be liberated, and whether through the sacrament of Thy holy baptism, or through the sacrifice of a broken spirit and a contrite and humbled heart, in the sorrow of repentance, they may deserve to receive the remission of their sins and blasphemies, by which through ignorance they have offended Thee. For nothing is of any avail, save Thy surpassing mercy and power, and the truth of Thy baptism, and the keys of the kingdom of heaven in Thy holy Church; so that we must not despair of men as long as by Thy patience they live on this earth, who even knowing how great an evil it is to think or to say such things about Thee, are detained in that malign profession on account of the use or the attainment of temporal or earthly convenience, if rebuked by Thy reproaches they in any way flee to Thy ineffable goodness, and prefer to all the enticements of the carnal life, the heavenly and eternal life.

EXPOSITIONS ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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A LIBRARY OF FATHERS OF THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, ANTERIOR TO THE DIVISION OF THE EAST AND WEST.

TRANSLATED BY MEMBERS OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

YET SHALL NOT THY TEACHERS BE REMOVED INTO A CORNER ANY MORE BUT THINE EYES SHALL SEE THY TEACHERS. ISAIAH 30:20.

TO THE MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD WILLIAM LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND, FORMERLY REGIUS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, THIS LIBRARY OF ANCIENT BISHOPS, FATHERS, DOCTORS, MARTYRS, CONFESSORS, OF CHRIST'S HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, IS WITH HIS GRACE'S PERMISSION RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED, IN TOKEN OF REVERENCE FOR HIS PERSON AND SACRED OFFICE, AND OF GRATITUDE FOR HIS EPISCOPAL KINDNESS.

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PRAYER OF ST. AUGUSTINE

PREFACE

In any Commentary on a portion of the Old Testament by a writer unacquainted with Hebrew, exact criticism, and freedom from mistake, must not be expected. But the Psalms have been so in the mouth and in the heart of God’s people in all languages, that it has been necessary often to find an explanation suitable to imperfect translations. And no doubt it is intended that we should use such explanations for the purpose of edification, when we are unable to be more accurate, though in proving doctrine it is necessary always to remember and allow for any want of acquaintance with the original, or uncertainty with respect to its actual meaning. However, the main scope and bearing of the Text is rarely affected by such points as vary in different translations, and the analogy of the faith is sufficient to prevent a Catholic mind from adopting any error in consequence of a text seeming to bear a heterodox meaning. Perhaps the errors of translation in the existing versions may have led the Fathers to adopt rules of interpretation ranging too far from the simple and literal; but having such translations, they could hardly use them otherwise. Meanwhile St. Augustine will be found to excel in the intense apprehension of those great truths which pervade the whole of Sacred Writ, and in the vivid and powerful exposition of what bears upon them. It is hardly possible to read his practical and forcible applications of Holy Scripture, without feeling those truths by the faith of which we ought to live brought home to the heart in a wonderful manner. His was a mind that strove earnestly to solve the great problems of human life, and after exhausting the resources, and discovering the emptiness, of erroneous systems, found truth and rest at last in Catholic Christianity, in the religion of the Bible as expounded by St. Ambrose. And though we must look to his Confessions for the full view of all his cravings after real good, and their ultimate satisfaction, yet throughout his works we have the benefit of the earnestness with which he sought to feed on the ‘sincere milk of the word.’

His mystical and allegorical interpretation, in spite of occasional mistakes, which belong rather to the translation than to himself, will be found in general of great value. It is to a considerable extent systematic, and the same interpretation of the same symbols is repeated throughout the work, and is indeed often common to him with other Fathers. The ‘feet’ taken for the affections, ‘clouds’ for the Apostles, and many other instances, are of very frequent occurrence. And it is evident that a few such general interpretations must be a great help to those who wish to make an allegorical use of those portions of Holy Scripture, which are adapted for it. Nor are they adhered to with such strictness as to deprive the reader of the benefit of other explanations, where it appears that some other metaphor or allegory was intended. Both St. Augustine and St. Gregory acknowledge, and at times impress on their readers, that metaphorical language is used in Holy Scripture with various meanings under the same symbol.

The discourses on the Psalms are not carried throughout on the same plan, but still are tolerably complete as a commentary, since the longer expositions furnish the means of filling out the shorter notices, in thought at least, to the attentive reader of the whole. They were not delivered continuously, nor all at the same place. Occasionally the Author is led by the circumstances of the time into long discussions of a controversial character, especially with respect to the Donatists, against whose narrow and exclusive views he urges strongly the prophecies relating to the universality of the Church. Occasionally a Psalm is first reviewed briefly, so as to give a general clue to its interpretation, and then enlarged upon in several discourses.

For the present Translation, as far as the first thirty Psalms, the Editors are indebted to a friend who conceals his name; for the remainder of the Volume, with part of the next which is to appear, to the Rev. J. E. Tweed, M.A. of Exeter College, Oxford. It is hoped that the whole of St. Augustine on the Psalms may come out in Volumes at intervals not much exceeding half a year.

C. M.

Oxford,

S. Augustine of Canterbury,

1847.

ST. AUGUSTINE ON THE PSALMS

PSALM 1

1. Blessed is the man that hath not gone away in the counsel of the ungodly. This is to be understood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord Man. Blessed is the man that hath not gone away in the counsel of the ungodly, as the man of earth did, who consented to his wife deceived by the serpent, to the transgressing the commandment of God. Nor stood in the way of sinners. For He came indeed in the way of sinners, by being born as sinners are; but He stood not therein, for that the enticements of the world held Him not. And hath not sat in the seat of pestilence. He willed not an earthly kingdom, with pride, which is well taken for the seat of pestilence; for that there is hardly any one who is free from the love of rule, and craves not human glory. For a pestilence is disease widely spread, and involving all or nearly all. Yet the seat of pestilence may be more appropriately understood of hurtful doctrine; whose word spreadeth as a canker. The order too of the words must be considered: went away, stood, sat. For he went away, when he drew back from God. He stood, when he took pleasure in sin. He sat, when, confirmed in his pride, he could not go back, unless set free by Him, Who neither hath gone away in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of pestilence.

2. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law will he meditate by day and by night. The law is not made for a righteous man, says the Apostle. But it is one thing to be in the law, another under the law. Whoso is in the law, acteth according to the law; whoso is under the law, is acted upon according to the law: the one therefore is free, the other a slave. Again, the law, which is written and imposed upon the servant, is one thing; the law, which is mentally discerned by him who needeth not its letter, is another thing. He will meditate by day and by night, is to be understood either as without ceasing; or by day in joy, by night in tribulations. For it is said, Abraham saw my day, and was glad: and of tribulation it is said, my reins also have instructed me, even unto the night.

3. And he shall be like a tree planted hard by the running streams of waters; that is either, Very Wisdom, Which vouchsafed to assume man's nature for our salvation; that as man He might be the tree planted hard by the running streams of waters; for in this sense can that too be taken which is said in another Psalm, the river of God is full of water. Or, by the Holy Ghost, of Whom it is said, He shall baptize you in the Holy Ghost; and again, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink; and again, If thou knewest the gift of God, and Who it is that asketh water of thee, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water, of which whoso drinketh shall never thirst, but it shall be made in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Or, by the running streams of waters may be by the sins of the people, because first the waters are called peoples in the Apocalypse; and again, by running stream is not unreasonably understood fall, which hath relation to sin. That tree then, that is, our Lord, from the running streams of water, that is, from the sinful people's drawing them by the way into the roots of His discipline, will bring forth fruit, that is, will establish Churches; in His season, that is, after He hath been glorified by His Resurrection and Ascension into heaven. For then, by the sending of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles, and by the confirming of their faith in Him, and their mission to the world, He made the Churches to bring forth fruit. His leaf also shall not fall, that is, His Word shall not be in vain. For, all flesh is grass, and the glory of man as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, and the flower falleth, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever. And whatsoever He doeth shall prosper, that is, whatsoever that tree shall bear; which all must be taken of fruit and leaves, that is, deeds and words.

4. The ungodly are not so, they are not so, but are like the dust which the wind casteth forth from the face of the earth. The earth is here to be taken as that stedfastness in God, with a view to which it is said, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, yea, I have a goodly heritage. With a view to this it is said, Wait on the Lord and keep His ways, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the earth. With a view to this it is said, Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. A comparison too is derived hence, for as this visible earth supports and contains the outer man, so that earth invisible the inner man. From the face of which earth the wind casteth forth the ungodly, that is, pride, in that it puffeth him up. On his guard against which he, who

was inebriated by the richness of the house of the Lord, and drunken of the torrent stream of its pleasures, saith, Let not the foot of pride come against me. From this earth pride cast forth him who said, I will place my seat in the north, and I will be like the Most High. From the face of the earth it cast forth him also who, after that he had consented and tasted of the forbidden tree that he might be as God, hid himself from the Face of God. That this earth has reference to the inner man, and that man is cast forth thence by pride, may be particularly seen in that which is written, Why is earth and ashes proud? Because, in his life, he cast forth his bowels. For, whence he hath been cast forth, he is not unreasonably said to have cast forth himself.

5. Therefore the ungodly rise not in the judgment: therefore, namely, because as dust they are cast forth from the face of the earth. And well did he say that this should be taken away from them, which in their pride they court, namely, that they may judge: so that this same idea is more clearly expressed in the following sentence, nor sinners in the counsel of the righteous. For it is usual for what goes before, to be thus repeated more clearly. So that by sinners should be understood the ungodly; what is before in the judgment, should be here in the counsel of the righteous. Or if indeed the ungodly are one thing, and sinners another, so that although every ungodly man is a sinner, yet every sinner is not ungodly; The ungodly rise not in the judgment, that is, they shall rise indeed, but not that they should be judged, for they are already appointed to most certain punishment. But sinners do not rise in the counsel of the just, that is, that they may judge, but peradventure that they may be judged; so as of these it were said, The fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall then suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

6. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous. As it is said, medicine knows health, but knows not disease, and yet disease is recognised by the art of medicine. In like manner can it be said that the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly He knoweth not. Not that the Lord is ignorant of any thing, and yet He says to sinners, I never knew you. But the way of the ungodly shall perish; is the same as if it were said, the way of the ungodly the Lord knoweth not. But it is expressed more plainly

that this should be not to be known of the Lord, namely, to perish; and this to be known of the Lord, namely, to abide; so as that to be should appertain to the knowledge of God, but to His not knowing not to be. For the Lord saith, I AM that I AM, and, I AM hath sent me.

PSALM 2

1. Why do the heathen rage, and the people meditate vain things? The kings of the earth have stood up, and the rulers taken counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Christ. It is said, why? as if it were said, in vain. For what they wished, namely, Christ’s destruction, they accomplished not; for this is spoken of our Lord’s persecutors, of whom also mention is made in the Acts of the Apostles.

2. Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yoke from us. Although it admits of another acceptation, yet is it more fitly understood as in the person of those, who are said to meditate vain things. So that let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yoke from us, may be, let us do our endeavour, that the Christian religion do not bind us, nor be imposed upon us.

3. He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn, and the Lord shall have them in derision. The sentence is repeated; for He who dwelleth in the heavens, is afterwards put, the Lord; and for shall laugh them to scorn, is afterwards put, shall have them in derision. Nothing of this however must be taken in a carnal sort, as if God either laugheth with cheek, or derideth with nostril; but it is to be understood of that power which He giveth to His saints, that they seeing things to come, namely, that the Name and rule of Christ is to pervade posterity and possess all nations, should understand that those men meditate a vain thing. For this power whereby these things are foreknown is God’s laughter and derision. He that dwelleth in the heavens shall laugh them to scorn. If by heavens we understand holy souls, by these God, as foreknowing what is to come, will laugh them to scorn, and have them in derision.

4. Then He shall speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure. For shewing more clearly how He will speak unto them, he added, He will vex them; so that in His wrath, is, in His sore displeasure. But by the wrath and sore displeasure of the Lord God must not be

understood any mental perturbation; but the might whereby He most justly avengeth, by the subjection of all creation to His service. For that is to be observed and remembered which is written in the Wisdom of Solomon, But Thou, Lord of power, judgest with tranquillity, and with great favour orderest us. The wrath of God then is an emotion which is produced in the soul which knoweth the law of God, when it sees this same law transgressed by the sinner. For by this emotion of righteous souls many things are avenged. Although the wrath of God can be well understood of that darkening of the mind, which overtakes those who transgress the law of God.

5. Yet am I set by Him as King upon Sion, His holy hill, preaching His decree. This is clearly spoken in the Person of the very Lord our Saviour Christ. But if Sion signify, as some interpret, beholding, we must not understand it of any thing rather than of the Church, where daily is the desire raised of beholding the bright glory of God, according to that of the Apostle, but we with open face beholding the glory of the Lord. Therefore the meaning of this is, Yet I am set by Him as King over His holy Church; which for its eminence and stability He calleth a mountain. Yet I am set by Him as King. I, that is, whose bands they were meditating to break asunder, and whose yoke to cast away. Preaching His decree. Who doth not see the meaning of this, seeing it is daily practised?

6. The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee. Although that day may also seem to be prophetically spoken of, on which Jesus Christ was born according to the flesh; yet as to-day intimates presentiality, (and in eternity there is nothing past as if it had ceased to be, nor future as if it were not yet, but present only; since whatever is eternal, always is,) a divine interpretation is given to that expression, To-day have I begotten Thee, whereby the uncorrupt and Catholic faith proclaims the eternal generation of the Power and Wisdom of God, Who is the Only-begotten Son.

7. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance. This has at once a temporal sense with reference to the Manhood which He took on Himself, Who offered up Himself as a Sacrifice in the stead of all sacrifices, Who also maketh intercession for us; so that the words, ask of

Me, may be referred to all this temporal dispensation, which has been instituted for mankind, namely, that the nations should be joined to the Name of Christ, and so be redeemed from death, and possessed by God. I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, which so possess them for their salvation, and to bear unto Thee spiritual fruit. And the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. The same repeated, The uttermost parts of the earth, is put for the nations; but more clearly, that we might understand all the nations. And Thy possession stands for Thine inheritance.

8. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron, with inflexible justice, and Thou shalt break them like a potter's vessel; that is, Thou shalt break in them earthly lusts, and the filthy doings of the old man, and whatsoever hath been derived and inured from the sinful clay. And now understand, ye kings. And now; that is, being now renewed, your covering of clay worn out, that is, the carnal vessels of error, which belong to your past life, now understand, ye who now are kings; that is, able now to govern all that is servile and brutish in you, able now too to fight, not as they who beat the air, but chastening your bodies, and bringing them into subjection. Be instructed, all ye who judge the earth. This again is a repetition; Be instructed is instead of understand; and ye who judge the earth instead of ye kings. For He signifies the spiritual by those who judge the earth. For whatsoever we judge, is below us; and whatsoever is below the spiritual man, is with good reason called the earth; because it is defiled with earthly corruption.

9. Serve the Lord with fear; lest what is said, Ye kings and judges of the earth, turn into pride: And rejoice with trembling. Very excellently is rejoice added, lest serve the Lord with fear should seem to tend to misery. But again, lest this same rejoicing should run on to unrestrained inconsiderateness, there is added with trembling, that it might avail for a warning, and for the careful guarding of holiness. It can also be taken thus, And now ye kings understand; that is, And now that I am set as King, be ye not sad, kings of the earth, as if your excellency were taken from you, but rather understand and be instructed. For it is expedient for you, that ye should be under Him, by Whom understanding and instruction are given you. And this is expedient for you, that ye lord it not with rashness, but that

ye serve the Lord of all with fear, and rejoice in bliss most sure and most pure, with all caution and carefulness, lest ye fall therefrom into pride.

10. Lay hold of discipline, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye perish from the righteous way. This is the same as, understand, and, be instructed. For to understand and be instructed, this is to lay hold of discipline. Still in that it is said, lay hold of, it is plainly enough intimated that there is some protection and defence against all things which might do hurt unless with so great carefulness it be laid hold of. Lest at any time the Lord be angry, is expressed with a doubt, not as regards the vision of the prophet to whom it is certain, but as regards those who are warned; for they, to whom it is not openly revealed, are wont to think with doubt of the anger of God. This then they ought to say to themselves, let us lay hold of discipline, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and we perish from the righteous way. Now, how the Lord be angry is to be taken, has been said above. And ye perish from the righteous way. This is a great punishment, and dreaded by those who have had any perception of the sweetness of righteousness; for he who perisheth from the way of righteousness, in much misery will wander through the ways of unrighteousness.

11. When His anger shall be shortly kindled, blessed are all they who put their trust in Him; that is, when the vengeance shall come which is prepared for the ungodly and for sinners, not only will it not light on those who put their trust in the Lord, but it will even avail for the foundation and exaltation of a kingdom for them. For he said not, When His anger shall be shortly kindled, safe are all they who put their trust in Him, as though they should have this only thereby, to be exempt from punishment; but he said, blessed; in which there is the sum and accumulation of all good things. Now the meaning of shortly I suppose to be this, that it will be something sudden, whilst sinners will deem it far off and long to come.

PSALM 3

A Psalm of David, when he fled from the face of Abessalon his son.

1. The words, I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up, lead us to believe that this Psalm is to be understood as in the Person of Christ; for they sound more applicable to the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, than to that history in which David's flight is described from the face of his rebellious son. And, since it is written of Christ's disciples, The sons of the bridegroom fast not as long as the bridegroom is with them; it is no wonder if by his undutiful son be here meant, that undutiful disciple who betrayed Him. From whose face although it may be understood historically that He fled, when on his departure He withdrew with the rest to the mountain; yet in a spiritual sense, when the Son of God, that is the Power and Wisdom of God, abandoned the mind of Judas; when the Devil wholly occupied him; as it is written, The Devil entered into his heart, may it be well understood that Christ fled from his face; not that Christ gave place to the Devil, but that on Christ's departure the Devil took possession. Which departure, I suppose, is called a flight in this Psalm, because of its quickness; which is indicated also by the word of our Lord, saying, That thou doest, do quickly. So even in common conversation we say of any thing that does not come to mind, it has fled from me; and of a man of much learning we say, nothing flies from him. Wherefore truth fled from the mind of Judas, when it ceased to enlighten him. But Absalom, as some interpret, in the Latin tongue signifies, Patris pax, a father's peace. And it may seem strange, whether in the history of the kings, when Absalom carried on war against his father; or in the history of the New Testament, when Judas was the betrayer of our Lord; how "father's peace" can be understood. But both in the former place they who read carefully, see that David in that war was at peace with his son, who even with sore grief lamented his death, saying, O Absalom, my son, would God I had died for thee! And in the history of the New Testament by that so great and so wonderful forbearance of our Lord; in that He bore so long with him as if good, when He was not ignorant of his thoughts; in that He admitted him to

the Supper in which He committed and delivered to His disciples the figure of His Body and Blood; finally, in that He received the kiss of peace at the very time of His betrayal; it is easily understood how Christ shewed peace to His betrayer, although he was laid waste by the intestine war of so abominable a device. And therefore is Absalom called “father’s peace,” because his father had the peace, which he had not.

2. O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me! So multiplied indeed were they, that one even from the number of His disciples was not wanting, who was added to the number of His persecutors. Many rise up against me; many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God. It is clear that if they had had any idea that He would rise again, assuredly they would not have slain Him. To this end are those speeches, Let Him come down from the cross, if He be the Son of God; and again, He saved others, Himself He cannot save. Therefore, neither would Judas have betrayed Him, if he had not been of the number of those who despised Christ, saying, There is no salvation for Him in His God.

3. But Thou, O Lord, art my taker. It is said to God in the nature of man, for the taking of man is, the Word made Flesh. My glory. Even He calls God his glory, whom the Word of God so took, that God became one with Him. Let the proud learn, who unwillingly hear, when it is said to them, For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? And the lifter up of my head. I think that this should be here taken of the human mind, which is not unreasonably called the head of the soul; which so inhered in, and in a sort coalesced with, the supereminent excellency of the Word taking man, that it was not laid aside by so great humiliation of the Passion.

4. With my voice have I cried unto the Lord; that is, not with the voice of the body, which is drawn out with the sound of the reverberation of the air; but with the voice of the heart, which to men speaks not, but with God sounds as a cry. By this voice Susanna was heard; and with this voice the Lord Himself commanded that prayer should be made in closets, that is, in the recesses of the heart noiselessly. Nor would one easily say that prayer is not made with this voice, if no sound of words is uttered from the body; since even when in silence we pray within the heart, if thoughts interpose

alien from the mind of one praying, it cannot yet be said, With my voice have I cried unto the Lord. Nor is this rightly said, save when the soul alone, taking to itself nothing of the flesh, and nothing of the aims of the flesh, in prayer, speaks to God, where He only hears. But even this is called a cry by reason of the strength of its intention. And He heard me out of His holy mountain. We have the Lord Himself called a mountain by the Prophet, as it is written, The stone that was cut out without hands grew to the size of a mountain. But this cannot be taken of His Person, unless peradventure He would speak thus, out of myself, as of His holy mountain He heard me, when He dwelt in me, that is, in this very mountain. But it is more plain and unembarrassed, if we understand that God out of His justice heard. For it was just, that He should raise again from the dead the Innocent Who was slain, and to Whom evil had been recompensed for good, and that He should render to the persecutor a meet reward, who repaid Him evil for good. For we read, Thy justice is as the mountains of God.

5. I slept, and took rest. It may be not unsuitably remarked, that it is expressly said, I, to signify that of His own Will He underwent death, according to that, Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. Therefore, saith He, you have not taken Me as though against My will, and slain Me; but I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up. Scripture contains numberless instances of sleep being put for death; as the Apostle says, I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep. Nor need we make any question, why it is added, took rest, seeing that it has already been said, I slept. Repetitions of this kind are usual in Scripture, as we have pointed out many in the second Psalm. But some copies have, I slept, and was cast into a deep sleep. And different copies express it differently, according to the possible renderings of the Greek words, ἐγὼ δὲ ἐκοιμήθην καὶ ὕπνωσα. Unless perhaps sleeping may be taken of one dying, but sleep of one dead: so that sleeping may be the transition into sleep, as awakening is the transition into wakefulness. Let us not deem these repetitions in the sacred writings empty ornaments of speech. I slept, and took rest, is therefore well understood as “I gave Myself up to My Passion, and death ensued.” And I rose, for the Lord will take Me

up. This is the more to be remarked, how that in one sentence the Psalmist has used a verb of past and future time. For he has said, both I rose, which is the past, and will take Me up, which is the future; seeing that assuredly the rising again could not be without that taking up. But in prophecy the future is well joined to the past, whereby both are signified. Since things which are prophesied of as yet to come in reference to time are future; but in reference to the knowledge of those who prophesy they are already to be viewed as done. Verbs of the present tense are also mixed in, which shall be treated of in their proper place when they occur.

6. I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me. It is written in the Gospels how great a multitude stood around Him as He was suffering, and on the cross. Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God. It is not said to God, Arise, as if asleep or lying down, but it is usual in holy Scripture to attribute to God what He doeth in us; not indeed universally, but where it can be done suitably; as when He is said to speak, when by His gift Prophets speak, and Apostles, or whatsoever messengers of the truth. Hence that text, Would you have proof of Christ, Who speaketh in me? For he doth not say, of Christ, by Whose enlightening or order I speak; but he attributes at once the speaking itself to Him, by Whose gift he spake.

7. Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause. It is not to be pointed as if it were one sentence, Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God; since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause. For He did not therefore save Him, because He smote His enemies; but rather He being saved, He smote them. Therefore it belongs to what follows, so that the sense is this; Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause, Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners; that is, thereby hast Thou broken the teeth of the sinners, since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me. It is forsooth the punishment of the opposers, whereby their teeth have been broken, that is, the words of sinners rending with their cursing the Son of God, brought to nought, as it were to dust; so that we may understand teeth thus, as words of cursing. Of which teeth the Apostle speaks, If ye bite one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. The teeth of sinners can also be taken as the chiefs of sinners; by whose authority each one is cut off from the fellowship of godly livers, and as it were

incorporated with evil livers. To these teeth are opposed the Church's teeth, by whose authority believers are cut off from the error of the Gentiles and divers opinions, and are translated into that fellowship which is the body of Christ. With these teeth Peter was told to eat the animals when they had been killed, that is, by killing in the Gentiles what they were, and changing them into what he was himself. Of these teeth too of the Church it is said, Thy teeth are as a flock of shorn sheep, coming up from the bath, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them. These are they who prescribe rightly, and as they prescribe, live; who do what is written, Let your works shine before men, that they may bless your Father which is in heaven. For moved by their authority, they believe God Who speaketh and worketh through these men; and separated from the world, to which they were once conformed, they pass over into the members of the Church. And rightly therefore are they, through whom such things are done, called teeth like to shorn sheep; for they have laid aside the burdens of earthly cares, and coming up from the bath, from the washing away of the filth of the world by the Sacrament of Baptism, every one beareth twins. For they fulfil the two commandments, of which it is said, On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets; loving God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind, and their neighbour as themselves. There is not one barren among them, for much fruit they render unto God. According to this sense then it is to be thus understood, Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners, that is, Thou hast brought the chiefs of the sinners to nought, by smiting all who oppose Me without a cause. For the chiefs according to the Gospel history persecuted Him, whilst the lower people honoured Him.

8. Salvation is of the Lord; and upon Thy people be Thy blessing. In one sentence the Psalmist has enjoined men what to believe, and has prayed for believers. For when it is said, Salvation is of the Lord, the words are addressed to men. Nor does it follow, And upon Thy people be Thy blessing, in such wise as that the whole is spoken to men, but there is a change into prayer addressed to God Himself, for the very people to whom it was said, Salvation is of the Lord. What else then doth he say but this? Let no man presume on himself, seeing that it is of the Lord to save from the death of sin; for, Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the

body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But do Thou, O Lord, bless Thy people, who look for salvation from Thee.

9. This Psalm can be taken as in the Person of Christ another way; which is that whole Christ should speak. I mean by whole, with His body, of which He is the Head, according to the Apostle, who says, Ye are the body of Christ, and the members. He therefore is the Head of this body; wherefore in another place he saith, But doing the truth in love, we may increase in Him in all things, Who is the Head, Christ, from Whom the whole body is joined together and compacted. In the Prophet then at once the Church, and her Head, (the Church founded amidst the storms of persecution throughout the whole world, which we know already to have come to pass,) speaks, O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me! many rise up against me; wishing to exterminate the Christian name. Many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God. For they would not otherwise hope that they could destroy the Church, branching out so very far and wide, unless they believed that God had no care thereof. But Thou, O Lord, art my taker; in Christ of course. For into that flesh the Church too hath been taken by the Word, Who was made flesh, and dwelt in us; for that, In heavenly places hath He made us to sit together with Him. When the Head goes before, the other members will follow; for, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Justly then does the Church say, Thou art my taker. My glory; for she doth not attribute her excellency to herself, seeing that she knoweth by Whose grace and mercy she is what she is. And the lifter up of my head, of Him, namely, Who, the First-born from the dead, ascended up into heaven. With my voice have I cried unto the Lord, and He heard me out of His holy mountain. This is the prayer of all the Saints, the odour of sweetness, which ascends up in the sight of the Lord. For now the Church is heard out of this mountain, which is also her head; or, out of that justice of God, by which both His elect are set free, and their persecutors punished. Let the people of God also say, I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up; that they may be joined, and cleave to their Head. For to this people is it said, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall lay hold on thee. Since they are taken out of sinners, of whom it is said generally, But they that sleep, sleep in the night. Let them say moreover, I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me; of the heathen verily

that compass me about to extinguish every where, if they could, the Christian name. But how should they be feared, when by the blood of the martyrs in Christ, as by oil, the ardour of love is inflamed? Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God. The body can address this to its own Head. For at His rising the body was saved; Who ascended up on high, led captivity captive, gave gifts unto men. For this is said by the Prophet, in the secret purpose of God, until that ripe harvest which is spoken of in the Gospel, whose salvation is in His Resurrection, Who vouchsafed to die for us, shed out our Lord to the earth. Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause, Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners. Now while the Church hath rule, the enemies of the Christian name are smitten with confusion; and, whether their curses or their chiefs, brought to nought. Believe then, O man, that salvation is of the Lord: and, Thou, O Lord, may Thy blessing be upon Thy people.

10. Each one too of us may say, when a multitude of vices and lusts leads the resisting mind in the law of sin, O Lord, how are they multiplied that trouble me! many rise up against me. And, since despair of recovery generally creeps in through the accumulation of vices, as though these same vices were mocking the soul, or even as though the Devil and his angels through their poisonous suggestions were at work to make us despair, it is said with great truth, Many say unto my soul, There is no salvation for him in his God. But Thou, O Lord, art my taker. For this is our hope, that He hath vouchsafed to take the nature of man in Christ. My glory; according to that rule, that no one should ascribe ought to himself. And the lifter up of my head; either of Him, Who is the Head of us all, or of the spirit of each several one of us, which is the head of the soul and body. For the head of the woman is the man, and the head of the man is Christ. But the mind is lifted up, when it can be said already, With the mind I serve the law of God; that the rest of man may be reduced to peaceable submission, when in the resurrection of the flesh death is swallowed up in victory. With my voice I have cried unto the Lord; with that most inward and intensive voice. And He heard me out of His holy mountain; Him, through Whom He hath succoured us, through Whose mediation He heareth us. I slept, and took rest; and rose, for the Lord will take me up. Who of the faithful is not able to say this, when he calls to mind the death of his sins, and the gift of

regeneration? I will not fear the thousands of people that surround me. Besides those which the Church universally hath borne and beareth, each one also hath temptations, by which, when compassed about, he may speak these words, Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God: that is, make me to arise. Since Thou hast smitten all who oppose me without a cause: it is well in God’s determinate purpose said of the Devil and his angels; who rage not only against the whole body of Christ, but also against each one in particular. Thou hast broken the teeth of the sinners. Each man hath those that revile him, he hath too the prime authors of vice, who strive to cut him off from the body of Christ. But salvation is of the Lord. Pride is to be guarded against, and we must say, My soul cleaved after Thee. And upon Thy people be Thy blessing: that is, upon each one of us.

PSALM 4

To the end, a Psalm Song to David.

1. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For this end signifies perfection, not consumption. Now it may be a question, whether every Song be a Psalm, or rather every Psalm a Song; whether there are some Songs which cannot be called Psalms, and some Psalms which cannot be called Songs. But the Scripture must be attended to, if haply "Song" do not denote a joyful theme. But those are called Psalms which are sung to the Psaltery; which the history as a high mystery declares the Prophet David to have used. Of which matter this is not the place to discourse; for it requires prolonged inquiry, and much discussion. Now meanwhile we must look either for the words of the Lord Man after the Resurrection, or of man in the Church believing and hoping on Him.

2. Ver. 1. When I called, the God of my righteousness heard me. When I called, God heard me, the Psalmist says, of Whom is my righteousness. In tribulation Thou hast enlarged me. Thou hast led me from the straits of sadness into the broad ways of joy. For, tribulation and straitness is on every soul of man that doeth evil. But he who says, We rejoice in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; up to that where he says, Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us; he hath no straits of heart, they be heaped on him outwardly by them that persecute him. Now the change of person, for that from the third person, where he says, He heard, he passes at once to the second, where he says, Thou hast enlarged me; if it be not done for the sake of variety and grace, it is strange why the Psalmist should first wish to declare to men that he had been heard, and afterwards address Him Who heard him. Unless perchance, when he had declared how he was heard, in this very enlargement of heart he preferred to speak with God; that he might even in this way shew what it is to be enlarged in heart, that is, to have God already shed abroad in the heart, with Whom he might hold converse interiorly. Which is rightly understood as spoken in the person of him who,

believing on Christ, has been enlightened; but in that of the very Lord Man, Whom the Wisdom of God took, I do not see how this can be suitable. For He was never deserted by It. But as His very prayer against trouble is a sign rather of our infirmity, so also of that sudden enlargement of heart the same Lord may speak for His faithful ones, whom He has personated also when He said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink, and so forth. Wherefore here also He can say, Thou hast enlarged me, for one of the least of His, holding converse with God, Whose love he has shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer. Why does he again ask, when already he declared that he had been heard and enlarged? It is for our sakes, of whom it is said, But if we hope for that we see not, we wait in patience; or is it, that in him who has believed that which is begun may be perfected?

3. Ver. 2. O ye sons of men, how long heavy in heart. Let your error, says he, have lasted at least up to the coming of the Son of God; why then any longer are ye heavy in heart? When will ye make an end of crafty wiles, if now when the truth is present ye make it not? Why do ye love vanity, and seek a lie? Why would ye be blessed by the lowest things? Truth alone, from which all things are true, maketh blessed. For, vanity is of deceivers, and all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labour, wherewith he laboureth under the sun? Why then are ye held back by the love of things temporal? Why follow ye after the last things, as though the first, which is vanity and a lie? For you would have them abide with you, which all pass away, as doth a shadow.

4. Ver. 3. And know ye that the Lord hath magnified His Holy One. Whom but Him, Whom He raised up from below, and placed in heaven at His right hand? Therefore doth he chide mankind, that they would turn at length from the love of this world to Him. But if the addition of the conjunction (for he says, and know ye) is to any a difficulty, he may easily observe in Scripture that this manner of speech is usual in that language, in which the Prophets spoke. For you often find this beginning, And the Lord said unto him, And the word of the Lord came to him. Which joining by a conjunction, when no sentence has gone before, to which the following one may be annexed,

peradventure admirably conveys to us, that the utterance of the truth in words is connected with that vision which goes on in the heart. Although in this place it may be said, that the former sentence, Why do ye love vanity, and seek a lie? is as if it were written, Do not love vanity, and seek a lie. And being thus read, it follows in the most direct construction, and know ye that the Lord hath magnified His Holy One. But the interposition of the Diapsalma, forbids our joining this sentence with the preceding one. For whether this be a Hebrew word, as some would have it, which means, so be it; or a Greek word, which marks a pause in the psalmody: (so as that Psalma should be what is sung in psalmody, but Diapsalma an interval of silence in the psalmody; that as the coupling of voices in singing is called Sympsalma, so their separation Diapsalma, where a certain pause of interrupted continuity is marked:) whether I say it be the former, or the latter, or something else, this at least is probable, that the sense cannot rightly be continued and joined, where the Diapsalma intervenes.

5. The Lord will hear me, when I cry unto Him. I believe that we are here warned, that with great earnestness of heart, that is, with an inward and incorporeal cry, we should implore help of God. For as we must give thanks for enlightenment in this life, so must we pray for rest after this life. Wherefore in the person, either of the faithful preacher of the Gospel, or of our Lord Himself, it may be taken, as if it were written, the Lord will hear you, when you cry unto Him.

6. Ver. 4. Be ye angry, and sin not. For the thought occurred, Who is worthy to be heard? or how shall the sinner not cry in vain unto the Lord? Therefore, Be ye angry, saith he, and sin not. Which may be taken two ways: either, even if ye be angry, do not sin; that is, even if there arise an emotion in the soul, which now by reason of the punishment of sin is not in our power, at least let not the reason and the mind, which is after God regenerated within, that with the mind we should serve the law of God, although with the flesh we as yet serve the law of sin, consent thereunto; or, repent ye, that is, be ye angry with yourselves for your past sins, and henceforth cease to sin. What you say in your hearts: there is understood, say ye: so that the complete sentence is, What ye say in your hearts, that say ye; that is, be ye not the people of whom it is said, with their lips they

honour Me, but their heart is far from Me. In your chambers be ye pricked. This is what has been expressed already in heart. For this is the chamber, of which our Lord warns us, that we should pray within, with closed doors. But, be ye pricked, refers either to the pain of repentance, that the soul in punishment should prick itself, that it be not condemned and tormented in God’s judgment; or, to arousing, that we should awake to behold the light of Christ, as if pricks were made use of. But some say that not, be ye pricked, but, be ye opened, is the better reading; because in the Greek Psalter it is κατανύγητε, which refers to that enlargement of the heart, in order that the shedding abroad of love by the Holy Ghost may be received.

7. Ver. 5. Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and hope in the Lord. He says the same in another Psalm, the sacrifice for God is a troubled spirit. Wherefore that this is the sacrifice of righteousness which is offered through repentance it is not unreasonably here understood. For what more righteous, than that each one should be angry with his own sins, rather than those of others, and that in self-punishment he should sacrifice himself unto God? Or are righteous works after repentance the sacrifice of righteousness? For the interposition of Diapsalma not unreasonably perhaps intimates even a transition from the old life to the new life: that on the old man being destroyed or weakened by repentance, the sacrifice of righteousness, according to the regeneration of the new man, may be offered to God; when the soul now cleansed offers and places itself on the altar of faith, to be encompassed by heavenly fire, that is, by the Holy Ghost. So that this may be the meaning, Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and hope in the Lord; that is, live uprightly, and hope for the gift of the Holy Ghost, that the truth, in which you have believed, may shine upon you.

8. But yet, hope in the Lord, is as yet expressed without explanation. Now what is hoped for, but good things? But since each one would obtain from God that good, which he loves; and they are not easy to be found who love interior goods, that is, which belong to the inward man, which alone should be loved, but the rest are to be used for necessity, not to be enjoyed for pleasure; excellently did he subjoin, when he had said, hope in the Lord, (ver. 6.) Many say, who sheweth us good things? This is the speech, and

this the daily inquiry of all the foolish, and unrighteous; whether of those who long for the peace and quiet of a worldly life, and from the frowardness of mankind find it not; who even in their blindness dare to find fault with the order of events, when involved in their own deservings they deem the times worse than these which are past: or, of those who doubt and despair of that future life, which is promised us; who are often saying, Who knows if it's true? or, who ever came from below, to tell us this? Very exquisitely then, and briefly, he shews, (to those, that is, who have interior sight,) what good things are to be sought; answering their question, who say, Who sheweth us good things? The light of Thy countenance, saith he, is stamped on us, O Lord. This light is the whole and true good of man, which is seen not with the eye, but with the mind. But he says, stamped on us, as a penny is stamped with the king's image. For man was made after the image and likeness of God, which he defaced by sin: therefore it is his true and eternal good, if by a new birth he be stamped. And I believe this to be the bearing of that which some understand skilfully; I mean, what the Lord said on seeing Cæsar's tribute money, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's; and to God the things that are God's. As if He had said, in like manner as Cæsar exacts from you the impression of his image, so also does God: that as the tribute money is rendered to him, so should the soul to God, illumined and stamped with the light of His countenance. (Ver. 7.) Thou hast put gladness into my heart. Gladness then is not to be sought without by them, who, being still heavy in heart, love vanity, and seek a lie; but within, where the light of God's countenance is stamped. For Christ dwelleth in the inner man, as the Apostle says; for to Him doth it appertain to see truth, since He hath said, I am the truth. And again, when He spake in the Apostle, saying, Would you receive a proof of Christ, Who speaketh in me? He spake not of course from without to him, but in his very heart, that is, in that chamber where we are to pray.

9. But men (who doubtless are many) who follow after things temporal, know not to say aught else, than, who sheweth us good things? when the true and certain good within their very selves they cannot see. Of these accordingly is most justly said, what he adds next; From the time of His corn, of wine, and oil, they have been multiplied. For the addition of His, is not superfluous. For the corn is God's: inasmuch as He is the living bread

Which came down from heaven. The wine too is God's: for, they shall be inebriated, he says, with the fatness of Thine house. The oil too is God's: of which it is said, Thou hast fattened my head with oil. But those many, who say, Who sheweth us good things? and who see not that the kingdom of heaven is within them: these, from the time of His corn, of wine, and oil, are multiplied. For multiplication does not always betoken plentifulness, and not, generally, scantiness: when the soul, given up to temporal pleasures, burns ever with desire, and cannot be satisfied; and, distracted with manifold and anxious thought, is not permitted to see the simple good. Such is the soul of which it is said, for the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things. A soul like this, by the departure and succession of temporal goods, that is, from the time of His corn, wine, and oil, filled with numberless idle fancies, is so multiplied, that it cannot do that which is commanded, think on the Lord in goodness, and in simplicity of heart seek Him. For this multiplicity is strongly opposed to that simplicity. And therefore leaving these, who are many, multiplied, that is, by the desire of things temporal, and who say, Who sheweth us good things? which are to be sought not with the eyes without, but with simplicity of heart within, the faithful man rejoices and says, (ver. 8.) In peace, together, I will sleep, and take rest. For such men justly hope for all manner of estrangement of mind from things mortal, and forgetfulness of this world's miseries; which is beautifully and prophetically signified under the name of sleep and rest, where the most perfect peace cannot be interrupted by any tumult. But this is not had now in this life, but is to be hoped for after this life. This even the words themselves, which are in the future tense, shew us. For it is not said, either, I have slept, and taken rest; or, I do sleep, and take rest; but, I will sleep, and take rest. Then shall this corruptible put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; then shall death be swallowed up in victory. Hence it is said, but if we hope for that we see not, we wait in patience.

10. Wherefore, consistently with this, he adds the last words, and says, Since Thou, O Lord, in singleness hast made me dwell in hope. Here he does not say, wilt make; but, hast made. In whom then this hope now is, there will be assuredly that which is hoped for. And well does he say, in

singleness. For this may refer in opposition to those many, who being multiplied from the time of His corn, of wine, and oil, say, Who sheweth us good things? For this multiplicity perishes, and singleness is observed among the Saints: of whom it is said in the Acts of the Apostles, and of the multitude of them that believed, there was one soul, and one heart. In singleness, then, and simplicity, removed, that is, from the multitude and crowd of things, that are born and die, we ought to be lovers of eternity, and unity, if we desire to cleave to the one God and our Lord.

PSALM 5

1. The title of the Psalm is, For her who receiveth the inheritance. The Church then is signified, who receiveth for her inheritance eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ; that she may possess God Himself, in cleaving to Whom she may be blessed, according to that, Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth. What earth, but that of which it is said, Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living? And again more clearly, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup. And conversely the word Church is said to be God’s inheritance according to that, Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance. Therefore is God said to be our inheritance, because He feedeth and sustaineth us: and we are said to be God’s inheritance, because He ordereth and ruleth us. Wherefore it is the voice of the Church in this Psalm called to her inheritance, that she too may herself become the inheritance of the Lord.

2. Ver. 1. Hear my words, O Lord. Being called she calleth upon the Lord; that the same Lord being her helper, she may pass through the wickedness of this world, and attain unto Him. Understand my cry. The Psalmist well shews what this cry is; how from within, from the chamber of the heart, without the body’s utterance, it reaches unto God: for the bodily voice is heard, but the spiritual is understood. Although this too may be God’s hearing, not with carnal ear, but in the omnipresence of His Majesty.

3. Attend Thou to the voice of my supplication; that is, to that voice, which he maketh request that God would understand: of which what the nature is, he hath already intimated, when he said, (ver. 2.) Understand my cry. Attend Thou to the voice of my supplication, my King, and my God. Although both the Son is God, and the Father God, and the Father and the Son together One God; and if asked of the Holy Ghost, we must give no other answer than that He is God; and when the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are mentioned together, we must understand nothing else, than One God; nevertheless Scripture is wont to give the appellation of King to

the Son. According then to that which is said, By Me man cometh to the Father, rightly is it first, my King; and then, my God. And yet has not the Psalmist said, Attend ye; but, Attend Thou. For the Catholic faith preaches not two or three Gods, but the Very Trinity, One God. Not that the same Trinity can be together, now the Father, now the Son, now the Holy Ghost, as Sabellius believed: but that the Father must be none but the Father, and the Son none but the Son, and the Holy Ghost none but the Holy Ghost, and this Trinity but One God. Hence when the Apostle had said, Of Whom are all things, by Whom are all things, in Whom are all things, he is believed to have conveyed an intimation of the Very Trinity; and yet he did not add, to Them be glory; but, to Him be glory.

4. Because I will pray unto Thee, (ver. 3.) O Lord, in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice. What does that, which he said above, Hear Thou, mean, as if he desired to be heard immediately? But now he saith, in the morning Thou wilt hear; not, hear Thou: and, I will pray unto Thee; not, I do pray unto Thee: and, as follows, in the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see; not, I do stand by Thee, and do see. Unless perhaps his former prayer marks the invocation itself: but being in darkness amidst the storms of this world, he perceives that he does not see what he desires, and yet does not cease to hope, For hope that is seen, is not hope. Nevertheless, he understands why he does not see, because the night is not yet past, that is, the darkness which our sins have merited. He says therefore, Because I will pray unto Thee, O Lord; that is, because Thou art so mighty to Whom I shall make my prayer, in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice. Thou art not He, he says, That can be seen by those, from whose eyes the night of sins is not yet withdrawn: when the night then of my error is past, and the darkness gone, which by my sins I have brought upon myself, then Thou wilt hear my voice. Why then did he say above not, Thou wilt hear, but, hear Thou? Is it that after the Church cried out, hear Thou, and was not heard, she perceived what must needs pass away to enable her to be heard? Or is it that she was heard above, but doth not yet understand that she was heard, because she doth not yet see by Whom she hath been heard; and what she now says, In the morning Thou wilt hear, she would have thus taken, In the morning I shall understand that I have been heard? Such is that expression, Arise, O Lord, that is, make me arise. But this latter is taken of Christ’s resurrection: but at

all events that Scripture, The Lord your God proveth you, that He may know whether ye love Him, cannot be taken in any other sense, than, that ye by Him may know, and that it may be made evident to yourselves, what progress ye have made in His love.

5. In the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see. What is, I will stand, but, “I will not lie down?” Now what else is to lie down, but to take rest on the earth, which is a seeking happiness in earthly pleasures? I will stand by, he says, and will see. We must not then cleave to things earthly, if we would see God, Who is beheld by a clean heart. (Ver. 5, 6.) For Thou art not a God Who hast pleasure in iniquity. The malignant man shall not dwell near Thee, nor shall the unrighteous abide before Thine eyes. Thou hast hated all that work iniquity, Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie. The man of blood, and the crafty man, the Lord will abominate. Iniquity, malignity, lying, homicide, craft, and all the like, are the night of which we speak: on the passing away of which, the morning dawns, that God may be seen. He has unfolded the reason, then, why he will stand by in the morning, and see: For, he says, Thou art not a God Who hast pleasure in iniquity. For if He were a God Who had pleasure in iniquity, He could be seen even by the iniquitous, so that He would not be seen in the morning, that is, when the night of iniquity is over.

6. The malignant man shall not dwell near Thee: that is, he shall not so see, as to cleave to Thee. Hence follows, Nor shall the unrighteous abide before Thine eyes. For their eyes, that is, their mind is beaten back by the light of truth, because of the darkness of their sins; by the habitual practice of which they are not able to sustain the brightness of right understanding. Therefore even they who see sometimes, that is, who understand the truth, are yet still unrighteous, they abide not therein through love of those things, which turn away from the truth. For they carry about with them their night, that is, not only the habit, but even the love, of sinning. But if this night shall pass away, that is, if they shall cease to sin, and this love and habit thereof be put to flight, the morning dawns, so that they not only understand, but also cleave to the truth.

7. Thou hast hated all that work iniquity. God’s hatred may be understood from that form of expression, by which every sinner hates the truth. For it

seems that she too hates those, whom she suffers not to abide in her. Now they do not abide, who cannot bear the truth. Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie. For this is the opposite to truth. But lest any one should suppose that any substance or nature is opposite to truth, let him understand that a lie has relation to that which is not, not to that which is. For if that which is be spoken, truth is spoken: but if that which is not be spoken, it is a lie. Therefore saith he, Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie; because drawing back from that which is, they turn aside to that which is not. Many lies indeed seem to be for some one's safety or advantage, spoken not in malice, but in kindness: such was that of those midwives in Exodus, who gave a false report to Pharaoh, to the end that the infants of the children of Israel might not be slain. But even these are praised not for the fact, but for the disposition shewn; since those who only lie in this way, will attain in time to a freedom from all lying. For in those that are perfect, not even these lies are found. For to these it is said, Let there be in your mouth, yea, yea; nay, nay; whatsoever is more, is of evil. Nor is it without reason written in another place, The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul: lest any should imagine that the perfect and spiritual man ought to lie for this temporal life, in the death of which no soul is slain, neither his own, nor another's. But since it is one thing to lie, another to conceal the truth; (if indeed it be one thing to say what is false, another not to say what is true,) if haply one does not wish to give a man up even to this visible death, he should be prepared to conceal what is true, not to say what is false; so that he may neither give him up, nor a lie, lest he slay his own soul for another's body. But if he cannot yet do this, let him at all events admit only lies of such necessity, that he may attain to be freed even from these, if they alone remain, and receive the strength of the Holy Ghost, whereby he may despise all that must be suffered for the truth's sake. In fine, there are two kinds of lies, in which there is no great fault, and yet they are not without fault, either when we are in jest, or when we lie that we may do good. That first kind, in jest, is for this reason not very hurtful, because there is no deception. For he to whom it is said knows that it is said for the sake of the jest. But the second kind is for this reason the more inoffensive, because it carries with it some kindly intention. And to say truth, that which has no duplicity, cannot even be called a lie. As if, for example, a sword be intrusted to any one, and he promises to return it, when he who intrusted it to him shall demand it: if he chance to require his sword when in a fit of madness, it is clear it must not be returned then, lest he kill either himself or others, until soundness of mind be restored to him. Here then is no duplicity, because he, to whom the sword was intrusted, when he promised that he would return it at the other's demand, did not imagine that he could require it when in a fit of madness. But even the Lord concealed the truth, when He said to the disciples, not yet strong enough, I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: and the Apostle Paul, when he said, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. Whence it is clear that it is not blameable, sometimes not to speak what is true. But to say what is false, is not found to have been allowed to the perfect.

8. The man of blood, and the crafty man, the Lord will abominate. What he said above, Thou hast hated all that work iniquity, Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie, may well seem to be repeated here: so that one may refer the man of blood to the worker of iniquity, and the crafty man to the lie. For it is craft, when one thing is done, another pretended. He used an apt word too, when he said, will abominate. For the disinherited are usually called abominated. Now this Psalm is, for her who receiveth the inheritance; and she adds the exulting joy of her hope, in saying, (ver. 7.) But I, in the multitude of Thy mercy, will enter into Thine house. In the multitude of mercy: perhaps he means in the multitude of perfected and blessed men, of whom that city shall consist, of which the Church is now in travail, and is bearing few by few. Now that many men regenerated and perfected, are rightly called the multitude of God's mercy, who can deny; when it is most truly said, what is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? I will enter into Thine house: as a stone into a building, I suppose, is the meaning. For what else is the house of God than the Temple of God, of which it is said, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are? Of which building He is the corner-stone, Whom the Power and Wisdom of God coeternal with the Father assumed.

9. I will worship at Thy holy temple, in Thy fear. At the temple, we understand as, near the temple. For he does not say, I will worship in Thy holy temple; but, I will worship at Thy holy temple. It must be understood too to be spoken not of perfection, but of progress toward perfection: so that

the words, I will enter into Thine house, should signify perfection. But that this may come to a happy issue, I will first, he says, worship at Thy holy temple. And perhaps on this account he added, in Thy fear; which is a great defence to those that are advancing toward salvation. But when any one shall have arrived there, in him comes to pass that which is written, perfect love casteth out fear. For they do not fear Him Who is now their friend, to whom it is said, henceforth I will not call you servants, but friends, when they have been brought through to that which was promised.

10. Ver. 8. O Lord, lead me forth in Thy justice because of mine enemies. He has here sufficiently plainly declared that he is on his onward road, that is, in progress toward perfection, not yet in perfection itself, when he desires eagerly that he may be led forth. But, in Thy justice, not in that which seems so to men. For to return evil for evil seems justice: but it is not His justice of Whom it is said, He maketh His sun to rise on the good and on the evil: for even when God punishes sinners, He does not inflict His evil on them, but leaves them to their own evil. Behold, the Psalmist says, he travailed with injustice, he hath conceived toil, and brought forth iniquity: he hath opened a ditch, and digged it, and hath fallen into the pit which he wrought: his pains shall be turned on his own head, and his iniquity shall descend on his own pate. When then God punishes, He punishes as a judge those that transgress the law, not by bringing evil upon them from Himself, but driving them on to that which they have chosen, to fill up the sum of their misery. But man, when he returns evil for evil, does it with an evil will: and on this account is himself first evil, when he would punish evil.

11. Direct in Thy sight my way. Nothing is clearer, than that he here sets forth that time, in which he is journeying onward. For this is a way which is traversed not in any regions of the earth, but in the affections of the heart. In Thy sight, he says, direct my way: that is, where no man sees; who are not to be trusted in their praise or blame. For they can in no wise judge of another man’s conscience, wherein the way toward God is traversed. Hence it is added, (ver. 9.) for truth is not in their mouth. To whose judgment of course then there is no trusting, and therefore must we fly within to conscience, and the sight of God. Their heart is vain. How then can truth be

in their mouth, whose heart is deceived by sin, and the punishment of sin? Whence men are called back by that voice, Wherefore do ye love vanity, and seek a lie?

12. Their throat is an open sepulchre. It may be referred to signify gluttony, for the sake of which men very often lie by flattery. And admirably has he said, an open sepulchre: for this gluttony is ever gaping with open mouth, not as sepulchres, which, on the reception of corpses, are closed up. This also may be understood hereby, that with lying and blind flattery men draw to themselves those, whom they entice to sin; and as it were devour them, when they turn them to their own way of living. And when this happens to them, since by sin they die, those, by whom they are led along, are rightly called open sepulchres: for themselves too are in a manner lifeless, being destitute of the life of truth; and they take in to themselves dead men, whom having slain by lying words and a vain heart, they turn unto themselves. With their own tongues they dealt craftily: that is, with evil tongues. For this seems to be signified, when he says their own. For the evil have evil tongues, that is, they speak evil, when they speak craftily. To whom the Lord saith, How can ye, being evil, speak good things?

13. Ver. 10. Judge them, O God: let them fall from their own thoughts. It is a prophecy, not a curse. For he does not wish that it should come to pass; but he perceives what will come to pass. For this happens to them, not because he appears to have wished for it, but because they are such as to deserve that it should happen. For so also what he says afterwards, Let all that hope in Thee rejoice, he says by way of prophecy; since he perceives that they will rejoice. Likewise is it said prophetically, Stir up Thy strength, and come: for he saw that He would come. Although the words, let them fall from their own thoughts, may be taken thus also, that it may rather be believed to be a wish for their good by the Psalmist, whilst they fall from their evil thoughts, that is, that they may no more think evil. But what follows, drive them out, forbids this interpretation. For it can in no wise be taken in a favourable sense, that one is driven out by God. Wherefore it is understood to be said prophetically, and not of ill will; when this is said, which must necessarily happen to such as chose to persevere in those sins, which have been mentioned. Let them, therefore, fall from their own

thoughts, is, let them fall by their self-accusing thoughts, their own conscience also bearing witness, as the Apostle says, and their thoughts accusing or excusing, in the revelation of the just judgment of God.

14. According to the multitude of their ungodlinesses drive them out: that is, drive them out far away. For this is according to the multitude of their ungodlinesses, that they should be driven out far away. The ungodly then are driven out from that inheritance, which is possessed by knowing and seeing God: as diseased eyes are driven out from the shining of the light, when what is gladness to others is pain to them. Therefore these shall not stand in the morning, and see. And that expression is as great a punishment, as that which is said, But for me it is good to cleave to the Lord, is a great reward. To this punishment is opposed, Enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord; for similar to this expulsion is, Cast him into outer darkness.

15. Since they have embittered Thee, O Lord: I am, saith He, the Bread which came down from heaven; again, Labour for the meat which wasteth not; again, Taste and see that the Lord is sweet. But to sinners the bread of truth is bitter. Whence they hate the mouth of him that speaketh the truth. These then have embittered God, who by sin have fallen into such a state of sickliness, that the food of truth, in which healthy souls delight, as if it were bitter as gall, they cannot bear.

16. Ver. 11. And let all rejoice that hope in Thee; those of course to whose taste the Lord is sweet. They will exult for evermore, and Thou wilt dwell in them. This will be the exultation for evermore, when the just become the Temple of God, and He, their Indweller, will be their joy. And all that love Thy name shall glory in Thee: as when what they love is present for them to enjoy. And well is it said, in Thee, as if in possession of the inheritance, of which the title of the Psalm speaks: when they too are His inheritance, which is intimated by, Thou wilt dwell in them. From which good they are kept back, whom God, according to the multitude of their ungodlinesses, driveth out.

17. Ver. 12. For Thou wilt bless the just man. This is blessing, to glory in God, and to be inhabited by God. Such sanctification is given to the just. But that they may be justified, a calling goes before: which is not of merit,

but of the grace of God. For all have sinned, and want the glory of God. For whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. Since then calling is not of our merit, but of the goodness and mercy of God, he went on to say, O Lord, as with the shield of Thy good will Thou hast crowned us. For God's good will goes before our good will, to call sinners to repentance. And these are the arms whereby the enemy is overcome, against whom it is said, Who will bring accusation against God's elect? Again, if God be for us, who can be against us? Who spared not His Only Son, but delivered Him up for us all. For if, when we were enemies, Christ died for us; much more being reconciled, shall we be saved from wrath through Him. This is that unconquerable shield, whereby the enemy is driven back, when he suggests despair of our salvation through the multitude of tribulations and temptations.

18. The whole contents of the Psalm, then, are a prayer that she may be heard, from the words, hear my words, O Lord, unto, my King, and my God. Then follows a view of those things which hinder the sight of God, that is, a knowledge that she is heard, from the words, because I shall pray unto Thee, O Lord, in the morning Thou wilt hear my voice, unto, the man of blood and the crafty man the Lord will abominate. Thirdly, she hopes that she, who is to be the house of God, even now begins to draw near to Him in fear, before that perfection which casteth out fear, from the words, but I in the multitude of Thy mercy, unto, I will worship at Thy holy temple in Thy fear. Fourthly, as she is progressing and advancing amongst those very things which she feels to hinder her, she prays that she may be assisted within, where no man seeth, lest she be turned aside by evil tongues, for the words, O Lord, lead me forth in Thy justice because of my enemies, unto, with their tongues they dealt craftily. Fifthly, is a prophecy of what punishment awaits the ungodly, when the just man shall scarcely be saved; and of what reward the just shall obtain, who, when they were called, came, and bore all things manfully, till they were brought to the end, from the words, judge them, O God, unto the end of the Psalm.

PSALM 6

To the end, in the hymns of the eighth, a Psalm to David.

1. Of the eighth, seems here obscure. For the rest of this title is more clear. Now it has seemed to some to intimate the day of judgment, that is, the time of the coming of our Lord, when He will come to judge the quick and dead. Which coming, it is believed, is to be, after reckoning the years from Adam, seven thousand years: so as that seven thousand years should pass as seven days, and afterwards that time arrive as it were the eighth day. But since it has been said by the Lord, It is not yours to know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power: and, But of the day and that hour knoweth no man, no, neither angel, nor Power, neither the Son, but the Father alone: and again, that which is written, that the day of the Lord cometh as a thief, shews clearly enough that no man should arrogate to himself the knowledge of that time, by any computation of years. For if that day is to come after seven thousand years, every man could learn its advent by reckoning the years. What comes then of the Son's even not knowing this? Which of course is said with this meaning, that men do not learn this by the Son, not that He by Himself doth not know it: according to that form of speech, the Lord your God trieth you that He may know; that is, that He may make you know: and, arise, O Lord; that is, make us arise. When therefore the Son is thus said not to know this day; not because He knoweth it not, but because He causeth those to know it not, for whom it is not expedient to know it, that is, He doth not shew it to them; what does that strange presumption mean, which, by a reckoning up of years, expects the day of the Lord as most certain after seven thousand years?

2. Be we then willingly ignorant of that which the Lord would not have us know: and let us inquire what this title, of the eighth, means. The day of judgment may indeed, even without any rash computation of years, be understood by the eighth, for that immediately after the end of this world, life eternal being attained, the souls of the righteous will not then be subject unto times: and, since all times have their revolution in a repetition of those

seven days, that peradventure is called the eighth day, which will not have this variety. There is another reason, which may be here not unreasonably accepted, why the judgment should be called the eighth, because it will take place after two generations, one relating to the body, the other to the soul. For from Adam unto Moses the human race lived of the body, that is, according to the flesh: which is called the outward and the old man, and to which the Old Testament was given, that it might prefigure the spiritual things to come by operations, albeit religious, yet carnal. Through this entire season, when men lived according to the body, death reigned, as the Apostle saith, even over those that had not sinned. Now it reigned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, as the same Apostle saith; for it must be taken of the period up to Moses, up to which time the works of the law, that is, those sacraments of carnal observance, held even those bound, for the sake of a certain mystery, who were subject to the One God. But from the coming of the Lord, from Whom there was a transition from the circumcision of the flesh to the circumcision of the heart, the call was made, that man should live according to the soul, that is, according to the inner man, who is also called the new man by reason of the new birth and the renewing of spiritual conversation. Now it is plain that the number four has relation to the body, from the four well-known elements of which it consists, and the four qualities, of dry, humid, warm, cold. Hence too it is administered by four seasons, spring, summer, autumn, winter. All this is very well known. For of the number four relating to the body we have treated elsewhere somewhat subtilly, but obscurely: which must be avoided in this discourse, which we would have accommodated to the unlearned. But that the number three has relation to the mind may be understood from this, that we are commanded to love God after a threefold manner, with the whole heart, with the whole soul, with the whole mind: of each of which severally we must treat, not in the Psalms, but in the Gospels: for the present, for proof of the relation of the number three to the mind, I think what has been said enough. Those numbers then of the body which have relation to the old man and the Old Testament, being past and gone, the numbers too of the soul, which have relation to the new man and the New Testament, being past and gone, a septenary so to say being passed; because every thing is done in time, four having been distributed to the body, three to the mind; the eighth will come, the day of judgment: which assigning to deserts their due, will transfer at once the saint, not to temporal works, but to eternal life; but will condemn the ungodly to eternal punishment.

3. In fear of which condemnation the Church prays in this Psalm, and says, (ver. 1.) Reprove me not, O Lord, in Thine anger. The Apostle too mentions the anger of the judgment; Thou treasurest up unto thyself, he says, anger against the day of the anger of the just judgment of God. In which he would not be reproved, whosoever longs to be healed in this life. Nor in Thy rage chasten me. Chasten, seems rather too mild a word; for it availeth toward amendment. For for him who is reproved, that is, accused, it is to be feared lest his end be condemnation. But since rage seems to be more than anger, it may be a difficulty, why that which is milder, namely, chastening, is joined to that which is more severe, namely, rage. But I suppose that one and the same thing is signified by the two words. For in the Greek θυμὸς, which is in the first verse, means the same as ὀργὴ, which is in the second verse. But when the Latins themselves too wished to use two distinct words, they looked out for what was akin to anger, and rage was used. Hence copies vary. For in some anger is found first, and then rage: in others, for rage, indignation or choler is used. But whatever the reading, it is an emotion of the soul urging to the infliction of punishment. Yet this emotion must not be attributed to God, as if to a soul, of Whom it is said, but Thou, O Lord of power, judgest with tranquillity. Now that which is tranquil, is not disturbed. Disturbance then does not attach to God as judge: but what is done by His ministers, in that it is done by His laws, is called His anger. In which anger, the soul, which now prays, would not only not be reproved, but not even chastened, that is, amended or instructed. For in the Greek it is, παιδεύσῃς, that is, instruct. Now in the day of judgment all are reproved that hold not the foundation, which is Christ. But they are amended, that is, purged, who upon this foundation build wood, hay, stubble. For they shall suffer loss, but shall be saved, as by fire. What then does he pray, who would not be either reproved or amended in the anger of the Lord? what else but that he may be healed? For where sound health is, neither death is to be dreaded, nor the physician’s hand with caustics or the knife.

4. He proceeds accordingly to say, (ver. 2.) Pity me, O Lord, for I am weak: heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled, that is, the support of my soul,

or strength: for this is the meaning of bones. The soul therefore says, that her strength is troubled, when she speaks of bones. For it is not to be supposed, that the soul has bones, such as we see in the body. Wherefore, what follows tends to explain it, (ver. 3.) and my soul is troubled exceedingly, lest because he mentioned bones, they should be understood as of the body. And Thou, O Lord, how long? Who does not see represented here a soul struggling with her diseases; but long kept back by the physician, that she may be convinced what evils she has plunged herself into through sin? For what is easily healed, is not much avoided: but from the difficulty of the healing, there will be the more careful keeping of recovered health. God then, to Whom it is said, And Thou, O Lord, how long? must not be deemed as if cruel: but as a kind convincer of the soul, what evil she hath procured for herself. For this soul does not yet pray so perfectly, as that it can be said to her, Whilst thou art yet speaking I will say, Behold, here I am. That she may at the same time also come to know, if they who do turn meet with so great difficulty, how great punishment is prepared for the ungodly, who will not turn to God: as it is written in another place, If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and ungodly appear?

5. Ver. 4. Turn, O Lord, and deliver my soul. Turning herself she prays that God too would turn to her: as it is said, Turn ye unto Me, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord. Or is it to be understood according to that way of speaking, Turn, O Lord, that is, make me turn, since the soul in this her turning feels difficulty and toil? For our perfected turning findeth God ready, as says the Prophet, We shall find Him ready as the dawn. Since it was not His absence Who is every where present, but our turning away that made us lose Him; He was in this world, it is said, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. If, then, He was in this world, and the world knew Him not, our impurity doth not endure the sight of Him. But whilst we are turning ourselves, that is, by changing our old life are fashioning our spirit; we feel it hard and toilsome to be wrested back from the darkness of earthly lusts, to the serene and quiet and tranquillity of the divine light. And in such difficulty we say, Turn, O Lord, that is, help us, that that turning may be perfected in us, which findeth Thee ready, and offering Thyself for the fruition of them that love Thee. And hence after he

said, Turn, O Lord, he added, and deliver my soul: cleaving as it were to the entanglements of this world, and suffering, in the very act of turning, from the thorns, as it were, of rending and tearing desires. Make me whole, he says, for Thy pity’s sake. He knows that it is not of his own merits that he is healed: for to him sinning, and transgressing a given command, was just condemnation due. Heal me therefore, he says, not for my merit’s sake, but for Thy pity’s sake.

6. Ver. 5. For in death there is no one that is mindful of Thee. He knows too that now is the time for turning unto God: for when this life shall have passed away, there remaineth but a retribution of our deserts. But in hell who shall confess to Thee? That rich man, of whom the Lord speaks, who saw Lazarus in rest, but bewailed himself in torments, confessed in hell, yea so as to wish even to have his brethren warned, that they might keep themselves from sin, because of the punishment which is not believed to be in hell. Although therefore to no purpose, yet he confessed that those torments had deservedly lighted upon him; since he even wished his brethren to be instructed, lest they should fall into the same. What then is, But in hell who will confess to Thee? Is hell to be understood as that place, whither the ungodly will be cast down after the judgment, when by reason of that deeper darkness they will no more see any light of God, to Whom they may confess aught? For as yet that rich man by raising his eyes, although a vast gulf lay between, could still see Lazarus established in rest: by comparing himself with whom, he was driven to a confession of his own deserts. It may be understood also, as if the Psalmist calls sin, that is committed in contempt of God’s law, death: so as that we should give the name of death to the sting of death, because it procures death. For the sting of death is sin. In which death this is to be unmindful of God, to despise His law and commandments: so that by hell the Psalmist would mean, that blindness of soul, which overtakes and enwraps the sinner, that is, the dying. As they did not think good, the Apostle says, to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind. From this death, and this hell, the soul earnestly prays that she may be kept safe, whilst she strives to turn to God, and feels her difficulties.

7. Wherefore he goes on to say, (ver. 6.) I have laboured in my groaning. And as if this availed but little, he adds, I will wash each night my couch. That is here called a couch, where the sick and weak soul rests, that is, in bodily gratification and in every worldly pleasure. Which pleasure, whoso endeavours to withdraw himself from it, washes with tears. For he sees that he already condemns carnal lusts; and yet his weakness is held by the pleasure, and willingly lies down therein, from whence none but the soul that is made whole can rise. As for what he says, each night, he would perhaps have it taken thus: that he who, ready in spirit, perceives some light of truth, and yet, through weakness of the flesh, rests sometime in the pleasure of this world, is compelled to suffer as it were days and nights in an alternation of feeling: as when he says, With the mind I serve the law of God, he feels as it were day; again when he says, but with the flesh the law of sin, he declines into night: until all night passeth away, and that one day comes, of which it is said, In the morning I will stand by Thee, and will see. For then he will stand, but now he lies down, when he is on his couch; which he will wash each night, that with so great abundance of tears he may obtain the most assured remedy from the mercy of God. I will drench my bed with tears. It is a repetition. For when he says, with tears, he shews with what meaning he said above, I will wash. For we take bed here to be the same as couch above. Although, I will drench, is something more than, I will wash: since any thing may be washed superficially, but drenching penetrates to the more inward parts; which here signifies weeping to the very bottom of the heart. Now the variety of tenses which he uses; the past, when he said, I have laboured in my groaning; and the future, when he said, I will wash each night my couch; the future again, I will drench my bed with tears; this shews what every man ought to say to himself, when he labours in groaning to no purpose. As if he should say, It hath not profited when I have done this, therefore I will do the other.

8. Ver. 7. Mine eye is disordered by anger: is it by his own, or God’s anger, in which he maketh petition that he might not be reproved, or chastened? But if anger in that place intimate the day of judgment, how can it be understood now? Is it a beginning of it, that men here suffer pains and torments, and above all the loss of the understanding of the truth; as I have already quoted that which is said, God gave them over to a reprobate mind?

For such is the blindness of the mind. Whosoever is given over thereunto, is shut out from the interior light of God: but not wholly as yet, whilst he is in this life. For there is outer darkness, which is understood to belong rather to the day of judgment; that he should rather be wholly without God, whosoever whilst there is time refuses correction. Now to be wholly without God, what else is it, but to be in extreme blindness? If indeed God dwell in inaccessible light, whereinto they enter, to whom it is said, Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. It is then the beginning of this anger, which in this life every sinner suffers. In fear therefore of the day of judgment, he is in trial and grief; lest he be brought to that, the disastrous commencement of which he experiences now. And therefore he did not say, mine eye is extinguished, but, mine eye is disordered by anger. But if he mean that his eye is disordered by his own anger, there is no wonder either in this. For hence perhaps it is said, Let not the sun go down upon your wrath; because the mind, which, from her own disorder, is not permitted to see God, supposes that the inner sun, that is, the wisdom of God, suffers as it were a setting in her.

9. I have grown old in all mine enemies. He had only spoken of anger, (if it were yet of his own anger that he spoke:) but thinking on his other vices, he found that he was entrenched by them all. Which vices, as they belong to the old life and the old man, which we must put off, that we may put on the new man, it is well said, I have grown old. But in all mine enemies, he means, either amidst these vices, or amidst men who will not be converted to God. For these, even if they know them not, even if they bear with them, even if they use the same tables and houses and cities, with no strife arising between them, and in frequent converse together with seeming concord: notwithstanding, by the contrariety of their aims, they are enemies to those who turn unto God. For seeing that the one love and desire this world, the others wish to be freed from this world, who sees not that the first are enemies to the last? For if they can, they draw the others into punishment with them. And it is a great grace, to be conversant daily with their words, and not to depart from the way of God’s commandments. For often the mind which is striving to go on to God-ward, being rudely handled in the very road, is alarmed; and generally fulfils not its good intent, lest it should offend those with whom it lives, who love and follow after other perishable

and transient goods. From such every one that is whole is separated, not in space, but in soul. For the body is contained in space, but the soul's space is her affection.

10. Wherefore after the labour, and groaning, and very frequent showers of tears, since that cannot be ineffectual, which is asked so earnestly of Him, Who is the Fountain of all mercies, and it is most truly said, the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart: after difficulties so great, the pious soul, by which we may also understand the Church, intimating that she has been heard, see what she adds: (ver. 8.) Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping. It is either spoken prophetically, since they will depart, that is, the ungodly will be separated from the righteous, when the day of judgment arrives, or, for this time present. For although both are equally found in the same assemblies, yet on the open floor the wheat is already separated from the chaff, though it be hid among the chaff. They can therefore be associated together, but cannot be carried away by the wind together.

11. For the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping; (ver. 9.) The Lord hath heard my supplication; the Lord hath received my prayer. The frequent repetition of the same sentiments shews not, so to say, the necessities of the narrator, but the warm feeling of his joy. For they that rejoice are wont so to speak, as that it is not enough for them to declare once for all the object of their joy. This is the fruit of that groaning in which there is labour, and those tears with which the couch is washed, and bed drenched: for, he that sows in tears, shall reap in joy: and, blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

12. Ver. 10. Let all mine enemies be ashamed and vexed. He said above, depart from me all ye: which can take place, as it has been explained, even in this life: but as to what he says, let them be ashamed and vexed, I do not see how it can happen, save on that day when the rewards of the righteous and the punishments of the sinners shall be made manifest. For at present so far are the ungodly from being ashamed, that they do not cease to insult us. And for the most part their mockings are of such avail, that they make the weak to be ashamed of the name of Christ. Hence it is said, Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me before men, of him will I be ashamed before My

Father. But now whosoever would fulfil those sublime commands, to disperse, to give to the poor, that his righteousness may endure for ever; and selling all his earthly goods, and spending them on the needy, would follow Christ, saying, We brought nothing into this world, and truly we can carry nothing out; having food and raiment, let us be therewith content; incurs the profane raillery of those men, and by those who will not be made whole, is called mad; and often to avoid being so called by desperate men, he fears to do, and puts off that, which the most faithful and powerful of all physicians hath ordered. It is not then at present that these can be ashamed, by whom we have to wish that we be not made ashamed, and so be either called back from our proposed journey, or hindered, or delayed. But the time will come, when they shall be ashamed, saying as is written, These are they whom we had sometimes in derision, and a parable of reproach: we fools counted their life madness, and their end to be without honour: how are they numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints? Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, nor the sun risen upon us: we have been filled with the way of wickedness and destruction, and have walked through rugged deserts, but the way of the Lord we have not known. What hath pride profited us, or what hath the vaunting of riches brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow.

13. But as to what he says, Let them be turned and confounded. Who would not judge it to be a most righteous punishment, that they should have a turning unto confusion, who would not have one unto salvation? After this he added, exceeding quickly. For when the day of judgment shall have begun to be no longer looked for, when they shall have said, Peace, then shall sudden destruction come upon them. Now whensoever it come, that comes very quickly, of whose coming we give up all expectation; and nothing makes the length of this life be felt but the hope of living. For nothing seems more quick, than all that has already passed in it. When then the day of judgment shall come, then will sinners feel how that all the life which passeth away is not long. Nor will that any way possibly seem to them to have come tardily, which shall have come without their desiring, or rather without their believing. Although it can too be taken in this place thus, that inasmuch as God has heard, so to say, her groans, and her long

and frequent tears, she may be understood to be freed from her sins, and to have tamed every disordered impulse of carnal affection: as she saith, Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity, for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping: and when she has had this happy issue, it is no marvel if she be already so perfect, as to pray for her enemies. The words then, Let all mine enemies be ashamed, and vexed, may have this meaning; that they should repent of their sins, which cannot be effected without confusion and vexation. There is then nothing to hinder us from taking what follows too in this sense, let them be turned and ashamed, that is, let them be turned to God, and be ashamed that they sometime gloried in the former darkness of their sins; as the Apostle says, For what glory had ye sometime in those things, of which ye are now ashamed? But as to what he added, exceeding quickly, it must be referred either to the warm affection of her wish, or to the power of Christ; Who converteth to the faith of the Gospel in such quick time the nations, which in their idols' cause did persecute the Church.

PSALM 7

Exposition

A Psalm to David himself, which he sung to the Lord, for the words of Chusi, son of Jemini.

1. Now the story, which gave occasion to this prophecy, may be easily recognised in the second book of Kings. For there Chusi, the friend of king David, went over to the side of Abessalon, his son, who was carrying on war against his father, for the purpose of discovering and reporting the designs which he was taking against his father, at the instigation of Achitophel, who had revolted from David's friendship, and was instructing by his counsel, to the best of his power, the son against the father. But since it is not the story itself which is to be the subject of consideration in this Psalm, from which the prophet hath taken a veil of mysteries, if we have passed over to Christ, let the veil be taken away. And first let us inquire into the signification of the very names, what it means. For there have not been wanting interpreters, who investigating these same words, not carually according to the letter, but spiritually, declare to us, that Chusi should be interpreted silence; and Gemini, righthanded; Achitophel, brother's ruin. Among which interpretations, Judas, that traitor, again meets us, that Abessalon should bear his image, according to that interpretation of it as a father's peace; in that his father was full of thoughts of peace toward him: although he in his guile had war in his heart, as was treated of in the third Psalm. Now as we find in the Gospels that the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ are called sons, so in the same Gospels we find they are called brethren also. For the Lord on the resurrection saith, Go and say to My brethren. And the Apostle calls Him, the first begotten among many brethren. The ruin then of that disciple, who betrayed Him, is rightly understood to be a brother's ruin, which we said is the interpretation of Achitophel. Now as to Chusi, from the interpretation of silence, it is rightly understood that our Lord contended against that guile in silence, that is, in that most deep secret, whereby blindness happened in part to Israel, when

they were persecuting the Lord, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, and so all Israel might be saved. When the Apostle came to this profound secret and deep silence, he exclaimed, as if struck with a kind of awe of its very depth, O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? Thus that great silence he does not so much discover by explanation, as he sets forth its greatness in admiration. In this silence the Lord hiding the sacrament of His adorable passion, turns the brother's voluntary ruin, that is, His betrayer's impious wickedness, into the order of His mercy and providence: that what he with perverse mind wrought for one Man's destruction, He might by providential overruling dispose for all men's salvation. The perfect soul then, which is already worthy to know the secret of God, sings a Psalm unto the Lord, she sings for the words of Chusi, because she has attained to know the words of that silence: for among unbelievers and persecutors there is that silence and secret. But among His own, to whom it is said, Now I call you no more servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you: among His friends, I say, there is not the silence, but the words of the silence, that is, the meaning of that silence set forth and manifested. Which silence, that is, Chusi, is called the son of Gemini, that is, righthanded. For what was done for the Saints was not to be hidden from them. And yet He saith, Let not the left hand know what the right hand doeth. The perfect soul then, to which that secret has been made known, sings in prophecy for the words of Chusi, that is, for the knowledge of that same secret. Which secret God at her right hand, that is, favourable and propitious unto her, has wrought. Wherefore this silence is called the son of the right hand, which is, Chusi, the son of Gemini.

2. Ver. 1. O Lord my God, in Thee have I hoped: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me. As one to whom, already perfected, all the war and enmity of vice being overcome, there remaineth no enemy but the envious devil, he says, Save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me: (ver. 2.) lest at any time he tear my soul as a lion. The Apostle says, Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking

whom he may devour. Therefore when the Psalmist said in the plural number, Save me from all them that persecute me: he afterwards introduced the singular, saying, lest at any time he tear my soul as a lion. For he does not say, lest at any time they tear: he knew what enemy and violent adversary of the perfect soul remained. Whilst there be none to redeem, nor to save: that is, lest he tear me, whilst Thou redeemest not, nor savest. For, if God redeem not, nor save, he tears.

3. And that it might be clear that the already perfect soul, which is to be on her guard against the most insidious snares of the devil only, says this, see what follows, (ver. 3.) O Lord my God, if I have done this. What is it that he calls this? Since he does not mention the sin by name, are we to understand sin generally? If this sense displease us, we may take that to be meant which follows: as if we had asked, what is this that you say, this? He answers, If there be iniquity in my hands. Now then it is clear that it is said of all sin, (ver. 4.) If I have repaid them that recompense me evil. Which none can say with truth, but the perfect. For so the Lord says, Be ye perfect, as your Father Which is in heaven; Who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the evil, and raineth on the just and the unjust. He then who repayeth not them that recompense evil, is perfect. When therefore the perfect soul prays for the words of Chusi, the son of Jemini, that is, for the knowledge of that secret and silence, which the Lord, favourable to us and merciful, wrought for our salvation, so as to endure, and with all patience bear, the guiles of this betrayer: as if He should say to this perfect soul, explaining the design of this secret, For thee ungodly and a sinner, that thine iniquities might be washed away by My blood-shedding, in great silence and great patience I bore with My betrayer; wilt not thou imitate me, that thou too mayest not repay evil for evil? Considering then, and understanding what the Lord has done for him, and by His example going on to perfection, the Psalmist says, If I have repaid them that recompense me evil: that is, if I have not done what Thou hast taught me by Thy example: may I therefore fall by mine enemies empty. And he says well, not, If I have repaid them that do me evil; but, who recompense. For whoso recompenseth, had received somewhat already. Now it is an instance of greater patience, not even to repay him evil, who after receiving benefits returns evil for good, than if without receiving any previous benefit he had

had a mind to injure. If therefore he says, I have repaid them that recompense me evil: that is, If I have not imitated Thee in that silence, that is, in Thy patience, which Thou hast wrought for me, may I fall by mine enemies empty. For he is an empty boaster, who, being himself a man, desires to avenge himself on a man; and whilst he openly seeks to overcome a man, is secretly himself overcome by the devil, rendered empty by vain and proud joy, because he could not, as it were, be conquered. The Psalmist knows then where a greater victory may be obtained, and where the Father which seeth in secret will reward. Lest then he repay them that recompense evil, he overcomes his anger rather than another man, being instructed too by those writings, wherein it is written, better is he that overcometh his anger, than he that taketh a city. If I have repaid them that recompense me evil, may I therefore fall by my enemies empty. He seems to swear by way of execration, which is the heaviest kind of oath, as when one says, If I have done so and so, may I suffer so and so. But swearing in a swearer's mouth is one thing, in a prophet's meaning another. For here he mentions what will really befal men, who repay them that recompense evil; not what, as by an oath, he would imprecate on himself or any other.

4. Ver. 5. Let the enemy therefore persecute my soul and take it. By again naming the enemy in the singular number, he more and more clearly points out him, whom he spoke of above as a lion. For he persecutes the soul, and if he has deceived it, will take it. For the limit of men's rage is the destruction of the body; but the soul, after this visible death, they cannot keep in their power: whereas whatever souls the devil shall have taken by his persecutions, he will keep. And let him tread my life upon the earth: that is, by treading let him make my life earth, that is to say, his food. For he is not only called a lion, but a serpent too, to whom it was said, Earth shalt thou eat. And to the sinner was it said, Earth thou art, and into earth shalt thou go. And let him bring down my glory to the dust. This is that dust, which the wind casteth forth from the face of the earth, to wit, vain and silly boasting of the proud, puffed up, not of solid weight, as a cloud of dust carried away by the wind. Justly then has he here spoken of the glory, which he would not have brought down to dust. For he would have it solidly established in conscience before God, where there is no boasting. He that glorieth, saith the Apostle, let him glory in the Lord. This solidity is

brought down to the dust, if one through pride despising the secresy of conscience, where God only proves a man, desires to glory before men. Hence comes what the Psalmist elsewhere says, God shall bruise the bones of them that please men. Now he that has well learnt or experienced the steps in overcoming vices, knows that this vice of empty glory is either alone, or more than all, to be shunned by the perfect. For that by which the soul first fell, she overcomes the last. For the beginning of all sin is pride: and again, the beginning of man's pride is to depart from God.

5. Ver. 6. Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger. Why yet does he, who we say is perfect, incite God to anger? Must we not see, whether he rather be not perfect, who, when he was being stoned, said, O Lord, lay not this sin to their charge? Or does the Psalmist pray thus not against men, but against the devil and his angels, whose possession sinners and the ungodly are? He then does not pray against him in wrath, but in mercy, whosoever prays that that possession may be taken from him by that Lord Who justifieth the ungodly. For when the ungodly is justified, from ungodly he is made just, and from being the possession of the devil he passes into the temple of God. And since it is a punishment, that a possession, in which one longs to have rule, should be taken away from him: this punishment, that he should cease to possess those whom he now possesses, the Psalmist calls the anger of God against the devil. Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger. Arise, (he has used it as "appear,") in words, that is, human and obscure; as though God sleeps, when He is unrecognised and hidden in His secret workings. Be exalted in the borders of mine enemies. He means by borders the possession itself, in which he wishes that God should be exalted, that is, be honoured and glorified, rather than the devil, while the ungodly are justified and praise God. And arise, O Lord my God, in the commandment that Thou hast given: that is, since Thou hast enjoined humility, appear in humility; and first fulfil what Thou hast enjoined; that men by Thy example overcoming pride may not be possessed of the devil, who against Thy commandments advised to pride, saying, Eat, and your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods.

6. And the congregation of the people shall surround Thee. This may be understood two ways. For the congregation of the people can be taken,

either of them that believe, or of them that persecute, both of which took place in the same humiliation of our Lord: in contempt of which the multitude of them that persecute surrounded Him; concerning which it is said, Why have the heathen raged, and the people meditated vain things? But of them that believe through His humiliation the multitude so surrounded Him, that it could be said with the greatest truth, blindness in part is happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in: and again, Ask of me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thine inheritance, and the boundaries of the earth for Thy possession. And for their sakes return Thou on high: that is, for the sake of this congregation return Thou on high: which He is understood to have done by His resurrection and ascension into heaven. For being thus glorified He gave the Holy Ghost, Which before His exaltation could not be given, as it is written in the Gospel, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. Having then returned on high for the sake of the congregation of the people, He sent the Holy Ghost: by Whom the preachers of the Gospel being filled, filled the whole world with Churches.

7. It can be taken also in this sense: Arise, O Lord, in Thine anger, and be exalted in the borders of mine enemies: that is, arise in Thine anger, and let not mine enemies understand Thee; so that to be exalted, should be this, become high, that Thou mayest not be understood; which has reference to the silence spoken of above. For it is of this exaltation thus said in another Psalm, And He ascended upon Cherubim, and flew: and, He made darkness His secret place. In which exaltation, or concealment, when for their sins' desert they shall not understand Thee, who shall crucify Thee, the congregation of believers shall surround Thee. For in His very humiliation He was exalted, that is, was not understood. So that, And arise, O Lord my God, in the commandment that Thou hast given: may have reference to this, that is, when Thou shewest Thyself, be high or deep that mine enemies may not understand Thee. Now sinners are the enemies of the just man, and the ungodly of the godly man. And the congregation of the people shall surround Thee: that is, by this very circumstance, that those who crucify Thee understand Thee not, the Gentiles shall believe on Thee, and so shall the congregation of the people surround Thee. But what follows, if this be the true meaning, has in it more pain, that it begins already to be perceived,

than joy that it is understood. For it follows, and for their sakes return Thou on high, that is, and for the sake of this congregation of the human race, wherewith the Churches are crowded, return Thou on high, that is, again cease to be understood. What then is, and for their sakes, but that this congregation too will offend Thee, so that Thou mayest most truly foretel and say, Thinkest Thou when the Son of Man shall come, He will find faith on the earth? Again, of the false prophets, who are understood to be heretics, He says, Because of their iniquity the love of many shall wax cold. Since then even in the Churches, that is, in that congregation of peoples and nations, where the Christian name has most widely spread, there shall be so great abundance of sinners, which is already, in great measure, perceived; is not that famine of the word here predicted, which has been threatened by another prophet also? Is it not too for this congregation's sake, who, by their sins, are estranging from themselves the light of truth, that God returns on high, that is, so that faith, pure and cleansed from the corruption of all perverse opinions, is held and received, either not at all, or by the very few of whom it was said, Blessed is he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved? Not without cause then is it said, and for the sake of this congregation return Thou on high: that is, again withdraw into the depth of Thy secrecy, even for the sake of this congregation of the peoples, that hath Thy name, and doeth not Thy deeds.

8. But whether the former exposition of this place, or this last be the more suitable, without prejudice to any one better, or equal, or as good, it follows very consistently, the Lord judgeth the people. For whether He returned on high, when, after the resurrection, He ascended into heaven, well does it follow, The Lord judgeth the people: for that He will come from thence to judge the quick and the dead. Or whether He return on high, when the understanding of the truth leaves sinful Christians, for that of His coming it has been said, Thinkest thou the Son of Man on His coming will find faith on the earth? The Lord then judgeth the people. What Lord, but Jesus Christ? For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. Wherefore this soul which prayeth perfectly, see how she fears not the day of judgment, and with a truly secure longing says in her prayer, Thy kingdom come: judge me, she says, O Lord, according to my righteousness. In the former Psalm a weak one was entreating, imploring

rather the mercy of God, than mentioning any desert of his own: since the Son of God came to call sinners to repentance. Therefore he had there said, Save me, O Lord, for Thy mercy's sake; that is, not for my desert's sake. But now, since being called he hath held and kept the commandments which he received, he is bold to say, Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to my harmlessness, that is upon me. This is true harmlessness, which harms not even an enemy. Accordingly, well does he require to be judged according to his harmlessness, who could say with truth, If I have repaid them that recompense me evil. As for what he added, that is upon me, it can refer not only to harmlessness, but can be understood also with reference to righteousness; that the sense should be this, Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to my harmlessness, which righteousness and harmlessness is upon me. By which addition he shews that this very thing, that the soul is righteous and harmless, she has not by herself, but by God Who giveth brightness and light. For of this he says in another Psalm, Thou, O Lord, wilt light my candle. And of John it is said, that he was not the light, but bore witness of the light. He was a burning and shining candle. That light then, whence souls, as candles, are kindled, shines forth not with borrowed, but with original, brightness, which light is truth itself. It is then so said, According to my righteousness, and according to my harmlessness, that is upon me, as if a burning and shining candle should say, Judge me acccording to the flame which is upon me, that is, not that wherewith I am myself, but that whereby I shine enkindled of thee.

9. Ver. 9. But let the wickedness of sinners be consummated. He says, be consummated, be completed, according to that in the Apocalypse, Let the righteous become more righteous, and let the filthy be filthy still. For the wickedness of those men appears consummate, who crucified the Son of God; but greater is theirs who will not live uprightly, and hate the precepts of truth, for whom the Son of God was crucified. Let the wickedness of sinners, then he says, be consummated, that is, arrive at the height of wickedness, that just judgment may be able to come at once. But since it is not only said, Let the filthy be filthy still; but it is said also, Let the righteous become more righteous; he joins on the words, And Thou shalt direct the righteous, O God, Who searcheth the hearts and reins. How then

can the righteous be directed but in secret? when even by means of those things which, in the commencement of the Christian ages, when as yet the saints were oppressed by the persecution of the men of this world, appeared marvellous to men, now that the Christian name has begun to be in such high dignity, hypocrisy, that is pretence, has increased; of those, I mean, who by the Christian profession had rather please men than God. How then is the righteous man directed in so great confusion of pretence, save whilst God searcheth the hearts and reins; seeing all men’s thoughts, which are meant by the word heart; and their delights, which are understood by the word reins? For the delight in things temporal and earthly is rightly ascribed to the reins; for that it is both the lower part of man, and that region where the pleasure of carnal generation dwells, through which man’s nature is transferred into this life of care, and deceiving joy, by the succession of the race. God then, searching our heart, and perceiving that it is there where our treasure is, that is, in heaven; searching also the reins, and perceiving that we do not assent to flesh and blood, but delight ourselves in the Lord, directs the righteous man in his inward conscience before Him, where no man seeth, but He alone Who perceiveth what each man thinketh, and what delighteth each. For delight is the end of care; because to this end does each man strive by care and thought, that he may attain to his delight. He therefore seeth our cares, Who searcheth the heart. He seeth too the ends of cares, that is delights, Who narrowly searcheth the reins; that when He shall find that our cares incline neither to the lust of the flesh, nor to the lust of the eyes, nor to the pride of life, all which pass away as a shadow, but that they are raised upward to the joys of things eternal, which are spoilt by no change, He may direct the righteous, even He, the God Who searcheth the hearts and reins. For our works, which we do in deeds and words, may be known unto men; but with what mind they are done, and to what end we would attain by means of them, He alone knoweth, the God Who searcheth the hearts and reins.

10. Ver. 10. My righteous help is from the Lord, Who maketh whole the upright in heart. The offices of medicine are twofold, one the curing infirmity, the other the preserving health. According to the first it was said in the preceding Psalm, Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; according to the second it is said in this Psalm, If there be iniquity in my

hands, if I have repaid them that recompense me evil, may I therefore fall by my enemies empty. For there the weak prays that he may be delivered, here one already whole that he may not change for the worse. According to the one it is there said, Make me whole for Thy mercy's sake; according to this other it is here said, Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness. For there he asks for a remedy to escape from disease; but here for protection from falling into disease. According to the former it is said, Make me whole, O Lord, according to Thy mercy: according to the latter it is said, My righteous help is from the Lord, Who maketh whole the upright in heart. Both the one and the other maketh men whole; but the former removes them from sickness into health, the latter preserves them in this health. Therefore there the help is merciful, because the sinner hath no desert, who as yet longeth to be justified, believing on Him Who justifieth the ungodly; but here the help is righteous, because it is given to one already righteous. Let the sinner then who said, I am weak, say in the first place, Make me whole, O Lord, for thy mercy's sake; and here let the righteous man, who said, If I have repaid them that recompense me evil, say, My righteous help is from the Lord, Who maketh whole the upright in heart. For if he sets forth the medicine, by which we may be healed when weak, how much more that, by which we may be kept in health. For if while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, how much more being now justified shall we be kept whole from wrath through Him.

11. My righteous help is from the Lord, Who maketh whole the upright in heart. God, Who searcheth the hearts and reins, directeth the righteous; but with righteous help maketh He whole the upright in heart. He doth not as He searcheth the hearts and reins, so make whole the upright in heart and reins; for the thoughts are both bad in a depraved heart, and good in an upright heart; but delights which are not good belong to the reins, for they are more low and earthly; but those that are good not to the reins, but to the heart itself. Wherefore men cannot be so called upright in reins, as they are called upright in heart, since where the thought is, there at once the delight is too; which cannot be, unless when things divine and eternal are thought of. Thou hast given, he says, joy in my heart, when he had said, The light of Thy countenance has been stamped on us, O Lord. For although the phantoms of things temporal, which the mind falsely pictures to itself, when

tossed by vain and mortal hope, to vain imaginations oftentimes bring a delirious and maddened joy; yet this delight must be attributed not to the heart, but to the reins; for all these imaginations have been drawn from lower, that is, earthly and carnal things. Hence it comes, that God, Who searcheth the hearts and reins, and perceiveth in the heart upright thoughts, in the reins no delights, affordeth righteous help to the upright in heart, where heavenly delights are coupled with clean thoughts. And therefore when in another Psalm he had said, Moreover even to-night my reins have chided me; he went on to say as touching help, I foresaw the Lord alway in my sight, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Where he shews that he suffered suggestions only from the reins, not delights as well; for had he suffered these, then he would of course be moved. But he said, The Lord is on my right hand, that I should not be moved; and then he adds, Wherefore was my heart delighted; that the reins should have been able to chide, not delight him. The delight accordingly was produced not in the reins, but there, where against the chiding of the reins God was foreseen to be on the right hand, that is, in the heart.

12. Ver. 11. God the righteous judge, strong (in endurance) and long-suffering. What God is judge, but the Lord, Who judgeth the people? He is righteous; Who shall render to every man according to his works. He is strong; (in endurance) Who, being most powerful, for our salvation bore even with ungodly persecutors. He is long-suffering; Who did not immediately, after His resurrection, hurry away to punishment, even those that persecuted Him, but bore with them, that they might at length turn from that ungodliness to salvation: and still He beareth with them, reserving the last penalty for the last judgment, and up to this present time inviting sinners to repentance. Not bringing in anger every day. Perhaps bringing in anger is a more significant expression than, being angry; (and so we find it in the Greek copies;) that the anger, whereby He punisheth, should not be in Him but in the minds of those ministers who obey the commandments of truth; through whom orders are given even to the lower ministries, who are called angels of wrath, to punish sin: whom even now the punishment of men delights not for justice sake, in which they have no pleasure, but for malice sake. God then doth not bring in anger every day, that is, He doth not collect His ministers for vengeance every day. For now the patience of

God inviteth to repentance: but in the last time, when men through their hardness and impenitent heart shall have treasured up for themselves anger in the day of anger, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, then He will brandish His sword.

13. Ver. 12. Unless ye be converted, He says, He will brandish His sword. The Lord Man Himself may be taken to be God's double-edged sword, that is, His spear, which at His first coming He will not brandish, but hideth as it were in the sheath of humiliation: but He will brandish it, when at the second coming to judge the quick and dead, in the manifest splendour of His glory, He shall flash light on His righteous ones, and terror on the ungodly. For in other copies, instead of, He shall brandish His sword, it has been written, He shall make bright His spear: by which word I think the last coming of the Lord's glory most appropriately signified: seeing that is understood of His person, which another Psalm has, Deliver, O Lord, my soul from the ungodly, Thy spear from the enemies of Thine hand. He hath bent His bow, and made it ready. The tenses of the words must not be altogether overlooked, how he has spoken of the sword in the future, He will brandish; of the bow in the past, He hath bent: and these words of the past tense follow after.

14. Ver. 13. And in it He hath prepared the instruments of death: He hath wrought His arrows for the burning. That bow then I would readily take to be the Holy Scripture, in which by the strength of the New Testament, as by a sort of string, the hardness of the Old has been bent and subdued. From thence the Apostles are sent forth like arrows, or divine preachings are shot. Which arrows He has wrought for the burning, arrows, that is, whereby being stricken they might be inflamed with heavenly love. For by what other arrows was she stricken, who saith, Bring me into the house of wine, place me among perfumes, crowd me among honey, for I have been wounded with love? By what other arrows is he kindled, who, desirous of returning to God, and coming back from wandering, asketh for help against crafty tongues, and to whom it is said, What shall be given thee, or what added to thee against the crafty tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with devastating coals: that is, coals, whereby, when thou art stricken and set on fire, thou mayest burn with so great love of the kingdom of heaven, as to

despise the tongues of all that resist thee, and would recall thee from thy purpose, and to deride their persecutions, saying, Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? For I am persuaded, he says, that neither death, nor life, nor angel, nor principality, nor things present, nor things to come, nor power, nor height, nor depth, nor other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thus for the burning hath He wrought His arrows. For in the Greek copies it is found thus, He hath wrought His arrows for the burning. But most of the Latin copies have burning arrows. But whether the arrows themselves burn, or make others burn, which of course they cannot do unless they burn themselves, the sense is complete.

15. But since he has said that the Lord has prepared not arrows only, but instruments of death too, in the bow, it may be asked, what are “instruments of death?” Are they, peradventure, heretics? For they too, out of the same bow, that is, out of the same Scriptures, light upon souls not to be inflamed with love, but destroyed with poison: which does not happen but after their deserts: wherefore even this dispensation is to be assigned to the Divine Providence, not that it makes men sinners, but that it orders them after they have sinned. For through sin reaching them with an ill purpose, they are forced to understand them ill, that this should be itself the punishment of sin: by whose death, nevertheless, the sons of the Catholic Church are, as it were by certain thorns, so to say, aroused from slumber, and make progress toward the understanding of the holy Scriptures. For there must be also heresies, that they which are approved, he says, may be made manifest among you: that is, among men, seeing they are manifest to God. Or has He haply ordained the same arrows to be at once instruments of death for the destruction of unbelievers, and wrought them burning, or for the burning, for the exercising of the faithful? For that is not false that the Apostle says, To the one we are the savour of life unto life, to the other the savour of death unto death; and who is sufficient for these things? It is no wonder then if the same Apostles be both instruments of death in those, from whom they suffered persecution, and fiery arrows to inflame the hearts of believers.

16. Now after this dispensation righteous judgment will come: of which the Psalmist so speaks, as that we may understand that each man’s punishment is wrought out of his own sin, and his iniquity turned into vengeance: that we may not suppose that that tranquillity and ineffable light of God brings forth from Itself the means of punishing sin; but that it so ordereth sins, that what have been delights to man in sinning, should be instruments to the Lord avenging. Behold, he says, he hath travailed with injustice. Now what had he conceived, that he should travail with injustice? He hath conceived, he says, toil. Hence then comes that, In toil shalt thou eat thy bread. Hence too that, Come unto Me all ye that toil and are heavy laden; for My yoke is easy, and My burden light. For toil will never cease, except one love that which cannot be taken away against his will. For when those things are loved which we can lose against our will, we must needs toil for them most miserably; and to obtain them, amid the straightnesses of earthly cares, whilst each desires to snatch them for himself, and to be beforehand with another, or to wrest it from him, must scheme injustice. Duly then, and quite in order, hath he travailed with injustice, who hath conceived toil. Now he bringeth forth what, save that with which he hath travailed, although he has not travailed with that which he conceived? For that is not born, which is not conceived; but seed is conceived, that which is formed from the seed is born. Toil is then the seed of iniquity, but sin the conception of toil, that is, that first sin, to depart from God. He then hath travailed with injustice, who hath conceived toil. And he hath brought forth iniquity. Iniquity is the same as injustice: he hath brought forth then that, with which he travailed. What follows next?

17. Ver. 15. He hath opened a ditch, and digged it. To open a ditch, is, in earthly matters, that is, as it were in the earth, to prepare deceit, that another fall therein, whom the unrighteous man wishes to deceive. Now this ditch is opened, when consent is given to the evil suggestion of earthly lusts: but it is digged, when after consent we press on to actual work of deceit. But how can it be, that iniquity should rather hurt the righteous man against whom it proceeds, than the unrighteous heart whence it proceeds? Accordingly, the stealer of money, for instance, while he desires to inflict painful harm upon another, is himself maimed by the wound of avarice. Now who, even out of his right mind, sees not how great is the difference between these men,

when one suffers the loss of money, the other of innocence? He will fall then into the pit which he hath made. As it is said in another Psalm, The Lord is known in executing judgments; the sinner is caught in the works of his own hands.

18. Ver. 16. His toil shall be turned on his head, and his iniquity shall descend on his pate. For he had no mind to escape sin: but was brought under sin as a slave, so to say, as the Lord saith, Whosoever sinneth is a slave. His iniquity then will be upon him, when he is subject to his iniquity; for he could not say to the Lord, what the innocent and upright say, My glory, and the lifter up of my head. He then will be in such wise below, as that his iniquity may be above, and descend on him; for that it weigheth him down and burdens him, and suffers him not to fly back to the rest of the saints. This occurs, when in an ill regulated man reason is a slave, and lust hath dominion.

19. Ver. 17. I will confess to the Lord according to His justice. This is not the sinner’s confession: for he says this, who said above most truly, If there be iniquity in my hands: but it is a confession of God’s justice, in which we speak thus, Verily, O Lord, Thou art just, in that Thou both so protectest the just, that Thou enlightenest them by Thyself; and so orderest sinners, that they be punished not by Thine, but by their own malice. This confession so praises the Lord, that the blasphemies of the ungodly can avail nothing, who, willing to excuse their evil deeds, are unwilling to attribute to their own fault that they sin, that is, are unwilling to attribute their fault to their fault. Accordingly they find either fortune or fate to accuse, or the devil, to whom He Who made us hath willed that it should be in our power to refuse consent: or they bring in another nature, which is not of God: wretched waverers, and erring, rather than confessing to God, that He should pardon them. For it is not fit that any be pardoned, except he say, I have sinned. He, then, that sees the deserts of souls so ordered by God, that while each has his own given him, the fair beauty of the universe is in no part violated, in all things praises God: and this is not the confession of sinners, but of the righteous. For it is not the sinner’s confession when the Lord says, I confess to Thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and revealed them to babes. Likewise in Ecclesiasticus it is

said, Confess to the Lord in all His works: and in confession ye shall say this, All the works of the Lord are exceeding good. Which can be seen in this Psalm, if any one with a pious mind, by the Lord's help, distinguish between the rewards of the righteous and the penalties of the sinners, how that in these two the whole creation, which God made and rules, is adorned with a beauty wondrous and known to few. Thus then he says, I will confess to the Lord according to His justice, as one who saw that darkness was not made by God, but ordered nevertheless. For God said, Let light be made, and light was made. He did not say, Let darkness be made, and darkness was made: and yet He ordered it. And therefore it is said, God divided between the light, and the darkness: and God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. This is the distinction, He made the one and ordered it: but the other He made not, but yet He ordered this too. But now that sins are signified by darkness, so is it seen in the Prophet, who says, And thy darkness shall be as the noon day: and in the Apostle, who says, He that hateth his brother is in darkness: and above all that text, Let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Not that there is any nature of darkness. For all nature, in so far as it is nature, is compelled to be. Now being belongs to light: not-being to darkness. He then that leaves Him, by Whom he was made, and inclines to that whence he was made, that is, to nothing, is in this sin endarkened: and yet he does not utterly perish, but he is ordered among the lowest things. Therefore after the Psalmist said, I will confess unto the Lord: that we might not understand it of confession of sins, he adds lastly, And I will sing to the name of the Lord most high. Now singing has relation to joy, but repentance of sins to sadness.

20. This Psalm can also be taken in the person of the Lord Man: if only that which is there spoken in humiliation, be referred to our weakness, which He bore.

PSALM 8

To the end, for the wine-presses, a Psalm of David himself.

1. He seems to say nothing of wine-presses in the text of the Psalm, of which this is the title. By which it appears, that one and the same thing is often signified in Scripture by many and various similitudes. We may then take wine-presses to be Churches, on the same principle by which we understand also by a threshing-floor the Church. For whether in the threshing-floor, or in the wine-press, there is nothing else done, but the clearing the produce of its covering; which is necessary, both for its first growth, and increase, and arrival at the maturity either of the harvest or the vintage. Of these coverings or supporters then; that is, of chaff, on the threshing-floor, the corn; and of husks, in the presses, the wine is stripped: as in the Churches, from the multitude of worldly men, which is collected together with the good, for whose birth and adaptating to the divine word that multitude was necessary, this is effected, that by spiritual love they be separated through the operation of God's ministers. For now so it is that the good are, for a time, separated from the bad, not in space, but in affection: although they have converse together in the Churches, as far as respects bodily presence. But another time will come, the corn will be stored up apart in the granaries, and the wine in the cellars. The wheat, saith he, He will lay up in garners; but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable. The same thing may be thus understood in another similitude: the wine He will lay up in cellars, but the husks He will cast forth to cattle: so that by the bellies of the cattle we may be allowed by way of similitude to understand the pains of hell.

2. There is another interpretation concerning the wine-presses, yet still keeping to the meaning of Churches. For even the Divine Word may be understood by the grape: for the Lord even has been called a Cluster of grapes; Which they that were sent before by the people of Israel brought from the land of promise hanging on a staff, crucified as it were. Accordingly, when the Divine Word maketh use of, by the necessity of

declaring Himself, the sound of the voice, whereby to convey Himself to the ears of the hearers; in the same sound of the voice, as it were in husks, knowledge, like the wine, is enclosed: and so this grape comes into the ears, as into the pressing machines of the wine-pressers. For there the separation is made, that the sound may reach as far as the ear; but knowledge be received in the memory of those that hear, as it were in a sort of vat; whence it passes into discipline of the conversation and habit of mind, as from the vat into the cellar: where if it do not through negligence grow sour, it will acquire soundness by age. For it grew sour among the Jews, and this sour vinegar they gave the Lord to drink. For that wine, which from the produce of the vine of the New Testament the Lord is to drink with His saints in the kingdom of His Father, must needs be most sweet and most sound.

3. “Wine-presses” are also usually taken for martyrdoms, as if when they who have confessed the name of Christ have been trodden down by the blows of persecution, their mortal remains as husks remained on earth, but their souls flowed forth into the rest of a heavenly habitation. Nor yet by this interpretation do we depart from the fruitfulness of the Churches. It is sung then, for the wine-presses, for the Church’s establishment; when our Lord after His resurrection ascended into heaven. For then He sent the Holy Ghost: by Whom the disciples being fulfilled preached with confidence the Word of God, that Churches might be collected.

4. Accordingly it is said, (ver. 1.) O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is Thy Name in all the earth! I ask, how is His Name wonderful in all the earth? The answer is, For Thy glory has been raised above the heavens. So that the meaning is this, O Lord, Who art our Lord, how do all that inhabit the earth admire Thee! for Thy glory hath been raised from earthly humiliation above the heavens. For hence it appeared Who Thou wast that descendedst, when it was by some seen, and by the rest believed, whither it was that Thou ascendedst.

5. Ver. 2. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, because of Thine enemies. I cannot take babes and sucklings to be any other, than those to whom the Apostle says, As unto babes in Christ I have given you milk to drink, not meat. Who were meant by those who went before the Lord praising Him, of whom the Lord Himself used this

testimony, when He answered the Jews who bade Him rebuke them, Have ye not read, out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise? Now with good reason He says not, Thou hast made, but, Thou hast made perfect praise. For there are in the Churches also those who now no more drink milk, but eat meat: whom the same Apostle points out, saying, We speak wisdom among them that are perfect: but not by those only are the Churches perfected; for if there were only these, little consideration would be had of the human race. But consideration is had, when they too, who are not as yet capable of the knowledge of things spiritual and eternal, are nourished by the faith of the temporal history, which for our salvation after the Patriarchs and Prophets was administered by the most excellent Power and Wisdom of God, even in the Sacrament of the assumed Manhood, in which there is salvation for every one that believeth: to the end that moved by Its authority each one may obey Its precepts, whereby being purified and rooted and grounded in love, he may be able to run with Saints, no more now a child in milk, but a young man in meat, to comprehend the breadth, the length, the height, and depth, to know also the surpassing knowledge of the love of Christ.

6. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, because of Thine enemies. By enemies to this dispensation, which has been wrought through Jesus Christ and Him crucified, we ought generally to understand all who forbid belief in things unknown, and promise certain knowledge: as all heretics do, and they who in the superstition of the Gentiles are called philosophers. Not that the promise of knowledge is to be blamed; but because they deem the most healthful and necessary step of faith is to be neglected, by which we must needs ascend to something certain, which nothing but that which is eternal can be. Hence it appears that they do not possess even this knowledge, which in contempt of faith they promise; seeing that they know not so useful and necessary a step thereof. Out of the mouth, then, of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, Thou, our Lord, declaring first by the Apostle, Except ye believe, ye shall not understand; and saying by His own mouth, Blessed are they that have not seen, and shall believe. Because of the enemies: against whom too that is said, I confess to Thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and revealed them unto

babes. From the wise, he saith, not the really wise, but those who deem themselves such. That Thou mayest destroy the enemy and the defender. Whom but the heretic? For he is both an enemy and a defender, who when he would assault the Christian faith, seems to defend it. Although the philosophers too of this world may be well taken as the enemies and defenders: forasmuch as the Son of God is the Power and Wisdom of God, by which every one is enlightened who is made wise by the truth: of which they profess themselves to be lovers, whence too their name of philosophers; and therefore they seem to defend it, while they are its enemies, since they cease not to recommend noxious superstitions, that the elements of this world should be worshipped and revered.

7. Ver. 3. For I shall see Thy heavens, the works of Thy fingers. We read that the law was written with the finger of God, and given through Moses His holy servant: by which finger of God many understand the Holy Ghost. Wherefore if, by the fingers of God, we are right in understanding these same ministers filled with the Holy Ghost, by reason of this same Spirit Which worketh in them, since by them all holy Scripture has been completed for us; we understand consistently with this, that, in this place, the books of both Testaments are called the heavens. Now it is said too of Moses himself, by the magicians of king Pharaoh, when they were conquered by him, This is the finger of God. And what is written, The heaven shall be rolled up as a book, although it be said of this æthereal heaven, yet naturally, according to the same image, the heavens of books are named by allegory. For I shall see, he says, the heavens, the works of Thy fingers: that is, I shall discern and understand the Scriptures, which Thou, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, hast written by Thy ministers.

8. Accordingly the heavens named above also may be interpreted as the same books, where he says, For Thy glory hath been raised above the heavens: so that the complete meaning should be this, For Thy glory hath been raised above the heavens; for thy glory hath exceeded the declarations of all the Scriptures: out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast made perfect praise, that they should begin by belief in the Scriptures, who would arrive at the knowledge of Thy glory: which hath been raised above the Scriptures, in that it passeth by and transcends the announcements of all

words and languages. Therefore hath God lowered the Scriptures even to the capacity of babes and sucklings, as it is sung in another Psalm, And He lowered the heaven, and came down: and this did He because of the enemies, who through pride of talkativeness, being enemies of the cross of Christ, even when they do speak some truth, still cannot profit babes and sucklings. So is the enemy and defender destroyed, who, whether he seem to defend wisdom, or even the name of Christ, still, from the step of this faith, assaults that truth, which he so readily makes promise of. Whereby too he is convicted of not possessing it; since by assaulting the step thereof, namely faith, he knows not how one should mount up thereto. Hence then is the rash and blind promiser of truth, who is the enemy and defender, destroyed, when the heavens, the works of God's fingers, are seen, that is, when the Scriptures, brought down even to the slowness of babes, are understood; and by means of the lowness of the faith of the history, which was transacted in time, they raise them, well nurtured and strengthened, unto the grand height of the understanding of things eternal, up to those things which they establish. For these heavens, that is, these books, are the works of God's fingers; for by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the Saints they were completed. For they that have regarded their own glory rather than man's salvation, have spoken without the Holy Ghost, in Whom are the bowels of the mercy of God.

9. For I shall see the heavens, the works of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained. The moon and stars are ordained in the heavens; since both the Church universal, to signify which the moon is often put, and Churches in the several places particularly, which I imagine to be intimated by the name of stars, are established in the same Scriptures, which we believe to be expressed by the word heavens. But why the moon justly signifies the Church, will be more seasonably considered in another Psalm, where it is said, The sinners have bent their bow, that they may shoot in the obscure moon the upright in heart.

10. Ver. 4. What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? It may be asked, what distinction there is between man and son of man. For if there were none, it would not be expressed thus, man, or son of man, disjunctively. For if it were written thus, What is man,

that Thou art mindful of him, and son of man, that Thou visitest him? it might appear to be a repetition of the word man. But now when the expression is, man, or son of man, a distinction is more clearly intimated. This is certainly to be remembered, that every son of man is a man; although every man cannot be taken to be a son of man. Adam, for instance, was a man, but not a son of man. Wherefore we may from hence consider and distinguish what is the difference in this place between man and son of man; namely, that they who bear the image of the earthy man, who is not a son of man, should be signified by the name of men; but that they who bear the image of the heavenly Man, should be rather called sons of men; for the former again is called the old man, and the latter the new; but the new is born of the old, since spiritual regeneration is begun by a change of an earthy and worldly life; and therefore the latter is called son of man. Man then in this place is earthy, but son of man heavenly; and the former is far removed from God, but the latter present with God; and therefore is He mindful of the former, as in far distance from Him; but the latter He visiteth, with whom being present He enlighteneth him with His countenance. For salvation is far from sinners; and, The light of Thy countenance hath been stamped upon us, O Lord. So in another Psalm he saith, that men in conjunction with beasts are made whole together with these beasts, not by any present inward illumination, but by the multiplication of the mercy of God, whereby His goodness reacheth even to the lowest things; for the wholeness of carnal men is carnal, as of the beasts; but separating the sons of men from those whom being men he joined with cattle, he proclaims that they are made blessed, after a far more exalted method, by the enlightening of the truth itself, and by a certain inundation of the fountain of life. For he speaketh thus: Men and beasts Thou wilt make whole, O Lord, as Thy mercy hath been multiplied, O God. But the sons of men shall put their trust in the covering of Thy wings. They shall be inebriated with the richness of Thine house, and of the torrent of Thy pleasures Thou shalt make them drink. For with Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light shall we see light. Extend Thy mercy to them that know Thee. Through the multiplication of mercy then He is mindful of man, as of beasts; for that multiplied mercy reacheth even to them that are afar off; but He visiteth the son of man, over whom, placed under the covering of His wings, He extendeth mercy, and in His light giveth light, and maketh him drink of His pleasures, and inebriateth him with the richness of His house, to forget the sorrows and the wanderings of his former conversation. This son of man, that is, the new man, the repentance of the old man begets with pain and tears. He though new, is nevertheless called yet carnal, whilst he is fed with milk; I would not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, says the Apostle. And to shew that they were already regenerate, he says, As unto babes in Christ, I have given you milk to drink, not meat. And when he relapses, as often happens, to the old life, he hears in reproof that he is a man; Are ye not men, he says, and walk as men?

11. Therefore was the son of man first visited in the person of the very Lord Man, born of the Virgin Mary. Of Whom, by reason of the very weakness of the flesh, which the Wisdom of God vouchsafed to bear, and the humiliation of the Passion, it is justly said, (ver. 5.) Thou hast lowered Him a little lower than the Angels. But that glorifying is added, in which He rose and ascended up into heaven; With glory, he says, and with honour hast Thou crowned Him; (ver. 6.) and hast set Him over the works of Thine hands. Since even Angels are the works of God’s hands, even over Angels we understand the Only-begotten Son to have been set; Whom we hear and believe, by the humiliation of the carnal generation and passion, to have been lowered a little lower than the Angels.

12. Thou hast put, he says, all things in subjection under His feet. When he says, all things, he excepts nothing. And that he might not be allowed to understand it otherwise, the Apostle enjoins it to be believed thus, when he says, He being excepted Which put all things under Him. And to the Hebrews he uses this very testimony from this Psalm, when he would have it to be understood that all things are in such sort put under our Lord Jesus Christ, as that nothing should be excepted. And yet he does not seem, as it were, to subjoin any great thing, when he says, (ver. 7.) All sheep and oxen, yea, moreover, the beasts of the field, birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of the sea. For, leaving the heavenly excellencies and powers, and all the hosts of Angels, leaving even man himself, he seems to have put under Him the beasts merely; unless by sheep and oxen we understand holy souls, either yielding the fruit of innocence, or

even working that the earth may bear fruit, that is, that earthly men may be regenerated unto spiritual richness. By these holy souls then we ought to understand not those of men only, but of all Angels too, if we would gather from hence that all things are put under our Lord Jesus Christ. For there will be no creature that will not be put under Him, under Whom the preeminent spirits, that I may so speak, are put. But whence shall we prove that sheep can be interpreted even, not of men, but of the blessed spirits of the angelical creatures on high? May we from the Lord's saying that He had left ninety and nine sheep in the mountains, that is, in the higher regions, and had come down for one? For if we take the one lost sheep to be the human soul in Adam, since Eve even was made out of his side, for the spiritual handling and consideration of all which things this is not the time, it remains that, by the ninety and nine left in the mountains, spirits not human, but angelical, should be meant. For as regards the oxen, this sentence is easily despatched; since men themselves are for no other reason called oxen, but because by preaching the Gospel of the word of God they imitate Angels, as where it is said, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. How much more easily then do we take the Angels themselves, the messengers of truth, to be oxen, when Evangelists by the participation of their title are called oxen? Thou hast put under therefore, he says, all sheep and oxen, that is, all the holy spiritual creation; in which we include that of holy men, who are in the Church, in those wine-presses to wit, which are intimated under the other similitude of the moon and stars.

13. Yea moreover, saith he, the beasts of the field. The addition of moreover is by no means idle. First, because by beasts of the plain, may be understood both sheep and oxen: so that, if goats are the beasts of rocky and mountainous regions, sheep may be well taken to be the beasts of the field. Accordingly had it been written even thus, all sheep and oxen and beasts of the field; it might be reasonably asked what beasts of the plain meant, since even sheep and oxen could be taken as such. But the addition of moreover besides, obliges us, beyond question, to recognise some difference or another. But under this word, moreover, not only beasts of the field, but also (ver. 8.) birds of the air, and fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of the sea, are to be taken in. What is then this distinction? Call to mind the "wine-presses," holding husks and wine; and the threshing-floor, containing

chaff and corn; and the nets, in which were enclosed good fish and bad; and the ark of Noah, in which were both unclean and clean animals: and you will see that the Churches for a while, now in this time, unto the last time of judgment, contain not only sheep and oxen, that is, holy laymen and holy ministers, but moreover beasts of the field, birds of the air, and birds of the sea, that walk through the paths of the sea. For the beasts of the field were very fitly understood, as men rejoicing in the pleasure of the flesh where they mount up to nothing high, nothing laborious. For the field is also the broad way, that leadeth to destruction: and in a field is Abel slain. Wherefore there is cause to fear, lest one coming down from the mountains of God's righteousness, (for thy righteousness, he says, is as the mountains of God,) making choice of the broad and easy paths of carnal pleasure, be slain by the devil. See now too "the birds of heaven," the proud, of whom it is said, They have set their mouth against the heaven. See how they are carried on high by the wind, who say, We will magnify our tongue, our lips are our own, who is our Lord? Behold too the fish of the sea, that is, the curious; who walk through the paths of the sea, that is, search in the deep after the temporal things of this world: which, like paths in the sea, vanish and perish, as quickly as the water comes together again after it has given room, in their passage, to ships, or to whatsoever walketh or swimmeth. For he said not merely, who walk the paths of the sea; but "walk through," he said; shewing the very determined earnestness of those who seek after vain and fleeting things. Now these three kinds of vice, namely, the pleasure of the flesh, and pride, and curiosity, include all sins. And they appear to me to be enumerated by the Apostle John, when he says, Love not the world; for all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. For through the eyes especially prevails curiosity. To what the rest indeed belong is clear. And that temptation of the Lord Man was threefold: by food, that is, by the lust of the flesh, where it is suggested, command these stones that they be made bread: by vain boasting, where, when stationed on a mountain, all the kingdoms of this earth are shewn Him, and promised if He would worship: by curiosity, where, from the pinnacle of the temple, He is advised to cast Himself down, for the sake of trying whether He would be borne up by Angels. And accordingly after that the enemy could prevail with Him by none of these temptations, this is said of him, When the devil had ended all his temptation. With a reference then to the meaning of the wine-presses, not only the wine, but the husks too are put under His feet; to wit, not only sheep and oxen, that is, the holy souls of believers, either in the laity, or in the ministry; but moreover both beasts of pleasure, and birds of pride, and fish of curiosity. All which classes of sinners we see mingled now in the Churches with the good and holy. May He work then in His Churches, and separate the wine from the husks: let us give heed, that we be wine, and sheep or oxen; not husks, or beasts of the field, or birds of heaven, or fish of the sea, which walk through the paths of the sea. Not that these names can be understood and explained in this way only, but the explanation of them must be according to the place where they are found. For elsewhere they have other meanings. And this rule must be kept to in every allegory, that what is expressed by the similitude should be considered agreeably to the meaning of the particular place: for this is the manner of the Lord's and the Apostles' teaching. Let us repeat then the last verse, which is also put at the beginning of the Psalm, and let us praise God, saying, O Lord our Lord, how wonderful is Thy name in all the earth! For fitly, after the matter of the discourse, is the return made to the heading, whither all that discourse must be referred.

PSALM 9

1. The inscription of this Psalm is, To the end for the hidden things of the Son, a Psalm of David himself. As to the hidden things of the Son there may be a question: but since he has not added whose, the very only-begotten Son of God should be understood. For where a Psalm has been inscribed of the son of David, When, he says, he fled from the face of Absalom his son; although his name even was mentioned, and therefore there could be no obscurity as to whom it was spoken of: yet it is not merely said, from the face of son Absalom; but his is added. But here both because his is not added, and much is said of the Gentiles, it cannot properly be taken of Absalom. For the war which that abandoned one waged with his father, no way relates to the Gentiles, since there the people of Israel only were divided against themselves. This Psalm is then sung for the hidden things of the only-begotten Son of God. For the Lord Himself too, when, without addition, He uses the word Son, would have Himself, the Only-begotten, to be understood; as where He says, If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed. For He said not, the Son of God; but in saying merely, Son, He gives us to understand Whose Son it is. Which form of expression nothing admits of, save His excellency of Whom we so speak, that, though we name Him not, He can be understood. For so we say, it rains, clears up, thunders, and such like expressions; and we do not add who does it all: for that the excellency of the doer spontaneously presents itself to all men’s minds, and does not want words. What then are the hidden things of the Son? By which expression we must first understand that there are some things of the Son manifest, from which those are distinguished which are called hidden. Wherefore since we believe two advents of the Lord, one past, which the Jews understood not: the other future, which we both hope for; and since the one which the Jews understood not, profited the Gentiles; For the hidden things of the Son, is not unsuitably understood to be spoken of this advent, in which blindness in part is happened to Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in. (For notice of two judgments is conveyed to us throughout the Scriptures, if

any one will give heed to them, one hidden, the other manifest. The hidden one is passing now, of which the Apostle Peter says, The time is come, that judgment should begin from the house of the Lord. The hidden judgment accordingly is the pain, by which now each man is either exercised to purification, or warned to conversion, or if he despise the calling and discipline of God, is blinded unto damnation. But the manifest judgment is that, in which the Lord, at His coming, will judge the quick and the dead, all men confessing that it is He by Whom both rewards shall be assigned to the good, and punishments to the evil. But then that confession will avail, not to the remedy of evils, but to the accumulation of damnation. Of these two judgments, the one hidden, the other manifest, the Lord seems to me to have spoken, where He says, Whoso believeth on Me hath passed from death unto life, and shall not come into judgment; into the manifest judgment, that is. For that which passes from death unto life by means of some affliction, whereby He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth, is the hidden judgment. But whoso believeth not, saith He, hath been judged already: that is, by this hidden judgment hath been already prepared for that manifest one. These two judgments we read of also in Wisdom, whence it is written, Therefore unto them, as to children without the use of reason, Thou didst give a judgment to mock them; But they that have not been corrected by this judgment have felt a judgment worthy of God. Whoso then are not corrected by this hidden judgment of God, shall most worthily be punished by that manifest one.) Wherefore in this Psalm must be observed the hidden things of the Son, that is, both His advent in humility, by which He profited the Gentiles with the Jews’ blindness; and the pain which is now dispensed secretly, not as yet in the damnation of sinners, but either in exercising the converted, or in admonition that they be converted, or in blinding, that they who refuse to be converted may be made ready for damnation.

2. I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. He doth not, with a whole heart, confess unto God, who doubteth of His Providence in any particular: but he who sees already the hidden things of the wisdom of God, how great is His invisible reward, who saith, We rejoice in tribulations; and how all torments, which are inflicted on the body, are either for the exercising of those that are converted to God, or for warning that they be converted, or for just preparation of the obdurate unto their last damnation:

and so now all things are referred to the governance of Divine Providence, which fools think done as it were by chance and at random, and without any Divine ordering. I will tell all Thy marvels. He tells all God's marvels, who sees them performed not only openly on the body, but invisibly indeed too in the soul, but far more sublimely and excellently. For men earthly, and led wholly by the eye, marvel more that the dead Lazarus rose again in the body, than that Paul the persecutor rose again in soul. But since the visible miracle calleth the soul to the light, but the invisible enlighteneth the soul that comes when called, he tells all God's marvels, who, by believing the visible, passes on to the understanding of the invisible.

3. I will be glad and exult in Thee. Not any more in this world, not in pleasure of bodily dalliance, not in relish of palate and tongue, not in sweetness of perfumes, not in joyousness of passing sounds, not in the variously coloured forms of figure, not in vanities of men's praise, not in wedlock and perishable offspring, not in superfluity of temporal wealth, not in this world's getting, whether it extend over place and space, or be prolonged in time's succession: but, I will be glad and exult in Thee, namely, in the hidden things of the Son, where the light of Thy countenance hath been stamped on us, O Lord: for, Thou wilt hide them, saith he, in the hiding place of Thy countenance. He then will be glad and exult in Thee, who tells all Thy marvels. And He will tell all Thy marvels, (since it is now spoken of prophetically, Who came not to do His own will, but the will of Him Who sent Him.

4. For now the Person of the Lord begins to appear speaking in this Psalm. For it follows, I will sing to Thy Name, O Most High, in turning mine enemy behind. His enemy then, where was he turned back? Was it when it was said to him, Get thee behind, Satan? For then he who by tempting desired to put himself before, was turned behind, by failing in deceiving Him Who was tempted, and by availing nothing against Him. For earthly men are behind: but the heavenly man is preferred before, although he came after. For the first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man is from heaven, heavenly. But from this stock he came by whom it was said, He Who cometh after me is preferred before me. And the Apostle forgets those things that are behind, and reaches forth unto those things that are before.

The enemy, therefore, was turned behind, after that he could not deceive the heavenly Man being tempted; and he turned himself to earthy men, where he can have dominion. Wherefore no man goeth before him, and causeth him to be behind, but he who laying aside the image of the earthy man shall have borne the image of the heavenly. But now, should we prefer understanding the words, mine enemy, generally, either for a sinner, or an heathen, it will not be unreasonable. Nor will the words, In turning mine enemy behind, be a punishment; but a benefit, yea such a benefit, as that nothing can be compared to it. For what more blessed than to lay aside pride, and to have no wish to go before Christ, as if one were whole, and needed not the physician, but to wish rather to go behind after Christ, Who, when calling a disciple to perfection, saith, Follow Me. But still, in turning my enemy behind, is more suitably understood as spoken of the devil. For in truth the devil is turned behind, even in the persecution of the righteous, and he, much more to their advantage, is a persecutor, than if he went before as a leader and a prince. We must sing then to the Name of the Most High in turning the enemy behind: since we ought to choose rather to fly from him as a persecutor, than to follow him as a leader. For we have whither we may fly and hide ourselves in the hidden things of the Son; seeing that the Lord hath been made a refuge for us.

5. They will be weakened, and perish from Thy face. Who will be weakened and perish, but the unrighteous and ungodly? They will be weakened, while they shall avail nothing; and they shall perish, because the ungodly will not be; from the face of God, that is, from the knowledge of God, as he perished who said, But now I live not, but Christ liveth in me. But why will the ungodly be weakened, and perish from Thy face? Because, he saith, Thou hast made my judgment, and my cause: that is, the judgment in which I seemed to be judged, Thou hast made mine; and the cause in which men condemned me just and innocent, Thou hast made mine. For such things served Him for our deliverance: as sailors too call the wind theirs, which they take advantage of for prosperous sailing.

6. Thou satest on the throne Who judgest equity. Whether the Son say this to the Father, Who said also, Thou couldest have no power against Me, except it were given thee from above, referring this very thing, that the

Judge of men was judged for men’s advantage, to the Father’s equity and His own hidden things: or whether man say to God, Thou satest on the throne Who judgest equity, giving the name of God’s throne to his soul, so that his body may peradventure be the earth, which is called God’s footstool: for God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself: or whether the soul of the Church, perfect now and without spot and wrinkle, worthy, that is, of the hidden things of the Son, in that The King hath brought her into His chamber, say to her spouse, Thou satest upon the throne Who judgest equity, in that Thou hast risen from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and sittest at the right hand of the Father: whichsoever, I say, of those opinions, whereunto this verse may be referred, is preferred, it transgresses not the rule of faith.

7. Thou hast rebuked the heathen, and the ungodly hath perished. We take this to be more suitably said to the Lord Jesus Christ, than said by Him. For Who else hath rebuked the heathen, and the ungodly perished, save He, Who after that He ascended up into heaven, sent the Holy Ghost, that, filled by Him, the Apostles should preach the word of God with boldness, and freely reprove men’s sins? At which rebuke the ungodly perished; because the ungodly was justified and was made godly. Thou hast effaced their name for the world, and for the world’s world. The name of the ungodly hath been effaced. For they are not called ungodly who believe in the true God. Now their name is effaced for the world, that is as long as the course of the temporal world endures. And for the world’s world. What is the world’s world, but that whose image and shadow, as it were, this world possesses? For the change of seasons succeeding one another, whilst the moon is on the wane, and again on the increase, whilst the sun each year returns to his quarter, whilst spring, or summer, or autumn, or winter passes away only to return, is in some sort an imitation of eternity. But this world’s world is that which abides in immutable eternity. As a verse in the mind, and a verse in the voice: the former is understood, the latter heard; and the former fashions the latter: and hence the former works in art and abides, the latter sounds in the air and passes away. So the fashion of this changeable world is defined by that world unchangeable which is called the world’s world. And hence the one abides in the art, that is, in the Wisdom and Power of God: but the other is made to pass in the governance of creation.

If after all it be not a repetition, so that after it was said for the world, lest it should be understood of this world that passeth away, it were added for the world’s world. For in the Greek copies it is thus, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος. Which the Latins have for the most part rendered, not, for the world, and for the world’s world; but, for ever, and for the world’s world. that in the words for the world’s world, the words for ever, should be explained. The name then of the ungodly Thou hast effaced for ever, for from henceforth the ungodly shall never be. And if their name be not prolonged unto this world, much less unto the world’s world.

8. The swords of the enemy have failed at the end. Not enemies in the plural, but this enemy in the singular. Now what enemy’s swords have failed but the devil’s? Now these are understood to be divers erroneous opinions, whereby as with swords he destroys souls. In overcoming these swords, and in bringing them to failure, that sword is employed, of which it is said in the seventh Psalm, If ye be not converted, He will brandish His sword. And peradventure this is the end, against which the swords of the enemy fail; since up to it they are of some avail. Now it worketh secretly, but in the last judgment it will be brandished openly. By it the cities are destroyed. For so it follows, The swords of the enemy have failed at the end: and Thou hast destroyed the cities. Cities indeed wherein the devil rules, where crafty and deceitful counsels hold, as it were, the place of a court, on which supremacy attend as officers and ministers the services of all the members, the eyes for curiosity, the ears for lasciviousness, or for whatsoever else is gladly listened to that bears on evil, the hands for rapine or any other violence or pollution soever, and all the other members after this manner serving the tyrannical supremacy, that is, perverse counsels. Of this city the commonalty, as it were, are all soft affections and disturbing emotions of the mind, stirring up daily seditions in a man. So then where a king, where a court, where ministers, where commonalty are found, there is a city. Nor again would such things be in bad cities, unless they were first in individual men, who are, as it were, the elements and seeds of cities. These cities He destroys, when on the prince being shut out thence, of whom it was said, The prince of this world has been cast out, these kingdoms are wasted by the word of truth, evil counsels are laid to sleep, vile affections tamed, the ministries of the members and senses taken captive, and

transferred to the service of righteousness and good works: that as the Apostle says, sin should no more reign in our mortal body, and so forth. Then is the soul at peace, and the man is disposed to receive rest and blessedness. Their memorial has perished with uproar: with the uproar, that is, of the ungodly. But it is said, with uproar, either because when ungodliness is overturned, there is uproar made: for none passeth to the highest place, where there is the deepest silence, but he who with much uproar shall first have warred with his own vices: or with uproar, is said, that the memory of the ungodly should perish in the perishing even of the very uproar, in which ungodliness riots.

9. And the Lord abideth for ever. Wherefore then have the heathen raged, and the people imagined vain things against the Lord, and against His Anointed: for the Lord abideth for ever. He hath prepared His seat in judgment, and He shall judge the world in equity. He prepared His seat, when He was judged. For by that patience Man purchased heaven, and God in Man profited believers. And this is the Son’s hidden judgment. But seeing He is also to come openly and in the sight of all to judge the quick and the dead, He hath prepared His seat in the hidden judgment: and He shall also openly judge the world in equity: that is, He shall distribute gifts proportioned to desert, setting the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left. He shall judge the people with justice. This is the same as was said above, He shall judge the world in equity. Not as men judge who see not the heart, by whom very often worse men are acquitted than are condemned: but in equity and with justice shall the Lord judge, conscience bearing witness, and thoughts accusing, or else excusing.

10. And the Lord hath become a refuge to the poor. Whatsoever be the persecutions of that enemy, who hath been turned behind, what harm shall he do to them whose refuge the Lord hath become? But this will be, if in this world, in which that one has an office of power, they shall choose to be poor, by loving nothing which either here leaves a man while he lives and loves, or is left by him when he dies. For to such a poor man hath the Lord become a refuge, an Helper in due season, in tribulation. Lo He maketh poor, for He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. For what an Helper in due season is, he explained by adding in tribulation. For the soul is not

turned to God, save when it is turned away from this world: nor is it more seasonably turned away from this world, except toils and pains be mingled with its trifling and hurtful and destructive pleasures.

11. Ver. 10. And let them who know Thy Name, hope in Thee, when they shall have ceased hoping in wealth, and in the other enticements of this world. For the soul indeed that seeketh where to fix her hope, when she is torn away from this world, the knowledge of God’s Name seasonably receives. For the mere Name of God hath now been published every where: but the knowledge of the name is, when He is known Whose name it is. For the name is not a name for its own sake, but for that which it signifies. Now it has been said, The Lord is His Name. Wherefore whoso willingly submits himself to God as His servant, hath known this name. And let them who know Thy Name hope in Thee. Again, the Lord saith to Moses, I am That I am; and Thou shalt say to the children of Israel, I AM, hath sent me. Let them then who know Thy Name, hope in Thee; that they may not hope in those things which flow by in time’s quick revolution, having nothing but ‘will be’ and ‘has been.’ For what in them is future, when it arrives, straightway becomes the past; it is awaited with eagerness, it is lost with pain. But in the nature of God nothing will be, as if it were not yet; or hath been, as if it were no longer: but there is only that which is, and this is eternity. Let them cease then to hope in and love things temporal, and let them apply themselves to hope eternal, who know His name Who said, I am That I am; and of Whom it was said, I AM hath sent me. For Thou hast not forsaken them that seek Thee, O Lord. Whoso seek Him, seek no more things transient and perishable; For no man can serve two masters.

12. Ver. 11. Sing to the Lord, Who dwelleth in Sion, is said to them, whom the Lord forsakes not as they seek Him. He dwelleth in Sion, which is interpreted watching, and which beareth the likeness of the Church that now is; as Jerusalem beareth the likeness of the Church that is to come, that is, the city of Saints already enjoying life angelical; for Jerusalem is by interpretation the vision of peace. Now watching goes before vision, as this Church goes before that one which is promised, the city immortal and eternal. But in time it goes before, not in dignity: because more honourable is that whither we are striving to arrive, than what we practise, that we may

attain to arrive; now we practise watching, that we may arrive at vision. But again this same Church which now is, unless the Lord inhabit her, the most earnest watching might run into any sort of error. And to this Church it was said, For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are: again, That Christ may dwell in the inner man in your hearts by faith. It is enjoined us then, that we sing to the Lord Who dwelleth in Sion, that with one accord we praise the Lord, the Inhabitant of the Church. Shew forth His wonders among the heathen. It has both been done, and will not cease to be done.

13. Ver. 12. For requiring their blood He hath remembered. As if they, who were sent to preach the Gospel, should make answer to that injunction which has been mentioned, Shew forth His wonders among the heathen, and should say, O Lord, who hath believed our report? and again, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; the Psalmist suitably goes on to say, That Christians not without great reward of eternity will die in persecution, for requiring their blood He hath remembered. But why did he choose to say, their blood? Was it, as if one of imperfect knowledge and less faith should ask, How will they shew them forth, seeing that the infidelity of the heathen will rage against them; and he should be answered, For requiring their blood He hath remembered, that is, the last judgment will come, in which both the glory of the slain and the punishment of the slayers shall be made manifest? But let no one suppose He hath remembered to be so used, as though forgetfulness can attach to God; but since the judgment will be after a long interval, it is used in accordance with the feeling of weak men, who think God hath forgotten, because He doth not act so speedily as they wish. To such is said what follows also, He hath not forgotten the cry of the poor: that is, He hath not, as you suppose, forgotten. As if they should on hearing, He hath remembered, say, Then He had forgotten; No, He hath not forgotten, says the Psalmist, the cry of the poor.

14. But I ask, what is that cry of the poor, which God forgetteth not? Is it that cry, the words whereof are these, (ver. 13.) Pity me, O Lord, see my humiliation at the hands of my enemies? Why then did he not say, Pity us, O Lord, see our humiliation at the hands of our enemies, as if many poor were crying; but as if one, Pity me, O Lord? Is it because One intercedeth for the Saints, Who first for our sakes became poor, though He was rich;

and it is He Who saith, Who exaltest me from the gates of death, (ver. 14.) that I may declare all Thy praises in the gates of the daughter of Sion? For man is exalted in Him, not that Man only Which He beareth, Which is the Head of the Church; but whichsoever one of us also is among the other members, and is exalted from all depraved desires; which are the gates of death, for that through them is the road to death. But the joy in the fruition is at once death itself, when one gains what he hath in abandoned wilfulness coveted: for coveting is the root of all evil: and therefore is the gate of death, for the widow that liveth in pleasures is dead. At which pleasures we arrive through desires as it were through the gates of death. But all highest purposes are the gates of the daughter of Sion, through which we come to the vision of peace in the Holy Church. In these gates therefore all the praises of God are well shewn forth, that what is holy may not be given to dogs, nor pearls cast before swine: who would rather frowardly bark, than earnestly inquire; or who would neither bark nor inquire, but wallow in the mire of their own lusts. But when God's praises are shewn forth in good earnestness; to them that seek it is given, and to them that inquire it is made manifest, and to them that knock it is opened. Or haply are the gates of death the bodily senses and eyes, which were opened when the man tasted of the forbidden tree, from which they are exalted, to whom it is said that they should seek not the things that are seen, but the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal: and are the gates of the daughter of Sion the sacraments and beginnings of faith, which are opened to them that knock, that they may arrive at the hidden things of the Son? For eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it ascended in the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him. Thus far is the cry of the poor, which the Lord hath not forgotten.

15. Then follows, I will exult for Thy salvation: that is, with blessedness shall I be holden by Thy salvation, which is our Lord Jesus Christ, the Power and Wisdom of God. Therefore says the Church, which is here in affliction and is saved by hope, as long as the hidden judgment of the Son is, in hope she says, I will exult for Thy salvation: for now she is worn down either by the roar of violence around her, or by the errors of the heathen. (Ver. 15.) The heathen are fixed in the corruption, which they

made. Consider ye how punishment is reserved for the sinner, out of his own works; and how they that have wished to persecute the Church, have been fixed in that corruption, which they thought to inflict. For they were desiring to kill the body, whilst they themselves were dying in soul. In that snare which they hid, has their foot been taken. The hidden snare is crafty devising. The foot of the soul is well understood to be its love: which, when depraved, is called coveting or lust; but when upright, love or charity. For by love it is moved as it were to the place, whither it tendeth. But the soul's place is not in any space which bodily form occupies: but in the delight, at which she rejoices to have attained through love. But a pernicious delight follows coveting, a profitable one charity. Whence coveting is also called a root. The root moreover is taken for, so to say, the foot of the tree. Charity too is called a root, where the Lord speaks of the seed, which in the stony places withers under the scorching sun, because it had not deep root. Whereby He points out those, that rejoice in receiving the word of truth, but give way in persecution, which can be withstood by love only. And the Apostle says, That being rooted and grounded in love, ye may be able to take in. The foot then of sinners, that is, their love, is taken in the snare, which they hide: for when delight shall have followed on to deceitful dealing, when God shall have delivered them over to the lust of their heart; that delight at once binds them, that they dare not tear away their love thence and apply it to profitable objects; for when they shall make the attempt, they will be pained in heart, as if desiring to free their foot from a fetter: and giving way under this pain they refuse to withdraw from pernicious delights. In the snare then which they have hid, that is, in deceitful counsel, their foot hath been taken, that is their love, which through deceit attains to that vain joy whereby pain is purchased.

16. Ver. 16. The Lord is known executing judgments. These are God's judgments. Not from that tranquillity of His blessedness, nor from the secret places of wisdom, wherein blessed souls are received, is the sword, or fire, or wild beast, or any such thing brought forth, whereby sinners may be tormented: but how are they tormented, and how does the Lord do judgment? In the works, he says, of his own hands hath the sinner been caught.

17. Here is interposed, The song of the diapsalma: as it were the hidden joy, as far as we can imagine, of the separation which is now made, not in place, but in the affections of the heart, between sinners and the righteous, as of the corn from the chaff, as yet on the floor. And then follows, (ver. 17.) Let the sinners be turned into hell: that is, let them be given into their own hands, when they are spared, and let them be ensnared in deadly delight. All the nations that forget God. Because when they did not think good to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.

18. Ver. 18. For there shall not be forgetfulness of the poor man to the end: who now seems to be in forgetfulness, when sinners are thought to flourish in this world's happiness, and the righteous to be in travail: but the patience, saith He, of the poor shall not perish for ever. Wherefore there is need of patience now to bear with the evil, who are already separated in will, till they be also separated at the last judgment.

19. Ver. 19. Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail. The future judgment is prayed for: but before it come, Let the heathen, saith he, be judged in Thy sight: that is, in secret; which is called in God's sight, with the knowledge of a few holy and righteous ones. (Ver. 20.) Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord. He seems to me to point out Antichrist: of whom the Apostle says, When the man of sin shall be revealed. Let the heathen know that they are men. That they who will be set free by the Son of God, and belong to the Son of Man, and be sons of men, that is, new men, may serve man, that is, the old man the sinner, for that they are men.

20. And because it is believed that he is to arrive at so great a pitch of empty glory, and he will be permitted to do so great things, both against all men and against the Saints of God, that then some weak ones shall indeed think that God cares not for human affairs, the Psalmist interposing a diapsalma, adds as it were the voice of men groaning and asking why judgment is deferred. (Psalm 10. ver. 1.) Why, O Lord, saith he, hast Thou withdrawn afar off? Then he who thus inquired, as if all on a sudden he understood, or as if he asked, though he knew, that he might teach, adds, Thou despisest in due seasons, in tribulations: that is, Thou despisest seasonably, and causest tribulations to inflame men's minds with longing for Thy coming. For that fountain of life is sweeter to them, that have much

thirst. Therefore he hints the reason of the delay, saying, (ver. 2.) Whilst the ungodly vaunteth himself, the poor man is inflamed. Wondrous it is and true with what earnestness of good hope the little ones are inflamed unto an upright living by comparison with sinners. In which mystery it comes to pass, that even heresies are permitted to exist; not that heretics themselves wish this, but because Divine Providence worketh this result from their sins, Which both maketh and ordaineth the light; but ordereth only the darkness, that by comparison therewith the light may be more pleasant, as by comparison with heretics the discovery of truth is more sweet. For so, by this comparison, the approved, who are known to God, are made manifest among men.

21. They are taken in their thoughts, which they think: that is, their evil thoughts become chains to them. But how become they chains? (ver. 3.) For the sinner is praised, saith he, in the desires of his soul. The tongues of flatterers bind souls in sin. For there is pleasure in doing those things, in which not only is no reprover feared, but even an approver heard. And he that does unrighteous deeds is blessed. Hence are they taken in their thoughts, which they think.

22. Ver. 4. The sinner hath angered the Lord. Let no one congratulate the man, that prospers in his way, to whose sins no avenger is nigh, and an approver is by. This is the greater anger of the Lord. For the sinner hath angered the Lord, that he should suffer these things, that is, should not suffer the scourging of correction. The sinner hath angered the Lord: according to the multitude of His anger He will not search it out. Great is His anger, when He searcheth not out, when He as it were forgetteth and marketh not sin, and by fraud and wickedness man attains to riches and honours: which will especially be the case in that Antichrist, who will seem to men blessed to that degree, that he will even be thought God. But how great this anger of God is, we are taught by what follows.

23. God is not in his sight, (ver. 5.) his ways are polluted in all time. He that knows what in the soul gives joy and gladness, knows how great an ill it is to be abandoned by the light of truth: since a great ill do men reckon the blindness of their bodily eyes, whereby this light is withdrawn. How great then the punishment he endures, who through the prosperous issue of his

sins is brought to that pass, that God is not in his sight, and that his ways are polluted in all time, that is, his thoughts and counsels are unclean? Thy judgments are taken away from his face. For the mind conscious of evil, whilst it seems to itself to suffer no punishment, believes that God doth not judge, and so are God's judgments taken away from its face; while this very thing is great condemnation. And he shall have dominion over all his enemies. For so is it delivered, that he will overcome all kings, and alone obtain the kingdom; since too according to the Apostle, who preaches concerning him, He shall sit in the temple of God, exalting himself above all that is worshipped and that is called God.

24. And seeing that being delivered over to the lust of his own heart, and predestinated to extreme condemnation, he is to come, by wicked arts, to that vain and empty height and rule; therefore it follows, (ver. 6.) For he hath said in his heart, I shall not move from generation to generation without evil: that is, my fame and my name will not pass from this generation to the generation of posterity, unless by evil arts I acquire so lofty a principality, that posterity cannot be silent concerning it. For a mind abandoned and void of good arts, and estranged from the light of righteousness, by bad arts devises a passage for itself to a fame so lasting, as is celebrated even in posterity. And they that cannot be known for good, desire that men should speak of them even for ill, provided that their name spread far and wide. And this I think is here meant, I shall not move from generation to generation without evil. There is too another interpretation, if a mind vain and full of error supposes that it cannot come from the mortal generation to the generation of eternity, but by bad arts: which indeed was also reported of Simon, when he thought that he would gain heaven by wicked arts, and pass from the human generation to the generation divine by magic. Where then is the wonder, if that man of sin too, who is to fill up all the wickedness and ungodliness, which all false prophets have begun, and to do such great signs; that, if it were possible, he should deceive the very elect, shall say in his heart, I shall not move from generation to generation without evil?

Ver. 7. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness and deceit. For it is a great curse, to seek heaven by such abominable arts, and to get together such earnings for acquiring the eternal seat. But of this cursing his mouth is full. For this desire shall not take effect, but within his mouth only will avail to destroy him, who dared promise himself such things with bitterness and deceit, that is, with anger and insidiousness, whereby he is to bring over the multitude to his side. Under his tongue is toil and grief. Nothing is more toilsome than unrighteousness and ungodliness: upon which toil follows grief; for that the toil is not only without fruit, but even unto destruction. Which toil and grief refers to that which he hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved from generation to generation without evil. And therefore, under his tongue, not on his tongue, because he will devise these things in silence, and to men will speak other things, that he may appear good and just, and a son of God.

26. Ver. 8. He lieth in ambush with the rich. What rich, but those whom he will load with this world’s gifts? And he is therefore said to lie in ambush with them, because he will display their false happiness to deceive men; who, when with a perverted will they desire to be such as they, and seek not the good things eternal, will fall into his snares. That in the dark he may kill the innocent. In the dark, I suppose, is said, where it is not easily understood what should be sought, or what avoided. Now to kill the innocent, is of an innocent to make one guilty.

27. His eyes look against the poor, for he is chiefly to persecute the righteous, of whom it is said, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (ver. 9.) He lieth in wait in a secret place, as a lion in his den. By a lion in a den, he means one, in whom both violence and deceit will work. For the first persecution of the Church was violent, when by proscriptions, by torments, by murders, the Christians were compelled to sacrifice: another persecution is crafty, which is now conducted by heretics of any kind and false brethren: there remains a third, which is to come by Antichrist, than which there is nothing more perilous; for it will be at once violent and crafty. Violence he will exert in empire, craft in miracles. To the violence, the word lion refers; to craft, the words in his den. And these are again repeated with a change of order. He lieth in wait, he says, that he may catch the poor; this hath reference to craft: but what follows, To catch the

poor whilst he draweth him, is put to the score of violence. For draweth means, he bringeth him to himself by violence, by whatever tortures he can.

28. Again, the two which follow are the same. Ver. 10. In his snare he will humble him, is craft. He shall decline and fall, whilst he shall have domination over the poor, is violence. For a snare naturally points to lying in wait: but domination most openly conveys the idea of terror. And well does he say, He will humble him in his snare. For when he shall begin to do those signs, the more wonderful they shall appear to men, the more those Saints that shall be then will be despised, and, as it were, set at nought: he, whom they shall resist by righteousness and innocence, shall seem to overcome by the marvels that he does. But he shall decline and fall, whilst he shall have domination over the poor; that is, whilst he shall inflict whatsoever punishments he will upon the servants of God that resist him.

29. But how shall he decline, and fall? (ver. 11.) For he hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten; He turneth away His face, that He see not unto the end. This is declining, and the most wretched fall, while the mind of a man prospers as it were in its iniquities, and thinks that it is spared; when it is being blinded, and kept for an extreme and timely vengeance: of which the Psalmist now speaks: (Ver. 12.) Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted: that is, let Thy power be made manifest. Now he had said above, Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail, let the heathen be judged in Thy sight: that is, in secret, where God alone seeth. This comes to pass, when the ungodly have arrived at what seems great happiness to men: over whom is placed a lawgiver, such as they had deserved to have of whom it is said, Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord, let the heathen know that they are men. But now after that hidden punishment and vengeance it is said, Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted; not of course in secret, but now in glory most manifest. That Thou forget not the poor unto the end; that is, as the ungodly think, who say, God hath forgotten, He turneth away His face, that He should not see unto the end. Now they deny that God seeth unto the end, who say that He careth not for things human and earthly, for the earth is as it were the end of things; in that it is the last element, in which men labour in most orderly sort, but they cannot see the order of their labours, which specially belongs to the hidden things of the Son. The Church then

labouring in such times, like a ship in great waves and tempests, awaketh the Lord as if He were sleeping, that He should command the winds, and calm should be restored. He says therefore, Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted, that Thou forget not the poor unto the end.

30. Accordingly understanding now the manifest judgment, and in exultation at it, they say, (ver. 13.) Wherefore hath the ungodly angered God? that is, what hath it profited him to do so great evil? For he said in his heart, He will not require it. Then follows, (ver. 14.) For Thou seest toil and considerest anger, to deliver them into Thine hands. This sentence looks for distinct explanation, wherein if there shall be error it becomes obscure. For thus has the ungodly said in his heart, God will not require it, as though God regarded toil and anger, to deliver them into His hands; that is, as though He feared toil and anger, and for this reason would spare them, lest their punishment be too burdensome to Him, or lest He should be disturbed by the storm of anger: as men generally act, excusing themselves of vengeance, to avoid toil or anger.

31. The poor hath been left unto Thee. For therefore is he poor, that is, hath despised all the temporal goods of this world, that Thou only mayest be his hope. Thou wilt be a helper to the orphan, that is, to him to whom his father this world, by whom he was born after the flesh, dies, and who can already say, The world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For of such orphans God becomes the Father. The Lord teaches us in truth that His disciples do become orphans, to whom He saith, Call no man father on earth. Of which He first Himself gave an example in saying, Who is my mother, and who my brethren? Whence some most mischievous heretics would assert that He had no mother; and they do not see that it follows from this, if they pay attention to these words, that neither had His disciples fathers. For as He said, Who is my mother? so He taught them, when He said, Call no man your father on earth.

32. Ver. 15. Break the arm of the sinner and of the malicious; of him, namely, of whom it was said above, He shall have dominion over all his enemies. He called his power then, his arm; to which Christ’s power is opposed, of which it is said, Arise, O Lord God, let Thine hand be exalted. His fault shall be required, and he shall not be found because of it; that is,

he shall be judged for his sins, and himself shall perish because of his sin. After this, what wonder if there follow, (ver. 16.) The Lord shall reign for ever and world without end; ye heathen shall perish out of His earth? He uses heathen for sinners and ungodly.

33. Ver. 17. The Lord hath heard the longing of the poor: that longing wherewith they were burning, when in the straits and tribulations of this world they desired the day of the Lord. Thine ear hath heard the preparation of their heart. This is the preparation of the heart, of which it is sung in another Psalm, My heart is prepared, O God, my heart is prepared: of which the Apostle says, But if we hope for what we see not, we do with patience wait for it. Now, by the ear of God, we ought, according to a general rule of interpretation, to understand not a bodily member, but the power whereby He heareth; and so, (not to repeat this often,) by whatever members of His are mentioned, which in us are visible and bodily, must be understood powers of operation. For we must not suppose it any thing bodily, in that the Lord God hears not the sound of the voice, but the preparation of the heart.

34. Ver. 18. To judge for the orphan and the humble: that is, not for him who is conformed to this world, nor for the proud. For it is one thing to judge the orphan, another to judge for the orphan. He judges the orphan even, who condemns him; but he judges for the orphan, who delivers sentence for him. That man add not further to magnify himself upon earth. For they are men, of whom it was said, Place a lawgiver over them, O Lord: let the heathen know that they are men. But he too, who in this same passage is understood to be placed over them, will be man, of whom it is now said, That man add not further to magnify himself upon earth: namely, when the Son of Man shall come to judge for the orphan, who hath put off from himself the old man, and thus, as it were, buried his father.

35. After the hidden things then of the Son, of which, in this Psalm, many things have been said, will come the manifest things of the Son, of which a little has been now said at the end of the same Psalm. But the title is given from the former, which here occupy the larger portion. Indeed, the very day of the Lord’s advent may be rightly numbered among the hidden things of the Son, although the very presence of the Lord itself will be manifest. For

of that day it is said, that no man knoweth it, neither angels, nor powers, nor the Son of man. What then so hidden, as that which is said to be hidden even to the Judge Himself, not as regards knowledge, but disclosure? But concerning the hidden things of the Son, even if any one would not wish to understand the Son of God, but of David himself, to whose name the whole Psalter is attributed, for the Psalms we know are called the Psalms of David, let him give ear to those words in which it is said to the Lord, Have mercy on us, O Son of David: and so even in this manner let him understand the same Lord Christ, concerning Whose hidden things is the inscription of this Psalm. For so likewise is it said by the Angel: God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. Nor to this understanding of it is the sentence opposed in which the same Lord asks of the Jews, If Christ be the Son of David, how then doth he in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand, until I put Thine enemies under Thy feet. For it was said to the unskilled, who although they looked for Christ's coming, yet expected Him as man, not as the Power and Wisdom of God. He teacheth then, in that place, the most true and pure faith, that He is both the Lord of king David, in that He is the Word in the beginning, God with God, by Which all things were made; and Son, in that He was made to him of the seed of David according to the flesh. For He doth not say, Christ is not David's Son, but if ye already hold that He is his Son, learn how He is his Lord: and do not hold in respect of Christ that He is the Son of Man, for so is He David's Son; and leave out that He is the Son of God, for so is He David's Lord.

PSALM 11

To the end, a Psalm of David himself.

1. This title does not require a fresh consideration: for the meaning of, to the end, has already been sufficiently handled. Let us then look to the text itself of the Psalm, which to me appears to be sung against the heretics, who, by rehearsing and exaggerating the sins of many in the Church, as if either all or the majority among themselves were righteous, strive to turn and snatch us away from the breasts of the one True Mother Church: affirming that Christ is with them, and warning us as if with piety and earnestness, that by passing over to them we may go over to Christ, Whom they falsely declare they have. Now it is known that in prophecy Christ, among the many names in which notice of Him is conveyed in allegory, is also called a mountain. We must accordingly answer these people and say, (ver. 1.) I trust in the Lord: how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow? I keep to one mountain wherein I trust, how say ye that I should pass over to you, as if there were many Christs? Or if through pride you say that you are mountains, I had indeed need to be a sparrow winged with the powers and commandments of God: but these very things hinder my flying to these mountains, and placing my trust in proud men. I have a house where I may rest, in that I trust in the Lord. For even the sparrow hath found her a house, and, The Lord hath become a refuge to the poor. Let us say then with all confidence, lest while we seek Christ among heretics we lose Him, In the Lord I trust: how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow?

2. Ver. 2. For, lo, sinners have bent the bow, they have prepared their arrows in the quiver, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart. These be the terrors of those who threaten us as touching sinners, that we may pass over to them as the righteous. Lo, they say, the sinners have bent the bow: the Scriptures, I suppose, by carnal interpretation of which they emit envenomed sentences from them. They have prepared their arrows in the quiver: the same words that is, which they will shoot out on

the authority of Scripture, they have prepared in the secret place of the heart. That they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart: that when they see, from the Church's light being obscured by the multitude of the unlearned and the carnal, that they cannot be convicted, they may corrupt good manners by evil communications. But against all these terrors we must say, In the Lord I trust.

3. Now I remember that I promised to consider in this Psalm with what suitableness the moon signifies the Church. There are two probable opinions concerning the moon: but of these which is the true, I suppose it either impossible or very difficult for a man to decide. For when we ask whence the moon has her light, some say that it is her own, but that of her globe half is bright, and half dark: and when she revolves in her own orbit, that part wherein she is bright gradually turns towards the earth, so as that it may be seen by us; and that therefore at first her appearance is as if she were horned. For if you make a ball half white and half dark; if you have the dark part before your eyes, you see none of the white: and when you begin turning that white part to your eyes, if you do it gradually, at first you will see horns of whiteness; afterwards it increases gradually, until the whole white part is brought opposite to the eye, and none of the other dark part is visible: but if you continue still gradually turning, the darkness begins to appear and the whiteness to diminish, until it returns again to horns, and is at last wholly removed from the eye, and again that dark part alone can be seen, which they say takes place, when the light of the moon seems to increase up to the fifteenth day, and again diminishes up to the thirtieth, and returns to horns, until no light at all appears in it. According to this opinion the moon in allegory signifies the Church, because in its spiritual part the Church is bright, but in its carnal part is dark: and sometimes the spiritual part is seen by good works, but sometimes it lies hid in the conscience, and is known to God alone, since in the body alone is it seen by men. As happens, when we pray in heart, and as it were seem to be doing nothing, whilst we are enjoined to have our hearts upward, not to the earth, but toward the Lord. But others say that the moon has no light of her own, but is lighted by the sun: but that when she is with it, she keeps that part in which she is not lighted towards us, and therefore there is no light visible in her: but when she begins to recede from the sun, she is lighted in

that part also, which is towards the earth; and that she necessarily begins with horns, until on the fifteenth day she becomes opposite the sun; (for then she rises when the sun sets, so that whosoever shall observe the sun setting, if he turn to the east as he first loses sight of it, may see the moon rising;) and thenceforward when she begins to approach him on the other side, she turns towards us that part, in which she is not lighted, till she returns to horns, and afterwards altogether vanishes: because then the part which is lighted is on high towards the heaven, but towards the earth the part which the sun cannot irradiate. Therefore according to this opinion also the moon is understood to be the Church, because she has no light of her own, but is lighted by the only-begotten Son of God, Who in many places of holy Scripture is allegorically called the Sun. Whom certain heretics being ignorant of, and not able to discern Him, endeavour to turn away the minds of the simple to this corporeal and visible sun, which is the common light of the flesh of men and flies, and some they do pervert, who as long as they cannot behold with the mind the inner light of truth, will not be content with the simple Catholic faith; which is the only safety to babes, and by which milk alone they can arrive in assured strength at the firm support of more solid food. Whichever then of these two opinions be the true, the moon in allegory is fitly understood as the Church. Or if in such difficulties as these, troublesome rather than edifying, there be either no satisfaction or no leisure to exercise the mind, or if the mind itself be not capable of it, it is sufficient to regard the moon with ordinary eyes, and not to seek out obscure causes, but with all men to perceive her increasings and fulnesses and wanings; and if she wanes to the end that she may be renewed, even to this rude multitude she sets forth the image of the Church, in which the resurrection of the dead is believed.

4. Next we must enquire, what in this Psalm is meant by, the obscure moon, in which sinners have prepared to shoot at the upright in heart? For not in one way only may the moon be said to be obscure: for when her monthly course is finished, and when her brightness is interrupted by a cloud, and when she is eclipsed at the full, the moon may be called obscure. It may then be understood first of the persecutors of the Martyrs, for that they wished in the obscure moon to shoot at the upright in heart; whether it be yet in the time of the Church's youth, because she had not yet shone forth in

greatness on the earth, and conquered the darkness of heathen superstitions; or by the tongues of blasphemers and such as defame the Christian name, when the earth was as it were beclouded, the moon, that is, the Church, could not be clearly seen; or when by the slaughter of the Martyrs themselves and so great effusion of blood, as by that eclipse and obscuration, wherein the moon seems to exhibit a bloody face, the weak were deterred from the Christian name; in which terror sinners shot out words crafty and sacrilegious to pervert even the upright in heart. And secondly, it can be understood of these sinners, whom the Church contains, because at that time, taking the opportunity of this moon's obscurity, they committed many crimes, which are now tauntingly objected to us by the heretics, whereas their founders are said to have been guilty of them. But howsoever that be which was done in the obscure moon, now that the Catholic name is spread and celebrated throughout the whole world, what concern of mine is it to be disturbed by things unknown? For in the Lord I trust; nor do I listen to them that say to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow. For, lo, sinners have bent the bow, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart. Or if the moon seem even now obscure to them, because they would make it uncertain which is the Catholic Church, and they strive to convict her by the sins of those many carnal men whom she contains; what concern is this to him, who says in truth, In the Lord I trust? By which word every one shews that he is himself wheat, and endures the chaff with patience unto the time of winnowing.

5. In the Lord, therefore, I trust. Let them fear who trust in man, and cannot deny that they are of man's party, by whose grey hairs they swear; and when in conversation it is demanded of them, of what communion they are, unless they say that they are of his party, they cannot be recognised. Tell me, what do they do, when the so numberless and daily sins and crimes of those, of whom that society is full, are recounted to them? Can they say, In the Lord I trust; how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow? For they do not trust in the Lord, who say that the Sacraments are then holy, if they be administered by holy men. Accordingly when it is demanded of them, who are holy, they are ashamed to say, We are. Moreover if they are not ashamed to say so, the hearers are ashamed for them. So then they force those who receive the Sacraments to put their hope

in man, whose heart they cannot see. And cursed is every one that putteth his hope in man. For what is it to say, What I give is holy, but, Put your hope in me? What if you are not holy? Or shew your heart. But if you cannot do this, how shall I see that you are holy? Or perhaps you will say that it is written, Ye shall know them by their works? I see indeed marvellous works, the daily violences of the Circumcelliones, with the bishops and presbyters for their leaders, flying about in every direction, and calling their terrible clubs ‘Israels;’ which men now living daily see and feel. But for the times of Macarius, respecting which they raise an invidious cry, most men have not seen them, and no one sees them now: and any Catholic who saw them could say, if he wished to be a servant of God, In the Lord I trust. Which indeed he says now, when he sees many things in the Church which he would not, who perceives that he as yet swims within those nets full of fish good and bad, until all arrive at the end of the sea, where the bad are separated from the good. But these, what do they answer, if he whom they baptize say to one of them, How would you have me feel confidence? For if it be the desert of both the giver and the receiver, be it of God the giver and of my conscience the receiver: for these two, His goodness and my own faith, are not doubtful to me. Why do you interpose yourself, of whom I can know nothing certain? Allow me to say, In the Lord I trust. For if I trust in you, how can I trust that you have done no evil this night? Lastly, if you would have me believe you, can I do more than believe respecting yourself? How then can I trust in those with whom you communicated yesterday, and communicate to-day, and will communicate to-morrow, as to whether even in these three days they have not committed aught of evil? But if what we do not know defileth neither you or me, what cause is there for rebaptizing those who have known nothing of the times of the surrender of the books and of the Macarian cry? What cause that thou shouldest dare to rebaptize Christians coming from Mesopotamia, who never even heard the name of Cæcilianus and Donatus, and deny that they are Christians? But if other men’s sins, which they know not of, defile them, whatever is each day committed, on your side, without your knowledge, makes you guilty, who vainly object the imperial constitutions to Catholics, whilst private clubs and fires rage as they do in your own camp. See whereunto they have fallen, who when they saw sinners in the Catholic Church could not say, In the Lord I trust; and have placed their hope in man. Which they would most certainly say, if they were not themselves, or even if themselves were such as they supposed them to be, from whom with sacrilegious pride they pretended that they wished to separate themselves.

6. Let the Catholic soul then say, In the Lord I trust; how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow? For, lo, the sinners have bent the bow, they have prepared their arrows in the quiver, that they may in the obscure moon shoot at the upright in heart: and from them let her turn her speech to the Lord, and say, (ver. 3.) For they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected. And this let her say not against these only, but against all heretics. For they have all, as far as in them lies, destroyed the praise which God hath perfected out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, when they disturb the little ones with vain and scrupulous questions, and suffer them not to be nourished with the milk of faith. As if then it were said to this soul, why do they say to you, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow; why do they frighten you with sinners, who have bent the bow, to shoot in the obscure moon at the upright in heart? She answers, Therefore it is they frighten me, because they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected. Where but in their conventicles, where they nourish not with milk, but kill with poison the babes and ignorant of the interior light. But what hath the Just done? If Macarius, if Cæcilianus, offend you, what hath Christ done to you, Who said, My peace I give unto you, My peace I leave with you; which ye with your abominable dissensions have violated? What hath Christ done to you? Who with such exceeding patience endured His betrayer, as to give to him, as to the other Apostles, the first Eucharist consecrated with His own hands, and blessed with His own mouth. What hath Christ done to you? Who sent this same betrayer, whom He called a devil, who before betraying the Lord could not shew good faith even to the Lord’s purse, with the other disciples to preach the kingdom of heaven; that He might shew that the gifts of God come to those that with faith receive them, though he, through whom they receive them, be such as Judas was.

7. Ver. 4. The Lord is in His holy temple, yea in such wise as the Apostle saith, For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Now if any man shall violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy. He violateth the

temple of God, who violateth unity: for he holdeth not the head, from which the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the working after the measure of every part maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love. The Lord is in this His holy temple; which consisteth of His many members, fulfilling each his own separate duties, by love built up into one building. Which temple he violateth, who for the sake of his own preeminence separateth himself from the Catholic society. The Lord is in His holy temple; the Lord, His seat is in heaven. If you take heaven to be the just man, as you take the earth to be the sinner, to whom it was said, Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou go; the words, The Lord is in His holy temple you will understand to be repeated, whilst it is said, The Lord, His seat is in heaven.

8. His eyes look upon the poor. His to Whom the poor man hath been left, and Who hath been made a refuge to the poor. And therefore all the seditions and tumults within these nets, until they be drawn to shore, concerning which heretics upbraid us to their own ruin and our correction, are caused by those men, who will not be Christ’s poor. But do they turn away God’s eyes from such as would be so? For His eyes look upon the poor. Is it to be feared lest, in the crowd of the rich, He may not be able to see the few poor, whom He brings up in safe keeping in the bosom of the Catholic Church? His eyelids question the sons of men. Here by that rule I would wish to take the sons of men of those that from old men have been regenerated by faith. For these, by certain obscure passages of Scripture, as it were the closed eyes of God, are exercised that they may seek: and again, by certain clear passages, as it were the open eyes of God, are enlightened that they may rejoice. And this frequent closing and opening in the holy Books are as it were the eyelids of God; which question, that is, which try the ‘sons of men;’ who are neither wearied with the obscurity of the matter, but exercised; nor puffed up by knowledge, but confirmed.

9. Ver. 5. The Lord questioneth the righteous and ungodly. Why then do we fear lest the ungodly should be any hurt to us, if so be they do with insincere heart share the sacraments with us, seeing that He questioneth the righteous and the ungodly. But whoso loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul:

that is, not him who believeth God, and putteth not his hope in man, but only his own soul doth the lover of iniquity hurt.

10. Ver. 6. He shall rain snares upon the sinners. If by clouds are understood prophets generally, whether good or bad, who are also called false prophets: false prophets are so ordered by the Lord God, that by them He may rain snares upon sinners. For no one, but the sinner, falls into a following of them, whether by way of preparation for the last punishment, if he shall choose to persevere in sin; or to dissuade from pride, if in time he shall come to seek God with a more sincere intent. But if by clouds are understood good and true prophets only; by these too it is clear that God raineth snares upon sinners, although by them He watereth also the godly unto fruitfulness. To some, saith the Apostle, we are the savour of life unto life; to some the savour of death unto death. For not prophets only, but all who with the word of God water souls, may be called clouds. Who when they are understood amiss, God raineth snares upon sinners; but when they are understood aright, He maketh the hearts of the godly and believing fruitful. As, for instance, the passage, and they two shall be in one flesh, if one interpret it with an eye to lust, He raineth a snare upon the sinner. But if you understand it, as he who says, But I speak concerning Christ and the Church, He raineth a shower on the fertile soil. Now both are effected by the same cloud, that is, holy Scripture. Again the Lord says, Not that which goeth into your mouth defileth you, but that which cometh out. The sinner hears this, and makes ready his palate for gluttony: the righteous hears it, and is guarded against the superstitious distinction in meats. Here then also out of the same cloud of Scripture, according to the several desert of each, upon the sinner the rain of snares, upon the righteous the rain of fruitfulness, is poured.

11. Fire and brimstone and the blast of the tempest is the portion of their cup. This is their punishment and end, by whom the name of God is blasphemed; that first they should be wasted by the fire of their own lusts, then by the ill savour of their evil deeds cast off from the company of the blessed, at last carried away and overwhelmed suffer penalties unspeakable. For this is the portion of their cup: as of the righteous, Thy cup inebriating how excellent is it! for they shall be inebriated with the richness of Thine

house. Now I suppose a cup is mentioned for this reason, that we should not suppose that any thing is done by God’s providence, even in the very punishments of sinners, beyond moderation and measure. And therefore as if he were giving a reason why this should be, he added, (ver. 7.) For the Lord is righteous, and hath loved righteousnesses. The plural not without meaning, but only because he speaks of men, is as that righteousnesses be understood to be used for righteous men. For in many righteous men there seem, so to say, to be righteousnesses, whereas there is one only righteousness of God whereof they all participate. Like as when one face looks upon many mirrors, what in it is one only, is by those many mirrors reflected manifoldly. Wherefore he recurs to the singular, saying, His face hath seen equity. Perhaps, His face hath seen equity, is as if it were said, Equity hath been seen in His face, that is, in knowledge of Him. For God’s face is the power by which He is made known to them that are worthy. Or at least, His face hath seen equity, because He doth not allow Himself to be known by the evil, but by the good; and this is equity.

12. But if any one would understand the moon of the synagogue, let him refer the Psalm to the Lord’s passion, and of the Jews say, For they have destroyed what Thou hast perfected; and of the Lord Himself, But what hath the Just done? Whom they accused as the destroyer of the Law: Whose precepts, by their corrupt living, and by despising them, and by setting up their own, they had destroyed, so that the Lord Himself may speak as Man, as He is wont, saying, In the Lord I trust; how say ye to my soul, Remove into the mountains as a sparrow? by reason, that is, of the fear of those, who desired to apprehend and crucify Him. Since the interpretation is not unreasonable of sinners wishing to shoot at the upright in heart, that is, those who believed in Christ, in the obscure moon, that is, the Synagogue filled with sinners. To this too the words, The Lord is in His holy temple; the Lord, His seat is in heaven, are suitable; that is, the Word in Man, or the very Son of Man Who is in heaven. His eyes look upon the poor; either on Him whom He assumed as God, or for whom He suffered as Man. His eyelids question the sons of men. The closing and opening of the eyes, which is probably meant by the word eyelids, we may take to be His death and resurrection, whereby He tried the sons of men His disciples, terrified at His passion, and gladdened by the resurrection. The Lord questioneth the

righteous and ungodly, even now from out of Heaven governing the Church. But whoso loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul. Why it is so, what follows teaches us. For He shall rain snares upon the sinners: which is to be taken according to the exposition above given, and so on with all the rest to the end of the Psalm.

PSALM 12

To the end, for the eighth, a Psalm of David.

1. It has been said on the sixth Psalm, that ‘the eighth’ may be taken as the day of judgment. For the eighth may also be taken ‘for the eternal age;’ for that after the time present, which is a cycle of seven days, it shall be given to the Saints.

2. Ver. 1. Save me, O Lord, for the holy hath failed; that is, is not found: as we speak when we say, Corn fails, or, Money fails. For the truths have been minished from among the sons of men. The truth is one, whereby holy souls are enlightened: but forasmuch as there are many souls, there may be said in them to be many truths: as in mirrors there are seen many reflections from one face.

3. Ver. 2. He hath talked vanity each man to his neighbour. By neighbour we must understand every man: for that there is no one with whom we should work evil; and the love of our neighbour worketh no evil. Deceitful lips, with a heart and a heart they have spoken evil things. The repetition, with a heart and a heart, signifies a double heart.

4. Ver. 3. May the Lord destroy all deceitful lips. He says all, that no one may suppose himself excepted: as the Apostle says, Upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and of the Greek. The tongue speaking great things: the proud tongue.

5. Ver. 4. Who have said, We will magnify our tongue, our lips are our own, who is Lord over us? Proud hypocrites are meant, putting confidence in their speech to deceive men, and not submitting themselves to God.

6. Ver. 5. Because of the wretchedness of the needy and the sighing of the poor, now I will arise, saith the Lord. For so the Lord Himself in the Gospel pitied His people, because they had no ruler, when they could well obey. Whence too it is said in the Gospel, The harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few. But this must be taken as spoken in the person of God the

Father, Who, because of the needy and the poor, that is, who in need and poverty were lacking spiritual good things, vouchsafed to send His own Son. From thence begins His sermon on the mount in Matthew, where He says, Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. I will place in salvation. He does not say what He would place: but, in salvation, must be understood as, in Christ; according to that, For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation. And hence He is understood to have placed in Him what appertains to the taking away the wretchedness of the needy, and the comforting the sighing of the poor. I will deal confidently in Him: according to that in the Gospel, For He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

7. Ver. 6. The words of the Lord are pure words. This is in the person of the Prophet himself, The words of the Lord are pure words. He says pure, without the alloy of pretence. For many preach the truth impurely; for they sell it for the bribe of the advantages of this life. Of such the Apostle says, that they declared Christ not purely. Silver tried by the fire for the earth. These words of the Lord by means of tribulations approved to sinners. Purified seven times: by the fear of God, by godliness, by knowledge, by might, by counsel, by understanding, by wisdom. For seven steps also of beatitude there are, which the Lord goes over, according to Matthew, in the same sermon which He spake on the Mount, Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed the meek, blessed they that mourn, blessed they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, blessed the merciful, blessed the pure in heart, blessed the peace-makers. Of which seven sentences it may be observed how all that long sermon was spoken. For the eighth where it is said, Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousness’ sake, denotes the fire itself, whereby the silver is proved seven times. And at the termination of this sermon it is said, For He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes. Which refers to that which is said in this Psalm, I deal confidently in Him.

8. Ver. 7. Thou, O Lord, shalt preserve us, and keep us from this generation to eternity: here as needy and poor, there as wealthy and rich.

9. Ver. 8. The ungodly walk in a circle round about: that is, in the desire of things temporal, which revolves as a wheel in a repeated circle of seven

days; and therefore they do not arrive at the eighth, that is, at eternity, for which this Psalm is entitled. So too it is said by Solomon, For the wise king is the winnower of the ungodly, and he bringeth on them the wheel of the wicked.—After Thine height Thou hast multiplied the sons of men. For there is in temporal things too a multiplication, which turns away from the unity of God. Hence the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle presseth down the mind that museth upon many things. But the righteous are multiplied after the height of God, when they shall go from strength to strength.

PSALM 13

Unto the end, a Psalm of David.

1. For Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth. (Ver. 1.) How long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me unto the end? that is, put me off as to spiritually understanding Christ, Who is the Wisdom of God, and the true end of all the aim of the soul. How long dost Thou turn away Thy face from me? As God doth not forget, so neither doth He turn His face away: but Scripture speaks after our manner. Now God is said to turn away His face, when He doth not give to the soul, which as yet hath not the pure eye of the mind, the knowledge of Himself.

2. Ver. 2. How long shall I place counsel in my soul? There is no need of counsel but in adversity. Therefore, How long shall I place counsel in my soul? is as if it were said, How long shall I be in adversity? Or at least it is an answer, so that the meaning is this, So long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me to the end, and so long turn away Thy face from me, until I shall place counsel in mine own soul: so that except a man place counsel in his own soul to work mercy perfectly, God will not direct him to the end, nor give him that full knowledge of Himself, which is face to face. Sorrow in my heart through the day? How long shall I have, is understood. And through the day signifies continuance, so that day is taken for time: from which as each one longs to be free, he has sorrow in his heart, making entreaty to rise to things eternal, and not endure man’s day.

3. How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me? either the devil, or carnal habit.

4. Ver. 3. Look on me, and hear me, O Lord my God. Look on me, refers to what was said, How long dost Thou turn away Thy face from me. Hear, refers to what was said, How long wilt Thou forget me to the end? Lighten mine eyes, that I sleep not in death. The eyes of the heart must be understood, that they be not closed by the pleasurable eclipse of sin.

5. Ver. 4. Lest at any time mine enemy say, I have prevailed against him. The devil’s mockery is to be feared. They that trouble me will exult, if I be moved; the devil and his angels; who exulted not over that righteous man, Job, when they troubled him; because he was not moved, that is, did not draw back from the stedfastness of his faith.

6. Ver. 5. But I have hoped in Thy mercy. Because this very thing, that a man be not moved, and that he abide fixed in the Lord, he should not attribute to self: lest when he glories that he hath not been moved, he be moved by this very pride. My heart shall exult in Thy salvation; in Christ, in the Wisdom of God. (Ver. 6.) I will sing to the Lord Who hath given me good things; spiritual good things, not belonging to man’s day. And I will chant to the name of the Lord most high; that is, I give thanks with joy, and in most due order employ my body, which is the song of the spiritual soul. But if any distinction is to be marked here, I will sing with the heart, I will chant with my works; to the Lord, that which He alone seeth, but to the name of the Lord, that which is known among men, which is serviceable not for Him, but for us.

PSALM 14

To the end, a Psalm of David himself.

1. What to the end means, must not be too often repeated. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth; as the Apostle saith. We believe on Him, when we begin to enter on the good road: we shall see Him, when we shall get to the end. And therefore is He the end.

2. Ver. 1. The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. For not even have certain sacrilegious and abominable philosophers, who entertain perverse and false notions of God, dared to say, There is no God. Therefore it is, hath said in his heart; for that no one dares to say it, even if he has dared to think it. They are corrupt, and become abominable in their affections: that is, whilst they love this world and love not God; these are the affections which corrupt the soul, and so blind it, that the fool can even say, in his heart, There is no God. For as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind. There is none that doeth goodness, no not up to one. Up to one, can be understood either with that one, so that no man be understood: or besides one, that the Lord Christ may be excepted. As we say, This field is up to the sea; we do not of course reckon the sea together with the field. And this is the better interpretation, so that none be understood to have done goodness up to Christ; for that no man can do goodness, except He shall have shewn it. And that is true; for until a man know the one God, he cannot do goodness.

3. Ver. 2. The Lord from heaven looked out upon the sons of men, to see if there be one understanding, or seeking after God. It may be interpreted, upon the Jews; as he may have given them the more honourable name of the sons of men, by reason of their worship of the One God, in comparison with the Gentiles; of whom I suppose it was said above, The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God, &c. Now the Lord looks out, that He may see, by His holy souls: which is the meaning of, from heaven. For by Himself nothing is hid from Him.

4. Ver. 3. All have gone out of the way, they have together become useless: that is, the Jews have become as the Gentiles, who were spoken of above, There is none that doeth good, no not up to one: must be interpreted as above. Their throat is an open sepulchre. Either the voracity of the ever open palate is signified: or allegorically those who slay, and as it were devour those they have slain, into whom they instil the disorder of their own conversation. Like to which with the contrary meaning is that which was said to Peter, Kill and eat; that he should convert the Gentiles to his own faith and good conversation. With their tongues they have dealt craftily. Flattery is the companion of the greedy and of all bad men. The poison of asps is under their lips. By poison, he means deceit; and of asps, because they will not hear the precepts of the law, as asps will not hear the voice of the charmer; which is said more clearly in another Psalm. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: this is, the poison of asps. Their feet are swift to shed blood. He here shews forth the habit of ill doing. Destruction and unhappiness are in their ways. For all the ways of evil men are full of toil and misery. Hence the Lord cries out, Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. For My yoke is easy and My burden light. And the way of peace have they not known: that way, namely, which the Lord, as I said, mentions, in the easy yoke and light burden. There is no fear of God before their eyes. These do not say, There is no God; but yet they do not fear God.

5. Ver. 4. Shall not all, who work iniquity, know? He threatens the judgment. Who devour My people as the food of bread: that is, daily. For the food of bread is daily food. Now they devour the people, who serve their own ends out of them, not referring their ministry to the glory of God, and the salvation of those, over whom they are.

6. They have not called upon the Lord. For he doth not really call upon Him, who longs for such things as are displeasing to Him. (Ver. 5.) There they trembled for fear, where no fear was: that is, for the loss of things temporal. For they said, If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him; and the Romans will come, and take away both our place and nation. They feared to lose an earthly kingdom, where no fear was; and they lost

the kingdom of heaven, which they ought to have feared. And this must be understood of all temporal goods, the loss of which when men fear, they come not to things eternal.

7. For God is in the just generation. [It refers to what went before, so that the sense is, ‘shall not all they that work iniquity know that the Lord is in the just generation;’] that is, He is not in them who love the world. For it is unjust to leave the Maker of the worlds, and serve the creature more than the Creator. (Ver. 6.) Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, for the Lord is his hope: that is, ye have despised the humble coming of the Son of God, because ye saw not in Him the pomp of the world: that they, whom He was calling, should put their hope in God alone, not in the things that pass away.

8. Ver. 7. Who will give salvation to Israel out of Sion? Who but He Whose humiliation ye have despised? is understood. For He will come in glory to the judgment of the quick and the dead, and the kingdom of the just: that, forasmuch as in that humble coming blindness hath happened in part unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, in that other should happen what follows, and so all Israel should be saved. For the Apostle too takes that testimony of Isaiah, where it is said, There shall come out of Sion He Who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for the Jews, as it is here, Who shall give salvation to Israel out of Sion? When the Lord shall turn away the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad. It is a repetition, as is usual: for I suppose, Israel shall be glad, is the same as, Jacob shall rejoice.

PSALM 15

A Psalm of David himself.

1. Touching this title there is no question. (Ver. 1.) O Lord, who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle? Although tabernacle be sometimes used even for an everlasting habitation: yet when tabernacle is taken in its proper meaning, it is a thing of war. Hence soldiers are called tent-fellows, as having their tents together. This sense is assisted by the words, Who shall sojourn? For we war with the devil for a time, and then we need a tabernacle wherein we may refresh ourselves. Which specially points out the faith of the temporal Dispensation, which was wrought for us in time through the Incarnation of the Lord. And who shall rest in Thy holy mountain? Here perhaps he signifies at once the eternal habitation itself, that we should understand by mountain the supereminence of the love of Christ in life eternal.

2. Ver. 2. He who walketh without stain, and worketh righteousness. Here He has laid down the proposition; in what follows he sets it forth in detail.

3. Who speaketh the truth in his heart. For some have truth on their lips, and not in their heart. As if one should deceitfully point out a road, knowing that there were robbers there, and should say, If you go this way, you will be safe from robbers; and it should turn out that in fact there were no robbers found there: he has spoken the truth, but not in his heart. For he supposed it to be otherwise, and spoke the truth in ignorance. Therefore it is not enough to speak the truth, unless it be so also in heart, (Ver. 3.) Who hath practised no deceit in his tongue. Deceit is practised with the tongue, when one thing is professed with the mouth, another concealed in the breast. Nor done evil to his neighbour. It is well known that by neighbour, every man should be understood. And hath not entertained slander against his neighbour, that is, hath not readily or rashly given credence to an accuser.

4. Ver. 4. The malicious one hath been brought to nought in his sight. This is perfection, that the malicious one have no force against a man; and that

this be in his sight; that is, that he know most surely that the malicious is not, save when the mind turns itself away from the eternal and immutable form of her own Creator to the form of the creature, which was made out of nothing. But those that fear the Lord, He glorifieth: the Lord Himself, that is. Now the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. As then the things above belong to the perfect, so what he is now going to say belongs to beginners.

5. Who sweareth unto his neighbour, and deceiveth him not. (Ver. 5.) Who hath not given his money upon usury, and hath not taken rewards against the innocent. These are no great things: but he who is not able to do even this, much less able is he to speak the truth in his heart, and to practise no deceit in his tongue, but as the truth is in the heart, so to profess and have it in his mouth, yea, yea; nay, nay; and to do no evil to his neighbour, that is, to any man; and to entertain no slander against his neighbour: all which are the virtues of the perfect, in whose sight the malicious one hath been brought to nought. Yet he concludes even these lesser things thus, Whoso doeth these things shall not be moved for ever: that is, he shall attain unto those greater things, wherein is great and unshaken stability. For even the very tenses are, perhaps not without cause, so varied, as that in the conclusion above the past tense should be used, but in this the future. For there it was said, The malicious one hath been brought to nought in his sight: but here, shall not be moved for ever.

PSALM 16

The inscription of the title, of David himself.

1. Our King in this Psalm speaks in the character of the human nature He assumed, of Whom the royal title at the time of His passion was eminently set forth.

2. Now He saith as follows; (ver. 1.) Preserve me, O Lord, for in Thee have I hoped: (ver. 2.) I have said to the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou requirest not my goods: for with my goods Thou dost not look to be made blessed.

3. Ver. 3. To the saints who are on His earth: to the saints who have placed their hope in the land of the living, the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, whose spiritual conversation is, by the anchor of hope, fixed in that country, which is rightly called God’s earth; although as yet in this earth too they be conversant in the flesh. He hath wonderfully fulfilled all My wishes in them. To those saints then He hath wonderfully fulfilled all My wishes in their advancement, whereby they have perceived, how both the humanity of My divinity hath profited them that I might die, and the divinity of the humanity that I might rise again.

4. Ver. 4. Their infirmities have been multiplied: their infirmities have been multiplied not for their destruction, but that they might long for the Physician. Afterwards they made haste. Accordingly after infirmities multiplied they made haste, that they might be healed. I will not gather together their assemblies by blood. For their assemblies shall not be carnal, nor will I gather them together as one propitiated by the blood of cattle. Nor will I be mindful of their names within My lips. But by a spiritual change what they have been shall be forgotten; nor by Me shall they be any more called either sinners, or enemies, or men; but righteous, and My brethren, and Sons of God through My peace.

5. Ver. 5. The Lord is the portion of Mine inheritance, and of My cup. For together with Me they shall possess the inheritance, the Lord Himself. Let others choose for themselves portions, earthly and temporal, to enjoy: the portion of the Saints is the Lord eternal. Let others drink of deadly pleasures, the portion of My cup is the Lord. In that I say, Mine, I include the Church: for where the Head is, there is the body also. For into the inheritance will I gather together their assemblies, and by the inebriation of the cup I will forget their old names. Thou art He who will restore to Me My inheritance: that to these too, whom I free, may be known the glory wherein I was with Thee before the world was made. For Thou wilt not restore to Me that which I never lost, but Thou wilt restore to these, who have lost it, the knowledge of that glory: in whom because I am, Thou wilt restore to Me.

6. Ver. 6. The lines have fallen to me in glorious places. The boundaries of my possession have fallen in Thy glory as it were by lot, like as God is the possession of the Priests and Levites. For Mine inheritance is glorious to Me. For Mine inheritance is glorious, not to all, but to them that see; in whom because I am, it is to Me.

7. Ver. 7. I will bless the Lord, Who hath given Me understanding: whereby this inheritance may be seen and possessed. Yea moreover too even unto night my reins have chastened Me. Yea besides understanding, even unto death, My inferior part, the assumption of flesh, hath instructed Me, that I might experience the darkness of mortality, which that understanding hath not.

8. Ver. 8. I foresaw the Lord in My sight always. But coming into things that pass away, I removed not Mine eye from Him Who abideth ever, foreseeing this, that to Him I should return after passing through the things temporal. For He is on My right hand, that I should not be moved. For He favoureth Me, that I should abide fixedly in Him.

9. Ver. 9. Wherefore My heart was glad, and My tongue exulted. Wherefore both in My thoughts is gladness, and in my words exultation. Moreover too My flesh shall rest in hope. Moreover too My flesh shall not fail unto destruction, but shall sleep in hope of the resurrection.

10. Ver. 10. For Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell. For Thou wilt neither give My soul for a possession to those parts below. Neither wilt Thou grant Thine Holy One to see corruption. Neither wilt Thou suffer that sanctified body, whereby others are to be also sanctified, to see corruption. (Ver. 11.) Thou hast made known to Me the paths of life. Thou hast made known through Me the paths of humiliation, that men might return to life, from whence they fell through pride; in whom because I am, Thou hast made known to Me. Thou wilt fill Me with joy with Thy countenance. Thou wilt fill them with joy, that they should seek nothing further, when they shall see Thee face to face; in whom because I am, Thou wilt fill Me. Pleasure is at Thy right hand even to the end. Pleasure is in Thy favour and mercy in this life’s journey, leading on even to the end of the glory of Thy countenance.

PSALM 17

A prayer of David himself.

1. This prayer must be assigned to the Person of the Lord, with the addition of the Church, which is His body.

2. Ver. 1. Hear My righteousness, O God, consider My supplication. Hearken unto My prayer, not in deceitful lips: not going forth to Thee in deceitful lips. (Ver. 2.) Let My judgment from Thy countenance go forth. From the enlightening of the knowledge of Thee, let Me judge truth. Or at least, let My judgment go forth, not in deceitful lips, from Thy countenance, that is, that I may not in judging utter aught else than I understand in Thee. Let Mine eyes see equity: the eyes, of course, of the heart.

3. Ver. 3. Thou hast proved and visited Mine heart in the night-season. For this Mine heart hath been proved by the visitation of tribulation. Thou hast examined Me by fire, and iniquity hath not been found in Me. Now not night only, in that it is wont to disturb, but fire also, in that it burns, is this tribulation to be called; whereby when I was examined I was found righteous.

4. That My mouth may not speak (ver. 4.) the works of men. That nothing may proceed out of My mouth, but what relates to Thy glory and praise; not to the works of men, which they do beside Thy will. Because of the words of Thy lips. Because of the words of Thy peace, or of Thy prophets. I have kept hard ways. I have kept the toilsome ways of human mortality and suffering.

5. Ver. 5. To perfect My steps in Thy paths. That the love of the Church might be perfected in the strait ways, whereby she arrives at Thy rest. That My footsteps be not moved. That the signs of My way, which, like footsteps, have been imprinted on the Sacraments and Apostolical writings, be not moved, that they may mark them who would follow Me. Or at least,

that I may still abide fixedly in eternity, after that I have accomplished the hard ways, and have finished My steps in the straits of Thy paths.

6. Ver 6. I have cried out, for Thou hast heard Me, O God. With a free and strong effort have I directed My prayers unto Thee: for that I might have this power, Thou hast heard Me when praying more weakly. Incline Thine ear to Me, and hear My words. Let not Thy hearing forsake My humiliation.

7. Ver. 7. Make Thy mercies marvellous. Let not Thy mercies be disesteemed, lest they be loved too little.

8. Who savest them that hope in Thee from such as resist Thy right hand: from such as resist the favour, whereby Thou favourest Me. (Ver. 8.) Keep Me, O Lord, as the apple of Thine eye: which seems very little and minute: yet by it is the sight of the eye directed, whereby the light is distinguished from the darkness; as by Christ’s humanity, the divinity of the Judgment distinguishing between the righteous and sinners. In the covering of Thy wings protect Me. In the defence of Thy love and mercy protect Me. (Ver. 9.) From the face of the ungodly who have troubled Me.

9. Mine enemies have compassed about My soul; (ver. 10.) they have shut up their own fat. They have been covered with their own gross joy, after that their desire hath been satiated with wickedness. Their mouth hath spoken pride. And therefore their mouth spoke pride, in saying, Hail, King of the Jews, and other like words.

10. Ver. 11. Casting Me forth they have now compassed Me about. Casting Me forth outside the city, they have now compassed Me about on the Cross. Their eyes they have determined to turn down on the earth. The bent of their heart they have determined to turn down on these earthly things: deeming Him, Who was slain, to endure a mighty evil, and themselves, that slew Him, none.

11. Ver. 12. As a lion ready for prey, have they taken Me. They have taken Me, like that adversary who walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. And as a lion’s whelp dwelling in secret places. And as his whelp, the people to whom it was said, Ye are of your father the devil: meditating on the snares, whereby they might circumvent and destroy the just One.

12. Ver. 13. Arise, O Lord, prevent them, and cast them down. Arise, O Lord, Thou Whom they suppose to be asleep, and regardless of men's iniquities; be they blinded before by their own malice, that vengeance may prevent their deed; and so cast them down.

13. Deliver My soul from the ungodly. Deliver My soul, by restoring Me after the death, which the ungodly have inflicted on Me. Thy weapon (ver. 14.) from the enemies of Thine hand. For My soul is Thy weapon, which Thy hand, that is, Thy eternal Power, hath taken to subdue thereby the kingdoms of iniquity, and divide the righteous from the ungodly. This weapon then deliver from the enemies of Thine hand, that is, of Thy Power, that is, from Mine enemies. Destroy them, O Lord, from off the earth, scatter them in their life. O Lord, destroy them from off the earth, which they inhabit, scatter them throughout the world in this life, which only they think their life, who despair of life eternal. And by Thy hidden things their belly hath been filled. Now not only this visible punishment shall overtake them, but also their memory hath been filled with sins, which as darkness are hidden from the light of Thy truth, that they should forget God. They have been filled with swine's flesh. They have been filled with uncleanness, treading under foot the pearls of God's words. And they have left the rest to their babes: crying out, This sin be upon us and upon our children.

14. Ver. 15. But I shall appear in Thy righteousness in Thy sight. But I, Who have not appeared to them that, with their filthy and darkened heart, can not see the light of wisdom, shall appear in Thy righteousness in Thy sight. I shall be satiated, when Thy glory shall be manifested. And when they have been satiated with their uncleanness, that they could not know Me, I shall be satiated, when Thy glory shall be manifested, in them that know Me. In that verse indeed where it is said, filled mith swine's flesh, some copies have, filled with children: for from the ambiguity of the Greek a double interpretation has resulted. Now by children we understand works; and as by good children, good works, so by, evil evil.

PSALM 18

To the end, for the servant of the Lord, David himself.

That is, for the strong of hand, Christ in His Manhood. The words of this song which he spoke to the Lord on the day when the Lord delivered him out of the hands of his enemies, and of the hand of Saul; and he said, On the day when the Lord delivered him out of the hands of his enemies and of the hand of Saul: namely, the king of the Jews, whom they had demanded for themselves. For as David is said to be by interpretation, strong of hand; so Saul, is said to be demanding. Now it is well known, how that People demanded for themselves a king, and received him for their king, not according to the will of God, but according to their own will.

2. Christ, then, and the Church, that is, whole Christ, the Head and the Body, saith here, (ver. 1.) I will love Thee, O Lord, My strength. I will love Thee, O Lord, by Whom I am strong.

3. Ver. 2. O Lord, My stay, and My refuge, and My deliverer. O Lord, Who hast stayed Me, because I sought refuge with Thee: and I sought refuge, because Thou hast delivered Me. My God is My helper; and I will hope in Him. My God, Who hast first afforded me the help of Thy call, that I might be able to hope in Thee. My defender, and the horn of My salvation, and My redeemer. My defender, because I have not leant upon Myself, lifting up as it were the horn of pride against Thee; but have found Thee a horn indeed, that is, the sure height of salvation: and that I might find it, Thou redeemedst Me.

4. Ver. 3. With praise will I call upon the Lord, and I shall be safe from Mine enemies. Seeking not My own but the Lord’s glory, I will call upon Him, and there shall be no means whereby the errors of ungodliness can hurt Me.

5. Ver. 4. The pains of death, that is, of the flesh, have compassed Me about. And the overflowings of ungodliness have troubled Me. Ungodly troubles

stirred up for a time, like torrents of rain which will soon subside, have come on to trouble Me.

6. Ver. 5. The pains of hell compassed Me about. Among those that compassed Me about to destroy Me, were pains of envy, which work death, and lead on to the hell of sin. The snares of death prevented Me. They prevented Me, so that they wished to hurt Me first, which shall afterwards be recompensed unto them. Now they seize unto destruction such men as they have evilly persuaded by the boast of righteousness: in the name but not in the reality of which they glory against the Gentiles.

7. Ver. 6. And in Mine oppression I called upon the Lord, and cried unto My God. And He heard My voice from His holy temple. He heard from My heart, wherein He dwelleth, My voice. And My cry in His sight entered into His ears; and My cry, which I utter, not in the ears of men but inwardly before Him Himself, entered into His ears.

8. Ver. 7. And the earth was moved and trembled. When the Son of Man was thus glorified, sinners were moved and trembled. And the foundations of the mountains were troubled. And the hopes of the proud, which were in this life, were troubled. And were moved, for God was wroth with them. That is, that the hope of temporal goods might have now no more establishment in the hearts of men.

9. Ver. 8. There went up smoke in His wrath. The tearful supplication of penitents went up, when they came to know God’s threatenings against the ungodly. And fire burneth from His face. And the ardour of love after repentance burns by the knowledge of Him. Coals were kindled from Him. They, who were already dead, abandoned by the fire of good desire and the light of righteousness, and who remained in coldness and darkness, re-enkindled and enlightened, have come to life again.

10. Ver. 9. And He bowed the heaven, and came down. And He humbled the just One, that He might descend to men’s infirmity. And darkness under His feet. And the ungodly, who savour of things earthly, in the darkness of their own malice, knew not Him: for the earth under His feet is as it were His footstool.

11. Ver. 10. And He mounted above the cherubim, and did fly. And He was exalted above the fulness of knowledge, that no man should come to Him but by love: for love is the fulfilling of the law. And full soon He shewed to His lovers that He is incomprehensible, lest they should suppose that He is comprehended by corporeal imaginations. He flew above the wings of the winds. But that swiftness, whereby He shewed Himself to be incomprehensible, is above the powers of souls, whereon as upon wings they raise themselves from earthly fears into the air of liberty.

12. Ver. 11. And hath made darkness His hiding place. And hath settled the obscurity of the Sacraments, and the hidden hope in the heart of believers, where He may lie hid, and not abandon them. In this darkness too, wherein we yet walk by faith, and not by sight, as long as we hope for what we see not, and with patience wait for it. Round about Him is His tabernacle. Yet they that believe Him turn to Him and encircle Him; for that He is in the midst of them, since He is equally the friend of all, in whom as in a tabernacle He at this time dwells. Dark water in clouds of air. Nor let any one on this account, if he understand the Scripture, imagine that he is already in that light, which will be when we shall have come out of faith into sight: for in the prophets and in all the preachers of the word of God there is obscure teaching.

13. Ver. 12. In respect of the brightness in His sight: in comparison with the brightness, which is in the sight of His manifestation. His clouds have passed over. The preachers of His word are not now bounded by the confines of Judæa, but have passed over to the Gentiles. Hail and coals of fire. Reproofs are figured, whereby, as by hail, the hard hearts are bruised: but if a cultivated and genial soil, that is, a godly mind, receive them, the hail’s hardness dissolves into water, that is, the terror of the lightning-charged, and as it were frozen, reproof dissolves into satisfying doctrine; and hearts kindled by the fire of love revive. All these things in His clouds have passed over to the Gentiles.

14. Ver. 13. And the Lord hath thundered from heaven. And in confidence of the Gospel the Lord hath sounded forth from the heart of the just One. And the Highest gave His voice; that we might entertain it, and in the depth of human things, might hear things heavenly.

15. Ver. 14. And He sent out His arrows, and scattered them. And He sent out Evangelists traversing straight paths on the wings of strength, not in their own power, but His by Whom they were sent. And He scattered them, to whom they were sent, that to some of them they should be the savour of life unto life, to others the savour of death unto death. And He multiplied lightnings, and troubled them. And He multiplied miracles, and troubled them.

16. Ver. 15. And the fountains of water were seen. And the fountains of water springing up into everlasting life, which were made in the preachers, were seen. And the foundations of the round world were revealed. And the Prophets, who were not understood, and upon whom was to be built the world of believers in the Lord, were revealed. At Thy chiding, O Lord: crying out, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. At the blasting of the breath of Thy displeasure; saying, Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

17. Ver. 16. He hath sent down from on high, and hath fetched Me: by calling out of the Gentiles for an inheritance a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle. He hath taken Me out of the multitude of waters. He hath taken Me out of the multitude of peoples.

18. Ver. 17. He hath delivered Me from My strongest enemies. He hath delivered Me from Mine enemies, who prevailed to the afflicting and overturning of this temporal life of Mine. And from them which hate Me; for they are too strong for Me: as long as I am under them knowing not God.

19. Ver. 18. They have prevented Me in the day of My affliction. They have first injured Me, in the time when I am bearing a mortal and toilsome body. And the Lord hath become My stay. And since the stay of earthly pleasure was disturbed and torn up by the bitterness of misery, the Lord hath become My stay.

20. Ver. 19. And hath brought Me forth into a broad place. And since I was enduring the straits of the flesh, He brought Me forth into the spiritual breadth of faith. He hath delivered Me, because He desired Me. Before that I desired Him, He delivered Me from My most powerful enemies, (who

were envious of Me when I once desired Him,) and from them that hated Me, because I do desire Him.

21. Ver. 20. And the Lord shall reward Me according to My righteousness. And the Lord shall reward Me according to the righteousness of My good will, Who first shewed mercy, before that I had the good will. And according to the cleanness of My hands He will recompense Me. And according to the cleanness of My deeds He will recompense Me, Who hath given Me to do well by bringing Me forth into the broad place of faith.

22. Ver. 21. Because I have kept the ways of the Lord. That the breadth of good works, that are by faith, and the long-suffering of perseverance should follow after.

23. Nor have I walked impiously apart from My God. Ver. 22. For all His judgments are in My sight. For with persevering contemplation I weigh all His judgments, that is, the rewards of the righteous, and the punishments of the ungodly, and the scourges of such as are to be chastened, and the trials of such as are to be proved. And I have not cast out His righteousness from Me: as they do that faint under their burden of them, and return to their own vomit.

24. Ver. 23. And I shall be undefiled with Him, and I shall keep Myself from Mine iniquity.

25. Ver. 24. And the Lord shall reward Me according to My righteousness. Accordingly not only for the breadth of faith, which worketh by love; but also for the length of perseverance, will the Lord reward Me according to My righteousness. And according to the cleanness of My hands in the sight of His eyes. Not as men see, but in the sight of His eyes. For the things that are seen are temporal; but the things that are not seen are eternal: whereto the height of hope appertains.

26. Ver. 25. With the holy Thou shalt be holy. There is a hidden depth also, wherein Thou art known to be holy with the holy, for that Thou makest holy. And with the harmless Thou shalt be harmless. For Thou harmest no man, but each one is bound by the bands of his own sins.

27. Ver. 26. And with the chosen Thou shalt be chosen. And by him whom Thou choosest, Thou art chosen. And with the froward Thou shalt be froward. And with the froward Thou seemest froward: for they say, The way of the Lord is not right: and their way is not right.

28. Ver. 27. For Thou wilt make whole the humble people. Now this seems froward to the froward, that Thou wilt make them whole that confess their sins. And Thou wilt humble the eyes of the proud. But them that are ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seek to establish their own, Thou wilt humble.

29. Ver. 28. For thou wilt light My candle, O Lord. For our light is not from ourselves; but Thou wilt light my candle, O Lord. O my God, Thou wilt enlighten my darkness. For we through our sins are darkness; but, Thou, O my God, wilt enlighten my darkness.

30. Ver. 29. For by Thee shall I be delivered from temptation. For not by myself, but by Thee, shall I be delivered from temptation. And in my God shall I leap over the wall. And not in myself, but in my God shall I leap over the wall, which sin has raised between men and the heavenly Jerusalem.

31. Ver. 30. My God, His way is undefiled. My God cometh not unto men, except they shall have purified the way of faith, whereby He may come to them; for that His way is undefiled. The words of the Lord have been proved by fire. The words of the Lord are tried by the fire of tribulation. He is the Protector of them that hope in Him. And all that hope not in themselves, but in Him, are not consumed by that same tribulation. For hope followeth faith.

32. Ver. 31. For Who is God, but the Lord? Whom we serve. And Who God, but our God? And Who is God, but the Lord? Whom after good service we sons shall possess as the hoped for inheritance.

33. Ver. 32. God, Who hath girded me with strength. God, Who hath girded me that I might be strong, lest the loosely flowing folds of desire hinder my deeds and steps. And hath made my way undefiled. And hath made the way

of love, whereby I may come to Him, undefiled, as the way of faith is undefiled, whereby He comes to me.

34. Ver. 33. Who hath made my feet perfect like harts’ feet. Who hath made my love perfect to surmount the thorny and dark entanglements of this world. And will set me up on high. And will fix my aim on the heavenly habitation, that I may be filled with all the fulness of God.

35. Ver. 34. Who teacheth my hands for battle. Who teacheth me to work for the overthrow of mine enemies, who strive to shut the kingdom of heaven against us. And Thou hast made mine arms as a bow of steel. And Thou hast made my earnest striving after good works unwearied.

36. Ver. 35. And Thou hast given me the defence of my salvation, and Thy right hand hath held me up. And the favour of Thy grace hath held me up. And Thy discipline hath directed me to the end. And Thy correction, not suffering me to wander from the way, hath directed me that whatsoever I do, I refer to that end, whereby I may cleave to Thee. And this Thy discipline, it shall teach me. And that same correction of Thine shall teach me to attain to that, whereunto it hath directed me.

37. Ver. 36. Thou hast enlarged my steps under me. Nor shall the straits of the flesh hinder me; for Thou hast enlarged my love, working in gladness even with these mortal things and members which are under me. And my footsteps have not been weakened. And either my goings, or the marks which I have imprinted for the imitation of those that follow, have not been weakened.

38. Ver. 37. I will follow up mine enemies, and seize them. I will follow up my carnal affections, and will not be seized by them, but will seize them, so that they may be consumed. And I will not turn, till they fail. And from this purpose I will not turn myself to rest, till they fail who make a tumult about me.

39. Ver. 38. I will break them, and they shall not be able to stand: and they shall not hold out against me. They shall fall under my feet. When they are cast down, I will place before me the loves whereby I walk for evermore.

40. Ver. 39. And Thou hast girded me with strength to the war. And the loose desires of my flesh hast Thou bound up with strength, that in such a fight I may not be encumbered. Thou hast supplanted under me them that rose up against me. Thou hast caused them to be deceived, who followed upon me, that they should be brought under me, who desired to be over me.

41. Ver. 40. And Thou hast given mine enemies the back to me. And Thou hast turned mine enemies, and hast made them to be a back to me, that is, to follow me. And Thou hast destroyed them that hate me. But such other of them, as have persisted in hatred, Thou hast destroyed.

42. Ver. 41. They have cried out, and there was none to save them. For who can save them, whom Thou wouldest not save? To the Lord, and He did not hear them. Nor did they cry out to any chance one, but to the Lord: and He did not judge them worthy of being heard, who depart not from their wickedness.

43. Ver. 42. And I will beat them as small as dust before the face of the wind. And I will beat them small; for dry they are, receiving not the shower of God’s mercy; that borne aloft and puffed up with pride they may be hurried along from firm and unshaken hope, and as it were from the earth’s solidity and stability. As the clay of the streets I will destroy them. In their wanton and loose course along the broad ways of perdition, which many walk, will I destroy them.

44. Ver. 43. Thou wilt deliver Me from the contradictions of the people. Thou wilt deliver Me from the contradictions of them who said, If we send Him away, all the world will go after Him.

45. Thou shalt make Me the head of the Gentiles. A people whom I have not known have served Me. The people of the Gentiles, whom in bodily presence I have not visited, have served Me. (Ver. 44.) At the hearing of the ear they have obeyed Me. They have not seen Me with the eye: but, receiving My preachers, at the hearing of the ear they have obeyed Me.

46. The strange children have lied unto Me. Children, not to be called Mine, but rather strange children, to whom it is rightly said, Ye are of your father the devil, have lied unto Me. (Ver. 45.) The strange children have waxen

old. The strange children, to whom for their renovation I brought the new Testament, have remained in the old man. And they have halted from their own paths. And like those that are weak in one foot, for holding the old they have rejected the new Testament, they have become halt, even in this old Law, rather following their own traditions, than God's. For they brought frivolous charges of unwashen hands, because such were the paths, which themselves had made and worn by long use, in wandering from the ways of God's commands.

47. Ver. 46. The Lord liveth, and blessed be my God. But to be carnally minded is death: for the Lord liveth, and blessed be my God. And let the God of my salvation be exalted. And let me not think after an earthly fashion of the God of my salvation; nor look from Him for this earthly salvation, but that on high.

48. Ver. 47. O God, Who givest Me vengeance, and subduest the people under Me. O God, Who avengest Me by subduing the people under Me. My Deliverer from My angry enemies: the Jews crying out, Crucify Him, Crucify Him.

49. Ver. 48. From them that rise up against Me Thou wilt exalt Me. From the Jews that rise up against Me in My passion, Thou wilt exalt Me in My resurrection. From the unjust man Thou wilt deliver Me. From their unjust rule Thou wilt deliver Me.

50. Ver. 49. For this cause will I confess to Thee among the Gentiles, O Lord. For this cause shall the Gentiles confess to Thee through Me, O Lord. And I will sing unto Thy Name. And Thou shalt be more widely known by My good deeds.

51. Ver. 50. Magnifying the salvation of His King. God, Who magnifieth, so as to make wonderful, the salvation, which His Son giveth to believers. And shewing mercy to His Christ: God, Who sheweth mercy to His Christ: To David and to His seed for evermore: to the Deliverer Himself strong of hand, Who hath overcome this world; and to them whom, as believers in the Gospel, He hath begotten for evermore. What things soever are spoken in this Psalm which cannot apply to the Lord Himself personally, that is to the

Head of the Church, must be referred to the Church. For whole Christ speaks here, in Whom are all His members.

PSALM 19

first exposition

To the end, a Psalm of David himself.

1. It is a well-known title; nor does the Lord Jesus Christ say what follows, but it is said of Him.

2. Ver. 1. The heavens tell out the glory of God. The righteous Evangelists, in whom, as in the heavens, God dwelleth, set forth the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, or the glory wherewith the Son glorified the Father upon earth. And the firmament sheweth forth the works of His hands. And the firmament sheweth forth the deeds of the Lord's power, that now made heaven by the assurance of the Holy Ghost, which before was earth by fear.

3. Ver. 2. Day unto day uttereth word. To the spiritual the Spirit giveth out the fulness of the unchangeable Wisdom of God, the Word which in the beginning is God with God. And night unto night announceth knowledge. And to the fleshly, as to those afar off, the mortality of the flesh, by conveying faith, announceth future knowledge.

4. Ver. 3. There is no speech nor language, in which their voices are not heard. In which the voices of the Evangelists have not been heard, seeing that the Gospel was preached in every tongue.

5. Ver. 4. Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.

6. In the sun hath He set His tabernacle. Now that He might war against the powers of temporal error, the Lord, being about to send not peace but a sword on earth, in time, or in manifestation, set so to say His military dwelling, that is, the dispensation of His incarnation. (Ver. 5.) And He as a bridegroom coming forth out of His chamber. And He, coming forth out of the Virgin's womb, where God was united to man's nature as a bridegroom to a bride. Rejoiced as a giant to run His way. Rejoiced as One exceeding

strong, and surpassing all other men in power incomparable, not to inhabit, but to run His way. For, He stood not in the way of sinners.

7. Ver. 6. His going forth is from the highest heaven. From the Father is His going forth, not that in time, but from everlasting, whereby He was born of the Father. And His meeting is even to the height of heaven. And in the fulness of the Godhead He meets even to an equality with the Father. And there is none that may hide himself from His heat. But whereas, the Word was even made flesh, and dwelt in us, assuming our mortality, He permitted no man to excuse himself from the shadow of death; for the heat of the Word penetrated even it.

8. Ver. 7. The law of the Lord is undefiled, converting souls. The law of the Lord, therefore, is Himself Who came to fulfil the law, not to destroy it; an undefiled law, Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth, not oppressing souls with the yoke of bondage, but converting them to imitate Him in liberty. The testimony of the Lord is sure, giving wisdom to babes. The testimony of the Lord is sure; for, no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him, which things have been hidden from the wise and revealed to babes; for, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

9. Ver. 8. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. All the statutes of the Lord are right in Him Who taught not what He did not; that they who should imitate Him might rejoice in heart, in those things which they should do freely with love, not slavishly with fear. The commandment of the Lord is lucid, enlightening the eyes. The commandment of the Lord is lucid, with no veil of carnal observances, enlightening the sight of the inner man.

10. Ver. 9. The fear of the Lord is chaste, enduring for ever. The fear of the Lord; not that distressing fear under the law, dreading exceedingly the withdrawal of temporal goods, by the love of which the soul commits fornication; but that chaste fear wherewith the Church, the more ardently she loves her Spouse, the more carefully does she take heed of offending Him, and therefore, perfect love casteth not out this fear, but it endureth for ever.

11. The judgments of the Lord are true, justified together. The judgments of Him, Who judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, are justified in truth unchangeably. For neither in His threatenings or His promises doth God deceive any man, nor can any withdraw either from the ungodly His punishment, or from the godly His reward. (Ver. 10.) To be desired more than gold, and much precious stone. Whether it be gold and stone itself much, or much precious, or much to be desired; still, the judgments of God are to be desired more than the pomp of this world; by desire of which it is brought to pass that the judgments of God are not desired, but feared, or despised, or not believed. But if any be himself gold and precious stone, that he may not be consumed by fire, but received into the treasury of God, more than himself does he desire the judgments of God, Whose will he preferreth to his own. And sweeter than honey and the honey comb. And whether one be even now honey, who, disenthralled already from the chains of this life, is awaiting the day, when he may come up to God's feast; or whether he be yet as the honey comb, wrapped about with this life as it were with wax, not mixed and become one with it, but filling it, needing some pressure of God's hand, not oppressing but expressing it, whereby from life temporal it may be strained out into life eternal: to such an one the judgments of God are sweeter, than he himself is to himself, for that they are sweeter than honey and the honey comb.

12. Ver. 11. For Thy servant keepeth them. For to him who keepeth them not the day of the Lord is bitter. In keeping them there is great reward. Not in any external benefit, but in the thing itself, that God's judgments are kept, is there great reward; great because one rejoiceth therein.

13. Ver. 12. Who understandeth sins? But what sort of sweetness can there be in sins, where there is no understanding? For who can understand sins, which close the very eye, to which truth is pleasant, to which the judgments of God are desirable and sweet? yea, as darkness closes the eye, so do sins the mind, and suffer it not to see either the light, or itself.

14. Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret faults. From the lusts which lie hid in me, cleanse me, O Lord. (Ver. 13.) And from the faults of others preserve Thy servant. Let me not be led astray by others. For he is not a prey to the faults of others, who is cleansed from his own. Preserve therefore from the

lusts of others, not the proud man, and him who would be his own master, but, Thy servant. If they get not the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled. If neither my own secret sins, nor those of others, get the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled. For there is no third source of sin, but one's own secret sin, by which the devil fell, and another's sin, by which man is seduced, so as by consenting to make it his own. And I shall be cleansed from the great offence. What but pride? for there is none greater than apostacy from God, which is the beginning of the pride of man. And he shall indeed be undefiled, who is free from this offence also; for this is the last to them who are returning to God, which was the first as they departed from Him.

15. Ver. 14. And the words of my mouth shall be pleasing, and the meditation of my heart is always in Thy sight. The meditation of my heart is not after the vain glory of pleasing men, for now there is pride no more, but in Thy sight alway, Who regardest a pure conscience. O Lord, my Helper, and my Redeemer. O Lord, my Helper, in my approach to Thee; for Thou art my Redeemer, that I might set out unto Thee: lest any attributing to his own wisdom his conversion to Thee, or to his own strength his attaining to Thee, should be rather driven back by Thee, who resistest the proud; for he is not cleansed from the great offence, nor pleasing in Thy sight, Who redeemest us that we may be converted, and helpest us that we may attain unto Thee.

second exposition

1. As we have intreated the Lord to cleanse us from our own secret faults, and preserve His servants from those of others, we ought to understand the meaning of this, that we may sing with man's intelligence, and not as it were with the voice of birds. For black-birds, and parrots, and ravens, and magpies, and such like birds, are often taught by men to utter they know not what. But to sing with understanding has been granted by the divine will to human kind. And how many bad and dissipated men thus sing what is worthy of their ears and hearts, we well know and we deplore. For they are so much the worse, as they cannot be ignorant of what they sing. For they know that their songs are impure, and yet the greater the impurity the greater their readiness to sing, for they think themselves the more joyous in

proportion as they are more unclean. But we who, in the Church, have learnt to sing the oracles of God, should at the same time be instant to be that which is written, Blessed is the people that understand the joyful sound. Therefore, dearest brethren, what we have sung with accordant voice, we ought also with an undisturbed heart to know and understand. For each one of us has in this canticle prayed unto the Lord, and said unto God, Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults, and preserve Thy servant from those of others. If they shall not get the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled, and cleansed from the great offence. Now that we may well understand what this is, and the nature of it, let us, as the Lord shall help us, shortly run over the contents of this Psalm.

2. For the canticle is of Christ, as evidently appears from that passage where it is written, He as a Bridegroom coming forth out of His chamber. For who is the Bridegroom, but He to whom has been betrothed by the Apostle that virgin, for whom the chaste friend of the bridegroom chastely fears, lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so this virgin’s mind, the Bride of Christ, should be corrupted from the chastity that is in Christ? In this our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, therefore, abundant and full grace resides, of which the Apostle John saith, And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Ver. 1. This glory the heavens declare. The heavens are Saints, raised up from the earth, bearing the Lord. Although the visible heaven also, in some sort, hath declared the glory of Christ. When? When, at the same Lord’s nativity, a new star, which had never before been seen, appeared. But, nevertheless, these are truer and higher heavens, of which it is said in the following verses of the Psalm, There is no speech, nor language, in which their voices are not heard. Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. Whose words but the heavens’? Whose then but the Apostles’? It is they declare unto us the glory of God, residing in Jesus Christ through grace for the remission of sins. For all have sinned, and want the glory of God, being justified gratuitously by His Blood. Because gratuitously, therefore grace. For grace is no grace if it be not gratuitous. Because we had before done no good thing, whereby we might deserve such gifts, rather in that punishment was, not for nothing, to be inflicted, therefore was the boon for nothing accorded. Nothing had gone before in our deserts but what would entitle us to condemnation. But He, not for our righteousness, but of His own mercy, hath saved us by the laver of regeneration. This, I say, is the glory of God; this have the heavens declared. This, I say, is God’s glory, not thine. For no good hast thou done, and yet so great good hast thou received. If, therefore, thou attainest unto the glory which the heavens have declared, say unto the Lord thy God, My God, His mercy shall prevent me. For it hath prevented thee; of course it hath prevented thee, for that it found no good in thee. Thou preventedst His punishment by thy pride; He prevented thy punishment by effacing thy sins. For as of a sinner justified, of ungodly made godly, of one condemned received into the kingdom, say thou unto the Lord thy God, Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the glory. Say we not unto us. For unto whom, if as unto us? Say we, I repeat, not unto us; for if He were so to deal with us, He could only inflict punishment upon us. Not unto us, but unto His own Name let Him give the glory, because He hath not dealt with us according to our iniquities. Not therefore unto us, O Lord, not unto us. The repetition is confirmation; Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the glory. This those heavens knew, which declared the glory of God.

3. And the firmament sheweth the works of His hands. What was before said, the glory of God, is here repeated, the works of His hands. What are the works of His hands? It is not, as some think, that God made all things by the Word, and man, as more excellent than all other things, He made by His Own Hands. We must not think this; this is a weak and inexact notion; for He made all things by the Word. For although diverse works of God are mentioned, among which He made man after His own image, yet all things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made. But as respects the Hands of God, it is said of the heavens too, And the heavens are the works of Thy Hands. And that you might not suppose that saints are in that place called heavens, he added, They shall perish, but Thou abidest. Therefore not man only, but the heavens also, that shall perish, did God make with His Hands, to Whom it is said, The heavens are the works of Thy Hands. And of the earth is this self-same said, For the sea is His and He made it, and His Hands laid the foundations of the dry land. Therefore,

if He made the heavens with His Hands, and the earth with His Hands, He made not man alone with His hands; and if by the Word He made the heavens, and by the Word the earth, therefore by the Word man too. What by the Word that by the hand, what by the hand that by the Word. For the stature of God is not marked out by human members, Who is wholly every where, and is no where contained. What therefore He made by the Word, He made by the Wisdom, and what He made by the Hand he did by the Power; now Christ is the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God, and all things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made. The heavens have declared, do declare, will declare, the glory of God. The heavens, I say, that is, the Saints will declare the glory of God; raised aloft from earth, bearing God, thundering with precepts, lightening with Wisdom, will declare that glory of God, as I said, whereby we that are saved are unworthy of it. This unworthiness, that is, wherein we were unworthy, the younger son acknowledges when straitened by want; this unworthiness, I say, the younger son acknowledges, far from his father's home, a worshipper of demons, as it were a feeder of swine; he acknowledges the glory of God, but when straitened by want. And since by that glory of God we have been made what we were not worthy of, he says to his father, I am not worthy to be called thy son. Unhappy, he obtains happiness by his lowliness, and shews himself worthy in the confession of his unworthiness. This glory of God the heavens declare, and the firmament sheweth the works of His hands. The heavens, the firmament, are a firm heart, a fearless heart. For these things are shewn among the ungodly, among the enemies of God, among the lovers of the world, and the persecutors of the righteous; in the midst of a violent world are these things shewn. But what could the violence of the world effect, when the firmament shewed these things? The firmament sheweth; what? the works of His hands. What are the works of His hands? That glory of God, whereby we are saved, whereby we are created in good works. For we are His work, created in Christ Jesus in good works. For He not only made us men, but righteous men too, if so we be, and not we ourselves.

4. Ver. 2. Day unto day uttereth a word, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. What is this? Perhaps it is plain and evident what day unto day uttereth a word is, evident and plain as if by day. But what night unto night

sheweth knowledge is, is obscure as if by night. Day unto day, saints unto saints, Apostles unto believers, Christ Himself unto Apostles, to whom He said, Ye are the light of the world. This seems plain, and easy of apprehension. But how doth night unto night shew knowledge? Some have understood these words simply, and perhaps it may be so, considering the meaning of this sentence to be, that what the Apostles heard in our Lord Jesus Christ's time, during His converse on earth, this has been passed on to posterity as from time to time; day unto day, night unto night, the former day unto the latter day, the former night unto the latter night, for that this doctrine is preached day and night. Let this simple interpretation suffice him whom it will suffice. But some words in Scripture have from their obscurity this advantage, that they give birth to many interpretations. Accordingly had this been plain, you would have heard some one thing, but as it is obscurely spoken, you will hear many. There is too another interpretation, day unto day, night unto night, that is, spirit unto spirit, flesh unto flesh. There is another, day unto day, spiritual unto spiritual, night unto night, carnal unto carnal. For both hear, though both do not equally understand. For the one hear it as a word uttered, the other as knowledge declared. For what is uttered is uttered to those present, but what is declared is declared to those that are far removed. More senses of the word heavens may be discovered, but because of the stress of the present time, a limit must be imposed. Yet let us mention one more meaning, which certain have, as if by conjecture, opened. When, they say, the Lord Christ talked with the Apostles, day unto day uttered a word; when Judas betrayed the Lord Christ to the Jews, night unto night declared knowledge.

5. Ver. 3. There is no speech nor language in which their voices are not heard. Whose, but of those heavens which declare the glory of God? There is no speech, nor language, in which their voices are not heard. Read the Acts of the Apostles, how, when the Holy Ghost came upon them, they were all filled with Him, and spake in the tongues of all nations, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Lo, there is no speech nor language, in which their voices are not heard. But not there only, where they were filled, was the sound. (Ver. 4.) Their sound went forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. And therefore are we even speaking here. For that sound hath come even unto us, the sound which went forth into all

the earth, and the heretic cometh not into the Church! For this cause hath the sound gone forth into all the earth, that thou mayest enter into heaven. O man full of mischief and strife, most evil and still liking to err, O haughty son, hear thy Father’s will. Lo, what can be more plain, what more evident? Their sound went forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. Needs it any interpreter? Why strivest thou against thyself? Wouldest thou hold a part in dissent, who canst hold the whole in concord?

6. In the sun hath He set His tabernacle. His Church, that is, in open sight, not in secret, not that it should lie hid, not veiled as it were; lest haply as veiled it should light upon the flocks of the heretics. It is said again to one in holy Scripture, For thou didst this secretly, thou shalt suffer in the sun, that is, thou didst the evil in secret, thou shalt suffer the punishment in the open sight of all men. In the sun therefore hath He set His tabernacle. Why, O heretic, fliest into darkness? Art thou a Christian? Hear Christ. Art thou a servant? Hear thy Lord. Art thou a son? Hear thy Father; amend thyself, return to life again. Let us say of thee too, He was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. Say not to me, Why dost thou seek me, if I am lost? For therefore do I seek thee, because thou art lost. Do not seek me, says he. This is indeed the wish of ungodliness, whereby we are divided; but not of charity, whereby we are brethren. I should not be extravagant, if I were to seek my servant; and am I called extravagant, because I seek my brother? Be this his conceit, in whom brotherly love exists not; yet will I seek my brother. Let him be even angry, so he be still sought, who is appeased when he is found. I will seek, I say, my brother, and appeal to my Lord, not against him, but for him. Nor in my appeal will I say, Lord, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me; but, speak to my brother, that he hold the inheritance with me. Why then errest thou, brother? Why fly by the corners? Why try to lie hid? He has set His tabernacle in the sun. (Ver. 5.) And as a bridegroom coming forth out of His chamber, I suppose that thou mayest recognise Him. As a bridegroom coming forth out of His chamber, He rejoiced as a giant to run His course; He hath set His tabernacle in the sun; that is, as a bridegroom when the Word was made flesh, He found a bridal chamber in the Virgin’s womb; and thence coming out as from a closet of surpassing purity, joined to the nature of man, humble in His mercy below all, strong in His majesty above all. For this is,

He rejoiced as a giant to run His course, He was born, grew up, taught, suffered, rose again, ascended; He ran His course, He halted not therein. The self-same bridegroom then Who did all this, He set in the sun, that is, in the open sight of all men, His tabernacle, that is, His holy Church.

7. Now wouldest thou hear what course He swiftly ran? (Ver. 6.) His going forth is from the highest heaven, and His meeting even to the height thereof. But after that He went forth thence, and returned on His backward course, He sent His Spirit. There appeared to them, upon whom He came, cloven tongues as of fire. As fire the Holy Ghost came, to burn the hay of flesh, to smelt and refine the gold; as fire He came, and therefore it follows, and there is none that can hide from the heat thereof.

8. Ver. 7. The law of the Lord is undefiled, converting souls. This is the Holy Ghost. The testimony of the Lord is sure, giving wisdom to babes, not to the proud. This is the Holy Ghost.

9. Ver. 8. The statutes of the Lord are right, not terrifying, but rejoicing the heart. This is the Holy Ghost. The commandment of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes; not dulling them, the eyes, not of the flesh, but of the heart, not of the outer, but of the inner man. This is the Holy Ghost.

10. Ver. 9. The fear of the Lord; not a slavish fear, but chaste, loving freely, not fearing to be punished by Him at Whom it is alarmed, but to be separated from Him Whom it loves. This is chaste fear, not which perfect love casteth out, but enduring for ever. This is the Holy Ghost, that is, this fear the Holy Ghost giveth, bringeth, implanteth. The judgments of the Lord are true, justified together, not for the contentions of division, but for the gathering together of unity. For this is, together. This is the Holy Ghost. Therefore He made them, upon whom He first descended, speak in the tongues of all nations, because He announced that He would gather together the tongues of all nations into unity. What one man did then on receiving the Holy Ghost, that one should speak in the tongues of all nations, this unity itself now doth, she speaketh in all tongues. And now One Man speaketh in all nations in all tongues, One Man the Head and the Body, One Man Christ and the Church, perfect Man together, the bridegroom and the

bride. But they two, saith He, shall be one flesh. The judgments of the Lord are true justified together, because of unity.

11. Ver. 10. To be desired more than gold, and much precious stone. Either much gold, or much precious, or much to be desired; much any way, with the heretic little. They do not love together with us, yet with us they confess Christ. This same Christ Whom with me thou dost confess, Him love with me. And he, who willeth not together, refuses, resists, rejects, with him there is not this desirableness more than gold, and much precious stone. Listen again, sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb. But this is all against the wanderer; honey is bitter to one in a fever; but notwithstanding sweet and acceptable to one restored to health, for to sound health it is dear. To be desired more than gold, and much precious stone, sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb.

12. Ver. 11. For Thy servant also keepeth them. How sweet they are Thy servant proves by keeping them, not by talking. Thy servant keepeth them, for that they are both at present sweet, and healthful for time to come; for in keeping them there is great reward. But enamoured of his strife, the heretic neither sees this brilliancy, nor tastes the sweetness.

13. Ver. 12. For, Who understandeth sins? Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Therefore, saith he, he is a servant who keepeth this sweetness, the pleasantness of charity, the love of unity. I, he says, myself who keep it, entreat Thee, (for who understandeth sins?) lest some steal over me, man as I am, and by some, as a man, I be first entangled. Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret sins. This then we have sung; see, to this I have come in my discourse. Let us say, and sing with understanding, and pray in our song, and by our prayer obtain our petition, let us say, Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret sins. For, Who understandeth sins? If darkness is seen, sins are understood. In fact, when we repent of sin, we are in the light. For whilst one is entangled in his sin, with eyes as it were darkened and closed, he sees not the sin; for so, if the eye of thy body be covered, thou canst neither see aught else, nor that by which it is covered. Therefore say we to God, Who can see what He will purify, who can have an eye on what He will heal; say we to Him, Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret sins, (ver. 13.) and preserve Thy servant from those of others. My own sins, he says,

pollute me, the sins of others afflict me; from the one cleanse me, from the other preserve me. Take away from my heart, I pray, the evil thought, keep back from me the evil counsellor, this is, Cleanse me from my secret sins, and preserve Thy servant from those of others. For these two kinds of faults, both our own and those of others, appeared even from the very first in the beginning. The devil fell by his own sin, he degraded Adam by another's sin. This same servant of God, who keepeth the judgments of God in which there is great reward, in another Psalm too prays thus, Let not the foot of pride come unto me, and let not the hand of the wicked move me. Let not the foot of pride come unto me, that is, Cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret sins; and let not the hand of the wicked move me, that is, Preserve Thy servant from the sins of others.

14. If they get not the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled. If they get not the dominion over me, mine own secret sins and the sins of others, then shall I be undefiled. This is no daring reliance on his own strength, but he entreats the Lord to fulfil it; to Whom it is said in another Psalm, Order my ways according to Thy word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me. If thou art a Christian, fear not the dominion of any man without; the Lord thy God fear alway. Fear the evil in thyself, that is, thy lust, not what God made in thee, but what thou hast made for thine own self. The Lord made thee a good servant, thou hast created in thine own heart an evil lord for thine own self. Justly wilt thou be subject to iniquity, justly wilt thou be subject to the lord, whom thou hast made for thine own self; since thou wouldest not be subject to Him Who made thee.

15. But if, he says, they get not the dominion over me, then shall I be undefiled, and cleansed from the great offence. What offence, do we suppose? What is that great offence? Perchance it is other than that I am about to mention, yet I will not conceal what I think. I deem the great offence to be pride. This perhaps is in another way intimated in that he saith, And I shall be cleansed from the great offence. Do you enquire how great that offence is, which cast down an Angel, which of an Angel made a Devil, and for ever closed the kingdom of heaven against him? This is the great offence, and the head and cause of all offences. For it is written, The beginning of all sin is pride. And that thou mightest not disregard it as any

light matter, he says, The beginning of pride in man is to depart from God. No light evil, my brethren, is this vice; Christian humility is displeasing to this vice in those persons, which you see to be of high degree. By reason of this vice men disdain to submit their necks to the yoke of Christ, being more straitly fastened to the yoke of sin. For no release from serving will be theirs; for they do not like to serve, but to serve is expedient for them. By misliking to serve they gain nothing, but that they serve not a good Lord, not that they do not serve at all. Since whosoever will not be the servant of love, he must needs be the servant of iniquity. From this vice, which is the head of all vices, for that all other vices spring from thence, is produced a departing from God, whilst the soul goes into darkness, and makes an evil use of its free will, with all other sins too in its train; so that a man squanders all his substance by prodigal living with harlots, and through want becomes a feeder of swine, who was the associate of Angels. On account of this vice, on account of this great sin of pride, God came in humility. This cause, this great sin, this mighty disease of souls, brought down the Almighty Physician from heaven, humbled Him even to the form of a servant, exposed Him to despiteful treatment, hung Him on the tree; that by the saving strength of so great medicine this swelling might be cured. Let man now at length blush to be proud, for whose sake God hath become humble. So, saith he, shall I be cleansed from the great offence, because, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

16. Ver. 14. And hereby shall the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be pleasing in Thy sight alway. For if I be not cleansed from this great offence, my words will be pleasing in the sight of men, not in Thy sight. The proud soul would be pleasing in the sight of men; the humble soul would be pleasing in secret, where God seeth; so that if she shall please men with any good work, she would congratulate them whom the good work pleases, not herself, to whom it ought to be enough that she hath done a good work. Our glory, saith the Apostle, is this, the testimony of our conscience. And therefore let us also say what follows, O Lord, my Helper and my Redeemer. Helper in good, Redeemer from evil. Helper, that I may dwell in Thy love, Redeemer, that Thou mayest deliver me from mine iniquity.

PSALM 20

To the end, a Psalm of David.

1. This is a well-known title; and it is not Christ Who speaks; but the prophet speaks to Christ, under the form of wishing foretelling things to come.

2. Ver. 1. The Lord hear Thee in the day of trouble. The Lord hear Thee in the day in which Thou saidst, Father glorify Thy Son. The name of the God of Jacob protect Thee. For to Thee belongeth the younger people. Since the elder shall serve the younger.

3. Ver. 2. Send Thee help from the Holy, and from Sion defend Thee. Making for Thee a sanctified Body, the Church, from watching safe, which waiteth when Thou shalt come from the wedding.

4. Ver. 3. Be mindful of all Thy sacrifice. Make us mindful of all Thy injuries and despiteful treatment, which Thou hast borne for us. And be Thy whole burnt offering made fat. And turn the cross, whereon Thou wast wholly offered up to God, into the joy of the resurrection.

5. Diapsalma. (Ver. 4.) The Lord render to Thee according to Thine Heart. The Lord render to Thee, not according to their heart, who thought by persecution they could destroy Thee; but according to Thine Heart, Wherein Thou knewest what profit Thy passion would have. And fulfil all Thy counsel. And fulfil all Thy counsel, not only that whereby Thou didst lay down Thy life for Thy friends, that the corrupted grain might rise again to more abundance; but that also whereby blindness in part hath happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, and so all Israel might be saved.

6. Ver. 5. We will exult in Thy salvation. We will exult in that death will in no wise hurt Thee; for so Thou wilt also shew that it cannot hurt us either. And in the name of the Lord our God will we be magnified. And the

confession of Thy name shall not only not destroy us, but shall even magnify us.

7. The Lord fulfil all Thy petitions. The Lord fulfil not only the petitions which Thou madest on earth, but those also whereby Thou intercedest for us in heaven. (Ver. 6.) Now have I known that the Lord hath saved His Christ. Now hath it been shewn to me in prophecy, that the Lord will raise up His Christ again. He will hear Him from His holy heaven. He will hear Him not from earth only, where He prayed to be glorified; but from heaven also, where interceding for us at the Right Hand of the Father, He hath from thence shed abroad the Holy Spirit on them that believe on Him. In strength is the safety of His right hand. Our strength is in the safety of His favour, when even out of tribulation He giveth help, that when we are weak, then we may be strong. For vain is that safety of man, which comes not of His right hand but of His left: for thereby are they lifted up to great pride, whosoever in their sins have secured a temporal safety.

8. Ver. 7. Some in chariots, and some in horses. Some are drawn away by the ever moving succession of temporal goods; and some are preferred to proud honours, and in them exult: But we will exult in the name of the Lord our God. But we fixing our hope on things eternal, and not seeking our own glory, will exult in the name of the Lord our God.

9. Ver. 8. They have been bound, and fallen. And therefore were they bound by the lust of temporal things, fearing to spare the Lord, lest they should lose their place by the Romans: and rushing violently on the stone of offence and rock of stumbling, they fell from the heavenly hope: to whom the blindness in part of Israel hath happened, being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and wishing to establish their own. But we are risen, and stand upright. But we, that the Gentile people might enter in, out of the stones raised up as children to Abraham, who followed not after righteousness, have attained to it, and are risen; and not by our own strength, but being justified by faith, we stand upright.

10. Ver. 9. O Lord, save the King: that He, Who in His Passion hath shewn us an example of conflict, should also offer up our sacrifices, the Priest raised from the dead, and established in heaven. And hear us in the day

when we shall call on Thee. And as He now offereth for us, hear us in the day when we shall call on Thee.

PSALM 21

To the end, a Psalm of David himself.

1. The title is a familiar one; the Psalm is of Christ.

2. Ver. 1. O Lord, the King shall rejoice in Thy strength. O Lord, in Thy strength, whereby the Word was made flesh, the Man Christ Jesus shall rejoice: And shall exult exceedingly in Thy salvation. And in that, whereby Thou quickenest all things, shall exult exceedingly.

3. Ver. 2. Thou hast given Him the desire of His soul. He desired to eat the Passover, and to lay down His life when He would, and again when He would to take it; and Thou hast given it to Him. And hast not deprived Him of the good pleasure of His lips. My peace, saith He, I leave with you: and it was done.

4. Ver. 3. For Thou hast presented Him with the blessings of sweetness. Because He had first quaffed the blessing of Thy sweetness, the gall of our sins did not hurt Him. Diapsalma. Thou hast set a crown of precious stone on His Head. At the beginning of His discoursing precious stones were brought, and compassed Him about; His disciples, from whom the commencement of His preaching should be made.

5. Ver. 4. He asked life; and Thou gavest Him: He asked a resurrection, saying, Father, glorify Thy Son; and Thou gavest it Him, Length of days for ever and ever. The prolonged ages of this world which the Church was to have, and after them an eternity, world without end.

6. Ver. 5. His glory is great in Thy salvation. Great indeed is His glory in the salvation, whereby Thou hast raised Him up again. Glory and great honour shalt Thou lay upon Him. But Thou shalt yet add unto Him glory and great honour, when Thou shalt place Him in heaven at Thy right hand.

7. Ver. 6. For Thou shalt give Him blessing for ever and ever. This is the blessing which Thou shalt give Him for ever and ever: Thou shalt make

Him glad in joy together with Thy countenance. According to His manhood, Thou shalt make Him glad together with Thy countenance, which He lifted up to Thee.

8. Ver. 7. For the King hopeth in the Lord. For the King is not proud, but humble in heart, he hopeth in the Lord. And in the mercy of the Most Highest He shall not be moved. And in the mercy of the Most Highest His obedience even unto the death of the Cross shall not disturb His humility.

9. Ver. 8. Let Thy hand be found by all Thine enemies. Be Thy power, O King, when Thou comest to judgment, found by all Thine enemies; who in Thy humiliation discerned it not. Let Thy right hand find out all that hate Thee. Let the glory, wherein Thou reignest at the right hand of the Father, find out for punishment in the day of judgment all that hate Thee; for that now they have not found it.

10. Ver. 9. Thou shalt make them like a fiery oven: Thou shalt make them on fire within, by the consciousness of their ungodliness: In the time of Thy countenance: in the time of Thy manifestation. The Lord shall trouble them in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them. And then, being troubled by the vengeance of the Lord, after the accusation of their conscience, they shall be given up to eternal fire, to be devoured.

11. Ver. 10. Their fruit shalt Thou destroy out of the earth. Their fruit, because it is earthly, shalt Thou destroy out of the earth. And their seed from the sons of men. And their works; or, whomsoever they have seduced, Thou shalt not reckon among the sons of men, whom Thou hast called into the everlasting inheritance.

12. Ver. 11. Because they turned evils against Thee. Now this punishment shall be recompensed to them, because the evils which they supposed to hang over them by Thy reign, they turned against Thee to Thy death. They imagined a device, which they were not able to establish. They imagined a device, saying, It is expedient that one die for all: which they were not able to establish, not knowing what they said.

13. Ver. 12. For Thou shalt set them low. For Thou shalt rank them among those from whom in degradation and contempt Thou wilt turn away. In Thy

leavings Thou shalt make ready their countenance. And in these things that Thou leavest, that is, in the desires of an earthly kingdom, Thou shalt make ready their shamelessness for Thy passion.

14. Ver. 13. Be Thou exalted, O Lord, in Thy strength. Be Thou, Lord, Whom in humiliation they did not discern, exalted in Thy strength, which they thought weakness. We will sing and praise Thy power. In heart and in deed we will celebrate and make known Thy marvels.

PSALM 22

first exposition

To the end, for the taking up of the morning, a Psalm of David.

1. To the end, for His own resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself speaketh. For in the morning on the first day of the week was His resurrection, whereby He was taken up, into eternal life, Over whom death shall have no more dominion. Now what follows is spoken in the person of The Crucified. For from the head of this Psalm are the words, which He cried out, whilst hanging on the Cross, sustaining also the person of the old man, whose mortality He bare. For our old man was nailed together with Him to the Cross.

2. Ver. 1. O God, my God, look upon me, why hast Thou forsaken me far from my salvation? Far removed from my salvation: for salvation is far from sinners. The words of my sins. For these are not the words of righteousness, but of my sins. For it is the old man nailed to the Cross that speaks, ignorant even of the reason why God hath forsaken him: or else it may be thus, The words of my sins are far from my salvation.

3. Ver. 2. My God, I will cry unto Thee in the day-time, and Thou wilt not hear. My God, I will cry unto Thee in the prosperous circumstances of this life, that they be not changed; and Thou wilt not hear, because I shall cry unto Thee in the words of my sins. And in the night-season, and not to my folly. And so in the adversities of this life will I cry to Thee for prosperity; and in like manner Thou wilt not hear. And this Thou doest not to my folly, but rather that I may have wisdom to know what Thou wouldest have me cry for, not with the words of sins out of longing for life temporal, but with the words of turning to Thee for life eternal.

4. Ver. 3. But Thou dwellest in the holy place, O Thou praise of Israel. But Thou dwellest in the holy place, and therefore wilt not hear the unclean words of sins. The praise of him that seeth Thee; not of him, who hath

sought his own praise in tasting of the forbidden fruit, that on the opening of his bodily eyes he should endeavour to hide himself from Thy sight.

5. Ver. 4. Our Fathers hoped in Thee. All the righteous, namely, who sought not their own praise, but Thine. They hoped in Thee, and Thou deliveredst them.

6. Ver. 5. They cried unto Thee, and were saved. They cried unto Thee, not in the words of sins, from which salvation is far; and therefore were they saved. They hoped in Thee, and were not confounded. They hoped in Thee, and their hope did not deceive them. For they placed it not in themselves.

7. Ver. 6. But I am a worm, and no man. But I, speaking now not in the person of Adam, but I in My own person, Jesus Christ, was born without human generation in the flesh, that I might be as man beyond men; that so at least human pride might deign to imitate My humility. The scorn of men, and outcast of the people. In which humility I was made the scorn of men, so as that it should be said, as a reproachful railing, Be thou His disciple: and that the people despise Me.

8. Ver. 7. All that saw Me laughed Me to scorn. All that saw Me derided Me. And spake with the lips, and shook the head. And they spoke, not with the heart, but with the lips.

9. For they shook their head in derision, saying, (ver. 8.) He trusted in the Lord, let Him deliver Him: let Him save Him, since He desireth Him. These were their words; but they were spoken with the lips.

10. Ver. 9. Since Thou art He Who drew Me out of the womb. Since Thou art He Who drew Me, not only out of that Virgin womb, (for this is the law of all men’s birth, that they be drawn out of the womb,) but also out of the womb of the Jewish nation; by the darkness whereof he is covered, and not yet born into the light of Christ, whosoever places his salvation in the carnal observance of the Sabbath, and of circumcision, and the like. My hope from My mother’s breasts. My hope, O God, not from the time when I began to be fed by the milk of the Virgin’s breasts; for it was even before; but from the breasts of the Synagogue, as I have said, out of the womb, Thou hast drawn Me, that I should not suck in the customs of the flesh.

11. Ver. 10. I have been strengthened in Thee from the womb. It is the womb of the Synagogue, which did not carry Me, but threw Me out: but I fell not, for Thou heldest me. From My mother’s womb Thou art My God. From My mother’s womb: My mother’s womb did not cause that, as a babe, I should be forgetful of Thee.

12. Thou art My God, (ver. 11.) depart not from Me; for trouble is hard at hand. Thou art, therefore, My God, depart not from Me; for trouble is nigh unto Me; for it is in My body. For there is none to help. For who helpeth, if Thou helpest not?

13. Ver. 12. Many calves came about Me. The multitude of the wanton populace came about Me. Fat bulls closed Me in. And their leaders, glad at My oppression, closed Me in.

14. Ver. 13. They opened their mouth upon Me. They opened their mouth upon Me, not out of Thy Scripture, but of their own lusts. As a ravening and roaring lion. As a lion, whose ravening is, that I was taken and led; and whose roaring, Crucify, Crucify.

15. Ver. 14. I was poured out like water, and all My bones were scattered. I was poured out like water, when My persecutors fell: and through fear, the stays of My body, that is, the Church, My disciples were scattered from Me. My heart became as melting wax, in the midst of my belly. My wisdom, which was written of Me in the sacred books, was, as if hard and shut up, not understood: but after that the fire of My Passion was applied, it was, as if melted, manifested, and entertained in the memory of My Church.

16. Ver. 15. My strength dried up as a potsherd. My strength dried up by My Passion; not as hay, but a potsherd, which is made stronger by fire. And My tongue cleaved to My jaws. And they, through whom I was soon to speak, kept My precepts in their hearts. And Thou broughtest Me down to the dust of death. And to the ungodly appointed to death, whom the wind casteth forth as dust from the face of the earth, Thou broughtest Me down.

17. Ver. 16. For many dogs came about Me. For many came about Me barking, not for truth, but for custom. The council of the malignant came

about Me. [The council of the malignant besieged Me.] They pierced My hands and feet. They pierced with nails My hands and feet.

18. Ver. 17. They numbered distinctly all My bones. They numbered distinctly all My bones, while extended on the wood of the Cross, Yea, these same regarded, and beheld Me. Yea, these same, that is, unchanged, regarded and beheld Me.

19. Ver. 18. They divided My garments for themselves, and cast the lot upon My vesture.

20. Ver. 19. But Thou, O Lord, withhold not Thy help far from Me. But Thou, O Lord, raise Me up again, not as the rest of men, at the end of the world, but immediately. Look to My defence. Look, that they in no wise hurt Me.

21. Ver. 20. Deliver My soul from the sword. Deliver My soul from the tongue of dissension. And My only One from the hand of the dog. And from the power of the people, barking after their custom, deliver My Church.

22. Ver. 21. Save Me from the lion's mouth: save Me from the mouth of the kingdom of this world: and my humility from the horns of the unicorns. And from the loftiness of the proud, exalting themselves to special preeminence, and enduring no partakers, save My humility.

23. Ver. 22. I will declare Thy name to My brethren. I will declare Thy name to the humble, and to My Brethren that love one another as they have been beloved by Me. In the midst of the Church will I sing of Thee. In the midst of the Church will I with rejoicing preach Thee.

24. Ver. 23. Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him. Ye that fear the Lord, seek not your own praise, but praise Him. All ye seed of Jacob, magnify Him. All ye seed of him whom the elder shall serve, magnify Him.

25. Let all the seed of Israel fear Him. Let all who have been born to a new life, and restored to the vision of God fear Him. (Ver. 24.) Since He hath not despised, nor disregarded the prayer of the poor man. Since He hath not despised the prayer, not of him who, crying unto God in the words of sins

was loath to overpass a vain life, but the prayer of the poor man, not swollen up with transitory pomps. Nor hath He turned away His face from Me. As from him, who said, I will cry unto Thee, but Thou wilt not hear. And when I cried unto Him He heard Me.

26. Ver. 25. With Thee is My praise. For I seek not Mine own praise, for Thou art My praise, Who dwellest in the holy place; and, praise of Israel, Thou hearest The Holy One now beseeching Thee. In the great Church I will confess Thee. In the Church of the whole world I will confess Thee. I will offer My vows in the sight of them that fear Him. I will offer the sacraments of My Body and Blood in the sight of them that fear Him.

27. Ver. 26. The poor shall eat, and be filled. The humble and the despisers of the world shall eat, and imitate Me. For so they will neither desire this world’s abundance, nor fear its want. And they shall praise the Lord, who seek Him. For the praise of the Lord is the pouring out of that fulness. Their hearts shall live for ever and ever. For that food is the food of the heart.

28. Ver. 27. All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord. They shall remember themselves: for, by the Gentiles, born in death and bent on outward things, God had been forgotten; and then shall all the borders of the earth be turned to the Lord. And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight. And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in their own consciences.

29. Ver. 28. For the kingdom is the Lord’s, and He shall rule over the nations. For the kingdom is the Lord’s, not proud men’s: and He shall rule over the nations.

30. Ver. 29. All the rich of the earth have eaten, and worshipped. The rich of the earth too have eaten the Body of their Lord’s humiliation, and though they have not, as the poor, been filled even to imitation, yet they have worshipped. In His sight shall fall all that descend to earth. For He alone seeth how all they fall, who abandoning a heavenly conversation, make choice, on earth, to appear happy to men, who see not their fall.

31. And My Soul shall live to Him. And My Soul, Which in the contempt of this world seems to men as it were to die, shall live, not to itself, but to

Him. And My seed shall serve Him. (Ver. 30.) And My deeds, or they who through Me believe on Him, shall serve Him.

32. Ver. 31. The generation to come shall be declared to the Lord. The generation of the New Testament shall be declared to the honour of the Lord. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness. And the Evangelists shall declare His righteousness. To a people that shall be born, whom the Lord hath made. To a people that shall be born to the Lord through faith.

second exposition

A Sermon delivered on the Anniversary of the Lord’s Passion.

1. What God would not have passed over in silence in His Scripture, must not either by us be passed over in silence, and by you must be heard. The Lord’s Passion, as we know, happened once: for once hath Christ died, the Just for the unjust. And we know, and are sure, and hold fast with faith unshaken, that Christ rising from the dead dieth no more, and death shall have no more dominion over Him. These are the Apostle’s words: yet that we may not forget what once occurred, it is transacted in our memory every year. Does Christ die as often as the Easter celebration comes round? but yet the yearly memorial does as it were represent what occurred long since, and causes in us such emotions as if we saw the Lord hanging on the Cross, not of course as mocking, but believing in Him. For as He hung on the Cross He was mocked, as He sitteth in heaven He is worshipped. Or haply is He mocked still, and now we must not be angry with the Jews, who mocked Him at all events as He was dying, not as He was reigning? And who is there, who mocks Christ still? Would it were one, would it were two, would that they could be numbered. All the chaff of His threshing-floor mocks Him, and the wheat sighs for the mocking of the Lord. This I would sigh for with you. For it is the season of sorrow. The Lord’s Passion is in course of celebration: it is the season of sighing, the season of weeping, the season of confession and supplication. And which of us is sufficient for shedding tears answerable to the just demands of so great sorrow? But what now saith the Prophet? Who will give my head water, and mine eyes a fountain of tears? If there were really a fountain of tears in our eyes, even this would not suffice Christ mocked in a matter that is clear, in a matter

wherein no one can say, “I understood it not.” For to Him who possesses the whole world a part is offered; and to Him who sitteth at the right hand of the Father it is said, “See what Thou hast here;” and for the whole earth Africa alone is shewn Him.

2. The words which we have just heard, brethren, where shall we place them? O that they could be written with our tears. Who was the woman who came in with the ointment? Of what was she the type? was she not of the Church? Whereof was that ointment the figure? was it not of that sweet savour, of which the Apostle says, We are a sweet savour of Christ in every place? For the Apostle too was speaking in the person of this same Church. And the words, we are, he said to the faithful. And what said he? We are a sweet savour of Christ in every place. In every place, Paul said that all the faithful are a sweet savour of Christ; and he is contradicted, and it is said, Africa alone has a sweet savour, all the world besides stinketh. Who says, We are a sweet savour of Christ in every place? The Church. This sweet savour that box of ointment figured, with which the Lord was anointed. Let us see if the Lord Himself do not also bear witness to it. When some who sought their own things, covetous, thieves, that is, that Judas, said of the ointment, To what purpose is this loss? the costly thing might be sold, and benefit the poor. For he wished to sell the sweet savour of Christ. What was the Lord’s answer? Why trouble ye the woman? She hath wrought a good work upon Me. And what shall I say more? when He Himself said, And wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told. Is there aught to add to this? Is there aught to take away? Is there any reason why we should lend our ears to revilers? Has the Lord spoken this falsely, or been deceived? Let them make their choice which to say, let them say either that the Truth hath spoken falsely, or let them say that the Truth was deceived. Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached. And as if thou wouldest ask Him; “But where shall it be preached?” He answers, in the whole world. Let us listen to the Psalm; let us see, if it say the same. Let us listen to that which is sung in lamentation, and truly a matter it is worthy of plaint, when it is sung to the deaf. I wonder, brethren, if this psalm is read to-day among the party of Donatus too. I ask you, my brethren, I confess to you, Christ’s mercy knoweth that I wonder thus, as though they were made of stone, and can not

hear. What thing more plain can be spoken to the deaf? Christ's Passion is set forth as clearly as the Gospel, and it was written, I know not how many years before the Lord was born of the Virgin Mary: it was a herald announcing the future Judge. Let us peruse it, as far as the stress of time permits, not as the promptings of our sorrow would move us; but, as I said, as far as the stress of time permits.

3. Ver. 1. O God, My God, look upon Me: why hast Thou forsaken Me? This first verse we heard on the Cross, where the Lord said, Eli, Eli, that is, My God, My God, lama sabachthani? which is, why hast Thou forsaken Me? The Evangelist hath interpreted this, and said that He spoke in the Hebrew tongue, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? What did the Lord intend to say? For God had not forsaken Him, forasmuch as He was Himself God; of course as the Son of God, God; of course as the Word of God, God. Hear, at the very commencement, that Evangelist, who poured forth what he had drunk in from the Lord's Breast: let us see, whether Christ be God: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The very Word then that was God, was made Flesh, and dwelt in us. And when the Word, God, was made Flesh, He was hanging on the Cross, and said, My God, My God, look upon Me: why hast Thou forsaken Me? why is it said, but because we were there, but because the Church is the Body of Christ? Wherefore said He, My God, My God, look upon Me: why hast Thou forsaken Me? unless in some sort as rousing our attention, and saying, "Was this Psalm written concerning Me?" Far from my salvation are the words of my sins. What sins in Him, of Whom it is said, Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth? How then saith He, My sins; unless that He prayeth for our sins, and made our sins His sins, that He might make His righteousness our righteousness?

4. Ver. 2. My God, I will cry unto Thee in the day-time, and Thou wilt not hear: and in the night-season, and not to my folly. He spake of course of me, of thee, of such an one. For He bare His Body, that is, the Church. Unless haply ye think, brethren, that when the Lord said, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me, He was afraid to die. The soldier is not braver than the captain; It is enough for the servant, that he be as his lord. Paul, a soldier of Christ the King, says, I am in a strait betwixt two, having

a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. He wishes for death, that he may be with Christ, and is Christ Himself afraid of death? But what bare He but our weakness, and in behalf of those who, having a place in His body, yet fear death, did He speak thus? Hence came that voice, it was the voice of His members, not of the Head; and so also in these words, I have cried by day, and by night-season, and Thou wilt not hear. For many cry in tribulation, and are not heard: but unto salvation, not to folly. Paul cried that the thorn in the flesh might be taken away from him, and he was not heard for it to be taken away; and it was said to him, My grace is sufficient for thee; for strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore was he not heard; but not to folly, but to wisdom: to the end that man may understand that God is a Physician, and that tribulation is a remedy for salvation, not a punishment for condemnation. While under treatment thou art cauterized, cut, criest out: the physician heeds not for thy wish, but he heeds for thy health.

5. Ver. 3. But Thou dwellest in the holy place, O Thou praise of Israel. Thou dwellest in them, whom Thou hast sanctified, and whom Thou makest to understand, that some to their profit Thou hearest not, and some to their condemnation Thou hearest. To his profit, Paul was not heard; to condemnation, the devil was heard. He asked to tempt Job, and it was granted. The devils asked to go into the swine, and they were heard. Devils are heard, an Apostle is not heard: but they are heard unto condemnation, the Apostle is not heard, unto salvation; for not to my folly. But Thou dwellest in the holy place, O Thou praise of Israel. Why dost Thou not hear even Thine own? Why say I this? Remember that it is always said, “Thanks be to God;” and there is a great concourse here, and those, who are not in the habit of coming, have come. I say to all, that the Christian when under tribulation is tried, whether he have not forsaken his God. For when it is well with a man, the Christian is left to himself. The fire is brought to the furnace; and the refiner’s furnace is a thing of high mysterious meaning. There is gold there, there is chaff, there is fire working in a confined space. This fire is not diverse, yet its effects are diverse: it turns chaff into ashes, from gold it takes away its impurities. Now they in whom God dwelleth, are assuredly made better in tribulation, proved as gold. And if perchance the adversary, the devil, ask (to prove any), and it be granted him, whether by

some bodily pain, or some loss, or bereavement, let him keep his heart fixed on Him, Who withdraweth not Himself, and if He seem to withdraw His ear from his lamentations, yet He sheweth mercy to his supplications. He who made us knoweth what to do, He knoweth how to re-make us. He is a good builder Who built the house; and if any thing therein hath fallen to decay, He knoweth how to repair it.

6. And see what he says: (ver. 4.) Our fathers hoped in Thee, they hoped, and Thou didst deliver them. We know, and read how many of our fathers God hath delivered who hoped in Him. He delivered the whole people of Israel out of the land of Egypt; He delivered the three children out of the fiery furnace; He delivered Daniel out of the den of lions; He delivered Susanna from a false accusation: they all called upon Him, and were delivered. What? was He wanting to His Own Son, that He should not hear Him when hanging on the Cross? But why is He not delivered forthwith, Who said, Our fathers hoped in Thee, and Thou didst deliver them?

7. Ver. 6. But I am a worm, and no man. A worm, and no man; for man is a worm also: but He is a worm and no man. How no man? Because God. Why then did He so abase Himself as to say, a worm? Is it because a worm is born of the flesh without coition, as Christ of the Virgin Mary? Both a worm even, and yet no man. Why a worm? Because mortal, because born of the flesh, because born without coition. Why not a man? Because the Word was in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

8. A scorn of men, and the outcast of the people. Consider how great things He suffered. Now that we may speak of the Passion, and that we may approach it with the greater grief, consider first how great things He suffers, and then consider wherefore. For what was the fruit thereof? Lo, our fathers hoped, and were delivered out of the land of Egypt. And as I said, so many called upon God, and immediately at the time, not in the life to come, but forthwith, were delivered. Job himself was given up to the devil at his request, corrupted with worms: yet he recovered his health in this life, and received twice as much as he had lost. But the Lord was scourged, and there was none to help; He was defiled with spittle, and there was none to help; He was smitten with buffetings, and there was none to help; He was

crowned with thorns, there was none to help; He was raised on the tree, there was none to deliver; He crieth out, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? there is no help. Wherefore, my Brethren? Wherefore? What the recompense of so great sufferings? All these His sufferings are a price. What so great sufferings are the price of, let us repeat, let us see what He says. Let us first inquire what He suffered, after that, wherefore: and let us see how much they are Christ's enemies, who confess that He endured so great sufferings, and take away the wherefore. Hence let us hear the whole in this Psalm, both what He suffered, and wherefore. Keep to these two, the what and the wherefore. At present let me explain the what. Let us not dwell at length on this, so the very words of the Psalm will come to you the better. See what the Lord suffers, take heed ye Christians: The scorn of men, and the outcast of the people.

9. Ver. 7. All that saw Me laughed Me to scorn; they spake with the lips, and shook the head. (Ver. 8.) He trusted in the Lord, let Him deliver Him; let Him save Him, since He desireth Him. But why said they this? Because He was made man, they said it as against a man.

10. Ver. 9. Since Thou art He Who drew Me out of the womb. Would they ever say this to That, Which in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God? For that Word, by Which all things were made, was not drawn out of the womb, save that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us. Since Thou hast drawn Me out of the womb: My God from My mother's breasts. For before the worlds, My Father; from My mother's breasts, My God.

11. Ver. 10. I was cast upon Thee from the womb. That is, that Thou only shouldest be My hope, now as man, now as weak, now the Word made Flesh. From My mother's womb Thou art My God. Not from Thyself My God, for from Thyself My Father; but from My mother's womb My God.

12. Ver. 11. Depart not from Me; for trouble is hard at hand, for there is none to help. See Him forsaken; and woe to us, if He forsake us, for there is none to help.

13. Ver. 12. Many calves came about Me; fat bulls closed Me in. The people, and their leaders: the people, many calves; the leaders, fat bulls.

14. Ver. 13. They opened their mouth upon Me, as a ravening and roaring lion. Let us hearken to their roaring in the Gospel, Crucify, Crucify.

15. Ver. 14. I was poured out like water, and all My Bones were scattered. He calleth His strong ones His Bones. For bones are strong in the body. When did He scatter His Bones? When He said to them, Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Then scattered He His strong ones, and He was poured out like water. For when water is poured out, it either cleanses, or waters. Christ was poured out like water, the filthy were cleansed, minds were watered. My heart became as melting wax, in the midst of My Belly. He calls the weak ones in His Church His Belly. How did His Heart become as wax? His Heart is His Scripture, that is, His wisdom which was in the Scriptures. For the Scripture was closed, no one understood it: the Lord was crucified, and the Scripture was melted like wax, that all the weak ones should understand it. For hence too the veil of the temple was rent: because what was veiled hath been unveiled.

16. Ver. 15. My strength dried up as a potsherd. Gloriously expressed; for, My name has been made stronger by tribulation. For as a potsherd is before the fire soft, after the fire hard; so the Lord’s name was before the Passion despised, after the Passion it is honoured. And My tongue cleaved to My jaws. As that member in us is of use only for speaking; so He said that His preachers, His tongue, cleaved to His jaws, that from His inward parts they might derive wisdom. And Thou broughtest Me down to the dust of death.

17. For many dogs came about Me: the council of the malignant ones came about Me. See here the very Gospel. They pierced My hands and My feet. Then were the wounds made, the scars whereof the doubting disciple handled, the same who said, Unless I shall put my fingers into the scars of His wounds, I will not believe: whereupon He said to him, Come, thou hard of belief, put thy hand: and he put his hand, and cried out, My Lord, and my God. And He answered, Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that see not, and believe. They pierced My hands and My feet.

18. (Ver. 17.) They numbered distinctly all My Bones. When He was hanging extended on the tree. The extension of His Body on the tree could

not be better described than by the words, They numbered distinctly all My Bones.

19. Yea, they regarded, and beheld Me. They regarded, and understood not: they beheld, and saw not. They lifted up their eyes to the flesh, not their heart unto the Word. (Ver. 18.) They divided My garments for themselves. His garments, His Sacraments. Mark, brethren, His garments, His Sacraments, could be divided by heresies: but there was there a garment which no one divided. And cast the lot upon My vesture. There was there, says the Evangelist, a coat woven from above. From heaven therefore, from the Father therefore, from the Holy Ghost therefore. What is this coat, but love, which no man can divide? What is this coat, but unity? Upon it is the lot cast; no man divideth it. The Sacraments heretics have been able to divide for themselves; they have not divided love. And because they could not divide it, they withdrew: but it abideth entire. It falls by lot to some. Whoso hath it, is safe. No one moves him from the Church Catholic: and if being without he begin to have it, he is received within, as the olive branch by the dove.

20. Ver. 19. But Thou, O Lord, withhold not Thy help far from Me. And it was so: after three days He rose again. Look to My defence.

21. Ver. 20. Deliver My soul from the sword (framea): that is, from death. For framea is a sword, and by a sword He would have us understand death. And Thine Only One from the hand of the dog. My soul, Mine Only One, the Head, and the Body. By Only One, He meant, the Church. From the hand, that is, from the power, of the dog. Who are dogs? They that bark like dogs, and understand not against whom. Nothing is done to them, and they bark. What will a man do to a dog, when he is going on his way? Yet he barks. They that bark with blinded eyes, not discerning against whom, or for whom, are dogs.

22. Ver. 21. Save Me from the lion’s mouth. You know who is the roaring lion going about, and seeking whom he may devour. And My humility from the horns of the unicorns. By unicorns, He would mean only the proud; therefore He added, My humility.

23. You have heard what His sufferings were, and what He prayed, that He might be delivered from them: let us now give heed to the wherefore He suffered. Now then, brethren, consider: whoso is not in that lot, for which Christ suffered, wherefore is he a Christian? Lo, we know what He suffered: His bones were numbered distinctly, He was mocked, His garments were divided, moreover the lot was cast upon His vesture, men in furiousness and raging stood around Him, and all His bones were scattered: we hear it here, and we read it in the Gospel. Let us see wherefore. O Christ, Son of God, if Thou hadst not willed Thou couldest not suffer; O shew us the fruit of Thy Passion. “Hear,” saith He, “the fruit: I am not silent, but men are deaf. Hear,” saith He, “the fruit, wherefore I suffered all these things.”

Ver. 22. I will declare Thy Name to My brethren. Let us see whether He declareth God’s Name to His brethren in any separate part. I will declare Thy Name to My brethren: in the midst of the Church will I sing of Thee. So is it accomplished now. But let us see what the Church is. For He said, In the midst of the Church will I sing of Thee. Let us see the Church, for which He suffered.

24. Ver. 23. Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him. Wheresoever God is feared and praised, there is the Church of Christ. See, my brethren, whether in these days throughout the whole world it is said without a cause, Amen and Hallelujah. Is not God feared there? Is not God praised there? Donatus has gone out, and says, “He is altogether not feared, the whole world is lost.” Without any reason thou sayest, The whole world is lost. Has then a small portion only remained in Africa? Doth Christ then say nothing, whereby to stop these men’s mouths? doth He say nothing, whereby to pluck out the tongues of such as speak thus? Let us see, if haply we may find. Still it is said to us, In the midst of the Church: He speaketh of our Church. Ye that fear the Lord, praise Him: let us see, whether they praise the Lord; and let us understand, whether He speaketh of them, and whether in the midst of their Church He be praised. How do they praise Christ, who say, “He hath lost the whole world, the devil hath taken all from Him, and He hath remained in a part only?” But let us look farther; let Him declare Himself more openly, let Him speak more openly: let it not be a matter for

interpretation, or conjecture. All ye seed of Jacob, magnify Him. Perhaps they still say, “We are the seed of Jacob.” Let us see, whether they be.

25. Let all the seed of Israel fear Him. Let them still say, “We are the seed of Israel:” let us allow them, let them say it. (Ver. 24.) Since He hath not despised nor disregarded the prayer of the poor. What poor? Not they that rely upon themselves. Let us see, whether they be poor, who say, “We are the righteous.” Christ crieth out, Far from My salvation are the words of My sins. But let them still say what they will. Nor hath turned away His face from Me; and when I cried unto Him, He heard Me. Wherefore heard He? to what purpose?

26. Ver. 25. With Thee is My praise. With God He hath put His praise: He hath taught us not to rely on man. Let them still say what they will. Already indeed they begin to burn, the fire begins to draw nigh: there is none may hide himself from the heat thereof. But let them still say, “We too have put our praise with Him, we too rely not on ourselves,” let them still say so. In the great Church will I confess Thee. Now here I suppose He has begun to touch the quick. The great Church, Brethren, what is it? Is a scanty portion of the earth the great Church? The great Church is the whole world. Now if one would wish to gainsay Christ, “Tell us, Thou hast said, In the great Church I will confess Thee: what great Church? Thou art reduced to a morsel of Africa, the whole world Thou hast lost: Thou hast shed Thy Blood for the whole, but Thou hast suffered from the invader.” Thus have we spoken to the Lord as if by way of inquiry; yet knowing what we are about to say. Let us suppose that we do not know what He would say: doth not He answer us? “Peace, I will yet say what no one can raise a doubt about.” Let us await then what He is about to say. I would wish at once to pass sentence, and not admit men to give any other explanation, forasmuch as Christ saith, In the great Church. And you say, that He hath continued in an extreme part. And they still dare to say, “And ours is the great Church: what think you of Bagai and Tamugade?” If He say not something to stop their mouths, let them still say, that the great Church is Numidia only.

27. Let us see, let us hear the Lord further: I will offer my vows in the sight of them that fear Him. What are His vows? The sacrifice which He offered to God. Know ye what sacrifice? The faithful know the vows which He

offered in the sight of them that fear Him. For there follows, (ver. 26.) The poor shall eat, and be filled. Blessed poor, who eat to the end that they may be filled. For it is the poor that eat. But they that are rich are not filled, because they are not hungry. The poor shall eat. From them came Peter the fisherman, from them came the other fishermen, John and James his brother, from them came too Matthew the publican. These were of the poor, who ate and were filled: having suffered such things as they ate. He gave His Supper, He gave His Passion: he is filled, who imitates it. The poor imitated it: for they so suffered as to follow Christ’s footsteps. The poor shall eat. But why poor? And they shall praise the Lord, who seek Him. The rich praise themselves; the poor praise the Lord. Why are they poor? Because they praise the Lord, and seek the Lord. The Lord is the riches of the poor. For therefore is the house empty, that the heart may be full of riches. Let the rich seek wherewith to fill their chest; the poor seek wherewith to fill their heart: and when they have filled it, they praise the Lord, who seek Him. And see, Brethren, wherein they, that are truly poor, are rich: that it is not in the chest, not in the garner, not in the storehouse: Their hearts shall live for ever and ever.

28. Now then give heed. The Lord hath suffered; all that ye have heard hath the Lord suffered. We ask, why He suffered? and He begins to declare it: I will declare Thy name to My brethren; in the midst of the Church will I sing of Thee. But they still say, “This is the Church.” Let all the seed of Israel fear Him. They say, “We are the seed of Israel.” Since He hath not despised, nor disregarded the prayer of the poor. Still they say, “We are they.” Nor hath He turned away His face from Me. Christ the Lord Himself hath not turned away His face from Himself, that is, from His Church, which is His Body. With Thee is My praise. Ye would praise yourselves. But they answer, “Nay, without a doubt we too praise Him.” I will offer My vows unto the Lord, in the sight of them that fear Him. The sacrifice of peace, the sacrifice of love, the sacrifice of His Body the faithful know: on this I cannot now enlarge. I will offer My vows in the sight of them that fear Him. Let the publicans eat, let the fishermen eat, let them feed, let them imitate the Lord, let them suffer, let them be filled. The Lord Himself hath died, the poor die also; and the death of the disciples is added to the death of the Master. Wherefore? Give Me the fruit. (Ver. 27.) All the borders of the earth

shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord. See here, Brethren! Why ask ye of me, what answer we should give to Donatus' party? Look at the Psalm: both among us it is read to-day, and among them it is read to-day. Let us write it on our foreheads, let us go forth with it, let not our tongue keep silence, let it repeat the words: "See, Christ hath suffered; see, the Merchant displayeth His gains; see, the price which He gave, His Blood was shed. In a scrip He bare our price: He was smitten with a spear, the scrip was rent, and the price of the whole world flowed forth. What answerest thou, O heretic? Is it not the price of the whole world? Hath Africa only been redeemed? Thou darest not say, 'The whole world was redeemed, but is lost.' From what spoiler's hand hath Christ so suffered, as to lose His own possession? Lo, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord." Let this satisfy thee, and let Him speak. Had he said the ends of the earth, and not all the borders of the earth: they had been able to say, "Lo, we have the ends of the earth in Mauritania." He said, All the borders of the earth, O heretic, he said, all. What outlet is there for thee to escape the difficulty? Outlet hast thou none, but thou hast whereby to enter.

29. I appeal to you: I am unwilling to enlarge upon this, lest it should be said, that my words are of any influence: attend to the Psalm, read the Psalm. Lo, Christ hath suffered, His Blood hath been shed: lo, our Redeemer; lo, our Price. Let me be told, what hath He bought? Why do we ask? What if one say to me, "why, O foolish man, dost thou ask? Thou hast the volume in thine hands: thou hast therein wherewith He bought, seek therein what He bought. Lo, there thou hast, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord." For the borders of the earth shall remember themselves. But heretics have forgotten, and therefore do they hear it every year. Do they give ear to this, think ye, when their reader says, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and turn to the Lord? Well, perchance it is but one verse: thy thoughts were elsewhere, thou wast talking idly with thy brother, when he spoke thus: mark, how he repeats it, and knocks at deaf men's ears: And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight. He is still deaf, he does not hear: let the knocking be repeated. (Ver. 28.) For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the nations. Remember these three verses, Brethren. To-

day have they been sung even among them; or it may be they have erased them. Believe me, my Brethren, I am so embarassed, I am so pressed, that I am astonished at this strange deafness and hardness of their hearts, that I sometimes doubt, whether they have it in their copies. All run to-day to the Church, all to-day attentively listen to this Psalm, all listen with uplifted heart. But suppose that they are not attentive: is it one verse only, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord? Thou art awaking, but art still rubbing thine eyes: And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight. Shake off sleep, thou art still drowsy; listen: For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the nations.

30. Whether they have any thing yet to allege, I know not: let them contend with the Scriptures, not with us. See the volume itself, let them contend against it. Where is their saying, "We preserved the Scriptures from being burnt?" They have been preserved, whereby thou mayest be burnt. What did ye preserve? Open, read: thou didst preserve, and thou dost impugn them. Why preservedst thou from the flames, what thou wouldest destroy with the tongue? I do not believe, I do not believe, that thou preservedst them; I do not at all believe it; thou didst not preserve them. Most truly do our party say, that thou didst deliver them up. He is proved to be the deliverer of them up, who when on reading the Testament doth not follow it. See, it is read, and I follow; it is read, and thou refusest to follow. Whose hand hath cast them into the flames? He that believes and follows, or he that grieves that there is aught to be read? I do not wish to know who may have preserved them: in what place soever the volume hath been found, from what cave soever, our Father's testament hath come to light, for some thieves or other wished to take it away, some persecutors or other wished to burn it: from what place soever it hath been brought forth, let it be read. Why dost thou quarrel? We are Brethren, why do we quarrel? The Father hath not died intestate. He hath made a Testament, and so died: He died, and rose again. So long does the dispute touching the inheritance of the dead last, until the Testament is publicly produced; and when the Testament has been publicly produced, all are silent, that the instrument may be opened and read: the judge listens with attention, the advocates hold their peace, the heralds procure silence, every body is in suspense that the words of the deceased, unconscious in the tomb, may be read. He lies without consciousness in the

tomb, and his words have force. Christ sitteth in heaven; and is His Testament gainsaid? Open, let us read. We are Brethren, why do we contend together? Let us calm our temper, the Father hath not left us without a Testament. He Who made the Testament, liveth for ever: He heareth our words, He recogniseth His own. Let us read; why do we quarrel? When the whole inheritance shall have been found, let us hold to it. Open the Testament, read in the very beginning of the Psalter itself, Ask of Me. But who speaketh? Peradventure not Christ. You have there, The Lord said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. The Son of God then speaketh, or the Father speaketh to His Son. What then saith He to His Son? Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the bounds of the earth for Thy possession. It is usual, Brethren, when there is a question of possession, for the borderers to be sought. Between this and that borderer, the heir is sought out, either to whom it is given, or who has bought it. Between what borderers is he sought? Between this and that man in possession. He who hath left all borders, hath left no borderers. Wheresoever thou turnest thyself, Christ is. Thou hast the borders of the earth for thine inheritance; come hither, with me possess the whole. Why by quarrelling dost thou call to a part only? Come hither; to thine own good thou shalt be conquered, thou shalt have the whole. Dost thou wrangle still? I have already read the Testament, and thou wranglest. Art thou still wrangling, because He said, the borders of the earth, and not, all the borders of the earth? Let us read on then. How does it stand? All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and turn to the Lord. And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight. For the kingdom is the Lord’s, and He shall rule over the nations. His it is, not yours. Acknowledge ye the Lord: acknowledge the Lord’s possession.

31. But ye again because ye would possess your goods privately, and not in common unity, and with Christ, (for ye wish to rule on earth yourselves, not to reign with Him in heaven,) ye have your own houses. And sometimes we come to them, saying, “Let us seek the truth, let us find the truth.” They answer, “Keep what you have: thou hast thy sheep, I have mine; forbear to meddle with my sheep, for I do not meddle with thine.” Thanks be to God; the sheep are mine; the sheep are His! What hath Christ bought? Nay, let them be neither mine, nor thine; but His Who hath bought them, His Who

hath marked them. Neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth; but God Who giveth the increase. Why have I mine, and thou thine? If Christ be there, let mine go thither, for they are not mine: if Christ be here, let thine come hither, for they are not thine. Let us kiss head and hands for possessions, and let the strange children perish. “It is not my possession,” he says. What is this? Let us see whether it be not thy possession, let us see whether thou dost not claim it for thyself. I labour for the name of Christ, thou for the name of Donatus. For if thou look to Christ, Christ is every where. Thou sayest, Lo, here is Christ: I say, He is throughout the world. Praise the Lord, ye servants; praise the Name of the Lord. Wherefrom do they praise? Whereunto do they praise? From the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof, praise ye the Name of the Lord. See the Church which I shew to you, see what Christ hath bought, see what He hath redeemed, see for what He hath given His blood. But what sayest thou? “I gather for Him too.” He that gathereth not with Me, Christ saith, scattereth. Thou dividest unity, thou seekest thine own possessions. And why have they Christ’s Name? Because for the defence of thine own possession thou hast affixed Christ’s titles. Do not some do the same with their own houses? Lest some powerful person should attack his house, he affixes thereon the title of some powerful one, a false title. He would be himself the owner, and would have the front of his house protected by another man’s title: that on reading the title one may be scared at the power of the name, and abstain from attacking the house. This they did when they condemned the Maximianists. They pleaded before judges, and adduced their own council; as it were, shewing their titles, that they might appear to be Bishops. Then the judged asked, “Who is the other Bishop here, of the party of Donatus?” The official answered, “We know none but Aurelius the Catholic.” In fear of the laws they made answer of one Bishop only. But they, that they might gain the ear of the judge, affixed Christ’s Name: on their own possession they affixed His title. Gracious is the Lord to spare them, and claim that for His own possession, wheresoever He findeth His title. Powerful is His mercy, Who doeth that for them, Who gathereth together, whomsoever He findeth bearing the name of Christ. And consider, Brethren, when any powerful one findeth his title, doth he not justly claim it for his own and say, “He would not affix my title, unless it were my property? He hath affixed my title, it is my property: that, whereon I find my name, is mine.” Does he change the title? The title is the very same as before: the owner is changed, the title is not changed. So also with those that have the baptism of Christ, if they return to unity, we do not change or destroy their title; but we acknowledge the title of our King, the title of our Captain. But what do we say? O wretched house, may He own thee, Whose title thou bearest: thou bearest Christ’s title; be not the possession of Donatus.

32. We have spoken at great length, Brethren; but let not that, which is read to-day, depart from your recollection. Lo, I repeat it, and often must it be repeated: by this very day, that is, by the mysteries of this day, I adjure you that it go not out of your hearts, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord. And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight. For the kingdom is the Lord’s, and He shall rule over the nations. Against so clear and so manifestly proven a possession of Christ, listen not to the words of the wrangler. Whatever they say to gainsay it, they are men that say it; but this God saith.

PSALM 23

A Psalm of David himself.

1. The Church speaks to Christ: (ver. 1.) The Lord feedeth me, and I shall lack nothing. The Lord Jesus Christ is my Shepherd, and I shall lack nothing.

2. Ver. 2. In a place of pasture there hath He placed me. In a place of fresh pasture, leading me to faith, there hath He placed me to be nourished. By the water of refreshing hath He brought me up. By the water of baptism, whereby they are refreshed who have lost health and strength, hath He brought me up.

3. Ver. 3. He hath converted my soul: He hath led me forth in the paths of righteousness, for His Name’s sake. He hath brought me forth in the narrow ways, wherein few walk, of His righteousness; not for my merit’s sake, but for His Name’s sake.

4. Ver. 4. Yea, though I walk in the midst of the shadow of death. Yea, though I walk in the midst of this life, which is the shadow of death. I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me. I will fear no evil, for Thou dwellest in my heart by faith: and Thou art now with me, that after the shadow of death I too may be with Thee. Thy rod and Thy staff, they have comforted me. Thy discipline, like a rod for a flock of sheep, and like a staff for children of some size, and growing out of the natural into spiritual life, they have not been grievous to me; rather have they comforted me: because Thou art mindful of me.

5. Ver. 5. Thou hast prepared a table in my sight, against them that trouble me. Now after the rod, whereby, whilst a little one, and living the natural life, I was brought up among the flock in the pastures; after that rod, I say, when I began to be under the staff, Thou hast prepared a table in my sight, that I should no more be fed as a babe with milk, but being older should take meat, strengthened against them that trouble me. Thou hast fattened

my head with oil. Thou hast gladdened my mind with spiritual joy. And Thy inebriating cup, how excellent is it! And Thy cup yielding forgetfulness of former vain delights, how excellent is it!

6. Ver. 6. And Thy mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: that is, as long as I live in this mortal life, not Thine, but mine. That I may dwell in the house of the Lord for length of days. Now Thy mercy shall follow me not here only, but also that I may dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

PSALM 24

A Psalm of David himself, on the first day of the week.

1. A Psalm of David himself, touching the glorifying and resurrection of the Lord, which took place early in the morning on the first day of the week, which is now called the Lord’s Day.

2. Ver. 1. The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof, the compass of the world, and all they that dwell therein: when the Lord, being glorified, is announced for the believing of all nations; and the whole compass of the world becomes His Church. (Ver. 2.) He hath founded it above the seas. He hath most firmly established it above all the waves of this world, that they should be subdued by it, and should not hurt it. And hath prepared it above the rivers. The rivers flow into the sea, and men of lust lapse into the world: these also the Church, which, when worldly lusts have been conquered by the grace of God, hath been prepared by love for the reception of immortality, subdues.

3. Ver. 3. Who shall ascend into the mount of the Lord? Who shall ascend to the height of the righteousness of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place? Or who shall abide in that place, whither He shall ascend, founded above the seas, and prepared above the rivers?

4. Ver. 4. The innocent of hand, and the pure in heart. Who then shall ascend thither, and abide there, but the guiltless in deed, and pure in thought? Who hath not received his soul in vain. Who hath not reckoned his soul among things that pass away, but feeling it to be immortal, hath longed for an eternity stedfast and unchangeable. And hath not sworn in deceit to his neighbour. And therefore without deceit, as things eternal are simple and undeceiving, hath so behaved himself to his neighbour.

5. Ver. 5. This man shall receive blessing from the Lord, and mercy from the God of his salvation.

6. Ver. 6. This is the generation of them that seek the Lord. For thus are they born that seek Him. Of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob. Diapsalma. Now they seek the face of God, Who gave the preeminence to the younger born.

7. Ver. 7. Take away your gates, ye princes. All ye, that seek rule among men, remove, that they hinder not, the entrances which ye have made, of desire and fear. And be ye lift up, ye everlasting gates. And be ye lift up, ye entrances of eternal life, of renunciation of the world, and conversion to God. And the King of glory shall come in. And the King, in Whom we may glory without pride, shall come in: Who having overcome the gates of death, and having opened for Himself the heavenly places, fulfilled that which He said, Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.

8. Ver. 8. Who is this King of glory? Mortal nature is awe-struck in wonder, and asks, Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty. He, Whom thou didst deem weak and overwhelmed. The Lord mighty in battle. Handle the scars, and thou wilt find them made whole, and human weakness restored to immortality. The glorifying of the Lord, which was owing to earth, where It warred with death, hath been paid.

9. Ver. 9. Take away your gates, ye princes. Let us go hence straightway into heaven. Again, let the Prophet’s trumpet cry aloud, “Take away too, ye princes of the air, the gates, which ye have in the minds of men who worship the host of heaven.” And be ye lift up, ye everlasting gates. And be ye lift up, ye doors of everlasting righteousness, of love, and chastity, through which the soul loveth the One True God, and goeth not a whoring with the many, that are called gods. And the King of glory shall come in. And the King of glory shall come in, that He may at the right hand of the Father intercede for us.

10. Ver. 10. Who is this King of glory? What! dost thou too, prince of the power of this air, marvel and ask, Who is this King of glory? The Lord of powers, He is the King of glory. Yea, His Body now quickened, He Who was tempted marches above thee; He Who was tempted by the angel, the deceiver, goes above all angels. Let none of you put himself before us and stop our way, that he may be worshipped as a god by us: neither

principality, nor angel, nor power, separateth us from the love of Christ. It is good to trust in the Lord, rather than to trust in a prince; that he who glorieth, should glory in the Lord. These indeed are powers in the administration of this world, but the Lord of powers, He is the King of glory.

PSALM 25

To the end, a Psalm of David himself.

1. Christ speaks, but in the person of the Church: for what is said has reference rather to the Christian People turned unto God.

2. Ver. 1. Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lift up my soul: with spiritual longing have I lift up the soul, that was trodden down on the earth with carnal longings. (Ver. 2.) O my God, in Thee I trust, I shall not be ashamed. O my God, from trusting in myself I was brought even to this weakness of the flesh; and I who on abandoning God wished to be as God, fearing death from the smallest insect, was in derision ashamed for my pride; now, therefore, in Thee I trust, I shall not be ashamed.

3. And let not my enemies mock me. And let them not mock me, who by ensnaring me with serpent-like and secret suggestions, and prompting me with, “Well done, well done,” have brought me down to this. (Ver. 3.) For all that wait upon Thee shall not be confounded.

4. Let them be confounded who do vain things unrighteously. Let them be confounded who act unrighteously for the acquiring things that pass away. (Ver. 4.) Make Thy ways, O Lord, known to me, and teach me Thy paths: not those which are broad, and lead the many to destruction; but Thy paths, narrow, and known to few, teach Thou me.

5. Ver. 5. In Thy truth guide me: avoiding error. And teach me: for by myself I know nothing, but falsehood. For Thou art the God of my salvation; and for Thee have I waited all the day. For dismissed by Thee from Paradise, and having taken my journey into a far country, I cannot by myself return, unless Thou meetest the wanderer: for my return hath throughout the whole tract of this world’s time waited for Thy mercy.

6. Ver. 6. Remember Thy compassions, O Lord. Remember the works of Thy mercy, O Lord; for men deem of Thee as though Thou hadst forgotten. And that Thy mercies are from eternity. And remember this, that Thy

mercies are from eternity. For Thou never wast without them, Who hast subjected even sinful man to vanity indeed, but in hope; and hast not deprived him of so many and great consolations of Thy creation.

7. Ver. 7. Remember not the offences of my youth, and of my ignorance. The offences of my presumptuous boldness and of my ignorance reserve not for vengeance, but let them be as if forgotten by Thee. According to Thy mercy, be mindful of me, O God. Be mindful indeed of me, not according to the anger of which I am worthy, but according to Thy mercy which is worthy of Thee. For Thy goodness, O Lord. Not for my deservings, but for Thy goodness, O Lord.

8. Ver. 8. Gracious and upright is the Lord. The Lord is gracious, since even sinners and the ungodly He so pitied, as to forgive all that is past; but the Lord is upright too, Who after the mercy of vocation and pardon, which is of grace without merit, will require merits meet for the last judgment. Wherefore He will establish a law for them that fail in the way. For He hath first bestowed mercy to bring them into the way.

9. Ver. 9. He will guide the meek in judgment. He will guide the meek, and will not confound in the judgment those, that follow His will, and do not, in withstanding It, prefer their own. The gentle He will teach His ways. He will teach His ways, not to those that desire to run before, as if they were better able to rule themselves; but to those who do not exalt the neck, nor lift the heel, when the easy yoke and the light burden is laid upon them.

10. Ver. 10. All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth. And what ways will He teach them, but mercy wherein He is placable, and truth wherein He is incorrupt? Whereof He hath exhibited the one in forgiving sins, the other in judging deserts. And therefore ‘all the ways of the Lord’ are the two advents of the Son of God, the one in mercy, the other in judgment. He then attaineth unto Him holding on His ways, who seeing himself freed by no deserts of his own, lays pride aside, and henceforward bewares of the severity of His trial, having experienced the clemency of His help. To them that seek His testament and His testimonies. For they understand the Lord as merciful at His first advent, and as the Judge at His second, who in meekness and gentleness seek His testament, when with His Own Blood He

redeemed us to a new life; and in the Prophets and Evangelists, His testimonies.

11. Ver. 11. For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, Thou wilt be favourable to my sin; for it is manifold. Thou hast not only forgiven my sins, which I committed before I believed; but also to my sin, which is manifold, since even in the way there is no lack of stumbling, Thou wilt be made favourable by the sacrifice of a troubled spirit.

12. Ver. 12. Who is the man, that feareth the Lord? from which fear he begins to come to wisdom. He shall establish a law for him in the way, which he hath chosen. He shall establish a law for him in the way, which in his freedom he has taken, that he may not sin now with impunity.

13. Ver. 13. His soul shall dwell in good, and his seed shall, by inheritance, possess the earth. And his work shall possess the stable inheritance of a renewed body.

14. Ver. 14. The Lord is the stay of them that fear Him. Fear seems to belong to the weak, but the Lord is the stay of them that fear Him. And the Name of the Lord, which hath been glorified throughout the whole world, is a stay to them that fear Him. And His testament, that it may be manifested unto them. And He maketh His testament to be manifested unto them, for the Gentiles and the bounds of the earth are Christ's inheritance.

15. Ver. 15. Mine eyes are ever unto the Lord; for He shall pluck my feet out of the snare. Nor would I fear the dangers of earth, while I look not upon the earth: for He, upon Whom I look, will pluck my feet out of the snare.

16. Ver. 16. Look upon me, and have mercy upon me; for I am single and poor. For I am a single people, keeping the lowliness of Thy single Church, which no schisms or heresies possess.

17. Ver. 17. The tribulations of my heart have been multiplied. The tribulations of my heart have been multiplied by the abounding of iniquity and the waxing cold of love. O bring Thou me out of my necessities. Since I must needs bear this, that by enduring unto the end I may be saved, bring Thou me out of my necessities.

18. Ver. 18. See my humility and my travail. See my humility, whereby I never, in the boast of righteousness, break off from unity; and my travail, wherein I bear with the unruly ones that are mingled with me. And forgive all my sins. And, propitiated by these sacrifices, forgive all my sins, not those only of youth and my ignorance before I believed, but those also which, living now by faith, I commit through infirmity, or the darkness of this life.

19. Ver. 19. Consider mine enemies, how they are multiplied. For not only without, but even within, in the Church's very communion, they are not wanting. And with an unrighteous hate they hate me. And they hate me who love them.

20. Ver. 20. Keep my soul, and deliver me. Keep my soul, that I turn not aside to imitate them; and draw me out from the confusion wherein they are mingled with me. Let me not be confounded, for I have put my trust in Thee. Let me not be confounded, if haply they rise up against me: for not in myself, but in Thee have I put my trust.

21. Ver. 21. The innocent and the upright have cleaved to me, for I have waited for Thee, O Lord. The innocent and the upright, not in bodily presence only, as the evil, are mingled with me, but in the agreement of the heart in the same innocence and uprightness cleave to me: for I have not fallen away to imitate the evil; but I have waited for Thee, expecting the winnowing of Thy last harvest.

22. Ver. 22. Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles. Redeem Thy people, O God, whom Thou hast prepared to see Thee, out of his troubles, not those only which he bears without, but those also which he bears within.

PSALM 26

first exposition

Of David himself.

1. It may be attributed to David himself, not the Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus, but the whole Church now perfectly established in Christ.

2. Ver. 1. Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in my innocence. Judge me, O Lord, for, after the mercy which Thou first shewedst me, I have some desert of my innocence, the way whereof I have kept. And trusting in the Lord I shall not be moved. And yet not even so trusting in myself, but in the Lord, I shall abide in Him.

3. Ver. 2. Prove me, O Lord, and try me. Lest, however, any of my secret sins should be hid from me, prove me, O Lord, and try me, making me known, not to Thee from Whom nothing is hid, but to myself, and to men. Burn my reins and my heart. Apply a remedial purgation, as it were fire, to my pleasures and thoughts. (Ver. 3.) For Thy mercy is before mine eyes. For, that I be not consumed by that fire, not my merits, but Thy mercy, whereby Thou hast brought me on to such a life, is before my eyes. And I have been pleasing in Thy truth. And since my own falsehood hath been displeasing to me, but Thy truth pleasing, I have myself been pleasing also with it and in it.

4. Ver. 4. I have not sat with the council of vanity. I have not chosen to give my heart to them who endeavour to provide, what is impossible, how they may be blessed in the enjoyment of things transitory. And I will not enter in with them that work wickedly. And since this is the very cause of all wickedness, therefore I will not have my conscience hid, with them that work wickedly.

5. Ver. 5. I have hated the congregation of evil doers. But to arrive at this council of vanity, congregations of evil doers are formed, which I have hated. And I will not sit with the ungodly. And, therefore, with such a

council, with the ungodly, I will not sit, that is, I will not place my consent. And I will not sit with the ungodly.

6. Ver. 6. I will wash mine hands amid the innocent. I will make clean my works among the innocent: among the innocent will I wash mine hands, with which I shall embrace Thy glorious gifts. And I will compass Thy altar, O Lord.

7. Ver. 7. That I may hear the voice of Thy praise. That I may learn how to praise Thee. And that I may declare all Thy wondrous works. And after I have learnt, I may set forth all Thy wondrous works.

8. Ver. 8. O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house: of Thy Church. And the place of the habitation of Thy glory: where Thou dwellest, and art glorified.

9. Ver. 9. Destroy not my soul with the ungodly. Destroy not then, together with them that hate Thee, my soul, which hath loved the beauty of Thy house. And my life with the men of blood. And with them that hate their neighbour. For Thy house is beautified with the two commandments.

10. Ver. 10. In whose hands is wickedness. Destroy me not then with the ungodly and the men of blood, whose works are wicked. Their right hand is full of gifts. And that which was given them to obtain eternal salvation, they have converted into the receiving this world’s gifts, supposing that godliness is a trade.

11. Ver. 11. But I have walked in mine innocence: deliver me, and have mercy on me. Let so great a price of my Lord’s Blood avail for my complete deliverance: and in the dangers of this life let not Thy mercy leave me.

12. Ver. 12. My foot hath stood in uprightness. My love hath not withdrawn from Thy righteousness. In the Churches I will bless Thee, O Lord. I will not hide Thy blessing, O Lord, from those whom Thou hast called; for next to the love of Thee I join the love of my neighbour.

second exposition

1. When the Apostle Paul was being read, ye heard, as we did, holy Brethren: As, saith he, the truth is in Jesus, that ye lay aside after the former conversation the old man, who is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; but be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put ye on the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth. And lest any one should suppose that any thing material is to be laid aside, as one takes off a coat; or any thing to be taken from without, as one takes up a garment; as if putting aside one coat and assuming another; and this carnal understanding of it should not allow men to carry into action within themselves spiritually what the Apostle enjoined, he went on and explained what it was to put the old man off one, and put on the new. For the rest of this lesson relates to the idea. He speaks as if to one asking, And how am I to put off the old man, or how put on the new? Am I myself a third person to lay aside the old man, which I have had, and to take a new man, which I have not had? so that three men should be conceived, and he that lays aside the old man and takes the new, should be between the other two. Lest any one then, hindered by such a carnal thought, should fail to do what is commanded, and excuse himself for not doing it by the obscurity of the lesson, the Apostle says in the following words: Wherefore laying aside lying, speak ye the truth. And, lo, this is the laying aside the old man, and the putting on the new. Wherefore laying aside lying, speak ye the truth, every one with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

2. But let not any one of you, Brethren, imagine that truth must be spoken with a Christian, and falsehood with a pagan. Speak with thy neighbour. He is thy neighbour, who is with thee a child of Adam and Eve. We are all neighbours by the lot of our earthly birth: but brethren after another manner by the hope of an heavenly inheritance. Thou oughtest to deem every man thy neighbour, even before he be a Christian. For thou knowest not what he is, with God; thou knowest not how God may have foreknown him. Sometimes he, at whom thou scoffest as worshipping stones, is converted, and worshippeth God, perchance more devoutly than thyself, who wast but just now scoffing at him. There are then neighbours of ours lying hid among those, who are not as yet in the Church; and there are those lying hid in the Church, who are far from us. And therefore let us, who know not things future, regard every one as our neighbour, not only by the lot of human

mortality, whereby we came into this world under the same condition; but also by the hope of that inheritance, since we know not what he is to be, who now is nothing.

3. Attend then to what follows in the putting on the new man, and putting off the old man. Laying aside, saith he, lying, speak ye the truth, every one with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not. If thou art angry with thy servant, because he hath sinned; be angry with thyself, lest thou sin also. Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath. It is understood, Brethren, it is true, with reference to time: because although from the very condition of our humanity, and weakness of our mortal nature, which we bear, wrath doth steal upon the Christian, yet it must not be long retained, nor last to the second day. Cast it out of the heart, before this visible light go down, lest that light invisible abandon thee. But, it is also well understood in another sense, for that Christ, the Truth, is our Sun of Righteousness; not this sun, which is worshipped by Pagans and Manichæans, and is seen by sinners even; but that other Sun, by Whose truth human nature is enlightened, at Which the Angels rejoice: but the weakened vision of the heart of man, although it quails beneath His rays, is purified nevertheless to contemplate Him by His commands. When this Sun hath begun to dwell in a man by faith, let not the wrath, which is born within thee, so far prevail against thee, that it should go down upon thy wrath, that is, that Christ should abandon thy soul; for Christ will not dwell with thy wrath. For He seemeth as it were to go down from thee, when thou dost go down from Him: for anger, when it hath become inveterate, becomes hatred; when it hath become hatred, thou art at once a murderer. For as the Apostle John saith, Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. Again he saith, that every one that hateth his brother abideth in darkness. And no wonder if he abide in darkness, from whom the Sun hath gone down.

4. To this too, perhaps, refers what ye have heard in the Gospel. The ship was in jeopardy in the lake, and Jesus was asleep. We too are sailing through a lake, so to say, and there is no want of wind and tempest: our ship is almost filled through the daily temptations of this life. And whence comes it, but because Jesus is asleep? If Jesus were not asleep within thee,

thou wouldest not be exposed to these storms; but wouldest have calm within, through Jesus watching with thee. But what is “Jesus sleepeth?” Thy faith which is of Jesus, hath fallen asleep. The tempests of this lake arise, thou seest evil men flourishing, the good in trouble; it is a temptation, it is a wave. And thy soul saith, O God, is this Thy justice, that the evil should flourish, the good be in trouble? thou sayest to God, “Is this Thy justice?” and God to thee, “Is this thy faith?” For have I promised thee this? wert thou made a Christian for this, that thou shouldest flourish in this life? Art thou tormented, because the evil flourish here, who shall, hereafter, be tormented with the devil? But why speakest thou thus? why art thou disturbed by the waves of the sea, and the storm? Because Jesus is asleep, that is, because thy faith, which is of Jesus, hath been laid asleep in thine heart. What doest thou that thou mayest be delivered? Awake Jesus, and say, Master, we perish. For the doubtful dangers of the deep alarm us, we perish. He will awake, that is, thy faith will return to thee; and with His help, thou wilt consider in thy soul, that what is, for a time, given to the evil, will not abide with them. For either it will leave them, while they live, or is left by them when they die. But what is promised to thee, will abide for ever. What is granted them for a time, is soon taken away. For it hath flourished as the flower of the grass. For all flesh is grass: the grass withereth, and the flower falleth, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever. Turn therefore the back upon that which falleth, and the face to that which abideth. Now that Christ is awake, the storm shall no more shake thy heart, the waves shall not fill thy bark: for thy faith commands the winds and the waves, and the danger shall pass away. For to this, Brethren, all that belongs, which the Apostle saith of putting off the old man. Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath; neither give place to the devil. The old man then did give place, let not the new. He that stole, let him steal no more. The old man then did steal, let not the new. It is the same man, it is one man: it was Adam, let it be Christ: it was the old man, let it be the new; and so on with what follows there.

5. But let us examine the Psalm somewhat more carefully, because when any one hath made progress in the Church, he must needs endure evil men in the Church. But the man who is such does not recognise them, although many evil men murmur against the evil, just as one man in health bears

more easily with two sick men, than two sick men with one another. Therefore, Brethren, we give this charge, The Church of the time present is a threshing-floor: we have often said it, we often repeat it. It contains both chaff and corn. Let no man look for all the chaff to go out thence, save in the time of winnowing. Let no man leave the floor before the time of winnowing, as if in his unwillingness to endure sinners; lest being found without the floor, he be picked up by the birds, before he enter into the barn. Now, Brethren, mark how we would enforce this. When the corn has begun to be threshed, the grains, amidst the chaff, do not touch each other: it is as though they did not know each other, because of the intervention of the chaff. And any one who looks at a floor at some little distance, thinks there is nothing but chaff; except he look more narrowly, except he put forth his hand, except he make a separation by the breath of his mouth, that is, by a purifying wind, he hardly attains to distinguish the grains. Therefore sometimes even the very grains are so separated as it were from each other, and not touching one another, that any one, when he has made progress, may think that he is alone. This thought, Brethren, tempted Elias, so great a man; and he said to God, as the Apostle also records, They have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God to him? I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee before Baal. He said not to him, Thou hast two or three others like thyself. Do not deem thyself alone. There are, saith He, seven thousand others; and dost thou deem thyself alone? Accordingly this briefly we enjoin, as I had begun to say. Do ye, holy Brethren, give heed with me, and may God’s mercy be with us in our hearts, that it may be so understood by you, as to bear fruit, and work in you. Hear it briefly: Whosoever is still evil, let him not deem that no one is good: whosoever is good, let him not deem that he only is good. Do ye apprehend this? Lo, I repeat it, mark ye how I say: Whosoever is evil, let him not in questioning his own conscience, and receiving a bad report of himself, imagine that no one is good: whosoever is good, let him not imagine that he only is good; and let not the good man fear in the mixture with the evil, for the time will come that he shall be separated from them. For to this end we have sung to-day, Destroy not my soul with the ungodly, and my life with the men of blood. For what is, Destroy not with the ungodly? Destroy not together. Why doth he fear, lest God should destroy him together? For I see that it is said to God, Because Thou sufferest us now together, destroy not together those whom Thou sufferest together. And this pervades the whole psalm, which I would briefly consider with you, holy Brethren, for it is brief.

6. Ver. 1. Judge me, O Lord. It is a serious and seemingly perilous wish, which he expresses for himself, that he may be judged. What is to be judged, which he wishes? He wishes to be separated from the evil. In another place he clearly speaks of this judgment of separation: Judge me, O Lord, and separate my cause from the unholy nation. He shews what he meant by, Judge: lest, as if without judgment, both the good and bad (for both good and bad enter at present into the Church) should go into eternal fire. Judge me, O Lord. Why? For I have walked in mine innocence, and trusting in the Lord I shall not be moved. What is, trusting in the Lord? For he stumbles among the evil, who does not trust in the Lord. Hence it has come that schisms arose. They trembled among the evil, when they were worse themselves, and were unwilling, as it were, to be good among the evil. O! if they were corn, they would endure the chaff in the floor till the time of winnowing. But because they are chaff, the wind hath blown before this winnowing, and hath caught up the chaff from the threshing floor, and cast it forth among thorns. And the chaff indeed hath been cast forth thence: but is that which remains corn only? It is only the chaff that flies away before the winnowing; but there remains both corn and chaff: but the chaff will be winnowed, when the time of winnowing shall come. This the Psalmist meant: I have walked in mine innocence, and trusting in the Lord I shall not be moved. For if I shall trust in man, I shall see perhaps this man sometime living ill, and not keeping to those good ways, which he hath either learnt or teaches in the Church, but those which he hath followed under the teaching of the devil; and because my trust shall be in man, when man stumbles my trust stumbles, and when man falls my trust will fall: but, because I trust in the Lord, I shall not be moved.

7. There follows, (ver. 2.) Prove me, O Lord, and try me; burn my reins, and my heart. What is, Burn my reins, and my heart? Burn my delights, burn my thoughts, (He hath used heart for thoughts, and reins for delights,) lest I should think any evil, lest any evil should delight me. But wherewith wilt

Thou burn my reins? With the fire of Thy word. Wherewith wilt Thou burn my heart? With the heat of Thy Spirit. Of which heat it is said elsewhere, And there is none who can hide himself from the heat thereof. And of which fire the Lord saith, I came to send fire on the earth.

8. Therefore there follows, (ver. 3.) For Thy mercy is before mine eyes, and I have been pleasing in Thy truth. That is, I have not been pleasing in man’s sight, but I have been pleasing unto Thee within, where Thou seest: and I care not, if I be displeasing where men see, as the Apostle saith, Let every one prove his own work, and then shall he have glory in himself alone, and not in another.

9. Ver. 4. I have not sat, saith he, with the council of vanity. Give heed, holy Brethren, to what this, I have not sat, is. According as God seeth, he saith, I have not sat. Sometimes thou art not in the council, yet thou sittest there. For instance, thou dost not sit in the theatre, but thou thinkest on the shows of the theatre, against which it is said, Burn my reins: thou sittest there in heart, though thou art not there in body. But it may happen, that thou art held there by some one, and fast bound, or some pious duty may make thee sit there. How can this happen? It chances from some duty of piety, that a necessity may lie on a servant of God to be in the amphitheatre; he wished to deliver some gladiator or other, it might happen that he was sitting, and waiting, until he whom he was desirous of delivering came out. See! he hath not sat in the council of vanity, though he was seen sitting there in body. What is it to sit? To consent unto them who sit there: which if thou have not done, though present, thou hast not sat there: if thou have done it, though absent, thou hast sat there. And I will not enter in with them that work wickedness. (Ver. 5.) I have hated the congregation of evil doers. You see that it is within, that, And I will not sit with the ungodly.

10. Ver. 6. I will wash mine hands in innocency; not with this visible water. Thou dost wash the hands, when thou dost think piously of thy works, and innocently in God’s sight; for there is an altar too in God’s sight, whereunto the Priest hath entered, Who first offered Himself up for us. There is an heavenly altar, and no man embraceth that altar, but he who washeth his hands in innocency. For many unworthy men touch this altar here, and God endures that his Sacraments should suffer injury for a time. But what! my

Brethren, will the heavenly Jerusalem be as these walls? You will not be so received with the evil into Abraham’s bosom, as you are now received with the evil within the walls of the Church. Fear not then: wash thine hands. And I will compass the altar of the Lord: where thou offerest vows unto the Lord, where thou pourest forth prayers, where thy conscience is pure, where thou dost tell God what thou art; and if there be haply aught in thee that displeaseth God, He, to Whom thou dost make confession, taketh care for it. Wash then thine hands in innocency, and compass the altar of the Lord, that thou mayest hear the voice of praise.

11. For this follows, (ver. 7.) That I may hear the voice of praise, and declare all Thy wondrous works. What is, That I may hear the voice of praise? He means, That I may understand. For this is to hear before God, not as these sounds, which many hear, and many do not. How many are there hearing now as regards us, who yet are deaf toward God! How many who have ears, and have not those ears of which Jesus saith, Who hath ears to hear, let him hear! What is it then to hear the voice of praise? I will tell you, if I can, with the help of the Lord’s mercy, and your prayers. To hear the voice of praise, is to understand, inwardly, that whatever of evil from sin is in thee, is thine own; whatever of good in works of righteousness, is God’s. So hear the voice of praise, as not to praise thyself even when thou art good. For in praising thyself as good, thou dost become evil. For humility had made thee good, pride maketh thee evil. Thou wast converted that thou mightest be illuminated, and by Thy conversion thou wert made full of light, having been enlightened by conversion. But whereunto? unto thyself? If thou couldest be illuminated by conversion to thyself, thou couldest never be in darkness, because thou wouldest ever be with thyself. Wherefore wert thou illuminated? Because thou turnedst thyself to something else, which thou wert not. What is the something else which thou wert not? God is light. For thou wast not light, because thou wast a sinner. For the Apostle saith to them, whom he would have hear the voice of praise, For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light. What is, Ye were sometime darkness, but the old man? But now light: not without a cause are ye light, who were sometime darkness, but because ye have been illumined. Think not that thou art thyself light: that is the light, which lighteth every man that cometh into this world: but thou by thyself, by evil

will, by thy turning away from God, wast in darkness: now thou art in light. But he immediately subjoined, lest they should be proud to whom it was said, But now light, and added, In the Lord. For thus he saith, Ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. Therefore if without the Lord, then not light, but if therefore light because in the Lord, what hast thou that thou hast not received? But if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? For thus the Apostle himself spake in another place to men who bore themselves proudly, and would attribute to themselves what is God's, and glory in good as if it were their own: he saith to them, For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? He Who hath given to the humble, taketh away from the proud, because he who gave can take away. This is the bearing, Brethren, (if so be I have explained it, as I wished: I have indeed explained it as far as I could, although not as far as I would,) this is the bearing of the words, I will wash my hands in innocency, and I will compass Thine altar, O Lord, that I may hear the voice of Thy praise: that is, that I may not for this good thing in me rely on myself, but on Thee Who gavest it me, that I should not wish to be praised for myself in myself, but for Thee in Thee. Therefore there follows, That I may hear the voice of Thy praise, and declare all Thy wondrous works: not mine, but Thine.

12. And now see, Brethren, see that lover of God, who relieth on God, placed among the evil, entreating God that he be not destroyed with the evil, for that God erreth not in judgment. For, when thou seest men have entered into one place, thou thinkest their merits equal: but God is not deceived, fear not. By the judgment of the wind thou dost discriminate between the chaff and the wheat: thou dost wish the wind to blow for thee, and thou art not the wind, but thou dost wish the wind to blow for thee: and, when with the winnowing fan thou hast shaken out both chaff and wheat, the wind takes away the light, the heavy remains. Thou dost look then for the wind to judge the floor. What? doth God look for another to judge with Him, lest He destroy the good with the evil? Fear not then: be thou secure in thy goodness, even in the midst of the evil; and say what thou hearest, (ver. 8.) O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thine house. God's house is the Church: as yet it contains evil men, but the beauty of God's house is in the

good, is in the holy: this beauty of Thine house have I loved. And the place of the habitation of Thy glory. What is this? This too will I explain, it has a somewhat obscure reference to that meaning: may the Lord help me, and your heart’s earnest attention inspired by the same Lord. Why doth he say, the place of the habitation of Thy glory? He said before, the beauty of Thine house: and he explains what is the beauty of God’s house, The place, saith he, of the habitation of Thy glory. It is not enough to say, the place of God’s habitation; but, the place of the habitation of God’s glory. What is God’s glory? Whereof I spoke a little before, that he even who is made good should not glory in himself, but in the Lord. For all have sinned, and are in need of the glory of God. In whom then the Lord so dwells, that He receiveth glory for His own good things, that they are unwilling to attribute to themselves, and claim as it were for their own, what they have received from Him: these belong to the beauty of God’s house. Nor would Scripture have them distinguished, unless there were some, who have indeed the gift of God, and will not glory in God, but in themselves: they have indeed the gift of God, but they do not belong to the beauty of God’s house. For they who belong to the beauty of God’s house, in whom God’s glory dwelleth, are themselves the place of the habitation of God’s glory. And in whom doth God’s glory dwell, but in such as so glory, that they glory not in themselves, but in the Lord? Since then I have loved the beauty of Thine house, that is, all who are there and seek Thy glory; and, moreover, I have not put my trust in man, and have not consented to the ungodly, and will not enter into nor sit in their assembly; since I have been such in the Church of God, what reward wilt Thou give me? What should be our answer follows, (Ver. 9.) Destroy not my soul with the ungodly, nor my life with the men of blood.

13. Ver. 10. In whose hands are wickednesses, their right hand is full of gifts. Gifts are not only money, not only gold and silver, not only presents; nor do all who receive these, receive gifts. For sometimes they are received by the Church. Yea, moreover, Peter received such; the Lord received such; He had a bag, Judas stole what was put therein. But what is to receive gifts? To praise a man for gifts, to flatter a man, to fawn and wheedle, to judge contrary to truth for gifts. For what gifts? Not for gold and silver and any thing of this kind only; but he too who judges amiss for praise, receives a

gift, and a gift than which nothing is more empty. For his hand was open to receive the judgment of another's tongue, and he hath lost the judgment of his own conscience. Hence in whose hands there are wickednesses, their right hand is full of gifts. You see, brethren, that they are before God also, in whose hands are no wickednesses, neither is their right hand filled with gifts, of course, in God's sight; and they can say to none but God, Thou knowest: to none but Him can they say, Destroy not my soul with the ungodly, and my life with the men of blood; Who Alone can see that they receive no gifts. For instance, it happens that two men have a cause before a servant of God: no one calls any but his own cause just. For if he thought his own cause unjust, he would not seek the judge. This one thinks that he has a just cause, and so does the other. They come before the judge: before sentence is pronounced, they both say, We accept your judgment; whatever you shall judge, far be it from us to reject.—What say you too?—Judge what you will; only judge: if I should resist at all on any point, may I be anathema. Both love the judge, before he passes judgment. But when sentence shall have been pronounced, it will be against one; and neither of them knows against whom it will be. The judge then, if he shall wish to please both parties, receives for a gift the praise of men. But having received that gift, see what gift he loses. He receives what sounds, and passeth away: he loses what is uttered, and never passeth away. The word of God is being ever uttered; It never passeth away: the word of man as soon as it has been uttered presently passeth away. He holds the shadow, he lets go the substance. Now if he have regard to God, he will pronounce sentence against one of the parties, having his thoughts on God, under Whom as Judge he pronounces it. But he, against whom it has been pronounced, and if it cannot now be disannulled, because it is maintained, it may not be by the law of the Church, but of this world's princes, who have granted so much authority to the Church, that whatever has been judged therein cannot be set aside, if, I say, it cannot be disannulled, he has no wish any longer to look into himself, but turns his blinded eyes against the judge, and maligns him as much as he can. He wished, saith he, to please the other party, he favoured the rich man, either he received something from him, or he was afraid to offend him. He makes an accusation, as if gifts had been received. But if the poor man shall have had a cause against a rich man, and judgment shall have been for the poor man, the rich one again says, He has received gifts. What gifts from a poor man? He saw, saith he, a poor man, and that he might not be blamed as having acted against the poor, he has overborne justice, and pronounced sentence against the truth. Since then it must needs be that this be said, see how it cannot be said by them who do not receive gifts, save in God's sight, Who alone seeth who receiveth and who doth not receive. (Ver. 11.) But I have walked in mine innocence: O deliver me, and be merciful unto me: (Ver. 12.) my foot hath stood in uprightness. I have been shaken indeed on every side by scandals and temptations from those who blame my judgment with the rashness of men; but my foot hath stood in uprightness. But why in uprightness? Because he had said above, And trusting in the Lord, I shall not be moved.

14. How then does he conclude? In the Churches I will bless Thee, O Lord. That is, in the Churches I will not bless myself, as if certain of men, but I will bless Thee in my works. For this it is to bless God in the Churches, Brethren, so to live that God may be blessed by each man's conversation. For he who blesseth the Lord with his tongue, and curseth Him in his deeds, doth not bless God in the Churches. Almost all bless with the tongue, but not all in deed. Some bless with the voice, some with their conversation. Now those in whose conversation there is not found what they say, cause God to be blasphemed, so that they who do not as yet enter the Church, although they love their sins, and therefore are unwilling to be Christians, yet excuse themselves by the evil, so as to flatter themselves, deceiving their own selves, and saying, Why dost thou persuade me to be a Christian? I have suffered fraud at a Christian's hands, and never did any: a Christian has sworn falsely to me, and I have never done so. And when they speak thus, they are kept back from salvation: that it profiteth them nothing, not indeed that they are already good, but that they are but moderately bad. For as it is no profit to open the eyes, if a man be in darkness; so is it no profit to be in the light, if the eyes are closed. And so the pagan indeed, (to speak of them the rather as though their lives were good,) is, with open eyes, in darkness; because he acknowledgeth not the Lord his Light: but the Christian, whose life is evil, is in none other light than God's, but with closed eyes; for, by his evil life, he will not see Him, in Whose Name he is, as it were, blind, in the midst of light, quickened by no vision of the True Light.

PSALM 27

first exposition

Of David himself, before he was anointed.

1. Christ’s young soldier speaketh, on his coming to the faith. (Ver. 1.) The Lord is my light, and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord will give me both knowledge of Himself, and salvation: who shall take me from Him? The Lord is the Protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid? The Lord will repel all the assaults and snares of mine enemy: of no man shall I be afraid.

2. Ver. 2. Whilst the guilty approach unto me to eat up my flesh. Whilst the guilty come near to recognise and insult me, that they may exalt themselves above me in my change for the better; that with their reviling tooth they may consume not me, but rather my fleshly desires. Mine enemies who trouble me. Not they only who trouble me, blaming me with a friendly intent, and wishing to recal me from my purpose, but mine enemies also. They became weak, and fell. Whilst then they do this with the desire of defending their own opinion, they became weak to believe better things, and began to hate the word of salvation, whereby I do what displeases them.

3. Ver. 3. If camps stand together against me, my heart will not fear. But if the multitude of gainsayers conspire to stand together against me, my heart will not fear, so as to go over to their side. If war rise up against me, in this will I trust. If the persecution of this world arise against me, in this petition, which I am pondering, will I place my hope.

4. Ver. 4. One have I asked of the Lord, this will I require. For one petition have I asked of the Lord, this will I require. That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. That as long as I am in this life, no adversities may exclude me from the number of them, who hold the unity and the truth of the Lord’s faith throughout the world. That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord. With this end, namely, that persevering

in the faith, the delightsome vision may appear to me, which I may contemplate face to face. And I shall be protected, His temple. And death being swallowed up in victory, I shall be clothed with immortality, being made His temple.

5. Ver. 5. For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the day of my evils. For He hath hidden me in the dispensation of His Incarnate Word in the time of temptations, to which my mortal life is exposed. He hath protected me in the secret place of His tabernacle. He hath protected me, with the heart believing unto righteousness.

6. On a rock hath He exalted me. And that what I believed might be made manifest for salvation, He hath made my confession to be conspicuous in His own strength. (Ver. 6.) And now, lo! He hath exalted mine head above mine enemies. What doth He reserve for me at the last, when even now the body is dead because of sin, lo! I feel that my mind serves the law of God, and is not led captive under the rebellious law of sin? I have gone about, and have sacrificed in His tabernacle the sacrifice of rejoicing. I have considered the circuit of the world, believing on Christ; and in that for us God was humbled in time, I have praised Him with rejoicing: for with such sacrifice He is well pleased. I will sing and give praises to the Lord. In heart and in deed I will be glad in the Lord.

7. Ver. 7. Hear my voice, O Lord, wherewith I have cried unto Thee. Hear, Lord, my interior voice, which with a strong intention I have addressed to Thy ears. Have mercy upon me, and hear me. Have mercy upon me, and hear me therein.

8. Ver. 8. My heart hath said to Thee, I have sought Thy countenance. For I have not exhibited myself to men; but in secret, where Thou alone hearest, my heart hath said to Thee; I have not sought from Thee ought without Thee as a reward, but Thy countenance. Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek. In this search will I perseveringly persist: for not aught that is common, but Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek, that I may love Thee freely, since nothing more precious do I find.

9. Ver. 9. Turn not away Thy face from me: that I may find what I seek. Turn not aside in anger from Thy servant: lest, while seeking Thee, I fall in

with somewhat else. For what is more grievous than this punishment to one who loveth and seeketh the truth of Thy countenance? Be Thou my Helper. How shall I find it, if Thou help me not? Leave me not, neither despise me, O God my Saviour. Scorn not that a mortal dares to seek the Eternal; for Thou, God, dost heal the wound of my sin.

10. Ver. 10. For my father and my mother have left me. For the kingdom of this world and the city of this world, of which I was born in time and mortality, have left me seeking Thee, and despising what they promised, since they could not give what I seek. But the Lord took me up. But the Lord, Who can give me Himself, took me up.

11. Ver. 11. Appoint me a law, O Lord, in Thy way. For me then who am setting out toward Thee, and commencing so great a profession, of arriving at wisdom, from fear, appoint, O Lord, a law in Thy way, lest in my wandering Thy rule abandon me. And direct me in the right path because of mine enemies. And direct me in the right way of its straits. For it is not enough to begin, since enemies cease not until the end is attained.

12. Ver. 12. Deliver me not up unto the souls of them that trouble me. Suffer not them that trouble me to be satiated with my evils. For unrighteous witnesses have risen up against me. For there have risen up against me they that speak falsely of me, to remove and call me back from Thee, as if I seek glory of men. And iniquity hath lied unto itself. Therefore iniquity hath been pleased with its own lie. For me it hath not moved, to whom because of this there hath been promised a greater reward in heaven.

13. Ver. 13. I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living. And since my Lord hath first suffered these things, if I too despise the tongues of the dying, (for the mouth that lieth slayeth the soul,) I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living, where there is no place for falsity.

14. Ver. 14. Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man: and let thy heart be strong, yea wait on the Lord. But when shall this be? It is arduous for a mortal, it is slow to a lover: but listen to the voice, that deceiveth not, of him that saith, wait on the Lord. Endure the burning of the reins manfully, and the burning of the heart stoutly. Think not that what thou dost not as yet

receive is denied thee. That thou faint not in despair, see how it is said, Wait on the Lord.

second exposition

1. The Lord our God in addressing and consoling us, whom sooth He regards as eating our bread by His Own righteous judgment in the sweat of our face, vouchsafes to speak to us out of ourselves, to shew us that He is not only our Creator, but also our Indweller. These words of the Psalm, which we have heard and partly sung, if we say that they are our own, we must be reverently careful how we speak the truth; for they are rather the words of God's Spirit than our own. Again, if we say that they are not ours, we do indeed lie. For groaning belongs not but to those who are in distress; or all that speech, which is uttered here, full of grief and tears, may be His Who never can be miserable. The Lord then is merciful, we are miserable: in His mercy He vouchsafes to speak to the miserable, vouchsafes even in them to use the speech of the miserable. So each is true, both that the speech is ours, and that it is not ours; that it is the speech of God's Spirit, and that it is not His. The speech is that of God's Spirit, in that but for His inspiration we should not speak thus: but it is not His, in that He is neither miserable, nor in distress: but these words are those of the miserable and distressed. Again, they are ours, because they are words indicating our misery: and yet they are not ours, because it is of His gift that we are vouchsafed even to groan.

2. A Psalm of David before he was anointed. Thus runs the title of the Psalm, A Psalm of David before he was anointed, that is, before he received unction. For he was anointed as a king. And the king was then anointed alone, and also the priest: these two persons were anointed at that time. In the two persons was prefigured the One future king and priest, in either office One Christ; and therefore Christ from the chrism. But not only was our Head anointed, but His Body also, we ourselves. Now He is King, in that He ruleth and leadeth us; Priest, in that He intercedeth for us. And verily He alone hath been such a priest, as to be also Himself the sacrifice. He hath offered none other sacrifice to God than Himself. For He could not find besides Himself a most pure, reasonable victim, as a lamb without spot, redeeming us by the shedding of His own blood, incorporating us with

Himself, making us His Own members, that in Him we too should be Christ. Therefore anointing belongs to all Christians: but in the former times of the Old Testament it belonged to two characters only. But it appears from this that we are the Body of Christ, in that we all are anointed: and we all in Him are both Christ's and Christ, because in some sort Whole Christ is the Head and Body. This anointing will perfect us spiritually in that life, which is promised us. But this voice is of one longing for that life; it is the voice as it were of one longing for the grace of God, which shall be perfected in us at the last: therefore it is said, Before he was anointed. For we are anointed now in the sacrament, and, by this sacrament, something is prefigured, which we shall be. And that certain unspeakable future thing we ought to long for, and to groan in the sacrament, that we may rejoice in that thing, which is foreshewn in the sacrament.

3. See what he says: (ver. 1.) The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? He enlightens me, let darkness vanish: He saves me, let weakness vanish: walking in the light with firmness, whom shall I fear? For God giveth not such salvation, as can be wrested by any one; nor is He such a Light, as can be obscured by any one. The Lord enlightening, we enlightened; the Lord saving, we saved: if then He be the enlightener and we the enlightened; and He the Saviour, we the saved, without Him we are darkness and weakness. But having in Him a sure, and established, and true hope, whom shall we fear? The Lord thy light, the Lord thy Saviour. Find one more powerful, and fear. I belong, in such wise, to the most powerful of all, to the all-powerful, that He both enlighteneth me, and saveth me; nor fear I any but Him. The Lord is the protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?

4. Ver. 2. Whilst the guilty approach unto me to eat up my flesh: mine enemies who trouble me became weak and fell. I, therefore, what shall I fear, or whom shall I fear? Of whom shall I be afraid, or of what shall I be afraid? They who persecute me, they are weakened, they fall. Now why do they persecute me? To eat up my flesh. What is my flesh? My fleshly affections. Let them rage in their persecutions: nothing dies in me, but what is mortal. There will be somewhat in me, which the persecutor cannot reach, where my God dwelleth. Let them eat my flesh: when my flesh is

gone, I shall be spirit and spiritual. And indeed so great salvation doth my Lord promise me, that even now this mortal flesh, which seems to be given up to the hands of the persecutors, doth not perish for ever; but what hath been exhibited in the resurrection of my Head, may all the members hope for. Whom should my soul fear, which God inhabiteth? Whom should my flesh fear, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption? Would ye know, because they who persecute us eat our flesh, how that we need not fear even for this very flesh of ours? It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body. Now how great confidence should there be in him, who could say, The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid? The general is protected by guards, and fears not; a mortal is protected by mortals, and is secure: a mortal is protected by the Immortal, and shall he fear and be afraid?

5. Now how great confidence there should be in him, who speaks thus, do ye hear; (ver. 3.) If camps stand together against me, mine heart shall not fear. Camps are well defended, but what stronger defence than God? If war rise up against me. What can war do to me? Can it take away my hope from me? Can it take away what the Almighty gives? As He who gives is not conquered, so what He giveth is not taken away. If the gift can be taken away, the giver is conquered. Therefore even these things, which we receive in time, no one can take away from us, my Brethren, but He alone Who gave them. The spiritual things which He bestoweth He will not take away, unless thou shalt let them go; but things fleshly and temporal He taketh away; because whoever else taketh them away, taketh them away by His giving him the power. We know this, and read in the book of Job, that not even the devil, who appears, so to say, to have the greatest power for a time, can do any thing without permission. He received power over the lowest things, and lost the greatest and the highest. And this is not the power of one enraged, but the punishment of one damned. Not even he then can have any power without permission. You see this both in the book which I have quoted, and in the Gospel the Lord saith, This night Satan hath desired that he might sift you as wheat; and I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not. Now it is permitted either for our punishment, or for our trial. Therefore since no one can take away from us what God giveth, let us fear

none but God. Whatsoever else threaten, whatsoever else vaunt itself against us, let not our heart fear.

6. If war rise up against me, in this will I trust. In what? (Ver. 4.) One, saith he, have I asked of the Lord. He named some boon in the feminine gender, as if he had said, One petition. And as we are in the habit of saying in conversation for instance, ‘Duas habes,’ (in the feminine,) and not ‘Duo,’ (in the neuter:) so Scripture has used this manner of speech: One, saith he, have I asked of the Lord, this will I require. Let us see what he asketh, who feareth nothing. Great security of soul! Would ye fear nothing? Ask this one, which he asketh who feareth nothing, or which he asketh that he may fear nothing. One, saith he, have I asked of the Lord, this will I require. This is practised here by them that walk honestly. What is this? What is this one? That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. This is the one: for that is called a house where we shall abide always. In this state of pilgrimage, the word house is used, but the proper name is, tent. A tent belongs to those who are in pilgrimage, and in a measure warring and fighting against an enemy. Since then there is a tent in this life, it is plain that there is an enemy too. For to have tents in common, this is to be comrades: and you know this is the name for soldiers. Here then is a tent, there a house. But this tent too is sometimes by application of its resemblance called a house, and the house is according to the same method called a tent: yet properly the latter is the house, the former the tent.

7. Now what we shall do in that house, you have clearly expressed in another Psalm: Blessed are they that dwell in Thine house; they will be praising Thee for ever. On fire, if we may so say, with this desire, and boiling with this love, he longs to dwell all the days of his life in the house of the Lord: in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, not as if they were to come to an end, but days eternal. For so is the word, days, used, as years, of which it is said, And Thy years shall not fail. For the day of life eternal is one day without setting. This then he said to the Lord, I have desired this, One have I asked, This will I require. And as if we should say to him, And what wilt thou do there? what will be thy delight there? what the recreation of thy soul? what the pleasures there whence thy joys will be supplied? For thou wilt not continue there, unless thou shalt be happy. But

that happiness whence will it come? For here we have the divers happinesses of the human race; and any one is called miserable, when what he loves is withdrawn. Men then have divers things, and when any man seems to have what he loves, he is called happy. But he is truly happy, not if he have what he loves, but if he love what he ought to love. For many are more miserable in having what they love, than in wanting it. For men miserable by the love of hurtful things, are more miserable by having them. And God in mercy, when we love amiss, denieth what we love: but in anger giveth to him that loveth what he loves amiss. You have the Apostle, saying expressly, God gave them up to the lust of their own hearts. He gave them what they loved, but in condemnation. You have again God denying what was asked: For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, saith he, that He would take it away from me; (namely, the thorn in the flesh;) and He said to me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for strength is made perfect in weakness. See He gave those up to the lust of their hearts: He denied the Apostle Paul what he prayed for; to the former He gave unto condemnation, to the latter He denied unto salvation. But when we love that which God wills us to love, beyond doubt He will give it us. This is that one, which should be loved, that we may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of our life.

8. And because, in these earthly habitations, men are charmed with divers delights and pleasures, and every one wishes to dwell in that house, where he will have nothing to offend his mind, and have many things to delight him; but if those things which did delight are withdrawn, the man wishes to remove from what place soever it be: let us then ask him, as it were, more inquisitively, and let him tell us, what we ourselves, what he will do in that house, where he wishes and desires, longs and asks this one thing from the Lord, that he may dwell therein all the days of his life. What wilt thou do there, I ask thee? What is it for which thou longest? Hear what, That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord. See what I love, see why I wish to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. He has there a grand spectacle, to contemplate the delight of the Lord Himself. He wishes when his own night is over to be fixed in His light. For then will be our morning, when the night is passed: whence he says in another Psalm, In the morning I will stand before Thee, and will contemplate. Now therefore I do not contemplate, because I have fallen: then I will stand, and will contemplate.

This is man’s voice. For man has fallen, and one would not be sent to raise us up, if we had not fallen. We have fallen, He hath descended. He hath ascended, we are lifted up; for no man hath ascended, but He Who descended. He who hath fallen is lifted up; He Who descended ascendeth. And let us not therefore despair, that He alone hath ascended. For He lifteth us up, to whom in our fall He descended: and we shall stand, and shall contemplate, and enjoy great delight. Lo! I have said this, and ye have cried out for the longing after some vision not seen as yet. Let your soul go beyond all ordinary things, and let your reach of thought go beyond all your customary imaginations according to the flesh, derived from the senses of the flesh, and figuring out all manner of vain fancies. Cast all away from your mind, reject whatever may have occurred to you: recognise the weakness of your heart, and for the very fact of any thing occurring to you, that you are able to imagine, say, It is not that; for if it had been that, it would not have occurred to me. So will ye long for some certain good. What kind of good? The Good of all good, whence cometh all good, the Good to which cannot be added what Good It is. For we use the expression, a good man, and a good field, and a good house, and a good animal, and a good tree, and a good body, and a good soul: you have added in speaking of all these, “good.” There is the Simple Good, the Very Good by Which all things are good, the Very Good of Which all good things are; this is the delight of the Lord, this we shall contemplate. Now, Brethren, mark; if these goods which are called goods delight us, if goods which are not in themselves goods (for all things changeable are not in themselves goods) delight us; what will be our contemplation of the Good Unchangeable, Eternal, Abiding ever in the same fashion? For these things, which are called good, would by no means delight us, except they were good; nor could they be by any other means good, save from Him Who is simply Good.

9. See why I wish to dwell, saith he, in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. I have told you why, That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord. But, that I may always contemplate, that no annoyance may befal me in my contemplation, no temptation turn me aside, no power of any hurry me away, that I may not be exposed to the violence of any enemy in my contemplation, but have secure and thorough enjoyment of my delight, the

Lord my God Himself; what shall be done for me? He shall protect me. Not only, then, saith he, would I contemplate the delight of the Lord, but also that I, His temple, be protected. That He may protect me, His own temple, I shall be His temple, and be protected by Him. Is the temple of God such as the temples of idols are? The idols of the Gentiles are protected by their temples: the Lord our God will protect His temple, and I shall be secure. I shall contemplate for delight, and be protected for salvation. As that contemplation shall be perfect, so shall this protection be perfect; and as that joy of contemplation shall be perfect, so also shall the incorruption of sound health be perfect. To these two expressions, That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord, and be protected, His temple; those two with which the Psalm commences, 'The Lord is my Light, and my Salvation, whom shall I fear?' In that I shall contemplate the delight of the Lord, He is my Light: in that He will protect me, His temple, He is my Salvation.

10. But why doth He make this good for us unto the end? (ver. 5.) For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the day of my evils. My dwelling, then, shall be in His house all the days of my life to this end, that I may contemplate the delight of the Lord, and be protected, His temple. But whence my assurance of arriving thither? For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the day of my evils. Then the days of my evils will be no more, but He hath seen me in the days of my evils. He then Who mercifully regarded me when far off, how shall He gladden me when brought near to Him? For which cause therefore I did not make that one petition shamelessly; nor did my heart say to me, What art thou asking, or from Whom art thou asking? For dost thou dare, unrighteous sinnner, to ask any thing from God? Darest thou hope, infirm one, of heart impure, that thou shalt have any contemplation of God? I do, he answers, not of myself, but of His delight; not of self-reliance, but of His earnest. He Who hath given such an earnest to the pilgrim, will He desert him on his arrival? For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the day of my evils. Lo! the day of our evils is this life. Days of evil the ungodly have in one way, the faithful in another. For even they that believe, but who as yet are in pilgrimage from the Lord, (For as long as we are in this body, we are in pilgrimage from the Lord, as the Apostle hath said:) if they spend no days of evil, whence the words in the Lord's prayer, Deliver us from evil, if we are not in days of

evil? But far differently do they spend the days of evil, who have not yet believed: yet even these hath He not disregarded. For Christ died for the ungodly. Therefore let the soul of man dare to feel confidence, and make that one petition: it will have it in safety, it will possess it in safety. So greatly hath she been loved in her deformity, how shall she shine in her beauty? For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle, in the days of my evils: He hath protected me in the secret of His tabernacle. What is the secret of His tabernacle? What is this? For there are, so to say, many members of a tabernacle seen from without. There is too, so to say, the shrine which is called the secret sanctuary, the innermost part of the temple. And what is this? that which the priest alone entered. And haply the priest Himself is the secret of God's tabernacle. For He received flesh from this tabernacle, and made for us the secret of the tabernacle: so that His other members, believers on Him, should be His tabernacle, but Himself the secret of the tabernacle. For ye are dead, saith the Apostle, and your life hath been hid with Christ in God.

11. Would ye know that he is speaking of this? The Rock assuredly is Christ. Hear what follows, For He hath hidden me in His tabernacle in the days of my evils: He hath protected me in the secret of His tabernacle. You were asking what is the secret of the tabernacle: hear what follows: On the Rock hath He exalted me. Therefore in Christ hath He exalted me. Because thou hast humbled thyself in the dust, He hath exalted thee on the Rock. But Christ is above, and thou art yet below. Hear the words following, (ver. 6.) Even now hath He exalted mine head above mine enemies. Even now, before I come to that house, where I wish to dwell all the days of my life, before I come to that contemplation of the Lord, Even now hath He exalted mine head above mine enemies. As yet I suffer from the enemies of the Body of Christ, as yet I have not been exalted above mine enemies; but, mine head hath He exalted above mine enemies. Christ our Head is already in heaven, our enemies can as yet rage against us; we are not yet exalted above them; but our Head is already there, whence He spake the words, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? He hath said that He is in us here below: therefore we too are in Him there above; for that, Even now He hath exalted mine head above mine enemies. See what an earnest we have, whereby we too are by faith, and hope, and charity, with our Head in

heaven for ever; because the Head Himself, by divinity, goodness, unity, is with us on earth even unto the consummation of the world.

12. I have gone about, and have sacrificed in His tabernacle the victim of rejoicing. We sacrifice the victim of rejoicing, we sacrifice the victim of gladness, the victim of thankfulness, the victim of thanksgiving, which cannot be explained in words. But we sacrifice, where? In His very tabernacle, in the holy Church. What then do we sacrifice? Most abundant and inexpressible joy, with no words, with speech ineffable. This is the victim of rejoicing. Whence hath it been sought, where found? By going about. I have gone about, saith he, and sacrificed in His tabernacle the victim of rejoicing. Let thy mind go about through all creation: every where will creation cry out to thee, God made me. Whatever in art delighteth thee, sets forth the artificer: and much more if thou go about the universe, doth consideration conceive the great Workman’s praise. Thou seest the heavens: they are God’s great work. Thou seest the earth: God made the numerous seeds, the varieties of herbs, the multitude of animals. Go yet about the heavens even unto the earth, leave nothing: on all sides all things proclaim to thee the Framer, and the very species of creatures are so to say the voices of the Creator’s praisers. But who can set forth the whole creation? who set it forth in praises? who worthily praise the heaven and the earth, the sea and all things that are therein? And these indeed are things visible. Who can worthily praise Angels, Thrones, Sovereignties, Principalities, and Powers? Who can worthily praise that very power that works actively within us, quickening the body, moving the limbs, bringing the senses into action, embracing so many things by the memory, discriminating so many things by the intellect; who can worthily praise it? But if in these creatures of God human language is so embarrassed, how fares it in the case of the Creator, except in default of language there remain rejoicing alone? I have gone about, and have sacrificed in His tabernacle the victim of rejoicing.

13. There is another interpretation also, which seems to me to have a closer reference to the context of the Psalm. For since he had said that he was exalted on the Rock, which is Christ; and that his Head, which is Christ, was exalted above his enemies; he would have it understood that he himself, who was exalted on the Rock, was exalted in the same, his Head,

above his enemies: referring this to the Church’s honour, to which the persecution of the enemies gave way: and since this was effected through the faith of the whole world, he saith, I have gone about, and have sacrificed in His tabernacle the victim of rejoicing: that is, I have considered the faith of the whole world, in which faith my Head hath been exalted above them that persecuted me; and in His very tabernacle, that is, in the Church spread abroad throughout the whole world, have I in manner unspeakable praised the Lord.

14. I will sing and give praises to the Lord. We shall be in safety, and sing in safety, and give praise in safety, when we shall contemplate the delight of the Lord, and shall be protected as His temple in that incorruption, when death shall be swallowed up in victory. But what now? For those joys, which we shall have, when we shall have gained that one petition, have been already spoken of. But what now? Hear my voice, O Lord. Let us groan now, let us pray now. Groaning belongs not but to the miserable, prayer belongs not but to the necessitous. Prayer shall pass away, praise shall take its place; tears shall pass away, joy shall take their place. Now in the meanwhile, whilst we are in the days of our evils, let not our prayer to God cease, from Whom we ask that one petition; and from this petition let us not desist, until by His gift and guidance we attain unto it. (Ver. 7.) Hear my voice, O Lord, wherewith I have cried unto Thee: have mercy upon me, and hear me. He makes that one petition; entreating, weeping, groaning so long, he makes but that one. He has put an end to all His desires; there hath remained that one petition, which he asks.

15. Hear why he makes this petition: (ver. 8.) My heart hath said to Thee, I have sought Thy countenance. This then is what he said a little before, That I may contemplate the delight of the Lord. My heart hath said to Thee, I have sought Thy countenance. If our joy were in this visible sun, our heart would not say, I have sought Thy countenance; but, the eyes of our body. To whom saith our heart, I have sought Thy countenance, but to Him Who appertaineth to the eye of the heart? The eyes of the flesh seek this visible light, the eyes of the heart seek that other light. But thou wouldest see that light, which is seen by the eyes of the heart; because this Light is God. For God is Light, saith John, and in Him is no darkness at all. Wouldest thou

then see that light? Purify the eye, whereby Christ is seen, for, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

16. My heart hath said unto Thee, I have sought Thy countenance; Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek. I have made one petition of the Lord, this will I seek, Thy countenance. Turn not away Thy face from me. How he hath planted himself in that one petition! Wouldest thou obtain thy request? Seek nothing else. Be thou sufficient but for one petition, for one will suffice thee. My heart hath said unto Thee, I have sought Thy countenance; Thy countenance, O Lord, will I seek. Turn not away Thy face from me: turn not aside in anger from Thy servant. Magnificent! nothing can be more divinely spoken! This is the feeling of those that truly love. Another man would be blessed and immortal in these pleasures of earthly lusts which he loves: and peradventure for this reason would worship God, and pray, that he may long live here in his delights, and that nothing should fail him, which earthly desire has in possession, neither gold, nor silver, nor any estate that charms his eyes, that his friends, his children, his wife, his dependents, should not die; in these delights would he live for ever. But since he cannot for ever, for he knows that he is mortal; for this haply does he worship God, and for this pray to God, and for this sigh to God, that all these things may last even to old age. And if God should say to him, Lo! I make thee immortal in these things, he would accept it as a great boon, and in the exultation of his joy and self-congratulation would be unable to contain himself. Not so doth this man wish, who hath made one petition of the Lord. But what doth he wish? To contemplate the delight of the Lord all the days of his life. And on the contrary the other, who in this way and for this reason would worship the Lord, if those temporal advantages were at his hand, would not fear the anger of his Lord, unless lest He should take them away. This man feareth not His anger on this account; since he hath said of his enemies, That they may eat my flesh. For what doth he fear His anger? Lest He take away that which he hath loved. What hath he loved? Thy countenance. Therefore he deems this to be the anger of the Lord, if He turn away His countenance from him. (Ver. 9.) Turn not aside in anger from Thy servant. He might by chance be answered thus; “Why fearest thou lest He should turn aside from thee in anger? Rather if He should turn aside from thee in anger, He will not avenge Himself on thee: if thou meet Him in

His anger, He will be avenged on thee. Rather then desire that He may turn aside from thee when in anger.” “No,” says he; for he knows what he longs for; “His anger is nothing else than the turning away of His countenance.” “What if He will make thee immortal in these delights, and in the enjoyment of earthly gratifications?” Such a lover answers, “I would not have it; whatever I have beside Him has no charms for me: whatever my Lord would give me, let Him take away all, give me Himself.” Turn not aside in anger from Thy servant. From some peradventure He doth turn aside, not in anger; as from certain who say to Him, Turn away Thy face from my sins. When He turneth away His face from thy sins, He doth not turn aside from thee in anger. Let Him then turn away His face from thy sins: but let Him not turn away His face from thee.

17. Be Thou my helper: leave me not. For, lo, I am in the way, I have made the one petition of Thee, to dwell in Thy house all the days of my life, to contemplate Thy delight, and be protected as Thy temple: this is my one petition: but that I may attain unto it, I am in the way. Peradventure Thou wilt say unto me, “Strive, walk, I have given thee freewill; thou art master of thine own will, follow on the way, seek peace, and ensue it; turn not aside from the way, abide not therein, look not back; persevere in walking, for he that shall persevere unto the end, the same shall be saved.” Now that thou hast received freewill, thou dost rely as it were on the power of walking: rely not on thyself; if He should leave thee, thou wilt faint in the very way, thou wilt fall, wilt go astray, wilt come to a stand: say then to Him, Thou hast given me indeed a free will, but without Thee my efforts are nothing: Be Thou my helper: leave me not; neither despise me, O God of my salvation. For Thou dost help, Who formedst; Thou dost not desert, Who createdst.

18. Ver. 10. For my father and my mother have left me. He hath made himself a babe unto God: he hath made Him Father, he hath made Him Mother. He is Father, in that He made, in that He calleth, in that He ordereth, in that He ruleth him: Mother, in that He cherisheth, in that He nourisheth him, in that He suckleth, in that He beareth him. My father and my mother have left me: but the Lord hath taken me up: both to rule me, and to nourish me. Mortal parents beget, children succeed, mortals to other

mortals; and for this were they born who might succeed, that those who begot them might depart: He will not depart Who created me, I will not withdraw from Him. My father and my mother have left me: but the Lord hath taken me up. Beside those two parents also, of whose flesh we were born, the man the father, the woman the mother, as Adam and Eve; besides those two parents, we have here another father and another mother, or rather we had. The father according to the world is the devil, and he was our father when we were unbelievers. For to unbelievers the Lord saith, Ye are of your father the devil. If he be the father of all the ungodly, who worketh in the children of disobedience, who is the mother? There is a certain city, that is called Babylon; this city is the company of all the lost from the East even unto the West; she hath a kingdom on earth: after this city a certain state is named, which ye now see growing old and waning. This was our first mother, in this were we born. We have known another father, God; we have left the devil. For how dare he approach those, whom He, Who overcometh all things, hath taken up? We have known another mother, the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the holy Church, a portion whereof is a pilgrim on earth: we have left Babylon. My father and my mother have left me: they have nothing now to give me; since even when they seemed to give to me, it was Thou Who gavest, and I set it down to them.

19. For by whom, even with respect to this world, is aught given to man, but by God? Or what is taken away from man, except He order, or permit, Who gave it? But vain men imagine, that those spirits, whom they adore, give it: and sometimes they say to themselves, God is necessary for life eternal, for that spiritual life; but these powers ought to be worshipped by us for these temporal things. O the folly of mankind! thou hast more love for those things for which thou wouldest worship them: in good truth, thou hast more mind to worship them, or, not to say more, at least as much. But God will not be worshipped together with them, not even though He be worshipped much more, and they much less. What then, thou wilt say, are they not necessary too for these things? No. But we have reason to fear, lest they do one harm in their anger. No harm will they do, unless He permit. They have always the wish to do harm, nor, if they be appeased, or if they be entreated, do they cease to wish to do harm. For this is a property of their malevolence. Therefore what wilt thou gain by worshipping them, save that

thou wilt offend Him, by offending Whom thou wilt be given over into their power, that they who could do nothing to thee when He is favourable, may do what they will when He is angry? And that thou mayest know, whosoever thou art who thinkest so, how vainly thou dost worship them, as if for temporal benefits: of all that worship Neptune have none suffered shipwreck? or of all who blaspheme Neptune have none arrived in port? Have all the women who worship Juno had a good delivery? or all who blaspheme Juno a bad delivery? From this, beloved brethren, ye may understand the folly of those men who will worship them even for these temporal things. For if for these temporal things they ought to be worshipped, their worshippers alone would abound in all temporal blessings. And indeed if this were the case, we ought to avoid such gifts, and make one petition of the Lord. To this must be added, that it is He Who giveth even these things, Who is offended when these spirits are worshipped. Therefore let our father and our mother leave us; let the devil leave us, the city Babylon leave us: let the Lord take us up to console us with things temporal, and to bless us with things eternal. For my father and my mother have left me: but the Lord hath taken me up.

20. Now then he hath been taken up by the Lord, having abandoned that city, and its ruler the devil, for the devil is the ruler of the ungodly, the ruler of the world, of this darkness. What darkness? Sinners, unbelievers. Whence the Apostle saith to them that now believe, Ye were sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord. Being then now taken up by Him, what say we? (Ver. 11.) Appoint me a law, O Lord, in Thy way. Hast thou dared to ask for a law? What if He should say to thee, “Thou shalt fulfil the law? if I give a law, thou shalt fulfil it?” He would not dare ask it, unless he said first, But the Lord hath taken me up. He would not dare ask it, unless he said first, Be Thou my helper. Therefore if Thou helpest, if Thou takest me up, give me a law. Appoint me, O Lord, a law in Thy way. Therefore, appoint me a law in Thy Christ. For the Way Himself hath spoken unto us, and said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. A law in Christ, is a law with mercy. This is the Wisdom, of Which it is written, She carrieth law and mercy in her tongue. And if thou shalt commit any offence in the law, He Who shed His Blood for thee, pardons thee on confession: only forsake not thou the way, say unto Him, Be Thou my upholder, and direct me in the

right path, because of mine enemies. Give me a law, but take not mercy away: as he said in another Psalm, For He will give mercy, Who hath given a law. Therefore, Appoint me a law, O Lord, in Thy way: this refers to the precept: what refers to mercy? And direct me, saith he, in the right path, because of mine enemies.

21. Ver. 12. Deliver me not up unto the souls of them that trouble me: that is, let me not consent to them that trouble me. For if thou shalt consent to him that troubleth thee, unto his soul, he will not, so to say, devour thy flesh, but by a perverted will he will eat up thy soul. Deliver me not up unto the souls of them that trouble me. Deliver me, if it please Thee, into the hands of them that trouble me. For this Martyrs have said to Him, and He hath delivered His own into the hands of them that trouble them. But what hath He delivered? The flesh. Which is meant in the book of Job, The earth hath been delivered into the hands of the wicked; the flesh hath been delivered into the hands of the persecutor. Deliver me not up, not my flesh, but me. I speak unto Thee as a soul, as mind I speak unto Thee: I do not say, Deliver not up my flesh into the hands of them that trouble me; but, Deliver me not up unto the souls of them that trouble me. And how are men delivered up unto the souls of them that trouble them? For unrighteous witnesses have risen up against me. Now, for that there are unrighteous witnesses, and they speak much evil against me, and in many things defame me, if I shall have been delivered up unto their souls, I also shall lie, and shall be their companion, not a partaker of Thy truth, but a partaker with them in a lie against Thee: Unrighteous witnesses have risen up against me; and iniquity hath lied unto itself: unto itself, and not unto me: unto itself let it ever lie, but let it not lie unto me. If Thou shalt have delivered me up unto the souls of them that trouble me, that is, if I shall have consented to their wishes; now will not iniquity already have lied unto itself, but unto me also: whereas if they exercise against me all the violence they wish, and endeavour to hinder my free course, and notwithstanding Thou give me not over unto their souls: by not consenting to their wishes, I shall abide and continue in Thy truth, and iniquity will lie not unto me, but unto itself.

22. He returns to that one petition after these dangers, after toils, after difficulties, amid the hands of them that persecute and trouble him, gasping,

panting, travailing, yet stedfast, and assured while He upholdeth, helpeth, guideth, ruleth; yet, after that going about and rejoicing, in joy exulting, in travails groaning, he sighed at last, and said, (ver. 13.) I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living. O the good things of the Lord, sweet, immortal, incomparable, eternal, unchangeable! And when shall I see you, ye good things of the Lord? I believe to see you, but not in the earth of the dying. I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the earth of the living. The Lord shall deliver me from the earth of the dying, Who for my sake vouchsafed to take upon Himself the earth of the dying, and to die amid the hands of the dying: the Lord shall deliver me from the earth of the dying: I believe to see the good things of the Lord in the earth of the living. Panting he spoke, travailing he spoke, he spoke in peril amid a mighty crowd of temptations: but yet wholly depending on His mercy, to Whom he said, Appoint me a law, O Lord.

23. And what doth He say, Who hath appointed him a law? Let us hear the Voice of the Lord too exhorting us from on high, consoling us; His Voice Whom we have for father and mother, who have left us: let us hear His Voice. For He hath heard our groans, He hath seen our deep sighs, He hath beheld our longing; and our one petition, the one request through Christ our Advocate hath He gladly received; and until we accomplish this pilgrimage, during which He will defer, not take away, what He hath promised, He hath said unto us, Wait on the Lord. Thou wilt not wait on a false one, not on one that can be deceived, not on one that will not find what to give. The Almighty hath promised, the Sure One hath promised, the True hath promised. Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man. Faint not: be not of them to whom it is said, Woe unto them that have lost endurance. Wait on the Lord, is said to us all, and to one Man is it said. We are one Man in Christ, we are the Body of Christ, who have that one longing, who make that one petition, who in those days of our evils groan, who believe to see the good things of the Lord in the earth of the living; to us all who are one in One it is said, (ver. 14.) Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man; and let thy heart be strong, yea, wait on the Lord. What else saith He to thee, than repeat what thou hast heard? Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man. Therefore he who hath lost endurance, hath become effeminate, hath lost vigour. Let men, let women, listen to this; for in the one man is man and

woman. Such an one in Christ is neither male, nor female. Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man; let thy heart be strong, yea, wait on the Lord. By waiting on the Lord thou shalt possess Him, thou shalt possess Him on Whom thou shalt wait. Long for somewhat else, if thou canst find aught greater, better, sweeter.

PSALM 28

Of David himself.

1. It is the Voice of the Mediator Himself, strong of hand in the conflict of the Passion. Now what He seems to wish for against His enemies, is not the wish of malevolence, but the declaration of their punishment; as in the Gospel, with the cities, in which though He had performed miracles, yet they had not believed on Him, He doth not wish in any evil will what He saith, but predicteth what is impending over them.

2. Ver. 1. Unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; My God, be not silent from me. Unto Thee, O Lord, have I cried; My God, separate not the unity of Thy Word from that which as Man I am. Lest at any time Thou be silent from me: and I shall be like them that go down into the pit. For from this, that the Eternity of Thy Word ceaseth not to unite Itself to Me, it comes that I am not such a man as the rest of men, who are born into the deep misery of this world: where, as if Thou art silent, Thy Word is not recognised. (Ver. 2.) Hear, O Lord, the voice of my supplication, whilst I pray unto Thee, whilst I hold up my hands to Thy holy temple. Whilst I am crucified for their salvation, who on believing become Thy holy temple.

3. Ver. 3. Draw not My Soul away with sinners, and destroy me not with them that work iniquity, with them that speak peace with their neighbours. With them that say unto Me, We know that Thou art a Master come from God. But evil in their hearts. But they speak evil in their hearts.

4. Ver. 4. Give unto them according to their works. Give unto them according to their works, for this is just. And according to the malice of their affections. For aiming at evil, they cannot discover good. According to the works of their hands give Thou unto them. Although what they have done may avail for salvation to others, yet give Thou unto them according to the works of their wills. Pay them their recompense. Because, for the truth which they heard, they wished to recompense deceit; let their own deceit deceive them.

5. Ver. 5. For they have not had understanding in the works of the Lord. And whence is it clear that this hath befallen them? From this forsooth, for they have not had understanding in the works of the Lord. This very thing, in truth, hath been, even now, their recompense, that in Him Whom they tempted with malicious intent as a Man, they should not recognise God, with what design the Father sent Him in the Flesh. And the works of His hands. Nor be moved by those visible works, which are laid out before their very eyes. Thou shalt destroy them, and not build them up. Let them do Me no hurt, nay, nor again in their endeavour to raise engines against My Church, let them aught avail.

6. Ver. 6. Blessed be the Lord, for He hath heard the voice of My prayer.

7. Ver. 7. The Lord My Helper and My Protector. The Lord helping Me in so great sufferings, and protecting Me with immortality in My resurrection. In Him hath My Heart trusted, and I have been helped. And My Flesh hath flourished again: that is, and My Flesh hath risen again. And of my will I will confess unto Him. Wherefore, the fear of death being now destroyed, not by the necessity of fear under the Law, but with a free will with the Law, shall they who believe on Me, confess unto Him; and because I am in them, I will confess.

8. Ver. 8. The Lord is the strength of His people. Not that people ignorant of the righteousness of God, and willing to establish their own. For they thought not themselves strong in themselves: for the Lord is the strength of His people, struggling in this life’s difficulties with the devil. And the protector of the salvation of His Christ. That, having saved them by His Christ, after the strength of war, He may protect them at the last with the immortality of peace.

9. Ver. 9. Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. I intercede therefore, after My Flesh hath flourished again, because Thou hast said, Desire of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance: for all Mine are Thine. And rule them, and set them up even for ever. And rule them in this temporal life, and raise them from hence into life eternal.

PSALM 29

A Psalm of David himself, of the consummation of the tabernacle.

1. A Psalm of the Mediator Himself, strong of hand, of the perfection of the Church in this world, where she wars in time against the devil.

2. The Prophet speaks, (ver. 1.) Bring unto the Lord, O ye Sons of God, bring unto the Lord the young of rams. Bring unto the Lord yourselves, whom the Apostles, the leaders of the flocks, have begotten by the Gospel. (Ver. 2.) Bring unto the Lord glory and honour. By your works let the Lord be glorified and honoured. Bring unto the Lord glory to His name. Let Him be made known gloriously throughout the world. Worship the Lord in His holy court. Worship the Lord in your heart enlarged and sanctified. For ye are His regal holy habitation.

3. Ver. 3. The Voice of the Lord is upon the waters. The Voice of Christ is upon the peoples. The God of majesty hath thundered. The God of majesty, from the cloud of the flesh, hath awfully preached repentance. The Lord is upon many waters. The Lord Jesus Himself, after that He sent forth His Voice upon the peoples, and struck them with awe, converted them to Himself, and dwelt in them.

4. Ver. 4. The Voice of the Lord is in power. The Voice of the Lord now in them themselves, making them powerful. The Voice of the Lord is in great might. The Voice of the Lord working great things in them.

5. Ver. 5. The Voice of the Lord breaking the cedars. The Voice of the Lord humbling the proud in brokenness of heart. The Lord shall break the cedars of Libanus. The Lord by repentance shall break them that are lifted on high by the splendour of earthly nobility, when to confound them He shall have chosen the base things of this world, in the which to display His Divinity.

6. Ver. 6. And shall bruise them as the calf of Libanus. And when their proud exaltation hath been cut off, He will lay them low after the imitation of His Own humility, Who like a calf was led to slaughter by the nobility of

this world. For the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers agreed together against the Lord, and against His Christ. And the Beloved is as the young of the unicorns. For even He the Beloved, and the Only One of the Father, emptied Himself of His glory; and was made man, like a child of the Jews, that were ignorant of God's righteousness, and proudly boasting of their own righteousness as peculiarly theirs.

7. Ver. 7. The Voice of the Lord cutting short the flame of fire. The Voice of the Lord, without any harm to Himself, passing through all the excited ardour of them that persecute Him, or dividing the furious rage of His persecutors, so that some should say, Is not this haply the very Christ; others, Nay; but He deceiveth the people: and so cutting short their mad tumult, as to pass some over into His love, and leave others in their malice.

8. Ver. 8. The Voice of the Lord moving the wilderness. The Voice of the Lord moving to the faith the Gentiles once without hope, and without God in the world; where no prophet, no preacher of God's word, as it were, no man had dwelt. And the Lord will move the desert of Cades. And then the Lord will cause the holy word of His Scriptures to be fully known, which was abandoned by the Jews who understood it not.

9. Ver. 9. The Voice of the Lord perfecting the stags. For the Voice of the Lord hath first perfected them that overcame and repelled the envenomed tongues. And will reveal the woods. And then will He reveal to them the darknesses of the Divine books, and the shadowy depths of the mysteries, where they may feed with freedom. And in His temple doth every man speak of His glory. And in His Church all born again to an eternal hope praise God, each for His own gift, which He hath received from the Holy Spirit.

10. Ver. 10. The Lord inhabiteth the deluge. The Lord therefore first inhabiteth the deluge of this world in His Saints, kept safely in the Church, as in the ark. And the Lord shall sit a King for ever. And afterward He will sit reigning in them for ever.

11. Ver. 11. The Lord will give strength to His people. For the Lord will give strength to His people fighting against the storms and whirlwinds of this world, for peace in this world He hath not promised them. The Lord

will bless His people in peace. And the same Lord will bless His people, affording them peace in Himself; for, saith He, My peace I give unto you, My peace I leave with you.

PSALM 30

first exposition

To the end, the Psalm of the Canticle of the Dedication of the House, of David himself.

1. To the end, a Psalm of the joy of the Resurrection, and the change, the renewing of the body to an immortal state, and not only of the Lord, but also of the whole Church. For in the former Psalm the tabernacle was finished, wherein we dwell in the time of war: but now the house is dedicated, which will abide in peace everlasting.

2. It is then whole Christ Who speaketh. (Ver. 1.) I will exalt Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up. I will praise Thy high Majesty, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up. Thou hast not made Mine enemies to rejoice over Me. And those, who have so often endeavoured to oppress Me with various persecutions throughout the world, Thou hast not made to rejoice over Me.

3. Ver. 2. O Lord, My God, I have cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed Me. O Lord, My God, I have cried unto Thee, and I no longer bear about a body enfeebled and sick by mortality.

4. Ver. 3. O Lord, Thou hast brought back My Soul from hell, and Thou hast saved Me from them that go down into the pit. Thou hast saved Me from the condition of profound darkness, and the lowest slough of corruptible flesh.

5. Ver. 4. Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His. The prophet seeing these future things, rejoiceth, and saith, Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His. And make confession of the remembrance of His holiness. And make confession to Him, that He hath not forgotten the sanctification, wherewith He hath sanctified you, although all this intermediate period belong to your desires.

6. Ver. 5. For in His indignation is wrath. For He hath avenged against you the first sin, for which you have paid by death. And life in His will And life

eternal, whereunto you could not return by any strength of your own, hath He given, because He so would. In the evening weeping will tarry. Evening began, when the light of wisdom withdrew from sinful man, when he was condemned to death: from this evening weeping will tarry, as long as God's people are, amid labours and temptations, awaiting the day of the Lord. And exultation in the morning. Even to the morning, when there will be the exultation of the resurrection, which hath shone forth by anticipation in the morning resurrection of the Lord.

7. Ver. 6. But I said in my abundance, I shall not be moved for ever. But I, that people which was speaking from the first, said in mine abundance, suffering now no more any want, I shall not be moved for ever.

8. Ver. 7. O Lord, in Thy will Thou hast afforded strength unto my beauty. But that this my abundance, O Lord, is not of myself, but that in Thy will Thou hast afforded strength unto my beauty, I have learnt from this, Thou turnedst away Thy Face from me, and I became troubled; for Thou hast sometimes turned away Thy Face from the sinner, and I became troubled, when the illumination of Thy knowledge withdrew from me.

9. Ver. 8. Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and unto my God will I pray. And bringing to mind that time of my trouble and misery, and as it were established therein, I hear the voice of Thy First-Begotten, my Head, about to die for me, and saying, Unto Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and unto My God will I pray.

10. Ver. 9. What profit is there in My blood, whilst I go down to corruption? What profit is there in the shedding of My blood, whilst I go down to corruption? Shall dust confess unto Thee? For if I shall not rise immediately, and My body shall become corrupt, shall dust confess unto Thee? that is, the crowd of the ungodly, whom I shall justify by My resurrection? Or declare Thy truth? Or for the salvation of the rest declare Thy truth?

11. Ver. 10. The Lord hath heard, and had mercy on Me, the Lord hath become My helper. Nor did He suffer His holy One to see corruption.

12. Ver. 11. Thou hast turned My mourning into joy to Me. Whom I, the Church, having received, the First-Begotten from the dead, now in the dedication of Thine house, say, Thou hast turned my mourning into joy to me. Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness. Thou hast torn off the veil of my sins, the sadness of my mortality; and hast girded me with the first robe, with immortal gladness.

13. Ver. 12. That my glory should sing unto Thee, and I should not be pricked. That now, not my humiliation, but my glory should not lament, but should sing unto Thee, for that now out of humiliation Thou hast exalted me; and that I should not be pricked with the consciousness of sin, with the fear of death, with the fear of judgment. O Lord, my God, I will confess unto Thee for ever. And this is my glory, O Lord, my God, that I should confess unto Thee for ever, that I have nothing of myself, but that all my good is of Thee, Who art God, All in all.

second exposition

1. This truly have we sung: (ver. 1.) I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over me. If we shall know from the holy Scriptures who our enemies are, we recognise the truth of this Canticle: but if the wisdom of the flesh deceive us, so that we recognise not against whom our wrestling is, in the very commencement of this Psalm we find a difficulty, which we cannot solve. For whose voice do we suppose his to be, who praiseth God, and giveth thanks, and rejoiceth, and saith, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over me? First let us consider the Lord Himself, Who in that He vouchsafed to be Man, could by a prophecy going before apply these words not unsuitably to Himself. For wherein He was Man, therein also was He weak: wherein weak, therein also praying. For as we have just now heard, when the Gospel was being read, how He even retired into the desert from His disciples, whither they followed and found Him: but He retiring thither prayed, and it was said by His disciples who found Him, Men seek Thee. But He answered, Let us go to other places and villages also to preach; for therefore have I come. If thou dost consider the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is it that prays? to Whom doth He pray? why doth He pray? doth God pray? doth He pray to One Equal to

Him? But what occasion for prayer hath the ever Blessed, the ever Almighty, the ever Unchangeable, the Eternal and Coeternal with the Father? Regarding then what Himself hath thundered forth by John, as (so to say) by a cloud of His, saying, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the Same was in the beginning with God: all things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made: what was made in Him is Life, and the Life was the Light of men, and the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. Reading thus far we find no prayer, nor cause for praying, no occasion for praying, no disposition for praying. But since he saith a little afterwards, And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us, thou hast the Majesty to which to pray, thou hast the Humanity to pray for thee. For it was said by the Apostle, even after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; Who sitteth, saith he, at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us. Why doth He make intercession for us? Because He vouchsafed to be a Mediator. What is it to be a Mediator between God and men? Not between the Father and men, but between God and men. What is God? Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. What are men? Sinners, ungodly, mortals. Between that Trinity, and the weakness and wickedness of men, Man was made Mediator, not wicked but yet weak; that inasmuch as He was not wicked He might join thee to God, inasmuch as He was weak He might draw near unto thee: and so, that there might be a Mediator between man and God, the Word was made Flesh, that is, the Word was made Man. For men are called by the name of flesh. Hence, And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. By all flesh is meant all men. And the Apostle, We wrestle not against flesh and blood, (that is, against men,) but against princes and powers, and the rulers of the world, of this darkness: of which we will speak, if God help us, in what follows. For this distinction bears upon the exposition of the Psalm, which we have undertaken in the Name of the Lord to unfold to you, holy Brethren. Yet I have mentioned these examples for this reason, that ye may know that men are called flesh, and understand that by the saying, And the Word was made Flesh, is meant, And the Word was made Man.

2. Nor have I said this without reason. Ye should know, holy Brethren, that there existed a certain heresy, or haply that the remains are still found of certain men, who were called Apollinarians. For some of them said that the

Man, which the Wisdom of God assumed, (and in which He manifested forth His Person, not as in other men, but as it is said in the Psalm, God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows, that is, more than Thy fellows: that it should not be supposed that Christ was anointed as other men, as other righteous men, as the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, and whatsoever there is great among mankind. Since among mankind there hath not appeared aught greater than John the Baptist, neither hath risen among them that are born of women. If thou lookest for excellency in man, John the Baptist is it. But He, of Whom John saith that he is not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoes, what was He but greater than other men? Even in His very Manhood greater than other men. For as to His being God, and as to His Divinity, and as to His being in the beginning the Word, and the Word being with the Father, and the Word being God, He is above every creature, equal to the Father: but we speak of His Manhood. Perhaps some one of you, Brethren, may imagine, that the Man assumed by the Wisdom of God, was equal to other men. If in the members there be great distinction between the head and the rest of the members, undoubtedly all the members make one body, yet there is great difference between the head, and the rest of the members. For in the other members thou hast only perception by touch; by touching thou hast perception in the other members; but in the head thou both seest, and hearest, and smellest, and tastest, and touchest: if the excellence of the head as compared with the rest of the members be so great, how great is the excellence of the Head of the Church universal, that is, of that Man, Whom God hath willed to be the Mediator between God and men?) Those heretics then said, that That Man, Which the Word assumed when the Word was made Flesh, had no human mind, but was only life without human intelligence. For you know, of what man consists; of a principle of life and a body. But this same principle of life of man has somewhat, which the living principle in beasts has not. For even beasts have animal life, and are called animals; for they would not be called animals, but from animal life; and we see that they too live. But what has man more, wherein he was made after the image of God? In that he has intelligence and wisdom, in that he distinguishes good from evil: herein was he made after the image and likeness of God. He has then somewhat which beasts have not. And in that he despises, in himself, that wherein he is superior to the beasts, he destroys in himself or defaces, and in a manner effaces the image of God, so that to such it is said, Be ye not like to horse and mule, which have no understanding. These heretics then said that our Lord Jesus Christ had no human mind, nor that which the Greeks call λογικὸν, and we rationale, that wherewith man reasons, which the other animals have not. But what say they? That the Very Word of God was in That Man in the place of mind. These have been shut out, the Catholic faith hath rejected them, and they have made a heresy. It hath been established in the Catholic faith, that That Man, which the Wisdom of God assumed, had nothing less than other men, as far as relates to entireness of nature; but as far as relates to excellency of Person, something else than other men. For other men may be called partakers of the Word of God, as having the Word of God: but no one of them can be called the Word of God, Which He was called, forasmuch as it is said, The Word was made Flesh.

3. There have not been wanting some others too, proceeding from this same error, to say not only that That Man, Christ the Mediator between God and men, had no mind, but no principle of life either: but they have said merely, He was the Word and Flesh, and no human animal life was in Him, neither was human mind in Him. This have they said. But what was He? The Word and Flesh. The Catholic Church rejecteth these too, and driveth them out from among the sheep, and from the simple and true faith: and it hath been established, as I said, that That Man, the Mediator, had all that is man’s, except sin. For if He did many things after the body, whereby we may understand that He had a Body, not in falsehood, but in truth; as, for instance, how do we understand that He had a Body? He walked, sat, slept, was seized, was scourged, was buffeted, was crucified, died. Take away the body, none of these things could have been done. As then from these signs we recognise in the Gospel that He had a true Body, as Himself also said even after the resurrection, Handle, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have: as from these circumstances, from these actions, we believe, and understand, and know, that the Lord Jesus had a Body, so also from certain other natural functions that He had animal life. To be hungry, to be thirsty, these are functions of animal life: take away animal life, a lifeless body will not be able to be so. But if they say these were unreal, those things too will be unreal which are believed of the Body: but if

the Body be therefore real, because the functions of the body are real; the animal life is therefore real, because its functions are real.

4. What then? Because the Lord was made weak for thee, O man, who hearest me, compare not thyself with God. For thou art a creature, He thy Creator. And compare not thyself with That Man, because thy God, and the Word the Son of God, was Man for thee: but prefer That Man to thyself, as the Mediator, yet God above every creature: and so understand, that He Who was made Man for thee, not unsuitably prayeth for thee. If therefore He doth not unsuitably pray for thee, He could also not unsuitably say those words for thy sake, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over Me. But these words, if we do not understand enemies, will be false, when we think of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. For how is it true, if the Lord Christ speak, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up? In His character as man, in His character of weakness, in His character of flesh, how is it true? Since His enemies did rejoice over Him, when they crucified Him, held, scourged, and buffeted Him, saying, Prophesy unto us, O Christ. This rejoicing of theirs as it were compels us to think what is said, Thou hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over Me, to be false. And afterwards, when He was hanging on the Cross, and they were passing by, or standing, and looking, and wagging their heads, and saying, See the Son of God; He saved others, Himself He cannot save: let Him come down from the Cross, and we will believe on Him: were they not in speaking thus rejoicing over Him? Where then is that saying, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over Me?

5. Perhaps this is not the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of man as such, of the universal Church of the Christian People: for that all men are in Christ one Man, and the unity of Christians is one Man. Perhaps Man as such, that is, the very unity of Christians saith, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to triumph over me. And how is this true of them? Were not the Apostles seized, were they not beaten, were they not scourged, were they not slain, were they not crucified, were they not burnt alive, fought not they with wild beasts, whose memories we solemnize? And since men thus treated them, did they not

rejoice over them? How then can either the Christian People say, I will magnify Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over me?

6. We shall understand this, if we look first to the title of the Psalm. This is, To the end, a Psalm of the canticle of the dedication of the house, of David himself. In this title lies all the expectation, and the whole mystery of the solution of this difficulty. The house will sometime be dedicated, which is now in building. For now the house, that is, the Church, is in building: hereafter it will be dedicated. In the dedication will appear the glory of the Christian People, which is now hidden. Now let our enemies rage, let them humble us, let them do, not whatever they wish, but whatever they are permitted to do from above. For we must not set down whatever we have suffered from our enemies to our enemies, and not to the Lord our God. Seeing that by His Own example the Mediator hath shewn, when from above He permitteth men to injure, that not the will to injure is given from above, but the power. For every evil man hath in himself the will to injure; but the ability to injure is not in his power. That he hath the will, he is at once guilty: that he hath the power, by the hidden dispensation of God’s providence it is permitted him against one for punishment, against another it is permitted for his trial, against another it is permitted for his crown. For punishment: as the ἀλλόφυλοι, that is, foreigners were permitted to take captive the people of Israel, because they sinned against God. But for trial permission was given to the devil against Job: Job was tried, the devil was put to confusion. But for a crown has permission been given to persecutors against Martyrs: the Martyrs have been slain, their persecutors fancied they had conquered: they triumphed in the open sight of men unreally, the others were in secret truly crowned. Therefore against whom permission is given, is a matter of the hidden dispensation of God’s providence: but the will to injure is man’s own, for he does not forthwith slay whom he would.

7. Accordingly the Lord Himself, the Judge of quick and dead, standing before a human judge, affording us a pattern of humility and patience, not conquered, but exhibiting to the soldier an example for fighting, when the judge was threatening, and swelling with pride, and saying, Knowest Thou not that I have power to release, and to slay Thee? took away the pride of

the boaster, and giving back as it were the breathing by which his swelling might go down, answered, Thou couldest have no power against Me, except it were given thee from above. Job too, (now the devil has slain his children, the devil has taken away all his substance,) what did he say too? The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath it been done; blessed be the name of the Lord. Let not the enemy triumph, because he hath done it: I know, saith he, by Whom permission hath been given him: to the devil let there be assigned the will to injure, to my Lord the power of proving. Even under his bodily sores, his wife, who was left, comes up to him, like Eve, the devil's helper, not her husband's comforter, tempts him, and among many reproaches says, Speak some word against God, and die. And that Adam on the dunghill was more guarded than Adam in Paradise. For Adam in Paradise consented to the woman, that he should be sent out of Paradise: Adam on the dunghill rejected the woman, that he should be admitted into Paradise. What then does that Adam on the dunghill, travailing with immortality within, without overspread with worms, what says he to the woman? Thou hast spoken as one of the foolish women. What? If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not bear with evil? Here again too he acknowledged in himself the hand of the Lord, because the devil had smitten him: for he did not attend to who smote, but Who permitted. For even the devil himself called the same power, which he wished to be given him, the hand of the Lord. For accusing that just man, to whom the Lord bare testimony, he says to God, Doth Job fear the Lord for nought? Hast not Thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the works of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. So great goods hast Thou given him, and therefore doth he honour Thee. But put forth Thine hand, and touch all that he hath, and verily he will bless Thee to Thy face! What is, Put forth Thine hand, when he wished himself to put it forth? But because he could not put forth his own hand, he called this very power, which he received of God, the hand of God.

8. What follows then, Brethren, because the enemies have done so great things against Christians, and have exulted, and rejoiced over them? But when will it appear, that they have not really rejoiced over them? When they shall be confounded, and these shall rejoice at the coming of the Lord

our God, when He shall come bearing retribution in His hand, damnation to the ungodly, a kingdom to the righteous, fellowship with the devil to the unrighteous, fellowship with Christ to the faithful. When, I say, He shall shew this, when the righteous shall stand in great boldness, (I speak from the Scriptures: you remember the lesson from the book of Wisdom: Then shall the righteous stand in great boldness against them that have afflicted them: but they repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit shall say among themselves, What hath pride profited us? or what good hath the vaunting of riches done us? For all those things are passed away like a shadow. And what will they say of the righteous? How are they reckoned among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints!) then will the dedication of the house be, which is now being built in tribulation; then will that People rightly say, I will exalt Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken me up, and hast not made mine enemies to rejoice over me. These words then will be verified in the People of God, the People that now is in straitness, now in tribulation with so great temptations, so great offences, so great persecution, so great pressure. These torments of soul he doth not feel in the Church, who maketh no progress, for he thinks all is peace: but let him begin to make progress, and then he will see in what pressure he is; for when the blade had increased, and had brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. And he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow. Let him make progress, and he will see where he is: let there be fruit, and tares will appear. It is a true saying of the Apostle, and cannot be destroyed from the beginning unto the end: Yea, and all, saith he, that will live godly in Christ suffer persecution. But malignant men and seducers wax worse and worse, themselves deceived, and deceiving others. And whence are those words of the Psalm, Wait on the Lord, quit thyself like a man, and let thine heart be strengthened, yea, wait on the Lord? It were not enough once, Wait on the Lord, if it were not repeated: unless haply he might wait two days, three days, four days, and the pressure and tribulation still remain, and therefore he added, Quit thyself like a man: and again, let thine heart be strengthened. And because it will be so from the beginning even to the end, what the sentence has in the beginning, the same it has at the end, Yea, wait on the Lord. These things which press upon thee will pass away, and He will come, on Whom thou waitest, and wipe away thy sweat: He will dry the tear, thou shalt weep no more. But now we must groan in tribulations, as Job saith, Is not man’s life upon earth a trial?

9. Nevertheless, Brethren, before the day of the dedication of the house come, let us consider that our Head hath already been dedicated: already hath the dedication of the house taken place in the Head, as the dedication of the foundation. The Head is above, the foundation below: may we not perhaps have spoken amiss in saying that Christ is the foundation; He is rather the top. He hath ascended into heaven, He sitteth at the right Hand of the “Father.” But I think we have made no mistake. For the Apostle hath said, For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones. They who live godly, who honour and praise God, who are patient in tribulations, who long for their country, these build gold, silver, precious stones: but they who still love the things of this world, and are involved in earthly business, and are given up to certain bonds and affections of the flesh, to their homes, wives, possessions; and yet are Christians, so that their heart doth not withdraw from Christ, and that they place nothing before Christ, as in building nothing is placed before the foundation; these indeed build wood, hay, stubble: but what hath he gone on to say? The fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. The fire of tribulation and of trial. This fire has tried many martyrs here, but in the end it trieth all the human race. Martyrs have been found, who possessed these worldly goods. How many rich men and senators have suffered? Yet some of them did build wood, hay, stubble, in their affection for carnal and worldly cares: but still, because they had Christ for a foundation upon which they built, the hay was burnt, and they were left on the foundation. So saith the Apostle, If any man’s work abide, he shall receive a reward, and shall lose nothing; because what he loved, this shall he find. What then hath the fire of tribulation done for them? It hath tried them. If any man’s work abide, he shall receive a reward: if any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. But it is one thing not to be injured by the fire, another thing to be saved through the fire. And whence? Because of the foundation. Let not then the foundation withdraw from thine heart. Lay not the foundation upon hay, that is, lay not hay before the foundation, that the hay should have the first place in thine heart

and Christ the second: but if now it must needs be that there be hay there, at least let Christ have the first place there, and the hay the second.

10. Christ then is the Foundation. As I said, our Head hath been dedicated, the Head is Itself the Foundation. But a foundation is usually below, and a head above. May you, holy brethren, understand my words: peradventure I shall explain this in the Name of Christ. Weights are of two kinds. For a weight is a certain force in any substance, struggling as it were to gain its proper place: this is a weight. You carry a stone in your hand, you bear the pressure of its weight, it presses down your hand, because it seeks its proper place. And would you know what it seeks? Withdraw your hand, it comes to the ground, it rests on the earth, it has arrived where it tended, it has found its proper place. That weight, therefore, was, as it were, spontaneous motion, without life, without sensation. There are other things, which seek their place upwards. For if you pour water upon oil, by its own weight it goes to the bottom. For it seeks its proper place, it seeks to be duly ordered; for water above oil is out of its order. Until it arrives then at its proper order, there is a restless motion, till it occupies its proper place. On the other hand, let out oil under water; as, for instance, if a vessel of oil fall into water, into the deep, into the sea, and be broken, the oil does not rest below. As the water poured upon oil, by its weight towards the bottom seeks its proper place; so oil poured out under water by its weight seeks its proper place towards the top. If then this be so, brethren, whither does fire and water tend? Fire is borne upwards, it seeks its proper place; and water seeks its proper place by its own weight. Stone seeks the bottom, and the wood, and the pillars, and the earth, wherewith these houses are built: they are then of that kind of substances, which, by their own weight, are borne downwards. It is clear then, that they receive their foundation down below, because they are by their own weight borne downwards; and except there is something to sustain it, the whole falls, because the whole tends towards the earth. With things then that have a downward tendency, the foundation is laid below: but the Church of God which is laid below tendeth towards heaven. Our foundation therefore hath been laid there, even our Lord Jesus Christ sitting at the right Hand of the Father. If then ye have understood, holy brethren, how that our Foundation hath been already dedicated, let us shortly listen to, and run through, the Psalm.

11. I will exalt Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast taken Me up, and hast not made Mine enemies to rejoice over Me. What enemies? The Jews? In the dedication of the foundation let us understand the very dedication of the future house: for what is now said in the person of the Foundation, will then be said in the person of the whole house. What enemies then? The Jews, or the devil and his angels rather, who retired in confusion after the Lord's resurrection? The prince of death grieved at the victory over death; And Thou hast not made Mine enemies to rejoice over Me: because I could not be kept in hell.

12. Ver. 2. O Lord, My God, I have cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed Me. The Lord prayed in the mount before His Passion, He healed Him. Healed Whom? Him, Who was never sick, the Word God, the Word the Divinity? No, but He bore the death of flesh, He bore thy wound, being about to heal thee of thy wound. And the flesh was healed. When? When He rose again. Listen to the Apostle, see the true healing: Death, saith he, hath been swallowed up in Victory. O death, where is thy sting? O death, where is thy struggle? Therefore that exaltation will then be ours to declare, the exaltation now is Christ's.

13. Ver. 3. O Lord, Thou hast brought back My Soul from hell. This needs no explanation. Thou hast saved Me from them that go down into the pit. Who are they that go down into the pit? All sinners who sink into the deep. For the pit is the depth of this world. What is this depth of the world? The abounding of wantonness, and wickedness. They then who immerse themselves in lusts, and earthly desires, go down into the pit. Such persecuted Christ. But what doth He say? Thou hast saved Me from them that go down into the pit.

14. Ver. 4. Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His. Since your Head hath risen, all ye other members hope for that, which ye see in the Head: all ye other members hope for that, which ye have believed in the Head. It is a true and ancient proverb, Where the head is, there are the other members. Christ hath ascended into heaven, whither we are about to follow. He hath not remained in hell, He hath risen again, He dieth no more: when we too shall have risen again, we shall die no more. Having then these promises, Sing to the Lord, O ye saints of His; and make confession of the remembrance of His

holiness. What is, Make confession of the remembrance? For ye had forgotten Him, but He hath not forgotten you.

15. Ver. 5. For in His indignation is wrath, and life in His will. Wrath in indignation against the sinner: In the day that ye shall eat, ye shall surely die. They touched, they died, having been dismissed from Paradise, for in His indignation is wrath: but not without hope, for there is life in His will. What is in His will? Not in our strength, not in our merits: but because He willed it, He hath saved us; not because we were worthy. For of what is the sinner worthy, but of punishment? He hath given life. And if He hath given life to the ungodly, what doth He reserve for the faithful?

16. In the evening weeping will tarry. Fear not, for that he had said to us, Sing; and here is groaning: in singing exultation, in prayer groaning. Groan for things present, sing for things to come; pray for what is here, sing for what is hoped. In the evening weeping will tarry. What is, In the evening weeping will tarry? It is evening, when the sun sets. The sun hath set on man, that is, That Light of Righteousness, the presence of God. Hence when Adam was expelled, what is said in the book of Genesis? When God walked in Paradise, He walked in the evening. The sinner had now hid himself in the wood, he was unwilling to see the Face of God, at Which he had been wont to rejoice. The Sun of Righteousness had set on him, he did not rejoice at the presence of God. Thence began all this mortal life. In the evening weeping will tarry. Ye will long be in weeping, race of man; for ye will be born of Adam: and so it has come to pass: we too are of Adam, and as many as have begotten children, and shall beget them, are of Adam, of whom they too themselves were born. In the evening weeping will tarry; and exultation in the morning. When That Light shall have begun to rise on the faithful, which had set on sinners. For therefore too did the Lord Jesus Christ rise from the tomb in the morning, that what He hath dedicated in the foundation, the same He might promise to the house. In our Lord it was evening, when He was buried; and morning when He rose again on the third day: thou too wast buried in the evening in Paradise, and hast risen again on the third day. How on the third day? If thou consider the course of the world, there is one day before the Law, another under the Law, a third under grace. What on that third day thy Head shewed, the same is on the third day

of the world shewn in thee. When? In the morning we must hope, we must rejoice; but now we must endure, and groan.

17. Ver. 6. But I said in my abundance, I shall not be moved for ever. In what abundance, hath man said, I shall not be moved for ever? We understand, Brethren, the character of man in his humiliation. Who hath abundance here? Not one. What is man’s abundance? Care, calamity. But the rich have abundance? The more they have, the more they want: they are wasted by longings, torn by desires, racked by fears, waste away with sorrow: where is their abundance? There was abundance, when man was settled in Paradise, when nothing was wanting to him, when he enjoyed God; but he said, I shall not be moved for ever. How did he say, I shall not be moved for ever? When he heard with satisfaction the words, Eat, and ye shall be as gods: whereas God said, In the day that ye eat thereof, ye shall surely die; and the devil, Ye shall not surely die. In believing then him who thus persuaded him, he said, I shall not be moved for ever.

18. But since the Lord had said truly, that He would take away from the proud, what He had given to the humble, when He created him; the Psalmist proceeds, and says, (ver. 7.) O Lord, in Thy will Thou hast afforded strength unto my beauty: that is, since I was not good and strong of myself, but was both fair and strong of Thee, to my beauty Thou hadst afforded strength, of Thine own will, wherewith Thou hadst made me. And that Thou mightest shew me, that I was this from Thy will, Thou turnedst away Thy Face from me, and I became troubled. He turned away then His Face from him, whom He sent forth out of Paradise. Placed now here, let him cry out and say, To Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and to my God will I pray. In Paradise thou didst not cry out, but didst praise; thou didst not weep, but didst rejoice: having been put without, weep now, and cry. He draweth nigh to him troubled, Who deserted him when proud. For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. (Ver. 8.) To Thee, O Lord, will I cry, and unto my God will I pray.

19. What follows now is in the Person of the Lord, of our Foundation Himself. (Ver. 9.) What profit is there in My blood, whilst I go down to corruption? What then doth He pray for? That He may rise again. For if I shall go down, saith He, to corruption, if My Flesh shall be so corrupted, as

other men’s, so as to rise at the last, to what purpose have I shed My Blood? For if I rise not now, I shall shew forth to none, I shall gain none: but that I may shew forth to any Thy marvels, Thy praises, life eternal, let My Flesh rise again, let It not go into corruption. For if It shall go so, as other men’s, what profit is there in My Blood? Shall dust confess unto Thee, or shew forth Thy truth? Confession is twofold, either of sin, or of praise. When it is ill with us, let us in tribulation confess our sins; when it is well with us, let us in the exultation of righteousness confess praise unto God: but without confession let us never be.

20. Ver. 10. The Lord hath heard, and had mercy on Me. How? Remember the dedication of the house. He hath heard, and had mercy. The Lord hath become My Helper.

21. Listen now to the resurrection itself! (Ver. 11.) Thou hast turned My mourning into joy to Me, Thou hast rent off My sackcloth, and girded Me with gladness. What is sackcloth? Mortality. Sackcloth is made of goats and kids, and goats and kids are set among sinners. The Lord took from our condition the sackcloth only, He assumed not that of which sackcloth is the desert. That of which sackcloth is the desert, is sin: the sackcloth is mortality. For thee He assumed mortality, Who had no desert of death. For he hath desert of death, who sins; but He Who sinned not, deserved not the sackcloth. In another place He Himself saith, But when they troubled Me, I clothed Myself with hair-cloth. What is this, I clothed Myself with hair-cloth? I opposed to My persecutors that, which I have from the hair-cloth. That they might think Him a man, He hid Himself from the eyes of the persecutors, because the persecutors were not worthy to see Him, clothed with hair-cloth. Therefore, Thou hast put off My sackcloth, and girded Me with gladness.

22. Ver. 12. That My glory should sing unto Thee, and I should not be pricked. As it is in the Head, so in the body. What is, I should not be pricked? I should die no more. For He was pricked, when He hung on the Cross, He was smitten with a spear. Our Head therefore saith, that I should not be pricked, I should die no more. But we, what do we say because of the dedication of the house? That our conscience should not prick us with the goads of our sins. For all will be remitted, and we shall then be free. That

My glory, saith He, should sing to Thee, not My humiliation. If our’s, Christ’s too, for we are the body of Christ. How? Because although Christ sitteth in heaven, He will say to some, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat. He is both there, and here: there in Himself, here in us. What then doth He say? That My glory should sing to Thee, and I should not be pricked. My humiliation sigheth unto Thee, my glory shall sing to Thee. Now at the end: O Lord, my God, I will confess unto Thee for ever. What is, I will confess unto Thee for ever? I will praise Thee for ever, for we have said that there is a confession in praises also, and not only in sins. Confess then now what thou hast done against God, and thou shalt confess what God shall have done to thee. What hast thou done? Sins. What hath God done? On confessing thine iniquity He remitteth thy sins, that afterwards confessing unto Him His praises for ever thou shouldest not be pricked with sin.

PSALM 31

first exposition

To the end, a Psalm of David himself, an ecstasy.

1. To the end a Psalm of David Himself, the Mediator strong of hand in persecutions. For the word ecstasy, which is added to the title, signifies a transport of the mind, which is produced either by a panic, or by some revelation. But in this Psalm the panic of the people of God troubled by the persecution of all the heathen, and by the failing of faith throughout the world, is principally seen. But first the Mediator Himself speaks: then the People redeemed by His Blood gives thanks: at last in trouble it speaks at length, which is what belongs to the ecstasy; but the Person of the Prophet himself is twice interposed, near the end, and at the end.

2. Ver. 1. In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let Me not be put to confusion for ever. In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let Me never be confounded, whilst they shall insult Me as one like other men. In Thy righteousness rescue Me, and deliver Me. And in Thy righteousness rescue Me from the pit of death, and deliver Me out of their company.

3. Ver. 2. Bend down Thine ear unto Me. Hear Me in My humiliation, nigh at hand unto Me. Make haste to deliver Me. Defer not to the end of the world, as with all who believe on Me, My separation from sinners. Be unto Me a God Who protecteth Me. Be unto Me God, and Protector. And a house of refuge, that Thou mayest save Me. And as a house, wherein taking refuge I may be saved.

4. Ver. 3. For Thou art My strength, and My refuge. For Thou art unto Me My strength to bear My persecutors, and My refuge to escape them. And for Thy Name’s sake Thou shalt be My guide, and shalt nourish Me. And that by Me Thou mayest be known to all the Gentiles, I will in all things follow Thy will; and, by assembling, by degrees, Saints unto Me, Thou shalt fulfil My body, and My perfect stature.

5. Ver. 4. Thou shalt bring Me out of this trap, which they have hidden for Me. Thou shalt bring Me out of these snares, which they have hidden for Me. For Thou art My Protector.

6. Ver. 5. Into Thy hands I commend My Spirit. To Thy power I commend My Spirit, soon to receive It back. Thou hast redeemed Me, O Lord God of truth. Let the people too, redeemed by the Passion of their Lord, and joyful in the glorifying of their Head, say, Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.

7. Ver. 6. Thou hatest them that hold to vanity uselessly. Thou hatest them that hold to the false happiness of the world. But I have trusted in the Lord.

8. Ver. 7. I will be glad, and rejoice in Thy mercy: which doth not deceive me. For Thou hast regarded My humiliation: wherein Thou hast subjected me to vanity in hope. Thou hast saved my soul from necessities. Thou hast saved my soul from the necessities of fear, that with a free love it may serve Thee.

9. Ver. 8. And hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy. And hast not shut me up, that I should have no opening for recovering unto liberty, and be given over for ever into the power of the devil, ensnaring me with the desire of this life, and terrifying me with death. Thou hast set my feet in a large room. The resurrection of my Lord being known, and mine own being promised me, my love, having been brought out of the straits of fear, walks abroad in continuance, into the expanse of liberty.

10. Ver. 9. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled. But what is this unlooked for cruelty of the persecutors, striking such dread into me? Have mercy on me, O Lord. For I am now no more alarmed for death, but for torments and tortures. Mine eye hath been disordered by anger. I had mine eye upon Thee, that Thou shouldest not abandon me: Thou art angry, and hast disordered it. My soul, and my belly. By the same anger my soul hath been disturbed, and my memory, whereby I retained what my God hath suffered for me, and what He hath promised me.

11. Ver. 10. For my life hath failed in pain. For my life is to confess Thee, but it failed in pain, when the enemy had said, Let them be tortured until

they deny Him. And my years in groanings. The time that I pass in this world is not taken away from me by death, but abides, and is spent in groanings. My strength hath been weakened by want. I want the health of this body, and racking pains come on me: I want the dissolution of the body, and death forbears to come: and in this want my confidence hath been weakened. And my bones have been disturbed. And my stedfastness hath been disturbed.

12. Ver. 11. I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies. All the wicked are my enemies; and nevertheless they for their wickednesses are tortured only till they confess: I then have overpassed their reproach, I, whose confession death doth not follow, but racking pains follow upon it. And to my neighbours too much. This hath seemed too much to them, who were already drawing near to know Thee, and to hold the faith that I hold. And a fear to mine acquaintance. And into my very acquaintance I struck fear by the example of my dreadful tribulation. They that did see me, fled without from me. Because they did not understand my inward and invisible hope, they fled from me into things outward and visible.

13. Ver. 12. I have been forgotten, as one dead from the heart. And they have forgotten me, as if I were dead from their hearts. I have become as a lost vessel. I have seemed to myself to be lost to all the Lord’s service, living in this world, and gaining none, when all were afraid to join themselves unto me.

14. Ver. 13. For I have heard the rebuking of many dwelling by in a circuit. For I have heard many rebuking me, in the pilgrimage of this world near me, following the circuit of time, and refusing to return with me to the eternal country. Whilst they were assembling themselves together against me, they conspired that they might take my soul. That my soul, which should by death easily escape from their power, might consent unto them, they imagined a device, whereby they would not suffer me even to die.

15. Ver. 14. But I have hoped in Thee, O Lord; I have said, Thou art my God. For Thou hast not changed, that Thou shouldest not save, Who dost correct.

16. Ver. 15. In Thy hands are my lots. In Thy power are my lots. For I see no desert, for which out of the universal ungodliness of the human race Thou hast elected me particularly to salvation. And though there be with Thee some just and secret order in my election, yet I, from whom this is hid, have attained by lot unto my Lord's vesture. Deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

17. Ver. 16. Make Thy Face to shine upon Thy servant. Make it known to men, who do not think that I belong unto Thee, that Thy Face is bent upon me, and that I serve Thee. Save me in Thy mercy.

18. Ver. 17. O Lord, let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee. O Lord, let me not be put to shame by those who insult me, for that I have called upon Thee. Let the ungodly be ashamed, and be brought down to hell. Let them rather who call upon stones be ashamed, and made to dwell with darkness.

19. Ver. 18. Let the deceitful lips be made dumb. In making known to the peoples Thy mysteries wrought in me, strike with dumb amazement the lips of them that invent falsehood of me. Which speak iniquity against the Righteous, in pride and contempt. Which speak iniquity against Christ, in their pride and contempt of Him as a crucified man.

20. Ver. 19. How great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord. Here the Prophet exclaims, having sight of all this, and admiring how manifoldly plenteous is Thy sweetness, O Lord. Which Thou hast hid for them that fear Thee. Even those, whom Thou correctest, Thou lovest much: but lest they should go on negligently from relaxed security, Thou hidest from them the sweetness of Thy love, for whom it is profitable to fear Thee. Thou hast perfected it for them that hope in Thee. But Thou hast perfected this sweetness for them that hope in Thee. For Thou dost not withdraw from them what they look for perseveringly even unto the end. In sight of the sons of men. For it does not escape the notice of the sons of men, who now live no more after Adam, but after the Son of Man. Thou wilt hide them in the hidden place of Thy Countenance: which seat Thou shalt preserve for everlasting in the hidden place of the knowledge of Thee for them that hope

in Thee. From the troubling of men. So that now they suffer no more trouble from men.

21. Ver. 20. Thou wilt protect them in Thy tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues. But here meanwhile whilst evil tongues murmur against them, saying, Who hath known this? or, Who hath come thence? Thou wilt protect them in the tabernacle, that of faith in those things, which the Lord wrought and endured for us in time.

22. Ver. 21. Blessed be the Lord; for He hath made His mercy marvellous, in the city of compassing. Blessed be the Lord, for after the correction of the sharpest persecutions He hath made His mercy marvellous to all throughout the world, in the circuit of human society.

23. Ver. 22. I said in my ecstasy. Whence that people again speaking saith, I said in my fear, when the heathen were raging horribly against me. I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine eyes. For if Thou hadst regard to me, Thou wouldest not suffer me to endure these things. Therefore Thou heardest, O Lord, the voice of my prayer, when I cried unto Thee. Therefore putting a limit to correction, and shewing that I have part in Thy care, Thou heardest, O Lord, the voice of my prayer, when I raised it high out of tribulation.

24. Ver. 23. Love the Lord, all ye His saints. The Prophet again exhorts, having sight of these things, and saith, Love the Lord, all ye His saints; for the Lord will require truth. Since if the righteous shall scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear?—And He will repay them that do exceeding proudly. And He will repay them who even when conquered are not converted, because they are very proud.

25. Ver. 24. Quit you like men, and let your heart be strengthened: working good without fainting, that ye may reap in due season. All ye who trust in the Lord: that is, ye who duly fear and worship Him, trust ye in the Lord.

second exposition

SERMON I

1. Let us investigate, as we best can, the hidden things of this Psalm, which we have just sung, and let us offer to your ears and minds a discourse framed upon it. Its title is, To the end, a psalm of David himself, an ecstasy. What, to the end, is, we know, if we know Christ. For the Apostle saith, For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. An end, not consuming, but a perfecting. For we use the word end in a double sense; either as that by which it is brought to pass that what was is not, or by which it is brought to pass that what had been commenced is perfected. To the end, therefore, is, to Christ.

2. A psalm to David, an ecstasy. The word ecstasy is Greek; in Latin, as far as we can understand it, it may be expressed in one word, if it be called a transport, (excessus.) For a transport of the mind is properly and usually called an ecstasy. Now by transport of the mind two things are understood, either a panic, or a straining after things above, so that in some sort things below glide from the memory. In such an ecstasy have all the Saints been, to whom the secrets of God exceeding this world have been revealed. Of this transport of the mind, that is, ecstasy, when Paul spake, alluding to himself, he says, For whether we be transported in mind, it is to God: or whether we temper ourselves, it is to you; for the love of Christ constraineth us. That is, if we would only do such things and only contemplate such things, as we behold in a transport of the mind, we should not be with you, but should be in things above, as it were despising you: and how should you with weak step follow us to those more lofty and interior things, unless again, the love of Christ constraining us, (Who, when He was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant,) we should consider that we are servants, and being not ungrateful to Him from Whom we have received higher things, should for their sakes who are weak not despise lower things, and should attemper ourselves to them who cannot with us see things sublime? Therefore it is he says, Whether we be transported in mind, it is to God: for He seeth what we see in a transport of the mind; He Only revealeth His secret things. For he speaks thus, who says that he was caught up and carried away into the third heaven, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Yea, such was his transport of mind, that he said, Whether in the body, or whether out of the body, I know not: God

knoweth. Therefore if the title of this Psalm signifies this transport of the mind, that is, this ecstasy, we ought indeed to look that he will give utterance to things great, and lofty, who composed the Psalm, that is, the Prophet, yea rather the Holy Ghost by the Prophet.

3. But if this ecstasy is to be understood as panic, the context of the Psalm will not be wanting to this signification of the word either. For he seems to be about to speak of suffering, in which there is panic. But whose panic? Christ's, in that he said, To the end, and we understand Christ to be the end? Or peradventure our panic? For what! can we rightly understand panic to be in Christ on the approach of suffering, Who had come on account of it? when He had come to that for which He had come, had He panic at the prospect of death? If He were so entirely man, as not to be God, He would more rejoice at the prospect of the resurrection, than have panic at the prospect of death. Nevertheless, since He vouchsafed to assume the form of a servant, and therein to clothe us with Himself, He Who disdained not to assume us unto Himself, did not disdain to transfigure us into Himself, and to speak with our words, that we too might speak with His words. For this wonderful interchange hath taken place, and a divine traffic hath been transacted, an exchange of things duly solemnized in this world by the heavenly Merchant. He came to receive reproaches, to give honours; He came to drink the cup of sorrow, to give salvation; He came to submit to death, to give life. Being then about to die from that which he had of ours, He was in panic, not in Himself, but in us: since too He both said this, that His soul was sorrowful, even unto death, and all we ourselves of course with Him. For without Him we are nothing: but in Him is Christ Himself, and we. How? Because Whole Christ is Head and Body. The Head, That Saviour of the Body, Who hath already ascended into heaven: but the body is the Church, which toils on earth. Now unless this Body did cleave to its Head in the bond of love, so as for there to be made One of the Head and the Body, He could not say in reproving from heaven a certain persecutor, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Since no man was touching Him now sitting in heaven, how did Saul, by his violence against Christians on earth, any way inflict injury upon Him? He does not say, Why persecutest thou My Saints, or My servants; but, why persecutest thou Me? that is, My members. The Head cried out for the members, and the Head transfigured

the members into Himself. For the tongue takes up the utterance of the foot. When by chance the foot, bruised in the crowd, is in pain, the tongue cries out, “You are treading upon me.” For it does not say, “You are treading on my foot;” but it says that it is itself being trode upon, when no one touched it. But the foot, which has been trode upon, is not separated from the tongue. Therefore thus also by ecstasy is not unfitly understood panic. For what shall I say, Brethren? If there were absolutely no panic in those that are about to suffer, would that be said to Peter himself, which we heard on the Apostle’s birthday, when the Lord predicted to him his future suffering, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and wentest whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not? And this, saith he, spake He, signifying what death he should die. If therefore the Apostle Peter, of so great perfection, went unwillingly whither he would not, (he died unwillingly, but was crowned willingly,) what wonder, if there be some panic in the suffering even of the righteous, even of Saints? Panic comes from human weakness, hope from divine promise. That for which thou feelest panic is thine own, what thou hopest is the gift of God in thee. And it is better thou dost acknowledge thyself in thy panic, that in thy deliverance thou mayest glorify Him Who made thee. Let human weakness be panic-struck, divine mercy faileth not in that fear. In fine, this panic-struck one begins with this. (Ver. 1.) In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me not be confounded for ever. You see, that he both is panic-struck, and hopes: you see that this panic is not without hope. Even though there be some disturbance in the human heart, divine consolation withdraws not.

4. Here then Christ speaketh in the Prophet: I venture to say, Christ speaketh. The Psalmist will say some things in this Psalm, which may seem as if they could not apply to Christ, to that excellency of our Head, and especially to That Word Which was in the beginning God with God: nor perhaps will some things here seem to apply to Him in the form of a servant, which form of a servant He took from the Virgin: and yet Christ speaketh, because Christ in Christ’s members. And, that ye may know, that the Head and His Body are called One Christ, He saith Himself, when He was speaking of marriage, They shall be two in one flesh: therefore they are no more two, but one flesh. But, peradventure, He may say this of any

marriage. Hear the Apostle Paul; And they shall be two, saith he, in one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ, and the Church. There is produced then as it were out of two, one certain person, of the Head and the Body, of the Bridegroom and the Bride. For the wonderful and excellent unity of this person, the prophet Isaiah also sets forth; for speaking in him too, Christ saith in prophecy, He hath bound a mitre on Me, as on a Bridegroom the chaplet, and adorned Me with ornaments as a Bride. He called Himself the Bridegroom, and the Bride: why called He Himself the Bridegroom, and the Bride, unless because they shall be two in one flesh? If two in one flesh, why not too in one voice? Christ may therefore speak, because the Church speaks in Christ, and Christ in the Church; and the Body in the Head, and the Head in the Body. Hear the Apostle expressing this very thing more clearly, For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. Speaking of the members of Christ, that is, of the faithful, he doth not say, so also are the members of Christ; but to all that he hath expressed he gave the name of Christ. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ many members, one Body. Therefore we all are together with our Head, Christ, without our Head nothing worth. Why? Because with our Head we are the vine: without our Head, which God forbid, lopped branches, destined to no work of the husbandman, but to the fire only. So He Himself in the Gospel, I am the Vine, ye are the branches, My Father is the husbandman, and without Me, saith He, ye can do nothing. O Lord, if without Thee nothing, in Thee all. For whatsoever He worketh by us, we seem to work. He can do much and all without us, we without Him nothing.

5. Therefore in whatever ecstasy he speaketh, whether in panic or transport of the mind, what is said is suitable. Let us speak in the Body of Christ, let us all speak as one, for that all are oneness; let us say, In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me not be confounded for ever. That confusion do I dread, saith He, which is for ever. For there is a certain confusion for a time which is useful, the disturbance of a mind looking back on its sins, amazed at the looking back, in its amazement ashamed, in its shame reforming. Whence too the Apostle saith, For what glory had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? Therefore he saith that they, now faithful, are ashamed,

not of present gifts, but of past sins. Let not the Christian dread this confusion: yea rather, if he have not this, he will have everlasting confusion. What is everlasting confusion? When that shall happen, which is said, And their iniquities shall take them over on the contrary part. And as their iniquities take them over on the contrary part, all the bad flock shall go to the left hand, as goats separated from the sheep; and they shall hear, Go ye into the fire everlasting, which hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. They ask why? For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat. They despised then, when they gave no meat to Christ as He hungered, when they gave no drink to the thirsty, when they clothed not the naked; took not in the stranger, visited not the sick—then they despised. When these things shall begin to be enumerated to them, they will be confounded, and this confusion will be for ever. And in fear of this, he who is afraid, or whose mind is transported toward God, maketh this request, In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me not be confounded for ever.

6. And in Thy Righteousness rescue me, and deliver me. For if Thou lookest to my righteousness, Thou condemnest me. In Thy Righteousness rescue me. For there is a righteousness of God, which becomes ours too, when it is given to us. Now it is therefore called God’s Righteousness, that man may not deem that he hath righteousness of himself. For thus the Apostle Paul saith, To him that believeth on Him Who justifieth the ungodly, (what is, Who justifieth the ungodly? Who of ungodly maketh a man righteous:) his faith is counted for righteousness. But the Jews, because they thought that they could by their own strength fulfil righteousness, stumbled at the stumbling-stone and rock of offence, and did not acknowledge the grace of Christ. For they received a law, whereby they could be made guilty, but could not be freed from guilt. In fine, what saith the Apostle of them? For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. What is, what he says, the Jews have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge? Hear what not according to knowledge is. For they being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and wishing to establish their own, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. If then for this reason they have not a zeal of God according to knowledge, because they are ignorant of God’s righteousness, and wish to establish their own, as if they were made righteous of

themselves: for this reason have they not come to know the grace of God, because they would not be saved freely. Who is he that is saved freely? In whom the Saviour findeth not what to crown, but what to condemn; findeth not deserts of good things, but findeth deserts of punishment. If He deal as it were strictly according to the rule of the law laid down, the sinner must be condemned. If He were to act by this rule, whom would He deliver? He found all men sinners: He Alone came without sin, Who found us sinners. So saith the Apostle: For all have sinned, and are in need of the glory of God. What means, are in need of the glory of God? That He should Himself deliver, and not thou. Because thou canst not deliver thyself, thou needest a deliverer. Wherein dost thou vaunt thyself? Wherein dost thou rely on the Law and on righteousness? Seest thou not what is inwardly struggling in thee, of thee, against thee? Hearest thou not one fighting, and confessing, and longing for help in the fight? Hearest thou not the Lord's combatant asking of the disposer of the contest help in his fight? For God doth not so look on at thy struggles, as the exhibitor of the games looks on, if so be thou fightest in the amphitheatre. He can give thee a prize if victorious; he cannot help thee in danger. Not so doth God look on. Look there, mark him that saith, For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Why grace? Because it is given gratuitously. Why is it given gratuitously? Because thy merits have not gone before, but the kindnesses of God have prevented thee. Glory then be to Him Who delivereth us. For all have sinned, and are in need of the glory of God. In Thee, then, O Lord, have I trusted, not in myself: let me not be confounded for ever, because I trust in Him, Who confoundeth not. In Thy Righteousness rescue me, and deliver me. Since Thou hast not found in me my own righteousness, rescue me in Thine: that is, let that rescue me which justifieth me, which maketh me of ungodly godly, of unrighteous righteous, of blind seeing, of falling rising, of weeping rejoicing. This delivereth me: not I myself. In Thy Righteousness rescue me, and deliver me.

7. Ver. 2. Bend down Thine ear unto me. God did this, when He sent Christ Himself unto us. He sent Him to us, Who bending His Head wrote with His

Finger on the earth, when the adulterous woman was brought before Him to be punished. But He had before bent Himself to the earth, that is, God to man, to whom it was said, Earth thou art, and unto earth thou shalt go. For God doth not bend His Ear to us as if in bodily space, nor is He bounded by these circumscribed bodily members. Nay, let not human fancies form any such notions as these. God is Truth. Truth is neither square, nor round, nor long. It is every where present, if the eye of the heart be open to It. Nevertheless God bendeth His Ear to us, letting down mercy upon us. What greater mercy, than that He should give us His Only One, not to live with us, but to die for us? Bend down Thine Ear unto me.

8. Make haste to deliver me. For he is heard in this, when he saith, Make haste. For for this purpose this word was used, that thou mayest understand how that all this age, which seems to us while it is passing long, is but a moment. That is not long, which hath an end. The period from Adam to this day is passed, and much more in truth hath been passed already, than remains to be passed. If Adam were still living, and should die to-day; what would it profit him to have been so long, to have lived so long? Why then this haste? Because time flies by, and what is slow to thee, is in God’s sight short. This haste he had already understood in ecstasy. Make haste to deliver me. Be unto me a God Who protecteth me, and a house of refuge, that Thou mayest save me. Be Thou unto me a house of refuge, a God Who protecteth, a house of refuge. For sometimes I am in peril, and I would fly: whither do I fly? to what place fly safely? to what hill? to what cave? to what guarded shelter? What castle can I hold? with what walls be encompassed? Whithersoever I go, I accompany myself. For, O man, whatsoever thou wilt, thou canst fly, except thy conscience. Enter into thy house, rest on thy bed, enter the inner chambers; thou canst have no place within, whither thou mayest fly from thy conscience, if thy sins torment thee. But because he hath said, Make haste to deliver me, and rescue me in Thy Righteousness, that Thou mayest remit my sins, and build up Thy Righteousness in me: Thou shalt be to me a house of refuge, to Thee do I fly. For whither shall I fly from Thee? God is angry with thee, whither wilt thou fly? Hear what, in fear of the anger of God, he saith in another Psalm, Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or, whither shall I fly from Thy presence? If I climb up into heaven, Thou art there: if I go down into hell,

Thou art present. Whithersoever I go, there I find Thee. And if Thou art angry, I find Thee an Avenger; if Thou art propitious, an Helper. Nothing then remains for me, but to fly unto Thee, not from Thee. If Thou art a servant, to escape a human master, Thou fliest to places where Thy master is not: to escape God, fly to the Lord. For there is no place, whither thou mayest fly from God. All things are present and naked to the eyes of the Almighty. Be Thou then to me, saith he, a house of refuge. For if I shall not be made whole, how shall I fly? Make me whole, and I fly to Thee. For if Thou dost not make me whole, I cannot walk: how shall I be able to fly? Whither should he go, whither fly, if he be unable to walk, half dead in the way, maimed and wounded by robbers? Whom the priest going by passed over, the Levite going by passed over, the Samaritan going by pitied, that is, the Lord Himself, Who hath pitied the race of man. For Samarite is by interpretation keeper. And who keepeth us, if He deserteth us? With good reason, when the Jews said railing at Him, Say we not truly that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? He rejected the one, accepted the other, saying, I have not a devil. He did not say, I am not a Samaritan: wishing it to be understood that He is our Keeper. In pity then He drew nigh, He took care of him, brought him to an inn, fulfilled His mercy towards him: now he is able to walk, he is able even to fly. Whither should he fly but to God, where he hath made for himself a house of refuge?

9. Ver. 3. For Thou art my strength and my refuge; and for Thy Name’s sake Thou shalt be my guide, and shalt nourish me. Not for my merit’s sake, but for Thy Name’s sake, that Thou mayest be glorified, not because I am worthy. Thou shalt be my guide, that I go not astray from Thee; and Thou shalt nourish me, that I may be strong to eat the food, wherewith Thou feedest angels. For here hath He nourished us with milk, Who hath promised us heavenly food; and hath exercised a mother’s pity. For as a mother, when suckling, conveys through the flesh the same food which the infant is not able to take, and infuses milk; (for the little one receives the same as he would receive at table, but what is conveyed through the flesh is suited to the little one;) so the Lord, that He might make His wisdom milk to us, came to us clothed with Flesh. Hence the Body of Christ speaketh, Thou shalt nourish me.

10. Thou shalt bring me out of this trap, which they have hidden for me. Now is suffering intimated, Thou shalt bring me out of this trap which they have hidden for me. Nor is it that suffering only, wherewith our Lord Jesus Christ suffered; the devil hath spread his trap even unto the end. And woe to that man that falleth into it; now every one doth fall, who trusteth not in God, who saith not, In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me not be confounded for ever, and in Thy righteousness rescue me, and deliver me. The trap of the enemy hath been spread, and prepared. He hath baited the trap with error and terror; error to entice with, terror to crush and hurry away. Shut thou the door of desire against error, shut the door of fear against terror, and thou shalt be led out of the trap. Of this kind of fight thy Captain Himself, Who for thy sake vouchsafed even to be tempted, hath given thee an example in Himself. And He was first tempted with enticements; for the door of desire was tempted in Him, when the devil tempted Him, saying, Command these stones, that they be made bread. Worship me, and I will give Thee these kingdoms. Cast Thyself down, for it hath been written, He hath given His angels charge over Thee, and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone. All this enticement tempts desire. But when he found the door of desire shut in Him, Who was tempted for us, he betook himself to tempting the door of fear, and prepared suffering for Him. In a word, the Evangelist speaketh thus, And the temptation being ended, the devil departed from Him for a season. What is, for a season? As if he would return, and tempt the gate of fear, because he found the gate of desire closed. The whole Body then of Christ is tempted even unto the end. My Brethren, when some evil or other was enjoined against the Christians, this Body was attacked together, the whole was attacked: hence it was said in the Psalm, As a heap of sand I was shaken that I might fall, and the Lord held me up. But when these things were over, which attacked the whole Body that it it might fall, temptation began in its separate parts. The Body of Christ is tempted part by part: one Church does not suffer persecution, another does. It suffers not the rage of the Emperor, but the rage of an evil people. How great devastations from the populace! How great evils have been heaped upon the Church by bad Christians, by those, who, having been taken in that net, have so multiplied, as to weigh down the ships in that fishing of the Lord before the Passion! There is no want then of the weighing down of

temptation. Let no one say to himself, “It is not a time of temptation.” Whoso saith this to himself, promiseth himself peace: whoso promiseth himself peace, is assaulted off his guard. Let the whole Body of Christ then say, (ver. 4.) Thou wilt bring me out of this trap, which they have hidden for me: because our Head even hath been brought out of the trap, which they hid for Him, to Whom it was just now said in the Gospel, that they would say, This is the heir; come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance will be ours. And on being questioned, What will the Lord of the vineyard do to the wicked husbandmen? they pronounced sentence against themselves: He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen. What, and have ye never read, The Stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the Head of the corner? For what is here, the builders rejected; is expressed in the Gospel, they cast out of the vineyard, and slew. He too then hath been delivered. Our Head is above, is free. Let us cleave to Him by love, that we may be hereafter the better united to Him by immortality; and let us say all, Thou wilt take me out of that trap which they have hidden for me; for Thou art my Protector.

11. Let us listen to the words of the Lord, which He spake on the Cross, Into Thy hands I commend My spirit. At least when we meet in the Gospel with His words from this Psalm, let us not doubt that He Himself hath spoken here. We have this in the Gospel: He said, (ver. 5.) Into Thy hands I commend My spirit: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost. It was not without a cause that He would have the words of this Psalm to be His own words, but only that He might warn you that He hath spoken in this Psalm. Seek Him here: consider how He wished to be sought for in that Psalm, For the taking up of the morning: They pierced My Hands and My Feet; they numbered distinctly all My bones; yea, they regarded and beheld Me; they divided My garments for themselves, and cast the lot upon My vesture; that He might warn thee that this was fulfilled in Himself, He placed in His mouth the heading of this very Psalm, O God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? And yet He transferred in a figure the voice of His Body unto Himself; for the Father never at any time forsook His Only Son. Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth. Doing what Thou hast promised, not failing in Thy promise, O God of truth.

12. Ver. 6. Thou hatest them that hold to vanity uselessly. Who holds to vanity? He that by fear of death dieth. For by fear of death he lieth, and dieth before he dies, who therefore lied that he might live. Thou wouldest lie that thou mayest not die: thou both liest, and diest; and whereas thou shunnest one death, which thou canst put off, but canst not put away, thou fallest into two, so as that thou diest first in soul, and afterwards in body. Whence is this, but from holding to vanity? Because the passing day is sweet to thee, because the flying seasons, of which thou retainest nothing and art moreover thyself retained, are sweet to thee. Thou hatest them that hold to vanity uselessly. But I, who do not hold to vanity, have trusted in the Lord. Thou trustest in money, thou holdest by vanity: thou trustest in honour and in some eminence of human power, thou holdest to vanity: thou trustest in some powerful friend, thou holdest to vanity. When thou trustest in all these things, either thou diest and leavest them here; or in thy lifetime they all perish, and thou failest in thy trust. Of this vanity Isaiah maketh mention, when he saith, All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof is as the flower of grass: the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth; but the word of the Lord abideth for ever. But I am not as they who trust in vanity, and do hold to vanity; but have trusted in the Lord, Who is not vanity.

13. Ver. 7. I will be glad, and rejoice in Thy mercy, not in mine own righteousness. For Thou hast regarded my humiliation, Thou hast saved my soul from necessities, and hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy. What are the necessities, from which we wish our soul to be saved? Who can number them? Who duly amplify them? Who fitly set them forth, to be shunned and avoided? First it is a hard necessity in the human race, not to know another’s heart, to think ill frequently of a faithful friend, to think well frequently of a faithless friend. O hard necessity! And what canst thou do to look into hearts? what eye apply, O weak and lamentable mortality? What canst thou do to see to-day thy brother’s heart? Thou hast nothing thou canst do. There is another greater necessity, thou seest not even thine own, how it will be to-morrow. What shall I now say of the necessities of mortality itself? Death is inevitable, and no man wishes it. No man wishes what is inevitable. No man wishes that, which will be, whether he will or no. Hard necessity, not to wish that which cannot be shunned! For if it were possible, we should be unwilling doubtless to die; and should wish to be

made as Angels, but by some transformation, not by death: as the Apostle saith, We have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, if so be that we be found clothed and not naked. For we who are in this habitation do groan, being burdened: wherein we would not be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life. We wish to attain unto the kingdom of God, but we do not wish it through death: and yet necessity saith unto thee, This way shalt thou come. Dost thou hesitate, O man, to come this way, when God hath come this way to thee? What again are the necessities in conquering most inveterate lusts, and evil habits the growth of years? To conquer habit, you know, is a hard battle. Thou seest how evil are thy deeds, how detestable, how unhappy; and yet thou doest the same: thou didst so yesterday, thou wilt do so to-day. If they are thus displeasing to thee, whilst I am speaking, how do they displease thee, when thou thinkest on them? And yet thou wilt do the same. By what art thou hurried along? who drags thee captive? Is it that law in thy members warring against the law of thy mind? Cry out then, Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord: and so that is fulfilled in thee, which we just now said, But I have trusted in the Lord: I will be glad, and rejoice in Thy mercy; for Thou hast regarded my humiliation, Thou hast saved my soul from necessities. For how hath thy soul been saved from necessities, but because thy humiliation hath been regarded? Unless thou wert first humbled, He would not hear thee, Who should deliver thee from necessities. He was humbled, who said, Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? They were not humbled, who being ignorant of God’s Righteousness, and wishing to establish their own, have not submitted themselves to the Righteousness of God.

14. Ver. 8. And Thou hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy. Not thy neighbour, not thy partner, not him with whom thou hast been on service, and injured him, or it may be in thine own city hast done wrong to: for these are such as we ought to pray for. We have another enemy, the devil, the old serpent. We all at death, if we die well, are delivered out of his hands. For whoever die ill, in their iniquities, are shut up into his hands, that they should be condemned with him at the end. The Lord our God then

delivereth us from the hand of our enemy; for he wishes to catch us by our lusts. Now our lusts, when they are strong, and when we serve them, are called necessities. But when God delivereth our soul from our necessities, what shall there be which the enemy can lay hold of in us, that we should be shut up into his hands?

15. Thou hast set my feet in a large room. But yet, the way is narrow: it is narrow to the toiling, broad to the loving. The same way which is narrow, is made broad. In a large room, saith he, Thou hast set my feet, that my feet straitened for room should not knock against each other, and by such knocking throw me down. What then doth he mean by saying, Thou hast set my feet in a large room? Thou hast plainly made righteousness easy to me, which once was difficult to me: this is, Thou hast set my feet in a large room.

16. Ver. 9. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled; mine eye hath been disordered by anger, my soul, and my belly. For my life hath failed in pain, and my years in groanings. Let this suffice you, dearly beloved: with the help of the Lord, we will perhaps fulfil our engagement, that this Psalm ended, we may proceed on our way.

SERMON II

1. Let our attention turn again to the rest of the Psalm, and let us recognise ourselves in the words of the Prophet. For if we look into ourselves in the time of tribulation, we shall rejoice in the time of retribution. I set forth to you, dearly beloved, when I was expounding the first part of this Psalm, that it is Christ Who speaketh; and I did not omit to say how that Christ is to be taken. Wholly, with the Head and the Body. I established this also by testimonies of Scripture, as it appeared to me, adequate enough and clear; so that it could not in any wise be doubted that Christ is Head and Body, Bridegroom and Bride, the Son of God and the Church, the Son of God made Son of Man for our sakes, that He might make the sons of men sons of God; and so there might be two in one flesh in a great mystery, who are recognised in the Prophets as two in one voice. The thanksgiving of the Psalmist himself hath been expressed above in the words, Thou hast regarded my humiliation, Thou hast saved my soul from necessities, and

hast not shut me up into the hands of the enemy; Thou hast set my feet in a large room. It is the thanksgiving of Man delivered from tribulation, of Christ's members delivered from affliction and snares. And again he saith, Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled. In tribulation of course there is straitness: how then, Thou hast set my feet in a large room? If he be still troubled, how are his feet in a large room? Is it haply so that there is one voice, because there is indeed one Body; but in some of the members thereof largeness is felt, in others straitness, that is, some feel the easiness of righteousness, others are distressed in tribulation? For if the condition of different members was not different, the Apostle would not say, If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; and if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Some Churches, for instance, have peace, some are in tribulation; in such as have peace the feet are in a large room; such as are in tribulation suffer straitness; but both the tribulation of the latter saddens the former, and the peace of the former comforts the latter. For the Body is in such wise one, that there is no schism; now nothing maketh schism but dissension. But charity produceth closeness, closeness embraceth unity, unity preserveth charity, charity attaineth to glory. Let her say then in the person of some members, (ver. 9.) Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am troubled; mine eye hath been disturbed by anger, my soul, and my belly.

2. We ask, whence comes this trouble, since a little before he seemed to rejoice in his deliverance, through a certain righteousness poured in upon him bountifully by the gift of God, and room thereby made for his feet in the expanse of charity. Whence then is this trouble also, unless peradventure from that which the Lord saith, Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold? For when at first the fewness of the saints had been set forth, by the casting as it were of the net, the Church was multiplied, and countless numbers were taken, of whom it had been foretold, I declared, and spake, they were multiplied out of number. Who were even to overload the ships, and break the nets, as it was recorded in that first fishing before the Lord's Passion. Out of these multitudes then are those numbers swelled, by whom the Churches throughout Easter are so crammed, that the confined space of the walls cannot contain the crowds of them. Now how should he not be troubled for this multitude, when he seeth those very same filling the

theatres and amphitheatres, who a little before filled the Churches? those very same in their iniquities, who were a little before in the praises of God? those very same blaspheming God, who were answering Amen unto God? Let him abide, let him endure, let him not fail, even in the abounding multitude of the wicked, because neither does the grain of corn fail in the multitude of the chaff, until that after the time of fanning he be sent into the barn, and there be in the company of the saints, and suffer nothing from the clouds of dust. Let him then endure to the end, because the Lord too, when He had said, Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold, lest through this, that abundance of iniquity is fore-announced, our feet should slip and stumble, immediately added for the encouragement and consolation and confirmation of the faithful, saying, He that shall persevere unto the end, the same shall be saved.

3. Give heed accordingly to the Psalmist, situated, as it appears to me, in this trouble. When as being in trouble he ought as it were to grieve, (for trouble hath a suitable partner in grief,) he declares that he is angry in trouble, and saith, Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble, mine eye hath been disordered by anger. If thou art in trouble, why art thou angry? He is angry for others’ sins. Who would not be angry, seeing men confessing God with their mouths, and in their lives denying Him? Who would not be angry, seeing men renouncing the world in word, and not in deed? Who would not be angry, seeing brethren plotting against brethren, not keeping good faith with the kiss, which they imprint in the Sacraments of God? And who can enumerate all the things, at which the Body of Christ is angry, which liveth interiorily by the Spirit of Christ, which groaneth as the grain among the chaff? For they scarcely appear who thus groan, who are thus angry; as the grain scarcely appears, when the floor is being threshed. He who knows not how many ears have been gathered in, thinks the whole chaff; and out of this which is all thought to be chaff, a large heap will be cleansed. Among these then, who do not appear and who groan, he is angry, who saith in another place, The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up. He saith too in another place, when he seeth many doing evil, Weariness possessed me, at sinners forsaking Thy law. He saith again in another place, I saw the senseless, and I wasted away.

4. But for this anger, there is cause for fear, lest it be so great, as to be turned into hatred. For anger is not yet hatred. For thou art angry with thy son, thou dost not hate the child; thou art keeping his inheritance for him, who is sensible of thine anger; and therefore thou art angry, lest he lose what thou mayest have kept for him, should he turn out ill, by depraved habits. Anger then is not yet hatred: we do not yet hate them, with whom we are angry; but if this anger abide and be not quickly plucked out, it increases and becomes hatred. Therefore that new born anger be plucked out, and turn not into hatred, Scripture thus teacheth us, saying, Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Now thou dost sometimes meet with a brother cherishing hatred, and he reproves one who is angry: there is hatred in him, and he blames anger in another; he hath a beam in his own eye, and reproveth a mote in his brother’s eye. But that mote and shoot, if it be not quickly plucked out, will become a beam. He doth not therefore say, Mine eye hath been put out by anger, but disordered. For, if it be put out, it is now hatred, not anger. And, see how that it is put out. Hence John saith, He that hateth his brother is in darkness even until now. Before one then pass into darkness, the eye is disordered by anger; but care must be taken that the anger turn not into hatred, and the eye be put out. Therefore he saith, Mine eye hath been disordered for anger, my soul and my belly, that is, my inward parts have been disturbed. He used belly for inward parts. For sometimes with the wicked, and perverse, with those who wander from the law, and live evilly, one may be angry, one may not cry out. When we are angry and may not cry out, our inward parts are disturbed. For so great sometimes is the perversity that it cannot be corrected.

5. Ver. 10. For my life hath failed in pain, and my years in groanings. My life hath failed in pain, he saith. Now we live, saith the Apostle, if ye stand fast in the Lord. Whosoever are perfect through the Gospel and the grace of God, live not here but for others; for their life in this world is no more necessary for them. But, because their services are necessary for others, there occurs in their case what the same Apostle saith, Having a desire to depart, and be with Christ; for it is far best: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is needful for you. Now when a man sees that from his services, from his labours, from his preaching men make no progress, his life is weakened by want. A truly miserable want and hunger, since those whom we gain to

the Lord the Church in a manner eateth. What is eateth? Passeth into her body. For whatever we eat we pass into our body. This the Church doeth by the Saints. She hungereth after those she would gain, and those whom she has gained in any way she in a manner eateth. Peter represented this Church, when a vessel was let down to him from heaven, full of all manner of four-footed beasts, creeping things, and fowls of the air: by which kinds all the Gentiles are denoted. The Lord shewed the Church in figure beforehand, that she should devour all the Gentiles, and change them into her own body: and He said to Peter, Kill and eat. O Church, (that is, O Peter, for upon this rock I will build my Church,) kill and eat. First kill, and so eat. Kill what they are, and make them what thou art. When then the Gospel is preached, and he who preaches it sees that men make no progress, how can he not cry out, For my life hath failed in pain, and my years in groanings? My strength hath been weakened by want, and my bones have been disturbed. These years of ours, which we pass here, are in groanings. Why? Because iniquity hath abounded, the love of many waxeth cold. In groanings, not in plain speeches. When the Church seeth many going wrong, she stifles her groans in her own breast, so as to say to God, My groaning is not hid from Thee. So it is said in another Psalm, but it is suitable here; My groaning, though hidden from men, hath not been hidden from Thee. My strength hath been weakened by want, and my bones have been disturbed. Of this want we have spoken above. By bones are meant the strong ones of the Church, who, though they be not disturbed by the persecutions of aliens, are nevertheless disturbed by the iniquities of brethren.

6. Ver. 11. I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies, and to my neighbours too much, and fear to mine acquaintance. I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies. Who are the Church’s enemies? Heathens? Jews? Bad Christians live worse than all. Would ye see how bad Christians live worse than all? Of such the prophet Ezekiel saith that they are like useless vine-branches. Grant that the heathen are wood of the trees of the forest without the Church, still something can be made of it, as of carpenter’s woods is made wood fit for the carpenter. And if it be as yet knotty, and crooked, and covered with bark, still it may be trimmed, chipped, planed, and can come to some work for man’s use. But of vine

branches cut off carpenters can make nothing; the fire only awaits them. Mark, Brethren; seeing that the branch which abideth in the vine is every where preferred to the wood of the trees of the forest, because the branch yieldeth fruit, and that wood doth not; yet, if the wood of the trees of the forest be compared with the branch cut off from the vine, the wood is understood to be better, because of it the carpenter can make something, while the other none seeketh but to supply the hearth. Giving heed therefore to the multitude of evil livers in the Church, he saith, I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies. Bad men, saith he, live worse in my Sacraments, than they who have never approached them. Why should we not speak out plainly in Latin, even when we explain the Psalm? Even if we do not dare to speak at other times, at least let the obligation of exposition have the liberty of rebuking. I have been made, saith he, a reproach above all mine enemies. Of such the Apostle Peter saith, The latter end with them is worse than the beginning: for it were better for them not to know the way of righteousness, than, knowing it, to turn aside from the holy commandment delivered unto them. When he saith, It were better for them not to know the way of righteousness, did he not judge that enemies stationed without are better than evil livers within, by whom the Church is oppressed and weighed down? It had been better, saith he, for them not to know the way of righteousness, than, knowing it, to turn aside from the holy commandment delivered unto them. Finally, see to how shocking a thing he compared them. It hath happened to them according to the true proverb, The dog hath turned to his vomit again. Seeing then that the Church is full of such as these, do not the few say truly here, yea rather the Church herself by the voice of the few, I have been made a reproach above all mine enemies, and to my neighbours too much, and fear to mine acquaintance? I have been made a reproach to my neighbours too much, that is, to those who were already drawing near to me that they might believe; that is; My neighbours have been too much frightened by the bad life of bad and false Christians. For how many do you think, my Brethren, wish to be Christians, but are offended by the evil conversation of Christians? These are the neighbours who were already drawing near, and we have seemed too great a reproach unto them.

7. I have been made a fear to mine acquaintance. What is so much to be feared? I have been made, saith he, a fear to mine acquaintance. What is so much to be feared, as when a man sees many living evilly, and those of whom good was hoped found in many evil practices? He fears lest all, whom he thought good, be such, and almost all the good come into evil suspicion. What a man! How has he fallen? How has he been found in that disgraceful business, in that wickedness, in that evil deed? Think you all are not the same? This is a fear to mine acquaintance, that even with those to whom we are known we very often come into suspicion. And unless, if thou art any thing, what thou art thyself console thee, thou dost not believe there is any other like thee. A good conscience, whatever it be, consoleth a man, so as that a man whose life is good may say to himself, “O thou, who art fearing now lest all be such, art thou such?” Conscience makes answer, “I am not.” Then, if thou art not such, art thou alone? Beware lest this pride be worse than that wickedness. Say not that thou art alone. For so Elias once for weariness of the multitude of the ungodly said, They have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thy altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee before Baal. Therefore, Brethren, amid these offences, there is one remedy—that thou think not badly of thy brother. Be thou in humility, what thou wouldest have him be, and thou wilt not think him to be what thou art not. But still he is made a fear even to his acquaintance, even to those who have had proof of him.

8. They that did see me, fled without from me. It were pardonable, if they that did not see me, had fled without from me; for even they that did see me, fled without from me. But if they that did not see me, have fled without from me; (and it must not be said, they fled without, for they were never within; for if they had been within, they would have seen me; that is, they would have recognised the Body of Christ, they would have recognised the members of Christ, they would have recognised the unity of Christ.) This is more to be lamented, this is altogether unbearable, that many who saw me, fled without from me; that is, many, who had knowledge of what the Church was, went out, and made heresies and schisms against the Church. To-day, for instance, you find a man born in Donatus’ party, he knows not

what the Church is, he holds to what he was born in; you cannot tear him away from the usage which he has sucked in with his nurse’s milk. Give me a man who is daily conversant with Scripture, who reads it, who preaches it. Is it possible, I ask, that he does not see there, Desire of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the limits of the earth for thy possession? Does he not see there, All the ends of the world shall remember themselves and be turned unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him? If thou seest there the unity of the whole world, why dost thou fly without, so as not only thyself to suffer blindness, but also to create blindness for others? They that did see me, that is, who knew what the Church was, who saw it in the Scriptures, fled without from me. For think ye, my Brethren, that all they who have made heresies in divers parts and places, have not known in the Scriptures of God that the Church hath not been foretold but as diffused throughout the whole globe? I say the truth, dearly beloved; we are all at least Christians, or are all called Christians, and all sign ourselves with the sign of Christ; the prophets have spoken more obscurely of Christ, than of the Church: I suppose because they saw in the spirit that men would make parties against the Church, and would not have so much strife concerning Christ, concerning the Church would stir up great contentions. And hence that out of which greater contentions were to arise was more plainly predicted and openly prophesied of, that it may avail for the conviction of those who have seen and fled without.

9. For example I will mention one instance: Abraham was our father not by reason of carnal propagation, but of the imitation of faith. Righteous and well-pleasing to God, by faith he begat a son, Isaac, who had been promised to him, of Sarah his wife being barren, in his old age: this same son he was commanded to offer up to God, he doubted not, nor disputed, nor argued about God’s command, nor thought that evil which The Best could enjoin. He led his son to be offered up, placed upon him the wood for the sacrifice, came to the spot, raised his right hand to strike him, lowered it at His prohibition at Whose command he had lifted it up; he who had obeyed to strike the blow, obeyed to spare; every where obedient, never fearful; but that the sacrifice might be completed and they might not go away without blood, a ram was found caught in a thicket by his horns; it was offered up,

the sacrifice was accomplished. Search what this means: it is a figure of Christ wrapped up in a mystery. Now that it may be seen, it is examined: that it may be seen, it is thoroughly discussed that what is wrapped up may be unrolled. Isaac as the only beloved son, having the type of the Son of God, carrying the wood for himself, as Christ carried the cross. Finally, that very ram signified Christ. For what is it to be caught by the horns, but in a manner to be crucified? This is a figure of Christ. Forthwith the Church was to be preached; the Head having been fore-announced, the Body was to be fore-announced too. The Spirit of God began, God began to wish to preach the Church to Abraham, and took away all figure. He was preaching Christ in figure, He preached the Church openly; for He saith to Abraham, Because thou hast obeyed My voice, and hast not spared thy beloved son, for My sake, in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the sea, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. And almost every where Christ is preached by the prophets in some cover of a mystery, the Church openly; that they even might see her who were to rise against her, and this wickedness might be fulfilled in them which the Psalm foretold, They that did see me, fled without from me. They went out from us, but they were not of us: this the Apostle John said of them.

10. Ver. 12. I have been forgotten, as one dead from the heart. I have been forgotten, I have fallen into oblivion, they that saw me have forgotten me; they have forgotten me, and so forgotten me as if I were dead from their hearts. I have been forgotten, as one dead from the heart. I have become as a lost vessel. What is this, I have become as a lost vessel? He was toiling, and profiting none: he saw that he was a vessel, and profited none, and he saith that he is as it were a lost vessel.

11. Ver. 13. For I have heard the rebuking of many dwelling by in a circle. Many dwell by in my circle, and blame me daily. How many evil words do they speak against wicked Christians—evil words which reach to all Christians. For does he, who speaks evil of, or blames, Christians, does he say, “See what bad Christians do?” No, but, “See what Christians do.” He makes no separation, does not discriminate. Yet they say this, who dwell by in a circle; that is, who go round about and do not enter. Why go they round

about and do not enter? Because they love the wheel of time. They do not enter into truth, because they do not love eternity: devoted to things temporal, as it were fast bound to a wheel; of whom it is said elsewhere, Make their princes as a wheel; and again, The ungodly walk in a circle. Whilst they were assembling themselves together against me, they conspired that they might take my soul. What is, they have conspired that they might take my soul? That I might consent to their wickednesses. For it is a little matter for those that speak evil and do not enter in, that they do not enter in; they would moreover cast men out hence by their rebuking. If they have cast thee out of the Church, they have taken thy soul; that is, have obtained thy consent, and thou wilt be in a circle, not in rest.

12. But I, amidst those reproaches, amidst those scandals, amidst those evils, amidst these seductions, ungodlinesses without and perversenesses within, when I was looking for righteous men and seeking whom to imitate, and there were none, what did I do? what counsel did I find? (Ver. 14.) But I have hoped in Thee, O Lord. Nothing more healthful, nothing more secure. Thou wast wishing to imitate some one, thou didst find him not good. Away with this imitation. Thou didst seek another; something or other displeased thee; thou didst seek a third, and he too did not please; what, because this one and that one did not please, shalt thou too be lost? Take away thy hope from man, for cursed be every one who putteth his hope in man. If thou look still to man, and seekest to imitate him and depend on him, thou dost wish still to be fed with milk, and thou wilt become a breast-bred, as those children are called who suck longer than they ought. For to use milk, to wish food to be passed into one as it were through the flesh,—this is to live by man. Get strength for the table, thence take nourishment from whence he took it or perchance did not take it. Perhaps thou hast to thy profit fallen in with a bad one whom thou thoughtest good, that so thou mightest find bitterness as it were in thy mother’s milk, and so by that distaste be repelled, and attracted to stronger food. For nurses act thus to the breast-bred, place something bitter on the nipples of their breasts; by which infants being disgusted, refuse the breast, and crave after the table. Therefore let him say, But I have hoped in Thee, O Lord; I have said, Thou art my God. Thou art my God. Let Donatus retire, Cæcilianus retire; neither the one or the other is my God. I do not walk after man’s name, I hold to the Name of

Christ. Hear Paul himself saying, Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I should be lost, if I were of Paul's party: how shall I not be lost, if I shall be of Donatus' party? Yes, let them retire altogether, men's names, men's charges; men's fictions. In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; I have said, Thou art my God. Not any man, but Thou art my God. One man faileth, another advanceth; my God neither faileth, nor advanceth; nor hath the Perfect One any whither to advance, nor the Eternal any whither to fail. I said to the Lord, Thou art my God.

13. Ver. 15. In Thy Hands are my lots. Not in hands of men, but in Thy Hands. What are these lots? How lots? When we hear the word lots, we must not look out for lot-diviners. For the lot is no evil thing, but it is an event, in human doubt, indicating the Divine will. For so the Apostles cast lots, when Judas perished after betraying his Lord, and, as it was written of him, He went to his own place; then began search to be made, who should be ordained in his place, two were chosen by man's judgment, and of the two, one was chosen by Divine judgment. God was consulted concerning the two, which of them it would be, and the lot fell upon Matthias. What then is, In Thy Hands are my lots? By lots, to the best of my opinion, he expressed the grace whereby we are saved. Why does he call the grace of God by the name of lot? Because in a lot there is no choice, but the will of God. For when it is said, this man does so, that man does not, there is an estimate of deserts; and when deserts are estimated, there is choice, not lot. But since God hath found no deserts of ours, He hath saved us by the lot of His own will, because He willed, not because we were worthy. This is a lot. With much significance upon that vesture of the Lord woven from the top, which signifies the eternity of love, when it could not be divided by the persecutors was the lot cast. By them to whom it came it signified those who seem to attain to the lot of the Saints. By grace ye are saved through faith, saith the Apostle. By grace ye are saved through faith, and this not of yourselves. (Recognise the lot.) And this not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, (as if ye did any good, and so were worthy of attaining thereunto;) not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Jesus Christ unto good works. This so to say hidden lot is the will of God; it is a lot among mankind, a lot coming from

the hidden will of God, with Whom there is no unrighteousness. For He accepteth no man’s person, but His hidden justice is to thee a lot.

14. Mark therefore, dearly Beloved, see, how this very thing is confirmed by the Apostle Peter. When that Simon, the sorcerer, having been baptized by Philip, continued with him, believing the Divine miracles which were performed in his sight; the Apostles came to Samaria, where this sorcerer also had himself believed, and where he had been baptized; the Apostles laid their hands on the baptized, and they received the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues; Simon wondered, and was astounded at so great a Divine miracle, that at the laying on of men’s hands the Holy Ghost came and filled men; and he longed for this, not grace, but power; not whereby he might be set free, but whereby he might be puffed up. But when he longed for this, and pride and devilish ungodliness, and exaltation which deserved a fall, had filled his heart, he said to the Apostles, How much money would you take of me, that men may receive the Holy Ghost at the laying on of my hands too? He who was seeking after things of this world, who was dwelling by in a circle, thought that for money he could buy the gift of God. He who thought that he could by money procure the Holy Ghost, judged the Apostles also to be covetous, as he was himself ungodly and proud. Forthwith Peter said, Thy money go into perdition with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this faith; that is, thou dost not belong to this grace, which we all receive freely, because thou dost think to buy that which is given freely. Now from this, that it is given freely, it is called a lot. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this faith. I have said thus much, that we might not be alarmed at what he saith, In Thy Hands are my lots. For what are lots? The Church’s inheritance. To what extent is the Church’s inheritance? Within what bounds? Even unto all bounds. I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the boundaries of the earth for thy possession. Let not man promise me some small portion or other; O my God, in Thy Hands are my lots. Let this suffice you, dearly Beloved, for the present; the remainder in the Lord’s Name and with His help we will make good to-morrow.

SERMON III

1. The remainder of this Psalm, on which we have already delivered two discourses, is somewhat more than a third part of it, and we see that to-day our task must be fulfilled. Wherefore I beg of you, dearly Beloved, to be content that we do not dwell on the plainer words of it, that those parts may occupy us which it is necessary to explain. For there are many things which occur spontaneously to the minds of the faithful, many which need a brief hint, while there are some, though more infrequent, on which much labour must be bestowed that they may be understood. That the time then may suffice both for your strength and mine, see how evident these parts are, and recognise them without further delay together with us, and praise God in them with us; and if the Psalm pray, do ye pray; and if it lament, do ye lament; and if it joy, do ye rejoice; and if it hope, do ye hope; and if it fear, do ye fear. For all that is here written, is a mirror for us.

2. Ver. 15. Deliver me from the hands of mine enemies and from them that persecute me. Let us say this, yea let each one, for his own enemies, say this. For good it is, and we ought to pray that God would deliver us from the hands of our enemies. But we must understand for what enemies we are to pray, and what to pray against. Men, who are our enemies, whatsoever they be, must not be held in hatred, lest, when a bad man hates a bad man, from whom he is suffering, there be two bad men. Let the good man love even the bad man from whom he suffers; that there be at all events but one bad man. Those are the enemies against whom we must pray, the devil and his angels; they envy us the kingdom of heaven, they would not that we should ascend up whence they have been cast down; from these let us pray that our soul be delivered. For even when men are stirred up against us, they are made the instruments of these. Wherefore the Apostle Paul, warning us how guarded we ought to be against our enemies, saith to the servants of God who were suffering tribulations, and that questionless by the dissensions, unfairnesses, enmities of men, We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, that is, not against men, but against princes and powers and the rulers of the world. What world? The heavens and the earth? God forbid. There is no ruler of this world but the Creator. But what world doth he mean? The lovers of the world. In fine, he goes on in continuation and explains, when I say of the world, I mean of this darkness. What darkness forsooth, but unbelievers and ungodly? For when from ungodly and

unbelievers they have been made godly and believers, the same Apostle addressed them thus, For ye were sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord. Against spiritual wickednesses in heavenly places, saith he, against the devil and his angels ye fight: your enemies ye see not and ye conquer. Deliver me from the hands of mine enemies, and from them that persecute Me.

3. Ver. 16. Make Thy Face to shine upon Thy servant; save me in Thy mercy. We were saying before, if such of you as were present, dearly beloved, remember yesterday's discourse, that those are the greatest persecutors of the Church who being Christians will not live good lives. For through these the Church incurs obloquy, and from them sustains enmity: when they are reproved, when they are not permitted to live evilly, when they are dealt with even by a word, they meditate evil in their hearts, and seek an opportunity of breaking out. Among them is the Psalmist mourning, and so are we if we will; for they are the more numerous, and amidst their great numbers the good are scarcely seen as grains of wheat in the floor, by which nevertheless when they are cleansed the Lord's garners are to be filled. Therefore in the midst of these the Psalmist mourning, saith, Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant. For a sort of confusion is supposed, when all are called Christians: and good livers and evil livers all are marked with the same mark, all draw near to one altar, all are washed in one baptism, all utter the same Lord's prayer, all are present at the celebration of the same mysteries. When are they that mourn distinguished, and they for whom they mourn, except He make His face to shine upon His servants? What then is, Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant? Let it appear that I belong to Thee; and let not the ungodly Christian say so too, that he belongs to Thee, lest I shall have said to Thee in vain in another Psalm, Judge me, O God, and divide my cause from the ungodly people. What he said there, Divide my cause, he expresses here, Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant. And nevertheless that he too be not proud, and seem as it were to justify himself, he goes on to say, Save me in Thy mercy. That is, not in mine own righteousness, not in my merits, but in Thy mercy; not because I am worthy, but because Thou art merciful. Hear me, not according to judicial severity, but according to most merciful goodness. Save me in Thy mercy.

4. Ver. 17. O Lord, let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee. He hath pleaded a weighty cause, Let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee. Wouldest Thou that he should be confounded who hath called upon Thee? Wouldest Thou it should be said, Where is He in Whom he trusted? But who even of the very ungodly doth not call upon God? Unless then in some special way he said, I have called upon Thee, which cannot be common with the many, he would by no means venture to claim so great a reward from this calling upon God. For God might answer him after a sort in thought, and say, “Why dost thou ask of Me that thou mayest not be confounded? Wherefore? Because thou hast called upon Me? Do not men daily call upon Me, that they may fulfil it may be the adulteries which they lust after? Do not men daily call upon Me, that those may die from whom they are expecting an inheritance? Do not men daily call upon Me, who are devising some fraud, that they may execute it with a prosperous issue? How then dost thou claim so great a reward as to say, Let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee? All those men it is true call, but do not call upon Thee. Thou dost call upon God, when thou dost call God unto thyself. For this is to call upon Him, to call Him unto thyself, to invite Him, so to say, into the home of thine heart. Now thou wouldest not dare to invite any householder merely, unless thou first knewest how to prepare an habitation for him. For what if God say to thee, “Lo, thou hast called upon Me, I come to Thee. Where shall I enter in? Shall I bear this great filth of thy conscience? If thou wast to invite My servant into thine house, wouldest thou not first take care to cleanse it? Thou dost call Me into thine heart, and it is full of rapine. The place into which God is called is full of blasphemies, is full of adulteries, is full of frauds, is full of evil lusts; and dost thou call upon Me?” Of such men in short what saith the Psalm in another place? They have not called upon the Lord. And in very truth they have called, and yet they have not called upon Him. I say briefly, since the question has arisen how a man can claim so great a reward, by alleging one only merit, in saying, for I have called upon Thee, when we see that God is called upon by so many bad men; the question has arisen, and we must not pass from it: I say briefly then to the covetous man, Dost thou call upon God. Why dost thou call upon God? That He may give thee gain? Thou dost call then upon gain, not upon God. Because thou canst not have this gain, which thou covetest, by thy servant, because thou canst not have it by thy tenant, by thy

client, by thy friend, by thy satellite, thou dost call upon God, thou makest God the minister of thy gain. God is held cheap by thee. Wouldest thou call upon God? Call upon Him for His own sake. Thou covetous one! is it a little thing to thee if God Himself fill thee? If God come to thee without gold and silver, wouldest thou have none of Him? What then of those things which God hath made is sufficient for thee, for whom God Himself sufficeth not?” With good reason then doth the Psalmist pray, Let me not be confounded, for I have called upon Thee. Call ye upon the Lord, Brethren, if ye would not be confounded. For the Psalmist dreads a confusion of some sort, of which he spoke in the former part of the Psalm, In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me not be put to confusion for ever. For that ye may know that he fears this confusion, what did he add when he had said, Let me not be confounded for ever, for I have called upon Thee? Let the ungodly be ashamed, and be brought down to hell: with that confusion, of course, for ever.

5. Ver. 18. Let the deceitful lips be made dumb, which speak iniquity against the Righteous in pride and contempt. This Righteous One is Christ. Many lips speak iniquity against Him in pride and contempt. How in pride and contempt? Because He, Who came in such humility, appeared contemptible to the proud. Wouldest thou not that He should be contemned by them that love honours, He Who endured so great reproaches? Wouldest thou not that He should be contemned by these that so highly prize this life, He Who died? Wouldest thou not that He should be contemned by those who think the death of condemnation on the Cross shameful, He Who was crucified? Wouldest thou not that He should be contemned by the rich, He, Who spent a life of poverty in the world, when He was the Creator of the world? All these things which men love, because Christ would not have them, that He might shew by His not having them that they were to be contemned, not because He had it not in His power to possess them, all that love these things contemn Him. And whosoever of His servants would follow His footsteps, to walk himself in that lowliness in which He hath learnt that his Lord walked, is contemned in Christ, as a member of Christ; and when the Head and the members are contemned, whole Christ Himself is contemned, for this whole Righteous One is the Head and the Body. And it must needs be that Whole Christ Himself be despised by the proud and

the ungodly, that that may befall them which is said, Let the deceitful lips be made dumb, which speak iniquity against the Righteous in pride and contempt. When will those lips be made dumb? In this life? Never. Day by day do they cry out against Christians, most of all against the lowly, day by day do they blaspheme, day by day do they bark, multiply punishment by those tongues, with which they shall thirst in hell, and long in vain for a drop of water. It is not now then that these men's lips are made dumb. But when? When their iniquities shall lead them over on the contrary part; as it is said in the book of Wisdom, Then shall the righteous stand in great boldness against those that have afflicted them. Then shall they say, These are they whom we had sometimes in derision and in a proverb of reproach. How are they numbered among the sons of God, and their lot is among the Saints? We fools counted their life madness. Then shall their lips be made dumb, who speak iniquity against the Righteous in pride and contempt. For just now they say to us, Where is your God? What do ye worship? What do ye see? Ye believe, and ye are distressed; that ye are distressed is certain, what ye hope for is uncertain. When that we hope for shall come in certainty, then shall the deceitful lips be made dumb.

6. Wherefore see what follows, for that the deceitful lips shall be made dumb, which speak iniquity against the Righteous in pride and contempt. The Psalmist, who thus lamenteth, hath given heed, he hath seen the good things of God within in the spirit, hath seen these good things which are seen in secret, but are not seen by the ungodly. He seeth that they therefore speak iniquity against the Righteous in pride and contempt, because they have skill to see the good things of this life, but the good things of the life to come they skill not even to imagine. But that he might set forth the value of good things of the life to come to men whom He enjoins to endure, not love things present, he cried out and added,

Ver. 19. How great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord. Here if an ungodly man should say, “Where is this multitude of sweetness?” I will answer, How can I shew thee the multitude of this sweetness, who hast lost thy palate from the fever of iniquity? Didst thou not know what honey is, thou wouldest not cry out, “how good it is,” unless thou hadst tasted it. Thou hast no palate of the heart for tasting these good things: what shall I do for thee? How shall I shew thee? He is not one to whom I can say, Taste and see that the Lord is sweet. How great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord, which Thou hast hid for them that fear Thee. What is, “hast hid for them?” Thou hast preserved for them, not denied to them, to the end that they alone may attain unto it, (for that is good which cannot be common to the just and to the ungodly,) to the end that they may by fear attain unto it. For as long as they still fear, they too have not yet attained; but they believe that they shall attain, and they begin with fear. For nothing is sweeter than the immortality of wisdom; but the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Which Thou hast hid for them that fear Thee.

7. But Thou hast perfected it for them that hope in Thee in sight of the sons of men. Not “Thou hast perfected it in sight of the sons of men,” but, “for those that hope in Thee in sight of the sons of men;” that is, Thou hast perfected Thy sweetness for those that hope in Thee in sight of the sons of men. As the Lord saith, Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father. Therefore if thou trust in the Lord, trust before men; lest haply thou hide this trust of thine in thine heart, and fear to confess Him when it is objected to thee as a crime that thou art a Christian. But to whom is it objected now that he is a Christian? There are so few left who are not Christians, that it may rather be objected to them that they are not Christians, than that they should dare to object to any that they are Christians. Notwithstanding I say to you, my Brethren, begin, whosoever thou art that hearest me, to live as a Christian, and see if it be not objected to thee even by Christians, Christians that is in name, not in life and conversation. No man feels this but he who has had trial of it. Give heed then, look well into what thou hearest. Wouldest thou live as a Christian? Wouldest thou follow the steps of thy Lord? It is objected to thee; thou art ashamed, and in thy shame thou dost leave off. Thou hast lost the way. Thou seemest to thyself to have believed with the heart unto righteousness; but thou hast lost, with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. If then thou wouldest walk the way of the Lord, trust in God even in the sight of men; that is, be not ashamed for thy trust. As He liveth in thine heart, so let Him dwell in thy mouth; for not without a cause hath Christ been pleased that His mark should be imprinted on our forehead, as on the seat of shame, and that a Christian should not be ashamed at the reproach of Christ. If then

thou shalt have done this in the sight of men, if thou shalt not have been ashamed thereof before men, if thou shalt not have denied Christ in sight of the sons of men, either by word or deed, hope thou that the sweetness of God is perfected for thee. What comes next?

8. Ver. 20. Thou wilt hide them in the hidden place of Thy Countenance. What is this place? He said not, Thou wilt hide them in Thy heaven; he said not, Thou wilt hide them in paradise; he said not, Thou wilt hide them in Abraham's bosom. For the future places of the Saints are designated in Holy Scripture by many names. Let all whatsoever is out of God, be held cheap. Let Him Who defendeth us in the place of this life, be Himself our place after this life. Because even this very Psalm above saith this to Him, Be Thou unto me a God, Who protecteth me, and a house of refuge. Therefore shall we be hidden in the countenance of God. Are ye waiting to hear from me what retreat there is in the Face of God? Cleanse the heart, that He may Himself enlighten you, and He upon Whom ye call may enter in. Be thou His house, and He will be thy house; let Him dwell in thee, and thou shalt dwell in Him. If thou shalt entertain Him in this life in thy heart, He shall entertain thee after this life with His Countenance. [Thou wilt hide them, saith he. Where? In the hidden place of Thy Countenance.] From the troubling of men. For there they are not troubled when they are hid. In the hidden place of Thy Countenance they are not troubled. Is there, think ye, a man in this world so happy, as, that when he begins to hear men's reproaches because he serveth Christ, he flieth in heart to God, and beginneth to have trust in His sweetness, and enter, with his conscience, into the countenance of God from the troubling of men from whom he heareth reproaches? He doth enter doubtless, if he have wherewith to enter, that is, if this same conscience be not laden, if it make not a heavy burthen for him—at the narrow gate. Thou wilt hide them, then, in the hidden place of Thy Countenance from the troubling of men. Thou wilt protect them in Thy tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues. Some time or other Thou wilt hide them in the hidden place of Thy Countenance from the troubling of men, that thenceforward no troubling of men may harrass them; but meanwhile, whilst they sojourn in this life, since they who serve thee are exposed to many contradicting tongues; what dost Thou do for them? Thou wilt protect them in Thy tabernacle. What is the tabernacle? The Church of

the present time, for is it for this reason called a tabernacle, because as yet it sojourneth on this earth. For a tabernacle is the habitation of soldiers encamped in an expedition. These are called tabernacles. A tabernacle is not a home. Fight thou as a sojourner on thy expedition; that having been saved in thy tabernacle, thou mayest be received in glory into thy house. For thy everlasting home will be in heaven, if only thou shalt have lived well in this tabernacle. Therefore in this tabernacle Thou wilt protect them from the contradiction of tongues. Many tongues contradict, divers heresies, divers schisms make a noise, many tongues contradict the true doctrine, do thou run to the tabernacle of God, hold to the Catholic Church, depart not from the rule of truth, and thou shalt be protected in thy tabernacle from the contradiction of tongues.

9. Ver. 21. Blessed be the Lord, for He hath made His mercy marvellous in the city of compassing. What is the city of compassing? In Judæa alone were God’s people placed, as it were, in the midst of the world, where the praises of God were celebrated, and sacrifices offered unto Him, where prophecy did not cease foretelling those future events which we now see in course of fulfilment. This people were, as it were, in the midst of the nations. This Prophet marked and saw that the Church of God should be in all nations; and because all nations were around on every side, which placed the single nation of the Jews in the midst of them, he called these nations compassing her about on every side the city of compassing. Thou didst indeed, O Lord, make Thy mercy marvellous in the city Jerusalem; there Christ suffered, there He rose again, there He ascended up into heaven, there He did many wonderful things: but greater is Thy praise, for that Thou hast made Thy mercy marvellous in the city of compassing, that is, in all nations hast spread abroad Thy mercy. Nor hast Thou kept Thine ointment in that Jerusalem, as in a vessel; but as from a broken vessel the ointment hath been poured forth throughout the world, that it might be fulfilled which is said in holy Scripture, Thy name is as ointment poured out. And so Thou hast made Thy mercy marvellous in the city of compassing. For He ascended up into heaven, He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, after ten days He sent the Holy Ghost: the disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost, they began to preach the wonderful works of Christ; they were stoned, slain, dispersed in flight. And when they were made to flee from thence as

from one place, as brands burning with Divine fire, they filled the whole wood of the world, kindled by the heat of the Spirit and the light of truth; and the Lord made His mercy marvellous in the city of compassing.

10. Ver. 22. I said in my ecstasy. Call to remembrance the title of the Psalm. See here is that ecstasy. Mark what he saith, I said, saith he, in my ecstasy, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes. I said in my panic, that is, I said in my ecstasy. He saw that he was panic-struck inwardly by some great tribulation or other, such as there is no want of: he gives heed to his panic-stricken and trembling heart, and saith, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes. If I were in Thy sight, I should not fear thus: if Thou hadst Thine Eye upon me, I should not tremble thus. But as he saith in another Psalm, If I said my foot hath been moved, Thy mercy, O Lord, helped me; so at once he saith here, Therefore Thou hast heard the voice of my prayer. Because I confessed, because I said, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes, because I have not been proud, but accused my own heart, and staggering in my tribulation have cried out to Thee, Thou hast heard my prayer. That therefore hath been fulfilled which I set forth from that other Psalm. For what is here, I said in my ecstasy, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes, is there, If I said my foot hath been moved. And what is there, Thy mercy, O Lord, helped me, is here, Therefore Thou hast heard, O Lord, the voice of my prayer. Mark that in Peter’s case, He seeth the Lord walking on the water, he thinks Him a spirit: the Lord crieth out, It is I; be not afraid. Peter hath affiance, and saith, If it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water. So hereby do I prove whether it be Thou, if in Thy word I am able to do as Thou art able. He saith, Come. And the word of the Bidder is made the power of the hearer. Come, saith He; and he came down: he began to go, he was going without fear, as trusting in Him; but when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid. I said in my ecstasy, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes. And beginning to sink, he cried, Lord, I perish. And Jesus, stretching forth His hand to him, raised him up, saying, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? I said, therefore, in my ecstasy, I have been cast forth from the sight of Thine Eyes; and, as though I were now beginning to perish in the sea, Thou hast heard, O Lord, the voice of my prayer. Now Thou heardest, when I cried unto Thee. Crying unto God is not

with the voice, but with the heart. Many who are silent with the lips, cry with the heart; many clamorous with the mouth, with heart averted are able to obtain nothing. If then thou criest, cry inwardly where God heareth. When I cried unto Thee, saith he, Thou heardest the voice of my prayer.

11. Now then that he made trial, to what doth he exhort us? (Ver. 23.) Love the Lord, all ye His Saints. As if he should say, Trust me, I have made trial of it; I have had tribulations, I have called upon Him, and have not been deceived; I have hoped in God, and have not been confounded; He hath enlightened my thoughts, He hath established my fear. Love the Lord, all ye His Saints; that is, Do ye love the Lord, who love not the world, that is, all His Saints. For how do I tell him to love the Lord, who still loves the amphitheatre? How do I tell him to love the Lord, who still loves the stage-player, still loves the harlequin, still loves wine-bibbing, still loves all the pomps and all the vanities and lying madnesses of the world? I tell such, “Learn not to love, that thou mayest learn to love; turn away, that thou mayest be turned to; pour out, that thou mayest be filled.” Love the Lord, all ye His Saints.

12. For the Lord will require truth. You know that now many evil doers are seen; you know that now they are puffed up in their vanities: the Lord will require truth. And He will repay them that do exceeding proudly. Bear with them until you bear them to their graves, endure them until ye are free from them; for it must needs be that the Lord who requireth truth will repay them that do exceeding proudly. Art thou at once about to ask, When will He repay? When He wills. Thou mayest be certain that He will repay; doubt not of His repaying; for the time, do not venture to give counsel to God. Assuredly He will require truth, and will repay them that do exceeding proudly. Some He will repay even here; and we have seen and learnt that He doth repay. For when they that fear the Lord are abased, if perchance they had been distinguished in some dignity of this world, though abased they have not fallen, because they have not shut out God from their hearts: God is their exaltation. Job seemed abased when he lost his property, when he lost his children; when he lost what he was keeping, when he lost those for whom he was keeping; he was left without inheritance, and what is sadder, without an heir; he was left with his wife alone, no comforter to

him, but rather the devil's helper; he seemed abased: see whether he were wretched, see whether he were not in the hidden place of God's Countenance. Naked, saith he, came I out of my mother's womb, naked shall I return into the earth. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it pleased the Lord, so hath it been done. Blessed be the name of the Lord. These pearls of praise of God, whence are they? Behold him poor without, rich within. These pearls of praise of God would not proceed out of his mouth, except he had a treasure in his heart. Ye who would be rich, covet such riches as ye cannot lose even by shipwreck. Therefore, when such as these are abased, deem them not wretched. Ye are mistaken, ye know not what they possess within. Ye who love the world, judge from your own selves, because, when ye lose such things, ye are reduced to wretchedness. Do not by any means think this; they possess within wherewith to rejoice. Their Ruler is within, their Shepherd and their Comforter is within. These are they who fall miserably, even they who place their trust in this world. Their outward glitter is taken away, nothing remains within but the smoke of an evil conscience. They have no source of comfort, they have no place whither they may go abroad, they have no place whither they may return within: abandoned by the pomp of the world, void of the grace of the Spirit, they are in deed abased. And with many God dealeth thus in this life, but not with all. For if He dealt thus with none, Divine Providence would seem as it were to slumber; if He dealt thus with all, Divine long-suffering would not be preserved. Nevertheless, thou, Christian, hast learnt to forbear, not to repay vengeance. Wouldest thou avenge thyself, O Christian? Christ is not yet avenged. Hast thou suffered from the evil, and hath not He suffered? Did not He first suffer for thee, Who had no cause for suffering? For in thee tribulation is the refiner's furnace, (if so be thou art gold and not chaff,) that thou mayest be cleared of dross, not be turned into ashes.

13. Love the Lord, all ye His Saints, for the Lord will require truth, and will repay them that do exceeding proudly. But when will He repay? O that He would repay now, now would I see these men abased, and laid low! Hear what follows, Quit you like men. Do not hang down the weary hands in tribulation, let not your knees totter. (Ver. 24.) Quit you like men, and let your heart be strengthened. Let your heart be strengthened to endure and

bear all the ills of this life. But who are they to whom the Prophet saith, Quit you like men, and let your heart be strengthened? Is it to them who love the world? Nay. But listen to whom he speaketh, All ye who trust in the Lord.

PSALM 32

first exposition

To David himself; for understanding.

1. To David himself; for understanding; by which it is understood that not by the merits of works, but by the grace of God, man is delivered, confessing his sins.

2. Ver. 1. Blessed are they whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sins are covered: and whose sins are buried in oblivion. (Ver. 2.) Blessed is the man to whom the Lord hath not imputed sin, nor is there guile in his mouth: nor has he in his mouth boastings of righteousness, when his conscience is full of sins.

3. Ver. 3. Because I kept silence, my bones waxed old: because I made not with my mouth confession unto salvation, all firmness in me has grown old in infirmity. Through my roaring all the day long: when I was ungodly and a blasphemer, crying against God, as though defending and excusing my sins.

4. Ver. 4. Because day and night Thy Hand was heavy upon me: because, through the continual punishment of Thy scourges, I was turned in misery, while a thorn was fixed through me: I was made miserable by knowing my misery, being pricked with an evil conscience.

5. Ver. 5. I acknowledged my sin, and my unrighteousness have I not hid: that is, my unrighteousness have I not concealed. I said, I will confess against myself my unrighteousness to the Lord: I said, I will confess, not against God, (as in my ungodly crying, when I kept silence,) but against myself, my unrighteousness to the Lord. And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my heart; hearing the word of confession in the heart, before it was uttered with the voice.

6. Ver. 6. For this shall every one that is holy pray unto Thee in an acceptable time: for this wickedness of heart shall every one that is righteous pray unto Thee. For not by their own merits will they be holy, but by that acceptable time, that is, at His coming, Who redeemed us from sin. Nevertheless in the flood of great waters they shall not come nigh him: nevertheless, let none think, when the end has come suddenly, as in the days of Noah, that there remaineth a place of confession, whereby he may draw nigh unto God.

7. Ver. 7. Thou art my refuge from the pressures, which have compassed me about: Thou art my refuge from the pressure of my sins, which hath compassed my heart. O Thou, my Rejoicing, deliver me from them that compass me about: in Thee is my joy: deliver me from the sorrow, which my sins bring upon me.

8. Diapsalma. The answer of God: (ver. 8.) I will give thee understanding, and will set thee in the way, in which thou shalt go; I will give thee understanding after confession, that thou depart not from the way, in which thou shouldest go; lest thou wish to be in thine own power. I will fix Mine Eyes upon thee: so will I make sure upon thee My Love.

9. Ver. 9. Be not ye like unto horse or mule, which have no understanding: and therefore would govern themselves. But saith the Prophet, Hold in their jaws with bit and bridle. Do Thou then, O God, unto them, that will not come nigh Thee, what man doth to horse and mule, that by scourges Thou make them to bear Thy rule.

10. Ver. 10. Many are the scourges of the sinner: much is he scourged, who, confessing not his sins to God, would be his own ruler. But he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy compasseth him about; but he that trusteth in the Lord, and submitteth himself to His rule, mercy shall compass him about.

11. Ver. 11. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: be glad, and rejoice, ye righteous, not in yourselves, but in the Lord. And glory, all ye that are right in heart: and glory in Him, all ye who understand that it is right to be subject unto Him, that so ye may be placed above all things beside.

EXPOSITION II

1. A Psalm of the Grace of God, and of our justification, by no merits of ours preceding, but by the Mercy of our Lord God preventing us, highly commended by the mouth of the Apostle, as the lesson preceding this Psalm hath conveyed unto all, is undertaken by my weakness to be handled together with you, My Beloved. Wherefore first I recommend my infirmity to your prayers, as saith the Apostle, that utterance may be given unto me in the opening of my mouth, so to speak, as may be both to me not dangerous to utter, and for you wholesome to hear. For the human mind doubting and wavering between confession of infirmity, and the boldness of presumption, is ever buffeted on this side and on that, and in such wise driven, that yet to fall to either side is to be cast headlong. For if one hath wholly given himself up to his own infirmity, and hath inclined to such thoughts as to say, The Mercy of God to all sinners, in whatever sins persisting, so they believe that God delivereth, God pardoneth, is so sure at the last, that none can perish of ungodly believers, that is, that none can perish of those who say to themselves, Whatever I do, with whatever crimes and wickednesses I be defiled, how much soever I sin, God delivereth me by His Mercy, because I have trusted in Him. Whoever then saith that none of such can perish, by evil thoughts is led to look for impunity of sin; and the Righteous God, to Whom the Psalmist sings of Mercy and Judgment, not Mercy only, but also Judgment, finds one mispresuming of himself, and abusing God’s Mercy to his own destruction, and so must needs condemn him. Such a thought therefore casteth a man headlong: but if any, terrified thereby, hath lifted up himself to a certain bold presumption, and hath presumed on his own strength, his own righteousness, and hath proposed in his heart to fulfil all righteousness, and so to do all things which are commanded in the Law, as in none to offend, and to have his own life in his own power so that he no where slip at all, no where fail, no where stumble, no where be in the dark, and attribute this to himself, and to the power of his own will: even if haply he hath fulfilled all things which seem righteous in the eyes of men, so that nothing be found in his life, which can be reproved by men, that very presumption and proud boasting God condemneth. What then, if a man justify himself, and presume on his own righteousness? He falleth. If one considering and weighing his own infirmity, and presuming on God’s

mercy, neglect to cleanse his life from sins, and hath plunged himself in all the depths of wickedness; he also falleth.

The presumption of righteousness is as the right hand, the thought of impunity of sin is as the left. Let us hear the voice of God, saying to us, Turn not to the right hand, nor to the left. Presume not of thy righteousness, so to reign; presume not of God’s Mercy unto sin. From both the Divine command recalleth thee, both from this height, and from that depth. Hither if thou ascend, thou wilt fall headlong; thither if thou sink, thou wilt drown. Turn not (saith He) to the right hand, nor to the left. Again I say briefly, what ye should all keep fixed in mind; Presume not of thy righteousness, so to reign; presume not of God’s Mercy unto sin. Thou wilt answer, What then shall I do? This very Psalm teacheth us, which being read through and handled, I trust, God’s Mercy assisting us, we shall see that way wherein we either already walk, or which we ought to hold. Let every one according to his own measure hearken, and as he shall be conscious unto himself, either lament, if needing correction, or rejoice, if to be approved. If he find himself to have strayed from the way, let him return to walk therein; if he find himself in the way, let him walk on, that he may arrive at the end. Let none out of the way be proud, none in the way slothful.

2. Now that this Psalm doth relate to that grace whereby we are Christians, the Apostle Paul hath testified; wherefore we have chosen to have that very lesson read unto you. This shewed the Apostle, when he was commending the righteousness which is by faith, against those who boasted of the righteousness which is by works, thus saying, What shall we then say that Abraham, our father as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. God Himself avert from us such glorying, and let us rather hearken to that saying, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For many glory in their own works, and we find many pagans therefore unwilling to become Christians, because they are in a manner satisfied with their own good lives. To live well is needful, saith one. What will Christ command of me? That I should live well? I live well already; wherein is Christ necessary to me? I commit no murder, no theft, no violence; I covet not another’s goods; I am defiled with no adultery: for let any thing be found in my life worthy of

blame, and he, who can blame it, shall make me a Christian. He hath whereof to glory; but not before God. But not so our father, Abraham. For this passage of Scripture would direct our attention to this very thing. For because we confess, and such is our belief concerning the holy Patriarch, who pleased God, that we both say and know that he hath whereof to glory before God; therefore saith the Apostle, It is evidently known unto us and manifest, that Abraham hath whereof to glory before God: But if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God: but he hath whereof to glory before God: therefore is he not justified by works. If then Abraham is not justified by works, whereby is he justified? The answer follows, for saith he, For what saith the Scripture? that is, Whereby saith the Scripture that Abraham is justified? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Therefore Abraham was justified by Faith.

3. But whoever hears this, Not by works, but by faith, must beware of that gulf, of which I spoke. Thou seest then that by faith, not by works, is Abraham justified; therefore (sayest thou) I will do what I will, because, though I have not good works, but only trust in God, that is counted to me for righteousness. If so one hath spoken and determined, he falleth and is drowned; if yet he thinketh and wavereth, he is perilled. But the Scripture of God, and its true understanding, not only when perilled freeth him from peril, but even when drowned raiseth him out of the deep. I answer, therefore, as against the Apostle, and say of Abraham himself, what we find indeed in the Epistle of another Apostle, who wished to correct certain men that had misunderstood this Apostle. For James in his Epistle, writing against those who would not do good works, presuming on faith only, commended the works of that same Abraham, as Paul his faith: and the two Apostles are not contrary to each other. But he speaks of a work known unto all, that Abraham offered unto God his own son for a sacrifice. A great work! but of faith. I laud the superstructure of works, but I see in faith the foundation: I laud the fruit of good works, but I discern in faith the root. But if Abraham had done this without a right faith, it would have profited him nothing, however good that work might be. Again, if Abraham had so held his faith, as that when God commanded him to offer up to Him his son for a sacrifice, he should say with himself, “I do it not, and yet I believe that God

will deliver me, even despising His commands;” his faith without works had been dead, and had remained dry and barren as a root without fruit.

4. What then? Ought no works to be placed before faith, so that before faith one may be said to do good works? (No,) for those very good works, so called, before faith, although they may seem to men worthy of praise, are nothing worth. To me they seem to be such, as great strength, and the swiftest speed, out of the way. Let none then count his works before faith good; where faith was not, good works were not. For it is the intention that maketh the work good; faith that directs the intention. Attend, not so much to what one doth, as to what, in doing it, he hath regard, whither he is directing his arms which steer so excellently. For suppose a man to steer a ship right well, and yet to have lost his course; what avails, that he holds the topsail bravely, moves it bravely, keeps the head to the waves, careth lest the sides be beaten in, hath so great strength that he turn the ship whither he will, and whence he will? And suppose it be said to him, Where goest thou? and he say, I know not; or say not, I know not, but, I am going to such a port; and yet goeth not to that port, but hurrieth on to the rocks: doth not such an one, the more he seemeth to himself active and powerful in steering the ship, so much the more dangerously steer it, so as through haste to bring it to shipwreck at last? Such is he who runs the best, out of the way. Were it not better and more tolerable, that the pilot should be somewhat weaker, so as to direct the ship with some labour and difficulty, and yet hold his right and due course; and that the other again should walk even somewhat slowly and feebly, yet in the way, than out of the way run bravely? He then is the best who both holds the way, and walks well therein; but he is next in hope, who though he halteth somewhat, yet not so much as to go astray, or stand still, but advances though by little and little; for haply there is hope that he will arrive whither, though slowly, he tendeth.

5. Therefore, Brethren, by faith was Abraham justified; but if works did not precede his faith, yet they followed it. For can thy faith be barren? If thou art not barren, thy faith is not barren. Thou hast believed somewhat of evil, and in the fire of thy evil hast burned up the root of thy faith. Therefore hold fast thy faith, and work. But thou sayest, The Apostle Paul said not this. Nay, this said the Apostle Paul, Faith, which worketh by love; and in

another place, Therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law; and in another, For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. See if he does not will thee to work, who saith, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not covet; and if there is any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Doth love permit thee to do any evil to him whom thou lovest? But perhaps thou only doest no evil, and dost not farther any good. Doth love then permit thee not to do whatever thou canst for him whom thou lovest? Is not that Love which prayeth even for enemies? Doth he then desert his friend who blesseth his enemies? Therefore if faith be without love, it will be without works. But lest thou think much of the works of faith, add unto it hope and love, and think not what thou workest. Love itself cannot be empty. For what is there in any man that worketh at all, even to evil, except love? Shew me the love that is empty and doth no work. Uncleanness, adulteries, violence, murders, every luxury; doth not love work these? Therefore cleanse thy love: the waters flowing into the draught, turn into the garden: what desires it had for the world, the same let it have for the world's Creator. Do we say unto you, Love nothing? God forbid. Dull, dead, hateful, miserable will ye be, if ye love nothing. Love, but look well what ye love. The love of God, the love of our neighbour, is called charity: the love of the world, the love of this life, is called covetousness. Let covetousness be bridled, charity stirred up. For the very charity of him that doeth good works, gives him hope out of a good conscience; for a good conscience produceth hope; as an evil conscience is wholly in despair, so a good conscience is wholly in hope. And so there will be these three, of which the Apostle speaketh, faith, hope, charity. Also in another place speaketh he of three likewise, but instead of hope he has placed a good conscience. For the end of the commandment, said he; What is the end of the commandment? That by which the commandments are perfected, not whereby they are destroyed. For in one sense, we say, The meat is ended; in another, The coat is ended, which was being woven; meat is ended, so that it be not; a coat is ended, so that it be made perfect: and yet both in this we say the end, and in that. Here then he calleth not that the end of the commandment, whereby as it were the commandments perish, but that whereby they are perfected and consummated, not consumed. The end then is for these three: The end of the commandment, (saith he,) is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. Instead of hope, he placed a good conscience. For he hath hope, who beareth a good conscience. But he whom an evil conscience pricketh, draws back from hope, and expects nothing for himself but condemnation: that he may then hope to reign, let him have a good conscience; and that he may have a good conscience, let him believe, and work. That he believeth, is of faith; that he worketh, is of charity. In one place, then, the Apostle begins from faith, faith, hope, charity; in the other he begins from Charity itself; Charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. We but now began from the middle, from conscience itself and from hope. Who wishes, I say, to have good hope, let him have a good conscience; and that he may have a good conscience, let him believe, and work. From the middle we go to the beginning and end; let him believe, and work. That he believeth, is of faith; that he worketh, is of charity.

6. How then saith the Apostle, that man is justified without works, by faith; when in another place he saith, Faith which worketh by love? Let us then oppose not the Apostle James to Paul, but Paul himself to Paul, and say unto him, Here thou permittest us in some wise to sin with impunity, where thou sayest, We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law. There thou sayest, Faith which worketh by love. How am I here made as it were secure, even if I have not worked; but there seem to have neither hope nor faith itself aright, unless I have worked by love? I hear thyself speak, O Apostle; certainly thou wouldest here commend unto me faith without works; but the work of faith is love, which love can not so be void, but that it must both work no evil, and work whatever it can of good. For what doth love? Depart from evil, and do good. This faith then without works thou commendest; and in another place thou sayest, Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. If, then, faith without charity profiteth nothing, but where charity is, needs must that it works, faith itself worketh by love. How then shall man be justified by faith without works? The Apostle himself answers, For this cause said I this to thee, O man, lest thou shouldest seem as it were to presume of thy works, and for the merit of thy works to have received the

grace of faith. Therefore presume not of works before faith. Thou knowest that faith found thee a sinner; although faith given made thee righteous, it found ungodly whom it made righteous. To him that believeth, (saith he,) on Him That justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. If the ungodly is justified, from being ungodly he becometh righteous: if from being ungodly he becometh righteous, what are the works of the ungodly? The ungodly may boast indeed his works, and say, I give to the poor, I take nothing from any, I covet not another man’s wife, I do no murder, I do no wrong to any, that which is pledged with me, no man witnessing, I restore; all this may he say; I ask whether he be godly or ungodly. And how am I ungodly, saith he, doing all these things? Even as they, of whom it was said, They served the creature more than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever. How art thou ungodly? What if for all these good works, thou either hope for that which is to be hoped for, but not from Him from Whom alone it is to be hoped for; or hope for that which is not to be hoped for, even from Him from Whom eternal life is to be hoped for? For thy good works thou hast hoped for some earthly happiness; thou art ungodly. That is not the reward of faith. A precious thing is faith, to a vile thing hast thou devoted it. Ungodly, then, art thou, and vain are those works of thine. Though in good works, thou mayest move thine arms, and seem to steer the ship exceeding well, thou art running on the rocks. What if thou hope for that which is to be hoped, that is, life eternal, but not from the Lord God, through Jesus Christ, through Whom alone eternal life is given, but thinkest that thou canst arrive at life eternal through the host of Heaven, through the Sun and Moon, through the Powers of the air, of the sea, of the earth, of the stars? Thou art ungodly. Believe in Him That justifieth the ungodly, that thy good works may be indeed good works: for neither call I them good, as long as they proceed not from a good root. What is this? either thou hopest for life temporal from God the Eternal, or life eternal from devils; on either side thou art ungodly. Correct thy faith; direct thy faith aright, direct thy way aright; and if thou have good feet, walk on secure, run, thou holdest the way. The better thou runnest, the more speedily wilt thou arrive. But perhaps thou haltest somewhat. At least wander not out of the way; though but slowly, thou wilt arrive: stand not still; turn not back; go not astray.

7. What then? Who are blessed? Not they in whom God findeth no sin, for He findeth it in all; For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. If, then, sins are found in all, it remains that none are blessed, but they whose sins are forgiven. This, then, hath the Apostle thus commended; Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. And to him that worketh, that is, presumeth of works, and saith that for their merits the grace of faith is given him, is the reward not reckoned of Grace, but of debt. What is this, but that our reward is called Grace? If it be Grace, it is given gratis. What meaneth, It is given gratis? Gratis is evident. Thou hast done nothing good, and yet forgiveness of thy sins is given thee. Thy works are considered, and are found all evil. If God should pay thee what is due to those works, He would surely condemn thee. For the wages of sin is death. To evil works what is due? What but condemnation? To good works what is due? The Kingdom of Heaven. But thou art found in evil works; if that be paid thee, which is thy due, thou must needs be punished. What befals then? God payeth thee not the punishment due, but giveth thee Grace not due. He owed vengeance, He giveth mercy. Thou beginnest then to be in faith, through mercy; now thy faith, having added to itself hope and love, beginneth to do good works: but even so glory not, nor lift up thyself: remember by Whom thou art set in the way; remember that with strong and swift feet thou wast wandering; remember that when thou wast languishing and lying in the way half dead, thou wast set upon a beast, and brought to an inn. But to him that worketh, saith he, is the reward not reckoned of Grace, but of debt. If thou wouldest be an alien unto Grace, boast of thy merits. Yet He seeth what is in thee, and knoweth what He oweth to each. But to him that worketh not—What? Suppose here some ungodly sinner; see, he worketh not. What then? He believeth on Him That justifieth the ungodly. But in that he doeth not good works, he is ungodly: though he seem to do good works, yet, because without faith, neither are they to be called good. But believing on Him That justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. But what righteousness? That of faith, which good works have not preceded, but which good works do follow.

8. Attend ye then; otherwise by misunderstanding ye will plunge yourselves into that gulf of sinning with impunity; but I am free, as the Apostle himself was, from all who misunderstood him, free. For they misunderstood him wilfully; lest good works should follow. Be not ye, my Brethren, in the number of such. It is said in a certain Psalm of a certain man such as this, that is, of a class of men as it were under the name of one; He hath refused to understand, that he might do good. It is not said, He could not understand. It behoveth you then to be willing to understand, that ye may do good. For so ye will not fail of clear understanding. What is the clear understanding? Let none boast his good works before faith, none be slothful in good works after faith received. God sheweth mercy then to all ungodly, and justifieth them, through faith.

9. Ver. 1, 2. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. Now the Psalm beginneth, and therewith beginneth understanding. Understanding then or intelligence is this, to know that thou oughtest not to boast thyself of thine own merits, nor to presume upon impunity of sin. For so is the title of this Psalm, To David himself; for understanding. This Psalm is called a Psalm of Understanding. The first understanding then is this, to know thyself a sinner. The understanding next following is, that when through faith thou hast begun to do good works by love, thou impute not this to thine own strength, but to the grace of God. So will not guile be in thy heart, that is, in thine inward mouth; nor wilt thou have one thing on thy lips, another in thy thoughts. Thou wilt not be of those Pharisees of whom it is said, Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, for ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Whoso then, being unrighteous, pretendeth himself righteous; is not he full of hypocrisy? He is not that Nathaniel, of whom the Lord saith, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. But whence was there no guile in that Nathaniel? When, saith he, thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. Under the fig-tree was he; under the condition of flesh was he. If he was under the condition of flesh, because he was holden by original sin, under that fig-tree was he, wherein one groaneth in another Psalm, Behold, I was shapen in iniquity. But He Who came with Grace, saw him. What is, saw him? Had mercy on him.

Therefore He so commendeth a man without guile, as to commend His own grace in him. When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. I saw thee. What is that so great, unless thou understand it as said in a particular manner? What is it so great, to see a man under a fig-tree? If Christ had not seen under that fig-tree the human race, we had either withered away wholly, or been as the Pharisees, in whom was guile, that is, who justified themselves in words, but in deeds were wicked: and so there would be found in us leaves only, no fruit. For such a fig-tree when Christ saw, He cursed it, and it withered away. “I see,” said He, “leaves only,” that is, words only, “without fruit. Let it wither away,” saith He, “that it have not even leaves.” And taketh He away words also? Yes, for a withered tree cannot have even leaves. So then were the Jews; the Pharisees were that tree: words they had, deeds they had not. According to the sentence of the Lord, they purchased to themselves barrenness. Let Christ then see us under the fig-tree, let Him see in our flesh the fruit of good works, lest we under His curse wither away. And since all is imputed to His Grace, not to our merits, Blessed are they whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sins are covered; not they in whom are not found sins, but they whose sins are covered. Are sins covered? they are hidden, they are blotted out. If God hath covered sins, He hath willed not to advert unto them; if He hath willed not to advert unto them, He hath willed not to animadvert upon them; if He hath willed not to animadvert upon them, He hath willed not to punish; if He hath willed not to punish, He hath willed not to acknowledge them, He hath willed rather to pardon them. Blessed are they whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Neither so understand ye what he said, Whose sins are covered, as though they should be in the same, and yet live. Why then spake he of sins covered? That they might not be seen. For what else is it for God to see sins, but to punish sins? That thou mightest know that this it is for God to see sins, namely, to punish sins, what is said unto Him? Turn Thy face from my sins. Thy sins then let Him not see, that He may see thee. How see thee? As He saw Nathaniel; When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. The shade of the fig-tree hindered not the Eyes of God’s mercy.

10. And in whose spirit there is no guile. But they truly who will not confess their sins, labour in vain in defence of their sins. And the more they

labour in defence of their sins, boasting their own merits, seeing not their own iniquities, the more their strength and courage faileth. For he is strong, who not in himself but in God is strong; according to that saying, I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me; and He said unto me, My Grace is sufficient for thee. My Grace, saith He, not thy strength. My Grace, saith He, is sufficient for thee, for My Strength is made perfect in weakness. Whence the same saith in another place, When I am weak, then am I strong. He then who would be strong, as presuming upon himself, and boasting his own merits, of whatever sort they be, will be like that Pharisee, who, what he said that he had received from God, yet proudly boasted of this: I thank Thee, saith he. Observe, my Brethren, what kind of pride God bringeth to notice; truly such as can enter into even a righteous man, such as can creep over even one of good hopes. I thank Thee, said he; therefore when he said, I thank Thee, he confessed that he had received from Him what he had. For what hast thou, that thou didst not receive? Therefore, I thank Thee, said he; I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. Whence then was he proud? Not because he thanked God in his own good works, but because he exalted himself above the other for his good works.

11. Attend, Brethren; for wherefore the Lord began to speak that same parable, the Evangelist hath premised. For when Christ had said, When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth? then, lest there should arise certain heretics, who, considering and thinking the whole world as fallen, (for all heretics are among the few, and of the smaller part,) should boast of themselves, that that remained still in them, which had perished to all the world beside; then immediately when the Lord had said, When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth? the Evangelist added and said, And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, the other a Publican, and the rest, which ye know. The Pharisee, then, said; I thank Thee. But where was he proud? In that he despised others. Whence provest thou this? From his own words. The Pharisee, saith he, despised him that stood afar off, unto whom, confessing his sins, God drew nigh. The Publican, saith he, stood afar off. But God stood not afar off from him. Why stood not God afar off from

him? Because, as is said in another place, The Lord is nigh unto them that have broken their heart. See if that Publican had broken his heart, and then will ye see that the Lord is nigh unto them that have broken their heart. And the Publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast. The smiting of the breast is the contrition of the heart. What said he smiting his breast? God be merciful to me a sinner! And what, in sentence, the Lord? I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. Whereby? It is the judgment of God. I am not as this Publican. I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. The other dares not lift up his eyes unto Heaven, he mindeth his own conscience, he standeth afar off, and he is justified rather than the Pharisee. Wherefore? I pray Thee, Lord, explain to us this Thy judgment, explain to us the righteousness of Thy Law. God doth explain the rule of His Law. Would ye hear, wherefore? For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12. Attend, therefore, dearly Beloved. I said that the Publican dared not lift up his eyes to Heaven. Why looked he not to Heaven? Because he looked to himself. He looked to himself, that he might first displease himself, and so please God. But thou boastest thyself, thou upliftest thy neck. To the proud man saith the Lord, Wilt not thou look to thyself? I look to thee. Wouldest thou that I look not to thee? Look thou to thyself. For this reason dared not the Publican lift up his eyes unto Heaven, because he looked upon himself, he punished his own conscience; he was judge unto himself, that He might intercede for him; he punished himself, that He might set him free; he accused himself, that He might defend him. And so did He defend him, in that He declared sentence for the same. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. He looked to himself, saith He, and I would not look to him: I heard him saying, Turn Thy face from my sins. For who is it that said this, but he that said also that, For I acknowledge my transgressions. And in like manner, my Brethren, was the Pharisee also a sinner. For neither because he said, I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, nor because he fasted twice in the week, nor because he gave tithes, was he not a sinner. But even if he had

been without any other sin, his very pride was a great sin; and yet, he said all those words. Who in the world is without sin? Who can boast that he hath a clean heart, or who can boast that he is free from sins? He had then sins; but like one perverse, and not knowing whither he had come, he was as it were in the Physician's house to be cured, and shewed his sound limbs, covering his wounds. Let God cover thy wounds; do not thou. For if thou wish to cover them being ashamed, the Physician will not cure. Let the Physician cover, and cure, for He covereth with a plaster. By the covering of the Physician the wound is healed; by the covering of the wounded man the wound is concealed. And from whom dost thou conceal? From Him Who knoweth all things.

13. Consider then, Brethren, what this man said, (ver. 3.) When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. What is this? It seems as it were contradictory, When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring. If through his roaring, how kept he silence? Somewhat he kept silent, somewhat he kept not silent. He kept silent that whereby he might profit, he kept not silent that whereby he would fail; confession he kept silent, presumption he proclaimed. For said he, I kept silence, I confessed not. Then it behoved him to speak, to keep silent his merits, to proclaim his sins: but now perversely he kept silent his sins, his merits he proclaimed. And what befel him? His bones waxed old. Be ye sure that if he had proclaimed his sins, and kept silent his merits, his bones had been made new, that is, his strength had been made new: he would have been strong in the Lord, because he was found in himself weak. But now, because in himself he would be strong, he was made weak, and his bones waxed old. He remained still in oldness, because he would not, by confession, love newness. For what men are made new, ye know, Brethren: because Blessed are they whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. He would not that his transgressions should be forgiven him, he accumulated, he defended them; he boasted his own merits. Because then he kept silence from confession, his bones waxed old. Through my roaring all the day long. What is, Through my roaring all the day long? Through my persevering in defence of my sins. And yet see ye what manner of man he is, how that he acknowledgeth himself. For now will there be understanding, and he shall regard nothing beside himself, and displease

himself because he doth acknowledge himself. Now ye will hear, that ye may be made whole.

14. Ver. 2–4. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night Thy Hand was heavy upon me. What is, Thy Hand was heavy upon me? A great matter, Brethren: remember the sentence ruled between those two, the Pharisee and the Publican. What was said of the Pharisee? That he is abased. What was said of the Publican? That he is exalted. Why is the one abased? Because he exalted himself. Why is the other exalted? Because he humbled himself. Therefore that He may abase him that exalteth himself, God maketh heavy His Hand over him. He would not humble himself by confession of his transgression; he is abased by the weight of God's hand. How could he endure that heavy hand of Him abasing? How light was the hand of Him exalting! Both in the one was He strong, and in the other was He strong; strong to abase the one, strong to exalt the other.

15. Ver. 4. Because day and night Thy Hand was heavy upon me, I was turned in misery, until a thorn was fixed through me. By the very aggravation of Thy Hand, by very humiliation, I was turned in misery, I was made miserable, a thorn was fixed through me, my conscience was pricked. What happened when the thorn was fixed through him? The sense of pain was given him; he found out his infirmity. And he who kept silent confession of his sin, so that by his exclaiming in defence of his sin his strength waxed old, that is, his bones were turned into oldness, what did he now when the thorn was fixed through him? (Ver. 5.) I acknowledged my sin unto Thee. Now then he acknowledgeth. If he acknowledgeth, He pardoneth. Hear ye what follows: see if he saith not himself, I acknowledge my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. This was what I was saying; cover not thou, and God covereth. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. They who cover their sins, are laid bare; but he laid them bare, that so he might be covered. Mine iniquity have I not hid. What is, have I not hid? Before had I kept silence. What now? I said. Somewhat contrary to that silence. I said. What saidst thou? I will confess my transgression unto the Lord, and Thou forgavest the

iniquity of my heart. I said. What saidst thou? He doth not now confess, he doth but promise that he will confess; and He even now forgiveth. Attend, Brethren, it is a great matter. He said, I will confess; he said not, I have confessed, and Thou hast forgiven: he said, I will confess, and Thou forgavest: because in that very thing that he said, I will confess, he shewed that he had not yet confessed with his mouth, but in his heart he had confessed. This very thing, to say, I will confess, is to confess: therefore also, And thou forgavest the iniquity of my heart. My confession then had not yet come to my mouth, for I had said, I will confess against myself: nevertheless, God heard the voice of my heart. My words were not yet in my mouth, but the Ear of God was already in my heart. Thou forgavest the iniquity of my heart; because I said, I will confess.

16. But this sufficed not; he said not only, I will confess my transgression unto the Lord: he said with good cause, I will confess against myself; and this makes a difference. For many confess their transgressions, but against the Lord God Himself: when they are found in sin they say, God willed it. For if a man say either, I did it not; or, This deed which you blame is no sin; he confesseth neither against himself, nor against God. If he say, I surely did it, and it is sin, but God willed it, what have I done? This is to confess against God. Haply you may say, No one saith this; who is there that saith, God willed it? Many say even this; but those who say not this—what say they else when they say, My fate did it, my stars caused it? And thus by going about will they to come at last to God. By going about would they come at last to accuse God, who will not by going straight come to appease God; and they say, My fate did it. What is fate? My stars caused it. What are stars? Surely those which we perceive in the Heavens. And who made them? God. Who ordained them? God. Thou seest then what thou wouldest say, God made me to sin: so is He unrighteous, thou righteous; because if He had not caused thee, thou hadst not sinned. Away with those excuses in sins! Remember that Psalm, Incline not my heart to wicked words, to make excuses in my sins, with men that work iniquity. But there are great men forsooth who defend their sins: there are also great men who tell the constellations, and who reckon the stars and their seasons, and who say when any one either sinneth or liveth well, and when Mars maketh a murderer, or Venus an adulteress; great, learned, chosen men they seem in

this world. But what saith he in the Psalm? Incline not my heart to wicked words, with men that work iniquity: and I will not partake with their chosen. Call they chosen and learned the tellers of constellations; call they wise those who as it were arrange on their fingers the fates of men, and foreshew men's characters from the stars: with a free will hath God created me; if I have sinned, I have sinned myself: so must I confess my transgression not only unto the Lord, but against myself, not against Him. I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: the sick man crieth to the Physician, I said. Why, I said? I is said with an emphasis; I, even I; not fate, nor chance, nor the devil: for neither did he compel me, but I consented to him persuading me. I said, Lord, be merciful unto me: heal my soul; for I have sinned aguinst Thee. So hath this man also determined and purposed; I said, I will confess against myself my transgression unto the Lord, and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

17. Ver. 6. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in an acceptable time. At what time? For this. For what? For ungodliness. For what? Even for the pardon of sins. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in an acceptable time. Therefore shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee, because Thou hast forgiven sin. For if Thou forgavest not sins, there would not be one godly man to pray unto Thee, For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee, in an acceptable time: when the New Testament shall be manifested; when the Grace of Christ shall be manifested, for that is the acceptable time. But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, that is, of a female, (for the ancients used those words indifferently,) made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. From whence to redeem them? From the devil, from perdition, from their sins, from him to whom they had sold themselves. To redeem them that were under the law: under the law were they, because the law pressed them; their own condition pressed them, by convincing of guilt, not by saving. It did indeed forbid sin; but because they had not of themselves the power of justifying themselves, they ought to have cried unto Him, as he cried who was led captive under the law of sin, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? All men were under the law, not in the law, while it already pressed sore upon them, convincing them of guilt. For the law

manifested sin, it forced the thorn, it made the heart to be pricked: the law warned every man that he should acknowledge himself guilty, and cry unto God for pardon. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee, in an acceptable time. Therefore said I of the time, When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son. Again saith the Apostle, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee. And because this concerning all Christians had been predicted by the Prophet, the Apostle added, Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in an acceptable time.

18. Surely in the floods of waters they shall not come nigh unto Him. Unto Him. Unto whom? Unto God; for he is wont to change the person; as it is written, Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: Thy blessing is upon Thy people. He saith not, Salvation belongeth unto the Lord, and His blessing is upon His people; nor, O Lord, salvation belongeth unto Thee, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people; but when he had begun, Salvation belongeth unto the Lord, speaking not unto Him, but of Him; then he turned to Him and said, And Thy blessing is upon Thy people. So here also, when thou hearest first, To Thee, then To Him, think not that it is another. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto Thee in an acceptable time. Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto Him. What is, in the floods of great waters? They who are floating in the floods of great waters come not nigh unto God. What are the floods of great waters? The multiplicity of various doctrines. Attend, Brethren. The great waters are the variety of doctrines. The doctrine of God is one; there are not many waters but one water, whether the water of the Sacrament of Baptism, or of the doctrine of Salvation. Concerning that doctrine, by which we are sprinkled through the Holy Spirit, it is said, Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. To those waters approach not the ungodly, but they that believe on Him that justifieth the ungodly, now justified, approach. Other waters there are many, many doctrines defile the minds of men, as I said but now. One doctrine there is, My fate did it; another, Chance did it for me; Fortune caused it. Men are governed by chance, there is no Providence whereby any thing is directed; this is another doctrine. Another man said, There is against us the race of darkness, which

rebelled against God; the same maketh men to sin. In this flood of great waters, they shall not come nigh unto God. Which is that water, that true water which flows from the inmost vein of the pure fountain of Truth? Which is that water, Brethren, but that which teaches to confess unto the Lord? Which is that water, but that which teaches, It is a good thing to confess unto the Lord? Which is that water, but that which teaches this word, I said, I will confess against myself my transgression unto the Lord, and, I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. This is the water of confession of sin, this is the water of humiliation of heart, this is the water of a life leading unto salvation, abasing itself, presuming nothing of itself, attributing nothing proudly to its own power. This water is not in any of the books of the Gentiles; not in the books of the Epicureans, not of the Stoics, not of the Manichæans, not of the Platonists. Even where the best precepts of morals and discipline are found, yet is not found that humility. The way of that humility flows from another source; it comes from Christ. This way is from Him, Who when He was high, came lowly. For what else taught He by humbling Himself, being made obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross? What else taught He by paying that which He owed not, that He might free us from debt? What else taught He by being baptized, Who did no sin; crucified, Who had no guilt? What else taught He, but this humility? Not unjustly saith He, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In this humility these men come nigh unto God, because the Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart. But in the floods of great waters, lifting up themselves against God, and teaching pride and ungodliness, shall they not come nigh unto God.

19. But what? Art thou, who art even justified, still in the midst of those waters? On every side, my Brethren, even when we are confessing our sins, roar around us the waters of that flood. We are not indeed in the flood, but we are surrounded by the flood. They press upon us, but overwhelm us not, they trouble us, but drown us not. What then wilt thou do, seeing thou art in the midst of the flood, whilst thou walkest in this world? For doth not one hear such teachers, doth he not hear such proud men, doth he not from their words suffer in his heart daily persecutions? What then should he say who is now justified and presuming upon God, who is surrounded by that flood? (Ver. 7.) Thou art My Refuge from the pressure which hath surrounded me.

Let others fly for refuge, either to their gods or to their devils, or to their own strength, or to the defence of their sins: for me in that flood is there no refuge but Thou, from the pressure which hath surrounded me.

20. O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me. If already thou rejoicest, why wouldest thou be delivered? O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me. I hear the voice of joy, O Thou, My Rejoicing; I hear a groan, deliver me. Thou rejoicest and groanest. True, saith he, I both rejoice and groan; I rejoice in hope, I groan still in act. O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me. Rejoicing in hope; saith the Apostle. Therefore rightly saith he, O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me. Wherefore, deliver me? It follows; patient in tribulation. O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me. The Apostle also was already justified, and what saith he? And not only they, but ourselves also which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves. Wherefore, deliver me? Because, we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. See then wherefore he saith, deliver me. Because we still wait, groaning within ourselves, for the redemption of our body. Wherefore then, O Thou, My Rejoicing? There the same Apostle goes on, and says, For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. If thou dost hope, thou dost rejoice; if with patience thou waitest, yet thou groanest: for there is no need of patience, where thou sufferest no evil. That which is called endurance, that which is called patience, that which is called submission, that which is called long-suffering, is not but in evils. When thou art sore pressed, there is anguish. If then we wait with patience, still we say, Deliver me from the pressure which hath compassed me about: but because we are saved by hope, we say at the same time both of these, O Thou, My Rejoicing, deliver me.

21. The answer of God, (ver. 8.) I will give thee understanding. The Psalm indeed is for understanding. I will give thee understanding, and set thee in the way in which thou shalt go. What is, I will set thee in the way in which thou shalt go? Not that thou mayest stand still therein, but that thou stray not therefrom. I will give thee understanding, that thou mayest know thyself ever, and rejoice ever in hope before God, until thou come at last to that

country where shall be now no more hope, but reality. I will fix Mine Eyes upon thee: I will not take off from thee Mine Eyes; because thou also wilt not take off thine eyes from Me. Now, being justified, now after remission of thy sins, lift up thine eyes unto God. For thine heart was corrupt, while it was on earth. It is not in vain that thou hearest, Lift up thine heart, lest it be corrupted. Therefore do thou also lift up thine eyes even unto God, that He may fix His Eyes upon thee. But why fearest thou, lest while thou hast thine eyes upon God, thou shouldest stumble, shouldest not look before thee, and haply fall into a snare? Fear not, for even there are His Eyes, which He fixeth upon thee. Take no thought, saith He; and the Apostle Peter saith, Cast ye all your care upon Him, for He careth for you. Therefore, I will fix Mine Eyes upon thee. Do thou then raise thine eyes unto Him, and fear not, as I said, lest thou fall into a snare. Hear another Psalm. Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord. And, as if one said to him, What dost thou for thy feet, when thou lookest not before thee? For He shall pluck, saith he, my feet out of the net. I will fix Mine Eyes upon thee.

22. To this man promised He understanding, and His protection: now turneth He to the proud, who defend their sins, and sheweth unto us, what is true understanding. (Ver. 9.) Be not ye as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding. The horse and mule are of uplifted neck. The horse and mule are not like that ox, which knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: be not ye as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding. For what do such suffer? Hold in their jaws with bit and bridle, who come not near unto Thee. Wouldest thou be as the horse or as the mule? wouldest thou not have a rider? Thy mouth and thy jaws shall be held in with bit and bridle; thy mouth shall be held in, even that wherewith thou boastest thy merits, and keepest silent thy sins. Hold in their jaws, who come not near unto Thee, by humbling themselves.

23. Ver. 10. Many are the scourges of the sinner. It is no wonder if after the applying of the bit and bridle, there follow scourges; for the beast desired to be untamed: he is tamed with bridle and scourge; and I wish he may be throughly tamed! for there is fear lest by too much resisting he deserve to be left untamed, and to go on in his own unrestrained liberty, so that it be said of him, Their iniquity standeth forth as from their fatness; as of them

whose sins are as yet unpunished. Therefore when he is scourged, let him be amended, let him be tamed; for even so this man also declared himself to be tamed. A horse and a mule had he called himself, when he kept silence, but whereby was he tamed? By scourges. I was turned, saith he, in misery, until a thorn was fixed through. Whether scourges thou sayest, or goads thou sayest, God tameth the beast whereon He rideth; for it is expedient for the beast that it be ridden upon. For not because He is weary by going afoot, doth God ride the beast. And truly is it not full of mystery, that an ass was brought unto the Lord? A people, meek, and gentle, bearing well the Lord, is that ass; and tendeth towards Jerusalem. For the meek will He guide in judgment, as saith another Psalm, and the gentle will He teach His way. What meek? Those that lift not up their neck against their tamer; suffering patiently the scourges and the bridle; afterwards so tamed, that without a scourge they amble, and without bit or bridle keep the way. If thou be without That rider, thou wilt fall, not He. Many are the scourges of the sinners; but he that trusteth in the Lord, Mercy shall compass him about. How is there refuge from pressure? Him whom first pressure compasseth, afterwards compasseth Mercy: because He will give Mercy, Who gave also Law: Law in scourges; Mercy in consolation. But he that trusteth in the Lord, Mercy shall compass him about.

24. What then is the conclusion? (ver. 11.) Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous. O ye who rejoice in yourselves! O ye ungodly, O ye proud, who rejoice in yourselves! now believe ye on Him that justifieth the ungodly, and let your faith be counted for righteousness. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous. And rejoice; understand again, in the Lord. Wherefore? Because ye are now righteous. Whereby righteous? Not by your merits, but by His Grace. Wherefore righteous? Because justified.

25. And glory all ye that are right in heart. What is, Right in heart? Not resisting God. Attend, my Beloved, and understand the right heart. I speak briefly, but yet a thing of all the most to be commended. And God be thanked, that it cometh at the end, that so it may remain fixed in your thoughts. Between a right heart, and an heart not right, is this difference. Whatever man, whatsoever he suffereth against his will, afflictions, sorrows, labours, humiliations, attributeth them not but to the Righteous

Will of God, not charging Him with foolishness, as though He knoweth not what He doth, because He scourgeth such an one, and spareth such another; he indeed is right in heart. But perverse in heart, and froward, and distorted are they, who whatever evils they suffer, say that they suffer them unjustly, charging Him with injustice, through Whose Will they suffer; or, because they dare not charge Him with injustice, take from Him His government. Because God, saith one, can not do injustice, but it is unjust that I suffer, and such an one suffer not; for I grant that I am a sinner, yet surely there are some worse, who rejoice, while I suffer tribulation: because then this is unjust, that even some worse than I should rejoice, while I suffer tribulation, who am either righteous, or less a sinner than they, and it is certain unto me that this is unjust, and it is certain unto me that God doth not injustice; therefore God governeth not the things of men, nor is there any care for us with Him. They then who are not right in heart, that is, who are distorted in heart, have three conclusions; either There is no God; for, The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. And it hath been said, in speaking of those floods, there wanted not such a doctrine among philosophers; there wanted not men who said that there was no God, who governeth all things, and who created all things, but that there were many Gods, living at ease, beyond this world, caring not for it. Either, therefore, There is no God, which saith the ungodly, who is displeased with whatever happens to him against his will, and happens not to another, to whom he preferreth himself: or, God is unjust, Who is pleased at these things, and Who doeth these things; or, God governeth not human things, and there is no care for all men with Him. In these three conclusions, great ungodliness is it, either to deny a God, or to call Him unrighteous, or to take from Him the government of the world. Wherefore this? Because he is distorted in heart. God is right, and therefore a distorted heart acquiesceth not in Him. As it is in another Psalm, How good is God to Israel, even unto such as are of an upright heart. And because even he had once such a thought as this, How doth God know, and is there knowledge in the Most High? therefore he added in that place, But as for me, my feet were almost gone. As a warped beam, though you lay it on an even pavement, taketh not its place, nor is it joined and fastened to the rest, but always moves about and totters, not because that is uneven where thou placedst it, but because that which thou placedst is warped: so thy heart, as long as it is crooked and warped, cannot coincide with the rightness of God, and can not be so placed therein, as to cleave unto the same, and for that to be, He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit. Therefore said he, Glory, all ye that are right in heart. How glory the right in heart? Hear their glorying; And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, saith the Apostle. For it is no great thing to glory in gladness, to glory in rejoicing; the right in heart glorieth in tribulations also. And hear how he glorieth in tribulation; for it is not in vain, nor without reason, that such an one glorieth: see; Knowing, saith the right heart, that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

26. So then is the right heart, Brethren. Let every man to whomsoever any thing happens say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Lo, this is a right heart. As the Lord pleased, so is it done. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Who hath taken away? What hath He taken away? From whom hath He taken away? When hath He taken away? Blessed be the Name of the Lord. He said not, The Lord gave, and the devil hath taken away. Attend therefore, Beloved, lest haply you should say, the devil did this for me. Unto thy God alone refer thy scourge; for not even the devil doth any thing against thee; unless He permit Who hath power above, either for punishment, or for discipline: for the punishment of the ungodly, for the discipline of His son. For He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Neither must thou hope to be without a scourge, unless haply thou wish to be disinherited. For He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. What, every son? Where then wouldest thou hide thyself? Every one; and none will be excepted, none without a scourge. What? Even to all? Would you hear how truly he saith all? Even the Only-Begotten, without sin, was yet not without a scourge. Wherefore even the Only-Begotten, bearing thy infirmity, and foreshewing in Himself thy person, as the head beareth the person of its own body; when now He was approaching His Passion, out of His Manhood which He bore, became sorrowful, that He might make thee glad; became sorrowful, that He might console thee. For truly the Lord was able to be without sorrow, going to His Passion. If the soldier was able, was not the Captain able? How was the soldier able? Hear Paul exulting, as he approached his passion. I am now (saith he) ready to be offered, and the

time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing. See how he exulteth, coming to his passion. He then rejoiceth, who should be crowned; He, who should crown, sorroweth. What therefore did He bear? The infirmity of some, who, when tribulation or death cometh, are sorrowful. But see how He leadeth us to rightness of heart. Behold, thou wouldest live, thou wouldest not that any thing should happen to thee; but God hath willed otherwise: here are two wills, but thy will must be made straight to the will of God, not God's will bent to thine. For thy will is crooked; His is even the rule. The rule must be fixed, that what is crooked may be made straight to the rule. See now the Lord Jesus Christ teacheth this, My Soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: and, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. See, He sheweth the human will. But see the right heart; Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Do thou then the same; rejoice in those things which happen unto thee; and even if the last day come upon thee, rejoice. Or if the frailty of any human will creep over thee, let it speedily be made straight unto God, that thou mayest be among those of whom it is said, Glory, all ye that are right in heart.

PSALM 33

first exposition

1. Ver. 1. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: rejoice, O ye righteous, not in yourselves, for that is not safe; but in the Lord. For praise is comely to the upright: these praise the Lord, who submit themselves unto the Lord; for else they are distorted and perverse.

2. Ver. 2. Praise the Lord with harp: praise the Lord, presenting unto Him your bodies a living sacrifice. Sing unto Him with the psaltery of ten strings: let your members be servants to the love of God, and of your neighbour, in which are kept both the three and the seven commandments.

3. Ver. 3. Sing unto Him a new song: sing unto Him a song of the grace of faith. Sing skilfully unto Him with jubilation: sing skilfully unto Him with rejoicing.

4. Ver. 4. For the Word of the Lord is right: for the Word of the Lord is right, to make you that which of yourselves ye cannot be. And all His works are done in faith: lest any think that by the merit of works he hath arrived at faith, when in faith are done all the works which God Himself loveth.

5. Ver. 5. He loveth Mercy and Judgment: for He loveth Mercy, which now He sheweth first; and Judgment, wherewith He exacteth that which He hath first shewn. The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord: throughout the whole world are sins forgiven unto men by the Mercy of the Lord.

6. Ver. 6. By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm: for not by themselves, but by the Word of the Lord were the righteous made strong. And all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth. And all their faith by His Holy Spirit.

7. Ver. 7. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as into a bottle: He gathereth the people of the world together, to confession of mortified sin,

lest through pride they flow too freely. He layeth up the deep in storehouses: and keepeth in them His secrets for riches.

8. Ver. 8. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let every sinner fear, that so he may cease to sin. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him: not of the terrors of men, or of any creature, but of Him let them stand in awe.

9. Ver. 9. For He spake, and they were made: for no other one made those things which are to fear; but He spake, and they were made. He commanded, and they were created: He commanded by His Word, and they were created.

10. Ver. 10. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the Heathen to nought; of them that seek not His Kingdom, but kingdoms of their own. He maketh the devices of the people of none effect: of them that covet earthly happiness. And reproveth the counsels of princes: of them that seek to rule over such peoples.

11. Ver. 11. But the counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; but the counsel of the Lord, whereby He maketh none blessed but him that submitteth unto Himself, standeth for ever. The thoughts of His Heart to all generations: the thoughts of His Wisdom are not mutable, but endure to all generations.

12. Ver. 12. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: one nation is blessed, belonging to the heavenly city, which hath not chosen save the Lord for their God: And the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance: and which not of itself, but by the gift of God, hath been chosen, that He by possessing it may not suffer it to be uncared for and miserable.

13. Ver. 13. The Lord looketh from Heaven; He beholdeth all the sons of men. From the souls of the righteous, the Lord looketh mercifully upon all who would rise to newness of life.

14. Ver. 14. From His prepared habitation: from His habitation of assumed Humanity, which He prepared for Himself. He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth: He looketh mercifully upon all who live in the flesh, that He may be over them in ruling them.

15. Ver. 15. He fashioneth their hearts singly: He giveth spiritually to their hearts their proper gifts, so that neither the whole body may be eye, nor the whole hearing; but that one in this manner, another in that manner, may be incorporated with Christ. He understandeth all their works. Before Him are all their works understood.

16. Ver. 16. A king shall not be saved by much strength: he shall not be saved who ruleth his own flesh, if he presume much upon his own strength. Neither shall a giant be saved by much strength: nor shall he be saved whoever warreth against the habit of his own lust, or against the devil and his angels, if he trust much to his own might.

17. Ver. 17. A horse is a deceitful thing for safety: he is deceived, who thinketh either that through men he gaineth salvation received among men, or that by the impetuosity of his own courage he is defended from destruction. In the abundance of his strength shall he not be saved.

18. Ver. 18. Behold, the Eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him: because if thou seek salvation, behold, the love of the Lord is upon them that fear Him. Upon them that hope in His mercy: that hope not in their own strength, but in His mercy.

19. Ver. 19. To deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine. To give them the nourishment of the Word, and of Everlasting Truth, which they lost while presuming on their own strength, and therefore have not even their own strength, from lack of righteousness.

20. Ver. 20. My soul shall be patient for the Lord: that hereafter it may be filled with dainties incorruptible, meanwhile, whilst here it remaineth, my soul shall be patient for the Lord. For He is our Helper and Defender: our Helper He is, while we endeavour after Him; and our Defender, while we resist the adversary.

21. Ver. 21. For our heart shall rejoice in Him: for not in ourselves, wherein without Him there is great need; but in Himself shall our heart rejoice. And we have trusted in His holy Name: and therefore have we trusted that we shall come to God, because unto us absent hath He sent, through faith, His own Name.

22. Ver. 22. Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee: let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us; for hope confoundeth not, because we have hoped in Thee.

second exposition

Discourse the First. On the first part of the Psalm

1. This Psalm admonishes us to rejoice in the Lord. It is entitled, Of David himself. Whoever then belong to the most holy seed of David, let them hearken to their own words, and speak their own words, and let them rejoice in the Lord. But thus it begins, (ver. 1.) Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: let the unrighteous rejoice in the world; with the world ended is ended the rejoicing of the unrighteous. But let the righteous rejoice in the Lord; because while the Lord remaineth, remaineth also the rejoicing of the righteous. But it is meet so to rejoice in the Lord, as to praise Him, Who alone has not any thing which can displease us; and has many things, none so many, which displease the unfaithful. And that is a short precept, He pleaseth God whom God pleaseth. And think not lightly of this, dearly beloved. For ye see how many dispute against God, how many are displeased with His works. For when He would do contrary to the will of men, because He is the Lord, and knoweth what He doth, and regardeth not so much our will as our benefit; they who would have rather their own will to be fulfilled than God’s, would bend God to their will, not make right their will unto God. Such men, unfaithful, ungodly, unrighteous—though it grieveth me to say it, yet I will say it, for ye know how truly I say it—are more easily pleased with a pantomime than with God.

2. Therefore when he had said, Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; because to rejoice in Him except by praising Him we cannot, and we praise One Whom we please the more, the more He pleaseth us; For praise, saith he, is comely to the upright. Who are the upright? They who direct their heart according to the will of God; and whom, if human frailty disturb them, Divine Justice consoleth. For although in their mortal heart they may privately wish something, which may suit their own immediate case, or interest, or their present necessity, yet when they have understood and learned that God willeth otherwise, they prefer the will of The Better, to

their own will; the will of The Omnipotent, to the will of the weak; the will of God, to the will of man. For far as God differs from man, so far the will of God from the will of man. Wherefore Christ having put on Man, and proposing a rule to us, teaching us to live, and granting us to live, shewed also man's private will; whereby He figured both His own and ours, because He is our Head, and we, as ye know, belong to Him as real members. Father, saith He, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; this was the human Will, wishing something proper to itself, and as it were private. But because He willed man to be right in heart, that whatever in him was somewhat crooked, He might make straight to Him, Who is ever Right; Nevertheless, saith He, not as I will, but as Thou, Father. But what evil could Christ will? What, in short, could He will other than the Father. Whose Divinity is one, Their Will can not be different. But in the person of Man, transforming His Own into Himself; whom He had transformed into Himself when He said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: whom He transformed into Himself, when to Saul raging, and persecuting the Saints, He cried from Heaven, though none touched Him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest Thou Me? He shewed as it were man's proper will; He shewed thee, and corrected thee. Behold, saith He, thyself in Me; for thou also canst will something proper to thyself, though God will otherwise; this is granted to human frailty, it is granted to human infirmity: to have a proper will, it is difficult that this should not happen to thee: but think straightway Who is above thee; think of Him above thee, thyself below Him; Him the Creator, thyself the creature; Him the Lord, thyself the servant; Him Omnipotent, thyself weak; correcting thyself, submitting to His Will, and saying, Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Wherein art thou severed from God, who now willest that which God willeth? Then shalt thou be upright, and praise shall be comely to thee, for, praise is comely to the upright.

3. But if thou art crooked, thou praisest God when it is well with thee, blasphemest when it is ill: which ill indeed, if it be just, is not ill; but just it is, since it is done by Him, Who can do nothing unjust: and so thou wilt be a foolish boy in the house of thy father, loving thy father if he fondle thee, and hating him when he scourgeth thee: as if he were not, both when fondling and when scourging, preparing for thee the inheritance. But see how praise is comely to the upright; hear the voice of the upright praising

from another Psalm, I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall continually be in my mouth. What is at all times, that is, continually; and what is, I will bless, that is, His praise shall be in my mouth. At all times, and continually, whether in prosperity or in adversity. For if in prosperity and not in adversity, how at all times? how continually? And we have heard many such words from many: when any good fortune befals them, they exult, they rejoice, they sing to God, they praise God; nor are they to be disapproved, nay, we must rejoice in them, for many praise Him not even then. But they who have now begun to praise God on account of their prosperity, must be taught to acknowledge their Father also when scourging them, and not to murmur against the hand of Him correcting; lest remaining ever perverse they deserve to be disinherited, so that being now made upright, (what is upright? so that nothing which God doth, displease them,) they may be able to praise God even in adversity, and to say, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as the Lord pleased, so is it come to pass. Blessed be the name of the Lord. To such upright, praise is comely, not to them that will first praise, and afterwards blame.

4. Therefore, ye righteous upright, rejoice in the Lord; for your praise is comely. Let none say, Who am I, that am righteous? or, When am I righteous? Cast not yourselves away, and despair not of yourselves. Ye are men, in the image of God were ye created: He Who made you men, for you also was made Man: that ye, being many sons, might be adopted to an eternal inheritance, the Blood of the Only-Begotten was shed for you. If ye unto yourselves have become vile through earthly frailty, according to your own price weigh yourselves: What ye eat, What ye drink, Whereto ye subscribe Amen, consider as is meet. Do we give you this warning, that ye may be proud, and dare to claim to yourselves some perfection? No: but neither again ought ye to think yourselves to be exiled from all righteousness. For I will not question you of your righteousness; for perhaps none of you would dare to answer, I am righteous: but I question you of your faith. As none of you dares to say, I am righteous, so none dares to say, I am not faithful. I ask not yet how thou livest, but how thou believest. Thou wilt answer, that thou believest in Christ. Hast thou not heard the Apostle, The just shall live by faith? Thy faith is thy righteousness, because truly if thou dost believe, thou dost beware; if thou

dost beware, thou dost endeavour; and God knoweth thy endeavour, and beholdest thy will, and considereth the wrestling with the flesh, and exhorteth thee to fight, and assisteth thee to conquer, and contending watcheth thee, and fainting, lifteth thee up, and conquering, crowneth thee. Therefore, Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: or this I would say, Rejoice in the Lord, O ye faithful, because the just shall live by faith. Praise is comely to the upright. Learn to give thanks unto God, both in prosperity and in tribulation. Learn to have in thy heart what every man hath in his tongue; The will of God be done. The common speech of the people is mostly saving doctrine. Who saith not daily, What God willeth, that let Him do? And so the upright will be among those, who rejoice in the Lord, and to whom praise is comely, whom the Psalm addresseth, in the words following, and saith, (ver. 2.) Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto Him with the psaltery of ten strings. For this even now we sang, this expressing with one mouth, we instructed your hearts.

5. Hath not the institution of these Vigils in the name of Christ brought it to pass that harps should be banished out of this place? And, lo, the same are bid to sound. Praise the Lord, saith he, with harp; sing unto Him with the psaltery of ten strings. Let none turn his heart to instruments of the theatre. That which is commanded him, he hath in himself, as it is elsewhere said, Thy vows are upon me, O God; I will render praises unto Thee. They remember, who some while since were present, when what difference there is between the psaltery and harp, as best I could, I explained in my discourse, and tried withal to bring it home to the understanding of all: but how much I effected, they know best who heard. And now in due season I repeat it, that in this diversity of two musical instruments, we may find the diversity of human actions signified by the same, and to be fulfilled in our life. The harp hath that hollow board, like a tabor, covered with tortoiseshell, on which the chords lean, so that when touched they sound. I speak not of the staff wherewith they are touched, but that hollow board I mean, over which they are laid, upon which in some wise they lean, so that from thence trembling at the touch, and from that concavity conceiving sound, they are rendered more harmonious; this board then the harp hath in the lower, the psaltery in the upper part. This is the distinction between them. Now in this place we are bidden to praise the Lord with harp, and to

sing to Him with a psaltery of ten strings. He saith not, with a harp of ten strings, neither in this Psalm, nor, if I mistake not, in any other place. My sons, the readers may read and examine more thoroughly and leisurely for themselves; but as far as I myself remember, I have found in many places a psaltery of ten strings, a harp of ten strings no where occurs, that I have read. Remember that the harp hath that wherefrom it sounds in the lower part, the psaltery in the higher. In our lower life, that is, our earthly, we have prosperity and adversity: wherefore must we praise God in both, that His praise may be continually in our mouth, and that we may bless the Lord at all times. For there is an earthly prosperity, and there is an earthly adversity: in both must God be praised, that so we may harp. What then is earthly prosperity? When we are sound in body; when all things abound whereby we live; when our safety is sure; when the fruits come in largely; when He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. All these things contribute to earthly life. Whoever therefrom praiseth not God, is ungrateful. Because they are earthly things, are they therefore not of God? Or is therefore another to be thought to give them, because they are given also to the evil. For manifold is the mercy of God, patient is it, long-suffering. Thereby sheweth He the more what things He reserveth for the good, when He sheweth what great things He giveth even to the evil. And adversities there are, forsooth from the lower part, from the frailty of the human race, in griefs, in weariness, in pressures, in tribulations, in temptations. In all these let him praise God who harpeth. Let him consider, not that they are from below, but that they cannot be ruled and governed but by that Wisdom, which reacheth from end to end mightily, and sweetly ordereth all things. For He doth not rule heavenly things, and leave alone earthly; or it would not be said unto Him, Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I go down into hell, Thou art there. Where then is He wanting, Who no where is not? Praise then the Lord on the harp. Whether any earthly thing abound to thee, give thanks to Him Who gave it, or whether ought be wanting to thee, or haply by misfortune be taken from thee, harp without care. For He is not taken from thee, Who gave, though that be taken from thee which He gave. Even so, I say, harp without care. Assured in thy God, touch the strings in thy heart, and say, as to an harp sounding well in the lower part, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, whatever the Lord pleased that did He. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

6. But now, when thou considerest the superior gifts of God, what Commandments He hath given thee, with what heavenly doctrine He hath imbued thee, what things He hath commanded thee from above, from the fountain of His Truth; turn also to the psaltery, sing unto the Lord with a psaltery of ten strings. For the Commandments of the Law are ten; in the ten Commandments of the Law thou hast the psaltery. The thing is complete. Therein thou hast the love of God in three, and the love of thy neighbour in seven. And truly thou knowest, the Lord Himself having said it, that On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. Saith God unto thee from above, The Lord thy God is one Lord; thou hast one string. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain: thou hast another string: Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, not carnally, not with their Jewish delights, who abuse rest unto wickedness. For better were it that they should dig the whole day, than the whole day dance. But thou, thinking on rest in thy God, and for that rest doing all things, abstain from servile work. Now, Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin; and would that I could say, of man, and not of sin! These three relate to the love of God: of Whom consider thou the unity, the truth, and the pleasantness, for there is a pleasantness in the Lord, where there is a true Sabbath, a true rest; wherefore it is said, Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. For who giveth such delight, as He Who maketh all things which delight? In these three is the love of God, in the other seven is the love of our neighbour, that thou do not to another, what thou wouldest not suffer. Honour thy father and thy mother: because thou also wouldest be honoured by thy children. Thou shalt not commit adultery: because thou wouldest not that thy wife should commit adultery, behind thy back. Thou shalt not kill: because thou also wouldest not be killed. Thou shalt not steal: because thou also wouldest not suffer robbery. Thou shalt not bear false witness: because thou hatest him that beareth false witness against thee. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife; because thou wouldest not thy wife to be coveted by another. Thou shalt not covet any thing that is thy neighbour’s: because if any other covet aught that is thine, thou art displeased. Direct thy tongue to thyself also,

when thou art displeased at him who injures thee. All these are the commandments of God; by Wisdom Herself were they given; their sound cometh from above. Touch the psaltery, fulfil the Law which the Lord thy God came not to destroy but to fulfil. By love wilt thou fulfil, what by fear thou couldest not. For he who through fear doth not evil, would fain do it if he could: and so though the power is not given, the will remaineth. I do it not, saith he. Wherefore? Because I fear. Not yet lovest thou righteousness; thou art still a servant: be a son. But of a good servant is made a good son: now do it not through fear; thou wilt learn also to do it not through love: for there is a beauty in righteousness: punishment may deter thee, but righteousness hath its own comeliness; it seeketh men's eyes, it inflameth its lovers. For this the Martyrs, treading under foot the world, shed their blood. What loved they when they renounced all things? For were they not lovers? or say we this to you that ye may love not? Who loveth not, is cold, is dead. Love we, but that beauty which seeketh the eyes of the heart. Love we, but that beauty which with praise of righteousness inflameth the mind. Men exclaim, they cry aloud, they say every where, How good! How excellent! What see they? Righteousness they see, in which an old man bowed down is beautiful. For neither if an old man that is righteous walk abroad, is there any thing in his body to be loved, and yet he is loved by all. Even there is he loved where he is not seen: nay there is he loved where he is seen, but with the heart. Let him then delight you, and pray ye to the Lord, that He may delight you. For The Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall yield her increase: that through love ye may fulfil, what by fear it is hard to fulfil. Why say I, it is hard? The mind is not yet able: it would rather that there were not any commandment, if to do, it is not led by love, but by fear constrained. Do not steal; fear hell: he would rather that there were no hell, into which he should be cast. When beginneth a man to love righteousness, but when he had rather that there were no stealing, even though there were no hell into which thieves should be cast? This it is, to love righteousness.

7. And what is righteousness herself like? Who painteth her? What beauty hath the Wisdom of God? Through her are all things beautiful, that are pleasant to the eyes: her to see, her to embrace, our hearts must be cleansed, her lovers we profess ourselves; herself so dresseth us that we may not be

displeasing to her. And when men reprove us for those things, whereby we please her whom we love, how is it that we so little regard our reprovers, how is it we so despise them, and altogether care nothing for them? Women’s lovers, loose and worthy of condemnation, when their mistresses dress them after their own fancy, if they can but please them, care not for those whom they displease, thinking it sufficient for them that they please their eyes, whom they court: and grave men they mostly displease, nay, grave men they always displease, and by better judgment are blamed. Thou art not well shorn, saith a grave man to a wanton youth, it becometh thee not to go with such-like curls. He knoweth, however, that a certain person is pleased with those curls: he hateth thee that with true judgment blamest, and keepeth in himself that which pleaseth his perverse will. He thinketh thee his enemy, because thou wouldest take away his disgrace. He flieth thy eyes, and altogether careth not by what rule of righteousness he be blamed. If therefore these regard not their reprovers in truth, that they may be handsome in falsehood; ought we, in those things whereby we please the Wisdom of God, ought we to regard unrighteous mockers, having no eyes wherewith they may see What we love? These things considering, all ye upright in heart, Praise the Lord with harp; sing unto Him with a psaltery of ten strings.

8. Ver. 3. Sing unto Him a new song. Put off oldness: ye know the new song. A new man, a New Testament, a new song. A new song belongeth not to men that are old: none learn that but new men, renewed through Grace from oldness, and belonging now to the New Testament, which is the kingdom of Heaven. For that sigheth all our love, and singeth a new song. A new song let it sing, not with the tongue, but with the life. Sing unto Him a new song: sing skilfully unto Him. Every man asketh how he should sing unto God. Sing unto Him, but sing not unskilfully. He would not that His Ears be offended. Sing skilfully, Brother. If, in the audience of any good musician, when it is said to thee, Sing, to please such an one, without some knowledge of the musical art, thou fearest to sing, lest thou shouldest displease a master of the art, because, what an unskilful person findeth not amiss in thee, a master blameth: who can undertake to sing skilfully before God, so judging of the singer, so examining every part, so exactly hearing? How canst thou shew so nice a skill in singing, as in nothing to displease

Ears so perfect? Behold, he giveth as it were the tune of thy song; seek not words as if thou couldest explain whereby God is pleased. Sing with jubilation: for this is to sing skilfully unto God, to sing with jubilation. What is it to sing with jubilation? To be unable to understand, to express in words, what is sung in the heart. For singers, either in the harvest, or in the vineyard, or in any other busy work, after they have begun in the words of their hymns to exult and rejoice, being as it were filled with so great joy, that they cannot express it in words, then turn from actual words, and proceed to sounds of jubilation. The jubilee is a sound signifying that the heart laboureth with that which it cannot utter. And whom beseemeth that jubilation, but the Ineffable God? For He is Ineffable, Whom thou canst not speak; and if thou canst not speak Him, and oughtest not to keep Him silent, what remaineth to thee but jubilation; that the heart may rejoice without words, and the boundless extent of joy may have no limits of syllables? Sing skilfully unto Him with jubilation.

9. Ver. 4. For the Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in faith. In that even wherein He displeaseth the not right, He is right. And all His works done in faith. Let thy works be done in faith, for The just shall live by faith; and Faith worketh by love. Let thy works be done in faith, because by trusting in God thou art rendered faithful. How can the works of God be done in faith, as though God also should live by faith? We find God also called faithful, and that not in our own words: hear an Apostle; God, saith He, is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Thus ye have heard God called faithful, hear it also in another place. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us: If we believe not, yet He abideth Faithful: He cannot deny Himself. We have then a Faithful God also: but let us well distinguish Faithful God from faithful man. Man is faithful when he trusteth in God promising: God is Faithful because He performeth what He promised to man. Let us hold Him a Debtor most Faithful, since we hold Him a Promiser most Merciful. For neither have we lent unto Him any loan, that we should hold Him a debtor; since from Him we have whatever we offer unto Him, and from Him cometh whatever good there is in us. All the good things, in which we rejoice, are from Him. For who hath known the Mind of

the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. We then have given nothing to Him, and yet we hold Him a debtor. Wherefore a debtor? Because He is a Promiser. We say not unto God, Lord, render what Thou hast received; but, Render what Thou hast promised. For the Word of the Lord is right. What is, The Word of the Lord is right? He deceiveth thee not: do not thou deceive Him, rather do not thou deceive thyself; for who can deceive the Omniscient? But iniquity hath lied unto itself. For the Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in faith.

10. Ver. 5. He loveth Mercy and Judgment. Do thou the same, because He doth. Observe ye both Mercy and Judgment. The time of Mercy is now, the time of Judgment shall be hereafter. Whence is it now the time of Mercy? He calleth those but now averted, He forgiveth sin to them converted: He is patient with sinners, until they be converted: when they are converted, He forgetteth things past, He promiseth things to come: He exhorteth the slothful, consoleth the afflicted, teacheth the studious, assisteth the fighting: He deserteth none labouring and crying unto Himself. He giveth that wherewith sacrifice may be done unto Himself; He bestoweth that wherewith He may be reconciled. Let not the great time of Mercy pass, Brethren, let it not pass away from us. There will come a judgment, and then also there will be repentance, but then without fruit, then they repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit, shall say within themselves, (is it not written in the book of Wisdom?) What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All these things are passed away like a shadow. Let us now say, All these things are passing away like a shadow. Let us now say to our profit, They are passing away; lest then we say without avail, They are passed away. This then is the time of Mercy, there will come also the time of Judgment.

11. But think not, Brethren, that these two can in any wise be separated, the one from the other, in God. They do indeed seem somewhat contrary to each other; as if one who is Merciful could not observe Judgment; and one who is tenacious of Judgment, would forget Mercy. But God is Omnipotent; neither in Mercy loseth He Judgment, nor in Judgment, Mercy. For He hath

compassion, He considereth His Own Image, our frailty, our wandering, our blindness, and He calleth; and to those converted unto Him He forgiveth sins, to the unconverted He forgiveth not. Is He Merciful to the unrighteous? Has He therefore lost Judgment, or ought He not to judge between the converted and the unconverted? Seemeth it just to you, that the converted and the unconverted be treated equally; that the same regard be paid to one confessing and one lying, to the humble and the proud? Therefore hath He Judgment, yea even in Mercy. Again, in The Judgment will He have Mercy, namely, upon those unto whom He shall say, I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat. For in a certain Apostolic Epistle it is said, For he shall have Judgment without Mercy, that hath shewed no Mercy. Blessed (saith He) are the merciful: for they shall obtain Mercy. Therefore in The Judgment shall there be also Mercy, but not without Judgment. For if not every one, but he shall have Mercy, who hath before shewn Mercy; even Mercy itself will be just, because it will not be indiscriminate. Mercy it surely is, that sins should be forgiven, Mercy it is, that life eternal should be bestowed; see then also Judgment, Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you. Surely this, It shall be given unto you, and, ye shall be forgiven, is Mercy; but if Judgment had departed therefrom, He would not say, With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

12. Thou hast heard how God sheweth Mercy and Judgment, do thou also shew Mercy and Judgment. Do these things perhaps belong unto God; do they not belong unto man? If they belonged not unto man, the Lord would not have said to the Pharisees, Ye have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment and Mercy. Therefore unto Thee belong Mercy and Judgment. Think not that Mercy belongeth unto thee, but Judgment belongeth not unto thee. It may be thou hearest a cause between two, of whom one is rich, and the other poor; and it may happen that the poor man hath a bad, the rich a good cause. Now if thou art not instructed in the Kingdom of God, thou seemest to thyself to do well, if, as pitying the poor man, thou hide and conceal his iniquity, and strive to justify him, so that he may seem to have a good cause; and if thou shouldest be blamed because thou hast judged ill, thou answerest as concerning Mercy, It is true, and I too know it; but he was poor, Mercy was due unto him. How hast thou kept

Mercy, and lost Judgment? And how, sayest thou, if I should keep Judgment should I not lose Mercy? Should I pronounce against a poor man, who had not wherewithal to pay, or if he had, could not, after that he had paid, find wherewithal to live? Thy God saith unto thee, Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause. It is an easy thing that we should be warned not to accept the person of the rich; this every man knoweth, and would that every man so did. That is where one is deceived; where one would please God, by accepting the person of the poor in judgment, and saying unto God, I have shewn favour unto the poor. Nay, but thou shouldest hold fast both, even both Mercy and Judgment. First, what sort of mercy hast thou shewed towards him, whose iniquity thou hast favoured? Lo, his purse thou hast spared, his heart thou hast wounded: that poor man hath remained in his iniquity, and is so much the more in iniquity, as he hath seen thee, as if a righteous man, favour his iniquity. From thee hath he departed, unjustly succoured; by God he remaineth justly to be condemned. What sort of mercy hast thou shewn to him, whom thou hast made unrighteous? Lo, thou art found more cruel than merciful. What then, sayest thou, should I do? Thou shouldest judge first according to the cause. Thou shouldest convict the poor, prevail on the rich man. There is one time for judgment, another for supplication. When the rich man saw that thou hadst held justice, hadst not lifted up the head of the wicked because he was poor, but according to the merits of his sin hadst justly punished him; would not he be prevailed on to mercy at thy supplication, who had been made glad by thy judgment? My Brethren, though there remaineth indeed more of the Psalm, yet must we now spare our strength, both of mind and body, by reason of the variety of hearers: for also when we are taking food from the same wheat, many new tastes as it were are made for us, so as to do away loathing: may this suffice you.

DISCOURSE THE SECOND

On the Second Part of the Psalm

1. Both in preaching and hearing the Word of Truth is labour; and this labour, my Brethren, we bear with patience, if we remember the Lord’s sentence, and our condition. For from the very first beginning of our race hath man heard, and that not from man that deceiveth, nor from the devil

that seduceth, but from Truth Itself out of the mouth of God, In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread. Therefore if our bread is the Word of God, let us sweat in hearing, lest we die in fasting. A few verses of the first part of this Psalm, at the solemnity of the vigil lately past, were handled: let us hear what remaineth.

2. Now thus begins the part which remaineth, which but now we sang, (ver. 5.) The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord. (Ver. 6.) By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm. For it is the same thing, By the voice of the Lord were the Heavens established. He had said above, Sing skilfully unto Him with jubilation, that is, Sing ineffably: (ver. 4.) For the Word of the Lord is right, and all His works are in faith. He promiseth nothing which He payeth not: He that is Faithful is made a debtor, be thou a covetous exacter. Then when he had said, All His works are done in faith; he added wherefore: (ver. 5.) He loveth Mercy and Judgment. He then, Who loveth Mercy, pitieth. But He Who pitieth, can He promise and not give, Who could give though He promised not? Therefore because He loveth Mercy, it behoveth Him to afford that which He promiseth: and because He loveth Judgment, it behoveth Him to exact what He gave. Wherefore said the Lord Himself to a certain servant; Wherefore gavest thou not the money into the bank, that at My coming I might have required Mine own with usury? Which therefore we mention, that we may understand what we have but now heard. For the same Lord saith in another place, in the Gospel, I judge no man: the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day. Nor let him excuse himself, who will not hear lest haply there be ought which may be required of him. For that very thing is required of him, that he would not receive, when it was given. For it is one thing not to be able to receive, another not to be willing; there is the excuse of necessity, here the guilt of wilfulness. Therefore all His works are done in faith: He loveth Mercy and Judgment. Receive ye Mercy, and fear Judgment; lest He, when He cometh to require of you, so require as to send you empty away. For He requireth an account; the account rendered, He giveth Eternity. Receive ye therefore Mercy. Brethren; let us all receive it. Let none of us slumber in receiving, lest he be wakened untimely to give account. Receive ye Mercy; so God crieth unto us, as in time of famine it would be said, Receive corn. Which when thou heardest in time of famine, truly by the very spur of

necessity goaded thou wouldest run, turning thee this way and that way; thou wouldest ask whence thou couldest receive that of which it was said, Receive ye; and when thou hadst found, how wouldest thou contain thyself? what delay wouldest thou interpose? So even now it is said, Receive ye Mercy, for He loveth Mercy and Judgment. When thou hast received, use it well, that thou mayest give a good account, when His Judgment cometh, Who now sheweth unto thee Mercy beforehand in this famine.

3. I would not then that thou shouldest say unto me, Whence receive I? Whither go I? Remember what Thou hast sung, The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord. Where is not the Gospel now preached? Where is the Word of the Lord silent? Where doth Salvation not work? It needs but that thou be willing to receive: the barns are full. This very fulness and abundance waited not for thee coming, but unto thee sleeping came of themselves. It was not said, Let the nations arise, and come into one place, but the same were preached unto the nations where they were, that thenceforward the prophecy might be fulfilled which saith, And men shall worship Him, every one from his place.

4. The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord. What of the Heavens? Hear what of the Heavens. For they want not Mercy, where is no misery. On earth aboundeth the misery of man, more aboundeth the mercy of the Lord. With the misery of man the earth is full, and with the Mercy of the Lord the earth is full. The Heavens, then, in which is no misery, because they want not mercy, do they not want the Lord? All things want the Lord, both the miserable, and the happy. Without Him is not the miserable man lifted up, without Him is not the happy governed. Therefore, lest haply thou shouldest ask concerning the Heavens, when thou hast heard, The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord, hear how the Heavens also want the Lord, (ver. 6.) By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm; for neither of themselves were the Heavens a support unto themselves, nor did they of themselves bestow on themselves their own firmness. By the word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm, and all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth. It was not that They had somewhat from themselves, and received as it were a supplement from the Lord. For by the Breath of His Mouth, was made not a part, but all the strength of them.

5. See now, my Brethren, the works of the Son and of the Holy Spirit are the same. For it ought not to be negligently passed over, by reason of certain unrighteous discerners, and troublesome confounders. For out of both cometh evil. They confound, by ill discerning, the creature with the Creator; and when the Spirit of God is the Creator, reckon Him among the creatures. Again they discern, and yet confound: may they be so confounded that they may be converted. Hear now how the work of the Son and of the Spirit is one. The Word is certainly the Son of God, and the Breath of His Mouth His Holy Spirit. By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm. But what is it, to be made firm, but to have a sure and firm strength? And all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth. It might have been said thus, “By the Breath of His Mouth were the Heavens made firm, and, By the Word of the Lord, all the strength of them.” For what is ‘all the strength of them,’ that is, ‘were made firm?’ This then doth the Son and the Holy Spirit. Is it without the Father? Who then acteth by His Word, and His Spirit, but He Whose is the Word, and Whose is the Spirit. This Trinity then is One God. Him worshippeth he who knoweth how to worship, Him hath he every where who hath converted himself. For He is not sought by them that are averted from Him; but averted, Himself calleth them, that converted He may fill them.

6. Now, my Brethren, excepting those superior Heavens, unknown to us on earth, labouring and seeking after them as we may by human conjectures; excepting then those Heavens, concerning which, how they be one above another, and how many they be, or in what manner they be distinguished, with what inhabitants they be filled, with what order they be ruled, how therein one hymn unfailing chanted in concert by all glorifieth God, it is much for us to find out, yet do we toil to arrive thither. For there is our country, which perhaps through our long travel we have forgotten. For our voice is in that Psalm, Woe is me, that my travel is prolonged. Concerning those Heavens then it is both for me difficult, if not impossible, to discourse, and for you to understand. Whoever in these things in understanding preventeth me, let him enjoy that whither he hath first arrived, and pray for me that I may follow. Meanwhile, excepting those Heavens, I have whereon now to discourse, as best I may, those Heavens that are the nearest to us, the sacred Apostles of God, the preachers of the

Word of Truth; by which Heavens we are watered, that so through the whole world the wheat of the Church may spring up; although with the tares now drinking one common rain, but not to have one common garner.

7. When then it had been said, The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord; as if thou hadst asked, Whence is the earth made full of the Mercy of the Lord? First were the Heavens sent to scatter the Mercy of the Lord over the earth, and that too over the whole earth. For see what is elsewhere said concerning the Heavens themselves, The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth His handy-work. What are the Heavens, that is the Firmament, Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no cessation, no silence. But where have they preached, and how far have they preached? There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard, but this relateth to that, that they spake in the tongues of all men in one place. Speaking in the tongues of all men, they fulfilled that which was said, There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. But I ask, that same voice in the tongues of all men, how far hath it reached? what places hath it filled? Hear then what follows, Their sound is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. Of whom but of those Heavens that declare the glory of God? If then their sound hath gone out into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world, what they have preached to us let Him declare Who sent them. He declareth plainly, faithfully He declareth: because even before they came to pass He predicted that they would be, He, all Whose works are in faith. For He rose again from the dead, and after handling of his limbs, being recognised of His disciples, He said, It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name. Whence, and how far? Among all nations, (saith He,) beginning at Jerusalem. But what Mercy do we all expect, my Brethren, more abundant from the Lord, than that our sins be forgiven? Since then that is the great Mercy of the Lord, the remission of sins, this remission of sins also hath the Lord predicted should be preached among all nations. The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord. Wherewith is the earth full? With the Mercy of the Lord? Wherefore? Because every where God forgiveth sins, because He hath sent the Heavens to water the earth.

8. And how dared those same Heavens to go with confidence, of weak men to be made Heavens, except that by the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made firm. Whence could sheep among wolves have such strength, except that by the Breath of His Mouth were all the strength of them. Behold, saith He, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. O Lord most merciful! Surely Thou dost this, that the earth may be full of Thy Mercy. If then Thou art so Merciful, as to fill the earth with Thy Mercy; see whom Thou sendest, see whither Thou sendest. Whither, I say, Thou sendest, and whom Thou sendest. Sheep into the midst of wolves. If one wolf be sent into the midst of innumerable sheep, who resisteth him? What doth he not overthrow, unless it happen that he is soon satisfied? For he could devour all. Sendest Thou the weak among the savage? I send them, saith He, because they are become Heavens to water the earth. Whence can weak men be Heavens. But all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth. Behold the wolves shall take you, and deliver, and give you up to powers for My Name’s sake. Now arm ye yourselves. With your own strength? Far be it. Take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. For all the strength of them by the Breath of His Mouth.

9. These things were done. The Apostles were sent; they endured pressures. Do we now bear as great to hear this Word, as they to sow it? No. Will then, Brethren, our labour be unfruitful? No. I see your thronging together, but ye also see my sweat. If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him. Behold those things are come to pass. From those sheep sent into the midst of wolves, we celebrate also the Martyrs’ memories. This very place, when the body of a blessed Martyr was smitten, was then full of wolves. So many wolves were overcome by one sheep captured, and the place was filled with sheep by one sheep slain. Then raged the sea with great waves of persecutors. Into a dry land and thirsty went the Heaven of God. But now, through those things which they suffered, who broke the enemy’s line, is the Name of Christ glorified. Walking over the heads of swelling waters, it hath occupied even powers themselves. And because those things are come to pass, they also who now see, not yet believing, our conventicles, our celebrations, our solemnities, the praises now openly, now publicly offered to our God; think ye that they grieve not, think ye that they do not rave? But now is fulfilled

that which is written of them, The wicked shall see it, and shall be enraged. What then, though he be enraged. Fear not the wolf, O sheep. Fear not now their threats and raving. He is enraged, but what followeth? He shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away.

10. Because then the salt sea-water, which hath remained, dares not now to rage against Christians, but grinds to itself a secret murmur, and within the mortal skin roars the confined saltness; see what follows, (ver. 7.) He gathereth the waters of the sea together as into a bottle. Since then before, the sea having its waves free raged, but now being confined within mortal breasts is bitter, He, who in those Saints was victorious, who then set bounds to the sea, He hath caused that its waves returning into themselves should be abated. He hath gathered as into a bottle the waters of the sea: the mortal skin covereth bitter thought. For fearing for their own skin, men keep within, that which they dare not to utter. For their bitterness is the same: they hate as much, they detest as much. But what then raged openly, now rageth secretly. What else can I say, than that which is spoken, He shall gnash with his teeth and melt away? Let the Church then go on, let it walk forward. The way is made, our highway is paved for us by the Emperor. Let us be fervent in our journeys of good work, for this it is for us to walk on. And if ever arise pressures of temptations, whence we expected them not, the waters of the sea being now gathered together as into a bottle, let us understand that the Lord doth this for discipline, that He may shake out of us too confident a security in temporal things, and direct us to His kingdom with composed desire. Which desire by tribulations buffeting on this side and on that is lengthened out, so that we become tuneful to the Ears of the Lord like ductile trumpets. For this also is said in the Psalms, that we should praise God on ductile trumpets. A ductile trumpet is enlarged by the hammer, so the Christian heart by the blows of pressures is enlarged towards God.

11. Let us remember then, Brethren, now at this time, in which the water of the sea has been gathered as into a bottle, that there is not wanting to God, whence He may bring forth somewhat, wherewith to amend us, when we have need of amendment. For therefore it follows, He layeth up the deep in storehouses. The secrets of God he calleth God’s storehouses. He knoweth

the hearts of all, what to bring forth at any time, whence to bring it forth, what power to bestow upon the evil over the good, to judge indeed the evil, but to instruct the good. He knoweth how to do these things, Who layeth up the deep in storehouses. Let that then come to pass which followeth, (ver. 8.) Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let not proud rejoicing glory with rash exultation, saying, Now is the water of the sea gathered together as into a bottle; who can do any thing to me? Who will dare to hurt me? Knowest thou not that He hath laid up the deep in storehouses; knowest thou not whence He bringeth forth what is needful to scourge thee, Who is thy Father? He indeed for thy discipline keepeth the treasures of the deep, wherewith He may instruct thee unto the treasures of the Heavens. Therefore return thou unto fear, who wast going but now into security. Let the earth rejoice, but let it also fear. Let it rejoice; Wherefore? Because the earth is full of the mercy of the Lord. Let it fear; Wherefore? Because He hath so gathered into a bottle the waters of the sea, as to lay up the deep in storehouses. In it then come these things to pass, both of which elsewhere are briefly spoken of, Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. Let them not fear another instead of Him. Of Him let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe. Doth a wild beast rage? Fear God. Doth a serpent lie in wait? Fear God. Doth man hate thee? Fear God. Doth the devil fight against thee? Fear God. For the whole creation is under Him Whom thou art commanded to fear. (Ver. 9.) For He spake, and they were made: He commanded, and they were created. This followeth in the Psalm. For when he had said, Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him, lest man should betake himself to fearing any thing else, and being averse to the fear of God, should fear some creature instead of Him, and worship that which was made, leaving Him Who made it, he confirmed us in the fear of God, as it were speaking to us, and addressing us. Why wilt Thou fear aught in Heaven, aught in earth, aught in the sea? He spake, and they were made: commanded, and they were created. When He, Who spake, and they were made; Who commanded, and they were created; when He bids, they move; when He bids, they rest. The malice of men can have the desire of injuring for its own; but the power, if He giveth not, hath it not. For there is no power but of God. It is the definitive sentence of an Apostle.

He said not, There is no desire but of God; for there is an evil desire which is not of God: but because that evil desire hurteth none, if He permit not; There is no power, saith he, but of God. Wherefore God as Man standing before a man, said, Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above. The one judged, the other taught: when He was being judged, He taught; that He might judge those whom He had taught. Thou couldest have, said He, no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above. What is this? Hath man only no power, except when he hath received it from above? What? Dared even the devil himself to take one sheep from holy Job, without first saying, Put forth Thine Hand now; that is, Give me power? He was willing; but He suffered not: when He permitted, he had the power. Therefore had not he the power, but He who permitted him. Therefore Job himself also, being well instructed, said not, as I have already often observed unto you, The Lord gave, and the devil hath taken away, but, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He; not whatsoever the devil pleased. See then, my Brethren, who with such labour eat wholesome and useful bread, see that ye fear not any one but the Lord. Beside Him, that Thou fear no other, Scripture commandeth thee. Therefore let all the earth fear the Lord, who layeth up the depth in storehouses. Of Him let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe. For He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created.

19. But now have evil kings ceased, they are made good: they too have believed; the sign of Christ’s Cross now bear they in their forehead, a sign more precious than any jewel of a diadem: they who raged, are destroyed. But who hath done this? Haply thou, that thou mayest extol thyself? (Ver. 10.) The Lord bringeth the counsel of the Heathen to nought; He maketh the devices of the people of none effect; and reproveth the counsels of princes. While they said, Let us away with them from off the earth, the Christian name will no longer be, if we do this: thus be they slain, thus tortured; be such and such things inflicted on them: these things were said, and amid these, did the Church grow. He maketh the devices of the people of none effect, and reproveth the counsels of princes.

14. Ver. 11. The Counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; the Thoughts of His Heart to all generations. It is a repetition of the same sentence. What before he called, The Counsel, that he calleth afterwards, The Thoughts of His Heart. And whereas above he saith, standeth for ever, so afterwards he saith, to all generations. Repetition is confirmation. But think not, Brethren, because he said, The Thoughts of His Heart, that God as it were sitteth down and thinketh what He should do, and taketh counsel to do any thing, or not to do any thing. To thee, O Man, belongs such tardiness. His Word runneth very swiftly. When can there be delay of thought, in that Word, Which is One, and embraceth all things? But the Thoughts of God are spoken of, that thou mayest understand; that according to what is in thee, thou mayest dare to lift up thy heart even to words suited to thine infirmity: because the thing itself is too much for thee. The Thoughts of His Heart to all generations. What are the Thoughts of His Heart, and what is the counsel of the Lord which standeth for ever? Against which counsel, Why do the Heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? Since, The Lord maketh the devices of the people of none effect, and reproveth the counsels of princes. How then standeth for ever the Counsel of the Lord, except it be concerning us whom He hath first foreknown and predestined? Who taketh away the Predestination of God? Before the creation of the world He saw us, He made us, He healed us, He sent unto us, He redeemed us: this His counsel standeth for ever, these His Thoughts to all generations. Then raged the Heathen openly swelling and roaring; now let them melt away as it were confined and gathered into a bottle: they had free boldness, let them now have fierce and bitter thoughts. When can they destroy that which He hath thought of, and which standeth for ever?

15. But what is this? Blessed is the nation. Who is there that hearing this, doth not rouse himself? For all love blessedness; and therein are men perverse, that wicked they would be, miserable they would not: and though misery is the inseparable companion of wickedness, they perversely not only would be wicked, and would not be miserable, which is impossible; but therefore would they be wicked lest they be miserable. What is this that I have said, Therefore would they be wicked, lest they be miserable? Observe this now in all men who do evil, they ever wish to be blessed. One stealeth: dost thou ask, Why? From hunger: from necessity. Therefore lest

he should be miserable, he is wicked; and therefore is he the more miserable, because he is wicked. For the sake then of driving away misery, and of acquiring blessedness, do all men whatever either of good or evil they do. Always then they wish to be blessed: whether living ill, or living well, they wish to be blessed, and that happeneth not to all, which all wish to happen to them. For all would be blessed, but there shall not any be except they who will be righteous. And lo, some one, though he doth evil, would be blessed. Whereby? By money, by silver and gold, by estates, by lands, by houses, by slaves, by the pomp of the world, by honour fleeting and perishable. By having something would men be blessed: ask then what thou shouldest have, that thou mayest be blessed. For when thou shalt be blessed, thou wilt surely be better, than when thou wast miserable. But it cannot be that any thing worse than thyself should make thee better. Thou art a man; worse than thou is whatever thou covetest, whereby thou desirest to be blessed. Gold, silver, any other bodies, which thou gapest to acquire, to possess, to enjoy, are inferior to thee. Thou art better, thou art worthier: and surely thou wouldest be better than thou art, since thou wouldest be blessed, because thou art miserable. For it is surely better to be blessed than to be miserable. Thou wouldest be better than thyself; and thou seekest, thou searchest out, wherewith thou mayest become so, things worse than thyself. Whatever thou hast desired on earth, is worse than thou. This every man wisheth for his friend, thus he adjureth him, So mayest thou be better, So may we see thee better, So let us rejoice in thee being better. What one wisheth for his friend, this he would also for himself. Accept then a faithful counsel. Thou wouldest be better than thyself; I know it, we all know it; we all wish it: seek then what is better than thyself, that thereby thou mayest be rendered better than thyself.

16. Consider now the Heavens and the earth: let not beautiful bodies so please thee, that by them thou wish to be blessed. In the soul is what thou seekest. For thou wouldest be blessed: enquire thou what is better than thy soul itself. For since there are two things, that is, soul and body, because of these two that is the better, which is called the soul, therefore can thy body be made better by the better, because the body is subject to the soul. Thy body then can be made better by thy soul, so that when thy soul shall be righteous, thy body also may hereafter be immortal. For through the

illumination of the soul, the body merits incorruption, that through the better there may be a reparation of the worse. If then thy body’s good be thy soul, because it is better than thy body; when thou seekest thine own good, seek that which is better than thy soul. But what is thy soul? Beware, lest haply, despising thy soul, and thinking that it is something vile and worthless, thou shouldest seek things more vile, wherewith thy soul may be made blessed. For thy soul is the Image of God; the mind of man containeth it. It received it, and by inclining unto sin disfigured it. The Same came unto it as the reformer, Who was before the former of it. For by the Word were all things made, and by the Word was this Image impressed. The Word Himself came, that we might hear from an Apostle, Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. Now then it remaineth that thou seek what is better than thy soul. What shall that be, I pray thee, but thy God? Thou findest no other better than thy soul; for when thy nature shall be perfected, it will be equalled with the Angels. Now is there nothing higher save the Creator. Lift up thyself unto Him, despair not, say not, It is too much for me. Rather it is too much for thee to have, it may be, gold, which thou seekest. Gold, though thou wouldest, haply thou wilt not have; God, when thou wouldest, thou shalt have: for even before thou wouldest, He came unto thee; and when thou wast in will averted, He called thee; and when thou wast converted, He frightened thee, and when frightened thou didst confess, He consoled thee. He, Who hath given thee all things, He, Who hath caused that thou shouldest be, Who to those also who are with thee, even the wicked, giveth the sun, giveth rain, giveth fruits, fountains, life, health, so many consolations; He keepeth for thee something which He giveth not save to thee. But what is that which He keepeth for thee, but Himself. Ask somewhat else, if thou hast found better. God keepeth Himself for thee. Thou covetous, why longest thou after Heaven and earth? Better is He Who made Heaven and earth: Him shalt thou see: Him shalt thou have. Why seekest thou, that such a villa should be thine, and passing by it sayest, Blessed is he whose is that possession? How many say this, who pass by it; and yet when they have so said, and pass by it, though they can shake the head and sigh, can they also possess it? Every where soundeth covetousness, soundeth iniquity, but Thou shalt not covet any thing which is thy neighbour’s. Blessed whose is that villa, whose is that house, whose is that field! Restrain iniquity, hear the truth: Blessed is the nation whose—Whose what? Thou knowest already what I am about to say. Therefore desire that ye may have, then indeed shall ye be blessed. With this alone shall ye be blessed, by a better thing than yourselves ye shall be made better. It is God that is better than thou; even He, I say, Who made thee. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. This desire, this possess, this when thou wilt, thou shalt have: this thou shalt have for nothing.

17. Ver. 12. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. The Lord our God! For of whom is He not God? Not surely of all in the same manner. Ours is He more; ours, who live by Him as by our bread. Let Him be our inheritance, our possession. Do we haply speak rashly in making God our possession, when He is the Lord, when He is the Creator? This is not rashness: it is the affection of desire, it is the sweetness of hope. Let the soul say, all-secure let it say, Thou art my God, Who sayest to my soul, I am thy salvation. Let it so say, secure let it say, it will do no wrong when so it saith; nay it will do wrong if it say not. Wouldest thou have trees, whereby thou mightest be blessed? Hear the Scripture speaking of Wisdom; She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her. See, he hath said that Wisdom is our possession. But lest thou shouldest think that Wisdom, because Scripture hath called it thy possession, to be something inferior to thee, it goes on and adds, And to them that lean upon her, as on the Lord, she is safe. See thy Lord is made unto thee as a staff: securely man leaneth, because He faileth not. Say then securely, This is thy possession; to them that lay hold upon her. Scripture hath said, hath filled up thy doubts with confidence: speak securely, love securely, hope securely. Thine also be those words in the Psalm, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance.

18. Therefore by this shall we be blessed, by possessing God. What then? Shall we possess Him, and will not He possess us? Whence then Esaias, Lord, possess us? Therefore He possesseth us, and is possessed, and all for our sakes. For not as He, that we may be blessed in Him, is possessed by us; not so doth He also, that He may be blessed, possess us. He both possesseth and is possessed, for nothing else than that we may be blessed. We possess Him, and He possesseth us; because we attend on Him, and He attendeth on us. We attend on Him as our Lord God; He attendeth on us as His own possession. That we attend on Him, none doubteth; that He attendeth on us,

who proveth to us? He Who saith, I am the Vine: ye are the branches: My Father is the Husbandman. See in this Psalm also both are declared to us, both are proved to us. He hath already said that we possess Him: Blessed is the nation, whose God is the Lord. Whose is this farm? His. Whose is that? His. Whose is this? Let us so speak of God; let us say whose He is. And as answer is wont to be made to us when we enquire concerning certain farms and estates that are fine and very pleasant; He is a senator, and he is called so and so, whose is that property; and we say, Blessed is that man. So if we should ask, Whose is this God? There is a blessed nation whose He is. For the Lord is their God. And not as that senator possesseth his farm, but is not possessed by his farm, so also the God of this nation. Wherefore, we ought to labour, that we may be His: but either of them possesseth the other. Ye have heard that a nation possesseth Him, Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: hear how He also possesseth it: and the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance. Nation blessed in its possession; inheritance blessed in its possessor: And the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance.

19. Ver. 13. The Lord looketh from heaven, He beholdeth all the sons of men. All in this place so receive as to understand all of that nation who possess that inheritance, or who are that inheritance. For they themselves are God’s inheritance. Even all of them hath the Lord looked upon from Heaven: and He hath seen them Who said, When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. He saw him because He had mercy on him. Wherefore oftentimes praying mercy we say to a man, Look upon me. And of him that despiseth thee, what sayest thou? He seeth me not. There is then a seeing of him that hath mercy, a not seeing of him that punisheth. That looking upon sins is the punishment of sins; which sins he would not to be seen, who saith, Hide Thy Face from my sins. What he would to be overlooked, that he would not to be looked upon. Hide, saith he, Thy Face from my sins. When then He hath hidden His Face from thy sins, will He not see thee? And wherefore saith he in another place, Hide not Thy Face from me? Let Him then hide from thy sins, let Him not hide from thee: let Him see thee, let Him have mercy on thee, let Him succour thee. The Lord looked from Heaven, He regarded all the sons of men: all that belong unto the Son of Man.

20. Ver. 14. From His prepared habitation: from that which He hath prepared for Himself. He looked upon us from the Apostles, He looketh upon us from the preachers of the Truth, He looked upon us from the Angels, whom He sent unto us. All these are His house, all these are His habitation, for all these are the Heavens which declare the Glory of God. He beheld all the sons of men: from His prepared habitation He looked upon all the inhabitants of the earth. These are the same; they are His; it is that blessed nation, whose God is the Lord; it is that people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance: for it is throughout all lands, and not only in one part. He looked upon all the inhabitants of the earth.

21. Ver. 15. He hath fashioned their hearts singly. By the hand of His grace; by the hand of His mercy, He hath fashioned hearts, He formed our hearts, He fashioned them singly, giving to us as it were single hearts, which yet destroy not unity. As all our members are formed singly, have their operations singly, and yet live in the unity of the body; the hand doth what the eye doth not, the ear hath a power which neither the eye nor the hand hath; yet all work together in unity; and the hand, and the eye, and the ear do different things, and yet are not opposed to one another; so also in the Body of Christ, single men, like single members, enjoy each their own gifts, because He Who hath chosen the people for His own inheritance, hath fashioned their hearts singly. Are all Apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing. Wherefore? Because He fashioned their hearts singly. But as in our members there are diverse operations, but one health; so in all the members of Christ are diverse gifts, but one grace. He fashioneth their hearts singly.

22. He understandeth all their works. What is understandeth? Seeth in secret and inwardly; thou hast in a certain Psalm, Understand my crying. For there is no such need as of words, that any thing may come to the Ears of God. Seeing in secret is called understanding. He spoke more expressly than if He should say, He seeth all their works: lest thou shouldest think that those works are then seen, when thou seest the work of a man. A man seeth

the act of a man by motion of the body, but God seeth in the heart. Because then He seeth within, it is said, He understandeth all their works. Two men give to the poor, one seeketh his reward in Heaven, the other the praise of men. Thou in two seest one thing, God understandeth two. For He understandeth what is within, and knoweth what is within; their ends He seeth, their base intentions He seeth. He understandeth all their works.

23. Ver. 16. A king shall not be saved by much strength. Unto the Lord must we all, in God are we all. Be God thy hope, be God thy strength, be God thy firmness; thy supplication let Him be, thy praise let Him be, thy end in which thou rest, let Him be; thy succour when thou labourest, let Him be. Hear the truth, A king shall not be saved by much strength: neither shall a giant be saved by much strength. A giant is any proud man, lifting up himself against God, as though he were something in himself and by himself. Such an one is not saved by much strength.

24. But he hath a horse, large, spirited, strong, swift: can he if any evil threaten, deliver him quickly out of danger? Let him not be deceived, let him hear what followeth. (Ver. 17.) A horse is a deceitful thing for safety. Understood ye what was said, A horse is a deceitful thing for safety? Let not thy horse promise thee safety; if he promise thee, he will lie. For if God will, thou wilt be freed; if God will not, thy horse falling, thou wilt fall from a greater height. Therefore think it not said, A horse is a deceitful thing for safety, as though a just man were deceitful for safety, because just men as it were tell lies for safety. For it is not written æquus, which word is derived from equity; but equus, a quadruped. This the Greek version sheweth. And evil beasts, men who seek to themselves occasions of lying, are refuted, when the Scripture saith, The mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul, and, Thou shalt destroy all them that speak leasing. What then is this, A horse is a deceitful thing for safety? A horse lieth to thee when it promiseth safety. Doth a horse speak to any one and promise safety? But when thou seest a horse well made, of great strength, and possessed of great speed, all these things, as it were, promise thee safety from it: but they deceive, if God guard thee not; A horse is a deceitful thing for safety. A horse also take figuratively, for any greatness of this world, any honour unto which thou ascendest proudly: the higher thou goest, not only so much the more lofty,

but so much the more safe thou thinkest thyself, but falsely; for thou knowest not how he may cast thee down, dashed the more heavily, the more loftily thou wast carried. A horse is a deceitful thing for safety: in the abundance of his strength shall he not be saved. And whereby shall he be saved? Not by might, not by strength, not by power, not by glory, not by a horse. Whereby then? Whither shall I go? Where shall I find whence I may be saved. Seek not long, seek not far? (Ver. 18.) Behold, the Eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him. Ye see that these are the same whom He beholds from His habitation. Behold, the Eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His Mercy: not in their own merits, not in strength, not in fortitude, not in a horse, but in His Mercy.

25. Ver. 19. To deliver their souls from death. He promiseth eternal life. What in this our travel? doth He desert us? See what follows: And to keep them alive in famine. The time of famine is now, the time of plenty shall be hereafter. He who in the famine of this corruption deserteth us not, when made immortal, how shall He not satisfy us! But while it is the time of famine, we must bear, we must endure, we must persevere even to the end. Now must all be run, because both the way is plain, and we must consider what we carry. The spectators in the amphitheatre are haply still in their madness, and sit in the sun: and we, even if we stand, are yet in the shade; more useful and more beautiful is what we behold. Let us behold The Beautiful, and be beheld by The Beautiful. Let us behold in mind those things which are declared in the sense of the Divine Scriptures, and let us rejoice in such a spectacle. But who is our spectator? Behold, the Eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him; upon them that hope in His Mercy. To deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

26. But for endurance of travel, while there is famine, and while we wait by the way to be refreshed, lest we faint; what is imposed upon us? or what ought we to profess? (Ver. 20.) Our soul shall be patient for the Lord. Securely shall it wait for Him mercifully promising, mercifully and truly performing: and until He perform, what must we do? Our soul shall be patient for the Lord. But what if in that patience, we shall not endure? Nay, we shall surely endure, For He is our Helper and Defender. He assisteth in

battle, He protecteth from the heat, He deserteth thee not, bear thou, endure thou. He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

27. And what when thou hast endured, when thou hast been patient, when thou hast come even to the end, what shall be given thee? for what reward dost thou endure? why dost thou so long suffer such hardships? (Ver. 21.) For our heart shall rejoice in Him, and we have trusted in His Holy Name. Here hope, that there thou mayest rejoice; here hunger and thirst, that there thou mayest feast.

28. He hath exhorted to all things, he hath filled us with the joy of hope, he hath proposed to us what we should love, in what only and by what only we should presume; after this cometh a prayer short and salutary. (Ver. 22.) Let Thy Mercy, O Lord, be upon us. And upon what merit? according as we have hoped in Thee. To some I have been burdensome; I perceive it: for some again I have finished my discourse even too soon, and this also I perceive. Let the weak pardon the stronger, and let the stronger pray for the weaker. Let us all be members in one body, from our Head let us grow. In Him is our hope, and in Him is our strength. Let us not hesitate to exact from our Lord God Mercy; He willeth it to be exacted of Him. For He will not be troubled while it is exacted, or at all straitened, like one from whom thou seekest what he hath not, or of which he hath but little, and feareth to give lest he have too little. Wouldest thou know how God giveth thee Mercy? Do thou give charity: let us see if it come to an end, while thou givest it. What richness then is there in the Most High Himself, if such can be in His Image!

29. Therefore, Brethren, above all things I exhort you to this charity, not only towards yourselves, but also toward those who are without, whether they be still Pagans, not yet believing in Christ, or divided from us, with us confessing The Head, though severed from The Body. Let us lament them, Brethren, as though our brethren. Will they, nill they, our brethren they are. Then will they cease to be our brethren, when they shall cease to say, Our Father. Of some said the Prophet, To them who say unto you, Ye are not our brethren, say ye, Ye are our brethren. Look around, of whom could he say this? whether of Pagans? No: for we call not them brethren according to the Scriptures, and the ecclesiastical mode of speaking. Of the Jews, who

believed not in Christ? Read the Apostle, and see that when he saith, Brethren, without any addition, he willeth to be understood none but Christians. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases. When he spoke of marriage, he called a Christian man or woman, a brother or sister. Again he saith, But why dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? And in another place, Ye do wrong and defraud, and that your brethren. They then, who say, ye are not our brethren, call us Pagans. And therefore do they wish to rebaptize us, saying that we have not that which they give. Whence followeth their error, to deny that we are their brethren. But why said the Prophet unto us, Say ye, Ye are our brethren; except because we acknowledge in them that which we repeat not. They then, by not acknowledging our Baptism, deny that we are their Brethren; we, by not repeating theirs, but acknowledging it ours, say unto them, Ye are our brethren. Let them say, Why seek ye us? what would ye with us? Let us answer, Ye are our brethren. Let them say, Depart from us, we have no concern with you. We certainly have concern with you: we confess one Christ: in one body, under one Head, we ought to be. Why then seekest thou me, saith one, if I am lost? A great absurdity! a great madness! Wherefore should I seek thee, unless because thou art lost? If then I am lost, saith he, how am I thy brother? That it may be said to me of thee, For this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found. Therefore, Brethren, we adjure you by the very bowels of that Love, by Whose milk we are nourished, by Whose bread we are strengthened, even by Christ our Lord, by His Mercy I adjure you, (for it is time that we should shew toward them great charity, abundant mercy in praying God for them, that He would give them again sober sense, that they may repent, and see that they have nothing at all to say contrary to the truth; there remaineth to them nought but only the weakness of animosity, which is so much the more weak, as it thinketh that it hath more strength,) for the weak, for the carnally wise, for the animal, and carnal, yet for our brethren, celebrating the same Sacraments, though not with us, yet the same; responding the same Amen, though not with us, yet the same; for them pour forth the marrow of your charity unto God. For somewhat have we done in council for their good, which that I should explain to you now, the time sufficeth not. Wherefore I exhort you, that with more alacrity, and in greater numbers, (for our brethren, not now present, will hear from you,) ye come together to-morrow at the Church of the Tricliæ.

PSALM 34

discourse the first

On the Title of the Psalm.

1. This Psalm seems indeed to have nothing obscure or that needs an expounder in its text; but its title makes us attentive, and requires that we should knock. But as it is here written, that Blessed is the man who trusteth in Him. let us all hope that He will open to us knocking. For He would not exhort us to knock, if He would not open to us knocking. For if it ever happens, that he who was purposing to shut the door always, being compelled by weariness, at the stroke of the knocker should rise and open, contrary to his own purpose, lest he should suffer him long knocking; how much more ought we to hope that He will quickly open, Who saith, Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. I knock then with earnestness of heart unto the Lord God, that He may deign to reveal unto us this mystery; do ye also, my Beloved, knock with me with earnestness of hearing, and with humble praying for me. For it is, it must be confessed, a hidden and great mystery.

2. For so is the Title of the Psalm, A Psalm of David, when he changed his countenance before Abimelech, and he sent him away, and he departed. We seek in the Scriptures, according to the histories which we have written concerning David, when this was done; as when we find the title of another Psalm, A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son. For we read in the Book of Kings, and find when David fled from the face of his son Absalom; and it is most true that it so happened, and because it happened it was written; and although the Title of that Psalm is so written mysteriously, yet was it drawn from an event which happened. So also I believe that what is here written, When he changed his countenance before Abimelech, and he sent him away, and he departed, is written in the Books of Kings, where every thing is written which pertaineth to the actions of David: but we find not this, and yet we do find somewhat, whence this appears to be drawn. For it is written, that when David fled from his persecutor Saul, he betook

himself to Achis, the king of Gath, that is, to the king of a certain nation near to the kingdom of the Jews: there he lay hid, that he might avoid the persecution of Saul. But his glory was still recent, whereby he earned envy for his good service, when he slew Goliath, and in one battle gave glory and security of government both to king and people. For Saul, although Goliath challenging, he quaked, yet Goliath being overthrown, began to be an enemy to him by whose hand he had destroyed his enemy, and envied the glory of David, chiefly because the people in their rejoicings, and the women in their dances, sang the glory of David, saying, that Saul had slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. Hence being alarmed, because the youth through one battle had begun to have greater glory, and already in the praises of all was preferred to the king, (as the nature is of the plague of envy, and of worldly pride,) he began to envy and to persecute him. Then he, as I have said, betook himself to the king of Gath, who was called Achis. But it was suggested to the same king that he had with him one who had begun to have great glory in the people of the Jews, and it was said to him, Is not this David, to whom the women sang in the dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands? But if for this glory Saul had begun to envy him, was it not to be feared by David, lest the king also, with whom he had taken refuge, should wish to oppress a man whom he might have near him as an enemy, if he should keep him safe. And he feared him, and (as it is written) he changed his countenance before them, and affected, and drummed upon the doors of the city, and was carried in his own hands, and fell down at the doors of the gate, and his spittle ran down over his beard. The king with whom he lay hid saw him, and said unto his men, Wherefore have ye brought this mad fellow unto me? shall he come into my house? And so he sent him away, expelling him; and David departed safe thence through that feigning of madness. According then to this feigning of madness seemeth to agree to the real history what is here written, A Psalm of David, when he changed his countenance before Abimelech, and he sent him away, and he departed. But it was Achis, not Abimelech; for the name only seemeth not to agree; for the event is related almost in the very same words in the Psalms, in which it is written in the Book of Kings. Therefore ought it the more to move us to enquire of this mystery, that the name is changed. For neither was that done without reason, however it was done, but because it figured something: nor was this written without a reason, even for the name being changed.

3. Surely, Brethren, ye see the depth of mysteries. If it be not mysterious that Goliath was slain by a stripling, it is not mysterious that he changed his countenance, and affected, and drummed, and fell down before the doors of the city, and the doors of the gate, and the spittle ran down over his beard. How can it be that this should not signify any thing, when the Apostle saith openly, Now all these things happened unto them in a figure, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come? If the manna signify nothing, of which the Apostle saith, They did all eat the same spiritual meat; if it signify nothing that the sea was divided, and the people led through the midst, that they might escape the persecution of Pharaoh, when the Apostle saith: I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea. If it signify nothing that the rock being struck, the water flowed out, when the Apostle saith, That Rock was Christ: if then these things signify nothing, however they happened: if, in short, nothing be signified by the two sons of Abraham, born according to the order of birth among men, and yet these two sons the Apostle calleth the two Covenants, the Old, and the New, saying, Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; if then these things signify nothing, which you see, by the authority of the Apostle, were done as figures of things to come: we ought to think that this also signifieth nothing, which I have just now related to you concerning David out of the Book of Kings. It doth not then signify nothing, either that the name was changed, or that it was said, before Abimelech.

4. Attend with me; for all, that I have now said, belongs as it were to the hand of the knocker; the door is not yet opened. I knocked, when I said these things; ye also knocked, when ye heard these things. Let us still knock by praying, that the Lord may open unto us. We have the interpretation of Hebrew names: there have not been wanting learned men to translate for us names from the Hebrew into the Greek tongue, and from thence into the Latin. Consulting then these names, we find they interpret Abimelech, The kingdom of my Father, and Achis, How is it? Let us attend to these names;

thence beginneth the door to be opened to us knocking. If thou askest, What is Achis? It is answered, How is it? How is it, is the expression of one wondering and understanding not; Abimelech, The kingdom of my Father; David, Strong in hand. David is a figure of Christ, as Goliath is a figure of the devil; and as David overthrew Goliath, it is Christ that destroyeth the devil. But what is Christ, Who destroyeth the devil? Humility destroyeth pride. Therefore when I name Christ, my Brethren, humility is most commended to us. For He made a way for us through humility; because through pride we had departed from God, we could not return unto Him, but through humility; and we had none whom we might set before us to imitate. For all mortal men were swollen with pride; and if there arose any man of humble spirit, as were the Prophets, and Patriarchs, the human race disdained to imitate humble men. Lest then man should disdain to imitate a humble man, God was made humble, that even so the pride of the human race might not disdain to follow the footsteps of God.

5. But there was before, as ye know, the sacrifice of the Jews, after the order of Aaron, with victims of cattle; and that too was a mystery; not yet was the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of the Lord, which the faithful know, and those who have read the Gospel; which sacrifice is now diffused through the whole world. Set then before your eyes two sacrifices, both that after the order of Aaron, and this after the order of Melchizedek. For it is written, The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. Of whom is this said, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek? Of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who was Melchizedek? The King of Salem. Salem was before a city, the same which afterwards, as learned men have delivered, was called Jerusalem. Before then the Jews reigned there, there was this Priest Melchizedek, who is called in Genesis the Priest of the Most High God. The same met Abraham, when he delivered Lot from the hand of his pursuers, and overthrew those by whom he was held captive, and delivered his brother: after the deliverance of his brother, Melchizedek met him. And so great a man was Melchizedek, that Abraham was blessed by him. He brought forth bread and wine, and blessed Abraham, and Abraham gave him tithes. See what he brought forth, and whom he blessed. And afterwards was it written, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. David said this in the

Spirit long after Abraham; but in the time of Abraham lived Melchizedek. Of what other saith he, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek, but of Him, Whose Sacrifice ye know?

6. Therefore was the sacrifice of Aaron taken away, and began the Sacrifice after the order of Melchizedek. Therefore some one, I know not who, changed his countenance. Who is this some one, I know not who? It should not be said, I know not who, for our Lord Jesus Christ is well known. In His own Body and Blood He willed our health to be. But whereby commended He His Body and Blood? By His own humility; for unless He were humble, neither could This be eaten nor That drunk. Consider His Highness; In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Behold the food is from everlasting: but of It eat the Angels, of It eat the Hosts above, of It eat the Heavenly Spirits, and eating they are filled, and yet remaineth That whole Which satisfieth them and maketh them glad. But what man could be capable of that food? How could his heart be made fit enough for that food. Therefore behoved that table to become milk, and so to come even to babes. But how doth food become milk? How is food changed into milk, except it be passed through flesh? For the mother doth this: what the mother eateth, that eateth the infant: but because the infant is less fit to feed on bread, the same bread the mother incarnates, and through humility of her own breast and the juice of milk, of that very bread feeds the infant. How then did the Wisdom of God of that same Bread feed us? The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. See then humility; in that man ate the bread of Angels, as it is written, He gave them of the bread of Heaven. Man did eat Angels’ food: that is, That Word by which the Angels live from everlasting, Which is equal to the Father, did man eat: because, Being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God: by That are the Angels filled. But He made Himself of no reputation, that man might eat Angels’ food, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: that so from His Cross might be commended unto us the Body and the Blood of the Lord, for a new sacrifice. Because He changed His Countenance before Abimelech, that is, before the kingdom of His Father. For the kingdom of His Father was the kingdom of the Jews. How the

kingdom of His Father? The kingdom of David, the kingdom of Abraham. For the kingdom of God the Father is rather the Church, than the people of the Jews: but according to the flesh the kingdom of His Father was the people of Israel. For it was said, And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. It is shewn then that according to the flesh the father of the Lord is David: but according to the Divinity, Christ is not the Son but the Lord of David. The Jews indeed knew Christ according to the flesh, according to the Divinity they knew Him not. Therefore He asked them a question, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He? They say unto Him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right Hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son? And they were not able to answer Him: because they knew not in the Lord Christ save what was visible to the eyes, not what was understood in the heart. But if they had had within eyes as they had without, from that which they saw without they had understood the Son of David; from that which they understood within they had understood the Lord of David.

7. Therefore He changed His Countenance before Abimelech. What is, before Abimelech? Before the kingdom of His Father. What is, before the kingdom of His Father? Before the Jews. And He sent him away, and He departed. Whom did He send away? Even the people of the Jews He sent away, and He departed. Thou seekest now Christ among the Jews, and findest Him not. Wherefore did He send away, and depart? Because He changed His countenance. For they cleaving to the sacrifice after the order of Aaron, held not the Sacrifice after the order of Melchizedek; and so lost Christ, and the Gentiles began to have Him, to whom He had not before sent Preachers. For to them, He had sent Preachers: David himself, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the other Prophets had He sent, and a few thereby learned knowledge, but they a very few in comparison of them that perished, for they were many. For we read that there were thousands. For it is written, A remnant shall be saved. But now thou lookest for circumcised Christians, and findest not. But there were of the Circumcision, in the primitive times of the faith, many thousands of Christians. Thou lookest for them now, and findest not. Rightly thou findest

not, for He changed His Countenance before Abimelech, and He quitted him, and He departed. And before Achis He changed His countenance, and He quitted him, and He departed. For therefore were the names changed, that the change of names might excite our attention to the signification of the mystery: lest we should think that nothing is told or related in the Scriptures of the Psalms, save what is found in the Books of Kings to have been done: and should not seek there figures of things to come, but take them as histories of things past. Therefore when the names are changed, what is said to thee? Here is something shut up; knock; abide not in the letter, for the letter killeth: but desire the Spirit, for the Spirit giveth life: the understanding of the Spirit saveth him that believeth.

8. How then He quitted king Achis, hear now, my Brethren. I said that Achis is interpreted, How is it? Recollect the Gospel; when our Lord Jesus Christ spoke concerning His Body, He said, Except a man eat My Flesh, and drink My Blood, he shall have no life in him. For My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed. And His Disciples who followed Him feared, and were shocked at His discourse; and understanding it not, they thought that our Lord Jesus Christ said some hard thing, as if they were to eat His Flesh, and to drink His Blood which they saw; and could not endure it, saying as it were, How is it? For error and ignorance and folly are in the person of king Achis. For when it is said, How is it, something is not understood; where something is not understood, there is the darkness of ignorance. There was then, in them, the kingdom of ignorance, as it were king Achis: that is, the kingdom of error prevailed over them. But He said, Except a man eat My Flesh, and drink My Blood: because He had changed His Countenance, it seemed like raving and madness, that He should give to men His Flesh to be eaten, and His Blood to be drunk. Therefore David was thought, as it were, mad, when Achis himself said, Wherefore have ye brought this mad fellow unto me? Doth not this seem madness, Eat My Flesh and drink My Blood? And He saying, Whoso eateth not My Flesh and drinketh not My Blood, shall have no life in him, seemeth to be mad. But to king Achis He seemeth to be mad, that is, to the foolish and ignorant. Therefore He quitted them, and departed: understanding fled from their heart, lest they should be able to comprehend Him. And what said they? As it were, How is it? which is interpreted, Achis. For they said, How can this

Man give us His Flesh to eat? They thought the Lord a mad fellow, and that He knew not what He spoke, and that He was insane. But He Who knew what He said, in that change of His Countenance, and in that seeming raving and madness, declared mysteries, and ‘affected, and drummed upon the doors of the city.’

9. Now must we enquire what that also may be, He affected, and drummed upon the doors. Not without reason is it said, He fell down at the doors of the gate: not without reason is it said, His spittle ran down upon His beard; these things are not said in vain. With the wages of understanding, a long discourse ought not to be burdensome. Ye know, my Brethren, that those same Jews, before whom He changed His Countenance, and sent them away, and departed, this day rest. If they who lost Christ, whom He sent away, and departed, have a vain rest; we have a fruitful rest, that we may understand Christ, Who sent them away, and came unto us. All things are not done in vain; neither were they in that madness of David, of which it is said, He affected, and drummed upon the gates of the city, and was carried in His own hands, and fell down at the doors of the gate, and His spittle ran down over His beard. He affected: what is, He affected? He had an affection. What is it to have an affection? He had compassion on our infirmities, and therefore would He to take upon Himself the same flesh, that therein He might destroy death. Having then compassion on us, He was said to affect. Therefore doth the Apostle reprove those who are hard and without affection. For reproving some he saith, Without natural affection, unmerciful; where is affection, there is mercy. Where is mercy? He had mercy on us from above: for if He had refused to empty himself, remaining in that Form in which He was equal with the Father from everlasting, we had always remained in death: but that He might deliver us from everlasting death, to which the sin of pride had brought us, He humbled Himself, being made obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. Therefore He affected, because He came even to the death of the Cross. And because whoever is crucified is extended on wood; and that to make a drum, flesh, that is, skin, is extended on wood, therefore it is said, He drummed, that is, He was crucified, He was extended on wood. He affected, that is, He had affection for us, that He might lay down His life for His sheep. He drummed: How? upon the doors of the city. The door is that which is

opened to us, that we may believe in God. We had closed the door against Christ, and had opened it to the devil. Against Life Eternal had we our hearts closed. But He, the Lord our God, because we men had our hearts closed against life eternal, and would not see the Word, Which Angels see, with His Cross opened the hearts of mortal men, that is, He drummed against the doors of the city.

10. And was carried in His Own Hands: how indeed this could be done in case of a man, who, Brethren, can understand? For who is carried in ‘his own hands?’ In the hands of others can a man be carried, in his own hands is no man carried. How this may be understood of David according to the letter, we find not; but in Christ we find. For Christ was carried in His Own Hands, when commending His Own Body, He said, This is My Body. For That Body He carried in His Own Hands. This is the Humility of our Lord Jesus Christ, this is much commended unto men. According to this He exhorteth us, Brethren, to live; that is, that we should imitate His Humility; that we should slay Goliath, and holding Christ, should conquer pride. For, He fell down at the doors of the gate. What is, fell down? Cast Himself down unto humility. What is, at the doors of the gate? At the beginning of faith, whereby we are saved. For none beginneth but from the beginning of faith, as it is said in the Song of Songs, Thou shalt come, and shalt pass through from the beginning of faith. We shall come face to face; as it is written, Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. We shall see Him. When? When these things have passed away. Hear also the Apostle Paul, Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face. Before then we see face to face the Word, which Angels see, we have yet need of the doors of the gate, at which the Lord fell down, humbling Himself even unto death.

11. What is it that, His spittle ran down over His beard? For in this, He changed His Countenance before Abimelech, or Achis, and He quitted him, and He departed; those that understood not, He quitted. To whom went He? To the Gentiles. Therefore let us understand, what they could not. The spittle of David ran down over his beard; what is, The spittle? As it were, infantile words; for spittle runneth down with infants. Were not these like

infantile words, Eat ye My Flesh, and drink My Blood? But those infantile words covered His strength. For by the beard is understood strength. The spittle therefore running down over His beard, what is it but words of weakness covering His strength? Your Holiness hath now, as I trust, understood the title of this Psalm. If we should wish now to explain the Psalm also, there is fear lest those things which ye have heard should slip out of your hearts. The title of this Psalm have we explained in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ: since to-morrow is the Lord's Day, and we owe unto you a discourse, let us defer unto to-morrow the text of the Psalm, that ye may hear it also with pleasure.

discourse the second

Those of you who were present yesterday, I doubt not, remember our promise; and now it is time, in the Name of the Lord, to pay the debt. He inspired us to promise, He will also give us power to pay, being always debtors of charity. For that it is which is always paid, and yet always due, as saith the Apostle, Owe no man any thing, but to love one another. The title of this Psalm we explained yesterday, and when the exposition detained us long, the text of the same Psalm we deferred to explain. Let us then hear what the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of His holy Prophet, saith in the words of the Psalm, agreeable to the title which yesterday we handled. Those who were not then present perhaps demand of us also this as a debt; but lest haply through other such delays, we defraud those to whom we ought now to pay what we owe, from a brief recital thereof let them understand as much as they can, who to-day are here present, and yesterday were not. But if any thing moveth them, which they may wish to enquire of more diligently, they will find our ears open to them in Christ's Name, at any other time, lest this be hindered.

2. I said that it was written in the Book of Kings, that David, when he fled from Saul, would be hid with a certain king of Gath named Achis; but when his glory had been made known there, lest, through envy, the same king, to whom he had fled, should contrive any thing against him, he feigned madness, and, as if possessed with frenzy, changed his countenance, and as we read, affected, and drummed upon the doors of the city, and was carried in his own hands, and fell down at the doors of the gate. And king Achis

said, Wherefore have ye brought this fellow to me: have I need of madmen? And so sent him away, that it might be fulfilled which here is written, He changed His Countenance, and He sent him away, and He departed. But he quitted king Achis; but here it is written, that He changed His Countenance before Abimelech, and He quitted him, and He departed. But I said that the names were changed that it might be shewn to be a mystery; lest if the same name had been repeated in the title of the Psalm, he should seem not to have prophesied to us something mysterious, but to have related it as a fact. Both names then contain a great mystery. For Achis is interpreted, How is it? Abimelech is interpreted, The kingdom of my father. In that word then which is called, How is it, is signified ignorance, and by it is to be understood, the expression of one wondering and not perceiving: but in that which is called Abimelech, is signified the kingdom of the Jews. For that in the person of Christ may be called, The kingdom of My father, because His father, according to the flesh, was David, and the kingdom of David was in the nation of the Jews. Therefore, before the kingdom of His father, He changed His Countenance, and He sent him away, and He departed; because there was there a sacrifice after the order of Aaron, and afterwards He of His Own Body and Blood appointed a sacrifice after the order of Melchizedek. He changed then His Countenance in the Priesthood, and sent away the kingdom of the Jews, and came to the Gentiles. What then is, He affected? He was full of affection. For what is so full of affection as the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, seeing our infirmity, that He might deliver us from everlasting death, underwent temporal death with such great injury and contumely? And He drummed: because a drum is not made, except when a skin is extended on wood; and David drummed, to signify that Christ should be crucified. But, He drummed upon the doors of the city: what are the doors of the city, but our hearts which we had closed against Christ, Who by the drum of His Cross hath opened the hearts of mortal men? And was carried in His Own Hands: how carried in His Own Hands? Because when He commended His Own Body and Blood, He took into His Hands that which the faithful know; and in a manner carried Himself, when He said, This is My Body. And He fell down at the doors of the gate; that is, He humbled Himself. For this it is, to fall down even at the very beginning of our faith. For the door of the gate is the beginning of faith; whence beginneth the Church, and arriveth at last even unto sight:

that as it believeth those things which it seeth not, it may deserve to enjoy them, when it shall have begun to see face to face. So is the title of the Psalm; briefly we have heard it; let us now hear the very words of Him that affecteth, and drummeth upon the doors of the city.

3. Ver. 1. I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be ever in my mouth. So speaketh Christ, so also let a Christian speak; for a Christian is in the Body of Christ; and therefore was Christ made Man, that that Christian might be enabled to be an Angel, who saith, I will bless the Lord at all times. When shall I bless the Lord? When He blesseth thee? When the goods of this world abound? When thou hast great abundance of corn, oil, and wine, of gold and silver, of servants and cattle; when this mortal health remaineth unwounded and sound; when all that are born to thee grow up, nothing is withdrawn by immature death, happiness wholly reigneth in thy house, and all things overflow around thee; then shalt thou bless the Lord? No; but at all times. Therefore both then, and when according to the time, or according to the scourges of our Lord God, these things are troubled, are taken away, are seldom born to thee, and born pass away. For these things come to pass, and thence followeth penury, need, labour, pain, and temptation. But thou, who hast sung, I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall be ever in my mouth, both when He giveth them, bless; and when He taketh them away, bless. For it is He that giveth, it is He that taketh away: but Himself from him that blesseth Him He taketh not away.

4. But who is it that blesseth the Lord at all times, except the humble in heart. For very humility taught our Lord in His Own Body and Blood: because when He commendeth His Own Body and Blood, He commendeth His Humility, in that which is written in this history, in that seeming madness of David, which we have passed by, And his spittle ran down over his beard. When the Apostle was read, Ye heard the same spittle, but running down over the beard. One saith perhaps, What spittle have we heard? Was it not read but now, where the Apostle saith, The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom? But now it was read, But we preach, saith he, Christ crucified, (for then He drummed,) unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of

God. Because the Foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the Weakness of God is stronger than men. For spittle signifieth foolishness; spittle signifieth weakness. But if the Foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the Weakness of God is stronger than men; let not the spittle as it were offend thee, but observe that it runneth down over the beard: for as by the spittle, weakness; so by the beard, strength is signified. He covered then His Strength by the body of His Weakness, and that which without was weak, appeared as it were in spittle; but within His Divine Strength was covered as a beard. Therefore humility is commended unto us. Be humble if thou wouldest bless the Lord at all times, and that His praise should be ever in thy mouth. Because Job not only blessed the Lord, when he had abundance of all things, wherewith we read that he was made both rich and happy, rich in cattle and servants and houses, happy in children and in all good things. Taken away were all these at one time, yet he fulfilled what in this Psalm is written, saying, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it pleased the Lord, so it came to pass, Blessed be the name of the Lord. See here thou hast an example of one blessing the Lord at all times.

5. But wherefore doth man bless the Lord at all times? Because he is humble. What is it to be humble? To take not praise unto himself. Who would himself be praised, is proud: who is not proud, is humble. Wouldest thou not then be proud? That thou mayest be humble, say what is here written; (ver. 2.) In the Lord shall my soul be praised: the humble shall hear thereof and be glad. Those then who will not be praised in the Lord, are not humble, but fierce, rough, lifted up, proud. Gentle beasts would the Lord have; be thou the Lord’s beast, that is, be thou humble. He sitteth upon thee, He ruleth thee: fear not lest thou stumble, and fall headlong: that indeed is thy infirmity; but consider Who sitteth upon thee. Thou art an ass’s colt, but thou carriest Christ. For even He on an ass’s colt came into the city; and that beast was gentle. Was that beast praised? Was it said to that beast, Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord? The ass carried; but it was He that was carried, that by those going before and following was praised. And haply said the beast, In the Lord shall my soul be praised; the humble shall hear thereof and be glad. That ass never said this, Brethren; but this must the People say, which doth imitate that beast, if it would carry its Lord. Haply the People is wroth that it is

compared to the ass, whereon the Lord sat; and some uplifted and proud will say to me, See he hath made us asses. Let him be the Lord’s ass, whoever saith this, lest he be horse or mule which have no understanding; for ye know the Psalm where it is said, Be not ye as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding. For horse and mules sometimes lift up their neck, and by their own fierceness throw off their rider. They are tamed with the bit, with bridle, with stripes, until they learn to submit, and to carry their master. But thou, before thy jaws are bruised with the bridle, be humble, and carry thy Lord: wish not praise for thyself, but praised be He, Who sitteth upon thee, and say thou, In the Lord shall my soul be praised; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. For when they hear that are not humble, they are not glad, but wroth: and the same are they which say that we have made them asses; but let them which are humble deign to hear, and to be what they hear.

6. Now followeth, (ver. 3.) O magnify the Lord with me. Who is this that exhorteth us, that we should magnify the Lord with him? Whoever, Brethren, is in the body of Christ, ought for this to labour, that the Lord may be magnified with him. For he loveth the Lord, whoever he is. And how doth he love Him? So as not to envy his fellow-lover. For whoever loveth carnally, must needs love with deadly jealousy. If haply for a great sum he hath been able to see naked her whom with deadly love he hath desired, doth he wish that another also should see her? Needs must he be wounded with jealousy and envy, if another also have seen her. And so is chastity preserved, if he alone hath seen who may, and not another; or not even he. Not so is the Wisdom of God. Her we shall see, face to face, and we shall all see, and no one there will be jealous. Unto all She sheweth Herself, and unto all is pure and chaste. They are changed into Her, and She is not changed into them. She is Truth indeed, She is God indeed. Have ye ever heard, Brethren, that our God can be changed? The Truth Supreme above all is He, the Word of God is He, the Wisdom of God is He, by Whom all things were made: He hath His lovers. But what saith His lover? O magnify the Lord with me: I would not alone magnify the Lord, I would not alone love, I would not alone embrace Him. For neither if I embrace Him, will there be no room where another may lay his hands. Such breadth is there in Wisdom Itself, that all souls may embrace and enjoy Her. And what shall I

say, Brethren? Let them blush who so love God as to envy others. Abandoned men love a charioteer, and whoever loveth a charioteer or hunter, wisheth the whole people to love with him, and exhorteth, saying, Love with me this pantomime, love with me this or that shame. He calleth among the people that shame may be loved with him; and doth not a Christian call in the Church, that the Truth of God may be loved with him? Stir up then love in yourselves, Brethren; and call to every one of yours, and say, O magnify the Lord with me. Let there be in you that fervour. Wherefore are these things recited and explained? If ye love God, bring quickly to the love of God all who are joined unto you, and all who are in your house; if the Body of Christ is loved by you, that is, if the unity of the Church, bring them quickly to enjoy, and say, O magnify the Lord with me.

7. And let us exalt His Name together. What is, let us exalt His Name together? That is, in one. For many copies so have it, O magnify the Lord with me; and let us exalt His Name in one. Whether it be said, together, or in one, it is the same thing. Therefore bring quickly whom ye can, by exhorting, by transporting, by beseeching, by disputing, by rendering a reason, with meekness, with gentleness. Bring them quickly unto love; that if they magnify the Lord, they may magnify Him in one. The party of Donatus seem indeed unto themselves to magnify the Lord: why doth the whole world offend them? Let us, Brethren, say unto them, O magnify the Lord with me; and let us exalt His Name in one. Wherefore would ye magnify the Lord in separation? He is One; wherefore would ye make two peoples of God? Wherefore would ye rend the Body of Christ? For surely He hung upon the Cross, when He drummed; and when He hung upon the Cross, He gave up the ghost; and they came who had suspended Him, and found that He had given up the ghost, and they brake not His legs: but the legs of the thieves, yet living on the cross, they brake, that by a speedy death through very pain they might be freed from their torment, which thing was wont to be done to persons crucified. So came the persecutor, and found that the Lord had quietly given up the ghost, as He said Himself, I have power to lay down my life. (For whom laid he down His life? For all His people, for His whole body.) So the persecutor came, and brake not the legs of Christ; Donatus came, and rent the Church of Christ. The Body of Christ upon the Cross is whole, even in the hands of His persecutors: and in

the hands of Christians the Church of Christ is not whole. Let us then, Brethren, cry with groans as much as we can, saying, O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His Name in one. For so the Church crieth unto them; it is the voice of the Church crying unto them who have cut themselves off from her. For whereby were they rent from her? Through pride. But Christ teacheth humility, when He commendeth His Body and Blood: this as I said to your Holiness, is treated and celebrated in the text of this Psalm; wherein is commended the Body and Blood of Christ, when the Humility of Christ is commended, which for our sakes He deigned to take upon Himself.

8. Ver. 4. I sought the Lord, and He heard me. Where heard the Lord? Within. Where giveth He? Within. There thou prayest, there thou art heard, there thou art blessed. Thou hast prayed, thou art heard, thou art blessed; and he knoweth not who standeth by thee: it is all carried on in secret, as the Lord saith in the Gospel, Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father Which is in secret; and thy Father Which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. When therefore thou enterest into thy chamber, thou enterest into thy heart. Blessed are they who rejoice when they enter into their heart, and find therein nought of evil. Let your Holiness attend; as men are unwilling to enter their houses who have bad wives, as they go out to their business, and rejoice; when the hour has come to return to their own house they are sorrowful; for they are about to enter to weariness, to murmurings, to bitterness, to confusions; for a house is not quiet, where between a man and his wife there is no peace; and to him it is better to wander about abroad. If then they are miserable, who when they return to their own walls fear lest they be troubled by some disturbance of their own family, how much more miserable are they, who are unwilling to return to their own conscience, lest they be overturned by the strife of their sins. Therefore that thou mayest be able to return willingly to thy heart, cleanse it, for Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God. Take away thence filthy desires, take away the spot of avarice, take away the plague of superstition, take away sacrilege, and evil thoughts; hatreds also, I say not against a friend, but even against an enemy; take away all these; so enter into thy heart, and thou shalt rejoice therein. When then thou hast begun to rejoice, the very cleanness of thy heart will delight thee, and will

make thee to pray: as when thou comest to any place, where is silence, where is quiet, the place is clean; thou sayest, Let us pray here; and the quietness of the place delighteth thee, and thou believest that God will there hear thee. If then the visible cleanness of a place delighteth thee, wherefore doth not the uncleanness of thy heart offend thee? Enter in, cleanse all, lift up thine eyes unto God, and immediately he will hear thee. Cry and say, I sought the Lord, and He heard me; and delivered me out of all my troubles. Wherefore? Because even when thou art enlightened, when thou hast begun here to have a good conscience, there remain troubles; because there remaineth some infirmity, until death be swallowed up in victory, and this mortal have put on immortality: needs must thou in this world be scourged; needs must thou suffer some temptations, some suggestions: God will cleanse all, He will deliver thee from all thy troubles; seek thou Him.

9. I sought the Lord, and He heard me. Who then are not heard, seek not the Lord. Attend, Holy Brethren; he said not, I sought gold from the Lord, and He heard me; I sought from the Lord long life, and He heard me; I sought from the Lord this or that, and He heard me. It is one thing to seek any thing from the Lord, another to seek the Lord Himself. I sought (saith he) the Lord, and He heard me. But thou, when thou prayest, saying, Kill that my enemy, seekest not the Lord, but, as it were, makest thyself a judge over thy enemy, and makest thy God an executioner. How knowest thou that he is not better than thou, whose death thou seekest? In that very thing haply he is, that he seeketh not thine. Therefore seek not from the Lord any thing without, but seek the Lord Himself, and He will hear thee, and while thou yet speakest, He will say, Lo, here I am. What is, Lo, here I am? Lo, I am present: what wouldest thou? what seekest thou of Me? Whatever I should give thee, is more vile than I; Myself have thou, Me enjoy, Me embrace: not yet art thou able wholly; by faith touch Me, and thou shalt cleave unto Me, (this God saith to thee,) and thy other burdens will I remove from off thee, that thou mayest wholly cleave unto Me, when I have changed this thy mortal to immortality, that thou mayest be equal to My Angels, and ever see My Face, and mayest rejoice, and thy joy none shall take from thee; because thou soughtest the Lord, and He heard thee, and out of all thy troubles delivered thee.

10. I have said who was the exhorter, namely, that lover, who would not alone embrace what he loveth, and saith, (ver. 5.) Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened. For he saith what he himself proved. For some spiritual person in the Body of Christ, or even our Lord Jesus Christ Himself according to the flesh, the Head exhorting His Own Members, saith; what? Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened. Or rather some spiritual Christian inviteth us to approach to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. But let us approach to Him and be lightened; not as the Jews approached to Him, that they might be darkened; for they approached to Him that they might crucify Him: let us approach to Him that we may receive His Body and Blood. They by Him crucified were darkened; we by eating and drinking The Crucified are lightened. Approach unto Him, and be ye lightened. Lo, this is said to the Gentiles. Christ was crucified amid the Jews raging and seeing; the Gentiles were absent; lo, they have approached who were in darkness, and they who saw not are lightened. Whereby approach the Gentiles? By following with faith, by longing with the heart, by running with charity. Thy feet are thy charity. Have two feet, be not lame. What are thy two feet? The two commandments of love, of thy God, and of thy Neighbour. With these feet run thou unto God, approach unto Him, for He hath both exhorted thee to run, and hath Himself shed His Own Light, as he hath magnificently and divinely continued. And your faces shall not be ashamed. Approach (saith he) unto Him, and be ye lightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed. No face shall be ashamed but of the proud. Wherefore? Because he would be lifted up, and when he hath suffered insult, or ignominy, or mischance in this world, or any affliction, he is ashamed. But fear not thou, approach unto Him, and thou shalt not be ashamed. Whatever thy enemy doth to thee, he seemeth to be superior to thee before men, but before God thou art superior. I have taken, I have bound, I have killed: how superior seem they to themselves who say these things! How superior seemed the Jews unto themselves, when they buffeted the Lord, when they spat in His face, and smote Him on the head with a reed, when they crowned Him with thorns, when they covered Him with a robe of ignominy! How superior were they! And He seemed inferior, because He fell down at the doors of the gate: but He was not ashamed. For He was the True Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. As then the Light cannot be confounded, so He

suffereth not him that is lightened to be confounded. Therefore approach unto Him, and be ye lightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed.

11. But saith some one, How shall I approach unto Him? With so great evils, so great sins am I burdened; so great crimes cry out from my conscience; how can I dare to approach unto God? How? If thou humble thyself through penance. But I am ashamed, sayest thou, to do penance. Approach then unto Him, and thou shalt be lightened, and thy face shall not be ashamed. For if the fear of being ashamed recalleth thee from penance, but penance maketh thee to approach unto God: seest thou not that thou bearest thy punishment in thy face, for therefore was thy face ashamed, because it approached not unto God, and therefore it approached not, because it will not do penance? As the Prophet testifieth, (ver. 6.) The poor man cried, and the Lord heard him. He teacheth thee how thou mayest be heard. Therefore art thou not heard, because thou art rich. Lest haply thou say, thou criedst and wast not heard, hear wherefore; The poor man cried, and the Lord heard him. As poor cry thou, and the Lord heareth. And how shall I cry as poor? By not, if thou hast aught, presuming therefrom upon thy own strength: by understanding that thou art needy; by understanding that so long art thou poor, as thou hast not Him Who maketh thee rich. But how did the Lord hear him? And saved him out of all his troubles. And how saveth He men out of all their troubles? (Ver. 7.) The Angel of the Lord shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them. So it is written, brethren, not as some bad copies have it, The Lord shall send His Angel round about them that fear Him, and He shall deliver them: but thus, The Angel of the Lord shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them. Whom called He here the Angel of the Lord, who shall send round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them? Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is called in Prophecy, the Angel of the great Counsel, the Messenger of the great Counsel; so the Prophets called Him. Even He then, the Angel of the great Counsel, that is, the Messenger, shall send unto them that fear the Lord, and shall deliver them. Fear not then lest thou be hid: wheresoever thou hast feared the Lord, there doth that Angel know thee, Who shall send to succour thee, and shall deliver thee.

12. Now will He speak openly of the same Sacrament, whereby He was carried in His Own Hands. (Ver. 8.) O taste and see that the Lord is good. Doth not the Psalm now open itself, and shew thee that seeming insanity and constant madness, the same insanity and sober inebriety of that David, who in a figure shewed I know not what, when in the person of king Achis they said to him, How is it? When the Lord said, Except a man eat My Flesh and drink My Blood, he shall have no life in him? And they in whom reigned Achis, that is, error and ignorance, said; what said they? How can this man give us his flesh to eat? If thou art ignorant, Taste and see that the Lord is good: but if thou understandest not, thou art king Achis: David shall change His Countenance and shall depart from thee, and shall quit thee, and shall depart.

13. Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. Why needeth this to be explained at length? Whoever trusteth not in the Lord, is miserable. Who is there that trusteth not in the Lord? He that trusteth in himself. Sometimes, which is even worse, (my Brethren, attend,) sometimes men trust not in themselves, but in other men. While Garseus is alive and well, thou canst do me no harm; saith one, and perhaps he speaketh of one already dead. In this very city, saith one, while such an one is alive and well; and he perhaps has died in another place. And how soon do men say this: they say not, I trust in God, that He will not permit thee to hurt me. They say not, I trust in my God, that although He may permit thee to touch somewhat of mine, to touch my soul He will not permit thee. But when they say, While such an one is alive and well, they both refuse to have safety themselves, and weigh down these, through whom they think to have safety.

14. Ver. 9. O fear the Lord, all ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him. For many therefore will not fear God the Lord, lest they suffer hunger. It is said to them, Defraud not; and they say, Whence can I feed myself? No art can be without imposture; no business can be without fraud. But fraud God punisheth: fear God. But if I should fear God, I shall not have whence to live. O fear the Lord, all ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him. He promiseth plenty to him that trembleth, and doubteth, lest haply if he should fear God, he should lose things superfluous. The Lord fed thee despising Him, and will He desert thee

fearing Him? Attend, and say not, Such a one is rich, and I am poor. I fear the Lord, he by not fearing how much has he gained, and I by fearing am bare! See what follows; (Ver. 10.) The rich do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. If thou receive it according to the letter, He seemeth to deceive thee, for thou seest that many rich men that are wicked die in their riches, and are not made poor while they live; thou seest them grow old, and come even to the end of life amid great abundance and riches. Thou seest their funeral pomp celebrated with great profusion, the man himself brought rich even to the sepulchre, having expired in beds of ivory, his family weeping around; and thou sayest in thy mind, if haply thou knowest some both sins and crimes done by him: I know what things that man hath done; lo, he hath grown old, he hath died in his bed, his friends follow him to the grave, his funeral is celebrated with all this pomp; I know what he hath done; the Scripture has deceived me, and has spoken falsely, where I hear and sing; The rich do lack and suffer hunger. When was this man in need? when did he suffer hunger? But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. Daily I rise up to Church, daily I bend the knee, daily I seek the Lord, and have nothing good: this man sought not the Lord, and he hath died in the midst of all these good things! Thus thinking, the snare of offence choketh him; for he seeketh mortal food on the earth, and seeketh not a true reward in heaven, and so he putteth his head into the devil’s noose, his jaws are tied close, and the devil holdeth him fast unto evil doing, that so he may imitate the evil men, whom he seeth to die in such plenty.

15. Therefore understand it not so. And how shall I understand it? Of spiritual goods. But where are they? They are not seen with the eyes, but with the heart. I see not those same goods. He seeth them who loveth. Righteousness I see not. No, for it is not gold, nor is it silver. If it were gold, thou wouldest see it. Because it is faith, thou seest it not. And if thou seest not faith, wherefore lovest thou a faithful servant? Ask thyself, what sort of servant thou lovest. Perhaps thou hast a servant handsome, of good stature, well formed; but a thief, good for nothing, fraudulent: but perhaps thou hast another small of stature, deformed in face, of bad complexion; but faithful, thrifty, sober: attend, I pray thee; which of these two lovest thou? If thou askest the eyes of the flesh, the handsome dishonest one prevaileth with

thee; if the eyes of the heart, then prevaileth the deformed faithful. Thou seest then what it is thou wouldest that another should shew unto thee, namely, faith; do thou shew unto him the same. Wherefore rejoicest thou at him who sheweth faith towards thee, and praisest him for those goods which are not seen but with the eye of the heart? When thou art filled with spiritual riches, canst thou be poor? And was he therefore rich, because he had a bed of ivory; and art thou poor who hast the chamber of thy heart filled with such jewelry of virtues, justice, truth, charity, faith, endurance? Unfold thy riches, if thou hast them, and compare them with the riches of the rich. But such an one has found in the market mules of great value, and has bought them. If thou couldest find faith to be sold, how much wouldest thou give for that, which God willeth that thou shouldest have gratis, and thou art ungrateful? Those rich then lack, they lack, and what is heavier, they lack bread. But do not haply think that they lack gold and silver, although indeed they lack these also. How much had such a man; and yet what could ever satisfy him? So he died lacking, because he wished to gain more than he possessed. They lack even bread. How lack they even bread? If thou understandest bread. For He hath said, I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven. And again, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing: but what manner of good, I have already said,

16. Ver. 11. Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Ye think, brethren, that I say this: think that David saith it; think that an Apostle saith it; nay think that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself saith it; Come, ye children, hearken unto Me. Let us hearken unto Him together; hearken ye unto Him through us. For He would teach us; He the Humble, He that drummeth, He that affecteth, would teach us. And what saith He? Come, ye children, hearken unto Me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Let Him then teach, let us give ear, let us give heart. Let us not open the ears of the flesh, and shut those of the heart; but as He Himself said in His Gospel, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Who would not hear Christ teaching through His Prophet?

17. Ver. 12. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth to see good days? He asketh a question. Doth not every one among you answer, I? Is there any man among you that loveth not life, that is, that desireth not life, and loveth not to see good days? Do ye not daily thus murmur, and thus speak; How long shall we suffer these things? Daily are they worse and worse: in our fathers’ time were days more joyful, were days better. O if thou couldest ask those same, thy fathers, in like manner would they murmur to thee of their own days. Our fathers were happy, miserable are we, evil days have we: such an one ruled over us, we thought that after his death might some refreshing be given to us; worse things have come: O God, shew unto us good days! What man is he that desireth life, and loveth to see good days? Let him not seek here good days. A good thing he seeketh, but not in its right place doth he seek it. As, if thou shouldest seek some righteous man in a country, wherein he lived not, it would be said to thee, A good man thou seekest, a great man thou seekest, seek him still, but not here; in vain thou seekest him here, thou wilt never find him. Good days thou seekest, together let us seek them, seek not here. But our fathers had them. Ye are deceived: all men here have so laboured. Read the Scriptures; therefore God willed them to be written, that we might have consolation. In the time of Elias was there a famine, our fathers suffered it. The heads of dead beasts were sold for gold; they slew their own people, and ate them; and two women agreed together to kill their sons, and eat them; one killed her son, and the two ate him together; the other refused to kill her son, and she who had first slain her son sued her, and this her suit came before the king, they betook themselves even before the king, contending concerning the slaying of their sons. As concerning such food, God avert what we read. Always are there evil days in this world, but always good days in God. Good days had Abraham, but within, in his heart: evil days had he, when through famine he changed his place, and sought food. So all men have sought food. Had Paul good days, who saith, In hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness? But let not the servants be wroth; the Lord Himself had not good days in this world: insults, injuries, the Cross, and all those evils did He suffer.

18. Let not a Christian then murmur, let him see whose steps he followeth: but if he loveth good days, let him hearken unto Him teaching and saying,

Come, ye children, hearken unto Me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What wouldest thou? Life and good days. Hear, and do. (Ver. 13.) Keep thy tongue from evil. This do. I will not, saith a miserable man, I will not keep my tongue from evil, and yet I desire life and good days. If a workman of thine should say to thee, I indeed lay waste this vineyard, yet I require of thee my reward; thou broughtest me to the vineyard to lop and prune it, I cut away all the useful wood, I will cut short also the very trunks of the vines, that thou have thereon nothing to gather, and when I have done this, thou shalt repay to me my labour. Wouldest thou not call him mad? Wouldest thou not drive him from thy house or ever he put his hand to the knife? Such are those men, who would both do evil, and swear falsely, and speak blasphemy against God, and murmur, and defraud, and be drunken, and dispute, and commit adultery, and use charms, and consult diviners, and withal see good days. To such it is said, thou canst not doing ill seek a good reward. If thou art unjust, shall God also be unjust? What shall I do, then? What desirest thou? Life I desire, good days I desire. Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile, that is, defraud not any, lie not to any.

19. But what is, Depart from evil? It is little that thou injure none, murder none, steal not, commit not adultery, do no wrong, speak no false witness; Depart from evil. When thou hast departed, thou sayest, Now I am safe, I have done all, I shall have life, I shall see good days. Not only saith he, Depart from evil, but also, and do good. It is nothing that thou spoil not: clothe the naked. If thou hast not spoiled, thou hast declined from evil; but thou wilt not do good, except thou receive the stranger into thine house. So then depart from evil, as to do good. Seek peace, and ensue it. He hath not said, Thou shalt have peace here; seek it, and ensue it. Whither shall I ensue it? Whither it hath gone before. For the Lord is our peace, hath risen again, and hath ascended into Heaven. Seek peace, and ensue it; because when thou also hast risen, this mortal shall be changed, and thou shalt embrace peace there where no man shall trouble thee. For there is perfect peace, where thou wilt not hunger. For here it is bread that maketh thy peace: withhold bread, and see what a war there will be within thy bowels. How is it that even the righteous groan here, Brethren? That ye may know that here we seek peace, but shall obtain it only in the end. But in part must we have

it here, that there we may deserve it wholly. What is, in part? Let us be peaceful here, let us love our neighbour as ourselves. So love thy brother as thyself, be at peace with him. But there cannot but exist some strifes, as between brethren and between Saints have existed, as between Barnabas and Paul, but not such as to destroy concord, not such as to interrupt charity. For even thyself thou sometimes resistest, and yet thou hatest not thyself. For every one who repenteth of any thing, striveth with himself. He hath sinned, he returneth, he is angry with himself that he hath done this, that he hath committed that. Therefore he is at strife with himself, but that strife tendeth to concord. See how a certain righteous man striveth with himself, saying, Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul; and why dost thou disquiet me? Hope thou in God; for I will yet praise Him. When he saith to his soul, Why dost thou disquiet me? it surely did disquiet him. He wished perhaps himself to suffer for Christ, and his soul became sorrowful. And he who knew and said, Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me? had not yet peace with himself; but in his heart he clave unto Christ, that his soul might follow Him, and not disquiet himself. Seek then peace, Brethren. The Lord saith, These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. Peace in this world I promise not unto you. In this life is not true peace, neither tranquillity. The joy of immortality, the society of Angels, is promised. But whoever hath not sought it while here he hath been, shall not have it, when there he shall arrive.

20. Ver. 15. The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous: fear not then; labour; the eyes of the Lord are upon thee. And His Ears are open unto their prayers. What wouldest thou more? If an householder in a great house should not hearken to a servant murmuring, he would complain, and say, What hardship do we here suffer, and none heareth us. Canst thou say this of God, What hardships I suffer, and none heareth me? If He heard me, haply, sayest thou, He would take away my tribulation: I cry unto Him, and yet have tribulation. Only do thou hold fast His ways, and when thou art in tribulation, He heareth thee. But He is a Physician, and still hast thou something of putrefaction; thou criest out, but still He cutteth, and taketh not away His Hand, until He hath cut as much as pleaseth Him. For that Physician is cruel who heareth a man, and spareth his wound and putrefaction. How do mothers rub their children in the baths for their health.

Do not the little ones cry out in their hands? Are they then cruel because they spare not, nor hearken unto their tears? Are they not full of affection? And yet the children cry out, and are not spared. So our God also is full of charity, but therefore seemeth He not to hear, that He may spare and heal us for everlasting.

21. The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His Ears are open unto their prayers. Haply say the wicked, I securely do evil, because the Eyes of the Lord are not upon me: God attendeth to the righteous, me He seeth not, and whatever I do, I do securely. Immediately added the Holy Spirit, seeing the thoughts of men, and said, The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His Ears are open unto their prayers: (ver. 16.) but the Face of the Lord is against them that do evil; to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

22. Ver. 17. The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and delivered them out of all their troubles. Righteous were the Three Children; out of the furnace cried they unto the Lord, and in His praises their flames cooled. The flame could not approach nor hurt the innocent and righteous Children praising God, and He delivered them out of the fire. Some one saith, Lo, truly righteous were those who were heard, as it is written, The righteous cried, and the Lord heard them, and delivered them out of all their troubles: but I have cried, and He delivereth me not; either I am not righteous, or I do not the things which He commandeth me, or haply He seeth me not. Fear not: only do what He commandeth; and if He deliver thee not bodily, He will deliver thee spiritually. For He Who took out of the fire the Three Children, did He take out of the fire the Maccabees? Did not the first sing hymns in the flames, these last in the flames expire? The God of the Three Children, was not He the God also of the Maccabees? The one He delivered, the other He delivered not. Nay, He delivered both: but the Three Children He so delivered, that even the carnal were confounded; but the Maccabees therefore He delivered not so, that those who persecuted them should go into greater torments, while they thought that they had overcome God’s Martyrs. He delivered Peter, when the Angel came unto him being in prison, and said, Arise, and go forth, and suddenly his chains were loosed, and he followed the Angel, and He delivered him. Had Peter lost

righteousness when He delivered him not from the cross? Did He not deliver him then? Even then He delivered him. Did his long life make him unrighteous? Haply He heard him more at last than at first, when truly he delivered him out of all his troubles. For when He first delivered him, how many things did he suffer afterwards! For thither He sent him at last, where he could have suffered no evil.

23. Ver. 18. The Lord is nigh unto them that have broken their heart; and saveth such as be lowly in spirit. God is High: let a Christian be lowly. If he would that the Most High God draw nigh unto him, let him be lowly. A great mystery, Brethren. God is above all: thou raisest thyself, and touchest not Him: thou humblest thyself, and He descendeth unto thee. (Ver. 19.) Many are the troubles of the righteous: doth He say, Therefore let Christians be righteous, therefore let them hear My Word, that they may suffer no tribulation? He promiseth not this; but saith, Many are the troubles of the righteous. Rather, if they be unrighteous they have fewer troubles, if righteous they have many. But after few tribulations, or none, these shall come to tribulation everlasting, whence they shall never be delivered: but the righteous after many tribulations shall come to peace everlasting, where they shall never suffer any evil. Many are the tribulations of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of all.

24. Ver. 20. The Lord keepeth all their bones: not one of them shall be broken: this also, Brethren, let us not receive carnally. Bones are the firm supports of the faithful. For as in flesh our bones give firmness, so in the heart of a Christian it is faith that gives firmness. The patience then which is in faith, is as the bones of the inner man: this is that which cannot be broken. The Lord keepeth all their bones: not one of them shall be broken. If of our Lord God Jesus Christ he had said this, The Lord keepeth all the bones of His Son; not one of them shall be broken; as is prefigured of Him also in another place, when the lamb was spoken of that should be slain, and it was said of it, Neither shall ye break a bone thereof: then was it fulfilled in the Lord, because when He hung upon the Cross, He expired before they came to the Cross, and found His Body lifeless already, and would not break His legs, that it might be fulfilled which was written. But He gave this promise to other Christians also, The Lord keepeth all their

bones; not one of them shall be broken. Therefore, Brethren, if we see any Saint suffer tribulation, and haply either by a Physician so cut, or by some persecutor so mangled, that his bones be broken; let us not say, This man was not righteous, for this hath the Lord promised to His righteous, of whom He said, The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken. Wouldest thou see that He spoke of other bones, those which we called the firm supports of faith, that is, patience and endurance in all tribulations? For these are the bones which are not broken. Hear, and see ye in the very Passion of our Lord, what I say. The Lord was in the middle Crucified; near Him were two thieves: the one mocked, the other believed: the one was condemned, the other justified: the one had his punishment both in this world, and that which shall be, but unto the other said the Lord, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise; and yet those who came brake not the bones of the Lord, but of the thieves they brake: as much were broken the bones of the thief who blasphemed, as of the thief who believed. Where then is that which is spoken, The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken? Lo, unto whom He said, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise, could He not keep all his bones? The Lord answereth thee: Yea, I kept them; for the firm support of his faith could not be broken by those blows whereby his legs were broken.

25. Ver. 21. The death of sinners is the worst. Attend, Brethren, for the sake of those things which I said. Truly Great is the Lord, and His Mercy, truly Great is He Who gave to us to eat His Body, wherein He suffered such great things, and His Blood to drink. How regardeth He them that think evil and say, ‘Such an one died ill, by beasts was he devoured: he was not a righteous man, therefore he perished ill; for else would he not have perished.’ Is he then righteous, who dieth in his own house and in his own bed? This then (sayest thou) it is whereat I wonder; because I know the sins and the crimes of this same man, and yet he died well; in his own house, within his own doors, with no injury of travel, with none even in mature age. Hearken, The death of sinners is worst. What seemeth to thee a good death, is worst if thou couldest see within. Thou seest him outwardly lying on his bed, dost thou see him inwardly carried to hell? Hearken, Brethren, and learn from the Gospel, what is the ‘worst death’ of sinners. Were there not two in that age, a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen,

and fared sumptuously every day; another a poor man who lay at his door full of sores, and the dogs came and licked his sores, and he desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table? Now it came to pass that the poor man died, (righteous was that poor man,) and was carried by Angels into Abraham's bosom. He who saw his body lying at the rich man's door, and no man to bury it, what haply said he? So die he who is my enemy; and whoever persecutes me, so may I see him. His body is accursed with spitting, his wounds stink; and yet in Abraham's bosom he resteth. If we are Christians, let us believe: if we believe not, Brethren, let none feign himself a Christian. Faith bringeth us to the end. As the Lord spake these things, so are they. Doth indeed an astrologer speak unto thee, and it is true, and doth Christ speak, and it is false? But by what sort of death died the rich man? What sort of death must it not be in purple and fine linen, how sumptuous, how pompous! What funeral ceremonies were there! In what spices was that body buried! And yet when he was in hell, being in torments, from the finger of that despised poor man he desired one drop of water to be poured upon his burning tongue, and obtained it not. Learn then what meaneth, The death of sinners is worst; and ask not beds covered with costly garments, and to have the flesh wrapped in many rich things, friends exhibiting a shew of lamentation, a household beating their breasts, a crowd of attendants going before and following when the body is carried out, marble and gilded memorials. For if ye ask those things, they answer you what is false, that of many not light sinners, but altogether wicked, the death is best, who have deserved to be so lamented, so embalmed, so covered, so carried out, so entombed. But ask the Gospel, and it will shew to your faith the soul of the rich man burning in torments, which was nothing profited by all those honours and obsequies, which to his dead body the vanity of the living did afford.

26. But because there are many kinds of sinners, and not to be a sinner is difficult, or perhaps in this life impossible, he added immediately, of what kind of sinners the death is worst. And they that hate the righteous one (saith he) shall perish. What righteous one, but Him that justifieth the ungodly? Whom, but our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is also the propitiation for our sins? Who then hate Him, have the worst death; because they die in their sins, who are not through Him reconciled to our God. (Ver. 22.) For

the Lord redeemeth the souls of His servants. But according to the soul is death to be understood either the worst or best, not according to bodily either dishonour, or honours which men see. And none of them which trust in Him, shall perish; this is the manner of human righteousness, that mortal life, however advanced, because without sin it can not be, in this perisheth not, while it trusteth in Him, in Whom is remission of sins. Amen.

PSALM 35

discourse i

On the first part of the Psalm.

How that this Psalm, by command of my Brethren and fellow-Bishops, hath been laid on me to be handled, be your charity aware. They have willed that we all hear somewhat therefrom. For from Him do we all hear, from Whom we learn together, and in Whose school we are fellow-disciples. The title of it causeth us no delay, for it is both brief, and to be understood not difficult, (especially to those nursed in the Church of God.) For so it is, To David himself. The Psalm then is to David himself: now David is interpreted, Strong in hand, or Desirable. The Psalm then is to the Strong in hand, and Desirable, to Him Who for us hath overcome death, Who unto us hath promised life: for in this is He Strong in hand, that He hath overcome death for us; in this is He Desirable, that He hath promised unto us life eternal. For what stronger than That Hand Which touched the bier, and he that was dead rose up? What stronger than That Hand Which overcame the world, not armed with steel, but pierced with wood? Or what more desirable than He, Whom not having seen, the Martyrs wished even to die, that they might be worthy to come unto Him? Therefore is the Psalm unto Him: to Him let our heart, to Him our tongue sing worthily: if yet Himself shall deign to give somewhat to sing. None to Him singeth worthily, but who hath from Him received what to sing. Nay this which now we sing, was spoken by His Spirit through His Prophet, and in those words wherein we acknowledge both ourselves and Him. Neither do we wrong, because we say both ourselves and Him: since when He was in Heaven, He so cried, Why persecutest thou Me? when Him none touched, and we on earth were in trouble. His Voice then let us hear: now of the Body, now of the Head. For this is a Psalm calling on God, against enemies, amid the tribulations of this world. And surely He is the same Christ, then the Head being in tribulation, now the Body being in tribulation; yet through tribulations to all His Members giving life eternal, which by promising became He desirable.

2. Ver. 1. Judge Thou, O Lord, (saith he,) them that hurt me, and fight Thou against them that fight against me. “If God be for us, who can be against us?” And whereby doth God this for us? (Ver. 2.) Take hold (saith he) of arms and shield, and rise up to my help. A great spectacle is it, to see God armed for thee. And what is His Shield, what are His Arms? Lord, in another place saith the man who here also speaketh, as with the shield of Thy good-will hast Thou compassed us. But His Arms, wherewith He may not only us defend, but also strike His enemies, if we have well profited, shall we ourselves be. For as we from Him have this, that we be armed, so is He armed from us. But He is armed from those, whom He hath made, we are armed with those things which we have received from Him Who made us. These our arms the Apostle in a certain place calleth, The shield of Faith, the helmet of Salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. He hath armed us with such arms as ye have heard, arms admirable, and unconquered, insuperable and shining; spiritual truly and invisible, because we have to fight also against invisible enemies. If thou seest thine enemy, let thine arms be seen. We are armed with faith in those things which we see not, and we overthrow enemies whom we see not. Nevertheless, dearly Beloved, think not that these arms are so that what is a shield is always a shield, or what is a helmet is always a helmet, or what is a breast-plate always a breast-plate. For in these arms corporal it is so, although even those which are made of steel may be changed, so that out of a sword may be made an axe: but the same Apostle we find to have said in one place, The breast-plate of faith, and in another to have said, The shield of faith. Therefore the same faith can be both a breast-plate and a shield, a shield it is, because it receives and repels the darts of the enemies, a breast-plate because it suffers not thy inward parts to be pierced through. These are our arms; but what are God’s? We read in a certain place, Deliver my soul from the ungodly, Thy Weapon from the enemies of Thy Hand. What first he said, from the ungodly, that in the following verse is from the enemies of Thy Hand: and what above he called my soul, that in the following verse he called, Thy Weapon, that is, Thy Sword, His soul then he called the Weapon of God: Deliver (saith he) my soul from the ungodly, that is, deliver Thy Weapon from the enemies of Thy Hand. For Thou takest hold of my soul, and warrest upon my enemies. And what is our soul, however splendid, however far reaching, however sharpened, however anointed, however with

the light and gleam of Wisdom glistening? What is our soul, or what can it do, unless God hold it and fight with it. For the best made weapon, unless it have a warrior, is useless. But I have said of our own arms, that nothing ought be taken as so fixed, that what is one thing, the same cannot be another: so also we find in God’s arms. Lo, here he called the soul of the righteous the weapon of God: again he saith that the soul of the righteous is the seat of God, the soul of the righteous is the seat of Wisdom. Therefore whatever He will, He maketh of our soul. Since it is in His hand, let Him use it as He will.

3. Let Him then rise up, for so is He called on, let Him take hold of His Arms, let Him rise up for our help. Whence He should rise up, is said unto Him also in another place in these very words, Rise up: why sleepest Thou, O Lord? And when He is said to sleep, we sleep; and when He is said to rise up, we are awakened. For the Lord also slept in the ship; and therefore was the ship tossed, because Jesus slept. For if Jesus had watched therein, the ship had not been tossed. Thy ship is thy heart; Jesus in the ship, faith in the heart. If thou rememberest thy faith, thy heart is not tossed; if thou forgettest thy faith, Christ sleepeth; beware of shipwreck. Nevertheless do what remaineth, that if He sleep, He may be awakened; say unto Him, Lord, rise up, we perish; that He may rebuke the winds, and there be a calm in thy heart. For all temptations will retire, or surely will prevail nothing, when Christ, that is, thy faith, shall watch in thy heart. What then is, Rise up? Make Thyself known, apparent, felt. Rise up, therefore, for my help.

4. Ver. 3. Pour forth the weapon, and stop the way against them that persecute me. Who are they that persecute thee? Haply thy neighbour, or he whom thou hast offended, or to whom thou hast done wrong, or who would take away what is thine, or against whom thou preachest the truth, or whose sin thou rebukest, or whom living ill by thy well living thou offendest. There are indeed even these enemies to us, and they persecute us: but other enemies we are taught to know, those against whom we fight invisibly, of whom the Apostle warneth us, saying, We wrestle not against flesh and blood, that is, against men; not against those whom ye see, but against those whom ye see not; against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the world, of this darkness. Now when he said the rulers of the world, as he

spake of the devil and his angels, there was need to take care lest men should misunderstand, and think that the world is ruled by the devil and his demons. But because the world is said of this fabric which we see, and the world is said of sinners, and of those who love the world, of whom it was said, The world knew Him not, and of whom also, The whole world lieth in wickedness; therefore the Apostle explained of what world they were rulers, he said, of this darkness. The rulers of this world, I say, are the rulers of this darkness. Again, he maketh us to understand what he said, of this darkness. Of what darkness are the devil and his angels rulers? Of all the unbelievers, of all the wicked, of whom it is said, The Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended It not. Lastly, out of the number of the same as many believe, what saith the same Apostle? Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Wouldest thou not be ruled by the devil? Come to the light. And how shalt thou come to the Light, unless He pour forth the weapon, and deliver thee from thy enemies, and from them that persecute thee? How poureth He forth the weapon? for we have already heard what His weapon is; even the soul of the righteous. Let the righteous abound, so is the weapon poured forth, and the way is stopped against the enemies. For from the very pouring forth of the weapon the Apostle warning us to live righteously, in the sequel saith, That he that is of the contrary part, may have no evil thing to say of you. The way is stopped against him, because what to say against the saints he cannot find.

5. And whence shall these be righteous? Or what say the enemies who persecute us? Those invisible enemies, what say they? Say they nothing? Most of all is it suggested to the human heart, by the enemies who invisibly fight against it, that God is not our helper; that so seeking other helps, we may be found weak, and be taken by those same enemies. This then is suggested. Against those voices ought we most of all to watch, which are shewn in another Psalm. Many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, there is no help for him in his God. Against these voices what is here said? Say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation. When thou hast said unto my soul, I am thy Salvation, then will it live righteously, so that I seek no helper beside Thee.

6. And what follows? (Ver. 4.) Let them be confounded and put to shame, that seek after my soul: for to this end they seek after it, to destroy it. For I would that they would seek it for good! for in another Psalm he blameth this in men, that there was none who would seek after his soul: Refuge failed me: there was none that would seek after my soul. Who is this that saith, There was none that would seek after my soul? Is it haply He, of Whom so long before it was predicted, They pierced My Hands and My Feet, they numbered all My Bones, they stared and looked upon Me, they have parted My Garments among them, and cast lots for My Vesture? Now all these things were done before their eyes, and there was none who would seek after His Soul. Let us then call upon Him, Brethren, that He may say unto our soul, I am thy Salvation; and may open its ears, that it may hear Him, saying, I am thy Salvation. For He saith it, but some are deaf, wherefore they hear rather those enemies that persecute them, being in tribulation. If aught is wanting, if the soul is in trouble, in need of temporal goods, it seeks aid for the most part from devils, it chooses to consult the possessed of devils, it seeks the diviners: its persecutors, the invisible enemies, have approached it, have entered into it, have fought against it, have taken it captive, have conquered it by saying, There is no salvation for him in his God. He was deaf to the voice, saying, I am thy Salvation. Say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation, that they may be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul, to which Thou sayest, I am thy Salvation. Let me hear Him saying unto me, I am thy Salvation: other salvation will I not seek after except the Lord my God. By some creature is salvation suggested to me; it is from Him: and if I lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help, yet cometh not my help from the hills, but from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. In very temporal troubles God helpeth through man; He Himself is thy Salvation. Through His Angel God helpeth, He Himself is thy Salvation. All things to Him are subject, and for this temporal life He indeed helpeth one from this side, another from that: eternal life He giveth not but from Himself. Behold, when thou art in trouble, that is not before thee which thou seekest, but He is near thee Whom thou seekest. And seek thou Him, Who never can be wanting. Let those things be withdrawn, which He gave; is He therefore withdrawn, Who gave? Let those things be restored which He gave; is that true riches, when these things are restored, and not He Who withdrew them to prove thee, and

restored them to console thee? For He consoleth us when these things are not wanting to us. He consoleth us in the way, but only if we understand the way. For the whole of this life, and all things which thou usest in this life, ought to be to thee as an inn to a traveller, not as a house to dwell in. Remember though thou hast performed somewhat, that somewhat remaineth, that thou hast stayed for refection, not for defection.

7. There are who say, God the Good, the Great, the Most High, the Invisible, the Eternal, the Incorruptible, will indeed give unto us eternal life, and that incorruption which He hath promised in the resurrection; but these worldly and temporal things belong to devils, and to those rulers of the darkness of this world. By thus saying, when they are entangled in the love of these things, they abandon God, as though these things belonged not unto Him, and seek by wicked sacrifices, by I know not what remedies, and by I know not what unlawful persuasion of men, to provide for themselves that which is temporal, as money, wife and children, and whatever either comforts human life passing by, or hinders it going its way. Divine Providence watching against this opinion, that God might shew all these things to belong to Him, and to be in His Power, not only things eternal which He promiseth hereafter, but also things temporal which on earth He giveth to whom He will, and when He will, in good time, knowing to whom He should give, to whom not give, as a physician his medicines, knowing better the sick man’s disease than the sick man himself; God then, that He might shew this, divided the times of the Old and New Testament. In the Old Testament are promises of things earthly; but in the New, of a kingdom, the kingdom of heaven. Most of the Commandments, both of worshipping God, and of living well, are the same both in this and in that; but because the promise here seems of one kind, there of another; the command of Him that ordereth, and the obedience of him that serveth, is the same, but the wages, as it were, are not the same. For unto them it was said, Ye shall receive the land of promise; in it ye shall reign; your enemies ye shall conquer; ye shall not be subdued by them; all things shall abound to you in this land; in it ye shall beget children. These earthly things were promised, but yet in a figure. Suppose that some so received them as they were promised; and truly many so received them. For the land was given to the children of Israel, riches were given, children were given even to their

barren and old women, who prayed unto God, and in Him alone presumed, and other helper sought not even for those things. They heard the voice of God in their heart, I am thy Salvation. If for things eternal, why not for things temporal. This did God shew in the case of that holy man Job; because even the devil himself had no power to take away these things, except when he had received it from that Most High Power. He would envy the holy man: could he also hurt him? He could accuse him, could he also condemn him? Could he take aught from him, could he hurt even a nail, could he a single hair, until he had said unto God, Put forth Thine Hand? What is, Put forth Thine Hand? Give me the power. He received it, he tempted him; he was tempted. Yet the tempted conquered, the tempter was conquered. For God, Who had permitted the devil to take those things, had not deserted His servant within, and to overcome the devil himself, of the soul of His servant had made to Himself a weapon. Whereunto tendeth this? I speak concerning man. Conquered was he in Paradise: a conqueror on the dunghill. There was he conquered by the devil through the woman, here he conquered the devil and the woman. Thou speakest, saith he, as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the Hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? How well had he heard, I am thy Salvation.

8. Let them be confounded and put to shame, that seek after my soul. Look to men. Pray (saith He) for your enemies. But here it is a prophecy: and those things which are said under the figure of wishing are to be explained in the sense of prophesying. Let this be done, or that be done, is nothing more than, this or that will be done. So then understand the prophecy: Let them be confounded and put to shame, that seek after my life. What is, Let them be confounded and put to shame? They shall be confounded and put to shame. For even so was it done. Many have been confounded to their health: many, put to shame, have passed over from the persecution of Christ to the society of His members with devoted piety; and this would not have been, had they not been confounded and put to shame. Therefore he wished well to them. But because there are two kinds of those who are conquered; for in two ways are they conquered, either to this end they are conquered that they may be converted unto Christ, or to this, that they be condemned by Christ; here also are explained the same two kinds, obscurely indeed, but wanting only an understanding hearer. Of those who are converted, hear

what is said. Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul: let them be turned back. Let them not go before, but follow; let them not give counsel, but take it. For Peter would go before the Lord, when the Lord spake of His future Passion: he would to Him as it were give counsel for His health. The sick man to the Saviour give counsel for His health! And what said he to the Lord, affirming that His future Passion? Be it far from Thee, Lord. Be gracious to Thyself. This shall not be to Thee. He would go before that the Lord might follow; and what said He? Get thee behind Me, satan. By going before thou art satan, by following thou wilt be a disciple. The same then is said to these also, Let them be turned back and brought to confusion that think evil against me. For when they have begun to follow after, now they will not think evil against me, but desire my good.

9. What of others? For all are not so conquered as to be converted and believe: many continue in obstinacy, many preserve in heart the spirit of going before, and if they exert it not, yet they labour with it, and finding opportunity bring it forth. Of such, what followeth? (Ver. 5.) Let them be as dust before the wind. Not so are the ungodly, not so; but as the dust which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth. The wind is temptation; the dust are the ungodly. When temptation cometh the dust is raised, it neither standeth nor resisteth. Let them be as dust before the wind, and let the Angel of the Lord trouble them. (Ver. 6.) Let their way be darkness and slipping. A horrible way! Darkness alone who feareth not? A slippery way alone who avoids not? In a dark and slippery way how shalt thou go? where set foot? These two ills are the great punishments of men: darkness, ignorance; a slippery way, luxury. Let their way be darkness and slipping; and let the Angel of the Lord persecute them; that they be not able to stand. For any one in a dark and slippery way, when he seeth that if he move his foot he will fall, and there is no light before his feet, haply resolveth to wait until light come; but here is the Angel of the Lord persecuting them. These things he predicted would come upon them, not as though he wished them to happen. Although the Prophet in the Spirit of God so speaketh these things, even as God doth the same, with sure judgment, with a judgment good, righteous, holy, tranquil; not moved with wrath, not with bitter jealousy, not with desire of wreaking enmities, but of punishing wickedness with righteousness; nevertheless, it is a prophecy.

10. But wherefore these so great evils? By what desert? Hear by what desert. (Ver. 7.) For without cause have they hid for me the corruption of their trap. For Him that is our Head, observe, the Jews did this: they hid the corruption of their trap. For whom hid they their trap? For Him, Who saw the hearts of those that hid. But yet was He among them like one ignorant, as though He were deceived, whereas they were in that deceived, that they thought Him to be deceived. For therefore was He as though deceived, living among them, because we among such as they were so to live, as to be without doubt deceived. He saw His betrayer, and chose him the more to a necessary work. By his evil He wrought a great good: and yet among the twelve was he chosen, lest even the small number of twelve should be without one evil. This was an example of patience to us, because it was necessary that we should live among the evil: it was necessary that we should endure the evil, either knowing them or knowing them not: an example of patience He gave thee lest thou shouldest fail, when thou hast begun to live among the evil. And because that School of Christ in the twelve failed not, how much more ought we to be firm, when in the great Church is fulfilled what was predicted of the mixture of the evil. For neither did the same School see rendered to the Seed of Abraham what had been promised, and that very threshing floor, whence the grain that shall fill the garner must proceed. Wherefore then, when the threshing is, is not the chaff justly endured therein, until it be purged by the last winnowing? For this will surely come upon the evil, which ye have heard.

11. But yet what is to be done? Without a cause have they hid for me the corruption of their trap. What meaneth, Without a cause? I have done them no evil, I have hurt them not at all. Vainly have they reviled my soul. What is, Vainly? Speaking falsely, proving nothing. (Ver. 8.) Let a trap come upon them which they know not of. A magnificent retribution, nothing more just! They have hidden a trap that I might know not: let a trap come upon them which they know not of. For I know of their trap. But what trap is coming upon them? That which they know not of. Let us hear, lest haply he speak of that. Let a trap come upon them, which they know not of. Perhaps that is one which they hid for him, that another which shall come upon themselves. Not so: but what? The wicked shall be holden with the cords of his own sins. Thereby are they deceived, whereby they would deceive.

Thence shall come mischief to them, whence they endeavoured mischief. For it follows, And let the net which they have hidden catch themselves. As if any one should prepare a cup of poison for another, and forgetting should drink it up himself: or as if one should dig a pit, that his enemy might fall thereinto in the darkness; and himself forgetting what he had dug, should first walk that way, and fall into it. Verily, Brethren, thus believe, thus be assured; thus, if there be in you any more excellent reason or prudence, thus observe and know; there is no wicked man who hurts not himself first. For so think of wickedness as of fire. Thou wouldest burn something: that which thou appliest is first burned; if it be not burned, it burneth not. Thou hast a torch; this torch thou appliest to something to burn it: is not the torch itself which thou appliest first burned, that it may be able to burn any thing? Wickedness then proceedeth from thee, and whom doth it first waste but thyself? Doth it hurt the bough to which it is put forth; and where it hath root doth it not hurt? And I verily say, that thy wickedness should not hurt another, it is possible; that it should not hurt thee, it is not possible. For what hurt was done to holy Job, of whom I have spoken above? As it is said in another Psalm, Like a sharp razor thou hast wrought deceit. What is done with a sharp razor? Hairs, things superfluous, are cut off. What then dost thou to him whom thou wouldest hurt? If a worthless man, whom thou wouldest hurt, consent with thee to do ill, not thy wickedness will be hurtful to him, but his own; but if he be inwardly free from wickedness, and can present a clean heart to the voice that saith, I am thy salvation, outwardly thou fightest against him, the inner man thou takest not. Yet thy wickedness proceeds from thy inner man: thee first it maketh empty. Thou art corrupt within, whence that worm proceeded; within it hath left nothing sound. And let the net which they have hidden catch themselves, and let them fall into their own trap. Not that which haply thou thoughtest of just before when thou heardest, Let a trap come upon them, which they know not of, that is, as though it were some other one, secret and inevitable. In what then fall they? In the same iniquity which they have hidden for me. Was not this done to the Jews? The Lord conquered their iniquity, they by their own iniquity were conquered. He rose for us: they died in themselves.

12. This then for the wicked that would hurt me: what for me? (Ver. 9.) But my soul shall rejoice in the Lord; as in Him from Whom it hath heard, I am

thy salvation; as not seeking other riches from without; as not seeking to abound in pleasures and good things of earth; but loving freely the true Spouse, not from Him wishing to receive aught that may delight, but Him alone proposing to itself, by Whom it may be delighted. For what better than God will be given unto me? God loveth me: God loveth thee. See He hath proposed to thee, Ask what thou wilt. If the emperor should say to thee, Ask what thou wilt, what commands, what dignities, wouldest thou burst forth with! What great things wouldest thou propose to thyself, both to receive and to bestow. When God saith unto thee, Ask what thou wilt, what wilt thou ask? Empty thy mind, exert thy avarice, stretch forward as far as possible, and enlarge thy desire: it is not any one, but Almighty God that said, Ask what thou wilt. If of possessions thou art a lover, thou wilt desire the whole earth, that all who are born may be thy husbandmen, or thy slaves. And what when thou hast possessed the whole earth? Thou wilt ask the sea, in which yet thou canst not live. In this greediness the fishes will have the better of thee. But perhaps thou wilt possess the islands. Pass over these also; ask the air, although thou canst not fly; stretch thy desire even unto the heavens, call thine own the sun, the moon, and the stars, because He Who made all said, Ask what thou wilt: yet nothing wilt thou find more precious, nothing wilt thou find better, than Himself Who made all things. Him seek, Who made all things, and in Him and from Him shalt thou have all things which He made. All things are precious, because all are beautiful; but what more beautiful than He. Strong are they; but what stronger than He. And nothing would He give thee rather than Himself. If aught better thou hast found, ask it. If thou ask aught else, thou wilt do wrong to Him, and harm to thyself, by preferring to Him that which He made, when He would give to thee Himself Who made. In this love said a certain soul unto Him, Art not Thou my portion, O Lord? that is, Thou art my portion. Let those who will choose for themselves what they shall possess, let them make for themselves portions of other things: Thou art my portion, Thee have I chosen for me. And again, The Lord is the portion of my inheritance. Let Him possess thee, that thou mayest possess Him: thou shalt be His property, thou shalt be His house. He possesseth that He may profit, He is possessed that He may profit. Is it that thou mayest profit Him at all? I have said unto the Lord, Thou art my God, for my goods thou wantest not.

But my soul shall be joyful in the Lord; it shall rejoice in His salvation. The salvation of God is Christ: For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.

13. Ver. 10. All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? Who can speak any thing worthily of these words? I think them only to be pronounced, not to be expounded. Why seekest thou this or that? What is like unto thy Lord? Him hast thou before thee. All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? The unrighteous have declared unto me delights, but not after Thy law, O Lord! Persecutors have been who have said, Worship Saturn, worship Mercury. I worship not idols: (saith he.) Lord, who is like unto Thee? They have eyes, and see not; ears have they, but they hear not. Lord, who is like unto Thee, Who hast made the eye to see, the ear to hear? But I (saith he) worship not idols, for them a workman made. Worship a tree or mountain; did a workman make them also? Here too, Lord, who is like unto Thee? Earthly things are shewn unto me; Thou art Creator of the earth. And from these haply they turn to the higher creation, and say to me, Worship the Moon, worship this Sun, who with his light, as a great lamp in the Heavens, maketh the day. Here also I plainly say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? The Moon and the Stars Thou hast made, the Sun to rule the day hast Thou kindled, the Heavens hast Thou framed together. There are many invisible things better. But haply here also it is said to me, Worship Angels, adore Angels. And here also will I say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? Even the Angels Thou hast created. The Angels are nothing, but by seeing Thee. It is better with them to possess Thee, than by worshipping them to fall from Thee.

14. All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? O Body of Christ, Holy Church, let all thy bones say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? And if the flesh under persecution hath fallen away, let the bones say, Lord, who is like unto Thee? For of the righteous it is said, The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken. Of how many righteous have the bones under persecution been broken? Finally, The just shall live by faith, and Christ justifieth the ungodly. But how justifieth He any except believing and confessing? For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Therefore also that thief, although from His theft led to the judge, and from the judge to the cross, yet

on the very cross was justified: with his heart he believed, with his mouth he confessed. For neither to a man unrighteous and not already justified, would the Lord have said, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise, and yet his bones were broken. For when they came to take down the bodies, by reason of the approaching Sabbath, the Lord was found already dead, and His Bones were not broken. But of those that yet lived, that they might be taken down, the legs were broken, that so from this pain having died, they might be buried. Were then of the one thief, who persisted in his ungodliness on the cross, the bones broken, and not also of the other who with his heart believed, and with his mouth made confession unto salvation? Where then is that which was said, The Lord keepeth all his bones; not one of them shall be broken; except that in the Body of the Lord the name of bones is given to all the righteous, the firm in heart, the strong, to no persecutions, no temptations, yielding, so as to consent unto evil? And whence should they be able to yield to no temptations, except when the persecutors say, Behold this god, behold what a god! let him come to thee, let him charm thee: behold, here is in the mount some great priest: haply therefore thou art poor because this god helpeth thee not; entreat him and he will help thee: haply therefore thou art sick, because thou entreatest him not; entreat him and thou shalt be well: haply therefore thou hast no children, entreat him and thou shalt have. But if in the Lord’s Body he be one of the bones, he repelleth all these words, and saith, Lord, who is like unto Thee? Give, if Thou wilt give, even in this life, what I ask; but if Thou wilt not, be Thou my Life, Whom I seek always. Shall I depart hence unto Thee with a clear face, if I worship another, and offend Thee? To-morrow perhaps I shall die: with what face shall I see Thee? Great is His Mercy; and therefore hath He admonished us to live well, and hath hidden from us the last day of our life, lest we should promise ourselves aught from the future. To-day I work and live: to-morrow I work not. What if to-morrow find thee not? Say then, among the bones of Christ, Lord, who is like unto Thee? All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto Thee?

15. Which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him; yea, the poor and needy from him that spoileth him. Thus far has the Psalm been read to-day; thus far is it to be handled; lest that come to disgust, which hath been said, while we wish to say other things. Let this then suffice for

to-day, Which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him. Who that deliverest, but He Who is Strong in hand? Even that David shall deliver the poor from him that is too strong for him. For the devil was too strong for thee, and held thee, because he conquered thee, when thou consentedst unto him. But what hath the Strong in hand done? No man entereth into a strong man's house, to spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man. By His own Power, most Holy, most Magnificent, hath He bound the devil by pouring forth the weapon to stop the way against him, that He may deliver the poor and needy, to whom there was no helper. For who is thy helper but the Lord to whom thou sayest, O Lord, My Strength, and My Redeemer. If thou wilt presume of thy own strength, thereby wilt thou fall, whereof thou hast presumed: if of another's, he would lord it over thee, not succour thee. He then alone is to be sought, Who hath redeemed them, and made them free, and hath given His Blood to purchase them, and of His servants hath made them His Brethren.

DISCOURSE II

On the remaining part of the Psalm.

To the rest of the Psalm let us apply our minds, and to the Lord our God let us pray, both for soundness of understanding, and for the quiet of well-doing. As far as yesterday was discoursed, I trust that ye remember, dearly Beloved: from the same place to-day let us take our beginning. Now we understand here the words of Christ, the words, namely, both of the Head and of the Body of Christ. When thou hearest Christ, do not separate the Bridegroom from the Bride, but understand that great Sacrament, And they two shall be one flesh. If two in one flesh, why not also in one voice? For neither the Head alone suffered here temptations, and the Body suffereth not; nor indeed was there any cause of suffering to the Head, but that He might give an example to the Body. For the Lord suffered of free will, we of necessity; He out of commiseration, we out of our condition. Moreover, His voluntary Passion is our necessary consolation; so that when we haply suffer like things, we may look upon our Head, that being warned by His example we may say unto ourselves, If He did so, what must we? and, Even as He was, so let us also be. For however much raged the enemy, to the death of the Body could he only approach; which Body yet could he not destroy in the Lord, because on the third day It rose again. What in Him was done on the third day, that in ours shall be at the end of the world. The hope of our resurrection is put off, is it therefore put away? Here then, most dearly Beloved, let us acknowledge the Words of Christ, and let us distinguish them from the words of the ungodly. For they are the voices of the Body, suffering persecutions and troubles and temptations in this world, but since many suffer here, also for their sins, and for their crimes, with great vigilance must we discern the cause, not the punishment. For a criminal can have like punishment with a Martyr, but yet a cause unlike. Three were there on the Cross, one the Saviour, another to be saved, another to be dammed: of all the punishment was equal, but the cause unequal.

2. Let then our Head say, (ver. 11.) False witnesses did rise up, they laid to My charge things that I knew not. But let us say to our Head, Lord, what knewest Thou not? Didst Thou indeed know not any thing? Didst Thou not know the hearts of them that charged Thee? Didst Thou not foresee their deceits? Didst Thou not give Thyself into their hands knowingly? Hadst Thou not come that Thou mightest suffer by them? What then knewest Thou not? He knew not sin, and thereby He knew not sin, not by not judging, but by not committing. There are phrases of this kind also in daily use, as when thou sayest of any one, He knoweth not to stand, that is, he doth not stand; and, He knoweth not to do good, because he doth not good; and, He knoweth not to do ill, because he doth not ill. That which is alien from operation, is alien from conscience; that which is alien from conscience, seems alien also from science. So God is said to know not, as art knoweth not faults, and yet by art faults are discovered and discerned. This then to our interrogatories out of the very truth of His own Gospel doth our Head answer; when we have said, Lord, what knewest Thou not? Wherewith couldest Thou be charged which Thou knewest not? He answereth, Ungodliness I knew not, with ungodliness I was charged. Thou hast in the Gospel, if thou believe not that I knew not ungodliness, that even the ungodly themselves I know not, unto whom at the end I shall say, I know you not; depart from Me, ye that work ungodliness. Did He not know those whom He condemned? or can any condemn justly, but a good cognizant? And yet a good cognizant lied not in saying, I know you not: that is, ye are not joined to My Body, ye cleave not to My Rules, ye are

vicious, but I am that very Art which haveth no vice, and in which a man learneth not save not to do vice. False witnesses did rise up; they laid to My charge things that I knew not. What knew not Christ so much, as to blaspheme? Thereof was He called in question by His persecutors, and because He spake truth, He was judged to have spoken blasphemy. But by whom? By them of whom it followeth, (Ver. 12.) They rewarded Me evil for good, and barrenness to My Soul. I gave unto them fruitfulness, they rewarded Me barrenness; I gave life, they death; I honour, they dishonour; I medicine, they wounds; and in all these which they rewarded Me, was truly barrenness. This barrenness in the tree He cursed, when seeking fruit He found none. Leaves there were, and fruit there was not: words there were, and deeds there were not. See of words abundance, and of deeds barrenness. Thou that preachest a man should not steal, stealest: thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, committest adultery. Such were they who charged Christ with things that He knew not.

3. Ver. 13. But I, when they troubled me, clothed myself with sackcloth, and humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer shall return into mine own bosom. We are taught indeed, Brethren, that we belong to the Body of Christ, that we are members of Christ; and we are admonished in all our tribulations to consider not how we may answer our enemies, but how by praying we may propitiate God, and chiefly to pray that we be not overcome by temptation; then, that even those who persecute us may be converted to soundness and righteousness. There is no greater, no better employment in tribulation, than to retire from the noise which is without, and to go into the inner closet of the heart; there to call upon God, where none seeth thee groaning, and Him succouring; that chamber-door to close against every invading trouble; to humble thyself in confession of sin, to magnify and praise God, both chastising and consoling: this must by every means be held firm. But of the Body must we say this; that is, of ourselves: of our Lord Jesus Christ, what such as this do we find? The Gospel being looked through and most diligently searched, we find not that the Lord in any passion or tribulation clothed Himself with sackcloth. That He fasted indeed we read, after He was baptized: sackcloth there we hear of none, read of none; but that He fasted, the Jews not yet persecuting, but the devil tempting Him. At that time I say that the Lord fasted not, when they

charged Him with things which He knew not, and when they rewarded Him evil for good, by railing, by persecuting, by holding fast, by scourging, by wounding, by slaying: but yet in all these, Brethren, if for some little space with pious curiosity we lift the veil, and search with the intent eye of the heart the inner part of this Scripture, we find that even this the Lord did. Sackcloth, haply He calleth His mortal flesh. Wherefore Sackcloth? For the likeness of sinful flesh. For the Apostle saith, God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that through sin He might condemn sin in the flesh: that is, He clothed His Own Son with sackcloth, that through sackcloth He might condemn the goats. Not that there was sin, I say not in the Word of God, but not even in that Holy Soul and Mind of a Man, which the Word and Wisdom of God had so joined to Himself as to be One Person. Nay, nor even in His very Body was any sin, but the likeness of sinful flesh there was in the Lord; because death is not but by sin, and surely that Body was mortal. For had It not been mortal, It had not died; had It not died, It had not risen again; had It not risen again, It had not shewed us an example of eternal life. So then death, which is caused by sin, is called sin, as we say the Greek tongue, the Latin tongue, meaning not the very member of flesh, but that which is done by the member of flesh. For the tongue in our members is one among others, as the eyes, nose, ears, and the rest: but the Greek tongue is Greek words, not that the tongue is words, but that words are by the tongue. Thou sayest of one, I know his face, speaking of a member of his body; and thou sayest also, I know his hand though he is absent, not the hand of his body, but the writing which was made by the hand of his body. So then the sin of the Lord, is that which was caused by sin; because He assumed flesh, of the same lump which had deserved death by sin. For to speak more briefly, Mary who was of Adam died for sin, Adam died for sin, and the Flesh of the Lord which was of Mary died to put away sin. With this sackcloth the Lord clothed Himself, and therefore was He not known, because He lay hid under sackcloth. When they, saith He, troubled Me, I clothed Myself with sackcloth: that is, they raged, I lay hid. For had He not willed to lie hid, neither could He have died, since in one moment of time one drop only of His Power, if indeed it is to be called a drop, He put forth, when they wished to seize Him, and at His one question, Whom seek ye? they all went back and fell to the ground. Such power could He not have humbled in passion, if He had not lain hid under sackcloth.

4. I clothed Myself with sackcloth, and humbled My Soul with fasting. Again, if we have understood the sackcloth, how understand we the fasting? Wished Christ to eat, when He sought fruit on the tree, and if He had found, would He have eaten? Wished Christ to drink, when He said to the woman of Samaria, Give Me to drink? when He said on the Cross, I thirst? For what hungered, for what thirsted Christ, but our good works? Because in them that crucified and persecuted Him He had found no good works, He fasted; for they rewarded barrenness to His soul. For what a fast was His, Who found barely one thief, whom on the Cross He might taste! For the Apostles had fled, and had hidden themselves in the multitude. And even Peter, who even to the death of his Lord had promised to persevere, had now thrice denied Him, had now wept, and still lay hid in the multitude, still feared lest He should be known. Lastly, having seen Him dead, all of them despaired of their own safety; and despairing He found them, after His resurrection, and when He spake with them, found them grieving and mourning, no longer hoping any thing. For so also did certain of them who spake with Him. When He said, What talk ye between yourselves? (for they were talking of Him;) Art Thou only, they said, a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known what things our priests and rulers have done concerning Jesus of Nazareth, Who was a man mighty in word and deed; how they have crucified and slain Him? But we trusted that it should have been He that should have redeemed Israel. In great fasting had the Lord remained, had He not refreshed them that He might feed on them. For He refreshed them, He comforted them, He confirmed them, and into His Own Body converted them. In this manner then was our Lord also in fasting.

5. And My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom. In the bosom of this verse is plainly a great depth, and may the Lord grant that it be fathomable by us. For in the ‘bosom’ a secret is understood. And we ourselves, Brethren, are here well admonished to pray within our own bosom, where God seeth, where God heareth, where no human eye penetrateth, where none seeth but He Who succoureth; where Susanna prayed, and her voice though it was not heard by men, yet by God was heard. Of this indeed we are well admonished, but of our Lord ought we to understand something more, because He Himself also prayed. And, indeed, His sackcloth we find not in the Gospel according to the letter, nor His fasting at the time of His

Passion according to the letter; and these therefore I have explained to be spoken by an allegory or similitude, as I could. But His prayer even from the Cross have we heard, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me! But there also were we. For when did the Father forsake Him, from Whom He never departed? We read also that in the mount Jesus prayed alone, we read that He passed the night in prayer, even at the time of His Passion. What then? And My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom. I know not what better to understand concerning the Lord: take meanwhile what now occurs; perhaps something better will occur hereafter, either to me or to some better: My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom: this I understand to be said, because in His Own Bosom He had the Father. For God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. In Himself He had Him to Whom He prayed. He was not far from Him, for Himself had said, I am in the Father, and the Father in Me. But because prayer rather belongeth to very Man, (for according as Christ is the Word, He prayeth not, but heareth prayer; and seeketh not to be succoured for Himself, but with the Father succoureth all:) what is, My prayer shall return into Mine Own Bosom, but in Me My Manhood invoketh in Me My Godhead.

6. Ver. 14. As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him: as one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled myself. Now looketh He back to His Own Body: let us now look to this. When we rejoice in prayer, when our mind is calmed, not by the world’s prosperity, but by the light of Truth: (who perceiveth this light, knoweth what I say, and he seeth and acknowledgeth what is said, As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him:) even then our soul pleaseth God, not placed afar off, for, In Him, saith one, we live and move and have our being, but as a Brother, as a Neighbour, as a Friend. But if it be not such that it can so rejoice, so shine, so approach, so cleave unto Him, and seeth itself far off thence, then let it do what followeth, As one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled Myself. As our Brother, so I pleased Him, said He, drawing near; As one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled myself, said He, removed and set afar off. For what mourneth any one, but that which he desireth, and hath not? And sometimes in one man happen both, that at one time he should draw near, at another be far off; draw near by the light of Truth, be far off by the cloud of the flesh. For neither, Brethren, unto God, Who is every where, and is

contained in no place, do we through place draw near, or from Him through place remove. To draw near unto Him, is to become like unto Him; to remove from Him, to become unlike unto Him. Dost not thou, when thou seest two things nearly alike, say, This comes near to that? and when things unlike are shewn to thee, though in one place, and though they be held often in one hand, say, This kind is far off from that? Thou holdest both, joinest both, and sayest, This thing is far from that, not forsooth in place, but in unlikeness. If then thou wouldest draw near to Him, be like unto Him: if thou wilt not be like, thou wilt be far off. But when thou art like, rejoice; when unlike, groan; that groaning may excite desire, nay that desire may excite groaning, and that through groaning thou mayest draw near, who hadst begun to be afar off. Did not Peter draw near, when He said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God? And yet the same man became afar off by saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee. Lastly, what said He, his Neighbour, as it were, to him drawing near? Blessed art thou, Simon, Barjona. To him afar off, as it were, and unlike, what said He? Get thee behind Me, Satan. To him drawing near, Flesh and blood, saith He, hath not revealed it unto Thee, but My Father, which is in Heaven. His Light is shed over Thee, in His Light Thou shinest. But when having become afar off, he spake against the Lord’s Passion, which should be for our Salvation, Thou savourest not, said He, the things that be of God, but those that be of men. One rightly placing together both of these saith in a certain Psalm, I said in my ecstasy, I am cast off from before Thine Eyes. In my ecstasy, would he not have said, had he not drawn near; for ecstasy is the transporting of the mind. He poured over himself his own soul, and drew near unto God; and through some cloud and weight of the flesh being again cast down to earth, and recollecting where he had been, and seeing where he was, he said, I am cast off from before Thine Eyes. This then, As a Neighbour, as our Brother, so I pleased Him, may He grant to be done in us; but when that is not, let even this be done, As one mourning and sorrowful, so I humbled myself.

7. Ver. 15. And against Me they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together, against Me only: they rejoicing, I sorrowful. But we heard just now in the Gospel, Blessed are they that mourn. If they are blessed that mourn, miserable are they that laugh. Against Me they rejoiced, and gathered

themselves together: scourges were gathered together against Me, and they knew not. Because they laid to My charge things that I knew not, they also knew not Whom they charged.

8. Ver. 16. They tempted Me, and mocked Me with mocking. That is, they derided Me, they insulted Me; this of the Head, this of the Body. Consider, Brethren, the glory of the Church which now is; remember its past dishonours, remember how once were Christians every where put to flight, and wherever found, mocked, beaten, slain, exposed to beasts, burned, men rejoicing against them. As it was to the Head, so it is also to the Body. For as it was to the Lord on the Cross, so has it been to His Body in all that persecution which was made but now: nor even now cease the persecutions of the same. Wherever men find a Christian, they are wont to insult, to persecute, to deride him, to call him dull, senseless, of no spirit, of no knowledge. Do they what they will, Christ is in Heaven: do they what they will, He hath honoured His punishment, already hath He fixed His Cross in the foreheads of all; the ungodly is permitted to insult, to rage he is not permitted; but yet from that which the tongue uttereth, is understood what he beareth in his heart: They gnashed upon Me with their teeth.

9. Ver. 17. Lord, when wilt Thou look on? Rescue My Soul from their deceits, My Darling from the lions. For to us the time is slow; and in our person is this said, When wilt Thou look on? that is, when shall we see vengeance upon those who insult us? When shall the Judge, overcome by weariness, hear the widow? But our Judge, not from weariness, but from love, delayeth our salvation; from reason, not from need; not that He could not even now succour us, but that the number of us all may be filled up even to the end. And yet out of our desire, what do we say? Lord, when wilt Thou look on? Rescue My Soul from their deceits, My Darling from the lions: that is, My Church from raging powers.

10. Lastly, wouldest thou know what is that Darling? Read the words following: (ver. 18.) I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, in the great Congregation; in a weighty people will I praise Thee. Truly saith He, I will confess unto Thee in the great Congregation; in a weighty people will I praise Thee: for confession is made in all the multitude, but not in all is God praised: the whole multitude heareth our confession, but not in all the

multitude is the praise of God. For in all the whole multitude, that is, in the Church which is spread abroad in the whole world, is chaff, and wheat: the chaff flieth, the wheat remaineth; therefore, in a weighty people will I praise Thee. In a weighty people, which the wind of temptation carries not away, in such is God praised. For in the chaff He is ever blasphemed. When our chaff is considered, what is meant? See how Christians live, see what Christians do; and it is fulfilled, which is written, Through you is My Name blasphemed among the Gentiles. Wickedly, grudgingly beholdest thou the threshing-floor, who art all on the chaff; not easily appeareth the grain to thee; seek and thou shalt find a weighty people in which thou mayest praise God. Wouldest thou find? Be thou such; for if thou be not such, it is hard but that all should appear to thee such as thou art: Comparing (saith the Apostle) themselves among themselves, they understand not. In a weighty people will I praise Thee.

11. Ver. 19. Let not them that are Mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over Me: for they rejoice over Me because of My chaff. Who hate Me without a cause; that is, whom I never hurt; winking with their eyes: that is, pretending hypocrites, (Ver. 20.) For they spake indeed peace to Me. What is, winking with their eyes? Declaring by their looks, what they carry not in their heart. And who are these winking with their eyes? (ver. 20.) For they spake indeed peace to Me; and with wrath devised craftily. (Ver. 21.) Yea they opened their mouth wide against Me. First winking with their eyes, those lions sought to ravish and devour; first fawning they spake peace, and then with wrath devised craftily. What peace spake they? Master, we know that Thou acceptest not man’s person, and teachest the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? They spake indeed peace unto Me. What then? Didst not Thou know them, and deceived they Thee, winking with their eyes? Truly He knew them; therefore said He, Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? Afterward, they opened their mouth wide against Me, crying, Crucify Him, Crucify Him! and said, Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it. This, when they insulted Him, Aha, Aha, Prophesy unto us, Thou Christ. As their peace was pretended, when they tempted Him concerning the money, so now insulting was their praise. They said, Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen it: that is, Thy deeds, Thy miracles. This Man is the Christ. If He be the Christ, let Him come down from the Cross, and we

will believe Him. He saved others, Himself He cannot save. Our eyes have seen it. This is all whereof He boasted Himself, when, He called Himself the Son of God. But the Lord was hanging patient upon the Cross: His power had He not lost, but He shewed His patience. For what great thing was it for Him to come down from the Cross, Who could afterward rise again from the sepulchre? But He seems to have yielded to His insulters; and this behoved, that having risen again He should shew Himself to His own, and not to them, and this is a great mystery; for His resurrection signified the New Life, but the New Life is known to His friends, not to His enemies.

12. Ver. 22. This Thou hast seen, O Lord; keep not silence. What is, keep not silence? Judge Thou. For of judgment is it said in a certain place, I have kept silence; shall I keep silence for ever? And of the delaying of judgment it is said to the sinner, These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself. How keepeth He silence, Who speaketh by the Prophets, Who speaketh with His own mouth in the Gospel, Who speaketh by the Evangelists, Who speaketh by us, when we speak the truth? What then? He keepeth silence from judgment, not from precept, not from doctrine. But this His judgment the Prophet in a manner invoketh, and predicteth: Thou hast seen, O Lord: keep not silence; that is, Thou wilt not keep silence, needs must that Thou wilt judge. O Lord, be not far from Me. Until Thy judgment come, be not far from Me, as Thou hast promised, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

13. Ver. 23. Arise, Lord, and attend to My judgment. To what judgment? That Thou art in tribulation; that Thou art tormented with labours and pains? Do not even many wicked men suffer the same? To what judgment? Therefore art Thou righteous, because Thou sufferest these things? No: but what? To My judgment. What followeth? Attend to My judgment; even to My cause, My God, and My Lord. Not to My punishment, but to My cause: not to that which the robber hath in common with Me, but to that whereof is said, Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake. For this cause is distinguished. For punishment is equal to good and bad. Therefore Martyrs, not the punishment, but the cause maketh, for if punishment made

Martyrs, all the mines would be full of Martyrs, every chain would drag Martyrs, all that are executed with the sword would be crowned. Therefore, let the cause be distinguished; let none say, because I suffer, I am righteous. Because He Who first suffered, suffered for righteousness' sake, therefore He added a great exception, Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake. For many having a good cause do persecution, and many having a bad cause suffer persecution. For if persecution could not be done rightly, it had not been said in a certain Psalm, Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him did I persecute. Then, Brethren, doth not a good and righteous father persecute a prodigal son? His vices he persecuteth, not himself: not that which he begat, but that which the other added. The surgeon truly, who is called in to give health, is not he mostly armed with a knife? but against the wound, not against the man: he cuts that he may cure: and yet when he cuts the sick man, he is pained, cries out, resists, and if haply by fever he hath lost his senses, even strikes the surgeon: nor yet does not he desist from seeking the health of the sick man; what he knoweth right he doth, him cursing and reviling he regardeth not. Are not all lethargies roused, lest from heavy sleep they may sink down to death? And this they suffer from their own sons whom they have begotten most dear to them, and the son is not dear unless he hath been troublesome to his sleeping Father. The lethargic are roused, the frenzied are bound, but yet both are loved. Let none then say, I suffer persecution: let him not sift the punishment, but prove the cause: lest if he prove not the cause, he be numbered with the ungodly. Therefore how watchfully, how excellently hath This Man recommended Himself, O Lord, attend to My judgment, not to My punishments; even to My cause, My God, and My Lord.

14. Ver. 24. Judge me, O Lord, according to My righteousness; that is, attend to My cause. Not according to My punishment, but according to My righteousness, O Lord, My God, that is, according to this judge Thou Me.

15. And let them not rejoice over Me; that is, Mine enemies. (Ver. 25.) Let them not say in their heart, Aha, aha, so would we have it; that is, We have done what we could, we have slain him, we have taken him away. Let them not say: shew them that they have done nothing. Let them not say, We have swallowed him up. Whence say those Martyrs, If the Lord had not been on

our side, then they had swallowed us up quick. What is, had swallowed us up? Had passed into their own body. For that thou swallowest up, which thou passest into thy own body. The world would swallow thee up; swallow thou the world, pass it into thy own body: kill and eat. As it was said to Peter, Kill and eat; do thou kill in them what they are, make them what Thou art. But if they on the other hand persuade thee to ungodliness, thou art swallowed up by them. Not when they persecute thee art thou swallowed up by them, but when they persuade thee to be what they are. Let them not say, We have swallowed him up. Do thou swallow up the body of Pagans. Why the body of Pagans? It would swallow thee up. Do thou to it, what it would to thee. Therefore perhaps that calf, being ground to powder, was cast into the water and given to the children of Israel to drink, that so the body of ungodliness might be swallowed up by Israel. (Ver. 26.) Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour; so that we may swallow up them ashamed and brought to confusion. Who speak evil against me: let them be ashamed, let them be brought to confusion.

16. What sayest thou now, the Head with the Members? (Ver. 27.) Let them shout for joy and be glad that favour My righteous cause: who cleave to My Body. Yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, Which hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant. (Ver. 28.) And My Tongue shall speak of Thy righteousness, and of Thy praise all the day long. And whose tongue endureth to speak the praise of God all the day long? See now I have made a discourse something longer; ye are wearied. Who endureth to praise God all the day long? I will suggest a remedy, whereby thou mayest praise God all the day long if thou wilt. Whatever thou dost, do well, and thou hast praised God. When thou singest an hymn, thou praisest God, but what doth thy tongue, unless thy heart also praise Him? Hast thou ceased from singing hymns, and departed, that thou mayest refresh thyself? Be not drunken, and thou hast praised God. Dost thou go away to sleep? Rise not to do evil, and thou hast praised God. Dost thou transact business? Do no wrong, and thou hast praised God. Dost thou till thy field? Raise not strife, and thou hast praised God. In the innocency of thy works prepare thyself to praise God all the day long.

PSALM 36

Attend, dearly Beloved, a little to the text and the mysteries of this Psalm; and let us run through it, since in many places it is plain: but when the necessity of its obscurity compels us to dwell upon it, ye will endure it for the sake of the advantage of learning. (Ver. 1.) The ungodly hath said in himself that he will sin: there is no fear of God before his eyes. Not of one man, but of a race of ungodly men he speaketh, who fight against their own selves, by not understanding, that so they may live well; not because they cannot, but because they will not. For it is one thing, when one endeavours to understand some thing, and through infirmity of the flesh cannot; as saith the Scripture in a certain place, For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things; but another when the human heart acts mischievously against itself, so that what it could understand, if it had but good will thereto, it understandeth not, not because it is difficult, but because the will is contrary. But so it is when men love their own sins, and hate God’s Commandments. For the Word of God is thy adversary, if thou be a friend to thy ungodliness; but if thou art an adversary to thy ungodliness, the Word of God is thy friend, as well as the adversary of thy ungodliness. If then thou hatest thy ungodliness, thou joinest thyself to the Word of God, and ye will be two against it, thou, and the Word of God, to destroy it. For thou indeed by thyself, of thy own strength, canst do nothing; but He helpeth thee Who hath sent to thee His Word, and so ungodliness is overcome. If thou hatest it, God also hath remitted it, and thou shalt be free: but if thou love it, it is contrary to thee to understand aught that is said against it. Suppose a man to ask how the Son can be equal to the Father: he hath believed it, he seeketh to understand it, as yet he cannot; for it is a great matter, and requireth greater powers that it may be comprehended; and it is the beginning of faith, which keepeth the soul until it be strengthened. With milk it is nourished, that it may arrive at the fitness and firmness for stronger meat; that it may be able to understand this, In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God; and the Word was God. Before it can do this, it is nourished in faith; and it endeavours to understand, that it may understand as much as God shall grant. Doth it with endeavours understand this also? What thou wouldest not to be done to thee, do not thou to another. That because thou wouldest not suffer iniquity, thou shouldest not do iniquity; because thou wouldest not suffer treachery and deceit, thou shouldest not contrive deceit against another? No, but this when thou wouldest not understand, it is attributed to thy will. Therefore, The ungodly hath said in himself, that he will sin; he hath purposed to sin.

2. But doth he who purposeth to sin, say this in public, and not rather in himself? Why in himself? Because no man seeth him. What then, because man seeth not in the heart, wherein he saith to himself that he will sin, doth not God see therein? God doth see therein. But what followeth? There is no fear of God before his eyes. There is fear of men before his eyes, for he dareth not in public to declare his iniquity, lest he be either reproved or condemned by men. But he departeth from the sight of men; whither? To himself: he betaketh himself within, and no man seeth him; where he meditateth treachery, and deceit, and sin, there no man seeth him. Even there he might not meditate with himself, if he thought that God seeth him: but since there is no fear of God before his eyes, when he hath departed from the sight of men to his own heart, whom should he fear there? Is not God present there? Yea, but there is no fear of God before his eyes.

3. Therefore he meditateth deceits, and then followeth,—(Doth it haply escape him that God seeth there? The very thing is declared which I was beginning to speak of: it doth escape him, but of his own will, because he wrought against himself, not willing to understand.) (Ver. 2.) For he hath wrought deceitfully in His sight. In whose sight? In His, Whose fear was not before the eyes of him that did work deceitfully. To find out his iniquity, and hate it. He wrought so as not to find it. For there are men who as it were endeavour to seek out their iniquity, and fear to find it; because if they should find it, it is said to them, Depart from it: this thou didst before thou knewest; thou didst iniquity being in ignorance; God giveth pardon: now thou hast discovered it, forsake it, that to thy ignorance pardon may easily be given; and that with a clear face thou mayest say to God, Remember not the sins of my youth, and of my ignorance. Thus he seeketh it, thus he

feareth lest he find it; for he seeketh it deceitfully. When saith a man, I knew not that it was sin? When he hath seen that it is sin, and ceaseth to do the sin, which he did only because he was ignorant: such an one in truth would know his sin, to find it out, and hate it. But now many ‘work deceitfully to find out their iniquity:’ they work not from their heart to find it out and hate it. But because in the very search after iniquity, there is deceit, in the finding it there will be defence of it. For when one hath found his iniquity, lo now it is manifest to him that it is iniquity. Do it not, thou sayest. And he who wrought deceitfully to find it out, now he hath found, hateth it not; for what saith he? How many do this! Who is there that doth it not? And will God destroy them all? Or at least he saith this: if God would not these things to be done, would men live who commit the same? Seest thou that thou didst work deceitfully to find out thy iniquity? For if not deceitfully but sincerely thou hadst wrought, thou wouldest now have found it out, and hated it; now thou hast found it out, and thou defendest it; therefore thou didst work deceitfully, when thou soughtest it.

4. Ver. 3. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he would not understand, that he might do good. Ye see that he attributeth that to the will: for there are men who would understand and cannot, and there are men who would not understand, and therefore understand not. He would not understand, that he might do good.

5. Ver. 4. He hath meditated iniquity on his bed. What said He, On his bed? The ungodly hath said in himself, that he will sin: what above he said, in himself, that here he said, On his bed. Our bed is our heart: there we suffer the tossing of an evil conscience; and there we rest when our conscience is good. Whoso loveth the bed of his heart, let him do some good therein. There is our bed, where the Lord Jesus Christ commands us to pray. Enter into thy chamber, and shut thy door. What is, Shut thy door? Expect not from God such things as are without, but such as are within; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. Who is he that shutteth not the door? He who asketh much from God such things, and in such wise directeth all his prayers, that he may receive the goods that are of this world. Thy door is open, the multitude seeth when thou prayest. What is it to shut thy door? To ask that of God, which God alone knoweth how He

giveth. What is that for which thou prayest, when thou hast shut the door? What eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man. And haply it hath not entered into thy very bed, that is, into thy heart. But God knoweth what He will give: but when shall it be? When the Lord shall be revealed, when the Judge shall appear. For what is plainer than that which He shall say to them that are set at His Right Hand? Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. This shall they hear who are on the left hand, and shall groan with fruitless repentance, because so living they would not repent with fruit. Why shall they groan? Because there is for them no place of recovery. But they also shall hear somewhat themselves: Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. That is an evil hearing. For the righteous at their good hearing shall rejoice; for so it is written, The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance; he shall not be afraid from any evil hearing. From what evil hearing? That which they shall hear: Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire. God therefore, Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, searcheth out our secret groaning, that in His sight we may be pleasing, and not as it were of our own righteousness boast ourselves before men. For whoso by his own righteousness would please men, not to that end that they who see him may praise God, but with this intention that he may himself be praised, he shutteth not his door against noise; for the door is open to that noise, and God heareth not as He would hear. Our bed, then, our heart, let us strive to cleanse, that it may be well with us there. Ye know, my Beloved, how many things many suffer in public, in the forum, in strifes, in contentions, in troublesome business: how a man, wearied with business abroad, runneth to his house that he may rest there, and striveth quickly to finish his business abroad, and to betake himself, for rest, to his own house. For therefore hath every one a home of his own, that he may rest therein. But if there also he suffer trouble, where can he rest? What then? It is good to have rest in his own house. But if abroad he suffer enemies, within perhaps a bad wife, he goeth forth into public: when he would rest from those troubles which are abroad, he entereth into his house: but when he neither resteth here, nor resteth abroad, where shall there be rest? At least in the closet of the heart, when thou betakest thyself to thine inmost conscience. If there thou hast haply found a wife that causeth thee no bitterness, even the Wisdom of God; with her join thyself; rest within in thy chamber; let not the smoke of an evil conscience drive thee thence. But it was to meditate deceits, that he, of whom the Scripture speaketh these things, betook himself thither where men see not; and such things did he there meditate to himself, that not even in his heart could he rest. He hath meditated iniquity on his bed.

6. He hath set himself in every way that is not good. What is, he hath set himself? He hath sinned perseveringly. Whence also of a certain pious and good man it is said, He hath not stood in the way of sinners. As this hath not stood, so that hath set himself. But wickedness hath he not hated. There is the end, there the fruit: if a man can not but have wickedness, let him at least hate it. For when thou hatest it, it scarcely occurs to thee to do any wickedness. For sin is in our mortal body, but what saith the Apostle? Let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. When beginneth it not to be therein? When that shall be fulfilled in us which he saith, When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality. Before this come to pass, there is a delighting in sin in the body, but greater is the delighting and the pleasure in the Word of Wisdom, in the Commandment of God. Overcome sin and the lust thereof. Sin and iniquity do thou hate, that thou mayest join thyself to God, Who hateth it as well as thou. Now being joined in mind unto the Law of God, in mind thou servest the Law of God. And if in the flesh thou therefore servest the law of sin, because there are in thee certain carnal delightings, then will there be none when thou shalt no longer fight. It is one thing, not to fight, and to be in true and lasting peace; another to fight and overcome; another to fight and to be overcome; another not to fight at all, but to be carried away. For there are men who do not fight at all, such as is he of whom He speaketh, when he saith, Wickedness hath he not hated; for how fighteth he against that which he hath not hated? He is carried off by wickedness, and doth not fight. But there are who begin to fight, but because they presume on their own strength, (that God may shew them that it is He that overcometh, if man joineth himself to God,) both when they fight they are overcome, and when they begin after a sort to lay hold on righteousness, they become proud, and are confounded. These fight, but are overcome. But who is he that fighteth, and is not overcome? He who saith, I

see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind. See he fighteth, but not on his own strength presumeth he, therefore he shall be conqueror. For what followeth, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. He presumeth on Him who commanded him to fight; and overcometh his enemy, assisted by Him that commanded. But as for this man, wickedness hath he not hated.

7. Ver. 5. Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and Thy truth reacheth even unto the clouds. I know not what Mercy of Him he meaneth, which is in the heavens. For the Mercy of the Lord is also in the earth. Thou hast it written, The earth is full of the Mercy of the Lord. Of what Mercy then speaketh He, when He saith, Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens? The gifts of God are partly temporal and earthly, partly eternal and heavenly. Whoso for this worshippeth God, that he may receive those temporal and earthly goods, which are open to all, is still as it were like the brutes: he enjoyeth indeed the Mercy of God, but not that which is excepted, which shall not be given, save only to the righteous, to the holy, to the good. What are the gifts which abound to all? He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Who hath not this Mercy of God, first that he hath being, that he is distinguished from the brutes, that he is a rational animal, so as to understand God; secondly, that he enjoys this light, this air, rain, fruits, diversity of seasons, and all the earthly comforts, health of body, the affection of friends, the safety of his family? All these are good, and they are God’s gifts. Think not, Brethren, that any can give these, but God alone. Whoever then expecteth not these things but from the Lord, is very different from those who expect them even from devils, or from diviners, or from astrologers. For these are in two ways miserable, both because they desire only earthly goods, and because they ask not from Him Who giveth all goods. But they who desire these goods, and in these goods would be happy, and seek them only from God, in this indeed are better, that they seek them from God, but yet they are endangered. Saith one, How are they endangered? Because sometimes they consider human affairs, and see that all these earthly goods, which they desire, the ungodly and unrighteous have abundantly; and think that they have lost the reward of worshipping God, because the same which the wicked have they also have,

though they worship God, Whom the others worship not; or because sometimes they who worship have not at all, and they have who blaspheme: therefore they are still in danger.

8. But this man rightly understood what mercy he should pray for from God. Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the Heavens; and Thy Truth reacheth even to the clouds. That is, the Mercy which Thou givest to Thy Saints, is Heavenly, not earthly; is Eternal, not temporal. And how couldest Thou declare it unto men? Because, Thy Truth reacheth even unto the clouds. For who could know the Heavenly Mercy of God, unless God should declare it unto men? How did He declare it? By sending His truth even unto the clouds. What are the clouds? The Preachers of the Word of God. By whom in a certain place God was wroth with a certain vineyard. For I suppose, My Beloved, ye have understood, as well as heard the Prophet Isaiah, where He saith of a certain Vineyard, I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And lest any should think that He spake of a visible vineyard, he so concluded. The Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the House of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant. Therefore He reproved the Vineyard, which He looked should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And what said He? I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. And verily it came to pass. For the Apostles were sent to be Preachers. We find in the Acts of the Apostles that the Apostle Paul wished to preach to the Jews, and he found in them no grapes but wild grapes. For they began for his good to render evil, and to persecute him, and he, fulfilling what is written, I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it, said, Unto you were we sent, but since ye reject the Word of God, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. Therefore was this fulfilled, I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. Truth reached even to the clouds: therefore unto us could be declared the Mercy of God, which is in Heaven and not in earth. And truly, Brethren, the clouds are the Preachers of the Word of Truth. When God threateneth through His Preachers, He thunders through the clouds. When God worketh miracles through His Preachers, He lightneth through the clouds, He terrifieth through the clouds, and watereth by the rain. Those Preachers then, by whom is preached the Gospel of God, are the clouds of God. Let us then hope for Mercy, but for that which is in the Heavens.

9. Ver. 6. Thy Righteousness is like the mountains of God: Thy Judgments are a great deep. Who are the mountains of God. Those who are called clouds, the same are also the mountains of God. The great Preachers are the mountains of God. And as when the sun riseth, he first clothes the mountains with light, and thence the light descends to the lowest parts of the earth: so our Lord Jesus Christ, when He came, first irradiated the height of the Apostles, first enlightened the mountains, and so His Light descended to the valley of the world. And therefore saith He in a certain Psalm, I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help. But think not that the mountains themselves will give thee help: for they receive what they may give, give not of their own. And if thou remain in the mountains, thy hope will not be strong: but in Him, Who enlighteneth the mountains, ought to be thy hope and presumption. Thy help indeed will come to thee through the mountains, because the Scriptures are administered to thee through the mountains, through the great Preachers of the Truth: but fix not thy hope in them. Hear what He saith next following: I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help. What then? Do the mountains give thee help? No; hear what follows, My help cometh from the Lord, Which made Heaven and earth. Through the mountains cometh help, but not from the mountains. From whom then? From the Lord, Which made Heaven and earth. There have been other mountains, by whom whosoever would guide his ship has made shipwreck. For there have risen up leaders of heresies, who have been mountains. Arius was a mountain, Donatus was a mountain, Maximianus even now was like a mountain. Many looking to those mountains and desiring land, when they would be freed from the waves, were driven on the rocks, and made shipwreck on the land. By such mountains was not he seduced, who said, In the Lord put I my trust. How say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain. I would not my hope should be in Arius, I would not in Donatus. My help cometh from the Lord, Which made Heaven and earth. Learn ye how far ye may presume upon God, and how much ye may attribute to men, for Cursed is the man that trusteth in man. Most meekly and humbly, the holy Apostle Paul, being truly jealous of the Church, but for the Bridegroom, not for himself, and fearing those who would say, I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, chose rather his own person to tread upon and despise, that he might glorify Christ. Was Paul crucified for you, or were ye

baptized in the name of Paul? He repels them from himself; but that he may send them to Christ. Even the friend of the Bridegroom would not to be loved by the Bride for the Bridegroom. For the Apostles are the friends of the Bridegroom. For the same Bridegroom, the humble John also, who was thought the Christ, was jealous. Wherefore he said, I am not the Christ: but there cometh One mightier than I after me, the latchet of Whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. And so humbling himself, he truly shewed that he was not the Bridegroom, but the Bridegroom’s friend; and therefore he said, He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom: but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom’s voice. And if the friend of the Bridegroom is a mountain, yet hath not the mountain light from itself: but he heareth and rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom’s voice.We, saith he, have all received of His fulness. Of whose fulness? Of His, Who was the True Light Which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. For Him then the Apostle also was jealous of the Church, saying, Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. That is, I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help. Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. But lest thy hope be again fixed on the mountains and not on God, hear this, I have planted, Apollos watered; and God gave the increase; and this, So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. Now then thou hast said, I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence cometh my help: but because neither is he that planteth any thing, nor he that watereth; say, My help cometh from the Lord, Which made Heaven and earth; and, Thy Righteousness is like the mountains of God: that is, the mountains are filled with Thy Righteousness.

10. Thy Judgments are like the great abyss. The abyss he calleth the depth of sin, whither every one cometh by despising God; as in a certain place it is said, God gave them over to their own hearts’ lusts, to do the things which are not convenient. Attend, my Beloved. This is a great matter; a great matter is before us. What meaneth this, God gave them over to their own hearts’ lusts, to do the things that are not convenient? If then God has given them over to their own hearts’ lusts, to do those things which are not

convenient, is it therefore they do such wickednesses? Suppose one should propose this question; if God maketh them to do the things which are not convenient, what have they done? The secret is that which thou heardest, God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts. Therefore it was lust which they would not overcome, to which they were delivered by the Judgment of God. But that they should be held worthy to be delivered, see what of them he said before, Because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Whereby? By their pride; for, Professing themselves wise, they became fools. And thereupon followeth, God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts. Because then they were proud and ungrateful, they were held worthy to be delivered up to the lusts of their own hearts, and became a great abyss, so that they not only sinned, but also worked craftily, lest they should understand their iniquity, and hate it. That is the depth of wickedness, to be unwilling to find it out and to hate it. But how one cometh to that depth, see; Thy Judgments are the great abyss. As the mountains are by the Righteousness of God, who through His Grace become great: so also through His Judgments come they unto the depth, who sink lowest. By this then let the mountains delight thee, by this turn away from the abyss, and turn thyself unto that, of which it is said, My help cometh from the Lord. But whereby? I have lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains. What meaneth this? I will speak plainly. In the Church of God thou findest an abyss, thou findest also mountains; thou findest there but few good, because the mountains are few, the abyss broad; that is, thou findest many living ill after the wrath of God, because they have so worked that they are delivered up to the lusts of their own heart; so now they defend their sins and confess them not; but say, Why? What have I done? Such an one did this, and such an one did that. Now will they even defend what the Divine Word reproves. This is the abyss. Therefore in a certain place saith the Scripture, (hear this abyss,) The sinner when he cometh unto the depth of sin despiseth. See, Thy Judgments are like the great abyss. But yet not art thou a mountain; not yet art thou in the abyss; fly from the abyss, tend towards the mountains; but yet remain not on the mountains. For thy help cometh from the Lord, Which made Heaven and earth.

11. O Lord, Thou shalt save man and beast, (ver. 7.) as Thy Mercy is multiplied, O God. Because he said, Thy Mercy is in the Heavens, that it may be known to be also on earth, he said, O Lord, Thou savest man and beast, as Thy Mercy is multiplied, O God. Great is Thy Mercy, and manifold is Thy Mercy, O God; and that shewest Thou both to man and beast. For from whom is the saving of men? From God. Is not the saving of beasts also from God? For He Who made man, made also beasts; He Who made both, saveth both; but the saving of beasts is temporal. But there are who as a great thing ask this of God, which He hath given to beasts. Thy Mercy, O God, is multiplied, so that not only unto men, but unto beasts also is given the same saving which is given to men, a carnal and temporal saving.

12. Have not men then somewhat reserved with God, which beasts deserve not, and whereunto beasts arrive not? They have evidently. And where is that which they have. The children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. Attend, my Beloved, to this most pleasant sentence: Thou savest man and beast. First, he spake of man and beast, then of the children of men; as though men were one, the children of men other. Sometimes in Scripture children of men is said generally of all men, sometimes in some proper manner, with some proper signification, so that not all men are understood; chiefly when there is a distinction. For not without reason is it here put; O Lord, Thou savest man and beast: but the children of men; as though setting aside the first, he keepeth separate the children of men. Separate from whom? Not only from beasts, but also from men, who seek from God the saving of beasts, and desire this as a great thing. Who then are the children of men? Those who put their trust under the shadow of His wings. For those men together with beasts rejoice in possession, but the children of men rejoice in hope: those follow after present goods with beasts, these hope for future goods with Angels. Why then are those with a distinction called men, and these called the children of men? For in a certain place also saith the Scripture, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the Son of Man, that Thou visitest him? What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? Thou art mindful of him, as of one absent; but the Son of Man Thou visitest as present. What is, Thou art mindful of man? O Lord, Thou savest man and beast. For even to the evil Thou givest saving, and to

them who desire not the kingdom of Heaven. For He regardeth them, and deserteth them not after their manner, as they their cattle: He deserteth them not, but as of the absent, is mindful of them. But He Whom he visiteth is the Son of Man; and of Him it is said, The children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. And if ye would discern these two kinds of men, first consider the two men, Adam and Christ. Hear the Apostle, For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. We are born of Adam, that we may die: we rise again through Christ, that we may live for ever. When we bear the image of the earthly man, we are men: when we bear the image of the Heavenly Man, we are children of men; for Christ was called the Son of Man. For Adam was a man, but not a son of man: therefore to Adam belong those who desire carnal goods and that temporal saving. We exhort them to become the children of men, to put their trust under the shadow of His wings, and to desire that Mercy which is in the Heavens, and which was declared by the clouds. But if as yet they cannot, in the mean while even temporal goods let them not desire, but from God alone. So even let them serve after the Old Testament, that at the New they may arrive.

13. For that people also desired earthly goods; the kingdom of Jerusalem, the subjection of their enemies, abundance of fruits, their own health, their childrens’ health. Such things they desired, and such things they received; under the Law were they kept. They desired from God goods which He gives even to beasts, because not yet had the Son of Man come to them, that they might be the children of men: yet they had already ‘clouds’ declaring the Son of Man. Unto them came Prophets, and declared Christ; and there were of them some who understood, and had hope of the future, to receive the Mercy which is in the Heavens. There were also of them some who desired but carnal things, and earthly and temporal felicity. The same men’s feet slipped away to make and to worship idols. For when He warned them, and scourged them in those things in which they delighted, and took them away, they suffered famine, wars, pestilences, diseases, and so they turned themselves to idols. Those goods which as a great thing they ought to have desired of God, they desired from idols, and abandoned God. For they observed that those goods, which they sought, abounded to the ungodly and wicked, and they thought that they worshipped God in vain, because He

gave them not their hire on earth. O man, thou art God’s workman; hereafter is the time of receiving thy hire: why askest thou now thy hire, before thou hast wrought? If thy workman come up to thy house, wilt thou give him his hire, before that he has finished his work? Thou wilt think him perverse, if he say; First, let me receive my hire, and then I will work. Thou wilt be angry. But why wilt thou be angry? Because he trusted not a deceitful man. How will not God be angry, when thou trustest not Truth Itself? What He promised thee, He will give thee: He deceiveth not, because He is Truth, Who promised. But fearest thou, lest haply He have nothing to give? He is Omnipotent: fear not, lest He be not, to give thee; He is Immortal: fear not, lest He be succeeded. He is everlasting: be secure. If thou wouldest thy workman to rely on thee the whole day, trust thou also in God, thy whole life; for thy life is a moment of time with God. And thou shalt be, what? But the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings.

14. Ver. 8. They shall be drunken with the fulness of Thy House. He promiseth us some great thing. He would speak it, and He speaketh it not. Can He not, or do not we receive it? I dare, my Brethren, to say, even of holy tongues and hearts, by which Truth is declared to us, that it can neither be spoken, which they declared, nor even thought of For it is a great thing, and ineffable; and even they saw through a glass darkly, as saith the Apostle, For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face. Lo, they who saw through a glass darkly, thus burst forth. What then shall we be, when we shall see face to face? That with which they travailed in heart, and could not with their tongue bring forth, that men might receive it. For what necessity was there that he should say, They shall be drunken with the fulness of Thy House? He sought a word whereby to express from human things what he would say; and because he saw that men drowning themselves in drunkenness receive indeed wine without measure, but lose their senses, he saw what to say; for when shall have been received that ineffable joy, then shall be lost in a manner the human soul, it shall become Divine, and be drunken with the fulness of God’s House. Wherefore also in another Psalm it is said, Thy cup inebriating, how excellent is it! With this cup were the Martyrs drunken when going to their passion, they knew not their own. What so drunken as not to know a wife weeping, not children,

not parents? They knew them not, they thought not that they were before their eyes. Wonder not: they were drunken. Wherewith were they drunken? Lo, they had received a cup wherewith they were drunken. Wherefore he also gives thanks to God, saying, What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me? I will take the cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord, Therefore, Brethren, let us be ‘children of men,’ and let us trust under the shadow of His wings, and be drunken with the fulness of His House. As I could, I have spoken; and as far as I can, I see; and how far I see, I cannot speak. They shall be drunken with the fulness of Thy House; and of the torrent of Thy Pleasure shalt Thou give them to drink. A torrent we call water coming with a flood. There will be a flood of God’s Mercy to overflow and inebriate those, who now put their trust under the shadow of His wings. What is that Pleasure? As it were a torrent inebriating the thirsty. Let him then who thirsts now, lay up hope: whoso thirsts now, let him have hope; when inebriated, he shall have possession: before he have possession, let him thirst in hope. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

15. With what fountain then wilt thou be overflowed, and whence runneth such a torrent of His Pleasure? (Ver. 9.) For with Thee, saith he, is the fountain of Life. What is the fountain of Life, but Christ? He came to thee in the flesh, that He might bedew thy thirsty lips: He will satisfy thee trusting, Who bedewed thee thirsting. For with Thee is the fountain of Life; in Thy Light shall we see light. Here a fountain is one thing, light another: there not so. For that which is the Fountain, the same is also Light: and whatever thou wilt thou callest It, for It is not what thou callest It: for thou canst not find a fit name: for It remaineth not in one name. If thou shouldest say, that It is Light only, it would be said to thee, Then without cause am I told to hunger and thirst, for who is there that eateth light? It is said to me plainly, directly, Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God. If It is Light, my eyes must I prepare. Prepare also lips; for That Which is Light is also a Fountain: a Fountain, because It satisfieth the thirsty: Light, because It enlighteneth the blind. Here sometimes, light is in one place, a fountain in another. For sometimes fountains run even in darkness; and sometimes in the desert thou sufferest the sun, findest no fountain: here then can these

two be separated: there thou shalt not be wearied, for there is a Fountain; there thou shalt not be darkened, for there is Light.

16. Ver. 10. Shew forth Thy Mercy unto them that know Thee; Thy Righteousness to them that are of a right heart. As I have said, Those are of a right heart, who follow in this life the Will of God. The Will of God is sometimes that thou shouldest be whole, sometimes that thou shouldest be sick. If when thou art whole God’s Will be sweet, and when thou art sick God’s Will be bitter; thou art not of a right heart. Wherefore? Because thou wilt not make right thy will according to God’s Will, but wilt bend God’s Will to thine. That is right, but thou art crooked: thy will must be made right to That, not That made crooked to thee; and thou wilt have a right heart. It is well with thee in this world; be God blessed, Who comforteth thee: it goeth hardly with thee in this world; be God blessed, because He chasteneth and proveth thee; and so wilt thou be of a right heart, saying, I will bless the Lord at all times: His Praise shall be ever in my mouth.

17. Ver. 11. Let not the foot of pride come against me. But now he said, The children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings: they shall be drunken with the fulness of Thy House. When one hath begun to be plentifully overflowed with that Fountain, let him take heed lest he grow proud. For the same was not wanting to Adam, the first man: but the foot of pride came against him, and the hand of the sinner removed him, that is, the proud hand of the devil. As he who seduced him, said of himself, I will sit in the sides of the north; so he persuaded him, by saying, Taste, and ye shall be as Gods. By pride then have we so fallen as to arrive at this mortality. And because pride had wounded us, humility maketh us whole. God came humbly, that from such great wound of pride He might heal man. He came, for, The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us. He was taken by the Jews; He was reviled of them. Ye heard when the Gospel was read, what they said, and to Whom they said, Thou hast a devil: and He said not, Ye have a devil, for ye are still in your sins, and the devil possesseth your hearts. He said not this, which if He had said, He had said truly: but it was not meet that He should say it, lest He should seem not to preach Truth, but to retort evil speaking. He let go what He heard as though He heard it not. For a Physician was He, and to cure the madman had He come. As a

Physician careth not what he may hear from the madman; but how the madman may recover and become sane; nor even if he receive a blow from the madman, careth he; but while he to him giveth new wounds, he cureth his old fever: so also the Lord came to the sick man, to the madman came He, that whatever He might hear, whatever He might suffer, He should despise; by this very thing teaching us humility, that being taught by humility, we might be healed from pride: from which he here prayeth to be delivered, saying, Let not the foot of pride come against me; neither let the hand of the sinner remove me. For if the foot of pride come, the hand of the sinner removeth. What is the hand of the sinner? The working of him that adviseth ill. Hast thou become proud? Quickly he corrupteth thee who adviseth ill. Humbly fix thyself in God, and care not much what is said to thee. Hence is that which is elsewhere spoken, From my secret sins cleanse Thou me; and from others' sins also keep Thy servant. What is, From my secret sins? Let not the foot of pride come against me. What is, From other men's sins also keep Thy servant? Let not the hand of the wicked remove me. Keep that which is within, and thou shalt not fear from without.

18. But wherefore so greatly fearest thou this? Because it is said, (ver. 12.) Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity; so that they have come into that abyss, of which it is said, Thy judgments are like the great abyss: so that they have come even to that deep wherein sinners who despise have fallen. Have fallen. Whereby did they first fall? By the foot of pride. Hear the foot of pride. When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God. Therefore came against them the foot of pride, whereby they came into the depth. God gave them over to their own hearts' lusts, to do those things which are not convenient. The root of sin, and the head of sin feared he who said, Let not the foot of pride come against me. Wherefore said he, the foot? Because by walking proudly man deserted God, and departed from Him. His foot, called he his affection. Let not the foot of pride come against me: let not the hand of the wicked remove me: that is, let not the works of the wicked remove me from Thee, that I should wish to imitate them. But wherefore said he this against pride, Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity? Because those who now are ungodly, have fallen by pride. Therefore when the Lord would caution His Church, He said, It shall watch thy head, and thou shall watch his heel. The serpent watcheth when the foot of pride may

come against thee, when thou mayest fall, that he may cast thee down. But watch thou his head: the beginning of all sin is pride. Thereby have fallen all that work iniquity: they are driven out, and are not able to stand. He first, who in the Truth stood not, then, through him, they whom God sent out of Paradise. Whence he, the humble, who said that he was not worthy to unloose His shoe’s latchet, is not driven out, but standeth and heareth Him, and rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom’s voice; not because of his own, lest the foot of pride come against him, and he be driven out, and be not able to stand.

And now if with all my pains I have been tedious to any of you, I have finished the Psalm, the tediousness has passed away, and I will congratulate you that the whole Psalm is expounded. In the very middle of it, fearing lest I should burden you, I was about to let you go: but I thought that our attention would be broken off, and that we should not so return to the half remaining, as if we should now run through the whole; and I was willing rather to be burdensome to you, than, leaving the subject unfinished, to keep the rest. For there is due to you also to-morrow’s sermon: pray ye for me, that I may be able to render it; and do ye bring hungry mouths and devout hearts.

PSALM 37

sermon the first

On the First Part of the Psalm.

With terror do they hear of the coming of the last day, who will not be secure by living well: and who fain would live ill, long. But it was for useful purposes that God willed that day to remain unknown; that the heart may be ever ready to expect that of which it knows it is to come, but knows not when it is to come. Seeing, however, that our Lord Jesus Christ was sent to us to be our “Master,” He said, that of that day not even the Son of Man knew, because it was not part of His office as our Master that through Him it should become known to us. For indeed the Father knoweth nothing that the Son knoweth not; since That is the Very Knowledge of the Father Itself, Which is His Wisdom; now His Son, His Word, is His “Wisdom.” But because it was not for our good to know that, which however was known to Him, Who came indeed to teach us, though not to teach us that which it was not good for us to know, He not only, as a Master, taught us something, but also as a Master, left something untaught. For, as a Master, He knew how both to teach us what was good for us, and not to teach us what was injurious. Now thus, according to a certain form of speech, the Son is said not to know what He does not teach: that is, (according to a certain form of speech, as I said,) in the same way that we are daily in the habit of speaking, He is said not to know, what He causes us not to know. For we call a day “joyful,” because it makes us joyful; and a day sad, because it makes us sad; and we call the frost sluggish, because it makes us sluggish. In the same way that it is said, on the contrary, by the Lord, Now I know. It was said to Abraham, Now I know that thou fearest God. This God knew even before that proof of him. For that trial of him was made for this reason, that we might know what God already knew, that what before the proof of it was known to Him might be written for our instruction. And perhaps even Abraham himself did not yet know what was the strength of his faith: for it is by being, as it were, put to the question by trial, that each one becomes acquainted with himself: just as Peter, at all events, was ignorant of what was the real strength of his faith, when he said to the Lord, I will be with Thee unto death. But the Lord, Who knew him well, having (so to speak) felt the pulse of his heart, foretold where he would fail, foreshewing to him his infirmity. Then it was that Peter, who before his trial had thought presumptuously of himself, in his trial learned to know himself. And so therefore we not unreasonably suppose our Father Abraham also to have discovered the strength of his faith, when, being commanded to sacrifice his only son, he neither hesitated nor shrunk from offering him up to Him Who had given him, because, as he knew not whence He was going to give him that son, when not as yet born, so he believed that, when sacrificed, He could replace him. Therefore God said, Now I know; which we understand, Now have I made thee to know; according to the expressions which we have quoted, of a sluggish frost, because it makes sluggish, and a joyful day, because it makes joyful. Thence is that saying, The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love Him. For surely you will be attributing to the Lord our God, the Supreme, the Very God, great ignorance, (which however you will perceive to be sacrilegious,) if you were to understand, The Lord your God proveth you, as if He, being before in ignorance, were gaining knowledge from the trial of us. But what is meant by, “He proveth you that He may know?” “He proveth you that He may cause you to know.” Receive therefore a principle of interpretation from the contrary of the present subject: and, just as when you hear God say, I know, you understand by it, “have caused you to know;” so also when you hear it said of the Son of Man, (i.e. of Christ,) that He knoweth not that day, understand it to be meant, that He causes us not to know it. Now what is meant by “causes us not to know it?” Conceals it, so that what is not profitable for us to have told be not communicated. This is what I said of a good Master knowing what to communicate, what to keep back: as we read that some things He postponed. Whence we learn, that not every thing is to be communicated, which they to whom it is communicated, cannot bear. For in another place He says, I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. The Apostle also says, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ; I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able, neither yet now are ye able. What is the purport of this discourse? That since we know that the last day will come, but, while for our profit we know that it is to come, are, for our profit also, ignorant of the time when it is to come, we may keep our heart in readiness for it, by living well: and may not only not fear that day's coming, but may even desire it. Seeing that day, as it increases the misery of the unbelieving, so it ends that of the faithful. Which now of these two thou wilt choose to do, is now indeed, before it comes, in thine own power; when it shall have come, will not be so. Choose therefore, whilst there is time; for that which God mercifully conceals, He mercifully postpones also.

2. Now that in every sort of life that hath any kind of professed object, not all are found good, not all are reprobates, appears from this, that of certain classes of persons, which we have just now heard set forth in the Gospel by comparisons, it is thus concluded: One shall be taken; and one shall be left. The good shall be taken; the bad shall be left. Two men are seen in the field. The profession is the same, but their hearts not the same. The profession is visible to men; the heart is known to God. Whatsoever therefore the field signifies, one shall be taken, and one shall be left. Not as if half of it was to be taken, and half left: but it speaks of two classes of persons. And if one of those comprises many persons, the other but few, yet, one shall be taken, and one shall be left: that is, the one class shall be taken, and the other shall be left. So shall it be in the bed, so in the mill. Perhaps you are anxious to know what these things mean. You see that they are wrapped up and enveloped, as it were, in comparisons. Now it may seem to me to be one thing; to another, something else. But neither do I by what I say forbid any other person to receive a better explanation; nor let him object to my receiving both, if both are reconcileable with the faith. For to me it seems that those who bear rule over the Church are labouring in the field, as the Apostle saith, Ye are God's husbandry; ye are God's building. For he calls himself both a master builder, when he says, As a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation; and also a husbandman, when he says, I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. In the mill then He spake of two women, not two men; I suppose, because this comparison relates to the laity: because the rulers govern, the laity are governed. And I think that by that mill is meant the world, because it revolves on the wheel of the times, (so to speak,) and because it crushes those who love it. There are then some who do not withdraw from secular business: but yet in this

too some do well, others ill. Some, make to themselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness; by whom they may be received into everlasting habitations; to whom it is said, I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat. Some neglect those things, to whom it is said, I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat. Therefore, because of those who are engaged in the business and the labours of this world, there are some that love to do good to the needy, some that neglect it, as of two women in the mill, the one shall be taken and the other left. Now the bed I believe to be put for rest: because there are those who will neither submit to worldly business, as there are men living in wedlock, having houses, households, children; nor do any thing in the Church like those who, being set over others, labour therein as in the field, but as if too feeble to perform these duties, betake themselves to retirement, and love to be in quiet, not venturing on great undertakings, as being mindful of their infirmity, and in a certain way entreating God on the "bed" of their infirmity. And that profession too hath good men, hath also hypocrites; wherefore of these also one shall be taken, the other left; for to whatsoever profession you turn, prepare yourself to bear with hypocrites: otherwise, if you do not prepare yourself, you will find that which you did not expect, and will fall away, or be offended at it. He therefore would prepare thee against all contingencies, Who speaks to thee now that it is the time, both for Him to speak, and not yet the time to judge, and for them to hear, and not yet to repent in vain. For now repentance is not in vain, then it will be in vain. For it is not that men will not repent them then of having lived ill, but that God's righteousness may by no means restore to them, what they by their own unrighteousness have forfeited. For it is a righteous thing with God, to shew mercy now, and then to execute justice. Therefore it is that it is declared now. Is it not declared? Let every one contradict me, let every one murmur dissent, if this Scripture is not read and is not sung all over the world, if it ceases even to be circulated for sale through the whole community.

3. But, in truth, this it is that disturbs you who are a Christian; that you see men of bad lives prospering, and surrounded with abundance of things like these; you see them sound in health, distinguished with proud honours; you see their family unvisited by misfortune; the happiness of their relatives, the obsequious attendance of their dependants, their most commanding

influence, their life uninterrupted by any sad event; you see their characters most profligate, their external resources most affluent; and your heart says that there is no Divine judgment; that all things are carried to and fro by accidents, and blown about in disorderly and irregular motions. For if God, thou sayest, regarded human affairs, would his iniquity flourish, and my innocence suffer? Every sickness of the soul hath in Scripture its proper remedy. Let him then whose sickness is of that kind that he says in his heart things like these, let him drink this Psalm by way of potion. What is the matter? What aileth thee? Let us once more consider what you were saying. What was I saying? you say. What, but what you yourself see? The wicked flourish, the good suffer. How can it be that God seeth these things? Take and drink this; He, concerning Whom thou utterest those murmurs, hath Himself mingled that potion for thee. Only do not thou reject that most wholesome cup. Apply to it the lips of the heart by lending thine ears; and drink what thou hearest.

Ver. 1. Be not envious because of evil-doers, neither be envious against the workers of iniquity. (Ver. 2.) For they shall soon wither like the grass, and shall fade like the herbs of the meadow. That which to thee seemeth long, is “soon” in the sight of God. Conform thou thyself to God; and it will be “soon” to thee. That which he here calls grass, that we understand by the herbs of the meadow. They are some worthless things, occupying the surface only of the ground, they have no depth of root. In the winter then they are green; but when the summer sun shall begin to scorch, they will wither away. For now it is the season of winter. Thy glory doth not as yet appear. But if thy love hath but a deep root, like that of many trees during winter, the frost passes away, the summer (that is, the Day of Judgment) will come; then will the greenness of the grass wither away. Then will the glory of the trees appear. For ye (saith the Apostle) are dead, even as trees seem to be in winter, as it were dead, as it were withered. What is our hope then, if we are dead? The root is within; where our root is, there is our life also, for there our love is fixed. And your life is hid with Christ in God. When shall he wither, who is thus rooted? But when will our spring be? When our summer? When will the honour of foliage clothe us around, and the fulness of fruit make us rich? When shall this come to pass? Hear what follows; When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. And what then shall we do now? Be not envious because of the evil-doers, neither be envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon wither like the grass, and fade like the herb of the meadow.

4. What shouldest thou do then? (Ver. 3.) Trust in the Lord. For they too trust, but not in the Lord. Their hope is perishable. Their hope is short-lived, frail, fleeting, transitory, baseless. Trust thou in the Lord. “Behold,” thou sayest, “I do trust; what am I to do?”

And do good. Do not do that evil which thou beholdest in those men, who are prosperous in wickedness. Do good, and dwell in the land. Lest haply thou shouldest be doing good without “dwelling in the land.” For it is the Church that is the Lord’s land. It is her whom He, the Father, the tiller of it, waters, and cultivates. For there are many that, as it were, do good works, but yet, in that they do not dwell in the land, they do not belong to the husbandman. Therefore do thou thy good, not outside of the land, but do thou dwell in the land. And what shall I have?

And thou shalt be fed in its riches. What are the riches of that land? Her riches are her Lord! Her riches are her God! He it is to Whom it is said, The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup. In a late discourse we suggested to you, dearly beloved, that God is our possession, and that we are at the same time God’s possession. Hear how that He is Himself the riches of that land.

Ver. 4. Delight thyself in the Lord. As if thou hadst put the question, and hadst said, “Shew me the riches of that land, in which thou biddest me dwell, he says, Delight thyself in the Lord.

5. And He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Understand in their proper signification, the desires of thine heart. Distinguish the desires of thine heart from the desires of thy flesh; distinguish as much as thou canst. It is not without a meaning that it is said in a certain Psalm, God is (the strength) of mine heart. For there it says in what follows: And God is my portion for ever. For instance: One labours under bodily blindness. He asks that he may receive his sight. Let him ask it; for God does that too, and gives those blessings also. But these things are asked for even by the

wicked. This is a desire of the flesh. One is sick, and prays to be made sound. From the point of death he is restored to health. That too is a desire of the flesh, as are all of such a kind. What is "the desire of the heart?" As the desire of the flesh is to wish to have one's eyesight restored, to enable him, that is, to see that light, which can be seen by such eyes; so the desire of the heart relates to a different sort of light. For, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Delight thou thyself in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

6. "Behold," (you say,) "I do long after it, I do ask for it, I do desire it. Shall I then accomplish it?" No. Who shall then? (Ver. 5.) Reveal thy way unto the Lord: trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. Mention to Him what thou sufferest, mention to Him what thou dost desire. For what is it that thou sufferest? The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. What is it then that thou dost desire? Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And because it is He Himself that "will bring it to pass," when thou shalt have revealed thy ways unto Him; hear what follows; The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. What is it then that He is to bring to pass, since it is said, Reveal thy way unto Him, and He will bring it to pass? What will He bring to pass?

Ver. 6. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light. For now, thy righteousness is hid. Now it is a thing of faith; not yet of sight. You believe something that you may do it. You do not yet see that in which you believe. But when thou shalt begin to see that, which thou didst believe before, thy righteousness will be brought forth to the light, because it is thy faith that was thy righteousness. For the just lives by faith.

7. And He shall bring forth thy judgment as the noon-day. That is to say, "as the clear light." It was too little to say, as the light. For we call it "light" already, even when it but dawns: we call it light even while the sun is rising. But never is the light brighter than at mid-day. Therefore He will not only bring forth thy righteousness as the light, but thy judgment shall be as the noon-day. For now dost thou make thy "judgment" to follow Christ. This is thy purpose: this is thy choice: this is thy judgment. No one hath shewn thee what He hath promised: thou holdest fast One Who as yet doth but promise; but thou waitest for Him Who shall shew thee the fulfilment. In the

judgment therefore of thy faith thou hast chosen to follow what thou dost not see: the justice of thy judgment is as yet a matter of uncertainty. It is as yet censured and ridiculed by the infidels. “What hast thou believed? What is it that Christ hath promised thee? That thou shalt be immortal, and that He will give thee eternal life? Where is this to be? When will He give it thee? When can it possibly be?” Yet is it thy judgment rather to follow Christ, promising what thou dost not see, than the wicked, censuring thy belief of what thou dost not yet see. And this is thy judgment; but what is the wisdom of that judgment doth not yet appear. In this world it is, as it were, night. Then, when shall He bring forth thy judgment as the noon-day? When Christ, Who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. When the Day of Judgment shall have come, and when Christ shall have come and gathered together all nations to be judged, what shall then be? Where shall the wicked hide his falsehood, when I shall see my faith? Well, what is our portion now? Distress, tribulations, and trials: and Blessed is he that endureth to the end: for He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved. Let him not yield to those that mock him; let him not make his choice to flourish here; so that from a tree he should become grass.

8. ‘What should I do then?’ Hear what thou shouldest do. (Ver. 7.) Submit thee to the Lord, and entreat Him. Be this thy life, to obey His commandments. For this is to submit thee to Him; and to entreat Him until He give thee what He hath promised. Let good works “continue;” let prayer “continue.” For men ought always to pray, and not to faint. Wherein dost thou shew that thou art submitted to Him? In doing what He hath commanded. But haply thou dost not receive thy wages as yet, because as yet thou art not able. For He is already able to give them; but thou art not already able to receive them. Exercise thou thyself in works. Labour in the vineyard; at the close of the day crave thy wages. Faithful is He who brought thee into the vineyard. Submit thee to the Lord, and entreat Him.

9. “See! I do so; I do submit to the Lord, and I do entreat. But what do you think? That neighbour of mine is a wicked man, living a bad life, and prosperous! His thefts, adulteries, robberies, are known to me. Lifted up above every one, proud, and raised on high by wickedness, he deigns not to

notice me. Under these circumstances, how shall I hold out with patience?” This is a sickness; drink, by way of remedy.

“Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way.” He prospereth, but it is in his way: thou sufferest, but it is in God’s way! His portion is prosperity on his way, misery on arriving at its end: yours, toil on the road, happiness in its termination. The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; and the way of the ungodly shall perish. Thou walkest those ways which the Lord knoweth, and if thou dost suffer toil in them, they do not deceive thee. The way of the ungodly is but a transitory happiness; at the end of the way the happiness is at an end also. Why? Because that way is the broad road; its termination leads to the pit of hell. Now, thy way is narrow; and few there be that enter in through it: but into how ample a field it comes at the last, thou oughtest to consider. Fret not thyself at him who prospereth in his way; because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

Ver. 8. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath. Wherefore art thou wroth? Wherefore is it that, through that passion and indignation, thou dost blaspheme, or almost blaspheme? Against the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass, cease from anger, and forsake wrath. Knowest thou not whither that wrath tempts thee on? Thou art on the point of saying unto God, that He is unjust. It tends to that. “Look! why is that man prosperous, and this man in adversity?” Consider what thought it begets: stifle the wicked notion. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: so that now returning to thy senses, thou mayest say, Mine eye is disturbed because of wrath. What eye is that, but the eye of faith? To the eye of thy faith I appeal. Thou didst believe in Christ: why didst thou believe? What did He promise thee? If it was the happiness of this world that Christ promised thee, then murmur against Christ; yes! murmur against Him, when thou seest the wicked flourishing. What of happiness did He promise? What, save in the Resurrection of the Dead? But what in this life? That which was His portion. His portion, I say! Dost thou, servant and disciple, disdain what thy Lord, what thy Master bore? Dost thou not hear from Him, The servant is not greater than his Lord, and the disciple is not above his Master. He endured for thee pain, scourgings, reproaches, the Cross, and death, and which of these was due to the Just One, which not due to thee, a sinner?

Therefore keep thou thine eye right, let it not be disturbed because of wrath. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath. Be not emulous in any wise to do evil; by, as it were, copying him who, by doing evil, flourishes for a time. Be not emulous in any wise to do evil.

Ver. 9. For evil-doers shall be cut off. “But I see their prosperity.” Believe Him, Who saith, they shall be cut off; Him Who seeth better than thou, since His eye anger cannot cloud. For evil-doers shall be cut off. But those that wait upon the Lord,—not upon any one that can deceive them; but verily on Him Who is the Truth itself,—But those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the land. What land, but that Jerusalem, with the love of which whosoever is inflamed, shall come to peace at the last.

10. “But how long is the sinner to flourish? How long shall I have to endure?” Thou art impatient; that which seems long to thee, will soon come to pass. It is infirmity makes that seem long, which is really short, as is found in the case of the longings of sick men. Nothing seems so long, as the mixing of the potion for him when athirst. For all that his attendants are making all speed, lest haply the patient be angry; “When will it be done? (he cries,) When will it be drest? When will it be served?” Those who are waiting upon you are making haste, but your infirmity fancies that long, which is being done with expedition. Behold ye, therefore, our Physician complying with the infirmity of the patient, saying, “How long shall I have to endure? How long will it be?”

Ver. 10. Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be. Is it certainly among sinners, and because of the sinner, that thou murmurest? A little while, and he shall not be. Lest haply because I said, They that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the land, thou shouldest think that waiting to be of very long duration. Wait a little while, thou shalt receive without end what thou waitest for. A little while, a moderate space. Review the years from Adam’s time up to this day; run through the Scriptures. It is almost yesterday that he fell from Paradise! So many ages have been measured out, and unrolled. Where now are the past ages? Even so, however, shall the few which remain, pass away also. Hadst thou been living throughout all that time, since Adam was banished from Paradise up to this present day, thou wouldest certainly see that the life, which had thus flown away, had not been of long duration. But how long is the duration of each individual’s life? Add any number of years you please: prolong old age to its longest duration: what is it? Is it not but a morning breeze? Be it so, however, that the Day of Judgment is far off, when the reward of the righteous and of the unrighteous is to come: your last day at all events cannot be far off. Make thyself ready against this! For such as thou shall have departed from this life, shalt thou be restored to the other. At the close of that short life, you will not yet be, where the Saints shall be, to whom it shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father: inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world. You will not yet be there? Who does not know that? But you may already be there, where that beggar, once covered with sores, was seen at a distance, at rest, by that proud and unfruitful rich man in the midst of his torments. Surely laid in that rest thou waitest in security for the Day of Judgment, when thou art to receive again a body, to be changed so as to be made equal to an Angel. How long then is that, for which we are impatient, and are saying, ‘When will it come? Will it tarry long?’ This our sons will say hereafter, and our sons’ sons will say too; and, though each one of these in succession will say this same thing, that little while, that is yet to be, passes away, as all that is already past hath past away already! O thou sick one! Yet a little while, and the sinner shall not be. Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and thou shalt not find him.

He shews what he meant by, he shall not be—not that he shall cease to exist altogether, but that he shall not exist for any good end. For if he shall cease to exist altogether, he will not even be tortured. Then is security given to the sinner, so that he will say, ‘I will do what I will so long as I live; afterward I shall be no more.’ Will he be no more in existence, that he may suffer pain, that he may be tormented? What then will become of, Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels? ‘But perhaps they will not be consigned to that fire, and will be annihilated.’ Then it would not be said, Go ye into everlasting fire; for if they were not to be in existence, it would not be everlasting to them. And indeed what is in store for them there, whether absolute annihilation, or pain and torment, the Lord hath not kept back from us, saying, There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Now in what way shall they weep, and gnash the teeth, if they shall cease to exist altogether? In what way is it here said, A little while, and the sinner shall not be, except in the way in which he expounded his meaning in the following verse? Yea, thou shalt seek his place, and thou shalt not find it. What is meant by his place? His use. “Why? hath the sinner any use?” He hath. God uses him here to prove the righteous, even as He made use of the devil to prove Job; even as He made use of Judas to betray Christ. In this life, therefore, there is something that can be done with the sinner. Here, therefore, is the place for him, just as the place for the chaff is in the furnace of the goldsmith. The chaff burns, that the gold may be cleared of its dross; even so the ungodly rages, that the righteous man may be proved. But when the time of our probation shall have been completed, when there shall no longer be those requiring to be proved, there will no longer be those, by whom they must be proved. I pray you, because we said, ‘there will not be persons to be proved,’ does it follow the persons themselves shall ‘not be?’ But because henceforth there will be no need of sinners, as instruments for the probation of the righteous, therefore verily thou shalt seek his place, and thou shalt not find it. Seek the sinner’s place now, and thou shalt find it. God hath made of the sinner a scourge. He hath even given him honour, nay, He hath given him power also. For sometimes He does this: He gives power to the sinner; then the world is scourged, then the godly are corrected. To that sinner, that which is due shall be repaid; and yet he has been made an instrument for the improvement of the godly; an occasion for the falling away of the ungodly. Thou shalt seek his place; and thou shalt not find it.

12. Ver. 11. But the meek shall inherit the land. That land is the one of which we have often spoken, the holy Jerusalem, which is to be released from these her pilgrimages, and to live for ever with God, and on God. Therefore, They shall inherit the land. What shall be their delight? And they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. Let the ungodly man delight himself here in the multitude of his gold, in the multitude of his silver, in the multitude of his slaves, in the multitude, lastly, of his baths, his roses, his intoxicating wines, his most sumptuous and luxurious banquets. Is this the power thou enviest? Is this the glory that delights thee? Would not his fate be worthy to be deplored, even if he were to be so for ever? What shall be thy delights? And they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. Peace shall be thy gold. Peace shall be thy silver. Peace shall be thy

lands. Peace shall be thy life, thy God Peace. Peace shall be to thee whatsoever thou dost desire. For here that which is gold, cannot be silver to thee; that which is wine, cannot be bread unto thee; and what is light to thee, cannot be drink to thee also. Thy God shall be all to thee! Thou shalt eat Him; so that thou shalt hunger no more. Thou shalt drink of Him, so that thou shalt never thirst. Thou shalt be enlightened by Him, so that thou shalt be no more blind. Thou shalt be stayed by Him, so that thou shalt not fall. He shall possess thee whole, entire, Himself whole, entire. Thou shalt not be straitened for room in dwelling with Him, with Whom thou dost possess all. Thou shalt possess the whole of Him. He too shall possess the whole of thee; for Thou and He shall be one; of which one He who possesses you shall possess the whole. This is the remainder in store for the man of peace. That verse we have been singing, which, however, is far in this Psalm from these verses now treated of. But because we have been singing it, we ought to end with it. Only do thou be of good courage; keep innocency. It is a precious possession. Thou hast a mind to steal something; I suppose, that thou mayest make gain. Consider what it is thou art laying hands on, and what it is from which thou art taking away! Thou wishest to gain on one side: thou art losing on the other. Thou art acquiring money, thou art losing innocency. Rather let thine heart rouse itself from its slumber. Thou who didst wish to acquire money, and art thereby losing innocence, be willing rather to lose the money. Keep innocency, and take heed to direction. For God will direct thee, that thou shouldest will whatsoever God will. For if thou willest not what God wills, thy way will be crooked, and thy perversity will not suffer thee to be “made straight” in the “direct” way. Keep innocence, then; and take heed to direction; and think not that when there is an end of this life, there is an end of man: for there is a remainder in store for the man of peace.

discourse the second

On the second part of the Psalm.

We have both received a command to speak of the Psalm to you, dearly beloved; and it was our bounden duty to obey it also. For it hath pleased God to delay our departure on account of the violence of the rains; and we have received a command, that our tongue should not be unemployed here in your service; seeing that the thought of your welfare ever employs our hearts, even as ours does yours. We had however already suggested to you what God means in that Psalm: what He would teach us; of what He would remind us, what He would forewarn us against, and what He would have us to bear with patience, and what to hope. For there are two classes of men, the just and the unjust, mingled together in this life, and in this world. Each hath a disposition of heart peculiar to itself. That of the just is struggling upward by humbling itself; that of the unjust is sinking downward by exalting itself. For the one lowers itself that it may rise; the other exalts itself that it may fall. Hence it happens, that one class has to endure, the other to be endured; that the object of the just is to save the unjust themselves to eternal life; the object of the unjust is to return evil for good, and if it be possible to deprive even of temporal life those who wish them life everlasting. For the unjust endureth with pain the just, and the just the unjust, they are a burden the one to the other. No one doubts that those two sorts of characters are a burden to one another, but that on different views. For it is for this reason that the just man is a burden to the unjust, that both in his desires he wishes, and in his actions he endeavours, that he should not be unjust, but should become just: but the unjust man’s hatred for the just is of this kind, that he would not have him exist at all; not that he would have him be righteous. For the more righteous he is, so much the more is he a burden to the unrighteousness of the other. And he takes pains moreover to make him, if it were possible, unrighteous, but if he cannot, to get him taken out of the way, and remove him from the place where he is an eyesore and a grievance to himself. But even if he should make him unrighteous, he will not be any the less a burden to him. For not only is the just man a burden to the unjust, but even two unjust persons can with difficulty endure each other: and when they seem to have a regard for each other, it is not friendship they interchange with one another, but accompliceship. But it is when they are conspiring for the destruction of the just that they are in accord together, not because they love each other, but because they have a common hatred for the man who ought to be the object of love. It is towards this class of persons that the Lord our God enjoins upon us patience, and that affection of charity of which we have received the knowledge in the Gospel; where the Lord enjoins us, saying, Love your enemies, and do good to them which hate you. Even as the Apostle also says, Be not overcome of evil; but overcome evil with good. Contend with evil, but be it in the cause of goodness. For that is the proper sort of contention, or rather that is a salutary contest, that there should be a good man against a wicked man, not two wicked men opposed to each other.

2. Turn back then to the Psalm. The first part of it hath been already handled. Then follow these words: (ver. 12.) The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth: (Ver. 13.) But the Lord shall laugh at him. At whom? Surely at the sinner, gnashing upon the other with his teeth. But wherefore shall the Lord laugh at him? For He foreseeth that his day is coming. He seems indeed full of wrath, while, ignorant of the morrow that is in store for him, he is threatening the just. But the Lord beholds and foresees his day. ‘What day?’ That in which He will render to every man according to his works. For he is treasuring up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the just judgment of God. But it is the Lord that foresees it; thou dost not foresee it. It hath been revealed to thee by Him Who foresees it. Thou didst not know of the ‘day of the unrighteous,’ in which he is to suffer punishment. But He Who knows it hath revealed it to thee. It is a main part of knowledge to join thyself to Him Who hath knowledge. He hath the eyes of knowledge: have thou the eyes of a believing mind. That which God sees, be thou willing to believe. For the day of the unjust, which God foresees, will come. What day is that? The day for all vengeance! For it is necessary that vengeance should be taken upon the ungodly, that vengeance be taken upon the unjust, whether he turn or whether he turn not. For if he shall turn from his ways, that very thing, that his injustice is come to an end, is the infliction of vengeance. Did not the Lord laugh to foresee the days of two unjust persons, both that of Judas the traitor, and that of Saul the persecutor? He foresaw the one’s day for punishment, the other’s for conversion to righteousness. Vengeance was inflicted upon both. The first was consigned to hell fire: this last was struck to the earth by a voice from heaven. Therefore, for the unjust man, whom thou hast to endure, do thou, with God, foresee his day, by the eyes of thy faith: and when thou seest him raging furiously against thee, say to thyself, ‘This man will either be reclaimed and be with me; or, still persisting in his course, will not be with me.

3. What? Does the unrighteous man’s injustice hurt thee, and not hurt him? How can it be, that the iniquity, which goes forth by his wrath and his indignation to harm thee, should not lay waste his very self within him, before it comes forth to attack thee? Thy body is oppressed by adversity; his soul is corrupted by iniquity. For whatsoever he puts forth against thee, returns back upon his head. For his persecution clears thee, while it makes him guilty. To which then doth it the greater injury? See, in his rage he has stripped thee of thy property. Who is visited with the severer loss, he who loses money, or he who loses faith? That loss those who have the inward eye well know how to deplore. For there are many for whom gold has charms, faith has not; forsooth, because they have eyes wherewith to see gold, no eyes wherewith to see faith. For had they those eyes, and could they behold it, surely they would love faith more than gold! And yet when men break faith with them, they cry out, they call for indignation at it, and say, “O faith? Where is faith?” Thou lovest it so far as to require it of others. Love it so as to shew it forth thyself. Therefore, because all who persecute the righteous, are afflicted with a severer loss, and stricken with a more fatal ruin, when their soul within them is laid waste, the Psalm goes on and shews this as follows.

Ver. 14. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright heart. (Ver. 15.) Their weapon shall enter into their own heart. It is an easy thing for his weapon, that is, his sword, to reach thy body, even as the sword of the persecutors reached the body of the Martyrs, but when the body had been smitten, the heart remained unhurt; but his heart who drew out the sword against the body of the just did not clearly remain unhurt. This is attested by this very Psalm. It saith, Their weapon, that is, Their sword shall, not go into their body, but, their weapon shall go into their own heart. They would fain have slain him in the body. Let them die the death of the soul. For those, whose bodies they sought to kill, the Lord hath freed from anxiety, saying, Fear not them who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. Now what a thing is it to rage with the sword, and not to be able to kill more than the body only of thine enemy, and to be able to kill thine own soul! They are out of their senses; it is against themselves that they are raving. They are mad, they do not see themselves; just as if one were to thrust his sword through his own flesh, that he might rend another person's coat! Thou wert thinking of that which thou hast reached, and not thinking of what thou hast had to pass through to it; thou hast made a rent in his coat, and in thine own flesh. It is clear, therefore, that the hurt and injury which the unjust do themselves, is greater than the injury which they seem to themselves to do to those whom they hate. Therefore, their weapon shall go into their own heart. It is the Lord's sentence, and it is unalterable.

And their bows shall be broken. What is meant by, and their bows shall be broken? Their plots shall be frustrated. For above He had said, The wicked have drawn out the sword and bent their bows. By the drawing out of the sword he would have understood open hostility; but by the bending of the bow, secret conspiracies. See! His sword destroys himself, and his laying of snares is frustrated. What is meant by frustrated? That it does no mischief to the righteous. How then, for instance, (you ask,) did it do no mischief to the man, whom it thus stripped of his goods, whom it reduced to straitened circumstances by taking away his possessions? He has still cause to sing, (ver. 16.) A little that a righteous man hath, is better than great riches of the ungodly.

4. But the wicked are powerful: they engage in many undertakings, they have at their command the means to effect their purposes, and activity in executing them; their command is followed by obedience. But shall it be always so?

Ver. 17. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken. Now by their arms is meant their power. What will he do in hell? Will it be what the rich man had to do, he who was wont to fare sumptuously in the upper world, and in hell was tormented? Therefore their arms shall be broken; but the Lord upholdeth the righteous. How does He uphold them? What saith He unto them? Even what is said in another Psalm, Wait on the Lord, be of good courage; and let thine heart be strengthened. Wait, I say, on the Lord. What is meant by this, "Wait on the Lord?" Thou sufferest but for a time; thou shalt rest for ever: thy trouble is short; thy happiness is to be everlasting. It is but for a little while thou art to sorrow; thy joy shall have no end. But in the midst of trouble does thy "foot" begin to "slip?" The example even of Christ's sufferings is set before thee. Consider what He endured for thee, in

Whom no cause was found why He should endure it? How great so ever be thy sufferings, thou wilt not come to those insults, those scourgings, to that robe of shame, to that crown of thorns, and last of all to that Cross, which He endured; because that is now removed from the number of human punishments. For though under the ancients criminals were crucified, in the present day no one is crucified. It was honoured, and it came to an end. It came to an end as a punishment; it is continued in glory. It hath removed from the place of execution to the foreheads of Emperors. He Who hath invested His very sufferings with such honour, what doth He reserve for His faithful servants? By these facts then, by these words, by these appeals, the Lord upholdeth the righteous. Whatsoever befals the righteous, let him impute it to the will of God, not to the power of the enemy. He may be inflamed with rage: strike thee he cannot, unless it be His Will! And if it be His Will that the other should smite thee, He knows well how to take up His servant. For whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth; but He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth? Wherefore then should the unrighteous man think it a great thing, that God hath employed him as a scourge? Him He is employing for a service: me He is correcting to prepare me for an inheritance. Nor ought we to consider how much He permits the unjust to do; but how much He hath in store for the just.

5. But we are bound to wish even for those by whom we are scourged, that they may be converted, and may themselves be scourged. For it was so that He chastened His faithful servants, Who had once made Saul to be His scourge; and afterwards converted Saul himself. And when the Lord said to holy Ananias, by whom Saul was baptized, that that Saul was to be taken charge of by him, because he was a chosen vessel, Ananias, fearing and shuddering at hearing the mention of Saul the persecutor, answered, saying, “Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how great persecution he hath raised against thy saints in Jerusalem; and now he comes, having received commission, that wheresoever he shall find any that call upon Thy name, he should arrest them, and bind them, and bring them to Jerusalem.” And the Lord said in answer, “Be it so; I will shew him what things he must suffer for My name’s sake.” I will recompense it to him; He saith; I will revenge myself upon him, “and he shall suffer for My name, who now rages against My name. I am correcting, or have already corrected, others by his agency:

I will correct him too by the agency of others.” So did it come to pass; and we know “how great things he endured,” being far more than the evils which he had done: like a covetous exactor of his due, he received what he had given back again with usury.

6. But observe whether that was fulfilled in his case which the Psalm now speaks of. The Lord strengtheneth the righteous.—Not only so, (saith that same Paul, whilst suffering many evils,) but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience; and experience hope; but hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Justly is it said by him, now righteous, now “strengthened.” As therefore those who persecuted him did no harm to him, when now “strengthened,” so neither did he himself do any harm to those whom he persecuted. But the Lord, he saith, strengtheneth the righteous. Hear now other expressions of the now strengthened and stablished righteous man. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or persecution? How fast attached must he have been, who was not separated by such things as these! But it is the Lord strengtheneth the righteous. There had come down certain prophets from Jerusalem, and being filled with the Holy Ghost had prophesied to the same Paul, that he was “to suffer many things in Jerusalem;” so that one of them, Agabus by name, having loosened his girdle, bound himself with it, as is wont to be done, in order to shew as a Prophet by this sign the things that were to be, saying, Even as ye see me bound, so must this man be bound in Jerusalem; whereon the brethren began to deter Saul, now become Paul, as warned by the prophecy, not to expose himself to dangers so great, and by advice and by entreaty to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem. But he, who was now of the number of those concerning whom it is said, The Lord strengtheneth the righteous, says, Wherefore would ye break my heart. I hold not my life dear unto me. For he had already said to those, whom he had begotten in the Gospel, I would myself be gladly spent for your souls’ sake. For I am ready (he cries) not only to be bound, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. Therefore, the Lord does strengthen the righteous. In what way does He strengthen them? (Ver. 18.) The Lord knoweth the ways of the spotless ones. When they suffer ills, they are believed to be walking ill ways by those who are ignorant, by those who have not knowledge to discern the ways of the spotless ones. He Who knoweth those ways, knoweth by what way to lead His own, them that are gentle, in the right way. Whence in another Psalm he said, The meek shall He guide in judgment; them that are gentle will He teach His way. How, think you, was that beggar, who lay covered with sores before the rich man’s door, spurned by the passers by! How did they, probably, close their nostrils and spit at him! The Lord, however, knew how to reserve Paradise for him. How did they, on the other hand, desire for themselves the life of him, who was clad in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day! But the Lord, Who foresaw that man’s day coming, knew the torments, the torments without end, that were in store for him. Therefore, The Lord knoweth the ways of the upright.

8. Ver. 18. And their inheritance shall be for ever. This we hold by faith. Doth the Lord too know it by faith? The Lord knoweth those things with as clear a manifestation, as we cannot speak of even when we shall be made equal to the Angels. For the things that shall be manifest to us, shall not be equally manifest to us as they are now to Him, Who is incapable of change. Yet even of us ourselves what is said? Beloved, now are we the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear, what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. There is therefore surely some blissful vision reserved for us; and if it can be now in some measure conceived, darkly and through a glass, yet cannot we in any way express in language the ravishing beauty of that bliss, which God reserves for them that fear Him, which He consummates in those that hope in Him. It is for that destination that our hearts are being disciplined in all the troubles and trials of this life. Wonder not that it is in trouble that thou art disciplined for it. It is for something glorious that thou art being disciplined. Whence comes that speech of the now strengthened righteous man. The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us. What is that promised glory to be, but to be made equal to the Angels and to see God? How great a benefit doth he bestow on the blind man, who makes his eyes sound so as to be able

to see the light of this life. When restored to soundness, he finds nothing worthy enough to reward his restorer. For let him give him as much as he pleases, what will he give him equal to what the other has bestowed on him? Let him give very largely, he will give him gold, perhaps even a great deal of gold: the other has given him light! That he may know that what he gives is nothing, let him look in the dark at what he gives. What reward then shall we give unto that Physician, Who restores soundness to our inward eyes, to enable them to see a certain eternal Light, which is Himself? What shall we give unto Him? Let us enquire, let us ascertain, if we can: and in the anxiety of our search, let us exclaim, What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits unto me? And what doth he find? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. Are ye able, He saith, to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? Thence he saith to Peter, Lovest thou Me? Feed My sheep: for whose welfare he was to drink the cup of the Lord. But the Lord upholdeth the righteous. The Lord knoweth the ways of the upright; and their inheritance shall be for ever.

9. Ver. 19. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time. What is meant by, shall not be ashamed in the evil time. In the day of trouble, in the day of distress, they shall not be ashamed, as he is ashamed whose hope deceives him. Who is the man that is ashamed? He who saith, “I have not found that which I was in hopes of.” Nor undeservedly either; for thou didst hope it from thyself or from man, thy friend. But cursed is he that putteth his trust in man. Thou art ashamed, because thy hope hath deceived thee; thy hope that was set on a lie. For every man is a liar. But if thou dost place thy hopes on thy God, thou art not made ashamed. For He in Whom thou hast put thy trust, cannot be deceived. Whence also the man whom we mentioned just above, the now strengthened righteous man, when fallen on an evil time, on the day of tribulation, what saith he to shew that he was not ashamed? We glory in tribulation; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; but hope maketh not ashamed. Whence is it that hope maketh not ashamed? Because it is placed on God. Therefore follows immediately, Because the love of God is spread in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Which is given unto us. The Holy Spirit hath been given to us already: how should He deceive us, of Whom

we possess such an “earnest” already? They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

For here too there is a certain satisfaction for their needs provided. For the days of famine are the days of this life. While others are perishing with hunger, they are filled. For whence could that man glory, saying, We glory in tribulations, if he were suffering from the cravings of hunger within? Without there appeared to be straits, but there was enlargement within.

10. But what is the wicked man to do when he begins to suffer tribulation? Without he hath nothing; all hath been taken from him: in his conscience he finds no comfort, He hath not whither to go forth out of himself, that is full of trouble; he hath not whither to retire within himself; for that is full of wickedness. Justly therefore doth that come to pass in his case, which follows, For the wicked shall perish. For how can it be that they should not perish, for whom there is no place found any where? There is not consolation for him in that which is without; there is not in that which is within. For those things are without with respect to us, from which there is no consolation. And all those who have not God, who are devoted to the service of wealth, of glory, of friendship, of worldly power, and all bodily goods whatsoever, cannot be comforted from within, in the way that he was comforted, who, filled with spiritual good things, out of that very fulness broke forth, saying, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away. The Lord hath done as it seemed Him good. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Therefore for these transgressors there is no place in what is without; for there they are suffering tribulations. Conscience doth not comfort them, they do not stand well with themselves: for it cannot go well with the bad man. Whoever is a bad man stands badly with himself: he cannot but be tormented with self-inflicted torments. For he is his own punishment, whom his own conscience tortures. He may fly from an enemy whithersoever he can. Whither shall he flee from himself?

11. Thus a certain person had come over to us from the party of Donatus, having been accused and excommunicated by those of his own sect, seeking to find here, what he had lost there. But because he could not be received, except in that place in which it was right he should be received, (for he had not quitted that side in full possession of all his rights among them, so that

it might be clear that it was from choice, not from necessity, that he had so acted,) because, I say, he could not have what he was seeking for, and he was seeking for empty elevation, and vain glory; because he did not find here what he lost there, he is himself lost also. He was groaning under his wounds, and would not be comforted. For some secret and horrible stings were in his conscience. We endeavoured to comfort him out of the word of God; but he was not of the number of the prudent ants, who in summer lay up a store, on which to live in winter. For it is then when the times are peaceful, that man ought to collect for himself the Word of God, and ought to store it up in the inmost recesses of his heart, just as the ant shuts up in the storehouses of her holes the labours of the summer. For in summer time there is leisure for doing this; but let winter come, let tribulation, that is, come upon him, and unless he finds somewhat to feed on within, he needs must perish with hunger. Now this man had not laid up a store of the Word of God against his necessity: the winter came upon him: he could not find here, that which he was seeking; and could not be comforted except by obtaining it; from the Word of God he could derive no kind of consolation. Within, in his own breast, he possessed nothing; without, he could not find that which he sought. He was consumed by the fires of grief and indignation, his mind was violently agitated; and that too for a long time in secret, until at last it burst out into certain groans, audible to the brethren, yet so that he did not know them to be audible. He saw, and (God knows) we grieved to see a soul suffering so great a punishment, such rackings, so great a hell, so great torments! What need of more words? Unwilling to submit to a low place, that man, to whom such a place, if he had been wise, might have been salutary, shewed himself in such colours, that he came even to be cast out. Nor should we hence, my brethren, be led to despair of others, who haply have freely chosen the truth; not been led by necessity. For so far ought we to be from despairing of the rest, that even of that man I would not despair, so long as he liveth. For we need not despair of any man, so long as he lives. Now this ought to be known to you, dearly beloved brethren, concerning this very case; lest haply any one should tell you any thing different. For a Sub-deacon of theirs, who when no inquiry was set on foot against him there, freely chose reconciliation to the Church, and Catholic unity, and came quitting them of his own accord, came as in sincerity, preferring what is good, and not as rejected by the bad; he, I say, has been received with such success, that we rejoice in his conversion, and commend him to your prayers. For God is able to make him better and better yet. We must not however pronounce concerning any one, either for good or for evil. For so long as we live here, the issue of tomorrow is always unknown. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.

12. Ver. 20. For the wicked shall perish. But the enemies of the Lord, when they shall begin to glory, and to be lifted up, immediately shall consume away utterly, even as the smoke. Recognise from the comparison itself the thing which he intimates. Smoke, breaking forth from the place where fire has been, rises up on high, and by the very act of rising up, it swells into a large volume: but the larger that volume is, the more unsubstantial does it become; for from that very largeness of volume, which has no foundation or consistency, but is merely loose, shifting and evanescent, it passes into air, and dissolves; so that you perceive its very largeness to have been fatal to it. For the higher it ascends, the farther it is extended, the wider the circumference which it spreads itself over, the thinner, and the more rare and wasting and evanescent does it become. But the enemies of the Lord, when they shall begin to glory, and to be lifted up, immediately shall consume away utterly even as the smoke. Of such as these was it said, As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the Truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But how is it that they resist the Truth, except by the vain inflation of their swelling pride, while they raise themselves up on high, as if great and righteous persons, though on the point of passing away into empty air? But what saith he of them? As if speaking of smoke, he says, They shall proceed no farther, for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, even as theirs also was. But the enemies of the Lord, even as they shall begin to glory, and to be lifted up, immediately shall they consume away utterly, even as the smoke.

13. Ver. 20. The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again. He receiveth, and will not repay. What is it he will not repay? Thanksgiving. For what is it that God would have of thee, what doth He require of thee, except that He may do thee good? And how great are the benefits, which the sinner hath received, and which he will not repay! He hath received the gift of being; he

hath received the gift of being a man; and of a being highly distinguished above the brutes; he hath received the form of a body, and the distinction of the senses in the body, eyes for seeing, ears for hearing, the nostrils for smelling, the palate for tasting, the hands for touching, and the feet for walking; and even the very health and soundness of the body. But up to this point we have these things in common even with the brute; he hath received yet more than this; a mind capable of understanding, capable of Truth, capable of distinguishing right from wrong; capable of seeking after, of longing for, its Creator, of praising Him, and fixing itself upon Him. All this the wicked man hath received as well as others; but by not living well, he fails to repay that which he owes. Thus it is, the wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: he will not requite Him from Whom he hath received; he will not return thanks; nay, he will even render evil for good, blasphemies, murmuring against God, indignation. Thus it is that he (Ver. 21.) borroweth, and payeth not again; but the righteous sheweth mercy, and lendeth. The one therefore hath nothing; the other hath. See, on the one side, destitution: see, on the other, wealth. The one receiveth and payeth not again: the other sheweth mercy, and lendeth: and he hath more than enough. What if he is poor? Even so he is rich; do you but look at his riches with the eyes of Religion. For thou lookest at the empty chest; but dost not look at the conscience, that is full of God. He hath not means without, but he hath charity within. How great sums doth he expend out of the stores of his charity, and it is not exhausted. For if he hath means without, it is Charity herself still that gives, though she gives out of that which he hath: but if he finds not without ought to give, he gives good wishes; gives counsel, if he can; he gives help, if he can; finally, if he cannot assist either by counsel, or by cooperation, at least he assists by prayer; at least he prays for the brother in tribulation; and perhaps this one is heard in his prayer, more than he who bestows bread. He always hath wherewithal to give, whose heart is full of charity. Charity is that self-same thing, which is also called good-will. God asketh no more of thee than that which He hath given thee within. For good-will cannot be empty. For not having good-will, thou givest not to the poor, even though thou hast money to spare: whereas the very poor do offices of charity to one another from the resources of their good-will; are not unfruitful the one towards the other. You see a blind man led by one who sees; because, being poor himself, he had not money to give, he hath lent eyes to him that had them not. Whence did it come to pass that he gave the use of his limbs to him that had them not, but that there was within good-will, the treasure of the poor: a treasure, in which is found most delightful rest, and true security? To endanger the loss of that, neither doth the thief find admission, nor is shipwreck dreaded. He preserves about him that which he hath within; he escapes stripped of every thing, and still is full. Thus it is the righteous sheweth mercy, and lendeth.

14. Ver. 22. For such as shall bless Him shall inherit the land, that is, they shall possess that righteous One: the only One, Who both is truly righteous, and maketh righteous: Who both was poor in this world, and brought great riches to it, wherewith to make those rich whom He found poor. For, it is He, Who hath enriched the hearts of the poor with the Holy Spirit; and having emptied out their souls by confession of sins, hath filled them with the richness of righteousness: He Who was able to enrich the fisherman, who, by forsaking his nets, spurned what he possessed already, but sought to draw up what he possessed not. For God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And it was not by an orator that He gained to Himself the fisherman; but by the fisherman that He gained to Himself the orator; by the fisherman that He gained the Senator; by the fisherman that He gained the Emperor. For such as shall bless Him shall inherit the land; they shall be fellow-heirs with Him, in that land of the living, of which it is said in another Psalm, Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living. Thou art my very portion, He saith unto God; and has not hesitated to make God his own portion. They shall inherit the land. (Ver. 22.) But they that curse Him shall be cut off. Yet that those should so bless, who bless, is a grace that hath been given them. For He came to them while they were yet cursing; and they were made to bless. And in this manner they that curse Him have been cut off already; since by His free gift they have been made to bless Him, Whom before they used to curse through their own wickedness, Whom, through His goodness, they now bless.

15. Ver. 23. Observe what follows: The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in His way. That man may himself ‘delight in the Lord’s way,’ his steps are ordered by the Lord Himself? For if the Lord

did not order the steps of man, so crooked are they naturally, that they would always be going through crooked paths, and by pursuing crooked ways, would be unable to return again. He however came, and called us, and redeemed us, and shed His blood; He hath given this ransom; He hath done this good, and suffered these evils. Consider Him in what He hath done, He is God! Consider Him in what He hath suffered, He is Man! Who is that God-Man? Hadst not thou, O man, forsaken God, God would not have been made Man for thee! For that was too little for thee to requite, or for Him to bestow, that He had made thee man; unless He Himself should become Man for thee also. For it is He Himself that hath ordered our steps; that we should delight in His way. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in His way.

16. Now that thou art following the way of Christ, promise not thyself prosperity in the world. He walked through painful paths; but He promised great rewards. Follow thou Him; consider not only the way by which thou art to go, but also the destination at which thou art to arrive. Thou wilt have to endure temporal hardships; but thou wilt come to eternal joy. If thou wouldest endure the suffering, consider the reward. For even the labourer in the vineyard would sink, if he did not look to what he was to receive. But when thou hast considered what it is thou art to receive, all these things that thou sufferest will be inconsiderable in thine eyes; and thou wilt not esteem them worthy to earn that for thee. Thou wilt marvel that so great a recompense is given for so very little labour. For surely, brethren, for the sake of everlasting rest, everlasting labour ought to have been endured; and to attain everlasting happiness thou oughtest to undergo everlasting sufferings. But if thou wert to undergo everlasting toil, when couldest thou come to everlasting bliss? Thus it results that thy tribulation must needs be temporal, which being come to an end, thou mayest come to happiness that is without end. But yet, brethren, there might have been long tribulation to earn everlasting happiness:—to explain myself, as our happiness is to have no end, so our misery, and our pains, and our tribulations, might be of long duration. For were they even of a thousand years' duration, set a thousand years against eternity! What finite quantity, how great so ever it be, canst thou set against that which is infinite? Ten thousand, ten hundred thousand years, (if we may so speak,) nay, thousands of thousands of years, which are

finite quantities, cannot be compared with eternity. To this is added, that God hath willed thy suffering should be not merely temporal, but also of short duration. The whole life of man is but of a few days' duration; even if joys were not mingled with its sorrows, whereas these are certainly both more numerous and of longer duration than its hardships. And it is for this reason the hardships are both fewer and shorter, that we may be able to endure. Now if man were to be through the whole of his life in toil, and in sufferings, in pain, in tortures, in prison, in scourgings, in hunger, and in thirst, every day, and every hour through the whole length of life, to the period of old age, yet the whole life of man is but a few days. That labour being over, there is to come the Eternal Kingdom; there is to come happiness without end; there is to come equality with the Angels; there is to come Christ's inheritance, and Christ, our joint Heir, is to come. How great is the labour, for which thou receivest so great a recompense? The Veterans who serve in the wars, and move in the midst of wounds for so many years, enter upon the military service from their youth, and quit it in old age: and to obtain a few days of repose in their old age, when age itself begins to weigh down those, whom the wars do not break down, how great hardships do they endure; what marches, what frosts, what burning suns; what privations, what wounds, and what dangers! And while suffering all these things, they fix their thoughts on nothing but those few days of repose in old age, at which they know not whether they will ever arrive. Thus it is, the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in His way. This is the point with which I commenced. If thou dost delight in the way of Christ, and art truly a Christian, (for he is a Christian indeed, who does not despise the way of Christ, but delighteth in following Christ's way through His sufferings,) do not thou go by any other way, than that by which He Himself hath also gone. It appears painful; but it is the very way of safety; another perhaps is delightful; but it is full of robbers. And he delighteth in His way.

17. Ver. 24. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth his hand. See what it is to delight in Christ's way. Should it happen that he suffers some tribulation; some forfeiture of honour, some affliction, some loss, some contumely, or all those other accidents, incident to mankind frequently in this life, he sets the Lord before him, what kind of

trials He endured! and, though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth his hand, because He has suffered before him. For what shouldest thou fear, O man, whose steps are ordered so, that thou shouldest delight in the way of the Lord? What shouldest thou fear? Pain? Christ was scourged. Shouldest thou fear contumelies? He was reproached with, Thou hast a devil, Who was Himself casting out the devils. Haply thou fearest faction, and the conspiracy of the wicked. Conspiracy was made against Him. Thou canst not make clear the purity of thy conscience in some accusation, and sufferest wrong and violence, because false witnesses are listened to against thee. False witness was borne against Him first, not only before His death, but also after His resurrection. False witnesses were suborned that He might be condemned by His judges; the watch at the sepulchre came forward as false witnesses against Him. He rose again, with so great a miracle: the earth quaking opened a way for the Lord's resurrection. There was there earth watching the earth, but it was a harder earth, on which no impression could be made. It reported the truth; but was seduced by that which was false. That watch declared to the Jews what they had seen, and what had come to pass: they took money, and were told, Say ye, that while ye slept His disciples came and stole Him away. Behold here false witnesses even against His resurrection! But how great, my brethren, how great the blindness in the false witnesses! For this generally happens to false witnesses, that they are blinded, and do not perceive that they are saying things contradictory to their own words, from which it becomes evident that they are false witnesses. For what did they say, contradicting themselves? 'Whilst we were sleeping, His disciples came and stole Him away.' What testimony is this? Who is the person that bears it? The person who was asleep! To such narrators as those I would not give credence, not even if they were informing me of their dreams. It is madness and absurdity; if thou wert awake, wherefore didst thou suffer it; if thou wert asleep, how camest thou to know it?

18. So is it also with these children of those men, as ye remember, and we (the occasion having offered itself) must not omit to mention. For the more anxious we are for their salvation, the more are we bound to dwell upon their inconsistency. Behold! Christ's Body has to endure false witnesses; the Body has to endure that which had already taken place in the case of the

Head. It is not to be wondered at; and even now there are not wanting persons who say of the Body of Christ dispersed throughout the world, that it is the offspring of Traditors! You bear false witness! In that passage, following you a few words farther, I convict you of false witness. Thou sayest to me; "Thou art a Traditor." I say unto thee; "Thou art a liar." But thou dost not any where, or at any time, prove me to be a Traditor. I, here, at this very time, prove thy falsehood in thine own words. Unquestionably you there said that we 'are sharpening our swords.' I quote the proceedings of your Circumcelliones. Unquestionably you there said that you do not reclaim what has been taken from you. I quote the proceedings where you employed a Proctor to make the exaction. Unquestionably you there said, 'We offer the Gospels only.' I quote the so numerous rulings of the judges which you have employed to harass those who were separated from you: I quote the petition addressed to the Apostate emperor, to whom you said, that "in his breast justice only finds a place." I pray you does Julian's apostasy seem to you to be a part of "the Gospel?" See there I have convicted you of falsehood! What is there that you have said of me, that is entitled to credence? Even if I could find no grounds for shewing that your words were false, it is enough for me to prove you to be a liar, you who say that "such as you are yourself, such are the others also." For you had good reason to send such words as those to all your whole party: you wished to be rich in associates in lying: that you might not have singly to blush at your falsehood.

19. And yet he says, "Let the sentence pronounced by our Fathers against Cæcilian have weight." Why should it have weight? "Because they were Bishops that pronounced it." Let that too then have authority against you, which was pronounced by Maximianus's partizans. For previously, as I believe you know, the Bishops came to Carthage in concert with Maximianus, while yet the Deacon of this very man; as the Tractatory hath it, which these men even appended to their proceedings, when they (the Maximianists) were carrying on a civil suit for the possession of the House against the Proctor of that man "who does not reclaim what is taken from him." They first then sent round a "Tractatory" relating to him, complaining that he would not come before their tribunal: for this it was that they principally complained of. Observe how God has brought on their own

heads the charge which they made in the case of Cæcilian. The coincidence is marvellous: God was pleased after so many years had passed to bring round upon them, to their face, what had been done in the former case; so that they can in no way find pretexts for feigning ignorance, or a loophole by which to escape. Should they say, "they had forgot what had been done before," God does not suffer them to forget; and O that it might avail to their salvation! For it is in His mercy that God has done this, that they might consider what was done. Place then before your eyes, brethren, the unity of the Universal Church at that time, from which these men severed themselves in opposition to Cæcilian; set also before your eyes the party of Donatus at the present time, from which the Maximianists have severed themselves in opposition to Primianus. These men have done to Primianus now, what the others did at that time to Cæcilian. It is on this ground that the Maximianists declare themselves to be more sincere than the Donatists, in that they have really and truly imitated the acts of their ancestors. For they have set up Maximianus against Primianus in the same way that they set up Majorinus against Cæcilian; and they have complained of Primianus in the same way that they complained of Cæcilian. For if you remember, it was this that they said, that "Cæcilian, mindful of the guilt he was conscious of, refused to appear before them." Indeed, he knew well their factious spirit. So also do these men complain that Primianus refused to appear before them. Why is Primianus at liberty to understand the character of the faction of the Maximianists, and Cæcilian not at liberty to understand the spirit of the Donatist faction? Maximian was as yet not ordained: charges were being made against Primianus: the Bishops came; they desired that he should appear before them: he did not come before them, as their Tractatory inserted in the Records, shews. He did not come before them. I do not find fault with him; nay, I even praise him. If you saw any factious combination, you ought not to come before the factious party, but should have reserved your case for the more impartial cognizance of your own party. For there remained a large part of Donatus's party before whom Primianus might have cleared himself; therefore he refused to appear before those who had already factiously combined against him. Observe how we praise your policy in opposition to the Maximianists: consider well Cæcilianus's case also: you will not examine it in the spirit of a brother; examine it then in that of a stranger. When you refused to appear, then, what was it that you said in your own breast? “These men have entered into a factious combination against my life; they have been corrupted to do me an injury; if I put myself into their hands, I suffer my cause to be condemned before it is heard. I will not appear; let my case be reserved for fairer judges, and men whose authority has greater weight. Sound policy this. What if Cæcilian said this also? Although you will have difficulty in proving what other Lucilla corrupted them to prejudice you, and will haply not be able to find such was the case, whereas to him it was a fact so well known, that it was afterwards proved in the proceedings. But (we will suppose) you saw something that was kept in the back ground; a report was brought to you of some danger to be feared by you. I allow your fear to justify that precaution; you did right not to appear before such judges, for there were others who could judge your case. Now consider Cæcilianus’s case. You reserved Numidia to judge your case; he reserved the whole world. But if you wish the sentence of the Donatists against him to have force, then let those of the Maximianists now have force against you. Bishops condemned him; so did Bishops also condemn you! Wherefore did you afterwards plead your cause, and there make good your cause against the Maximianists, even as he pleaded his cause afterwards, and made it good against the Donatists? That which took place then is seen brought round before our very eyes in a marvellous and manifest manner, viz. that the Maximianists are making the same complaint of Primianus, that the whole of their party made of Cæcilian. I am affected by the circumstance to an extraordinary degree, Brethren; and thank God for it; for, in truth, the mercy of God has been establishing an example to enlighten them, if they would but be wise. Therefore if you can give your attention for a short time, Brethren, listen to the Council of the Maximianists, seeing God has put this also into our hands. (And whilst he was commenting, he himself read the Council of the Maximianists.)

20. “To our most Holy Brethren throughout all Africa;” (and whilst he was reading this, he also said, ‘the entire Unity of their own body throughout Africa. But here there is the Catholic Church existing together with them, while in other parts of the world they do not themselves exist together with the Catholic Church;’) and whilst he was commenting, he likewise read what follows: “To our most Holy Brethren, and Colleagues established

throughout all Africa, i.e. throughout the Proconsular Province, Numidia, Mauritania, Byzacena, and Tripolis, and moreover to the Priests and Deacons, and to all the congregations militant with us in the truth of the Gospel, We, Victorinus, Fortunatus, Victorianus, Migginus, Saturninus, Constantius, Candorius, Innocentius, Cresconius, Florentius, Salvius, a second Salvius, Donatus, Geminius, Prætextatus; (and whilst he was reading, he likewise said, ‘That is the very Bishop of Assura, whom they afterwards readmitted. He afterwards readmitted the person who had given sentence against himself;’ and whilst he was commenting, he likewise read what follows;) “Maximianus, Theodorus, Anastasius, Donatianus, Donatus, a second Donatus, Pomponius, Pancratius, Januarius, Secundinus, Paschasius, Cresconius, Rogatianus, a second Maximianus, Benenatus, Gaianus, Victorinus, Guntasius, Quintasius, Felicianus;” (and whilst he was reading he likewise said, ‘Is this the Bishop of Mustita, who is still living? But perhaps it is some one from another See. The subscribers afterwards express the Sees also to which each belonged;’ and while commenting, he likewise proceeded to read what follows;) Salvius, Migginus, Proculus, Latinus, and the rest of us who were in the Council at Cabarsussis, send eternal health in the Lord. There is no one, Brethren, that is ignorant concerning the Priests of God, that it is not according to the impulse of their own will, but by the direction of the Divine Law, that they, according to justice and desert, either pass sentence against the criminal, or remove from the innocent that which has been inflicted upon them. For he will be exposed to no slight danger, whosoever shall either spare the guilty, or attempt to destroy the innocent: especially seeing it is written, ‘The innocent and the righteous slay thou not,’ and, ‘Thou shalt not justify the wicked.’ Being admonished, therefore, by this injunction of the Law, we have been obliged (letters from elders of the same Church calling upon us to do so) to hear and to discuss in the spirit of it the case of Primianus, whom the Holy People of the Church of Carthage had elected as their Bishop over God’s sheepfold, in order that all things being made clear, we might either if innocent, as was to be wished, clear him of the charges; or if guilty, at all events shew that he was condemned according to his just deserts. For it was most to be wished for by us, that the Laity of the Church of Carthage might rejoice that they were dignified by the possession of such a Bishop as was accounted in all respects holy and in no point obnoxious to censure. Seeing that at all events the Lord’s Priest ought for this reason to be such a person, that whatsoever the people be not able to effect with God for themselves, he may deserve to obtain for the people what he shall ask for them: because it is written, If the people shall sin, the Priest shall pray for them: but if the Priest sin, who shall entreat for him?” (And while he was reading, he also said commenting upon it, ‘Even Apostles have written to congregations to pray for them; even Apostles were in the habit of saying in prayer, Forgive us our debts. Even the Apostle John said, We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins. But that was written concerning that Priest, Whom they know not, that the people might be admonished in prophecy, that they ought to recognise as their Priest such a Person as could have no one to intercede for Him. But who is there for whom no one prays, save Him Who intercedes for all? Because, therefore, the Levitical Priesthood was then in existence, in which the priest was wont to enter into the Holy Place, and offer victims for the people, while however he presented the shadow only, not the substance, of a certain Priest that was to come, for at that time the priests themselves were sinners, like the rest of mankind; God, willing by prophecy to remind the people, that even then such a Priest was to be anxiously looked for by them, Who might intercede for all, and for Whom none could have to intercede, pointing to such an One, He reminded them, saying, If the people sin, the Priest shall pray for them; but if the Priest shall sin, who shall entreat for him? Therefore, O people, choose as thy Priest such an one as thou canst not be compelled to pray for; and of Whose intercession for thyself, thou mayest be assured. That Person is our Lord Jesus Christ, the One Priest, the One Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.’ And while he was commenting, he proceeded to read what follows:) “Now the scandals of Primianus, and his extraordinary wickedness, have to such a degree excited the judgment of Heaven against him, that it was necessary to cut off utterly the author of these crimes; who being recently ordained,—” (And as he was reading, he at the same time said commenting upon it;) ‘from this point begins the enumeration of the charges against him:’ (and as he was commenting, he read what follows;) “—endeavouring to induce certain Priests to combine with him in an impious conspiracy, did ask this as a favour of them, that in order to the condemnation of four Deacons, excellent persons, and of singular and approved merit, to wit, Maximianus, Rogatianus, Donatus, and Salgamius also.” (And as he read, he at the same time said commenting upon it, ‘Among these four was that author of the schism, severing from a fragment another fragment, and not grieving at being himself cut off from the whole body.’ And while he was commenting, he also read what follows:) “that they should without delay promise him their concurrence in order to this.” (And when he read this, commenting upon it, he said, ‘It was for this he made interest with them; they refused to promise him; but were silent; he did not scruple to execute the crime which he meditated by his own authority.’ And while he was commenting, he at the same time read,) “And when they, astounded by his wicked presumption, had by their silence rejected the proposal, he did not hesitate to perpetrate the crime he meditated on his own responsibility; to such a degree that he thought he might pass sentence on Maximianus, a Deacon, a man, (as is known to all,) innocent, and that too without pleading his cause—without being confronted with an accuser, or a witness—while absent, while lying sick on his couch.” (And whilst he read, he at the same time said by way of comment, ‘Observe the charge!’ and whilst he was commenting, he also read what follows;) “—having before condemned certain clerks in a similar ebullition of passion. For when he had been admitting unclean persons to the Communion of the Saints, contrary to the Law and the decrees of all Priests, and when, the great majority of the Laity making opposition to it, he was moreover called upon by the letters of the most considerable of the Elders of the Church, that he might himself correct the wrong that he had done, he, being possessed by that natural wilfulness of his, disdained to make amends. Affected, therefore, by this, the Elders of the said Church sent ambassadors and letters to the whole Body, in which they, not without tears, besought of us, that we would come to them with all diligence; that having weighed the cause in the balance, and having fully sifted the charges, we might clear the reputation of the Church. Having then come to this Church according to the letters of the parties aforesaid, he, inflamed to fury after his usual fashion, absolutely refused to acknowledge our arrival.” (And as he read this, he said commenting on it, ‘You know what is laid to his charge, that the party of Donatus hath now become unclean. For this was a principle with them, that such as they are with whom they are in communion, such both each individually, and the entire body collectively, become also. Therefore, if these men speak truly, at this time the whole party of Donatus is unclean. Now let the Numidians come forth, and flatly say, “It does not concern us, if you have admitted to Communion those unclean persons, whoever they be. Could it injure us who are at so great a distance?” if that which takes place at Carthage does you no harm who are in Numidia, could what took place in Africa affect injuriously the Church Universal? At every point the reasons by which they defend themselves, serve to accuse them, and to exculpate us.’ And as he was commenting, he read what follows:) “He absolutely refused to acknowledge our arrival.” (And as he read this, he at the same time said; ‘The very same thing that they complained of in Cæcilian.’ And as he commented, he read what follows:) “Who in his rebellious spirit kicking against the pricks in every direction, persevered in his evil disposition, so that having hired a mob of abandoned character,—” (And as he read, he said at the same time; ‘Here indeed there is something more; this they never said of Cæcilian. See what he did—’ And as he was commenting, he at the same time read what follows;) “and having procured officers, blocked up the doors of the Basilicas,—” (And as he was reading, he at the same time said, ‘—in order that the Bishops might not enter;’ and as he was commenting, he also read what follows;) “that they might deprive us of the power of going in, and performing the usual solemnities. Whether it be consistent for a Bishop to do this, whether Christians are at liberty to perpetrate such deeds, whether the Gospels allow of this, let any one who is a lover or a champion of the truth judge, and if it be, approve them. For one, once our Brother, hath inflicted a wound upon us, which not even a stranger would ever have done.” (And as he was reading, he at the same time said; ‘Why should I say more? they say many things, and they condemn the man; but let us now read the condemnation itself.’ And as he was commenting, he at the same time read,) “All we, God’s Priests, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, have made a decree; that, ‘Whereas the said Primianus hath in the first place appointed Bishops to supersede others yet alive; hath admitted unclean persons to Communion with the Saints; hath attempted to constrain the Presbyters to enter into a conspiracy; hath caused Fortunatus a Presbyter to be thrown into a sewer for administering Baptism to persons in sickness; hath refused Communion to Demetrius a Presbyter, that he might compel him to renounce his son; for that also the aforesaid Presbyter was reprimanded for having entertained the Bishops; and whereas the aforesaid Primianus did send a mob to raze the houses of Christians; and whereas the Bishops and the Clergy were besieged together, and afterwards stoned by his satellites; whereas the Elders of the congregation were beaten in the Basilica, because they expressed their indignation at the admission of the Claudianists to Communion, whereas he thought proper to condemn certain innocent Clerks; whereas he refused to present himself before us for the hearing of his cause; when by means of the mob and the officers he prevented us from entering the doors of the Basilicas; because he rejected with insults the envoys sent from us to him; and whereas he has kept possession of many places, first by "force, and afterwards by judicial authority,—" (And as he read, he said, 'Behold the non-vindication of what is taken from him; whereas the Apostle Paul says, Dare any of you, having a matter with another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the Saints? Observe what sort of charge they brought against him! that he would not try the cause for the possession of the said places before the Bishops, but before the judge,') "besides other his unlawful deeds, which not to pollute our writing we pass in silence; we therefore adjudge him to be for ever cut off from the Sacerdotal Body; lest from touching him the Church of God should be infected with contagion, or polluted with any crime. Which self-same thing the Apostle Paul prescribes, and admonishes us, Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and so, not regardless of the purity of the Church, we have thought it expedient by this our Tractatory to warn all our holy Colleagues in the Priesthood, all Clerks, and all of the Laity that are mindful of their being Christians, that they should all of them with all diligence shun Communion with him, as condemned. For whosoever shall by disobeying attempt to violate this our Decree, shall have to answer for himself for the loss of his soul. It hath verily seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, that time be granted to those who are slow to turn from their error; under this limitation, that whosoever of our Colleagues in the Episcopate, or of the Clergy, regardless of the salvation of their souls, shall not cease from Communion with the aforesaid Primianus, from the day of his condemnation, i.e. from the twenty-second of June, until the twenty-second of December, should lie under a similar sentence. And of the Laity also, unless, between the day of his condemnation aforesaid, and the Easter Day next following, they shall renounce intercourse with him, that no one should be capable of being restored to the Church, save by penitence, in case they should remember themselves. Signed, Victorinus, Bishop of Munatia. Signed, Fortunatus, Bishop of Dionysianum. Signed, Victorianus, Bishop of Carcabia. Signed, Florentius, Bishop of Adrumetum. Signed, Migginus, Bishop of Elephantaria. Signed, Innocentius, Bishop of Thebalta. I, Miggin, signed for my colleague, Salvius of Membressis. Signed, Salvius, Bishop of Ausafa. Signed, Donatus, Bishop of Sabrata. Signed, Gemelius, Bishop of Tanabœa." (And as he read, he said, 'See of the very parties to the condemnation, both Pretextatus of Assura, and Felicianus of Mustita.' And as he was commenting, he recited as follows;) "Signed, Prœtextatus, Bishop of Assura. Signed, Maximianus, Bishop of Stabata. Signed, Datianus, Bishop of Camiceta, Signed, Donatus, Bishop of Fisciana. Signed, Theodorus, Bishop of Usula. I, Victorianus, signed as desired by my colleague Bishop Agnosius. Signed, Donatus, Bishop of Cebresuta. Signed, Natalicus, Bishop of Thela. Signed, Pomponius, Bishop of Macriana. Signed, Pancratius, Bishop of Baliana. Signed, Januarius, Bishop of Aquenum. Signed, Secundus, Bishop of Jacondiana. Signed, Pascasius, Bishop of Vicus Augusti. Signed, Creso, Bishop of Conjustiacum. Signed, Rogatianus, Bishop. Signed, Maximianus, Bishop of Erumminum. Signed, Benenatus, Bishop of Tugutianum. Signed, Ritanus, Bishop. Signed, Gaianus, Bishop of Tiguala. Signed, Victorinus, Bishop of Leptimagna. Signed, Guntasius, Bishop of Benefa. Signed, Quintasius, Bishop of Capsa. Signed, Felicianus, Bishop of Mustita. Signed, Victorianus as deputed by Migginus, Bishop. Signed, Miggius, Bishop. Signed, Latinus, Bishop of Mugiæ. Signed, Proculus, Bishop of Girbita. I, Donatus, Bishop of Fabra, signed for my brother and colleague Marratius. I, Proculus, signed for my colleague Gallionus. Signed, Secundianus, Bishop of Prisianum. Signed, Helpidius, Bishop of Tusdrita. Signed, Donatus, Bishop of Samurdata. Signed, Getulicus, Bishop of Victoriana. Signed, Annibonius, Bishop of Robauta. I, Annibonius, also signed, as requested by my colleague the Bishop of Augendiara. Signed, Tertullus, Bishop of Abita. Signed, Primulianus, Bishop. Signed, Secundinus, Bishop of Arusia. Signed, Maximus, Bishop of Pittana. Signed, Donatus, Bishop of Belma. Signed, Perseverantius, Bishop of Teberta. Signed, Faustinus, Bishop of Bina. Signed, Victor, Bishop of Altibura. In all fifty-three in number.”

And as he was reading, he at the same time said commenting upon it; Deign to give us your attention for a short space. This is the Sentence of your condemnation. We say to him; What will you? that it should have weight, or that it should not? I am in your favour; I say decidedly that all these have uttered falsehoods against you: and hear on what ground I believe it to be so. Because you maintained your cause before other judges, and the other party was condemned. If then I consider you to be innocent, because refusing to come before the tribunal of a factious cabal, you proved your innocence elsewhere, so that those who condemned you, were really deserving of condemnation, deign to acknowledge Cæcilianus’ innocence, who would not come before your predecessors, and reserved his cause for the cognizance of the Universal Church, just as you yourself reserved your own to the council of Numidia. If the See of Bagai reestablished your innocence, how much more so was his reestablished by the Apostolic See? Or would you rather that their sentence should be valid, who first pronounced condemnation? If theirs be valid, it is valid against you. For against Cæcilian it neither had nor will have validity; yet consider what a decision you are pronouncing against yourself.

22. Now here they dare to say, ‘But we who passed sentence against the Maximianists were more numerous than they.’ Let your sentence then be valid against Felician, and theirs against Cæcilian will be valid also. When they held a council at Bagai, they condemned Felician among the rest. At present Felician is in their Church. Either he has been reinstated being guilty; or was condemned being innocent. If then you reinstate a guilty person to preserve the peace of the Donatist Body, yield to all nations for the sake of the peace of Christendom. If however it was by an error on your part that Felician was condemned, being innocent, was it possible for three hundred and ten to err in condemning Felician, and impossible for seventy to err in condemning Cæcilian? What do you say then when you hear it said to you, ‘The Maximianists condemned you previously,’ you shelter yourselves by saying, ‘But we who condemned the Maximianists were more in number.’ To both your positions a reply is directly made, because

your predecessors also previously condemned Cæcilian. If priority gives validity, let the Primianists bow to the Council of the Maximianists. If superior numbers make valid, let the Donatists bow to the Church Universal. I think nothing can be fairer. ‘The Maximianists are few.’ ‘Aye, but their sentence of condemnation was passed first. A convicted party cannot convict. If you think this, how could you, condemned as you were, venture to pass sentence? For his own name stands in the list of the parties to the condemnation; and they did not reserve for him the position of the party who had his cause to plead. But Cæcilian’s case was different;—the position of the defendant was reserved for him, as indeed the sentence itself shews: for he was not readmitted to Communion except on his acquittal. This man, on the other hand, is found in one document condemned by the judges, in the other, himself passing sentence of condemnation among the judges. But allow that to be the lenity of the Council of Bagai; we will allow that without objection.’ ‘The Maximianists condemned you wrongfully; so too did those your predecessors condemn Cæcilian wrongfully. You established your innocence in the Council of Bagai; he his in the trial beyond the sea. The verdict in that trial was approved by all the world. What would you say?’ ‘We are more in number than the Maximianists.’ ‘Allow that you are more numerous: let us compare the number of the two majorities; see how vast a difference! You were condemned in your absence by the Maximianists, after you had refused to come before them. In this point indeed there is a resemblance: in this way was it that they also condemned Cæcilian in his absence, when he did not appear before their cabal: but, on the other hand, you caused sentence to be passed against them in the Council of Bagai, in their absence: while Cæcilian was acquitted, being present at the trial, and confronted with his adversary. There is besides another vast difference. The Numidians your judges, before whom you were to establish your innocence, you yourself appealed to; you yourself appointed them. The Maximianists asked not for them, whereas Donatus was beaten by Cæcilian before those very judges, for whom the Donatist party had petitioned. Now the Maximianists reply to you with justice, ‘We being Bishops of your province, of the Diocese that belongs to you, came to you at first, and would have judged your case; you refused to acknowledge us, you would not come before us. If you feared to be tried by us, we should have named judges in conjunction at all events, you should not have gone to those you yourself pleased. Observe how wide a difference! Then moreover the Donatists petitioned the Emperor by letter, that he would name them judges. They found fault with those before whom they were condemned, whom, before they were condemned, they petitioned for. Others were assigned at their request; and before these also were they beaten; they appealed to the Emperor, and were beaten there. The Maximianist lost his cause once, when absent, and is silent; the Donatist, thrice beaten though present, refuses to be silent.

23. But you contend with the Maximianists on the score of numbers. As I said, I am in your favour. Three hundred and ten are more than one hundred, or as many as there were of them, who, on the side of Maximianus, condemned Primianus. And think you that the thousands of Bishops throughout the world who passed sentence in favour of Cæcilian against Donatus, should have no weight with you? But you will say, ‘What? Did thousands of Bishops from all the world condemn the Donatists?’ Very true. They did not condemn them. Why did they not? Because they were not present at the trial. If not present at the trial, it was for this very reason they did not condemn them, because they were utterly ignorant of that cause. Wherefore hast thou separated thyself from those who were innocent of it? There comes hither to thee from the Church throughout the world some person already baptized, whom you would fain rebaptize; and with loud exclamations and with groans appeals to you as, in the exercise of a now deadly ministerial act, you would fain repeat that which is given once for all and is not lost. And he says to thee, “What wouldest thou do? Rebaptize me?” (So speaks some one from Mesopotamia, or some one from Syria, or haply some one from Pontus, or some one settled yet farther off.) You reply, ‘Thou hast no Baptism!’ ‘How? Read the letters of the Apostle sent to me.’ There comes some one from Galatia, from Pontus; some one from Philadelphia, to which Churches John wrote. There comes some one from Colosse, from Philippi, from Thessalonica. ‘What? have I no Baptism? I, to whom an Apostle wrote, through whom thou hast Baptism thyself? Darest thou read mine Epistle, who dost abominate my Communion?’

PSALM 37

discourse the third

On the third Part of the Psalm.

The last part of this Psalm yet remained with you, undiscussed and unexplored. Therefore, as I perceive, it was not without His purpose, although not according to our own, that the Lord hath called us back hither, to discharge our debt. Be ye therefore attentive, brethren, that we may, with God’s assistance, be enabled now to repay, what we know ourselves to owe. Who is the speaker of that which we have been but just now singing?”

Ver. 25. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

If it is spoken but in the person of one single individual, how long is the whole life of one man? And what is there wonderful in the circumstance, that a single man, fixed in some one part of the earth, should not, throughout the whole space of his life, being so short as man’s life is, have ever seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread, although he may have advanced from youth to age. It is not any thing worthy of marvel; for it might have happened, that before his lifetime there should have been some “righteous man seeking bread;” it might have happened, that there had been some one in some other part of the earth not where he himself was. Hear too another thing, which makes an impression upon us. Any single one among you, (look you,) who has now grown old, may perhaps, when, looking back upon the past course of his life, he turns over in his thoughts the persons whom he has known, not find any instance of a righteous man begging bread, or of his seed begging bread, suggest itself to him; but nevertheless he turns to the inspired Scriptures, and finds that righteous Abraham was straitened, and suffered hunger in his own country, and left that land for another; he finds too that the son of the very same man, Isaac, removed to other countries in search of bread, for the same cause of hunger. And how will it be true to say, I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread? And if he finds this true in the duration of his own life, he finds it is otherwise in the inspired writings, which are more trustworthy than human life is.

2. What are we to do then? Let us be seconded by your pious attention, so that we may discern the purpose of God in these verses of the Psalm, what it is He would have us understand by them. For there is a fear, lest any unstable person, not capable of understanding the Scriptures spiritually, should appeal to human instances, and should observe the virtuous servants of God to be sometimes in some necessity, and in want, so as to be compelled to beg bread: should particularly call to mind the Apostle Paul, who says, In hunger and thirst; in cold and nakedness; and should stumble thereat, saying to himself, "Is that certainly true which I have been singing? Is that certainly true, which I have been sounding forth in so devout a voice, standing in church? I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. Lest he should say in his heart, 'Scripture deceives us;' and all his limbs should be paralyzed to good works: and when those limbs within him, those limbs of the inner man, shall have been paralyzed, (which is the more fearful paralysis,) he should henceforth leave off from good works, and say to himself, "Wherefore do I do good works? Wherefore do I break my bread to the hungry, and clothe the naked, and take home to mine house him who hath no shelter, putting faith in that which is written? I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread; whereas I see so many persons who live virtuously, yet for the most part suffering from hunger. But if perhaps I am in error in thinking the man who is living well, and the man who is living ill, to be both of them living well, and if God knows him to be otherwise; that is, knows him, whom I think just, to be unjust, what am I to make of Abraham's case, who is commended by Scripture itself as a righteous person? What am I to make of the Apostle Paul, who says, Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. What? that I should myself be in evils such as he endured, In hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness?"

3. Whilst therefore he thus thinks, and whilst his limbs are paralyzed to the power of good works, can we, my brethren, as it were, lift up the sick of the palsy; and, as it were, 'lay open the roof' of this Scripture, and let him

down before the Lord. For you observe that it is obscure. If obscure therefore, it is covered. And I behold a certain patient paralytic in mind, and I see this roof, and am convinced that Christ is concealed beneath the roof. Let me, as far as I am able, do that which was praised in those, who opened the roof, and let down the sick of the palsy before Christ; that He might say unto him, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. For it was so that He made the inner man whole of his palsy, by loosing his sins, by binding fast his faith. But there were present there men, who had not eyes to see that the inward paralytic was already healed; and thought that the Physician was blaspheming, when He was making him whole. Who is this, they say, Who forgiveth sins? This man blasphemeth. Who can forgive sins but God alone? And because He really was God, He heard them thinking such things. This their thought of God, they thought truly; but they did not behold God present there. Therefore that Physician wrought a certain work in the body of the paralytic also, that He might heal the inward palsy of those also who said such things. For He wrought for them to see! He gave for them to believe! Come therefore, every one, who is feeble and weak in heart, so that, looking at human instances of worldly suffering, thou art fain to leave off from good works, and art relaxed as it were, by a certain inward paralysis; come, if we may be able, let us lay open the roof, that thou mayest be let down before the Lord.

4. For in His body, which is the Church, the Lord Himself hath ‘been young’ indeed in the first ages; and, lo! He hath now grown old. You know and acknowledge, and understand, that in this body ye are placed; and ye so believe, that Christ is our Head; that we are the body of that Head. Now are we alone so; and were not those who were before our time such also? All the righteous that have been from the beginning of the world have Christ for their Head. For they believed that He was to come, Whom we believe to have now come; and it was in faith in Him, in Whose faith we also have been made whole, that they were made whole also: so that He should be in His own person the Head of the whole of the City of Jerusalem: all the faithful, from the beginning unto the end, being included in the number, the legions and the armies of the Angels being also joined to them, so that it might become one City under one King; and, as it were, one Province under one Governor, happy in perpetual peace and security, praising God

eternally, and happy eternally. Now the body of Christ, which is the Church, like an individual man, was once indeed young; and, behold! she is now in a fruitful old age. For it was of her that it was said, she shall still be multiplied in fruitful old age. She hath multiplied herself through all nations; and this is her voice as she reflects upon her first period, and this her last, as if that of one individual. She looks back over all of it, because all ages are known to her by the Scripture; and she saith, exulting, and warning us, Once was I young; in the first ages of the world, and, lo! now am I old; I am now even in the last ages of the world; and never have I seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

5. Now do we recognise the Man Who was young, and now is old; and having, as it were, laid open the roof, we have come to Christ! But who is the righteous man, who hath never been seen forsaken, nor his seed begging bread? If you understand what is meant by bread, you understand who is meant by him. For the “bread” is the Word of God, which never departs from the righteous man’s mouth. For, that righteous man, when tempted in the person of his Head, gave this very answer. For, when the devil said to the Lord Himself, while an hungered, and suffering from hunger, Command that these stones be made bread, He answered, Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. Consider now, my brethren, when it is that the righteous man doth not do the will of God. For he doth it alway, and lives according to His will. The will of God departeth not from his heart; for the will of God is the law of God. And what is said of such a person? And in His law doth he meditate day and night. That other sort of bread you feed on one hour, and you leave it. On that bread of the Word you feed both day and night. For both when you hear it, and when you read it, you are feeding upon it; when you think upon it, you are ruminating it, so as to be a ‘clean,’ and not an ‘unclean animal.’ Which Wisdom also indicates by the mouth of Solomon, saying, The treasure that is to be desired continueth in the mouth of the wise man; but a foolish man swalloweth it up. For he who swalloweth it up hastily, so that what he has devoured is not to be seen remaining in him, has forgotten what he heard. But he who has not forgotten, thinks upon it, and by thinking upon it, ruminates it, and in the rumination of it finds delight. Whence it is said, Holy meditation shall keep thee. See now if ‘holy meditation doth keep thee’ in the rumination of this

bread, then hast thou never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

6. Ver. 26. He is alway merciful, and lendeth. ‘Fœneratur’ is used in Latin indeed, both for him who lendeth, and for him who borroweth. But in this passage the meaning is more plain, if we express it by ‘fœnerat.’ What matters it to us, what the grammarians please to rule? It were better for us to be guilty of a barbarism, so that ye understand, than that in our propriety of speech ye be left unprovided. Therefore, that righteous man is all day merciful, and fœnerat. Let not the lenders of money on usury, however, rejoice. For we find it is a particular kind of lender that is spoken of, as it was a particular kind of bread; that we may, in all passages, remove the roof, and find our way to Christ. I would not have you be lenders of money on usury; and I would not have you be such for this reason, because God would not have you. For if I indeed would not have you be so, and God would have you be, do it; but if God would not have it, even though I would fain have it so, he who should do it, would do it to his hurt. Whence does it appear that God would not have it so? It is said in another place, He that putteth not out his money to usury. And how detestable, odious, and execrable a thing it is, I believe that even usurers themselves know. Again, on the other hand, I myself, nay rather our God Himself, bids thee be an usurer, and says to thee, “Lend unto God.” If thou lendest to man, hast thou hope? and shalt thou not have hope, if thou lendest to God? If thou hast lent thy money on usury to man, that is, if thou hast given the loan of thy money to one, from whom thou dost expect to receive something more than thou hast given, not in money only, but any thing, whether it be wheat, or wine, or oil, or whatever else you please, if you expect to receive more than you have given, you are an usurer, and in this particular are not deserving of praise, but of censure. ‘What then,’ you say, ‘am I to do, that I may lend profitably?’ Consider what the usurer does. He undoubtedly desires to give a less sum, and to receive a larger; do thou this also; give thou a little, receive much. See how thy principal grows, and increases! Give things temporal, receive things eternal: give earth, receive heaven! And perhaps thou wouldest say, ‘To whom shall I give them?” The self-same Lord, Who bade thee not lend on usury, comes forward as the Person, to Whom thou shouldest lend on usury! Hear from Scripture in what way thou mayest lend

unto the Lord. He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord. For the Lord wanteth not aught of thee. But thou hast one who needs somewhat of thee: thou extendest it to him; he receives it. For the poor hath nothing to return to thee, and yet he would himself fain requite thee, and finds nothing wherewith to do it: all that remains in his power is the good-will that desires to pray for thee. Now when the poor man prays for thee, he, as it were, says unto God, "Lord, I have borrowed this; be Thou surety for me." Then, though you have no bond on the poor man to compel his repayment, yet you have on a sponsible security. See, God from His own Scriptures saith unto thee; "Give it, and fear not; I repay it. It is to Me thou givest it." In what way do those who make themselves sureties for others, express themselves? What is it that they say? "I repay it: I take it upon myself. It is to me you are giving it." Do we then suppose that God also says this, "I take it on Myself. It is unto Me thou givest it?" Assuredly, if Christ be God, of which there is no doubt, He hath Himself said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat. And when they said unto Him, When saw we Thee hungry? that He might shew Himself to be the Surety for the poor, that He answers for all His members, that He is the Head, they the members, and that when the members receive, the Head receiveth also; He says, Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these that belong to Me, ye have done it unto Me. Come, thou covetous usurer, consider what thou hast given; consider what thou art to receive. Hadst thou given a small sum of money, and he to whom thou hadst given it were to give thee for that small sum a great villa, worth incomparably more money than thou hadst given, how great thanks wouldest thou render, with how great joy wouldest thou be transported! Hear what possession He to Whom thou hast been lending bestows. Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive—What? The same that they have given? God forbid! What you gave were earthly things, which, if you had not given them, would have become corrupted on earth. For what could you have made of them, if you had not given them? That which on earth would have been lost, has been preserved in heaven. Therefore what we are to receive is that which hath been preserved. It is thy desert that hath been preserved, thy desert hath been made thy treasure. For consider what it is that thou art to receive. Receive—the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. On the other hand, what shall be their sentence, who would not lend? Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And what is the kingdom which we receive called? Consider what follows: And these shall go into everlasting burning; but the righteous into life eternal. Make interest for this; purchase this. Give your money on usury to earn this. You have Christ throned in heaven, begging on earth. We have discovered in what way the righteous lendeth. He is alway merciful, and lendeth.

7. And his seed is blessed. Here too let not any carnal notion suggest itself. We see many of the sons of the righteous dying of hunger; in what sense then will his seed be blessed? His seed is that which remains of him afterwards; that wherewith he soweth here, and will hereafter reap. For the Apostle says, Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore time, he says, let us do good unto all men. This is that seed of thine which shall be blessed. You commit it to the earth, and gather ever so much more; and dost thou lose it in committing it to Christ? See it expressly termed seed by the Apostle, when he was speaking of alms. For this he saith; He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth in blessings, shall also reap in blessings. But, perhaps, it is a labour to thee when thou sowest; a pain to thee when thou shewest mercy, because thou seest the wretched. For it will be better for us, when some day we shall have no persons to whom to give those alms. When all shall be changed into incorruption, there will be no one hungry, to whom thou mayest offer bread: there will be no one thirsty, to whom thou mayest give drink: there will be no one naked for thee to clothe: there will be no stranger for thee to take in. Here, however, we are sowing the seed in the midst of afflictions, of travails, of griefs, of lamentation. But turn to another Psalm; They went forth, and wept as they were throwing their seed. Hear now that his seed shall be blessed. They shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, carrying their sheaves.

8. Observe therefore what follows, and be not slothful. (Ver. 27.) Depart from evil, and do good. Do not think it to be enough for thee to do, if thou dost not strip the man who is already clothed. For in not stripping the man who is already clothed, thou hast indeed departed from evil: but do not be barren, and wither. So choose not to strip the man who is clothed already, as to clothe the naked. For this is to depart from evil, and to do good. And you will say, “What advantage am I to derive from it?” He to Whom thou

lendest has already assured thee of what He will give thee. He will give thee everlasting life. Give to Him, and fear not! Hear too what follows; Depart from evil, and do good, and dwell for evermore. And think not when thou givest that no one sees thee, or that God forsakes thee, when haply after thou hast given to the poor, and some loss, or some sorrow for the property thou hast lost, should follow, and thou shouldest say to thyself, “What hath it profited me to have done good works? I believe God doth not love the men who do good.” Whence comes that buz, that subdued murmur among you, except that those expressions are very common? Each one of you at this present moment recognises these expressions, either in his own lips, or on those of his friend. May God destroy them; may He root out the thorns from His field; may He plant the good seed, and the tree bearing fruit! For wherefore art thou afflicted, O man, that thou hast given some things away to the poor, and hast lost certain other things? Seest thou not that it is what thou hast not given, that thou hast lost? Wherefore dost thou not attend to the voice of thy God? Where is thy faith? wherefore is it so fast asleep? Wake it up in thy heart. Consider what the Lord Himself said unto thee, while exhorting thee to good works of this kind; Provide yourselves bags which wax not old; a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth. Call this to mind therefore when you are lamenting over a loss. Wherefore dost thou lament, thou fool of little mind, or rather of unsound mind? Wherefore didst thou lose it, except that thou didst not lend it to Me? Wherefore didst thou lose it? Who has caried it off? Thou wilt answer, “A thief.” Was it not this, that I forewarned thee of? that thou shouldest not lay it up where the thief could approach? If then he who has lost any thing, grieves, let him grieve for this, that he did not lay it up there, whence it could not be lost.

9. Ver. 28. For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His Saints. When the Saints suffer affliction, think not that God doth not judge, or doth not judge righteously. Will He, Who warns thee to judge righteously, Himself judge unrighteously? He loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His Saints. But (think) how the ‘life’ of the Saints is ‘hid with Him,’ in such a manner, that who now suffer trouble on earth, like trees in the winter-time, having no fruit and leaves, when He, like a newly-risen sun, shall have appeared, that which before was living in their root, will shew itself forth in

fruits. He does then love judgment, and doth not forsake His Saints. But is the Saint afflicted with hunger? God will not forsake him. He scourges him. He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Thou despisest him when he is being scourged: thou art affrighted when he is enriched. For wherewith is he scourged? It is with temporal tribulations. When is he to be enriched? When it is to be said to him, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which is prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Be not thou reluctant to be chastened, that thou mayest be among the number of those who deserve to be received. To such a degree doth He love just judgment, that He forsaketh not His Saints, whom He scourgeth for a short time. And seeing that He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth, He spared not His "Only Son," in Whom He found no fault. For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His Saints. Will He therefore perhaps, since He doth not forsake them, give them what thou desirest here, to live many years, to come to old age? Thou dost not observe, that when thou wouldest wish old age to come, thou wishest for that, of which, when it shall have come, thou wilt complain. Let not thy soul therefore, whether through wickedness, or through weakness, or through littleness, say unto thee, How is it true the Lord loveth judgment; He forsaketh not His Saints. In very truth He forsook not the Three Children who praised Him in the furnace; the fire touched them not. Were not the Maccabees His Saints too, whose flesh indeed was consumed in the fire, but whose faith failed not? 'But this,' you say, 'involves a still greater question, because though their faith did not fail, He nevertheless did forsake them.' Hear what follows; They shall be preserved for ever. It was but a few years that you were desiring for them, which if He had given them, God (you think) would not have forsaken His Saints. He visibly did not forsake the Three Children. Invisibly He forsook not the Maccabees either. To the one He gave temporal life, to confound the unbelievers: the others He crowned invisibly, that He might judge the impiety of the persecutor. Yet neither the one nor the other did He forsake, Who forsaketh not His Saints. And it was no great reward the Three Children received, if they were not to be preserved for ever. They shall be preserved for ever.

10. But the unrighteous shall be punished; the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. Just as the seed of the other shall be blessed, so shall the seed of the

wicked be cut off. For the seed of the wicked is the works of the wicked. For again, on the other hand, we find the son of the wicked man flourish in the world, and sometimes become righteous, and flourish in Christ. Be careful therefore how thou takest it; that thou mayest remove the covering, and make thy way to Christ. Do not take the text in a carnal sense; for thou wilt be deceived. But the seed of the wicked—all the works of the wicked—will be cut off: they shall have no fruit. For they are effective indeed for a short time; afterwards they shall seek for them, and shall not find the reward of that which they have wrought. For it is the expression of those who lose what they have wrought, that text which says, What hath pride profited us, or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow. The seed of the wicked, then, shall be cut off.

11. Ver. 29. The righteous shall inherit the land. Here again let not covetousness steal on thee, nor promise thee some great estate; hope not to find there, what you are commanded to despise in this world. That land in the text, is a certain land of the living, the kingdom of the Saints. Whence it is said; Thou art my hope, my portion in the land of the living. For if thy life too is the same life as that there spoken of, think what sort of land thou art about to inherit. That is the land of the living; this the land of those who are about to die: to receive again, when dead, those whom it nourished when living. Such then as is that land, such shall the life itself be also: if the life be for ever, the land also is to be thine for ever. And how is the land to be thine for ever?

And they shall dwell therein (it says) for ever. It must therefore be another land, where they are to dwell therein for ever. For of this land (of this earth) it is said, Heaven and earth shall pass away.

12. Ver. 30. The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom. See here is that ‘bread.’ Observe with what satisfaction this righteous man feedeth upon it; how he turns wisdom over and over in his mouth. And his tongue talketh of judgment.

Ver. 31. The law of his God is in his heart. Lest haply thou shouldest think him to have that on his lips, which he hath not in his heart, lest thou shouldest reckon him among those of whom it is said, This people honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And of what use is this to him?

And none of his steps shall slide. The word of God in the heart frees from the snare; the word of God in the heart delivers from the evil way; the word of God in the heart delivers from the slippery place. He is with thee, Whose word departeth not from thee. Now what evil doth he suffer, whom God keepeth? Thou settest a watchman in thy vineyard, and feelest secure from thieves; and that watchman may sleep, and may himself fall, and may admit a thief. But He Who keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The law of his God is in his heart, and none of his steps shall slide. Let him therefore live free from fear; let him live free from fear even in the midst of the wicked; free from fear even in the midst of the ungodly. For what evil can the ungodly or unrighteous man do to the righteous? Lo! see what follows.

Ver. 32. The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. For he says, what it was foretold in the book of Wisdom that he should say, He is grievous unto us, even to behold; for his life is not like other men's. Therefore he seeks to slay him. What? Doth the Lord, Who keepeth him, Who dwelleth with him, Who departeth not from his lips, from his heart, doth He forsake him? What then becomes of what was said before; And He forsaketh not His Saints?

13. Ver. 32, 33. The wicked therefore watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him. But the Lord will not leave him in his hands. Wherefore then did He leave the Martyrs in the hands of the ungodly? Wherefore did they do unto them whatsoever they would? Some they slew with the sword; some they crucified; some they delivered to the beasts; some they burnt by fire; others they led about in chains, till wasted out by a long protracted decay. Assuredly the Lord forsaketh not His Saints. He will not leave him in his hands. Lastly, wherefore did He leave His own Son in the hands of the ungodly? Here also, if thou wouldest have all the limbs of thy inner man made strong, remove the covering of the roof, and find thy way to the Lord. Hear what another Scripture, foreseeing our Lord's future suffering at the hands of the ungodly, saith. What saith it? The earth is given into the hands of the wicked. What is meant by earth being given into the hands of the

ungodly? The delivering of the flesh into the hands of the persecutors. But God did not leave His righteous One there: from the flesh, which was taken captive, He leads forth the soul unconquered. God would have forsaken His "Just One" in the hands of the ungodly, if He had caused Him to consent to the ungodly: an evil against which He prays in another Psalm, and says, Deliver me not, O Lord, by mine own heart's desire to the sinful man. It is necessary that thou shouldest not be abandoned to the sinful man, in consequence of "thine own heart's desire;" lest while thou desirest this present life, thou shouldest fall into his hands, and lose life eternal. By what desire is it that he ought not to be abandoned to the sinful man? By that desire of which it is also said, Neither have I desired the day of man, Thou knowest. For he who sets his affections and desires on the day of man, when his adversary shall have threatened him that he will take from him the day of man, that he will kill him, and destroy this present life, then he who has no hope of another life faints, and gives way to the enemy. He however who listens to the words of the Lord, saying, Fear not them which kill the body, but cannot kill the soul, even though the earth be delivered over into the hands of the enemy, even though the earthly house be taken, yet the spirit escapes away; and the spirit escaping out of their hands, the earth too shall rise again. The spirit shall be changed unto the Lord: earth shall be changed into heaven. For even of the earth itself, which is delivered for a time into the hands of the ungodly, not a particle is lost. The very hairs of your head are numbered. Security therefore there is, but it is provided that God be within. But God finds admission, if the devil be driven out.

Ver. 33. The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when there shall be judgment for him. Some copies have it, and when He shall judge him, there shall be judgment for him. For him, however, means when sentence is passed upon him. For we can express ourselves so as to say to a person, Judge for me, i.e. 'hear my cause.' When therefore God shall begin to hear the cause of His righteous servant, since we must all be presented before the tribunal of Christ, and stand before it to receive every one the things he hath done in this body, whether good or evil, when therefore he shall have come to that Judgment, He will not condemn him; though he may seem to be condemned in this present life by man. Even though the Proconsul may have passed sentence on Cyprian, yet the earthly seat of judgment is one thing, the heavenly tribunal is another. From the inferior tribunal he receives sentence of death; from the superior one a crown, Nor will He condemn him when there shall be judgment for him.

14. But when will it be? Think not it is to be now. Now is the season of labour; now is the season of seedtime; the season of winter. Sow thou thy seed, though it be in the midst of wind or of rain. Be not slothful. The summer will come to gladden thee; the summer in which thou wilt rejoice that thou hast sown. “What then am I to do now?”

Ver. 34. Wait on the Lord. And while I am waiting upon Him, what am I to do?—and keep His ways. And if I keep them, what am I to receive? And He shall exalt thee to inherit the land. “What land?” Once more let not any estate suggest itself to your mind:—that land of which it is said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. What of those, who have troubled us, in the midst of whom we have groaned, whose scandals we have patiently endured, for whom, while they were raging against us, we have prayed in vain? What will become of them? What follows? When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.

And from how close a proximity wilt thou see it! Thou wilt be on the right hand; they on the left. This sight, however, belongs to the eyes of faith: which eyes whoever have not, they are grieved at the prosperity of the ungodly, and think that it is to no purpose that they are righteous, because they see the ungodly flourish here. But he who hath that eye of faith, what doth he say?

Ver. 35. I have seen the ungodly lifted up on high, and rising above the cedars of Libanus. And suppose him to be lifted up on high; suppose him to be towering above the rest; what follows?

Ver. 36. I passed by, and, lo, he was not! I sought him, and his place could no where be found! Why was he, “no more, and his place no where to be found?” Because thou hast passed by. But if thou art yet carnally-minded, and that earthly prosperity appears to thee to be true happiness, thou hast not yet passed by him; thou art either his fellow, or thou art below him; go on, and pass him: and when thou hast made progress, and hast passed by him, thou observest him by the eye of faith; thou seest his end, thou sayest to thyself, “Lo! he who so swelled before, is not!” just as if it were some smoke that thou wert passing near to. For this too was said above in this very Psalm, They shall consume and fade away as the smoke. Smoke rises on high, and grows into a swelling volume; the greater the height to which it rises, the greater the bulk to which it expands. But when thou hast passed by, look behind thee; for the smoke is behind thee, if God be before thee. Look not on things which are behind out of longing after them, as Lot’s wife looked and remained behind in the way; but look back upon them out of contempt for them, and thou shalt see ‘the ungodly no where to be found,’ and thou shalt seek for his place. What is his place? That in which he hath power, riches, a certain rank in the world, so that many pay court to him; that he commands, and is obeyed; this place will be no more, but will pass away; so that you may say, I passed by, and he was not. What is meant by “passed by?” Advanced, arrived at what is spiritual: entered into the sanctuary of God; so as to consider his end. And, lo! he was not, and his place was no where to be found.

15. Ver. 37. Keep innocency; keep it even as thou usedst to keep thy purse, when thou wert covetous; even as thou usedst to hold fast that purse, that it might not be snatched from thy grasp by the thief, even so keep innocency, lest that be snatched from thy grasp by the devil. Be that thy sure inheritance, of which the rich and the poor may both be sure. Keep innocency. What doth it profit thee to gain gold, and to lose innocence?

Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing which is right. Keep thou thine eyes “right,” that thou mayest see the thing which is right; not perverted, wherewith thou lookest upon the wicked; not distorted, so that God should appear to thee distorted and wrong, in that He favours the wicked, and afflicts the faithful with persecutions. Dost thou not observe how distorted thy vision is? Set right thine eyes, and behold the thing that is right. What “thing that is right?” Take no heed of things present. And what wilt thou see?

For there is a remainder for the man that maketh peace. What is meant by there is a remainder? When thou art dead, thou shalt not be dead. This is the meaning of there is a remainder. He will still have something remaining to him, even after this life, that is to say, that seed, which shall be blessed. Whence our Lord saith, He that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live;—seeing there is a remainder for the man that maketh peace.

16. Ver. 38. But the transgressors shall be destroyed in the self-same thing. What is meant by, in the self-same thing? It means for ever: or all together in one and the same destruction.

The remainder of the wicked shall be cut off. Now there is (a remainder) for the man that maketh peace: they therefore who are not peace-makers are ungodly. For, Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God.

17. Ver. 39, 40. But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, and He is their strength in the time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the sinners. At present therefore let the righteous bear with the sinner; let the wheat bear with the tares; let the grain bear with the chaff: for the time of separation will come, and the good seed shall be set apart from that which is to be consumed with fire. The one will be consigned to the garner; the other to everlasting burning; for it was for this reason that the just and the unjust were at the first together; that the one should lay a stumbling-block, that the other should be proved; that afterwards the one should be condemned, the other receive a crown.

18. Thanks be to God! Brethren, we have discharged that debt which was owing, in Christ’s name; yet Charity hath still a bond upon us, as her debtors still. For that debt is the only one, which if it be repaid every day, is still ever due. We have spoken many things against the Donatists; we have read many things in your ears; many documents, many things beside the canonical Scriptures, they having compelled us. For even if they find fault with this, that we read such things to you, we are willing to be found fault with, provided you derive instruction. For in this respect we may also reply to them in these words, I have become a fool; ye have compelled me. But above all, my brethren, hold fast your inheritance; concerning which we have assurance that our names are in our Father’s Will and Testament; not in any worthless deed of any mortal man. Of that we have assurance; for He

Who made the bequest, Himself lives. He Who made that Will in favour of His heir, is Himself to judge of the Will that He Himself made. In things of this life, the testator is one person, the judge another: and yet the person who has the will wins before a judge who is a different party; not before a judge who is another party, and who is dead. How sure then is our winning, when He is to judge of it, Who made the Testament? For although Christ died for a time, yet now however He liveth for ever.

19. Let them therefore say against us whatever they please, let us on our part love them, even in spite of themselves. For we know, brethren, we know, I say, those tongues of theirs; on account of which let us not become enraged against them; do ye bear with them with patience, even as we do. For in their cause they see themselves to have nothing to rely on; and they begin to rail and speak evil of us, saying many things that they know, many also that they do not know. What they do know, are our past offences. For we ourselves also (even as the Apostle says) were sometime foolish, and unbelieving; and unto every good work reprobate. We were deluded and infatuated in a perverse error, we do not deny it; and in proportion as we do not deny what we were before, do we praise God Who hath not imputed these things unto us. Wherefore then, O heretic, dost thou leave the question, and attack the person? For what am I? What am I? Am I the Catholic Church? Am 1 Christ’s inheritance, dispersed throughout the world? It is enough for me that I am in it. Thou revilest my past misconducts; what great result dost thou achieve thereby? I am more severe to my own past misconducts than thou art. What thou revilest, I have condemned. O that thou wouldest but imitate me, that one day thine error also might be a thing of the past! These are past misconducts, which they know of; misconducts committed principally in this city. For it was here that we lived wickedly, as I myself confess, and in proportion as I rejoice on account of the grace of God, so on account of my past misconducts, do I ——What shall I say? “Grieve?” I should grieve indeed, if they were still in existence. But what shall I say? do I “rejoice?” I cannot say this either, for, O that I had never been what I was before! Whatever I was before, however, that is now, in Christ’s name, past. That with which they charge me now, they know not. There are things in me with which they may charge me still; but for them it would be a hard matter to gain a knowledge of

them. For I have much ado in my thoughts, struggling against the evil suggestions of my thoughts, and holding a protracted and an almost continual conflict with the assaults of the enemy trying to overthrow me. I groan unto God in mine infirmity; and He Who knew my birth, knoweth also what my heart travaileth of. With me, however, it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment, (saith the Apostle;) yea, I judge not mine own self. For I indeed know myself better than they do; but God knoweth me better than I know myself. Let them not therefore insult you on our account: Christ forbid! For they say, "And who are these men, and whence come they? Here, where they received baptism, we knew them wicked." If they really know us well, they know that once we went to sea; that we travelled abroad; that we returned a different person from what we went out. It was not here then that we were baptized; but where we were baptized, is a Church known to all the world. And there are many brethren of ours, who both know that we were baptized, and were baptized together with us. It is easy therefore to ascertain this, if any of the brethren is anxious on that subject. Shall we, however, give satisfaction to these men, and give them any thing of a demonstration of the testimony of the Church, with which they are not in communion? No wonder they do not know us to have been baptized in Christ beyond the sea, who beyond the sea have not Christ Himself either. For he who hath the communion of the whole Church, hath Christ Himself on the other side of the sea also. How can he know where I was baptized, when his own communion scarcely crosses the sea? However, my brethren, what shall I say unto them? Suspect what ill you please of me. If we be good, we are the corn in Christ's Church; if wicked, we are the chaff in Christ's Church; we have not, however, quitted the 'floor.' But as for thee who hast been blown abroad by the blast of temptation, what art thou? The wind bears not away the corn from the floor; learn then, from the place where thou art, to know what thou art.

20. "But who art thou," (saith he,) "that speakest such great things against us?" Whoever I may be, consider what is said, not by whom it is said. "But," says he, "unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do, that thou takest My covenant in thy mouth?" Be it so, that "the Lord saith this to the wicked;" haply there is a class of sinners, to whom the Lord rightly so speaks: but of whomsoever He speaks, He saith so for this reason, that the

sinner himself profiteth not, when he pronounceth the law of God. Does he therefore not profit his hearers? In the Church, as the Lord hath said, we have both kinds, the evil as well as the good. For when the good preach, what is it that they say? Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ. And of the good what is said also? But be thou an example of the believers. This is what we are striving to the uttermost to be: what we really are, however, is known to Him, unto Whom we groan. Of the wicked, however, it is said, The Scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses' seat: what they say, do ye: but do not the things which they do. Thou seest that on the seat of Moses, to which the seat of Christ hath succeeded, the evil also sit; yet do not, while they speak what is good, do harm to their hearers. Wherefore hast thou, because of the wicked, forsaken His very Seat itself? Return to peace, to reconciliation with that Catholic unity that gives thee no occasion of offence. If my words, and my actions, are both of them good, then imitate me; but if I myself do not do what I say, thou hast a rule from the Lord, 'Do the things that I say, but do not after my works:' at all events, do not forsake the Catholic See. Lo! in Christ's name we are about to go forth, and they will say many things: where will it end? Do ye soon cease to care to defend our cause. Say to them no more than, "Brethren, reply to the question before us; Augustine is a Bishop in the Catholic Church. He bears his own burden; he is to give account of himself to God. I know him to be among the good; if he be wicked, is known to himself; if he be a good man, even so he is not my hope. For this have I learned before all other things in the Catholic Church, not to have my hope placed in man. No wonder therefore that you find fault with the persons, since your own hopes are placed on man." Assuredly when they find fault with us, do you too despise us. For we ourselves know already, what place we hold in your affections, seeing we know what place you hold in ours. Contend not in our defence against them. Whatever they say of us, pass it quickly by, lest while contending for the defence of our cause, you neglect the care of your own. For this is the object they are artfully aiming at: Being afraid and unwilling to let us speak of the merits of the case itself, they heap accusations upon us in order to call us off, that while we are bent upon defending ourselves, we may refrain from confuting them. For, of a certainty, as for you who call me wicked, I call myself both this and innumerable other names. Away with the subject quickly from our discussion; bring my defence to a close; discuss the merits of the case itself; consider the question that affects the Church; look to the position in which you yourself stand. From whatever quarter Truth speaks to thee, accept it as if hungry; lest haply the Bread should never find its way to thee, whilst in a fastidious and calumnious spirit thou art always seeking for somewhat to find fault with in the vessel which contains it.

PSALM 38

A Psalm to David himself, on the remembrance of the Sabbath.

Apposite to what we have been chanting, (viz.) I will declare mine iniquity, I will be sorry for my sin, is the answer of this woman in the Gospel lesson. For the Lord, looking on her iniquities, called her a dog, saying, It is not meet to cast the children’s meat to dogs. But she, who knew how to declare her iniquity, and to be sorry for her sin, denied not what the Truth pronounced; but by confessing her misery, she the better obtained commiseration, being sorry for her sin. For she had prayed for her daughter to be made whole, perhaps, under the name of her daughter, implying her own life. Attend, therefore, whilst to the best of our power, we examine and discuss the meaning of the whole Psalm. The Lord be present with our hearts, that we may healthfully find here our own words, and as we shall have found them, utter them; neither finding difficulty in discovering them, nor uttering them without understanding.

2. Its title is, A Psalm to David himself, on the remembrance of the Sabbath. We examine what has been written for us concerning the holy Prophet David, of whose seed according to the flesh the Lord Jesus Christ came, and among the good things which are known to us about him by the Scriptures, we find not that on any occasion he called the Sabbath to remembrance. For why should he call it to remembrance, considering that Jewish observance, with which they were then wont to observe the Sabbath? Wherefore should he thus call to remembrance that which would necessarily come after an interval of seven days? To observe it therefore, not thus to call it to remembrance, was his duty. Now no one calls any thing to remembrance, but what is not present before him. For instance, in this city you call to remembrance Carthage, where you have at some time been; and to-day you call to remembrance yesterday, or some day of the preceding year, or any previous one that you please; and any deed of your own that you have already done, or somewhere that you have been, or some transaction at which you have been present. What doth this recollection of

the Sabbath mean? What is this Sabbath? For it is with groaning that he calls it to recollection. You have both heard already when the Psalm was read, and you will now hear it when we shall go over it, how great is his groaning, his mourning, his tears, his misery. But happy he, who is wretched after this manner! Whence the Lord also in the Gospel called some who mourn blessed. “How should he be blessed if he is a mourner? How blessed, if he is miserable?” Nay rather, he would be miserable, if he were not a mourner. Such an one then let us understand here too, calling the Sabbath to remembrance, (viz.) some mourner or other: and would that we were ourselves that ‘some one or other!’ For there is here some person sorrowing, groaning, mourning, calling the Sabbath to remembrance. The Sabbath is rest. Doubtless he was in some disquietude, who with groaning was calling the Sabbath to remembrance.

3. He therefore tells and commends unto God, the disquietude under which he was suffering, fearing somewhat more grievous than there was, where he was. For that he is in evil case, he states expressly; there is no need of a commentator to prove this, nor of any inference by implication, nor conjecture. Nor is it necessary that we should enquire, but only that we should understand what he says. And unless he feared something worse than that in which he was involved already, he would not begin in this way.

Ver. 1. O Lord, rebuke me not in Thine indignation; neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure. For it will be that some shall be chastened in God’s hot displeasure, and rebuked in His indignation. And haply not all who are rebuked will be chastened; yet are there some that are to be saved in the chastening. So it is to be indeed, because it is called chastening, but yet it shall be so as by fire. But there are to be some, who will be rebuked, and will not be corrected. For he will at all events rebuke those to whom He will say, I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; and all the rest, which He there follows out at length, as He upbraids with unprofitableness and with inhumanity the wicked on His left hand, to whom is said, Go into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. It is these more grievous evils which he is in dread of, not taking into account this present life, in the miseries of which he is groaning and lamenting, when he asks and says, Lord, rebuke me not in Thine indignation. Let me not be among those to whom Thou wilt hereafter say, Go ye into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels. Neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure; so that Thou mayest cleanse me in this life, and make me such, that I may after that stand in no need of the cleansing fire, for those who are to be saved, yet so as by fire. Why? Why, but because they build upon the foundation, wood, stubble, and hay. Now they should build on it, gold, silver, and precious stones; and should have nothing to fear from either fire: not only that which is to consume the ungodly for ever, but also that which is to purge those who are to escape through the fire. For it is said, he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. And because it is said, he shall be saved, that fire is thought lightly of. For all that, though we should be saved by fire, yet will that fire be more grievous than any thing that man can suffer in this life whatsoever. And you know how great sufferings bad men have endured, and may endure; yet their sufferings are only just so great as good men may have endured also. For what has any malefactor, robber, adulterer, any desperately wicked, or any sacrilegious person, endured by the law, which has not been endured by a martyr in his confession of Christ. These evils which are here, are far more tolerable; and yet observe how men often do any thing which you command them, that they may not suffer them. How much better were it would they do what God commands, that they might not suffer those more grievous ills!

4. Now on what ground does this person pray that he may not be rebuked in indignation, nor chastened in hot displeasure? (He speaks,) as if he would say unto God, ‘Since the things which I already suffer are many in number, I pray Thee let them suffice;’ and he begins to enumerate them, by way of satisfying God; offering what he suffers now, that he may not have to suffer worse evils hereafter.

Ver. 2, 3. For Thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh, from the face of Thine anger. He has now begun telling these evils, which he is suffering here: and yet even this already was from the wrath of the Lord, because it was of the vengeance of the Lord. ‘Of what vengeance?’ That which He took upon Adam. For think not that punishment was not inflicted upon him, or that God had said to no purpose, Thou shall surely die; or that we suffer any thing in this life, except from that death, which we earned by the original sin. For we bear about a mortal body, (which otherwise would not be mortal,) full of temptations, full of anxieties; liable to bodily pains and wants; subject to weariness even when in sound health, because not as yet completely sound, to say the least. For whence did he come to say, There is no soundness in my flesh, except that what is called soundness in this life, is not however in reality soundness in the eye of persons who judge rightly, and call to remembrance the Sabbath? For if you do not eat, hunger disturbs you: that is a kind of natural malady; for, by way of vengeance, punishment has been made our nature. That which was the first man's punishment, is our nature. Whence the Apostle says, We were also by nature the children of wrath, even as others. By nature the children of wrath, that is, bearing punishment about us. But wherefore says he, We were? Because, in hope, we are so no longer; for, in fact, we are so still; but it is better to say that, in hope, we are already; because of our hope we have certain assurance. For our hope is not an uncertain one, so that we should feel doubts concerning it. Hear even boasting in hope. We groan within ourselves, (says he,) waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Why so, Paul? Art thou not as yet redeemed? Has not the ransom been already paid for thee? Has not that Blood been already shed? Is not that the ransom for us all? It is, verily, the very one appointed ransom. But see what he says, For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope? For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Now what is that he with patience waits for? Salvation. The salvation of what? Of the body itself; because this is what he spoke of in speaking of the redemption of the body. If it is the salvation of the body that he was waiting for, then that was not health which he possessed already. Hunger, thirst, destroy life, if remedies be not taken for them. For food is the remedy for hunger, and drink for thirst; and sleep is the remedy for fatigue. Remove these remedies; and see if the things that are there do not destroy. If, these being out of the question, no disorders exist, this is considered sound health. But if thou hast something that, if thou eatest not, must destroy thee, boast not of health; but wait with groaning, for the redemption of thy body. Rejoice that thou art redeemed; but let it be in hope, not as if in fact, that thou feelest assurance. For if thou dost not groan in the hope, thou wilt never come to the substance. “This then is not health,” says he; There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of Thine anger. Whence then do His arrows stick fast in him? The very punishment, the very vengeance, and haply the pains both of mind and of body, which it is necessary for us to suffer here, these he describes by these self-same arrows. For of these arrows holy Job also made mention, and said that the arrows of the Lord stuck fast in him, whilst he was labouring under those pains. We are used, however, to call God’s words also arrows; but could he grieve that he should be struck by these? The words of God are arrows, as it were, that inflame love, not pain. Or is it that that very love can not exist without pain? For whatever we love, and do not possess, we must needs be pained for. For he who has what he loves, both loves, and grieves not: while he who loves, and has not yet what he loves, must needs, as I said, groan in pain. Thence is that which is said in the person of the Church, the spouse of Christ, in the Song of Songs, I am wounded with love. She spake of herself as wounded with love: for she was in love with some object, and did not yet possess it: she was in pain, because she had not possession of it as yet. Therefore if she was in pain, she was wounded; this wound however hastened her to seek true soundness. Whoever has not been smitten with that wound, will never be able to attain to true soundness. Is he then to be for ever smitten with this wound? We may then understand the arrows sticking fast, thus; Thy words are fixed fast in my heart; and by those words themselves is it come to pass, that I called the Sabbath to remembrance: and that very remembrance of the Sabbath, and the non-possession of it at present, prevents me from rejoicing at present; and causes me to acknowledge that there is neither health in my very flesh, neither ought it to be so called when I compare this sort of soundness to that soundness, which I am to possess in the everlasting rest; where this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, and see that in comparison with that soundness this present kind is but sickness.

6. Neither is there any rest in my bones, from the face of my sin. It is commonly enquired, of what person this is the speech; and some understand it to be Christ’s, on account of some things which are here said of the Passion of Christ; to which we shall shortly come; and which we ourselves shall acknowledge to be spoken of His Passion. But how could He Who had

no sin, say, There is no rest in my bones, from the face of my sin. The meaning therefore of necessity constrains us to recognise here the whole and entire person of Christ, that is, both the Head and the Body. For when Christ speaks, He speaks sometimes in the Person of the Head only; Which is the Saviour Himself, born of the Virgin Mary: sometimes in the person of His Body, which is the Holy Church, dispersed through all the world. And we ourselves are in His Body, if, that is, our faith be sincere in Him; and our hope be certain, and our charity fervent. We are in His body; and members of His; and we find ourselves to be speaking in that passage, according to the Apostle's saying, For we are members of His body; and this the Apostle says in many passages. For if we were to say that they are not the words of Christ, those words, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? will also not be the words of Christ. For there too you have, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? The words of mine offences are far from my health. Just as here you have, from the face of my sins, so there also you have, the words of my offences. And if Christ is, for all that, without sin, and without offences, we begin to think those words in the Psalm also not to be His. And it is exceedingly harsh and inconsistent that that Psalm should not relate to Christ, where we have His Passion as clearly laid open as if it were being read to us out of the Gospel. For there we have, They parted My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture. Why should I mention that the first verse of that Psalm was pronounced by the Lord Himself while hanging on the Cross, with His own mouth, saying, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? What did He mean to be inferred from it, but that the whole of that Psalm relates to Him, seeing He Himself, the Head of His Body, pronounced it in His own Person? Now when it goes on to say, the words of mine offences, it is beyond a doubt that they are the words of Christ. Whence then come the sins, but from the Body; which is the Church? Because both the Head, and the Body of Christ, are speaking. Why do they speak as if one person only? Because they twain, as He hath said, shall be one flesh. This (says the Apostle) is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Whence also when He Himself was speaking in the Gospel, in answer to those who had introduced a question concerning the putting away of a wife, He says, Have ye not read that which is written, that from the beginning God made them male and female; and a man shall leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. If therefore He Himself hath said, they are no more twain, but one flesh, what wonder if, as they are but one flesh, they should have but one tongue, and the same speech, as being but one flesh, the Head and the Body. Let us listen to them then as being one person; but yet let us hear the Head as the Head, and the Body as the Body. The persons are not separated: but their dignities are distinguished; because the Head saves, the Body is saved: it belongs to the Head to shew mercy, to the Body to mourn over misery; the office of the Head is to cleanse, the duty of the Body, to confess sins; yet have they but one speech, in which it is not written when it is the Body that speaks, and when the Head; but we indeed, while we hear it, distinguish the one from the other; He however speaks as but one. For why should He not say, my sins, Who said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in. I was sick and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Assuredly the Lord was not in prison. Why should He not say this, to Whom when it was said, When saw we Thee a hungred, and athirst, or in prison; and did not minister unto Thee? He replied, that He spake thus in the person of His Body. Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of Mine, ye did it not unto Me. Why should He not say, from the face of my sins, Who said to Saul, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me, Who, however, being in Heaven, now suffered from no persecutors? But, just as, in that passage, the Head spake for the Body, so here too the Head speaks the words of the Body; whilst you hear at the same time the accents of the Head Itself also. Yet do not either, when you hear the voice of the Body, separate the Head from it; nor the Body, when you hear the voice of the Head: because they are no more twain, but one flesh.

7. There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of thine anger. But perhaps God is unjustly angry with thee, O Adam; unjustly angry with thee, O son of man; because now brought to acknowledge that thy punishment, now that thou art a man that hath been placed in Christ’s Body, thou hast said, There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of Thine anger. Declare the justice of God’s anger: lest thou shouldest seem to be excusing thyself, and accusing Him. Go on to tell whence the anger of the Lord proceeds. There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of Thine anger;

neither is there any rest in my bones. He repeats what he said before, There is no soundness in my flesh; for, There is no rest in my bones, is equivalent to this. He does not however repeat from the face of Thine anger; but states the cause of the anger of God. There is no rest in my bones from the face of my sins.

8. Ver. 4. For mine iniquities have lifted up my head; and are like a heavy burden too heavy for me to bear. Here too he has placed the cause first, and the effect afterwards. What consequence followed, and from what cause, he has told us. Mine iniquities have lift up mine head. For no one is proud but the unrighteous man, whose head is lifted up. He is lifted up, whose head is lifted up on high against God. You heard when the lesson of the Book of Ecclesiasticus was read; The beginning of pride is when a man departeth from God. He who was the first to refuse to listen to the Commandment, “his head iniquity lifted up” against God. And because his iniquities have lifted up his head, what hath God done unto him? They are like a heavy burden, too heavy for me to bear! It is the part of levity to lift up the head, just as if he, who lifts up his head, had nothing to carry. Since therefore that which admits of being lifted up is light, it receives a weight by which it may be weighed down. For his mischief returns upon his own head, and his violent dealing comes down upon his own pate. They are like a heavy burden, too heavy for me to bear.

9. Ver. 5. My wounds stink and are corrupt. Now he who has wounds, is not perfectly sound. Add to this, that the wounds stink and are corrupt. Wherefore do they stink? Because they are corrupt: now in what way this is explained in reference to human life, who doth not understand. Let a man but have his soul’s sense of smelling sound, he perceives how foully sins stink. The contrary to which stink of sin, is that savour of which the Apostle says, We are the sweet savour of Christ unto God, in every place, unto them which be saved. But whence is this, except from hope? Whence is this, but from our calling the Sabbath to remembrance? For it is a different thing that we mourn over in this life, from that which we anticipate in the other. That which we mourn over is ‘stench,’ that which we reckon upon is ‘fragance.’ Were there not therefore such a perfume as that to invite us, we should never call the Sabbath to remembrance. But since, by the Spirit, we have

such a perfume, as to say to our Betrothed, Because of the savour of Thy good ointments we will run after Thee; we turn our senses away from our own unsavourinesses, and turning ourselves to Him, we gain some little breathing-time. But indeed, unless our evil deeds also did smell rank in our nostrils, we should never confess with those groans, My wounds stink and are corrupt. And wherefore? from the face of my foolishness. From the same cause that he said before, from the face of my sins; from that same cause he now says, from the face of my foolishness.

10. Ver. 6. I am troubled, I am bowed down even unto the end. Wherefore was he bowed down? Because he had been lifted up. If thou art humble, thou shalt be exalted; if thou exaltest thyself, thou shalt be bowed down; for God will be at no loss to find a weight wherewith to bow thee down. That weight shall be the burthen of thy sins, that shall be redoubled upon thine head, and thou shalt be bowed down. Now what does to be bowed down mean? It is to be unable to lift one's self up. Such was the woman, whom the Lord found bowed down for eighteen years. She could not lift herself up. Such are those who have their heart set on the earth. But indeed since that woman found out the Lord, and He healed her, let her hear the words; 'Lift up your heart.' Yet so far as she is bowed down, she still groaneth. For he is still bowed down, who saith, The corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things. Let him groan on these things; that he may receive the other; let him 'call the Sabbath to remembrance,' that he may deserve to arrive at it. For that which the Jews used to celebrate was but a sign. Of what thing was it the sign? Of that which he calls to remembrance, who saith, I am troubled, and am bowed down even unto the end. What is meant by even unto the end? Even to death.

I go mourning all the day long. All day long, that is, "without intermission." By all the day long, he means, "all my life long." But from what time hath he known it? From the time that he began to call the Sabbath to remembrance. For so long as he calls to remembrance what he no longer possesses, wouldest thou not have him go mourning? All the day long have I gone mourning.

11. Ver. 7. For my soul is filled with illusions, and there is no soundness in my flesh. Where there is the whole man, there there is soul and flesh both. The soul is filled with illusions; the “flesh” hath no soundness. What does there remain that can give joy? Is it not meet that one should go mourning? All the day long have I gone mourning. Let mourning be our portion, until our soul be divested of its illusions; and our body be clothed with soundness. For true soundness is no other than immortality. How great however are the soul’s illusions, were I even to attempt to express, when would the time suffice me? For whose soul is not subject to them? There is a brief particular that I will remind you of, to shew how our soul is filled with illusions. The presence of those illusions sometimes scarcely permits us to pray. We know not how to think of material objects without images, and such as we do not wish, rush in upon the mind; and we wish to go from this one to that, and to quit that for another. And sometimes you wish to return to that which you were thinking of before, and to quit that which you are now thinking of; and a fresh one presents itself to you; you wish to call up again what you had forgotten; and it does not occur to you; and another comes instead which you would not have wished for. Where meanwhile was the one that you had forgotten? For why did it afterwards occur to you, when it had ceased to be sought after; whereas while it was being sought for, innumerable others, which were not desired, presented themselves instead of it? I have stated a fact briefly; I have thrown out a kind of hint or suggestion to you, brethren, taking up which, you may yourselves suggest the rest to yourselves, and discover what it is to mourn over the illusions of our soul. He hath received therefore the punishment of illusion; he hath forfeited Truth. For just as illusion is the soul’s punishment, so is Truth its reward. But when we were set in the midst of these illusions, the Truth Itself came to us, and found us overwhelmed by illusions, took upon Itself our flesh, or rather took flesh from us; that is, from the human race. He manifested himself to the eyes of the Flesh, that He might by faith heal those to whom He was going to reveal the Truth hereafter, that Truth might be manifested to the now healed eye. For He is Himself the Truth, which He promised unto us at that time, when His Flesh was to be seen by the eye, that the foundation might be laid of that Faith, of which the Truth was to be the reward. For it was not Himself that Christ shewed forth on earth; but it was His Flesh that he shewed. For had He shewed Himself, the Jews would

have seen and known Him; but had they known Him, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory. But perhaps His disciples saw Him, when they said unto Him, Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us; and He, to shew that it was not Himself that had been seen by them, added; Have I been so long with you, and have ye not known Me, Philip? He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also. If then they saw Christ, wherefore did they yet seek for the Father? For if it were Christ whom they saw, they would have seen the Father also. They did not therefore yet see Christ, who desired that the Father should be shewn unto them. To prove that they did not yet see Him, hear that, in another place, He promised it by way of reward, saying, He who loveth Me, keepeth My commandments; and whoso loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father; and I will love Him, and (as if it were said to Him, "what wilt Thou give unto him, as Thou lovest him?" He saith,) I will manifest Myself unto him. If then He promises this by way of a reward unto them that love Him, it is manifest that the vision of the Truth, promised to us, is of such a nature, that, when we have seen it, we shall no longer say, My soul is filled with illusions.

12. Ver. 8. I am become feeble, and am bowed down greatly. He who calls to mind the transcendent height of the Sabbath, sees how greatly he is himself bowed down. For he who cannot conceive what is that height of rest, sees not where he is at present. Therefore another Psalm hath said, I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes. For his mind being taken up thither, he beheld something sublime; and was not yet entirely there, where what he beheld was; and a kind of flash, as it were, if one may so speak, of the Eternal Light having glanced upon him, when he perceived that he was not yet arrived at this, which he was able after a sort to understand, he saw where he himself was, and how he was cramped and bowed down by human infirmities. And he says, I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes. Such is that certain something which I saw in my trance, that thence I perceive how far off I am, who am not already there. He was already there who said that he was caught up into the third Heaven, and there heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. But he was recalled to us, in order that, as requiring to be made perfect, he might first mourn his infirmity, and afterwards be clothed with might. Yet encouraged for the ministration of his office by having seen

somewhat of those things, he goes on saying, I heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Now then what use is it for you to ask, either of me or of any one, the things which it is not lawful for man to utter. If it was not lawful for him to utter them, to whom is it lawful to hear them? Let us however lament and groan in Confession; let us own where we are; let us call the Sabbath to remembrance, and wait with patience for what He has promised, Who hath, in His own Person also, shewed forth an example of patience to us. I am become feeble, and bowed down greatly.

13. I have roared with the groaning of my heart. You observe the servants of God generally interceding with groaning; and the reason of it is asked, and there is nothing apparent, but the groaning of some servant of God, if indeed it does find its way at all to the ears of a person placed near him. For there is a secret groaning, which is not heard by man: yet if the thought of some strong desire has taken so strong hold of the heart, that the wound of the inner man finds expression in some uttered exclamation, the reason of it is asked; and a man says to himself, “Perhaps this is the cause of his groaning;” and, “Perhaps this or that hath befallen him.” Who can determine, but He in Whose Eyes and Ears he groaned? Therefore he says, I roared with the groaning of mine heart; because if men ever hear a man’s groanings, they for the most part hear but the groaning of the flesh; they do not hear him who groans with the groaning of his heart. Some one hath carried off his goods; he roareth, but not with the groaning of his heart: another because he has buried his son, another his wife; another because his vineyard has been injured by a hailstorm; another because his cask has turned sour; another because some one hath stolen his beast; another because he has suffered some loss; another because he fears some man who is his enemy: all these roar with the groaning of the flesh. The servant of God, however, because he roareth from the recollection of the Sabbath, where the Kingdom of God is, which flesh and blood shall not possess, says, I have roared with the groaning of my heart.

14. And who observed and noticed the cause of his groaning?

Ver. 9. All my desire is before Thee. For it is not before men who cannot see the heart, but it is before Thee that all my desire is open! Let your desire be before Him; and the Father, Who seeth in secret, shall reward thee. For it is thy heart's desire that is thy prayer; and if thy desire continues uninterrupted, thy prayer continueth also. For not without a meaning did the Apostle say, Pray without ceasing. Are we to be without ceasing bending the knee, prostrating the body, or lifting up our hands, that he says, Pray without ceasing? Or if it is in this sense that we say that we pray, this, I believe, we cannot do without ceasing. There is another inward kind of prayer without ceasing, which is the desire of the heart. Whatever else you are doing, if you do but long for that Sabbath, you do not cease to pray. If you would never cease to pray, never cease to long after it. The continuance of thy longing is the continuance of thy prayer. You will be ceasing to speak, if you cease to long for it. Who are those who have ceased to speak? They of whom it is said, Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. The freezing of charity is the silence of the heart; the burning of charity is the cry of the heart. If love continues still, you are still lifting up your voice; if you are always lifting up your voice, you are always longing after something; if always longing for something absent, you are calling "the Sabbath rest to remembrance." And it is important you should understand too before whom the roaring of thine heart is open. Now then consider what sort of desires those should be, that are before the eyes of God. Should it be the desire for the death of our enemy? a thing which men flatter themselves they lawfully wish for? For sometimes we pray for what we ought not. Let us consider what they flatter themselves they pray for lawfully! For they pray that some person may die, and his inheritance come to them. But let those too, who pray for the death of their enemies, hear the Lord saying, Pray for your enemies. Let them not pray for this, that their enemies may die; but rather pray for this, that they may be reclaimed; then will their enemies be dead; for from the time that they are reclaimed, henceforth they will be enemies no longer. And all my desire is before Thee. What if we suppose that our desire is before Him, and that yet that very groaning is not before Him? How can that be, since our desire itself finds its expression in "groaning?" Therefore follows, And my groaning is not hid from Thee.

From Thee indeed it is not hid; but from many men it is hid. The servant of God sometimes seems to be saying in humility, And my groaning is not hid from Thee. Sometimes also he seems to smile. Is then that longing dead in his heart? If however there is the desire within, there is the groaning also. It does not always find its way to the ears of man; but it never ceases to sound in the ears of God.

15. Ver. 10. My heart is troubled. Wherefore is it troubled? And my courage hath failed me. Generally something comes upon us on a sudden; the heart is troubled; the earth quakes; thunder is sent from Heaven; a formidable attack is made upon us, or a horrible sound heard. Perhaps a lion is seen on the road; the heart is troubled. Perhaps robbers lie in wait for us; the heart is troubled: we are filled with a panic fear; from every quarter something excites anxiety. Wherefore? Because my courage hath failed me. For what would be feared, did that courage still remain unmoved? Whatever bad tidings were brought, whatever threatened us, whatever sound was heard, whatever were to fall, whatever appeared horrible, would inspire no terror. But whence that trouble? My courage faileth me. Wherefore hath my courage failed me? The light of mine eyes also is gone from me. Thus Adam also could not see the light of his eyes. For the ‘light of his eyes’ was God Himself, Whom when he had offended, he fled to the shade, and hid himself among the trees of Paradise. He shrunk in alarm from the face of God: and sought the shelter of the trees; thenceforth among the trees he had no more the light of his eyes, at which he had been wont to rejoice. If therefore it was so with him as the stock, and with us as the shoots of that stock, and if these members are returning to Him, the last Adam, (because the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit,) and if they cry aloud as in His Body, in the words of this confession, The light of mine eyes is gone from me; if these things be so, is one, now a penitent confessing his sins, is he now redeemed, now a member of Christ’s body, and is the light of his eyes not with him? In good truth it is not with him; but yet it is with them so far as they still call to remembrance the Sabbath, as in hope beholding it: but that Light whereof it is said, I will manifest Myself unto him, is not as yet theirs. Something of light there is, in that we are the sons of God; and hold this already by faith; but that light which we shall see, is not yet. For it doth not yet appear what we shall be; we do know, that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him as He is. For now we have the light of faith, and the light of hope. For as long as we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by faith, not by sight. For so long as

we hope for that which we see not, we with patience wait for it. These are the words of those who are absent from their home; not yet settled in their country. And he says rightly, and truly too, (and truly, unless he be a hypocrite, does he confess also,) the light of mine eyes also is not with me. These things man suffers within; there, by himself, in himself, and toward himself; from no other person, and in relation with no other person beside himself: all these he hath deserved to be unto himself, to his own punishment; namely, all that he hath enumerated above.

16. But is this all then that man suffers? For he suffers inwardly from himself, outwardly from those among whom he lives: he suffers evils of his own: he is compelled to suffer also evils of others. Whence those two sentences, Cleanse Thou me, O Lord, from my secret faults; and from sins of others spare Thy servant, O Lord. He hath already confessed concerning his own secret faults, from which he desires to be cleansed: let him speak also of those of others, from the effects of which he desires that he may be spared.

Ver. 11. My lovers; why should I henceforth speak of my enemies? My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh, and stood over against me. Understand this that he saith, Stood over against me. For if they stood against me, they fell against themselves. My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh and stood over against me. Let us now recognise the words of the Head speaking; now let our Head in His Passion begin to dawn upon us. Yet again when the Head begins to speak, do not sever the Body from it. If the Head would not separate itself from the words of the Body, should the Body dare to sever itself from the sufferings of the Head? Do thou suffer in Christ’s suffering: for Christ, as it were, sinned in thy infirmity. For just now He spoke of thy sins, as if speaking in His own Person, and called them His own. For He said from the face of My sins, though they were not His sins. As therefore He willed our sins should be His own, on account of our being His Body, let us also regard His sufferings as our own, on account of His being our Head. For He hath not suffered the enmity of those who were before friends, and we not suffered it also. Nay rather, let us prepare ourselves against this, to be entertained after the same manner; let us not reject a Cup like His, that by the way of His humility we may arrive at His exaltation. For to those who wished to be near His exaltation, yet thought not of His humility, He answered and said to them, Can ye drink of the cup that I shall drink of? Those sufferings of the Lord then are our sufferings also: and were each individual to serve God well, to keep faith truly, to render to each their dues, and to conduct himself honestly among men, I should like to see if he does not suffer even that which Christ here details in the account of His Passion. My lovers and my neighbours drew nigh, and stood over against me.

And my neighbours stood afar off. Who were the neighbours that drew nigh, and who were those who stood afar off? The Jews were neighbours because near kinsmen, they drew near even when they crucified Him: the Apostles also were His neighbours; and they also stood afar off, that they might not have to suffer with Him. This may also be understood thus: My friends, that is, those who feigned themselves ‘My friends:’ for they feigned themselves His friends, when they said, We know that Thou teachest the way of God in truth; when they wished to try Him, whether tribute ought to be paid to Cæsar; when He convinced them out of their own mouth, they wished to seem to be His friends. But He needed not that any should testify of man, for He Himself knew what was in man; so that when they spoke unto Him words of friendship, He answered them, Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? My friends and my neighbours then drew near and stood over against me, and my neighbours stood afar off. You understand what I said. I called those neighbours, who drew nigh, and at the same time stood afar off. For they drew nigh in the body, but stood afar off in their heart. Who were in the body so near to Him, as those who lifted Him on the Cross? Who in heart so far off, as those who blasphemed Him? Hear this sort of distance described by the Prophet Isaiah; observe this nearness and distance at one and the same time. This people honours Me with their lips: behold, with their body they draw near; but their heart is far from Me. The same persons are at the same time near and afar off also: with their lips they are near, in heart afar off. However, because the Apostles also stood afar off, through fear, we understand it more simply and properly of them; so that we mean by it, that some drew near, and others stood afar off; since even Peter, who had followed more boldly than the rest, was still so far off, that being questioned and alarmed, he thrice denied the Lord, with Whom he had promised to “be ready to die.” Who afterwards that, from being afar off, he might be made to draw nigh, heard after the resurrection the question, Lovest thou Me? and said, I love Thee; and by so saying was brought nigh, even as by denying Him, he had become far off; till with the threefold confession of love, he had put away from him his threefold denial. And my neighbours stood afar off.

18. Ver. 12. They also that sought after my soul, were preparing violence against me. It is now plain who “sought after His soul;” viz. those who had not His soul, in that they were not in His Body. They who were seeking after His soul, were far removed from His soul; but they were seeking it to destroy it. For His soul may be sought after in a right way also. For in another passage He finds fault with some persons, saying, There is no man to care for My soul. He finds fault with some for not seeking after His soul; and again, with others for seeking after it. Who is he that seeketh after His soul in the right way? He who imitates His sufferings. Who are they that sought after His soul in the wrong way? Even those who prepared violence against Him; and crucified Him.

19. He goes on; Those who sought after My faults had spoken vanity. What is, sought after My faults? They sought after many things, and found them not. Perhaps He may have meant this; ‘They sought for criminal charges against me.’ For they sought for somewhat to say against Him, and they found not. For they were seeking to find evil things to say of “the Good;” crimes of the Innocent; When would they find such things in Him, Who had no sin? But because they had to seek for sins in Him, Who had no sin, it remained for them to invent that which they could not find. Therefore, those who sought after My faults have spoken vanity, i.e. untruth, and imagined deceit all the day long; that is, they meditated treachery without intermission. You know how atrocious false-witness was borne against the Lord, before He suffered. You know how atrocious false-witness was borne against Him, even after His resurrection. For those soldiers who watched His sepulchre of whom Isaiah spake, I will appoint the wicked for His burial, (for they were wicked men, and would not speak the truth, and being bribed they disseminated a lie,) consider what vanity they spake. They also were examined, and they said, While we slept, His disciples came and stole

Him away. This it is, to speak vanity. For if they were sleeping, how could they know what had been done?

20. He saith then, (ver. 13.) But I as a deaf man heard not. He Who replied not to what He heard, did, as it were, not hear them. But I as a deaf man heard not. And I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. And he repeats the same things again.

Ver. 14. And I became as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs. As if He had nothing to say unto them, as if He had nothing wherewith to reproach them. Had He not already reproached them for many things? Had He not said many things, and also said, Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, and many things besides? Yet when He suffered, He said none of these things; not that He had not what to say, but He waited for them to fulfil all things, and that all the prophecies might be fulfilled of Him, of Whom it had been said, And as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so openeth He not His mouth. It behoved Him to be silent in His Passion, though not hereafter to be silent in Judgment. For He had come to be judged, then, Who was hereafter coming to judge; and Who was for this reason to come with great power to judge, that He had been judged in great humility.

21. Ver. 15. For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou wilt hear, O Lord, my God. As if it were said to Him, “Wherefore openedst thou not thy mouth? Wherefore didst Thou not say, ‘Refrain?’ Wherefore didst Thou not rebuke the unrighteous, while hanging on the Cross?” He goes on and says, For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou, O Lord my God, wilt hear. He warns you what to do, should tribulation haply befal. For you seek to defend yourself, and perhaps your defence is not listened to by any one. Then are you confounded, as if you had lost your cause; because you have none to defend or to bear testimony in your favour. Keep but your innocence within, where no one can pervert thy cause. False-witness has prevailed against you before men. Will it then prevail before God, where your cause has to be pleaded? When God shall be Judge, there shall be no other witness than your own conscience. In the presence of a just judge, and of your own conscience, fear nothing but your own cause. If you have not a bad cause, you will have no accuser to dread; no false-witness to confute, nor witness

to the truth to look for. Do but bring into court a good conscience, that you may say, For in Thee, O Lord, do I hope; Thou, O Lord my God, wilt hear.

22. Ver. 16. For I said, Let not mine enemies ever rejoice over me. And when my feet slip, they magnify themselves against me. Again He returns to the infirmity of His Body: and again the Head takes heed of Its feet. The Head is not in such a manner in Heaven, as to forsake what It has on earth; He evidently sees and observes us. For sometimes, as is the way of this life, our feet are turned aside, and they slip by falling into some sin; there the tongues of the enemy rise up with the bitterest malignity. From this then we discern what they really had in view, even while they kept silence. Then they speak with an unsparing harshness; rejoicing to have discovered what they ought to have grieved for. And I said, Lest at any time my adversaries should rejoice over me. I said this indeed; and yet it was perhaps for my correction, that Thou hast caused them to magnify themselves against me, when my feet slipped; that is to say, when I stumbled, they were elated, and said many things. For pity, not insult, was due from them to the weak; even as the Apostle speaks; Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness: and he combines the reason why; considering thyself also, lest thou also be tempted. Not such as these were the persons of whom He speaks; And when my feet slipped, they rejoiced greatly against me: but they were such as those of whom He says elsewhere; They that hate me will rejoice if I fall.

23. Ver. 17. For I am prepared for the scourges. Quite a magnificent expression; as if He were saying, “It was even for this that I was born; that I might suffer.” For He was not to be born, but from Adam, to whom the scourge is due. But sinners are in this life sometimes not scourged at all, or are scourged less than their deserts: because the wickedness of their heart is given over as already desperate. Those, however, for whom eternal life is prepared, must needs be scourged in this life: for that sentence is true; My son, faint not under the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary when thou art rebuked of Him. For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Let not mine enemies therefore insult over me; let them not magnify themselves; and if my Father scourgeth me, I am prepared for the scourge; because there is an inheritance

in store for me. Thou wilt not submit to the scourge: the inheritance is not bestowed upon thee. For every son must needs be scourged. So true it is that every son is scourged, that He spared not even Him, Who had no sin. For I am prepared for the scourges.

24. And my sorrow is continually before me. What sorrow is that? Perhaps, a sorrow for my scourge. And, in good truth, my brethren, in good truth, let me say unto you, men do mourn for their scourges, not for the causes on account of which they are scourged. Not such was the person here. Listen, my brethren; If any person suffers any loss, he is more ready to say, “I did not deserve to suffer it,” than to consider why he suffered it, mourning the loss of money, not mourning over that of righteousness. If thou hast sinned, mourn for the loss of thy inward treasure. Thou hast nothing in thy house, but perhaps thou art still more empty in heart; but if thine heart is full of its Good, even thy God, why dost thou not say, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord was it done. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Whence then was it that He was grieving? Was it for the scourging wherewith He was scourged? God forbid. And my sorrow (says He) is continually before me. And as if we were to say, “What sorrow? whence comes that sorrow?” he says; (ver. 18.) For I declare mine iniquity; and I will have a care for my sin. See here the reason for the sorrow! It is not a sorrow occasioned by the scourge; not one for the remedy, not for the wound. For the scourge is a remedy against sins. Hear, brethren; We are Christians, and yet if any one’s son dies, he mourns for him; but does not mourn for him, if he sins. It is then, when he sees him sinning, that he ought to make mourning for him, to lament over him. It is then he should restrain him, and give him a rule to live by; should impose a discipline upon him: or if he has done so, and the other has not taken heed, then was the time when he ought to have been mourned over; then he was more fatally dead whilst living in luxury, than when, by death, he brought his luxury to its close: at that time, when he was doing such things in thine house, he was not only “dead, but he stank also.” These things were worthy to be lamented; the others were such as might well be endured; those, I say, were tolerable; these worthy to be mourned over. They were to be mourned over in the same way that you have heard this person mourn over them; For I declare mine iniquity. I will have a care for my sin. Be not free from anxiety, when

you have confessed your sin, as if always able to confess thy sin, and to commit it again. Do thou declare thine iniquity in such a manner, as to have a care for thy sin. What is meant by having a care of thy sin? To have a care of thy wound. If you were to say, I will have a care of my wound, what would be meant by it, but I will do my endeavour to have it healed. For this is to have a care for one’s sin, to be ever struggling, ever endeavouring, ever exerting one’s self, earnestly and zealously, to heal one’s wound. Behold! thou art from day to day mourning over thy sins; but perhaps, thy tears indeed flow, but thy hands are unemployed. Do alms, redeem thy sins, let the poor rejoice of thy bounty, that thou also mayest rejoice of the Grace of God. He is in want; so art thou in want also: he is in want at thy hands; so art thou also in want at God’s hand. Dost thou despise one who needs thy aid; and shall God not despise thee when thou needest His? Do thou therefore supply the needs of him, who is in want of thine aid; that God may supply thy needs within. This is the meaning of, I will have a care for my sin. I will do all that ought to be done, to blot out and to heal my sin. And I will have a care for my sin.

25. Ver. 19. But mine enemies live. They are well off: they rejoice in worldly prosperity, while I am suffering, and roaring with the groaning of my heart. In what way do His enemies live, in that He hath said of them already, that they have spoken vanity? Hear in another Psalm also; Whose sons are as young plants; firmly rooted. But above He had said, Whose mouth speaketh vanity. Their daughters polished after the similitude of a temple: their garners full bursting forth more and more; their cattle fat, their sheep fruitful, multiplying in their streets; no hedge falling into ruin; no cry in their streets. Mine enemies then live. This is their life; this life they praise; this they set their hearts upon: this they hold fast to their own ruin. For what follows? They pronounce the people that is in such a case blessed. But what sayest thou, who ‘hast a care for thy sin?’ What sayest thou, who confessest thine iniquity? He says, Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord.

But mine enemies live, and are strengthened against me, and they that hate me wrongfully are multiplied. What is hate me wrongfully? They hate me, who wish their good, whereas were they simply requiting evil for evil, they would not be righteous; were they not to requite with good the good done to them, they would be ungrateful: they, however, who hate wrongfully, actually return evil for good. Such were the Jews; Christ came unto them with good things; they requited Him evil for good. Beware, brethren, of this evil; it soon steals upon us. Let no one of you think himself to be far removed from the danger, because we said, “Such were the Jews.” Should a brother, wishing your good, rebuke you, and you hate him, you are like them. And observe, how easily, how soon it is produced; and avoid an evil so great, a sin so easily committed.

26. Ver. 20. They also that render evil for good, were speaking evil of me, because I have pursued the thing that is just. Therefore was it that I was requited evil for good. What is meant by pursued after the thing that is just. Not forsaken it. That you might not always understand persecutio in a bad sense, He means by persecutus, pursued after, thoroughly followed. Because I have followed the thing that is just. Hear also our Head crying with a lamentable voice in His Passion; And they cast Me forth, Thy Darling, even as a dead man in abomination. Was it not enough that He was dead? wherefore in abomination also? Because He was crucified. For this death of the Cross was a great abomination in their eyes, as they did not perceive that it was spoken in prophecy, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. For He did not Himself bring death; but He found it here, propagated from the curse of the first man; and this same death of ours, which had originated in sin, He had taken upon Himself, and hung on the Tree. Lest therefore some persons should think, (as some of the Heretics think,) that our Lord Jesus Christ had only a false body of flesh; and that the death by which He made satisfaction on the Cross was not a real death, the Prophet notices this, and says, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. He shews then that the Son of God died a true death, the death which was due to mortal flesh: lest if He were not accursed, you should think that He had not truly died. But since that death was not an illusion, but had descended from that original stock, which had been derived from the curse, when He said, Ye shall surely die: and since a true death assuredly extended even to Him, that a true life might extend itself to us, the curse of death also did extend to Him, that the blessing of life might extend even unto us. And they cast Me forth, Thy Darling, even as a dead man in abomination.

27. Ver. 21. Forsake me not, O Lord; O my God, depart not from me. Let us speak in Him, let us speak through Him, (for He Himself intercedeth for us,) and let us say, Forsake me not, O Lord my God. And yet He had said, My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me? and He now says, O My God, depart not from Me? If He does not forsake the body, did He forsake the Head? Whose words then are these but the First Man's? To shew then that He carried about Him a true body of flesh derived from him, He says, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? God had not forsaken Him. If He does not forsake Thee, who believest in Him, could the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, One God, forsake Christ? But He had transferred to Himself the person of the First Man. We know by the words of an Apostle, that our old man is crucified with Him. We should not, however, be divested of our old nature, had He not been crucified in weakness. For it was to this end that He came, that we may be renewed in Him, because it is by aspiration after Him, and by following the example of His suffering, that we are renewed. Therefore that was the cry of infirmity; that cry, I mean, in which it was said, Why hast Thou forsaken Me? Thence was it said in that passage above, the words of mine offences. As if He were saying, These words are transferred to My Person from that of the sinner.

28. Ver. 22. Depart not from me. Make haste to help me, Lord of my salvation. This is that very salvation, Brethren, concerning which, as the Apostle Peter saith, Prophets have enquired diligently, and though they have enquired diligently, yet have not found it. But they searched into it, and foretold of it; while we have come and have found what they sought for. And see, we ourselves too have not as yet received it; and after us shall others also be born, and shall find, what they also shall not receive, and shall pass away, that we may, all of us together, receive the penny of salvation in the end of the day, with the Prophets, the Patriarchs, and the Apostles. For you know that the hired servants, or labourers, were taken into the vineyard at different times; yet did they all receive their wages on an equal footing. Apostles, then, and Prophets, and Martyrs, and ourselves also, and those who will follow us to the end of the world, it is in the End itself that we are to receive everlasting salvation; that beholding the face of God, and contemplating His Glory, we may praise Him for ever, free from imperfection, free from any punishment of iniquity, free from every

perversion of sin: praising Him; and no longer longing after Him, but now clinging to Him for Whom we used to long to the very end, and in Whom we did rejoice, in hope. For we shall be in that City, where God is our Bliss, God is our Light, God is our Bread, God is our Life; whatever good thing of ours there is, at being absent from which we now grieve, we shall find in Him. In Him will be that rest, which when we call to remembrance now, we cannot choose but grieve. For that is the Sabbath which we call to remembrance; in the recollection of which, so great things have been said already; and so great things ought to be said by us also, and ought never to cease being said by us, not with our lips indeed, but in our heart: for therefore do our lips cease to speak, that we may cry out with our hearts.

PSALM 39

The title of this Psalm, which we have just chanted and proposed to discuss, is, On the end, for Idithun, a Psalm for David himself. Here then we must look for, and must attend to, the words of a certain person who is called Idithun; and if each one of ourselves may be Idithun, in that which he sings he recognises himself, and hears himself speak. For thou mayest see who was called Idithun, according to the ancient descent of man; let us, however, understand what this name is translated, and seek to comprehend the Truth in the translation of the word. According therefore to what we have been able to discover by enquiry in those names which have been translated from the Hebrew tongue into the Latin, by those who study the sacred writings, Idithun being translated is, over-leaping them. Who then is this person over-leaping them? or who those whom he hath over-leaped? Because it is not simply over-leaping, but over-leaping them. Is it because he overleaps that he sings? Or is it by singing that he over-leapeth? Whether it is that he sings because he is leaping beyond, or that it is by singing that he leaps beyond, nevertheless it is the song of one leaping beyond, that we have just been singing. Whether we ourselves are persons leaping beyond, God, to Whom we were singing it, knoweth. But if any one who is already leaping beyond hath sung it, let him rejoice that he is the thing of which he has sung; if any one has sung it, who is still clinging to earth, let him wish to be that of which he has been singing. For there are some persons, yet clinging to the earth, yet bowed down to the ground, yet setting their hearts on what is below, yet placing their hopes in things that pass away, whom he who is called over-leaping them hath over-leaped. For whom hath he over-leaped, but those who remained behind?

2. You know that some of the Psalms are entitled, Songs of Degrees; and in the Greek it is obvious enough what the word ἀναβαθμῶν means. For ἀναβαθμοὶ are degrees (or steps) of them that ascend, not of them that descend. The Latin, not being able to express it strictly, expresses it by the general term; and in that it called them steps, left it undetermined, whether they were steps of persons ascending or descending. But because there is no

speech or language where their voices are not heard among them, the earlier language explains the one which comes after it: and what was ambiguous in one is made certain in another. Just then as there the singer is some one who is ascending, so here is it some one who is over-leaping. But both that ascent and this leaping is effected not by the feet, not by the help of ladders, not by wings: and yet, if you mean the inner man, at once by the feet, by ladders, and by wings. For if it be not by the feet, why does the inward man say, O let not the foot of pride come unto me? If not by ladders, what mean those which Jacob saw, where Angels were ascending and descending? If not with wings, what becomes of him who saith, Who shall give me wings like a dove? then will I fly away and be at rest. But in bodily things, the feet, the wings, ladders, are different things. Within, the feet, the ladders, and the wings, are the affections of a good will. With these let us walk; with these let us ascend; with these let us fly. When therefore every one hears of this man leaping beyond, and would fain imitate him, let him not study by the lightness of his body to leap over ditches, or to clear any rather high places by a leap. But I am speaking of what relates to the body; for there are ditches which he also leaps over. The things are burned with fire, and dug up, that shall perish at the rebuke of Thy countenance. What things are those that are burned, and dug up, which shall perish at the rebuke of the Lord, except sins? The things burnt with fire, are the effects which desire, inflamed unlawfully, produceth; the things dug up, are the effects of fear, unreasonably dejected. For from hence do all sins arise; either from desire or from fear. Let such an one then overleap all things by which he might be detained on earth; let him rear his ladders; let him spread forth his wings; let him observe whether any one recognises himself in this picture. Yes verily, in the grace of our Lord, many do recognise themselves here; who haply now holding the world in no account, as well as all that delights us in the world, make their choice to live righteously, as long as they live here, in certain spiritual delights. And whence are these derived, as long as we are walking upon earth, except from the Divine Oracles, from God’s Word, from the search and investigation of some Parable in Scripture, from the delight which belongs to discovery, preceded by the labour of enquiry? There are in books some pleasures that are holy and good. For there are none such in gold and silver, in banquets and in luxury, in hunting and fishing, in diversion and in jest, in the vanities of the theatres, in the pursuit and endeavour after ruinous honours. For indeed it is not so that in all these there are true joys, and none in these books. Rather then let the soul that leaps beyond all these things below, and takes delight in these that we describe, say with confidence, because it says with truth too, The unjust have told me of pleasures, but not such as Thy law. Let this Idithun come still to us, let him overleap those whose delight is in things below, and take delight in these things, and let him rejoice in the Word of the Lord; in the delight of the law of the Most High. But what shall we say? Is he even from this point to leap over to another? Or is it up to this point that he who desires to overleap, is able to advance by leaping beyond? Let us choose rather to listen to his own words: for to me it appears, that this person who leaps beyond them, was already living in the oracles of God, and there learnt that which we are going to hear.

3. Ver. 1. I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. Believe that whilst engaged in his work, in reading, commenting, preaching, admonishing, rebuking, and exhorting, whilst he was tried by certain difficulties incident to man, himself a man, and living among men, though already leaping beyond those who take no delight in these things, (inasmuch as it is difficult for a man not to slip with his tongue, and he who hath not offended in word, as it is written, the same is a perfect man;) he had perhaps said some things requiring to be repented of, and there had fallen from his lips things that he wished, but was not able, to recal. For it is not without reason that the tongue is set in a moist place, but because it is so prone to slip. Perceiving therefore how hard it was for a man to be under the necessity of speaking, and not to say something that he will wish unsaid, and filled with disgust at these sins, he seeks to avoid the like. To this difficulty is he exposed who is seeking to leap beyond. Let no one pronounce judgment on my words, who is himself not yet endeavouring to leap beyond. Let him leap over, and prove the truth of what I say: for then he will be a witness to the truth, as well as a son of the Truth. When this had happened to him then, he had resolved not to speak, lest he should say any thing that he would be sorry for having said. This is intimated by his first words; I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. Keep then thy ways, Idithun, and do not sin with thy tongue; examine thoroughly, weigh well, what thou art about to say; refer to thy inward

apprehension of the truth, and then put it forth before the hearer without. Thou searchest for these things often in the turmoil of business, when the attention is taken up, whilst the infirmity of a soul, pressed down by the corruptible body, longs both to hear and to say something, to take something in at the ear, and to give something forth through the lips, and thus (being on some occasions thrown off of its balance, by its desire of speaking) makes some slip through carelessness in taking heed to what it says, and under these circumstances says something, that perhaps ought not to have been said. Against these evils silence is a better remedy. For a sinner, of some one peculiar description, a proud or envious man is standing by, he hears the man who is leaping beyond speak; he catches at his words, he lays snares in his way: it will go hard but that he will find something said, in a way that it should not have been said; nor does he on hearing it make allowance for him, but through spite cavils at it. To guard against such persons, this Idithun had thought it better to be silent; whence he sung thus, I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. How long am I to be ensnared by the spiteful, or to have snares laid for me, even if I be not taken in them? I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. Although I have leaped beyond the pleasures of earth, although the fleeting passions for things temporal ensnare me not, though now I despise these things below, and am rising up to better things than these, yet in these very better things the satisfaction of knowledge in the sight of God is enough for me. Of what use is it for me to speak what is to be laid hold of, and to give a handle to cavillers? Therefore, I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue.

I keep my mouth with a bridle. Wherefore is this? Is it on account of the religious, the thoughtful, the faithful, the holy ones? God forbid! These persons hear in such a manner, as to praise what they approve; but as for what they disapprove, perhaps, among much that they praise they rather excuse than cavil at it; on account of what persons then dost thou take heed to thy ways, and place a guard on thy lips that thou mayest not sin with thy tongue? Hear: it is,

While the wicked standeth over against me. It is not ‘by me’ that he takes up his station, but against me. Why? what could I say at all, whereby I could satisfy them? I speak of spiritual things to one who is carnal, to one who has ears and eyes for outward things, but is inwardly blind and deaf. For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. Now were he not proved to be a natural man, when would he cavil? Happy is he who speaketh a word to an ear that taketh heed; not to the ear of a sinner that taketh his stand against him. For there were many such standing around Him, and gnashing their teeth at Him, when He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so opened not His mouth. For what would you say to men swollen with pride, agitated by passion, prone to cavil, litigious, and full of words. What would you say to them, that is holy and pious, and that in the matter of religion overleaps them, when even to those who heard with willingness, who were eager to learn, who were yearning for the food of truth, and who received it with eagerness, even the Lord Himself says, I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. And the Apostle, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. Yet not as to persons to be despaired of, but as to those who still required to be nourished. For he goes on to say, As babes in Christ, I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able. Well, tell it unto us even now. Neither yet now are ye able. Be not therefore impatient to hear that which as yet thou art not capable of; but grow that thou mayest be able to bear it. It is thus we address the little one, who yet requires to be fed with kindly milk in the bosom of Mother Church, and to be rendered meet for the strong meat of the Lord’s Table. But what can I say even of that kind to the sinner, who taketh his stand against me, who either thinks or pretends himself capable of what he cannot bear; so that when I say any thing unto him, and he has failed to comprehend it, he should not suppose that it was not he that had failed to comprehend, but I who had broken down. Therefore because of this sinner, who taketh up his stand against me, I keep my mouth as it were with a bridle.

4. Ver. 2. I became deaf, and was humbled, I held my peace from good. For this person, who is leaping beyond, suffers some difficulty in a certain stage to which he hath already attained; and he desires to advance beyond, even from thence, to avoid this difficulty. I was afraid of committing a sin; so that I spoke not; that I imposed on myself the necessity of silence: for I had

spoken thus, I will take heed to my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue. Whilst I was too much afraid of saying any thing wrong, I kept silence from all that is good. I became deaf, and was humbled, and I kept silence even from good. For whence could I say good things, except that I heard them? It is Thou that shalt make me to hear of joy and gladness. And the friend of the bridegroom standeth and heareth Him, and rejoiceth on account of the bridegroom’s voice, not his own. That he may speak true things, he hears what he is to say. For it is he that speaketh a lie, that speaketh of his own. Therefore something sad and annoying has befallen him; and by his confession, he warns us that what has befallen him, should not be imitated, but guarded against. For being, as I said, too much afraid of saying something that was not good, he made up his mind to say nothing, not even what was good: and as he resolved to be silent, so he began not to hear. For if you are a person leaping beyond, you stand waiting to hear something from God, to say unto men; if you are one leaping beyond, you go to and fro between God Who is rich, and the needy who is craving for something to hear; that you may hear on the one side, and deliver it on the other. If you make your choice not to speak on this side, you will not deserve to hear any thing on the other; you yourself despise the poor; you will yourself be despised by Him to Whom riches belong. Did you forget that you were the servant, whom the Lord hath set over His Household, to give their meat to his fellow-servants? Wherefore then are you anxious to receive, what you are slow to expend? Since then you would not say that which you had received, you are justly hindered from receiving what you wished to receive. For something you yourself were wishing for: something you possessed already; impart what you possess, that you may deserve to receive what you do not possess. When therefore I had put a bridle, as it were, on my lips; and constrained myself to silence, because I saw that every where speech was dangerous, then, says he, that came to pass upon me, which I did not wish, I became deaf, and was humbled; not humbled myself, but was humbled; and I held my peace even from good. Whilst afraid of saying any evil, I began to refrain from speaking what is good: and I condemned my determination; for I was holding my peace even from what is good.

Ver. 2. And my sorrow was stirred up again. Inasmuch as I had found in silence a kind of respite from a certain sorrow, that had been inflicted upon me by those who cavilled at my words, and found fault with me: and that sorrow that was caused by the cavillers, had ceased indeed; but when I held my peace even from good, my sorrow was stirred up again. I began to be more grieved at having refrained from saying what I ought to have said, than I had before been grieved by having said what I ought not. And my sorrow was stirred up again.

5. Ver. 3. And while I was musing, the fire burned. My heart began to be discomforted. I saw men insensate; and I was consumed with grief; I did not rebuke them; and whilst I was thus silent, the zeal of Thine house was eating me up. For I reflected on the words of my Lord, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou oughtest to have put My money to the exchangers, and I at My coming should receive it again with usury. And that which follows may God avert from those who are His stewards! Bind him hand and foot, and let him be cast into outer darkness; the servant, who was not a waster of his master’s goods, so as to destroy them, but was slothful in laying them out to improve them. What ought they to expect, who have wasted them in luxury, if they are condemned, who through slothfulness have kept them? As I was musing, the fire burned. And as he was in this state of wavering suspense, between speaking and holding his peace, between those who are prepared to cavil, and those who are anxious to be instructed, between those that “abound,” and those that “are in need;” having become a reproach to those who abounded, and an object of contempt to the proud; having regard to the blessedness of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness; being in difficulty and in trouble in whichever alternative he adopts, being in danger of casting pearls before swine, and in danger of not bestowing their meat on his fellow-servants, in this state of suspense, he prays for a better place, a place different from this his present stewardship, in which man is in such difficulty and in such danger, and sighing after a certain “end,” when he was not to be subject to these things, when the Lord is to say to the faithful dispenser, Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord, he says,

Then spake I with my tongue. In this fluctuation, in the midst of these dangers, and these difficulties, because, that in consequence of the abundance of offences the love of many is waxing cold, although the law of the Lord inspires delight, in this fluctuation then, (I say,) then spake I with my tongue. To whom? not to the hearer whom I would fain instruct; but to Him Who heareth and taketh heed also, by Whom I would fain be instructed myself. I spake with my tongue to Him, from Whom I inwardly hear, whatever I hear that is good, or true.—What saidst thou?

Ver. 4. Lord, make me to know mine end. For some things I have passed by already; and I have arrived at a certain point, and that to which I have arrived is better than that from which I have advanced to this; but yet there remains a point, which has to be left behind. For we are not to remain here, where there are trials, offences, where we have to bear with persons, who listen to us and cavil at us. Make me to know mine end; the end, from which I am still removed, not the course which is already before me.

6. The end he speaks of, is that which the Apostle fixed his eye upon, in his course; and made confession of his own infirmity, perceiving in himself a different state of things from that which he looked for elsewhere. For he says, Not that I have already attained, or am already perfect. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. And that you might not say, “If the Apostle hath not apprehended, have I apprehended? If the Apostle is not perfect, am I perfect?” Observe what he is doing; attend to what he is saying. What art thou doing then, O Apostle? Hast thou not yet apprehended? Art thou not yet perfect? What art thou doing? What action is that, to which thou exhortest me? What is it you propose for me to follow and to imitate? But this one thing, saith he, I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are before, I press forward towards the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. It is by way of pressing forward towards it; not as yet by arriving at it; not as having as yet apprehended. Let us not relapse to the point from which we have already made a start; nor remain stationary in the place to which we have already arrived. Let us run; let us stretch forward; we are already on the way; be not so confident in consequence of what you have passed by already, as anxious for what you have not as yet attained to. Forgetting what

is behind, he says, reaching forward to what is before, I press forward for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. For He is Himself the End. But this one thing. This is that one thing, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. One thing, which is in another Psalm also called one petition. One (petition) have I desired of the Lord, which I will require. (Forgetting what is behind, reaching forward to what is before.) One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. And wherefore? to behold the joy of the Lord. For there I shall have a companion to rejoice in; I shall not have an adversary to fear: for there I shall have a friend to share with me in that contemplation, not an enemy to catch at my words. It is this which Idithun would fain have known to him, whilst here; that he might know what was yet wanting to him; and not rejoice so much in what he had at present attained to, as long after what he had not attained to yet; and having passed through some stages, should not linger on the road, but be borne along by fervent desire to things above, till he who had left some things behind, should leave all behind, and from the sprinkling of the rain-drops of the Lord, that come from the clouds of Scripture, he should come (like the hart) to the very Well of Life, and in that light should see light, and in the presence of God should be hid from the provoking of men; where he might say, ‘It is well, I wish for nothing farther. Here I love every one, I fear no one.’ A right desire, a holy desire! Ye who have this already, rejoice with us, and pray that we may persevere and hold it to the end; and may not fall away in the midst of the causes of offence. For this same blessing we ourselves ask for you. For we are not worthy to pray for you, and you too are unworthy to pray for us. The Apostle indeed commended himself to the prayers of his hearers, to whom he was preaching the Word of God. Pray ye therefore for us, brethren; that we may both see clearly what it is requisite we should see; and say well what it is requisite we should say. This affection, however, I well know is to be found but in few persons: nor do those persons understand me thoroughly, who have not tasted that of which I speak. We however speak to all; both to those who have such an affection, and to those who have not; to those who have, that they may sigh with us for those things; to those who have not, that they may shake off their lethargy; that they may rise above things below; that they may arrive at the delights of the law of the Lord; and may not linger behind in the pleasures of the wicked. For many persons talk of many things; and many persons praise many things; the unrighteous commend unrighteous things. And in fact those unrighteous things have a pleasure, but not such as thy law, O Lord. Let those therefore join us in saying these things, who believe that we say them also. For this matter is one that is within you: no words can set it forth; but let him whose heart is set on this believe that others also are engaged in it: not that he alone has received what is God’s. In this case then let Idithun say, Lord, let me know mine end.

7. And the number of my days, what it is. I ask of the number of my days, what it is. I can speak of number without number, and understand “number without number,” in the same sense, as ‘years without years’ may be spoken of. For where there are years, there is a sort of number at all events, also. But yet, Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. Make me to know the number of my days; but to know what it is. What then? that number in which thou art, think you that it “is” not? Assuredly, if I weigh the matter well, it has no being; if I linger behind, it has a sort of being; if I rise above it, it has none. If, shaking off the trammels of these things, I contemplate things above, if I compare things that pass away with those that endure, I see what has a true being, and what rather seems to be, than really is. Should I say that these days of mine “are;” and shall I rashly apply this word so full of meaning to this course of things passing away? To such a degree have I my own self almost ceased to be, failing as I am in my weakness, that He escaped from my memory, Who said, I AM HE THAT IS. Hath then any number of days any existence? In truth it hath, and it is “number without end.” But in the case of these days I would say that some part of them existed, if I can keep hold of that day of which you ask me; do you, yourself, in order that you may ask me, keep hold the day about which you ask! Dost thou retain this present day? If you retained yesterday, you retain possession of to-day also. But you say, “yesterday I do not retain in my possession, because it “is” no longer; this one, however, which now is, and which is by me, I do still retain. Has it so escaped thee, how much of this has now past since the break of day? Did not this day begin with the first hour? Give me its first hour! Give me its second also, for perhaps that also has past away. “I will give you its third hour,” you say, (for in that hour we are perhaps at this present time.) “These days therefore certainly do

exist.” And is the third hour a day? And in giving me the third hour, thou wilt be giving me not a day, but an hour. Even this however I do not concede to you, if you have in any way left them behind. Give me even the third hour, that in which you are at present; for if any part of it has already past, and any part is as yet remaining, you can neither give me what has already past, because it is no longer in being; nor that which is as yet to come, because not yet in being. Of this very hour which is now passing, what will you give me, to which you will venture to apply the word, it is? When you say the very word ‘est,’ (it is,) it is but one syllable, but one single motion, and the syllable has but three letters; in the very sounding of the word, you do not arrive at the second letter of the word, unless the first is finished. The third letter will not sound, except when the second also shall have past. Of this single syllable what will you give me? And can you retain the days, who cannot retain a syllable? Every thing is swept on by a series of moments, fleeting by, one after the other; there is a torrent of existences ever flowing on and on; a torrent, of which He drank in the way, Who hath now lift up His Head. These days then have no true being; they are gone almost before they arrive; and when they are come, they cannot continue; they press upon one another, they follow the one the other, and cannot check themselves in their course. Of the past nothing is called back again; what is yet to be, is expected as something to pass away again: it is not as yet possessed, whilst as yet it is not arrived; it can not be kept when once it has arrived. He asks then concerning the number of his days, which is; not that which is not: and (which confounds me by a still greater and more perplexing difficulty) at once is, and is not. We can neither say that that is, which does not continue; nor that it is not, when it has come and is passing. It is that absolute ‘IS,’ that true ‘IS,’ that ‘IS,’ in the true sense of the word, that I long for; that ‘IS;’ which is in that Jerusalem which is the Bride of my Lord; where there will not be death, there will not be failing; there will be a day, that passeth not away, but continueth: which has neither a yesterday to precede it, nor a to-morrow pressing close upon it. This number of my days, which is, this, (I say,) make Thou me to know.

8. That I may know what is wanting to me. For while I am struggling here, this is wanting unto me: and so long as it is wanting unto me, I do not call myself perfect. So long as I have not received it, I say, not that I have

already attained, either am already perfect; but I am pressing towards the prize of God’s high calling. This let me receive as the prize of my running the race! There will be a certain resting-place, to terminate my course; and in that resting-place there will be a Country, and no pilgrimage, no dissension, no temptation. Make me then to know this number of my days, which is, that I may know what is wanting unto me; because I am not there yet; lest I should be made proud of what I already am, that I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness. For, when in comparison with that which truly is, considering those things which so “are not,” and seeing that there is more wanting to me than already present with me, I shall be rather humbled by what is wanting to me than puffed up by what I already possess. For they who consider themselves to possess any thing while they live here, by indulging in pride fail to receive what is wanting to them; because they think what they already possess to be something great. For if a man think himself to be any thing, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. Yet do they not make themselves great thereby. For that which is swollen and puffed up counterfeits bulk indeed, but hath no soundness.

9. By this time then this man, who is leaping beyond, performing a certain secret act within his heart, which is not known except to him, who does likewise, attaining now what he asked, in that “his end” has been made known to him, in that he has been made to know the number of his days, not the number which is passing away, but ‘that which is,’ he turns his thoughts to these things which he has left behind, and hath compared them with the knowledge he before had. And just as if you were to say to him, “Wherefore did you long for the number of your days that really is? for what say you of these present days?” Looking at them from that height, he speaks these words.

Ver. 5. Behold, thou hast made my days old. For these days are waxing old. I long for new days that never shall wax old, that I may say, Old things have passed away; behold, things are become new. Already new in hope; then in reality. For though, in hope and in faith, made new already, how much do we even now do after our old nature! For we are not so completely clothed upon with Christ, as not to bear about with us any thing derived from Adam. Observe that Adam is waxing old within us, and Christ is being renewed in us. Though our outward man is perishing, yet is our inward man being renewed day by day. Therefore, while we fix our thoughts on sin, on mortality, on time, that is hastening by, on sorrow, and toil, and labour, on stages of life following each other in succession, and continuing not, passing on insensibly from infancy even to old age; whilst, I say, we fix our eyes on these things, let us see here the old man, the day that is waxing old; the Song that is out of date; the Old Testament; when however we turn to the inner man, to those things that are to be renewed in place of these which are to be changed, let us find the new man, the new day, the new song, the New Testament; and that newness, let us so love, as to have no fears of its waxing old. Now, however, we are on our course passing from old things to new; the very transition is now taking place, in which outward things are decaying; and those within are being renewed, till this outward part, which is consuming away, shall pay the debt to nature; shall have arrived at death; be itself too renewed in the resurrection. Then shall all things that yet remain unrenewed, which in hope are renewed already, be made new in deed, in reality also. You are therefore effecting something even now, whilst you are putting off old things, whilst you are hasting forward to those which are new. This man, therefore, who is hasting forward to those things which are new, and reaching forward to those things which are before, says, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the number of my days, which really is, that I may know what is wanting unto me. See he still drags with him Adam; and even so he is hasting unto Christ. Behold, saith he, thou hast made my days old. It is those days that are derived from Adam, those days, I say, that thou hast made old. They are waxing old day by day: and so waxing old, as to be at some day or other consumed also.

And my substance is as nothing before Thee. Before Thee, O Lord, my substance is as nothing. Before Thee; Who seest this; and I too, when I see it, see it only when before Thee. When “before men” I see it not. For what shall I say? What words shall I use to shew, that that which I now am is nothing in comparison of That which truly IS? But it is within that it is said; it is within that it is felt, so far as it is felt. Before Thee, O Lord, where Thine eyes are; and not where the eyes of men are. And where Thine eyes are, what is the state of things; That which I am is as nothing.

10. But, verily, every man living is altogether vanity. But, verily. For what was he saying above? Behold, I have already leaped beyond all mortal things, and despised things below, have trampled under foot the things of earth, have soared upwards to the delights of the law of the Lord, I have been afloat in the dispensation of the Lord, have yearned for that End which Itself is to know no end, have yearned for the number of my days that truly is, because the number of days like these hath no real being. Behold, I am already such a one as this; I have already overleaped so much; I am longing for those things which abide. But verily, in the state in which I am here, so long as I am here, so long as I am in this world, so long as I bear mortal flesh, so long as the life of man on earth is a trial, so long as I sigh among causes of offence, as long as while I stand I am in fear lest I fall, as long as both my good and my ill hangs in uncertainty, every man living is altogether vanity. “Every man,” I say; both he who clings to the world, and he who is leaping beyond it: even Idithun himself comes under the description of altogether vanity up to this present time; for that all is vanity, and vanity of vanities. What profit hath a man of all his labour, which he taketh under the sun? What then? Is Idithun too still under the sun? He hath something under the sun: he hath also something beyond it. He hath under the sun, to wake, to sleep, to eat, to drink, to hunger, and to thirst; to be vigorous, to be weary; to grow up to boyhood, to youth, to old age; to have all the objects of his hopes and his fears uncertain. All these things even Idithun, even the very man who is leaping beyond them, hath beneath the sun. How is it then he is leaping beyond them? It is from that longing of his, Lord, make me to know mine end. For this [object of his] longing is beyond the sun; it is not under the sun. All that is under the sun, are visible things; whatever is not visible is not under the sun. Faith is not visible, hope is not visible, charity is not visible, kindness is not visible; lastly, that fear which is clean, and endureth for ever, is not visible. Idithun placing his delight and comfort in all these, and conversing with them beyond the sun, because his conversation is in heaven, groans on account of those things, which he hath still under the sun; and contemns and is disgusted with these things; while he burns for those things, which he is now longing to arrive at. He hath spoken of those already, let him now speak of these also. You have heard what ought to be desired; hear now what ought to be despised. But, verily, every man living is altogether vanity.

11. Ver. 6. Albeit man walketh in the Image. In what Image, save that of Him, Who said, Let Us make man in Our Image, after Our Likeness. Albeit man walks in the Image. For the reason he says albeit, is, that this is some great thing. And this albeit is followed by nevertheless, that the albeit which you have already heard, should relate to what is beyond the sun; but this nevertheless, which is to follow, to what is under the sun, and that the one should relate to the Truth, the other to vanity. Albeit, then, that man walketh in the Image, nevertheless he is disquieted in vain. Hear the cause of his disquieting, and see if it be not a vain one; that thou mayest trample it under foot, that thou mayest leap beyond it, and mayest dwell on high, where that vanity is not. What vanity is that?

He heapeth up riches, ond knoweth not for whom he may be gathering them together. O infatuated vanity! Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and hath not respected vanities, nor lying deceits. To you indeed, O covetous man, to you I seem to be out of my senses, these words appear to you to be “old wives’ tales.” For you, a man of great judgment, and of great prudence, to be sure, are daily devising methods of acquiring money, by traffic, by agriculture, by eloquence perhaps, by making yourself learned in the law, by warfare, perhaps you even add that of usury. Like a shrewd man as you are, you leave nothing untried, whereby you may pile coin on coin; and may store it up more carefully in a place of secresy. You plunder others; you guard against the plunderer; you are afraid lest you should yourself suffer the wrong, that you yourself do; and even what you do suffer, does not correct you. But indeed you do not suffer it; for you are a man of prudence; you take good care of it; you do not only understand well how to raise it; you have a place in which to deposit it; a person to whose care to commit it, by which means nothing is lost of what you have gathered together. I will question your own heart, I would discuss the prudence of your conduct! See, you have gathered together; you have taken such care of them, that you cannot lose any part of what you have stored up: tell me now, for whom are you keeping them. I am not arguing with you, I am not dwelling upon, I am not exaggerating whatever else of evil there is in that covetousness of our vanity. This is the one thing I put before you, that I would question you upon, which the occasion of the reading of this present Psalm suggests to me. We will suppose you are gathering together, are heaping up riches; I do not say, beware lest whilst thou art gathering up, thou shouldest thyself be gathered up. I do not say, beware lest when thou wouldest seize prey, thou shouldest thyself be a prey; this I will express more clearly; for perhaps, blinded by avarice, thou hast not understood, lest haply then, I say, while you would yourself be preying on the weaker, you become yourself the prey of the greater. For you do not observe that you are in a sea; you do not see that the smaller fishes are devoured by the larger. I speak not of these things; I am not speaking of the difficulties and the dangers involved in the mere acquisition of wealth; how much they endure, who are heaping it up: to what a degree they are in danger in every situation; how they almost see death in every place, all this I pass by. We will suppose that you heap up riches without opposition from any one; that you keep them without any one robbing you of them. Examine your own heart, and that prudence of yours, which leads you to deride me, to think me out of my senses for saying these things: and tell me now, “You are heaping up treasures; for whom are you gathering them together?” I see what you would tell me; as if what you would say had not occurred to the person described here; you will say, I am keeping them for my children? This is the voice of parental affection; the excuse of injustice. “I am keeping them” (you say) “for my children.” So then you are keeping them for your children, are you? Did not Idithun then know this? Assuredly he did; but he reckoned it one of the things of the old days, that have waxed old, and therefore he despised it: because he was hastening on to the new days.

12. For, look, I proceed to examine the case of you and your children. You are yourself to pass away, and are keeping them for those who are to pass away also; nay rather, you are yourself passing away already, and are keeping them for those who are themselves passing away also. For when I spoke of you thus, as one “about to pass away,” I spoke of you as if you had some permanence now. During this very day, from the time that we began speaking, up to this very moment, do you perceive that we have been growing old? For you do not see even the growth of the hair of your head; and at this moment, while you are standing, while you are here, while you are employed on something or other, while you are speaking, your hairs are growing on your head; for they have not grown all in a moment to such a length, that you require a barber. Time therefore goes on hasting by, both in

the case of those who consider, and in the case of those who think not of it, and who are unwisely employed on something else. You are passing away, and are keeping it for your son who is also passing away. I ask you, first of all, this question; “Do you know that he for whom you are keeping them will possess them; or if he is not yet born, do you know that he ever will be born? You are keeping it for sons, of whom it is uncertain whether they will be born, or whether they will come into possession; and you do not lay up your treasure where it ought to be laid up. For your Lord would not give such advice as this to His servant, that he should lose his own property. You are the servant of a certain great Householder, having much that is your own. That which thou lovest and possessest, He Himself bestowed upon thee; and He would not have thee lose what He hath given thee, seeing He would give Himself unto thee also. But even this too, which He hath given thee but for a time, He would not have thee lose. There is a great deal of it; it overflows, it exceeds the limits of thy wants. Surely now the superfluity may be retrenched. I would not have thee lose even this, saith the Lord. And what am I to do? Remove; the place where you have placed it is not a place of security. Surely you wish to comply with the dictates of covetousness. Look now whether my counsel does not chime in with the dictates of covetousness itself. For you wish to have what you have, and not to lose it; I am shewing you where to deposit it. Lay not up treasures on earth; not knowing for whom you are gathering them together: and afterwards, how he who will have and possess them hereafter, will expend them. Perhaps, while he possesses them, he will be himself possessed: and will not keep that which he shall have from you. Perhaps while you are keeping it for him, you will lose it before he comes. I am offering advice to your covetousness. Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven. If you wished to keep riches here on earth, you would seek for a store-house; perhaps you would not trust it to your own house, because of your domestics; you would deposit it in the street of the Bankers. For there accidents can hardly happen; there the thief does not easily find an entrance; every thing is well taken care of. Why do you think of that plan, except that you have no better place in which to keep it? What if I give you a better place? say to you, ‘Do not trust it to the person, who is not a sufficiently sponsible one. But there is One Who is sufficiently sponsible; entrust it to Him; He hath great store-houses; where riches cannot be lost. He is great and rich beyond all rich men.’ Now you will haply say, “And when shall I venture to entrust it to such a Person?” What if He Himself exhorts thee to do so? Recognise Him; He is not merely an “Householder;” but He is thy Master also. “My servant,” (He says,) “I would not have thee lose thy personalities; consider where thou art placing them, why wouldest thou deposit them where thou mayest lose them; where even though thou lovest them not, thou canst not thyself continue for ever. There is another place, to which I shall remove thee. Let what thou hast precede thee: fear not lest thou shouldest lose it; I was the Giver of it. I will be the Keeper of it. This thy Lord saith unto thee; put thy faith to the question; see whether thou wilt put faith in Him.” You will say, “I count what I do not see as lost already; I would fain see it here.” Through your wish to see it here, you will neither see it here, and you will also have nothing there. You have some treasures hid in the earth; when you go forth, you do not carry them with you. You have come to hear a Discourse; to gather together inward wealth; you are thinking of your outward wealth. I pray you, have you brought it hither? Lo! even now, you cannot see it! You believe that you have in your house, what you know that you laid by; do you know that you have not lost it? How many have returned to their homes, and not found what they laid by? At this, perhaps, the hearts of the covetous are alarmed; and because I said, that many had returned to their homes, and not found what they had laid by, every one has said in his heart, “That be far from us, Bishop! Wish and ask for us what is good! Be it far from us, such a thing should happen: God forbid it should happen so. I put my trust in God, that I shall find what I put by in safety.” Do you put your trust in God, and do you not believe God’s own word? “I put my trust in Christ, that what I put by will be safe; no one will come near it; no one will carry it away.” You wish to be ensured, by putting your trust in Christ, against losing any thing out of your house: you will be better ensured, by believing Christ’s word, so as to deposit it where He hath counselled thee! Have you no doubts of your servant? and have you doubts about your Lord? Have you no fears for your house, and have you fears for heaven? “But” (you say) “how am I to lay it up in heaven?” He hath given you counsel: “Deposit it where I tell you; I would not have you know in what manner it finds its way thither.” Deposit it in the hands of the poor, give it to the needy; what matters it to thee in what manner it makes its way thither? Shall not I bring thither what I receive? Hast thou forgotten, When ye did it unto one of the least of Mine, ye did it unto Me? If any friend of yours had certain basins or cisterns, and you were in search of some receptacles contrived for the keeping of any fluid, whether oil, or wine, in which to conceal or to store up your fruits, and he were to say, “I will keep them for you;”—and if he had certain secret ducts and passages to those basins, so that what was openly poured therein, might secretly find its way through these; and were he to say, “Pour here what you have;” and you were, on the other hand, to think that it was not the place where you thought of storing them, and to be afraid to pour them in;—then would not he, who knew that his places had some secret contrivance, say to you, “Pour it in, and fear not; it finds its way from hence to that place; you do not see by what way: but trust me, who was the builder of it.” For He, by Whom all things were made, hath built mansions for all of us: thither He would have that which we have go before us; that we may not lose it on earth. When, however, you have kept them on earth, tell me for whom you are to gather them together? You have children: add one more to their number; and give something to Christ also. He heaps up riches; and cannot tell for whom he may be gathering them together. He is disquieted in vain.

13. Ver. 7. And now. And now, saith this Idithun,—(looking back on a certain vain show, and looking up to a certain Truth, standing mid-way where he has something beyond him, and something also behind him, having below him the place from which he took his spring, having above him that toward which he has stretched forth,)—And now, when I have “overleaped” some things, when I have trampled many things under foot, when I am no longer captivated by things temporal; even now, I am not perfect, I have not yet apprehended. For it is by hope that we are saved; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Therefore he says;

Ver. 7. And now what wait I for? Is it not for the Lord? He is my expectation, Who hath given me all those things, that I might despise them. He will give unto me Himself also, even He Who is above all, and by Whom all things were made, and by Whom I was made amongst all; even He, the Lord, is my Expectation! You see Idithun, brethren, you see in what way he waiteth for Him! Let no man therefore call himself perfect here; he deceives and imposes upon himself; he is beguiling himself, he cannot have perfection here, and what avails it that he should lose humility?

And now what wait I for? Is it not for the Lord? When it has arrived, then it is no longer an object of expectation; then that perfection will actually be. “Now,” however, how much ground soever Idithun hath overleaped, he is but waiting still.

And my substance is ever before Thee. Already advancing, already tending towards Him, and to some extent already beginning to be, still (he says) my substance is ever before Thee. Now that other substance is also before men. You have gold, silver, slaves, estates, trees, cattle, servants. These things are visible even to men. There is a certain substance that is ever before Thee. And my substance is ever before Thee.

14. Ver. 8. Deliver me from all my transgresssions. I have “overleaped” a great deal of ground, a very great deal of ground already; but, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. I have “overleaped” a great deal: but still do I beat my breast, and say, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Thou therefore art my expectation! my End. For Christ is the end of the Law unto righteousness, unto every man that believeth. From all mine offences: not only from those, that I may not relapse into those which I have already “overleaped;” but from all, without exception, of those on account of which I now beat my breast, and say, Forgive us our debts. Deliver me from all mine offences: me being thus minded, and holding fast what the Apostle said, As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded. For at the time that he said that he was not already perfect, he then immediately goes on and says, As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded. What is the meaning of, As many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded? Thou hadst already said, Not that I have already apprehended, or am already perfect. Observe the order of the words. But this one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before, I am pressing toward the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. For this very reason he is not perfect, that he is pressing toward the prize of the high calling of God; which he hath not found as yet, unto which he hath not as yet attained. But

if he is not perfect at present, because he hath not as yet attained unto it, which of us is perfect? Yet he goes on and says, Yet let as many of us as be perfect, be thus minded. Art thou then, O Apostle, not perfect, and are we perfect? But hath it escaped you, that he did just now call himself perfect? For he does not say, As many of you as are perfect, be ye thus minded; but as many of us as be perfect, let us be thus minded; after having said a little before, Not that I have already attained; either am already perfect. In no other way then can you be perfect in this life, than by knowing that you cannot be perfect in this life. This then will be your perfection, so to have "overleaped" some things, as to have still some point to which you are hastening on: so as to have something remaining, to which you will have to leap on, when every thing else has been passed by. It is such faith as this that is secure; for whoever thinks that he has already attained, is exalting himself, so as to be abased hereafter.

15. Therefore because I am thus minded, because I speak of myself as perfect and as not perfect at the same time; (not perfect indeed, because I have not yet attained that which I desire; perfect, because I know the thing that is yet wanting to me;) therefore, because I am thus minded, because I despise worldly things, because I refuse to take delight in perishable things, because I am laughed to scorn by the covetous man, boasting himself that he is prudent, and laughing me to scorn as one out of my senses, because I act thus; because I pursue this course.

Thou hast made me the reproach of the foolish. Thou hast so willed it, that I should live among those, and preach the Truth among those, who love vanity; and I cannot but be a laughing-stock to them. For we have been made a spectacle unto this world, and unto angels, and unto men: to angels who praise, to men who censure, us; or rather to angels, some of whom praise, some of whom are censuring us: and to men also, some of whom are praising, and some censuring us. We have arms on the right hand, and on the left, with which we wage war, through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true. This we do in the sight of angels; this in the sight of men; because even among the angels there are holy Angels, to whom we give pleasure by living virtuously; and there are trangressing angels, to whom we give pleasure by living ill. And among men also, there are holy men, to whom the life we live gives pleasure; there are also very wicked men, who mock at our good life. Both the one and the other are arms to us: the one on the right hand, the other on the left: arms however they are both of them; both of these kinds of arms, both those on the right hand, and those on the left; both those who praise, and those who censure; both those who pay us honour, and those who heap dishonour upon us; with both these kinds I contend against the devil; with both of these I smite him; I defeat him with prosperity, if I be not corrupted by it; by adversity, if I am not broken in spirit by it.

16. Thou then hast made me the reproach of the foolish.

Ver. 9. I became dumb, and I opened not my mouth. But it was to guard against the foolish man, that I became dumb, and opened not my mouth. For to whom should I tell what is going on within me? For I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me; for He will speak peace unto His people. But, There is no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked. I was dumb, and opened not my mouth; because it is Thou that madest me. Was this the reason that thou openedst not thy mouth, because God made thee? That is strange; for did not God make thy mouth, that thou shouldest speak? He that planted the ear, doth He not hear? He that formed the eye, doth He not see? God hath given thee a mouth to speak with; and dost thou say, I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because Thou madest me? Or does the clause, Because Thou madest me, belong to the verse that follows? Because Thou madest me,

Ver. 10. Remove Thy stroke away from me. Because it is Thou that hast made me, let it not be Thy pleasure to destroy me utterly; scourge, so that I may be made better, not so that I faint; beat me, so that I may be beaten out to a greater length and breadth, not so that I may be ground to powder. Because Thou hast made me, remove Thy stroke away from me.

By the heaviness of Thy hand I fainted in corrections. That is, I fainted while Thou wast correcting me. And what is meant by correcting me? except what follows,

Ver. 11. Thou with rebukes hast chastened man for iniquity; Thou hast made my life to consume away like a spider. There is much that is discerned by this Idithun; by every one, who discerns as he does; who overleaps as he does. For he says, that he has fainted in God’s corrections; and would fain have the stroke removed away from him, because it is He Who made him. Let Him renew me, Who also made me; let Him, Who created me, create me anew. But yet, Brethren, do we suppose that there was no cause for his fainting, so that he wishes to be renewed, to be created anew? It is for iniquity, saith he, that Thou hast chastened man. All this, my having fainted, my being weak, my crying out of the deep, all of this is because of iniquity; and in this Thou hast not condemned, but hast chastened me. Thou hast chastened man for sin. Hear this more plainly from another Psalm; It is good for me that Thou hast afflicted me, that I might learn Thy righteousness. I have been afflicted, and at the same time it is good for me; it is at once a punishment, and an act of favour. What hath He in store for us after punishment is over, Who inflicts punishment itself by way of favour? For He it is of Whom it was said, I was brought low, and He made me whole: and, It is good for me that Thou hast afflicted me, that I might learn Thy righteousness. Thou chastenest man for iniquity. And that which is written, Thou formest my grief in teaching me, could only be said unto God by one who was leaping beyond his fellows; Thou formest my grief in teaching me; Thou makest, that is to say, a lesson for me out of my sorrow. It is Thou that formest that very grief itself; Thou dost not leave it unformed, but formest it; and that grief, that has been inflicted by Thee, when formed, will be a lesson unto me, that I may be set free by Thee. For the word finges is used in the sense of forming, as it were moulding, my grief; not in the sense of feigning it; in the same way that fingit is applied to the artist, in the same sense that figulus is derived from fingere. Thou therefore hast chastened man for iniquity. I see myself in afflictions; I see myself under punishment; and I see no unrighteousness in Thee. If I therefore am under punishment, and if there is no unrighteousness with Thee, it remains that Thou must have been chastening man for iniquity.

18. And by what means hast Thou chastened him? Tell us, O Idithun, the manner of thy chastening; tell us in what way thou hast been chastened. And Thou hast made my life consume like a spider. This is the chastening! What consumes away sooner than the spider? I speak of the creature itself; though what can be more liable to consume away than the spider’s webs?

Observe too how liable to decay is the creature itself. Do but set your finger lightly upon it; and it is a ruin; there is nothing at all more easily destroyed. To such a state hast Thou brought my life, by chastening me because of iniquity. When chastening makes us weak, there is a kind of strength that would be a fault. I perceive that some of you have already flown before me to my meaning, and have already understood; but those who are quicker of apprehension must not leave the slow behind, that they may pursue the road of our discourse in company. This is what I said; this I would have you understand. If it is the chastening of a just God that has produced this state of weakness, there is a kind of 'strength' that would be a fault. It was by a kind of strength that man offended, so as to require to be corrected by weakness: for it was by a certain pride that he offended; so as to require to be chastened by humility. All proud persons call themselves strong men. Therefore have many come from the East and the West, and have attained to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven. Wherefore was it that they so attained? Because they would not be strong. What is meant by 'would not be strong?' They were afraid to presume of their own merits. They did not go about to establish their own righteousness, that they might submit themselves to the righteousness of God. Lastly, at the time when the Lord spake thus, Many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven; but the children of the kingdom, (i.e. the Jews, who were ignorant of the righteousness of God, and went about to establish their own,) shall be cast into outer darkness; call to mind the faith of one single person from among the Gentiles, the Centurion; who was so weak in confidence in himself, so far from being "a strong man," as to say I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof. He was not worthy to receive Christ in his house, and he had already received Him in his heart! For that Teacher of humility, the Son of Man, had in his breast already found where He might lay His head. To this speech of the Centurion's our Lord alluded, when He spake to them that followed Him, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith in any in Israel. He found this man weak: the Israelites He found strong; so that He said, referring to both, They that are whole need not a phycician, but they which are sick. It is on account of this then, that is, on account of this humility, that many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall go into outer darkness. Behold! you are mortal; and you bear about you a body of flesh that is corrupting away; And ye shall fall like one of the princes. Ye shall die like men, and shall fall like the devil. What good does the remedial discipline of mortality do you? The devil is proud, as not having a mortal body, as being an angel. But as for you, who have received a mortal body, and to whom even this does no good, so as to humble you by so great weakness, you shall fall like one of the princes. This then is the first grace of God’s gift, to bring us to the confession of our infirmity, that whatever good we can do, whatever ability we have, we may be that in Him; that He that glorieth, may glory in the Lord. When I am weak, saith he, then am I strong. Thou chastenest man for iniquity, and Thou makest my life to consume away, even as a spider.

19. But surely every man living disquieteth himself in vain. He returns to what he mentioned a little before. Although he be improving here, yet for all that, every man living disquieteth himself in vain; forasmuch as he lives in a state of uncertainty. For who has any assurance even of his own goodness? He is disquieted in vain. Let him cast upon the Lord the burden of his care; let him cast upon Him whatever causes him anxiety. Let Him sustain thee; let Him keep thee. For on this earth what is there that is certain, except death? Consider the whole sum of all the good or the ill of this life, either those belonging to righteousness, or those belonging to unrighteousness; what is there that is certain here, except death? Have you been advancing in goodness? You know what you are to-day; what you will be to-morrow, you know not! Are you a sinner? you know what you are to-day; what you will be to-morrow, you know not! You hope for wealth; it is uncertain whether it will fall to your lot. You hope to have a wife; it is uncertain whether you will obtain one, or what sort of one you will obtain. You hope for sons; it is uncertain whether they will be born to you. Are they born? it is uncertain whether they will live: if they live, it is uncertain whether they will grow up in virtue, or whether they will fall away. Whichever way you turn, all is uncertain, death alone is certain. Art thou poor? It is uncertain whether thou wilt grow rich? Art thou unlearned? It is uncertain whether thou wilt become learned. Art thou in feeble health, it is uncertain whether thou wilt regain thy strength. Art thou born? It is certain

that thou wilt die: and in this certainty of death itself, the day of thy death is uncertain. Amidst these uncertainties, where death alone is certain, while even of that the hour is uncertain, and while it alone is studiously guarded against, though at the same time it is in no way to be escaped, every man living disquieteth himself in vain.

20. Being now then in the act of passing by and leaving behind these things, and dwelling now in the midst of some higher things than these, and despising these things below, in a position mid-way between both, he says,

Ver. 12. Hear my prayer, O Lord. Whereof shall I rejoice? Whereof should I groan? I rejoice on account of what is past, I groan longing for these which are not yet come. Hear my prayer, and give ear unto my cry. Hold not Thy peace at my tears. For do I now no longer weep, because I have already past by, have left behind so great things as these? Do I not weep much the more? For, He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow. The more I long for what is not here, do I not so much the more groan for it until it comes? do I not so much the more weep until it comes? Do I not weep for it, so much the more that scandals multiply the more that iniquity aboundeth, the more that the love of many waxeth cold? Do I not say, O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears. Hear my prayer, and give ear unto my tears; hold not Thy peace from me. Let me not become deaf to all eternity, Hold not Thy peace from me. Let me hear Thy voice! For God speaketh in secret; He speaketh to many persons within their heart, and loud is the sound heard there in the profound silence of the heart, while with a loud voice He saith, I am thy salvation. It is on account of this voice wherewith God saith unto the soul, I am Thy salvation; that he prays, God would not hold His peace from him. Hold not Thou Thy peace from me.

21. For I am a sojourner with Thee. But with whom am I a sojourner? When I was with the devil, I was a sojourner; but then I had a bad host and entertainer; now, however I am with Thee; but I am a sojourner still. What is meant by a sojourner? I am a sojourner in the place from which I am to remove; not in the place where I am to dwell for ever. The place where I am to abide for ever, should be rather called my home. In the place from which I am to remove I am a sojourner; but yet it is with my God that I am a sojourner, with Whom I am hereafter to abide, when I have reached my

home. But what home is that to which you are to remove from this estate of a sojourner? Recognise that home, of which the Apostle speaks, We have an habitation of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. If this house is eternal in the Heavens, when we have come to it, we shall not be sojourners any more. For how should you be a sojourner in an eternal home? But here, where the Master of the house is some day to say to you, “Remove,” while you yourself know not when He will say it, be thou in readiness. And by longing for your eternal home, you will be keeping yourself in readiness for it. And be not angry with Him, because He gives thee notice to remove, when He Himself pleases. For He made no covenant with thee, nor did He bind Himself by any engagement; nor didst thou enter upon the tenancy of this house on a certain stipulation for a definite term: thou art to quit, when it is its Master’s pleasure. For therefore is it that you now dwell there free of charge. For I am a sojourner with Thee, and a stranger. Therefore it is there is my country: it is there is my home. I am a sojourner with Thee, and a stranger. Here too is understood with Thee. For many are strangers with the devil: but they who have already believed and are faithful, are, it is true, strangers as yet, because they have not yet come to that country and to that home: but still they are strangers with God. For so long as we are in the body, we are strangers from the Lord, and we desire, whether we are strangers, or abiding here, we may be accepted with Him. I am a sojourner with Thee; and a stranger, as all my fathers were. If then I am as all my fathers were, shall I say that I will not remove, when they have removed? Am I to lodge here on other terms, than those on which they lodged here also.

22. What then does it result from this, that I ought to ask for, seeing I am undoubtedly to remove from hence?

Ver. 13. Grant me some remission, that I may be refreshed before I go hence. Consider well, Idithun, consider what knots those are which thou wouldest have loosed unto thee, that thou mightest be refreshed before thou goest hence. For thou hast certain fever-heats from which thou wouldest fain be refreshed, and thou sayest, that I may be refreshed, and “grant me a remission.” What should He remit, or loosen unto thee, save that difficulty, under which, and in consequence of which, thou sayest, Forgive us our debts. Grant me a remission before I go hence, and be no more. Set me free from my sins, before I go hence, that I may not go hence with my sins. Remit them unto me, that I may be set at rest in my conscience, that it may be disburthened of its feverish anxiety, the anxiety with which I am sorry for my sin. Grant me a remission, that I may be refreshed, (before every thing else,) before I go hence, and be no more. For if thou grantest me not a remission, that I may be refreshed, I shall go and be no more. Before I go thither, where if I go, I shall thenceforth be no more. Grant me a remission, that I may be refreshed. A question has suggested itself, how he will be no more. “See! he has not then departed to his rest;” a consummation which God avert from Idithun! For Idithun will go, will assuredly go to his rest. But suppose some unrighteous person, some one not an Idithun, not leaping beyond them, some one laying up treasures here, some one brooding over his possessions; unjust, proud, a boaster, puffed up, a despiser of the poor man who lies before his door, will not even he too be in existence? What is meant then by be no more? For if that Dives was not in existence, who is that who was tormented in the flame? Who is that who desired a drop of water from Lazarus’ finger to be dropped upon his tongue? Who is that person, who said, Father Abraham, send Lazarus? Assuredly he was in existence to speak, and to be “tormented in the flame,” and to rise again against the last day, and to be condemned with the devil to everlasting fire. What is meant then by shall be no more, unless Idithun is alluding to what is true being, and what is not true being. For he was beholding with the mind, with which he could do so, with the “mind’s eye,” by which he was able to behold it, that end, which he had desired to have shewn unto him, saying, Lord, make me to know mine end. He was beholding the number of his days, which truly is; and he observed that all that is below, in comparison of that true being, has no true being. For those things are permanent; these are subject to change; mortal, and frail, and the eternal suffering, though full of corruption, is for this very reason not to be ended, that it may ever be being ended without end. He alluded therefore to that realm of bliss, to the happy country, to the happy home, where the Saints are partakers of eternal Life, and of Truth unchangeable; and he feared to go where that is not, where there is no true being; longing to be there, where Being in the highest sense is! It is on account of this contrast then, while standing mid-way between them, he says, Grant me a remission, that I may be refreshed before I go hence and be no more. For if Thou grantest me not a remission of my sins, I shall go from Thee unto all eternity! And from whom shall I go to all eternity? From Him Who said, I am HE that Am: from Him Who said, Say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you. He then who goes from Him, in the contrary direction, goes to non-existence.

23. Therefore, my brethren, even if I have taxed severely the endurance of your bodies, take it patiently, because I too have had fatigue to endure. And it is with truth I say, that it is you yourselves that impose that fatigue upon yourselves. For I should soon hold my peace, did I perceive that you were weary of what is said by me.

PSALM 40

Of all those things which our Lord Jesus Christ has foretold, we know part to have been already accomplished, part we hope will be accomplished hereafter. All of them, however, will be fulfilled, because He is the Truth Who speaks them, and requires of us to be as faithful, as He Himself speaks them faithfully. He who believes, will rejoice in their coming to pass; he who believes not, will be confounded at their coming. They will however come assuredly, whether men wish for them, or wish them away; whether they believe, or whether they believe not; as the Apostle speaks; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself. But above all things, my brethren, remember this short text, and hold fast this which we all of us have just heard from the Gospel. He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Our fathers have already been delivered up to councils, have pleaded their causes before the enemies whom they loved; they gave to them as much of reproof as they could; and shewed them as much love as they could; and the seed of the righteous blood hath been sown, and from that blood, as from seed sown throughout the world, the harvest of the Church has risen. The age that follows is that of scandals, and of hypocrisy, and of trials, from those who say, Lo! here is Christ; or Lo! there. That enemy of ours was at that time a Lion, while he was raging with open violence; now that he is in secret, conspiring against us, he is a Dragon. But may He to Whom it was said, Thou shalt trample under thy feet the Lion and the Dragon, inasmuch as we are His body and His limbs, just as He then trampled under the feet of our Fathers the Lion, while raging against us openly, and dragging on the Martyrs to their sufferings, even so now in like manner trample the Dragon under our feet likewise, that he may not lie in wait for us. Against which dragon the Apostle, wishing to put us on our guard, says, I have espoused you to one husband to present you a chaste virgin unto Christ. But I fear lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the purity that is in Christ Jesus. That old adulterer then, the serpent, seeks to corrupt the purity of the mind, not that of the flesh. But even as the human tempter rejoices in his wickedness, when he corrupts the flesh, even so does that devil triumph, when he corrupts the mind. But just as our fathers had need of patience in their conflict with the Lion, so have we of vigilance in ours with the serpent. But the persecution of the Church, whether it come from the Dragon, or from the Lion, never ceases; and the enemy is more to be feared when he is deceiving, than whilst he is raging. At that time he used to constrain Christians to deny Christ, at the present time he persuades them to deny Christ. His manner then was to constrain by force, now he persuades. At that time then he brought violence to bear upon us; at this time treachery; at that time he was seen, when roaring against us; now, while he is wandering about with slippery stealth, he is seen with difficulty. In what way however he used at that time to force Christians to deny Christ, is well known. For they were dragged before judgment-seats, that they might deny Christ; and by confessing Him, they earned the crown. Now however he persuades men into denying Christ; and the reason that he succeeds in deceiving is, that he who is being persuaded to deny Christ, appears to himself to be (as it were) not departing from Christ. For what is said in these days by the Heretics to the Catholic? ‘Come, and be a Christian.’ It is for this reason that they say, ‘Be a Christian,’ that he may say, “Am I not one?” It is a very different thing to say, “Come, be a Christian,” and to say, “Come, deny Christ.” The manifest danger, the roar of the lion, is heard long beforehand: is guarded against long beforehand. The slippery serpent makes his approaches, creeping along with stealthy gliding; stealing on with noiseless trail, insinuating into your ears his artful whisper, and he does not say, deny Christ; (for since the time that the Martyrs were crowned, who would listen to his voice?) but he says, ‘Be a Christian.’ And the other, (the extraordinary speech having made an impression upon him,) if the poison hath not yet penetrated him, replies, ‘Assuredly, I am a Christian already.’ But if he is moved, and bitten by the serpent’s fangs, answers, “Why do you say to me, Be a Christian? What? am I not a Christian already?” The other answers, “No.” “Am I then really not a Christian?” “No.” “Do you then make me one now, if I am not one already.” Come, then, but when you begin to be questioned by the Bishop, as to who you are, do not say, “I am a Christian,” or “I am a believer;” but say that you are not one, in order that you may be made one. For when he has heard the confession of a Christian believer, he dares not baptize thee over again; but when he hears that he is not one, he gives it to him as that which he had not before; that he himself may have the appearance of being free from blame, in that he acts according to the other's words. On which point, I demand of you, Heretic, why you think yourself to be free from blame? What is it that I hear in this your answer? "That it is not you that deny Christ, but the other." If he who denies is in fault, what is he who teaches the person, who denies, to make that denial? Are you, however, in deed so perfectly free from blame, who, being a Christian, effect the same object by persuasion, that the Pagan used to effect by threats? And what do you effect by it? Do you remove what he had, because he denies what he really has? You do not make him not have it, but you make him have it to his own punishment! For what he has, he has. That Baptism is a kind of 'character' stamped upon him; it decorated the soldier; it convicts the deserter! For what is it you would do? You are building Christ upon Christ! If you yourself were single minded, you would not seek to double Christ. Then I would ask you, have you forgotten that Christ is a stone, and the stone which the builders rejected, has become the head-stone of the corner? If Christ then be a stone, and you would lay Christ upon Christ, you have let slip what you heard in the Gospel, there shall not be one stone upon another. Yet so great is the force of the connecting bond of charity, that although many living stones meet together in the building of God's Temple, yet they altogether make but one stone. You however have split yourself off; you call men away from the "being built up;" you call them to a downfall! And these insidious designs are too common, and they never cease; and we see it, and we endure it with patience, and endeavour to check them to the best of our power by disputing with them, by refuting them, by meeting them, by threatening them, yet in all things loving them. And when, in spite of our so doing, they persevere in their evil way, and our heart consumes away with grief for our brother's death, while it grieves over those who are without and fears for those within, in the midst of the manifold distresses and unceasing trials with which this life abounds, what shall we do? For from iniquity abounding thus, a kind of lethargy falls upon our charity. Because iniquity aboundeth, the love of many waxeth cold. And what else should we do, but what follows, if at least by His help we may be able to do it. He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

2. Let us say then what this Psalm says. (Ver. 1.) I waited patiently for the Lord. I waited patiently for the promise of no mere mortal, who can both deceive and be himself deceived: I waited for the consolation of no mere mortal, who may be consumed by sorrow of his own, before he gives me comfort. Should a brother mortal attempt to comfort me, when he himself is in sorrow likewise? Let us mourn in company; let us weep together, let us wait patiently together, let us join our prayers together also. Whom did I wait for but for the Lord? The Lord, Who though He puts off the fulfilment of His promises, yet never recals them? He will make it good; assuredly He will make it good, because He has made many of His promises good already: and of God’s truth we ought to have no fears, even if as yet He had made none of them good. Lo! let us henceforth think thus, ‘He has promised us every thing; He has not as yet given us possession of any thing; He is a sponsible Promiser; a faithful Pay-master: do you but shew yourself a dutiful exactor of what is promised; and if you be weak, if you be one of the little ones, claim the promise of His mercy. Do you not see tender lambs striking their dams’ teats with their heads, in order that they may get their fill of milk? I waited patiently for the Lord, says he. And what does He in return? Has He turned away His face from thee? Hath He despised thee when waiting patiently upon Him? Or has He perhaps not seen thee? Not so, by any means. But what has He done to thee?

And He took heed unto me, and heard my cry. He took heed to it, and He heard it. See thou hast not waited in vain. His eyes are over thee. His ears turned towards thee. For, the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. What then? Did He not see thee, when thou usedst to do evil and to blaspheme Him? What then becomes of what is said in that very Psalm, The face of the Lord is upon them that do evil? But for what end? That He may cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. Therefore, even when thou wert wicked, He took heed of thee; but He took no heed to thee. So then to him who waited patiently for the Lord, it was not enough to say, He took heed of me, He says, He took heed to me; that is, He took heed by comforting me, that He might do me good. What was it that He took heed to? and He heard my cry.

3. And what hath He accomplished for thee? What hath He done for thee. (Ver. 2.) He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. (Ver. 3.) And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. He hath given us great blessings already: and still He is our debtor; but let him who hath this part of the debt repaid already, believe that the rest will be also, seeing that he ought to have believed even before he received any thing. Our Lord has employed facts themselves to persuade us, that He is a faithful promiser, a liberal giver. What then has He already done? He has brought me out of a horrible pit. What horrible pit is that? It is the depth of iniquity, from the lusts of the flesh, for this is meant by the miry clay. Whence hath He brought thee out? Out of a certain deep, out of which thou criedst out in another Psalm, Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord. And those who are already “crying out of the deep,” are not absolutely in the lowest deep: the very act of crying is already lifting them up. There are some deeper in the deep, who do not even perceive themselves to be in the deep. Such are those who are proud despisers, not pious entreaters for pardon; not tearful criers for mercy: but such as Scripture thus describes. The sinner when he comes into the depth of evil despiseth. For he is deeper in the deep, who is not satisfied with being a sinner, unless instead of confessing he even defends his sins. But he who has already cried out of the deep, hath already lifted up his head in order that he might ‘cry out of the deep,’ has been heard already, and has been brought out of the horrible pit, and out of the mire and clay. He already has faith, which he had not before; he has hope, which he was before without; he now walks in Christ, who before used to go astray in the devil. For on that account it is that he says, He hath set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. Now that Rock was Christ. Supposing that we are upon the rock, and that our goings are ordered, still it is necessary that we continue to walk; that we advance to something farther. For what did the Apostle Paul say when now upon the Rock, when his goings had now been established? Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. What then has been done for thee, if thou hast not apprehended? On what account dost thou return thanks, saying, But I have obtained mercy? Because his goings are now established, because he now walks on the Rock? For what does He say, But this one thing I do,

forgetting what is behind. What is behind? The horrible pit. What is behind? It is the mire and clay, the lusts of the flesh, the darkness of iniquities. Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before. Now he would not speak of himself as reaching forth unto those things which are before, if he had already reached them. For the mind reacheth forwards from longing for an object desired; not from delight in one obtained. Reaching forth, he says, to those which are before, I press toward the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He was then on his course, he was hastening on to the victory. And in another place, when now close to the prize, he cries, I have finished my course. Therefore, when he was saying, I press forward toward the prize of my high calling, because his feet were now set on the Rock, and his goings were ordered, because he was now walking on the right way, he had something to return thanks for; something to ask for still; returning thanks for what he had received already, while he was claiming that which still remained due. For what things already received was he giving thanks? For the remission of sins, for the illumination of faith; for the strong support of hope, for the fire of charity. But in what respects had he still a claim of debt on the Lord? Henceforth, he says, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. There is therefore something due to me still. What is it that is due? A crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. He was at first a loving Father to bring him forth from the horrible pit; to forgive his sins, to rescue him from the mire and clay; hereafter he will be a righteous Judge, requiting to him walking rightly, what He promised; to him, (I say,) unto whom He had at the first granted that power to walk rightly. He then as a righteous Judge will repay; but whom will he repay? He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved.

4. Ver. 3. He hath put a new song in my mouth. What new song is this? Even a hymn unto our God. Perhaps you used to sing hymns to strange gods; old hymns, because they were uttered by the old man, not by the new man; let the new man be formed, and let him sing a new song; being himself made new, let him love those new things by which he is himself made new. For what is more Ancient than God, Who is before all things, and is without end and without beginning. He becomes new to thee, when thou returnest to Him; because it was by departing from Him, that thou

hadst become old; and hadst said, I have waxed old because of all mine enemies. We therefore utter a hymn unto our God; and the hymn itself sets us free. For I will call upon the Lord to praise Him, and I will be safe from all mine enemies. For a hymn is a song of praise. Call on God to praise Him, not to find fault with Him. For when you call on God to destroy your enemy, when you would fain rejoice in another’s ill, and call on God to bring this ill about, you are trying to make Him a partaker of your own malice. Now if you make Him a partaker of your own malice, you call upon Him, not to praise, but to reflect upon Him. For you think God to be such an one as yourself. Whence in another place it is said unto you, These things hast thou done, and I kept silence: and thou thoughtest wickedly that I was altogether such an one as thyself. Call on the Lord then to praise Him. Think Him not to be like unto thee, that thou mayest thyself become like unto Him. For, Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father is perfect; He, Who makes His sun to rise on the evil, and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. Praise thou, therefore, the Lord, so as not to wish ill unto thine enemies. ‘And how much good,’ (sayest thou,) ‘am I to wish him.’ As much as to thine own self. For it will not be out of what is thine that they will receive the gift of becoming good; nor will what is to be given to them, be a diminution of what thou possessest. Thine enemy is thine enemy, because he is wicked; as soon as he becomes good, he becomes thy friend and thy partner; so that thou mayest be willing to possess in conjunction with him, what thou before desiredst; He will henceforth be thy brother. Call then on God to praise Him: sing an hymn unto thy God. The sacrifice of praise, (He says,) glorifieth Me. What? Will God’s glory be greater because thou glorifiest Him? Or do we add any thing to God’s glory, when we say to Him, ‘I glorify Thee, O my God;’ or make Him more holy, when we say to Him, ‘I bless Thee, O my God?’ When He Himself blesseth us, He maketh us more holy: He maketh us more happy: when He glorifieth us, He maketh us more glorious, more honourable: when we glorify Him, it profiteth ourselves, not Him. For how do we glorify Him? It is by calling Him, not by making Him, glorious. What then does He go on to say, after saying, The sacrifice of praise glorifieth Me. Lest thou shouldest think that thou doest any thing for God, by offering Him the sacrifice of praise He says, And there is the way, where I will shew unto him my salvation. Thou seest that it is thyself, not God, that it will profit, if thou praisest God. Dost thou praise God? Thou art walking in the right way. Dost thou reflect upon Him? Then hast thou lost the way.

5. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even a hymn unto our God. If haply any one asks, what person is speaking in this Psalm? I would say briefly, “It is Christ.” But as ye know, brethren, and as we must say frequently, Christ sometimes speaks in His own Person, in the Person of our Head. For He Himself is the Saviour of the Body. He is our Head; [even He,] the Son of God, Who was born of the Virgin, suffered for us, rose again for our justification, sitteth at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us: Who is also to recompense to the evil and to the good, in the judgment, all the evil and the good that they have done. He deigned to become our Head; to become the Head of the Body, by taking of us that flesh, in which He should die for us; that flesh which He also raised up again for our sakes, that in that flesh He might place before us an instance of the resurrection; that we might learn to hope for that, of which we heretofore despaired, and might henceforth have our feet upon the rock, and might walk in Christ. He then sometimes speaks in the name of our Head; sometimes also He speaks of us who are His members. For both when He said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat, He spoke on behalf of His members, not of Himself: and when He said, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? The Head was crying on behalf of its members: and yet He did not say, Why dost thou persecute My members? but, Why persecutest thou Me? If He suffers in us, then shall we also be crowned in Him. Such is the love of Christ. What is there can be compared to this? This is the thing on account of which He hath put a hymn in our mouth, and this He speaks on behalf of His members.

6. The just shall see and shall fear, and shall trust in the Lord. The just shall see. Who are the just? The faithful; because it is by faith that the just shall live. For there is in the Church this order, some go before, others follow; and those who go before make themselves an example to those who follow; and those who follow imitate those who go before. But do those then follow no one, who exhibit themselves as an ensample to them that come after? If they follow no one, at all, they will fall into error. These persons then must themselves also follow some one, that is, Christ Himself. For all the better

sort of persons in the Church, for whom there now remained no longer any man worthy to be a model for their imitation; because, by the proficiency they have made, they had left all others behind; for them Christ Himself remains, as One Whom they may follow even unto the end. And that there are degrees of precedence you see by the Apostle Paul, saying, Be ye followers of Me, even as I also am of Christ. Let those then who have already had their goings established on the Rock, let them be an example to the believers. But be thou, saith he, an example of the believers. These very believers are the just, who, fixing their eyes on those who precede them in goodness, follow them in the way of imitation. In what way do they follow? The just shall see, and fear. "Shall see, and shall fear" to follow the evil way; when they see that all the better sort of persons have already chosen the good way; and they say in their hearts, just as travellers are wont to do, when being themselves in uncertainty about the road, and wavering, as it were, as to which they should travel by, they observe others walking on a certain road with confidence, and say to themselves, It is not without reason that these men go this road, while they are intending to arrive at the same point with ourselves; and wherefore is it that they go this way with great confidence, except that it is fatal to go the other. The just therefore, shall see, and shall fear. They see a narrow way on the one hand; on the other side, a broad road: on this side they see few, on the other many. But thou art a just man; count them not, but weigh them; bring "a just balance," not a deceitful one: because thou art called just. The just shall see, and fear, applies to thee. Count not therefore the multitudes of men that are filling the "broad ways," that are to fill the circus to-morrow; celebrating with shouts the City's Anniversary, while they defile the City itself by evil living. Look not at them; they are many in number; and who can count them? But there are a few travelling along the narrow road. Bring forth the balance, I say. Weigh them; see what a quantity of chaff you lift up on the one side, against a few grains of corn on the other. Let this be done, by the just, the believers, who are to follow. And what shall they who precede, do? Let them not be proud, let them not exalt themselves; let them not deceive those who follow them. How may they deceive those who follow them? By promising them salvation in themselves. What then ought those who follow to do? The just shall see, and fear: and shall trust in the Lord; not in those who go before them. But indeed they fix their eyes on those who go before them, and follow and imitate them; but they do so, because they consider from Whom they have received the grace to go before them; and because they trust in Him. Although therefore they make these their models, they place their trust in Him from Whom the others have received the grace, whereby they are such as they are. The just shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Just as in another Psalm, I lift up mine eyes unto the hills, we understand by hills, all distinguished and great spiritual persons in the Church; great in solidity, not by swollen inflation. By these it is that all Scripture hath been dispensed unto us; they are the Prophets, they are the Evangelists; they are sound Doctors: to these I lift up mine eyes, from whence shall come my help. And lest you should think of mere human help, he goes on to say, My help cometh from the Lord, Which made heaven and earth. The just shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

7. Come then, all those who would fain trust in the Lord, who see and fear. Let them fear to walk the evil way; the broad road. Let them choose the narrow road, there where there are some persons’ goings established on the Rock. Let them now hear what they ought to do.

Ver. 4. Blessed is that man, that maketh the name of the Lord his trust, and hath not respected vanities or lying madnesses. Behold the way by which thou wouldest fain have gone. Behold the multitude that fill the ‘broad way.’ It is not without reason that road leads to the amphitheatre. It is not without reason it leads to Death. The broad way leads unto death, its breadth delights for time: its end is straitness to all eternity. Aye; but the multitudes murmur; the multitudes are rejoicing together; the multitudes are hastening along; the multitudes are flocking together! Do not thou imitate them; do not turn aside after them: they are vanities, and lying madnesses. Let the Lord thy God be thy hope. Hope for nothing else from the Lord thy God; but let the Lord thy God Himself be thine hope. For many persons hope to obtain from God’s hands riches, and many perishable and transitory honours; and, in short, any thing else they hope to obtain at God’s hands, except only God Himself. But do thou seek after thy God Himself: nay, indeed, despising all things else, make thy way unto Him! Forget other things, remember Him. Leave other things behind, and press forward unto Him. Surely it is He Himself, Who set thee right, when turned away from the right path; Who, now that thou art set in the right path, guides thee aright, Who guides thee to thy destination. Let Him then be thy hope, Who both guides thee, and guides thee to thy destination. Whither does worldly covetousness lead thee? And to what point does it conduct thee at the last? Thou didst at first desire a farm; then thou wouldest possess an estate; thou wouldest shut out thy neighbours; having shut them out, thou didst set thy heart on the possessions of other neighbours; and didst extend thy covetous desires till thou hadst reached the shore: arriving at the shore, thou covetest the islands: having made the earth thine own, thou wouldest haply seize upon heaven. Leave thou all thy loves. He Who made heaven and earth is more beautiful than all.

8. Blessed is the man that maketh the name of the Lord his hope, and who hath not regarded vanities and lying madnesses. For whence is it that madness is called "lying?" Insanity is a lying thing, even as it is sanity that sees the Truth. For what thou seest as good things, thou art deceived; thou art not in thy sound senses: a violent fever has driven thee to frenzy: that which thou art in love with is not a reality. Thou applaudest the charioteer; thou cheerest the charioteer; thou art madly in love with the charioteer. It is vanity; it is a lying madness. 'It is not,' (he cries.) "Nothing can be better; nothing more delightful. What can I do for one in a state of high fever? Pray ye for such persons, if you have any feelings of compassion in you. For the physician himself also in a desperate case generally turns to those in the house, who stand around weeping; who are hanging on his lips to hear his opinion of the patient who is sick and in danger. The physician stands in a state of doubt: he sees not any good to promise; he fears to pronounce evil, lest he should excite alarm. He devises a thoroughly modest sentence; "The good God can do all things. Pray ye for him." Which then of these madmen shall I check? Which of them will listen to me? Which of them would not call us miserable? Because they suppose us to have lost great and various pleasures, of which they are madly fond, in that we are not as madly in love with them as they are: and they do not see that they are lying pleasures. When I offer him an egg, or hold forth the cup that is to restore health to him, I hurt him. And when shall I find a way, whereby to restore him to health? Should I exhort him to take refreshment, lest he should sink from exhaustion, and not attain to sound health, he presents his fists; he wishes to

vent his fury upon his physician. And though he strike one, still let him be loved; though he do one an injury, let him not be given over; he will return to a sound mind, he will thank us by and bye. How many are there here, who examine themselves, who consider each other, and speak of each other in the Church of God: who in the Holy Church's bosom observe that their now rightlydirected desires after the word of God, after the offices and duties of charity, after the frequenting of Christ's flock, do not stray from the Church, they look at each other, and talk of each other in turns. "Who is this passionate lover of the Circus? Who is this lover and admirer of such an actor, and such a gladiator?" He applies it to another; and the other to him. Assuredly these things are true; assuredly we rejoice in persons of this description. If we rejoice in such persons as these, let us not despair of such persons as these. Let us pray for them; dearly beloved: it is out of these, out of the number of those who once composed the number of the ungodly, that the number of the Saints is increased. And hath not respected vanities, and lying madnesses. "Such a one has won," he cries; "he harnessed such and such a horse," he proclaims aloud. He would fain be a kind of diviner; he aspires to the honours of divination by abandoning the fountain of Divinity; and he frequently pronounces an opinion, and is frequently mistaken. Why is this? Even because they are lying madnesses. But why is it that what they say sometimes comes true? That they may lead astray the foolish ones; that by loving the semblance of truth there, they may fall into the snare of falsehood: let them be left behind, let them be given over, let them be cut off. If they were members of us, they must be mortified. Mortify, he says, your members which are upon the earth. Let our God be our hope. He Who made all things, is better than all! He Who made what is beautiful, is more beautiful than all that is such. He Who made whatever is mighty, is Himself mightier. He Who made whatever is great, is Himself greater. He will be unto you every thing that you love. Learn in the creature to love the Creator; and in the work Him Who made it. Let not that which has been made by Him detain thine affections, so that thou shouldest lose Him by Whom thou thyself wert made also. Blessed, then, is the man, that maketh the Name of the Lord his trust; and hath not respected vanities and lying madnesses.

9. Perhaps he, who being impressed by that verse, desires to amend his ways, and being seized by fear for the righteousness of faith, shall desire to walk the narrow road; perhaps he (I say) will say unto us, I shall not be able to persevere in walking, if I have nothing to behold. What are we to do then, brethren? Are we to leave him altogether without a spectacle? He will die; he will not persevere; He will not follow us. What shall we do then? We will give him other sights in exchange for sights [like these]. And what sights shall we present to the Christian, whom we would fain divert from those sights? I thank the Lord our God; He in the following verse of the Psalm hath shewn us, what sights we ought to present and offer to spectators who would fain have sights to see? Let us now suppose him to be weaned from the circus, the theatre, the amphitheatre; let him be looking after, let him by all means be looking after, some sight to see; we do not leave him without a spectacle. What then shall we give in exchange for those? Hear what follows.

Ver. 5. Many, O Lord my God, are the wonderful works which Thou hast made. He used to gaze at the wonderful works of man; let him now contemplate the wonderful works of God. Many are the wonderful works that God has made. Why are they become vile in his eyes? He praises the charioteer guiding four horses; running all of them without fault and without stumbling. Perhaps the Lord has not made such wonderful works in things spiritual. Let him control lust, let him control cowardice, let him control injustice, let him control imprudence, I mean, the passions which falling into excess produce those vices; let him control these and bring them into subjection, and let him hold the reins, and not suffer himself to be carried away; let him guide them the way he himself would have them go; let him not be forced away whither he would not. He used to applaud the charioteer, he himself shall be applauded for his own charioteering; he used to call out that the charioteer should be invested with a dress of honour; he shall himself be clothed with immortality. These are the spectacles, these the sights that God exhibits to us. He cries out of heaven, “My eyes are upon you. Strive, and I will assist you; triumph, and I will crown you.” Many, O Lord my God, are the wonderful works which Thou hast made.

And in Thy thought there is none that is like unto Thee. Now then look at the actor! For the man hath by dint of great pains learnt to walk upon a rope; and hanging there he holds thee hanging in suspense. Turn to Him who exhibits spectacles far more wonderful. This man hath learned to walk upon the rope; but hath he caused another to walk on the sea? Forget now thy theatre; behold our Peter; not a walker on the rope, but, so to speak, a walker on the sea. And do thou also walk on other waters, (though not on those on which Peter walked, to symbolize a certain truth,) for this world is a sea. It hath a deleterious bitterness; it hath the waves of tribulations, the tempests of temptations; it hath men in it who, like fish, delight in their own ruin, and prey upon each other; walk thou here, set thou thy foot on this. Thou wouldest see sights; be thyself a spectacle. That thy spirit may not sink, look on Him Who goes before thee, and says, We have been made a spectacle unto this world, and unto angels, and unto men. Tread thou on the waters; suffer not thyself to be drowned in the sea. Thou wilt not go there, thou wilt not “tread it under foot,” unless it be His bidding, Who was Himself the first to walk upon the sea. For it was thus that Peter spoke. If Thou art, bid me come unto Thee on the waters. And because He was, He heard him when praying; He granted his wish to him when expressing his desire; He raised him up when sinking. These are the wonderful works that the Lord hath made. Look on them; let faith be the eye of him who would behold them. And do thou also likewise; for although the winds alarm thee, though the waves rage against thee, and though human frailty may have inspired thee with some doubt of thy salvation, thou hast it in thy power to cry out, thou mayest say, Lord, I perish. He Who bids thee walk there, suffers thee not to perish. For in that thou now walkest on the Rock, thou fearest not even on the sea! If thou art without the Rock, thou must sink in the sea; for the Rock, on which thou must walk, is such an one, as is not sunk in the sea.

10. Observe then the wonderful works of God.

I have declared, and have spoken; they are multiplied beyond number. There is a number, there are some over and above the number. There is a fixed number that belongs to that heavenly Jerusalem. For the Lord knoweth them that are His; the Christians that fear Him, the Christians that believe, the Christians that keep the commandments, that walk in God’s ways, that keep themselves from sins; that if they fall confess: they belong to the number. But are they the only ones? There are also some beyond the number. For even if they be but a few, (a few in comparison of the numbers of the larger majority,) with how great numbers are our Churches filled, crowded up to the very walls; to what a degree do they annoy each other by the pressure, and almost choke each other by their overflowing numbers. Again, out of these very same persons, when there is a public spectacle, there are numbers flocking to the amphitheatre; these are over and above the number. But it is for this reason that we say this, that they may be in the number. Not being present, they do not hear this from us; but when ye have gone from hence, let them hear it from you. I have declared, he says, and have spoken. It is Christ Who speaks. He hath declared it, in His own Person, as our Head. He hath Himself declared it by His members. He Himself hath sent those who should declare it; He Himself hath sent the Apostles. Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world. How great the number of believers that are gathered together; how great the multitudes that flock together; many of them truly converted, many but in appearance: and those who are truly converted are the minority; those who are so but in appearance are the majority: because they are multiplied beyond the number.

11. I have declared, and have spoken: they are multiplied beyond number. (Ver. 6.) Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire. These are the wonderful works of God; these are the thoughts of God, to which no man’s thoughts are like; that the lover of sight-seeing may be weaned from curiosity: and with us may seek after those more excellent, those more profitable things, in which, when he shall have attained unto them, he will rejoice; and will rejoice in such a manner as not to fear lest the person, on whom he sets his heart, should be conquered; for he sets his heart on the charioteer, who being beaten in the race, he is himself subjected to insults. When the charioteer wins, it is he himself who is invested with the dress of honour. And is the poor man who cheers him clothed also? The winner himself is clothed with the dress of honour; but instead of the man who is beaten, the other [who cheers him] is insulted. Why do you subject yourself to censure for him, with whom you do not divide the dress of honour. On

our side, in our spectacles, this is ordered differently. In that racecourse, in that spectacle, all indeed run, said the Apostle Paul, but one receiveth the prize; the rest retire defeated. And they endured unto the end in the course; but since one has received the prize, the rest who have undergone the like toil remain where they were. On our side it is not so. As many as run, run, that is, perseveringly, even unto the end, all receive the crown: and he who comes in first has to wait, that he may be crowned together with him who comes after him. Inasmuch as it is not covetousness, but charity, that sets that contest on foot; all those who run love each other; and love itself is the race which they run.

12. Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire, saith the Psalm to God. For the men of old time, when as yet the true Sacrifice, which is known to the faithful, was foreshewn in figures, used to celebrate rites that were figures of the reality that was to be hereafter; many of them understanding their meaning; but more of them in ignorance of it. For the Prophets and the holy Patriarchs understood what they were celebrating; but the rest of the “stiff-necked people” were so carnal, that what was done by them was but to symbolize the things that were to come afterwards; and it came to pass, when that first sacrifice was abolished; when the burnt-offerings of rams, of goats, and of calves, and of other victims, had been abolished, God did not desire them. Why did God not desire them? And why did He at the first desire them? Because all those things were, as it were, the words of a person making a promise; and the expressions conveying a promise, when the thing that they promise is come, are no longer uttered. It is only until he gives [what he promised], that a person is a promiser; after he has bestowed it, he alters the expression. Of the thing, which he used to say that ‘he was going to give it,’ he now does not say, ‘I will give it,’ but, ‘I have already given it,’ changing his words. Why was this word at first approved by him, and afterwards changed? Because it was a word applicable to its own proper occasion; and for that its own proper occasion was approved. It was, then, when the gift was being promised, that it was pronounced; but when the thing promised had been bestowed, the expression of a promise was given up; that of a fulfilment of a promise was substituted. Those sacrifices then, as being but expressions of a promise, have been abrogated. What is that which has been given as its fulfilment? That Body; which ye know;

which ye do not all of you know; which, of you who do know it, I pray God all may not know it unto condemnation. Observe the time when it was said; for the person is Christ our Lord, speaking at one time for His members, at another in His own person. Sacrifice and offering, said He, Thou didst not desire. What then? Are we left at this present time without a sacrifice? God forbid!

But a Body hast Thou perfected for me. It was for this reason that Thou didst not desire the others; that Thou mightest perfect this; before Thou perfectedst this, Thou didst desire the others. The fulfilment of the promise has done away with the words that express the promise. For if they still hold out a promise, that which was promised is not yet fulfilled. This was promised by certain signs; the signs that convey the promise are done away; because the Substance that was promised is come. We are in this Body. We are partakers of this Body. We know that which we ourselves receive; and ye who know it not yet, will know it bye and bye; and when ye come to know it, I pray ye may not receive it unto condemnation. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation unto himself. ‘A Body’ hath been ‘perfected’ for us; let us be made perfect in the Body.

13. Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; but a Body hast Thou perfected for me. Burnt-offerings also for sin hast Thou not required.

Ver. 7. Then said I, Lo, I come! Must we expound, Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; but a Body hast Thou perfected for me? Burnt-offerings also for sin hast Thou not required; (which things He before did require;) Then said I, Lo, I come! It is time that what was promised should come; because the signs, by means of which they were promised, have been put away. And indeed, Brethren, observe these put away; those fulfilled. Let the Jewish nation at this time shew me their priest, if they can! Where are their sacrifices? They are brought to an end; they are put away now. Should we at that time have rejected them? We do reject them now; because, if you chose to celebrate them now, it were unseasonable; unfitting to the time; incongruous. You are still making promises; I have already received! There has remained to them a certain thing for them to celebrate; that they might not remain altogether without a sign. For Cain, the elder brother who slew his younger brother, received a sign, that no man should kill him: as it is written in Genesis, And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any one should kill him. So too does the Jewish nation remain also. All nations that are subject to the Roman law have merged in the Roman rule; they have incorporated their superstitions; and have afterwards begun to detach themselves from them, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. But that nation has remained the same as ever with her sign of circumcision, and with her sign of unleavened bread; Cain hath not been slain. He has not been slain; he bears his mark about him. He is cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive his brother's blood from his hand. For he indeed shed the blood; he did not receive it; he shed it; another earth received it; and from that earth, which opened her mouth, and received it, he has been cursed; and that earth, whose mouth received the blood, is the Church. It is from this, then, that he is cursed. And that is the blood which crieth unto Me from the earth. For it was of this earth that the Lord said, The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the earth. Cries, he saith, unto Me from the earth. Cries unto the Lord! But he who shed the Blood is dumb; because he hath not drunk of It. In such a case then are they; like Cain with his mark. The sacrifices, however, which used to be performed there, have been put away; and that which remained unto them for a sign like that of Cain, hath by this time been fulfilled; and they know it not. They slay the Lamb; they eat the unleavened bread. Christ has been sacrificed for us, as our Passover. Lo, in the sacrifice of Christ, I recognise the Lamb that was slain! What of the unleavened bread? Therefore, says he, let us keep the feast; not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of wickedness, (he shews what is meant by old; it is stale flour; it is sour,) but in the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. They have continued in the shade; they cannot abide the Sun of Glory. We are already in the light of day. We have the Body of Christ, we have the Blood of Christ. If we have a new life, let us sing a new song, even a hymn unto our God. Burnt offerings for sin Thou didst not desire. Then said I, Lo, I come!

14. In the head of the Book it is written of me, that (ver. 8.) I should fulfil Thy will: O my God, I am willing, and Thy Law is within my heart. Behold! He turns His regards to His members. Behold! He hath Himself fulfilled the will of the Father. But in what beginning of a Book is it written of Him? Perhaps in the beginning of this Book of Psalms. For why should

we seek far for it, or examine into other books for it? Behold! it is written in the beginning of this Book of Psalms! Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly; nor stood in the way of sinners; nor sat in the seat of scorners. But His will is in the Law of the Lord; that is, ‘O my God, I am willing,’ ‘and Thy Law is within my heart;’ that is the same as, And in His Law doth he meditate day and night.

15. Ver. 9. I have well declared Thy righteousness in the great congregation. He now addresses His members. He is exhorting them to do what He has already done. He has declared; let us declare also. He has suffered; let us “suffer with Him.” He has been glorified; we shall be “glorified with Him.” I have declared Thy righteousness in the great congregation. How great an one is that? In all the world. How great is it? Even among all nations. Why among all nations? Because He is the Seed of Abraham, in Whom all nations shall be blessed. Why among all nations? Because their sound hath gone forth into all lands.

In the great congregation. Lo! I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, and that Thou knowest. My lips speak; I will not refrain them from speaking. My lips indeed sound audibly in the ears of men; but Thou knowest mine heart. I will not refrain my lips, O Lord; that Thou knowest. It is one thing that man heareth; another that God knoweth. That the ‘declaring’ of it should not be confined to the lips alone, and that it might not be said of us, Whatsoever things they say unto you, do; but do not after their works; or lest it should be said to the people, “praising God with their lips, but not with their heart,” This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me; do thou make audible confession with thy lips; draw nigh with thine heart also. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. In case like unto which that thief was found, who, hanging on the Cross with the Lord, did on the Cross acknowledge the Lord. Others had refused to acknowledge Him while working miracles; this man acknowledged Him when hanging on the Cross. That thief had every other member pierced through; his hands were fastened by the nails; his feet were pierced also; his whole body was fastened to the tree; the body was not disengaged in its other members; the heart and the tongue were disengaged; with the heart he believed; with the tongue he made confession. Remember me, O Lord, he said, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. He hoped for the coming of his salvation at a time far remote; he was content to receive it after a long delay; his hope rested on an object far remote. The day, however, was not postponed! His words were, Remember me, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. The answer was, This day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise. Paradise hath happy trees! This day hast thou been with Me on the Tree of the Cross. This day shalt thou be with Me on the Tree of Salvation.

16. Lo! I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, Thou knowest. In order that he may not believe in heart indeed, and through fear refrain his lips from professing what he has believed. For there are Christians, there are some have faith in their heart, and yet among the Pagans, malicious, treacherously flattering, mean, faithless, foolish insulters, if they are attacked on the score of being Christians, still have faith in their heart, and fear to confess it by their lips; they refrain their lips from uttering what they have within, what they know to be true. But the Lord reproves these persons; Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me before men, of him will I be ashamed before My Father; that is, ‘I will not acknowledge him; because he was ashamed to confess Me before men, I will not confess him before My Father.’ Let then the lips utter what the heart holds; this is prescribed against fear. Let the heart really hold what the lips utter; this is prescribed against hypocrisy. For sometimes there is fear, and you dare not say what you know to be true, what you believe. Sometimes hypocrisy; you say, and do not in reality believe in your heart. Let your lips agree with your heart. While you are seeking peace from God, be at peace with yourself; let there be no disagreement between your lips and your heart. Lo! I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, Thou knowest. How saith he? What doth the Lord know? Inwardly in the heart, where man seeth not. Therefore he said also, I have believed. Lo! the heart holds, it already holds that which God may see. Let him not refrain his lips. He doth not refrain them. For what saith he? Therefore have I spoken. And because he spoke that which he believed, inquiring what he should render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward him; he adds, I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. He shrunk not back through fear of the Lord’s words, Can ye drink of the cup that I shall drink of? For he confesses by the lips what he held in his

heart; he attained even unto grace to suffer. And because he attained unto the grace to suffer, what harm did the enemy do? For in sooth right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints. By those very deaths, for which the heathen madly raged, we are this day refreshed. We are celebrating the Martyrs’ anniversary; we are setting before us the Martyrs’ examples; we are “considering their faith;” the manner in which they were discovered; dragged forth, and stood before their judges. Knit together in the bond of unity in the Catholic Church, without aught of hypocrisy they confessed Christ: they, as being the members, desired to follow the Head, Which had gone before them! But who were they that desired this? Those who were patient in tortures; faithful in confession; truthful in their words. For they launched against the faces of those who were questioning them, the arrows of God; and they wounded them unto resentment; many they wounded too unto salvation. All these things we set before ourselves, and we are gazing upon them, and praying that we may imitate them. These are our Christian spectacles; on these God looks down from on high; to these He encourages us; for these He aids us; for these contests He sets prizes before us, and bestows them. Lo! I have not refrained my lips. See thou fear not, and so refrain thy lips. O Lord, Thou knowest; that that is really in the heart, which is uttered by the lips.

17. Ver. 10. I have not hid my righteousness within my heart. What is meant by my righteousness? My faith. For, the just shall live by faith. As suppose the persecutor under threat of punishment, as they were once allowed to do, puts you to the question, ‘What art thou? Pagan or Christian?’ ‘A Christian.’ That is his righteousness. He believeth; he lives by faith. He doth not hide his righteousness within his heart. He has not said in his heart, ‘I do indeed believe in Christ; but I will not tell what I believe to this persecutor, who is raging against me, and threatening me. My God knoweth that inwardly, within my heart, I do believe. He knoweth that I renounce Him not.’ Lo! you say that you have this inwardly within your heart! What have you upon your lips? ‘I am not a Christian.’ Your lips bear witness against your heart. I have not hid my righteousness within my heart.

18. I have declared Thy Truth and Thy Salvation. I have declared Thy Christ. This is the meaning of, I have declared Thy Truth and Thy

Salvation. How is Thy Truth Christ? I am the Truth. How is Christ His Salvation? Simeon recognised the infant in His Mother's hands in the Temple, and said, For mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation. The old man recognised the little child; the old man having himself become a little child in that infant, having been renewed by faith. For he had received an oracle from God; and it said this, 'The Lord had said unto him, that he was not to depart out of this life, until he had seen the Salvation of God. This Salvation of God it is a good thing to have shewn unto men; but let them cry, Shew us Thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us Thy Salvation. But the Salvation of God is among all nations. For after he had said in a certain place, God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us. That Thy way may be known upon earth, he adds, Thy saving health [is] among all nations. First he says, That Thy way be known upon earth; and he goes on to say, Thy Salvation is among all nations. As if it were said unto him, "What way is that which thou wouldest fain know? Men come themselves to the way. For does the way ever come to men? Our Way did come unto men; found them wandering from the Way; called them to Itself when walking without It. Walk in Me, It saith, and ye shall not go astray. I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. Lest you should say, Where is God's Way? To what country shall I go? What mountain shall I ascend? What plain shall I enquire after? 'Enquirest thou after God's Way?' is the answer. The Salvation of of God is God's Way; and it is in every place, because, Thy Salvation is among all nations. I have declared Thy Truth, and Thy Salvation.

19. I have not concealed Thy mercy and Thy Truth from the great congregation. Let us be there; let us also be numbered among the members of this Body: let us not keep back the mercy of the Lord, and the Truth of the Lord. Wouldest thou hear what the mercy of the Lord is? Depart from thy sins; He will forgive thy sins. Wouldest thou hear what the truth of the Lord is? Hold fast righteousness. Thy righteousness shall receive a crown? For mercy is announced to you now; Truth is to be shewn unto thee hereafter. For God is not merciful in such a way as not to be just, nor just in such a way as not to be merciful. Does that mercy seem to thee an inconsiderable one? He will not impute unto thee all thy former sins: thou hast lived ill up to this present day; thou art still living; this day live well;

then thou wilt not conceal this mercy. If this is meant by mercy, what is meant by truth? Before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; He shall set the sheep on His right hand, the goats on His left. What awaits the sheep? Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you. What is the doom of the goats? Go into everlasting fire. There there is no place for repentance. Because thou didst despise the mercy of God, thou shalt feel His Truth. If however thou hast not despised His mercy, thou shalt rejoice in His Truth.

20. Ver. 11. Remove not Thou Thy mercies far from me, O Lord. He is turning his attention to the wounded members. Because I have not concealed Thy mercy and Thy Truth from the great congregation, from the Unity of the Universal Church, look Thou on Thy afflicted members, look on those who are guilty of sins of omission, and on those who are guilty of sins of commission: and withhold not Thou Thy mercies. Thy mercy and Thy Truth have continually preserved me. I should not dare to turn from my evil way, were I not assured of remission; I could not endure so as to persevere, if I were not assured of the fulfilment of Thy promise. Thy mercy and Thy Truth have continually preserved me. I perceive that Thou art good; I perceive that Thou art just. I love Thee in that Thou art good; I fear Thee in that Thou art just. Love and fear effectually induce me; because Thy mercy and Thy Truth have alway preserved me. Why is it they that preserve one? and why is the eye not to be turned away from them? Even because,

Ver. 12. Innumerable evils have compassed me about. Who can number sins? Who can count his own sins, and those of others? A burden under which he was groaning, who said, Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults; and from the faults of others, spare Thou Thy servant, O Lord. Our own are too little; those of others are added to the burden. I fear for myself; I fear for a virtuous brother, I have to bear with a wicked brother; and under such burthen what shall we be, if God’s mercy were to fail? But Thou, Lord, remove not afar off. Be Thou near unto us! To whom is the Lord near? Even unto them that are of a broken heart. He is far from the proud: He is near to the humble. For though the Lord is high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly.

But let not those that are proud think themselves to be unobserved: for the things that are high, He beholdeth afar off. He beheld afar off the Pharisee, who boasted himself; He was near at hand to succour the Publican, who made confession. The one extolled his own merits; and concealed his wounds; the other boasted not of his merits, but laid bare his wounds. He came to the Physician; he knew that he was sick; and that he required to be made whole; he dared not lift up his eyes to Heaven: he smote upon his breast. He spared not himself, that God might spare him; he acknowledged himself guilty, that God might ignore the charge against him. He punished himself, that God might free him from punishment. Such expressions are there here; let us religiously hear, let us religiously love them: let us say these things with our hearts, with our tongues, with our very inmost marrow. Let no one think himself to be righteous: he who thus speaks, “lives;” and, O that he may live! He lives up to this time in this world; he lives up to this time, still, with death, he lives: and even if the Spirit is life because of righteousness, yet is the body nevertheless dead because of sin. And the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things. It belongs to thee then to cry, it belongs to thee to groan: it belongs to thee to confess thy sin: not to exalt thyself, not to boast thyself, nor to glory in thine own deserts. For even if thou hast any thing that thou mayest rejoice in, what is there that thou hast not received? (Ver. 12.) For innumerable evils have compassed me about.

21. Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I could not see. There is a something for us to see; what prevents us so that we see it not? Is it not iniquity? From beholding this [natural] light your eye is prevented perhaps by some humour penetrating into it; perhaps by smoke, or dust, or by something else that has been thrown into it: and you have not been able to raise your wounded eye to contemplate this light of day. What then? Will you be able to lift up your wounded heart unto God? Must it not be first healed, in order that thou mayest see? Do you not shew your pride, when you say, “First let me see, and then I will believe? Who is there who says this? For who that would fain see, says, ‘Let me see, and then I will believe?’ I am about to manifest the Light unto thee; or rather the Light Itself would fain manifest Itself to thee! To whom? It cannot manifest Itself

to the blind. He does not see. Whence is it that he seeth not? It is that the eye is clogged by the multitude of sins. For what does he say? Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I could not see. Let his iniquities then be put away; let his sins be loosed; let the weight be removed from off the eye; let that which is wounded be healed; let the stinging ointment (as it were) of the Commandment be applied. First accomplish what is prescribed to thee: heal thine heart; make thine heart clean. "Love thine enemy." "And who loves his enemy?" This is the prescription of your physician; it is bitter, but it is for your health. "What would you have me do to you?" (he says.) "You are so distressed in order to be healed." And he says more than this: "once healed, it will not be difficult for you; once healed, you will experience delight in loving your enemy; do but endeavour in order that you may be healed. In tribulations, in distresses, in trials be strong; endure to the end; it is the hand of a physician, not of an assassin." "See," (says he,) "having embraced the commandments, and held fast the faith, I will, as you bid me, first heal my heart; when healed, what shall I see? Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "This" (says he) "I cannot do now; mine iniquities have taken hold of me, so that I could not see."

22. They are more than the hairs of my head. He subjects the number of the hairs of his head to calculation. Who is there can calculate the number of the hairs of his head? Much less can he tell the number of his sins, which exceed the number of the hairs of his head. They seem to be minute; but they are many in number. You have guarded against great ones; you do not now commit adultery, or murder; you do not plunder the property of others; you do not blaspheme; and do not bear false witness; those are the weightier kind of sins. You have guarded against great sins, what are you doing about your smaller ones? You have cast off the weight; beware lest the sand overwhelm you. They are more in number than the hairs of my head.

23. And my heart hath forsaken me. What wonder if thine heart is forsaken by thy God, when it is even forsaken by itself? What is meant by "faileth me," "forsaketh me?" Is not capable of knowing itself. He means this; My heart hath forsaken me. I would fain see God with mine heart; and cannot from the multitude of my sins: that is not enough; mine heart does not even know itself. For no one thoroughly knows himself: let no one presume upon

his own state. Was Peter able to comprehend with his own heart the state of his own heart, who said, I will be with Thee even unto death? There was a false presumption in the heart; there was lurking in that heart at the same time a real fear: and the heart was not able to comprehend the state of the heart. Its state was unknown to the sick heart itself: it was manifest to the physician. That which was foretold of him was fulfilled. God knew that in him which he knew not in himself: because his heart had forsaken him, his heart was unknown to his heart. And mine heart hath forsaken me. What then? What do we say? What do we cry?

Ver. 13. Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me. As if he were saying, ‘If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.’ Be pleased to deliver me. O Lord, look upon me to help me. Look, that is, on the penitent members, members that lie in pain, members that are writhing under the instruments of the surgeon; but still in hope. O Lord, look upon me to help me.

24. Ver. 14. Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it. For in a certain passage he makes an accusation, and says, I looked upon my right hand, and beheld; and there was no man who sought after my soul; that is, there was no man to imitate Mine example. Christ in His Passion is the Speaker. I looked on my right hand, (that is, not on the ungodly Jews, but on Mine own right hand, the Apostles,) and there was no man who sought after My soul. So thoroughly was there no man to seek after My soul, that he who had presumed on his own strength, denied My soul. But because a man’s soul is sought after in two ways, either in order that you may enjoy his society; or that you may persecute him; therefore he here speaks of others, whom he would have confounded and ashamed, who are seeking after his soul. But lest you should understand it in the same way as when he complains of some who did not seek after his soul, He adds, to destroy it; that is, they seek after my soul in order to my death. Let them be ashamed and confounded. And, in truth, many “sought after His soul,” and were ashamed and confounded: they sought after His soul; and (as it seemed to them) they “took it away.” But it was He Who had power to lay it down, and power to take it again. Therefore they triumphed when He laid it down; they were confounded when He took it

again. Let them be confounded and ashamed that seek after my soul to take it away.

25. Let them be turned backward and put to shame that wish me evil. Turned backwards. Let us not take this in a bad sense. He wishes them well; and it is His voice, Who said from the Cross, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Wherefore then doth he say to them, that they should return backwards? Because they who before were proud, so that they fell, are now become humble, so that they may rise again. For when they are before, they are wishing to take precedence of their Lord; to be better than He; but if they go behind Him, they acknowledge Him to be better than they; they acknowledge that He ought to go before; that He should precede, they follow. Thence He thus rebukes Peter giving Him evil counsel. For the Lord, when about to suffer for our salvation, also foretold what was to happen concerning that Passion itself; and Peter says, Be it far from Thee, “God forbid it!” “This shall not be!” He would fain have gone before his Lord; would have given counsel to his Master! But the Lord, that He might make him not go before Him, but follow after Him, says, Get thee behind, Satan! It is for this reason He said Satan, because thou art seeking to go before Him, Whom thou oughtest to follow; but if thou art behind, if thou follow Him, thou wilt henceforth not be Satan. What then? Upon this Rock I will build My Church.

26. Let them be turned backward, and put to shame, that wish me evil. They are evil-wishers, who even when they “give good words,” do nevertheless, as far as depends on their hearts, curse. You say to some one, “Be a Christian;” [he says,] “Aye, do you be a Christian! You!” He spoke of a good thing; but it is not what he said, but with what mind he said it, that is taken into the account; even as it was accounted to the Jews, when that man who was “born blind” was made to see. When they were assailing him with insults, and pressing him hard, he said to them, Will ye also be His disciples? Then they cursed him. This is what the Evangelist says; they cursed him, and said, “Be thou His disciple!” Though they cursed, the Lord blessed! He fulfilled what they said; still He recompensed to them the evil which they had spoken. Let them be turned backwards, and put to shame, who wish me evil. But there are others also who are not good either, who

wish us good things, who are also to be guarded against. For just as the others speak evil, while they speak of what is good in us, but with a malicious disposition, so are there those who speak of what is evil in us, but with a good intention. I mean this. He who says to thee, “Be you a Christian!” speaks of your good qualities, but with a bad intention; but he who says to you, “There is no man better than yourself,” if he says that in speaking of bad actions, (seeing that The wicked is praised in his own heart’s desires, and he who doeth unrighteously is blessed,) he is speaking of your evil in terms of praise; just as the other spoke of your good qualities, and spoke evil of them; so he speaks of your bad qualities, and speaks well of them. But beware of both the one and the other description of enemy; and shun them. The one is raging against you, the other fawning upon you: the one employs reviling, the other praise; but the one is an enemy in his reviling, the other is insidious and designing in his praise. Beware of both of them; pray for protection against both. For he who prayed, Let them be turned backward, and put to shame, who wish me evil, thought of another class, who are treacherously wishing one evil, and “giving us good words” falsely.

Ver. 15. Let them speedily bear away their own confusion, that say unto me, Well done! Well done! They praise you without reason. ‘A great man! A good man! A man of education and of learning; but why a Christian? They praise those things in you which you should wish not to be praised; they find fault with that at which you rejoice. But if perhaps you say, “What is it you praise in me, O man?” That I am a virtuous man? A just man? If you think this, Christ made me this; praise Him. But the other says, “Be it far from you. Do yourself no wrong! You yourself made yourself such.” Let them be confounded who say unto me, Well done! Well done! And what follows?

Ver. 16. Let all those that seek Thee, O Lord, rejoice and he glad. Those who seek not me, but Thee; who say not to me, Well done! Well done! but see me glory in Thee, if I have any thing whereof to glory; for he who glories, let him glory in the Lord. Let all those who seek Thee, Lord, rejoice and be glad.

And say continually, The Lord be magnified. For even if the sinner becometh righteous, thou shouldest give the glory to Him, Who justifieth the ungodly. Whether therefore it be a sinner, let Him be praised, Who calls him to forgiveness; or one already walking in the way of righteousness, let Him be praised, Who calls him to receive the crown! Let the Name of the Lord be magnified continually by such as love Thy salvation.

Ver. 17. But I. I for whom they were seeking evil, I whose life they were seeking, that they might take it away. But turn thee to another description of persons. But I to whom they said, “Well done! Well done!” I am poor and needy. There is nothing in me that may be praised as mine own. Let Him rend my sackcloth in sunder, and cover me with His robe. For, Now I live, not I myself; but Christ liveth in me. If it is Christ that liveth in thee, and all that thou hast is Christ’s, and all that thou art to have hereafter is Christ’s also; what art thou in thyself? I am poor and needy. Now I am not rich, because I am not proud. He was rich who said, Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are; but the publican was poor, who said, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner! The one was belching from his fulness; the other from want was crying piteously, I am poor and needy! And what wouldest thou do, O poor and needy man? Beg at God’s door; Knock, and it shall be opened unto thee.—As for me, I am poor and needy.

Yet the Lord careth for me. Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He shall bring it to pass. What canst thou effect for thyself by taking care? what canst thou provide for thyself? Let Him Who made thee care for thee. He Who cared for thee before thou wert, how shall He fail to have a care of thee, now that thou art what He would have thee be? For now thou art a believer, now thou art walking in the “way of righteousness.” Shall not He have a care for thee, Who maketh His sun rise on the good and on the evil, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust? Shall He neglect, desert, forsake thee, now that thou art a just man, and alive by faith? Nay even here He cherishes thee, even here He assists thee, even here furnishes thee with what is necessary for thee, and taketh away whatever is injurious. By “giving” He comforteth thee, that thou mayest be able to endure unto the end; by “taking away” He chastens thee, that thou mayest not be cast away. The Lord careth for thee. Be not thou careful about thyself. He bears thee Who created thee! Do not thou choose to fall out of the hands of thy Maker; thou wilt be broken, if thou fallest out of thy Maker’s hand. But it is a virtuous will that enables thee to continue in the hand of thy Maker. Say, “My God hath willed it so! He will sustain me; He will hold me fast!” Cast thyself upon Him; think not that He is avoid, so that thou wouldest fall headlong. Think not so in thyself. He hath said, I fill heaven and earth also. In no place is He wanting to thee. Be not thou wanting to Him; to thyself. The Lord careth for me.

Ver. 17. Thou art my Help, and my Deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God. He is calling upon God, imploring Him, fearing lest he should fall away: Make no tarrying. What is meant by “make no tarrying.” We lately read concerning the days of tribulation; Unless those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved. The members of Christ—the Body of Christ extended every where—are asking of God, as one single person, one single poor man, and beggar! For He too was poor, Who though He was rich, yet became poor, that ye through His poverty might be made rich. It is He that maketh rich those who are the true poor; and maketh poor those who are falsely rich. He crieth unto Him; From the end of the earth I cried unto Thee, when my heart was in heaviness. There will come days of tribulations, and of greater tribulations; they will come even as the Scripture speaks: and as days advance, so are tribulations increased also. Let no one promise himself what the Gospel doth not promise. My brethren, consider, I pray you, whether our Scriptures have failed in any point; if they have said any thing, and the event has proved other than they said: it needs must be that even unto the end all things must in like manner come to pass, even as they have said. In this world Scripture doth not promise us ought but tribulations, distresses, difficulties, increase of sorrow, abundance of temptations. Let us prepare ourselves earnestly against these things, that we may not faint through want of preparation. You heard it said just now, Woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck. They are with child, who are big with hope; they are giving suck, (i.e. feeding their babes at their breast,) who have already obtained what they desired. For the woman with child is big with a son, in hope; she doth not yet see her son. She who is now giving suck, is embracing what she hoped for. Let us then suppose a case in point, by way of illustration. That villa of my neighbour’s is a handsome one! O that it were mine! O that I could join it to my own; and that I could make this estate and that but one! Avarice too has a love of unity. The quality it loves is good; but it knows not in what object that quality should rightly be loved. See he covets his neighbour’s villa; but that neighbour is a rich, not a needy man; a man of consideration also, and of influence too; a man perhaps the effects of whose power you would have reason to fear, rather than to have any hopes of his property. The heart having no hope doth not conceive any wish. The soul doth not become pregnant. But if there be near a poor neighbour, who is either in necessity, so that he may possibly sell it, or against whom means of pressure may be employed, so that he may be compelled to sell, you fix your eye upon it; you hope for the villa; the soul conceives, is impregnated with the hope; the hope that you will be able to obtain the little villa, and the property of your poor neighbour. And when that poor man is reduced to difficulties, he comes to his richer neighbour, the man to whom he is perhaps in the habit of paying court, to whom he usually gives place, and rises up at his approach, and salutes him by bowing the head. ‘Give me money,’ he says, ‘I am in difficulties, I am pressed by my creditor.’ And the other answers, ‘I have not now the money by me.’ If he would sell the land, he would have it. We recognise this picture; such (persons) once were among us, may they be so no longer! It is not the case with us that we were alive yesterday, and to-day are not; there is yet room for amendment. Not as yet has that separation of the one class to the right hand, the other to the left, taken place. We are not yet in hell, where that rich man was, thirsting and longing for a “drop of water.” Let us hear, let us amend ourselves, while we are yet alive! Let us not set our hopes on others’ possessions, and conceiving the hope, become pregnant with it: let us not attain to them either, and coming to possess them embrace them, as mothers their children. For woe to them that are with child, and that give suck in those days. We must change the heart, we must “lift up our hearts:” we must not in heart dwell here; it is an unwholesome region; let it suffice us, that in the flesh we must dwell here. Let not that come to pass which need not. Let “the evil of the day” be sufficient for it. In heart let us dwell above. If ye be risen again with Christ, (saith he to the faithful, to them that are now receiving the Lord’s Body and Blood,) If ye are risen with Christ, set your affections on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: seek those things which are above, not those on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

For that which is promised you doth not yet appear; and yet it is already “prepared” for you, but you see it not. You would fain conceive a hope; conceive it from this quarter. Be that thy hope. Then will the birth be certain, not abortive, nor thy offspring short-lived: what thou bringest forth thou shalt embrace for eternity. For thus it is said by Isaiah, We have been with child, we have brought forth the Spirit of salvation. It is therefore yet in reserve; it is not yet given, but it is as yet to be given. How great gifts, brethren, have been given already! As the Scriptures say; Who can number them? There it is written concerning the existence of the Church; and we see that the Church does exist. There it is written concerning idols, that they shall cease; and we see that they are not. There it is written that the Jews were to lose the kingdom; and we see that the fact is so. There it is written concerning the heretics, that they should exist; and we see that it is so. There it is written also concerning the Day of Judgment; there it is written concerning the rewards of the good, and the punishment of the bad. In all things we have found God faithful. Will He fail and deceive us in the last? The Lord will care for me, Thou art my help and my Deliverer! Make no tarrying, O my God. ‘Unless those days should be shortened, no flesh could endure unto the end. But for the elect’s sake they shall be shortened.’ Those days will be days of tribulation; but they will not be so long as they are expected to be. They will soon pass away. The rest that is to come will not pass away. Although even a long duration of evil would be worth enduring, for a blessing of infinite duration.

PSALM 41

To the People, on the Feast of the Martyrs.

The solemn day of the Martyrs hath dawned; therefore to the glory of the Passion of Christ, the Captain of Martyrs, Who spared not Himself, ordering His soldiers to the fight; but first fought, first conquered, that their fighting He might encourage by His example, and aid with His majesty, and crown with His promise: let us hear somewhat from this Psalm pertaining to His Passion. I commend unto you oftentimes, nor grieve I to repeat, what for you is useful to retain, that our Lord Jesus Christ speaketh often of Himself, that is, in His own Person, Which is our Head; often in the person of His Body, which are we and His Church; but so that the words sound as from the mouth of one, that we may understand the Head and the Body to consist together in the unity of integrity, and not be separated the one from the other; as in that marriage whereof it is said, They two shall be one flesh. If then we acknowledge two in one flesh, let us acknowledge two in one voice. First, that which responding to the reader we have sung, though it be from the middle of the Psalm, from that I will take the beginning of this Sermon.

Ver. 5. Mine enemies speak evil of Me, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. This is the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ: but see if herein are not understood the members also. This was spoken also when our Lord Himself walked in the flesh here on earth. For when they saw the multitude following His authority; His divinity, and majesty set forth by miracles; when this saw the Jews, of whom the Lord Himself put forth a similitude, that they said, This is the heir, come let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours; they spoke one to another, that is among themselves, whence is that word of Caiaphas, the high priest, Perceive ye [that a great multitude followeth Him]; behold the world is gone after Him. If we let Him thus alone, the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. But the words of him, not knowing what he said, hath the

Evangelist explained to us, saying, This spake he not of himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation. Yet they, when they saw the people go after Him, said, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish; that is, when we have slain Him, then shall His Name be no more in the earth, nor shall He seduce any, being dead; but by that very slaying of Him shall men understand, that He was but a man whom they followed, that there was in Him no hope of salvation, and shall desert His Name, and it shall no more be. He died, and His Name perished not, but His Name was sown as seed: He died, but He was a grain, which dying, the corn immediately sprang up. When glorified then was our Lord Jesus Christ, began they much more, and much more numerously to trust in Him; then began His members to hear what the Head had heard. Now then our Lord Jesus Christ being in heaven set down, and Himself in us labouring on earth, still spake His enemies, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. For hence stirred up the devil persecutions in the Church to destroy the Name of Christ. Unless haply ye think, brethren, that those Pagans, when they raged against Christians, said not this among themselves, 'to blot out the Name of Christ from the earth.' That Christ might die again, not in the Head, but in His Body, were slain also the Martyrs. To the multiplying of the Church availed the Holy Blood poured forth, to help Its seminating came also the death of the Martyrs. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints. More and more were the Christians multiplied, nor was it fulfilled which spake the enemies, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. Even now also is it spoken. Down sit the Pagans, and compute them the years, they hear their fanatics saying, A time shall come when Christians shall be none, and those idols must be worshipped as before they were worshipped: still say they, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. Twice conquered, now the third time be wise! Christ died, His Name has not perished: the Martyrs died, multiplied more is the Church, groweth through all nations the Name of Christ. He Who foretold of His own Death, and of His Resurrection, He Who foretold of His Martyrs' death, and of their crown, He Himself foretold of His Church things yet to come, if truth He spake twice, has He the third time lied? Vain then is what ye believe against Him; better is it that ye believe in Him, that ye may understand upon the needy and poor One; that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich. But now because He became poor He is contemned, and, say they, He was but man. What was He? He died, He was crucified; He is a Man ye worship, in a Man ye have hope, a dead Man ye adore. Thou art deceived, Understand upon the needy and poor One, that through His poverty thou mayest be made rich. What is, Understand upon the needy and poor One? To accept Christ Himself, needy and poor, saying in another Psalm, I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon Me. What is it to Understand upon the needy and poor One? That He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and was found in fashion as a man; that He was rich with God, poor with us; rich in heaven, poor in earth; rich being God, poor being Man. Does this then disturb thee, that thou seest a man, that thou lookest upon flesh, that thou beholdest death, that thou deridest a cross? Doth this disturb thee? Understand upon the needy and poor One. What is this? Understand, that where is exposed to thee infirmity, therein lieth hid divinity. Rich was He, because so He is; poor was He, because so but now wast thou. But yet is His poverty our riches; even as His infirmity is our strength; as His foolishness is our wisdom; as His mortality is our immortality. What the poor is, consider; Him measure not by others’ poverty. To fill the poor came He, Who became poor: wherefore open the bosom of faith, receive thou the poor One, lest poor thou remain.

2. Ver. 1. Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One: in the evil day shall the Lord deliver Him. For the evil day will come: will thou, nill thou, come it will: the Day of Judgment will come upon thee, an evil day if thou understand not the needy and poor. For what now thou wilt not believe, shall be made manifest in the end. But neither shalt thou escape, when it shall be made manifest, because thou believest not, when it is kept secret. Invited art thou, what thou seest not to believe, lest when thou see, thou be put to the blush. Understand then upon the needy and poor One, that is, Christ: understand in Him the hidden riches, Whom poor thou seest. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. For thereby in the evil day shall He deliver thee, in that He is God: but in that He is man, and that which in Him is human hath raised to life, and changed for the better, He hath lifted (thee) to heaven. But He Who is God, Who would have one person in man and with man, could neither decrease nor

increase, neither die nor rise again. He died out of man’s infirmity, but God dieth not. In that the Word of God dieth not, wonder not, since neither dieth the soul of the Martyr. Heard we not but now the Lord Himself saying, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul? Did then, the Martyrs dying, the Martyrs’ souls not die, and Christ dying, should the Word die? Surely the Word of God is much greater than the soul of man; for the soul of man was made by God; and if it was made by God, by the Word was it made; for all things were made by Him. Therefore neither dieth the Word, since even the soul made by the Word dieth not. But as we rightly say, Such a man died, though his soul dieth not; so we rightly say, Christ died, though His Divinity dieth not. Wherefore died? Because needy and poor. Let not His death offend thee, and avert thee from beholding His Divinity. Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One. Consider also the poor, the needy, the hungry and thirsty, the naked, the sick, the prisoners; understand also upon such poor, for if upon such thou understand, thou understandest upon Him Who said, I was an hungred, I was thirsty, I was a stranger, naked, sick, in prison; so in the evil day shall the Lord deliver thee.

3. And see thy blessedness. The Lord preserve him. The Prophet wisheth well to him that understandeth upon the needy and poor One. That well-wishing is a promise. Secure may they wait, who this do. The Lord preserve him, and make him alive. What is preserve him, and make him alive? To what pertaineth, make him alive? To the future life. For he is made alive who was dead. But can a dead man understand upon the needy and poor? Nay, but that making alive He promiseth to us, whereof saith the Apostle, The body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. But if He who raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. This then is the making alive which is promised to him that understandeth upon the needy and poor. But because, saith the Apostle to Timothy, Having the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come; lest they should think who understand upon the needy and poor, that they should be received indeed into heaven, but neglected on earth, and should not hope but for that which shall be to eternity, but in that which is at present, should think that God careth not for

His Saints and faithful ones; therefore, when he had said what most chiefly we ought to expect, The Lord preserve him, and make him alive, He looked back to this life, and bless him, saith he, upon earth. Raise then thine eyes to these promises with Christian faith: God deserteth thee not on earth, and He promiseth somewhat in heaven. For many evil Christians, inspectors of Calendars, and inquirers and observers of times and days, when therein they have begun to be reproved by us, or by some good and better Christians, asking why they do these things, answer, These things are necessary for this present time; but we are Christians for the sake of life eternal; therefore believe we in Christ that He may give us life eternal; for this life temporal in which we live, pertaineth not to His regard. Remains only that they should briefly say this, that for life eternal God, and for this life present the devil, be worshipped. To these answereth Christ Himself, Ye cannot serve two masters. And One thou worshippest for what thou expectest in heaven, and another thou worshippest for what thou expectest on earth. How much better to worship One, Who made both Heaven and earth. He Who cared that earth should be, doth He neglect His own image on earth? Therefore, The Lord preserve him, and make him alive, that understandeth upon the needy and poor: moreover, though He make him alive to eternity, bless him upon earth.

4. Ver. 2. And deliver him not into the hand of his enemy. The enemy is the devil. Let none think of a man his enemy, when he hears these words. Haply one thought of his neighbour, of him who had a suit with him in court, of him who would take from him his own possession, of him who would force him to sell to him his house. Think not this; but that enemy think of, of whom said the Lord, An enemy hath done this. For He it is who suggests that for things earthly he be worshipped, for overthrow the Christian Name this enemy cannot. For he hath seen himself conquered by the fame and praises of Christ, he hath seen, whereas he slew Christ’s Martyrs, that they are crowned, he triumphed over. He hath begun to be unable to persuade men that Christ is nought; and because by reviling Christ, he now with difficulty deceives, by lauding Christ, he endeavours to deceive. Before this what said he? Whom worship ye? A Jew, dead, crucified, a man of no moment, who could not even from himself drive away death. When after His Name he saw running the whole human race, saw that in the Name of

the Crucified temples are thrown down, idols are broken, sacrifices abolished; and that all these things predicted in the Prophets are considered by men, by men with wonder astonished, and closing now their hearts against the reviling of Christ; he clothes himself with praise of Christ, and begins to deter from the faith in another manner. Great is the law of Christ, powerful is that law, divine, ineffable! but who fulfilleth it? In the name of our Saviour, tread upon the lion and the dragon. By reviling openly roared the lion; by lauding craftily lurks the dragon. Let them come to the faith, who doubted; and not say, Who fulfilleth it? If on their own strength they presume, they will not fulfil it. Presuming on the grace of God let them believe, presuming (on it) let them come; to be aided come, not to be judged. So live all the faithful in the Name of Christ, each one in his degree fulfilling the commands of Christ, whether married, or celibates and virgins, they live as much as God granteth them to live; neither presume they in their own strength, but know that in Him they ought to glory. For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Say not to me, Who fulfilleth it? He in me fulfilleth it, Who to the poor came rich: poor indeed to the poor, but to the empty full. This thinking, whoso understandeth upon the needy and poor, and despiseth not the poverty of Christ, he understandeth the riches of Christ, he is blessed upon earth, and is not delivered into the hand of his enemy, of him that would persuade him that God be worshipped for things heavenly, the devil be worshipped for things earthly. And deliver him not into the hand of his enemy.

5. Ver. 3. The Lord help him. But when? Haply in heaven, haply in the life eternal, that so it remain to worship the devil for earthly needs, for the necessities of this life. Far be it! Thou hast promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. He came unto thee on earth, by Whom were made heaven and earth. Consider then what He saith, The Lord help him, on his bed of pain. The bed of pain is the infirmity of the flesh; lest thou shouldest say, I cannot hold, and carry, and tie up my flesh; thou art aided that thou mayest. The Lord help thee on thy bed of pain. Thy bed did carry thee, thou carriedst not thy bed, but wast a paralytic inwardly; He cometh Who saith to thee, Take up thy bed, and go thy way into thy house. The Lord help him on his bed of pain. Then to the Lord Himself He turneth, as

though it were asked, Why then, since the Lord helpeth us, suffer we such great ills in this life, such great scandals, such great labours, such disquiet from the flesh and the world? He turneth to God, and as though explaining to us the counsel of His healing, He saith, Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity. What is, Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity. By the bed is understood any thing earthly. Every soul that is infirm in this life seeketh for itself somewhat whereon to rest, because intensity of labour, and of the soul extended toward God, it can hardly endure perpetually, somewhat it seeketh on earth whereon to rest, and in a manner with a kind of pausing to recline, as are those things which innocent ones love. For neither of the desires of the wicked must we now speak, as that many rest in theatres, many rest in the Circus, in the Amphitheatre, many rest in gambling, many in luxury of taverns, many in lust of adultery, many in violence of rapine, many in guile and treachery of frauds, in all these do men rest. What is rest? Delight in them. But remove we all these; come we to the innocent man; He resteth in his house, his family, his wife, his children; in his poverty, his little farm, his orchard planted with his own hand, in some building fabricated with his own study; in these rest the innocent. But yet God willing us not to have love but of life eternal, even with these, though innocent delights, mixeth bitterness, that even in these we may suffer tribulation, and so He turneth all our bed in our infirmity. Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity. Let him not then complain, when in these things which he hath innocently, he suffereth some tribulations. He is taught to love the better, by the bitterness of the worse; lest going a traveller to his country, he choose the inn instead of his own home. Thou hast turned all his bed in his infirmity.

6. But why this? Because He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Why this? Because to men sinning was it said, In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread. Therefore because all these chastisements, in which all our bed is turned in our infirmity, man ought to acknowledge that he suffers for sin; let him turn himself, and say what follows; I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. O Lord, by tribulations do Thou exercise me; to be scourged Thou judgest every son whom Thou wilt receive, Who sparedst not even the Only-Begotten. He indeed without sin was scourged; but I say, Be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have

sinned against Thee. If He was lanced, Who rottenness had none, if He, our very Medicine, refused not the medicinal fire; ought we to bear impatiently the Physician burning and cutting, that is, by every tribulation exercising us, and from sin healing us? Wholly let us commit ourselves to the Physician's hand, for He errs not, to cut the sound for the rotten: He knoweth whereon He looketh, He knoweth what is vicious, because Himself made our nature; what Himself created, what by our lust hath been added, He discerneth. He knoweth that to man sound He gave commandment, lest he should fall into sickness; that He spake in Paradise. Eat this, eat not that. Man sound heard not the Physician's commandment, that he might not fall; let him hear it even sick, that he may rise again. I said, Lord, be merciful to me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. In my acts, in my sins, I accuse not fortune; I say not, This did fate for me; I say not, an adulterer Venus made me, and a robber Mars made me, a miser Saturn made me. I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. Said Christ this? This said our Head, without sin? This said He, Who restored that which He took not away? Said He, the only free among the dead? For free was He among the dead, because without sin: for whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. This then said He Himself? Yea, Himself by His Members: for the voice of His Members is the voice of Himself, and the voice of our Head is our own voice. For we were in Him when He said, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death. For neither feared He to die, Who had come to die. Nor refused He to die, Who had power to lay down His life, and had power to take it again: but this spake the Members for the Head, this spake the Head for the Members. In Him then we find our own voice, Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. For in Him were we, when He said, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? For in that Psalm, in the head whereof is this verse, it is said next following, The words of my sins. Whose sins in Him, but that our old man is crucified in Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin? Unto Him and in Him let us say, I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.

7. Ver. 5. Mine enemies speak evil of Me, When He shall die, then shall His Name perish. Of this we have already spoken, and from this began; and

other things to say, need not to repeat, what by so recent a discourse has been impressed on your ears and hearts.

8. Ver. 6. And entered in to see. What Christ suffered, that suffereth also the Church; what the Head suffered, that suffer also the Members. For the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. If, said He, they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household.

And entered in to see. Even Judas was with our Head, to our Head he entered in to see; that is, to spy out: not to have whereon He might believe, but to find what he might betray. Lo, he entered in to see, and this is set forth in our Head for an example. What of those Members after the assumption of our Head? Saith not the Apostle Paul, And that because of false brethren, unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty. These also then entered in to see. For they are hypocrites, evil pretenders, joining themselves to us with feigned charity, catching at every movement, every word of the Saints, seeking snares against all. And what befalleth them? See what followeth, Their heart speaketh vain things: that is, they speak as with feigned love; vain is that which they speak, true is it not, solid is it not. And because they seek to find matter for an accusation, what saith He? They have gathered iniquity to themselves. For enemies prepared with calumnies, to themselves seem as great, because they have whereof to accuse. They gather iniquity to themselves. To themselves, saith He, not to Me. As Judas to himself, not to Christ; so the pretenders of the Church to themselves, not to us: for of them is it said also elsewhere, Iniquity hath lied to itself. They have gathered iniquity to themselves. And because they entered in to see, they went abroad and told it. He who entered in to see, went abroad and told it. Would that he were within and spake truth; and not going abroad to speak falsely. A betrayer and persecutor is he, going abroad he telleth. If to Christ’s Members thou belongest, come within, cling to the Head. Endure the tares if thou art wheat, endure the chaff if thou art grain. Endure the bad fish within the net if thou art a good fish. Wherefore before the time of winnowing dost thou fly away? Wherefore before the time of harvest, dost thou root up the corn also with thyself? Wherefore before thou art come to the shore, hast thou broken the nets? They go abroad, and tell it.

9. Ver. 7. All mine enemies whisper against Me unto the same thing. Against Me all unto the same thing. How much better with me unto the same thing, than against me unto the same thing. What is, Against me unto the same thing? With one counsel, with one conspiring. Christ then speaketh unto thee, Ye consent against Me, consent ye to Me: why against Me? wherefore not with Me. That same thing if ye had always had, ye had not divided you into schisms. For, saith the Apostle, I beseech you, brethren, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no division among you. All mine enemies whisper against Me unto the same thing: against Me do they devise evil to Me. To themselves rather, for they have gathered iniquity to themselves: but therefore to Me, because by their intention they are to be weighed: for not because to do nothing was in their power, to do nothing was in their will. For the devil lusted to extinguish Christ, and Judas would slay Christ; yet Christ slain and rising again, we are made alive, but to the devil and to Judas is rendered the reward of their evil will, not of our salvation. For that ye may know that by the intention is every one to be weighed for retribution either of reward or punishment, we find men that have spoken good to another, and such good as we wish for, and yet are called evil speakers. When the blind man of old, now enlightened both in body and heart, convicted the Jews, seeing in body, blind in heart; for to them said he now seeing, Will ye also be His disciples? Then, saith the Gospel, they reviled him, and said, Thou art His disciple. For all of us come this to pass, which they said evil speaking! Evil speaking was that called, from the malevolent error of the speakers, not from any evil in the words. The intention wherewith they spake, not what they spake, did He consider, Who related that they spake evil of Him, Against Me they devised evil to Me. And what evil to Christ, to the Martyrs what evil? All hath God turned to good.

10. Ver. 8. An ungodly word do they set forth against Me. What sort of ungodly word? Listen to the Head Itself. Come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours. Fools! How shall the inheritance be yours? Because ye killed Him? Lo! ye even killed Him; yet shall not the

inheritance be yours. Shall not He that sleepeth add this also, that He rise again? When ye exulted that ye had slain Him, He slept; for He saith in another Psalm, I slept. They raged and would slay Me; I slept. If I had not willed, I had not even slept. I slept, because I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. I laid Me down and slept, and rose up again. Rage then the Jews; be the earth given into the hands of the wicked, be the flesh left to the hands of persecutors, let them on wood suspend it, with nails transfix it, with a spear pierce it. Shall He that sleepeth, not add this, that He rise up again? Wherefore slept He? Because Adam is the figure of Him that was to come. And Adam slept, when out of his side was made Eve. Adam in the figure of Christ, Eve in the figure of the Church; whence she was called the mother of all living. When was Eve created? While Adam slept. When out of Christ's side flowed the Sacraments of the Church? While He slept upon the Cross. Shall He that sleepeth not add this also, that He rise again?

11. And whereby slept He? By him who entered in to see, and gathered iniquity to himself For, (ver. 9.) The man of My peace, in whom I trusted, which did eat of My bread, hath enlarged his heel against Me: hath raised up his foot against Me: would trample upon Me. Who is this man of His peace? Judas. And in him did Christ trust, that He said, in whom I trusted? Did He not know him from the beginning? Did He not before he was born know that he would be? Had He not said to all His disciples, I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? How then trusted He in him, but that He is in His Members, and that because many faithful trusted in Judas, the Lord transferred this to Himself? For when Judas was seen, by many who trusted in Christ, to walk among the twelve disciples, some trusted in him, that he was such as were the rest: but because Christ was in His Members so trusting, as He is in them hungering and thirsting; as He said, I was an hungred, so said He, I trusted. Further, if we too so say to Him, Lord, when trustedst Thou? as it was said to Him, Lord, when wast Thou an hungred? as then He said to us, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me; so can He say, When one of these least of mine trusted in him, I trusted. In whom trusted? The man of My peace, in whom I trusted, which did eat of My bread. How shewed He him in His Passion? By the words of His prophecy: by the sop He marked

Him out, that it might appear said of him, Which did eat of My bread. Again, when he came to betray Him, He granted him a kiss, that it might appear said of him, The man of My peace.

12. Ver. 10. But Thou, O Lord, be merciful unto Me. This is the person of a servant, this is the person of the needy and poor. For, Blessed is he that understandeth upon the needy and poor One. Be merciful unto Me, and raise Me up, and I will requite them. See, as it was spoken, so is it done. For the Jews slew Christ, lest they should lose their place. Christ slain, they lost their place. Rooted out of the kingdom were they, dispersed were they. He, raised up, requited them tribulation, He requited them unto admonition, not yet unto condemnation. For the city wherein the people raged, as a ramping and a roaring lion, crying out, Crucify Him, Crucify Him, the Jews rooted out therefrom, hath now Christians, by not one Jew is inhabited. There is planted the Church of Christ, whence were rooted out the thorns of the synagogue. For truly this fire blazed as the fire of thorns. But the Lord was as a green tree. This said Himself, when certain women mourned Christ as dying; Weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. From this predicting, Raise Thou Me up, and I shall reward them. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in a dry? When can a green tree be consumed by the fire of thorns? For they blazed as fire among thorns. Fire consumeth thorns, but whatsoever green tree it is applied to, is not easily kindled, for the moistness of the wood resists a flame slow and feeble, yet sufficient to consume thorns. And raise Me up, and I will requite them. Think not however, brethren, the Son less powerful than ye think the Father, because of that which He said, raise Me up, as if He could not raise up Himself. For that He raised up, which had power to die; that in the Flesh died, the Flesh was raised up. Yet lest ye think that God the Father of Christ could raise up Christ, that is, the Flesh of His Son, and that Christ Himself, though He be the Word equal with the Father, could not raise up His own Flesh; hear out of the Gospel, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But, said the Evangelist, (lest even after this we should doubt,) He spake of the temple of His Body. Raise Me up, and I will requite them.

13. Ver. 11. By this I know that Thou favourest Me, that Mine enemies shall not triumph over Me. Because the Jews did triumph, when they saw Christ crucified; they thought that they had fulfilled their will to do Him hurt: the fruits of their cruelty they saw in effect, Christ hanging on the Cross: they shook their heads, saying, If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross. He came not down, Who could; His Potency He shewed not, but patience taught. For if, on their saying these things, He had come down from the Cross, He would have seemed as it were to yield to them insulting, and not being able to endure reproach, would have been believed conquered: more firm remained He upon the Cross, than they insulting; fixed was He, they wavering. For therefore shook they their heads, because to the true Head they adhered not. He taught us plainly patience. For mightier is that which He did, Who would not do what the Jews challenged. For much mightier is it to rise from the sepulchre, than to come down from the Cross. That Mine enemies shall not triumph over Me. They triumphed then at that time. Christ rose again, Christ was glorified. Now see they in His Name the human race converted: now let them insult, now shake the head: rather now let them fix the head, or if they shake the head, in wonder and admiration let them shake. For now say they, Can this indeed be He of Whom spake Moses and the Prophets? For of Him they said, He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. With His stripes we are healed. For we see that being Crucified He draweth after Him the human race; and without reason said our fathers, Let us kill Him, lest the world go after Him. Haply it had not gone after Him, if He had not been killed. By this I know that Thou favourest Me, that Mine enemies shall not triumph over Me.

14. Ver. 12. But as for Me, Thou upholdest Me, because of Mine innocence. Truly innocence; integrity without sin, requiting without debt, scourging without desert. Thou upholdest Me because of Mine innocence, and hast made Me strong in Thy sight for ever. Thou hast made Me strong for ever, Thou madest Me weak for a time: Thou hast made Me strong in Thy sight, Thou madest Me weak in sight of men. What then? Praise to Him, glory to Him. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. For He is the God of Israel, our God, the God of Jacob, the God of the younger son, the God of the younger people. Let none say, Of the Jews said He this, I am not Israel; rather the

Jews are not Israel. For the elder son, he is the elder people reprobated; the younger, the people beloved. The elder shall serve the younger: now is it fulfilled: now, brethren, the Jews serve us, they are as our satchellers, we studying, they carry our books. Hear wherein the Jews serve us, and not without reason. Cain, the elder brother, who killed the younger brother, received a mark, that he might not be slain; that is, that the people might remain for ever. With them are the Law and the Prophets, in which Law, and in which Prophets, Christ is preached. When we have to do with Pagans, and shew this coming to pass in the Church of Christ, which before was predicted of the Name of Christ, of the Head and Body of Christ, lest they think that we have forged these predictions, and from things which have happened, as though they were future, had made them up, we bring forth the books of the Jews. The Jews forsooth are our enemies, from an enemy's books convince we the adversary. All then hath the Lord disposed, all hath He ordained for our salvation. He predicted before us, He hath fulfilled in this our time, and what He hath not yet fulfilled, He is fulfilling. We have Him so a Requiter, that we may trust Him a Debtor, trust that what He hath not yet given, He will give; and what He then had not given, He hath given since. If any would prove where they be written, let him read Moses and the Prophets. If any enemy clamour and say, 'Ye for yourselves have forged prophecies;' be the books of the Jews brought forth, because the elder shall serve the younger. Therein let them read those predictions, which now we see fulfilled; and let us all say, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting, and all the people shall say, So be it, So be it.

PSALM 42

Long since has our spirit been longing to rejoice with you in God’s Word; and to salute you in Him, Who is our Help and our Salvation. Hear therefore by us that which the Lord gives; and rejoice with us in Him, in His Word, His Truth, and His Love. For we have undertaken the exposition of a Psalm corresponding to your own longings, on which we propose to speak to you. For the Psalm itself begins with a certain pious longing; and he who sings so, says,

Ver 1. Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God. Who is it then that saith this? It is ourselves, if we be but willing! And why ask, who it is other than thyself, when it is in thy power to be the thing which thou art asking about? It is not however one individual, but it is One Body; but Christ’s Body is the Church. Such longing indeed is not found in all who enter the Church: let all however who have tasted the sweetness of the Lord, and who own in Christ that for which they have a relish, think that they are not the only ones; but that there are such seeds scattered throughout the field of the Lord, this whole earth: and that there is a certain Christian unity, whose voice thus speaks, Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God. And indeed it is not ill understood as the cry of those, who being as yet Catechumens, are hastening to the grace of the holy Font. On which account too this Psalm is ordinarily chanted on those occasions, that they may long for the Fountain of remission of sins, even as the hart for the water-brooks. Let this be allowed; and this meaning retain its place in the Church; a place both truthful and sanctioned by usage. Nevertheless, it appears to me, my brethren, that such a longing is not fully satisfied even in the faithful in Baptism: but that haply, if they know where they are sojourning, and whither they have to remove from hence, their longing is kindled in even greater intensity.

2. The title then of it is, On the end: a Psalm for understanding for the sons of Korah. We have met with the sons of Korah in other titles of Psalms: and

remember to have discussed and stated already the meaning of this name. Yet we must even now take notice of this title in such a way, that what we have said already should be no prejudice against our saying it again: for all were not present in every place where we said it. Now Korah may have been, as indeed he was, a certain definite person; and have had sons, who might be called the sons of Korah; let us however search for the secret of which this is the sacrament, that this name may bring to light the mystery, with which it is pregnant. For there is some great mystery in the matter that the name of sons of Korah is given to Christians. Why "sons of Korah?" They are sons of the bridegroom, sons of Christ. Why then does Korah stand for Christ? Because "Korah" is equivalent to "Calvaria." This is still more abstruse. I was asking why Korah stands for Christ; still more anxious am I to enquire, why Christ is thought to be connected with Calvaria. Why, does it not at once occur to you that He was crucified on Calvary? Unquestionably it does. Therefore, the sons of the bridegroom, the sons of His Passion, the sons redeemed by His Blood, the sons of His Cross, who bear on their forehead that which His enemies erected on Calvary, are called the sons of Korah; to them is this Psalm sung as a Psalm for understanding. Let then our understanding be roused: and if the Psalm be sung to us, let us follow it with our understanding. What is it we are to understand? For what understanding is this Psalm sung? I venture to speak. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made. Come, my brethren, catch my eagerness; share with me in this my longing: let us both love, let us both be inflamed with this thirst, let us both hasten to the well of understanding. Let us then long for it as the hart for the brook; having taken that fountain, which those yet to be baptized long for, in order to the remisson of their sins, and having been already baptized, let us long for that fountain whereof another Scripture saith, For with Thee is the fountain of life. For He is both the Fountain and the Light; for it is In Thy Light that we shall see light. If He is both the Fountain and the Light, with good reason is He the understanding also, because He both filleth the soul that thirsteth for knowledge; and every one who hath "understanding," is enlightened by a certain light; not a corporeal, not a carnal one, not an outward, but an inward light! There is then, brethren, a certain light within, not possessed by those who understand not. Whence moreover, those who long after this “fountain of life,” and who draw somewhat from it, are addressed by the Apostle beseeching them and saying, That ye walk not as the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened: being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. If then they are darkened in their understanding, i.e. are darkened, because they understand not, therefore those who “understand” are enlightened. Run to the brooks; long after the water-brooks. With God is the fountain of Life; a fountain that shall never be dried up: in His Light is a Light that shall never be darkened. Long thou for this light: for a certain fountain, a certain light, such as thy bodily eyes know not; a light to see which the inward eye must be prepared; a fountain, to drink of which the inward thirst is to be kindled. Run to the fountain; long for the fountain; but do it not any how, be not satisfied with running like any ordinary animal; run thou like the hart. What is meant by like the hart? Let there be no sloth in thy running; run with all thy might: long for the fountain with all thy might. For we find in “the hart” an emblem of swiftness.

3. But perhaps Scripture meant us to consider in the stag not this point only, but another also. Hear what else there is in the hart. It destroys serpents, and after the killing of serpents, it is inflamed with thirst yet more violent; having destroyed serpents, it runs to the water-brooks, with thirst more keen than before. The serpents are thy vices, destroy the serpents of iniquity; then wilt thou long yet more for the Fountain of Truth. Perhaps avarice whispers in thine ear some dark counsel, hisses against the word of God, hisses against the commandment of God. And since it is said to thee, “Disregard this or that thing,” if thou prefer working iniquity to despising some temporal good, thou choosest to be bitten by a serpent, rather than destroy it. Whilst therefore thou art yet indulgent to thy vice, thy covetousness or thy appetite, when am I to find in thee a longing such as this, that might make thee run to the water-brooks? When art thou to desire the fountain of Wisdom, whilst thou art yet labouring in the venom of iniquity? Destroy in thyself whatever is contrary to the truth, and when thou hast seen thyself to be comparatively free from irrational passions, be not contented to stay where thou art, as if there were nothing farther for thee to long for. For there is yet somewhat to which thou mayest raise thyself; even

if thou hast already achieved that triumph within, that there is no longer within thee a foe to hinder and to thwart thee. For perhaps if thou art the hart, thou wilt already say to me, ‘God knows that I am no longer covetous, that I no longer set my heart on the property of any man; that I am not inflamed by the passion of unlawful love; that I do not pine away with hatred or ill-will against any man: and as to all other things of this description, thou wilt say, ‘I am free from them,’ and perhaps thou wouldest fain know wherein thou mayest find pleasure. Long for the water-brooks; God hath wherewith to refresh thee, and to satisfy thee when thou comest to Him, athirst, like the swift-footed hart, after the destruction of the serpents.

4. There is another point to be observed in the hart. It is reported of stags, (and it has been seen by some persons; for any thing of the kind would never be recorded, had it not been seen before;) it is reported of them then I repeat, that when they either wander in the herds, or when they are swimming to reach some other parts of the earth, that they support the burdens of their heads on each other, in such a manner as that one takes the lead, and others follow, resting their heads upon him, as again, others who follow do upon them, and others in succession to the very end of the herd; but the one who took the lead in bearing the burden of their heads, when tired, returns to the rear, and rests himself after his fatigue by supporting his head just as did the others; by thus supporting what is burdensome, each in turn, they both accomplish their journey, and do not abandon each other. Are they not a kind of harts that the Apostle addresses, saying, Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ?

5. Such a hart then, being yet in a state of “faith” only, not yet in “sight” of what he believes, wishing for the understanding of that which he loves, has to bear with adversaries, who are not harts, who have their understanding darkened, in a state of spiritual darkness, blinded by the greediness of their vices; who mock the man who believes, and cannot shew them that in which he believes, saying, Where is thy God? Let us hear then how that hart meets these words, that we ourselves may do so also, if we can. He first expressed his thirst, Like as the hart (he says) longs for the water-brooks, so longs my soul after Thee, O God. What if it is for the sake of bathing there, that the hart longs for the water-brooks? Do we not know then whether it is

for the sake of bathing, or of drinking there, that he longs for them? Hear what follows, and do not ask.

Ver. 2. My soul is athirst for the living God. What I am saying, that as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so longs my soul after Thee, O God, means this, My soul is athirst for the living God. For what is it athirst? When shall I come and appear before God? This it is for which I am athirst, to ‘come and to appear before Him.’ I am athirst in my pilgrimage, in my running; I shall be filled on my arrival. But When shall I come? And this, which is soon in the sight of God, is late to our longing. When shall I come and appear before God? This too proceeds from that longing, of which in another place comes that cry, One thing have I desired of the Lord; that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. Wherefore so? That I may behold (he saith) the beauty of the Lord. When shall I come and appear before the Lord?

6. Meanwhile, whilst I am training myself, whilst I am on my course, on my way, before I come and appear.

Ver. 3. My tears have been my meat day and night, while they daily say unto me, Where is thy God? My tears (he saith) have been not bitterness, but my bread. Those very tears were sweet unto me: being athirst for that fountain, inasmuch as I was not as yet able to drink of it, I have eagerly made my tears my meat. For he said not, My tears became my drink, lest he should seem to have longed for them, as for “the water-brooks:” but, still retaining that thirst wherewith I burn, and by which I am hurried away towards the water-brooks, My tears became my meat, whilst I am not yet there. And assuredly he does but the more thirst for the water-brooks from making his tears his meat. For it is by day and night both, that my tears have been my bread. That food, which is called bread, men eat in the day-time, while at night they sleep; but the bread of tears is eaten day and night; whether by day and night you understand ‘always,’ or take “day” for the prosperity of this world, “night” on the other hand for the adversity of this life. Whether then my lot is cast in the prosperity, or in the adversity of this world, I still pour forth the tears that flow from my “longing,” I cease not from the craving of my longings. And when well off in this world, it is still but ill with me, until I appear before God! Why then dost thou bid me rejoice in the day, as it were, if any prosperity of this life smiles upon me? Is it not deceptive? Is it not frail, and fading, and mortal? Is it not fugitive, temporary, transitory? Has it not more deceit in it than delight? Why then should not my tears become my bread even in it, since even when the prosperity of the world is beaming around us, so long as we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord. And they daily say unto me, Where is thy God? For if a Pagan should say this to me, I cannot retort it upon him, saying, “Where is thine?” inasmuch as he points with his finger to some stone, and says, “Lo, there is my God!” When I have laughed at the stone, and he who pointed to it has been put to the blush, he raises his eyes from the stone, looks up to heaven, and perhaps says, pointing his finger to the Sun, “Behold there my God! Where, I pray, is your God?” He has found something to point out to the eyes of the flesh; whereas I, on my part, not that I have not a God to shew to him, cannot shew him what he has no eyes to see. For he indeed could point out to my bodily eyes his God, the Sun; but what eyes hath he to which I might point out the Creator of the Sun?

7. However day by day hearing, “Where is thy God?” and having been “feeding on my tears” from day to day, I have been meditating night and day on what I heard, “Where is thy God?” nay, I have myself also sought to find my God, that if I could I might not believe only, but might “see” also somewhat. For I see the things which my God hath made, but my God Himself, Who made these things, I do not see. But since I am longing like the hart for the water-brooks, and it is with Him that the fountain of life is, and the Psalm is written, for the sons of Korah for understanding, and since the invisible things of God are seen by being understood by the things made, what shall I do that I may find my God? I will consider the earth. The earth was ‘made.’ Great is the beauty of the earth, but it hath a Creator. Great the marvels in the seeds, and things that generate them: but they have all of them a Maker, I point to the greatness of the circling sea: I am struck with astonishment, and with wonder; I look for the Maker, I raise my eyes to Heaven, and to the beauty of the stars; I behold with wonder the brightness of the sun, sufficing to the bringing forth of the day, the moon cheering the darkness of the night. Wondrous indeed are these things, worthy of our praise, nay rather of our awe. For these things are no longer terrestrial, but they are heavenly. Yet is not my thirst stayed even there; I

admire these, and I praise these; I thirst for Him Who made them. I turn my thoughts to myself, and I enquire who I am myself, I who am carrying on this enquiry! I find myself to have body and soul, the one for me to govern, the other for me to be governed by; I find the body serves, the soul commands. I discern the soul to be something better than the body: I see that "self," that carries on the investigation into such things as these, to be not a body, but spirit: and yet I know that all these things which I surveyed, I surveyed through the medium of the body. I was praising the earth: it was by the eyes I had the knowledge of it. I was praising the sea: it was by the eyes I had the knowledge of it; I was praising the heavens, the stars, the sun, and moon; it was by the eyes I came to know them. The eyes are members of the body, they are the windows of the mind: the being who sees by them is within; when he is absent, being called away by some thought or other, their opening avails not. It is not by these eyes that my God, Who made these things, is to be looked for. Possibly there may be something that the mind can see by itself, whether it be something that I cannot discern by the eyes, (as I do light and colours;) by the ears, as music and sound; by the nostrils, as the fragrance of odours; by the tongue and palate like flavours; nor by every part of the body throughout, as I do hardness and softness; heat and cold; roughness and smoothness; or whether it be something that I behold with the inward eye. What is meant by "behold with the inward eye?" It is something which is neither colour, nor sound, nor smell, nor flavour; heat nor cold; hardness nor softness. Let me be told else, what colour Wisdom hath? When we think of "righteousness," and joy inwardly in that thought, in its beauty what sound reaches our ears? What of the nature of vapour rises to the nostrils? What is carried to the lips? What is there that we can handle, and that so gives us pleasure? It is within, and at the same time it is beautiful; it is praised, and at the same time it is seen: and, even if these eyes are in darkness, the mind rejoices in its light. What was that which Tobias saw, when, blind himself, he gave advice, for the regulation of his life, to his son who had the use of his eyes? There is then something which the mind, the lord, the governor, the inhabitant of the body, sees by itself; discerns not by the bodily eyes; not by the ear, or nostrils, or palate, or by the touch of the body, but by itself; and in any case, what it discerns by itself is more excellent than what is discerned through its servant. Assuredly it is; for by itself it discerns itself; and in order to know itself, the mind beholds itself, and yet does not require the help of the bodily eyes in order to behold itself: indeed it rather abstracts itself from all the bodily senses, as interrupting, and confounding it with their din, in order to see itself in itself; to know itself as mirrored in itself. “But is God then any thing of the same nature as the soul?” God cannot, it is true, be seen except by the mind; but yet He cannot be seen as the mind can. For this mind of ours seeks to find something that is God, about which they who say, Where is thy God? may not insult us. It seeks to find a Truth not subject to change, a Substance not capable of failing. The mind itself is not of this nature: it is capable of progress, and of decay; of knowledge, and of ignorance; of remembering or forgetting; at one moment it wishes for this thing, at another it does not wish for it. That mutability is not incident to God. Were I to say God is susceptible of change, they will insult over me, who say, Where is thy God?

8. Having therefore sought to find my God in visible and corporeal things, and found Him not, having sought to find His substance in myself, (as if He were of the same nature as myself,) and found Him not, I perceive my God to be something higher than my soul. Therefore that I might attain unto Him,

Ver. 4. I thought on these things, and poured out my soul above myself. When would my soul attain to that object of its search, which is “above my soul,” if my soul were not to pour itself out above itself? For were it to rest in itself, it would not see any thing else beyond itself; and in seeing itself, would not, for all that, see God. Let then my insulting enemies now say, Where is thy God? aye, let them say it! I, so long as I do not see, so long as my happiness is postponed, make my tears my bread day and night. Let them still say, Where is thy God? I seek my God in every corporeal nature, terrestrial or celestial, and find Him not: I seek His Substance in my own soul, and I find it not, yet still I have thought on these things, and wishing to see the invisible things of my God, being understood by the things made, I have poured forth my soul above myself, and there remains no longer any being for me to attain to, save my God. For it is there is the “house of my God.” His dwelling-place is above my soul; from thence He beholds me; from thence He created me; from thence He directs me and provides for me;

from thence He appeals to me, and calls me, and directs me; leads me in the way, and to the end of my way.

9. For He Who has His House very high in secret place, hath even on earth a tabernacle. His tabernacle on earth is the Church, which is yet on her pilgrimage. But it is here that He is to be sought: for it is in “the tabernacle” that we find the Way, by which we arrive at the House. For when I was pouring out my soul above myself, in order to reach my God, why did I do so?

For I will go into the place of Thy Tabernacle. For I should be in error were I to seek for my God without the place of His tabernacle. For I will go into the place of Thy wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God.

I will go, he says, into the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God! For there are already many things that I admire in “the tabernacle.” See how great wonders I admire in the tabernacle! For God’s tabernacle on earth is the faithful; I admire in them the obedience of even their bodily members: that in them, Sin does not reign so that they should obey its lusts; neither do they yield their members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but unto the living God in good works. I admire the sight of the bodily members warring in the service of the soul that serves God. I contemplate the soul itself obeying God; scrupulously measuring the works of its free agency: restraining its passions, dispelling ignorance, putting forth its energies in enduring every thing laborious and painful, extending justice and charity to others. I admire also the presence of those virtues in the soul, but I am walking in the place of the tabernacle, still I leave even these behind; and wonderful though the tabernacle be, yet when I come to the house of God, I am even struck dumb with astonishment. Of that house he speaks in another Psalm, after he had put a certain abstruse and difficult question to himself, (viz. why it is that it generally goes well with the wicked on earth, and ill with the good?) saying, I thought to know this; it is too painful for me, until I go into the sanctuary of God, and understand of the last things. For it is there, in the sanctuary of God, in the house of God, is the fountain of understanding. There he understood of the last things; and solved the question concerning the prosperity of the unrighteous, and the sufferings of the righteous. How does he solve it? Why, that the wicked, when reprieved here, are reserved for punishments without end; and the good when they suffer here, are being tried in order that they may in the end obtain the inheritance. And it was in the sanctuary of God that he understood this, and understood of the last things. It was going up to “the tabernacle,” that he arrived at “the house of God.” Yet it was thus, that whilst admiring the members of the tabernacle, he was led on even to the house of God: by following the leadings of a certain delight, a certain inward spiritual joy, when there came from the house of God a sweet sound, as from some instrument, and he, whilst walking in the tabernacle, having caught a certain sound of spiritual music, led on by its sweetness, and following the guidance of the sound, abstracting his attention from all noise of flesh and blood, made his way on even to the house of God. For he tells us of his progress, and of his guidance thither; as if we had been saying, “You are admiring the tabernacle here on earth; how came you to the sanctuary of the house of God?” he says,

In the voice of joy and praise; the sound of keeping holiday. Here, when men keep festival simply for their own indulgence, it is their custom to place musical instruments, or to station a chorus of singers, before their houses, or any kind of music that serves and allures to wantonness. And when these are heard, what do we passers by say? ‘What is going on here?’ And we are told in answer, that it is some festival. ‘It is a birthday that is being celebrated,’ (say they,) ‘there is a marriage here;’ that those songs may not appear out of place, but the luxurious indulgence may be excused by the festive occasion. In the “house of God” there is a never-ending festival: for there it is not an occasion celebrated once, and then to pass away. The angelic choir makes an eternal “holiday:” the presence of God’s face, joy that never fails. This is a “holiday” of such a kind, as neither to be opened by any dawn, nor terminated by any evening. From that everlasting perpetual festivity, a certain sweet and melodious strain strikes on the ears of the heart, provided only the world do not drown the sounds. As he walks in this tabernacle, and contemplates God’s wonderful works for the redemption of the faithful, the sound of that festivity charms his ears, and bears the hart away to the water-brooks.

10. But seeing, brethren, so long as we are at home in this body, we are absent from the Lord; and the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things; even though we have some way or other dispersed the clouds, by walking as longing leads us on, and for a brief while have come within reach of that sound, so that by an effort we may catch something from that house of God, yet through the burden, so to speak, of our infirmity, we sink back to our usual level, and relapse to our ordinary state. And just as there we found cause for rejoicing, so here there will not be wanting an occasion for sorrow. For that hart that made tears its bread day and night, borne along by longing to the water-brooks, (that is, to the spiritual delights of God,) pouring forth his soul above himself, that he may attain to what is above his own soul, walking towards the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God, and led on by the sweetness of that inward spiritual sound to feel contempt for all outward things, and be borne on to things spiritual, is but a mortal man still; is still groaning here, still bearing about the frailty of flesh, still in peril in the midst of the offences of this world. He therefore glances back to himself, as if he were coming from that world; and says to himself, now placed in the midst of these sorrows, comparing these with the things, to see which he had entered in there, and after seeing which he had come forth from thence;

Ver. 5. Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me? Lo, we have just now been gladdened by certain inward delights: with the mind’s eye we have been able to behold, though but with a momentary glance, something not susceptible of change: why dost thou still disquiet me, why art thou still cast down? For thou dost not doubt of thy God. For now thou art not without somewhat to say to thyself, in answer to those who say, Where is thy God? I have now had the perception of something that is unchangeable; why dost thou disquiet me still?

Hope in God. Just as if his soul was silently replying to him, “Why do I disquiet thee, but because I am not yet there, where that delight is, to which I was, as it were, rapt for a moment? Am I already drinking from this fountain with nothing to fear? Have I no longer any stumbling-blocks to dread? Have I no longer any thing to care for, as if all my passions were conquered and thoroughly subdued? Is not my foe, the devil, on the watch against me? Is he not daily spreading for me the snares of his deceptions? Wouldest thou have me not "disquiet thee," placed as I am yet in the world, and "absent" from the house of my God?" Still Hope in God, is his answer to the soul that disquiets him, and would fain account for her disquiet from the evils with which this world abounds. In the mean while dwell in hope: for hope that is seen is not hope; but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

11. Hope in God. Why "hope?"

For I will confess unto Him. What wilt thou "confess?"

My God is the saving health of my countenance. My "health" (my salvation) cannot be from myself; this it is that I will say, that I will "confess." It is my God that is the saving health of my countenance. For to account for his fears, in the midst of those things, which he now knows, having come after a sort to the understanding of them, he has been looking behind him again in anxiety, lest the enemy be stealing upon him: he cannot yet say, "I am made whole every whit." For having but the first-fruits of the Spirit, we groan within ourselves; waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. When that health (that salvation) is perfected in us, then shall we be living in the house of God for ever, and praising for ever Him to Whom it was said, Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, they will be praising Thee world without end. This is not so yet, because the salvation which is promised, is not as yet in being; but it is in hope that I confess unto God, and say, My God is the saving health of my countenance. For it is in hope that we are saved; but hope that is seen, is not hope. Persevere then that thou mayest attain; persevere until salvation come. Hear thy God Himself speaking to thee from within, Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and let thy heart be strengthened; wait, I say, on the Lord: for he that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved. Why, then, art thou cast down, O my soul? and why dost thou disquiet me? Hope in God: for I will confess unto Him. My confession is this: My God is the saving health of my countenance.

12. Ver. 6. My soul is disquieted on account of myself. Is it disquieted on account of God? It is on my own account it is disquieted. By the Unchangeable it was revived; it is by the changeable it is disquieted. I know that the righteousness of God remaineth; whether my own will remain stedfast, I know not. For I am alarmed by the Apostle's saying, Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. Therefore since there is no soundness in me for myself, there is no hope either for me of myself. My soul is disquieted on account of myself. Wouldest thou have it not disquieted? Let it not rest on thine own self; and say, Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lift up my soul. Hear the meaning of this more plainly. Found not thy hopes on thyself; but on thy God. For if thou restest thy hopes on thyself, thy soul is disquieted on account of thyself; for it has not yet found any thing that should make it secure about thee. Since then my soul is disquieted on account of myself, what remains but humility? but that the soul should not presume on her own merits? What remains but that she should make herself the very meanest of all things, that she should humble herself, that she may deserve to be exalted; that she give herself credit for nothing, that what is good for her, may by Him be given to her. Therefore, because my soul is disquieted on account of myself, and since it is pride that causes this "disquiet,"

Therefore I remember Thee, O Lord, from the land of Jordan, and from the little hill of Hermon. From whence did I remember thee? From the little hill, and from the land of Jordan. Perhaps from Baptism, where the remission of sins is given. For no one runs to the remission of sins, except he who is dissatisfied with himself; no one runs to the remission of sins, but he who confesses himself a sinner; no one confesses himself a sinner, except by humbling himself before God. Therefore it is from the land of Jordan I have remembered thee, and from the hill; observe, not of the great hill, that thou mayest make of the little hill a great one: for whoso exalteth himself shall be abased, and whoso humbleth himself shall be exalted. If you would also ask the meanings of the names, Jordan means "their descent." Descend then, that thou mayest be lifted up: be not lifted up, lest thou be cast down. And the little hill of Hermon. Hermon means "anathematizing." Anathematize thyself, by being displeased with thyself; for if thou art pleased with thyself, God will be displeased with thee.

Because then God gives us all good things, because He Himself is good, not because we are worthy of it; because He is merciful, not because we have in any thing deserved it; it is from the land of Jordan, and from Hermon, that I remember thee. And because he so remembers with humility he shall earn his exaltation to fruition, for he is not “exalted” in himself, who “glories in the Lord.”

13. Ver. 7. Deep calleth unto deep with the voice of thy water-spouts. I may perhaps finish the Psalm, aided as I am by your attention, whose fervour I perceive. As for your fatigue in hearing, I am not greatly solicitous, since you see me also, who speak, toiling in the heat of these exertions. Assuredly it is from your seeing me labouring, that you labour with me: for I am labouring not for myself, but for you. Deep calleth unto deep with the voice of thy water-spouts. It was God Whom he addressed, Who remembered him from the land of Jordan and Hermon. It was in wonder and admiration he spake this; Abyss calleth unto abyss with the voice of Thy water-spouts. What abyss is this that calls, and to what other abyss? Justly, because the understanding spoken of is an “abyss.” For an abyss is a depth that cannot be reached or comprehended; and it is principally applied to a great body of water. For there is a ‘depth,’ a ‘profound,’ the bottom of which cannot be reached by sounding. Furthermore, it is said in a certain passage, Thy judgments are a mighty abyss, Scripture meaning to suggest that the judgments of God are incomprehensible. What then is the abyss that calls, and to what other “abyss” does it call? If by “abyss” we understand a great depth, is not man’s heart, do you not suppose, an abyss? For what is there more profound than that “abyss?” Men may speak, may be seen by the operations of their members, may be heard speaking in conversation: but whose thought is penetrated, whose heart seen into? What he is inwardly engaged on, what he is inwardly capable of, what he is inwardly doing, or what purposing, what he is inwardly wishing to happen, or not to happen, who shall comprehend? I think an ‘abyss,’ may not unreasonably be understood of man, of whom it is said elsewhere, Man shall come to a deep heart, and God shall be exalted. If man then is an ‘abyss,’ in what way doth ‘abyss’ call on ‘abyss?’ Does man call on man as God is called upon? No, but “calls on” is equivalent to “calls to him.” For it was said of a certain person, he calls on death; that is, lives in such a way as to be inviting death;

for there is no man at all who puts up a prayer, and calls expressly on death: but men by evil-living invite death. Deep calls on deep, then, is, ‘man calls to man.’ Thus is it wisdom is learnt, and thus faith, when man calls to man. The holy preachers of God’s word call on the “deep:” are they not themselves a deep also? That you may know that they also are a deep, the Apostle says, It is a very small thing that I be judged of you or of man’s judgment. Nay, how profound a deep he is, hear yet farther. Yea, I judge not mine own self. Do not you believe that there is in man a “deep” so profound as not to be seen through by him in whom it is? How profound a depth of infirmity lay concealed in Peter, when he knew not what was passing in himself, and rashly promised to die either with or for his Lord! How profound was the abyss; yet was that abyss bare to the eyes of God! For that which he knew not of within himself, Christ forewarned him of. Every man then, though holy, though righteous, though advancing in many things, is still a deep; and he is calling on “a deep,” when he is announcing any point of faith, any point of the truth, for the sake of eternal life. But it is then that the “deep” is useful to the deep called upon, when it is done with the voice of Thy water-spouts. Deep calls to deep: man wins his fellow-man, but not with his own voice, but with the voice of Thy water-spouts.

14. Hear another interpretation. Deep calleth to deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts. I, who tremble all over, when my soul was disquieted on account of myself, feared greatly on account of Thy judgments. For under this mortal flesh, subject to suffering and sin, full of troubles and of offences, obnoxious to solicitations of passion, there is a certain sentence of condemnation from Thy judgment; for Thou hast said to the sinner, Thou shalt surely die, and, In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread. This is the first deep of Thy judgments. But if men have lived ill here, deep calleth unto deep, in that they pass from punishment to punishment, and from darkness to darkness, and from deep to deep, and from suffering to suffering, and from the fires of passion to the flames of hell. It was this then, perhaps, that this man feared, when he said, My soul is disquieted on account of myself; therefore have I remembered Thee, O Lord, from the land of Jordan, and from Hermon. I am bound to be humble. For I am horribly afraid of Thy judgments; intensely do I fear Thy judgments. Therefore is my soul disquieted on account of myself. And what judgments

of thine are they that I have feared? Are those judgments slight ones? They are great ones, severe, hard to bear; but would they were all. Deep calls to deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts, in that Thou threatenest, Thou sayest, that there is another condemnation in store even after those sufferings. Deep calls on deep with the voice of Thy water-spouts. Whither then shall I go from Thy presence? And whither shall I flee from Thy Spirit? seeing that deep calls to deep, and after those sufferings severer ones are to be dreaded.

15. All Thy overhangings and Thy waves are come upon me. The “waves” in what I already feel, the overhangings in that Thou denouncest. All my sufferings are Thy waves; all Thy denouncements of judgments are Thy overhangings. In the waves that deep “calleth;” in the overhangings is the other “deep” which it “calls to.” In this that I suffer are all Thy waves; in the severer punishment that Thou threatenest, all Thy overhangings are come upon me. For He Who threatens does not let His judgments fall upon us, but keeps them suspended over us. But inasmuch as Thou sittest at liberty, I have thus spoken unto my soul. Hope in God: for I will confess unto Him. My God is the saving health of my countenance. The more numerous my sufferings, the sweeter will be Thy mercy.

16. Therefore follows; The Lord will commend His loving-kindness in the day-time; and in the night-time will He declare it. In tribulation no man has leisure to hear: attend, when it is well with you; hear, when it is well with you; learn, when you are in tranquillity, the discipline of wisdom, and store up the word of God as you do food. For in tribulation every one must be profited by what he heard in the time of security. For in prosperity God commends to thee His mercy, in case thou serve Him faithfully, for He frees thee from tribulation; but it is in the night only that He declares His mercy to thee, which He commended to thee by day. When tribulation shall actually come, He will not leave thee destitute of His help; He will shew thee that which He commended to thee in the day-time is true. For it is written in a certain passage, The mercy of the Lord is seasonable in the time of affliction, as clouds of rain in the time of drought. The Lord hath commended His loving-kindness in the day time, and in the night will He declare it. He does not shew that He is thine Helper, unless tribulation

come, from whence thou must be rescued by Him, Who promised it to thee in the day-time. Therefore we are warned to be like “the ant.” For just as worldly prosperity is signified by the day, adversity by the night, so again in another way worldly prosperity is expressed by “the summer,” adversity by the winter. And what is it that the ant does? She lays by in summer what will be useful to her in winter. Whilst therefore it is summer, whilst it is well with you, whilst you are in tranquillity, hear the word of the Lord. For how can it be that in the midst of these tempests of the world, you should pass through the whole of that sea, without suffering? How could it happen? To what mortal’s lot has it fallen? If even it has been the lot of any, that very calm is more to be dreaded. The Lord hath commended His loving-kindness in the day-time, and in the night-time will He declare it.

17. What shouldest thou do then in this pilgrimage? What shouldest thou do?

Ver. 8. There is with me prayer unto the God of my life. This I make my business here; I who am the “hart thirsting and longing for the water-brooks,” calling to mind the sweetness of that strain, by which I was led on through the tabernacle even to the house of God; whilst this corruptible body presseth down the soul, there is yet with me prayer unto the God of my life. For in order to making supplication unto God, I have not to buy ought from places beyond the sea; or in order that He may hear me, have I to sail to bring from a distance frankincense and perfumes, or have I to bring “calf or ram from the flock.” There is with me prayer to the God of my life. I have within a victim to sacrifice; I have within an incense to place on the altar; I have within a sacrifice wherewith to propitiate my God. The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit. What sacrifice of a troubled spirit I have within, hear.

Ver. 9. I will say unto God, Thou art my lifter up. Why hast Thou forgotten me? For I am suffering here, even as if Thou hadst forgotten me. But Thou art trying me, and I know that Thou dost but put off, not take utterly from me, what Thou hast promised me. But yet, Why hast Thou forgotten me? So cried our Head also, as if speaking in our name. My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? I will say unto God, Thou art my lifter up; why hast Thou forgotten me?

18. Why hast Thou rejected me? Rejected me, that is to say, from that height of the apprehension of the unchangeable Truth. Why hast Thou rejected me? Why, when already longing for those things, have I been cast down to these, by the weight and burden of my iniquity? This same voice in another passage said, I said in my trance, (i.e. in my rapture, when he had seen some great thing or other,) I said in my trance, I am cast out of the sight of Thine eyes. For he compared these things, in which he found himself, to those, toward which he had been raised; and saw himself cast out far “from the sight of God’s eyes,” as he speaks even here, Why hast Thou rejected me?

Ver. 9, 10. Why go I mourning, while mine enemy troubleth me, while he breaketh my bones? Even he, my tempter, the devil; while offences are every where on the increase, because of the abundance of which the love of many is waxing cold. When we see the strong members of the Church generally giving way to the causes of offence, does not Christ’s body say, The enemy breaketh my bones? For it is the strong members that are “the bones;” and sometimes even those that are strong sink under their temptations. For whosoever of the body of Christ considers this, does he not exclaim, with the voice of Christ’s Body, Why hast Thou rejected me? Why go I mourning, while mine enemy troubleth me, while he breaketh my bones.

You may see not my flesh merely, but even my “bones.” To see those who were thought to have some stability, giving way under temptations, so that the rest of the weak brethren despair when they see those who are strong succumbing; how great, my brethren, are the dangers!

19. They who trouble me cast me in the teeth. Again that voice!

Ver. 10. While they say daily unto me, Where is thy God? And it is principally in the temptations of the Church they say this, Where is thy God? How much was this cast in the teeth of the Martyrs! Those men so patient and courageous for the name of Christ, how often was it said to them, Where is your God? “Let Him deliver you, if He can.” For men saw their torments outwardly; they did not inwardly behold their crowns! They who trouble me cast me in the teeth, while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God? And on this account, seeing my soul is disquieted on account of myself, what else should I say unto it, than those words;

Ver. 11. Why art thou cast down, O my soul; and why dost thou disquiet me? And, as it seems to answer, “Wouldest thou not have me disquiet thee, placed as I am here in so great evils? Wouldest thou have me not disquiet thee, panting as I am after what is good, thirsting and labouring as I am for it?” What should I say, but,

Ver. 11. Hope thou in God; for I will yet confess unto Him. He states the very words of that confession; he repeats the grounds on which he fortifies his hope. He is the health of my countenance, and my God.

PSALM 43

This Psalm is a short one; it satisfies the mental cravings of the hearers, without imposing too severe a trial on the hunger of those fasting. Let our soul feed upon it: our soul, which he who sings in this Psalm, speaks of as cast down; cast down, I suppose, either in consequence of some fast, or rather in consequence of some hunger he was in. For fasting is a voluntary act; being an hungered is an involuntary thing. That which is an hungered, is the Church, is the Body of Christ: and that Man who is extended throughout the whole world, of which the Head is above, the limbs below: it is His voice that ought by this time to be perfectly known, and perfectly familiar, to us, in all the Psalms; now chanting joyously, now sorrowing; now rejoicing in hope, now sighing at its actual state, even as if it were our own. We need not then dwell long on pointing out to you, who is the speaker here: let each one of us be a member of Christ's Body; and he will be speaker here.

2. You know, however, that all those who are growing better, and who are sighing after that celestial city, who are aware of their state of pilgrimage here, who hold fast the way, who in their longings have grounded firmly before them the hope of that most unchangeable land, as their anchor; you know, I say, that this class of men, this good seed, this grain of Christ's sowing, has to groan in the midst of tares, and that too till the coming of the season of harvest, that is, (as Truth itself, which cannot be deceived, expounds it,) to the end of the world. Groaning therefore in the midst of the tares, (that is, the wicked, the deceitful, and the seducers, or those, whose minds are disturbed by anger, or poisoned by treachery,) reflecting that they are thrown together with them in one field, (as it were,) which extends throughout the world, that they receive one and the same rain, that they are fanned by the same breezes, that they are nourished together with themselves in the midst of troubles, that they share together with themselves those common bounties of God, granted to the evil and the good in common by Him Who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust; the seed of Abraham, the

holy seed then, seeing how great things they have in common with the wicked, from whom they are some time or other to be separated, as to be born in a similar manner, to share the same human condition, to bear together with them mortal bodies, to share with them the use of light, and water, and earth's fruits, and the several instances of worldly prosperity or adversity, famine or plenty, war or peace, health or sickness; seeing, I say, how great things they have in common with the wicked, with whom, however, they have not the same cause in common, they break forth into this exclamation;

Ver. 1. Judge me, O Lord, and separate my cause from the ungodly nation. "Judge me, O God," he cries; I do not dread Thy judgment, because I know Thy mercy. Judge me, O God, and separate my cause from the ungodly nation. Now, meanwhile, in this state of pilgrimage, Thou dost not yet separate my place, because I am to live together with the tares even to the time of the harvest: Thou dost not as yet separate my rain from theirs; my light from theirs: separate my cause. Let a difference be made between him who believes in Thee, and him who believes not in Thee. Our infirmity is the same; but our consciences not the same: our sufferings the same; but our longings not the same. The desire of the ungodly shall perish, but as to the desire of the righteous, we might well doubt, if He were not sure Who promised. The object of our desires is He Himself, Who promiseth: He will give us Himself, because He has already given Himself to us; He will give Himself in His immortality to us then immortal, even because He gave Himself in His mortality to us when mortal. Judge me, O God, and separate my cause from an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and wicked man! i.e. from the ungodly nation; from man, i.e. from a certain class of men: for such an one is a man; and such a one is a man, and the one shall be taken and the other left.

3. And since patience is needful in order to endure, until the harvest, a certain distinction without separation, if we may so speak; (for they are together with us, and therefore not yet separated; the tares however being still tares, and the corn still corn, and therefore they are already distinct;) since then a kind of strength is needful, which must be implored of Him, Who bids us to be strong, and without Whose making us strong, we should

not be what He bids us to be; of Him, Who said, He that endures unto the end shall be saved, lest the soul's powers should be impaired in consequence of her ascribing any strength to herself, he subjoins immediately,

Ver. 2. For Thou, O God, art my strength: why hast Thou cast me off, and why go I mourning, while the enemy harasseth me? I go "mourning:" the enemy is harassing me with daily temptations; inspiring either some unlawful love, or some ungrounded cause of fear; and the soul, that fights against both of them, though not taken prisoner by them, yet being in danger from them, is contracted with sorrow, and says unto God. Why?

Let her then ask of Him, and hear Why? For she is in the Psalm enquiring the cause of her dejection; saying, Why hast Thou cast me off? and why go I mourning? Let her hear from Isaiah; let the lesson which has just been read, suggest itself to her. The spirit shall go forth from me, and every breath have I made. For iniquity have I a little afflicted him; I hid my face from him, and he departed from me sorrowful in the ways of his heart. Why then didst thou ask, Why hast Thou cast me off, and why go I mourning? Thou hast heard, it was for iniquity. Iniquity is the cause of thy mourning; let "Righteousness" be the cause of thy rejoicing! Thou wouldest sin; and yet thou wouldest fain not suffer; so that it was too little for thee to be thyself unrighteous, without also wishing Him to be unrighteous, in that thou wouldest fain not be punished by Him. Consider a speech of a better kind in another Psalm. It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me, that I might learn Thy righteousnesses. By being lifted up, I had learned my own iniquities; let me by being "humbled," learn Thy righteousnesses. Why go I mourning, while the enemy harasses me? Thou complainest of the enemy. It is true he does harass thee; but it was thou didst give place to him. And even now there is a course open to thee; choose the course of prudence; admit thy King, shut the tyrant out.

4. But in order that she may do this, hear what she says, what she supplicates, what she prays for. Pray thou for what thou hearest; pray for it when thou hearest it; let these words be the voice of us all. (Ver. 3.) O send out Thy Light and Thy Truth. They have led me, and brought me on unto Thy holy hill, and into Thy Tabernacles. For that very Light and Truth are

indeed two in name; the reality expressed is but One. For what else is the “Light” of God, except the “Truth” of God? Or what else is the “Truth” of God, except the “Light” of God? And the one Person of Christ is both of these. I am the Light of the world: he that believeth on Me, shall not walk in darkness. I am the Way, the Truth. and the Life. He is Himself the Light: He is Himself the Truth. Let Him come then and rescue us, and separate at once our cause from the ungodly nation; let Him deliver us from the deceitful and unjust man, let Him separate the wheat from the tares, for at the time of harvest He will Himself send His Angels, that they may gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and cast them into flaming fire, while they gather together the corn into the garner. He will send out His Light, and His Truth; for that they have already “brought us and led us to His holy hill, and into His Tabernacles.” We possess the “earnest;” we hope for the prize. His holy Hill is His holy Church. It is that mountain, which, according to Daniel’s vision, grew from a very small “stone,” till it crushed the kingdoms of the earth; and grew to such a size, that it “filled the face of the earth.” This is the “hill,” from which he tells us that his prayer was heard, who says, I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. Let no one of those that are without that mountain, hope to be heard unto eternal life. For many are heard in their prayers for many things. Let them not congratulate themselves on being heard; the devils were heard in their prayer, that they might be sent into the swine. Let us desire to be heard unto eternal life, by reason of our longing, through which we say, Send out Thy Light and Thy Truth. That is a “Light,” which requires the eye of the heart. For Blessed (He saith) are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. We are now on His Hill, that is, in His Church, and in His Tabernacle. The tabernacle is for persons sojourning; the house, for those dwelling in one community. The tabernacle is also for those who are both from home, and also in a state of warfare. When thou hearest of a tabernacle, form a notion of a war; guard against an enemy. But what shall the house be? Blessed are they that dwell in Thine house: they will be alway praising Thee.

5. Now then that we have been led on even to the Tabernacle, and are placed on His holy Hill, what hope do we carry with us?

Ver. 4. Then will I go in unto the Altar of God. For there is a certain invisible Altar on high, which the unrighteous man approaches not. To that Altar he alone draws nigh, who draws nigh to this one without cause to fear. There he shall find his Life, who in this one separates his cause. And I will go in unto the Altar of God. From His holy Hill, and from His Tabernacle, from His Holy Church, I will go in unto the Altar of God on High. What manner of Sacrifice is there? He himself who goeth in is taken for a burnt-offering. I will go in unto the Altar of God. What is the meaning of what he says, the Altar of my God?

Unto God, Who makes glad my youth. Youth signifies newness: just as if he said, Unto God, Who makes glad my newness. It is He Who makes glad my newness, Who hath filled my old estate with mourning. For now I go mourning in oldness, then shall I stand, exulting in newness!

Yea, upon the harp will I praise Thee, O God my God. What is the meaning of "praising on the harp," and praising on the psaltery? For he does not always do so with the harp, nor always with the psaltery. These two instruments of the musicians have each a distinct meaning of their own, worthy of our consideration and notice. They are both borne in the hands, and played by the touch; and they stand for certain bodily works of ours. Both are good, if one knows how to play the psaltery, or to play the harp. But since the psaltery is that instrument which has the shell, (i.e. that drum, that hollow piece of wood, by straining on which the chords resound,) on the upper part of it, whereas the harp has that same concave sounding board on the lower part, there is to be a distinction made between our works, when they are upon the harp, when on the psaltery: both however are acceptable to God, and grateful to His ear. When we do any thing according to God's Commandments, obeying His commands and hearkening to Him, that we may fulfil His injunctions, when we are active and not passive, it is the psaltery that is playing. For so also do the Angels: for they have nothing to suffer. But when we suffer any thing of tribulation, of trials, of offences on this earth, (as we suffer only from the inferior part of ourselves; i.e. from the fact that we are mortal, that we owe somewhat of tribulation to our original cause, and also from the fact of our suffering much from those who are not "above;") this is the harp. For there rises a sweet strain from that part of us which is “below:” we suffer, and we strike the psaltery, or shall I rather say we sing and we strike the harp. When the Apostle was saying that he evangelized and preached the Gospel throughout the whole world according to the commandment of God; because he said that he had received that Gospel not of men or by man, but by Jesus Christ, the sound of the strings came from the top: but when he said, We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, it was the harp sounding from the bottom, but still sounding sweetly. For all patience is pleasing to God. If however you fail in tribulations, you have broken the harp. Why then did he just now say, I will praise Thee on the harp? On account of what he had said before, Why go I mourning, while the enemy afflicts me? For he was suffering something from affliction from below: and yet even in that he wished to approve himself unto God, and longed to return thanks unto God, preserving a good courage in his tribulations, and because he could not be free from tribulation, it was patience that God required of him. Upon the harp will I praise Thee, O God my God!

6. And again, in order that he may draw the sound from that sounding-board below, he addresses his soul: (ver. 5.) Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, (he says,) and why dost thou disquiet me? I am in tribulations, in weariness, in mourning, Why dost thou disquiet me, O my soul? Who is the speaker, to whom is he speaking? That it is the soul to which he is speaking, every body knows: for it is obvious: the appeal is addressed to it directly: Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me? The question is as to the speaker. It is not the flesh addressing the soul, surely, since the flesh cannot speak without the soul. For it is more appropriate for the soul to address the flesh, than for the flesh to address the soul. But, as he said not, Why art thou sorrowful, O my flesh; (for perhaps if it was the flesh that he was addressing, he would not say, Why art thou sorrowful? but “why art thou in pain?” For sorrow is the name for pain of mind; whereas the trouble that is felt in the body, may indeed be called “pain;” but not “sorrow.” The soul, however, is generally made sorrowful by the “pain” of the body. But still there is a difference between what is made “sorrowful,” and that which feels pain. For it is the flesh that feels pain; the soul that is made “sorrowful;” and this text is plain, Why art thou sorrowful, O my

soul;) therefore it is not the soul that addresses the flesh; for he said not, Why art thou sorrowful, O my flesh? nor is it the flesh addressing the soul; forasmuch as it is absurd for the inferior part to be addressing the superior. We perceive then that we have a certain part, in which is the image of God; viz. the mind and reason. It was that same mind that prayed for God’s Light; and God’s Truth. It is the same mind by which we apprehend right and wrong: it is by the same that we discern truth from falsehood. It is this same that we call understanding; which understanding, indeed, is wanting to the brutes. And this “understanding” whoever neglects in himself, and holds it in less account than the other parts of his nature, and casts it off, just as if he had it not, is addressed in the Psalm, Be ye not as the horse and the mule, which have no understanding. It is our understanding then that is addressing our soul. The latter is withered away from tribulations, worn out in anguish, made sorrowful in temptations, fainting in toils. The mind, catching a glimpse of Truth above, would fain rouse her spirits, and she says, Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me?

7. Consider whether this is not the exclamation of the Apostle; in that his conflict, prefiguring in his person certain others—perhaps ourselves—and saying, I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members; that is, certain motions of the flesh. And in a kind of struggle, and almost despair, he supplicates for the grace of God. O wretched man that I am! Who shall free me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Such persons, so struggling, our Lord Himself also condescended to prefigure, when he said, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. For did He not know to what end He had come into the world? Did He dread His Passion, Who had said, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. No man taketh it from Me; but I lay it down of Myself, and I take it again. But He Who said, My soul is sorrowful, even unto death, prefigured in His own Person certain of His own members. For in general the understanding believes correctly, and knows well too, that man will be, according to his “faith,” in Abraham’s bosom. It believes this; and yet when the point of death, as it were, is come, it is disturbed through its close relation, so to speak, with this world; it lifts up its ears to catch that voice of God within; it hears from within an intellectual music. For a certain sound from above so

strikes in silence, not on the ears, but on the mind, that whosoever hears that melody is filled with loathing of corporeal sounds, and the whole of this human life is to it but a kind of din, interrupting the hearing of a certain strain from above, passing sweet, incomparable, and ineffable. And, in truth, when such a result follows from any passion, man suffers violence while he addresses his soul, Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul, and why dost thou disquiet me? Is it, haply, because it is hard to find a life of purity, when He is the Judge, Who knows how to judge with clear and thorough sight—because though our life is now commendable among men, so that men cannot find what they can with justice censure, there is a balance that proceedeth from His eyes, there is a standard proceeding from Him, that squares by no deceitful rule; and God finds in man certain things to censure, which men did not see to be worthy of censure, nor the very person within himself who is to be judged—is it, I say, from fear of these things that the soul is disquieted? and that the mind addresses her, as if she said, Why dost thou fear because of thy sins, in that thou canst not avoid all sin? Hope in the Lord: for I will confess unto Him. Some things are cured by immediate address: the rest are purged away by faithful confession. Yes! fear indeed, if thou callest thyself righteous; if thou hast not those words from another Psalm, Enter not into judgment with Thy servant: ‘Why not enter into judgment with Thy servant?’ I stand in need of Thy mercy: for if Thou shewest judgment without mercy, whither must I go? If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall abide it? Enter not into judgment with Thy servant: for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. Therefore, if in Thy sight no man living shall be justified, (for how justly soever any one who lives here liveth, woe unto him, if God “enter into judgment” with him. For by another Prophet He thus chideth in the same manner the proud and presumptuous: Wherefore would ye plead with Me in judgment? Ye all have forsaken Me, saith the Lord;) therefore, I say, seek not to plead with Him; do thy endeavour to be righteous; and how much soever thou art so, own thyself a sinner: ever hope but for mercy; and secure in this confession, address the soul that is disquieting thee, and raising tumults to disturb thee: Why art thou sorrowful, O my soul; and why dost thou disquiet me? Perhaps thou wouldest fain have rested thy hopes upon thyself? Hope in the Lord: not in thyself. For what art thou in thyself, and what art thou of thyself? Let Him be the principle of health in thee, Who submitted to wounds for thy sake! Hope, he says, in the Lord; for I will confess unto Him. What wilt thou confess unto Him? My God is the saving health of my countenance. Thou art the saving health of my countenance; Thou shalt heal me! I call upon Thee as being sick; I own Thee to be the Physician: I do not boast myself to be whole; as it is said in another Psalm, I have said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.

8. These expressions, brethren, are safe ones: but yet be watchful in good works. Touch “the psaltery,” by obeying the Commandments; touch the harp, by patiently enduring your sufferings. You have heard from Isaiah, Break thy bread to the hungry; think not that fasting by itself is sufficient. Fasting chasteneth thine own self: it does not refresh others. Thy distress will profit thee, if thou affordest comfort to others. See, thou hast denied thyself; to whom wilt thou give that of which thou hast deprived thyself? Where wilt thou bestow what thou hast denied thyself? How many poor may be filled by the breakfast we have this day given up? Fast in such a way that thou mayest rejoice, that thou hast breakfasted, while another has been eating; fast on account of thy prayers, that thou mayest be heard in them. For He says in that passage, Whilst thou art yet speaking I will say, Here I am, provided thou wilt with cheerful mind break thy bread to the hungry. For generally this is done by men reluctantly and with murmurs, to rid themselves of the wearisome importunity of the beggar, not to refresh the bowels of him that is needy. But it is a cheerful giver that God loves. If thou givest thy bread reluctantly, thou hast lost both the bread, and the merit of the action. Do it then from the heart: that He Who seeth in secret, may say, whilst thou art yet speaking, Here I am. How speedily are the prayers of those received, who work righteousness! And this is man’s righteousness in this life, fasting, alms, and prayer. Wouldest thou have thy prayer fly upward to God? Make for it those two wings of alms and fasting. Such may God’s Light and God’s Truth find us, that He may find us without cause for fear, when He comes to free us from death, Who has already come to undergo death for us. Amen.

PSALM 44

1. This Psalm is addressed "to the sons of Korah," as its title shews. Now Korah is equivalent to the word "calvitium," or "baldness;" and we find in the Gospel that our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified in the place of a skull. It is clear then that this Psalm is sung to the "sons of His Passion." Now we have on this point a most certain and most evident testimony from the Apostle Paul; because that at the time when the Church was suffering under the persecutions of the Gentiles, he quoted from hence a verse, to insert by way of consolation, and encouragement to patience. For it is here that is said, which he inserted in his Epistle, For Thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Let us then hear in this Psalm the voice of the Martyrs; and see how good is the cause which the voice of the Martyrs pleads, saying, For Thy sake, &c. For on this account the Lord also added the words for righteousness sake, while saying, Blessed are they that suffer for righteousness; viz. lest any one suffering persecution should expect glory from the punishment itself, without having a good cause. And hence exhorting His disciples, He says, Blessed are ye, when men shall say, or do such and such things unto you for my sake. Hence then the words, For Thy sake are we killed all the day long.

2. But it is a counsel of God of great depth, and one requiring great consideration, what was the reason that after He had led our fathers, the Patriarchs, and the whole of that people Israel, out of Egypt with a mighty hand; and after He had drowned in the sea their enemies when pursuing them, had led them through opposing nations, and having completely subdued their enemies, planted themselves in the land of promise, and, with very small numbers on their side, won great victories over a vast multitude of the enemy; why it should afterwards have seemed good to Him to "turn His face," as it were, from His people, so that His saints must be exposed to the sweeping overthrow of slaughter and of death, and no man resisted, no man defended them, no man rescued them; as if God had "turned His face" from their groanings; as if He had forgotten them; as if He was not Himself their God, Who with a mighty hand, and a stretched out arm, and power

made manifest, forced (as I said) from Egypt our fathers, (i.e. that people,) and having conquered and expelled the Heathen from their own land, settled them in the sovereignty; all persons marvelling that a great multitude had been repeatedly conquered by a few. This then it is that begins to be sung in this Psalm, in the groaning of confession. For it was not without reason that those things actually took place; but in order that it might be understood why they took place. Now that they did actually take place, we know: why they took place, is a deeper question for us. The title then is not simply To the sons of Korah, but, For understanding to the sons of Korah. This is the case also with that Psalm, the first verse of which the Lord Himself uttered on the Cross: My God, My God, look upon Me; why hast Thou forsaken Me? For 'transferring us in a figure' to what He was saying, and to His own Body, (for we are also His Body, and He is our Head,) He uttered from the Cross not His own cry, but ours. For God never forsook Him: nor did He Himself ever depart from the Father; but it was in behalf of us that He spake this: My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? For there follows, Far from My health are the words of My offences: and it shews, in whose person He said this; for sin could not be found in Him. I will cry unto Thee in the day-time, and Thou wilt not hear; and in the night-season, (assuredly we must understand, Thou wilt not hear;) but he added, and not for foolishness unto me, that is, this very thing that 'Thou wilt not hearken unto me,' is not for foolishness unto me, but for understanding. What means, wilt not hear me for understanding? This means, "Thou wilt not hear me" unto temporal things, that I may understand that it is things eternal that should be desired of Thee! God then does not forsake, and when He seems to forsake, He is taking from thee what thou didst wrongly long for, and teaching thee what thou oughtest rightly to long for. For if God were always to shew favour unto us in these present prosperities, that every thing should abound unto us, and that in this time of our mortality we should suffer no distress, or difficulties, we could not but say that these are the highest blessings that God bestows on His servants, and we should not desire any greater ones of Him. Now it is for this reason that He mingles the bitterness of tribulations with this life's hurtful sweetness, that another, which is wholesomer, might be sought after. This is the meaning of A Psalm for understanding for the sons of Korah. Let us at least hear the Psalm, and there rather see this truth.

3. Ver. 1. O God, we have heard with our ears; our fathers have told us the work that Thou didst in their days, and in the days of old. Wondering wherefore, in these days, He has seemingly forsaken those, whom it was His will to exercise in sufferings, they recall the past events which they have heard of from their fathers; as if they said, It is not of these things that we suffer, that our fathers told us! For in that other Psalm also, He said this, Our fathers trusted in Thee; they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them. But I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and the outcast of the people. They trusted, and Thou didst deliver them; have I then hoped, and hast Thou “forsaken” me? And have I believed upon Thee in vain? And is it in vain that my name has been written in Thy Book, and Thy name has been inscribed on me? What our fathers told us was this:

Ver. 2. Thy hand destroyed the nations; and Thou plantedst them: Thou didst weaken the peoples, and cast them out. That is to say; ‘Thou didst drive out “the peoples” from their own land, that Thou mightest bring them in, and plant them; and mightest by Thy mercy stablish their kingdom.’ These are the things that we heard from our fathers.

4. But perhaps it was because they were brave, were men of battle, were invincible, were well-disciplined, and warlike, that they could do these things. Far from it. This is not what our fathers told us; this is not what is contained in Scripture. But what does it say, but what follows?

Ver. 3. For they gat not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance. Thy right hand is Thy Power: Thine arm is Thy Son Himself. And the light of Thy countenance. What means this, but that Thou wert present with them, in miracles of such a sort that Thy presence was perceived. For when God’s presence with us appears by any miracle, do we see His face with our own eyes? No. It is by the effect of the miracle He intimates to man His presence. In fact, what do all persons say, who express wonder at facts of this description? “I saw God present.” But Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance; because Thou pleasedst in them: i.e. didst so deal with them, that Thou wert well-pleasing in them: that whoso considered how they were being dealt with, might say, that God is with them of a truth; and it is God that moves them.

5. ‘What? Was He then other than now He is?’ Away with the supposition. For what follows?

Ver. 4. Thou art Thyself my King and my God. Thou art Thyself; for Thou art not changed. I see that the times are changed; but the Creator of times is unchanged. Thou art Thyself my King and my God. Thou art wont to guide me: to govern me, to save me.

Thou Who commandest salvation unto Jacob. What is, Thou Who commandest? Even though in Thine own proper Substance and Nature, in which Thou art whatsoever Thou art, Thou wast hid from them; and though Thou didst not converse with the fathers in that which Thou art in Thyself, so that they could see Thee face to face, yet by any created being whatsoever Thou commandest salvation unto Israel. For that sight of Thee face to face is reserved for those set free in the Resurrection. And the very “fathers” of the New Testament too, although they saw Thy mysteries revealed, although they preached the secret things so revealed to them, nevertheless said that they themselves saw but in a glass, darkly, but that seeing face to face is reserved to a future time, when what the Apostle himself speaks of shall have come. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. It is against that time then that vision face to face is reserved for you, of which John also speaks: Beloved, we are now the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. Although then at that time our fathers saw Thee not as Thou art, face to face, although that vision is reserved against the resurrection, yet, even though they were Angels who presented themselves, it is Thou, Who commandest salvation unto Jacob. Thou art not only present by Thine own Self; but by whatsoever created being Thou didst appear, it is Thou that dost command by them, that which Thou doest by Thine own Self in order to the salvation of Thy servants: but that which they do whom Thou commandest it, is done to procure the salvation of Thy servants. Since then Thou art Thyself my King and my God, and Thou commandest salvation unto Jacob, wherefore are we suffering these things?

6. But perhaps it is only what is past that has been described to us: but nothing of the kind is to be hoped for by us for the future. Nay indeed, it is still to be hoped for.

Ver. 5. Through Thee will we winnow away our enemies. Our fathers then have declared to us a work that Thou didst “in their days, and in the days of old,” that Thy hand destroyed the Gentiles: that Thou “didst cast out the peoples; and didst plant them.” Such was the past; but what is to be hereafter? Through Thee we shall winnow away our enemies. A time will come, when all the enemies of Christians will be winnowed away like chaff, be blown like dust, and be cast off from the earth. If then both the past has been described to us to have been such, and the future foretold to be of the same description, why do we suffer in the midst of the present state of things; except it be in order to the understanding of the sons of Korah? Through Thee will we winnow away our enemies: and through Thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us. Thus much of the future.

7. Ver. 6. I will not trust in my bow, even as our fathers did not in their sword. Neither shall my sword help me.

8. Ver. 7. For Thou hast saved us from our enemies. This too is spoken of the future under the figure of the past. But this is the reason that it is spoken of as if it were past, that it is as certain as if it were past. Give heed, wherefore many things are expressed by the Prophets as if they were past; whereas it is things future, not past facts that are the subject of prophecy. For the future Passion of our Lord Himself was foretold: and yet it says, They pierced My hands and My feet. They told all My bones; not, ‘They shall pierce,’ and ‘shall tell.’ They looked and stared upon Me; not ‘They shall look and stare upon Me.’ They parted My garments among them. It does not say, ‘They shall part’ them. All these things are expressed as if they were past, although they were yet to come: because to God things to come also are as certain as if they were past. For to us what is past is certain; what is to come uncertain. For we know a certain thing to have happened, and it is impossible that what has once happened should not have happened. Suppose a Prophet, to whom the future is as certain as the past is to you: and as certain as it is to you that what you remember to have happened cannot possibly not have happened, so certain is it to him, that

what he knows to be about to come to pass, cannot possibly fail to come to pass. It is for this reason, in consequence of their certainty, that those things which are yet future, are spoken of as if past. This it is then that we hope. For it is, Thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.

9. Ver. 8. In God will we boast all the day long. Observe how he intermingles words expressive of a future time, that you may perceive that what was spoken of before as in past time was foretold of future times. In God will we boast all day long; and in Thy name will we confess for ever. What is, We shall boast? What, We shall confess? That Thou hast saved us from our enemies; that Thou art to give us an everlasting kingdom: that, in us are to be fulfilled the words, Blessed are they that dwell in Thine house: they will be always praising Thee.

10. Since then we have the certainty that these things are to be hereafter, and since we have heard from our fathers that those we spoke of were in time past, what is our state at present?

Ver. 9. But now Thou hast cast us off, and put us to shame. Thou hast "put us to shame" not before our own consciences, but in the sight of men. For there was a time when Christians were persecuted; when in every place they were outcasts, when in every place it used to be said, "He is a Christian!" as if it conveyed an insult and reproach. Where then is He, "our God, our King," Who commands salvation unto Jacob? Where is He, Who did all those works, which our fathers have told us? Where is He, Who is hereafter to do all those things, which He revealed unto us by His Spirit? Is He changed? No. These things are done in order to understanding, for the sons of Korah. For we ought to understand something of the reason, why He has willed we should suffer all these things in the mean time. What "all things?" But now Thou hast cast us off and put us to shame: and goest not forth, O God, in our powers. We go forth to meet our enemies, and Thou goest not forth with us. We see them: they are very strong, and we are without strength. Where is that might of Thine? Where Thy right hand, and Thy power? Where the sea dried up, and the Egyptian pursuers overwhelmed with the waves? Where Amalek's resistance subdued by the sign of the Cross? And Thou, O God, goest not forth in our powers.

11. Ver. 10. Thou hast turned us away backward in presence of our enemies, so that they are, as it were, before; we, behind; they are counted as conquerors, we as conquered. And they which hate us spoiled for themselves. What did they "spoil" but ourselves?

12. Ver. 11. Thou hast given us like sheep appointed for meat, and hast scattered us among the nations. We have been devoured by the nations. Those persons are meant, who, through their sufferings, have by process of assimilation, become part of the body of the Gentile world. For the Church mourns over them, as over members of her body, that have been devoured.

13. Ver. 12. Thou hast sold Thy people for no price. For we see whom Thou hast made over; what Thou hast received, we have not seen. And there was no multitude in their jubilees. For when the Christians were flying before the pursuit of enemies, who were idolaters, were there then held any congregations and jubilees to the honour of God? Were those Hymns chanted in concert from the Churches of God, that are wont to be sung in concert in time of peace, and to be sounded in a sweet accord of the brotherhood in the ears of God? And there was no multitude in their jubilees.

14. Ver. 13, 14. Thou madest us a reproach to our neighbours; a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us. Thou madest us a similitude among the Heathen. What is meant by a similitude? It is when men in imprecating a curse make a "similitude" of his name whom they detest. "So mayest thou die;" "So mayest thou be punished?" What a number of such reproaches were then uttered! "So mayest thou be crucified!" Even in the present day there are not wanting enemies of Christ, (those very Jews themselves,) against whom whensoever we defend Christ, they say unto us, "So mayest thou die as He did." For they would not have inflicted that kind of death had they not an intense horror of dying by such a death: or had they been able to comprehend what mystery was contained in it. When the ointment is applied to the eyes of the blind man, he does not see the eye-salve in the physician's hand. For the very Cross was made for the benefit even of the persecutors themselves. Hereby they were healed afterwards; and they believed in Him whom they themselves had slain. Thou madest us a similitude among the heathen; a shaking of the head among the peoples, a

shaking of the head by way of insult. They spake with their lips, they shook the head. This they did to the Lord: this to all His Saints also, whom they were able to pursue, to lay hold of, to mock, to betray, to afflict, and to slay.

15. Ver. 15, 16. My shame is continually before me; and the confusion of my face has covered me. For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth: that is to say, from the voice of them that insult over me, and who make it a charge against me that I worship Thee, that I confess Thee! and who make it a charge against me that I bear that name, by which all charges against me shall be blotted out. For the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth, that is, of him that speaketh against me. By reason of the enemy and the persecutor. And what is the understanding conveyed here? Those things which are told us of the time past, will not be done in our case: those which are hoped for, as to be hereafter, are not as yet manifest. Those which are past, as the leading out of Thy people with great glory from Egypt; its deliverance from its persecutors; the guiding of it through the nations, the placing of it in the kingdom, whence the nations had been expelled. What are those to be hereafter? The leading of the people out of this Egypt of the world, when Christ, our “leader” shall appear in His glory: the placing of the Saints at His right hand; of the wicked at His left; the condemnation of the wicked with the devil to eternal punishment; the receiving of a kingdom from Christ with the Saints to last for ever. These are the things that are yet to be: the former are what are past. In the interval, what is to be our lot? Tribulations! “Why so?” That it may be seen with respect to the soul that worships God, to what extent it worships God; that it may be seen whether it worships Him freely, from Whom it received salvation freely. For should God say unto thee, What didst thou give Me, that I might create thee? Assuredly if thou deservedst aught of Me after thou wast made, thou hadst not deserved aught of Me before I made thee. What are we to say to Him, Who first created us freely, because He Himself is good, not because we have deserved any thing whatsoever. In the next place, what are we to say of our restoration, our second birth itself? That our deserts obtained for us the sending to us of that eternal salvation from the Lord? God forbid! If our deserts were at all accounted of, His coming would be but to our condemnation! He came not to examine into our deserts, but for the remission of our sins. Thou wert not

in being, and thou wert created! What hast thou given unto God? Thou wert wicked, and thou wert redeemed! What hast Thou given unto God? What is there that thou hast not received from Him freely? With reason is it named “grace,” because it is bestowed (“gratis,” i.e.) freely. What is required of thee then is this, that thou too shouldest worship Him freely; not because He gives thee things temporal, but because He holds out to thee things eternal.

16. But beware, lest thou think of those eternal things themselves otherwise (than as they are:) and lest, understanding those things eternal in a carnal sense, thou shouldest nevertheless not be serving God “freely.” For, if thou worshippest God because He gives thee an estate, dost thou mean to forego His service because He takes thine estate from thee? But perhaps thou sayest, “I will serve God because He will give me an estate, though not a temporal one! Nevertheless, thou still bearest a corrupt mind; for thou dost not yet serve Him with a pure love; thou art still seeking a reward. For thou wouldest fain possess, in the world to come, the things which thou must of necessity leave behind thee here, thou wouldest fain change thy carnal pleasure, not cut it off entirely. We do not commend the fasting of the man, who reserves his appetite for a luxurious dinner. For sometimes men are invited to a great feast, and as they wish to come to it with an appetite, they fast. But is not such fasting as this to be attributed rather to luxury than to self-denial? Do not therefore hope to have such things given to thee by God, as He calls upon thee to despise even here. For such were the things hoped for by the Jews: therefore they were confounded by that question. For they too hope for a Resurrection; but they hope to arise to such bodily pleasures as they love here. When therefore the question was put to them by the Sadducees, who do not believe in a Resurrection, as to that woman who married the seven brothers in succession, whose wife of them she should be in the Resurrection? they were at a loss, and could not answer. But when it was proposed to our Lord, because the Resurrection promised to us is not one in which pleasures of this sort are to be renewed, but one in which we are to find everlasting delight from the fruition of God Himself, the Lord answered and said, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, and the power of God: for in the Resurrection they shall neither marry nor be given in marriage; for neither can they die any more, i.e. there is no looking for a

successor, where there is none to make a decease. And what then will there be there? but they shall be equal (saith He) unto the Angels of God. Unless perhaps you suppose that the Angels delight in the daily banquet, and the wine with which you intoxicate yourself, or perhaps believe that the Angels have wives. Nothing of all this is to be found among the Angels. Whence do the Angels derive their joy, save from that source, of Which the Lord saith, “Know ye not that their Angels do alway behold the Father’s face?” If then the Angels’ joy is derived from the “face of the Father,” prepare thou thyself for such pleasure, or for any pleasure thou canst find superior to that of seeing God’s face. Woe to that love of thine, if thou canst conceive any thing more beautiful than Him, from Whom is all Beauty, to keep thee back from deserving to think of Him. The Lord was incarnate, and appeared unto men as a Man. ‘In what fashion did He appear?’ I have said already; He appeared “unto men, and as a Man.” What great thing did He appear? Flesh unto flesh! What great thing did He appear, of Whom it was said, We beheld Him, and He had no form nor comeliness? Who was it that had no form nor comeliness? He of Whom it was also said, Thou art fair before the children of men. As Man, He had no form nor comeliness; but He was fair, in that wherein He was before the sons of men. Thence it is that shewing that form of the flesh, out of His own form, to the eyes of the beholders, what saith He? He that loveth Me keepeth My Commandments; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father: and I will love him, and manifest Myself unto him. Himself, Whom they saw already, He promised that He would manifest unto them. But what means this? It is even as if He said, “Ye see the form of a servant; the form of God is concealed. I employ the former to win you: the latter I reserve for you: with the former I nourish you while yet ‘babes;’ with the latter I feed you when full grown.” In order then that this faith of ours, whereby we are made clean, may be prepared for things invisible, is the cause that all these things have been done for understanding unto the sons of Korah, so that the saints should be stripped of their property, should be stripped even of temporal life itself, in order that they might not worship the Everlasting Himself with a view to these self-same temporal things; but out of a pure love of Him should endure patiently all these things that they are suffering for a time.

17. Because then “the sons of Korah” have understood this, what do they say?

Ver. 17. All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten Thee. What is meant by, have not forgotten Thee? Neither have we behaved ourselves frowardly in Thy covenant.

Ver. 18. Our heart has not turned back; and Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way. See here is understanding, in that “our heart has not gone back;” that we have not “forgotten Thee, have not behaved frowardly in Thy covenant;” placed as we are in great tribulations, and persecutions of the Gentiles. Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way. Our goings were in the pleasures of the world; our goings were in the midst of temporal prosperities. Thou hast taken our goings out of Thy way; and hast shewn us how strait and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life. And Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way. What is meant by, “hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way?” It is as if He said, “Ye are placed in the midst of tribulation; ye are suffering many things; ye have already lost many things that ye loved in this life: but I have not abandoned you on the way, the narrow way that I am teaching you. Ye were seeking broad ways. What do I tell you? This is the way we go to everlasting life: by the way ye wish to walk, ye are going to death. How broad and wide is the road that leads to destruction: and how many there be that find it! How strait and narrow the way that leadeth unto life, and how few there be that walk therein. Who are the few? They who patiently endure tribulations, patiently endure temptations; who in all these troubles do not fall away: who do not rejoice in the word for a season only; and in the time of tribulation fade away, as on the sun’s arising; but who have the root of “love,” according to what we have lately heard read in the Gospel. Have thou then, I say, the root of charity, that when the sun has arisen, it may not scorch thee, but may nourish thee. All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten Thee, and behaved frowardly in Thy covenant. Our heart is not turned back. But because we do all this in the midst of tribulations, now walking in the “strait road,” Thou hast turned aside our goings out of Thy way.

18. Ver. 18, 19. For Thou hast brought us low in the place of infirmity: therefore Thou wilt exalt us in the place of strength. And the shadow of

death has covered us. For this mortality of ours is but the shadow of death. The true death is condemnation with the devil.

19. Ver. 19, 20, 21. If we have forgotten the Name of our God. Here is the understanding of the sons of Korah. And stretched out our hands to a strange God. Shall not God search this out? For He knoweth the secrets of the heart. He “knows,” and yet He “searches them out?” If He knows the secrets of the heart, what do the words, Shall not God search it out, do there? He “knows” it in Himself; He “searches it out” for our sakes. For it is for this reason God sometimes searches a thing out; and speaks of that becoming known to Himself, which He is Himself making known to thee. He is speaking of His own work, not of His knowledge. We commonly say, “A gladsome day,” when it is fine. Yet is it the day itself that experiences delight? No: we speak of the day as gladsome, because it fills us with delight. And we speak of a sullen sky. Not that there is any such feeling in the clouds, but because men are affected with sullenness at the sight of such an appearance of the skies, it is called sullen for this reason, that it makes us sullen. So also God is said to know when He causes us to know. God says to Abraham, Now I know that thou fearest God. Did He then not know it before then? But Abraham did not know himself till then: for it was in that very trial he came to know himself. For in general a man thinks that he can do what he cannot; or that he cannot do what he can do. The questioning comes upon him through a divine dispensation; and by that examination he is made acquainted with himself: and God is said to know that which He had caused him to know. Did Peter know himself, when he said to the Physician, I will be with Thee even unto death? The Physician had felt his pulse, and knew what was going on within His patient’s soul: the patient knew it not. The crisis of trial came; and the Physician approved the correctness of His opinion: the sick man gave up his presumption. Thus God at once “knows” it and “searches it out.” ‘He knows it already. Why does He “search it out?” ’ For thy sake: that thou mayest come to know thine own self, and mayest return thanks to Him that made thee. Shall not God search it out?

21. Ver. 21. For He knoweth the secrets of the heart. What secrets?

Ver. 22. For, for Thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. For you may see a man being put to death; you do not know why he is being put to death. God knoweth this. The thing in itself is hid. But some one will say to me, “See, he is detained in prison for the name of Christ, he is a confessor for the name of Christ.” Why do not heretics also confess the name of Christ, and yet they do not die for His sake? Nay more; let me say it, in the Catholic Church itself, do you think there either are, or have been wanting persons such as would suffer for the sake of glory among men? Were there no such persons, the Apostle would not say, Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. He knew therefore that these might be some persons, who did this not from “charity,” but out of vainglory. It is therefore hid from us; God alone sees this; we cannot see it. He alone can judge of this, who knoweth the secrets of the heart. For, for Thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. I have already mentioned that from hence the Apostle Paul had borrowed a text for the encouragement of the Martyrs: that they might not “faint in the tribulations” undergone by them for the name of Christ.

22. Ver. 23. Awake; why sleepest Thou, O Lord? Who is addressed, and who is the speaker? Would not he be more correctly said to “sleep” and slumber, who speaks such words as these? Awake; why sleepest Thou, O Lord? He replies to you, I know what I am saying: I know that He that keepeth Israel doth not sleep: but yet the Martyrs cry, Awake; why sleepest Thou, O Lord? O Lord Jesus, Thou wast slain; Thou didst “sleep” in Thy Passion; to us Thou hast now “awaked” from sleep. For we know that Thou hast now “awaked” again. To what purpose hast Thou awaked and risen again? The Gentiles that persecute us, think Thee to be dead; do not believe Thee to have risen again. Arise Thou then to them also! Why sleepest Thou, though not to us, yet to them? For if they already believed Thee to have risen again, could they persecute us who believe in Thee? But why do they persecute? “Destroy, slay so and so, whoever have believed in Thee, such an one, who died an ill death!” As yet to them “Thou sleepest;” arise to them, that they may perceive that Thou hast “awaked” again; and may be at rest. Lastly, it has come to pass, while the Martyrs die, and say these things; while they sleep, and “awaken” Christ, truly dead in their sleepings, Christ

has, in a certain sense, risen again in the Gentiles; i.e. it becomes believed, that He has risen again; so by degrees they themselves, becoming converted to Christ by believing, collected a numerous body: such as the persecutors dreaded; and the persecutions have come to an end. Why? Because Christ hath risen again in the Gentiles, Who before was "asleep" to them, as not believing. Arise, and cast us not off for ever!

23. Ver. 24. Wherefore hidest Thou Thy face: as if Thou wert not present; as if Thou hadst forgotten us?

And forgettest our misery and trouble?

24. Ver. 25. For our soul is bowed down to the dust. Where is it bowed down? To the dust: i.e. "dust" persecutes us. They persecute us, of whom Thou hast said, The ungodly are not so; but are like the dust, which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth. Our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly hath cleaved to the earth. He seems to me to have expressed the punishment of the extreme of humiliation, in which, when any one prostrates himself, "his belly cleaveth to the earth." For whosoever is humbled so as to be on his knees, has yet a lower degree of humiliation to which he can come: but he who is so humbled, that his belly cleaveth to the ground, there is no farther humiliation for him. Should one wish to do still farther, it will, after that point, be not bowing him down, but crushing him. Perhaps then he may have meant this; We are bowed down very low in this dust; there is no farther point to which humiliation can go. Humiliation has now reached its highest point: let mercy then come also.

25. Or does the Church, brethren, in these words, perchance, lament over those, whom their persecutors persuaded to impiety; so that they who endured unto the end, say, Our soul is bowed down to the dust; i.e. in the hands of this "dust;" in the hands of the ungodly and the persecutors? Our soul is bowed down to the dust; to such a degree, that we called on Thee, that Thou wouldest give us help out of our tribulation. But our belly has cleaved unto the ground; means to say, "our belly" hath consented to the ungodliness of this dust: for this is the meaning of hath cleaved. For if, when you are inflamed with love and charity, you rightly say unto God, My soul cleaveth to Thee; and, It is good for me to cleave unto God: and it is

when your will coincides with God’s will, that you cleave unto God; it is said, not without reason, of the ‘belly’ spoken of above, that it hath cleaved unto the earth; but that those are signified, who, not being able to endure persecution, have consented unto the ungodly; for in so doing they have cleaved unto the earth. But why were they called “the belly,” except because they are carnal; so that the face of the Church is in the Saints, in them that are spiritual; the belly of the Church in the carnal ones. Therefore the face of the Church is displayed to view: the belly is hid, as being more weak and feeble. This is intimated by the Scripture in a certain passage, where some one says, that he “received a book; and that book (he says) was sweet in my mouth; but in my belly it was bitter.” What is meant by this, but that the highest precepts, which those who are spiritual can bear, those who are carnal cannot bear? And that by the very things, in which those who are spiritual take delight, those who are carnal are made sorrowful? What is it, my brethren, that this book contains? Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor. How sweet is this in the mouth of the Church! It is done by all them that are spiritual. But say this to any carnal person whatsoever, “Do this,” he is more likely to depart from thee sorrowful, (as did that rich man from our Lord,) than to practise what has been commanded him. But why did he go away sorrowful, except that that book is sweet in the mouth, and in the belly bitter? Thou hast given some sum of gold and silver; thou comest to such a point, that unless thou lose it, thou art perhaps under the necessity of committing some sin; perhaps must do some wrong to the Church; art constrained to blaspheme. Placed then as thou art in a strait, between the loss of money, or the loss of righteousness, thou art warned. Prefer to lose thy money, that thou lose not righteousness; thou, however, to whom righteousness is not sweet in the mouth; but who art still weak among those members, which are such as the Church reckons to be the belly; being filled with sorrow, sometimes choosest rather to forfeit somewhat of thy righteousness, than to forfeit one sesterce of thy money, and layest thyself under a heavier loss, while, to fill thy purse, thou makest thy heart empty. Perhaps then it was of these persons it was said, Our belly cleaveth to the earth.

26. Ver. 26. Arise, O Lord, help us. And indeed, dearly beloved, He has “arisen and helped” us. For when He awaked (i.e. when He arose again, and

became known to the Gentiles) on the cessation of persecutions, even those who had cleaved to the earth were raised up from the earth, and on performing penance, have been restored to Christ’s body, feeble and imperfect though they were: so that in them was fulfilled the text, ‘Thine eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect; and in Thy book shall they all be written.’ Arise, O Lord, help us, and redeem us for Thy Name’s sake; that is to say, freely; for Thy Name’s sake, not for the sake of my merits: because Thou hast vouchsafed to do it, not because I am worthy that Thou shouldest do it unto me. For this very thing, that we have not forgotten Thee; that our heart hath not gone back; that we have not stretched out our hands to any strange god; how should we have been able to achieve, except with Thy help? How should we have strength for it, except through Thy appealing to us within, exhorting us, and not forsaking us? Whether then we suffer in tribulations, or rejoice in prosperities, redeem Thou us, not for our merits, but for Thy Name’s sake.

PSALM 45

This Psalm, even as we ourselves have been singing with gladness together with you, we would beg you in like manner to consider with attention together with us. For it is sung of the sacred Marriage-feast; of the Bridegroom and the Bride; of the King and His people; of the Saviour and those who are to be saved. He who comes to the marriage-feast with the wedding-garment, seeking not his own glory, but that of the Bridegroom, does not merely listen with pleasure, (as men are wont to do, who are seeking after a spectacle, not exhibiting a reality,) but also calls upon his own heart not to be idle there; but to shoot forth, and to break out; to grow, to go on to maturity, to be accepted. For it is our duty to be such to whom this Psalm is sung, the "sons of Korah;" as the title of the Psalm hath it. For these were certain real persons; nevertheless, every title in the sacred writings conveys some hidden meaning; and requires not only a hearer, but one to understand it also. For we enquire as to the force of the Hebrew word, what is meant by "Korah;" and (as the explanations of all the words used in Scripture have it) the answer reported to us is, that the sons of Korah is equivalent to the sons of the bald-head. This name let us not take in a ludicrous sense, lest haply we should prove ourselves to have but the "understanding of children"—such children as we read of in the Book of Kings, as insulting the holy Prophet Elisha, and crying after him, Go up, thou bald-head; go up, thou bald-head. For those children so foolishly loquacious, and cursing to their own ruin, were devoured by wild beasts that came out of the wood. This is written; and we have reminded you where it is written; let those who remember it recal it to their minds; those who remember it not, read it; those who have not read it, take it on faith. That thing then which that past event signified of times to come, ought not to overtake us. For in those children are typified foolish men, having the "understanding" of ignorance, such as the Apostle would fain have us not be, where he says, Be ye not children in understanding. And because the Lord had exhorted us to the imitation of children, (when he placed a little one before Him, and said, "unless one shall be as this child, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,”) even in that very passage the cautious Apostle, whilst he would have us not be of the understanding of children, yet on the other hand calls us to the imitation of children. Be not children (says he) in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, that in understanding ye may be full-grown. Let him who delights to imitate the child, delight not in its ignorance, but in its innocence. Now it was from ignorance, that those children insulted that bald-headed Saint of God, and cried after him, Bald-head! Bald-head! It came to pass that they were devoured by wild beasts; and they prefigured those men who with equal childishness of “understanding,” made a mock of a certain Bald-headed One, (“bald-headed” as having been crucified in the place of a skull. These then were possessed by a sort of wild beasts; i.e. by demons; the devil and his angels, who work in the children of disobedience. Such children as these were those who stood before the hallowed Cross, and wagged their heads, and said, If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross. His sons are we, in that we are the “children of the Bridegroom;” and it is to us that this Psalm is addressed, whose title has the words, For the sons of Korah, for the things that shall be changed.

2. Why need I explain what is meant by, for the things that shall be changed? Every one who is himself changed, recognises the meaning of this. Let him who hears this, for the things that shall be changed, consider what was before, and what is now. And first let him see the world itself to be changed, lately worshipping idols, now worshipping God; lately serving things that they themselves made, now serving Him by Whom they themselves were made. Observe at what time the words, “for the things that shall be changed,” were said. Already, by this time the Pagans that are left are in dread of the “changed” state of things: and those who will not suffer themselves to be “changed” see the Churches full; the temples deserted; see crowds here, and there solitude! They marvel at the things so changed; let them read that they were foretold; let them lend their ears to Him Who promised it; let them believe Him Who fulfils that promise. But each one of us, brethren, also, undergoes a change from “the old” to “the new man:” from an infidel to a believer: from a thief to a giver of alms: from an adulterer to a man of chastity; from an evil-doer to a doer of good. To us

then be sung the words, for the things that shall be changed; and so let the description of Him by Whom they were changed, begin.

3. For it goes on, For the things that shall be changed, to the sons of Korah for understanding; a song for the beloved. For that beloved One was seen by His persecutors, but yet not for "understanding." For had they known Him, they would never have crucified the Lord of Glory. In order to this "understanding," other eyes were required by Him when He said, He that seeth Me, seeth My Father also. Let the Psalm then now sound of Him, let us rejoice in the marriage-feast, and we shall be with those of whom the marriage is made, who are invited to the marriage; and the very persons invited are the Bride herself. For the Church is "the Bride;" Christ the Bridegroom. There are commonly spoken by Scholars certain verses to Bridegrooms and Brides, called "Epithalamia." Whatever is sung there, is sung in honour of the Bride and Bridegroom. Is there then no Bridechamber in that marriage-feast, to which we are invited? Whence then does another Psalm say, He hath set up His tabernacle in the Sun; and He is even as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber. The nuptial union is that of the Word, and the flesh. The Bridechamber of this union, the Virgin's womb. For the flesh itself was united to the Word: whence also it is said, Henceforth they are not twain, but one flesh. The Church was assumed unto Him out of the human race: so that the Flesh itself, being united to the Word, might be the Head of the Church: and the rest who believe, members of that Head. For would you see who is come to the marriage? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Let the bride rejoice, as being the object of the love of God. When was she beloved by Him? While she was as yet loathsome. For, All, says the Apostle, have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. And again, For Christ died for the ungodly. She was loved, while yet loathsome, that she might not remain loathsome. In truth, however, it was not in her loathsomeness she was loved; because her loathsomeness itself was not loved: for if it was this that He loved, He would retain this. He did away loathsomeness: He formed beauty! What was she when He came to her, and what has He made her now! Let Him now Himself come in the words of Prophecy; yea, let the Bridegroom Himself now come forth unto us; let us love Him; or rather, let us not love Him, if we find any thing in Him that is

not fair. Lo, He Himself found many things that were loathsome, and has loved us; let us not love Him, if we find any thing that is not fair in Him. For as for the very circumstance that He assumed flesh, so that it was even said of Him, We beheld Him, and He had no form nor comeliness, if you consider the mercy, through which He became Man, even in that also He is “beautiful:” but the Prophet was supporting the character of the Jews, when he said, We beheld Him, and He had no form nor comeliness. Why was it so? Because not (viewed) in understanding. But to those who understand the words, And the Word was made flesh, His “beauty” is wonderful. But God forbid that I should glory, (said one of the friends of the bridegroom,) save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not enough for thee not to be ashamed of it, unless thou makest thy boast of it also. Wherefore then had He no form nor comeliness? Because Christ crucified is both to the Jews a stumbling-block; and to the Greeks foolishness. But wherefore had He comeliness even upon the Cross? Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. To us, however, now that we are believers, let the Bridegroom, wheresoever He is, appear beautiful. He is “beautiful” as God, the Word with God; beautiful in the womb of the Virgin, where without losing His Divinity, He assumed the Manhood: Beautiful when born, the Infant Word: for when He was as yet but an Infant, whilst He was hanging at the breast, and was yet borne in arms, the Heavens spoke; the Angels gave forth praises; a Star directed the wise men; He was adored in the manger, He that is the food of gentle ones. He then is “beautiful” in Heaven, beautiful on earth; beautiful in the womb; beautiful in His parents’ hands: beautiful in His miracles; beautiful under the scourge: beautiful when inviting to life; beautiful also when not regarding death: beautiful in “laying down His life;” beautiful in “taking it again:” beautiful on the Cross; beautiful in the Sepulchre; beautiful in Heaven. Listen then to the song unto “understanding;” and let not the weakness of the flesh turn away your eyes from the splendour of His beauty! The highest beauty, the real beauty, is that of righteousness: there where you find Him unrighteous, you will see Him not beautiful. If He is righteous every whit, He is also “beautiful” every whit. Let Him then come to us to be beheld by the eyes of our minds; as He is described by a certain Prophet who is celebrating His praises, Lo! he begins:

4. Ver. 1. Mine heart hath uttered a good word. Who is the speaker? The Father, or the Prophet? For some understand it to be the Person of the Father, which says, Mine heart hath uttered a good word, intimating to us a certain unspeakable generation. Lest you should haply think something to have been taken unto Him, out of which God should beget the Son, (just as man takes something to himself out of which he begets children, that is to say, an union of marriage, without which man cannot beget offspring,) lest then you should think that God stood in need of any nuptial union, to beget "the Son," he says, Mine heart hath uttered a good word. This very day, thine heart, O man, begets a counsel, and requires no wife: by the counsel, so born of thine heart, thou buildest something or other, and before that building subsists, the design subsists; and that which thou art about to produce, exists already in that by which thou art going to produce it; and thou praisest the fabric that as yet is not existing, not yet in the visible form of a building, but on the projecting of a design: nor does any one else praise thy design, unless either thou shewest it to him, or he sees what thou hast done. If then by the Word all things were made, and the Word is of God, consider the fabric reared by the Word, and learn from that building to admire His counsels! What manner of Word is that, by Which heaven and earth were made; and all the splendor of the heavens; all the fertility of the earth; the expanse of the sea; the wide diffusion of air; the brightness of the constellations; the light of sun and moon? These are visible things: rise above these also; think of the Angels, Principalities, Thrones, Dominions, and Powers. All were made by Him. How then were these good things made? Because there was "uttered forth a good Word," by which they were to be made. Hence it is, a good Word. The Word Himself was addressed as Good Master: and the Word Himself made answer, Why askest thou Me of the Good? There is none good, save One, that is, God. Good Master, was what was said to Him: and He says, Why askest thou Me of the good? adding also, There is none good, save One, that is, God. How then is He Himself good, except that He is God? But not only is He Good, but He is also One God with the Father. For in saying, There is none good, save One, that is, God, He did not separate Himself from God, but declared His Oneness with Him. Mine heart hath utterd a good word. This may have been spoken by God the Father of His Good Word, Who is our "Good," and

the Worker of our good, by means of which “good” alone we ourselves can be in any way good.

5. It proceeds; I speak of the things which I have made unto the King. Is the Father still speaking? If the Father is still speaking, let us enquire how this also can be understood by us, consistently with the true Catholic Faith, I speak of the things that I have made unto the King. For if it is the Father speaking of His own works to His Son, our “King,” what works is the Father to speak of to the Son, seeing that all the Father’s works were made by the Son’s agency? Or, in the words, I speak of My works unto the King, does the word, I speak, itself signify the generation of the Son? I fear whether this can ever be made intelligible to those slow of comprehension: I will nevertheless say it. Let those who can follow me, do so: lest if it were left unsaid, even those who can follow should not be able. We have read where it is said in another Psalm, God hath spoken once. So often has He spoken by the Prophets, so often by the Apostles, and in these days by His Saints, and does He say, God has spoken once? How can He have spoken but once, except with reference to His Word? But as the Mine heart hath uttered a good Word, was understood by us in the other clause of the generation of the Son, it seems that a kind of repetition is made in the following sentence, so that the Mine heart hath uttered a good Word, which had been already said, is repeated in what He is now saying, I speak. For what does “I speak” mean? ‘I utter a Word.’ And whence but from His heart, from His very inmost, does God utter the Word? You yourself do not speak any thing but what you bring forth from your “heart,” this word of yours which sounds once and passes away, is brought forth from no other place: and do you wonder that God speaks in this manner? But God’s ‘speaking’ is eternal. You are speaking something at the present moment, because you were silent before: or, look you, you have not yet brought forth your word; but when you have begun to bring it forth, you as it were ‘break silence;’ and bring into being a word, that did not exist before. It was not so God begat the “Word.” God’s ‘speaking’ is without beginning, and without end: and yet the “Word” He utters is but “One.” Let Him utter another, if what He has spoken shall have passed away. But since He by Whom it is uttered abideth, and That which is uttered abideth; and is uttered but once, and has no end, that very ‘once’ too is said without beginning, and there is

no second speaking, because that which is said once, does not pass away. The words, Mine heart hath uttered a good Word, then, are the same thing with, I speak of the things which I have made unto the King. Why then, I speak of the things which I have made? Because in the Word Itself are all the works of God. For whatever God designed to make in the creation already existed in “the Word;” and would not exist in the reality, had it not existed in the Word, just as with you the thing would not exist in the building, had it not existed in your design: even as it is said in the Gospel; That which was made in Him was life. That which was made then was in existence; but it had its existence in the Word: and all the works of God existed there, and yet were not as yet works. “The Word” however already was, and this Word was God, and was with God: and was the Son of God, and One God with the Father. I speak of the things I have made unto the King. Let him hear Him “speaking,” who apprehends “the Word:” and let him see together with the Father the Everlasting Word; in Whom exist even those things that are yet to come: in Whom even those things that are past have not passed away. These “works” of God are in the Word, as in the Word, as in the Only-Begotten, as in the “Word of God.”

6. What follows then? My tongue is the pen of a writer writing rapidly. What likeness, my brethren, what likeness, I ask, has the “tongue” of God with a transcriber’s pen? What resemblance has the rock to Christ? What likeness does the “lamb” bear to our Saviour, or what “the lion” to the strength of the Only-Begotten? Yet such comparisons have been made; and were they not made, we should not be formed to a certain extent by these visible things to the knowledge of the “Invisible One.” So then with this mean simile of the pen; let us not compare it to His excellent greatness, so let us not reject it with contempt. For I ask, why He compares His tongue to the pen of a writer writing rapidly? But how swiftly soever the transcriber writes, still it is not comparable to that swiftness of which another Psalm says, His word runneth very swiftly. But it appears to me, (if human understanding may presume so far,) that this too may be understood as spoken in the Person of the Father; My tongue is the pen of a writer. Inasmuch as what is spoken by the tongue, sounds once and passes away, what is written, remains; seeing then that God uttereth “a Word,” and the Word which is uttered does not sound once and pass away, but is uttered

and yet continues, God chose rather to compare this to words written than to sounds. But what He added, saying, of one writing swiftly, stimulates the mind unto understanding. Let it however not slothfully rest here, thinking of transcribers, or thinking of some kind of quick shorthand writers: if it be this it sees in the passage, it will be resting there. Let it think swiftly what is the meaning of that word swiftly. The swiftly of God is such that nothing exceeds in swiftness. For in writings letter is written after letter; syllable after syllable; word after word: nor do we pass to the second except when the first is written out. But there nothing can exceed the swiftness, where there are not several words; and yet there is not any thing omitted; since in the One are contained all things.

7. Lo! now then that Word, so uttered, Eternal, the Co-eternal Offspring of the Eternal, will come as “the Bridegroom;” (ver. 2.) Fairer than the children of men. “Than the children of men.” I ask, why not than the Angels also? Why did he say, than the children of men, except because He was Man? Lest you should think the Man Christ to be any ordinary man, he says, Fairer than the children of men. Even though Himself ‘Man,’ He is fairer than the children of men; though among the children of men, “fairer than the children of men: though of the children of men, fairer than the children of men. Grace is shed abroad on Thy lips. ‘The Law was given by Moses. Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.’ Grace is shed abroad on Thy lips. Was it through my deserts that I was helped; because I delight in the Law of God after the inner man? But, there is another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Grace is shed abroad on Thy lips. He came unto us with the word of grace, with the kiss of grace. What is there more sweet than that grace? To what purport is that grace? Blessed are they, whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. If He were to come as a severe Judge, and not to bring that “grace,” which is “shed abroad on His lips,” who could have any hope of salvation? Who could help fearing for himself what was the sinner’s due? He, coming with “grace,” did not exact what was due, but paid that which He did not owe. For was not the forfeit of “death” due from the sinner? Or was there any thing but

punishment “due” to you, being a sinner? He has remitted thy debt, and He has paid that which He did not owe. Marvellous “grace!” Wherefore grace? Because it is given gratis, freely. For this reason it is in your power to acknowledge the free gift, not to recompense it. He sought to find what reward to render, and said, What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me? And he seemed to have found something, I will take the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord. Is this the recompense that thou renderest? that thou “takest the cup of salvation, and callest upon the name of the Lord?” Who gave thee that very cup of salvation? He continued the acknowledgment of the free grace, for as to the rendering a recompense for it, he was at a loss. Find something to give unto God, that thou hast not received from Him: and thou wilt have rendered a return for that free grace. But beware, lest whilst thou seekest something that thou didst not receive from God, to render unto Him, thou find it indeed; but only thine own sin! This it is true thou didst not receive from Him, but thou oughtest not to give to Him either. This the Jews gave unto Him, They rewarded Him evil for good; they received rain from Him, and they rendered unto Him not fruit; but the thorns of suffering. Whatsoever good thing then in thyself thou wouldest offer unto God, thou findest thyself to have received from Him only. There is the grace that is “shed abroad on His lips;” He made thee; made thee of His free grace: for there was nothing for Him to reward, before He had made thee. Thou wert lost: He sought thee, and having found thee, restored thee. He did not impute to thee the past. He promised thee the future. Verily, grace is shed abroad on Thy lips! Therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever. A difficulty is started how this, therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever, can be understood to be still spoken by God the Father. It seems that it may with more propriety be understood of the person of the Prophet. And sudden and perfectly abrupt changes of person are found in the sacred writings: indeed the divine pages, if any one takes notice, are full of them. Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue. And immediately follows, What shall be given unto thee, or what shall be added unto thee against the false tongue. There is a different person in this verse from that in the former: in the one, that of a person asking, in the other, of one bringing, succour. Sharp arrows of the mighty One, with consuming coals of fire. There is one person that says, “What shall be given or added unto thee,” and in what follows another is introduced, Woe is me that my sojourn is remote. So frequent a change of persons in a few verses is a hint for our understanding; He does not point out the place where the change is made: we are not told, ‘God spake this, and man this;’ but it is from the words themselves we are made to understand what relates to man, what to God. Now it was man that said, My heart hath uttered a good word. It was a man that said it; it was the writer of the Psalm that said; but he said it speaking in the person of God. He begins to speak in his own person also. Therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever. For God hath said, Grace is shed abroad on Thy lips, addressing Him, Whom He had made fair before the children of men; even the Man Whom the Eternal had begotten before all things; God, co-eternal with Himself. The Prophet then is filled with a certain unspeakable joy; and considering what God the Father hath revealed of His Son to man, that he could also speak those former words in the Person of God, says, therefore hath God blessed Thee for ever. Wherefore? On account of that grace. For to what does that grace tend? To the “kingdom of heaven.” For the First Testament had promised the earth; and the reward, or the promise, to those under the Law was different from that under Grace: “the land of Canaan” to Jews under the Law, “the kingdom of heaven” to Christians under Grace. That kingdom, then, that belonged to those under the Law, that land, has passed away. The kingdom of heaven, that belongs to those under Grace, does not pass away. God hath blessed thee, not for a time, but for ever.

9. There have not been wanting those, who preferred understanding all the preceding passage also of the Prophet’s own person; and would have even this verse, Mine heart hath uttered forth a good word, understood as spoken by the Prophet, supposed to be uttering a hymn. (For whoever utters a hymn to God, his heart is, as it were, “uttering forth a good word,” just as his heart who blasphemes God, is uttering forth an evil word.) So that even by what follows, I speak of the things which I have made unto the King, he meant to express that man’s chief work was but to praise God. To Him it belongs to satisfy thee, by His beauty; to thee to praise Him with thanksgiving. If thy “works” be not the praise of God, thou art beginning to love thine own self; thou wilt belong to the number of those of whom the Apostle says, Men shall be lovers of their own selves. Be dissatisfied with thyself; find satisfaction in Him Who made thee: in that thou art dissatisfied

with that in thine own self, which thou thyself hast made. Be then thy “work” the praise of God; let thine heart utter forth a good word. Tell then of thy works unto the King, for it is the King Himself that hath made thee to tell of them; and He it is Who gave thee what thou mightest offer to Him. Render to Him of His own; be not willing, having received the share of thine inheritance, to ‘go afar off, and riotously squander it on harlots; and feed the swine.’ Remember this passage of the Gospel. But to us also apply the words, He was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found.

10. My tongue is the pen of a writer writing quickly. There have been persons who have understood the Prophet to have been describing in this manner what he was writing; and therefore to have compared his tongue to the pen of a writer writing quickly: but that he chose to express himself in the words writing quickly, to signify, that he was writing of things which were to come “quickly;” that writing quickly should be understood to be equivalent to “writing things that are quick;” i.e. writing things that would not long tarry. For God did not tarry long to manifest Christ. How quickly is that perceived to have rolled by, which is acknowledged to be already past! Call to mind the generations before thee; thou wilt find that the making of Adam is but a thing of yesterday. So do we read that all things have gone on from the very beginning: they were therefore done quickly. The day of Judgment also will be here quickly. Do thou anticipate its “quick” coming. It is to come “quickly;” do thou become converted yet more “quickly.” The Judge’s face will appear: but observe thou what the Prophet says, Let us come before (let us ‘prevent’) His face with confession. Grace is shed abroad on thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

11. Ver. 3. Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O most Mighty. What is meant by Thy sword, but Thy word? It was by that sword He scattered His enemies; by that sword He divided the son from the father, “the daughter from the mother, the daughter-in-law from the mother-in-law.” We read these words in the Gospel, I came not to send peace, but a sword. And, in one house shall five be divided against each other; three against two, and two against three; i.e. “the father against the son, the daughter against the mother, the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law.” By what “sword,” but that which Christ brought, was this division wrought? And indeed, my

brethren, we see this exemplified daily. Some young man is minded to give himself up to God’s service; his father is opposed to it; they are “divided against each other:” the one promises an earthly inheritance, the other loves an heavenly; the one promises one thing, the other prefers another. The father should not think himself wronged: God alone is preferred to him. And yet he is at strife with the son, who would fain give himself to God’s service. But the spiritual sword is mightier to separate them, than the ties of carnal nature to bind them together. This happens also in the case of a mother against her daughter; still more also in that of a daughter-in-law against a mother-in-law. For sometimes in one house mother-in-law and daughter-in-law are found orthodox and heretical respectively. And where that sword is forcibly felt, we do not dread the repetition of Baptism. Could daughter be divided against mother; and could not daughter-in-law be divided against mother-in-law?

12. This takes place also with mankind in general, that “son is divided against father.” For we were once children of the devil. It was said to us, when we were as yet unbelievers, Ye are of your father, the devil. He was not our father by begetting us; but we became his children by becoming like him. Now you see the son divided against the father. That “sword” has come; he renounces the devil; he finds another father and another mother. The former, by proposing himself for our imitation, begat us unto perdition; the two parents we have found gender unto life everlasting. “The son (then) is divided against the father.” “The daughter is divided against the mother:” the laity, which came from Judaism to belief, is divided against the Synagogue. The daughter-in-law also is divided against the mother-in-law; the laity, which came from among the Gentiles, is expressed by the daughter-in-law, because Christ, the Bridegroom, is the Son of the Synagogue. For from whence, according to the flesh, was the Son of God born? From that Synagogue. Even He, Who forsook His Father and mother, and clave unto His wife, that they twain might be one flesh; according to no mere conjecture of ours, but to the attestation of the Apostle, saying, This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. For in a certain sense, He did forsake the Father; He did not indeed “forsake” Him entirely, as it were, unto actual separation from Him, but unto the assumption of human flesh. In what way did He “forsake” Him? In that,

when He was in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied Himself of His glory, taking upon Him the form of a servant. In what way did He “forsake His mother” also? In forsaking the Jewish nation; that Synagogue that would still cleave to the old types. To a figurative expression of this belongs that He said, Who is My mother, or who are My brethren? For He was within, teaching; they were standing without. Consider if it is not so now with the Jews. Christ is teaching within the Church: they still stand without. What then is “the mother-in-law?” The mother of the Bridegroom. The mother of the Bridegroom, our Lord Jesus Christ, is the Synagogue. Her daughter-in-law, then, is the Church, which, coming from the Gentiles, did not consent to carnal circumcision, and is divided against her mother-in-law. Gird on Thy sword. It was of the mighty power of that “sword” we were speaking, when we said this.

13. Gird Thy sword upon Thee, i.e. Thy word, about Thy thigh, O most Mighty; i e. having Thy sword girt about Thy thigh. What does he mean to express by the “thigh?” The flesh. Whence those words, A prince shall not depart from Judah; and a lawgiver from his thighs? Did not Abraham himself, (to whom was promised the seed in which “all the nations of the earth were to be blessed,”) when he sent his servant to seek and to bring home a wife for his son, being by faith fully persuaded, that in that (so to speak) contemptible seed was contained the great Name; that is, that the Son of God was to come of the seed of Abraham, out of all the children of men;) did not he, I say, cause his servant to swear unto him in this manner, saying, Put thy hand under my thigh, and so swear; as if he had said, “Put thy hand on the altar, or on the Gospel, or on the Prophet, or on any holy thing.” Put (he says) thy hand under my thigh; having full confidence, not ashamed of it as unseemly, but understanding therein a truth. Gird, therefore, thy sword about Thee, about Thy thigh, most Mighty. Most Mighty even about Thy thigh; because the weakness of God is stronger than men.

14. With Thy beauty and Thy glory. Take to Thee that righteousness, in which Thou art at all times beautiful and glorious.

Ver. 4. And speed on, and proceed prosperously, and reign. Do we not see it so? Is it not already come to pass? He has “sped on; has proceeded prosperously, and He reigns;" all nations are subdued unto Him. What a thing was it to see that "in the Spirit," of which same thing it is now in our power to experience in the reality! At the time when these words were said, Christ did not yet "reign" thus; had not yet sped on, nor "proceeded prosperously." They were then being preached, they have now been fulfilled: in many things we have God's promise fulfilled already; in some few we have to claim its fulfilment yet. Speed on, and proceed prosperously, and reign.

15. Because of truth, meekness, and righteousness. Truth was restored unto us, when the Truth sprung out of the earth: and Righteousness looked out from heaven. Christ was presented to the expectation of mankind, that in Abraham's Seed "all nations should be blessed." The Gospel has been preached. It is the Truth. What is meant by meekness? The Martyrs have suffered; and the kingdom of God has made much progress, from thence, and advanced throughout all nations; because the Martyrs suffered, and neither "fell away," nor yet offered resistance; confessing every thing, concealing nothing; prepared for every thing, shrinking from nothing. Marvellous meekness! This did the Body of Christ, by its Head it learned. He was first led as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, even so opened not His mouth; meek to that degree, that while hanging on the Cross, He said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Why because of righteousness? He will come also to judge, and to render to every man according to his works. He spake the truth; He patiently endured unrighteousness: He is to bring righteousness hereafter.

And Thy right hand shall lead Thee on marvellously. We shall be guided on by His right hand: He by His own. For He is God, we mortal men. He was led on by His own right hand; i.e. by His own power. For the power which the Father hath, He hath also; the Father's immortality He hath also: He hath the Father's Divinity, the Father's Eternity, the Father's Power. Marvellously will His right hand lead Him on, performing the works of God; undergoing human sufferings, overthrowing the evil wills of men by His own goodness. Even now, He is being led on even to places where as yet He is not; and it is His own right hand that is leading Him on. For that is leading Him thither which He has Himself bestowed upon His Saints. Thy right hand shall lead Thee on marvellously.

Ver. 5. Thine arrows are sharp, are most powerful; words that pierce the heart, that kindle love. Whence in the Song of Songs it is said, I am wounded with love. For she speaks of being “wounded with love;” that is, of being in love, of being inflamed with passion, of sighing for the Bridegroom, from Whom she received the arrow of the Word. Thine arrows are sharp, are most powerful; both piercing, and effective; sharp, most powerful.

The peoples shall fall under Thee. Who have “fallen?” They who were “wounded” have also “fallen.” We see the nations subdued unto Christ; we do not see them “fall.” He explains where they “fall,” viz. in the heart. It was there they lifted themselves up against Christ, there they fall down before Christ. Saul was a blasphemer of Christ: he was then lifted up, he prays to Christ, “he is fallen,” he is prostrate before Him: the enemy of Christ is slain, that the disciple of Christ may live! By an arrow launched from heaven, Saul, (not as yet Paul, but still Saul,) still lifted up, still not yet prostrate, is wounded in the heart: he received the arrow, he fell “in heart.” For though he fell prostrate on his face, it was not there that he fell down in heart: but it was there where he said aloud, Lord, what dost Thou bid me do? But just now thou wert going to bind the Christians, and to bring them to punishment: and now thou sayest unto Christ, What dost Thou bid me do? O arrow sharp and most mighty, by whose stroke Saul fell, so as to become Paul. As it was with him, so was it also with “the peoples;” consider the nations, observe their subjection unto Christ. The peoples (then) shall fall under Thee in the heart of the King’s enemies; that is, in the heart of Thine enemies. For it is Him that he calls King, Him that he recognises as King. The peoples shall fall under Thee in the heart of the King’s enemies.

They were “enemies” before; they have been stricken by thine arrows: they have fallen before Thee. Out of enemies they have been made friends: the enemies are dead, the friends survive. This is the meaning of, for those which shall be changed. We are seeking to understand each single word, and each separate verse; yet so far only are we to seek for their “understanding,” as to leave no one to doubt that they are spoken of Christ. The peoples shall fall under Thee, in the heart of the King’s enemies.

17. Ver. 6. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. Because God has “blessed Thee for ever,” on account of the grace poured over Thy lips. Now the throne of the Jewish Kingdom was a temporal one; belonging to those who were under the Law, not to those who were under “grace:” He came to “redeem those who were under the Law,” and to place them under ‘Grace.’ His Throne is for ever and ever. Why? for that first throne of the Kingdom was but a temporal one: whence then have we a throne for ever and ever? Because it is God’s throne. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. O divine Attribute of Eternity! for God could not have a temporal throne. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever—a sceptre of direction is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom.

“The sceptre of direction” is that which directs mankind: they were before crooked, distorted; they sought to reign for themselves: they loved themselves, loved their own evil deeds: they submitted not their own will to God; but would fain have bent God’s will to conformity with their own lusts. For the sinner and the unrighteous man is generally angry with God, because it rains not! and yet would have God not be angry with himself, because he is profligate. And it is pretty much for this very reason that men daily sit, to dispute against God: “This is what He ought to have done: this He has not well done.” Thou forsooth seest what thou doest; He knows not what He does! It is thou that art crooked! His ways are right. When wilt thou make the crooked coincide with the straight? It cannot be made to coincide with it. Just as if you were to place a crooked stick on a level pavement; it does not join on to it; it does not cohere; it does not fit into the pavement. The pavement is even in every part: but that is crooked; it does not fit into that which is level. The will of God then is equal, thine own is “crooked:” it is because thou canst not be conformed unto it, that it seems “crooked” unto thee: rule thou thyself by it; seek not to bend it to thine own will: for thou canst not accomplish it; that is at all times ‘straight!’ Wouldest thou abide in Him? “Correct thou thyself;” so will the sceptre of Him Who rules thee, be unto thee “a rule of direction.” Thence is He also called King, from ruling. For that is no “ruler” that does not correct.

Hereunto is our King a King of ‘right ones.’ Just as He is a Priest (Sacerdos) by sanctifying us, so is He our King, our Ruler, by ‘ruling’ us. But what says He elsewhere? With the holy Thou wilt be holy, and with the upright man Thou wilt shew Thyself upright. With the pure Thou wilt shew Thyself pure, and with the froward Thou wilt shew Thyself froward: not that God’s ways are crooked; but that they whose ways are crooked, think His ways crooked. Does goodness please thee? God is Good. Does it displease thee? He is to thee as if unrighteous. Unto thee, God is crooked: this is the effect of thine own crookedness: for His righteousness remaineth for ever. Hear in another Psalm: How good is God unto Israel, unto such as are right in heart.

18. Ver. 6, 7. A rod of direction is the rod of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity. See there “the rod of direction” described. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity. Draw near to that rod; let Christ be thy King: let Him “rule” thee with that rod, not crush thee with it. For that rod is a rod of iron; an inflexible rod. Thou shall rule them with a rod of iron: and break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. Some He rules; others He “breaks in pieces:” He ‘rules’ them that are spiritual: He breaks in pieces them that are carnal. Draw near then to that rod; what fearest thou in it? This is the whole of that rod; Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity. What dost thou fear? But perhaps thou wert thyself unrighteous: for thou hearest of thy King that He hateth iniquity, and thou fearest. Thou hast what to do. What is it that He hates? “Iniquity.” Is it thee? But there is iniquity in thee. God hates it, do thou hate it too; that the same thing may be hated by you both. For so wilt thou be the friend of God, if thou hate what He hates. So wilt thou also love what He loves. Be displeased with thine own unrighteousness: take delight in that which He created. For thou art an unrighteous man. I apply to thee two words; the two words, “man,” and “unrighteous,” out of these two names one expresses thy nature, the other thy fault: the one God made for thee; the other is thine own work: love what God made: hate that which thou thyself hast made, in that He Himself hates it also. See how thou art already beginning to become united to Him, now that thou hatest what He hates. He will hereafter punish sin, for the rod of His kingdom is a rod of direction. ‘But let Him not punish sin.’ Nay, He cannot but (punish it.) Sin is to be punished; if it were not what must be

punished, it would not be sin. Anticipate Him: thou wouldest have Him not punish it; do thou punish it. For it is for this very reason that He still spares thee, still reprieves thee: still withholds His hand; still bends His bow; that is, His threatenings. Would He so loudly declare that He was about to smite thee, if He wished to smite thee? He is then holding back His hand from the punishment of thine offences; but do not thou hold back. Turn thou thyself to the punishment of thine offences: for unpunished offences cannot be: punishment therefore must be executed either by thyself, or by Him: do thou then plead guilty, that He may reprieve thee. Consider an instance in that penitential Psalm; Hide Thy face from my sins. Did he mean “from me?” No: for in another passage he says plainly, Hide not Thy face from me. Turn then Thy face from my sins. I would have Thee not see my sins. For God’s ‘seeing’ is animadverting upon. Hence too a Judge is said to ‘animadvert’ (animum advertere) on that which he punishes; i.e. to turn his mind on it, to bend it thereon, even to the punishment of it, inasmuch as he is the Judge. So too is God a Judge. Turn Thou Thy face from my sins. But thou thyself, if thou wouldest have God turn ‘His face’ from them, turn not thine own face from them. Observe how he proposes this to God in that very Psalm; I acknowledge, he says, my transgression, and my sin is ever before me. He would fain have that, which he wishes to be ever before his own eyes, not be before God’s eyes. A rod of direction is the rod of Thy kingdom. Let no one flatter himself with fond hopes of God’s mercy. His sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness. Do we say that God is not merciful? What can exceed His mercy, Who shews such forbearance to sinners; Who takes no account of the past in all that turn unto Him? So love thou Him for His mercy, as still to wish that He should be truthful. For mercy cannot strip Him of His attribute of justice: nor justice of that of mercy. Meanwhile during the time that He postpones thy punishment, do not thou postpone it: for a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of His kingdom.

19. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore, God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee. It was for this reason that He anointed thee, that thou mightest love righteousness, and hate iniquity. And observe in what way he expresses himself. Therefore, God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee: i.e. ‘God hath anointed Thee, O God.’ ‘God’ is ‘anointed’ by God. For in the Latin it is thought to be the same case of the noun repeated: in the Greek

however there is a most evident distinction; one being the name of the Person addressed; and one His, who makes the address, saying, “God hath anointed Thee.” “O God, Thy God hath anointed Thee,” just as if He were saying, Therefore hath Thy God, O God, anointed Thee. Take it in that sense, understand it in that sense; that such is the sense is most evident in the Greek. Who then is the God that is ‘anointed’ by God? Let the Jews tell us; these Scriptures are common to us and them. It was God, Who was anointed by God: you hear of an Anointed one; understand it to mean “Christ.” For the name of ‘Christ’ comes from chrism; this name by which He is called “Christ” expresses “unction:” nor were kings and prophets anointed in any kingdom, in any other place, save in that kingdom where Christ was prophesied of, where He was anointed, and from whence the Name of Christ was to come. It is found no where else at all: in no one nation or kingdom. God, then, was anointed by God; with what oil was He anointed, but a spiritual one? For the visible oil is in the sign, the invisible oil is in the mystery; the spiritual oil is within. “God” then was “anointed” for us, and sent unto us; and God Himself was man, in order that He might be “anointed:” but He was man, in such a way as to be God still. He was God in such a way as not to disdain to be man. “Very man and very God;” in nothing deceitful, in nothing false, as being every where true, every where the Truth itself. God then is man; and it was for this cause that “God” was anointed, because God was Man, and became “Christ.”

20. This was figured in Jacob’s placing a stone at his head, and so sleeping. The patriarch Jacob had placed a stone at his head: sleeping with that stone at his head, he saw heaven opened, and a ladder from heaven to earth, and Angels ascending and descending; after this vision he awaked, anointed the stone, and departed. In that stone he understood Christ; for that reason he anointed it. Take notice what it is whereby Christ is preached. What is the meaning of that anointing of a stone, especially in the case of the Patriarchs who worshipped but One God? It was however done as a figurative act: and he departed. For he did not anoint the stone, and come to worship there constantly, and to perform sacrifice there. It was the expression of a mystery; not the commencement of sacrilege. And notice the meaning of “the stone.” The Stone which the builders refused, this is become the head of the corner. Notice here a great mystery. The Stone is Christ. Peter calls

Him a living Stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God. And the stone is set at “the head,” because Christ is the Head of the man. And “the stone” was anointed, because “Christ” was so called from His being anointed. And in the revelation of Christ, the ladder from earth to heaven is seen, or from heaven to earth, and the Angels ascending and descending. What this means, we shall see more clearly, when we have quoted the testimony from the Lord Himself in the Gospel. You know that Jacob is the same as Israel. For when he wrestled with the Angel, and “prevailed,” and had been blest by Him over Whom he prevailed, his name was changed, so that he was called “Israel; just as the people of Israel prevailed against Christ, so as to crucify Him, and nevertheless was (in those who believed in Christ) blest by Him over Whom it prevailed. But many believed not; hence the halting of Jacob. Here we have at once, blessing and halting. Blessing on those who became believers; for we know that afterwards many of that people did believe: Halting on the other hand in those who believed not. And because the greater part believed not, and but few believed, therefore that a halting might be produced, He touched the breadth of his thigh. What is meant by the breadth of the thigh? The great multitude of his descendants. Notice then that “ladder.” Our Lord says in the Gospel, (when He beheld Nathanael,) Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. For so is it said of Jacob himself, And Jacob was without guile, dwelling in an house. The Lord recalling this to mind, and seeing Nathanael a man of that people and nation to be a man without guile, Behold (He says) an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. It was on account of Jacob that He called him ‘an Israelite without guile.’ And that Nathanael says, Whence knowest Thou me? And the Lord said, When thou wert under the fig-tree I saw thee: i.e. when thou wert among that people, placed under the Law, which sheltered that People with its carnal shadows, I saw thee there. What is meant by ‘I saw thee there?’ I took compassion upon thee there. He however remembering that he had been literally also under a fig-tree, wondering, (as he believed himself to have been seen by no one, when he was there,) confesses and says, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel. Who is it that says this? He who had been told that he was an ‘Israelite indeed, and that in him there was no guile;’ and the Lord said, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, hast thou believed? Thou shalt see greater things than these. He is speaking with Jacob, with

‘Israel;’ with him who placed the stone at his head. Thou shalt see greater things than these. What ‘greater things?’ Inasmuch as “Christ” is now the Head of the man. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye shall see Heaven opened, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. May “the Angels” of God “ascend and descend” by that ladder; may that be realized in the Church! The “Angels of God” are those who preach His Truth: let them “ascend,” and see it written, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Let them “descend,” and see it written, that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Let them “ascend” in order to elevate the great ones: let them “descend,” in order to nourish the little ones. Behold Paul “ascending;” Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: behold him descending; Or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. Behold him ascending; We speak wisdom among them that are perfect: behold him descending; I have fed you with milk, and not with meat. This is realized in the Church: “the Angels of God” do ascend and descend on the Son of Man: for the Son of Man is at once above, unto Whom they ascend in heart, that is to say, His Head; and the Son of Man is below, that is to say, His Body. The “members” are here: the “head” is above: we ascend to the head, we descend to the members. Christ is there, Christ is here too. For were He there only, and not here, how should we account for that speech, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? For in Heaven who could have given Him annoyance? None, not the Jews, nor Saul, nor the devil His tempter, no one could give Him annoyance there: but it was as it is with the frame of the human body, the foot being trodden upon, the tongue crieth out.

21. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore, God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee. We have been speaking of God, Who was “anointed;” i.e. of Christ. The name of Christ could not be more clearly expressed, than by His being called God the Anointed. In the same way in which He was beautiful before the children of men, so is He here anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. Who then are His fellows? The children of men; for that He Himself (as the Son of Man) became partaker of their mortality in order to make them partakers of His Immortality.

22. Ver. 8. Out of Thy garments is the smell of myrrh, amber, and cassia. Out of Thy garments is perceived the smell of fragrant odours. By His garments are meant His Saints, His elect, His whole Church, which He shews forth, as His garment, so to speak; His robe without spot and wrinkle, which on account of its spots He has washed in His blood; on account of its “wrinkles” extended on His Cross. Hence the sweet savour which is signified by certain perfumes there mentioned. Hear Paul, that least of the Apostles, that hem of that garment, which the woman with the issue of blood touched, and was healed, hear him saying; We are a sweet savour of Christ, in every place, both in them that are saved, and in them that perish. He did not say, ‘We are a sweet savour in them that are saved, and a foul savour in them that are lost:’ but, as far as relates to ourselves, ‘we are a sweet savour both in them that are saved, and in them that perish.’ That a man should be saved by ‘a sweet savour,’ is not improbable or incredible; but that a man should perish through a sweet savour, how is it to be accounted for? It is a thing of great force; it is a great truth: and it is so, even if it cannot be comprehended. For that you may understand that it is hard to be comprehended, he immediately added; And who is sufficient for these things? Who can understand that men perish by a sweet savour? Something however I would say on this, brethren. Behold when Paul himself was preaching the Gospel, many loved him, as the preacher of the Gospel; many envied him. They who loved him were saved by the odour of “sweet savour;” they who envied him, perished by means of that “sweet savour.” To them that perished then he was not a foul “savour,” but a “sweet savour.” For it was for this very reason they the more envied him, the more excellent that grace was which reigned in him: for no man envies him who is unhappy. He then was glorious in the preaching of God’s Word, and in regulating his life according to the rule of that rod of direction; and he was loved by those who loved Christ in him, who followed after and pursued the odour of sweet savour; who loved the friend of the Bridegroom: that is to say, by the Bride Herself, who says in the Song of Songs, We will run after the sweet savour of thy perfumes. But the others, the more they beheld him invested with the glory of the preaching of the Gospel, and of an irreproachable life, were so much the more tortured with envy, and found that sweet savour prove death to them.

23. Ver. 8. Out of Thy garments is the smell of myrrh, amber, and cassia; out of thy ivory palaces, whereby kings' daughters have made Thee glad. Choose which ever you please, "ivory" palaces, or "magnificent," or "royal" palaces, it is out of these that the kings' daughters have made Christ glad. Would you understand the spiritual sense of "ivory palaces?" Understand by them the magnificent houses, and tabernacles of God, the hearts of the Saints; and by these self-same "kings" those who rule their flesh; who bring into subjection to themselves the rebellious commonalty of human affections, who chastise the body, and reduce it to bondage: for it is from these that the daughters of kings have made Him glad. For all the souls that have been born through their preaching and evangelizing are 'daughters of kings:' and the Churches, as the daughters of Apostles, are daughters of kings. For He is "King of kings;" they themselves kings, of whom it was said, "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." They preached the "Word of Truth;" and begat Churches not for themselves, but for Him. With this mystery is connected what is written in the Law. "If a man's brother die, let his brother take his wife, and raise up seed to his brother." 'Let his brother take his wife, and raise up seed to his brother.' Christ said, Say unto my brethren. In the Psalms He said, I will declare Thy name unto my brethren. Christ died, rose again, ascended, became "absent in the body." His brethren have taken His wife, to beget children, by the preaching of the Gospel, (not by themselves, but by the Gospel), for their Brother's name's sake. For in Christ Jesus, through the Gospel, (saith he,) have I begotten you. Therefore as "raising up seed to their brother," to as many as they begat, they gave the name not of 'Paulians' or 'Petrians,' but of "Christians." Observe whether that sense is not wakefully kept in these verses. For when he said, "out of the ivory palaces, he spake of mansions royal, ample, honourable, peaceful, like the heart of the Saints; he added, Whereby the kings' daughters have made Thee glad in Thine honour. They are indeed daughters of kings, daughters of thine Apostles, but still in Thine honour: for they raised up seed to their brother. Hence Paul, when he saw those whom he had raised up unto his Brother, running after his own name, exclaimed, Was Paul crucified for you? For what saith the Law: Let the son which is born bear the name of him that is dead. Let him be born to him that is dead, be called by the name of him that is dead. This precept of the Law Paul retains; those who wished

to be called by his name he checks, saying, Was Paul crucified for you? Look at Him Who is dead? Was Paul crucified for you? What then? When thou didst beget them, haply thou didst bestow thine own name upon them. No; for he says, Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? The daughters of kings have made Thee glad in Thine honour. Keep, hold fast this ‘in Thine honour.’ This is meant by having a wedding garment; seeking His honour, His glory. Understand moreover by kings’ daughters the cities, which were founded by kings, and have received the faith: and out of the ivory palaces, (palaces rich, the proud, the lifted up.) Kings’ daughters have made Thee glad in Thine honour; in that they sought not the honour of their founders, but have sought Thine honour. Shew me at Rome a temple of Romulus, held in so great honour, as I can shew you the Monument of Peter. In Peter, who is honoured, but He Who died for us? For we are followers of Christ, not followers of Peter. And even if we were born from the brother of Him that is dead, yet are we named after the name of Him Who is dead. We were begotten by the one, but begotten to the other. Behold, Rome, Carthage, and several other cities are the daughters of kings, and yet have they made glad the King in His honour: and all these make up one single Queen.

24. What a nuptial song! Behold in the midst of songs full of rejoicing, comes forth the Bride herself. For the Bridegroom was coming. It was He Who was being described: it was on Him all our attention was fixed.

Ver. 9. Upon Thy right hand did stand the Queen. She which stands on the left is no Queen. For there will be one standing on the left also, to whom it will be said, Go into everlasting fire. But she shall stand on the right hand, to whom it will be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. On Thy right hand did stand the Queen, in a vesture of gold, clothed about with divers colours. What is the vesture of this Queen? It is one both precious, and also of divers colours: it is the mysteries of doctrine in all the various tongues: one African, one Syrian, one Greek, one Hebrew, one this, and one that; it is these languages that produce the divers colours of this vesture. But just as all the divers colours of the vesture blend together in the one vesture, so do all the languages in one and the same faith. In that vesture, let there be diversity, let there be no rent. See we have “understood” the divers colours of the diversity of tongues; and the vesture to refer to unity: but in that diversity itself, what is meant by the ‘gold?’ Wisdom itself. Let there be any diversity of tongues you please, but there is but one “gold” that is preached of: not a different gold, but a different form of that gold. For it is the same Wisdom, the same doctrine and discipline that every language preaches. In the languages there is diversity; gold in the thoughts.

25. The Prophet addresses this Queen, (for he delights in singing to her,) and moreover each one of us, provided, however, we know where we are, and endeavour to belong to that body, and do belong to it in faith and hope, being united in the membership of Christ. For it is us whom he addresses, saying, Hearken, O daughter, and behold, as being one of the Fathers, (for they are daughters of kings,) although it be a Prophet, or although it be an Apostle that is addressing her; addressing her, as a daughter, for we are accustomed to speak in this way, Our fathers the Prophets, our fathers the Apostles; if we address them as “fathers,” they may address us as children: and it is one father’s voice addressing one daughter. Hearken, O daughter, and see. Hear first; afterward see. For they came to us with the Gospel; and that has been preached to us, which as yet we do not see, and which on hearing of it we believed, which by believing it, we shall come to see: even as the Bridegroom Himself speaks in the Prophet, A people whom I have not known served me. In the hearing of me with the ear it obeyed me. What is meant by on hearing of me with the ear? That they did not see. The Jews saw Him, and crucified Him; the Gentiles saw Him not, and believed. Let the Queen who comes from the Gentiles come in “the vesture of gold, clothed with divers colours;” let her come from among the Gentiles clad in all languages, in the unity of Wisdom: let it be said unto her, Hearken, O daughter, and see. If thou wilt not hear, thou shalt not “see.” Hear that thou mayest ‘purify the heart by faith,’ as the Apostle speaks in the Acts of the Apostles; purifying their hearts by faith. For it is to this end we hearken to that we are to believe, before we “see” it, that by believing we may “purify the heart,” whereby we may be able to “see.” “Hear,” that thou mayest believe; purify the heart by faith. ‘And when I have purified the heart, what shall I see? Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Ver. 10. Hearken, O daughter, and see: and incline thine ear. It is not enough to “hearken;” hearken with humility: bow down thine ear. Forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house. There was a certain ‘people,’ and a certain house of thy father, in which thou wast born, the people of Babylon, having the devil for thy king. Whencesoever the Gentiles came, they came from their father the devil; but they have renounced their sonship to the devil. “Forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house.” He, in making thee a sinner, begat thee loathsome: the Other, in that He justifies the ungodly, begetteth thee again in beauty. Forget thine own people, and thy father’s house.

26 Ver. 11. For the King hath greatly desired thy beauty. What “beauty” is that, save that which is His own work? Greatly desired the beauty—Of whom? Of her the sinner, the unrighteous, the ungodly, such as she was with her father, the devil, and among her own people. No, but her’s of whom it is said, Who is this that cometh up made white? She was not white then at the first, but was made white afterwards. For though your sins shall be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow. The king has greatly desired thy beauty. What King is this? For He is the Lord thy God. Now consider whether thou oughtest not to forego that thy father, and thy own people, and to come to this King, Who is thy God? Thy God is “thy King,” thy “King” is also thy Bridegroom. Thou weddest to thy King, Who is thy God: being endowed by Him, being adorned by Him; redeemed by Him, and healed by Him. Whatever thou hast, wherewith to be pleasing to Him, thou hast from Him.

27. Ver. 12. And the daughters of Tyre shall worship Him with gifts. It is that self-same King, Who is thy God, that the daughters of Tyre shall worship with gifts. The daughters of Tyre are the daughters of the Gentiles; the part standing for the whole. Tyre, a city bordering on this country, where the prophecy was delivered, typified the nations that were to believe in Christ. Thence came that Canaanitish woman, who was at first called a dog; for that ye may know that she was from thence, the Gospel speaks thus. He departed into the parts of Tyre and Sidon, and behold a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, with all the rest that is related there. She who at first, at the house of her “father” and among her “own people,” was but a

dog, who by coming to, and crying after that “King,” was made beautiful by believing in Him, what did she obtain to hear? ‘O woman, great is thy faith.’ The King has greatly desired thy beauty. And the daughters of Tyre shall worship with gifts. With what gifts? Even so would this King be approached, and would have His treasuries filled: and it is He Himself Who has given us that wherewith they may be filled, and may be filled by you. Let them come (He says) and worship Him with gifts. What is meant by with gifts. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth destroy; and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither thief nor moth spoileth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Come with “gifts:” Give alms, and all things are clean unto you. Come with gifts to Him that saith, I will have mercy rather than sacrifice. To that Temple, that existed aforetime as a shadow of that which was to come, they used to come with bulls, and rams, and goats, with every different kind of animal for sacrifice: that with that blood one thing should be done, and another be typified by it. Now that very blood, which all these things used to figure, hath come: the King Himself hath come, and He Himself would have your gifts. What gifts? Alms. For He Himself will judge hereafter, and will Himself hereafter account “gifts” to certain persons. Come, (He says,) ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Why? I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: naked, and ye clothed Me: a stranger, and ye took Me in: sick and in prison, and ye visited Me. These are the gifts with which the daughters of Tyre worship the King; for when they said, When saw we Thee? He who is at once above and below, (whence those ascending and descending are spoken of,) said, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me.

28. The daughters of Tyre shall worship Him with gifts. And who the daughters of Tyre are, and how they are to worship Him with gifts, he would explain more clearly, saying, The rich among the people shall entreat thy face. These daughters of Tyre, who worship with gifts, are the rich among the people, whom that “friend of the Bridegroom” addresses: Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the Living God, Who giveth us richly all things to

enjoy, that they be rich in good works; ready to distribute, willing to communicate. Let them worship with gifts; but they are not losing what they give; they are in full security, placing them where they will always be able to find them. That they lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true Life. It is by worshipping with gifts, they will entreat Thy face. For it is to the Church they flock together, and there give their alms. That they may not come to be without, (i.e. that themselves may not come to stand without,) let them give their alms in the Church. For so will the face of this Bride and Queen be favourable to those who do them. Therefore it was that those who sold their property, came with presents to entreat the face of this Queen; and ‘laid what they brought at the Apostles’ feet.’ Warm then was love in the Church: “the face of the Queen” was then the Church; the face of the Queen was the reverence of “the daughters of Tyre,” of the rich that worshipped with presents; The rich among the people shall entreat Thy face. Both they who shall entreat that face, and He whose face they will entreat, are all collectively but one Bride, but one Queen, mother and children belonging all together unto Christ, belonging unto their Head.

29. But inasmuch as these works, and these alms may be done with a view to vain glory among men, therefore the Lord says, Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them. But how they ought nevertheless to be done publicly in the “face of the Bride,” He expresses, saying, Let your works so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Which is in Heaven: not that ye should seek your own glory in the good works which ye do in public, but that ye may seek the glory of God. ‘And who (says some one) knows whether I seek God’s glory, or my own? I am seen to give to the poor; but from what motive I give, who sees?’ Let that One Who sees thee suffice thee: He sees thee, Who will reward thee. He loveth inwardly Who seeth inwardly: He loveth inwardly, let Him be also loved inwardly, Who is the Author of that inward beauty itself. Be not delighted with the outward eyes, so to speak, that thou art seen, that thou art praised, observe what follows here.

Ver. 13. All the glory of her, the King’s daughter, is from within. Not only is her robe, outwardly, of gold, and of divers colours; but He Who loved her beauty, knew her to be also beautiful within. What are those inward charms? Those of conscience. It is there Christ sees; it is there Christ loves her: it is there He addresses her, there punishes, there crowns. Let then thine alms be done in secret; for all the glory of her, the King’s daughter, is from within.

With fringes of gold, clothed with divers colours. Her beauty is from within; yet in the ‘fringes of gold’ is the diversity of languages; the beauty of doctrine. What do these avail, if there be not that beauty ‘from within.’

30. The virgins shall be brought unto the King after her. It has been fulfilled indeed. The Church has believed; the Church has been formed throughout all nations. And to what a degree do virgins now seek to find favour in the eyes of that King! Whence are they moved to do so? Even because the Church preceded them. The virgins shall be brought unto the King after her. Her near kinswomen shall be brought unto Thee. For they that are brought unto Him are not strangers, but her “near kinswomen,” that belong to her. And because he had said, unto the King, he says, turning the discourse to Him, her near kinswomen shall be brought unto Thee.

31. Ver. 15. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought, and shall be led into the Temple of the King. The “Temple of the King” is the Church itself: it is the Church itself that enters into the Temple of the King. Whereof is that Temple constructed? Of the men who enter the Temple? Who but God’s “faithful” ones are its “living stones?” They shall be led into the Temple of the King. For there are virgins without the Temple of the King, the nuns among the heretics: they are virgins, it is true; but what will that profit them, unless they be led into the “Temple of the King?” The “Temple of the King” is in unity: the “Temple of the King” is not ruinous, is not rent asunder, is not divided. The cement of those living stones is “charity.”

32. They shall be led into the Temple of the King. Ver. 16. Instead of thy fathers, children are born to thee. Nothing can be more manifest. Now consider the “Temple of the King” itself, for it is on its behalf he speaks, on account of the unity of the body that is spread throughout all the world: for those very persons, who have chosen to be virgins, cannot find favour with

the King, unless they be led into the Temple of the King. Instead of thy fathers, are thy children born to thee. It was the Apostles begat thee: they were sent: they were the preachers: they are the fathers. But was it possible for them to be with us in the body for ever? Although one of them said, I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better: to abide in the flesh is necessary for your sakes. It is true he said this, but how long was it possible for him to remain here? Could it be till this present time, could it be to all futurity? Is the Church then left desolate by their departure? God forbid. Instead of thy fathers, children have been born to thee. What is that? Instead of thy fathers, children have been born to thee? The Apostles were sent to thee as "fathers," instead of the Apostles sons have been born to thee: there have been appointed Bishops. For in the present day, whence do the Bishops, throughout all the world, derive their origin? The Church itself calls them fathers; the Church itself brought them forth, and placed them on the thrones of "the fathers." Think not thyself abandoned then, because thou seest not Peter, nor seest Paul: seest not those through whom thou wert born. Out of thine own offspring has a body of "fathers" been raised up to thee. Instead of thy fathers, have children been born to thee. Thou shalt make them princes over all the earth. Observe how widely diffused is the "Temple of the King," that the virgins that are not led to the Temple of the King, may know that they have nothing to do with that marriage. Instead of thy fathers, have thy children been born to thee: thou shalt make them princes over all the earth. This is the Universal Church: her children have been made princes over all the earth: her children have been appointed instead of the fathers. Let those who are cut off own the truth of this, let them come to the One Body: let them be led into the Temple of the King. God hath established His Temple every where: hath laid every where the foundations of the Prophets and Apostles. The Church has brought forth sons; has made them instead of her fathers to be princes over all the earth.

33. Ver. 17. They shall be mindful of thy name in every generation and generation; therefore shall the peoples confess unto Thee. What does it profit then to "confess" indeed, and yet to confess out of "the Temple?" What does it profit to pray, and yet not to pray on the Mount? I cried, says he, unto the Lord with my voice: and He heard me out of His holy hill. Out of what "hill?" Out of that of which it is said, A city set upon a hill cannot

be hid. Of what “hill?” Out of that hill, which Daniel saw ‘grow out of a small stone, and break all the kingdoms of the earth; and cover all the face of the earth.’ There let him pray, who hopes to receive: there let him ask, who would have his prayer heard: there let him confess, who wishes to be pardoned. Therefore shall the peoples confess unto thee for ever, world without end. For in that eternal life it is true indeed there will no longer be the mourning over sins: but yet in the praises of God by that everlasting City which is above, there will not be wanting a perpetual confession of the greatness of that happiness. For to that City itself, to which another Psalm sings, Glorious things are spoken of thee, O City of God, to her who is the very Bride of Christ, the very Queen, a “King’s daughter, and a King’s consort;” inasmuch as its princes are mindful of her name in every generation and generation, (i.e. so long as this age, which takes many generations to complete it, is passing by,) taking in her behalf a charitable care, that being redeemed from this world, she may reign with God everlastingly; the peoples shall for this very cause confess even to herself; the hearts of all, now enlightened by perfect charity, being laid bare, and made manifest, that she may know the whole of herself most completely, who here is, in many parts of her, unknown to herself. Whence we are admonished by the Apostle to judge nothing before the time; until the Lord come, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness; and make manifest the counsels of the heart; and every man have praise of God. For the Holy City itself will be, as it were, “confessing” to herself, when her several peoples, of which she consists, shall be confessing everlastingly unto the City herself: so that in no single part shall she be concealed from herself, there being no person within her of whom any part is hid.

PSALM 46

Some things, dearly beloved, I now speak to you as things well known, and upon which I ought not to dwell, for what ye know ye ought briefly to be reminded of. The sons of Korah understood we to be ourselves. For I remind you as knowing it, that Korah is interpreted ‘Baldness,’ and that our Lord, since in the ‘place of the Bald skull’ He was crucified, hath drawn unto Him many; like that corn of wheat, which except it die, should abide alone; and that those who are drawn unto Him are called sons of Korah. Thus much in the mystery. There were indeed some sons of Korah at the time when this was first sung, but to us ought the Spirit to give life, not the letter to be a veil. Let us then here understand, and see if that which followeth, that is, which the context of this Psalm containeth, agreeth with us. Here also find we ourselves, if yet we adhere to His Members, Whose Body’s Head is in heaven, from that Passion ascending, that those who lay in humbleness, He might bring forth with Him in richness, bearing fruit with patience. It is called, A Psalm, to the end, for the sons of Korah, for things secret. Secret is it then; but He Himself, Who in the place of Calvary was crucified, ye know, hath rent the veil, that the secrets of the temple might be discovered. Furthermore since the Cross of our Lord was a key, whereby things closed might be opened; let us trust that He will be with us, that these secrets may be revealed. What is said, To the end, always ought to be understood of Christ. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. But The End He is called, not because He consumeth, but because He perfecteth. For ended call we the food which is eaten, and ended the coat which is woven, the former to consumption, the latter to perfection. Because then we have not where to go farther when we have come to Christ, Himself is called the end of our course. Nor ought we to think, that when we have come to Him, we ought to strive any further to come also to the Father. For this thought Philip also, when he said to Him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. When he said, It sufficeth us, he sought the end of satisfaction and perfection. Then said He, Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known Me, Philip: he that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father. In Him then have we the Father, because He is in the Father, and the Father in Him, and He and His Father are One.

2. What then doth he admonish us of, who singeth that wherein we ought to recognise our own voice, if indeed we have the affection of this voice. (Ver. 1.) Our God is a refuge and strength. There are some refuges wherein is no strength, whereto when any fleeth, he is more weakened than strengthened. Thou fleest, for example, to some one greater in the world, that thou mayest make thyself a powerful friend; this seemeth to thee a refuge. Yet so great are this world's uncertainties, and so frequent grow the ruins of the powerful day by day, that when to such refuge thou art come, thou beginnest to fear more than ever therein. Before, thou fearedst only for thine own sake, but when with such thou hast taken refuge, thou wilt fear for him also. For many, when to such refuges they have fled, they falling to whom they fled, have been themselves sought after; though none had sought after them, if to such they had not fled. Our refuge is not such, but our refuge is strength. When thither we have fled, we shall be firm.

3. A helper in tribulations, which find us out too much. Tribulations are many, and in every tribulation unto God must we flee; whether it be a tribulation in our estate, or in our body's health, or about the peril of those dearest to us, or any other thing necessary to the sustaining of this life, refuge ought there to be none at all to a Christian man, other than his Saviour, other than his God, to Whom when he has fled, he is strong. For he will not in himself be strong, nor will he to himself be strength, but He will be his strength, Who has become his refuge. But, dearly beloved, among all tribulations of the human soul is no greater tribulation than the consciousness of sin. For if there be no wound herein, and that be sound within man which is called conscience, wherever else he may suffer tribulation, thither will he flee, and there find God. But if in this there be no rest through abundance of iniquity, because God is not even there, what shall man do, whither shall he flee, when he hath begun to suffer tribulations? He will flee from the field to the city, from public to his house, from his house to his chamber, yet follows tribulation. From his chamber he hath no more whither to flee, except into his chamber within. Furthermore, if therein be tumult, if the smoke of iniquity, if the flame of wickedness,

thither can he not flee. He is driven thence, and when thence he is driven, he is driven from himself. And so he hath found his enemy whither he fled; whither shall he from himself escape? Whithersoever he fleeth he draweth himself after himself, and whithersoever such he draweth himself, he tormenteth himself by his very self. These are the tribulations which find a man out too much: for more bitter there are none; so surely are there none more bitter, as there are none more inward. Ye see, dearly beloved, when trees are cut down and proved by the carpenters, sometimes in the surface they seem as though injured and rotten; but the carpenter looks into the inner marrow as it were of the tree, and if within he find the wood sound, he promises that it will last in a building; nor will he be very anxious about the injured surface, when that which is within he declares sound. Furthermore, to man any thing more inward than conscience is not found; what then profits it, if what is without is sound, and the marrow of conscience has become rotten? These are close and vehement overmuch, and as this Psalm saith, too great tribulations; yet even in these the Lord hath become a helper by forgiving sin. For the consciences of the ungodly hateth nothing save indulgence; for if one saith he hath great tribulations, being a confessed debtor to the treasury, when he beholdeth the narrowness of his estate, and seeth that he cannot be solvent; if on account of the distrainers every year hanging over him, he saith that he suffereth great tribulations, and doth not breathe freely except in hope of indulgence, and that in things earthly; how much more the debtor of penalties out of the abundance of sins: when shall he pay what he owes out of his evil conscience, when if he pay, he perisheth? For to pay this debt, is to undergo the penalties. Remaineth then that of His indulgence we may be secure, yet so that, indulgence received, we return not again to contract debts.

4. These sons of Korah then haply are understood to be those, to whom spake Peter in the Acts of the Apostles, when they were intent upon the marvels of the coming of the Holy Spirit, when all on whom He had come spake with all tongues. For he preached unto them, as the Christ, Him Who would do such things by sending His Holy Spirit. They, considering Him, Whom they had crucified with their own hands, how contemptible He was when He was being slain, how high and exalted before God He had become, that with His Spirit He should fill the foolish, and make infants’

tongues eloquent, being pricked in their hearts said, What shall we do? These were the too great tribulations which had found them out. For they had not found out their sins, but the sins were found out in them by the warning of the Apostles. So tribulations found them out, they found not out tribulations. For when without any one's warning man himself considereth his deeds, and asketh God, what saith he? I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the Name of the Lord. Thus there is one tribulation which thou findest out, another which findeth thee out. But in both, whether that which findeth thee out, or that which thou findest out, that both He may repel, He is to be asked, Who is a helper in tribulations. For even he, when he found, said this, Then called I upon the Name of the Lord: and these, in tribulations by which they said that they were found out, said this; God is our refuge and strength, a helper in tribulations, which have found us out too much. But now that a helper He has become, whereby has He become so? Being pricked in their hearts, (It saith,) they said, What shall we do? as though in great desperation: He is so great, Whom we slew; we, where shall we be? And Peter, Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. For nothing more grievous than this sin could they think of. What more grievous sin in the sick man, than the slaying the physician? What more grievous can the sick man do, than to kill his own physician? When this is remitted, what is not remitted? From Him then, of Whom is said, refuge and strength, received they great security. Be baptized every one of you in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ; in His Name, Whom ye slew, be baptized, and your sins are remitted you. The physician even after have ye recognised; now securely drink ye the Blood which ye shed.

5. Now then, such security received, what say they? Ver. 2. Therefore will not we fear, when the earth shall be confounded. Just before anxious, suddenly secure; out of too great tribulations set in great tranquillity. For in them Christ was sleeping, therefore were they tossed: Christ awoke, (as but now we heard out of the Gospel, He commanded the winds, and they were still. Since Christ is in each man's heart by faith, it is signified to us, that his heart as a ship in this world's tempest is tossed, who forgetteth his faith: as though Christ sleeping it is tossed, but Christ awaking cometh tranquillity. Nay, the Lord Himself, what said He? Where is your faith. Christ aroused,

aroused up faith, that what had been done in the ship, might be done in their hearts. A helper in tribulations, which found us out too much. He caused that therein should be great tranquillity.

6. See what tranquillity: Therefore will not we fear when the earth shall be confounded, and the mountains shall be carried into the heart of the sea. Then we shall not fear. Let us seek mountains carried, and if we can find, it is manifest that this is our security. The Lord truly said to His disciples, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Be Thou removed, and be Thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done. Haply, to this mountain, He said of Himself; for He is called a Mountain; It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord shall be manifest. But this Mountain is placed above other mountains; because the Apostles also are mountains, supporting this Mountain. Therefore followeth, In the last days the Mountain of the Lord shall be manifest, established in the top of the mountains. Therefore passeth It the tops of all mountains, and on the top of all mountains is It placed; because the mountains are preaching The Mountain. But the sea signifieth this world, in comparison of which sea, like earth seemed the nation of the Jews. For it was not covered over with the bitterness of idolatry, but, like dry land, was surrounded with the bitterness of the Gentiles as with sea. It was to be, that the earth be confounded, that is, that nation of the Jews; and that the mountains be carried into the heart of the sea, that is, first that great Mountain established in the top of the mountains. For He deserted the nation of the Jews, and came among the Gentiles. He was carried from the earth into the sea. Who carrying Him? The Apostles, to whom He had said, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done: that is, through your most faithful preaching it shall come to pass, that this mountain, that is, I Myself, be preached among the Gentiles, be glorified among the Gentiles, be acknowledged among the Gentiles, and that be fulfilled which was predicted of Me, A people whom I have not known shall serve Me. But when were those mountains also carried? This too declareth to us the Scripture of God. When the Apostle preached to the Jews, they rejected the Word, and then said the Apostle Paul, We were sent unto you, but seeing ye put from you the Word of God, lo, we turn to the

Gentiles. The mountains were carried into the heart of the sea. For the Gentiles truly believed the mountains, so that in the heart of the sea were those mountains: not as the Jews, of whom it was said, This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. For this also of the New Testament doth the Lord promise, saying by the Prophet, I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. This Law, these Commandments, by the Apostles introduced into the faith and creed of all Gentiles, were called mountains, carried into the heart of the sea. Therefore will not we fear. Who will not fear? We who are pricked in heart, lest we be in the number of the reprobate Jews, as of branches broken off. For some even of them believed, and adhered to the Apostles' preaching. Fear then they whom the Mountain deserted: we from the mountains have not retired; and when they were carried into the heart of the sea, we followed.

7. What now follows from this, that the mountains are carried into the heart of the sea? Attend, and see the truth. For when first this was spoken, it was obscure, because it had not then come to pass, but now who doth not acknowledge it already done? Thy book be the page divine, that thou mayest hear this; thy book be the whole world, that thou mayest see it. In those books none read it, save they who know letters; in the whole world, may read even a simple one. What then was done when the mountains were carried into the heart of the sea? Ver. 3. The waters thereof roared, and were troubled: when the Gospel was preached, What is this? He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: this the Athenians; but the Ephesians, with what tumult would they have slain the Apostles, when in the theatre, for their goddess Diana, they made such an uproar, as to be shouting, Great is Diana of the Ephesians! Amidst which waves and roaring of the sea, feared not they who to that refuge had fled. Nay, the Apostle Paul would enter in to the theatre, and was kept back by the disciples, because it was necessary that he should still abide in the flesh for their sakes. But yet, the waters thereof roared, and were troubled: the mountains shook at the mightiness thereof. Whose might? The sea's? or rather God's, of Whom was said, refuge and strength, a helper in tribulations, which have found us out too much? For shaken were the mountains, that is, the powers of this world. For one thing are the mountains of God, another the mountains of the world: the

mountains of the world, they whose head is the devil, the mountains of God, they whose Head is Christ. But by these mountains were shaken those mountains. Then gave they their voices against Christians, when the mountains were shaken, the waters roaring; for the mountains were shaken, and there was made a great earthquake, with quaking of the sea. But against whom this? Against the City founded upon a rock. The waters roar, the mountains shake, the Gospel being preached. What then, the City of God? Hear what followeth.

8. Ver. 4. The streams of the river make glad the City of God. When the mountains shake, when the sea rages, God deserteth not His City, by the streams of the river. What are these streams of the river? That overflowing of the Holy Spirit, of which the Lord said, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. These rivers then flowed out of the belly of Paul, Peter, John, the other Apostles, the other faithful Evangelists. Since these rivers flowed from one river, many streams of the river make glad the City of God. For that ye might know this to be said of the Holy Spirit, in the same Gospel next said the Evangelist, But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that were to believe on Him should receive. For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. Jesus being glorified after His Resurrection, glorified after His Ascension, on the day of Pentecost came the Holy Spirit, and filled the believers, who spake with tongues, and began to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Hence was the City of God made glad, while the sea was troubled by the roaring of its waters, while the mountains were confounded, asking what they should do, how drive out the new doctrine, how root out the race of Christians from the earth. Against whom? Against the streams of the river making glad the City of God. For thereby shewed He of what river He spake; that He signified the Holy Spirit, by the streams of the river make glad the City of God. And what follows? The Most High hath sanctified His tabernacle: since then there followeth the mention of Sanctification, it is manifest that these streams of the river are to be understood of the Holy Spirit, by Whom is sanctified every godly soul believing in Christ, that it may be made a citizen of the City of God.

9. Ver. 5. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved. Let the sea rage, the mountains shake; God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved. What is, in the midst of her? That God stands in any one place, and they surround Him who believe in Him? Then is God circumscribed by place; and broad that which surroundeth, narrow that which is surrounded? God forbid. No such thing imagine of God, Who is contained in no place, Whose seat is the conscience of the godly: and so is God's seat in the hearts of men, that if man fall from God, God in Himself abideth, not falleth like one not finding where to be. For rather doth He lift up thee, that thou mayest be in Him, than so lean upon thee, as if thou withdraw thyself, to fall. Himself if He withdraw, fall wilt thou: thyself if thou withdraw, fall will not He. What then is, God is in the midst of her? It signifieth that God is equal to all, and accepteth not persons. For as that which is in the middle has equal distances to all the boundaries, so God is said to be in the middle, because He consulteth equally for all. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved. Wherefore shall she not be moved? Because God is in the midst of her. God shall help her with His countenance: He is the Helper in tribulations that have found us out too much. God shall help her with His Countenance. What is, with His Countenance? With manifestation of Himself. How manifests God Himself, so as that we see His Countenance? I have already told you; ye have learned God's Presence; we have learned it through His works. When from Him we receive any help so that we cannot at all doubt that it was granted to us by the Lord, then God's Countenance is with us. God shall help her with His Countenance.

10. Ver. 6. The heathen are troubled. And how troubled? why troubled? To cast down the City of God, in the midst whereof is God? To overthrow the tabernacle sanctified, which God helpeth with His Countenance? No: with a wholesome trouble are the heathen now troubled. For what followeth? And the kingdoms are bowed. Bowed, saith He, are the kingdoms; not now erected that they may rage, but bowed that they may adore. When were the kingdoms bowed? When that came to pass which was predicted in another Psalm, All kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall serve Him. What cause made the kingdoms to bow? Hear the cause. The Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved. The idols' fanatics, like frogs in the marshes, clamoured, the more tumultuously the more sordidly, in filth

and mire. And what is the brawling of frogs to the thunder of the clouds? For out of them the Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved: He thundered out of His clouds. And what are His clouds? His Apostles, His preachers, by whom He thundered in precepts, lightned in miracles. The same are clouds who are also mountains: mountains for their height and firmness, clouds for their rain and fruitfulness. For these clouds watered the earth, of which it was said, The Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved. For it is of those clouds that He threateneth a certain barren vineyard, whence the mountains were carried into the heart of the sea; I will command, saith He, the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. This was fulfilled in that which I have mentioned, when the mountains were carried into the heart of the sea; when it was said, It was necessary that the word of God should have been spoken first to you; but seeing ye put it from you, we turn to the Gentiles; then was fulfilled, I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. The nation of the Jews hath just so remained as a fleece dry upon the ground. For this, ye know, happened in a certain miracle, the ground was dry, the fleece only was wet, yet rain in the fleece appeared not. So also the mystery of the New Testament appeared not in the nation of the Jews. What there was the fleece, is here the veil. For in the fleece was veiled the mystery. But on the ground, in all the nations open lieth Christ’s Gospel; the rain is manifest, the Grace of Christ is bare, for it is not covered with a veil. But that the rain might come out of it, the fleece was pressed. For by pressure they from themselves excluded Christ, and the Lord now from His clouds raineth on the ground, the fleece hath remained dry. But of them then the Most High gave His Voice, out of those clouds; by which Voice the kingdoms were bowed and worshipped.

11. Ver. 7. The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our taker up. Not any man, not any power, not, in short, Angel, or any creature either earthly or heavenly, but the Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our taker up. He Who sent Angels, came after Angels, came that Angels might serve Him, came that men He might make equal to Angels. Mighty Grace! If God be for us, who can be against us? The Lord of Hosts is with us. What Lord of Hosts is with us? If (I say) God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; how hath He not with Him also freely given us all things. Therefore be we

secure, in tranquillity of heart nourish we a good conscience with the Bread of the Lord. The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our taker up. However great be thy infirmity, see Who taketh thee up. One is sick, a physician is called to him. His own taken-up, the Physician calleth the sick man. Who hath taken him up? Even He. A great hope of salvation; a great Physician hath taken him up. What Physician? Every Physician save He is man: every Physician who cometh to a sick man, another day can be made sick, beside Him. The God of Jacob is our taker up. Make thyself altogether as a little child, such as are taken up by their parents. For those not taken up, are exposed; those taken up are nursed. Thinkest thou God hath so taken thee up, as when an infant thy mother took thee up? Not so, but to eternity. For thy voice is in that Psalm, ‘My father and my mother forsake me, but the Lord hath taken me up. The God of Jacob is our taker up.’

12. Ver. 8. Come and see the works of the Lord. Now of this taking up, what hath the Lord done? Consider the whole world, come and see. For if thou comest not, thou seest not; if thou seest not, thou believest not; if thou believest not, thou standest afar off: if thou believest thou comest, if thou believest thou seest. For how came we to that mountain? Not on foot? Is it by ship? Is it on the wing? Is it on horses? For all that pertain to space and place, be not concerned, trouble not thyself, He cometh to thee. For out of a small stone He hath grown, and become a great mountain, so that He hath filled all the face of the earth. Why then wouldest thou by land come to Him, Who filleth all lands? Lo, He hath already come: watch thou. By growing He waketh even sleepers; if yet there is not in them so deep sleep, as that they be hardened even against the mountain coming; but they hear, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. For it was a great thing for the Jews to see the stone. For the stone was yet small: and small they deservedly despised it, and despising they stumbled, and stumbling they were broken; remains that they be ground to powder. For so was it said of the stone, Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. It is one thing to be broken, another to be ground to powder. To be broken is less than to be ground to powder: but none grindeth He coming exalted, save whom He brake lying low. For now before His coming He lay low before the Jews, and they stumbled at Him, and were broken; hereafter

shall He come in His Judgment, glorious and exalted, great and powerful, not weak to be judged, but strong to judge, and grind to powder those who were broken stumbling at Him. For, A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, is He to them that believe not. Therefore, brethren, no wonder if the Jews acknowledged not Him, Whom as a small stone lying before their feet they despised. They are to be wondered at, who even now so great a mountain will not acknowledge. The Jews at a small stone by not seeing stumbled; the heretics stumble at a mountain. For now that stone hath grown, now say we unto them, Lo, now is fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel, The stone that was small became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. Wherefore stumble ye at Him, and go not rather up to Him? Who is so blind as to stumble at a mountain? Came He to thee that thou shouldest have whereat to stumble, and not have whereto to go up? Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord. Isaiah saith this; Come ye, and let us go up. What is, Come ye, and let us go up? Come ye, is, Believe ye. Let us go up, is, Let us profit. But they will neither come, nor go up, nor believe, nor profit. They bark against the mountain. Even now by so often stumbling on Him they are broken, and will not go up, choosing always to stumble. Say we to them, Come ye, and see the works of the Lord: what prodigies He hath set forth through the earth. Prodigies are called, because they portend something, those signs of miracles which were done when the world believed. And what thereafter came to pass, and what did they portend?

13. Ver. 9. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. This not yet see we fulfilled: yet are there wars, wars among nations for sovereignty; among sects, among Jews, Pagans, Christians, heretics, are wars, frequent wars, some for the truth some for falsehood contending. Not yet then is this fulfilled, He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; but haply it shall be fulfilled. Or is it now also fulfilled? In some it is fulfilled; in the wheat it is fulfilled, in the tares it is not yet fulfilled. What is this then, He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth? Wars He calleth whereby it is warred against God. But who warreth against God? Ungodliness. And what to God can ungodliness do? Nothing. What doth an earthen vessel dashed against the rock, however vehemently dashed? With so much greater harm to itself it cometh, with how much the greater force it cometh. These wars were great, frequent were they. Against God fought ungodliness, and

earthen vessels were dashed in pieces, even men by presuming on themselves, by too much prevailing by their own strength. This is that, the shield whereof Job also named concerning one ungodly. He runneth against God, upon the stiff neck of his shield. What is, upon the stiff neck of his shield? Presuming too much upon his own protection. Were they such who said, God is our refuge and strength, a Helper in tribulations which have found us out too much? or in another Psalm, For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. When one learneth that in himself he is nothing, and help in himself has none, arms in him are broken in pieces, wars are made to cease. Such wars then destroyed that Voice of the Most High out of His holy clouds, whereby the earth was moved, and the kingdoms were bowed. These wars hath He made to cease unto the end of the earth. He shall break the bow, and dash in pieces the arms, and burn the shield with fire. Bow, arms, shield, fire. The bow is plots; arms, public warfare; shields, vain presuming of self-protection: the fire wherewith they are burned, is that whereof the Lord said, I am come to send fire on the earth; of which fire saith the Psalm, There is nothing hid from the heat thereof. This fire burning, no arms of ungodliness shall remain in us, needs must all be broken, dashed in pieces, burned. Remain thou unharmed, not having any help of thine own; and the more weak thou art, having no arms thine own, the more He taketh thee up, of Whom it is said, The God of Jacob is our taker up. For thou prevailedst as it were through thyself; thou art troubled in thyself. Destroy the arms wherein thou presumedst: hear the Lord saying, My grace is sufficient for thee. Say thou also, When I am weak, then am I strong. It is the Apostle’s voice. All his own arms had he destroyed, as it were of his own might, who said, But I will not glory save in my infirmities. As though he said, “I run not against God upon the stiff neck of my shield: who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting.” He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. But when God taketh us up, doth He send us away unarmed? He armeth us, but with other arms, arms Evangelical, arms of truth, continence, salvation, faith, hope, charity. These arms shall we have, but not of ourselves: but the arms which of ourselves we had, are burnt up: yet if by that fire of the Holy Spirit we are kindled, whereof it is said, He shall burn the shields with fire; thee, who didst wish to be powerful in thyself, hath God made weak, that He may make thee strong in Him, because in thyself thou wast made weak.

14. What then followeth? (Ver. 10.) Be still. To what purpose? And see that I am God. That is, Not ye, but I am God. I created, I create anew; I formed, I form anew; I made, I make anew. If thou couldest not make thyself, how canst thou make thyself anew? This seeth not the contentious tumult of man’s soul; to which contentious tumult is it said, Be still. That is, restrain your souls from contradiction. Do not argue, and, as it were, arm against God. Else yet live thy arms, not yet burned up with fire. But if they are burned, Be still; because ye have not wherewith to fight. But if ye be still in yourselves, and from Me seek all, who before presumed on yourselves, then shall ye see that I am God.

15. I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. Just before I said, by the name of earth is signified the nation of the Jews, by the name of sea the other nations. The mountains were carried into the heart of the sea; the nations are troubled, the kingdoms are bowed; the Most High gave His Voice, and the earth was moved. (Ver. 11.) The Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our taker up. Miracles are done among the heathen, full filled is the faith of the heathen; burned are the arms of human presumption. Still are they, in tranquillity of heart, to acknowledge God the Author of all their gifts. And after this glorifying, doth He yet desert the people of the Jews? of which saith the Apostle, I say unto you, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. That is, until the mountains be carried hither, the clouds rain here, the Lord here bows the kingdoms with His thunder, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And what thereafter? And so all Israel shall be saved. Therefore, here too observing the same order, I will be exalted (saith He) among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth; that is, both in the sea, and in the earth, that now might all say what followeth; The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our taker up.

PSALM 47

1. That faith wherein we live, and whereby we live, the Lord our God hath by Holy Books, Holy Scriptures, in manifold and divers manners to us diffused; varying indeed the mysteries of words, but commending the one faith. For one and the same thing is therefore said in divers manners, that by the very manner of speaking it may for fear of weariness be varied, yet may for sake of concord be kept one. Therefore upon this Psalm which we have heard sung, to which we have responded singing, I shall say things which ye know: and yet haply by the aid and gift of the Lord, some sweetness I shall bring you, when things which here and there ye have heard, once again being reminded, ye ruminate. For that same rumination, whereby God marketh the clean beasts, would this insinuate, that every man ought what he hears so to lay up in his heart, as not to be slow afterwards to think thereupon, that when he hears he may be like one chewing, but when he calls to memory things heard, he may be like one ruminating. In another manner then the same things are spoken, and make us sweetly to think of what we know, and the very same willingly to hear, because the manner of speaking is varied, and an ancient matter by the very manner of speaking is made new.

2. The title of the Psalm goeth thus. To the end: for the sons of Korah: a Psalm of David himself. These sons of Korah have the title also of some other Psalms, and indicate a sweet mystery, insinuate a great Sacrament: wherein let us willingly understand ourselves, and let us acknowledge in the title us who hear, and read, and as in a glass set before us behold who we are. The sons of Korah, who are they? There was a certain man named Korah, for so a man was called: nevertheless when that is read which is written, and the Divine Word is found to speak to some, who cannot well be understood to be the sons of that particular man who was called Korah, the mind recurs to the mystery, to seek what Korah signifies. For as it is a Hebrew word, it is spoken accordingly, and interpreted both in the Greek and in the Latin tongue. And it is done for us already: many Hebrew words have been interpreted for us; and we find that Korah is interpreted ‘Calvus.’

The more, much more, did ye attend. Obscure it was when it was said, sons of Korah; is it not much more obscure when it is said, sons of the Bald (Calvi)? Who are these sons of the Bald? Haply the sons of the Bridegroom. For the Bridegroom was crucified in the place of Calvary. Recollect the Gospel, where they crucified the Lord, and ye will find Him crucified in the place of Calvary. Furthermore, they who deride His Cross, by devils, as by beasts, are devoured. For this also a certain Scripture signified. When God's Prophet Elisha was going up, children called after him mocking, Go up thou bald head, Go up thou bald head: but he, not so much in cruelty as in mystery, made those children to be devoured by bears out of the wood. If those children had not been devoured, would they have lived even till now? Or could they not, being born mortal, have been taken off by a fever? But so in them had no mystery been shewn, whereby posterity might be put in fear. Let none then mock the Cross of Christ. The Jews were possessed by devils, and devoured; for in the place of Calvary, crucifying Christ, and lifting on the Cross, they said as it were with childish sense, not understanding what they said, Go up, thou bald head. For what is, Go up? Crucify Him, Crucify Him. For childhood is set before us to imitate humility, and childhood is set before us to beware of foolishness. To imitate humility, childhood was set before us by the Lord, when He called children to Him, and because they were kept from Him, He said, Suffer them to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. The example of childhood is set before us to beware of foolishness by the Apostle, Brethren, be not children in understanding: and again he proposeth it to imitate, Howbeit in malice be ye children, that in understanding ye may be men. 'For the sons of Korah' the Psalm is sung; for Christians then is it sung. Let us hear it as sons of the Bridegroom, Whom senseless children crucified in the place of Calvary. For they earned to be devoured by beasts; we to be crowned by Angels. For we acknowledge the humility of our Lord, and of it are not ashamed. We are not ashamed of Him called in mystery the bald (Calvus,) from the place of Calvary. For on the very Cross whereon He was insulted, He permitted not our forehead to be bald; for with His own Cross He marked it. Finally, that ye may know that these things are said to us, see what is said.

3. O clap your hands, all ye nations. Were the people of the Jews all the nations? No, but blindness in part is happened to Israel, that senseless children might cry, ‘Calve,’ ‘Calve;’ and so the Lord might be crucified in the place of Calvary, that by His Blood shed He might redeem the Gentiles, and that might be fulfilled which saith the Apostle, Blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. Let them insult, then, the vain, and foolish, and senseless, and say, ‘Calve,’ ‘Calve;’ but ye redeemed by His Blood which was shed in the place of Calvary, say, O clap your hands, all ye nations; because to you hath come down the Grace of God. O clap your hands. What is O clap? Rejoice. But wherefore with the hands? Because with good works. Do not rejoice with the mouth while idle with the hands. If ye rejoice, clap your hands. The hands of the nations let Him see, Who joys hath deigned to give them. What is, the hands of the nations? The acts of them doing good works. O clap your hands, all ye nations: shout unto God with the voice of triumph. Both with voice and with hands. If with the voice only it is not well, because the hands are slow; if only with the hands it is not well, because the tongue is mute. Agree together must the hands and tongue. Let this confess, these work. Shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

4. Ver. 2. For the Lord Most High is terrible. The Most High in descending made like one laughable, by ascending into Heaven is made terrible. A great King over all the earth. Not only over the Jews; for over them also He is King. For of them also the Apostles believed, and of them many thousands of men sold their goods, and laid the price at the Apostles’ feet, and in them was fulfilled what in the title of the Cross was written, The King of the Jews. For He is King also of the Jews. But ‘of the Jews’ is little. O clap your hands, all ye nations: for God is the King of all the earth. For it sufficeth not Him to have under Him one nation: therefore such great price gave He out of His side, as to buy the whole world. A great King over all the earth.

5. Ver. 3. He hath subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet. Which subdued, and to whom? Who are they that speak? Haply Jews? Surely, if Apostles; surely, if Saints. For under these God hath subdued the people and the nations, that to-day are they honoured among the nations,

who by their own citizens earned to be slain: as their Lord was slain by His citizens, and is honoured among the nations; was crucified by His own, is adored by aliens, but those by a price made His own. For therefore bought He us, that aliens from Him we might not be. Thinkest thou then these are the words of Apostles, He hath subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet? I know not. Strange that Apostles should speak so proudly, as to rejoice that the nations were put under their feet, that is, Christians under the feet of Apostles. For they rejoice that we are with them under the feet of Him Who died for us. For under Paul's feet ran they, who would be of Paul, to whom He said, Was Paul crucified for you? What then here, what are we to understand? He hath subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet. All pertaining to Christ's inheritance are among "all the nations," and all not pertaining to Christ's inheritance are among "all the nations:" and ye see so exalted in Christ's Name is Christ's Church, that all not yet believing in Christ lie under the feet of Christians. For what numbers now run to the Church; not yet being Christians, they ask aid of the Church; to be succoured by us temporally they are willing, though eternally to reign with us as yet they are unwilling. When all seek aid of the Church, even they who are not yet in the Church, hath He not subdued the people under us, and the nations under our feet?

6. Ver. 4. He hath chosen an inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob, whom He loved. A certain beauty of Jacob He hath chosen for our inheritance. Esau and Jacob were two brothers; in their mother's womb both struggled, and by this struggle their mother's bowels were shaken; and while they two were yet therein, the younger was elected and preferred to the elder, and it was said, Two peoples are in thy womb, and the elder shall serve the younger. Among all nations is the elder, among all nations the younger; but the younger is in good Christians, elect, godly, faithful; the elder in the proud, unworthy, sinful, stubborn, defending rather than confessing their sins: as was also the very people of the Jews, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness. But for that it is said, The elder shall serve the younger; it is manifest that under the godly are subdued the ungodly, under the humble are subdued the proud. Esau was born first, and Jacob was born last; but he who was last born, was preferred to the first-born, who through gluttony

lost his birthright. So thou hast it written, He longed for the pottage, and his brother said to him, If thou wilt that I give it thee, give me thy birthright. He loved more that which carnally he desired, than that which spiritually by being born first he had earned: and he laid aside his birthright, that he might eat lentils. But lentils we find to be the food of the Egyptians, for there it abounds in Egypt. Whence is so magnified the lentil of Alexandria, that it comes even to our country, as if here grew no lentil. Therefore by desiring Egyptian food he lost his birthright. So also the people of the Jews, of whom it is said, in their hearts they turned back again into Egypt. They desired in a manner the lentil, and lost their birthright. He hath chosen an inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom He loved.

7. Ver. 5. God is gone up with jubilation. Even He our God, the Lord Christ, is gone up with jubilation; the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Is gone up: whither, save where we know? Whither the Jews followed Him not, even with their eyes. For exalted on the Cross they mocked Him, ascending into Heaven they did not see Him. God hath gone up with jubilation. What is jubilation, but admiration of joy which cannot be expressed in words? As the disciples in joy admired, seeing Him go into Heaven, Whom they had mourned dead; truly for the joy, words sufficed not: remained to jubilate what none could express. There was also the voice of the trumpet, the voice of Angels. For it is said, Lift up thy voice like a trumpet. Angels preached the ascension of the Lord: they saw the Disciples, their Lord ascending, tarrying, admiring, confounded, nothing speaking, but in heart jubilant: and now was the sound of the trumpet in the clear voice of the Angels, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? this is Jesus. As if they knew not that it was the same Jesus. Had they not just before seen Him before them? Had they not heard Him speaking with them? Nay, they not only saw the figure of Him present, but handled also His limbs. Of themselves then knew they not, that it was the same Jesus? But they being by very admiration, from joy of jubilation, as it were transported in mind, the Angels said, that same is Jesus. As though they said, If ye believe Him, this is that same Jesus, Whom crucified, your feet stumbled, Whom dead and buried, ye thought your hope lost. Lo, this is the same Jesus. He hath gone up before you, He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven. His Body is removed indeed from your eyes, but God is not

separated from your hearts: see Him going up, believe on Him absent, hope for Him coming; but yet through His secret Mercy, feel Him present. For He Who ascended into Heaven that He might be removed from your eyes, promised unto you, saying, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Justly then the Apostle so addressed us, The Lord is at hand; be careful for nothing. Christ sitteth above the Heavens; the Heavens are far off, He Who there sitteth is near. The Lord with the sound of the trumpet. Therefore ye, the sons of Korah, if now ye have understood yourselves, and herein behold yourselves, rejoice also, because here ye see yourselves.

8. Ver. 6. Sing praises to our God, sing praises. Whom as Man mocked they, who from God were alienated. Sing praises to our God. For He is not Man only, but God. Man of the seed of David, God the Lord of David, of the Jews having flesh. Whose (saith the Apostle) are the fathers, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came. Of the Jews then is Christ, but according to the flesh. But who is this Christ Who is of the Jews according to the flesh? Who is over all, God blessed for ever. God before the flesh; God in the flesh, God with the flesh. Nor only God before the flesh, but God before the earth whence flesh was made; nor only God before the earth whereof flesh was made, but even God before the Heaven which was first made; God before the day which was first made; God before Angels; the same Christ is God: for In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. Therefore, Sing praises to our God, sing praises.

9. Ver. 7. For God is the King of all the earth. What? And before was He not God of all the earth? Is He not God of both heaven and earth, since by Him surely were all things made? Who can say that He is not his God? But not all men acknowledged Him their God; and where He was acknowledged, there only, so to say, He was God. In Judah is God known. Not yet was it said to the sons of Korah, O clap your hands, all ye nations. For that God known in Judah, is King of all the earth: now by all He is acknowledged, for that is fulfilled which Isaiah saith, “He is Thy God Who hath delivered thee, the God of the whole earth shall He be called.” For God is the King of all the earth; sing ye praises with understanding. He teacheth

us and warneth us to sing praises with understanding, not to seek the sound of the ear, but the light of the heart. Sing ye praises (saith he) with understanding. The Gentiles, whence ye were called that ye might be Christians, adored gods made with hands, and sang praises to them, but not with understanding. If they had sung with understanding, they had not adored stones. When a man sensible sang to a stone insensible, did he sing with understanding? But now, brethren, we see not with our eyes Whom we adore, and yet correctly we adore. Much more is God commended to us, that with our eyes we see Him not. If with our eyes we saw Him, haply we might despise. For even Christ seen the Jews despised, unseen the Gentiles adored. For to them was it said, 'Sing ye praises with understanding.' Be ye not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding.

10. Ver. 8. God shall reign over all nations. Who reigned over one nation, shall reign (saith He) over all nations. When this was said, God reigned over one nation. It was a prophecy, the thing was not yet shewn. Thanks be to God, we now see fulfilled what before was prophesied. A written promise God sent unto us before the time, the time fulfilled He hath repaid us. God shall reign over all nations, is a promise. God sitteth upon His Holy Seat. What then was promised to come, now being fulfilled, is acknowledged and held. God sitteth upon His Holy Seat. What is His Holy Seat? Haply saith one, The Heavens, and he understandeth well. For Christ hath gone up, as we know, with the Body, wherein He was crucified, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; thence we expect Him to come to judge the quick and the dead. God sitteth upon His Holy Seat. The Heavens are His Holy Seat. Wilt thou also be His Seat? think not that thou canst not be; prepare for Him a place in thy heart. He cometh, and willingly sitteth. The same Christ is surely the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God: and what saith the Scripture of Wisdom Herself? The soul of the righteous is the seat of Wisdom. If then the soul of the righteous is the seat of Wisdom, be thy soul righteous, and thou shalt be a royal seat of Wisdom. And truly, brethren, all men who live well, who act well, converse in godly charity, doth not God sit in them, and Himself command? The soul obeyeth God sitting in it, and itself commandeth the members. For thy soul commandeth thy members, that so may move the foot, the hand, the eye, the ear, and itself commandeth the members as its servants, but yet itself serveth its

Lord sitting within. It cannot well rule its inferior, unless its superior it have not disdained to serve. God sitteth upon His Holy Seat.

11. The princes of the peoples are gathered together unto the God of Abraham. The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. True it is, God said this, and thereupon the Jews prided themselves, and said, We are Abraham’s children; priding themselves in their Father’s name, carrying his flesh, not holding his faith; by seed cleaving to Him, in manners degenerating. But the Lord, what said He to them so priding themselves? If ye are Abraham’s children, do the works of Abraham. Again, what said John to them, when certain of them were coming and trembling, who by repenting would amend themselves? Offspring of vipers! For they were unrighteous, they were lost, they were sinners, they were ungodly: they came to the baptism of John; and what said he to them? Offspring of vipers. They called themselves Abraham’s children, and he called them children of vipers. Was Abraham a viper? Nay; but because by ill-living they had imitated devils, and had become their children, by imitating whom they lived ill; therefore said he, Offspring of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say with yourselves, We have Abraham to our father, and to pride yourselves, as it were, upon the stock of Abraham; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. For neither will Abraham remain without children, if God condemn you; for He is powerful both to condemn those whom He hateth, and to render to him those whom He promised. And whence will He render to him sons, if He condemneth the Hebrews begotten of his own flesh? Of these stones. He shewed them the stones in the wilderness. What were the stones? what but the Gentiles who adored stones? Wherefore stones? By adoring stones they were called stones; for the Psalm had predicted, They that make them be like unto them, and every one that trusteth in them. Yet of these stones rendered He children unto Abraham. Now all we who adored stones, converted to the Lord, are made children of Abraham, not by deriving from him flesh, but by imitating his faith: therefore, (ver. 9.) The princes of the peoples are gathered together unto the God of Abraham. The princes of the peoples: the princes of the nations: not

the princes of one people, but the princes of all people have gathered together unto the God of Abraham.

12. Of these princes was that Centurion too, of whom but now when the Gospel was read ye heard. For he was a Centurion having honour and power among men, he was a prince among the princes of the peoples. Christ coming to him, he sent his friends to meet Him, nay unto Christ truly passing over to him he sent his friends, and asked that He would heal his servant who was dangerously sick. And when the Lord would come, he sent to Him this message: I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof, but say in a word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers. See how he kept his rank! first he mentioned that he was under another, and afterwards that another was under him. I am under authority, and I am in authority; both under some I am, and over some I am. And I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. As though he said, If I being set under authority command those who are under me, Thou Who art set under no man’s authority, canst not Thou command Thy creature, since all things were made by Thee, and without Thee was nothing made. Say, then, said he, in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof. He feared to admit Christ within his own walls, yet already was He within, in his heart: already was his soul His seat, already He sat there Who sought the humble. Then Jesus turned about and marvelled at him and said unto them that followed Him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith in Israel. And as another Evangelist relates the same thing, Jesus followeth on and saith, And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. For this Centurion was not of the people of Israel, for in the people of Israel the proud repelled God from them: among the princes of the nations was found one humble, who invited God to himself. Admiring at his faith, Jesus reprobates the Jews’ misbelief. For sound to themselves they seemed, whereas they were dangerously sick, when their Physician not knowing they slew. Therefore when He reprobated, and repudiated their pride, what said He? I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, not belonging to the kindred of

Israel: many shall come to whom He said, “O clap your hands, all ye nations;” and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. Abraham begat them not of his own flesh; yet shall they come and sit down with him in the kingdom of heaven, and be his sons. Whereby his sons? Not as born of his flesh, but by following his faith. But the children of the kingdom, that is, the Jews, shall be cast into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. They shall be condemned to outer darkness who are born of the flesh of Abraham, and they shall sit down with him in the kingdom of heaven, who have imitated Abraham’s faith. Justly therefore here also saith He, The princes of the peoples have gathered together unto the God of Abraham.

13. And what they who belonged to the God of Abraham? For the mighty gods of the earth are greatly lifted up. They who were gods, the people of God, the vineyard of God, whereof it is said, Judge betwixt Me and My vineyard, shall go into outer darkness, shall not sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, are not gathered unto the God of Abraham. Wherefore? For the mighty gods of the earth; they who were mighty gods of the earth, presuming upon earth. What earth? Themselves; for every man is earth. For to man was it said, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. But man ought to presume upon God, and thence to hope for help, not from himself. For the earth raineth not upon itself, nor shineth for itself; but as the earth from heaven expecteth rain and light, so man from God ought to expect mercy and truth. They then, the mighty gods of the earth, were greatly lifted up, that is, greatly prided themselves: they thought no physician necessary for themselves, and therefore remained in their sickness, and by their sickness were brought down even to death. The natural branches were broken off that the humble wild olive tree might be grafted in. For the mighty gods of the earth are greatly lifted up. Hold we fast then, brethren, humility, charity, godliness: since we are called, on their proving reprobate, even by their example let us fear to pride ourselves.

PSALM 48

1. The title of this Psalm is, A song of praise, to the sons of Korah, on the second day of the week. Concerning this what the Lord deigneth to grant receive ye like sons of the firmament. For on the second day of the week, that is, the day after the first which we call the Lord’s day, which also is called the second week-day, was made the firmament of Heaven. Nay, the firmament Heaven. For God called the firmament Heaven. But in the first day He had made Light, and divided it from darkness; and called the Light, Day; and the darkness, night. But as the context of this Psalm indicates, somewhat also God foretold in that His work, which should be fulfilled in us: and so according to the condition of this creation the world ran its course. For in vain the Lord said of Moses, He wrote of Me, unless all things which are written, even when God framed the creature, can be interpreted to signification of things to come: that thou mayest understand God to have made the Light when Christ rose from the dead. For then truly the Light was divided from the darkness, when immortality was separated from mortality. What then followeth but that to the Head the Body also be made, which is the Church? Verily there is also a Psalm concerning the first day of the week, wherein the Lord’s Resurrection is declared most openly. For there it is said, Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. What more evident than that Christ is the King of Glory? Of Whom it is said, Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. The second day of the week then we ought not to understand but of the Church of Christ: but the Church of Christ in the Saints, the Church of Christ in those who are written in Heaven, the Church of Christ in those who to this world’s temptations yield not. For they are worthy of the name of ‘firmament.’ The Church of Christ, then, in those who are strong, of whom saith the Apostle, We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, is called the firmament. Of this it is sung in this Psalm. Let us hear, acknowledge, associate, glory, reign. For Her called firmament, hear also in the Apostolic Epistles, the pillar and firmament of the truth. Of this firmament is it sung to the sons of

Korah, who ye know are the sons of the Bridegroom crucified in the place of Calvary. For Korah is interpreted Calvitium. Now followeth in this Psalm, which is inscribed, On the second day of the week;

2. Ver. 1. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. See, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised: but do infidels praise the Lord? Do they also who believe and yet live ill praise the Lord? they through whom it cometh to pass that the Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, do they praise God? Or in truth if they do praise, is their praise accepted; when it is written, Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner? Thou saidst then, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, but say where? In the city of our God, in His holy mountain. Of this it is elsewhere spoken, Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart. In such, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, that is, in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. This is the city set upon an hill, which cannot be hid: this is the candle which is not hidden under a bushel, to all known, to all proclaimed. Yet are not all men citizens thereof, but they in whom great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. What then is that city: let us see whether perhaps, since it is said, In the city of our God, in His holy mountain, we ought not to enquire for this mountain where also we may be heard. For not in vain is it said in another Psalm, I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of His holy hill. That hill helped thee then that thou mightest be heard. For if unto it thou wentest not up, lying below thou mightest cry out, but heard thou couldest not be. What then is that mountain, brethren? One is it with great care to be enquired for, with great solicitude investigated, with labour also to be occupied, and ascended. But if in any part of the earth it is, what shall we do? Shall we go abroad out of our own country, that to that mountain we may arrive? Nay, then we are abroad, when in it we are not. For that is our city, if we are members of the King, Who is the head of the same city. Where then is that mountain? If any place it occupied, we must labour, as I said, to arrive thereat. But why art thou troubled? I would thou mayest not be slothful to ascend to the mountain, as the mountain was not slow to come to thee sleeping. For there was a certain corner stone contemptible, whereat the Jews stumbled, cut out of a certain mountain without hands, that is, coming of the kingdom of the Jews without hands, because human operation went not with Mary of whom

was born Christ. But if that stone, when the Jews stumbled thereat, had remained there, thou hadst not had whither to ascend. But what was done? What saith the prophecy of Daniel? What but that the stone grew, and became a great mountain? How great? So that it filled the whole face of the earth. By growing, then, and by filling the whole face of the earth, that mountain came to us. Why then seek we the mountain as though absent, and not as being present ascend to it; that in us the Lord may be great, and greatly to be praised?

3. Further, lest thou shouldest not recognise this mountain even in this Psalm, and shouldest think it to be sought in some other part of the earth, see what followeth. When he had said, in the city of our God, in His holy mountain, what added he? (Ver. 2.) Spreading abroad the joys of the whole earth, the mountains of Sion. Sion is one mountain, why then mountains? Is it that to Sion belonged also those which came from the other side, so as to meet together on the Corner Stone, and become two walls, as it were two mountains, one of the circumcision, the other of the uncircumcision; one of the Jews, the other of the Gentiles: no longer adverse, although diverse, because from different sides, now in the corner not even diverse. For He is our peace, Who hath made both one. The same Corner Stone which the builders rejected, is become the Head Stone of the corner. The mountain hath joined in itself two mountains; one house there is, and two houses; two, because coming from different sides; one, because of the Corner Stone, wherein both are joined together. Hear also this, the mountains of Sion: the sides of the North are the city of the great King. For thou hadst thought of Sion as one place, where Jerusalem was built, and therein none occurred to thee, save the people of the circumcision, which indeed in the remnant was gathered by Christ, but in the greater part winnowed like chaff. For it is written, A remnant shall be saved. But consider also the Gentiles, see also the wild olive tree grafted into the fatness of the olive. See the Gentiles; the sides of the North: the sides of the North are joined to the city of the great King. The North is wont to be contrary to Sion: Sion forsooth is in the South, the North over against the South. Who is the North, but He who said, I will sit in the sides of the North, I will be like the Most High? The devil had held dominion over the ungodly, and possessed the nations serving images, adoring demons; and all whatsoever there was of human kind any

where throughout the world, by cleaving to him, had become North. But since He Who binds the strong man, taketh away his goods, and maketh them His own goods; men delivered from infidelity and superstition of devils, believing in Christ, are fitted on to that city, have met in the corner that wall that cometh from the circumcision, and that was made the city of the great King, which had been the sides of the North. Therefore also in another Scripture is it said, Out of the North come clouds of golden colour: great is the glory and honour of the Almighty. For great is the glory of the physician, when from being despaired of the sick recovers. Out of the North come clouds, and not black clouds, not dark clouds, not lowering, but of golden colour. Whence but by grace illumined through Christ? See, the sides of the North are the city of the great King. The sides truly, because they had adhered to the devil; for whoever adhere to any one, are said to be his ‘sides.’ For even of some men we are wont so to speak, he is a good man, but he hath bad sides; that is, he indeed excelleth in probity, but wicked are they that are joined with him. “The sides of the North then,” those who adhered to the devil: whence came also that son, of whom but now we heard, that “he was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.” For by going to a far country he had come even to the North, and there, as ye know, he had joined himself to one of the princes of that country: he became then a side of the North, by adhering to a prince of that country; but because the city of the great King is collected even out of the side of the North, he returned to himself, and said, I will arise, and go to my father. And his father met him, and said of him, He was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. That fatted calf was the Corner Stone. At last the elder son, who refused to sit down to meat, being exhorted by his father, entered in; and now the two walls, like the two sons coming to the calf, have made the city of the great King.

4. Let the Psalm then follow, and say, God shall be known in her houses. Now in her ‘houses,’ because of the mountains, because of the two walls, because of the two sons. God shall be known in her houses, but he commendeth grace, therefore he added, when He shall take her up. For what would that city have been, unless He had taken her up? Would it not immediately have fallen, unless it had such foundation. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Let none

then glory in his own merits; but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For then is that city great, then is the Lord known therein, when He shall take her up; as the physician taketh up the sick man to be cured, not to be loved as he is. For the physician hates the fever. The physician doth not love the sick man, and the physician doth love the sick man. If he loved him sick, he would always wish him sick; again, if he loved not the sick man, to the sick man he would not come. But he loveth him sick, that he may make him whole. The Lord then hath taken up this city, and is known therein, that is, His grace is known in that city: for whatever that city hath, which glorieth in the Lord, it hath not of itself. For because of this it is said, What hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? God shall be known in her houses, when He shall take her up.

5. Ver. 3. For, lo, the kings of the earth are gathered together. Behold now those sides of the North, see how they come, see how they say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord: and He will teach us His way, and we will walk in it. Lo, the kings of the earth are gathered together, and have come together in one. In what one, but that “corner stone?” (Ver. 4.) They saw it, and so they marvelled. After their marvelling at the miracles and glory of Christ, what followed? They were troubled, they were moved, (Ver. 5.) trembling took hold upon them. Whence took trembling hold upon them, but from the consciousness of sins? Let them run then, kings after a king; kings, let them acknowledge the King. Therefore saith He elsewhere, Yet have I been set by Him a King upon His holy hill of Sion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the ends of earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. A King then was heard of, set up in Sion, to Him were delivered possessions even to the uttermost parts of the earth. Kings behoved to fear lest they should lose the kingdom, lest the kingdom be taken from them. As wretched Herod feared, and for the Child slew the children. But fearing to lose his kingdom, he deserved not to know the King. Would that he too had adored the King with the Magi: not by ill-seeking the kingdom, slain the Innocents, and perished guilty. For as concerning him, he destroyed the

Innocents: but as for Christ, even a Child, the children dying for Him did He crown. Therefore behoved kings to fear when it was said, Yet have I been set a King by Him upon His holy hill of Sion, and inheritance to the uttermost parts of the earth shall He give Him, Who set Him up King. But why envy ye, O ye kings? View, not envy. For otherwise is He King, Who said, My kingdom is not of this world. Fear not then that the kingdom of this world be taken from you. A kingdom shall be given to you, but of heaven, where He is King. What then follows? Understand now therefore, O ye kings, now were ye preparing to envy; Understand now. Of another King is it spoken Whose kingdom is not of this world. Justly then, The kings were gathered together in one, they were troubled, trembling took hold upon them. Thence also this is said to them, Understand now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling. And what did they? There pains as of a woman in travail. What are the pains as of a woman in travail, but the pangs of a penitent? See the same conception of pain and travail: Of Thy fear (saith Isaiah) we have conceived, we have travailed of the Spirit of salvation. So then the kings conceived from the fear of Christ, that by travailing they brought forth salvation by believing on Him Whom they had feared. There pains as of a woman in travail: when of travail Thou hearest, expect a birth. The old man travaileth, but the new man is born: There pains as of a woman in travail.

6. Ver. 6. With a strong wind Thou shalt break the ships of Tarshish. Briefly understood, this is, Thou shalt overthrow the pride of the nations. But where in this history is mentioned the overthrowing of the pride of the nations? Because of the ships of Tarshish. Learned men have enquired for Tarshish a city, that is, what city was signified by this name: and to some it has seemed that Cilicia is called Tarshish, because its metropolis is called Tarsus. Of which city was the Apostle Paul, being born in Tarsus of Cilicia. But some have understood by it Carthage, being haply sometimes so named, or in some language so signified. For in the Prophet Isaiah it is thus found; Howl, ye ships of Carthage. But in Ezekiel by some interpreters the word is translated Carthage, by some Tarshish: and from this diversity it can be understood that the same which was called Carthage, is called Tharsus. But it is manifest, that in the beginning of its reign Carthage flourished with

ships, and so flourished, that among other nations they excelled in trafficking and navigation. For when Dido, flying from her brother, escaped to the parts of Africa, where she built Carthage, the ships which had been prepared for commerce in his country she had taken with her for her flight, the princes of the country consenting to it; and the same ships also when Carthage was built failed not in traffic. And hence that city became too proud, so that justly by its ships may be understood the pride of the nations, presuming on things uncertain, as on the breath of the winds. Now let none presume on full sails, and on the seeming fair state of this life, as of the sea. Be our foundation in Sion: there ought we to be stablished, not to be carried about with every wind of doctrine. Whoso then by the uncertain things of this life had been puffed up, let them be overthrown, and be all the pride of the nations subjected to Christ, Who shall with a strong wind break all the ships of Tarshish: not of any city, but of Tarshish. How with a strong wind? With very strong fear. For so all pride feared Him that shall judge, as on Him humble to believe, lest Him exalted it should fear.

7. Ver. 7. As we have heard, so have we seen. Blessed Church! at one time thou hast heard, at another time thou hast seen. She heard in promises, seeth in performance: heard in Prophecy, seeth in the Gospel. For all things which are now fulfilled were before prophesied. Lift up thine eyes then, and stretch them over the world; see now His ‘inheritance even to the uttermost parts of the earth:’ see now is fulfilled what was said, All kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him: see fulfilled what was said, Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and Thy glory above all the earth. See Him Whose feet and hands were pierced with nails, Whose bones hanging on the tree were counted, upon Whose vesture lots were cast: see reigning Whom they saw hanging; see sitting in Heaven Whom they despised walking on earth: see thus fulfilled, All the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him. Seeing all this, exclaim with joy, As we have heard, so have we seen. Justly the Church herself is so called out of the Gentiles. Hearken, O daughter, and see: forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house. Thy father was the North, come to Mount Sion, hear and see; not see and hear, but hear and see: first hear, after see. Thou hearest first what thou seest not. Thou shalt see hereafter, what thou hast heard. A people (saith

He) whom I have not known hath served Me. At the hearing of the ear it hath obeyed Me. If at the hearing of the ear it obeyed Me, then it saw not. Where then is, They to whom it was not told of Him, shall see; and they who have not heard shall understand? They to whom the Prophets were not sent, first heard and understood the Prophets: they who first heard not, afterwards hearing marvelled. They remained behind to whom they were sent, carrying the books, understanding not the truth: having the tables of the Testament, and not holding the inheritance. But we, as we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God; there have we heard, there also seen. Whoso is without the same, neither heareth, nor seeth; whoso is within, is neither blind, nor deaf. As we have heard, so have we seen. And where hearest thou? where seest thou? In the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God. God hath founded it for ever. Let not heretics insult, divided into parties, let them not exalt themselves who say, Lo, here is Christ, or lo, there. Whoso saith, Lo, here is Christ, or lo, there, inviteth to parties. Unity God promised. The kings are gathered together in one, not dissipated through schisms. But haply that city which hath held the world, shall sometime be overthrown. Far be the thought! God hath founded it for ever. If then God hath founded it for ever, why fearest thou lest the firmament should fall?

8. Ver. 8. We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy people. Who have received, and where received? Hath not the same Thy people received Thy mercy. If Thy people hath received Thy mercy, how then We have received Thy mercy, and, in the midst of Thy people? As if they who received were one party, they in the midst of whom they received another. A great mystery, but yet well known. When hence also, that is, out of these verses, hath been extracted and brought forth what ye know, it will be not ruder, but sweeter. Now forsooth all are reckoned the people of God, who carry His Sacraments, but not all belong to His Mercy. All forsooth receiving the Sacrament of the Baptism of Christ, are called Christians, but not all live worthily of that Sacrament. There are some of whom saith the Apostle, Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Yet on account of this form of godliness they are named among God’s people. As to the floor, until the corn is threshed, belongs not the wheat only, but the chaff. But will it also belong to the garner? In the midst then of an evil

people is a good people, which hath received the Mercy of God. He liveth worthily of the Mercy of God who heareth, and holdeth, and doeth what the Apostle saith, We beseech you that ye receive not the Grace of God in vain. Whoso then receiveth not the Grace of God in vain, the same receiveth not only the Sacrament, but also the Mercy of God as well. And what does it harm him that he is in the midst of a people disobedient, until the floor be winnowed, until the good be separated from the evil? What does it harm him to dwell in the midst of the people? Let him be of those who are called the Firmament; let him be a lily among thorns. And that thorns also belong to the people of God, wouldest thou hear? So is it set forth in this very similitude, As a lily, He saith, among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. Did He say among strange women? No, but among the daughters. Then are there evil daughters; and among them, the lily is among thorns. So those who have the Sacraments, and have not good manners, are both said to be of God, and not of God; are both said to be His, and to be strangers: His because of His own Sacraments, strangers because of their own vice. So also strange daughters: daughters, because of the form of godliness; strange, because of their loss of virtue. Be the lily there; let it receive the Mercy of God: hold fast the root of a good flower, be not ungrateful for soft rain coming from heaven. Be thorns ungrateful, let them grow by the showers: for the fire they grow, not for the garner. We have received Thy mercy, O God, in the midst of Thy people. In the midst of Thy people not receiving Thy mercy, we have received Thy mercy. For He came unto His own, and His own received Him not, yet, in the midst of them, as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.

9. Now occurreth this to every one’s thoughts. What? That people, which in the midst of the people of God receiveth the mercy of God, what numbers hath it? How few are they, there is scarce found one! Will God be content with these, and will He destroy so great a multitude? This say they who promise themselves what they have never heard promised by God. And truly if we live ill, if we enjoy this world’s delights, if we serve our passions, will God destroy us? How many are there who seem to keep God’s commandments? There is scarce found one, or two, or a few at most. Those only will God deliver, and the rest condemn? God forbid, say they; when He cometh and seeth so great a multitude on the left, He will have

mercy, and give indulgence. This is evidently what the serpent promised the first man. For God had threatened death, if he tasted; but he said, ‘Not so, Ye shall not surely die.’ They believed the serpent, they found true what God threatened, false what the devil had promised. So now also, brethren, set before your eyes the Church, after the example and similitude of Paradise: the serpent ceaseth not to suggest what then he suggested. But the fall of the first man ought to avail with us for experience of caution, not for imitation of his sin. Therefore he fell, that we may rise. Let us answer to such suggestions, what Job answered. For him also tempted he by a woman, as by Eve, and on the dunghill he conquered, that was conquered in Paradise. Therefore let us not have such words, nor think that they are few; they are many, but among more they lie hid. For we cannot deny that the wicked are more, and so many more, that among them the good appear not at all, as the wheat appears not in the floor. For whoever looketh on a floor, might think that was chaff only. Bring a man without experience, and he thinks it vainly done that oxen are put in, that men sweat there under the heat, to thresh the chaff, yet there is also the heap, to be purged by winnowing, then will come forth plenty of corn, which before lay hidden in the plenty of chaff. And now wouldest thou find out the good? Be such, and thou shalt find.

10. Against this despairing, then, see what followeth in this Psalm. For when he had said, We have received Thy mercy in the midst of Thy people, he signified that there is a people not receiving the mercy of God, in the midst of whom some do receive the mercy of God: and then lest it should occur to men that there are so few, as to be nearly none, how did He console them in the words following? Ver. 9. According to Thy Name, O God, so is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth. What is this? Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; in the city of our God, in His holy mountain. Neither can there be any praise of Him but in His saints. For they who live ill, praise Him not, but as it were, preach Him with their tongue, blaspheme in their life. Since then there is no praise of Him but in His saints, let not heretics say to themselves, His praise hath remained in us, because we are few, and separate from the crowd; we live righteously, we praise God, not only in our speech, but also in our conversation. They are answered out of this Psalm, Why say ye that God is praised in your ‘part,’ to Whom it is

said, According to Thy Name, O God, so is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth. That is, as Thou art known through all the earth, so Thou art also praised through all the earth, nor are there wanting who now praise Thee through all the earth. But they praise Thee who live well. For, According to Thy Name, O God, so is Thy praise, not in a part, but unto the ends of the earth. Thy right hand is full of righteousness. That is, many are they also who shall stand at Thy right hand. Not only shall they be many, who shall stand at Thy left hand, but there also shall be a full heap set at Thy right hand. Thy right hand is full of righteousness.

11. Ver. 10. Let mount Zion rejoice, and the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Thy judgments, O Lord. O mount Zion, O daughters of Judah, ye labour now among tares, among chaff, among thorns ye labour: yet be glad because of God’s judgments. God erreth not in judgment. Live ye separate, though separate ye were not born; not vainly hath a voice gone forth from your mouth and heart, Destroy not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men. He shall winnow with such art, carrying in His hand a fan, that not one grain of wheat shall fall into the heap of chaff prepared to be burned, nor one beard of chaff pass to the heap to be laid up in the garner. Be glad, O ye daughters of Judæa, because of the judgments of God that erreth not, and do not yet judge rashly. To you let it belong to collect, to Him let it belong to separate. Let mount Zion rejoice, and the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Thy judgments, O Lord; but think not that the ‘daughters of Judah’ are Jews. Judah is confession; all the sons of confession are all the sons of Judah. For salvation is of the Jews, is nothing else than that Christ is of the Jews. This saith also the Apostle, He is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. Be such a Jew; glory in the circumcision of the heart, though thou hast not the circumcision of the flesh. Let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of Thy judgments, O Lord.

12. Ver. 11. Walk about Zion, and embrace her. Be it said to them who live ill, in the midst of whom is the people, which hath received the mercy of God. In the midst of you is a people living well, Walk about Zion. But how?

embrace her. Not with scandals, but with love go round about her: that so those who live well in the midst of you ye may imitate, and by imitation of them, be incorporate with Christ, Whose members they are. Walk about Zion, go round about her: speak in the towers thereof. In the height of her bulwarks, set forth the praises thereof.

13. Ver. 12. Set your hearts upon her might. Not that ye may have the form of godliness, deny the power thereof, but, upon her might set your hearts. What is the might of this city? Whoso would understand the might of this city, let him understand the force of love. That is a virtue which none conquereth. Love’s flame no waves of the world, no streams of temptation, extinguish. Of this it is said, Love is strong as death. For as when death cometh, it cannot be resisted; by whatever arts, whatever medicines, you meet it; the violence of death can none avoid who is born mortal; so against the violence of love can the world do nothing. For from the contrary the similitude is made of death; for as death is most violent to take away, so love is most violent to save. Through love many have died to the world, to live to God; by this love inflamed, the martyrs, not pretenders, not puffed up by vain-glory, not such as they of whom it is written, Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing, but men whom truly a love of Christ and of the truth led on to this passion; what to them were the temptations of the tormentors? Greater violence had the eyes of their weeping friends, than the persecutions of enemies. For how many were held by their children, that they might not suffer? to how many did their wives fall upon their knees, that they might not be left widows? How many have their parents forbidden to die, as we know and read in the Passion of the Blessed Perpetua! All this was done; but tears, however great, and with whatever force flowing, when did they extinguish the ardor of love? This is the might of Sion, to whom elsewhere it is said, Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. Speak ye in her towers; set your hearts upon her might, and distribute her houses.

14. What here understand we, Set your hearts upon her might, and distribute her houses? That is, distinguish house from house. Do not confound. For there is a house having the form of godliness, and not having godliness; but there is a house having both form and godliness. Distribute,

confound not. But then ye distribute and confound not, when ye ‘set your hearts upon her might;’ that is, when through love ye are made spiritual. Then ye will not judge rashly, then ye will see that the evil harms not the good as long as we are in this floor. Distribute her houses. There can be also another understanding. The two houses, one coming of the circumcision, one of the uncircumcision, it is commanded the Apostles to distribute. For when Saul was called, and made the Apostle Paul, agreeing in unity with his fellow Apostles, he so with them determined, that they should go to the circumcision, he to the uncircumcision. By that dispensation of their Apostleship, they distributed the houses of the city of the great King; and meeting in the corner, divided the Gospel in dispensation, in love united it. And truly this is rather to be understood; for it followeth and sheweth that it is here said to the preachers, distribute her houses: that ye may tell it to the generation following: that is, that even to us, who were to come after them, their dispensation of the Gospel should reach. For not for those only they laboured, with whom they lived in the earth; nor the Lord for those Apostles only to whom He deigned to shew Himself alive after His Resurrection, but for us also. For to them He spake, and signified us when He spake, Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world. Were they then to be here alway, even to the end of the world? Also He said, Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word. Therefore He considereth us, because He suffered on account of us. Justly then it is said, That ye may tell it to the generation following.

15. Tell what? (Ver. 13.) For this is God, even our God. The earth was seen, the earth’s Creator was not seen; the flesh was held, God in the flesh was not acknowledged. For the flesh was held by those, from whom had been taken the same flesh, for of the seed of Abraham was the virgin Mary. At the flesh they stayed, the Divinity they did not understand. O Apostles, O mighty city, preach thou on the towers, and say, This is God, even our God. So, even so as He was despised, as He lay a stone before the feet of the stumbling, that He might humble the hearts of the confessing; even so, This is God, even our God. Certainly He was seen, as was said, ‘Afterward did He shew Himself upon earth, and conversed with men.’ This is God, even our God. He is also Man, and who is there will know Him? This is God, even our God. But haply for a time as the false gods. For because they can

be called gods, but cannot be so, for a time they are even called so. For what saith the Prophet, or what warneth He to be said to them? This shall ye say to them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from those that are under the heavens. He is not such a god: for our God is above all gods. Above all what gods? For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens. The same then is our God. This is God, even our God. For how long? For ever and ever: He shall rule us for ever. If He is our God, He is also our King. He protecteth us, being our God, lest we die; He ruleth us, being our King, lest we fall. But by ruling us He doth not break us; for whom He ruleth not, He breaketh. Thou shalt rule them, saith He, with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. But there are whom He ruleth not; these He spareth not, as a potter’s vessel dashing them in pieces. By Him then let us wish to be ruled and delivered, for He is our God for ever and ever, and He shall rule us for ever.

PSALM 49

SERMON I

On the first part of the Psalm.

1. All divine sayings are profitable to those that understand them aright: but dangerous to those who will wrest them according to the perverseness of their own heart, instead of correcting their own heart according to the rectitude of them. For there is this great perverseness usual in men; that whereas they ought themselves to live according to the Will of God, they would have God live according to their will: and while they will not be set right themselves, they would have Him made wrong: judging the right to be not what He willeth, but what they will. Again, we are wont to hear men murmuring against God, because with ill men in this life it goeth well, while the good suffer; as if He were perverse and knew not what He did, or altogether withdrew His eyes from things human, or would not have His peace disturbed, and minded not these things, since it were a labour for God to observe and correct them. Those men, therefore, whose will to worship God is in order that it may be well with them here, murmur when they chance to see those who do not worship God enriched and abounding in earthly prosperity; but themselves, who worship God, struggling with difficulties, with want, with woe, and other hardships of human mortality. Against this voice, and against these blasphemies of men murmuring, holy Scripture ever doth chant a charm healing the bite of the serpent. For such corruption is the mark of a poisoned heart, belching forth against God the foulness of blasphemy: nay, what is worse, rejecting the hand of the healer, not rejecting the fangs of the serpent. Thus, I say, the heart of man doth thrust from itself the sternness of the Word of God, and giveth entrance to the allurements of the serpent engaging it to evil. Against these men, therefore, holy Scripture doth sing her chant, and is now speaking to us in this Psalm. To which Psalm I would direct the attention of your Holiness, did not God Himself bid us all hearken: and not us only, but the whole world. For hear how He beginneth.

Ver. 1. Hear ye these things, all ye nations. Not then you only who are here. For of what power is our voice so to cry out, as that all nations may hear? For Our Lord Jesus Christ hath proclaimed it through the Apostles, hath proclaimed it in so many tongues that He sent; and we see this Psalm, which before was only repeated in one nation, in the Synagogue of the Jews, now repeated throughout the whole world, throughout all Churches; and that fulfilled which is here spoken of, Hear ye these words, all ye nations. To this alone I would engage your attention, lest because of bodily fatigue ye might not perchance keep your minds awakened, being alarmed at the length of this Psalm. If it shall be possible it will be ended to-day: if not, there will remain something for us to-morrow: nevertheless, do you be constantly attentive. For if the Lord will, ye shall hear as much as will not load, but lighten you. Hear ye these words, all ye nations: of whom ye are: With ears ponder, all ye that dwell in the world. This He seemeth to have repeated a second time, lest to have said hear, before, were too little. What I say, he saith, hear, with ears ponder, that is, hear not cursorily. What is, with ears ponder? It is what the Lord said, he that hath ears to hear, let him hear: for as all who were in His presence must have had ears, what ears did He require save those of the heart, when He said, he that hath ears to hear, let him hear. The same ears also this Psalm doth smite. With ears ponder, all ye that dwell in the world. Perhaps there is here some distinction. We ought not indeed to narrow our view, but there is no harm in explaining even this view of the sense. Perhaps there is some difference between the saying, all nations, and the saying, all ye that dwell in the world. For perchance he would have us understand the expression, dwell in, with a further meaning, so as to take all nations for all the wicked, but the dwellers of the world all the just. For he doth inhabit who is not held fast: but he that is occupied is inhabited, and doth not inhabit. Just as he doth possess whatever he hath, who is master of his property: but a master is one who is not held in the meshes of covetousness: while he that is held fast by covetousness is the possessed, and not the possessor. We have a certain sense affixed to habitation in the Scripture of God, in the place where he saith, I would rather be an abject in the house of the Lord, than to inhabit the tents of the ungodly. But why? If thou art an abject in the house of the Lord, dost thou not dwell there? He would not intimate habitation, except in the case of those who reign, and hold, and domineer, and govern: but they that are despised do not as it were inhabit, but are subject.

For thus he saith, I would rather be an abject in the house of God, than to reign in the tents of the ungodly. Therefore, if there is any distinction between all nations and the inhabitants of the world, as there is between hear and ponder it with your ears, then though there seemeth to be a repetition, yet what he wished to intimate is something different: because not only sinners and the ungodly were to hear these words, but the godly also. Now all hear promiscuously: but when men shall have come to give an account, those who have heard to no purpose will be separated from those who have pondered with their ears. Therefore let even the ungodly hear: Hear ye this, all ye nations. Let the just also hear, who have not heard to no purpose, and who rather rule the world than are ruled by the world: with ears ponder, all ye that dwell in the world.

3. And again he saith, both all ye earthborn, (ver. 2.) and sons of men. The expression earthborn he doth refer to sinners; the expression sons of men to the faithful and righteous. Ye see then that this distinction is observed. Who are the earthborn? The children of the earth. Who are the children of the earth? They who desire earthly inheritances. Who are the sons of men? They who appertain to the Son of Man. We have already before explained this distinction to your Sanctity, and have concluded that Adam was a man, but not the son of man; that Christ was the Son of Man, but was God also. For whosoever pertain to Adam, are earthborn: whosoever pertain to Christ, are sons of men. Nevertheless, let all hear, I withhold my discourse from no one. If one is earthborn, let him hear, because of the judgment: another is a son of man, let him hear for the kingdom’s sake. The rich and poor together. Again, the same words are repeated. The expression rich refers to the earthborn; but the word poor to the sons of men. By the rich understand the proud, by the poor the humble. Let a man have large means of wealth; if in them he is not lifted up, he is poor: let him not have any thing: but covet and be puffed up, him God numbereth among the rich and reprobate. Now both the rich and poor in heart God distinguisheth from those that are so in coffer and household. Are not they poor who accept the monition of the Apostle, who bid Timothy, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they

be not high-minded? How did He make them poor who were rich? By taking from them the cause wherefore riches are sought. For no man would be rich for any other reason, than that he may be puffed up among those with whom he dwelleth, and may seem to be greater than they. But when he bade them not be high-minded, he made them equal with those who have nothing: so that perchance, a beggar with very few pence may be more exalted than the rich man who mindeth the Apostle, saying, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded. How not to be highminded? If they do what followeth, Trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. He said not, Who giveth to them; but Who giveth to us. Had Paul himself no riches? Evidently he had. What riches? Those of which the Scripture speaketh in another place, To a faithful man the whole world is full of riches. Hear also himself declaring: As having nothing and yet possessing all things. Therefore let him who wishes to be rich not cleave to a part, and he shall have all; let him cleave to Him Who hath created all. The rich and poor together. He saith in another Psalm, The poor shall eat and be satisfied. How hath he commended the poor? The poor shall eat and be satisfied. What eat they? That Food which the faithful know. How shall they be satisfied? By imitating the Passion of their Lord, and not without cause receiving their recompense. The poor shall eat and be satisfied, and they shall praise the Lord who seek Him. What of the rich? Even they eat. But how eat they? All the rich upon the earth have eaten and worshipped. He said not, Have eaten and are satisfied; but, have eaten and worshipped. They worship God indeed, but they will not display brotherly humaneness. These eat and worship; those eat and are filled: yet both eat. Of the eater what he eateth is required: let him not be forbidden by the distributor to eat, but let him be admonished to fear him who doth require his account. Let these words then be heard by sinners and righteous, nations, and those who inhabit the world, earthborn and sons of men, the rich and the poor together: not divided, not separated. That is for the time of the harvest to do, the hand of the winnower will effect that. Now together let rich and poor hear, let goats and sheep feed in the same pasture, until He come Who shall separate the one on His right hand, the other on His left. Let them all hear together the teacher, lest separated from one another they hear the voice of the Judge.

4. And what is it they are now to hear? (ver. 3.) My mouth shall speak of wisdom, and the meditation of my heart understanding. And this repetition is perhaps made, lest perchance if he had said only my mouth, thou shouldest suppose that one spake to thee who had understanding but in his lips. For many have understanding in their lips, but have not in their heart, of whom the Scripture saith, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. What saith he then who speaketh to thee? when he hath said, My mouth shall speak of wisdom, in order that thou mayest know that what is poured forth from the mouth floweth from the bottom of the heart, he hath added, And the meditation of my heart of understanding.

5. Ver. 4. I will incline mine ear to the parable, I will shew my proposition upon the harp. Who is this, the meditation of whose heart speaketh understanding, in such sort, that it be not only on the surface of the lips, but also fill the inner man? Who is he that heareth and thus speaketh? For many speak what they hear not. Who are they who speak what they hear not? These be they who do not what they speak: they be like the Pharisees whom the Lord affirmeth to sit in the seat of Moses. He willed to speak to thee from Moses' seat, by the mouth of those who speak those things, and do not; and the Lord would thus give thee security. Fear not, He saith, What they say, do ye; but what they do, do not ye: for they say, and do not. They hear not what they say. But they who do and then say, hear what they say: and so say with profit, because they hear. He then who is a speaker and not a hearer profiteth another, profiteth not himself. He then who would be both a hearer and a speaker, who speaketh to thee, before he saith, I will shew my proposition upon the harp, which is to speak by means of the body, (for the soul useth the body as a harper useth the harp,) first saith, I will incline mine ear to the parable. Before that I shall speak to thee through the body, before that my harp giveth her sound, I will first incline mine ear to the parable, that is to say, I will hear what I am to say to thee. And why to a parable? Because now we see through a glass darkly, as saith the Apostle; whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. For our vision is not yet that face to face, where there are no longer parables, where there no longer are riddles and comparisons. Whatever now we understand we behold through riddles. A riddle is a dark parable which it is hard to understand. Howsoever a man may cultivate his heart and apply himself to

apprehend mysteries, so long as we see through the corruption of this flesh, we see but in part. But when we shall have put on incorruption in the resurrection of the dead, when the Son of Man shall have appeared to judge the quick and dead, then shall be seen the Son of Man judging, Who was first judged, separating the bad from the good, placing the bad on the left hand, the good on the right. Both the good and bad shall see Him alike, but to the bad He shall say, Go ye into everlasting fire; while to the good He shall say, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive ye the Kingdom. The wicked shall depart into everlasting fire, but the just into everlasting life; and there shall be that vision face to face of which the former are not worthy. Mark what I say. Just as both the bad and good saw the Son of Man here, when He was yet to be judged, (for the Apostles saw Him who followed Him, the Jews saw Him who crucified Him,) so shall both the good and bad see Him when He shall come to judge: the good that they may receive their reward for having followed Him; the bad that they may receive their punishment for having crucified Him. Will they only be condemned who have crucified Him? I dare to say, they only. Then we, say the sinners of this age, are safe. If God searcheth not the heart, ye are safe. What have I said? Let your love understand me, lest they affirm, when God cometh to judgment, that they understood not. The Jews, because they saw Christ, crucified Him: thou, because thou seest not Christ, resistest His Word. Thou who resistest His Word, wouldest thou not crucify His Flesh, if thou sawest Him? The Jew contemned Him hanging on the Tree, thou contemnest Him sitting in Heaven. Therefore two kinds of people saw Him, while He was here; two kinds shall also see Him, when He shall have come to judgment. For Son of Man He shall come, that He may judge; because Son of Man He came, that He might be judged. Accordingly, because the Father was not made flesh, the Father suffered not, and judgeth by the Son, as He Himself saith in the Gospel, The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: and as He saith a little lower down, Hath given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. For according as He is the Son of God, He is the Word always with the Father, and because always with the Father, with the Father He always judgeth: but according as He is the Son of Man, He was both judged and will judge. But as He was seen by those who believed, and by those who crucified Him, when He was judged; so will He be seen, when He shall have begun to be judge, both by those whom He shall condemn, and by those whom He shall crown. But that vision of divinity, which He hath promised to them that love Him, when He saith, He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and he that loveth Me keepeth My commandments, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him: this the ungodly shall not see. This manifestation is in a certain way familiar: He keepeth it for His own, He will not shew it to the ungodly. Of what sort is the vision itself? Of what sort is Christ? Equal to the Father. Of what sort is Christ? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. For this vision we sigh now, and groan so long as we sojourn here; to this vision we shall be brought home at the last, this vision now we see but darkly. If then we see now darkly, let us incline our ear to the parable, and then let us shew our proposition upon the harp: let us hear what we say, do what we enjoin.

6. And what hath he said? (ver. 5.) And wherefore shall I fear in the evil day? The iniquity of my heel shall compass me. He beginneth something obscurely. Wherefore shall I fear, he saith, in the evil day? The iniquity of my heel shall compass me. Therefore he ought the rather to fear if the iniquity of his heel shall compass him. Nay, for let not man fear, he saith, who hath not power to escape. For example, he who feareth death, what shall he do to escape death? Let him tell me how he is to escape what Adam oweth, he who is born of Adam. But let him consider that he is born of Adam, and hath followed Christ, and ought to pay what Adam oweth, and obtain what Christ hath promised. Therefore, he who feareth death can no wise escape: but he who feareth the damnation which the ungodly shall hear, Go ye into everlasting fire, hath an escape. Let him not fear then. For why should he fear? Will the iniquity of his heel compass him? If then he avoid ‘the iniquity of his heel,’ and walk in the ways of God, he shall not come to the evil day: the evil day, the last day, shall not be evil to him. For the last day shall be ill with some, shall be good with others. Shall it be ill with those to whom it shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom? But it shall be ill with those to whom it shall be said, Go ye into everlasting fire. But if the iniquity of his heel shall compass him, wherefore shall he fear in the evil day? Now while they live, let them take heed to themselves, let them put away iniquity from their heel: let them walk in that way, let them walk in the way of which He saith Himself, I am

the way, the truth, and the life: and let them not fear in the evil day, for He giveth them safety Who became The Way. Wherefore should I fear in the evil day? The iniquity of my heel shall compass me. Therefore let them avoid the iniquity of their heel. With the heel a man slippeth. Let your Love observe. What was said by God to the Serpent? She shall mark thy head, and thou shalt mark her heel. The devil marketh thy heel, in order that when thou slippest he may overthrow thee. He marketh thy heel, do thou mark his head. What is his head? The beginning of an evil suggestion. When he beginneth to suggest evil thoughts, then do thou thrust him away before pleasure ariseth, and consent followeth; and so shalt thou avoid his head, and he shall not grasp thy heel. But wherefore said He this to Eve? Because through the flesh man doth slip. Our flesh is an Eve within us. He that loveth his wife, he saith, loveth himself. What meaneth himself? He continueth, and saith, For no man ever yet hath hated his own flesh. Because then the devil would make us slip through the flesh, just as he made that man Adam to slip, through Eve; Eve is bidden to mark the head of the devil, because the devil marketh her heel. If then the iniquity of our heel shall compass us, why fear we in the evil day, since being converted to Christ we are able not to do iniquity; and there will be nothing to compass us, and we shall joy and not sorrow in the last day?

7. But who are they whom the iniquity of their heel shall compass? (Ver. 6.) They who trust in their virtue, and in the abundance of their riches do glory. Therefore such sins will I avoid, and the iniquity of my heel shall never compass me. What is avoiding such sins? Let us not trust in our own virtue, let us not glory in the abundance of our own riches, but let us glory in Him Who hath promised to us, being humble, exaltation, and hath threatened condemnation to men exalted; and then iniquity of our heel shall never compass us. Who trust in their virtue, and glory in the abundance of their riches.

8. There are some who rely on their friends, others rely on their virtue, others on their riches. This is the presumption of mankind which relieth not on God. He hath spoken of virtue, he hath spoken of riches, he speaketh of friends. (Ver. 7.) Brother redeemeth not, shall man redeem? Dost thou expect that man shall redeem thee from the wrath to come? If brother

redeem thee not, shall man redeem thee? Who is the brother, who if He hath not redeemed thee, no man will redeem? It is He who said after His resurrection, Go, tell My brethren. Our Brother He hath willed to be: and when we say to God, Our Father, this is manifested in us. For he that saith to God, Our Father; saith to Christ, Brother. Therefore let him that hath God for his Father and Christ for his Brother, not fear in the evil day. For the iniquity of his heel shall not compass him; for he relieth not on his virtue, nor glorieth in the abundance of his riches, nor vaunteth himself of his powerful friends. Let him rely on Him who died for him, that he might not die eternally: Who for his sake was humbled, in order that he might be exalted; Who sought him ungodly, in order that He might be sought by him faithful. Therefore if He redeem not, shall man redeem? Shall any man redeem, if the Son of man redeem not? If Christ redeem not, shall Adam redeem? Brother redeemeth not, shall man redeem?

9. He shall not give to God his propitiation, and the price of the redemption of his soul. He trusteth in his virtue, and in the abundance of his riches doth glory, who shall not give to God his propitiation: that is, satisfaction whereby he may prevail with God for his sins: nor the price of the redemption of his soul, who relieth on his virtue, and on his friends, and on his riches. But who are they that give the price of the redemption of their souls? They to whom the Lord saith, Make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that they may receive you into everlasting habitations. They give the price of the redemption of their soul who cease not to do almsdeeds. So those whom the Apostle chargeth by Timothy he would not have to be proud, lest they should glory in the abundance of their riches. Lastly, what they possessed he would not have to grow old in their hands: but that something should be made of it to be for the price of the redemption of their souls. For he saith, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded: nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. And as if they had said, What shall we then make of our riches? he continueth, Let them be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, and they will not lose that. How know we? Hear what followeth. Let them lay up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life. So shall they give the price of the redemption of their

soul. And our Lord counselleth this: Make for yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where thief approacheth not, neither moth corrupteth. God would not have thee lose thy wealth, but He hath given thee counsel to change the place thereof. Let your love understand. Suppose thy friend were just now to enter thy house, and find thou hadst placed thy store of grain in a damp place, and he knew the natural proneness of grain to decay, which thou perchance knewest not, he would give thee counsel of this sort, saying, ‘Brother, thou art losing what with great toil thou hast gathered, thou hast placed it in a damp place, in a few days this grain will decay.’ ‘And what am I to do, brother?’ ‘Raise it into a higher place.’ Thou wouldest hearken to thy friend suggesting that thou shouldest raise grain from a lower to a higher chamber, and dost thou not hearken to Christ charging thee to lift thy treasure from earth to heaven, where not what thou keepest in store may be paid to thee, but that thou mayest keep in store earth, mayest receive heaven, mayest keep in store things mortal, mayest receive things everlasting, that while thou lendest Christ to receive at thy hands but a small loan upon earth, He may repay thee a great recompense in Heaven? Nevertheless, they whom the iniquity of their heel shall compass, because they trust in their virtue, and in the abundance of their riches do glory, and rely on human friends who are able to help them in nothing, shall not give to God their propitiation, and the price of the redemption of their souls.

10. And what hath he said of such a man? (Ver. 9.) Yea, he hath laboured for ever, and shall live till the end. His labour shall be without end, his life shall have an end. Wherefore saith he, He shall live till the end? Because such men think life to be nought but daily enjoyments. So when many poor and needy men of our times, unstable, and not looking to what God doth promise them for their labours, see rich men in daily feastings, in the splendour and glitter of gold and of silver, they say what? ‘These are the only people; they really live!’ This is a saying, be it said no longer: we both warn you, and it remains to warn you, that it be said by fewer persons than it would be said, if we had not warned you. For we do not presume to say that we so say these words, as that it be not said, but that it be said by fewer persons: for it will be said even unto the end of the world. It is too little that he saith, he liveth; he addeth and saith, he thundereth, thinkest thou that he

alone liveth? Let him live! his life will be ended: because he giveth not the price of the redemption of his soul, his life will end, his labour will not end. He laboured for ever, and shall live till the end. How shall he live till the end? As he lived that was clothed with purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, who, being proud and puffed up, spurned the man full of sores lying before his gate, whose sores the dogs licked, and who longed for the crumbs which fell from his table. What did those riches profit him? Both changed places: the one was borne from the rich man’s gate into Abraham’s bosom, the other from his rich feasts was cast into the fire: the one was in peace, the other burned: the one was sated, the other thirsted: the one had laboured till the end, but he lived for ever: the other had lived till the end, but he laboured for ever. And what did it profit the rich man, who asked, while lying in torments in hell, that a drop of water should be poured upon his tongue from the finger of Lazarus, saying, For I am burning here in this flame, and it was not granted to him? One longed for the drop from the finger, as the other had for the crumbs from the rich man’s table; but the labour of the one is ended, and the life of the other is ended: the labour of this is for ever, the life of that is for ever. We who labour perchance here on the earth, have not our life here: and shall not be so placed hereafter, for our life shall be Christ for ever: while they who will have their life here, shall labour for ever and live till the end.

Ver. 9, 10. For he shall not see death, though he shall have seen wise men dying. The man who laboured for ever and shall live till the end, shall not see death, though he shall have seen wise men dying. What is this? He shall not comprehend what death is, whenever he shall have seen wise men dying. For he saith to himself, ‘this fellow, for all he was wise and dwelled with wisdom and worshipped God with piety, is he not dead? Therefore I will enjoy myself while I live; for if they that are wise in other respects, could do any thing, they would not have died.’ Just as the Jews saw Christ hanging on the Cross and despised Him, saying, ‘If this Man were the Son of God, He would come down from the Cross:’ not seeing what death is. If they had seen what death is; if they had seen, I say. He died for a time, that He might live again for ever: they lived for a time, that they might die for ever. But because they saw Him dying, they saw not death, that is to say, they understood not what was very death. What say they even in Wisdom?

Let us condemn Him with a most shameful death, for by His own sayings He shall be respected; for if he is indeed the Son of God, He will deliver Him from the hands of His adversaries: He will not suffer His Son to die, if He is truly His Son. But when they saw themselves insulting Him upon the Cross, and Him not descending from the Cross, they said, He was indeed but a Man. Thus was it spoken: and surely He could have come down from the Cross, He that could rise again from the tomb: but He taught us to bear with those who insult us; He taught us to be patient of the tongues of men, to drink now the cup of bitterness, and afterwards to receive everlasting salvation. Being sick, drink a bitter draught, in order that thou mayest be whole, whose vitals are not sound: shrink not, for that thou mightest not shrink, thy Physician did drink before thee; that is, the Lord did drink before thee the bitterness of the Passion. He did drink Who had no sin, He Who had not any thing in Him to be cured. Drink thou until there pass away the bitterness of this world, and there come a world where is no offence, no wrath, no wasting, no bitterness, no fever, no guile, not any enmities, no old age, no death, no contention. Labour thou here, being to come to the end of thy labours; labour thou, lest, whilst thou wilt not labour here, thou come to the end of thy life, and never come to the end of thy labours. For he shall not see death, though he shall have seen wise men dying.

12. The imprudent and unwise shall perish together. Who is the imprudent? He that looketh not out for himself for the future. Who is the unwise? He that perceiveth not in what evil case he is. But do thou perceive in what evil case thou art now, and look out that thou be in a good case for the future. By perceiving in what evil case thou art, thou wilt not be unwise: by looking out for thyself for the future, thou wilt not be imprudent. Who is he that looketh out for himself? That servant to whom his master gave what he should expend, and afterwards said to him, Thou canst not be my steward, give an account of thy stewardship; and who answered, What shall I do? I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed; had, nevertheless, by even his master’s goods made to himself friends, who might receive him when he was put out of his stewardship. Now he cheated his master in order that he might get to himself friends to receive him: fear not thou lest thou be cheating, the Lord Himself exhorteth thee to do so: He saith Himself to thee, Make to thyself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. Perhaps what thou hast got,

thou hast gotten of unrighteousness: or perhaps this very thing is unrighteousness, that thou hast and another hath not, thou aboundest and another needeth. Of this mammon of unrighteousness, of these riches which the unrighteous call riches, make to thyself friends, and thou shalt be prudent: thou art gaining for thyself, and art not cheating. For now thou seemest to lose it. Wilt thou lose it if thou place it in a treasury? For boys, my brethren, no sooner find some money, wherewith to buy something, than they put it in a money-box, which they open not until afterwards: do they, because they see not what they have got, on that account lose it? Fear not: boys put in a money-box, and are secure: dost thou place it in the hand of Christ, and fear? Be prudent, and provide for thyself against the future in Heaven. Be therefore prudent, copy the ant, as saith the Scripture; ‘Store in summer, lest thou hunger in winter:’ the winter is the last day, the day of tribulation; the winter is the day of offences and of bitterness: gather what may be there for thee for the future: but if thou doest not so, thou wilt perish both imprudent and unwise.

13. But that rich man too died, and a like funeral was made for him. See to what men have brought themselves: they regard not what a wicked life he led while he lived, but what pomp followed him when he died! O happy he, whom so many lament! But the other lived in such sort, that few lament. For all ought to lament a man living so sadly. But there is the funeral train; he is received in a costly tomb, he is wound in costly robes, he is buried in perfumes and spices. Secondly, what a monument he hath! How marbled! Doth he live in that same monument? He is therein dead. Men deeming these to be good things, have strayed from God, and have not sought the true good things, and have been deceived with the false. To this end see what followeth. He who gave not the price of the redemption of his soul, who understood not death, because he saw wise men dying, he became imprudent and unwise, in order that he might die with them. And how shall they perish, who shall leave their riches to aliens? Together the imprudent and unwise man shall perish.

14. Hearken brethren: And they shall leave their riches to aliens. As if he had included them in a curse, so that when they shall have died, aliens shall possess their goods. Therefore happy they who leave their sons in their

inheritance, to whom they that are their own succeed. He had sons, he is not dead. What of his sons? They also keep what their parents have left them: to keep is too little, they increase it also. For whom do they in turn keep it? For their sons, and they for their sons, and the third generation for their sons. What for Christ? What for his soul? All for his children? Among their sons which they have on earth let them reckon one Brother whom they have in heaven; to Whom they ought to give all, let them but share it with Him. But, nevertheless, some one saith to me, "See those whom the Scripture hath spoken of as accursed, who it hath said perish and leave their riches to aliens; but that man is blessed who leaveth to his own sons." I examine this sense, because 'I incline mine ear to a parable:' and I see that Scripture speaketh not thus to no purpose. For I see many ungodly men die, whose successors are their sons; nor could Scripture have so spoken as to sever those men from misery of whose life it disapproveth; and what do ye think, brethren, I understand by it, but that all such men do leave their riches to aliens? How are their sons aliens? The sons of the ungodly are aliens: for we see a certain foreigner that became a neighbour, because he did good. If any of thy friends doth thee no good, he is a stranger. Where do we find a certain foreigner that became a neighbour because he did good? In the Gospel. A certain man lay wounded by robbers, for the Lord had said to a certain man, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. And he had answered, And who is my neighbour? And the Lord proceeded. "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who wounded him, and left him half dead in the road: his neighbours passed by: for he was a Jew, he was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho: a priest went by, and passed over on the other side, a Levite went by, and he also passed over on the other side; a certain Samaritan went by, (a Samaritan was a foreigner,) he came to him, he beheld his misery, and of pity healed his wounds; he set him on his beast, and led him to an inn, he commended him to the host." Which things are spoken in a mystery, and seem too perplexed to unravel on the present occasion: yet for the sake of what I have proposed, my brethren, The Lord saith, "Who is neighbour to that wounded man?" He answered, "I suppose, he that wrought a work of mercy upon him." "Go," He saith, "and do thou likewise." He upon whom thou shewest mercy is thy neighbour. If then a foreign Samaritan by shewing mercy and by relieving became neighbour; whatsoever persons will not relieve thee in tribulation, have become aliens to thee. Moreover, let us observe, those rich men, who have lived ill, who have done proudly, are dead, and have left their riches, I say not to strangers, but to their sons, and the sons follow the way of their parents: and as those were proud, so these; as those were grasping, so these too; as those were covetous, so these; they are aliens to them. For that ye may know how they are strangers, else let them have succoured that rich man who was burning in the flame, being heirs of his wealth. But perhaps he had not any to succeed him, and aliens possessed his riches? We find in the very Gospel that he had: for he saith, I have five brethren. His own brethren could not succour him burning in the flame. What would the rich man say to thee? I have five brethren: one brother I have not made my friend who lay before my gate: those brethren cannot help me; those who possess my riches are become aliens to me. Ye see how that all that live ill, leave their riches to aliens.

15. But do those same aliens indeed serve them who are called their own? Hear in what they serve them, observe how they are ridiculed: Together the imprudent and unwise shall perish; and shall leave their riches, why hath he said, to strangers? Because they can do them no good. Nevertheless, wherein do they seem to themselves to do good? (Ver. 11.) And their tombs shall be their house for ever. Now because these tombs are erected, the tombs are a house. For often thou hearest a rich man saying, I have a house of marble which I must quit, and I think not for myself of an eternal house, where I shall alway be. When he thinketh to make for himself a monument of marble or of sculpture, he is deeming as it were of an eternal house: as if therein this rich man would abide! If he would abide there, he would not burn in hell. We must consider that the place where the spirit of an evil doer abideth, is not where the mortal body is laid: but their tombs shall be their house for ever. Their dwelling places are from generation to generation. ‘Dwelling places’ are wherein they abode for a season: ‘house’ is wherein they will abide as it were for ever, that is to say, their tombs. Thus they leave their dwelling places, where they abode while they lived, to their families, and they pass as it were to everlasting houses, to their tombs. What profit to them are their dwelling places, from generation to generation? Now suppose a generation and generation are sons, grandsons there will be, and great grandsons; what do their dwelling places, what do

they profit them? What? Hear: they shall invoke their names in their lands. What is this? They shall take bread and wine to their tombs, and there they shall invoke the names of the dead. Dost thou consider how loudly was invoked the name of the rich man after his death, when men drank them drunk at his monument, and there came down not one drop upon his own burning tongue? Men minister to their own belly, not to the ghosts of their friends. The souls of the dead nothing doth reach, but what they have done of themselves while alive: but if they have done nought of themselves while alive, nothing doth reach them dead. But what do the survivors? They will but invoke their names in their lands.

16. Ver. 12. And man though he was in honour perceived not, he was compared to the beasts without sense, and was made like to them. This is just as men were derided, who perceived not what they ought to do with their riches while they lived, and thought they would be blessed, if they should have a marble monument for an everlasting house, and if their relations to whom they had left their substance should invoke their names in their own lands. They ought, on the contrary, to have made ready for themselves an eternal house in good works, to have made ready for themselves everlasting life, to have sent before them expenditure, to have followed their works, to have ministered to a needy companion, to have given to him with whom they were walking, not to have despised Christ covered with sores before their gate, Who hath said, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. However, ‘man being in honour hath not understood.’ What is, being in honour? Being made after the image and likeness of God, man is preferred to beasts. For God hath not so made man as He made a beast: but God hath made man for beasts to minister to: is it to his strength then, and not to his understanding? Nay. But he understood not: and he who was made after the image of God, is compared to the beasts without sense, and is made like unto them. Whence it is said elsewhere, Be ye not like to horse and mule, in which there is no understanding.

17. Ver. 13. This their own way is an offence to them. Be it an offence to them, not to thee. But when will it be so to thee too? If thou thinkest such men to be blessed. If thou perceivest that they be not blessed, their own way

will be an offence to themselves; not to Christ, not to His Body, not to His members. And afterwards they shall bless with their mouth. What meaneth, Afterwards they shall bless with their mouth? Though they have become such, that they seek nothing but temporal goods, yet they become hypocrites: and when they bless God, with lips they bless, and not with heart. Christians like these, when to them eternal life is commended, and they are told, that in the name of Christ they ought to be despisers of riches, do make grimaces in their hearts: and if they dare not do it with open face, lest they blush, or lest they should be rebuked by men, yet they do it in heart, and scorn; and there remaineth in their mouth blessing, and in their heart cursing. And afterwards they shall bless with their mouths. It were too long a task to finish the Psalm: meanwhile, let what ye have heard to-day suffice for your Love, to-morrow ye shall hear whatever shall please the Lord.

SERMON II

On the second part of the Psalm.

1. Yesterday, though the Psalm was commenced, the end thereof remained due, as your Love remembereth. But we had come to that verse, where the Spirit of God marketh men who mind not ought but present things of this world and earth, and for the world to come after this life think of nought, and conceive that there is no happiness but in the riches and honours of this world, and in transitory power; but after their death mind nothing but how stately funerals may be obtained for them, and how they may be buried in monuments raised with wondrous skill, and their names may be invoked in their own lands from their own houses: while they make no provision to themselves for the place where their spirit shall be after this life; they fools not dreading the voice of Christ, Who saith, Fool, this night thy soul shall be taken from thee, and whose shall those things be which thou hast prepared? and not regarding the rich man condemned to torments in hell after magnificent daily feastings, and purple and fine linen; nor the poor man reposing in Abraham’s bosom after labours and sores and hunger: for such things they not caring, but minding that which is present, and not looking forward for any thing beyond this life, but how their name, which is abhorred in heaven, may be invoked upon earth; the holy Scripture,

therefore, describing such men, saith, (ver. 13.) This their own way is a stumbling-block to themselves, and hereafter they shall bless with their mouth. As saith the Lord Jesus of certain who at first come to the faith purified by the word of God, and by exorcisms in the name of Christ, in order that they may receive the Grace of God, that they may be baptized, and afterwards go back to worse evil deeds than they had committed before, The latter things, He saith, shall be made worse for them than the former: this the Apostle Peter: but the Lord, And the last things, He saith, of that man shall be worse than the former. Wherefore? Because at first he was even an open heathen, afterwards he is cloaked with the Christian name, under the garb of religion he is a concealed evil doer. And he shall be worse, because he is concealed, as he saith, And afterwards shall they bless with their mouth: that is, thou hearest the name of God and the name of Christ on their lips, in their heart thou findest it not. Concerning whom is said, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. As far as this the Psalm had been treated of.

2. In the next place thus commence the verses which are to be examined and treated of to-day: (ver. 14.) Like sheep laid in hell, death is their shepherd. Whose? Of those whose way is a stumblingblock to themselves. Whose? Of those who mind only things present, while they think not of things future: of those who think not of any life, but of that which must be called death. Not without cause, then, like sheep in hell, have they death to their shepherd. What meaneth, ‘they have death to their shepherd?’ For is death either some thing or some power? Yea, death is either the separation of the soul from the body, or a separation of the soul from God, and that indeed which men fear is the separation of the soul from the body: but the real death, which men do not fear, is the separation of the soul from God. And ofttimes when men fear that which doth separate the soul from the body, they fall into that wherein the soul is separated from God. This then is death. But how is death their shepherd? If Christ is life, the devil is death. But we read in many places in Scripture, how that Christ is life. But the devil is death, not because he is himself death, but because through him is death. For whether that (death) wherein Adam fell was given man to drink by the persuasion of him: or whether that wherein the soul is separated from the body, still they have him for the author thereof, who first falling through

pride envied him who stood, and overthrew him who stood with an invisible death, in order that he might have to pay the visible death. They who belong to him have death to their shepherd: but we who think of future immortality, and not without reason do wear the sign of the Cross of Christ on the forehead, have no shepherd but life. Of unbelievers death is the shepherd, of believers life is the shepherd. If then in hell are the sheep, whose shepherd is death, in heaven are the sheep, whose shepherd is life. What then? Are we now in heaven? In heaven we are by faith. For if not in heaven, where is the Lift up your heart? If not in heaven, whence with the Apostle Paul, For our conversation is in heaven? In body we walk on earth, in heart we dwell in heaven. We dwell there, if thither we send any thing which holdeth us there. For no one dwelleth in heart, save where thought is: but there his thought is, where his treasure is. He hath treasured on earth, his heart doth not withdraw from earth: he hath treasured in heaven, his heart from heaven doth not come down: for the Lord saith plainly, Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.

3. They then, whose shepherd is death, seem to flourish for a time, and the righteous to labour: but why? Because it is yet night. What meaneth, it is night? The merits of the righteous appear not, and the felicity of the unrighteous hath, as it were, a name. So long as it is winter, grass appeareth more verdant than a tree. For grass flourisheth through the winter, a tree is as it were dry through the winter: when in summer time the sun hath come forth with greater heat, the tree, which seemed dry through the winter, is bursting with leaves, and putteth forth fruits, but the grass withereth: thou wilt see the honour of the tree, the grass is dried. So also now the righteous labour, before that summer cometh. There is life in the root, it doth not yet appear in the branches. But our root is love. And what saith the Apostle? That we ought to have our root above, in order that life may be our shepherd, because our dwelling ought not to quit heaven, because in this earth we ought to walk as if dead; so that living above, below we may be dead; not so as that being dead above, we may live below. In as much then as our life and heart ought not to depart from above, what saith the Apostle? For ye are dead. And in order that thou mayest not fear, Your life is hidden, he saith, with Christ in God. Behold where our root is! But when our honour shall appear, as it were in leaves and fruits, he continueth, and saith,

When Christ, your life, shall have appeared, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory; and it shall be morning. For now it is not morning. Let the proud and rich of this world be puffed up now, let the ungodly tread down the good, unbelievers believers, and let them say, What doth it profit you that ye have believed? what more have ye because ye have Christ? Let believers answer, if they are indeed believers, It is night, that which we hold doth not yet appear. Let not the hands be idle in good works. Whence it is elsewhere said, In the day of my trouble I sought God with my hands in the night season before Him, and I was not deceived. Our labour shall appear in the morning, and there shall be fruit in the morning: so that they that now labour shall hereafter reign, and they that now boast them and are proud, shall hereafter be brought under. For what followeth? Like sheep laid in hell, death is their shepherd; and the righteous shall reign over them in the morning.

4. I suppose that now this verse is clear, because we have before said, The righteous shall reign over them in the morning. Endure thou the night, yearn for the morning. Think not because the night hath life, the morning too hath not life. Doth then he that sleepeth live, and he that riseth live not? Is not he that sleepeth more like death? And who are they that sleep? They whom the Apostle Paul rouseth, if they choose but to awake. For to certain he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. They then that are lightened by Christ watch now, but the fruit of their watchings appeareth not yet: in the morning it shall appear, that is, when doubtful things of this world shall have passed away. For these are very night: for do they not appear to thee like darkness? One doth ill, he liveth, flourisheth; terrifieth, is honoured: one doth well, he is blamed, blasphemed, accused, laboureth, is terrified: these things are as if it were darkness. But in the root is vigour, fruit, opulence: life is not yet in the branches, but the root hath not withered: it is like to one withering, but the time cometh, it is clad with its honour, it is enriched with its fruits. Then they of whom it is said that we should not envy them—for the Psalm saith of them, what? For they shall soon wither like the grass, and like the herbs of the field they shall quickly fall—shall fall, I say, when they shall see on the right hand the saints, upon whom while labouring men trample, and shall speak among themselves, doing penance, but a penance too late and

without fruit. They that would not now do one with fruit, shall then do one without fruit. What then shall they say, when being in penance without fruit? These are they whom we had sometime in derision, and for a similitude of reproach. I say the words of the Book of Wisdom: they know them who are wont to hear them. For they are the future words of evil-doers, when they shall see the Judge, and all the faithful now at His right hand, and all His Saints with Him judging; this they have to say, (the Scripture saith their own words,) These are they whom we had sometime in derision, and for a similitude of reproach, we fools accounted their life madness. For when a man shall have begun to live to God, to contemn the world, not to choose to avenge his own wrongs, not to choose riches here, to contemn all things, to think of the Lord alone, not to forsake the way of Christ, not only by the heathen is it said, 'He is mad;' but, what is more to be lamented, (because even within many are sleeping, and will not awake,) men hear from their own people, from Christians, 'What is come to thee?' My brethren, he who saith to a man living according to the way of Christ, 'What is come to thee?' do we think what he saith? We shudder at the Jews, because they said to our Lord Jesus Christ, Thou hast a devil: and whenever we hear the Gospel being read, we beat our breasts. A wicked thing said the Jews to Christ, Thou hast a devil: come now Christian, when thou hast seen the devil banished from the heart of a Christian and Christ indwelling, and thou sayest, 'What is come to thee?' doth he seem to thee to have a devil? It was said even of the Lord Himself, that He was mad, when He spake words, which they would not receive: it was said, He is mad, He hath a devil; and yet some awaked from sleep and said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. So now also, brethren, so long as both the nations hear these words, and they that dwell in the world, and earthborn, and sons of men, and rich and poor, that is, both they that pertain to Adam and they that pertain to Christ, some say, he hath a devil, others say, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. For some hold the world's way, and hear these words for a time: others hear not in vain, but do what is said, Ponder with your ears, ye that dwell in the world. And while they are doing these things, the fruit is uncertain. But they that do ill and choose the world's way, of them death is the shepherd: but they that choose God's way, of them life is the shepherd. Life Itself shall come to judge, and to condemn with their shepherd those to whom shall be said, Go ye into everlasting fire, which hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. But they on whom men have trampled, and who were ridiculed for believing, shall hear from Life Itself, Whom they have for shepherd, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which was prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Therefore the righteous shall reign over them, not now, but in the morning. Let no one say, Wherefore am I a Christian? I rule no one, I would rule the wicked. Be not in haste, thou shalt reign, but in the morning. And the help of them shall grow old in hell from their glory. Now they have glory, in hell they shall grow old. What is the help of them? Help from money, help from friends, help from their own might. But when a man shall be dead, in that day shall perish all his thoughts. How great glory he seemed to have among men, while he lived, so great oldness and decay of punishments shall he have, when he shall be dead in hell.

5. Ver. 15. Nevertheless, God shall redeem my soul. Behold the voice of one hoping in the future: Nevertheless, God shall redeem my soul. Perhaps it is the voice of one still wishing to be relieved from oppression. Some one is in prison, he saith, God shall redeem my soul: some one is in bond, God shall redeem my soul: some one is suffering peril by sea, is being tossed by waves and raging tempests, what saith he? God shall redeem my soul. They would be delivered for the sake of this life. Not such is the voice of this man. Hear what followeth: God shall redeem my soul from the hand of hell, when He shall have received me. He is speaking of this redemption, which Christ now sheweth in Himself. For He hath descended into hell, and hath ascended into heaven. What we have seen in the Head we have found in the Body. For what we have believed in the Head, they that have seen, have themselves told us, and by themselves we have seen; For we are all one body. But are they better that hear, we worse to whom it hath been told? Not so saith The Life Itself, Our Shepherd Himself. For He rebuketh a certain disciple of His, doubting and desiring to handle His scars, and when he had handled the scars and had cried out, saying, My Lord and my God, seeing His disciple doubting, and looking to the whole world about to believe, ‘Because thou hast seen Me,’ He saith, ‘thou hast believed: blessed are they that see not, and believe.’ But God shall redeem my soul from the hand of hell, when He hath received me. Here then what? Labour, oppression, tribulation, temptation: expect nothing else. Where joy? In future hope. For

the Apostle saith, Alway rejoicing. In so great tribulations, Alway rejoicing, alway sorrowful: alway rejoicing, for he said himself, As if sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing. Our sorrow hath an as if: our joy hath not an as if: because it is in sure hope. Wherefore hath our sorrow an as if? Because like as sleep it shall pass away, and the righteous shall reign in the morning. For your Love knoweth, how that he that intimateth sleep, doth add an as if: as if I were sitting, as if I were speaking, as if I were dining, as if I were disputing. The whole is, as if: for when he hath awaked, he findeth not that which he did see. As if I had found a treasure, saith the beggar. If there were not an as if, he would not be a beggar: but because there was as if, he is a beggar. So now they that open their eyes to worldly pleasures, and close their heart, of them the as if passeth away, and their own reality cometh. As if is their happiness of the world, their reality is punishment. But our as if is sorrow; our joy is not as if. For the Apostle doth not say, As if rejoicing, but alway sorrowful: or, As if sorrowful, and as if rejoicing: but he saith, As if sorrowful, but alway rejoicing. As poor: (and there as he hath put for as if:) yet making many rich. And when the Apostle said this, he had nothing: he had given up his all, he possessed not any riches. And he saith in continuation, what? As if having nothing: and this same ‘having nothing’ of the Apostle was ‘as if.’ And possessing all things: there he hath not said as if. ‘As if’ he was poor; but not as if, but really, he enriched many. As if he had nothing: but not as if, but truly, he possessed all things. Whence did he truly possess all things? Because he clave to the Maker of all things. Nevertheless, he saith, God shall redeem my soul from the hand of hell, when He hath received me.

6. What then of them that here will flourish? Thou wilt see an evil man flourishing, and perchance thy feet will stumble, and thou wilt say in thy heart, I know the doings of this man, what sins this man hath committed, and see, he is flourishing, doth terrify, doth rule, his head is lifted up, he suffereth no pain, nothing in his house doth suffer diminution: and thou wilt fear, because thou hast believed, and perchance thy heart saith, Wretch that I am, I suppose to no purpose I have believed, God doth not regard things human. God therefore doth awaken us: and He saith what? (ver. 16.) Fear not, though a man have become rich. For why didst thou fear, because a man hath become rich? Thou didst fear that thou hadst believed to no

purpose, that perchance thou shouldest have lost the labour for thy faith, and the hope of thy conversion: because perchance there hath come in thy way gain with guilt, and thou couldest have been rich, if thou hadst seized upon that same gain with the guilt, and neededst not have laboured; and thou, remembering what God hath threatened, hast refrained from guilt, and hast contemned the gain: thou seest another man that hath made gain by guilt, and hath suffered no harm; and thou fearest to be good. Fear not, saith the Spirit of God to thee, though a man shall have become rich. Wouldest thou not have eyes but for things present? Things future He hath promised, Who hath risen again; peace in this world, and repose in this life, He hath not promised. Every man doth seek repose; a good thing he is seeking, but not in the proper region thereof he is seeking it. There is no peace in this life; in Heaven hath been promised that which on earth we are seeking: in the world to come hath been promised that which in this world we are seeking.

7. Ver. 16. Fear not, though a man be made rich, and though the glory of his house be multiplied. Wherefore fear not? For when he shall die, he shall not receive any thing. Thou seest him living, consider him dying. Thou markest what he hath here, mark what he taketh with him. What doth he take with him? He hath store of gold, he hath store of silver, numerous estates, slaves: he dieth, these remain, he knoweth not for whom. For though he leaveth them for whom he will, he keepeth them not for whom he will. For many have gained even what was not left them, and many have lost what was left them. All these things then remain, and he taketh with him what? Perhaps some one saith, He taketh that with him in which he is wound, and that which is expended upon him for a costly and marble tomb, to erect a monument, this he taketh with him. I say, not even this. For these things are presented to him without his feeling them. If thou deckest a man sleeping and not awake, he hath the decorations with him on the couch: perhaps the decorations are resting upon the body of him as he lieth, and perhaps he seeth himself in tatters during sleep. What he feeleth is more to him than what he feeleth not. Though even this when he shall have awaked will not be: yet to him sleeping that which he saw in sleep was more than that which he felt not. Why then, brethren, should men say to themselves, Let money be spent at my death: why do I leave my heirs rich? Many things will they

have of mine, let me too have something of my own for my body. What shall a dead body have? what shall rotting flesh have? what shall flesh not feeling have? If that rich man had any thing, whose tongue was dry, then man hath something of his own. My brethren, do we read in the Gospel, that this rich man appeared in the fire with allsilken and fine-linen coverings? Was he of such sort in hell as he was in feastings at table? When he thirsted and desired a drop, all those things were not there. Therefore man carrieth not with him any thing, nor doth the dead take with him that which the burial taketh. For where feeling is, there is the man; where is no feeling, the man is not. There lieth fallen the vessel which contained the man, the house which held the man. The body let us call the house, the spirit let us call the inhabitant of the house. The spirit is tormented in hell: what doth it profit him, that the body lieth in spices and perfumes, wound in costly linens? just as if the master of the house should be sent into banishment, and thou shouldest garnish the walls of his house. He in banishment is in need, and doth faint with hunger, he scarce findeth to himself one hovel where he may snatch a sleep, and thou sayest, "Happy is he, for his house hath been garnished." Who would not judge that thou wast either jesting or wast mad? Thou dost garnish the body, the spirit is tormented. Give something to the spirit, and ye have given something to the dead man. But what wilt thou give him, when he desired one drop, and received not? For the man scorned to send before him any thing. Wherefore scorned? Because this their way is a stumbling-block to them. He minded not any but the present life, he thought not but how he might be buried, wound in costly vestments. His soul was taken from him, as the Lord saith: Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be taken from thee, and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? And that is fulfilled which this Psalm saith; Fear not, though a man be made rich, and though the glory of his house be multiplied: for when he shall die he shall not receive anything, nor shall his glory descend together with him.

8. Ver. 17. For his soul shall be blessed in his life. Let your love observe; For his soul shall be blessed in his life. As long as he lived he did well for himself. This all men say, but say falsely. It is a blessing from the mind of the blesser, not from the truth itself. For what sayest thou? Because he ate and drank, because he did what he chose, because he feasted sumptuously,

therefore he did well with himself. I say, he did ill for himself. Not I say, but Christ. He did ill for himself. For that rich man, when he feasted sumptuously every day, was supposed to do well with himself: but when he began to burn in hell, then that which was supposed to be well was found to be ill. For what he had eaten with men above, he digested in hell beneath. Unrighteousness I mean, brethren, on which he used to feast. He used to eat costly banquets with the mouth of flesh, with his heart's mouth he used to eat unrighteousness. What he ate with his heart's mouth with men above, this he digested amid those punishments in the places beneath. And verily he had eaten for a time, he digested ill for everlasting. Is then unrighteousness eaten? perhaps some one saith: what is it that he saith? Unrighteousness eaten? It is not I that say: hear the Scripture: As a sour grape is vexation to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes, so is unrighteousness to them that use it. For he that shall have eaten unrighteousness, that is, he that shall have had unrighteousness wilfully, shall not be able to eat righteousness. For righteousness is bread. Who is bread? I am the living bread which came down from heaven. Himself is the bread of our heart. For just as he that eateth with the mouth of the body sour grapes, hath his teeth set on edge and blunted, and he becometh less suited to eat bread, and it remaineth to him to praise what he seeth and not be able to eat it; so also he that hath practised unrighteousness and fed upon sins in his heart, beginneth not to be able to eat bread, he praiseth the word of God, and doeth not. Whence doeth he not? Because when he beginneth to do, he laboureth; just as we see the teeth labour after sour grapes, when we begin to eat bread. But what do they whose teeth are blunted? They refrain for a space from sour grapes, and their teeth return to their soundness, and they fall to bread. So we also praise righteousness: but if we will eat righteousness, let us refrain from iniquities: and there ariseth in the heart, not only a zest to praise righteousness, but also a readiness to eat it. For if the Christian saith, 'God knoweth that it delighteth me, but I cannot do it:' he hath loosened teeth, he hath long eaten unrighteousness. Is then even righteousness eaten? If it were not eaten, the Lord would not have said, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness. Therefore since his soul shall be blessed in life, in life it shall be blessed, in death it shall be tormented.

9. Ver. 18. He shall confess to Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good. Attend ye, and be fed, let it sink in your hearts; eat, see such men, and be not such: beware of such words. He shall confess to Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good. How many Christians there be, brethren, who then give thanks to God, when gain cometh to them! That is, He shall confess Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good: he shall praise Thee and say, ‘Truly Thou art my God:’ ‘He hath loosed me from prison, I will confess to Him.’ Gain cometh to him, he confesseth; inheritance cometh, he confesseth: he suffereth loss, he blasphemeth. What sort of son art thou, whom when thy Father is correcting, He is displeasing to thee? Would He correct thee, unless thou wast displeasing? or if thou didst so much displease as that He hated thee, would He choose to correct? Give thanks then to the Corrector, in order that thou mayest receive an inheritance from God, Who correcteth thee. For thou art being instructed, when thou art being corrected. ‘But He correcteth much.’ Yes, for great is that which thou hast to receive. For if thou weighest the correction together with that which thou art to receive, thou wilt find that the correction is nothing. The Apostle Paul saith this: For the lightness of our tribulation, which is temporal for the present, according to an incredible manner, worketh for us an eternal weight of glory. But when? To us looking, he saith, not to those things which are seen, but to those things which are not seen: not to those things which are temporal, but to those things which are eternal. For those things which are seen are temporal; but those things which are not seen are eternal. And again: The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. What is it then that thou sufferest? But thou art always suffering. I grant it. From the time that thou wast born, through all thy ages until thy old age; until thou shalt die, suppose that thou suffer what Job suffered; what he suffered for a few days let a man suffer from his very infancy: what thou sufferest doth pass away, is ended; what thou wilt receive will have no end. I would not thou shouldest match the punishment with the reward; match time with eternity if thou canst.

10. He shall confess to Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good. Be not of such sort, brethren: see ye how that to this end we say these words, to this end we sing, to this end we treat, to this end toil—do not these things.

Your business doth prove you: sometimes in your business ye hear the truth, and ye blaspheme. The Church ye blaspheme. Wherefore? Because ye are Christians. ‘If so it be, I betake myself to Donatus’s party: I will be a heathen.’ Wherefore? Because thou hast eaten bread, and the teeth are in pain. When thou sawest the bread itself, thou didst praise; thou beginnest to eat, and the teeth are in pain; that is, when thou wast hearing the Word of God thou didst praise: when it is said to thee, Do this, thou blasphemest: do not so ill: say this, ‘The bread is good, but I cannot eat it.’ But now if thou seest with the eyes, thou praisest: when thou beginnest to close the teeth, thou sayest, Bad is this bread, and like him that made it. So it cometh to pass that thou confessest to God, when God doeth thee good: and thou liest when thou singest, I will alway bless God, His praise is ever in my mouth. How alway? If alway gain, alway He is blessed: if sometime there is loss, He is not blessed, but blasphemed. Forsooth thou blessest alway, forsooth His praise is ever in thy mouth! Thou wilt be such as just now he describeth: He will confess to Thee, when Thou shalt have done him good.

11. Ver. 19. He shall enter even unto the generations of his fathers: that is, he shall imitate his fathers. For the unrighteous, that now are, have brothers, have fathers. Unrighteous men of old, are the fathers of the present; and they that are now unrighteous, are the fathers of unrighteous posterity: just as the fathers of the righteous, the righteous of old, are the fathers of the righteous that now are; and they that now are, are the fathers of them that are to be. The Holy Spirit hath willed to shew that righteousness is not evil when men murmur against her: but these men have their father from the beginning, even to the generation of their fathers. Two men Adam begat, and in one was unrighteousness, in one was righteousness: unrighteousness in Cain, righteousness in Abel. Unrighteousness seemed to prevail over righteousness, because Cain unrighteous slew Abel righteous in the night. Is it so in the morning? Nay, but the righteous shall reign over them in the morning. The morning shall come, and it shall be seen where Abel is, and where Cain. So all men who are after Cain, and so all who are after Abel, even unto the end of the world. He shall enter even unto the generations of his fathers: even to eternity he shall not see light. Because even when he was here, he was in darkness, taking pleasure in false goods, and not loving real goods: even so he shall go hence into hell: from the darkness of his

dreams the darkness of torments shall receive him. Therefore, even to eternity he shall not see light. But wherefore this? What he hath written in the middle of the Psalm, the same also he hath writ at the end: (Ver. 20.) Man, though he was in honour, understood not, was compared to the beasts without sense, and was made like to them. But ye, brethren, consider that ye be men made after the image and likeness of God. The image of God is within, is not in the body; is not in these ears which ye see, and eyes, and nostrils, and palate, and hands, and feet; but is made nevertheless: wherein is the intellect, wherein is the mind, wherein the power of discovering truth, wherein is faith, wherein is your hope, wherein your charity, there God hath His Image: there at least ye perceive and see that these things pass away; for so he hath said in another Psalm, Though man walketh in an image, yet he is disquieted in vain: he heapeth up treasures, and knoweth not for whom he shall gather them. Be not disquieted, for of whatsoever kind these things be, they are transitory, if ye are men who being in honour understand. For if being men in honour ye understand not, ye are compared to the beasts without sense, and are made like to them.

PSALM 50

Exposition

1. How much availeth the Word of God to us for the correction of our life, both regarding His rewards to be expected, and His punishments to be feared, let each one measure in himself; and let him put his conscience without deceit before His eyes, and not flatter himself in a danger so great: for ye see that even our Lord God Himself doth flatter no one: though He comforteth us by promising His blessings, and by strengthening our hope; yet them that live ill and despise His word he assuredly spareth not. Let each one examine himself, while it is time, and let him see where he is, and either persevere in good, or be changed from evil. For as he saith in this Psalm, not any man whatever nor any angel whatever, but, (ver. 1.) The Lord, the God of gods, hath spoken. But in speaking, He hath done what? He hath called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down. He that 'hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down,' is Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Word made Flesh, in order that He might dwell in us. Our Lord Jesus Christ then is the God of gods; because by Himself were all things made, and without Himself was nothing made. The Word of God, if He is God, is truly the God of gods; but whether He be God the Gospel answereth, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And if all things were made by Himself, as He saith in the sequel, then if any were made gods, by Himself were they made. For the one God was not made, and He is Himself alone truly God. But Himself the only God, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, is one God.

2. But then who are those gods, or where are they, of whom God is the true God? Another Psalm saith, God hath stood in the synagogue of gods, but in the midst He judgeth gods. As yet we know not whether perchance any gods be congregated in heaven, and in their congregation, for this is 'in the synagogue,' God hath stood to judge. See in the same Psalm those to whom he saith, I have said, Ye are gods, and children of the Highest all; but ye

shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. It is evident then, that He hath called men gods, that are deified of His Grace, not born of His Substance. For He doth justify, who is just through His own self, and not of another; and He doth deify who is God through Himself, not by the partaking of another. But He that justifieth doth Himself deify, in that by justifying He doth make sons of God. For He hath given them power to become the sons of God. If we have been made sons of God, we have also been made gods: but this is the effect of Grace adopting, not of nature generating. For the only Son of God, God, and one God with the Father, Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, was in the beginning the Word, and the Word with God, the Word God. The rest that are made gods, are made by His own Grace, are not born of His Substance, that they should be the same as He, but that by favour they should come to Him, and be fellow-heirs with Christ. For so great is the love in Him the Heir, that He hath willed to have fellow-heirs. What covetous man would will this, to have fellow-heirs? But even one that is found so to will, will share with them the inheritance, the sharer having less himself, than if he had possessed alone: but the inheritance wherein we are fellow-heirs of Christ, is not lessened by multitude of possessors, nor is it made narrower by the number of fellow-heirs: but is as great for many as it is for few, as great for individuals as for all. See, saith the Apostle, what love God hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and be, the sons of God. And in another place, Dearly beloved, we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. We are therefore in hope, not yet in substance. But we know, he saith, that when He shall have appeared, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. The Only Son is like Him by birth, we like by seeing. For we are not like in such sort as He, Who is the same as He is by Whom He was begotten: for we are like, not equal: He, because equal, is therefore like. We have heard who are the gods that being made are justified, because they are called the sons of God: and who are the gods that are not Gods, to whom the God of gods is terrible? For another Psalm saith, He is terrible over all gods. And as if thou shouldest enquire, What gods? He saith, For all the gods of the nations are devils. To the gods of the nations, to the devils, terrible: to the gods made by Himself, to sons, lovely. Furthermore, I find both of them confessing the Majesty of God, both the devils confessed Christ, and the faithful confessed Christ. Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, said Peter. We know who Thou art, Thou art the Son of God, said the devils. A like confession I hear, but like love I find not; nay even here love, there fear. To whom therefore He is lovely, the same are sons; to whom He is terrible, are not sons; to whom He is lovely, the same He hath made gods; those to whom He is terrible He doth prove not to be gods. For these are made gods, those are reputed gods: these Truth maketh gods, those error doth so account.

3. Ver. 1. The God, therefore, of gods, the Lord hath spoken. Hath spoken many ways. By Angels He hath Himself spoken, by Prophets He hath Himself spoken, by His own mouth hath Himself spoken, by His faithful He doth Himself speak, by our lowliness, when we say any thing true, He doth Himself speak. See then, by speaking diversely, many ways, by many vessels, by many instruments, yet He doth Himself sound every where, by touching, moulding, inspiring: see what He hath done. For He hath spoken, and hath called the world. What world? Africa, perhaps! for the sake of those that say, the Church of Christ is the portion of Donatus. Africa indeed alone He hath not called, but even Africa He hath not severed. For He that hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down, leaving out no parts that He hath not called, in His calling hath found Africa. Let it rejoice therefore in unity, not pride itself in division. We say well, that the voice of the God of gods hath come even into Africa, hath not stayed in Africa. For He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down. There is no place where may lurk the conspiracies of heretics, they have no place wherein they may hide themselves under the shadow of falsehood; for there is none that can hide himself from the heat thereof. He that hath called the world, hath called even the whole world: He that hath called the world, hath called as much as He hath formed. Why do false christs and false prophets rise up against me? why is it that they strive to ensnare me with captious words, saying, Lo! here is Christ, Lo! He is there! I hear not them that point out portions: the God of gods hath pointed out the whole: He that hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down, hath redeemed the whole; but hath condemned them that lay false claim to portions.

4. But we have heard the world called from the rising of the sun unto the going down: whence doth He begin to call, Who hath called? This thing also hear ye: (ver. 2.) Out of Sion is the semblance of His beauty. Evidently the Psalm doth agree with the Gospel, which saith, Throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Hear, “Throughout all nations:” He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down. Hear, “Beginning at Jerusalem:” Out of Sion is the semblance of His beauty. Therefore, He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down, agreeth with the words of the Lord, Who saith, It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name throughout all nations. For all nations are from the rising of the sun unto the going down. But that, Out of Sion is the semblance of His beauty, that thence beginneth the beauty of His Gospel, that thence He began to be preached, being beautiful in form beyond the sons of men, agreeth with the words of the Lord, Who saith, “Beginning at Jerusalem.” New things are in tune with old, old things with new: the two Seraphim say to one another, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. The two Testaments are both in tune, and the two Testaments have one voice: let the voice of the Testaments in tune be heard, not that of pretenders disinherited. This thing then hath the God of gods done, He hath called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down, His semblance going before out of Sion. For in that place were His disciples, who received the Holy Ghost sent from heaven on the fiftieth day after His resurrection. Thence the Gospel, thence the preaching, thence the whole world filled, and that in the Grace of Faith.

5. For when the Lord Himself had come, because He came to suffer, He came hidden: and though He was strong in Himself, He appeared in the flesh weak. For He must needs appear in order that He might not be perceived; be despised, in order that He might be slain. There was semblance of glory in divinity, but it lay concealed in flesh. For if they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. So then He walked hidden among the Jews, among His enemies, doing marvels, suffering ills, until He was hanged on the tree, and the Jews seeing Him hanging both despised Him the more, and before the Cross wagging their heads they said, If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the

Cross. Hidden then was the God of gods, and He gave forth words more out of compassion for us than out of His own majesty. For whence, unless assumed from us, were those words. My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? But when hath the Father forsaken the Son, or the Son the Father? Are not Father and Son one God? Whence then, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me, save that in the Flesh of infirmity there was acknowledged the voice of a sinner? For as He took upon Him the likeness of the flesh of sin, why should He not take upon Him the voice of sin? Hidden then was the God of gods, both when He walked among men, and when He hungered, and when He thirsted, and when fatigued He sat, and when with wearied body He slept, and when taken, and when scourged, and when standing before the judge, and when He made answer to him in his pride, Thou couldest have no power against Me, except it had been given thee from above; and while led as a victim 'before His shearer He opened not His mouth,' and while crucified, and while buried, He was always hidden God of gods. What took place after He rose again? The disciples marvelled, and at first believed not, until they touched and handled. But flesh had risen, because flesh had been dead: Divinity which could not die, even still lay hid in the flesh of Him rising. Form could be seen, limbs held, scars handled: the Word by Whom all things were made, who doth see? who doth hold? who doth handle? And yet the Word was made flesh, and dwelled among us. And Thomas, that was holding Man, understood God as he was able. For when he had handled the scars, he cried out, My Lord, and my God. Yet the Lord was shewing that form, and that flesh, which they had seen upon the Cross, which had been laid in the sepulchre. He stayed with them forty days. To the impious Jews He shewed not Himself: He shewed Himself to them that had believed on Him before He was crucified: so that them whom being crucified He had left wavering, by rising again He made strong. In the next place, on the fortieth day charging His Church, that is, 'the world, called from the rising of the sun unto the going down,' (in order that they that will perish in schism might have no excuse,) He ascended into heaven, saying to them, Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, (whence is the semblance of His beauty,) and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the whole earth. For after these words were spoken, a cloud received Him. They were beholding Him Whom they knew: yet they knew in humiliation, not yet in clearness. And when from them He went into heaven, they were admonished by an angelic voice, saying, Men of Galilee, why stand ye? This Jesus Which ye see go, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen Him going into heaven. He ascended then: they returned rejoicing, and remained in the city, according to His commandment, until they were filled with the Holy Spirit. But what was said to Thomas handling? Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; blessed are they that see not, and believe. We are foretold. That world called from the rising of the sun unto the going down seeth not, and believeth. Hidden then is the God of gods, both to those among whom He walked, and to those by whom He was crucified, and to those before whose eyes He rose, and to us who believe on Him in heaven sitting, Whom we have not seen on earth walking. But even if we were to see, should we not see that which the Jews saw and crucified? It is more, that not seeing we believe Christ to be God, than that they seeing deemed Him only to be man. They in a word by thinking evil slew, we by believing well are made alive.

6. What then, brethren? This God of gods, both then hidden, and now hidden, shall He ever be hidden? Evidently not: hear what followeth: (ver. 3.) God shall come manifest. He that came hidden, shall come manifest. Hidden He came to be judged, manifest He shall come to judge: hidden He came that He might stand before a judge, manifest He shall come that He may be judge even of judges: He shall come manifest, and shall not be silent. But why? Is He now silent? And whence are all the words that we say? whence those precepts? whence those warnings? whence that trumpet of terror? He is not silent, and is silent: is not silent from warning, is silent from avenging: is not silent from precept, is silent from judgment. For He suffereth sinners daily doing evil things, not caring for God, not in their conscience, not in heaven, not in earth: all these things escape Him not, and universally He doth admonish all; and whenever He chastiseth any on earth, it is admonition, not yet condemnation. He is silent then from judgment, He is hidden in heaven, as yet He intercedeth for us: He is long-suffering to sinners, not putting forth His wrath, but awaiting penitence. He saith in another place; I have held my peace, shall I always hold my peace? When then He shall not hold His peace, God shall come manifest. What God? Our God. And the God Himself, Who is our God: for he is not God, who is not our God. For the gods of the nations are devils: the God of Christians is

very God. Himself shall come, but ‘manifest,’ not still to be mocked, not still to be buffetted and scourged: He shall come, but ‘manifest,’ not still to be smitten with a reed upon the head, not still to be crucified, slain, buried: for all these things God being hidden hath willed to suffer. He shall come manifest, and shall not be silent.

7. But that He shall come to judgment, the following words teach. Fire shall go before Him. Do we fear? Be we changed, and we shall not fear. Let chaff fear the fire: what doth it to gold? What thou mayest do is now in thy power, so thou mayest not experience, for want of being corrected, that which is to come even against thy will. For if we might so bring it about, brethren, that the day of judgment should not come; I think that even then it were not for us to live ill. If the fire of the day of judgment were not to come, and over sinners there impended only separation from the face of God, in whatever affluence of delights they might be, not seeing Him by Whom they were created, and separated from that sweetness of His ineffable countenance, in whatever eternity and impunity of sin, they ought to bemoan themselves. But what shall I say, or to whom shall I say? This is a punishment to lovers, not to despisers. They that have begun to feel in any degree the sweetness of wisdom and truth, know what I say, how great a punishment it is to be only separated from the face of God: but they that have not tasted that sweetness, if not yet they yearn for the face of God, let them fear even fire; let punishments terrify those, whom rewards win not. Of no value to thee is what God promiseth, tremble at what He threateneth. The sweetness of His presence shall come; thou art not changed, thou art not awakened, thou sighest not, thou longest not: thou embracest thy sins and the delights of thy flesh, thou art heaping stubble to thyself, the fire will come. Fire shall burn in His presence. This fire will not be like thy hearth-fire, into which nevertheless, if thou art compelled to thrust thy hand, thou wilt do whatsoever he would have thee who doth threaten this alternative. If he say to thee, “write against the life of thy father, write against the lives of thy children, for if thou do not, I thrust thy hand into thy fire:” thou wilt do it in order that thy hand be not burned, in order that thy member be not burned for a time, though it is not to be ever in pain. Thine enemy threateneth then but so light an evil, and thou doest evil; God threateneth eternal evil, and doest thou not good? To do evil not even menaces should

compel thee: from doing good not even menaces should deter thee. But by the menaces of God, by menaces of everlasting fire, thou art dissuaded from evil, invited to good. Wherefore doth it grieve thee, except because thou believest not? Let each one then examine his heart, and see what faith doth hold there. If we believe a judgment to come, brethren, let us live well. Now is time of mercy, then will be time of judgment. No one will say, "Call me back to my former years." Even then men will repent, but will repent in vain: now let there be repentance, while there is fruit of repentance; now let there be applied to the roots of the tree a basket of dung, sorrow of heart, and tears; lest He come and pluck up by the roots. For when He shall have plucked up, then the fire is to be looked for. Now, even if the branches have been broken, they can again be grafted in: then, "every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire." Fire shall burn in His presence.

8. Ver. 3. And a mighty tempest round about Him. A mighty tempest, in order to winnow so great a floor. In this tempest shall be that winnowing whereby from the saints shall be put away every thing impure, from the faithful every unreality; from godly men and them that fear the Word of God, every scorner and every proud man. For now a sort of mixture doth lie there, from the rising of the sun unto the going down. Let us see then how He will do That is to come, what He will do with that tempest which shall be a mighty tempest round about Him. Doubtless this tempest is to make a sort of separation. It is that separation which they waited not for, who brake the nets, before they came to land. But in this separation there is made a sort of distinction between good men and bad men. There be some that now follow Christ with lightened shoulders without the load of the world's cares, who have not heard in vain, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven: and come, follow Me; to which sort is said, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Some then shall be judging with the Lord: but others to be judged, but to be placed on the right hand. For that there will be certain judging with the Lord, we have most evident testimony, which I have but now quoted: Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

9. But some one saith, “The twelve Apostles shall there sit; nothing more.” Where then shall be the Apostle Paul? Shall he be severed thence? Far be it from us to say so, far be it from us even to think so in secret. But what if he shall himself sit in the place of Judas? On the contrary, divine Scripture hath declared who was ordained in place of Judas: for Matthias hath expressly been named in the Acts of the Apostles, so that we cannot doubt of him. Judas falling then, the number twelve was filled up. Since therefore that number twelve hath occupied twelve seats, shall not the Apostle Paul judge? Perhaps he shall judge standing? Not so it is: the Retributor of justice shall not so do: not by any means shall he judge standing, that hath laboured more than they all. Assuredly this one Apostle Paul doth compel us diligently to think and examine, why twelve thrones have been spoken of. For we find other numbers in the Scriptures which signify multitude. Five virgins are admitted, five are excluded. Understand virgins in whatever manner you please, either relating to chastity and integrity of heart, wherein the whole Church ought to be a virgin, whereunto is said, I have espoused you to one husband, to present you a chaste virgin to Christ: or relating to those women that have also integrity of the flesh dedicated to God—amid so many thousands are there but five? But in the number five is to be perceived the continence of the five senses of the flesh. For to many cometh corruption through the eyes, to many through the ear, to many through illicit smelling, to many through sinful tasting, to many through adulterous embraces: from all these five gates of corruption whosoever do contain themselves, and who do so contain themselves that they have glory in their own conscience, not look for praise from men; are the five wise virgins, that have oil with them. What is, that have oil with them? It is our glory, the testimony of our conscience. Again, he that was being tormented in hell saith, I have five brethren. Therein is perceived the people of the Jews, set under the Law: for Moses the lawgiver wrote five books. Again, the Lord after the Resurrection commanded nets to be cast on the right side, there are taken up a hundred and fifty-three fishes, and for all they were so great, saith the Evangelist, the nets were not rent. For before the Passion He had commanded nets to be thrown, adding neither to the right hand, nor to the left: because, if He had said to the right, He had signified only the good; if to the left, only the bad: but when right and left are not mentioned, good and bad are taken promiscuously. But then were taken, as the Evangelist

testifieth, so many, that the nets were breaking. For this time was signified by that taking: the nets broken, signified the cuttings and rendings of heretics and schismatics. But what the Lord did after His resurrection, signified what is to be to us after our resurrection, in that number of the kingdom of heaven, where shall be no bad man. Therefore the nets that were thrown to the right side expressed those on the right hand, those on the left hand having been removed. Nevertheless will there be only one hundred and fifty-three righteous men of those on the right hand? The Scripture doth point to thousands of thousands. Read the Apocalypse: Twelve times twelve thousand there will be perchance, as is there understood, from the people of the Jews alone. Mark the numerousness of the Martyrs: that alone near us which is called the White Mass, doth contain more than one hundred and fifty-three Martyrs. Lastly, those seven thousand of whom reply was made to Elias, I have left me seven thousand men that have not bowed knees before Baal, far exceed that number of fishes. Therefore the hundred and fifty-three fishes doth not alone express just such a number of saints, but Scripture doth express the whole number of saints and righteous men by so great a number for a particular reason; to wit, in order that in those hundred and fifty-three all may be understood that pertain to the resurrection to eternal life. For the Law hath ten commandments: but the Spirit of Grace, through which alone the Law is fulfilled, is called sevenfold. The number then must be examined, what mean ten and seven: ten in commandments, seven in the grace of the Holy Spirit: by which grace the commandments are fulfilled. Ten then and seven contain all that pertain to the resurrection, to the right hand, to the kingdom of heaven, to life eternal, that is, they that fulfil the Law by the Grace of the Spirit, not as it were by their own work or their own merit. But ten and seven, if thou countest from one unto seventeen, by adding all the numbers by steps, so that to one thou mayest add two, add three, add four, that they may become ten, by adding five that they may become fifteen, by adding six that they may become twenty-one, by adding seven that they may become twenty-eight, by adding eight that they may become thirty-six, by adding nine that they may become forty-five, by adding ten that they may become fifty-five, by adding eleven that they may become sixty-six, by adding twelve that they may become seventy-eight, by adding thirteen that they may become ninety-one, by adding fourteen that they may become one hundred and five, by adding fifteen that they may become one hundred and twenty, by adding sixteen that they may become one hundred and thirty-six, by adding seventeen, make up one hundred and fifty-three, thou wilt find a vast number of all saints to belong to this number of a few fishes. In like manner then as in five virgins, countless virgins; as in five brethren of him that was tormented in hell, thousands of the people of the Jews; as in the number of one hundred and fifty-three fishes, thousands of thousands of saints: so in twelve thrones, not twelve men, but great is the number of the perfect.

10. But I see what is next required of us; in like manner as in the case of the five virgins, a reason was given why many should belong to five, and why to those five many Jews, and why to a hundred and fifty-three many perfect—to shew why and how to the twelve thrones not twelve men, but many belong. What mean the twelve thrones, which signify all men every where that have been enabled to be so perfect as they must be perfect, to whom it is said, Ye shall sit over the twelve tribes of Israel? And why do all men every where belong to the number twelve? Because the very every where which we say, we say of the whole world: but the compass of lands is contained in four particular quarters, East, West, South, and North: from all these quarters they being called in the Trinity and made perfect in the faith and precept of the Trinity,—seeing that three times four are twelve, ye perceive wherefore the saints belong to the whole world; they that shall sit upon twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel, since the twelve tribes of Israel, also, are the twelve tribes of the whole of Israel. For like as they that are to judge are from the whole world, so also they that are to be judged are from the whole world. The Apostle Paul of himself, when he was reproving believing laymen, because they referred not their causes to the Church, but dragged them with whom they had matters before the public, said, Know ye not that we shall judge Angels? See after what sort He hath made Himself judge: not only himself, but also all that judge aright in the Church.

11. Since then it is evident, that many are to judge with the Lord, but that others are to be judged, not however on equality, but according to their deserts; He will come with all His Angels, when before Him shall be

gathered all nations, and among all the Angels are to be reckoned those that have been made so perfect, that sitting upon twelve thrones they judge the twelve tribes of Israel. For men are called Angels: the Apostle saith of himself, As an angel of God ye received me. Of John Baptist it is said, Behold, I send My Angel before Thy face, that shall prepare Thy way before Thee. Therefore, coming with all Angels, together with Him He shall have the Saints also. For plainly saith Isaias also, He shall come to judgment with the elders of the people. Those ‘elders of the people,’ then, those but now named Angels, those thousands of many men made perfect coming from the whole world, are called Heaven. But earth the others, yet fruitful. Which is the earth that is fruitful? That which is to be set on the right hand, unto which it shall be said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me to eat: truly fruitful earth in which the Apostle doth joy, when they sent to him to supply his necessities: Not because I ask a gift, he saith, but I require fruit. And he giveth thanks, saying, Because at length ye have budded forth again to be thoughtful for me. He saith, Ye have budded forth again, as to trees which had withered away with a kind of barrenness. Therefore the Lord coming to judgment, (that we may now hear the Psalm, brethren,) He will do what? (ver. 4.) He will call the heaven from above. The heaven, all the Saints, those made perfect that shall judge, them He shall call from above, to be sitters with Him to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. For how shall He call the heaven from above, when the heaven is always above? But those that He here calleth heaven, the same elsewhere He calleth heavens. What heavens? That tell out the glory of God: for, The heavens tell out the glory of God: whereof is said, Into all the earth their sound hath gone forth, and into the ends of the world their words. For see the Lord severing in judgment: He shall call the heaven from above and the earth, to sever His people. From whom but from evil men? Of whom here afterwards no mention is made, now as it were condemned to punishment. See these good men, and distinguish. He shall call the heaven from above, and the earth, to sever His people. He calleth the earth also, not however to be associated but to be dissociated. For at first He called them together, when the God of gods spake and called the world from the rising of the sun unto the going down, He had not yet severed: those servants had been sent to bid to the marriage, who had gathered good and bad. But when the God of gods shall come manifest and shall not keep silence, He shall so call the heaven from above that it may judge with Him. For what the heaven is, the heavens themselves are; just as what the earth is, the lands themselves, just as what the Church is, the Churches themselves: He shall call the heaven from above and the earth, to sever His people. Now with the heaven He severeth the earth, that is, the heaven with Him doth sever the earth. How doth He sever the earth? In such sort that He setteth on the right hand some, others on the left. But to the earth severed, He saith what? Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which was prepared for you from the beginning of the world. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me to eat, and so forth. But they say, When saw we Thee an hungred? And He, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me. He shall call therefore the heaven from above, and the earth, to sever His people.

12. Ver. 5. Gather to Him His righteous. The voice divine and prophetic, seeing future things as if present doth exhort the Angels gathering. For He shall send His Angels, and before Him shall be gathered all nations. Gather to Him His righteous. What righteous men save those that live of faith and do works of mercy? For those works are works of righteousness. Thou hast the Gospel: Beware of doing your righteousness before men to be seen of them. And as if it were inquired, what righteousness? When therefore thou doest alms, He saith. Therefore alms He hath signified to be works of righteousness. Those very persons gather for His righteous: gather those that have had compassion on the needy, that have considered the needy and poor: gather them, “The Lord preserve them, and make them to live;” Gather to Him His righteous: who order His covenant above sacrifices: that is, who think of His promises above those things which they work. For those things are sacrifices, God saying, ‘I will have mercy more than sacrifice.’ Who keep His covenant more than sacrifice.

13. Ver. 6. And the Heaven shall declare His righteousness. Truly this righteousness of God to us the ‘heavens have declared,’ the Evangelists have foretold. Through them we have heard that some will be on the right hand, to whom the Householder saith, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive. Receive what? A kingdom. In return for what thing? I was an hungred, and ye gave Me to eat. What so valueless, what so earthly, as to break bread to the hungry? At so much is valued the kingdom of heaven.

Break thy bread to the hungry, and the needy without covering bring into thy house; if thou seest one naked, clothe him. If thou hast not the means of breaking bread, hast not house into which thou mayest bring, hast not garment wherewith thou mayest cover: give a cup of cold water, cast two mites into the treasury. As much the widow doth buy with two mites, as Peter buyeth, by leaving the nets, as Zacchæus buyeth by giving half his goods. Of so much worth is all that thou hast. The heavens shall declare His righteousness, for God is Judge. Truly judge not confounding but severing. For the Lord knoweth them that are His. Even if grains lie hid in the chaff, they are known to the husbandman. Let no one fear, that he is a grain even among the chaff; the eyes of our winnower are not deceived. Fear not lest that tempest, which shall be round about Him, should confound thee with chaff. Certainly mighty will be the tempest; yet not one grain will it sweep from the side of the corn to the chaff: because not any rustic with three-pronged fork, but God, Three in One, is Judge. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is Judge. Let heavens go, let the heavens tell, into every land let their sound go out, and unto the ends of the world their words: and let that body say, From the ends of the world unto Thee have I cried, when my heart was in heaviness. For now mingled it groaneth, divided it shall rejoice. Let it cry then and say, Destroy not my soul with ungodly men, and with men of blood my life. He destroyeth not together, because God is Judge. Let it cry to Him and say, Judge me, O Lord, and sever my cause from the nation unholy: let it say, He shall do it: there shall be gathered to Him His righteous ones. He hath called the earth that He may sever His people.

14. Ver. 7. Hear, my people, and I will speak to thee. He shall come and shall not keep silence; see how that even now, if ye hear, He is not silent. Hear, my people, and I will speak to thee. For if thou hearest not, I will not speak to thee. Hear, and I will speak to thee. For if thou hearest not, even though I shall speak, it will not be to thee. When then shall I speak to thee? If thou hearest. When hearest thou? If thou art my people. For, Hear, my people: thou hearest not if thou art an alien people. Hear, my people, and I will speak to thee: Israel, and I will testify to thee. Israel, hear thou, my people, hear thou. Israel is the name of election: Thou shalt not be called, He saith, Jacob, but thou shalt be called Israel. Therefore hear thou, as if

Israel, as if seeing God; though not in form, but now in faith. For thus is interpreted Israel, ‘seeing God.’ He that hath ears of hearing, let him hear: and he that hath eyes of seeing, let him see. Hear thou, Israel, and I will testify to thee. That which above He hath said, My people; the same in the sequel is Israel: and that which He hath said above, I will speak to thee; the same in the sequel is, I will testify to thee. What shall speak the Lord our God to His people? To His Israel what shall He testify? Let us hear: God, thy God, I am. God I am, and thy God I am. How, God I am? As to Moses it was said, I am That I am. How, Thy God I am? I am God of Abraham, and God of Isaac, and God of Jacob. I am God, and thy God I am: and if I be not thy God, I am God. By my good I am God, by thy evil I am not thy God. For Thy God, is properly said to that man whom God doth keep more as one of His family, as though in His household, as though in His peculiar; Thy God am I. What wilt thou more? Requirest thou a reward from God, so that God may give thee something; so that what He hath given thee may be thine own? Behold God Himself, who shall give, is thine own. What richer than He? Gifts thou wast desiring, thou hast the Giver Himself. God, thy God, I am.

15. What He requireth of man, let us see; what tribute our God, our Emperor and our King doth enjoin us; since He hath willed to be our King, and hath willed us to be His province? Let us hear His injunctions. Let not a poor man tremble beneath the injunction of God: what God enjoineth to be given to Himself, He doth Himself first give That enjoineth: be ye only devoted. God doth not exact what He hath not given, and to all men hath given what He doth exact. For what doth He exact? Let us hear now: (ver. 8.) I will not reprove thee because of thy sacrifices. I will not say to thee, Wherefore hast thou not slain for me a fat bull? why hast thou not selected the best he-goat from thy flock? Wherefore doth that ram amble among thy sheep, and is not laid upon mine altar? I will not say, Examine thy fields and thy pen and thy walls, seeking what thou mayest give Me. I will not reprove thee because of thy sacrifices. What then? Dost Thou not accept my sacrifices? (Ver. 9.) But thy holocausts are always in My sight. Certain holocausts concerning which is said in another Psalm, If Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would surely have given, with holocausts Thou wilt not be delighted: and again he turneth himself, Sacrifice to God is a troubled spirit,

a heart broken and humbled God doth not despise. Which be then holocausts that He despiseth not? Which holocausts that are always in His sight? Kindly, O Lord, he saith, deal in Thy good will with Sion, and be the walls of Jerusalem builded, then shalt Thou accept the sacrifice of righteousness, oblations, and holocausts. He saith that certain holocausts God will accept. But what is a holocaust? A whole consumed with fire: causis is burning, holon is whole: but a holocaust is a whole consumed with fire. There is a certain fire of most burning love: be the mind inflamed with love, let the same love hurry off the limbs to its use, let it not allow them to serve cupidity, in order that we may wholly glow with fire of divine love that will offer to God a holocaust. Such holocausts of thine are in My sight always.

16. As yet that Israel perchance doth not understand what are the holocausts thereof which He hath in His sight always, and is still thinking of oxen, of sheep, of he-goats: let it not so think: I will not accept calves of thy house. Holocausts I named; at once in mind and thought to earthly flocks thou wast running, therefrom thou wast selecting for Me some fat thing: I will not accept calves of thy house. He is foretelling the New Testament, wherein all those sacrifices have ceased. For they were then foretelling a certain Sacrifice which was to be, with the Blood whereof we should be cleansed. I will not accept calves of thy house, nor he-goats of thy flocks.

17. Ver. 10. For mine are all the beasts of the wood. Why should I ask of thee what I have made? Is it more thine, to whom I have given it to possess, than Mine, Who have made it? For Mine are all the beasts of the wood. But perchance that Israel saith, The beasts are God’s, those wild beasts which I enclose not in my pen, which I bind not to my stall; but this ox and sheep and he-goat—these are mine own. Cattle on the mountain, and oxen. Mine are those which thou possessest not, Mine are these which thou possessest. For if thou art My servant, the whole of thy property is Mine. For it cannot be, that that is the property of the master which the servant hath gotten to himself, and yet that not be the property of the Master which the Master Himself hath created for the servant. Therefore Mine are the beasts of the wood which thou hast not taken; Mine are also the cattle on the mountains

which are thine, and the oxen which are at thy stall: all are Mine own, for I have created them.

18. Ver. 11. I know all the winged creatures of heaven. How doth He know? He hath weighed them, hath counted. Which of us knoweth all the winged creatures of heaven? But even though to some man God give knowledge of all the winged creatures of heaven, He doth not Himself know in the same manner as He giveth man to know. One thing is God's knowledge, another man's: in like manner as there is one possession of God's, another of man's: that is, God's possessing is one thing, man's another. For what thou possessest, thou hast not wholly in thy power, or else thy ox, so long as it liveth, is in thy power; so as that it either die not, or be not to be fed. With whom there is the highest power, there is highest and most secret cognition. Let us ascribe this to God, while praising God. Let us not dare to say, How knoweth God? Do not, I pray you, brethren, of me expect this, that I should unfold to you, how God doth know: this only I say, He doth not so know as a man, He doth not so know as an Angel: and how He knoweth I dare not say, because also I cannot ken. One thing, nevertheless, I ken, that even before all the winged creatures of heaven were, God knew that which He was to create. What is that knowledge? O man, thou beginnest to see, after that thou hadst been formed, after that thou hadst received sense of seeing. These fowls sprung of the water at the word of God, saying, Let the waters bring forth fowls. Whereby did God know the things which He commanded the water to bear forth? Now surely He knew what He had created, and before He created He knew. So great then is the knowledge of God, so that with Himself they were in a certain ineffable manner before they were created: and of thee doth He expect to receive what He had, before He created? I know all the winged creatures of heaven, which thou to Me canst not give. The things which thou wast about to slay for Me, I know all: not because I made I know, but in order that I might make. And the beauty of the field is with Me. The fairness of the field, the abundance of all things engendering upon earth, is with Me, He saith. How with Him? Were they so, even before they were made? Yea, for with Him were all things to come, and with Him are all things by-gone: things to come in such sort, that there be not withdrawn from Him all things bygone. With Him are all things by a certain cognition of the ineffable wisdom of God residing in the Word, and

the Word Himself is all things. Is not the beauty of the field in a manner with Him, inasmuch as He is every where, and Himself hath said, Heaven and earth I fill? What with Him is not, of Whom it is said, If I shall have ascended into heaven, Thou art there; and if I shall have descended into hell, Thou art present? With Him is the whole: but it is not so with Him as that He doth suffer any contamination from those things which He hath created, or any want of them. For with thee, perchance, is a pillar near which thou art standing, and when thou art weary, thou leanest against it. Thou needest that which is with thee, God needeth not the field which is with Him. With Him is field, with Him beauty of earth, with Him beauty of heaven, with Him all winged creatures, because He is Himself every where. And wherefore are all things near Him? Because even before that all things were, or were created, to Him were known all things.

19. Who can explain, who expound that which is said to Him in another Psalm, For my goods Thou needest not? He hath said that He needeth not from us any necessary thing. (Ver. 12.) If I shall be hungry, I will not tell thee. He that keepeth Israel shall neither hunger nor thirst, nor be weary, nor fall asleep. But, lo! according to thy carnality I speak: because thou wilt suffer hunger when thou hast not eaten, perhaps thou thinkest even God doth hunger that He may eat. Even though He shall be hungry, He telleth not thee: all things are before Him, whence He will He taketh what is needful for Him. These words are said to convince little understanding; not that God hath declared His hunger. Though for our sake this God of gods deigned even to hunger. He came to hunger, and to fill; He came to thirst, and give drink; He came to be clothed with mortality, and to clothe with immortality; He came poor, to make rich. For He lost not His riches by taking to Him our poverty, for, “In him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden.” If I shall be hungry, I will not tell thee. For Mine is the whole world, and the fulness thereof. Do not then labour to find what to give Me, without whom I have what I will.

20. Why then dost still think of thy flocks? (Ver. 13.) Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, or shall I drink the blood of he-goats? Ye have heard what of us He requireth not, Who willeth to enjoin us somewhat. If of such things ye were thinking, now withdraw your thoughts from such things: think not to offer

God any such thing. If thou hast a fat bull, kill for the poor: let them eat the flesh of bulls, though they shall not drink the blood of he-goats. Which, when thou shalt have done, He will account it to thee, That hath said, If I shall be hungry, I will not tell thee: and He shall say to thee, “I was hungry, and thou gavest Me to eat.” Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, or shall I drink the blood of he-goats?

21. Say then, Lord our God, what dost Thou enjoin Thy people, Thy Israel? (Ver. 14.) Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise. Let us also say to Him, In me, O God, are Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee. I had feared lest Thou mightest enjoin something which would be out of my power, which I was counting to be in my pen, and but now perchance it had been taken away by a thief. What dost Thou enjoin me? Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise. Let me revert to myself, wherein I may find what I may immolate: let me revert to myself; in myself may I find immolation of praise: be Thy altar my conscience. Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise. We are without anxiety, we go not into Arabia in quest of frankincense: not any bags of covetous dealer do we sift: God requireth of us the sacrifice of praise. Zacchæus had this sacrifice of praise in his patrimony; the widow had it in her bag; some poor host or other hath had it in his jar: another neither in patrimony, nor in bag, nor in jar, hath had any thing, had it wholly in his heart: salvation was to the house of Zacchæus; and more this poor widow cast in than those rich men: this man, that doth offer a cup of cold water, shall not lose his reward: but there is even “peace on earth to men of good will.” Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise. O sacrifice gratuitous, by grace given! I have not indeed bought this to offer, but Thou hast given: for not even this should I have had. Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise. And this is the immolation of the sacrifice of praise, to render thanks to Him from Whom thou hast whatever of good thou hast, and by Whose mercy is forgiven thee whatsoever of evil of thine thou hast. Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise: and render to the Highest thy prayers. With this odour the Lord is well-pleased. Render to the Highest thy prayers.

22. Ver. 15. And call thou upon Me in the day of thy tribulation: and I will draw thee forth, and thou shalt glorify Me. For thou oughtest not to rely on thy powers, all thy aids are deceitful. Upon Me call thou in the day of

tribulation: I will draw thee forth, and thou shalt glorify Me. For to this end I have allowed the day of tribulation to come to thee: because perchance if thou wast not troubled, thou wouldest not call on Me: but when thou art troubled, thou callest on Me; when thou callest upon Me, I will draw thee forth, when I shall draw thee forth thou shalt glorify Me, that thou mayest no more depart from Me. A certain man had grown dull and cold in fervour of prayer, and said, Tribulation and grief I found, and on the Name of the Lord I called. He found tribulation as it were some profitable thing; he had rotted in the slough of his sins; now he had continued without feeling, he found tribulation to be a sort of caustic and cutting. I found, he saith, tribulation and grief, and on the Name of the Lord I called. And truly, brethren, tribulations are known to all men. Behold those afflictions that abound in mankind; one afflicted with loss bewaileth; another smitten with bereavement mourneth; another exiled from country grieveth and desireth to return, deeming sojourning intolerable; another's vineyard is hailed upon, he observeth his labours and all his toil spent in vain. When can a human being not be made sad? An enemy he findeth in a friend. What greater misery in mankind? These things all men do deplore and grieve at, and these are tribulations: in all these they call upon the Lord, and they do rightly. Let them call upon God, He is able either to teach how it must be borne, or to heal it when borne. He knoweth how not to suffer us to be tried above that we are able to bear. Let us call upon God even in those tribulations: but these tribulations do find us; as in another Psalm is written, Helper in tribulations which have found us too much: there is a certain tribulation which we ought to find. Let such tribulations find us: there is a certain tribulation which we ought to seek and to find. What is that? The above-named felicity in this world, abundance of temporal things: that is not indeed tribulation, these are the solaces of our tribulation. Of what tribulation? Of our sojourning. For the very fact that we are not yet with God, the very fact that we are living amid trials and difficulties, that we cannot be without fear, is tribulation: for there is not that peace which is promised us. He that shall not have found this tribulation in his sojourning, doth not think of going home to his father-land. This is tribulation, brethren. Surely now we do good works, when we deal bread to the hungry, home to the stranger, and the like: tribulation even this is. For we find pitiful objects upon whom we shew pity; and the pitiful case of pitiful objects maketh us compassionate. How much better now would it be with thee in that place, where thou findest no hungry man whom thou mayest feed, where thou findest no stranger whom thou mayest take in, no naked man whom thou mayest cover, no sick man whom thou mayest visit, no litigant whom thou mayest set at one! For all things in that place are most high, are true, are holy, are everlasting. Our bread in that place is righteousness, our drink there is wisdom, our garment there is immortality, our house is everlasting in the heavens, our stedfastness is immortality: doth sickness come over? Doth weariness weigh down to sleep? No death, no litigation: there peace, quiet, joy, righteousness. No enemy hath entrance, no friend falleth away. What is the quiet there? If we think and observe where we are, and where He that cannot lie hath promised that we are to be, from His very promise we find in what tribulation we are. This tribulation none findeth, but he that shall have sought it. Thou art whole, see if thou art miserable; for it is easy for him that is sick to find himself miserable: when thou art whole, see if thou art miserable; that thou art not yet with God. 'Tribulation and grief I found, and on the Name of the Lord I called.' Immolate, therefore, to God the sacrifice of praise. Praise Him promising, praise Him calling, praise Him exhorting, praise Him helping: and understand in what tribulation thou art placed. Call upon (Him), thou shalt be drawn forth, thou shalt glorify, shalt abide.

23. But see what followeth, my brethren. For now some one or other, because God had said to him, Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise, and had enjoined in a manner this tribute, did meditate to himself and said, I will rise daily, I will proceed to Church, I will say one hymn at matins, another at vespers, a third or fourth in my house, daily I do sacrifice the sacrifice of praise, and immolate to my God. Well thou doest indeed, if thou doest this: but take heed, lest now thou be careless, because now thou doest this: and perchance thy tongue bless God, and thy life curse God. O my people, saith to thee the God of gods, the Lord That spake, 'calling the earth from the rising of the sun unto the setting,' though yet thou art placed amid the tares, Immolate the sacrifice of praise to thy God, and render to Him thy prayers: but take heed lest thou live ill, and chant well. Wherefore this? For, (ver. 16.) Unto the sinner, saith God, Why dost thou tell out My judgments, and takest My Covenant in thy mouth? Ye see, brethren, with what

trembling we say these words. We take the Covenant of God in our mouth, and we preach to you the instruction and judgment of God. And what saith God to the sinner? Why dost thou? Doth He then forbid preachers that be sinners? And where is that, What they say do, but what they do, do not? Where is that, Whether in truth or on occasion Christ be preached? But these words were said, lest they should fear that hear, from whomsoever it be that they hear: not that they should be without care that speak good words, and do evil deeds. Now therefore, brethren, ye are without care: if ye hear good words ye hear God, through whomsoever it be that ye may hear. But God would not dismiss without reproof them that speak: lest with their speaking alone, without care for themselves they should slumber in evil life, and say to themselves, "For God will not consign us to perdition, through whose mouth He has willed that so many good words should be spoken to His people." Nay, but hear what thou speakest, whoever thou art that speakest: and thou that wilt be heard thyself, first hear thyself; and speak what a certain man doth speak in another Psalm, I will hear what in me speaketh the Lord God, for He shall speak peace to His people. What am I then, that hear not what in me He speaketh, and will that other hear what through me He speaketh? I will hear first, will hear, and chiefly I will hear what speaketh in me the Lord God, for He shall speak peace to His people. Let me hear, and 'chasten my body, and to servitude subject it, lest perchance to others preaching, myself be found a cast-away.' Why dost thou tell out my judgments? Wherefore to thee what profiteth not thee? He admonisheth him to hear: not to lay down preaching, but to take up obedience. But thou, why dost thou take My Covenant in thy mouth?

24. Ver. 17. But thou hatest instruction. Thou hatest discipline. When I spare, thou singest and praisest: when I chasten, thou murmurest: as though, when I spare, I am thy God: and, when I chasten, I am not thy God. "I rebuke and chasten those whom I love." But thou hatest instruction: and hast thrown My sayings behind thee. The words that are said through thee, thou throwest behind thee. And thou hast thrown My sayings behind thee: to a place where they may not be seen by thee, but may load thee. And thou hast thrown My sayings behind thee.

25. Ver. 18. If thou sawest a thief, thou didst consent unto him, and with adulterers thou didst make thy portion. Lest perchance thou shouldest say, I have not committed theft, I have not committed adultery. What if he pleased thee that hath committed? Hast thou not with the very pleasing consented? Hast thou not by approval made thy portion with him that hath committed? For this is, brethren, to consent with a thief, and to make with an adulterer thy portion: for even if thou committest not, and approvest what is committed, thou art an accessory in the deed: for ‘the sinner is praised in the longings of his soul, and he that doeth iniquity shall be blessed.’ Thou doest not evil things, thou praisest evil-doers. For is this a small evil? Thou didst make thy portion with adulterers.

26. Ver. 19. Thy mouth hath abounded in malice, and thy tongue hath embraced deceit. Of the malevolence and deceit, brethren, of certain men he speaketh, who by adulation, though they know what they hear to be evil, yet lest they offend those from whom they hear, not only by not reproving but by holding their peace do consent. Too little is it, that they do not say, Thou hast done evil: but they even say, Thou hast done even well: and they know it to be evil: but their mouth aboundeth in malice, and their tongue embraceth deceit. Deceit is a sort of guile in words, of uttering one thing, thinking another. He saith not, thy tongue hath committed deceit or perpetrated deceit, but in order to point out to thee a kind of pleasure taken in the very evil doing, He hath said, Hath embraced. It is too little that thou doest it, thou art delighted too; thou praisest openly, thou laughest to thyself. Thou dost push to destruction a man heedlessly putting forth his faults, and knowing not whether they be faults: thou that knowest it to be a fault, sayest not, Whither art thou rushing? If thou wert to see him heedlessly walk in the dark, where thou knewest a well to be, and wert to hold thy peace, of what sort wouldest thou be? wouldest thou not be set down for an enemy of his life? And yet if he were to fall into a well, not in soul but in body he would die. He doth fall headlong into his vices, he doth expose before thee his evil doings: thou knowest them to be evil, and praisest and laughest to thyself. Oh that at length he were to be turned to God at whom thou laughest, and whom thou wouldest not reprove, and that he were to say, “Let them be confounded that say to me, Well, well.”

27. And thy tongue hath embraced deceit. (Ver. 20.) Sitting against thy brother thou didst detract. And this sitting doth belong to that whereof he hath spoken above in, hath embraced. For he that doeth any thing while standing or passing along, doth it not with pleasure: but if he for this purpose sitteth, how much leisure doth he seek out to do it! Sitting against thy brother thou didst detract. That very evil detraction thou wast making with diligence, thou wast making sitting; thou wouldest thereon be wholly engaged; thou wast embracing thy evil, thou wast kissing thy craftiness. Sitting against thy brother thou didst detract: and against thy mother’s son thou didst lay a stumbling-block. Who is mother’s son? Is it not brother? He would repeat then the same that he had said above, thy brother. Hath he intimated that any distinction must be perceived by us? Evidently, brethren, I think a distinction must be made. Brother against brother doth detract, for example’s sake, as though for instance one strong, and now a doctor and scholar of some weight, doth detract from his brother, one perchance that is teaching well and walking well: but another is weak, against him he layeth a stumbling-block by detracting from the former. For when the good are detracted from by those that seem to be of some weight and to be learned, the weak fall upon the stumbling-block, who as yet know not how to judge. Therefore this weak one is called mother’s son, not yet father’s, still needing milk, and hanging on the breast. He is borne as yet in the bosom of his mother the Church, he is not strong enough to draw near to the solid food of his Father’s table, but from the mother’s breast he draweth sustenance, unskilled in judging, inasmuch as yet he is animal and carnal. For the spiritual man judgeth all things, but the animal man perceiveth not those things which are of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him. To such men saith the Apostle, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as to babes in Christ I gave you milk to drink, not meat; for ye were not able, but not even now are ye able. A mother I have been to you: as is said in another place, I became a babe among you, even as a nurse cherishing her own children. Not a nurse nursing children of others, but a nurse cherishing her own children. For there are mothers who when they have borne give to nurses: they that have borne cherish not their children, because they have given them to be nursed; but those that cherish, cherish not their own, but those of others: but he himself had borne, he was himself cherishing, to no nurse did commit what he had borne; for he had

said, Of whom I travail again until Christ be formed in you. He did cherish them, and gave milk. But there were some as it were learned and spiritual men who detracted from Paul. His letters indeed, say they, are weighty and powerful; but the presence of his body weak, and speech contemptible: he saith himself in his Epistle, that certain his detractors had said these words. They were sitting, and were detracting against their brother, and against that their mother's son, to be fed with milk, they were laying a stumbling-block. And against thy mother's son thou didst lay a stumbling-block.

28. Ver. 21. These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue. Therefore the Lord our God shall come, and shall not keep silence. Now, These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue. What is, I held my tongue? From vengeance I have desisted, my severity I have deferred, patience to thee I have prolonged, thy repentance I have long looked for. These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue. But when for this thing I was waiting, that thou shouldest repent, according to the Apostle saying, "But thou according to the hardness of thy heart, and thy heart unrepentant, art treasuring to thyself wrath in the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the just judgment of God;" thou hast imagined iniquity, that I shall be like unto thee. It is too little that thy evil doings please thee, thou thinkest that they please even Me. God, because thou findest not to be an avenger, thou wouldest have for a participator, and as though a corrupt judge, thou wouldest have Him sharer of the spoil. Thou hast imagined iniquity, that I shall be like unto thee; Thou hast imagined that I shall be like unto thee, while thou wilt not be like unto Me. For, Be ye, he saith, perfect, even as your Father, Which is in the heavens, Who maketh His sun to rise on the good and evil. Him thou wouldest not copy, Who giveth good things even to evil men, insomuch that sitting thou dost detract even from good men. Thou hast imagined iniquity, that I shall be like unto thee. I will reprove thee, when 'God manifest shall come, our God, and shall not keep silence,' I will reprove thee. And what to thee shall I do in reproving thee? what to thee shall I do? Now thyself thou seest not, I will make thee see thyself. Because if thou shouldest see thyself, and shouldest displease thyself, thou wouldest please Me: but because not seeing thyself thou hast pleased thyself, thou wilt displease both Me and Thyself; Me when thou shalt be judged; thyself when thou shalt burn. But what to thee shall I do? He saith. I will set thee before thy face. For why

wouldest thou escape thyself? At thy back thou art to thyself, thou seest not thyself: I make thee see thyself: what behind thy back thou hast put, before thy face will I put; thou shalt see thy uncleanness, not that thou mayest amend, but that thou mayest blush. Now because He saith these words, brethren, is he to be despaired of to whom this is said? Was not that city of which it was said, Three days, and Nineve shall be overthrown, within three days meet to be converted, to pray, bewail, to obtain remission of the impending punishment? Let them hear that are such, while they may hear even Him keeping silence. For ‘He shall come, and shall not keep silence,’ and shall reprove, when for amendment no place shall be. I will set thee, He saith, before thy face. Now then do thou, whosoever art of such sort, what God threateneth to do to thee. Take thyself from thy back, where thou wilt not see thyself, dissembling thy doings, and place thyself before thyself. Mount the judgment seat of thy mind, be to thyself judge, let fear rack thee, let confession burst forth from thee, and say thou to thy God, For mine iniquity I acknowledge, and my short-coming is before me ever. Let what was behind thee come before thee: lest thou thyself hereafter be set before thyself by God the Judge, and there be no place whither thou mayest flee from thyself.

29. But, (ver. 22.) understand these things, ye that forget God. See how He crieth, and keepeth not silence, spareth not. Thou hadst forgotten the Lord, didst not think of thy evil life. Perceive how thou hast forgotten the Lord. Lest at length He seize like a lion, and there be none to deliver. What is like a lion? Like a brave one, like a mighty one, like him whom none can withstand. To this he made reference when he said, Lion. For it is used for praise, it is used also for shewing evil. The devil hath been called lion: Your adversary, He saith, like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom He may devour. May it not be that whereas he hath been called lion because of savage fierceness, Christ hath been called Lion for wondrous mightiness? And where is that, The Lion hath prevailed of the tribe of Judah? Let your love attend for a brief space to the little which still remaineth: I entreat you that ye shake off weariness, He will be with you that hath given you strength up to this hour. A little before he had said, as if enjoining us as ye have heard, a sort of tribute of praise to Him: Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise, and render to the Most High thy prayers. But afterwards, But to

the sinner hath God said, Why dost thou tell out My judgments, and takest My Covenant in thy mouth? As though He had said to him, It profiteth thee nothing that thou praisest! I have enjoined sacrifice of praise to them that live well: for them it profiteth that they praise: but if thou praisest, it profiteth thee nothing: why praisest thou Me? Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner. Afterwards He concludeth as if to both, and reproving the bad that forget God, he saith, Understand these things, ye that forget God, lest at length He seize like a lion, and there be none to deliver.

30. Ver. 23. Sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me. How shall sacrifice of praise glorify Me? Assuredly sacrifice of praise doth no wise profit evil men, because they take Thy Covenant in their mouth, and do damnable things that displease Thine eyes. Straightway, he saith, even to them this I say, Sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me. For if thou livest ill and speakest good words, not yet dost thou praise: but again, if, when thou beginnest to live well, to thy merits thou dost ascribe thy living well, not yet dost thou praise. I will not have thee to be a robber reviling the Lord’s Cross: but neither will I have thee to be him that in the Temple did vaunt his merits, and hide his wounds. If thou hast been unrighteous and persisting in that unrighteousness, I say not to thee, praise will not profit; but thou dost not praise Me; that to be praise I count not; again, if thou hast been in a manner righteous, (for no one is righteous but the humble and godly,) and hast walked on puffed up with thy righteousness, and hast despised others in comparison with thyself, and hast above measure lifted thyself up as if glorying in thy merits, thou dost not praise Me. Neither he doth praise Me, who liveth ill, nor doth he praise Me, who liveth well as though of his own power. But was that Pharisee such as he was as of his own power, when he said, Thanks to Thee I give, that I am not like other men? Thanks to God he gave for that good which he had in himself. Though then some good be in thee, though thou now understand that not from thyself is that which is good, but from God thou hast received: yet in that very thing if thou hast lifted up thyself above another that hath not, thou art accounted envious; not yet My praiser shalt thou be. First then be made straight from thy most evil way, begin to live well: understand that thou art not made straight but by the gift of God: for By the Lord the goings of a man are directed. This when thou shalt have understood, give countenance to others also, in order that

they may be what thou art: because even thou wast that which they are. Give countenance as much as thou canst, and do not despair; for not only as far as to thee is God rich. Therefore he doth not praise, that by living ill offendeth the Lord; he praiseth not, that, when he hath begun to live well, of his own strength doth think his living well to be, not received of God; nor doth he praise, that, though he knoweth that he hath received his living well from God, yet only so far as to himself will have God to be rich. He then that was saying, Thanks to Thee I give, O God, that I am not like other men, unjust, extortioners, adulterers, or even as this publican; had he not herein cause for saying, Give this publican also what Thou hast given me, supply also to me what Thou hast not yet given? But now, as if full, he was belching: he did not say, But I am needy and poor: which that Publican was saying, O Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. Therefore the Publican went down justified, rather than that Pharisee. Therefore hear ye that live well, hear ye that live ill: Sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me. No one offereth Me this sacrifice, and is evil. I say not, Let there not offer Me this any one that is evil; but no one doth offer Me this, that is evil. For he that praiseth, is good: because if he praiseth, he doth also live well, because if he praiseth, not only with tongue he praiseth, but life also with tongue doth agree.

31. Sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me: and there is the way whereby I will shew him the salvation of God. In sacrifice of praise is the way whereby I will shew him the salvation of God. What is the salvation of God? Christ Jesus. And how in sacrifice of praise to us is shewn Christ? Because Christ with grace came to us. These words saith the Apostle: But I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me: but that in flesh I live, in faith I live of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me. Acknowledge then sinners, that there would not need physician, if they were whole. For Christ died for the ungodly. When then they acknowledge their ungodlinesses, and first copy that Publican, saying, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner: shew wounds, beseech Physician: and because they praise not themselves, but blame themselves, So that he that glorieth, not in himself but in the Lord may glory,—they acknowledge the cause of the coming of Christ, because for this end He came, that He might save sinners: for Jesus Christ came, he saith, into this world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Further, those Jews, boasting of their work, thus the same Apostle doth rebuke, in saying,

that they to grace belonged not, who to their merits and their works thought that reward was owing. He therefore that knoweth himself to belong to grace, doth know what is Christ and what is Christ’s, because he needeth grace. If grace it is called, gratis it is given; if gratis it is given, not any merits of thine have preceded that it should be given. For if thy merits have preceded, reward is not reckoned according to grace, but according to debt. If therefore thou sayest thy merits have preceded, thyself thou wilt have to be praised, not God: therefore thou dost not acknowledge Christ, Who came with the grace of God: turn thee then to thy merits, see them to have been evil, so that there is not owed thee aught but punishment, not reward. And when thou shalt have seen what to thee through merit is owed, thou dost acknowledge what through grace is given: and with sacrifice of praise thou dost glorify God. For there is the way wherein thou mayest know Christ, the salvation of God.

PSALM 51

Exposition

1. Neither must this multitude’s throng be defrauded, nor their infirmity burthened. Silence we ask, and quiet, in order that our voice, after yesterday’s labour, be able with some little vigour to last out. It must be believed, that your love hath met together in greater numbers to-day for nothing else, but that ye may pray for those whom an alien and perverse inclination doth keep away. For we are speaking neither of heathens nor of Jews, but of Christians: nor of those that are yet Catechumens, but of many that are even baptized, from the Laver of whom ye do no wise differ, and yet to their heart ye are unlike. For to-day how many brethren of ours we think of, and deplore their going unto vanities and lying insanities, to the neglect of that to which they have been called. Who, if in the very circus from any cause they chance to be startled, do immediately cross themselves, and stand bearing It on the forehead, in the very place, from whence they had withdrawn, if It in heart they had borne. God’s mercy must be implored, that He may give understanding for condemning these things, inclination to flee them, and mercy to forgive. Opportunely, then, of Penitence a Psalm to-day has been chanted. Speak we even with the absent: there will be to them for our voice your memory. Neglect not the wounded and feeble, but that ye may more easily make whole, whole ye ought to abide. Correct by reproving, comfort by addressing, set an example by living well, He will be with them That hath been with you. For now that ye have overpast these dangers, the fountain of God’s mercy is not closed. Where ye have come they will come; where ye have passed, they will pass. A grievous thing it is indeed, and exceeding perilous, nay ruinous, and for certain a deadly thing, that witting they sin. For in one way to these vanities doth he run that despiseth the voice of Christ; in another way, he that knoweth from what he is fleeing. But that not even of such men we ought to despair, this Psalm doth shew.

2. For there is written over it the title thereof, A Psalm of David himself, when there came to him Nathan the prophet, when he went in unto Bersabee. Bersabee was a woman, wife of another. With grief indeed we speak, and with trembling; but yet God would not have to be hushed what He hath willed to be written. I will say then not what I will, but what I am obliged; I will say not as one exhorting to imitation, but as one instructing you to fear. Captivated with this woman's beauty, the wife of another, the king and prophet David, from whose seed according to the flesh the Lord was to come, committed adultery with her. This thing in this Psalm is not read, but in the title thereof it appeareth; but in the book of Kings it is more fully read. Both Scriptures are canonical, to both without any doubt by Christians credit must be given. The sin was committed, and was written down. Moreover her husband in war he caused to be killed: and after this deed there was sent to him Nathan the prophet; sent by the Lord, to reprove him for so great an outrage.

3. What men should beware of, we have said; but what if they shall have fallen they should imitate, let us hear. For many men will to fall with David, and will not to rise with David. Not then for falling is the example set forth, but if thou shalt have fallen for rising again. Take heed lest thou fall. Not the delight of the younger be the lapse of the elder, but be the fall of the elder the dread of the younger. For this it was set forth, for this was written, for this in the Church often read and chanted: let them hear that have not fallen, lest they fall; let them hear that have fallen, that they may rise. So great a man's sin is not hushed, is proclaimed in the Church. There hear men that are ill hearers, and seek for themselves countenance for sinning: they look out for means whereby they may defend what they have made ready to commit, not how they may beware of what they have not committed, and they say to themselves, If David, why not I too? Thence that soul is more unrighteous, which, forasmuch as it hath done it because David did, therefore hath done worse than David. I will say this very thing, if I shall be able, more plainly. David had set forth to himself none for a precedent as thou hast: he had fallen by lapse of concupiscence, not by the countenance of holiness: thou dost set before thine eyes as it were a holy man, in order that thou mayest sin: thou dost not copy his holiness, but dost copy his fall. That thou dost love in David, which in himself David hated:

thou makest thee ready to sin, thou inclinest to sin: the book of God in order that thou mayest sin thou consultest: the Scriptures of God for this thou hearest, that thou mayest do what displeaseth God: this did not David; he was reproved by a Prophet, he stumbled not over a Prophet. But others hearing to their health, by the fall of a strong man measure their weakness: and what God condemneth desiring to avoid, from careless looking do restrain their eyes: them they fix not upon the beauty of another’s flesh, nor make themselves careless with perverse simpleness; they say not, ‘With good intent I have observed, of kindness I have observed, of charity I have long looked.’ For they set before themselves the fall of David, and they see that this great man for this purpose hath fallen, in order that little men may not be willing to look on that whereby they may fall. For they restrain their eyes from wantonness, not readily do they join themselves in company, they do not mingle with strange women, they raise not complying eyes to strange balconies, to strange terraces. For from afar David saw her with whom he was captivated. Woman afar, lust near. Elsewhere was what he saw, in himself that whereby he fell. This weakness of the flesh must be therefore minded, the words of the Apostle recollected, Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body. He hath not said, let there not be; but, let there not reign. There is sin in thee, when thou takest pleasure; there reigneth, if thou shalt have consented. Carnal pleasure, especially if proceeding unto unlawful and strange objects, is to be bridled, not let loose: by government to be tamed, not to be set up for government. Look and be without care, if thou hast nothing whereby thou mayest be moved. But thou makest answer, “I contain with strong resolution.” Art thou any wise stronger than David?

4. He admonisheth, moreover, by such an example, that no one ought to lift himself up in prosperous circumstances. For many fear adverse circumstances, fear not prosperous circumstances. Prosperity is more perilous to soul than adversity to body. First, prosperity doth corrupt, in order that adversity may find something to break. My brethren, against felicity stricter watch must be kept. Wherefore see ye after what manner the saying of God amid our own felicity doth take from us security: Serve ye, He saith, the Lord in fear, and exult unto Him with trembling. In exultation, in order that we may render thanks; in trembling, lest we fall. This sin did not David, when he was suffering Saul for persecutor. When holy David

was suffering Saul his enemy, when he was being vexed by his persecutions, when he was fleeing through divers places, in order that he might not fall into his hands, he lusted not for her that was another’s, he slew not husband after committing adultery with wife. He was in the infirmity of his tribulation so much the more intimate with God as he seemed more miserable. Something useful is tribulation; useful the surgeon’s lancet rather than the devil’s temptation. He became secure when his enemies were overthrown, pressure was removed, swelling grew out. This example therefore doth avail to this end, that we should fear felicity. Tribulation, he saith, and grief I found, and on the name of the Lord I called.

5. But it was done; I would say these words to those that have not done the like, in order that they should watch to keep their uncorruptness, and that while they take heed how a great one has fallen, they that be small should fear. But if any that hath already fallen heareth these words, and that hath in his conscience any evil thing; to the words of this Psalm let him advert; let him heed the greatness of the wound, but not despair of the majesty of the Physician. Sin with despair is certain death. Let no one therefore say, If already any evil thing I have done, already I am to be condemned: God pardoneth not such evil things, why add I not sins to sins? I will enjoy this world in pleasure, in wantonness, in wicked cupidity: now hope of amendment having been lost, let me have even what I see, if I cannot have what I believe. This Psalm then, while it maketh heedful those that have not believed, so doth not will them to be despaired of that have fallen. Whoever thou art that hast sinned, and hesitatest to do penance for thy sin, despairing of thy salvation, hear David groaning. To thee Nathan the prophet hath not been sent, David himself hath been sent to thee. Hear him crying, and with him cry: hear him groaning, and with him groan; hear him weeping, and mingle tears; hear him amended, and with him rejoice. If from thee sin could not be excluded, be not hope of pardon excluded. There was sent to that man Nathan the prophet, observe the king’s humility. He rejected not the words of him giving admonition, he said not, Darest thou speak to me, a king? An exalted king heard a prophet, let His humble people hear Christ.

6. Hear therefore these words, and say thou with him: (ver. 1.) Have pity upon me, O God, after Thy great mercy. He that imploreth great mercy, confesseth great misery. Let them seek a little mercy of Thee, that have sinned in ignorance: Have pity, he saith, upon me, after Thy great mercy. Relieve a deep wound after Thy great healing. Deep is what I have, but in the Almighty I take refuge. Of my own so deadly wound I should despair, unless I could find so great a Physician. Have pity upon me, O God, after Thy great mercy: and after the multitude of Thy pities, blot out my iniquity. What he saith, Blot out my iniquity, is this, Have pity upon me, O God. And what he saith, After the multitude of Thy pities, is this, After Thy great mercy. Because great is the mercy, many are the mercies; and of Thy great mercy, many are Thy pityings. Thou dost regard mockers to amend them, dost regard ignorant men, to teach them, dost regard men confessing to pardon. Did he this in ignorance? A certain man had done some, aye many evil things he had done; Mercy, he saith, I obtained, because ignorant I did it in unbelief. This David could not say, Ignorant I did it. For he was not ignorant, how very evil a thing was the touching of another’s wife, and how very evil a thing was the killing of the husband, who knew not of it, and was not even angered. They obtain therefore the mercy of the Lord that have in ignorance done it; and they that have knowing done it, obtain not any mercy it may chance, but great mercy.

7. Ver. 2. More and more wash me from mine unrighteousness. What is, More and more wash? One much stained. More and more wash the sins of one knowing. Thou that hast washed off the sins of one ignorant. Not even thus is it to be despaired of Thy mercy. And from my delinquency purge Thou me. According to the manner in which He is physician, offer a recompense. He is God, offer sacrifice. What wilt thou give that thou mayest be purged? For see upon Whom thou callest; upon a Just One thou callest. He hateth sins, if He is just; He taketh vengeance upon sins, if He is just; thou wilt not be able to take away from the Lord God His justice: entreat mercy, but observe the justice: there is mercy to pardon the sinner, there is justice to punish the sin. What then? Thou askest mercy; shall sin unpunished abide? Let David answer, let those that have fallen answer, answer with David, and say, No, Lord, no sin of mine shall be unpunished; I know the justice of Him, Whose mercy I ask: it shall not be unpunished, but

for this reason I will not that Thou punish me, because I punish my sin: for this reason I beg that Thou pardon, because I acknowledge.

8. Ver. 3. For mine iniquity I acknowledge, and my delinquency is before me ever. I have not put behind my back what I have done, I look not at others, forgetful of myself, I pretend not to pull out a straw from my brother’s eye, when there is a beam in my eye; my sin is before me, not behind me. For it was behind me when to me was sent the Prophet, and set before me the parable of the poor man’s sheep. For saith Nathan the Prophet to David, “There was a certain rich man having very many sheep; but a poor man his neighbour had one little ewe sheep, which in his bosom and of his own food he was feeding: there came a stranger to the rich man, nothing from his flock he took, for the little ewe sheep of the poor man his neighbour he lusted; her he slew for the stranger: what doth he deserve?” But the other being angry doth pronounce sentence: then the king, evidently knowing not wherein he had been taken, declared the rich man deserving of death, and that the sheep be restored fourfold. Most sternly and most justly. But his sin was not yet before him, behind his back was what he had done: his own iniquity he did not yet acknowledge, and therefore another’s he did not pardon. But the Prophet, being for this purpose sent, took from his back the sin, and before his eyes placed it, so that he might see that sentence so stern to have been pronounced against himself. For cutting and healing his heart’s wound, he made a lancet of his tongue. This did the Lord to the Jews, when to Him they brought an adulterous woman, setting forth a snare of temptation, and into that which they had set forth themselves falling. In adultery, say they, this woman was taken, Moses hath commanded for such to be stoned; of this woman what dost Thou say? As though in a double trap they were trying to catch the Wisdom of God, so that if He should command to be killed, He should lose the character of gentleness; but if He should command to be let go, He should incur a charge as being a reviler of the law. What answered He then? He saith not, Kill: He saith not, Let go: but He saith, He that knoweth himself to be without sin, let him first cast a stone at her. Just is the law, which commandeth an adulteress to be killed: but let this just law have ministers innocent. Ye heed whom ye bring to Me, heed also what ye are. They, when they had heard this, one after another went out. Remained the adulteress and the Lord; remained she wounded

and He Physician; remained great misery and great mercy. They that brought blushed, but asked not pardon; she that was brought was confounded, and was healed. The Lord saith to her, Woman, hath no man condemned thee? And she, No man, Lord. And He, Neither will I condemn thee: go, now henceforward sin not. Did Christ ought against His law? No, for the Father had not without His Son given law. If heaven and earth, and all things that therein are, by Himself were made, how was law written without the Word of God? God did not then contrary to His law, because neither doth an emperor ought against his laws, when to them that have confessed he giveth a reprieve. Moses the minister of the Law, Christ the publisher of the Law. Moses stoneth as judge, Christ reprieveth as King. God then had pity on him after His great mercy, as here he asketh, as here he beggeth, as he crieth out and grieveth; what they bringing forth an adulteress would not do; their wounds at the shewing of the Physician they perceived, medicine from the Physician asked not. So there are many men that are not ashamed to sin, to do penance are ashamed. O incredible madness! At the wound itself thou dost not blush, at the bandage of the wound thou dost blush! When bare, is it not more foul and stinking? Take refuge then in the Physician, do penance, say, Mine iniquity I acknowledge, and my sin is before me ever.

9. Ver. 4. Against Thee alone have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done. What is this? For before men was not another’s wife debauched and husband slain? Did not all men know what David had done? What is, Against Thee alone have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done. Because Thou alone art without sin. He is a just punisher that hath nothing in Him to be punished: He is a just reprover that hath nothing in Him to be reproved. Against Thee alone, he saith, have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done, that Thou mayest be justified in Thy sayings, and conquer when Thou art judged. To whom he speaketh, brethren, to whom he speaketh, is difficult to understand. To God surely he speaketh, and it is evident that God the Father is not judged. What is, Against Thee alone have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done, that Thou mayest be justified in Thy sayings, and conquer when Thou art judged? He seeth the future Judge to be judged, one just by sinners to be judged, and therein conquering, because in Him was nothing to be judged.

For alone among men could truly say the God-Man, ‘If ye have found in Me sin, say.’ But perchance there was what escaped men, and they found not what was really there, but was not manifest. In another place He saith, Behold, there cometh the Prince of the world, being an acute observer of all sins; Behold, He saith, there cometh the Prince of this world, with death afflicting sinners, presiding over death: for, By the malice of the devil death came into the world. Behold, He saith, there cometh the Prince of this world: (He said these words close upon His Passion:) and in Me he shall find nothing, nothing of sin, nothing worthy of death, nothing worthy of condemnation. And as if it were said to Him, Why then dost Thou die? He continueth and saith, But that all men may know that I do the will of My Father, arise, let us go hence. I suffer, He saith, undeserving, for men deserving, in order that them I may make deserving of My Life, for whom I undeservedly suffer their death. To Him then, having no sin, saith on the present occasion the Prophet David, Against Thee only have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done, that Thou mayest be justified in Thy sayings, and conquer when Thou art judged. For Thou overcomest all men, all judges; and he that deemeth himself just, before Thee is unjust: Thou alone justly judgest, having been unjustly judged, That hast power to lay down Thy life, and hast power again to take it. Thou conquerest, then, when Thou art judged. All men Thou overcomest, because Thou art more than men, and by Thee were men made.

10. Against Thee alone have I sinned, and before Thee an evil thing have I done, that Thou mayest be justified in Thy sayings, and conquer when Thou art judged. (Ver. 5.) For, behold, in iniquities I was conceived. As though he were saying, They are conquered that have done what thou also David: for this is not a little evil and little sin, to wit, adultery and man-slaying. What of them that from the day that they were born of their mother’s womb, have done no such thing? even to them dost thou ascribe some sins, in order that He may conquer all men when He beginneth to be judged. David hath taken upon him the person of mankind, and hath heeded the bonds of all men, hath considered the offspring of death, hath adverted to the origin of iniquity, and he saith, For, behold, in iniquities I was conceived. Was David born of adultery; being born of Jesse, a righteous man, and his own wife? What is it that he saith himself to have been in iniquity conceived, except

that iniquity is drawn from Adam? Even the very bond of death, with iniquity itself is engrained. No man is born without bringing punishment, bringing desert of punishment. A Prophet saith also in another place, No one is clean in Thy sight, not even an infant, whose life is of one day upon the earth. For we know both by the Baptism of Christ that sins are loosed, and that the Baptism of Christ availeth for remission of sins. If infants are every way innocent, why do mothers run with them when sick to the Church? What by that Baptism, what by that remission is put away? An innocent one I see that rather weeps than is angry. What doth Baptism wash off? what doth that Grace loose? There is loosed the offspring of sin. For if that infant could speak to thee, it would say, and if it had the understanding which David had, it would answer thee, Why heedest thou me, an infant? Thou dost not indeed see my actions: but I in iniquity have been conceived, And in sins hath my mother nourished me in the womb. Beside this bond of mortal concupiscence was Christ born without a male, of a virgin conceiving by the Holy Ghost. He cannot be said to have been conceived in iniquity, it cannot be said, In sins His mother nourished Him in the womb, to whom was said, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Virtue of the Highest shall overshadow thee. It is not therefore that men are conceived in iniquity, and in sins nourished in the womb by their mother, because it is sin to have to do with wives; but because that which is made is surely made of flesh deserving punishment. For the punishment of the flesh is death, and surely there is in it liability to death itself. Whence the Apostle spoke not of the body as if to die, but as if dead: The body indeed is dead, he saith, because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. How then without bond of sin is born that which is conceived and sown of a body dead because of sin? This chaste operation in a married person hath not sin, but the origin of sin draweth with it condign punishment. For there is no husband that, because he is an husband, is not subject to death, or that is subject to death for any other reason but because of sin. For even the Lord was subject to death, but not on account of sin: He took upon Him our punishment, and so looseth our guilt. With reason then, In Adam all die, but in Christ shall all be made alive. For, Through one man, saith the Apostle, sin hath entered into this world, and through sin death, and so hath passed unto all men, in that all have sinned. Definite is the sentence: In Adam, he saith, all have sinned. Alone then could such an infant be innocent, as hath not been born of the work of Adam.

11. Ver. 6. For, behold, truth Thou hast loved: uncertain and hidden things of Thy wisdom, Thou hast manifested to me. “Truth thou hast loved;” that is, unpunished Thou hast not left even the sins of those whom Thou dost pardon. Truth Thou hast loved: so mercy Thou hast granted first, as that Thou shouldest also preserve truth. Thou pardonest one confessing, pardonest, but only if he punisheth himself: so there are preserved mercy and truth: mercy because man is set free; truth, because sin is punished. For, behold, truth Thou hast loved: uncertain and hidden things of Thy wisdom Thou hast manifested to me. What hidden things? What uncertain things? Because God pardoneth even such. Nothing is so hidden, nothing so uncertain. For this uncertainty the Ninevites did penance, for they said, though after the threatenings of the Prophet, though after that cry, Three days and Nineve shall be overthrown: they said to themselves, Mercy must be implored; they said in this sort reasoning among themselves, “Who knoweth whether God may turn for the better His sentence, and have pity?” It was ‘uncertain,’ when it is said, Who knoweth? on an uncertainty they did penance, certain mercy they earned: they prostrated them in tears, in fastings, in sackcloth and ashes they prostrated them, groaned, wept, God spared. Nineve stood: was Nineve overthrown? One way indeed it seemeth to men, and another way it seemed to God. But I think that it was fulfilled that the Prophet had foretold. Regard what Nineve was, and see how it was overthrown; overthrown in evil, builded in good; just as Saul the persecutor was overthrown, Paul the preacher builded. Who would not say that this city, in which we now are, was happily overthrown, if all those madmen leaving their triflings were to run together to the Church with contrite heart, and were to call upon God’s mercy for their past doings? Should we not say, Where is that Carthage? Because there is not what there was, it is overthrown: but if there is what there was not, it is builded. So is said to Jeremiah, Behold, I will give to thee to root up, to dig under, to overthrow, to destroy, and again, to build, and to plant. Thence is that voice of the Lord, I will smite and I will heal. He smiteth the rottenness of the deed, He healeth the pain of the wound. Physicians do thus when they cut; they smite and heal; they arm themselves in order to strike, they carry steel, and come

to cure. But because great were the sins of the Ninevites, they said, Who knoweth? This uncertainty had God disclosed to His servant David. For when he had said, before the Prophet standing and convicting him, I have sinned: straightway he heard from the Prophet, that is, from the Spirit of God Which was in the Prophet, ‘Thy sin is put away from thee.’ Uncertain and hidden things of His wisdom He manifested to him.

12. Ver. 7. Thou shalt sprinkle me, he saith, with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed. Hyssop we know to be a herb humble but healing: to the rock it is said to adhere with roots. Thence in a mystery the similitude of cleansing the heart has been taken. Do thou also take hold, with the root of thy love, on thy Rock: be humble in thy humble God, in order that thou mayest be exalted in thy glorified God. Thou shalt be sprinkled with hyssop, the humility of Christ shall cleanse thee. Despise not the herb, attend to the efficacy of the medicine. Something further I will say, which we are wont to hear from physicians, or to experience in sick persons. Hyssop, they say, is proper for purging the lungs. In the lung is wont to be noted pride: for there is inflation, there breathing. It was said of Saul the persecutor as of Saul the proud, that he was going to bind Christians, breathing slaughter: he was breathing out slaughter, breathing out blood, his lung not yet cleansed. Hear also in this place one humbled, because with hyssop purged: Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed: Thou shalt wash me, that is, shalt cleanse me: and above snow I shall be whitened. Although, he saith, your sins shall have been like scarlet, like snow I will whiten. Out of such men Christ doth present to Himself a vesture without spot and wrinkle. Further, His vesture on the mount, which shone forth like whitened snow, signified the Church cleansed from every spot of sin.

13. But where is humility from hyssop? Hear what followeth: (ver. 8.) To my hearing Thou shalt give exultation and gladness, and bones humbled shall exult. To my hearing, he saith, Thou shalt give exultation and gladness: I will rejoice in hearing Thee, not in speaking against Thee. Thou hast sinned, why defendest thou thyself? Thou wilt speak: suffer thou; hear, yield to divine words, lest thou be put to confusion, and be still more wounded: sin hath been committed, be it not defended: to confession let it come, not to defence. Thou engagest thyself as defender of thy sin, thou art

conquered: no innocent patron hast thou engaged, thy defence is not profitable to thee. For who art thou that defendest thyself? Thou art meet to accuse thyself. Say not, either, I have done nothing; or, What great thing have I done? or, Other men as well have done. If in doing sin thou sayest thou hast done nothing, thou wilt be nothing, thou wilt receive nothing: God is ready to give indulgence, thou closest the door against thyself: He is ready to give, do not oppose the bar of defence, but open the bosom of confession. To my hearing Thou shalt give exultation and gladness. May He grant me Himself to say what I think. More happy are they that hear than they that speak. For he that learneth is humble, but he that teacheth laboureth that he be not proud, lest the inclination to please men to their hurt steal over him, lest he displease God that would please men. There is great dread in one teaching, my brethren, great is our trembling over these our words. Believe our heart which ye cannot see: Himself knoweth—Who, I pray, be merciful to us, Who be favourable to us!—with how much of that trembling we speak to you. But when we hear Himself suggesting any thing, and teaching within, we are without concern, without concern we rejoice: for we are under a Master; His glory we seek, Him teaching we laud: His truth delighteth us within, where no one maketh or heareth sound: there he said was his gladness and his exultation. To my hearing, he saith, Thou shalt give exultation and gladness. And therefore, because humble, he heareth. He that heareth, that heareth truly, and heareth well, heareth humble; for the glory is in Him from Whom he heareth what he heareth. After that he hath said, To my hearing Thou shalt give exultation and gladness, immediately he hath declared what hearing doth, Bones humbled shall exult. Humbled are the bones, the bones of one hearing have not haughtiness, have not swelling, which he that speaketh doth scarce conquer in himself. Thence also that great man was humble, than whom among those born of women no one greater hath arisen, he that so humbled himself, that he pronounced himself unworthy to loose the latchet of his Lord’s shoe; that John Baptist, giving glory to his Master, and thus to his Friend; he saith, when he was thought to be Christ, and of this thing might have been proud, and have enlarged himself: (for he had not himself said he was Christ; but he might have accepted the mistake of men so thinking, of themselves willing to confer this honour;) but he voided the false honour, in order that he might find true glory: and see the humility of the hearing: he saith, He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom, but the friend of the Bridegroom standeth and heareth Him. He made himself one standing and hearing, not one falling and speaking. He standeth, he saith, and heareth Him. Ye have heard the hearing; where is the exultation and gladness? Immediately he continueth, “Standeth and heareth Him, and with joy rejoiceth, because of the voice of the Bridegroom.”

To my hearing Thou shalt give exultation and gladness, and bones humbled shall exult.

14. Ver. 9. Turn Thou away Thy face from my sins, and all mine iniquities blot out. For now bones humbled exult, now with hyssop cleansed, humble I have become. Turn Thou away Thy face, not from me, but from my sins. For in another place praying he saith, Turn not away Thy face from me. He that would not that God’s face be turned away from himself, would that God’s face be turned away from his sins. For to sin, when God turneth not Himself away, he adverteth: if he adverteth, he animadverteth: Turn away Thy face from my sins, and all mine iniquities blot out. He is busied with that capital sin: he reckoneth on more, he would have all his iniquities to be blotted out: he relieth on the Physician’s hand, on that great mercy, upon which he hath called in the beginning of the Psalm: All mine iniquities blot out. God turneth away His face, and so blotteth out, by ‘turning away’ His face, sins He blotteth out, by ‘turning towards,’ He writeth them. Thou hast heard of Him blotting out by turning away, hear of Him by turning towards, doing what? But the countenance of the Lord is upon men doing evil things, that He may destroy from the earth the remembrance of them: He shall destroy the remembrance of them, not by ‘blotting out their sins.’ But here he doth ask what? Turn away Thy face from my sins. Well he asketh. For he doth not himself turn away his face from his sins, saying, For my sin I acknowledge. With reason thou askest and well askest, that God turn away from thy sin, if thou from thence dost not turn away face: but if thou settest thy sin at thy back, God doth there set His face. Do thou turn sin before thy face, if thou wilt that God thence turn away His face; and then safely thou askest, and He heareth.

15. Ver. 10. A clean heart create in me, O God. Create he meant to say, ‘as it were begin something new;’ but, because repentant he was praying, that had

committed some sin, which before he had committed, he was more innocent, he sheweth after what manner he hath said, ‘create.’ And a right spirit renew in my inner parts. By my doing, he saith, the uprightness of my spirit hath been made old and bowed. For he saith in another Psalm, They have bowed my soul. And when a man doth make himself stoop unto earthly lusts, he is ‘bowed’ in a manner, but when he is made erect for things above, upright is his heart made, in order that God may be good to him. For, How good is the God of Israel to the upright of heart! Moreover, brethren, listen. Sometimes God chastiseth in this world for his sin him that He pardoneth in the world to come. For even to David himself, to whom it had been already said by the Prophet, Thy sin is put away, there happened certain things which God had threatened for that very sin. For his son Abessalom against him waged bloody war, and many ways humbled his father. He was walking in grief, in the tribulation of his humiliation, so resigned to God, that, ascribing to Him all that was just, he confessed that he was suffering nothing undeservedly, having now an heart upright, to which God was not displeasing. A slanderous person and one throwing in his teeth harsh curses he patiently heard, one of the soldiers on the opposite side, that were with his unnatural son. And when he was heaping curses upon the king, one of the companions of David, enraged, would have gone and smitten him; but he is kept back by David. And he is kept back how? For that he said, God sent him to curse me. Acknowledging his guilt he embraced his penance, seeking glory not his own, praising the Lord in that good which he had, Praising the Lord in that which he was suffering, ‘blessing the Lord alway, ever His praise was in his mouth.’ Such are all the upright in heart: not those crooked persons who think themselves upright and God crooked: who when they do any evil thing, rejoice; when they suffer any evil thing, blaspheme; nay, if set in tribulation and scourging, they say from their distorted heart, “O God, what have I done to Thee?” Truly it is because they have done nothing to God, for they have done all to themselves. And an upright spirit, renew in my inner parts.

16. Ver. 11. Cast me not forth from Thy face. Turn away Thy face from my sins: and cast me not forth from Thy face. Whose face he feareth, upon the face of the Same he calleth. Cast me not forth from Thy face, and Thy Holy Spirit take not away from me. For there is the Holy Spirit in one confessing.

Even now to the gift of the Holy Spirit it belongeth, that what thou hast done displeaseth thee. The unclean spirit sins do please, the Holy One they displease. Though then thou still implore pardon, yet thou art joined to God on the other part, because the evil thing that thou hast committed displeaseth thee: for the same thing displeaseth both thee and Him. Now ye are two to assail thy fever, thou and the Physician. For the reason that there cannot be confession of sin, and punishment of sin, in a man of himself: when one is angry with himself, and is displeasing to himself, then it is not without the gift of the Holy Spirit, nor doth he say, Thy Holy Spirit give to me, but, Take not away from me. ‘And, Thy Holy Spirit take not away from me.’

17. Ver. 12. Give back to me the exultation of Thy salvation. Give back what I had, what by sinning I had lost: Give back to me the exultation of Thy salvation: to wit, of Thy Christ. For who without Him can be made whole? Because even before that He was Son of Mary, In the beginning He was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; and so by the holy fathers this is believed to have been the dispensation of flesh taken upon Him, which was to be, as is believed by us to have been done. Times are changed, not faith. Give back to me the exultation of Thy salvation: and with Principal Spirit confirm me. Some have here understood the Trinity in God, Itself God, the dispensation of Flesh being excepted therefrom: since it is written, God is a Spirit. For that which is not body, and yet is, seemeth to exist in such sort as that it is spirit. Therefore some understand here the Trinity spoken of, In upright Spirit, the Son, in Holy Spirit, Holy Ghost, in Principal Spirit, Father. Whether then this be so, or whether upright Spirit He would have to be taken of man himself, when He saith, An upright spirit renew in my inner parts, which I have bowed and distorted by sinning, so that in that case the Holy Spirit be Himself the Principal Spirit; which also he would not have to be taken away from him, and thereby would have himself to be confirmed therein, it is not any heretical opinion.

18. But see what he annexeth: With Spirit, he saith, Principal confirm Thou me. Wherein confirm? Because Thou hast pardoned me, because I am secure, that what Thou hast forgiven is not to me ascribed, on this being

made secure and with this grace confirmed, therefore I am not ungrateful. But I shall do what? (Ver. 13.) I would teach unrighteous men Thy ways. I would teach unrighteous men, being of unrighteous, that is, one that was myself an unrighteous man, now no longer unrighteous; the Holy Spirit not having been taken away from me, and I being confirmed with Principal Spirit, I would teach unrighteous men Thy ways. What ways wilt thou teach unrighteous men? And ungodly men to Thee shall be converted. If David’s sin is counted for ungodliness, let not ungodly men despair of themselves, forasmuch as God hath spared an ungodly man; but let them take heed that to Him they be converted, that His ways they learn: but if David’s deed is not counted for ungodliness, but this is properly called ungodliness, namely, to apostatise from God, not to worship one God, or never to have worshipped, or to have forsaken Him Whom one did worship, then what he saith hath the force of superabundance, And ungodly men shall to Thee be converted. So full art thou of the fatness of mercy, that for those converted to Thee, not only sinners of any sort, but even ungodly, there is no cause for despair. Wherefore? That believing on Him that justifieth an ungodly man, their faith may be counted for righteousness.

19. Ver. 14. Deliver me from bloods, O God, God of my health. The Latin translator hath expressed, though by a word not Latin, yet an accuracy from the Greek. For we all know that in Latin, ‘sanguines’ (bloods) are not spoken of, nor yet ‘sanguina’ (bloods in the neuter), nevertheless because the Greek translator hath thus used the plural number, not without reason, but because he found this in the original language the Hebrew, a godly translator hath preferred to use a word not Latin, rather than one not exact. Wherefore then hath he said in the plural number, From bloods? In many bloods, as in the origin of the sinful flesh, many sins he would have to be understood. The Apostle having regard to the very sins which come of the corruption of flesh and blood, saith, Flesh and blood shall not possess the kingdom of God. For doubtless, after the true faith of the same Apostle, that flesh shall rise again and shall itself gain incorruption, as He saith Himself, This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality. Because then this corruption is of sin, by the name thereof sins are called: in like manner as both that morsel of flesh and member which playeth in the mouth when we articulate words is called a tongue, and that

is called a tongue which by the tongue is made, as we call one tongue the Greek, another the Latin; for the flesh is not diverse, but the sound. In the same manner, then, as the speech which is made by the tongue is called a tongue; so also the iniquity which is made by blood is called blood. Heeding, then, his many iniquities, as in the expression above, (ver. 9.) And all my iniquities blot out, and ascribing them to the corruption of flesh and blood, Free me, he saith, from bloods: that is, free me from iniquities, cleanse me from all corruption. For incorruption he desireth, who saith, Deliver me from bloods: because ‘flesh and blood shall not possess the kingdom of God, nor corruption incorruption.’ Deliver me from bloods, O God, God of my health. He sheweth that when there hath been perfect health in that body, corruption in it there shall not be, which is implied in the name of flesh and blood: for thus is the perfect soundness of the body. For after what sort is that sound which slippeth, which hath need, which hath a kind of perpetual sickness of hunger and of thirst? These things then shall not be: because Meat is for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall make void both it and them. There shall be a form of body made perfect out of God, Death having been swallowed up into victory, no corruption remaining, no defect creeping over, being changed by no ages, by no toil wearied, so as that it be to be supported by food or any meat. But we shall not be without meat and drink: God Himself shall be our food and our drink. Such food alone restoreth, and faileth not. Deliver me from bloods, O God, God of my health. For in a manner now we are in that same health. Hear the Apostle: For by hope we have been made whole. And observe that he was speaking of actual health of body: In our own selves, he saith, we groan, awaiting the adoption, the redemption of our body: for by hope we have been made whole: but hope which is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he hope for? But if for what we see not we hope, we by patience wait for it. Of him that shall have persevered unto the end is that very patience: he shall be made whole, this is the health which we have not yet, but are to have. Not yet is the substance, but certain hope. And my tongue shall exult of Thy righteousness.

20. Ver. 15. O Lord, my lips Thou shalt open, and my mouth shall tell of Thy praise. Thy praise, because I have been created: Thy praise, because sinning I have not been forsaken: Thy praise, because I have been

admonished to confess: Thy praise, because in order that I might be secured I have been cleansed. My lips Thou shalt open, and my mouth shall tell of Thy praise.

21. Ver. 16. Because if Thou hadst willed sacrifice, I would have given it surely. David was living at that time when sacrifices of victim animals were offered to God, and he saw these times that were to be. Do we not perceive ourselves in these words? Those sacrifices were figurative, foretelling the One Saving Sacrifice. Not even we have been left without a Sacrifice to offer to God. For hear what he saith, having a concern for his sin, and wishing the evil thing which he hath done to be forgiven him: If Thou hadst willed, he saith, sacrifice, I would have given it surely. With holocausts Thou wilt not be delighted. Nothing shall we therefore offer? So shall we come to God? And whence shall we propitiate Him? Offer; certainly in thyself thou hast what thou mayest offer. Do not from without fetch frankincense, but say, In me are, O God, Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee. Do not from without seek cattle to slay, thou hast in thyself what thou mayest kill. (Ver. 17.) Sacrifice to God is a spirit troubled, a heart contrite and humbled God despiseth not. Utterly he despiseth bull, he-goat, ram: now is not the time that these should be offered. They were offered when they indicated something, when they promised something; when the things promised come, the promises are taken away. A heart contrite and humbled God despiseth not. Ye know that God is high: if thou shalt have made thyself high, He will be far from thee; if thou shalt have humbled thyself, He will draw near to thee.

22. See who this is: David as one man was seeming to implore; see ye here our image and the type of the Church.

Ver. 18. Deal kindly, O Lord, in Thy good will with Sion. With this Sion deal kindly. What is Sion? A city holy. What is a city holy? That which cannot be hidden, being upon a mountain established. Sion in prospect, because it hath prospect of something which it hopeth for. For Sion is interpreted ‘prospect,’ and Jerusalem, ‘vision of peace.’ Ye perceive then yourselves to be in Sion and in Jerusalem, if being sure ye look for hope that is to be, and if ye have peace with God. And be the walls of Jerusalem builded. Deal kindly, O Lord, in Thy good will with Sion, and be the walls of Jerusalem builded. For not to herself let Sion ascribe her merits: do Thou with her deal kindly, Be the walls of Jerusalem builded: be the battlements of our immortality laid, in faith and hope and charity.

23. Ver. 19. Then Thou shalt accept the sacrifice of righteousness. But now sacrifice for iniquity, to wit, a spirit troubled, and a heart humbled; then the sacrifice of righteousness, praises alone. For, Blessed they that dwell in Thy house, for ever and ever they shall praise Thee: for this is the sacrifice of righteousness. Oblations and holocausts. What are holocausts? A whole victim by fire consumed. When a whole beast was laid upon the altar with fire to be consumed, it was called a holocaust. May divine fire take us up whole, and that fervor catch us whole. What fervor? Neither is there that hideth himself from the heat thereof. What fervor? That whereof speaketh the Apostle; In spirit fervent. Be not merely our soul taken up by that divine fire of wisdom, but also our body; that it may earn there immortality; so be it lifted up for a holocaust, that death be swallowed into victory. Oblations and holocausts. Then shall they lay upon Thine altar calves. Whence calves? What shall He therein choose? Will it be the innocence of the new age, or necks freed from the yoke of the law?

24. The Psalm, in the name of Christ, is ended, though perchance not as we would, yet as we could. It remaineth in few words to address you, brethren, because of the many evil things amid which we live. For living in things human, we cannot withdraw from things human. With forbearance we must live amid evil men: because when we were evil, with forbearance good men have lived amid us. Not forgetting what we have been, we shall not despair of those that now are what we have been. Nevertheless, dearly beloved, in so great diversity of morals and so detestable a corruption, rule your houses, rule your children, rule your families. In like manner as to us it belongeth in the Church to speak with you, so to you it belongeth so to do in your houses, that ye may give a good account of them that have been committed to your charge. God loveth discipline. But it is a perverse and false harmlessness to give the rein to sins. Very much without profit, very destructively doth the son experience leniency in his father, to the end that hereafter from God he may experience severity: and that not alone, but together with his careless father. But why! If he sinneth not himself, and

doth not what his son doth: for that reason ought he not to restrain his son from that very wickedness? Is it perchance in order that the son may think that the father also would do such things, if he had not grown old? Sin which to thee is not displeasing in thy son, doth delight thee: but the age hath left thee, not the concupiscence. Most of all, my brethren, take heed to your sons that believe, for whom ye have engaged that they should be baptized, but perchance an evil son despiseth both the warnings of his father, and reproof, and severity; do thou fulfil thy part, God of him doth exact his.

PSALM 52

EXPOSITION

1. The Psalm of which we have undertaken to speak to your Love is short: but hath a title somewhat operose. Patiently therefore bear with us, until we unravel it, as best we may, as far as the Lord shall have aided us. For these titles must not in every case be omitted: since indeed it hath seemed good to the brethren, that the words which we say should be taken down not only with ear and heart, but also with pen: so that we are obliged to consider not only hearer, but also reader. Occasion was given to this Psalm by a certain action performed, which we have also caused to be read to you from the book of Kings. For Saul having been chosen king not to abide, but after the people’s hard and evil heart, having been given for their reproof not for their profit, according to that text of holy Scripture which saith of God, Who maketh a hypocrite man to reign, because of the perverseness of the people: since therefore of such sort was Saul, he persecuted David, in whom God was prefiguring the kingdom of eternal salvation, and whom God had chosen to abide in his seed: inasmuch as indeed our King, King of ages with Whom we are to reign for everlasting, was to be from the seed of that same David after the flesh. Though then David God had elected and pre-elected and predestined to the kingdom, He would not have even David himself to hold the kingdom before that first He delivered him from them that persecuted him: in order that even in this very thing he might figure us, that is, His Body, of which Body the Head is Christ. For furthermore, if Himself our Head, without labour having been at first accomplished on the earth, chose not in heaven to reign, nor to raise up the Body, which from below He received, save by the way of tribulation; why dare the members expect, that they can be more fortunate than their Head? If the Master of the Family they have called Beelzebub, how much more His Household. Expect we not therefore a more easy way: wherein He hath gone before, go we; wherein He hath led, follow we. For if from His steps we have strayed, we perish. In this David then, what was being prefigured ye see: kingdom evil in Saul, kingdom good in David: death in Saul, and life in David. For

us nothing doth persecute but death, over which at the last we shall triumph, saying, Where, O Death, is thy contention? Where, O Death, is thy sting? What is it that I say; doth nothing persecute but death? Because, unless we are subject to death, there would be nothing which the enemy could do to us. For doth he to angels do any thing? Therefore even death itself, from which most of all we have persecution, whose contention is ended at the end, when we shall have risen again from the dead, as it was ended in our Head, so will be ended in us likewise, if we shall have been found just. For He having died hath been the slayer of death, and more in Him death hath died than Himself in death.

2. Secondly, even the name itself, if we heed, is not without mystery. For Saul is interpreted, 'seeking;' that is, earnest seeking. For how ought we to doubt that we to ourselves have made this death? For by man's sin death hath been born. With reason then hath man himself for himself earnestly sought death, and thus seeking is a name of death. For as it is written, God made not death, neither is glad at the perdition of the living. For God hath created all things that they might be, and healthful hath made the nations of the whole world. And, as if thou wast enquiring, 'whence death?' But ungodly men with hands, he saith, and with words have called it to them, and counting it a friend, have melted away. Therefore, by seeking it earnestly they have melted away, and into death have fallen, counting it to be their friend: just as the people counted as a friend, and sought, a king that was an enemy. For the people wrung from the Lord to have a king, and there was given them Saul, as if they had been given up into their own hands, that with hands and words called to them death; and there was figured in Saul himself death itself. Therefore that seventeenth Psalm thus hath the title: In the day wherein the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said first, all his enemies: and afterwards, from the hand of Saul: because the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. What is, and from the hand of Saul? Forasmuch as He hath taken us forth from hell, and from the hand of death hath freed us.

3. When therefore Saul was persecuting the holy man David, David took refuge where he thought it to be safe: passing over by a certain Priest Achimelech, he received of him loaves. Wherein he figured also the

character not only of a King but also of a Priest: because he ate the ‘loaves of shewing,’ which, as saith the Lord in the Gospel, it was not lawful to eat but for the priests alone. After this Saul began to seek him, and was angry with his men because no one would betray him to him. In this sort it is read in the Book of Kings. But there was there a certain Doeg, (when he had come to Achimelech the Priest, chief of the shepherds of Saul, an Edomite. Who when he was present, while Saul was angry with his men, because no one there would betray David, betrayed where he had seen him. Saul forthwith sent, brought forth the Priest and all that were of him, and commanded them to be slain. No one of the men of king Saul, not even at the king’s command, dared to lay hand upon the Priests of the Lord: but he that had betrayed, like Judas, who retreated not from his purpose, and unto the end continued of that root to bring forth fruits, (of what kind but of such kind as an evil tree bringeth forth?) that Doeg slew with his own hand, at the king’s commanding, the Priest and all that were of him: secondly, even the city of the Priests was taken by storm. We have found then this Doeg, and enemy to king David and the Priest Achimelech. One man is Doeg, but a class of men is Doeg: just as David is both the very body of king and priest, as it were one man and two characters, but yet one class of men. Further, in this time and in this age let us see these two classes, in order that either what we sing, or what we hear to be sung, may pertain to our profit. On one side let us see Doeg, on another the body of King and Priest, on another let us see the body of men against King and Priest.

4. In the first place to the names themselves give heed, how mystical they be. Doeg is interpreted ‘motion:’ Edomite is interpreted ‘earthly.’ Now see what class of men signifieth that Doeg, ‘motion;’ it is not, I say, one persevering for everlasting, but one to be made to change place. Earthly: why do ye look for any fruits from an earthly man? A heavenly man shall be for everlasting. There is then a kingdom earthly, as I will briefly say, and quickly will unfold, to-day in this age, where also the kingdom of heaven is sojourning. Its citizens hath each kingdom, kingdom earthly and kingdom heavenly, kingdom to be rooted up, and kingdom for everlasting to be planted. Only in this world the citizens of each kingdom are mingled: the body of kingdom earthly, and the body of kingdom heavenly, are commingled. Kingdom heavenly groaneth amid the citizens of kingdom

earthly, and sometimes (for even this must not be hushed) in a manner kingdom earthly doth exact service from citizens of the kingdom of heaven, and kingdom heavenly doth exact service from citizens of kingdom earthly. Both things to you from the Scripture of God we will prove. Daniel and the three children at Babylon were set over the king's affairs: Joseph in Egypt, next after the king, was set to govern the state, from which state the people of God was to be delivered: in that very republic Joseph in a manner was doing service, as were those three children, as was Daniel. It is evident then that kingdom earthly had made use to itself of citizens of kingdom heavenly for its purposes, that is, for the purposes of its kingdom, not for its evil deeds. What of the kingdom of heaven also, how doth it make use of citizens of kingdom earthly in this world for a time? Doth not the Apostle say of these men, that not chastely they were proclaiming the Gospel, but desiring earthly things they were preaching the kingdom of heaven, their own things they were seeking, and Christ they were proclaiming? And that ye may know that even these same men were taken for the work of the kingdom of heaven, like mercenary soldiers, the Apostle rejoicing of them saith, There are that through envy and strife preach Christ, not chastely, thinking themselves to stir up tribulation to my bonds. But why? Forasmuch as every way, whether by occasion or whether in truth, Christ is preached. And in this I rejoice, but also I will rejoice. Of such men also Christ preacheth, saying, The Pharisees and Scribes in the seat of Moses have sat: what things they say, do ye: but what things they do, do not ye: for they say, and do not. What things they say belong to David, but what things they do belong to Doeg. Through them hear me, them imitate not. These two races of men are to-day on the earth. Of these two races singeth this Psalm.

5. But the title of the Psalm hath: At the end, understanding of David, when there came Doeg the Edomite and told Saul, David hath come into the house of Abimelech: whereas we read that he had come into the house of Achimelech. And it may chance that we do not unreasonably suppose, that because of the similarity of a name and the difference of one syllable, or rather of one letter, the titles have been varied. In the manuscripts, however, of the Psalms, when we looked into them, rather Abimelech we have found than Achimelech. And since in another place thou hast a most evident Psalm, intimating not a dissimilarity of name, but an utterly different name;

when, for instance, David changed his face before king Achish, not before king Abimelech, and he sent him away, and he departed: and yet the title of the Psalm is thus written, When he changed his countenance in the presence of Abimelech—the very change of name maketh us the rather intent upon a mystery, lest thou shouldest pursue the quasi-facts of history, and despise the sacred veilings. When examined, the name in that Psalm, which is Abimelech, is found to be interpreted, My father's kingdom. But in what manner did David send away his father's kingdom, and then depart, except in the same manner as Christ sent away the Jews' kingdom, and to the Gentiles passed over? Hence perchance also the Prophetic Spirit, writing the title to this Psalm, willed not to say Achimelech, but Abimelech; because, when David came to his father's kingdom, then he was betrayed; that is, when our Lord Jesus Christ came to the Jews' kingdom established by His Father, whereof He saith, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof and righteousness," then He was betrayed to death, which the word Saul doth signify. But he was not slain, as neither Isaac, though he also was figuring our Lord's passion; nor yet was the figure maintained without blood, either in the former case of the ram, or in the latter of Achimelech the priest. For it behoved not them to be slain, whom then to rise it did not behove: but their life from danger of death, though with shedding of blood, Jesus in delivering, was the rather intimating the resurrection, which in this manner was being figured in them, because it was reserved for the true Lord. More on this point might be said, if in this Sermon we had undertaken to treat of the mysteries of those things that were performed.

6. Now, however, let us hear of those two kinds of men; since indeed from that title we have digressed; it may be somewhat tediously, and perchance in too many words, but yet as the Lord hath permitted. Observe ye two kinds of men; the one of men labouring, the other of those among whom they labour: the one of men thinking of earth, the other of heaven: the one of men weighing down their heart unto the deep, the other of men with Angels their heart conjoining: the one trusting in earthly things, wherein this world aboundeth, the other confiding in heavenly things, which God, Who lieth not, hath promised. But mingled are these kinds of men. We see now the citizen of Jerusalem, citizen of the kingdom of heaven, have some

office upon earth: to wit, one weareth purple, is a Magistrate, is Ædile, is Proconsul, is Emperor, doth direct the earthly republic: but he hath his heart above, if he is a Christian, if he is a believer, if he is godly, if he is despising those things wherein he is, and trusteth in that wherein he is not yet. Of which kind was that holy woman Esther, who, though she was wife of a king, incurred the danger of interceding for her countrymen: and when she was praying before God, where she could not lie, in her prayer said, that her royal ornaments were to her but as the cloth of a menstruous woman. Despair we not then of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven, when we see them engaged in any of Babylon's matters, doing something earthly in republic earthly: nor again let us forthwith congratulate all men that we see doing matters heavenly; because even the sons of pestilence sit sometimes in the seat of Moses, of whom is said, What things they say, do ye: but what things they do, do not: for they say, and do not. Those, amid earthly things, lift up heart unto heaven, these, amid heavenly words, trail heart upon earth. But there will come time of winnowing, when both are to be severed with greatest diligence, in order that no grain may pass over unto the heap of chaff that is to be burned, that not one single straw may pass over to the mass that is to be stored in the barn. So long as then now it is mingled, hear we thence our voice, that is, voice of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven: (for to this we ought to aspire, to bear with evil men here, rather than be borne with by good men:) and let us conjoin ourselves to this voice, both with ear and with tongue, and with heart and work. Which if we shall have done, we are here speaking in those things which we hear. Let us therefore speak first of the evil body of kingdom earthly.

7. Ver. 1. Why doth he glory in malice that is mighty? Observe, my brethren, the glorying of malignity, the glorying of evil men. Where is glorying? Why doth he glory in malice that is mighty? that is, he that in malice is mighty, why doth he glory? There is need that a man be mighty, but in goodness, not in malice. Is it any great thing to glory in malice? To build a house doth belong to few men, any ignorant man you please can pull down. To sow wheat, to dress the crop, to wait until it ripen, and in that fruit on which one has laboured to rejoice, doth belong to few men: with one spark any man you please can burn all the crop. To breed an infant, when born to feed him, to educate, to bring him on to youth's estate, is a great

task: to kill him in one moment of time any one you please is able. Therefore those things which are done for destruction, are most easily done. He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord: he that glorieth, let him glory in goodness. Thou gloriest, because thou art mighty in evil. What art thou about to do, O mighty man, what art thou about to do, boasting thyself much? Thou art about to kill a man: this thing also a scorpion, this also one fever, this also a poisonous fungus can do. To this is thy mightiness reduced, that it be made equal to a poisonous fungus? This therefore do the good citizens of Jerusalem, who not in malice but in goodness glory: firstly, that not in themselves, but in the Lord they glory. Secondly, that those things which make for edification they earnestly do, and do such things as are strong to abide: but things which make for destruction they may do, for the discipline of men advancing, not for the oppression of the innocent. To this mightiness then that earthly body being compared, why may it not hear out of these words, Why doth he glory in malice that is mighty?

8. Ver. 2. In iniquity the whole day upon injustice hath thy tongue thought. “In iniquity the whole day,” that is, in the whole of time, without weariness, without intermission, without cessation. And when thou doest not, thou thinkest; so that when any thing of evil is away from thy hands, from thy heart it is not away; either thou doest an evil thing, or while thou canst not do, thou sayest an evil thing, that is, thou evil-speakest: or when not even this thou canst do, thou willest and thinkest an evil thing. The whole day, then, that is, without intermission. We expect punishment to this man. Is he to himself a small punishment? Thou threatenest him: thou, when thou threatenest him, wilt send him whither? unto evil? Send him away unto himself. In order that thou mayest vent much rage, thou art going to give him into the power of beasts: unto himself he is worse than beasts. For a beast can mangle his body: of himself he cannot leave his heart whole. Within, against himself he doth rage of himself, and dost thou from without seek for stripes? Nay, pray God for him, that he may be set free from himself. Nevertheless in this Psalm, my brethren, there is not a prayer for evil men, or against evil men, but a prophecy of what is to result to evil men. Think not therefore that the Psalm of ill-will saith any thing: for it is said in the spirit of prophecy.

9. There followeth then what? All thy might and all thy thought of iniquity all the day, and meditation of malignity in thy tongue without intermission, hath performed what, done what? (Ver. 3.) As with a sharp razor thou hast done deceit. See what do evil men to Saints, they scrape their hair. What is it that I have said? If there be such citizens of Jerusalem, that hear the voice of their Lord, of their King, saying, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: that hear the voice which but now from the Gospel hath been read, What doth it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and of himself make wreck: they despise all present good things, and above all life itself. And what is Doeg's razor to do to a man on this earth meditating on the kingdom of heaven, and about to be in the kingdom of heaven, having with him God, and about to abide with God? What is that razor to do? Hair it is to scrape, it is to make a man bald. And this belongeth to Christ, Who in the Place of a Scull was crucified. It maketh also the son of Core, which is interpreted baldness. For this hair signifieth a superfluity of things temporal. Which hairs indeed are not made by God superfluously on the body of men, but for a sort of ornament: yet because without feeling they are cut off, they that cleave to the Lord with their heart, so have these earthly things as they have hair. But sometimes even something of good with 'hair' is wrought, when thou breakest bread to the hungry, the poor without roof thou bringest into thy house; if thou shalt have seen one naked, thou coverest him: lastly, the Martyrs themselves also imitating the Lord, blood for the Church shedding, hearing that voice, As Christ laid down His life for us, so also ought we also to lay down for the brethren, in a certain way with their hair did good to us, that is, with those things which that razor can lop off or scrape. But that therefore even with the very hair some good can be done, even that woman a sinner intimated, who, when she had wept over the feet of the Lord, with her hair wiped what with tears she wetted. Signifying what? That when thou shalt have pitied any one, thou oughtest to relieve him also if thou canst. For when thou hast pity, thou sheddest as it were tears: when thou relievest, thou wipest with hair. And if this to any one, how much more to the feet of the Lord? The feet of the Lord are what? The holy Evangelists, whereof is said, How beautiful are the feet of them that tell of peace, that tell of good things! Therefore like a razor let Doeg whet his tongue, let him whet deceit as much as he may: he will take away superfluous temporal things; will he necessary things everlasting?

10. Ver. 4. Thou hast loved malice above benignity. Before thee was benignity; herself thou shouldest have loved. For thou wast not going to expend any thing, nor wast thou going to fetch something to love by a distant voyage. Benignity is before thee, iniquity before thee: compare and choose. But perchance thou hast an eye wherewith thou seest malignity, and hast no eye wherewith thou seest benignity. Woe to the iniquitous heart. What is worse, it doth turn away itself, that it may not see what it is able to see. For what of such hath been said in another place? He would not understand that he might do good. For it is not said, he could not: but he would not, he saith, understand that he might do good, he closed his eyes from present light. And what followeth? Of iniquity he hath meditated in his bed; that is, in the inner secresy of his heart. Some reproach of this kind is heaped upon this Doeg the Edomite, a malignant body, a motion of earth, not abiding, not heavenly. Thou hast loved malignity above benignity. For wilt thou know how an evil man doth see both, and the former he doth rather choose, from the other doth turn himself away? Wherefore doth he cry out when he suffereth any thing unjustly? Wherefore doth he then exaggerate as much as he can the iniquity, and praise benignity, censuring him that hath wrought in him malignity above benignity? Be he then a rule to himself for seeing: out of himself he shall be judged. Moreover, if he do what is written, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; and, Whatsoever good things ye will that men should do unto you, these also do ye do unto them: at home he hath means of knowing, because what on himself he will not have to be done, he ought not to do to another. Thou hast loved malice above benignity. Iniquitously, inordinately, perversely thou wouldest raise water above oil: the water will be sunk, the oil will remain above. Thou wouldest under darkness place a light: the darkness will be put to flight, the light will remain. Above heaven thou wouldest place earth, by its weight the earth will fall into its place. Thou therefore wilt be sunk by loving malice above benignity. For never will malice overcome benignity. Thou hast loved malice above benignity: iniquity more than to speak of equity. Before thee is equity, before thee is iniquity: one tongue thou hast, whither thou wilt thou turnest it: wherefore then rather to iniquity and not to equity? Food of bitterness dost thou not give to thy belly, and food of iniquity dost thou give to thy malignant tongue? As thou choosest whereon to live, so choose what thou mayest speak. Thou preferrest iniquity to equity, and

preferrest malice to benignity; thou indeed preferrest, but above what can ever be but benignity and equity? But thou, by placing thyself in a manner upon those things which it is necessary should go beneath, wilt not make them to be above good things, but thou with them wilt be sunk unto evil things.

11. Ver. 5. Because of this there followeth in the Psalm, Thou hast loved all words of sinking under. Rescue therefore thyself, if thou canst, from sinking under. From shipwreck thou art fleeing, and dost embrace lead! If thou wilt not sink, catch at a plank, be borne on wood, let the Cross carry thee through. But now because thou art a Doeg the Edomite, a ‘motion,’ and ‘of earth,’ thou doest what? Thou hast loved all words of sinking-under, a tongue deceitful. This hath preceded, words of sinking-under have followed a tongue deceitful. What is a tongue deceitful? A minister of guile is a tongue deceitful, of men bearing one thing in heart, another thing from mouth bringing forth. But in these is overthrowing, in these sinking under.

12. Ver. 6. Wherefore God shall destroy thee at the end: though now thou seemest to flourish like grass in the field before the heat of the sun. For, All flesh is grass, and the brightness of man as the bloom of grass: the grass hath withered, and the bloom hath fallen down: but the word of the Lord abideth for everlasting. Behold that to which thou mayest bind thyself, to what ‘abideth for everlasting.’ For if to grass, and to the bloom of grass, thou shalt have bound thyself, since the grass shall wither, and the bloom shall fall down, God shall destroy thee at the end: and if not now, certainly at the end He shall destroy, when that winnowing shall have come, and the heap of chaff from the solid grain shall have been separated. Is not the solid grain for the barns, and the chaff for the fire? Shall not the whole of that Doeg stand at the left hand, when the Lord is to say, Go ye into fire everlasting, which hath been prepared for the devil and his angels? Therefore God shall destroy at the end: shall pluck thee out, and shall remove thee from thy dwelling. Now then this Doeg the Edomite is in a dwelling: But a servant abideth not in the house for ever. Even he worketh something of good, even if not with his doings, at least with the words of God, so that in the Church, When he seeketh his own, he would say, at least, those things which are of Christ.

But He shall remove thee from thy dwelling. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, they have received their reward.” And thy root from the land of the living. Therefore in the land of the living we ought to have root. Be our root there. Out of sight is the root: fruits may be seen, root cannot be seen. Our root is our love, our fruits are our works: it is needful that thy works proceed from love, then is thy root in the land of the living. Then shall be rooted up that Doeg, nor any wise shall he be able there to abide, because neither more deeply there hath he fixed a root: but it shall be with him in like manner as it is with those seeds on the rock, which even if a root they throw out, yet, because moisture they have not, with the risen sun forthwith do wither. But, on the other hand, they that fix a root more deeply, hear from the Apostle what? I bow my knees for you to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye may be in love rooted and grounded. And because there now is root, That ye may be able, he saith, to comprehend what is the height, and breadth, and length, and depth: to know also the supereminent knowledge of the love of Christ, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God. Of such fruits so great a root is worthy, being so single, so budding, for buddings so deeply grounded. But truly this man’s root shall be rooted up from the land of the living.

13. Ver. 7. And the just shall see, and shall fear; and over him they shall laugh. Shall fear when? Shall laugh when? Let us therefore understand, and make a distinction between those two times of fearing and laughing, which have their several uses. For so long as we are in this world, not yet must we laugh, lest hereafter we mourn. We have read what is reserved at the end for this Doeg, we have read, and because we understand and believe, we see but fear. This, therefore, hath been said, The just shall see, and shall fear. So long as we see what will result at the end to evil men, wherefore do we fear? Because the Apostle hath said, In fear and trembling work out your own salvation: because it hath been said in a Psalm, Serve the Lord in fear, and exult unto Him with trembling. Wherefore with fear? “Wherefore let him that thinketh himself to stand, see that he fall not.” Wherefore with trembling? Because he saith in another place: Brethren, if a man shall have been overtaken in any delinquency, ye that are spiritual instruct such sort in the spirit of gentleness; heeding thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Therefore, the just that are now, that live of faith, so see this Doeg, what to

him is to result, that nevertheless they fear also for themselves: for what they are to-day, they know; what to-morrow they are to be, they know not. Now, therefore, The just shall see, and they shall fear. But when shall they laugh? When iniquity shall have passed over; when it shall have flown over; as now to a great degree hath flown over the time uncertain; when shall have been put to flight the darkness of this world, wherein now we walk not but by the lamp of the Scriptures, and therefore fear as though in night. For we walk by prophecy; whereof saith the Apostle Peter, We have a more sure prophetic word, to which giving heed ye do well, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day shine, and the daystar arise in your hearts. So long then as by a lamp we walk, it is needful that with fear we should live. But when shall have come our day, that is, the manifestation of Christ, whereof the same Apostle saith, When Christ shall have appeared, your life, then ye also shall appear with Himself in glory, then the just shall laugh at that Doeg. For then is not the time for relieving: not as now, when thou seest a man unjustly living, thou desirest with him to strive that thou mayest amend him; because he that is unjust, being changed for the better, will be able to be just, in like manner as a just man, being changed for the worse, can be unjust. Therefore, neither for thyself presume, nor for him despair: and give diligence as much as thou canst, if thou art benign, if thou lovest not malice above benignity, that a man walking in evil way and erring thou mayest amend to the good way. But then, when shall have come the time of the Judgment, for amendment place there shall be none, but only for condemnation: and there shall be there penitence, but without fruit, because too late. Wilt thou that it be fruitful? be it not too late. To-day amend thee. Guilty thou art, He is Judge: amend the guilt, and thou shalt rejoice before the Judge. For to-day he exhorteth thee, lest He judge thee: and He that is to be thy Judge, is Himself to-day thy Advocate. Then, therefore, brethren, there remaineth a time for laughing. For that same derision of the unrighteous which is to be on the part of the just, the Book of Wisdom hath pointed out. For in her own, into whose souls wisdom doth transport herself, she is to do what she hath spoken of, I was reproving, and ye did not listen; I was speaking, and to my words ye attended not: and over your destruction I will laugh. This shall be done then by the just against this Doeg. But now let us see and fear, lest we be that which against him we say: and if that we were, that let us cease to be, in order that now fearing, hereafter we may laugh.

14. But what shall they then say that shall laugh? (Ver. 8.) And over him they shall laugh; and shall say, Behold a man that hath not set God for his helper. See ye the body earthly! As much as thou shalt have, so great shalt thou be, is a proverb of covetous men, of grasping men, of men oppressing the innocent, of men seizing upon other men's goods, of men denying things entrusted to their care. Of what sort is this proverb? As much as thou shalt have, so great shalt thou be; that is, as much as thou shalt have had of money, as much as thou shalt have gotten, by so much the more mighty shalt thou be. Behold a man that hath not set God for his helper. But hath trusted in the multitude of his riches. Let not a poor man, one perchance that is evil, say, I am not of this body. For he hath heard the Prophet saying, He hath trusted in the multitude of his riches: forthwith if he is poor, he heedeth his rags, he hath observed near him perchance a rich man among the people of God more richly apparelled, and he saith in his heart, Of this man he speaketh; doth he speak of me? Do not thence except thyself, do not separate thyself, unless thou shalt have seen and feared, in order that thou mayest hereafter laugh. For what doth it profit thee, if thou dost want means, and thou burnest with cupidity? When our Lord Jesus Christ to that rich man that was grieved, and that was departing from Him, had said, Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come follow Me: and great hopelessness for rich men foretold, so that He said, more easily could a camel pass through the eye of a needle, than a rich man enter into the kingdom of Heaven, were not forthwith the disciples grieved, saying with themselves, Who shall be able to be saved? Therefore when they were saying, Who shall be able to be saved? did they think of the few rich men, did there escape them so great a multitude of poor men? Could they not say to themselves, If it is hard, aye an impossible thing, that rich men should enter into the kingdom of heaven, as it is impossible that a camel should enter through the eye of a needle, let all poor men enter into the kingdom of heaven, be the rich alone shut out? For how few are the rich men? But of poor men are thousands innumerable. For not the coats are we to look upon in the kingdom of heaven; but for every one's garment shall be reckoned the effulgence of righteousness: there shall be

therefore poor men equal to Angels of God, clothed with the stoles of immortality, they shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father: what reason is there for us about a few rich men to be concerned, or distressed? This thought not the Apostles; but when the Lord had spoken this, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven: they saying to themselves, Who shall be able to be saved, meant what? Not means, but desires; for they saw even poor men themselves, even if not having money, yet to have covetousness. And that ye may know, that not money in a rich man, but covetousness is condemned, attend to what I say; Thou observest that rich man standing near thee, and perchance in him is money, and is not covetousness; in thee is not money, and is covetousness. A poor man full of sores, full of woe, licked by dogs, having no help, having no morsel, not having perchance a mere garment, was borne by the Angels unto Abraham's bosom. Ho! being a poor man, art thou glad now; for are even sores by thee to be desired? Is not thy patrimony soundness? There is not in this Lazarus the merit of poverty, but that of godliness. For thou seest who was borne up, thou seest not whither he was borne up. Who was borne up by Angels? A poor man, full of woe, full of sores. Whither was he borne up? Unto Abraham's bosom. Read the Scriptures, and thou shalt find Abraham to have been a rich man. In order that thou mayest know, that not riches are blamed; Abraham had much gold, silver, cattle, household, was a rich man, and unto his bosom Lazarus, a poor man, was borne up. Unto bosom of rich man, poor man: are not rather both unto God rich men, both in cupidity poor men?

15. What then in this Doeg doth the Scripture blame? It hath not said, Behold a man that was rich; but, Behold a man that hath not set God for his Helper, but hath trusted in the multitude of his riches. Not because he hath had riches, but because in them he hath trusted, and in God hath not trusted, therefore he is condemned, therefore is punished, therefore is moved from his dwelling, like that 'motion of earth,' as dust which the wind driveth from the face of earth, therefore is rooted out the root of him from the land of the living. Are the rich men like this, of whom Paul speaketh; Charge the rich men of this world not proudly to be wise, as Doeg, nor to trust in uncertainty of riches, as himself hath 'trusted in the multitude of his riches:'

but in the living God; not in the same manner as he did, That hath not set God for his Helper? Lastly, for them he doth charge what? Be they rich in good works, readily distribute, communicate. And what if they shall readily have distributed, if they shall have communicated to him that hath not? Shall they enter through the eye of a needle? They shall enter, evidently: for also for them already He hath Himself a camel entered. For He hath Himself first entered, Whom, like a camel, no man with the burden of the Passion had loaded, except Himself had laid Him down unto the earth. Because He hath also Himself said this, That which to men is impossible, to God is an easy thing. Be therefore this Doeg condemned, let just men fear for him now, let just men laugh over him hereafter. For deservedly is he condemned, that hath not set God for his helper; as thou dost, who perchance hast money, but on God art relying, not on money. And hath trusted in the multitude of his riches: hath been made like to them, who when they said, Blessed the people to whom these things are; that is, these things of earth, there rejoined forthwith he that derideth this Doeg, Blessed the people of whom is the Lord for their own God. For those things wherein they called the people blessed, the Psalm enumerateth. For they spake like strange children, like that Doeg the Edomite, that is, one earthly: Their mouth hath spoken vanity, their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. Whose own sons are as young plants firmly rooted in their youth: their daughters adorned, and decked as the similitude of a temple: their garners full, breaking forth from this unto this: their sheep fruitful, multiplying in their goings forth; their oxen fat; there is no falling of enclosure, nor going forth, nor cry in their streets. As it were great felicity they seem to have of earthly peace. But he that is earthly, is also a motion, that is, as dust which the wind driveth from the face of earth. Lastly, what in them is censured? Not that they have had these things; for even good men have these things; but what? To this attend: lest every where ye should censure rich men; and again, lest ye should rely on poverty and on indigence. For if we must not rely on riches, how much more we must not rely on poverty, but on the living God? Wherein then are these men noted? Because blessed they called the people to whom these things are. Therefore are they strange children, therefore their mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. But thou, what? Blessed the people of whom is the Lord their own God.

16. Therefore that man having been condemned, that hath trusted in the multitude of his riches, and hath prevailed in his vanity: for what more vain, that he that thinketh coin more to avail than God? Therefore that man having been condemned that said, blessed of the people to whom these things are: thou that sayest, Blessed the people of whom is the Lord their own God, dost think of thyself what? dost hope for thyself what? But I; now at length hear that body; (ver. 9.) But I am like an olive, fruit-bearing in the house of God. Not one man speaketh, but that olive fruit-bearing, whence have been pruned the proud branches, and the humble wild olive graffed in. Like an olive, fruit-bearing in the house of God, I have trusted in the mercy of God. He did what? In the multitude of his riches: therefore his root shall be plucked out from the land of the living. But I, because like an olive, fruit-bearing in the house of God, the root whereof is nourished, is not rooted out, have trusted in the mercy of God. But perchance now? For even herein men err sometimes. God indeed they worship, and are not now like to that Doeg: but though on God they rely, it is for temporal things nevertheless; so that they say to themselves, I worship my God, who will make me rich upon earth, who to me will give sons, who to me will give a wife. Such things indeed giveth none but God, but God would not have Himself for the sake of such things to be loved. For to this end oftentimes those things He giveth even to evil men, in order that some other thing good men of Him may learn to seek. In what manner then sayest thou, I have trusted in the mercy of God? Perchance for obtaining temporal things? Nay but, For everlasting and world without end. The expression, For everlasting, he willed to repeat by adding, world without end, in order that by there repeating he might affirm how rooted he was in the love of the kingdom of heaven, and in the hope of everlasting felicity.

17. Ver. 9. I will confess to Thee for ever, because Thou hast done. Hast done what? Doeg Thou hast condemned, David Thou hast crowned. I will confess to Thee for ever, because Thou hast done. Great confession, Because Thou hast done! Hast done what? except these very things which above have been spoken of, that like an olive fruit-bearing in the house of God, I should trust in the mercy of God for everlasting and world without end? Thou hast done: an ungodly man cannot justify himself. But who is He that justifieth? Believing, he saith, on Him that justifieth the ungodly. For

what hast thou which thou hast not received? But if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hast not received, as if of thyself thou hast? Be it far from me that I should so glory, saith he, that is opposed against Doeg, that beareth with Doeg upon earth, until he remove from his dwelling, and be rooted up from the land of the living. I glory not as if I have not received, but in God I glory. And I will confess to Thee because Thou hast done, that is, because Thou hast done not according to my merits, but according to Thy mercy. But I have done what? If thou recollectest, Before, I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. But thou, what hast thou done? "But mercy I have obtained, because ignorant I did it." I will confess to thee for ever, because Thou hast done.

18. And I will look for Thy name, for it is pleasant. Bitter is the world, but Thy name is pleasant. Even if certain sweet things are in the world, yet with bitterness they are digested. Thy name is preferred, not only for greatness but also for pleasantness. For unjust men have told to me their delights, but it is not as Thy law, O Lord. For if there were nothing sweet to the Martyrs, they would not have suffered with equanimity so great bitterness of tribulations. Their bitterness by any one was experienced, their sweetness easily could no one taste. The name of God therefore is pleasant to men loving God above all pleasantnesses. I will look for Thy name, for it is pleasant. And to what dost Thou prove that it is pleasant? Give me a palate to which it is pleasant. Praise honey as much as thou art able, exaggerate the sweetness thereof with what words thou shalt have power: a man knowing not what honey is, unless he shall have tasted, what thou sayest knoweth not. Therefore the rather to the proof the Psalm inviting thee saith what? Taste and see that sweet is the Lord. Taste thou wilt not, and thou sayest, Is it pleasant? What is pleasant? If thou hast tasted, in thy fruit be it found, not in words alone, as it were only in leaves, lest by the curse of the Lord, to wither like that fig-tree thou shouldest deserve. Taste, he saith, and see, that sweet is the Lord. Taste and see: then ye shall see, if ye shall have tasted. But to a man not tasting, how provest thou? By praising the pleasantness of the name of God, whatsoever things thou shalt have said are words: something else is taste. The words of His praise there hear even the ungodly, but none taste how sweet it is, but the Saints. Further, a man discerning the sweetness of the name of God, and wishing to unfold and

wishing to shew the same, and not finding persons to whom he may unfold it; for to the Saints there is no need that he shew it, because they even of themselves taste and know, but the ungodly cannot discern what they will not taste: doth, I say, what, because of the sweetness of the name of God? He hath borne him forthwith away from the crowds of the ungodly. And I will look, he saith, for Thy name, for it is pleasant, in the sight of Thy Saints. Pleasant is Thy name, but not in the sight of the ungodly? I know how sweet a thing it is, but it is to them that have tasted.

PSALM 53

The present Volume carries the Work down to the end of Ps. 75, completing half the number of the Psalms. The whole of it, as well as a few Psalms at the end of the former and the beginning of the following volume, is translated by T. Scratton, Esq. M. A. of Ch. Ch. Oxford. A considerable portion of the Discourses on the remaining Psalms has been already translated, and it is hoped that the whole may be brought out at intervals not much exceeding half a year for each volume.

C. M.

Eve of St. John Baptist.

PSALM 53

Exposition

Of this Psalm we undertake to treat with you, as far as the Lord supplieth us. A brother biddeth us that we may have the will, and prayeth that we may have the power. If any thing in haste perchance I shall have passed over, He will supply it in you, that even to us deigneth to give what we shall be enabled to say. The title of it is: At the end, for Maeleth, understanding to David himself. For Maeleth, as we find in interpretations of Hebrew names, seemeth to say, For one travailing, or in pain. But who there is in this world that travaileth and is in pain, the faithful acknowledge, because thereof they are. Christ here travaileth, Christ here is in pain: the Head is above, the members below. For one not travailing nor in pain would not say, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Him, with whom when persecuting He was travailing, being converted, He made to travail. For he also was himself afterwards enlightened, and grafted on those members which he used to persecute; being pregnant with the same love, he said, My little children, of whom again I travail, until Christ be formed in you. For the members therefore of Christ, for His Body which is the Church, for that same One Man, that is, for that very unity, whereof the Head is above, this Psalm is sung. But this man groaneth and travaileth and is in pain. Wherefore, or amid whom, except that he hath received and learned from His Head, Who saith, Iniquity shall abound, and the love of many shall wax cold? But if iniquity shall abound, and the love of many shall wax cold, who shall remain to travail? It followeth, He that shall have persevered unto the end, the same shall be saved. How would it be a great thing to persevere, unless amid molestations, and temptations, and distractions, and scandals, men had to persevere? For no one is bid to endure good things. But forasmuch as for such an one it is said, and forasmuch as for such an one it is sung, let us see what it is. For his sake are rebuked here the men, amid whom he groaneth, amid whom he is in pain, and the consolation of one in pain and travail at the end of the Psalm is drawn forth and expressed. Who are they, then, amid whom we travail and groan, if in the Body of Christ we are, if under Him, the Head, we live, if amongst His members we are counted? Who they are, hear ye.

2. Ver. 1. The unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God. Such sort is it of men, amid whom is pained and groaneth the Body of Christ. If such is this sort of men, of not many do we travail; as far as seemeth to occur to our thoughts, very few there are; and a difficult thing it is to meet with a man that saith in his heart, There is no God; nevertheless, so few there are, that, fearing amid the many to say this, in their heart they say it, for that with mouth to say it they dare not. Not much then is that which we are bid to endure, hardly is it found: uncommon is that sort of men that say in their heart, There is no God. But, if it be examined in another sense, is not that found to be in more men, which we supposed to be in men few and uncommon, and almost in none? Let them come forth into the midst that live evil lives, let us look into the doings of profligate, daring, and wicked men, of whom there is a great multitude; who foster day by day their sins, who, their acts having been changed into habit, have even lost sense of shame: this is so great a multitude of men, that the Body of Christ, set amid them, scarce dareth to censure that which it is not constrained to commit, and deemeth it a great matter for itself that the integrity of innocence be preserved in not doing that which now, by habit, either it doth not dare to blame, or if it shall have dared, more readily there breaketh out the censure and recrimination of them that live evil lives, than the free voice of them that live good lives. And those men are such as say in their heart, There is no God. Such men I am confuting. Whence confuting? That their doings please God, they judge. He doth not therefore affirm, ‘Some say,’ but, ‘The unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God.’ Which men do so far believe there is a God, that the same God they judge with what they do to be pleased. But if thou being wise dost perceive, how the unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God, if thou give heed, if thou understand, if thou examine; he that thinketh that evil doings please God, Him he doth not think to be God. For if God is, just He is; if just He is, injustice displeaseth Him, iniquity displeaseth. But thou, when thou thinkest that iniquity pleaseth Him, dost deny God. For if God is one Whom iniquity displeaseth, but to thee God seemeth not to be one Whom iniquity displeaseth, and there is no God but one Whom iniquity displeaseth, when thou sayest in thy

heart, God doth countenance my iniquities, nothing else thou sayest than, There is no God.

3. Let us advert also to that sense, which concerning Christ our Lord Himself, our Head Himself, doth present itself. For when Himself in form of a servant appeared on earth, they that crucified Him said, He is not God. Because Son of God He was, truly God He was. But they that are corrupted and have become abominable said what? He is not God: let us slay Him, He is not God. Thou hast the voice of these very men in the book of Wisdom. For after there had gone before the verse, The unwise man hath said in his heart, There is no God; as if reasons were required why the unwise man could say this, he hath subjoined, (ver. 2.) Corrupted they are, and abominable have become in their iniquities. Hear ye those corrupted men. For they have said with themselves, not rightly thinking: corruption beginneth with evil belief, thence it proceedeth to depraved morals, thence to the most flagrant iniquities, these are the grades. But what with themselves said they, thinking not rightly? A small thing and with tediousness is our life. From this evil belief followeth that which also the Apostle hath spoken of, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. But in the former passage more diffusely luxury itself is described: Let us crown us with roses, before they be withered; in every place let us leave the tokens of our gladness. After the more diffuse description of that luxury, what followeth? Let us slay the poor just man: this is therefore saying, He is not God. Soft words they seemed but now to say: Let us crown us with roses, before they be withered. What more delicate, what more soft? Wouldest thou expect, out of this softness, Crosses, swords? Wonder not, soft are even the roots of brambles; if any one handle them, he is not pricked: but that wherewith thou shalt be pricked from thence hath birth. Corrupted, therefore, are those men, and abominable have become in their iniquities. The unwise man hath said in his heart, He is not God. “If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross.” Behold them openly saying, He is not God.

4. But in what manner amid them groaneth the Body of Christ? There have groaned amid them Apostles that then were, and disciples of Christ: to us in what respect do they belong? In what manner amid them do we travail? Still

there are that say, Christ is not God. This say the heathens that have remained; this very thing say the Jews themselves, who for the testimony of their confusion every where have been diffused: this say also many heretics. For even the Arians have said, He is not God: Eunomians have said, He is not God. Add to this, brethren, that even they of whom a little before I have spoken, who live evil lives, do nothing else say than, He is not God. For when we say to them, that Christ is to come a Judge to the Judgment, which thing say the Scriptures that deceive not; yet they rather lending an ear to the Serpent suggesting, Thou shalt not die the death, which he had said in Paradise, contrary to the truth of God determining and saying, Thou shalt die the death; so do evil things, that they say to themselves, Christ shall come, and shall give indulgence to all. So then lying is He that hath said, He shall sever unrighteous men to the left hand, shall sever just men to the right hand: to just men shall say, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which hath been prepared for you from the foundation of the world: to ungodly men shall say, Go ye into fire everlasting, which hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. How then to all shall He give indulgence? How shall He no one condemn? Therefore He lieth. This is to say, He is not God. See then that thou perchance lie not. For thou art a man, He God: for God is true, but every man a liar. But what say I of these men, O Body of Christ? Sever thyself from them meanwhile in heart and life, neither imitate, nor keep company, nor assent, nor approve them: but more, even rebuke them. For why dost thou give heed to them that say these words? Corrupted they are, and abominable have become in their iniquities: there is not one that doeth good.

5. Ver. 3. The Lord from Heaven hath looked forth upon the sons of men, that He might see if there is one understanding and seeking after God. What is this? Corrupted they are, and abominable have become, all these that say, There is no God? And what? Did it escape God, that they were become such? Or indeed to us would their inward thought be opened, except by Him it were told? If then He understood, if then He knew, what is this which hath been said, that, From Heaven He hath looked forth upon the sons of men, that He might see if there is one understanding and seeking after God. For of one inquiring the words are, of one not knowing. God from Heaven hath looked forth upon the sons of men, that He might see if

there is one understanding or seeking after God. And as though He had found what He sought by looking upon, and by looking down from Heaven, He giveth sentence: (ver. 4.) All men have gone aside, together useless they have become: there is not one that doeth good, not so much as one. Two questions arise somewhat difficult: for if God looketh out from Heaven, in order that He may see if there is one understanding or seeking after God; there stealeth upon an unwise man the thought, that God knoweth not all things. This is one question: what is the other? If there is not one that doeth good, is not so much as one; who is he that travaileth amid bad men? The former question then is solved as followeth; ofttimes the Scripture speaketh in such manner, that what by the gift of God a creature doth, God is said to do: so that for instance, when thou hast pity upon a poor man, because by the gift of God thou art acting, God hath pity: when thou acknowledgest who thou art, because by aid of Him giving light thou art acting, if thou art such an one as to say, Thou shalt light my lamp, O Lord, my God, Thou shalt lighten my darkness; that which by aid of Him giving and doing thou hast acknowledged, He doth acknowledge. For whence is, The Lord your God proveth you, that He may know if ye love Him? What is, That He may know? That by His gift He may make you know. So then here also, God from heaven hath looked forth upon the sons of men, that He might see if there is one understanding or seeking after God. Be He present Himself, and grant us that what He hath made our heart to conceive, He may also make it to bring forth. The Apostle saith, But we not the spirit of this world have received, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know what things by God have been given to us. By this Spirit then whereby we understand what things by God have been given to us, we distinguish between ourselves and them to whom these things have not been given, and from ourselves we understand them. For if we perceive that we could not have had any good thing except by the giving and bestowing of Him from Whom are all good things, at the same time we see that no such thing can they have to whom God hath not given. This distinguishing in us is of the Spirit of God; and by the means whereby we see this, God seeth; because this thing God doeth, that we should see. For hence has been said the following also, For the Spirit searcheth all things, even the depth of God; not because He searcheth That knoweth all things, but because to thee hath been given the Spirit, which maketh thee also to search: and that which by

His own gift thou doest, He is said to do; because without Him thou wouldest not do it: therefore God is said to do, when thou doest. By the gift of the Spirit of sons, they to whom hath been given the Spirit of God look out upon the sons of men, that they may see if there is one understanding or seeking after God: but because that by the gift of God and by the Spirit of God they do it, this God is said to do; as it were to look forth and see. But wherefore From heaven, if this is done by men? Because saith the Apostle, But our conversation is in the heavens. For whence doest thou this that thou mayest see, whence lookest forth that thou mayest perceive? Is it not in heart? If in heart thou doest this, Christian, see whether it is above thou hast thy heart. If above thou hast thy heart, from heaven upon earth thou art looking forth. And because this by the gift of God thou doest, God from heaven is looking forth upon the sons of men. The former question then, according to our measure, thus hath been solved.

6. What is that which looking forth we acknowledge? What is that which looking forth God acknowledgeth? What (because here He giveth it) doth He acknowledge? Hear what it is; that All have gone aside, together useless they have become: there is not one that doeth good, there is not so much as one. What then is that other question, but the same whereof a little before I have made mention? If, There is not one that doeth good, is not so much as one, no one remaineth to groan amid evil men. Stay, saith the Lord, do not hastily give judgment. I have given to men to do well; but of Me, He saith, not of themselves: for of themselves evil they are: sons of men they are, when they do evil; when well, My sons. For this thing God doth, out of sons of men He maketh sons of God: because out of Son of God He hath made Son of Man. See what this participation is: there hath been promised to us a participation of Divinity: He lieth that hath promised, if He is not first made partaker of mortality. For the Son of God hath been made partaker of mortality, in order that mortal man may be made partaker of divinity. He that hath promised that His good is to be shared with thee, first with thee hath shared thy evil: He that to thee hath promised divinity, sheweth in thee love. Therefore take away that men are sons of God, there remaineth that they are sons of men: There is none that doeth good, is not so much as one.

7. Ver. 4. Shall not all know that work iniquity, that devour My people for the food of bread? Shall they not know? Shall it not to them be shewn? Say, menace, speak by the voice of one travailing and grieving. For Thy people is devoured for the food of bread. There is therefore here a people of God that is being devoured. Nay, There is not one that doeth good, there is not so much as one. We reply by the rule above. But this people that is devoured, this people that suffereth evil men, this that groaneth and travaileth amid evil men, now out of sons of men have been made sons of God: therefore are they devoured. For, The counsel of the needy man thou hast confounded, because the Lord is his hope. For ofttimes, in order that the people of God may be devoured, this very thing in it is despised, that it is the people of God. I will pillage, he saith, and despoil; if he is a Christian, what will he do to me? There speaketh for him He that speaketh for one travailing, and He doth menace them that are devouring, saying, Shall not all know, that work iniquity? For even he that was seeing a thief and was consenting with him, and with the adulterers was setting his portion, sitting against his brother was detracting, and against his mother’s son was setting a stumbling-block, hath said in his heart, There is no God. Therefore this to him is said, These things thou hast done, and I kept silence: thou hast imagined iniquity, that I shall be like thee: that is, I shall not be God, if I shall be like thee. But what followeth? I will convince thee, and will set thee before thy face. So here also, I will convince thee, and set thee before thy face. Thou wilt not now know so as thou shouldest be displeasing to thyself, thou shalt know so as thou mayest mourn. For God cannot but shew to the unrighteous their iniquity. If He is not to shew, who will they be that are to say, What hath profited us pride, and what hath boasting of riches bestowed upon us? For then shall they know, that now will not know. Shall not all know, that work iniquity, that devour My people for the food of bread? Why hath He added, for the food of bread? As it were as bread, they eat My people. For all other things which we eat, we can eat now these, now those; not always this vegetable, not always this flesh, not always these apples: but always bread. What is then, Devour My people for the food of bread? Without intermission, without cessation they devour, That devour My people for the food of bread.

8. On God they have not called. He is comforting the man that groaneth, and chiefly by an admonition, lest by imitating evil men, who ofttimes prosper, they delight in evil doing. There is kept for thee that which to thee hath been promised: their hope is present, thine is future, but theirs is transient, thine sure; theirs false, thine true. For they, Upon God have not called. Do not daily such men ask of God? They do not ask of God. Give heed, if I am able to say this by the aid of God Himself. God gratuitously will have Himself to be worshipped, gratuitously will have Himself to be loved, that is chastely to be loved; not Himself to be loved for the reason that He giveth any thing besides Himself, but because He giveth Himself. He then that calleth upon God in order that He may be made rich, on God doth not call: for upon that He calleth which to himself he willeth to come. For what is to "call upon" but to call unto himself? Unto himself therefore to call, is the meaning of to call upon. For when thou sayest, O God, give me riches: thou wilt not that God Himself should come to thee, but wilt that riches should come to thee. What thou wilt to thee should come, upon the same thou callest. But if upon God thou wast calling, to thee He would Himself come, Himself would be thy riches. But now thou wouldest have coffer full, and conscience void: God filleth not coffer but breast. What do outward riches profit thee, if inward need presseth thee? Therefore those men that for the sake of worldly comforts, that for the sake of earthly good things, that for the sake of present life and earthly felicity, call upon God, do not call upon God.

9. For this reason what followeth concerning them? (Ver. 5.) There have they feared with fear, where there was no fear. For is there fear, if a man lose riches? There is no fear there, and yet in that case men are afraid. But if a man lose wisdom, truly there is fear, and in that case he is not afraid. Hear, distinguish, understand such men: there is entrusted to some one or other a bag, he will not give it back, for his own he counteth it, he thinketh not that it can be demanded back, already for his own he will keep it, he refuseth to give it back. Let him observe what he feareth to lose, and what he will not have: into jeopardy come money and fidelity; whichever is the more valuable, therein the heavier loss is to be feared. But thou, that thou mayest keep gold, dost lose fidelity: with heavier loss thou art stricken, and thou of thy gain hast rejoiced: in that case thou hast feared with fear, where

was no fear: give back the money: too little I say, ‘give back;’ lose the money, lest thou lose fidelity. Thou hast feared to give back money, and hast willed to lose fidelity. The Martyrs took not away property of other persons, but even their own they despised that they might not lose fidelity: and it was too little to lose money, when they were proscribed; they took also their life when they suffered: they lost life, in order that unto everlasting life they might find it. Therefore there they feared, where they ought to have been afraid. But they that of Christ have said, He is not God, have there feared where was no fear. For they said, If we shall have let Him go, there will come the Romans, and will take away from us both place and kingdom. O folly and imprudence saying in its heart, He is not God! Thou hast feared to lose earth, thou hast lost Heaven: thou hast feared lest there should come the Romans, and take away from thee place and kingdom! Could they take away from thee God? What then remaineth? what but that thou confess, that thou hast willed to keep, and by keeping ill hast lost? For thou hast lost both place and nation by slaying Christ. For ye did will rather to slay Christ, than to lose place; and ye have lost place, and nation, and Christ. In fearing, they have slain Christ: but wherefore this? For God hath scattered the bones of them that please men. Willing to please men, they feared to lose their place. But Christ Himself, of Whom they said, He is not God, willed rather to displease such men, as they were: sons of men, not sons of God, He willed rather to displease. Thence were scattered their bones, His bones no one hath broken. They were confounded, for God hath despised them. In very deed, brethren, as far as regardeth them, great confusion hath come to them. In the place where they crucified the Lord, Whom for this cause they crucified, that they might not lose both place and nation, the Jews are not. God, therefore, hath despised them: and yet in despising He warned them to be converted. Let them now confess Christ, and say, He is God, of Whom they said, ‘He is not God.’ Let them return to the inheritance of their fathers, to the inheritance of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, let them possess with these very persons life eternal: though they have lost life temporal. Wherefore this? Because out of sons of men have been made sons of God. For so long as they remain, and will not, there is not one that doeth good, there is not so much as one. They were confounded, for God hath despised them. And as though to these very persons He were turned, He saith, (ver. 6.) Who shall give out of Sion salvation to Israel? O ye fools, ye revile, insult, buffet, besmear with spittings, with thorns ye crown, upon the Cross ye lift up; whom? Who shall give out of Sion salvation to Israel? Shall not That Same of Whom ye have said, ‘He is not God?’ In God’s turning away the captivity of His people. For there turneth away the captivity of His people, no one but He that hath willed to be a captive in your own hands. But what men shall understand this thing? Jacob shall exult, and Israel shall rejoice. Israel; the true Jacob, and the true Israel, that younger, to whom the elder was servant, shall himself exult, for he shall himself understand.

PSALM 54

Exposition

1. The title of this Psalm hath fruit in the prolixity thereof, if it be understood: and because the Psalm is short, let us make up by tarrying over the title, our not having to tarry over the Psalm. For upon this dependeth every verse which is sung. If any one, therefore, observe that which on the front of the house is fixed, secure he will enter; and, when he shall have entered, he will not err. For this on the post itself is prominently marked, namely, in what manner within he may not be in error. The title thereof standeth thus: At the end, in hymns, understanding to David himself, when there came the Ziphites, and said to Saul, Behold, is not David hidden with us? That Saul was persecutor of the holy man David, very well we know: that Saul was bearing the figure of a temporal kingdom, not to life but to death belonging, this also to your Love we remember to have imparted. And also that David himself was bearing the figure of Christ, or of the Body of Christ, ye ought both to know and to call to mind, ye that have already learned. What then of the Ziphites? There was a certain village, Ziph, whereof the inhabitants were Ziphites, in whose country David had hidden himself, when Saul would find and slay him. These Ziphites then, when they had learned this, betrayed him to the king his persecutor, saying, Behold, is not David hidden with us? Of no good to them indeed was their betrayal, and to David himself of no harm. For their evil disposition was shewn: but Saul not even after their betrayal could seize David; but rather in a certain cave in that very country, when into his hands Saul had been given to slay, David spared him, and that which he had in his power he did not. But the other was seeking to do that which he had not in his power. Let them that have been Ziphites take heed: let us see those whom to us the Psalm presenteth to be understood by the occasion of those same men.

2. If we inquire then by what word is translated Ziphites, we find, Men flourishing. Flourishing then were certain enemies to holy David, flourishing before him hiding. We may find them in mankind, if we are

willing to understand the Psalm. Let us find here at first David hiding, and we shall find his adversaries flourishing. Observe David hiding: For ye are dead, saith the Apostle to the members of Christ, and your life is hid with Christ in God. These men, therefore, that are hiding, when shall they be flourishing? When Christ, he saith, your life, shall have appeared, then ye also with Him shall appear in glory. When these men shall be flourishing, then shall be those Ziphites withering. For observe to what flower their glory is compared: All flesh is grass, and the honour of flesh as the flower of grass. What is the end? The grass hath withered, and the flower hath fallen off. Where then shall be David? See what followeth: But the Word of the Lord abideth for ever. These therefore are two sorts of men, which ye ought both to distinguish and to choose one of them. For what doth it profit thee to know, if thou art slow to choose? And indeed now the power of choosing lieth near thee: there shall come a time when thou shalt no more have the power of choosing, when no longer God shall defer the sentence of judgment. For who are these flourishing Ziphites, except that body of Doeg the Edomite; of whom already we have spoken to your Love a few days since: of whom it was said, Behold a man that hath not set God for his helper, but hath trusted in the multitude of his riches, and hath prevailed in his vanity. These are the flourishing sons of the world, of whom but now ye have heard from the Gospel, that In their own generation they are more crafty than the children of light. For they too seem to look forward unto the future, whereto they know not whether they may come. Ye have heard what that steward did to his master, making for himself a store out of his master’s property, and bestowing it upon his debtors, in order that when he should be removed from his stewardship, he might be received by them. And though he defrauded his master, yet his master praised his wit, not heeding his own loss, but his ingenuity. How much more ought we, Himself our Lord Jesus Christ admonishing, to make to ourselves friends of the Mammon of iniquity? For Mammon is interpreted riches. But our riches are in that place, where is our house eternal in the heavens. Again, money temporal they call riches, who except for a time cannot flourish, nor for everlasting from these do will to make to themselves friends, because true riches they know not. These riches then to be riches iniquity alone doth count, flourishing as it does for a time like grass. These are the Ziphites, enemies of David, flourishing in the world.

3. These men sometimes are observed of the weak sons of light, and their feet totter, when they have seen evil men in felicity to flourish, and they say to themselves, ‘Of what profit to me is innocence? What doth it advantage me that I serve God, that I keep His commandments, that I oppress no one, from no one plunder any thing, hurt no one, that what I can I bestow? behold, all these things I do, and they flourish, I toil.’ But why! Wouldest thou also wish to be a Ziphite? They flourish in the world, wither in judgment, and after withering, into fire everlasting shall be cast: wouldest thou also choose this? Art thou ignorant of what He hath promised thee, Who to thee hath come, what in Himself here He displayed? If the flower of the Ziphites were to be desired, would not Himself thy Lord also in this world have flourished? Or indeed was there wanting to Him the power to flourish? Nay but here He chose rather amid the Ziphites to hide, and to say to Pontius Pilate, as if to one being himself also a flower of the Ziphites, and in suspicion about His kingdom, My kingdom is not of this world. Therefore here He was hidden: and all good men are hidden here, because their good is within, it is concealed, in the heart it is, where is faith, where charity, where hope, where their treasure is. Do these good things appear in the world? Both these good things are hidden, and the reward of these good things is hidden. But truly the dignity of the world is white, in what manner? It is bright for a time; will it alway be bright? It is grass in the winter, until the summer it is green. Let not that thing therefore be done in the mind, which in another Psalm we light on. For there a certain one confesseth that he almost fell himself, and that his steps slipped walking in the way of God, while he was beholding the flower, as it were, and felicity of the ungodly: and after that he understood what God was reserving for the wicked at the last, and what He that cannot deceive was promising to the just toiling, returning thanks for this understanding, he saith, How good is the God of Israel to the right in heart! Wherefore dost thou say this? But my own feet, he saith, were almost moved. For what reason? Because I was jealous toward sinners, beholding the peace of sinners. But his steps were strengthened after that he understood at the last. For that which in the same Psalm a little after he saith, On this account labour is before me, is this; a great question to me hath arisen in my heart, wherefore men do evil, and in the world flourish, but many men do well, and in this world do labour. While this great question was before my eyes, and laborious to be

investigated; there is labour, he saith, before me: until I enter into the Sanctuary of God, and understand at the last things. What are these last things? What but those things which we know already in the Gospel to have been foretold? For when the Son of Man shall be come, there shall be gathered before Him all nations, and He shall separate them, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats; the sheep He shall set on the right hand, the goats on the left. Behold then shall these Ziphites be separated: flame followeth separation. Where is the flower of them that now on the left hand shall stand? Shall they not then groan? shall they not then be racked with a too late penitence, and say, Of what profit to us hath been pride, and what hath boasting of riches bestowed upon us? All these things have passed away like a shadow, O ye Ziphites, on the left hand standing, too late it repenteth you in the shadow to have flourished. Wherefore did ye not acknowledge David, whose hiding among you ye betrayed? For then if ye had been amended, that sorrow would not have been without fruit. For there is a sorrow with fruit, there is one without fruit: a sorrow with fruit is now when thyself thou accusest, when in thyself thou censurest thy evil customs, when them censured thou dost persecute, persecuted thou shuttest them out, and, after these have been shut out, thou art changed, putting off from thyself the old man, and putting on the new, choosing rather the reproach of Christ than the flower of the Ziphites. Moreover, if while holding thy good in secret, and hiding amid Ziphites, holding in secret also the promise of thy reward, there shall have chanced to thee any high place of the world, be not lifted up: for if lifted up thou shalt have been, thou wilt fall unto the flower of the Ziphites. For so it was with a certain holy woman, Esther, amid the then people of the Jews: though she was the wife of a foreign king, she so shared the danger of her countrymen, that she interceded with the king for her countrymen: she began to pray, and in the very prayer she confessed that all those royal deckings were to her but as the cloth of a menstruous woman. If these things women can do, cannot men? And if these things a Jewish woman could do, shall not the Christian Church be able? This therefore I would say to your Love. If riches flow in, set not your heart upon them. Though they abound, and there follow thee the prosperity of the world, trust not thou in the sea, though it smile on thee. If riches flow in, if they abound, trample them, and depend upon thy God. For when them beneath thee thou shalt have put, and on Him shalt have depended, when they shall have been taken away thou wilt not fall. Let not perchance by thy thought evil and unchristian, that be done in thee which is spoken of in another Psalm, when there had been made mention of the flower of these Ziphites. Too deep, he saith, have become Thy thoughts. I say, it is said, Too deep have become Thy thoughts: a man unwise shall not know, and a fool shall not understand, these things. Shall not understand what? When there shall rise up sinners like grass, and all they that work iniquity shall have beheld, that they perish for ever and ever. They have been delighted with the flower of evil men: they have said with themselves, Behold evil men flourish, I suppose evil men God doth love; and being delighted with the temporal flower of iniquity, they turned themselves to iniquity, so that they perished. Not for a time, as they flourish, but for ever and ever. Whence this? Because a man unwise shall not know, and a fool shall not understand, these things; not entering into the Sanctuary of God, in order to ‘understand at the last things.’ And because somewhat difficult is this understanding, from thence beginneth this Psalm, namely, how David was hiding among the Ziphites, and was not delighted with the flower of the Ziphites; but chose rather amid them humility, in order that he might have with God hidden glory. What then to him is there being ascribed in this title? At the end, in hymns: that is, in praises. In what praises? The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done: be the name of the Lord blessed. Withered in a manner did he seem, in the loss of all his substance? God forbid! Leaves had fallen; the root was living. Therefore, At the end in hymns. What is “Understanding to David himself?” Understanding against this, “A man unwise shall not know, and a fool shall not understand these things.” Understanding to David himself, when there came the Ziphites, and said to Saul, Behold, is not David hidden with us? And be he hidden with you, so long as he flourish not like you. Hear, therefore, the voice of him.

4. Ver. 1. O God, in Thy name make me safe, and in Thy virtue judge me Let the Church say this, hiding amid the Ziphites. Let the body Christian say this, keeping secret the good of its morals, expecting in secret the reward of its merits, let it say this: O God, in Thy name make me safe, and in Thy virtue judge me. Thou hast come, O Christ, humble Thou hast appeared, despised Thou hast been, scourged hast been, crucified hast been,

slain hast been; but, on the third day hast risen, on the fortieth day into Heaven hast ascended: Thou sittest at the right hand of the Father, and no one seeth: Thy Spirit thence Thou hast sent, Which men that were worthy have received; fulfilled with Thy love, the praise of that very humility of Thine throughout the world and nations they have preached: Thy name I see to excel among mankind, but nevertheless as weak to us hast Thou been preached. For not even did that Teacher of the Gentiles say, that among us he knew any thing, Save Christ Jesus, and Him crucified; in order that of Him we might choose the reproach, rather than the glory of the flourishing Ziphites. Nevertheless, of Him he saith what? Although He died of weakness, yet He liveth of the power of God. He came then that He might die of weakness, He is to come that He may judge in the power of God: but through the weakness of the Cross His name hath been illustrious. Whosoever shall not have believed upon the name made illustrious through weakness, shall stand in awe at the Judge, when He shall have come in power. But, lest He that once was weak, when He shall have come strong, with that fan send us to the left hand; may He “save us in His name, and judge us in His virtue.” For who so rash as to have desired this, as to say to God, for instance, Judge me? Is it not wont to be said to men for a curse, “God judge thee?” So evidently it is a curse, if He judge thee in His virtue; and shall not have saved thee in His name: but when in name precedent He shall have saved thee, to thy health in virtue consequent He shall judge. Be thou without care: that judgment shall not to thee be punishment, but dividing. For in a certain Psalm thus is said: Judge me, O God, and divide my cause from the nation unholy. What is, Judge me? Divide me from the Ziphites, amid whom I lie hid; I have endured their flower, may there now come also my flowering. And their flower indeed hath been temporary, and the grass withering, it hath fallen off: but my flower shall be what? They that are planted in the House of the Lord, in the courts of the House of our God shall flourish. There remaineth therefore to us also flower, but that which falleth not, like the leaf of that tree planted beside waters, whereof is said, “And His leaf shall not fall off.” O God, therefore, in Thy name make me safe, and in Thy virtue judge me.

5. Ver. 2. O God, hearken to my prayer, in Thy ears receive the words of my mouth. Let the words of my mouth reach Thine ears, because it is not the

flower of the Ziphites that I desire of Thee. In Thy ears receive the words of my mouth. Do Thou receive. For to the Ziphites even if there sound my prayer, they hear not, because they understand not. In temporal things to wit they rejoice, good things everlasting to desire they know not how. To Thee may my prayer attain, driven forth and darted out from the desire of Thy eternal blessings: to Thy ears I send it forth, aid it that it may reach, lest it fall short in the middle of the way, and fainting as it were it fall down. But even if there result not to me now the good things which I ask, I am secured nevertheless that hereafter they will come. For even in the case of transgressions a certain man is said to have asked of God, and not to have been hearkened to for his good. For privations of this world had inspired him to prayer, and being set in temporal tribulations he had wished that temporal tribulations should pass away, and there should return the flower of grass; and he saith, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? The very voice of Christ it is, but for His members’ sake. The words, he saith, of my transgressions I have cried to Thee throughout the day, and Thou hast not hearkened: and by night, and not for the sake of folly to me: that is, “and by night I have cried, and Thou hast not hearkened; and nevertheless in this very thing that Thou hast not hearkened, it is not for the sake of folly to me that Thou hast not hearkened, but rather for the sake of wisdom that Thou hast not hearkened, that I might perceive what of Thee I ought to ask. For those things I was asking which to my cost perchance I should have received.” Thou askest riches, O man; how many have been overset through their riches? Whence knowest thou whether to thee riches may profit? Have not many poor men more safely been in obscurity; having become rich men, so soon as they have begun to blaze forth, they have been a prey to the stronger? How much better they would have lain concealed, how much better they would have been unknown, that have begun to be inquired after not for the sake of what they were, but for the sake of what they had! In these temporal things therefore, brethren, we admonish and exhort you in the Lord, that ye ask not any thing as if it were a thing settled, but that which God knoweth to be expedient for you. For what is expedient for you, ye know not at all. Sometimes that which ye think to be for you is against you, and that which ye think to be against you is for you. For sick ye are; do not dictate to the physician the medicines he may choose to set beside you. If the teacher of the Gentiles, Paul the Apostle, saith, For what we should pray for as we ought, we know not, how much more we? Who nevertheless, when he seemed to himself to pray wisely, namely, that from him should be taken away the thorn of the flesh, the angel of Satan, that did buffet him, in order that he might not in the greatness of the revelations be lifted up, heard from the Lord what? Was that done which he wished? Nay, in order to that being done which was expedient, He heard from the Lord, I say, what? Thrice, he saith, I besought the Lord that He would take it from me; and He said to me, My Grace sufficeth for thee: for virtue in weakness is made perfect. Salve to the wound I have applied; when I applied it I know, when it should be taken away I know. Let not a sick man draw back from the hands of the physician, let him not give advice to the physician. So it is with all these things temporal. There are tribulations; if well thou worshippest God, thou wilt know that He knoweth what is expedient for each man: there are prosperities; take the more heed, lest these same corrupt thy soul, so that it withdraw from Him that hath given these things. Therefore this man understanding saith what! O God, hearken to my prayer; in Thy ears receive the words of my mouth.

6. Ver. 3. For aliens have risen up against me. What aliens? Was not David himself a Jew of the tribe of Judah? But the very place Ziph belonged to the tribe of Judah; it was of the Jews. How then aliens? Not in city, not in tribe, not in kindred, but in flower. For wilt thou know of those aliens? In another Psalm, alien sons they have been called, whose mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. And he enumerateth the flower of the Ziphites. Of whom their sons are like young plants established in their youth: their daughters disposed and decked like the similitude of a temple: their garners full, breaking forth from this unto this: their sheep fruitful, multiplying in their goings out; their oxen fat: there is no falling of enclosure, nor going forth, nor cry in their streets. But see the Ziphites, see them for a time flourishing. Blessed they have called the people to whom these things are. With reason alien sons. Thou amid the Ziphites hiding saidst what? Blessed the people whereof the Lord is its God. Out of this affection this prayer is being sent forth into the ears of the Lord, when it is said, In Thy ears receive the words of my mouth; for aliens have risen up against me.

7. And mighty men have sought after my soul. For in a new manner, my brethren, they would destroy the race of holy men, and the race of them that abstain from hoping in this world, all they that have hope in this world. Certainly commingled they are, certainly together they live. Very much to one another are opposed these two sorts: the one of those that place no hope but in things secular, and in temporal felicity, and the other of those that do firmly place their hope in the Lord God. And though concordant are these Ziphites, do not much trust to their concord: temptations are wanting; when there shall have come any temptation, so as that a person may be reproved for the flower of the world, I say not to thee he will quarrel with the Bishop, but not even to the Church Herself will he draw near, lest there fall any part of the grass. Wherefore have I said these words, brethren? Because now gladly ye all hear in the name of Christ, and according as ye understand, so ye shout out at the word; ye would not indeed shout at it unless ye understood. This your understanding ought to be fruitful. But whether it is fruitful, temptation doth try; lest suddenly when ye are said to be ours, through temptation ye be found aliens, and it be said, aliens have risen up against me, and mighty men have sought my soul. Be not that said which followeth, They have not set forth God before their face. For when will he set God before his face, before whose eyes there is nought but the world? namely, how he may have coin upon coin, how flocks may be increased, how barns may be filled, how it may be said to his soul, Thou hast many good things, be merry, feast, take thy fill. Doth he set before his face Him, that unto one so boasting and so blooming with the flower of the Ziphites saith, Fool, that is, “man not understanding,” “man unwise,” “This night shall be taken from thee thy soul; all these things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?”

They have not set forth God before their face.

8. Ver. 4. For behold, God helpeth me. Even themselves know not themselves, amid whom I am hiding. But if they too were to set God before their face, they would find in what manner God helpeth me. For all holy men are helped by God, but within, where no one seeth. For in like manner as the conscience of ungodly men is a great punishment, so a great joy is the very conscience of godly men. For our glory this is, saith the Apostle,

the testimony of our conscience. In this doth glory that man within, not in the flower of the Ziphites without, that now saith, For behold God helpeth me. Surely though afar off are to be those things which He promiseth, this day have I a sweet and present help; to-day in my heart's joy I find that without cause certain say, Who doth shew to us good things? For there is signed upon us the light of Thy countenance, O Lord, Thou hast put pleasantness into my heart. Not into my vineyard, not into my flock, not into my cask, not into my table, but into my heart. For behold God helpeth me. How doth He help thee? And the Lord is the lifter up of my soul.

9. Ver. 5. Turn away evil things unto mine enemies. So however green they are, so however they flourish, for the fire they are being reserved. In Thy virtue destroy Thou them. Because to wit they flourish now, because to wit they spring up like grass: do not thou be a man unwise and foolish, so that by giving thought to these things thou perish for ever and ever. For, Turn Thou away evil things unto mine enemies. For if thou shalt have place in the body of David Himself, in His virtue He will destroy them. These men flourish in the felicity of the world, perish in the virtue of God. Not in the same manner as they flourish, do they also perish: for they flourish for a time, perish for everlasting: flourish in unreal good things, perish in real torments. In Thy virtue destroy Thou them, whom in Thy weakness Thou hast endured.

10. Ver. 6. Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. Who can even understand this good thing of the heart, at another's speaking thereof, unless in himself he hath tasted it? What is, Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee? Nevertheless, I will say on; let him receive that is able, as he is able: let him believe that is not able, and pray that he may be able. For ought we by any means so to pass over this verse as not to commend it to you? I say to your Love, my affection for it doth sufficiently invite me to speak something concerning it: and thanks I render to God, that with attention ye hear. But if I should observe you reluctant to hear, unwillingly on this verse I should hold my peace, and yet in my heart, as far as the Lord would deign to grant, I should not hold my peace. May there come then unto my tongue that which in heart hath been conceived: may there be drawn forth in word that which in mind is kept: say we as we are able, what is, Voluntarily I will sacrifice to

Thee. For what sacrifice here shall I take, brethren? or what worthily shall I offer to the Lord for His mercy? Victims shall I seek from flock of sheep, ram shall I select, for any bull in the herds shall I look out, frankincense indeed from the land of the Sabæans shall I bring? What shall I do? What offer; except that whereof He speaketh, Sacrifice of praise shall honour Me? Wherefore then voluntarily? Because truly I love that which I praise. I praise God, and in the self-same praise I rejoice: in the praise of Himself I rejoice, at Whom being praised, I blush not. For He is not praised in the same manner as by those who love the theatrical follies is praised either a charioteer, or a hunter, or actor of any kind, and by their praisers, other praisers are invited, are exhorted, to shout together: and when all have shouted, ofttimes, if their favourite is overcome, they are all put to the blush. Not so is our God: be He praised with the will, loved with charity: let it be gratuitous that He is loved and that He is praised. What is gratuitous? Himself for the sake of Himself, not for the sake of something else. For if thou praisest God in order that He may give thee something else, no longer freely dost thou love God. Thou wouldest blush, if thy wife for the sake of riches were to love thee, and perchance if poverty should befal thee, should begin to think of adultery. Seeing that therefore thou wouldest be loved by thy partner freely, wilt thou for any thing else love God? What reward art thou to receive of God, O covetous man? Not earth for thee, but Himself He keepeth, Who made heaven and earth. Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee: do it not of necessity. For if for the sake of any thing else thou praisest God, out of necessity thou praisest. If there were present to thee that which thou lovest, thou wouldest not praise God. See what I say: thou praisest God, for example, in order that He may give thee abundant money: if thou wert to have from any other quarter abundant money, not from God, wouldest thou praise God? If, therefore, because of money thou praisest God, not voluntarily thou sacrificest to God, but out of necessity thou sacrificest: because, beside Him, something else has thy love. Thence hath it been said, Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. Despise all things, to Himself give heed. These things also which He hath given, because of the Giver are good things. For He giveth entirely, He giveth these temporal things: and to certain men to their good, to certain men to their harm, after the height and depth of His judgments. At the abyss of which judgments an Apostle stood in awe, saying, O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of

God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who shall find out His ways, or who shall comprehend His counsels? He knoweth when He giveth, to whom He giveth; when He taketh away, and from whom He taketh away. Ask thou in this present time that which may profit thee hereafter, ask that which may help thee for eternity. But Himself without price love thou: because from Him thou findest not any thing that He may give better than Himself; or if thou findest a better thing, this ask thou. Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. Wherefore voluntarily? Because gratis. What is gratis? And I will confess to Thy name, O Lord, for it is a good thing: for nothing else, but because a good thing it is. Doth he say, I will confess to Thy name, O Lord, because Thou givest me fruitful manors, because Thou givest me gold and silver, because Thou givest me extended riches, abundant money, most exalted dignity? Nay. But what? For it is a good thing. Nothing I find better than Thy name: therefore I will confess to Thy name, O Lord, for it is a good thing.

11. Ver. 7. For out of all tribulation Thou hast delivered me. For this cause I have perceived how good a thing is Thy name: for if this I were able before tribulations to acknowledge, perchance for me there had been no need of them. But tribulation hath been applied for admonition, admonition hath redounded to Thy praise. For I should not have understood where I was, except of my weakness I had been admonished. Out of all tribulations, therefore, Thou hast delivered me. And upon mine enemies mine eye hath looked back: upon those Ziphites mine eye hath looked back. Yea, their flower I have passed over in loftiness of heart, unto Thee I have come, and thence I have looked back upon them, and have seen that All flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass: as in a certain place is also said, I have seen the ungodly man to be exalted and raised up like the cedars of Lebanon: I passed by, and, lo! he was not. Wherefore he was not? Because thou hast passed by. What is, because thou hast passed by? Because not to no purpose hast thou heard Lift up thy heart; because not on earth, where thou wouldest have rotted, thou hast remained; because thou hast lifted thy soul to God, and thou hast mounted beyond the cedars of Lebanon, and from that elevation hast observed: and Lo! he was not; and thou hast sought him, and there hath not been found place for him. No longer is labour before thee; because thou hast entered into the sanctuary of

God, and hast understood for the last things. So also here thus he concludeth. And upon mine enemies mine eye hath looked back. This do ye therefore, brethren, with your souls; lift up your hearts, sharpen the edge of your mind, learn truly to love God, learn to despise the present world, learn voluntarily to sacrifice the offerings of praise; to the end that, mounting beyond the flower of the grass, ye may look back upon your enemies.

PSALM 55

Exposition

1. Of this Psalm the title is: At the end, in hymns, understanding to David himself. What the “end” is, we will briefly call to your recollection, because ye have known it. For the end of the Law is Christ, for righteousness unto every man believing. Be the attention therefore directed unto the End, directed unto Christ. Wherefore is He called the end? Because whatever we do, to Him we refer it, and when to Him we shall have come home, more to ask we shall not have. For there is an end spoken of which doth consume, there is an end spoken of which doth make perfect. In one sense, for instance, we understand it, when we hear, there is ended the food which was in eating; and in another sense we understand it, when we hear, there is ended the vesture which was in weaving: in each case we hear, there is ended; but the food so that it no longer is, the vesture so that it is perfected. Our end therefore ought to be our perfection, our perfection Christ. For in Him we are made perfect, because of Himself the Head the Members are we. And He hath been spoken of as the End of the Law, because without Him no one doth make perfect the Law. When therefore ye hear in the Psalms, At the end: (for many Psalms are thus superscribed:) be not your thought upon consuming, but upon consummation.

2. In hymns: in praises. For whether we are troubled and are straitened, or whether we rejoice and exult, He is to be praised, Who both in tribulations doth instruct, and in gladness doth comfort. For the praise of God from the heart and mouth of a Christian man ought not to depart; not that he may be praising in prosperity, and speaking evil in adversity; but after the manner that this Psalm doth prescribe, I will speak good of the Lord in every time, alway the praise of Him is in my mouth. Thou dost rejoice; acknowledge a Father indulging: thou art troubled; acknowledge a Father chastening. Whether He indulge, or whether He chasten, He is instructing one for whom He is preparing an inheritance.

3. What then is, Understanding to David himself? David indeed was, as we know, a holy prophet, king of Israel, son of Jesse: but because out of his seed there came for our salvation after the flesh the Lord Jesus Christ, often under that name He is figured, and David instead of Christ is in a figure set down, because of the origin of the Flesh of the Same. For after some sort He is Son of David, after some sort the Lord He is of David; Son of David after the flesh, Lord of David after the divinity. For if by Him have been made all things, by Him also David himself hath been made, out of whose seed He came to men. Moreover, when the Lord had questioned the Jews, whose Son they affirmed Christ to be, they made answer, David's. (Where the Lord chides the Jews, when they said that He was the Son of David,) He saw that they had stayed at the flesh, and had lost sight of the divinity; and He reproveth them by propounding a question: How then doth David himself in spirit call Him Lord, The Lord hath said unto my Lord, Sit on My right hand, until I lay Thy foes beneath Thy feet? If then He in spirit calleth Him Lord, how is He his Son? A question He propounded; His being Son He denied not. Ye have heard Lord; say ye how He is his Son: ye have heard Son; say how He is Lord. This question the Catholic Faith solveth. How Lord? Because In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. How Son? Because The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Because then David in a figure is Christ, but Christ, as we have often reminded your Love, is both Head and Body; neither ought we to speak of ourselves as alien from Christ, of Whom we are members, nor to count ourselves as if we were any other thing: because The two shall be in one flesh. This is a great Sacrament, saith the Apostle, but I speak in regard of Christ and the Church. Because then whole Christ is Head and Body; when we hear, Understanding to David himself, understand we ourselves also in David. Let the members of Christ understand, and Christ in His members understand, and the members of Christ in Christ understand: because Head and Members are one Christ. The Head was in heaven, and was saying, Why dost thou persecute Me? We with Him are in heaven through hope, Himself is with us on earth through love. Therefore understanding to David himself. Be we admonished when we hear, and let the Church understand: for there belongeth to us great diligence to understand in what evil we now are, and from what evil we desire to be delivered, remembering the Prayer of the Lord, where at the end we say,

Deliver us from evil. Therefore amid many tribulations of this world, this Psalm complaineth somewhat of understanding. He lamenteth not with it, who hath not understanding. But furthermore, dearly beloved, we ought to remember, that after the image of God we have been made, and that not in any other part than in the understanding itself. For in many things by beasts we are surpassed: but when a man knoweth himself to have been made after the image of God, therein something in himself he acknowledgeth to be more than hath been given to dumb animals. But on consideration of all those things which a man hath, he findeth himself in this thing peculiarly distinguished from a dumb animal, in that he hath himself an understanding. Whence certain men despising in themselves that peculiar and especial thing which from their Maker they had received, the Maker Himself reproveth, saying, Do not become like horse and mule, in which there is no understanding. And in another place He speaketh of Man in honour set. In what honour, except that he is made after the image of God? Therefore, In honour set, he understood not, He saith; he hath been compared unto brutes without sense, and hath been made like unto them. Let us acknowledge therefore our honour, and let us understand. If we do understand, we see this not to be the region of rejoicing, but of groaning; not now of exulting, but as yet of lamenting. But even if certain exultation doth dwell in our hearts, not yet is it in substance, but in hope. Because of a thing promised we are glad, because we know He that promiseth doth not deceive us. Nevertheless, as regardeth the present time, in what evil, in what straits we are, hear ye; and if to this way ye keep, that which ye hear in yourselves acknowledge ye. For whosoever doth not yet hold to the path of godliness, wondereth that the members of David make such groanings. For he seeth not in himself those things. So long as in himself too those things he seeth not, not yet is he there: he feeleth not that which the body feeleth; because he is beside the body; let him be embodied, and he shall feel. Let him speak then, and let us hear, let us hear and speak.

4. Hear Thou, O God, my entreaty, and despise not my prayer: give heed unto me, and hearken unto me. Of one earnest, anxious, of one set in tribulation, are these words. He is praying, suffering many things, from evil yearning to be delivered: it remaineth that we hear in what evil he is, and when he beginneth to speak, let us acknowledge there ourselves to be; in

order that the tribulation being shared, we may conjoin prayer. (Ver. 2.) I have been made sad in my exercise, and have been troubled. Where made sad, where troubled? In my exercise, he saith. Of evil men, whom he suffereth, he hath made mention, and the same suffering of evil men he hath called his exercise. Think ye not that without profit there are evil men in this world, and that no good God maketh of them. Every evil man either on this account liveth that he may be corrected, or on this account liveth that through him a good man may be exercised. O that therefore they that do now exercise us would be converted, and together with us be exercised! Nevertheless, so long as they are such as to exercise, let us not hate them: because in that wherein any one of them is evil, whether unto the end he is to persevere, we know not; and ofttimes when to thyself thou seemest to have been hating an enemy, thou hast been hating a brother, and knowest not. The devil and his angels in the holy Scriptures have been manifested to us, that for fire everlasting they have been destined. Of them only must amendment be despaired of: against whom we have a secret wrestling, for which wrestling the Apostle armeth us, saying, Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, that is, against men whom ye see, but against princes, and powers, and rulers of the world, of this darkness. Lest perchance when he had said, of the world, thou shouldest understand demons to be rulers of heaven and earth: he hath said, of the world, of this darkness: of the world he hath spoken, of the lovers of the world; of the world he hath spoken, of ungodly and unrighteous men: of the world he hath spoken, whereof saith the Gospel, And the world knew Him not. For if the world knew not Light, because Light shineth in darkness, and darkness comprehended It not; and this darkness itself, which comprehended not Light present, is called by the name of “the world;” then of this darkness they are the rulers. Concerning these same rulers therefore we have a definite sentence of Scripture, that from thence no return at all of any one of them is to be hoped for. But truly of the darknesses themselves of whom these are the rulers we are not sure, whether perchance they that were darkness may not be made light. For instance, to them that were lately made believers, saith the Apostle, Ye have been sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord: darkness in yourselves, light in the Lord. Therefore, brethren, all evil men, while they are evil men, do exercise good men. For, behold, hear ye briefly and understand. If thou art a good man, thou wilt have no enemy but a bad man. Moreover, before thee this rule of goodness hath been set, that thou shouldest imitate the goodness of thy Father, Who maketh His sun to rise on good men and on evil men, and raineth on just men and unjust men. For thou hast not an enemy that God hath not. Thou indeed hast for enemy him that with thee hath been created: but He him that He hath created. Of enemies therefore of God, of evil men and unrighteous men, often in the Scriptures we read: and He spareth them, Who hath nothing that the enemy may lay to His charge, to Whom every enemy is ungrateful: for from Him he hath whatever of good he hath. For from Him he hath it in mercy, even whatever thing there is whereby he is troubled. For to this end he is troubled, that he be not proud; to this end he is troubled, in order that being humbled he may acknowledge the Highest. Thou therefore on thy enemy, whom hardly thou sufferest, hast bestowed what? If He hath him for enemy, That hath bestowed so great things on him, and maketh His sun to rise on good men and evil men, and raineth on just men and unjust men: thou that neither canst make the sun to rise, nor upon the lands make rain, canst thou not keep one thing for thine enemy, so that there may be to thee, Peace on earth to a man of good will? Therefore since this rule of Love for thee is fixed, that imitating the Father thou shouldest love an enemy: for, He saith, Love your enemies: in this precept how wouldest thou be exercised, if thou hadst no enemy to suffer? Thou seest then that he profiteth thee somewhat: and let God sparing evil men profit thee, so that thou shew mercy: because perchance thou too, if thou art a good man, out of an evil man hast been made a good man: and if God spared not evil men, not even thou wouldest be found to return thanks. May He therefore spare others, That hath spared thee also. For it were not right, when thou hadst passed through, to close up the way of godliness.

5. Whence then doth this man pray, set among evil men, with whose enmities he was being exercised? Why saith he, I have been made sad in my exercise, and have been troubled? While he is extending his love so as to love enemies, he hath been affected with disgust, being bayed at all around by the enmities of many men, by the phrenzy of many, and under a sort of human infirmity he hath sunk. He hath seen himself now begin to be pierced through with an evil suggestion of the devil, to bring on hatred against his enemies: wrestling against hatred in order to perfect love herself,

in the very fight, and in the wrestling, he hath been troubled. For there is his voice also in another Psalm, Mine eye hath been troubled, because of anger. And what followeth there? I have waxen old among all mine enemies. As if in storm and waves he were beginning to sink, like Peter. For he doth trample the waves of this world, that loveth enemies. Christ on the sea was walking fearless, from Whose heart there could not by any means be taken away the love of an enemy; Who hanging on the Cross did say, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Peter too would walk. He as Head, Peter as Body: because, Upon this rock, He saith, I will build My Church. He was bidden to walk, and he was walking by the Grace of Him bidding, not by his own strength. But when he saw the wind mighty, he feared; and then he began to sink, being troubled in his exercise. By what mighty wind? (Ver. 3.) By the voice of the enemy, and by the tribulation of the sinner. Therefore, in the same manner as he cried out on the waves, Lord, I perish, save me, a similar voice from this man hath preceded, Hearken Thou, O God, to my entreaty, and despise not my prayer: give heed unto me, and hearken unto me. Wherefore? For what sufferest thou? Of what dost thou groan? I have been made sad in my exercise. To be exercised indeed amid evil men Thou hast set me, but too much they have risen up, beyond my powers: calm Thou one troubled, stretch forth a hand to one sinking. I have been made sad in my exercise, and have been troubled by the voice of the enemy, and by the tribulation of the sinner; for they have brought down upon me iniquity, and in anger they were shadowing me. Ye have heard of waves and winds: one as it were humbled they were insulting, and he was praying: on every side against him with the roar of insult they were raging, but he within was calling upon Him whom they did not see.

6. When some such thing is a Christian’s lot to suffer, he ought not lightly, as if in hatred, to proceed against that man by whom he is suffering, and to will to conquer the wind; but to turn himself to prayer, that he lose not love. For we must not fear that a human enemy can do any thing. For what is he to do? To say many evil things, to hurl reproaches, to rage with revilings: but to thee what? Rejoice, He saith, and exult, for your reward is great in the heavens. He on earth redoubleth reproaches, thou in heaven thy gains. But let him rage more, he might do yet something more: what is more

secure than thou, to whom hath been said, Fear not them that kill the body, but the soul they cannot kill. What then is to be feared when thou sufferest an enemy? Lest thy love be troubled wherewith thou lovest an enemy. For that human enemy, being flesh and blood, desireth that which he seeth in thee. But another hidden enemy, ruler of this darkness, which thou sufferest in flesh and blood, is seeking the other hidden thing of thine; thy inward treasures to plunder and waste he is striving. Two enemies, therefore, set thou before thine eyes, the one open, and the other hidden: the open, a man; the hidden, the devil. This man is the same as thou art after human nature, but after faith and love not yet that which thou art, but will be able to be that which thou art. Since therefore there are two, the one see thou, the other perceive thou; the one love thou, of the other beware. For even that enemy, whom thou seest, would humble that thing in thee wherein he is conquered. For instance, if by thy riches he is conquered, poor he would make thee; if by thy honour he is conquered, humble he would make thee; if by thy powers he is conquered, weak he would make thee: to these things therefore he giveth heed, in thee either to throw down or to take away the things whereby he is conquered. That hidden enemy also from thee would take away that thing wherein he is conquered. For being man thou conquerest a man in human felicity, but the devil thou conquerest in love of an enemy. In like manner then, as a man goeth about to take away from thee, and to cut short, or to overthrow the felicity wherein he is conquered: so also the devil conquers a man by taking away that wherein he is conquered. But take care in heart to hold fast the love of an enemy, wherewith the devil is conquered of thee. Let a man rage as much as he can, let him take whatever he can; if he is loved that is openly raging, he hath been conquered who is secretly raging.

7. But this man being troubled and made sad was praying, his eye being disturbed as it were on account of anger. But the anger of a brother if it shall have been inveterate is then hatred. Anger doth trouble the eye, hatred doth quench it: anger is a straw, hatred is a beam. Sometimes thou hatest and chidest an angry man: in thee is hatred, in him whom thou chidest anger: with reason to thee is said, Cast out first the beam from thine own eye, and so thou shalt see to cast out the straw from thy brother’s eye. For that ye may know how much difference there is between anger and hatred: day by

day men are angry with their sons, shew me them that hate their sons! This man being troubled was praying even when made sad, wrestling against all revilings of all revilers; not in order that he might conquer any one of them by giving back reviling, but that he might not hate any one of them. Hence he prayeth, hence asketh. From the voice of the enemy and from the tribulation of the sinner; for they have brought down upon me iniquity, and in anger they were shadowing me. (Ver. 4.) My heart hath been troubled in me. This is the same as elsewhere hath been said, Mine eye because of anger hath been troubled. And if eye hath been troubled, what followeth? And fear of death hath fallen upon me. Our life is love: if life is love, death is hatred. When a man hath begun to fear lest he should hate him that he was loving, it is death he is fearing; and a sharper death, and a more inward death, whereby soul is killed, not body. Thou didst mind a man raging against thee; what was he to do, against whom thine own Lord had given thee security, saying, Fear not them that kill the body? He by raging killeth body, thou by keeping hatred hast killed soul; and he the body of another, thou thine own soul. Fear, therefore, of death hath fallen upon me.

8. Ver. 5. Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me, and darkness have covered me. And I have said,—

He that hateth his brother, is in darkness until now. If love is light, hatred is darkness. And what saith to himself one set in that weakness and troubled in that exercise? (Ver. 6.) Who shall give me wings as to a dove, and I shall fly and shall rest? Either for death he was wishing, or for solitude he was longing. So long, he saith, as this is the work with me, as this command is given me, that I should love enemies, the revilings of these men, increasing and shadowing me, do derange mine eye, perturb my sight, penetrate my heart, slay my soul. I could wish to depart, but weak I am, lest by abiding I should add sins to sins: or at least may I be separated for a little space from mankind, lest my wound suffer from frequent blows, in order that when it hath been made whole it may be brought back to the exercise. This is what takes place, brethren, and there ariseth ofttimes in the mind of the servant of God a longing for solitude, for no other reason than because of the multitude of tribulations and scandals, and he saith, Who shall give me wings? Doth he find himself without wings, or rather with bound wings? If they are wanting, be they given; if bound, be they loosed; because even he that looseth a bird’s wings, either giveth, or giveth back to it its wings. For it had not as though its own them, wherewith it could not fly. Bound wings make a burden. Who, he saith, shall give me wings as to a dove, and I shall fly and shall rest? Shall rest, where? I have said there are two senses here: either, as saith the Apostle, To be dissolved and to be with Christ, for it is by far the best thing. For he too, although strong, although great, although in heart most stout; although in Christ a soldier invincible, in his exercise, as we read, was troubled, and he saith, Henceforth let not any one be vexatious to me. As though he were saying out of that Psalm, Weariness hath gotten hold on me because of sinners forsaking Thy law. Therefore a man ofttimes endeavoureth to amend men perverted, crooked, belonging indeed to his care, but men in whom there is but failure for all human pains and vigilance; amend he cannot, suffer them he must. Even he that amended cannot be, is thine, either by the fellowship of the human race, or ofttimes by Church Communion; he is within, what wilt thou do? whither wilt go? whither separate thyself, in order that these things thou mayest not suffer? But go to him, speak, exhort, coax, threaten, reprove. I have done all things, whatever powers I had I have expended and have drained, nothing I see have I prevailed; all my labour hath been spent out, sorrow hath remained. How then shall my heart rest from such men, except I say, Who shall give me wings? As to a dove, however, not as to a raven. A dove seeketh a flying away from troubles, but she loseth not love. For a dove as a type of love is set forth, and in her the plaint is loved. Nothing is so fond of plaints as a dove: day and night she complaineth, as though she were set here where she ought to complain. What then saith this lover? Revilings of men to bear I am unable, they roar, with phrensy are carried away, are inflamed with indignation, in anger they shadow me; to do good to them I am unable; O that I might rest somewhere, being separated from them in body, not in love; lest in me there should be troubled love itself: with my words and my speech no good can I do them, by praying for them perchance I shall do good. These words men say, but ofttimes they are so bound, that to fly they are not able. For perchance they are not bound with any birdlime, but are bound by duty. But if they are bound with care and duty, and to leave it are unable, let them say, I was wishing to be dissolved and to be with Christ, for it is by far the best thing: to abide in the flesh is necessary because of you. A dove bound back by affection, not by cupidity, to fly away was not able because of duty to be fulfilled, not because of little merit. Nevertheless a longing in heart must needs be; nor doth any man suffer this longing, but he that hath begun to walk in that narrow way: in order that he may know that there are not wanting to the Church persecutions, even in this time, when a calm is seen in the Church, at least with respect to those persecutions, which our Martyrs have suffered. But there are not wanting persecutions, because a true saying is this, All that will godly to live in Christ, shall suffer persecution. Thou sufferest not persecution: thou willest not godly to live in Christ. Dost thou will to prove that to be a true saying which hath been said? Begin godly to live in Christ. What is it, godly to live in Christ? So that this may belong to thy bowels, whereof the Apostle speaketh, Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? Other men's infirmities, other men's offences, were to him persecutions. Are they then wanting at this time? More do abound to them that mind these things. And ofttimes from afar a man is seen, and it is said of him, It is well with him; and he that saith it, is either tasting his own matters, and is not able to taste those of others; or of himself hath not whereof he may taste, and with another man tasting, nay devouring, he suffereth not. Let him begin therefore godly to live in Christ, and prove that which is said: he beginneth to long for wings, to go afar off, to flee and to abide in the desert.

9. For whence is it think ye, brethren, that the servants of God have thronged the deserts? If well with them it were amid men, would they withdraw from men? And yet what do even these same? Behold they go afar off fleeing, they abide in the desert: but do they one by one? There holdeth them love, so that with many they abide; and from these same many, there come forth some to exercise them. Because in every congregation of a multitude there must needs be found evil men. For God, that knoweth that we must be exercised, mingleth with us even men that are not to persevere; or certainly so counterfeit, as that they have not so much as begun that wherein they ought to persevere. For He knoweth that it is necessary for us that we bear evil men, and the good there is in what we are should advance; let us love enemies, rebuke, chastise, excommunicate, with love from us even separate them. For see what saith the Apostle; But if any

one obey not our word through the epistle, him mark ye, and be not mingled together with him. But let there not steal upon thee because of this thing indignation, and trouble thine eye. Not, he saith, as an enemy esteem him, but rebuke him as a brother, that he may blush. From him from whom he proclaimeth separation, he cutteth not off love. That eye liveth, thy life liveth. For love lost is thy death. This he hath feared to lose that hath said, Fear of death hath fallen upon me. Accordingly, lest I should lose the life of love, Who shall give me wings as to a dove, and I shall fly and shall rest? Whither art thou to go? whither to fly? where to rest? (Ver. 7.) Behold I have gone afar fleeing, and have abode in the desert. In what desert? Wherever thou shalt be, there will gather them together other men, the desert with thee they will seek, will attach themselves to thy life, thou canst not thrust back the society of brethren: there are mingled with thee also evil men; still exercise is thy due portion, Behold I have gone afar, and have abode in the desert. In what desert? It is perchance in the conscience, whither no man entereth, where no one is with thee, where thou art and God. For if in the desert, in any place, what wilt thou do with men gathering themselves together? For thou wilt not be able to be separated from mankind, so long as among men thou livest. Observe rather that Comforter, our Lord and King, our Ruler and Creator, created also among us: observe that with His Twelve He joined one man whom He was to suffer.

10. He saith, Behold I have gone afar fleeing, and have abode in the desert. Perchance that man, as I have said, hath fled unto his conscience, there some little desert he will have found where he may rest. But that love doth trouble him: alone he found himself in conscience, but not alone in charity: within he was comforted in conscience, but without tribulations left him not. Therefore in himself at peace, on others depending, when he was yet being troubled, he saith what?

Ver. 8. I was looking for him that should save me from weakness of mind and tempest. Sea there is, tempest there is: nothing for thee remaineth but to cry out, Lord, I perish. Let Him stretch forth hand, Who doth the waves tread fearlessly, let Him relieve thy dread, let Him confirm in Himself thy security, let Him speak to thee within, and say to thee, Give heed to Me, what I have borne: an evil brother perchance thou art suffering, or an enemy without art suffering; which of these have I not suffered? There roared without Jews, within a disciple was betraying. There rageth therefore tempest, but He doth save men from weakness of mind, and tempest. Perchance thy ship is being troubled, because He in thee is sleeping. The sea was raging, the bark wherein the disciples were sailing was being tossed; but Christ was sleeping: at length it was seen by them that among them was sleeping the Ruler and Creator of winds; they drew near and awoke Christ; He commanded the winds, and there was a great calm. With reason then perchance thy heart is troubled, because thou hast forgotten Him on Whom thou hast believed: beyond endurance thou art suffering, because it hath not come into thy mind what for thee Christ hath borne. If unto thy mind cometh not Christ, He sleepeth: awake Christ, recall faith. For then in thee Christ is sleeping, if thou hast forgotten the sufferings of Christ: then in thee Christ is watching, if thou hast remembered the sufferings of Christ. But when with full heart thou shalt have considered what He hath suffered, wilt not thou too with equanimity endure? and perchance rejoicing, because thou hast been found in some likeness of the sufferings of thy King. When therefore on these things thinking thou hast begun to be comforted and to rejoice, He hath arisen, He hath commanded the winds; therefore there is a great calm. I was looking for Him that should save me from weakness of mind and tempest.

11. Ver. 9. Sink, O Lord, and divide the tongues of them. He is referring to men troubling him and shadowing him, and he hath wished this thing not of anger, brethren. They that have wickedly lifted up themselves, for them it is expedient that they be sunk. They that have wickedly conspired, it is expedient for them that their tongues should be divided: to good let them consent, and let their tongues agree together. But if to one purpose there were whispering against me, he saith, all mine enemies, let them lose their ‘one purpose’ in evil, divided be the tongues of them, let them not with themselves agree together. Sink, O Lord, and divide the tongues of them. Wherefore sink? Because themselves they have lifted up. Wherefore divide? Because for an evil thing they have united. Recollect that tower of proud men made after the deluge: what said the proud men? Lest we perish in a deluge, let us make a lofty tower. In pride they were thinking themselves to be fortified, they builded up a lofty tower, and the Lord

divided the tongues of them. Then they began not to understand one another; hence arose the beginning of many tongues. For before, one tongue there was: but one tongue for men agreeing was good, one tongue for humble men was good: but when that gathering together did into a union of pride fall headlong, God spared them, even though He divided the tongues, lest by understanding one another they should make a destructive unity. Through proud men, divided were the tongues; through humble Apostles, united were the tongues. Spirit of pride dispersed tongues, Spirit Holy united tongues. For when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, with the tongues of all men they spake, by all men they were understood: tongues dispersed, into one were united. Therefore if still they rage and are Gentiles, it is expedient for them divided to have their tongues. They would have one tongue; let them come to the Church; because even among the diversity of tongues of flesh, one is the tongue in faith of heart.

Sink, O Lord, and divide the tongues of them.

12. For I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the city. With reason this man was seeking the desert, for he saw iniquity and contradiction in the city. There is a certain city turbulent: the same it was that was building a tower, the same was confounded and called Babylon, the same through innumerable nations dispersed: thence is gathered the Church into the desert of a good conscience. For he saw contradiction in the city. ‘Christ cometh.’—‘What Christ?’ thou contradictest.—‘Son of God.’—‘And hath God a Son?’ thou contradictest.—‘He was born of a Virgin, suffered, rose again.’—‘And whence is it possible for this to be done?’ thou contradictest.—Give heed at least to the glory of the Cross itself. Now on the brow of kings that Cross hath been fixed, over which enemies insulted. The effect hath proved the virtue. It hath subdued the world, not with steel, but with wood. The wood of the Cross deserving of insults hath seemed to enemies, and before the wood itself standing they were wagging the head, and saying, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. He was stretching forth His hands to a people unbelieving and contradicting. For if just he is that of faith liveth, unjust he is that hath not faith. By that which here he saith iniquity, I understand unbelief. The Lord therefore was seeing in the city iniquity and contradiction, and was stretching forth His hands to

a people unbelieving and contradicting: and nevertheless waiting for these same, He was saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Even now indeed there rage the remnant of that city, even now they contradict. From the brows of all men now He is stretching forth hands to the remnant unbelieving and contradicting. For I have seen iniquity and contradiction in the city.

13. Ver. 10. Day and night there will compass it upon the walls thereof iniquity, and labour. “Upon the walls thereof;” upon the fortifications thereof, holding as it were the heads thereof, the noble men thereof. If that noble man were a Christian, not one would remain a pagan! Ofttimes men say, ‘no one would remain a pagan, if he were a Christian.’ Ofttimes men say, ‘If he too were made a Christian, who would remain a pagan?’ Because therefore not yet they are made Christians, as if walls they are of that city unbelieving and contradicting. How long shall these walls stand? Not always shall they stand. The Ark is going around the walls of Jericho: there shall come a time at the seventh going round of the Ark, when all the walls of the city unbelieving and contradicting shall fall. Until it come to pass, this man is being troubled in his exercise; and enduring the remains of men contradicting, he would choose wings for flying away, would choose the rest of the desert. Yea let him continue amid men contradicting, let him endure menaces, drink revilings, and look for Him that will save him from weakness of mind and tempest: let him look upon the Head, the pattern for his life, let him be made calm in hope, even if he is troubled in fact. Day and night there will compass it upon the walls thereof iniquity; and labour in the midst thereof and injustice. And for this reason labour is there, because iniquity is there: because injustice is there, therefore also labour is there. But let them hear him stretching forth hands. Come unto Me, all ye that labour. Ye cry, ye contradict, ye revile: He on the contrary, Come unto Me, all ye that labour, in your pride, and ye shall rest in My humility. Learn of Me, He saith, for meek I am and humble in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For whence do they labour, but because they are not meek and humble in heart? God humble was made, let man blush to be proud.

14. Ver. 11. There hath not failed from the streets thereof usury and deceit. Usury and deceit are not hidden at least, because they are evil things, but in

public they rage. For he that in his house doth any evil thing, however for his evil thing doth blush: In the streets thereof usury and deceit. Money-lending even hath a profession, Money-lending also is called a science; a corporation is spoken of, a corporation as if necessary to the state, and of its profession it payeth revenue; so entirely indeed in the streets is that which should have been hidden. There is also another usury worse, when thou forgivest not that which to thee is owed; and the eye is disturbed in that verse of the prayer, Forgive us our debts, (as we too forgive our debtors). For what there wilt thou do, when thou art going to pray, and coming to that same verse? An insulting word thou hast heard: thou wouldest exact the punishment of condemnation. Do but consent to exact just so much as thou hast given, thou usurer of injuries! With the fist thou hast been smitten, slaying thou seekest. Evil usury! How wilt thou go to prayer? If thou shalt have left praying, which way wilt thou come round unto the Lord? Behold thou wilt say: Our Father, Which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, as in heaven so on earth. Thou wilt say, Our daily bread give us to-day. Thou wilt come to, Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. Even in that evil city let there abound these usuries; let them not enter the walls where the breast is smitten! What wilt thou do? because there thou and that verse are in the midst? Petitions for thee hath a heavenly Lawyer composed. He that knew what used there to be done, said to thee, “Otherwise thou shalt not obtain.” Verily, verily, I say unto you, that if ye shall have forgiven men sins, they shall be forgiven you; but if ye shall not have forgiven sins unto men, neither will your Father forgive you. Who saith this? He that knoweth what there is being done, in the place whereat thou art standing to make request. See how Himself hath willed to be thy Advocate; Himself thy Lawyer, Himself the Assessor of the Father, Himself thy Judge hath said, “Otherwise thou shalt not receive.” What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not receive, unless thou shalt speak; wilt not receive if falsely thou shalt speak. Therefore either thou must do and speak, or else what thou askest thou wilt not earn; because they that this do not do, are in the midst of those evil usuries. Be they engaged therein, that yet do idols either adore or desire: do not thou, O people of God, do not thou, O people of Christ, do not thou the Body of Him the Head! Give heed to the bond of thy peace, give heed to the promise of thy life. For what doth it profit thee, that thou exactest for injuries which thou hast endured? doth vengeance refresh thee? Therefore, over the evil of another shalt thou rejoice? Thou hast suffered evil; pardon thou; be not ye two.

And there faileth not from the streets thereof usury and deceit.

15. Therefore for this reason thou wast seeking solitude and wings, for this reason thou art complaining, these things to bear thou art not able, namely, the contradiction and iniquity of this city. Rest thou in those things which with thee are within, and do not seek solitude. Hear also of these very things what he saith.

Ver. 12. For if an enemy had upbraided me. And indeed above he was ‘troubled in his exercise’ by the voice of the enemy and by the tribulation of the sinner, perhaps being placed in that city, that proud city that was building a tower, which was “sunk,” that divided might be the tongues: give heed to his inward groaning because of perils from false brethren. For if an enemy had upbraided me, I would have undergone it assuredly, and if he that did hate me had over me great words spoken, that is, through pride had on me trampled, did magnify himself above me, did threaten me all in his power: I would hide myself assuredly from him. From him that is abroad, thou wouldest hide thyself where? Amid those that are within. But now see whether any thing else remaineth, but that thou seek solitude. (Ver. 13.) But thou, he saith, man of one mind, my guide and my friend. Perchance sometimes good counsel thou hast given, perchance sometimes thou hast gone before me, and some wholesome advice thou hast given me: in the Church of God together we have been. But thou, man of one mind, my guide and my friend, (ver. 14.) that together with me didst take sweet morsels. What are the sweet morsels? Not all they that are present know: but let them not be soured that do know, in order that they may be able to say to them that as yet know not: Taste ye and see, how sweet is the Lord.

Thou that together with me didst take sweet morsels. In the House of God we have walked with consent. Whence then dissention? Thou that wast within, hast become one without. He hath walked with me in the House of God with consent: another house hath he set up against the House of God. Wherefore hath that been forsaken, wherein we have walked with consent?

wherefore hath that been deserted, wherein together we did take sweet morsels?

16. Ver. 15. Let there come death upon them, and let them go down unto Hell living. How hath he cited and hath made us call to mind that first beginning of schism, when in that first people of the Jews certain proud men separated themselves, and would without have sacrificed? A new death upon them came: the earth opened herself, and swallowed them up alive. Let there come, he saith, death upon them, and let them go down into Hell living. What is living? knowing that they are perishing, and yet perishing. Hear of living men perishing and being swallowed up in a gulph of the earth, that is, being swallowed up in the voraciousness of earthly desires. Thou sayest to a man, What aileth thee, brother? Brethren we are, one God we invoke, in one Christ we believe, one Gospel we hear, one Psalm we sing, one Amen we respond, one Hallelujah we sound, one Easter we celebrate: why art thou without and I am within? Ofttimes one straitened, and perceiving how true are the charges which are made, saith, May God requite our ancestors! Therefore alive he perisheth. In the next place thou continuest and thus givest warning. At least let the evil of separation stand alone, why dost thou adjoin thereto that of rebaptism? Acknowledge in me what thou hast; and if thou hatest me, Christ in me spare thou. And this evil thing doth frequently and very greatly displease them. Truly, say they, it is ill done; O that it were possible not to have it done: but what have we to do with the statutes of our ancestors? Let them go down unto Hell living. If being dead thou shouldest go down, what thou wert doing thou wouldest not know; but when thou knowest that to be an evil thing which thou doest, and nevertheless doest it, dost thou not alive go down unto the lower places? And why is it that a gulf of the earth swallowed up alive the rulers themselves for the most part, but the people that with them consented, fire falling from heaven consumed? It is on this account that this Psalm referring to this punishment, with the people hath begun, and with the leaders hath concluded. Let there come death upon them, it hath said, because of them upon whom there came fire from Heaven; and immediately hath continued, Let them go down unto Hell living, because of the leaders whom a gulf of the earth swallowed up. For how should they have descended unto Hell living, of whom it had said, Let there come death upon

them? If already upon them death had come, how alive unto the lower places did they descend? Therefore with the lesser ones he hath begun, with the greater he hath concluded. Let there come death upon them, that have consented and have followed. What of those leaders and princes? Let them go down unto Hell living; because they themselves have the Scriptures in their hands, and know well by daily reading how the Church Catholic through the whole world is so spread, that in a word all contradiction is void; and that there cannot be found any support for their schism they know well: therefore unto the lower places living they go down, because the evil which they do, evil to be they know. But the former a fire of divine indignation consumed. For being inflamed with desire of strife, from their evil leaders they would not depart. There came upon fire a fire, upon the heat of dissension the heat of consuming. Let there come death upon them and let them go down unto Hell living. For naughtiness is in their lodgings, in the midst of them. In their lodgings, wherein they tarry and pass away. For here they are not alway to be: and nevertheless in defence of a temporal animosity they are fighting so fiercely. In their lodgings is iniquity; in the midst of them is iniquity: no part of them is so near the middle of them as their heart.

17. Ver. 16. Therefore to the Lord I have cried out. The Body of Christ and the oneness of Christ in anguish, in weariness, in uneasiness, in the tribulation of its exercise, that One Man, Oneness in One Body set, when He was wearying His soul in crying out from the ends of the earth; saith, From the ends of the earth to Thee I have cried out, when My heart was being vexed. Himself one, but a oneness that One! and Himself one, not in one place one, but from the ends of the earth is crying as one. How from the ends of the earth should there cry one, except in many there were one? I to the Lord have cried out. Rightly do thou cry out to the Lord, cry not to Donatus: lest for thee he be instead of the Lord a lord, that under the Lord would not be a fellowservant. I to the Lord have cried out: and the Lord hath heard me.

18. Ver. 18. In evening, in morning, at noon-day I will recount and will tell forth, and He shall hearken to my voice. Do thou proclaim glad tidings, keep not secret that which thou hast received, in evening of things gone by,

in morning of things to be, at noon-day of things ever to be. Therefore to that which he saith in evening belongeth that which he recounteth: to that which he saith, in morning, belongeth that which he telleth forth: to that which he saith at noon-day, belongeth that wherein his voice is hearkened to. For the end is at noon-day; that is to say, whence there is no going down unto setting. For at noon-day there is light full high, the splendour of wisdom, the fervour of love. In evening and in morning and at noon-day. In evening, the Lord on the Cross; in morning, in Resurrection; at noon-day, in Ascension. I will recount in evening the patience of Him dying, I will tell forth in morning the life of Him rising, I will pray that He hearken at noon-day sitting at the right hand of the Father. He shall hearken to my voice, That intercedeth for us. How great is the security of this man? How great the consolation, how great the refuge 'from weakness of mind and tempest,' against evil men, against ungodly men both without and within, and in the case of those that are without though they had been within.

19. Therefore, my Brethren, those that in the very congregation of these walls ye see to be rebellious men, proud, seeking their own, lifted up; not having a zeal for God that is chaste, sound, quiet, but ascribing to themselves much; ready for dissension, but not finding opportunity; are the very chaff of the Lord's floor. From hence these few men the wind of pride hath dislodged: the whole floor will not fly, save when He at the last shall winnow. But what shall we do, save with this man sing, with this man pray, with this man mourn and say securely, (ver. 18.) He shall redeem in peace my soul. Against them that love not peace: in peace He shall redeem my soul. "Because with those that hated peace I was peace-making." He shall redeem in peace my soul, from those that draw near to me. For from those that are afar from me, it is an easy case: not so soon doth he deceive me that saith, Come, pray to an idol: he is very far from me. Art thou a Christian? A Christian, he saith. Out of a neighbouring place he is my adversary, he is at hand. He shall redeem in peace my soul, from those that draw near to me: for in many things they were with me. Wherefore have I said, draw near to me? Because in many things they were with me. In this verse two propositions occur. In many things they were with me. Baptism we had both of us, in that they were with me: the Gospel we both read, they were in that with me: the festivals of martyrs we celebrated, they were there with me:

Easter's solemnity we attended, they were there with me. But not entirely with me: in schism not with me, in heresy not with me. In many things with me, in few things not with me. But in these few things wherein not with me, there is no profit to them of the many things wherein they were with me. For see, brethren, how many things hath recounted the Apostle Paul: one thing, he hath said, if it shall have been wanting, in vain are those things. If with the tongues of men and of angels I shall speak, he saith, if I have all prophecy, and all faith, and all knowledge; if mountains I shall remove, if I shall bestow all my goods upon the poor, if I shall deliver my body even so that it be burned. How many things he hath enumerated! To all these many things let there be wanting one thing, charity; the former in number are more, the latter in weight is greater. Therefore in all Sacraments they are with me, in one charity not with me: In many things they were with me. Again, by a different expression: For in many things they were with me. They that themselves have separated from me, with me they were, not in few things, but in many things. For throughout the whole world few are the grains, many are the chaffs. Therefore he saith what? In chaff with me they were, in wheat with me they were not. And the chaff is nearly related to the wheat, from one seed it goeth forth, in one field is rooted, with one rain is nourished, the same reaper it suffereth, the same threshing sustaineth, the same winnowing awaiteth, not into one barn entereth. For in many things they were with me.

20. (Ver. 19.) God will hear me, and He shall humble them That is before ages. For they rely on some leader or other of theirs that hath begun but yesterday. He shall humble them That is before ages. For even if with reference to time Christ is of Mary the Virgin, nevertheless before ages "In the beginning He is the Word, and the Word with God, and the Word God." He shall humble them, That is before ages. For to them is no changing: of them I speak to whom is no changing. He knew of some to persevere, and in the perseverance of their own wickedness to die. For we see them, and to them is no changing: they that die in that same perverseness, in that same schism, to them is no changing. God shall humble them, shall humble them in damnation, because they are exalted in dissension. To them is no changing, because they are not changed for the better, but for the worse: neither while they are here, nor in the resurrection. For all we shall rise

again, but not all shall be changed. Wherefore? Because To them is no changing: and they have not feared God. My brethren, one remedy there is: let them fear God, let them forsake Donatus. Thou sayest to him, Thou art perishing in schism; it must needs be that God should requite those evil things: thou wilt come unto damnation; flatter not thyself with thy words, follow not a blind guide: for a blind man leading a blind man, together into a ditch do they fall. What is that to me? he saith: as I have lived yesterday, so also to-day: what my parents were, the same also am I. Thou fearest not God: give fear to God: let him think that all these things are true which are read, that the faithfulness of Christ is that which cannot be broken: how in heresy shall he remain in the face of so great evidentness of the holy Catholic Church, which God hath diffused throughout the whole world; which before He diffused, He promised, foretold, hath so manifested as He promised? Therefore let them beware and mark that fear not God.

Ver. 20. He stretcheth forth His hand in requiting.

21. They have polluted His Testament. Read the testament which they have polluted: “In thy seed shall be blessed all nations.” They have polluted His Testament. Thou against these words of the Testator sayest what? The Africa of holy Donatus hath alone deserved this grace, in him hath remained the Church of Christ. Say at least the Church of Donatus. Wherefore addest thou, of Christ? Of whom it is said, In thy seed shall be blessed all nations. After Donatus wilt thou go? Set aside Christ, and then secede. See therefore what followeth: They have polluted His Testament. What Testament? To Abraham have been spoken the promises, and to his seed. The Apostle saith, Nevertheless, a man’s testament confirmed no one maketh void, or superaddeth to: to Abraham have been spoken the promises, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as if in many; but as if in one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ. In this Christ, therefore, what Testament hath been promised? In thy seed shall be blessed all nations. Thou that hast given up the unity of all nations, and in a part hast remained, hast polluted His Testament. That which therefore hath befallen thee, to be banished, to be from the inheritance separated, is of the anger of God. For attend to that which followeth: They have polluted His Testament; (they have been divided, because of the anger of His countenance.) What do ye

look for, by what clearer mark should heretics be pointed out? They have been divided, because of the anger of His countenance.

22. Ver. 22. And His heart hath drawn near. Of whom do we understand it, except of Him, by the anger of whom they have been divided? How hath His heart drawn near? In such sort, that we may understand His will. For by heretics hath been vindicated the Catholic Church, and by those that evil think have been proved those that think well. For many things lay hid in the Scriptures: and when heretics had been cut off, with questions they troubled the Church of God: then those things were opened which lay hid, and the will of God was understood. Thence is said in another Psalm, A congregation of bulls amid the cows of the people, in order that they might be excluded that have been proved with silver. For let them be excluded, He hath said, let them come forth, let them appear. Whence even in silver-working men are called ‘excluders,’ that is, pressers out of form from the sort of confusion of the lump. Therefore many men that very excellently could the Scriptures understand and expound, were hidden among the people of God: but they did not declare the solution of difficult questions, when no reviler again urged them. For was the Trinity perfectly treated of before the Arians snarled thereat? Was repentance perfectly treated of before the Novatians opposed? So not perfectly of Baptism was it treated, before rebaptizers set without contradicted; nor of the very oneness of Christ were the doctrines clearly stated which have been stated, save after that this separation began to press upon the weak: in order that they that knew how to treat of and solve these questions, (lest the weak should perish vexed with the questions of the ungodly,) by their discourses and disputations should bring out unto open day the dark things of the Law. Therefore they have been divided because of the anger of His countenance, and unto us for understanding His heart hath drawn near. Therefore perceive ye that which in another Psalm He hath mentioned, “Congregation of bulls,” that is, of proud smiters with horns, “amid the cows of the people.” What doth he speak of as cows? Souls easy to be led astray. Why this? “In order that those may be excluded,” that is, may appear, that were lying hid, “that have been proved with silver.” What is, “with silver?” With the saying of God. The sayings of God are sayings chaste, silver with fire tried, the thing approved of the earth, purged seven times so much. This

obscure sense see in what manner the Apostle bringeth out into light; It is needful, he saith, that also heresies there be, in order that men proved may be made manifest among you. What is “men proved?” Proved with silver, proved with the word. What is, “may be made manifest?” May be brought out. Wherefore this? Because of heretics. What is, because of heretics? Because of the “congregation of bulls amid the cows of the people.” So therefore these also have been divided because of the anger of His countenance, and His heart hath drawn near.

23. Ver. 21. His discourses have been softened above oil, and themselves are darts. For certain things in the Scriptures were seeming hard, while they were obscure; when explained, they have been softened. For even the first heresy in the disciples of Christ, as it were from the hardness of His discourse arose. For when He said, Except a man shall have eaten My flesh and shall have drunk My blood, he shall not have life in himself: they, not understanding, said to one another, Hard is this discourse, who can hear it? Saying that, Hard is this discourse, they separated from Him: He remained with the others, the twelve. When they had intimated to Him, that by His discourse they had been scandalized, Will ye also, He saith, choose to go? Then Peter, The Word of life eternal Thou hast: to whom shall we go? Attend, we beseech you, and ye little ones learn godliness. Did Peter by any means at that time understand the secret of that discourse of the Lord? Not yet he understood: but that good were the words which he understood not, godly he believed. Therefore if hard is a discourse, and not yet is understood, be it hard to an ungodly man, but to thee be it by godliness softened: for whenever it is solved, it both will become for thee oil, and even unto the bones it will penetrate.

24. Furthermore, just as Peter, after their having been scandalized by the hardness, as they thought, of the discourse of the Lord, even then said, The Word of life eternal Thou hast: to whom shall we go? so he hath added, (ver. 22.) Cast upon the Lord thy care, and He shall Himself nourish thee up. A little one thou art, not yet thou understandest the secret things of words: perchance from thee the bread is hidden, and as yet with milk thou must be fed: be not angry with the breasts: they will make thee fit for the table, for which now little fitted thou art. Behold by the division of heretics

many hard things have been softened: His discourses that were hard have been softened above oil, and they are themselves darts. They have armed men preaching the Gospel: and the very discourses are aimed at the breast of every one that heareth, by men instant in season and out of season: by those discourses, by those words, as though by arrows, hearts of men unto the love of peace are smitten. Hard they were, and soft they have been made. Being softened they have not lost their virtue, but into darts have been converted. His discourses have been softened above oil: and themselves, the softened discourses, themselves are darts. But thou not yet perchance art fitted to be armed with these darts, and not yet for thee hath shone out that which in discourse perchance is obscure and hard. Cast upon the Lord thy care, and Himself shall nourish thee up. Upon the Lord cast thyself. Behold thou wilt cast thyself upon the Lord, let no one put himself in the place of the Lord. Cast upon the Lord thy care. See in what manner that great soldier of Christ would not that upon himself the care of little ones should be cast: Hath by any means Paul for you been crucified, or in the name of Paul have ye been baptized? What did he say to them after that, Cast upon the Lord your care, and Himself shall nourish you up? But now a little one would cast his care upon the Lord, and some one or other meeteth him and saith, I will take thee in. He meeteth as it were a ship tossed by the waves, and he saith, I will take her in. Do thou also make answer, A harbour I seek, not a rock. Cast upon the Lord thy care, and Himself shall nourish thee up. And see, a harbour doth take thee in: He shall not give for everlasting tossing to the just man. Thou art seeming to toss in that sea, but a harbour taketh thee in. Do thou only before that thou enter into the harbour break not away from the anchor. The ship is tossing at anchor, but not afar from the land is she driven, nor for everlasting will she toss, even if for a time she toss. For to tossing belong the words above: I have been made sad in my exercise, and have been troubled. I was looking for Him that should make me safe from weakness of mind and tempest. Tossing he speaketh, but not for everlasting he shall toss: for to an anchor he is bound, the anchor is his hope. He shall not give for everlasting tossing to the just man.

25. But to the others what?

Ver. 23. But Thou, O God, shalt bring them down unto the pit of corruption. The pit of corruption is the darkness of sinking under. Thou shalt bring them down, he saith, unto the pit of corruption: because, when blind leadeth blind, they both fall into a ditch. God bringeth them down into the pit of corruption, not because He is the author of their own guilt, but because He is Himself the judge of their iniquities. For God hath delivered them unto the desires of their heart. For they have loved darkness, and not light; they have loved blindness, and not seeing. For behold the Lord Jesus hath shone out to the whole world, let them sing in unity with the whole world: For there is not one that can hide himself from the heat of Him. But they passing over from the whole to a part, from the body to a wound, from life to a limb cut off, shall meet with what, but going into the pit of corruption?

26. Men of bloods and of deceitfulness. Men of bloods, because of slayings he calleth them: and O that they were corporal and not spiritual slayings. For blood from the flesh going forth, is seen and shuddered at: who seeth the blood of the heart in a man rebaptized? Those deaths require other eyes. Although even about these visible deaths Circumcelliones armed every where remain not quiet. And if of these visible deaths we think, there are men of bloods. Give heed to the armed man, whether he is a man of peace and not of blood. If at least a club only he were to carry, well; but he carrieth a sling, carrieth an axe, carrieth stones, carrieth lances: and carrying these weapons, wherever they may they scour, for the blood of innocent men they thirst. Therefore even with regard to these visible deaths there are men of bloods. But even of them let us say, O that such deaths alone they perpetrated, and souls they slew not. These that are men of bloods and of deceit, let them not suppose that we thus wrongly understand men of bloods, of them that kill souls: they themselves of their Maximianists have so understood it. For when they condemned them, in the very sentence of their Council they have set down these words: Swift are the feet of them to shed the blood (of the proclaimers), tribulation and calamity are in the ways of them, and the way of peace they have not known. This of the Maximianists they have said. But I ask of them, when have the Maximianists shed the body’s blood; not because they too would not shed, if there were so great a multitude as could shed, but because of the fear in their minority rather they have suffered somewhat from others, than have

themselves at any time done any such thing. Therefore I question the Donatist and say: In thy Council thou hast set down of the Maximianists, Swift are the feet of them to shed blood. Shew me one of whom the Maximianists have hurt so much as a finger! What other thing to me is he to answer, than that which I say? They that have separated themselves from unity, and who slay souls by leading astray, spiritually, not carnally, do shed blood. Very well thou hast expounded, but in thy exposition acknowledge their own deeds. Men of bloods and of deceitfulness. In guile is deceitfulness, in dissimulation, in seduction. What therefore of those very men that have been divided because of the anger of His countenance? They are themselves men of bloods and of deceit.

27. But of them he saith what? They shall not halve their days. What is, They shall not halve their days? They shall not make progress as much as they think: within the time which they expect, they shall perish. For he is that partridge, whereof hath been said, In the half of his days they shall leave him, and in his last days he shall be an unwise one. They make progress, but for a time. For what saith the Apostle? But evil men and seducers shall make progress for the worse, themselves erring, and other men into error driving. But a blind man leading a blind man, together into a ditch they fall. Deservedly they fall into the pit of corruption. What therefore saith he? They shall make progress for the worse: not however for long. For a little before he hath said, But further they shall not make progress: that is, shall not halve their days. Let the Apostle proceed and tell wherefore: For the madness of them shall be manifest to all men, as also was that of the others.

Men of bloods and of deceit shall not halve their days. But I in Thee will hope, O Lord. But deservedly they shall not halve their days, because in man they have hoped. But I from days temporal have reached unto day eternal. Wherefore? Because in Thee I have hoped, O Lord.

PSALM 56

Exposition

A discourse to the people of Carthage.

Just as when we are going to enter into any house, we look on the title to see whose it is and to whom it belongeth, lest perchance inopportunely we burst into a place whereunto we ought not; and again, in order that we may not through timidity withdraw from that which we ought to enter: as if in a word we were to read, These estates belong to such an one or to such an one: so on the lintel of this Psalm we have inscribed, At the end, for the people that from holy men were put afar off, to David himself, at the inscription of the Title, when the Allophyli held him in Gath. Let us therefore take knowledge of the people that from holy men were put afar off at the inscription of the Title. For this doth belong to that David whom now ye know how to understand spiritually. For there is here commended to our notice no other than He of Whom hath been said, The end of the Law is Christ for righteousness to every man believing. Therefore when thou hearest at the end, unto Christ give heed, lest tarrying in the way thou arrive not at the end. For whatever that place is where beneath thou shalt have stood, before that thou shalt have come home unto Christ, the divine discourse saith to thee nothing but, draw near, not yet is the place where there is security. There is one place where a most sure standing-ground is established; there is a rock whereon a House doth stand up so secure as that it feareth not the rain of the tempest. For the floods have beat against that House, and it hath not fallen, for it had been founded upon a Rock: but the Rock was Christ. Under the name of David Christ is figured: because of Him hath been said, He that hath been made of the seed of David after the flesh.

2. Who are then the people that from holy men were put afar off at the inscription of the Title? Let the Title itself declare to us that people. For there was written a certain title at the Passion of the Lord, when the Lord

was crucified: there was in that place a Title inscribed in Hebrew, in Greek, and in Latin, The King of the Jews; in three tongues as though by three witnesses the Title was confirmed: because in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall stand every word. When the Jews had read this Title, they were indignant, and they said to Pilate, Write not, King of the Jews, but that He said Himself that He was King of the Jews. Write thou that He said Himself, they said; not that the thing was which He said. But because in another Psalm it is truly said, For the Inscription of the Title corrupt thou not, Pilate answered, What I have written I have written: as though he were saying, I corrupt not truth, even if ye love falsehood. Because therefore in that cursed one the Jews had indignation, saying, We have no king but Cæsar alone; from offence at the Title they were put afar off from holy men. Let them draw near to holy men, and cleave unto the holy One that confess and desire to have Christ for King: be they put afar off from holy men that gainsaying the Title repudiated God for King, and chose man for king. Every people therefore that with human kingdom is pleased, rejecting the Lord from being King over them—to whom reigning every man is subject in such sort that he too may himself reign over his passions—every such people, I say, is put afar off from holy men. Do not, therefore, brethren, in the Jews alone remark this thing. There were given in them as it were primitive examples, to the end that in that same people might shine forth that thing whereof every man should beware. There is indeed also a Cæsar, a human king, for men in things human, but another King there is for things divine: one king for life temporal, another King for life eternal; one king earthly, another King heavenly: king earthly under King heavenly, King heavenly over all things. It is not therefore because they said they had Cæsar for king, that they sinned; but because Christ for King they would not have. And now many men Christ for King, in Heaven sitting, and every where reigning, will not have: and these are they that trouble us. Against such men this Psalm strengtheneth us. For it must needs be that such men we suffer even unto the end: whom we should not suffer, unless for us it were expedient. For every temptation is probation, and the effect of every probation hath its fruit. Because a man for the most part even to his own self is unknown: what he may bear, or what he may not bear, he knoweth not: and sometimes presumeth that he may bear that which he is not able, and sometimes despaireth of himself to be able to bear that which he is able: there cometh up temptation like a sort of inquisition, and a man is found out by himself; because he lay hid even to himself, but to his Maker he lay not hid. Furthermore, Peter presumed of something which in him was not yet, that even unto death he with the Lord Jesus Christ would persevere: his own powers Peter knew not, but the Lord knew. That he was not fitted replied He that had formed him, He that even to him that had been formed by Himself meet powers would give, what not yet He had given, knew: he that not yet had received knew not: there came on temptation; he denied, wept, received. Since therefore we know not what we should ask, as though not having, and for what we should give thanks as if receiving, need there is alway that with temptations and tribulations we be educated in this world: but troubled we cannot be, except by those that have been put afar off from holy men. This farness, brethren, understand ye to be of heart, not of the body. For ofttimes it cometh to pass that he that in body afar is estranged from thee, is joined to thee, because he loveth that which thou lovest; and ofttimes it cometh to pass that one standing beside thee is joined to thee, because he loveth that which thou lovest: and ofttimes it cometh to pass that one standing beside thee, because that he loveth the world, while thou lovest God, is afar from thee.

3. What therefore meaneth, that which to the title itself still belongeth, namely, that the Allophyli held him in Geth? Geth was a certain city of the Allophyli, that is, of strangers, to wit, of people afar from holy men. All they that refuse Christ for King become strangers. Wherefore strangers are they made? Because even that vine, though by Him planted, when it had become sour what heard it? Wherefore hast thou been turned into sourness, O alien vine? It hath not been said, My vine: because if Mine, sweet; if sour, not Mine; if not Mine, surely alien. There held him, then, Allophyli in Geth. We find indeed, brethren, David himself, son of Jesse, king of Israel, to have been in a strange land among the Allophyli, when he was being sought by Saul, and was in that city and with the king of that city, but that there he was detained we read not. Therefore our David, the Lord Jesus Christ out of the seed of that David, not alone they held, but there hold Him still Allophyli in Geth. Of Geth we have said that it is a city. But the interpretation of this name, if asked for, signifieth ‘press.’ Christ inasmuch as He is the Head, the Saviour of the Body, He that was born of a Virgin,

crucified, that now to us displayeth the pattern of our resurrection in the resurrection of His flesh, that sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and for us intercedeth, is also here, but in His Body which is the Church. The Body is conjoined to the Head thereof, the Head for the Body is crying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? And the Head in the Body thereof after the Apostle's saying, And together hath raised us again, and together hath made us to sit in heavenly places. And we there are sitting, and Himself is here labouring; we there are sitting after hope, and He here is with us after charity. This bond as it were of one man maketh two to be in one flesh, Bride and Bridegroom. Whence also the Lord Himself saith, Therefore now not two, but one flesh. How therefore here is He held in Geth? Held in a winepress is His Body, that is, His Church. What is, in a winepress? In pressings. But in a winepress fruitful is the pressing. A grape on the vine sustaineth no pressing, whole it seemeth, but nothing thence floweth: it is thrown into a winepress, is trodden, is pressed; harm seemeth to be done to the grape, but this harm is not barren; nay, if no harm had been applied, barren it would have remained.

4. Let whatsoever holy men therefore that are suffering pressing from those that have been put afar off from the saints, give heed to this Psalm, let them perceive here themselves, let them speak what here is spoken, that suffer what here is spoken of. Surely let him that suffereth not, speak not; I bind not to the speaking, him that I see out of suffering. But let him beware, that when he would be afar from suffering, he be not put afar off from holy men. Let each one therefore think of his enemy; if Christian he is, the world to him is an enemy. Private enmities therefore let no one think of, when about to hear the words of this Psalm: Know ye that for us the wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against princes and powers, and spiritual things of wickedness, that is, against the devil and his angels; because even when we suffer men that annoy us, he is instigating, he is inflaming, as it were his vessels he is moving. Let us give heed therefore to two enemies, him whom we see, and him whom we see not; man we see, the devil we see not; man let us love, of the devil beware; for man pray, against the devil pray, and let us say to God,

Ver. 1. Have pity on me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down. Fear not because man hath trodden thee down: have thou wine, a grape thou hast become in order that thou shouldest be trodden. Have pity on me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down: all day long warring he hath troubled me, every one that hath been put afar off from the saints. But why should not here be understood even the devil himself? Is it because mention is made of ‘man?’ doth therefore the Gospel err, because it hath said, A man that is an enemy hath done this? But by a kind of figure may he also be called a man, and yet not be a man. Whether therefore it was him whom he that said these words was beholding, or whether it was the people and each one that was put afar off from holy men, through which kind the devil troubleth the people of God, who cleave to holy men, who cleave to the Holy One, who cleave to the King, at the title of which King being indignant they were as though beaten back, and put afar off: let him say, Have pity on me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down: and let him faint not in this treading down, knowing Him on Whom he is calling, and by Whose example he hath been made strong. The first cluster in the winefat pressed is Christ. When that cluster by passion was pressed out, there flowed that whence the cup inebriating is how passing beautiful! Let His Body likewise say, looking upon its Head, Have pity on me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down: all day long warring he hath troubled me. All day long, at all times. Let no one say to himself, There have been troubles in our fathers’ time, in our time there are not. If thou supposest thyself not to have troubles, not yet hast thou begun to be a Christian. And where is the voice of the Apostle, But even all that will live godly in Christ, persecutions shall suffer. If therefore thou sufferest not any persecution for Christ, take heed lest not yet thou hast begun godly to live in Christ. But when thou hast begun godly to live in Christ, thou hast entered into the winepress; make ready thyself for pressings: but be not thou dry, lest from the pressing nothing go forth.

5. Ver. 2. Mine enemies have trodden me down all day long. They that have been put afar off from holy men, these are mine enemies. All day long: already it hath been said, From the height of the day. What meaneth, from the height of the day? Perchance it is a high thing to understand. And no wonder, because the height of the day it is. For perchance they for this reason have been put afar off from holy men, because they were not able to

penetrate the height of the day, whereof the Apostles are twelve shining hours. Therefore they that crucified Him, as if man, in the day have erred. But why have they suffered darkness, so that they should be put afar off from holy men? Because on high the day was shining, Him in the height hidden they knew not. For if they had known, never the Lord of Glory would they have crucified. Therefore from this height of day starting back and put afar off from holy men, they have been made enemies, that trouble and tread down as it were a grape in a winepress. There is also another sense. From the height of the day mine enemies have trodden me down all day long, that is, at all times. From the height of the day, that is, from pride temporal. For when they tread down, high they are: humble are they that are trodden down, high are they that tread down. But fear not the height of men treading down: of the day the height is, temporal it is, not eternal.

6. Ver. 3. For many men that war against me, shall fear. Shall fear when? When the day shall have passed away, wherein they are high. For for a time high they are, when the time of their height is finished they will fear. But I in Thee will hope, O Lord. He saith not, But I will not fear: but, Many men, that war against me, shall fear. When there shall have come that day of Judgment, then shall mourn for themselves all the tribes of the earth. When there shall have appeared the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, then secure shall be all holy men. For that thing shall come which they hoped for, which they longed for, the coming whereof they prayed for: but to those men no place for repentance shall remain, because in that time wherein fruitful might have been repentance, their heart they hardened against a warning Lord. Shall they too raise up a wall against a judging God? The godliness of this man do thou indeed acknowledge, and if in that Body thou art, imitate him. When he had said, Many men, that war against me, shall fear: he did not continue, ‘But I will not fear:’ lest to his own powers ascribing his not fearing, he too should be amid high temporal things, and through pride temporal he should not deserve to come to rest everlasting: rather he hath made thee to perceive whence he shall not fear. But I, he saith, in thee will hope, O Lord: he hath not spoken of his confidence: but of the cause of his confidence. For if I shall not fear, I may also by hardness of heart not fear, for many men by too much pride fear nothing. Let your love attend. One thing is soundness of body, another thing is torpor of body, another thing is

immortality of body. Perfect soundness indeed is immortality: but by a sort of mode of speaking, that is called soundness which we have in this life. When he is not sick, a man is called sound; and when the physician hath made examination, sound he pronounceth him: and when any one hath begun to be sick, that same soundness is disturbed; and when it is healed, to the same soundness he returneth. To three states as it were of the body give heed and examine, soundness, torpor, immortality. Soundness hath no sickness, but nevertheless, when it is touched and molested, it feeleth pain. But torpor hath no pain, hath lost sense of pain, by so much the more insensible as it is worse. Again, immortality hath no pain, for swallowed up is all corruption, and this corruptible hath put on incorruption, and this mortal hath put on immortality. There is therefore no pain in a body immortal, no pain in a body torpid. Let not a torpid man deem himself forthwith immortal: nearer immortality is the soundness of a man in pain, than the torpor of a man not feeling. Thou findest therefore a man proud in the most excessive vapouring, that hath persuaded himself to fear nothing: mightier dost thou deem him than that man, that saith, Without fightings, within fears: mightier than the Head Himself our Lord God, Who said, Sorrowful is My Soul even unto death? This man is not more mighty: be not thou pleased with his torpor: not with immortality hath he been clothed, but of feeling stripped. But do thou keep thy soul not without affection; for they have been blamed that are without affection: and say thou with the feeling of soundness, Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If to this man there reached not offence, to wit the perdition of every weak man, while being as it were stiff and without pain would he seem to be the better? Far be it: torpor there would be, not calmness. Evidently, brethren, when we shall have come to that place, to that seat, to that blessedness, to an heavenly country, where our soul may be filled with security, be filled with rest and everlasting felicity, no pain there shall be; because cause for pain there shall not be. Many men, he saith, that war against me, shall fear. And those very torpid men that now nothing do fear, shall fear sometime. For there shall come so great terror as shall break and crush all hardness. Many men that war against me, shall fear. But I in Thee will hope, O Lord.

7. Ver. 4. In God I will praise my discourses, in God I have hoped: I will not fear what flesh doeth to me. Wherefore? Because in God I will praise my discourses. If in thyself thou praisest thy discourses: I say not that thou art not to fear; it is impossible that thou have not to fear. For thy discourses either false thou wilt have, and therefore thine own, because false: or if thy discourses shall be true, and thou shalt deem thyself not to have them from God, but of thyself to speak; true they will be, but thou wilt be false: but if thou shalt have known that thou canst say nothing true in the wisdom of God, in the faith of the Truth, save that which from Him thou hast received, of Whom is said, For what hast thou, which thou hast not received? Then in God thou art praising thy discourses, in order that in God thou mayest be praised by the discourses of God. For if whatever in thee is of God, is honoured by thee; thou also, having been made by God, wilt be honoured in God: but if whatever in thee is of God, thou shalt have honoured as though thine own, not of God; in like manner as that people was put afar off from holy men, so thou wilt be put afar off from the Holy One. Therefore, In God I will praise my discourses: if in God, wherefore mine? Both in God, and mine. In God, because from Himself: mine, because I have received. Himself hath willed them to be mine, Who hath given, by loving Him of Whom they are: because from Him to me they are, mine they have been made. For whence, Our daily bread give us this day? How ours? How give? By asking from Him thou wilt not be empty, by confessing it to be thine, thou wilt not be ungrateful. For if thou say not thine, thou hast not received: again, if thou say thine, so as if from thee be that which thou callest thine, thou losest that which thou hadst received, because ungrateful thou art to Him from Whom thou hadst received. In God, therefore, I will praise discourses, because there He is Himself the fountain of true discourses: Mine, because, thirsting, I have drawn near and have drunk. In God I will praise my discourses, in God I have hoped, I will not fear what flesh doeth to me. Wast thou not the same that a little before wast saying, Have pity on me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down; all day long warring he hath troubled me? How therefore here, I will not fear what flesh doeth to me? What shall he do to thee? Thou thyself a little before hast said, Hath trodden me down, hath troubled me. Nothing shall he do, when these things he shall do? He hath had regard to the wine which floweth from treading, and hath made answer, Evidently he hath trodden down, evidently hath troubled; but

what to me shall he do? A grape I was, wine I shall be: In God I have hoped, I will not fear what flesh doeth to me.

8. Ver. 5. All day long my words they abhorred. Thus they are, ye know. Speak truth, preach truth, proclaim Christ to the heathen, proclaim the Church to heretics, proclaim to all men salvation: they contradict, they abhor my words. But when my words they abhor, whom think ye they abhor, save Him in Whom I shall praise my discourses? All day long my words they abhorred. Let this at least suffice, let them abhor words, no farther let them proceed, censure, reject! Be it far from them! Why should I say this? When words they reject, when words they hate, those words which from the fount of truth flow forth, what would they do to him through whom the very words are spoken? what but that which followeth, Against me all the counsels of them are for evil? If the bread itself they hate, how spare they the basket wherein it is ministered? Against me all the counsels of them are for evil. If so even against the Lord Himself, let not the Body disdain that which hath gone before in the Head, to the end that the Body may cleave to the Head. Despised hath been thy Lord, and wilt thou have thyself be honoured by those men that have been put afar off from holy men? Do not for thyself wish to claim that which in Him hath not gone before. The disciple is not greater than his Master; the servant is not greater than his Lord. If the Master of the family they have called Beelzebub, how much more them of His household? Against me all the counsels of them are for evil.

9. Ver. 6. They shall sojourn, and shall hide. To sojourn is to be in a strange land. Sojourners is a term used of those then that live in a country not their own. Every man in this life is a foreigner: in which life ye see that with flesh we are covered round, through which flesh the heart cannot be seen. Therefore the Apostle saith, Do not before the time judge any thing, until the Lord come, and He shall enlighten the hidden things of darkness, and shall manifest the thoughts of the heart; and then praise shall be to each one from God. Before that this be done, in this sojourning of fleshly life every one carrieth his own heart, and every heart to every other heart is shut. Furthermore, those men of whom the counsels are against this man for evil, shall sojourn, and shall hide: because in this foreign abode they are, and

carry flesh, they hide guile in heart; whatsoever of evil they think, they hide. Wherefore? Because as yet this life is a foreign one. Let them hide; that shall appear which they hide, and they too will not be hidden. There is also in this hidden thing another interpretation, which perchance will be more approved of. For out of those men that have been put afar off from holy men, there creep in certain false brethren, and they cause worse tribulations to the Body of Christ; because they are not altogether avoided as if entirely aliens. From these same men the Apostle, calling to mind weightier perils, when he was enumerating many sufferings of his, and was saying, By perils of rivers, by perils of robbers, by perils from mine own people, by perils from the nations, by perils in the city, by perils in the desert, by perils in the sea: by perils, he saith, in false brethren. These men are exceeding dangerous, of whom is said in another Psalm, And they were entering in, in order that they might see. They were entering in, in order that they might see, and no one saith, Go not in to see. For he goeth in as though thine, he is not guarded against as an alien. Those men, therefore, shall sojourn and shall hide. For thus they go into the great house, not there to abide; therefore they shall sojourn. For such sinners the Lord willing to be considered as servants, after that Gospel interpretation, whereby Every one that doeth sin is the servant of sin, saith, The servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth for ever. He that goeth in as a son, will not sojourn, because he shall continue even unto the end: he that goeth in as a servant, deceitful, sinful, to the eye giving heed, seeking what he may carry off, seeking what he may accuse, or what he may find fault with, in order to sojourn goeth in, not to inhabit and continue. Not even those men nevertheless let us fear, brethren: (ver. 4.) In God I have hoped, I will not fear what flesh doeth to me. Even if they sojourn, even if they go in, even if they feign, even if they hide, flesh they are: do thou in the Lord hope, nothing to thee shall flesh do. But he bringeth in tribulation, bringeth in treading down. There is added wine, because the grape is pressed: thy tribulation will not be unfruitful: another seeth thee, imitateth thee: because thou also in order that thou mightest learn to bear such a man, to thy Head hast looked up, that first cluster, unto whom there hath come in a man that he might see, hath sojourned, and hath hidden, to wit, the traitor Judas. All men, therefore, that with false heart go in, sojourning and hiding, do not thou fear: the father of these same men, Judas, with thy Lord hath been: and

He indeed knew him; although Judas the traitor was sojourning and hiding, nevertheless, the heart of him was open to the Lord of all: knowingly He chose one man, whereby He might give comfort to thee that wouldest not know whom thou shouldest avoid. For He might have not chosen Judas, because He knew Judas: for He saith to His disciples, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one out of you is a devil? Therefore even a devil was chosen. Or if chosen he was not, how is it that He hath chosen twelve and not rather eleven? Chosen even he is, but for another purpose. Chosen were eleven for the work of probation, chosen one for the work of temptation. Whence could He give an example to thee, that wouldest not know what men thou shouldest avoid as evil, of what men thou shouldest beware as false and artificial, sojourning and hiding, except He say to thee, Behold, with Myself I have had one of those very men! There hath gone before an example, I have borne, to suffer I have willed that which I knew, in order that to thee knowing not I might give consolation. That which to Me he hath done, the same he will do to thee also: in order that he may be able to do much, in order that he may make much havoc, he will accuse, false charges he will allege. Suppose falsehoods prevail; shall they any wise against thee prevail, and against Me not have prevailed? Against Me surely they have prevailed, but heaven from Me they have not taken. His flesh when buried had false witnesses to endure: too little it was to suffer then in the judgment, He suffered them in the tomb. They received money to speak falsely; they said, When we were sleeping, there came His disciples and took Him away. Furthermore, so blind were the Jews, that they believed a saying altogether incredible: they believed witnesses sleeping. Either it was false that they slept, and lying men they should not have believed: or it was true that they slept, and that which was done they knew not. They shall sojourn and shall hide. Let them sojourn and hide, to do what? In God I have hoped, I will not fear what flesh doeth to me.

10. Ver. 6. These same men shall mark my heel. For they shall sojourn and hide in such sort, that they may mark where a man slippeth. Intent they are upon the heel, to see when a slip may chance to be made; in order that they may detain the foot for a fall, or trip up the foot for a stumble; certes that they may find that which they may accuse. And what man so walketh, that no where he slippeth? For example, how speedily is a slip made even in

tongue? For it is written, Whosoever in tongue stumbleth not, the same is a perfect man. What man I pray would dare himself to call or deem perfect? Therefore it must needs be that every one slip in tongue. But let them that shall sojourn and shall hide, carp at all words, seeking somewhere to make snares and knotty false accusations, wherein they are themselves entangled before those whom they strive to entangle: in order that they may themselves be taken and perish before that they catch other men in order to destroy them. For a man runneth back unto his heart, and thence runneth back to God, and knoweth how to say, In God I will praise my discourses. Whatever good thing I have said, whatever true thing I have said, of God I have said it, and from God have said it: whatever other thing perchance I have said, which to have said I ought not, as a man I have said, but under God I have said. He that strengtheneth one walking, doth menace one straying, forgive one acknowledging, recalleth the tongue, recalleth him that slipped. For a just man seven times shall fall, and shall rise again; but ungodly men shall be made weak in evil things. Let not therefore any one of us fear cunning pursuers, carpers at words, tellers almost of syllables, and breakers of commandments. He is minding what in thee he may convict; in order to believe in Christ through thee, he is not minding. Attend thou unto the discourses of him whom thou blamest, whether perchance he may teach thee something to thy health. And what, he saith, shall he be able to teach to my health, that hath so slipped in word? This very thing perchance he is teaching thee to thy health, that thou be not a carper at words, but a gatherer of precepts. Themselves shall mark my heel.

11. As my soul hath undergone. I speak of that which I have undergone. He was speaking as one experienced: As my soul hath undergone. They shall sojourn and hide. Let my soul undergo all men, men without barking, men within hiding, let it undergo. From without coming, like a river cometh temptation: on the Rock let it find thee, let it strike against, not throw thee down; the house hath been founded upon a Rock. Within he is, he shall sojourn and hide: suppose chaff is near thee, let there come in the treading of oxen, let there come in the roller of temptations; thou art cleansed, the other is crushed.

12. As my soul hath undergone: (ver. 7.) for nothing Thou shalt save them. He hath taught us even for these very men to pray. However they shall sojourn and hide, however deceitful they be, however dissemblers and liers in wait they be; do thou pray for them, and do not say, Shall God amend even such a man, so evil, so perverse? Do not despair: give heed to Him Whom thou askest, not him for whom thou askest. The greatness of the disease seest thou, the might of the Physician seest thou not? They shall sojourn and hide: as my soul hath undergone. Undergo, pray: and there is done what? For nothing Thou shalt save them. Thou shalt make them safe so as that nothing to Thee it may be, that is, so that no labour to Thee it may be. With men they are despaired of, but Thou with a word dost heal; Thou wilt not toil in healing, though we are astounded in looking on. There is another sense in this verse, For nothing Thou shalt save them: with not any merits of their going before Thou shalt save them. I that before was a blasphemer, he saith, and a persecutor, and injurious; he received letters in order that wherever he might find Christians, he might bind and lead away. Certes in order that he might bind and lead away, at first he was sojourning and was hiding. Therefore of this man not any good merits had gone before, nay, such things had gone before on account of which he would be condemned: nothing of good he brought in, and saved was he. For nothing Thou shalt save them. They shall not bring to Thee he-goats, rams, bulls, not gifts and spices shall they bring Thee in Thy temple, not any thing of the drink-offering of a good conscience do they pour thereon; all in them is rough, all foul, all to be detested: and though they to Thee bring nothing whereby they may be saved; For nothing Thou shalt save them, that is, with the free gift of Thy Grace. What had that robber brought to the cross? From the lurking place to the judgment, from the judgment unto the tree, from the tree unto Paradise. ‘He believed, wherefore he spake.’ But even that very faith who did give, but He that beside him hung? For nothing Thou shalt save them.

13. In anger the peoples Thou shalt bring down. Thou art angry and dost bring down, dost rage and save, dost terrify and call. For what is, In anger the peoples Thou shalt bring down? Thou fillest with tribulations all things, in order that being set in tribulations men may fly to Thee, lest by pleasures and a wrong security they be seduced. From Thee anger is seen, but that of

a father. A father is angry with a son, the despiser of his injunctions: being angry with him he boxeth him, striketh, pulleth the ear, with hand draggeth, to school leadeth. In anger the peoples Thou shalt bring down. How many men have entered, how many men have filled the House of the Lord, in the anger of Him brought down, that is, by tribulations terrified and with faith filled? For to this end tribulation stirreth up; in order to empty the vessel which is full of wickedness, so as that it may be filled with grace. In anger the peoples Thou shalt bring down.

14. Ver. 8. O God, my life I have told out to Thee. For that I live hath been Thy doing, and for this reason I tell out my life to Thee. But did not God know that which He had given? What is that which thou tellest out to Him? Wilt thou teach God? Far be it. Therefore why saith he, I have told out to Thee? Is it perchance because it profiteth Thee that I have told out my life? And what doth it profit God? To the advantage of God it doth profit. I have told out to God my life, because that life hath been God’s doing. In like manner as his life Paul the Apostle did tell out, saying, I that before was a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious, he shall tell out his life. But mercy I have obtained. He hath told out his life, not for himself but for Him: because he hath told it out in such sort, that in Him men believe, not for his own advantages, but for the advantages of Him. For what saith that same Paul? Therefore Christ hath died, and hath risen, in order that he that liveth, no more for himself may live, but for Him that for all men hath died. If therefore thou livest, and livest not by thyself, because that thou shouldest live He hath granted: tell out thy life, not for thyself, but for Him; not thine own things seeking, not for thyself living, but for Him That for all men hath died. For of certain reprobate men what saith the same Apostle? For all men seek their own things, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. If for this reason thou tellest out thy life, in order that it may profit thee, and other men it may not profit; for thyself thou tellest it out, not for God; but if so thou tellest out thy life, in order that other men also thou mayest invite to receive life, which thou too hast received, thou tellest out thy life to Him from Whom thou hast received, and thou shalt have a reward more ample, because even out of that which thou hast received, not ungrateful thou hast shewn thyself. O God, my life I have told out to Thee. Thou hast put my tears in Thy sight. Thou hast hearkened to me imploring Thee. As also in

Thy promise. Because as Thou hadst promised this thing, so Thou hast done. Thou hast said Thou wouldest hearken to one weeping. I have believed, I have wept, I have been hearkened unto; I have found Thee merciful in promising, true in repaying. As also in Thy promise.

15. Ver. 9. Turned be mine enemies backward. This thing to these very men is profitable, no ill to these men he is wishing. For to go before they are willing, therefore to be amended they are not willing. Thou warnest thine enemy to live well, that he amend himself: he scorneth, he rejecteth thy word: “Behold him that adviseth me; behold him from whom I am to hear the commandments whereby I shall live!” To go before thee he willeth, and in going before is not amended. He mindeth not that thy words are not thine, he mindeth not that thy life to God thou tellest out, not to thyself. In going before therefore he is not amended: it is a good thing for him that he be turned backward, and follow him whom to go before he willed. The Lord to His disciples was speaking of His Passion that was to be. Peter shuddered, and saith, Far be it, O Lord, there shall not be done this thing: he that a little before had said, Thou art the Christ, Son of the living God, having confessed God, feared for Him to die, as if but a man. But the Lord Who so came that He might suffer, (for we could not otherwise be saved unless with His blood we were redeemed,) a little before had praised the confession of Peter, and had said, Because to thee flesh and blood hath not revealed this thing, but My Father Which is in the heavens; therefore thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not overcome Her: and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. See ye after what sort He followed up a confession true, godly, full of confidence, because he said, Thou art the Christ, Son of the living God. But immediately when the Lord beginneth to speak of His Passion, he feared lest He should perish by death, whereas we ourselves should perish unless He died; and he saith, Far be it, O Lord, this thing shall not be done. And the Lord, to him to whom a little before He had said, Blessed thou art, and upon this Rock I will build My Church, saith, Go back behind, Satan, an offence thou art to Me. Why therefore Satan is he, that a little before was blessed, and a Rock? For thou savourest not the things which are of God, He saith, but those things which are of man. A little before [he savoured] the things which are of God: “because not flesh and blood hath revealed to

thee, but My Father Which is in the Heavens.” When in God he was praising his discourse, not Satan but Peter, from petra: but when of himself and out of human infirmity, carnal love of man, which would be for an impediment to his own salvation, and that of the rest, Satan he is called. Why? Because to go before the Lord he willed, and to the Leader heavenly, earthly counsel to give. Far be it, O Lord, this thing shall not be done. Thou sayest, Far be it, and thou sayest, O Lord: surely if Lord He is, in power He doeth: if Master He is, He knoweth what He doeth, He knoweth what He teacheth: but thou willest to lead thy Leader, teach thy Master, command thy Lord, choose for God: much thou goest before, go back behind. Did not this too profit these enemies? Turned be Mine enemies backward; but let them not remain backward. For this reason let them be turned backward, lest they go before; but so that they follow, not so that they remain. Turned be Mine enemies backward.

16. Ver. 9. In whatsoever day I shall have called upon Thee, behold I have known that my God art Thou. A great knowledge. He saith not, I have known that God Thou art: but, That my God art Thou. For thine He is, when thee He succoureth: thine He is, when thou to Him art not an alien. Whence is said, Blessed the people of whom is the Lord the God of the same. Wherefore of whom is? For of whom is He not? Of all things indeed God He is: but of those men the God peculiarly He is said to be, that love Him, that hold Him, that possess Him, that worship Him, as though belonging to His own House: the great family of Him are they, redeemed by the great blood of the Only Son. How great a thing hath God given to us, that His own we should be, and He should be ours! But in truth foreigners afar have been put from holy men, sons alien they are. See what of them is said in another Psalm: O Lord, deliver me, he saith, from the hand of alien sons, of whom the mouth hath spoken vanity, and the right hand of them is a right hand of iniquity. And see the height of these same; but it is ‘the height of the day,’ that is, pride temporal. Of whom their sons, he saith, are as young plants firmly rooted, the daughters of them adorned as the similitude of a temple. The felicity of the present world he is describing, wherein men erring, and counting it as some great matter, the felicity true and everlasting seek not. Thence therefore these are sons alien, not sons of God: Of whom their sons, he saith, are as young plants firmly rooted, their

daughters adorned as the similitude of a temple: their garners full, belching forth out of this unto this: their oxen fat, their sheep fruitful, multiplying in their goings out: there is not falling of wall, nor going over, nor cry in the streets of them. And what followeth? Blessed they have called the people to whom these things are. But who have called them? Sons alien, of whom the mouth hath spoken vanity. Thou, what sayest thou? Blessed the people, of whom the Lord is the God of the same. He hath taken from among them all other things which God giveth, and hath given God Himself. For all those things, brethren, of which the sons alien have made mention, God giveth; but even to aliens He giveth, but even to evil men giveth, but even to blasphemers giveth, He that maketh His sun to rise upon good men and upon evil men, and raineth upon just men and upon unjust men. Sometimes these things to good men He giveth, sometimes giveth not: and to evil men sometimes giveth, sometimes giveth not: for good men however He keepeth Himself, but for evil men fire everlasting. There is therefore an evil thing which He giveth not to good men, and there is a good thing which He giveth not to evil men: there are certain middle things, both good things and evil things, which He giveth both to good men and to evil men.

17. Let us therefore love God, brethren, purely and chastely. There is not a chaste heart, if God for reward it worshippeth. How so? Reward of the worship of God shall not we have? We shall have evidently, but it is God Himself Whom we worship. Himself for us a reward shall be, because we shall see Him as He is. Observe that a reward thou shalt obtain. To His lovers our Lord Jesus Christ saith what? He that loveth Me, keepeth My commandments; and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him. What therefore wilt Thou give him? And I will manifest Myself to him. If thou lovest not, too little it is: if thou lovest, if thou sighest, if freely thou worshippest Him, by Whom freely thou hast been bought; for thou hadst not deserved of Him that He should redeem thee; if upon consideration of His benefits towards thee thou sighest, and unquiet hast thy heart with longing for Him; do not beside Him ask any thing from Him, He is Himself sufficient for thee. Howsoever covetous thou art, sufficient for thee is God. For avarice sought to possess the whole earth, add also Heaven: more is He that hath made heaven and earth. I will tell you, brethren: in these human alliances consider a chaste heart, of what sort

it is towards God: certainly human alliances are of such sort, that a man doth not love his wife, that loveth her because of her portion: a woman her husband doth not chastely love, that for these reasons loveth him, because something he hath given, or because much he hath given. Both a rich man is a husband, and one that hath become a poor man is a husband. How many men proscribed, by chaste wives have been the more beloved! Proved have been many chaste marriages by the misfortunes of husbands: that the wives might not be supposed to love any other object more than their husband, not only have they not forsaken, but the more have they obeyed. If therefore a husband of flesh freely is loved, if chastely he is loved; and a wife of flesh freely is loved, if chastely she is loved; in what manner must God be loved, the true and truth-speaking Husband of the soul, making fruitful unto the offspring of everlasting life, and not suffering us to be barren? Him, therefore, so let us love, as that any other thing besides Himself be not loved: and there takes place in us that which we have spoken of, that which we have sung, because even here the voice is ours: In whatsoever day I shall have called upon Thee, behold, I have known that my God art Thou. This is to call upon God, freely to call upon Him. Furthermore, of certain men hath been said what? Upon the Lord they have not called. The Lord they seemed as it were to call unto themselves; and they besought Him about inheritances, about increasing money, about lengthening this life, about the rest of temporal things: and concerning them the Scripture saith what? Upon the Lord they have not called. Therefore there followeth what? There they have feared with fear, where there was no fear. What is, where there was no fear? Lest money should be stolen from them, lest any thing in their house should be made less; lastly, lest they should have less of years in this life, than they hoped for themselves: but there have they trembled with fear, where there was no fear. Such men they are as were those Jews: If we shall have let Him live, there will come the Romans, and will take away from us both place and nation. There they have feared a fear, where there was no fear. Behold, I have known that my God art Thou. Great riches of heart, great light of the eye interior, great confidence of security! Behold, I have known that my God art Thou.

18. Ver. 10. In God I will praise the word, in the Lord I will praise the discourse: (ver. 11.) in God I have hoped, I will not fear what man doeth

unto me. Now this is the very sense which above hath been repeated.

19. Ver. 12. In me, O God, are Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee. “Vow ye, and render to the Lord your God.” What vow, what render? Perchance those animals which were offered at the altars aforetime? No such thing offer thou: in thyself is what thou mayest vow and render. From the heart’s coffer bring forth the incense of praise; from the store of a good conscience bring forth the sacrifice of faith. Whatsoever thing thou bringest forth, kindle with love. In thyself be the vows, which thou mayest render of praise to God. Of what praise? For what hath He granted thee? (Ver. 13.) For Thou hast rescued my soul from death. This is that very life which he telleth out to Him: O God, my life I have told out to Thee. For I was what? Dead. Through myself I was dead: through Thee I am what? Alive. Therefore in me, O God, are Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee. Behold I love my God: no one doth tear Him from me: that which to Him I may give, no one doth tear from me, because in the heart it is shut up. With reason is said with that former confidence, What should man do unto me? Let man rage, let him be permitted to rage, be permitted to accomplish that which he attempteth: what is he to take away? Gold, silver, cattle, men servants, maid servants, estates, houses, let him take away all things: doth he by any means take away the vows, which are in me, which I may render of praise to God? The tempter was permitted to tempt a holy man, Job; in one moment of time he took away all things: whatever of possessions he had had, he carried off: took away inheritance, slew heirs; and this not little by little, but in a crowd, at one blow, at one swoop, so that all things were on a sudden announced: when all was taken away, alone there remained Job, but in him were vows of praise, which he might render to God, in him evidently there were: the coffer of his holy breast the thieving devil had not rifled, full he was of that wherefrom he might sacrifice. Hear what he had, hear what he brought forth: The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done: be the name of the Lord blessed. O riches interior, whither thief doth not draw near! God Himself had given that whereof He was receiving; He had Himself enriched him with that whereof to Him he was offering that which He loved. Praise from thee God requireth, thy confession God requireth. But from thy field wilt thou give any thing? He hath Himself rained in order that thou mayest have.

From thy coffer wilt thou give any thing? He hath Himself put in that which thou art to give. What wilt thou give, which from Him thou hast not received? For what hast thou which thou hast not received? From the heart wilt thou give? He too hath given faith, hope, and charity: this thou must bring forth: this thou must sacrifice. But evidently all the other things the enemy is able to take away against thy will; this to take away he is not able, unless thou be willing. These things a man will lose even against his will: and wishing to have gold, will lose gold; and wishing to have house, will lose house: faith no one will lose, except him that shall have despised her.

20. In me, O God, are Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee: (ver. 13.) because Thou hast rescued my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from slipping: that I may be pleasing before God in the light of the living. With reason he is not pleasing to alien sons, that are put afar off from holy men, because they have not the light of the living, whence they may see that which to God is pleasing. Light of the living, is light of the immortal, light of holy men. He that is not in darkness, is pleasing in the light of the living. A man is observed, and the things which belong to him; no one knoweth of what sort he is: God seeth of what sort he is. Sometimes even the devil himself he escapeth; except he tempt, he findeth not: just as concerning that man of whom just now I have made mention. God knew him, and bore witness to him: the devil knew him not, and therefore had said, Doth Job by any means worship God for nought? See to what a proof the enemy challengeth: there is perfection. See what the enemy throweth out for reproach: he saw a man serving God, in all things obeying, all things doing well; and because a rich man he was, and his house most prosperous, this thing he throweth out for reproach, that for this reason he worshippeth God, because He had given to him all these things: Doth Job by any means worship God for nought? For this was true light, this the light of the living, that gratis he should worship God. God saw in the heart of His servant His gratuitous worship. For that heart was pleasing in the sight of the Lord in the light of the living: the devil's sight he escaped, because in darkness he was. God admitted the tempter, not in order that He might Himself know that which He did know, but in order that to us to be known and imitated He might set it forth. Admitted was the tempter; he took away every thing, there remained the man bereft of possessions, bereft of family, bereft of

children, full of God. A wife certainly was left. Merciful do ye deem the devil, that he left him a wife? He knew through whom he had deceived Adam. He had left a help-mate for himself, not a comforter for the husband. He, therefore, being full of God, in whom vows there were, which he might render of praise, in order that he might shew that gratis he did worship God, not because so great things he had received; even with the loss of all things was a man of such sort, because Him that had given all things, he lost not: The Lord hath given, he saith, the Lord hath taken away; as hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done: be the Name of the Lord blessed. Moreover, with wound smitten from head even unto feet, whole nevertheless within, he made answer to the woman tempting, out of the light of the living, out of the light of his heart: thou hast spoken as though one of the unwise women, that is, as though one that hath not the light of the living. For the light of the living is wisdom, and the darkness of unwise men is folly. Thou hast spoken as though one of the unwise women: my flesh thou seest, the light of my heart thou seest not. For she then might more have loved her husband, if the interior beauty she had known, and had beheld the place where he was beautiful before the eyes of God: because in Him were vows which he might render of praise to God. How entirely the enemy had forborne to invade that patrimony! How whole was that which he was possessing, and that because of which yet more to be possessed he hoped for, being to go on from virtues unto virtue. Therefore, brethren, to this end let all these things serve us, that God gratis we love, in Him hope always, neither man nor devil fear. Neither the one nor the other doeth any thing, except when it is permitted: permitted for no other reason can it be, except because it doth profit us. Let us endure evil men, let us be good men: because even we have been evil. Even as nothing God shall save men, of whom we dare to despair. Therefore of no one let us despair, for all men whom we suffer let us pray, from God let us never depart. Our patrimony let Him be, our hope let Him be, our safety let Him be. He is Himself here a comforter, there a remunerator, every where Maker-alive, and of life the Giver, not of another life, but of that whereof hath been said, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: in order that both here in the light of faith, and there in the light of sight, as it were in the light of the living, in the sight of the Lord we may be pleasing.

PSALM 57

Exposition

1. We have heard in the Gospel just now, brethren, how loveth us our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God with the Father, Man with us, out of our own selves, now at the right hand of the Father; ye have heard how much He loveth us. For the measure of His own love He hath even Himself prescribed, and upon us hath laid it, saying that His commandment is, that we should love one another. And that we should not inquire doubting and fretting how much we ought to love one another, and how much that perfect love is which is pleasing to God, (for that is perfect than which greater there cannot be,) He hath Himself expressed, hath taught, and He saith, Greater love than this no one hath, than that a man should lay down his life for his friends. He hath Himself done that which He taught; the Apostles have done that which from Him they learned, and by us that it be done they have preached. Let us also do thus; because even if we are not what He was, in respect of this, that He created us, what He was nevertheless we are, in respect of that which He was made because of us. And if He alone had done, perchance no one of us ought to dare to imitate Him: for in such sort He was Man, as that God also He was: but in that Man He was, servants have imitated Lord, and disciples Master; and they have done that have gone before us in His own Family, our fathers indeed, but nevertheless our fellow-servants; nor would God command that we should do this, if impossible He judged it, that this by man should be done. But considering thy weakness, dost thou faint under the command? be comforted in the example. But even the example for thee is a great thing. There is present He that furnished the example, to furnish also aid. Let us hear therefore in this Psalm; for opportunely it chanceth, even by His provision, that therewith doth harmonize the Gospel, which commendeth to us the love of Christ, Who His life hath laid down for us, in order that we also our life for the brethren should lay down. It hath accorded and harmonized with this Psalm, so that we may see in what manner our Lord Himself His life hath laid down for us. For this Psalm the Passion of the Same doth sing. And since

whole Christ is Head and Body, which truth well ye know I doubt not: the Head is our Saviour Himself, Who suffered under Pontius Pilate; Who now after that He hath risen again from the dead, is sitting at the right hand of the Father: but the Body of Him is the Church, not this or that, but in the whole world spread abroad; nor that only which now is among men that are living in the present life, but in those also belonging to it, that have been before us, and in those that are to be after us, even unto the end of the world. For the whole Church consisting of all faithful men, because all faithful men are members of Christ, hath that Head established in the Heavens that governeth His Body: and if separated It is in sight, yet joined It is in love. Because therefore whole Christ is Head and Its Body, therefore in all the Psalms let us so hear the words of the Head, as that we hear also the words of the Body. For He would not speak separately, because He would not be separated, saying, Behold, with you I am even unto the consummation of the world. If with us He is, He speaketh in us, speaketh of us, speaketh through us; because we also speak in Him: and therefore the truth we speak, because in Him we speak. For whenever in ourselves and out of ourselves we shall have willed to speak, in a lie we shall remain.

2. Because then this Psalm is singing of the Passion of the Lord, see what is the title that it hath: at the end. The end is Christ. Why hath He been called end? Not as one that consumeth, but one that consummateth. For to consume, is to destroy: to consummate, to perfect. For whatever we speak of as ended, from the word ‘end’ we derive our expression. But in one sense we say, the bread hath been ended; in another sense we say, the coat hath been ended: there hath been ended the bread which was being eaten, there hath been ended the coat which was being woven: the bread then hath been ended so that it is consumed; the coat hath been ended so that it is perfected; the end therefore of our purpose is Christ: because however much we attempt, in Him we are made perfect, and by Him are made perfect, and this is our perfection, that unto Him we come home: but when unto Him thou shalt have come home, more thou seekest not; thy end He is. For in like manner the end of thy life is the place whither thou art tending, to which when thou shalt have arrived, then thou wilt stay: so the end of thy study, of thy purpose, of thy attempt, of thy intention, is He to Whom thou art tending, unto Whom when thou shalt have come home, more thou wilt

not desire, because nothing better thou wilt have. He therefore Himself both an example of living to us hath set forth in this life, and the reward of living He will give us in a future life.

3. At the end, corrupt not, for David himself, for the inscription of the title; when he fled from the face of Saul into a cavern. We referring to holy Scripture, do find indeed how holy David, that king of Israel, from whom too the Psalter of David hath received the name thereof, had suffered for persecutor Saul the king of his own people, as many of you know that have either read or have heard the Scriptures. King David had then for persecutor Saul: and whereas the one was most gentle, the other most ferocious: the one mild, the other envious; the one patient, the other cruel; the one beneficent, the other ungrateful: he endured him with so much mildness, that when he had gotten him into his hands, him he touched not, hurt not. For David himself received power from the Lord God, so that if he would he might have killed Saul: and he chose to spare rather than to slay. But the other, not even by such a benefit was overcome, so as to cease to persecute. We find therefore at that time, when Saul was persecuting David, the king now rejected pursuing the future and predestinated king, that David himself fled from the face of Saul into a cavern. What reference hath this to Christ? If all things which then were being done, were figures of things future, we find there Christ, and by far in the greatest degree. For this, corrupt not for the inscription of the title, I see not how it belongeth to that David. For not any title was inscribed over David himself which Saul would corrupt. But we see in the Passion of the Lord that there had been written a title, King of the Jews: in order that this title might put to the blush these very men, seeing that from their King they withheld not their hands. For in them Saul was, in Christ David was. For Christ, as saith the Apostolic Gospel, is, as we know, as we confess, of the seed of David after the flesh; for after the Godhead He is above David, above all men, above heaven and earth, above angels, above all things visible and invisible; because all things through Him were made, and without Him was not any thing made: nevertheless, having deigned to be made Man out of the seed of David, to us He came; because of the tribe of David He was born, whence the Virgin Mary who bore Christ. The title therefore inscribed is this, King of the Jews. Saul, as we said, was the people of the Jews; David was Christ. The Jews were

indignant, because there had been inscribed for title, King of the Jews: it shamed them Him to have for King Whom to crucify they were able. For they saw not that the very Cross, whereon they nailed Him, would be on the brows of kings. When therefore they were indignant because of that title, they went to Pilate the judge, to whom they had given up Christ to be slain; and they said to him, Write not so, King of the Jews, but write that He said Himself that He was King of the Jews. And because already it had been sung through the Holy Spirit, Unto the end, corrupt not, for the inscription of the title: Pilate answered them, What I have written, I have written: why do ye suggest to me falsehood? I corrupt not truth.

4. We have heard what meaneth, corrupt not for the inscription of the title. What therefore is, When he fled from the face of Saul into a cavern? Which thing indeed the former David also did: but because in him we find not the inscription of the title, in the latter let us find the flight into the cavern. For that cavern wherein David hid himself did figure somewhat. But wherefore hid he himself? It was in order that he might be concealed and not be found. What is to be hidden in a cavern? To be hidden in earth. For he that fleeth into a cavern, with earth is covered so that he may not be seen. But Jesus did carry earth, flesh which He had received from earth: and in it He concealed Himself, in order that by Jews He might not be discovered as God. For if they had known, never the Lord of glory would they have crucified. Why therefore the Lord of glory found they not? Because in a cavern He had hidden Himself, that is, the flesh’s weakness to their eyes He presented, but the Majesty of the Godhead in the body’s clothing, as though in a hiding-place of the earth, He hid. They therefore, not knowing the God, crucified the Man. Neither die could He except in Man; nor be crucified could He except in Man; because not even held could He be except in Man. He offered to men wrongly seeking, earth; He kept for men rightly seeking, life. He fled therefore after the flesh into a cavern from the face of Saul. But if this also thou wouldest understand in this way; to wit, that the Lord fled from the face of Saul, because He suffered; even unto that point He concealed Himself from the Jews, as actually to die. For however much the Jews were raging against Him, until He died, they still were thinking that He might be delivered, and shew by some miracle that He was the Son of God. This thing foretold had been in the book of Wisdom: With death most

shameful let us condemn Him; for there shall be respect to Him out of His discourse: for if truly Son of God He is, He will take Him up and will deliver Him from the hands of adversaries. Because therefore He was being crucified, and was not delivered, they believed Him not to be Son of God. Wherefore reviling Him hanging on the Tree, and shaking their head, they did say to Him, If Son of God Thou art, come down from the Cross. Other men He hath saved, Himself to save He is not able. These words they were saying as it is in the same book of Wisdom, these things they thought and erred; for there blinded them their malice. For what great matter was it from the Cross to come down, to Him, for Whom an easy thing it was from the Tomb to rise again? But wherefore even unto death willed He to be patient? It was in order that He might flee from the face of Saul into a cavern. For a cavern may be understood as a lower part of the earth. And certainly, as is manifest and certain to all, His Body in a Tomb was laid, which was cut out in a Rock. This Tomb therefore was the Cavern; thither He fled from the face of Saul. For so long the Jews did persecute Him, even until He was laid in a cavern. Whence prove we that so long they persecuted Him, until therein He was laid? Even when dead, and, on the Cross hanging, with lance they wounded Him. But when shrouded, the funeral celebrated, He was laid in a cavern, no longer had they any thing which to the Flesh they might do. Rose therefore the Lord again out of that cavern unhurt, uncorrupt, from that place whither He had fled from the face of Saul: concealing Himself from ungodly men, whom Saul prefigured, but shewing Himself to His members. For the members of Him rising again by His members were handled: for the members of Him, the Apostles, touched Him rising again and believed; and behold nothing profited the persecution of Saul. Hear we therefore now the Psalm; because concerning the title thereof enough we have spoken, as far as the Lord hath deigned to give.

5. Ver. 1. Have pity on me, O God, have pity on me, for in Thee hath trusted my Soul. Christ in the Passion saith, Have pity on Me, O God. To God, God saith, Have pity on Me! He that with the Father hath pity on thee, in thee crieth, Have pity on Me. For that part of Him which is crying, Have pity on Me, is thine: from thee this He received, for the sake of thee, that thou shouldest be delivered, with Flesh He was clothed. The flesh itself crieth: Have pity on Me, O God, have pity on Me: Man himself, soul and flesh. For

whole Man did the Word take upon Him, and whole Man the Word became. Let it not therefore be thought that there Soul was not, because the Evangelist thus saith; The Word was made flesh, and dwelled in us. For man is called flesh, as in another place saith the Scripture, And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Shall anywise flesh alone see, and shall Soul not be there? Again saith our Lord Himself of men, As Thou hast given to Him power of all flesh. Had He anywise over flesh alone received power, and not most chiefly over souls, which in the first place He delivered? Therefore there was soul, there was flesh, there whole man; and whole man with the Word, and the Word with Man, and Man the Word, one Man, and Word and Man one God. Let him say therefore, Have pity on me, O God, have pity on me. Let us not be afraid at the words of one asking pity and holding out pity. For this cause He asketh, because He holdeth it out: for this reason He became Man, because pitiful He was, not so as that He would be born by the necessity of His lot, but so that He might deliver us from the lot of our necessity. Have pity on me, O God, have pity on me; because in Thee hath trusted my soul. Thou hearest the Master praying, learn thou to pray. For to this end He prayed, in order that He might teach how to pray: because to this end He suffered, in order that He might teach how to suffer; to this end He rose again, in order that He might teach how to hope for rising again.

6. And in the shadow of Thy wings I will hope, until iniquity pass over. This now evidently whole Christ doth say: here is also our voice. For not yet hath passed over, still rife is iniquity. And in the end our Lord Himself said there should be an abounding of iniquity: And since iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold; but he that shall have persevered unto the end, the same shall be saved. But who shall persevere even unto the end, even until iniquity pass over? He that shall have been in the Body of Christ, he that shall have been in the members of Christ, and from the Head shall have learned the patience of persevering. Thou passest away, and behold passed are thy temptations; and thou goest into another life whither have gone holy men, if holy thou hast been. Into another life have gone Martyrs; if Martyr thou shalt have been, thou also goest into another life. Because thou hast passed away hence, hath by any means iniquity therefore passed away? There are born other unrighteous men, as there die

some unrighteous men. In like manner therefore as some unrighteous men die and others are born: so some just men go, and others are born. Even unto the end of the world neither iniquity will be wanting to oppress, nor righteousness to suffer. And in the shadow of Thy wings I will hope, until iniquity pass over: that is, Thou shalt protect me, and in order that by the heat of iniquity I dry not up, Thou shalt afford a shelter for me.

7. Ver. 2. I will cry to God most high. If most high He is, how heareth He thee crying? Confidence hath been engendered by experience: to God, he saith, Who hath done good to me. If before that I was seeking Him, He did good to me, when I cry shall He not hearken to me? For good to us the Lord God hath done in sending to us our Saviour Jesus Christ, that He might die for our offences, and rise again for our justification. For what sort of men hath He willed His Son to die? For ungodly men. But ungodly men were not seeking God, and have been sought of God. For He is Most High in such sort, as that not far from Him is our misery and our groaning: because “near is the Lord to them that have bruised the heart.” I will cry to God most high, God that hath done good to me.

8. Ver. 3. He hath sent from heaven and hath saved me. Now the Man Himself, now the Flesh Itself, now the Son of God after His partaking of ourselves, of Him it is manifest, how He was saved, and sent hath from heaven the Father and hath saved Him, hath sent from heaven, and hath raised Him again: but in order that ye may know, that also the Lord Himself hath raised again Himself; both truths are written in Scripture, both that the Father hath raised Him again, and that Himself Himself hath raised again. Hear we how the Father hath raised Him again: the Apostle saith, He hath been made, he saith, obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: wherefore God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above every name. Ye have heard of the Father raising again and exalting the Son; hear ye how that He too Himself His flesh hath raised again. Under the figure of a temple He saith to the Jews, Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up. But the Evangelist hath explained to us what it was that He said: But this, he saith, He spake of the Temple of His Body. Now therefore out of the person of one praying, out of the person of a man,

out of the person of the flesh, He saith, He hath sent from heaven, and hath saved me.

9. He hath given unto reproach those that trampled on me. Them that have trampled on Him, that over Him dead have insulted, that Him as though man have crucified, because God they perceived not, them He hath given unto reproach. See ye whether it has not been so done. The thing we do not believe as yet to come, but fulfilled we acknowledge it. The Jews raged against Christ, they were overbearing against Christ. Where? In the city of Jerusalem. For where they reigned, there they were puffed up, there their necks they lifted up. After the Passion of the Lord thence they were rooted out; and they lost the kingdom, wherein Christ for King they would not acknowledge. In what manner they have been given unto reproach, see ye: dispersed they have been throughout all nations, no where having a settlement, no where a sure abode. But for this reason still Jews they are, in order that our books they may carry to their confusion. For whenever we wish to shew Christ prophesied of, we produce to the heathen these writings. And lest perchance men hard of belief should say that we Christians have composed these books, so that together with the Gospel which we have preached we have forged the Prophet, through whom there might seem to be foretold that which we preach: by this we convince them; namely, that all the very writings wherein Christ hath been prophesied are with the Jews, all these very writings the Jews have. We produce documents from enemies, to confound other enemies. In what sort of reproach therefore are the Jews? A document the Jew carrieth, wherefrom a Christian may believe. Our librarians they have become, just as slaves are wont behind their masters to carry documents, in such sort that these faint in carrying, those profit by reading. Unto such a reproach have been given the Jews: and there hath been fulfilled that which so long before hath been foretold, He hath given unto reproach those that trampled on me. But how great a reproach it is, brethren, that this verse they should read, and themselves being blind should look upon their mirror! For in the same manner the Jews appear in the holy Scripture which they carry, as appeareth the face of a blind man in a mirror: by other men it is seen, by himself not seen. He hath given unto reproach those that trampled on me.

10. Thou wast inquiring perhaps when he said, He hath sent from heaven and hath saved me. What hath He sent from heaven? Whom hath He sent from heaven? An Angel hath He sent, to save Christ, and through a servant is the Lord saved? For all Angels are creatures serving Christ. For obedience there might have been sent Angels, for service they might have been sent, not for succour: as is written, Angels ministered unto Him, not like men merciful to one indigent, but like subjects to One Omnipotent. What therefore hath He sent from heaven, and hath saved me? Now we hear in another verse what from heaven He hath sent. He hath sent from heaven His mercy and His truth. For what purpose? And hath drawn out my soul from the midst of the lions' whelps. Hath sent, he saith, from heaven His mercy and His truth: and Christ Himself saith, I am Truth. There was sent therefore Truth, that it should draw out my soul hence from the midst of the lions' whelps: there was sent mercy. Christ Himself we find to be both mercy and truth; mercy in suffering with us, and truth in requiting us. This is the same that a little before I said, namely, that He Himself Himself did raise again. For if Truth raised again Christ, and if Truth did draw forth the Soul of Christ from the midst of the lions' whelps; in like manner as merciful He was in dying for us, so true He was in rising again to justify us. For He had said that He was about to rise again, and the Truth could not lie, and being Truth and truth speaking, therefore true scars He shewed, because true wounds He endured. These scars the disciples held, handled, made evident to themselves: he cried out who thrust fingers into the pierced side, and saith, My Lord and my God. In mercy for him He had died, and in truth unto him had risen again. He hath sent from Heaven His mercy and His truth: and hath drawn out my soul from the midst of the lions' whelps. Who are the lions' whelps? That lesser people, unto evil deceived, unto evil led away by the chiefs of the Jews: so that these are lions, those lions' whelps. All roared, all slew. For we are to hear even here the slaying of these very men, presently in the following verses of this Psalm.

11. And hath drawn out, he saith, my soul from the midst of the lions' whelps. Why sayest thou, And hath drawn out my soul? For what hadst thou suffered, that thy soul should be drawn out? I have slept troubled. Christ hath intimated His death. Assuredly of old David we read that he fled into a cavern, nevertheless not that he slept in a cavern. Another David is in

a cavern, another David there is that saith, I have slept troubled. We see the perturbation of Him, not that He was troubled, but that they were troubling. For ‘troubled’ He called Himself, after the notion of the men that were raging, not after the conscience of Him That gave way. They thought that they had disturbed Him, thought they had overcome, but He ‘slept troubled.’ So calm had been this disturbed one, that when He willed He slept. No one sleepeth disturbed: all men that are perturbed either from sleep are roused, or else are not suffered to go off to sleep. But He disturbed was, and slept. Great is the humility of Him disturbed, great the power of Him sleeping. By what power came it that He slept? From that whereof He speaketh Himself, Power I have of laying down My life, and power of taking it: no one taketh it from Me; but I do it lay down, and again I take it. They disturbed, and He slept. The type of which thing Adam bore, when God sent upon him a slumber, in order that out of his side He might make a help-mate for him. For was it that He could not make a wife for the first man even out of the side of one awake? Or did He for this reason will him to sleep, that he might not feel when a rib was being taken away from him? In a word, who doth sleep so soundly, as that when a bone is plucked from him he would not awake? He that could without pain take away a rib from one sleeping, could do so from one awake also. But why willed he to do it to one sleeping? Because to Christ sleeping on the Cross there was made a wife out of His side. For smitten was His side as He hung, with a lance, and there flowed forth the Sacraments of the Church. I have slept, he saith, troubled. And in another Psalm he manifesteth this thing, in the place where he saith, I Myself have slept; and, sleep I have taken. There He expresseth His power. He might even there have said, I have slept: as He hath said here. But what is, I Myself have slept? It is, Because I have willed, I have slept. They have not driven me unwilling unto sleep; but of mine own will I have slept, after the saying above quoted, Power I have of laying down My life, and power I have of taking it again. Wherefore there He continueth and saith, I have slept, and sleep I have taken, and have risen up, because the Lord shall sustain me.

12. I have slept troubled. Whence troubled? Who troubling? Let us see in what manner He brandeth an evil conscience upon the Jews, wishing to excuse themselves of the slaying of the Lord. For to this end, as the Gospel

speaketh, to the judge they delivered Him, that they might not themselves seem to have killed Him. For when at that time Pilate the judge had said to them, Take ye Him, and after your Law judge Him: they made answer, For us it is not lawful to kill any man. To kill is not lawful, is it lawful to deliver to be killed? For which doth slay? He that hath yielded on hearing an outcry, or he that by outcry hath extorted that He should be slain? Let the Lord Himself give testimony by whom He was slain, whether by that Pilate who unwillingly slew Him, whence also he scourged Him, and with garment of shame clothed Him, and when scourged brought Him forth before their eyes, in order that at all events being satiated with the punishment of His stripes, that He should be slain they should not extort. Therefore also when he saw them persevere, as we read, he washed his hands, and said, Innocent I am of the blood of this Just One. Consider whether he was innocent, that did so much as yield to men clamouring; nevertheless, much more guilty they were that by clamour willed to slay Him. But let us question and hear the Lord, to whom He doth ascribe His death, for that He hath said, I have slept troubled. Let us question Him, and say, since Thou hast slept troubled, who have persecuted Thee? who have slain Thee? was it perchance Pilate, who to soldiers gave Thee, on the Tree to be hanged, with nails to be pierced? Hear who they were, (ver. 5.) Sons of men. Of them He speaketh, whom for persecutors He suffered. But how did they slay, that steel bare not? They that sword drew not, that made no assault upon Him to slay; whence slew they? Their teeth are arms and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. Do not consider the unarmed hands, but the mouth armed: from thence the sword proceeded, wherewith Christ was to be slain: in like manner also as from the mouth of Christ, that wherewith the Jews were to be slain. For He hath a sword twice whetted: and rising again He hath smitten them, and hath severed from them those whom He would make His faithful people. They an evil sword, He a good sword: they evil arrows, He good arrows. For He hath Himself also arrows good, words good, whence He pierceth the faithful heart, in order that He may be loved. Therefore of one kind are their arrows, and of another kind their sword. Sons of men, their teeth are arms and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sabre. Tongue of sons of men is a sharp sabre, and their teeth arms and arrows. When therefore did they smite, save when they clamoured, Crucify, crucify?

13. And what have they done to Thee, O Lord? Let the Prophet here exult! For above, all those verses the Lord was speaking: a Prophet indeed, but in the person of the Lord, because in the Prophet is the Lord. And whenever there speaketh the Prophet in his own person, the Lord Himself speaketh through Him, That to him dictateth the truth which he speaketh. Now therefore in the person of the Prophet, hear ye, my brethren. This Prophet hath in spirit seen the Lord humbled, slain, scourged, with buffets smitten, beaten with palms of hands, with spittle defiled, with thorns crowned, on the tree hanged: them raging, Him bearing; them exulting, Him as if conquered, he hath seen in spirit: and then after all that humiliation, and their fury, Him to have risen again, and all those things which the raging Jews had done to have been made void; and elated with joy, as though he were seeing it come to pass, (ver. 6.) Be exalted, he saith, above the Heavens, O God. Man on the Cross, and above the Heavens, God. Let them continue on the earth raging, Thou in Heaven be judging. Where are they that were raging? where are their teeth, the arms and arrows? Have not “the stripes of them been made the arrows of infants?” For in another place a Psalm this saith, desiring to prove them vainly to have raged, and vainly unto phrensies to have been driven headlong: for nothing they were able to do to Christ when for the time crucified, and afterwards when He was rising again, and in Heaven was sitting: the arrows of infants have the stripes of them been made. How do infants make to themselves arrows? Of reeds? But what arrows? or what powers? or what bows? or what wound? Be Thou exalted above the Heavens, O God, and above all the earth Thy glory. Wherefore exalted above the Heavens, O God? Brethren, God exalted above the Heavens we see not, but we believe: but above all the earth His glory to be not only we believe, but also see. But what kind of madness heretics are afflicted with, I pray you observe. They being cut off from the bond of the Church of Christ, and to a part holding, the whole losing, will not communicate with the whole earth, where is spread abroad the glory of Christ. But we Catholics are in all the earth, because with all the world we communicate, wherever the Glory of Christ is spread abroad. For we see that which then was sung, now fulfilled. There hath been exalted above the Heavens our God, and above all the earth the Glory of the Same. O heretical insanity! That which thou seest not thou believest with me, that which thou seest thou deniest: thou believest with me in Christ exalted

above the Heavens, a thing which we see not; and deniest His Glory over all the earth, a thing which we see. Be Thou exalted above the Heavens, O God, and above all the earth Thy Glory.

14. He returneth to the words of the Lord: and the Lord Himself beginneth to recount to us, as though speaking to us, the Prophet also exulting and saying, Be Thou exalted above the Heavens, O God, and above all the earth Thy Glory. Himself also strengtheneth us, as though saying to us, What could they do to Me, that have persecuted Me? But wherefore doth He speak to us? Because they do so to us too. But they do nothing who in like manner may persecute us. For let your Love see the Lord speaking to us, and exhorting us by His example; A trap they have prepared for My feet, and have bowed down My Soul. They wished to bring It down as if from Heaven, and to the lower places to weigh It down: They have bowed My Soul: they have digged before My face a pit and themselves have fallen into it. Me have they hurt or themselves? Behold He hath been exalted above the Heavens, God, and behold above all the earth the Glory of the Same: the kingdom of Christ we see, where is the kingdom of the Jews? Since therefore they did that which to have done they ought not, there hath been done in their case that which to have suffered they ought: themselves have dug a ditch, and themselves have fallen into it. For their persecuting Christ, to Christ did no hurt, but to themselves did hurt. And do not suppose, brethren, that themselves alone hath this befallen. Every one that prepareth a pit for his brother, it must needs be that himself fall into it. Take heed, my brethren, have Christian eyes, be not deceived with things visible. For perchance to some one of you, because I have said this, there hath come to mind some man that hath chosen to play a cheat upon his brother, and hath chosen to contrive some snares for him, and he hath contrived, and succeeded, and the brother hath fallen into his snares, and he hath been spoiled, or hath been oppressed, either by prison, or by false witness, or overreached by some wicked accusation: but in this case is seen the one oppressed, the other to have oppressed: the one overcome, the other to have overcome: and a false thing is thought that which we have said, namely, that whosoever shall have prepared a pit for his brother, doth himself fall into it. I call upon you, as being Christians, that ye take an example from things which we have already experienced. Heathens have persecuted Martyrs, and

Martyrs have been taken, have been bound, into prison have been thrust, to beasts given over, some with steel smitten, others with fire consumed; have they conquered that were persecuting, and conquered have been the Martyrs? Far be it. Look for the glory of the Martyrs with God, look for the pit of the heathen in a delved conscience: for there is the pit wherein falleth an ungodly man, even an evil conscience. For supposest thou him into no pit to have fallen, who the light of Christ hath lost, and with blindness hath been smitten? If he fell not into a pit, he would see before him: he knoweth not where he goeth, in like manner as when he that walketh in a road hath fallen into a pit, he hath lost the road. Ye see, then, all evil-doers to have lost the way, having been involved in misdeed. But now thee he hath betrayed perchance into the hands of a robber, or into the hands of some unjust man, or of a judge imposed upon by him, and thou art in oppression, he is rejoicing, he exulting. Do not, I have already said, do not have the eyes of heathens: Christian eyes have thou. Thou seest him that exulteth; that very exultation is the pit of him. For better is the heaviness of one suffering unjust things, than the rejoicing of one doing unjust things. The very rejoicing of one doing unjust things, is that same pit; into it when a man shall have fallen, eyes he loseth. For thyself thou grievest, because thou hast lost a garment; and for him thou grievest not, because he hath lost faith. Which of you with more grievous loss hath been smitten? Behold he slayeth, thou art slain: he liveth, thou art dead. Far be it! Where is the faith of Christians? where is he that dieth for a time? Let him hear his Lord: He that believeth in Me, though he die, is living. Therefore, he that believeth not, though he live, is dead. They have dug before my face a pit, and themselves have fallen into it. All evil men it must needs be that this befal.

15. But the patience of good men with preparation of heart accepteth the will of God: and glorieth in tribulations, saying that which followeth: (ver. 7.) Prepared is my heart, O God, I will sing and play. What hath he done to me? He hath prepared a pit, my heart is prepared. He hath prepared pit to deceive, shall I not prepare heart to suffer? He hath prepared pit to oppress, shall I not prepare heart to endure? Therefore he shall fall into it, but I will sing and play. Hear the heart prepared in an Apostle, because he hath imitated his Lord: We glory, he saith, in tribulations: because tribulation worketh patience: patience probation, probation hope, but hope maketh not

ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Which hath been given to us. He was in oppressions, in chains, in prisons, in stripes, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in every wasting of toils and pains, and he was saying, We glory in tribulations. Whence, but that prepared was his heart? Therefore he was singing and playing. Prepared is my heart, O God, prepared my heart; I will sing and play.

16. Ver. 8. Rise up, my glory. He that had fled from the face of Saul into a cavern, saith, Rise up, my glory: glorified be Jesus after His Passion. Rise up, psaltery and harp. He calleth upon what to rise? Two organs I see: but Body of Christ one I see, one flesh hath risen again, and two organs have risen. The one organ then is the psaltery, the other the harp. Organs is the word used for all instruments of musicians. Not only is that called an organ, which is great, and blown into with bellows; but whatsoever is adapted to playing and is corporeal, whereof for an instrument the player maketh use, is said to be an organ. But distinguished from one another are these organs; and I would, as far as the Lord granteth me, point out to you, both in what manner they are distinguished, and wherefore distinguished, and wherefore to both is said, Rise up. Already we have said, one flesh of the Lord hath risen again; and there is said, Rise up psaltery and harp. The psaltery is an organ, which indeed is carried in the hands of one that striketh it, and hath strings stretched, but that place whence the strings receive sound, that hollow wood which hangeth suspended, and when touched resoundeth because it is filled with air, this the psaltery hath in the upper part. But the harp hath this sort of wood hollow and sounding on the lower part. Therefore in a psaltery the strings receive their sound from above, but in a harp the strings receive sound from a lower part: this difference there is between psaltery and harp. What therefore do these two organs figure to us? For Christ the Lord our God is waking up His psaltery and His harp; and He saith, I will rise up at the dawn. I suppose that here ye now perceive the Lord rising. We have read thereof in the Gospel: see the hour of the Resurrection. How long through shadows was Christ being sought? He hath shone, be He acknowledged; at the dawn He rose again. But what is psaltery? what is harp? Through His flesh two kinds of deeds the Lord hath wrought, miracles and sufferings: miracles from above have been,

sufferings from below have been. But those miracles which He did were divine; but through Body He did them, through flesh He did them. The flesh therefore working things divine, is the psaltery: the flesh suffering things human is the harp. Let the psaltery sound, let the blind be enlightened, let the deaf hear, let the paralytics be braced to strength, the lame walk, the sick rise up, the dead rise again; this is the sound of the Psaltery. Let there sound also the harp, let Him hunger, thirst, sleep, be held, scourged, derided, crucified, buried. When therefore thou seest in that Flesh certain things to have sounded from above, certain things from the lower part, one flesh hath risen again, and in one flesh we acknowledge both psaltery and harp. And these two kinds of things done have fulfilled the Gospel, and it is preached in the nations: for both the miracles and the sufferings of the Lord are preached.

17. Therefore there hath risen psaltery and harp in the dawn, and he confesseth to the Lord; and saith what? (ver. 9.) I will confess to Thee among the peoples, O Lord, and will play to Thee among the nations: (ver. 10.) for magnified even unto the Heavens hath been Thy mercy, and even unto the clouds Thy truth. Heavens above clouds, and clouds below heavens: and nevertheless to this nearest heaven belong clouds. But sometimes clouds rest upon the mountains, even so far in the nearest air are they rolled. But a Heaven above there is, the habitations of Angels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers. This therefore may perchance seem to be what should have been said; “Magnified even unto the Heavens Thy truth, and even unto the clouds Thy mercy.” For in Heaven Angels praise God, seeing the very form of truth, without any darkness of vision, without any admixture of unreality: they see, love, praise, are not wearied. There is truth: but here in our own misery surely there is mercy. For to a miserable one must be rendered mercy. For there is no need of mercy above, where is no miserable one. I have said this because that it seemeth as though it might have been more fittingly said, Magnified even unto the Heavens hath been Thy truth, and even unto the clouds Thy mercy. For ‘clouds’ we understand to be preachers of truth, men bearing that flesh in a manner dark, whence God both gleameth in miracles, and thundereth in precepts: and themselves are those clouds of whom speaketh Isaias in the person of the Lord, rebuking a certain vineyard, evil, barren, thorny, I will

command My clouds, that they rain not upon it a shower: that is, I will command My Apostles, that they forsake the Jews, and to them preach not the Gospel, but preach the Gospel in the good land of the nations, whence not thorns but grapes come forth. We know therefore the clouds of God to be the preachers of truth, Prophets, Apostles, all men that rightly expound the Word of truth, and have in themselves a light hidden, as clouds have that in them whereby they lighten: men therefore are clouds. What meaneth therefore, O Lord, For magnified even unto the Heavens hath been Thy mercy, and even unto the clouds Thy truth? Truth is mighty above all among the Angels: but Thou hast given it to men also, and brought it down even to the clouds. Above, mercy the Angels seem not to need: but because to miserable men Thou shewest mercy, and by rendering to them mercy makest them Angels by partaking of the Resurrection, even unto the Heavens is Thy mercy. Glory to our Lord, and to the Mercy of the Same, and to the Truth of the Same, because neither hath He forsaken by mercy to make us blessed through His Grace, nor defrauded us of truth: because first Truth veiled in flesh came to us and healed through His flesh the interior eye of our heart, in order that hereafter face to face we may be able to see It. Giving therefore to Him thanks, let us say with the same Psalm the last verses, which sometime since too I have said, (ver. 11.) Be Thou exalted above the Heavens, O God, and above all the earth Thy glory. For this to Him the Prophet said so many years before; this now we see; this therefore let us also say.

PSALM 58

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonality, wherein every where he confuteth the Donatists.

1. The words which we have sung must be rather hearkened to by us, than proclaimed. For to all men as it were in an assemblage of mankind, the Truth crieth, (ver. 1.) If truly indeed justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. For to what unjust man is it not an easy thing to speak justice? or what man if about justice questioned, when he hath not a cause, would not easily answer what is just? In as much as the hand of our Maker in our very hearts hath written this truth, That which to thyself thou wouldest not have done, do not thou to another. Of this truth, even before that the Law was given, no one was suffered to be ignorant, in order that there might be some rule whereby might be judged even those to whom Law had not been given. But lest men should complain that something had been wanting for them, there hath been written also in tables that which in their hearts they read not. For it was not that they had it not written, but read it they would not. There hath been set before their eyes that which in their conscience to see they would be compelled; and as if from without the voice of God were brought to them, to his own inward parts hath man been thus driven, the Scripture saying, For in the thoughts of the ungodly man there will be questioning. Where questioning is, there law. But because men, desiring those things which are without, even from themselves have become exiles, there hath been given also a written law: not because in hearts it had not been written, but because thou wast a deserter from thy heart, by Him that is every where thou art seized, and to thyself within art called back. Therefore the written law, what crieth it, to those that have deserted the law written in their hearts? Return ye transgressors to the heart. For who hath taught thee that thou wouldest have no other man draw near thy wife? Who hath taught thee, that thou wouldest not have a theft committed upon thee? who hath taught thee, that thou wouldest not suffer wrong, and whatever

other thing either universally or particularly might be spoken of? For many things there are, of which severally if questioned men with loud voice would answer, that they would not suffer. Come, if thou art not willing to suffer these things, art thou by any means the only man? dost thou not live in the fellowship of mankind? He that together with thee hath been made, is thy fellow; and all men have been made after the image of God, unless with earthly covetings they efface that which He hath formed. That which therefore to thyself thou wilt not have to be done, do not thou to another. For thou judgest that there is evil in that, which to suffer thou art not willing: and this thing thou art constrained to know by an inward law; that in thy very heart is written. Thou wast doing somewhat, and there was a cry raised in thy hands: how art thou constrained to return to thy heart when this thing thou sufferest in the hands of others? Is theft a good thing? No! I ask, is adultery a good thing? All cry, No! Is man-slaying a good thing? All cry, that they abhor it. Is coveting the property of a neighbour a good thing? No! is the voice of all men. Or if yet thou confessest not, there draweth near one that coveteth thy property: be pleased to answer what thou wilt have. All men therefore, when of these things questioned, cry that these things are not good. Again, of doing kindnesses, not only of not hurting, but also of conferring and distributing, any hungry soul is questioned thus; “thou sufferest hunger, another man hath bread, and there is abundance with him beyond sufficiency, he knoweth thee to want, he giveth not: it displeaseth thee when hungering, let it displease thee when full also, when of another’s hungering thou shalt have known. A stranger wanting shelter cometh into thy country, he is not taken in: he then crieth that inhuman is that city, at once among barbarians he might have found a home. He feeleth the injustice because he suffereth; thou perchance feelest not, but it is meet that thou imagine thyself also a stranger; and that thou see in what manner he will have displeased thee, who shall not have given that, which thou in thy country wilt not give to a stranger.” I ask all men. True are these things? True. Just are these things? Just.

2. But hear ye the Psalm. If truly therefore justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. Be it not a justice of lips, but also of deeds. For if thou actest otherwise than thou speakest, good things thou speakest, and ill thou judgest. For if thou actest as thou judgest; if asked which is better, gold

or faith, thou art not so far perverse and erring from all truth as to answer that gold is better: thou preferrest therefore, when asked, to gold, faith; thou hast spoken justice. Hast thou heard the Psalm? If truly therefore justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. And where shall I prove thee not to judge as thou hast spoken? I already have got thine answer setting faith before gold. Behold from some place or other a friend hath come, and without witness gold he hath entrusted to thee; he alone knoweth this, and thou, as far as regardeth men. There is there another witness, that is not seen, and yet seeth: and the man to thee in a secret place and in thy closet perchance, in the absence of witnesses, gold hath entrusted; the witness that is present, not in a chamber of walls is present, but in the couches of your consciences. He hath entrusted and hath departed, to no one of his friends he hath made it known, hoping himself to return and to receive from his friend that which he had given: such is the uncertainty of things human, he is dead, he hath left an heir, hath left a son: the son knoweth not what his father had, what to thee he entrusted: return thou, return transgressor to the heart, there written the law is: That which to thyself thou wilt not have to be done, to another do thou not. Suppose thyself to have entrusted, to none of thy friends to have told it, to have died, to have left a son; what wouldest thou wish to be rendered to him by thine own friend? Answer, judge the case, the judge's tribunal is in thy mind, there is sitting there God, there is at hand for accuser conscience, for torturer fear. Amid things of men thou art, in the fellowship of men thou art engaged: think what thou wouldest have to be rendered to thy son by thy friend. I know what answer thy thought maketh. So judge thou, as thou hearest judge, a voice there will be; the voice of truth holdeth not its peace; not with lips it crieth, but a cry is raised out of the heart: incline thine ear, there be thou with the son of thy friend. Thou seest perchance also a man in need wandering about, knowing not what his father had, where he hath placed it, to whom he entrusted it; think also of thy son, suppose that man to live whom thou despisest as dead, thyself deem dead in order that thou mayest live. But something else covetousness doth enjoin; doth enjoin contrary to God; God one thing, another thing covetousness: one thing in Paradise our Maker, another thing athwart it, the serpent, the deceiver. Let there come into thy mind first thy fall; for this reason mortal thou art, for this reason toiling, for this in the sweat of thy face eating bread, for this reason thorns and thistles for thee the earth beareth: by example learn that which thou wouldest not by precept. But cupidity prevaileth; why not rather truth? And where is that which thou wast speaking? Behold, thou art meditating to deny the deposit of gold; behold, thou art meditating from the heir of thy friend altogether to hide it. I had asked a little before which would be the more precious, and which would be the better, gold, or good faith. Wherefore one thing sayest thou, another thing doest? Fearest thou not this voice, If truly justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men? Behold thou hast told me that better is good faith, and in thy judgment better thou hast considered gold to be. Thou hast not judged as thou hast spoken; true things thou hast spoken, and false things thou hast judged: therefore even when thou wast speaking justice, truly thou didst not speak. For if truly justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. When to me concerning justice thou wast making answer, it was for shame, not with openness thou wast speaking.

3. But now to the present case let us come, if ye please. For the voice is that sweet voice, so well known to the ears of the Church, the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the voice of His Body, the voice of the Church toiling, sojourning upon earth, living amid the perils of men speaking evil and of men flattering. Thou wilt not fear a threatener, if thou lovest not a flatterer. He therefore, of whom this is the voice, hath observed and hath seen, that all men speak justice. For what man doth dare not to speak it, lest he be called unjust? When, therefore, as though he were hearing the voices of all men, and were observing the lips of all men, he cried out to them, If truly indeed justice ye speak,—if not falsely justice ye speak, if not one thing on lips doth sound, whilst another thing is concealed in hearts—judge right things, ye sons of men. Hear out of the Gospel His own voice, the very same as is in this Psalm: Hypocrites, saith the Lord to the Pharisees, how are ye able good things to speak, when ye are evil men? Either make the tree good, and the fruit thereof good; or make the tree evil and the fruit thereof evil. Why wilt thou whiten thee, wall of mud? I know thy inward parts, I am not deceived by thy covering: I know what thou holdest forth, I know what thou coverest. For there was no need for Him, that any one to Him should bear testimony of man; for He knew Himself what was in man. For He knew what was in man, Who had made man, and Who had been made Man, in order that He might seek man. See, therefore, if these words

do not follow one another. ‘Ye hypocrites, how are ye able good things to speak, when ye are evil men?’ If truly, therefore, justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. Have ye not justice spoken of, when ye said, Master, we know that just Thou art, and acceptest the person of no man? Wherefore guile in heart did ye conceal? Wherefore the image of Cæsar to your Creator did ye shew, and His image in your hearts did efface? Hath not the thing which ye spake been heard, and how ye would judge been tried? Have ye not crucified Him, Whom to be just ye had pronounced? If truly, therefore, justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. Why do I hear your speaking, we know that just Thou art, when I foresee your judgment, Crucify, Crucify? If truly, therefore, justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. For what have ye done by raging against God That was Man, and by slaying your King? For was He no King to be, because He was slain by you, when He was to rise again? In the title whereon had been written, King of the Jews, set upon the Cross of the Lord, in three tongues, in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, a human judge knew how to say, What I have written, I have written: and did not God know how to say, What I have written, I have written? In any wise, your King He is; while alive, your King He is; when slain, your King He is: behold, He hath risen again, and in Heaven your King He is: behold, to come He is; woe unto you, for your King He is. Go to now, and speak justice, and do not judge right things, sons of men. Ye will not rightly judge, rightly ye shall be judged. For He liveth That is your King, and He dieth no more, and death over Him shall no longer have dominion. Behold, He cometh; ‘return ye transgressors to the heart.’ Behold, He shall come, be amended before that He come; ‘come ye before His face in confession.’ Behold, He shall come, your King He is. Ye remember the title upon the Cross: but ye see it not written: nevertheless it abideth; on earth it is not read, but in Heaven it is kept. For do ye suppose that this inscription hath been corrupted? And what saith the title of this Psalm? At the end, for David himself, corrupt not, for the inscription of the title. Not, therefore, corrupted is that inscription of the title. Your King is Christ, because of all things Christ is King: for His is the kingdom, and He shall Himself have dominion of the nations. If therefore King He is, behold before He come, He saith to you, I am still speaking, He saith, Not yet am I judging: I that do so cry with menacing, am unwilling to smite with the

Judgment. If truly therefore justice ye speak, judge right things, sons of men.

4. But now ye do what? Why these things to you do I speak? (Ver. 2.) Because in heart iniquities ye work on earth. Iniquities perchance in heart alone? Hear what followeth: both their heart hands do follow, and their heart hands do serve, the thing is thought of, and it is done; or else it is not done, not because we would not, but because we could not, Whatever thou willest and canst not, for done God doth count it. For in heart iniquities ye work on earth. What next? iniquities your hands knit together. What is, knit together? From sin, sin, and to sin, sin, because of sin. What is this? A theft a man hath committed, a sin it is: he hath been seen, he seeketh to slay him by whom he hath been seen: there hath been knit together sin with sin: God hath permitted him in His hidden judgment to slay that man whom he hath willed to slay: he perceiveth that the thing is known, he seeketh to slay a second also; he hath knit together a third sin: while these things he is planning, perchance that he may not be found out, or that he may not be convicted of having done it, he consulteth an astrologer; there is added a fourth sin: the astrologer answereth perchance with some hard and evil responses, he runneth to a soothsayer, that expiation may be made; the soothsayer maketh answer that he is not able to expiate: a magician is sought. And who could enumerate those sins which are knit together with sins? Iniquities your hands do knit together. So long as thou knittest together, thou bindest sin upon sin. Loose thyself from sins. But I am not able, thou sayest. Cry to Him. Unhappy man I, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? For there shall come the Grace of God, so that righteousness shall be thy delight, as much as thou didst delight in iniquity; and thou, a man that out of bonds hast been loosed, shalt cry out to God, Thou hast broken asunder my bonds. ‘Thou hast broken asunder my bonds,’ is what else but, ‘Thou hast remitted my sins?’ Hear why chains they are: the Scripture maketh answer, with the chains of his sins each one is bound fast. Not only bonds, but chains also they are. Chains are those which are made by twisting in: that is, because with sins sins thou wast knitting together. Woe to them that draw sins like a long rope. Isaias crieth, Woe to them that draw sins like a long rope: what is it else but, Woe to them whose hands knit together iniquity? And because each one with his sins is bound

fast, as also with his sins he is smitten, the men that were wickedly trading in the Temple the Lord drove out with a whip made of small cords. But thou wilt not have now thy bonds to be broken, because thou feelest not thy bonds, they even delight thee, and a pleasure they are: thou shalt feel at the end, when it shall be said, Bind him hands and feet, and cast him forth into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Thou dost shudder, dost fear, dost beat the breast, thou sayest Evil things are sins, a good thing righteousness is. If truly therefore justice ye speak, judge right things ye sons of men. In your life let there be found your words; in your deeds let there be known your lips. Do not therefore knit together iniquity: because unto you for a binding shall be applied whatsoever ye knit together. They hear not, not all however: and they that hear not are fore-known.

5. Ver. 3. Alienated are sinners from the womb, they have gone astray from the belly, they have spoken false things. And when iniquity they speak, false things they speak: because deceitful is iniquity: and when justice they speak, false things they speak: because one thing with mouth they profess, another thing in heart they conceal. Alienated are sinners from the womb. What is this? Let us search more diligently: for perhaps he is saying this, because God hath foreknown men that are to be sinners even in the wombs of their mothers. For whence when Rebecca was yet pregnant, and in womb was bearing twins, was it said, Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated? For it was said, The elder shall serve the younger. Hidden at that time was the judgment of God: but yet from the womb, that is, from the very origin, alienated are sinners. Whence alienated? From truth. Whence alienated? From the blessed country, from the blessed life. Perchance alienated they are from the very womb. And what sinners have been alienated from the womb? For what men would have been born, if therein they had not been held? Or what men to-day would be alive to hear these words to no purpose, unless they were born? Perchance therefore sinners have been alienated from a certain womb, wherein that charity was suffering pains, which speaketh through the Apostle, Of whom again I am in labour, until Christ be formed in you. Expect thou therefore; be formed: do not to thyself ascribe a judgment which perchance thou knowest not. Carnal thou art as yet, conceived thou hast been: from that very time when thou hast received the name of Christ, by a sort of sacrament thou hast been born in the bowels of

a mother. For not only out of bowels a man is born, but also in bowels. First he is born in bowels, in order that he may be able to be born of bowels. Wherefore it hath been said even to Mary, For that which is born in thee, is of the Holy Spirit. Not yet of Her It had been born, but already in Her It had been born. Therefore there are born within the bowels of the Church certain little ones, and a good thing it is that being formed they should go forth, so that they drop not by miscarriage. Let the mother bear thee, not miscarry. If patient thou shalt have been, even until thou be formed, even until in thee there be the sure doctrine of truth, the maternal bowels ought to keep thee. But if by thy impatience thou shalt have shaken the sides of thy mother, with pain indeed she expelleth thee out, but more to thy loss than to hers.

6. Alienated are sinners from the womb, they have gone astray from the belly, they have spoken false things. For this reason therefore have they gone astray from the belly, because they have spoken false things? Or rather have they not for this reason spoken false things, because they have gone astray from the belly? For in the belly of the Church truth abideth. Whosoever from this belly of the Church separated shall have been, must needs speak false things: must needs, I say, speak false things; whoso either conceived would not be, or whom when conceived the mother hath expelled. Thence heretics exclaim against the Gospel, (to speak in preference of those, whom expelled we lament.) We repeat to them: behold Christ hath said, It behoved Christ to suffer, and from the dead to rise again the third day. “I acknowledge there our Head, I acknowledge there our Bridegroom: acknowledge thou also with me the Bride: see what followeth; That there be preached in His name repentance and remission of sins throughout all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. “Hither come, hither come.” Behold the Church throughout all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. I say not, Hither come, Herself to thee doth come. But they making them deaf against the Gospel, and not permitting us to read the words of God, which they boast themselves to have kept from flame and would destroy with tongue, speak their own words, speak empty words: “Such an one was a traditor, and such an one was a traditor.” Aye, I too say, “Such an one was a traditor, and such an one was a traditor:” and a true thing I say. But what is that to me? Neither thou of those men whom thou namest to me in the Gospel dost read, nor I of those men whom I name in

the Gospel do read. Let there be put aside out of the way our papers, let there come forth into the midst the writing of God: hear Christ speaking, hear the Truth speaking: That there be preached in His name, He saith, repentance and remission of sins throughout all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. “No,” they say: “but what we say, hear thou, what saith the Gospel we will not hear.” Alienated are sinners from the womb, they have gone astray from the belly, they have spoken false things. We speak true things, because we have heard true things; that which the Lord saith, not that which man saith. It may be that man lie: it cannot be that Truth lie. Out of the mouth of truth I acknowledge Christ, the Truth itself: out of the mouth of truth I acknowledge the Church, the partaker of Truth. Let no one speak to me false things, of him that hath gone astray from the womb in the bowels of the Church, I should at first see what he would wish to teach me. I see him alienated from the womb, I see him to have gone astray from the belly, and I am to hear from him what, but false things? They have gone astray from the belly, they have spoken false things.

7. Ver. 4. Indignation to them after the similitude of a serpent. A great thing ye are to hear. Indignation to them after the similitude of a serpent. As if we had said, What is that which thou hast said? there followeth, As if of a deaf asp. Whence deaf? And closing its ears. Therefore deaf, because it closeth its ears. And closing its ears. Which will not hearken to the voice of men charming, and of the medicine medicated by the wise man. As we have heard, because even men speak who have learned it with such research as they were able, but nevertheless it is a thing which the Spirit of God knoweth much better than any men. For it is not to no purpose that of this he hath spoken, but because it may chance that true is even that which we have heard of the asp. When the asp beginneth to be affected by the Marsian charmer, who calleth it forth with certain peculiar incantations, hear what it doeth—But meanwhile unto this give heed, brethren, (for this thing must be first mentioned, lest any one should hear as it were with hesitation:) the thing itself, from whence a simile is taken, by the Scriptures is not commended; but only thence a simile is drawn. For He did not commend the unjust judge, who would not hear that widow, and neither feared God nor regarded men; and nevertheless from thence a simile the Lord derived: nor did He commend that sluggard, who gave three loaves to

one asking him, not because of friendship, but being overcome with importunity; and yet from thence a simile He gave. And therefore from things not to be commended are derived in a manner a few similes. Or else if ye think we ought to countenance the Marsians, because of this thing ye hear in the Scripture of God; we must go also to the shows in the Theatre, because the Apostle saith, Not so I box, as if smiting the air. For to box is to perform the pancratium. Now because from hence hath been taken a simile, ought these shows to delight us? Or because he hath said, He that in a contest striveth, in all things is abstemious: for this reason ought a Christian to attach himself to these vain and absurd contentions? Give heed what is spoken to thee for a simile's sake, what is noted thee for avoidance. So therefore here also there hath been given a certain simile derived from the Marsian, who maketh incantation to bring forth the asp from the dark cavern; surely into light he would bring it: but it loving its darkness, wherein coiled up it hideth itself, when it will not choose to come forth, nevertheless refusing to hear those words whereby it feeleth itself to be constrained, is said to press one ear against the ground, and with its tail to stop up the other, and therefore as much as possible escaping those words, it cometh not forth to the charmer. To this as being like, the Spirit of God hath spoken of certain persons hearing not the Word of God, and not only not doing, but altogether, that they may not do it, refusing to hear.

8. This thing hath been done even in the first times of the faith. Stephen the Martyr was preaching the Truth, and to minds as though dark, in order to bring them forth into light, was making incantation: when he came to make mention of Christ, Whom they would not hear at all, of them the Scripture saith what? of them relateth what? They shut, he saith, their ears. But what they did afterwards, the narrative of the passion of Stephen doth publish. They were not deaf, but they made themselves deaf. For because ears open in heart they had not, but because the might of the word through the ears of the flesh rushing in, even to the very ears of the heart was doing violence; they closed even the ears of the body, and took to stones. Behold the deaf asps, harder than the stones wherewith their charmer they stoned: they heard not the voice of him charming, and of the medicine medicated by the wise man. What is 'the medicine medicated by the wise man?' Perchance 'medicine mixed' he may be calling 'medicine medicated.' Do we not there

seek some other thing, how that if already a medicine it be, it is also medicated? Medicines there were in the Prophets, medicines there were in the Law, all the very precepts were medicines, and this medicine not yet had been medicated: by the coming of the Lord medicated was the medicine: this thing they could not bear. For because they were not being healed by the medicine, medicated was the very medicine by the coming of the Lord. Now was Stephen a medicated medicine chanting; this they would not hear: whence the medicine was medicated, against this the ears they shut. For this thing they did at the point where was named Christ. The indignation of these men, was as the indignation of a serpent. Why your ears do ye shut? Wait, hear, and if ye shall be able, rage. Because they chose not to do aught but rage, they would not hear. But if they had heard, perchance they would have ceased to rage. The indignation of them was as the indignation of a serpent.

9. Such men are these also whom we are suffering. At the first they thought that they alone held the truth: God was not inactive, He held not His peace: in His Church was preached the Truth, in the bowels of the Mother were disclosed their lies: there was laid open that which giveth light, there was displayed the City upon a hill set, and the candle was placed upon a candlestick, which giveth light to all that are in the house. For where lieth hid the Church of Christ, where lieth hid the Truth of Christ? Is not the same the Mountain that hath grown out of a very small stone, and hath filled the whole face of the earth? Hence they are convinced, they have nought to say against the Church. And what for them hath remained? “Wherefore seek ye us?” “What would ye have of us?” They say, “Depart from us.” But they say also to their own people, “Let no one with them speak, no one with them be united, no one hear them.” The indignation of them is the indignation of serpents: as of a deaf asp and closing its ears; which will not hearken to the voice of men charming; and of the medicine, that is, the voice of the medicine, medicated by the wise man. Is there not from hence understood what sort of medicine it is, when of voice he speaketh? Hath anywise medicine a voice? There is a certain medicine which hath voice. A medicine we carry, the voice of it hear ye, not after the manner of deaf asps. If truly therefore of justice ye speak, judge right things, sons of men. There is a voice of medicine, and that too medicated by

the wise man. For now hath come Christ to fulfil the Law and the Prophets, to establish the truth itself, on which two commandments the whole Law hangeth and the Prophets.

10. Do we not perchance look for something even in the fact, that the asp is said so to shut the ears, as that one of them upon the earth it presseth, the other with its tail closeth up? What meaneth this? In the tail let the things behind certainly be understood; in fact, past things, upon which now it behoveth us to turn our back, in order that we may aim at those things which are promised to us: therefore neither with our past nor with our present life ought we to be delighted. For to this the Apostle admonisheth us, saying, What fruit at any time have ye had in those things wherein now ye blush? He is weaning them from remembering with pleasure things past, with a certain lust for enjoyment; lest we return in heart into Egypt. What of things present? How doth he bid us that even these things should be despised? Not regarding, he saith, the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen are eternal. Also of the present life, he saith, If in this life only in Christ we are hoping, more miserable we are than all men. Forget thou therefore things past, wherein ill thou hast lived; despise things present, wherein temporally thou livest; lest by entangling thee, things present suffer thee not to attain unto things future. For if present life delighteth thee, ear upon earth thou hast laid: if with thy past things, even now that they have glided by, thou art delighted, ear with tail thou hast closed up. Thou oughtest therefore to go into light, to go forth from darkness, at hearing the voice of the medicine medicated by the wise man: in order that now in light walking, and exulting, thou mayest say, The things which are behind I have forgotten, unto the things which are before I am reaching forth. He hath not said, The things which are behind I have forgotten, and with things present I am delighted. When he saith, The things which are behind I have forgotten, he hath not closed up ear with tail: when he saith, Unto the things which are before I am reaching forth, with these and things present he hath not grown deaf, with reason hearing, with reason preaching, with reason exulteth the tongue of him, preaching the Truth in new light, the old service being now laid aside. For for this purpose availeth the subtlety of the serpent, to imitate which the Lord exhorteth us. For He

saith, Be ye subtle, as serpents. What is, subtle as serpents? Offer all thy limbs to the smiter, provided only the Head thou keep entire. The Head of the man is Christ. But there is weighing us down something like the weight of a sort of hide, and as it were the old age of the old man. Hear the Apostle saying, You stripping off the old man, and putting on the new. And how do I put off, thou sayest, the old man? Imitate the subtlety of the serpent. For what doth the serpent, in order to put off from itself the old coat? It squeezeth itself through a narrow hole. And where, thou sayest, do I find this narrow hole? Hear: Strait and narrow is the way which leadeth to life, and few there are that enter in through it. Dost thou shrink back from it, and art thou not willing to walk therein, because few there are? There must the old coat be laid aside, and at another place laid aside it cannot be. Or, if thou art willing with thine oldness to be impeded, weighed down, oppressed, do not go through the narrow way. But if thou art weighed down with a sort of oldness of thy sin, and of thy past life; pass along it thou canst not. Because therefore the body, which is corruptible, weigheth down the soul: either let desires corporal not oppress thee, or let the lusts of the flesh be put off. Whence are they put off, except thou shalt have gone through the narrow way, unless thou shalt have been subtle as the serpent?

11. Ver. 6. God hath broken utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. Of whom? Of them to whom indignation is as the similitude of a serpent, and of an asp closing up its ears, so that it heareth not the voice of men charming, and of medicine medicated by the wise man. The Lord hath done to them what? Hath broken utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. It hath been done, this at first hath been done, and now is being done. But it would have sufficed, my brethren, that it should have been said, God hath broken utterly the teeth of them. Wherefore, in their own mouth? The Pharisees would not hear the Law, would not hear the precepts of truth from Christ, being like to that serpent and asp. For in their past sins they took delight, and present life they would not lose, that is, joys earthly for joys heavenly. One ear they were shutting with delight in things past, another with delight in things present, therefore they would not hear. For whence is this, If we shall have let Him go, there will come the Romans, and take away both our place and nation? They were unwilling indeed to lose their place, to earth they had pressed down their ear, and therefore they would

not hear those words medicated by the wise man. It was said of them, that both covetous they were, and lovers of money: and all the life of them, even the past, was described by the Lord in the Gospel. He that diligently readeth the Gospel, findeth whence those men were closing up both ears. Let your love give heed: the Lord hath done what? Hath broken utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. What is, in their own mouth? In such sort, that with their own mouth against themselves they should make declaration: He hath compelled them with their mouth against themselves to give sentence. They would have slandered Him, because of the tribute: He said not, It is lawful to pay tribute, or, it is not lawful to pay tribute. And He willed to break utterly their teeth, wherewith they were gaping in order to bite; but in their own mouth He would do it. If He said, Let there be paid to Cæsar tribute, they would have slandered Him, because He had spoken evil to the nation of the Jews, by making it a tributary. For because of sin they were paying tribute, having been humbled, as to them in the Law had been foretold. We have Him, say they, a maligner of our nation, if He shall have bidden us to pay tribute: but if He say, Do not pay, we have Him for saying that we should not be under allegiance to Cæsar. Such a double noose as it were to catch the Lord they laid. But to whom had they come? To Him that knew how to break utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. Shew to Me the coin, He saith. Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? Of paying tribute do ye think? To do justice are ye willing? the counsel of justice do ye seek? If truly justice ye speak, judge right things, ye sons of men. But now because in one way ye speak, in another way judge, hypocrites ye are: Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? Now I will break utterly your teeth in your mouth: shew to Me the coin. And they shewed it to Him. And He saith not, Cæsar’s it is: but asketh, Whose it is? in order that their teeth in their own mouth might be utterly broken. For on His inquiring, of whom it had the image and inscription, they said, of Cæsar. Even now the Lord shall break utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. Now ye have made answer, now have been broken utterly your teeth in your mouth. Render unto Cæsar the things which are of Cæsar, and unto God the things which are of God. Cæsar seeketh his image; render it: God seeketh His image; render it. Let not Cæsar lose from you his coin: let not God lose in you His coin. And they found not what they might answer. For they had been sent to slander Him: and they went back, saying, that no one to Him could make answer.

Wherefore? Because broken utterly had been the teeth of them in their own mouth.

12. Of that sort is also the following; In what power doest Thou these things? I also will ask of you one question, answer me. And He asked them of John, whence was the Baptism of John, from heaven, or of men? so that whatever they might answer might tell against themselves. They would not say out, of men, fearing men, lest they should be stoned by them; because John for a prophet they counted; to say, from heaven, they dreaded still more, lest they should confess Christ Himself; because John had preached of Christ. Straitened on both sides, on the one hand and on the other, they that were preparing to lay a charge gave an answer of ignorance: they said, We know not. For a slander they were preparing, when they said, In what power dost Thou these things? so that if He said, Christ I am, as being arrogant, proud, a blasphemer, they would have assailed Him. He would not say, The Christ I am: but He enquired about John, who had said that He was the very Christ. But they dared not find fault with John, fearing lest by the people they should be slain: they dared not to say, A true saying John hath spoken, lest it should be said to them, Believe him. They were dumb, they said that they knew not: now to bite they were not able. Whence were not able? At once your thoughts run upon, Broken had been the teeth of them in their own mouth.

13. The Lord displeased that Pharisee, who to dinner had bidden Him, because a woman that was a sinner drew near to His feet, and he murmured against Him, saying, If this man were a prophet, He would know what woman drew near to His feet. O thou that art no prophet, whence knowest thou that He knew not what woman drew near to His feet? Because indeed He kept not the purifying of the Jews, which outwardly was as it were kept in the flesh, and was afar from the heart, this thing he suspected of the Lord. And in order that I may not speak at length on this point, even in his mouth He willed to break utterly the teeth of him. For He set forth to him: “A certain usurer had two debtors, one was owing five hundred pence, the other fifty: both had not wherewithal to pay, he forgave both. Which loved him the more?” To this end the one asketh, that the other may answer: to this end he answereth, that the teeth of him in his mouth may be broken

utterly. He answered confounded, shut out he was: admitted she was to receive mercy, she that had burst into a strange habitation, but had not drawn near to a strange God: The Lord hath broken utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth.

14. The jaw-bones of lions the Lord hath broken utterly. Not only of asps. What of asps? Asps treacherously desire to throw in their venom, and scatter it, and hiss. Most openly raged the nations, and roared like lions. Wherefore have raged the nations, and the peoples meditated empty things? When they were lying in wait for the Lord. Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or is it not lawful? Asps they were, serpents they were, broken utterly were the teeth of them in their own mouth. Afterwards they cried out, Crucify, Crucify. Now is there no tongue of asp, but roar of lion. But also the jaw-bones of lions the Lord hath broken utterly. Perchance here there is no need of that which he hath not added, namely, in the mouth of them. For men lying in wait with captious questions, were forced to be conquered with their own answer: but those men that openly were raging, were they by any means to be confuted with questions? Nevertheless, even their jaw-bones were broken utterly: having been crucified, He rose again, ascended into heaven, was glorified as the Christ, is adored by all nations, adored by all kings. Let the Jews now rage, if they are able. They rage not: The jaw-bones of lions the Lord hath broken utterly.

15. We have also in the case of heretics this as a warning and precedent, because themselves also we find to be serpents with indignation made deaf, not choosing to hear the ‘medicine medicated by the wise man:’ and in their own mouth the Lord hath broken utterly the teeth of them. How were they raging against us, accusing us as being persecutors, for excluding them from the Basilicas? Now question them: ought heretics to be excluded from the Basilicas, or ought they not? Let them answer now, let them say that they ought not: the Maximianists demand back the Basilicas. But in order that the Maximianists may not recover the Basilicas, they say that heretics ought to be excluded. What is it therefore that ye were saying against us? Are not your teeth utterly broken in your own mouth? What have we to do with kings? say they. What have we to do with emperors? Ye on emperors do rely! I ask also, What have ye to do with proconsuls, whom emperors

have sent? What have ye to do with laws, which against you emperors have given? The emperors of our communion against all heretics have given laws: those men, in fact, they call heretics, who are not of their communion, among whom certainly you also are: if true are the laws, let them hold good even against you heretics; if false are the laws, wherefore do they hold good against your heretics? Brethren, for a little space give heed, and understand what we have said: when they were pleading their causes against the Maximianists, in order that they might expel those that were by themselves condemned, and their schismatics, from places which they held of old, and where bishops had succeeded their predecessors; wishing to exclude these men from thence, they pleaded public laws, before the judges they came, said that they were themselves catholics, in order that they might be able to exclude heretics. Wherefore dost thou call thyself a catholic, in order to have a heretic excluded; and wilt not rather be a catholic, that thou mayest not be excluded as a heretic? Now a catholic thou art, in order that thou mayest have power to exclude a heretic. For a judge could not judge otherwise than by his laws. They called themselves catholics, they were admitted to plead: they called the others heretics, he enquired whereby it might be proved: there was read the Council of Bagai, whereby the Maximianists were condemned, it was inserted in the Acta Proconsularia, it was proved that they having been condemned ought not to hold the Basilicas, and the proconsul gave judgment according to law. According to what law? That which was passed against heretics. If against heretics, also against thee. Wherefore, saith he, against me? For I am not a heretic. If heretic thou art not, false are those laws: for by those emperors they were passed, that are not of thy communion: all that are not of their communion, by their laws they call heretics. I enquire not whether true they are, or false; let that question be set aside, if still a question it is: meanwhile after thy account now I ask, True laws are they, or false laws are they? If true they are, let them be believed: if false they are, wherefore usest thou them? Thou hast said to the proconsul, A catholic I am, exclude thou a heretic. He enquired whence a man should be proved a heretic: thou producedst thy Council, shewedst that thou hadst condemned him. He, either conniving, or not understanding, nevertheless used the law in the capacity of judge; and thou hast done by means of the judge that which by thyself thou art not willing to do; for if the judge used the law of the emperor at thy instigation, why dost thou not use it for thy own correction? Lo, he hath expelled thy heretic according to the law of his emperor: wherefore according to the same law wilt thou not have him expel thee too? We repeat what ye have done: behold, the Basilicas were held by the Maximianists, now by you they are held: there have been excluded from them the Maximianists: there are extant the orders of the proconsuls, are extant the minutes of the proceedings, guards are accepted, cities stirred, men expelled from their places. Wherefore? Because heretics they are. Expelled by what law? Answer: let us see whether yet your teeth are not broken utterly in your mouth. False is the law? let it not hold good against thy heretic. True is the law? let it hold good also against thee. There is nothing which they can answer, God hath broken utterly the teeth of them in their own mouth. And therefore, wherever they cannot with slimy guile twine like asps, with open violence they roar like lions. There rush forth and rage armed bands of Circumcelliones, make havoc as much as they can, as much as ever they can. But also the jaw-bones of lions the Lord hath broken utterly.

16. Ver. 7. They shall be despised like water running down. Be not terrified, brethren, by certain streams, which are called torrents: with winter waters they are filled up; do not fear: after a little it passeth by, that water runneth down; for a time it roareth, soon it will subside: they cannot hold long. Many heresies now are utterly dead: they have run in their channels as much as they were able, have run down, dried are the channels, scarce of them the memory is found, or that they have been. They shall be despised like water running down. But not they alone; the whole of this age for a time is roaring, and is seeking whom it may drag along. Let all ungodly men, all proud men resounding against the rocks of their pride as it were with waters rushing along and flowing together, not terrify you, winter waters they are, they cannot alway flow: it must needs be that they run down unto their place, unto their end. And nevertheless of this torrent of the world the Lord hath drunk. For He hath suffered here, the very torrent He hath drunk, but in the way He hath drunk, but in the passage over: because in way of sinners He hath not stood. But of Him saith the Scripture what? Of the torrent in the way He shall drink, therefore He shall lift up His Head: that is, for this reason glorified He hath been, because He hath died; for this reason hath risen again, because He hath suffered. If He would not have

drunk in the way of the torrent, He would not have died; if He had not died, He would not have risen again; if He had not risen again, He would not have been glorified. Therefore, Of the torrent in the way He shall drink, for this cause He shall lift up His Head. Exalted is now our Head: let His members follow Him. They shall be despised like water running down. He hath bended His bow, until they be made weak. The menaces of God cease not: the bow of God are the menaces of God. The bow is bended, not yet it striketh. He hath bended His bow, until they be made weak. And many men have been made weak, terrified by the bending of that same bow. For hence was made weak he that said, What dost Thou bid me to do? I am, He saith, Jesus of Nazareth, Whom thou persecutest. He that was crying out from heaven, was bending the bow. Many men therefore that have been enemies, have been made weak; and having been converted, would not for long lift up their necks against the continuance of the bended bow. For in like manner also was he made weak that saith, in order that we might not fear to be made weak, When I am made weak, then mighty I am. And when he was praying that from him should be taken the thorn of the flesh, what had he for answer? “Virtue in weakness is made perfect.” He hath bended His bow, until they be made weak.

17. Ver. 8. Like wax melted they shall be taken away. For thou wast about to say, all men are not so made weak, like myself, in order that they may believe: many men do persevere in their evil, and in their malice. And of the same fear thou nothing: Like wax melted they shall be taken away. Against thee they shall not stand, they shall not continue: with a sort of fire of their own lusts they shall perish. For there is here a kind of hidden punishment, of it the Psalm is about to speak now, to the end of it. There are but a few verses; be attentive. There is a certain punishment future, fire of hell, fire everlasting. For future punishment hath two kinds: either of the lower places it is, where was burning that rich man, who was wishing for himself a drop of water to be dropped on his tongue off the finger of the poor man, whom before his gate he had spurned, when he saith, For I am tormented in this flame. And the second is that at the end, whereof they are to hear, that on the left hand are to be set: Go ye into fire everlasting, that hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. Those punishments shall be manifest at that time, when we shall have departed out of this life, or when

at the end of the world men shall have come to the resurrection of the dead. Now therefore is there no punishment, and doth God suffer sins utterly unpunished even unto that day? There is even here a sort of hidden punishment, of the same he is treating now. This the Spirit of God would commend to our notice: this let us understand, of this beware, this avoid, and into those very terrible punishments we shall not fall. Perchance some one will say to me, There are even here punishments, prisons, banishments, tortures, deaths, divers kinds of pains and tribulations. There are indeed even these, and by God's judgment they are dispensed: but to many men for probation, to many men for condemnation. We see nevertheless sometimes with these punishments just men to be afflicted, and to these punishments unjust men to be strangers: for which reason did totter the feet of him that afterwards rejoicing saith, How good is the God of Israel to men right in heart! But my own feet have been almost shaken, because I have been jealous in the case of sinners, beholding the peace of sinners. For he had seen the felicity of evil men, and well-pleased he had been to be an evil man, seeing evil men to reign, seeing that it was well with them, that they abounded in plenty of all things temporal, such as he too, being as yet but a babe, was desiring from the Lord: and his feet did totter, even until he saw what at the end is either to be hoped for or to be feared. For he saith in the same Psalm, This thing is a labour before me, until I enter into the sanctuary of God, and understand unto the last things. It is not therefore the punishments of the lower places, not the punishments of that fire everlasting after the resurrection, not those punishments which as yet in this world are common to just men and unjust men, and ofttimes more heavy are those of just men than those of unjust men; but some punishment or other of the present life the Spirit of God would recommend to our notice. Give heed, hear ye me about to speak of that which ye know: but a more sweet thing it is when it is declared in a Psalm, which, before it was declared, was deemed obscure. For behold I bring forth that which already ye knew: but because these things are brought forth from a place where ye have never yet seen them, it cometh to pass that even known things, as if they were new things, do delight you. Hear ye the punishment of ungodly men: Like wax, he saith, melted they shall be taken away. I have said that through their lusts this thing to them is done. Evil lust is like a burning and a fire. Doth fire consume a garment, and doth not the lust of adultery consume the soul? Of meditated adultery when the Scripture was speaking it saith, Shall one bind fire in his bosom, and his garments shall he not burn up? Thou bearest in thy bosom live coals; burned through is thy vest; thou bearest in thought adultery, and whole then is thy soul?

18. But these punishments few men do see: therefore them the Spirit of God doth exceedingly recommend to our notice. Hear the Apostle saying, God hath given them up unto the lusts of their heart. Behold, the fire from the face of which like wax they are melting. For they loose themselves from a certain continence of chastity: therefore even these same men, going unto their lusts, as loose and melting are spoken of. Whence melting? whence loose? From the fire of lusts. God hath given them up unto the lusts of their heart, so that they do those things which beseem not, being filled full of all iniquity. And he enumerateth many things which are sins, and saith they are the punishments of sinners. For he saith that the first punishment is pride: nay, no punishment, but the first sin is pride. The first sin is pride: the last punishment is fire everlasting, or fire infernal; for hereafter it will be the punishment of men condemned. Between that first sin and this last punishment, the things which are intermediate are both sins and punishments. For of so many things speaketh the Apostle as being done by them which are execrable sins; and nevertheless punishments he calleth them; For this cause, he saith, God hath given up them unto the lusts of their heart, unto uncleanness, so that they do those things which beseem not. And lest any one might think that he is afflicted only with those very punishments wherewith now he is delighted, and that he should not fear that which is to come at the end; he hath made mention of the last punishment; Who, though they had known the justice of God, perceived not, he saith, that they that do these things, are worthy of death, not only they that do them, but also they that consent to men doing them. They that do those things are worthy of death. What things? Those that above he hath enumerated to be in the number of punishments. For God hath given them up, he hath said, unto the lusts of their heart, so that they do those things which beseem not. For a man to be an adulterer, is at once a punishment: for a man to be a liar, covetous, fraudulent, a man-slayer, are even now punishments. Of what sins are they the punishments? Of former apostasy, of that pride. The beginning of the sin of a man is to apostatise from God: and

the beginning of all sin is pride. Therefore of sin itself first he hath spoken. Who though they had known God, glorified Him not as God, nor gave thanks, but were empty in their thoughts, and their unwise heart was darkened. Now this darkening of heart is punishment. But whence doth it chance to them? For saying themselves to be wise men, they became fools. Because, of themselves they used to say they had that, which from God they had received: or if they knew from whom they received it, Him they glorified not, from whom they knew themselves to have received: this is, saying themselves to be wise men, and there forthwith followed punishment: fools they became, and their unwise heart was darkened, saying themselves to be wise, they became fools. Is this a small punishment? To speak of these punishments alone; is darkening of heart, blindness of mind, a little punishment? If any one committing a theft, immediately had lost an eye: all men would say that God being present had taken vengeance. The eye of the heart he hath lost, and is God supposed to have spared him? Like wax melted they shall be taken away.

19. Ver. 7. There hath fallen upon them fire, and they have not seen the sun. Ye see in what manner he speaketh of a certain punishment of darkening. Fire hath fallen upon them, fire of pride, a smoky fire, fire of lust, fire of wrath. How great a fire is it? He upon whom it shall have fallen, shall not see the sun. Therefore hath it been said, Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Therefore, brethren, fire of evil lust fear ye, if ye will not to melt like wax, and to perish from the face of God. For there falleth upon you that fire, and the sun ye shall not see. What sun? Not that which together with thee see both beasts and insects, and good men and evil men: because He maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men. But there is another sun, whereof those men are to speak, And the sun hath not risen to us, passed away are all those things as it were a shadow. Therefore we have strayed from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shone to us, and the sun hath not risen to us. Wherefore, but because there hath fallen upon them fire, and they have not seen the sun. There hath conquered them the lust of the flesh. And this lust hath come whence? Give heed. From propagation thou hast been born together with that sin which thou mayest conquer: do not to thyself add enemies, conquer that with which thou hast been born. Into the arena of this life with it thou hast come,

engage with that which together with thee hath gone forward. When this same hath not been conquered, wherefore dost thou challenge troops of lusts? For carnal pleasure, brethren, together with man is born. But he that is well trained quickly seeth his enemy, and assaileth, and striveth, and quickly conquereth: for he is prepared for enemies that are not yet increasing. But he that maketh light of conquering that lust, with which by the propagation of sin he hath been born, and still stirreth up and advanceth many lusts; with difficulty overcometh them, and against himself being himself divided, with his own fire is burned up. Do not therefore hope as though there should be only those future punishments; see them present. There hath fallen upon them fire, and they have not seen the sun.

20. Ver. 8. Before that the bramble bringeth forth your thorns: as though living, as though in anger, it shall drink them up. What is the bramble? Of prickly plants it is a kind, upon which there are said to be certain of the closest thorns. At first it is a herb; and while it is a herb, soft and fair it is: but thereon there are nevertheless thorns to come forth. Now therefore sins are pleasant, and as it were they do not prick. A herb is the bramble; even now nevertheless there is a thorn. Before that the bramble bringeth forth thorns: is before that of miserable delights and pleasures the evident tortures come forth. Let them question themselves that love any object, and to it cannot attain; let them see if they are not racked with longing: and when they have attained to that which unlawfully they long for, let them mark if they are not racked with fear. Let them see therefore here their punishments; before that there cometh that resurrection, when in flesh rising again they shall not be changed. For all we shall rise again, but not all we shall be changed. For they shall have the corruption of the flesh wherein to be pained, not that wherein to die: otherwise even those pains would be ended. Then the thorns of that bramble, that is, all pains and piercings of tortures shall be brought forth. Such thorns as they shall suffer that are to say, These are they whom sometimes we had in derision: thorns of the piercing of repentance, but of one too late and without fruit like the barrenness of thorns. The repentance of this time is pain healing: repentance of that time is pain penal. Wouldest thou not suffer those thorns? here be thou pierced with the thorns of repentance; in such sort that thou do that which hath been spoken of, Turned I have been in sorrow, when the thorn was piercing: my

sin I have known, and mine iniquity I have not covered: I have said, I will declare against me my shortcoming to the Lord, and Thou hast remitted the ungodliness of my heart. Now do so, now be pierced through, be there not in thee done that which hath been said of certain execrable men, They have been cloven asunder, and have not been pierced through. Observe them that have been cloven asunder and have not been pierced through. Ye see men cloven asunder, and ye see them not pierced through. Behold beside the Church they are, and it doth not repent them, so as they should return whence they have been cloven asunder. The bramble hereafter shall bring forth their thorns. They will not now have a healing piercing through, they shall have hereafter one penal. But even now before that the bramble produceth thorns, there hath fallen upon them fire, that suffereth them not to see the sun, that is the wrath of God is drinking up them while still living: fire of evil lusts, of empty honours, of pride, of their covetousness: and whatsoever is weighing them down, that they should not know the truth, so that they seem not to be conquered, so that they be not brought into subjection even by truth herself. For what is a more glorious thing, brethren, than to be brought in subjection and to be overcome by truth? Let truth overcome thee willing: for even unwilling she shall of herself overcome thee. Therefore that fire of evil desires, that hath fallen upon them, so that they see not the sun, hath drunk up the bramble, before that it produceth their thorns: that is, it hideth their evil life, before that the same life bringeth forth evident rackings at the end; but in the anger of God that fire is concealing the bramble. For it is no little punishment that now they see not the sun, nor believe that thorns of punishment out of this evil life hereafter shall come forth. For ye, he saith, are a bramble, which bramble, that is, your own selves, living, that is, still set in this life, before that it bring forth in future judgment the evident thorns of your punishments, now in anger it drinketh up, that is, as if by sucking up suffereth it not to appear. The order of these words then, as far as I think, more perspicuously can be put together thus. There hath fallen upon them fire, and they have not seen the sun: which fire as though in anger, you as though living, a bramble it drinketh up, before that it bringeth forth your thorns: that is, you yourselves whom a bramble it findeth, it drinketh up before death, before that the same bramble bringeth forth your thorns, that is, after death in that penal resurrection. But wherefore hath he not spoken of living, but as though living, except because unreal is this life of ungodly men? For they do not live, but seem to themselves to live. And wherefore not, in anger, but as though in anger, except because undisturbed God doeth this thing? For this also hath been written: But Thou, O Lord of virtues, with gentleness judgest. He therefore even when He threateneth is not angry. For He is not perturbed, but is as though angry, because He punisheth and avengeth. And they that amended will not be, as it were live, but do not live. For the vengeance for the first sin, and that for those which they have added, abideth upon them; and the same is called the anger of God, because of the judgment of God it cometh. Whence the Lord of one not believing saith, But the anger of God abideth upon him. For with the anger of God we mortal men are born. Whence saith the Apostle, We also have been sometime by nature sons of wrath, as also the rest. What is, by nature sons of wrath, except that we bear with us the punishment of the first sin? But if we turn ourselves, wrath is taken away, there is granted grace. Thou wilt not be turned, thou art adding even upon that thou wert born: as though in wrath thou art drunk up in the present time.

21. Acknowledge therefore that punishment, and rejoice that ye are not in this other, all ye that are advancing and all ye that understand and love the truth, all ye that in yourselves desire more the victory of truth than your own, that close not against the truth your ears, because of delight in present things and remembrance of past things: be not ye a dog returned to its own vomit. All ye that are of such sort, see ye the punishments of those that are not of such sort, and rejoice. As yet the punishments of the lower places have not come, as yet fire everlasting hath not come: let him that is growing in God compare himself now with an ungodly man, a blind heart with an enlightened heart: compare ye two men, one seeing and one not seeing in the flesh. And what so great thing is vision of the flesh? Did Tobias by any means have fleshly eyes? His own son had, and he had not; and the way of life a blind man to one seeing did shew. Therefore when ye see that punishment, rejoice, because in it ye are not. Therefore saith the Scripture, (ver. 9.) The just man shall rejoice when he shall have seen vengeance. Not that future punishment; for see what followeth: his hands he shall wash in the blood of the sinner. What is this? Let your love attend. When manslayers are smitten, ought anywise innocent men to go thither and wash

their hands? But what is, in the blood of the sinner he shall wash his hands? When a just man seeth the punishment of a sinner, he groweth himself; and the death of one is the life of another. For if spiritually blood runneth from those that within are dead, do thou, seeing such vengeance, wash therein thy hands; for the future more cleanly live. And how shall he wash his hands, if a just man he is? For what hath he on his hands to be washed, if just he is? But the just man of faith shall live. Just men therefore he hath called believers: and from the time that thou hast believed, at once thou beginnest to be called just. For there hath been made a remission of sins. Even if out of that remaining part of thy life some sins are thine, which cannot but flow in, like water from the sea into the hold; nevertheless, because thou hast believed, when thou shalt have seen him that altogether is turned away from God to be slain in that blindness, there falling upon him that fire so that he see not the sun—then do thou that now through faith seest Christ, in order that thou mayest see in substance, (because the just man liveth of faith,) observe the ungodly man dying, and purge thyself from sins. So thou shalt wash in a manner thy hands in the blood of the sinner. Therefore his hands he shall wash in the blood of the sinner.

22. Ver. 10. And a man shall say, If therefore there is fruit to a just man. Behold, before that there cometh that which is promised, before that there is given life everlasting, before that ungodly men are cast forth into fire everlasting, here in this life there is fruit to the just man. What fruit? In hope rejoicing, in tribulation enduring. What fruit to the just man? We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, but patience probation, but probation hope: but hope confoundeth not: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, that hath been given to us. Doth he rejoice that is a drunkard; and doth he not rejoice that is just? In love there is fruit to a just man. Miserable the one, even when he maketh himself drunken: blessed the other, even when he hungereth and thirsteth. The one wine-bibbing doth gorge, the other hope doth feed. Let him see therefore the punishment of the other, his own rejoicing, and let him think of God. He that hath given even now such joy of faith, of hope, of charity, of the truth of His Scriptures, what manner of joy is He making ready against the end? In the way thus He feedeth, in his home how shall He fill him? And a man shall say, If therefore there is fruit to the just man.

Let them that see believe, and see, and perceive. Rejoice shall the just man when he shall have seen vengeance. But if he hath not eyes whence he may see vengeance, he will be made sad, and will not be amended by it. But if he seeth it, he seeth what difference there is between the darkened eye of the heart, and the eye enlightened of the heart: between the coolness of chastity and the flame of lust, between the security of hope and the fear there is in crime. When he shall have seen this, let him separate himself, and wash his hands in the blood of the same. Let him profit by the comparison, and say, Therefore there is fruit to the just man: therefore there is a God judging them in the earth. Not yet in that life, not yet in fire eternal, not yet in the lower places, but here in earth. Behold, that rich man yet is clothed with purple and fine linen, and yet feasteth every day sumptuously. Not yet the bramble hath brought forth thorns, not yet he saith, I am tormented in this flame: but even now there is blindness of mind, even now the eye of the mind hath been quenched. If blind in eyes of flesh he were to sit down to his table, however rich it be, miserable thou wouldest call him: blind within, the bread of Christ he seeth not, and blessed is he? This no one saith but one alike blind. Therefore there is fruit to the just man; therefore there is a God judging them in the earth.

23. If somewhat too prolix we have been, pardon us. We exhort you in the name of Christ, to meditate profitably on those things which ye have heard. Because even to preach the truth is nought, if heart from tongue dissenteth; and to hear the truth nothing profiteth, if a man upon the rock build not. He that buildeth upon a Rock, is the same that heareth and doeth: but he that heareth and doeth not, buildeth upon sand: he that neither heareth nor doeth, buildeth nothing. But in like manner as he that buildeth upon sand, ruin for himself buildeth; so he that buildeth not upon a rock, the flood coming, without house is carried away. It is not possible to do any thing without both building, and upon a rock building: that is, both to hear and to do. And let not another man say, Why do I go forth to the Church? for they that daily to the Church go forth, do not what they hear. They do it, nevertheless, in order that they may hear: thus they may come so to do it, as both to hear and to do: but thou, how very far thou art from doing, that so far art fleeing from hearing? But I, he saith, build not upon sand. Upon thee naked the flood will come: will it therefore not take thee off? will therefore the rain

not slay thee? will, for this reason, the winds not sweep thee away? Therefore I will come and will hear. But when thou shalt have heard, do. For if thou shalt have heard and shalt not have done, thou hast builded indeed, but upon sand. Because therefore without building standing, naked we are, but in a building planted upon sand, under ruin we are: it remaineth that upon a Rock we build, and what we have heard, that we do.

PSALM 59

Exposition

Sermon I. on the first part of the Psalm

1. As the Scripture is wont to set mysteries of the Psalms on the titles, and to deck the brow of a Psalm with the high announcement of a Mystery, in order that we that are about to go in may know (when as it were upon the door-post we have read what within is doing) either of whom the house is, or who is the owner of that estate: so also in this Psalm there hath been written a title, of a title. For it hath, At the end, corrupt not for David himself unto the inscription of the title. This is that which I have spoken of, title of Title. For what the inscription of this title is, which to be corrupted he forbiddeth, the Gospel to us doth indicate. For when the Lord was being crucified, a title by Pilate was inscribed and set, King of the Jews, in three tongues, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin: which tongues in the whole world mostly do prevail. Therefore, if the King of the Jews was crucified, the Jews their King crucified; by crucifying Him, King of the Gentiles also they made Him, rather than slew Him. And indeed as much as in them lay, they destroyed the Christ, but for themselves, not for us; and He died for us, and with His blood He redeemed us. And now the title is not corrupted: because He is King, not only of the Gentiles, but also of the same Jews. But why? Because they spake against Him, therefore were they able to overthrow the dominion of their King? King He is, and above them. For this King an iron rod doth bear, wherewith He both ruleth and breaketh. I, He saith, have been set a King by Him over His holy Mount Sion, preaching the precept of the Lord. The Lord hath said to Me, My Son art Thou, to-day I have begotten Thee: ask of Me, and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and for Thy possession the ends of the earth; Thou shalt rule them with an iron rod, and as it were a vessel of the potter Thou shalt break them in pieces. Whom shall He rule? whom shall He break in pieces? Shall rule men obeying, shall break in pieces men resisting. Therefore corrupt not is most proper and prophetic; since indeed even those Jews made

suggestion at that time to Pilate, and said, Do not write King of the Jews, but write, that Himself said that He was King of the Jews: for this title, say they, hath established Him King over us. And Pilate, What I have written, I have written. And there was fulfilled, corrupt not.

2. Nor is this the only Psalm which hath an inscription of such sort, that the Title be not corrupted. Several Psalms thus are marked on the face, but however in all the Passion of the Lord is foretold. Therefore here also let us perceive the Lord's Passion, and let there speak to us Christ, Head and Body. So always, or nearly always, let us hear the words of Christ from the Psalm, as that we look not only upon that Head, the one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus: Who also after the Divine Nature in the beginning was the Word, God with God, which Word was made Flesh, and dwelled in us, flesh out of the seed of Abraham, out of the seed of David by Mary the Virgin: not therefore of Him alone, Who is our Head, let us think, when we hear Christ speak; but let us think of Christ, Head and whole Body, a sort of entire Man. For to us is said, But ye are the Body of Christ and members, by the Apostle Paul. And of Him is said by the same Apostle, that He is the Head of the Church. If therefore He is Head, we Body; whole Christ is Head and Body. For sometimes thou findest words which do not suit the Head, and unless thou shalt have attached them to the Body, thy understanding will waver: again thou findest words which are proper for the Body, and Christ nevertheless is speaking. In that place we must have no fear lest a man be mistaken: for quickly he proceedeth to adapt to the Head, that which he seeth is not proper for the Body. Himself in a word on the Cross hanging in the person of the Body spake, My God, My God, have regard unto Me, wherefore, hast Thou forsaken Me? For He had not forsaken Christ, by whom forsaken He had not been: nor in truth did He come to us in such sort as to have forsaken Him; or did He so send Him, as from Him to have departed. But because man was deserted by God, that sinning Adam, who though he was wont to rejoice before the face of God, being terrified by the consciousness of sin, fled from his joy: and God did truly forsake him, because himself left God: since out of this Adam Christ had received flesh, out of the person of the same flesh, this He saith: because then our old man was nailed together with Him to the Cross.

3. Let us hear therefore what followeth: When Saul sent and guarded his house in order that he might kill him. This though not to the Cross of the Lord, yet to the Passion of the Lord doth belong. For Crucified was Christ, and dead, and buried. That sepulchre was therefore as it were the house: to guard which the government of the Jews sent, when guards were set to the sepulchre of Christ. There is indeed a story in the Scripture of the Reigns, of the occasion when Saul sent to guard the house in order that he might kill David: but as much as he that hath written the Psalm hath taken thence, so much we ought to examine when of the title of the Psalm we are treating. Did he wish to intimate this only to us, that they sent to the house in order that it might be guarded, and he might be killed? How then, if David figured Christ, to this end was the house guarded that Christ might be killed; since in the Tomb Christ was not laid, until after He had been slain on the Cross? Refer this therefore to the Body of Christ: that to kill Christ was to take away the name of Christ, in order that men might not believe in Christ, provided that the falsehood of the guards might gain credit, who were bribed to say, that while they slept His disciples came and took Him away. This is truly to will to slay Christ, to extinguish the name of His Resurrection, in order that falsehood might be preferred to the Gospel. But in like manner as Saul effected not his purpose of slaying David: so this could not the government of the Jews effect, that the testimony of guards sleeping should avail more than that of Apostles watching. For what were the guards instructed to say? We give to you, they say, as much money as ye please; and say ye, that while ye were sleeping there came His disciples, and took Him away. Behold what sort of witnesses of falsehood against truth and the Resurrection of Christ, His enemies, through Saul figured, did produce. Enquire, O unbelief, of sleeping witnesses, let them reply to thee of what was done in the Tomb. Who, if they were sleeping, whence knew it? If watching, wherefore detained they not the thieves? Let him say therefore what followeth.

4. Ver. 1. Deliver me from mine enemies, my God, and from men rising up upon me, redeem Thou me. There hath been done this thing in the flesh of Christ, it is being done in us also. For our enemies, to wit the devil and his angels, cease not to rise up upon us every day, and to wish to make sport of our weakness and our frailness, by deceptions, by suggestions, by

temptations, and by snares of whatsoever sort to entangle us, while on earth we are still living. But let our voice watch unto God, and cry out in the members of Christ, under the Head that is in heaven, Deliver me from mine enemies, my God, and from men rising up upon me, redeem Thou me.

5. Ver. 2. Deliver me from men working iniquity, and from men of bloods, save Thou me. They indeed were men of bloods, who slew the Just One, in Whom no guilt they found: they were men of bloods, because when the foreigner washed his hands, and would have let go Christ, they cried, Crucify, Crucify, they were men of bloods, on whom when there was being charged the crime of the blood of Christ, they made answer, giving it to their posterity to drink, His blood be upon us and upon our sons. But neither against His Body did men of bloods cease to rise up; for even after the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, the Church suffered persecutions, and she indeed first that grew out of the Jewish people, of which also our Apostles were. There at first Stephen was stoned, and received that of which he had his name. For Stephanus doth signify a crown. Lowly stoned but highly crowned. Secondly, among the Gentiles rose up kingdoms of Gentiles, before that in them was fulfilled that which had been foretold, There shall adore Him all the kings of the earth, all nations shall serve Him: and there roared the fierceness of that kingdom against the witnesses of Christ: there was shed largely and frequently the blood of Martyrs: wherewith when it had been shed, being as it were sown, the field of the Church more productively put forth, and filled the whole world as we now behold. From these therefore, men of bloods, is delivered Christ, not only Head, but also Body. From men of bloods is delivered Christ, both from them that have been, and from them that are, and from them that are to be; there is delivered Christ, both He that hath gone before, and He that is, and He that is to come. For Christ is the whole Body of Christ; and whatsoever good Christians that now are, and that have been before us, and that after us are to be, are an whole Christ, who is delivered from men of bloods; nor is this voice void, And from men of bloods save Thou me.

6. Ver. 3. For behold they have hunted my soul. They have been able to hold, been able to slay, they have hunted my soul. But where is, Thou hast broken asunder my bonds? Where is, The trap is broken, and we are

delivered? Where is that wherein we bless God, that hath not given us for a hunting to the teeth of them? They indeed have hunted, but in the hands of men hunting He leaveth not us, That guardeth Israel. For, behold, they have hunted my soul: there have rushed upon me strong men. We must not however pass on from these strong men: diligently we must trace who are the strong men rising up. Strong men, upon whom but upon weak men, upon powerless men, upon men not strong? And praised nevertheless are the weak men, and condemned are the strong men. If it would be perceived who are strong men, at first the devil himself the Lord hath called a strong man: No one, He saith, is able to go into the house of a strong man, and to carry off his vessels, unless first he shall have bound the strong man. He hath bound therefore the strong man with the chains of His dominion: and his vessels He hath carried off, and His own vessels hath made them. For all unrighteous men were vessels of the devil, that believing have been made vessels of Christ: to whom the Apostle saith, For ye have been sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord: That maketh known His riches on the vessels of mercy. These men therefore may be understood as strong men. But there are among mankind certain strong men of a blameable and damnable strength, that are confident indeed, but on temporal felicity. That man doth not seem to you to have been strong, of whom now from the Gospel hath been read: how his estate brought forth abundance of fruits, and he being troubled, hit upon the design of rebuilding, so that, having pulled down his old barns, he should construct new ones more capacious, and, these having been finished, should say to his soul, Thou hast many good things, soul, feast, be merry, be filled. What sort of strong man seest thou? Behold a man that hath not set God for his helper, but hath hoped in the multitude of his riches. See how strong he is: And he hath prevailed, he saith, in his emptiness.

7. There are also other men strong, not because of riches, not because of the powers of the body, not because of any temporally preeminent power of station, but relying on their righteousness. This sort of strong men must be guarded against, feared, repulsed, not imitated: of men relying, I say, not on body, not on means, not on descent, not on honour; for all such things who would not see to be temporal, fleeting, falling, flying? but relying on their own righteousness. Such strength prevented the Jews from going in through

the eye of the needle. For while on themselves they rely that just men they are, and think themselves to be as it were whole, the medicine they refused, and the Physician Himself they slew. Such strong men therefore, not weak, He came not to call, That said, They that are whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick: I am not come to call just men but sinners unto repentance. These were the strong men that reviled the disciples of Christ, because their Master was going in unto sick men, and was feasting with sick men. Wherefore, say they, doth your Master eat with publicans and sinners? O ye strong men, to whom a Physician is not needful! This strength to soundness belongeth not, but to insanity. For even than men phrensied nothing can be stronger, more mighty they are than whole men: but by how much greater their powers are, by so much nearer is their death. May God therefore turn away from our imitation these strong men. For we must fear lest a man should desire to imitate these men. But the Teacher of humility, Partaker of our infirmity, giving to partake of His own Divinity, for this purpose coming down, that He might teach the way and become the Way, deigned very much to recommend His own humility to us; and therefore by a servant to be baptized disdained not, in order that He might teach us to confess our sins, and to be made weak in order that we may be strong; to have rather the Apostle's voice, saying, When I am made weak, then mighty I am. How therefore would he not be strong? But these men that strong have desired to be, that is, that on their own virtue have desired to rely, as though being just, have stumbled upon the stone of stumbling: and the Lamb hath seemed to them to be a kid, and because as if He were a kid they slew Him, by the Lamb to be redeemed they deserved not. The same are therefore the strong men, that assailed Christ, commending their own justice. Hear ye these strong men: when certain men of Jerusalem were speaking, having been sent by them to take Christ, and not daring to take Him; (because when He would, then was He taken, That truly was strong:) Why therefore, say they, could ye not take Him? And they made answer, No one of men did ever so speak as He. And these strong men, Hath by any means any one of the Pharisees believed on Him, or any one of the Scribes, but this people knowing not the Law? They preferred themselves to the sick multitude, that was running to the Physician: whence but because they were themselves strong? and what is worse, by their strength, all the multitude also they brought over unto themselves, and slew the Physician of all. But

He also because He was slain, of His blood made medicine for sick men; There have rushed upon Me strong men. To these mighty strong men give heed: and see whether a man should rely on any thing, when not even on righteousness he ought to rely. Now see where they lie that rely on riches, on strength of body, on nobility of family, on rank in the world, if whosoever on justice itself as if his own shall have relied, falleth. There have rushed upon me strong men. Out of these strong men was he that vaunted his powers. Thanks to Thee, he saith, I render, because I am not like the rest of men, unjust, robbers, adulterers, as also this Publican: I fast twice in a week, tithes I give of all things that I possess. Behold, a strong man vaunting his power, but on the other side observe a weak one afar off standing, and in humility drawing near. But the Publican, He saith, stood afar off, and not even his eyes unto Heaven dared to raise, but smote his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. Verily I say unto you, that Publican went down justified rather than that Pharisee. And observe the justice. For every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. There rushed on those strong men, that is, proud men, who knowing not God’s righteousness, and their own righteousness wishing to set up, to the righteousness of God they did not submit.

8. Ver. 3. What next? Neither iniquity is mine, nor sin mine, O Lord. There have rushed on indeed strong men on their own righteousness relying, they have rushed on, but sin in me they have not found. For truly those strong men, that is, as it were righteous men, on what account would they be able to persecute Christ, unless it were as if a sinner? But, however, let them look to it how strong they be, in the raging of fever not in the vigour of soundness: let them look to it how strong they be, and how as though just against an unrighteous man they have raged. But, however, neither iniquity is mine, nor sin mine, O Lord. Without iniguity I did run, and I was guided. Those strong men therefore could not follow me running: therefore a sinner they have deemed me, because my steps they have not seen.

9. Ver. 4. Without iniquity I did run, and was guided; rise up to meet me, and see. To God is said, Without iniquity I did run, and was guided; rise up to meet me, and see. But why? If He meet not, is He unable to see? It is just

as if thou wast walking in a road, and from afar by some one thou couldest not be recognised, thou wouldest call to him and wouldest say, Meet me, and see how I am walking; for when from afar thou espiest me, my steps thou art not able to see. So also unless God were to meet, would He not see how without iniquity he was guided, and how without sin he was running? This interpretation indeed we can also accept, namely, Rise up to meet me, as if ‘help me.’ But that which he hath added, and see, must be understood as, make it to be seen that I run, make it to be seen that I am guided: according to that figure wherein this also hath been said to Abraham, Now I know that thou fearest God. God saith, Now I know: whence, but because I have made thee to know? For unknown to himself every one is before the questioning of temptation: just as of himself Peter in his confidence was ignorant, and by denying learned what kind of powers he had, in his very stumbling he perceived that it was falsely he had been confident: he wept, and in weeping he earned profitably to know what he was, and to be what he was not. Therefore Abraham when tried, became known to himself: and it was said by God, Now I know, that is, now I have made thee to know. In like manner as glad is the day because it maketh men glad; and sad is bitterness because it maketh sad one tasting thereof: so God’s seeing is making to see. Rise up, therefore, he saith, to meet me, and see. What is, and see? And help me, that is, in those men, in order that they may see my course, may follow me; let not that seem to them to be crooked which is straight, let not that seem to them to be curved which keepeth the rule of truth: For without iniquity I have run, and was guided: rise up to meet me, and see.

10. Something else I am admonished to say in this place by the loftiness of our Head Himself: for He was made weak even unto death, and He took on Him the weakness of flesh, in order that the chickens of Jerusalem He might gather under His wings, like a hen shewing herself weak with her little ones. For have we not observed this thing in some bird at some time or other, even in those which build nests before our eyes, as the house-sparrows, as swallows, so to speak, our annual guests, as storks, as various sorts of birds, which before our eyes build nests, and hatch eggs, feed chickens, as the very doves which daily we see; and some bird to become weak with her chickens, have we not known, have we not looked upon,

have we not seen? In what way doth a hen experience this weakness? Surely a known fact I am speaking of, which in our sight is daily taking place. How her voice groweth hoarse, how her whole body is made languid? The wings droop, the feathers are loosened, and thou seest around the chickens some sick thing, and this is maternal love which is found as weakness. Why was it therefore, but for this reason, that the Lord willed to be a Hen, saying in the Holy Scripture, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often have I willed to gather thy sons, even as a hen her chickens under her wings, and thou hast not been willing? But He hath gathered all nations, like as a hen her chickens, He That hath been made weak for our sakes, receiving flesh from us, that is, from mankind, crucified, despised, with buffets smitten, scourged, hanged on the Tree, wounded with the spear. Therefore this belongeth to maternal weakness, not to Majesty lost. Whereas therefore such was Christ, and therefore despised, and therefore a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, and therefore many men have stumbled against Him: whereas such therefore He was, and nevertheless flesh without sin had taken upon Him, He was made partaker of our own weakness, not of our own iniquity; in order that even hereby, that with us He shared weakness, He might undo our iniquity. Therefore without iniquity I did run, and I was guided. Why, therefore, is He not to be acknowledged according to His Godhead, and why is that alone in Him to be considered, which for our sakes He was made, and not That whereby He made us? Evidently That also is to be considered: because a great proof of loving-kindness it is to know Who it was that for thee hath suffered, and what. No small one it was, it was not in behalf of thee some great one, but in behalf of thee weak, He the Highest. What? He having been made a little one: He humbled Himself, having been made obedient even unto death. Who? Hear from above: Who when in the form of God He was, thought it no robbery to be equal with God. Therefore being equal with God, His own Self He emptied, taking the form of a servant, after the similitude of men having been made, and in shape having been found as a man: and He emptied Himself in such wise, that He took unto Him that which He was not, not so as to lose what He was. In what manner therefore emptied? Because to thee of such sort He appeared, because to thee the dignity which with the Father He hath, He shewed not, because to thee now He presented weakness, reserved for the purged hereafter brightness. He therefore that is equal to the Father of such sort was made: and nevertheless in the very weakness He must be acknowledged, not by sight, but by faith: in order that what to see we are not yet able, at least we may believe, and by believing that which we do not see, even to see we may earn. With reason, after that He rose again, He saith to Mary Magdalene, to whom He deigned first to appear: Touch Me not; for not yet I have ascended to the Father. What is this? A little after, the women touched Him. For returning from the tomb, as He met them, they worshipped Him, and held His feet: the disciples also felt His scars. What is therefore, Touch Me not, for not yet have I ascended to the Father: but, do not believe Me to be this alone which thou seest, lest here also should abide thy seeing even as thy touching? For humble to thee I seem, not yet I have ascended to the Father. Whence also to you I have come down, and thence I have not departed: not yet thither I have ascended, since you I have not deserted. He came without departing, He ascended without deserting. But what is it that He ascendeth to the Father? When to us He is known as equal with the Father. For we ascend by making progress, so that we may be strong enough to see this, to perceive this, to receive this however it be. For this reason therefore He deferred touching. He put it not away, He repelled not, He refused not. For not yet, He saith, have I ascended to the Father. ‘From the highest Heaven is the going forth of Him,’ saith another Psalm, ‘and the meeting of Him even unto the highest of Heaven.’ The highest of Heaven, that is, the highest in all spiritual things, the Father is: thence the running forth of Him, and the meeting even unto the highest of Heaven. He meeteth even unto the highest, is not said but of one equal. Lastly, when some things unequal we compare, and something short to something long we apply, to see how it is length to length, if unequal we shall have found it, then we are wont to say, It meeteth not; but if equal it be, it meeteth. Therefore the meeting of Him is even unto the highest of Heaven, because equal He is with the Father, as such an One He would have Himself be known to His faithful, Who said, Touch Me not. This thing He would have to be granted by the Father to His faithful, Who was saying, Rise up unto meeting Me, and see: make it known, that with Thee I am equal. And see: what is, And see? Make it to be seen that with Thee I am equal. How long doth Philip say to Me, Shew to us the Father, and it is sufficient for us? How long shall I say, So long a time am I with you, and the Father know ye not: Philip, he that hath seen Me hath seen also the Father: dost thou not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? And as yet perchance he believed not Him to be equal. Rise up to meet Me, and see. Make Me to be seen, make Thyself to be seen, make known to men Our equality. Let not the Jews think themselves to have crucified a man. Though in Him there was crucified, only so much as of Man there was: nevertheless they knew not Whom they crucified. For if they had known, the Lord of Glory they never would have crucified. This Lord of glory in order that My faithful ones may know, Rise up to meet me and see.

11. And Thou, Lord God of virtues, God of Israel. Thou God of Israel, that art thought to be but God of one nation, which worshippeth Thee, when all nations worship idols, Thou God of Israel, Give heed unto the visiting all nations. Fulfilled be that prophecy wherein Isaiah in Thy person speaketh to Thy Church, Thy holy City, that barren one of whom many more are the sons of Her forsaken than of her that hath a husband. To Her indeed hath been said, Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not; break forth and cry out, thou that travailest not: for many more are the sons of Her forsaken than of her that hath a husband; more than of the Jewish nation which hath an Husband, which hath received the Law, more than of that nation which had a visible king. For thy king is hidden, and more sons to thee there are by a hidden Bridegroom. Therefore to Her is said, Many more are the children of thee forsaken than of Her which hath an Husband. Secondly, the Prophet addeth, Enlarge the place of Thy tabernacle, and Thy courts fix thou: there is no cause for thee to spare, extend further thy cords, and strong stakes set thou again and again on the right and on the left. Upon the right keep good men, on the left keep evil men, until there come the fan: occupy nevertheless all nations; bidden to the marriage be good men and evil men, filled be the marriage with guests; it is the office of servants to bid, of the Lord to sever. Again and again on the right hand and on the left stretch forth. For Thy seed shall inherit the nations: and cities which had been forsaken Thou shalt inhabit: forsaken of God, forsaken of Prophets, forsaken of Apostles, forsaken of the Gospel, full of demons. Cities which had been forsaken Thou shalt inhabit, there is nothing for thee to fear. For Thou shalt prevail; and blush not because abominable Thou hast been. Therefore though there have risen up upon thee strong men, blush not:

when against the name of Christ laws were enacted, when ignominy and infamy it was to be a Christian. Blush not because abominable Thou hast been: for confusion for everlasting Thou shalt forget, of the ignominy of Thy widowhood Thou shalt not be mindful. For I am the Lord that make Thee, The Lord is His name: and He that rescueth Thee, the Same, the God of Israel, shall be called the Lord of the whole earth. And Thou, Lord God of Virtues, God of Israel, give heed unto visiting all nations: give heed, I say, unto visiting all nations.

12. Ver. 5. Have not pity upon all men that work iniquity. Here evidently He is terrifying. Whom would He not terrify? What man falling back upon his own conscience would not tremble? Which even if to itself it is conscious of godliness, strange if it be not in some sort conscious of iniquity. For whosoever doeth sin, also doeth iniquity. For if Thou shalt have marked iniquities, O Lord, what man shall abide it? And nevertheless a true saying it is, and not said to no purpose, and neither is nor will it be possible to be void, Have not pity upon all men that work iniquity. But He had pity even upon Paul, who at first as Saul wrought iniquity. For what good thing did he, whence he might deserve of God? Did he not hate His Saints unto death? did he not bear letters from the chief of the priests, to the end that wheresoever he might find Christians, to punishment he should hurry them? When bent upon this, when thither proceeding, breathing and panting slaughter, as the Scripture testified of him, was he not from Heaven with a mighty voice summoned, thrown down, raised up; blinded, lightened; slain, made alive; destroyed, restored? In return for what merit? Let us say nothing; himself rather let us hear: I that before have been, he saith, a blasphemer, and persecutor; and injurious, but mercy I have obtained. Surely Thou wouldest not have pity upon all men that work iniquity: this in two ways may be understood: either that in fact not any sins doth God leave unpunished; or that there is a sort of iniquity, on the workers whereof God hath indeed no pity. On these two heads briefly, as much as the time sufficeth for, something we would speak to your Love.

13. All iniquity, be it little or great, punished must needs be, either by man himself repenting, or by God avenging. For even he that repenteth punisheth himself. Therefore, brethren, let us punish our own sins, if we

seek the mercy of God. God cannot have mercy on all men working iniquity as if pandering to sins, or not rooting out sins. In a word, either thou punishest, or He punisheth. Wilt thou that He punish not? Punish thou. For even that thing thou hast done which unpunished cannot be: but by thyself be it punished rather, in order that thou mayest do that which in the Psalm hath been written, Let us come before the face of Him in confession. What is, Let us come before the face of Him? Before that Himself giveth heed to punish, do thou come before Him in confession, and punish. Let not Him find any thing which He may punish. Because when thou punishest iniquity, thou doest equity. And therefore on thee God shall have pity, because God doth find thee now working equity. What is working equity? Because this thing in thyself thou hatest, which He also hateth: so that thou mayest begin to please God, because that thing in thyself thou punishest which displeaseth God. For it is not possible for sin to be left unpunished: for true is, Have Thou not pity on all men that work iniquity.

14. But let us see now another way in which this sentence may be understood. There is a certain iniquity, on the worker whereof it cannot be that God have mercy. Ye enquire, perchance, what that is? It is the defending of sins. When a man defendeth his sins, great iniquity he worketh: that thing he is defending which God hateth. And see how perversely, how iniquitously. Whatever of good he hath done, to himself he would have it to be ascribed; whatever of evil, to God. For in this manner men defend sins in the person of God, which is a worse sin. What is this? No one there is that would dare to say, good is adultery, good is manslaying, good guile, good falseswearing; no one surely among men. For even they that do these things, make an outcry when they suffer them. By no means therefore canst thou find a soul so perverse, so alien from the society of mankind and from sharing in the common blood of Adam, as that to him appeareth adultery to be a good thing, as I have said, or guile, robbery, false swearing. But how do they defend these things? If God had not willed it, I should not have done this thing. Wilt thou have me do any thing against my fate? Then thou enquirest, what is fate: thou fleest to the stars. Thou inquirest who made and ordered the stars: God it is. Therefore thou defendest thy sin in such sort, that thou layest blame on God. So the guilty is excused, so that the Judge may be charged. However on men working

iniquity God hath no pity at all. Have Thou no pity on all men that work iniquity.

15. Ver. 6. Let them be converted at the evening. Of certain men he is speaking that were once workers of iniquity, and once darkness, being converted in the evening. What is, in the evening? Afterward. What is, at the evening? Later. For before, before that they crucified Christ, they ought to have acknowledged their Physician. Wherefore. when He had been crucified—rising again, into Heaven ascending—after that He sent His Holy Spirit, wherewith were fulfilled they that were in one house, and they began to speak with the tongues of all nations, there feared the crucifiers of Christ: they were pricked through with their consciences, counsel of safety from the Apostles they besought, they heard, do penance, and be baptized each one of you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and your sins shall be remitted unto you. After the slaying of Christ, after the shedding of the blood of Christ, remitted are your sins. He so willed to die, that with His blood even the shedders of the same blood He redeemed. Ye have shed raging, drink ye confessing. With reason, let them be converted at evening, and suffer hunger as dogs. Dogs the Jews called the Gentiles, as if being unclean. For even the Lord Himself, when after Him there cried a certain woman of Canaan, not of Judæa, unto the healing of her daughter desiring to prevail with His mercy—He foreseeing all things—knowing all things—yet since her faith He willed to shew, deferred the blessing, and kept her in suspense. And how deferred? I am not, He saith, sent but to the sheep which have been lost of the house of Israel. Israel, sheep: Gentiles, what? It is not good to throw the bread of sons to dogs. The Gentiles therefore dogs He called, because of uncleanness. But what of that woman hungering? This moreover she disdained not: humbly she received reproach, and earned a blessing. But this must not be called a reproach, which by the Lord had been said. If a servant say any such thing to his master, a reproach it is. When the Lord saith even any such thing to his servant, it may rather be called a condescension. Even so, she saith, Lord. What is even so? A true thing thou sayest, surely a true thing thou sayest, a dog I am. But even dogs, she saith, eat of the crumbs which fall from the table of their masters. And immediately the Lord, O woman, great is thy faith. But lately a dog, now a woman. Whence now a woman, she that a little before was a dog? By

confessing humbly, by not disdaining that which by the Lord had been spoken. Therefore the nations are dogs, and for this reason they are hungry. It is a good thing for Jews also to acknowledge themselves sinners; and though it be at evening, to be converted; and to suffer hunger like dogs. For in ill sort had he been filled that was saying, I fast twice in a week. But that publican was a dog, suffering hunger; and thence for the blessing of the Lord was hungering he that was saying, ‘Merciful be Thou to me, a sinner.’ Let these be converted, therefore, they also at evening, and suffer hunger as dogs. Let them yearn for the grace of God, perceive themselves to be sinners; let those strong men be made weak, those rich men be made poor, those just men acknowledge themselves sinners, those lions be made dogs. Let them be converted at evening, and suffer hunger as dogs. And they shall go around the city. What city? That world, which in certain places the Scripture calleth ‘the city of standing round:’ that is, because in all nations every where the world had encompassed the one nation of Jews, where such words were being spoken, and it was called ‘the city of standing round.’ Around this city shall go those men, now having become hungry dogs. In what manner shall they go around? By preaching. Saul out of a wolf was made a dog at evening, that is, being late converted by the crumbs of his Lord, in His grace he ran, and went around the city.

16. Ver. 7. Behold, themselves shall speak in their mouth, and a sword is on the lips of them. Here is that sword twice whetted, whereof the Apostle saith, And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Wherefore twice whetted? Wherefore, but because smiting out of both Testaments? With this sword were slain those whereof it was said to Peter, ‘Slay, and eat.’ And a sword is on the lips of them. For who hath heard? They shall speak in their mouth, Who hath heard? That is, they shall be wroth with men that are slow to believe. They that a little before were even themselves unwilling to believe, do feel disgust from men not believing. And truly, brethren, so it is. Thou seest a man slow before he is made a Christian; thou criest to him daily, hardly he is converted: suppose him to be converted, and then he would have all men to be Christians, and wondereth that not yet they are. It hath chanced out to him at evening to have been converted: but because he hath been made hungering like a dog, he hath also on his lips a sword; he saith, Who hath heard? What is, Who hath heard? ‘Who hath

believed our hearing, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? For who hath heard?’ The Jews believe not: they have turned them to the nations, and have preached. The Jews did not believe; and nevertheless through believing Jews the Gospel went around the city, and they said, For who hath heard?

17. Ver. 8. And Thou, Lord, shalt deride them. ‘Who hath heard?’ All nations are to be Christian, and ye say, Who hath heard? What is, ‘shalt deride them?’ As nothing Thou shalt esteem all nations. Nothing for Thee it shall be; because a most easy thing it will be for all nations to believe in Thee.

18. Ver. 9. My strength to Thee I will keep. For those strong men have fallen for this reason; because their strength to Thee they have not kept: that is, they that upon me have risen up and rushed, on themselves have relied. But I my strength to Thee will keep: because if I withdraw, I fall; if I draw near, stronger I am made. For see, brethren, what there is in a human soul. It hath not of itself light, hath not of itself powers: but all that is fair in a soul, is virtue and wisdom: but it neither is wise for itself, nor strong for itself, nor itself is light to itself, nor itself is virtue to itself. There is a certain origin and fountain of virtue, there is a certain root of wisdom, there is a certain, so to speak, if this also must be said, region of unchangeable truth: from this the soul withdrawing is made dark, drawing near is made light. Draw near to Him, and be made light: because by withdrawing ye are made dark. Therefore, my strength, I will keep to Thee: not from Thee will I withdraw, not on myself will I rely. My strength, to Thee I will keep: because, O God, my lifter up Thou art. For where was I, and where am I? Whence hast Thou taken me up? What iniquities of mine hast Thou remitted? Where was I lying? To what have I been raised up? I ought to have remembered these things: because in another Psalm is said, ‘For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord hath taken me unto Him.’ My strength, to Thee I will keep: for, O God, my taker up Thou art.

19. Ver. 10. My God, the mercy of Him shall come before me. Behold what is, My strength, to Thee I will keep: on myself I will no ways at all rely. For what good thing have I brought, that thou shouldest have mercy on me, and shouldest justify me. What in me hast Thou found, save sins alone? Of

Thine there is nothing else but the nature which Thou hast created; the other things are mine own evil things which Thou hast blotted out. I have not first risen up to Thee, but to awake me Thou hast come: for His mercy shall come before me. Before that any thing of good I shall do, His mercy shall come before me. What answer here shall the unhappy Pelagius make?

20. My God hath shewn to me among mine enemies. What saith he? How great mercy He hath put forth concerning me, among mine enemies He hath shewed. Let one gathered compare himself with men forsaken, and one elect with men rejected: let the vessel of mercy compare itself with the vessels of wrath; and let it see how out of one lump God hath made one vessel unto honour, another unto dishonour. What is, hath shewed to me among mine enemies? For so God, willing to shew wrath, and to manifest His power, hath brought in, in much patience, the vessels of wrath, which have been perfected unto perdition. And wherefore this? In order that He might make known His riches upon the vessels of mercy. If therefore vessels of wrath He hath brought in, wherein He might make known His riches upon the vessels of mercy, most rightly hath been said, His mercy shall come before me: My God hath shewed to me among mine enemies: that is, however great mercy He hath had concerning me, to me He hath shewed it among those men, concerning whom He hath not had mercy. For unless the debtor be in suspense, he is less grateful to him by whom the debt hath been forgiven. My God hath shewed to me among mine enemies.

21. Ver. 11. But of the enemies themselves what? Slay them not, lest sometime they forget Thy law. He is making request for his enemies, he is fulfilling the commandment. What is, Do not Thou have mercy upon all men that work iniquity; and, Slay them not, lest sometime they forget Thy law. In what manner hath He not mercy upon all men that work iniquity; and in what manner doth He not slay them? Lest they forget Thy law. But here of His enemies he is speaking. What then? Do His enemies work equity? If any that are enemies to Him work equity, then He doth Himself work iniquity. But because He doth Himself work equity, and moreover He that worketh equity doth in fact suffer iniquity from enemies; it is evident that they that are enemies to a just man, do work iniquity. Whence therefore a little above, Have not Thou mercy upon all men that work iniquity; and

now of his enemies, He saith, Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law. ‘Do not Thou,’ therefore, ‘have mercy on them,’ that Thou mayest slay their sins. Slay not them of whom the sins Thou slayest. But what is it to be slain? To forget the law of the Lord. It is real death, to go into the pit of sin: this indeed may be also understood of the Jews. Why of the Jews, Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law? Those very enemies of mine, that have slain me, do not Thou slay. Let the nation of the Jews remain: certes conquered it hath been by the Romans, certes effaced is the city of them, Jews are not admitted into their city, and yet Jews there are. For all those provinces by the Romans have been subjugated. Who now can distinguish the nations in the Roman empire the one from the other, in as much as all have become Romans and all are called Romans? The Jews nevertheless remain with a mark; nor in such sort conquered have they been, as that by the conquerors they have been swallowed up. Not without reason is there that Cain, on whom, when he had slain his brother, God set a mark in order that no one should slay him. This is the mark which the Jews have: they hold fast by the remnant of their law, they are circumcised, they keep Sabbaths, they sacrifice the Passover; they eat unleavened bread. These are therefore Jews, they have not been slain, they are necessary to believing nations. Why so? In order that He may shew to us among our enemies His mercy. My God hath shewn to me in mine enemies. He sheweth His mercy to the wild-olive grafted on branches that have been cut off because of pride. Behold where they lie, that were proud, behold where thou hast been grafted, that didst lie: and be not thou proud, lest thou shouldest deserve to be cut off. My God, slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law.

22. Ver. 11. Scatter them abroad in Thy virtue. Now this thing hath been done: throughout all nations there have been scattered abroad the Jews, witnesses of their own iniquity and our truth. They have themselves writings, out of which hath been prophesied Christ, and we hold Christ. And if sometime perchance any heathen man shall have doubted, when we have told him the prophecies of Christ, at the clearness whereof he is amazed, and wondering hath supposed that they were written by ourselves, then out of the copies of the Jews we prove, how this thing so long time before had been foretold. See after what sort by means of our enemies we confound other enemies. Scatter them abroad in Thy virtue: take away from

them ‘virtue,’ take away from them their strength. And bring them down, my protector, O Lord. (Ver. 12.) The transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips: and let them be taken in their pride: and out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations, in the anger of consummation, and they shall not be. Obscure words these are, and I fear lest they be not well instilled. Now ye are tired of hearing: therefore if it please your Love; what remaineth let us defer until to-morrow. The Lord will aid us to pay to you our debt: for on His part we promise rather than from ourselves.

SERMON II

on the second part of psalm 59.

1. Yesterday’s sermon, though protracted, hath left me a debtor against to-day; accordingly because the Lord hath willed, the time for paying hath come. But in proportion as we are earnest to repay, so ought ye to be covetous to require: that is, in such sort that what He giveth and we render, (for He is Lord, we are servants,) ye should so accept, as that there may be fruit through your hearing from your life. For a cultivated field, rendering no fruit, and ungrateful to the husbandman, instead of fruits bringing forth thorns, requireth not barn but fire. But the Lord our God, as ye see Him visit this earth with wonted rains, in like manner deigneth to visit with His Word our heart, as it were His field; and from our heart requireth fruits, because He knoweth both what there He soweth, and how much rain He giveth. And because in truth without Him we are nothing, because also before we were, we were nothing, and whosoever is now a man, and willeth to be without Him, will be nothing else but a sinful one: and that is true which here hath been said, My strength, to Thee will I keep: since whatever we can do, unless with Him and to Him we keep it, by withdrawing we lose: our mind ought alway to watch not from Him to withdraw, but rather if afar it was, more and more to approach and draw near; not with the step of the feet, not in the conveyance of carriages, not with the speed of animals, not with the lifting up of wings, but with purity of affections, and the integrity of holy morals.

2. Let us see therefore what remaineth of this Psalm. For we had left off at the point, when he had begun to speak of his enemies, saying to God, (ver. 11.) Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law. Although he had called them his enemies, nevertheless he asked of God that He would not slay them, and that they should not forget His law. To hold the law however, that is, not to forget the law, is not at once perfection, and, as it were, security about recompense, and no anxiety about punishment. For there are they that hold the law in memory, and fulfil it not in life: but they that fulfil it in life, cannot but hold it in memory. Therefore he that in morals doeth the commandments of God, and in a manner by his living taketh pains that that be not wiped out which he holdeth in his heart, and by living calleth to his mind what in his heart hath been written of the law of God, the same doth fruitfully hold the law of God, he shall not be counted an enemy. For, behold, the Jews are enemies, whom this Psalm seemeth to imply; the law of God they hold, and therefore of them hath been said, Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law: in order that the nation of Jews might remain, and by it remaining the number of Christians might increase. Throughout all nations they remain certainly, and Jews they are, nor have they ceased to be what they were: that is, this nation hath not so yielded to Roman institutions, as to have lost the form of Jews; but hath been subjected to the Romans so as that it still retaineth its own laws; which are the laws of God. But what in their case hath been done? Ye tithe mint and cummin, and have forsaken the weightier matters of the law, mercy, and judgment, straining a gnat, but swallowing a camel. This to them the Lord saith. And in truth so they are; they hold the law, hold the Prophets; read all things, sing all things: the Light of the Prophets therein they see not, which is Christ Jesus. Not only Him now they see not, when He is sitting in Heaven: but not even at that time saw they Him, when among them humble He was walking, and they were made guilty by shedding the blood of the Same; but not all. This even to day we commend to the notice of your Love. Not all: because many of them were turned to Him Whom they slew, and by believing on Him, they obtained pardon even for the shedding of His blood: and they have given an example for men; how they ought not to despair that sin of whatsoever kind would be remitted to them, since even the killing of Christ was remitted to them confessing. Thence therefore hath been said, (ver. 9.) Because, O God, my taker up Thou art, my God, His mercy shall

prevent me: that is, before any good deservings of mine, there preventeth me the mercy of the same; and if nothing in me of good He shall have found, He doth Himself make me good, and He doth Himself justify one converted, and doth Himself admonish that one averted should be converted. (Ver. 10.) My God, He saith again, hath shewn to me among mine enemies: that is, how much He loveth me, and how much on me He bestoweth of His goodness, by comparison of mine enemies to me He sheweth; because while out of one lump are the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy, through the vessels of wrath the vessels of mercy learn how much of good on them God doth bestow. And secondly, (ver. 11.) Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law: this hath been said of Jews. But what to them wilt Thou do? Scatter them abroad in Thy virtue. Shew to them, that Thou art strong, not themselves, who, by relying on their own virtue, have not known Thy truth: not such as those strong men are, of whom hath been said, There have rushed upon me strong men: but such as Thou art, strong to scatter them abroad. And bring them down, my protector, O Lord: that is, scatter them abroad, in such sort that Thou forsake them not, lest sometime they forget Thy law: and in that very thing protect me, so that in the scattering abroad of the same, I may have the evidence of Thy mercy.

3. And there followeth, (ver. 12.) The transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips. To what is joined, to what is connected this sentence? The transgressions, he saith, of their mouth, the discourse of their lips. The following words are not so connected as to teach us to what is joined this sentence. The transgressions, he saith, of their mouth, the discourse of their lips: and let them be taken in their pride, and out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations, in anger of consummation, and they shall not be. This to be obscure even yesterday we had declared, and accordingly we had deferred the exposition for your minds when more fresh. Now then, since not yet fatigued ye are with hearing, lift up your hearts to assist me with attention, lest perchance on account of the seeming obscurity and perplexity thereof, our discourse may not be sufficient to win your attention: and ye ought from yourselves also to contribute something, in order that what we have not filled up by our word, ye may supply by intelligence. Well then, this sentence hath been set in

such wise in the middle, that we do not readily see to what it is joined: The transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips. Let us go back then to words higher up. Because he had said, Slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law, them to wit whom he had called enemies; he added two verses, scatter them abroad in Thy virtue, and bring them down, my protector, O Lord: and immediately he hath introduced, The transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips, that is, slay this, not themselves. Therefore, slay not them, lest sometime they forget Thy law; but there is something in them for Thee to slay, in order that thou mayest fulfil that which above hath been said, Do not Thou have mercy on all men that work iniquity. Scatter them abroad therefore, and lead them down: that is, do not forsake, when Thou scatterest abroad; because in not forsaking thou hast something in them for Thee to do, though themselves Thou slayest not. What therefore wilt Thou slay? The transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips. What in them wilt Thou slay? The Crucify, Crucify, which they cried out, not them that cried out. For they willed to blot out, cut off, destroy Christ: but Thou, by raising to life Christ, Whom they willed to destroy, dost slay the transgressions of their mouth, the discourse of their lips. For in that He whom they cried out should be destroyed, liveth, they are taken with dread: and that He whom on earth they despised, in heaven is adored by all nations, they wonder: thus are there slain the transgressions of them, and the discourse of their lips.

4. And let them be taken in their pride. What is, let them be taken in their pride? Because to no purpose have strong men rushed on, and it hath fallen out to them as it were to think themselves to have done somewhat, and they have prevailed against the Lord. They were able to crucify a man, weakness might prevail and virtue be slain; and they thought themselves somewhat, as it were strong men, as it were mighty men, as it were prevailing, as it were a lion prepared for prey, as it were fat bulls, as of them in another place he maketh mention: Fat bulls have beset me. But what have they done in the case of Christ? Not life, but death they have slain. That is, death in Him dying having been effaced, and life rising again from death in Him living—for He did even of Himself raise again Himself to life—because there was in Him even that which could not die, they have done what? Hear what they have done: they pulled down the Temple. But Himself did what?

In three days He raised to life again the same. By this means, therefore, were slain the transgressions of their mouth, and the discourse of their lips. And what now hath come to pass in those men that have been converted? And let them be taken in their pride. For it was told to them, that He Whom they slew rose again. They believed Him to have risen again, because they saw that He, being in Heaven, thence sent the Holy Spirit, and filled those that on Him believed; and they found themselves to have condemned nought, and to have done nought. Their doing issued in emptiness, the sin remained. Because therefore the doing was made void, but the sin remained upon the doers; they were taken in their pride, they saw themselves under their iniquity. It remained therefore for them to confess the sin, and for Him to pardon, That had given Himself up to sinners, and to forgive His death, having been slain by men dead, and making alive men dead. They were taken therefore in their pride.

5. And out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations, in anger of consummation, and they shall not be. This too with difficulty is understood, to what is joined the and they shall not be. What shall they not be? Let us therefore examine the context above: when they shall have been taken in their pride, there shall be declared out of cursing and lying consummations. What are consummations? Perfections: for to be consummated, is to be perfected. One thing it is to be consummated, another thing to be consumed. For a thing is consummated which is so finished as that it is perfected: a thing is consumed, which is so finished that it is not. Pride would not suffer a man to be perfected, nothing so much hindereth perfection. For let your Love attend a little to what I am saying; and see an evil very pernicious, very much to be guarded against. What sort of evil do ye think it is? How long could I enlarge upon how much evil there is in pride? The devil on that account alone is to be punished. Certes he is the chief of all sinners: certes he is the tempter to sin: to him is not ascribed adultery, not wine-bibbing, not fornication, not the robbing of others’ goods: by pride alone he fell. And since pride’s companion is envy, it must needs be that a proud man should envy: because of this vice, which doth necessarily follow pride, having fallen he also envied him that stood, and was at pains to lead man astray, lest he should be exalted to that place whence himself had been cast down. And therefore he earnestly endeavours

to allure us to real sins, because we have a Judge of such sort as that before Him he cannot lay to our charge unreal sins. For if before a human judge our cause were to be pleaded, whom he might beguile with false accusations, he would not have to busy much in order to make us to sin: because by beguiling the judge he might both oppress the innocent, and bring over to himself them when overreached by him, and make them to be condemned together with himself; but now because he knoweth of such a Judge as cannot be deceived, and because he knoweth that He is just, and cannot accept persons; he desireth to bring before Him persons so guilty, as that it must needs be that He condemn them, because Just He is. He is therefore at pains to make us sin, of mere envy, which envy must needs accompany pride. Such an evil then is pride, which doth hinder perfection. If therefore a man vaunt himself of riches, vaunt himself of the beauty and of the powers of his body; all these things are but mortal: they are to be laughed at that vaunt themselves of things mortal, by which things ofttimes either while living they are forsaken, or when dead they must needs forsake them: it is a capital sin, when a man hath well advanced, that with pride he is tempted, so as to lose all wherein he made progress. In a word, all vices in evil-doings are to be feared, pride in well-doings is more to be feared. It is no wonder then, that so humble is the Apostle, as to say, When I am made weak, then I am strong. For lest he should himself be tempted by this sin, what sort of medicine doth he say was applied to him against swelling by the Physician, who knew what He was healing? Lest by the greatness, he saith, of the revelations I should be exalted, there was given to me a thorn of my flesh, the angel of Satan, to buffet me: wherefore thrice the Lord I besought, that it should depart from me: and He said to me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for virtue in weakness is made perfect. See what the consummations are. An Apostle, the teacher of Gentiles, father of the faithful through the Gospel, received a thorn of the flesh whereby he might be buffetted. Which of us would dare to say this, unless he had not been ashamed to confess this? For if we shall have said that Paul had not suffered this; while to him as it were honour we give, a liar we make him. But because truthful he is, and truth he hath spoken; it behoveth us to believe that there was given to him an angel of Satan, lest by the greatness of the revelations he should be exalted. Behold how much to be feared is the serpent of pride. What therefore hath been done to those men? In their sin they have been taken, for that they slew Christ, and by the very greatness of the sin they were the more humbled, and in their greater humility they merited to be raised up: this is, Let them be taken in their pride. And out of cursing and lying there shall be declared consummations: that is, for this reason they shall be made the more perfect, because in cursing and lying they have been overtaken. For pride did not allow them to be made perfect; evil-doing took away pride through their confession, pardon effaced evil-doing through the mercy of God, and out of cursing and lying there were declared consummations; that is, it hath been said to man, thou hast seen what thou art, thou hast felt what thou art, thou hast strayed, made blind thou hast been, thou hast sinned and hast fallen, thou hast acknowledged thy weakness, beseech the Physician, do not think thyself whole; where is thy phrenzy? Behold the Physician thou hast slain, Whom by slaying thou couldest not destroy; nevertheless, as much as in thee lay, thou hast slain; Out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations. Ye have done what belonged to cursing, O Jews: for cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. Ye have crucified Christ, as though accursed ye have deemed Him. Add to cursing lying: guards at the sepulchre ye placed: in order that they might lie, ye gave money. Behold, Christ hath risen again: where is the curse of the Cross which ye have made? where is the lying of the guards whom ye have bribed?

6. Ver. 12. Out of cursing and lying shall be declared (ver. 13.) consummations in the anger of consummation, and they shall not be. What is, in the anger of consummation shall be declared consummations? There is an anger of consummation, and there is an anger of consuming. For every vengeance of God is called anger: sometimes God avengeth, to the end that He may make perfect; sometimes He avengeth, to the end that He may condemn. How doth He avenge, to the end that He may make perfect? He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. How doth He avenge, to the end that He may condemn? When He shall have set ungodly men on the left hand, and shall have said to them, Go ye into fire everlasting, that hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. This is the anger of consuming, not that of consummation. But there shall be declared consummations in the anger of consummation; it shall be preached by the Apostles, that where sin hath abounded, grace shall much more abound, and the weakness of man

hath belonged to the healing of humility. Those men thinking of this, and finding out and confessing their iniquities, shall not be. ‘Shall not be’ what? In their pride. For above he had said, Let them be taken in their pride, and out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations in the anger of consummation, and they shall not be, to wit in their pride, wherein they have been taken.

7. And they shall know how God shall have dominion of Jacob, and of the ends of the earth. For before they thought themselves just men, because the Jewish nation had received the Law, because it had kept the commandments of God: it is proved to them that it hath not kept them, since in the very commandments of God Christ it perceived not, because blindness in part has happened to Israel. Even the Jews themselves see that they ought not to despise the Gentiles, of whom they deemed as of dogs and sinners. For just as alike they have been found in iniquity, so alike they will attain unto salvation. Not only to Jews, saith the Apostle, but also even to Gentiles. For to this end the Stone which the builders set at nought, hath even been made for the Head of the corner, in order that two in Itself It might join: for a corner doth unite two walls. The Jews thought themselves exalted and great: of the Gentiles they thought as weak, as sinners, as the servants of demons, as the worshippers of idols, and yet in both was there iniquity. Even the Jews have been proved sinners; because there is none that doeth good, there is not even so much as one: they have laid down their pride, and have not envied the salvation of the Gentiles, because they have known their own and their weakness to be alike: and in the Corner Stone being united, they have together worshipped the Lord. And they shall know that God shall have dominion of Jacob, and of the ends of the earth. Not only of Jews He shall have dominion, but also of the earth: which thing they had not known, if they had continued in their pride; but in their pride they would be, if they still thought themselves righteous: but in order that they should not think themselves righteous, there were ‘preached to them out of cursing and lying consummations in anger of consummation;’ because they were taken in their pride, out of the curse which they made when Christ they slew. Behold what our Lord Jesus Christ hath done. He hath died at the hands of the Jews, and hath redeemed the multitude of the Gentiles: here was shed the blood, there it profited; but it hath profited all men that have

been converted; because even they have acknowledged Him Whom they slew, and through Him for that very slaying, and for their great sin, they have obtained pardon.

8. What now then of the men themselves? The thing which hath been spoken of above: (ver. 14.) They shall be converted at evening: that is, even if late, that is, after the slaying of our Lord Jesus Christ: They shall be converted at evening: and hereafter they shall suffer hunger as dogs. But as dogs, not as sheep, or calves: as dogs, as Gentiles, as sinners; because they too have known their sin that thought themselves righteous. Of those of whom hath been said in another Psalm, After this they made haste: the same hath been said herein, at evening. For in that place it is thus: Multiplied were the weaknesses of them, after this they made haste. Whence have they made haste after this? Because multiplied were the weaknesses of them: for if still they thought themselves whole, they never would have made haste. The thing which therefore hath been implied in, ‘multiplied were the weaknesses of them:’ the same hath been said here, Let them be taken in their pride, and out of cursing and lying shall be declared consummations in the anger of consummation. And that which there hath been said in, after this they made haste: the same hath been said here, And they shall not be, in their pride. And they shall know that God shall have dominion of Jacob, and of the ends of the world: and they shall be converted at evening. It is a good thing therefore for a sinner to be humbled; and no one is more incurable than he that thinketh himself whole. And they shall go around the city. Already, to wit yesterday, we have explained city; it is the ‘city of standing round;’ all nations.

9. Ver. 15. They shall be scattered abroad in order that they may eat; that is, in order that they may gain others, in order that into their Body they may change believers. But if they shall not be filled, they shall murmur. Because above also he had spoken of the murmur of them, saying, For who hath heard? And Thou, O Lord, he saith, shalt deride them, saying, Who hath heard? Wherefore? Because, as nothing Thou shalt count all nations. So also here, But if they shall not be filled, they shall murmur.

10. Let the Psalm be concluded. See ye the Corner exulting, now with both walls rejoicing. The Jews were proud, humbled they have been; Gentiles

were despairing, raised up they have been: let them come to the Corner, there let them meet, there run together, there find the kiss of peace; from different parts let them come, but with differing not come, those of Circumcision, these of uncircumcision. Far apart were the walls, but before that to the Corner they came: but in the Corner let them hold themselves, and now let the whole Church from both walls, say what? (ver. 16.) But I will sing of Thy power, and I will exult in the morning of Thy mercy. In the morning when temptations have been overcome, in the morning when the night of this world shall have passed away; in the morning when no longer the lyings in wait of robbers and of the devil and of his angels we dread, in the morning when no longer by the lamp of prophecy we walk, but Himself the Word of God as it were a Sun we contemplate. And I will exult in the morning of Thy mercy. With reason in another Psalm is said, In the morning I will stand by Thee, and I will meditate. With reason also of the Lord Himself the Resurrection was at dawn, that there should be fulfilled that which hath been said in another Psalm, In the evening shall tarry weeping, and in the morning exultation. For at even the disciples mourned our Lord Jesus Christ as dead, at dawn at Him rising again they exulted. I will exult in the morning of Thy mercy.

11. For Thou hast become my taker up, and my refuge in the day of my tribulation. (Ver. 17.) My Helper, to Thee I will play, because Thou, O God, art my taker up. What was I, unless Thou didst succour? How much despaired of was I, unless Thou didst heal? Where was I lying, unless Thou didst come to me? Certes with a huge wound I was endangered, but that wound of mine did call for an Almighty Physician. To an Almighty Physician nothing is incurable. He taketh not leave of any one: it is needful that thou shouldest wish to be healed, it is needful that from His hands thou flee not. But even if thou wouldest not be healed, He admonisheth of thy wound that thou mayest be healed: and calleth thee back when turned away, and when fleeing as it were compelleth thee, and enticeth thee to return to Himself. In all things He fulfilleth that which hath been said, His mercy shall prevent me. Think of that which hath been said, shall prevent me. If any thing of thine thou hast first brought, and by any good thing of thine hast merited the mercy of God, then He hath not prevented thee. But when dost thou even perceive that prevented thou hast been, except thou perceive

that which the Apostle saith, For what hast thou, which thou hast not received. But if thou hast received, why dost thou glory, as though thou hast not received? That is, His mercy shall prevent me. Lastly, thinking of all good things whatsoever we may have, either in nature or in purpose, or in conversion itself, in faith, in hope, in charity, in good morals, in justice, in fear of God; all these to be only by His gifts, he hath thus concluded: My God is my mercy. He being filled with the good things of God hath not found what he might call his God, save his mercy. O name, under which no one must despair! My God, he saith, is my mercy. What is, my mercy? If thou say, my salvation, I perceive that He giveth salvation; if thou say, my refuge, I perceive that thou takest refuge in Him; if thou say, my strength, I perceive that He giveth to thee strength: my mercy, is what? All that I am is of Thy mercy. But have I merited of Thee, by calling upon Thee? That I should be, what have I done? That I should be one to call upon Thee, what have I performed? For if I have done any thing that I should be, then I was, before I was. Moreover if nothing I was before I was, no wise I have deserved of Thee, that I should be. Thou hast caused that I should be, and hast Thou not caused that good I should be? Thou hast granted to me to be, and could any one else grant to me that good I should be? If Thou to me hast granted that I should be, and another to me hath granted that good I should be; better is he that to me hath granted that good I should be, than He that to me hath granted that I should be. Moreover because than Thou no one is better, no one than Thou more mighty, no one than Thou in mercy more abundant; from Whom I have received that I should be, from the Same I have received that good I should be. My God is my mercy.

PSALM 60

Exposition

Sermon preached to the people a little while after the exposition of the former Psalm.

1. The title of this Psalm is somewhat long: but let it not frighten us, because the Psalm is short. As though therefore we had heard a somewhat longer Psalm, thus let us attend thereto: forasmuch as to men fed and to be fed in the name of Christ we are speaking in the Church of God; and to men not aliens to the savour of those writings whereto the world is alien, these things ought not alway to be new. For if those things which very often ye have heard, with pleasantness in the mouth of thought ye have ruminated, and have not in forgetfulness as though in belly buried them; that very same recollection and memory of yours will be able to aid us much, that we may not speak much for the purpose of explaining, to persons as if uneducated, those things which we know that you know already. Certainly we remember that you ofttimes have heard the thing which we are speaking of. Scarce is it possible in the Psalms to find any voices, but those of Christ and the Church, or of Christ only, or of the Church only, which truly in part we also are. And for this cause whenever we recognise our voices, without emotion recognise them we cannot; and by so much the more we are delighted, in proportion as in the same ourselves we feel to be. David the king was one man, but not one man he figured; sometimes to wit he figured the Church of many men consisting, extended even unto the ends of the earth: but sometimes One Man he figured, Him he figured that is Mediator of God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. In this Psalm therefore, or rather in this Psalm’s title, certain victorious actions of David are spoken of, how he had done mightily in defeating certain enemies, and in making them tributaries; when after the death of Saul his persecutor, he received his kingdom openly over Israel. For even before that he was suffering persecution, a king he was, but to God alone he was known. Afterwards therefore the kingdom having been made known, and visibly and notably received, he defeated

those that in this title are mentioned; and the title of the Psalm is set down as followeth: To the end, in behalf of those men that shall be changed unto the title's inscription, unto teaching for David himself, when he burned up Mesopotamia in Syria, and Syria Sobal, and turned Joab, and smote Edom, in the valley of salt-pits twelve thousand. We read of these things in the books of the Reigns, that all those persons whom he hath named, were defeated by David, that is, Mesopotamia in Syria, and Syria Sobal, Joab, Edom. These things were done, and just as they were done, so there they have been written, so they are read: let him read that will. Nevertheless, as the Prophetic Spirit in the Psalms' titles is wont to depart somewhat from the expression of things done, and to say something which in history is not found, and hence rather to admonish us that titles of this kind have been written not that we may know things done, but that things future may be prefigured; just as it was said that in the presence of Abimelech he 'changed his countenance, and let him go, and he departed;' whereas the Scripture of the Reigns sheweth that he did this thing not in the presence of Abimelech, but in the presence of king Achish: so also in this title we find something whereby we are advised of some other thing. For in that narrative of wars and mighty deeds of king David, where all these nations, of whom we have made mention, were defeated, that he burned up any place we read not. But here this thing is inserted for this especial reason, that there it is not written that he burned up Mesopotamia in Syria, and Syria Sobal. But now let us begin to examine these things after the significations of things future, and to bring out the dimness of shadows into the light of the word.

2. What is to the end ye know. For the end of the law is Christ. Those that are changed ye know. For who but they that from old life into new do pass? For far be it that here a blameable change should be understood. It is not like that whereby Adam was changed from righteousness to iniquity, and from delights to toil: but as they are changed to whom hath been said, For ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. But they are changed into the title's inscription. Ye know the title's inscription: a title was fixed upon the Cross of the Lord written, This is the King of the Jews: they are changed into this title's inscription, who into the kingdom of Christ do pass over from the kingdom of the devil. It is well that they are changed unto this title's inscription. But they are changed, as followeth, unto teaching.

For when he had said, In behalf of those that shall be changed unto the title's inscription: he added, for David himself unto teaching: that is, are changed not for themselves, but for David himself, and are changed unto teaching. For Christ is not King in such sort, as if in the world He were to reign; inasmuch as openly He said, My kingdom is not of this world. Therefore into His teaching let us pass over, if unto the writing of the title we would be changed, not for ourselves, but for David himself: so that they which live, no longer unto themselves may live, but unto Him That for them hath died and hath risen again. When therefore would Christ have changed us, unless He had done that which He spake of, Fire I have come to send into the world? If therefore Christ came to send into the world fire, to wit to its health and profit, we must inquire not how He is to send the world into fire, but how into the world fire. Inasmuch as therefore He came to send fire into the world, let us inquire what is Mesopotamia which was burned up, what is Syria Sobal? The interpretations therefore of the names let us examine according to the Hebrew language, wherein first this Scripture was written. Mesopotamia they say is interpreted, exalted calling. Now the whole world by calling hath been exalted, Syria is interpreted lofty. But she which was lofty, burned up hath been and humbled. Sobal is interpreted empty antiquity. Thanks to Christ that hath burned her. Whenever old bushes are burned up, green places succeed; and more speedily and more plentifully, and more fully green, fresh ones spring out, when fire hath gone before them to the burning up of the old. Let not therefore the fire of Christ be feared, hay it consumeth. For all flesh is hay, and all the glory of man as flower of hay. He burneth up therefore those things with that fire. And turned Joab. Joab is interpreted enemy. There was turned an enemy, as thou wilt understand it. If turned unto flight, the devil it is: if converted to the faith, a Christian it is. How unto flight? From the heart of a Christian: The Prince of this world, He saith, now hath been cast out. But how can a Christian turned to the Lord be an enemy turned? Because he hath become a believer that had been an enemy. Smote Edom. Edom is interpreted earthly. That earthly one ought to be smitten. For why should one live earthly, that ought to live heavenly? There hath been slain therefore life earthly, let there live life heavenly. For as we have borne the image of the earthly, let us bear also the image of Him that is from Heaven. See it slain: Mortify your members which are upon earth. But when he had smitten Edom, he smote twelve thousand in the valley of salt-pits. Twelve thousand is a perfect number, to which perfect number also the number of the twelve Apostles is ascribed: for not to no purpose is it, but because through the whole world was to be sent the Word. But the Word of God, which is Christ, is in clouds, that is, in the preachers of truth. But the world of four parts doth consist. The four parts thereof are exceeding well known to all, and often in the Scriptures they are mentioned: they are the same as the names of the four winds, East, West, North, and South. To all these four parts was sent the Word, so that in the Trinity all might be called. The number twelve four times three do make. With reason therefore twelve thousand earthly things were smitten, the whole world was smitten: for from the whole world was chosen out the Church, mortified from earthly life. Why in the valley of salt-pits? A valley is humility: salt-pits signify savour. For many men are humbled, but emptily and foolishly, in empty oldness they are humbled. One suffereth tribulation for money, suffereth tribulation for temporal honour, suffereth tribulation for the comforts of this life; he is to suffer tribulation and to be humbled: why not for the sake of God? why not for the sake of Christ? why not for the savour of salt? Knowest thou not that to thee hath been said, Ye are the salt of earth, and, If the salt shall have been spoiled, for no other thing will it be of use, but to be cast out? A good thing it is therefore wisely to be humbled. Behold now are not heretics being humbled? Have not laws been made even by men to condemn them, against whom divine laws do reign, which even before had condemned them? Behold they are humbled, behold they are put to flight, behold persecution they suffer, but without savour; for folly, for emptiness. For now the salt hath been spoiled: therefore it hath been cast out, to be trodden down of men. We have heard the title of the Psalm, let us hear also the words of the Psalm.

3. Ver. 1. God, Thou hast driven us back, and hast destroyed us. Is that David speaking that smote, that burned up, that defeated, and not they to whom He did these things, that is to say, their being smitten and driven back, that were evil men, and again their being made alive and returning in order that they might be good men? That destruction indeed That David made, strong of hand, our Christ, whose figure that man was bearing; He did those things, He made this destruction with His sword and with His fire:

for both He brought into this world. Both Fire I am come to send into the world, thou hast in the Gospel: and, A sword I have come to send into the earth, thou hast in the Gospel. He brought in fire, whereby might be burned up Mesopotamia in Syria, and Syria Sobal: He brought in a sword whereby might be smitten Edom. Now again this destruction was made for the sake of ‘those that are changed unto the title’s inscription.’ Hear we therefore the voice of them: to their health smitten they were, being raised up let them speak. Let them say, therefore, that are changed into something better, changed unto the title’s inscription, changed unto teaching for David himself; let them say, God, Thou hast driven us back, and hast destroyed us: angry Thou hast been, and hast had mercy on us. Thou hast destroyed us, in order that Thou mightest build us; Thou hast destroyed us that were ill builded, hast destroyed empty oldness; in order that there may be a building unto a new man, building to abide for everlasting. Deservedly angry Thou hast been, Thou hast had mercy on us. Thou wouldest not have had mercy, unless Thou hadst been angry. Thou hast destroyed us in Thy anger: but Thy anger against our oldness hath been, in order that the oldness might be destroyed. But Thou hast had mercy upon us because of newness, because of those that are changed unto the title’s inscription: because even if our outward man is wasted, yet our inward man is renewed from day to day.

4. Ver. 2. Thou hast moved the earth, and hast troubled it. How hath the earth been troubled? In the conscience of sinners. Whither go we? whither flee we, when this sword hath been brandished, ‘Do penance, for near hath drawn the kingdom of Heaven?’ Thou hast moved the earth, and hast troubled it. Heal the crushings thereof, for moved it hath been. Unworthy it is to be healed, if moved it hath not been: but thou speakest, preachest, threatenest us with God, of coming judgment holdest not thy peace, of the commandment of God thou warnest, from these things thou abstainest not; and he that heareth, if he feareth not, if he is not moved, is not worthy to be healed, Another heareth, is moved, is stung, smiteth the breast, sheddeth tears: Heal the crushings thereof, for moved it is.

5. After these things, the earthly one smitten, oldness burned up, man changed into something better, those made light that were darkness, there followeth that which elsewhere hath been written, My son, drawing near to

the service of God, stand in righteousness and fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation. The first labour is, that thou shouldest be displeasing to thyself, that sins thou shouldest battle out, that thou shouldest be changed into something better: the second labour, in return for thy having been changed, is to bear the tribulations and temptations of this world, and amid them to hold on even unto the end. Of these things therefore when he was speaking, while pointing out such things, he addeth what? (Ver. 3.) Thou hast shewn to Thy people hard things: to Thy people now, made tributary after the victory of David. Thou hast shewn to Thy people hard things. Wherein? In persecutions which the Church of Christ hath endured, when so much blood of martyrs was spilled. Thou hast shewn to Thy people hard things. Thou hast given us to drink of the wine of goading. Of goading is what? Not of killing. For it was not a killing that destroyeth, but a medicine that smarteth. Thou hast given us to drink of the wine of goading.

6. Wherefore this? (Ver. 4.) Thou hast given to men fearing Thee, a sign that they should flee from the face of the bow. Through tribulations temporal, he saith, Thou hast signified to Thine own to flee from the wrath of fire everlasting. For, saith the Apostle Peter, Time it is that Judgment begin with the House of God. And exhorting the Martyrs to endurance, when the world should rage, when slaughters should be made at the hands of persecutors, when far and wide blood of believers should be spilled, when in chains, in prisons, in tortures, many hard things Christians should suffer, in these hard things, I say, lest they should faint, Peter saith to them, Time it is that Judgment begin with the House of God; and if a beginning there be with us, what sort of end shall be to them that believe not the Gospel of God? and if a just man scarce shall be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly man appear? What therefore is to be in the Judgment? The bow is bended, still in menacing posture it is, not yet in aiming. And see what there is in the bow: is there not an arrow to be shot forward? The string however is stretched back in a contrary direction to that in which it is to be shot; and the more the stretching thereof hath gone backward, with the greater swiftness it starteth forward. What is it that I have said? The more the Judgment is deferred, with so much the greater swiftness it is to come. Therefore even for temporal tribulations to God let us render thanks, because He hath given to His people a sign, that they

should flee from the face of the bow: in order that His faithful ones having been exercised in tribulations temporal, may be worthy to avoid the condemnation of fire everlasting, which is to find out all them that do not believe these things. Thou hast given to men fearing Thee a sign that they should flee from the face of the bow.

7. Ver. 5. That Thy beloved may be delivered: save me with Thy right hand, and hearken unto me. With Thy right hand save me, Lord: so save me as that at the right hand I may stand. Save me with Thy right hand: not any safety temporal I require, in this matter Thy Will be done. For a time what is good for us we are utterly ignorant: for ‘what we should pray for as we ought we know not:’ but save me with Thy right hand, so that even if in this time I suffer sundry tribulations, when the night of all tribulations hath been spent, on the right hand I may be found among the sheep, not on the left hand among the goats. Save me with Thy right hand, and hearken unto me. Because now I am deserving that which Thou art willing to give; not ‘with the words of my transgressions’ I am crying through the day, so that Thou hearken not, and ‘in the night so that Thou hearken not, and that not for folly to me,’ but truly for my warning, by adding savour from the valley of salt-pits, so that in tribulation I may know what to ask: but I ask life everlasting; therefore hearken unto me, because Thy right hand I ask. Let therefore Your Love understand, how every faithful man having in heart the Word of God with fear, fearing Judgment to come, living commendably, so that because of him the holy name of his Lord be not evil spoken of, imploreth many things after the world’s way and is not hearkened unto; but for life everlasting always is hearkened unto. For what man would not ask for health, when he is sick? And yet perchance to be sick is good for him. It may be that on this point thou art not hearkened to: nevertheless, thou art not hearkened to at thy desire, in order that thou mayest be hearkened to for thy profit. But truly when this thing thou askest, that God should give to thee life everlasting, that God should give to thee the kingdom of Heaven, that He should give to thee at the right hand of His Son to stand, when He shall have come to judge the earth, without care be thou, thou shalt receive, if now thou receivest not: for not yet hath come the time that thou shouldest receive. Thou art hearkened unto and knowest not: what thou askest is

doing, even if thou knowest not wherein it is doing. In the root the thing is, not yet in fruit. Save me with Thy right hand, and hearken unto me.

8. Ver. 6. God hath spoken in His Holy One. Why fearest thou that there come not to pass that which God hath spoken? If thou shouldest have any friend stern and wise, how wouldest thou say? He hath spoken these things, there must needs come to pass that which he hath spoken: the man is stern, no levity he useth, not easily from his resolution is he moved aside, that which he hath promised is stedfast. But nevertheless a human being he is, that sometimes willeth to do that which he hath promised, and is not able. Of God there is not any thing that thou mayest fear; that truthful He is, is certain; that Almighty He is, is certain; to deceive thee He is not able, He hath means whence He may perform. Why then fearest thou lest thou be beguiled? It is needful that thou beguile not thine own self, and that thou persevere even unto the end, when He is to give that which He hath promised. God hath spoken in His Holy One. In what Holy One of His? God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. In that Holy One, of whom elsewhere ye have heard, "O God, in the Holy One is Thy way." God hath spoken in His Holy One. I will rejoice and will divide Sichima. Because God hath spoken this thing, it will be done: the voice of the Church is, God hath spoken in His Holy One; she saith not the words which God hath spoken, but because God hath spoken in His Holy One; nor can there be done any thing, except after the manner that God hath spoken; in consequence those things come forth: I will rejoice, and I will divide Sichima, and the valley of tabernacles I will measure out. Sichima is interpreted shoulders. But according to history, Jacob returning from Laban his father in law with all his kindred, hid the idols in Sichima which he had from Syria, where for a long time he had dwelled, and at length was coming from thence. But tabernacles he made there because of his sheep and herds, and called the place Tabernacles. And these I will divide, saith the Church. What is this, I will divide Sichima? If to the story where the idols were hidden is the reference, the Gentiles it signifieth; I divide the Gentiles. I divide, is what? For not in all men is there faith. I divide, is what? Some will believe, others will not believe: but nevertheless let them not fear that believe, among them that believe not. For divided they are even now in faith, hereafter there shall be divided in the Judgment, sheep on the right

hand, goats on the left. Behold we find in what manner the Church divideth Sichima. How doth it divide the shoulders, according to the interpretation of the name? The shoulders are divided, in order that their sins may burthen some men, while others may take up the burden of Christ. For godly shoulders He was requiring when He said, For My yoke is gentle, and My burden is light. Another burden oppresseth and loadeth thee, but Christ's burden relieveth thee: another burden hath weight, Christ's burden hath wings. For even if thou pull off the wings from a bird, thou dost remove a kind of weight; and the more weight thou hast taken away, the more on earth it will abide. She that thou hast chosen to disburden lieth there: she flieth not, because thou hast taken off a weight: let there be given back the weight, and she flieth. Such is Christ's burden: let men carry it, and not be idle: let them not be heeded that will not bear it; let them bear it that will, and they shall find how light it is, how sweet, how pleasant, how ravishing unto Heaven, and from earth how transporting: I will divide Sichima, and the valley of tabernacles I will measure out. Perchance because of the sheep of Jacob, the valley of tabernacles is to be understood of the nation of the Jews, and the same is divided: for they have passed from thence that have believed, the rest have remained without.

9. Ver. 7. Mine is Galaad. These names are read in the Scriptures of God. Galaad hath the voice of an interpretation of its own and of a great Mystery: for it is interpreted the heap of testimony. How great a heap of testimony in the Martyrs? Mine is Galaad, mine is a heap of testimony, mine are the true Martyrs. Let others die for their ancient emptiness saltless, do they belong to the heap of testimony? For even if I shall have given up my body so that I be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. But when in a certain place the Lord was admonishing of keeping peace, He put salt before: Have, He saith, in yourselves salt, and peace have ye among yourselves. Therefore, mine is Galaad; but Galaad, that is, a heap of witness, in great tribulation evidently hath been made. Then meanly esteemed was the Church among men, then reproach on Her a Widow was being thrown, because Christ's She was, because the sign of the Cross on her brow She was wearing: not yet was there honour, censure there was then: when therefore not honour, but censure there was, then was made a heap of witness; and through the heap of witness was the Love of Christ

enlarged; and through the enlargement of the Love of Christ, were the Gentiles possessed. There followeth, And mine is Manasses; which is interpreted forgotten. For to Her had been said, Confusion for everlasting Thou shalt forget, and of the reproach of Thy widowhood Thou shalt not be mindful. There was therefore a confusion of the Church once, which now hath been forgotten: for of Her confusion and of the reproach of Her widowhood now She is not mindful. For when there was a sort of confusion among men, a heap of witness was made. Now no longer doth any even remember that confusion, when it was a reproach to be a Christian, now no one remembereth, now all have forgotten, now Mine is Manasses, and Ephraim the strength of My head. Ephraim is interpreted fruitfulness. Mine, he saith, is fruitfulness, and this fruitfulness is the strength of My Head. For My Head is Christ. And whence is fruitfulness the strength of Him? Because unless a grain were to fall into the earth, it would not be multiplied, alone it would remain. Fall then to earth did Christ in His Passion, and there followed fruit-bearing in the Resurrection. And Ephraim is the strength of My Head. He was hanging and was being despised: the grain was within, it had powers to draw after it all things. How in a grain do numbers of seeds lie hid, something abject it appeareth to the eyes, but a power turning into itself matter and bringing forth fruit is hidden; so in Christ’s Cross virtue was hidden, there appeared weakness. O mighty grain! Doubtless weak is He that hangeth, Doubtless before Him that people did wag the head, Doubtless they said, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. Hear the strength of Him: that which is a weak thing of God, is stronger than men. With reason so great fruitfulness hath followed: it is mine, saith the Church.

10. Ver. 7. Juda is my king: Moab the pot of my hope. ‘Juda is my king:’ what Juda? He that is of the tribe of Juda. What Juda, but He to whom Jacob himself said, ‘Juda, thy brethren shall praise thee,’ Juda is my king. What therefore should I fear, when Juda my king saith, ‘Fear not them that kill the body?’ Juda is my king: Moab the pot of my hope. Wherefore pot? Because tribulation. Wherefore of my hope? Because there hath gone before Juda my king. For where He hath gone before, why fearest thou to follow? Where hath He gone before? Through tribulations, through straits, through reproaches. Fenced was the way, but only before He passed along:

now that He hath passed along, follow, now the way is open by His passing along. Single I am, He saith, but until that I pass along: single is the grain, but until it pass along: when it hath passed along, there will follow fruitfulness. Juda is my king. Therefore because Juda is my king: Moab is the pot of my hope. Moab is perceived in the Gentiles. For that nation was born of sin, that nation was born of the daughters of Lot, who lay with their father drunken, abusing a father. Better were it to have remained barren, than thus to have become mothers. But this was a kind of figure of them that abuse the law. For do not heed that law in the Latin language is of the feminine gender: in Greek of the masculine gender it is: but whether it be of the feminine gender in speaking, or of the masculine, the expression maketh no difference to the truth. For law hath rather a masculine force, because it ruleth, is not ruled. But moreover, the Apostle Paul saith what? Good is the law, if any one use it lawfully. But those daughters of Lot unlawfully used their father. But in the same manner as good works begin to grow when a man useth well the law: so arise evil works, when a man ill useth the law. Furthermore, they ill using their father, that is, ill using the law, engendered the Moabites, by whom are signified evil works. Thence the tribulation of the Church, thence the pot boiling up. Of this pot in a certain place of prophecy is said, A pot heated by the North wind. Whence but by the quarters of the devil, who hath said, I will set my seat at the North? The chiefest tribulations therefore arise against the Church from none except from those that ill use the law. What then? Is the Church hence to fall off: and because of a pot, that is, abundance of offences, will She not persevere even unto the end? Hath not Juda Her King foretold this unto Her! Doth He not say to Her, Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall grow cold? With boiling pot love groweth cold. Wherefore the rather dost not thou, O love, against the pot grow warm? Art thou ignorant that to thee hath been said, when of that abundance of offences Thy King was speaking, He that shall have persevered unto the end, the same shall be saved? Persevere therefore even unto the end against the pot of offences. The pot of iniquity is hot, but mightier is the flame of love. Be not conquered, but persevere even unto the end. Why fearest thou the Moabites, the evil works of them that ill use the law? For why? Did not Juda thy king, that hath gone before, endure such men? Knowest thou not that the Jews by ill using the law slew Christ? Therefore hope thou; and where thy king hath gone before, follow.

Say, Juda is my king. And for that Juda is my king, Moab hath been made what? The pot of my hope, not of my consuming. See in tribulations the pot of hope, hear the Apostle: But also we glory, he saith, in tribulation. The pot there is already, but attend to this man, and see whether he explaineth the pot of hope. Knowing that tribulation worketh patience, but patience probation, probation hope. If tribulation patience, patience probation, probation hope, and the pot is the tribulation which worketh hope: with good reason, ‘Moab is the pot of my hope.’ ‘But hope confoundeth not.’ And why? Dost thou boil against the pot? Yea evidently, For the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that hath been given unto us.

11. Ver. 8. Into Idumæa I will stretch out my shoe. The Church speaketh, I will come through even unto Idumæa. Let tribulations rage, let the world boil with offences, I will stretch out my shoe even unto Idumæa, even unto those very persons, that lead an earthly life, (for Idumæa is interpreted earthly,) even unto these same, even unto Idumæa, I will stretch out my shoe. Of what thing the shoe except of the Gospel? How beautiful the feet of them that tell of peace, that tell of good things, and the feet shod unto the preparation of the Gospel of peace. In a word, since tribulation worketh patience, but patience probation, probation hope, the pot shall not consume me: for the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that hath been given unto us. Let us not cease to preach the Gospel, let us not cease to tell of the Lord. Even unto Idumæa I will stretch out my shoe. Do not even the very earthly men serve? Even if with earthly desires they are bound, yet Christ they adore. In these times we see, brethren, how many earthly men do perpetrate frauds for the sake of gain, for frauds perjuries; on account of their fears they consult fortune-tellers, astrologers: all these men are Edomites, earthly; and nevertheless all these men adore Christ, under His own shoe they are; now even unto Idumæa is stretched out His shoe. To Me Allophyli have been made subject. Who are Allophyli? Men of other race, not belonging to My race. They have been made subject, because many men adore Christ, and are not to reign with Christ. To Me Allophyli have been made subject.

12. Ver. 9. Who will lead Me down into the city of standing round? What is the city of standing round? If ye remember already, I have made mention thereof in another Psalm, wherein hath been said, And they shall go around the city. For the city of standing round is the compassing around of the Gentiles, which compassing around of the Gentiles in the middle thereof had the one nation of the Jews, worshipping one God: the rest of the compassing around of the Gentiles to idols made supplication, demons they did serve. And mystically it was called the city of standing round; because on all sides the Gentiles had poured themselves around, and had stood around that nation which did worship one God. Who will lead me down into the city of standing around? Who, but God? This is meant to express, even as He shall lead down through those clouds, whereof hath been said, The voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel. The wheel itself is the city of standing round, which hath been called a wheel, that is, the round world. Who will lead me down into the city of standing around? who will lead me down even unto Idumæa? that is, so that I may reign even over earthly men, so that even they may venerate Me, that of Me are not, that will not learn of Me.

13. Who will lead me down even unto Idumæa? (Ver. 10.) Wilt not Thou, O God, That hast driven us back? And wilt not Thou, O God, march forth in our powers? Wilt not Thou lead us down, That hast driven us back? But wherefore ‘hast driven us back?’ Because Thou hast destroyed us. Wherefore hast destroyed us? Because angry Thou hast been, and hast had pity on us. Thou therefore wilt lead down, That hast driven back; Thou, O God, that wilt not march forth in our powers, wilt lead down. What is, wilt not march forth in our powers? The world is to rage, the world is to tread us down, there is to be a heap of witness, builded of the spilled blood of martyrs, and the raging heathen are to say, Where is the God of them? Then Thou wilt not march forth in our powers: against them Thou wilt not shew Thyself, Thou wilt not shew Thy power, such as Thou hast shewn in David, in Moses, in Joshua the son of Nun, when to their might the Gentiles yielded, and when the slaughter had been ended, and the great laying waste repaired, into the land which Thou promisedst Thou leddest in Thy people. This thing then Thou wilt not do, Thou wilt not march forth in our powers, but within Thou wilt work. What is, wilt not march forth? Wilt not shew

Thyself. For indeed when in chains the Martyrs were being led along, when they were being shut up in prison, when they were being led forth to be mocked, when to the beasts they were exposed, when they were being smitten with the sword, when with fire they were being burned, were they not despised as though forsaken, as though without helper? In what manner was God working within? in what manner within was He comforting! in what manner to these men was He making sweet the hope of life everlasting? in what manner was He not forsaking the hearts of them, where the man was dwelling in silence, well if good, ill if evil? Was He then by any means forsaking, because He was not marching forth in the powers of them? By not marching forth in the powers of them, did He not the more lead down the Church even unto Idumæa, lead down the Church even unto the city of standing round? For if the Church chose to war and to use the sword, She would seem to be fighting for life present: but because she was despising life present, therefore there was made a heap of witness for the life that shall be.

14. Thou therefore, O God, that wilt not march forth in our powers, (ver. 11.) Give to us aid from tribulation, and vain is the safety of man. Go now they that salt have not, and desire safety temporal for their friends, which is empty oldness. Give to us aid: from thence whence Thou wast supposed to forsake, thence succour. Give to us aid from tribulation, and vain is the safety of man.

15. Ver. 12. In God we will do valour, and Himself to nothing shall bring down our enemies. We will not do valour with the sword, not with horses, not with breastplates, not with shields, not in the mightiness of an army, not abroad. But where? Within, where we are not seen. Where within? In God we will do virtue: and as if abjects, and as if trodden down, men as if of no consideration we shall be, but Himself to nothing shall bring down our enemies. In a word, this thing hath been done to our enemies. Trodden down have been the Martyrs: by suffering, by enduring, by persevering even unto the end, in God they have done valour. Himself also hath done that which followeth: to nothing He hath brought down the enemies of them. Where are now the enemies of the Martyrs, except perchance that

now drunken men with their cups do persecute those, whom at that time phrensied men did use with stones to persecute?

PSALM 61

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

1. The above Psalm with your Love we have undertaken to consider. Short it is, the Lord will be with us, to enable us to speak sufficiently and briefly upon it. As far as Himself shall have aided that biddeth us to speak, so will I be to the willing subservient, as that I be not to them that are dull, tedious, nor to (so) few, overmuch, nor to the engaged, burdensome. The title of it doth not detain us. For it is Unto the end, in hymns, to David himself. In hymns, to wit in praises. Unto the end, to wit unto Christ. For the end of the law is Christ, for righteousness to every one that believeth. And David himself as no other ought we to understand than the same Who came out of the seed of David, so that He might be Man among men, and might make men equal to angels. But the voice in this Psalm (if we are among the members of Him, and in the Body, even as upon His exhortation we have the boldness to trust) we ought to acknowledge to be our own, not that of any foreigner. But I have not so called it our own, as if it were of those only that are now in presence; but our own, as being of us that are throughout the whole world, that are from the East even unto the West. And in order that ye may know it thus to be our voice, He speaketh here as if one Man: but He is not One Man; but even as One, the Unity is speaking. But in Christ we all are one man: because of this One Man the Head is in Heaven, and the members are yet toiling on earth: and because they are toiling see what He saith.

2. Ver. 1. Hearken, O God, to my supplication, give heed to my prayer. Who saith? He, as if One. See whether one: (ver. 2.) From the ends of the earth to Thee I have cried, while my heart was being vexed. Now therefore not one: but for this reason one, because Christ is One, of Whom all we are the members. For what one man crieth from the ends of the earth? There crieth not from the ends of the earth any but that inheritance, of which hath been

said to the Son Himself, Demand of Me, and I will give to Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and for Thy possession the boundaries of the earth. This therefore Christ's possession, this Christ's inheritance, this Christ's Body, this Christ's one Church, this the Unity which we are, is crying from the ends of the earth. But is crying what? That whereof I have spoken above, Hearken, O God, to my supplication, give heed to my prayer: from the ends of the earth to Thee I have cried. That is, this thing to Thee I have cried: from the ends of the earth, that is, every where.

3. But wherefore have I cried this thing? While my heart was being vexed. He sheweth himself to be throughout all nations in the whole round world, in great glory, but in great tribulation. For our life in this sojourning cannot be without temptation: because our advance is made through our temptation, nor does a man become known to himself unless tempted, nor can he be crowned except he shall have conquered, nor can he conquer except he shall have striven, nor can he strive except he shall have experienced an enemy, and temptations. This Man therefore is being vexed, that from the ends of the earth is crying, but nevertheless He is not forsaken. For ourselves who are His Body He hath willed to prefigure also in that His Body wherein already He hath both died and hath risen again, and into Heaven hath ascended, in order that whither the Head hath gone before, thither the members may be assured that they shall follow. Therefore us He did transfer by a figure into Himself, when He willed to be tempted of Satan. But now there was being read in the Gospel, how the Lord Jesus Christ in the wilderness was being tempted of the devil. Christ entirely was tempted of the devil. For in Christ thou wast being tempted, because Christ of thee had for Himself flesh, of Himself for thee salvation; of thee for Himself death, of Himself for thee life; of thee for Himself revilings, of Himself for thee honours; therefore of thee for Himself temptation, of Himself for thee victory. If in Him tempted we have been, in Him we overcome the devil. Dost thou observe that Christ was tempted, and dost thou not observe that He conquered? Acknowledge thyself in Him tempted, and in Him acknowledge thyself conquering. He was able from Himself to keep away the devil: but if He were not tempted, to thee that must be tempted the lesson of conquering He had failed to give. Therefore it is no wonder, if that Man being set amid temptations is crying from the

ends of the earth. But wherefore is he not being conquered? On the Rock Thou hast exalted me. Now therefore here we perceive who is crying from the ends of the earth. Let us call to mind the Gospel: Upon this Rock I will build My Church. Therefore She crieth from the ends of the earth, whom He hath willed to be builded upon a Rock. But in order that the Church might be builded upon the Rock, who was made the Rock? Hear Paul saying: But the Rock was Christ. On Him therefore builded we have been. For this reason that Rock whereon we have been builded, first hath been smitten with winds, flood, rain, when Christ of the devil was being tempted. Behold on what firmness He hath willed to stablish thee. With reason our voice is not in vain, but is hearkened unto: for on great hope we have been set: On the Rock Thou hast exalted me.

4. Ver. 3. Thou hast led me down, because Thou hast been made my hope. If He had not been made our own hope, He would not have led us down. He leadeth down as being a Leader, and on Himself leadeth as being the Way, and to Himself leadeth home as being the Country. He leadeth us down therefore. Wherefore? Because He hath been made our hope. Whence hath been made our hope? Behold, in the same manner as ye have heard that He was tempted, that He suffered, that He rose again, even so He hath been made our hope. For what do we say to ourselves when we read of these things? God indeed will not destroy us for whose sake He hath sent His Son, to be tempted, to be crucified, to die, to rise again: for truly God doth not despise us, for whose sake His own Son He hath not spared, but for us all hath delivered Him up. Thus therefore He hath been made our hope. In Him thou seest both thy labour and thy reward; labour in His Passion, reward in His resurrection. Thus therefore He hath been made our hope. For we have two lives; but one wherein we are, the other for which we hope. That wherein we are is known to us: that for which we hope is to us unknown. Endure that wherein thou art, and thou shalt have that which not yet thou hast. How dost thou endure? So that thou be not conquered by temptations. By His labours, temptations, sufferings, by His death, Christ hath pointed out to thee the life wherein thou art: by His Resurrection hath pointed out to thee the life wherein thou shalt be. For we had known man be born and die; man rising and living for everlasting we had not known: He took upon Him that which thou knewest, and shewed to thee that which

thou knewest not. For this reason therefore He was made our hope in tribulations, in temptations. See the Apostle saying: Not this alone, but we glory also in tribulations, he saith, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, patience probation, probation hope, but hope confoundeth not: for the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit that hath been given to us. Therefore Himself hath been made our hope That hath given to us the Holy Spirit, and we walk now by hope; for we should not walk, unless we hoped. The Apostle Himself saith what? For that which a man seeth, why doth he hope for? But if that which we see not we hope for, by patience we wait for it. And again, For by hope we have been saved.

5. Thou hast led me down, because Thou hast been made my hope: a tower of strength from the face of the enemy. My heart is vexed, saith that Unity from the ends of the earth, and I toil amid temptations and offences: the heathen envy, because they have been conquered; the heretics lie in wait, hidden in the cloak of the Christian name: within in the Church itself the wheat suffereth violence from the chaff: amid all these things when my heart is vexed, I will cry from the ends of the earth. But there forsaketh me not the Same that hath exalted me upon the Rock, in order to lead me down even unto Himself, because even if I labour, while the devil through so many places and times and occasions lieth in wait against me, He is to me a tower of strength, to whom when I shall have fled for refuge, not only I shall escape the weapons of the enemy, but even against him securely I shall myself hurl whatever darts I shall please. For Christ Himself is the tower, Himself for us hath been made a tower from the face of the enemy, who is also the Rock whereon hath been builded the Church. Art thou taking heed that thou be not smitten of the devil? Flee to the Tower; never to that Tower will the devil's darts follow thee: there thou wilt stand protected and fixed. But in what manner shalt thou flee to the Tower? Let not a man, set perchance in temptation, in body seek that Tower, and when he shall not have found it, be wearied, or faint in temptation. Before thee is the Tower: call to mind Christ, and go into the Tower. How dost thou call to mind Christ, in order that thou mayest go into the tower? Whatever thou sufferest, meditate how He first hath suffered, and meditate with what end He suffered, to wit, that He should die and should rise again. For such an

end do thou also hope, as in Him hath gone before, and thou hast gone into the Tower by not assenting to the enemy. For if thou shalt have assented to the enemy, then unto thee hath reached the dart of him fighting against thee. Do thou rather against him hurl weapons, wherewith he may be smitten, wherewith he may be conquered. These weapons are what? The words of God, thy faith, that same hope of thine, good works. I say not, so stay in that Tower as to be idle there, and let it suffice for thee that the enemy's weapons reach thee not: do there something, let not thy hands be at rest: good works of thine are swords that slay the enemy.

6. Ver. 4. A sojourner I will be in Thy tabernacle even unto ages. Ye see how he, of whom we have spoken, is he that crieth. Which of us is a sojourner even unto ages? For a few days here we live, and we pass away: for sojourners here we are, inhabitants in Heaven we shall be. Thou art a sojourner in that place where thou art to hear the voice of the Lord thy God, "Remove." For from that Home everlasting in the Heavens no one will bid thee to remove. Here therefore a sojourner thou art. Whence also is said in another Psalm, A sojourner I am with Thee and a stranger, as all my fathers were. Here therefore sojourners we are; there the Lord shall give to us mansions everlasting: Many are, He saith, the mansions in My Father's house. Those mansions not as though to sojourners He will give, but as though to citizens to abide for everlasting. Here however, brethren, because for no small time the Church was to be on this earth, but because here shall be the Church even unto the end of the world: therefore here He hath said, A dweller I will be in Thy tabernacle even unto ages. Let the enemy rage, as he will, let him fight against me, lyings in wait for me let him make ready, with offences let him beset me, and make my heart to be vexed; A sojourner I will be in Thy tabernacle even unto ages. The Church shall not be conquered, she shall not be rooted up, nor yield to temptations of whatever sort, until there come this world's end, and from this temporal habitation that everlasting one receive us, whereunto He shall lead us home That hath been made our hope. A sojourner I will be in Thy tabernacle even for ages. If for a long time thou art to be a sojourner, (suppose to Him we were saying this,) thou must then toil on earth amid so great temptations: for if a few days were the Church's time here, speedily there would be an end to the tempter's lyings in wait. Well, of a few days thou wouldest choose that the

temptations should be: but how would She gather together all Her sons, unless for a long time She were to be here, unless even unto the end She were to be prolonged? Do not envy the rest of mankind that hereafter shall be: do not, because thou hast already passed over, wish to cut down the bridge of mercy: be it here even for ever. And what of temptations, which needs must abound, by how much the more offences come? For Himself saith, because iniquity hath abounded, the love of many shall wax cold. But that Church, which crieth from the ends of the earth, is in these circumstances whereof he speaketh in continuation. But he that shall have persevered even unto the end, the same shall be saved. But whence shalt thou persevere? What are thy powers amid so great offences, amid so great temptations, amid so great fightings? With what powers dost thou conquer an enemy, whom thou seest not? Canst thou anywise with thine own? Nay, and inasmuch as even unto ages that sojourner shall be here, what hope hath he that he may endure? (Ver. 4.) I shall be covered up in the veiling of Thy wings. Behold the reason why we are in safety amid so great temptations, until there come the end of the world, and ages everlasting receive us; namely, because we are covered up in the veiling of His Wings. There is heat in the world, but there is a great shade under the wings of God. I shall be covered up in the veiling of Thy wings.

7. Ver. 5. For Thou, O God, hast hearkened to my prayer. What prayer? That wherewith he beginneth: Hearken, O God, to my supplication, give heed unto my prayer: from the ends of the earth to Thee I have cried. This to Thee I have cried from the ends of the earth. Therefore I shall be covered up in the veiling of Thy wings, because Thou hast hearkened to my supplication. We are admonished therefore, brethren, not to cease praying, so long as it is the time of temptations. Thou hast given inheritance to men fearing Thy name. Let us continue therefore in the fear of God’s name: the eternal Father deceiveth us not. Sons labour, that they may receive the inheritance of their parents, to whom when dead they are to succeed: are we not labouring to receive an inheritance from that Father, to whom not dying we succeed; but together with Him in the very inheritance for everlasting are to live? Thou hast given inheritance to men fearing Thy name.

8. Ver. 6. Days upon days of the King Thou shalt add to the years of Him. This is therefore the King of whom we are the members. A King Christ is, our Head, our King. Thou hast given to Him days upon days; not only those days in that time that hath end, but days upon those days without end. I will dwell, he saith, in the house of the Lord, for length of days. Wherefore for length of days, but because now is the shortness of days? For every thing which hath an end, is short: but of this King are days upon days, so that not only while these days pass away, Christ reigneth in His Church, but the Saints shall reign together with Him in those days which have no end. There one day there is, and many days there are. Inasmuch as there are many days, I have said just now, For length of days: inasmuch as there is one day, thus is understood, My Son Thou art, I this day have begotten Thee. Of one day He hath spoken as this day: but that day is not set in the middle between yesterday and to-morrow, nor is the beginning thereof the end of yesterday, nor the end thereof the beginning of to-morrow. For years of God have been also spoken of: But Thou art the very Same, and Thy years shall not fail. In the same manner as years, so days, so one day. Whatsoever thou wilt thou sayest of eternity. Whatever thou wilt thou sayest for this reason, because whatever thou shalt have said, it is too little that thou hast said. For thou must needs say somewhat, to the end that there may be something whereby thou mayest meditate on that which cannot be told. Days upon days of the King Thou shalt add to the years of Him, even unto the day of generation and of generation. Of this generation and of the generation that shall be: of this generation which is compared to the moon, because as the moon is new, waxeth, is full, waneth, and vanisheth, so are these mortal generations; and of the generation wherein we are born anew by rising again, and shall abide for everlasting with God, when now no longer we are like the moon, but like that of which saith the Lord, Then the righteous shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. For the moon by a figure in the Scriptures is put for the mutability of this mortal state. Therefore to Jericho was he going down that fell among robbers: because the city Jericho is a Hebrew name, and is interpreted in Latin by moon. He was going down therefore as though from immortality to mortality; and fittingly in the journey was he wounded by robbers and left half dead, even that Adam out of whom is the whole human race. Therefore days upon days of the King Thou shalt add to the years of Him, even unto

the day of generation, of generation mortal I take it: of what other generation hath he made mention? Hear, of what.

9. Ver. 7. He shall abide for everlasting in the sight of God; according to what, or because of what? His mercy and truth who shall seek for Him? He saith also in another place, All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth, to men seeking His testament and His testimonies. Large is the discourse of truth and mercy, but shortness we have promised. Briefly hear ye what is truth and mercy: because no small thing is that which hath been said, All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth. Mercy is spoken of, because our merits God regarded not, but His own goodness, in order that He might forgive us all our sins, and might promise life everlasting: but truth is spoken of, because He faileth not to render those things which He hath promised. Let us acknowledge it here, and let us do it; so that, just as to us God hath shewn forth His mercy and His truth, mercy in forgiving our sins, truth in shewing forth His promises; so also, I say, let us execute mercy and truth, mercy concerning the weak, concerning the needy, concerning even our enemies; truth in not sinning, and in not adding sin upon sin. For he that counteth much on the mercy of God, hath suffered to steal into his mind the making God unjust, and the thinking that if he shall have continned a sinner, and shall have chosen not to depart from his iniquities, He will come, and will set him in that place, where He setteth His servants that to Him are obedient. And will it be just, that He should set thee, continuing in sins, in that place where He is to set them that have departed from sins? Wilt thou be unjust in such sort as to make God also unjust? Why wilt thou then turn God unto thy will? Do thou be turned unto the will of God. Who is therefore he that doeth this, save one out of those few, of whom is said, He that shall have continued unto the end, the same shall be saved? With reason here also His mercy and truth who shall seek for Him? Why is there ‘for Him?’ Who shall seek, would be sufficient. Why hath he added, for Him, but because many men seek to learn His mercy and truth in His books? And when they have learned, for themselves they live, not for Him; their own things they seek, not the things which are of Jesus Christ: they preach mercy and truth, and do not mercy and truth. But by preaching it, they know it: for they would not preach it, unless they knew it. But he that loveth God and Christ, in preaching the mercy and truth of the Same, doth

himself seek her for Him, not for himself: that is, not in order that himself may have by this preaching temporal advantages, but in order that he may do good to His members, that is, His faithful ones, by ministering with truth of that which he knoweth: in order that he that liveth no longer for himself may live, but for Him that for all men hath died. His mercy and truth who will seek for Him?

10. Ver. 8. So I will play music to Thy name, that I may render my vows from day unto day. If thou playest music to the name of God, play not for a time. Wilt thou for ever play? wilt thou for everlasting play? Render to Him thy vows from day unto day. What is, render to Him thy vows from day unto day? From this day unto that day. Continue to render vows in this day, until thou come to that day: that is, He that shall have continued even unto the end, the same shall be saved.

PSALM 62

Exposition

Sermon to the people.

1. The delight of divine sayings, and the pleasantness of understanding the Word of God, while Himself that giveth the sweetness aideth our earth to give her fruit, do invite both us to speak and you to hear. I see that you hear without weariness, and I rejoice in the palate of your heart, wherefrom that which is wholesome is not rejected, but with eagerness it is taken in and profitably is retained. Let us speak therefore to you to-day also, as far as the Lord alloweth, of that Psalm which but now we have sung. The title of it is, Unto the end, in behalf of Idithun, a Psalm to David himself. I recollect that already to you hath been explained what Idithun is. For according to the interpretation of the Hebrew tongue, as to us it hath come down, in Latin Idithun is translated, leaping over them. Therefore he that is singing doth leap over certain men, on whom from above he looketh down. Let us see how far he hath leaped over, and whom he hath leaped over, and in what place, though he hath leaped over certain men, he is situate, whence as from a kind of spiritual and secure position he may behold what is below, (not so looking back as that he fall, but so that he that hath leaped over may stir up the indolent to follow,) and may extol the place, at which by leaping over he hath arrived. For this man that leapeth over is above something in such sort as that he is under some one: whence first to us he hath desired to intimate the Person under whom he is protected, in order that his having passed over, may not be for pride but for advancement.

2. He being set, I say, in a certain fortified place, doth say, (ver. 1.) Shall not my soul be subject to God? For he had heard, He that doth exalt himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted: and fearful lest by leaping over he should be proud, not elated by those things which were below, but humble because of Him that was above; to envious men, as it were threatening to him a fall, who were grieved that he had leaped over,

he hath made answer, Shall not my soul be subject to God? Why is it that for me as it were leaping over ye seek for snares? either by assaulting ye would throw me down, or by leading astray ye would deceive me. Do I so remember what I am above, as that I am forgetful, whom I am below? Shall not my soul be subject to God? Howsoever much I may draw near, howsoever much I may ascend, howsoever much I leap over, under God I shall be, not against God. Safely therefore I mount above other things, when He that is above all things doth hold me under Him. Shall not my soul be made subject to God? For from Himself is my salvation. For Himself is my God and my salvation, my taker up, I shall not be moved more. I know Who is above me, I know Who stretcheth forth His mercy to men that know Him, I know under the covering of Whose wings I should hope: I shall not be moved more. Ye are striving indeed, he saith to certain, leaping over those very persons to whom he speaketh: ye indeed are striving that I should be moved, but let there not come to me the foot of pride. For, for this cause cometh about that which also in the same Psalm followeth, nor let the hand of sinners remove me: to which agreeth, I shall not be moved more. For to that which there hath been said, nor let the hand of sinners remove me, there answereth here, I shall not be moved more. But to that which there hath been said, Let not there come to me the foot of pride, there answereth here, Shall not my soul be made subject to God?

3. Therefore, down from the higher place fortified and protected, he, to whom the Lord hath been made a refuge, he, to whom is God Himself for a fortified place, hath regard to those whom he hath leaped over, and looking down upon them speaketh as though from a lofty tower: for this also hath been said of Him, A Tower of strength from the face of the enemy: he giveth heed therefore to them, and saith, How long do ye lay upon a man? By insulting, by hurling reproaches, by laying wait, by persecuting, ye lay upon a man burthens, ye lay upon a man as much as a man can bear: but in order that a man may bear, under him is He that hath made man. How long do ye lay upon a man? If to a man ye look, slay ye, all of you. Behold, lay upon, rage, slay ye, all of you. As though a wall bowed down, and as a fence smitten against; lean against, smite against, as if going to throw down. And where is, I shall not be moved more? But wherefore? I shall not be moved more? Because Himself is God my Saving One, my taker up,

therefore ye men are able to lay burdens upon a man; can ye anywise lay upon God, Who protecteth man?

4. Ver. 3. Slay ye, all of you. What is that size of body in one man so great as that he may be slain by all? But we ought to perceive our person, the person of the Church, the person of the Body of Christ. For one Man with His Head and Body is Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the Body and the Members of the Body: two in one Flesh, and in one voice, and in one passion, and, when iniquity shall have passed over, in one rest. The sufferings therefore of Christ are not in Christ alone; nay, there are not any save in Christ. For if Christ thou understandest to be Head and Body, the sufferings of Christ are not, save in Christ: but if Christ thou understand of Head alone, the sufferings of Christ are not in Christ alone. For if the sufferings of Christ are in Christ alone, to wit in the Head alone; whence saith a certain member of Him, Paul the Apostle, In order that I may supply what are wanting of the oppressions of Christ in my flesh? If therefore in the members of Christ thou art, whatsoever man thou art that art hearing these words, whosoever thou art that dost not hear these words: (but however, thou dost hear, if in the members of Christ thou art:) whatsoever thing thou sufferest from those that are not in the members of Christ, was wanting to the sufferings of Christ. Therefore it is added because it was wanting; thou fillest up the measure, thou causest it not to run over: thou sufferest so much as was to be contributed out of thy sufferings to the whole suffering of Christ, that hath suffered in our Head, and doth suffer in His members, that is, in our own selves. Unto this our common republic, as it were each of us according to our measure payeth that which we owe, and according to the powers which we have, as it were a quota of sufferings we contribute. The store-house of all men’s sufferings will not be completely made up, save when the world shall have been ended. How long do ye lay upon man? Whatever the Prophets have suffered from the blood of just Abel even unto the blood of Zacharias, hath been laid upon man, because there have preceded the advent of the Incarnation of Christ certain members of Christ: as in the birth of a certain one, though not yet the head came forth, there came forth the hand, but yet to the head was joined even the hand. Do not therefore think, brethren, that all just men, that have suffered the persecution of ungodly men, even those that have come before the

Lord’s Advent to foretell the Lord’s Advent, belonged not to the members of Christ. Far be it that he should not belong to the members of Christ, who belongeth to the City which for King hath Christ. That alone is Jerusalem heavenly, the holy City. The King of this City is Christ: for Himself saith to Her, “Mother, Sion” a man will say. He saith to Her, “Mother;” but as Man. For “Mother Sion” a man will say, and Man He was made in Her, and Himself the Most Highest hath founded Her. This King therefore of Her, that hath founded Her, the Most Highest, Himself, in Her was made man most lowly. Himself therefore, before the Advent of His Incarnation, hath sent before Him certain of His Members, after whom foreshewing Himself to come there came also Himself, joined together with them. Reflect upon the similitude of that man that was born: how hand before head coming forth, is both with the head and under the head. For in reference to Christ it was said, when the excellence of the first people was being praised, and the natural branches broken off were grieved over: Of whom is the Adoption, he saith, and the testaments, and the establishment of the law; of whom are the fathers, and out of whom is Christ after the flesh, Who is above all, God blessed for ever. Out of whom is Christ after the flesh, as though out of Sion, because Man He was made in Her: because Christ is above all, God blessed for ever, because Himself hath founded Her, the Most Highest. Out of whom is Christ after the flesh, the Son of David; Who is above all, God blessed for ever, the Lord of David. That whole City therefore is speaking, from the blood of righteous Abel even to the blood of Zacharias. Thence also hereafter from the blood of John, through the blood of the Apostles, through the blood of Martyrs, through the blood of the faithful ones of Christ, one City speaketh, one man saith, How long do ye lay upon a man? Slay ye all of you. Let us see if ye efface, let us see if ye extinguish, let us see if ye remove from the earth the name thereof, let us see if ye peoples do not meditate of empty things, saying, When shall She die, and when shall perish the name of Her? As though She were a wall bowed down, and a fence smitten against, lean ye against Her, smite against Her. Hear from above: (ver. 2.) My taker up, I shall not be moved more: for as though a heap of sand I have been smitten against that I might fall, and the Lord hath taken me up.

5. Ver. 4. Nevertheless, mine honour they have thought to drive back: conquered while they slay men yielding, by the blood of the slain multiplying the faithful, yielding to these and no longer being able to kill; Nevertheless, mine honour they have thought to drive back. Now because a Christian cannot be killed, pains are taken that a Christian should be dishonoured. For now by the honour of Christians the hearts of ungodly men are tortured: now that spiritual Joseph, after his selling by his brethren, after his removal from his home into Egypt as though into the Gentiles, after the humiliation of a prison, after the made-up tale of a false witness, after that there had come to pass that which of him was said, Iron passed through the soul of him: now he is honoured, now he is not made subject to brethren selling him, but corn he supplieth to them hungering. Conquered by his humility and chastity, uncorruptness, temptations, sufferings, now honoured they see him, and his honour they think to check. For in their thoughts is this, The sinner shall see; for he cannot but see, since a City cannot be hid that is set upon a hill. The sinner, I say, shall see, and be angry; with his teeth he shall gnash, and shall pine away. There lurketh in the heart and is hidden by the brow their venom, while they rage and are indignant. Therefore here also of the thoughts of them he speaketh, Mine honour, he saith, they have thought to drive back. For they dare not in words to profess what they think. Let us wish for them good things, even if they wish evil things. Judge them, O God, let them fall down from their thoughts. For what is better for them, what more profitable, than that they should fall from thence where they stand ill, in order that they too being amended may be able to say, Thou hast set my feet upon a Rock.

6. Ver. 4. Nevertheless, they have thought mine honour to drive back. Is it all against one man, or one man against all; or all against all, or one against one? Meanwhile, when he saith, ye lay upon a man, it is as it were upon one man: and when he saith, Slay all ye, it is as if all men were against one man: but nevertheless it is also all against all, because also all are Christians, but in One. But why must those divers errors hostile to Christ be spoken of as all together? Are they also one? Truly them also as one I dare to speak of: because there is one City and one city, one People and one people, King and king. One City and one city is what? Babylon one, Jerusalem one. By whatsoever other mystical names besides She is called, yet One City there

is and one city; over this the devil is king, over that Christ is King. For I remark the Gospel in a certain place, and there moveth me that which I think doth move you too. After that there were bidden many men to the marriage, good and bad, and the marriage was filled with them that sat at meat: (for the servants that were sent forth, as had been commanded, did bid both good men and bad men:) and the King came in to view them that were at meat, and He found a man not having a marriage garment, and He said to him that which ye know: Friend, whence hast thou come hither, not having a marriage garment? But he was speechless: and He commanded him to be bound hands and feet, and to be cast into outer darkness. Thus there was removed from the banquet, and sent into punishment, some man or other in so great a multitude of guests. But yet the Lord, to shew that one man to be one body which consisteth of many, when He commanded him to be cast out, and to be sent into condign punishment, hath added forthwith, For many are called, but few are chosen. What is this? What is this? Thou hast called together crowds, there hath come a huge multitude, Thou hast preached, hast spoken, they have been 'multiplied above number,' filled is the marriage with guests, there is cast forth thence one man alone, and Thou sayest, For many are called, but few are chosen. Why not rather, All called, many chosen, one cast forth? If He had said, For many are called, and more chosen, but few rejected: in the few perchance nearer the truth we should perceive that one man. But now he saith that one hath been cast forth thence, and he addeth, For many are called, but few chosen. Who are chosen, but they that have continued? One having been cast forth, those that were chosen have continued. How is it that when one hath been cast forth out of many, few are chosen, except because in that one are many? All men that earthly things do mind, all men that do choose earthly felicity before God, all men that seek their own things, not the things which are of Jesus Christ, to that one city belong, which is called Babylon mystically, and which hath for king the devil. But all men who mind those things which are above, who on heavenly things do meditate, who with carefulness live in the world that they may not offend God, who are careful not to sin, who if sinning are not ashamed to confess, humble, mild, holy, just, godly, good, all these to that one City do belong, which for King hath Christ. For the former on earth as it were is the greater in age, not by elevation, not by honour. For the former city was first born, the latter city was after born. For that began from Cain, this from Abel. These two Bodies, serving under two kings, to their several cities belonging, are opposed to one another even unto the end of the world, until there be made out of the mixture a severing, and some be set on the right, others on the left, and it be said to the former, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which for you hath been prepared from the beginning of the world: but to the latter, Go ye into fire everlasting, that hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. For Christ saith this, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom that for you hath been prepared from the beginning of the world, as King of His City, victorious over all things. But to those that are set on the left hand, as though to a city of unrighteous men, Go ye, He saith, into fire everlasting, doth He by any means sever from them their king? No. For He hath added, That hath been prepared for the devil and his angels.

7. Give heed, brethren, give heed, I entreat you. For it delighteth me yet to speak a few words to you of this beloved City. For most glorious things of Thee have been spoken, City of God. And, if I forget Thee, O Jerusalem, let mine own right hand forget me. For dear is the one Country, and truly but one Country, the only Country: besides Her whatsoever we have, is a sojourning in a strange land. I will say therefore that which ye may acknowledge, that of which ye may approve: I will call to your minds that which ye know, I will not teach that which ye know not. Not first, saith the Apostle, that which is spiritual, but that which is natural, afterwards that which is spiritual. Therefore the former city is greater by age, because first was born Cain, and afterwards Abel: but in these the elder shall serve the younger. The former greater by age, the latter greater in dignity. Wherefore is the former greater by age? Because not first that which is spiritual, but that which is natural. Wherefore is the latter greater in dignity? Because the elder shall serve the younger. But Cain builded a city, so we have read: before there was any city, in the beginning of things human, Cain builded a city. Doubtless thou wouldest perceive that already there had been born many men out of those two men, and out of those whom they had begotten, so that there was a meet and convenient number, to have impressed upon it the name of city. Cain therefore builded a city where a city was not. There was builded also afterward Jerusalem, the kingdom of God, the Holy City, the City of God; and set in the form as it were of a shadow signifying things

future. Perceive ye therefore the great mystery, and bear in mind what I have quoted before, Not first that which is spiritual, but that which is natural, afterwards the spiritual; for this reason therefore Cain first builded a city, and in that place he buided where no city was. But when Jerusalem was being builded, it was not builded in a place where there was not a city, but there was a city at first which was called Jebus, whence the Jebusites. This having been captured, overcome, made subject, there was builded a new city, as though the old were thrown down; and it was called Jerusalem, vision of peace, City of God. Each one therefore that is born of Adam, not yet doth belong to Jerusalem: for he beareth with him the offshoot of iniquity, and the punishment of sin, having been consigned to death, and he belongeth in a manner to a sort of old city. But if he is to be in the people of God; his old self will be thrown down, and he will be builded up new. For this reason therefore Cain builded a city where there was not a city. For from mortality and from naughtiness every one setteth out, in order that he may be made good hereafter. For as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One Man many shall be made just. And all we in Adam do die: and each one of us of Adam was born. Let him pass over to Jerusalem, he shall be thrown down old, and shall be builded new. As though to conquered Jebusites, in order that there may be builded up Jerusalem, is said, Put ye off the old man, and put on the new. And now to them builded in Jerusalem, and shining by the light of Grace, is said, Ye have been sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. The evil city therefore from the beginning even unto the end doth run on, and the good City by the changing of evil men is builded up.

8. And these two cities are meanwhile mingled, at the end to be severed; against each other mutually in conflict, the one for iniquity, the other for the truth. And sometimes this very temporal mingling bringeth it to pass that certain men belonging to the city Babylon, do order matters belonging to Jerusalem, and again certain men belonging to Jerusalem, do order matters belonging to Babylon. Something difficult I seem to have propounded. Be ye patient, until it be proved by examples. For all things in the old people, as writeth the Apostle, in a figure used to befall them: but they have been written for our amendment, upon whom the end of the world hath come. Regard therefore that people as also set to intimate an after people; and see

then what I say. There were great kings in Jerusalem: it is a known fact, they are enumerated, are named. They all were, I say, wicked citizens of Babylon, and they were ordering matters of Jerusalem: all men from thence to be dissevered at the end, to no one but to the devil do belong. Again we find citizens of Jerusalem to have ordered certain matters belonging to Babylon. For those three children, Nabuchodonosor, overcome by a miracle, made the ministers of his kingdom, and set them over his Satraps; and so there were ordering the matters of Babylon citizens of Jerusalem. Observe now how this is being fulfilled and done in the Church, and in these times. All they of whom hath been said, What things they say do ye, but what things they do, do not, are citizens of Babylon, ordering the commonwealth of the City Jerusalem. For if they were ordering nothing of the City Jerusalem, whence What things they say do ye? Whence, In the chair of Moses they sit? Again, if citizens they are of Jerusalem Herself, that shall reign for everlasting with Christ, whence, What things they do, do not ye, except because they too are to hear, Depart from Me, all ye that work iniquity? It is therefore a thing known to you, that the citizens of the evil city do order certain doings of the good City. Let us see if now also citizens of the good City do order certain doings of the evil city. Every earthly commonwealth, sometime assuredly to perish, whereof the kingdom is to pass away, when there shall come that kingdom, whereof we pray, Thy kingdom come; and whereof hath been foretold, And of His kingdom shall be no end: an earthly commonwealth, I say, hath our citizens conducting the affairs of it. For how many faithful, how many good men, are both magistrates in their cities, and are judges, and are generals, and are counts, and are kings? All that are just and good men, having not any thing in heart but the most glorious things, which of Thee have been said, City of God. And as if they are doing bond-service in the city which is to pass away, even there by the doctors of the Holy City they are bidden to keep faith with those set over them, whether with the king as supreme, or with governors as though sent by God for the punishment of evil men, but for the praise of good men: or as servants, that to their masters they should be subject, even Christians to Heathens, and the better should keep faith with the worse, for a time to serve, for everlasting to have dominion. For these things do happen until iniquity do pass away. Servants are commanded to bear with masters unjust and capricious: the citizens of Babylon are commanded to be endured by the citizens of Jerusalem, shewing even more attentions, than if they were citizens of the same Babylon, as though fulfilling the, He that shall have exacted of thee a mile, go with him other twain. This whole city dispersed, spread abroad, mingled, He addresseth in these words, and saith, (ver. 3.) How long do ye lay upon a man? Slay all ye, both ye that are without as though thorns in the hedges, or as though trees unfruitful in the woods, and ye that are within as though tares, or as though chaff, all ye as many as ye are, severed, mingled, to be endured, to be severed, slay all ye, as though against a wall bowed down, and a fence smitten down. (Ver. 4.) Nevertheless, mine honour they have thought to drive back. They have not spoken, but yet they have thought. Have thought to drive back mine honour.

9. I have run in thirst. For they were rendering evil things for good things: for them was I thirsting: mine honour they thought to drive back: I was thirsting to bring them over into my body. For in drinking what do we, but send into our members liquor that is without, and suck it into our body? Thus did Moses in that head of the calf. The head of the calf is a great sacrament. For the head of the calf was the body of ungodly men, in the similitude of a calf eating hay, seeking earthly things: because all flesh is hay. It was therefore, as I have said, the body of ungodly men. Moses being angered cast it into the fire, ground it to powder, in water scattered it, to drink to the people he gave it; and the anger of the Prophet became handmaid to a prophecy. For that body is thrown into the fire of tribulations, and by the word of God is ground to powder. For little by little they relinquish the unity of that body. For like as it were a garment, so by time it is wasted. And each one that is made a Christian is severed from that people, and as it were from the lump he is ground off. Combined they hate, broken off they believe. And what now is more evident, than that into that City Jerusalem, of which the people Israel was a type, by Baptism men were to be made to pass over? Therefore in water it was scattered, in order that for drink it might be given. For this even unto the end this man thirsteth; he runneth and thirsteth. For many men He drinketh, but never will He be without thirst. For thence is, I thirst, woman, give Me to drink. That Samaritan woman at the well found the Lord thirsting, and by Him thirsting she was filled: she first found Him thirsting, in order that He might drink her believing. And when He was on the Cross, I thirst, He said,

although they gave not to Him that for which He was thirsting. For for themselves He was thirsting: but they gave vinegar, not new wine, wherewith are filled up the new bottles, but old wine, but old to its loss. For old vinegar also is said of the old men, of whom hath been said, For to them is no changing; namely, that the Jebusites should be overthrown, and Jerusalem be builded.

10. So also the Head of this body even unto the end from the beginning runneth in thirst. And as if to Him were being said, Why in thirst? what is wanting to Thee, O Body of Christ, O Church of Christ? in so great honour, in so great exaltation, in so great height also even in this world established, what is wanting to Thee? There is fulfilled that which hath been foretold of Thee, There shall adore Him all kings of the earth, all nations shall serve Him. For what therefore dost Thou thirst? for what dost Thou thirst? with so many peoples art Thou not satisfied? Of what peoples dost Thou speak? With their mouth they were blessing, with their heart they were cursing. ‘Many called, but few chosen.’ A woman suffering with an issue of blood touched the border of His garment, and was made whole: and when the Lord was admiring her touching, because He had perceived from Himself virtue to have gone forth, to wit for healing the woman, He said, Who hath touched Me? And the wondering disciples, Multitudes throng Thee, and Thou sayest, Who hath touched Me? And He, Some one hath touched Me? As though He were saying, One woman hath touched, multitudes throng. They that at Jerusalem’s festivals fill up the Churches, at Babylon’s festivals fill up the theatres: and for all they serve, honour, obey Her—not only those very persons that bear the Sacraments of Christ, and hate the commandments of Christ, but also they, that bear not even the mere Sacraments, Heathen though they be, Jews though they be,—they honour, praise, proclaim, but with their mouths they were blessing. I heed not the mouth, He knoweth That hath instructed me, with their heart they were cursing. In that place they were cursing, where mine honour they thought to drive back.

11. What dost Thou, O Idithun, Body of Christ, leaping over them? What dost Thou amid all these things? What wilt Thou? wilt faint? wilt Thou not persevere even unto the end? wilt Thou not hearken, He that shall have

persevered even unto the end, the same shall be saved, though for that iniquity aboundeth, the love of many shall wax cold? And where is it that Thou hast leaped over them? where is it that Thy conversation is in Heaven? But they cleave unto earthly things, as though earthborn they mind the earth, and are earth, the serpent’s food. What dost thou amid these things? Howbeit although they do these things, although they think of these things, although they smite against, although they bear against me as if bowed down, although they perceive me now erect, and mine honour they think to drive back, although with their mouth they bless, and with their heart curse, although they lie in wait where they can, slander where they can: (ver. 5.) Nevertheless, to God my soul shall be made subject. And who would endure so great things, either open wars, or secret lyings-in-wait? Who would endure so great things amid open enemies, amid false brethren? Who would endure so great things? Would a man? and if a man would, would a man of himself? I have not so leaped over that I should be lifted up, and fall: To God my soul shall be made subject: for from Himself is my patience. What patience is there amid so great scandals, except that if for that which we do not see we hope, through patience we look for it? There cometh my pain, there will come my rest also; there cometh my tribulation, there will come my cleansing also. For doth gold glitter in the furnace of the refiner? In a necklace it will glitter, in an ornament it will glitter: let it suffer however the furnace, in order that being cleansed from dross it may come into light. This is the furnace, there is there chaff, there gold, there fire, into this bloweth the refiner: in the furnace burneth the chaff, and the gold is cleansed; the one into ashes is turned, of dross the other is cleansed. The furnace is the world, the chaff unrighteous men, the gold just men; the fire tribulation, the refiner God: that which therefore the refiner willeth I do; wherever the Maker setteth me I endure it. I am commanded to endure, He knoweth how to cleanse. Though there burn the chaff to set me on fire, and as if to consume me: that into ashes is burned, I of dross am cleansed. Wherefore? Because to God my soul shall be made subject: for from Himself is my patience.

12. What to thee is He, from whom is thy patience. (Ver. 6.) For Himself is my God and My Saving One, my Taker up, I will not remove hence. Because Himself is my God, therefore He calleth me: and my Saving One,

therefore He justifieth me: and my Taker up, therefore He glorifieth me. For here I am called and am justified, but there I am glorified; and from thence where I am glorified, I will not remove. For a sojourner I am with Thee on earth as all my fathers were. Therefore from my lodging I shall remove, from my Heavenly home I shall not remove.

13. Ver. 7. In God is my salvation and my glory. Saved I shall be in God, glorious I shall be in God: for not only saved, but also glorious, saved, because a just man I have been made out of an ungodly man, by Him justified; but glorious, because not only justified, but also honoured. For those whom He hath predestinated, those also He hath called. Calling them, what hath He done here? Whom He hath called, the same also He hath justified; but whom He hath justified, the same also He hath glorified. Justification therefore to salvation belongeth, glorifying to honour. How glorifying to honour belongeth, it is not needful to discuss. How justification belongeth to salvation, let us seek some proof. Behold there cometh to mind out of the Gospel: there were some who to themselves were seeming to be just men, and they were finding fault with the Lord because He admitted to the feast sinners, and with publicans and sinners was eating; to such men therefore priding themselves, strong men of earth very much lifted up, much glorying of their own soundness, such as they counted it, not such as they had, the Lord answered what? They that are whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick. Whom calleth He whole, whom calleth He sick? He continueth and saith, I have not come to call just men, but sinners unto repentance. He hath called therefore ‘the whole’ just men, not because the Pharisees were so, but because themselves they thought so to be; and for this reason were proud, and grudged sick men a physician, and being more sick than those, they slew the Physician. He hath called whole, however, righteous men, sick, the sinners. My being justified therefore, saith that man that leapeth over, from Himself I have: my being glorified, from Himself I have: For God is my salvation and my glory. My salvation, so that saved I am: my glory, so that honoured I am. This thing hereafter: now what? God of my help, and my hope is in God; until I attain unto perfect justification and salvation. For by hope we are saved: but hope which is seen, is not hope. Until I shall come to that glorifying, when the righteous shall shine in the kingdom of their Father as the sun; meanwhile

now amid temptations, amid iniquities, amid scandals, amid open assaults and crafty talkings, amid them that with their mouth bless, and with their heart curse, amid them that ‘mine honour think to drive back,’ here is what? God of my help: for He giveth help to men striving. To men striving against whom? Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. God therefore is of my help, and my hope is in God. Hope it is, so long as that is not yet which hath been promised, and that is believed which is not yet seen: but when it shall have come, there shall be salvation and glorifying: while these things are deferred, however, we are not forsaken: for God is of my help, and my hope is in God.

14. Ver. 8. Hope ye in Him, all the council of the people. Imitate ye Idithun, leap over your enemies; men fighting against you, stopping up your way, men hating you, leap ye over: Hope in Him all the council of the people: pour out before Him your hearts. Do not yield to them that say to you, Where is your God? My tears, he saith, have been made for me bread day and night, while it is said to me, day by day, Where is thy God? Upon these things I have meditated, and have poured out over me my soul. I have called to mind what I hear, Where is thy God? I have remembered these things, and have poured out over me my soul, seeking my God, ‘I have poured out over me my soul,’ that to Him I might attain, not within myself did I abide. Therefore, hope in Him all the council of the people. Pour out before Him your hearts, by imploring, by confessing, by hoping. Do not keep back your hearts within your hearts: Pour out before Him your hearts. That perisheth not which ye pour out. For He is my Taker up. If He taketh up, why fearest thou to pour out? Cast upon the Lord thy care, and hope in Him. What fear ye amid whisperers, slanderers hateful to God, where they are able openly assailing, where they are unable secretly lying in wait, falsely praising, truly at enmity, amid them what fear ye? God is our Helper. Do they anywise equal God? Are they anywise stronger than He? God is our Helper, be ye without care. ‘If God is for us, who is against us?’ Pour out before Him your hearts, by leaping over unto Him, by lifting up your souls: God is our Helper.

15. And now having been set in a fortified place, in a tower of strength from the face of the enemy, have pity on those of whom ye were afraid: for

ye ought to run in thirst: look down therefore upon them, now that ye are in that place stablished, and say ye,

Ver. 9. Nevertheless, vain are the sons of men, and liars are the sons of men. “Sons of men, how long are ye heavy in heart?” Sons of men vain, sons of men liars, sons of men wherefore do ye love vanity and seek lying? With pity say these things, and be wise. If ye have leaped over, if ye love your enemies, if ye desire to throw down in order that ye may build up, if Him ye love That ‘judgeth in the nations, and filleth up places that are fallen:’ so to them say ye these things, not hating them, not rendering evil for evil.

Liars are the sons of men in the balances, in order that they may deceive, being at one because of vanity. Certainly many men there are: behold there is that one man, that one man that was cast forth from the multitude of guests. They conspire, they all seek things temporal, and they that are carnal things carnal, and for the future they hope them, whosoever do hope: even if because of variety of opinions they are in division, nevertheless because of vanity they are at one. Divers indeed are errors and of many forms, and the kingdom against itself divided shall not stand: but alike in all is the will vain and lying, belonging to one king, with whom into fire everlasting it is to be thrown headlong—these men because of vanity are at one.

16. And for them see how He thirsteth, see how He runneth in thirst. He turneth therefore Himself to them, thirsting for them: (ver. 10.) Do not hope in iniquity. For my hope is in God. Do not hope in iniquity. Ye that will not draw near and pass over, do not hope in iniquity. For I that have leapt over, my hope is in God: and is there anywise iniquity with God? Do not hope in iniquity. This thing let us do, that thing let us do, of that thing let us think, thus let us adjust our lyings in wait; Because of vanity being at one. Thou thirstest: they that think of those things against thee are given up by those whom thou drinkest, Do not hope in vanity. Vain is iniquity, nought is iniquity, mighty is nothing save righteousness. Truth may be hidden for a time, conquered it cannot be. Iniquity may flourish for a time, abide it cannot. Do not hope upon iniquity: and for robbery be not covetous. Thou art not rich, and wilt thou rob? What findest thou? What losest thou? O losing gains! Thou findest money, thou losest righteousness. For robbery be not covetous. Poor I am, I have nothing. Therefore wilt thou rob? What

thou robbest thou seest: by whom thou art robbed seest thou not? Knowest thou not thine enemy goeth about, like a roaring lion, and seeketh what he may rob? That prey which thou desirest to rob is in a trap: thou seizest and art seized. For robbery therefore be not covetous, O poor man, but fix thy desires upon God, That giveth to us all things abundantly for enjoyment. He shall feed thee That hath made thee. Shall He That feedeth a robber not feed an innocent man? He shall feed thee That maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, and raineth upon just men and unjust men. If He feedeth men that are to be condemned, shall He not feed men that are to be delivered? Therefore for robbery be not covetous. This hath been said to a poor man, that perchance will rob somewhat out of necessity. Let the rich man come forth: I have no necessity, he saith, to rob: to me nothing is wanting, all things abound. And do thou too hear: if riches flow, upon them set not the heart. The former hath not, the latter hath: let not the former seek to rob that which he hath not, let not the latter set heart upon that which he hath. If riches flow, that is, if they overflow, run as though from a fountain, upon them set not the heart: do not on thyself rely, do not in that place fix thyself: certainly even this fear thou, namely, if riches flow. Seest thou not that if there the heart thou shalt have set, thou also wilt flow? Rich thou art, and behold no longer thou covetest further to have, because many things thou hast: hear, Charge the rich men of this world not to be highminded. And what is, upon them set not the heart? Nor hope in the uncertainty of riches. Therefore if riches flow, set not upon them the heart, in riches do not trust, rely not, hope not, lest it be said, Behold a man that hath not set God for his Helper, but hath hoped in the multitude of his riches, and hath prevailed in his vanity. Therefore, vain sons of men, lying sons of men, neither rob, nor, if there flow riches, set heart upon them: no longer love vanity, and seek lying. For blessed is the man who hath the Lord God for his hope, and who hath not had regard unto vanities, and lying follies. Ye would deceive, ye would commit a fraud, what bring ye in order that ye may cheat. Deceitful balances. For lying, he saith, are the sons of men in the balances, in order that they may cheat by bringing forth deceitful balances. By a false balance ye beguile men looking on: know ye not that one is he that weigheth, Another He that judgeth of the weight? He seeth not, for whom thou weighest, but He seeth That weigheth thee and him. Therefore neither fraud nor robbery covet ye any longer, nor on those things which ye have set your hope: I have admonished, have foretold, saith this Idithun.

17. What followeth? (Ver. 11, 12.) Once hath God spoken, these two things I have heard, that power is of God, and to Thee, O Lord, is mercy, for Thou shalt render to each one after his works. There hath spoken Idithun, he hath sounded from the high place, to which he hath leapt over, he hath heard there somewhat, and hath spoken to us: but I am somewise troubled in that thing which he hath said to us, brethren, and until with you I share either the trouble or, it may be, my breathing again, I would have you attentive. For we have brought the Psalm to an end by the help of the Lord: after these words which we are about to say, there remaineth nothing further for us to explain of this. Therefore strive with me, that we may be able to understand this: and if I shall not have been able, and any one of you understandeth that which I am not able; I shall rejoice rather than envy. Truly it is difficult to trace out in what way hath been placed first: Once hath God spoken: and secondly, when once He hath spoken, how I two things have heard. For if he had said, ‘Once hath God spoken, this one thing I have heard:’ he would seem to have cut off half of this inquiry, so that we should simply inquire what is Once hath God spoken. But now we are going to inquire both what is, Once hath God spoken: and what is, These two things I have heard, though once He hath spoken.

18. Once hath God spoken. What sayest thou, Idithun? If thou that hadst leapt over them art saying, Once He hath spoken; I turn to another Scripture and it saith to me, In many quarters and in many ways formerly God hath spoken to the fathers in the prophets. What is, Once hath God spoken? Is He not the God that in the beginning of mankind spake to Adam? Did not the Selfsame speak to Cain, to Noe, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to all the Prophets, and to Moses? One man Moses was, and how often to him spake God? Behold even to one man, not once but ofttimes God hath spoken. Secondly, He hath spoken to the Son when standing here, Thou art My beloved Son. God hath spoken to the Apostles, He hath spoken to all the Saints, even though not with voice sounding through the cloud, nevertheless in the heart where He is Himself Teacher. Whence that one saith, I will hear what speaketh in me the Lord God, for He shall speak

peace to His people. What is therefore, Once hath God spoken? Much hath that man leapt over in order to arrive at that place, where once God hath spoken. Behold briefly I have spoken to your Love. Here among men, to men ofttimes, in many ways, in many quarters, through creatures of many forms God hath spoken: by Himself once God hath spoken, because One Word God hath begotten. This Idithun, therefore, leaping over them, had leapt over with the glance of the mind, mighty and potent and surpassing, had leapt over the earth, and whatever in the earth there is; air, all the clouds out of which God hath spoken many things, and ofttimes, and to many men: had leapt over also all Angels with the glances of Faith. For this man leaping over was not held fast by earthly things, but like a flying eagle was borne beyond all the mist whereby is covered the whole earth. For the Wisdom saith, And with mist I have covered the whole earth: he arriveth at something clear, leaping over the whole creation, and seeking God, and pouring out over himself his soul, he arriveth at the Beginning, and at the Word, God with God; and he findeth of One Father, One Word; and he hath seen how once God hath spoken, hath seen the Word by whom have been made all things, and in whom at the same time are all things, not diverse, not severed, not unequal. For it could not be but that God did Himself know that which by the Word He made: but if that which He made He knew, in Him there was that which was made before it was made. For if in Him was not that which was made before it was made, how knew He that which He made? For thou canst not say that God made things He knew not. God therefore hath known that which He hath made. And how knew He before He made, if there cannot be known any but things made? But by things made there cannot be known any but things previously made, by thee, to wit, who art a man made in a lower place, and set in a lower place: but before that all these things were made, they were known by Him by Whom they were made, and that which He knew He made. Therefore in that Word by Which He made all things, before that they were made, were all things; and after they have been made there are all things; but in one way here, in another there, in one way in their own nature wherein they have been made, in another in the art by which they have been made. Who could explain this? We may endeavour: go ye with Idithun, and see.

19. Now therefore as we have been able, we have said in what way God hath spoken once: let us see in what way ‘these two things he hath heard.’ These two things I have heard. Perchance it is not a consequence, that he should have heard these two things alone; but, these two things, he saith, I have heard; certain two things which to us must needs be said, he hath heard. He hath heard perchance many other things, but it is not needful that they be said to us. For even the Lord saith, Many things I have to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now. What is therefore, These two things I have heard? These two things which to you I am about to say not of myself to you I say, but what things I have heard I say. Once hath God spoken: One Word hath He, the Only-begotten God. In that Word are all things, because by the Word were made all things. One Word hath He, in Whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden. One Word He hath, once hath God spoken. These two things, which to you I am about to say, these I have heard: not of myself I speak, not of myself I say: to this belongeth the I have heard. But the friend of the Bridegroom standeth and heareth Him, that he may speak the truth. For he heareth Him, lest by speaking a lie, of his own he should speak: lest thou shouldest say, Who art thou that sayest this thing to me? whence dost thou say this to me? I have heard these two things, and I that speak to thee that I have heard these two things, am one who also doth know that once God hath spoken. Do not despise a hearer saying to thee certain two things for thee so necessary; him, I say, that by leaping over the whole creation hath attained unto the Only-begotten Word of God, where he hath learned that once God hath spoken.

20. Let him therefore now say certain two things. For greatly to us belong these two things. (Ver. 11, 12.) For power is of God, and to Thee, O Lord, is mercy. Are these the two things, power and mercy? These two evidently: perceive ye the power of God, perceive ye the mercy of God. In these two things are contained nearly all the Scriptures. Because of these two things are the Prophets, because of these two, the Patriarchs, because of these the Law, because of these Himself our Lord Jesus Christ, because of these the Apostles, because of these all the preaching and spreading of the word of God in the Church, because of these two, because of the power of God, and His mercy. His power fear ye, His mercy love ye. Neither so on His mercy rely, as that His power ye despise: nor so the power fear ye, as that of mercy

ye despair. With Him is power, with Him mercy. This man He humbleth, and that man He exalteth: this man He humbleth with power, that man He exalteth in mercy. For if God, willing to shew wrath and to prove His power, hath in much patience borne with the vessels of wrath, which have been perfected unto perdition—thou hast heard of power: inquire for mercy—and that He might make known, He saith, His riches unto the vessels of mercy. It belongeth therefore to His power to condemn unjust men. And to Him who would say, What hast thou done? For thou, O man, who art thou that should make answer to God? Fear therefore and tremble at His power: but hope for His mercy. The devil is a sort of power; ofttimes however he wisheth to hurt, and is not able, because that power is under power. For if the devil could hurt as much as he would; no one of just men would remain, nor could any one of the faithful be on earth. The same through his vessels smiteth against, as it were, a wall bowed down: but he only smiteth against, so far as he receiveth power. But in order that the wall may not fall, the Lord will support: for He that giveth power to the tempter, doth Himself to the tempted extend mercy. For according to measure the devil is permitted to tempt. And, Thou wilt give us to drink in tears in a measure. Do not therefore fear the tempter permitted to do somewhat: for thou hast a most merciful Saviour. So much he is permitted to tempt as is profitable for thee, that thou mayest be exercised, mayest be proved; in order that by thyself thou mayest be found out, that knowest not thyself. For where, or from whence, ought we to be secure, except by this power and mercy of God? After that Apostolic saying, Faithful is God, that doth not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able.

21. Therefore power is of God: ‘for there is no power but of God.’ Do not say, ‘And why doth He give to him a great power?’ And, ‘let Him not give power. Hath He justice that giveth power?’ Unjustly thou canst murmur, He cannot lose justice. Is there anywise injustice with God? Far be it. This thing fix in heart, this thing from thy thought let not the enemy chase away. God may do something so as that thou mayest not know wherefore He doeth it: unjustly however He cannot do, with Whom iniquity there is not. For behold thou censurest God as if it were for injustice: (I am discussing with thee a question, attend to me a little:) thou couldest not censure injustice, except it were by seeing justice. Censurer of iniquity he cannot be

that discerneth not justice, wherewith when compared he censureth iniquity. For whence knowest thou that this thing is unjust, unless thou know what is just? For what if this also is just, which thou callest unjust? “Far be it,” thou sayest, “unjust it is:” and thou criest out as if with seeing eyes, seeing this thing to be unjust, by some rule indeed of justice, with which comparing that which thou seest to be crooked, and perceiving it not to tally with the straightness of the rule, thou findest fault; like an artizan, severing straight from crooked. Therefore I ask thee, this thing to be just, whence seest thou? Where, I say, seest thou this just thing, after seeing which, thou censurest an unjust thing? Whence is that something, wherewith thy soul is imbued, (though in many ways being in the dark,) that something which gleameth upon thy mind, whence this thing is pronounced just? Is it possible that it hath not its fountain? From thyself hast thou that which is just, and canst thou to thyself give justice? No one giveth to himself that which he hath not. Therefore when thou art unjust, thou canst not be just, except by turning thee to a certain abiding justice, wherefrom if thou withdrawest, thou art unjust; to which if thou drawest near, thou art just. If thou withdraw, It decreaseth not, if thou draw near, It increaseth not. Where is therefore that justice? Seek in earth: far be it. For not gold or precious stones thou art seeking, when thou art seeking justice. Seek in the sea; seek in the clouds, seek in the stars: seek in Angels, thou findest it in them, but themselves also from the Fountain drink it. For the justice of Angels is in them all, but from One it is received. Look back therefore, mount over, go to that place where once God hath spoken, and there thou wilt find the Fountain of justice, where is the fountain of life. For with Thee is the fountain of life. For if out of a little dew thou wouldest judge what is just and what is unjust; is there anywise iniquity with God, from Whom to thee as it were from a fountain floweth justice, in so far as thou tastest of what is just, because in many ways unjustly thou dost but mistaste? God hath therefore the fountain of justice. Do not there seek iniquity, where is light without shadow. But plainly the reason may escape thee. If the reason escapeth thee, consider thy ignorance, see what thou art: attend to these two things, For power is of God, and to Thee, O Lord, is mercy. Seek not things too mighty for thee, and things too high for thee examine not, but what things the Lord hath commanded thee, on those things think alway. Because to these two things which God hath commanded thee belong those two things, For power is of God, and to Thee, O Lord, is mercy. Fear not the enemy: so much he doeth as he hath received power to do, Him fear thou That hath the chief power: Him fear, That doeth as much as He willeth, and That doeth nothing unjustly, and whatever He shall have done, is just. We might suppose something or other to be unjust: inasmuch as God hath done it, believe it to be just.

22. Therefore, thou sayest, if any one slay an innocent man, doeth he justly or unjustly? Unjustly certainly. Wherefore doth God permit this? See first that thou owe not this debt: break to the hungry thy bread, and the homeless needy man take thou into thy house: if thou shalt have seen a naked man, clothe him. For this is thy justice, for this thing the Lord hath commanded thee: Wash you, be ye clean, take away naughtinesses from your hearts, and from the sight of Mine eyes: learn to do good, judge for the fatherless and the widow: and come and let us dispute, saith the Lord. Thou desirest to dispute before that thou doest any thing in consideration whereof thou mayest be worthy to dispute, why God hath permitted this. The counsel of God to tell to thee, O man, I am not able: this thing however I say, both that the man hath done unjustly that hath slain an innocent person, and that it would not have been done unless God permitted it: and though the man hath done unjustly, yet God hath not unjustly permitted this. Let the reason lie concealed in that person whoever it be, for whose sake thou art moved, whose innocence doth much move thee. For to thee speedily I might make answer. He would not have been slain unless he were guilty: but thou thinkest him innocent. I might speedily say this to thee. For thou couldest not examine his heart, sift his deeds, weigh his thoughts, so that thou couldest say to me, unjustly he was slain. I might easily therefore make answer: but there is forced upon my view a certain Just One, without dispute just, without doubt just, Who had no sin, slain by sinners, betrayed by a sinner; Himself Christ the Lord, of Whom we cannot say that He hath any iniquity, for those things which He robbed not He paid, is made an objection to my answer. And why should I speak of Christ? ‘With thee I am dealing,’ thou sayest. And I with thee. About Him thou proposest a question, about Him I am solving the question. For therein the counsel of God we know, which except by His own revealing we should not know: so that when thou shalt have found out that counsel of God, whereby He hath

permitted His innocent Son to be slain by unjust men, and such a counsel as pleaseth thee, and such a counsel as cannot displease thee, if thou art just, thou mayest believe that in other things also by His counsel God doeth the same, but it escaped thee. Ah! brethren, need there was of the blood of a just one to blot out the handwriting of sins; need there was of an example of patience, of an example of humility; need there was of the Sign of the Cross to beat down the devil and his angels; need for us there was of the Passion of our Lord; for by the Passion of the Lord redeemed hath been the world. How many good things hath the Passion of the Lord done! And yet the Passion of this Just One would not have been, unless unrighteous men had slain the Lord. What then? is this good thing which to us hath been granted by the Lord's Passion to be ascribed to the unjust slayers of Christ? Far be it. They willed, God permitted. They guilty would have been, even if only they had willed it: but God would not have permitted it, unless just it had been. They willed to slay: suppose that they had not been able: unjust they would have been, man-slayers they would have been; who would doubt it? For the Lord questioneth the just and the ungodly man: and in the thoughts of the ungodly man questioning shall be. God doth scrutinize what each man hath willed, not what he was able to do. Therefore if they had willed, and had not been able and had not slain, unjust they would have continued, to thee Christ's Passion would not have been given: an ungodly man therefore willed to do it to complete his condemnation; he was permitted, in order that to thee it might be granted: that he willed, is ascribed to the iniquity of the ungodly man; that he was permitted to do, is ascribed to the power of God. He therefore unjustly willed, God justly permitted. Accordingly, my brethren, both Judas the foul traitor to Christ, and the persecutors of Christ, malignant all, ungodly all, unjust all, are to be condemned all: and nevertheless the Father His own proper Son hath not spared, but for the sake of us all He hath delivered Him up. Order if thou art able; distinguish if thou art able (these things): render to God thy vows, which thy lips have uttered: see what the unjust hath here done, what the Just One. The one hath willed, the Other hath permitted: the one unjustly hath willed, the Other justly hath permitted. Let unjust will be condemned, just permission be glorified. For what evil thing hath befallen Christ, in that Christ hath died? Both evil were they that evil willed to do, and yet nothing of evil did He suffer on Whom they did it. Slain was mortal flesh, slaying death by death, giving a lesson of patience, sending before an example of Resurrection. How great good things of the Just One were wrought by the evil things of the unjust! This is the great mystery of God: that even a good thing which thou doest He hath Himself given it to thee, and by thy evil He doeth good Himself. Do not therefore wonder, God permitteth, and in judgment permitteth: He permitteth, and in measure, number, weight, He permitteth. With Him is not iniquity: do thou only belong to Him; on Himself thy hope set thou, let Himself be thy Helper, thy Salvation: in Him be there the fortified place, the tower of strength, thy refuge let Himself be, and He will not suffer thee to be tempted above that which thou art able to bear, but will make with the temptation also an escape, that thou mayest be able to support it: so that His suffering thee to bear temptation, be His power; His suffering not any more on thee to be done than thou art able to bear, be His mercy: for power is of God, and to Thee, O Lord, is mercy, because Thou wilt render to each one after his works.

After treating of the Psalm, when an astrologer was pointed out among the people about him, he added:

23. That thirst of the Church, would fain drink up that man also whom ye see. At the same time also, in order that ye may know how many in the mixed multitude of Christians with their mouth do bless, and in their heart curse, this man having been a Christian and a believer returneth as a penitent, and being terrified by the power of the Lord, turneth him to the mercy of the Lord. For having been led astray by the enemy when he was a believer, long time he hath been an astrologer, led astray, leading astray, deceived, deceiving, he hath allured, hath beguiled, many lies he hath spoken against God, That hath given to men power of doing that which is good, and of not doing that which is evil. He used to say, that one’s own will did not adultery, but Venus; one’s own will did not manslaying, but Mars; and God did not what is just, but Jupiter; and many other blasphemous things, and not light ones. From how many Christians do ye think he hath pocketed money? How many from him have bought a lie, to whom we used to say, Sons of men, how long are ye dull of heart, wherefore love ye vanity, and seek a lie? Now, as of him must be believed, he hath shuddered at his lie, and being the allurer of many men, he hath

perceived at length that by the devil he hath himself been allured, and he turneth to God a penitent. We think, brethren, that because of great fear of heart it hath come to pass. For what must we say? If out of a heathen an astrologer were converted, great indeed would be the joy: but nevertheless it might appear, that, if he had been converted, he was desiring the clerical office in the Church. A penitent he is, he seeketh not any thing save mercy alone. He must be recommended therefore both to your eyes and hearts. Him whom ye see in hearts love ye, with eyes guard ye. See ye him, mark ye him, and whithersoever he shall have gone his way, to the rest of the brethren that now are not here, point him out: and such diligence is mercy; lest that leader astray drag back his heart and take it by storm. Guard ye him, let there not escape you his conversation, his way: in order that by your testimony it may be proved to us that truly to the Lord he hath been turned. For report will not be silent about his life, when to you he is thus presented both to be seen and to be pitied. Ye know in the Acts of the Apostles how it is written, that many lost men, that is, men of such arts, and followers of naughty doctrines, brought unto the Apostles all their books; and there were burned so many volumes, that it was the writer’s task to make a valuation of them, and write down the sum of the price. This truly was for the glory of God, in order that even such lost men might not be despaired of by Him that knew how to seek that which had been lost. Therefore this man had been lost, is now sought, found, led hither, he bringeth with him books to be burned, by which he had been to be burned, so that when these have been thrown into the fire, he may himself pass over into a place of refreshment. Know ye that he, brethren, once knocked at the Church door before Easter: for before Easter he began to ask of the Church Christ’s medicine. But because the art wherein he had been practised is of such sort as that it was suspected of lying and deceit, he was put off that he might not tempt; at length however he was admitted, that he might not more dangerously be tempted. Pray for him through Christ. Straightway to-day’s prayer pour out for him to the Lord our God. For we know and are sure, that your prayer effaceth all his impieties. The Lord be with you.

PSALM 63

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

1. For the sake of those that perchance are as yet unskilled in the name of Christ; for as much as from every quarter He doth gather men together, Who for all men hath given His Blood, we must say in few words something which both they gladly may hear that know, and they may learn that know not. Those Psalms which we sing, before that our Lord Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, by the dictation of the Spirit of God were spoken and written down. For David was king among the nation of the Jews, which nation alone did worship One God, that hath made Heaven and earth, the sea and all things which in them are, whether the things which are seen, or the things which are not seen. But the rest of the nations either did worship idols, which with their hands they had made, or the creation of God, not the Creator Himself, that is, either sun, or moon, or stars, or sea, or mountains, or trees. For all these things God hath made; and would have Himself to be praised in them, not them to be worshipped instead of Himself. In this same nation of Jews, I say, David was king, of whose seed was born our Lord Jesus Christ of the Virgin Mary; because from him the Virgin Mary derived her lineage, who did bear Christ: and so were these Psalms spoken: and there was prophesied in them Christ to come after many years: and there was spoken of by those Prophets, that lived before our Lord Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, whatsoever was to be in our times, which now we read of and see: and much we rejoice, that our Hope hath been foretold by holy men, who saw not that thing fulfilled, but in the Spirit saw it as future: and we now read, and hear from readers, we discourse of those things; and as they are in the Scriptures, so we see them now fulfilled throughout the whole world. For this who would not rejoice? Who would not hope for those things to come which not yet have come, because of those things which being now so many, have been fulfilled? For now, brethren, ye see, how the whole world, the whole earth, all nations, all

regions run unto the name of Christ, and believe in Christ. Truly ye see this thing, after what sort every where are overthrown the vanities of the heathen, ye see this thing, evident it is to you. Is this too a thing we have read to you from a book, and not one that is doing before your eyes? This whole thing therefore which ye see come to pass before your eyes, was written of, countless revolutions of years before, by those men whom now we read, when already we see those things fulfilled. But forasmuch as those things also have been written which have not yet come; how our Lord Jesus Christ is to come to judge, Who at first came that He might be judged; (for He came at first humble, hereafter He is to come exalted; He came that He might shew an example of patience, hereafter He is to come that He may judge all men according to their deserts, whether good men, or evil men;) because, I say, not yet hath come this thing which we hope for, namely, that Christ is to come as the Judge of quick and of dead, we ought to believe it. The small part which remaineth let us believe is to come, when already we see so many things which then were future, now completed. For fool is he that will not believe the few things which remain, when he seeth so many things to be fulfilled, which then were not, when they were being foretold.

2. This Psalm therefore is spoken in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, both Head and Members. For that One Person that was born of Mary, and suffered and was buried, and rose again, and ascended into Heaven, and at the right hand of the Father now sitteth and intercedeth for us, is our Head. If He is the Head, we are the members: the whole Church of Him which every where is spread abroad, is the Body of the Same, whereof He is Himself the Head. For not only the believers that now are, but they also that have been before us, and that after us are to be even unto the end of the world, do all belong to His Body: of which Body Himself is the Head, That hath ascended into Heaven. Because therefore now we know Head and Body, He is Head, we Body. When we hear the voice of the Same, both from the Head we ought to hear it, and from the Body too: because whatever He hath suffered, therein we also have suffered: because that which we also suffer in ourselves, Himself also suffereth. In like manner as if the head suffer any thing, is the hand able to say that it suffereth not? or if the hand suffereth any thing, is the head able to say that it suffereth not? or if the foot suffereth any thing, is the hand able to say that it suffereth not?

Whenever one member of ours suffereth any thing, all the members haste to succour the member which is suffering. If therefore when He suffered, we in Him did suffer, and He now hath ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father: whatever His Church suffereth in the tribulations of this world, in temptations, in necessities, in difficulties, (for thus She must needs be instructed, in order that with fire like gold She may be purged,) Himself suffereth. We prove this thing, how we in Him have suffered, by the Apostle saying, But if dead ye are with Christ, why yet as though living about this world do ye decree? Also he saith, that our old man hath been crucified together with Him, that the body of sin might be made void. If therefore in Him we are dead, in Him also we have risen again. For the same Apostle saith, But if ye have risen again with Christ, taste those things which are above, those things which are above seek ye, where Christ is on the right hand of God sitting. If therefore in Him we are dead, and in Him have risen again, and if Himself in us dieth, and in us riseth again; (for Himself is the Oneness of Head and Body;) not without reason the voice of the Same is our voice, and our voice is also the voice of the Same. Let us hear therefore the Psalm, and Christ speaking therein let us perceive.

3. This Psalm hath the Title, For David Himself, when he was in the desert of Idumæa. By the name of Idumæa is understood this world. For Idumæa was a certain nation of men going astray, where idols were worshipped. In no good sense is put this Idumæa. If not in a good sense it is put, it must be understood that this life, wherein we suffer so great toils, and wherein to so great necessities we are made subject, by the name of Idumæa is signified. Even here is a desert where there is much thirst, and ye are to hear the voice of One now thirsting in the desert. But if we acknowledge ourselves as thirsting, we shall acknowledge ourselves as drinking also. For he that thirsteth in this world, in the world to come shall be satisfied, according to the Lord’s saying, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for the same shall be satisfied. Therefore in this world we ought not to love fulness. Here we must thirst, in another place we shall be filled. But now in order that we may not faint in this desert, He sprinkleth upon us the dew of His word, and leaveth us not utterly to dry up, so that there should not be in our case any seeking of us again, but that we may so thirst as that we may drink. But in order that we may drink, with somewhat

of His Grace we are sprinkled: nevertheless we thirst. And what saith our soul to God?

4. Ver. 1. God, my God, unto Thee from the light I watch. What is to watch? It is, not to sleep. What is to sleep? There is a sleep of the soul; there is a sleep of the body. Sleep of body we all ought to have: because if sleep of body is not taken, a man fainteth, the body itself fainteth. For our frail body cannot long sustain a soul watching and on the stretch on active works; if for a long time the soul shall have been intent on active pursuits, the body being frail and earthly holdeth her not, sustaineth her not for ever in activity, and fainteth and falleth. Therefore God hath granted sleep to the body, whereby are recruited the members of the body, in order that they may be able to sustain the soul watching. But of this let us take heed, namely, that our soul herself sleep not: for evil is the sleep of the soul. Good is the sleep of the body, whereby is recruited the health of the body. But the sleep of the soul is to forget her God. Whatsoever soul shall have forgotten her God, sleepeth. Therefore the Apostle saith to certain persons that forgot their God, and being as it were in sleep, did act the follies of the worship of idols—(For so are they that worship idols, as they that see in slumbers empty visions: but if the soul of the same persons do wake up, she understandeth by whom she hath been made, and worshippeth not that which herself hath made)—The Apostle, I say, saith to certain persons, Rise, thou that sleepest, and rise up from the dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee. Was the Apostle waking up one sleeping in body? Nay, but he was waking a soul sleeping, in as much as he was waking her, in order that she might be lightened by Christ. Therefore as to these same watchings saith this man, God, my God, unto Thee from the light I watch. For thou wouldest not watch of thyself, unless there should arise thy Light, to wake thee from sleep. For Christ lighteneth souls, and maketh them to watch: but if His light He taketh away, they slumber. For for this cause to Him there is said in another Psalm, Lighten mine eyes, that I may never slumber in death. Or if from Him being turned away they slumber, He is a present light to them, and they are not able to see, because they sleep. In like manner also is he that sleepeth in body during the day; now the sun hath arisen, now is the day grown hot, and he is as it were in the night, because he watcheth not that he may see the day that is already risen; so in certain men, when

Christ is now present, when the truth hath now been preached, there is yet a sleep of the soul. To those men therefore, if ye watch, ye will be saying daily, Rise, thou that sleepest, and rise up from the dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee. For your life and your manners ought to watch in Christ, in order that those Heathen men sleeping may perceive, and at the sound of your watchings may be awakened, and may themselves shake off sleep, and may begin in Christ with you to say, O God, my God, unto Thee from the light I watch.

5. Ver. 2. My soul hath thirsted for Thee. Behold that desert of Idumæa. See how here he thirsteth: but see what good thing is here, Hath thirsted for Thee. For there are they that thirst, but not for God. For every one that willeth any thing to be granted to him, is in the heat of longing; the longing itself is the thirst of the soul. And see ye what longings there are in the hearts of men: one longeth for gold, another longeth for silver, another longeth for possessions, another inheritance, another abundance of money, another many herds, another a wife, another honours, another sons. Ye see those longings, how they are in the hearts of men. All men are inflamed with longing, and scarce is found one to say, My soul hath thirsted for Thee. For men thirst for the world: and perceive not themselves to be in the desert of Idumæa, where their souls ought to thirst for God. Say we therefore, My soul hath thirsted for Thee: say all we, because in the harmony of Christ all were one soul: let this same soul thirst in Idumæa.

6. Hath thirsted for Thee, he saith, my soul: in how many ways for Thee my flesh also? A small thing it is that my soul hath thirsted, my flesh also hath thirsted. Consider if the soul thirsteth for God, in what manner doth the flesh also thirst for God? For when the flesh thirsteth, for water it thirsteth: when the soul thirsteth, for the Fountain of Wisdom it thirsteth. From that very Fountain shall be made drunken our souls, as saith another Psalm, They shall be made drunken with the fruitfulness of Thy House, and with the flood of Thy delights Thou shalt give them to drink. Wisdom therefore must be thirsted after, righteousness must be thirsted after. With it we shall not be satisfied, with it we shall not be filled, save when this life shall have been ended, and we shall have come to that which God hath promised. For God hath promised equality with Angels: and now the Angels thirst not as

we do, they hunger not as we do; but they have the fulness of truth, of light, of immortal wisdom. Therefore blessed they are, and out of so great blessedness, because they are in that City, the Heavenly Jerusalem, afar from whence we now are sojourning in a strange land, they observe us sojourners, and they pity us, and by the command of the Lord they help us, in order that to this common country sometime we may return, and there with them sometime with the Lord’s fountain of truth and eternity we may be filled. Now therefore let our soul thirst: whence doth our flesh also thirst, and this in many ways? In many ways for Thee, he saith, my flesh also. Because to our flesh also is promised Resurrection. As to our soul is promised blessedness, so also to our flesh is promised resurrection. Resurrection of the flesh of such sort is promised to us: hear ye, and learn, and hold fast what is the hope of Christians, on account of which we are Christians. For not to this end are we Christians, that we may seek for ourselves earthly felicity, which ofttimes both robbers and wicked men have. For the sake of another felicity we are Christians, which then we shall receive, when that whole life of this world shall have passed away. Therefore is promised to us resurrection of the flesh also; and such a resurrection of the flesh is promised, as that this flesh which now we bear, shall rise again at the last. And let it not seem to you a thing incredible. For if God hath made us that were not, is it a great thing for Him to make again us that were? Therefore let not this seem to you to be incredible, because ye see dead men as it were decaying, and passing into ashes and into dust. Or if any dead man be burned, or if dogs tear him in pieces, do ye think that from this he will not rise again? All things which are dismembered, and into a sort of dust do decay, are entire with God. For into those elements of the world they pass, whence at first they have come, when we were made: we do not see them; but yet God will bring them forth, He knoweth whence, because even before we were, He created us from whence He knew. Such a resurrection of the flesh therefore to us is promised, as that, although it be the same flesh, that now we carry, which is to rise again, yet it hath not the corruption which now it hath. For now because of the corruption of frailty, if we eat not, we faint and are hungry; if we drink not, we faint and are thirsty; if long time we watch, we faint and sleep; if long time we sleep, we faint, therefore we watch; if long time we eat and drink, though for refreshment we may eat and drink, the very prolonged refreshment is a cause of fainting; if long time we stand, we are wearied, therefore we sit; and if long time we sit, there also are we wearied, and therefore we rise up. Secondly, see how without any standing is our flesh: for infancy passeth away into boyhood, and thou seekest infancy, and infancy is not, for now instead of infancy is boyhood: again this same also passeth into youth, thou seekest boyhood and findest not: the young man becometh a middle aged man, thou seekest the young man and he is not: the middle aged man becometh an old man, thou seekest a middle aged man and findest not: and an old man dieth, thou seekest an old man and findest not: our age therefore standeth not still: every where is weariness, every where faintness, every where corruption. Observing what a hope of resurrection God promiseth to us, in all those our manifold faintings we thirst for that incorruption: and so our flesh manifoldly doth thirst for God. In this Idumæa, in this desert, manifoldly as it toileth, so manifoldly doth it thirst; manifoldly as it is wearied, so manifoldly doth it thirst for that unwearying incorruption.

7. Nevertheless, my brethren, the flesh of a good Christian and a believer even in this world for God doth thirst: for if the flesh hath need of bread, if it hath need of water, if it hath need of wine, if it hath need of money, if this flesh hath need of a beast, from God it ought to seek it, not from demons and idols and I know not what powers of this world. For there are certain who when they suffer hunger in this world, leave God and ask Mercury or ask Jove to give unto them, or her whom they call ‘Heavenly,’ or any the like demons: not for God their flesh thirsteth. But they that thirst for God, every where ought to thirst for Him, both soul and in flesh: for to the soul also God giveth His bread, that is the Word of Truth: and to the flesh God giveth the things which are necessary, for God hath made both soul and flesh. For the sake of thy flesh thou askest of demons: hath God made the soul, and the demons made the flesh? He that hath made the soul, the Same hath made the flesh also: He that hath made both of them, the Same feedeth both of them. Let either part of us thirst for God, and after labour manifold let either simply be filled.

8. But where thirsteth our soul, and our flesh manifoldly, not for any one but for Thee, O Lord, that is our God? it thirsteth where? In a land desert, and without way, and without water. Of this world we have spoken, the

same is Idumæa, this is the desert of Idumæa, whence the Psalm hath received its title. In a land desert. Too little it is to say desert, where no man dwelleth; it is besides, both without way, and without water. O that the same desert had even a way: O that into this a man running, even knew where he might thence get forth! He seeth no man to his comfort, he seeth no way whereby he may be free from the desert place. Therefore in that place he taketh lodging. O that there were even water, whence he might be refreshed, that from thence cannot get forth. Evil is the desert, horrible, and to be feared: and nevertheless God hath pitied us, and hath made for us a way in the desert, Himself our Lord Jesus Christ: and hath made for us a consolation in the desert, in sending to us preachers of His Word: and hath given to us water in the desert, by fulfilling with the Holy Spirit His preachers, in order that there might be created in them a well of water springing up unto life everlasting. And, lo! we have here all things, but they are not of the desert. Therefore what properly belongs to the desert this Psalm hath first noticed, in order that when thou too hadst heard in what evil case thou wast, whatever consolations thou mightest have here, either of associates, or of way, or of water, thou shouldest not ascribe to the desert, but to Him That hath deigned to visit thee in the desert.

9. Ver. 3. Thus in a holy thing I have appeared to Thee, that I might see Thy power and Thy glory. At first ‘my soul thirsted, and my flesh manifoldly for Thee in a desert, and in a land without way, and without water,’ and thus in a holy thing I have appeared to Thee that I might see Thy power and Thy glory. Unless a man first thirst in that desert, that is in the evil wherein he is, he never arriveth at the good, which is God. But I have appeared to Thee, he saith, in a holy thing. Now in a holy thing is there great consolation. I have appeared to Thee, is what? In order that Thou mightest see me: and for this reason Thou hast seen me, in order that I might see Thee. I have appeared to Thee, that I might see. He hath not said, I have appeared to Thee that Thou mightest see: but, I have appeared to Thee, that I might see Thy power and Thy glory. Whence also the Apostle, But now, he saith, knowing God, nay having been known of God. For first ye have appeared to God, in order that to you God might be able to appear. That I might see Thy power and Thy glory. In truth in that forsaken place, that is, in that desert, if as though from the desert a man striveth to obtain enough for his

sustenance, he will never see the power of the Lord, and the glory of the Lord, but he will remain to die of thirst, and will find neither way, nor consolation, nor water, whereby he may endure in the desert. But when he shall have lifted up himself to God, so as to say to Him out of all his inward parts, My soul hath thirsted for Thee; how manifoldly for Thee also my flesh! lest perchance even the things necessary for the flesh of others he ask, and not of God, or else long not for that resurrection of the flesh, which God hath promised to us: when I say, he shall have lifted up himself, he will have no small consolations.

10. Behold, brethren, in like manner as our flesh, so long as it is mortal, so long as it is frail, before that resurrection hath those comforts whereby we live, as bread, water, fruits, wine, oil: (if all these comforts and succours forsake us, even to continue we are unable;) though not yet this flesh hath received that perfect soundness, wherein it will suffer no difficulty, no need: so also our soul, while here it is in this flesh, amid the temptations and dangers of this world, is still weak; but hath moreover those same comforts of the Word, comforts of prayer, comforts of discourse: these things are to our soul as those to our flesh. But when our flesh shall have risen again, so that no longer of these we have need, it will have a kind of position and condition of its incorruption: so also our soul will have to its food Himself the Word of God, by Which were made all things. Nevertheless, thanks to God, Who now in this desert forsaketh us not, either in giving to us what is necessary for the flesh, or in giving to us what is necessary for the soul: and when by any necessities He instructeth us, He willeth that we should love Him the more; lest perchance through fulness we be corrupted, and forget Him. He withdraweth from us sometimes the things which are necessary, and grindeth us down; in order that we may know that Father and Lord He is, not only when comforting, but also when chastening. For He is preparing us for a certain inheritance incorruptible and great. If one cask, or one vessel of thine, or whatever thou hast in thy house, thou art intending to leave to thy son, and that he may not lose it, thou instructest him, and if with the whip for correction thou chastenest him, that he may not lose that nothing of thine, which he is himself also to leave here, even as thou dost; wilt thou not have our Father also to instruct us with the whippings even of necessities or tribulations, Who is going to give us such an inheritance as

cannot pass away? For as our inheritance God will give us Himself, so that Himself we may possess, and by Himself we may be possessed for everlasting.

11. Therefore in a holy thing let us appear to God, that He may appear to us: let us appear in holy longing, that He may appear to us in the power and glory of the Son of God. For to many He hath not appeared: let them be in the Holy One, that He may appear to them also. For many think Him to have been only man; because He is preached as having been born of man, crucified and dead, as having walked on earth, having eaten and having drunk, and as having done all other things that are human; and they think Him to have been such an one as are the rest of men. But ye have heard but now when the Gospel was being read in what terms He hath notified His Majesty: I and My Father are One. Behold how great a Majesty and how great an Equality with the Father hath come down to the flesh because of our infirmity. Behold how greatly beloved we have been, before that we loved God. If before that we loved God, so much by Him we were beloved, as that His Son, Equal with Himself, He made a Man for our sake, what doth He reserve for us now loving Him? Therefore many men think it to be a very small thing that the Son of God hath appeared on earth; because they are not in the Holy One, to them hath not appeared the power of the Same and the glory of the Same: that is, not yet have they a heart made holy, whence they may perceive the eminence of that virtue, and may render thanks to God, nor that to which for their own sakes so great an One came, unto what a nativity, unto what a Passion, they are not able to see, His glory and His power.

12. Ver. 4. For better is Thy mercy than lives. Many are the lives of men, but one life God promiseth: and He giveth not this to us as if for our merits but for His mercy. For what good thing have we done, to merit this? Or what good deeds of ours have gone before, that God should give to us His Grace? Hath He found righteousnesses to crown and not transgressions to forgive? Nay, it would not have been unjust if He had willed to punish the transgressions which He hath forgiven. For what is so just a thing, as that a sinner should be punished? Though a just thing it be, that a sinner should be punished; it hath belonged to the mercy of Him not to punish a sinner but to

justify him, and of a sinner to make a just man, and of an ungodly man to make a godly man. Therefore His mercy is better than lives. What lives? Those which for themselves men have chosen. One hath chosen for himself a life of business, another a country life, another a life of usury, another a military life; one this, another that. Divers are the lives, but better is Thy life than our lives. Better is that which Thou givest to men amended, than that which perverse men choose. One life Thou givest, which should be preferred to all our lives, whatsoever in the world we might have chosen. For better is Thy mercy than lives: my lips shall praise Thee. My lips would not praise Thee, unless before me were to go Thy mercy. By Thy gift Thee I praise, through Thy mercy Thee I praise. For I should not be able to praise God, unless He gave me to be able to praise Him. For better is Thy mercy than lives: my lips shall praise Thee.

13. Ver. 5. So I will speak good of Thee in my life, and in Thy name I will lift up my hands. ‘So I will speak good of Thee in my life.’ Now in my life which to me Thou hast given, not in that which I have chosen after the world with the rest among many lives, but that which Thou hast given to me through Thy mercy, that I should praise Thee. So I will speak good of Thee in my life. What is so? That to Thy mercy I may ascribe my life wherein Thee I praise, not to my merits. And in Thy name I will lift up my hands. Lift up therefore hands in prayer. Our Lord hath lifted up for us His hands on the Cross, and stretched out were His hands for us, and therefore were His hands stretched out on the Cross, in order that our hands might be stretched out unto good works: because His Cross hath brought us mercy. Behold, He hath lifted up hands, and hath offered for us Himself a Sacrifice to God, and through that Sacrifice have been effaced all our sins. Let us also lift up our hands to God in prayer: and our hands being lifted up to God shall not be confounded, if they be exercised in good works. For what doth he that lifteth up hands? Whence hath it been commanded that with hands lifted up we should pray to God? For the Apostle saith, Lifting up pure hands without anger and dissension. It is in order that when thou liftest up hands to God, there may come into thy mind thy works. For whereas those hands are lifted up that thou mayest obtain that which thou wilt, those same hands thou thinkest in good works to exercise, that they may not blush to be lifted up to God. In Thy name I will lift up my hands. Those are our prayers

in this Idumæa, in this desert, in the land without water and without way, where for us Christ is the Way, but not the way of this earth.

14. And what shall I say, when I shall lift up my hands in Thy name? what shall I require? Ah! brethren, when ye lift up hands, ask what ye are to require! For from the Almighty ye require. Some great thing require ye, not such things as they require that not yet have believed. Ye see what sort of things are given even to ungodly men. Art thou to require from thy God money? Doth He not give it even to wicked men, that in Him believe not? What great thing therefore art thou to require, which He giveth to evil men also? But let it not displease thee that those things which He giveth to evil men also, are so trifling that even to evil men they are worthy to be given: in order that those things which can be given even to evil men may not seem to thee as if they were great things. God's indeed are all earthly gifts: but see, how those things which He giveth even to evil men, are not to be esteemed as any thing great. There is another thing which He reserveth for us. But let us think of those things which He giveth even to evil men, and hence let us perceive what thing He reserveth for good men. What things He giveth to evil men see ye: He giveth to them this light, see ye that both good men and evil men see it! the rain which cometh down upon the earth; and from hence how great good things do spring? and thence is made distribution both to evil men and to good men, according to the Gospel saying, That maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, and raineth upon just men and unjust men. Those gifts therefore which do spring either from rain, or from the sun, from our Lord indeed we ought to require, forasmuch as they are things necessary; but not those things alone, because those things are given both to good men and to evil men. What therefore ought we to require, when we lift up hands? For as best it could, the Psalm hath spoken this. What is it that I have said, as best it could? As best could human mouth unto human ears. For by means of human mouths these words have been spoken, and in certain figures they have been spoken, as all the weak, as all the babes could receive them. What hath he said? What hath he required? In Thy name, he saith, I will lift up my hands. As going to receive what? As though with marrow and fatness my soul should be filled. Do ye think that this soul hath longed for any fatness of flesh, my brethren? For he hath not longed for this as if it were some great

matter, namely, that fat rams or fat hogs for him should be killed, or that he should come to some tavern, where he might find choice meats wherewith to fill himself. If we shall have supposed this, we are worthy to hear those words. Therefore something spiritual we ought to perceive. Our soul hath a sort of fatness. For the souls which lack that wisdom, do grow thin; and become so utterly attenuated, as that in all good works they speedily fall short. Why do they speedily fall short in all good works? Because they have not the fatness of their fulness. Hear the Apostle, speaking of a fat soul, giving commandment that every one should work well. He saith what? A cheerful giver God loveth. Whence could a fat soul be fat, except by the Lord it were filled? And nevertheless howsoever fat here it be, what will it be in the world to come, where God will feed us? Meanwhile in this sojourning, what we shall be then, cannot even be told. And perchance that fulness we desire here when we lift up our hands, at the time of which with fatness we shall be so filled, that all our want shall utterly perish, and for nothing we shall long: forasmuch as the whole will be before us, whatever we long for here, whatever as a great matter we love here. Already our fathers are dead, but God liveth: here we could not always have fathers, but there we shall alway have one living Father, when we have our father-land: whatever is our earthly land, there we cannot alway be; and others must needs be born, and sons of elder citizens are born, to shut out from thence their fathers. For to this end a boy is born, to say to his elder, What doest thou here? It must needs be that they that succeed and are born should shut out them that have gone before them. There all we alike shall live: there will be no successor, because there will be no predecessor. What sort of country is that? But thou lovest here riches. God Himself shall be to thee thy riches. But thou lovest a good fountain. What is more passing clear than that wisdom? What more bright? Whatsoever is an object of love here, in place of all thou shalt have Him that hath made all things, as though with marrow and fatness my soul should be filled: and lips of exultation shall praise Thy name. In this desert, in Thy name I will lift up my hands: let my soul be filled as though with marrow and fatness, and my lips with exultation shall praise Thy name. For now is prayer, so long as there is thirst: when thirst shall have passed away, there passeth away praying and there succeedeth praising. And lips of exultation shall praise Thy name.

15. Ver. 7. If I have remembered Thee upon my bed, in the dawnings I did meditate on Thee: (ver. 8.) because Thou hast become my helper. His ‘bed’ he calleth his rest. When any one is at rest, let him be mindful of God; when any one is at rest, let him not by rest be dissolved, and forget God: if mindful he is of God when he is at rest, in his actions on God he doth meditate. For the dawn he hath called actions, because every man at dawn beginneth to do something. What therefore hath he said? If mindful I have been of Thee on my bed, in the dawnings also I was meditating on Thee. If therefore I was not mindful on my bed, in the dawn also I did not meditate on Thee. Can he that thinketh not of God when he is at leisure, in his actions think of God? But he that is mindful of Him when he is at rest, on the Same doth meditate when he is doing, lest in action he should come short. Therefore he hath added what? And in the dawnings I was meditating on Thee: because Thou hast become my helper. For unless God aid our good works, they cannot be accomplished by us. And worthy things we ought to work: that is, as though in the light, since by Christ shewing the way we work. Whosoever worketh evil things, in the night he worketh, not in the dawn; according to the Apostle, saying, They that are drunken, in the night are drunken; and they that sleep, in the night do sleep: let us that are of the day, be sober. He exhorteth us that after the day we should walk honestly: As in the day, honestly let us walk. And again, Ye, he saith, are sons of light, and sons of day; we are not of night nor of darkness. Who are sons of night, and sons of darkness? They that work all evil things. To such a degree they are sons of night, that they fear lest the things which they work should be seen: and the evil things which openly they work, for this reason openly they work, because many men work those things: the things which few men work, in secret they work: but they that work such things openly, are indeed in the light of the sun, but in the darkness of the heart. No one therefore in the dawn worketh, except him that in Christ worketh. But he that while at leisure is mindful of Christ, on the Same doth meditate in all his actions, and He is a helper to him in a good work, lest through his weakness he fail.

16. And in the covering of Thy wings I will exult. I am cheerful in good works, because over me is the covering of Thy wings. If thou protect me not, forasmuch as I am a chicken, the kite will seize me. For our Lord

Himself saith in a certain place to that Jerusalem, a certain city, where He was crucified: Jerusalem, He saith, Jerusalem, how often I have willed to gather together thy sons, as though a hen her chickens, and thou wouldest not? Little ones we are: therefore may God protect us under the shadow of His wings. What when we shall have grown greater? A good thing it is for us that even then He should protect us, so that under Him the greater, alway we be chickens. For alway He is greater, however much we may have grown. Let no one say, let Him protect me while I am a little one: as if sometime he would attain to such magnitude, as should be self-sufficient. Without the protection of God, nought thou art. Alway by Him let us desire to be protected: then alway in Him we shall have power to be great, if alway under Him little we be. And in the covering of Thy wings I will exult.

17. Ver. 9. My soul hath been glued on behind Thee. See ye one longing, see ye one thirsting, see ye how he cleaveth to God. Let there spring up in you this affection. If already it is sprouting, let it be rained upon and grow: let it come to such strength, that ye also may say from the whole heart, My soul hath been glued on behind Thee. Where is that same glue? The glue itself is love. Have thou love, wherewith as with glue thy soul may be glued on behind God. Not with God, but behind God; that He may go before, thou mayest follow. For he that shall have willed to go before God, by his own counsel would live, and will not follow the commandments of God. Because of this even Peter was rebuked, when he willed to give counsel to Christ Who was going to suffer for us. For as yet Peter was weak, and knew not how great profit there was for mankind in the blood of Christ. Now the Lord, That had come to redeem us, and to give His blood a ransom for us, began to proclaim His Passion. Peter was alarmed for His Lord, as if He were about to die, Whom he would have had here alway to live just as he then saw Him: because being given up to his carnal eyes, by carnal affection about the Lord he was held fast; and he saith to Him, Far be it from Thee, O Lord, be Thou merciful to Thyself. And the Lord, Go back behind Me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things which are of God, but the things which are of men. Wherefore, the things which are of men? Because to go before Me thou desirest, go back behind Me, in order that thou mayest follow me: so that now following Christ he might say, My soul

hath been glued on behind Thee. With reason he addeth, Me Thy right hand hath taken up. My soul hath been glued on behind Thee, me Thy right hand hath taken up. This Christ hath said in us: that is in the Man Which He was bearing for us, Which He was offering for us, He hath said this. The Church also saith this in Christ, she saith it in Her Head: for she too hath suffered here great persecutions, and by Her individual members even now he suffereth. For what man belonging to Christ is not vexed with divers temptations, and do not the devil and his angels daily strive with him, in order that he may be led astray by some lust, by some suggestion, either by promise of gain or fear of loss, or by promise of life or fear of death, either by the enmity of some great man, or the friendship of some great man? By every means the devil striveth in what way he may throw down: and in persecutions we live, and we have for our perpetual enemies, the devil and his angels: but let us not fear. The devil and his angels are as it were kites: under the wings of that Hen let us stay, and he is not able to touch us. For the Hen which protecteth us, is strong. Weak She is for our sake: but strong She is in Herself; our Lord Jesus Christ, the very Wisdom of God. Therefore the Church also saith this: My soul hath been glued on behind Thee, Thy right hand hath taken me up.

18. Ver. 9. But themselves in vain have sought my soul. What have they done to me that have sought to destroy my soul? O that they were seeking my soul, so that they might believe with me: but they have sought my soul to destroy me. For they were not going to carry off the glue, wherewith my soul hath adhered behind Thee. For who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or sword? Thy right hand hath taken me up. Therefore because of that glue, and because of Thy right hand most mighty, in vain they have sought my soul. As many as have persecuted or desire to persecute the Church, of them this may be understood: chiefly, however, let us take this of the Jews, who sought to destroy the Soul of Christ, both in Himself our Head Which they crucified, and in His disciples whom afterwards they persecuted. They have sought my soul. They shall go unto the lower places of the earth. Earth they were unwilling to lose, when they crucified Christ: into the lower places of the earth they have gone. What are the lower places of the earth? Earthly lusts. Better it is to walk upon earth, than by lust to go under earth. For

every one that in prejudice of his salvation desireth earthly things, is under the earth: because earth he hath put before him, earth upon himself he hath put, and himself beneath he hath laid. They therefore fearing to lose earth, said what of the Lord Jesus Christ, when they saw great multitudes go after Him, forasmuch as He was doing wonderful things? If we shall have let Him go alive, there will come the Romans, and will take away from us both place and nation. They feared to lose earth, and they went under the earth: there befel them even what they feared. For they willed to kill Christ, that they might not lose earth; and earth they therefore lost, because Christ they slew. For when Christ had been slain, because the Lord Himself had said to them, The kingdom shall be taken from you, and shall be given up to a nation doing righteousness: there followed them great calamities of persecutions: there conquered them Roman emperors, and kings of the nations: they were shut out from that very place where they crucified Christ, and now that place is full of Christian praisers: it hath no Jew, it hath been cleared of the enemies of Christ, it hath been fulfilled with the praisers of Christ. Behold, they have lost at the hands of the Romans the place, because Christ they slew, who to this end slew, that they might not lose the place at the hands of the Romans. Therefore, They shall enter into the lower places of the earth.

19. Ver. 10. They shall be delivered unto the hands of the sword. In truth, thus it hath visibly befallen them, they have been taken by storm by enemies breaking in. Portions of foxes they shall be. Foxes he calleth the kings of the world, that then were when Judæa was conquered. Hear in order that ye may know and perceive, that those he calleth foxes. Herod the king the Lord Himself hath called a fox. Go ye, He saith, and tell that fox. See and observe, my brethren: Christ as King they would not have, and portions of foxes they have been made. For when Pilate the deputy governor in Judæa slew Christ at the voices of the Jews, he said to the same Jews, Your King shall I crucify? Because He was called King of the Jews, and He was the true King. And they rejecting Christ said, We have no king but Cæsar. They rejected a Lamb, chose a fox: deservedly portions of foxes they were made.

20. Ver. 11. The King in truth, is so written, because they chose a fox, a King in truth they would not have. The King in truth: that is, the true King, to whom the title was inscribed, when He suffered. For Pilate set this title inscribed over His Head, The King of the Jews, in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin tongues: in order that all they that should pass by might read of the glory of the King, and the infamy of the Jews themselves, who, rejecting the true King, chose the fox Cæsar. The King in truth shall rejoice in God. They have been made portions of foxes: The King in truth shall rejoice in God. He Whom they seemed to themselves as if to overcome, when they crucified Him, at the time when He was crucified did shed the ransom, wherewith He bought the round world. The King in truth shall rejoice in God: every one shall be praised that sweareth in the Same. Why shall every one be praised that sweareth in the Same? Because for himself he hath chosen Christ, not a fox: because when those Jews insulted, then He gave that whence they might be redeemed. To Himself therefore we belong, that hath redeemed us, that for us hath conquered the world, not with armed soldiery, but with despised Cross. The King in truth shall rejoice in God: every one shall be praised that sweareth in the Same. Who sweareth in Him? He that promiseth to Him his life, that voweth to Him and payeth, he that becometh a Christian: this is what he saith in, Every one shall be praised that sweareth in the Same. For stopped up is the mouth of men speaking unjust things. How many unjust things have the Jews spoken? How many evil things have spoken, not only the Jews, but also all men that for the sake of idols have persecuted the Christians? When they were raging against the Christians, they were thinking that they could make an end of Christians: while they were thinking that they could make an end, the Christians grew, and they themselves have been made an end of. Stopped up is the mouth of men speaking unjust things. No one dareth now openly to speak against Christ, now all men fear Christ. For stopped up is the mouth of men speaking unjust things. When in weakness the Lamb was, even foxes were bold against the Lamb. There conquered the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the foxes were silenced. For stopped up is the mouth of men speaking unjust things.

PSALM 64

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

While keeping to-day the festival of the holy Martyrs’ Passion, in the recollection of them let us rejoice, calling to mind what they suffered, and perceiving unto what they looked. For so great tribulations in the flesh they never would have endured, unless they had perceived with the mind a great rest. Over this Psalm, therefore, as beseemeth the aforesaid celebration, let us hastily pass. For yesterday many things your Love heard, and yet not even to-day have we been able to withhold our service from this festivity. Therefore though chiefly the Lord’s Passion is noticed in this Psalm, neither could the Martyrs have been strong, unless they had beheld Him, That first suffered; nor such things would they have endured in suffering, as He did, unless they had hoped for such things in the Resurrection as He had shewed of Himself: but your Holiness knoweth that our Head is our Lord Jesus Christ, and that all that cleave unto Him are the members of Him the Head; and ye now have the voice of Him very well known to you, forasmuch as not from Head alone, but also from Body He speaketh, and the voices of Him either signify or foretel not only Himself the Lord Jesus Christ, that hath now ascended into Heaven, but also the members of Him about to follow their own Head: let us acknowledge here not only His voice, but also our own. And let no one say, that now-a-days in tribulation of passions we are not. For alway ye have heard this fact, how in those times the whole Church together as it were was smitten against, but now through individuals she is tried. Bound indeed is the devil, that he may not do as much as he could, that he may not do as much as he would: nevertheless, he is permitted to tempt as much as is expedient to men advancing. It is not expedient for us to be without temptations: nor should we beseech God that we be not tempted, but that we be not ‘led into temptation.’

2. Ver. 1. Say we, therefore, ourselves also: Hearken, O God, to my prayer, while I am troubled; from fear of the enemy deliver my soul. Enemies have raged against the Martyrs: for what was that voice of Christ's Body praying? For this it was praying, to be delivered from enemies, and that enemies might not have power to slay them. Were they not therefore hearkened to, because they were slain; and hath God forsaken His servants of a contrite heart, and despised men hoping in Him? Far be it. For who hath called upon God, and hath been forsaken; who hath hoped in Him, and hath been deserted by Him? They were hearkened to therefore, and they were slain; and yet from enemies they were delivered. Others being afraid gave consent, and lived, and yet the same by enemies were swallowed up. The slain were delivered, the living were swallowed up. Thence is also that voice of thanksgiving, Perchance alive they would have swallowed us up. Many men were swallowed up, and alive they were swallowed up, many dead were swallowed up. They that thought the Christian faith to be vain, dead were swallowed up: but they who, knowing the preaching of the Gospel to be truth, knowing Christ to be the Son of God; and believing this, and holding this inwardly, nevertheless yielded to the pains, and to idols did sacrifice, alive were swallowed up. Those were swallowed up, because they were dead: but these because they were swallowed up are dead. For being swallowed up they could not live, although alive they were swallowed up. Therefore for this prayeth the voice of the Martyrs, From fear of the enemy deliver Thou my soul: not so that the enemy may not slay me, but that I may not fear an enemy slaying. For that to be fulfilled in the Psalm the servant prayeth, which but now in the Gospel the Lord was commanding. What but now was the Lord commanding? Fear not them that kill the body, but the soul are not able to kill; but Him rather fear ye, that hath power to kill both body and soul in the hell of fire. And He repeated, Yea, I say unto you, fear Him. Who are they that kill the body? Enemies. What was the Lord commanding? That they should not be feared. Be prayer offered, therefore, that He may grant what He hath commanded. From fear of the enemy deliver my soul. Deliver me from fear of the enemy, and make me submit to the fear of Thee. I would not fear him that killeth the body, but I would fear Him that hath power to kill both body and soul in the hell of fire. For not from fear would I be free: but from fear of the enemy being free, under fear of the Lord a servant.

3. Ver. 2. Thou hast protected me from the gathering together of malignants, and from the multitude of men working iniquity. Now upon Himself our Head let us look. Like things many Martyrs have suffered: but nothing doth shine out so brightly as the Head of Martyrs; in Him rather let us behold what they have gone through. Protected he was from the multitude of malignants, God protecting Himself, the Son Himself and the Manhood which He was carrying protecting His flesh: because Son of Man He is, and Son of God He is; Son of God because of the form of God, Son of Man because of the form of a servant: having in His power to lay down His life: and to take it again. To Him what could enemies do? They killed body, soul they killed not. Observe. Too little therefore it were for the Lord to exhort the Martyrs with word, unless He had enforced it by example. Ye know what a gathering together there was of malignant Jews, and what a multitude there was of men working iniquity. What iniquity? That wherewith they willed to kill the Lord Jesus Christ. So many good works, He saith, I have shewn to you, for which of these will ye to kill Me? He endured all their infirm, He healed all their sick, He preached the Kingdom of Heaven, He held not His peace at their vices, so that these same should have been displeasing to them, rather than the Physician by whom they were being made whole: for all these His remedies being ungrateful, like men delirious in high fever raving at the physician, they devised the plan of destroying Him that had come to heal them; as though therein they would prove whether He were indeed a man, that could die, or were somewhat above men, and would not suffer Himself to die. The word of these same men we perceive in the wisdom of Solomon: with death most vile, say they, let us condemn Him; let us question Him, for there will be regard in the discourses of Him; for if truly Son of God He is, let Him deliver Him. Let us see therefore what was done.

4. Ver. 3. For they have whet like a sword their tongues. ‘Sons of men; their teeth are arms and arrows, and their tongue is a sharp sword,’ which saith another Psalm also; so also here, They have whet like a sword their tongues. Let not the Jews say, we have not killed Christ. For to this end they gave Him to Pilate the judge, in order that they themselves might seem as it were guiltless of His death. For when Pilate had said to them, kill ye Him; they replied, For us it is not lawful to kill any one. The iniquity of their deed

upon a human judge they wished to lay: but did they deceive God the Judge? With regard to what Pilate did, in the very fact that he did it, he was somewise an accomplice, but in comparison with them he is himself much less guilty. For he strove as far as he could to deliver Him out of their hands. For to this end he scourged Him, and led Him forth to them. Not in persecution he scourged the Lord, but wishing to satisfy their fury, that even so they might at length be appeased, and might cease to wish to kill, when they saw Him scourged. He did this also. But when they persisted, ye know how he washed his hands, and said, that he himself did it not, that he was pure of the blood of that Man. He did it nevertheless. But if he is guilty because he did it though unwillingly, are they innocent who compelled him to do it? By no means. But he gave sentence against Him, and commanded Him to be crucified: and in a manner himself killed Him; ye also, O ye Jews, killed Him. Whence did ye kill Him? With the sword of the tongue: for ye did whet your tongues. And when did ye smite, except when ye cried out, Crucify, Crucify?

5. But on this account we must not pass over that which hath come into mind, lest perchance the reading of the Divine Scriptures should disquiet any one. One Evangelist saith that the Lord was crucified at the sixth hour, and another at the third hour: unless we understand it, we are disquieted. And when the sixth hour was already beginning, Pilate is said to have sat on the judgment-seat: and in reality when the Lord was lifted up upon the tree, it was the sixth hour. But another Evangelist, looking unto the mind of the Jews, how they wished themselves to seem guiltless of the death of the Lord, by his account proveth them guilty, saying, that the Lord was crucified at the third hour. But considering all the circumstance of the history, how many things might have been done, when before Pilate the Lord was being accused, in order that He might be crucified; we find that it might have been the third hour, when they cried out, Crucify, Crucify. Therefore with more truth they killed at the time when they cried out. The ministers of the magistrate at the sixth hour crucified, the transgressors of the law at the third hour cried out: that which those did with hands at the sixth hour, these did with tongue at the third hour. More guilty are they that with crying out were raging, than they that in obedience were ministering. This is the whole of the Jews' sagacity, this is that which they sought as

some great matter. Let us kill and let us not kill: so let us kill, as that we may not ourselves be judged to have killed. They have whetted like a sword their tongues.

6. They have bended the bow, a bitter thing. The bow he calleth lyings in wait. For he that with sword fighteth hand to hand, openly fighteth: he that shooteth an arrow deceiveth, in order to strike. For the arrow smiteth, before it is foreseen to come to wound. But whom could the lyings in wait of the human heart escape? Would they escape our Lord Jesus Christ, Who had no need that any one should bear witness to Him of man? For Himself knew what was in man, as the Evangelist testifieth. Nevertheless, let us hear them, and look upon them in their doings as if the Lord knew not what they devise. They have bended the bow, a deadly thing, (ver. 4.) in order that they may shoot in secret One unspotted. The expression he used, they have bended the bow, is the same as, in secret: as if they were deceiving by lyings in wait. For ye know by what artifices they did this, how with money they bribed a disciple that clave to Him, in order that He might be betrayed to them, how they procured false witnesses; with what lyings in wait and artifices they wrought, in order that they might shoot in secret one unspotted. Great iniquity! Behold from a secret place there cometh an arrow, which striketh One unspotted, who had not even so much of spot as could be pierced with an arrow. A Lamb indeed He is unspotted, wholly unspotted, alway unspotted; not one from whom spots have been removed, but that hath contracted not any spots. For He hath made many unspotted by forgiving sins, being Himself unspotted by not having sins. That they may shoot in secret One unspotted.

7. Suddenly they shall shoot Him, and shall not fear. O heart hardened, to wish to kill a Man that did raise the dead! Suddenly: that is, insidiously, as if unexpectedly, as if not foreseen. For the Lord was like to one knowing not, being among men knowing not what He knew not and what He knew: yea, knowing not that there was nothing that He knew not, and that He knew all things, and to this end had come in order that they might do that which they thought they did by their own power. Suddenly they shall shoot Him, and shall not fear.

8. Ver. 5. They have confirmed to themselves malignant discourse. ‘Have confirmed:’ there were done so great miracles, they were not moved, they persisted in the design of the evil discourse. He was given up to the judge: trembleth the judge, and they tremble not that to the judge have given Him up: trembleth power, and ferocity trembleth not: he would wash his hands, and they stain their tongues. But wherefore this? They have confirmed to themselves malignant discourse. How many things did Pilate, how many things that they might be restrained! What said he? what did he? But they have confirmed to themselves malignant discourse: “Crucify, crucify.” The repetition is the confirmation of the malignant discourse. Let us see in what manner they have confirmed to themselves malignant discourse. “Your King shall I crucify?” They said, “We have no king but Cæsar alone.” They have confirmed to themselves malignant discourse. He was offering for King the Son of God: to a man they betook themselves: worthy were they to have the one, and not have the Other. Further hear, in what manner they confirmed malignant discourse. “I find not any thing in this Man,” saith the judge, “wherefore He is worthy of death.” And they that confirmed malignant discourse, said, “His blood be upon us and upon our sons.” They confirmed to themselves malignant discourse. Confirmed malignant discourse, not to the Lord, but to themselves. For how not to themselves, when they say, Upon us and upon our sons? That which therefore they confirmed, to themselves they confirmed: because the same voice is elsewhere, They dug before my face a ditch, and fell into it. Death killed not the Lord, but He death: but them iniquity killed, because they would not kill iniquity.

9. Doubtless, brethren, certain it is, that either thou killest iniquity, or art killed of iniquity. But do not seek to kill iniquity as though it were something without thee. To thyself look, see what fighteth with thee, and take heed lest it defeat thee: thy iniquity, thy enemy will not be slain: for it is without thyself, and against thyself thy soul rebelleth, not any other thing. With some part thou adherest to God, with some part thou pleasest thyself in the world. That wherewith thou pleasest thyself in the world fighteth against the mind which adhereth to God. Let it adhere, let it adhere, let it not faint, let it not give way, great help it hath. It conquereth that which in it rebelleth against itself, if it persevereth in fighting. There is sin in thy body,

but let it not reign. Let not therefore, he saith, sin reign in your mortal body, to obey the lusts thereof. But if thou shalt not have obeyed; even if there be that which may persuade, that which may allure unto evil, by not obeying thou bringest it about that there reign not that which is, and thus it will come to pass hereafter that there be not that which was. When? When death shall be swallowed up into victory, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, in that case there shall not be that which may fight against thee, there shall not be any other thing which may delight thee but God. Therefore also those Jews hated the Lord, sovereignty did delight them. Certain men saw that by Him sovereignty was being taken away from them, and because of their delight they rebelled against the Lord: whereas, if they had rebelled against their evil delight, the very hatred they would have conquered, and they would not have been conquered by it, and the Lord would have been to them a Saviour, Who had come to make them whole. But now they fostered the fever: they fought against the Physician: whatsoever the fever suggested, they did: whatsoever on the other hand the Physician commanded they neglected. Therefore they rather were killed, not the Lord: for in the Lord death was killed, in them iniquity lived: but because iniquity lived in them, they were dead.

10. Ver. 5. They told, in order that they might hide traps: they said, Who shall see them? They thought they would escape Him, Whom they were killing, that they would escape God. Behold, suppose Christ was a man, like the rest of men, and knew not what was being contrived for Him: doth God also know not? O heart of man! wherefore hast thou said to thyself, Who seeth me? when He seeth That hath made thee? They said, Who shall see them? God did see, Christ also was seeing: because Christ is also God. But wherefore did they think that He saw not? Hear the words following.

11. Ver. 6. They have searched out iniquity, they have failed, searching searchings: that is, deadly and acute designs. Let Him not be betrayed by us, but by His disciple: let Him not be killed by us, but by the judge: let us do all, and let us seem to have done nothing. And where is the cry of the tongue, Crucify, Crucify? So blind ye are, as deaf also to be. Feigned innocence is not innocence; pretended equity is not equity, but double iniquity; because both iniquity it is and pretence. Therein therefore those

men failed searching searchings. By how much the more acutely they seemed to think it out for themselves, so much the more they failed; because from the light of truth and equity into the depths of evil designs they were sunk. Justice hath a certain light of its own, it bedeweth and lighteneth a soul adhering to itself: but a soul turning away itself from the light of justice by how much the more it seeketh what it may find against justice, by so much the more from light it is thrust back, and in darkness it is sunk down. With reason therefore those men also, while searching out what they designed against the Just One, from justice were departing: and by how much the more from justice they were departing, by so much the more they were failing in searching searchings. Deep is their counsel for innocence: when Judas himself repented that he had betrayed Christ, and he threw down before them the money which they had given, they would not cast it into the treasury, and said, Money of blood it is, let us not cast it into the treasury. What is the treasury? The chest of God into which were gathered those things which were cast for the need of the servants of God. O man, let thy heart be rather the chest of God, where may dwell the riches of God, where may be the coin of God, thy mind, I say, having the image of thy Emperor. If it be so, what a pretence of innocence was that, not to cast into the chest the money of blood; and the blood itself to cast upon the conscience!

12. But what befel them? They failed searching searchings. Whence? Because he saith, Who shall see them? that is, that no one saw them. This they were saying, this among themselves they thought, that no one saw them. See what befalleth an evil soul: it departeth from the light of truth, and because itself seeth not God, it thinketh that itself is not seen by God. So also those men by departing went into darkness, in order that themselves might not see God: and they said, Who seeth us? He also saw whom they were crucifying: they in their failing neither saw that Son nor the Father. If therefore He also saw, why did He suffer Himself to be held by them, to be killed by them? Wherefore, if He saw, willed He that their counsels should prevail against Him? Wherefore? Because man He was for the sake of man, and being God hid in man, that had come to give an example of patience to men knowing not, therefore Himself knowing He endured all things.

13. For what followeth? Ver. 6. There shall draw near a man and a deep heart, and God shall be exalted. They said, Who shall see us? They failed in searching searchings, evil counsels. There drew near a man to those same counsels, He suffered Himself to be held as a man. For He would not have been held except He were man, or have been seen except He were man, or have been smitten except He were man, or have been crucified or have died except He were man. There drew near a man therefore to all those sufferings, which in Him would have been of no avail except He were Man. But if He were not Man, there would not have been deliverance for man. There hath drawn near a Man and a deep heart, that is, a secret heart: presenting before human faces Man, keeping within God: concealing the form of God, wherein He is equal with the Father, and presenting the form of a servant, wherein He is less than the Father. For Himself hath spoken of both: but one thing there is which He saith in the form of God, another thing in the form of a servant. He hath said in the form of God, I and the Father are one: He hath said in the form of a servant, For the Father is greater than I. Whence in the form of God saith He, I and the Father are one? Because when He was in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Whence in the form of a servant saith He, For the Father is greater than I? Because He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant. There drew near therefore a Man, and a deep heart, and God was exalted. Slain is the Man, and exalted is God. For His being slain was of human weakness, His rising again and ascending was of power divine. There shall draw near a Man and a deep heart, heart secret, heart hidden: not shewing that which it knew, not shewing what it was. They thinking that it was the whole which was seen, kill a Man in deep heart, and there is exalted God in heart divine: for by the power of His Majesty exalted He was. And whither went He exalted? To that place from whence He withdrew not humbled.

14. There shall draw near a Man and a deep heart, and God shall be exalted. For this reason now attend ye, my brethren, to the deep heart of the Man. Of what Man? Mother Sion, a Man shall say; and Man He was made in Her, and Himself the Most Highest hath founded her. In that very city He was made Man, which He founded Himself, the same Most Highest that in Her was made Man. Therefore there hath drawn near a man and a deep heart.

Behold Man in a deep heart: see, as much as thou art able, if thou art able, God also in a deep heart. There drew near a Man: and because God He was, and because He was about to suffer willingly, and because He was about to give an example to the weak, as though God were about to suffer, but in man, but in the flesh, there followeth what? (Ver. 7.) Arrows of infants have been made the strokes of them. Where is that savageness? where is that roar of the lion, of the people roaring and saying, Crucify, Crucify? Where are the lyings in wait of men bending the bow? Have not the strokes of them been made the arrows of infants? Ye know in what manner infants make to themselves arrows of little canes. What do they strike, or whence do they strike? What is the hand, or what the weapon? what are the arms, or what the limbs? Arrows of infants have been made the strokes of them.

15. Ver. 8. And the tongues of them have been made weak upon them. Let them whet now their tongues like a sword, let them confirm to themselves malignant discourse. Deservedly to themselves they have confirmed it, because the tongues of them have been made weak upon them. Could this be strong against God? ‘Iniquity,’ he saith, ‘hath lied to itself:’ their tongues have been made weak upon them. Behold, the Lord hath risen, That was killed. They were passing by before the Cross, or were standing and were looking upon Him, as so long before a Psalm had foretold: They have pierced My hands and My feet, they have told all My bones, but themselves have beheld and have looked upon Me. Then the head they wagged, saying, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. They made trial in a manner whether He was Son of God; and as it were they found out that He was not, because, on their reviling Him, from the Cross He came not down: if He had come down from the Cross, Son of God He would have been. What thinkest thou of Him Who from the cross came not down, and from the tomb rose again? What therefore did they effect? But even if the Lord had not risen again, what would they have effected, except what the persecutors of the Martyrs have also effected? For the Martyrs have not yet risen again, and nevertheless they have effected nothing; of them not yet rising again we are now celebrating the nativities. Where is the madness of their raging? Arrows of infants have the strokes of them been made, and the tongues of them have been made weak upon them. To what did they bring those their searchings, in which searchings they failed, so that even, when

the Lord was dead and buried, they set guards at the tomb? For they said to Pilate, That deceiver; (by this name the Lord Jesus Christ was called, for the comfort of His servants when they are called deceivers;) they say therefore to Pilate, That deceiver said when yet living, After three days I will rise again: command therefore that the sepulchre be guarded even unto the third day, lest perchance there come His disciples, and steal Him, and say to the people, He hath risen from the dead, and the last error shall be worse than the former. Pilate saith to them, Ye have a guard, go ye, keep it as ye know how. But they departing made fast the sepulchre, sealing the stone, and setting the guards. They set for guards soldiers at the sepulchre. At the earth quaking, the Lord rose again: such miracles were done about the sepulchre, that even the very soldiers that had come for guards were made witnesses, if they chose to tell the truth: but the same covetousness which had led captive a disciple, the companion of Christ, led captive also the soldier that was guard of the sepulchre. We give you, they say, money; and say ye, while yourselves were sleeping there came His disciples, and took Him away. Truly they failed searching searchings.

What is it that thou hast said, O unhappy guile? Dost thou so far forsake the light of the counsel of godliness, and sinkest into the depths of craftiness, as to say this, Say ye that while yourselves were sleeping, there came His disciples and took Him away? Sleeping witnesses ye adduce: truly thou thyself hast fallen asleep, that in searching such devices hast failed. If they were sleeping, what could they see? if nothing they saw, how are they witnesses? But they failed in searching searchings: failed of the light of God, failed in the very completion of their designs: when that which they willed, nowise they were able to complete, surely they failed. Wherefore this? Because there drew near a Man and a deep heart, and God was exalted. For this reason afterwards when the resurrection of Christ had been made known, and the Holy Spirit came and filled with boldness certain disciples that feared, so that no longer fearing death, they dared to preach what they had seen, after God had been exalted in His Majesty, Who for our weakness’ sake humble was judged; and when the heavenly trumpets began to sound forth Him to come as Judge, Whom at first they had seen judged, then were troubled all men that saw them. God being exalted, as I have said, Christ being preached, Jews were seen by certain Jews, were seen failing in their searchings. For those men saw, in the name of Him that had been crucified and killed by their hands, so great miracles performed: they withdrew in heart from those that continued in ungodliness: the hard-heartedness of the others was displeasing to them, they sought counsel for their own salvation, and they said to the Apostles, ‘What shall we do?’ There were troubled, therefore, all men that saw them: that is, they that perceived how their tongues were made weak upon them, they that perceived how in all their evil searchings of designs every where they failed. Those men were troubled.

16. Ver. 9. And every man feared. They that feared not, were not even men. Every man feared; that is, every one using reason to perceive the things which were done. Whence they that feared not, must rather be called cattle, rather beasts savage and cruel. A lion ramping and roaring is that people as yet. But in truth every man feared: that is, they that would believe, that trembled at the judgment to come. And every man feared: and they declared the works of God. He that said, From fear of the enemy deliver my soul, was the every man that feared. From fear of the enemy he was being delivered, but to the fear of God was being made subject. He did not fear those that kill the body, but Him That hath power to cast both body and soul into Hell. They preached the Lord: for at first Peter feared, and feared the enemy, not yet was his soul delivered from the enemy. Having been questioned by the maid because he had been among His disciples, he denied the Lord thrice. The Lord rose again, confirmed the Pillar: now Peter preacheth without fear and with fear; without fear of them that kill the body, with fear of Him that both body and soul hath power of killing in the Hell of fire. Every man feared; and they declared the works of God. For those Apostles declaring the works of God the chief priests brought before them, and threatened them, saying, that in the name of Jesus they should not preach. And they said, “Tell us, whom it behoveth us rather to obey, God or men?” What would they say? men rather than God? Without doubt they would answer nothing but, God rather. But they knew what things God commanded, and they despised the threatening priests. Because therefore every man feared, man terrified not: and they declared the works of God. If man feareth, let not man terrify: for a man ought to fear Him by Whom man was made. That which is above men fear thou, and men shall not terrify

thee. Death everlasting fear thou, and for that which is present thou wilt not care. That pleasure uncorrupt, and the rest without spot, desire thou: and one promising those gifts temporal, and the whole world, thou wilt deride. Love therefore and fear: love that which God promiseth, fear that which God threateneth: thou wilt neither be corrupted by that which man promiseth, nor wilt be frightened by that which he threateneth. And every man hath feared: and they have declared the works of God, and His doings they have perceived. What is, His doings they have perceived? Was it, O Lord Jesu Christ, that Thou wast silent, and like a sheep for a victim wast being led, and didst not open before the shearer Thy mouth, and we thought Thee to be set in smiting and in grief, and knowing how to bear weakness? Was it that Thou wast hiding Thy beauty, O Thou beautiful in form before the sons of men? Was it that Thou didst not seem to have beauty nor grace? Thou didst bear on the Cross men reviling and saying, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. What servant of Thine and beloved of Thine, perchance knowing Thy power, cried not out and said, O that now He would come down, and all these that revile would be confounded! But it was not so: He must needs have died for the sake of men to die, and must rise again for the sake of men alway to live. This thing they, that would have had Him come down from the Cross, perceived not: but when He rose again, and being glorified ascended into Heaven, they perceived the works of God. They declared the works of God, and His doings they perceived.

17. Ver. 10. The just man shall rejoice in the Lord. Now the just man is not sad. For sad were the disciples at the Lord’s being crucified; overcome with sadness, sorrowing they departed, they thought they had lost hope. He rose again, even when appearing to them He found them sad. He held the eyes of two men that walked in the way, so that by them he was not known, and He found them groaning and sighing, and He held them until He had expounded the Scriptures, and by the same Scriptures had shewn that so it ought to have been done as it was done. For He shewed in the Scriptures, how after the third day it behoved the Lord to rise again. And how on the third day would He have risen again, if from the Cross He had come down? Now ye that are sad in the way, if at the Jews reviling ye had seen the Lord come down from the Cross, how much would ye have been elated? Ye would have rejoiced that the mouths of the Jews He had so stopped. Await

the design of the Physician: in that He descendeth, in that He willeth to be killed, He is compounding an antidote. Behold now He hath risen again, behold now He speaketh, not yet is He known, in order that the more joyfully He may be known. Afterwards He opened the eyes of them in the breaking of bread: they know Him, rejoice, cry out, The just man shall rejoice in the Lord. It was told one that was more hard-hearted, The Lord hath been seen, the Lord hath risen again. As yet he is sad, he believeth not. Except I shall have put forth, he saith, my hand, and shall have touched the scars of the nails, I will not believe. There is presented even the Body to be touched, he thrusteth the hand, handleth, crieth out, "My Lord and my God." The just man shall rejoice in the Lord. Those just men therefore rejoiced in the Lord, that saw, touched, and believed: what of the just that now are? because they see not, because they touch not, rejoice they not in the Lord? And where is that voice of the Lord to Thomas himself, Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed? Therefore let us all rejoice in the Lord, let us all after the faith be One Just Man, and let us all in one Body hold One Head, and let us rejoice in the Lord, not in ourselves: because our Good is not ourselves to ourselves, but He that hath made us. Himself is our good to make us glad. And let no one rejoice in himself, no one rely on himself, no one despair of himself: let no one rely on any man, whom he ought to bring in to be the partner of his own hope, not the giver of the hope.

18. Ver. 10. The just man shall rejoice in the Lord, and shall hope in Him; and all men shall be praised that are right in heart. Now because the Lord hath risen again, now because He hath ascended into Heaven, now because He hath shewed that there is another life, now because it is evident that His counsels, wherein He lay concealed in deep heart, were not empty, because to this end That Blood was shed to be the price of the redeemed; now because all things are evident, because all things have been preached, because all things have been believed, under the whole of Heaven, the just man shall rejoice in the Lord, and shall hope in Him; and all men shall be praised that are right in heart. Who are the right in heart? Ah! my brethren, we are always saying, and good it is for you to know, who are the right in heart? They that all those things whatsoever in this life they suffer, do ascribe not to any ignorance, but to the counsel of God for their healing;

and rely not on their own justice, so as to think that they unjustly suffer what they suffer, or that God is unjust, because he that sinneth more suffereth no more. See, brethren, these things we often speak of. Something thou feelest, either affecting the body, or the expenditure of thy property, or it is some bereavement of those most dear to thee: do not regard those whom thou knowest to be more wicked than thyself, (for perchance thou darest not to call thyself righteous, but thou knowest men worse than thyself,) both how they prosper in those respects, and are not chastised, so that the counsel of God should be displeasing to thee, and thou shouldest say, Grant I am a sinner, and for that reason I am chastened, why is he not chastened, in whom very great outrages I know? Whatsoever of evil I have done, have I by any means done so much as he? Perverted is thy heart. How good is the God of Israel, but to men right in heart. But thy feet are slipping, because thou art jealous of sinners, beholding the peace of sinners. Allow Him to heal: He knoweth what He doeth, that knoweth the wound. The other is not lanced. What if he is despaired of? what if thou art being lanced, because thou art not despaired of? Suffer therefore whatever thou sufferest, with right heart. God knoweth what to give to thee, what to withhold from thee. Let that which He giveth thee serve for comfort, not for corruption: and let what He withholdeth from thee serve for patience, not for blasphemy. But if thou blasphemest, and God is displeasing to thee, and thou art pleasing to thyself, of perverted and crooked heart thou art: and this is the worse, that the heart of God thou wouldest correct by thy heart, to make Him do what thou wilt have, whereas thou oughtest to do what He willeth. What then? Thou wouldest make crooked the heart of God which alway is right, according to the depravity of thy own heart? How much better to correct thy heart by the rectitude of God? Hath not thy Lord taught thee this, of Whose Passion but now we were speaking? Was He not bearing thy weakness, when He said, Sad is My soul even unto death? Was He not figuring thyself in Himself, when He was saying, Father, if it be possible, let there pass from Me this cup? For the hearts of the Father and of the Son were not two and different: but in the form of a servant He carried thy heart, that He might teach it by His example. Now behold trouble found out as it were another heart of thine, which willed that there should pass away that which was impending: but God would not. God consenteth not to thy heart, do thou consent to the heart of God. Hear the voice of Himself: Yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt, Father.

19. There shall be praised, therefore, all men right in heart. What followeth? If there shall be praised all men right in heart, there shall be condemned the crooked in heart. Two things are set before thee now, choose while there is time. If of right heart thou shalt have been, at the right hand thou wilt be, and thou wilt be praised. In what manner? Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which for you hath been prepared from the beginning of the world. But if of crooked heart thou shalt have been, if thou shalt have mocked God, if His Providence thou shalt have derided, if thou shalt have said in thy mind, truly God careth not for things human: if He did care for things human, would that robber have so much, and I innocent be in want? of crooked heart thou hast become, there will come that Judgment, there will appear all the reasons on account of which God doeth all these things: and thou, that wouldest not in this life correct thy heart by the rectitude of God, and prepare thyself for the right hand, where there shall be praised all men right in heart, wilt be on the left, where at that time thou shalt hear, Go ye into fire everlasting, that hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. And will there be then time to correct the heart? Now therefore correct, brethren, now correct. Who doth hinder? Psalm is chanted, Gospel is read, Reader crieth, Preacher crieth; long-suffering is the Lord; thou sinnest, and He spareth; still thou sinnest, still He spareth, and still thou addest sin to sin. How long is God long-suffering? Thou wilt find God just also. We terrify because we fear; teach us not to fear, and we terrify no more. But better it is that God teach us to fear, than that any man teach us not to fear. For every man hath feared, and they have declared the works of God. May God count us among those that have feared and have declared. Because we fear, we declare to you, brethren. We see your eagerness to hear the word, and we see your wishes to demand it, we see your yearnings. The soil is well watered with rain, may it bear grain, not thorns: for grain the barn is prepared, fire for thorns. Dost thou know what to do with thy land, and doth not God know what to do with His servant? That which raineth upon a fruitful field is sweet, and that which raineth upon a thorny field is sweet. Doth it find fault with the rain, because it hath borne thorns? Will not that rain be witness in the Judgment of God, and say, sweet I have come upon

all? Do thou therefore take heed what thou bringest forth, that thou mayest attend to what is being prepared for thee. Thou bringest forth grain, barn expect thou; bringest forth thorns, fire expect thou. But not yet hath come either the time of the barn or the time of the fire: now let there be preparation, and there will not be fear. In the name of Christ both we who speak are living, and ye to whom we speak are living: for amending our plan, and changing evil life into a good life, is there no place, is there no time? Can it not, if thou wilt, be done to-day? Can it not, if thou wilt, be now done? What must thou buy in order to do it, what specifics must thou seek? To what Indies must thou sail? What ship prepare? Lo, while I am speaking, change the heart; and there is done what so often and so long while is cried out for, that it be done, and which bringeth forth everlasting punishment if it be not done.

PSALM 65

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

The voice of holy prophecy must be confessed in the very title of this Psalm. It is inscribed, Unto the end, a Psalm of David, a song of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, on account of the people of transmigration when they were beginning to go forth. How it fared with our fathers in the time of the transmigration to Babylon, is not known to all, but only to those that diligently study the Holy Scriptures, either by hearing or by reading. For the captive people Israel from the city of Jerusalem was led into slavery unto Babylon. But holy Jeremiah prophesied, that after seventy years the people would return out of captivity, and would rebuild the very city Jerusalem, which they had mourned as having been overthrown by enemies. But at that time there were prophets in that captivity of the people dwelling in Babylon, among whom was also the prophet Ezekiel. But that people was waiting until there should be fulfilled the space of seventy years, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah. It came to pass, when the seventy years had been completed, the temple was restored which had been thrown down: and there returned from captivity a great part of that people. But whereas the Apostle saith, these things in figure happened unto them, but they have been written for our sakes, upon whom the end of the world hath come: we also ought to know first our captivity, then our deliverance: we ought to know the Babylon wherein we are captives, and the Jerusalem for a return to which we are sighing. For these two cities, according to the letter, in reality are two cities. And the former Jerusalem indeed by the Jews is not now inhabited. For after the crucifixion of the Lord vengeance was taken upon them with a great scourge, and being rooted up from that place where, with impious licentiousness being infuriated, they had madly raged against their Physician, they have been dispersed throughout all nations, and that land hath been given to Christians: and there is fulfilled what the Lord had said to them, Therefore the kingdom shall be taken away from you, and it shall be given to a nation doing justice. But when they saw great multitudes then following the Lord, preaching the kingdom of Heaven, and doing wonderful things, the rulers of that city said, If we shall have let Him go, all men will go after Him, and there shall come the Romans, and shall take from us both place and nation. That they might not lose their place, the Lord they killed; and they lost it, even because they killed. Therefore that city, being one earthly, of a certain city everlasting in the Heavens did bear the figure: but when that which was signified began more evidently to be preached, the shadow, whereby it was being signified, was thrown down: for this reason in that place now the temple is no more, which had been constructed for the image of the future Body of the Lord. We have the light, the shadow hath passed away: nevertheless, still in a kind of captivity we are: So long as we are, he saith, in the body, we are sojourning afar from the Lord.

2. And see ye the names of those two cities, Babylon and Jerusalem. Babylon is interpreted confusion, Jerusalem vision of peace. Observe now the city of confusion, in order that ye may perceive the vision of peace; that ye may endure that, sigh for this. Whereby can those two cities be distinguished? Can we anywise now separate them from each other? They are mingled, and from the very beginning of mankind mingled they run on unto the end of the world. Jerusalem received beginning through Abel, Babylon through Cain: for the buildings of the cities were afterwards erected. That Jerusalem in the land of the Jebusites was builded: for at first it used to be called Jebus, from thence the nation of the Jebusites was expelled, when the people of God was delivered from Egypt, and led into the land of promise. But Babylon was builded in the most interior regions of Persia, which for a long time raised its head above the rest of nations. These two cities then at particular times were builded, so that there might be shewn a figure of two cities begun of old, and to remain even unto the end in this world, but at the end to be severed. Whereby then can we now shew them, that are mingled? At that time the Lord shall shew, when some He shall set on the right hand, others on the left. Jerusalem on the right hand shall be, Babylon on the left. Jerusalem is to hear, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which for you hath been prepared from the beginning of the world. Babylon is to hear, Go ye into fire everlasting, that

hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. Nevertheless, we can bring forward something, as far as the Lord alloweth, whereby may be distinguished the godly believers even at this time, citizens of Jerusalem, from the citizens of Babylon. Two loves make up these two cities: love of God maketh Jerusalem, love of the world maketh Babylon. Therefore let each one question himself as to what he loveth: and he shall find of which he is a citizen: and if he shall have found himself to be a citizen of Babylon, let him root out cupidity, implant charity: but if he shall have found himself a citizen of Jerusalem, let him endure captivity, hope for liberty. For many citizens of holy mother Jerusalem were being held corrupted by the lusts of Babylon, and by the very corruption of lusts were made as it were citizens of that city, and many still are so, and many that are to be after us on this earth will be so: but the Lord, the Builder of Jerusalem, knoweth what citizens of His He hath predestinated, whom He seeth under the dominion of the devil, and who must be redeemed with the blood of Christ: the Same knoweth them before they know themselves. Under this figure then is sung this Psalm. In the title of which are set even two Prophets, who at that time were in the captivity, Jeremiah and Ezechiel, and they were singing certain things when they were beginning to go forth. He beginneth to go forth, that is beginning to love. For there go forth many men secretly, and the feet of them going forth are the heart's affections: but they go forth from Babylon. What is, from Babylon? From confusion. How do men go forth from Babylon, that is, from confusion? They that at first were confounded together with like lusts, begin by charity to be distinct: being now distinct, they are not confounded. Even if yet in body they are mingled, yet by holy longing they are severed; and because of the corporal mingling not yet they have gone forth, because of the affection of the heart they have begun to go forth. Now therefore let us hear of, brethren, hear of, and sing of, and long for, that city whereof we are citizens. And what are the joys which are sung of to us? In what manner in ourselves is formed again the love of our city, which by long sojourning we had forgotten? But our Father hath sent from thence letters to us, God hath supplied to us the Scriptures, by which letters there should be wrought in us a longing for return: because by loving our sojourning, to enemies we had turned our face, and our back to our fatherland. What then is here sung?

3. Ver. 1. For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion. That fatherland is Sion: Jerusalem is the very same as Sion; and of this name the interpretation ye ought to know. As Jerusalem is interpreted vision of peace, so Sion ‘Beholding,’ that is, vision and contemplation. Some great inexplicable sight to us is promised: and this is God Himself that hath builded the city. Beauteous and graceful the city, how much more beauteous a Builder it hath! For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, he saith. But where? In Sion: in Babylon it is not meet. For when a man beginneth to be renewed, already with heart in Jerusalem he singeth, with the Apostle saying, Our conversation is in the Heavens. For in the flesh though walking, he saith, not after the flesh we war. Already in longing we are there, already hope into that land, as it were an anchor, we have sent before, lest in this sea being tossed we suffer shipwreck. In like manner therefore as of a ship which is at anchor, we rightly say that already she is come to land, for still she rolleth, but to land in a manner she hath been brought safe in the teeth of winds and in the teeth of storms; so against the temptations of this sojourning, our hope being grounded in that city Jerusalem causeth us not to be carried away upon rocks. He therefore that according to this hope singeth, in that city singeth: let him therefore say, For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion. In Sion, not in Babylon. But now there thou art yet in Babylon. There I am, saith that lover and that citizen: there I am; but in flesh, not in heart. But whereas of two things I have spoken, namely, that I am there in flesh not in heart, with the latter I sing, not with the former: for not in flesh I sing, but in heart. The flesh indeed sounding even the citizens of Babylon hear, but the heart’s sound heareth the Builder of Jerusalem. Whence saith the Apostle, exhorting those same citizens to certain loving songs, and longings to return to that most fair city, the vision of peace, Singing, he saith, and chanting Psalms in your hearts to the Lord. What is, singing in your hearts? Sing not from thence where ye are, namely, in Babylon: but from thence sing, where above ye dwell. Therefore, For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion. In Sion for Thee a hymn is meet, not in Babylon. They that sing in Babylon are citizens of Babylon; even the hymn of God unmeetly they sing. Hear the voice of Scripture. ‘Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner.’ For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion.

4. And to Thee shall there be paid a vow in Jerusalem. Here we vow, and a good thing it is that there we should pay. But who are they that here do vow and pay not? They that persevere not even unto the end in that which they have vowed. Whence saith another Psalm, Vow ye, and pay ye unto the Lord your God: and, to Thee shall it be paid in Jerusalem. For there shall we be whole, that is, entire in the resurrection of just men: there shall be paid our whole vow, not soul alone, but the very flesh also, no longer corruptible, because no longer in Babylon, but now a body heavenly and changed. What sort of change is promised? For we all shall rise again, saith the Apostle, but we shall not all be changed. But who shall be, himself hath said: In the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for there shall sound the trumpet, and the dead shall rise again incorrupt, (that is, entire,) and we shall be changed. But of what sort will be that change he continueth and saith: for it must needs be that this corruptible put on incorruption, and that this mortal put on immortality: but when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying which hath been written, Death hath been swallowed up in victory. Where is, O death, thy sting? For now while there begin in us the first-fruits of the mind, from whence is the longing for Jerusalem, many things of corruptible flesh do contend against us, which will not contend, when death shall have been swallowed up in victory. Peace shall conquer, and war shall be ended. But when peace shall conquer, that city shall conquer which is called the vision of peace. On the part of death therefore shall be no contention. Now with how great a death do we contend! For thence are carnal pleasures, which to us even unlawfully do suggest many things: to which we give no consent, but nevertheless in giving no consent we contend. At first therefore the lust of the flesh hath led us following it, afterwards struggling against it hath dragged us; then after grace received it hath begun neither to lead nor to drag, but still to contend with us: after contention will be also victory. Now although it cometh against thee, let it not overcome thee: hereafter, when death shall have been swallowed up in victory, even from fighting it will desist. What hath been said? The last enemy shall be destroyed, even death. “I will pay my vow.” What vow? As it were a holocaust. For a holocaust is then spoken of when fire consumeth the whole: a holocaust is a sacrifice where the whole is consumed: for ὅλον is translated whole, καῦσις burning. Holocaust is a whole burned. Let there

seize us then a fire, a fire divine in Jerusalem: let us begin to burn with love, until the whole mortal thing be consumed, and let that which may have been against us, go for a sacrifice unto the Lord. Whence elsewhere is said, Deal kindly, O Lord, in Thy good will with Sion, that builded may be the walls of Jerusalem: then Thou shalt accept the sacrifice of righteousness, oblations, and holocausts. For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion, and to Thee shall be paid a vow in Jerusalem. We ask here, whether perchance mention is made to us of the King of that same city; of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; let us sing then until we arrive at more manifest tokens. For I could now say, that it is He to whom is said, For Thee a hymn is meet, O God, in Sion; and to Thee shall be rendered a vow in Jerusalem. But if I were to say it, I rather than the Scripture should be believed, and thus perchance I should not be believed. Let us hear the following words.

5. Ver. 2. Hearken, he saith, to my prayer, unto Thee every flesh shall come. And we have the Lord saying, that there was given to Him power over every flesh. That King therefore began even now to appear, when there was being said, Unto Thee every flesh shall come. To Thee, he saith, every flesh shall come. Wherefore to Him shall every flesh come? Because flesh He hath taken to Him. Whither shall there come every flesh? He took the first-fruits thereof out of the womb of the Virgin; and now that the first-fruits have been taken to Him, the rest shall follow, in order that the holocaust may be completed. Whence then every flesh? Every man. And whence every man? Have all been foretold, as going to believe in Christ? Have not many ungodly men been foretold, that shall be condemned also? Do not daily many men not believing die in their own unbelief? After what manner therefore do we understand, Unto Thee every flesh shall come? By every flesh he hath signified flesh of every kind: out of every kind of flesh they shall come to Thee. What is, out of every kind of flesh? Have there come poor men, and have there not come rich men? Have there come humble men, and not come lofty men? Have there come unlearned men, and not come learned men? Have there come men, and not come women? Have there come masters, and not come servants? Have there come old men, and not come young men; or have there come young men, and not come youths; or have there come youths, and not come boys; or have there come boys, and have there not been brought infants? In a word, have there come Jews,

(for thence were the Apostles, thence many thousands of men at first betraying, afterwards believing,) and have there not come Greeks; or have there come Greeks, and not come Romans; or have there come Romans, and not come Barbarians? And who could number all nations coming to Him, to Whom hath been said, Unto Thee every flesh shall come? Hearken unto my prayer, unto Thee every flesh shall come.

6. Ver. 3. The discourses of unjust men have prevailed over us, and our iniquities Thou shalt propitiate. What is, the discourses of unjust men have prevailed over us, and our iniquities Thou shalt propitiate? For as much as we were born on this earth, we found those unjust men, whom we have heard speaking. If I be able to explain what I mean, let the attention of your Love aid me. Every man, in whatsoever place he is born, of that same land or region or city learneth the language, is habituated to the manners and life of that place. What should a boy do, born among Heathens, to avoid worshipping a stone, in as much as his parents have suggested that worship? from them the first words he hath heard, that error with his milk he hath sucked in; and because they that used to speak were elders, and the boy that was learning to speak was an infant, what could the little one do but follow the authority of elders, and deem that to be good, which they recommended? Therefore nations that are converted to Christ afterwards, and taking to heart the impieties of their parents, and saying now what the prophet Jeremias himself said, Truly a lie our fathers have worshipped, vanity which hath not profited them—when, I say, now they say this, they renounce the opinions and blasphemies of their unjust parents. But because, in being imbued with such-like opinions and blasphemies, they acted upon the persuasions of those men, who in proportion as in age they had precedence, so were thought to have precedence due to them in authority; now he desiring to return to Jerusalem from Babylon, confesseth and saith, The discourses of unjust men have prevailed against us. There have led us away men teaching evil things, citizens of Babylon they have made us, we have left the Creator, have adored the creature: have left Him by whom we were made, have adored that which we ourselves have made. For the discourses of unjust men have prevailed over us: but nevertheless they have not crushed us. Wherefore? ‘Our impieties Thou shalt propitiate.’ Let your Love observe. Our impieties Thou shalt propitiate, is not said except to

some priest offering somewhat, whereby impiety may be expiated and propitiated. For impiety is then said to be propitiated, when God is made propitious to the impiety. What is it for God to be made propitious to impiety? It is, His becoming forgiving, and giving pardon. But in order that God's pardon may be obtained, propitiation is made through some sacrifice. There hath come forth therefore, sent from God the Lord, One our Priest; He took upon Him from us that which He might offer to the Lord; we are speaking of those same first-fruits of the flesh from the womb of the Virgin. This holocaust He offered to God. He stretched out His hands on the Cross, in order that He might say, Let My prayer be directed as incense in Thy sight, and the lifting up of My hands an evening sacrifice. As ye know, the Lord about eventide hung on the Cross: and our impieties were propitiated; otherwise they had swallowed us up: the discourses of unjust men had prevailed over us; there had led us astray preachers of Jupiter, and of Saturn, and of Mercury: the discourses of ungodly men had prevailed over us. But what wilt Thou do? Our impieties Thou wilt propitiate. Thou art the priest, Thou the victim; Thou the offerer, Thou the offering. Himself is the Priest, that now having entered into the places within the vail, alone there of those that have borne flesh, maketh intercession for us. For a figure of which thing, in that first people, and in that first temple, one priest used to enter into the Holy of Holies, all the people without used to stand: and he that alone entered into the parts within the vail, offered sacrifice for the people standing without. If it be understood rightly, the Spirit maketh alive: if it be not understood, the letter killeth. But now when the Apostle was being read ye heard, The letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive. For what was being enacted in that people, the Jews knew not; nay, not even now do they know. For of them hath been said, So long as Moses is being read, a vail is upon their heart. There the vail is a figure: but there shall be taken away the figure, and there shall appear truth in themselves. But when shall the vail be taken away? Hear the Apostle: When thou shalt have passed over to the Lord, the vail shall be removed. Wherefore so long as they pass not over to the Lord, so long as they read Moses, a vail they have upon the heart. For this sacrament shone at that time the face of Moses, so as that the sons of Israel could not look stedfastly upon the face of him: (ye heard it but now when it was being read:) and a vail there was between the face of Moses speaking, and the people hearing the words. Through a vail they heard words, face they saw not. And what saith the Apostle? So that the sons of Israel could not look stedfastly upon the face of Moses. They looked not stedfastly, he saith, even unto the end. What is, even unto the end? Even until they perceived Christ. For, saith the Apostle, For the end of the law is Christ for righteousness unto every man believing. There is indeed splendour in the face of Moses, but only as in a face carnal and mortal: could that be long-lasting or everlasting? For death supervening, straightway it will be taken away. But the splendour of the glory of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ is everlasting. But that was a figure temporal, but this, which by that figure was being signified, is truth. They read therefore and perceive not Christ, they bring not down their stedfast looking even unto the end, because a vail set in the way withholdeth from them the sight of the interior splendour. And see there under the vail Christ: Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself saith, If ye believed Moses, ye would believe also in Me, for of Me he wrote. But our sins and impieties being propitiated through that evening sacrifice, we pass over to the Lord, and the vail is taken away: for which reason also when the Lord had been crucified, the vail of the temple was rent. Hearken to my prayer, unto Thee every flesh shall come. The discourses of ungodly men have prevailed over us, and to our impieties Thou shalt be propitious.

7. Ver. 4. Blessed is he whom Thou hast chosen, and hast taken to Thee. Who is he that is chosen by Him and taken to Him? Was any one chosen by our Saviour Jesu Christ, or was Himself after the flesh, because He is man, chosen and taken to Him? Thus it might be spoken as it were to the Word of God, that was in the beginning, as saith the Evangelist, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: because also the same Son of God is the Word of God, of Whom also he saith, All things through Him were made, and without Him there was not made any thing: wherefore there is said to that Son of God, because He is Himself our Priest, afterward when He had taken to Him flesh, Blessed is he whom Thou hast chosen, and hast taken to Thee: that is that Man wherewith Thou hast been invested, who had his beginning in time, being born of a woman, for a sort of temple of Him Who is alway for everlasting, and for everlasting hath been. Or hath not rather Christ Himself taken to Him some blessed one, and the same whom He hath taken to Him is not spoken of in

the plural number but in the singular? For one man He hath taken to Him, because unity He hath taken to Him. Schisms He hath not taken to Him, heresies He hath not taken to Him: a multitude they have made of themselves, there is not one to be taken to Him. But they that abide in the bond of Christ and are the members of Him, make in a manner one man, of whom saith the Apostle, Until we all arrive at the acknowledging of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ. Therefore one man is taken to Him, to which the Head is Christ; because the Head of the man is Christ. The same is that blessed man that hath not departed in the counsel of ungodly men, and the like things which there are spoken of: the same is He that is taken to Him. He is not without us, in His own members we are, under one Head we are governed, by one Spirit we all live, one father-land we all long for. Let us see therefore what is spoken to Christ, whether to us it belong, and whether of ourselves it be said: let us question our consciences, that love let us search out diligently, and if as yet little is that love, and but lately born, (for perchance in some one lately it hath sprung up,) let him diligently root up the thorns springing beside it, that is, worldly cares, lest in growing they choke the holy seed. Blessed is He whom Thou hast chosen and taken to Thee. In Him let us be, and be taken to Him; in Him let us be, and chosen we shall be.

8. And to us He will give what? He shall inhabit, he saith, in Thy courts. Jerusalem, that is, to which they sing that begin to go forth from Babylon: He shall inhabit in Thy courts: we shall be filled with the good things of Thy House. What are the good things of the House of God? Brethren, let us set before ourselves some rich house, with what numerous good things it is crowded, how abundantly it is furnished, how many vessels there are there of gold and also of silver; how great an establishment of servants, how many horses and animals, in a word, how much the house itself delights us with pictures, marble, ceilings, pillars, recesses, chambers:—all such things are indeed objects of desire, but still they are of the confusion of Babylon. Cut off all such longings, O citizen of Jerusalem, cut them off; if thou wilt return, let not captivity delight thee. But hast thou already begun to go forth? Do not look back, do not loiter on the road. Still there are not wanting foes to recommend thee captivity and sojourning: no longer let there prevail against thee the discourses of ungodly men. For the House of

God long thou, and for the good things of that House long thou: but do not long for such things as thou art wont to long for either in thy house, or in the house of thy neighbour, or in the house of thy patron. Other is the good thing of that House. What need is there that we declare what are the good things of that House? Let that same man point them out, that singeth going out of Babylon. We shall be filled, he saith, with the good things of Thy House. What are those good things? We had lifted up perchance the heart to gold, to silver, and other precious things: do not seek such things, they weigh down, they lift not up. Here therefore now upon those good things of Jerusalem, upon those good things of the House of the Lord, upon those good things of the temple of the Lord, let us meditate: because the House of the Lord, is the very same as the Temple of the Lord. We shall be filled with the good things of Thy House: Thy holy Temple is (ver. 5.) marvellous in righteousness. These are the good things of that House. He hath not said, Thy holy Temple is marvellous in pillars, marvellous in marbles, marvellous in gilded ceilings; but is marvellous in righteousness. Without thou hast eyes wherewith thou mayest see marbles, and gold: within is an eye wherewith may be seen the beauty of righteousness. If there is no beauty in righteousness, why is a righteous old man loved? What bringeth he in body that may please the eyes? Crooked limbs, brow wrinkled, head blanched with grey hairs, dotage every where full of plaints. But perchance because thine eyes this decrepit old man pleaseth not, thine ears he pleaseth: with what words? with what song? Even if perchance when a young man he sang well, all with age hath been lost. Doth perchance the sound of his words please thine ears, that can hardly articulate whole words for loss of teeth? Nevertheless, if righteous he is, if another man’s goods he coveteth not, if of his own that he possesseth he distributeth to the needy, if he giveth good advice, and soundly judgeth, if he believeth the entire faith, if for his belief in the faith he is ready to expend even those very shattered limbs, for many Martyrs are even old men; why do we love him? What good thing in him do we see with the eyes of the flesh? Not any. There is therefore a kind of beauty in righteousness, which we see with the eye of the heart, and we love, and we kindle with affection: how much men found to love in those same Martyrs, though beasts tare their limbs! Is it possible but that when blood was staining all parts, when with the teeth of monsters their bowels gushed out, the eyes had nothing but objects to shudder at? What was there to be loved, except that in that hideous spectacle of mangled limbs, entire was the beauty of righteousness? These are the good things of the House of God, with these prepare thyself to be satisfied. But in order that with them thou mayest be satisfied, when thou shalt have arrived there, for this it behoveth thee to hunger and thirst while thou art sojourning: for this thirst thou, for this hunger thou; because those same will be the good things of God. Hear thou that king to whom these things are said, Who hath come that He may bring thee back, and for thy sake hath made Himself the Way. He saith what? "Blessed they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Thy holy Temple is marvellous in righteousness. And that same temple, brethren, do not imagine to be ought but yourselves. Love ye righteousness, and ye are the Temple of God.

9. Ver. 5. Hearken to us, O God, our Saviour. He hath disclosed now Whom he nameth as God. The Saviour specially is the Lord Jesus Christ. It hath appeared now more openly of Whom he had said, "Unto Thee every flesh shall come." Hearken to us, O God, our Saviour. That One Man that is taken unto Him into the Temple of God, is both many and is One. In the person of One he hath said, Hearken, O God, to my hunger: and because the same One of many is composed, now he saith, Hearken to us, O God, our Saviour. Hear Him now more openly preached: Hearken to us, O God, our Saviour, the Hope of all the ends of the earth and in the sea afar. Behold wherefore hath been said, Unto Thee every flesh shall come. From every quarter they come. Hope of all the ends of the earth, not hope of one corner, not hope of Judæa alone, not hope of Africa alone, not hope of Pannonia, not hope of East or of West: but Hope of all the ends of the earth, and in the sea afar: of the very ends of the earth. And in the sea afar: and because in the sea, therefore afar. For the sea by a figure is spoken of this world, with saltness bitter, with storms troubled; where men of perverse and depraved appetites have become like fishes devouring one another. Observe the evil sea, bitter sea, with waves violent, observe with what sort of men it is filled. Who desireth an inheritance except through the death of another? Who desireth gain except by the loss of another? By the fall of others how many men wish to be exalted? How many, in order that they may buy, desire for other men to sell their goods? How they mutually oppress, and how they that are able do devour! And when one fish hath devoured, the greater the

less, itself also is devoured by some greater. O evil fish, prey thou wilt have of a little fish, prey thou wilt be made to a great fish. Daily those things happen, before our faces they are; we see them, let us shudder at them. Let us not do these things, brethren, because the hope He is of the ends of the earth. If He were not the hope, and in the sea afar, He would not have said to His disciples, I will make you fishers of men. Now in the sea being taken by the nets of the Faith, we rejoice that we there are swimming yet within the nets; because this sea yet is raging with storms, but the nets, which have taken us, will be drawn out to shore. The shore is the end of the sea. Therefore the landing will be at the end of the world. Meanwhile within those same nets, brethren, let us live righteously: let us not by breaking the nets go forth without. For many have broken the nets, and have made schisms, and have gone forth without. Because evil fishes that were taken within the nets they said they would not endure; they themselves have become more evil than they whom they said they could not endure. For those nets did take fishes both good and evil. The Lord saith, The kingdom of Heaven is like to a sein cast into the sea, which gathereth of every kind, which, when it had been filled, drawing out, and sitting on the shore, they gathered the good into vessels, but the evil they cast out: so it shall be, He saith, in the consummation of the world. He sheweth what is the shore, He sheweth what is the end of the sea. The angels shall go forth, and shall sever the evil from the midst of the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Ha! ye citizens of Jerusalem that are within the nets, and are good fishes; endure the evil, the nets break ye not: together with them ye are in a sea, not together with them will ye be in the vessels. For Hope He is of the ends of the earth, Himself is Hope also in the sea afar. Afar, because also in the sea.

10. Ver. 6. Preparing mountains in His strength. Not in their strength. For He hath prepared great preachers, and those same He hath called mountains; humble in themselves, exalted in Him. Preparing mountains in His strength. What saith one of those same mountains? We ourselves in our own selves have had the answer of death, in order that in ourselves we should not trust, but in God that raiseth the dead. He that in himself doth trust, and in Christ trusteth not, is not of those mountains which He hath prepared in His strength. Preparing mountains in His strength: girded about

in power. Power, I understand: girded about, is what? They that put Christ in the midst, girded about they make Him, that is on all sides begirt. We all have Him in common, therefore in the midst He is: all we gird Him about that believe in Him: and because our faith is not of our strength, but of His power; therefore girded about He is in His power; not in our own strength.

11. Ver. 7. That troublest the bottom of the sea. He hath done this: it is seen what He hath done. For He hath prepared mountains in His strength, hath sent them to preach: girded about He is by believers in power: and moved is the sea, moved is the world, and it beginneth to persecute His saints. Girded about in power: that troublest the bottom of the sea. He hath not said, that troublest the sea; but the bottom of the sea. The bottom of the sea is the heart of ungodly men. For just as from the bottom more thoroughly all things are stirred, and the bottom holdeth firm all things: so whatsoever hath gone forth by tongue, by hands, by divers powers for the persecution of the Church, from the bottom hath gone forth. For if there were not the root of iniquity in the heart, all those things would not have gone forth against Christ. The bottom He troubled, perchance in order that the bottom He might also empty: for in the case of certain evil men He emptied the sea from the bottom, and made the sea a desert place. Another Psalm saith this, That turneth sea into dry land. All ungodly and heathen men that have believed were sea, have been made land; with salt waves at first barren, afterwards with the fruit of righteousness productive. That troublest the bottom of the sea: the sound of its waves who shall endure? Who shall endure, is what? What man shall endure the sound of the waves of the sea, the behests of the high powers of the world? But whence are they endured? Because He prepareth mountains in His strength. In that therefore which he hath said who shall endure? he saith thus; We ourselves of our own selves should not be able to endure those persecutions, unless He gave strength. That troublest the bottom of the sea: the sound of its waves who shall endure?

12. Ver. 8. The nations shall be troubled. At first they shall be troubled: but those mountains prepared in the strength of Christ, are they troubled? Troubled is the sea, against the mountains it dasheth: the sea breaketh, unshaken the mountains have remained. The nations shall be troubled, and

all men shall fear. Behold now all men fear: they that before have been troubled do now all fear. The Christians feared not, and now the Christians are feared. All that did persecute do now fear. For He hath overcome That is girded about with power, to Him hath come every flesh in such sort, that the rest by their very minority do now fear. And all men shall fear, that inhabit the ends of the earth, because of Thy signs. For miracles the Apostles wrought, and thence all the ends of the earth have feared and have believed.

13. Outgoings in morning and in evening Thou shalt delight: that is, Thou makest delightful. Already in this life what is there being promised to us? Outgoings thou shalt delight in morning and in evening. There are outgoings in morning, there are outgoings in the evening. By the morning he signifieth the prosperity of the world, by the evening he signifieth the trouble of the world. Let your Love give heed, (for in both a human soul is tried, both in prosperity lest it be corrupted, and in adversity lest it be crushed)—The morning signifieth prosperity, because the morning is glad, the sadness, as it were, of the night being overpast. But sad is the darkness, when the evening cometh on: therefore when the evening, as it were, of the world came, He offered an evening sacrifice. Let each one therefore not fear the evening; neither in the morning let him be corrupted. Behold, some one or other, in order that thou mayest do some evil thing, hath promised gain; it is morning: there smileth upon thee a large sum of money, morning to thee it becometh. Do not be bribed, and thou wilt have an outgoing in the morning. For if thou hast an outgoing, thou wilt not be caught. For the promise of gain is like a bait in a trap; thou art squeezed close, and there is no way of going out, thou art caught in the trap. But the Lord thy God hath given to thee an outgoing, lest with gain thou be caught, when He saith to thee in heart, I am thy riches. Do not give heed to what the world promiseth, but to what the Maker of the world promiseth. Thou mindest what God hath promised to thee doing righteousness, thou despisest what man promiseth thee to draw thee away from righteousness. Heed not then what the world promises, but what the Maker of the world, and thou wilt have an outgoing in the morning through the Lord’s word saying, What doth it profit a man, if the whole world he gain, but to his soul suffer loss. But he that could not with promised gain corrupt and allure thee to iniquity, will menace penalties, and will resort to hostility, and will begin to say to

thee, If thou wilt not do this thing, I will shew thee, I will be doing, thou shalt have me for an enemy. At first when he was promising gain, it was morning to thee: but now evening draweth on, sad thou hast become. But He that hath given thee an outgoing in the morning, will give one also in the evening. In the same manner as thou hast contemned the morning of the world by the light of the Lord, so contemn the evening also by the sufferings of the Lord, in saying to thy soul, What more will this man do to me, than my Lord hath suffered for me? May I hold fast justice, not consent to iniquity. Let him vent his rage on the flesh, the trap will be broken, and I will fly to my Lord, That saith to me, Do not fear them that kill the body, but the soul are not able to kill. And for the body itself He hath given security, saying, A hair of your head shall not perish. Nobly here he hath set down, Thou wilt delight outgoings in morning and in evening. For if thou take not delight in the very outgoing, thou wilt not labour to go out thence. Thou runnest thy head into the promised gain, if thou art not delighted with the promise of the Saviour. And again thou yieldest to one tempting and terrifying, if thou find no delight in Him that suffered before thee, in order that He might make an outgoing for thee. Outgoings in morning and in evening Thou wilt delight.

14. Ver. 9. Thou hast visited the earth, and hast inebriated it. Whence hast inebriated the earth? Thy cup inebriating how glorious it is! Thou hast visited the earth, and hast inebriated it. Thou hast sent Thy clouds, they have rained down the preaching of the truth, inebriated is the earth. Thou hast multiplied to enrich it. Whence hast thou ‘multiplied to enrich it?’ The river of God is filled with water. What is the river of God? The people of God. The first people was filled with water, wherewith the rest of the earth might be watered. Hear Him promising water: If any man thirst, let Him come to Me and drink: he that believeth on Me, rivers of living water from His belly shall flow: if rivers, one river also; for in respect of unity many are one. Many Churches and one Church, many faithful and one Bride of Christ: so many rivers and one river. Many Israelites believed, and were fulfilled with the Holy Spirit; from thence they were scattered abroad through the nations, they began to preach the truth, and from the river of God that was filled with water, was the whole earth watered. Thou hast prepared food for them: because thus is Thy preparing. Not because they

have deserved of Thee, whom Thou hast forgiven sins: the merits of them were evil, but Thou for Thy mercy’s sake, because thus is Thy preparing, thus Thou hast prepared food for them.

15. Ver. 10. The furrows thereof inebriate Thou. Let there be made therefore at first furrows to be inebriated: let the hardness of our breast be opened with the share of the word of God, The furrows thereof inebriate Thou: multiply the generations thereof. We see, they believe, and by them believing other men believe, and because of those others believe; and it is not sufficient for one man, that having become himself a believer, he should gain one. So is multiplied seed too: a few grains are scattered, and fields spring up. The furrows thereof inebriate Thou, multiply the generations thereof: in the drops thereof it shall rejoice, when it shall rise up. That is, before it be perchance enlarged to the bulk of a river, when it shall rise up, in its drops, that is, in those meet for it, it shall rejoice. For upon those that are yet babes, and upon the weak, are dropped some portions of the sacraments, because they cannot receive the fulness of the truth. Hear in what manner he droppeth upon babes, while they are rising up, that is, in their recent rising having small capacities: the Apostle saith, To you I could not speak as if to spiritual, but as if to carnal, as if to babes in Christ. When he saith, to babes in Christ, he speaketh of them as already risen up, but not yet meet to receive that plenteous wisdom, whereof he saith, Wisdom we speak among perfect men. Let it rejoice in its drops, while it is rising up and is growing, when strengthened it shall receive wisdom also: in the same manner as an infant is fed with milk, and becometh fit for meat, and nevertheless at first out of that very meat for which it was not fit, for it milk is made. In its drops it shall rejoice, when it shall rise up.

16. Ver. 11. Thou shalt bless the crown of the year of Thy goodness. Seed is now sowing, that which is sown is growing, there will be the harvest too. And now over the seed the enemy hath sown tares; and there have risen up evil ones among the good, false Christians, having like leaf, but not like fruit. For those are properly called tares, which spring up in the manner of wheat, for instance darnel, for instance wild oats, and all such as have the first leaf the same. Therefore of the sowing of the tares thus saith the Lord: There hath come an enemy, and hath sown over them tares; but what hath

he done to the grain? The wheat is not choked by the tares, nay, through endurance of the tares the fruit of the wheat is increased. For the Lord Himself said to certain workmen desiring to root up the tares, Suffer ye both to grow unto the harvest, lest perchance while ye desire to root up the tares, ye root up at the same time the wheat also: but in time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather together first the tares, and bind in bundles for burning, but the wheat store ye in the barn. This is the end of the year, the harvest of the world. Thou shalt bless the crown of the year of Thy goodness. Of crown when thou hearest, the glory of victory is implied. Conquer the devil, and thou wilt have a crown. Thou shalt bless the crown of the year of Thy goodness. Again he maketh reference to the goodness of God, lest any one boast of his own merits.

17. Thy plains shall be filled with abundance: (ver. 12.) the ends of the desert shall grow fat, and the hills shall be encircled with exultation. Plains, hills, ends of the desert, the same are also men. Plains, because of the equality: because of equality, I say, from thence just peoples have been called plains. Hills, because of lifting up: because God doth lift up in Himself those that humble themselves. Ends of the desert are all nations. Wherefore ends of the desert? Deserted they were, to them no Prophet had been sent: they were in like case as is a desert where no man passeth by. No word of God was sent to the nations: to the people Israel alone the Prophets preached. We came to the Lord; the wheat believed among that same people of the Jews. For He said at that time to the disciples, Ye say, far off is the harvest; look back, and see how white are the lands to harvest. There hath been therefore a first harvest, there will be a second in the last age. The first harvest was of Jews, because there were sent to them Prophets proclaiming a coming Saviour. Therefore the Lord said to His disciples, See how white are the lands to harvest: the lands, to wit, of Judæa. Other men, He saith, have laboured, and into their labours ye have entered. The Prophets laboured to sow, and ye with the sickle have entered into their labours. There hath been finished therefore the first harvest, and thence, with that very wheat which then was purged, hath been sown the round world; so that there ariseth another harvest, which at the end is to be reaped. In the second harvest have been sown tares, now here there is labour. Just as in that first harvest the Prophets laboured until the Lord came: so in that second harvest

the Apostles laboured, and all preachers of the truth labour, even until at the end the Lord send unto the harvest His Angels. Aforetime, I say, a desert there was, but the ends of the desert shall grow fat. Behold where the Prophets had given no sound, the Lord of the Prophets hath been received, The ends of the desert shall grow fat, and with exultation the hills shall be encircled.

18. Ver. 13. Clothed have been the rams of the sheep: ‘with exultation’ must be understood. For with what exultation the hills are encircled, with the same are clothed the rams of the sheep. Rams are the very same as hills. For hills they are because of more eminent grace; rams, because they are leaders of the flocks. Therefore those rams, the Apostles, were clothed with exultation, they rejoice over their fruits, not without cause they have laboured, not without cause they have preached. Clothed have been the rams of the sheep: and the valleys shall abound in wheat. And the humble peoples shall bring forth much fruit. They shall shout: thence they shall abound with wheat, because they shall shout. What shall they shout? For a hymn they shall say. For one thing it is to shout against God, another thing to say a hymn; one thing to shout iniquities, another thing to shout the praises of God. If thou shout in blasphemy, thorns thou hast brought forth: if thou shoutest in a hymn, thou aboundest in wheat.

PSALM 66

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

This Psalm hath on the title the inscription, For the end, a song of a Psalm of Resurrection. When ye hear for the end, whenever the Psalms are repeated, understand it for Christ: the Apostle saying, For the end of the law is Christ, for righteousness to every one believing. In what manner therefore here Resurrection is sung, ye will hear, and whose Resurrection it is, as far as Himself deigneth to give and disclose. For the Resurrection we Christians know already hath come to pass in our Head, and in the members it is to be. The Head of the Church is Christ, the members of Christ are the Church. That which hath preceded in the Head, will follow in the Body. This is our hope; for this we believe, for this we endure and persevere amid so great perverseness of this world, hope comforting us, before that hope becometh reality. For reality it will be when both we shall have risen again, and being changed into a heavenly form, shall have been made equal to the Angels. What man for this would dare to hope, unless Truth had promised it? But this hope promised to themselves the Jews had, and of their good and as it were just works they gloried much, because they had received the Law, by living according to which both here they would have carnal good things, and in the Resurrection of the dead, they hoped for such things as here they delighted in. For this cause to the Sadducees, who denied a future Resurrection, the Jews were not able to make answer when they propounded a question which the same Sadducees propounded to the Lord. For hence we perceive that they could not solve this question, because on the Lord’s solving it they wondered. The Sadducees, I say, were propounding a question respecting a certain woman, who had seven husbands, not at the same time, but succeeding one another. For there was this provision of the Law for multiplying the people, that if a man perchance died without children, his brother (if brother he had) should take his wife to raise up seed unto his brother. When that woman then was brought forward, who had had seven husbands who had all died without children, and who to fulfil this duty had married their brother's wife, they asked a question and said, In the Resurrection, of which of them shall she be the wife? Without doubt the Jews would not have been hard bested, would not have failed in that question, unless in the Resurrection for themselves they had hoped for such things as they were in the habit of doing in this life. But the Lord promising equality with Angels, not any human corruption of the flesh, saith to them, Ye err, knowing not the Scriptures, neither the power of God; for in the Resurrection, neither shall the women marry, nor shall the men take wives: for neither shall they begin to die, but shall be equal with the Angels of God. He hath proved that succession is necessary in a place where decease is mourned: there because there shall be no deceased, neither should successors be looked for. For unto this He hath subjoined For they shall not begin to die. Nevertheless, because the Jews, though it be carnally, did hold the hope of future resurrection, they were glad that answer had been made to the Sadducees, with whom they had a dispute about this doubtful and obscure question. The Jews therefore did hold the hope of the resurrection of the dead: and they hoped that themselves alone would rise again to a blessed life because of the work of the Law, and because of the justifications of the Scriptures, which the Jews alone had, and the Gentiles had not. Crucified was Christ, blindness in part happened unto Israel, in order that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in: as the Apostle saith. The resurrection of the dead beginneth to be promised to the Gentiles also that believe in Jesus Christ, that He hath risen again. Thence this Psalm is against the presumption and pride of the Jews, for the comfort of the Gentiles that are to be called to the same hope of resurrection.

2. In a manner, my brethren, the mind of the Psalm ye have heard. Upon this which I have said, upon this which I have set before you, let your whole attention be fixed; from hence let not any thought divert you: against the presumption of the Jews it is spoken, who because of the justifications of the Law were hoping to themselves resurrection, and crucified Christ, Who was the First to rise again, Who will not have for His members to rise again the Jews alone, but all men that have believed in Him, that is, all nations. Thence he beginneth, (ver. 1.) Be joyful in God. Who? Every land. Not

therefore Judæa alone. See, brethren, after what sort is set forth the universality of the Church in the whole world spread abroad: and mourn ye not only the Jews, who envied the Gentiles that grace, but still more for heretics wail ye. For if they are to be mourned, that have not been gathered together, how much more they that being gathered together have been divided? Jubilate in God every land. What is jubilate? Into the voice of rejoicings break forth if ye cannot into that of words. For 'jubilation' is not of words, but the sound alone of men rejoicing is uttered, as of a heart labouring and bringing forth into voice the pleasure of a thing imagined which cannot be expressed. Be joyful in God every land: let no one jubilate in a part: let every land be joyful, let the Catholic Church jubilate. The Catholic Church embraceth the whole: whosoever holdeth a part and from the whole is cut off, should howl, not jubilate. Be joyful in God every land.

3. Ver. 2. But play ye to His name. What hath he said? By you playing let His name be blessed. But what it is to play, I told you yesterday, and I suppose Your Love to remember it. To play is also to take up an instrument which is called a psaltery, and by the striking and action of the hands to accompany voices. If therefore ye jubilate so that God may hear; play also something that men may both see and hear: but not to your own name. For take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men that ye may be seen of them. And for whose name, thou wilt say, shall I play, so that my works may not be seen of men? Attend to another passage, Let your works shine before men, that they may see your good deeds, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven. Let them see your good deeds, and glorify not you, but God. For if for the sake of yourselves being glorified ye do good works, we make the same reply as He made to certain of such men, Verily I say unto you, they have received their reward: and again, Otherwise no reward ye will have with your Father That is in Heaven. Thou wilt say, ought I, then, to hide my works, that I do them not before men? No. But what saith He? Let your works shine before men. In doubt then I shall remain. On one side Thou sayest to me, Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men: on the other side Thou sayest to me, Let your good works shine before men; what shall I keep? what do? what leave undone? A man can as well serve two masters commanding different things as one commanding different things. I command not, saith the Lord, different things. The end observe, for

the end sing: with what end thou doest it, see thou. If for this reason thou doest it, that thou mayest be glorified, I have forbidden it: but if for this reason, that God may be glorified, I have commanded it. Play therefore, not to your own name, but to the name of the Lord your God. Play ye, let Him be lauded: live ye well, let Him be glorified. For whence have ye that same living well? If for everlasting ye had had it, ye would never have lived ill; if from yourselves ye had had it, ye never would have done otherwise than have lived well. But play ye to His name.

4. Give glory to His praise. Our whole attention upon the praise of God he directeth, nothing for us he leaveth whence we should be praised. Let us glory thence the more, and rejoice: to Him let us cleave, in Him let us be praised. Ye heard when the Apostle was being read, See ye your calling, brethren, how not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, but the foolish things of the world God hath chosen to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world God hath chosen to confound the strong; and the mean things of the world God hath chosen, and those things which are not as though they were things that are, that those things which are might be made void. What hath he willed to say? What hath he willed to shew? There hath come down the Lord, our God Jesus Christ, to restore the human race, and to give His Grace to all men perceiving that it is His Grace, not their merits: and that no person whatever should glory in the flesh, the weak He chose. For thence was not chosen even that Nathanael. For why dost thou suppose that He chose Matthew the publican, sitting at the receipt of custom, and chose not Nathanael, to whom the same Lord had borne witness, saying, Behold a true Israelite, in whom guile is not? This Nathanael, I say, is found to have been learned in the law. Not that learned men He was not going to choose: but if the same at first He had chosen, on account of their learning they would have thought themselves to have been chosen; so those men’s knowledge would have been praised, and the praise of the Grace of Christ would have been lessened. He bare witness to one being a good trustworthy man, in whom guile was not: but, nevertheless, him He took not among those disciples, for whom at first He chose but ignorant men. And whence perceive we that he was skilled in the Law? When he heard from one of those that had followed the Lord, saying, We have found the Messiah, which is interpreted Christ: he enquired whence,

and it was told him, from Nazareth: then he, From Nazareth there may be some good thing. Without doubt he, that perceived that from Nazareth there might be some good thing, was skilled in the Law, and had well examined the Prophets. I know that there is in these words another way of reading, but by the wiser sort it is not approved, namely, that he seemed as it were to have despaired, when he heard and said, From Nazareth can there be any good thing? That is, can there any wise be? So uttering it as if he were in despair. But there followeth in that place, Come and see. These words, to wit, Come and see, may follow after either way of reading. If thou sayest, as if not believing, From Nazareth can there be any good thing? The answer is, Come and see that which thou believest not. Again, if thou sayest in confirmation, From Nazareth there may be some good thing; the answer is, Come and see how truly good is that which I tell thee of from Nazareth; and how rightly thou believest, come and experience. From hence nevertheless this man is supposed to have been learned in the Law, because, to wit, he was not chosen among the disciples by Him, Who chose the foolish things of this world first, though the Lord had borne so great testimony to him, saying, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom guile is not. But the Lord chose afterwards orators also; but they would have been proud, if He had not first chosen fishermen; He chose rich men; but they would have said that on account of their riches they had been chosen, unless at first He had chosen poor men: He chose Emperors afterwards; but better is it, that when an Emperor hath come to Rome, he should lay aside his crown, and weep at the monument of a fisherman, than that a fisherman should weep at the monument of an Emperor. For the weak things of the world God hath chosen to confound the strong; and the mean things of the world God hath chosen, and those things which are not as though things that are, that those things which are might be made void. And what followeth? The Apostle hath concluded, That there might not glory before God any flesh. See ye how from us He hath taken away, that He might give glory: hath taken away ours, that He might give His own; hath taken away empty, that He might give full; hath taken away insecure, that He might give solid. How much more strong and firm is our glory, because in God it is? Thou oughtest not therefore in thyself to glory; Truth hath forbidden it; but that which the Apostle saith, Truth hath commanded, ‘He that glorieth, in God let him glory.’ Give therefore glory to His praise. Do not imitate the Jews, who as if to their merits desired to ascribe their justifications; and envied the Gentiles drawing near to Evangelical Grace, in order that all sins might be forgiven them; as if the former had not any thing to be forgiven them; already, as if they were good workmen, were expecting their hire. And though yet they were sick, they thought themselves to be whole, and on that account more dangerously were they sick. For if they had but been more slightly sick, they would not, as if they were phrensied, have slain the Physician. Give ye glory to His praise.

5. Ver. 3. Say ye to God, How to be feared are Thy works! Wherefore to be feared and not to be loved? Hear thou another voice of a Psalm: Serve ye the Lord in fear, and exult unto Him with trembling. What meaneth this? Hear the voice of the Apostle: With fear, he saith, and trembling, your own salvation work ye out. Wherefore with fear and trembling? He hath subjoined the reason: for God it is that worketh in you both to will and to work according to good will. If therefore God worketh in thee, by the Grace of God thou workest well, not by thy strength. Therefore if thou rejoicest, fear also: lest perchance that which was given to a humble man be taken away from a proud one. For that ye may know this thing to have come to pass because of that very pride of the Jews, who justified themselves as though by the works of the Law, and therefore fell; another Psalm saith, These in chariots and those in horses, as though it were in certain steps and instruments of theirs for their raising up: but we, he saith, in the name of the Lord our God will be magnified. These in chariots and these in horses: but we in the name of the Lord our God will be magnified. See how the former were exalted in themselves: see how the latter were glorying in God. Wherefore what followed: Their feet have been bound fast and they have fallen: but we have risen and are erect. Hear our Lord Himself saying this same thing: I, He saith, have come, that they which see not may see: and they that see may be made blind. See on one side goodness, on the other ill intent as it were. But what is better than He? What more merciful? What more just? Why then, they that see not may see? Because of goodness. Why, and they that see may be made blind? Because of arrogance. And did they really see, and were they made blind? They saw not, but they thought they saw. For behold, see brethren, when the Jews themselves said, Are we blind, the Lord saith to them, If blind ye were, sin ye would not have: but

now because ye say, we see, your sin in you abideth. To the Physician thou hast come; that thou seest sayest thou? Then no more of eye-salves, alway blind thou wilt remain: confess thyself blind, that thou mayest deserve to be enlightened. Observe the Jews, observe the Gentiles. They that see not, may see, He saith: to this end I have come, that they which see may be made blind. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself in the Flesh the Jews saw, the Gentiles saw not: behold they that saw, crucified; they that saw not believed. Therefore what hast Thou done, O Christ, against proud men? What hast Thou done? We see, because Thou hast so deigned, and Thy members we are: we see. Thou hast hidden God, hast put forth Man. Wherefore this? That blindness in part to Israel might happen, and the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in. To this end Thou hast hidden God, and Man before their faces Thou hast put. They saw, and saw not: they saw what Thou hadst taken, and they saw not what Thou wast: they saw the form of a servant, they saw not the form of God: the form of a servant, than which the Father is greater, not the form of God, because of which but now ye have heard, I and the Father are One. They held what they saw, they crucified what they saw; they insulted Him whom they saw, they acknowledged not Him that was concealed. Hear the Apostle saying, For if they had known, the Lord of glory they would never have crucified. Therefore ye Gentiles that have been called, observe the branches cut off because of severity, but yourselves graffed in because of goodness, and made partakers of the fatness of the olive, not being high-minded, that is, not being proud. For thou bearest not the root, he saith, but the root thee. Rather be afraid, because ye see the natural branches lopped off. For through the Patriarchs the Jews came, from the flesh of Abraham they were born. And what saith the Apostle? But thou sayest, broken were the branches, that I might be graffed in. Well, because of unbelief they were broken off: but thou, he saith, by faith standest, be not highminded, but fear: for if the natural branches God hath not spared, neither thee will He spare. Observe therefore the branches broken, and thyself graffed in: be not exalted above the broken branches, but rather say thou to God, How to be feared are Thy works! Brethren, if against the Jews of old, cut off from the root of the Patriarchs, we ought not to exalt ourselves, but rather to fear and to say to God, How to be feared are Thy works: how much less ought we not to exalt ourselves against the fresh wounds of the cutting off! Before there had been cut off Jews, graffed in

Gentiles; from the very graft there have been cut off heretics; but neither against them ought we to exalt ourselves; lest perchance he deserve to be cut off, that delighteth to revile them that are cut off. My brethren, a bishop's voice, however unworthy, hath sounded to you: we pray you to beware, whosoever ye are in the Church, do not revile them that are not within; but pray ye rather, that they too may be within. For God is able again to graft them in. Of the very Jews the Apostle said this, and it was done in their case. The Lord rose again, and many believed: they perceived not when they crucified, nevertheless afterwards they believed in Him, and there was forgiven them so great a transgression. The shedding of the Lord's blood was forgiven the man-slayers, not to say, God-slayers: for if they had known, the Lord of glory they never would have crucified. Now to the manslayers hath been forgiven the shedding of the blood of Him innocent: and that same blood which through madness they shed, though grace they have drunk. Say ye, therefore, to God, How to be feared are Thy works! Whence to be feared? Because blindness in part to Israel hath happened, that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in. O fulness of Gentiles, say thou to God, How to be feared are Thy works! and so rejoice thou as that thou mayest fear, be not exalted above the branches cut off. Say ye unto God, How to be feared are Thy works.

6. Ver. 2. In the multitude of Thy power Thine enemies shall lie to Thee. For this purpose he saith, to Thee thine enemies shall lie, in order that great may be Thy power. What is this? With more attention hearken. The power of our Lord Jesus Christ most chiefly appeared in the Resurrection, from whence this Psalm hath received its title. And rising again, He appeared to His disciples. He appeared not to His enemies, but to His disciples. Crucified He appeared to all men, rising again to believers: so that afterwards also he that would might believe, and to him that should believe, resurrection might be promised. Many holy men wrought many miracles; no one of them when dead did rise again: because even they that by them were raised to life, were raised to life to die. Let your Love attend. The Lord making mention of His works said, The works believe ye, if Me ye will not believe. And there are mentioned also the past works of the Prophets; and if they be not the same, yet many are the same, many of the same power. The Lord walked upon the sea, He bade Peter also walk. Was

the same Lord not in that place when the sea divided herself, that Moses with the people of Israel might pass over? The same Lord was doing those things. He that did them through His flesh, the Same did them through the flesh of His servants. Nevertheless, this thing through His servants He did not, (for Himself did all things,) that any one of themselves should have died and risen again unto life everlasting. Because therefore the Jews might say, when the Lord did miracles, Moses hath done these things, Elias hath done, Eliseus hath done them: they might for themselves say these words, because those men also did raise to life dead men, and did many miracles: therefore when from Him a sign was demanded, of the peculiar sign making mention which in Himself alone was to be, He saith, This generation crooked and provoking seeketh a sign, and a sign shall not be given to it, except the sign of Jonas the Prophet: for as Jonas was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so shall be also the Son of Man in the heart of the earth three days and three nights. In what way was Jonas in the belly of the whale? Was it not so that afterwards alive he was vomited out? Hell was to the Lord what the whale was to Jonas. This sign peculiar to Himself He mentioned, this is the most mighty sign. It is more mighty to live again after having been dead, than not to have been dead. The greatness of the power of the Lord as He was made Man, in the virtue of the Resurrection doth appear. This the Apostle also noticeth, when he saith, Not having mine own righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, which is of God righteousness in faith, to know Him and the virtue of His Resurrection. Thus it is noticed also in another place: although He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth in the virtue of God. Whereas therefore this great power of the Lord is in the Resurrection perceived, whence this Psalm hath received its title, what meaneth, in the multitude of Thy power Thine enemies shall lie unto Thee, but that thou understand it thus, Thine enemies shall lie to Thee in order that Thou mayest be crucified, Thou shalt be crucified in order that Thou mayest rise again? The lie therefore of them shall redound to the praise of Thy great power. Wherefore are enemies wont to lie? To lessen the power of some person, about whom they lie. To Thee, he saith, contrariwise it chanceth. For less would Thy power have appeared, if they had not lied to Thee.

7. Observe also the very lie of the false witnesses in the Gospel, and see how it is about Resurrection. For when to the Lord had been said, What sign shewest Thou to us, that Thou doest these things? besides that which He had spoken about Jonah, through another similitude of this same thing also He spake, that ye might know this peculiar sign had been especially pointed out: Destroy this Temple, He saith, and in three days I will raise it up. And they said, In forty and six years was builded this temple, and wilt Thou in three days raise it up? And the Evangelist explaining what it was, But this, he saith, spake Jesus of the Temple of His Body. Behold this His power He said He would shew to men in the same thing as that from whence He had given the similitude of a Temple, because of His flesh, which was the Temple of the Divinity hidden within. Whence the Jews outwardly saw the Temple, the Deity dwelling within they saw not. Out of those words of the Lord false witnesses made up a lie to say against Him, out of those very words wherein He mentioned His future Resurrection, in speaking of the Temple. For false witnesses, when they were asked what they had heard Him say, alleged against Him: We heard Him saying, I will destroy this Temple, and after three days I will raise it up. ‘After three days I will raise up,’ they had heard: I will destroy, they had not heard: but had heard ‘destroy ye.’ One word they changed and a few letters, in order to support their false testimony. But for whom changest thou a word, O human vanity, O human weakness? For the Word, the Unchangeable, dost thou change a word? Thou changest thy word, dost thou change God’s Word? Whence in another place is said, And iniquity hath lied to themselves. Why therefore to Thee have Thine enemies lied, to Whom every land shouteth for joy? In the multitude of Thy power Thine enemies shall lie to Thee. They will say, I will destroy, though Thou hast said, Destroy ye. Wherefore said they that Thou hadst said, I will destroy; and said not that which Thou saidest, destroy ye? It was, as it were, in order that they might defend themselves from the charge of destroying the Temple without cause. For Christ, because He willed it, died: and nevertheless ye killed Him. Behold we grant you, O ye liars, Himself destroyed the Temple. For it hath been said by the Apostle, That loved me, and gave up Himself for me. It hath been said of the Father, That His own Son spared not, but gave Him up for us all. If therefore the Father gave up the Son, and the Son gave up His own Self, Judas did what? The Father in giving up the Son to death for us did

well: Christ in delivering up Himself for us did well: Judas in giving up his Master for his covetousness, did evil. For that which hath been given to us by the Passion of Christ, shall not be ascribed to the malice of Judas: he shall have the reward of malice, Christ the praise of bounty. By all means be it that Himself destroyed the Temple, Himself destroyed that said, Power I have to lay down My Soul, and power I have again to take it: no one taketh it from Me, but I Myself lay it down from Me, and again I take it. Be it that Himself hath destroyed the Temple in His Grace, in your malice. In the multitude of Thy power thine enemies shall lie to Thee. Behold they lie, behold they are believed, behold Thou art oppressed, behold Thou art crucified, behold Thou art insulted, behold head is wagged at Thee, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. Behold when Thou wilt, life Thou layest down, and with lance in the side art pierced, and Sacraments from Thy side flow forth; Thou art taken down from the Tree, wound in linens, laid in the sepulchre, there are set guards lest Thy disciples take Thee away; there cometh the hour of Thy Resurrection, earth is shaken, tombs are cloven, Thou risest again in secret, appearest openly. Where then are those liars? Where is the false testimony of evil will? Have not Thine enemies in the multitude of Thy power lied to Thee?

8. Give them also those guards at the Tomb, let them recount what they have seen, let them take money and lie too: let them too speak, crooked men by crooked men admonished, let there speak by Jews corrupted, they that in Christ would not be uncorrupted; let them speak, let them too lie. What will they say? Let us see, speak ye: ye also will lie in the multitude of the power of the Lord. What will ye say? While we were sleeping, there came His disciples, and took Him away from the Tomb. O folly, asleep indeed! Either thou wast awake, and shouldest have prevented it: or thou wast asleep, and what was done thou knewest not. They too were added to the lie of the enemies: increased was the number of liars, that increased might be the reward of believers: because in the multitude of Thy power Thine enemies shall lie to Thee. Therefore they lied, in the multitude of Thy power they lied: to confound liars Thou hast appeared to men of truth, and Thou hast appeared to those men of truth whom Thou hast made men of truth.

9. Let Jews remain in their lies: to Thee, because in the multitude of Thy power they lied, let there be done that which followeth, (ver. 4.) Let every land worship Thee, and play to Thee, play to Thy name, O Most Highest. A little before, Most Lowly, now Most Highest: Most Lowly in the hands of lying enemies; Most Highest above the head of praising Angels. Let every land worship Thee, and play to Thee, play to Thy name, O Most Highest.

10. Come ye, and see the works of the Lord. O ye Gentiles O most distant nations, leave lying Jews, come confessing. Come ye, and see the works of the Lord: terrible in counsels above the sons of men. Son of Man indeed He too hath been called, and verily Son of Man He became: very Son of God in the form of God; very Son of Man in form of a servant: but do not judge of that form by the condition of others alike: terrible He is in counsels above the sons of men. Sons of men took counsel to crucify Christ, being crucified He blinded the crucifiers. What then have ye done, sons of men, by taking keen counsels against your Lord, in whom was hidden Majesty, and to sight shewn weakness? Ye were taking counsels to destroy, He to blind and save; to blind proud men, to save humble men: but to blind those same proud men, to the end that, being blinded they might be humbled, being humbled might confess, having confessed might be enlightened. Terrible in counsels above the sons of men. Terrible indeed. Behold blindness in part to Israel hath happened: behold the Jews, out of whom was born Christ, are without: behold the Gentiles, that were against Judæa, in Christ are within. Terrible in counsels above the sons of men.

11. Wherefore what hath He done by the terror of His counsel? He hath turned the sea into dry land. For this followeth, (ver. 6.) That hath turned the sea into dry land. A sea was the world, bitter with saltness, troubled with tempest, raging with waves of persecutions, sea it was: truly into dry land the sea hath been turned, now there thirsteth for sweet water the world that with salt water was filled. Who hath done this? He that hath turned the sea into dry land. Now the soul of all the Gentiles saith what? ‘My soul is as it were land without water to Thee.’ That hath turned the sea into dry land. In the river they shall pass over on foot. Those same persons that have been turned into dry land, though they were before sea, in the river on foot shall pass over. What is the river? The river is all the mortality of the world.

Observe a river: some things come and pass by, other things that are to pass by do succeed. Is it not thus with the water of a river, that from earth springeth and floweth? Every one that is born must needs give place to one going to be born: and all this order of things rolling along is a kind of river. Into this river let not the soul greedily throw herself, let her not throw herself, but let her stand still. And how shall she pass over the pleasures of things doomed to perish? Let her believe in Christ, and she will pass over on foot: she passeth over with Him for Leader, on foot she passeth over. What is, to pass over on foot? To pass over easily. She requireth no horse to pass over, she is not lifted up with pride to pass over the river: humble she passeth over, and the more safely she passeth over. In the river they shall pass over on foot.

12. There we will be joyous in Him. O ye Jews, of your own works boast ye: lay aside the pride of boasting of yourselves, take up the Grace of being joyous in Christ. For therein we will be joyous, but not in ourselves: there we will be joyous in Him. When shall we joy? When we shall have passed over the river on foot. Life everlasting is promised, resurrection is promised, there our flesh no longer shall be a river: for a river it is now, while it is mortality. Observe whether there standeth still any age. Boys desire to grow up; and they know not how by succeeding years the span of their life is lessened. For years are not added to but taken from them as they grow: just as the water of a river alway draweth near, but from the source it withdraweth. And boys desire to grow up that they may escape the thraldom of elders; behold they grow up, it cometh to pass quickly, they arrive at youth: let them that have emerged from boyhood retain, if they are able, their youth: that too passeth away. Old age succeedeth: let even old age be everlasting; with death it is removed. Therefore a river there is of flesh that is born. This river of mortality, so that it doth not by reason of concupiscence of things mortal undermine and carry him away, he easily passeth over, that humbly, that is on foot, passeth over, He being leader That first hath passed over, That of the flood in the way even unto death hath drunk, and therefore hath lifted up the head. Passing over therefore on foot that river, that is, easily passing over that mortality that glideth along, there we will be joyous in Him. But now in what save in Him, or in the hope of Him? For even if we are joyous now, in hope we are joyous; but

then in Him we shall be joyous. And now in Him, but through hope: but then face to face.

13. There we will be joyous in Him. In whom? In Him (ver. 7.) That reigneth in His virtue for everlasting. For what virtue have we? and is it everlasting? If everlasting were our virtue, we should not have slipped, should not have fallen into sin, we should not have deserved penal mortality. He, of His good pleasure, took up that whereunto our desert threw us down. That reigneth in His virtue for everlasting. Of Him partakers let us be made, in Whose virtue we shall be strong, but He in His own. We enlightened, He a light enlightening: we, being turned away from Him, are in darkness; turned away from Himself He cannot be. With the heat of Him we are warmed; from whence withdrawing we had grown cold, to the Same drawing near again we are warmed. Therefore let us speak to Him that He may keep us in His virtue, because in Him we will be joyous That reigneth in His virtue for everlasting.

14. But this thing is not granted to believing Jews alone. Because the Jews did greatly lift themselves up relying on their own virtue, afterwards they understood in Whose virtue they were strong to their health, and certain of them believed: but that is not enough for Christ; much is that which He hath given, a great price He hath given, not for Jews alone was that to avail which He hath given. The eyes of Him do look upon the Gentiles. Therefore, “The eyes of Him upon the Gentiles look. And what do we?” The Jews will murmur; the Jews will say, “what He hath given to us, the same to them also; to us Gospel, to them Gospel; to us the Grace of Resurrection, and to them the Grace of Resurrection; doth it profit us nothing that we have received the Law, and that in the justifications of the Law we have lived, and have kept the commandments of the fathers? Nothing will it avail? The same to them as to us.” Let them not strive, let them not dispute. Let not them that are bitter be exalted in their own selves. O flesh miserable and wasting, art thou not sinful? Why crieth out thy tongue? Let the conscience be listened to. For all men have sinned, and need the glory of God. Know thyself, human weakness. Thou didst receive the Law, in order that a transgressor also of the Law thou mightest be: for thou hast not kept and fulfilled that which thou didst receive. There hath

come to thee because of the Law, not the justification which the Law enjoineth, but the transgression which thou hast done. If therefore there hath abounded sin, why enviest thou Grace more abounding. Be not bitter, for let not them that are bitter be exalted in their own selves. He seemeth in a manner to have uttered a curse in Let not them that are bitter be exalted; yea, be they exalted, but not in themselves. Let them be humbled in themselves, exalted in Christ. For, "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted; and he that exalteth himself shall be humbled." Let not them that are bitter be exalted in their own selves.

15. Ver. 8. Bless our God, ye nations. Behold, there have been driven back they that are bitter, reckoning hath been made with them: some have been converted, some have continued proud. Let not them terrify you that grudge the Gentiles Gospel Grace: now hath come the Seed of Abraham, in Whom are blessed all nations. Bless ye Him in Whom ye are blessed, Bless our God, ye nations: and hear ye the voice of His praise. Praise not yourselves, but praise Him. What is the voice of His praise? That by His Grace we are whatever of good we are. (Ver. 9.) Who hath set my Soul unto life. Behold the voice of His praise: Who hath set my Soul unto life. Therefore in death she was: in death she was, in thyself. Thence it is that ye ought not to have been exalted in yourselves. Therefore in death she was in thyself: where will it be in life, save in Him that said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life? Just as to certain believers the Apostle saith, Ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. Darkness therefore in yourselves, light in the Lord: so death in yourselves, life in the Lord. Who hath set my Soul unto life. Behold, He hath set our Soul in life, because we believe in Him; unto life He hath set our Soul: but what further need is there, save that we persevere even unto the end? And this who shall give, save He of whom in continuation hath been said, and hath not given unto motion my feet? He hath set my Soul unto life, He guideth the feet that they stumble not, be not moved and given unto motion; He maketh us to live, He maketh us to persevere even unto the end, in order that for everlasting we may live. And hath not given unto motion my feet.

16. Wherefore hath He said this, And hath not given unto motion my feet? For what hast thou suffered, or what couldest thou suffer, that thy feet

should be moved? What? Hear the words which follow. Wherefore have I said, hath not given unto motion my feet? Because many things we have suffered, on account of which our feet would have been moved from the way, unless He had guided, and not given them unto motion. What are these things? (ver. 10.) For thou hast proved us, O God; Thou hast fired us as silver is fired. Hast not fired us like hay, but like silver: by applying to us fire, Thou hast not turned us into ashes, but Thou hast washed off uncleanness, Thou hast fired us, as silver is fired. And see in what manner God is wroth against them, whose Soul He hath set unto life. Thou hast led us into a trap: not that we might be caught and die, but that we might be tried and delivered from it. Thou hast laid tribulations upon our back. For having been to ill purpose lifted up, proud we were: having been to ill purpose lifted up, we were bowed down, in order that being bowed down, we should be lifted up for good. Thou hast laid tribulations on our back: (Ver. 11.) Thou hast set men over our heads. All these things the Church hath suffered in sundry and divers persecutions: She hath suffered this in Her individual members, even now doth suffer it. For there is not one, that in this life could say that he was exempt from these trials. Therefore there are set even men over our heads: we endure those whom we would not, we suffer for our betters those whom we know to be worse. But if sins be wanting, a man is justly superior: but by how much there are more sins, by so much he is inferior. And it is a good thing to consider ourselves to be sinners, and thus endure men set over our heads: in order that we also to God may confess that deservedly we suffer. For why dost thou suffer with indignation that which He doeth Who is just? Thou hast laid tribulations upon our back: Thou hast set men over our heads. God seemeth to be wroth, when He doeth these things: fear not, for a Father He is, He is never so wroth as to destroy. When ill thou livest, if He spareth, He is more angry. In a word, these tribulations are the rods of Him correcting, lest there be a sentence from Him punishing. Thou hast laid tribulations upon our back: Thou hast set men over our heads.

17. We have passed through fire and water. Fire and water are both dangerous in this life. Certainly water seemeth to extinguish fire, and fire seemeth to dry up water. Thus also these are the trials, wherein aboundeth this life. Fire burneth, water corrupteth: both must be feared, both the

burning of tribulation and the water of corruption. Whenever there is adversity, and any thing which is called unhappiness in this world, there is as it were fire: whenever there is prosperity, and the world's plenty floweth about one, there is as it were water. See that fire burn thee not, nor water corrupt. Be thou strong against the fire, thou must needs be baken; as though thou wert a clay vessel, thou art cast into the furnace of fire, in order that the thing which hath been formed may be made strong. The vessel then now by fire being made strong feareth not the water: but if the vessel shall not have been hardened by fire, like mud in water it will be dissolved. Hasten not to the water: through fire pass over to the water, that thou mayest pass over the water also. Therefore also in the mystic rites, and in catechising and in exorcising, there is first used fire. For whence ofttimes do the unclean spirits cry out, 'I burn,' if that is not fire? But after the fire of Exorcism we come to Baptism: so that from fire to water, from water unto refreshment. But as in the Sacraments, so it is in the temptations of this world: the straitness of fear draweth near first, in place of fire; afterwards fear being removed, we ought to be afraid lest worldly happiness corrupt. But when the fire hath not made thee burst, and when thou hast not sunk in the water, but hast swum out; through discipline thou passest over to rest, and passing over through fire and water, thou art led forth into a place of refreshment. For of those things whereof the signs are in the Sacraments, there are the very realities in that perfection of life everlasting. So soon as we shall have passed over to that place of refreshment, dearly beloved brethren, there no enemy we shall fear, no tempter, no envious person, no fire, no water; there an everlasting place of refreshment there will be. A place of coolness it is called, because of the rest therein. For if thou say, it is heat, it is true: if thou say, it is a cool place, it is true. For if the cool place thou understand amiss, we are as it were torpid there. But we are not torpid there, but we rest: nor though it be called heat, shall we be hot there, but we shall be fervent in spirit. Observe that same heat in another Psalm: nor is there any one that hideth himself from the heat thereof. What saith also the Apostle? In spirit fervent. Therefore, we have gone over through fire and water: and Thou hast led us forth into a cool place.

18. Observe how not only concerning a cool place, but neither of that very fire to be desired he hath been silent: (ver. 13.) I will enter into Thy House

in holocausts. What is a holocaust? A whole sacrifice burned up, but with fire divine. For a sacrifice is called a holocaust, when the whole is burned. One thing are the parts of sacrifices, another thing a holocaust: when the whole is burned and the whole consumed by fire divine, it is called a holocaust: when a part, a sacrifice. Every holocaust indeed is a sacrifice: but not every sacrifice a holocaust. Holocausts therefore he is promising, the Body of Christ is speaking, the Unity of Christ is speaking, I will enter into Thy House in holocausts. All that is mine let Thy fire consume, let nothing of mine remain to me, let all be Thine. But this shall be in the Resurrection of just men, when both this corruptible shall be clad in incorruption, and this mortal shall be clad in immortality: then shall come to pass that which hath been written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' Victory is, as it were, fire divine: when it swalloweth up our death also, it is a holocaust. There remaineth not any thing mortal in the flesh, there remaineth not any thing culpable in the spirit: the whole of mortal life shall be consumed, in order that in life everlasting it may be consummated, that from death we may be preserved in life. These therefore will be the holocausts.

19. And what shall there be in the holocausts? I will render to Thee my vows, (ver. 14.) which my lips have distinguished. What is the distinction in vows? This is the distinction, that thyself thou censure, Him thou praise: perceive thyself to be a creature, Him the Creator: thyself darkness, Him the Enlightener, to Whom thou shouldest say, Thou shalt light my lamp, O Lord my God, Thou shalt enlighten my darkness. For whenever thou shalt have said, O soul, that from thyself thou hast light, thou wilt not distinguish. If thou wilt not distinguish, thou wilt not render distinct vows. Render distinct vows, confess thyself changeable, Him unchangeable: confess thyself without Him to be nothing, but Himself without thee to be perfect; thyself to need Him, but Him not to need thee. Cry to Him, I have said to the Lord, My God art Thou, for my good things Thou needest not. Now though God taketh thee to Him for a holocaust, He groweth not, He is not increased, He is not richer, He becometh not better furnished: whatsoever He maketh of thee for thy sake, is the better for thee, not for Him that maketh. If thou distinguishest these things, thou renderest the vows to thy God which thy

lips have distinguished. I will render to Thee my vows, which my lips have distinguished.

20. And my mouth hath spoken in my tribulation. How sweet ofttimes is tribulation, how necessary? In that case what hath the mouth of the same spoken in his tribulation? (Ver. 15.) Holocausts marrowed I will offer to Thee. What is marrowed? Within may I keep Thy love, it shall not be on the surface, in my marrow it shall be that I love Thee. For there is nothing more inward than our marrow: the bones are more inward than the flesh, the marrow is more inward than those same bones. Whosoever therefore on the surface loveth God, desireth rather to please men, but having some other affection within, he offereth not holocausts of marrow: but into whosesoever marrow He looketh, him He receiveth whole. Holocausts marrowed I will offer to Thee, with incense and rams. The rams are the rulers of the Church: the whole Body of Christ is speaking: this is the thing which he offereth to God. Incense is what? Prayer. With incense and rams. For especially the rams do pray for the flocks. I will offer to Thee oxen with he-goats. Oxen we find treading out corn, and the same are offered to God. The Apostle hath said, that of the preachers of the Gospel must be understood that which hath been written, Of the ox treading out corn the mouth thou shalt not muzzle. Doth God care for oxen? Therefore great are those rams, great the oxen. What of the rest, that perchance are conscious of certain sins, that perchance in the very road have slipped, and, having been wounded, by penitence are being healed? Shall they too continue, and to the holocausts shall they not belong? Let them not fear, he hath added he-goats also. Holocausts, he saith, marrowed I will offer to Thee, with incense and rams; I will offer to Thee oxen with he-goats. By the very yoking are saved the he-goats; of themselves they have no strength, being yoked to bulls they are accepted. For they have made friends of the mammon of iniquity, that the same may receive them into everlasting tabernacles. Therefore those he-goats shall not be on the left, because they have made to themselves friends of the mammon of iniquity. But what he-goats shall be on the left? They to whom shall be said, I hungred, and ye gave me not to eat: not they that have redeemed their sins by alms-deeds.

21. Ver. 16. Come ye, hear, and I will tell, all ye that fear God. Let us come, let us hear, what he is going to tell, Come ye, hear, and I will tell. But to whom, Come ye, and hear? All ye that fear God. If God ye fear not, I will not tell. It is not possible that it be told to any where the fear of God is not. Let the fear of God open the ears, that there may be something to enter in, and a way whereby may enter in that which I am going to tell. But what is he going to tell? How great things He hath done to my soul. Behold, he would tell: but what is he going to tell? Is it perchance how widely the earth is spread, how much the sky is extended, and how many are the stars, and what are the changes of sun and of moon? This creation fulfilleth its course: but they that have very curiously sought it out, the Creator thereof have not known. This thing hear, this thing receive, O ye that fear God, how great things He hath done to my soul: if ye will, to yours also. How great things He hath done to my soul. (Ver. 17.) To Him with my mouth I have cried. And this very thing, he saith, hath been done to his soul; that to Him with his mouth he should cry, hath been done, he saith, to his soul. Behold, brethren, Gentiles we were, even if not in ourselves, in our parents. And what saith the Apostle? Ye know, when Gentiles ye were, to idols without speech how ye went up, being led. Let the Church now say, how great things He hath done to my soul. To Him with my mouth I have cried. I a man to a stone was crying, to a deaf stock I was crying, to idols deaf and dumb I was speaking: now the image of God hath been turned to the Creator thereof. I that was saying to a stock, My father thou art; and to a stone, Thou hast begotten me: now say, “Our Father, Which art in Heaven.” To Him with my mouth I have cried. ‘With my mouth’ now, not with the mouth of another. When I was crying to stones in the vain conversation of fathers’ tradition, with the mouth of others I was crying: when I have cried to the Lord, that which Himself hath given, that which Himself hath inspired, to Him with my own mouth I have cried, and have exalted Him under my tongue. What is, I have cried with my mouth, and have exalted Him under my tongue? Him in public I have preached, Him in secret I have confessed. Too little it is to exalt God with tongue; but also under the tongue, so that of what thou speakest being assured, of the same in silence thou mayest meditate. To Him with my mouth I have cried, and I have exalted Him under my tongue. See how in secret he would be uncorrupt that offereth marrowed holocausts. This do ye, brethren, this imitate, so that ye

may say, Come ye, see how great things He hath done to my soul. For all those things of which he telleth, by His Grace are done in our soul. See the other things of which he speaketh.

22. Ver. 18. If I have beheld iniquity in my heart, may not the Lord hearken. Consider now, brethren, how easily, how daily men blushing for fear of men do censure iniquities; He hath done ill, He hath done basely, a villain the fellow is: this perchance for man’s sake he saith. See whether thou beholdest no iniquity in thy heart, whether perchance that which thou censurest in another, thou art meditating to do, and therefore against him dost exclaim, not because he hath done it, but because he hath been found out. Return to thyself, within be to thyself a judge. Behold in thy hid chamber, in the very inmost recess of the heart, where thou and He that seeth are alone, there let iniquity be displeasing to thee, in order that thou mayest be pleasing to God. Do not regard it, that is, do not love it, but rather despise it, that is, contemn it, and turn away from it. Whatever pleasing thing it hath promised to allure thee to sin; whatever grievous thing it hath threatened, to drive thee on to evil doing; all is nought, all passeth away: it is worthy to be despised, in order that it may be trampled upon; not to be eyed lest it be accepted. [For it maketh suggestion sometimes through thoughts, or through the words of evil men in conference. For evil communications do corrupt good manners: do thou regard them not. But too little it is to do so in countenance, too little it is to do so in tongue: in heart do not regard, that is, do not love it, do not accept it. For to put ‘regard’ for love is of daily occurrence: in the first place, because of God we say, He hath regarded me. What is, hath regarded me? For saw He not thee before? Or was He looking upward, and by thy prayers hath He been reminded to cast His eyes upon thee? He did see thee before too; but in, He hath regarded me, thou meanest, He hath loved me. And to a man that seeth thee, and of whom thou makest request, that he may pity thee, thou sayest, Regard me. What is, regard me? Love; attend to me; pity me. Therefore he hath not said, If I have beheld iniquity in my heart, because no iniquity at all is suggested to the human heart. There it is suggested, there will not cease suggestion; but let there be made no regard. For if thou regardest iniquity, thou lookest back; and incurrest the condemnation of the Lord, saying in the Gospel, No one putting hand upon the plough and looking

back is fit for the kingdom of God. What, therefore, ought I to do? What the Apostle saith, Those things which are behind forgetting, unto those things which are before stretching forth. For behind, all our doings which have passed away are iniquitous. No one out of good hath come to Christ: all men have sinned, by believing they are justified. Perfect righteousness there will not be, save in that life: nevertheless for our progress in goodness good morals by Himself are inspired, by Himself are given. Do not therefore reckon up thine own merits, do not. And if iniquity maketh suggestion, do not consent, for he saith what?] If I have beheld iniquity in my heart, may not the Lord hearken.

23. Ver. 19. Therefore God hath hearkened to me. Because I have not beheld iniquity in my heart. And He hath listened to the voice of my prayer.

24. Ver. 20. Blessed be my God, that hath not thrust away my supplication and His mercy from me. Gather the sense from that place, where he saith, Come ye, hear, and I will tell you, all ye that fear God, how great things He hath done to my soul: he hath both said the words which ye have heard, and at the end thus he hath concluded: Blessed be my God, that hath not thrust away my supplication and His mercy from me. For thus there arriveth at the Resurrection he that speaketh, where already we also are by hope: yea both it is we ourselves, and this voice is ours. So long therefore as here we are, this let us ask of God, that He thrust not from us our supplication, and His mercy, that is, that we pray continually, and He continually pity. For many become feeble in praying, and in the newness of their own conversion pray fervently, afterwards feebly, afterwards coldly, afterwards negligently: as if they have become secure. The foe watcheth: thou sleepest. The Lord Himself hath given commandment in the Gospel, how it behoveth men always to pray and not to faint. And he giveth a comparison from that unjust judge, who neither feared God, nor regarded man, whom that widow daily importuned to hear her; and he yielded for weariness, that was not influenced by pity: and the naughty judge saith to himself, Though neither God I fear, nor men I regard, even because of the weariness which this widow daily putteth upon me, I will hear her cause, and will avenge her. And the Lord saith, If a naughty judge hath done this, shall not your Father avenge His chosen, that to Him do cry day and night? Yea, I say unto you,

He shall make judgment of them speedily. Therefore let us not faint in prayer. Though He putteth off what He is going to grant, He putteth it not away: being secure of His promise, let us not faint in praying, and this is by His goodness. Therefore he hath said, Blessed is my God, that hath not thrust away my supplication and His mercy from me. When thou hast seen thy supplication not thrust away from thee, be secure, that His mercy hath not been thrust away from thee.

PSALM 67

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

1. Your Love remembereth, that in two Psalms, which have been already treated of, we have stirred up our soul to bless the Lord, and with godly chant have said, Bless thou, O my soul, the Lord. If therefore we have stirred up our soul in those Psalms to bless the Lord, in this Psalm is well said, (ver. 1.) May God have pity on us, and bless us. Let our soul bless the Lord, and let God bless us. When God blesseth us, we grow, and when we bless the Lord, we grow, to us both are profitable. He is not increased by our blessing, nor is He lessened by our cursing. He that curseth the Lord, is himself lessened: he that blesseth the Lord, is himself increased. First, there is in us the blessing of the Lord, and the consequence is that we also bless the Lord. That is the rain, this the fruit. Therefore there is rendered as it were fruit to God the Husbandman, raining upon and tilling us. Let us chant these words with no barren devotion, with no empty voice, but with true heart. For most evidently God the Father hath been called a Husbandman. The Apostle saith, God's husbandry ye are, God's building ye are. In things visible of this world, the vine is not a building, and a building is not a vineyard: but we are the vineyard of the Lord, because He tilleth us for fruit; the building of God we are, since He Who tilleth us, dwelleth in us. And what saith the same Apostle? I have planted, Apollo hath watered, but the increase God hath given. Therefore neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth, but He that giveth the increase, even God. He it is therefore That giveth the increase. Are those perchance the husbandmen? For a husbandman he is called that planteth, that watereth: but the Apostle hath said, I have planted, Apollo hath watered. Do we enquire whence himself hath done this? The Apostle maketh answer, Yet not I, but the Grace of God with me. Therefore whithersoever thou turn thee, whether through Angels, thou wilt find God thy Husbandman; whether through Prophets, the Same is thy Husbandman; whether through Apostles, the very

Same acknowledge to be thy Husbandman. What then of us? Perchance we are the labourers of that Husbandman, and this too with powers imparted by Himself, and by Grace granted by Himself. Himself therefore both tilleth, and giveth the increase. But a human husbandman tilleth a vineyard only so far as to plough, prune, apply other means which belong to the diligence of husbandmen: to rain upon his vineyard he is not able. But if perchance he is able to water, of whose power is it? Himself indeed guideth the water into a channel, but God filleth the spring. Lastly, in his vineyard he cannot give increase to his tender shoots, he cannot shape the fruit, he cannot qualify the seeds, he cannot rule the seasons of production. But God, that can do all things, is our Husbandman; we are secure. Perchance some one saith, “Thou sayest that our Husbandman is God. Nay, but I say that the Apostles are husbandmen, who have said, I have planted, Apollo hath watered.” If I of myself say it, let no one believe: if Christ saith it, woe to him that believeth not. The Lord Christ therefore saith what? I am the Vine, ye the branches, My Father the Husbandman. Let therefore earth thirst, and give forth the voices of her thirst: as it hath been written, My soul is as earth without water for Thee. Let therefore our earth, we ourselves, longing for the rain of God, say, May God have pity on us, and bless us.

2. Lighten His countenance upon us. Thou wast perchance going to enquire, what is bless us? In many ways men would have themselves to be blessed of God: one would have himself to be blessed, so that he may have a house full of the necessary things of this life; another desireth himself to be blessed, so that he may obtain soundness of body without flaw; another would have himself to be blessed, if perchance he is sick, so that he may acquire soundness; another longing for sons, and perchance being sorrowful because none are born, would have himself to be blessed so that he may have posterity. And who could number the divers wishes of men desiring themselves to be blessed of the Lord God? But which of us would say, that it was no blessing of God, if either husbandry should bring him fruit, or if any man’s house should abound in plenty of things temporal, or if the very bodily health be either so maintained that it be not lost, or, if lost, be regained? For the fruitfulness of women and the chaste vows of men desiring sons, belong to whom save to the Lord God? For He that created when there was nothing, doth Himself by succession of offspring cause to

continue that which He hath builded. God maketh these things, God giveth these things. Too little it is for us to say, God maketh these things, God giveth these things; but alone He maketh, alone He giveth. For what if God maketh these things, but some one also maketh these things, that is not God? He maketh these things, and alone maketh them. And without reason these things are sought either from men, or from demons; and whatsoever good things the enemies of God receive, from Him they receive; and while from others they seek them, when they receive, unknowingly from Him they receive them. In like manner as when they are punished, and think themselves by others to be punished, unknowingly by Him they are punished: so also, when they abound, are filled, are saved, are delivered, even though they know not this, and either to men or demons or to angels they ascribe it, they have it not except from Him with whom is power over all things. May we so have spoken of these things, brethren, that whosoever longeth for even those earthly things, either for the cravings of necessity, or for any infirmity, should long for them from no one except from Him Who is the Fountain of all good things, and the Creator and Renewer of the universe.

3. But some gifts there are which God giveth even to His enemies, others which God keepeth only for His friends. What are the gifts which He giveth to His enemies? Those which I have enumerated. For not good men alone have houses full of things necessary, nor do good men alone either in health abide or from sickness grow well, nor do good men alone have sons, good men alone money, good men alone other things meet for this life temporal and transient: evil men also have these things, and sometimes they are wanting to good men: but they are wanting to evil men also, and ofttimes to these rather than to those; sometimes to those rather than to these they abound. God hath willed these temporal things to be promiscuous: because if to good men alone He were to give them, evil men also would think that for the sake of these things God must be worshipped: again, if to evil men alone He were to give these things, weak good men would fear to be converted, lest those things to them should perchance be wanting. For a soul being as yet weak is less able to receive the kingdom of God, God our Husbandmam must feed her. For even the tree that now mightily withstandeth tempests, when from the ground it sprung, was but a herb.

That Husbandman therefore knoweth how not only to prune and purge mighty trees: but also how to protect the tender plants at their first springing. For this reason, dearly beloved, as I began to say, if to good men alone these things were given, all men for the sake of receiving these things would wish to be converted to God: again, if to evil men alone they were given, weak men would fear lest when they were converted, they should lose that which evil men alone could have. Indiscriminately they are given both to good men and evil men. Again, if from good men alone they should be taken away, there would be that same fear on the part of weak men, so that they would not be converted to God: again, if from evil men alone they should be taken away, the only punishment would be thought to be that same wherewith evil men are smitten. In that therefore He giveth them to good men, He comforteth them on their journey: in that He giveth them to evil men also, He warneth good men to long for other things which they have not with evil men in common. Again, from good men He taketh them away whenever He willeth, in order that they may question themselves of their own powers, and they may find out themselves, that perchance were hidden from themselves, whether now they be able to say, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done; be the name of the Lord blessed. For that soul both blessed the Lord, and, being rained upon with the fatness of blessing, rendered back her fruits: The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away. He hath withdrawn the gifts, but hath not withdrawn the Giver. Every soul that is blessed is simple, not cleaving to things earthly nor with glued wings grovelling, but beaming with the brightness of virtues, on the twin wings of twin love doth spring into the free air; and seeth how from her is withdrawn that whereon she was treading, not that whereon she was resting, and she saith securely, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done: be the name of the Lord blessed. He hath given, and He hath taken away: there remaineth He that hath given, and He hath taken away that which He hath given: be His name blessed. To this end therefore these things are taken away from good men. But let not perchance any weak man say, when shall I be of so great virtue, as was holy Job? The mightiness of the tree thou wonderest at, because but now thou hast been born: this great tree, whereat thou wonderest, under the branches and shade whereof thou coolest thyself, hath been a switch. But dost thou fear lest there be taken away from thee these things, when such thou shalt have become? Observe that they are taken away from evil men also. Why therefore dost thou delay conversion? That which thou fearest when good to lose, perchance if evil thou wilt lose still. If being good thou shalt have lost them, there is by thee the Comforter that hath taken them away: the coffer is emptied of gold; the heart is full of faith: without, poor thou art, but within, rich thou art: thy riches with thee thou carriest, which thou wouldest not lose, even if naked from shipwreck thou shouldest escape. Why doth not the loss, that perchance, if evil, thou wilt lose, find thee good; forasmuch as thou seest evil men also suffer loss? But with greater loss they are stricken: empty is the house, more empty the conscience is. Whatsoever evil man shall have lost these things, hath nothing to hold by without, hath nothing within whereon he may rest. He fleeth when he hath suffered loss from the place where before the eyes of men with the display of riches he used to vaunt himself; now in the eyes of men to vaunt himself he is not able: to himself within he returneth not, because he hath nothing. He hath not imitated the ant, he hath not gathered to himself grains, while it was summer. What have I meant by, while it was summer? While he had quietude of life, while he had this world’s prosperity, when he had leisure, when happy he was being called by all men, his summer it was. He should have imitated the ant, he should have heard the Word of God, he should have gathered together grains, and he should have stored them within. There had come the trial of tribulation, there had come upon him a winter of numbness, tempest of fear, the cold of sorrow, whether it were loss, or any danger to his safety, or any bereavement of his family; or any dishonour and humiliation; it was winter; the ant falleth back upon that which in summer she hath gathered together; and within in her secret store, where no man seeth, she is recruited by her summer toils. When for herself she was gathering together these stores in summer, all men saw her: when on these she feedeth in winter, no one seeth. What is this? See the ant of God, he riseth day by day, he hasteneth to the Church of God, he prayeth, he heareth lection, he chanteth hymn, he digesteth that which he hath heard, with himself he thinketh thereon, he storeth within grains gathered from the threshing-floor. They that providently hear those very things which even now are being spoken of, do thus, and by all men are seen to go forth to the Church, go back from Church, to hear sermon, to hear lection, to choose a book, open and read it: all these things are seen, when they are done. That ant is treading his path, carrying and storing up in the sight of men seeing him. There cometh winter sometime, for to whom cometh it not? There chanceth loss, there chanceth bereavement: other men pity him perchance as being miserable, who know not what the ant hath within to eat, and they say, miserable he whom this hath befallen, or what spirits, dost thou think, hath he whom this hath befallen? how afflicted is he? He measureth by himself, hath compassion according to his own strength; and thus he is deceived: because the measure wherewith he measureth himself, he would apply to him whom he knoweth not. He seeth him that hath suffered loss, or is humbled, or is stricken with bereavement. What thinkest thou? ‘That man hath done some evil thing, that this should befal him. Such a heart, such a mind let mine enemies have.’ Thou knowest not, O man, thou art indeed thine own enemy, that through the summer gatherest not together for thyself what he hath gathered. Now within the ant is feeding on the labours of summer: but her gathering together thou wast able to see, her eating thou canst not see. In these words, brethren, as far as the Lord hath allowed, as far as He hath deigned to supply and instruct our infirmity and lowliness, as much as we are capable of according to our measure, we have explained why God giveth all these things promiscuously, both to good men and to evil men, and why He taketh them away both from good men and evil men. He hath given to thee, be not lifted up. He hath taken away from thee, be not heart-broken. Thou fearest lest He take away, He can take away from an evil man also: it is better that being good that which is of God thou losest, but God thou keepest. So also it is with that evil man, him we are exhorting: thou art going to suffer loss, (who is not going to suffer bereavement?) some chance will fall upon thee, some calamity by a side blow, every where the world is full of such, instances are never wanting: I am speaking to thee in summer, grains for thee to gather are not wanting: observe the ant, O sluggard, gather in summer while thou art able; winter will not suffer thee to gather, but to eat that which thou shalt have gathered. For how many men so suffer tribulation, that there is no opportunity either to read any thing, or to hear any thing, and they obtain no admittance, perchance, to those that would comfort them. The ant hath remained in her nest, let her see if she hath gathered any thing in summer, whereby she may recruit herself in winter.

4. But now since God blesseth us, why doth He bless us? What blessing doth this voice require, That God may bless us? The blessing which He keepeth for His friends, which to good men alone He giveth. Do not for a great matter desire that which evil men also receive: because God is good, He doth those things, the Same that maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, and raineth upon just men and unjust men. What therefore is there especially for good men? What especially for just men? May He lighten His face upon us. That Sun's face Thou lightenest upon good men and evil men, Thine own face lighten Thou upon us. There see that light as well beasts, as both good men and evil men. But 'blessed they of pure heart; for they shall see God.' May He lighten His face upon us. There is a double interpretation, both must be given: lighten, he saith, Thy face upon us, shew to us Thy countenance. For God doth not ever light His countenance, as if ever it had been without light: but He lighteth it upon us, so that what was hidden from us, is opened to us, and that which was, but to us was hidden, is unveiled upon us, that is, is lightened. Or else surely it is, 'Thy image lighten upon us:' so that he said this, in, lighten Thy countenance upon us: Thou hast imprinted Thy countenance upon us; Thou hast made us after Thine image and Thy likeness, Thou hast made us Thy coin; but Thine image ought not in darkness to remain: send a ray of Thy wisdom, let it dispel our darkness, and let there shine in us Thy image; let us know ourselves to be Thine image, let us hear what hath been said in the Song of Songs, If Thou shalt not have known Thyself, O Thou fair one among women. For there is said to the Church, If Thou shalt not have known Thyself. What is this? If Thou shalt not have known Thyself to have been made after the image of God. O Soul of the Church, precious, redeemed with the blood of the Lamb immaculate, observe of how great value Thou art, think what hath been given for Thee. Let us say, therefore, and let us long that He may lighten His face upon us. We wear His face: in like manner as the faces of emperors are spoken of, truly a kind of sacred face is that of God in His own image: but unrighteous men know not in themselves the image of God. In order that the countenance of God may be lightened upon them, they ought to say what? Thou shalt light my candle, O Lord my God, Thou shalt light my darkness. I am in the darkness of sins, but by the ray of Thy wisdom dispelled be my darkness, may Thy countenance appear; and if perchance through me it appeareth somewhat deformed, by Thee be

there reformed that which by Thee hath been formed. May He lighten, therefore, His face upon us.

5. Ver. 2. That we may know on earth Thy way. On earth, here, in this life, we may know Thy way. What is, Thy way? That which leadeth to Thee. May we acknowledge whither we are going, acknowledge where we are as we go; neither in darkness we can do. Afar Thou art from men sojourning, a way to us Thou hast presented, through which we must return to Thee. Let us acknowledge on earth Thy way. What is His way wherein we have desired, That we may know on earth Thy way? We are going to enquire this ourselves, not of ourselves to learn it. We can learn of it from the Gospel: I am the Way, the Lord saith: Christ hath said, I am the Way. But dost thou fear lest thou stray? He hath added, And the Truth. Who strayeth in the Truth? He strayeth that hath departed from the Truth. The Truth is Christ, the Way is Christ: walk therein. Dost thou fear lest thou die before thou attain unto Him? I am the Life: I am, He saith, the Way and the Truth and the Life. As if He were saying, What fearest thou? Through Me thou walkest, to Me thou walkest, in Me thou restest. What therefore meaneth, We may know on earth Thy Way, but ‘we may know on earth Thy Christ?’ But let the Psalm itself reply: lest ye think that out of other Scriptures there must be adduced testimony, which perchance is here wanting: by repetition he hath shewn what signified, That we may know on earth Thy Way: and as if thou wast inquiring, “In what earth, what way?” In all nations Thy Salvation. In what earth, thou art inquiring? Hear: In all nations. What way art thou seeking? Hear: Thy Salvation. Is not perchance Christ his Salvation? And what is that which the old Symeon hath said, that old man, I say, in the Gospel, preserved full of years even unto the infancy of the Word? For that old man took in his hands the Infant Word of God. Would He that in the womb deigned to be, disdain to be in the hands of an old man? The Same was in the womb of the Virgin, as was in the hands of the old man, a weak infant both within the bowels, and in the old man’s hand, to give us strength, by Whom were made all things; (and if all things, even His very mother.) He came humble, He came weak, but clothed with a weakness to be changed into strength, because though He was crucified of weakness, yet He liveth of the virtue of God, the Apostle saith. He was then in the hands of an old man. And what saith that old man? Rejoicing that

now he must be loosed from this world, seeing how in his own hand was held He by Whom and in Whom his Salvation was upheld; he saith what? Now Thou lettest go, he saith, O Lord, Thy servant in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation. Therefore, May God bless us, and have pity on us; may He lighten His countenance upon us, that we may know on earth Thy Way! In what earth? In all nations? What Way? Thy Salvation.

6. What followeth, because the Way of God is known on earth, because the Salvation of God is known in all nations? (Ver. 3.) Let the peoples confess to Thee, O God; confess to Thee, he saith, all peoples. There standeth forth a heretic, and he saith, In Africa I have peoples: and another from another quarter, And I in Galatia have peoples. Thou in Africa, he in Galatia: therefore I require one that hath them every where. Ye have indeed dared to exult at that voice, when ye heard, Let the peoples confess to Thee, O God. Hear the following verse, how he speaketh not of a part: Let there confess to Thee all peoples. Walk ye in the Way together with all nations; walk ye in the Way together with all peoples, O sons of peace, sons of the One Catholic Church, walk ye in the Way, seeing as ye walk. Wayfarers do this to beguile their toil. Sing ye in this Way; I implore you by that Same Way, sing ye in this Way: a new song sing ye, let no one there sing old ones: sing ye the love-songs of your father-land, let no one sing old ones. New Way, new wayfarer, new song. Hear thou the Apostle exhorting thee to a new song: Whatever therefore is in Christ is a new creature; old things have passed away, behold they have been made new. A new song sing ye in the way, which ye have learned on the earth. In what earth? In all nations. Therefore even the new song doth not belong to a part. He that in a part singeth, singeth an old song: whatever he please to sing, he singeth an old song, the old man singeth: divided he is, carnal he is. Truly in so far as carnal he is, so far he is old; and in so far as he is spiritual, so far new. See what saith the Apostle; I could not speak to you as if to spiritual, but as if to carnal. Whence proveth he them carnal? For while one saith, I am of Paul; but another, I of Apollos: are ye not, he saith, carnal? Therefore in the Spirit a new song sing thou in the safe way. Just as wayfarers sing, and ofttimes in the night sing. Awful round about all things do sound, or rather they sound not around, but are still around; and the more still the more awful; nevertheless, even they that fear robbers do sing. How much more safely

thou singest in Christ! That way hath no robber, unless thou by forsaking the way fallest into the hands of a robber. Sing, I say, safely a new song in the way which thou hast known upon earth, that is, in all nations. See thou how he singeth not with thee that new song, that would be in a part. Sing ye, he saith, to the Lord a new song, and in continuation, Sing ye to the Lord all the earth. Let the peoples confess to Thee, O God. They have found out Thy way, let them confess to Thee. The very singing is confession, confession of thy sins and of the virtue of God. Thine own iniquity confess thou, the Grace of God confess thou: thyself blame thou, Him glorify thou; thyself censure thou, Him praise thou: in order that also when Himself cometh He may find thee thine own punisher, and He may hold out to thee Himself as thy Saviour. For why fear ye to confess, that have found out this way in all nations? Why fear ye to confess, and in your confession to sing a new song together with all the earth; in all the earth, in catholic peace, dost thou fear to confess to God, lest He condemn thee that hast confessed? If having not confessed thou liest concealed, having confessed thou wilt be condemned. Thou fearest to confess, that by not confessing canst not be concealed: thou wilt be condemned if thou hast held thy peace, that mightest have been delivered, by having confessed. Let there confess to Thee peoples, O God, confess to Thee all peoples.

7. And because this confession leadeth not to punishment, he continueth and saith, (ver. 4.) Let the nations rejoice and exult. If robbers after confession made do wail before man, let the faithful after confessing before God rejoice. If a man be judge, the torturer and his fear exact from a robber a confession: yea sometimes fear wringeth out confession, pain extorteth it: and he that waileth in tortures, but feareth to be killed if he confess, supporteth tortures as far as he is able: and if he shall have been overcome by pain, he giveth his voice for death. Nowise therefore is he joyful; nowise exulting: before he confesseth the claw teareth him; when he hath confessed, the executioner leadeth him along a condemned felon: wretched in every case. But let the nations rejoice and exult. Whence? Through that same confession. Why? Because good He is to Whom they confess: He exacteth confession, to the end that He may deliver the humble; He condemneth one not confessing, to the end that He may punish the proud. Therefore be thou sorrowful before thou confessest; after having confessed

exult, now thou wilt be made whole. Thy conscience had gathered up evil humours, with boil it had swollen, it was torturing thee, it suffered thee not to rest: the Physician applieth the fomentations of words, and sometimes He lanceth it, He applieth the surgeon’s knife by the chastisement of tribulation: do thou acknowledge the Physician’s hand, confess thou, let every evil humour go forth and flow away in confession: now exult, now rejoice, that which remaineth will be easy to be made whole. Let there confess to Thee peoples, O God: confess to Thee all peoples. And because they confess, let the nations rejoice and exult, for Thou judgest the peoples in equity. No one deceiveth Thee: let him be glad that must be judged, that hath feared Him that was to judge. For he hath looked before, and hath come before the face of Him in confession; but He, when He shall have come, shall judge the peoples in equity. What will avail there the cunning of the accuser, where conscience is witness, where thou wilt be and thy cause, where the Judge requireth no witness? An Advocate He hath sent to thee: for the sake of Him and through Him confess thou, plead thy cause, and He is Counsel for the penitent, and the Petitioner of pardon for him if confessing, and the judge of him if innocent. Wilt thou indeed possibly fear for thy cause where thy Advocate will be thy Judge? Let the nations rejoice, therefore, and exult, for Thou judgest the peoples in equity. But they will have to fear lest they be judged to their hurt: let them give up themselves to be amended to Him who seeth them that must be judged. Here let them be amended, and not fear when they shall be judged. See thou what he saith in another Psalm: O God, in Thy name save me, and in Thy virtue judge me. What saith he? Unless first Thou save me in Thy name, I ought to fear the time when Thou shalt judge me in Thy virtue: but if first Thou save me in Thy name: why shall I fear Him judging in virtue, whose safety hath gone before in His name? So also in this passage, let there confess to Thee all peoples. And lest ye should suppose that something must be feared in confession, let the nations rejoice, he saith, and exult. Why rejoice and exult? Because Thou judgest the peoples in equity. No one giveth bribe against us, no one bribeth Thee, no one beguileth Thee. Therefore be thou secure. But what of thy cause? No one bribeth God, it is evident: let Him not perchance therefore be more to be feared, because no wise He can be bribed. How therefore art thou secure? According to that which but now hath been said, O God, in Thy name save me, and in Thy virtue judge me.

So here also; let the nations rejoice and exult, for Thou judgest the peoples in equity. And that unrighteous men may not fear, he hath added, and the nations on the earth Thou directest. Depraved were the nations and crooked were the nations, perverse were the nations; for the ill desert of their depravity, and crookedness and perverseness, the Judge's coming they feared: there cometh the hand of the same, it is stretched out mercifully to the peoples, they are guided in order that they may walk the straight way; why should they fear the Judge to come, that have first acknowledged Him for a Corrector? To His hand let them give up themselves, Himself guideth the nations on the earth. But guided nations are walking in the Truth, are exulting in Him, are doing good works; and if perchance there cometh in any water (for on sea they are sailing) through the very small holes, through the crevices into the hold, pumping it out by good works, lest by more and more coming it accumulate, and sink the ship, pumping it out daily, fasting, praying, doing almsdeeds, saying with pure heart, Forgive us our debts, as also we forgive our debtors—saying such words walk thou secure, and exult in the way, sing in the way. Do not fear the Judge: before thou wast a believer, thou didst find a Saviour. Thee ungodly He sought out that He might redeem, thee redeemed will He forsake so as to destroy? And the nations on earth Thou directest.

8. He exulteth, rejoiceth, exhorteth, he repeateth those same verses in exhortation. (Ver. 5.) Let the peoples confess to Thee, O God, let all peoples confess to Thee. (Ver. 6.) The earth hath given her fruit. What fruit? Let all peoples confess to Thee. Earth it was, of thorns it was full; there came the hand of One rooting them up, there came a calling by His majesty and mercy, the earth began to confess; now the earth giveth her fruit. Would she give her fruit unless first she were rained on? Would she give her fruit, unless first the mercy of God had come from above? Let them read to me, thou sayest, how the earth being rained upon gave her fruit. Hear of the Lord raining upon her: Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. He raineth, and that same rain is thunder; it terrifieth: fear thou Him thundering, and receive Him raining. Behold, after that voice of a thundering and raining God, after that voice let us see something out of the Gospel itself. Behold that harlot of ill fame in the city burst into a strange house into which she had not been invited by the host, but by One invited

she had been called; called not with tongue, but by Grace. The sick woman knew that she had there a place, where she was aware that her Physician was sitting at meat. She is gone in, that was a sinner; she dareth not draw near save to the feet: she weepeth at His feet, she washeth with tears, she wipeth with hair, she anointeth with ointment. Why wonderest thou? The earth hath given her fruit. This thing, I say, came to pass by the Lord raining there through His own mouth; there came to pass the things whereof we read in the Gospel; and by His raining through His clouds, by the sending of the Apostles and by their preaching the truth, the earth more abundantly hath given her fruit, and that crop now hath filled the round world.

9. See what secondly is said; May God bless us, even our God; (ver. 7.) May God bless us. Bless us, as already I have said, is again and again may He bless, may He multiply blessings. Let Your Love observe that even now the fruit of the earth was first in Jerusalem. For from thence began the Church: there came there the Holy Spirit, and filled full the holy men gathered together in one place; miracles were done, with the tongues of all men they spake. They were filled full of the Spirit of God, the people were converted that were in that place, fearing and receiving the divine shower, by confession they brought forth so much fruit, that all their goods they brought together into a common stock, making distribution to the poor, in order that no one might call any thing his own, but all things might be to them in common, and they might have one soul and one heart unto God. For there had been forgiven them the blood which they had shed, it had been forgiven them by the Lord pardoning, in order that now they might even learn to drink that which they had shed. Great in that place is the fruit: the earth hath given her fruit, both great fruit, and most excellent fruit. Ought by any means that earth alone to give her fruit? May there bless us God, our God, may there bless us God. Still may He bless us: for blessing in multiplication is wont most chiefly and properly to be perceived. Let us prove this in Genesis; see the works of God: God made light, and God made a division between light and darkness: the light He called day, and the darkness He called night. It is not said, He blessed the light. For the same light returneth and changeth by days and nights. He calleth the sky the firmament between waters and waters: it is not said, He blessed the sky: He severed the sea from the dry land, and named both, the dry land earth, and

the gathering together of the waters sea: neither here is it said, God blessed. We come to those things which were to have the seed of fruitfulness, and the things which sprang out of the waters. For these very things have the greatest fruitfulness in multiplying; and the Lord blessed them, saying, Grow, and be multiplied, and replenish the waters of the sea, and let winged creatures be multiplied over the earth. So also when He made subject all things to man, whom He made after His own image, it is written, And God blessed, saying, Grow, and be multiplied, and replenish the face of the earth. Therefore of blessing the proper power is for multiplication, and for replenishing the face of the earth. Hear also in this Psalm: May God bless us, even our God, may God bless us. And for what availeth that blessing? And let all the ends of the world fear Him. Therefore, my brethren, so abundantly in the name of Christ God hath blessed us, that He filleth the entire face of the earth with His sons, adopted into His kingdom, coheirs of His Only-Begotten. An only Son He begot, and One He would not have Him to be: an Only Son He begot, I say, and One He would not have Him to remain. He made for Him brethren; though not by begetting, yet by adopting, He made them co-heirs with Him. He made Him first a partaker of our mortality, in order that we might believe ourselves to be able to be partakers of His Divinity.

10. Let us observe our price. All things have been foretold, all things are being shewn forth, the Gospel goeth through the round world: every labour of mankind at this time beareth witness, all things are being fulfilled, that in the Scriptures have been foretold. Just as up to the present day all things have come to pass, so also the things which remain are to come to pass. Let us fear the judgment-day, the Lord is to come. He that came humble, will come exalted: He that came to be judged, will come to judge. Let us acknowledge Him humble, in order that we may not dread Him exalted: let us embrace Him humble, in order that we may long for Him exalted. For to men longing for Him He will come gracious. Those long for Him that have kept His faith and have done His commandments. For even if we will not, He will come. Let us will therefore that He come, Who will come, even if we will not. How should we will that He come? By living well, by doing well. Let not things past please us; things present not hold us; let us not ‘close the ear’ as it were with tail, let us not press down the ear on the

ground; lest by things past we be kept back from hearing, lest by things present we be entangled and prevented from meditating on things future; let us reach forth unto those things which are before, let us forget things past. And that for which now we toil, for which now we groan, for which now we sigh, of which now we speak, which in part, however small soever, we perceive, and to receive are not able, we shall receive, we shall throughly enjoy in the resurrection of the just. Our youth shall be renewed as an eagle's, if only our old man we break against the Rock of Christ. Whether those things be true, brethren, which are said of the serpent, or those which are said of the eagle, or whether it be rather a tale of men than truth, truth is nevertheless in the Scriptures, and not without reason the Scriptures have spoken of this: let us do whatever it signifieth, and not toil to discover how far that is true. Be thou such an one, as that thy youth may be able to be renewed as an eagle's. And know thou that it cannot be renewed, except thine old man on the Rock shall have been broken off: that is, except by the aid of the Rock, except by the aid of Christ, thou wilt not be able to be renewed. Do not thou because of the pleasantness of the past life be deaf to the word of God: do not by things present be so held and entangled, as to say, I have no leisure to read, I have no leisure to hear. This is to press down the ear upon the ground. Do thou therefore not be such an one: but be such an one as on the other side thou findest, that is, so that thou forget things past, unto things before reach thyself out, in order that thine old man on the Rock thou mayest break off. And if any comparisons shall have been made for thee, if thou hast found them in the Scriptures, believe: if thou shalt not have found them spoken of except by report, do not very much believe them. The thing itself perchance is so, perchance is not so. Do thou profit by it, let that comparison avail for thy salvation. Thou art unwilling to profit by this comparison, by some other profit, it mattereth not provided thou do it: and, being secure, wait for the Kingdom of God, lest thy prayer quarrel with thee. For, O Christian man, when thou sayest, Thy Kingdom come, how sayest thou, Thy kingdom come? Examine thy heart: see, behold, Thy kingdom come: He crieth out to thee, I come: dost thou not fear? Often we have told Your Love: both to preach the truth is nothing, if heart from tongue dissent: and to hear the truth is nothing, if fruit follow not hearing. From this place exalted as it were we are speaking to you: but how much we are beneath your feet in fear, God knoweth, Who is gracious to the humble; for the voices of men praising do not give us so much pleasure as the devotion of men confessing, and the deeds of men now righteous. And how we have no pleasure but in your advances, but by those praises how much we are endangered, He knoweth, Whom we pray to deliver us from all dangers, and to deign to know and crown us together with you, saved from every trial, in His Kingdom.

PSALM 68

Exposition

1. Of this Psalm, the title seemeth not to need operose discussion: for simple and easy it appeareth. For thus it standeth: For the end, for David Himself a Psalm of a Song. But in many Psalms already we have reminded you what is at the end: for the end of the Law is Christ for righteousness to every man believing: He is the end which maketh perfect, not that which consumeth or destroyeth. Nevertheless, if any one endeavoureth to inquire, what meaneth, a Psalm of a Song: why not either Psalm or Song, but both; or what is the difference between Psalm of Song, and Song of Psalm, because even thus of some Psalms the titles are inscribed: he will find perchance something which we leave for men more acute and more at leisure than ourselves. Certain before us have distinguished between Song and Psalm; so that because a Song with the mouth is pronounced, but a Psalm with the accompaniment of a visible instrument, that is with a Psaltery, is sung, by a Song there seemeth to be signified the understanding of the mind, but by a Psalm the works of the body. For instance, in this very sixty-seventh Psalm which we have undertaken to treat of, that which hath been said, namely, Sing ye to God, Psalm ye to His name: certain have distinguished as followeth; to wit, Sing ye to God, seemeth to have been said, because those things which within herself the mind doeth, to God are known, by men are not seen; but because good works are to be seen by men to the end that they may glorify our Father Who is in Heaven, with reason hath been said, Psalm ye to His name, that is, to its fame far and wide, so that laudably His name may be pronounced. This distinction in some other place, as far as I recollect, I myself also have followed. But I remember that we have also read, Psalm ye to God: as signifying, that such things as visibly we work well, not only to men, but also to God, are pleasing. But not all things which to God are pleasing, can also be pleasing to men, because they cannot see them. Whence a marvellous thing it is, if in the same manner as both are read, both Sing ye to God, and Psalm ye to God; so in some other place there can be read, Sing ye to His name. But if This

also in the holy Scriptures is found to be spoken, the above distinction in vain hath been worked out. I am moved also by the consideration, that under a general name they are rather called Psalms than Songs; so that the Lord said, What things have been written in the Law and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me. And the book itself is called the book of Psalms, not of Songs: as it is written, He saith, in the book of the Psalms, whereas rather according to that distinction, it would seem that they ought to have been called Songs; for a Song even without a Psalm there may be, but a Psalm without a Song there cannot be. For there may be thoughts of the mind, whereof there are no corporal works: but there is no good work whereof there is in the mind no thought. And thus in both cases Songs are used, not in both cases Psalms: and yet, as I have said, generally they are called Psalms, not Songs; and the book of Psalms, not of Songs. And if the meanings of the words be understood and examined, where the title is only of a Psalm, and where only of a Song, and where not the Psalm of a Song, as in this, but the Song of a Psalm is inscribed; I know not whether this difference can be proved. In fine, as we commenced, leaving these things to those who are able and who have opportunity to make such distinctions, and to define them by a certain rule for the differences; let us, as far as we are enabled by the help of the Lord, consider and treat of the text of this Psalm.

2. Ver. 1. Let God rise up, and let His enemies be scattered. Already this hath come to pass, Christ hath risen up, Who is over all things, God blessed for ever, and His enemies have been dispersed through all nations, to wit, the Jews; in that very place, where they practised their enmities, being overthrown in war, and thence through all places dispersed: and now they hate, but fear, and in that very fear they do that which followeth, And let them that hate Him flee from His face. The flight indeed of the mind is fear. For in carnal flight, whither flee they from the face of Him, Who every where sheweth the efficacy of His presence? Whither shall I depart, saith he, from Thy Spirit, and from Thy face whither shall I flee? With mind, therefore, not with body, they flee; to wit, by being afraid, not by being hidden; and not from that face which they see not, but from that which they are compelled to see. For the face of Him hath His presence in His Church been called. Whence to them at enmity with Him He said, Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man coming in clouds. Even as He hath come in His Church,

spreading Her abroad in the whole round world, wherein His enemies have been dispersed. But He hath come in such clouds as He speaketh of, in, “I will command My clouds, that they rain not upon it rain.” Let them, therefore, that hate Him flee from the face of Him: let them be afraid at the presence of His holy believers, of whom He saith, In as much as to one of My least ones ye have done it, to Me ye have done it.

3. Ver. 2. As smoke faileth, let them fail. For they lifted up themselves from the fires of their hatred unto the vapouring of pride, and against Heaven setting their mouth, and shouting, Crucify, Crucify, Him taken captive they derided, Him hanging they mocked: and being soon conquered by that very Person against Whom they swelled victorious, they vanished away. As wax melteth from the face of fire, so let sinners perish from the face of God. Though perchance in this passage he hath referred to those men, whose hardheartedness in tears of penitence is dissolved: yet this also may be understood, that he threateneth future judgment; because though in this world like smoke, in lifting up themselves, that is, in priding themselves, they have melted away, there will come to them at the last final damnation, so that from His face they will perish for everlasting, when in His own glory He shall have appeared, like fire, for the punishment of the ungodly, and the light of the righteous.

4. Lastly, there followeth, (ver. 3.) And let just men be joyous, and exult in the sight of God, let them delight in gladness. For then shall they hear, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive ye the kingdom. Let them be joyous, therefore, that have toiled, and exult in the sight of God. For there will not be in this exultation, as though it were before men, any empty boasting; but (it will be) in the sight of Him who unerringly looketh into that which He hath granted. Let them delight in gladness: no longer exulting with trembling, as in this world, so long as human life is a trial upon earth.

5. Secondly, he turneth himself to those very persons to whom he hath given so great hope, and to them while here living he speaketh and exhorteth: (ver. 4.) Sing ye to God, psalm ye to His name. Already on this subject in the exposition of the Title we have before spoken that which seemed meet. He singeth to God, that liveth to God: He psalmeth to His name, that worketh unto His Glory. In singing thus, in psalming thus, that

is, by so living, by so working, a way make ye to Him, he saith, that hath ascended above the setting. A way make ye to Christ: so that through the beautiful feet of men telling good tidings, the hearts of men believing may have a way opened to Him. For the Same is He that hath ascended above the setting: either because the new life of one turned to Him receiveth Him not, except the old life shall have set by his renouncing this world, or because He ascended above the setting, when by rising again He conquered the downfall of the body. For The Lord is His name. Which if they had known, the Lord of glory they never would have crucified.

6. Exult ye in the sight of Him, O ye to whom hath been said, Sing ye to God, psalm ye to the name of Him, a way make ye to Him that hath ascended above the setting, also exult in the sight of Him: as if sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing. For while ye make a way to Him, while ye prepare a way whereby He may come and possess the nations, ye are to suffer in the sight of men many sorrowful things. But not only faint not, but even exult, not in the sight of men, but in the sight of God. “In hope rejoicing, in tribulation enduring:” exult ye in the sight of Him. For they that in the sight of men trouble you, shall be troubled by the face of Him, (ver. 5.) the Father of orphans and Judge of widows. For desolate they suppose them to be, from whom ofttimes by the sword of the Word of God both parents from sons, and husbands from wives, are severed: but persons destitute and widowed have the consolation of the Father of orphans and Judge of widows: they have the consolation of Him that say to Him, For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord hath taken up me: and they that have hoped in the Lord, continuing in prayers by night and by day: by whose face those men shall be troubled when they shall have seen themselves prevail nothing, for that the whole world hath gone away after Him.

7. For out of those orphans and widows, that is, persons destitute of partnership in this world’s hope, the Lord for Himself doth build a Temple: whereof in continuation he saith, The Lord is in His holy place. For what is His place he hath disclosed, when he saith, God that maketh to dwell men of one mood in a house: men of one mind, of one sentiment: this is the holy place of the Lord. For when he had said, The Lord is in His holy place: as

though we were inquiring in what place, since He is every where wholly, and no place of corporal space containeth Him; forthwith he hath subjoined somewhat, that we should not seek Him apart from ourselves, but rather being of one mood dwelling in a house, we should deserve that He also Himself deign to dwell among us. This is the holy place of the Lord, the thing that most men seek to have, a place where in prayer they may be hearkened unto. Let themselves be therefore that which they seek, and what they speak of in their hearts, that is, in such chambers of theirs let them afflict themselves, dwelling of one mood in a house; as that by the Lord of the great house they may be dwelled in, and by themselves may be hearkened to. For there is a great house, wherein not only golden vessels are, and silver vessels, but also wooden and earthen. And some indeed there are unto honour, others for dishonour: but if any shall have purged their own selves from the vessels of dishonour, they shall be of one mood in the house, and shall be the holy place of the Lord. For as in a great house of a man, the Lord thereof doth not abide in every place whatsoever, but in some place doubtless more private and honourable: so God dwelleth not in all men that are in His house, (for He dwelleth not in the vessels of dishonour,) but His holy place are they whom He maketh to dwell of one mood, or of one manner, in a house. For what are called τρόποι in Greek, by both modi and mores, (moods, and manners,) in Latin may be interpreted. Nor hath the Greek writer, Who maketh to dwell, but only, maketh to dwell. The Lord, then, is in His holy place. What is that place? God Himself maketh it for Himself. For God maketh to dwell men of one mood in a house: this is His holy place.

8. But to prove that by His Grace He buildeth to Himself this place, not for the sake of the merits preceding of those persons out of whom He buildeth it, see what followeth: (ver. 6.) Who leadeth forth men fettered, in strength. For He looseth the heavy bonds of sins, wherewith they were fettered so that they could not walk in the way of the commandments: but He leadeth them forth in strength, which before His Grace they had not. Likewise men provoking that dwell in the tombs: that is, every way dead, taken up with dead works. For these men provoke Him to anger by withstanding justice: for those fettered men perchance would walk, and are not able, and are praying of God that they may be able, and are saying to Him, From my

necessities lead me forth. By whom being heard, they give thanks, saying, Thou hast broken asunder my bonds. But these provoking men that dwell in the tombs, are of that kind, which in another passage the Scripture pointeth out, saying, From a dead man, as from one that is not, confession perisheth. Whence there is this saying, When a sinner shall have come into the depth of evil things, he despiseth. For it is one thing to long for, another thing to fight against righteousness: one thing from evil to desire to be delivered, another thing one's evil doings to defend rather than to confess: both kinds nevertheless the Grace of Christ leadeth forth in strength. With what strength, but that wherewith against sin even unto blood they are to strive? For out of each kind are made meet persons, whereof to construct His holy place; those being loosened, these being raised to life. For even of the woman, whom Satan had bound for eighteen years, by His command He loosed the bonds; and Lazarus' death by His voice He overcame. He that hath done these things in bodies, is able to do more marvellous things in characters, and to make men of one mood to dwell in a house: leading forth men fettered in strength, likewise men provoking that dwell in the tombs.

9. Ver. 7. O God, when Thou wentest forth before Thy people. His going forth is perceived, when He appeareth in His works. But He appeareth not to all men, but to them that know how to spy out His works. For I do not now speak of those works which are conspicuous to all men, Heaven and earth and sea and all things that in them are; but the works whereby He leadeth forth men fettered in strength, likewise men provoking that dwell in the tombs, and maketh them of one manner to dwell in a house. Thus He goeth forth before His people, that is, before those that do perceive this His Grace. Lastly, there followeth, When Thou wentest by in the desert, (ver. 8.) the earth was moved. A desert were the nations, which knew not God: a desert they were, where by God Himself no law had been given, where no Prophet had dwelled, and foretold the Lord to come. When, then, Thou wentest by in the desert, when Thou wast preached in the nations; the earth was moved, to the faith earthly men were stirred up. But whence was it moved? For the heavens dropped from the face of God. Perchance here some one calleth to mind that time, when in the desert God was going over before His people, before the sons of Israel, by day in the pillar of cloud, by night in the brightness of fire; and determineth that thus it is that the

heavens dropped from the face of God, for manna He rained upon His people: that the same thing also is that which followeth, Mount Sina from the face of the God of Israel, (ver. 9.) with voluntary rain severing God to Thine inheritance, namely, the God that on Mount Sina spake to Moses, when He gave the Law, so that the manna is the voluntary rain, which God severed for His inheritance, that is, for His people; because them alone He so fed, not the other nations also: so that what next he saith, and it was weakened, is understood of the inheritance being itself weakened; for they murmuring, fastidiously loathed the manna, longing for victuals of flesh, and those things on which they had been accustomed to live in Egypt. But in these words, if the exact meaning only of the letter, not a spiritual sense, be to be looked for, it ought to be shewn according to an exact corporal sense of them, who at that time, being fettered, and even dwelling in the tombs, were led forth in strength. Secondly, if that people, to wit that inheritance of God, who with loathing rejected the manna, was made weak, there ought not to follow, But Thou didst perfect it: but, But Thou didst smite it. For God being offended by those murmurings and loathings, a mighty plague followed. Lastly, all those men in the desert were stricken down, nor were any of them except two found worthy to go into the land of promise. Although even if in the sons of them that inheritance be said to have been perfected, we ought more readily to hold to a spiritual sense. For all those things in a figure did happen to them; until the day should break, and the shadows should be removed.

10. May then the Lord open to us that knock; and may the secret things of His mysteries, as far as Himself vouchsafeth, be disclosed. For in order that the earth might be moved to the Truth when into the desert of the Gentiles the Gospel was passing, the Heavens dropped from the face of God. These are the Heavens, whereof in another Psalm is sung, The Heavens are telling forth the glory of God. For of these a little after is there said: There are neither speeches nor discourses, wherein the voices of them are not heard: into every land the sound of them hath gone forth, and into the ends of the earth the words of them. However, to those heavens must not be ascribed so great glory, as though from men that Grace came into the desert of the Gentiles, that the earth might be moved to the Truth. For the Heavens dropped not from themselves, but from the face of God, to wit, He dwelling

in them, and making them of one manner to dwell in a house. For the same also are the mountains, whereof is said, I have lifted mine eyes to the mountains, whence shall come help to me. And nevertheless, lest on men he should seem to have set hope, immediately he hath added, My help is from the Lord, Who hath made Heaven and earth. For to Him in another place is said, Thou enlightening marvellously, from the everlasting mountains: though it be from the everlasting mountains; nevertheless it is Thou enlightening marvellously. So here also, the Heavens dropped; but from the face of God. For even these very persons have been saved through faith, and this not of themselves, but God's gift it is, not of works, lest perchance any man should be lifted up. For of Himself we are the workmanship, 'that maketh men of one mood to dwell in a house.'

11. But what is that which followeth, Mount Sina from the face of the God of Israel? Must there be understood dropped; so that what he hath called by the name of Heavens, the same he hath willed to be understood under the name of Mount Sina also; just as we said that those are called mountains, which were called Heavens? Nor in this sense ought it to move us that He saith mountain, not mountains, while in that place they were called Heavens, not Heaven: for in another Psalm also after it had been said, The Heavens are telling forth the glory of God: after the manner of Scripture repeating the same sense in different words, subsequently there is said, And the firmament telleth the works of His hands. First he said Heavens, not Heaven: and yet afterwards not firmaments, but firmament. For God called the firmament Heaven, as in Genesis hath been written. Thus then Heavens and Heaven, mountains and mountain, are not a different thing, but the very same thing: just as Churches many, and the One Church, are not a different thing, but the very same thing. Why then Mount Sina, which gendereth unto bondage? as saith the Apostle. Is perchance the Law itself to be understood in mount Sina, as that which the Heavens dropped from the face of God, in order that the earth might be moved? And is this the very moving of the earth, when men are troubled, because the Law they cannot fulfil? But if so it is, this is the voluntary rain, whereof in confirmation he saith, Voluntary rain God severing to Thine inheritance: because He hath not done so to any nation, and His judgment He hath not manifested to them. God therefore set apart this voluntary rain to His inheritance because He gave the Law. And

there was made weak, either the Law, or the inheritance. The Law may be understood to have been made weak, because it was not fulfilled; not that of itself it is weak, but because it maketh men weak, by threatening punishment, and not aiding through grace. For also the very word the Apostle hath used, where he saith, For that which was impossible of the Law, wherein it was made weak through the flesh: willing to intimate that through the Spirit it is fulfilled: nevertheless, itself he hath said is made weak, because by weak men it cannot be fulfilled. But the inheritance, that is, the people, without any doubt is understood to have been made weak by the giving to them of the Law. For the Law came in, that transgression might abound. But that which followeth, But Thou hast made it perfect, to the Law is thus referred, forasmuch as it is made perfect, that is, is fulfilled after that which the Lord saith in the Gospel, I have not come to annul the Law, but to fulfil. Whence also the same Apostle, who had said that the Law was made weak through the flesh, because flesh fulfilleth not that which through the Spirit is fulfilled, that is, through spiritual grace; saith also, That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. This is then the sense of, But thou hast made it perfect; namely, that The fulness of the Law is love; and, The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, not through ourselves, but, through the Holy Spirit that hath been given to us; this is, But Thou hast made it perfect, if He be understood to have made perfect the Law; but if the inheritance, more easy is the understanding thereof. For if for this reason the inheritance of God is said to have been made weak, that is, the people of God to have been made weak by the giving of the Law, to wit, because the Law entered in, in order that transgression might abound: then also that which followeth, But Thou hast made it perfect, is understood by that which also in the Apostle followeth, but where transgression abounded, grace did more abound. For transgression being abundant, the weaknesses of them were multiplied, and afterwards they made haste: because they groaned and called upon Him; in order that by His aid there might be fulfilled that, which by His command was not fulfilled.

12. There is in these words yet another sense: which seemeth to me more to approve itself. For much more in accordance with the context, grace itself is understood to be the voluntary rain, because with no preceding merits of

works it is given gratis. For if grace, no longer of works: otherwise grace no longer is grace. For unworthy I am, he saith, to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God: but by the grace of God I am what I am. This is the voluntary rain. For voluntarily He hath begotten us with the word of Truth. This is the voluntary rain. Thence elsewhere is said, With the buckler of Thy good will Thou hast crowned us. That rain, when God was going over in the desert, that is, was being preached in the nations, the Heavens dropped: not however from themselves, but from the face of God, since even they themselves by the grace of God are what they are. And therefore, Mount Sina, he himself also who laboured more than they all, yet not he himself, but the grace of God with him, in order that more abundantly he might drop upon the nations, that is, upon the desert, where Christ had not been preached, lest upon another's foundation he should build; he himself, I say, was an Israelite of the family of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin: and he himself therefore unto bondage had been gendered, being of the earthly Jerusalem, which is in bondage with her sons, and so he persecuted the Church. For what he himself hath intimated: As then he that after the flesh had been begotten was persecuting him that after the Spirit had been begotten, even so now. But mercy he obtained, because ignorant he did it in unbelief. We wonder, then, how the Heavens dropped from the face of God: let us wonder more, how did Mount Sina, that is, he that before was persecuting, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, after the Law a Pharisee. But why should we wonder? For not from himself, but as followeth from the face of the God of Israel, of whom he saith himself, and upon the Israel of God: of whom the Lord saith, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom guile is not. This voluntary rain then, with no merits of good works preceding, God set apart for His inheritance. And it was made weak. For he acknowledged himself not to be any thing of himself; that not to his own powers, but to the grace of God must be ascribed what he is. He acknowledged that which hath been said, In my infirmities I will glory. He acknowledged that which hath been said, Be not highminded, but fear. He acknowledged that which hath been said, But to humble men He giveth grace. And it was made weak, but Thou hast made it perfect: because virtue in weakness is perfected. Some copies indeed, both Latin and Greek, have not Mount Sina; but, from the face of the God of Sina, from the face of the God of Israel. That is, The Heavens dropped from the face of God: and, as if enquiry were made of what God, from the face of the God, he saith, of Sina, from the face of the God of Israel, that is, from the face of the God that gave the Law to the people of Israel. Why then the Heavens dropped from the face of God, from the face of this God, but because thus was fulfilled that which had been foretold, Blessing He shall give that hath given the Law? The Law whereby to terrify a man that relieth on human powers; blessing, whereby He delivereth a man that hopeth in God. Thou then, O God, hast made perfect Thine inheritance; because it is made weak in itself, in order that it may be made perfect by Thee.

13. Ver. 10. Thine animals shall dwell therein. Thine, not their own; to Thee subject, not for themselves free; for Thee needy, not for themselves sufficient. Lastly, he continueth, Thou hast prepared in Thine own sweetness for the needy, O God. In Thine own sweetness, not in his meetness. For the needy he is, for he hath been made weak, in order that he may be made perfect: he hath acknowledged himself indigent, that he may be replenished. This is that sweetness, whereof in another place is said, The Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall give her fruit: in order that a good work may be done not for fear, but for love; not for dread of punishment, but for love of righteousness. For this is true and sound freedom. But the Lord hath prepared this for one wanting, not for one abounding, whose reproach is that poverty: of which sort in another place is said, Reproach to these men that abound, and contempt to proud men. For those he hath called proud, whom he hath called them that abound.

14. Ver. 11. The Lord shall give the Word: to wit, food for His animals which shall dwell therein. But what shall these animals work to whom He shall give the Word? What but that which followeth? To them preaching the Gospel in much virtue. With what virtue, but with that strength wherein He leadeth forth men fettered? Perchance also here he speaketh of that virtue, wherewith in preaching the Gospel they wrought wondrous signs.

15. Who then shall give the Word to men preaching the Gospel with much virtue? (Ver. 12.) The King, he saith, of the virtues of the Beloved. The Father therefore is King of the virtues of the Son. For the Beloved, when there is not specified any person that is beloved, by a substitution of name, of the Only Son is understood. Is not the Son Himself King of His virtues,

to wit of the virtues serving Himself? Because with much virtue the King of Virtues shall give the Word to men preaching the Gospel, of Whom it hath been said, The Lord of Virtues, He is the King of Glory? But his not having said King of Virtues, but King of the Virtues of the Beloved, is a most usual expression in the Scriptures, if any one observe: which thing chiefly appeareth in those cases where even the person’s own name is already expressed, so that it cannot at all be doubted that it is the same person of whom something is said. Of which sort also is that which in the Pentateuch in many passages is found: And Moses did it, as the Lord commanded Moses. He said not that which is usual in our expressions, And Moses did, as the Lord commanded him; but, ‘Moses did as the Lord commanded Moses,’ as if one person were the Moses whom He commanded, and another person the Moses who did, whereas it is the very same. In the New Testament such expressions are most difficult to find. From thence nevertheless is that which the Apostle saith, Concerning His Son Who was made for Him of the seed of David after the flesh, Who was predestined to be the Son of God in virtue after the Spirit of sanctification by the resurrection of the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord: as though one person were the Son of God who was made of the seed of David after the flesh, and another person Jesus Christ our Lord, whereas He is one and the same. But in the old Books this expression is frequent: and therefore when it is used somewhat obscurely, by evident instances of the like kind it must be understood; as in this Psalm, whereof we are treating, somewhat obscurely it hath been used. For if Jesus Christ were said to be King of the virtues of Jesus Christ, it would be as clear as this, Moses did as the Lord commanded Moses: but because there hath been said, King of the virtues of the Beloved, it is no slight matter that it should come to pass that the Same is King of the virtues, as is also the Beloved. The King, therefore, of the virtues of the Beloved, thus may be understood, as if it were to be said, the King of His virtues, because both King of Virtues is Christ, and the Beloved is the very same Christ. However, this sense hath not so great urgency, as that no other can be accepted: because the Father also may be understood as King of the virtues of His Beloved Son, to Whom the Beloved Himself saith, All Mine are Thine, and Thine Mine. But if perchance it is asked, whether God the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ can be called King also, I know not whether any one would dare to withhold this name from Him in the passage where the Apostle saith, But to the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God. Because even if this be said of the Trinity itself, therein is also God the Father. But if we do not carnally understand, O God, Thy Judgment to the King give Thou, and Thy justice to the Son of the King: I know not whether any thing else hath been said than, ‘to Thy Son.’ King therefore is the Father also. Whence that verse of this Psalm, King of the virtues of the Beloved, in either way may be understood. When therefore he had said, The Lord shall give the Word to men preaching the Gospel with much virtue: because virtue itself by Him is ruled, and serveth Him by Whom it is given; the Lord Himself, he saith, Who shall give the Word to men preaching the Gospel with much virtue, is the King of the virtues of the Beloved.

16. In the next place there followeth, Of the Beloved, and of the beauty of the House to divide the spoils. The repetition belongeth to eulogy: though this repetition all the copies have not, and the more careful mark it with a star put before it, which marks are called asterisks, whereby they would have to be noted, that there are not in the Septuagint Version, but there are in the Hebrew, those words which are distinguished by such marks. But whether it be repeated, or whether it be received as spoken once, the word which hath been set down, namely, Beloved, I suppose that thus must be understood that which followeth, and of the beauty of a house to divide the spoils; as if there were said, Chosen even to divide the spoils of the beauty of a house, that is, Chosen even for dividing the spoils. For beautiful Christ hath made His House, that is, the Church, by dividing to Her spoils: in the same manner as the Body is beautiful in the distribution of the members. ‘Spoils’ moreover those are called that are stripped off from conquered foes. What this is the Gospel adviseth us in the passage where we read, No one goeth into the house of a strong man to spoil his vessels, unless first he shall have bound the strong man. Christ therefore hath bound the devil with spiritual bonds, by overcoming death, and by ascending from Hell above the Heavens: He hath bound him by the Sacrament of His Incarnation, because though finding nothing in Him deserving of death, yet he was permitted to kill: and from him so bound He took away his vessels as though they were spoils. For he was working in the sons of disobedience, of whose unbelief he made use to work his own will. These vessels the Lord cleansing by the remission of sins, sanctifying these spoils wrested from the

foe laid prostrate and bound, these He hath divided to the beauty of His House; making some apostles, some prophets, some pastors and doctors, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the Body of Christ. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and though all the members of the body are many, the body is one: so also is Christ. Are all Apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all Powers? Have all the gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But all these things worketh one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one his own gifts, as He willeth. And such is the beauty of the house, whereto the spoils are divided, that a lover thereof with this fairness being enkindled, crieth out, O Lord, I have loved the grace of Thy House.

17. Now in that which followeth, he turneth himself to address the members themselves, whereof the beauty of the House is composed, saying, (ver. 13.) If ye sleep in the midst of the lots, wings of a dove silvered, and between the shoulders thereof in the freshness of gold. First, we must here examine the order of the words, in what manner the sentence is ended; which certainly awaiteth, when there is said, If ye sleep: secondly, in that which he saith, namely, wings of dove silvered, whether in the singular number it must be understood as being, ‘of this wing’ thereof, or in the plural as, ‘these wings.’ But the singular number the Greek excludeth, where always in the plural we read it written. But still it is uncertain whether it be, these wings; or whether, ‘O ye wings,’ so as that he may seem to speak to the wings themselves. Whether therefore by the words which have preceded, that sentence be ended, so that the order is, The Lord shall give the Word to men preaching the Gospel with much virtue, if ye sleep in the midst of the lots, O ye wings of a dove silvered: or by these which follow, so that the order is, If ye sleep in the midst of the lots, the wings of a dove silvered with snow shall be whitened in Selmon: that is, the wings themselves shall be whitened, if ye sleep in the midst of the lots: so that he may be understood to say this to them that are divided to the beauty of the House, as it were spoils, that is, if ye sleep in the midst of the lots, O ye that are divided to the beauty of the House, through the manifestation of the Spirit unto profit, so that to one indeed is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge after the same Spirit, to another faith, to another kinds of healings in the same Spirit, &c. if then ye sleep in

the midst of the lots, then the wings of a dove silvered with snow shall be whitened in Selmon. It may also be thus: If ye being the wings of a dove silvered, sleep in the midst of the lots, with snow they shall be whitened in Selmon, so as that those men be understood who through grace receive remission of sins. Whence also of the Church Herself, is said in the Song of Songs, Who is She that goeth up whitened? For this promise of God is held out through the Prophet, saying, If your sins shall have been like scarlet, like snow I will whiten them. It may also thus be understood, so that in that which hath been said, wings of a dove silvered, there be understood, ye shall be, so that this is the sense, O ye that like as it were spoils to the beauty of the house are divided, if ye sleep in the midst of the lots, wings of a dove silvered ye shall be: that is, into higher places ye shall be lifted up, adhering however to the bond of the Church. For I think no other dove silvered can be better perceived here, than that whereof hath been said, One is My dove. But silvered She is because with divine sayings she hath been instructed: for the sayings of the Lord in another place are called silver with fire refined, purged sevenfold. Some great good thing therefore it is, to sleep in the midst of the lots, which some would have to be the Two Testaments, so that to ‘sleep in the midst of the lots’ is to rest on the authority of those Testaments, that is, to acquiesce in the testimony of either Testament: so that whenever any thing out of them is produced and proved, all strife is ended in peaceful acquiescence. But if so it be, of what else do men preaching the Gospel with much virtue seem to be reminded, but that the Lord shall give them the Word that they may be able to preach, if only they sleep in the midst of the lots? For to them the Word of Truth is given, if only the authority of the two Testaments is not forsaken by them: so that they themselves are also the wings of a dove silvered, by the preaching of whom the glory of the Church is borne unto Heaven.

18. Between the shoulders, however. This is indeed a part of the body, it is a part about the region of the heart, at the hinder parts however, that is, at the back: which part of that dove silvered he saith is ‘in the greenness of gold,’ that is, in the vigour of wisdom, which vigour I think cannot be better understood than by love. But why on the back, and not on the breast? Although I wonder in what sense this word is put in another Psalm, where there is said, Between His shoulders He shall overshadow thee, and under

His wings thou shalt hope: forasmuch as under wings there cannot be overshadowed any thing but what shall be under the breast. And in Latin, indeed, between the shoulders, perchance in some degree of both parts may be understood, both before and behind, that we may take shoulders to be the parts which have the head betwixt them; and in Hebrew perchance the word is ambiguous, which may in this manner also be understood: but the word that is in the Greek, μετάφρενα, signifieth not any thing but at the back, which is between the shoulders. Is there for this reason there the greenness of gold, that is, wisdom and love, because in that place there are in a manner the roots of the wings? or because in that place is carried that light burden? For what are even the wings themselves, but the two commandments of love, whereon hangeth the whole Law and the Prophets? what is that same light burden, but that same love which in these two commandments is fulfilled? For whatever thing is difficult in a commandment, is a light thing to a lover. Nor on any other account is rightly understood the saying, My burden is light, but because He giveth the Holy Spirit, whereby love is shed abroad in our hearts, in order that in love we may do freely that which he that doeth in fear doeth slavishly; nor is he a lover of what is right, when he would prefer, if so be it were possible, that what is right should not be commanded.

19. It may also be required, when it hath not been said, if ye sleep in the lots, but in the midst of the lots; what this is, in the midst of the lots. Which expression indeed, if more exactly it were translated from the Greek, would signify, in the midst between the lots, which is in no one of the interpreters I have read: therefore I suppose, that what hath been said signifieth much the same, to wit the expression, in the midst of the lots. Hence therefore what seemeth to me I will explain. Ofttimes this word is wont to be used for uniting and pacifying one thing and another, that they may not mutually disagree: as when God is establishing His covenant between Himself and His people, this word the Scripture useth; for instead of that expression which is in Latin between Me and you, the Greek hath, in the midst of Me and you. So also of the sign of Circumcision, when God speaketh to Abraham, He saith, There shall be a testament between Me and thee and all thy seed: which the Greek hath, in the midst of Me and thee, and the midst of thy seed. Also when He was speaking to Noe of the bow in the clouds to

establish a sign, this word very often He repeateth: and that which the Latin copies have, between Me and you, or between Me and every living soul, and whatever suchlike expressions there are used, is found in the Greek to be, in the middle of Me and you, which is ἀνὰ μέσον. David also and Jonathan establish a sign between them, that they may not disagree with a difference of thought: and that which in Latin is expressed, between both, in the middle of both, the Greek hath expressed in the same word, which is ἀνὰ μέσον. But it was best that in this passage of the Psalms our translators said not, 'among the lots,' which expression is more suited to the Latin idiom; but, in the midst of the lots, as though 'in the midst between the lots,' which rather is the reading in the Greek, and which is wont to be said in the case of those things which ought to have a mutual consent. The Scripture therefore commandeth to sleep in the midst of the lots, them that either are the wings of a dove silvered, or by this it is granted to them to be so. Furthermore, if these lots signify the two Testaments, of what else are we admonished but that against the mutual agreement of the Testaments we should not fight, but in understanding them should acquiesce, and ourselves should be the sign and evidence of their agreement, while we perceive that the one saith nothing against the other, and with peaceful admiration, like a vision in sleep, we prove it? But why in the 'lots' the Testaments should be perceived, though this word is Greek, and the Testament is not so named, the reason is, because through a testament is given inheritance, which in Greek is called κληρονομία, and an heir κληρονόμος. Now κλῆρος in Greek is the term for lot, and lots according to the promise of God are called those parts of the inheritance, which were distributed to the people. Whence the tribe of Levi was commanded not to have lot among their brethren, because they were sustained by tithes from them. For, I think, they that have been ordained in the grades of the Ecclesiastical Ministry have been called both Clergy and Clerks, because Matthias by lot was chosen, who we read was the first that was ordained by the Apostles. Henceforth, because of inheritance which is given by testament, as though by that which is made that which maketh, by the name of 'lots' the Testaments themselves are signified.

20. Nevertheless, to me here another sense also occurreth, if I mistake not, to be preferred; understanding by cleri the inheritances themselves: so that,

whereas the inheritance of the Old Testament, although in a shadow significant of the future, is earthly felicity; but the inheritance of the New Testament is everlasting immortality; to ‘sleep in the midst of the lots’ is not too earnestly now to seek the former, and still patiently to look for the latter. For they that serve God for the sake of these things, or rather for the sake of these things will not serve Him, while they are seeking felicity in this life and in this earth, have their sleep taken from them, and they sleep not. For with inflamed desires being phrensied, unto crimes and outrages they are hurried forward, and they rest not at all; longing to get, fearing to lose. But he that heareth me, saith Wisdom, shall dwell in hope, and he shall rest without fear from all malice. This is, as far as I see, to sleep in the midst of the lots, that is, in the midst between the inheritances; not yet in reality, but yet in hope of heavenly inheritance to dwell, and already to be untroubled with the desire of earthly felicity. But when there shall have come that which we hope for, no longer between two inheritances we shall rest; but in the new and true inheritance, whereof the old was a shadow, we shall reign. Wherefore even if we shall have understood that which hath been said, If ye sleep in the midst of the lots, as though it had been said, if ye die between the midst of the lots, as though the Scripture in its wonted manner had called this death of the flesh a sleep; it is a death most desirable, that in restraining the desires from earthly things, in the hope of the heavenly inheritance, a man, persevering even unto the end, should so close the last day of this life. For so, sleeping in the midst between the lots, shall they be the wings of the dove silvered, as that, in the time wherein they shall rise again, they shall be caught up in the clouds to meet Christ in the air, and shall live alway hereafter with the Lord: or else surely so it is, because through those that do so live, as the more securely, so the more highly the Church is extolled, and on wings, so to speak, of exalted praise she is uplifted. For not without cause hath been said, Before death praise not any man. All the holy men of God therefore, from the beginning of mankind, even unto the time of the Apostles, (because even they knew how themselves to say, The day of a man I have not coveted, Thou knowest: and, One thing I have sought of the Lord, this I will require,) and after the time of the Apostles, from which time the difference of the two Testaments more clearly hath been revealed, the Apostles themselves and the blessed martyrs, and the rest of just men, like rams, and the sons of rams, even unto this time have slept in the midst of the lots, the earthly kingdom’s felicity already contemning, and for the kingdom of Heaven’s Eternity hoping, and not yet holding. And because so well they have slept, on them, as it were on wings now flieth, and with praises is exalted, the Church: to wit, the Dove silvered, in order that by this fame of theirs, posterity having being invited to imitate them, while in like manner the rest also sleep, there may be added wings whereby even unto the end of the world sublimely she may be preached.

21. Ver. 14. While He That is above the heavens distinguisheth kings over Her, with snow they shall be made white in Selmon. While He above the heavens, He that ascended over all heavens that He might fulfil all things, while He distinguisheth kings over Her, that is, over that same Dove silvered. For the Apostle continueth and saith, and He hath Himself given some for Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers. For what other reason is there to distinguish kings over Her, save for the work of the Ministry, for the edification of the Body of Christ: when she is indeed Herself the Body of Christ? But they are called kings from ruling: and what more than the lusts of the flesh, that sin may not reign in their mortal body to obey the desires thereof, that they yield not their members instruments of iniquity unto sin, but yield themselves to God, as though from the dead living, and their members instruments of righteousness to God? For thus shall the kings be distinguished from foreigners, because they draw not the yoke with unbelievers: secondly, in a peaceful manner being distinguished from one another by their proper gifts. For not all are Apostles, or all Prophets, or all Teachers, or all have gifts of healings, or all with tongues do speak, or all interpret. But all these things worketh one and the same Spirit, dividing proper gifts to each one as He willeth. In giving which Spirit He that is above the Heavens distinguisheth kings over the Dove silvered. Of which Holy Spirit, when, sent to His Mother full of grace, the Angel was speaking, to her enquiring in what manner it could come to pass that she was announced as going to bear, seeing she knew not a man: The Holy Spirit, He saith, shall come over upon thee, and the Virtue of the Most Highest shall overshadow thee. What is, ‘shall overshadow thee,’ but shall make a shadow? Whence also those kings, while, with the grace of the Spirit of the

Lord Christ they are distinguished over the Dove silvered, with snow shall be made white in Selmon. For Selmon is interpreted shadow. For not by their merits or their own virtue they are distinguished. For who, he saith, distinguisheth thee? But what thing hast thou which thou hast not received? In order that therefore they may be distinguished from ungodly men, they receive remission of sins from Him who saith, If your sins shall have been like scarlet, as though snow I will make them white. Behold in what manner with snow they shall be made white unto Selmon, in the grace of the Spirit of Christ, whereby to them their proper gifts have been distributed: whereof hath been said that which I have quoted above, The Holy Spirit shall come over upon Thee, and the virtue of the Most Highest shall overshadow Thee, that is, shall make a shadow for Thee, wherefore that Holy Thing which shall be born of Thee, shall be called the Son of God. That shadow again is understood of a defence against the heat of carnal lusts: whence not in carnal concupiscence, but in spiritual belief, the Virgin conceived Christ. But the shadow consisteth of light and body: and further, The Word that was in the beginning, that true Light, in order that a noon-day shadow might be made for us; the Word, I say, was made Flesh, and dwelled in us. To God, to wit, man, as though to Light a body, was added, and them that believe on Him with the shadow of protection He hath covered. For He is not such a shadow as that whereof is said, All those things have passed away like a shadow: nor such a shadow as that whereof saith the Apostle, Let no man judge you in meat and drink, or in regard of a festival, or a new moon, or Sabbaths, which is a shadow of things future: but such as that whereof hath been written, under the shadow of Thy wings protect me. While then He, that is above the Heavens, distinguisheth kings over the Dove silvered, let not their own merits exalt them, let them not trust in their own virtue: for with snow they shall be made white unto Selmon, with grace they shall be made to shine bright in the protection of the Body of Christ.

22. But this mountain subsequently he calleth the mountain of God, a mountain fruitful, a mountain full of curds, or a mountain fat. But here what else would he call fat but fruitful? For there is also a mountain called by that name, that is to say, Selmon. But what mountain ought we to understand by the mountain of God, a mountain fruitful, a mountain full of

curds, but the same Lord Christ? Of whom also another Prophet saith, There shall be manifest in the last times the mountain of the Lord prepared on the top of the mountains? He is Himself the ‘Mountain full of curds,’ because of the babes to be fed with grace as though it were with milk; a mountain rich to strengthen and enrich them by the excellence of the gifts; for even the milk itself whence curd is made, in a wonderful manner signifieth grace; for it floweth out of the overflowing of the mother’s bowels, and of a sweet compassion unto babes freely it is poured forth. But in the Greek the case is doubtful, whether it be the nominative or the accusative: for in that language mountain is of the neuter gender, not of the masculine: therefore some Latin translators have not translated it, unto the Mountain of God, but, the Mountain of God. But I think, unto Selmon the Mountain of God, is better, that is, unto the Mountain of God which is called Selmon: according to the interpretation which, as we best could, we have explained above.

23. Secondly, in the expression, Mountain of God, Mountain full of curds, Mountain fruitful, let no one dare from this to compare the Lord Jesus Christ with the rest of the Saints, who are themselves also called mountains of God: for we read, Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God: whence the Apostle saith, that we may be the righteousness of God in Him. Of which mountains also in another place is said, Thou enlightening marvellously from the everlasting mountains: because to them life everlasting hath been given, and through them the preeminent authority of the Holy Scriptures hath been established; but with Him enlightening by means of them, to Whom is said, Thou enlightening. For, I have lifted up mine eyes unto the Mountains, whence there shall come help to me: and yet my help is not from those same mountains of themselves; but, my help is from the Lord, who hath made Heaven and earth. For one of those very mountains greatly excelling, when he had said, that he laboured more than they all; saith, yet not I, but the grace of God with me. That no one therefore might dare even to compare the Mountain beautiful in form before the sons of men, with mountains the sons of men; for there were not wanting men to call Him, some John Baptist, some Elias, some Jeremias, or one of the Prophets; He turneth to them and saith, (ver. 16.) Why do ye imagine mountains full of curds, a mountain, he saith, wherein it hath

pleased God to dwell therein? “Why do ye imagine?” For as they are a light, because to themselves also hath been said, Ye are the Light of the world, but some thing different hath been called the true Light which enlighteneth every man: so they are mountains; but far different is the Mountain prepared on the top of the mountains. These mountains therefore in bearing that Mountain are glorious: one of which mountains saith, “but from me far be it to glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom to me the world hath been crucified, and I to the world: so that he that glorieth, not in himself, but in the Lord may glory.” Why then do ye imagine mountains full of curds, that Mountain wherein it hath pleased God to dwell therein? Not because in other men He dwelleth not, but because in them through Him. For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, not in a shadow, as in the temple made by king Solomon, but bodily, that is, solidly and truly. For God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Which whether we take to be spoken of the Father, because He saith Himself, But the Father in Me abiding Himself doeth His works: I in the Father and the Father in Me: or whether thus it be understood, God was in Christ, the Word was in Man: yet the Word was in the flesh in such a manner that the Word made flesh was even properly named as One, that is, man to the Word in the one Person of Christ was conjoined. Why then do ye imagine mountains full of curds, that mountain wherein it hath pleased God to dwell in Him? Far otherwise indeed than in those mountains, whereof ye imagine even this Mountain to be one. For not because through the grace of adoption they are sons of God, is therefore any one of them the Only-Begotten, to Whom He should say, Sit on My right hand, until I lay Thine enemies beneath Thy feet. For the Lord shall inhabit even unto the end: that is, those mountains not to be compared with this Mountain, the Lord Himself shall inhabit, Who is the Mountain prepared on the top of the mountains; in order that He may conduct them unto the end, that is, unto Himself, to be beheld as He is, as God. For the end of the Law is Christ for righteousness to every one believing. God therefore it hath pleased to dwell in that mountain, Which hath been prepared on the top of the mountains: to Whom He saith, Thou art My beloved Son, in Whom I have been well pleased. But that same Mountain is the Lord, Who shall inhabit other mountains unto the end, on the top of whom He hath been prepared. For there is One God, and One Mediator of God and men, the

Man Christ Jesus, Mountain of mountains, as Saint of saints. Whence He saith, ‘I in them and Thou in Me.’ Why then do ye imagine mountains full of curds, the mountain wherein it hath pleased God to dwell in Him? For those mountains full of curds that Mountain the Lord shall inhabit even unto the end, that something they may be to whom He saith, for without Me nothing ye are able to do.

24. Thus cometh to pass that also which followeth; (ver. 17.) The Chariot of God is of ten thousands manifold: or of tens of thousands manifold: or, ten times thousand times manifold. For one Greek word, which hath there been used, μυριοπλάσιον, each Latin interpreter hath rendered as best he could, but in Latin it could not be adequately expressed: for a thousand with the Greeks is called χίλια, but μυριάδες are a number of tens of thousands: for one μυριὰς are ten thousands. Thus a vast number of saints and believers, who by bearing God become in a manner the chariot of God, he hath signified under this name. By abiding in and guiding this, He conducteth it, as though it were His Chariot, unto the end, as if unto some appointed place. For, the beginning is Christ; secondly, they that are of Christ, at the appearing of Him; then the end. This is Holy Church: which is that which followeth, thousands of men rejoicing. For in hope they are joyful, until they be conducted unto the end, which now they look for through patience. For admirably, when he had said, Thousands of men rejoicing: immediately he added, The Lord is in them. That we may not wonder why they rejoice, The Lord is in them. For through many tribulations we must needs enter into the kingdom of God, but, The Lord is in them. Therefore even if they are as it were sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing, though not now in that same end, to which they have not yet come, yet in hope they are rejoicing, and in tribulation patient: for, The Lord is in them, in Sina in the holy place. In the interpretations of Hebrew names, we find Sina interpreted commandment: and some other interpretations it has, but I think this to be more agreeable to the present passage. For giving a reason why those thousands rejoice, whereof the Chariot of God doth consist, The Lord, he saith, is in them, in Sina in the holy place: that is, the Lord is in them, in the commandment; which commandment is holy, as saith the Apostle: Therefore the law indeed is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good. But what would the commandment profit, unless the Lord were there, of Whom it is said,

For God it is that worketh in you both to will and to work according to good will? For commandment without the Lord’s aid is letter killing. For, the Law entered in, that there might abound transgression. But because the fulness of the Law is Love, therefore through Love the Law is fulfilled, not through fear. For the Love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Which hath been given to us. Therefore these thousands do rejoice. For they do the righteousness of the Law so far as they are aided by the Spirit of Grace: for the Lord is in them, in Sina in the holy place.

25. In the next place, turning his address to the Lord Himself, (ver. 18.) Thou hast gone up, he saith, on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, Thou hast received gifts in men. Of this the Apostle thus maketh mention, thus expoundeth in speaking of the Lord Christ: But unto each one of us, he saith, is given grace after the measure of the giving of Christ: for which cause he saith, He hath gone up on high, He hath led captive captivity, He hath given gifts to men. But that He hath gone up, what is it, but that also He hath gone down into the lower parts of the earth? He that hath gone down is the Same also that hath gone up above all Heavens, that He might fulfil all things. To Christ therefore without doubt hath been said, Thou hast gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, Thou hast received gifts in men. And let it not move us that the Apostle making mention of that same testimony saith not, Thou hast received gifts in men; but, He hath given gifts unto men. For he with Apostolic authority hath spoken thus according to the faith that the Son is God with the Father. For in respect of this He hath given gifts to men, sending to them the Holy Spirit, Which is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. But forasmuch as the self-same Christ is understood in His Body which is the Church, wherefore also His members are His saints and believers, whence to them is said, But ye are the Body of Christ, and the members, doubtless He hath Himself also received gifts in men. Now Christ hath gone up on high, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father: but unless He were here also on the earth, He would not thence have cried, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? When the Same saith Himself, Inasmuch as to one of My least ye have done it, to Me ye have done it: why do we doubt that He receiveth in His members, the gifts which the members of Him receive?

26. But what is, Thou hast led captivity captive? Is it because He hath conquered death, which was holding captive those over whom it reigned? Or hath he called men themselves captivity, who were being held captive under the devil? Which thing’s mystery even the title of that Psalm doth contain, to wit, when the house was being builded after the captivity: that is, the Church after the coming in of the Gentiles. Calling therefore those very men who were being held captive a captivity, as when ‘the service’ is spoken of there are understood those that serve also, that same captivity he saith by Christ hath been led captive. For why should not captivity be happy, if even for a good purpose men may be caught? Whence to Peter hath been said, From henceforth thou shalt catch men. Led captive therefore they are because caught, and caught because subjugated, being sent under that gentle yoke, being delivered from sin whereof they were servants, and being made servants of righteousness whereof they were children. Whence also He is Himself in them, That hath given gifts to men, and hath received gifts in men. And thus in that captivity, in that servitude, in that chariot, under that yoke, there are not thousands of men lamenting, but thousands of men rejoicing. For the Lord is in them, in Sina, in the holy place. With which sense agreeth another interpretation also, whereby Sina is interpreted ‘measure.’ For concerning these gifts of spiritual gladness the Apostle speaking, saith, that whereof I have made mention above, but to each one of us hath been given grace after the measure of the giving of Christ. And in the next place there followeth that which here also followeth: Wherefore he saith, He hath gone up on high, He hath led captivity captive, He hath given gifts to men: which here is, Thou hast received gifts in men. What is more unanimous than this and that truth? What more evident?

27. But what next doth he adjoin? (Ver. 18.) For they that believe not to dwell: or, as some copies have, For not believing to dwell: for what else are men not believing, but they that believe not? To whom this hath been said, is not easy to perceive. For as though a reason were being given of the above words, when it had been said, Thou hast led captivity captive, Thou hast received gifts in men: there hath been added in continuation, for they that believe not to dwell, that is, not believing that they should dwell. What is this? Of whom saith he this? Did that captivity, before it passed into a good captivity, shew whence it was an evil captivity? For through not

believing they were possessed by the enemy, that worketh in the sons of unbelief: among whom ye were sometime, while ye were living among them. By the gifts therefore of His grace, He that hath received gifts in men, hath led captive that captivity. For they believed not that they should dwell. For faith hath thence delivered them, in order that now believing they may dwell in the House of God, even they too becoming the House of God, and the Chariot of God, consisting of thousands of men rejoicing.

28. Whence he that was singing of these things, in the Spirit foreseeing them, even he too being fulfilled with joy hath burst forth a hymn, saying, The Lord God is blessed, (ver. 19.) blessed is the Lord God from day unto day. Which some copies have, by day daily, because the Greeks have it thus, ἡμέραν καθʹ ἡμέραν: which more exactly would be expressed by, by day daily. Which expression I think signifieth the same as that which hath been said, to wit, from day unto day. For daily this He doeth even unto the end, He leadeth captive captivity, receiving gifts in men.

29. And because He leadeth that chariot unto the end, He continueth and saith, A prosperous journey there shall make for us the God of our healths, (ver. 20.) our God, the God of making men safe. Highly is grace here commended. For who would be safe, unless He Himself should make whole? But that it might not occur to the mind, Why then do we die, if through His grace we have been made safe? immediately he added below, and the Lord’s is the outgoing of death: as though he were saying, Why are thou indignant, O lot of humanity, that thou hast the outgoing of death? Even thy Lord’s outgoing was no other than that of death. Rather therefore be comforted than be indignant: for even the Lord’s is the outgoing of death. For by hope we have been saved: but if that which we see not we hope for, through patience we wait for it. Patiently therefore even death itself let us suffer, by the example of Him, who though by no sin He was debtor to death, and was the Lord, from Whom no one could take away life, but Himself laid it down of Himself, yet had Himself the outgoing of death.

30. Ver. 21. Nevertheless, God shall break in pieces the heads of His enemies, the scalp of hair of men walking on in their transgressions: that is, too much exalting themselves, being too proud in their transgressions: wherein at least they ought to be humble, saying, O Lord, be Thou merciful

to me a sinner. But He shall break in pieces their heads: for he that exalteth himself shall be humbled. And thus though even of the Lord be the outgoing of death: nevertheless the same Lord, because He was God, and died after the flesh of His own will, not of necessity, shall break in pieces the heads of His enemies: not only of those who mocked and crucified Him, and wagged their heads, and said, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross; but also of all men lifting up themselves against His doctrine, and deriding His death as though it were of a man. For that very same One of Whom hath been said, Others He saved, Himself He cannot save, is the God of our healths, and is the God of saving men: but for an example of humility and of patience, and to efface the handwriting of our sins, He even willed that the outgoing of death should be His own, that we might not fear that death, but rather this from which He hath delivered us through that. Nevertheless, though mocked and dead, He shall break in pieces the heads of His enemies, of whom He saith, Raise Thou me up, and I shall render to them: whether it be good things for evil things, while to Himself He subdueth the heads of them believing, or whether just things for unjust things, while He punisheth the heads of them proud. For in either way are shattered and broken the heads of enemies, when from pride they are thrown down, whether by humility being amended, or whether unto the lowest depths of hell being hurled.

31. Ver. 22. The Lord hath said, Out of Basan I will be turned: or, as some copies have, Out of Basan I will turn. For He turneth that we may be safe, of Whom above hath been said, God of our healths, and God of saving men. For to Him elsewhere also is said, O God of virtues, turn Thou us, and shew Thy face, and safe we shall be. Also in another place, Turn us, O God of our healths. But he hath said, Out of Basan I will turn. Basan is interpreted confusion. What is then, I will turn out of confusion, but that there is confounded because of his sins, he that is praying of the mercy of God that they may be put away? Thence it is that the Publican dared not even to lift up his eyes to Heaven: so, on considering himself, was he confounded; but he went down justified, because the Lord hath said, Out of Basan I will turn. Basan is also interpreted drought: and rightly the Lord is understood to turn out of drought, that is, out of scarcity. For they that think themselves to be in plenty, though they be famished; and full, though they be altogether

empty; are not turned. For, blessed they that hunger and thirst for righteousness, for the same shall be filled. Out of that drought the Lord doth turn them: for concerning a dry soul to Him is said, I have stretched out my hands to Thee, my soul is like earth without water to Thee. That also which other copies have, Out of Basan I will be turned, hath not an impertinent sense. For there is turned to us even He Himself Who saith, Turn ye to Me, and I will be turned to you: and He will not, if we be without confusion, where our sin is before us alway; and if we be without drought, whereby we long for the rain of Him that hath set apart a voluntary rain for His inheritance. For by drought it hath been made weak, but He being turned hath made it perfect Himself, to Whom is said, And being turned Thou hast made me alive. The Lord, then, hath said, Out of Basan I will turn, will turn unto the deep of the sea. If, I will turn, why, unto the deep of the sea? Unto Himself indeed the Lord turneth, when savingly He turneth, and He is not surely Himself the deep of the sea. Doth perchance the Latin expression deceive us, and hath there been put unto the deep, for a translation of what signifieth deeply? For He doth not turn Himself: but He turneth those that in the deep of this world lie sunk down with the weight of sins, in that place where one that is turned saith, From the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord. But if it is not, I will turn, but, I will be turned unto the deep of the sea; our Lord is understood to have said, how by His own mercy He was turned even unto the deep of the sea, to deliver even those that were sinners in most desperate case. Though in one Greek copy I have found, not, unto the deep, but, in the depths, that is, ἐν βυθοῖς: which strengtheneth the former sense, because even there God turneth to Himself men crying from the depths. And even if He be understood Himself there to be turned, to deliver such sort also, it is not beside the purpose: and so then He turneth, or else to deliver them is so turned, that His foot is stained in blood. Which to the Lord Himself the Prophet speaketh: (ver. 23.) That Thy foot may be stained in blood: that is, in order that they themselves who are turned to Thee, or to deliver whom Thou art turned, though in the deep of the sea by the burden of iniquity they may have been sunk, may make so great proficiency by Thy Grace, (for where there hath abounded sin, there hath superabounded grace, that they may become Thy foot among Thy members, to preach Thy Gospel, and for Thy name’s sake drawing out a long martyrdom, even unto blood they may contend. For thus, as I judge, more meetly is perceived His foot stained in blood.

32. Lastly, he addeth, The tongue of Thy dogs out of enemies by Himself, calling those very same that had been about to strive for the faith of the Gospel, even dogs, as though barking for their Lord. Not those dogs, whereof saith the Apostle, Beware of dogs: but those that eat of the crumbs which fall from the table of their masters. For having confessed this, the woman of Canaan merited to hear, O woman, great is thy faith, be it done to thee as thou wilt. Dogs commendable, not abominable; observing fidelity towards their master, and before his house barking against enemies. Not only of dogs he hath said, but of Thy dogs: nor are their teeth praised, but their tongue is: for it was not indeed to no purpose, not without a great mystery, that Gedeon was bidden to lead those alone, who should lap the water of the river like dogs; and of such sort not more than three hundred among so great a multitude were found. In which number is the sign of the Cross because of the letter T, which in the Greek numeral characters signifieth three hundred. Of such dogs in another Psalm also is said, They shall be turned at even, and hunger they shall suffer as dogs. For even some dogs have been reproved by the Prophet Isaiah, not because they were dogs, but because they knew not how to bark, and loved to sleep. In which place indeed he hath shewn, that if they had watched and barked for their Lord, they would have been praiseworthy dogs: just as they are praised, of whom is said, The tongue of Thy dogs. And these nevertheless the Prophet hath foretold out of enemies are to be, by means of that turning, whereof alone he was speaking. Whence also saith that Psalm, They shall be turned at even, and hunger they shall suffer as dogs. In the next place, as though to men inquiring whence they should have this so great good, as that they should become dogs of Him, Whose enemies they had been: it is replied, from Himself. For thus we read, The tongue of Thy dogs out of enemies from Himself. By His own love indeed, by His own mercy, by His own grace. For when would they have that power of themselves? For when enemies we were, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son: to this end even the Lord’s portion hath been the outgoing of death.

33. Ver. 24. There have been seen Thy steps, O God. The steps are those wherewith Thou hast come through the world, as though in that chariot Thou wast going to traverse the round world; which chariot of clouds He intimateth to be His holy and faithful ones in the Gospel, where He saith, From this time ye shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds. Leaving out that coming wherein He shall be Judge of quick and dead, From this time, He saith, ye shall see the Son of Man coming in clouds. These Thy steps have been seen, that is, have been manifested, by the revealing the grace of the New Testament. Whence hath been said, How beautiful are the feet of them that proclaim peace, that proclaim good things! For this grace and those steps were lying hid in the Old Testament: but when there came the fulness of time, and it pleased God to reveal His Son, that He might be proclaimed among the Gentiles, there were seen Thy steps, O God: the steps of my God, of the King Who is in the holy place. In what holy place, save in His Temple? For the Temple of God is holy, he saith, which ye are.

34. But in order that those steps might be seen, (ver. 25.) there went before princes conjoined with men psalming, in the midst of damsels players on timbrels. The princes are the Apostles: for they went before, that the peoples might come in multitudes. They went before proclaiming the New Testament: conjoined with men psalming, by whose good works that were even visible, as it were with instruments of praise, God was glorified. But those same princes are in the midst of damsels players on timbrels, to wit, in an honourable ministry: for thus in the midst are ministers set over new Churches; for this is damsels: with flesh subdued praising God; for this is players on timbrels, because timbrels are made of skin dried and stretched.

35. Therefore, that no one should take these words in a carnal sense, and by these words should conceive in his mind certain choral bands of wantonness, he continueth and saith, (ver. 26.) In the Churches bless ye the Lord: as though he were saying, wherefore, when ye hear of damsels, players on timbrels, do ye think of wanton pleasures? In the Churches bless ye the Lord. For the Churches are pointed out to you by this mystic intimation: the Churches are the damsels, with new grace decked: the Churches are the players on the timbrels, with chastened flesh being spiritually tuneful. In the Churches, then, bless ye the Lord God from the

wells of Israel. For from thence He first chose those whom He made wells. For from thence were chosen the Apostles; and they first heard, “He that shall have drunk of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but there shall be made in him a well of water springing unto life everlasting.”

36. Ver. 27. There is Benjamin the younger in a trance. There is Paul the last of the Apostles, who saith, For even I am an Israelite, out of the seed of Abraham, out of the tribe of Bejamin. But evidently in a trance, all men being amazed at a miracle so great as that of his calling. For a trance is the mind’s going out: which thing sometimes chanceth through fear; but sometimes through some revelation, the mind suffering separation from the corporal senses, in order that that which is to be represented may be represented to the spirit. Whence even thus may be understood that which here hath been written, namely, in a trance; for when to that persecutor there had been said from Heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me: there being taken from him the light of the eyes of flesh, he made answer to the Lord, Whom in spirit he saw, but they that were with him heard the voice of him replying, though seeing no one to whom he was speaking. Here also the trance may be understood to be that one of his, whereof he himself speaking, saith, that he knew a man caught up even unto the third Heaven; but whether in the body, or whether out of the body, he knew not: but that he being caught up into Paradise, heard ineffable words, which it was not lawful for a man to speak.

Princes of Juda the leaders of them, princes of Zabulon, princes of Nephthalim. Since he is indicating the Apostles as princes, wherein is even Benjamin the younger in a trance, in which words that Paul is indicated no one doubteth; or when under the name of princes there are indicated in the Churches all men excelling and most worthy of imitation: what mean these names of the tribes of Israel? For if only of Juda mention were made, because the kings had been out of the same tribe as also the Lord Christ after the flesh; then by this tribe we should suppose that there were figured the princes also of the New Testament: but when he addeth, princes of Zabulon, princes of Nephthalim, some one perchance would say, that out of these tribes the Apostles were, but out of others they were not. Which interpretation though I see not how it may be proved, yet because I find not how it may be refuted, and since in this passage the princes of Churches, and the leaders of those, who in the Churches do bless God, I see to be commended; not without reason even of this sense I approve: but the light which shineth forth out of the translation of the very names doth more please me. For the names are Hebrew: whereof Juda is said to be interpreted confession, Zabulon habitation of strength, Nephthalim my enlargement. All which words do intimate to us the most proper princes of the Church, worthy of their leadership, worthy of imitation, worthy of honours. For the Martyrs in the Churches hold the highest place, and by the crown of holy worth they do excel. But however in martyrdom the first thing is confession, and for this is next put on strength to endure whatsoever shall have chanced; then after all things have been endured, straits being ended, breadth followeth in reward. It may also thus be understood; that whereas the Apostle chiefly commendeth these three things, faith, hope, love; confession is in faith, strength in hope, breadth in love. For of faith the substance is, that with the heart men believe unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession be made unto salvation. But in sufferings of tribulations the thing itself is sorrowful, but the hope is strong. For, if that which we see not we hope for, through patience we wait for it. But breadth the shedding abroad of love in the heart doth give. For love perfected casteth out fear: which fear hath torment, because of the straits of the soul. The princes then of Juda are the leaders of them: that in the Churches do bless the Lord. The princes of Zabulon, the princes of Nephthalim: princes of confession, of strength, of breadth; princes of faith, of hope, of love.

37. Ver. 28. Command, O God, Thy Virtue. For one is our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things, and we in Him, of Whom we read that He is the Virtue of God and the Wisdom of God. But how doth God command His Christ, save while He commendeth Him? For God commendeth His love in us, in that while yet we were sinners, for us Christ died. “How hath He not also with Him given to us all things?” Command, O God, Thy Virtue: confirm, O God, that which Thou hast wrought in us. Command by teaching, confirm by aiding.

38. Ver. 29. From Thy Temple in Jerusalem, to Thee kings shall offer presents. From Thy Temple in Jerusalem, which is our free mother, because

the same also is Thy holy Temple: from that Temple then, to Thee kings shall offer presents. Whatever kings be understood, whether kings of the earth, or whether those whom “He that is above the heavens distinguisheth over the dove silvered;” to Thee kings shall offer presents. And what presents are so acceptable as the sacrifices of praise? But there is a noise against this praise, from men bearing the name of Christian, and having diverse opinions. Be there done that which followeth, (ver. 30.) Rebuke Thou the beasts of the cane. For both beasts they are, since by not understanding they do hurt: and beasts of the cane they are, since the sense of the Scriptures they wrest according to their own misapprehension. For in the cane the Scriptures are as reasonably perceived, as language in tongue, according to the mode of expression whereby the Hebrew or the Greek or the Latin tongue is spoken of, or the like; that is to say, by the efficient cause the thing which is being effected is implied. Now it is usual in the Latin language for writing to be called style, because with the stilus it is done: so then cane also, because with a cane it is done. The Apostle Peter saith, that men unlearned and unstable do wrest the Scriptures to their own proper destruction: these are the beasts of the cane, whereof here is said, Rebuke Thou the beasts of the cane.

39. Concerning these also is that which followeth, The congregation of bulls amid the cows of the peoples, in order that there may be excluded they that have been tried with silver. Calling them bulls because of the pride of a stiff and untamed neck: for he is referring to heretics. But by the cows of the peoples, I think souls easily led astray must be understood, because easily they follow these bulls. For they lead not astray entire peoples, among whom are men grave and stable; whence hath been written, In a people grave I will praise Thee: but only the cows which they may have found among those peoples. For of these are they that steal into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, who are led with divers lusts, alway learning, and at the knowledge of the truth never arriving. But that which the same Apostle saith, There must also be heresies, in order that those that are approved may be made manifest among you: doth also follow here, in order that there may be excluded they that have been tried with silver, that is, they that have been proved with the sayings of God. For, The sayings of the Lord are chaste sayings, silver tried with the fire of earth.

For, may be excluded, hath been said, meaning, may appear, may stand forth: as he saith, may be made manifest. Whence also, in the art of the silversmith, they are called exclusores, who out of the shapelessness of the lump are skilled to mould the form of a vessel. For many meanings of the holy Scriptures are concealed, and are known only to a few of singular intelligence, and are never vindicated so suitably and acceptably as when our diligence to make answer to heretics constraineth us. For then even they that neglect the pursuits of learning, shaking off their slumber, are stirred up to a diligent hearing, in order that their opponents may be refuted. In a word, how many senses of holy Scriptures concerning Christ as God have been vindicated against Photinus, how many concerning Christ as man against Manichæus, how many concerning the Trinity against Sabellius, how many concerning the Unity of the Trinity against Arians, Eunomians, Macedonians? How many concerning the Catholic Church in the whole world spread abroad, and concerning the intermixture of evil men even unto the end of the world, how they are no hindrance to good men in the partaking of the Sacraments thereof, against Donatists, and Luciferians, and others, whoever they be, that with like error dissent from the truth: how many against the rest of heretics, whom to enumerate or mention were too long a task, and for the present work unnecessary? Nevertheless, of these senses the tried vindicators either entirely would have lain concealed, or would not have been so eminent, as the contradictions of proud men have made them to be, of whom, as it were bulls, that is, not subject to the peaceful and gentle yoke of discipline, the Apostle maketh mention, in the place where he hath said that such an one must be chosen for the Episcopate as is able to exhort in sound doctrine and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly; these are bulls with uplifted neck, impatient of plough and yoke: vain-talkers and leaders astray of minds; which minds this Psalm hath intimated under the name of cows. To this useful purpose then Divine Providence alloweth bulls to be gathered together among the cows of the people, namely, in order that there may be excluded, that is, in order that there may stand forth, they that have been tried with silver. For to this end heresies are suffered to be, in order that approved men may be made manifest. Although thus also it may be understood, the congregation of bulls is among the cows of the peoples, in order that from those cows may be excluded they that have been tried with silver. For this purpose the heretical teachers have, from the ears of the souls whom they endeavour to lead astray, to exclude them, that is, separate them, that have been tried with silver, that is, them that are meet to teach the sayings of the Lord. But whether this be the sense of that word, or whether it be that; there followeth, scatter Thou the nations which would have war. For not amendment but strife they pursue. This thing then he doth prophesy, that they should rather be scattered themselves, that will not be amended, that aim to scatter the flock of Christ. But nations he hath called them, not because of generations of kindreds, but because of divers kinds of sects, wherein a chain of succession doth confirm the error.

40. Ver. 31. There shall come ambassadors out of Egypt, Ethiopia shall prevent the hands of Him. Under the name of Egypt or of Ethiopia, he hath signified the faith of all nations, from a part the whole: calling the preachers of reconciliation ambassadors. For Christ, he saith, we have an embassy, God as it were exhorting through us: we beseech you for Christ to be reconciled to God. Not then of the Israelites alone, whence the Apostles were chosen, but also from the rest of the nations that there should be preachers of Christian peace, in this manner hath been mystically prophesied. But by that which he saith, shall prevent the hands of Him, he saith this, shall prevent the vengeance of Him: to wit, by turning to Him, in order that their sins may be forgiven, lest by continuing sinners they be punished. Which thing also in another Psalm is said, Let us come before the face of Him in confession. As by hands he signifieth vengeance, so by face, revelation and presence, which will be in the Judgment. Because then, by Egypt and Ethiopia he hath signified the nations of the whole world; immediately he hath subjoined, to God (are) the kingdoms of the earth. Not to Sabellius, not to Arius, not to Donatus, not to the rest of the bulls stiff-necked, but, to God (are) the kingdoms of the earth.

41. But the greater number of Latin copies, and especially the Greek, have the verses so punctuated, that there is not one verse in these words, to God the kingdoms of the earth, but, to God, is at the end of the former verse, and so there is said, Ethiopia shall come before the hands of her to God, and then there followeth in another verse, (ver. 32.) Kingdoms of the earth, sing ye to God, psalm ye to the Lord. By which punctuation, doubtless to be

preferred by the agreement of many copies, and those deserving of credit, there seemeth to me to be implied faith which precedeth works: because without the merits of good works through faith the ungodly is justified, just as the Apostle saith, To one believing in Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness: in order that afterwards faith itself through love may begin to work. For those alone are to be called good works, which are done through love of God. But these faith must needs go before, so that from thence these may begin, not from these this: for no one worketh through love of God, except he first believe in God. This is faith whereof is said, For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which through love worketh. This is faith, whereof to the Church Herself is said in the Song of Songs, Thou shalt come and shalt pass hence from the beginning of faith. For She hath come like the chariot of God in thousands of men rejoicing, having a prosperous course, and She hath passed over from this world to the Father: in order that there may come to pass in Her that which the Bridegroom Himself saith, Who hath passed hence from this world to the Father, I will that where I am, these also may be with Me: but from the beginning of faith. Because then in order that good works may follow, faith doth precede; and there are not any good works, save those which follow faith preceding: nothing else seemeth to have been meant in, Ethiopia shall come before the hands of her to God, but, Ethiopia shall believe in God. For thus she shall come before the hands of her, that is, the works of her. Of whom, except of Ethiopia herself? For this in the Greek is not ambiguous: for the word of her there in the feminine gender most clearly hath been put down. And thus nothing else hath been said than Ethiopia shall come before her hands to God, that is, by believing in God she shall come before her works. For, I judge, saith the Apostle, that a man is justified through faith without the works of the Law. Is He God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? So then Ethiopia, which seemeth to be the utmost limit of the Gentiles, is justified through faith, without the works of the Law. For, in order to be justified, she doth not glory of the works of the Law, nor setteth her merits before faith, but by faith she cometh before her own works. The greater number of copies indeed have not hands, but hand: which hath the same force, seeing that instead of works it is put. But I should have preferred that the Latin interpreters had thus translated it: Ethiopia shall come before her own hands, or, her hand, to God: for this would be more plain than what now hath been said, of her: and with no injury to truth this might have been done, because in the Greek language that pronoun may be understood to signify not only of her, but also her own, singular or plural: her own, I mean, singular, if hand; but her own, plural, if hands. For the expression in Greek, χεῖρα αὐτῆς, which most copies have, both of hand of her and her own hand may be understood: but that which is uncommon in the Greek copies, χειρὰς αὐτῆς, by both hands of her and her own hands, in Latin may be expressed.

42. Henceforward, as if through prophecy all things had been discoursed of which now we see fulfilled, he exhorteth to the praise of Christ, and next He foretelleth His future Advent. Kingdoms of earth, sing ye to God, psalm ye to the Lord: psalm ye to God, (ver. 33.) Who hath ascended above the Heaven of Heavens to the East. Or, as some copies have it, Who hath ascended above the Heaven of Heaven to the East. In these words he perceiveth not Christ, who believeth not His Resurrection and Ascension. But hath not to the East, which he hath added, expressed the very spot; since in the quarters of the East is where He rose again, and whence He ascended? Therefore above the Heaven of Heaven He sitteth at the right hand of the Father. This is what the Apostle saith, the Same is He that hath ascended above all Heavens. For what of Heavens doth remain after the Heaven of Heaven? Which also we may call the Heavens of Heavens, just as He hath called the firmament Heaven: which Heaven, however, even as Heavens we read of, in the place where there is written, and let the waters which are above the Heavens praise the name of the Lord. And forasmuch as from thence He is to come, to judge quick and dead, observe what followeth: behold, He shall give His voice, the voice of power. He that like a lamb before the shearer of Him was without voice, behold shall give His voice, and not the voice of weakness, as though to be judged; but the voice of power, as though going to judge. For God shall not be hidden, as before, and in the judgment of men not opening His mouth; but God shall come manifest, our God, and He shall not be silent. Why do ye despair, ye unbelieving men? Why do ye mock? What saith the evil servant? My Lord delayeth to come. Behold, He shall give His voice, the voice of power.

43. Ver. 34. Give ye glory to God, above Israel is the magnificence of Him. Of whom saith the Apostle, Upon the Israel of God. For not all that are out of Israel, are Israelites: for there is also an Israel after the flesh. Whence he saith, See ye Israel after the flesh. For not they that are sons of the flesh, are sons of God, but sons of promise are counted for a seed. Therefore at that time when without any intermixture of evil men His people shall be, like a heap purged by the fan, like Israel in whom guile is not, then most preeminent above Israel shall be the magnificence of Him: and the virtue of Him in the clouds. For not alone He shall come to judgment, but with the elders of His people: to whom He hath promised that they shall sit upon thrones to judge, who even shall judge angels. These be the clouds.

44. Lastly, lest of any thing else the clouds be understood, he hath in continuation added, (ver. 35.) Wonderful is God in His saints, the God of Israel. For at that time even most truly and most fully there shall be fulfilled the name Israel itself, which is one ‘seeing God:’ for we shall see Him as He is. He Himself shall give virtue and strength to His people, blessed be God: to His people now frail and weak. For we have this treasure in earthen vessels. But then by a most glorious changing even of our bodies, He Himself shall give virtue and strength to His people. For this body is sown in weakness, shall rise in virtue. He Himself then shall give the virtue which in His own flesh He hath sent before, whereof the Apostle saith, the power of His Resurrection. But strength whereby shall be destroyed the enemy death. Now then of this long and difficultly understood Psalm we have at length by His own aid made an end. Blessed be God. Amen.

PSALM 69

Exposition

Sermon I. on the first part of the above Psalm.

1. We have been born into this world, and added to the people of God, at that period wherein already the herb from a grain of mustard seed hath spread out its branches; wherein already the leaven, which at first was contemptible, hath leavened three measures, that is, the whole round world repeopled by the three sons of Noe: for from East and West and North and South shall come they that shall sit down with the Patriarchs, while those shall have been driven without, that have been born of their flesh and have not imitated their faith. Unto this glory then of Christ’s Church our eyes we have opened; and that barren one, for whom joy was proclaimed and foretold, because she was to have more sons than she that had the husband, her we have found to be such an one as hath forgotten the reproaches and infamy of her widowhood: and so we may perhaps wonder when we chance to read in any prophecy the words of Christ’s humiliation, or our own. And it may be, that we are less affected by them; because we have not come at that time when these things were read with zest, in that tribulation abounded. But again if we think of the abundance of tribulations, and observe the way wherein we are walking, (if indeed we do walk in it,) how narrow it is, and how through straits and tribulations it leadeth unto rest everlasting, and how that very thing which in human affairs is called felicity, is more to be feared than misery; since indeed misery ofttimes doth bring out of tribulation a good fruit, but felicity doth corrupt the soul with a perverse security, and giveth place for the Devil the Tempter—when, I say, we shall have judged prudently and rightly, as the salted victim did, that human life upon earth is trial, and that no one is at all secure, nor ought to be secure, until he be come to that country, whence no one that is a friend goeth forth, into which no one that is an enemy is admitted, even now in the very glory of the Church we acknowledge the voices of our tribulation: and being members of Christ, subject to our Head in the bond of love, and

mutually supporting one another, we will say from the Psalms, that which here we have found the Martyrs said, who were before us; that tribulation is common to all men from the beginning even unto the end. Nevertheless, this Psalm which we have undertaken to treat of, and whereof we have purposed to speak to your Love in the name of the Lord, let us acknowledge to be in the grain of mustard seed: for a little space from the height of the herb and the spreading of the branches, and from that glory, where the birds of Heaven rest, let us withdraw the thoughts; and let us hear how this greatness which delighteth us in the herb hath risen from a small thing. For Christ here is speaking: (but to men already knowing it we are speaking:) Christ not only Head, but also Body. By the very words we know it. For that Christ here is speaking is not permitted us to doubt at all. For here are the express words, which in His passion were fulfilled: They have given for My food gall, and in My thirst they have given Me vinegar to drink: for these words even to the letter were fulfilled, and exactly as they were foretold so they were completed. For when Christ Himself had said, I thirst, hanging on the Cross, and at this word to Him vinegar on a sponge had been given, which receiving He said, It is finished, and then with bowed head He gave up the Ghost, shewing all those things which had been foretold in Him then to have been finished, we may not here understand any thing else. The Apostles also, speaking of Christ, gave testimonies out of that Psalm. But who should go astray from their opinions? or what lamb should not follow the rams? Therefore Christ here speaketh: and we must rather point out where His members speak, in order that we may shew that here He is speaking whole, than doubt that Christ speaketh.

2. The Title of the Psalm is: Unto the end, in behalf of those that shall be changed, to David himself. Now of the change for the better hear thou; for change either is for the worse or for the better. Adam and Eve for the worse; they that out of Adam and Eve to Christ have adhered, have been changed for the better. For, as through one man death, so also through one Man resurrection of the dead: and, as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. From that which God had formed, Adam was changed, but unto the worse estate of his iniquity: from that which iniquity hath wrought the faithful are changed, but for the better through the grace of God. That we should be changed for the worse, was our own iniquity: that we should

be changed for the better, not our own righteousness, but the grace of God provideth. That we have been changed then for the worse, to ourselves let us ascribe: that for the better we are changed, let us praise God. For those, then, that shall be changed, this Psalm is. But whence hath this change been made but by the Passion of Christ? The very word Pascha in Latin is interpreted passage. For Pascha is not a Greek word but a Hebrew. It soundeth indeed in the Greek language like Passion, because πάσχειν signifieth to suffer: but if the Hebrew expression be examined, it pointeth to something else. Pascha doth intimate passage. Of which even John the Evangelist hath admonished us, who (just before the Passion when the Lord was coming to the supper wherein He set forth the Sacrament of His Body and Blood) thus speaketh: But when there had come the hour, wherein Jesus was to pass from this world to the Father. He hath expressed then the passage of the Pascha. But unless He passed Himself hence to the Father, Who came for our sake, how should we have been able to pass hence, who have not come down for the sake of taking up any thing, but have fallen? But He Himself fell not; He but came down, in order that He might raise up him that had fallen. The passage therefore both of Him and of us is hence to the Father, from this world to the kingdom of Heaven, from life mortal to life everlasting, from life earthly to life heavenly, from life corruptible to life incorruptible, from intimacy with tribulations to perpetual security. Accordingly, In behalf of them that shall be changed, the Psalm's title is. The cause therefore of our change, that is, the very Passion of the Lord and our own voice in tribulations in the text of the Psalm let us observe, let us join in knowing, join in groaning, and in hearing, in joint-knowing, joint-groaning, let us be changed, in order that there may be fulfilled in us the Title of the Psalm, In behalf of them that shall be changed.

3. Ver. 1. Save me, O God, for the waters have entered in even unto my soul. That grain is despised now, that seemeth to give forth humble words. In the garden it is buried, though the world will admire the greatness of the herb, of which herb the seed was despised by the Jews. For in very deed observe ye the seed of the mustard, minute, dull coloured, altogether despicable, in order that therein may be fulfilled that which hath been said, We have seen Him, and He had neither form nor comeliness. But He saith, that waters have come in even unto His soul; because those multitudes,

which under the name of waters He hath pointed out, were able so far to prevail as to kill Christ. They prevailed unto contemning, unto holding, unto binding, unto reviling, unto buffeting, unto spitting. How much further? Even unto death. Therefore, The waters have entered in even unto my soul: for this life He called “His soul,” unto which they were able in their cruelty to reach. But could they have done this, unless by Himself they had been permitted? Whence then doth He so cry out, as though He were suffering something against His will, except, because the Head doth prefigure the Members? For He suffered because He willed: but the Martyrs even though they willed not; for to Peter thus He foretold his passion: When thou shalt be old, He saith, another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wilt not. For though we desire to cleave to Christ, yet we are unwilling to die: and therefore willingly or rather patiently we suffer, because no other passage is given us, through which we may cleave to Christ. For if we could in any other way arrive at Christ, that is, at life everlasting, who would be willing to die? For while explaining our nature, that is, a sort of association of soul and body, and in these two parts a kind of intimacy of glueing and fastening together, the Apostle saith, that we have a House not made with hands, everlasting in the Heavens: that is, immortality prepared for us, wherewith we are to be clothed at the end, when we shall have risen from the dead; and he saith, Wherein we are not willing to be stripped, but to be clothed upon, that the mortal may be swallowed up of life. If it might so be, we should so will, he saith, to become immortal, as that now that same immortality might come, and now as we are it should change us, in order that this our mortal body by life should be swallowed up, and the body should not be laid aside through death, so as at the end again to have to be recovered. Although then from evil to good things we pass, nevertheless the very passage is somewhat bitter, and hath the gall which the Jews gave to the Lord in the Passion, hath something sharp to be endured, whereby they are shewn that gave Him vinegar to drink. Prefiguring then and transforming into Himself our own selves, He saith this, Save me, O God, for the waters have entered in even unto my soul. They that persecuted were able even to kill, but they shall have no more to do. For the Lord Himself hath sent an exhortation before, saying, Fear not them that kill body and have no more to do; but fear Him that hath power to kill both body and soul in the hell of fire. With the greater fear lesser things we contemn, and with the greater desire of eternity we disdain all things temporal. For here both sweet are temporal pleasures, and bitter are temporal tribulations: but who would not drink the cup of tribulation temporal, fearing the fire of hell; and who would not contemn the sweetness of the world, longing for the sweetness of life eternal? From hence that we may be delivered let us cry: lest perchance amidst oppressions we consent to iniquity, and truly irreparably we be swallowed up: Save me, O God, for the waters have entered in even unto my soul.

4. Ver. 2. Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. What called He clay? Is it those very persons that have persecuted? For out of clay man hath been made. But these men by falling from righteousness have become the clay of the deep, and whosoever shall not have consented to them persecuting and desiring to draw him to iniquity, out of his clay doth make gold. For the clay of the same shall merit to be converted into a heavenly form, and to be made associate of those of whom saith the Title of the Psalm, in behalf of them that shall be changed. But at the time when these were the clay of the deep. I stuck in them: that is, they held Me, prevailed against Me, killed Me. Fixed then I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. What is this, there is no substance? Can it be that clay itself is not a substance? What is then, fixed I am? Can it be that Christ hath thus stuck? Or hath He stuck, and was not, as hath been said in the book of Job, the earth delivered into the hands of the ungodly man? Was He fixed in body, because it could be held, and suffered even crucifixion? For unless with nails He had been fixed, crucified He had not been. Whence then there is no substance? Is that clay not a substance? But we shall understand, if it be possible, what is, and there is no substance, if first we shall have understood what is a substance. For there is substance spoken of even of riches, as we say, he hath substance, and, he hath lost substance. But shall we suppose this here to have been spoken of in, and there is no substance, that is, there are no riches, as if now any thing were being done concerning riches, or any question were being raised about riches? Is it perchance that this very clay is poverty, and there shall be no riches, except when we shall have been made partakers of eternity? For then there are true riches, when there shall be nothing wanting to us. This sense may also be taken, according as we understand this word, so that what was said was,

Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance, that is, unto poverty I have come. For here He saith, poor and sorrowful I am. The Apostle also saith, that for your sakes He became poor though He was rich, that by His poverty ye might be enriched. Therefore the Lord desiring to set forth to us His poverty, perchance hath said, there is no substance. For to extreme poverty He came, when the form of a servant He put on. The riches of Him are what? Who, when in form of God He was, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. These are great and incomparable riches. Whence then that poverty? Because He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made after the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, being made obedient even unto death, so that He said, The waters have entered in even unto my soul. Add to this, death: what more wilt thou add? The infamy of death. Therefore there followeth, even the death of the Cross. Great poverty! But hence there will be great riches: for as His poverty was fulfilled, so there will be fulfilled also our riches from His poverty. How great riches hath He, that from His own poverty He should make us rich? What sort of persons will He make us by His riches, whom He hath made rich by His poverty?

5. Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. Substance is understood in another way, as that thing which we are, whatsoever we are. But it is somewhat difficult to understand this, although the things be of common use: but because the word is uncommon, it needeth some little insisting on, and exposition: to which however if ye are attentive, perchance we shall not find it too hard for us. Suppose a man spoken of, a beast spoken of, earth spoken of, Heaven spoken of, sun spoken of, moon, stone, sea, air; all these things are substances, by the very fact that they are, the natures themselves are called substances. God is a sort of substance: for that which is no substance, is nothing at all. To be a substance then is to be something. Whence also in the Catholic Faith against the poisons of certain heretics thus we are builded up, so that we say, Father and Son and Holy Spirit are of one substance. What is, of one substance? For example, if gold is the Father, gold is also the Son, gold also the Holy Spirit. Whatever the Father is because He is God, the same is the Son, the same the Holy Spirit. But when He is the Father, this is not what He is. For Father He is called not in reference to Himself, but in reference to the Son: but in reference to

Himself God He is called. Therefore in that He is God, by the same He is a substance. And because of the same substance the Son is, without doubt the Son also is God. But yet in that He is Father, because it is not the name of the substance, but is referred to the Son; we do not say that the Son is Father in the same manner as we say the Son is God. Thou askest what the Father is; we answer, God. Thou askest what is the Father and the Son: we answer, God. If questioned of the Father alone, answer thou God: if questioned of both, not Gods, but God, answer thou. We do not reply as in the case of men, when thou inquirest what is father Abraham, we answer a man; the substance of him serveth for answer: thou inquirest what is his son Isaac, we answer, a man; of the same substance are Abraham and Isaac: thou inquirest what is Abraham and Isaac, we answer not man, but men. Not so in things divine. For so great in this case is the fellowship of substance, that of equality it alloweth, plurality alloweth not. If then it shall have been said to thee, when thou tellest me that the Son is the same as the Father, in fact the Son also is the Father; answer thou, according to the substance I have told thee that the Son is the same as the Father, not according to that term which is used in reference to something else. For in reference to Himself He is called God, in reference to the Father is called Son. And again, the Father in reference to Himself is called God, in reference to the Son He is called Father. The Father as He is called in reference to the Son, is not the Son: the Son as He is called in reference to the Father, is not the Father: what the Father is called in reference to Himself and the Son in reference to Himself, the same is Father and Son, that is, God. What is then, there is no substance? After this interpretation of substance, how shall we be able to understand this passage of the Psalm, Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance? God made man, He made substance; and O that he had continued in that which God made him! If man had continued in that which God made him, in him would not have been ‘fixed’ He whom God begot. But moreover because through iniquity man fell from the substance wherein he was made, (for iniquity itself is no substance; for iniquity is not a nature which God formed, but a perverseness which man made;) the Son of God came to the clay of the deep, and was fixed; and that was no substance wherein He was fixed, because in the iniquity of them He was fixed. Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. “All things by Him were made, and without Him there was made nothing.” All natures by Him were made, iniquity by Him was not made, because iniquity was not made. Those substances by Him were made, which praise Him. The whole creation praising God is commemorated by the three children in the furnace, and from things earthly to things heavenly, or from things heavenly to things earthly reacheth the hymn of them praising God. Not that all these things have sense to praise; but because all things being well meditated upon, do beget praise, and the heart by considering creation is fulfilled to overflowing with a hymn to the Creator. All things do praise God, but only the things which God hath made. Do ye observe in that hymn that covetousness praiseth God? There even the serpent praiseth God, covetousness praiseth not. For all creeping things are there named in the praise of God: there are named all creeping things; but there are not there named any vices. For vices out of ourselves and out of our own will we have: and vices are not a substance. In these was fixed the Lord, when He suffered persecution: in the vice of the Jews, not in the substance of men which by Him was made. Fixed I am, He saith, in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. Fixed I am, and I have not found that which I have made.

6. Ver. 2. I have come into the depth of the sea, and the tempest hath made Me to sink down. Thanks to the mercy of Him Who came into the depth of the sea, and vouchsafed to be swallowed by the sea whale, but was vomited forth the third day. He came into the depth of the sea, in which depth we were thrust down, in which depth we had suffered shipwreck: He came thither Himself, and the tempest made Him to sink down: for there He suffered waves, those very men; tempests, the voices of men saying, Crucify, Crucify. Though Pilate said, I find not any cause in this Man why He should be killed: there prevailed the voices of them, saying, Crucify, Crucify. The tempest increased, until He was made to sink down That had come into the depth of the sea. And the Lord suffered in the hands of the Jews that which He suffered not when upon the waters He was walking: the which not only He had not suffered Himself, but had not allowed even Peter to suffer it. I have come into the depth of the sea, and the tempest hath made Me to sink down.

7. Ver. 3. I have laboured, crying, hoarse have become my jaws. Where was this? When was this? Let us question the Gospel. For the Passion of our Lord in this Psalm we perceive. And, indeed, that He suffered we know; that there came in waters even unto His Soul, because peoples prevailed even unto His death, we read, we believe; in the tempest that He was sunk down, because tumult prevailed to His killing, we acknowledge: but that He laboured in crying, and that His jaws were made hoarse, not only we read not, but even on the contrary we read, that He answered not to them a word, in order that there might be fulfilled that which in another Psalm hath been said, I have become as it were a man not hearing, and having not in his mouth reproofs. And that which in Isaiah hath been prophesied, like a sheep to be sacrificed He was led, and like a lamb before one shearing Him, so He opened not His mouth. If He became like a man not hearing, and having not in His mouth reproofs, how did He labour crying, and how were His jaws made hoarse? Is it that He was even then silent, because He was hoarse with having cried so much in vain? And this indeed we know to have been His voice on the Cross out of a certain Psalm: O God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? But how great was that voice, or of how long duration, that in it His jaws should have become hoarse? Long while He cried, Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees: long while He cried, Woe unto the world because of offences. And truly hoarse in a manner He cried, and therefore was not understood, when the Jews said, What is this that He saith? Hard is this saying, who is able to hear it? We know not what He saith. He said all these words: but hoarse were His jaws to them that understood not His words. I have laboured crying, hoarse have become My jaws.

8. Mine eyes have failed from hoping in My God. Far be it that this should be taken of the person of the Head: far be it that His eyes should have failed from hoping in His God: in Whom rather there was God reconciling the world to Himself, and Who was the Word made flesh and dwelled in us, so that not only God was in Him, but also He was Himself God. Not so then: the eyes of Himself, our Head, failed not from hoping in His God: but the eyes of Him have failed in His Body, that is, in His members. This voice is of the members, this voice is of the Body, not of the Head. How then do we find it in His Body and members? What else shall I say? Of what else shall I make mention? When He suffered, when He died, all His disciples

despaired of His being Christ. By a robber the Apostles were excelled, who believed at the time when they failed. See the members of Him despairing: observe those two men whom after the Resurrection He found in the way conversing together, whereof one was Cleopas, when their eyes were holden that they should not know Him. For how should they with eyes know Him concerning Whom in mind they had come to waver? Something had been formed in their eyes like to their own mind. For they were conversing with one another, and when they were accosted by Him as to what they were saying, they answered, Dost Thou alone sojourn in Jerusalem, and knowest not the things which have come to pass, after what manner Jesus of Nazareth, mighty in words and in deeds, hath been slain by the elders and chief priests? And we were hoping that He was Himself to redeem Israel. They had hoped and were not hoping. Their eyes failed from hoping in their God. Them therefore into Himself He transformed, in saying, Mine eyes have failed from hoping in My God. This hope He restored, when He offered the scars to be handled, which when Thomas had touched, he returned to the hope which he had lost, and cried out, My Lord and my God. Thine eyes have failed from hoping in thy God, thou hast handled the scars, and hast found thy God: hast handled the form of a servant, and hast confessed thy Lord. To whom however the Lord Himself saith, Because thou hast seen thou hast believed. And foretelling us with the voice of His mercy, He saith, “Blessed they that see not and believe.” Mine eyes have failed from hoping in My God.

9. Ver. 4. Thus there have been multiplied above the hairs of My head they that hate Me gratis. How multiplied? So as that they might add to themselves even one out of the twelve. There have been multiplied above the hairs of My head they that hate Me for nought. With the hairs of His head He hath compared His enemies. With reason they were shorn when in the place of Calvary He was crucified. Let the members accept this voice, let them learn to be hated gratis. For now, O Christian, if it must needs be that the world hate thee, why dost thou not make it hate thee gratis, in order that in the Body of thy Lord and in this Psalm sent before concerning Him, thou mayest acknowledge thy own voice? How shall it come to pass that the world hate thee gratis? If thou no wise hurtest any one, and art still hated: for this is gratis, without cause. It is little for thee without cause to be hated,

even more than this, cause them to render thee evil things for good things. Mine enemies have strengthened themselves, that persecute Me unjustly. As He hath said, They have been multiplied above the hairs of My head; the same afterwards, Mine enemies have strengthened themselves; and as at first, They that hate Me gratis; the same afterwards, They that persecute Me unjustly. Unjustly is the same as gratis. This is the very voice of Martyrs, not in the punishment, but in the cause. Neither to suffer persecution, nor to be held, nor to be scourged, nor to be imprisoned, nor to be proscribed, nor to be killed, is any thing praiseworthy: but while having a good cause, to suffer these things, this is praiseworthy. For praise is in the goodness of the cause, not in the sharpness of the punishment. For howsoever great have been the sufferings of the Martyrs, do they equal the sufferings of all robbers, of all sacrilegious, of all crime-stained men? But what, doth the world hate even these? It doth hate them evidently. For they go beyond the world's mediocrity in excess of naughtiness, and in a manner from the very society of worldly men they are estranged, molesting even earthly peace, and they suffer many evil things, but not gratis. Lastly, hear the voice of that robber hanging with the Lord on the Cross, when on the other side one of the two robbers was reviling the Lord Who was being crucified, and was saying, If Son of God Thou art, deliver Thyself: the other put him to silence, and said, Dost thou not fear God, even for that thou art set in the same condemnation? And we indeed rightly for our deeds. Behold, not gratis: but by confession he shed out of himself corruption, and was made meet for the food of the Lord. He drave out his iniquity, he accused it, and he was freed from it. Behold there two robbers, there also the Lord: they both are crucified, and He is crucified: and them the world hated, but not gratis: and Him it hated, but gratis. The things which I robbed not then I was paying. This is gratis. I robbed not, and I was paying: I sinned not, and I was being punished. He alone was Himself of such sort, He truly robbed nothing. Not only He robbed nothing, but even that which He had not of robbery, of this He emptied Himself, in order that to us He might come. For, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God: and yet He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant. He robbed not at all. But who robbed? Adam. Who robbed at first? He that led astray Adam. How did the Devil rob? I will set my seat at the North, and I will be like the Most High. He assumed to himself that which he had not received: behold robbery. The devil usurped to himself what he had not received; he lost what he had received; and out of the very cup of his pride he gave him to drink whom he was wishing to deceive. Taste ye, he saith, and ye shall be as Gods. They willed to rob divinity, and they lost felicity. He therefore robbed, and accordingly paid. But I, he saith, the things which I robbed not was then paying. The Lord Himself, drawing near to His Passion, in the Gospel thus speaketh: Behold there cometh the Prince of this world, that is the devil, and in Me shall find nothing; that is, wherefore he should kill Me he shall find not: but that all may know that I do the will of My Father, arise, let us go. And He went to the Passion to pay that which He robbed not. For what is, in Me he shall find nothing? No guilt. Hath the devil lost any thing from his house? Let him examine the robbers, nothing with Me he shall find. Nevertheless, He saith that He had robbed nothing, to sin adverting, that He had taken nothing which was not His; for this belongeth to robbery, this to iniquity: for from the devil himself He had wrested those whom the same had robbed. No man, He saith, entereth into the house of a strong man, and spoileth his vessels, except first he shall have bound the strong man. He hath bound the strong man, and hath spoiled his vessels: truly He hath not robbed; but He answereth thee, those vessels from thy great house had been lost; I have not stolen a thing, but have recovered a thing stolen.

10. Ver. 5. O God, Thou hast known mine improvidence. Again out of the mouth of the Body. For what improvidence is there in Christ? Is He not Himself the Virtue of God, and the Wisdom of God? Doth He call this His improvidence, whereof the Apostle speaketh, the foolishness of God is wiser than men? Mine improvidence, that very thing which in Me they derided that seem to themselves to be wise, Thou hast known why it was done: Thou hast known mine improvidence. For what was so much like improvidence, as, when He had it in His power with one word to lay low the persecutors, to suffer Himself to be held, scourged, spit upon, buffeted, with thorns to be crowned, to the tree to be nailed? It is like improvidence, it seemeth a foolish thing; but this foolish thing excelleth all wise men. Foolish indeed it is: but even when grain falleth into the earth, if no one knoweth the custom of husbandmen, it seemeth foolish: with great labour it is reaped, is carried to the barn, is threshed, is winnowed; after so great perils of weather and of storms, and after the labours of rustics and the

carefulness of masters, the corn is put in the store clean; there cometh winter, that which hath been cleansed is brought forth and cast abroad: improvidence it appeareth; but hope maketh it not to be improvidence. He then spared not Himself: because even the Father spared Him not, but delivered Him up for us all. And of the Same, Who loved me, saith the Apostle, and delivered up Himself for me: for except a grain shall have fallen into the land so that it die, fruit, He saith, it will not yield. This is the improvidence; but Thou hast known it. But "they if they had known the Lord of glory, they had never crucified." O God, Thou hast known mine improvidence, and my transgressions from Thee are not concealed. It is plain, clear, open, that this must be perceived to be out of the mouth of the Body. Transgressions none had Christ: He was the bearer of transgressions, but not the committer. And my transgressions from Thee are not concealed: that is, I have confessed to Thee all my transgressions, and before my mouth Thou hast seen them in my thought, hast seen the wounds which Thou wast to heal. But where? Even in the Body, in the members: in those believers out of whom there was now cleaving to Him that member, who was confessing his sins. And my transgressions, he saith, from Thee are not concealed.

11. Ver. 6. Let them not blush in Me, that wait for Thee, O Lord, Lord of virtues. Again, the voice of the Head, Let them not blush in Me: let it not be said to them, Where is He on Whom ye were relying? Let it not be said to them, Where is He that was saying to you, Believe ye in God, and in Me believe? Let them not blush in Me, that wait for Thee, O Lord, Lord of virtues. Let them not be confounded concerning Me, that seek Thee, O God of Israel. This also may be understood of the Body, but only if thou consider the Body of Him not one man: for in truth one man is not the Body of Him, but a small member, but the Body is made up of members. Therefore the full Body of Him is the whole Church. With reason then saith the Church, Let them not blush in Me, that wait for Thee, O Lord, Lord of virtues. Let me not so be afflicted by insurgent persecutors, let me not so be worn down by envious enemies, by snarling heretics, that from Me have gone forth, because they were not of Me: for if they had been of Me, with Me perchance they had remained. Let me not be so weighed down by their scandals, as that they shall blush in Me that wait for Thee, O Lord, Lord of

virtues. Let them not be confounded because of Me, that seek Thee, O God of Israel.

12. Ver. 7. For because of Thee I have sustained upbraiding, shamelessness hath covered my face. No great thing is that which is spoken of in I have sustained: but that which is spoken of in for Thy sake I have sustained, is. For if thou sustainest because thou hast sinned; for thine own sake thou sustainest, not for the sake of God. For to you what glory is there, saith Peter if sinning ye are punished, and ye bear it? But if thou sustainest because thou hast kept the commandment of God, truly for the sake of God thou sustainest; and thy reward remaineth for everlasting, because for the sake of God thou hast sustained revilings. For to this end He first sustained, in order that we might learn to sustain. And if He, Who had not that which was laid to His charge; how much more we, who even if we have not the sin which the enemy layeth to our charge, yet have another sin which is deservedly to be chastised in us? Some one or other calleth thee thief, and thou art no thief: thou hearest the reproach; thou art not however no thief in such sort as that thou art not any thing which to God is displeasing. Again, if He who had robbed nothing at all, who most truly had said, Behold there cometh the prince of this world, and in Me he shall find nothing, was called sinner, was called unrighteous, was called Beelzebub, was called mad; dost thou, O servant, disdain to hear according to thy deserts, that which the Lord heard for no deserts of His? He came to give thee an example. As if He had done this for nought, so thou dost not profit. For why did He hear it, but in order that thou, when thou shouldest hear, shouldest not faint? Behold, thou hearest and faintest: in vain then He hath heard: for not for His own sake, but for thy sake He hath heard. For for Thy sake I have sustained upbraiding, shamelessness hath covered my face. Shamelessness is what? Not to be confused. Lastly, it seemeth to be as it were a fault, when we say, the man is shameless. Great is the shamelessness of the man, that he doth not blush. Therefore shamelessness is a kind of folly. A Christian ought to have this shamelessness, when he cometh among men to whom Christ is an offence. If he shall have blushed because of Christ, he will be blotted out from the book of the living. Thou must needs therefore have shamelessness when Thou art reviled because of Christ; when they say, Worshipper of the Crucified, adorer of Him that died ill, venerator of Him that was slain! here

if thou shalt blush thou art a dead man. For see the sentence of Him that deceiveth no one. He that shall have been ashamed of Me before men, I also will be ashamed of him before the Angels of God. Watch therefore thyself whether there be in thee shamelessness; be thou boldfaced, when thou hearest a reproach concerning Christ; yea be boldfaced. Why fearest thou for thy forehead which thou hast armed with the sign of the Cross? For this is, For Thy sake I have sustained upbraiding, shamelessness hath covered my face. For Thy sake I have sustained upbraiding: and because I have not blushed because of Thee, when I was being reviled for Thy sake, shamelessness hath covered my face.

13. Ver. 8. An alien I have become to My brethren, and a stranger to the sons of My mother. To the sons of the Synagogue He became a stranger. For in His own country it was said, Do we not know Him to be the Son of Mary and of Joseph? And whence in another passage, But this Man we know not whence He is? Therefore, I have become a stranger to the sons of My mother. They knew not whence I am, of whom was My flesh: they knew Me not to have been born out of the thigh of Abraham; wherein My flesh was concealed, when under that same thigh the servant putting his hand swore by the God of Heaven. A stranger I have become to the sons of My mother. Why so? Why did they not acknowledge? Why did they call Him an alien? Why did they dare to say, we know not whence He is? Because the zeal of Thine House hath eaten Me up: that is, because I have persecuted in them their own iniquities, because I have not patiently borne those whom I have rebuked, because I have sought Thy glory in Thy House, because I have scourged them that in the Temple dealt unseemly: in which place also there is quoted, the zeal of Thine House hath eaten Me up. Hence an alien, hence a stranger; hence, we know not whence He is. They would have acknowledged whence I am, if they had acknowledged that which Thou hast commanded. For if I had found them keeping Thy commandments, the zeal of Thine House would not have eaten Me up. And the reproaches of men reproaching Thee have fallen upon Me. Of this testimony Paul the Apostle hath also made use, (there hath been read but now the very lesson, and saith, Whatsoever things aforetime have been written, have been written that we might be instructed, that through comfort of the Scriptures we may have hope. He hath said then that of Christ was

that voice, the reproaches of men reproaching Thee have fallen upon Me. Why Thee? Is the Father reproached, and not Christ Himself? Why have the reproaches of men reproaching Thee fallen upon Me? Because, he that hath known Me, hath known the Father also: because no one hath reviled Christ without reviling God: because no one honoureth the Father, except he that honoureth the Son also. The revilings of men reviling Thee have fallen upon Me, because they found Me.

14. Ver. 10. And I have covered in fasting My Soul, and it became to Me for a reviling. The fasting of Christ already in another Psalm we have spiritually set forth to Your Love. His fasting was, when there fell away all they that had believed in Him; because also it was His hunger, that men should believe in Him: because also it was His thirst, when He said to the woman, I thirst, give Me to drink: yea for her faith He was thirsting. And from the Cross when He was saying, I thirst, He was seeking the faith of them for whom He had said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. But what did those men give to drink to Him thirsty? Vinegar. Vinegar is also called ‘old.’ With reason of the old man they gave to drink, because they willed not to be new. Why willed they not to become new? Because to the title of this Psalm whereon is written, For them that shall be changed, they belonged not. Therefore, I have covered in fasting My soul. Lastly, He put from Him even the gall which they offered: He chose rather to fast than to accept bitterness. For they enter not into His Body that are embittered, whereof in another place a Psalm saith, They that are embittered shall not be exalted in themselves. Therefore, I have covered in fasting My soul: and it became to Me for a reviling. This very thing became to Me for a reviling, that I consented not to them, that is, from them I fasted. For he that consenteth not to men seducing to evil, fasteth from them; and through this fasting earneth reviling, so that he is upbraided because he consenteth not to the evil thing.

15. Ver. 11. And I have set sackcloth my garment. Already before we have said something of the sackcloth, from whence there is this, But I, when they were troubling Me, was covering myself with sackcloth, and was humbling My Soul in fasting. I have set sackcloth for My garment: that is, have set against them My flesh, on which to spend their rage, I have concealed My

divinity. Sackcloth, because mortal the flesh was: in order that by sin He might condemn sin in the flesh. And I have set sackcloth my garment: and I have been made to them for a parable, that is, for a derision. It is called a parable, whenever a comparison is made concerning some one, when he is evil spoken of. ‘So may this man perish,’ for example, ‘as that man did,’ is a parable: that is, a comparison and likeness in cursing. I have been made to them, then, for a parable.

16. Ver. 12. Against Me were reviling they that were sitting in the gate. In the gate is nothing else but in public. And against Me they were chanting, they that were drinking wine. Do ye think, brethren, that this hath befallen Christ alone? Daily to Him in His members it happeneth: whenever perchance it is necessary for the servant of God to forbid excess of wine and luxuries in any village or town, where there hath not been heard the Word of God, it is not enough that they sing, nay more even against him they begin to sing, by whom they are forbidden to sing. Compare ye now His fasting and their wine. And against Me were chanting they that were drinking wine: the wine of error, the wine of ungodliness, the wine of pride.

17. Ver. 13. But I with My prayer with Thee, O Lord. But I was with Thee. But how? With Thee by praying. For when thou art evil spoken of, and knowest not what thou mayest do; when at thee are hurled reproaches, and thou findest not any way of rebuking him by whom they are hurled; nothing remaineth for thee but to pray. But remember even for that very man to pray. But I with my prayer with Thee, O Lord. It is the time of Thy good pleasure, O God. For behold the grain is being buried, there shall spring up fruit. It is the time of Thy good pleasure, O God. Of this time even the Prophets have spoken, whereof the Apostle maketh mention; “Behold now the time acceptable, behold now the day of salvation.” It is the time of Thy good pleasure, O God. In the multitude of Thy mercy. This is the time of good pleasure, in the multitude of Thy mercy. For if there were not a multitude of Thy mercy, what should we do for the multitude of our iniquity? In the multitude of Thy mercy; Hearken to me in the truth of Thy Salvation. Because He hath said, of Thy mercy, he hath added truth also: for mercy and truth are all the ways of the Lord. Why mercy? In forgiving sins.

Why truth? In fulfilling the promises. Hearken to Me in the truth of Thy Salvation.

18. Ver. 14. Save Thou Me from the mire, that I may not stick. From that whereof above he had spoken, Fixed I am in the clay of the deep, and there is no substance. Furthermore, since ye have duly received the exposition of that expression, in this place there is nothing further for you to hear particularly. From hence he saith that he must be delivered, wherein before he said that he was fixed: Save Thou Me from the mire, that I may not stick. And he explaineth this himself; Let Me be rescued from them that hate Me. They were themselves therefore the clay wherein he had stuck. But the following perchance suggesteth itself. A little before he had said, Fixed I am; now he saith, Save Thou Me from the mire, that I may not stick: whereas after the meaning of what was said before he ought to have said, Save Thou Me from the mire where I had stuck, by rescuing Me, not by causing that I stick not. Therefore He had stuck in flesh, but had not stuck in spirit. He saith this, because of the infirmity of His members. Whenever perchance thou art seized by one that urgeth thee to iniquity, thy body indeed is taken, in regard to the body thou art fixed in the clay of the deep: but so long as thou consentest not, thou hast not stuck; but if thou consentest, thou hast stuck. Let then thy prayer be in that place, in order that as thy body is now held, so thy soul may not be held, so thou mayest be free in bonds. Let Me be rescued from them that hate Me: and from the deep of waters.

19. Ver. 15. Let not the tempest of waters drown Me. But already he had been drowned. I have come into the depth of the sea, thou hast said, and the tempest hath drowned Me, thou hast said. It hath drowned after the flesh, let it not drown after the Spirit. They to whom was said, If they shall have persecuted you in one city, flee ye into another; had this said to them, that neither in flesh they should stick, nor in spirit. For we must not desire to stick even in flesh; but as far as we are able we ought to avoid it. But if we shall have stuck, and shall have fallen into the hands of sinners: then in body we have stuck, we are fixed in the clay of the deep, it remaineth to entreat for the soul that we stick not, that is, that we consent not, that the tempest of water drown us not, so that we go into the deep of the clay.

Neither let the deep swallow Me, nor the pit close her mouth upon Me. What is this, brethren? What hath he prayed against? Great is the pit of the depth of human iniquity: every one, if he shall have fallen into it, will fall into the deep. But yet if a man being there placed confesseth his sins to his God, the pit will not shut her mouth upon him: as is written in another Psalm, From the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord; Lord, hearken unto my voice. But if there is done in him that which another passage of Scripture saith, When a sinner shall have come into the depth of evil things, he will despise, upon him the pit hath shut her mouth. Why hath she shut her mouth? Because she hath shut his mouth. He hath lost confession, really dead he is, and there is fulfilled in him that which elsewhere is spoken of, From a dead man, as from one that is not, there perisheth confession. This state is very greatly to be dreaded, brethren. If thou shalt have seen a man do iniquity, he is sunk in a pit: but when thou shalt have told him his own iniquity, and he shall have said, Truly I have sinned, I confess it, upon him the pit hath not shut her mouth: but when thou shalt have heard him say, But what harm have I done? he hath become the advocate of his sin: upon him the pit hath shut her mouth, he hath no way whereby he may be rescued. Confession lost, there will be no place for mercy. Thou hast become thy sin’s advocate, how shall God be the deliverer from it? Therefore in order that He may be a deliverer, do thou be an accuser.

sermon ii

On the latter part of Psalm 69.

The latter part of the Psalm whereof yesterday we spake to your Love, had remained to be explained by us to-day. And I see that there is time to pay the debt, if however the length thereof shall not have left us debtors even to-day. Accordingly this I say beforehand, and beg you not to expect a long discourse for those things which are evident. For so we can tarry for the need at those things which are more obscure, and perchance fulfil what we owe: so as that on other days we may owe other things, and pay other things. Let us see then what words follow. After he said, (ver. 16.) Neither let the pit close upon me her mouth: which yesterday we have recommended to your Love, in order that with all earnestness of mind and fidelity of godliness we should take heed that this curse come not upon us.

For then there doth close her mouth upon a man the pit, that is, depth of iniquity, when not only he lieth sunk in sins, but also loseth the opening of confession. But when a man saith, I am a sinner: even the depth of the pit is being illumined with some light. There followeth then amid His sufferings crying out our Lord Jesus Christ, Head and Body, as we have set forth: so that in some places ye acknowledge the words of the Head; but the things which have been so spoken as that they cannot be appropriate to the Head, to the Body ye refer. For thus Christ doth speak, as it were One: because also He is truly One, whereof hath been said, There shall be two in one flesh. For if in one flesh, why dost thou wonder that He is also in one voice? There followeth then,

Ver. 17. Hearken unto me, O Lord, for sweet is Thy mercy. He hath given this as a reason why He ought to be hearkened unto, because sweet is the mercy of God. Was not this rather a consequence, so that He should have said, Hearken unto me, O Lord, in order that sweet to me may be Thy mercy? Why then, Hearken unto me, O Lord, for sweet is Thy mercy? The sweetness of the mercy of the Lord because of His trouble He set forth in a manner with other words, when He said, Hearken to me, O Lord, for I am being troubled. For in truth, he that saith, Hearken to me, O Lord, for I am being troubled, giveth the reason why he prayeth to be hearkened unto: but to a man set in trouble the mercy of God must needs be sweet. Concerning this sweetness of the mercy of God see ye what in another place the Scripture saith: Like rain in drought, so beautiful is the mercy of God in trouble. That which there he saith to be beautiful, the same he saith here to be sweet. Not even bread would be sweet, unless hunger had preceded. Therefore even when the Lord permitteth or causeth us to be in any trouble, even then He is merciful: for He doth not withdraw nourishment, but stirreth up longing. Accordingly what saith he now, Hearken to me, O Lord, for sweet is Thy mercy? Now do not Thou defer hearkening, in so great trouble I am, that sweet to me is Thy mercy. For to this end Thou didst defer to succour, in order that to me that wherewith Thou didst succour might be sweet: but now no longer is there cause why Thou must defer; my trouble hath arrived at the appointed measure of distress, let Thy mercy come to do the work of goodness. Hearken unto me, O Lord, for sweet is

Thy mercy. After the multitude of Thy pities have regard unto me: not after the multitude of my sins.

2. Ver. 17. Turn not away Thy face from Thy child. And this is a commending of humility; from Thy child, that is, from Thy little one: because now I have been rid of pride through the discipline of tribulation, turn not away Thy face from Thy child. This is that beautiful mercy of God, whereof he spake above. For in the following verse he explaineth that whereof he spake: For I am troubled, speedily hearken Thou unto me. What is speedily? Now there is no cause why Thou must defer it: I am troubled, my affliction hath gone before; let Thy mercy follow.

3. Ver. 18. Give heed to my soul, and redeem her, doth need no exposition: let us see therefore what followeth. Because of mine enemies deliver me. This petition is evidently wonderful, neither briefly to be touched upon, nor hastily to be skipped over; truly wonderful: because of mine enemies deliver me. What is, because of mine enemies deliver me? That they may be confounded, that they may be tortured by my deliverance. What then, if there were not any persons to be tortured by my deliverance, ought I not to be succoured? And is deliverance then only welcome to thee, when it shall have been another’s condemnation? See, there are not any enemies, to be confounded or tortured because of thy deliverance: wilt thou so continue, wilt thou not be delivered? Or is it therefore that it may so operate upon thy enemies, that they may themselves be able to be converted by thy deliverance? But even this is marvellous, if it gave any reason for the petition. For is the servant of God delivered by the Lord his God, in order that others may profit thereby? What, if there were wanting men who should profit, must that servant of God not be delivered? Whithersoever then I turn me, whether to the punishment or to the deliverance of enemies, I see no reason for this petition, Because of mine enemies deliver me: unless we understand it of something else, which when I shall have spoken by the help of the Lord, He shall judge in you, that dwelleth in you. There is a kind of secret deliverance of holy men: this for their own sakes is made. There is one public and evident: this is made because of their enemies, either for their punishment, or for their deliverance. For truly God delivered not the brothers in the book of Maccabees from the fires of the persecutor,

against whom Antiochus being wroth, made use of even their mother, by whose persuasions he hoped they would be turned to the love of life, and in loving to live unto men, to God would die. But that mother, being no longer like Eve, but like our mother the Church, saw with joy them dying whom with pain she had borne so she might know them alive; and to this exhorted them, to choose rather to die for the sake of the paternal laws of the Lord their God, than to live in defiance of them. What are we here to suppose, brethren, but that they were delivered? But secret was their deliverance: in a word, Antiochus himself, by whom they were slain, thought he had done something which his cruelty dictated, or rather invited. But again the Three Children openly were delivered from the furnace of fire; because their body also was rescued, their safety was public. The former were in secret crowned, the latter openly delivered: all however saved. But what fruit was there of the deliverance of the three Children? Why was their crown delayed? Nabuchodonosor himself was converted to their God, and preached Him, for that He rescued His servants, Whom he had despised, when he had cast them into the furnace. There is then a secret deliverance, there is an open deliverance. Secret deliverance doth belong to the soul, open deliverance to the body as well. For in secret the soul is delivered, openly the body. Again, if so it be, in this Psalm the voice of the Lord let us acknowledge: to the secret deliverance doth belong that whereof he spake above, Give heed to my soul, and redeem her. There remaineth the body’s deliverance: for on His arising and ascending into the Heavens, and sending the Holy Ghost from above, there were converted to His faith they that at His death did rage, and out of enemies they were made friends through His grace, not through their righteousness. Therefore he hath continued, because of mine enemies deliver me. Give heed to my soul, but this in secret: but because of mine enemies deliver even my body. For mine enemies it will profit nothing if soul alone Thou shalt have delivered; that they have done something, that they have accomplished something, they will believe. What profit is there in my blood, while I go down into corruption? Therefore give heed to my soul, and redeem her, which Thou alone knowest: secondly also, because of mine enemies deliver me, that my flesh may not see corruption.

4. Ver. 19. Thou knowest my reproach, and my confusion, and my shame. What is reproach? What is confusion? What shame? Reproach is that which the enemy casteth in the teeth. Confusion is that which gnaweth the conscience. Shame is that which causeth even a noble brow to blush, because of the upbraiding with a pretended crime. There is no crime; or even if there is a crime, it doth not belong to him, against whom it is alleged: but yet the infirmity of the human mind ofttimes is made ashamed even when a pretended crime is alleged; not because it is alleged, but because it is believed. All these things are in the Body of the Lord. For confusion in Him could not be, in Whom guilt was not found. There was alleged as a crime against Christians, the very fact that they were Christians. That indeed was glory: the brave gladly received it, and so received it as that they blushed not at all for the Lord's name. For fearlessness had covered the face of them, having the effrontery of Paul, saying, for I blush not because of the Gospel: for the virtue of God it is for salvation to every one believing. O Paul, art not thou a venerator of the Crucified? Little it is, he saith, for me not to blush for it: nay, therein alone I glory, wherefore the enemy thinketh me to blush. But from me far be it to glory, save in the Cross of Jesus Christ, through Whom to me the world is crucified, and I to the world. At such a brow as this then reproach alone could be hurled. For neither could there be confusion in a conscience already made whole, nor shame in a brow so free. But when it was being alleged against certain that they had slain Christ, deservedly they were pricked through with evil conscience, and to their health confounded and converted, so that they could say, Thou hast known my confusion. Thou therefore, O Lord, hast known not only my reproach but also my confusion, in certain shame also: who, though in me they believe, publicly blush to confess me before ungodly men, human tongue having more influence with them than promise divine. Behold ye therefore them: even such are commended to God, not that so He may leave them, but that by aiding them He may make them perfect. For a certain man believing and wavering hath said, "I believe, O Lord, help Thou mine unbelief." (Ver. 20.) In Thy sight are all they that trouble Me. Why I have reproach, Thou knowest; why confusion, Thou knowest; why shame, Thou knowest: therefore deliver Thou me because of mine enemies, because Thou knowest these things of me, they know not; and thus, because they are themselves in Thy sight, not

knowing these things, they will not be able to be either confounded or corrected, unless openly Thou shalt have delivered me because of mine enemies.

5. Reproach my heart hath expected, and misery. What is, hath expected? Hath foreseen these things as going to be, hath foretold them as going to be. For He came not for any other purpose. If He had been unwilling to die, neither would He have willed to be born: for the sake of resurrection He did both. For there were two particular things known to us among mankind, but one thing unknown. For we knew that men were born and died: that they rose again and lived for everlasting we knew not. That He might shew to us that which we knew not, He took upon Him the two things which we knew. To this end therefore He came. Reproach my heart hath expected and misery. But the misery of whom? For He expected misery, but rather of the crucifiers, rather of the persecutors, that in them should be misery, in Him mercy. For pitying the misery of them even while hanging on the Cross, He saith, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Reproach my heart hath expected, and misery: and I waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, and there was not. What then did it profit, that I expected? That is, what did it profit that I foretold? What did it profit that I said to this end I had come? I came to fulfil that which I said, I waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, and there was not; and men comforting, and I found not: that is, there was none. For that which in the former verse He said, I waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, the same is in the following verse, and men comforting. But that which in the former verse is, and there was not; the same in the following verse is, and I found not. Therefore another sentence is not added, but the former is repeated. Which sentence if we reconsider, a question may arise. For were His disciples no wise made sorrowful when He was led to the Passion, when on the tree hanged, when dead? So much were they made sorrowful, that Mary Magdalene, who first saw Him, rejoicing told them as they were mourning what she had seen. The Gospel speaketh of these things: it is not our presumption, not our suspicion: it is evident that the disciples grieved, it is evident that they mourned. Strange women were weeping, when to the Passion He was being led, unto whom turning He saith, Weep ye, but for yourselves, do not for Me. How then did He wait for

one that together might be made sorrowful, and there was not? We observe, and we find men sorrowful, and mourning, and wailing: whence to us wonderful seemeth this sentence, I waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, and there was not: and men comforting, and I found not. Let us diligently attend, and we shall see that He waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, and there was not. For they were being made sorrowful carnally because of life mortal, which had to be changed by death, and to be restored by resurrection: hence was the sorrowfulness. For it should have been on account of those that being blind slew the Physician, who like persons delirious, fevered to their destruction, inflicted injury upon Him by Whom soundness had been brought to them. He was willing to heal, they to rage: hence sorrowfulness to the Physician. Inquire whether He found a companion in this sorrowfulness. For He saith not, I waited for one that should be made sorrowful: but, that together should be made sorrowful, that is, by the same thing as I was should be made sorrowful, and I found not. Peter certainly loved very much, and without hesitation threw himself to walk on the waves, and at the voice of the Lord he was delivered: and though following Him when led to the Passion, with the boldness of love, yet being troubled, thrice he denied Him. Whence, except because an evil thing it seemed to him to die? For he was shunning that which he thought an evil thing. This then even in the Lord he was lamenting, which he was himself shunning. On this account even before he had said, Far be it from Thee, O Lord, merciful be Thou to Thyself: there shall not come to pass this thing: at which time he merited to hear, Satan; after that he had heard, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona. Therefore in that sorrowfulness which the Lord felt because of those for whom He prayed, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do: no companion He found. And I waited for one that together should be made sorrowful, and there was not. There was not at all. And men comforting, and I found not. Who are men comforting? Men profiting. For they comfort us, they are the comfort of all preachers of the Truth.

6. Ver. 22. And they gave for My food gall, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink. This was done indeed to the letter. And the Gospel declareth this to us. But we must understand, brethren, that the very fact that I found not comforters, that the very fact that I found not one that

together should be made sorrowful, this was My gall, this to Me was bitter, this was vinegar: bitter because of grief, vinegar because of their old man. For we read, that to Him indeed gall was offered, as the Gospel speaketh; but for drink, not for food. Nevertheless, we must so take and consider that when fulfilled, which here had been before predicted, They gave for My food gall: and in that very action, not only in this saying, we ought to seek for a mystery, at secret things to knock, to enter the rent vail of the Temple, to see there a Sacrament, both in what there hath been said and in what there hath been done. They gave, He saith, for My food gall: not the thing itself which they gave was food, for it was drink: but for food they gave it. Because already the Lord had taken food, and into it there had been thrown gall. But He had taken Himself pleasant food, when He ate the Passover with His disciples: therein He shewed the Sacrament of His Body. Unto this food so pleasant, so sweet, of the Unity of Christ, of which the Apostle maketh mention, saying, For one bread, One Body, being many we are; unto this pleasant food who is there that addeth gall, except the gainsayers of the Gospel, like those persecutors of Christ? For less the Jews sinned in crucifying Him walking on earth, than they that despise Him sitting in Heaven. That which then the Jews did, in giving above the food which He had already taken that bitter draught to drink, the same they do that by evil living bring scandal upon the Church: the same do embittered heretics, But let them not be exalted in their own selves. They give gall after so delectable meat. But what doth the Lord? He admitteth them not to His Body. In this mystery, when they presented gall, the Lord Himself tasted, and would not drink. If we did not suffer them, neither at all should we taste: but because it is necessary to suffer them, we must needs taste. But because in the members of Christ such sort cannot be, they can be tasted, received into the Body they cannot be. And they gave for My food gall, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink. I was thirsting, and vinegar I received: that is, for the faith of them I longed, and I found oldness.

7. Ver. 23. Let the table of them be made in their own presence for a trap. Like the trap which for Me they set, in giving Me such a draught, let such a trap be for them. Why then, in their own presence? Let the table of them be made for a trap, would have been sufficient. They are such as know their iniquity, and in it most obstinately do persevere: in their own presence there

is made a trap for them. These are they that, being too destructive, go down into Hell alive. Lastly, of persecutors what hath been said? Except that the Lord were in us, perchance alive they had swallowed us up. What is alive? Consenting to them, and knowing that we ought not to consent to them. Therefore in their own presence there is made a trap, and they are not amended. Even though in their own presence there is a trap, let them not fall into it. Behold they know the trap, and thrust out foot, and bow their necks to be caught. How much better were it to turn away from the trap, to acknowledge sin, to condemn error, to be rid of bitterness, to pass over into the Body of Christ, to seek the Lord's glory! But so much prevaileth presumption of mind, that even in their own presence the trap is, and they fall into it. Let the eyes of them be darkened, that they see not, followeth here: that whereas without benefit they have seen, it may chance to them even not to see. Let the table of them, therefore, be made in their own presence for a trap. In their own presence be made for a trap, is not from one wishing, but from one prophesying: not in order that it may come to pass, but because it will come to pass. This we have often remarked, and ye ought to remember it: lest that which the prescient mind saith in the Spirit of God, it should seem with ill will to imprecate. May it come to pass therefore; nor can it otherwise come to pass than that these things to such men must happen. And since we see that through the Spirit of God such things are spoken of as to happen to evil men; to this end let us perceive these things in them, in order that we may ourselves avoid such things. For this is good for us to perceive, and by our enemies to profit. Let it then be done to them, (ver. 23.) both for a requital and for a stumbling-block. And is this by any means unjust? It is just. Why? For it is for a requital. For not any thing would happen to them, which was not owed. For a requital it is done, and for a stumbling-block: for they are themselves a stumbling-block to themselves.

8. Let the eyes of them be darkened, that they see not, and the back of them alway bow Thou down. This is a consequence. For they, whose eyes have been darkened that they see not, it followeth, must have their back bowed down. How so? Because when they have ceased to take knowledge of things above, they must needs think of things below. He that well heareth, "lift up the heart," a bowed back hath not. For with stature erect he looketh

for the hope laid up for him in Heaven; most especially if he send before him his treasure, whither his heart followeth. But, on the other hand, they they perceive not the hope of future life; already being blinded, they think of things below: and this is to have a bowed back: from which disorder the Lord delivered that woman. For Satan had bound her eighteen years, and her that was bowed down He raised up: and because on the Sabbath He did it, the Jews were scandalized; suitably were they scandalized at her being raised up, themselves being bowed. And the back of them alway bow Thou down.

9. Ver. 25. Pour forth upon them Thine anger, and let the indignation of Thine anger overtake them, are plain words: but nevertheless, in overtake them we perceive them as it were fleeing. But whither are they to flee? Into Heaven? Thou art there. Into Hell? Thou art present. Their wings they will not take to fly straight: Let the indignation of Thine anger overtake them, let it not permit them to escape.

10. Ver. 26. Let the habitation of them become forsaken. This is now evident. For in the same manner as He hath mentioned not only a secret deliverance of His, saying, Give heed to My soul, and redeem her; but also one open after the body, adding, because of mine enemies deliver me: so also to these men He foretelleth how there are to be certain secret misfortunes, whereof a little before He was speaking. For is any man equal to perceive the unhappiness of a man whose heart is already blinded? Let there be taken from him the eyes of the body, all men call him miserable: let him lose the eyes of the mind, while yet he aboundeth with all plenteousness of possessions, they call him happy; but only they that in like manner have lost the eyes of the mind. Then what now is done openly, that it may appear to all how vengeance hath been taken upon them? For the blindness of the Jews was secret vengeance: but the open was what? Let their habitation become forsaken, and in their tabernacles let there be not any one to inhabit. There hath come to pass this thing in the very city Jerusalem, wherein they thought themselves mighty in crying against the Son of God, Crucify, Crucify; and in prevailing because they were able to kill Him that raised dead men. How mighty to themselves, how great, they seemed! There followed afterwards the vengeance of the Lord, stormed was

the city, utterly conquered the Jews, slain were I know not how many thousands of men. No one of the Jews is permitted to come thither now: where they were able to cry against the Lord, there by the Lord they are not permitted to dwell. They have lost the place of their fury: and O that even now they would know the place of their rest! What profit to them was Caiaphas in saying, If we shall have let go this man thus, there will come the Romans, and take away from us both place and kingdom? Behold, both they did not let Him go alive, and He liveth: and there have come the Romans, and have taken from them both place and kingdom. But now we heard, when the Gospel was being read, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered together thy sons, as a hen her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not? Behold, there is left to you your house forsaken. The same here also is said: Let the habitation of them become forsaken, and in the tabernacles of them let there not be any one to inhabit. “Let there be not any one to inhabit,” but out of the number of those men. For all those places are both full of men, and are void of Jews.

11. Why so? (ver. 27.) For Him Whom Thou hast smitten they have themselves persecuted, and upon the pain of my wounds they have added. How then have they sinned if they have persecuted one by God smitten? What sin is ascribed to their mind? Malice. For the thing was done in Christ which was to be. To suffer indeed He had come, and He punished him through whom He suffered. For Judas the traitor was punished, and Christ was crucified: but us He redeemed by His blood, and He punished him in the matter of his price. For he threw down the price of silver, for which by him the Lord had been sold; and he knew not the price, wherewith he had himself by the Lord been redeemed. This thing was done in the case of Judas. But when we see that there is a sort of measure of requital in all men, and that not any one can be suffered to rage more than he hath received power to do: how have they added, or what is that smiting of the Lord? Without doubt He is speaking in the person of him from whom He had received a body, from whom He had taken upon Him flesh, that is in the person of mankind, of Adam himself who was smitten with the first death because of his sin. Mortal therefore here are men born, as born with their punishment: to this punishment they add, whosoever do persecute men. For now here man would not have had to die, unless God had smitten him. Why

then dost thou, O man, rage more than this? Is it little for a man that sometime he is to die? Each one of us therefore beareth his punishment: to this punishment they would add that persecute us. This punishment is the smiting of the Lord. For the Lord smote man with the sentence; What day ye shall have touched it, He saith, with death ye shall die. Out of this death He had taken upon Him flesh, and our old man hath been crucified together with Him. By the voice of that man He hath said these words, Him whom Thou hast smitten they have themselves persecuted, and upon the pain of My wounds they have added. Upon what pain of wounds? Upon the pain of sins they have themselves added. For sins He hath called His wounds. But do not look to the Head, consider the Body; according to the voice whereof hath been said by the Same in that Psalm, wherein He shewed there was His voice, because in the first verse thereof He cried from the Cross, God, My God, look upon Me, why hast Thou forsaken Me? There in continuation He saith, Afar from My safety are the words of Mine offences. These are the very wounds inflicted by robbers in the road upon him whom he mounted upon his beast: whom a priest and a Levite passing by had found and contemned, by whom He could not have been made whole; but a Samaritan passing by pitied him, drew near, and upon his own beast he mounted him. Samarite in Latin is interpreted keeper: but who is the keeper, save our Lord Jesus Christ? Who, since He hath risen from the dead, now no longer to die, ‘neither sleepeth nor shall slumber, that keepeth Israel.’ And upon the pain of My wounds they have added.

12. Ver. 27. Lay Thou iniquity upon their iniquity. What is this? Who would not be afraid? To God is said, Lay Thou iniquity upon their iniquity. Whence shall God lay iniquity? For hath He iniquity to lay? For we know that to be true which hath been spoken through Paul the Apostle, What then shall we say? Is there anywise iniquity with God? Far be it. Whence then, Lay Thou iniquity upon iniquity? How must we understand this? May the Lord be with us, that we may speak, and because of your weariness may be able to speak briefly. Their iniquity was that they killed a just Man: there was added another, that they crucified the Son of God. Their raging was as though against a man: but if they had known, the Lord of Glory they had never crucified. They with their own iniquity willed to kill as it were a man: there was laid iniquity upon their own iniquity, so that the Son of God they

should crucify. Who laid this iniquity upon them? He that said, Perchance they will reverence My Son, Him I will send. For they were wont to kill servants sent to them, to demand rent and profit. He sent the Son Himself, in order that Him also they might kill. He laid iniquity upon their own iniquity. And these things did God do in wrath, or rather in just requital? For, May it be done to them, He saith, for a requital and for a stumbling-block. They had deserved to be so blinded as not to know the Son of God. And this God did, laying iniquity upon their iniquity; not in wounding, but in not making whole. For in like manner as thou increasest a fever, increasest a disorder, not by adding disorder, but by not relieving: so because they were of such sort as that they merited not to be healed, in their very naughtiness in a manner they advanced; as it is said, But evil men and wicked doers advance for the worse: and iniquity is laid upon their own iniquity. And let them not enter in Thy righteousness. This is a plain thing.

13. Ver. 28. Let them be blotted out from the book of the living. For had they been sometime written therein? Brethren, we must not so take it, as that God writeth any one in the book of life, and blotteth him out. If a man said, What I have written I have written, concerning the title where it had been written, King of the Jews: doth God write any one, and blot him out? He foreknoweth, He hath predestined all before the foundation of the world that are to reign with His Son in life everlasting. These He hath written down, these same the Book of Life doth contain. Lastly, in the Apocalypse, what saith the Spirit of God, when the same Scripture was speaking of the oppressions that should be from Antichrist? There shall give consent to him all they that have not been written in the book of life. So then without doubt they will not consent that have been written. How then are these men blotted out from that book wherein they were never written? This hath been said according to their own hope, because they thought of themselves that they were written. What is, let them be blotted out from the book of life? Even to themselves let it be evident, that they were not there. By this method of speaking hath been said in another Psalm, There shall fall from Thy side a thousand, and tens of thousands from on Thy right hand: that is, many men shall be offended, even out of that number who thought that they would sit with Thee, even out of that number who thought that they would stand at Thy right hand, being severed from the left-hand goats: not that

when any one hath there stood, he shall afterwards fall, or when any one with Him hath sat, he shall be cast away; but that many men were to fall into scandal, who already thought themselves to be there, that is, many that thought that they would sit with Thee, many that hoped that they would stand at the right hand, will themselves fall. So then here also they that hoped as though by the merit of their own righteousness themselves to have been written in the book of God, they to whom is said, Search the Scriptures, wherein ye think yourselves to have life eternal: when their condemnation shall have been brought even to their own knowledge, shall be effaced from the book of the living, they shall know themselves not to be there. For the verse which followeth, explaineth what hath been said: And with just men let them not be written. I have said then, Let them be effaced, according to their hope: but according to Thy justice I say what? Let them not be written.

14. Ver. 29. Poor and sorrowful I am. Why this? Is it that we may acknowledge that through bitterness of soul this poor One doth speak evil? For He hath spoken of many things to happen to them. And as if we were saying to Him, "Why such things?—Nay, not so much!" He answereth, Poor and sorrowful I am. They have brought Me to want, unto this sorrow they have set Me down, therefore I say these words. It is not, however, the indignation of one cursing, but the prediction of one prophesying. For He was intending to recommend to us certain things which hereafter He saith of His poverty and His sorrow, in order that we may learn to be poor and sorrowful. For, Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. And, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. This therefore He doth Himself before now shew to us: and so, poor and sorrowful I am. The whole Body of Him saith this. The Body of Christ in this earth is poor and sorrowful. But let Christians be rich. Truly if Christians they are, they are poor; in comparison with the riches celestial for which they hope, all their gold they count for sand. Poor and sorrowful I am.

15. And the health of Thy countenance, O God, hath taken Me up. Is this poor One anywise forsaken? When dost thou deign to bring near to thy table a poor man in rags? But again, this poor One the health of the

countenance of God hath taken up: in His countenance He hath hidden His need. For of Him hath been said, Thou shalt hide them in the hiding place of Thy countenance. But in that countenance what riches there are would ye know? Riches here give thee this advantage, that thou mayest dine on what thou wilt, whenever thou wilt: but those riches, that thou mayest never hunger. Poor and sorrowful I am: and the health of Thy countenance, O God, hath taken Me up. For what purpose? In order that no longer I may be poor, no longer sorrowful? (Ver. 30.) I will praise the name of the Lord with a song, I will magnify Him in praise. Now it hath been said, this poor One praiseth the name of the Lord with a song, he magnifieth Him in praise. When would He have ventured to sing, unless He had been refreshed from hunger? I will praise the name of the Lord with a song, I will magnify Him with praise. O vast riches! What jewels of God's praise hath he brought out of his inward treasures! I will magnify Him in praise. These are my riches! The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away. Then miserable he hath remained? Far be it. See the riches: "As it hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done, be the name of the Lord blessed." I will praise the name of the Lord with a song, I will magnify Him in praise.

16. Ver. 31. And it shall please God: that I shall praise Him, shall please: above a new calf, bearing horns and hoofs. More grateful to Him shall be the sacrifice of praise than the sacrifice of a calf. The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me, and there is the way wherein I will shew to him the salvation of God: Immolate to God the sacrifice of praise, and render to the Most High thy vows. Therefore I will praise God, and it shall please Him better than a new calf bearing horns and hoofs. So then His praise going forth from my mouth shall please God more than a great victim led up to His altar. Must any thing be said concerning the horns and hoofs of this calf? He that is well furnished and is rich in the praise of God, ought to have both horns wherewith he may toss the adversary, and hoofs wherewith he may cast up the earth. For ye know that calves do this when growing up and increasing unto such fierceness as bulls have. For it is new, because of the new life. Some heretic then perchance is gainsaying, let him be tossed with the horns: another gainsayeth not, but yet meanly mindeth an earthly object, let him be cast up with the hoofs. Therefore above this calf my praising shall please Thee, such as hereafter will be, after poverty and

sorrow, in the eternal society of Angels, where neither adversary there shall be in battle to be tossed, nor sluggard from earth to be stirred up.

17. Ver. 32. Let the needy see and rejoice. Let them believe, and in hope be glad. Let them be more needy, in order that they may deserve to be filled: lest while they belch out pride's satiety, there be denied them the bread whereon they may healthily live. Seek the Lord, ye needy, hunger ye and thirst; for He is Himself the living bread that came down from Heaven. Seek ye the Lord, and your soul shall live. Ye seek bread, that your flesh may live: the Lord seek ye, that your soul may live.

18. Ver. 33. For the Lord hath hearkened to the poor. He hath hearkened to the poor, and He would not have hearkened to the poor, unless they were poor. Wilt thou be hearkened to? Poor be thou: let sorrow cry out from thee and not fastidiousness. For the Lord hath hearkened to poor men, and His fettered ones He hath not despised. Being offended at His servants, He hath put them in fetters: but them crying from the fetters He hath not despised. What are these fetters? Mortality, the corruptibleness of the flesh are the fetters wherewith we have been bound. And would ye know the weight of these fetters? Of them is said, The body which is corrupted weigheth down the soul. Whenever men in the world will to be rich, for these fetters they are seeking rags. But let the rags of the fetters suffice: seek so much as is necessary for keeping off want, but when thou seekest superfluities, thou longest to load thy fetters. In such a prison then let the fetters abide even alone. Sufficient for the day be the evil thereof. Concerning this evil we cry to God, for the Lord hath hearkened to the poor, and His fettered ones He hath not despised.

19. Ver. 34. Let there praise Him heavens and earth, sea and all things creeping in them. The true riches of this poor man are these, to consider the creation, and to praise the Creator. Let there praise Him heavens and earth, sea and all things creeping therein. And doth this creation alone praise God, when by considering of it God is praised?

20. Hear thou another thing also: (ver. 35.) for God shall save Sion. He restoreth His Church, the faithful Gentiles He doth incorporate with His Only-Begotten; He beguileth not them that believe in Him of the reward of

His promise. For God shall save Sion; and there shall be builded the cities of Juda. These same are the Churches. Let no one say, when shall it come to pass that there be builded the cities of Juda? O that thou wouldest acknowledge the Edifice, and be a living stone, that thou mightest enter into Her. Even now the cities of Juda are being built. For Juda is interpreted confession. By confession of humility there are being builded the cities of Juda: in order that there may remain without the proud, who blush to confess. For God shall save Sion. What Sion? Hear in the following words: (ver. 36.) and the seed of His servants shall possess Her, and they that love His name shall dwell therein.

21. The Psalm is ended, but for a little space let us not leave these two verses: for they admonish us of something, lest by despairing, into that edifice we enter not. The seed, he saith, of His servants shall possess her. Now then, the seed of His servants are who? Perchance thou sayest, the Jews were born of Abraham; but for us that are not born of Abraham, how shall we have that city? But those Jews are not the seed of Abraham, to whom was said, If sons of Abraham ye are, the deeds of Abraham do ye. The seed, then, of His servants, the imitators of the faith of His servants, shall possess her. In a word, the last verse explaineth the former. For in order that thou, being troubled, mightest not suppose this to be spoken concerning Jews, And the seed of His servants shall possess her, while thou sayest, we are the seed of Gentiles, who have worshipped idols, and have served devils: what then for us is to be hoped for in this city? in order that thou mayest rely and hope, immediately he hath added, And they that love His name shall dwell therein. For these are the seed of His servants, they that love His name. For because His servants have loved His name; let whosoever love not His name not call themselves the seed of His servants; and let them that love His name, not deny themselves to be the seed of His servants.

PSALM 70

Exposition

Sermon preached at the Celebration of the Martyrs.

1. Thanks to the Corn of wheat, because He willed to die and to be multiplied: thanks to the only Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who disdained not to undergo our death, in order that He might make us worthy of His life. Behold Him that was single until He went hence; as He said in another Psalm, Single I am until I go hence; for He was a single corn of wheat in such sort as that He had in Himself a great fruitfulness of increase; in how many corns imitating the Passion of Him do we exult, when we celebrate the nativities of the Martyrs! Many therefore members of Him, under one Head our Saviour Himself, being bound together in the bond of love and peace, (as ye judge it fit that ye know, for ye have often heard,) are one man: and of the same, as of one man, the voice is ofttimes heard, in the Psalms, and thus one crieth as though it were all, because all in one are one. Let us hear then how the Martyrs laboured, and were in peril themselves amid mighty tempests of hatred in this world, not so much for the body, which sometime they were to put off, but for the very Faith; lest they, fainting and perchance yielding to the sharp pains of persecutions, or to the love of this life, should lose that which God had promised: who not only by word but also by example had taken away all fear: by word, saying, Fear not them that kill the body, but the soul are not able to kill; by example, doing that which in word He commanded, so that He would shun neither the hands of them scourging, nor the buffets of them smiting, nor the spittle of them spitting, nor the crown of thorns of them putting it on Him, nor the Cross of them slaying: none of these things He would shun, Who had no need of them, but for the sake of those to whom this was needful, making of Himself medicine for the sick: and unless He were alway present, Who saith, Behold I am with you even unto the end of the world, surely they had fainted.

2. There is then in this Psalm the voice of men troubled, and so indeed of Martyrs amid sufferings in peril, but relying on their own Head. Let us hear them, and speak with them out of sympathy of heart, though it be not with similarity of suffering. For they are already crowned, we are still in peril: not that such sort of persecutions do vex us as have vexed them, but worse perchance in the midst of all kinds of so great scandals. For our own times do more abound in that woe, which the Lord cried: Woe to the world because of scandals. And, Because iniquity hath abounded, the love of man shall wax cold. For not even that holy Lot at Sodom suffered corporal persecution from any one, or had it been told him that he should not dwell there: the persecution of him were the evil doings of the Sodomites. Now then that Christ sitteth in Heaven, now that He is glorified, now that necks of kings are made subject to His yoke, and their brows placed beneath His sign, now that not any one remaineth to dare openly to trample upon Christians, still, however, we groan amid instruments and singers, still those enemies of the Martyrs, because with words and steel they have no power, with their own wantonness do persecute them. And O that we were sorrowing for Heathens alone: it would be some sort of comfort, to wait for those that not yet have been signed with the Cross of Christ; when they should be signed, and when, by His authority attached, they should cease to be mad. We see besides men wearing on their brow the sign of Him, at the same time on that same brow wearing the shamelessness of wantonness, and on the days and celebrations of the Martyrs not exulting but insulting. And amid these things we groan, and this is our persecution, if there is in us the love which saith, Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I burn not? Not any servant of God, then, is without persecution: and that is a true saying which the Apostle saith, But even all men that will to live godly in Christ, shall suffer persecution. See whence, see how, that devil is two-formed. A lion he is in assault, a snake in lying in wait. If as a lion he menace, he is an enemy; if as a snake he lie in wait, he is an enemy. When are we secure? Behold, though all men be made Christians, will the Devil too be a Christian? To tempt therefore he ceaseth not, to lie in wait he ceaseth not. Bridled he is and bound in the hearts of ungodly men, that he may not rage against the Church, and do as much as he would. The teeth of ungodly men gnash at the majesty of the Church and the peace of Christians, and because they have nothing that they can do by raging; by

dancing, by blaspheming, by wanton living, they vex not the bodies of Christians, but rend the souls of Christians. Let us cry then all with one voice these words,

Ver. 1. O God, to my aid make speed. For need we have for an everlasting aid in this world. But when have we not? Now however being in tribulation, let us especially say, O God, to my aid make speed.

3. Let them be confounded and fear that seek my soul. Christ is speaking: whether Head speak or whether Body speak; He is speaking that hath said, Why persecutest thou Me? He is speaking that hath said, Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of Mine, to Me ye have done it. The voice then of this Man is known to be of the whole man, of Head and of Body: that need not often be mentioned, because it is known. Be they confounded, he saith, and fear that seek my soul. In another Psalm He saith, I was looking unto the right and saw, and there was not one that would know Me: flight hath perished from Me, and there is not one to seek out My soul. There of persecutors He saith, that there was not one to seek out His soul: but here, let them be confounded and fear that seek My soul. He was grieving that He was not sought for imitation: was lamenting that He was sought for oppression. Thou seekest the soul of a just man when thou art thinking how to imitate him: thou art seeking the soul of a just man when thou art thinking how to kill him. Because in two ways is sought the soul of a just man, each is expressed in a different Psalm. In the one case He is lamenting that there is not one to seek His soul in order to imitate His passions: but here be they confounded and fear that seek My soul. They seek His soul not in order that they may have two. For they did not so seek His soul as a robber seeketh the coat of a traveller: he killeth to the end that he may strip, that he may have. But he that persecuteth in order to kill doth drive forth the soul, doth not clothe himself. They seek my soul, they will to kill me, what then dost thou desire for them? Let them be confounded and fear. And where is that which thou hast heard from thy Lord, Love ye your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute you? Behold thou sufferest persecution, and cursest them from whom thou sufferest: how dost thou imitate the Passions of thy Lord that have gone before, hanging on the cross and saying, Father, forgive them, for they

know not what they do. To persons saying such things the Martyr replieth and saith, thou hast set before me the Lord, saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do: understand thou my voice also, in order that it may be thine too: for what have I said concerning mine enemies? Let them be confounded and fear. Already such vengeance hath been taken on the enemies of the Martyrs. That Saul that persecuted Stephen, he was confounded and feared. He was breathing out slaughters, he was seeking some to drag and slay: a voice having been heard from above Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me, he was confounded and laid low, and he was raised up to obedience, that had been inflamed unto persecuting. This then the Martyrs desire for their enemies, Let them be confounded and fear. For so long as they are not confounded and fear, they must needs defend their actions: glorious they think themselves, because they hold, because they bind, because they scourge, because they kill, because they dance, because they insult, and because of all these doings they be sometime confounded and fear. For if they be confounded, they will also be converted: because converted they cannot be, unless they shall have been confounded and shall have feared. Let us then wish these things to our enemies, let us wish them without fear. Behold I have said, and let me have said it with you, may all that still dance and sing and insult the Martyrs be confounded and fear: at last within these walls confounded may they beat their breasts!

4. Ver. 2. Let them be turned away backward and blush that think evil things to me. At first there was the assault of them persecuting, now there hath remained the malice of them thinking. In fact, there are in the Church distinct seasons of persecutions following one another. There was made an assault on the Church when kings were persecuting: and because kings had been foretold as to persecute and as to believe, when one had been fulfilled the other was to follow. There came to pass also that which was consequent; kings believed, peace was given to the Church, the Church began to be set in the highest place of dignity, even on this earth, even in this life: but there is not wanting the roar of persecutors, they have turned their assaults into thoughts. In these thoughts, as in a bottomless pit, the devil hath been bound, he roareth and breaketh not forth. For it hath been said concerning these times of the Church, The sinner shall see, and shall be angry. And shall do what? That which he did at first? Drag, bind, smite? He doeth not

this. What then? With his teeth he shall gnash, and shall pine away. And with these men the Martyr is, as it were, angry, and yet for these men the Martyr prayeth. For in like manner as he hath wished well to those men concerning whom he hath said, (ver. 2.) Let them be confounded and fear that seek my soul: so also now, Let them be turned backward, and blush, that think evil things to me. Wherefore? In order that they may not go before, but follow. For he that censureth the Christian religion, and on his own system willeth to live, willeth as it were to go before Christ, as though He indeed had erred and had been weak and infirm, because He either willed to suffer or could suffer in the hands of the Jews; but that he is a clever man for guarding against all these things; in shunning death, even in basely lying to escape death, and slaying his soul that he may live in body, he thinketh himself a man of singular and prudent measures. He goeth before in censuring Christ, in a manner he outstrippeth Christ: let him believe in Christ, and follow Christ. For that which had been desired but now for persecutors thinking evil things, the same the Lord Himself said to Peter. Now in a certain place Peter willed to go before the Lord. For the Saviour was speaking of His Passion, which if He had not undergone, we should not have been saved: and Peter that a little before had confessed the Son of God, and in that confession had been called the Rock, whereon the Church was to be builded, a little afterwards as the Lord is speaking of His future Passion, he saith, Far be it, O Lord, merciful be Thou to Thyself, there shall not be done this thing. A little before, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to Thee, but My Father which is in Heaven: now in a moment, Go back behind Me, Satan. What is, Go back behind Me? Follow Me. Thou willest to go before Me, thou willest to give Me counsel, it is better that thou follow My counsel: this is, ‘go back,’ go back behind Me. He is silencing one outstripping, in order that he may go backward; and He is calling him Satan, because he willeth to go before the Lord. A little before, blessed, now, Satan. Whence a little before, blessed? Because, to thee, He saith, flesh and blood hath not revealed it, but My Father Which is in Heaven. Whence now, Satan? Because thou savourest not, He saith, the things which are of God, but the things which are of men. Let us then that would duly celebrate the nativities of the Martyrs, long for the imitation of the Martyrs; let us not wish to go before the Martyrs, and think ourselves to be of better understanding than they, because we shun sufferings in behalf of righteousness and faith which they shunned not. Therefore be they that think evil things, and in wantonness feed their hearts, turned backward and blush. Let them hear from the Apostle afterwards saying, But what fruit had ye sometime in those things at which ye now blush?

5. What followeth? (Ver. 3.) Let them be turned away forthwith blushing, that say to me, Well, well. Two are the kinds of persecutors, revilers and flatterers. The tongue of the flatterer doth more persecute than the hand of the slayer: for this also the Scripture hath called a furnace. Truly when the Scripture was speaking of persecution, it said, Like gold in a furnace it hath proved them, (speaking of Martyrs being slain,) and as the holocaust's victim it hath received them. Hear how even the tongue of flatterers is of such sort: The proving, he saith, of silver and of gold is fire; but a man is proved by the tongue of men praising him. That is fire, this also is fire: out of both thou oughtest to go forth safe. The censurer hath broken thee, thou hast been broken in the furnace like an earthen vessel. The Word hath moulded thee, and there hath come the trial of tribulation: that which hath been formed, must needs be seasoned; if it hath been well moulded, there hath come the fire to strengthen. Whence He said in the Passion, Dried up like a potsherd hath been My virtue. For Passion and the furnace of tribulation had made Him stronger. Again, if thou be praised by men flattering and paying deference to thee, being like one buying oil, and not taking it with thee, like the five foolish virgins; the furnace of thy breaking will be the mouth of men praising thee. But if without these things we cannot be; we must needs both enter into these things, and go forth from thence: enter into the reviling of evil and wicked men, enter also into some men's paying deference to us as flatterers, but we must go forth from thence. Let us ask it of Him concerning Whom hath been said, The Lord keep thy going in and thy going out: in order that going in whole, so thou mayest go out whole. For the Apostle also saith, Faithful is God, that will not suffer you to be tried above that ye are able. Behold thou hast a 'going in,' He hath not said, Be not tried. For he that is not tried is not proved, and he that is not proved, profiteth not. What then hath he wished? Faithful is God, That will not suffer you to be tried above that ye are able. Thou hast heard the going in, hear also the going out. But He shall make with the trial

a going out also, so that ye may be able to endure it. Therefore, let them be also turned away forthwith blushing, that say to me, Well, well. For why do they praise me? Let them praise God. For who am I that I should be praised in myself? Or what have I done? What have I which I have not received? “If thou hast received,” he saith, “why dost thou boast as if thou hast not received?” Let them be turned away, then, forthwith blushing, that say to me, Well, well. With such oil the head of heretics is made fat when they say, It is I, it is I: and it is said to them, It is Thou, my Lord! They have received the, Well, well; they have followed the, Well, well: have become blind leaders of blind followers. In the plainest words to Donatus are said these words which have been sung, “Well, well! good leader! excellent leader!” And he hath not said to them, Be they turned away forthwith and blush, that say to me, Well, well: and he hath not wished to correct them so that they should say to Christ, Good leader, excellent leader! But the Apostle, dreading the ‘well’ of men, in order that he might be truly praised in Christ, would not have himself to be praised instead of Christ; and when certain said, I am of Paul, he replied in the liberty of the Lord, Hath Paul been crucified for you, or in the name of Paul have ye been baptized? Therefore let the Martyrs in the persecutions even of men flattering, say, Let them be turned away forthwith blushing, that say to me, Well, well.

6. And what cometh to pass when they are all turned back and blush, whether it be they that seek my soul, or they that think evil things to me, or they that with perverse and feigned benevolence with tongue would soften the stroke which they inflict, when they shall have been themselves turned away and confounded; there shall come to pass what? Let them exult and be joyous in Thee: not in me, not in this man or in that man; but in whom they have been made light that were darkness. (Ver. 4.) Let them exult and be joyous in Thee, all that seek Thee. One thing it is to seek God, another thing to seek man. Let them be joyous that seek Thee. They shall not be joyous then that seek themselves, whom Thou hast first sought before they sought Thee. Not yet did that sheep seek the Shepherd, it had strayed from the flock, and He went down to it; He sought it, and carried it back upon His shoulders. Will He despise thee, O sheep, seeking Him, Who hath first sought thee despising Him and not seeking Him? Now then begin thou to seek Him that first hath sought thee, and hath carried thee back on His

shoulders. Do thou that which He speaketh of, They that are My sheep hear My voice, and follow Me. If then thou seekest Him that first hath sought thee, and hast become a sheep of His, and thou hearest the voice of thy Shepherd, and followest Him; see what He sheweth to thee of Himself, what of His Body, in order that as to Himself thou mayest not err, as to the Church thou mayest not err, that no one may say to thee, that is Christ which is not Christ, or that is the Church which is not the Church. For many men have said that Christ had no flesh, and that Christ hath not risen in His Body: do not thou follow the voices of them. Hear thou the voice of Himself the Shepherd, that was clothed with flesh, in order that He might seek lost flesh. He hath risen again, and He saith, Handle ye and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have. He sheweth Himself to thee, the voice of Him follow thou. He sheweth also the Church, that no one may deceive thee by the name of Church. It behoved, He saith, Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day, and that there should be preached repentance and remission of sins through all nations, beginning with Jerusalem. Thou hast the voice of Thy Shepherd, do not thou follow the voice of strangers: and a thief thou shalt not fear, if thou shalt have followed the voice of the Shepherd. But how shalt thou follow? If thou shalt neither have said to any man, as if it were by his own merit, Well, well: nor shalt have heard the same with joy, so that thy head be not made fat with the oil of a sinner. Let all them exult and be joyous in Thee, that seek Thee; and let them say—let them say what, that exult? Be the Lord alway magnified! Let all them say this, that exult and seek Thee. What? Be the Lord alway magnified; yea, they that love Thy salvation. Not only, Be the Lord magnified; but also, alway. Behold, thou wast straying, and wast turned away from Him; He hath called thee, Be the Lord magnified. Behold, He hath inspired thee with confession of sins, thou hast confessed, He hath given pardon, be the Lord magnified. Now thou hast begun to live justly: now I think it to be as it were a just thing, that thou also be magnified. For when He called thee straying, the Lord was to be magnified; when to thee confessing He forgave sins, the Lord was to be magnified: but now hearing the words of Him; thou hast begun to advance, thou hast been justified, thou hast arrived at a sort of excellence of virtue; it is a seemly thing that thou also sometime be magnified. Let them say, Be the Lord alway magnified. A sinner thou art, be He magnified in order that He may call; thou confessest, be He magnified in order that He may forgive: now thou livest justly, be He magnified in order that He may direct: thou perseverest even unto the end, be He magnified in order that He may glorify. Be the Lord, then, alway magnified. Let just men say this, let them say this that seek Him. Whosoever saith not this, doth not seek Him. Behold, Be the Lord magnified. Let them exult and be joyous, all that seek Him, and let them say, Be the Lord alway magnified, yea they that love His saving health. For from Him they have salvation, not from themselves. The saving health of the Lord our God, is the Saviour our Lord Jesus Christ: whosoever loveth the Saviour, confesseth himself to have been made whole; whosoever confesseth himself to have been made whole, confesseth himself to have been sick. Let them say then, Be the Lord alway magnified; yea, they that love Thy saving health, not their own saving health, as if they could save themselves of themselves: not as it were the saving health of a man, as though by him they could be saved. Do not, he saith, confide in princes, and in the sons of men, in whom there is no safety. Why so? Of the Lord is safety, and upon Thy people is Thy blessing. Therefore, Be the Lord alway magnified: who are saying this? They that love Thy saving health.

7. Behold, Be the Lord magnified: wilt thou never, wilt thou no where? In Him was something, in me nothing: but if in Him is whatsoever I am, be He, not I. But thou then what? (Ver. 5) But I am needy and poor. He is rich, He abounding, He needing nothing. Behold my light, behold whence I am illumined; for I cry, Thou shalt illumine my candle, O Lord; my God, Thou shalt illumine my darkness. The Lord doth loose men fettered, the Lord raiseth up men crushed, the Lord maketh wise the blind men, the Lord keepeth the proselytes. What then of thee? But I am needy and poor. I am like an orphan, my soul is like a widow destitute and desolate: help I seek, alway mine infirmity I confess. But I am needy and poor. There have been forgiven me my sins, now I have begun to follow the commandments of God: still, however, I am needy and poor. Why still needy and poor? Because I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind. Why needy and poor? Because, blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness. Still I hunger, still I thirst: my fulness hath been put off, not taken away. But I am needy and poor; O God, aid Thou me. Most suitably also Lazarus is said to be interpreted, one aided: that needy

and poor man, that was transported into the bosom of Abraham; and beareth the type of the Church, which ought alway to confess that she hath need of aid. This is true, this is godly. I have said to the Lord, My God Thou art. Why? For my goods Thou needest not. He needeth not us, we need Him: therefore He is truly Lord. For thou art not the very true Lord of thy servant: both are men, both needing God. But if thou supposest thy servant to need thee, in order that thou mayest give him bread; thou also needest thy servant, in order that he may aid thy labours. Each one of you doth need the other. Therefore neither of you is truly lord, and neither of you truly servant. Hear thou the true Lord, of Whom thou art the true servant: I have said to the Lord, My God Thou art. Why art Thou Lord? Because my goods Thou needest not? But what of thee? But I am needy and poor. Behold the needy and poor: may God feed, may God alleviate, may God aid: O God, he saith, aid Thou me.

8. My helper and deliverer art Thou; O Lord, delay not. Thou art the helper and deliverer: I need succour, help Thou; entangled I am, deliver Thou. For no one will deliver from entanglings except Thee. There stand round about us the nooses of divers cares, on this side and on that we are torn as it were with thorns and brambles, we walk a narrow way, perchance we have stuck fast in the brambles: let us say to God, Thou art my deliverer. He that shewed us the narrow way, hath taught us to follow it. May this voice continue in us, brethren. However we shall have lived here, however we shall have profited here, let no one say, It is sufficient for me, I am a just man. He that shall have so said, hath stopped on the way, he knoweth not how to attain to the end. Where he hath said, It is sufficient, there hath he stuck fast. Observe the Apostle, to whom there was no sufficiency; see in what manner he willeth himself to be aided, until he may attain. Brethren, he saith, I count not myself to have apprehended: lest they should think themselves to have apprehended, to whom again he saith, He that thinketh himself to know any thing, not yet knoweth as he ought to know. What saith he then? Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. Above he had said, Not that now I have received, or now have been made perfect: and in this place he continueth, Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. If not yet he hath received, needy and poor he is: if not yet he is perfect, needy and poor he is. Well, he saith, O God, aid Thou me. But he is

perceiving something, even something more exalted he is perceiving. See, however, what he saith; But to him that is able to do above all things more abundantly than we ask and perceive. See then, because he hath not yet attained, he hath not yet apprehended. What then saith he? Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but one thing I do, the things which are behind forgetting, unto the things which are before reaching forth, with earnestness I follow unto the prize of the high calling. He then runneth on, thou hast stuck fast. He speaketh of himself as not yet perfected, and dost thou already boast of perfection? Be they confounded that say to themselves, Well, well. Be thou also confounded among them, because thou sayest to thyself, Well, well. For he that praiseth himself, saith to himself, Well well: he that by others is praised and consenteth, doth not carry oil with him: the lights go out, He will shut the door.

9. This truth then this Psalm hath briefly taught us, dearly beloved, that, by being reminded of the festival of Martyrs, we may perceive how the Martyrs here have suffered corporal tribulation; and we in whatsoever peace we be, must needs suffer spiritual tribulation: and the Church and the ‘heap’ must needs groan amid offences, and tares, and chaff, until the harvest come, until the fan, until there come the last winnowing, so that the chaff be severed from the grain, until it be stored in the garner. Until which come to pass, let us cry, But I am needy and poor; O God, aid Thou me: my helper art Thou, O Lord, delay not. What is, delay not? Because many men say, it is a long time till Christ comes. What then: because we say, delay not, will He come before He hath determined to come? What meaneth this prayer, delay not? May not Thy coming seem to me to be too long delayed. For to thee it seemeth a long time, to God it seemeth not long, to Whom a thousand years are one day, or the three hours of a watch. But if thou shalt not have had endurance, late for thee it will be: and when to thee it shall be late, thou wilt be diverted from Him, and wilt be like unto those that were wearied in the desert, and hastened to ask of God the pleasant things which He was reserving for them in the Land; and when there were not given on their journey the pleasant things, whereby perchance they would have been corrupted, they murmured against God, and went back in heart unto Egypt: to that place whence in body they had been severed, in heart they went back. Do not thou, then, so, do not so: fear the word of the Lord, saying,

Remember Lot’s wife. She too being on the way, but now delivered from the Sodomites, looked back; in the place where she looked back, there she remained: she became a statue of salt, in order to season thee. For to thee she hath been given for an example, in order that thou mayest have sense, mayest not stop infatuated on the way. Observe her stopping and pass on: observe her looking back, and do thou be reaching forth unto the things before, as Paul was. What is it, not to look back. Of the things behind forgetful. he saith. Therefore thou followest, being called to the heavenly reward, whereof hereafter thou wilt glory. For the same Apostle saith, There remaineth for me a crown of righteousness, which in that day the Lord, the just Judge, shall render to me.

PSALM 71

Exposition

Sermon I. On the first part of the above Psalm.

1. In all the holy Scriptures the grace of God that delivereth us commendeth itself to us, in order that it may have us commended. This is sung of in this Psalm, whereof we have undertaken to speak with your Love. The Lord will be with me, in order that I may so apprehend it in heart, as is right; and may so draw it forth, as is expedient for you. For much do move me the love and fear of God: the fear of God, because He is just; love, because He is merciful. For who could say to Him, What hast Thou done? if He should condemn a just man. How great then is His mercy, in justifying an unjust man! On this subject we have heard the Apostle also read before to us, commending especially that same grace: because of the commendation whereof he had the Jews for enemies, as it were relying on the letter of the law, and as it were loving and boasting of their justice; of which same persons he saith, I bear witness to them, that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. And as though it were said to him, but what is it to have a zeal for God not according to knowledge? he hath added immediately, For being ignorant of the justice of God, and willing to establish their own, to the justice of God they are not made subject. Boasting, he saith, as though of works, they shut out from them grace; and as though relying on their unreal soundness, they reject the medicine. For against such men even the Lord had said, I have not come to call just men, but sinners to repentance: the whole need not a Physician, but the sick. This then is the sum of great knowledge, for a man to know that he is by himself nothing, and that whatever he is, he is from God, and is for God. For what hast thou, he saith, which thou hast not received? But if thou hast even received, why dost thou boast as if thou hast not received? This grace the Apostle commendeth: by this he got to have the Jews for enemies, boasting of the letter of the law and of their own justice. This then commending in the lesson which hath been read, he saith thus: For I am the least of the

Apostles, that am not worthy to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But therefore mercy, he saith, I obtained, because ignorant I did it in unbelief. Then a little afterwards, Faithful the saying is, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first. Were there before him not any sinners? What then, was he the first then? Yea, going before all men not in time, but in evil disposition. But therefore, he saith, mercy I obtained, in order that in me Christ Jesus might shew all long-suffering, for the imitation of those that shall believe in Him unto life eternal: that is, every sinner and unjust man, already despairing of himself, already having the mind of a gladiator, so as to do whatsoever he willeth, because he must needs be condemned, may yet observe the Apostle Paul, to whom so great cruelty and so very evil a disposition was forgiven by God; and by not despairing of himself may he be turned unto God. This grace God doth commend to us in this Psalm also: let us examine it, and let us see whether it be so, or whether perchance I regard it amiss. For I judge that it hath this drift, and giveth this sound nearly in all its syllables; that is to say, it commendeth to us this truth, that the grace of God is gratuitous, which delivereth us undeserving, not for our sake, but for its own sake: so that even if I did not say this, nor had made this preface, any one of moderate intelligence attentively hearing the words of this same Psalm, would have tasted of this; and perchance by the very words, if he had any other purpose in mind, he would have been changed, and would have become that which here it soundeth. What is this? That our whole hope should be in God, and we should rely in no respect upon ourselves as though upon our own strength; lest by making that our own which is from Him, we let go even that which we have received.

2. The title then of this Psalm is, as usual, a title intimating on the threshold what is being done in the house: To David himself for the sons of Jonadab, and for those that were first led captive. Jonadab was a certain man, (he is commended to us in the prophecy of Jeremiah, who had enjoined his sons not to drink wine, and not to dwell in houses, but in tents. But the commandment of the father the sons kept and observed, and by this earned a blessing from the Lord. Now the Lord had not commanded this, but their own father. But they so received it as though it were a commandment from the Lord their God; for even though the Lord had not commanded that they

should drink no wine and should dwell in tents; yet the Lord had commanded, that sons should obey their father. In this case alone a son ought not to obey his father, if his father should have commanded any thing contrary to the Lord his God. For indeed the father ought not to be angry, when God is preferred before him. But when a father doth command that which is not contrary to God; he must be heard as God is: because to obey one's father God hath enjoined. God then blessed the sons of Jonadab because of their obedience, and thrust them in the teeth of His disobedient people, reproaching them, because while the sons of Jonadab were obedient to their father, they obeyed not their God. But while Jeremias was treating of these topics, he had this object in regard to the people of Israel, that they should prepare themselves to be led for captivity into Babylon, and should not hope for any other thing, but that they were to be captives. The title then of this Psalm seemeth from thence to have taken its hue, so that when he had said, Of the sons of Jonadab; he added, and of them that were first led captive: not that the sons of Jonadab were led captive, but because to them that were to be led captive there were opposed the sons of Jonadab, because they were obedient to their father: in order that they might understand that they had been made captive, because they were not obedient to God. It is added also that Jonadab is interpreted, the Lord's spontaneous one. What is this, the Lord's spontaneous one? Serving God freely with the will. What is, the Lord's spontaneous one? In me are, O God, Thy vows, which I will render of praise to Thee. What is, the Lord's spontaneous one? Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. For if the Apostolic teaching admonisheth a slave, to serve a human master, not as though of necessity, but of good will, and by freely serving make himself in heart free; how much more must God be served with whole and full and free will, who seeth thy very will? For if thy servant serve thee not with the heart, his hands, his face, his presence thou art able to see, his heart thou canst not: and nevertheless the Apostle saith to them, not unto eye serving. And what is, not unto eye? What then, will my master see how I serve him, that thou sayest to me, not unto eye serving? He hath added, but as if servants of Christ. The human lord seeth not, but the Lord Christ seeth. From the heart, he saith, with good will. Such was Jonadab, that is, by this the name of him is interpreted. Who are then they that first were led captive? The sons of Israel were led captive, first, and second, and third: but for the sake of these that were first led captive the

Psalm, or concerning these the Psalm, doth not give this sound: that is, the Psalm itself when sifted, when searched, when questioned, in all the verses thereof speaketh to thee of something else, not of those men whoever they were who, when certain enemies had made an invasion, were led captive into Babylon out of Jerusalem. But the Psalm saith what, save that which ye have heard from the Apostle? He commendeth to us the grace of God; He commendeth it to us, because by ourselves we are nothing: He commendeth it to us, because whatever we are, by His mercy we are; but whatever of ourselves we are, evil we are. Why then captive? and why under the name of captivity is commended the very grace of the Deliverer? The Apostle openeth it, the Apostle himself saith, I delight in the law of God after the inner man: but I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin, which is in my members. There thou hast the being led captive. What then doth this Psalm commend? That which in that place the Apostle pursueth; Unhappy man I; who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Why then first? For it hath been said why captive. As far as I judge, this thing also shineth forth clearly. It was because in the comparison of the sons of Jonadab all disobedience was reproved. But through disobedience we were made captive, because Adam himself by not obeying sinned. It was said also by the same Apostle, which also is a true saying, that all in Adam die, in whom all have sinned. With reason also the first were led captive: because the first man is of earth earthy, the second man is from Heaven heavenly: as is the earthy, such are also the earthy; as is the heavenly, such are also the heavenly. As we have borne the image of the earthy, let us bear also the image of Him that is from Heaven. The first man made us captive, the second man hath delivered us from captivity. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But in Adam they die through the flesh’s nativity, in Christ they are delivered through the heart’s faith. It was not in thy power not to be born of Adam: it is in thy power to believe in Christ. Howsoever much then thou shalt have willed to belong to the first man, unto captivity thou wilt belong. And what is, shalt have willed to belong? or what is, shalt belong? Already thou belongest: cry out, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Let us hear then this man crying out this.

3. Ver. 1. O God, in Thee I have hoped, O Lord, I shall not be confounded for everlasting. Already I have been confounded, but not for everlasting. For how is he not confounded, to whom is said, What fruit had ye in these things wherein ye now blush? What then shall be done, that we may not be confounded for everlasting? Draw near unto Him, and be ye enlightened, and your faces shall not blush. Confounded ye are in Adam, withdraw from Adam, draw near unto Christ, and then ye shall not be confounded. In Thee I have hoped, O Lord, I shall not be confounded for everlasting. If in myself I am now confounded, in Thee I shall not be confounded for everlasting.

4. Ver. 2. In Thine own righteousness deliver me, and save me. Not in mine own, but in Thine own: for if in mine own, I shall be one of those whereof he saith, Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and their own righteousness willing to establish, to the righteousness of God they were not made subject. Therefore, in Thine own righteousness, not in mine. For mine is what? Iniquity hath gone before. And when I shall be righteous, Thine own righteousness it will be: for by righteousness given to me by Thee I shall be righteous; and it shall be so mine, as that it be Thine, that is, given to me by Thee. For I believe on Him that justifieth an ungodly man, so that my faith is counted for righteousness. Even so then the righteousness shall be mine, not however as though mine own, not as though by mine own self given to myself: as they thought who through the letter made their boast, and rejected grace. For it is said in another place, Judge me, O Lord, after my righteousness. Surely he is not boasting in his own righteousness. But return to the Apostle: For what hast thou which thou hast not received? and so speak of thy righteousness that thou mayest remember that thou hast received it, and not envy them that receive it. For even that Pharisee, as though from God he had received, was saying, Thanks to Thee that I am not like the rest of men. Thanks to Thee: well. That I am not like the rest of men. Why? Doth it delight thee to be good because another is evil? Lastly, what hath he added? Unjust, robbers, adulterers, as even this Publican. This is no longer to exult, but to insult. But that captive dared to raise not even his eyes to Heaven, but he smote his breast, saying, O Lord, be Thou merciful to me a sinner. It is a small thing then that thou acknowledge the good thing which is in thee to be from God, unless also on that account thou exalt not thyself above him that hath not yet, who perchance when he shall

have received, will outstrip thee. For when Saul was a stoner of Stephen, how many were the Christians of whom he was persecutor! Nevertheless, when he was converted, all that had gone before he surpassed. Therefore say thou to God that which thou hearest in the Psalm, In Thee I have hoped, O Lord, I shall not be confounded for everlasting: in Thine own righteousness, not in mine, deliver me, and save me. Incline unto me Thine ear. This also is a confession of humility. He that saith, Incline unto me, is confessing that he is lying like a sick man laid at the feet of the Physician standing. Lastly, observe that it is a sick man that is speaking: Incline unto me Thine ear, and save me.

5. Ver. 2. Be Thou unto me for a protecting God. Let not the darts of the enemy reach unto me: for I am not able to protect myself. And a small thing is protecting: he hath added, and for a walled place, that Thou mayest save me. For a walled place be Thou to me, be Thou my walled place. To what purpose is it that thou Adam didst flee from Him, and didst hide thee amid the trees of Paradise? To what purpose is it that thou fearedst at His face, at which thou didst use to rejoice? Thou wentest away, and didst perish: thou hast been made captive, and behold thou art visited, and behold thou art not let go; and behold the ninety and nine sheep are left on the mountains, and there is sought the lost sheep: and behold there is said concerning the sheep that is found, Dead he was, and he hath come to life: had perished, and he hath been found. Behold, God Himself hath become the place of thy fleeing unto, who at first was the fearful object of thy fleeing from. For a walled place, he saith, be Thou to me, that Thou mayest save me. I shall not be safe except in Thee: except Thou shalt have been my rest, my sickness shall not be able to be made whole. Lift me from the earth; upon Thee I will lie, in order that I may rise unto a walled place. What can be better walled? When unto that place thou shalt have fled for refuge, tell me what adversaries thou wilt dread? Who will lie in wait, and come at thee? A certain man is said from the summit of a mountain to have cried out, when an Emperor was passing by, I speak not of thee: the other is said to have looked back and to have said, Nor I of thee. He had despised an Emperor with glittering arms, with mighty army. From whence? From a strong place. If he was secure on a high spot of earth, how secure art thou on Him by Whom heaven and earth were made? Be Thou then to me for a protecting God, and for a

walled place, that Thou mayest save me. I, if for myself I shall have chosen another place, shall not be able to be safe. Choose thou indeed, O man, if thou shalt have found one, a place better walled. There is not then a place whither to flee from Him, except we flee to Him. If thou wilt escape Him angry, flee to Him appeased. For my firmament and my refuge Thou art. My firmament is what? Through Thee I am firm, and by Thee I am firm. For my firmament and my refuge Thou art: in order that I may be made firm by Thee, in whatever respects I shall have been made infirm in myself, I will flee for refuge unto Thee. For firm the grace of Christ maketh thee, and immoveable against all temptations of the enemy. But there is there too human frailness, there is there still the first captivity, there is there too the law in the members fighting against the law of the mind, and willing to lead captive in the law of sin: still the body which is corrupt presseth down the soul. Howsoever firm thou be by the grace of God, so long as thou still bearest an earthly vessel, wherein the treasure of God is, something must be dreaded even from that same vessel of clay. Therefore my firmament Thou art, in order that I may be firm in this world against all temptations. But if many they are, and they trouble me: my refuge Thou art. For I will confess mine infirmity, to the end that I may be timid like a ‘hare,’ because I am full of thorns like a ‘hedgehog.’ And as in another Psalm is said, The rock is a refuge for the hedgehogs and the hares: but the Rock was Christ.

6. Ver. 3. O God, deliver me from the hand of the sinner. Generally, sinners, among whom is toiling he that is now to be delivered from captivity: he that now crieth, Unhappy man I, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Within is a foe, that law in the members; there are without also enemies: unto what criest thou? Unto Him, to Whom hath been cried, From my secret sins cleanse me, O Lord, and from strange sins spare Thy servant. Therefore when there is said, Save me, it is meant from thy inward sickness, that is, from thine iniquity, from that whereby thou hast been led captive, from that whereby thou belongest to the first man, in order that thou mayest cry amid the first captives. But having been saved from thine iniquity, take heed that now also thou be saved from the iniquities of strangers, amid whom thou must needs live until this life be ended. And how long? Behold it is ending for thee: is it by any means ending for the Church, save at the end of the world? But that

one man, the oneness of Christ, crieth in these voices. It must needs be then that many of the faithful, going forth from this body, are already in that rest, which God giveth to the spirits of the faithful: but here there are still members of Christ, in those that are living in this life, in those that hereafter shall be born. Therefore even unto the end of the world there will be here that man, who crieth out to be delivered from his sins, and from the law of the members fighting against the law of the mind. Secondly, amid the sins of other men amid whom he must needs live even unto the end. But these sinners are of two kinds: there are some that have received Law, there are others that have not received: all the heathen have not received Law, all Jews and Christians have received Law. Therefore the general term is sinner; either a transgressor of the Law, if he hath received Law; or only unjust without Law, if he hath not received the Law. Of both kinds speaketh the Apostle, and saith, They that without Law have sinned, without Law shall perish, and they that in the Law have sinned, by the Law shall be judged. But thou that amid both kinds dost groan, say to God that which thou hearest in the Psalm, My God, deliver me from the hand of the sinner. Of what sinner? From the hand of him that transgresseth the Law, and of the unjust man. He that transgresseth the Law is indeed also unjust; for not unjust he is not, that transgresseth the Law: but every one that transgresseth the Law is unjust, not every unjust man doth transgress the Law. For, Where there is not a Law, saith the Apostle, neither is there transgression. They then that have not received Law, may be called unjust, transgressors they cannot be called. Both are judged after their deservings. But I that from captivity will to be delivered through Thy grace, cry to Thee, Deliver me from the hand of the sinner. What is, from the hand of him? From the power of him, that while he is raging, he lead me not unto consenting with him; that while he lieth in wait, he persuade not to iniquity. From the hand of the sinner and of the unjust man. Make answer to him, why thou desirest thyself to be delivered from the hand of him that transgresseth the Law, and of the unjust man. Do not thou consent; but if he rageth, be thou patient, endure. But who doth endure, if He forsake that is the walled place? Why then do I say, Deliver me from the hand of him that transgresseth the Law, and of the unjust man? Because it is not in me to be patient, but in Thee that givest patience.

7. Lastly, there followeth the reason why I say this: (ver. 4.) for Thou art my patience. Now if He is patience rightly, He is that also which followeth, O Lord, my hope from my youth. My patience, because my hope: or rather my hope, because my patience. Tribulation, saith the Apostle, worketh patience, patience probation, but probation hope, but hope confoundeth not. With reason in Thee I have hoped, O Lord, I shall not be confounded for everlasting. O Lord, my hope from my youth. From thy youth is God thy hope? Is He not also from thy boyhood, and from thine infancy? Certainly, saith he. For see what followeth, that thou mayest not think that I have said this, my hope from my youth, as if God no ways profited mine infancy or my boyhood; hear what followeth: (ver. 5.) In Thee I have been strengthened from the womb. Hear yet: From the belly of my mother Thou art my Protector. Why then, from my youth, except it was the period from which I began to hope in Thee? For before in Thee I was not hoping, though Thou wast my Protector, that didst lead me safe unto the time, when I learned to hope in Thee. But from my youth I began in Thee to hope, from the time when Thou didst arm me against the Devil, so that in the girding of Thy host being armed with Thy faith, love, hope, and the rest of Thy gifts, I waged conflict against Thine invisible enemies, and heard from the Apostle, There is not for us a wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and rulers of the world of this darkness, against spiritual things of naughtiness. There a young man it is that doth fight against these things: but though he be a young man, he falleth, unless He be the hope of Him to Whom he crieth, O Lord, my hope from my youth.

8. In Thee is my singing alway. Is it only from the time when I began to hope in Thee until now? Nay, but alway. What is, alway? Not only in the time of faith, but also in the time of sight. For now, So long as we are in the body we are absent from the Lord: for by faith we walk, not by sight: there will be a time when we shall see that which being not seen we believe: but when that hath been seen which we believe, we shall rejoice: but when that hath been seen which they believed not, ungodly men shall be confounded. Then will come the substance whereof there is now the hope. But, Hope which is seen is not hope. But if that which we see not we hope for, through patience we wait for it. Now then thou groanest, now unto a place of refuge thou runnest, in order that thou mayest be saved; now being in infirmity

thou entreatest the Physician: what, when thou shalt have received perfect soundness also, what when thou shalt have been made equal to the Angels of God, wilt thou then perchance forget that grace, whereby thou hast been delivered? Far be it. In Thee shall be my singing alway.

9. Ver. 6. As it were a monster I have become unto many. Here in time of hope, in time of groaning, in time of humiliation, in time of sorrow, in time of infirmity, in time of the voice from the fetters—here then what? As it were a monster I have become unto many. Why, As it were a monster? Why do they insult me that think me a monster? Because I believe that which I see not. For they being happy in those things which they see, exult in drink, in wantonness, in chamberings, in covetousness, in riches, in robberies, in secular dignities, in the whitening of a mud wall, in these things they exult: but I walk in a different way, contemning those things which are present, and fearing even the prosperous things of the world, and secure in no other thing but the promises of God. And they, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die. What sayest thou? Repeat it: let us eat, he saith, and drink. Come now, what hast thou said afterwards? for to-morrow we die. Thou hast terrified, not led me astray. Certainly by the very thing which thou hast said afterwards, thou hast stricken me with fear to consent with thee. For to-morrow we die, thou hast said: and there hath preceded, Let us eat and drink. For when thou hadst said, Let us eat and drink; thou didst add, for to-morrow we die. Hear the other side from me, “Yea let us fast and pray, for to-morrow we die. I keeping this way, strait and narrow, as it were a monster have become unto many: but Thou art a strong helper. Be Thou with me, O Lord Jesus, to say to me, faint not in the narrow way, I first have gone along it, I am the way itself, I lead, in Myself I lead, unto Myself I lead home. Therefore though a monster I have become unto many; nevertheless I will not fear, for Thou art a strong Helper.

10. Ver. 7. Let my mouth be fulfilled with praise, that with hymn I may tell of Thy glory, all the day long Thy magnificence. What is all the day long? Without intermission. In prosperity, because Thou dost comfort; in adversity, because Thou dost correct: before I was in being, because Thou didst make; when I was in being, because Thou didst give health: when I had sinned, because Thou didst forgive; when I was converted, because

Thou didst help; when I had persevered, because Thou didst crown. So indeed let my mouth be fulfilled with praise, that with hymn I may tell of Thy glory, all the day long Thy magnificence.

11. Ver. 8. Cast me not away in the time of old age. My hope from my youth, cast me not away in time of old age. What is this time of old age? When my strength shall fail, forsake Thou not me. Here God maketh this answer to thee, yea indeed let thy strength fail, in order that in thee mine may abide: in order that thou mayest say with the Apostle, When I am made weak, then I am mighty. Fear not, that thou be cast away in that weakness, in that old age. But why? Was not thy Lord made weak on the Cross? Did not most mighty men and fat bulls before Him, as though a man of no strength, made captive and oppressed, shake the head and say, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross? Has he deserted because He was made weak, Who preferred not to come down from the Cross, lest He should seem not to have displayed power, but to have yielded to them reviling? What did He hanging teach thee, That would not come down, but patience amid men reviling, but that thou shouldest be strong in thy God? Perchance too in His person was said, As it were a monster I have become unto many, and Thou art a strong Helper. In His person according to His weakness, not according to His power; according to that whereby He had transformed us into Himself, not according to that wherein He had Himself come down. For He became a monster unto many. And perchance the same was the old age of Him; because on account of its oldness it is not improperly called old age, and the Apostle saith, Our old man hath been crucified together with Him. If there was there our old man, old age was there; because old, old age. Nevertheless, because a true saying is, Renewed as an eagle’s shall be Thy youth; He rose Himself the third day, promised a resurrection at the end of the world. Already there hath gone before the Head, the members are to follow. Why dost thou fear lest He should forsake thee, lest He cast thee away for the time of old age, when thy strength shall have failed? Yea at that time in thee will be the strength of Him, when thy strength shall have failed.

12. Ver. 9. Why do I say this? For mine enemies have spoken against me, and they that were keeping watch for My soul, have taken counsel together,

saying, God hath forsaken Him, persecute Him, and seize Him, for there is no one to deliver Him. This hath been said concerning Christ. For He that with the great power of Divinity, wherein He is equal to the Father, had raised to life dead persons, on a sudden in the hands of enemies became weak, and as if having no power, was seized. When would He have been seized, except they had first said in their heart, God hath forsaken Him? Whence there was that voice on the Cross, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? So then did God forsake Christ, though God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, though Christ was also God, out of the Jews indeed according to the flesh, Who is over all things, God blessed for ever—did God forsake Him? Far be it. But in our old man our voice it was, because our old man was crucified together with Him: and of that same our old man He had taken a Body, because Mary was of Adam. Therefore the very thing which they thought, from the Cross He said, Why hast Thou forsaken Me? Why do these men think Me left alone to their evil? What is, think Me forsaken in their evil? For if they had known, the Lord of glory they had never crucified. Persecute and seize Him. More familiarly however, brethren, let us take this of the members of Christ, and acknowledge our own voice in these words: because even He used such words in our person, not in His own power and majesty; but in that which He became for our sakes, not according to that which He was, Who hath made us.

13. Ver. 10. O Lord, my God, be not far from me. So it is, and the Lord is not far off at all. For, “The Lord is nigh unto them that have bruised the heart.” My God, unto my help look Thou.

14. Ver. 11. Be they confounded and fail that engage my soul. What hath he desired? Be they confounded and fail. Why hath he desired it? That engage my soul? What is, That engage my soul? Engaging as it were unto some quarrel. For they are said to be engaged that are challenged to quarrel. If then so it is, let us beware of men that engage our soul. What is, That engage our soul? First provoking us to withstand God, in order that in our evil things God may displease us. For when art thou right, so that to thee the God of Israel may be good, good to men right in heart? When art thou right? Wilt thou hear? When in that good which thou doest, God is pleasing

to thee; but in that evil which thou sufferest, God is not displeasing to thee. See ye what I have said, brethren, and be ye on your guard against men that engage your souls. For all men that deal with you in order to make you be wearied in sorrows and tribulations, have this aim, namely, that God may be displeasing to you in that which ye suffer, and there may go forth from your mouth, What is this? For what have I done? Now then hast thou done nothing of evil, and art thou just, He unjust? A sinner I am, thou sayest, I confess, just I call not myself. But what, sinner, hast thou by any means done so much evil as he with whom it is well? As much as Gaiuseius? I know the evil doings of him, I know the iniquities of him, from which I, though a sinner, am very far; and yet I see him abounding in all good things, and I am suffering so great evil things. I do not then say, O God, “what have I done” to Thee, because I have done nothing at all of evil; but because I have not done so much as to deserve to suffer these things. Again, art thou just, He unjust? Wake up, wretched man, thy soul hath been engaged! I have not, he saith, called myself just. What then sayest thou? A sinner I am, but I did not commit so great sins, as to deserve to suffer these things. Thou sayest not then to God, just I am, and Thou art unjust: but thou sayest, unjust I am, but Thou art more unjust. Behold thy soul hath been engaged, behold now thy soul wageth war. What? Against whom? Thy soul, against God; that which hath been made against Him by Whom it was made. Even because thou art in being to cry out against Him, thou art ungrateful. Return, then, to the confession of thy sickness, and beg the healing hand of the Physician. Think thou not they are happy who flourish for a time. Thou art being chastised, they are being spared: perchance for thee chastised and amended an inheritance is being kept in reserve. Return then, return thou, O transgressor, to the heart, let not thy soul be engaged. More mighty He is by far with Whom thou hast declared war. The greater the stones which thou hast thrown at the sky, the mightier the ruin which will overwhelm thee. Return rather, know thyself. God it is that is displeasing to thee: blush, be thou displeasing to thyself. Nothing of good thou hadst done, unless He had been good; and nothing of evil thou hadst suffered, unless He had been just. Awake thou therefore unto this voice, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord so hath been done: be the name of the Lord blessed. Unjust men they were that were sitting whole beside Job rotting; and nevertheless he was being scourged to be restored again, they were being spared to be punished. Whatsoever then of tribulation shall have chanced to thee, whatsoever of insult, be not thy soul engaged, be it not engaged, not only against God, but not even against those very persons that are doing these things to thee. For if thou shalt have hated even those very persons, then against them thy heart hath been engaged. Forthwith to Him render thou thanks, for them pray thou. For perchance even a prayer for them is this which thou hast heard, Let them be confounded and fail that engage my soul. “Let them be confounded and fail:” for much on their own righteousness they rely: therefore be they confounded. This is expedient for them, in order that they may acknowledge their sins, as the cause wherefore they are confounded and fail, (for they were to ill purpose relying on their own strength,) and they failing themselves may say, When I am made weak, then mighty I am: and they failing themselves may say, Cast me not away in time of old age. A good thing therefore he hath wished for them, that they may be confounded for their evil doings, and fail from their perverse strength, and then at length failing and being confounded they may seek an Enlightener from this confusion, and a Comforter from discomfiture. Lastly, see what followeth, Let them put on confusion and shame, that think evil things to me. “Confusion and shame,” confusion because of a bad conscience, shame because of modesty. Let this befal them, and they will be good. Think thou not that he is enraged: O that he might be hearkened unto in behalf of them! For even Stephen seemed to be enraged, when with flaming mouth these words he darted forth, Ye of a stiff neck, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always withstand the Holy Spirit. How inflamed the anger, how vehement against enemies. Doth his soul seem to thee to be engaged? Far be it. Their health he was seeking; them phrensied, raving to their hurt, he was binding with words. For see how the soul of him was not engaged, not only against God, but not even against them: O Lord Jesu, he saith, receive my spirit. Jesus was not displeasing to him, because he suffered stoning for His word: so his soul was not engaged against God. Also he said, O Lord, set not this sin against them. His soul then was not engaged, not even against his enemies. Let them be clothed with confusion and shame, that think evil things to me. For this all they seek that trouble me, evil things for me they seek. Which evil things was seeking even that woman, when she suggested, Say thou somewhat against God, and die. And that wife of Tobit, who saith to her husband, where are thy righteousnesses? To this end she was saying it, that God might be displeasing to him; his soul might be engaged.

15. If then no one by troubling hath persuaded thee, if no one hath wrung from thee a confession that God doth displease thee in those things which thou sufferest, or that thou hatest the men through whom thou sufferest, then thy soul is not engaged: safely thou sayest that which followeth.

Ver. 12. But I alway in Thee will hope, and will add to all Thy praise. What is this? I will add to all Thy praise, ought to move us. More perfect wilt thou make the praise of God? Is there any thing to be superadded? If already that is all praise, wilt thou add any thing? God was praised in all His good deeds, in every creature of His, in the whole establishment of all things, in the government and regulation of ages, in the order of seasons, in the height of Heaven, in the fruitfulness of the regions of earth, in the encircling of the sea, in every excellency of the creature every where brought forth, in the sons of men themselves, in the giving of the Law, in delivering His people from the captivity of the Egyptians, and all the rest of His wonderful works: not yet He had been praised for having raised up flesh unto life eternal. Be there then this praise added by the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ: in order that here we may perceive His voice above all past praise: thus it is that we rightly understand this also. What, O thou who art perchance a sinner, who didst fear lest thy soul should be engaged, who in Him alone didst hope in order that thou shouldest be delivered from that first captivity, who on thy own righteousness didst not rely, but on His grace, which this Psalm doth commend, what, wilt thou add any thing to all the praise of God? I will add, he saith. Let us see what he addeth. Thy praise might have been entire, and nothing at all might seem to be wanting to Thy praise, because nothing could be wanting, if Thou didst condemn all unrighteous men. For the very justice whereby unrighteous men are condemned could not but be great praise of God: great praise it would be. Thou didst make man, Thou didst give him a free will, in Paradise didst place him, a command didst impose, death if he broke the command most justly Thou didst denounce; there was nothing Thou didst not do, there is no one who would require more of Thee: He sinned, mankind became as though a mass of sinners, flowing from sinners; what then, if Thou shouldest condemn this mass of iniquity, will any one say to Thee, unjustly Thou hast done? Thou wouldest be evidently even so just, and this Thy praise would be entire; but because Thou hast delivered even the sinner himself by justifying the ungodly, I will add to all Thy praise.

16. Ver. 13. My mouth shall tell out Thy righteousness: not mine. From thence I will add to all Thy praise: because even that I am righteous, if righteous I am, is Thy righteousness in me, not mine own: for Thou dost justify the ungodly. My mouth shall tell out Thy righteousness, all the day long Thy salvation. What is, Thy salvation? Of the Lord is Salvation. Let no one assume to himself, that he saveth himself, Of the Lord is Salvation. Not any one by himself saveth himself, Of the Lord is Salvation, ‘vain is man’s salvation.’ All the day long Thy Salvation: at all times. Something of adversity cometh, preach the Salvation of the Lord: something of prosperity cometh, preach the Salvation of the Lord. Do not preach in prosperity, and hold thy peace in adversity: otherwise there will not be that which hath been said, all the day long. For all the day long is day together with its own night. Do we when we say, for example, thirty days have gone by, mention the nights also; do we not under the very term days include the nights also? In Genesis what was said? The evening was made, and the morning was made, one day. Therefore a whole day is the day together with its own night: for the night doth serve the day, not the day the night. Whatever thou doest in mortal flesh, ought to serve righteousness: whatever thou doest by the commandment of God, be it not done for the sake of the advantage of the flesh, lest day serve night. Therefore all the day long speak of the praise of God, to wit, in prosperity and in adversity; in prosperity, as though in the day time; in adversity, as though in the night time: all the day long nevertheless speak of the praise of God, so that thou mayest not have sung to no purpose, I will bless God at every time, alway the praise of Him is in my mouth. When sons were safe, cattle, servants, all his property, Job praised God; this as it were in the day time: losses came, bereavement fell upon him, there perished that which was safely kept, they perished for whom it was kept; this as it were in the night time. See nevertheless him praising all the day long. Did he after that day time wherein he rejoiced, because there came a setting as it were of that light, that is, of his

prosperity, fall off from the praises of God? Was there not a day in his heart, whence it shone forth, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done: be the name of the Lord blessed? And it was as it were yet even-tide: there came even a thicker night, darkness more profound, pain of body, cankering of worms; nor even so in that very cankering did he fall away from the praises of God without in the night, who within rejoiced in the day. For to his wife recommending blasphemy and engaging his soul, to that wretched woman alluring to evil like a shadow of the night, Thou hast spoken, he saith, like one of the unwise women. Truly a daughter of the night! If good things we have received from the hand of the Lord, evil things shall we not endure? We have praised in the day, shall we fall off in the night? All the day long, that is, together with its own night, Thy Salvation.

17. For I have not known tradings. Therefore, he saith, All the day long Thy Salvation, for I have not known tradings. What are these tradings? Let traders hear and change their life; and if they have been such, be not such; let them not know what they have been, let them forget; lastly, let them not approve, not praise; let them disapprove, condemn, be changed, if trading is a sin. For on this account, O thou trader, because of a certain eagerness for getting, whenever thou shalt have suffered loss, thou wilt blaspheme; and there will not be in thee that which hath been spoken of, all the day long Thy praise. But whenever for the price of the goods which thou art selling, thou not only liest, but even falsely swearest; how in thy mouth all the day long is there the praise of God? While, if thou art a Christian, even out of thy mouth the name of God is being blasphemed, so that men say, see what sort of men are Christians! Therefore if this man for this reason speaketh the praise of God all the day long, because he hath not known tradings; let Christians amend themselves, let them not trade. But a trader saith to me, behold I bring indeed from a distant quarter merchandise unto these places, wherein there are not those things which I have brought, by which means I may gain a living: I ask but as reward for my labour, that I may sell dearer than I have bought: for whence can I live, when it hath been written, the worker is worthy of his reward? But he is treating of lying, of false swearing. This is the fault of me, not of trading: for I should not, if I would, be unable to do without this fault. I then, the merchant, do not shift mine

own fault to trading: but if I lie, it is I that lie, not the trade. For I might say, for so much I bought, but for so much I will sell; if thou pleasest, buy. For the buyer hearing this truth would not be offended, and not a whit less all men would resort to me: because they would love truth more than gain. Of this then, he saith, admonish me, that I lie not, that I forswear not; not to relinquish business whereby I maintain myself. For to what dost thou put me when thou puttest me away from this? Perchance to some craft? I will be a shoemaker, I will make shoes for men. Are not they too liars? are not they too false-swearers? Do they not, when they have contracted to make shoes for one man, when they have received money from another man, give up that which they were making, and undertake to make for another, and deceive him for whom they have promised to make speedily? Do they not often say, to-day I am about it, to-day I'll get them done? Secondly, in the very sewing do they not commit as many frauds? These are their doings and these are their sayings: but they are themselves evil, not the calling which they profess. All evil artificers, then, not fearing God, either for gain, or for fear of loss or want, do lie, do forswear themselves; there is no continual praise of God in them. How then dost thou withdraw me from trading? Wouldest thou that I be a farmer, and murmur against God thundering, so that, fearing hail, I consult a wizard, in order to learn what to do to protect me against the weather; so that I desire famine for the poor, in order that I may be able to sell what I have kept in store? Unto this dost thou bring me? But good farmers, thou sayest, do not such things. Nor do good traders do those things. But why, even to have sons is an evil thing, for when their head is in pain, evil and unbelieving mothers seek for impious charms and incantations? These are the sins of men, not of things. A trader might thus speak to me—Look then, O Bishop, how thou understand the tradings which thou hast read in the Psalm: lest perchance thou understand not, and yet forbid me trading. Admonish me then how I should live; if well, it shall be well with me: one thing however I know, that if I shall have been evil, it is not trading that maketh me so, but my iniquity. Whenever truth is spoken, there is nothing to be said against it.

18. Let us inquire then what he hath called tradings, which indeed he that hath not known, all the day long doth praise God. Trading even in the Greek language is derived from action, and in the Latin from want of inaction: but

whether it be from action or want of inaction, let us examine what it is. For they that are active traders, rely as it were upon their own action, they praise their works, they attain not to the grace of God. Therefore traders are opposed to that grace which this Psalm doth commend. For it doth commend that grace, in order that no one may boast of his own works. Because in a certain place is said, Physicians shall not raise to life, ought men to abandon medicine? But what is this? Under this name are understood proud men, promising salvation to men, whereas of the Lord is Salvation. Just as then against physicians, that is, proud promisers of salvation, this doth guard which hath been said, namely, All the day long Thy Salvation: so against traders, that is, those that rejoice in their action and works, that doth guard which hath been said, My mouth shall tell forth Thy righteousness, that is, not mine own. Who are traders, that is, men as it were with their action self-satisfied? They that being ignorant of God's righteousness, and willing to establish their own, are not subject to the righteousness of God. With reason also trading hath been spoken of, because it admitteth no inaction. How great an evil thing is that which admitteth of no inaction! With reason the Lord drave from the Temple them to whom He said, It is written, My House shall be called the House of prayer, but ye have made it a house of trading; that is, boasting of your works, seeking no inaction, nor hearing the Scripture speaking against your unrest and trading, be ye still, and see that I am the Lord. What is, be ye still, and see that I am the Lord, but that ye should know that it is God that worketh in you, and ye should not be lifted up because of your own works? Dost thou not hear the voice of Him saying, Come ye unto Me, all ye that labour and are laden, and I will refresh you; take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for gentle I am and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls? This rest against traders is preached: this rest against them that hate inaction is preached, while they so act and so boast themselves of their works, that they rest not in God, and they recoil so much the further from grace, the more they are lifted up because of their own works

19. But there is in some copies, For I have not known literature. Where some books have trading, there others literature: how they may accord is a hard matter to find out; and yet the discrepancy of interpreters perchance sheweth the meaning, introduceth no error. Let us enquire then how to

understand literature also, lest we offend grammarians in the same way as we did traders a little before: because a grammarian too may live honourably in his calling, and neither forswear nor lie. Let us examine then the literature which he hath not known, in whose mouth all the day long is the praise of God. There is a sort of literature of the Jews: for to them let us refer this; there we shall find what hath been said: just as when we were enquiring about traders, on the score of actions and works, we found that to be called detestable trading, which the Apostle hath branded, saying, For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and willing to establish their own, to the righteousness of God they were not made subject. Against which saith the same Apostle, Not by works, lest perchance a man be lifted up. How then? Shall we not work what is good? We shall work, but with Himself working in us. For His workmanship we are, created in Christ Jesus in good works. Just as then we found out the former charge against traders, that is men boasting of action, exalting themselves because of business which admitteth no inaction, unquiet men rather than good workmen; because good workmen are those in whom God worketh; so also we find a sort of literature among the Jews: may the Lord be with me, that I may explain in words that which He hath vouchsafed to grant me in heart to see. The pride of the Jews who relied as it were on their powers and on the justice of their works, did boast of the Law, because they themselves received the Law, other nations received not; in which Law, of grace they boasted not, but of the letter. For the Law without grace, is the letter alone: it abideth to reprove iniquity, not to give salvation. For what saith the Apostle? For if there had been given a law which could have made alive, by all means out of the law there would have been righteousness; but the Scripture concluded all things under sin, in order that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to men believing. Concerning this letter he saith in another place, The letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive. Thou hast the letter if thou art a transgressor of the Law. Thou that, he saith, through the letter, and circumcision art a transgressor of the Law. Is it not well sung and said, Deliver Thou me from the hand of the transgressor of the Law and of the unrighteous man? Thou hast the letter, but dost not fulfil the letter. Whence dost thou not fulfil the letter? For thou, that preachest that a man steal not, stealest; thou, that sayest that a man commit not adultery, committest adultery; thou, that abhorrest idols, committest sacrilege. For the name of

God through you is blasphemed among the Gentiles, as it hath been written. What then hath profited thee the letter which thou dost not fulfil? But wherefore dost thou not fulfil? Because on thyself thou reliest. Why dost thou not fulfil? Because a trader thou art, thy own works thou extollest: thou knowest not that the grace of Him helping is necessary, in order that the precept of Him commanding may be fulfilled. Behold it is God that hath commanded, do thou what He hath commanded. Thou beginnest to act as if by thy own powers, and thou fallest: and there abideth upon Thee the letter punishing, not saving. With reason the Law through Moses was given, grace and truth through Jesus Christ hath come to pass. Moses wrote five books: but in the five porches encircling the pool, sick men were lying, but they could not be healed. See how the letter remained, convicting the guilty, not saving the unrighteous. For in those five porches, a figure of the five books, sick men were given over rather than made whole. What then in that place did make whole a sick man? The moving of the water. When that pool was moved there went down a sick man, and there was made whole one, one because of unity: whatsoever other man went down unto that same moving was not made whole. How then was there commended the unity of the Body crying from the ends of the earth? Another man was not healed, except again the pool were moved. The moving of the pool then did signify the perturbation of the people of the Jews when the Lord Jesus Christ came. For at the coming of an Angel the water in the pool was perceived to be moved. The water then encircled with five porches was the Jewish nation encircled by the Law. And in the porches the sick lay, and in the water alone when troubled and moved they were healed. The Lord came, troubled was the water; He was crucified, may He come down in order that the sick man may be made whole. What is, may He come down? May He humble Himself. Therefore whosoever ye be that love the letter without grace, in the porches ye will remain, sick ye will be, lying ill, not growing well: for on the letter ye rely. For if there had been given a law which could have made alive, by all means out of the law there would have been righteousness. But the Law was given to make you guilty, that being made guilty ye should fear, fearing ye should ask indulgence, no longer rely on your own powers, on the letter not exalt yourselves. For the same figure also it is that Eliseus at first sent a staff by his servant to raise up the dead child. There had died the son of a widow his hostess; it was reported to him, to his servant he gave his staff: go thou, he saith, lay it on the dead child. Did the prophet not know what he was doing? The servant went before, he laid the staff upon the dead, the dead arose not. For if there had been given a law which could have made alive, surely out of the law there had been righteousness. The law sent by the servant made not alive: and yet he sent his staff by the servant, who himself afterwards followed, and made alive. For when that infant arose not, Eliseus came himself, now bearing the type of the Lord, who had sent before his servant with the staff, as though with the Law: he came to the child that was lying dead, he laid his limbs upon it. The one was an infant, the other a grown man: he contracted and shortened in a manner the size of his full growth, in order that he might fit the dead child. The dead then arose, when he being alive adapted himself to the dead: and the Master did that which the staff did not; and grace did that which the letter did not. They then that have remained in the staff, glory in the letter; and therefore are not made alive. But I will to glory concerning Thy grace. But from me, saith the Apostle, far be it to glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, save in Him Who being alive adapted Himself to me dead, in order that I might rise again: that no longer I might live, but there should live in me Christ. In that same grace I glorying literature have not known: that is, men on the letter relying, and from grace recoiling, with whole heart I have rejected.

20. Ver. 14. With reason there followeth, I will enter into the power of the Lord: not mine own, but the Lord’s. For they gloried in their own power of the letter, therefore grace joined to the letter they knew not. For the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth through Jesus Christ have come to pass. For He came Himself to fulfil the Law, when He gave love, through which the Law might be fulfilled. For love is the fulfilling of the Law. They not having love, that is, not having the Spirit of grace, (for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which hath been given to us, have remained glorying in the letter. But because “the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive:” I have not known literature, and I will enter into the power of the Lord. Therefore this verse following doth strengthen and perfect the sense, so as to fix it in the hearts of men, and not suffer any other interpretation to steal in from any quarter. O Lord, I will be mindful of Thy righteousness alone. Ah! alone. Why hath he added alone, I ask you? It

would suffice to say, I will be mindful of Thy righteousness. Alone, he saith, entirely: there of mine own I think not. For what hast thou which thou hast not received? But if also thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hast not received. Thy righteousness alone doth deliver me, what is mine own alone is nought but sins. May I not glory then of my own strength, may I not remain in the letter; may I reject literature, that is, men glorying of the letter, and on their own strength perversely, like men frantic, relying: may I reject such men, may I enter into the power of the Lord, so that when I am weak, then I may be mighty; in order that Thou in me mayest be mighty, for, I will be mindful of Thy righteousness alone.

PSALM 71

Sermon II. On the second part of the Psalm.

1. That the grace of God, whereby gratis we were saved, with no merits of ours preceding, save those whereunto punishment was due, in this Psalm was commended, yesterday we intimated to your Love: and because in treating of it we were unable to make an end, the latter part thereof we put off until to-day, promising in the name of the Lord that we would pay the debt. For paying which forasmuch as now is the time, be ye present with mind like a fertile field, wherein ye may both multiply the seed, and to the rain be not ungrateful. We commended to your notice yesterday the title thereof, but for the sake of recalling your attention, and to point it out to those that yesterday were absent, briefly we are going to touch upon what they may call to mind who heard, they may hear who knew not. Of the sons of Jonadab the Psalm is; which name is interpreted, the Lord’s spontaneous; because with spontaneous, that is, with good, pure, sincere, and perfect will, not with feigned heart, the Lord must be served: to which truth that passage also doth point, where it hath been said, Voluntarily I will sacrifice to Thee. To the sons of this man, that is, to the sons of obedience, the Psalm is sung, and to those that first were led captive, in order that there may be acknowledged here our groaning, and there may be sufficient for the day the naughtiness thereof. For now, if being proud we have forsaken Him, even wearied let us return. Not even to return we are able except through grace. Grace gratis is given. For unless it were gratis, it were no grace. But again, if for this reason it is grace, because it is gratis; nothing of thine hath gone before that thou shouldest receive. For if any good works of thine have gone before; as a reward thou hast received it, not gratis: but the reward which to us was owed, is punishment. Our being delivered then belongeth not to our own merits, but to His grace. Him then let us praise: to Him let us owe all that we are, and that we are saved. With which he concluded, when he had spoken of many things, saying, (ver. 14.) O Lord, I will be mindful of Thy righteousness alone. With this verse concluded yesterday’s exposition. The first then were captive, that is, belonging to the

first man: for because of this they were captive, because of the first man, in whom we all die: for not first is that which is spiritual, but that which is natural, afterwards the spiritual: because of the first man the first were captive: because of the second man the second were redeemed. For even redemption itself doth proclaim our captivity. For how redeemed, if not first captive? And that that captivity was more exactly intimated by the Apostle, we, quoting certain words out of his Epistle, intimated, and we repeat: But I see another law in my members fighting against the law of my mind, and leading me captive in the law of sin, which is in my members. The same is our first captivity, whereby the flesh doth lust against the Spirit. But this came of the punishment of sin, so that a man should be divided against himself, who willed not to be subject to One. For nothing is so expedient for the soul as to obey. And if it is expedient for the soul in the case of a servant to obey a master, in a son to obey a father, in a wife to obey a husband; how much more in a man to obey God? Adam then having made trial of evil,—now every man is Adam, just as in those that have believed every man is Christ, because members they are of Christ,—having made trial, I say, of evil, which he ought not to have made trial of, if he had believed Him saying, Touch not: having made trial then of evil, henceforth at least let him obey the commandments of the Physician in order that he may arise, that willed not to believe the Physician in order to escape sickness. For even to a man in health a good and faithful physician giveth advice, in order that he may not be necessary to him. For to the whole a physician is not necessary, but to the sick. But good physicians being friends who will not to sell their skill, and who take more delight in the whole than in the sick, give certain precepts to the whole, by observing which they may not fall into sickness. But again, if they shall have despised the precepts, and shall have fallen into sickness, they entreat the physician; him whom they have despised when whole, they implore when sick. O that they would but implore, that they may not, losing their senses in a fever, smite even the Physician! Ye have heard but now, when the Gospel was being read, how against them a parable was spoken. Were they of sound mind who said, This is the Heir, come, let us kill Him, and ours will be the inheritance? Surely not: let us suppose they that killed the Son were ready to kill the Father also; this is not to have a sound mind. Lastly, behold because they killed the Son: the Son rose again, and the Stone being rejected of the builders became for a Head of the corner. They stumbled against It, and they were broken in pieces: It shall come upon them, and shall grind them to powder. But not so he that singeth in the Psalm, and saith, I will enter into the power of the Lord: not mine own, but the Lord’s. O Lord, I will be mindful of Thy righteousness alone. None as mine own I acknowledge, of Thy righteousness alone I will be mindful. From Thee I have whatever of good I have: but whatever from myself I have, it is of evil that I have. To my deservings Thou hast not repaid punishment, but grace gratis Thou hast imparted. Of Thy righteousness therefore alone I will be mindful.

2. Ver. 15. O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth. What hast thou taught me? That of Thy righteousness alone I ought to be mindful. For reviewing my past life, I see what was owing to me, and what I have received instead of that which was owing to me. There was owing punishment, there hath been paid grace: there was owing hell, there hath been given life eternal. O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth. From the very beginning of my faith, wherewith Thou hast renewed me, Thou didst teach me that nothing had preceded in me, whence I might say that there was owing to me what Thou hast given. For who is turned to God save from iniquity? Who is redeemed save from captivity? But who can say that unjust was his captivity, when he forsook his Captain and fell off to the deserter? For our Captain is God, a deserter the devil: the Captain gave a commandment, the deserter suggested guile: where were thine ears between precept and deceit? was the devil better than God? Better he that revolted than He that made thee? Thou didst believe what the devil promised, and didst find what God threatened. Now then out of captivity being delivered, still however in hope, not yet in substance, walking by faith, not yet by sight, O God, he saith, Thou hast taught me from my youth. From the time that I have been turned to Thee, renewed by Thee who had been made by Thee, re-created who had been created, reformed who had been formed: from the time that I have been converted, I have learned that no merits of mine have preceded, but that Thy grace hath come to me gratis, in order that I might be mindful of Thy righteousness alone.

3. What next after youth? For, Thou hast taught me, he saith, from my youth: what after youth? For in that same first conversion of thine thou didst learn, how before conversion thou wast not just, but iniquity preceded, in order that iniquity being banished, there might succeed love: and having been renewed into a new man, only in hope, not yet in substance, thou didst learn how nothing of thy good had preceded, and by the grace of God thou wast converted to God: now perchance since the time that thou hast been converted wilt thou have any thing of thine own, and on thy own strength oughtest thou to rely? Just as men are wont to say, now leave me, it was necessary for thee to shew me the way; it is sufficient, I will walk in the way. And he that hath shewn thee the way, “wilt thou not that I conduct thee to the place?” But thou, if thou art conceited, “let me alone, it is enough, I will walk in the way.” Thou art left, and through thy weakness again thou wilt lose the way. Good were it for thee that He should have conducted thee, who first put thee in the way. But unless He too lead thee, again also thou wilt stray: say to Him then, Conduct me, O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth. But thy having entered on the way, is youth, the very renewal and beginning of the faith. For before thou wast walking through thy own ways a vagabond; straying through woody places, through rough places, torn in all thy limbs, thou wast seeking a home, that is, a sort of settlement of thy spirit, where thou mightest say, it is well; and being in security mightest say it, at rest from every uneasiness, from every trial, in a word from every captivity; and thou didst not find. What shall I say? Came there to thee one to shew thee the way? There came to thee the Way itself, and thou wast set therein by no merits of thine preceding, for evidently thou wast straying. What, since the time that thou hast set foot therein dost thou now direct thyself? Doth He that hath taught thee the way now leave thee? No, he saith: Thou hast taught me from my youth; and even until now I will tell forth Thy wonderful works. For a wonderful thing is that which still Thou doest; namely, that Thou dost direct me, Who in the way hast put me: and these are Thy wonderful works. What dost thou think to be the wonderful works of God? What is more wonderful among God’s wonderful works, than the raising the dead? But am I by any means dead, thou sayest? Unless dead thou hadst been, there would not have been said to thee, Rise, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee. Dead are all unbelievers, all unrighteous men; in body they live, but in heart

they are extinct. But he that raiseth a man dead according to the body, doth bring him back to see this light and to breathe this air: but he that raiseth is not himself light and air to him; he beginneth to see, as he saw before. A soul is not so resuscitated. For a soul is resuscitated by God; though even a body is resuscitated by God: but God, when He doth resuscitate a body, to the world doth bring it back: when He doth resuscitate a soul, to Himself He bringeth it back. If the air of this world be withdrawn, there dieth body: if God be withdrawn, there dieth soul. When then God doth resuscitate a soul, unless there be with her He that hath resuscitated, she being resuscitated liveth not. For He doth not resuscitate, and then leave her to live to herself: in the same manner as Lazarus, when he was resuscitated after being four days dead, was resuscitated by the Lord's corporal presence. For He drew near in body to the sepulchre, He cried out, Lazarus, come forth: and Lazarus rose up, he came forth from the sepulchre bound, then being unbound he went away. He was resuscitated in the Lord's presence, but he lived even in the Lord's absence. Although the Lord had resuscitated him corporally, as far as regards things visible: yet by the presence of His Majesty He resuscitated him, with respect to which presence He no where withdrew. Meanwhile nevertheless unto visible presence the Lord resuscitated Lazarus; the Lord withdrew from that same city or from that spot, did Lazarus cease to live? Not so is the soul resuscitated: God doth resuscitate her, she dieth if God shall have withdrawn. For I will speak boldly, brethren, but yet the truth. Two lives there are, one of the body, another of the soul: as the life of the body is the soul, so the life of the soul is God: in like manner as, if the soul forsake, the body dieth: so the soul dieth, if God forsake. This then is His grace, namely, that He resuscitate and be with us. Because then He doth resuscitate us from our past death, and doth renew in a manner our life, we say to Him, O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth. But because He doth not withdraw from those whom He resuscitateth, lest when He shall have withdrawn from them they die, we say to Him, and even until now I will tell forth Thy wonderful works: because while Thou art with me I live, and of my soul Thou art the life, which will die if she be left to herself. Therefore while my life is present, that is, my God, even until now, what next?

4. Ver. 18. And even unto oldness and old age. These are two terms for old age, and are distinguished by the Greeks. For the gravity succeeding youth hath another name among the Greeks, and after that same gravity the last age coming on hath another name; for πρεσβύτης signifieth grave, and γέρων old. But because in the Latin language the distinction of these two terms holdeth not, both words implying old age are inserted, oldness and old age: but ye know them to be two ages. Thou hast taught me Thy grace from my youth; and even until now; after my youth, I will tell forth Thy wonderful works, because Thou art with me in order that I may not die, Who hast come in order that I may rise: and even unto oldness and old age, that is, even unto my last breath, unless with me Thou shalt have been, there will not be any merit of mine; may Thy grace alway remain with me. Even one man would say this, thou, he, I; but because this voice is that of a certain great Man, that is, of the Unity itself, for it is the voice of the Church; let us investigate the youth of the Church. When Christ came, He was crucified, dead, rose again, called the Gentiles, they began to be converted, became Martyrs strong in Christ, there was shed faithful blood, there arose a harvest for the Church: this is Her youth. But seasons advancing let the Church confess, let Her say, Even until now I will tell forth Thy wonderful works. Not only in youth, when Paul, when Peter, when the first Apostles told: even in advancing age I myself, that is, Thy Unity, Thy members, Thy Body, will tell forth Thy marvellous works. What then? And even unto oldness and old age, I will tell forth Thy wonderful works: even until the end of the world here shall be the Church. For if She were not to be here even unto the end of the world; to whom did the Lord say, Behold, I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the world? Why was it necessary that these things should be spoken in the Scriptures? Because there were to be enemies of the Christian Faith who would say, “for a short time are the Christians, hereafter they shall perish, and there shall come back idols, there shall come back that which was before. How long shall be the Christians?” Even unto oldness and old age: that is, even unto the end of the world. When thou, miserable unbeliever, dost expect Christians to pass away, thou art passing away thyself without Christians: and Christians even unto the end of the world shall endure; and as for thee with thine unbelief when thou shalt have ended thy short life, with what face wilt thou come forth to the Judge, whom while thou wast

living thou didst blaspheme? Therefore from my youth, and even until now, and even unto oldness and old age, O Lord, forsake not me. It will not be, as mine enemies say, even for a time. Forsake not me, until I tell forth Thine arm to every generation that is yet to come. And the arm of the Lord hath been revealed to whom? The arm of the Lord is Christ. Do not Thou then forsake me: let not them rejoice that say, “only for a set time the Christians are.” May there be persons to tell forth Thine arm. To whom? To every generation that is yet to come. If then it be to every generation that is yet to come, it will be even unto the end of the world: for when the world is ended, no longer any generation will come on.

5. Ver. 19. Thy power and Thy righteousness. That is, that I may tell forth to every generation that is yet to come, Thine arm. And what hath Thine arm effected? This then let me tell forth, that same grace to every generation succeeding: let me say to every man that is to be born, nothing thou art by thyself, on God call thou, thine own are sins, merits are God’s: punishment to thee is owing, and when reward shall have come, His own gifts He will crown, not thy merits. Let me say to every generation that is to come, out of captivity thou hast come, unto Adam thou didst belong. Let me say this to every generation that is to come, that there is no strength of mine, no righteousness of mine; but Thy strength and Thy righteousness, O God, even unto the most high mighty works which Thou hast made. Thy power and Thy righteousness, as far as what? even unto flesh and blood? Nay, even unto the most high mighty works which Thou hast made. For the high places are the heavens, in the high places are the Angels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers: to Thee they owe it that they are; to Thee they owe it that they live, to Thee they owe it that righteously they live, to Thee they owe it that blessedly they live. Thy power and Thy righteousness, as far as what? Even unto the most high mighty works which Thou hast made. Think not that man alone belongeth to the grace of God. What was Angel before he was made? What is Angel, if He forsake him Who hath created? Therefore Thy power and Thy justice even unto the most high mighty works which Thou hast made.

6. And man exalteth himself: and in order that he may belong to the first captivity, he heareth the serpent suggesting, Taste, and ye shall be as Gods.

Men as Gods? O God, who is like unto Thee? Not any in the pit, not in Hell, not in earth, not in Heaven, for all things Thou hast made. Why doth the work strive with the Maker? O God, who is like unto Thee? But as for me, saith miserable Adam, and Adam is every man, while I perversely will to be like unto Thee, behold what I have become, so that from captivity to Thee I cry out: I with whom it was well under a good king, have been made captive under my seducer; and cry out to Thee, because I have fallen from Thee. And whence have I fallen from Thee? While I perversely seek to be like unto Thee. For what? doth not God call us unto His own likeness? Is it not He that saith, Love your enemies, pray for them that persecute you, do good to them that hate you? Saying these words, to the likeness of God He exhorteth us. Lastly, what doth he add? In order that ye may be, He saith, the sons of your Father Which is in Heaven. For what doth He Himself do? This thing He doth certainly: that maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, raineth upon just and unjust men. He then that wisheth well to his enemy, is like unto God, nor is this pride, but it is obedience. Why? Because after the image of God we have been made. Let Us make, He saith, man after Our image and Our likeness. It is not then any strange thing, if we hold the image of God in us. O that we may not lose it through pride. But what is it through pride to will to be like unto God? What do we think, when the captive was crying out, O Lord, who is like unto Thee? What is this perverse likeness? Hear and understand, if ye can: but we believe that because He hath set us here to say these words to you, He will give to you to be able to understand also. God needeth no good thing, and is Himself the Chief Good, and from Himself is every good thing. In order then that we may be good, we need God: in order that God may be good, He needeth not us; and not only not us, but even unto the most high mighty works which He hath made, neither celestial things themselves, nor supercelestial things, nor that which is called the Heaven of Heaven, doth God need, in order that He may be either more good, or more mighty, or more blessed. For what would any thing have been, whatever besides there is, unless He had made it? What then doth He need from thee, who was before thee, and was so mighty, that when thou wast not He made thee? Was it by any means as parents make sons? By a sort of carnal concupiscence they beget rather than create: but while they beget, God doth create. For if thou dost so create, tell me what thy wife will bear? Why should I say, Thou tell me? Let her tell, who knoweth not what she is carrying! Men however beget sons, both for their comfort, and for the support of old age. Did God by any means create all these things in order that by them when old He might be aided? God then doth know the thing which He doth create, and of what sort it is through His goodness, and of what sort it will be through its own will: God doth know, and hath disposed all things. But in order that a man may be any thing at all, he turneth himself to Him by Whom He hath been created. For by withdrawing he waxeth cold, by drawing near he waxeth warm: by withdrawing he is made dark, by drawing near he is made light. For from Whom he hath his being, with Him he hath his well being. Lastly, the younger son, who willed in his own power to have his substance, which was being kept for him in the best manner with his father, having become his own master, set out into a far country, clave to an evil prince, fed swine, by hunger was corrected, who from fulness being proud had departed. Therefore whosoever willeth to be thus like unto God, so that by Him he may stand, and keep, as is written, his strength close to Him, may not withdraw from Him; by cleaving to Him may be sealed even as from a ring the wax, being joined to Him may have the image of Him, doing that which hath been said, For me to cleave unto God is a good thing: this man doth truly keep the likeness and image after which he hath been made. But again, if perversely he shall have willed to imitate God, so that, just as God hath no one by whom He is formed, hath no one by whom He is ruled, he may so will of himself to exercise his own power, that like God, he may live with no one forming, no one ruling; what remaineth, brethren, but that withdrawing from His heat he grow benumbed, withdrawing from Truth he become empty, withdrawing from that which hath the highest and unchangeable being, changed for the worse, he sink down.

7. This thing the devil did: he willed to imitate God, but perversely, not to be under His power, but to have power opposed to Him. But man, being set under commandment, heard from the Lord God, Touch not. What? This tree. But what is that tree? If good it is, why do I not touch it? If evil it be, what doth it in Paradise? Assuredly it is in Paradise because it is good: but I will not have thee touch it. Why am I not to touch it? Because I will thee to be obedient, not gainsaying. Serve thou for this purpose, servant; but do not evil, servant. Servant, hear thou first the Lord’s bidding, and then learn thou

the design of Him bidding. Good is the tree, I will not have thee touch it. Why? Because I am Lord, and thou a servant. This is the whole reason. If small it is, dost thou disdain to be a servant? But what is expedient for thee except to be under the Lord? How wilt thou be under the Lord, except thou shalt have been under commandment? Again, if it is expedient for thee to be under the Lord, and under commandment, what was God to command thee? For doth He require any thing from thee? Is He to say to thee, offer unto me a sacrifice? Did not He Himself make all things: among which things He made thee also? Is He to say to thee, attend Me, either to the couch when I rest; or to the table, when I refresh myself; or to the baths, when I bathe? Because then God requireth of thee nothing, ought He to have ordered thee nothing? But if He ought to have ordered thee something, in order that thou mightest perceive thyself to be under the Lord, which is expedient for thee, thou wast to be withheld from some object: not because of the badness of that tree, but for the sake of thine own obedience. God could not more perfectly have shewn how great is the goodness of obedience, than when He withheld thee from that object which was not evil. There obedience alone beareth the palm, there disobedience alone doth find punishment. A good thing it is, I will not have thee touch it. For by not touching thou wilt not die. Did He that withheld thee this, by any means withdraw other things? Is not Paradise full of fruitful trees? What is wanting to thee? This thing I will not have thee touch, of this I will not have thee taste. A good thing it is, but obedience is better. Furthermore, when thou shalt have touched it, will that tree be an evil thing so that thou shalt die? But disobedience hath made thee subject to death, because thou hast touched things forbidden. Therefore that tree was called that of the knowledge of discerning good and evil, not because on it were hanging as it were fruits of such sort; but because whatever that tree was, with whatever apple, with whatever fruit it was, it was so called because man, who would not discern good from evil by commandment, was going to discern by experiment: so that by touching a thing forbidden he found punishment. But why did he touch it, my brethren? What was wanting to him? Let it be told me, what was wanting to him set in Paradise, in the midst of opulence, in the midst of pleasures, whose great pleasures were the very sight of God, whose face as of an enemy he feared after the sin? What was wanting to him that he touched it, save that he willed to exercise his own power, delighted to break a commandment, so that with no one having dominion over him he might become as God, because over God indeed no one hath dominion? Ill straying, ill presuming, doomed to die by withdrawing from the path of righteousness: behold he breaketh the commandment, he hath shaken off from his neck the yoke of discipline, uplifted with high spirit he hath broken in sunder the reins of guidance: where is he now? Truly captive he crieth, O Lord, who is like unto Thee? I perversely willed to be like unto Thee, and I have been made like unto a beast! Under Thy dominion, under Thy commandment, I was indeed like: But a man in honour set hath not perceived, he hath been compared to beasts without sense, and hath been made like unto them. Now out of the likeness of beasts cry though late and say, O God, who is like unto Thee?

8. Ver. 20. How great troubles hast Thou shewn to me, many and evil! Deservedly, proud servant. For thou hast willed perversely to be like thy God, who hadst been made after the image of thy Lord. Wouldest thou have it to be well with thee, when withdrawing from that good? Truly God saith to thee, if thou withdrawest from Me, and it is well with thee, I am not thy good. Again, if He is good, and in the highest degree good, and of Himself to Himself good, and by no foreign good thing good, and is Himself our chief good; by withdrawing from Him, what wilt thou be but evil? Also if He is Himself our blessedness, what will there be to one withdrawing from Him, except misery? Return thou then after misery, and say, O Lord, who is like unto Thee? How great troubles hast Thou shewn to me, many and evil!

9. But this was discipline; admonition, not desertion. Lastly, giving thanks, he saith what? And being turned Thou hast made me alive, and from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me back. But when before? What is this again? Thou hast fallen from a high place, O man, disobedient slave, O thou proud against thy Lord, thou hast fallen. There hath come to pass in thee, every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled: may there come to pass in thee, every one that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Return thou from the deep. I return, he saith, I return, I acknowledge; O God, who is like unto Thee? How great troubles hast Thou shewn to me, many and evil! and being turned Thou hast made me alive, and from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me

back. “We perceive,” I hear. Thou hast brought us back from the bottomless places of the earth, hast brought us back from the depth and drowning of sin. But why again? When had it already been done? Let us go on, if perchance the latter parts of the Psalm itself do not explain to us the thing which here we do not yet perceive, namely, why he hath said again. Therefore let us hear: How great troubles Thou hast shewn to me, many and evil! And being turned Thou hast made me alive, and from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me back. What then? (Ver. 21.) Thou hast multiplied Thy righteousness, and being turned Thou hast comforted me, and from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me back. Behold a second again! If we labour to unravel this again when written once, who will be able to unravel it when doubled? Now again itself is a redoubling, and once more there is written again. May He be with us from Whom is grace, may there be with us the arm also which we are telling forth to every generation that is to come: may He be with us Himself, and as with the key of His Cross open to us the mystery that is locked up. For it was not to no purpose that when He was crucified the vail of the temple was rent in the midst, but to shew that through His Passion the secret things of all mysteries were opened. May He then Himself be with men passing over unto Him, be the vail taken away: may our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ tell us why such a voice of the Prophet hath been sent before, Thou hast shewn to me troubles many and evil: and being turned Thou hast made me alive, and from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me back. Behold this is the first again which hath been written. Let us see what this is, and we shall see why there is a second again.

10. What is Christ? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the Same was in the beginning with God. All things through Him were made, and without Him was made nothing. An amazing thing this, a great thing this. What of thee captive? Where art thou lying? In the flesh, under death. Who then is He? Who thou? And what was He afterwards? For whose sake? Who is He but that which hath been spoken of, the Word? What Word? Doth it perchance sound and pass away? The Word, God with God, the Word by Which were made all things. What was He for thy sake? And the Word became flesh, and dwelled in us. He

that spared not His own Son, but for us all delivered Him up: how hath He not also together with Him given us all things? See what, who, for whose sake. The Son of God, flesh, for the sake of a sinner, for the sake of an unrighteous man, for the sake of a deserter, for the sake of a proud man, for the sake of a perverse imitator of His God. He became what thou art, Son of Man, in order that we might be made sons of God. He became flesh: whence the flesh? Of the Virgin Mary. Whence the Virgin Mary? Of Adam. Therefore He was of that first captive, and the flesh in Christ was from the lump of captivity. Why this? For an example. He took upon Him from thee that wherein He might die for thee: He took upon Him from thee that which He might offer for thee, by which example He might teach thee. Might teach thee what? That thou art to rise again. For from whence shouldest thou believe, unless an example of flesh assumed from the lump of thy death went before? Therefore in Him first we have risen again: because also when Christ rose again, we rose again. For the Word died not and rose again: but in the Word the flesh died and rose again. Therein Christ died, wherein thou art to die: and therein Christ rose again, wherein thou art to rise again. By His example He taught thee what thou shouldest not fear, for what thou shouldest hope. Thou didst fear death, He died: thou didst despair of rising again, He rose again. But thou sayest to me, He rose again, do I by any means rise again? But He rose again in that which for thee He received of thee. Therefore thy nature in Him hath preceded thee; and that which was taken of thee, hath gone up before thee: therein therefore thou also hast ascended. Therefore He ascended first, and we in Him: because that flesh is of the human race. Therefore also He rising again, we have been brought back out of the bottomless places of the earth. When therefore Christ rose again, from the bottomless places of the earth Thou didst bring me back. But when we believe in Christ, from the deep places of the earth again thou hast brought me back. Behold one again. Hear of its being fulfilled from the Apostle: If then ye have risen with Christ, the things which are above seek ye, where Christ is sitting on the right hand of God; the things which are above mind ye, not the things which are upon the earth. He then hath gone before: already we also have risen again, but still in hope. Hear the Apostle Paul saying this same thing: Even we ourselves groan in ourselves, looking for the adoption, the redemption of our body. What is it then that Christ hath granted to thee? Hear that which followeth; For by hope we are saved:

but hope which is seen is not hope. For that which a man seeth, why doth he hope for? But if that which we see not we hope for, through patience we wait for it. We have been brought back therefore again from the bottomless places in hope. Why again? Because already Christ had gone before. But because we shall rise again in substance, for now in hope we are living, now after faith we are walking; we have been brought back from the bottomless places of the earth, by believing in Him Who before us hath risen again from the bottomless places of the earth: our soul hath been resuscitated from the iniquity of unbelief, and there hath come to pass in us as it were the first Resurrection through faith. But if it shall be alone, where is that which the Apostle saith, Looking for the adoption, the redemption of our body? Where is that whereof he hath spoken in that passage, The body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness? But if He that raised Christ from the dead dwelleth in you; He that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, shall quicken your mortal bodies also through His Spirit dwelling in you. Therefore already we have risen again in mind, in faith, in hope, in love: but it remaineth for us to rise again in body. Thou hast heard one again, thou hast heard the other again; one again because of Christ going before; and the other, yet however in hope, and a thing which remaineth to be in substance. Thou hast multiplied Thy righteousness, already in men believing, already in those that first have risen again in hope. Thou hast multiplied Thy righteousness. To this same righteousness belongeth the scourge also: for it is time that judgment begin with the House of God, saith Peter, that is, with His Saints. But He scourgeth every son that He receiveth: Thou hast multiplied Thy righteousness: because now not even sons Thou hast spared; but those for whom Thou wast keeping an eternal inheritance, Thou hast not left without discipline. Thou hast multiplied Thy righteousness, and being turned Thou hast comforted me: and because of the body to rise again at the end, even from the bottomless places of the earth again Thou hast brought me back.

11. Ver. 22. For I will confess to Thee in the vessels of a Psalm Thy truth. The vessels of a Psalm are a Psaltery. But what is a Psaltery? An instrument of wood with strings. What doth it signify? There is some difference between it and a harp: they that are acquainted with it say, that the difference is, that the hollow piece of wood on which the strings are

stretched over to make them sound, the Psaltery hath on the upper part, the harp on the lower. And because the Spirit is from above, flesh from the earth; there seemeth to be signified by the Psaltery the Spirit, by the harp the flesh. And because he had spoken of two bringings back of ours from the bottomless places of the earth, one after the Spirit in hope, the other after the body in substance; hear thou of these two: for I will confess to Thee in the vessels of a Psalm Thy truth. This after the Spirit: concerning the body what? I will psalm to Thee on a harp, Holy One of Israel.

12. Again hear this because of that same again and again. (Ver. 23.) My lips shall exult when I shall psalm to Thee. Because lips are wont to be spoken of both belonging to the inner and to the outward man, it is uncertain in what sense lips have been used: there followeth therefore, And my soul which Thou hast redeemed. Therefore regarding the inward lips having been saved in hope, brought back from the bottomless places of the earth in faith and love, still however waiting for the redemption of our body, we say what? Already he hath said, And my soul which Thou hast redeemed. But lest thou shouldest think the soul alone redeemed, wherein now thou hast heard one again, (Ver. 24.) but still, he saith; why still? but still my tongue also: therefore now the tongue of the body: all day long shall meditate of Thy righteousness: that is, in eternity without end. But when shall this be? Hereafter at the end of the world, at the resurrection of the body and the changing into the Angelic state. Whence is it proved that this is spoken of the end, but still my tongue also all day long shall meditate of Thy righteousness? When they shall have been confounded and shall have blushed, that seek evil things for me. When shall they be confounded, when shall they blush, save at the end of the world? For in two ways they shall be confounded, either when they shall believe in Christ, or when Christ shall have come. For so long as the Church is here, so long as grain groaneth amid chaff, so long as wheat groaneth amid tares, so long as vessels of mercy groan amid vessels of wrath made for dishonour, so long as lily groaneth amid thorns, there will not be wanting enemies to say, When shall he die, and his name perish? “Behold there shall come the time when Christians shall be ended and shall be no more: as they began at a set time, so even unto a particular time they shall be.” But while they are saying these things and without end are dying, and while the Church is continuing

preaching the Arm of the Lord to every generation that is to come; there shall come Himself also at last in His glory, there shall rise again all the dead, each with his cause: there shall be severed good men to the right hand, but evil men to the left, and they shall be confounded that did insult, they shall blush that did mock: and so my tongue after resurrection shall meditate of Thy righteousness, all day long of Thy praise, when they shall have been confounded and shall have blushed, that seek evil things for me.

PSALM 72

Exposition

1. For Salomon indeed this Psalm’s title is fore-noted: but things are spoken of therein which could not apply to that Salomon king of Israel after the flesh, according to those things which holy Scripture speaketh concerning him: but they can most pertinently apply to the Lord Christ. Whence it is perceived, that the very word Salomon is used in a figurative sense, so that in him Christ is to be taken. For Salomon is interpreted peace-maker: and on this account such a word to Him most truly and excellently doth apply, through Whom, the Mediator, having received remission of sins, we that were enemies are reconciled to God. For when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son. The Same is Himself that Peace-maker, Who hath made both things one, and dissolving the middle wall of partition, making void in His flesh enmities, the law of commandments in decrees, in order that He might build up two into Himself unto one new man, making peace: and coming He hath preached peace to them that are afar, and peace unto them that are near. He saith Himself in the Gospel, Peace I leave unto you, My peace I give unto you. And by many other testimonies the Lord Christ is shewn to be a Peace-maker: not according to the peace which this world knoweth and seeketh; but that peace whereof is said in the Prophet, I will give unto them true comfort, peace upon peace, when, to wit to the peace of reconciliation, there is added the peace of immortality. For after all things have been given to us, which God hath promised, that we ought to look for the last peace, wherein with God we may live for everlasting, the same Prophet doth shew in the place where he saith, O Lord, our God, peace give Thou unto us, for all things Thou hast given unto us. That will be evidently the perfect peace, when the last enemy shall be destroyed, to wit, death. And in whom will this be save in that Peace-maker, our Reconciliation? For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. Since then we have found out the true Salomon, that is, the true Peace-maker: next let us observe what the Psalm doth teach concerning Him.

2. Ver. 1. O God, Thy judgment to the King give Thou, and Thy justice to the King’s Son. The Lord Himself in the Gospel saith, The Father judgeth not any one, but all judgment He hath given to the Son: this is then, O God, Thy judgment to the King give Thou. He that is King is also the Son of the King: because God the Father also is certainly King. Thus it hath been written, that the King made a marriage for His Son. But after the manner of Scripture the same thing is repeated. For that which he hath said in, Thy judgment; the same he hath otherwise expressed in, Thy justice: and that which he hath said in, the King, the same he hath otherwise expressed in, to the King’s Son: in like manner as is this passage, He that dwelleth in the Heavens shall laugh them to scorn, and the Lord shall mock at them. Whatever is meant by He that dwelleth in the Heavens, the same is, and the Lord: and whatever is meant by, shall laugh them to scorn, the same is, shall mock at them; and, The Heavens are telling forth the Glory of God, and the works of His hands the firmament is announcing. The Heavens are repeated under the name of firmament: and that which hath been said in, the glory of God, hath been repeated in, the works of His hands: and that which hath been said in, are telling forth, hath been repeated in, is announcing. But these repetitions do much commend the divine sayings, whether the same words, or whether in other words the same sense be repeated: and they are mostly found in the Psalms, and in the kind of discourse whereby the mind’s affection is to be awakened.

3. Next there followeth, (ver. 2.) to judge Thy people in justice, and Thy poor in judgment. For what purpose the royal Father gave to the royal Son His judgment and His justice is sufficiently shewn when he saith, To judge Thy people in justice, that is, for the purpose of judging Thy people. Such an idiom is found in Salomon: The Proverbs of Salomon, son of David, to know wisdom and discipline: that is, the Proverbs of Salomon, for the purpose of knowing wisdom and discipline. So, Thy judgment give Thou, to judge Thy people: that is, Thy judgment give Thou for the purpose of judging Thy people. But that which he saith before in, Thy people, the same he saith afterwards in, Thy poor: and that which he saith before in, in justice; the same afterward in, in judgment: according to that manner of repetition. Whereby indeed he sheweth, that the people of God ought to be poor, that is, not proud, but humble. For, blessed are the poor in spirit, for

theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. In which poverty even blessed Job was poor even before he had lost those great earthly riches. Which thing for this reason I thought should be mentioned, because there are certain persons who are more ready to distribute all their goods to the poor, than themselves to become the poor of God. For they are puffed up with boasting wherein they think their living well should be ascribed to themselves, not to the grace of God: and therefore now they do not even live well, however great the good works which they seem to do. For of their own they think they have, and they glory as if they have not received: being rich to themselves, not poor to God; abounding to themselves, not needing God. But the Apostle saith, If I shall have distributed all my goods to the poor, and shall have given up my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. As though he were saying, If I shall have distributed all my goods to the poor, and shall not have been a poor man of God, it profiteth me nothing. For love is not puffed up: nor is there the true love of God in him that is ungrateful to His Holy Spirit, by Which there is shed abroad in our hearts the love of Him. And therefore such men belong not to the people of God, because they are not the poor of God. For the poor of God say, But we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is from God, in order that we may know the things which by God have been given to us. For though even in this Psalm, because of the mystery of the taking on Him of man, whereby the Word became flesh, it is being said to the King, God the Father, Thy justice give Thou to the King’s Son: these men will not have justice to be given them, but are confident that they have it of themselves. For being ignorant of God’s justice, and their own willing to establish, to the justice of God they are not subject. They are not therefore, as I have said, the poor of God, but the rich of themselves: because they are not humble but proud. He will come, however, to judge the people of God in justice, and the poor of God in judgment: and in the judgment He will sever from their rich His poor, whom however by His poverty He hath made His rich. For the poor people crieth to Him, Judge Thou me, O God, and sever my cause from the nation unholy.

4. But seeing that he hath changed the order of the words, (though he had first said, O God, Thy judgment to the King give Thou, and Thy justice to the King’s Son, putting judgment first, then justice,) and hath put justice

first, then judgment, saying, To judge Thy people in justice, and Thy poor in judgment: he doth more clearly shew that he hath called judgment justice, proving that there is no difference made by the order in which the word is placed, because it signifieth the same thing. For it is usual to say ‘wrong judgment’ of that which is unjust: but justice iniquitous or unjust we are not wont to speak of. For if wrong and unjust it be; no longer must it be called justice. Again, by putting down judgment and repeating it under the name of justice, or by putting down justice and repeating it under the name of judgment, he clearly sheweth that he specially nameth that judgment which is wont to be put instead of justice, that is, that which cannot be understood of giving an evil judgment. For in the place where He saith, Judge not according to persons, but right judgment judge ye; He sheweth that there may be a wrong judgment, when He saith, right judgment judge ye: lastly, the one He doth forbid, the other He doth enjoin. But when without any addition He speaketh of judgment, He would at once have just judgment to be understood: as is that which He saith, Ye forsake the weighter matters of the Law, mercy and judgment. That also which Jeremias saith is, making his riches not with judgment. He saith not, making his riches by wrong or unjust judgment, or not with judgment right or just, but not with judgment: calling not any thing judgment but what is right and just.

5. Ver. 3. Let the mountains bear peace to the people, and the hills justice. The mountains are the greater, the hills the less. These are without doubt those which another Psalm hath, little with great. For those mountains did exult like rams, and those hills like lambs of the sheep, at the departure of Israel out of Egypt, that is, at the deliverance of the people of God from this world’s servitude. Those then that are eminent in the Church for passing sanctity, are the mountains, who are meet to teach other men also, by so speaking as that they may be faithfully taught, by so living as that they may imitate them to their profit: but the hills are they that follow the excellence of the former by their own obedience. Why then the mountains peace: and the hills justice? Would there perchance have been no difference, even if it had been said thus, Let the mountains bear justice to the people and the hills peace? For to both justice, and to both peace is necessary: and it may be that under another name justice herself may have been called peace. For this

is true peace, not such as unjust men make among them. Or rather with a distinction not to be overlooked must that be understood which he saith, the mountains peace, and the hills justice? For men excelling in the Church ought to counsel for peace with watchful care; lest for the sake of their own distinctions by acting proudly they make schisms and dissever the bond of union. But let the hills so follow them by imitation and obedience, that they prefer Christ to them: lest being led astray by the empty authority of evil mountains, (for they seem to excel,) they tear themselves away from the Unity of Christ. Therefore hath it been said, Let the mountains bear peace to the people. Let them say indeed, Imitators of me be ye, as I am of Christ. But again let them say, Though if we, or an Angel from Heaven, shall have preached to you beside that which ye have received, be he anathema. Let them say also, Hath Paul by any means been crucified for you, or in the name of Paul have ye been baptized? So let them bear peace to the people of God, that is, to the poor of God: not over them, but with them desiring to reign. Let not also the latter say, I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, but I of Cephas: but let all say, I am of Christ. This is justice; not to set servants before the Lord, nor to make them equal; so to lift eyes unto the mountains whence may come help to them, so that however their help they may not hope for from the mountains, but from the Lord who hath made Heaven and earth.

6. Thus also most pertinently may be understood, let the mountains bear peace to the people, namely, that we understand the peace to consist in the reconciliation whereby we are reconciled to God: for the mountains receive this for His people. Of this the Apostle thus testifieth: old things have passed away, behold they have been made new: but all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation. Behold in what manner the mountains receive peace for His people! For God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not ascribing to them their offences, and placing in us the word of reconciliation. In whom, but in the mountains that receive peace for His people? Wherefore the ambassadors of peace afterwards continue and say, for Christ therefore we are executing an embassy, as though God were exhorting through us, we pray you in Christ’s stead to be reconciled to God. This peace the mountains do bear to His people, that is, the preaching and

legation of His peace: but the hills justice, that is, obedience, which is in men and in every rational creature the fountain and perfection of all justice, so that of the two men, that is, of Adam, who was the head of our death, and of Christ Who is the Head of our salvation, there is this great distinction set forth, that “as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so also by the obedience of one man many shall be made just.” Let the mountains, therefore, receive peace for the people, and the hills justice: so that in this manner both being at one, there may come to pass that which hath been written, justice and peace have kissed one another. But that which other copies have, let the mountains receive peace for the people, and let the hills: I think must be understood of both sorts of preaching of Gospel peace, whether those that go before, or those that follow after. But in these copies this followeth, in justice He shall judge the poor of the people. But those copies are more approved of which have that which we have expounded above, let the mountains bear peace to the people, and the hills justice. But some have, to Thy people; some have not to Thy, but only to the people.

7. Ver. 4. He shall judge the poor of the people, and shall save the sons of the poor. The poor and the sons of the poor seem to me to be the very same, as the same city is Sion and the daughter of Sion. But if it is to be understood with a distinction, the poor we take to be the mountains, but the sons of the poor the hills: for instance, Prophets and Apostles, the poor, but the sons of them, that is, those that profit under their authority, the sons of the poor. But that which hath been said above, shall judge; and afterwards, shall save; is as it were a sort of exposition in what manner He shall judge. For to this end He shall judge, that He may save, that is, may sever from those that are to be destroyed and condemned, those to whom He giveth salvation ready to be revealed at the last time. For by such men to Him is said, Destroy not with ungodly men my soul: and, Judge Thou me, O God, and sever my cause from the nation unholy. We must observe also that he saith not, He shall judge the poor people, but, the poor of the people. For above when he had said, to judge Thy people in justice and Thy poor in judgment, the same he called the people of God as His poor, that is, only the good and those that belong to the right hand side. But because in this world those for the right and those for the left feed together, who, like lambs and goats at the last are to be put asunder; the whole, as it is mingled together,

he hath called by the name of the People. And because even here he putteth judgment in a good sense, that is, for the purpose of saving: therefore he saith, He shall judge the poor of the people, that is, shall sever for salvation those that are poor among the people. Already who are the poor we have explained above: the same also let us perceive to be needy. And He shall humble the false-accuser. No false-accuser can be more suitably recognised here than the devil. False accusation is his business. Doth Job worship God gratis? But the Lord Jesus doth humble him, by His grace aiding His own, in order that they may worship God gratis, that is, may take delight in the Lord. He humbled him also thus; because when in Him the devil, that is, the prince of this world, had found nothing, he slew Him by the false accusations of the Jews, whom the false-accuser made use of as his vessels, working in the sons of unbelief. For he was humbled in that He Whom they had slain rose again, and took away the kingdom of death: whereof he had so much the power, as that by one man whom he had deceived, he drew all men through death unto condemnation. But he was humbled: for if because of one man's transgression death reigned through one, much more they that receive abundance of grace and righteousness, in life shall reign through One Jesus Christ, Who humbled the false-accuser, that was putting in false accusations, unjust judges, false witnesses, in order that he might destroy Him.

8. Ver. 5. And He shall endure to the sun, or, shall endure with the sun. For thus some of our writers have thought would be more exactly translated that which in the Greek is συμπαραμενεῖ. But if in Latin it could have been expressed in one word, it must have been expressed by compermanebit: however, because in Latin the word cannot be expressed, in order that the sense at least might be translated, it hath been expressed by, He shall endure with the sun. For He shall coendure to the sun is nothing else but, He shall endure with the sun. But what great matter is it for Him to endure with the sun, through Whom all things were made, and without Whom nothing was made, save that this prophecy hath been sent before for the sake of those who think that the religion of the Christian name up to a particular time in this world will live, and afterwards will be no more? He shall endure therefore with the sun, so long as the sun riseth and setteth, that is, so long as these times revolve, there shall not be wanting the Church of God, that is,

Christ’s body on earth. But that which he addeth, and before the moon, generations of generations: he might have expressed by, and before the sun, that is, both with the sun and before the sun: which would have been understood by both with times and before times. That then which goeth before time is eternal: and that is truly to be held eternal which by no time is changed, as, in the beginning was the Word. But by the moon he hath chosen rather to intimate the waxings and wanings of things mortal. Lastly, when he had said, before the moon, wishing in a manner to explain for what purpose he inserted the moon, generations, he saith, of generations. As though he were saying, before the moon, that is, before the generations of generations which pass away in the departure and succession of things mortal, like the lunar wanings and waxings. And thus what is better to be understood by His enduring before the moon, than that He taketh precedence of all mortal things by immortality? Which also as followeth may not impertinently be taken, that whereas now, having humbled the false-accuser, He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, this is to endure with the sun. For the brightness of the eternal glory is understood to be the Son: as though the Sun were the Father, and the Brightness of Him His Son. But as these things may be spoken of the invisible Substance of the Creator, not as of that visible creation wherein are bodies celestial, of which bright bodies the sun hath the preeminence, from which this similitude hath been drawn: just as they are drawn even from things earthly, to wit, stone, lion, lamb, man having two sons, and the like: therefore having humbled the false-accuser, He endureth with the sun: because having vanquished the devil by the Resurrection, He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, where He dieth no more, and death no longer over Him shall have dominion. This too is before the moon, as though the First-born from the dead were going before the Church, which is passing on in the departure and succession of mortals. These are the generations of generations. Or perchance it is because generations are those whereby we are begotten mortally; but generations of generations those whereby we are begotten again immortally. And such is the Church which He went before, in order that He might endure before the moon, being the First-born of the dead. To be sure, that which is in the Greek γενεας γενεῶν, some have interpreted, not generations, but, of a generation of generations: because γενεας is of ambiguous case in Greek, and whether it be the genitive singular τῆς γενεᾶς, that is, of the generation, or the accusative plural τὰς γενεὰς, that is, the generations, doth not clearly appear, except that deservedly that sense hath been preferred wherein, as though explaining what he had called ‘the moon,’ he added in continuation, generations of generations.

9. Ver. 6. And He shall come down like rain into a fleece, and like drops distilling upon the earth. He hath called to our minds and admonished us, that what was done by the Judge Gedeon, in Christ hath its end. For he asked a sign of the Lord, that a fleece laid on the floor should alone be rained upon, and the floor should be dry; and again, the fleece alone should be dry, and the floor should be rained upon; and so it came to pass. Which thing signified, that, being as it were on a floor in the midst of the whole round world, the dry fleece was the former people Israel. The same Christ therefore Himself came down like rain upon a fleece, when yet the floor was dry: whence also He said, I am not sent but to the sheep which were lost of the house of Israel. There He chose out a Mother by whom to receive the form of a servant, wherein He was to appear to men: there the disciples, to whom He gave this same injunction, saying, Into the way of the nations go ye not away, and into the cities of the Samaritans enter ye not: go ye first to the sheep which are lost of the house of Israel. When He saith, go ye first to them, He sheweth also that hereafter, when at length the floor was to be rained upon, they would go to other sheep also, which were not of the old people Israel, concerning whom He saith, I have other sheep which are not of this fold, it behoveth Me to bring in them also, that there may be one flock and one Shepherd. Hence also the Apostle: for I say, he saith, that Christ was a minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises of the fathers. Thus rain came down upon the fleece, the floor being yet dry. But inasmuch as he continueth, but that the nations should glorify God for His mercy: that when the time came on, that should be fulfilled which by the Prophet He saith, a people whom I have not known hath served Me, in the hearkening of the ear it hath obeyed Me: we now see, that of the grace of Christ the nation of the Jews hath remained dry, and the whole round world through all nations is being rained upon by clouds full of Christian grace. For by another word he hath indicated the same rain, saying, drops distilling: no longer upon the fleece, but upon the earth. For what else is rain but drops distilling? But that the above nation under the

name of a fleece is signified, I think is either because they were to be stripped of the authority of teaching, just as a sheep is stripped of its skin; or because in a secret place He was hiding that same rain, which He willed not should be preached to uncircumcision, that is, be revealed to uncircumcised nations.

10. Ver. 7. There shall arise in His days justice and abundance of peace, until the moon be taken away. The expression tollatur, some have interpreted by be taken away, but others by be exalted, translating one Greek word, which is there used, ἀνταναιρεθῇ, just as each of them thought good. But they who have said, be removed, and they who have said, be taken away, do not so very much differ. For by the expression, be removed, custom doth teach us that there should be rather implied, that a thing is taken away and is no more, than that it is raised to a higher place: but be taken away can be understood in no other way at all, than that a thing is destroyed: that is, it is no more: but by be exalted, only that it is raised to a higher place. Which indeed when it is put in a bad sense is wont to signify pride: as is the passage, In thy wisdom be not exalted. But in a good sense it belongeth to a more exceeding honour, as, for instance, when any thing is being raised; as is, In the nights exalt ye your hands unto holy places, and bless ye the Lord. Here then if we have understood the expression, be removed, what will be, until the moon be removed, but that it be so dealt with that it be no more? For perchance he willed this also to be perceived, that mortality is to be no longer, ‘when the last enemy shall be destroyed, death:’ so that abundance of peace may be brought down so far as that nothing may withstand the felicity of the blessed from the infirmity of mortality: which will come to pass in that age, of which we have the faithful promise of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, concerning which it is said, There shall arise in His days justice and abundance of peace: until, death being utterly overcome and destroyed, all mortality be consumed. But if under the term moon, not the mortality of the flesh through which the Church is now passing, but the Church Herself in general hath been signified, which is to endure for everlasting, being delivered from this mortality, thus must be taken the expression, There shall arise in His days justice and abundance of peace, until the moon be exalted; as though it were said, There shall arise in His days justice, to conquer the contradiction and

rebellion of the flesh, and whereby there may be made a peace so increasing and abundant, until the moon be exalted, that is, until the Church be lifted up, through the glory of the Resurrection to reign with Him, Who went before Her in this glory, the first-born of the dead, that He might sit at the right hand of the Father; thus with the sun enduring before the moon, in the place whereunto hereafter was to be exalted the moon also.

11. Ver. 8. And He shall be Lord from sea even unto sea, and from the river even unto the ends of the round world: He to wit concerning Whom he had said, There shall arise in His days justice and abundance of peace, until the moon be exalted. If the Church here is properly signified under the term moon, in continuation he shewed how widely that same Church He was going to spread abroad, when He added, and He shall be Lord from sea even unto sea. For the land is encircled by a great sea which is called the Ocean: from which there floweth in some small part in the midst of the lands, and maketh those seas known to us, which are frequented by ships. Again, in from sea even unto sea He hath said, that from any one end of the earth even unto any other end, He would be Lord, Whose name and power in the whole world were to be preached and to prevail exceedingly. To which, that there might not be understood in any other manner, from sea even unto sea: He immediately added, and from the river even unto the ends of the round world. Therefore that which He saith in even unto the ends of the round world, the same He had said before in from sea even unto sea. But in that which now He saith, from the river, He hath evidently expressed that He willed Christ to publish at length His power from that place from whence also He began to choose His disciples, to wit from the river Jordan, where upon the Lord, on His baptism, when the Holy Ghost descended, there sounded a voice from Heaven, This is My beloved Son. From this place then His doctrine and the authority of the heavenly ministry setting out, is enlarged even unto the ends of the round world, when there is preached the Gospel of the kingdom in the whole world, for a testimony unto all nations: and then shall come the end.

12. Ver. 9. In His presence shall fall down the Ethiopians, and His enemies shall lick the earth. By the Ethiopians, as by a part the whole, He hath signified all nations, selecting that nation to mention especially by name,

which is at the ends of the earth. By in His presence shall fall down hath been signified, shall adore Him. And because there were to be schisms in divers quarters of the world, which would be jealous of the Church Catholic spread abroad in the whole round world, and again those same schisms dividing themselves into the names of men, and by loving the men under whose authority they had been rent, opposing themselves to the glory of Christ which is throughout all lands; so when He had said, in His presence shall fall down the Ethiopians, He added, and His enemies shall lick the earth: that is, shall love men, so that they shall be jealous of the glory of Christ, to Whom hath been said, Be Thou exalted above the Heavens, O God, and above all the earth Thy glory. For man earned to hear, Earth thou art, and unto earth thou shalt go. By licking this earth, that is, being delighted with the vainly talking authority of such men, by loving them, and by counting them for the most pleasing of men, they gainsay the divine sayings, whereby the Catholic Church hath been foretold, not as to be in any particular quarter of the world, as certain schisms are, but in the whole universe by bearing fruit and growing so as to attain even unto the very Ethiopians, to wit, the remotest and foulest of mankind.

13. Ver. 10. The kings of Tharsis and the isles shall offer gifts, the kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall lead presents. (Ver. 11.) And there shall adore Him all kings of the earth, all nations shall serve Him. This no longer requireth an expounder but a thinker; yea it doth thrust itself upon the sight not only of rejoicing believers, but also of groaning unbelievers—except perchance we must enquire why there hath been said, shall lead presents. For there are wont to be led those things which can walk. For could it by any means have been spoken with reference to the sacrifice of victims? Far be it that such ‘righteousness’ should arise in His days. But those gifts which have been foretold as to be led, seem to me to signify men, whom into the fellowship of the Church of Christ the authority of kings doth lead: although even persecuting kings have led gifts, knowing not what they did, in sacrificing the holy Martyrs.

14. But while he is explaining the reasons why so great honour is paid Him by kings, and He is served of all nations: (ver. 12.) because He hath delivered, he saith, the needy man from the mighty, and the poor man, to

whom was no helper. This needy and poor man is the people of men believing in Him. In this people are also kings adoring Him. For they do not disdain to be needy and poor, that is, humbly confessing sins, and needing the glory of God and the grace of God, in order that this King, Son of the King, may deliver them from the mighty one. For this same mighty one is he who above was called the Slanderer: whom mighty to subdue men to himself, and to hold them bound in captivity, not his virtue did make, but men's sins. The same is himself also called strong; therefore here mighty also. But He that hath humbled the slanderer and hath entered into the house of the strong man to bind him and to spoil his vessels, He hath delivered the needy man from the mighty, and the poor man to whom was no helper. For this neither the virtue of any one could accomplish, nor any just man, nor any Angel. When then there was no helper, by His coming He saved them Himself.

15. But it might occur to one; if because of sins man was held by the devil, have sins pleased Christ, Who saved the needy man from the mighty? Far be it. But, (ver. 13.) He it is that shall spare the helpless and poor man: that is, shall remit sins to the man, humble and not trusting in his own merits, or hoping for salvation because of his own virtue, but needing the grace of his Saviour. But when he hath added, and the souls of the poor He shall save: he hath recommended to our notice both the aids of grace; both that which is for the remission of sins, when he saith, He shall spare the poor and needy man; and that which doth consist in the imparting of righteousness, when he hath added, and the souls of the poor He shall save. For no one is meet of himself for salvation, (which salvation is perfect righteousness,) unless God's grace aid: because the fulness of the law is nought but love, which doth not exist in us of ourselves, but is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Which hath been given unto us.

16. Ver. 14. From usuries and iniquity He shall redeem the souls of them. What are these usuries but sins, which are also called debts? But I think they have been called usuries, because more of ill is found in the punishments than hath been committed in the sins. For, for example's sake, while a man-slayer killeth only the body of a man, but can no wise hurt the soul; of himself both soul and body is destroyed in hell. Because of such

despisers of present commandment and deriders of future punishment hath been said, I coming would have exacted with usuries, from these usuries are redeemed the souls of the poor by that blood which hath been shed for the remission of sins. He shall redeem, I say, from usuries, by remitting sins which owed larger punishments: but He shall redeem from iniquity, by helping them by grace even to do righteousness. Therefore the same two things have been repeated which were said above. For in that which is above, He shall spare the helpless and poor man, there is understood from usuries: but in that which there he saith, and the souls of the poor He shall save; there seemeth to have been implied, from iniquity: so that the words He shall redeem, are understood with both. So when He shall spare the poor and helpless man, and shall save the souls of the poor: thus from usuries and iniquity He shall redeem the souls of them. And honourable shall be the name of Him in the presence of them. For they give honour to His name for so great benefits, and they reply that "meet and right it is" to render thanks to the Lord their God. Or, as some copies have it, and honourable is the name of them in the presence of Him: for even if Christians seem despicable to this world, the name of them in the presence of Him is honourable, Who to them hath given it, no longer remembering those names in His lips, whereby before they used to be called, when they were bound fast by the superstitions of the Gentiles, or signed with names derived from their own evil deserts, before they were Christians, which name is honourable in the presence of Him, even if it seemeth despicable to enemies.

17. Ver. 15. And He shall live, and there shall be given to Him of the gold of Arabia. There would not have been said, and He shall live, (for of whom could not this be said, though living for ever so brief a space of time on this earth?) unless that life were being recommended to our notice, wherein He dieth no more, and death over Him shall have no more dominion. And thus, and He shall live, that was despised in death: for, as another Prophet saith, there shall be taken away from the earth the life of Him. But what is, and there shall be given to Him of the gold of Arabia? For the fact that from thence even the former Salomon received gold, in this Psalm hath been in a figure transferred unto another true Salomon, that is, the true Peace-maker. For the former did not have dominion from the river even unto the ends of

the round world. Thus then hath been prophesied, that even the wise men of this world in Christ would believe. But by Arabia we understand the Gentiles; by gold wisdom, which doth as much excel among all doctrines as gold among metals. Whence hath been written, “Receive ye prudence as silver, and wisdom as proved gold.” And they shall pray concerning Himself alway. That which the Greek hath, περὶ αὐτοῦ, some have interpreted by concerning Himself, some for Himself, or for Him. But what is, concerning Himself, except perchance that for which we pray, saying, Thy kingdom come? For Christ’s coming shall make present to believers the kingdom of God. But how to understand for Him is difficult; except that when prayer is made for the Church, for Himself prayer is made, because she is His Body. For concerning Christ and the Church hath been sent before a great Sacrament, there shall be two in one flesh. But now that which followeth, all the day long, that is, in all time, they shall bless Him, is sufficiently evident.

18. Ver. 16. And there shall be a firmament on the earth, on the tops of the mountains. For, all the promises of God in Him are Yea, that is, in Him are confirmed: because in Him hath been fulfilled whatever hath been prophesied for our salvation. For the tops of the mountains it is meet to understand as the authors of the divine Scriptures, that is, those persons through whom they were supplied: wherein He is indeed Himself the Firmament: for unto Him all things that have been divinely written are ascribed. But this He willed should be on earth; because for the sake of those that are upon earth, they were written. Whence He came also Himself upon earth, in order that He might confirm all these things, that is, in Himself might shew them to have been fulfilled. For it was necessary, He saith, for all things to be fulfilled which were written in the Law, and the Prophets, and Psalms, concerning Me: that is, in the tops of the mountains. For so there cometh in the last times the evident Mount of the Lord, prepared on the summit of the mountains: of which here he speaketh, “in the tops of the mountains.” Highly superexalted above Libanus shall be His fruit. Libanus we are wont to take as this world’s dignity: for Libanus is a mountain bearing tall trees, and the name itself is interpreted whiteness. For what marvel, if above every brilliant state of this world there is superexalted the fruit of Christ, of which fruit the lovers have contemned all secular

dignities? But if in a good sense we take Libanus, because of the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted: what other fruit must be understood, that is being exalted above this Libanus, except that whereof the Apostle speaketh when he is going to speak concerning that love of his, yet a preeminent way to you I shew? For this is put forward even in the first rank of divine gifts, in the place where he saith, but the fruit of the Spirit is love: and with this are conjoined the remaining words as consequent. And they shall flourish from the city like hay of the earth. Because city is used ambiguously, and there is not annexed of Him, or of God, for there hath not been said, from the city of Him, or from the city of God, but only from the city: in a good sense it is understood, in order that from the city of God, that is, from the Church, they may flourish like grass; but grass bearing fruit, as is that of wheat: for even this is called grass in Holy Scripture; as in Genesis there is a command for the earth to bring forth every tree and every grass, and there is not added every wheat: which without doubt would not have been passed over unless under the name of grass this also were understood; and in many other passages of the Scriptures this is found. But if we must take, and they shall flourish like the grass of the earth, in the same manner as is said, all flesh is grass, and the glory of a man like the flower of grass: certainly then that city must be understood which doth intimate this world's society: for it was not to no purpose that Cain was the first to build a city. Thus the fruit of Christ being exalted above Libanus, that is, above enduring trees and undecaying timbers, because He is the everlasting fruit, all the glory of a man according to the temporal exaltation of the world is compared to grass; for by believers and by men already hoping for life eternal temporal felicity is despised, in order that there may be fulfilled that which hath been written, all flesh is grass, and all the glory of flesh as the flower of grass: the grass hath dried, the flower hath fallen off, but the word of the Lord doth endure for ever. There is the fruit of Him exalted above Libanus. For always flesh hath been grass, and the glory of flesh as the flower of grass: but because it was not clearly proved what felicity ought to have been chosen and preferred, the flower of grass was esteemed for a great matter: not only it was by no means despised, but it was even chiefly sought after. As if therefore at that time He shall have begun to be thus, when there is reproved and despised whatever used to flourish in the world, thus hath been said, super-exalted above Libanus shall be the fruit of Him, and they shall flourish from the city like grass of the earth: that is, glorified above all things shall be that which is promised for everlasting, and compared to the grass of the earth shall be whatever is counted a great matter in the world.

19. Ver. 17. Be, therefore, the name of Him blessed for ever: before the sun endureth the name of Him. By the sun times are signified. Therefore for everlasting endureth the name of Him. For eternity doth precede times, and is not bounded by time. And there shall be blessed in Him all the tribes of the earth. For in Him is fulfilled that which hath been promised to Abraham. For He saith not, In seeds, as though in many; but as though in one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ. But to Abraham is said, In thy Seed shall be blessed all the tribes of the earth. And not the sons of the flesh but the sons of promise are counted in the Seed. All nations shall magnify Him. As if in explanation there is repeated that which above hath been said. For because they shall be blessed in Him, they shall magnify Him; not of themselves making Him to be great, that of Himself is great, but by praising and confessing Him to be great. For thus we magnify God: thus also we say, Hallowed be Thy name, which is indeed always holy.

20. Ver. 18. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, Who hath done wonderful things alone. Contemplating all things above spoken of, a hymn bursteth forth; and the Lord God of Israel is blessed. For that is being fulfilled which hath been spoken to that barren woman, and He that hath delivered Thee, the God of Israel, shall Himself be called of the whole earth. He doeth Himself marvellous things alone: for whosoever do them, He doth Himself work in them, Who doeth wonderful things alone.

21. Ver. 19. And blessed be the name of His glory for everlasting, and for age of age. For what else should the Latin interpreters have said, who could not have said for everlasting, and for everlasting of everlasting? For it soundeth as if one thing were meant in the expression for everlasting, and another thing in the expression for age: but the Greek hath εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος, which perchance more meetly might have been rendered by, ‘for age, and for age of age:’ so that by ‘for age,’ might have been understood as long as this age endureth; but ‘for age of age,’ that which after the end of this is promised to be. And there shall be fulfilled with the glory of Him every land: so be it, so be it. Thou hast commanded,

O Lord, so it is coming to pass: so it is coming to pass, until that which began with the river, may attain fully even unto the ends of the round world.

PSALM 73

Exposition

Hear ye, hear ye, dearly beloved, bowels of the Body of Christ, whose hope is the Lord your God, and who regard not vanities and lying follies: and ye that still regard them, hear ye in order that ye may not regard them. This Psalm hath an inscription, that is, a title, There have failed the hymns of David, the son of Jesse. A Psalm of Asaph himself. So many Psalms we have on the titles whereof is written the name David, no where there is added, son of Jesse, except in this alone. Which we must believe hath not been done to no purpose, nor capriciously. For every where God doth make intimations to us, and to the understanding thereof doth invite the godly study of love. What is, there have failed the hymns of David, the son of Jesse? Hymns are praises of God accompanied with singing: hymns are songs containing the praise of God. If there be praise, and it be not of God, it is no hymn: if there be praise, and God's praise, and it be not sung, it is no hymn. It must needs then, if it be a hymn, have these three things, both praise, and that of God, and singing. What is then, there have failed the hymns? There have failed the praises which are sung unto God. He seemeth to tell of a thing painful, and so to speak deplorable. For he that singeth praise, not only praiseth, but also praiseth with gladness: he that singeth praise, not only singeth, but also loveth him of whom he singeth. In praise, there is the speaking forth of one confessing, in singing; the affection of one loving. There have failed then the hymns of David, he saith: and he hath added, the son of Jesse. For David was king of Israel, son of Jesse, at a certain time of the Old Testament, at which time the New Testament was therein hidden, like fruit in a root. For if thou seek fruit in a root, thou wilt not find, and yet dost thou not find any fruit in the branches, except that which hath gone forth from the root. At that time then to the first people, coming from the seed of Abraham carnally; (for the second people also, though belonging to the New Testament, doth belong to the seed of Abraham, but now spiritually;) to this first people then, as yet carnal, where but few Prophets understood, both what was to be desired of God, and when it should be to be publicly preached, they foretold these future times, and the Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in like manner as Christ Himself to be born after the flesh was hidden in the root, that is in the seed of the Patriarchs, and at a certain time must be revealed, as at the fruit appearing, according as it is written, there hath flourished a shoot from the root of Jesse: so also the New Testament itself which is in Christ, in those former times was hidden, being known to the Prophets alone, and to the very few godly men, not by the manifestation of things present, but by the revelation of things future. For what meaneth it, brethren, (to mention but one thing,) that Abraham sending his faithful servant to espouse a wife for his only son, maketh him swear to him, and in the oath saith to him, Put thy hand under my thigh, and swear? What was there in the thigh of Abraham, where he put his hand in swearing? What was there there, except that which even then was promised to him, In thy seed shall be blessed all nations? Under the name of thigh, flesh is signified. From the flesh of Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob, and not to mention many names, through Mary was our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. But that the root was in the Patriarchs, how shall we shew? Let us question Paul. The Gentiles now believing in Christ, and desiring as it were to boast over the Jews who crucified Christ; although also from that same people there came another wall, meeting in the corner, that is, in Christ Himself, the wall of uncircumcision, that is, of the Gentiles, coming from a different quarter: when, I say, the nations were lifting up themselves, he doth thus depress them. For if thou, he saith, being cut out of the natural wild olive, hast been graffed in among them, do not boast against the branches: for if thou boastest, thou dost not bear the root, but the root thee. Therefore he speaketh of certain branches broken off from the root of the Patriarchs because of unbelief, and the wild olive therein graffed in, that it might be partaker of the fatness of the olive, that is, the Church coming out of the Gentiles. And who doth graff the wild olive on the olive? The olive is wont to be graffed on the wild olive; the wild olive on the olive we never saw. For whosoever may have done so will find no berries but those of the wild olive. For that which is graffed in, the same groweth, and of that kind the fruit is found. There is not found the fruit of the root but of the graft. The Apostle shewing that God did this thing by His Omnipotence, namely,

that the wild olive should be graffed into the root of the olive, and should not bear wild berries, but olive—ascribing it to the Omnipotence of God, the Apostle saith this, If thou hast been cut out of the natural wild olive and against nature hast been graffed into a good olive, do not boast, he saith, against the branches. But thou sayest, he saith, the branches have been broken off, that I may be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they have been broken off: but do thou by faith stand; be not high minded, but fear. But what is, be not high minded? Do not be proud, because thou hast been graffed in; but fear lest thou be broken off through unbelief, as they have been broken off. Because of unbelief, he saith, they have been broken off: but do thou by faith stand; be not high minded, but fear. For if God hath not spared the natural branches, neither thee will He spare. And there followeth a good passage, and necessary, and the whole to be hearkened unto: Thou seest then, he saith, the goodness and severity of God: upon those indeed that have been broken off, severity: but on thee that hast been graffed in, goodness, if thou shalt have remained in goodness. Otherwise (that is, if thou shalt not have remained in goodness) both thou shalt be cut off; and they (if they shall not have remained in unbelief) shall be graffed in.

3. In the time then of the Old Testament, brethren, the promises from our God to that carnal people were earthly and temporal. There was promised an earthly kingdom, there was promised that land into which they were also led, after being delivered from Egypt: by Jesus son of Nave they were led into the land of promise, where also earthly Jerusalem was builded, where David reigned: they received the land, after being delivered from Egypt, by passing through the Red sea; having ended their circuits and the wanderings over the deserts, they received the land, they received the kingdom; secondly, after they had received the kingdom, because they had received earthly things, they began on account of their sins to be besieged, stormed, led captive; at the last there was overthrown even the city itself. Such were also those promises, which were not to endure, through which however were figured future promises which were to endure, so that all that course of temporal promises was a figure and a sort of prophecy of things future. Accordingly when that kingdom was failing, where reigned David, the son of Jesse, that is, one that was a man, though a Prophet, though holy, because he saw and foresaw Christ to come, of whose seed also after the flesh He

was to be born: nevertheless a man, nevertheless not yet Christ, nevertheless not yet our King Son of God, but king David son of Jesse: because then that kingdom was to fail, through the receiving of which kingdom at that time God was praised by carnal men; for this thing alone they esteemed a great matter, namely, that they were delivered temporally from those by whom they were being oppressed, and that they had escaped from persecuting enemies through the Red sea, and had been led through the desert, and had found country and kingdom: for this alone they praised God, not yet perceiving the thing which God was designing beforehand and promising in these figures. In the failing therefore of those things for which the carnal people, over whom reigned that David, was praising God, there failed the hymns of David, not the Son of God, but the son of Jesse. The dangerous passage of the present Psalm's title, as the Lord hath willed, we have weathered: ye have heard why there hath been said, there have failed the hymns of David, the son of Jesse.

4. Whose voice is the Psalm? Of Asaph. What is Asaph? As we find in interpretations from the Hebrew language into the Greek, and those again translated to us from the Greek into the Latin, Asaph is interpreted Synagogue. It is the voice therefore of the Synagogue. But when thou hast heard Synagogue, do not forthwith abhor it, as if it were the murderer of the Lord. That Synagogue was indeed the murderer of the Lord, no man doubteth it: but remember, that from the Synagogue were the rams whereof we are the sons. Whence it is said in a Psalm, Bring ye to the Lord the sons of rams. What rams are thence? Peter, John, James, Andrew, Bartholomew, and the rest of the Apostles. Hence also he too at first Saul, afterwards Paul: that is, at first proud, afterwards humble. For ye know how Saul, whence was derived the name Saul, was a proud and unbridled king. Not as though for any arrogance the Apostle changed his name: but from being Saul he became Paul, from being proud, a small one. For the name Paul doth signify a small one. Wilt thou know what Saul is? Hear now Paul himself recording what he hath been by his naughtiness, and what now he is by the grace of God: hear after what sort he hath been Saul, and after what sort he is Paul: I that was, he saith, before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. Thou hast heard Saul, hear also Paul: For I am, he saith, the least of Apostles. What is least, but that I am Paul? And he continueth, that am not

worthy to be called an Apostle. Wherefore? Because I have been Saul. What is, I have been Saul? Let him tell himself; because I persecuted, he saith, the Church of God; but by the grace of God, he saith, I am what I am. He hath taken from himself all his greatness, now being least in himself, he is great in Christ. And this Paul saith what? God hath not cast away His people, (he is speaking of the people coming out of the Jews,) His people, he saith, which He hath foreknown. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. Therefore even Paul came to us from the Synagogue, and Peter and the other Apostles from the Synagogue. Therefore when thou hast heard the voice of the Synagogue, do not look to the deserving thereof, but observe the offspring. There is speaking therefore in this Psalm, the Synagogue, after the failing of the hymns of David, the son of Jesse: that is, after the failing of things temporal, through which God was wont to be praised by the carnal people. But why did these fail, except in order that others might be sought for? That there might be sought for what? Was it things which were not there? No, but things which were there being hidden in figures: not which were not yet there, but which there as it were in a sort were concealed in certain secret things of mysteries. What things? These, saith the Apostle himself, were our figures.

5. And observe now briefly that same figure of us: the people Israel under the domination of Pharaoh and the Egyptians is the Christian people before believing already predestined for God, and as yet serving demons and the devil the chief of them: behold the people under the yoke of the Egyptians is this people doing service to their sins. For not except through our sins is the devil able to have dominion. The people are delivered from the Egyptians through Moses: the people are delivered from the past life of sins through our Lord Jesus Christ. The one people doth pass through the Red sea; the other through Baptism. There die in the Red sea all the enemies of that people: there die in Baptism all our sins. Observe, brethren: after that Red sea not forthwith is the land given, nor, as though foes are no more, do they triumph securely, but there remaineth the desert’s solitude, there remain foes lying in wait in the way: so also after Baptism there remaineth the Christian life amid temptations. In that desert they sighed for the promised land: for what else do Christians sigh now that they have been washed in Baptism? Do they now by any means reign with Christ? We have

not yet come to our land of promise, though that will not fail us, for there will not fail the hymns of David. This thing however let all believers hear, let them know where they are: in a desert they are, for the land they sigh. Dead are the foes in Baptism, but they follow behind. What is, they follow behind? Before our face we have things future, behind our back things past: all past sins have been effaced in Baptism; those whereby now we are tried, do follow us not behind, but lie in wait in the way. Whence the Apostle, while yet set in the way of this desert, saith, the things which are behind forgetting, unto those things which are before reaching out, with earnestness I follow unto the palm of the high calling of God: as though he were saying, unto the land of the high promise of God. And there now, brethren, whatever that people suffered in the desert, and whatever God bestowed upon them, whatever those scourges were, whatever the gifts, they are intimations of those things, which we walking in Christ in the wilderness of this life, seeking the land, both receive for consolation and suffer for probation. It is no marvel therefore that this hath failed which did figure the future. For the people was led to a land of promise, but was that land always to remain? Nay; if this had been so, it would not have been a figure but a substance. But because it was a figure, unto something temporal that people was led. If unto something temporal they were led, it must needs have failed, and by its failing they be compelled to seek that which never would fail.

6. It was the Synagogue therefore, that is, they that there worshipped God after a godly sort, but yet for the sake of earthly things, for the sake of these present things: (for there are ungodly men who seek the blessings of present things from demons: but this people was on this account better than the Gentiles, because although it were blessings present and temporal, yet they sought them from the One God, who is the Creator of all things both spiritual and corporal.) When therefore those godly men after the flesh were observing—that is that Synagogue which was made up of good men, men for the time good, not spiritual men, such as were the Prophets therein, such as were the few that understood the kingdom heavenly, eternal—that Synagogue, I say, observed what things it received from God, and what things God promised to that people, abundance of things earthly, land, peace, earthly felicity: but in all these things were figures, and they not

perceiving what was there concealed in things figured, thought that God gave this for a great matter, and had nothing better to give to men loving Him and serving Him: they remarked and saw certain sinners, ungodly, blasphemers, servants of demons, sons of the Devil, living in great naughtiness and pride, yet abounding in such things earthly, temporal, for which sort of things they were serving God themselves: and there sprang up a most evil thought in the heart, which made the feet to totter, and almost slip out of God's way. And behold this thought was in the people of the Old Testament: I would it be not in our carnal brethren, when now openly there is being proclaimed the felicity of the New Testament. For what said that Synagogue at that time? What said that people? We serve God, and are cut short, we are scourged; there are withdrawn from us the things which we love, and which we had received from God as a great matter: but those wicked men, most naughty, proud, blasphemers, restless, do abound in all the things for which we serve God: I think to no purpose God is served. This is the meaning of the Psalm, which belongeth to the failing and tottering people: while they remark that earthly blessings, for which they were serving God, do abound to those who served not God, they totter and they well nigh slip, and together with those hymns they fail, because in such hearts hymns were failing. What is, in such hearts hymns were failing? Because now of such things they were thinking, they praised not God. For after what sort should they praise God, to whom as if perverse He seemed, in giving to ungodly men so great felicity, and taking it away from them that served Him? To them God did not seem to be good: and by those to whom God did not seem to be good, He was not indeed praised: in them again by whom God was not praised, there failed hymns. But afterwards this people perceived what God was admonishing them to seek, when He was withdrawing those temporal blessings from His servants, and was giving them to His enemies, to blasphemers, to ungodly men: being admonished they perceived how that above all things which God giveth both to good men and evil men, and sometimes taketh away from both good men and evil men—above all things He reserveth something for good men. What is, He reserveth something for good men. What doth He reserve for them? Himself. Now as far as I can judge, we are running on in the Psalm, it is understood in the name of the Lord. Hear one laying it to heart and repentant who had gone astray, in thinking God not good, Who giveth earthly good things to evil men, and taketh them away from His servants. For He perceived what God was reserving for His servants, and reconsidering and chastening himself, he brake forth in this manner:

7. Ver. 1. How good is the God of Israel! But to whom? To men right in heart. To men perverse what? Perverse He seemeth. So also in another Psalm He saith: With a holy man holy Thou shalt be, and with the innocent man innocent Thou shalt be, and with the perverse man perverse Thou shalt be. What is, perverse Thou shalt be with the perverse man? Perverse the perverse man shall think Thee. Not that by any means God is made perverse. Far be it: what He is, He is. But in like manner as the sun appeareth mild to one having clear, sound, healthy, strong eyes, but against weak eyes doth dart hard spears, so to say; the former looking at it it doth invigorate, the latter it doth torture, though not being itself changed, but the man being changed: so when thou shalt have begun to be perverse, and to thee God shall seem to be perverse; thou art changed, not He. That therefore to thee will be punishment which to good men is joy. He calling to mind this thing, saith, How good is the God of Israel to men right in heart!

8. But what to thee? (Ver. 2.) But my feet were almost moved. When were the feet moved, except when the heart was not right? Whence was the heart not right? Hear: my steps were well nigh overthrown. What he hath meant by almost, the same he hath meant by well nigh: and what he hath meant by my feet were almost moved, the same he hath meant by my steps were overthrown. Almost my feet were moved, almost my steps were overthrown. Moved were the feet: but whence were the feet moved and the steps overthrown? Moved were the feet to going astray, overthrown were the steps to falling: not entirely, but almost. But what is this? Already I was going to stray, I had not gone; already I was falling, I had not fallen.

9. But why even this? (Ver. 3.) For I was jealous, he saith, in the case of sinners, looking on the peace of sinners. I observed sinners, I saw them to have peace. What peace? Temporal, transient, falling, and earthly: but yet such as I also was desiring of God. I saw them that served not God to have that which I desired in order that I might serve God: and my feet were moved, and my steps were almost overthrown.

10. But why sinners have this, he saith briefly:

Ver. 4. Because there is no avoidance of their death, and there is a firmament in their scourge. (Ver. 5.) In the labours of men they are not, and with men they shall not be scourged. Now I have perceived, he saith, why they have peace, and flourish on the earth; because of their death there is no avoidance, because death sure and eternal doth await them, which neither doth avoid them, nor can they avoid it, because there is no avoidance of their death, and there is a firmament in their scourge. And there is a firmament in their scourge. For their scourge is not temporal, but firm for everlasting. Because of these evil things then which are to be to them eternal, now what? In the labours of men they are not, and with men they shall not be scourged. Doth not even the devil himself escape scourging with men, for whom nevertheless an eternal punishment is being prepared?

11. Wherefore on this account what do these men, while they are not scourged, while they labour not with men?

Ver. 6. Therefore, he saith, there hath holden them pride. Observe these men, proud, undisciplined; observe the bull, devoted for a victim, suffered to stray at liberty; and to damage whatever he may, even up to the day of his slaughter. Now it is a good thing, brethren, that we should hear in the very words of a prophet of this bull as it were, whereof I have spoken. For thus of him the Scripture doth make mention in another place: he saith that they are, as it were, made ready as for a victim, and that they are spared for an evil liberty. Therefore, he saith, there hath holden them pride. What is, there hath holden them pride? They have been clothed about with their iniquity and ungodliness. He hath not said, covered; but, clothed about, on all sides covered up with their ungodliness. Deservedly miserable, they neither see nor are seen, because they are clothed about; and the inward parts of them are not seen. For whosoever could behold the inward parts of evil men, that are as it were happy for a time, whosoever could see their torturing consciences, whosoever could examine their souls racked with such mighty perturbations of desires and fears, would see them to be miserable even when they are called happy. But because they are clothed about with their iniquity and ungodliness, they see not; but neither are they seen. The Spirit knew them, that saith these words concerning them: and we ought to examine such men with the same eye as that wherewith we know that we see, if there is taken from our eyes the covering of ungodliness. Let us see them, and while they are happy let us avoid them: and while they are happy let us not imitate them: and let us not desire of the Lord our God such things for ourselves as a great matter, as they that serve Him not have deserved to receive. Something else He reserveth, something else must be desired: but what this is, hear ye.

12. At first these men are being described. (Ver. 7.) There shall go forth as if out of fat their iniquity. See whether that bull is not perceived. Hear ye, brethren: not in any chance way must be passed over that which he hath said, there shall go forth as if out of fat their iniquity. For there are evil men, but evil because of leanness, evil because lean; that is, thin, puny, affected with a sort of wasting of need, and they too are evil, and to be condemned. For every need must be borne, rather than that any iniquity should be committed. Nevertheless, it is one thing to sin because of need, another thing to sin in abundance. A poor beggar committeth a theft; out of leanness hath gone forth the iniquity: but when a rich man aboundeth in so many things, why doth he plunder the things of others? Of the former the iniquity out of leanness, of the other out of fatness, hath gone forth. Therefore to the lean man when thou sayest, Why hast thou done this? Humbly afflicted and abject he replieth, Need hath compelled me. Why hast thou not feared God? Want was urgent. Say to a rich man, Why doest thou these things, and fearest not God?—supposing thee to be great enough to be able to say it—see if he even deigneth to hear; see if even against thyself there will not go forth iniquity out of his fatness. For now they declare war with their teachers and reprovers, and become enemies of them that speak the truth, having been long accustomed to be coaxed with the words of flatterers, being of tender ear, of unsound heart. Who would say to a rich man, Thou hast ill done in robbing other men’s goods? Or perchance if any man shall have dared to speak, and he is such a man as he could not withstand, what doth he reply? All that he saith is in contempt of God. Why? Because he is proud. Why? Because he is fat. Why? Because he is devoted for a victim. There shall go forth as out of fatness their iniquity.

13. They have passed over unto purpose of heart. Here within they have passed over. What is, they have passed over? They have crossed over the way. What is, they have passed over? They have exceeded the bounds of mankind, men like the rest they think not themselves. They have passed over, I say, the bounds of mankind. When thou sayest to such a man, Thy brother this beggar is; when thou sayest to such a man, Thy brother this poor man is; the same parents ye have had, Adam and Eve: do not heed thy haughtiness, do not heed the vapour unto which thou hast been elevated; although an establishment waiteth about thee, although countless gold and silver, although a marbled house doth contain thee, although fretted ceilings cover thee, thou and the poor man together have for covering that roof of the universe, the sky; but thou art different from the poor man in things not thine own, added to thee from without: thyself see in them, not them in thee. Observe thyself, how thou art in relation to the poor man; thyself, not that which thou hast. For why dost thou despise thy brother? In the bowels of your mothers ye were both naked. Forsooth, even when ye shall have departed this life, and these bodies shall have rotted, when the soul hath been breathed forth, let the bones of the rich and poor man be distinguished! I am speaking of the equality of condition, of that very lot of mankind, wherein all men are born: for both here doth a man become rich, and a poor man will not alway be here: and as a rich man doth not come rich, so neither doth he depart rich; the very same is the entrance of both, and like is the departure. I add, that perchance ye will change conditions. Now every where the Gospel is being preached: observe a certain poor man full of sores, who was lying before the gate of a rich man, and was desiring to be filled with crumbs, which used to fall from the table of the rich man; observe also that likeness of thine who was clothed with purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. It chanced, I say, for that poor man to die, and to be borne by the Angels into the bosom of Abraham: but the other died and was buried; (for the other’s burial perchance no one cared for:) and when in Hell that rich man was in torments, did he not lift up his eyes, and see in endless joy him whom he despised before his gate, and long for a drop of water from the finger of him who had longed for crumbs falling from his table? Brethren, how great was the toil of the poor man! Of how long duration were the luxuries of the rich man! But the condition which they have received in exchange is everlasting. The one then because

there was no accordance in the case of death, and there was a firmament in the scourging of him, was not in the labours of men, among men he was not scourged: but the other was scourged here, hath reposed there, because He doth scourge every son whom He doth receive. But to whom dost thou say these words? To one faring sumptuously, and clothing himself daily with purple and fine linen. To whom speakest thou? To him who hath passed over unto purpose of heart. Deservedly too late he will say, “Send Lazarus,” “let him tell even my brethren;” since to himself there is not granted the fruit of repentance. For it is not that repentance is not given, but everlasting will be the repentance, and no salvation after repentance. Therefore these men have passed over unto purpose of heart.

14. Ver. 8. They have thought and have spoken spitefulness. But men do speak spitefulness even with fear: but these men how? Iniquity on high they have spoken. Not only they have spoken iniquity; but even openly, in the hearing of all, proudly; “I will do it;” “I will shew you;” “thou shalt know with whom thou hast to do;” “I will not let thee live.” Thou mightest have but thought such things, not have given utterance to them! Within the chambers of thought at least the evil desire might have been confined, he might have at least restrained it within his thought. Why? Is he perchance lean? ‘There shall go forth as if out of fatness the iniquity of them.’ Iniquity on high they have spoken.

15. Ver. 9. They have set against Heaven their mouth, and their tongue hath passed over above the earth. What is this, hath passed over above the earth? The same which hath been said in, they have set against Heaven their mouth. For this, hath passed over above the earth is, they pass over all earthly things? What is it to pass over all earthly things? He doth not think of himself as a man that can die suddenly, when he is speaking; he doth menace as if he were alway to live: his thought doth transcend earthly frailty, he knoweth not with what sort of vessel he is enwrapped; he knoweth not what hath been written in another place concerning such men; His spirit shall go forth, and he shall return unto his earth, in that day shall perish all his thoughts. But these men not thinking of their last day, speak pride, and unto Heaven they set their mouth, they transcend the earth. If a robber were not to think of his last day, that is, the last day of his trial, when

sent to prison, nothing would be more monstrous than he: and yet he might escape. Whither dost thou flee to escape death? Certain will that day be. What is the long time which thou hast to live? How much is the long time which hath an end, even if it were a long time? To this there is added that it is nought: and the very thing which is called long time is not a long time, and is uncertain. Why doth he not think of this? Because he hath set against Heaven his mouth, and his tongue hath passed over above the earth.

16. Ver 10. Therefore there shall return hither My people. Now Asaph himself is returning hither. For he saw these things abound to unrighteous men, he saw them abound to proud men: he is returning to God, and is beginning to inquire and discuss. But when? When full days shall be found in them. What is full days? But when there came the fulness of time, God sent His Son. This is the very fulness of time, when He came to teach men that things temporal should be despised, that they should not esteem as a great matter whatever object evil men covet, that they should suffer whatever evil men fear. He became the way, He recalled us to inward thought, admonished us of what should be sought of God. And see from what thought reacting upon itself, and in a manner recalling the waves of its impulse, he doth pass over unto choosing true things. Therefore My people shall return hither, and full days shall be found in them.

17. Ver. 11. And they said, How hath God known, and is there knowledge in the Most High? See through what thought they pass. Behold unjust men are happy, God doth not care for things human. Doth He indeed know what we do? See what things are being said. We are inquiring, brethren, (no longer let Christians say it,) How hath God known, and is there knowledge in the Most High?

18. For how doth it appear to thee that God knoweth not, and that there is no knowledge in the Most High? He replieth, (ver. 12.) Lo! themselves they are sinners, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches. Both sinners they are, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches. He confessed that he willed not to be a sinner in order that he might have riches. A carnal soul for things visible and earthly would have sold its justice. What sort of justice is that which is retained for the sake of gold, as if gold were a more precious thing than justice herself, or as if when a man denieth the deposit

of another man’s goods, he to whom he denied them should suffer a greater loss, than he that denieth them to him. The former doth lose a garment, the latter fidelity. Lo! they are themselves sinners, and in the world they have gotten abundant riches. On this account therefore God knoweth not, and on this account there is no knowledge in the Most High.

19. Ver. 13. And I said, therefore without cause I have justified my heart. In that I serve God, and have not these things; they serve him not, and they abound in these things: therefore without cause I have justified my heart, and have washed among the innocent my hands. This without cause I have done. Where is the reward of my good life? Where is the wage of my service? I live well and am in need; and the unjust man doth abound. And I have washed among the innocent my hands.

20. Ver. 14. And I have been scourged all the day long. From me the scourges of God do not depart. I serve well, and I am scourged; he serveth not, and is honoured. He hath proposed to himself a great question. The soul is disturbed, the soul doth pass over things which are to pass away unto despising things earthly and to desiring things eternal. There is a passage of the soul herself in this thought; where she doth toss in a sort of tempest she will reach the harbour. And it is with her as it is with sick persons, who are less violently sick, when recovery is far off: when recovery is at hand they are in higher fever; physicians call it the critical accession through which they pass to health: greater fever is there, but leading to health: greater heat, but recovery is at hand. So also is this man enfevered. For these are dangerous words, brethren, offensive, and almost blasphemous, How hath God known? This is why I say, and almost; He hath not said, God hath not known: he hath not said, there is no knowledge in the Most High: but as if inquiring, hesitating, doubting. This is the same as he said a little before, “My steps were almost overthrown.” How hath God known, and is there knowledge in the Most High? He doth not affirm it, but the very doubt is dangerous. Through danger he is passing to health. Hear now the health: Therefore in vain I have justified my heart, and have washed among the innocent my hands: and I have been scourged all the day long, and my chastening was in the morning. Chastening is correction. He that is being chastened is being corrected. What is, in the morning? It is not deferred.

That of the ungodly is being deferred, mine is not deferred: the former is too late or is not at all; mine is in the morning. And I have been scourged all the day long, and my chastening was in the morning.

21. Ver. 15. If I said, I will declare this: that is, I will teach thus. How wilt thou teach? that there is no knowledge in the Most High, that God doth not know? Wilt thou propound this opinion, that without cause men live justly who do live justly; that a just man hath lost his service, because God doth more shew favour to evil men, or else He doth care for no one? Wilt thou tell this, declare this? He doth restrain himself by an authority repressing him. What authority? A man wisheth sometime to break out in this sentiment: but he is recalled by the Scriptures directing us alway to live well, saying, that God doth care for things human, that He maketh a distinction between a godly man and an ungodly man. Therefore this man also wishing to put forth this sentiment, doth recollect himself. And what saith he? If I said, I shall declare thus; behold, the generation of Thy sons I have reprobated. I have reprobated the generation of Thy sons. If I shall declare thus, the generation of just men I shall reprobate. As also some copies have it, Behold, the generation of thy sons with which I have been in concert: that is, with which consisting of Thy sons I have been in concert; that is, with which I have agreed, to which I have been conformed: I have been out of time with all, if so I teach. For he doth sing in concert who giveth the tune together; but he that giveth not the tune together doth not sing in concert. Am I to say something different from that which Abraham said, from that which Isaac said, from that which Jacob said, from that which the Prophets said? For all they said that God doth care for things human, am I to say that he careth not? Is there greater wisdom in me than in them? Greater understanding in me than in them? A most wholesome authority hath called back his thought from ungodliness.

22. And what followeth? If I said it, I shall declare thus: behold, the generation of Thy children I have reprobated. Therefore that he might not reprobate, he did what? (Ver. 16.) And I undertook to know. May God be with him in order that he may know. Meanwhile, brethren, from a great fall he is being withheld, when he doth not presume that he already knoweth, but hath undertaken to know that which he knew not. For but now he was

willing to appear as if knowing, and to declare that God hath no care of things human. For this hath come to be a most naughty and ungodly doctrine of unrighteous men. Know, brethren, that many men dispute and say that God careth not for things human, that by chances all things are ruled, or that our wills have been made subject to the stars, that each one is not dealt with according to his deserts, but by the necessity of his stars,—an evil doctrine, an impious doctrine. Unto these thoughts was going that man whose feet were almost moved, and whose steps were all but overthrown, into this error he was going; but because he was not in tune with the generation of the sons of God, he undertook to know, and condemned the knowledge wherein with God's just men he agreed not. And what he saith let us hear; how that he undertook to know, and was helped, and learned something, and declared it to us. And I undertook, he saith, to know. In this labour is before me. Truly a great labour; to know in what manner both God doth care for things human, and it is well with evil men, and good men labour. Great is the importance of the question; therefore, and this labour is before me. As it were there is standing in my face a sort of wall, but thou hast the voice of a Psalm, 'In my God I shall pass over the wall.' This labour is before me.

23. Sooth thou sayest, labour is before thee; before God it is no labour: put thyself before God where there is no labour, and not even to thee will there be labour. And he hath done this; for he saith how long labour is before him; (ver. 17.) until I enter into the sanctuary of God, and understand upon the last things. A great thing it is, brethren: now for a long time I labour, he saith, and before my face I see a sort of insuperable labour, to know in what manner both God is just, and doth care for things human, and is not unjust because men sinning and doing wicked actions have happiness on this earth; but the godly and men serving God are wasted ofttimes in trials and in labours: a great difficulty it is to know this, but only until I enter into the Sanctuary of God. For in the Sanctuary what is presented to thee, in order that thou mayest solve this question? And I understand, he saith, upon the last things: not present things. I, he saith, from the Sanctuary of God stretch out mine eye unto the end, I pass over present things. All that which is called the human race, all that mass of mortality is to come to the balance, is to come to the scale, thereon will be weighed the works of men. All

things now a cloud doth enfold: but to God are known the merits of each severally. And I understand, he saith, upon the last things: but not of myself; for before me there is labour. Whence may I understand upon the last things? Let me enter into the Sanctuary of God. In that place then he understood also the reason why these men now are happy.

24. Ver. 18. To wit, because of deceitfulness Thou hast set upon them. Because deceitful they are, that is fradulent; because deceitful they are, they suffer deceits. What is this, because fraudulent they are they suffer a fraud? They desire to play a fraud upon mankind in all their naughtinesses, they themselves also suffer a fraud, in choosing earthly good things, and in forsaking the eternal. Therefore, brethren, in their very playing off a fraud they suffer a fraud. In that which but now I said, brethren, "What manner of wit hath he who to gain a garment doth lose his fidelity?" hath he whose garment he hath taken suffered a fraud, or he that is smitten with so great a loss? If a garment is more precious than fidelity, the former doth suffer the greater loss: but if incomparably good faith doth surpass the whole world, the latter shall seem to have sustained the loss of a garment; but to the former is said, What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul? Therefore what hath befallen them? Because of deceitfulness Thou hast set for them: Thou didst throw them down while they were being exalted. He hath not said, Thou didst throw them down because they were lifted up: not as it were after that they were lifted up Thou didst throw them down; but in their very lifting up they were thrown down. For thus to be lifted up is already to fall; Thou didst throw them down while they were being lifted up.

25. Ver. 19. How have they become a desolation suddenly? He is wondering at them, understanding unto the last things. They have vanished. Truly like smoke, which while it mounteth upward, doth vanish, so they have vanished. How doth he say, They have vanished? In the manner of one who understandeth the last things. They have vanished: they have perished because of their iniquity.

26. Ver. 20. Like as the dream of one rising up. How have they vanished? As vanisheth the dream of one rising up. Fancy a man in sleep to have seen himself find treasures: he is a rich man, but only until he awaketh. Like as

the dream of one rising up: so they have vanished, like the dream of one awaking. It is sought then and it is not: there is nothing in the hands, nothing in the bed. A poor man he went to sleep, a rich man in sleep he became: had he not awoke, he were a rich man: he woke up, he found the care which he had lost while sleeping. And these men shall find the misery which they had prepared for themselves. When they shall have awoke from this life, that thing doth pass away which was grasped as if in sleep. Like as the dream of one rising up. And that there might not be said, "What then? a small thing doth their glory seem to thee, a small thing doth their state seem to thee, small things seem to thee inscriptions, images, statues, distinctions, troops of clients?" O Lord, he saith, in Thy city their image Thou shalt bring to nothing. Therefore, my brethren, speaking freely of this passage, or whence it is allowed me, (for when we mingle with you we do rather smite you than teach you,) in the name of Christ and in the fear of Him I exhort you: that whosoever of you have not these things, should not covet them; whosoever of you have them, should not rely on them. Behold, I have told you; I say not, ye are condemned because ye have them; but ye are condemned if on such things ye rely, if because of such things ye are puffed up, if because of such things ye think yourselves to be great men, if because of such things ye acknowledge not the poor, if because of your excelling in this emptiness ye forget the common lot of mankind. For then God must needs make retribution at the last, and in His City bring to nothing the image of such men. For he that is rich let him be so in the way that the Apostle hath enjoined: Charge, he saith, the rich men of this world not to think proudly, nor to hope in the uncertainty of their riches, but in the living God, Who bestoweth upon us all things abundantly to enjoy. He hath taken away the pride of rich men, he giveth counsel. As if they were saying, We are rich men, thou dost forbid us to be proud, dost prohibit us from boasting of the parade of our riches: what then are we to do with these riches? Is it come to this, that there is nothing which they may do therewith? Be they rich, he saith, in good works; let them readily distribute, communicate. And what doth this profit? Let them treasure unto themselves a good foundation for the future, that they may lay hold of true life. Where ought they to lay up treasure for themselves? In that place whereunto he set his eye, when entering into the Sanctuary of God. Let there shudder all our rich brethren, abounding in money, gold, silver, household, honours, let them shudder at that which but now hath been said, O Lord, in Thy city Thou shalt bring to nothing their image. Are they not worthy to suffer these things, to wit that God bring to nothing their image in His city, because also they have themselves brought to nothing the image of God in their earthly city? In Thy city Thou shalt bring to nothing their image.

27. Ver. 21. Because my heart was delighted. He is saying with what things he is tempted: because my heart was delighted, he saith, my reins also were changed. When those temporal things delighted me, my reins were changed. It may also be understood thus: because my heart was delighted in God, my reins also were changed, that is, my lusts were changed, and I became wholly chaste. My reins were changed. And hear how.

28. Ver. 22. And I was brought unto nothing, and I knew not. I, the very man, who now say these things of rich men, once longed for such things: therefore even I was brought to nothing when my steps were almost overthrown. And I was brought unto nothing, and I knew not. We must not therefore despair even of them, against whom I was saying such things.

29. What is, I knew not? As it were a beast I became to Thee, (ver. 23.) and I am alway with Thee. There is a great difference between this man and others. He became as it were a beast in longing for earthly things, when being brought to nothing he knew not things eternal: but he departed not from his God, because he did not desire these things of demons, of the devil. For this I have already brought to your notice. The voice is from the Synagogue, that is, from that people which served not idols. A beast indeed I became, when desiring from my God things earthly: but I never departed from That my God.

30. Because then, though having become a beast, I departed not from my God, there followeth, Thou hast held the hand of my right hand. He hath not said my right hand, but the hand of my right hand. If the hand of the right hand it is, a hand hath a hand. The hand Thou hast held of my right hand, in order that Thou mightest conduct me. For what hath he put hand? For power. For we say that a man hath that in his hand which he hath in his power: just as the devil said to God concerning Job, Lay to Thine hand, and take away the things which he hath. What is, lay to Thine hand? Put forth

power. The hand of God he hath called the power of God: as hath been written in another place, death and life are in the hands of the tongue. Hath the tongue hands? But what is, in the hands of the tongue? In the power of the tongue. What is, in the power of the tongue? Out of thy mouth thou shalt be justified, and out of thy mouth thou shalt be condemned. Thou hast held, therefore, the hand of my right hand, the power of my right hand. What was my right hand? That I was alway with Thee. Unto the left I was holding, because I became a beast, that is, because there was an earthly concupiscence in me: but the right was mine, because I was alway with Thee. Of this my right hand Thou hast held the hand, that is, hast directed the power. What power? He gave them power to become sons of God. He is beginning now to be among the sons of God, belonging to the New Testament. See in what manner the hand of his right hand was held. In Thy will Thou hast conducted me. What is, in Thy will? Not in my merits. What is, in Thy will? Hear the Apostle, who was at first a beast longing for things earthly, and living after the Old Testament. He saith what? I that at first was a blasphemer, and persecutor, and injurious: but mercy I obtained. What is, in Thy will? "By the grace of God I am what I am." And in glory Thou hast taken me up. Now to what glory he was taken up, and in what glory, who can explain, who can say? Let us await it, because in the Resurrection it will be, in the last things it will be. With glory Thou hast taken me up.

31. And he is beginning to think of that same Heavenly felicity, and to reprove himself, because he hath been a beast, and hath longed for things earthly. (Ver. 25.) For what have I in Heaven, and from Thee what have I willed upon earth? By your voice I see that ye have understood. He compared with his earthly will the heavenly reward which he is to receive; he saw what was there being reserved for him; and while thinking and burning at the thought of some ineffable thing, which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor into the heart of man hath ascended, he hath not said, this or that I have in Heaven, but, what have I in Heaven? What is that thing which I have in Heaven? What is it? How great is it? Of what sort is it? And, since that which I have in heaven doth not pass away, from Thee what have I willed upon earth? Thou reservest for me, (I will speak as I am able, but forgive me; accept my endeavour, mine earnestness to attempt; for to explain it I have not power.) Thou reservest, he saith, for me in Heaven

riches immortal, even Thyself, and I have willed from Thee on earth that which even ungodly men have, which even evil men have, which even abandoned men have, money, gold, silver, jewels, households, which even many wicked men have: which even many profligate women have, many profligate men: these things as a great matter I have desired of my God upon earth: though my God reserveth Himself for me in Heaven! For what have I in Heaven? He hath to display that very what. And from Thee what have I willed upon earth?

32. Ver. 26. My heart and my flesh hath failed, O God of my heart. This then for me in Heaven hath been reserved, God of my heart, and my portion is my God. What is it, brethren? Let us find out our riches, let mankind choose their parts. Let us see men torn with diversity of desires: let some choose war-service, some advocacy, some divers and sundry offices of teaching, some merchandise, some farming, let them take their portions in human affairs: let the people of God cry, my portion is my God. Not for a time my portion; but my portion is my God for everlasting. Even if I alway have gold, what have I? Even if I did not alway have God, how great a good should I have? To this is added, that He promiseth Himself to me, and He promiseth that I shall have this for everlasting. So great a thing I have, and never have it not. Great felicity: my portion is God! How long? For everlasting. For behold and see after what sort He hath loved him; He hath made his heart chaste: God of my heart, and my portion is God for everlasting. His heart hath become chaste, for nought now God is loved, from Him is not sought any other reward. He that doth seek any other reward from God, and therefore is willing to serve God, more precious doth make that which he willeth to receive, than Him from whom he willeth to receive. What then, is there no reward belonging to God? None except Himself. The reward belonging to God, is God Himself. This he loveth, this he esteemeth; if any other thing he shall have loved, the love will not be chaste. Thou art receding from the Fire immortal, thou wilt grow cold, wilt be corrupted. Do not recede. Recede not, it will be thy corruption, it will be thy fornication. Now he is returning, now he is repenting, now he is choosing repentance, now he is saying, my portion is God. And after what sort is he delighted with that Same, whom he hath chosen for his portion.

33. Ver. 27. Behold, they that put themselves afar from Thee shall perish. He therefore departed from God, but not far: for I have become as it were a beast, he saith, and I am alway with Thee. But they have departed afar, because not only things earthly they have desired, but have sought them from demons and the Devil. They that put themselves afar from Thee shall perish. And what is it, to become afar from God? Thou hast destroyed every man that committeth fornication away from Thee. To this fornication is opposed chaste love. What is chaste love? Now the soul doth love her Bridegroom: what doth she require of Him, from Her Bridegroom whom she loveth? Perchance in like manner as women choose for themselves men either as sons-in-law or as bridegrooms: she perchance chooseth riches, and loveth his gold, and estates, and silver and cattle and horses, and household, and the like. Far be it. He doth love Him alone, for nought he doth love Him: because in Him he hath all things, for by Him were made all things. Thou hast destroyed, he saith, every one that committeth fornication away from Thee.

34. Ver. 28. But thou doest what? But for me to cleave to God is a good thing. This is whole good. Will ye have more? I grieve at your willing. Brethren, what will ye have more? Than to cleave to God nothing is better, when we shall see Him face to face. But now what? For yet as a stranger I am speaking: to cleave, he saith, to God is a good thing: but now in my sojourning, (for not yet hath come the substance,) I have to put in God my hope. So long therefore as thou hast not yet cloven, therein put thy hope. Thou art wavering, cast forward an anchor to the land. Not yet dost thou cleave by presence, cleave fast by hope. To put in God my hope. And by doing what here wilt thou put in God thy hope? What will be thy business, but to praise Him Whom thou lovest, and to make others to be fellowlovers of Him with thee? Lo, if thou shouldest love a charioteer, wouldest thou not carry along other men to love him with thee? A lover of a charioteer whithersoever he goeth doth speak of him, in order that as well as he others also may love him. For nought are loved abandoned men, and from God is reward required in order that He may be loved? Love thou God for nought, grudge God to no one. Seize Him as many as ye are able, as many as shall possess: He is not made strait, ye will make no limits in Him, Him wholly each of you will possess, and Him wholly all ye will have. Therefore this do

while here thou art, that is, while thou art putting thy hope in God. For what followeth? In order that I may tell forth all Thy praises in the courts of the daughter of Sion. “In order that I may tell forth all Thy praises:” but where? “In the courts of the daughter of Sion:” for the preaching of God beside the Church is vain. A small thing it is to praise God and to tell forth all His praise. In the courts of the daughter of Sion tell thou forth. Make for unity, do not divide the people; but draw them unto one, and make them one. I have forgotten how long I have been speaking. Now the Psalm being ended, even judging by this closeness, I suppose I have held a long discourse: but it doth not suffice for your zeal; ye are too impetuous. O that with this impetuosity ye would seize upon the kingdom of Heaven.

PSALM 74

Exposition

Sermon to the people.

1. This Psalm's Title is, Of the Understanding of Asaph. Asaph in Latin is translated congregation, in Greek Synagogue. Let us see what this Synagogue hath understood. But let us understand firstly Synagogue: from thence we shall understand what the Synagogue hath understood. Every congregation is spoken of under the general name of Synagogue: one both of beasts and of men may be called a congregation; but here there is no congregation of beasts when we heard understanding. For when a man being in honour hath neglected in himself his understanding, hear what hath been said concerning him: A man being in honour is compared to beasts without sense, and is become like unto them. That then it is no congregation of beasts, we must neither for a long time discuss, nor more diligently notice: but because it is a congregation of men, of what men this is we ought to understand. It is not indeed of those men, who being in honour and not understanding are compared to the beasts without sense, and have become like unto them; but of those that do understand. For this the Psalm's Title doth prescribe, saying, Of the understanding of Asaph. It is therefore a certain understanding congregation whereof we are about to hear the voice. But since properly Synagogue is said of the congregation of the people of Israel, so that wheresoever we may have heard Synagogue, we are no longer wont to understand any but the people of the Jews; let us see whether perchance the voice in this Psalm be not of that same people. But of what sort of Jews and of what sort of people of Israel? For they are not of the chaff, but perchance of the grain; not of the broken branches, but perchance of those that are strengthened. For not all that are of Israel are Israelites: but in Isaac, He saith, there shall be called for thee a seed: that is, not they that are sons of the flesh are the sons of God: but the sons of promise are counted for a seed. There are therefore certain Israelites, of whom was he concerning whom was said, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom guile is

not. I do not say in the same manner as we are Israelites, for we also are the seed of Abraham. For to the Gentiles the Apostle was speaking, when he said, Therefore the seed of Abraham ye are, heirs according to promise. According to this therefore all we are Israelites, that follow the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham. But let us understand here the voice of the Israelites in the same manner as the Apostle saith, For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. Here therefore let us understand that whereof the Prophets have spoken, a remnant shall be saved. Of the remnant therefore saved let us hear in this place the voice; in order that there may speak that Synagogue which had received the Old Testament, and was intent upon carnal promises; and by this means it came to pass that their feet were shaken. For in another Psalm, where too the title hath Asaph, there is said what? How good is the God of Israel to men right in heart. But my feet were almost moved. And as if we were saying, whence were thy feet moved? Well nigh, he saith, my steps were overthrown, because I was jealous in the case of sinners, looking on the peace of sinners. For while according to the promises of God belonging to the Old Testament he was looking for earthly felicity, he observed it to abound with ungodly men; that they who worshipped not God were enriched with those things which he was looking for from God: and as though without cause he had served God, his feet tottered. For in that place he is saying, Behold sinners themselves have gotten even abundant riches in the world. Have I not in vain justified my heart? See in what manner his steps have been well-nigh overthrown; so that now the soul saith to herself, What profit is it that I serve God? Behold that man serveth not, and is happy; I serve, and I toil. Lastly, suppose that I am happy; seeing that he also is happy that serveth not, why should I think myself happy because I serve? But that Psalm whereof I have brought forward the testimony precedes that which now we have in hand.

2. But opportunely it hath chanced not by our own but by God’s dispensation, that just now we heard out of the Gospel, that the Law was given by Moses, Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ. For if we distinguish between the two Testaments, Old and New, there are not the same Sacraments nor the same promises; nevertheless, the same commandments for the most part. For, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not

commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Honour father and mother, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet the property of thy neighbour, Thou shalt not covet the wife of thy neighbour, to us too hath been commanded; and whosoever shall not have kept those, doth go astray, and is by no means worthy to earn to receive the Holy Mountain of God, concerning which hath been said, Who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle, or who shall rest upon Thy Holy Mountain? The innocent in hands and of a pure heart. The commandments therefore when examined are either all found to be the same, or there are scarce any in the Gospel which have not been spoken by the Prophets. The Commandments are the same, the Sacraments are not the same, the Promises are not the same. Let us see wherefore the commandments are the same; because according to these we ought to serve God. The Sacraments are not the same, for some Sacraments there are giving Salvation, others promising a Saviour. The Sacraments of the New Testament give Salvation, the Sacraments of the Old Testament did promise a Saviour. When therefore thou hast now the things promised, why dost thou seek the things promising, having now the Saviour? I say, thou hast the things promised, not because we have already received life eternal, but because Christ hath now come who was foretold by the Prophets. The Sacraments have been changed, have been made more easy, of fewer number, more saving, more blessed. Why are the promises not the same? Because there was promised the land of Chanaan, a land plentiful, fruitful, flowing with milk and honey, there was promised a kingdom temporal, there was promised the felicity of the world, there was promised fruitfulness of children, there was promised the subduing of enemies. All these things to earthly felicity do belong. But why should these things first have been promised? Because not first is that which is spiritual, but that which is natural: afterward, he saith, that which is spiritual. The first man was of earth earthy, the second Man was from Heaven Heavenly: such as is the earthly man, such are also earthly men; and such as is the Heavenly Man, such are also the Heavenly men. As we have borne the image of the earthly man, let us bear also the image of Him Who is from Heaven. To the image of the earthly man doth belong the Old Testament, to the image of the Heavenly Man the New Testament. But that no one might suppose that by one was made the earthly man, by another the Heavenly; therefore God shewing Himself to be the Creator of both, even of both Testaments willed

Himself to be the Author; in order that both things earthly He might promise in the Old Testament, and things Heavenly in the New Testament. But how long art thou at first an earthly man, how long dost thou mind things earthly? When to a boy are given some boyish playthings, wherewith his boyish mind may be amused, are they not taken out of his hands when he groweth up in order that he may now take in hand something more useful, which becometh a grown person? For example, thou didst thyself give to thy son nuts when he was little, and a book when he was bigger. By no means therefore, because God through the New Testament hath taken out of the hands of His sons those things which are like the playthings of boys, in order that He might give something more useful to them growing up, on that account must He be supposed not to have given those former things Himself. He gave both Himself. But the Law itself through Moses was given, Grace and Truth came through Jesus Christ: Grace because there is fulfilled through love that which by the letter was being enjoined, Truth because there is being rendered that which was promised. This thing therefore this Asaph hath understood. In a word, all things which to the Jews had been promised have been taken away. Where is their kingdom? Where the Temple? Where the Anointing? Where is Priest? Where are now the Prophets among them? From what time there came He that by the Prophets was foretold, in that nation there is now nothing of these things; now she hath lost things earthly, and not yet doth seek things Heavenly.

3. Thou shouldest not therefore hold fast to things earthly, although God doth bestow them. Nevertheless, because we ought not to cleave to them, we ought by no means to believe that any other doth give them but God: He doth Himself give them: but do not as a great matter expect from Him the good which He doth give even to one not good. For if as a great matter He were to give these things, to evil men He would not give them. But for this purpose He hath willed to give them to evil men also, that good men may learn to seek from Him some other thing which He giveth not to evil men also. But these miserable men cleaving to things earthly and not relying on Him Who made Heaven and earth, Who gave to them even those very earthly things, who delivered them even temporarily from Egyptian bondage; who led them through the severed sea, Who overwhelmed their pursuing enemies in the waves, not relying on Him Who would give indeed

things Heavenly to them grown up as He gave things earthly to them when children, fearing to lose that which they had received, they slew Him Who had given it. These things we say, brethren, in order that ye being men of the New Testament may learn not to cleave to things earthly. For if they without excuse did cleave to things earthly, to whom the New Testament itself had not yet been revealed; how much more without excuse do they pursue things earthly, to whom now the things Heavenly promised in the New Testament have been revealed! For call to mind, my brethren, what was said by them that persecuted Christ. If we shall have let Him go, the Romans will come and will take from us both place and nation. See ye how that in fearing to lose things earthly, they slew the King of Heaven. And what was done to them? They lost even those very things earthly: and in the place where they slew Christ, there they were slain: and when, being unwilling to lose the land, they slew the Giver of life, that same land being slain they lost; and at that very time when they slew Him, in order that by that very time they might be admonished of the reason wherefore they suffered these things. For when the city of the Jews was overthrown, they were celebrating the Passover, and with many thousands of men the whole nation itself had met together for the celebration of that festival. In that place God (through evil men indeed, but yet Himself good; through unjust men, but Himself just and justly) did so take vengeance upon them, that there were slain many thousands of men, and the city itself was overthrown. Of this thing in this Psalm the understanding of Asaph doth complain, and in the very plaint the understanding as it were doth distinguish things earthly from things heavenly, doth distinguish the Old Testament from the New Testament: in order that thou mayest see through what things thou art passing, what thou shouldest look for, what to forsake, to what to cleave. Thus then he beginneth.

4. Ver. 1. Wherefore hast Thou repelled us, O God, unto the end? “Hast repelled unto the end,” in the person of the congregation which is properly called Synagogue. Wherefore hast Thou repelled us, O God, unto the end? He censureth not, but enquireth wherefore, for what purpose, because of what hast Thou done this? What hast Thou done? Thou hast repelled us unto the end. What is, unto the end? Perchance even unto the end of the world. Hast Thou repelled us unto Christ, Who is the End to every one

believing? For, Wherefore hast Thou repelled us, O God, unto the end? Thy spirit hath been wroth at the sheep of Thy flock. Wherefore wast Thou wroth at the sheep of Thy flock, but because to things earthly we were cleaving, and the Shepherd we knew not?

5. Ver. 2. Remember Thou Thy congregation, which Thou hast possessed from the beginning. Can this by any means be the voice of the Gentiles? Hath He possessed the Gentiles from the beginning? Nay, but He hath possessed the seed of Abraham, the people of Israel even according to the flesh, born of the Patriarchs our fathers: of whom we have become the sons, not by coming out of their flesh, but by imitating their faith. But those, possessed by God from the beginning, what befel them? Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast possessed from the beginning. Thou hast redeemed the rod of Thine inheritance. That same congregation of Thine, being the rod of Thine inheritance, Thou hast redeemed. This same congregation he hath called ‘the rod of the inheritance.’ Let us look back to the first thing that was done, when He willed to possess that same congregation, delivering it from Egypt, what sign He gave to Moses, when Moses said to Him, What sign shall I give that they may believe me, that Thou hast sent me? And God saith to him, What dost thou bear in thine hand? A rod. Cast it on to the ground. And he let fall the rod upon the ground, and it became a serpent: and Moses was afraid, and Moses fled from it. And the Lord saith to him, Take hold of the tail thereof. And he took hold; and it returned to its own shape, having become a rod as it was a rod before. What doth it intimate? For this was not done to no purpose. Let us enquire of the writings of God. To what did the serpent persuade man? To death. Therefore death is from the serpent. If death is from the serpent, the rod in the serpent is Christ in death. Therefore also when by serpents in the desert they were being bitten and being slain, the Lord commanded Moses to exalt a brazen serpent in the desert, and admonish the people that whosoever by a serpent had been bitten, should look thereupon and be made whole. Thus also it was done: thus also men, bitten by serpents, were made whole of the venom by looking upon a serpent. To be made whole of a serpent is a great Sacrament. What is it to be made whole of a serpent by looking upon a serpent? It is to be made whole of death by believing in one dead. And nevertheless Moses feared and fled. What is it that Moses fled

from that serpent? What, brethren, save that which we know to have been done in the Gospel? Christ died and the disciples feared, and withdrew from that hope wherein they had been. But what was said? Take hold of the tail thereof. What is, the tail? On the latter parts seize thou. This was intimated by the following also, My back parts Thou shalt see. At first it became a serpent, but when the tail was grasped it became a rod; at first He was slain, afterwards He rose again. There is also in the tail of the serpent the end of the world. For thus now the mortality of the Church doth walk: some go, others come through death, as though through the serpent; because by the serpent death was sown: but at the end of the world, as though by the tail, we go back to the hand of God. And we are made the stablished kingdom of God, in order that there may be fulfilled in us, Thou hast redeemed the rod of Thine inheritance. But the voice is for the sake of the Synagogue; but the redeemed rod of the inheritance of God is more apparent in the Gentiles; but the hope of the Jews was hidden, that is to say, either of those who are to believe hereafter, or of those who believed at that time when, at the sending of the Holy Ghost, the disciples spake with the tongues of all nations.—For at that time some thousands of the Jews themselves, the crucifiers of Christ, believed: and because they had been found at hand, they so believed as that they sold all that they had, and the price of their goods before the feet of the Apostles they laid.—Because then this thing was hidden, and the redemption of the rod of God was to be more conspicuous in the Gentiles: he explaineth of what he saith that which he hath said, Thou hast redeemed the rod of Thine inheritance. This he hath said not of the Gentiles in whom it was evident. But of what? Mount Sion. Yet even Mount Sion can be otherwise understood. That one which Thou hast dwelled in the same. In the place where the People was aforetime, where the Temple was set up, where the Sacrifices were celebrated, where at that time were all those necessary things giving promise of Christ. A promise, when the thing promised is bestowed is now become superfluous. For before that there is bestowed that which is promised, the promise itself is necessary lest the person to whom the promise is made forget the thing promised and through not expecting it die. He ought therefore to expect, in order that he may receive it when it shall have come: therefore he ought not to neglect the promise. For this reason figures were not neglected, in order that when the day came the shadows might be taken away. Mount Sion. That one which Thou hast dwelled in the same.

6. Ver. 3. Lift up Thine hand upon their pride at the end. As Thou didst repel us at the end, so lift up Thine hand upon the pride of them at the end. The pride of whom? Of those by whom Jerusalem was overthrown. But by whom was it, but by the kings of the Gentiles? Well was the hand of Him lifted up upon the pride of them at the end: for they too have now known Christ. For the end of the Law is Christ for righteousness to every one believing. How well doth he wish for them! As if angry he is speaking, and he is seeming to speak evil: and O that there would come to pass the evil which he speaketh: nay now in the name of Christ that it is coming to pass let us rejoice. Now they holding the sceptre are being made subject to the Word of the Cross: now is coming to pass that which was foretold, there shall adore Him all the kings of the earth, all nations shall serve Him. Now on the brows of kings more precious is the sign of the Cross, than the jewel of a crown. Lift up Thine hand upon the pride of them at the end. How great things hath the enemy of malice wrought in Thy holy places! In those which were Thy holy places, that is, in the temple, in the priesthood, in all those sacraments which were at that time, how great things hath the enemy of malice wrought! In good sooth the enemy at that time wrought. For the Gentiles at that time who did this, were worshipping false Gods, were adoring idols, were serving demons: nevertheless they wrought many evil things on the Saints of God. When could they if they had not been permitted? But when would they have been permitted, unless those holy things, at first promised, were no longer necessary, when He that had promised was Himself holden? Therefore, how great things hath the enemy of malice wrought in Thy holy places!

7. Ver. 4. And all they have boasted, that hate Thee. Observe the servants of demons, the servants of idols: such as at that time the Gentiles were, when they overthrew the temple and city of God, and they boasted. In the midst of Thy festival. Remember what I said, that Jerusalem was overthrown at the time when the very festival was being celebrated: at which festival they crucified the Lord. Gathered together they raged, gathered together they perished.

8. They have set signs, their own signs, (ver. 5.) and they have not known. They had signs to place there, their standards, their eagles, their own dragons, the Roman signs; or even their statues which at first in the temple they placed; or perchance their signs are the things which they heard from the prophets of their demons. And they have not known. Have not known what? How thou shouldest have had no power against Me, except it had been given thee from above. They knew not how that not on themselves honour was conferred, to afflict, to take, or overthrow the city, but their ungodliness was made as it were the axe of God. They were made the instrument of Him enraged, not so as to be the kingdom of Him pacified. For God doth that which a man also ofttime doth. Sometimes a man in a rage catcheth up a rod lying in the way, perchance any sort of stick, he smiteth therewith his son, and then throweth the stick into the fire, and reserveth the inheritance for his son: so sometime God through evil men doth instruct good men, and through the temporal power of them that are to be condemned He worketh the discipline of them that are to be saved. For why do ye suppose, brethren, that discipline was even thus inflicted upon that nation, in order that it might perish utterly? How many out of this nation did afterwards believe, how many are yet to believe? Some are chaff, others grain; over both however there cometh in the threshing-drag; but under one threshing-drag the one is broken up, the other is purged. How great a good hath God bestowed upon us by the evil of Judas the traitor! By the very ferocity of the Jews how great a good was bestowed upon believing Gentiles! Christ was slain in order that there might be on the Cross One for him to look to who had been stung by the serpent. Thus then these men also perchance had heard from their diviners, that they ought to go to Jerusalem, and take her captive; and when they had taken and overthrown her, they said to themselves that it had been done by their devils; They have set signs, their own signs, and they have not known. Have not known what? As in the going forth from above. How that unless from above there went forth a mandate; never would such things have been permitted to the Gentiles raging against the people of the Jews. But it went forth from above: as Daniel saith, From the beginning of thy prayer there went forth a word. The same also the Lord said to Pilate puffing up himself, and setting for signs his own signs, and not knowing, and saying to Christ, To me makest thou no answer? Knowest Thou not that I have power to kill

Thee and have power to let Thee go—and to him swollen, as though pricking a blown bladder, the Lord saith, Thou couldest have no power against Me, unless it had been given to thee from above. So also here, they have set signs, their own signs, and they have not known. How have they not known? As in the going forth from above. Were they by any means able to understand how the going forth took place from above, to the end that this might be fulfilled?

9. Now let us hasten over the verses following after the destruction of Jerusalem, for the reason that they are both evident, and it doth not please me to tarry over the punishment even of enemies. As if in a forest of trees with axes, (ver. 6.) they have cut down the doors thereof at once; with mattock and hammer they have thrown Her down. That is, conspiring together, with firm determination, with mattock and hammer they have thrown Her down.

10. Ver. 7. They have burned with fire Thy Sanctuary, they have defiled on the ground the Tabernacle of Thy name.

11. Ver. 8. They have said in their heart, (the kindred of them is in one)—Have said what? Come ye, let us suppress the solemnities of the Lord from the land. ‘Of the Lord,’ hath been inserted in the person of this man, that is, in the person of Asaph. For they raging would not have called Him the Lord whose temple they were overthrowing. Come ye, let us suppress all the solemnities of the Lord from the land. What of Asaph? What understanding hath Asaph in these words? What? Doth he not profit even by the discipline accorded? Is not the mind’s crookedness made straight? Overthrown were all things that were at first: no where is there priest, no where Altar of the Jews, no where victim, no where Temple. Is there then no other thing to be acknowledged which succeeded this departing? Or indeed would this promissory sign have been taken away, unless there had come that which was being promised? Let us see therefore in this place now the understanding of Asaph, let us see if he profiteth by tribulation. Observe what he saith: (Ver. 9.) Our signs we have not seen, no longer is there prophet, and us He will not know as yet. Behold those Jews who say that they are not known as yet, that is, that they are yet in captivity, that not yet they are delivered, do yet expect Christ. Christ will come, but He will come

as Judge; the first time to call, afterwards to sever. He will come, because He hath come, and that He will come is evident; but hereafter from above He will come. Before thee He was, O Israel. Thou wast bruised because thou didst stumble against Him lying down: that thou mayest not be ground to powder, observe Him coming from above. For thus it was foretold by the prophet: Whoever shall stumble upon that stone shall be bruised, and upon whomsoever it shall have come, it shall grind him to powder. He doth bruise when little, He shall grind to powder when great. Now thy signs thou seest not, now there is no prophet: and thou sayest, and us He will not know as yet: because yourselves know not Him as yet. No longer is there a prophet; and us He will not know as yet.

12. Ver. 10. How long, O God, shall the enemy revile? Cry out as if forsaken, as if deserted: cry out like a sick man, who hast chosen rather to smite the physician than to be made whole: not as yet doth He know thee. See what He hath done, Who doth not know thee as yet. For they to whom there hath been no preaching of Him, shall see; and they that have not heard shall understand: and thou yet criest out, No longer is there a prophet, and us He will not know as yet. Where is thine understanding? The adversary doth provoke Thy name at the end. For this purpose the adversary doth provoke Thy name at the end, that being provoked Thou mayest reprove, reproving Thou mayest know them at the end: or certainly, at the end, in the sense of even unto the end. Even unto what end? Until thou knowest, until thou criest, until grasping the tail thou return to the kingdom.

13. Ver. 11. Wherefore dost Thou turn away Thine hand, and Thy right hand from the midst of Thy bosom unto the end? Again, another sign which was given to Moses. For in like manner as above from the rod was a sign, so also from the right hand now. For when that thing had been done concerning the rod, God gave a second sign: thrust, He saith, thine hand into thy bosom, and he thrust it: draw it forth, and he drew it forth: and it was found white, that is, unclean. For whiteness on the skin is leprosy, not fairness of complexion. For the heritage of God itself, that is, His people, being cast out became unclean. But what saith He to him? Draw it back into thy bosom. He drew it back, and it was restored to its own colour. When doest Thou this, saith this Asaph? How long dost Thou alienate Thy right

hand from Thy bosom, so that being without unclean it remaineth? Draw it back, let it return to its colour, let it acknowledge the Saviour. Wherefore dost thou turn away Thine hand, and Thy right hand from the midst of Thy bosom unto the end? These words he crieth, being blind, not understanding, and God doeth what He doeth. For wherefore came Christ? Blindness in part happened unto Israel, in order that the fulness of the Gentiles might enter in, and so all Israel might be saved. Therefore now, O Asaph, acknowledge that which hath gone before, in order that thou mayest at least follow, if thou wast not able to go before. For not in vain came Christ, or in vain was Christ slain, or in vain did the corn fall into the ground; but it fell that it might rise manifold. A serpent was lifted up in the desert, in order that it might cure of the poison him that was smitten. Observe what was done. Do not think it to be a vain thing that He came: lest He find thee evil, when He shall have come a second time.

14. Asaph hath understood, because on the Title of the Psalm there is, understanding of Asaph. And what saith he? (ver. 12.) But God, our King before the worlds, hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth. On the one hand we cry, No longer is there prophet, and us He will not know as yet: but on the other hand, our God, our King, Who is before the worlds, (for He is Himself in the beginning the Word by Whom were made the worlds,) hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth. God therefore, our King before the worlds, hath done what? hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth: and I am yet crying as if forsaken! He doth work Salvation in the midst of the earth, and I have remained earth! Asaph hath well understood; because it is understanding of Asaph. But why these things, or what sort of Salvation hath Christ wrought, but that men may learn to long after things eternal, and not always cleave to things temporal? But God, our King before the worlds, hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth. While we are crying, How long, O Lord, shall the enemy revile at the end, how long doth the adversary provoke, how long dost Thou turn away Thine hand from Thy bosom? We the while are saying these words: but God, our King before the worlds, hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth: and we are sleeping. Now the Gentiles are awake, and we are snoring, and as though God hath forsaken us, in dreams we are delirious. He hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth.

15. Now therefore, O Asaph, amend thyself according to thy understanding, tell us what sort of Salvation God hath wrought in the midst of the earth. When that earthly Salvation of yours was overthrown, what did He do, what did He promise? (Ver. 13.) Thou didst confirm in Thy virtue the sea. As though the nation of the Jews were as it were dry land severed from the waves, the Gentiles in their bitterness were the sea, and on all sides they washed about that land: behold, Thou hast confirmed in Thy virtue the sea, and the land remained thirsting for Thy rain. Thou hast confirmed in Thy virtue the sea, Thou hast broken in pieces the heads of dragons in the water. Dragons’ heads, that is, demons’ pride, wherewith the Gentiles were possessed, Thou hast broken in pieces upon the water: for those persons whom they were possessing, Thou by Baptism hast delivered.

16. What more after the heads of dragons? For those dragons have their chief, and he is himself the first great dragon. And concerning him what hath He done that hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth? Hear: (ver. 14.) Thou hast broken the head of the dragon. Of what dragon? We understand by dragons all the demons that war under the devil: what single dragon then, whose head was broken, but the devil himself ought we to understand? What with him hath He done? Thou hast broken the head of the dragon. That is, the beginning of sin. That head is the part which received the curse, to wit that the seed of Eve should mark the head of the serpent. For the Church was admonished to shun the beginning of sin. Which is that beginning of sin, like the head of a serpent? The beginning of all sin is pride. There hath been broken therefore the head of the dragon, hath been broken pride diabolical. And what with him hath He done, that hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth? Thou hast given him for a morsel to the Ethiopian peoples. What is this? How do I understand the Ethiopian peoples? How but by these all nations? And properly by black men: for Ethiopians are black. They are themselves called to the faith who were black; the very same indeed, so that there is said to them, for ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord. They are themselves indeed called black, but let them not remain black: for out of these is made the Church, to whom is said, Who is She that hath gone up made white? For what hath been made out of Her black, save that which hath been spoken of in, black I am, but comely? And how have these men received for meat that

dragon? I suppose that they have rather received Christ for meat: but Christ whereby they may consummate themselves; the devil whom they may consume. For thence was also that calf which the people worshipped, unbelieving, apostate, seeking the gods of the Egyptians, forsaking Him who had delivered them from the slavery of the Egyptians: whence there was enacted that great Sacrament. For when Moses was thus wroth with them worshipping and adoring the idol, and, inflamed with zeal for God, was punishing temporally, in order that he might terrify them to shun death everlasting; yet the head itself of the calf he cast into the fire, and ground to powder, destroyed, strawed on the water, and gave to the people to drink: so there was enacted a great Sacrament. O anger prophetic, and mind not perturbed but enlightened! He did what? Cast it into the fire, in order that first the form itself may be obliterated; piece by piece grind it down, in order that little by little it may be consumed: cast it into the water, give to the people to drink! What is this but that the worshippers of the devil were become the body of the same? In the same manner as men confessing Christ become the Body of Christ; so that to them is said, but ye are the Body of Christ and the members. The body of the devil was to be consumed, and that too by Israelites was to be consumed. For out of that people were the Apostles, out of that people the first Church. And it was said to Peter concerning the Gentiles, Kill and eat. What is, Kill and eat? Slay thou the thing which they are, and make them that which thou art. On the one hand, kill and eat; on the other hand, break in pieces and drink: but both are in the same Sacrament: because it must have needs been, and without doubt must have needs been, that the body, which was of the devil, by believing should pass over into the Body of Christ. Thus the devil is being consumed with the loss of his members. This was figured also in the serpent of Moses. For the magicians did likewise, and casting down their rods they exhibited serpents: but the serpent of Moses swallowed up the rods of all those magicians. Let there be perceived therefore even now the body of the devil: this is what is coming to pass, he is being devoured by the Gentiles who have believed, he hath become meat for the Ethiopian peoples. This again, may be perceived in, Thou hast given him for meat to the Ethiopian peoples, how that now all men bite him. What is, bite him? By reproving, blaming, accusing. Just as hath been said, by way of prohibition indeed, but yet the idea expressed: but if ye bite and eat up one another, take heed that ye be not consumed of one another. What is, bite and eat up one another? Ye go to law with one another, ye detract from one another, ye heap revilings upon one another. Observe therefore now how that with these bitings the devil is being consumed. What man, when angry with his servant, even a heathen, would not say to him, Satan? Behold the devil given for meat. This saith Christian, this saith Jew, this saith heathen: him he worshippeth, and with him he curseth!

17. Let us therefore look to the remaining verses, brethren; I beseech you attend: with great pleasure they are heard, because when heard, even throughout the round world they are recognised. When these things were being spoken of, they were not; because at that time they were in promise, they were not then in accomplishment: but now with what pleasure we are penetrated, when those things which we read of predicted in a book, we see fulfilled in the world? Let us see what He hath done whom now Asaph doth understand, how He hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth.

Ver. 15. Thou hast cleft the fountains and torrents: in order that they might flow with the stream of wisdom, might flow with the riches of the faith, might water the saltness of the Gentiles, in order that they might convert all unbelievers into the sweetness of the faith by their watering. Thou hast cleft the fountains and torrents. Perhaps it is a distinct thing; perhaps it is one thing, because the fountains were so abundant as to make rivers. Thou hast cleft the fountains and torrents. But if for distinction’s sake, in some men the Word of God becometh a well of water springing up unto life eternal; but others hearing the Word, and not so keeping it as that they live well, yet not keeping silence with tongue, they become torrents. For they are properly called torrents which are not perennial: for sometimes also in a secondary sense torrent is used for river: as hath been said, they shall be inebriated with the plenteousness of Thy House, and with the torrent of Thy pleasures Thou shalt give them to drink. For that torrent shall not ever be dried up. But torrents properly are those rivers named, which in summer fail, but with winter rains are flooded and run. Thou seest therefore a man sound in faith, that will persevere even unto the end, that will not forsake God in any trial; for the sake of the truth, not for the sake of falsehood and error, enduring all difficulties. Whence is this man so vigorous, but because the Word hath become in him a well of water springing up unto life eternal? But the other receiveth the Word, he preacheth, he is not silent, he runneth: but summer proveth whether he be fountain or torrent. Nevertheless through both be the earth watered, by Him Who hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth: let the fountains overflow, let the torrents run. Thou hast cleft fountains and torrents.

18. Ver. 16. Thou hast dried up the rivers of Etham. On the one side He breaketh up fountains and torrents, on the other He drieth up rivers, in order that from those may run waters, and from these waters may be dried up. Rivers, he saith, of Etham. What is Etham? For the word is Hebrew. What is Etham interpreted? Strong, stout. Who is this strong and stout one, whose rivers God drieth up? Who but that very dragon? For no one entereth into the house of a strong man that he may spoil his vessels, unless first he shall have bound fast the strong man. This is that strong man on his own virtue relying, and forsaking God: this is that strong man, who saith, I will set my seat by the north, and I will be like the Most High. Out of that very cup of perverse strength he hath given man to drink. Strong they willed to be, who thought that they would be Gods by means of the forbidden food. Adam became strong, over whom was reproachfully said, ‘Behold, Adam hath become like one of us.’ For knowing not God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, as though they were strong, to the righteousness of God they have not been made subject. Observe ye that a man hath put out of the way his own strength, and remained weak, needy, standing afar off, not daring even to raise his eyes to Heaven; but smiting his breast, and saying, O Lord, merciful be Thou to me a sinner. Now he is weak, now he confesseth his weakness, he is not strong: dry land he is, be he watered with fountains and torrents. They are as yet strong who rely on their own virtue. Be their rivers dried up, let there be no advancement in the doctrines of the Gentiles, of wizards, of astrologers, of magic arts: for dried up are the rivers of the strong man: Thou hast dried up the rivers of Etham. Let there dry up that doctrine; let minds be flooded with the Gospel of truth.

19. Ver. 16. Thine own is the day and Thine own is the night. Who is ignorant of this, seeing that He hath Himself made all these things; for by the Word were made all things? To that very One Himself Who hath

wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth, to Him is said, Thine own is the night. Something here we ought to perceive which belongeth to that very Salvation which He hath wrought in the midst of the earth. Thine own is the day. Who are these? The spiritual. And Thine own is the night. Who are these? The carnal. Thine own is the day and Thine own is the night. Let the spiritual speak spiritual things to the spiritual: for it hath been said, with things spiritual things spiritual comparing, we speak wisdom among the perfect. Not yet do carnal men receive this wisdom. I could not speak to you as if unto spiritual men, but as if unto carnal men. Therefore when spiritual men are speaking unto spiritual men, day unto day is breaking forth the Word: but while even carnal men themselves do not keep secret the faith of Christ crucified, which they are able to receive though being but little, 'night unto night is telling forth knowledge.' Thine own is the day, and Thine own is the night. Unto Thee belong spiritual men, unto Thee belong carnal men: those Thou dost enlighten with immutable wisdom and truth; these Thou dost comfort with the manifestation of the Flesh, as it were the moon comforting the night. Thine own is the day, and Thine own is the night. Wilt thou hear the day? See whether thou caust receive it, lift up, as much as thou art able, thy mind. Let us see whether thou dost belong to the day, let us now see, if thy face doth not shrink therefrom. Canst thou see that which thou hast heard but now from the Gospel, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God? For thou knowest not how to think of any words save those which sound and pass away. Canst thou now receive the Word, not as a sound, but as God? Hast thou not there heard, and the Word was God? But thou art thinking of these words: all things by Himself were made: and by Himself were made even they that make words. Of what sort then is that Word? Dost thou receive Him, O carnal man? Answer me, dost thou receive Him? Thou dost not receive Him yet, unto night thou belongest: a moon for thee is necessary, lest in darkness thou die. For certain sinners have bended the bow, in order that they might shoot under the obscure moon men right in heart. For the flesh of Christ was obscured when it was taken down from the Cross and laid in the tomb: and they that slew Him gloried over Him, and He had not yet risen again, and His disciples were shot at, men right in heart, but under the obscure moon. Therefore in order that not only day to day may break forth the Word, but also night to night may tell forth knowledge; because, Thine own is the day, and Thine own is the night, vouchsafe Thou to come down, to remain with Him from Whom Thou comest down, but to come to those unto whom Thou comest down. Vouchsafe to come down Who wast in this world, and the world by Thee was made, and the world knew Thee not. Let even night have her consolation. Let her have it, He saith: 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelled in us.' Thine own is the day, and Thine own is the night. Thou hast made perfect sun and moon: the sun, spiritual men, the moon, carnal men. As yet carnal he is, may he not be forsaken, and may he too be made perfect. Thou hast made perfect sun and moon: the sun, as it were a wise man: the moon, as it were an unwise man: Thou hast not however forsaken. For thus it is written, A wise man endureth as the sun, but a foolish man as the moon is changed. What then? Because the sun endureth, that is, because the wise man endureth as the sun, a foolish man is changed like the moon, is one as yet carnal, as yet unwise, to be forsaken? And where is that which hath been said by the Apostle, "To the wise and unwise a debtor I am?" Thou hast made perfect the sun and the moon.

20. Ver. 17. Thou hast made all the ends of the earth. Had He not also made them before, when He founded the earth? But in what manner hath He made the ends of the earth, Who hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth? In what manner save in that manner whereof the Apostle saith, But by grace we are saved, and that not of ourselves, but God's gift it is; not of works, lest perchance a man be exalted. Therefore were there no good works? There were: but in what manner? By the grace of God. Go on, let us see; For of Himself we are the workmanship created in Christ Jesus in good works. Behold in what manner He hath made the ends of the earth, That hath wrought Salvation in the midst of the earth. Thou hast made all the ends of the earth. Summer and spring Thou hast made them. Men fervent in the Spirit are the summer. Thou, I say, hast made men fervent in the Spirit: Thou hast made also the novices in the Faith, they are the spring. Summer and spring Thou hast made them. They shall not glory as if they have not received: Thou hast made them.

21. Ver. 18. Mindful be Thou of this Thy creature. Of what creature of Thine? The enemy hath reviled the Lord. O Asaph, grieve over thine old

blindness in understanding: the enemy hath reviled the Lord. It was said to Christ in His own nation, a sinner is this Man: we know not whence He is: we know Moses, to him spake God; this Man is a Samaritan. The enemy hath reviled the Lord; and the unwise people hath provoked Thy name. The unwise people Asaph was at that time, but not the understanding of Asaph at that time. What is said in the former Psalm? As it were a beast I have become unto Thee, and I am alway with Thee: because He went not to the gods and idols of the Gentiles. Although he knew not, being like a beast, yet he knew again as a man. For he said, alway I am with Thee, like a beast: and what afterwards in that place in the same Psalm, where Asaph is? Thou hast held the hand of my right hand, in Thy will Thou hast conducted me, and with glory Thou hast taken me up. In Thy will, not in my righteousness: by Thy gift, not by my work. Therefore here also, the enemy hath reviled the Lord: and the unwise people hath provoked Thy name. Have they all then perished? Far be it. Even if some of the branches have been broken, there remain nevertheless some whereupon the wild olive might be graffed in, and the root remaineth, and out of those same branches through unbelief broken there have been recovered some through faith. For even the Apostle Paul through unbelief had been broken, and through faith unto the root he was restored. So evidently the unwise people provoked Thy name, when it was said, If Son of God He is, let Him come down from the Cross.

22. But what sayest thou, O Asaph, now in understanding? (Ver. 19.) Deliver not to the beasts a soul confessing to Thee. I acknowledge, saith Asaph: for, as in another Psalm is said, My sin I am conscious of, and my evil-doing I have not covered. Wherefore? Because Peter hath spoken to the Israelites marvelling at the tongues; how that they themselves killed Christ, though for their sakes Christ was sent. When they heard this, they were pricked in heart, and they said to the Apostles, What then shall we do? tell us. And the Apostles, Do penance, and be baptized each one of you in the name of the Lord Jesu Christ, and there shall be remitted to you your sins. Because then through penance confession hath come: deliver not to the beasts a soul confessing to Thee. Why confessing to Thee? Because I am converted in sorrow, while the thorn is being thrust in. They were pricked in heart, and they became sorrowful in penance, that had been boastful in their saying. Deliver not to the beasts a soul confessing to Thee. To what beasts,

save to those the heads whereof were broken in pieces upon the water? For the same devil is called, beast, lion, and dragon. Do not, he saith, give to the Devil and his Angels a soul confessing to Thee. Let the serpent devour, if still I mind things earthly, if for things earthly I long, if still in the promises of the Old Testament, after the revealing of the New, I remain. But forasmuch as now I have laid down pride, and my own righteousness I will not acknowledge, but Thy Grace; against me let proud beasts have no power. Deliver not to the beasts a soul confessing Thee. The souls of Thy poor forget Thou not unto the end. Rich we were, strong we were: but Thou hast dried up the rivers of Etham: no longer we establish our own righteousness, but we acknowledge Thy Grace; poor we are, hearken to Thy beggars. Now we do not dare to lift our eyes to Heaven, but smiting our breasts we say, “O Lord, be Thou merciful to me a sinner.” The souls of Thy poor forget not at the end.

23. Ver. 20. Have regard unto Thy Testament. Fulfil that which Thou hast promised: the tables we have, for the inheritance we are looking. Have regard unto Thy Testament, not that old one: not for the sake of the land of Canaan I ask, not for the sake of the temporal subduing of enemies, not for the sake of carnal fruitfulness of sons, not for the sake of earthly riches, not for the sake of temporal welfare: Have regard unto Thy Testament, wherein Thou hast promised the kingdom of Heaven. Now I acknowledge Thy Testament: now understanding is Asaph, no beast is Asaph, now he seeth that which was spoken of, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, and I will accomplish with the House of Israel and of Juda a new Testament, not after the Testament which I ordered with their fathers.” Have regard unto Thy Testament: for they that have been darkened have been filled of the earth of unrighteous houses: because they had unrighteous hearts. Our ‘houses’ are our hearts: therein gladly dwell they that are blessed with pure heart. Have regard, therefore, unto Thy Testament: and let the remnant be saved: for many men that give heed to earth are darkened, and filled with earth. For there hath entered into their eyes dust, and it hath blinded them, and they have become dust which the wind sweepeth from the face of the earth. They that have been darkened have been filled of the earth of unrighteous houses. For by giving heed to earth they have been darkened, concerning whom there is said in another Psalm, Let their eyes be blinded,

that they see not, and their back ever bow Thou down. With earth, then, they that have been darkened have been filled, with the earth of unrighteous houses: because they have unrighteous hearts. For our houses, as we have said above, are our hearts: therein gladly we dwell, if we cleanse them from that iniquity: there is the evil conscience, which driveth the man from thence, whereunto he is bidden to go, carrying his bed, whose sins have been remitted, at the Lord's saying, Take up thy bed, and go into thine house: carry thy flesh, and enter into thy conscience that is now made whole. For they that have been darkened have been filled of the earth of unrighteous houses. They have been darkened, they have been filled with earth. They that have been obscured are who? They that have unrighteous hearts. To them the Lord rendereth after their heart.

24. Ver. 21. Let not the humble man be turned away confounded. For them pride hath confounded. The needy and helpless man shall praise Thy name. Ye see, brethren, how sweet ought to be poverty: ye see that poor and helpless men belong to God, but poor in spirit, for of them is the Kingdom of Heaven. Who are the poor in spirit? The humble, men trembling at the words of God, confessing their sins, neither on their own merits, nor on their own righteousness relying. Who are the poor in spirit? They who when they do any thing of good, praise God, when any thing of evil, accuse themselves. Upon whom shall rest My Spirit, saith the Prophet, but upon the humble man, and peaceful, and trembling at My words? Now therefore Asaph hath understood, now to the earth he adhereth not, now the earthly promises out of the Old Testament he requireth not. Thy beggar he hath become; Thy poor man he hath become; for Thy rivers he is thirsting, for his own have been dried up. Seeing then such an one he hath become, may he not be defrauded of his hope; he hath sought with hands by night in Thy presence, let him not be deceived; Let not the humble man be turned away confounded: the needy and helpless man shall praise Thy name. Confessing their sins, they shall praise Thy name; longing for Thine eternal promises, they shall praise Thy name: not they that are puffed up because of things temporal, not they that because of their own righteousness are lifted up and distended, not they; but who? The needy and helpless man shall praise Thy name.

25. Ver. 22. Arise, O Lord, judge Thou my cause. For forsaken I seem, for not yet I have received that which Thou hast promised: and my tears have become for me bread by day and by night, while it is said to me daily, Where is thy God? And because I am not able to shew my God, as if I were following an empty thing, they revile me. And not only Heathen, or Jew, or heretic; but sometimes even a Catholic brother doth make a grimace when the promises of God are being preached, when a future resurrection is being foretold. And still even he, though already washed with the water of eternal Salvation, bearing the Sacrament of Christ, perchance saith, ‘and what man hath yet risen again?’ And, ‘I have not heard my father speaking out of the grave, since I buried him!’ ‘God hath given to His servants a law for time, to which let them betake themselves: for what man cometh back from beneath?’ And what shall I do with such men? Shall I shew them what they see not? I am not able: for not for the sake of them ought God to become visible. Now let them do this, if they so please, let them thus do, thus endeavour; because they themselves will not be changed for the better, let them change God for the worse. Let him see that is able, let him believe that is not able, that there is a God. And if he seeth that is able, doth he with eyes see? With understanding he seeth, with heart he seeth. For not sun and moon He willed to shew, Who said, Blessed are they of pure heart, for they shall see God. But an impure heart is meet not even for faith, so as that it may even believe that which it seeth not. I see not, he saith: what am I to believe? Thy soul is seen then, I suppose? Fool, thy body is seen: thy soul who doth see? Since therefore thy body alone is seen, why art thou not buried? He marvelleth that I have said, If body alone is seen, why art thou not buried? And he answereth, (for he knoweth as much as this,) Because I am alive. How know I that thou art alive, of whom I see not the soul? How know I? Thou wilt answer, Because I speak, because I walk, because I work. Fool, by the operations of the body I know thee to be living, by the works of creation canst thou not know the Creator? And perchance he that saith, when I shall be dead, afterwards I shall be nothing; hath both learned letters, and hath learned this doctrine from Epicurus, who was a sort of doting philosopher, or rather lover of folly not of wisdom, whom even the philosophers themselves have named the hog: who said that the ‘chief good’ was pleasure of body; this philosopher they have named the hog, wallowing in carnal mire. From him perchance this lettered man hath

learned to say, I shall not be, after I have died. Dried be the rivers of Etham! Perish those doctrines of the Gentiles, flourish the plantations of Jerusalem! Let them see what they can, in heart believe what they cannot see! Certainly all those things which throughout the world now are seen, when God was working Salvation in the midst of the earth, when those things were being spoken of, they were not then as yet: and behold at that time they were foretold, now they are shewn as fulfilled, and still the fool saith in his heart, there is no God. Woe to the perverse hearts: for so will there come to pass the things which remain, as there have come to pass the things which at that time were not, and were being foretold as to come to pass. Hath God indeed performed to us all the things which He promised, and concerning the Day of Judgment alone hath He deceived us? Christ was not on the earth; He promised, He hath performed: no virgin had conceived; He promised, He hath performed: the precious Blood had not been shed whereby there should be effaced the hand-writing of our death; He promised, He hath performed: not yet had flesh risen again unto life eternal; He promised, He hath performed: not yet had the Gentiles believed; He promised, He hath performed: not yet heretics armed with the name of Christ, against Christ were warring; He foretold, He hath performed: not yet the idols of the Gentiles from the earth had been effaced; He foretold, He hath performed: when all these things He hath foretold and performed, concerning the Day of Judgment alone hath He lied? It will come by all means as these things came; for even these things before they came to pass were future, and as future were first foretold, and afterwards they came to pass. It will come, my brethren. Let no one say, it will not come: or, it will come, but far off is that which will come. But to thyself it is near at hand to go hence. Let the first deception suffice: if we have not been able to remain in the precept, at least let us be amended by example. Not yet was there an example of human falling, when it was said to Adam, With death thou shalt die, if thou shalt have touched. And there came athwart the serpent, and said, Thou shalt not die with death. Believed was the serpent, despised was God: believed was the serpent, touched was the thing forbidden, man died. Was there not more fulfilled that which God had threatened than what the enemy had promised? So it is indeed: we acknowledge this; thence all men are under death: now that we have experience let us beware. For even now the serpent doth not cease to whisper in our ears and to say, Will God indeed condemn so great multitudes, and save so few? What else is this but, Do contrary to commandment, ye will not die? But as it was then, so also it is now. If thou shalt have done that which the devil doth suggest, and shalt have despised that which God hath commanded; there will come the Judgment Day, and thou wilt find that true which God hath threatened, and that false which the devil hath promised. Arise, O Lord, judge Thou my cause. ‘Dead thou art, and despised thou art;’ it is being said to me, ‘Where is thy God?’ Arise, judge Thou my cause. For there is not to come to judgment any but He that hath arisen from the dead. As to come He was foretold, He came, and He was despised by the Jews while walking upon the earth; He is despised by false Christians while sitting in Heaven. Arise, O Lord, judge Thou my cause. Because in Thee I have believed, let me not perish; because I have believed that which I have not seen, of my hope let me not be beguiled, let me receive that which Thou hast promised. Judge Thou my cause. Remember Thy reproaches, those which are from the imprudent man all the day long. For still Christ is reviled: nor will there be wanting all the day long, that is, even unto the end of time, the vessels of wrath. Still is it being said, ‘Vain things the Christians do preach:’ still is it being said, ‘A fond thing is the resurrection of the dead.’ Judge Thou my cause: remember Thy reproaches. But what reproaches, save those which are from the imprudent man all the day long? Doth a prudent man say this? Nay, for a prudent man is said to be one far-seeing. If a prudent man is one far-seeing, by faith he seeth afar: for with eyes scarce that before the feet is seen. All the day long.

26. Ver. 23. Forget not the voice of them that implore Thee. While they groan for and expect now that which Thou hast promised from the New Testament, and walk by that same Faith, do Thou not forget the voice of them imploring Thee. But those still say, Where is Thy God? Let the pride of them that hate Thee come up alway to Thee. Do not forget even their pride. Nor doth He forget: no doubt He doth either punish or amend.

PSALM 75

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

1. This Psalm to the swelling of pride applieth the medicine of humility; but the humble it doth comfort in hope: with this design, that not any one may proudly rely on himself, that not any humble man may despair of the Lord. For the promise of God is ratified, sure, fixed, and unshaken, faithful, and devoid of all doubt, which doth comfort the afflicted. For the whole life of man upon the earth, as it is written, is trial. Nor is one as it were prosperous to be chosen, and adversity alone to be shunned; but of both we are to beware, of the one lest it corrupt, of the other lest it crush: so that for every man, in whatever state of affairs he shall have lived in this life, there may be no refuge but God, nor any joy but in His promises. For this life with whatsoever felicity overflowing doth deceive many men, God no man. Because then to every man, when converted unto God, his pursuit is changed, his pleasures are changed: (for they are not withdrawn, but are changed:) so all our pleasures in this life are not yet in substance, but in hope, but the hope itself is so sure, that to all this world's pleasures it is to be preferred, as it is written, delight thyself in the Lord. And that thou mightest not think thyself already to have that which He doth promise, he added forthwith, and He shall give thee the petitions of thy heart. If then not yet thou hast the petitions of thy heart, whence dost thou delight in the Lord, except because thou hast a sure promiser, who hath made Himself by promising a debtor? Of this entreaty then, in order that our hope may remain with us, and that we may be introduced unto that which God hath promised, the Title of this Psalm speaketh: At the end, corrupt not. What is, corrupt not? That which Thou hast promised, perform. But when? At the end. To this then let the mind's eye be directed, unto the end. Let all the things which have occurred in the way be passed over, in order that we may attain to the end. Let proud men exult because of present felicity, let them swell with honours, glitter in gold, overflow with domestics, be encircled

with the services of clients: these things pass away, they pass away like a shadow. When that end shall have come, when all who now hope in the Lord are to rejoice, then to them shall come sorrow without end. When the meek shall have received that which the proud deride, then the vapouring of the proud shall be turned into mourning. Then shall there be that voice which we know in the Book of Wisdom: for they shall say at that time when they see the glory of the Saints, who, when they were in humiliation, endured them; who, when they were exalted, consented not—at that time then they shall say, These are they whom sometime we have had in derision. Where they also say, What hath pride profited us, and the boasting of riches hath bestowed upon us what? All things have passed away like a shadow. Because on things corruptible they relied, their hope shall be corrupted: but our own hope at that time shall be substance. For in order that the promise of God may remain whole and sure and certain towards us, we have said out of a heart of faith, at the end corrupt not. Fear not, therefore, lest any mighty man should corrupt the promises of God. He doth not corrupt, because He is truthful; He hath no one more mighty by whom His promise may be corrupted: let us be then sure concerning the promises of God; and let us sing now from the place where the Psalm beginneth.

2. Ver. 1. We will confess to Thee, O Lord, we will confess to Thee, and will invoke Thy name. Do not invoke, before thou confess: confess, and invoke. For Him Whom thou art invoking, unto thyself thou callest. For what is it to invoke, but unto thyself to call? If He is invoked by thee, that is, if He is called to thee, unto whom doth He draw near? To a proud man He draweth not near. High indeed He is, one lifted up attaineth not unto Him. In order that we may reach all exalted objects, we raise ourselves, and if we are not able to reach them, we look for some appliances or ladders, in order that being exalted we may reach exalted objects: contrariwise God is both high, and by the lowly He is reached. It is written, Nigh is the Lord to them that have bruised the heart. The bruising of the heart is Godliness, humility. He that bruiseth himself is angry with himself. Let him make himself angry in order that he may make Him merciful; let him make himself judge, in order that he may make Him Advocate. Therefore God doth come when invoked. Unto whom doth He come? To the proud man He cometh not. Hear another testimony: Exalted is the Lord, and things lowly

He regardeth; but things exalted from afar He scanneth. Exalted is the Lord, and things lowly He regardeth, not from afar, but things exalted from afar He scanneth. And lest perchance when it was being said that He regardeth things lowly, proud men should rejoice for their impunity, as if He that dwelleth in exalted places doth not observe them in their pride; they are terrified, and there is said to them, He seeth you and scanneth you, but from afar. Those He maketh blessed, unto whom He approacheth: but ye, He saith, O proud men, O exalted men, shall not be unpunished, because He scanneth; shall not be blessed, because from afar He scanneth you. Take heed therefore what ye do: for if He knoweth, He is not unobservant. It is better therefore that He be unobservant than known. For what is that same being unobservant, but not knowing? What is, not to know? Not to animadvert. For even as the act of one avenging animadversion is wont to be spoken of. Hear one praying that He be unobservant: Turn away Thy face from my sins. What then wilt thou do if He shall have turned away His face from thee? A grievous thing it is, and to be feared, lest He forsake thee. Again, if He turn not away His face, He animadverteth. God knoweth this thing, God can do this thing, namely, both turn away face from one sinning, and not turn away from one confessing. Therefore in one place to Him is said, Turn away Thy face from my sins: and in another place to Him is said, Turn not away Thy face from me. There, from my sins turn away; but here, from me turn not away. Confess therefore and invoke. For by confessing thou purgest the Temple, into which He may come, when invoked. Confess and invoke. May He turn away face from thy sins, not turn away from thee: turn away face from that which thou hast wrought, not turn away from that which He hath Himself wrought. For thee, as man, He hath Himself wrought, thy sins thou hast thyself wrought. Confess, therefore, and invoke: say, We will confess to Thee, O Lord, we will confess to Thee.

3. This repetition is confirmation, that it doth not repent thee to have confessed. For not to any cruel one thou hast confessed, nor to one vindictive, nor to one that upbraideth; confess securely. Hear another voice of a Psalm exhorting: Confess ye to the Lord, for good He is. What is, for good He is? Why do ye fear to confess? Good He is, He is unobservant when one confesseth. Fear to confess to a human judge, lest perchance he punish thee after confession: to God, fear not: make Him by confessing

merciful, Whom by denying thou dost not make ignorant. We will confess to Thee, O God, we will confess, and now being secure, we will invoke Thy name. We have emptied our hearts by confession, Thou hast terrified, hast purged. Confession doth make us humble: draw Thou near to us humble Who dost withdraw from us exalted. But that there is a strengthening of the sense in repetition, by many passages of the Scriptures we are taught. Thence is that which the Lord saith, Verily, Verily. Thence in certain Psalms is, So be it, So be it. To signify the thing, one So be it would have been sufficient: to signify confirmation, there hath been added another So be it. Pharaoh, king of Egypt—ye know how that, when Joseph was in that country because of his love of chastity now shut up in prison, this Pharaoh saw a dream well known to us all, by seven lean kine there were devoured seven fat kine, and again that by seven thin ears of corn were devoured seven fruitful ears. And how did Joseph interpret? If ye remember, he said that these dreams were not two, but one vision. One is, he saith, their interpretation: but that thou hast seen it again, he saith, doth signify confirmation. These words I have said, that ye may not suppose that repetition in the words of the holy language is, as it were, a love of talkativeness. Ofttimes therein repetition hath the force of confirmation. Prepared is my heart, O God, he saith, prepared is my heart. In another place he saith, Wait for the Lord, do manfully, and may He strengthen thy heart, and wait for the Lord. Countless passages of such sort there are throughout all the Scriptures. With these it is sufficient that we have commended to your notice a way of speaking which ye may observe in all like cases: now to the substance attend: We will confess to Thee, he saith, and we will invoke. I have said why before invocation confession doth precede: because whom thou dost invoke, him thou dost invite. But he willeth not to come when invoked, if thou shalt have been lifted up: lifted up if thou shalt have been, thou wilt not be able to confess. And thou deniest not any things to God that He knoweth not. Therefore thy confession doth not teach Him, but it purgeth thee.

4. And now he hath confessed, he hath invoked: yea, they have confessed, they have invoked; and it is said in the person of one man, I will tell forth all Thy marvellous things. Having confessed, he hath emptied himself of evil things, invoking, he hath filled himself with good things; in telling

forth he hath belched out that wherewith he hath filled himself. And observe, brethren, when they were confessing there were many: We will confess to Thee, O God, we will confess to Thee, and we will invoke Thy name. For many are the hearts of men confessing, one of men believing. Why is it that many are the hearts of men confessing, one of men believing? Because divers sins men confess, one faith they believe. Now therefore when Christ hath begun to dwell in the inner man through faith, and hath begun when invoked to possess him that hath confessed; there is made up whole Christ, Head and Body, and out of many, One. Hear ye now the words of Christ. For these seemed not as it were to be His words, We will confess to Thee, O God, we will confess to Thee, and will invoke Thy name. Now beginneth the discourse in the person of the Head. But whether Head speaketh or whether members speak, Christ speaketh: He speaketh in the person of the Head, He speaketh in the person of the Body. But what hath been said? There shall be two in one flesh. This is a great Sacrament: I, he saith, speak in Christ and in the Church. And He Himself in the Gospel, Therefore no longer two, but one flesh. For in order that ye may know these in a manner to be two persons, and again one by the bond of marriage, as one He speaketh in Isaiah, and saith, As upon a Bridegroom he hath bound upon me a mitre, and as a Bride he hath clothed me with an ornament. A Bridegroom He hath called Himself in the Head, a Bride in the Body. He is speaking therefore as One, let us hear Him, and in Him let us also speak. Let us be the members of Him, in order that this voice may possibly be ours also. I will tell forth, he saith, all Thy marvellous things. Christ is preaching Himself, He is preaching Himself even in His members now existing, in order that He may guide unto Him others, and they may draw near that were not, and may be united with those members of Him, through which members of Him the Gospel hath been preached; and there may be made one Body under one Head, in one Spirit, in one Life.

5. Ver. 2. And he saith what? When I shall have received, he saith, the time, I will judge justices. When shall He judge justices? When He shall have received the time. Not yet is the precise time. Thanks to His mercy: He first preacheth justices, and then He judgeth justices. For if He willed to judge before He willed to preach, who would be found that should be delivered: who would meet Him that should be absolved? Now therefore is the time of

preaching: I will tell, he saith, all Thy marvellous works. Hear Him telling, hear Him preaching: for if thou shalt have despised Him, when I shall have received the time, He saith, I will judge justices. I forgive, He saith, now sins to one confessing, I will not spare hereafter one despising. Mercy and judgment I will sing to Thee, O Lord, is said in a Psalm. Mercy and judgment: now mercy, hereafter judgment: in which mercy sins are forgiven, in which judgment sins are punished. Wilt thou not fear the punisher of sinners? Love the forgiver, scorn Him not, exalt not thyself, say not, I have nothing which He may forgive me: for hear what followeth, When I shall have received the time I will judge justices. Hath Christ received a time? Hath the Son of God received a time? The Son of God hath not received a time: but the Son of Man hath received a time. But the self-same Person is both Son of God by Whom we were made, and Son of Man by Whom we were made again. By the assuming of man He was not Himself assumed, by the changing of man into something better He was by no means changed into any thing worse: He ceased not to be what He was, He received that which He was not. He was what? Seeing that in form of God He was, no robbery He judged it to be equal with God. They are the words of the Apostle. And He received what? But he emptied Himself, receiving the form of a servant. As the form of a servant He hath received, so also a time He hath received. He hath been changed then? Hath been wasted? Hath been made thinner? Hath fallen off into wasting? Far be it! What then? He hath emptied Himself, receiving the form of a servant. He hath been said to have emptied Himself by receiving an inferior, not by degenerating from an equal. Therefore, brethren, what is this, When I shall have received the time I will judge justices? He hath received a time as Son of Man; He doth govern times as Son of God. Hear how as Son of Man He hath received the time of judging. He saith in the Gospel, He hath given to Him power to execute judgment, because Son of Man He is. According to His nature as Son of God, He hath never received power of judging, because He never lacked the power of judging: according to His nature as Son of Man He hath received a time, as of being born, and of suffering, as of dying, and of rising again, and of ascending, so of coming and of judging. In Him His Body also saith these words, for not without them He will judge. For He saith in the Gospel, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Therefore whole Christ saith, that is, Head and Body in the Saints, when I shall have received the time, I will judge justices.

6. But now what? (Ver. 3.) The earth hath flowed down. If the earth hath flowed down, whence hath it flowed down except by sins? Therefore also they are called delinquencies. To delinquish is as it were by a kind of liquidity to slip down from the stability of firmness in virtue and righteousness. For it is through desire of lower things that every man sinneth: as he is strengthened by the love of higher things, so he falleth down and as it were melteth away by desire of lower things. This flux of things by the sins of man the merciful forgiver observing, being a merciful forgiver of sins, not yet an exactor of punishments, He observeth and saith: The earth hath flowed down, and all they that dwell therein. The earth herself indeed hath flowed down by them that dwell in her. That which followeth is an exposition, not an addition. As though thou wert saying, in what manner hath the earth flowed down? Have the foundations been withdrawn, and hath any thing therein been swallowed up in a sort of gulf? What I mean by earth is all they that dwell therein. I have found, he saith, the earth sinful. And I have done what? I have strengthened the pillars thereof. What are the pillars which He hath strengthened? Pillars He hath called the Apostles. So the Apostle Paul concerning his fellow-Apostles saith, who seemed to be pillars. And what would those pillars have been, except by Him they had been strengthened? For on occasion of a sort of earthquake even these very pillars rocked: at the Passion of the Lord all the Apostles despaired. Therefore those pillars which rocked at the Passion of the Lord, by the Resurrection were strengthened. The Beginning of the building hath cried out through the pillars thereof, and in all those pillars the Architect Himself hath cried out. For the Apostle Paul was one pillar of them when he said, Would ye receive a proof of Him that speaketh in me—Christ? Therefore, I, he saith, have strengthened the pillars thereof: I have risen again, I have shewn that death is not to be feared, I have shewn to them that fear, that not even the body itself doth perish in the dying. There terrified them wounds, there strengthened them scars. The Lord Jesus could have risen again without any scar: for what great matter were it for that power, to restore the frame of the body to such perfect soundness, as that no trace at all of past wound should appear? He had power whence He might

make it whole even without scar: but He willed to have that whereby He might strengthen the rocking pillars.

7. We have heard now, brethren, that which day by day is not kept secret: let us hear now what He hath cried through these pillars. It is time to hear because of that terrific utterance, I will judge justices when I shall have received the time. He is to receive the time of judging justices, ye even now have the time of doing justices. If He kept silence, ye would not have any thing to do: but to the strengthened pillars He crieth. He crieth what? (Ver. 4.) I have said to unjust men, Do not unjustly. He crieth, my brethren, truly ye cry, He delighteth you, hear ye Him crying. By Himself I pray, let that voice terrify you: these voices of yours ought not so much to delight us, as those to terrify you. I have said to unjust men, Do not unjustly. But already they have done, and they are guilty: already there hath flowed down the earth, and all they that dwell therein. Pricked to the heart were they that crucified Christ, they acknowledged their sin, they learned something of the Apostle, that they might not despair of the pardon of the Preacher. For as Physician He had come, and therefore had not come to the whole. For there is no need, He saith, to the whole of a physician, but to them that are sick. I have not come to call righteous men, but sinners to repentance. Therefore, I have said to unjust men, do not unjustly. They heard not. For of old to us it was spoken: we heard not, we fell, were made mortal, were begotten mortal: the earth flowed down. Let them hear the Physician even now in order that they may rise, Him that came to the sick man, Him Whom they would not hear when whole in order that they might not fall, let them hear when lying down in order that they may rise. I have said to the unjust, Do not unjustly. How must we act? We have already done. And to the delinquents, Do not exalt your horn. What is this? If ye have done iniquity through lust, do not defend it by being lifted up: confess if ye have done it. For he that confesseth not and is unjust, doth exalt the horn. I have said to unjust men, Do not unjustly; and to the delinquent, Do not exalt your horn. There shall be exalted in you the horn of Christ, if your horn be not exalted. Your horn is of iniquity, the horn of Christ is of majesty.

8. Ver. 5. Be not therefore lifted up: speak not iniquity against God. Hear ye now the voices of many, let each one hear, let him be pricked. What are

men wont to say? Doth God truly judge concerning things human? And is this a judgment of God? Or doth He indeed care for what is being done on the earth? So many unjust men do overflow with prosperity, innocent men are weighed down with toils. For to one hath chanced something of ill, by God's reproof and admonition, and he knoweth his conscience, knoweth that for his sin's deserts he may suffer somewhat: whence doth he dispute against God? Because he is not able to say, A just man I am: what do we suppose that he saith? There are worse unrighteous men, and yet these things they suffer not. This is the iniquity which men speak against God. But observe how unjust it is: while he willeth himself to seem a just man, Him he maketh unjust. For he that saith, Unjustly I suffer that which I suffer; doth make Him unjust, by whose judgment he is suffering; but himself just, who is suffering unjustly. I ask you, brethren of mine, is this just, that God be believed to be unjust, thou just? But when thou art saying these words thou art speaking against God, iniquity.

9. What saith He in another Psalm? These things thou hast done, having enumerated certain sins. These things thou hast done, He saith, and was silent. What is, I was silent? He is never silent with commandment, but meanwhile He is silent with punishment: He is keeping still from vengeance, He doth not pronounce sentence against the condemned. But this man saith thus, I have done such and such things, and God hath not taken vengeance; behold I am whole, nought of ill hath befallen me. These things thou hast done, and I was silent: thou hast suspected iniquity, that I shall be like unto thee. What is, that I shall be like unto thee? Because thou art unjust, even Me thou hast deemed unjust; as though an approver of thy misdeeds, and no adversary, no avenger thereof. And what afterwards saith He to thee? I will convict thee, and will set thee before thine own face? What is this? Because now by sinning behind thy back thou settest thyself, seest not thyself, examinest not thyself; I will set thee before thyself, and will bring upon thee punishment from thyself. So also here, Speak not iniquity against God. Attend. Many men speak this iniquity; but dare not openly, lest as blasphemers they be abhorred by godly men: in their heart they gnaw upon these things, within they feed upon such impious food; it delighteth them to speak against God, and if they break not out with tongue, in heart they are not silent. Whence in another Psalm is said, The fool hath

said in his heart, There is no God. The fool hath said, but he hath feared men: he would not say it where men might hear; and he said it in that place where He might Himself hear concerning Whom he said it. Therefore here also in this Psalm, (dearly beloved attend,) whereas that which He said, Do not speak iniquity against God, this He saw many men do in heart, He hath also added, (ver. 6.) for neither from East, nor from West, nor from the deserts of the mountains, (ver. 7.) for God is Judge. Of thine iniquities God is Judge. If God He is, every where He is present. Whither wilt thou take thyself away from the eyes of God, so that in some quarter thou mayest speak that which He may not hear? If from the East God judgeth, withdraw into the West, and say what thou wilt against God: if from the West, go into the East, and there speak: if from the deserts of the mountains He judgeth, go into the midst of the peoples, where thou mayest murmur to thyself. From no place judgeth He That every where is secret, every where open; whom it is allowed no one to know as He is, and whom no one is permitted not to know. Take heed what thou doest. Thou art speaking iniquity against God. The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the round world, (another Scripture saith this,) and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice: wherefore he that speaketh unjust things cannot be hid. Do not therefore think God to be in places: He is with thee such an one as thou shalt have been. What is, such an one as thou shalt have been? Good, if thou shalt have been good; and evil to thee He will seem, if evil thou shalt have been; but a Helper, if good thou shalt have been; an Avenger, if evil thou shalt have been. There thou hast a Judge in thy secret place. Willing to do something of evil, from the public thou retirest into thy house, where no enemy may see; from those places of thine house which are open and before the eyes of men, thou removest thyself into a chamber; thou fearest even in thy chamber some witness from some other quarter, thou retirest into thy heart, there thou meditatest: He is more inward than thy heart. Whithersoever therefore thou shalt have fled, there He is. From thyself whither wilt thou flee? Wilt thou not follow thyself whithersoever thou shalt flee? But since there is One more inward even than thyself, there is no place whither thou mayest flee from God angry, but to God reconciled. There is no place at all whither thou mayest flee. Wilt thou flee from Him? Flee to Him. Therefore speak not iniquity against God, even there where ye speak. Iniquity, he saith, he hath meditated in his bed. What is, ‘He hath meditated in his bed?’ The bed, calling his heart; Sacrifice the sacrifice of justice, and hope in the Lord. But above he said, Say ye in your hearts, and in your beds be pricked. However many prickings of evil deeds thou hast there, so many prickings of confession have thou there. Where then thou speakest iniquity against God, there He judgeth thee: He doth not defer judgment, but punishment. Now He judgeth, now He knoweth, now He seeth: punishment remaineth; when it shall have been set before thee, thou wilt have the punishment also, when there shall have appeared the face of that Man, Who was here derided, Who was judged, Who was crucified, Who stood before a judge, when He shall have appeared judging in His own presence, then thou shalt have punishment, if thou shalt not have amended thyself. What then shall we do now? Let us come before His face, ἐν ἐξομολογήσει, come before in confession: He shall come gentle Whom thou hadst made angry. Neither from the deserts of the mountains, for God is Judge: not from the East, not from the West, not from the deserts of the mountains. Wherefore? For God is Judge. If in any place He were, He would not be God: but because God is Judge, not man, do not expect Him out of places. His place thou wilt be, if thou art good, if after having confessed thou shalt have invoked Him.

10. Ver. 7. One He humbleth, and another He exalteth. Whom humbleth, whom exalteth this Judge? Observe these two men in the temple, and ye see whom He humbleth and whom He exalteth. They went up into the Temple to pray, He saith, the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican: the Pharisee said, Thanks to Thee I render, that I am not like the rest of men, unjust, robbers, adulterers, as even this Publican: I fast twice in the week, tithes I give of all things whatsoever I possess. To the Physician he had gone up, and was shewing whole limbs, he was hiding the wounds. What therefore said He, Who knew best what he had to be healed of? But the Publican was standing afar off, and was smiting his breast. Ye see him standing afar off: to Him he was drawing near, Whom he was invoking. And he was smiting his breast, saying, O God, be Thou merciful to me a sinner. Verily I say unto you, that Publican went down justified more than that Pharisee: for every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Thus hath been explained a verse of this Psalm. God the

Judge doth what? One He humbleth, and another He exalteth: He humbleth the proud, He exalteth the humble.

11. Ver. 8. For the cup in the hand of the Lord of pure wine is full of mixed. Justly so. And He hath poured out of this upon this man; nevertheless, the dreg thereof hath not been emptied; there shall drink all the sinners of earth. Let us be somewhat recruited; there is here some obscurity, as we have heard in a very recent lesson in the Gospel; Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. But thou sayest, At what am I to knock, in order that it may be opened unto me? Neither from East nor from West, neither from the deserts of the mountains, for God is Judge. If present He is in this place and in that, and absent no where, where thou art standing, there knock: there only stand, for by standing thou dost knock. What then is this? The first question that meeteth us is this, of pure wine it is full of mixed. How of pure, if of mixed? But when he saith, the cup in the hand of the Lord, (to men instructed in the Church of Christ I am speaking,) ye ought not indeed to paint in your heart God as it were circumscribed with a human form, lest, though the temples are shut up, ye forge images in your hearts. This cup therefore doth signify something. We will find out this. But in the hand of the Lord, is, in the power of the Lord. For the hand of God is spoken of for the power of God. For even in reference to men ofttimes is said, in hand he hath it: that is, in his power he hath it, when he chooseth he doth it. Of pure wine it is full of mixed. In continuation he hath himself explained: He hath inclined, he saith, from this unto this man; nevertheless the dreg thereof hath not been emptied. Behold how it was full of mixed wine. Let it not therefore terrify you that it is both pure and mixed: pure because of the genuineness thereof, mixed because of the dreg. What then in that place is the wine, and what the dreg? And what is, He hath inclined from this unto this man, in such sort that the dreg thereof was not emptied?

12. Call ye to mind from whence he came to this: one He humbleth, and another He exalteth. That which was figured to us in the Gospel through two men, a Pharisee and a Publican, this let us, taking in a wider sense, understand of two peoples, of Jews and of Gentiles: the people of the Jews that Pharisee was, the people of the Gentiles that Publican. The people of

the Jews were boasting of their merits, the Gentiles were confessing their sins. He that knoweth in the holy writings both the Apostolical Epistles and the Acts of the Apostles, seeth there what I say: not to make it long, it is just as the Apostles were exhorting the Gentiles not to despair, because they had lain in great sins; and were restraining the Jews from exalting themselves by the justifications, as it were, of the Law, and from supposing themselves to be on this account just, but the Gentiles to be sinners, because the Jews had the Law, and had the Temple, and had the Priesthood. But all those worshippers of idols, venerators of demons, were set afar off, just as that Publican was standing at a distance. As those by being proud have withdrawn, so these by confessing have drawn near. The cup therefore full of pure wine in the hand of the Lord, as far as the Lord giveth me to understand, (for there may be some other who may give a better interpretation, because the obscurity of the Scriptures is such that it is a difficult thing for them to produce but one interpretation. Nevertheless, whatever interpretation shall have been disclosed, it must needs accord with the rule of faith: we neither envy our elders, nor, little as we are, do we despair. What seemeth good to us I am telling Your Love, not that I may stop up your ears against others, who will perchance say something better:)—the cup of pure wine full of the mixed, seemeth to me to be the Law, which was given to the Jews, and all that Scripture of the Old Testament, as it is called; there are the weights of all manner of sentences. For therein the New Testament lieth concealed, as though in the dreg of corporal Sacraments. The circumcision of the flesh is a thing of great mystery, and there is understood from thence the circumcision of the heart. The Temple of Jerusalem is a thing of great mystery, and there is understood from it the Body of the Lord. The land of promise is understood to be the Kingdom of Heaven. The sacrifice of victims and of beasts hath a great mystery: but in all those kinds of sacrifices is understood that one Sacrifice and only victim of the Cross, the Lord, instead of all which sacrifices we have one; because even those figured these, that is, with those these were figured. That people received the Law, they received commandments just and good. What is so just as, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not speak false testimony, honour thy father and mother, thou shalt not covet the property of thy neighbour, one God thou shalt adore, and Him alone thou shalt serve, all these things belong to the wine.

But those things carnal have as it were sunk down in order that they might remain with them, and there might be poured forth from thence all the spiritual understanding. But the cup in the hand of the Lord, that is, in the power of the Lord: of pure wine, that is, of the mere Law: is full of mixed, that is is together with the dreg of corporal Sacraments. And because the one He humbleth, the proud Jew, and the other He exalteth, the confessing Gentile; He hath inclined from this unto this, that is, from the Jewish people unto the Gentile people. Hath inclined what? The Law. There hath distilled from thence a spiritual sense. Nevertheless, the dreg thereof hath not been emptied, for all the carnal Sacraments have remained with the Jews. There shall drink all the sinners of the earth. Who shall drink? All the sinners of the earth. Who are the sinners of the earth? The Jews were indeed sinners, but proud: again, the Gentiles were sinners, but humble. All sinners shall drink, but see, who the dreg, who the wine. For those by drinking the dreg have come to nought: these by drinking the wine have been justified. I would dare to speak of them even as inebriated, and I shall not fear: and O that all ye were thus inebriated. Call to mind, Thy cup inebriating, how passing beautiful! But why? Do ye think, my brethren, that all those who by confessing Christ even willed to die, were sober? So drunk they were, that they knew not their friends. All their kindred, who strove to divert them from the hope of Heavenly rewards by earthly allurements, were not acknowledged, were not heard by them drunken. Were they not drunken, whose heart had been changed? Were they not drunken, whose mind had been alienated from this world? There shall drink, he saith, all the sinners of the earth. But who shall drink the wine? Sinners shall drink, but in order that they may not remain sinners; in order that they may be justified, in order that they may not be punished.

13. Ver. 9. But I, for all drink, but separately I, that is, Christ with His Body, for ever will rejoice, I will Psalm to the God of Jacob: in that promise to be at the end, whereof is said, corrupt not. But I for ever will rejoice.

14. Ver. 10. And all the horns of sinners I will break, and there shall be exalted the horns of the Just. This is, the one He humbleth, the other He exalteth. Sinners would not have their horns to be broken, which without doubt will be broken at the end. Thou wilt not have Him then break them,

do thou to-day break them. For thou hast heard above, do not despise it: I have said to unjust men, Do not unjustly, and to the delinquents, Do not exalt the horn. When thou hast heard, do not exalt the horn, thou hast despised and hast exalted the horn: thou shalt come to the end, where there shall come to pass, All the horns of sinners I will break, and there shall be exalted the horns of the Just. The horns of sinners are the dignities of proud men: the horns of the Just are the gifts of Christ. For by horns exultations are understood. Thou hatest on earth earthly exultation, in order that thou mayest have the heavenly. Thou lovest the earthly, He doth not admit thee to the Heavenly: and unto confusion will belong thy horn which is broken, just as unto glory it will belong, if thy horn is exalted. Now therefore there is time for making choice, then there will not be. Thou wilt not say, I will be let go and will make choice. For there have preceded the words, I have said to the unjust. If I have not said, make ready an excuse, make ready a defence: but if I have said, seize first upon confession, lest thou come unto damnation; for then confession will be too late, and there will be no defence.

The present Volume is carried to the end of Psalm 101. or Psalm 100. in the Latin, where the MSS. of the ‘Second Part’ usually close. The latter part of the Volume is translated by the Rev. H. M. Wilkins, M.A. Fellow of Merton College, Oxford. The last Volumes of St. Chrysostom on St. Matthew, and on St. John, are in the Press, and likewise St. Chrysostom on the Acts, the Original of which is also preparing for Publication. The Greek Text of St. Chrysostom on the Epistles to the Galatians and Ephesians, and of Theodoret on the Romans, &c. may be expected in the course of next year.

C. M.

Advent, 1850.

PSALM 76

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty, wherein he disputeth against the Donatists, and treateth of vows.

1. The enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ, known unto all men, the Jews, are wont to glory in this Psalm which we have sung, saying, Known in Judæa is God, in Israel great is the name of Him: and to revile the Gentiles to whom God is not known, and to say that to themselves alone God is known; seeing that the Prophet saith, Known in Judæa is God: in other places therefore He is unknown. But God is known in very deed in Judæa, if they understand what is Judæa. For indeed God is not known except in Judæa. Behold even we say this, that except a person shall have been in Judæa, known to him God cannot be. But what saith the Apostle? He that in secret is a Jew, he that is so in circumcision of the heart, not in letter but in spirit. There are therefore Jews in circumcision of the flesh, and there are Jews in circumcision of the heart. Many of our holy fathers had both the circumcision of the flesh, for a seal of the faith, and circumcision of the heart, for the faith itself. From these fathers these men degenerating, who now in the name do glory, and have lost their deeds; from these fathers, I say, degenerating, they have remained in flesh Jews, in heart Heathens. For these are Jews, who are out of Abraham, from whom Isaac was born, and out of him Jacob, and out of Jacob the twelve Patriarchs, and out of the twelve Patriarchs the whole people of the Jews. But they were generally called Jews for this reason, that Judas was one of the twelve sons of Jacob, a Patriarch among the twelve, and from his stock the Royalty came among the Jews. For all this people after the number of the twelve sons of Jacob, had twelve tribes. What we call tribes are as it were distinct houses and congregations of people. That people, I say, had twelve tribes, out of which twelve tribes one tribe was Judah, out of which were the kings; and there was another tribe, Levi, out of which were the priests. But because to the priests serving the temple no land was allotted, but it was necessary that

among twelve tribes all the Land of promise should be shared: there having been therefore taken out one tribe of higher dignity, the tribe of Levi, which was of the priests, there would have remained eleven, unless by the adoption of the two sons of Joseph the number twelve were completed.

What this is, observe. One of the twelve sons of Jacob was Joseph. It is that Joseph whom his brethren sold into Egypt, and who there on account of his chastity was raised to an exalted station, and God was with him in all his work; and he received his brethren, by whom he had been sold, and his father, weighed down with famine and for the sake of bread going down into Egypt. This Joseph had two sons, Ephraim and Manasse. Jacob, dying, as though by will, received those his grandsons into the number of sons, and said to his son Joseph, The rest that are born shall be to thee; but these to me, and they shall divide the land with their brethren. As yet there had not been given nor divided the land of promise, but he was speaking in the Spirit prophesying. The two sons therefore of Joseph being added, there were made up nevertheless twelve tribes, since now there are thirteen. For instead of one tribe of Joseph, two were added, and there were made thirteen. There being taken out then the tribe of Levi, that tribe of priests which did serve the Temple, and lived by the tithes of all the rest unto whom the land was divided, there remain twelve. In these twelve was the tribe of Juda, whence the kings were. For at first from another tribe was given King Saul, and he was rejected as being an evil king; after there was given from the tribe of Judah King David, and out of him from the tribe of Judah were the Kings. But Jacob had spoken of this, when he blessed his sons, there shall not fail a prince out of Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until there come He to Whom the promise hath been made. But from the tribe of Judah there came Our Lord Jesus Christ. For He is, as the Scripture saith, and as ye have but now heard, out of the seed of David born of Mary. But as regardeth the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, wherein He is equal with the Father, He is not only before the Jews, but also before Abraham himself; nor only before Abraham, but also before Adam; nor only before Adam, but also before Heaven and earth and before ages: for all things by Himself were made, and without Him there was made nothing. Because therefore in prophecy hath been said, there shall not fail a prince out of Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until there come He for Whom the promise hath been made: former times are examined, and we find that the Jews always had their kings of the tribe of Judah, and had no foreign king before that Herod who was king when the Lord was born. Thence began foreign kings, from Herod. Before Herod all were of the tribe of Judah, but only until there should come He to Whom the promise had been made. Therefore when the Lord Himself came, the kingdom of the Jews was overthrown, and removed from the Jews. Now they have no king; because they will not acknowledge the true King. See now whether they must be called Jews. Now ye do see that they must not be called Jews. They have themselves with their own voice resigned that name, so that they are not worthy to be called Jews, except only in the flesh. When did they sever themselves from that name? They said—(they were raging against Christ, that is, the race of Judah was raging against the seed of David. And Pilate saith to them, Your King shall I crucify?)—they said, I say, We have no king but Cæsar. O ye who are called Jews and are not, if ye have no king but Cæsar, there hath failed a Prince of Judah: there hath come then He to Whom the promise hath been made. They then are more truly Jews, who have been made Christians out of Jews: the rest of the Jews, who in Christ have not believed, have deserved to lose even the very name. The true Judæa, then, is the Church of Christ, believing in that King, Who hath come out of the tribe of Judah through the Virgin Mary; believing in Him of Whom the Apostle was just now speaking, in writing to Timothy, Be thou mindful that Jesus Christ hath risen from the dead, of the seed of David, after my Gospel. For of Judah is David, and out of David is the Lord Jesus Christ. We believing in Christ do belong to Judah: and we acknowledge Christ. We, that with eyes have not seen, in faith do keep Him. Let not therefore the Jews revile, who are no longer Jews. They said themselves, We have no king but Cæsar. For better were it for them that their king should be Christ, of the seed of David, of the tribe of Judah. Nevertheless because Christ Himself is of the seed of David after the flesh, but God above all things blessed for ever, He is Himself our King and our God; our King, inasmuch as born of the tribe of Judah, after the flesh, was Christ the Lord, the Saviour; but our God, Who is before Judah, and before Heaven and earth, by Whom were made all things, both spiritual and corporal. For if all things by Himself were made; even Mary herself, out of whom He was born, by Himself was made. How then could He have been born like the rest of mankind, who made unto Himself a mother out of whom He might be born? Therefore He is Himself the Lord: the Apostle saying, when he was speaking of the Jews, of whom are the fathers, and out of whom is Christ after the flesh; Who is over all things, God blessed for ever. Because then the Jews saw Christ and crucified Him, they saw not God: but the Gentiles because they saw not and believed, have perceived God. Therefore if there appeared to them God in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, and they crucified Him because they perceived not God hidden in flesh: begone that which is called Judæa and is not; and let there draw near the true Judæa, to whom is said, Draw ye near to Him and be ye enlightened, and your faces shall not blush. The faces of the true Judæa shall not be put to confusion. For they have heard and have believed, and the Church hath become the true Judæa, where Christ is known, Who being Man of the seed of David, is God above David.

2. Known in Judæa is God, in Israel great is the Name of Him. Concerning Israel also we ought so to take it as we have concerning Judæa: as they were not the true Jews, so neither was that the true Israel. For what is Israel said to be? One seeing God. And how have they seen God, among whom He walked in the flesh; and while they supposed Him to be man, they slew Him? Rising again He appeared as God to all to whom He willed to manifest Himself. They then are worthy to be called Israel, who merited to perceive Christ, as God clothed in flesh, so that they despised not that which they saw, but adored that which they saw not. For though not seen to the eyes, the Gentiles with humble mind have perceived Him Whom they saw not, and in faith have retained Him. Again, they that in hands held Him, slew Him; they that in faith held Him, adored. In Israel great is His Name. Wilt thou be Israel? Observe that man concerning whom the Lord saith, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom guile is not. If a true Israelite is he in whom guile is not, the guileful and lying are not true Israelites. Let them not say then, that with them is God, and great is His name in Israel. Let them prove themselves Israelites, and I grant that in Israel great is His Name.

3. Ver. 2. And there hath been made in peace a place for Him, and His habitation is in Sion. Again, Sion is as it were the country of the Jews; the

true Sion is the Church of Christians. But the interpretation of the Hebrew names is thus handed down to us: Judæa is interpreted confession, Israel, one seeing God. After Judæa is Israel: so it hath been placed here, Known in Judæa is God, in Israel great is His Name. Wilt thou see God? First do thou confess, and then in thyself there is made a place for God; because there hath been made in peace a place for Him. So long as then thou confessest not thy sins, in a manner thou art quarrelling with God. For how art thou not disputing with Him, who art praising that which displeaseth Him? He punisheth a thief, thou dost praise theft: He doth punish a drunken man, thou dost praise drunkenness. Thou art disputing with God, thou hast not made for Him a place in thy heart: because in peace is His place. And how dost thou begin to have peace with God? Thou beginnest with Him in confession. There is a voice of a Psalm, saying, Begin ye to the Lord in confession. What is, Begin ye to the Lord in confession? Begin ye to be joined to the Lord. In what manner? So that the same thing may displease you as displeaseth Him. There displeaseth Him thy evil life; if it please thyself, thou art disunited from Him; if it displease thee, through confession to Him thou art united. See in how great measure thou art unlike Him, since indeed on account of that very unlikeness thou art displeasing to Him. Thou hast been made, O man, after the image of God: but through thy life being perverse and evil thou hast disturbed in thee and hast banished in thee the image of thy Creator. Having become unlike, thou lookest unto thyself and thou displeasest thyself: now from this time thou beginnest to become like, because the same thing is displeasing to thee as is displeasing to God also.

4. But how am I like, sayest thou, when I am still displeasing to myself? Therefore there hath been said, begin. Begin thou to the Lord in confession: thou wilt be made perfect in peace. For as yet thou hast war against thee. There is enjoined then a war, not only against the suggestions of the devil, against the prince of the power of this air, who worketh in the sons of unbelief, against the devil and his angels, the spiritual things of naughtiness; not only therefore against them war is enjoined thee, but against thyself. How against thyself? Against thy evil habit, against the oldness of thy evil life, which draweth thee to thy wonted life, and withholdeth thee from the new. For there is enjoined upon thee a kind of new life, and thou art old. By the joy of that newness thou art held aloft, by the burden of the oldness thou

art weighed down: there beginneth to be war for thee against thyself. But by the part wherein thou art displeased with thyself thou art being united to God; and by that part whereby thou art now being joined to God, thou wilt be meet to conquer thyself; because He is with thee Who overcometh all things. Observe what the Apostle saith: With the mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. How with mind? Because thy evil life is displeasing to thee. How with flesh? Because there are not wanting evil suggestions and affections of pleasure; but in that with mind thou art united with God, thou art conquering in thyself that which in thyself is not willing to follow. For thou hast gone before in part, and in part thou art held back. Draw thyself to Him, Who is raising thee upward. With a sort of weight of oldness thou art being weighed down: cry out and say, Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Who shall deliver me from that wherewith I am being weighed down? For the body which is corrupted doth weigh down the soul. Who, I say, shall deliver me? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But why doth He suffer thee long time to contend with thyself, until there be swallowed up all evil desires? In order that thou mayest perceive in thyself thy penance. In thee from thyself is thy rod: let thy strife be with thyself. Thus vengeance is taken upon a rebel against God, in such sort that he is himself a war unto himself, who would not have peace with God. But keep thy members against thy evil desires. There hath sprung up wrath, refrain thy hand, taking part with God. It might have arisen, but it hath found no weapons. In thy wrath is the onset, in thyself are the weapons: be the onset without weapons, and it learneth no longer to rise, which hath risen in vain.

5. But this I say, dearly beloved, lest perchance because we have said, But with flesh to the law of sin, ye may think that ye ought to consent to your carnal desires. Though there cannot now but be carnal desires, we must not consent to them. Therefore the Apostle hath not said, Be there not sin in your mortal body. For he knoweth that so long as it is mortal, there is there sin. But he saith what? Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body. What is, Let it not reign? He hath himself explained: to obey, he saith, the desires thereof. There are desires, there arise desires, thou dost not obey thy desires, dost not follow the same desires, dost not consent to them: there is in thee sin, but it hath lost its reign, now that in thee there reigneth not sin,

hereafter the last enemy shall be destroyed, death. But what is promised to us? For it hath been said, With mind I serve the law of God, but with flesh the law of sin. Hear the promise, that there will not always be in the flesh unlawful desires. For it will rise again, and it will be changed: and when this mortal flesh shall have been changed into a spiritual body, then no more with any earthly delights shall it allure the soul, nor shall divert it from the contemplation of God. There is then done in her that whereof the Apostle speaketh, The body indeed is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if He that hath raised up Jesus from the dead doth dwell in you; He that hath raised up Jesus Christ from the dead shall bring to life also your mortal bodies, because of His Spirit Which dwelleth in you. When our bodies then have been brought to life, there will be true peace, where there is a place for God: but let confession go before. Known in Judæa is God: confess thou therefore first. In Israel great is His Name: not yet thou seest in form, see thou by faith; and there shall be made in thee that which followeth: and there hath been made in peace a place for Him, and His dwelling is in Sion. Sion is interpreted contemplation. What is contemplation? For we shall contemplate God face to face. He is promised to us, in Whom now not seeing we believe. How shall we rejoice when we shall have seen Him! Brethren, if now so great joy the promise doth work in us, how great joy will the performance work? For there will be rendered to us that which He hath promised? And what hath He promised? Himself, so that in His face and in the contemplation of Him we may rejoice: and not any other object will delight us, because nothing is better than He that hath made all things which delight. There hath been made in peace a place for Him, and His dwelling is in Sion: that is, in a kind of contemplation and speculation, there hath been made a dwelling for Him, in Sion.

6. Ver. 3. There He hath broken the strength of bows, and the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Where hath He broken? In that eternal peace, in that perfect peace. And now, my brethren, they that have rightly believed see that they ought not to rely on themselves: and all the might of their own menaces, and whatsoever is in them whetted for mischief, this they break in pieces; and whatsoever they deem of great virtue wherewith to protect themselves temporally, and the war which they were waging against God by defending their sins, all these things He hath broken there.

7. Ver. 4. Thou enlightening marvellously from the eternal mountains. What are the eternal mountains? Those which He hath Himself made eternal; which are the great mountains, the preachers of truth. Thou dost enlighten, but from the eternal mountains: the great mountains are first to receive Thy light, and from Thy light which the mountains receive, the earth also is clothed. But those great mountains the Apostles have received, the Apostles have received as it were the first streaks of the rising light. Did they by any means keep to themselves that which they received? No. Lest there should be said to them, Servant naughty and slothful, thou shouldest have given my money to the usurers. Since then that which they received they kept not to themselves, but they preached it to all the round world; Thou enlightening marvellously from the eternal mountains. By those which Thou hast made eternal, by the same Thou hast promised life eternal to the rest also. Thou enlightening marvellously from the eternal mountains. Admirably with force hath been said Thou: that no one may suppose that the mountains enlighten him. For many thinking that they were enlightened by the mere mountains, made to themselves parties from the mountains; and the very mountains have fallen down, and they have been themselves broken in pieces. Some have made for themselves a Donatus, some have made for themselves a Maximianus, some have made for themselves this or that teacher. Why do they count their salvation to be in men, not in God? O man, there hath come to thee light through the mountains: but God doth enlighten thee, not the mountains. Thou enlightening, he saith: Thou, not the mountains. Thou enlightening: from the eternal mountains indeed; but, Thou enlightening. Wherefore also, in another place, a Psalm saith what? I have lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, whence there shall come help to me. What then, in the mountains is thy hope, and from thence to thee shall there come help? Hast thou stayed at the mountains? Take heed what thou doest. There is something above the mountains: above the mountains is He at Whom the mountains tremble. I have lifted up, he saith, mine eyes unto the mountains, whence there shall come help to me. But what followeth? My help, he saith, is from the Lord, who hath made Heaven and earth. Unto the mountains indeed I have lifted up eyes, because through the mountains to me the Scriptures were displayed: but I have my heart in Him that doth enlighten all mountains.

8. Therefore, brethren, for this purpose it hath been said, that no one of you should will to set his hope on man. Man is something, so long as he adhereth to Him by Whom man was made. For departing from Him, man is nothing, even when he adhereth to those (mountains). Do thou so take counsel through man, as that thou mayest consider Him that doth enlighten man. For even thou art able to draw near to Him, that doth speak to thee through man: for it is not so, that He hath made him to draw near unto Himself, and rejecteth thee. And he that hath truly so drawn near unto God, that God dwelleth in him, is displeased with all those that do not set their hope on Him. Therefore there hath been given a sort of example. When men divided among themselves the very Apostles, and they fell unto schisms who were saying, I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas, that is, of Peter—over these the Apostle doth mourn, and he saith to them, Is Christ divided? and he singled out himself to make light of among them; Hath Paul been crucified for you, or in the name of Paul have ye been baptized? Behold a good mountain, seeking glory, not for himself, but for Him by Whom the mountains are enlightened. He was not willing to rely on himself; but upon Him on Whom he had over himself relied. Whosoever therefore shall have willed so to recommend himself to the people, as that if there shall have chanced for him any tumult, he breaketh up the people to follow after him, and divideth the Church Catholic for his own sake, is not of those mountains which the Most High doth enlighten. But what is such an one? One darkened by himself, not enlightened by the Lord. But how are these mountains proved? If there shall perchance have fallen out any tumult against the mountains in the Church, either by means of the popular seditions of carnal men, or by means of any false suspicions of men, a good mountain doth drive away from itself all them that for its own sake will to withdraw from unity. For thus it will remain in unity, if for its own sake unity herself shall not have been divided. But they have been divided; when the people withdrew from the whole world and followed after their name, they rejoiced, were elated, and were thrown down. They should have been humbled, and they would have been exalted: in like manner as the Apostle was humbled, saying, Hath Paul been crucified for you? And in another place, I planted, Apollos watered, but God hath given the increase. Therefore, neither he that planteth is any thing, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. Such mountains in themselves were humble,

in God were exalted. But they that in themselves are exalted, by God are humbled. For he that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Therefore such men as regard their own pride are bitterly hostile to peaceful men in the Church. These are willing to cement peace, those stir up dissension among themselves. And what saith another Psalm regarding them? They that are bitter shall not be exalted in themselves. Thou enlightening, (observe this,) Thou marvellously from the eternal mountains.

9. Ver. 5. There have been troubled all the unwise in heart. There hath been preached the truth, there hath been declared life eternal; it hath been declared that there is another life, which is not of this earth: men have despised the present life, and have loved the future life when enlightened by the enlightened mountains. But the unwise in heart have been troubled. How have they been troubled? When the Gospel is preached. And what is life eternal? And who is He that hath risen from the dead? The Athenians wondered, when the Apostle Paul spake of the resurrection of the dead, and thought that he spake but fables. But because he said that there was another life which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it gone up into the heart of man, therefore the unwise in heart were troubled. But what hath befallen them? They have slept their sleep, and all men of riches have found nothing in their hands. They have loved things present, and have gone to sleep in the midst of things present: and so these very present things have become to them delightful: just as he that seeth in a dream himself to have found treasure, is so long rich as he waketh not. The dream hath made him rich, waking hath made him poor. Sleep perchance hath held him slumbering on the earth, and lying on the hard ground, poor and perchance a beggar; in sleep he hath seen himself to lie on an ivory or golden bed, and on feathers heaped up; so long as he is sleeping, he is sleeping well, waking he hath found himself on the hard ground, whereon sleep had taken him. Such men also are these too: they have come into this life, and through temporal desires, they have as it were slumbered here; and them riches, and vain pomps that fly away, have taken, and they have passed away: they have not understood how much of good might be done therewith. For if they had known of another life, there they would have laid up unto themselves the treasure which here was doomed to perish: like as

Zacchæus, the chief of the Publicans, saw that good when he received the Lord Jesus in his house, and he saith, The half of my goods I give to the poor, and if to any man I have done any wrong, fourfold I restore. This man was not in the emptiness of men dreaming, but in the faith of men awake. Therefore because the Lord had come in as a Physician to a sick man, He hath proclaimed his salvation, and saith, To-day salvation to this house hath come, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. In order that ye might know how we by imitating his faith are the sons of Abraham: but the Jews who glory because of the flesh from the faith have degenerated. Therefore the men of riches have slept their sleep, and they have found nothing in their hands. They have slept in their desires, there delighteth them and passeth away that sleep, there passeth away this life, and they find nothing in their hands, because they have put nothing in the hand of Christ. Wilt thou find any thing in thy hands hereafter? Despise not now the hand of the poor man; and have regard to empty hands, if thou wilt have full hands. For the Lord hath said, I was hungry, and ye gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in, and the like. And they, When saw we Thee hungry, thirsty, or a stranger? And He saith to them, Inasmuch as to one of My least ones ye have done it, to Me ye have done it. To hunger in the poor He hath willed, That is rich in Heaven; and thou a man to man dost hesitate to give, although thou knowest that thou art giving to Christ that which thou givest, from Whom thou hast received whatever thou givest? But they have slept their sleep, and all men of riches have found nothing in their hands.

10. Ver. 6. By Thy chiding, O God of Jacob, there have slept all men that have mounted horses. Who are they that have mounted horses? They that would not be humble. To sit on horseback is no sin; but it is a sin to lift up the neck of power against God, and to deem one’s self to be in some distinction. Because thou art rich, thou hast mounted; God doth chide, and thou sleepest. Great is the anger of Him chiding, great the anger. Let your Love observe the terrible thing. Chiding hath noise, the noise is wont to make men wake. So great is the force of God chiding, that he said, By Thy chiding, O God of Jacob, there have slept all men that have mounted horses. Behold what a sleep that Pharaoh slept who mounted horses. For he was not awake in heart, because against chiding he had his heart hardened. For

hardness of heart is slumber. I ask you, my brethren, how they sleep, who, while the Gospel is sounding, and the Amen, and the Hallelujah, throughout the whole world, yet will not condemn their old life, and wake up unto a new life. There was the Scripture of God in Judæa only, now throughout the whole world it is sung. In that one nation one God Who made all things was spoken of, as to be adored and worshipped; now where is He unsaid? Christ hath risen again, though derided on the Cross; that very Cross whereon He was derided, He hath now imprinted on the brows of kings: and men yet sleep. Better have we heard Him that saith, Arise thou that art sleeping, and rise up from the dead, and there shall enlighten thee Christ. But who do hear Him? They that do not mount horses. Who are they that do not mount horses? They that do not boast and exalt themselves, as if on their honours and powers. By Thy chiding, O God of Jacob, there have slumbered they that have mounted horses.

11. Ver. 7. Thou art terrible, and who shall withstand Thee at that time by Thine anger? Now they sleep, and perceive not Thee angry; but for cause that they should sleep, He was angry. Now that which sleeping they perceived not, at the end they shall perceive. For there shall appear the Judge of quick and dead. And who shall withstand Thee at that time by Thine anger? For now they speak that which they will, and they dispute against God and say, who are the Christians? or who is Christ? or what fools are they that believe that which they see not, and relinquish the pleasures which they see, and follow the faith of things which are not displayed to their eyes! Ye sleep and snore, ye speak against God, as much as ye are able. How long shall sinners, O Lord, how long shall sinners glory, they answer and will speak iniquity? But when doth no one answer and no one speak, except when he turneth himself against himself? When shall they turn their teeth against themselves, wherewith now they bite us, wherewith now they tear us by deriding Christians, and by censuring the life of holy men? They shall turn themselves against themselves at that time, when there shall happen to them that which is spoken of in the Book of Wisdom; they shall say within themselves, doing penance, and through anguish of spirit groaning: when they shall have seen the glory of holy men, then they shall say, These are they whom sometime we had in derision. O ye that slumbered much, now indeed ye are awake, and in your own hands

ye find nothing. Ye see how they have hands full of the glory of God, whom as if poor ye derided. Speak then to yourselves, inasmuch as ye do not withstand the anger of God, neither with hand, nor with tongue, nor with word, nor with thought. For He shall appear manifest to you, Whom ye thought worthy to be derided, when He was being proclaimed to you as to come. And what shall they say? Therefore we have strayed from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined upon us, and the sun hath not risen upon us. How should the Sun of righteousness have risen to them sleeping? But by His anger and chiding they sleep. This perchance one will say, and ‘I would not have mounted horse:’ and then they shall themselves blame their horses. Hear them blaming their horses, whereon they have slept: therefore we have erred, saith the Scripture, from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined upon us, and the sun hath not risen upon us. What hath pride profited us, and the boasting of riches hath bestowed upon us what? All things have passed away like a shadow. Therefore thou hast awoke at length. But better were it that thou hadst not mounted horse, when thou oughtest to have been awake; and thou wouldest have heard the voice of Christ, and Christ would have enlightened thee. Thou art terrible, and who shall withstand Thee at that time, by Thine anger? For what shall there be at that time?

12. Ver. 8. From Heaven Thou hast hurled judgment: the earth hath trembled, and hath rested. She which now doth trouble herself, she which now speaketh, hath to fear at the end and to rest. Better had she now rested, that at the end she might have rejoiced.

13. The earth hath trembled and hath rested. When? (Ver. 9.) When God arose unto judgment, that He might save all the meek in heart. Who are the meek in heart? They that on snorting horses have not mounted, but in their humility have confessed their own sins. That He might save all the meek in heart.

14. Ver. 10. For the thought of a man shall confess to Thee, and the remnants of the thought shall celebrate solemnities to Thee. The first is the thought, the latter are the remnants of the thought. What is the first thought? That from whence we begin, that good thought whence thou wilt begin to confess. Confession uniteth us to Christ. But now the confession itself, that

is, the first thought, doth produce in us the remnants of the thought: and those very remnants of thought shall celebrate solemnities to Thee. The thought of a man shall confess to Thee, and the remnants of the thought shall celebrate solemnities to Thee. What is the thought which shall confess? That which condemneth the former life, that whereunto that which it was is displeasing, in order that it may be that which it was not, is itself the first thought. But because thus thou oughtest to withdraw from sins, with the first thought after having confessed to God, that it may not escape thy memory that thou hast been a sinner; in that thou hast been a sinner, thou dost celebrate solemnities to God. Furthermore it is to be understood as followeth. The first thought hath confession, and departure from the old life. But if thou shalt have forgotten from what sins thou hast been delivered, thou dost not render thanks to the Deliverer, and dost not celebrate solemnities to thy God. Behold the first confessing thought of Saul the Apostle, now Paul, who at first was Saul, when he heard a voice from Heaven! While he was persecuting Christ, and was frantic against the Christians, and was willing to bring them to be slaughtered wheresoever he might find them, he heard a voice from heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? And being shined upon round about with the light, blindness having smitten his eyes, that he might inwardly see, he put forth the first thought of obedience: when he heard, “I am Jesus of Nazareth, Whom thou persecutest,” “O Lord,” he saith, “what dost Thou bid me to do?” This is a thought confessing: now he is calling upon the Lord Whom he persecuted. In what manner the remnants of the thought shall celebrate solemnities, in the case of Paul ye have heard, when the Apostle himself was being read; Be thou mindful that Christ Jesus hath risen from the dead, of the seed of David, after my Gospel. What is, be thou mindful?? Though effaced from thy memory be the thought, whereby at first thou hast confessed: be the remnant of the thought in the memory. And see after what sort the same Apostle Paul doth repeat in another place that which was bestowed upon him. I that before, he saith, have been a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. He that saith, before I have been a blasphemer, is he yet a blasphemer? In order that he might not be a blasphemer was the first thought confessing: but in order that he might commemorate what was forgiven him, there were the remnants of the thought, and through those same remnants of the thought he was celebrating solemnities.

15. For, my brethren, behold Christ hath renewed us, hath forgiven us all sins, and we have been converted: if we forget what hath been forgiven us, and by Whom it hath been forgiven, we forget the gift of the Saviour: but when we do not forget the gift of the Saviour, is not Christ daily sacrificed for us? Even once was Christ sacrificed for us, when we believed; then was thought; but now there are the remnants of thought, when we remember Who hath come to us, and what He hath forgiven us; by means of those very remnants of thought, that is, by means of the memory herself, He is daily so sacrificed for us, as if He were daily renewing us, That hath renewed us by His first grace. For now the Lord hath renewed us in Baptism, and we have become new men, in hope indeed rejoicing, in order that in tribulation we may be patient: nevertheless, there ought not to escape from our memory that which hath been bestowed upon us. And if now thy thought is not what it was: (for the first thought was to depart from sin: but now thou dost not depart, but at that time didst depart:) be there remnants of thought, lest He escape from memory Who hath made whole. If thou shalt have forgotten that thou hast had a wound, thou wilt have no remnants of thought. For what think ye that David said? Behold, he speaketh in the person of all! Holy David sinned grievously, Nathan the Prophet was sent to him, and rebuked him; and he confessed and said, I have sinned. This was the first thought of him confessing. The thought of a man shall confess to Thee. What were the remnants of thought? When he saith, And my sin is before me ever. What then was the first thought? That he should depart from sin. And if he hath already departed from sin, how is the sin of him before him ever, except that that thought passed away, but the remnants of thought do celebrate solemnities? Let us remember therefore, most dearly beloved brethren, we ask you: let whosoever shall have been delivered from sin, remember what he was; be there in him the remnants of thought. For then he beareth another man to be healed, if he shall remember that himself was healed. Therefore let each call to mind what he was, and whether he is no longer so: and then he will succour him that still is what he is no longer. But if he vaunteth himself as it were of his own merits, and driveth from him sinners as though they were unworthy, and rageth without mercy; he hath mounted a horse, let him look that he sleep not. For, they have slept that have mounted horses. At that time he relinquished his horse, he humbled himself: let him not again mount a horse, that is, let him not again

lift himself up unto pride. How is this to be done by him? Provided that the remnants of thought celebrate solemnities to God.

16. Ver. 11. Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God. Let each man vow what he is able, and pay it. Do not vow and not pay: but let every man vow, and pay what he can. Be ye not slow to vow: for ye will accomplish the vows by powers not your own. Ye will fail, if on yourselves ye rely: but if on Him to Whom ye vow ye rely, ye will be safe to pay. Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God. What ought we all in common to vow? To believe in Him, to hope from Him for life eternal, to live godly according to a measure common to all. For there is a certain measure common to all men. To commit no theft is not a thing enjoined upon one devoted to continence, and not enjoined upon the married woman: to commit no adultery is enjoined upon all men: not to love wine-bibbing, whereby the soul is swallowed up, and doth corrupt in herself the Temple of God, is enjoined to all alike: not to be proud, is enjoined to all men alike: not to slay man, not to hate a brother, not to lay a plot to destroy any one, is enjoined to all in common. The whole of this we all ought to vow. There are also vows proper for individuals: one voweth to God conjugal chastity, that he will know no other woman besides his wife: so also the woman, that she will know no other man besides her husband. Other men also vow, even though they have used such a marriage, that beyond this they will have no such thing, that they will neither desire nor admit the like: and these men have vowed a greater vow than the former. Others vow even virginity from the beginning of life, that they will even know no such thing as those who having experienced have relinquished: and these men have vowed the greatest vow. Others vow that their house shall be a place of entertainment for all the Saints that may come: a great vow they vow. Another voweth to relinquish all his goods to be distributed to the poor, and go into a community, into a society of the Saints: a great vow he doth vow. Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God. Let each one vow what he shall have willed to vow; let him give heed to this, that he pay what he hath vowed. If any man doth look back with regard to what he hath vowed to God, it is an evil. Some woman or other devoted to continence hath willed to marry: what hath she willed? The same as any virgin. What hath she willed? The same as her own mother. Hath she willed any evil thing? Evil certainly. Why? Because already she had vowed to the Lord her

God. For what hath the Apostle Paul said concerning such? Though he saith that young widows may marry if they will: nevertheless he saith in a certain passage, but more blessed she will be, if so she shall have remained, after my judgment. He sheweth that she is more blessed, if so she shall have remained; but nevertheless that she is not to be condemned, if she shall have willed to marry. But what saith he concerning certain who have vowed and have not paid? Having, he saith, damnation, because the first faith they have made void. What is, the first faith they have made void? They have vowed, and have not paid. Let no brother therefore, when placed in a monastery, say, I shall depart from the monastery: for neither are they alone that are in a monastery to attain unto the kingdom of Heaven, nor do those that are not there not belong unto God. We answer him, but they have not vowed; thou hast vowed, thou hast looked back. When the Lord was threatening them with the day of judgment, He saith what? Remember Lot’s wife. To all men He spake. For what did Lot’s wife? She was delivered from Sodom, and being in the way she looked back. In the place where she looked back, there she remained. For she became a statue of salt, in order that by considering her men might be seasoned, might have sense, might not be infatuated, might not look back, lest by giving a bad example they should themselves remain and season others. For even now we are saying this to certain of our brethren, whom perchance we may have seen as it were weak in the good they have purposed. And wilt thou be such an one as he was? We put before them certain who have looked back. They are savourless in themselves, but they season others, inasmuch as they are mentioned, in order that fearing their example they may not look back. Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God. For that wife of Lot to all doth belong. A married woman hath had the will to commit adultery; from her place whither she had arrived she looked back. A widow who had vowed so to remain hath willed to marry, she hath willed the thing which was lawful to her who hath married, but to herself was not lawful, because from her place she hath looked back. There is a virgin devoted to continence, already dedicated to God; let her have also the other gifts which truly do adorn virginity itself, and without which that virginity is unclean. For what if she be uncorrupt in body and corrupt in mind? What is it that he hath said? What if no one hath touched the body, but if perchance she be drunken, be proud, be contentious, be talkative? All these things God doth condemn. If before she had vowed, she had married, she would not have been condemned: she hath chosen something better, hath overcome that which was lawful for her; she is proud, and doth commit so many things unlawful. This I say, it is lawful for her to marry before that she voweth, to be proud is never lawful. O thou virgin of God, thou hast willed not to marry, which is lawful: thou dost exalt thyself, which is not lawful. Better is a virgin humble, than a married woman humble: but better is a married woman humble, than a virgin proud. But she that looked back upon marriage is condemned, not because she hath willed to marry; but because she had already gone before, and is become the wife of Lot by looking back. Be ye not slow, that are able, whom God doth inspire to seize upon higher callings: for we do not say these things in order that ye may not vow, but in order that ye may vow and may pay: Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God. Now because we have treated of these matters, thou perchance wast willing to vow, and now art not willing to vow. But observe what the Psalm hath said to thee. It hath not said, Vow not; but, Vow and pay. Because thou hast heard, pay, wilt thou not vow? Therefore wast thou willing to vow, and not to pay? Nay, do both. One thing is done by thy profession, another thing will be perfected by the aid of God. Look to Him Who doth guide thee, and thou wilt not look back to the place whence He is leading thee forth. He that guideth thee is walking before thee; the place from whence He is guiding thee is behind thee. Love Him guiding, and He doth not condemn thee looking back: Vow ye, and pay to the Lord our God.

17. All they that are in the circuit of Him shall offer gifts. Who are in the circuit of Him? For where is He that He saith, All they that are in the circuit of Him? If of God the Father thou think, where is He not That is every where present? If of the Son thou think after the form of the Divinity, He too with the Father is every where: for He is Himself the Wisdom of God, whereof hath been said, But she reacheth every where because of her own pureness. But if the Son ye understand, in that He took upon Himself flesh, and was seen among men, and was crucified, and rose again, we know that He hath ascended into Heaven. Who are in the circuit of Him? Angels. Therefore do not we offer gifts? For all they that are in the circuit of Him, he hath said, shall offer gifts. If our Lord were buried here upon earth, and His body were lying, like that of any Martyr or Apostle, we might observe

in them that should be in the circuit of Him, either whatever nations might be about the very spot on all sides, or men resorting to the burial place with gifts: but now He hath ascended, He is above. What is this, All they that are in the circuit of Him shall offer gifts? Meanwhile I will say to you what God doth admonish, what he may Himself have deigned to inspire in me out of these words: if any thing better shall have hereafter appeared, this also is yours; for the truth is common to all. It is neither mine, nor thine: it is not of this man or of that man: to all it is common. And perchance it is in the midst, in such sort that in the circuit thereof may be all they that love the truth. For whatever is common to all is in the midst. Why is it said to be in the midst? Because it is at the same distance from all, and at the same proximity to all. That which is not in the middle, is as it were private. That which is public is set in the middle, in order that all they that come may use the same, may be enlightened. Let no one say, it is mine: lest he should be wanting to make his own share of that which is in the midst for all. What then is, All they that are in the circuit of Him shall offer gifts? All they that understand truth to be common to all, and who do not make it as it were their own by being proud concerning it, they shall offer gifts; because they have humility: but they that make as it were their own that which is common to all, as though it were set in the middle, are endeavouring to lead men astray to a party, these shall not offer gifts; for, all they that are in the circuit of Him shall offer gifts, to Him terrible: they shall offer gifts to Him terrible. Let therefore all men fear that are in the circuit of Him. For therefore they shall fear, and with trembling they shall praise; because they are in the circuit of Him, to the end that all men may attain unto Him, and He may openly meet all, and openly enlighten all. This is, to stand in awe with others. When thou hast made Him as it were thine own, and no longer common, thou art exalted unto pride; though it is written, Serve ye the Lord in fear, and exult unto Him with trembling. Therefore they shall offer gifts, who are in the circuit of Him. For they are humble who know truth to be common to all.

18. To whom shall they offer gifts? (Ver. 12.) To Him terrible, and to Him that taketh away the spirit of princes. For the spirits of princes are proud spirits. They then are not His Spirits; for if they know any thing, their own they will it to be, not public; but, that Which setteth Himself forth as equal

toward all men, that setteth Himself in the midst, in order that all men may take as much as they can, whatever they can; not of what is any man’s, but of what is God’s, and therefore of their own because they have become His. Therefore they must needs be humble: they have lost their own spirit, and they have the Spirit of God. By whom have they lost their spirit? By Him that doth take away the spirit of princes. Inasmuch as to Him is said in another place, Thou shalt take away the spirit of them, and they shall fail, and shall be turned into their dust. Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created: and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. Some one hath understood something, his own he willeth it to be, as yet he hath his own spirit; it is good for him that he lose his spirit, and have the Spirit of God: as yet among the princes he is proud; it is good that he return to his dust, and say, Remember, O Lord, that dust we are. For if thou shalt have confessed thyself dust, God out of dust doth make man. All they that are in the circuit of Him do offer gifts. All humble men do confess to Him, and do adore Him. To Him terrible they offer gifts. Whence to Him terrible exult ye with trembling: and to Him that taketh away the spirit of princes: that is, that taketh away the haughtiness of proud men. To Him terrible among the kings of the earth. Terrible are the kings of the earth, but He is above all, that doth terrify the kings of the earth. Be thou a king of the earth, and God will be to thee terrible. How, wilt thou say, shall I be a king of the earth? Rule the earth, and thou wilt be a king of the earth. Do not therefore with desire of empire set before thine eyes exceeding wide provinces, where thou mayest spread abroad thy kingdoms; rule thou the earth which thou bearest. Hear the Apostle ruling the earth: I do not so fight as if beating air, but I chasten my body, and bring it into captivity, lest perchance preaching to other men, I myself become a reprobate. Therefore, my brethren, be ye in the circuit of Him, so that by whomsoever the truth shall have sounded to you, ye may not ascribe it to him through whom it soundeth; but it may be in the midst for all, because it is equally present to all. And be ye humble, lest even ye yourselves take unto your own use whatever of His good ye shall have understood. For as for us too, that which we have understood the better is yours; and that which ye have understood the better is ours: in order that in the circuit of Him we may be, and may be humble. And so losing our own spirit, let us offer gifts to Him terrible above all the kings of the earth, that is, above all men ruling their flesh, but subject to their Creator.

PSALM 77

Exposition

Sermon to the Commonalty.

1. This Psalm’s lintel is thus inscribed: Unto the end, for Idithun, a Psalm to Asaph himself. What, Unto the end, is, ye know. For the end of the law is Christ, for righteousness to every man that believeth. Idithun is interpreted leaping over those men, Asaph is interpreted a congregation. Here therefore there is speaking a congregation, that leapeth over, in order that it may reach the End, which is Christ Jesus. What things therefore must be leaped over, in order that we may be able to reach that End, where no longer we shall have any thing to leap over, the very text of the Psalm doth point out. For it is our duty to be alway leaping over whatever doth impede us, whatsoever doth entangle us, whatsoever doth bind us as it were with birdlime, and weigh us down with a load, until we reach unto that which is sufficient, beyond which there is nothing, beneath which are all things, and out of which are all things. For Philip was desiring to behold the Father Himself, and he said to the Lord Jesus Christ, Shew to us the Father, and it sufficeth us: as though he must leap over every other thing, until he should have reached the Father, where at length he would securely stand, and would have nothing else to desire. For this is the meaning of, it sufficeth. But He that had most truly said, I and the Father are One, admonished and taught Philip, how every man that did discern Christ, even in Him had an end: for that He and the Father are one. So long a time, He saith, am I with you, and have ye not seen Me? Philip, he that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also. Whosoever therefore would perceive, imitate, hold the mind of this Psalm, let him leap over all carnal desires, and let him trample on this world’s pomp and seduction, and propose to himself no other thing whereat to stay, but Him, out of Whom are all things. In all which things he doth himself toil until he attain unto the End. What then doth this man that leapeth over intimate to us?

2. Ver. 1. With my voice, he saith, to the Lord I have cried. But many men cry unto the Lord for the sake of getting riches and avoiding losses, for the safety of their friends, for the security of their house, for temporal felicity, for secular dignity, lastly, even for mere soundness of body, which is the inheritance of the poor man. For such and such like things many men do cry unto the Lord; scarce one for the sake of the Lord Himself. For an easy thing it is for a man to desire any thing of the Lord, and not to desire the Lord Himself; as if forsooth that which He giveth could be sweeter than Himself that giveth. Whosoever therefore doth cry unto the Lord for the sake of any other thing, is not yet one that leapeth over. But here the leaper over saith what? With my voice unto the Lord I have cried. And in order that thou mayest not determine that the voice of the same wherewith he hath cried unto the Lord hath been sent forth for the sake of any thing else but the Lord Himself, he continueth and saith, And my voice is unto God. For there is being sent forth a voice wherewith we may cry unto God, and that same voice is unto another thing, not unto God. For the voice is unto that thing for the sake of which it is uttered. But this man that did love God gratis, who did sacrifice to God voluntarily, who had leaped over whatever is below, and had seen no other thing above him, whereunto he might pour forth his soul, save Him out of Whom and through Whom and in Whom he had been created, had made that same voice of his to be unto Him unto Whom he had cried with his voice: My voice, he saith, is unto God. And is it without cause? See what followeth: and He doth hearken to me. He doth indeed hearken to thee at the time when thou dost seek Himself, not when through Himself thou dost seek any other thing. It hath been said of some men, They cried, and there was no one to save them; to the Lord, and He hearkened not unto them. For why? Because the voice of them was not unto the Lord. This the Scripture doth express in another place, where it saith of such men, On the Lord they have not called. Unto Him they have not ceased to cry, and yet upon the Lord they have not called. What is, upon the Lord they have not called? They have not called the Lord unto themselves: they have not invited the Lord to their heart, they would not have themselves inhabited by the Lord. And therefore what hath befallen them? They have trembled with fear where fear was not. They have trembled about the loss of things present, for the reason that they were not full of Him, upon Whom they have not called. They have not loved gratis, so that

after the loss of temporal things they could say, As it hath pleased the Lord, so hath been done, be the name of the Lord blessed. Therefore this man saith, My voice is unto the Lord, and He doth hearken unto me. Let him shew us how this cometh to pass.

3. Ver. 2. In the day of tribulation I have sought out God. Who art thou that doest this thing? In the day of thy tribulation take heed what thou seekest out. If a jail be the cause of tribulation, thou seekest to get forth from jail: if fever be the cause of tribulation, thou seekest health: if hunger be the cause of tribulation, thou seekest fulness: if losses be the cause of tribulation, thou seekest gain: if expatriation be the cause of tribulation, thou seekest the home of thy flesh. And why should I name all things, or when could I name all things? Dost thou wish to be one leaping over? In the day of thy tribulation seek out God: not through God some other thing, but out of tribulation God, that to this end God may take away tribulation, that thou mayest without anxiety cleave unto God. In the day of my tribulation I have sought out God: not any other thing, but God I have sought out. And how hast thou sought out? With my hands in the night before Him. Declare this thing again: let us see, perceive, imitate, if we can. In the day of thy tribulation thou hast sought out what? God. How hast thou sought out? With my hands. When hast thou sought out? By night. Where hast thou sought out? Before Him. And with what profit hast thou sought out? And I have not been deceived. Let us therefore view all, my brethren, examine all, question all: both what is the tribulation wherein this man hath sought out God, and what is it ‘with hands’ to seek God, and what is ‘by night,’ and what is ‘before Him:’ and then there followeth that which all men do understand, and I have not been deceived. For what is, and I have not been deceived? I have found that which I was seeking.

4. Tribulation must not be thought to be this or that in particular. For every individual that doth not yet leap over, thinketh that as yet to be no tribulation, unless it be a thing which may have befallen this life of some sad occasion: but this man, that leapeth over, doth count this whole life to be his tribulation. For so much he doth love his supernal country, that the earthly pilgrimage is of itself the greatest tribulation. For how can this life be otherwise than a tribulation, I pray you? how can that not be a

tribulation, the whole whereof hath been called a temptation? Thou hast it written in the book of Job, is not human life a temptation upon earth? Hath he said, human life is tempted upon earth? Nay, but life itself is a temptation. If therefore temptation, it must surely be a tribulation. In this tribulation therefore, that is to say in this life, this man that leapeth over hath sought out God. How? With my hands, he saith. What is, with my hands? With my works. For he was not seeking any thing corporeal, so that he might find and handle something which he had lost, so that he might seek with hands coin, gold, silver, vesture, in short every thing which can be held in the hands. Howbeit, even our Lord Jesus Christ Himself willed Himself to be sought after with hands, when to His doubting disciple He shewed the scars. But when He had cried out touching the scars of His wounds, My Lord and my God: did he not hear, Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed? If then he seeking Christ with hands, earned to hear, that it was a reproach to him so to have sought Him; we that have been called blessed, that have not seen and have believed, shall we seek with hands? What then, to us belongeth not the seeking with hands? It belongeth to us, as I have said, to seek with works. When so? In the night. What is, in the night? In this age. For it is night until there shine forth day in the glorified advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. For would ye see how it is night? Unless we had here had a lantern, we should have remained in darkness. For Peter saith, We too have more sure the prophetic discourse, whereunto ye do well to give heed, as to a lantern shining in a dark place, until day shine, and the day-star arise in your hearts. There is therefore to come day after this night, meanwhile in this night a lantern is not wanting. And this is perchance what we are now doing: by explaining these passages, we are bringing in a lantern, in order that we may rejoice in this night. Which indeed ought alway to be burning in your houses. For to such men is said, The Spirit quench ye not. And as though explaining what he was saying, he continueth and saith, Prophecy despise ye not: that is, let the lantern alway shine in you. And even this light by comparison with a sort of ineffable day is called night. For the very life of believers by comparison with the life of unbelievers is day. But how it is night we have already said, and have shewn it by the testimony of Peter the Apostle: who indeed hath also called it night, and concerning that same light hath admonished us to give heed thereto, that is, to the Prophetic discourse, until day shine, and the day-star arise in our hearts. But how now the life of the faithful is day in comparison to the life of the ungodly, Paul sheweth: Let us cast away, he saith, the works of darkness, and put on armour of light; as in the day let us walk honestly. Therefore living honestly, in comparison of the life of ungodly men, we are in day. But this day of the life of the faithful doth not suffice for this Idithun: he would leap over even this day; until he come to that day, where he may fear no more temptation of night. For here although the life of believers be day, yet human life is a temptation upon earth. Night and day—day in comparison with unbelievers, night in comparison with the Angels. For the Angels have a day, which we have not yet. Already we have one that unbelievers have not: but not yet have believers that which Angels have: but they will have, at the time when they will be equal to the Angels of God, that which hath been promised to them in the Resurrection. In this then which is now day and yet night; night in comparison with the future day for which we yearn, day in comparison with the past night which we have renounced: in this night then, I say, let us seek God with our hands. Let not works cease, let us seek God, be there no idle yearning. If we are in the way, let us expend our means in order that we may be able to reach the end. With hands let us seek God. Even though in night we are seeking Him Whom with hands we are seeking, we are not being deceived, because before Himself we are seeking. What is, before Himself? Do not your righteousness before men, that ye may be seen of them: otherwise ye will have no reward in your Father’s House. When then thou doest an almsdeed, He saith, (these are the hands seeking God,) sound not trumpet before thee, as hypocrites do: but let thy almsdeed be in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee. Therefore, with my hands in the night before Him, and I have not been deceived.

5. How great things, however, this Idithun hath endured in this earth and in this night, and how he hath need, in a manner, to leap over from tribulations assailing and stinging him from below—how needful it was to leap over, let us hear most earnestly. (Ver. 2.) My soul hath refused to be comforted. So great weariness did here possess me, that my soul did close the door against all comfort. Whence such weariness to him? It may be that his vineyard hath been hailed on, or his olive hath yielded no fruit, or the vintage hath

been interrupted by rain. Whence the weariness to him? Hear this out of another Psalm. For therein is the voice of the same: weariness hath bowed me down, because of sinners forsaking Thy law. He saith then that he was overcome with so great weariness because of this sort of evil thing; so as that his soul refused to be comforted. Weariness had well nigh swallowed him up, and sorrow had ingulfed him altogether beyond remedy, he refuseth to be comforted. What then remained?

6. In the first place, see whence he is comforted. Had he not waited for one who might condole with him, and had not found? For whither should he turn him for comfort, whom weariness had possessed because of sinners forsaking the law of God? Whither should he turn him? To any man of God? Already perchance he had found in many men great tribulation, the more he had relied on any delight from them. For sometimes men seem to be just, and we rejoice because of them: and we must needs rejoice: inasmuch as love cannot be without joy at such an one: but in these things wherein man hath rejoiced, if perchance any thing perverse shall have fallen out, as is often the case, in proportion as the joy was great therein before, so the sorrow which ariseth is great, so that henceforth man feareth to give rein to his joys, feareth to trust himself to gladness, lest it may be that the more he hath joyed, the more he may pine, if any mischance shall have arisen. Smitten therefore with abundant scandals, like as it were with many wounds, he hath closed his door against human comfort, and his soul hath refused to be comforted. And whence life? Whence respite? I have been mindful of God, and I have been delighted. My hands had not wrought in vain, they had found a great comforter. While not being idle, I have been mindful of God, and I have been delighted. God must therefore be praised, of Whom this man being mindful, hath been delighted, and hath been comforted in sorrowful case, and refreshed when safety was in a manner despaired of: God must therefore be praised. In fine, because he hath been comforted, in continuation he saith, I have babbled. In that same comfort being made mindful of God, I have been delighted, and have babbled. What is, I have babbled? I have rejoiced, I have exulted in speaking. For babblers they are properly called, that by the common people are named talkative, who at the approach of joy are neither able nor willing to be silent. This

man hath become such an one. And again he saith what? And my spirit hath fainted.

7. With weariness he had pined away; by calling to mind God, he had been delighted, again in babbling he had fainted: what followeth? (Ver. 4.) All mine enemies have anticipated watches. All mine enemies have kept watch over me; they have exceeded in keeping watch over me; in watching they have been beforehand with me. Where do they not lay traps? Have not mine enemies anticipated all watches? For who are these enemies, but they of whom the Apostle saith, Ye have not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and rulers of the world of this darkness, against spiritual things of naughtiness in heavenly places? Therefore against the devil and his angels we are waging hostilities. Rulers of the world he hath called them, because they do themselves rule the lovers of the world. For they do not rule the world, as if they were rulers of heaven and earth: but he is calling sinners the world. And the world knew Him not. Such a world do they rule that know not Christ. Against such men we have perpetual hostilities. In a word, whatsoever enmities thou hast against man, thou thinkest to bring them to an end, either by his giving thee satisfaction, if he hath injured thee; or by thy giving it to him, if thou hast injured him; or by both, if ye have mutually injured one another; thou strivest to give satisfaction and to be at one: but with the devil and his angels there is no concord. They do themselves begrudge us the kingdom of Heaven. They cannot at all be appeased towards us: because all mine enemies have anticipated watches. They have watched more to deceive than I to guard myself. For how can they have done otherwise than anticipate watches, that have set every where scandals, every where traps? Weariness doth invest the heart, we have to fear lest sorrow swallow us up: in joy to fear lest the spirit faint in babbling: all mine enemies have anticipated watches. In fine, in the midst of that same babbling, whiles thou are speaking, and art speaking without fear, how much is ofttimes found which enemies would lay hold of and censure, whereon they would even found accusation and slander—“he said so, he thought so, he spake so!” What should man do, save that which followeth? I have been troubled, and I spake not. Therefore when he was troubled, lest in his babbling enemies anticipating watches should seek and find slanders, he spake not. Never however would this

leaper over be still in himself: and if perchance he left off babbling, wherein there had stolen over him the desire of pleasing men with his very talking, yet he hath not desisted, hath not ceased to endeavour to transcend even this very feeling. And he saith what?

8. Ver. 5. I have thought on ancient days. Now he, as if he were one who had been beaten out of doors, hath taken refuge within: he is conversing in the secret place of his own heart. And let him declare to us what he is doing there: I have thought on ancient days. It is well with him. Observe what things he is thinking of, I pray you. He is within, in his own house he is thinking of ancient days. No one saith to him, thou hast spoken ill: no one saith to him, thou hast spoken much: no one saith to him, thou hast thought perversely. Thus may it be well with him, may God aid him: let him think of the ancient days, and let him tell us what he hath done in his very inner chamber, whereunto he hath arrived, over what he hath leaped, where he hath abode. I have thought on ancient days; and of eternal years I have been mindful. What are eternal years? It is a mighty thought. See whether this thought requireth any thing but great silence. Apart from all noise without, from all tumult of things human let him remain quiet within, that would think of those eternal years. Are the years wherein we are eternal, or those wherein our ancestors have been, or those wherein our posterity are to be? Far be it that they should be esteemed eternal. For what part of these years doth remain? Behold we speak and say, in this year: and what have we got of this year, save the one day wherein we are. For the former days of this year have already gone by, and are not to be had; but the future days have not yet come. In one day we are, and we say, in this year: nay rather say thou, to-day, if thou desirest to speak of any thing present. For of the whole year what hast thou got that is present? Whatsoever thereof is past, is no longer; whatsoever thereof is future, is not yet: how then, “this year?” Amend the expression: say, to-day. Thou speakest truth, henceforth I will say, “to-day.” Again observe this too, how to-day the morning hours have already past, the future hours have not yet come. This too therefore amend: say, in this hour. And of this hour what hast thou got? Some moments thereof have already gone by, those that are future have not yet come. Say, in this moment. In what moment? While I am uttering syllables, if I shall speak two syllables, the latter doth not sound until the former hath gone by:

in a word, in that same one syllable, if it chance to have two letters, the latter letter doth not sound, until the former hath gone by. What then have we got of these years? These years are changeable: the eternal years must be thought on, years that stand, that are not made up of days that come and depart; years whereof in another place the Scripture saith to God, But Thou art the Self-same, and Thy years shall not fail. On these years this man that leapeth over, not in babbling without, but in silence hath thought. And of the eternal years I have been mindful.

9. Ver. 6. And I have meditated in the night with my heart. No slanderous person seeketh for snares in his words, in his heart he hath meditated. I babbled. Behold there is the former babbling. Watch again, that thy spirit faint not. I did not, he saith, I did not so babble as if it were abroad: in another way now. How now? I did babble, and did search out my spirit. If he were searching the earth to find veins of gold, no one would say that he was foolish; nay, many men would call him wise, for desiring to come at gold: how great treasures hath a man within, and he diggeth not! This man was examining his spirit, and was speaking with that same his spirit, and in the very speaking he was babbling. He was questioning himself, was examining himself, was judge over himself. And he continueth; I did search my spirit. He had to fear lest he should stay within his own spirit: for he had babbled without; and because all his enemies had anticipated watches, he found there sorrow, and his spirit fainted. He that did babble without, lo, now doth begin to babble within in safety, where being alone in secret, he is thinking on eternal years. And I did search out, he saith, my spirit. And here he has to fear lest he should stay within his own spirit, and so should not be one leaping over. Now however he is doing better than he did without. He is overpassing somewhat: and hence let us see whereunto. This leaper over doth not cease until he cometh unto the end, wherefrom the Psalm hath the title, I did babble, he saith, and did search my spirit.

10. And thou hast found what? (Ver. 7.) God will not repel for everlasting. Weariness he had found in this life; in no place a trustworthy, in no place a fearless comfort. Unto whatsoever men he betook himself, in them he found scandal, or feared it. In no place therefore was he free from care. An evil thing it was for him to hold his peace, lest perchance he should keep silence

from good words; to speak and babble without was painful to him, lest all his enemies, anticipating watches, should seek slanders in his words. Being exceedingly straitened in this life, he thought much of another life, where there is not this trial. And when is he to arrive thither? For it cannot but be evident that our suffering here is the anger of God. This thing is spoken of in Isaiah, I will not be an avenger unto you for everlasting, nor will I be angry with you at all times. And He saith why: for the spirit shall go forth from Me, and I have made every breath. Because of sin for a little space I have made him sorrowful and have smitten him, and I have turned away My face from him, and he went away sorrowful, and walked in his own ways. What then? Will this anger of God alway abide? This man hath not found this in silence. For he saith what? God will not repel for everlasting, and He will not add any more that it should be well-pleasing to Him still. That is, that it should be well-pleasing to Him still to repel, and He will not add the repelling for everlasting. He must needs recal to Himself His servants, He must needs receive fugitives returning to the Lord, He must needs hearken to the voice of them that are in fetters. God will not repel for everlasting; and He will not add any more that it should be well-pleasing to Him.

11. Ver. 8. Or unto the end will He cut off mercy from generation to generation? (Ver. 9.) Or will God forget to be merciful? In thee, from thee unto another there is no mercy unless God bestow it on thee: and shall God Himself forget mercy? The stream runneth: shall the spring itself be dried up? Or shall God forget to be merciful: or shall He keep back in anger His mercies? That is, shall He be so angry, as that He will not have mercy? He will more easily keep back anger than mercy. Of this also by Isaiah He hath spoken: I will not be an avenger unto you for everlasting, nor will I at all times be angry with you. After He had said this and, he went away sorrowful, and walked in his own ways: then He saith, his ways I have seen, and have made him whole. When he perceived this he did overpass even himself, delighting in God, in order that he might be there, and might babble rather in His works; not in his spirit, not in that which he was, but in Him by Whom he had been made. And hence therefore leaping over he doth transcend. See ye him leaping over, see if he stayeth in any place until he reacheth unto God.

12. Ver. 10. And I said. Now leaping over himself he hath said what? Now I have begun: when I had gone out even from myself. Now I have begun. Here henceforth there is no danger: for even to remain in myself, was danger. And I said, Now I have begun: this is the changing of the right hand of the Lofty One. Now the Lofty One hath begun to change me: now I have begun something wherein I am secure: now I have entered a certain palace of joys, wherein no enemy is to be feared: now I have begun to be in that region, where all mine enemies do not anticipate watches. Now I have begun: this is the changing of the right hand of the Lofty One.

13. Ver. 11. I have been mindful of the works of the Lord. Now behold him roaming among the works of the Lord. For he was babbling without, and being made sorrowful thereby his spirit fainted: he babbled within with his own heart, and with his spirit, and having searched out that same spirit he was mindful of the eternal years, was mindful of the mercy of the Lord, how God will not repel him for everlasting; and he began now fearlessly to rejoice in His works, fearlessly to exult in the same. Let us hear now those very works, and let us too exult. But let even us leap over in our affections, and not rejoice in things temporal. For we too have our bed. Why do we not enter therein? Why do we not abide in silence? Why do we not search out our spirit? Why do we not think on the eternal years? Why do we not rejoice in the works of God? In such sort now let us hear, and let us take delight in Himself speaking, in order that when we shall have departed hence, we may do that which we used to do while He spake; if only we are making the beginning of Him whereof he spake in, Now I have begun. To rejoice in the works of God, is to forget even thyself, if thou canst delight in Him alone. For what is a better thing than He? Dost thou not see that, when thou returnest to thyself, thou returnest to a worse thing? I have been mindful of the works of the Lord: for I shall be mindful from the beginning of Thy wonderful works.

14. Ver. 12. And I will meditate on all Thy works, and on Thy affections I will babble. Behold the third babbling! He babbled without, when he fainted; he babbled in his spirit within, when he advanced; he babbled on the works of God, when he arrived at the place toward which he advanced. And on Thy affections I will babble: not on my affections. What man doth

live without affections? And do ye suppose, brethren, that they who fear God, worship God, love God, have not any affections? Wilt thou indeed suppose and dare to suppose, that painting, the theatre, hunting, hawking, fishing, engage the affections, and the meditation on God doth not engage certain interior affections of its own, while we contemplate the universe, and place before our eyes the spectacle of the natural world, and therein labour to discover the Maker, and find Him no where unpleasing, but pleasing above all things?

15. Ver. 13. O God, Thy way is in the Holy One. He is contemplating now the works of the mercy of God around us, out of these he is babbling, and in these affections he is exulting. At first he is beginning from thence, Thy way is in the Holy One? What is that way of Thine which is in the Holy One? I am, He saith, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Return therefore, ye men, from your affections. Whither are ye going, whither running? Whither not only from God but from yourselves are ye fleeing? Return ye transgressors to the heart: search ye your spirit, recollect the eternal years, find out the mercy of God around you, give heed to the works of His mercy: in the Holy One is His Way. “Sons of men, how long are ye heavy in heart?” What are ye seeking in your affections? Why do ye love emptiness, and seek lying? And know ye that the Lord hath magnified His Holy One?

Thy Way is in the Holy One: let us observe, let us observe Christ, there is His Way; O God, Thy way is in the Holy One. Who is a great God, like our God? Gentiles have their affections regarding their gods, they adore idols, they have eyes and they see not; ears they have and they hear not; feet they have and they walk not. Why dost thou walk to a God that walketh not? I do not, he saith, worship such things, and what dost thou worship? The divinity which is there. Thou dost then worship that whereof hath been said elsewhere, for the Gods of the nations are demons. Thou dost either worship idols, or devils. Neither idols, nor devils, he saith. And what dost thou worship? The stars, sun, moon, those things celestial. How much better Him that hath made both things earthly and things celestial. Who is a great God like our God?

16. Ver. 14. Thou art the God that doest wonderful things alone. Thou art indeed a great God, doing wonderful things in body, in soul; alone doing

them. The deaf have heard, the blind have seen, the feeble have recovered, the dead have risen, the paralytic have been strengthened. But these miracles were at that time performed on bodies, let us see those wrought on the soul. Sober are those that were a little before drunken, believers are those that were a little before worshippers of idols: their goods they bestow on the poor that did rob before those of others. Who is a great God like our God? Thou art the God that doest wonderful things alone. Moses too did them, but not alone: Elias too did them, even Eliseus did them, the Apostles too did them, but no one of them alone. That they might have power to do them, Thou wast with them: when Thou didst them they were not with Thee. For they were not with Thee when Thou didst them, inasmuch as Thou didst make even these very men. Thou art the God that doest wonderful things alone. How alone? Is it perchance the Father, and not the Son? Or the Son, and not the Father? Nay, but Father and Son and Holy Ghost. Thou art the God that doest wonderful things alone. For it is not three Gods but one God that doeth wonderful things alone, and even in this very leaper-over. For even his leaping over and arriving at these things was a miracle of God: when he was babbling within with his own spirit, in order that he might leap over even that same spirit of his, and might delight in the works of God, he then did wonderful things himself. But God hath done what? Thou hast made known unto the people Thy virtue. Thence this congregation of Asaph leaping over; because He hath made known in the peoples His virtue. What virtue of His hath He made known in the peoples? But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews indeed a scandal, but to the Gentiles folly: but to them that are called, Jews and Greeks, Christ the virtue of God and the wisdom of God. If then the virtue of God is Christ, He hath made known Christ in the peoples. Do we not yet perceive so much as this; and are we so unwise, are we lying so much below, do we so leap over nothing, as that we see not this? Thou hast made known in the peoples Thy virtue.

17. Ver. 15. Thou hast redeemed in Thine arm Thy people. With Thine arm, that is, with Thy virtue. And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Thou hast redeemed in Thine arm Thy people, the sons of Israel and of Joseph. How as if two peoples, the sons of Israel and of Joseph? Are not the sons of Joseph among the sons of Israel? They are evidently. We

know it, we read it, the Scripture declareth it, the truth sheweth it, for Israel is the same as Jacob: he had twelve sons, among whom Joseph was one, and out of the twelve sons of Israel all that were born do belong to the people Israel. How then saith he, sons of Israel and of Joseph? He hath admonished us of some distinction to be made. Let us search out our spirit, perchance God hath placed there something—God Whom we ought even by night to seek with our hands, in order that we may not be deceived—perchance we shall discover even ourselves in this distinction of sons of Israel and of Joseph. By Joseph He hath willed another people to be understood, hath willed that the people of the Gentiles be understood. Why the people of the Gentiles by Joseph? Because Joseph was sold into Egypt by his brethren. That Joseph whom the brethren envied, and sold him into Egypt, when sold into Egypt, toiled, was humbled; when made known and exalted, flourished, reigned. And by all these things he hath signified what? What but Christ sold by His brethren, banished from His own land, as it were into the Egypt of the Gentiles? There at first humbled, when the Martyrs were suffering persecutions: now exalted, as we see; inasmuch as there hath been fulfilled in Him, There shall adore Him all kinds of the earth, all nations shall serve Him. Therefore Joseph is the people of the Gentiles, but Israel the people of the Hebrew nation. God hath redeemed His people, the sons of Israel and of Joseph. By means of what? By means of the corner stone, wherein the two walls have been joined together.

18. And he continueth how? (Ver. 16.) The waters have seen Thee, O God. What are the waters? The peoples. What are these waters hath been asked in the Apocalypse, the answer was, the peoples. There we find most clearly waters put by a figure for peoples. But above he had said, Thou hast made known in the peoples Thy virtue. With reason therefore, the waters have seen Thee, O God: the waters have seen Thee, and they have feared. They have been changed because they have feared, The waters have seen Thee, O God, and they have feared: and the abysses have been troubled. What are the abysses? The depths of waters. What man among the peoples is not troubled, when the conscience is smitten? Thou seekest the depth of the sea, what is deeper than human conscience? That is the depth which was troubled, when God redeemed with His arm His people. In what manner

were the abysses troubled? When all men poured forth their consciences in confession. And the abysses were troubled.

19. Ver. 17. There is a multitude of the sound of waters. In praises of God, in confessions of sins, in hymns and in songs, in prayers, there is a multitude of the sound of waters. The clouds have uttered a voice. Thence that sound of waters, thence the troubling of the abysses, because the clouds have uttered a voice. What clouds? The preachers of the word of truth. What clouds? Those concerning which God doth menace a certain vineyard, which instead of grape had brought forth thorns, and He saith, I will command My clouds, that they rain no rain upon it. In a word, the Apostles forsaking the Jews, went to the Gentiles: among all nations, the clouds have uttered a voice: in preaching Christ, the clouds have uttered a voice.

20. For Thine arrows have gone through. Those same voices of the clouds He hath again called arrows. For the words of the Evangelists were arrows. For these things are allegories. For properly neither an arrow is rain, nor rain is an arrow: but yet the word of God is both an arrow because it doth smite; and rain because it doth water. Let no one therefore any longer wonder at the troubling of the abysses, when Thine arrows have gone through. What is, have gone through? They have not stopped in the ears, but they have pierced the heart. (Ver. 18.) The voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel. What is this? How are we to understand it? May the Lord give aid. The voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel. When boys we were wont to imagine, whenever we heard thunderings from Heaven, that carriages were going forth as it were from the stables. For thunder doth make a sort of rolling like carriages. Must we return to these boyish thoughts, in order to understand, the voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel, as though God hath certain carriages in the clouds, and the passing along of the carriages doth raise that sound? Far be it. This is boyish, vain, trifling. What is then, The voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel? Thy voice rolleth. Not even this do I understand. What shall we do? Let us question Idithun himself, to see whether perchance he may himself explain what he hath said: The voice, he saith, of Thy thunder is in the wheel. I do not understand. I will hear what thou sayest: Thy lightnings have appeared to the round world. Say then, I had no understanding. The round world is a wheel. For the circuit of the

round world is with reason called also an ‘orb:’ whence also a small wheel is called an ‘orbiculus.’ The voice of Thy thunder is in the wheel: Thy lightnings have appeared to the round world. Those clouds in a wheel have gone about the round world, have gone about with thundering and with lightning, they have shaken the abyss, with commandments they have thundered, with miracles they have lightened. Unto every land hath gone forth the sound of them, and unto the ends of the globe the words of them. The land hath been moved and made to tremble: that is, all men that dwell in the land. But by a figure the land itself is sea. Why? Because all nations are called by the name of sea, inasmuch as human life is bitter, and exposed to storms and tempests. Moreover if thou observe this, how men devour one another like fishes, how the stronger doth swallow up the weaker—it is then a sea, unto it the Evangelists went.

21. (Ver. 19.) Thy way is in the sea. But now Thy way was in the Holy One, now Thy way is in the sea: because the Holy One Himself is in the sea, and with reason even did walk upon the waters of the sea. Thy way is in the sea, that is, Thy Christ is preached among the Gentiles. For in another Psalm it is thus said: God have mercy upon us, and bless us, enlighten His countenance upon us, in order that we may know Thy way on the earth. Where on the earth? In all nations Thy saving health: this is, Thy way is in the sea, and Thy paths in many waters, that is, in many peoples. And Thy footsteps will not be known. He hath touched certain, and wonder were it if it be not those same Jews. Behold now the mercy of Christ hath been so published to the Gentiles, that Thy way is in the sea, and Thy paths in many waters, and Thy footsteps will not be known. How so, by whom will they not be known, save by those who still say, Christ hath not yet come? Why do they say, Christ hath not yet come? Because they do not yet recognise Him walking on the sea.

22. (Ver. 20.) Thou hast led home Thy people like sheep in the hand of Moses and of Aaron. Why He hath added this is somewhat difficult to discover. Aid ye therefore us with your attention: for after the above two verses there will be an end both of the Psalm and of the Sermon: lest perchance while ye think that a good part remaineth, for fear of the labour ye pay less attention to the present. When he had said, Thy way is in the

sea, which we understand of the Gentiles; and Thy paths are in many waters, which we understand of many peoples: he added, and Thy footsteps will not be known. And we were enquiring by whom they were not known, and he added immediately, Thou hast led home Thy people like sheep by the hand of Moses and Aaron: that is, by that people of Thine which was led home by the hand of Moses and Aaron, Thy footsteps will not be known. Why then hath there been written, save for the sake of rebuking and reproaching, Thy way is in the sea? Why is Thy way in the sea, except because it was thrust out from Thy land? They banished Christ, sick as they were, they would not have Him for their Saviour; but He began to be among the Gentiles, and among all nations, among many peoples. Nevertheless, a remnant of that people hath been saved. The ungrateful multitude hath remained without, even the halting breadth of Jacob’s thigh. For the breadth of the thigh is understood of the multitude of lineage, and among the greater part of the Israelites a certain multitude became vain and foolish, so as not to know the steps of Christ on the waters. Thou hast led home Thy people like sheep, and they have not known Thee. Though Thou hast done such great benefits unto them, hast divided sea, hast made them pass over dry land between waters, hast drowned in the waves pursuing enemies, in the desert hast rained manna for their hunger, leading them home by the hand of Moses and Aaron: still they thrust Thee from them, so that in the sea was Thy Way, and Thy steps they knew not.

PSALM 78

1. This Psalm doth contain the things which are said to have been done among the old people: but the new and latter people is being admonished, to beware that it be not ungrateful regarding the blessings of God, and provoke His anger against it, whereas it ought to receive His grace obediently and trustfully, lest they become, he saith, like their fathers, a crooked and embittering generation, a generation which hath not guided its heart, and the spirit of it hath not been trusted with God. This then is the aim of this Psalm, this the use, this the most abundant fruit. But while all things seem to be perspicuously and clearly spoken and narrated, the Title thereof doth first move and engage our attention. For it is not without reason inscribed, Understanding of Asaph: but it is perchance because these words require a reader who doth perceive not the voice which the surface uttereth, but some inward sense. Secondly, when about to narrate and mention all these things, which seem to need a hearer more than an expounder: I will open, he saith, in parables my mouth, I will declare propositions from the beginning. Who would not herein be awakened out of sleep? Who would dare to hurry over the parables and propositions, reading them as if self-evident, while by their very names they signify that they ought to be sought out with deeper view? For a parable hath on the surface thereof the similitude of some thing: and though it be a Greek word, it is now used as a Latin word. And it is observable, that in parables, those which are called the similitudes of things are compared with things with which we have to do. But propositions which in Greek are called προβλήματα, are questions having something therein which is to be solved by disputation. What man then would read parables and propositions cursorily? What man would not attend while hearing these words with watchful mind, in order that by understanding he may come by the fruit thereof?

2. Ver. 1. Hearken ye, He saith, My people, to My law, Whom may we suppose to be here speaking, but God? For it was Himself that gave a law to His people, whom when delivered out of Egypt He gathered together, the which gathering together is properly named a Synagogue, which the word

Asaph is interpreted to signify. Hath it then been said, Understanding of Asaph, in the sense that Asaph himself hath understood; or must it be figuratively understood, in the sense that the same Synagogue, that is, the same people, hath understood, unto whom is said, Hearken, My people, unto My law? Why is it then that He is rebuking the same people by the mouth of the Prophet, saying, But Israel hath not known Me, and My people hath not understood? But, in fact, there were even in that people they that understood, having the faith which was afterwards revealed, not pertaining to the letter of the law, but the grace of the Spirit. For they cannot have been without the same faith, who were able to foresee and foretel the revelation thereof that should be in Christ, inasmuch as even those old Sacraments were significants of those that should be. Had the prophets alone this faith, and not the people too? Nay indeed, but even they that faithfully heard the Prophets, were aided by the same grace in order that they might understand what they heard. But without doubt the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven was veiled in the Old Testament, which in the fulness of time should be unveiled in the New. For, I would not have you, saith the Apostle, to be ignorant, brethren, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized by Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all did eat the same spiritual meat, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they did drink of the Spiritual Rock following them, but the Rock was Christ. In a mystery therefore theirs was the same meat and drink as ours, but in signification the same, not in form; because the same Christ was Himself figured to them in a Rock, manifested to us in the Flesh. But, he saith, not in all of them God was well pleased. All indeed ate the same spiritual meat and drank the same spiritual drink, that is to say, signifying something spiritual: but not in all of them was God well pleased. When, he saith, not in all: there were evidently there some in whom God was well pleased; and although all the Sacraments were common, grace, which is the virtue of the Sacraments, was not common to all. Just as in our times, now that the faith hath been revealed, which then was veiled, to all men that have been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, the Laver of regeneration is common, but the very grace whereof these same are the Sacraments, whereby the members of the Body of Christ are to reign together with their Head, is not common to all. For even heretics have the same Baptism, and false brethren too, in the communion of the Catholic name. Therefore here too hath been rightly said, but not in all of them was God well pleased.

3. Nevertheless, neither then nor now without profit is the voice of him, saying, Hearken ye, My people, to My law. Which expression is remarkable in all the Scriptures, how he saith not, hearken thou, but, hearken ye. For of many men a people doth consist: to which many that which followeth is spoken in the plural number. Incline ye your ear unto the words of My mouth. Hearken ye, is the same as, Incline your ear: and what He saith there, My law, this He saith here in, the words of My mouth. For that man doth godly hearken to the law of God, and the words of His mouth, whose ear humility doth incline: not he whose neck pride doth lift up. For whatever is poured in is received on the concave surface of humility, is shaken off from the convexity of swelling. Whence in another place, Incline, he saith, thine ear, and receive the words of understanding. We have been therefore sufficiently admonished to receive even this Psalm of this understanding of Asaph, (for the word on the Title is put in the genitive case—‘hujus intellectûs,’ not ‘hic intellectus,’) to receive, I say, with inclined ear, that is, with humble piety. And it hath not been spoken of as being of Asaph himself, but to Asaph himself. Which thing is evident by the Greek article, and is found in certain Latin copies. These words therefore are of understanding, that is, of intelligence, which hath been given to Asaph himself: which we had better understand not as to one man, but as to the congregation of the people of God; whence we ought by no means to alienate ourselves. For although properly we say ‘Synagogue’ of Jews, but ‘Church’ of Christians, because a ‘congregation’ is wont to be understood as rather of beasts, but a ‘convocation’ as rather of men: yet that too we find called a Church, and it perhaps is more suitable for us to say, Save us, O Lord, our God, and congregate us from the nations, in order that we may confess to Thy Holy Name. Neither ought we to disdain to be, nay we ought to render ineffable thanks, for that we are, the sheep of His hands, which He foresaw when He was saying, I have other sheep which are not of this fold, them too I must lead in, that there may be one flock and one Shepherd: that is to say, by joining the faithful people of the Gentiles with the faithful people of the Israelites, concerning whom He had before said, I have not been sent but to the sheep which have strayed of the house of Israel. For

also there shall be congregated before Him all nations, and He shall sever them as a shepherd the sheep from the goats. Thus then let us hear that which hath been spoken. Hearken ye, My people, to My law, incline ye your ear unto the words of My mouth: not as if addressed to Jews, but rather as if addressed to ourselves, or at least as if these words were said as well to ourselves (as to them.) For when the Apostle had said, But not in all them was God well pleased, thereby shewing that there there were those too in whom God was well pleased: he hath forthwith added, For they were overthrown in the desert: secondly he hath continued, but these things have been made our figures, in order that we be not covetous of evil things, as they too coveted. Nor serving idols, as some of them did, as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed fornication, and they fell in one day twenty and three thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them tempted, and perished by serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them murmured, and perished by the destroyer. Now all these things did befal them in a figure: but they have been written for our reproof, upon whom the end of ages hath come. To us therefore more particularly these words have been sung. Whence in this Psalm among other things there hath been said, That another generation may know, sons who shall be born and shall arise. Moreover, if that death by serpents, and that destruction by the destroyer, and the slaying by the sword, were figures, as the Apostle evidently doth declare, inasmuch as it is manifest that all those things did happen: for he saith not, in a figure they were spoken, or, in a figure they were written, but, in a figure, he saith, they happened to them: with how much greater diligence of godliness must those punishments be shunned whereof those were the figures? For beyond a doubt as in good things there is much more of good in that which is signified by the figure, than in the figure itself: so also in evil things very far worse are the things which are signified by the figures, while so great are the evil things which as figures do signify. For as the land of promise, whereunto that people was being led, is nothing in comparison with the Kingdom of Heaven, whereunto the Christian people is being led: so also those punishments which were figures, though they were so severe, are nothing in comparison with the punishments which they signify. But those which the Apostle hath called figures, the same this Psalm, as far as we are able to judge, calleth parables and propositions: not having their end in the fact of their having happened, but in those things whereunto they are referred by a reasonable comparison. Let us therefore hearken unto the law of God—us His people—and let us incline our ear unto the words of His mouth.

4. Ver. 2. I will open, he saith, in parables My mouth, I will declare propositions from the beginning. From what beginning he meaneth, is very evident in the words following. For it is not from the beginning, what time the Heaven and earth were made, nor what time mankind was created in the first man: but what time the congregation that was led out of Egypt; in order that the sense may belong to Asaph, which is interpreted a congregation. But O that He that hath said, I will open in parables My mouth, would also vouchsafe to open our understanding unto them! For if, as He hath opened His mouth in parables, He would in like sort open the parables themselves: and as He declareth ‘propositions,’ He would declare in like sort the expositions thereof, we should not be here toiling: but now so hidden and closed are all things, that even if we are able by His aid to arrive at any thing, whereon we may feed to our health, still we must eat the bread in the sweat of our face; and pay the penalty of the ancient sentence not with the labour of the body only, but also with that of the heart. Let him speak then, and let us hear the parables and propositions.

5. Ver. 3. How great things we have heard, and have known them, and our fathers have told them to us. The Lord was speaking higher up. For of what other person could these words be thought to be, Hearken ye, O My people, to My law? Why is it then that now on a sudden a man is speaking, for here we have the words of a man, What things we have heard, and known them, and our fathers have told them to us. Without doubt God, now about to speak by a man’s ministry, as the Apostle saith, Will ye to receive proof of Him that is speaking in me, Christ? in His own person at first willed the words to be uttered, lest a man speaking His words should be despised as a man. For it is thus with the sayings of God which make their way to us through our bodily sense. The Creator moveth the subject creature by an invisible working; not so that the substance is changed into any thing corporal and temporal, when by means of corporal and temporal signs, whether belonging to the eyes or to the ears, as far as men are able to

receive it, He would make His will to be known. For if an angel is able to use air, mist, cloud, fire, and any other natural substance or corporal species; and man to use face, tongue, hand, pen, letters, or any other significants, for the purpose of intimating the secret things of his own mind: in a word, if, though he is a man, he sendeth human messengers, and he saith to one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to his servant, Do this, and he doeth it; with how much greater and more effectual power doth God, to Whom as Lord all things together are subject, use both the same angel and man, in order that He may declare whatsoever pleaseth Him? Although then now a man is saying, How great things we have heard and have known them, and our fathers have told them to us? yet let us hear them as though they were God's words, not as though they were human fables. For to this end there hath been premised, Hearken ye, My people, unto My law, incline ye your ear unto the words of My mouth. I will open in parables My mouth, I will declare propositions from the beginning. Then, how great things we have heard, he saith, and have known them, and our fathers have told them to us. We have heard and have known, is the same as, hear thou, daughter, and see. For those things were heard in the Old Testament which are known in the New: heard when they were being prophesied, known when they were being fulfilled. Where a promise is performed, hearing is not deceived. And our fathers, Moses and the Prophets, have told unto us.

6. Ver. 4. They have not been hidden from their sons in another generation. This is our generation wherein there hath been given to us regeneration. Telling forth the praises of the Lord and His powers, and His wonderful works which He hath done. The order of the words is, and our fathers have told unto us, telling forth the praises of the Lord. The Lord is praised, in order that He may be loved. For what object can be loved more to our health?

7. Ver. 5. And He hath raised up a testimony in Jacob, and hath set a law in Jacob. This is the beginning whereof hath been spoken above, I will declare propositions from the beginning. So then the beginning is the Old Testament, the end is the New. For fear doth prevail in the law. But the end of the law is Christ for righteousness to every one believing: at Whose

bestowing love is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, Which hath been given to us: and love made perfect doth cast out fear, inasmuch as now without the Law the righteousness of God hath been made manifest. But inasmuch as He hath a testimony by the Law and the Prophets, therefore, He hath raised up a testimony in Jacob, and hath set a law in Israel. For even that Tabernacle which was set up with a work so remarkable and full of such wondrous meanings, is named the Tabernacle of Testimony, wherein was the veil over the Ark of the Law, like the veil over the face of the Minister of the Law; because in that dispensation there were ‘parables and propositions.’ For those things which were being preached and were coming to pass were hidden in veiled meanings, and were not seen in unveiled manifestations. But when thou shalt have passed over unto Christ, saith the Apostle, the veil shall be taken away. For all the promises of God in Him are yea, Amen. Whosoever therefore doth cleave to Christ, hath the whole of the good which even in the letters of the Law he perceiveth not: but whosoever is an alien from Christ, doth neither perceive, nor hath. He hath raised up, then, a testimony in Jacob, and hath set a law in Israel. After his usual custom he is making a repetition. For He hath raised up a testimony, is the same as, He hath set a law, and in Jacob, is the same as in Israel. For as these are two names of one man, so law and testimony are two names of one thing. Is there any difference, saith some one, between hath raised up and hath set? Yea indeed, the same difference as there is even between Jacob and Israel: not because they were two persons, but these same two names were bestowed upon one man for different reasons; Jacob because of supplanting, for that he grasped the foot of his brother at his birth: but Israel because of the vision of God. So raised up is one thing, set is another. For, He hath raised up a testimony, as far as I can judge, hath been said because by it something hath been raised up; For without the Law, saith the Apostle, sin was dead: but I lived sometime without the Law: but at the coming in of the commandment sin revived. Behold that which hath been raised up by the testimony, which is the Law, so that what was lying hidden might appear, as he saith a little afterwards: But sin, that it might appear sin, through a good thing hath wrought in me death. But He hath set a law, hath been said, as though it were a yoke upon sinners, whence hath been said, For upon a just man law hath not been imposed. It is a testimony then, so far forth as it doth prove any thing; but a law so far forth as it doth command; though it is one and the same thing. Wherefore just as Christ is a stone, but to believers for the Head of the corner, while to unbelievers a stone of offence and a rock of scandal; so the testimony of the Law to them that use not the Law lawfully, is a testimony whereby sinners are to be convicted as deserving of punishment; but to them that use the same lawfully, is a testimony whereby sinners are shewn unto Whom they ought to flee in order to be delivered. For in His grace is the righteousness of God, having a testimony from the Law and the Prophets, whereby the ungodly man is justified: of which certain men being ignorant, and willing to establish their own righteousness, have not been made subject to the righteousness of God.

8. Ver. 5. How great things, he saith, He hath commanded our fathers, to make the same known to their sons? (Ver. 6.) That another generation may know, sons who shall be born and shall rise up, and they may tell to their sons. (Ver. 7.) That they may put their hope in God, and may not forget the works of God, and may seek out His commandments. (Ver. 8.) That they may not become, like their fathers, a crooked and embittering generation: a generation that hath not guided their heart, and the spirit thereof hath not been trusted with God. These words do point out two peoples as it were, the one belonging to the Old Testament, the other to the New: for in that he saith, How great things He hath commanded our fathers, to make the same known to their children, he hath implied that they received the commandments, to make them known to their sons, but that they did not know or do them: but they received them themselves, to the end that another generation might know, what the former knew not. Sons who shall be born and shall arise. For they that have been born have not arisen: because they had not their heart above, but rather on the earth. For the arising is with Christ: whence hath been said, If ye have arisen with Christ, savour ye the things which are above. And they may tell them, he saith, to their sons, in order that they may put their hope in God. For thus it is not that being righteous they desire to set up their own righteousness, but they reveal to God their way, and they hope in Him, in order that He may Himself bring it to pass. And may not forget the works of God: that is to say, in magnifying and vaunting their own works, as though they did them

themselves; while “God it is that worketh,” in them that work good things, “both to will and to work according to good will.”

And may search out His commandments. When they have already learned them, how should they search them out? For, How great things, he saith, He hath commanded to our fathers, to make the same known to their sons, that another generation may know? May know what? The commandments which He hath commanded. How then should they still search out, whereas they have already learned them, save that by putting their hope in God, they do then search out His commandments, in order that by them, with His aid, they may be fulfilled? That they may not become, like their fathers, a generation crooked and embittering, a generation which hath not guided its heart. And he saith why, by immediately subjoining, and its spirit hath not been trusted with God, that is, because it had no faith, which doth obtain what the Law doth enjoin. For when the spirit of man doth work together with the Spirit of God working, then there is fulfilled that which God hath commanded: and this doth not come to pass, except by believing in Him that doth justify an ungodly man. Which faith the generation crooked and embittering had not: and therefore concerning the same hath been said, The spirit thereof hath not been trusted with God. For this hath been said much more exactly to point out the grace of God, which doth work not only remission of sins, but also doth make the spirit of man to work together therewith in the work of good deeds, as though he were saying, his spirit hath not believed in God. For to have the spirit trusted with God, is, not to believe that his spirit is able to do righteousness without God, but with God. For this is to believe in God: which is surely more than to believe God. For ofttimes we must believe even a man, though in him we must not believe. To believe in God therefore is this, in believing to cleave unto God Who worketh good works, in order to work with Him well. For without Me, He saith, ye can do nothing. But what more on this head could the Apostle have said than what he saith, But he that cleaveth to the Lord is one spirit? Otherwise that law is a testimony whereby the party is condemned, not one whereby he is acquitted. For it is the letter menacing, to convict transgressors; not the Spirit giving aid, to deliver and justify sinners. Therefore, that generation, the example whereof is to be shunned, was for this reason crooked and embittering, because the spirit thereof was not trusted with God: for although in some sort it believed God, yet it did not believe in God: by faith it did not cleave unto God, to the end that, being made whole by God, it might work well together with God working therein.

9. Lastly, (ver. 9.) The sons of Ephrem bending and shooting bows, have been turned back in the day of war. Following after the law of righteousness, unto the law of righteousness they have not attained. Why? Because they were not of faith. For they were that generation whereof the spirit hath not been trusted with God: but they were, so to speak, of works: because they did not, as they bended and shot their bows, (which are outward actions, as of the works of the law, so guide their heart also, wherein the just man doth live by faith, which worketh by love; whereby men cleave to God, Who worketh in man both to will and work according to good will. For what else is bending the bow and shooting, and turning back in the day of war, but heeding and purposing in the day of hearing, and deserting in the day of temptation; flourishing arms, so to speak, beforehand, and at the hour of the action refusing to fight? But whereas he saith, bending and shooting bows, when it would seem that he ought to have said, bending bows and shooting arrows, for the bow is not shot, but by the bow something is shot: it is either the same form of speech as that whereof we have treated above, where there was said, He hath raised up a testimony, because He hath raised up something by a testimony, so here too, shooting bows, because they have shot something with bows: or else the order of words is obscure, by the omission of a word, which though not expressed must be understood, so that the order is, sons of Ephrem bending bows and shooting, and there is understood arrows, and the more full expression is, bending bows and shooting arrows: for though he had said, bending and shooting arrows, we ought not certainly to understand thereby arrows bending: but having heard the expression bending, to understand rather a bow, though it might not have been said. Some Greek copies to be sure are said to have bending and shooting with bows, so that without doubt we ought to understand arrows. But whereas by the sons of Ephrem he hath willed that there be understood the whole of that embittering generation, it is an expression signifying the whole by a part. And perhaps this part was chosen whereby to signify the whole, because from these men especially some good thing was to have been expected; because they were born of him

whom being his own grandson, although set at the left hand by his father as being the younger, Jacob nevertheless blessed with his right hand, and preferred him before his elder brother with a benediction of hidden meaning; so that while this tribe is so much censured in this place, and that there hath not appeared therein what that blessing promised is clearly shewn, we may well perceive that even then by the words of the Patriarch Jacob something far different was being figured than the wisdom of the flesh doth expect. For there was being figured how they were to be last that were first, and first were to be they that were last, through the Saviour’s coming, concerning Whom hath been said, He that is coming after me was made before me. In like manner righteous Abel was preferred before the elder brother; so to Ismael Isaac; so to Esau, though born before him, his twin brother Jacob; so also Phares himself preceded even in birth his twin brother, who had first thrust a hand out of the womb, and had begun to be born: so David was preferred before his elder brother: and as the reason why all these parables and others like them preceded, not only of words but also of deeds, in like manner to the people of the Jews was preferred the Christian people, for redeeming the which as Abel by Cain, so by the Jews was slain Christ. This thing was prefigured even when Jacob stretching out his hands cross-wise, with his right hand touched Ephrem standing on the left; and set him before Manasse standing on the right, whom he himself touched with the left hand. For after the flesh, the sons of Ephrem bending and shooting bows have been turned back in the day of war.

10. But what that is which he saith, they have been turned back in the day of war, the following words do teach, wherein he hath most clearly explained this: (ver. 10.) they have not kept, he saith, the testament of God, and in His law they would not walk. Behold what is, they have been turned back in the day of war: they have not kept the testament of God. When they were bending and shooting bows, they did also utter the words of most forward promise, saying, “Whatsoever things the Lord our God hath spoken we will do, and we will hear.” They have been turned back in the day of war: because the promise of obedience not hearing but temptation doth prove. But he whose spirit hath been trusted with God, keepeth hold on God, Who is faithful, and doth not suffer him to be tempted above that which he is able; but will make with the temptation a way of escape also,

that he may be able to endure, and may not be turned back in the day of war. But he that glorieth in himself, not in God, howsoever he may vaunt the promise of his virtue, as if bending and shooting bows, is turned back in the day of war. For because his spirit hath not been trusted with God, with him also the Spirit of God is not: and, as it is written, because he hath not believed, therefore he shall not be protected. But inasmuch as when he had said, they have not kept the testament of God; he hath added and saith, and in His law they would not walk, it is a repetition of the former sentence, with a sort of exposition of it. For he hath called that His law, which he had called above the testament of God: so that what hath been said in they have not kept, may be perceived to be repeated in they would not walk. But seeing that it might have been expressed more briefly by, ‘and in His law they have not walked,’ it seemeth to me that he hath willed us to seek for some reason why he hath chosen to say, they would not walk, rather than, they have not walked. For the law of works might have been deemed sufficient for justification, when the precepts which are enjoined, are done externally by men who would rather not have precepts enjoined, the which they perform not from their hearts, and yet do perform them: and thereby they seem in a manner to walk in the law of God, but are unwilling to walk: for they do them not from the heart. But from the heart a thing can no wise be done which is done for fear of punishment, not for love of righteousness. For as far as regardeth acts which are done externally, both they that fear punishment and they that love righteousness do not steal; and therefore they are alike in hand, unlike in heart; alike in operation, unlike in will. Therefore these men have been thus branded: a generation, he saith, which hath not directed their heart. It hath not been said, works, but heart. For when the heart is directed, the works are right; but when the heart is not directed, the works are not right, even though they seem to be right. And how the crooked generation hath not directed the heart, hath sufficiently been shewn, when he saith, and the spirit thereof hath not been trusted with God. For God is right: and therefore by cleaving to the right, as to an immutable rule, the heart of a man can be made right, which in itself was crooked. But in order that the heart may be with Him and thereby may be able to become right, we draw near to Him not with foot but with faith. Therefore also there is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews concerning that same generation crooked and embittering: The hearing of the word profited not them that were not tempered with the faith of them that hearkened. The will therefore which is in a right heart, is prepared by the Lord, faith preceding, whereby it draweth near to God, Who is right, in order that the heart may be made right. The which faith, the mercy of God preventing and inviting, is raised up through obedience; and doth begin to apply the heart to God, in order that it may be directed, and the more and more it is directed, so much the more it seeth what it saw not, and can do what it could not do. This thing Simon had not done, to whom Peter the Apostle said, there is neither part nor lot to thee in this faith: for thy heart is not right with God. For there he is shewing how it cannot be right without God, so that men may begin, not like slaves fearing to walk under the law, but in the law like willing sons, wherein they willed not to walk, and under it remained guilty. For this will not fear but love doth embrace, which is shed abroad in the hearts of the faithful through the Holy Spirit. Unto whom is said, By grace we have been saved through faith: and this not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God; not by works, lest perchance a man should be exalted. For of Him we are the workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, in good works, which God hath prepared, in order that we may walk therein. Not like those men, who willed not to walk in His law, either by believing in Him, or by discovering their way to Him, and by hoping in Him, in order that He might Himself do it.

11. Ver. 11. And they forgat His benefits, and the wonderful works of Him which He shewed to them; before their fathers the wonderful things which He did. What this is, is not a question to be negligently passed over. Concerning those very fathers he was speaking a little before, that they had been a generation crooked and embittering. Lest they should become, he saith, like their fathers: a generation crooked and embittering; a generation that hath not directed their heart, and the like, which are yet said of that same generation, the imitation whereof he hath enjoined to be shunned by another generation in this way, in order that they may put their hope in God, and may not forget the works of God, and may search out His commandments: concerning which we have already discoursed as much as hath seemed sufficient. What meaneth he then, when he is speaking of that same crooked generation, how that they forgot the benefits of God, and the wonderful things of Him which He shewed to them, by adding and saying,

before their fathers the wonderful things which He did? What fathers, inasmuch as these are the very fathers, whom he would not have posterity to be like? If we shall take them to be those out of whom the others had derived their being, for example, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, by this time they had long since fallen asleep, when God shewed wonderful things in Egypt. For there followeth, in the land of Egypt, in the plain of Thanis: where it is said that God shewed to them wonderful things before their fathers. Were they perchance present in spirit? For of the same the Lord saith in the Gospel, for all do live to Him. Or do we more suitably understand thereby the fathers Moses and Aaron, and the other elders who are related in the same Scripture also to have received the Spirit, of Which also Moses received, in order that they might aid him in ruling and bearing the same people? For why should they not have been called fathers? It is not in the same manner as God is the One Father, Who doth regenerate with His Spirit those whom He doth make sons for an everlasting inheritance; but it is for the sake of honour, because of their age and kindly carefulness: just as Paul the elder saith, Not to confound you I am writing these things, but as my dearly beloved sons I am admonishing you: though he knew of a truth that it had been said by the Lord, Call ye no man your father on earth, for One is your Father, even God. And this was not said in order that this term of human honour should be erased from our usual way of speaking: but lest the grace of God whereby we are regenerated unto eternal life, should be ascribed either to the power or even sanctity of any man. Therefore when he said, I have begotten you; he first said, in Christ, and through the Gospel; lest that might be thought to be of him, which is of God.

12. Therefore that generation, crooked and embittering, have forgotten the benefits of God, and His wonderful works which He shewed to them before their fathers, (ver. 12.) the wonderful works which He did in the land of Egypt, in the plain of Thanis. And he beginneth to recount in his narrative the same wonderful works. Which if they are ‘parables and propositions,’ they must certainly be referred to some thing by comparison. Nor ought we to take off the eye of attention from that which the Psalm itself doth intend to shew; how that this is the fruit of all things which are therein spoken of, and why we have been admonished to hear these words most attentively, God saying, Hearken ye, My people, unto My law, incline ye your ear unto

the words of My mouth; in order that we may put our hope in God, and may not forget the works of God, and may search out His commandments: lest we become, like those fathers, a generation crooked and embittering, a generation which guided not the heart, and the spirit thereof was not trusted with God. Unto this therefore all things must be referred; and therefore whatsoever these things do signify in a figurative action, so they may come to pass spiritually in a man, either by the grace of God, if they are good things, or by the judgment of God, if they are evil things; just as the former good things were done unto the Israelites, or evil things both unto themselves and unto their enemies. The which if we forget not, but put our hope in God, and are not ungrateful for His grace; and fear Him, not with servile fear, wherewith corporal evil things alone are feared, but with chaste fear abiding for everlasting, which fear doth deem it great punishment to be deprived of the light of righteousness; we shall not be made, like those fathers, a generation crooked and embittering. Accordingly, the land of Egypt must be understood for a figure of this world. The plain of Thanis is the smooth surface of lowly commandment. For lowly commandment is the interpretation of Thanis. In this world therefore let us receive the commandment of humility, in order that in another world we may merit to receive the exaltation which He hath promised, Who for our sake here became lowly.

13. Ver. 13. For He that did burst asunder the sea and made them go through, did confine the waters as it were in bottles, in order that the water might stand up first as if it were shut in, is able by His grace to restrain the flowing and ebbing tides of carnal desires, when we renounce this world, so that all sins having been thoroughly washed away, as if they were enemies, the people of the faithful may be made to pass through by means of the Sacrament of Baptism. He that led them home in the cloud of the day, and in the whole night in the illumination of fire, is able also spiritually to direct goings if faith crieth to Him, Direct Thou my goings after Thy word. Of Whom in another place is said, For Himself shall make thy courses right, and shall prolong thy goings in peace through Jesus Christ our Lord, Whose Sacrament in this world, as it were in the day, is manifest in the flesh, as if in a cloud; but in the Judgment, it will be manifest like as in a terror by night; for then there will be a great tribulation of the world like as it were

fire, and it shall shine for the just and shall burn for the unjust. (Ver. 15.) He that burst asunder the rock in the desert, and gave them water as in a great deep; (Ver. 16.) and brought out water from the rock, and brought down waters like rivers, is surely able upon thirsty faith to pour the gift of the Holy Spirit, (the which gift the performance of that thing did spiritually signify,) to pour, I say, from the Spiritual Rock that followed, which is Christ: Who did stand and cry, If any is athirst, let him come to Me: and, he that shall have drunk of the water which I shall give, rivers of living water shall flow out of his belly. For this He spake, as is read in the Gospel, of the Spirit, Which they were to receive that believed in Him, unto Whom like the rod drew near the wood of the Passion, in order that there might flow forth grace for believers.

14. And yet, (ver. 17.) they, like a generation crooked and embittering, added yet to sin against Him: that is, not to believe. For this is the sin, whereof the Spirit doth convict the world, as the Lord saith, “Of sin indeed because they have not believed on Me.” And they exasperated the Most High in drought, which other copies have, in a place without water, which is a more exact translation from the Greek, and doth signify no other thing than drought. Was it in that drought of the desert, or rather in their own? For although they had drunk of the rock, they had not their bellies but their minds dry, freshening with no fruitfulness of righteousness. In that drought they ought the more faithfully to have been suppliant unto God, in order that He Who had given fulness unto their jaws, might give also equity to their manners. For unto Him the faithful soul doth cry, Let mine eyes see equity.

15. Ver. 18. And they tempted God in their hearts, in order that they might seek morsels for their souls. It is one thing to ask in believing, another thing in tempting. Lastly there followeth, (Ver. 19.) And they slandered God, and said, Shall God be able to prepare a table in the desert? (Ver. 20.) For He smote the rock, and the waters flowed, and torrents gushed forth: will He be able to give bread also, or to Prepare a table for His people? Not believing therefore, they sought morsels for their souls. Not so the Apostle James doth enjoin a morsel to be asked for the mind, but doth admonish that it be sought by believers, not by such as tempt and slander God. But if any one

of you, he saith, doth lack wisdom, let him ask of God, Who doth give to all men abundantly, and doth not upbraid, and it shall be given to him: but let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. This faith had not that generation which ‘had not directed their heart, and the spirit thereof had not been trusted with God.’

16. Ver. 21. Wherefore the Lord heard, and He delayed, and fire was lighted in Jacob, and wrath went up into Israel. He hath explained what he hath called fire. He hath called anger fire: although in strict propriety fire did also burn up many men. What is therefore this that he saith, The Lord heard, and He delayed? Did He delay to conduct them into the land of promise, whither they were being led: which might have been done in the space of a few days, but on account of sins they must needs be wasted in the desert, where also they were wasted during forty years? And if this be so, He did then delay the people, not those very persons who tempted and slandered God: for they all perished in the desert, and their children journeyed into the land of promise. Or did He delay punishment, in order that He might first satisfy unbelieving concupiscence, lest He might be supposed to be angry, because they were asking of Him what He was not able to do? He heard then, and He delayed to avenge: and after He had done what they supposed He was not able to do, then anger went up upon Israel.

17. Lastly, when both these things have been briefly touched, afterwards he is evidently following out the order of the narrative. (Ver. 22.) Because they believed not in God, nor hoped in His saving health. For when he had told why fire was lighted in Jacob, and anger went up upon Israel, that is to say, because they believed not in God, nor hoped in His saving health: immediately subjoining the evident blessings for which they were ungrateful, he saith, (Ver. 23.) and He commanded the clouds above, and opened the doors of Heaven. (Ver. 24.) And He rained upon them manna to eat, and gave them bread of Heaven. (Ver. 25.) Bread of angels man did eat: dainties He sent them in abundance. (Ver. 26.) He brought over the South Wind from Heaven, and in His virtue He led in the South West Wind. (Ver. 27.) And He rained upon them fleshes like dust, and winged fowls like the sand of the sea. (Ver. 28.) And they fell in the midst of their camp, around their tabernacles. (Ver. 29.) And they ate and were filled exceedingly; and

their desire He brought to them: they were not deprived of their desire. Behold why He had delayed. But what He had delayed let us hear. (Ver. 30.) Yet the morsel was in their mouths, and the anger of God came down upon them. Behold what He had delayed. For before He delayed: and afterwards, fire was lighted in Jacob and anger went up upon Israel. He had delayed therefore in order that He might first do what they had believed that He could not do, and then might bring upon them what they deserved to suffer. For if they placed their hope in God, not only would their desires of the flesh but also those of the spirit have been fulfilled. For He that commanded the clouds above, and opened the doors of Heaven, and rained upon them manna to eat, and gave them the bread of Heaven, so that man did eat Angels’ food, He that sent dainties upon them in abundance, that He might fill the unbelieving, is not without power to give to believers Himself the true Bread from Heaven, which the manna did signify: which is indeed the food of Angels, whom being incorruptible the Word of God doth incorruptibly feed: the which in order that man might eat, He became flesh, and dwelled in us. For Himself the Bread by means of the Evangelical clouds is being rained over the whole world, and, the hearts of preachers, like heavenly doors, being opened, is being preached not to a murmuring and tempting synagogue, but to a Church believing and putting hope in Him. He that brought over the South West Wind, and led in His might the South Wind, and rained upon them fleshes like dust, and winged fowls like the sand of the sea: and they fell in the midst of their camp, around their tabernacles: and they ate and were filled exceedingly, and their desire He brought to them, and they were deprived of their desire: is able also to feed the feeble faith of such as tempt not, but believe, with the signs of words uttered by the flesh and speeding through the air, as though it were fowls: not however with such as come from the north, where cold and mist do prevail, that is to say, eloquence which is pleasing to this world, but by bringing over the South Wind from Heaven; (whither, except to the earth? In order that they who are feeble in faith, by hearing things earthly may be nourished up to receive things heavenly. For if, He saith, I have told you of things earthly, and ye believe not; how shall ye believe if I shall tell you of things heavenly? For that one had been translated from Heaven in a manner, where in mind he had departed to God; in order that he might be forbearing to those men unto whom he was saying, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. For there he had heard ineffable words, which on earth it was not lawful for him to speak by means of words that sound, like winged fowls;) and by bringing in by His might the South West Wind, that is, by means of South Winds, the fervent and flowing spirits of preachers; and this by His virtue, lest the South Wind should ascribe unto itself that which it hath of God. But these winds of their own selves come unto men, and they bear unto them words divinely sent; in order that in their own places and round about their tabernacles they may gather together fowls of such sort, and all the isles of the nations may adore the Lord, each man from his place.

18. But as to unbelievers, being a crooked and embittering generation, as it were, while the morsel was yet in their mouths, (ver. 31.) the anger of God went up upon them, and it slew among the most of them: that is, the most of them, or as some copies have it, the fat ones of them, which however in the Greek copies which we had, we did not find. But if this be the truer reading, what else must be understood by the fat ones of them, than men mighty in pride, concerning whom is said, their iniquity shall come forth as if out of fat? And the elect of Israel He fettered. Even there there were elect, with whose faith the generation crooked and embittering was not mixed. But they were fettered, so that they might in no sort profit them for whom they desired that they might provide from a fatherly affection. For what is conferred by human mercy, on those with whom God is angry? Or rather hath He willed it to be understood, how that even the elect were fettered at the same time with them, in order that they who were diverse both in mind and in life, might endure sufferings with them for an example not only of righteousness, but also of patience? For we have learned that holy men were even led captive with sinners for no other reason; since in the Greek copies we read not ἐνεπόδισεν, which is fettered; but συνεπόδισεν, which is rather fettered together with.

19. But the generation crooked and embittering, (ver. 32.) in all these things sinned yet more, and they believed not in His wonderful works. (Ver. 33.) And their days failed in vanity. Though they might, if they had believed, have had days in truth without failing, with Him to Whom hath been said, Thy years shall not fail. Therefore their days failed in vanity, and their years

with haste. For the whole life of mortal men is hastening, and that which seemeth to be longer is but a vapour of somewhat longer duration.

20. Nevertheless, when he slew them they sought Him: not for the sake of eternal life, but fearing to end the vapour too soon. There sought Him then, not indeed those whom He had slain, but they that were afraid of being slain according to the example of them. But the Scripture hath so spoken of them as if they sought God who were slain; because they were one people, and it is spoken as if of one body: (ver. 34.) and they returned, and at dawn they came to God. (Ver. 35.) And they remembered that God is their Helper, and the High God is their Redeemer. But all this is for the sake of acquiring temporal good things, and for avoiding temporal evil things. For they that did seek God for the sake of temporal blessings, sought not God indeed, but things. Thus God is worshipped with slavish fear, not with those free love. Thus then God is not worshipped: for that thing is worshipped which is loved. Whence because God is found to be greater and better than all things, He must be loved more than all things, in order that He may be worshipped.

21. Lastly, here let us see the words following: (ver. 36.) And they loved Him, he saith, in their mouth, and in their tongue they lied unto Him. (Ver. 37.) But their heart was not right with Him, and they were not counted faithful in His Testament. One thing on their tongue, another thing in their heart He found, unto Whom the secret things of men are naked, and without any impediment He saw what they loved rather. Therefore the heart is right with God, when it doth seek God for the sake of God. For one thing he desired of the Lord, the same he will require, that he may dwell always in the House of the Lord, and may meditate on the pleasantness of Him. Unto Whom saith the heart of the faithful, I will be filled, not with the flesh-pots of the Egyptians, nor with melons and gourds, and garlick and onions, which a generation crooked and embittering did prefer even to bread celestial, nor with visible manna, and those same winged fowls; but, I will be filled, when Thy glory shall be made manifest. For this is the inheritance of the New Testament, wherein they were not counted faithful; whereof however the faith even at that time, when it was veiled, was in the elect, and now, when it hath already been revealed, it is not in many that are called. For many have been called, but few are elect. Of such sort therefore was the

generation crooked and embittering, even when they were seeming to seek God, loving in mouth, and in tongue lying; but in heart not right with God, while they loved rather those things, for the sake of which they required the help of God.

22. Ver. 38. But He is Himself merciful, and will become propitious to their sins, and He will not destroy them. And He will abound to turn away His anger, and He will not kindle all his anger. (Ver. 39.) And he took it to heart that they are flesh, a breath going and not returning. By these words many men promise to themselves impunity for their iniquity from the Divine Mercy, even if they shall have persevered in being such, as that generation is described, crooked and embittering; which hath not directed their heart, and the spirit thereof hath not been trusted with God: with whom it is not profitable to agree. For if, to speak in their words, God will perchance not destroy no not even bad men, without doubt He will not destroy good men. Why then do we not rather choose that wherein there is no doubt? For they that lie to Him in their tongue, though their heart doth hold some other thing, do think indeed, and will, even God to be a liar, when He doth menace upon such men eternal punishment. But whilst they do not deceive Him with their lying, He doth not deceive them with speaking the truth. These words therefore of divine sayings, concerning which the crooked generation doth cajole itself, let it not make crooked like its own heart: for even when it is made crooked, they continue right. For at first they may be understood according to that which is written in the Gospel, that ye may be like your Father Who is in the Heavens, Who maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, and raineth upon just men and unjust men. For who could not see, how great is the long-suffering of mercy with which He is sparing evil men? But before the Judgment, He spared then that nation in such sort, that He kindled not all His anger, utterly to root it up and bring it to an end: which thing in His words and in the intercession for their sins of His servant Moses doth evidently appear, where God saith, Let Me blot them out, and make thee into a great nation: he intercedeth, being more ready to be blotted out for them than that they should be; knowing that he is doing this before One Merciful, Who inasmuch as by no means He would blot out him, would even spare them for his sake. For let us see how greatly He spared, and doth still spare. For He led into the land of promise, and

kept that nation, until by slaying Christ they bound themselves with the guilt greatest of all; and in that He scattered them, rooted out from that kingdom, throughout all the kingdoms of the nations, still He did not blot them out: but there remaineth the same people preserved by a succession of offspring, like Cain who received a mark, that no one should slay him, that is, utterly destroy him. Behold after what manner there is fulfilled that which hath been spoken, But He is Himself merciful, and will be propitious to their sins, and will not destroy them: and will abound to turn away His anger, and He will not kindle all His anger. For if all His anger, that is, as much as they deserve, should be kindled against them, that nation would not be left at all. Thus God, unto Whom is sung mercy and judgment, and Who in this world through mercy maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, in the end of the world also through judgment doth punish evil men with eternal darkness, severed from His eternal light.

23. In the second place, that we may not seem to do violence to divine words, and lest in the place where there was said, He will not destroy them, we should say, “But hereafter He will destroy them:” concerning this very present Psalm let us turn to a very common phrase of the Scripture, whereby this question may be more diligently and more truly solved. Certes speaking of these same persons a little lower down, when He had made mention of the things which the Egyptians because of them had endured, making mention of the last plague, He saith, And He smote every first born thing in the land of Egypt, the first fruits of their labour in the tabernacles of Cham. And He took away like sheep His people, and He led them through like a flock in the desert. And He led them forth in hope, and they feared not: and their enemies the sea overwhelmed. And He led them unto the mount of His sanctification, the mount which His right hand won. And He cast out from their face the nations, and by lot distributed to them the land in the cord of distribution. If any one at these words should press a question upon us and should say, How doth he make mention of all these things as having been bestowed upon them, when the same persons were not led into the land of promise, as were delivered from Egypt, inasmuch as they were dead? What shall we reply but that they were spoken of, because they were the self-same people by means of a succession of sons? So then when we hear, (especially because the words are of the future tense,) And He shall

become propitious to their sins, and He shall not destroy them; and He shall abound to turn away His anger, and He shall not kindle all His anger: let us perceive how in them was fulfilled that whereof the Apostle speaketh, So then even at this time a remnant were saved through the election of grace. Whence also He saith, Hath God by any means rejected His people? Far be it. For I also am an Israelite, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews. Those men therefore the Scripture did foresee, who were to believe in Christ out of that people, and to receive the remission of sins, yea even unto that very greatest one, wherein frantic they slew the Physician Himself. Hence doubtless hath been said, But He is Himself merciful, and He will be propitious to their sins, and He will not destroy them; and He will abound to turn away His anger; for He hath remitted even that sin, wherewith His only Son was slain: and He will not kindle all His anger; for a remnant have been saved.

24. Ver. 39. And He remembered that they are flesh, a spirit going and not returning. Therefore calling them and pitying them through His grace, He called them back Himself, because of themselves they could not return. For how doth flesh return, ‘a spirit walking and not turning back,’ while a weight of evil deserts doth weigh it down unto the lowest and far places of evil, save through the election of grace? The which is not rendered like a recompense to merits, but as a gift is given gratis: in order that the ungodly may be justified, and the lost sheep may return; not however in its own strength, but borne on the shoulders of the shepherd, which was able to lose itself while it was straying of its own will, but was not able to find itself, nor ever had been found, if it had not been sought by the mercy of the Shepherd. For even that son cannot but be fitted to this sheep, who coming to himself said, I will arise, and I will go to my Father. Though the calling then and the inspiration was hidden, even he was sought and raised again, not except by Him Who doth make alive all things: and he was found, by whom, save by Him Who went to save and to seek that which had been lost? For he had been dead and was alive again, had been lost and was found. For thus also is solved this no unimportant question, how it is written in the Proverbs, when the Scripture was speaking of the way of iniquity, all they that walk in her shall not return. For it hath been so spoken as if all ungodly men were to be despaired of: but the Scripture did only commend

grace; for of himself man is able to walk in that way, but is not able of himself to return, except when called back by grace.

25. I say then of these crooked and embittering persons, (ver. 40.) How often they exasperated Him in the desert, and provoked Him to wrath in the waterless place? (Ver. 41.) And they turned themselves and tempted God, and exasperated the Holy One of Israel. He is repeating that same unbelief of theirs, of which He had made mention above. But the reason of the repetition is, in order that there may be mentioned also the plagues, which He inflicted on the Egyptians for their sakes: all which things they certainly ought to have remembered, and not to be ungrateful. Lastly, there followeth what? (Ver. 42.) They remembered not His hands, in the day when He redeemed them from the hand of the troubler. And he beginneth to speak of what things He did to the Egyptians; (Ver. 43.) He set in Egypt His signs, and His prodigies in the plain of Thanis: (Ver. 44.) and He turned their rivers into blood, and their showers lest they should drink: or rather, the flowings of waters, as some do better understand by what is written in Greek, τὰ ὀμβρήματα, which in Latin we call scaturigines, waters bubbling from beneath. (Ver. 45.) He sent upon them the dog-fly, and it ate them up; and the frog, and it destroyed them. (Ver. 46.) And He gave their fruit to the mildew, and their labours to the locust. (Ver. 47.) And He slew with hail their vineyards, and their mulberry trees with frost. (Ver. 48.) And He gave over to the hail their beasts of burden, and their possessions to the fire. (Ver. 49.) He sent upon them the anger of His indignation, indignation and anger and tribulation, a visitation through evil angels. (Ver. 50.) He made a way to the course of His anger, and their beasts of burden He shut up in death. (Ver. 51.) And He smote every first-born thing in the land of Egypt, the first-fruits of their labours in the tabernacles of Cham.

26. All these punishments of the Egyptians may be explained by an allegorical interpretation, according as one shall have chosen to understand them, and to compare them to the things whereunto they must be referred. Which we too will endeavour to do; and shall do it the more properly, the more we shall have been divinely aided. For to do this, those words of this Psalm do constrain us, wherein it was said, I will open in parables my mouth, I will declare propositions from the beginning. For for this cause

even some things have been here spoken of, which that they befel the Egyptians at all we read not, although all their plagues are most carefully related in Exodus according to their order; so that while that which is not there mentioned we are sure hath not been mentioned in the Psalm to no purpose, and we can interpret the same only figuratively, we may at the same time understand that even the rest of the things which it is evident did happen, were done or described for the sake of some figurative meaning. For the Scripture doth so do in many passages of the prophetic sayings. It speaketh of something which in the doing of that thing, whereof it seemeth to make mention, is not found, nay even is found to have been differently done; in order that hence it may be perceived not to have spoken of that which might have been supposed, but of that rather which ought to be more attended to: like this passage is, He shall have dominion from sea even unto sea, and from the river even unto the ends of the earth. Which thing it is evident was not fulfilled in the kingdom of Solomon, whereof this Psalm might be thought to speak, inasmuch as it was speaking of Christ the Lord. In the plagues therefore of the Egyptians, which are in the book which is called Exodus, where the Scripture hath been especially careful, that those things whereby they were afflicted should be all related in order, there is not found what this Psalm hath, and He gave to the mildew their fruits. This also wherein, when he had said, and He gave over to the hail their beasts, he hath added, and their possession to the fire: of the beasts slain with hail is read in Exodus; but how their possession was burned with fire, is not read at all. Although voices and fires do come together with hail, just as thunderings do commonly accompany lightnings; nevertheless, it is not written that any thing was given over to the fire that it should be burned. Lastly, the soft things which the hail could not hurt, are said not to have been smitten, that is, hurt with hard blows; which things the locust devoured afterwards. Also that which is here spoken of, and their mulberry trees with hoar-frost, is not in Exodus. For hoar-frost doth differ much from hail; for in the clear winter nights the earth is made white with hoar-frost.

27. What then those things do signify, let the interpreter say as he can, let reader and hearer judge as is just. The water turned into blood seemeth to me to signify a carnal view of the causes of things. Dog-fly, are the manners of dogs, who see not even their parents when first they are born. The frog is

very talkative vanity. Mildew doth hurt secretly, which also some have interpreted by rust, others black mould: which evil thing to what vice is it more appropriately compared, than to what doth shew itself least readily, like the trusting much in one’s self? For it is a blighting air which doth work this secretly among fruits: just like in morals, secret pride, when a man thinketh himself to be something, though he is nothing. The locust is malice hurting with the mouth, that is, with unfaithful testimony. The hail is iniquity taking away the goods of others; whence theft, robberies, and depredations do spring: but more by his wickedness the plunderer himself is plundered. The hoar-frost doth signify the fault wherein the love of one’s neighbour by the darkness of foolishness, like as it were by the cold of night, is frozen up. But the fire, if here it is not that which is mentioned which was in the hail out of the lightning clouds, forasmuch as he hath said here, He gave over their possession to the fire, where he implieth that a thing was burned, which by that fire we read not to have been done,—it seemeth to me, I say, to signify the savageness of wrath, whereby even man-slaying may be committed. But by the death of beasts was figured, as far as I judge, the loss of chastity. For concupiscence, whereby offspring do arise, we have in common with beasts. To have this therefore tamed and ordered, is the virtue of chastity. The death of the first-born things, is the putting off of the very justice whereby a man doth associate with mankind. But whether the figurative significations of these things be so, or whether they are better understood in another way, whom would it not move, that with ten plagues the Egyptians are smitten, and with ten commandments the tables are inscribed, that thereby the people of God should be ruled? Concerning the comparing of which one with the other, inasmuch as we have spoken elsewhere, there is no need to load the exposition of this Psalm therewith: thus much we remind you, that here too, though not in the same order, yet ten plagues of the Egyptians are commemorated, forasmuch as in the place of three which are in Exodus and are not here, to wit, lice, boils, darkness; other three are commemorated, which are not there, that is to say, mildew, hoar-frost, and fire; not of lightning, but that whereunto their possession was given over, which is not read of in that place.

28. But it hath been clearly enough intimated, that by the judgment of God these things befel them through the instrumentality of evil angels, in this

wicked world, as though it were in Egypt and in the plain of Thanis, where we ought to be humble, until there come that world, wherein we may earn to be exalted out of this humiliation. For even Egypt in the Hebrew tongue doth signify darkness or tribulations, in which tongue, Thanis, as I have observed, is understood to be humble commandment. Concerning the evil angels therefore in this Psalm, while he was speaking of those very plagues, there hath been something inserted, which must not be passed over cursorily: (ver. 49.) He sent upon them, he saith, the anger of His indignation, indignation and anger and tribulation, an infliction through evil angels. Now that the devil and his angels are so very evil, that for them everlasting fire is prepared, no believer is ignorant: but that there should be sent by means of them an infliction from the Lord God upon certain whom He judgeth to be deserving of this punishment, seemeth to be a hard thing to those who are little prone to consider, how the perfect justice of God doth use well even evil things. For these indeed, as far as regardeth their substance, what other person but Himself hath made? But evil He hath not made them: yet He doth use them, inasmuch as He is good, well, that is, conveniently and justly: just as on the other hand unrighteous men do use His good creatures in evil manner. God therefore doth use evil angels not only to punish evil men, as in the case of all those concerning whom the Psalm doth speak, as in the case of king Achab, whom a spirit of lying by the will of God did beguile, in order that be might fall in war: but also to prove and make manifest good men, as He did in the case of Job. But as far as regardeth that corporal matter of visible elements, I suppose that thereof angels both good and evil are able to make use, according to the power given to each: just as also men good and evil do use such things, as far as they are able, according to the measure of human infirmity. For we use both earth and water, and air, and fire, not only in things necessary for our support, but also in many operations superfluous and playful, and marvellously artificial. For countless things, which are called μηχανήματα, are moulded out of these elements scientifically employed. But over these things angels have a far more extended power, both the good and the evil, though greater is that which the good have; but only so far as is commanded or permitted by the will and providence of God; on which terms also we have it. For not even in these cases are we able to do all that we will. But in a book the most unerring we read that the devil was able even to send fire from Heaven, to burn up with wonderful and awful fierceness so great a number of the cattle of a holy man: which thing no one of the faithful would dare perchance to ascribe to the devil, except it were read on the authority of Holy Scripture. But that man, being by the gift of God just and firm, and of godly knowledge, saith not, The Lord hath given, the devil hath taken away: but, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away: very well knowing that even what the devil was able to do with these elements, he would still not have done to a servant of God, except at his Lord’s will and permission; he did confound the malice of the devil, forasmuch as he knew who it was that was making use thereof to prove him. In the sons then of unbelief like as it were in his own slaves, he doth work, like men with their beasts, and even therewith only so far as is permitted by the just judgment of God. But it is one thing when his power is restrained from treating even his own as he pleases, by a greater power; another thing when to him power is given even over those who are alien from him. Just as a man with his beast, as men understand it, doeth what he will, and yet doth not indeed, if he be restrained by a greater power: but with another man’s beast to do something, he doth wait until power be given from him unto whom it belongeth. In the former case the power which there was is restrained, in the latter that which there was not is conceded.

29. And if such be the case, if through evil angels God did inflict those plagues upon the Egyptians, shall we dare to say that the water also was turned into blood by means of those same angels, and that frogs were created by means of the same, the like whereunto even the magicians of Pharaoh were able to make by their enchantments; so as that evil angels stood on both sides, on the one side afflicting them, on the other side deceiving them, according to the judgment and dispensation of the most just and most omnipotent God, Who doth justly make use of even the naughtiness of unrighteous men? I dare not to say so. For whence was it that the magicians of Pharaoh could by no means make lice? Was it not because even these same evil angels were not suffered to do this? Or, to speak more truly, is not the cause hidden, and it doth exceed our powers of inquiry? For if we shall have supposed that God wrought those things by means of evil angels, because punishments were being inflicted, and not blessings being bestowed, as though God doth inflict punishments upon no

one by means of good angels, but by means of those executioners as it were of the heavenly wrath; the consequence will be that we must believe that even Sodom was overthrown by means of evil angels, and that Abraham and Lot would seem to have entertained under their roof evil angels; the which, as being contrary to the most evident Scriptures, far be it that we should think. It is clear then that these things might have been done to men by means of good and evil angels. What should be done or when it should be done doth escape me: but Him that doeth it, it escapeth not, and him unto whom He shall have willed to reveal it. Nevertheless, as far as divine Scripture doth yield to our application thereto, on evil men that punishments are inflicted both by means of good angels, as upon the Sodomites, and by means of evil angels, as upon the Egyptians, we read: but that just men with corporal penances by means of good angels are tried and proved, doth not occur to me.

30. But as far as regardeth the present passage of this Psalm, if those things which were marvellously formed out of creatures, to evil angels we dare not ascribe; we have a thing which without doubt we can ascribe to them; the dyings of the beasts, the dyings of the first-born, and this especially whence all these things proceeded, namely, the hardening of heart, so that they would not let go the people of God. For when God is said to make this most iniquitous and malignant obstinacy, He maketh it not by suggesting and inspiring, but by forsaking, so that they work in the sons of unbelief that which God doth duly and justly permit. For this also which Isaias the prophet saith, O Lord, behold Thou hast been angry, and we have sinned; therefore we have gone astray, and we have become as it were unclean, all of us, must be understood in that manner. For there had gone before something, whence God being most justly wroth took away His light from them, so that into sins, which can not be shewn not to be sins by any cunning excuses, the blindness of the human mind fell, by erring and straying from the path of righteousness. And with regard to what is written in another Psalm concerning those very Egyptians, how God turned their heart so that they hated His people, and wrought deceit unto His servants, God may well be believed to have done it by means of those evil angels, so that the already corrupt minds of the sons of unbelief should by means of those angels, unto whom the same vices are pleasing, be stirred up unto the

hating of the people of God, and that those wonderful things should follow to terrify and amend good men. Moreover, those evil manners which we said were signified by these corporal plagues, on account of that which was said before, I will open in parables my mouth, are most appropriately believed by means of evil angels to have been wrought in those that are made subject to them by Divine justice. For neither when that cometh to pass of which the apostle speaketh, God gave them over unto the lusts of their heart, that they should do things which are not convenient, can it be but that those evil angels dwell and rejoice therein, as in the matter of their own work: unto whom most justly is human naughtiness made subject, in all save those whom grace doth deliver. And for these things who is sufficient? Whence when he had said, He sent unto them the anger of His indignation, indignation and anger and tribulation, an infliction through evil angels; for this which he hath added, (ver. 50.) a way He hath made for the path of His anger, whose eye, I pray, is sufficient to penetrate, so that it may understand and take in the sense lying hidden in so great a profundity? For the path of the anger of God was that whereby He punished the ungodliness of the Egyptians with hidden justice: but for that same path He made a way, so that drawing them forth as it were from secret places by means of evil angels unto manifest offences, He most evidently inflicted punishment upon those that were most evidently ungodly. From this power of evil angels nothing doth deliver man but the grace of God, whereof the Apostle speaketh, Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love: of which things that people did bear the figure, when they were delivered from the power of the Egyptians, and translated into the kingdom of the land of promise flowing with milk and honey, which doth signify the sweetness of grace.

31. The Psalm proceedeth then after the commemoration of the plagues of the Egyptians, and saith, (ver. 52.) And He took away like sheep His people, and He led them through like a flock in the desert. (Ver. 53.) And He led them down in hope, and they feared not, and their enemies the sea covered. This cometh to pass to so much the greater good, as it is a more inward thing, wherein being delivered from the power of darkness, we are in mind translated into the Kingdom of God, and with respect to spiritual pastures we are made to become sheep of God, walking in this world as it

were in a desert, inasmuch as to no one is our faith observable: whence saith the Apostle, Your life is hidden with Christ in God. But we are being led home in hope, For by hope we are saved. Nor ought we to fear. For, If God be for us, who can be against us? And our enemies the sea hath covered, He hath effaced them in baptism by the remission of sins.

32. In the next place there followeth, (ver. 54.) And He led them into the mountain of His sanctification. How much better into Holy Church! The mountain which His right hand hath gotten. How much higher is the Church which Christ hath gotten, concerning Whom has been said, “And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” (Ver. 55.) And He cast forth from the face of them the nations. And from the face of His faithful. For nations in a manner are the evil spirits of Gentile errors. And by lot He divided unto them the land in the cord of distribution. And in us all things one and the same Spirit doth work, dividing severally to every one as He willeth.

33. And He made to dwell in their tabernacles the tribes of Israel. In the tabernacles, he saith, of the Gentiles He made the tribes of Israel to dwell, which I think can better be explained spiritually, inasmuch as unto celestial glory, whence sinning angels have been cast forth and cast down, by Christ’s grace we are being uplifted. For that generation crooked and embittering, inasmuch as for these corporal blessings they put not off the coat of oldness, (ver. 56.) Did tempt yet, and provoked the high God, and His testimonies they kept not: (Ver. 57.) and they turned them away, and they kept not the covenant, like their fathers. For under a sort of covenant and decree they said, All things which our Lord God hath spoken we will do, and we will hear. It is a remarkable thing indeed which he saith, like their fathers: while throughout the whole text of the Psalm he was seeming to speak of the same men as it were, yet now it appeareth that the words did concern those who were already in the land of promise, and that the fathers spoken of were of those who did provoke in the desert.

34. Ver. 57. They were turned, he saith, into a crooked, or, as some copies have it, into a perverse bow. But what this is doth better appear in that which followeth, where he saith, (Ver. 58.) And unto wrath they provoked Him with their hills. It doth signify that they leaped into idolatry. The bow then was perverted, not for the name of the Lord, but against the name of

the Lord: Who said to the same people, Thou shalt have none other Gods but Me. But by the bow He doth signify the mind’s intention. This same idea, lastly, more clearly working out, And in their graven idols, he saith, they provoked Him to indignation.

35. Ver. 59. God heard, and He despised: that is, He gave heed and took vengeance. And unto nothing He brought Israel exceedingly. For when God despised, what were they who by God’s help were what they were? But doubtless he is commemorating the doing of that thing, when they were conquered by the Philistines in the time of Heli the priest, and the Ark of the Lord was taken, and with great slaughter they were laid low. This it is that he speaketh of in ver. 60. And He rejected the tabernacle of Selom, His tabernacle, where He dwelled among men. He hath elegantly explained why He rejected His tabernacle, when he saith, where He dwelled among men. When therefore they were not worthy for Him to dwell among, why should He not reject the tabernacle, which indeed not for Himself He had established, but for their sakes, whom now He judged unworthy for Him to dwell among.

36. Ver. 61. And He gave over unto captivity their virtue, and their beauty unto the hands of the enemy. The very Ark whereby they thought themselves invincible, and whereon they plumed themselves, he calleth their ‘virtue’ and ‘beauty.’ Lastly, also afterward, when they were living ill, and boasting of the temple of the Lord, He doth terrify them by a Prophet, saying, See ye what I have done to Selom, where was My tabernacle.

37. Ver. 62. And He ended with the sword His people, and His inheritance He despised. Their young men the fire devoured: that is, wrath. (Ver. 63.) And their virgins mourned not. For not even for this was there leisure, in fear of the foe.

38. Ver. 64. Their priests fell by the sword, and their widows were not lamented. For there fell by the sword the sons of Heli, of one of whom the wife being widowed, and presently dying in child-birth, because of the same confusion could not be mourned with the distinction of a funeral.

39. Ver. 65. And the Lord was awakened as one sleeping. For He seemeth to sleep, when He giveth His people into the hands of those whom He hateth,

when there is said to them, “Where is thy God.” He was awakened, then, like one sleeping, like a mighty man drunken with wine. No one would dare to say this of God, save His Spirit. For he hath spoken, as it seemeth to ungodly men reviling; as if like a drunken man He sleepeth long, when He succoureth not so speedily as men think.

40. Ver. 66. And He smote His enemies in the hinder parts: those, to wit, who were rejoicing that they were able to take His Ark: for they were smitten in their back-parts. Which seemeth to me to be a sign of that punishment, wherewith a man will be tortured, if he shall have looked back upon things behind; which, as saith the Apostle, he ought to value as dung. For they that do so receive the Testament of God, as that they put not off from them the old vanity, are like the hostile nations, who did place the captured Ark of the Testament beside their own idols. And yet those old things even though these be unwilling do fall: for all flesh is hay, and the glory of man as the flower of hay. The hay hath dried up, and the flower hath fallen off: but the Ark of the Lord abideth for everlasting, to wit, the secret testament of the kingdom of Heaven, where is the eternal Word of God. But they that have loved things behind, because of these very things most justly shall be tormented. For everlasting reproach He hath given to them.

41. Ver. 67. And He rejected, he saith, the tabernacle of Joseph, and the tribe of Ephræm He chose not. (Ver. 68.) And He chose the tribe of Juda. He hath not said, He rejected the tabernacle of Reuben, who was the first-born son of Jacob; nor them that follow, and precede Juda in order of birth; so that they being rejected and not chosen, the tribe of Juda was chosen. For it might have been said that they were deservedly rejected; because even in the blessing of Jacob wherewith he blessed his sons, he mentioneth their sins, and deeply abhorreth them; though among them the tribe of Levi merited to be the priestly tribe, whence also Moses was. Nor hath he said, He rejected the tabernacle of Benjamin, or the tribe of Benjamin He chose not, out of which a king already had begun to be; for thence there had been chosen Saul; whence because of the very proximity of the time, when he had been rejected and refused, and David chosen, this might conveniently have been said; but yet was not said: but he hath named those especially

who seemed to excel for more surpassing merits. For Joseph fed in Egypt his father and his brethren, and having been impiously sold, because of his piety, chastity, wisdom, he was most justly exalted; and Ephræm by the blessing of his grandfather Jacob was preferred before his elder brother: and yet God rejected the tabernacle of Joseph, and the tribe of Ephræm He chose not. In which place by these names of renowned merit, what else do we understand but that whole people with old cupidity requiring of the Lord earthly rewards, rejected and refused, but the tribe of Juda chosen not for the sake of the merits of that same Juda? For far greater are the merits of Joseph, but by the tribe of Juda, inasmuch as thence arose Christ according to the flesh, the Scripture doth testify of the new people of Christ preferred before that old people, the Lord opening in parables His mouth. Moreover, thence also in that which followeth, the Mount Sion which He chose, we do better understand the Church of Christ, not worshipping God for the sake of the carnal blessings of the present time, but from afar looking for future and eternal rewards with the eyes of faith: for Sion too is interpreted a ‘looking out.’

42. Lastly there followeth, (ver. 69.) and He builded like as of unicorns His sanctification: or, as some interpreters have made thereof a new word, His sanctifying. The unicorns are rightly understood to be those, whose firm hope is uplifted unto that one thing, concerning which another Psalm saith, One thing I have sought of the Lord, this I will require. But the sanctifying of God, according to the Apostle Peter, is understood to be a holy people and a royal priesthood. But that which followeth, in the land which He founded for everlasting: which the Greek copies have εἲς τὸν αἰῶνα, whether it be called by us for everlasting, or for an age, is at the pleasure of the Latin translators; forasmuch as it doth signify either: and therefore the latter is found in some Latin copies, the former in others. Some also have it in the plural, that is, for ages: which in the Greek copies which we have had we have not found. But which of the faithful would doubt, that the Church, even though, some going, others coming, she doth pass out of this life in mortal manner, is yet founded for everlasting?

43. Ver. 70. And He chose David His servant. The tribe, I say, of Juda, for the sake of David: but David for the sake of Christ: the tribe then of Juda

for the sake of Christ. At whose passing by blind men cried out, Have pity on us, Son of David: and forthwith by His pity they received light, because true was the thing which they cried out. This then the Apostle doth not cursorily speak of, but doth heedfully notice, writing to Timothy, Be thou mindful, that Christ Jesus hath risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my Gospel, wherein I suffer even unto bonds as an evil doer; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore the Saviour Himself, made according to the flesh of the seed of David, is figured in this passage under the name of David, the Lord opening in parables His mouth. And let it not move us, that when he had said, and He chose David, under which name he signified Christ, he hath added, His servant, not His Son. Yea even hence we may perceive, that not the substance of the Only-Begotten coeternal with the Father, but the 'form of a servant' was taken of the seed of David.

44. Ver. 71. And He took him from the flocks of sheep, from behind the teeming sheep He received him: to feed Jacob His servant, and Israel His inheritance. This David indeed, of whose seed the flesh of Christ is, from the pastoral care of cattle was translated to the kingdom of men: but our David, Jesus Himself, from men to men, from Jews to Gentiles, was yet according to the parable from sheep to sheep taken away and translated. For there are not now in that land Churches of Judæa in Christ, which belonged to them of the circumcision after the recent Passion and Resurrection of our Lord, of whom saith the Apostle, But I was unknown by face to the Churches of Judæa, which are in Christ, but thus much they heard, that he who sometime did persecute us, doth now preach the faith whereof sometime he made havoc, and in me they magnified the Lord. Already from hence those Churches of the circumcised people have passed away: and thus in Judæa, which now doth exist on the earth, there is not now Christ: He hath been removed thence, now He doth feed flocks of Gentiles. Truly from behind teeming sheep He hath been taken thence. For those former Churches were of such sort, as that of them it is said in the Song of Songs to the one Church which doth consist of many, that is, to the one flock, whereof the members are many flocks—of such, I say, it is said, Thy teeth—that is, those whereby thou speakest, or by means whereof into Thy Body, like as it were by eating, Thou dost make others to pass; this then being signified by Thy teeth—are like a flock of shorn ewes going up from

the washing, all of which do bear twins, and a barren one is not among them. For they then laid aside like as it were fleeces the burdens of the world, when before the feet of the Apostles they laid the prices of their sold goods, going up from that Laver, concerning which the apostle Peter doth admonish them, when they were troubled because they had shed the blood of Christ, and he saith, Do ye penance, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and your sins shall be forgiven you. But twins they begat, the works, to wit, of the two commandments of twin love, love of God, and love of one’s neighbour: whence a barren one there was not among them. From behind these teeming sheep our David having been taken, doth now feed other flocks among the Gentiles, and those too ‘Jacob’ and ‘Israel.’ For thus hath been said, to feed Jacob His servant, and Israel His inheritance. For not, because out of the Gentiles are these sheep, have they therefore been made alien from that seed, which is Jacob and Israel. For the seed of Abraham is the seed of the promise, concerning which the Lord said to him, In Isaac thy seed shall be called. Which the Apostle expounding saith, Not the sons of the flesh, but the sons of promise are reckoned for a seed. For out of the Gentiles were believers, to whom he said, but if ye are of Christ, then Abraham’s seed ye are, according to the promise heirs. But in this which he saith, Jacob His servant and Israel His inheritance, in its usual manner the Scripture hath repeated the same sentiment. Unless perchance any one be willing to make such a distinction as this; viz. that in this time Jacob serveth; but he will be the eternal inheritance of God, at that time when he shall see God face to face, whence he hath received the name Israel.

45. Ver. 72. And He fed them, he saith, in the innocence of His heart. What can be more innocent than He, Who not only had not any sin whereby to be conquered, but even not any to conquer? And in the understanding of His hands He led them home: or, as some copies have it, in the understandings of His hands. Any other man might suppose that it would have been better had it been said thus, “in innocence of hands and understanding of heart;” but He Who knew better than others what He spake, preferred to join with the heart innocence, and with the hands understanding. It is for this reason, as far as I judge; because many men think themselves innocent, who do not evil things because they fear lest they should suffer if they shall have done

them; but they have the will to do them, if they could with impunity. Such men may seem to have innocence of hands, but yet not that of heart. And what, I pray, or of what sort is that innocence, if of heart it is not, where man was made after the image of God? But in this which he saith, in understanding (or intelligence) of His hands He led them home, he seemeth to me to have spoken of that intelligence which He doth Himself make in believers: and so of His hands: for making doth belong to the hands, but in the sense wherein the hands of God may be understood; for even Christ was a Man in such sort, that He was also God. This indeed that David, of whose seed He was, could not make in the people over whom he reigned as a man: but He doth make it, unto Whom rightly the faithful soul is able to say, Make me to understand, and I will search out Thy law. Henceforth that we may not stray from Him, while we confide in our own intelligence as if it were of ourselves; to His hands let us subject ourselves by believing. May He make the same in us, in order that in the intelligence of His hands He may lead us home delivered from error, and bring us unto that place where we shall no longer be able to err! This is the fruit of the people of God, who give heed to the law of God, and incline their ear unto the words of His mouth, in order that they may guide in Him their heart, and their spirit may be trusted with Him, lest they should be changed into a generation crooked and provoking. But all these things having been proclaimed to them, let them put their hope in God, not only for the present life, but also for life eternal, and not only to receive the rewards of good works, but also for doing the good works themselves.

PSALM 79

Exposition

1 Over the title of this Psalm, being so short and so simple, I think we need not tarry. But the prophecy which here we read sent before, we know to be evidently fulfilled. For when these things were being sung in the times of King David, nothing of such sort, by the hostility of the Gentiles, as yet had befallen the city Jerusalem, nor the Temple of God, which as yet was not even builded. For that after the death of David his son Salomon made a temple to God, who is ignorant? That is spoken of therefore as though past, which in the Spirit was seen to be future.

Ver. 1. O God, the Gentiles have come into Thine inheritance. Under which form of expression this also was prophesied of the Lord’s Passion, They gave for My morsel gall, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink; and other things which in the same Psalm, though having to come to pass, are spoken of as having been done. Nor must this be wondered at, that these words are being spoken to God. For they are not being represented to Him not knowing, by Whose revelation they are foreknown; but the soul is speaking with God with that affection of godliness, of which God knoweth. For even the things which Angels proclaim to men, they proclaim to them that know them not; but the things which they proclaim to God, they proclaim to Him knowing, when they offer our prayers, and in ineffable manner consult the eternal Truth respecting their actions, as an immutable law. And therefore this man of God is saying to God that which he is to learn of God, like a scholar to a master, not ignorant but judging; and so either approving what he hath taught, or censuring what he hath not taught: especially because under the appearance of one praying, the Prophet is transforming into himself those who should be at the time when these things were to come to pass. But in praying it is customary to declare those things to God which He hath done in taking vengeance, and for a petition to be added, that henceforth He should pity and spare. In this way here also by him the judgments are spoken of by whom they are foretold, as if they were being spoken of by those whom they befel, and the very lamentation and prayer is a prophecy.

2. Ver. 1. O God, there have come the nations into Thine inheritance: they have defiled Thy holy Temple, they have made Jerusalem for a keeping of apples. (Ver. 2.) They have made the dead bodies of Thy servants morsels for the fowls of heaven, the fleshes of Thy saints for the beasts of the earth. (Ver. 3.) They have poured forth their blood like water in the circuit of Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury them. If in this prophecy any one of us shall have thought that there must be understood that laying waste of Jerusalem, which was made by Titus the Roman Emperor, when already the Lord Jesus Christ, after His Resurrection and Ascension, was being preached among the Gentiles, it doth not occur to me how that people could now have been called the inheritance of God, as not holding to Christ, Whom having rejected and slain, that people became reprobate, which not even after His Resurrection would believe in Him, and even killed His Martyrs. For out of that people Israel whosoever have believed in Christ; to whom the offer of Christ was made, and in a manner the healthful and fruitful fulfilment of the promise; concerning whom even the Lord Himself saith, I am not sent but to the sheep which have been lost of the house of Israel, the same are they that out of them are the sons of promise; the same are counted for a seed; the same do belong to the inheritance of God. From hence are Joseph that just man, and the Virgin Mary who bore Christ: hence John Baptist the friend of the Bridegroom, and his parents Zacharias and Elizabeth: hence Symeon the old, and Anna the widow, who heard not Christ speaking by the sense of the body; but while yet an infant not speaking, by the Spirit perceived Him: hence the blessed Apostles: hence Nathanael, in whom guile was not: hence the other Joseph, who himself too looked for the kingdom of God: hence that so great multitude who went before and followed after His beast, saying, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord: among whom was also that company of children, in whom He declared to have been fulfilled, Out of the mouth of infants and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise. Hence also were those after His resurrection, of whom on one day three and on another five thousand were baptized, welded into one soul and one heart by the fire of love; of whom no one spoke of any thing as his own, but to them all things were common.

Hence the holy deacons, of whom Stephen was crowned with martyrdom before the Apostles. Hence so many Churches of Judæa, which were in Christ, unto whom Paul was unknown by face, but known for an infamous ferocity, and more known for Christ's most merciful grace. Hence even he, according to the prophecy sent before concerning him, a wolf ravening, in the morning carrying off, and in the evening dividing morsels; that is, first as persecutor carrying off unto death, afterwards as a preacher feeding unto life. These are they that are out of that people the inheritance of God. Whence also saith the same, the head of the Apostles, the teacher of the Gentiles: I say then, hath God cast off His people? Far be it. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast off His people, whom He hath foreknown. This people, which out of that nation was added to the Body of Christ, is the inheritance of God. For that which the Apostle saith, God hath not cast off His people whom He hath foreknown, doth really correspond with that Psalm, wherein it is written, For the Lord shall not cast off His people. But in that place there followeth, and His inheritance He shall not forsake: where it evidently appeareth that such a people is the inheritance of God. For when the Apostle was to say this, above he had quoted the prophetic testimony concerning the foretold future unbelief of the people of Israel: All day long I have spread out my hands to a people not believing and gainsaying. In this place then, lest any one, wrongly understanding it, should judge the whole of that people to have been found guilty of the charge of unbelief and gainsaying, he hath immediately added, Hath God cast off His people? Far be it. For I also am an Israelite, of the tribe of Benjamin. Here he is shewing what people he spake of, to wit, belonging to the former people, the whole whereof if God had refused and condemned, he indeed would not himself have been Christ's Apostle, being an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. But he applieth a very necessary testimony, saying, Know ye not in Elias what saith the Scripture, how he intercedeth with God against Israel? O Lord, Thy prophets they have slain, Thy altars they have digged down, and I am left alone, and they are seeking my life. But what saith the answer of God to him? I have left unto Me seven thousand men, who have not bowed their knees before Baal. So then even at this time a remnant through election of Grace have been saved. This remnant out of that nation doth belong to the inheritance of God: not those concerning whom a little below he saith, But the rest have been blinded. For thus he saith. What then? That which Israel sought, this he hath not obtained: but the election hath obtained it: but the rest have been blinded. This election then, this remnant, that people of God, which God hath not cast off, is called His inheritance. But in that Israel, which hath not obtained this, in the rest that were blinded, there was no longer an inheritance of God, in reference to whom it is possible that there should be spoken, after the glorification of Christ in the Heavens, in the time of Titus the Emperor, O God, there have come the Gentiles unto Thine inheritance, and the other things which in this Psalm seem to have been foretold concerning the destruction of both the temple and city belonging to that people.

3. Furthermore herein we ought either to perceive those things which were done by other enemies, before Christ had come in the flesh: (for not different was the inheritance of God, at that time when there were even the holy prophets, when the carrying away into Babylon took place, and that nation was grievously afflicted, and at the time when under Antiochus also the Maccabees, having endured horrible sufferings, most gloriously were crowned. For such things have been described in this Psalm, as are also wont to happen in the wasting of wars:) or certainly if after the Resurrection and Ascension of the Lord the inheritance of God must be understood to be here spoken of; such things must be understood herein, as at the hands of worshippers of idols, and enemies of the name of Christ, His Church, in such a multitude of martyrs, endured. For although Asaph is interpreted Synagogue, which is congregation, and that name hath more usually been attached to the nation of the Jews: nevertheless that this Church also may be called a congregation, and that that old people hath been called a Church, already in another Psalm, we have clearly enough shewn. This Church then, this inheritance of God, out of circumcision and uncircumcision hath been congregated, that is, out of the people of Israel, and out of the rest of the nations, by means of the Stone which the builders rejected, and which hath become for the Head of the corner, in which corner as it were two walls coming from different quarters were united. For Himself is our peace, Who hath made both one, that He might build two into Himself making peace, and might unite together both in one Body unto God: in which Body we are sons of God, crying, Abba Father. Abba, on account of their language,

Father, on account of ours. For Abba is the same as Father. Whence the Lord, Who hath said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel, shewing to that nation the fulfilment of that promise of His presence, saith nevertheless in another place, I have other sheep, which are not of this fold, I must needs also bring them, in order that there may be one flock and one Shepherd: intimating the Gentiles whom He was going to bring, not indeed by means of His own corporal presence, in order that this might be true, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel; but yet by means of His Gospel, which was to be disseminated by the beautiful feet of them that proclaim peace, that proclaim good things. For, into every land there hath gone out the sound of them, and unto the ends of the round world the words of them. Hence also the Apostle saith, I say therefore that Christ Jesus was a minister of the Circumcision, for the truth of God, to confirm the promise to the fathers. Behold what is, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel. Secondly, the Apostle subjoineth, But that the Gentiles do glorify God for His mercy. Behold what is, I have other sheep, which are not of this fold, I must needs also bring them, that there may be one flock and one Shepherd. Both which things have been briefly declared in that which the same Apostle quoteth from the Prophet; Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people. These then, being the one flock under the one Shepherd, are the inheritance of God, not only of the Father, but also of the Son. For the Son's voice is, the lines have fallen unto Me in goodly places, for My inheritance is goodly to Me. And of that same inheritance the voice in the Prophet is, O Lord our God, possess us. This inheritance the Father hath not by dying left to the Son: but the Son Himself hath wonderfully by His own death acquired it; and hath possessed it by His Resurrection.

4. If then as relating to this must be understood what is sung in the prophecy of this Psalm, O God, there have come the Gentiles into Thine inheritance, so that we should understand that the Gentiles have come into the Church, not as believing but as persecuting; that is, that they invaded Her with the will to efface and utterly to destroy Her, as the examples of so many persecutions have shewn: it must needs be that what followeth, they have defiled Thy holy Temple, must be found not in beams and stones, but in men themselves, of whom, as of living stones, the Apostle Peter affirmeth the House of God to be builded. Whence also the Apostle Paul

most plainly declareth, the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are. This Temple then persecutors have indeed defiled in those whom they have constrained to deny Christ by threat or torment, and have made to worship idols by violently insisting; of whom many penitence hath restored, and hath purged from that stain. For a penitent’s voice is that, And from mine offending purge Thou me: and, A clean heart create in me, O God, and a right spirit renew in my bowels. But now in that which followeth, they have made Jerusalem for a keeping of apples; even the Church herself is rightly understood under this name, even the free Jerusalem our mother, concerning whom hath been written, Rejoice, thou barren that dost not bear; break forth and cry out, thou that dost not travail: for many more are the sons of the forsaken, than of her that hath the husband. The expression, for a keeping of apples, I think must be understood of the desertion which the wasting of persecution hath effected: that is, like a keeping of apples; for the keeping of apples is abandoned, when the apples have passed away. And certes when through the persecuting Gentiles the Church seemed to be forsaken, unto the celestial table, like as it were many and exceeding sweet apples from the garden of the Lord, the spirits of the martyrs did pass away.

5. Ver. 2. They have made, he saith, the dead bodies of Thy servants morsels for the fowls of heaven, the fleshes of Thy saints for the beasts of the earth. The expression, dead bodies, hath been repeated in fleshes: and the expression, of Thy servants, hath been repeated in, of Thy saints. This only hath been varied, to the fowls of heaven, and to the beasts of the earth. Better have they interpreted who have written dead, than as some have it, mortal. For dead is only said of those that have died; but mortal is a term applied even to living bodies. When then, as I have said, to their Husbandman the spirits of martyrs like apples had passed away, their dead bodies and their fleshes they set before the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the earth: as if any part of them could be lost to the resurrection, whereas out of the hidden recesses of the natural world He will renew the whole, by Whom even our hairs have been numbered.

6. Ver. 3. They have poured forth their blood like water, that is, abundantly and wantonly, in the circuit of Jerusalem. If we herein understand the earthly city Jerusalem, we perceive the shedding of their blood in the circuit

thereof, whom the enemy could find outside the walls. But if we understand it of that Jerusalem, concerning whom hath been said, many more are the sons of her that was forsaken, than of her that hath the husband, the circuit thereof is throughout the universal earth. For in that lesson of the Prophet, wherein is written, many more are the sons of her that was forsaken, than of her that hath the husband: a little after unto the same is said, and He that hath delivered thee, shall be called the God of Israel of the universal earth. The circuit then of this Jerusalem in this Psalm must be understood as followeth: so far as at that time the Church had been expanded, bearing fruit, and growing in the universal world, when in every part thereof persecution was raging, and was making havoc of the Martyrs, whose blood was being shed like water, to the great gain of the celestial treasuries. But as to that which hath been added, and there was no one to bury: it either ought not to seem to be an incredible thing that there should have been so great a panic in some places, that not any buriers at all of holy bodies came forward: or certes that unburied corpses in many places might lie long time, until being by the religious in a manner stolen they were buried.

7. Ver. 4. We have become, he saith, a reproach to our neighbours. Therefore precious not in the sight of men, from whom this reproach was, but “precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” A scoffing and derision: or, as some have interpreted it, a mockery to them that are in our circuit. It is a repetition of the former sentence. For that which above hath been called, a reproach, the same hath been repeated in, a scoffing and derision: and that which above hath been said in, to our neighbours, the same hath been repeated in, to them that are in our circuit. Moreover, in reference to the earthly Jerusalem, the neighbours, and those in the circuit of that nation, are certainly understood to be other nations. But in reference to the free Jerusalem our mother, there are neighbours even in the circuit of her, among whom, being her enemies, the Church dwelleth in the circuit of the round world.

8. In the second place now giving utterance to an evident prayer, whence it may be perceived that the calling to remembrance of former affliction is not by way of information but prayer; (ver. 5.) How long, he saith, O Lord, wilt Thou be angry, unto the end? shall Thy jealousy burn like fire? He is

evidently asking God not to be angry unto the end, that is, that this so great oppression and tribulation and devastation may not continue even unto the end; but that He moderate His chastening, according to that which is said in another Psalm, Thou shalt feed us with the bread of tears, and Thou shalt give us to drink of tears in measure. For the, how long, O Lord, wilt Thou be angry, unto the end? hath been spoken in the same sense as if it had been said, Be not, O Lord, angry unto the end. And in that which followeth, shall Thy jealousy burn like fire? both words must be understood, both, how long, and, unto the end: just as if there had been said, how long shall there burn like fire Thy jealousy unto the end? For these two words must be understood in the same manner as that word which was used a little higher up, namely, they-have-made. For while the former sentence hath, they have made the dead bodies of Thy servants morsels for the fowls of heaven: this word the latter sentence hath not, wherein is said, the fleshes of Thy saints for the beasts of the earth; but there is surely understood what the former hath, namely, they have made.

Moreover, the anger and jealousy of God are not emotions of God; as some do charge upon the Scriptures which they do not understand: but under the name of anger is to be understood the avenging of iniquity; under the name of jealousy, the exaction of chastity; that the soul may not despise the law of her Lord, and perish by departing in fornication from the Lord. These then in their actual operation in men’s affliction are violent; but in the disposal of God they are calm, unto Whom hath been said, But Thou, O Lord of virtues, with calmness dost judge. But it is clearly enough shewn by these words, that for sins these tribulations do befal men, though they be faithful: although hence may bloom the Martyrs’ glory by occasion of their patience, and the yoke of discipline godly endured as the scourge of the Lord. Of this the Maccabees amid sharp tortures, of this the three men amid flames innocuous, of this the holy Prophets in captivity, do testify. For although paternal correction most bravely and most godly they endure, yet they do not hide the fact, that these things have befallen them for the deservings of their sins. For their voice is that too in the Psalms, Chastening the Lord hath chastened me, and unto death He hath not delivered me. For, He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. And what son is there unto whom his father would not give discipline?

9. But that which he addeth, (ver. 6.) Pour forth Thine anger upon the nations which have not known Thee, and upon the kingdoms which have not called upon Thy name; this too is a prophecy, not a wish. Not in the imprecation of malevolence are these words spoken, but foreseen by the Spirit they are predicted: just as in the case of Judas the traitor, the evil things which were to befal him have been so prophesied as if they were wished. For in like manner as the prophet doth not command Christ, though in the imperative mood he giveth utterance to what he saith, Gird Thou Thy sword about Thy thigh, O Most Mighty: in Thy beauty and in Thy goodliness, both go on, and prosperously proceed, and reign: so he doth not wish, but doth prophesy, who saith, Pour forth Thine anger upon the nations which have not known Thee. Which in his usual way he repeateth, saying, And upon the kingdoms which have not called upon Thy name. For nations have been repeated in kingdoms: and that they have not known Him, hath been repeated in this, that they have not called upon His name. How then must be understood, what the Lord saith in the Gospel, The servant who knoweth not the will of his Lord, and doth things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with a few; but the servant who knoweth the will of his Lord, and doeth things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with many: if greater the anger of God is against the nations, which have not known the Lord? For in this which he saith, Pour forth Thine anger, with this word he hath clearly enough pointed out, how great anger he hath willed that there should be understood. Whence afterwards he saith, Render to our neighbours seven times as much. Is it not that there is a great difference between servants, who, though they know not the will of their Lord, do yet call upon His name, and those that are aliens from the family of so great a Master, who are so ignorant of God, as that they do not even call upon God? For in place of Him they call upon either idols or demons, or any creature they choose; not the Creator, Who is blessed for ever. For those persons, concerning whom he is prophesying this, he doth not even intimate to be so ignorant of the will of their God, as that still they fear the Lord Himself; but so ignorant of the Lord Himself, that they do not even call upon Him, and that they stand forth as enemies of His name. There is a great difference then between servants not knowing the will of their God, and yet living in His family and in His house, and enemies not only setting the will against

knowing the Lord Himself, but also not calling upon His name, and even in His servants fighting against it.

10. Ver. 7. Lastly, there followeth, For they have eaten up Jacob, and his place they have made desolate. For Jacob did hear the figure of the Church, as Esau did of the old Synagogue. Whence hath been said; And the elder shall serve the younger. It is possible that under this name there should be understood that inheritance of God, whereof we were speaking, to invade and lay waste which, after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord, the Gentiles came with persecution. But how we should view the place of Jacob, must be understood. For rather the place of Jacob may be supposed to be that city, wherein was also the Temple, whither-unto the whole of that nation for the purpose of sacrifice and worship, and to celebrate the Passover, the Lord had commanded to assemble. For if the assemblies of Christians, letted and suppressed by persecutors, has been what the Prophet would have to be understood, it would seem that he should have said, places made desolate, not place. Still we may take the singular number as put for the plural number; as dress for clothes, soldiery for soldiers, cattle for beasts: for many words are usually spoken in this manner, and not only in the mouths of vulgar speakers, but even in the eloquence of the most approved authorities. Nor to divine Scripture herself is this form of speech foreign. For even she hath put frog for frogs, locust for locusts, and countless expressions of the like kind. But that which hath been said, They have eaten up Jacob, the same is well understood, in that many men into their own evil-minded body, that is, into their own society, they have constrained to pass.

11. He remembereth, however, that although to them on account of their most perverse will by the anger of God a worthy retribution was to be rendered, yet that they could not prevail any thing against His inheritance, unless He had Himself willed, for her sins, by scourging to amend the same. Whence he subjoineth, Remember not our iniquities of old. He saith not by-gone, which might have even been recent; but of old, that is, coming from parents. For to such iniquities damnation, not correction, is owing. Speedily let Thy mercies anticipate us. Anticipate, that is, at Thy judgment. For mercy exalteth above in judgment. Now there is judgment without mercy,

but to him that hath not shewed mercy. But whereas he addeth, for we have become exceeding poor: unto this end he willeth that the mercies of God should be understood to anticipate us; that our own poverty, that is, weakness, by Him having mercy, should be aided to do His commandments, that we may not come to His judgment to be condemned.

12. Therefore there followeth, (ver. 9.) Help us, O God, our healing One. By this word which he saith, our healing One, he doth sufficiently explain what sort of poverty he hath willed to be understood, in that which he had said, for we have become exceeding poor. For it is that very sickness, to which a healer is necessary. But while he would have us to be aided, he is neither ungrateful to grace, nor doth he take away free-will. For he that is aided, doth also of himself something. He hath added also, for the glory of Thy Name, O Lord, deliver us: in order that he who glorieth, not in himself, but in the Lord may glory. And merciful be Thou, he saith, to our sins for Thy Name’s sake: not for our sake. For what else do our sins deserve, but due and condign punishments? But merciful be Thou to our sins, for Thy Name’s sake. Thus then Thou dost deliver us, that is, dost rescue us from evil things, while Thou dost both aid us to do justice, and art merciful to our sins, without which in this life we are not. For in Thy sight shall no man living be justified. But sin is iniquity. And if Thou shalt have marked iniquities, who shall stand?

13. Ver. 10. But that which he addeth, lest at any time they should say among the Gentiles, Where is their God? must be taken as rather for the Gentiles themselves. For to a bad end they come that have despaired of the true God, thinking that either He is not, or doth not help His own, and is not merciful to them. But this which followeth, and that there may be known among the nations before our eyes the vengeance of the blood of Thy servants which hath been shed: is either to be understood as of the time, when they believe in the true God that used to persecute His inheritance; because even that is vengeance, whereby is slain the fierce iniquity of them by the sword of the Word of God, concerning which hath been said, Gird Thou Thy sword: or when obstinate enemies at the last are punished. For the corporal ills which they suffer in this world, they may have in common with good men. There is also another kind of vengeance; that wherein the

Church’s enlargement and fruitfulness in this world after so great persecutions, wherein they supposed she would utterly perish, the sinner and unbeliever and enemy seeth, and is angry; with his teeth he shall gnash, and shall pine away. For who would dare to deny that even this is a most heavy punishment? But I know not whether that which he saith, before our eyes, is taken with sufficient elegance, if by this sort of punishment we understand that which is done in the inmost recesses of the heart, and doth torment even those who blandly smile at us, while by us there cannot be seen what they suffer in the inner man. But the fact, that whether in them believing their iniquity is slain, or whether the last punishment is rendered to them persevering in their naughtiness, without difficulty of doubtfulness is understood in the saying, that there may be known before our eyes vengeance among the nations.

14. And this indeed, as we have said, is a prophecy, not a wish: but for the sake of that which hath been written of in the Apocalypse, under the Altar of God the Martyrs crying unto God, and saying, How long, O Lord, dost Thou not avenge our blood, we must not omit to notice how it ought to be taken; lest the saints should be thought to desire vengeance for the sake of gratifying hatred, which is a thing very far from their perfect state: and yet it is written, A just man shall exult when he shall have seen vengeance on the ungodly; his hands he shall wash in the blood of a sinner. And the Apostle saith, Avenging not yourselves, my beloved, but give ye place to wrath: for it is written, To Me vengeance, and I will requite, saith the Lord. So that not even he doth command that they should wish not to be avenged, but that not avenging themselves they should give place to the anger of God, Who hath said, To Me vengeance, and I will requite. And the Lord in the Gospel hath set before us the widow for an example, who longing to be avenged, did intercede with the unjust judge, who at length heard her, not as being guided by justice, but overcome with weariness: but this the Lord hath set before us, to shew that much more the just God will speedily make the judgment of His elect, who cry unto Him day and night. Thence is also that cry of the Martyrs under the altar of God, that they may be avenged in the judgment of God. Where then is the, Love your enemies, do good unto them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute you? Where is also the, Not rendering evil for evil, nor cursing for cursing: and, unto no man

rendering evil for evil? For if evil for evil must not be rendered to any one, not only an evil deed must not be rendered for an evil deed, but not even an evil wish must be rendered for an evil deed or wish. But he doth render an evil wish, who, even though he doth not himself take vengeance, doth yet look forward and desire that God shall punish his enemy. Wherefore inasmuch as both a just man and an evil man would have vengeance taken by the Lord upon their enemies, whence should they be distinguished, except that a just man would rather have his enemy corrected than punished; and when he seeth vengeance taken upon him by the Lord, he is not delighted with his punishment, because he doth not hate him; but with the Divine justice, because he loveth God? Lastly, if in this world vengeance is taken upon him, he doth even rejoice either for him, if he is amended; or at least for others, that they fear to imitate him. Himself also is made better, not by feasting his hatred on his punishment, but by correcting his strayings. And thus of good-will it is, not of ill-will, that the just man doth rejoice, when he seeth vengeance and washeth his hands, that is, maketh his works more clean, in the blood, that is, in the destruction of the sinner, deriving from thence not joy at another’s ill, but an instance of divine admonition. But if in the world to come at the last judgment of God he hath vengeance taken for him, the same thing is pleasing to him as to God; that it should not be well with evil men, that even the ungodly should not reap the recompenses of the godly: which is a very unjust thing, and foreign to the rule of truth which the just man loveth. For when the Lord was exhorting us to love enemies, He set before us the example of our Father, Who is in Heaven, Who maketh His sun to rise upon good men and evil men, and raineth upon just men and unjust men: doth He yet therefore not chasten even by temporal correction, or not condemn at the last the obstinately hardened? Let therefore an enemy be so loved as that the Lord’s justice whereby he is punished displease us not, and let the justice whereby he is punished so please us, as that the joy is not at his evil but at the good Judge. But a malevolent soul is sorrowful, if his enemy by being corrected shall have escaped punishment: and when he seeth him punished, he is so glad that he is avenged, that he is not delighted with the justice of God, Whom he loveth not, but with the misery of that man whom he hateth: and when he leaveth judgment to God, he hopeth that God will hurt more than he could hurt: and when he giveth food to his hungering enemy, and drink to him thirsty, he hath an evil-minded sense of that which is written, For thus doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. For he trieth to aggravate the case the more, and to stir up against him the indignation of God, which he supposeth to be signified by the coals of fire; not perceiving that this fire is the burning sorrow of repentance, until such time as the head uplifted by pride is depressed unto healthful humility by the kindnesses shewn by an enemy, and by the good of the latter the evil of the former is overcome. Whence the Apostle hath guardedly added, Be not overcome of evil, but with good overcome evil. But how can he with good overcome evil, that on the surface is good, in the depth of heart evil; that in work doth spare, and in heart doth rage; in hand gentle, in will cruel? In such sort then under the appearance of one asking in this Psalm, future vengeance on the ungodly is prophesied of, as that we are to understand that holy men of God have loved their enemies, and have wished no one any thing but good, which is godliness in this world, everlasting life in that to come; but in the punishments of evil men, they have taken pleasure not in the ills of them, but in God’s good judgments; and wheresoever in the holy Scriptures we read of their hatreds against men, they were the hatreds of vices, which every man must needs hate in himself, if he loveth himself.

15. Ver. 12. But now in that which followeth, Let there come in before Thy sight, or, as some copies have it, In Thy sight, the groans of the fettered: not easily doth any one discover that the Saints were thrown into fetters by persecutors; and if this doth happen amid so great and manifold a variety of punishments, so rarely it doth happen, that it must not be believed that the prophet had chosen to allude to this especially in this verse. But, in fact, the fetters are the infirmity and the corruptibleness of the body, which do weigh down the soul. For by means of the frailty thereof, as a kind of material for certain pains and troubles, the persecutor might constrain her unto ungodliness. From these fetters the Apostle was longing to be unbound, and to be with Christ; but to abide in the flesh was necessary for their sakes unto whom he was ministering the Gospel. Until then this corruptible put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality, like as it were with fetters, the weak flesh doth let the willing spirit. These fetters then not any do feel, but they that in themselves do groan being burthened, desiring to be clothed upon with the tabernacle which is from Heaven; because both death is a

terror, and mortal life is sorrow. In behalf of these men groaning the Prophet doth redouble his groaning, that their groaning may come in in the sight of the Lord. They also may be understood to be fettered, who are enchained with the precepts of wisdom, the which being patiently supported are turned into ornaments: whence it hath been written, “Put thy feet into her fetters.” According to the greatness, he saith, of Thy arm, receive Thou unto adoption the sons of them that are put to death: or, as is read in some copies, Possess Thou sons by the death of the punished. Wherein the Scripture seemeth to me to have sufficiently shewn, what hath been the groan of the fettered, who for the name of Christ endured most grievous persecutions, which in this Psalm are most clearly prophesied. For being beset with divers sufferings, they used to pray for the Church, that their blood might not be without fruit to posterity; in order that the Lord’s harvest might more abundantly flourish by the very means whereby enemies thought that she would perish. For sons of them that were put to death he hath called them who were not only not terrified by the sufferings of those that went before, but in Him for Whose name they knew them to have suffered, being inflamed with their glory which did inspire them to the like, in most ample hosts they believed. Therefore he hath said, According to the greatness of Thine arm. For so great a wonder followed in the case of Christian peoples, as they, who thought they would prevail aught by persecuting her, no wise believed would follow.

16. Ver. 13. Render, he saith, to our neighbours seven times so much into their bosoms. Not any evil things he is wishing, but things just he is foretelling and prophesying as to come. But in the number seven, that is, in sevenfold retribution, he would have the completeness of the punishment to be perceived, for with this number fulness is wont to be signified. Whence also there is this saying for the good, He shall receive in this world seven times as much: which hath been put for all. As if having nothing, and possessing all things. Of neighbours he is speaking, because amongst them dwelleth the Church even unto the day of severing: for not now is made the corporal separation. Into their bosoms, he saith, as being now in secret, so that the vengeance which is now being executed in secret in this life, hereafter may be known among the nations before our eyes. For when a man is given over to a reprobate mind, in his inward bosom he is receiving

what he deserveth of future punishments. Their reproach wherewith they have reproached Thee, O Lord. This do Thou render to them sevenfold into their bosoms, that is, in return for this reproach, most fully do Thou rebuke them in their secret places. For in this they have reproached Thy Name, thinking to efface Thee from the earth in Thy servants.

17. Ver. 13. But we Thy people, must be taken generally of all the race of godly and true Christians. We, then, whom they thought they had power to destroy, Thy people, and the sheep of Thy flock: in order that he that glorieth may glory in the Lord, will confess to Thee for an age. But some copies have it, will confess to Thee for everlasting. Out of a Greek ambiguity this diversity hath arisen. For that which the Greek hath εἰς τὸν αἰῶνκ, may be interpreted both by for everlasting, and for an age: but according to the context we must understand which is the better interpretation. The sense then of this passage seemeth to me to shew, that we ought to say for an age, that is, even unto the end of time. But the following verse after the manner of the Scriptures, and especially of the Psalms, is a repetition of the former with the order changed, putting that before which in the former case was after, and that after which in the former case was before. For whereas in the former case there had been said, we will confess to Thee, instead of the same herein hath been said, we will proclaim Thy praise. And so whereas in the former case there had been said, for an age, instead of the same herein hath been said, for generation and generation. For this repetition of generation doth signify perpetuity: or, as some understand it, it is because there are two generations, an old and a new. But in this age both take place. For he that shall not have been born again of water and the Spirit, shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Secondly, because in this age the praise of God is proclaimed: for in the age to come, when we shall see Him as He is, henceforth there will be no one unto whom it may be proclaimed. We, then, Thy people, and the sheep of Thy flock, whom they thought they could consume by persecution, will confess to Thee for an age, that is, while there abideth even unto the end Thy Church, which they endeavoured to efface; unto generation and generation will proclaim Thy praise; which praise, since they would have silenced, they endeavoured to make an end of us. But in many places of holy Scriptures we have already made known to you that confession is also

put for praise: as in this passage it is, These words ye shall say in confession, ‘That the works of the Lord are very good.’ And especially that which the Saviour Himself saith, Who had not any sin at all, which by repentance to confess: I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes. I have said this, in order that it may be more clearly perceived how in the expression, We will proclaim Thy praise, the same hath been repeated as had been said higher up, We will confess to Thee.

PSALM 80

Exposition

A Sermon delivered to the people. See §. 10.

1. There are not very many things in this Psalm, wherein our discourse hath difficulty, or wherein the attention of the hearers hath any obstacle to prevent their understanding. Furthermore, with the aid of the Lord, having affectionate desire to hear and see what things have been prophesied and foretold, as those educated in the school of Christ, we ought to hasten over the things which are evident: so that if perchance things obscure demand the office of an interpreter, those things which are evident ought to require of me the office of a reader. The song here is of the Advent of the Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of His vineyard. But the singer of the song is that Asaph, as far as doth appear, enlightened and converted, by whose name ye know the synagogue to be signified. Lastly, the title of the Psalm is; For the end in behalf of them that shall be changed: that is, for the better. For Christ, the end of the Law, hath come on purpose that He should change men for the better. And he addeth, a testimony to Asaph himself. A good testimony of truth. Lastly, this testimony doth confess both Christ and the vineyard; that is, Head and Body, King and people, Shepherd and flock, and the entire mystery of all Scriptures, Christ and the Church. But the title of the Psalm doth conclude with, for the Assyrians. The Assyrians are interpreted, men guiding. Therefore it is no longer a generation which hath not guided the heart thereof, but now a generation guiding. Therefore hear we what he saith in this testimony.

2. Ver. 1. Thou that feedest Israel, hearken. What is, Thou that feedest Israel, hearken, Thou that conductest Joseph like sheep? He is being invoked to come, He is being expected until He come, He is being yearned for until He come. Therefore may He find ‘men guiding:’ Thou that conductest, he saith, Joseph like sheep: Joseph himself like sheep. Joseph himself are the sheep, and Joseph himself is a sheep. Observe Joseph; for

although even the interpretation of his name doth aid us much, for it signifieth increase; and He came indeed in order that the grain given to death might arise manifold; that is, that the people of God might be increased; nevertheless according to that which ye know already happened to Joseph, let it come into your mind how he was sold by his brethren, let it come into your mind how having been dishonoured by his own, among aliens he was exalted; and ye will perceive in Whose flock we ought to be, with them who now do guide their heart, in order that the stone rejected by the builders may become for the Head of the corner, holding two walls coming from different quarters, but in the corner at one. Thou that sittest upon the Cherubin. Cherubin is the seat of the glory of God, and is interpreted the fulness of knowledge. There God sitteth in the fulness of knowledge. Though we understand the Cherubin to be the exalted powers and virtues of the heavens: yet, if thou wilt, thou wilt be Cherubin. For if Cherubin is the seat of God, hear what saith the Scripture: The soul of a just man is the seat of wisdom. How, thou sayest, shall I be the fulness of knowledge? Who shall fulfil this? Thou hast the means of fulfilling it: The fulness of the Law is love. Do not run after many things, and strain thyself. The amplitude of the branches doth terrify thee: by the root hold, and of the greatness of the tree think not. Be there in thee love, and the fulness of knowledge must needs follow. For what doth he not know that knoweth love? Inasmuch as it hath been said, God is love.

3. Ver. 2. Thou that sittest upon the Cherubin, appear. For we went astray because Thou didst not appear. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasse. Appear, I say, before the nation of the Jews, before the people of Israel. For there is Ephraim, there Manasses, there Benjamin. But to the interpretation let us look: Ephraim is fruit-bearing, Benjamin son of right hand, Manasses one forgetful. Appear Thou then before one made fruitful, before a son of the right hand: appear Thou before one forgetful, in order that he may be no longer forgetful, but Thou mayest come into his mind that hast delivered him. For if the Gentiles shall be remembered, and if there shall be converted to the Lord all the ends of the earth: hath not the very people that cometh of Abraham had its own wall, which rejoiceth in the corner, seeing that it hath been written, A remnant shall be saved? Stir Thou up Thy power. For weak Thou wast when it was being said, If Son of

God He is, let Him come down from the Cross. Thou wast seeming to have no power: the persecutor had power over Thee: and Thou didst shew this aforetime, for Jacob too himself prevailed in wrestling, a man with an angel. Would he at any time, except the angel had been willing? And man prevailed, and the angel was conquered: and victorious man holdeth the angel, and saith, I will not let thee go, except thou shalt have blessed me. A great sacrament! He both standeth conquered, and blesseth the conqueror. Conquered, because he willed it; in flesh weak, in majesty strong. And he blessed him; Thou shalt be called, he saith, Israel. Nevertheless also he touched the hollow of the thigh, and it shrank, and the same one man he made both blessed and halt. Thou seest that the people of the Jews have halted: see therein also the family of the Apostles. Stir up, therefore, Thy power. How long dost Thou seem weak? Having been crucified of weakness, rise Thou in power: Stir up Thy power, and come Thou, to save us.

4. Ver. 3. O God, convert us. For averse we have been from Thee, and except Thou convert us, we shall not be converted. And illumine Thy face, and we shall be saved. Hath He any wise a darkened face? He hath not a darkened face, but He placed before it a cloud of flesh, and as it were a veil of weakness; and when He hung on the tree, He was not thought the Same as He was after to be acknowledged when He was sitting in Heaven. For thus it hath come to pass. Christ present on the earth, and doing miracles, Asaph knew not; but when He had died, after that He rose again, and ascended into Heaven, he knew Him. He was pricked to the heart, and he may have spoken also of Him this testimony which now we acknowledge in this Psalm; Illumine Thou Thy face, and we shall be whole. Thou didst cover Thy face, and we were sick: illumine Thou the same, and we shall be whole.

5. Ver. 4. O Lord God of virtues, how long wilt Thou be angry with the prayer of Thy servant? Now Thy servant. Thou wast angry at the prayer of Thy enemy, wilt Thou still be angry with the prayer of Thy servant? Thou hast converted us, we know Thee, and wilt Thou still be angry with the prayer of Thy servant? Thou wilt evidently be angry, in fact, as a father correcting, not as a judge condemning. In such manner evidently Thou wilt

be angry, because it hath been written, My son, drawing near unto the service of God, stand thou in righteousness and in fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation. Think not that now the wrath of God hath passed away, because thou hast been converted. The wrath of God hath passed away from thee, but only so that it condemn not for everlasting. But He scourgeth, He spareth not: because He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If thou refusest to be scourged, why dost thou desire to be received? He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. He scourgeth every one, Who did not spare even His only Son. But nevertheless, How long wilt Thou be angry with the prayer of Thy servant? No longer Thine enemy: but, Thou wilt be angry with the prayer of Thy servant, how long?

6. Ver. 5. There followeth: Thou wilt feed us with the bread of tears, and wilt give us to drink with tears in measure. What is, in measure? Hear the Apostle; Faithful is God, Who doth not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear. The measure is, according to your powers: the measure is, that thou be instructed, not that thou be crushed.

7. Ver. 6. Thou hast set us for a contradiction to our neighbours. Evidently this did come to pass: for out of Asaph were chosen they that should go to the Gentiles and preach Christ, and should have it said to them, “Who is this proclaimer of new demons?” Thou hast set us for a contradiction to our neighbours. For they were preaching Him Who was the subject of the contradiction. Whom did they preach? That after He was dead, Christ rose again. Who would hear this? Who would know this? It is a new thing. But signs did follow, and to an incredible thing miracles gave credibility. He was contradicted, but the contradictor was conquered, and from being a contradictor was made a believer. There, however, was a great flame: there the martyrs fed with the bread of tears, and given to drink in tears, but in measure, not more than they were able to bear; in order that after the measure of tears there should follow a crown of joys. And our enemies have sneered at us. And where are they that sneered? For a long while it was said, Who are they that worship the Dead One, that adore the Crucified? For a long while so it was said. Where is the nose of them that sneered? Now do not they that censure flee into caves, that they may not be seen? And our enemies have sneered at us.

8. But ye see what followeth: (ver. 7.) O Lord God of virtues convert us, and shew Thy face, and we shall be whole. (Ver. 8.) A vineyard out of Egypt Thou hast brought over, Thou hast cast out the nations, and hast planted her. It was done, we know. How many nations were cast out? Amorites, Cethites, Jebusites, Gergesites, and Evites: after whose expulsion and overthrow, there was led in the people delivered out of Egypt, into the land of promise. Whence the vineyard was cast out, and where she was planted, we have heard. Let us see what next was done, how she believed, how much she grew, what ground she covered. A vineyard out of Egypt Thou hast brought over, Thou hast cast out the nations, and hast planted her.

9. Ver. 9. A way Thou hast made in the sight of her, and hast planted the roots of her, and she hath filled the land. Would she have filled the land, unless a way had been made in the sight of her? What was the way which was made in the sight of her? I am, He saith, the Way, the Truth, and the Life. With reason she hath filled the land. That hath now been said of this vineyard, which hath been accomplished at the last. But in the mean time what? (Ver. 10.) She hath covered the mountains with her shadow, and with her branch the cedars of God. (Ver. 11.) Thou hast stretched out her boughs even unto the sea, and even unto the river her shoots. This requireth the office of an expositor, that of a reader and praiser doth not suffice: aid me with attention; for the mention of this vineyard in this Psalm is wont to overcloud with darkness the inattentive. For the greatness of this vineyard hath been already explained by us: and whence she arose, and whence she became great, hath been said before. A way Thou hast made in the sight of her, and Thou hast planted her roots, and she hath filled the earth: hath been said in reference to her perfection. But nevertheless the first Jewish nation was this vine. But the Jewish nation reigned as far as the sea and as far as the river. As far as the sea; it appeareth in Scripture that the sea was in the vicinity thereof. And as far as the river Jordan. For on the other side of Jordan some part of the Jews was established, but within Jordan was the whole nation. Therefore, even unto the sea and even unto the river, is the kingdom of the Jews, the kingdom of Israel: but not from sea even unto sea, and from the river even unto the ends of the round world; this is the future perfection of the vineyard, concerning which in this place he hath foretold, A way Thou hast made in the sight of her, and Thou hast planted her roots,

and she hath filled the earth. When, I say, he had foretold to thee the perfection, he returneth to the beginning, out of which the perfection was made. Of the beginning wilt thou hear? Even unto the sea, and even unto the river. Of the end wilt thou hear? He shall have dominion from sea even unto sea, and from the river even unto the ends of the round world: that is, she hath filled the earth. Let us look then to the testimony of Asaph, as to what was done to the first vineyard, and what must be expected for the second vineyard, nay to the same vineyard. For she is the self-same: for she is not another. Thence Christ, the "Salvation out of the Jews," thence the Apostles, thence the first believers, and they that laid the prices of their goods before the feet of the Apostles, thence all these things. And if any of the branches were broken off, because of unbelief they were broken: But thou, O people of the Gentiles, stand fast in faith: be not high-minded, but fear. For if God hath not spared the natural branches, neither will He spare thee. But if thou art highminded, thou dost not bear the root, but the root thee. What then, the vineyard before the sight whereof a way was made, that she should fill the earth, at first was where? Her shadow covered the mountains. Who are the mountains? The Prophets. Why did her shadow cover them? Because darkly they spake the things which were foretold as to come. Thou hearest from the Prophets, Keep the Sabbath-day, on the eighth day circumcise a child, offer sacrifice of ram, of calf, of he-goat. Be not troubled, her shadow doth cover the mountains of God; there will come after the shadow a manifestation. And her shrubs the cedars of God, that is, she hath covered the cedars of God; very lofty, but of God. For the cedars are types of the proud, that must needs be overthrown. The cedars of Lebanon, the heights of the world, this vineyard did cover in growing, and the mountains of God, all the holy Prophets and Patriarchs.

10. But how far hast Thou stretched out her boughs? (Ver. 11.) Even unto the sea and unto the river her shoots. Then what? Wherefore hast Thou thrown down her enclosure? Now ye see the overthrow of that nation of the Jews: already out of another Psalm ye have heard, with axe and hammer they have thrown her down. When could this have been done, except her enclosure had been thrown down. What is her enclosure? Her defence. For she bore herself proudly against her planter. The servants that were sent to her and demanded a recompense, the husbandmen they scourged, beat,

slew: there came also the Only Son, they said, This is the Heir; come, let us kill Him, and our own the inheritance will be: they killed Him, and out of the vineyard they cast Him forth. When cast forth, He did more perfectly possess the place whence He was cast forth. For thus He threatens her through Isaiah, I will throw down her enclosure. Wherefore? For I looked that she should bring forth grapes, but she brought forth thorns. I looked for fruit from thence, and I found sin. Why then dost thou ask, O Asaph, Why hast Thou thrown down her enclosure? For knowest thou not why? I looked that she should do judgment, and she did iniquity. Must not her enclosure needs be thrown down? And there came the Gentiles when the enclosure was thrown down, the vineyard was assailed, and the kingdom of the Jews effaced. This at first he is lamenting, but not without hope. For of directing the heart he is now speaking, that is, for the "Assyrians," for "men directing," the Psalm is. Wherefore hast Thou thrown down her enclosure: and there pluck off her grapes all men passing along the way. What is men passing along the way? Men having dominion for a time.

11. Ver. 13. There hath laid her waste the boar from the wood. In the boar from the wood what do we understand? To the Jews a swine is an abomination, and in a swine they imagine as it were the uncleanness of the Gentiles. But by the Gentiles was overthrown the nation of the Jews: but that king who overthrew, was not only an unclean swine, but was also a boar. For what is a boar but a savage swine, a furious swine? A boar from the wood hath laid her waste. From the wood, from the Gentiles. For she was a vineyard, but the Gentiles were woods. But when the Gentiles believed, there was said what? "Then there shall exult all the trees of the woods." The boar from the wood hath laid her waste; and a singular wild beast hath devoured her. A singular wild beast is what? The very boar that laid her waste is the singular wild beast. Singular, because proud. For thus saith every proud one, It is I, it is I, and no other.

12. But with what profit is this? (Ver. 14.) O God of virtues turn Thou nevertheless. Although these things have been done, Turn Thou nevertheless. Look from heaven and see, and visit this vineyard. (Ver. 15.) And perfect Thou her whom Thy right hand hath planted. No other plant Thou, but this make Thou perfect. For she is the very seed of Abraham, she

is the very seed in whom all nations shall be blessed: there is the root where is borne the graffed wild olive. Perfect Thou this vineyard which Thy right hand hath planted. But wherein doth He perfect? And upon the Son of man, whom Thou hast strengthened to Thyself. What can be more evident? Why do ye still expect, that we should still explain to you in discourse, and should we not rather cry out with you in admiration, Perfect Thou this vineyard which Thy right hand hath planted, and upon the Son of man perfect her? What Son of man? Him Whom Thou hast strengthened to Thyself. A mighty stronghold: build as much as thou art able. For other foundation no one is able to lay, except that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus.

13. Ver. 16. Things burned with fire, and dug up, by the rebuke of Thy countenance shall perish. What are the things burned with fire and dug up which shall perish from the rebuke of His countenance. Let us see and perceive what are the things burned with fire and dug up. Christ hath rebuked what? Sins: by the rebuke of His countenance sins have perished. Why then are sins burned with fire and dug up? Of all sins, two things are the cause in man, desire and fear. Think, examine, question your hearts, sift your consciences, see whether there can be sins, except they be either of desire, or of fear. There is set before thee a reward to induce thee to sin, that is, a thing which delighteth thee; thou doest it, because thou desirest it. But perchance thou wilt not be allured by bribes; thou art terrified with menaces, thou doest it because thou fearest. A man would bribe thee, for example, to bear false witness. Countless cases there are, but I am setting before you the plainer cases, whereby ye may imagine the rest. Hast thou hearkened unto God, and hast thou said in thy heart, What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but of his own soul suffer loss? I am not allured by a bribe to lose my soul to gain money. He turneth himself to stir up fear within thee, he who was not able to corrupt thee with a bribe, beginneth to threaten loss, banishment, massacres, perchance, and death. Therein now, if desire prevailed not, perchance fear will prevail to make thee sin. But furthermore, if out of the Scriptures there cometh into thy mind, forbidding desire, what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but if his own soul suffer loss: let there come also into thy mind, forbidding fear, Fear not them who kill body, but soul are not able to kill.

Whosoever will kill thee may do it as far as the body, as for the soul he may not. Thy soul will not die unless thou shalt have willed to kill it. Let another's iniquity slay thy flesh, so long as the truth preserveth thy soul. But if from the truth thou shalt have started aside, what more will the enemy do to thee than thou art of thyself doing to thyself? The raging enemy is able to kill thy flesh: but thou by bearing false witness art killing thy soul. Hear the Scripture. The mouth which lieth slayeth the soul. Therefore, my brethren, unto every right deed love and fear do lead: unto every sin love and fear do lead. To make thee do well, thou lovest God and fearest God: to make thee do ill, thou lovest the world and fearest the world. Let these two things be turned unto good: thou didst love the earth, love life eternal; thou didst fear death, fear hell. Whatever to thee if unrighteous the world hath promised, will it be able to give as much as God will give to the righteous? Whatever the world hath threatened thee if righteous, will it be able to do what God doeth to the unrighteous? Wilt thou see what God will give, if thou shalt have lived righteously? Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which hath been prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Wilt thou see what He will do to ungodly men? Go ye into fire everlasting, which hath been prepared for the devil and his angels. It is well thou wouldest have nothing else than that it should be well with thee. For in that thing which thou lovest, thou wouldest have it well with thee; and in that thing which thou fearest, thou wouldest not that it should be ill with thee: but thou dost not seek it in that country wherein it ought to be sought. Thou art in haste: for thou wouldest be both without indigence and without trouble. A good thing it is which thou wouldest have, but endure that which thou wouldest not, in order that thou mayest attain unto that which thou wouldest. Furthermore, the face of Him effacing sins shall do what? What are the sins set alight with fire and dug up? What had evil love done? A fire, as it were, it had set alight. What had evil fear done? It had dug up, as it were. For love doth inflame, fear doth humble: therefore, sins of evil love, with fire were lighted: sins of evil fear, were dug up. On the one hand, evil fear doth humble, and good love doth light; but in different ways respectively. For even the husbandman interceding for the tree, that it should not be cut down, saith, I will dig about it, and will apply a basket of dung. The dug trench doth signify the godly humility of one fearing, and the basket of dung the profitable squalid state of one repenting. But concerning the fire of good love the Lord saith, Fire I have come to send into the world. With which fire may the fervent in spirit burn, and they too that are inflamed with the love of God and their neighbour. And thus, as all good works are wrought by good fear and good love, so by evil fear and evil love all sins are committed. Therefore, Things set alight with fire and dug up, to wit, all sins, by the rebuke of Thy countenance shall perish.

14. Ver. 17. Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand, and upon the Son of Man Whom Thou hast strengthened Thyself. (Ver. 18.) And we depart not from Thee. How long is the generation crooked and provoking, and one which directeth not their heart? Let Asaph say, Let Thy mercy shew herself, do well with Thy vineyard; perfect her. Forasmuch as blindness in part befel Israel, in order that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in, and so all Israel might be saved. Thy face having been shewn upon the Man of Thy right hand, Whom Thou hast strengthened to Thyself, we depart not from Thee. How long dost Thou rebuke us? How long censure? This do, And we depart not from Thee. Thou wilt quicken us, and Thy Name we will invoke. Thou shalt be sweet to us, Thou wilt quicken us. For aforetime we did love earth, not Thee: but Thou hast mortified our members which are upon the earth. For the Old Testament, having earthly promises, seemeth to exhort that God should not be loved for nought, but that He should be loved because He giveth something on earth. What dost thou love, so as not to love God? Tell me. Love, if thou canst, any thing which He hath not made. Look round upon the whole creation, see whether in any place thou art held with the birdlime of desire, and hindered from loving the Creator, except it be by that very thing which He hath Himself created, Whom thou despisest. But why dost thou love those things, except because they are beautiful? Can they be as beautiful as He by Whom they were made? Thou admirest these things, because thou seest not Him: but through those things which thou admirest, love Him Whom thou seest not. Examine the creation; if of itself it is, stay therein: but if it is of Him, for no other reason is it prejudicial to a lover, than because it is preferred to the Creator. Why have I said this? With reference to this verse, brethren. Dead, I say, were they that did worship God that it might be well with them after the flesh: For to be wise after the flesh is death: and dead are they that do not worship God gratis, that is, because of Himself He is good, not because He giveth such and such good

things, which He giveth even to men not good. Money wilt thou have of God? Even a robber hath it. Wife, abundance of children, soundness of body, the world’s dignity, observe how many evil men have. Is this all for the sake of which thou dost worship Him? Thy feet will totter, thou wilt suppose thyself to worship without cause, when thou seest those things to be with them who do not worship Him. All these things, I say, He giveth even to evil men, Himself alone He reserveth for good men. Thou wilt quicken us; for dead we were, when to earthly things we did cleave; dead we were, when of the earthly man we did bear the image. Thou wilt quicken us; Thou wilt renew us, the life of the inward man Thou wilt give us. And Thy Name we will invoke; that is, Thee we will love. Thou to us wilt be the sweet forgiver of our sins, Thou wilt be the entire reward of the justified. (Ver. 19.) O Lord God of virtues, convert us, and shew Thy face, and we shall be whole.

PSALM 81

Exposition

A Sermon to the people of Carthage.

We have undertaken to speak to you of the present Psalm; let your quietness aid our voice, for it is somewhat worn out: the attention of the hearers, and the help of Him Who bids me speak, will give it strength. For a Title this Psalm hath, Unto the end for the presses, on the fifth of the Sabbath, a Psalm to Asaph himself. Into one title many mysteries are heaped together, still so that the lintel of the Psalm indicates the things within. As we have to speak of the presses, let no one expect that we shall speak of a vat, of a press, of olive baskets; because neither the Psalm hath this, and therefore it indicateth the greater mystery. For indeed if the text of the Psalm contained any thing of the sort, there would be some one who would imagine that the presses were to be taken to the letter, and nothing more to be sought there, nor any thing put mystically, and signified in sacred meaning; but he would say, The Psalm speaketh simply of presses, and thou tellest me of I know not what beside that thou imaginest!

No such thing did ye hear in this when it was reading. Therefore take the presses for the mystery of the Church, which is now transacting. In the presses we observe three things, pressure, and of the pressure two things, one to be laid up, the other to be thrown away. There takes place then in the press a treading, a crushing, a weight: and with these the oil strains out secretly into the vat, the lees run openly down the streets.

Look intently on this great spectacle. For God ceaseth not to exhibit to us that which we may look upon with great joy, nor is the madness of the Circus to be compared with this spectacle. That belongeth to the lees, this to the oil. When therefore ye hear the blasphemers babble impudently and say that distresses abound in Christian times; for ye know that they love to say this: and it is an old proverb, yet one that began from Christian times, ‘God gives no rain; count it to the Christians!’ Although it was those of old that said thus. But these now say also, ‘That God sends rain, count it to the Christians! God sends no rain; we sow not. God sends rain; we reap not!’ And they wilfully make that an occasion of shewing pride, which ought to make them more earnest in supplication, choosing rather to blaspheme than to pray.

When therefore they talk of such things, when they make such boasts, when they say these things, and say them in defiance, not with fear, but with loftiness, let them not disturb you. For suppose that pressures abound; be thou oil. Let the lees, black with the darkness of ignorance, be insolent; and let it, as though cast away in the streets, go gibing publicly: but do thou by thyself in thy heart, where He Who seeth in secret will requite thee, strain off into the vat.

The olive on the tree is shaken indeed by some tempests, yet it is not crushed by the squeezings of the press; therefore both hang together from the tree, both what is to be thrown away, and what is to be stored up. But when it comes to the press, the squeezing, either is distinguished, is separated, and one thing is sought after, the other is rejected. Would ye know the force of these presses? To name some one thing about which even they murmur who make them: How great plunderings, they say, are there in our times, how great distresses of the innocent, how great robberies of other men’s goods! Thus indeed thou takest notice of the lees, that other men’s goods are seized; to the oil thou givest no heed, that to the poor are given even men’s own. The old time had no such plunderers of other men’s goods: but the old time had no such givers of their own goods. Be thou somewhat more curious about the press, choose not to see that only which flows off in public view, there is somewhat for thee to find by seeking. Discuss, listen, take knowledge, how many are doing that, which when one rich man heard from the mouth of the Lord, he went away sorrowful. From the Gospel many hear, Go, sell all that thou possessest, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in the heavens: and come, follow Me. Dost thou not observe how many are doing it? ‘But few,’ they say, ‘are those.’ Yet those few are the oil; and those who make good use of the things that they possess belong to the oil. Add up all, and thou wilt see thy householder’s store full. Thou seest such a plunderer, as thou hast never seen: see thou such a despiser of his own goods, as thou hast never seen. Praise the presses. Now is fulfilled the prophecy from the Apocalypse, Let the righteous become more righteous, and let the filthy grow filthier still. Behold the presses in this sentence; Let the righteous become more righteous, and let the filthy grow filthier still.

2. Wherefore also on the fifth of the sabbath? What is this? Let us go back to the first works of God, if perchance we may not there find somewhat in which we may also understand a mystery. For the sabbath is the seventh day, on which God rested from all His works, intimating the great mystery of our future resting from all our works. First of the sabbath then is called that first day, which we also call the Lord’s day; second of the sabbath, the second day; third of the sabbath, the third day; fourth of the sabbath, the fourth day; the fifth of the sabbath, then, is the fifth from the Lord’s day; after which the sixth of the sabbath is the sixth day, and the sabbath itself the seventh day. See ye therefore to whom this Psalm speaketh. For it seems to me that it speaketh to the baptized. For on the fifth day God from the waters created animals: on the fifth day, that is, on the ‘fifth of the sabbath,’ God said, Let the waters bring forth creeping things of living souls. See ye, therefore, ye in whom the waters have already brought forth creeping things of living souls. For ye belong to the presses, and in you, whom the waters have brought forth, one thing is strained out, another is thrown away. For there are many that live not worthily of the baptism which they have received. For how many that are baptized have chosen rather to be filling the Circus than this Basilica! How many that are baptized are either making booths in the streets, or complaining that they are not made!

But this Psalm, For the presses, and on the fifth of the sabbath, is sung unto Asaph. Asaph was a certain man called by this name, as Idithun, as Core, as other names that we find in the titles of the Psalms: yet the interpretation of this name intimates the mystery of a hidden truth. Asaph, in fact, in Latin is interpreted ‘congregation.’ Therefore, For the presses, on the fifth of the sabbath, it is sung unto Asaph, that is, for a distinguishing pressure, to the baptized, born again of water, the Psalm is sung to the Lord’s congregation. We have read the title on the lintel, and have understood what it means by these presses. Now if you please let us see the very house of the composition, that is, the interior of the press. Let us enter, look in, rejoice, fear, desire, avoid. For all these things ye are to find in this inward house, that is, in the text of the Psalm itself, when we shall have begun to read, and, with the Lord's help, to speak what He grants us.

3. Behold yourselves, O Asaph, congregation of the Lord. (ver. 1.) Exult ye unto God our helper. Ye who are gathered together to-day, ye are this day the congregation of the Lord, if indeed unto you the Psalm is sung, Exult ye unto God our helper. Others exult unto the Circus, ye unto God: others exult unto their deceiver, do ye exult unto your helper: others exult unto their god their belly, do ye exult unto your God your helper. Jubilate unto the God of Jacob. Because ye also belong to Jacob: yea, ye are Jacob, the younger people to which the elder is servant. Jubilate unto the God of Jacob. Whatsoever ye cannot explain in words, yet do not therefore forbear exulting: what ye shall be able to explain, cry out; what ye cannot, jubilate. For from the abundance of joys, he that cannot find words sufficient, useth to break out into jubilating; Jubilate unto the God of Jacob.

4. Ver. 2. Take the Psalm, and give the tabret. Both take, and give. What is, take? what, give? Take the Psalm, and give the tabret. The Apostle Paul saith in a certain place, reproving and grieving, that no one had communicated with him in the matter of giving and receiving. What is, 'in the matter of giving and receiving,' but that which he hath openly set forth in another place. If we have sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things. And it is true that a tabret, which is made of hide, belongs to the flesh. The Psalm, therefore, is spiritual, the tabret, carnal. Therefore, people of God, congregation of God, take ye the Psalm, and give the tabret: take ye spiritual things, and give carnal. This also is what at that blessed Martyr's table we exhorted you, that receiving spiritual things ye should give carnal. For these which are built for the time, are needful for receiving the bodies either of the living or of the dead, but in time that is passing by. Shall we after God's judgment take up these buildings to Heaven? Yet without these we shall not be able to do at this time the things which belong to the possessing of Heaven. If therefore ye are eager in getting spiritual things, be ye devout in expending carnal

things. Take the psalm, and give the tabret: take our voice, return your hands.

5. The pleasant psaltery, with the harp. I remember that we once intimated to your charity the difference of psaltery and harp: let the thoughtful who remember recollect, let those who either have not heard, or do not remember, learn. Of those two musical instruments, psaltery and harp, this is the difference, that the psaltery hath that hollow wood, by which the strings are made to ring, in the upper part: the chords are struck below, that they may sound above. But in the harp this same hollow of the wood holdeth the lower place: as though the other should be of heaven, this of earth. For heavenly is the preaching of the word of God. But if we wait for heavenly things, let us not be sluggish in working at earthly things; because, the psaltery is pleasant, but, with the harp. The same is expressed in another way as above, Take the psalm, and give the tabret: here for psalm, is put psaltery, for tabret, harp. Of this, however, we are admonished, that to the preaching of God’s word we make answer by bodily works.

6. Ver. 3. Sound the trumpet. This is, Loudly and boldly preach, be not affrighted! as the Prophet says in a certain place, “Cry out, and lift up as with a trumpet thy voice.” Sound the trumpet in the beginning of the month of the trumpet. It was ordered, that in the beginning of the month there should be a sounding of the trumpet: and this even now the Jews do in bodily sort, after the spirit they understand it not. For the beginning of the month, is the new moon: the new moon, is the new life. What is the new moon? If any, then, is in Christ, he is a new creature. What is, sound the trumpet in the beginning of the month of the trumpet? With all confidence preach ye the new life, fear not the noise of the old life.

7. Ver. 4. Because it is a commandment for Israel, and a judgment for the God of Jacob. Where a commandment, there judgment. For, They that have sinned in the Law, by the Law shall be judged. And the very giver of the commandment, the Lord Christ, the Word made flesh, saith, For judgment I am come into the world, that they that see not may see, and they that see may be made blind. What is, That they that see not may see, they that see be made blind, but that the lowly be exalted, the proud thrown down? For not they that see are to be made blind, but those who to themselves seem to see

are to be convicted of blindness. This is brought about in the mystery of the press, that they who see not may see, and they that see be made blind.

8. Ver. 5. A testimony in Joseph He made that. Look you, brethren, what is it? Joseph is interpreted augmentation. Ye remember, ye know of Joseph sold into Egypt: Joseph sold into Egypt is Christ passing over to the Gentiles. There Joseph after tribulations was exalted, and here Christ, after the suffering of the Martyrs, was glorified. Thenceforth to Joseph the Gentiles rather belong, and thenceforth augmentation; because, “Many are the children of her that was desolate, rather than of her that hath the husband.”

A testimony in Joseph He made it, till he should go out of the land of Egypt. Observe that also here the fifth of the sabbath is signified: when Joseph went out from the land of Egypt, that is, the people multiplied through Joseph, he was caused to pass through the Red sea. Therefore then also the waters brought forth creeping things of living souls. No other thing was it that there in figure the passage of that people through the sea foreshewed, than the passing of the Faithful through Baptism; the apostle is witness: for I would not have you ignorant, brethren, he said, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. Nothing else then the passing through the sea did signify, but the Sacrament of the baptized; nothing else the pursuing Egyptians, but the multitude of past sins. Ye see most evident mysteries. The Egyptians press, they urge; so then sins follow close, but no farther than to the water. Why then dost thou fear, who hast not yet come, to come to the Baptism of Christ, to pass through the Red sea? What is Red? Consecrated with the Blood of the Lord. Why fearest thou to come? The consciousness, perhaps, of some huge offences goads and tortures in thee thy mind, and says to thee that it is so great a thing thou hast committed, that thou mayest despair to have it remitted thee. Fear lest there remain any thing of thy sins, if there lived any one of the Egyptians!

But when thou shalt have passed the Red sea, when thou shalt have been led forth out of thine offences with a mighty hand and with a strong arm, thou wilt perceive mysteries that thou knowest not: since Joseph himself too, when he came out of the land of Egypt, heard a language which he knew not. Thou shalt hear a language which thou knowest not: which they that know now hear and recognise, bearing witness and knowing. Thou shalt hear where thou oughtest to have thy heart: which just now when I said many understood and answered by acclamation, the rest stood mute, because they have not heard the language which they knew not. Let them hasten, then, let them pass over, let them learn. A language which he had not known he heard.

9. Ver. 6. He turned away from burdens his back. Who turned away from burdens his back, but He that cried, Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden? In another manner this same thing is signified. What the pursuit of the Egyptians did, the same thing do the burdens of sins. He turned away from burdens his back. As if thou shouldest say, From what burdens? His hands in the basket did serve. By the basket are signified servile works; to cleanse, to manure, to carry earth, is done with a basket, such works are servile: because every one that doeth sin, is the slave of sin; and if the Son shall have made you free, then will ye be free indeed. Justly also are the rejected things of the world counted as baskets, but even baskets did God fill with morsels; Twelve baskets did He fill with morsels; because He chose the rejected things of this world to confound the things that were mighty. But also when with the basket Joseph did serve, he then carried earth, because he did make bricks. His hands in the basket did serve.

10. Ver. 7. In tribulation thou didst call on Me, and I delivered thee. Let each Christian conscience recognise itself, if it have devoutly passed the Red sea, if with faith in believing and observing it hath heard a strange language which it knew not, let it recognise itself as having been heard in its tribulation. For that was a great tribulation, to be weighed down with loads of sins. How does the conscience, lifted from the earth, rejoice. Lo, thou art baptized, thy conscience which was yesterday overladen, to-day rejoiceth thee. Thou hast been heard in tribulation, remember thy tribulation. Before thou camest to the water, what anxiety didst thou bear on thee! what fastings didst thou practise! what tribulations didst thou carry in thy heart! what inward, pious, devout prayers! Slain are thine enemies; all thy sins are blotted out. In tribulation thou didst call upon me, and I delivered thee.

11. I heard thee in the hidden part of the tempest. Not in a tempest of the sea, but in a tempest of the heart. I heard thee in the hidden part of the tempest: I proved thee in the water of contradiction. Truly, brethren, truly, he that was heard in the hidden part of the tempest ought to be proved in the water of contradiction. For when he hath believed, when he hath been baptized, when he hath begun to go in the way of God, when he hath striven to be strained into the vat, and hath drawn himself out from the lees that run in the street, he will have many disturbers, many insulters, many detractors, many discouragers, many that even threaten where they can, that deter, that depress. This is all the ‘water of contradiction.’ I suppose there are some here to-day, for instance, I think it likely there are some here whom their friends wished to hurry away to the circus, and to I know not what triflings of this day’s festivity: perchance they have brought those persons with them to church. But whether they have brought those with them, or whether they have by them not permitted themselves to be led away to the circus, in the ‘water of contradiction’ have they been tried. Do not then be ashamed to proclaim what thou knowest, to defend even among blasphemers what thou hast believed. For if thou art heard in the hidden part of the tempest, with the heart doth one believe unto righteousness: if thou art proved in the water of contradiction, with the mouth is confession made unto salvation. For how much is that water of contradiction? even now it is nearly dried up. Our ancestors felt it: when to the word of God, when to the mysteries of Christ, the Gentiles offered fierce resistance, the water was disturbed. For that waters are sometimes to be understood for peoples, the Scripture of the Apocalypse evidently sheweth, where when many waters were seen, and it was asked what they were, it was answered, They are peoples. They therefore endured the water of contradiction, when the heathen raged, and the people imagined vain things; when the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Christ. When the heathen raged, then did that lion roaring come to meet the strong man Samson, as he went to take a wife from the foreigners; that is Christ going down to take a Church from the Gentiles. But what did he? He seized, held, crushed, tore the lion; he became in His hands like a kid of the goats. For what could the raging people become, but a sick sinner? But now that fierceness has been slain, no longer does the royal power so roar, no more does the people of the Gentiles rage as it meets Christ: yea, truly, in

the very kingdom of the Gentiles we find laws for the Church, like as it were a honeycomb in the mouth of the lion. Why then should I now fear the water of contradiction, which is now nearly all dried up? That is now almost silent, if the lees do not contradict. However much the bad that are aliens may rage, O that our own bad people would not help them!

I heard thee in the hidden part of the tempest, I proved thee in the water of contradiction. Ye recollect what was said of Christ, that He was thus born for the fall of many, and the rising again of many, and for a sign to be spoken against. We know, we see: the sign of the Cross has been set up, and it has been spoken against. There has been speaking against the glory of the Cross: but there was a title over the Cross which was not to be corrupted. For there is a title in the Psalm, For the inscription of the title, corrupt thou not. It was a sign to be spoken against: for the Jews said, Make it not, King of the Jews, but make it, that He said I am the King of the Jews. Conquered was the contradiction; it was answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

I heard thee in the hidden part of the tempest, I proved thee in the water of contradiction.

12. All this, from the beginning of the Psalm up to this verse, we have heard of the oil of the press. What remains is rather for grief and warning: for it belongs to the lees of the press, even to the end; perchance also not without a meaning in the interposition of the Diapsalma. But even this too is profitable to hear, that he who sees himself already of the oil may rejoice; he that is in danger of running among the lees may beware. To both give heed, choose the one, fear the other.

Ver. 8. Hear, O My people, and I will speak, and will bear witness unto thee. For it is not to a strange people, not to a people that belongs not to the press: “Judge ye,” He saith, “between Me and My vineyard.”

Hear, O my people, and I will speak, and will bear witness unto thee.

13. Ver. 9. Israel, if thou shalt have heard Me, there shall not be in thee any new god. A new god is one made for the time: but our God is not new, but from eternity to eternity. And our Christ is new, perchance, as Man, but

eternal God. For what before the beginning? And truly, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And our Christ Himself is the Word made flesh, that He might dwell in us. Far be it, then, that there should be in any one a new god. A new god is either a stone or a phantom. He is not, saith one, a stone; I have a silver and a gold one. Justly did he choose to name the very costly things, who said, The idols of the nations are silver and gold. Great are they, because they are of gold and silver; costly they are, shining they are; but yet, Eyes they have, and see not! New are these gods. What newer than a god out of a workshop? Yea, though those now old ones spiders' webs have covered over, they that are not eternal are new.

So much for the Pagans. One beside, taking in vain the name of the Lord his God, hath made for himself a Christ that is a creature, a Christ unequal and not coeval with Him that begetteth, speaking of a Son of God, and denying the Son of God. For if He is the only Son, What the Father is He is, and That He is from eternity. But thou hast imagined some other thing in thy heart, thou hast set up a new god.

Another hath made to himself a god fighting against a race of darkness, fearing lest he be invaded, busy lest he be corrupted; yet in part corrupted, in order that he might, as a whole, be safe; but not whole, because in part corrupt. The Manichees say these things, these too make to themselves in their heart a new god. Not such is our God, not such is thy portion, O Jacob! But He that made heaven and earth, Himself is thy God, Who needeth not the good, and feareth not from the evil.

14. Many, therefore, Heretics together with Pagans, have made themselves gods, these and those; these gods and those have they feigned for themselves, and have placed them, although not in temples, yet, what is worse, in their hearts, and have themselves become temples of false and ridiculous images. It is a great work to break these idols within, and to cleanse a place for the living God, not for a new god. For all these, thinking one thing and another, framing to themselves first some then other gods, and varying their very faith through falsehood, seem to disagree with each other; but they all from earthly thoughts depart not, in earthly thoughts they agree among themselves. Their opinion is diverse, the vanity of it is one. Of

them in another Psalm is said, They from vanity in one. Although by variety of opinions they disagree, yet by like vanity they are bound together. And ye know that vanity is backward, it is behind; therefore he who had forgotten the things behind, that is, had forgotten vanity, reaching forward to those things that are before, that is, unto the Truth, follows after the palm of the heavenly calling of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore for the worse do they agree among themselves, although they seem to differ from one another. Therefore Samson tied together the tails of foxes. Foxes signify the insidious, and chiefly heretics, deceitful, given to fraud, hiding themselves and taking men in by the winding ways of their holes, and withal stinking with a nasty savour. Against which savour saith the Apostle, We are a sweet savour of Christ in every place. These foxes are signified in the Song of Songs, where it is said, Take ye for us the little foxes that spoil the vineyards, that hide in winding holes. Take them for us, convict them for us: for thou takest one whom thou convictest of falsehood. Then when the little foxes gainsay the Lord, and say, In what authority doest Thou these things? Do ye too answer Me, He says, one word: The baptism of John, whence is it? from heaven, or of men? Now foxes use to have such holes as that on one side they do enter, and on another side go out; at either entrance the taker of foxes hath placed his nets. Tell Me, is it from heaven, or of men? They perceive that He had spread a net on either side, whereby He might take them; and they say with themselves, If, say they, we shall say from heaven, He will say to us, Wherefore then did ye not believe? For he bore witness of Christ. If we shall say, Of men, the people stoneth us, because they hold him for a prophet. Perceiving therefore that on this side and that there were means to take them withal, they answered, We know not. And the Lord said, Neither do I tell you on what authority I do these things. Ye say that ye know not what ye know. I do not tell you what ye ask. Because on no side ye would venture to come out, in your own darkness ye have remained. Let us too therefore obey if we can the Word of God when He speaketh. Take ye for us the little foxes that spoil the vineyards. Let us see whether we too cannot take some little foxes. Let us set at either entrance that by which, what way soever a fox may have chosen to go out, he may be taken. For example, to a Manichæan, making himself a new god, and in his heart setting up that which is not, let us say, and put the question to him, Is the substance of God corruptible or incorruptible? Choose which thou wilt, and go out which way thou wilt, but thou shalt not escape. If thou shalt have said corruptible, not by the people, but by thy very self thou wilt be stoned: but if thou shalt have said that God is incorruptible, how then hath the Incorruptible stood in fear of the race of darkness? What is the race of darkness to do to Him Who is incorruptible? What remains but that it be said, We know not? But yet, if this is said not in craftiness but in ignorance, let him not remain in darkness, of a fox let him become a sheep, let him believe the invisible, sole incorruptible God, not a new god; sole by His soleness, not solarity, lest we ourselves should seem to have opened another hole for the fox to escape. Although we shall not be afraid even of the name "Sol." For there is in our Scriptures the Sun of Righteousness, and health in His wings. From the heat of this sun shade is desired: but under the wings of this other Sun is a refuge from the heat; for health is in His wings. This is the Sun of which the ungodly shall say, Therefore we have erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shone upon us, and the sun is not arisen upon us. The worshippers of the sun shall say, The Sun is not arisen upon us; because whilst they adore the sun which He maketh to rise upon the good and the evil, to them the Sun is not arisen, Who enlighteneth the good alone. Each sort, then, make to themselves new gods, such as they will. For what hindereth the workshop of the deceived heart to frame to itself a phantom such as it may have chosen? But all these agree in the things behind, that is, are held in a similar vanity. Whence our Samson, which name is also interpreted 'their sun,' that is, of those to whom He shines; not of all, as is that which riseth upon the good and the evil, but the Sun of certain ones, the Sun of Righteousness: (for he bore a figure of Christ:) bound together, as I had begun to say, the tails of foxes, and then bound on fire; fire to set burning, but that the harvest of aliens. Such accordingly connected in things behind, as if tied together by their tails, draw along a fire that destroyeth; but they do not set burning the crops of our people. For the Lord knoweth them that are His; and let every one that calleth on the name of the Lord depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of clay: and some one indeed unto honour, and others unto dishonour. But if any one shall have cleansed himself from such, he shall be a vessel unto honour, useful for the Lord, prepared for every good work; and therefore neither the tails of foxes, nor the faces of foxes, shall he fear.

But let us see concerning this people: If thou shalt have heard Me, He saith, there shall not be in thee any new god. It moveth me that He hath said in thee, for He hath not said ‘from thee,’ as if it were an image taken to one from without, but in thee, in thy heart, in the image of thy fancy, in the deception of thine error thou shalt carry with thee thy new god, if thou remain old. If, then, thou wilt hear Me. “Me,” He says, because “I am I that Am. There shall not be in thee any new god: nor shalt thou worship a strange god. For if there be error in thee, Thou wilt not worship a strange god. If thou think not of a false god, thou wilt not worship a manufactured god: for there will not be in thee any strange god.

15. Ver. 10. For I am. Why wouldest thou adore what is not? For I am the Lord thy God. Because I am I that Am, and indeed I Am He saith, I that Am, over every creature: yet to thee what good have I afforded in time? “Who brought thee out of the land of Egypt.” Not to that people alone is it said. For we all were brought out of the land of Egypt, we have all passed through the Red sea; our enemies pursuing us have perished in the water. Let us not be ungrateful to our God; let us not forget God that abideth, and fabricate in ourselves a new god. I, Who led thee out of the land of Egypt, saith God. Open wide thy mouth, and I will fill it. Thou sufferest straitness in thyself because of the new god set up in thy heart; break the vain image, cast down from thy conscience the feigned idol: open wide thy mouth, in confessing, in loving: and I will fill it, because with me is the fountain of life.

16. This indeed saith the Lord, but what followeth? (Ver. 11.) And My people obeyed not My voice. For He would not speak these things except to His own people. For, “we know that whatsoever things the Law saith, it saith to them that are in the Law.

And My people obeyed not My voice: and Israel did not listen to Me. Who? To whom? Israel to Me. O ungrateful soul! Through Me the soul, by Me the soul called, by Me brought back to hope, by Me washed from sins! And Israel did not listen to Me! For they are baptized and pass through the Red sea: but on the way they murmur, gainsay, complain, are stirred with seditions, ungrateful to Him Who delivered them from pursuing enemies, Who leads through the dry land, through the desert, yet with food and drink, with light by night and shade by day: And Israel did not listen to Me.

17. Ver. 12. And I let them go according to the affections of their heart. Behold the press: the orifices are open, the lees run. And I let them go, not according to the healthfulness of My commands; but, according to the affections of their heart: I gave them up to themselves. The Apostle also saith, “God gave them up to the desires of their own hearts.” I let them go according to the affections of their heart, they shall go in their own affections. There is what ye shudder at, if at least ye are straining out into the hidden vats of the Lord, if at least ye have conceived a hearty love for His storehouses, there is what ye shudder at. Some stand up for the circus, some for the amphitheatre, some for the booths in the streets, some for the theatres, some for this, some for that, some finally for their “new gods;” they shall go in their own affections.

18. Ver. 13. If My people would have heard Me, if Israel would have walked in My ways. For perchance that Israel saith, Behold I sin, it is manifest, I go after the affections of my own heart: but what can I do? The devil doth this. Demons do this. What is the devil? Who are the demons? Certainly thine enemies. If Israel would have walked in My ways: unto nothing all their enemies I would have brought down. Therefore, If My people would have heard Me. For wherefore is it Mine, if it doth not hear Me? If My people would have heard Me. What is, My people? Israel. What is, Would have heard Me? If he had walked in My ways. He complaineth and groaneth under enemies: Unto nothing their enemies I would have brought down; and on them that oppress them I would have sent forth My hand.

19. But now what have they to do to complain of enemies? Themselves are become the worse enemies. For how? What followeth? Of enemies ye complain, yourselves, what are ye? (Ver. 15.) The enemies of God have lied unto Him. Dost thou renounce? I renounce. And he returns to what he renounced. In fact, what things dost thou renounce, except bad deeds, diabolical deeds, deeds to be condemned of God, thefts, plunderings, perjuries, manslayings, adulteries, sacrileges, abominable rites, curious arts. All these thou dost renounce, and again by these thou turnest back and art

overcome. Thy latter end is become worse than the former things. The dog is returned to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. The enemies of God have lied unto Him. And how great is the patience of the Lord! Why are they not laid low? why are they not slaughtered? why are they not swallowed by the gaping earth? why are they not burned up by the flaming sky? Because great is the patience of the Lord. And shall they be unpunished? Far be it! Let them not so flatter themselves about the mercy of God, as to promise themselves injustice on His part. Knowest thou not that the patience of God leadeth thee to repentance? But thou, according to the hardness of thy heart, and thine heart impenitent, treasurest up unto thyself wrath in the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the just judgment of God, Who shall render to every one according to his works. And if now He rendereth not, then He will render. For if now He rendereth, for a time He rendereth: but to one that is not converted nor corrected, for eternity He will render. See therefore that they shall not be unpunished, attend to what follows: The enemies of the Lord have lied unto Him. Thou wilt say, And what hath He done to them? Do they not live? Do they not breathe the air? Do they not enjoy the light? Do they not drink the fountains? Do they not eat the fruits of the earth? And their time shall be for ever.

20. Let not any man therefore flatter himself, because he belongs in a manner to the press: it is good for him, if he belongs to the oil in the press. Let not each one be promising to himself, while he has wicked deeds, which shall not possess the kingdom of God, and say to himself, because I have the sign of Christ, and the Sacraments of Christ, I shall not be destroyed for ever; and if I undergo a cleansing, through fire I shall be saved. For what is that which the Apostle saith of those who have the foundation? Other foundation can no man lay beside that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. What is it, they say, that follows? But let every one on that foundation take heed what he buildeth. For one buildeth up gold, silver, precious stones; another wood, hay, stubble. Every man’s work of what sort it is, the fire will prove: for the day of the Lord will declare it, because by fire it shall be revealed. If any man’s work shall abide which he hath built thereon, he shall receive a reward: that is, because upon the foundation he hath built up righteous works, gold, silver, precious stones. But if sins, wood, hay,

stubble; yet because of the foundation, himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.

Brethren, I wish to be extremely fearful; for it is better not to give you a hurtful security. I will not give what I do not receive, as I fear, I will affright: I would make you secure if I were myself made secure: I myself fear eternal fire. And their time shall be for ever, I do not understand otherwise than of the eternal fire, of which in another place the Scripture saith, Their fire shall not be quenched, and their worm shall not die. But of the ungodly He said it, saith one, not of me, who though I be a sinner, though an adulterer, though a defrauder, though a robber, though a perjurer, yet have Christ for a foundation, am a Christian, am baptized: I get purged through fire, and because of the foundation perish not. Tell me again, What art thou? A Christian, he says. Now then pass on. What else? A robber, an adulterer, and the rest of which the Apostle says, that they who do such things shall not possess the kingdom of God. Certainly then, when not corrected of such things, and for such things committed doing no penance, dost thou hope for the kingdom of heaven? I think not. Because, they that do such things shall not possess the kingdom of God. And, Knowest thou not that the long-suffering of God leadeth thee to repentance? Thou, promising thyself I know not what, according to thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the just judgment of God, Who shall render to every man according to his works. Attend therefore to the Judge Himself Who is coming. Well: thanks be to God, He hath not kept silence about the definitive sentence, He hath not sent out the criminals, and drawn a curtain. Beforehand He hath willed to announce what He hath determined to do; namely, Then shall be gathered before Him all nations. What shall He do with them? He will separate them, and will put some on the right hand and others on the left. Is there any place at all kept in the midst? What will He say to those on the right? Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom. What to those on the left? Go ye into eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels. If thou fearest not being sent for the place whither, look with whom it is. If therefore all those works shall not possess the kingdom of God; (yea not the works, but they that do such things; for such works there shall be none in the fire: for they shall not, while burning in that fire, be committing theft or adultery; but, they that do such things shall not possess the kingdom of God;) they shall not therefore be on the right hand, with those to whom it shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom: because, they that do such things shall not possess the kingdom of God. If therefore on the right they shall not be, there remaineth not but that they must be on the left. To those on the left what shall He say? Go ye into eternal fire. Because, their time shall be for ever.

21. Explain to us, then, saith one, how those that build wood, hay, stubble, on the foundation, do not perish, but are saved, yet so as by fire? An obscure question indeed that, but as I am able I tell you briefly. Brethren, there are men altogether despisers of this world, to whom nothing is pleasant that flows in the course of time, they cling not by love to any earthly works, holy, chaste, continent, just, perchance even selling all their goods and distributing to the poor, or possessing as though they possessed not, and using this world as though not using it. But there are others who cling to things allowed to infirmity with a degree of affection. He robs not another of his estate, but so loves his own, that if he loses it he will be disturbed. He does not covet another's wife, but so clings to his own, so cohabits with his own, as not therein to keep the measure prescribed in the laws, for the sake of begetting children. He does not take away other men's things, but reclaims his own, and has a law-suit with his brother. For to such it is said, Now indeed there is altogether a fault among you, because ye have law-suits with each other. But these very suits he orders to be tried in the Church, not to be dragged into court, yet he says they are faults. For a Christian contends for earthly things more than becomes one to whom the kingdom of Heaven is promised. Not the whole of his heart doth he raise upward, but some part of it he draggeth on the earth. Lastly, if there come the trial of martyrdom to be undergone, they that have Christ for foundation and build up gold, silver, precious stones, what say they on such an opportunity? It is good for me to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. Cheerful they run, either not at all or but slightly are they saddened from earthly frailness. But all those others that love their own property, their own houses, are grievously disturbed; the hay, and the stubble, and the sticks are burned. They have then wood, hay, stubble on the foundation, but of

allowable things, not of unlawful. For I say, brethren, thou hast the foundation, cleave to heaven, trample on earth. If such thou art, thou buildest not save gold, silver, and precious stones. But when thou sayest, I love that possession, I fear lest it be lost; and the loss approaches, and thou growest sad; thou dost not indeed prefer it to Christ; for in such sort thou lovest that possession, that if it be said to thee, Wilt thou have it or Christ? though thou art sad at losing it, yet thou dost rather embrace Christ, Whom thou hast laid for thy foundation: thou wilt be saved as through fire. Hear another case. Thou canst not keep that possession unless thou bear false witness; and not to do this, is to lay Christ for a foundation: for the Truth hath said, The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul. Therefore if thou lovest thy possession, yet dost not for its sake commit violence, dost not for its sake bear false witness, dost not for its sake commit manslaughter, dost not for its sake swear falsely, dost not for its sake deny Christ: in that thou wilt not for its sake do these things, thou hast Christ for a foundation. But yet because thou lovest it, and art saddened if thou losest it, upon the foundation thou hast placed, not gold, or silver, or precious stones, but wood, hay, stubble. Saved therefore thou wilt be, when that begins to burn which thou hast built, yet so as by fire. For let no one on this foundation building adulteries, blasphemies, sacrileges, idolatries, perjuries, think he shall be saved through fire, as though they were the wood, hay, stubble: but he that buildeth the love of earthly things on the foundation of the kingdom of Heaven, that is upon Christ, his love of temporal things shall be burned, and himself shall be saved through the right foundation.

22. The enemies of the Lord have lied unto Him; in saying, I go to the vineyard, and not going; and their time shall be, not for a time, but for ever. And who are these? (Ver. 16.) And He fed them of the fat of wheat. Ye know the fat of wheat, whereof many are fed that have lied unto Him. And He fed them of the fat of wheat: He mingled them with His own Sacraments. Even Judas, when He gave him the sop, He fed of the fat of wheat. And the enemy of the Lord lied unto him, and his time shall be for ever. And He fed them of the fat of wheat, and from the rock with honey He satisfied them. In the wilderness from the rock He brought forth water, not honey. Honey is wisdom, holding the first place for sweetness among the viands of the heart. How many enemies of the Lord, then, that lie unto the

Lord, are fed not only of the fat of wheat, but also from the rock with honey, from the wisdom of Christ? How many are delighted with His word, and with the knowledge of His sacraments, with the unfolding of His parables, how many are delighted, how many applaud with clamour! And this honey is not from any chance person, but from the rock. But the Rock was Christ. How many, then are satisfied with that honey, cry out, and say, It is sweet; say, Nothing better, nothing sweeter could be thought or said! and yet the enemies of the Lord have lied unto Him. I like not to dwell any more on matters of grief; although the Psalm endeth in terror to this purpose, yet from the end of it, I pray you, let us return to the heading: Exult unto God our Helper. Turned unto God.

And after the word.

Not lightly have your minds in the name of Christ been occupied with the Divine exhibitions, and raised to earnestness, not only for desiring some things, but also for shunning some things. These are the exhibitions that are useful, healthful, building up not destroying: yea both destroying and building up, destroying new gods, building up faith in the true and eternal God. Also for to-morrow we invite your love. To-morrow, they have, as we have heard, a sea in the theatre: let us have a harbour in Christ. But since the day after to-morrow, that is, the fourth of the week, we cannot meet at the ‘Table of Cyprian,’ because it is the festival of the holy Martyrs, to-morrow let us meet at that Table.

PSALM 82

A Psalm for Asaph himself.

This Psalm, like others similarly named, was so entitled either from the name of the man who wrote it, or from the explanation of that same name, so as to refer in meaning to the Synagogue, which Asaph signifies; especially as this is intimated in the first verse. For it begins, (ver. 1.) God stood in the synagogue of gods. Far however be it from us to understand by these Gods the gods of the Gentiles, or idols, or any creature in heaven or earth except men; for a little after this verse the same Psalm relates and explains what Gods it means in whose synagogue God stood, where it says, I have said, Ye are gods, and ye are all the children of the Most High: but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. In the synagogue of these children of the Most High, of whom the same Most High said by the mouth of Isaiah, I have begotten sons and brought them up, but they despised Me, stood God. By the synagogue we understand the people of Israel, because synagogue is the word properly used of them, although they were also called the Church. Our congregation, on the contrary, the Apostles never called synagogue, but always Ecclesia; whether for the sake of the distinction, or because there is some difference between a congregation whence the synagogue has its name, and a convocation whence the Church is called Ecclesia: for the word congregation (or flocking together) is used of cattle, and particularly of that kind properly called “flocks,” whereas convocation (or calling together) is more of reasonable creatures, such as men are. Accordingly in the person of Asaph is sung in another Psalm, I became as it were a beast before Thee; yet I am always by Thee. Yet although the property of the one true God, instead of the greatest and highest benefits, they used to ask Him for carnal, earthly, temporal things. We find that they were also often called sons, not by that grace which belongs to the New Testament, but by that of the Old, the grace by which He chose Abraham, and from his flesh raised up so great a nation, by which before they were yet born he loved Jacob but hated Esau, by which He freed them from Egypt, by which He cast out the nations, and brought them into the land of promise. For if this also were not grace, it certainly would not presently be said of us, who have power given us to become sons of God, not for the sake of obtaining an earthly but an heavenly kingdom, in the same Gospel, that we have received grace for grace, that is, for the promises of the Old Testament the promises of the New Testament. I think then that it is clear in what synagogue of gods God stood.

2. The next question is, whether we should understand the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity, to have stood among the congregation of gods, and in the midst to distinguish the gods; because Each One is God, and the Trinity Itself is One God. It is not indeed easy to make this clear, because it cannot be denied that not a bodily but a spiritual presence of God, agreeable to His nature, exists with created things in a wonderful manner, and one which but a few do understand, and that imperfectly: as to God it is said, If I shall ascend into heaven, Thou art there; if I shall go down into hell, Thou art there also. Hence it is rightly said, that God stands in the congregation of men invisibly, as He fills heaven and earth, which He asserts of Himself by the Prophet's mouth; and He is not only said, but is, in a way, known to stand in those things which He hath created, as far as the human mind can conceive, if man also stands and hears Him, and rejoices greatly on account of His voice within. But I think that the Psalm intimates something that took place at a particular time, by God's standing in the congregation of gods. For that standing by which He fills heaven and earth, neither belongs peculiarly to the synagogue, nor varies from time to time. God, therefore, stood in the congregation of gods; that is, He Who said of Himself, I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The cause too is mentioned; but in the midst, to judge of the gods. I acknowledge that God stood in the congregation of gods, of those whose are the fathers, and from whom according to the flesh Christ came. For in order that He might stand in the congregation of gods, on that account He was of them according to the flesh. But what is God? Not such as those gods in whose synagogue of gods He stood: but as the Apostle continues, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. I acknowledge, I say, that He stood; I acknowledge God the Bridegroom in the midst, of Whom one who was His friend said, He standeth in the midst of you, Whom ye know not. For they are those of whom a little after it is said in the Psalm, They did

not know, neither did they understand, they walk on in darkness. The Apostle also bears witness, That blindness hath in part happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in. For they saw Him when He stood in the midst of them; but they did not see Him to be God, as He wished to be seen, Who said, He who hath seen Me hath seen the Father also He distinguishes the gods, not by their own merits, but by His grace, of the same lump making some vessels for honour and others for dishonour. For who distinguisheth thee? What hast thou that thou hast not received? But if thou hast received it, why boastest thou as if thou hast not received?

3. Hear now the voice of God decreeing, hear the voice of the Lord dividing the flames of fire: (ver. 2.) How long will ye judge unrighteously, and accept the persons of the ungodly; as in another place, How long are ye heavy in heart? Until He shall come Who is the light of the heart? I have given a law, ye have resisted stubbornly: I sent Prophets, ye treated them unjustly, or slew them, or connived at those who did so. But if they are not worthy to be even spoken to, who slew the servants of God that were sent to them, ye who were silent when these things were doing, that is, ye who would imitate as if they were innocent those who then were silent, how long will ye judge unrighteously, and accept the persons of the ungodly? If the Heir comes even now, is He to be slain? Was He not willing for your sake to become as it were a child under guardians? Did not He for your sake hunger and thirst like one in need? Did He not cry to you, Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart? Did He not become poor, when He was rich, that by His poverty we might be made rich?

Ver. 3. Give sentence, therefore, for the fatherless and the poor man, justify the humble and needy. Not them who for their own sake are rich and proud, but Him Who for your sake was humble and poor, believe ye to be righteous: proclaim Him righteous.

4. But they will envy Him, and will not at all spare Him, saying, “This is the Heir, come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours.”

Ver. 4. Deliver, then, the poor man, and save the needy from the hands of the ungodly. This is said that it might be known, that in that nation where Christ was born and put to death, those persons were not guiltless of so great a crime, who being so numerous, that, as the Gospel says, the Jews feared them, and therefore dared not lay hands on Christ, afterwards consented, and permitted Him to be slain by the malicious and envious Jewish rulers: yet if they had so willed, they would still have been feared, so that the hands of the wicked would never have prevailed against Him. For of these it is said elsewhere, Dumb dogs, they know not how to bark Of them too is that said, Lo, how the righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart. He perished as far as lay in them, who would have Him to perish; for how could He perish by dying, Who in that way rather was seeking again what had perished? If then they are justly blamed and deservedly rebuked, who by their dissembling suffered such a wicked deed to be committed; how must they be blamed, or rather not only blamed, but how severely must they be condemned, who did this of design and malice?

5. To all of them, verily, what follows is most fitly suited: (ver. 5.) They did not know nor understand, they walk on in darkness. “For if even they had known, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory:” and those others, if they had known, would never have consented to ask that Barabbas should be freed, and Christ should be crucified. But as the above-mentioned blindness happened in part unto Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles should come in, this blindness of that People having caused the crucifixion of Christ, all the foundations of the earth shall be moved. So have they been moved, and shall they be moved, until the predestined fulness of the Gentiles shall come in. For at the actual death of the Lord the earth was moved, and the rocks rent. And if we understand by the foundations of the earth those who are rich in the abundance of earthly possessions, it was truly foretold that they should be moved, either by wondering that lowliness, poverty, death, should be so loved and honoured in Christ, when it is to their mind great misery; or even in that themselves should love and follow it, and set at nought the vain happiness of this world. So are all the foundations of the earth moved, while they partly admire, and partly are even altered. For as without absurdity we call foundations of heaven those on whom the kingdom of heaven is built up in the persons of saints and faithful; whose first foundation is Christ Himself, born of the Virgin, of whom the Apostle says, Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus; next the Apostles and Prophets themselves, by

whose authority the heavenly place is chosen, that by obeying them we may be builded together with them; whence he says to the Ephesians, Now are ye no longer strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God, built upon the foundation of Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner stone, in Whom all the building fitly joined together increases to a holy temple in the Lord; so it is not unsuitable to understand by the foundations of the world, those who by the envy which their superabundant possession of earthly happiness excites, lead men to lust after such enjoyments, and by acquiring them to be built together like earth upon earth, as in that building above like heaven upon heaven: since to the sinner it was said, Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return; and, The Heavens declare the glory of God, when their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the end of the world.

6. But the kingdom of earthly happiness is pride, to oppose which came the lowliness of Christ, rebuking those whom He wished by lowliness to make the children of the Most High, and blaming them: (ver. 6.) I said, Ye are gods, ye are all the children of the Most High. (Ver. 7.) But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. Whether to those He said this, I said, Ye are gods, and to those particularly who are unpredestined to eternal life; and to the other, &c. But ye shall die like men, &c. and shall fall like one of the princes, in this way also distinguishing the gods; or whether He blames all together, in order to distinguish the obedient and those who received correction, I said, Ye are gods, and ye are all the children of the Most High: that is, to all of you I promised celestial happiness, but ye, through the infirmity of your flesh, shall die like men, and through haughtiness of soul, like one of the princes, that is, the devil, shall not be exalted, but shall fall. As if He said: Though the days of your life are so few, that ye speedily die like men, this avails not to your correction: but like the devil, whose days are many in this world, because he dies not in the flesh, ye are lifted up so that ye fall. For by devilish pride it came to pass that the perverse and blind rulers of the Jews envied the glory of Christ: by this will it came to pass, and still does, that the lowliness of Christ crucified unto death is lightly esteemed in the eyes of them who love the excellence of this world.

7. And therefore that this vice may be cured, in the person of the Prophet himself it is said, (ver. 8.) Arise, O God, and judge the earth; for the earth swelled high when it crucified Thee: rise from the dead, and judge the earth. For Thou shalt destroy among all nations. What, but the earth? that is, destroying those who savour of earthly things, or destroying the feeling itself of earthly lust and pride in believers; or separating those who do not believe, as earth to be trodden under foot and to perish. Thus by His members, whose conversation is in heaven, He judges the earth, and destroys it among all nations. But I must not omit to remark, that some copies have, for Thou shalt inherit among all nations. This too may be understood agreeably to the sense, nor does any thing prevent both meanings existing at once. His inheritance takes place by love, which in that He cultivates by His commands and gracious mercy, He destroys earthly desires.

PSALM 83

Of this Psalm the title is, A song of a Psalm of Asaph. We have already often said what is the interpretation of Asaph, that is, congregation. That man, therefore, who was called Asaph, is named in representation of the congregation of God’s people in the titles of many Psalms. But in Greek, congregation is called synagogue, which has come to be held for a kind of proper name for the Jewish people, that it should be called The Synagogue; even as the Christian people is more usually called The Church, in that it too is congregated.

2. The people of God, then, in this Psalm saith, (ver. 1.) O God, who shall be like unto Thee? Which I suppose to be more fitly taken of Christ, because, being made in the likeness of men, He was thought by those by whom He was despised to be comparable to other men: for He was even reckoned among the unrighteous, but for this purpose, that He might be judged. But when He shall come to judge, then shall be done what is here said, O God, who is like unto Thee? For if the Psalms did not use to speak to the Lord Christ, that too would not be spoken which not one of the faithful can doubt was spoken unto Christ. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore hath God, Thy God, anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. To Him therefore also now it is said, O God, who shall be like unto Thee? For unto many Thou didst vouchsafe to be likened in Thy humiliation, even so far as to the robbers that were crucified with Thee: but when in glory Thou shalt come, who shall be like unto Thee? For what great thing is said, when it is said to God, “Who shall be like unto Thee?” unless it be said to Him, Who vouchsafed to be like men, taking unto Him the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man? And therefore he saith not, “Who is like unto Thee,” which in fact would be right to say if it referred to the Godhead. But because it referred to the form of a servant, it is then His unlikeness to other men will appear, when He shall appear in glory. Therefore it follows, Keep not silence, nor be restrained, O God.

Because at first He was silent, that He might be judged; when like as a lamb before him that sheared him was dumb, so He opened not His mouth, and restrained His power. And that He might shew that He was holding it back, upon that word of His when He said, I am He, they who were seeking Him that they might take Him, went backward, and fell. Would He therefore ever have fallen within their hands and suffered, unless He had held Himself back and restrained Himself, and in a manner made Himself mild? For so also have some translated the word used here, neither be Thou restrained, O God, as to say, neither grow Thou mild, O God. Himself saith elsewhere, I was silent, shall I alway be silent? To Whom it is here said, Keep not silence, of the Same it is said elsewhere, God shall come manifest, our God, and shall not keep silence. It is said here, Keep not silence. For He was silent, that He might be judged, when He came hidden; but He will not be silent, that He may judge, when He shall come manifest.

3. Ver. 2. For lo Thine enemies have sounded, and they that hate Thee have lifted up the head. He seems to me to signify the last days, when these things that are now repressed by fear are to break forth into free utterance, but quite irrational, so that it should rather be called a sound, than speech or discourse. They will not, therefore, then begin to hate, but they that hate Thee will then lift up the head. And not ‘heads,’ but head; since they are to come even to that point, that they shall have that head, which is lifted up above all that is called God, and that is worshipped; so that in him especially is to be fulfilled, He that exalteth himself shall be abased; and when He to Whom it is said, Keep not silence, nor grow mild, O God, shall slay him with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.

4. Ver. 3. Upon Thy people they have malignantly taken counsel. Or, as other copies have it, They have cunningly devised counsel, and have devised against Thy saints. In scorn this is said. For how should they be able to hurt the nation or people of God, or His saints, who know how to say, If God be for us, who shall be against us?

5. Ver. 4. They have said, Come, and let us destroy them from a nation. He has put the singular number for the plural: as it is said, “Whose is this cattle,” even though the question be of a flock, and the meaning “these

cattle.” Lastly, other copies have ‘from nations,’ where the translators have rather followed the sense than the word. Come, and let us destroy them from a nation. This is that sound whereby they sounded rather than spake, since they did vainly make a noise with vain sayings. And let it not be mentioned of the name of Israel any more. This others have expressed more plainly, and let there not be remembrance of the name of Israel any more. Since, let it be mentioned of the name, (memoretur nominis,) is an unusual phrase in the Latin language; for it is rather customary to say, let the name be mentioned, (memoretur nomen;) but the sense is the same. For he who said, let it be mentioned of the name, translated the Greek phrase. But Israel must here be understood in fact of the seed of Abraham, to which the Apostle saith, Therefore ye are the seed of Abraham, according to the promise heirs. Not Israel according to the flesh, of which he saith, Behold Israel after the flesh.

6. Ver. 5. Since they have imagined with one consent; together against Thee have they disposed a testament: as though they could be the stronger. In fact, a testament is a name given in the Scriptures not only to that which is of no avail till the death of the testators, but every covenant and decree they used to call a testament. For Laban and Jacob made a testament, which was certainly to have force between the living; and such cases without number are read in the words of God.

7. Then he begins to make mention of the enemies of Christ, under certain proper names of nations; the interpretation of which names sufficiently indicates what he would have to be understood. For by such names are most suitably figured the enemies of the truth. Idumæans, for instance, are interpreted either ‘men of blood,’ or ‘of earth.’ Ismaelites, are ‘obedient to themselves,’ and therefore not to God, but to themselves. Moab, ‘from the father;’ which in a bad sense has no better explanation, than by considering it so connected with the actual history, that Lot, a father, by the illicit intercourse procured by his daughter, begat him; since it was from that very circumstance he was so named. Good, however, was his father, but as the Law is good if one use it lawfully, not impurely and unlawfully. Hagarens, proselytes, that is strangers, by which name also are signified, among the enemies of God’s people, not those who become citizens, but those who

persevere in a foreign and alien mind, and when an opportunity of doing harm occurs, shew themselves. Gebal, “a vain valley,” that is, humble in pretence. Amon, “an unquiet people,” or “a people of sadness.” Amalech, “a people licking;” whence elsewhere it is said, “and his enemies shall lick the earth.” The alien race, though by their very name in Latin, they sufficiently shew themselves to be aliens, and for this cause of course enemies, yet in the Hebrew are called Philistines, which is explained, falling from drink, as of persons made drunken by worldly luxury. Tyre in Hebrew is called Sor; which whether it be interpreted straitness or tribulation, must be taken in the case of these enemies of God’s people in that sense, of which the Apostle speaks, Tribulation and straitness on every soul of man that doeth evil. All these are thus enumerated in the Psalms: The tabernacles of the Edomites, Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagarenes, Gebal, and Amon, and Amalech, and the Philistines with those who inhabit Tyre.

8. And as if to point out the cause why they are enemies of God’s people, he adds, For Assur came with them. Now Assur is often used figuratively for the devil, who works in the children of disobedience, as in his own vessels, that they may assail the people of God. They have holpen the children of Lot, he saith: for all enemies, by the working in them of the devil, their prince, have holpen the children of Lot, who is explained to mean one declining. But the apostate angels are well explained as the children of declension, for by declining from truth they swerved to become followers of the devil. These are they of whom the Apostle speaks; ‘Ye wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.’ Those invisible enemies are holpen then by unbelieving men, in whom they work in order to assail the people of God.

9. Now let us see what the prophetic spirit prays may fall upon them, rather foretelling than cursing.

Ver. 9. Do thou to them, he saith, as unto Madian and Sisera, as unto Jabin at the brook of Kishon.

Ver. 10. They perished at Endor, they became as the dung of the earth. All these, the history relates, were subdued and conquered by Israel, which then was the people of God: as was the case also with those whom he next mentions;

Ver. 11. Make their princes like Oreb and Zeb, and Zebee and Salmana. The meaning of these names is as follows: Madian is explained a perverted judgment: Sisera, shutting out of joy: Jabin, wise. But in these enemies conquered by God's people is to be understood that wise man of whom the Apostle speaketh, Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Oreb is dryness, Zeeb, wolf, Zebee, a victim, namely of the wolf; for he too has his victims; Salmana, shadow of commotion. All these agree to the evils which the people of God conquers by good. Moreover Kishon, the torrent in which they were conquered, is explained, their hardness. Endor, where they perished, is explained, the Fountain of generation, but of the carnal generation namely, to which they were given up, and therefore perished, not heeding the regeneration which leadeth unto life, where they shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, for they shall die no more. Rightly then it is said of these; they became as the dung of the earth, in that nothing was produced of them but fruitfulness of the earth. As then all these were in figure conquered by the people of God, as figures, so he prays that those other enemies may be conquered in truth.

10. All their princes, (ver. 12.) who said, Let us take to ourselves the sanctuary of God in possession. This is that vain noise, with which, as said above, Thy enemies have made a murmuring. But what must be understood by the sanctuary of God, except the temple of God? as saith the Apostle: For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. For what else do the enemies aim at, but to take into possession, that is, to make subject to themselves the temple of God, that it may give in to their ungodly wills?

11. But what follows? (Ver. 13.) My God, make them like unto a wheel. This is fitly taken as meaning that they should be constant in nothing that they think; but I think it may also be rightly explained, make them like unto a wheel, because a wheel is lifted up on the part of what is behind, is thrown down on the part of what is in front; and so it happens to all the enemies of the people of God. For this is not a wish, but a prophecy. He

adds: as the stubble in the face of the wind. By face he means presence; for what face hath the wind, which has no bodily features, being only a motion, in that it is a kind of wave of air? But it is put for temptation, by which light and vain hearts are hurried away.

12. This levity, by which consent is easily given to what is evil, is followed by severe torment; therefore he proceeds:

Ver. 14. Like as the fire that burneth up the wood, and as the flame that consumeth the mountains: (ver. 15.) so shalt Thou persecute them with Thy tempest, and in Thy anger shalt disturb them. Wood, he saith, for its barrenness, mountains for their loftiness; for such are the enemies of God's people, barren of righteousness, full of pride. When he says, fire and flame, he means to repeat under another term, the idea of God judging and punishing. But in saying, with Thy tempest, he means, as he goes on to explain, Thy anger: and the former expression, Thou shalt persecute, answers to, Thou shalt disturb. We must take care, however, to understand, that the anger of God is free from any turbulent emotion: for His anger is an expression for His just method of taking vengeance: as the law might be said to be angry when its ministers are moved to punish by its sanction.

13. Ver. 16. Fill their faces with shame, and they shall seek Thy name, O Lord. Good and desirable is this which he prophesieth for them: and he would not prophesy thus, unless there were even in that company of the enemies of God's people, some men of such kind that this would be granted to them before the last judgment: for now they are mixed together, and this is the body of the enemies, in respect of the envy whereby they rival the people of God. And now, where they can, they make a noise and lift up their head: but severally, not universally as they will do at the end of the world, when the last judgment is about to fall. But it is the same body, even in those who out of this number shall believe and pass into another body, (for the faces of these are filled with shame, that they may seek the name of the Lord,) as well as in those others who persevere unto the end in the same wickedness, who are made as stubble before the wind, and are consumed like a wood and barren mountains. To these he again returns, saying, (ver. 17.) They shall blush and be vexed for ever and ever. For those are not vexed for ever and ever who seek the name of the Lord, but having respect

unto the shame of their sins, they are vexed for this purpose, that they may seek the name of the Lord, through which they may be no more vexed.

14. Again, he returns to these last, who in the same company of enemies are to be made ashamed for this purpose, that they may not be ashamed for ever: and for this purpose to be destroyed in as far as they are wicked, that being made good they may be found alive for ever. For having said of them, Let them be ashamed and perish, he instantly adds, (ver. 18.) and let them know that Thy name is the Lord, Thou art only the Most Highest in all the earth. Coming to this knowledge, let them be so confounded as to please God: let them so perish, as that they may abide. Let them know, he says, that Thy name is the Lord: as if whoever else are called lords are named so not truly but by falsehood, for they rule but as servants, and compared with the true Lord are not lords; as it is said, I Am that I Am: as if those things which are made are not, compared with Him by Whom they are made. He adds, Thou only art the Most Highest in all the earth: or, as other copies have it, over all the earth; as it might be said, in all the heaven, or over all the heaven: but he used the latter word in preference, to depress the pride of earth. For earth ceaseth to be proud, that is, man ceaseth, to whom it was said, Thou art dust; and, Why is earth and ashes proud? when he saith that the Lord is the Most Highest above all the earth, that is, that no man's thoughts avail against those who are called according to His purpose, and of Whom it is said, If God is for us, who can be against us?

PSALM 84

This Psalm is entitled, For the winepresses. And, as you observed with me, my beloved, (for I saw that you attended most closely,) nothing is said in its text either of any press, or wine-basket, or vat, or of any of the instruments or the building of a winepress; nothing of this kind did we hear read; so that it is no easy question what is the meaning of this title inscribed upon it, for the winepresses. For certainly, if after the title it mentioned any thing about such things as I enumerated, carnal persons might have believed that it was a song concerning those visible winepresses; but as it has this title, yet says nothing afterwards of those winepresses which we know so well, I cannot doubt that there are other winepresses, which the Spirit of God intended us to look for and to understand here. Therefore, let us recall to mind what takes place in these visible winepresses, and see how this takes place spiritually in the Church. The grape hangs on the vines, and the olive on its trees, (for it is for these two fruits that presses are usually made ready;) and as long as they hang on their boughs, they seem to enjoy free air; and neither is the grape wine, nor the olive oil, before they are pressed. Thus it is with men whom God predestined before the world to be conformed to the image of His only-begotten Son, Who has been first and especially pressed in His Passion, as the great Cluster. Men of this kind, therefore, before they draw near to the service of God, enjoy in the world a kind of delicious liberty, like hanging grapes or olives: but as it is said, My son, when thou drawest near to the service of God, stand in judgment and fear, and make thy soul ready for temptation: so each, as he draweth near to the service of God, findeth that he is come to the winepress; he shall undergo tribulation, shall be crushed, shall be pressed, not that he may perish in this world, but that he may flow down into the storehouses of God. He hath the coverings of carnal desires stripped off from him, like grape-skins: for this hath taken place in him in carnal desires, of which the Apostle speaks, Put ye off the old man, and put on the new man. All this is not done but by pressure: therefore the Churches of God of this time are called wine-presses.

2. But who are we who are placed in the winepresses? Sons of Core. For this follows: For the winepresses, to the sons of Core. The sons of Core has been explained, sons of the bald: as far as those could explain it to us, who know that language, according to their service due to God: and in this I do not deny that I behold a great mystery, and by the help of the Lord, would find it out with you. For all baldness ought not to be mocked, as it is by the sons of wickedness: but if one mock at consecrated baldness, he is torn by demons. For Elisha too was walking, and senseless children called after him, Baldhead, baldhead: and to accomplish the figure, he turned and prayed the Lord that bears might come out of the wood and devour them. Their infancy was punished by death in this world: they perished as children, who would one day have perished in old age: but fear of the mystery was impressed on men. For Elisha bore the then character of One, whose sons we are, the sons of Core, namely, of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now it occurs to you, my beloved, out of the Gospel, why being bald he bore the figure of Christ: ye remember that He was crucified on Calvary. Whether then this be the meaning of Sons of Core, as I have explained from what others tell me; or whether there is any other sacred meaning unknown to us; meantime do ye behold what a fulness of sacred truths we meet with. Sons of Core, sons of Christ, for the Bridegroom speaketh of His sons, when He saith, The children of the Bridegroom cannot fast, while the Bridegroom is with them. These winepresses, then, are presses of Christians.

3. But being placed under pressure, we are crushed for this purpose, that for our love by which we were borne towards those worldly, secular, temporal, unstable, and perishable things, having suffered in them, in this life, torments, and tribulations of pressures, and abundance of temptations, we may begin to seek that rest which is not of this life, nor of this earth; and the Lord becomes, as is written, a refuge for the poor man. What is, for the poor man? For him who is, as it were, destitute, without aid, without help, without any thing on which he may rest, in earth. For to such poor men, God is present. For though men abound in money on earth, they think of what the Apostle saith, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches; and considering how uncertain that is in which they rejoiced before they drew near to the service of God, that is, before they entered into the winepresses, they see that from

their very wealth, they either have the pressure of care, how it is to be managed, how guarded; or if they have a little given way to desire, so as to love it, they are filled more with fear than with enjoyment. For what is so uncertain as a rolling thing? It is not unfitly that money itself is stamped round, because it remains not still. Such men, therefore, though they have something, are yet poor. But those who have none of this wealth, but only desire it, are counted also among rich men who will be rejected; for God takes account not of power, but of will. The poor then are destitute of all this world’s substance, for even though it abounds around them, they know how fleeting it is; and crying unto God, having nothing in this world with which they may delight themselves, and be held down, placed in abundant pressures and temptations, as if in winepresses, they flow down, having become oil or wine. What are these latter but good desires? For God remains their only object of desire; now they love not earth. For they love Him Who made heaven and earth; they love Him, and are not yet with Him. Their desire is delayed, in order that it may increase; it increases, in order that it may receive. For it is not any little thing that God will give to him who desires, nor does he need to be little exercised to be made fit to receive so great a good: not any thing which He hath made will God give, but Himself Who made all things. Exercise thyself to receive God: that which thou shalt have for ever, desire thou for a long time. In the people of Israel, those were rejected who were hasty: continually in Scripture this temper of haste is blamed. For who are they who make haste! Those who, having turned to God, when they did not find here that rest which they were seeking, and those joys which were promised them, as if fainting by the way and thinking some long time remained before they should have done with this world or with this life, and seeking here some rest, which, if it is enjoyed, is false, they look back, and fall from their purpose: and forget that terrible saying, Remember Lot’s wife. For why was she made a pillar of salt, if she seasons not men to make them wise? Therefore her bad example, if thou take care, becomes good to thee. Remember, he saith, Lot’s wife: for she looked back, whence she had been set free, to Sodom, and there remained where she looked back; herself to remain on that spot, to season others who should pass. Therefore being freed from the Sodom of our past life, let us not look back: for this is to be in haste, not to wait for what God hath promised because it is far off, and to look back to that which is near, whence thou hast been once set free. Of such what saith the Apostle Peter? It has happened to them according to the true proverb: The dog is returned to his vomit. For the consciousness of thy sins was weighing on thy breast: receiving pardon thou didst vomit, as it were, and thy breast was relieved: there was made a good conscience instead of a bad conscience: but why turnest thou again to thy vomit? If a dog doing thus disgusts thy sight, what art thou in the sight of God?

4. But each one, beloved brethren, from that point of his journey at which he hath arrived, and which he hath vowed to God, from thence looketh back, when he letteth Him go. For example, he has resolved to keep conjugal chastity; for righteousness begins here; he hath retired from fornication and illicit uncleanness: when he returns to fornication, he hath looked back. Another by the gift of God hath vowed something great, hath resolved not to allow even marriage: he who would not be condemned if he had married a wife, if he hath married after making a vow to God, is condemned; since he does the same as one who had not promised; but one is not condemned, the other is. Why, except because the latter hath looked back? For he had been in front, and the other had not come up to the same point. If a virgin, who would not have sinned in marrying, marry after being devoted, she shall be accounted an adulteress of Christ. For she hath looked back from the place which she had reached. If those who choose to leave all worldly hopes and all earthly occupations, and betake them to the society of saints, to that common life where no one calls any thing his own, but all things are common unto them, and they have one soul, and one heart towards God; whoever chooseth to depart from them is not esteemed such as he who had not entered: for the latter hath not yet attained: the former hath looked back. Wherefore, most beloved, as each can, make vows, and perform to the Lord God what each can: let no one look back, no one delight himself with his former interests, no one turn away from that which is before to that which is behind: let him run until he arrive: for we run not with the feet but with the desire. But let no one in this life say that he hath arrived. For who can be so perfect as Paul? Yet he saith, Brethren, I count not myself to have attained: but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are before, I

press forward to the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. Thou seest Paul still running, and thinkest thou that thou hast already attained?

5. If therefore thou feelest the passions of this world, even when thou art happy, thou understandest now that thou art in the winepress. For do ye think, my brethren, that unhappiness in this life is to be feared, and that happiness is not to be feared? Nay, rather, no unhappiness breaketh him whom no happiness can corrupt. How therefore should that corrupter be shunned and feared, lest she seduce thee by her caresses? Lean not on a staff of reed: for it is written that some lean upon a staff of reed. Trust not thyself to it: it is a weak thing to lean upon, it breaketh and slayeth thee. If therefore the world smile upon thee with happiness, imagine thyself in the winepress, and say, I found trouble and heaviness, and I did call upon the name of the Lord. He said not, I found trouble, without meaning, of such a kind as was hidden: for some troubles are hidden from some in this world, who think they are happy while they are absent from God. For as long as we are in the body, he saith, we are absent from the Lord. If thou wert absent from thy father, thou wouldest be unhappy: art thou absent from the Lord, and happy? There are then some who think it is well with them. But those who understand, that in whatever abundance of wealth and pleasures, though all things obey their beck, though nothing troublesome creep in, nothing adverse terrify, yet that they are in a bad case as long as they are absent from the Lord; with a most keen eye these have found trouble, and grief, and have called on the name of the Lord. Such is he who sings in this Psalm. Who is he? The Body of Christ. Who is that? You, if you will: all we, if we will: all sons of Core, and all one Man, for Christ’s Body is one. How is that not one Man which hath one Head? The Head of all of us is Christ; the body of that Head are we all. And we all are in this life in winepresses: if we are wise, we have already come to the winepress. Therefore, being placed in the pressure of temptations, let us utter this word, and send on our longing desire.

Ver. 1. How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts. He was in some tabernacles, that is, in winepresses: but he longed for other tabernacles, where is no pressure: in this he sighed for them, from these, he, as it were, flowed down into them by the channel of longing desire.

6. And what follows? (Ver. 2.) My soul longeth and faileth for the courts of the Lord. It is not enough that it longeth and faileth: for what doth it fail? For the courts of the Lord. The grape when pressed hath failed: but for what? So as to be changed into wine, and to flow into the vat, and into the rest of the store-room, to be kept there in great quiet. Here it is longed for, there it is received: here are sighs, there joy: here prayers, there praises: here groans, there rejoicing. Those things which I mentioned, let no one while here turn from ashamed: let no one be unwilling to suffer. There is danger, lest the grape, while it fears the winepress, should be devoured by birds or by wild beasts. He seems to be in great sadness, when he says, My soul longeth and faileth for the courts of the Lord; for he has not what he longeth for; but is he without joy. What joy? That which the Apostle speaks of: Rejoicing in hope. Then he will one day rejoice in reality: now he doth already in hope. And therefore, those who rejoice in hope, being certain that they shall receive, bear in the winepress all pressures. Therefore, the Apostle himself having said, Rejoicing in hope; as if speaking to those who are still in the winepress, added instantly, patient in tribulation. Patient in tribulation; what follows? Enduring in prayer. Why ‘enduring?’ Because ye suffer delay: ye pray and suffer delay: ye endure the delay: well may it be borne, that that is delayed, which when it hath come is not taken away.

7. Thou hast heard a groan in the winepress, My soul longeth and faileth for the courts of the Lord: hear how it holdeth out, rejoicing in hope: My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God. Here they have rejoiced for that cause. Whence cometh rejoicing, but of hope? Wherefore have they rejoiced? In the living God. What has rejoiced in thee? My heart and my flesh. Why have they rejoiced?

Ver. 3. For, saith he, the sparrow hath found her a house, and the turtledove a nest, where she may lay her young. What is this? He had named two things, and he adds two figures of birds which answer to them: he had said that his heart rejoiced and his flesh, and to these two he made the sparrow and turtle-dove to correspond: the heart as the sparrow, the flesh as the dove. The sparrow hath found herself a home: my heart hath found itself a home. She tries her wings in the virtues of this life, in faith, and hope, and charity, by which she may fly unto her home: and when she shall have come thither, she shall remain; and now the complaining voice of the sparrow, which is here, shall no longer be there. For it is the very complaining sparrow of whom in another Psalm he saith, Like a sparrow alone on the housetop. From the housetop he flies home. Now let him be on the housetop, treading on his carnal house: he shall have a heavenly house, a perpetual home: that sparrow shall make an end of his complaints. But to the dove he hath given young, that is, to the flesh: the dove hath found a nest, where she may lay her young. The sparrow a home, the dove a nest, and a nest too where she may lay her young. A home is chosen as for ever, a nest is framed for a time: with the heart we think upon God, as if the sparrow flew to her home: with the flesh we do good works. For ye see how many good works are done by the flesh of the saints; for by this we work the things we are commanded to work, by which we are helped in this life. Break thy bread to the hungry, and bring the poor and roofless into thy house; and if thou see one naked, clothe him: and other such things which are commanded us we work only through the flesh. Therefore that sparrow, who thinketh upon his home, parteth not from the dove who seeketh for herself a nest, where she may lay her young: for she throweth them not away in any corner, but hath found herself a nest where she may lay them. We speak, brethren, what ye know: how many seem to do good works without the Church? how many even Pagans feed the hungry, clothe the naked, receive the stranger, visit the sick, comfort the prisoner? how many do this? The dove seems, as it were, to bring forth young: but finds not herself a nest. How many works may heretics do not in the Church; they place not their young in a nest. They shall be trampled on and crushed: they shall not be kept, shall not be guarded. In the person of this flesh working a woman is spoken of by the Apostle Paul, saying, Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived. For afterwards Adam consented with the woman: for the woman was deceived by the serpent. And now no evil persuasion can do more than move in thee in the first instance the desire of thy flesh, to which if thy mind afterwards consents, the sparrow too hath fallen; but if the desires of the flesh are conquered, thy limbs are kept to good works, the arms of concupiscence are taken away, and the dove begins to have young. Therefore, what saith the Apostle in that place? But she shall be saved by child-bearing. A widow without children, if she continue so, shall she not be happier? Shall she not be saved, because she beareth not sons? Shall not a virgin of God be better? Shall she not be saved, because she hath no sons? or doth she not belong to God? Therefore the woman shall be saved, who is a type of the flesh, by childbearing, that is, if she do good works. But it is not every where that the dove can find a nest for herself where she may lay her young; in the true faith, in the Catholic faith, in the fellowship of the unity of the Church let her bring forth her works. Therefore, when the Apostle was speaking of her, he added, But she shall be saved by child-bearing, if she abide in faith, and love, and sanctification, with soberness. By abiding in faith, faith itself is a nest for thy young. For on account of the weakness of the young of thy turtle dove, the Lord deigned to give unto thee whence thou mightest make thyself a nest: for He clothed Himself with flesh, as hay for thy nest, that He might come unto thee. In that faith lay thy young: in that nest work thy works. For what the nests are, what that nest is, follows at once: Thy altars, O Lord of Hosts. Having said, And the dove hath found herself a nest, where she may lay her young; as if thou hadst asked, What nest? Thy altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God. What is, My King and my God? Thou Who rulest me, Who hast created me.

8. Here then is the nest, here absence from home, here sighing, here crushing, and here pressing, since here is the winepress: but what is it which he longs for? what that he desires? whither goeth he? whither tends our longing? whither doth it hurry us? Placed here, it meditateth on those things: placed among temptations, placed among pressures, placed in the winepress, sighing after heavenly promises: as if intending to do something there, it dwells beforehand on future joys. (Ver. 4.) Blessed are those who dwell in Thy house. Wherefore blessed? What shall they have? What shall they do? All who are called blessed on earth have something and do something. One man is blessed with so many farms, such a large family, so much gold and silver: he is called blessed by what he has. Blessed is another, he has attained such a rank, the proconsulship, or prefecture: he is called blessed in what he does. Either then in having or in doing men are blessed. But how will they be blessed there? what will they have? what will they do? What they will have I have said above: Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house. If thou hast thy own house, thou art poor; if God’s, thou art rich. In thy own house thou wilt fear robbers; of the house of God, He is

Himself the wall. Therefore blessed are those who dwell in Thy house. They possess the heavenly Jerusalem, without constraint, without pressure, without difference and division of boundaries; all have it, and each have all. Great are those riches. Brother crowdeth not brother: there is no want there. Next, what will they do there? For among men it is necessity which is the mother of all employments. I have already said, in brief, brethren, run in your mind through any occupations, and see if it is not necessity alone which produces them. Those very eminent arts which seem so powerful in giving help to others, the art of speaking in their defence or of medicine in healing, for these are the most excellent employments in this life; take away litigants, who is there for the advocate to help? take away wounds and diseases? what is there for the physician to cure? And all those employments of ours which are required and done for our daily life, arise from necessity. To plough, to sow, to clear fallow ground, to sail; what is it which produces all these works, but necessity and want? Take away hunger, thirst, nakedness; who has need of all these things? These good works also which are enjoined to us; for those which I have mentioned are respectable, but belong to all men; (I mean to except wicked deeds, detestable actions, scandalous crimes, homicides, house-breaking, adulteries, for I do not count these among human actions;) but I mean those which are positively virtuous, even they are only produced by necessity, and that a necessity arising from the frailty of the flesh; for instance, the injunction, ‘Break thy bread to the hungry.’ For whom could you break bread, if there were nobody hungry? ‘Take in the roofless poor into thy house.’ What stranger is there to take in, where all live in their own country? What sick person to visit, where they enjoy perpetual health? What litigants to reconcile, where there is everlasting peace? What dead to bury, where there is eternal life? None of those honourable actions which are common to all men will then be your employment, nor any of these good works; the young swallows will then fly out of their nest. What then? You have said already what we shall have; ‘Those who dwell in Thy house are blessed.’ Say now what they shall do, for I see not then any need to induce me to action. Even what I am now saying and arguing springs from some need. Will there be any such argument there to teach the ignorant, or remind the forgetful? Or will the Gospel be read in that country where the Word of God Itself shall be contemplated? Wherefore let him who in longing aspirations spoke with our voice, saying what we should have in that country which he sighed for, ‘Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house,’ let him say too what we shall do there. ‘They shall be always praising Thee.’ This shall be our whole duty, an unceasing Hallelujah.

Think not, my brethren, that there will be any weariness there: if ye are not able to endure long here in saying this, it is because some want draws you away from that enjoyment. If what is not seen gives not so much joy here, if with so much eagerness under the pressure and weakness of the flesh we praise that which we believe, how shall we praise that which we see? When death shall be swallowed up in victory, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, no one will say, ‘I have been standing a long time;’ no one will say, ‘I have fasted a long time,’ ‘I have watched a long time.’ For there shall be great endurance, and our immortal bodies shall be sustained in contemplation of God. And if the word which we now dispense to you keeps your weak flesh standing so long, what will be the effect of that joy? how will it change us? For we shall be like Him, since we shall see Him as He is. Being made like Him, when shall we ever faint? what shall draw us off? Brethren, we shall never be satiated with the praise of God, with the love of God. If love could fail, praise could fail. But if love be eternal, as there will there be beauty inexhaustible, fear not lest thou be not able to praise for ever Him Whom thou shalt be able to love for ever. Blessed are they who shall dwell in Thy house; for ever and ever they will be praising Thee. For this life let us sigh.

9. But how shall we come thither? (Ver 5.) Happy is the man whose strength is in Thee. He knew where he was, and that by reason of the frailty of his flesh he could not fly to that state of blessedness: he thought upon his own burden, as it is said elsewhere; ‘For the corruptible body weighs down the soul, and the earthly house depresses the understanding which has many thoughts.’ The Spirit calls upward, the weight of the flesh calls back again downward: between the double effort to raise and to weigh down, a kind of struggle ensues: this struggle goes toward the pressure of the winepress. Hear how the Apostle describes this same struggle of the winepress, for he was himself afflicted there, there he was pressed. ‘I delight,’ he says, ‘in the law of God after the inner man: but I see another law in my members,

warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.’ Great is this struggle and hopeless to escape from, if it were not for the help that follows; ‘Miserable man that I am: who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.’ And so here in this Psalm he saw those joys, and thought in his mind, ‘Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house, O Lord; for ever and ever they will be praising Thee.’ But who shall ascend thither? What shall I do with the burden of the flesh? Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house, they will praise Thee for ever and ever. ‘For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man.’ But what shall I do? how shall I fly? how shall I arrive thither? I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind. He said that he was unhappy, and he said, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, and praise Him for ever and ever? Who shall set me free? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. And as in the words of the Apostle, that difficulty and that almost inextricable struggle is alleviated by the addition, The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord; so here, when he sighed in the ardent longing for the house of God, and those praises of God, and when a kind of despair arose at the feeling of the burden of the body and the weight of the flesh, again he awoke to hope, and said, (ver. 5.) Blessed is the man whose taking up is in Thee.

10. What then does God supply by His grace to him whom He taketh hold of to lead him on? He goes on to say: He hath placed steps in his heart. He makes steps for him by which he may ascend. Where are these steps? In his heart. Therefore the more thou lovest, the more shalt thou rise. He hath placed steps in his heart. Who hath done this? He who hath taken hold of him: for, Blessed, says he, is he whose taking up is in Thee, O Lord. Because of himself he cannot rise, it is necessary that Thy grace should raise him. And what does Thy grace? It places steps in his heart. Where does it place steps? In his heart, (ver. 6.) in the valley of weeping. So here thou hast for a winepress the valley of weeping, the very pious tears in tribulation are the new wine of those that love. He hath placed steps in his heart. Where then hath He placed them? In the valley of weeping. For here He hath placed steps, in the valley of weeping. For here is weeping, where is sowing. They went forth weeping, he says, casting their seed. Therefore,

by the grace of God may upward steps be placed in thy heart. Rise by loving. Hence the Psalm “of degrees” is called. And where hath He placed these steps? In thy heart, in the valley of weeping. He hath said where He hath placed them, whither hath He set them? What hath He placed? Steps. Where? Within, In the heart. In what region, in what place, as it were, of abode? In the valley of weeping. To ascend whither? To the place which He hath appointed. What is this, brethren, To the place which He hath appointed. What place would he name, which He hath appointed, if it could be named? It hath been said to thee, He hath placed steps in his heart, in the valley of weeping. Dost thou ask, whither? What will He say to thee? What eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man. It is a hill, it is a mountain, it is a land, it is a meadow: by nearly all these names that place has been called. But what is it in itself, without images who can explain? For, Now we see through a glass darkly what that place is: then we shall see face to face. Ask not therefore whither he hath appointed us to go, or what place it is. He knoweth whither, He Who hath appointed the place whither He is leading thee, the ascent to which He hath placed in thy heart. What? dost thou fear to ascend, lest He who leads thee should go wrong? Lo, in the valley of weeping, He hath placed steps of ascent to the place which He hath appointed. Now we lament; whence proceed our lamentations, but from that place where the steps of our ascent are placed? Whence comes our lamentation, but from that cause wherefore the Apostle exclaimed that he was a wretched man, because he saw another law in his members, warring against the law in his mind? And whence does this proceed? From the penalty of sin. And we thought that we could easily be righteous as it were by our own strength, before we received the command; but when the command came, sin revived; but I died, saith the Apostle. For a law was given to men, not such as could save them at once, but it was to shew them in what severe sickness they were lying. Hear the words of the Apostle; For if a law had been given which could give life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; but the Scripture hath shut up all under sin, that the promise which is of faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe; so that grace came after the law, and found man not only laid prostrate, but already confessing and saying, Miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? And the physician came in due time to the valley of weeping, saying, Surely thou knowest that thou hast fallen; listen unto Me that thou mayest arise, thou who didst despise Me, so that thou didst fall. Therefore the Law was given, that it might convince the sick man of his disease, whereas he seemed to himself to be whole; that sins might be made manifest, not that they might be taken away. But when sin was made manifest by the law given, sin was but increased, for it is both sin, and against the Law; Sin, saith he, taking occasion by the command, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. What does he mean by taking occasion by the law? Having received the command, men tried as by their own strength to obey it; conquered by lust, they became guilty of transgression of this very command also. But what saith the Apostle? Where sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded; that is, the disease increased, the medicine became of more avail. Accordingly, my brethren, did those five porches of Solomon, in the middle of which the pool lay, heal the sick at all? The sick, says the Evangelist, lay in the five porches. In the Gospel we have and read it. Those five porches are the law in the five books of Moses. For this cause the sick were brought forth from their houses that they might lie in the porches. So the law brought the sick men forth, but did not heal them: but by the blessing of God the water was disturbed, as by an Angel descending into it. At the sight of the water troubled, the one person who was able, descended and was healed. That water surrounded by the five porches, was the people of the Jews shut up in their law. The Lord came and disturbed this people, so that He Himself was slain. For if the Lord had not troubled the Jews by coming down to them, would He have been crucified? So that the troubled water signified the Passion of the Lord, which arose from His troubling the Jewish people. The sick man who believeth in this Passion, like him who descended into the troubled water, is healed thereby. He whom the Law could not heal, that is, while he lay in the porches, is healed by grace, by faith in the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. One is healed, for those healed are one. What then does He say here? He hath placed steps of ascent in his heart, in the valley of weeping, to the place which He hath appointed. Now we will rejoice in that place.

11. Ver. 8. But why in the valley of weeping? What is this valley of weeping, from whence we shall come into that place of joy? He shall give blessing, saith he, Who gave the law. He afflicted us by the law, pressed us

under the law, shewed unto us the winepress, we saw the pressure, we were conscious of the tribulation of the flesh, we groaned with the rebellion of sin against our mind, we cried out, ‘Miserable man that I am:’ we groaned under the law; what remains but that He who gave the law should give His blessing? Grace shall come after the law, grace itself is the blessing. And what has that grace and blessing given unto us? They shall go from virtue to virtue. For here by grace many virtues are given. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith, to another the gift of healing, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues, to another prophecy. Many virtues, but necessary for this life; and from these virtues we go on to a virtue. To what virtue? To Christ the Virtue of God and the Wisdom of God. He giveth different virtues in this place, Who for all the virtues which are necessary and useful in this valley of weeping shall give one virtue, Himself. For in Scripture and in many writers four virtues are described useful for life: prudence, by which we discern between good and evil; justice, by which we give each person his due, owing no man any thing, but loving all men: temperance, by which we restrain lusts; fortitude, by which we bear all troubles. These virtues are now by the grace of God given unto us in the valley of weeping: from these virtues we mount unto that other virtue. And what will that be, but the virtue of the contemplation of God alone? There this our prudence will be unnecessary where no evils will meet us which we shall have to avoid. But what think we, my brethren? There will be no justice, such as here: for there will be no need with any man to which we shall owe relief. There will be no such temperance, where will be no lust to be restrained. No such fortitude as here, where there will be no evils to be borne. Therefore from these virtues of action here we shall pass to that virtue of contemplation, by which we shall see God: as it is written, I will be near Thee in the morning, and I will behold Thee. And hear how from these virtues of present action we shall pass to that contemplation. It follows in that place: They shall go from virtue to virtue. What virtue? That of contemplation. What is contemplation? The God of Gods shall appear in Sion. The God of Gods, Christ of the Christians. How is this? I said, Ye are Gods, and ye are all the children of the Most High. For He gave unto them power to become the sons of God, He in whom we believed, that fair Bridegroom, who on account of our uncomeliness appeared here without comeliness: for we saw Him, he saith, and He had no form nor beauty. When all is finished, that mortality makes necessary, He shall appear to the pure in heart, as He is, “God with God,” The Word with the Father, “by Which all things were made:” for, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. The God of Gods shall appear in Sion.

12. And again, from the thought of those joys he returns to his own sighs. He sees what has come before in hope, and where he is in reality. Then shall the God of Gods appear in Sion: this is why we shall rejoice: Him we shall praise for ever and ever. But as yet it is but the time of prayer, the time of deprecation: and if of rejoicing a little, yet still in hope: we are on our journey, we are in the valley of weeping. Therefore returning to the groans proper to this place, he saith, (ver. 8.) O Lord God of virtues, hear my prayer: hearken, O God of Jacob: for Jacob himself also Thou hast made Israel out of Jacob. For God appeared unto him, and he was called Israel, seeing God. Hear me therefore, O God of Jacob, and make me Israel. When shall I become Israel? When the God of Gods shall appear in Sion.

13. Ver. 9. Behold, O God our defender. ‘Under the shadow of Thy wings they shall hope:’ therefore, Behold, O God our defender. And look on the face of Thy Christ. For when doth God not look upon the face of His Christ? What is this, Look on the face of Thy Christ? By the face we are known. What is it then, Look on the face of Thy Christ? Cause Thy Christ to become known to all. Look on the face of Thy Christ: let Christ become known to all, that we may be able to go from strength to strength, that grace may abound, since sin hath abounded.

14. Ver. 10. For one day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. Those courts they were for which he sighed, for which he fainted. My soul longeth and faileth for the courts of the Lord: one day there is better than a thousand days. Men long for thousands of days, and wish to live here long: let them despise these thousands of days, let them long for one day, which has neither rising nor setting: one day, an everlasting day, to which no yesterday yields, which no to-morrow presses. Let this one day be longed for by us. What have we to do with a thousand days? We go from the thousand days to one day; let us hasten to that one day, as we go from strength to strength.

15. Ver. 11. I have chosen to be cast away in the house of the Lord, rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners. For he found the valley of weeping, he found humility by which he might rise: he knoweth that if he would raise himself he shall fall, if he humble himself he shall be exalted: he hath chosen to be cast away, that he may be raised up. How many beside this tabernacle of the Lord's winepress, that is beside the Catholic Church, wishing to be lifted up, and loving their honours, refuse to see the truth. If this verse had been in their heart, I have chosen to be cast away in the house of the Lord, rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners, would they not cast away honours, and run to the valley of weeping, and hence find in their heart the way of ascent, and hence go from virtues to virtue, placing their hope in Christ, not in some man or another? A good word is this, a word to rejoice in, a word to be chosen: I have chosen to be cast away in the house of the Lord, rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners. He himself chose to be cast away in the house of the Lord; but He who invited him to the feast, when he chose a lower place calleth him to a higher one, and saith unto him, Go up higher. Yet he chose not but to be in the house of the Lord, in any part of it, so that he were not outside the threshold.

16. Wherefore did he choose rather to be cast away in the house of the Lord, than to dwell in the tents of the ungodly? (Ver. 12.) Because God loveth mercy and truth. The Lord loveth mercy, by which He first came to my help: He loveth truth, so as to give to him that believeth what He has promised. Hear in the case of the Apostle Paul, His mercy and truth, Paul who was first Saul the persecutor. He needed mercy, and he has said that it was shewn towards him: I who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, that in me Christ Jesus might shew forth all longsuffering towards those who shall believe in Him unto life eternal. So that, when Paul received pardon of such great crimes, no one should despair of any sins whatever being forgiven him. Lo! Thou hast Mercy. God was then unwilling to put His Truth in action, so as to punish the sinner. For if the sinner were punished, would it not be truth? or would he dare to say, I ought not to be punished, when he could not say, I have not sinned? And if he did say, I have not sinned: to whom would he say it? Whom would he deceive? Therefore the Lord first exerted mercy towards him: after mercy, truth. Hear him how he demands truth afterwards. First he

said, I obtained mercy, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but by the grace of God I am what I am. Afterwards He saith, when he was drawing near his passion, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness. He who giveth mercy, keepeth truth. How doth He keep truth? Which the Lord, Who is a righteous Judge, shall repay me at that day. He freely gave him pardon, He shall render him a crown: He is a free giver of pardon, a debtor of a crown. How a debtor? hath He received any thing? To whom doth God owe any thing? Lo, we see that Paul holdeth Him a debtor, having received mercy, demanding truth. The Lord, he says, shall give me back in that day. What shall He give thee back, but that which He oweth thee? How oweth He unto thee? What hast thou given Him? Who hath first given unto Him, and it shall be restored to him again. The Lord Himself hath made Himself a debtor, not by receiving, but by promising: it is not said unto Him, Restore what Thou hast received: but, Restore what Thou hast promised. He hath shewn mercy unto me, he saith, that He might make me innocent: for before I was a blasphemer and injurious: but by His grace I have been made innocent. But He who first shewed mercy, can He deny His debt? He loveth mercy and truth. He will give grace and glory. What grace, but that of which the same one said; By the grace of God I am what I am? What glory, but that of which he said, There is laid up for me a crown of glory?

17. Ver. 12. Therefore the Lord will not withhold good from those who walk in innocence. Why then, O men, are ye unwilling to keep innocence, except in order that ye may have good things? Such an one will not keep innocence, in order not to restore that which is committed to his trust: he would have gold, and loseth innocence. What doth he gain? what doth he lose? He hath the gain of gold, he hath suffered the loss of innocence. ‘But if I shall keep innocence,’ he saith, ‘I shall be poor.’ Is not innocence itself no slight wealth? If thou hast a chest full of gold, shalt thou be rich; if thou hast a heart full of innocence, shalt thou be poor? But behold: if thou longest for good things, though thou be at present in poverty, in tribulation, in the valley of weeping, in pressure, in temptations, keep innocence. For there shall be hereafter that good for thee for which thou longest: rest, eternity, immortality, freedom from suffering shall be hereafter: these are

the good things which God keepeth for His righteous ones. For the good things which thou now longest for, as of great worth, for which thou art willing to be guilty and not guiltless, listen while I tell thee who have them, who abound in them. Thou seest wealth in the hands of robbers, of the impious, the wicked, the base; in the hands of scandalous and criminal men thou seest wealth: God giveth them these things on account of their fellowship in the human race, for the abundant overflowing of His goodness: Who also maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the evil, and causeth it to rain upon the righteous and upon sinners. Giveth He so much to the wicked, and keepeth nothing for thee? He keepeth something: be at ease, He Who had mercy on thee, when thou wast impious, doth He desert thee when thou hast become pious? He Who gave to the sinner the free gift of His Son's death, what keepeth He for the saved through that death? Therefore be at ease. Hold Him a debtor, for thou hast believed in Him promising. The Lord will withhold no good thing from those who walk in innocence. What then remains for us here, in the winepress, in affliction, in hardship, in our present dangerous life? What remains for us, that we may arrive thither? O Lord God of virtues, blessed is the man that putteth his hope in Thee.

PSALM 85

A Sermon to the People.

We have prayed to the Lord our God to shew us His mercy, and to grant us His salvation. This was spoken in prophecy, when first these Psalms were uttered and written: but as regards the present time, the Lord now sheweth His mercy to the nations, and hath granted unto them His salvation. He indeed hath shewn it: but many refuse to be made whole, and to see what He sheweth. But because He Himself healeth the eyes of the heart so that they see Him; therefore having said, Shew us Thy mercy, as if many blind persons would answer, How shall we see when He sheweth? he added, And grant us Thy salvation. For by granting His salvation, He healeth in us that by which we may be able to see what He sheweth: not as a physician takes care to shew this light to those whose eyes he has cured, when the light which he is to shew is one thing, the physician who heals the eyes to which he shews it another, and not the light itself. Not thus is it with the Lord our God: for He Himself is the Physician, Who cures us that we may see, and He Himself the Light which we become able to see. Let us however run through the whole Psalm, as far as we can, and as the Lord permits, as well as the shortness of time will allow.

2. Its title is, A Psalm for the end, to the sons of Core. Let us understand no other end than that of which the Apostle speaks: for, Christ is the end of the Law, for justification to every one that believeth. Therefore when at the head of the title of the Psalm he placed the words, for the end, he directed our heart to Christ. If we fix our gaze on Him, we shall not stray: for He is Himself the Truth unto which we are eager to arrive, and He Himself the Way by which we run. What is, To the sons of Core? Core is explained as a Hebrew word meaning in our language bald. To the sons of Core then means, To the sons of the Bald. Who is he who is bald? Not that we should mock him, but that we should mourn before him. For some mocked, and were destroyed by dæmons: as in the Book of Kings the children mocked at bald Elisha, and said after him, Thou bald-head, Thou bald-head, and bears

came out of the wood, and destroyed the children who were wicked enough to mock, for whom their parents had now to mourn. This event as by a prophecy signified our Lord Jesus Christ hereafter to come. For He was mocked as if bald by the Jews deriding Him, when He was crucified on the spot of Calvary. If we have believed in Him, we are His sons. To us therefore is that Psalm chanted, which is entitled, To the sons of Core; for we are children of the Bridegroom. He, the Bridegroom, giveth unto his Bride a pledge, His own Blood, and the Holy Spirit, by which He hath enriched us meanwhile in our wanderings: but He yet keepeth for us His hidden riches. What must that be which He keepeth for us, out of which He hath given us such an earnest?

3. Therefore the Prophet singeth to Him of the future, and useth words as it were of past time: he speaks of things future as if already done, because with God that which is future has already taken place. Here then the Prophet saw things future with respect to us, but already past in His providence and most sure predestination; as in that Psalm also, where all acknowledge Christ to be spoken of, for its recitation sounds even as if the Gospel were in reading; They pierced My hands and My feet, they numbered all My bones: they gazed and stared upon Me, they divided My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture. Who, when the reader reads this Psalm, would not recognise the Gospel? And yet the saying in the Psalm is not, they will pierce My hands and My feet; but they pierced; and not, they will number My bones; but they numbered; and not, they will divide My garments, but they did divide My garments among them. All these things which the Prophet saw in the future, he mentioned as if past; so here also, (ver. 1.) Lord, Thou hast been favourable unto Thy land; as if He had already done so.

4. Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob. His ancient people of Jacob, the people of Israel, born of Abraham’s seed, in the promise to become one day the heir of God. That was indeed a real people, to whom the Old Testament was given; but in the Old Testament the New was figured: that was the figure, this the truth expressed. In that figure, by a kind of foretelling of the future, there was given to that people a certain land of promise, in a region where the people of the Jews abode; where also is the

city of Jerusalem, whose name we have all heard of. When this people had received possession of this land, they suffered many troubles from their neighbouring enemies who surrounded them: and when they sinned against their God, they were given into captivity, not for destruction, but for discipline; their Father not condemning, but scourging them. And after being seized on, they were set free, and many times were both made captives, and set free; and they are now in captivity, and that for a great sin, even because they crucified their Lord. What then are we to understand them to mean by the words, Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob? Are we to understand here that other captivity, from which we all desire to be set free? For we all belong to Jacob, if we belong to Abraham's seed. For thus speaketh the Apostle; In Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, not those who are children of the flesh, these are the children of God, but the children of promise, these are counted as a seed. If the children of promise are counted for the seed, the Jews became degenerate by offending God: we, by deserving well of God, are become the children of Abraham, not according to the flesh, but according to faith. For by imitating his faith, we are become his children, whilst they, by degenerating from his faith, deserved to be disinherited. For, that you may know that they lost their birth from Abraham, when they arrogantly boasted in the hearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, glorying in their blood, not in their life, and saying to the Lord, We have Abraham for our father; the Lord saith unto them, as degenerate, If ye are the children of Abraham, do ye the works of Abraham. If they then were on that account not children, because they did not Abraham's works; we are therefore children, because we do the works of Abraham. But what are the works of Abraham which we do? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Therefore we all belong to Jacob, imitating Abraham's faith, who believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. What then is that captivity from which we desire to be set free? For none of us, I suppose, is now among the barbarians, nor has any armed nation rushed upon us and led us captive. But I am now pointing out another captivity, in which we groan, and from which we desire to be set free. Let the Apostle Paul proceed, let him tell of it: let him be our mirror, let him speak, and let us see ourselves there: for there is no one but may recognise himself there. That blessed Apostle then saith: For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man: the law of God delights me within:

but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind. Now thou hast heard of the law, thou hast heard of the battle, but thou hast not yet heard of the captivity; hear what follows: warring against the law of my mind, he says, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. We acknowledge this captivity, who is there of us who would not be set free from it? And how shall he be set free? This Psalm hath prophesied in song. Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob. To whom did it speak? To Christ; for it said, for the end, for the sons of Core: for He hath turned away the captivity of Jacob. Hear Paul himself confessing. When he said that he was dragged captive by the law in his members warring against the law of his mind, he cried out under that captivity, and said, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? He asked who it should be, and straightway it occurred to him, The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Of this grace of God the Prophet speaketh to our Lord Jesus Christ, Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob. Attend to the captivity of Jacob, attend, and see that it is this: Thou hast turned away our captivity, not by setting us free from the barbarians, with whom we had not met, but by setting us free from bad works, from our sins, by which Satan held sway over us. For if any one has been set free from his sins, the prince of sinners hath not whence he may hold sway over him.

5. For how did He turn away the captivity of Jacob? See, how that that setting free is spiritual, see how that it is done inwardly. (Ver. 2.) Thou hast forgiven, he saith, the iniquity of Thy people: Thou hast covered all their sins. Behold how He hath turned away their captivity, in that He hath remitted iniquity: iniquity held them captive; thy iniquity forgiven, thou art freed. Confess therefore that thou art in captivity, that thou mayest be worthy to be freed: for he that knoweth not of his enemy, how can he invoke the liberator? Thou hast covered all their sins. What is, Thou hast covered? So as not to see them. How didst Thou not see them? So as not to take vengeance on them. Thou wast unwilling to see our sins: and therefore sawest Thou them not, because Thou wouldest not see them: Thou hast covered all their sins. (Ver. 3.) Thou hast appeased all Thy anger: Thou hast turned Thyself from Thy wrathful indignation.

6. And as these things are said of the future, though the sound of the words is past, it follows: (ver. 4.) Turn us, O God of our salvation. That which he had just related as if it were done, how prayeth he that it may be done, except because he wished to shew that he had spoken as if of the past in prophecy? But that it was not yet done which he had said was done he sheweth by this, that he prayeth that it may be done: Turn us, O God of our salvation, and turn away Thine anger from us. Didst thou not say before, Thou hast turned away the captivity of Jacob, Thou hast covered all their sins: Thou hast appeased all Thy anger, Thou hast turned Thyself from Thy wrathful indignation? How then now sayest thou, And turn away Thine anger from us? The Prophet answereth: These things I speak of as done, because I see them about to be done: but because they are not yet done, I pray that they may come, which I have already seen. Turn away Thine anger from us.

7. Ver. 5. Be not angry with us for ever. For by the anger of God we are subject to death, and by the anger of God we eat bread on this earth in want, and in the sweat of our face. This was Adam’s sentence when he sinned: and that Adam was every one of us, for in Adam all die; the sentence passed on him hath taken effect after him on us. For we were not yet ourselves, but we were in Adam: therefore whatever happened to Adam himself took effect on us also, so that we should die: for we all were in him. For those sins of parents belong not to the children, which the parents commit after the children are born: for the children being now born belong unto themselves, and the parents belong unto themselves. Therefore those who have been born, if they keep the evil ways of their parents, must bear also their deserts: but if they have changed themselves, and have not imitated their bad parents, they begin to have a merit of their own, not the merit of their parents. So far as this the sin of thy father hurts thee not, if thou hast changed thyself, even as it would not hurt thy father if he had changed himself. But that which our stock hath received unto its subjection to death, it hath derived from Adam. What hath it so derived? That frailty of the flesh, this torture of pains, this house of poverty, this chain of death, and snares of temptations; all these things we carry about in this flesh; and this is the anger of God, because it is the vengeance of God. But because it was so to be, that we should be regenerated, and by believing should be made

new, and all that mortality was to be removed in our resurrection, and the whole man was to be restored in newness; for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive; seeing this the Prophet saith, Be not angry with us for ever, nor stretch out Thy wrath from one generation to another. The first generation was mortal by Thy wrath: the second generation shall be immortal by Thy mercy.

8. What then? Was this thy own work, O man, that thou deservedst the mercy of God, in that thou wast converted unto Him; and have they who have not been converted, not found mercy, but wrath? And what then? Couldest thou cause that thou shouldest be converted, if thou hadst not been called? Was it not He Who called thee when turned away, Who caused that thou shouldest be turned unto Him? Seek not thou to claim even thy conversion for thyself, for if He had not called thee when a fugitive, thou couldest not have turned unto Him. Therefore the Prophet, ascribing to God the benefit of his conversion, prays thus, and says:

Ver. 6. O God, Thou shalt turn us again, and make us alive. Not as if we ourselves of our own accord, without Thy mercy, turn unto Thee, and then Thou shalt make us alive: but, Thou shalt turn us again, and make us alive: so that not only our being made alive is from Thee, but our very conversion that we may be made alive. Thou, O God, shalt turn us again, and make us alive: and Thy people shall rejoice in Thee. To their own evil they shall rejoice in themselves: to their own good they shall rejoice in Thee. For when they wished to have joy of themselves, they found in themselves woe: but now because God is all our joy, he that will rejoice securely let him rejoice in Him Who cannot perish. For why, my brethren, will ye rejoice in silver? Either thy silver perisheth, or thou: and no one knows which first: yet this is certain, that both shall perish; which first, is uncertain. For neither can man remain here always, nor can silver remain here always: so too gold, so garments, so houses, so money, so broad lands, so, lastly, this light itself. Be not thou willing then to rejoice in these: but rejoice in that light which hath no setting: rejoice in that dawn which no yesterday precedes, which no to-morrow follows. What light is that? I, saith He, am the Light of the world. He Who saith unto thee, I am the Light of the world, calls thee to Himself. When He calls thee, He converts thee: when he converts thee, He healeth thee: when He hath healed thee, thou shalt see thy Converter, unto Whom it is said, And Thy people shall rejoice in Thee.

9. Ver. 7. Shew us Thy mercy, O Lord. This is what we have been singing before, and we have already spoken of the same. Shew us Thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us Thy salvation: Thy salvation, that is, Thy Christ. Happy is he unto whom God sheweth His mercy. He it is who cannot indulge in pride, unto whom God sheweth His mercy. For by shewing him His salvation He persuadeth him that whatever good man has, he hath not but from Him Who is all our good. And when a man has seen that whatever good he has he hath not from himself, but from his God; he sees that every thing which is praised in him is of the mercy of God, not of his own deserving; and seeing this, he is not proud; not being proud, he is not lifted up; not lifting himself up, he falleth not; not falling, he standeth; standing, he clingeth fast; clinging fast, he abideth; abiding, he enjoyeth, and rejoiceth in the Lord his God. He who made him shall be unto him a delight: and his delight no one spoileth, no one interrupteth, no one taketh away. What powerful man will threaten to take it away? what bad neighbour, what robber, what plotter taketh away God from thee? Though he can take from thee all what thou hast in the body, he taketh not away Him Whom thou hast in thy heart. This is that mercy which I pray may God shew unto us. Shew us Thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us Thy salvation: grant unto us Thy Christ, for in Him is Thy mercy. Let us too say unto Him, Grant unto us Thy Christ. Already indeed He hath given unto us His Christ: yet still let us say unto Him, Grant unto us Thy Christ, for still we say unto Him, Give us this day our daily bread. And who is our bread, but He Himself Who said, I am the living bread which came down from heaven. Let us say unto Him, Give unto us Thy Christ. He hath indeed already given unto us Christ, but as Man; Him Whom He hath given unto us as Man, He will give unto us as God. To men He gave Man: such He gave to men as men could receive; for as God no man could receive Christ. He became Man unto men, He reserved Himself as God for gods. Have I spoken arrogantly? Arrogantly indeed, if He had not Himself said, I said, Ye are gods, and ye are all the children of the Highest. We are renewed even unto adoption, so as to be made sons of God. Already indeed we are so, but by faith; we are so in hope, we are not yet such in reality. For by hope we are

saved, as saith the Apostle. But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, how doth he hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. What do we with patience wait for, except to see what we believe? For now we believe what we see not: by abiding in that which believing we see not, we shall deserve to see that which we believe. Therefore, what saith John in his Epistle? Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. Who would not rejoice, if suddenly while he was wandering abroad, ignorant of his descent, suffering want, and in a state of misery and toil, it were announced, Thou art the son of a senator: thy father enjoys an ample patrimony on your family estate; I bid thee return to thy father: how would he rejoice, if this were said to him by some one whose promise he could trust? One whom we can trust, an Apostle of Christ, hath come and said to us, What is the reason that ye despair of yourselves? why do ye afflict yourselves, and wear yourselves down with grief; why do ye choose, following your own desires, to suffer grief in want of those other joys? Ye have a father, ye have a country, ye have an inheritance. Who is that father? Beloved, we are the sons of God. Wherefore then see we not yet our Father? Because it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We are that now, but in hope: for what we shall be hath not yet appeared. And what shall we be? We know, saith he, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. But hath he said this of the Father, and not of the Son our Lord Jesus Christ? and shall we then be blessed in seeing the Father, not the Son? Hear Christ Himself: He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. For when the One God is seen, the Trinity is seen, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Hear more expressly that the vision of the Son Himself shall give unto us blessedness, and that there is no difference between the vision of Him and the vision of the Father. He Himself saith in the Gospel: He that loveth Me keepeth My commands, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him. He spoke unto them, and said, I will manifest Myself unto him. Wherefore? was it not the same Person Who was speaking? but flesh could see flesh; the heart did not yet the Deity. For this cause did flesh see flesh, that by faith the heart might be cleansed that it might see God. For it was said of the Lord, Purifying their hearts by faith: and the Lord said, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Therefore He promised us to shew Himself unto us. Think, my brethren, what His beauty is. All those beautiful things which ye see, which ye love, He made. If these are beautiful, what is He Himself? If these are great, how great is He? Therefore from these things which we love here, let us the more long for Him: and despising these things, let us love Him: that by that very love we may by faith purify our hearts, and His vision, when it cometh, may find our heart purified. The light which shall be shewn unto us ought to find us whole: this is the work of faith now. This is what we have spoken here: And grant us Thy salvation: grant us Thy Christ, that we may know Thy Christ, see Thy Christ; not as the Jews saw Him and crucified Him, but as the Angels see Him, and rejoice.

10. Ver. 8, 9. I will hearken what the Lord God shall speak in me. The Prophet spoke: God spoke within in him, and the world made a noise without. Therefore, retiring for a little from the noise of the world, and turning himself back upon himself, and from himself upon Him Whose voice he heard within; sealing up his ears, as it were, against the tumultuous disquietude of this life, and against the soul weighed down by the corruptible body, and against the imagination, that through the earthly tabernacle pressing down, thinketh on many things, he saith, I will hearken what the Lord God speaketh in me; and he heard, what? For He shall speak peace unto His people. The voice of Christ, then, the voice of God, is peace: it calleth unto peace. Ho! it saith, whosoever are not yet in peace, love ye peace: for what can ye find better from Me than peace? What is peace? Where there is no war. What is this, where there is no war? Where there is no contradiction, where there is no resistance, nothing to oppose. Consider if we are yet there: consider if there is not now a conflict with the devil, if all the saints and faithful ones wrestle not with the prince of dæmons. And how do they wrestle with him whom they see not? They wrestle with their own desires, by which he suggests unto them sins: and by not consenting to what he suggests, though they are not conquered, yet they fight. Therefore there is not yet peace where there is fighting. Or give me a man who suffers no temptation in his flesh, so that he can say to me, that he now has peace. Perhaps indeed he suffers no temptations to unlawful pleasures, yet he suffers the mere suggestions: either something is suggested to him which he refuses, or he is pleased with something which he must keep under. But, lo! nothing unlawful now gives him pleasure; yet he has to struggle daily

against hunger and thirst; for what just man is not exposed to this? Hunger then and thirst fight against us, the weariness of the flesh fights against us, enjoyment of sleep fights against us, oppression fights. We would watch, and we fall asleep: we would fast, and we hunger and thirst: we would stand, and we fail from fatigue: we wish to sit, yet if we do even this long, we become tired. Whatever we provide for our refreshment, there again we find weariness. Art thou hungry? one asks thee: thou answerest, I am. He places food before thee for thy refreshment; continue thou to use it, for thou hadst need of it; yet in continuing that which thou needest for refreshment, therein findest thou weariness. By long sitting thou wast tired; thou risest and refreshest thyself by walking; continue that relief, and by much walking thou art wearied; again thou wouldest sit down. Find me any thing by which thou art refreshed, wherein if thou continue thou dost not again become weary. What peace then is that which men have here, opposed by so many troubles, desires, wants, wearinesses? This is no true, no perfect peace. What will be perfect peace? This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy struggle? For where there is as yet mortality, how can there be full peace? It is from death that weariness cometh, which we find in all our pleasures. From death it is, since we carry a mortal body: which indeed the Apostle calls dead, even before its separation from the soul: The body, saith he, is dead because of sin. For if thou persevere in that by which thou art refreshed, thou wilt even die. Persevere in eating much; this itself will kill thee: persevere in fasting much, by this thou wilt die: sit continually, being resolved not to rise up, by this thou wilt die: be always walking so as never to take rest, by this thou wilt die; watch continually, taking no sleep, by this thou wilt die; sleep continually, never watching, thus too thou wilt die. When therefore death shall be swallowed up in victory, these things shall no longer be: there will be full and eternal peace. We shall be in a City, of which, brethren, when I speak I find it hard to leave off, especially when offences wax common. Who would not long for that City whence no friend goeth out, whither no enemy entereth, where is no tempter, no seditious person, no one dividing God’s people, no one wearying the Church in the service of the devil; since the prince himself of all such is cast into eternal fire, and with him those who consent unto him, and who have no will to retire from him? There shall be peace made pure in the sons of God, all loving one another, seeing one another full of God, since God shall be all in all. We shall have God as our common object of vision, God as our common possession, God as our common peace. For whatever there is which He now giveth unto us, He Himself shall be unto us instead of His gifts; this will be full and perfect peace. This He speaketh unto His people: this it was which he would hearken unto who said, I will hearken what the Lord God will say unto me: for He shall speak peace unto His people, and to His saints, and unto those who turn their hearts unto Him. Lo, my brethren, do ye wish that unto you should belong that peace which God uttereth? Turn your heart unto Him: not unto me, or unto that one, or unto any man. For whatever man would turn unto himself the hearts of men, he falleth with them. Which is better, that thou fall with him unto whom thou turnest thyself, or that thou stand with Him with Whom thou turnest thyself? Our joy, our peace, our rest, the end of all troubles, is none but God: blessed are they that turn their hearts unto Him.

11. Ver. 9. Nevertheless, His salvation is nigh them that fear Him. There were some even then who feared Him in the Jewish people. Every where throughout the earth idols were worshipped: devils were feared, not God: in that nation God was feared. But why was He feared? In the Old Testament He was feared, lest He should give them up to captivity, lest He should take away their land from them, lest He should destroy their vines with hail, lest He should make their wives barren, lest He should take away their children from them. For these carnal promises of God captivated their minds, which as yet were of small growth, and for these things God was feared: but He was near unto them who even for these things feared Him. The Pagan prayed for land to the devil: the Jew prayed for land to God: it was the same thing which they prayed for, but not the same to whom they prayed. The latter, though seeking what the Pagan sought, yet was distinguished from the Pagan; for He sought it of Him Who had made all things. And God, Who was far from the Gentiles, was near unto them: yet He had regard even to those who were afar off, and to those who were near, as the Apostle said: And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off, and to them that were near. Whom did He mean by those near? The Jews, because they worshipped one God. Whom by those who were afar off? The Gentiles,

because they had left Him by Whom they were made, and worshipped things which themselves had made. For it is not in space that any one is far from God, but in affections. Thou lovest God, thou art near unto Him. Thou hatest God, thou art far off. Thou art standing in the same place, both while thou art near and far off. This it was, my brethren, which the Prophet had regard to: although he saw the mercy of God extending over all, yet he saw something especial and peculiar shewn toward the Jews, and he saith, Nevertheless, I will hearken what the Lord God shall say unto me: for He shall speak peace unto His people; and His people shall be, not Judæa only, but it shall be gathered together out of all nations: For he shall speak peace unto His Saints, and to those who turn their hearts unto Him, and to all who shall turn their hearts unto Him from the whole world. Nevertheless, His salvation shall be nigh them that fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land: that is, in that land in which the Prophet was born, greater glory shall dwell, because Christ began to be preached from thence. Thence were the Apostles, and thither first they were sent; from thence were the Prophets, there first was the Temple, there sacrifice was made to God, there were the Patriarchs, there He Himself came of the seed of Abraham, there Christ was manifested, there Christ appeared; for from thence was the Virgin Mary who bore Christ. There He walked with His feet, there He worked miracles. Thirdly, He ascribed so great honour to that nation, that when a certain Canaanitish woman interrupted Him, praying for the healing of her daughter, He said unto her, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Seeing this, the Prophet saith, Nevertheless, His salvation is nigh them that fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land.

12. Ver. 10. Mercy and truth have met together. ‘Truth in our land,’ in a Jewish person, ‘mercy’ in the land of the Gentiles. For where was truth? Where the utterances of God were. Where was mercy? On those who had left their God, and turned themselves unto devils. Did He look down also upon them? Yea, as if he said, Call those who are fugitives afar off, who have departed far from Me: call them, let them find Me Who seek them, since they themselves would not seek Me. Therefore, Mercy and truth have met together: righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Do righteousness, and thou shalt have peace; that righteousness and peace may kiss each other. For if thou love not righteousness, thou shalt not have

peace; for those two, righteousness and peace, love one another, and kiss one another: that he who hath done righteousness may find peace kissing righteousness. They two are friends: thou perhaps willest the one, and not the other: for there is no one who wills not peace: but all will not work righteousness. Ask all men, Wiliest thou peace? With one mouth the whole race of man answers thee, I wish, I desire, I will, I love it. Love also righteousness: for these two, righteousness and peace, are friends; they kiss one another: if thou love not the friend of peace, peace itself will not love thee, nor come unto thee. For what great thing is it to desire peace? Every bad man longeth for peace. For peace is a good thing. But do righteousness, for righteousness and peace kiss one another, they quarrel not together. Wherefore dost thou quarrel with righteousness? Lo, righteousness saith unto thee, Thou shalt not steal, and thou hearest not; Thou shalt not commit adultery, and thou wilt not hear. Do not to another what thou wouldest not suffer, say not to another what thou wouldest not have said to thyself. Thou art an enemy to my friend, saith peace unto thee; why seekest thou me? I am the friend of righteousness: whenever I find an enemy of my friend, him I go not near. Wilt thou then attain unto peace? Do righteousness. Therefore another Psalm saith unto thee: Eschew evil, and do good: (this is to love righteousness:) and when thou hast eschewed evil and done good, seek peace, and ensue it. For now thou shalt not have to seek it long, for it shall itself meet thee, that it may kiss righteousness.

13. Ver. 11. Truth hath sprung out of the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven. Truth hath sprung out of the earth: Christ is born of a woman. Truth hath sprung out of the earth: the Son of God hath come forth of the flesh. What is truth? The Son of God. What is the earth? Flesh. Ask whence Christ was born, and thou seest that Truth is sprung out of the earth. But the Truth Which sprang out of the earth was before the earth, and by It the heaven and the earth were made: but in order that righteousness might look down from heaven, that is, in order that men might be justified by Divine grace, Truth was born of the Virgin Mary; that He might be able to offer a sacrifice to justify them, the sacrifice of suffering, the sacrifice of the Cross. And how could He offer a sacrifice for our sins, except He died? How could He die, except He received from us that wherein He might die; that is, unless He received from us mortal flesh, Christ could not have died:

because the Word dieth not, Godhead dieth not, the Virtue and Wisdom of God doth not die. How should He offer a sacrifice, a healing victim, if He died not? How should He die, unless He clothed Himself with flesh? How should He put on flesh, except truth sprang out of the earth? Truth hath sprung out of the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven.

14. On the same passage we may mention another meaning. Truth is sprung out of the earth: confession from man. For thou, O man, wast a sinner. O earth, who when thou hadst sinned didst hear the sentence, Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return, from thee let truth spring, that righteousness may look down from heaven. How doth truth spring from thee, whilst thou art a sinner, whilst thou art unrighteous? Confess thy sins, and truth shall spring out of thee. For if whilst thou art unrighteous, thou callest thyself just, how can truth spring out of thee? But if being unrighteous thou dost confess thyself to be so, truth hath sprung out of the earth. Remark that Publican praying in the Temple far off from the Pharisee, who did not even dare to lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner: lo, truth hath sprung out of the earth, because confession of sins hath been made by man. What follows then? Verily I say unto you, that that Publican went down to his house justified rather than the Pharisee: for “every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Truth is sprung out of the earth, in confession of sins: and righteousness hath looked down from heaven, so that this Publican went down justified rather than the Pharisee. For that ye may know that truth belongeth to confession of sins, John the Evangelist says, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and truth is not in us. Hear him now how he goes on to say how truth springs out of the earth, that righteousness may look down from heaven: If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Therefore, Truth is sprung out of the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven. What righteousness hath looked down from heaven? It is that of God, as though He said: Let us spare this man, for he spareth not himself: let us pardon him, for he himself confesseth. He is changed so as to punish his sin: I too will change, so as to set him free. Truth is sprung out of the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven.

15. Ver. 12. For the Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall yield her fruit. There is one verse left: I hope you will not be tired with what I have to say. Listen, brethren, to a subject which is necessary to understand: listen, comprehend, carry it away with you, and let not the seed of God be without effect in your hearts. Truth, he saith, is sprung out of the earth, confession of sins, that is, from men: and righteousness hath looked down from heaven, that is, justification has been given by the Lord God to him who confesses, that the wicked may acknowledge that he cannot become godly except He make him so unto Whom he confesses, except he believe in Him Who justifieth the ungodly. Thy own sins therefore thou canst have: good fruit thou canst have none of, except He give it thee, unto Whom thou makest confession. Therefore when he had said, Truth is sprung out of the earth, and righteousness hath looked down from heaven, as if he were asked, What is it that thou saidst, Righteousness hath looked down from heaven; he continues, For the Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall give her increase. Let us therefore look back upon ourselves: and if we find in ourselves nothing but sins, let us hate sins, and long for righteousness. For when we have begun to hate sins, that very hatred of sins straightway begins to make us like God, because we hate that which God also hateth. When therefore thou hast begun to hate sins and to confess to God, when unlawful delights hurry thee away, and draw thee to those things which profit not, make complaint to God: and confessing unto Him thy sins, thou shalt deserve from Him delight, and He will give unto thee the sweetness of working righteousness, so that righteousness shall begin to delight thee, whom before unrighteousness delighted: so that thou who at first didst delight in drunkenness, shalt rejoice in sobriety: and thou who didst at first rejoice in theft, so as to take from another man what thou hadst not, shalt seek to give to him that hath not that which thou hast: and thou who didst take delight in robbing, shalt delight now in giving: thou whom shows delighted, shalt delight in prayer; thou who didst delight in trifling and lascivious songs, shalt now delight in singing hymns to God; in running to church, thou who at first didst run to the theatre. Whence is that sweetness born to thee, except from this, that God giveth sweetness, and our land shall give her increase? For, behold, ye see what I mean: behold, I have spoken unto you the word of God, I have sown seed in your devout hearts, finding your souls furrowed, as it were, with the plough of confession: with devout

attention ye have received the seed; think now upon the word which ye have heard, like those who break up the clods, lest the fowls should carry away the seed, that what is sown may be able to spring up there: and unless God rain upon it, what profits it that it is sown? This is what is meant by the Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall give her increase. May He with His visitations, in leisure, in business, in your house, in your bed, at mealtime, in conversation, in walks, visit your hearts, when we are not by. May the rain of God come and make to sprout what is sown there: and when we are not by, and are resting quietly, or otherwise employed, may God give increase to the seeds which we have sown, that remarking afterwards your improved characters, we too may rejoice for your fruit. For the Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall give her increase.

16. Ver. 13. For righteousness shall go before him, and he shall direct his steps in the way: that righteousness, namely, which consists in confession of sins: for this is truth itself. For thou oughtest to be righteous towards thyself, and to punish thyself: for this is the beginning of man’s righteousness, that thou shouldest punish thyself, who art evil, and God should make thee good. Therefore since this is the beginning of man’s righteousness, this becomes a way for God, that God may come unto thee: there make for Him a way, in confession of sins. Therefore John too, when he was baptizing in the water of repentance, and would have men come to him repenting of their former deeds, spoke thus; Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Thou didst please thyself in thy sins, O man: let that which thou wast displease thee, that thou mayest be able to become what thou wast not. Prepare the way of the Lord: let that righteousness go before, of confession of sins: He will come and visit thee, for He shall place His steps in the way: for now He hath where to place His steps, He hath whereby He may come to thee. Before thou didst confess thy sins, thou hadst shut up the way of God: there was no way by which He might come unto thee. Confess thy past life, and thou openest a way; and Christ shall come unto thee, and shall place His steps in the way, that He may guide thee with His own footsteps.

PSALM 86

A Sermon to the people on the vigil of a festival, perhaps of St. Cyprian, delivered at Carthage.

No greater gift could God have given to men than in making His Word, by Which He created all things, their Head, and joining them to Him as His members: that the Son of God might become also the Son of man, one God with the Father, one Man with men; so that when we speak to God in prayer for mercy, we do not separate the Son from Him; and when the Body of the Son prays, it separates not its Head from itself: and it is one Saviour of His Body, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who both prays for us, and prays in us, and is prayed to by us. He prays for us, as our Priest; He prays in us, as our Head; He is prayed to by us, as our God. Let us therefore recognise in Him our words, and His words in us. Nor when any thing is said of our Lord Jesus Christ, especially in prophecy, implying a degree of humility below the dignity of God, let us hesitate to ascribe it to Him Who did not hesitate to join Himself unto us. For unto Him all creation is subject, since by Him all creation was made. And, therefore, when we behold His sublime and divine nature, when we hear, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made: gazing upon this divine nature of the Son of God, far surpassing and exceeding all the most sublime things of creation, we hear Him then in some part of Scripture groaning, praying, confessing; and we hesitate to ascribe unto Him these words, because our thoughts are reluctant to descend from that late contemplation of His divine nature, to this His humble condition, and seem almost to do Him injury, if they recognise in a man His words, unto Whom as to God they were directing words of prayer, they often remain doubtful, and try to change the understanding, and yet they meet with nothing in the Scripture but what reverts ever to Him, and suffers them not to turn aside from Him. They ought, therefore to rouse themselves, and thoroughly wake up in their faith; then they would see, that He Whom they were a little before contemplating in the form of God, took upon Himself the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death; and it was His will to make the words of the Psalm His own words, as He hung upon the Cross, and said, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? He is prayed to in the form of God, in the form of a servant He prayeth; there the Creator, here created; assuming unchanged the creature, that it might be changed, and making us with Himself one Man, Head and Body. Therefore we pray to Him, through Him, in Him; and we speak with Him, and He speaks with us; we speak in Him, He speaks in us the prayer of this Psalm, which is entitled, A Prayer of David. For our Lord was, according to the flesh, the Son of David; but according to His divine nature, the Lord of David, and his Maker; and not only before David, but also before Abraham, from whom David came; and also before Adam, from whom were all men; and also before heaven and earth, in which are all creatures. Let no one then, when he hears these words, say, Christ speaketh not; nor again say, I speak not; nay rather, if he own himself to be in the Body of Christ, let him say both, Christ speaks, and I speak. Be thou unwilling to say any thing without Him, and He saith nothing without thee. Have we not this in the Gospel? There where it is certainly written, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him; there certainly we have, Jesus was sorrowful, Jesus was wearied, Jesus slept, Jesus was hungry and was thirsty, Jesus prayed, and continued in prayer all night. He prayed, says the Gospel, and He continued in prayer; and there ran down over His body great drops of blood. What did that shew, when drops of blood ran down from His body as He prayed, but that His body, which is the Church, was already flowing with the blood of martyrs?

2. Ver. 1. Bow down Thine ear, O Lord, and hear me. He speaks in the form of a servant: speak thou, O servant, in the form of thy Lord: Bow down Thine ear, O Lord. He bows down His ear, if thou dost not lift up thy neck: for unto the humble He draweth near: from him that is exalted He removes afar off, except whom He Himself hath exalted from being humble. God then bows down His ear unto us. For He is above, we below: He in a high place, we in a lowly one, yet not deserted. For, God sheweth His love towards us: for while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. For scarcely

for a just man will one die: yet for a good man peradventure one would even dare to die: but our Lord died for the wicked. For no merits of ours had gone before, for which the Son of God should die: but the more, because there were no merits, was His mercy great. How sure then, how firm is the promise, by which for the righteous He keepeth His life, Who for the wicked gave His own death! Bow down Thine ear, O Lord, and hear me: for I am poor and in misery. To the rich then He boweth not down His ear: unto the poor and him that is in misery He boweth down His ear, that is, unto the humble, and him that confesseth, unto him that is in need of mercy: not unto him that is full, who lifteth up himself and boasteth, as if he wanted nothing, and saith, I thank Thee that I am not as this Publican. For the rich Pharisee boasted of his merits: the poor Publican confessed his sins.

3. Yet do not take what I have said, my brethren, in such a way, as if God does not hear those who have gold and silver, and a household, and farms, if they happen to be born to this estate, or hold such a rank in the world: only let them remember the Apostle’s words: Charge those who are rich in this world, that they be not highminded. For those that are not highminded are poor in God, and to the poor and needy and those in want He inclines His ear. For they know that their hope is not in gold and silver, nor in those things in which for a time they seem to abound. It is enough that riches ruin them not; it is enough that they do them no harm: for good they can do them none. What certainly profiteth is a work of mercy, done by a rich or by a poor man: by a rich man, with will and deed, by a poor man, with will alone. When therefore he is such an one as despiseth in himself every thing which is wont to swell men with pride, he is one of God’s poor: He inclines unto him His ear, for He knows that his heart is contrite. It is true, my brethren, that that poor man, who lay full of sores before the rich man’s door, was taken away by Angels into Abraham’s bosom: so we read, so we believe: but that rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and who feasted in splendour every day, was taken away to hell to be tormented. Was it really for the merit of his poverty that the poor man was carried away by Angels, or was it for the sin of his riches that the rich man was sent away to be tormented? In that poor man is signified the honour which is paid to humility, in that rich man the condemnation which awaits pride. I will prove shortly that it was not riches but pride which was tormented in

that rich man. It is certain that the poor man was carried into the bosom of Abraham: of Abraham himself Scripture saith that he had here very much gold and silver, and was rich on the earth. If every one that is rich is hurried away to be tormented, how could Abraham have gone before that poor man, so as to be ready to receive him when carried to his bosom? But Abraham in his riches was poor, humble, reverencing all commands, and obeying them. So true was it that he counted all those riches for nothing, that on God’s command he was ready to sacrifice his son, for whom he was keeping his riches. Learn therefore ye to be poor and needy, whether ye have any thing in this world, or whether ye have not. For you may find a poor man proud, and a rich man you may find confessing. God resisteth the proud, both those clothed all in silk, and those in rags: to the humble He giveth grace, both those who have some of this world’s goods, and those who have not. God looketh within: there He weigheth, there He trieth in the balance: thou seest not God’s scales, thy mind is raised to behold it. See, the desert of his being heard, that is, the cause why he was heard he places herein, saying, For I am poor and in misery. Take care lest thou be not poor and in misery, if so thou art not, thou shalt not be heard. Whatever there is around thee, or in thee, for which thou mightest presume, cast it from thee: presume not thou in aught but in God: be thou in need of Him, that thou mayest be filled with Him. For whatever else thou mayest have without Him, thou art the more entirely poor.

4. Ver. 2. Preserve Thou My Soul, for I am holy. I know not whether any one could say this, I am holy, but He Who was in the world without sin: He by Whom all sins were not committed but remitted. We own it to be His voice saying, Preserve Thou My Soul, for I am holy; of course in that form of a servant which He had assumed. For in that was flesh, in that was also a Soul. For He was not, as some have said, only Flesh and the Word: but Flesh and Soul also, and the Word, and all this, One Son of God, One Christ, One Saviour; in the form of God equal to the Father, in the form of a servant the Head of the Church. When therefore I hear, for I am holy, I recognise His voice: yet do I exclude my own? Surely He speaks inseparably from His body when He speaks thus. Shall I then dare to say, For I am holy? If holy as making holy, and as needing none to sanctify, I should be proud and false: but if holy as made holy, as it is written, Be ye

holy, for I am holy, then the body of Christ may venture, and that one Man, crying from the end of the earth, may venture with his Head, and under his Head, to say, For I am holy. For he hath received the grace of holiness, the grace of Baptism, and of remission of sins. And such were ye, saith the Apostle, enumerating many sins, light ones and heavy, customary and horrible; And such were ye: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified. If then he calls them sanctified, each one of the faithful may say, I am holy. This is not the pride of one puffed up, but the confession of one not ungrateful. For if thou sayest that thou art holy of thyself, thou art proud: on the other hand, thou who art faithful in Christ, and a member of Christ, if thou sayest that thou art not holy, thou art ungrateful. The Apostle rebuking pride, saith not, Thou hast not; but he saith, What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Thou wast not rebuked for saying that thou hast what thou hast not, but for wishing that what thou hast should be of thyself. Do thou then own both that thou hast, and that of thyself thou hast nothing, so as to be neither proud nor ungrateful. Say unto thy God, I am holy, for Thou hast sanctified me: because I received, not because I had: because Thou gavest, not because I deserved. For on another side thou art beginning to do an injury to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. For if all Christians who are faithful and have been baptized in Him have put Him on, as the Apostle saith, As many as are baptized in Christ have put on Christ: if they have been made members of His body, and say that they are not holy, they do injury to their Head, of Whom they are members, and yet not holy. Look thou where thou art, and from thy Head assume dignity. For thou wert in darkness, but now light in the Lord. Ye were sometime darkness, he saith: but did ye remain darkness? Was it for this the Enlightener came, that ye might still remain darkness, or that in Him ye might become light? Therefore, every Christian by himself, therefore also the whole body of Christ, may say, it may cry every where, while it suffers tribulations, various temptations and offences, it may say, Preserve Thou my soul, for I am holy: my God, save Thy servant, that putteth his trust in Thee. See thou, that holy man is not proud, since he putteth his trust in God.

5. Ver. 3. Be merciful unto me, O Lord, for I have cried unto Thee all day. Not one day: understand all day to mean continually: from the time that the body of Christ groans being in afflictions, until the end of the world, when

afflictions pass away, that man groaneth and calleth upon God: and each one of us after his measure hath his part in that cry in the whole body. Thou hast cried in thy days, and thy days have passed away: another hath come after thee, and cried in his days: and thou here, he there, another elsewhere: the body of Christ crieth all the day, its members departing and succeeding one another. One Man it is that reaches to the end of the world: the same members of Christ cry, and some members already rest in Him, some still cry, some when we shall be at rest will cry, and after them others will cry. It is the whole body of Christ whose voice He hears, saying, Unto Thee have I cried all the day. Our Head on the right hand of the Father intercedes for us: some members He recovereth, others He scourgeth, others He cleanseth, others He comforteth, others He is creating, others calling, others recalling, others correcting, others restoring.

6. Ver. 4. Make glad the soul of Thy servant: for unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. Make it glad, for unto Thee have I lifted it up. For it was on earth, and from the earth it felt bitterness: lest it should wither away in bitterness, lest it should lose all the sweetness of Thy grace, I lifted it up unto Thee: make Thou it glad with Thyself. For Thou alone art gladness: the whole world is full of bitterness. Surely with reason He admonishes His members to lift up their hearts. May they hear and do it: may they lift up unto Him what on earth is ill. There the heart decayeth not, if it be lifted up to God. If thou hadst corn in thy rooms below, thou wouldest take it up higher, lest it should grow rotten. Wouldest thou remove thy corn, and dost thou suffer thy heart to rot on the earth? Thou wouldest take thy corn up higher: lift up thy heart to heaven. And how can I, dost thou say? What ropes are needed? what machines? what ladders? Thy affections are the steps: thy will the way. By loving thou mountest, by neglect thou descendest. Standing on the earth thou art in heaven, if thou lovest God. For the heart is not so raised as the body is raised: the body to be lifted up changes its place: the heart to be lifted up changes its will. For unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.

7. Ver. 5. For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious. Therefore make Thou me glad. As though wearied with the bitterness of earthly things he wished to be sweetened, and sought the fount of sweetness, and found it not on the

earth. For wherever he turned himself, he found offences, fears, troubles, temptations. In what man was there safety? in whom could he securely rejoice? Certainly not in himself: how much less in others? Either men are bad, and we must bear with them, and hope that they will be changed; or they are good, and we ought to love them so as to fear at the same time, lest (as they are changeable) they should become bad; in one case their wickedness causes bitterness of soul, in the other it is caused by anxiety and fear, lest he who walks well should slip. Wherever therefore he turns himself, he finds bitterness in earthly things: he has not whereby he may be sweetened, unless he lift himself up to God. For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious. What is gracious? Bearing me until Thou hast made me perfect. I will speak truly, my brethren, like a man among men, and sprung from men: let each one endure to look into his own heart without flattery, and without false soothing. For nothing is more foolish than for a man vainly to soothe and seduce himself. Let him attend then and see what things pass in man’s heart: how even prayers are often hindered by vain thoughts, so that the heart scarcely remains fixed on God: and it would hold itself so as to be fixed, and somehow flees from itself, and finds no frames in which it can inclose itself, no bars by which it may keep in its flights and wandering movements, and stand still to be made glad by its God. Scarcely does one such prayer occur amongst many. Each one might say that this happened to him, but that it happened not to others, if we did not find in the holy Scripture David praying in a certain place, and saying, Since I have found my heart, O Lord, so that I might pray unto Thee. He said that he had found his heart, as if it were wont to flee from him, and he to follow it like a fugitive, and not be able to catch it, and to cry to God, For my heart hath deserted me. Therefore, my brethren, thinking over what he saith here, Thou, O Lord, art good and gracious, I think I see what he meaneth by “gracious.” Make glad the soul of Thy servant, for unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: for Thou art good and gracious: I seem to feel that for this reason he calls God gracious, because He bears with those failings of ours, and yet expects prayer from us, in order to make us perfect: and when we have given it to Him, He receives it gratefully, and listens to it, and remembers not those many prayers which we pour out unthinkingly, and accepts the one which we can scarcely find. For what man is there, my brethren, who, on being addressed by his friend, when he wishes to answer his address, sees his friend turn away from him and speak to another, who is there who would bear this? Or if you appeal to a judge, and set him up to hear you, and all at once, while you are speaking to him, pass from him, and begin to converse with your friend, who would endure this? Yet God endures the hearts of so many persons who pray and think of different things: I am not now speaking of evil things, such are sometimes perverse and at enmity with God; to think of any thing that is superfluous is an injury to Him with Whom you have begun to speak. Thy prayer is a speech addressed to God: when thou readest, God speaks to thee: when thou prayest, thou speakest to God. What then? Must we despair of mankind, and say that every man is already condemned into whose prayers any wandering thoughts have crept and interrupted them? If we say this, my brethren, I know not what hope remains. Therefore because there is some hope before God, because His mercy is great, let us say unto Him, Make glad the soul of Thy servant: for unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. And how have I lifted it up? As I could, as Thou gavest me strength, as I could catch it when it fled away. “And hast thou forgotten,” imagine God to say, “that as often as thou didst stand before Me, thou didst think of so many vain and useless things, and didst scarcely pour out unto Me an earnest and steady prayer?” For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious: gracious art Thou, enduring me. From infirmity I sink: heal Thou me, and I shall stand: strengthen Thou me, and I shall be strong. But until Thou do this, Thou bearest with me: For Thou, Lord, art good and gracious.

8. And of great mercy.

That is, not only of mercy, but of great mercy: for as our iniquity abounds, so also aboundeth Thy mercy. And of great mercy art Thou unto all that call upon Thee. What is it then which Scripture saith in many places; They shall call, and I will not hear them? (yet surely Thou art merciful to all that call upon Thee;) but that some call, yet call not upon Him, of whom it is said, They have not called upon God. They call, but not on God. Thou callest upon whatever thou lovest: thou callest upon whatever thou callest unto thyself, whatever thou wishest to come unto thee. Therefore if thou callest upon God for this reason, in order that money may come unto thee, that an inheritance may come unto thee, that worldly rank may come unto thee, thou callest upon those things which thou desirest may come unto thee: but thou makest God the helper of thy desires, not the listener to thy needs. God is good, if He gives what thou wishest. What if thou wishest ill, will He not then be more merciful by not giving? Then, if He gives not, then is God nothing to thee; and thou sayest, How much I have prayed, how often I have prayed, and have not been heard! Why, what didst thou ask? Perhaps that thy enemy might die. What if he at the same time were praying for thy death? He Who created thee, created him also: thou art a man, he too is a man; but God is the Judge: He hears both, and He grants their prayer to neither. Thou art sad, because thou wast not heard when praying against him; be glad, because his prayer was not heard against thee. But thou sayest, I did not ask for this; I asked not for the death of my enemy, but for the life of my child; what ill did I ask? Thou askedst no ill, as thou didst think. What if he was taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding. But he was a sinner, thou sayest, and therefore I wished him to live, that he might be corrected. Thou wishedst him to live, that he might become better; what if God knew, that if he lived he would become worse? How then couldest thou know what was good for him, to die or to live? If then thou knewest not, return into thy heart, leave it to God to take counsel for thee. What am I to do then, dost thou say? what am I to pray for? What art thou to pray for? What the Lord has taught thee, what thy heavenly Master has taught thee. Call upon God as God, love God as God: there is nothing better than He is; long for Him, Him desire. See how he calls on God in another Psalm: One thing have I required of the Lord, this I will ask. What is it which he required? That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. For what reason? That I may behold the delightfulness of the Lord. If then thou wouldest be a lover of God, with thy innermost marrow and with pure sighings love Him, desire Him, for Him burn, long for Him, than Whom thou shalt find nothing more pleasant, nothing better, nothing more joyful, nothing more lasting. For what so lasting as that which is everlasting? Thou needest not fear, lest He should ever be lost to thee, Who causes that thou be not lost thyself. If, therefore, thou callest on God as God, be confident thou shalt be heard: thou hast part in that verse; And of great mercy unto all that call upon Thee.

9. Say not thou then, He did not give me that which I prayed for. Return thou into thy conscience: weigh it, question it, spare it not. If thou calledst on God truly, be sure that that which perhaps thou wishedst to have as a temporal blessing He gave thee not, for this reason, because it was not good for thee. Let your heart, my brethren, be builded up on this, a Christian heart, a faithful heart: begin not, when ye are sad as if defrauded of your wants, begin not to be angry against God: for it is not good to kick against the pricks. Look back to the Scriptures. The devil is heard, and not the Apostle: what think ye? How are the devils heard? They prayed that they might go into the swine, and it was allowed them. How was the devil heard? He asked for Job, that he might tempt him, and received permission. How was the Apostle not heard? Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. He heard him whom He ordained to damnation, and did not hear him whom He willed to heal. So a sick man asketh many things of the physician; but the physician giveth them not: he heareth not for his desire, that he may hear for his cure.

Make God then thy Physician: seek of Him health, and He Himself will be thy health: seek not as if thou wouldest gain salvation from any other source, but so that He Himself may be salvation unto thee: not so as again to love any other salvation besides Him, but as thou hast it written in the Psalm: Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. What is it to thee what He saith unto thee, so that He give Himself unto thee? Wouldest thou that He should give Himself unto thee? What if that which thou wouldest have He wills not that thou shouldest have, that He may give Himself unto thee? He removes hindrances, that he may enter into thee. Think, brethren, and reflect what good things God giveth unto sinners: and learn hence what He keepeth for His own servants. To sinners who blaspheme Him every day He giveth the sky and the earth, He giveth springs, fruits, health, children, wealth, abundance: all these good things none giveth but God. He who giveth such things to sinners, what thinkest thou He keeps for His faithful ones? Is this to be believed of Him, that He Who giveth such things to the bad, keepeth nothing for the good? Nay verily He doth keep, not earth, but heaven for them. Too common a thing perhaps I say when I say heaven; Himself rather, Who made the heaven. Fair is heaven, but fairer is the Maker of heaven. But I see the heavens, Him I see not. Because thou hast eyes to see the heavens: a heart thou hast not yet to see the Maker of heaven: therefore came He from heaven to earth, to cleanse the heart, that He may be seen Who made heaven and earth. But wait thou with full patience for salvation. By what treatment to cure thee, He knoweth: by what cutting, what burning, He knoweth. Thou hast brought sickness on thyself by sinning: He comes not only to nurse, but also to cut and to burn. Seest thou not how much men suffer under the hands of physicians, when a man promises them an uncertain hope? Thou wilt be cured, says the physician: thou wilt be cured, if I cut. It is a man who speaks, and to a man that he speaks: neither is he sure who speaks, nor he who hears, for he who is speaking to the man hath not made man, and knows not perfectly what is passing in man: yet at the words of a man who knows not what is passing in man, man sooner believeth, submits his limbs, suffers himself to be bound, often without being bound is cut or burned; and receives perhaps health for a few days, even when just healed not knowing when he may die: perhaps, while being healed, dies; perhaps cannot be healed. But to whom hath God promised any thing, and deceived him?

10. Ver. 6. Fix my prayer in Thy ears, O Lord. Great earnestness of him who prays! Fix my prayer in Thine ears, O Lord: that is, let not my prayer go out of Thine ears, fix it then in Thine ears. How did he travail that he might fix his prayer in the ears of God? Let God answer and say to us; Wouldest thou that I fix thy prayer in My ears? Fix My law in thy heart. Fix my prayer in Thine ears, O Lord; and attend to the voice of my prayer.

11. Ver. 7. In the day of my trouble I have cried unto Thee, for Thou hast heard me. The cause that Thou heardest me was, that in the day of my trouble I cried unto Thee. A little before he had said, All the day have I cried, all the day have I been troubled. Let no Christian then say that there is any day in which he is not troubled. By all the day we have understood the whole of time. What then, is there trouble even when it is well with us? Even so, trouble. How is there trouble? Because as long as we are in the

body we are absent from the Lord. Let what will abound here, we are not yet in that country whither we are hastening to return. He to whom foreign travel is sweet, loveth not his country: if his country is sweet, travel is bitter; if travel is bitter, all the day there is trouble? When is there not trouble? When there is joy in one’s country. At Thy right hand are delights for evermore. ‘Thou shalt fill me with joy,’ he saith, ‘with Thy countenance: that I may see the delight of the Lord.’ There toil and groaning shall pass away: there shall be not prayer but raise; there Alleluia, there Amen, the voice in concord with Angels; there vision without failing and love without weariness. So long therefore as we are not there, ye see that we are not in that which is good. But do all things abound? If all things abound, see if thou art assured that all things perish not. But I have what I had not: more money is come to me which I had not before. Perhaps more fear too is come, which thou hadst not before: perhaps thou wast so much the more secure as thou wast the poorer. In fine, be it that thou hast wealth, that thou hast redundance of this world’s affluence, that thou hast assurance given thee that all this shall not perish; besides this, that God say unto thee, Thou shalt remain for ever in these things, they shall be for ever with thee, but My face thou shalt not see. Let none ask counsel of the flesh: ask ye counsel of the Spirit: let your heart answer you; let hope, faith, charity, which has begun to be in you, answer. If then we were to receive assurance that we should always be in affluence of worldly goods, and if God were to say to us, My face ye shall not see, would ye rejoice in these goods? Some one might perhaps choose to rejoice, and say, These things abound unto me, it is well with me, I ask no more. He hath not yet begun to be a lover of God: he hath not yet begun to sigh like one far from home. Far be it, far be it from us: let them retire, all those seductions: let them retire, those false blandishments: let them be gone, those words which they say daily unto us, Where is thy God? Let us pour out our soul over us, let us confess in tears, let us groan in confession, let us sigh in misery. Whatever is present with us besides our God, is not sweet: we would not have all things that He hath given, if He gives not Himself Who gave all things. Fix my prayer, O Lord, in Thy ears, and attend to the voice of my prayer. In the day of my trouble I have cried unto Thee, for Thou hast heard me.

12. Ver. 8. Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord. What did he say? Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord. Let the Pagans make for themselves what gods they will; let them bring workmen in silver and in gold, furbishers, sculptors; let them make gods. What kind of gods? Having eyes, and seeing not; and the other things which the Psalm mentions in what follows. But we do not worship these, he says; we do not worship them, these are symbols. What then do ye worship? Something else that is worse: for the gods of the gentiles are devils. What then? Neither, say they, do we worship devils. Ye have certainly nothing else in your temples, nothing else inspires your prophets than a devil. But what do ye say? We worship Angels, we have Angels as gods. Ye know not altogether what Angels are. Angels worship the one God, and favour not men who wish to worship Angels and not God. For we find Angels of high rank forbidding men to adore them, and commanding them to adore the true God. But when they say Angels, suppose they mean men, since it is said, I have said, Ye are Gods, and all the children of the Most Highest. Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord. Whatever man thinks to the contrary, that which was made is not like Him Who made it. Except God, whatever else there is in the universe was made by God. What a difference there is between Him Who made, and that which was made, who can worthily imagine? Therefore this man said, Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord: but how much God is unlike them he said not, because it cannot be said. Let your Charity attend: God is ineffable: we more easily say what He is not than what He is. Thou thinkest of the earth; this is not God: thou thinkest of the sea; this is not God: of all things which are in the earth, men and animals; this is not God: of all things which are in the sea, which fly through the air; this is not God: whatever shines in the sky, the stars, sun and moon; this is not God: the heaven itself; this is not God: think of the Angels, Virtues, Powers, Archangels, Thrones, Seats, Principalities; this is not God. What is He then? I could only tell thee, what He is not. Askest thou what He is? What the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor hath risen up into the heart of man. Why seekest thou that that should rise up to the tongue, which hath not risen up into the heart? Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord; there is not one that can do as Thou doest.

13. Ver. 9. All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. He has announced the Church: All nations that Thou hast made. If there is any nation which God hath not made, it will not worship Him: but there is no nation which God hath not made; because God made Adam and Eve, the source of all nations; thence all nations sprang. All nations therefore hath God made; all nations, therefore, that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. When was this said? When before Him there worshipped none but a few holy men in one people of the Hebrews, then this was said: and see now what it is which was said: All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. When these things were spoken, they were not seen, and they were believed: now that they are seen, why are they denied? All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify Thy Name.

14. Ver. 10. For Thou art great, and doing wondrous things: Thou alone art the great God. Let no man call himself great. Some were to be who would call themselves great: against these it is said, Thou alone art the great God. For what great thing is ascribed to God, when it is said that He alone is the great God? Who knows not that He is the great God? But because there were to be some who would call themselves great and make God little, against these it is said, Thou alone art the great God. For what Thou sayest is fulfilled, not what those say who call themselves great. What hath God said by His Spirit? All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. What saith he, whoever he is, who calleth himself great? Far from it: God is not worshipped in all nations: all nations have perished, Africa alone remains. This thou sayest, who callest thyself great: another thing He saith Who alone is the great God. What saith He, Who alone is the great God? All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. I see what the only great God hath said: let man be silent, who is falsely great; great only in appearance, because he disdains to be small. Who disdains to be small? He who saith this. Whoever will be great among you, said the Lord, shall be your servant. If that man had wished to be the servant of his brethren, he would not have separated them from their mother: but when he wishes to be great, and wishes not to be small, as would be for his welfare, God, Who resisteth the proud, and

giveth grace to the humble, because He alone is great, fulfilleth all things which He predicted, and contradicteth those who blaspheme. For such persons blaspheme against Christ, who say that the Church has perished from the whole world, and is left only in Africa. If thou wert to say to him, Thou wilt lose thy villa, he would perhaps scarcely keep from laying his hand upon thee: and yet he says, that Christ has lost His inheritance, redeemed by His own Blood! See now what a wrong he does, my brethren. The Scripture says, In a wide nation is the king's honour; but in the domination of the people is the affliction of a prince. This wrong then thou dost unto Christ, to say that His people is diminished to that small number. Was it for this thou wast born, for this thou callest thyself a Christian, that thou mayest grudge Christ His glory, Whose sign thou sayest that thou bearest on thy forehead, and hast lost out of thy heart? In a wide nation is the king's honour: acknowledge thy King: give Him glory, give Him a wide nation. What wide nation shall I give Him, dost thou say? Choose not to give Him from thy own heart, and thou wilt give aright. Whence am I to give? thou wilt say. Lo, give from hence: All nations that Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord. Say this, confess this, and thou hast given a wide nation: for all nations in One are one: this is very oneness. For as there is a Church and Churches, and those are Churches which also are a Church, so that is a nation which was nations: formerly nations, many nations, now one nation. Why one nation? Because one faith, one hope, one charity, one expectation. Lastly, why not one nation, if one country? Our country is heavenly, our country is Jerusalem: whoever is not a citizen of it, belongs not to that nation: but whoever is a citizen of it is in that one nation of God. And this nation, from the east to the west, from the north and the sea, is extended through the four quarters of the whole world. This God saith: From the east and west, from the north and the sea, give glory to God. This He foretold, this He fulfilled, Who alone is great. Let him therefore who would not be little cease from saying this against Him Who alone is great: for there cannot be two great, God and Donatus.

15. Ver. 11. Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth. Thy way, Thy truth, Thy life, is Christ. Therefore belongeth the Body to Him, and the Body is of Him. I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way. In what way? And I will walk in Thy truth. It is one

thing to lead to the way, another to guide in the way. Behold man every where poor, every where in need of help. Those who are beside the way are not Christians, or not yet Catholics: let them be guided to the way: but when they have been brought to the way and made Catholics in Christ, they must be guided by Him in the way itself, lest they fall. Now assuredly they walk in the way. Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way: surely I am now in Thy way, lead me there. And I will walk in Thy truth: while Thou leadest I shall not err: if Thou let me go, I shall err. Pray then that He let thee not go, but lead thee even to the end. How doth He lead thee? By always admonishing, always giving thee His hand. And the arm of the Lord, to whom is it revealed? For in giving His Christ He giveth His hand: in giving His hand, He giveth His Christ. He leadeth to the way, in leading to His Christ: He leadeth in the way, by leading in His Christ, and Christ is truth. Lead me, therefore, O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth: in Him verily Who said, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. For Thou Who leadest in the way and the truth, whither leadest Thou, but unto life? In Him then, unto Him Thou leadest. Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth.

16. Let my heart be made glad, so that it may fear Thy name. There is then fear in gladness. How can there be gladness, if fear? Is not fear wont to be painful? There will hereafter be gladness without fear, now gladness with fear; for not yet is there perfect security, nor perfect gladness. If there is no gladness, we faint: if full security, we rejoice wrongly. Therefore may He both sprinkle on us gladness, and strike fear into us, that by the sweetness of gladness He may lead us to the abode of security; by giving us fear, may cause us not to rejoice wrongly, and to withdraw from the way. Therefore saith the Psalm: Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling: so also saith the Apostle Paul; Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you. Whatever prosperity comes then, my brethren, is rather to be feared: those things which ye think to be prosperous, are rather temptations. An inheritance cometh, there cometh wealth, there is an abundant overflow of some happiness: these are temptations: take care that they corrupt you not. Whatever prosperity also there is according to Christ, and the true love of Christ: if perhaps thou hast gained thy wife, who was of the party of Donatus: if thy sons have been made believers who were pagans: if perhaps thou hast gained thy friend

who wished to draw thee away to the theatres, and thou hast drawn him to the church: if some hostile opponent of thine who was furiously mad against thee, laying aside his fury, has become gentle, and owned God, and now barks at thee no more, but cries with thee against wickedness: these things are pleasant. For what do we rejoice for, if we do not rejoice for these things? Or what other are our joys, but these? But because tribulations also abound, and temptations, and dissensions, and schisms, and other evils, without which this world cannot be, until iniquity pass away: let not that rejoicing make us secure, but let our heart be so made glad, as to fear the name of the Lord, lest it be made glad on one side, be stricken on another. Expect not security in journeying: if ever we wish for it here, it will be the birdlime of the body, not the safety of the man. Let my heart be made glad, so that it may fear Thy name.

17. Ver. 12, 13. I will confess unto Thee, O Lord my God, in my whole heart, and I will glorify Thy name for ever: for great is Thy mercy toward me, and Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell. Do not be angry, brethren, if I do not explain what I have said as though I were certain. For I am a man, and as much as is granted to me concerning the sacred Scriptures, so much I venture to speak: nothing of myself. Hell I have not yet seen, nor have you: and there will be perhaps another way for us, and not through hell. These things are uncertain. But because Scripture, which cannot be gainsaid, says, Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell, we understand that there are as it were two hells, an upper one and a lower one: for how can there be a lower hell, unless because there is also an upper? The one would not be called lower, except by comparison with that upper part. It appears then, my brethren, that there is some heavenly abode of Angels: there is there a life of ineffable joys, there immortality and incorruption, there all things abiding according to the gift and grace of God. That part of the creation is above. If then that is above, but this earthly part, where is flesh and blood, where is corruptibleness, where is nativity and mortality, departure and succession, changeableness and inconstancy, where are fears, desires, horrors, uncertain joys, frail hope, perishable existence; I suppose that all this part cannot be compared with that heaven of which I was just now speaking; if then this part cannot be compared with that, the one is above, the other below. And whither do we

go after death, unless there is a depth deeper than this depth in which we are in the flesh and in this mortal state? For the body is dead, saith the Apostle, because of sin. Therefore even here are the dead; that thou mayest not wonder because it is called hell, if it abounds with the dead. For he saith not, the body is about to die: but, the body is dead. Even now surely our body hath life: and yet compared with that body which is to be like the bodies of Angels, the body of man is found to be dead, although still having life. But again, from this hell, that is from this part of hell, there is another lower, whither the dead go: from whence God would rescue our souls, even sending thither His own Son. For it was on account of these two hells, my brethren, that the Son of God was sent, on all sides setting free. To this hell he was sent by being born, to that by dying. Therefore it is His voice in that Psalm, not according to any man's conjecture, but an Apostle explaining, when he saith, For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell. Therefore it is here also either His voice, Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell: or our voice by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself: for on this account He came even unto hell, that we might not remain in hell.

18. I will mention another opinion also. For perhaps even in hell itself there is some lower part where are thrust the ungodly who have sinned most. For whether in hell there were not some places where Abraham was, we cannot define sufficiently. For not yet had the Lord come to hell that He might rescue from thence the souls of all the saints who had gone before, and yet Abraham was there in repose. And a certain rich man when he was in torments in hell, when he saw Abraham, lifted up his eyes. He could not have seen him by lifting up his eyes, unless the one was above, the other below. And what did Abraham answer unto him, when he said, Father Abraham, send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger and drop it upon my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame? My son, he said, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is at rest, but thou art tormented. And besides this, he said, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that neither can we go to you, nor can any one come from thence to us. Therefore between these two hells, perhaps, in one of which the souls of the just have gotten rest, in the other the souls of the ungodly are tormented, one waiting and praying here, placed here in the body of Christ, and praying

in the voice of Christ, said that God had delivered his soul from the nethermost hell, because He delivered him from such sins as might have been the means of drawing him down to the torments of the nethermost hell. As if a physician were to see an illness threatening thee perhaps from some laborious work, and were to say, Spare thyself, treat thyself thus, rest, use this food; for if thou doest it not thou wilt be sick; and thou, if thou doest so and art made well, sayest rightly to the physician, Thou hast set me free from sickness: not sickness in which thou wast, but in which thou wast likely to be. Some one having a troublesome cause was to be sent to prison: another comes and defends him; what does he say when he thanks him? Thou hast delivered my soul out of prison. A debtor was to be hanged up: his debt is paid; he is said to be delivered from being hanged up. They were not in all these evils: but because they were in such due course towards them, that unless aid had been brought, they would have been in them, they rightly say that they are delivered from thence, whither they were not suffered by their deliverers to be taken. Therefore, brethren, whether it be this or that, consider me to be herein an inquirer into the word of God, not a rash assertor. And thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell.

19. Ver. 14. O God, the transgressors of the law have arisen up against me. Whom calleth he transgressors of of the law? Not the Pagans, who have not received the law: for no one transgresseth that which he hath not received; the Apostle saith clearly, For where there is no law, there is no prevarication. Transgressors of the law he calls ‘prevaricators.’ Whom then do we understand, brethren? If we take this word from our Lord Himself, the transgressors of the law were the Jews. The transgressors of the law rose up against Me: they did not keep the law, and accused Christ as if He transgressed the law. The transgressors of the law rose up against Me. And we know what the Lord suffered. Thinkest thou His Body suffers no such thing now? How can this be? If they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household? The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. The body also suffereth transgressors of the law, and they rise up against the Body of Christ. Who are the transgressors of the law? Do the Jews perchance dare to rise up against Christ? No: for it is not they that cause us much trouble. For they have not yet believed: they have not yet owned their salvation. Against the

Body of Christ bad Christians rise up, from whom the Body of Christ daily suffereth trouble. All schisms, all heresies, all within who live wickedly and engraft their own character on those who live well, and draw them over to their own side, and with evil communications corrupt good manners; these persons transgressing the law rose up against Me. Let every pious soul speak, let every Christian soul speak. That one which suffers not this, let it not speak. But if it is a Christian soul, it knows that it suffers evils: if it owns in itself its own sufferings, let it own herein its own voice; but if it is without suffering, let it also be without the voice; but that it may not be without suffering, let it walk along the narrow way, and begin to live godly in Christ: it must of necessity suffer this persecution. For all, saith the Apostle, who will live godly in Christ, suffer persecution.

O God, the transgressors of the law have risen up against Me, and the synagogue of the powerful have sought after My soul. The synagogue of the powerful is the congregation of the proud. The synagogue of the powerful rose up against the Head, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, crying and saying with one mouth, Crucify Him, crucify Him: of whom it is said, The sons of men, their teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword. They did not strike, but cried: by crying they struck, by crying they crucified Him. The will of those who cried was fulfilled, when the Lord was crucified: And the synagogue of the powerful sought after my soul. And they did not place Thee before their eyes. How did they not place Him before them? They did not know Him God. They should have spared him as Man: what they saw, according to this they should have walked. Suppose that He was not God, He was man: was He therefore to be slain? Spare Him a man, and own Him God.

20. Ver. 15. And Thou, Lord God, art One Who hast compassion and merciful, longsuffering, and very pitiful, and true. Wherefore longsuffering and very pitiful, and One Who hast compassion? Because hanging on the Cross He said: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Whom prayeth He to? for whom doth He pray? Who prayeth? Where prayeth He? The Son prays to the Father, crucified for the ungodly, in the midst of very insults, not of words but of death inflicted, hanging on the Cross; as if for this He had His hands stretched out, that thus He might pray for them, that

His ‘prayer might be directed like incense in the sight of the Father, and the lifting up of His hands like an evening sacrifice. Longsuffering, and very pitiful, and true.

21. Ver. 16. If therefore Thou art true, Look upon me, and have mercy upon me: give power unto Thy servant. Because Thou art true, give power unto Thy servant. Let the time of patience pass away, the time of judgment come. How, give power unto Thy servant? The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. He rising again will come even to earth Himself to judge: He will appear terrible Who appeared despicable. He will shew His power, Who shewed His patience; on the Cross was patience; in the judgment will be power. For He will appear as Man judging, but in glory: because ‘as ye saw Him go,’ said the Angels, ‘so He will come.’ His very form shall come to judgment; therefore the ungodly also shall see Him: for they shall not see the form of God. For blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Appearing in the form of Man, He will say, Go into everlasting fire; that it may be fulfilled which Isaiah said, Let the ungodly man be taken away, that he may not see the glory of the Lord. Let him be taken away, that he may not see the form of God. The form of Man then they shall see. Who when He was in the form of God, equal with God: this the ungodly shall not see. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: this the ungodly shall not see. For if the Word is God, and, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; but the ungodly are impure in heart: beyond doubt they shall not see God. And wherefore is it, They shall look on Him Whom they pierced, except because it appears that they will see the form of Man, that they may be judged, the form of God none will see, but those who shall be separated to the right hand? For when they are separated on the right hand, this shall be said unto them: Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which is prepared for you, from the beginning of the world. But what to the ungodly on the left? Go into everlasting fire, which My Father hath prepared for the devil and his angels. But when the judgment is ended, how did He finish? So the wicked shall go into everlasting burning; but the righteous into life eternal. Then from the sight of the form of Man those shall go on to the sight of the form of God. For this, He saith, is eternal life, that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou

hast sent: thou understandest, Himself also the only true God: because the Father and the Son are One True God: so that is the sense, that they may know Thee, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent, One True God. For they shall not go on to the sight of the Father without therein seeing the Son also. If the Son also were not in the vision of His Father, the Son Himself would not say unto His disciples, that the Son is in the Father, and the Father in the Son. The disciples say to Him: Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. He saith unto them, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have ye not known Me, Philip? he who hath seen Me hath seen the Father. You see that in the vision of the Father there is also the vision of the Son: and in the vision of the Son there is also the vision of the Father. Therefore He adds a consequence, and says; Know ye not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? that is, both in Me seen the Father is seen, and in the Father seen the Son too is seen. The vision of the Father and the Son cannot be separated: where nature and substance is not separated, there vision cannot be separated. For that ye may know that the heart ought to be made ready for that place, to see the Divinity of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, in Which though not seen we believe, and by believing cleanse the heart that there may be able to be sight: the Lord Himself saith in another place, He that hath My commands and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved by My Father: and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him. Did they not see Him, with whom He was talking? They both saw Him, and did not see Him? they saw something, they believed something: they saw Man, they believed in God. But in the Judgment they shall see the same Lord Jesus Christ as Man, together with the wicked: after the Judgment, they shall see God, apart from the wicked. Give power unto Thy servant.

22. And save the Son of Thine handmaid. The Lord is the Son of the handmaid. Of what handmaid? Her who when He was announced as about to be born of her, answered and said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to Thy word. He saved the Son of His handmaid, and His own Son: His own Son, in the Form of God; the Son of His handmaid in the form of a servant. Of the handmaid of God, therefore, the Lord was born in the form of a servant; and He said, Save the Son of Thine handmaid. And He was saved from death, as ye know, His flesh, which was dead,

being raised again. But that ye may see that He is God, and that He was not so raised by the Father as that He was not raised by Himself, ye have it said in the Gospel, that He Himself raised His own flesh; Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it again: and lest we should suspect any other meaning, the Evangelist goes on to say, But this He said concerning the temple of His Body. Therefore the Son of the handmaid was saved. And each several Christian placed in the Body of Christ may say, Save the son of Thine handmaid. Perhaps he cannot say, Give power unto Thy servant: because it was He, the Son, Who received power. Yet wherefore saith He not this also? Was it not said to servants, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel? and the servants say, Know ye not that we shall judge Angels? Each one therefore of the saints receiveth also power, and each several saint is the son of His handmaid. What if he is born of a pagan mother, and has become a Christian? How can the son of a pagan be the son of His handmaid: He is indeed the son of a pagan mother after the flesh, but the son of the Church after the Spirit. And save the son of Thine handmaid.

23. Ver. 17. Shew me a sign for good. What sign, but that of the Resurrection? The Lord says: This wicked and provoking generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so the Son of Man shall be in the heart of the earth. Therefore in our Head a sign has been shewn already for good; each one of us also may say, Shew me a sign for good: because at the last trumpet, at the coming of the Lord, both the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. This will be a sign for good. Shew me a sign for good, that they who hate me may see it, and be ashamed. In the judgment they shall be ashamed unto their destruction, who will not now be ashamed unto their healing. Now therefore let them be ashamed: let them accuse their own ways, let them keep the good way: because none of us liveth without being ashamed, unless he first be ashamed and live anew. Now God grants them the approach of a healthy shame, if they despise not the medicine of confession: but if they will not now be ashamed, then they shall be ashamed, when their iniquities shall convince them to their face. How shall they be ashamed? When they shall say, These are they whom we had sometimes in derision,

and a parable of reproach. We fools counted their life madness: how are they numbered among the children of God! What hath pride profited us? Then shall they say this: let them say it now, and they say it to their health. For let each one turn humbly to God, and now say, What hath my pride profited me? and hear from the Apostle, For what glory had ye in those things of which ye are now ashamed? Ye see that there is even now a wholesome shame while there is a place of penitence: but then one which will be late, useless, fruitless. What hath pride profited us? or what good hath the vaunting of riches brought us? All are passed away like a shadow. What? When thou livedst here, didst thou not see that all those things were passing away like a shadow? Then thou wouldest leave the shadow, and be in the light; nor wouldest thou afterwards say, All things are passed away like a shadow, when thou wert about to go into darkness from the shadow. Shew me a sign for good, that those who hate me may see it, and be ashamed.

24. For Thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me. Hast holpen me, in struggle; and comforted me, in sorrow. For no one seeketh comfort, but he who is in misery. Would ye not be consoled? Say that ye are happy, and ye hear, My people, (now ye answer, and I hear a murmur, as of persons who remember the Scriptures. May God, Who hath written this in your hearts, confirm it in your deeds. Ye see, brethren, that those who say unto you, Ye are happy, seduce you, O My people, they that call you happy cause you to err, and disturb the way of your feet. So also from the Epistle of the Apostle James: Be afflicted, and mourn: let your laughter be turned to mourning. Ye see what ye have heard read: when would such things be said unto us in the land of security? This surely is the land of offences, and temptations, and of all evils, that we may groan here, and deserve to rejoice there; here to be troubled, and there to be comforted, and to say, For Thou hast delivered mine eyes from tears, my feet from falling: I will please the Lord in the land of the living. This is the land of the dead. The land of the dead passeth, the land of the living cometh. In the land of the dead is labour, grief, fear, tribulation, temptation, groaning, sighing: here are false happy ones, true unhappy, because happiness is false, misery is true. But he that owneth himself to be in true misery, will also be in true happiness: and yet now because thou art miserable, hear the Lord saying, Blessed are they that

mourn. O blessed they that mourn! Nothing is so akin to misery as mourning: nothing so remote and contrary to misery as blessedness: Thou speakest of those who mourn, and Thou callest them blessed! Understand, He saith, what I say: I call those who mourn blessed. Wherefore blessed? In hope. Wherefore mourning? In act. For they mourn in this death, in these tribulations, in their wandering: and because they own themselves to be in this misery, and mourn, they are blessed. Wherefore do they mourn? The blessed Cyprian was put to sorrow in his passion: now he is comforted with his crown; now though comforted, he was sad. For our Lord Jesus Christ still intercedeth for us: all the Martyrs who are with Him intercede for us. Their intercessions pass not away, except when our mourning is passed away: but when our mourning shall have passed away, we all with one voice, in one people, in one country, shall receive comfort, thousands of thousands joined with Angels playing upon harps, with choirs of heavenly powers living in one city. Who mourneth there? Who there sigheth? Who there toileth? Who there needeth? Who dieth there? Who there sheweth mercy? Who breaketh bread to the hungry there, where all are satisfied with the bread of righteousness? No one saith unto thee, Receive a stranger; there no one will be a stranger to thee: all live in their own country. No one saith unto thee, Set at one thy friends disputing; in everlasting peace they enjoy the Face of God. No one saith unto thee, Visit the sick; health and immortality abide for ever. No one saith unto thee, Bury the dead; all shall be in everlasting life. Works of mercy stop, because misery is found not. And what shall we do there? Shall we perhaps sleep? If now we fight against ourselves, although we carry about a house of sleep, this flesh of ours, and keep watch with these lights, and this solemn feast gives us a mind to watch; what wakefulness shall that day give unto us! Therefore we shall be awake, we shall not sleep. What shall we do? There will be no works of mercy, because there will be no misery. Perhaps there will be these necessary works which there are here now, of sowing, ploughing, cooking, grinding, weaving? None of these, for there will be no want. Thus there will be no works of mercy, because misery is past away: where there is no want nor misery, there will be neither works of necessity nor of mercy. What will be there? What business shall we have? What action? Will there be no action, because there is rest? Shall we sit there, and be torpid, and do nothing? If our love grow cold, our action will grow cold. How then will that love resting in the face of God, for Whom we now long, for Whom we sigh, how will it inflame us, when we shall have come to Him? He for Whom while as yet we see Him not, we so sigh, how will He enlighten us, when we shall have come to Him? How will He change us? What will He make of us? What then shall we do, brethren? Let the Psalm tell us: Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house. Why? They shall praise Thee for ever and ever. This will be our employment, praise of God. Thou lovest and praisest. Thou wilt cease to praise, if thou cease to love. But thou wilt not cease to love, because He Whom thou seest is such an One as offends thee not by any weariness: He both satisfies thee, and satisfies thee not. What I say is wonderful. If I say that He satisfies thee, I am afraid lest as though satisfied thou shouldest wish to depart, as from a dinner or from a supper. What then do I say? doth He not satisfy thee? I am afraid again, that if I say, He doth not satisfy thee, thou shouldest seem to be in want: and shouldest be as it were empty, and there should be in thee some void which ought to be filled. What then shall I say, except what can be said, but can hardly be thought? He both satisfies thee, and satisfies thee not: for I find both in Scripture. For while He said, Blessed are the hungry, for they shall be filled; it is again said of Wisdom, Those who eat Thee shall hunger again, and those who drink shall thirst again. Nay, but He did not say ‘again,’ but he said, still: for, “shall thirst again” is as if once having been filled he departed and digested, and returned to drink. So it is, Those who eat Thee shall still hunger: thus when they eat they hunger: and those who drink Thee, even thus when drinking, thirst. What is it, to thirst in drinking? Never to grow weary. If then there shall be that ineffable and eternal sweetness, what doth He now seek of us, brethren, but faith unfeigned, firm hope, pure charity? and man may walk in the way which the Lord hath given, may bear troubles, and receive consolations.

PSALM 87

A Discourse to the people, perhaps at Carthage, delivered the day after that on the preceding Psalm.

1. The Psalm which has just been sung is short, if we look to the number of its words, but of deep interest in its thoughts. The whole has been read, and you see in how brief a period it has been exhausted. The consideration of this with you, beloved, so far as God deigns to grant, has just been proposed to me by our blessed father here present: and the proposal from its suddenness might alarm me, did not his prayer who proposed it at once support me. Listen, therefore, beloved. The subject of song and praise in that Psalm is a city, whose citizens are we, as far as we are Christians: whence we are absent, as long as we are mortal: whither we are tending: through whose approaches, undiscoverable among the brakes and thorns that entangle them, the Sovereign of the city made Himself a path for us to reach it. Walking thus in Christ, and pilgrims till we arrive, and sighing as we long for a certain ineffable repose that dwells within that city, a repose of which it is promised, that the eye of man hath never seen such, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into his heart to conceive; let us chant the song of a longing heart: for he who truly longs, thus sings within his soul, though his tongue be silent: he who does not, however he may resound in human ears, is voiceless to God. See what ardent lovers of that city were they by whom these words were composed, by whom they have been handed down to us; with how deep a feeling were they sung by those! A feeling that the love of that city created in them: that love the Spirit of God inspired; the love of God, he saith, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Fervent with this Spirit then, let us listen to what is said of that city.

2. Ver. 1, 2. Her foundations are upon the holy hills. The Psalm had as yet said nothing of the city: it begins thus, and says, Her foundations are upon the holy hills. Whose? There can be no doubt, that foundations, especially among the hills, belong to some city. Thus filled with the Holy Spirit, and

with many thoughts of love and longing for that city, as if after long internal meditation, that citizen bursts out, Her foundations are upon the holy hills; as if he had already said something concerning it. And how could he have said nothing on a subject, respecting which in his heart he had never been silent? For how could her foundations have been written, of which nothing had been said before? But, as I said, after long and silent travailing in contemplation of that city in his mind, crying to God, he bursts out into the ears of men thus: Her foundations are upon the holy hills. And, supposing persons who heard to enquire of what city he spoke, he adds, the Lord loveth the gates of Sion. Behold then, a city whose foundations are upon the holy hills, a city called Sion, whose gates the Lord loveth, as he adds, above all the dwellings of Jacob. But what doth this mean, her foundations on the holy hills? What are the holy hills upon which this city is built? Another citizen tells us this more explicitly, the Apostle Paul: of this was the Prophet a citizen, of this the Apostle citizen: and they spoke to exhort the other citizens. But how are these, I mean the Prophets and Apostles, citizens? Perhaps in this sense; that they are themselves the hills, upon which are the foundations of this city, whose gates the Lord loveth. Let then another citizen state this clearly, that I may not seem to guess. Speaking to the Gentiles, and telling them how they were returning, and being, as it were, framed together into the holy structure, built, he says, upon the foundations of the Apostles and Prophets: and because neither the Apostles nor Prophets, upon whom the foundations of that city rest, could stand by their own power, he adds, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner stone. That the Gentiles, therefore, might not think they had no relation to Sion: for Sion was a certain city of this world, which bore a typical resemblance as a shadow to that Sion of which he presently speaketh, that Heavenly Jerusalem, of which the Apostle saith, which is the mother of us all; that they might not be said to bear no relation to Sion, on the ground that they did not belong to the Jewish people, he addresses them thus: Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. Thou seest the structure of so great a city: yet whereon does all that edifice repose, where does it rest, that it may never fall? Jesus Christ Himself, he saith, being the head corner stone.

3. Perhaps some one will say, if Christ Jesus be the corner stone, in Him the two walls are joined together: for it is only two walls meeting from opposite lines that constitute a corner: just so, the close union of the Jewish and Gentile nations with one another in the peace of Christ, in one faith, one hope, and one love. But if Christ Jesus be the head corner stone, there seems a foundation laid earlier, and a corner stone added later. Some one may say then, that Christ rather rests upon the Prophets and Apostles, not they on Him, if they form the foundation, Himself the corner. But let him who so saith reflect, that there is also a corner in the foundation; and not only where it appears, towering to the top, for it beginneth from the bottom. But that ye may know that Christ is at once the earliest and the highest foundation, the Apostle saith, Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Christ Jesus. How, then, are the Prophets and Apostles foundations, and yet Christ so, than Whom nothing can be higher? How, think you, save that as He is openly styled, Saint of saints, so figuratively Foundation of foundations? Thus if thou art thinking of mysteries, Christ is the Saint of saints: if of a subject flock, the Shepherd of shepherds: if of a structure, the Pillar of pillars. In material edifices, the same stone cannot be above and below: if at the bottom, it cannot be at the top: and vice versâ: for almost all bodies are liable to limitations in space: nor can they be every where or for ever; but as the Godhead is in every place, from every place symbols may be taken for It; and not being any of these things in external properties, It can be every thing in figure. Is Christ a door, in the same sense as the doors we see made by carpenters? Surely not; and yet He said, I am the door. Or a shepherd, in the same capacity as those who guard sheep? though He said, I am the Shepherd. Both these names occur in the same passage: in the Gospel, He said, that the shepherd enters by the door: the words are, I am the good Shepherd; and in the same passage, I am the door: and who is the shepherd who enters by the door? I am the good Shepherd: and what is the door by which Thou, Good Shepherd, enterest? How then art Thou all things? In the sense in which every thing is through Me. To explain: when Paul enters by the door, does not Christ? Wherefore? Not because Paul is Christ: but since Christ is in Paul: and Paul acts through Christ. The Apostle says, Do ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me? When His saints and faithful disciples enter by the door, does not Christ enter by the door? How are we to prove this? Since Saul, not yet called

Paul, was persecuting those very saints, when He called to him from Heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Himself then is the foundation, and corner stone: rising from the bottom: if indeed from the bottom: for the base of this foundation is the highest exaltation of the building: and as the support of bodily fabrics rests upon the ground, that of spiritual structures reposes on high. Were we building up ourselves upon the earth, we should lay our foundation on the lowest level: but since our edifice is a heavenly one, to Heaven our Foundation has gone before us: so that our Saviour, the corner stone, the Apostles, and mighty Prophets, the hills that bear the fabric of the city, constitute a sort of living structure. This building now cries from your hearts; that you may be built up into its fabric, the hand of God, as of an artificer, worketh even through my tongue. Nor was it without a meaning that Noah's ark was made of square beams, which were typical of the form of the Church. For what is it to be made square? Listen to the resemblance of the squared stone: like qualities should the Christian have: for in all his trials he never falls: though pushed, and, as it were, turned over, he falls not: and thus too, whichever way a square stone is turned, it stands erect. The Martyrs, while beneath the stroke, seemed to be falling: but what is the expression in the Canticle? Though (the just) fall, he shall not be cast away: for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand. Thus then build yourselves together into a compact square, ready for every temptation: whatsoever chance to thrust you, let it not overthrow you; whatever befal, let it find thee standing: thus art thou built into this fabric with a devoted piety, an earnest religion, faith, hope, and love: and even to be thus built up, is to walk. In earthly cities, one thing is the structure of buildings: another thing are the citizens that dwell therein: that city is builded of its own inmates, who are themselves the blocks that form the city, for the very stones are living: Ye also, says the Apostle, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, words that are addressed to ourselves. Let us then pursue the contemplation of that city.

4. Her foundations are upon the holy hills: the Lord loveth the gates of Sion. I have made the foregoing remarks, that ye may not imagine the gates are one thing, the foundations another. Why are the Apostles and Prophets foundations? Because their authority is the support of our weakness. Why are they gates? because through them we enter the kingdom of God: for

they proclaim it to us: and while we enter by their means, we enter also through Christ, Himself being the Gate. And twelve gates of Jerusalem are spoken of, and the one gate is Christ, and the twelve gates are Christ: for Christ dwells in the twelve gates, hence was twelve the number of the Apostles. There is a deep mystery in this number of twelve: Ye shall sit, says our Saviour, on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. If there are twelve thrones there, there will be no room for the judgment-seat of Paul, the thirteenth Apostle, though he says that he shall judge not men only, but even Angels; which, but the fallen Angels? Know ye not, that we shall judge Angels, he writes. The world would answer, Why dost thou boast that thou shalt be a judge? Where will be thy throne? Our Lord spoke of twelve thrones for the twelve Apostles: one, Judas, fell, and his place being supplied by Matthias, the number of twelve thrones was made up: first, then, discover room for thy judgment-seat; then threaten that thou wilt judge. Let us, therefore, reflect upon the meaning of the twelve thrones. The expression is typical of a sort of universality, as the Church was destined to prevail throughout the whole world: whence this edifice is styled a building together into Christ: and because judges come from all quarters, the twelve thrones are spoken of, just as the twelve gates, from the entering in from all sides into that city. Not only therefore have those twelve, and the Apostle Paul, a claim to the twelve thrones, but, from the universal signification, all who are to sit in judgment: in the same manner as all who enter the city, enter by one or the other of the twelve gates. There are four quarters of the globe: East, West, North, and South: and they are constantly alluded to in the Scriptures. From all those four winds; our Lord declares in the Gospel that He will call his sheep from the four winds; therefore from all those four winds is the Church called. And how called? On every side it is called in the Trinity: no otherwise is it called than by Baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: four then being thrice taken, twelve are found.

5. Knock, therefore, with all your hearts at these gates: and let Christ cry within you: Open me the gates of righteousness. For He went before us the Head: He follows Himself in His Body. Remember the words of the Apostle, spoken because Christ suffered within himself: That I may fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh. Remark the

words, That I may fill up—what? that which is behind—of what? of the afflictions of Christ—wherein? in my flesh. Were any afflictions wanting in that Man, which the Word of God became, when born of the Virgin Mary? He suffered all that was due from His own will, not by any necessity arising from sin: and it seemeth that He suffered all: for while stretched upon the Cross He received the vinegar at the last, with these words, It is finished; and He bowed His head, and gave up the Ghost. What is the meaning of, It is finished? it means, Of the measure of My sufferings nothing is wanting: all that was prophesied of Me has been fulfilled: as if He was waiting in order that they might be fulfilled. Who is the man who departs as He did from the body? Rather, who is he, who had the power of doing so? He, Who had first said, I have power to lay down My soul, and I have power to take it again: no man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself, and I take it again. He laid it down, when He willed: He took it again, when He willed: no one stole, no one extorted it from Him. All his sufferings, therefore, were fulfilled: but in the Head: those is His body remained still. Now ye are the body and limbs of Christ: so the Apostle, being one of these limbs, used the words, That I may fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh. Thither accordingly, where Christ preceded us, are we on our way: and Christ is still journeying whither He has gone before; for Christ went before us in the Head, Christ follows in the Body: still Christ is here toiling: here Christ suffered at Saul’s hands, when Saul heard the voice, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? So, when the foot is trodden upon, the tongue says, Thou treadest upon me, though no man touched the tongue: it cries out from sympathy, not that it is trodden upon. Still Christ is here in want, Christ here still journeys, Christ here is sick, Christ here is in bonds. In saying this we should wrong Him, had He not told us this truth in His own words, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: and they ask, When saw we Thee an hungred, and fed Thee? and He shall answer, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. Let us therefore build ourselves up in Christ on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Himself being the chief corner stone: For the Lord loveth Sion above all the dwellings of Jacob. But this does not mean that Sion is not among the dwellings of Jacob: where was it, indeed, but in the people of

Jacob? for Jacob was the grandson of Abraham, of whom comes the Jewish nation, thence called the people of Israel, since Jacob himself received the appellation of Israel, as ye well know, holy brethren. But as these were merely temporal dwellings, which were emblems of the other, and the Prophet is speaking of a city which he conceives in a spiritual sense, of which that on this earth was the shadow and figure; he says, The Lord loveth the gates of Sion above all the dwellings of Jacob. He loveth that spiritual city above all figurative emblems of it, which represent it as a city everlasting, eternally in heaven at rest.

6. Ver. 3, 4. Very excellent things are said of thee, thou city of God. He was, as it were, contemplating that city of Jerusalem on earth: for consider what city he alludes to, of which certain very excellent things are spoken. Now the earthly city has been destroyed: after suffering the enemy's rage, it fell to the earth; it is no longer what it was: it exhibited the emblem, and the shadow hath passed away. Whence then are very excellent things spoken of thee, thou city of God? Listen whence; I will think upon Rahab and Babylon, with them that know Me. In that city, the Prophet, in the person of God, says, I will think upon Rahab and Babylon. Rahab belongs not to the Jewish people; Babylon belongs not to the Jewish people; as is clear from the next verse: For the Philistines also, and Tyre, with the Ethiopians, were there. Deservedly then, very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou city of God: for not only is the Jewish nation, born of the flesh of Abraham, included therein, but all nations also, some of which are named that all may be understood. I will think, he says, upon Rahab: who is that harlot? That harlot in Jericho, who received the spies and conducted them out of the city by a different road: who trusted beforehand in the promise, who feared God, who was told to hang out of the window a line of scarlet thread, that is, to bear upon her forehead the sign of the blood of Christ. She was saved there, and thus represented the Church of the Gentiles: whence our Lord said to the haughty Pharisees, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. They go before, because they do violence: they push their way by faith, and to faith a way is made, nor can any resist, since they who are violent take it by force. For it is written, The kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Such was the conduct of the robber, more courageous on the cross

than in the place of ambush. I will think upon Rahab and Babylon. By Babylon is meant the city of this world: as there is one holy city, Jerusalem; one unholy, Babylon: all the unholy belong to Babylon, even as all the holy to Jerusalem. But he slideth from Babylon to Jerusalem. How, but by Him who justifieth the ungodly: Jerusalem is the city of the saints; Babylon of the wicked: but He cometh Who justifleth the ungodly: since it is said, I will think not only upon Rahab, but upon Babylon, but with whom? with them that know Me. For this reason Scripture says somewhere, Pour out thine indignation upon the heathen that have not known Thee, and elsewhere, Continue forth Thy loving-kindness unto them that know Thee. And that ye may be assured that by Rahab and Babylon the Gentiles are meant, if the purport of this verse, I will think upon Rahab and Babylon with them that know Me, be asked, the next explains it, as follows, ‘behold the Philistines also,’ i.e. they too belong to Rahab, belong to Babylon, and they of Tyre. But to what extent are the Gentiles included in this allusion? To the ends of the earth. For He called a people from the ends of the earth: and the people of the Ethiopians, they were there. If then Rahab, and Babylon, and the Philistines, and Tyre, and the people of the Ethiopians, are in that city, deservedly it is said, Very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou city of God.

7. Ver. 5. Listen now to a deep mystery. Rahab is there through Him, through Whom also is Babylon, now no longer Babylon, but beginning to be Jerusalem. The daughter is divided against her mother, and will be among the members of that queen to whom is said, Forget thine own people, and thy father’s house, so shall the king have pleasure in thy beauty. For how could Babylon aspire to Jerusalem? How could Rahab reach those foundations? How could the Philistines, or Tyre, or the people of the Ethiopians? Listen to this verse, “Sion, my mother,” a man shall say. There is then a man who saith this: through whom all those I have mentioned make their approach. Who is this man? It tells if we hear, if we understand. It follows, as if a question had been raised, through whose aid Rahab, Babylon, the Philistines, Tyre, and the Morians, gained an entrance. Behold, through whom they come; Sion, my mother, a man shall say; and a man was born in her, and Himself the Most High hath founded her. What, my brethren, can be clearer? Truly, because very excellent things are spoken of

thee, thou city of God. Lo, Sion, O mother, a man shall say. What man? He who was born in her. It is then the man who was born in her, and He Himself hath founded her. Yet how can He be born in the city which He himself founded? It had already been founded, that therein He might be born. Understand it thus, if thou canst: Mother Sion, he shall say; but it is a man that shall say, Mother Sion; yea, a man was born in her: and yet he hath founded her, (not a man, but,) the Most high. As He created a mother of whom He would be born, so He founded a city in which He would be born. What hope is ours, brethren! On our behalf the Most High, Who founded the city, addresses that city as a mother: and He was born in her, and the Most High hath founded her.

8. Ver. 6. As though it were said, How do ye know this? All of us have sung these Psalms: and Christ, Man for our sake, God before us, sings within us all. But is this much to say, before us, of Him, Who was before heaven and earth and time? He then, born for our sakes a man, in that city, also founded her when He was the Most High. Yet how are we assured of this? The Lord shall rehearse it when He writeth up the people, as the following verse has it. Mother Sion, a man shall say, and a man was born in her, and Himself the Most High hath founded her. The Lord shall declare, when He writeth up the people, and their princes. What princes? Those who were born in her; those princes who, born within her walls, became therein princes: for before they could become princes in her, God chose the despised things of the world to confound the strong. Was the fisherman, the publican, a prince? They were indeed princes: but because they became such in her. Princes of what kind were they? Princes come from Babylon, believing monarchs of this world, came to the city of Rome, as to the head of Babylon: they went not to the temple of the Emperor, but to the tomb of the Fisherman. Whence indeed did they rank as princes? God chose the weak things of the world to confound the strong, and the foolish things He hath chosen, and things which are not as though they were, that things which are may be brought to nought. This He doth Who from the ground raises the helpless, and from the dunghill exalts the poor. For what purpose! That He may set him with the princes, even with the princes of His people. This is a mighty deed, a deep source of pleasure and exultation. Orators came later into that city, but they could never have done so, had not fishermen

preceded them. These things are glorious indeed, but where could they take place, but in that city of God, of whom very excellent things are spoken?

9. Ver. 7. So thus, after drawing together and mingling every source of joyous exultation, how doth he conclude? The dwelling as of all that shall be made joyous is in Thee. As if all made joyous, all rejoicing, shall dwell in that city. Amid our journeyings here we suffer bruises: our last home shall be the home of joy alone. Toil and groans shall perish: prayers pass away, hymns of praise succeed. There shall be the dwelling of the happy; no longer shall there be the groans of those that long, but the gladness of those who enjoy. For He will be present for Whom we sigh: we shall be like Him, as we shall see Him as He is: there it will be our whole task to praise and enjoy the presence of God: and what beyond shall we ask for, when He alone satisfies us, by Whom all things were made? We shall dwell and be dwelt in; and shall be subject to Him, that God may be all in all. Blessed, then, are they that dwell in Thy house. How blessed? Blessed in their gold, and silver, their numerous slaves, and multiplied offspring? Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: for ever and ever they will be praising Thee. Blessed in that sole labour which is rest! Let this then be the one and only object of our desire, my brethren, when we shall have reached this pass. Let us prepare ourselves to rejoice in God: to praise Him. The good works which conduct us thither, will not be needed there. I described, as far as I could, only yesterday, our condition there: works of charity there will be none, where there will be no misery: thou shalt not find one in want, one naked, no one will meet you tormented with thirst, there will be no stranger, no sick to visit, no dead to bury, no disputants to set at peace. What then wilt thou find to do? Shall we plant new vines, plough, traffic, make voyages, to support the necessities of the body? Deep quiet shall be there; all toilsome work, that necessity demands, will cease: the necessity being dead, its works will perish too. What then will be our state? As far as possible, the tongue of a man thus told us. As it were, the dwelling of all who shall be made perfect is in Thee. Why does he say, as it were? Because there shall be such joy there as we know not here. Many pleasures do I behold here, and many rejoice in this world, some in one thing, others in another; but there is nothing to compare with that delight, but it shall be as it were being made joyful. For if I say joyfulness, men at once think of such

joyfulness as men use to have in wine, in feasting, in avarice, and in the world’s distinctions. For men are elated by these things, and mad with a kind of joy: but there is no joy, saith the Lord, unto the wicked. There is a sort of joyfulness which the ear of man hath not heard, nor his eye seen, nor hath it entered into his heart to conceive. As it were, the dwelling of all who shall be made joyful is in Thee. Let us prepare for other delights: for a kind of shadow is what we find here, not the reality: that we may not expect to enjoy such things there as here we delight in: otherwise our self-denial will be avarice. Some persons, when invited to a rich banquet, where there are many and costly dishes yet to come on, abstain from breaking their fast: if you ask the reason, they tell you that they are fasting: which is indeed a great work, a Christian work. Yet be not hasty in praising them: examine their motives: it is their belly, not religion, that they are consulting. That their appetite may not be palled by ordinary dishes, they abstain till more delicate food is set before them. This fast then is for the gullet’s sake. Fasting is undoubtedly important: it fights against the belly and the palate; but sometimes it fights for them. Thus, my brethren, if ye imagine that we shall find any such pleasures in that country to which the heavenly trumpet urges us on, and on that account abstain from present enjoyments, that ye may receive the like more plentifully there, ye imitate those I have described, who fast only for greater feasting, and abstain only for greater indulgence. Do not ye like this: prepare yourselves for a certain ineffable delight: cleanse your hearts fron all earthly and secular affections. We shall see something, the sight of which will make us blessed: and that alone will suffice for us. What then? Shall we not eat? Yes: we shall eat: but that shall be our food, which will ever refresh, and never fail. In Thee is the dwelling of all who shall be, as it were, made joyful. He has already told us how we shall be made joyful. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: for ever and ever they will be praising Thee. Let us praise the Lord as far as we are able, but with mingled lamentations: for while we praise we long for Him, and as yet have Him not. When we have, all our sorrows will be taken from us, and nothing will remain but praise, unmixed and everlasting. Now let us pray.

PSALM 88

Dictated after the exposition of Psalm 41, and perhaps after that of Psalm 68.

The Title of this eighty-seventh Psalm contains a fresh subject for enquiry: the words occurring here, for Melech to respond, being no where else found. We have already given our opinion on the meaning of the titles Psalmus Cantici and Canticum Psalmi: and the words, sons of Core, are constantly repeated, and have often been explained: so also to the end; but what comes next in this title is peculiar. For Melech we may translate into Latin for the chorus, for chorus is the sense of the Hebrew word Melech. What other meaning then can we attach to the words, for the chorus to respond, but this, that the choir is to make responses with the singer? And thus we must suppose that not this only, but other Psalms were chanted, though they have received different titles, probably for the sake of variety to relieve weariness: for this Psalm was not the only one held worthy of choral responses, since it is not the only one which relates to our Lord's Passion. If indeed there is any other reason for so great a variety in the titles, by which it can be shewn that all the Psalms which are distinguished in their titles are so marked, as that the title of no one of them can be fitted to another; I must confess that I could not discover it, though I tried long; and whatever I have read on the subject in the works of my predecessors has not satisfied my hopes, or, perhaps, my slowness of apprehension. I will therefore explain in allusion to what mystery the words, for the choir to respond, that is, that the singer should be answered by a choir, seem to me to be used. The Passion of our Lord is here prophesied. Now the Apostle Peter saith, Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps; this is the meaning of 'to respond.' The Apostle John also saith, As Christ laid down His life for us, so ought we also to lay down our lives for the brethren; this also is to respond. But the choir signifies concord, which consists in charity: whoever therefore in imitation of our Lord's Passion gives up his body to be burnt, if he have not charity, does not answer in the choir, and therefore it profiteth him nothing. Further, as in Latin the terms

Precentor and Succentor are used to denote in music the performer who sings the first part, and him who takes it up; just so in this song of the Passion, Christ going before is followed by the choir of martyrs unto the end of gaining crowns in Heaven. This is sung by the sons of Core, that is, the imitators of Christ's Passion: as Christ was crucified in Calvary, which is the interpretation of the Hebrew word Core. This also is the understanding of Æman the Israelite: words occurring at the end of this title. Æman is said to mean, his brother: for Christ deigns to make those His brethren, who understand the mystery of His Cross, and not only are not ashamed of it, but faithfully glory in it, not praising themselves for their own merits, but grateful for His grace: so that it may be said to each of them, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile, just as holy Scripture says of Israel himself, that he was without guile. Let us therefore now hear the voice of Christ singing before us in prophecy, to whom His own choir should respond either in imitation, or in thanksgiving.

2. Ver. 1. O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before Thee.

Ver. 2. O let my prayer enter into Thy presence, incline Thine ear unto my calling. For even our Lord prayed, not in the form of God, but in the form of a servant; for in this He also suffered. He prayed both in prosperous times, that is, by day, and in calamity, which I imagine is meant by night. The entrance of prayer into God's presence is its acceptance: the inclination of His ear is His compassionate listening to it: for God has not such bodily members as we have. The passage is however, as usual, a repetition: the words, O let my prayer enter into Thy presence, being equivalent to, Incline Thine ear unto my calling.

3. Ver. 3. For my soul is filled with evils, and my life draweth nigh unto hell. Dare we speak of the Soul of Christ as filled with evils, when the passion had strength as far as it had any, only over the body? whence Himself exhorting His brethren to the endurance of suffering, and, as it were, urging his choir to respond, saith, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Can then the soul be filled with evils by the persecutors, though it cannot be killed? if so, we must enquire what sort of evils. It cannot be with vices, through which iniquity prevails over man, that

we can say that Soul was filled: but perhaps with griefs, in which the soul suffers with its own flesh in its suffering: for even what we call bodily pain cannot exist without the soul, but sorrowfulness, which is the pain of the soul only, precedes it when inevitably impending. The soul therefore may feel pain without the body: but without the soul the body cannot. Why therefore should we not say that the Soul of Christ was full of the evils of humanity, though not of human sins? Another Prophet says of Him, that He grieved for us: and the Evangelist says, And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy: and our Lord Himself saith unto them of Himself, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. The Prophet who composed this Psalm, foreseeing that this would happen, introduces Him saying, My soul is full of evils, and My life draweth nigh unto hell. For the very same sense is here expressed in other words, as when He said, My soul is sorrowful, even unto death. The words, ‘My soul is sorrowful,’ are like these, My soul is full of evils: and what follows, “even unto death,” like, my life draweth nigh unto hell. These feelings of human infirmity our Lord took upon Him, as He did the flesh of human infirmity, and the death of human flesh, not by the necessity of his condition, but by the free will of His mercy, that He might transfigure into Himself His own body, which is the Church, (the head of which He deigned to be,) that is, His members in His holy and faithful disciples: that if amid human temptations any one among them happened to be in sorrow and pain, he might not therefore think that he was separated from His favour: that the body, like the chorus following its leader, might learn from its Head, that these sorrows were not sin, but proofs of human weakness. We read of the Apostle Paul, a chief member in this body, and we hear him confessing that his soul was full of such evils, when he says, that he feels great heaviness and continual sorrow in heart for his brethren according to the flesh, who are Israelites. And if we say that our Lord was sorrowful for them also at the approach of His Passion, in which they would incur the most atrocious guilt, I think we shall not speak amiss.

4. Lastly, the very thing said by our Saviour on the Cross, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do, is expressed in this Psalm below,

Ver. 4. I am counted as one of them that go down into the pit: by them who knew not what they were doing, when they imagined that He died like other men, subjected to necessity, and overcome by it. The word pit is used for the depth of woe or of Hell.

5. I have been as a man that hath no help.

Ver. 5. Free among the dead. In these words our Lord's Person is most clearly shewn: for who else is free among the dead but He, Who though in the likeness of sinful flesh is alone among sinners without sin? Hence He saith to those who in their folly deemed themselves free, Every man who committeth sin is the servant of sin: and because through Him Who had no sin it behoved them to be freed from sin, He saith, If the Son hath freed you, then indeed ye shall be free. He therefore, free among the dead, Who had it in His power to lay down His life, and again to take it; from Whom no one could take it, but He laid it down of His own free will; Who could revive His own flesh, as a temple destroyed by them, at His will; Who, when all had forsaken Him on the eve of His Passion, remained not alone, because, as He testifies, His Father forsook Him not; was nevertheless by His enemies, for whom He prayed, who knew not what they did, and said, He saved others, Himself He cannot save; if He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him; He was by them counted as one who hath no help; like unto them that are wounded, and lie in the grave. But he adds, Whom thou dost not yet remember: and in these words there is to be remarked a distinction between Christ and the rest of the dead. For though He was wounded, and when dead laid in the tomb, yet they who knew not what they were doing, or who He was, regarded Him as like others who had perished from their wounds, and who slept in the tomb, who are as yet out of remembrance of God, that is, whose hour of resurrection has not yet arrived. For thus the Scripture speaks of the dead as sleeping, because it wishes them to be regarded as destined to awake, that is, to rise again. But He, wounded and asleep in the tomb, awoke on the third day, and became like a sparrow that sitteth alone on the housetop, that is, on the right hand of His Father in Heaven: and now dieth no more, death shall no more have dominion over Him. Hence He differs widely from those whom God hath not yet remembered to cause their resurrection after this manner: for what was to go before in the Head, was kept for the Body in the end. God is then said to remember, when He does an act: then to forget, when He does it not: for neither can God forget, as He never changes, nor remember, as He can never forget. I am counted then, by those who know not what they do, as a man that hath no help: while I am free among the dead, I am held by these men like unto them that are wounded, and lie in the grave. Yet those very men, who account thus of Me, are further said to be cut away from Thy hand, that is, when I was made so by them, ‘they were cut away from Thy hand;’ they who believed Me destitute of help, are deprived of the help of Thy hand: for they, as he saith in another Psalm, have digged a pit before me, and are fallen into the midst of it themselves. I prefer this interpretation to that which refers the words, they are cut away from Thy hand, to those who sleep in the tomb, whom God hath not yet remembered: since the righteous are among the latter, of whom, even though God hath not yet called them to the resurrection, it is said, that their souls are in the hands of God, that is, that they dwell under the defence of the Most High; and shall abide under the shadow of the God of Heaven. But it is those who are cut away from the hand of God, who believed that Christ was cut off from His hand, and thus accounting Him among the wicked, dared to slay Him.

6. Ver. 6. They laid Me in the lowest pit, that is, the deepest pit. For so it is in the Greek. But what is the lowest pit, but the deepest woe, than which there is none more deep? Whence in another Psalm it is said, Thou broughtest me out also of the pit of misery.

In a place of darkness, and in the shadow of death, whiles they knew not what they did, they laid Him there, thus deeming of Him; they knew not Him Whom none of the princes of this world knew. By the shadow of death, I know not whether the death of the body is to be understood, or that of which it is written, They that walked in darkness and in the land of the shadow of death, a light is risen on them, because by belief they were brought from out of the darkness and death of sin into light and life. Such an one those who knew not what they did thought our Lord, and in their ignorance accounted Him among those, whom He came to help, that they might not be such themselves.

7. Ver. 7. Thy indignation lieth hard upon Me, or, as other copies have it, Thy anger; or, as others, Thy fury: the Greek word θυμὸς having undergone different interpretations. For where the Greek copies have ὀργὴ, no translator hesitated to express it by the Latin ira: but where the word is θυμὸς, most object to rendering it by ira, although many of the authors of the best Latin style, in their translations from Greek philosophy, have thus rendered the word in Latin. But I shall not discuss this matter further: only if I also were to suggest another term, I should think indignation more tolerable than fury, this word in Latin not being applied to persons in their senses. What then does this mean, Thy indignation lieth hard upon Me, except the belief of those, who knew not the Lord of Glory? who imagined that the anger of God was not merely roused, but lay hard upon Him, Whom they dared to bring to death, and not only death, but that kind, which they regarded as the most execrable of all, namely, the death of the Cross: whence saith the Apostle, Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree. On this account, wishing to praise His obedience which He carried to the extreme of humility, he says. He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death; and as this seemed little, he added, even the death of the Cross; and with the same view, as far as I can see, he says in this Psalm, And all thy suspensions, or, as some translate waves, others tossings, Thou hast brought over Me. We also find in another Psalm, All thy suspensions and waves are come in upon Me, or, as some have translated better, have passed over Me: for it is διῆλθον in Greek, not εἰσῆλθον: and where both expressions are employed, waves and suspensions, one cannot be used as equivalent to the other. In that passage we explained suspensions as threatenings, waves as the actual sufferings: both inflicted by God's judgment: but in that place it is said, All have passed over Me, here, Thou hast brought all upon Me. In the other case, that is, although some evils took place, yet, he said, all those which are here mentioned passed over; but in this case, Thou hast brought them upon Me. Evils pass over when they do not touch a man, as things which hang over him, or when they do touch him, as waves. But when he uses the word suspensions, he does not say they passed over, but, Thou hast brought them upon Me, meaning that all which impended had come to pass. All things which were predicted of His

Passion impended, as long as they remained in the prophecies for future fulfilment.

8. Ver. 8. Thou hast put Mine acquaintance far from Me. If we understand by acquaintance those whom He knew, it will be all men; for whom knew He not? But He calls those acquaintance, to whom He was Himself known, as far as they could know Him at that season: at least so far forth as they knew Him to be innocent, although they considered Him only as a man, not as likewise God. Although He might call the righteous whom He approved, acquaintance, as He calls the wicked unknown, to whom He was to say at the end, I know you not. In what follows, and they have set Me for an abhorrence to themselves; those whom He called before acquaintance, may be meant, as even they felt horror at the mode of that death: but it is better referred to those of whom He was speaking above as His persecutors. I was delivered up, and did not get forth. Is this because His disciples were without, while He was being tried within? Or are we to give a deeper meaning to the words, I cannot get forth as signifying, ‘I remained hidden in My secret counsels, I shewed not Who I was, I did not reveal Myself, was not made manifest?’ And so it follows,

Ver. 9. My eyes became weak from want. For what eyes are we to understand? If the eyes of the flesh in which He suffered, we do not read that His eyes became weak from want, that is, from hunger, in His Passion, as is often the case; as He was betrayed after His supper, and crucified on the same day: if the inner eyes, how were they weakened from want, in which there was a light that could never fail? But He meant by His eyes those members in the body, of which He was Himself the head, which, as brighter and more eminent and chief above the rest, He loved. It was of this body that the Apostle was speaking, when he wrote, taking his metaphor from our own body, If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are there many members, yet but one body. The eye cannot say unto the hands, I have no need of you: and if the hand shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? What he wished understood by these words, he has expressed more clearly, by adding, Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. Wherefore as those eyes, that is, the holy Apostles, to whom not flesh and blood, but the Father Which is in Heaven had revealed Him, so that Peter said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God, when they saw Him betrayed, and suffering such evils, saw Him not such as they wished, as He did not come forth, did not manifest Himself in His virtue and power, but still hidden in His secresy, endured every thing as a man overcome and enfeebled, they became weak for want, as if their food, their Light, had been withdrawn from them.

9. He continues, And I have called upon Thee. This indeed He did most clearly, when upon the Cross. But what follows? All the day I have stretched forth My hands unto Thee, must be examined how it must be taken. For if in this expression we understand the tree of the Cross, how can we reconcile it with the whole day? Can He be said to have hung upon the Cross during the whole day, as the night is considered a part of the day? But if day, as opposed to night, was meant by this expression, even of this day, the first and no small portion had passed by at the time of His crucifixion. But if we take ‘day’ in the same sense of time (especially as the word is used in the feminine, a gender which is restricted to that sense in Latin, although not so in Greek, as it is always used in the feminine, which I suppose to be the reason for its translation in the same gender in our own version,) the knot of the question will be drawn tighter: for how can it mean for the whole space of time, if He did not even for one day stretch forth His hands on the Cross? Further, should we take the whole for a part, as Scripture sometimes uses this expression, I do not remember an instance, in which the whole is taken for a part, when the word whole is expressly added. For in the passage of the Gospel where the Lord saith, The Son of Man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, it is no extraordinary licence to take the whole for the part, the expression not being for three whole days and three whole nights: since the one intermediate day was a whole one, the other two were parts, the last being part of the first day, the first part of the last. But if the Cross is not meant here, but the prayer, which we find in the Gospel that He poured forth in the form of a servant to God the Father, where He is said to have prayed long before His Passion, and on the eve of His passion, and also when on the Cross, we do not read any where that He did so throughout the whole day. Therefore by

the stretched out hands throughout the whole day, we may understand the continuation of good works in which He never ceased from exertion.

10. But as His good works profited only the predestined to eternal salvation, and not all men, nor even all those among whom they were done, he adds,

Ver. 10. Dost thou shew wonders among the dead? If we suppose this relates to those whose flesh life has left, great wonders have been wrought among the dead, inasmuch as some of them have revived: and in our Lord’s descent into Hell, and His ascent as the conqueror of death, a great wonder was wrought among the dead. He refers then in these words, Dost Thou shew wonders among the dead? to men so dead in heart, that such great works of Christ could not rouse them to the life of faith: for he does not say that wonders are not shewn to them because they see them not, but because they do not profit them. For, as he says in this passage, the whole day have I stretched forth My hands to Thee: because He ever refers all His works to the will of His Father, constantly declaring that He came to fulfil His Father’s will: so also, as an unbelieving people saw the same works, another Prophet saith, I have spread out my hands all day unto a rebellious people, that believes not, but contradicts. Those then are dead, to whom wonders have not been shewn, not because they saw them not, but since they lived not again through them. The following verse, Shall physicians revive them, and shall they praise Thee? means, that the dead shall not be revived by such means, that they may praise Thee. In the Hebrew there is said to be a different expression: giants being used where physicians are here: but the Septuagint translators, whose authority is such that they may deservedly be said to have interpreted by the inspiration of the Spirit of God owing to their wonderful agreement, conclude, not by mistake, but taking occasion from the resemblance in sound between the Hebrew words expressing these two senses, that the use of the word is an indication of the sense in which the word giants is meant to be taken. For if you suppose the proud meant by giants, of whom the Apostle saith, Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? there is no incongruity in calling them physicians, as if by their own unaided skill they promised the salvation of souls: against whom it is said, Of the Lord is safety. But if we take the word giant in a good sense, as it is said of our Lord, He rejoiceth as a giant to run his course; that is Giant of giants, chief among the greatest and strongest, who in His Church excel in spiritual strength. Just as He is the Mountain of mountains; as it is written, And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be manifested in the top of the mountains: and the Saint of saints: there is no absurdity in styling these same great and mighty men physicians. Whence saith the Apostle, if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. But even such physicians, even though they cure not by their own power, (as not even of their own do those of the body,) yet so far forth as by faithful ministry they assist towards salvation, can cure the living, but not raise the dead: of whom it is said, Dost Thou shew wonders among the dead? For the grace of God, by which men’s minds in a certain manner are brought to live a fresh life, so as to be able to hear the lessons of salvation from any of its ministers whatever, is most hidden and mysterious. This grace is thus spoken of in the Gospel. No man can come to Me, except the Father Which hath sent Me draw him: and a little after this is still more openly repeated: The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life: but there are some of you that believe not. The Evangelist here interposes the remark, that Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him: and joining with this the Lord’s own words, he adds, And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father. He had above said, that there were some of them who believed not: and He adds the last quoted verse as an explanation of the cause of this unbelief: in order to shew, that the very faith by which the soul believes, and springs into fresh life from the death of its former affections, is given us by God. Whatever exertions, then, the best preachers of the word, and persuaders of the truth through miracles, may make with men, just like great physicians: yet if they are dead, and through Thy grace have not a second life, Dost Thou shew wonders among the dead, or shall physicians raise them? and shall they whom they raise praise Thee? For this confession declares that they live: not, as it is written elsewhere, Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not.

11. Ver. 11. Shall one shew Thy lovingkindness in the grave, or Thy faithfulness in destruction? The word shew is of course understood as if

repeated, Shall any shew Thy faithfulness in destruction? Scripture loves to connect lovingkindness and faithfulness, especially in the Psalms. Destruction also is a repetition of the grave, and signifies them who are in the grave, styled above the dead, in the verse, Dost thou shew wonders among the dead? for the body is the grave of the dead soul; whence our Lord's words in the Gospel, Ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

12. Ver. 12. Shall thy wondrous works be known in the dark, and thy righteousness in the land where all things are forgotten? the dark answers to the land of forgetfulness: for the unbelieving are meant by the dark, as the Apostle saith, For ye were sometimes darkness; and the land where all things are forgotten, is the man who has forgotten God; for the unbelieving soul can arrive at darkness so intense, that the fool saith in his heart, There is no God. Thus the meaning of the whole passage may thus be drawn out in its connection: Lord, I have called upon Thee, amid My sufferings; all day I have stretched forth my hands unto Thee, that is, I have never ceased to stretch forth My works to glorify Thee. Why then do the wicked rage against Me, unless because Thou shewest not wonders among the dead? because those wonders move them not to faith, nor can physicians restore them to life that they may praise Thee, because Thy hidden grace works not in them to draw them unto believing: because no man cometh unto Me, but whom Thou hast drawn. Shall then Thy loving kindness be shewed in the grave? that is, the grave of the dead soul, which lies dead beneath the body's weight: or Thy faithfulness in destruction? that is, in such a death as cannot believe or feel any of these things. For how then in the darkness of this death, that is, in the man who in forgetting Thee has lost the light of his life, shall Thy wondrous works and Thy righteousness be known.

13. But a question occurs as to what may be the use of these dead ones, what may be the advantage imparted by the Almighty to the body of Christ, that is, the Church, by means of these; namely, that in them may be displayed the grace of God towards the predestined who are called according to His purpose. Of this it is that in a former Psalm the Church

exclaims, My God, His mercy shall prevent me; and God shall shew unto me in mine enemies; and so it goes on here in the next verse, and says, Unto Thee I also have cried, O Lord: in which we must suppose our Lord speaking in the words of the Church, His own body; for what means, I also, but that we also were at one time the children of wrath naturally, like the rest. But, unto Thee have I cried, that I might be saved. For who distinguishes me from other children of wrath, when I hear the Apostle’s terrible reproof of the ungrateful; For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Salvation is the Lord’s: for there is no giant that can be saved by the greatness of his strength: but as it is written, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. How then shall they call upon Him in Whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things? They are the physicians who heal the man wounded by the thieves: but it is the Lord Who brought him to the inn: they themselves are the labourers in the Lord’s vineyard: but yet he who plants, and he who waters, is nought, but the Lord Who giveth the increase. Thus then I too have cried unto the Lord, that is, I have invoked the help of God for my salvation. But how could I invoke, unless I believed? how could I believe, did I not hear? But He it was Who drew me to believe what I heard; for it was not any chance physician that aroused me to life from the death of the soul, but He Himself working in secret. For many have heard; Since their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words into the ends of the world: but, All men have not faith: and, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And then I could not even have believed, had not the lovingkindness of God prevented me; and, because He calls the dead to life, and calls things that are not as things that are, by calling me in secret ways, by moving me, and drawing me to Him, had brought me at last to the light of faith. He therefore says, And early shall my prayers prevent Thee. It is morning, when the night and darkness of infidelity have passed away. Thy lovingkindness hath prevented me, that this morning might dawn upon me: but as that day of light is still to come, when the hidden things of darkness shall be revealed, and the thoughts of the heart be made manifest, and every one shall have praise of Thee: yet now in this life, in this wandering, in this light of faith, which compared with the darkness of infidelity seems already day, but compared with the day, when we shall see Him face unto face, is still night, shall my prayer prevent Thee.

14. Ver. 13. But that those prayers, the blessings of which surpass all words, may be more fervent and more constant, the gift that shall last unto eternity is deferred, while transitory evils are allowed to thicken. And so it follows;

Ver. 14. Lord, why hast Thou cast off my prayer? which may be compared with another Psalm; My God, My God, look upon me; why hast Thou forsaken me? The reason is made matter of question, not as if the wisdom of God were blamed as doing so without a cause; and so here. Lord, why hast Thou cast off my prayer? But if this cause be attended to carefully, it will be found indicated above; for it is with the view that the prayers of the Saints are, as it were, repelled by the delay of so great a blessing, and by the adversity they encounter in the troubles of life, that the flame, thus fanned, may burst into a brighter blaze.

15. For this purpose he briefly sketches in what follows the troubles of Christ's body. For it is not in the Head alone that they took place, since it is said to Saul too, Why persecutest thou Me? and Paul himself, as if placed as an elect member in the same body, saith, "That I may fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh." Why then, Lord, hast Thou cast off my soul? why hidest Thou Thy face from me?

Ver. 15. I am poor, and in toils from my youth up: and when lifted up, I was thrown down, and troubled.

Ver. 16. Thy wraths went over me: Thy terrors disturbed me.

Ver. 17. They came round about me all day like water: they compassed me about together.

Ver. 18. A friend Thou hast put far from me: and mine acquaintance from my misery. All these evils have taken place, and are happening in the limbs of Christ's body, and God turns away His face from their prayers, by not hearing as to what they wish for, since they know not that the fulfilment of their wishes would not be good for them. The Church is poor, as she hungers and thirsts in her wanderings for that food with which she shall be filled in her own country: she is in toils from her youth up, as the very Body of Christ saith in another Psalm, Many a time have they overcome me from my youth. And for this reason some of her members are lifted up even in this world, that in them may be the greater lowliness. Over that Body, which constitutes the unity of the Saints and the faithful, whose Head is Christ, go the wraths of God: yet abide not: since it is of the unbelieving only that it is written, that the wrath of God abideth upon him. The terrors of God disturb the weakness of the faithful, because all that can happen, even though it actually happen not, it is prudent to fear; and sometimes these terrors so agitate the reflecting soul with the evils impending around, that they seem to flow around us on every side like water, and to encircle us in our fears. And as the Church while on pilgrimage is never free from these evils, happening as they do at one moment in one of her limbs, at another in another, he adds, all day, signifying the continuation in time, to the end of this world. Often too, friends and acquaintances, their worldly interests at stake, in their terror forsake the Saints; of which saith the Apostle, all men forsook me: may it not be laid to their charge. But to what purpose is all this, but that early in the morning, that is, after the night of unbelief, the prayers of this holy Body may in the light of faith prevent God, until the coming of that salvation, which we are at present saved by hoping for, not by having, while we await it with patience and faithfulness. Then the Lord will not repel our prayers, as there will no longer be any thing to be sought for, but every thing that has been rightly asked, will be obtained: nor will He turn His face away from us, since we shall see Him as He is: nor shall we be poor, because God will be our abundance, all in all: nor shall we suffer, as there will be no more weakness: nor after exaltation shall we meet with humiliation and confusion, as there will be no adversity there: nor bear even the transient wrath of God, as we shall abide in His abiding love: nor will His terrors agitate us, because His promises realized will bless us: nor will our friend and acquaintance, being terrified, be far from us, where there will be no foe to dread.

PSALM 89

sermon i. on the first part of the psalm

Delivered in the morning, on the festival of some Martyrs.

1. Understand, beloved, this Psalm, which I am about to explain, by the grace of God, of our hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and be of good cheer, because He Who promised, will fulfil all, as He has fulfilled much: for it is not our own merit, but His mercy, that gives us confidence in Him. He Himself is meant, in my belief, by the understanding of Æthan the Israelite: which has given this Psalm its title. You see then, who is meant by Æthan: but the meaning of the word is strong. No man in this world is strong, except in the hope of God's promises: for as to our own deservings, we are weak, in His mercy we are strong. Weak then in himself, strong in God's mercy, the Psalmist thus begins.

2. I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, for ever: with my mouth will I make known Thy truth unto all generations.

Let my limbs, he saith, serve the Lord: I speak, but it is of Thine I speak. With my mouth will I make known Thy truth: if I obey not Thee, I am not Thy servant: if I speak on my own part, I am a liar. To speak then from Thee, and in my own person, are two things: one mine, one Thine: Truth Thine, language mine. Let us hear then what faithfulness he maketh known, what mercies he singeth.

3. (2.) For Thou hast said, Mercy shall be built up for ever. It is this that I sing: this is Thy truth, for the making known of which my mouth serveth. In such wise Thou sayest, I build, as not to destroy: for some Thou destroyest and buildest not; and some whom Thou destroyest Thou dost rebuild. For unless there were some who were destroyed to be rebuilt, Jeremiah would not have written, See, I have this day set thee to throw down and to build. And indeed all who formerly worshipped images and stones could not be built up in Christ, without being destroyed as to their old error. While,

unless some were destroyed not to be built up, it would not be written, He shall destroy them, and not build them up. On their account therefore who are destroyed and built up, that they might not conceive their being built up merely temporary, as the previous ruin was in which they were destroyed, the Psalmist, through whose mouth is made known the truth of God, held to the truth. Therefore will I make it known, therefore do I declare it, because Thou hast said: I that am man declare it in full confidence, for Thou God hast said: for even if I wavered in my own words, in Thine should I be confirmed. What saidst Thou? Mercy shall be built up for ever: Thy truth shalt Thou establish in the very Heavens. As He had said in the former place, I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, for ever: with my mouth will I make known Thy truth to all generations. In what follows, he joins these two words, mercy and faithfulness; For Thou hast said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: Thy truth shall be established in the Heavens: in which mercy and truth are repeated, for all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth, for truth in the fulfilment of promises could not be shewn, unless mercy in the remission of sins preceded. Next, as many things were promised in prophecy even to the people of Israel that came according to the flesh from the seed of Abraham, and that people was increased that the promises of God might be fulfilled in it; while yet God did not close the fountain of His goodness even to the Gentiles, whom He had placed under the rule of the Angels, while He reserved the people of Israel as His own portion: the Apostle expressly mentions the Lord’s mercy and truth as referring to these two parties. For he calls Christ a minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. See how God deceived not; see how He cast not off His people, whom He foreknew. For while the Apostle is treating of the fall of the Jews, to prevent any from believing them so far disowned of God, that no wheat from that floor’s fanning could reach the granary, he saith, God hath not cast away His people, whom He foreknew; for I also am an Israelite. If all that nation are thorns, how am I who speak unto you wheat? So that the truth of God was fulfilled in those Israelites who believed, and one wall from the circumcision is thus brought to meet the corner stone. But this stone would not form a corner, unless it received another wall from the Gentiles: so that the former wall relates in a special manner to the truth, the latter to the mercy of God. Now I say, says the Apostle, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promise made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy. Justly then is it added, Thy truth shalt Thou stablish in the Heavens: for all those Israelites who were called to be Apostles became as Heavens which declare the glory of God: as it is written by them, The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handywork. To assure you that this is the meaning of the Heavens, it is more expressly added, There is neither speech nor language, whereof their voices are not heard. If you ask, whose voices? there is nothing to refer it to but the Heavens. If therefore those whose voice is heard in all languages are the Apostles, it is also of them that it is said, Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words into the ends of the world. Since, although they were taken up from hence before the Church filled the whole world, yet as their words reached to the ends of the world, we are right in supposing this which we have just read, Thy truth shalt Thou stablish in the Heavens, fulfilled in them.

4. Ver. 3. I have made a covenant with My chosen. ‘Thou hast said,’ you understand, is to be carried on: Thou hast said, I have made a covenant with My chosen. What covenant, but the new, by which we are renewed to a fresh inheritance, in our longing desire and love of which we sing a new song. I have made a covenant with My chosen, saith the Psalmist: I have sworn unto David My servant. How confidently does he speak, who understands, whose mouth serves truth! I speak without fear; since Thou hast said. If Thou makest me fearless, because Thou hast said, how much more so dost Thou make me, when Thou hast sworn! For the oath of God is the assurance of a promise. Man is justly forbidden to swear: lest by the habit of swearing, since a man may be deceived, he fall into perjury. God alone swears securely, because He alone is infallible.

5. Let us see then what God hath sworn. (Ver. 4.) I have sworn, He saith, to David My servant; thy seed will I establish for ever. But what is the seed of David, but that of Abraham. And what is the seed of Abraham? And to thy seed, He saith, which is Christ. But perhaps that Christ, the Head of the Church, the Saviour of the body, is the seed of Abraham, and therefore of David; but we are not Abraham’s seed? We are assuredly; as the Apostle saith, And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs

according to the promise. In this sense, then, let us take the words, brethren, Thy seed will I stablish for ever, not only of that Flesh of Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, but also of all of us who believe in Christ, for we are limbs of that Head. This body cannot be deprived of its Head: if the Head is in glory for ever, so are the limbs, so that Christ remains entire for ever. Thy seed will I stablish for ever: and set up thy throne to generation and generation. We suppose he saith, for ever, because it is to generation and generation: since he has said above, with my mouth will I ever be shewing Thy truth to generation and generation. What is ‘to generation and generation?’ To every generation: for the word needed not as many repetitions, as the coming and passing away of the several generations. The multiplication of generations is signified and set forth to notice by the repetition. Are possibly two generations to be understood, as ye are aware, my beloved brethren, and as I have before explained? for there is now a generation of flesh and blood: there will be a future generation in the resurrection of the dead. Christ is proclaimed here: He will be proclaimed there: here He is proclaimed, that He may be believed in: there, He will be welcomed, that He may be seen. I will set up Thy throne from one generation to another. Christ hath now a throne in us, His throne is set up in us: for unless he sate enthroned within us, He would not rule us: but if we were not ruled by Him, we should be thrown down by ourselves. He therefore sits within us, reigning over us: He sits also in another generation, which will come from the resurrection of the dead. Christ will reign for ever over His Saints. God has promised this; He hath said it: if this is not enough, God hath sworn it. As then the promise is certain, not on account of our deservings, but of His pity, no one ought to be afraid in proclaiming that which he cannot doubt of. Let that strength then inspire our hearts, whence Ætham received his name, ‘strong in heart:’ let us preach the truth of God, the utterance of God, His promises, His oath; and let us, strengthened on every side by these means, glorify God, and by bearing Him along with us, become Heavens.

6. Ver. 5. O Lord, the very Heavens shall praise Thy wondrous works. The Heavens will not praise their own merits, but thy wondrous works, O Lord. For in every act of mercy on the lost, of justification of the unrighteous, what do we praise but the wondrous works of God? Thou praisest Him, because the dead have risen: praise Him yet more, because the lost are

redeemed. What grace, what mercy of God! Thou seest a man yesterday a whirlpool of drunkenness, to-day an ornament of sobriety: a man yesterday the sink of luxury, to day the beauty of temperance: yesterday a blasphemer of God, to-day His praiser: yesterday the slave of the creature, to-day the worshipper of the Creator. From all these desperate states men are thus converted: let them not look at their own merits: let them become Heavens, and praise the wondrous works of Him by Whom they were made Heavens. For "I will consider," he saith, "Thy Heavens, even the works of Thy fingers." O Lord, the very Heavens shall praise Thy wondrous works! And that you may understand who the Heavens are, let us see what follows: and Thy truth in the congregation of the Saints. There can therefore be no doubt, that by the Heavens are meant the preachers of the word of truth, and where will the Heavens praise Thy wondrous works, and Thy truth? In the congregation of the Saints. May the Church receive the dew of the Heavens: may the Heavens rain upon the parched soil, and may the earth as it receives the rain give birth to fruitful blossoms, good works: may it not give thorns for genial rain, and thus expect the fire instead of the barn! The very Heavens shall praise Thy wondrous works, O Lord: and Thy truth in the congregation of the Saints. The Heavens shall then praise Thy wondrous works, and Thy truth. All that the Heavens proclaim is of Thee, and from Thee: and therefore they preach fearlessly: for they know Whom they preach of, since they cannot blush for Him of Whom they preach.

7. What do the Heavens preach? What shall they praise in the congregation of the saints?

Ver. 6. For who is he among the clouds, who shall be compared unto Thee, Lord! Is this to be the praise of the Heavens, is this to be their rain? What? are the preachers confident, because none among the clouds shall be compared unto the Lord? Does it appear to you, brethren, a high ground of praise, that the clouds cannot be compared with their Creator? If it is taken in its literal, not in its mystical meaning, it is not so: what? are the stars that are above the clouds to be compared with the Lord? what? can the Sun, Moon, Angels, Heavens, be even compared with the Lord? Why is it then that he says, as if he meant some high praise, For who is he among the clouds, that shall be compared unto the Lord? We understand, my brethren, those clouds, as the Heavens, to be the preachers of truth; Prophets, Apostles, the announcers of the word of God; for that all these kinds of preachers are called clouds we learn from that prophecy, where God in His anger against His vineyard said, I will command the clouds that they rain no shower upon it: and the meaning of this vine the prophet explains most clearly in the following verse, for the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel. That you may not understand the vineyard otherwise, and missing the men who are signified by it, think of the earth; The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, he says, is the house of Israel. Let the house of Israel understand that she and no other is My vineyard: that it is she who has given Me thorns instead of grapes, she who has become ungrateful to her Planter and Cultivator, ungrateful to Him that watered her. If then the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, what said He in His anger? I will command the clouds that they rain no more upon it. And so indeed He did: the Apostles were sent like clouds to rain upon the Jews, and when they rejected the word of God, because they yielded thorns for grapes, the Apostles said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. From that time the clouds ceased to pour rain upon that vineyard. If therefore the clouds are the preachers of the truth, let us first enquire why they are clouds. For the same men are Heavens and clouds: Heavens from the brightness of the truth, clouds from the hidden things of the flesh: for all clouds are obscure, owing to their mortality: and they come and go. It is on account of these very obscurities of the flesh, that is, of the clouds, that the Apostle saith, Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness. You see at this moment what a man is saying; but what he has in his heart, you cannot see: what is forced from the cloud, you see, what is kept within the cloud, you see not. For whose eyes pierce the cloud? The clouds therefore are the preachers of the truth in the flesh. The Creator of all things Himself came in the flesh. But who is he among the clouds, who shall be compared unto the Lord? and what is he among the sons of God, that shall be like unto the Lord? No one then among the sons of God shall be like unto the Lord. He Himself is called the Son of God, and we are called the sons of God: but who among the sons of God will be like unto the Lord? He is the only Son, we are many: He is one, we in Him are one: He is born, we are adopted: He is the Son begotten from everlasting according to nature: we are made so in time through grace: He without any sin, we freed from sin by Him. Who, then, among the clouds shall be compared unto the Lord? or what is he among the sons of God, that shall be like unto the Lord? We are called clouds on account of the flesh, and we are preachers of the truth on account of the showers of the clouds: but our flesh comes in one way, His by another. We too are called sons of God, but He is the Son of God in another sense. His cloud comes from a Virgin, He is the Son from eternity, co-eternal with the Father. Who is he then among the clouds, that shall be compared unto the Lord? and what is he among the sons of God, that shall be like unto the Lord? Let the Lord Himself say whether He can find one like unto Himself. Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? Because I appear, because I am seen, because I walk among you, and perhaps at present I am become common; say, whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? Surely when they see a son of man, they see a cloud; but say, Whom do men say that I am? In answer they gave Him the reports of men; Some say that Thou art John the Baptist: some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. Many clouds and sons of God are here mentioned: for because they were righteous and holy, as the sons of God, Jeremias, Elias, and John, are called also sons of God: in their character of preachers of God, they are styled clouds. Ye have said what clouds men imagine Me to be: do ye too say, Whom say ye that I am? Peter replying in behalf of all, one for those who were one, answered, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

For who is he among the clouds that shall be compared unto the Lord? and what is he among the sons of God, that shall be like unto the Lord? “Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God;” not like those sons of God who are not made equal to Thee: Thou hast come in the flesh: but not as the clouds, who are not to be compared unto Thee.

8. For Who art Thou, to Whom it is answered, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God: Whom other men not righteous, not holy, supposed he be one of the Prophets, either Elias, or Jeremias, or John the Baptist; Who then art Thou? Hear what follows: (ver. 7.) God is very greatly to be feared in the counsel of the righteous. Who then is he among the clouds, that shall be

compared unto the Lord? or what is he among the sons of God, that shall be like unto the Lord, since that God is very greatly to be feared in the counsel of the righteous? Since they cannot be equal unto Him, let it be their counsel to believe in Him; as they who are clouds and sons of God cannot be His equals, this act of wisdom is left to human weakness, that he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. God is very greatly to be feared in the counsel of the righteous, and to be had in dread of all them that are round about Him. God is every where; who therefore are round about Him, Who is every where? For if He has some round about Him, He is represented as finite on every side. Moreover, if it is truly said to God and of God, of His greatness there is no end; who remain, who are round about Him, except because He Who is every where, chose to be born of the flesh on one spot, to dwell among one nation, in one place to be crucified, from one spot to rise again and ascend into Heaven. Where He did this, the Gentiles are round about Him. If He remained where He did these things, He would not be great, and be had in dread of all them that are round about Him; but since He preached when there in such a manner as to send preachers of His own name through all nations over the whole world; by working miracles among his servants, he is become great, and to be had in dread of all them that are round about Him.

9. Ver. 8. O Lord God of Hosts, who is like unto Thee? Thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side. Great is Thy power: Thou hast made Heaven and earth, and all things that in them are: but greater still is thy loving-kindness, which has shewn forth Thy truth to all around Thee. For if Thou hadst been preached only on the spot where Thou didst deign to be born, to suffer, to rise again, to ascend; the truth of that promise of God would have been fulfilled, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: but the promise, that the Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy, would not have been fulfilled, had not that truth been explained, and diffused to those around Thee from the spot where Thou didst deign to appear. On that spot Thou didst thunder out of Thy own Cloud: but to scatter rain upon the Gentiles round about, Thou hast sent other clouds. Truly in Thy power hast Thou fulfilled what Thou hast said, “Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven.” Thy truth, most mighty Lord, is on every side.

10. But when Thy truth began to be preached on every side, the heathen furiously raged together, and the people imagined a vain thing: the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed. Verily, when Thy truth had begun to be preached in Thy circuit, as if Thou wert coming to marry a wife among the alien-born, the roaring lion meets Thee, and is strangled by Thee. For this was prefigured in Samson: and you, my brethren, would not have applauded these words of mine, before I mentioned Samson by name, unless ye recognised the type; for ye have heard, like men accustomed to the watering of the clouds of God, Thy truth then is in the circuit of Thee. But when without persecutions, when without opposition, since it is said, that He was born for a sign which shall be spoken against? Since then that nation, where Thou didst deign to be born, and to dwell, was as a land separated from the waves of the heathen, so that it appeared dry and ready for watering with rain, while the rest of the nations were as a sea in the bitterness of their sterility; what do Thy preachers who scatter Thy truth in circuit of Thee, when the waves of that sea rage furiously? (Ver. 9.) Thou rulest the power of the sea. For what was the result of the sea raging thus, but the day which we are now keeping holy? It slew Martyrs, scattered seeds of blood, the harvest of the Church sprang up. Safely then let the clouds go forth: let them diffuse Thy truth in circuit of Thee, let them not fear the savage waves. Thou rulest the power of the sea. The sea swells, buffets, and roars: but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted beyond what ye are able: and so, Thou stillest the waves thereof when they rise.

11. Lastly, what hast Thou done in the sea itself, to pacify its rage, and to weaken it? (Ver. 10.) Thou hast humbled the proud as one that is wounded. There is a certain proud serpent in the sea, of which another passage of Scripture speaks, I will command the serpent, and he shall bite him; and again, There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast made to mock him, whose head He bruises above the water. Thou, he says, hast humbled the proud, as one that is wounded. Thou hast humbled thyself, and the proud was humbled: for the proud held the proud ones through pride: but the great one is humbled, and by believing in Him become small. While the little one is nourished by the example of one who from greatness descended to humility, the devil has lost what he held: because the proud held only the proud.

When such an example of humility was displayed before them, men learned to condemn their own pride, and to imitate the humility of God. Thus also the devil, by losing those whom he had in his power, has even himself been humbled; not chastened, but thrown prostrate. Thou hast humbled the proud like one that is wounded. Thou hast been humbled, and hast humbled others: thou hast been wounded, and hast wounded others: for Thy blood, as it was shed to blot out the handwriting of sins, could not but wound him. For what was the ground of his pride, except the bond which he held against us. This bond, this handwriting Thou hast blotted out with Thy blood: him therefore hast Thou wounded, from whom Thou hast rescued so many victims. You must understand the devil wounded, not by the piercing of the flesh, which he has not, but by the bruising of his proud heart. Thou hast scattered Thine enemies abroad with Thy mighty arm.

12. Ver. 11. The heavens are Thine, the earth also is Thine. From Thee, over Thy earth, they rain. Thine are the heavens, by whom is preached Thy truth in circuit of Thee; Thine is the earth, which has received Thy truth in circuit of Thee; and what has resulted from that rain? Thou hast laid the foundation of the round world, and all that therein is. (Ver. 12.) Thou hast created the north and the seas. For nothing has any power against Thee, against its Creator. The world indeed may rage through its own malice, and the perversity of its will; does it nevertheless pass over the bound laid down by the Creator, Who made all things? Why then do I fear the north wind? Why do I fear the seas? In the north indeed is the devil, who said, I will sit in the sides of the north; I will be like the Most High; but Thou hast humbled, as one wounded, the proud one. Thus what Thou hast done in them has more force for Thy dominion, than their own will has for their wickedness. Thou hast created the north and the seas.

13. Thabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name. Those mountains are here understood, but they have a meaning. Thabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name. Thabor, when interpreted, signifies an approaching light. But whence comes the light of which it is said, Ye are the light of the world, unless from Him concerning Whom it is written, That was the true light, which lighteth every man coming into the world? The light then which is the light of the world comes from that light which is not kindled from any

other source, so that there is no fear lest it be extinguished. The light then comes from Him, Who is that candle Which is not set beneath the bushel, but on a candlestick, Thabor the coming light. Hermon means his curse. Justly the light comes and is made the curse of him. Of whom but the devil, the wounded one, the proud one? Our illumination then is given from Thee; that he is held accursed of us, who kept us in his own error and pride, is from Thee. Thabor and Hermon, therefore, shall rejoice, not in their own merits, but in Thy name. For they shall say, Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name give the praise, on account of the raging sea: lest the heathen say, Where is now their God?

14. Ver. 13. Thou hast a mighty arm. Let no man arrogate any thing to himself. Thou hast a mighty arm: by Thee we were created, by Thee we have been defended. Thou hast a mighty arm: strong be Thy hand, and high be Thy right hand.

15. Ver. 14. Righteousness and judgment are the preparation of Thy seat. Thy righteousness and judgment will appear in the end: they are now hidden. Of thy righteousness it is treated in another Psalm, “on the hidden things of the Son.” There will then be a manifestation of Thy righteousness and judgment: some will be set on the right, others on the left hand: and the unbelieving will tremble, when they see what now they mock at, and believe not: the righteous will rejoice, when they shall see what they now see not, yet believe. Righteousness and judgment are the preparation of Thy seat: especially in the Day of Judgment. What then now? mercy and truth go before Thy face. I should fear the preparation of Thy seat, Thy justice, and Thy coming judgment, did not mercy and truth go before Thee: why should I at the end fear Thy righteousness, when with Thy mercy going before Thee Thou blottest out my sins, and by shewing forth Thy truth fulfillest Thy promises? Mercy and truth go before Thy face. For all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth.

16. In all these things shall we not rejoice? or shall we contain our joy? or shall words suffice for our gladness? or shall the tongue be able to express our rejoicing? If therefore no words suffice, (ver. 15.) Blessed is the people, O Lord, that knoweth glad shouting. O blessed people! dost thou conceive aright, dost thou understand, glad shouting? For except thou understand

glad shouting, thou canst not be blessed. What do I mean by understanding glad shouting? Whether thou knowest the source of that rejoicing which is beyond words to express. For this joy is not of thyself, since he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. Rejoice not then in thy own pride, but in God's grace. See that that grace is such, that the tongue fails to express its greatness, and then thou understandest glad shouting.

17. Finally, if thou hast understood the jubilant rejoicing in grace, hear the praise of that grace. Blessed indeed is the people, that knoweth glad shouting. See if this joy be not entirely of grace, of God, and not of thyself. They shall walk in the light of Thy countenance, O Lord. That Thabor, the coming light, if he walk not in the light of Thy countenance, is extinguished as a candle by the blast of pride. O Lord, they shall walk in the light of Thy countenance. (Ver. 16.) They shall rejoice in Thy name all the day. That Thabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name: all day shall they rejoice, if they will, in Thy name; but if they will rejoice in their own name, they shall not rejoice all day: for they shall not continue in their joy, when they shall delight in themselves, and fall through pride. That they may rejoice all day, therefore, they shall rejoice in Thy name, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted. Not in their own, but in Thine: lest they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For some are noted by the Apostle, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own, and not rejoicing in Thy light, and thus not submitting themselves unto the righteousness of God. And why? because they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. But the people who knoweth glad shouting, (for the former err from want of knowledge, but blessed is the people not that knoweth not, but that knoweth glad shouting,) whence ought it to shout, whence to rejoice, but in Thy name, walking in the light of Thy countenance? And it shall deserve to be exalted, but in Thy righteousness: let every man take away altogether his own righteousness, and be humbled: the righteousness of God shall come, and he shall be exalted, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

18. Ver. 17. For Thou art the glory of their strength: and in Thy good pleasure Thou shalt lift up our horns: because it has seemed good to Thee,

not because we are worthy.

19. Ver. 18. For of the Lord is our taking up. For I was moved like a heap of sand, that I might fall; and I should have fallen, had not the Lord taken me up. For of the Lord is (our) taking up; and of the Holy One of Israel our King. Himself is thy taking up, himself thy illumination: in His light thou art safe, in His light thou walkest, in His righteousness thou art exalted. He took thee up, He guards thy weakness: He gives thee strength of Himself, not of thyself.

20. Ver. 19. Thou spakest sometime in vision unto Thy sons, and saidst. Thou spakest in Thy vision. Thou didst reveal this to Thy Prophets. For this reason Thou spakest in vision, that is, in revelation: whence Prophets were called seers. They saw something within, which they were to speak without: and secretly they heard what they preached openly. Then Thou spakest in vision unto Thy sons, and saidst, I have laid help upon One that is mighty. Ye understand Who is meant by mighty? I have exalted One chosen out of the people. And Who is meant by chosen? One Who, ye rejoice, is already exalted.

21. Ver. 20. I have found David My servant: that David from David’s seed: with My holy oil have I anointed Him: for it is said of Him, God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.

22. Ver. 21. My hand shall hold Him fast, and My arm shall strengthen Him: because there was a taking up of man; because flesh was assumed in the Virgin’s womb, because by Him Who in the form of God is coequal with the Father, the form of a servant was taken, and He became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.

23. Ver. 22. The enemy shall not be able to do Him violence. The enemy rages indeed: but he shall not be able to do Him violence: he is wont to hurt, but he shall not hurt. How then shall he afflict Him? he will exercise Him, but he shall not hurt Him. There shall be profit in his raging; for those against whom he rages shall be crowned in their conquering. For how is he conquered, if he rages not against us? or where is God our helper, if we fight not? The enemy therefore shall do what is in his power; but he shall

not be able to do Him violence: the son of wickedness shall not come nigh to hurt Him.

24. Ver. 23. I will cut in pieces His enemies before His face. They are cut in pieces from their conspiracy, and in that they believe they are cut in pieces; for they believe by degrees; as when the calf’s head was ground small, they will come to be the drink of God’s people. For Moses ground down the calf’s head, and sprinkled it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink it. All the unbelieving are ground: they believe by degrees; and they are drunk by the people of God, and pass into Christ’s body. I will cut in pieces His foes before His face: and put to flight them that hate Him. That they hurt Him not. But possibly some of those put to flight say, Whither shall I go then from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I go then from Thy presence? And seeing that they cannot fly from the Almighty, turning they fly to Him. And I will put to flight them that hate Him.

25. Ver. 24. My truth also and My mercy is with Him. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. Remember, as much as ye can, how often these two attributes are urged upon us, that we render them back to God. For as He shewed us mercy that He might blot out our sins, and truth in fulfilling His promises; so also we, walking in His path, ought to give back to Him mercy and truth; mercy, in pitying the wretched; truth, in not judging unjustly. Let not truth rob you of mercy, nor mercy hinder truth: for if through mercy you shall have judged contrary to truth, or by rigorous truth shall have forgotten mercy, you will not be walking in the path of God, where “mercy and truth meet together.” And in My name shall His horn be exalted. Why should I say more? Ye are Christians, recognise Christ.

26. Ver. 25. I will set His hand also in the sea: that is, He shall rule over the Gentiles; and His right hand in the floods. Rivers run into the sea: avaricious men roll onwards into the bitterness of this world: yet all these kinds of men will be subject to Christ.

27. Ver. 26. He shall call me, Thou art My Father, and the lifter up of My salvation.

Ver. 27. And I will make Him my first-born; higher than the kings of the earth. Our Martyrs, whose birthdays we are celebrating, shed their blood on account of these things, which were believed though not yet seen; how much more brave ought we to be, as we see what they believed? For they had not yet seen Christ raised on high among the kings of the earth: as yet princes were taking counsel together against the Lord and His Anointed: what follows in the same Psalm was not then fulfilled, Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be learned, ye that are judges of the earth. Now indeed Christ has been exalted among the kings of the earth.

28. Ver. 28. My mercy will I keep for Him for ever: and my Testament faithful with Him. On His account, the Testament is faithful: in Him the Testament is mediated: He is the Sealer, the Mediator of the Testament, the Surety of the Testament, the Witness of the Testament, the Heritage of the Testament, the Coheir of the Testament.

29. Ver. 29. His seed will I make to endure world without end. Not only for this world, but unto the world without end: whither His seed, which is His heritage, the seed of Abraham, which is Christ, will pass. But if ye are Christ’s, ye are also Abraham’s seed: and if ye are destined His heirs for ever, He will establish His seed unto world without end: and His throne as the days of Heaven. The thrones of earthly kings are as the days of earth: different are the days of Heaven from those of earth. The days of Heaven are those years of which it is said, Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. The days of the earth are soon overtaken by their successors: those which precede are shut out from us: nor do those which succeed remain: but they come that they may go, and are almost gone before they are come. Such are the days of earth. But the days of Heaven, which are also the ‘One day’ of Heaven, and the never failing years, have neither beginning nor end: nor is any day there narrowed between yesterday and to-morrow: no one there expects the future, nor loses the past: but the days of Heaven are always present, where His throne shall be for ever and ever. Let us, if you please, reserve what remains; since the Psalm is a long one, and we have yet some farther opportunity of speaking with you in Christ’s name. Refresh your strength therefore: I do not mean that of your mind, for in mind I see that you are incapable of fatigue; but on account of the slaves of the soul, that your bodies may be sustained in their service, refresh yourselves for a little, and being refreshed return to your meal.

PSALM 89

Second Discourse on the second part of the Psalm. Delivered on the same day with the former Discourse.

1. Attend now to the rest of the Psalm, of which we spoke in the morning, and require the pious debt: since He will repay through me, Who made both me and you. In the former part of the Psalm our Lord Christ was announced according to God’s promise, and He is still announced in these words, of which I am about to treat. A little above, it had been said of Him amongst other truths, (ver. 27–29.) And I will make Him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for Him for evermore, and My Testament faithful with Him. His seed also will I establish unto world without end: and His throne as the days of Heaven. I have said what was in my power on these words and all above, from the very beginning.

2. It goes on, (ver. 30.) If his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; (ver. 31.) if they profane My statutes, and keep not My commandments; (ver. 32.) I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges. (ver. 33.) Nevertheless, My mercy will I not utterly take from him: nor will I hurt in My truth. (ver. 34.) My Testament will I not profane, nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips. This is a strong pledge of the promise of God. The sons of this David, are the children of the Bridegroom: all Christians therefore are called His sons. But it is much indeed that God promises, that if Christians, that is, His children, forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; if they break My statutes, and keep not My commandments; I will not spurn them, nor will I send them away from Me in perdition: but what will I do? I will visit their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges. It is not the mercy of one that calls them only; but also that chastises and scourges them. Let therefore thy Father’s hand be upon thee, and if thou art a good son, repel not chastening; for what son is there, to whom his father giveth not chastening? Let Him chasten him, so long as He takes not from him His mercy: let Him beat him when obstinate, as long as He does not disinherit him. If thou hast well

understood the promises of thy Father, fear not to be scourged, but to be disinherited; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth: and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Does the sinful son spurn chastening, when he sees the only Son without sin scourged? I will visit their offences with the rod. Thus too the Apostle threatens: What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod? Let not pious sons say, if Thou art coming with a rod, come not at all. For it is better to be taught with the Father's rod, than to perish in the caresses of the robber.

3. I will visit, He saith, their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges. Nevertheless, My mercy will I not utterly take from Him. From whom? From that David to Whom I gave these promises, Whom I anointed with My holy oil of gladness above His fellows. Do you recognise Him from Whom God will not utterly take away His mercy? That no one may anxiously say, since He speaks of Christ as Him from Whom He will not take away His mercy, What then will become of the sinner? Did He say any thing like this, "I will not take My loving-kindness utterly from them?" I will visit, He saith, their offences with the rod, and their sin with scourges. Thou didst expect for thy own security, I will not utterly take My loving-kindness from them. And indeed this is the reading of some books, but not of the most accurate: though, where they have it, it is a reading by no means inconsistent with the real meaning. For how can it be said that He will not utterly take His mercy from Christ? Has the Saviour of the body committed aught of sin either in Heaven or in earth, Who sitteth even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us? Yet it is from Christ: but from His members, His body which is the Church. For in this sense He speaks of it as a great thing that He will not take away His mercies from Him, supposing us not to recognise the only Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father; for there the Man is not counted for His Person, but the One Person is God and Man. He therefore does not utterly take His mercies from Him, when He takes not His mercy from His body, His members, in which, even while He was enthroned in Heaven, He was still suffering persecutions on earth; and when He cried from Heaven, Saul, Saul, not why persecutest thou My servants, nor why persecutest thou My saints, nor My disciples, but, why persecutest thou Me? As then, while no one persecuted Him when sitting in Heaven, He cried out, "Why persecutest thou Me?" when the

Head recognised its limbs, and His love allowed not the Head to separate Himself from the union of the body: so, when He taketh not away His mercies from Him, it is surely that He taketh it not from us, who are His limbs and body. Yet ought we not on that account to sin without apprehension, and perversely to assure ourselves that we shall not perish, be our actions what they may. For there are certain sins and certain offences, to define and discourse of which it is either impossible for me, or if it were possible, it would be too tedious for the time we have at present. For no man can say that he is without sin; for if he says so, he will lie; if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. Each one therefore is needfully scourged for his own sins; but the mercy of God is not taken away from him, if he be a Christian. Certainly if thou committest such offences as to repel the hand of Him Who chasteneth, the rod of Him Who scourgeth thee, and art angry at the correction of God, and fliest from thy Father when He chasteneth thee, and wilt not suffer Him to be thy Father, because He spares thee not when thou dost sin; thou hast estranged thyself from thy heritage, He has not thrown thee off; for if thou wouldest abide being scourged, thou wouldest not abide disinherited. Nevertheless, My mercies I will not take utterly from him: nor will I do hurt in My truth. For His mercy in setting free shall not be taken away, lest His truth in taking vengeance do harm.

4. Ver. 34. My covenant will I not profane, nor reject the thing that is gone out of my lips. Because his sons sin, I will not on this account be found false: I have promised; I will do. Suppose they choose to sin even as past hope, and so fall into sins as to offend their father’s countenance, and deserve to be disinherited; is it not still God Himself, of Whom it is said, From these stones He will raise up sons to Abraham? Therefore I tell you, brethren, many Christians sin venially, many are scourged and so corrected for their sin, chastened, and cured; many turn away altogether, striving with a stiff neck against the discipline of the Father, even wholly refusing God as their Father, though they have the mark of Christ, and so fall into such sins, that it can only be announced against them, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Nevertheless, Christ shall not be destitute of an inheritance on their account: not for the chaff’s sake shall the wheat also perish: nor on account of bad fish shall nothing be cast into the

vessels from that net. The Lord knows them that are His. For He Who predestined us before we were born, promised undoubtingly: For whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. Let desperate sinners sin as far as they choose: let the members of Christ reply, If God is with us, who shall be against us? God will not therefore do hurt in His truth, nor will He ‘profane His Testament.’ His Testament remains immovable, because in His foreknowledge He predestined His heirs; and “He will not reject the thing that is gone out of His lips.”

5. Ver. 34–37. Listen for thy confirmation in hope, for thy security, if thou knowest thyself to be among the members of Christ. (Ver. 35.) I have sworn once by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. Dost thou wait till God swear a second time? How often is He to swear, if in one oath He is false? One oath He made for our life, Who sent His Only One to die for us. I have sworn once by My holiness, that I will not lie unto David. (Ver. 36.) His seed shall endure for ever. His seed endures for ever; because the Lord knows them that are His. And His seat is like as the sun before me: (Ver. 37.) And as the moon perfect for evermore: and the faithful witness in heaven. They are His seat, in whom He sits and reigns. But if His seat, His members also; because even our members are the seat of our head. See how all our other members sustain our head: but the head supports nothing above itself, but is itself supported by the rest of our limbs, as if the whole body of a man were the seat of his head. His seat, therefore, all in whom God reigns, ‘shall be like as the sun before Me,’ He saith: because the righteous in the kingdom of My Father shall shine like the sun. But the sun is meant in a spiritual, not a bodily sense, as that which shines from Heaven, which He maketh to rise upon the just and unjust. Finally, that sun is not before men’s eyes only, but even those of cattle and the smallest insects; for which of the vilest animals sees not that sun? What does he say to distinguish the sun meant here? Like as the sun before Me. Not before men, before the flesh, before mortal animals, but before Me, and as the moon. But what moon? one that is perfect for evermore. For although that moon which we know becomes perfect, the next day she begins to wane, after her orb is full. He shall be as the moon perfect for evermore, He saith. His seat shall be made perfect as the moon, but that moon is one which will

be perfect for evermore. If as the sun, why also as the moon? the Scriptures usually signify by the moon the mortality of this flesh, because of its increasings and decreasings, because of its transitory nature. The moon is also interpreted as Jericho: one who was descending from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among robbers: for he was descending from immortality to mortality. Similar then is the flesh to that moon, which every month suffers increase and decrease: but that flesh of ours will be perfect in the resurrection: and a faithful witness in heaven. Thus then, if it was our mind only that would be perfected, he would compare us only to the sun: if our body only, to the moon; but as God will perfect us in both, in respect of the mind it is said, like as the sun before Me, because God only seeth the mind: and as the moon, so is the flesh: which shall be made perfect for evermore, in the resurrection of the dead: and a faithful witness in Heaven, because all that was asserted of the resurrection of the dead was true. I beseech you, hear this again more clearly, and remember it: for I know that some understand, while others are yet enquiring perhaps what I meant. There is no article of the Christian faith which has encountered such contradiction as that of the resurrection of the flesh. Finally, He Who was born for a sign that should be spoken against, resumed His own flesh after death to meet the caviller; and He Who could have so completely cured His wounds that their scars would have entirely vanished, retained those scars in His body, that He might cure the wounds of doubt in the heart. Indeed nothing has been attacked with the same pertinacious, contentious contradiction, in the Christian faith, as the resurrection of the flesh. On the immortality of the soul many Gentile philosophers have disputed at great length, and in many books they have left it written that the soul is immortal: when they come to the resurrection of the flesh, they doubt not indeed, but they most openly deny it, declaring it to be absolutely impossible that this earthly flesh can ascend to Heaven. Thus that moon shall be perfect for evermore, and shall be the faithful witness in heaven against all gainsayers.

6. These promises, so sure, so firm, so open, so unquestioned, were made concerning Christ. For although some are mysteriously veiled, yet some are so clear, that all that is obscure is easily revealed by them. Such being the case, see what follows. (Ver. 38.) But Thou hast approved and brought to nothing and forsaken Thine Anointed. (Ver. 39.) Thou hast overthrown the

testament of Thy servant, and profaned His holiness on the ground. (Ver. 40.) Thou hast broken down all His hedges, and made His strongholds a terror. (Ver. 41.) All they that go by the way spoil Him, and He is become a reproach to His neighbours. (Ver. 42.) Thou hast set up the right hand of His enemies, and made all His adversaries to rejoice. (Ver. 43.) Thou hast taken away the help of His sword, and givest Him not help in the battle. (Ver. 44.) Thou hast set Him free from cleansing, and cast His throne down to the ground. (Ver. 45.) The days of His seat hast Thou shortened, and covered Him with dishonour. How is this? Thou hast promised all those things: and Thou hast brought to pass their reverse. Where are now the promises which but a little before filled us with delight? which we so joyfully applauded, which we so fearlessly made our boast of? It is as if one promised, and another destroyed. And this is the mystery: for the words are not another, but Thou, Thou Who didst promise, Who didst even swear in condescension to human doubt, Thou hast promised this, and done thus! Whence shall I get Thy oath, where shall I find Thy promise fulfilled? Would then God promise, or swear thus falsely? and yet why then these promises, and these acts? I answer, that He acted thus in fulfilment of those promises. But who am I, to say this? Let us see therefore whether it is the language of the Truth; what I say will not then be without foundation. It was David to whom the fulfilment of these promises in his seed, that is, in Christ, was promised: and as they were addressed to David, men expected their completion in David. Further, lest when any Christian asserted these promises to have referred to Christ, another by applying them to David, because he descried the fulfilment of all of them in David, might thus err; He cancelled them in David, thus obliging us when we see them unfulfilled in David, to look to another quarter for their fulfilment. Thus also in the case of Esau and Jacob, we find the elder worshipped by the younger, though it is written, The elder shall serve the younger; so when you see it unfulfilled in those two brothers, you look for two peoples in whom to discover the completion of what God in His truth deigns to promise. From the fruit of thy body, saith the Lord unto David, shall I set upon thy seat. He promised from his seed something for evermore: and Solomon, born to him, became master of such wisdom, that the promise of God respecting the fruit of David's body was believed to have been fulfilled in him; but Solomon fell, and gave room for hoping for Christ; that since God can neither be deceived nor deceive, He might not make His promise to rest in one who He knew would fall, but you might after the fall of Solomon look back to God, and demand His promise. Hast Thou, O Lord, deceived? Hast Thou failed to fulfil Thy promise? Dost Thou not exhibit what Thou hast sworn? Perhaps God might reply, I swore and promised: but Solomon would not persevere. What then? Didst not Thou, Lord God, know beforehand that he would not persevere? Indeed Thou didst know. Why then didst Thou promise me what should be eternal in one who would not persevere? Hast Thou not answered; But if his children forsake My law, and walk not in My judgments; if they keep not My statutes, and profane My testament; yet My promise shall remain, and My oath shall be fulfilled: I have sworn once in My Holiness, within, in a certain mystery, in the very spring whence the Prophets drank, whence they burst forth to us of these things, I have sworn once that I will not fail David. Shew forth then what Thou hast sworn, give us what Thou hast promised. The fulfilment is taken from that David, that it might not be looked for in that David: wait therefore for what I have promised.

7. Even David himself knew this. Consider his words; Thou hast rejected and brought him down to nothing. Where then is Thy promise? Thou hast put off Thine anointed. This expression cheers us, among much that is sorrowful: for the promise of God is still valid; for Thou hast put off Thine Anointed, not taken Him away. See then what was the fate of that David, in whom the ignorant hoped for the fulfilment of the promises of God, in order that those promises might be more firmly relied upon for their fulfilment in another. Thou hast put off Thine Anointed: Thou hast overthrown the testament of Thy servant. For where is the Old Testament of the Jews? where that land of promise, in which they sinned while they dwelt in it, on the overthrow of which they wandered afar? Ask you for the kingdom of the Jews; it exists not: you ask for the altar of the Jews; it is not: you ask for the sacrifice of the Jews; it is not: you ask for the priesthood of the Jews; it is not. Thou hast overthrown the testament of Thy servant, and profaned his holiness on the earth. Thou hast shewn that what they thought holy, was earthly. Thou hast broken down all his hedges, with which Thou hadst entrenched him: for how could he have been spoiled unless his hedges had been broken down? Thou hast made his strongholds a terror. Why terror?

That it should be said to the sinners, For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee.

All they that go by the way have spoiled him: that is, all the heathen that go by the way, meaning, all who pass through this life, have spoiled Israel, have spoiled David. First of all, see his fragments in all nations: for it is of the Jews that it is said, They shall be a portion for foxes. For the Scripture calls wicked, crafty, and cowardly kings, whom another’s virtue terrifies, foxes. Thus when our Lord Himself was speaking of the threatening Herod, He said, Go ye, and tell that fox. The king who fears no man, is not a fox: like that Lion of Judah, of Whom it is said, Stooping down Thou didst rise up, and didst sleep as a lion. At Thy will Thou didst stoop down, at Thy will didst rise; because Thou wouldest, Thou didst sleep. And thus in another Psalm he says, I slept. Was not the sentence complete, “I slept, and took rest, and rose up again, because the Lord shall uphold Me?” Why is the word ego added? and thus with a strong emphasis on the word I, they raged against Me, they troubled Me: but had I not willed, I had not slept. Those then concerning whom it was declared that they should be a portion for foxes, are now spoken of as follows; All they that go by have spoiled him: and he is become a reproach to his neighbours. (Ver. 42.) Thou hast set up the right hand of his enemies, and made all his adversaries to rejoice. Look at the Jews, and see all things fulfilled that were predicted. Thou hast turned away the help of his sword. How they were used to fight few in number, and to strike down many. Thou hast turned away the help of his sword, and Thou givest him not victory in the battle. Naturally then is he conquered, naturally taken prisoner, naturally made an outcast from his kingdom, naturally scattered abroad: for he lost that land, for which he slew the Lord. Thou hast turned away the help of his sword, and hast not given him victory in the battle. (Ver. 43.) Thou hast loosed him from cleansing. What is this? Amongst all the evils, this is a matter for great fear; for howsoever God may beat, howsoever He may be wroth, howsoever He may flog and scourge, yet let Him scourge him bound, whom He is to cleanse, not ‘loose him from cleansing.’ For if He loose him from being purified, he becomes incapable of cleansing, and must be an outcast. From what cleansing then is the Jew loosed? From faith; for by faith we live: and it is said of faith, purifying their hearts by faith: and as it is only the faith of Christ that cleanses; by disbelief in Christ, they are loosed from purification. Thou hast loosed him from cleansing, and cast his throne down to the ground. And so Thou hast broken it. (Ver. 44.) The days of his seat hast Thou shortened. They imagined that they should reign for ever. And covered him with confusion. All these things happened to the Jews, Christ yet not being taken away, but His advent deferred.

8. Let us therefore see whether God fulfils His promises. After these stern penalties which have been recorded as having been inflicted upon this people and kingdom, that God might not be supposed to have fulfilled His promises in it, and so not to grant another kingdom in Christ, of which kingdom there shall be no end; the Prophet addresses Him in these words, (ver. 45.) Lord, how long wilt Thou hide Thyself unto the end? For possibly it was not from them and to the end; because blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved. But in the mean while shall Thy wrath burn like fire.

9. Ver. 46, 47. O remember what my substance is. That David, who was placed among the Jews in the flesh, in Christ in hope, speaks; Remember what is my substance. For not because the Jews fell away, did my substance fail: for from that people came the Virgin Mary, and from her the flesh of Christ; that Flesh sins not, but purifies sins; there, saith David, is my substance. O remember what my substance is. For the root has not entirely perished; the seed shall come to whom the promise was made, ordained by Angels in the hand of a Mediator. Remember what my substance is. For Thou hast not made all the sons of men for nought. Lo! all the sons of men have gone into vanity: yet Thou hast not made them for nought. If then all went into vanity, whom Thou hast not made for nought; hast Thou not reserved some instrument to purify them from vanity? This which Thou hast reserved to Thyself to cleanse men from vanity is Thy Holy One, in Him is my substance: for from Him are all, whom Thou hast not made for nought, purified from their own vanity. To them it is said, O ye sons of men, how long are ye heavy in heart? Wherefore have ye such pleasure in vanity, and seek after leasing? Perhaps they might become anxious, and turn from their vanity, and when they found themselves polluted with it, might seek for purification from it: then help them, make them secure. Know this also,

that the Lord hath made wonderful His Holy One. He has made His Holy One to be admired: thence He has purified all from their vanity: there, saith David, is my substance: O remember it! For Thou hast not made all the sons of men for nought. Thou hast therefore reserved something to purify them: and who is He Whom Thou hast reserved? What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? This man then who shall live and not see death, shall purify them from nothingness. For He made not all men for nought, nor can He Who made them so despise His own creatures, as not to convert and purify them.

10. Ver. 48. What man is he that shall live, and shall not see death? For being raised from the dead He dieth no more, and death hath no more dominion over Him. And as in another Psalm it is said, Thou shalt not leave my soul in Hell, neither shalt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption, the Apostolic teaching takes up this testimony, and in the Acts of the Apostles thus argues against the unbelieving; Men and brethren, we know that the patriarch David is dead and buried, and his flesh hath seen corruption. Therefore it cannot be said of him, neither shalt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption. Of whom then is it said? What man is he that shall live, and shall not see death? Perhaps there is no man such. Nay, but who is it? is said to make thee enquire, not despair. But perhaps there may be some man that shall live, and shall not see death, and yet perhaps he did not speak of Christ, Who died? There is no man that shall live, and shall not see death, except Him Who died for mortals. That thou mayest be assured that it is said of Him, consider the sequel; What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Did He never die then? He did. How then shall He live, and never see death? He shall deliver His own soul from the hands of Hell. He is spoken of alone indeed, in that He alone of all others shall live, and shall not see death: He shall deliver His own soul from the hand of Hell, because although the rest of His faithful shall rise from the dead, and shall themselves live for evermore, without seeing death; yet they shall not themselves deliver their own souls from the hands of Hell. He Who delivers His own soul from the hands of Hell, Himself delivers those of His believers: they cannot do so of themselves. Prove that He delivers His own soul. I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. No man taketh ‘it from Me;’ for I Myself slept, but I lay it down of Myself,

and take it again, because it is He Himself Who delivers His own soul from the hands of Hell.

11. Ver. 49. But in the very faith in Christ great difficulties occurred, and the heathen in their rage long said, “When shall he die, and his name perish?” On account of these then who have now long believed in Christ, but were destined to doubt for some time, these words follow, Lord, where are Thy old loving-kindnesses? We have now acknowledged Christ our purifier, we now possess Him in Whom Thy promises were to be fulfilled; shew forth in Him what Thou hast promised. It is He Himself that shall live, and not see death: Himself Who delivers His own soul from the hand of Hell: and yet we are still in suffering. Thus spoke the Martyrs, whose birthdays we are celebrating. He shall live, and not see death: He delivers His soul from the hands of Hell: yet “for Thy sake we are killed all the day long: and are counted as sheep appointed to be slain.” Lord, where are Thy old loving-kindnesses which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth?

12. Ver. 50. Remember, Lord, the rebuke that Thy servants have. Even while Christ was living, and while He was sitting on His Father’s right hand, reproaches were cast against the Christians: they long were reproached with the name of Christ. That widowed one who brought forth, and whose children were more than those of the married wife, heard ill names, heard reproaches: but the Church, multiplied as she is, extending right and left, no longer remembers the reproach of her widowhood. Remember, Lord, in the memory of Whom there is abundant sweetness. Remember, forget not. Remember what? the rebuke that Thy servants have: and how I do bear in my bosom the rebukes of many people. I went, saith he, to preach of Thee, and I heard reproaches, and bore them in my bosom, because I was fulfilling the prophecy. Being defamed we entreat: we are made as the filth of the earth, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. Long the Christians bore reproaches in their bosom, in their heart: nor dared resist their revilers; before, when it was a crime to answer a heathen: it is now a crime to remain a heathen. Thanks be to the Lord! He remembered our rebukes: He raised the horn of His Anointed on high, He made Him the Wonderful among the kings of the earth. Now no one insults Christians, or if he does, it is not in public: he speaks as if he were still

more fearful of being heard, than anxious to be believed. I bear in my bosom the rebukes of many people.

13. Ver. 51. Wherewith Thine enemies have blasphemed Thee, O Lord, both Jews and Pagans. Wherewith they have blasphemed. Wherewith have they blasphemed Thee? With the change of Thine Anointed. They objected that Christ died, and was crucified. Madmen, what is your reproach? Although there is now no one to use it: yet supposing some still remaining that so speak, what is your reproach? that Christ died? He was not destroyed, but changed. He is styled dead on account of the three days. Wherewith then have thine enemies blasphemed Thee? Not with the loss, not with the perdition of Thine Anointed, but with His change. He was changed from temporal to eternal life: He was changed from the Jews to the Gentiles; He was changed from earth to heaven. Let then Thy vain enemies blaspheme Thee still for the change of Thine Anointed. Would that they may be changed: they will not in that case blaspheme the change of Christ, which displeases them, since they themselves will not be changed. For there is no change with them, and they fear not God.

Wherewith Thine enemies have blasphemed Thee, the change of Thine Anointed.

14. They have blasphemed the change of Christ; but what dost thou answer? (Ver. 52.) The blessing of the Lord for evermore. Amen and Amen. Thanks to His mercy, thanks to His grace. We express our thanks: we do not give them, nor return them, nor repay them: we express our thanks in words, while in fact we retain our sense of them He saved us for no reward, He heeded not our impieties: He searched us out when we searched not for Him, He found, redeemed, emancipated us from the bondage of the devil and the power of his wicked angels: He drew us to Him to purify us by that faith, from which He releases those enemies only who believe not, and who for that reason cannot be purified. Let those who still remain infidels say every day what they choose; day by day they shall be fewer and fewer that remain; let them revile, mock, accuse, not the death, but the change of Christ. Do they not see that, when they say these things, they fail in purpose either by believing or by dying? For their curse is temporal: but the blessing of the Lord for evermore. To confirm that blessing is added, Amen and

Amen. This is the signature of the bond of God. Secure then of His promises, let us believe the past, recognise the present, hope for the future. Let not the enemy lead us astray from the way, that He, Who gathers us like chickens under His wings, may foster us: lest we stray from His wings, and the hawk of the air carry us off while yet unfledged. For the Christian ought not to hope in himself: if he hopes to be strong, let him be reared by his mother's warmth. This is the hen who gathers her young together; whence is the reproach of our Saviour against the unbelieving Jerusalem, How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house shall be left unto you desolate. Hence was it said, Thou hast made his strongholds a terror. Since then they would not be gathered together under the wings of this hen, and have given us a warning to teach us to dread the unclean spirits that fly in the air, seeking daily what they may devour; let us gather ourselves under the wings of this hen, the divine Wisdom, since she is weakened even unto death for her chickens. Let us love our Lord God, let us love His Church: Him as a Father, Her as a Mother: Him as a Lord, Her as His Handmaid, as we are ourselves the Handmaid's sons. But this marriage is held together by a bond of great love: no man offends the one, and wins favour of the other. Let no man say, "I go indeed to the idols, I consult possessed ones and fortune-tellers: yet I abandon not God's Church; I am a Catholic." While thou holdest to thy Mother, thou hast offended thy Father. Another says, Far be it from me; I consult no sorcerer, I seek out no possessed one, I never ask advice by sacrilegious divination, I go not to worship idols, I bow not before stones; though I am in the party of Donatus. What does it profit you not to have offended your Father, if he avenges your offended Mother? what does it serve you, if you acknowledge the Lord, honour God, preach His name, acknowledge His Son, confess that He sitteth by His right hand; while you blaspheme His Church? Does not the analogy of human marriages convince you? Suppose you have some patron, whom you court every day, whose threshold you wear with your visits, whom you daily not only salute, but even worship, to whom you pay the most loyal courtesy; if you utter one calumny against his wife, could you re-enter his house? Hold then, most beloved, hold all with one mind to God the Father, and the Church our Mother. Celebrate with temperance the birthdays of the Saints, that we may imitate those who have gone before us, and that they who pray for you may rejoice over you; that the blessing of the Lord may abide on you for evermore. Amen and Amen.

PSALM 90

1. This Psalm is entitled, The prayer of Moses the man of God, through whom, His man, God gave the law to His people, through whom He freed them from the house of slavery, and led them forty years through the wilderness. Moses was therefore the Minister of the Old, and the Prophet of the New Testament. For all these things, saith the Apostle, happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the world are come. In accordance therefore with this dispensation which was vouchsafed to Moses, this Psalm is to be examined, as it has received its title from his prayer.

2. Ver. 1. Lord, he saith, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another: either in every generation, or in two generations, the old and new: because, as I said, he was the Minister of the Testament that related to the old generation, and the Prophet of the Testament which appertained to the new. Jesus Himself, the Surety of that covenant, and the Bridegroom in the marriage which He entered into in that generation, saith, Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. Now it is not to be believed that this Psalm was entirely the composition of that Moses, as it is not distinguished by any of those of his expressions which are used in his songs: but the name of the great servant of God is used for the sake of some intimation, which should direct the attention of the reader or listener. Lord, he saith, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to the other.

3. He adds, how He became our refuge, since He began to be that, viz. a refuge, to us which He had not been before, not that He had not existed before He became our refuge: (ver. 2.) Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made: and from age even unto age Thou art. Thou therefore Who art for ever, and before we were, and before the world was, hast become our refuge ever since we turned to Thee. But the expression, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made, seems to me to contain a particular meaning; for mountains are the higher parts of the earth, and if God was

before even the earth were formed, (or, as some books have it, from the same Greek word, framed,) since it was by Him that it was formed, what is the need of saying that He was before the mountains, or any certain parts of it, since God was not only before the earth, but before heaven and earth, and even the whole bodily and spiritual creation? But it may certainly be that the whole rational creation is marked by this distinction; that while the loftiness of Angels is signified by the mountains, the lowliness of man is meant by the earth. And for this reason, although all the works of creation are not improperly said to be either made or formed; nevertheless, if there is any propriety in these words, the Angels are made; for as they are enumerated among His heavenly works, the enumeration itself is thus concluded: He spake the word, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created; but the earth was formed, that man might thence be created in the body. For the Scripture uses this word, where we read, God made, or God formed man out of the dust of the ground. Before then the noblest parts of the creation (for what is higher than the rational part of the Heavenly creation) were made: before the earth was made, that Thou mightest have worshippers upon the earth; and even this is little, as all these had a beginning either in or with time; but from age to age Thou art. It would have been better, from everlasting to everlasting: for God, Who is before the ages, exists not from a certain age, nor to a certain age, which has an end, since He is without end. But it often happens in the Scripture, that the equivocal Greek word causes the Latin translator to put age for eternity and eternity for age. But he very rightly does not say, Thou wast from ages, and unto ages Thou shalt be: but puts the verb in the present, intimating that the substance of God is altogether immutable. It is not, He was, and Shall be, but only Is. Whence the expression, I am that I am; and, I am hath sent me unto you; and, Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. Behold then the eternity that is our refuge, that we may fly thither from the mutability of time, there to remain for evermore.

4. But as our life here is exposed to numerous and great temptations, and it is to be feared lest we may be turned aside by them from that refuge, let us see what in consequence of this the prayer of the man of God seeks for. (Ver. 3.) Turn not Thou man to lowness: that is, Let not man, turned aside

from Thy eternal and sublime things, lust for things of time, savour of earthly things. This prayer is what God has Himself enjoined us, in the Prayer, Lead us not into temptation, He adds, Again Thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men. As if he said, I ask of Thee what Thou hast commanded me to ask: giving glory to His grace, that he that glorieth, in the Lord he may glory: without Whose help we cannot by an exertion of our own will overcome the temptations of this life. Turn not Thou man to lowness: again thou sayest, Turn again, ye children of men. But grant what Thou hast enjoined, by hearing the prayer of him who can at least pray, and aiding the faith of the willing soul.

5. Ver. 4. For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday, which is past by: hence we ought to turn to Thy refuge, where Thou art without any change, from the fleeting scenes around us; since however long a time may be wished for for this life, a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday: not as to-morrow, which is to come: for all limited periods of time are reckoned as having already passed. Hence the Apostle’s choice is rather to aim at what is before, that is, to desire things eternal, and to forget things behind, by which temporal matters should be understood. But that no one may imagine a thousand years are reckoned by God as one day, as if with God days were so long, when this is only said in contempt of the extent of time: he adds, and as a watch in the night: which only lasts three hours. Nevertheless men have ventured to assert their knowledge of times, to the pretenders to which our Lord said, It is not for you to know the times or seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power: and they allege that this period may be defined six thousand years, as of six days. Nor have they heeded the words, are but as one day which is past by: for, when this was uttered, not a thousand years only had passed, and the expression, as a watch in the night, ought to have warned them that they might not be deceived by the uncertainty of the seasons: for even if the six first days in which God finished His works seemed to give some plausibility to their opinion, six watches, which amount to eighteen hours, will not consist with that opinion.

6. Next, the man of God, or rather the Prophetic spirit, seems to be reciting some law written in the secret wisdom of God, in which He has fixed a

limit to the sinful life of mortals, and determined the troubles of mortality, in the following words; (ver. 5.) Their years are as things which are nothing worth: in the morning let it fade away like the grass; in the morning as a herb let it pass by; in the evening let it fall, and be dried up, and withered. The happiness therefore of the heirs of the old covenant, which they asked of the Lord their God as a great boon, attained to receive this Law in His mysterious Providence. Moses seems to be reciting it; Their years shall be things which are esteemed as nothing. Such are those things which are not before they are come: and when come, shall soon not be: for they do not come to be here, but to be gone. (Ver. 6.) In the morning, that is, before they come, as a heat let it pass by; but in the evening, it means after they come, let it fall, and be dried up, and withered. It is to fall in death, be dried up in the corpse, withered in the dust. What is this but flesh, wherein is the accursed lust of fleshly things? For all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness of man as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of the Lord abideth for ever.

7. Making no secret that this fate is a penalty inflicted for sin, he adds at once, (ver. 7.) For we consume away in Thy displeasure, and are troubled at Thy wrathful indignation: we consume away in our weakness, and are troubled from the fear of death; for we are become weak, and yet fearful to end that weakness. Another, saith He, shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not: although not to be punished, but to be crowned, by martyrdom; and the soul of our Lord, transforming us into Himself, was sorrowful even unto death: for the Lord’s going out is no other than in death.

8. Ver. 8. Thou hast set our misdeeds before Thee: that is, Thou hast not dissembled Thine anger: and our age in the light of Thy countenance. The light of Thy countenance answers to before Thee, and to our misdeeds, as above.

9. Ver. 9. For all our days are failed, and in Thine anger we have failed. These words sufficiently prove, that our subjection to death is a punishment. He speaks of our days failing, either because men fail in them from loving things that pass away, or because they are reduced to so small a number; which he asserts in the following lines; our years are spent in

thought like a spider; (Ver. 10.) The days of our age are threescore years and ten; and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years, yet is more of them but labour and sorrow. These words appear to express the shortness and misery of this life: since those who have reached their seventieth year are styled old men. Up to eighty, however, they appear to have some strength; but if they live beyond this, their existence is laborious through multiplied sorrows. Yet many even below the age of seventy experience an old age the most infirm and wretched: and old men have often been found to be wonderfully vigorous even beyond eighty years. It is therefore better to search for some spiritual meaning in these numbers. For the anger of God is not greater on the sins of Adam, (through whom alone "sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men,") because they live a much shorter time than the men of old; since even the length of their days is ridiculed in the comparison of a thousand years to yesterday that is past, and to three hours: especially since at the very time when they provoked the anger of God to send the deluge in which they perished, their life was at its longest span.

10. Moreover, seventy and eighty years equal a hundred and fifty; a number which the Psalms clearly insinuate to be a sacred one. One hundred and fifty have the same relative signification as fifteen, the latter number being composed of seven and eight together: the first of which points to the Old Testament through the observation of the Sabbath; the latter to the New, referring to the resurrection of our Lord. Hence the fifteen steps in the Temple. Hence in the Psalms, fifteen "songs of degrees." Hence the waters of the deluge overtopped the highest mountains by fifteen cubits: and many other instances of the same nature. Our years are passed in thought like a spider. We were labouring in things corruptible, corruptible works we were weaving together: which, as the prophet Isaiah saith, by no means covered us: the days of our years are in themselves threescore and ten: but if in their strength they come to fourscore years. A distinction is here made between themselves and their strength: in themselves, that is, in the years or days themselves, may mean in temporal things, which are promised in the Old Testament, signified by the number seventy; but if not in themselves, but in their strength, refers not to temporal things, but to things eternal, fourscore years, as the New Testament contains the hope of a new life and

resurrection for evermore: and what is added, that if they pass this latter period, their strength is labour and sorrow, intimates that such shall be the fate of him who goes beyond this faith, and seeks for more. It may also be understood thus: because although we are established in the New Testament, which the number eighty signifies, yet still our life is one of labour and sorrow, while we groan within ourselves, awaiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body; for we are saved by hope; and if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. This relates to the mercy of God, of which he proceeds to say, Since thy mercy cometh over us, and we shall be chastened: for “the Lord chasteneth whom He loveth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth,” and to some mighty ones He giveth a thorn in the flesh, to buffet them, that they may not be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, so that strength be made perfect in weakness. Some copies read, we shall be taught, instead of chastened, which is equally expressive of the Divine Mercy; for no man can be taught without labour and sorrow; since strength is made perfect in weakness.

11. Ver. 11. For who knoweth the power of Thy wrath: and for the fear of Thee to number Thine anger? It belongs to very few men, he saith, to know the power of Thy wrath; for when Thou dost spare, Thy anger is so far heavier against most men; that we may know that labour and sorrow belong not to wrath, but rather to Thy mercy, when Thou chastenest and teachest those whom Thou lovest, to save them from the torments of eternal punishment: as it is said in another Psalm, “The sinner hath provoked the Lord: He will not require it of him according to the greatness of His wrath.” Who then knoweth the power of Thy wrath, or for the fear of Thee how to number Thine anger? With this also is understood, ‘Who knoweth?’ Such is the difficulty of finding any one who knoweth how to number Thine anger by Thy fear, that he adds this, meaning that it is to the purpose that Thou appearest to spare some, with whom Thou art more angry, that the sinner may be prospered in his path, and receive a heavier doom at the last. For when the power of human wrath hath killed the body, it hath nothing more to do: but God hath power both to punish here, and after the death of the body to send into Hell, and by the few who are thus taught, the vain and seductive prosperity of the wicked is judged to be greater wrath of God.

This he knew not, whose feet were almost gone, because he was grieved at the wicked, seeing the ungodly in such prosperity, but he learnt it when he went into the sanctuary of God, and understood concerning the last things: that sanctuary which few enter, there to learn how to number the anger of God by His fear: and to reckon the prosperity of the wicked in the number of their punishments.

12. Ver. 12. Make Thy right hand so well known. This is the reading of most of the Greek copies: not of some in Latin, which is thus, Make Thy right hand well known to me. What is, make Thy right hand so well known, but Thy Christ, of Whom it is said, And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Make Him so well known, that Thy faithful may learn in Him to ask and to hope for those things rather of Thee as rewards of their faith, which do not appear in the Old Testament, but are revealed in the New: that they may not imagine that the happiness derived from earthly and temporal blessings is to be highly esteemed, desired, or loved, and thus their feet slip, when they see it in men who honour Thee not: that their steps may not give way, while they know not how to number Thine anger. Finally, in accordance with this prayer of the Man that is His, He has made His Christ so well known, as to shew by His sufferings that not those rewards which seem so highly prized in the Old Testament, where they are shadows of things to come, but things eternal, are to be desired. The right hand of God may also be understood in this sense, as that by which He will separate His saints from the wicked: because that hand becomes well known, when it scourgeth every son whom He receiveth, and suffers him not, in greater anger, to prosper in his sins, but in His mercy, scourgeth him with the left, that He may place him purified on His right hand. The reading of most copies, make Thy right hand well known to me, may be referred either to Christ, or to eternal happiness: for God has not a right hand in bodily shape, as He has not that anger which is aroused into violent passion.

13. But what he addeth, and those fettered in heart in wisdom; other copies read, instructed, not fettered: the Greek verb, expressing both senses, only differing by a single syllable. But since these also, as it is said, put their “feet in the fetters” of wisdom, are taught wisdom, (he means the feet of the heart, not of the body,) and bound by its golden chains depart not from the

path of God, and become not runaways from him; whichever reading we adopt, the truth in the meaning is safe. Them thus fettered, or instructed in heart in wisdom, God makes so well known in the New Testament, that they despised all things for the Faith which the impiety of Jews and Gentiles abhorred; and allowed themselves to be deprived of those things which in the Old Testament are thought high promises by those who judge after the flesh.

14. Ver. 13. And as when they became so well known, as to despise these things, and by setting their affections on things eternal, gave a testimony through their sufferings, (whence they are called witnesses or martyrs in the Greek,) they endured for a long while many bitter temporal afflictions. This man of God giveth heed to this, and the prophetic spirit under the name of Moses continues thus, Return, O Lord, how long? and be softened concerning Thy servants. These are the words of those, who, enduring many evils in that persecuting age, become known because their hearts are bound in the chain of wisdom, so firmly, that not even such hardships can induce them to fly from their Lord to the good things of this world. How long will Thou hide Thy face from me, O Lord? occurs in another Psalm, in unison with this sentence, Return, O Lord, how long? And that they who, in a most carnal spirit, ascribe to God the form of the human body, may know that the turning away and turning again of His countenance is not like those motions of our own frame, let them recollect these words from above in the same Psalm, Thou hast set our misdeeds before Thee, and our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance. How then does he say in this passage, Return, that God may be favourable, as if He had turned away His face in anger; when as in the former he speaks of God’s anger in such a manner, as to insinuate that He had not turned away His countenance from the misdeeds and the course of life of those He was angry with, but rather had set them before Him, and in the light of His countenance? The word, How long, belongs to righteousness beseeching, not indignant impatience. Be softened, some have rendered by a verb, soften. But be softened avoids an ambiguity; since to soften is a common verb: for he may be said to soften who pours out prayers, and he to whom they are poured out: for we say, I soften thee, and I soften toward thee; (‘deprecor te, et deprecor a te.’)

15. Ver. 14, 15. Next, in anticipation of future blessings, of which he speaks as already vouchsafed, he says, We are satisfied with Thy mercy in the morning. Prophecy has thus been kindled for us, in the midst of these toils and sorrows of the night, like a lamp in the darkness, until day dawn, and the Day-star arise in our hearts. For blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God: then shall the righteous be filled with that blessing for which they hunger and thirst now, while, walking in faith, they are absent from the Lord. Hence are the words, In Thy presence is fulness of joy: and, Early in the morning they shall stand by, and shall look up: and as other translators have said it, We shall be satisfied with Thy mercy in the morning; then they shall be satisfied. As he says elsewhere, I shall be satisfied, when Thy glory shall be revealed. So it is said, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us: and our Lord Himself answereth, I will manifest Myself to Zion; and until this promise is fulfilled, no blessing satisfies us, or ought to do so, lest our longings should be arrested in their course, when they ought to be increased until they gain their objects. We have been satisfied with Thy mercy in the morning; and we rejoiced and were glad all the days of our life. Those days are days without end: they all exist together: it is thus they satisfy us: for they give not way to days succeeding: since there is nothing there which exists not yet because it has not reached us, or ceases to exist because it has passed; all are together: because there is one day only, which remains and passes not away: this is eternity itself. These are the days respecting which it is written, What man is he that lusteth to live, and would fain see good days? These days in another passage are styled years: where unto God it is said, But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail: for these are not years that are accounted for nothing, or days that perish like a shadow: but they are days which have a real existence, the number of which he who thus spoke, Lord, let me know mine end, (that is, after reaching what term I shall remain unchanged, and have no further blessing to crave,) and the number of my days, what it is: (what is, not what is not:) prayed to know. He distinguishes them from the days of this life, of which he speaks as follows, Behold, Thou hast made my days as it were a span long, which are not, because they stand not, remain not, but change in quick succession: nor is there a single hour in them in which our being is not such, but that one part of it has already passed, another is about to come, and none remains as it is. But those years and days, in which we too shall never fail, but evermore be

refreshed, will never fail. Let our souls long earnestly for those days, let them thirst ardently for them, that there we may be filled, be satisfied, and say what we now say in anticipation, We have been satisfied with Thy mercy in the morning; we have rejoiced and were glad all the days of our life. (Ver. 15.) We have been comforted again now, after the time that Thou hast brought us low, and for the years wherein we have seen evil.

16. But now in days that are as yet evil, let us speak as follows. (Ver. 16.) Look upon Thy servants, and upon Thy works. For Thy servants themselves are Thy works, not only inasmuch as they are men, but as Thy servants, that is, obedient to Thy commands. For we are His workmanship, created not merely in Adam, but in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them: for it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

And direct their sons: that they may be right in heart, for to such God is bountiful; for God is bountiful to Israel, to those that are right in heart. Unlike him whose feet had well-nigh slipped, because he began to be displeased at God while he looked upon the prosperity of the wicked, as if God Himself knew not, or cared not for, their sins, and would not undertake to govern the human race.

17. Ver. 17. And let the brightness of the Lord our God be upon us; whence the words, “O Lord, the light of Thy countenance is marked upon us.” And, Make Thou straight the works of our hands upon us: that we may do them not for hope of earthly reward: for then they are not straight, but crooked. In many copies the Psalm goes thus far, but in some there is found an additional verse at the end, as follows, And make straight the work of our hands. To these words the learned have prefixed a star, called an asterisk, to shew that they are found in the Hebrew, or in some other Greek translations, but not in the Septuagint. The meaning of this verse, if we are to expound it, appears to me this, that all our good works are one work of love: for love is the fulfilling of the Law. For as in the former verse he had said, And the works of our hands make Thou straight upon us, here he says work, not works, as if anxious to shew, in the last verse, that all our works are one, that is, are directed with a view to one work. For then are works righteous, when they are directed to this one end: for the end of the commandment is

charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. There is therefore one work, in which are all, faith which worketh by love: whence our Lord’s words in the Gospel, This is the work of God, that ye believe in Him Whom He hath sent. Since, therefore, in this Psalm, both old and new life, life both mortal and everlasting, years that are counted for nought, and years that have the fulness of lovingkindness and of true joy, that is, the penalty of the first and the reign of the Second Man, are marked so very clearly; I imagine, that the name of Moses, the man of God, became the title of the Psalm, that pious and rightminded readers of the Scriptures might gain an intimation that the Mosaic laws, in which God appears to promise only, or nearly only, earthly rewards for good works, without doubt contains under a veil some such hopes as this Psalm displays. But when any one has passed over to Christ, the veil will be taken away: and his eyes will be unveiled, that he may consider the wonderful things in the law of God, by the gift of Him, to Whom we pray, Open Thou mine eyes, and I shall see the wondrous things of Thy law.

PSALM 91

first sermon

This Psalm is that from which the devil dared to tempt our Lord Jesus Christ: let us therefore attend to it, that thus armed, we may be enabled to resist the tempter, not presuming in ourselves, but in Him Who before us was tempted, that we might not be overcome when tempted. Temptation to Him was not necessary: the temptation of Christ is our learning, but if we listen to His answers to the devil, in order that, when ourselves are tempted, we may answer in like manner, we are then entering through the gate, as ye have heard it read in the Gospel. For what is to enter by the gate? To enter by Christ, Who Himself said, I am the door: and to enter through Christ, is to imitate His ways. And how are we to imitate the ways of Christ? Are we to imitate Him in the glorious power which He had as God in the flesh? is it to this that He exhorts us, this that He requires of us, that we should work such miracles as He wrought? Or does not our Lord Jesus Christ both now and evermore govern the universe with the Father? Is it to govern heaven and earth, and all that are in them, with Him, that He calls man, or that man too may become a creator, through whom all things may be created, as all things were through Christ? Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ invites you neither to those works, which He did from the beginning, of which it is written, By Him all things were made: nor to those which He performed on earth. He tells you not this: Thou shalt not be My disciple, unless thou hast walked upon the waves, or raised him who was four days dead, or opened the eyes of the born blind. Not this either. What is it then to enter by the door? Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. What He became on thy account, that thou shouldest attend to in Him, that thou mayest imitate Him. Even before He was born of Mary He wrought miracles, for who ever worked them except He of Whom it is said, He only doeth wondrous things. For it was by His power that those, who in former days worked miracles, were enabled to do so: by the power of Christ, Elias raised the dead. Unless indeed we are to suppose Peter greater than Christ, because Christ with His voice raised the sick; while, when Peter was passing by, the sick were brought out to be touched by his shadow. And yet can it be said that Peter is more mighty than Christ? Why then had Peter such power? Because Christ was in Peter. Hence our Saviour’s words, All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers; meaning, that those who came on a mission of their own, were not sent by Me, they came without Me, I was not in them, nor did I introduce them; all the miracles therefore wrought either by His predecessors or successors, were the work of the same Lord Christ, Who performed miracles when He was Himself present. Neither then does He exhort us to imitate those miracles which He worked before He became Man: but He urges us to imitate Him in those works which He could not have done had He not been made Man; for how could He endure sufferings, unless He had become a Man? How could He otherwise have died, been crucified, been humbled? Thus then do thou, when thou sufferest the troubles of this world, which the devil, openly by men, or secretly, as in Job’s case, inflicts; be courageous, be of long suffering thou shalt dwell under the defence of the Most High, as this Psalm expresses it: for if thou depart from the help of the Most High, without strength to aid thyself, thou wilt fall.

2. For many men are brave, when they are enduring persecution from men, and see them openly rage against themselves: imagining they are then imitating the sufferings of Christ, in case men openly persecute them; but if assailed by the hidden attack of the devil, they believe they are not being crowned by Christ. Never fear when thou dost imitate Christ. For when the devil tempted our Lord, there was no man in the wilderness; he tempted Him secretly; but he was conquered, and conquered too when openly attacking Him. This do thou, if thou wishest to enter by the door, when the enemy secretly assails thee, when he asks for a man that he may do him some hurt by bodily troubles, by fever, by sickness, or any other bodily sufferings, like those of Job. He saw not the devil, yet he acknowledged the power of God. He knew that the devil had no power against him, unless from the Almighty Ruler of all things he received that power: the whole glory he gave to God, power to the devil he gave not. For when the devil robbed him of all things, these were his words, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; he said not, The Lord gave, and the devil hath taken away: since the devil could have taken nothing from him, had not the Lord

permitted him. And for this cause God allowed him, that the man might be tried, and the devil conquered. When he struck him with a blow, it was by God’s leave. Even when from head to foot he was wasted by worms, not even then did he attribute any power to the devil: but when his wife, whom alone the devil had left, not as the consoler of her husband, but his own helper, advised him thus, Say some word against God, and die: he replied, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. If we have received good at the hands of God, shall we not endure evil?

3. He then who so imitates Christ as to endure all the troubles of this world, with his hopes set upon God, that he falls into no snare, is broken down by no panic fears, he it is (ver. 1, 2.) who dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, who shall abide under the protection of God, in the words with which the Psalm, which you have heard and sung, begins. You will recognise the words, so well known, in which the devil tempted our Lord, when we come to them. He shall say unto the Lord, Thou art my taker up, and my refuge: my God. Who speaks thus to the Lord? He who dwelleth under the defence of the Most High: not under his own defence. Who is this? He dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, who is not proud, like those who ate, that they might become as Gods, and lost the immortality in which they were made. For they chose to dwell under a defence of their own, not under that of the Most High: thus they listened to the suggestions of the serpent, and despised the precept of God: and discovered at last that what God threatened, not what the devil promised, had come to pass in them.

4. (Ver. 3.) Thus then do thou say also, In Him will I trust. For He Himself shall deliver me, not I myself. Observe whether he teaches any thing but this, that all our trust be in God, none in man. Whence shall he deliver thee? From the snare of the hunter, and from a harsh word. Deliverance from the hunter’s net is indeed a great blessing: but how is deliverance from a harsh word so? Many have fallen into the hunter’s net through a harsh word. What is it that I say? The devil and his angels spread their snares, as hunters do: and those who walk in Christ tread afar from those snares: for he dares not spread his net in Christ: he sets it on the verge of the way, not in the way. Let then thy way be Christ, and thou shalt not fall into the snares of

the devil: when thou wanderest from the way, there is the snare: on this side and that he sets his nooses, on this side and that his snares: among those nooses lies thy path. But dost thou wish to tread in safety? Turn not ever so slightly right or left: and let Him be thy way Who was made thy Way, that through Himself He may lead thee to Himself, and thou shalt not dread the nooses of the hunters.

But what is, from a harsh word? The devil has entrapped many by a harsh word: for instance, those who profess Christianity among Pagans suffer insult from the heathen: they blush when they hear reproach, and shrinking out of their path in consequence, fall into the hunter’s snares. And yet what will a harsh word do to you? Nothing. Can the snares with which the enemy entraps you by means of reproaches, do nothing to you? Nets are usually spread for birds at the end of a hedge, and stones are thrown into the hedge: those stones will not harm the birds. When did any one ever hit a bird by throwing a stone into a hedge? But the bird, frightened at the harmless noise, falls into the nets; and thus men who fear the vain reproaches of their calumniators, and who blush at unprovoked insults, fall into the snares of the hunters, and are taken captive by the devil. Yet why, my brethren, do I refrain from saying, what God urges me to say, and what I must not pass unsaid? However you may receive it, God compels me to say it: unless I say it, I fall into the snares of the hunters; for if fear of man’s detraction hinder me from stating it, I am myself for fear of a harsh word falling into the snares, while I am admonishing you not to fear the words of men. What is it then that I have to tell you? Just as among the heathen, the Christian who fears their reproaches falls into the snare of the hunter: so among the Christians, those who endeavour to be more diligent and better than the rest, are doomed to bear insults from Christians themselves. What then doth it profit, my brother, if thou occasionally find a city in which there is no heathen? No one there insults a man because he is a Christian, for this reason, that there is no Pagan therein: but there are many Christians who lead a bad life, among whom those who are resolved to live righteously, and to be sober among the drunken, and chaste among the unchaste, and amid the consulters of astrologers sincerely to worship God, and to ask after no such things, and among spectators of frivolous shows will go only to church, suffer from those very Christians reproaches, and harsh words, when they address such a one, ‘Thou art the mighty, the righteous, thou art Elias, thou art Peter: thou hast come from heaven.’ They insult him: whichever way he turns, he hears harsh sayings on each side: and if he fears, and abandons the way of Christ, he falls into the snares of the hunters. But what is it, when he hears such words, not to swerve from the way? On hearing them, what comfort has he, which prevents his heeding them, and enables him to enter by the door? Let him say; What words am I called, who am a servant and a sinner? To my Lord Jesus they said, Thou hast a devil. You have just heard the harsh words spoken against our Lord: it was not necessary for our Lord to suffer this, but in doing so He has warned thee against harsh words, lest thou fall into the snares of the hunters.

5. (Ver. 4.) He shall defend thee between His shoulders, and thou shalt hope under His wings. He says this, that thy protection may not be to thee from thyself, that thou mayest not imagine that thou canst defend thyself; He will defend thee, to deliver thee from the hunter’s snare, and from an harsh word. The expression, between His shoulders, may be understood both in front and behind: for the shoulders are about the head; but in the words, ‘thou shalt hope under His wings,’ it is clear that the protection of the wings of God expanded places thee between His shoulders, so that God’s wings on this side and that have thee in the midst, where thou shalt not fear lest any one hurt thee: only be thou careful never to leave that spot, where no foe dares approach. If the hen defends her chickens beneath her wings; how much more shalt thou be safe beneath the wings of God, even against the devil and his angels, the powers who fly about in mid air like hawks, to carry off the weak young one? For the comparison of the hen to the very Wisdom of God is not without ground; for Christ Himself, our Lord and Saviour, speaks of Himself as likened to a hen; O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not. That Jerusalem would not: let us be willing. She, when she abandoned her hen’s wings, was carried off by the powers of the air, presuming on her own strength, when she was weak: let us, confessing our want of strength, fly to the shelter of God’s wings: for He will be to us as a hen defending her young. There is nothing offensive in the name of the hen: for if you consider other birds, brethren, you will find many that hatch their eggs, and keep their young warm: but none that

weakens herself in sympathy with her chickens, as the hen does. We see swallows, sparrows, and storks outside their nests, without being able to decide whether they have young or no: but we know the hen to be a mother by the weakness of her voice, and the loosening of her feathers: she changes altogether from love for her chickens: she weakens herself because they are weak. Thus since we were weak, the Wisdom of God made Itself weak, when the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us, that we might hope under His wings.

6. (Ver. 4–6.) His truth shall surround thee with a shield. What are the wings, the same is the shield: since there are neither wings nor shield. If either were literally, how could the one be the same as the other? can wings be a shield or a shield wings? But all these expressions, indeed, are figuratively used through likenesses. If Christ were really a Stone, He could not be a Lion; if a Lion, He could not be a Lamb: but He is called both Lion, and Lamb, and Stone, and Calf, and any thing else of the sort, metaphorically, because He is neither Stone, nor Lion, nor Lamb, nor Calf, but Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all of us, for these are likenesses, not literal names. His truth shall be thy shield, it is said: a shield to assure us that He will not confound those whose trust is in themselves with those who hope in God. One is a sinner, and the other a sinner: but suppose one that presumes upon himself, is a despiser, confesses not his sins, and he will say, if my sins displeased God, He would not suffer me to live. But another dared not even raise his eyes, but beat upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. Both this was a sinner, and that: but the one mocked, the other mourned: the one was a despiser, the other a confessor, of his sins. But the truth of God, which respects not persons, discerns the penitent from him who denies his sin, the humble from the proud, him who presumes upon himself from him who presumes on God. His truth, then, shall surround thee with a shield.

7. Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; for the matter that walketh in darkness, nor for the ruin and the devil that is in the noon-day. These two clauses above correspond to the two below; Thou shalt not fear for the terror by night, from the arrow that flieth by day: both because of the terror by night, from the matter that

walketh in darkness: and because of the arrow that flieth by day, from the ruin of the devil of the noon-day. What ought to be feared by night, and what by day? When any man sins in ignorance, he sins, as it were, by night: when he sins in full knowledge, by day. The two former sins then are the lighter: the second are much heavier; but this is obscure, and will repay your attention, if, by God's blessing, I can explain it so that you may understand it. He calls the light temptation, which the ignorant yield to, terror by night: the light temptation, which assails men who well know, the arrow that flieth by day. What are light temptations? Those which do not press upon us so urgently, as to overcome us, but may pass by quickly if declined. Suppose these, again, heavy ones. If the persecutor threatens, and frightens the ignorant grievously, I mean those whose faith is as yet unstable, and know not that they are Christians that they may hope for a life to come; as soon as they are alarmed with temporal ills, they imagine that Christ has forsaken them, and that they are Christians to no purpose; they are not aware that they are Christians for this reason, that they may conquer the present, and hope for the future: the matter that walketh in darkness has found and seized them. But some there are who know that they are called to a future hope; that what God has promised is not of this life, or this earth; that all these temptations must be endured, that we may receive what God hath promised us for evermore; all this they know: when however the persecutor urges them more strenuously, and plies them with threats, penalties, tortures, at length they yield, and although they are well aware of their sin, yet they fall as it were by day.

8. But why does he say, at noon-day? The persecution is very hot; and thus the noon signifies the excessive heat. My beloved brethren, hear me prove this from the Scriptures. When our Lord was speaking of the sower who went forth to sow, and some of the seeds fell by the way-side, some upon stony places, and some among thorns, He condescended to explain the parable Himself; and when He came to the seed which fell on the stony places, He said thus, He that received the seed into stony places, the same are they that hear the word, and for a while rejoice at the word; and when tribulation ariseth because of the word, by and by they are offended. For what had He said of the seed which fell in these places? When the sun was up, He saith, they were scorched; and because they had no deep root, they

withered away. These then are they who for a while rejoice at the word, and when persecution hath arisen because of the word, they wither. Why do they wither? Because they had no firm root. What is that root? Love: in the Apostle’s words, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love; for, as the love of money is the root of all evil, so is love the root of all good. This ye know, and I have often repeated it; but why have I wished to call it to mind? That ye may understand this Psalm, in which the demon that is in the noon-day, represents the heat of a furious persecution: for these are our Lord’s words, The sun was up; and because they had no root, they withered away: and when explaining it, He applies it to those who are offended when persecution ariseth, because they have not root in themselves. We are therefore right in understanding by the demon that destroyeth in the noon-day, a violent persecution. Listen, beloved, while I describe the persecution, from which the Lord hath rescued His Church. At first, when the emperors and kings of the world imagined that they could extirpate from the earth the Christian name by persecution, they proclaimed, that any one who confessed himself a Christian, should be smitten. He who did not choose to be smitten, denied that he was a Christian, knowing the sin he was committing: the arrow that flieth by day reached him. But whoever regarded not the present life, but had a sure trust in a future one, avoided the arrow, by confessing himself a Christian; smitten in the flesh, he was liberated in the spirit: resting with God, he began peacefully to await the redemption of his body in the resurrection of the dead: he escaped from that temptation, from the arrow that flieth by day. “Whoever professes himself a Christian, let him be beheaded;” was as the arrow that flieth by day. The devil that is in the noon-day was not yet abroad, burning with a terrible persecution, and afflicting with great heat even the strong. For hear what followed; when the enemy saw that many were hastening to martyrdom, and that the number of fresh converts increased in proportion to that of the sufferers, they said among themselves, We shall annihilate the human race, so many thousands are there who believe in His Name; if we kill all of them, there will hardly be a survivor on earth. The sun then began to blaze, and to glow with a terrible heat. Their first edict had been, Whoever shall confess himself a Christian, let him be smitten. Their second was, Whoever shall have confessed himself a Christian, let him be tortured, and tortured even until he deny himself a Christian. Compare the arrow that flieth by day, and the devil that destroyeth at the noon. What was the arrow flying by day? that any confessing Christian should be smitten. What faithful believer would not avoid the arrow by a speedy death? But the second, viz. If he confess himself a Christian, let him not be slain, but tortured until he deny: if he deny, let him be dismissed: was the demon of the noon. Many therefore who denied not, failed amid the tortures; for they were tortured until they denied. But to those who persevered in professing Christ, what could the sword do, by killing the body at one stroke, and sending the soul to God? This was the result of protracted tortures also: yet who could be found able to resist such cruel and continued torments? Many failed: those, I believe, who presumed upon themselves, who dwelt not under the defence of the Most High, and under the shadow of the God of Heaven; who said not to the Lord, Thou art my lifter up: who trusted not beneath the shadow of His wings, but reposed much confidence in their own strength. They are thrown down by God, to shew them that it is He that protects them, He overrules their temptations, He allows so much only to befal them, as each person can sustain.

9. (Ver. 7.) Many then fell before the demon of the noon-day. Would ye know how many? He goes on, and says, A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. To whom, brethren, but to Christ Jesus, is this said? For our Lord Jesus is not only in Himself, but in us also. Remember those words, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? when no one touched Him, and yet He said, why persecutest thou Me? did He not account Himself in us? when He said, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me, did He not account Himself as in us? For the members, the body, and the head, are not separate from one another: the body and the head are the Church and her Saviour. How then is it said, A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand by thy right hand? Because they shall fall before the devil, that destroyeth at noon. It is a terrible thing, my brethren, to fall from beside Christ, from His right hand; but how shall they fall from beside Him? Why the one beside Him, the other at His right hand? Why a thousand beside Him, ten thousand at His right hand? Why a thousand beside Him? Because a thousand are fewer than the ten thousand who shall fall at His right hand. Who these are will soon be clear in Christ’s

name; for to some He promised that they should judge with Him, namely, to the Apostles, who left all things, and followed Him. Peter said to Him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee: and He gave them this promise, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Do not imagine that it was to them alone that this promise was made; for where, in that case, will the Apostle Paul sit, who laboured more abundantly than they all, if only twelve shall sit there? For St. Paul is the thirteenth: since out of the twelve, Judas fell, and in his place Matthias was ordained, as we find in the Acts of the Apostles. Thus the twelve thrones were filled up; but shall not he, who laboured more than all, have a seat? Or is the number twelve the perfection of the tribunal? For thousands shall sit in twelve seats. But some one may possibly ask, How do you prove to me that Paul will be among the judges? Hear his own words; Know ye not that we shall judge Angels? Thus he did not hesitate to account himself in the fulness of his faith among those who shall judge with Christ. Those judges then are the heads of the Church, the perfect. To such He said, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor. What means the expression, if thou wilt be perfect? it means, if thou wilt judge with Me, and not be judged. That young man went away very sorrowful: but many have done, and are doing this command: and these are they who shall judge with Him. But many promise themselves they shall judge with Christ, because they forsake all, and follow Christ: but they have a self-presumption, a certain swelling and pride, which God alone can discern, and they cannot escape the sickness of the noon-day, that is, the fall caused by the glowing heat of a too severe persecution. Many such at that period, who had distributed their all to the poor, and already promised themselves a seat beside Christ in judgment of the nations, failed amid their torments under the blazing fire of persecution, as before the demon of the noon-day, and denied Christ. These are they who have fallen beside Him: when about to sit with Christ for the judgment of the world, they fell.

10. I will now explain who are they who fall on the right hand of Christ. Ye know that when the judgment-seat is described, where those who have willed to be and actually become perfect, rooted and grounded in love, so that they cannot wither from the sun and the demon of the noon-day, shall judge with Christ, our Lord saith, Before Him shall be gathered all nations:

and He shall separate them from one another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from his goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on the left; and they shall be judged. There will be many who shall judge, but they will be fewer than those who will stand before the tribunal; the latter will be as ten thousand, the former as a thousand. What will He say to those placed on His right hand? I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat; I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; it is clear that these words will be addressed to those who have enough of this world's riches to discharge those humane offices. Yet both will reign together: for the one are as soldiers, the other as the provincial pay-masters who give the soldiers their supplies: both the soldier and the provincial, nevertheless, act under the same Emperor. The soldier is brave, the provincial devoted to his duties; the brave soldier fights with his prayers against the devil, the devoted provincial provides the soldier with his pay. Those placed on the right hand shall hear at last these words, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. There were then many, at that time when the sun of persecution and the demon of the noon-day glowed with terrible heat, there were many, who promised themselves that they should judge with Christ; yet they could not sustain the heat of persecution, and fell from beside Him; there were others there, who did not promise themselves the judicial seat; but through their works of charity promised themselves a place on the right hand of Christ, among those to whom He would say, 'Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' And because many have fallen from that hope of being judges, but yet many, many more from that of being on His right hand, the Psalmist thus addresses Christ, A thousand shall fall beside Thee, and ten thousand at Thy right hand. And since there shall be many, who regarded not all these things, with whom, as it were with His own limbs, Christ is one, he adds, But it shall not come nigh Thee. Were these words addressed to the Head alone? Surely not; surely neither (doth it come nigh) to Paul, nor Peter, nor all the Apostles, nor all the Martyrs, who failed not in their torments. What then do the words, it shall not come nigh, mean? Why were they thus tortured? The torture came nigh the flesh, but it did not reach the region of faith. Their faith then was far beyond the reach of the terrors threatened by their torturers. Let them torture, terror will not come nigh; let them torture, but they will mock the torture, putting their trust in Him who conquered before them, that the rest might conquer. And who conquer, except they who trust not in themselves? Attend, my beloved; for all he has said above refers to this. He shall say unto the Lord, Thou art my upholder and my refuge: and in Him will I trust. For He shall deliver me from the snare of the hunter. “He shall deliver me,” not I myself. He shall defend thee between His shoulders: but when? when thou shalt trust beneath His wings: His truth shall encompass thee with a shield. Because, then, thou hast trusted in Him, and reposed all thy hopes in Him, what follows? Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; for the matter that walketh in darkness, nor for the downfal and the devil that is in the noon-day. Who will not fear? He who trusts not in himself, but in Christ. But those who trust in themselves, although they even hope to judge at the side of Christ, although they hoped they should be at His right hand, as if He said to them, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; yet the devil that is at noon overtook them, the raging heat of persecution, terrifying with violence; and many fell from the hope of the seat of judgment, of whom it is said, A thousand shall fall beside thee; many too fell from the hope of reward for their duties, of whom it was said, And ten thousand at thy right hand. But this downfal and devil that is at noon-day shall not come nigh thee, that is, the Head and the body; for the Lord knows who are His.

11. Ver. 8. Nevertheless, with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the ungodly. What is this? Why nevertheless? Because the wicked were allowed to tyrannize over Thy servants, and to persecute them. Will they then have been allowed to persecute Thy servants with impunity? Not with impunity, for although Thou hast permitted them, and Thine own have thence received a brighter crown, nevertheless, with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the ungodly. For the evil which they willed, not the good they unconsciously were the agents of, will be recompensed them. All that is wanting is the eye of faith, by which we may see that they are raised for a time only, while they shall mourn for evermore; and to those into whose hands is given temporal power over the servants of God, it shall be said, Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. But if every man have but eyes in the sense in which it is said, With thine

eyes shalt thou behold, it is no unimportant thing to look upon the wicked flourishing in this life, and to have an eye to him, to consider what will become of him in the end, if he fail to reform his ways: for those who now would thunder upon others, will afterwards feel the thunderbolt themselves. Nevertheless, with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the ungodly.

12. Ver. 9. For Thou, Lord, art my hope. He has now come to the power which rescues him from falling by the downfall and the devil of the noon-day. For Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thy house of defence very high. What do the words very high mean? For many make their house of defence in God a mere refuge from temporal persecution; but the defence of God is on high, and very secret, whither thou mayest fly from the wrath to come. Within Thou hast set thine house of defence very high. There shall no evil happen unto Thee: neither shall any plague come nigh Thy dwelling. For He shall give His Angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways. They shall bear Thee in their hands: that Thou hurt not Thy foot against a stone. These are the very words which the devil said to our Lord when he tempted Him; but as they demand very careful consideration, let us defer them and the latter part of this Psalm until to-morrow, (as we owe you a discourse for to-morrow also,) to begin again at the same place, in order to avoid fatiguing you; lest, when we are anxious to clear up an obscure passage, any haste on our part may hinder your understanding it.

second discourse

1. I doubt not that you remember, beloved, such of you as were present yesterday at my sermon, that the shortness of time prevented my concluding the exposition of the Psalm, a part of which was thus deferred until this day. You who were here yesterday, remember this; you who were not, may now know it. On this account I have caused to be read to you the chapter in the Gospel, wherein our Lord was tempted from the words of this Psalm. On this account Christ was tempted, that the Christian may not be overcome by the tempter: He, as the Master, willed to be tempted in all things, because we are tempted: just as He willed to die, because we die: as He willed to rise again, since we too shall rise again. For all those works which He shewed forth in humanity, Who was made Man for us, He shewed forth on

our account, since He was God, through Whom we were made. And we have often impressed upon you, beloved, what we do not fear to reiterate frequently: in order that, since many of you possibly cannot read, either because they have no leisure, or know not letters, at least by constantly listening they may not forget their healthful faith. Certainly, by repeating them we may appear troublesome to some, while however we may be building up others. For we are well assured that there are many of retentive memory, and careful reading in Holy Writ, who know what we are about to say; and perhaps they wish us to say what they do not know. But if they are quicker, let them see that they are travelling with others not so quick; for when two persons of different speed are travelling in company, it is in the power of the quicker, and not of him who is more slow, to give or to deny his company; because if the swifter is pleased to do his utmost, the slower will not keep up with him, and so he must needs rein in his own speed, in order not to leave his fellow-traveller behind. What I have so often said, and now repeat, the Apostle says, To write the same things to you is not grievous, but for you it is safe,—is this. Our Lord Jesus Christ is as one whole perfect Man, both Head and Body: we acknowledge the Head in that Man Who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was buried, arose from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth on the right hand of the Father, whence we await His coming as Judge of the quick and the dead. This is the Head of the Church. The Body of this Head is the Church; not the Church of this country only, but of the whole world as well: not that of this age only, but from Abel himself down to those who shall to the end be born and believe in Christ, the whole assembly of the Saints, belonging to one city; which city is Christ's body, of which Christ is the Head. There, too, dwell the Angels, who are our fellow-citizens: we toil, because we are as yet pilgrims: while they within that city are awaiting our arrival. Letters have reached us too from that city, apart from which we are wandering: those letters are the Scriptures, which exhort us to live well. Why do I speak of letters only? The King himself descended, and became a path to us in our wanderings: that walking in Him, we may neither stray, nor faint nor fall among robbers, nor be caught in the snares which are set near our path. This character, then, we recognise in the whole Person of Christ, together with the Church: Himself alone born of the Virgin, Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, Mediator between God and man: Mediator for this purpose, that He may reconcile by Himself those who had fallen back: for a mediator is only between two persons. We had fallen away from the Majesty of God, and by our sins offended Him; His Son was sent as our Mediator, who by His blood might atone for our sins, by which we were separated from God: and placing Himself between us and the Almighty, might restore and reconcile us to Him, having turned away from Whom, we were held bound in our sins. He Himself is our Head, He is God, co-equal with the Father, the Word of God, by Whom all things were made: but God to create, Man to renew; God to make, Man to restore. Looking upon Him, then, let us hear the Psalm. Listen, beloved. This is the teaching and doctrine of this school, which may enable you to understand, not this Psalm only, but many, if ye keep in mind this rule. Sometimes a Psalm, and all prophecy as well, in speaking of Christ, praises the Head alone, and sometimes from the Head goes to the Body, that is, the Church, and without apparently changing the Person spoken of: because the Head is not separate from the Body, and both are spoken of as one. For observe, beloved, what I say. Clear, assuredly, to all is the Psalm in which it is said of our Lord, They pierced My hands and My feet: they numbered all My bones: they parted My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture. Even the Jews when they hear this are confounded: so evidently is it a prophecy of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. But our Lord Jesus Christ had no sins: yet in the commencement of that Psalm it is said, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me; and art so far from my health, and the words of my complaint? Ye see then what is said in the character of the Head, what in that of the Body. The sins belong to us: the suffering for us belongeth to the Head: but on account of His suffering for us, the sins which belong to us are remitted. Thus also it is in this Psalm.

2. I have treated of the first verses yesterday: but let us briefly run over them. (Ver. 1.) Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I took occasion, beloved brethren, to exhort you from these verses to put no trust in yourselves, but all in Him in Whom is our strength, for it is by means of His aid that we conquer, not by presuming in ourselves. The God of Heaven therefore defends us, if we say to the Lord what follows. (Ver. 2.) He shall say unto the Lord, Thou art my hope and my strong hold: my God, in Him will I trust. (Ver. 3.) For he

shall deliver thee from the snares of the hunter: and from a harsh word. I said, that many fearing a harsh word have fallen into the hunter’s snares; a man is insulted because he is a Christian, he becomes ashamed of his profession, and by means of a harsh word he falls into the snares of the devil. Again, a man is insulted, because among many Christians he lives a better life than they: and fearing the hard words of his insulting foe, he becomes a prey to the devil’s snares, so that he is not wheat on the floor, but rather follows the chaff. But he who trusts in God, is rescued from the snare of the hunters, and from the harsh word. But in what manner does God defend thee? He shall defend thee between His shoulders; that is, He will place thee before His breast, that He may defend thee under His wings: if thou acknowledge thy weakness, in order that as a weak chicken thou mayest fly beneath the wings of thy mother, lest thou be seized by the kite; for the powers of the air, the devil and his angels, are kites, and their wish is to seize upon our weakness. Let us then fly beneath the wings of our Mother the Divine Wisdom, since that Wisdom voluntarily weakened Herself on our behalf, when the Word was made flesh. Just as the hen weakeneth herself together with her chickens, that she may defend them beneath her wings: so our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, in order that He might undergo weakness with us, and protect us under His wings; made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man.

And thou shalt be safe under His wings: His truth shall encompass thee with a shield and buckler. (Ver. 5.) Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night. The temptations of ignorance are the terror by night: the sins of knowledge are the arrow that flieth by day: for ignorance is understood by night, and the making manifest by day. Some sin through ignorance, others with full knowledge: they that sin ignorantly are overthrown by the terror by night: they that sin with knowledge are stricken by the arrow that flieth by day. And as these things happen in the heavier persecutions, the further we advance, as if towards the noon, whoever falls under that heat will fall as it were by the devil that is at noon-day. And many have fallen by this heat, as I yesterday explained to you, my beloved, because in the heat of the persecution it was proclaimed, Let the Christians be tortured, until they deny themselves Christians. Whereas before when they confessed they were beheaded, they were afterwards tortured to make them deny: and as every one that was accused was tortured, until he denied, the confession of Christians was tortured, their denial acquitted. Great then was the fury of the persecutors. Whoever fell under that temptation, fell by the devil that was of the noon. And how many did fall! Many who were hoping that they might share their Lord's judgment-seat, fell from beside Him. Many too who hoped they should be on His right hand, as provincial paymasters among the holy soldiers of the Cross, to whom it should be said, I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat, (for there will be many on His right hand,) have fallen from that hope, and more of these than of those who hoped for the judgment-seat. For they are the fewer that shall judge with the Lord, and the more that shall stand before Him. But those who shall stand before Him, will be in different conditions. For some shall be on the left, others on the right: some that they may reign, others that they may be punished: some that they may hear the words, Come, ye blessed of My Father: others, that they may be addressed thus, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Of those then who fall by the downfall and the demon of the noon-day, A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand by thy right hand. But it shall not come nigh thee. What is this? The devil of the noon-day overthrows not thee. What wonder if it overthrow not the Head? But it overthrows not those either who hold so close to the Head, as the Apostle says, The Lord knoweth them that are His. For there are some so predestined, that the Lord knoweth who belong to His own body. Since then that temptation shall not approach them in such force as to overwhelm them, it is said concerning them, but it shall not come nigh thee. But lest those sinners who were allowed to practise such cruelties against the Christians, may be attended to by some weak persons, and lest it be said, Lo, what is the will of God, that such power is given to ungodly and wicked men against His servants? Consider a little with thy eyes, the eyes of faith, and thou shalt see the retribution upon sinners in the end, to whom at present only sufficient power is given to try thy faith. For these words follow: Yea, with thine eyes thou shalt behold, and see the reward of the ungodly.

3. Ver. 9–12. Because Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. There shall no evil come near unto Thee. These words are addressed to our Lord; Because Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. There shall no evil come near unto Thee: neither shall any scourge come nigh Thy dwelling. Next follow the words which ye have heard spoken by the devil: For He hath given His Angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways. They shall bear Thee in their hands, that Thou hurt not Thy foot against a stone. To whom does he say this? To whom did he say For Thou, Lord, art my help? I suppose it is no longer needful to explain to Christians who is the Lord in this passage. If they understand by it God the Father, how shall the Angels bear Him in their hands, lest He hurt His foot against a stone? You see this also, that our Lord Christ, when He was speaking of the body, suddenly begins to speak of the Head. Our Head is spoken of in one passage, in the words, For Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. For this cause, Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high, because Thou, Lord, art my hope. What means this? Attend, my beloved: Because Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. We need no longer wonder what the meaning of this is: for in the following verse it is added, that, because Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high, there shall no evil come near unto Thee: neither shall any scourge come nigh Thy dwelling. But we do not read in the Gospel, that at any time the Angels bore our Lord, that He might not hurt His foot against a stone: and yet we understand this. For these things have already past: and were prophesied with reason, since they were to happen. And we cannot say, Christ will come later, so that He may not strike His foot against a stone: for He will come to judge. Wherein then is the prophecy fulfilled? Attend, my beloved.

4. First listen to these verses: For Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. The human race knew that man died, but did not know that he arose again: it had therefore reason for fear, but not for hope. In order that He, then, Who for discipline awed them with the fear of death, might give them the hope of resurrection for the reward of eternal life, our Lord Jesus Christ was the first to rise from the dead. He died after many: He arose before all: He suffered that in dying, which many suffered before Him: He did that in His resurrection, which no one did before Him:

for when will the Church receive this, except in the end? What the members are to hope, has gone before in the Head: you know well, my beloved, their way of speaking with one another. Let then the Church say unto her Lord Jesus Christ, let the body say to its Head, For Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high: that is, Thou hast risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, that by ascending Thou mightest set Thine house of defence very high, and become my hope, when I despaired on earth, and believed not that I should rise again; I now believe, because my Head has ascended into heaven: where the Head has gone before, the limbs will in course follow. I imagine these words are now clear: they may be more clearly paraphrased thus. Thou hast arisen from the dead before me, that I might have a hope of resurrection which I had not before, so that I might hope I should follow Thee, whither Thou hast gone before me. These are the words of the Church to her Lord, of the body to its Head.

5. Do not then wonder if no evil shall happen unto thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. The flesh is the Lord's tabernacle. The Word dwelt in the flesh, and the flesh became a tabernacle for God: in that very tent our Chief carried on war on our behalf: in that very tent He was tempted by the enemy, lest His soldiers should faint. And because He shewed that very flesh to our eyes, because our eyes rejoice in that light, and are delighted with that visible illumination, because He made His flesh manifest to the eyes of all men, a Psalm says, He hath set His tabernacle in the sun. What is, in the sun? Openly, clearly, in the light of this world; that is, in the light which overspread the earth from heaven, there He hath placed His dwelling. But how could He set His tent there, if He were not as a bridegroom coming forth from his chamber? for this further description follows, He cometh forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course. The tabernacle is the very same as the spouse: the Word the Bridegroom, and the bridal chamber the Virgin's womb. And what saith the Apostle? And they too shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. And what are our Lord's own words in the Gospel? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. One instead of two, of the Word and the flesh, one Man, one God. But this tabernacle of our Lord's felt the scourge in this world, as it is well known, the Lord was scourged. Does It feel the lash in heaven? And

wherefore not? Because He hath set His house of defence very high, that He might be our hope; and no evil shall come near unto him; neither shall any plague come nigh His dwelling. He is far above all the heavens: but His feet rest upon the earth: His head is in heaven: His body on earth. But when His feet were being scourged, and trampled down by Saul, the Head cried out, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Lo, no man persecutes the Head: lo, the Head is in heaven: since "Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him:" no evil shall come near unto Thee: neither shall any plague come nigh Thy dwelling. But that we may not imagine that the Head is cut off from the body: for it is separated in point of place, but joined in feeling; that very communion of feeling cried from Heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? He prostrated Saul with a voice of reproach, while He raised him by the hand of pity. He who persecuted the body of Christ, became a member of Christ: that thus he might feel therein what he had inflicted before.

6. What then, my brethren, what is said of our Head? For Thou, Lord, art my hope: Thou hast set Thine house of defence very high. There shall no evil come near unto Thee: neither shall any plague come nigh Thy dwelling. Of this we have spoken, for He hath given His angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways. You heard these words but now, when the Gospel was being read; attend therefore. Our Lord, after He was baptized, fasted. Why was He baptized? That we might not scorn to be baptized. For when John said to our Lord, Comest Thou to me to be baptized? I ought to be baptized by Thee; and our Lord replied, Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness; He wished to fulfil all humility, so that He should be washed, Who had no defilement. Why this? On account of the pride of those who were to come after Himself. Suppose any catechumen, who perchance in his learning and piety excels many of the faithful: he finds many baptized who are ignorant, many who live not as he does himself, in such continence and chastity: perhaps he does not think of marriage, while he sees another of the faithful, if not in fornication, at least using his marriage license too freely; he may perhaps lift up the neck of pride, and say, what need have I of baptism, to receive what this man has, whom I already surpass, both in my life and knowledge? To such a one our Lord would say, 'How and how far hast thou surpassed him? as much as I

surpass thee? The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. Do not be so puffed up, as to dispense with baptism. Thou shalt seek the baptism of the Lord, I sought that of a servant.’ Our Lord, then, was baptized, and after baptism He was tempted; He fasted forty days, a number which has, as I have often mentioned, a deep meaning. All things cannot be explained at once, lest needful time be too much taken up. After forty days He was an hungred. He could have fasted without ever feeling hunger; but then how could He be tempted? or had He not overcome the tempter, how couldest thou learn to struggle with him? He was hungry; and then the tempter said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Was it a great thing for our Lord Jesus Christ to make bread out of stones, when He satisfied so many thousands with five loaves? He made bread out of nothing. For whence came that quantity of food, which could satisfy so many thousands? The sources of that bread are in the Lord’s hands. This is nothing wonderful; for He Himself made out of five loaves bread enough for so many thousands, Who also every day out of a few seeds raises up on earth immense harvests. These are the miracles of our Lord: but from their constant operation they are disregarded. What then, my brethren, was it impossible for the Lord to create bread out of stones? He made men even out of stones, in the words of John the Baptist himself, God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Why then did He not so? That he might teach thee how to answer the tempter, so that if thou wast reduced to any straits and the tempter suggested, if thou wast a Christian and belongedst to Christ, would He desert thee now? would He not have sent thee help? Possibly the Physician has still the knife in His hand, and therefore leaves thee: yet He does not forsake thee: just as He listened not to the prayers of Paul, because He did listen to him. For Paul says, that he was not heard when he complained of the messenger of Satan, who was a thorn in his flesh, by whom he says he was buffetted. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. As if a man said to his physician, who had given him a blister, This plaister is troublesome to me: I pray you take it away. And the physician replies, No; you must let it remain for some time; you cannot otherwise recover. The physician did not listen to his patient with a view to consult his pleasure, but his health. Be therefore strong, my brethren: and when ye are tempted by some want, beneath the scourge and the instruction of God, while He is both preparing and keeping for you an eternal inheritance, let not the devil suggest to you, If thou wert righteous, would He not send thee bread by means of the raven, as He did to Elias? Where is that thou hast read, I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread? Do thou answer the devil, The Scripture speaks truth, I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread; for I have a bread of mine own that thou knowest not of. What bread? Listen to our Lord; Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Dost thou think the word of God bread? If the Word of God, through which all things were made, was not bread, He would not say, I am the bread which came down from heaven. Thou hast therefore learnt to answer the tempter, when pressed with hunger.

7. What, if he tempt thee in these words: If thou wast a Christian, thou wouldest do miracles, as many Christians have done? Thou, deceived by a wicked suggestion, wouldest tempt the Lord thy God, so as to say to Him, If I am a Christian, and am before Thine eyes, and Thou dost account me at all in the number of Thine own, let me also do something like the many works which Thy Saints have done? Thou hast tempted God, as if thou wert not a Christian, unless thou didst this. Many who desired such things have fallen. For that Simon the sorcerer desired such gifts of the Apostles, when he wished to buy the Holy Spirit for money. He loved the power of working miracles, but loved not the imitation of humility. Thus, when some disciple, or some one from the crowd, wished to follow the Lord, from witnessing the miracles which He did: the Lord saw that he was proud, and sought not the path of humility, but the puffing up of power, and said, The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head. The foxes have holes in thee: the birds of the air have nests in thee. The foxes mean deceit: the birds of the air pride: for as the birds seek the regions above, so do the proud: and as foxes have treacherous holes, so have also all plotters against others. What then was our Lord’s answer? Pride and deceit may dwell in thee: Christ hath not where to dwell in thee: where to lay His head, because the laying of His head is the humility of Christ: unless He laid down His head, thou wouldest not be justified. Even

His disciples, when they desired such things, and were already wishing for a seat in His kingdom, before they gained the path of humility, when He was asked by the mother of His disciples, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, the other on Thy left, were seeking power: but through the suffering of humility we come to the power of the kingdom. Our Lord saith, Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? Why do ye think of the loftiness of the kingdom, and yet imitate not My humility? What then, if he tempt thee thus, “work miracles?” that thou mayest not tempt God, what shouldest thou answer? What our Lord answered. The devil said to Him, Cast Thyself down; for it is written, He shall give His Angels charge concerning Thee; and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone. If Thou shalt cast Thyself down, Angels shall receive Thee. And it might indeed, my brethren, happen, if our Lord had cast Himself down, the attending Angels would receive our Lord’s flesh; but what does He say to him? It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Thou thinkest Me a man. For the devil came to Him with this view, that he might try whether He were the Son of God. He saw His Flesh; but His might appeared in His works: the Angels had borne witness. He saw that He was mortal, so that he might tempt Him, that by Christ’s temptation the Christian might be taught. What then is written? Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Let us not then tempt the Lord, so as to say, If we belong to Thee, let us work a miracle.

8. Let us return to the words of the Psalm. He hath given His Angels charge over Thee, to keep Thee in all Thy ways. They shall bear Thee in their hands, lest at any time Thou hurt Thy foot against a stone. Christ was raised up in the hands of Angels, when He was taken up into heaven: not that, if Angels had not sustained Him, He would have fallen: but because they were attending on their King. Say not, Those who sustained Him are better than He Who was sustained. Are then cattle better than men, because they sustain the weakness of men? And we ought not to speak thus either; for if the cattle withdraw their support, their riders fall. But how ought we to speak of it? For it is said even of God, Heaven is My throne. Because then heaven supports Him, and God sits thereon, is therefore heaven the better? Thus also in this Psalm we may understand it of the service of the Angels: it does not pertain to any infirmity in our Lord, but to the honour they pay,

and to their service. But our Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead. Wherefore? Hear the Apostle: He was delivered for our offences, and rose again for our justification. Also the Gospel saith of the Holy Ghost: The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. What is the glorification of Jesus? He arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. Glorified by God by His ascent into heaven, He sent His Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. But in the Law, in Exodus the book of Moses, from the day when the lamb was slain and eaten, fifty days are numbered; and the Law was given, written by the finger of God on tables of stone. What the finger of God is, the Gospel explaineth to us; for the finger of God is the Holy Ghost. How do we prove this? Our Lord, when answering those who accused Him of casting out devils in the name of Beelzebub, saith, If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God; and another Evangelist, in relating the same saying, saith, If I with the finger of God cast out devils. What therefore is in one stated clearly, is darkly expressed in another. Thou didst not know what was the finger of God, but another Evangelist explains it by terming it the Spirit of God. The Law then written by the finger of God was given on the fiftieth day after the slaughter of the lamb, and the Holy Ghost descended on the fiftieth day after the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. The lamb was slain, the Passover was celebrated, the fifty days were completed, and the Law was given. But that Law was to cause fear, not love: but that fear might be changed into love, He Who was truly righteous was slain: of Whom that lamb whom the Jews were slaying was the type. He arose from the dead: and from the day of our Lord’s Passover, as from that of the slaying of the Paschal lamb, fifty days are counted; and the Holy Ghost descended, now in the fulness of love, not in the punishment of fear. Why have I said this? For this then our Lord arose, and was glorified, that He might send His Holy Spirit. And I said long ago that this was so, because His head is in heaven, His feet on earth. If His head is in heaven, His feet on earth; what means our Lord’s feet on earth? Our Lord’s saints on earth. Who are our Lord’s feet? The Apostles sent throughout the whole world. Who are our Lord’s feet? All the Evangelists, in whom our Lord travelleth over all nations. It was to be feared lest the Evangelists should be hurt against a stone: for when He was set in Heaven as the head, the feet which were toiling upon the ground might be hurt against a stone. What stone? The Law given on the tables of stone. That they might not therefore be impeached before the Law, not having received grace, and be held accursed in the Law: for this liability to the Law is that very stumbling against the stone: those whom the Law held condemned, the Lord absolved, that they might no more hurt their feet against the Law. That the feet of this Head might not incur guilt of the Law, the Holy Ghost was sent to inspire love, and to release from fear. Fear did not fulfil the Law, love fulfilled it. Men feared, but they fulfilled not: they loved, and they fulfilled. How did they fear, and yet not fulfil? how did they love, and fulfil? Men used to fear, and to plunder others' goods: they loved, and they gave away their own. We need not therefore wonder that our Lord was raised up to heaven by the hands of Angels, that His foot might not dash against a stone: lest those who on earth toiled in his body, while they were travelling over the whole world might become guilty of the Law, He took from them fear, and filled them with love. Through fear Peter thrice denied Him, for he had not yet received the Holy Ghost: afterwards, when he had received the Holy Spirit, he began to preach with confidence. He who at the words of the maid-servant thrice denied, after he had received the Holy Ghost, confessed, amid the stripes of the rulers, Him Whom he had denied. This is no wonder: for the Lord dissolved that threefold fear by threefold love. For when He arose from the dead He said to Peter, Peter, lovest thou Me? He said not, Fearest thou Me? For if he still feared, he would be hurting his feet against the stone. Lovest thou Me? He saith. Peter replies, Thou knowest that I love Thee. Once was enough. Perhaps it might satisfy me, who see not the heart; how much more would it suffice the Lord, Who saw how with his whole soul Peter said, I love Thee. It is not enough for our Lord, to answer once: He asketh a second time, and Peter answereth: He asketh a third time; and now Peter, wearied, as if our Lord doubted of his love, Lord, he saith, Thou knowest all things: Thou knowest that I love Thee. But our Lord so dealt with him, as if He said, thrice thou hast denied Me through fear: thrice confess Me through love. With that love and that charity He filled His disciples. Why? Because He hath set His house of defence very high: because when glorified He sent the Holy Ghost, He released the faithful from the guilt of the Law, that His feet might not dash against a stone.

9. The rest is clear, my brethren, for it has often been treated of. (Ver. 13.) Thou shalt go upon the asp and the basilisk; the lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet. Ye know who the serpent is, and how the Church treadeth upon him, as she is not conquered, because she is on her guard against his cunning. And after what manner he is a lion and a dragon, I believe you know also, beloved. The lion openly rages, the dragon lies secretly in covert: the devil hath each of these forces and powers. When the Martyrs were being slain, it was the raging lion: when heretics are plotting, it is the dragon creeping beneath us. Thou hast conquered the lion; conquer also the dragon: the lion hath not crushed thee, let not the dragon deceive thee. Let us prove that it was the lion, when he openly did rage. Peter exhorting the Martyrs saith, Know ye not that your adversary the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour? The lion openly raging sought whom he might devour: how does the dragon plot against us? By means of heretics. In fear of these, Paul, lest the Church should by them be corrupted from her virginity of faith, which she beareth in her heart, saith, I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ; but I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your mind should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. A few women in the Church have bodily virginity: but the virginity of the heart all the faithful have. In the very matter of faith he feared that the heart’s virginity would be corrupted by the devil: and those who have lost it, are uselessly virgins in their bodies. What does a woman who is corrupt in heart preserve in her body? Thus a Catholic married woman is before a virgin heretic. For the first is not indeed a virgin in her body, but the second has become married in her heart; and married not unto God as her husband, but unto the dragon. But what shall the Church do? Thou shalt go upon the asp and the basilisk. The basilisk is the king of serpents, as the devil is the king of wicked spirits. The lion and the dragon thou shalt tread under thy feet.

10. These are the words of God to the Church. (Ver. 14.) Because he hath set his love in me, therefore will I deliver him. Not only therefore the Head, which now sits in heaven, because He hath set His house of defence very high, to which no evil shall happen, neither shall any plague come nigh His dwelling; but we also, who are toiling on earth, and are still living in

temptations, whose steps are feared for, lest they fall into snares, may hear the voice of the Lord our God consoling us, and saying to us, Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him up, because he hath known my name.

11. (Ver. 15.) He shall call upon me, and I will hear him: yea, I am with him in trouble. Fear not when thou art in trouble, as if the Lord were not with thee. Let faith be with thee, and God is with thee in thy trouble. There are waves on the sea, and thou art tossed in thy bark, because Christ sleepeth. Christ slept in the ship, while the men were perishing. If thy faith sleep in thy heart, Christ is as it were sleeping in thy ship: because Christ dwelleth in thee through faith, when thou beginnest to be tossed, awake Christ sleeping: rouse up thy faith, and thou shalt be assured that He deserts thee not. But thou thinkest thou art forsaken, because He rescueth thee not when thou thyself dost wish. He delivered the Three Children from the fire? Did He, Who did this, desert the Maccabees? God forbid! He delivered both of these: the first bodily, that the faithless might be confounded; the last spiritually, that the faithful might imitate them. I am with him in trouble: I will deliver him, and bring him to honour.

12. (Ver. 16.) With length of days will I satisfy him. What is length of days? Eternal life. Brethren, imagine not that length of days is spoken of in the same sense as days are said to be long in summer, short in winter. Hath he such days to give us? That length is one that hath no end, eternal life, that is promised us in long days. And truly, since this sufficeth, with reason he saith, will I satisfy him. What is long in time, if it hath an end, satisfieth us not: for that reason it should not be even called long. And if we are covetous, we ought to be covetous of eternal life: long for such a life, as hath no end. Lo, a line in which our covetousness may be extended. Dost thou wish money without limit? Long for eternal life without limit. Dost thou wish that thy possession may have no end? Seek for eternal life. With length of days will I satisfy him.

13. I will shew him my salvation. Nor is this, my brethren, to be briefly passed over. I will shew him my salvation: He means, I will shew him Christ Himself. Why? Was He not seen on earth? What great thing hath He to shew us? But He did not appear such as we shall see Him. He appeared

in that shape in which those who saw Him crucified Him: behold, those who saw Him, crucified Him: we have not seen Him, yet we have believed. They had eyes, have not we? yea, we too have the eyes of the heart: but, as yet we see through faith, not by sight. When will it be sight? When shall we, as the Apostle saith, see Him face to face? which God promiseth us as the high reward of all our toils. Whatever thou toilest in, thou toilest for this purpose, that thou mayest see Him. Some great thing it is we are to see, since all our reward is seeing; and our Lord Jesus Christ is that very great sight. He Who appeared humble, will Himself appear great, and will rejoice us, as He is even now seen of His Angels. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Listen to the Lord Himself, Who gave this promise, saying in the Gospel, He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him. And as if it were asked of Him, And what wilt Thou give to him who loveth Thee? He answereth, I will manifest Myself to him. Let us long for, and let us love Him: let us burn with love toward Him, if we are His betrothed. Our husband is absent, let us wait for Him: He Whom we are longing for will come. He hath given such a pledge, let not the spouse fear lest she be forsaken by her Husband. He doth not forfeit His pledge. What pledge hath He given? He hath poured out His blood. What pledge hath He given? He hath sent the Holy Ghost. Will the Husband forfeit such pledges? If He loved us not, He would not give such pledges. He loveth us now. O that we could love Him as He doth? “No man hath greater love, that that he lay down his life for his friends:” and how can we lay down our lives for Him? What doth it profit Him, since He hath set His house of defence very high, nor doth any scourge come nigh His dwelling? But what saith John? Even as Christ laid down His life for us, we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Each man who layeth down his life for his brother, layeth it down for Him: just as in feeding his brother, he is feeding Christ. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto Me. Let us love and imitate Him: let us run after his ointments, as is said in the Song of Solomon: Because of the savour of thy good ointments, we will run after thee. For He came, and gave forth a savour that filled the world. Whence was that fragrance? From heaven. Follow then towards heaven, if thou do not answer falsely when it is said, Lift up your hearts, lift up your thoughts, your love, your hope: that it may not rot upon the earth. Thou darest not put wheat on the damp earth, lest it rot; because thou hast toiled and reaped, thou hast threshed and winnowed it. Dost thou seek a spot for thy wheat, and seekest thou not a place for thy heart? seekest thou not a place for thy treasure? Do whatever thou canst on earth; spend, thou shalt not lose, but store up. And who keepeth thy treasure? Christ, Who also keepeth thee. He knoweth how to keep thee; knoweth He not how to keep thy treasure? But why doth He wish that thou change the place of thy treasure, except that thou mayest change the place of thy heart? For no man concerneth himself except about his treasure. How many are there here who are now my listeners, and yet their heart is no where but in their money bags? Ye are on earth, because what ye love is on earth: let that be sent to heaven, and there will be thy heart. For wherever thy treasure is, there will be thy heart also.

PSALM 92

A Sermon to the people, preached on Saturday.

1. Listen to the Psalm: may the Lord grant to us to open the mysteries herein contained: whiles that, for remedy of weariness, they are diversely and variously explained. For God teacheth us no other hymn but that of faith, hope, and charity: that our faith may be firm in Himself, as long as we do not see Him, believing in Him Whom we do not see, that we may rejoice when we see Him, and the appearance of His light may succeed to our faith, when it will no longer be said to us, Believe what thou seest not; but, rejoice that thou seest. Let our hope also be immutable, and fixed in Him, let it not totter and fluctuate, let it not be tossed about; as God Himself, in Whom it is fixed, cannot be tossed. For now it is called hope: but then it will not be hope, but reality. For as long as that which is hoped is not seen, is it called hope, in the Apostle’s words, But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Patience then only is needful, until what is promised shall come. But no one is patient in a good estate. When patience is required of a man, he is in adversity: when it is said, Be patient, endure, sustain: it is trouble, under which God wills thee to be courageous, enduring, of long suffering, patient. But does He Who has promised deceive in ought? The physician draws his knife to cut the wound, and says to him whom he is about to cut, Be patient, sustain, endure: in pain he demands patience, but after it he promises health. And he who endures pain under the physician’s knife, unless he sets before his mind the health which he has not yet, fails under the pain which he suffers. There are therefore many evils in this world, within, and without: they never cease: stumbling-blocks abound: no one feels them, except he who treads the path of God. He is told in all the pages of divine Scripture to endure the present, hope for the future, love Whom he seeth not, that he may embrace Him when he seeth Him. For charity, which is joined in the third place to faith and hope, is above faith and hope: because faith is of things which are not seen; but it will be sight, when they shall be seen: and hope is of what is not

possessed: which, when the thing itself reaches us, will not be any longer hope, because we shall possess it, not hope for it: but charity knoweth not but to increase more and more. For if we love Whom we see not, how shall we love when we see Him? Let then our longing increase. We are not Christians, except on account of a future life: let no one hope for present blessings, let no one promise himself the happiness of the world, because he is a Christian: but let him use the happiness he hath, as he may, in what manner he may, when he may, as far as he may. When it is present, let him give thanks for the consolation of God: when it is wanting, let him give thanks to the Divine justice. Let him always be grateful, never ungrateful: let him be grateful to his Father, Who soothes and caresses him: and grateful to his Father when He chasteneth him with the scourge, and teacheth him: for He ever loveth, whether He caress or threaten: and let him say what ye have heard in the Psalm: (ver. 1.) It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord; and to sing praises unto Thy Name, Thou Most Highest.

2. This Psalm is entitled, a Psalm to be sung on the Sabbath day. Lo, this day is the Sabbath, which the Jews at this period observe by a kind of bodily rest, languid and luxurious. They abstain from labours, and give themselves up to trifles; and though God ordained the Sabbath, they spend it in actions which God forbids. Our rest is from evil works, theirs from good; for it is better to plough than to dance. They abstain from good, but not from trifling, works. God proclaims to us a Sabbath. What sort of Sabbath? First consider, where it is. It is in the heart, within us; for many are idle with their limbs, while they are disturbed in conscience. Every bad man cannot have a Sabbath: for his conscience is never at rest, he must needs live in turmoil; but he who has a good conscience, is tranquil; and that very tranquillity is the Sabbath of the heart. For it listeneth to the promises of the Lord: and if it toils in the present time, it expands in the hope of the future, and every cloud of sorrow is calmed; as the Apostle saith, Rejoicing in hope. That very joy in the tranquillity of our hope, is our Sabbath. This is the subject of praise and of song in this Psalm, how a Christian man is in the Sabbath of his own heart, that is, in the quiet, tranquillity, and serenity of his conscience, undisturbed; hence he tells us

here, whence men are wont to be disturbed, and he teaches thee to keep Sabbath in thine own heart.

3. The first thing is, that thou thyself, if thou hast made any advancement, praise God for that wherein thou hast advanced, because it is His gift, and not thy deserving. Hence begin the Sabbath, by not attributing these gifts to thyself, as if thou hadst not received what thou hast received: nor excusing thyself for the evil that thou doest, because it is thy own. For perverse and agitated men, who do not keep Sabbath, ascribe their evil deeds to God, their good ones to themselves. If he hath done ought of good, he saith, I did it: if of evil, he seeketh whom he may accuse, that he may not confess to God. And what is this? He seeketh whom he may accuse? If he is not very wicked, he hath Satan at hand to accuse: he saith, Satan did it, he persuaded me: as if Satan had the power of compelling him. He hath indeed cunning in persuading. But if Satan were speaking, and God were silent, thou wouldest have an occasion for self-excuse: but thy ears are between God admonishing, and the serpent suggesting. Why are they turned in one direction, and turned away from the other? Satan ceaseth not to persuade evil: but neither doth God cease to admonish us to good. But Satan doth not compel thee against thy will: it is in thy power to consent, or not to consent. If thou hast done any thing wrong by Satan's persuasion, dismiss Satan, accuse thyself, that by thy self-accusation thou mayest deserve the mercy of God. Dost thou wish to accuse one who hath no pardon? Accuse thyself, and thou receivest indulgence. Besides, many do not accuse Satan, but their fate. My fate led me, saith one: when you ask him, why did you do it? why did you sin? he replies, by my evil fate. Lest he should say, I did it; he points to God as the source of his sin: with his tongue he blasphemes. He saith not this indeed openly as yet, but listen, and see that he saith this. You ask of him, what is fate: and he replies, evil stars. You ask, who made, who appointed the stars; he can only answer, God. It follows, then, that whether he doth so directly or indirectly, still he accuseth God, and when God punisheth sins, he maketh God the author of his own sins. It cannot be that God punishes what He hath wrought: He punisheth what thou doest, that He may set free what He hath wrought. But sometimes, setting aside every thing else, they attack God directly: and when they sin, they say, God willed this; if God had not willed it, I should not have sinned. Does He warn thee

for this, that not only He may not be listened to, to keep thee from sin, but even be accused because thou dost sin? What then doth this Psalm teach us? It is a good thing to confess unto the Lord. What is to confess unto the Lord? In both cases: both in thy sins, because thou hast done them; and in thy good works, confess unto the Lord, because He hath done them. Then shalt thou sing unto the Name of God, the Most Highest: seeking the glory of God, not thine own; His Name, not thine. For if thou seekest the Name of God, He also seeketh thy name; but if thou hast neglected the Name of God, He also doth blot out thine. But how did I say, He seeketh thy name? As He said to His disciples when they came, after He sent them to preach the Gospel. After they had wrought many miracles, and had cast out devils in the Name of Christ, they said on their return, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us in Thy Name. They said, indeed, in Thy Name; but He saw in them that they were rejoicing in their glorification, and were puffing up themselves with pride, because they had power given them to drive out devils. He saw that they were seeking their own glory, and said to them, seeking and indeed keeping in store their names in Himself, In this rejoice not; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. Behold, where thou hast a name, if thou neglect not the Name of God. Sing, therefore, on the psaltery, unto the Name of God, that thy name may be stablished before God. But what is a psaltery, my brethren? It is a kind of instrument, which has strings. Our work is our song: whoever does good works, playeth with a psaltery unto God: whoever confesses with the mouth, singeth unto God. Sing therefore with thy mouth: play unto him with thy works. For what purpose?

4. Ver. 2. To tell of Thy mercy early in the morning, and of Thy truth in the night season. What is the meaning of this; that the mercy of God is to be told us in the morning, and in the night the truth of God? The morning is, when it is well with us; the night, the sadness of tribulation. What then did he say in brief? When thou art prosperous, rejoice in God, for it is His mercy. Now, perhaps thou wouldest say, If I rejoice in God, when I am prosperous, because it is His mercy; what am I to do when I am in sorrow, in tribulation? It is His mercy, when I am prosperous; is it then His cruelty, when I am in adversity? If I praise His mercy when it is well with me, am I then to exclaim against His cruelty when it is ill? No. But when it is well,

praise His mercy: when ill, praise His truth: because He scourgeth sins, He is not unjust. Daniel was in the night-season, when he was praying: for he was in the captivity of Jerusalem, he was in the power of enemies. Then the Saints suffered many evils: then he himself was cast into the den of lions; then the Three Children were thrown into the fire. The people of Israel suffered these evils in the captivity: it was the night-season. During the night Daniel confessed the truth of God: he said in his prayer, We have sinned, and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee: but unto us confusion of face. He told of the truth of God during the night-season. What is it to tell of the truth of God in the night-season? Not to accuse God, because thou sufferest aught of evil: but to attribute it to thy sins, His correction: to tell of His lovingkindness early in the morning, and of His truth in the night-season. When thou dost tell of His lovingkindness early in the morning, and of His truth in the night-season, thou dost always praise God, always confess to God, and sing unto His Name.

5. Ver. 3. Upon a psaltery of ten strings, with a song, and upon the harp. Ye have not heard of the psaltery of ten strings for the first time: it signifies the ten commandments of the Law. But we must sing upon that psaltery, and not carry it only. For even the Jews have the Law: but they carry it: they sing not. Who are they who sing? Those who work. This is but little: those who work in a sullen spirit, do not yet sing. Who are they who sing? Those who do well with cheerfulness: for there is cheerfulness in singing. And what saith the Apostle? For God loveth a cheerful giver. Whatever thou doest, do with cheerfulness: then thou dost a good work and well. But if thou doest it in sullenness, it is done with thee, thou dost it not: and thou rather carriest the instrument, thou dost not sing. Upon a psaltery of ten strings, with a song, and upon the harp. This means, in word and deed; ‘with a song,’ in word; ‘upon the harp,’ in work. If thou speakest words alone, thou hast, as it were, the song only, and not the harp: if thou workest, and speakest not, thou hast the harp only. On this account both speak well and do well, if thou wouldest have the song together with the harp.

6. (Ver. 4.) For Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy works; and I will rejoice in giving praise for the operations of Thy hands. Ye see what he

saith. Thou hast made me living well, Thou hast formed me: if by chance I do aught of good, I will rejoice in the work of Thy hands: as the Apostle saith, For we are His workmanship, created unto good works. For unless He formed thee to good works, thou wouldest not know any works but evil. He who speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: this the Gospel saith. Every sin is a lie; for every thing that is against the law, and against truth, is called a lie. What then doth He say? He that speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; that is, he that sinneth, sinneth of his own. Observe the sentence in converse. For if he who speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own: it follows that he who speaketh the truth, speaketh from God. Therefore it is said in another place, let God be true, but every man a liar. Thou art not told in this passage, Go, lie without fear, as thou art a man: nay, behold thyself a man, because thou liest; and that thou mayest be true, drink in truth, that thou mayest break forth of God, and that thou mayest be true. Because thou canst not have truth from thy own self, it remains that thou drink it thence, whence it floweth: as if thou hast gone back from the light, thou art in darkness: as a stone glows not with its own heat, but either from the sun or fire, and if thou withdraw it from the heat, it cools: there it appears, that the heat was not its own; but it became heated either by the sun or by fire: thus thou also, if thou withdraw from God, wilt become cold; if thou approach God, thou wilt warm: as the Apostle saith, fervent in spirit. Also what saith he of the light? If thou approach Him, thou wilt be in light; therefore saith the Psalm, Look upon Him, and be lightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed. Because therefore thou canst do no good, unless lightened by the light of God, and warmed by the Spirit of God; when thou shalt see thyself working well, confess unto God, and say what the Apostle saith; say unto thyself, that thou be not puffed up, For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Here therefore he praiseth God, and teacheth us a good confession: Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through Thy works; and I will rejoice in giving praise for the operations of Thy hands.

7. What are we to say of those who live bad but prosperous lives? For hence he who loveth the Sabbath hath a disturbed mind; he seeth himself daily engaged in good works, and toiling in narrow circumstances, perhaps in family poverty, perhaps in hunger, thirst, and nakedness, perhaps doing

good works in prison, and the man who sent him into prison living a wicked life, and glorying in it; a most wicked thought against God entereth his heart, and he saith, God, wherefore do I serve Thee? why do I obey Thy words? I have not seized another's goods, I have not committed theft, I have not slain a man, I have not coveted any man's possession, I have not borne false witness against any one, I have not done disrespect to my father or mother, I have not bowed down before idols, I have not taken the Lord's Name in vain: I have kept myself from sin. He enumerates the ten strings, that is, the ten precepts of the Law, and questioneth himself in each, and seeth that he hath not sinned, not in one: and he is sorrowful that he suffereth such evils. And those who, I do not say, touch some of the strings, but touch not even the psaltery itself, and work no good, consult idols, and perhaps then appear Christians, when their family suffereth no evil, but when there is any tribulation there, they run to some soothsayer, diviner, or astrologer? Christ's name is repeated before him: he sneers, and screws his mouth. It is said to him, Believer, dost thou consult an astrologer? He replieth, Begone from me: he discovered to me my goods, which I had otherwise lost, and remained in wailing. Good man, dost thou not sign thyself with the cross of Christ? Even the law prohibits all these things. Rejoicest thou that thou hast found thy goods: art thou not sad that thou art thyself lost? How much better would it be that thy coat should perish than thy soul? He sneers at all this: he is insulting to his parents, he hateth his enemy, he pursueth him even unto death: he stealeth when he hath found opportunity, or ceaseth not to bear false witness; he layeth wait against his neighbour's wife, he coveteth his neighbour's goods: he doeth all these things, and flourisheth in riches, in honours, in the good things of this world. That wretched man who doeth good, and suffereth evils, seeth him, becometh disturbed, and saith, O God, the wicked, I imagine, please Thee, and Thou hatest the good, and lovest those who work iniquity. If he is excited, and consenteth to this thought, he will lose the Sabbath from his heart: he now beginneth not to listen to this psaltery; he hath departed thence, he singeth without reason, It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord; and to sing praises unto Thy Name, O Most Highest. The Sabbath being now lost in the inner man, and the tranquillity of his heart being shut out, and good thoughts repelled, he now beginneth to imitate him whom he seeth flourishing amid his evil deeds; and turneth himself also to evil works.

But God is long-suffering, because He is eternal, and He knoweth the day of His own judgment, where He weigheth all things.

8. Teaching us this, what saith he? (ver. 5.) O Lord, how glorious are Thy works: Thy thoughts are made very deep. Verily, my brethren, there is no sea so deep as these thoughts of God, Who maketh the wicked flourish, and the good suffer: nothing so profound, nothing so deep: therein every unbelieving soul is wrecked, in that depth, in that profundity. Dost thou wish to cross this depth? Remove not from the wood of Christ’s Cross: thou shalt not sink: hold thyself fast to Christ. What do I mean by this, hold fast to Christ? It was for this reason that He chose to suffer on earth Himself. Ye have heard, while the prophet was being read, how He did not turn away His back from the smiters, and His face from the spittings of men, how He turned not His cheek from their hands; wherefore chose He to suffer all these things, but that He might console the suffering? He could have raised His flesh at the last day: but then thou wouldest not have had thy ground of hope, since thou hadst not seen Him. He deferred not His resurrection, that thou mightest not still be in doubt. Suffer then tribulation in the world with the same end as that which thou hast observed in Christ: and let not those who do evil, and flourish in this life, move thee. Thy thoughts are very deep. Where is the thought of God? Rejoice not as the fish who is exulting in his bait: the fisherman hath not drawn his hook: the fish hath as yet the hook in his jaws. And what seemeth to thee long, is short; all these things pass over quickly. What is the long life of man to the eternity of God? Dost thou wish to be of long-suffering? Consider the eternity of God. For thou regardest thy few days, and in thy few days thou dost wish all things to be fulfilled. What things? The condemnation of all the wicked: and the crowning of all the good: dost thou wish these things to be fulfilled in thy days? God fulfilleth them in His own time. Why dost thou suffer weariness? He is eternal: He waiteth: He is of long-suffering: but thou sayest, I am not of long-suffering, because I am mortal. But thou hast it in thy power to become so: join thy heart to the eternity of God, and with Him thou shalt be eternal. For what is said of temporal things? All flesh is grass: and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, and the flower fadeth. All things, then, wither and fade: but not that Word: for the Word of our God shall stand for ever. The grass passeth away, the glory of

the grass passeth away, but thou hast where to hold thyself fast: “The Word of the Lord abideth for ever.” Say then unto Him, Thy thoughts are very deep. Thou hast laid hold of the wood, thou art crossing that depth. Seest thou any thing there? understandest thou any thing there? I understand, thou sayest. If thou art a Christian, and well instructed, thou sayest: God reserveth all things for His own judgment. The good suffer, because they are chastened as sons: the wicked exult, because they are condemned as strangers. A man hath two sons: the one he chasteneth, the other he dismisseth: the one doeth ill, and he is not punished by his father: the other, as soon as he moves, is beaten with the hand, and scourged. Why is the one dismissed, the other scourged, except because for the one who is beaten, the heritage is preserved, while he who is dismissed is disinherited? He seeth that he hath no hope, and therefore letteth him go that he may do as he pleaseth, but the boy who is punished, if he hath no heart, and is imprudent and foolish, congratulateth his brother who is not beaten: and groaneth for himself, saying in his heart, “My brother doeth so many wicked acts, whatever he pleaseth he doeth against the command of my father, and no one giveth him a hard word: I, as soon as I move, am beaten!” He is foolish, unwise; he attendeth to what he suffereth, but not to what is reserved for the other.

9. For this reason, after saying, (ver. 6, 7.) Thy thoughts are very deep, he at once subjoins: An unwise man doth not well consider this, and a fool doth not understand it. What are the things which an unwise man doth not well consider, and which a fool doth not understand? When the ungodly are green as the grass. What is, as the grass? They flourish when it is winter, but they will wither in the summer. Thou observest the flower of the grass? What more quickly passeth by? What is brighter? What is greener? Let not its verdure delight thee, but fear its withering. Thou hast heard of the ungodly being green as the grass: hear also of the righteous: For lo. In the mean while, consider the ungodly; they flourish as the grass; but who are they who understand it not? The foolish and unwise. When the ungodly are green as the grass, and all men look upon the workers of iniquity. All who in their heart think not aright of God, look upon the ungodly when they are as green as grass, that is, when they flourish for a time. Why do they look upon them? That they may be destroyed for ever. For they regard their

momentary bloom, they imitate them, and wishing to flourish with them for a time, perish for evermore: this is, That they may be destroyed for ever.

10. Ver. 8. But Thou, Lord, art the Most Highest for evermore. Waiting above in Thy eternity until the season of the wicked be past, and that of the just come. For lo. Listen, brethren. Already he who speaketh (for he speaketh in our person, in the person of Christ's body, for Christ speaketh in His own body, that is, in His Church,) hath joined himself unto the eternity of God: as I a little before was saying unto you, God is longsuffering and patient, and alloweth all those evil deeds which He seeth to be done by wicked men. Wherefore? because He is eternal, and seeth what He keepeth for them. Dost thou also wish to be long-suffering and patient? Join thyself to the eternity of God: together with Him wait for those things which are beneath thee: for when thy heart shall have cleaved unto the Most Highest, all mortal things will be beneath thee: say then what follows, For lo, thine enemies shall perish. Those who now flourish, shall afterwards perish. Who are the enemies of God? Brethren, perhaps ye think those only enemies of God who blaspheme? They indeed are so, and those wicked men who neither in tongue nor in thought cease to injure God. And what do they do to the eternal, most high God? If thou strike with thy fist upon a pillar, thou art hurt: and thinkest thou that where thou strikest God with thy blasphemy, thou art not thyself broken? for thou doest nothing to God. But the enemies of God are openly blasphemers, and daily they are found hidden. Beware of such enmities of God. For the Scripture revealeth some such secret enemies of God: that because thou knowest them not in thy heart, thou mayest know in God's Scriptures, and beware of being found with them. James saith openly in his Epistle, Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Thou hast heard. Dost thou wish not to be an enemy of God? Be not a friend of this world: for if thou art a friend of this world, thou wilt be an enemy of God. For as a wife cannot be an adulteress, unless she be an enemy to her own husband: so a soul which is an adulteress through its love of worldly things, cannot but be an enemy to God. It feareth, but loveth not: it feareth punishment, but is not delighted with righteousness. All lovers of the world, therefore, are enemies of God, all the curious after trifles, all consulters of diviners, astrologers, and evil spirits. Let them enter, or not enter, Churches: they are enemies of God. They may flourish for a season

like grass, but they will perish, when He beginneth to visit them, and pronounce His sentence upon all flesh. Join thyself to the Scripture of God, and say with this Psalm, (Ver. 9.) For lo, thine enemies shall perish. Be not found there, where they shall perish. And all the workers of iniquity shall be destroyed.

11. But thou, who now art in toil, what will be thy hope, when God’s enemies shall perish, and all the workers of iniquity shall be destroyed? Thou who among these stumbling-blocks, among men’s wickednesses dost groan, who art troubled in the flesh, but rejoicest in heart: what will then be thy hope, O Thou Body of Christ? O Christ, Thou Who in heaven sittest on the Father’s right hand, but with Thy feet and Thy hands dost toil on earth, and sayest, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? What hope wilt Thou have, when God’s enemies shall perish, and all who work iniquity shall be destroyed? What lot will be Thine? (Ver. 10.) But mine horn shall be exalted like the horn of an unicorn. Why did he say, like the horn of un unicorn? Sometimes an unicorn signifies pride, sometimes it means the lifting up of unity; because unity is lifted up, all heresies shall perish with the enemies of God. And mine horn shall be exalted like an unicorn. When will it be so? and mine old age shall be in the fatness of mercy. Why did he say, my old age? He means, my last days; as our old age is the last season in our lives, so the whole of what the body of Christ at present suffereth in labours, in cares, in watchings, in hunger, in thirst, in stumbling-blocks, in wickednesses, in tribulations, is its youth: its old age, that is, its last days, will be in joy. And beware, beloved, that ye think not death meant also, in that he hath spoken of old age: for man groweth old in the flesh for this reason, that he may die. The old age of the Church will be white with good works, but it shall not decay through death. What the head of the old man is, that our works will be. Ye see how the head groweth old, and whiteneth, as fast as old age approacheth. Thou sometimes dost seek in the head of one who groweth old duly in his own course a black hair, yet thou findest it not: thus when our life shall have been such, that the blackness of sins may be sought, and none found, that old age is youthful, is green, and ever will be green. Ye have heard of the grass of sinners, hear ye of the old age of the righteous: My old age shall be in the fatness of mercy.

12. Ver. 11. And Mine eye hath beheld on mine enemies. Whom doth he call his enemies? All the workers of iniquity. Do not observe whether thy friend be wicked: let an occasion come, and then thou provest him. Thou beginnest to go contrary to his iniquity, and then thou shalt see that when he was flattering thee, he was thy enemy; but thou hadst not yet knocked, not to raise in his heart what was not there, but that what was there might break out. Mine eye also hath looked upon mine enemies: and mine ear shall hear his desire of the wicked that rise up against me. When? In my old age. What is, in old age? In the last times. And what shall our ear hear? Standing on the right hand, we shall hear what shall be said to them that are on the left: Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. The righteous shall not fear for the dreadful hearing. Ye know that it is said in a Psalm, The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance; He will not be afraid of any evil hearing. What evil hearing? Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

And mine ear shall hear upon the wicked that rise up against me.

13. The grass withereth, the flower of sinners dieth away: what of the righteous? (Ver. 12.) The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree. The ungodly are green as grass; The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree. By the palm tree he signifieth height. Possibly he had also this meaning in the palm, that in its extremities it is beautiful: so that thou mayest trace its beginning from the earth, its end in its topmost branches, wherein its whole beauty dwelleth. The rough root appeareth in the earth, the beautiful foliage toward the sky. Thy beauty too, then, shall be in the end. Thy root is fixed fast: but our root is upward. For our root is Christ, Who hath ascended into heaven. Humbled, he shall be exalted; he shall spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus. See what trees he spoke of: the righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree: and shall spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus. When the sun hath gone forth, doth the palm-tree wither? Doth the cedar die? But when the sun hath been glowing for some hours, the grass drieth up. The judgment, therefore, shall come, that sinners may wither, and the faithful flourish. He shall spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus.

14. Ver. 12, 13. Such as are planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of the house of our God. They shall be yet more increased in

fruitful old age, and shall be quiet, that they may shew it forth. Such is the sabbath, which but a little while ago I commended unto you, whence the Psalm hath its title. They shall be quiet, that they may shew it forth. Wherefore are they quiet that shew it forth? The grass of sinners moveth them not: the cedar and palm-tree not even in tempests are bent. They are therefore quiet, that they may shew it forth: and with reason, since at present they must shew it forth even unto men who mock at it. O wretched men, who are lovers of the world! Those who are planted in the house of the Lord, shew it to you: those who praise the Lord with song and lute, in word and deed, shew it forth to you, and tell you. Be not seduced by the prosperity of the wicked, admire not the flower of grass: admire not those who are happy only for a season, but miserable unto eternity. That happiness which now appeareth outwardly is not true; they are not happy in heart, because they are tortured by a bad conscience. But be thou quiet, trusting in the promises of the Lord thy God. For what wilt thou shew forth in thy quietness? How true the Lord my strength is: and that there is no unrighteousness in Him. Listen, my brethren, if ye are planted in the house of the Lord; if ye wish to flourish like a palm-tree, and to spread abroad like a cedar in Libanus, and not to wither like grass when the sun is hot; as those who appear to flourish when the sun is absent. If then ye wish not to be as grass, but as the palm-tree and the cedar, what will ye shew forth? How true the Lord my strength is: and that there is no unrighteousness in Him. How is it there is no unrighteousness? A man committeth so great crimes; he is well, he hath sons, a plentiful house, he is full of pride, is exalted by his honours, is revenged on his enemies, and doeth every evil deed; another man, innocent, attending to his own affairs, not robbing another’s goods, doing nothing against any one, suffereth in chains, in prison, tosseth and sigheth in poverty. How is it that there is no unrighteousness in Him? Be quiet, and thou shalt know: for thou art disturbed, and in thy chamber thou dost darken thy light. The eternal God doth wish to shine upon thee: do not then make thee cloudy weather from thy own disturbed mind. Be quiet within thyself, and see what I say unto thee. Because God is eternal, because for the present He spareth the bad, bringing them to repentance: He scourgeth the good, instructing them in the way unto the kingdom of heaven: There is no unrighteousness in Him: fear not. Behold, I have been so much scourged, it is clear, I confess, I have sinned: for I do not call myself righteous. For this is what most say; when any one is by chance in any misery, in pain, thou goest in to console him: and he replieth, I have sinned, I confess, there are sins which I confess to be mine; but have I sinned as deeply as this man hath? I know how great sins he committed: I have sinned, I confess unto God, but less than he hath; and, behold, he suffereth no evil. Be not disturbed, be quiet, that thou mayest know how true the Lord is: and that there is no unrighteousness in Him. What if He now scourgeth thee, because He is not keeping for thee the flame everlasting? What, if He leaveth this man unpunished now, because he is doomed to hear, Depart into everlasting fire. But when? when thou shalt be placed at the right hand, then shall it be said to those placed on the left, Depart into the everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels. Let not therefore those things move thee: Be quiet, keep sabbath, and shew how true the Lord my strength is: and that there is no unrighteousness in Him.

PSALM 93

A Sermon to the people.

We heard the title of this Psalm, while it was reading: and it is not difficult to understand its meaning from the Scripture of God, that is, from the book of Genesis: for in the title we are, as it were, warned upon the threshold what we are to look for within. It is entitled, The Song of praise of David himself, on the day before the sabbath, when the earth was founded. Remembering then what God did through all those days, when He made and ordained all things, from the first up to the sixth day, (for the seventh He sanctified, because He rested on that day after all the works, which He made very good,) we find that He created on the sixth day (which day is here mentioned, in that he saith, before the Sabbath) all animals on the earth; lastly, He on that very day created man in His own likeness and image. For these days were not without reason ordained in such order, but for that ages also were to run in a like course, before we rest in God. But then we rest if we do good works. As a type of this, it is written of God, God rested on the seventh day, when He had made all His works very good. For He was not wearied, so as to need rest, nor hath He now left off to work, for our Lord Christ saith openly, My Father worketh hitherto. For He saith this unto the Jews, who thought carnally of God, and understood not that God worketh in quiet, and always worketh, and is always in quiet. We also, then, whom God willed then to figure in Himself, shall have rest after all good works. And indeed, our good works, brethren, which we do here in the world before our rest, are in a manner toilsome; and that rest is in hope, it is not attained in its reality: and unless it was in hope, we should fail in our labour; but our toilsome and good works pass over. For what is so good, as to give bread unto the hungred? and what we were listening to just now, whilst the Gospel was reading, what is so good, as that which he advised generally, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise? To clothe the naked, is a good work: will this good work be evermore? It hath a little toil in it; but it hath a solace in the hope of future rest. But how much toil hast thou in clothing the naked? A good work doth not toil much: a bad work hath toil. For he who clotheth the naked, if he hath whence to do so, toileth not: if he hath not whence to do so, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will. But who counteth how much he toileth who chooseth to despoil one clothed? and yet these things too will pass away, when we shall have reached that rest, where there is no one hungry to be fed, no one naked to be clothed. And because these good works are doomed to pass away, that sixth day also, when those very good works are perfected, hath an evening; but in the Sabbath we find no evening, because our rest shall have no end: for evening is put for end. As therefore God made man in His own image on the sixth day: thus we find that our Lord Jesus Christ came into the sixth age, that man might be formed anew after the image of God. For the first period, as the first day, was from Adam until Noah: the second, as the second day, from Noah unto Abraham: the third, as the third day, from Abraham unto David: the fourth, as the fourth day, from David unto the removal to Babylon: the fifth period, as the fifth day, from the removal to Babylon unto the preaching of John. The sixth day beginneth from the preaching of John, and lasteth unto the end: and after the end of the sixth day, we reach our rest. The sixth day, therefore, is even now passing. And it is now the sixth day, see what the title hath; On the day before the sabbath, when the earth was founded. Let us now listen to the Psalm itself: let us enquire of it, how the earth was made, whether perhaps the earth was then made: and we do not read so in Genesis. When, therefore, was the earth founded? when, unless when that which hath been but now read in the Apostle taketh place: If, he saith, ye are stedfast, immoveable. When all who believe throughout all the earth are stedfast in faith, the earth is founded: then man is made in the image of God. That sixth day in Genesis signifieth this. But how did God make it? How was the earth founded? Christ came, that He might found the earth; For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Of Him therefore the Psalm singeth.

2. Ver. 1. The Lord reigneth, He is clothed with beauty; the Lord is clothed with strength, and is girded. We see that He hath clothed Himself with two things: beauty and strength. But why? That He might found the earth. So it followeth, He hath made the round world so sure, that it cannot be moved.

Whence hath He made it so sure? Because He hath clothed Himself in beauty. He would not make it so sure, if He put on beauty only, and not strength also. Why therefore beauty, why strength? For He hath said both: The Lord reigneth, He is clothed with beauty; the Lord is clothed with strength, and is girded. Ye know, brethren, that when our Lord had come in the flesh, of those to whom He preached the Gospel, He pleased some, and displeased others. For the tongues of the Jews were divided against one another: Some said, He is a good Man; others said, Nay, but He deceiveth the people. Some then spoke well, others detracted from Him, tore Him, bit and insulted Him. Towards those therefore whom He pleased, He put on beauty; towards those whom He displeased, He put on strength. Imitate then thy Lord, that thou mayest become His garment: be with beauty towards those whom thy good works please: shew thy strength against detractors. Hear the Apostle Paul imitating his Lord, how he too had beauty, had strength. We are unto God, he saith, a sweet savour in Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. For those whom goodness pleaseth, are saved: those who detract from what is good, perish. For his own part, he had a sweet savour: yea, was a sweet savour: but, woe to the wretched who perish even in that sweet savour. For he saith not, “To some we are a sweet savour: to others we are an ill savour:” but, we are a sweet savour in Christ, in every place, both in them that are saved, and in them that perish. He addeth instantly; to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other, the savour of life unto life. He had clothed himself with beauty to those to whom the savour was that of life unto life: to those with whom it was the savour of death unto death, he had put on strength. But if thou dost rejoice, when men praise thee, and thy good works please them: but when they revile thee, if thou failest in thy good works, and believest as it were that thou hast lost the fruit of thy good works, because thou findest revilers; thou hast not been stedfast: thou dost not belong to the round world that cannot be moved.

The Lord is clothed with strength; and is girded. The Apostle Paul hath another passage on this very beauty and strength: By the armour of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left. See where he speaketh of beauty and strength: By honour and dishonour. In honour He is beautiful: in dishonour, strong. Among some he was proclaimed of to his honour: among others he was despised to his dishonour. He displayed beauty to those whom he pleased, strength against those whom he displeased. And thus he enumerateth all things unto the end, where he saith, As having nothing, and yet possessing all things; when he hath all things, he is beautiful: when he hath nothing, he is strong. It is therefore no wonder, if it followeth, For He hath made the round world so sure, that it cannot be moved. For how cannot the round world be moved? When all the faithful believe in Christ, and are prepared either to rejoice with those who praise, or to be strong toward those who revile Him: not to be softened by the tongues of those who praise Him, nor to be broken down by the tongues of those who revile Him.

3. Perhaps we should enquire respecting this word also, why he said, He is girded. Girding signifieth work: for every man then girdeth himself, when he is about to work. But wherefore did he use the word præcinctus, instead of cinctus? For he saith in another Psalm, Gird Thee with Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Thou most mighty: the people shall fall under Thee: using the word accingere, not cingere, nor præcingere: this word being applied to the act of attaching any thing to the side by girding it. The sword of the Lord, wherewith He conquered the round world by killing iniquity, is the Spirit of God in the truth of the word of God. Wherefore is He said to bind His sword around His thigh? In another place, on another Psalm we have spoken in another manner of girding: but nevertheless, since it hath been mentioned, it ought not to be passed over. What is the girding on of the sword around the thigh? He meaneth the flesh by the thigh. For the Lord would not otherwise conquer the round world, unless the sword of truth came into the flesh. Why therefore is He here said to be girded in front (præcinctus)? He who girdeth himself before, placeth something before himself, wherewith he is girded; whence it is said, He girded Himself before with a towel, and began to wash the disciples’ feet. Because He was humble when He girded Himself with a towel. He washed the feet of His own disciples. But all strength is in humility: because all pride is fragile: therefore when He was speaking of strength, he added, He is girded: that thou mayest remember how thy God was girded in humility, when He washed His disciples’ feet. Peter was shocked at his Lord, his Master, (why should I say his Master, when I said his Lord?) bending down before his own feet, and washing his feet: he was frightened, and said, Lord, dost

Thou wash my feet? Jesus answered, What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet: Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me. Peter, who had at first been shocked at the Lord washing his feet, was more shocked at the words, Thou hast no part with Me, and he believed that there was some mystery in the thing, and that it was not without a meaning that our Lord spoke so: therefore he answered, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head; but Jesus said unto him, He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. His washing their feet, therefore, did not refer to any mystery of cleanliness, but was intended as a pattern of humility: for He had said, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Let us see if they knew afterwards, let us see if He opened to them what He was doing, that we may see the Lord girded with strength; because the whole of strength is in humility. After He had washed their feet, again He sat down; He said unto them, Ye call me Lord and Master: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; how ought ye also to do to one another’s feet? If therefore strength is in humility, fear not the proud. The humble are like a rock: the rock seems to lie downwards: but nevertheless it is firm. What are the proud? Like smoke: although they are lofty, they vanish. We ought therefore to ascribe our Lord’s being girded to His humility, according to the mention of the Gospel, that He was girded, that He might wash His disciples’ feet.

4. There is another thing which we may understand in this word. We have said that he who girdeth himself in front, placeth before him what he attacheth to himself, that he may gird himself. Since then those who revile us sometimes do so when we are absent, as if behind our backs: sometimes before our face, as they did to the Lord when He was hanging on the Cross, If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross: thou hast not need of strength, when any one revileth thee in thy absence, because thou dost not hear, nor dost thou perceive: but if he speaketh to thy face, thou must needs be strong. What does, ‘Be thou strong,’ mean? That thou mayest bear it: lest perhaps thou think thyself strong, as thou hearest, because thou strikest with thy fist when overcome with reviling. That is not strength, if thou strike when reviled, since thou art overcome by anger: and it is very

foolish, to call a conquered man strong, when the Scripture saith, He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city. He calleth the conqueror of his anger better than the conqueror of a city. Thou hast therefore a great adversary in thyself. When on hearing a reproach thy anger hath begun to rise, so that thou mayest return evil for evil, remember the Apostle’s words, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing. Remembering these words, thou breakest down thy anger, thou preservest thy strength; and since he railed against thee in thy presence, not behind thy back, thou art ‘girt in front’ with it.

5. Let us now hear the rest; the Psalm is short. For He hath made the round world sure, which cannot be moved. Ye see, brethren, many believe in Christ, there is a great multitude of them: and yet in this great crowd, ye have just heard while the Gospel was in reading, our Lord will come with His fan in His hand, and will purge His floor: He will gather His wheat into the garner, but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire. There are therefore throughout the whole earth both good and bad: the good are the wheat, the bad are the chaff. The threshing machine cometh into the floor: it bruiseth the chaff, and purgeth the wheat. What then is the round world, which cannot be moved. This He would not mention specially, if there were not also a round world that can be moved. There is a round world that shall not be moved. There is a round world that shall be moved. For the good who are stedfast in the faith are the round world: that no man may say, they are only in part of it; while the wicked who abide not in faith, when they have felt any tribulation, are throughout the whole world. There is therefore a round world moveable: there is a world immoveable: of which the Apostle speaketh. Behold, the round world moveable. I ask thee, of whom speaketh the Apostle in these words, Of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already: and overthrow the faith of some? Did these belong to the round world, that shall not be moved? But they were chaff: and as he saith, they overthrow the faith of some. He said not, Of all, and if he had said all, we must have understood all who belong to the city of Babylon, which must be condemned together with the devil; yet he said, the faith of some. And as if he were asked, And who can resist them? he addeth immediately, Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure. (Behold thou hast the

round world that shall not be moved,) having this seal,—what seal hath it as its sure foundation?—The Lord knoweth them that are His. This is the round world that shall not be moved; The Lord knoweth them that are His. And what seal hath it? And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness. Let him depart from unrighteousness: for he cannot depart from the unrighteous, for the chaff is mixed with the wheat until it is fanned. What say we, brethren? Even in the floor itself, it is a wonderful thing concerning the wheat: it parts from the chaff, when it is stripped, and yet does not leave the floor, when it is threshed. But when will it be altogether separated? When the winnower hath come. As yet therefore the floor is in the round world: it must be that, if thou dost profit thyself, thou live among the unrighteous. From the unrighteous thou canst not depart: from unrighteousness depart. Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness, and he will be in the round world that shall not be moved.

6. Ver. 2. Thy throne is established from thence, O Lord. What is, from thence? From that time. As if he said, What is the throne of God? Where doth God sit? In His Saints. Dost thou wish to be the throne of God? Prepare a place in thy heart where He may sit. What is the throne of God, except where God dwelleth? Where doth God dwell, except in His temple? What is His temple? Is it surrounded with walls? Far from it. Perhaps this world is His temple, because it is very great, and a thing worthy to contain God. It contains not Him by Whom it was made. And wherein is He contained? In the quiet soul, in the righteous soul: that is it that containeth Him. A great thing, my brethren! surely God is great; on the strong He is heavy: on the weak, light. Whom do I call strong? The proud, who presume in their own strength; for that weakness that is in humility is a greater strength. Hear the Apostle saying, for when I am weak, then am I strong. This is what I have set forth to you, that the Lord was girt with strength, when He was teaching humility. This therefore is the throne of God, which in another passage is openly spoken of in the prophet, Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? That is, where shall the Spirit of God rest, but on the throne or abode of God? Hear how he describes this seat. Perhaps you thought to hear of a marble house, large and spacious halls, resplendent and lofty ceilings. Hear what God purposes for Himself: Upon whom shall My Spirit rest?

Upon the humble and the quiet, who trembleth at My words. Behold, thou art humble and tranquil, and God dwelleth in thee. God is exalted, He dwelleth not in thee, if thou shalt choose to be exalted thyself. Surely thou dost wish to be exalted, that He may dwell in thee; be humble, and tremble at His words; and therein He dwelleth. He feareth not a trembling house, since He Himself strengtheneth it. Thy throne is established from thence, O Lord. ‘From thence,’ that is, ‘from then.’ This expression signifieth some particular time. From then. From when? Perhaps from the day before the Sabbath: From thence, because the title of the Psalm certifies us from whence; for on the sixth day, that is, in the sixth period of this world, the Lord came in the flesh. Plainly then, it must mean from the time when He came according to His humility, from the time He came from the womb. For what saith another Psalm? In the shining of Saints from the womb; that is, that the saints may be enlightened, that they may see God in the flesh; and that the heart may be cleansed, that He may be seen in the Divine Nature. In the shining of Saints from the womb. But what here followeth? That thou mightest not imagine that Christ had His origin in the womb: Before the morning star I have begotten thee. He subjoined this, after saying, In the shining of saints from the womb, lest thou shouldest think that Christ began with the time of His birth, as Adam, as Abraham, as David began. Before the morning star have I begotten thee; before every thing that is enlightened. For by the morning star, he either signifieth all the stars; and by the stars, the times; because God made the stars for signs of the seasons, that thou mayest see that Christ was born before all seasons: and He who is born before seasons, cannot appear to be born in a season; since the seasons too are God’s creation: and indeed, if all things were made by Him, the seasons also were made by Him. Or surely, when he saith of Wisdom, Before the morning star I have begotten thee; he meaneth, before every spirit which is enlightened. Listen, beloved. Since he had said, from the womb, as if with due precaution for our faith, that we might not think that Christ began from the time when He was born from a Virgin’s womb: he instantly subjoined, Before the morning star I have begotten thee: thus here also, when he had said, from thence, that is, from the day before the Sabbath, from that sixth age of the world, when our Lord Christ came, and was born in the flesh, because He deigned to become a man for us, He Who was God, not only before Abraham, but before heaven and earth; He Who said, Before Abraham was, I am: not before Abraham only, but before Adam: not only before Adam, but before all the angels, before heaven and earth; since all things were made through Him: he added, lest thou, attending to the day of our Lord's nativity, mightest think He commenced from that time, Thy throne is established, O God. But what God? Thou art from everlasting: for which he uses ἀπ' αἰῶνος, in the Greek version; that word being sometimes used for an age, sometimes for everlasting. Therefore, O Thou Who seemest to be born from thence, Thou art from everlasting! But let not human birth be thought of, but Divine eternity. He began then from the time of His birth; He grew: ye have heard the Gospel. He chose disciples, He replenished them, His disciples began to preach. Perhaps this is what he speaketh of in the following verse.

7. Ver. 3. The floods lift up their voices. What are these floods, which have lift up their voices? We heard them not: neither when our Lord was born, did we hear rivers speak, nor when He was baptized, nor when He suffered; we heard not that rivers did speak. Read the Gospel, ye find not that rivers spoke. It is not enough that they spoke: They have lift up their voice: they have not only spoken, but bravely, mightily, in a lofty voice. What are those rivers which have spoken? We have said, that we do not read of them in the Gospel: nevertheless, let us seek for them therein. For if we find them not there, where shall we find them? I could invent them for you, if I chose: but I should at once be not a faithful steward, but an impertinent fabulist. Let us seek in the Gospel: at the same time, let us ask what are the rivers which have lift up their voices. Jesus stood and cried, it is said in the Gospel. What did He cry? Behold now the head of those rivers crieth out: the very source of life, whence the rivers are to flow, first lifted up His own voice. And what did Jesus stand up and cry? He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. The Evangelist subjoineth, But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. But when Jesus was glorified in His resurrection, and ascension into heaven, as ye know, brethren; after ten days had been fulfilled, on account of some mystery, He sent His Holy Spirit, He filled His disciples. The Spirit itself was a mighty river, whence many rivers were filled. Of that river the Psalmist saith in another passage, The rivers of the

flood thereof shall make glad the city of God. Rivers then were made to flow from the belly of the disciples, when they received the Holy Spirit: themselves were rivers, when they had received that Holy Spirit. Whence did those rivers lift their voices? wherefore did they lift them up? Because at first they feared. Peter was not yet a river, when at the question of the maidservant he thrice denied Christ: I do not know the man. Here he lieth through fear: he lifteth not his voice as yet: he is not yet the river. But when they were filled with the Holy Spirit, the Jews sent for them, and enjoined them not to preach at all, nor to teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. The floods, then, have lift up their voice, from the voices of many waters. What is here written, pertaineth to that very lifting up of the voice; Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea; and the rest of his speech, in which he preacheth Jesus without fear with great confidence. For the floods have lift up their voice, from the voice of many waters. For when the Apostles had been dismissed from the council of the Jews, they came to their own friends, and told them what the priests and elders said unto them: but they on hearing lifted up their voices with one accord unto the Lord, and said, Lord, it is Thou Who hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; and the rest which floods lifting up their voices might say, (Ver. 4.) Wonderful are the hangings of the sea. For when the disciples had lifted up their voices unto Him, many believed, and many received the Holy Spirit, and many rivers instead of few began to lift up their voice. Hence there followeth, from the voices of many waters, wonderful are the hangings of the sea; that is, the waves of the world. When Christ had begun to be preached by so powerful voices, the sea became enraged, persecutions began to thicken. When therefore the rivers had lift up their voice, from the voices of many waters, wonderful were the hangings of the sea. To be hung aloft is to be lifted up; when the sea rages, the waves are hung as from above. Let the waves hang over as they choose; let the sea roar as it chooseth; the hangings of the sea indeed are mighty, mighty are the threatenings, mighty the persecutions; but see what followeth: but yet the Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier. Let therefore the sea restrain itself, and sometime become calmed; let peace be granted unto Christians.

The sea was disturbed, the vessel was tossed; the vessel is the Church: the sea, the world. The Lord came, He walked over the sea, and calmed the waves. How did the Lord walk over the sea? Above the heads of those mighty foaming waves. Principalities and kings believed; they were subdued unto Christ. Let us not therefore be frightened; because the hangings of the sea are mighty: for yet the Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier.

8. Ver. 5. Thy testimonies, O Lord, are very surely believed. The Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier than the mighty overhangings of the sea. Thy testimonies are very surely believed. Thy testimonies, because He had said beforehand, These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation. Because the world will give you tribulation, I tell you this. They began to suffer, and verified in themselves our Lord’s predictions, and they became stronger. For when they saw that the sufferings were fulfilled in them, they hoped that the crowns would be fulfilled in them also; and hence, mighty are the overhangings of the sea: but yet the Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier. That in Me, He saith, ye may have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation. What then are we doing? The sea rageth, the waves arise, and roar in fury; we suffer tribulation; do we not, possibly, fail? Never! The Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier. Thus when He was saying, That in Me ye might have peace; but in the world ye shall have tribulation; as if they asked, Dost Thou think the world will not overpower and extinguish us? at once He added, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. If then He saith, I have overcome the world, cling unto Him Who overcame the world, Who overcame the sea. Rejoice in Him, because the Lord, Who dwelleth on high, is mightier, and, Thy testimonies are very surely believed. And what is the end of all these? Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord! Thine house, the whole of Thine house, not here and there: but the whole of Thine house, throughout the whole world. Why throughout the whole of the round world? Because He hath set aright the round world, which cannot be moved. The Lord’s house will be strong: it will prevail throughout the whole world: many shall fall: but that house standeth; many shall be disturbed, but that house shall not be moved. Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord! For a short time only? No. Unto length of days.

PSALM 94

Delivered in another’s Diocese, at the request of an assembly of Bishops, as appears from the conclusion.

As we listened with much attention, while the Psalm was in reading, so let us listen attentively, while the Lord revealeth the mysteries which He hath deigned to obscure in this passage. For some mysteries in the Scriptures are shut up for this reason, not that they may be denied, but that they may be opened unto those who knock. If therefore ye knock with affection of piety, and sincere heartfelt love, He, Who seeth from what motives ye knock, will open unto you. It is known unto all of us, (and I wish we may not be among their number,) that many murmur against God’s long-suffering, and grieve either that impious and wicked men live in this world, or that they have great power; and what is more, that the bad generally have great power against the good, and that the bad often oppress the good; that the wicked exult, while the good suffer; the evil are proud, while the good are humbled. Observing such things in the human race, (for they abound,) impatient and weak minds are perverted, as if they were good in vain; since God averteth, or seemeth to avert, His eyes from the good works of the pious and faithful, and to promote the wicked in those pleasures which they love. Weak men, therefore, imagining that they live well in vain, are induced either to imitate the wickedness of those whom they see flourishing: or if either through bodily or mental weakness they are deterred from doing wrong by a fear of the penal laws of the world; not because they love justice, but, to speak more openly, fearing the condemnation of men among men, they refrain indeed from wicked deeds, but refrain not from wicked thoughts. And among their wicked thoughts, the chief is the wickedness which leadeth them impiously to imagine that God is neglectful, and regardless of human affairs: and that He either holdeth in equal estimation the good and the wicked: or even, and this is a still more pernicious notion, that He persecuteth the good, and favoureth the wicked. He who thinketh thus, although he doth no harm to any man, doth the greatest to himself, and is impious against himself, and by his wickedness hurteth not God, but slayeth himself. Nor do they hurt men, because they who think thus, are cowards; but nevertheless, God seeth their murders, their adulteries, their deceits and robberies, and punisheth them in their thoughts. For He observeth their real desires, for His eye is not repelled by flesh, that it may not discern the will. Such men, if they find opportunities, do not become evil, but are shewn to be so: so that thou perceivest not the manifestation of a recent growth within them, but dost understand what was lying hid within their hearts. Within these few years, and almost yesterday, men saw this: and even men of slow apprehension acknowledged it. For there was a house here very powerful for a season, of which God had made a scourge for the human race, and the human race was thence chastened; if it would recognise the scourge of the Father, and fear the sentence of the Judge. Now while this house was great, many groaned beneath it, murmured, censured, cursed, blasphemed. How do men narrow themselves, and how many are given up by that Divine Judgment to the lusts of their own hearts! Those who murmured against that house suddenly became members of it: and from them men suffered such inflictions as they themselves before had complained of from men like unto themselves. Righteous therefore is he, who, even when he can do evil, doth it not: of whom it is written, Who might offend, and hath not offended? or done evil, and hath not done it? Who is he? and we will call him blessed; for wonderful things hath he done in his life. The Scripture was speaking of those who have power to do evil, but are innocent. For the wolf wishes to do as much harm as the lion: they do harm in different ways, but they wish to do harm alike. For the lion not only despiseth, but putteth to flight the dog when he barks; and cometh to the fold, and the dogs being struck dumb, he carrieth off what he can: the wolf dareth not to go among the barking of dogs. Did he therefore return more innocent, because he could not, through his fear of the dogs, carry off his prey? God, therefore, teacheth innocence: that every man many be innocent, not from fear of punishment, but from love of justice; for then is he freely innocent, and truly innocent. But he who is innocent from fear, is not innocent, even though he harm not him whom he wisheth to harm; for he doth not hurt another by an evil deed, but himself much, through evil lusts. Hear the Scripture, as to how he hurteth himself: He who loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul. And indeed men greatly err, when they imagine their own wickedness hurteth others, and not themselves. Suppose a man’s iniquity reacheth others, so as to hurt the body, to injure property, to get possession of a house, to steal a slave, to take away gold or silver, or any thing else that he has. So far, this wickedness doth affect another. Does, therefore, thy iniquity injure another’s body, and not injure thy own soul?

2. Against this simple and true doctrine, by which good men are taught to love justice itself, and by so acting to wish to please God; and to understand, that their soul is by Him enlightened by a certain rational light, so that they may do what is just, and prefer that light of wisdom to all those things which are loved in the world: against this doctrine men murmur as follows; and if they do not murmur aloud, yet they are gnawed in heart. What do they say then? Am I really likely to please God by righteousness? or do those righteous persons please Him, under Whose government the wicked flourish? They commit so much evil: and no harm happeneth unto them. Or if any evil happeneth to them; what do they say unto thee, when thou beginnest to say to them, Behold how great sins hath he done, what a punishment hath he received? what was the end with him? They begin to think of the righteous, to whom evils have happened, and oppose them to us, saying, If some evil happeneth to that man because he was wicked, why did it happen to this man, who lived so righteously? He who hath done so great works of charity, who hath done so many good deeds in the Church, why hath he experienced such a lot? why had he a fate, like that of the man who hath done many evil deeds? They speak thus to shew that they do not evil, because they are not able, or because they dare not. For the tongue witnesseth, what the heart doth will: and, indeed, although the tongue were silent, itself overpowered by fear, God would see within what man was thinking of, even though it should escape another man. This Psalm therefore attempts to heal these silent thoughts, and even those which burst forth into words and acts, if they are disposed to be healed. Let them therefore listen, that they may be healed. And I wish that in the whole of the multitude which is now within these walls, and through us, heareth the word of God, there may be no such wounds that need a cure: I wish there may be none. Yet we are doing nothing superfluous in speaking of them, even if there are no wounds there. Let hearts be prepared for healing others, when they have begun to hear such things. For I suppose, that in every Christian, when he heareth a man speaking like this, if he is a true believer, and thoroughly

trusteth in God, and his hope is in a future life, not in this world, nor in this life, and he heareth not in vain that he is to ‘lift up his heart:’ he laugheth at, and grieveth for those who murmur thus, and saith unto himself: God knoweth what He doeth, we cannot know His design, why He spareth the wicked for a season, or why the good suffer for a season; yet it is enough for me to know this, that the good suffereth for a time, and the wicked flourisheth for a time also. He therefore who is such, is safe: and he beareth patiently all the prosperity of the wicked, and the sufferings of the good, until this life be finished, until iniquity pass away. Such a man is blessed, and God hath taught him from His law, and hath given him patience in time of adversity, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. But let him who is not as yet such, hear from us what pleaseth the Lord. But let Him who seeth better the wound which He hath to heal, say more Himself within the heart.

3. The Psalm hath this title, that is, this inscription: A Psalm of David himself, on the fourth day of the week. This Psalm is about to teach patience in the sufferings of the righteous: it enjoineth patience against the prosperity of the wicked, and buildeth up patience. This is the drift of the whole of it, from beginning to end. Wherefore then hath it such a title, on the fourth of the week? The first of the week is the Lord’s day: the second, is the second week-day, which people of the world call the Moon’s day: the third, is the third week-day, which they term Mars’ day. The fourth of the Sabbaths therefore is the fourth week-day, which by Pagans is styled Mercury’s day, and also by many Christians; but I would not call it so: and I wish they would change for the better, and cease to do so; for they have a phrase of their own, which they may use. For these terms are not of universal use: many nations have severally different names for them: so that the mode of speech used by the Church better beseemeth the mouth of a Christian. Yet if custom hath induced any person to utter that with his tongue which his heart doth disapprove, let him remember, that all those whose names the stars bear were men, and that the stars did not commence their existence in the sky, when those men began theirs, but were there long before; but on account of some mortal services rendered unto mortals, those men in their own times, because they had great power, and were eminent in this life, since they were beloved by men, not on account of eternal life, but of temporal services, received divine honours. For then men of the old

world, in being deceived and wishing to deceive, pointed to the stars in heaven, to flatter those who had done them any good service in their affection for this life, saying, that that was the star of such a man, this of another; while the man who had not beheld them before, so as to see that those stars were there before the birth of the man, were deceived into a belief: and thus this vain opinion was conceived. This erroneous opinion the devil strengthened, Christ overthrew. According to our mode of speech, then, the fourth of the week is taken for the fourth day from the Lord’s day. Attend, therefore, beloved, to what this title meaneth. Here is a great mystery, and a truly hidden one. For most passages of this Psalm sound clearly, move us openly, and are easily understood; but this title, I must confess, hath no slight obscurity: but the Lord will come to our aid, He will clear the cloud, and ye shall see the Psalm, and from its title understand it. For it hath at its commencement the words, A Psalm of David himself, on the fourth of the week. The title is on the threshold, it is fixed upon the door-posts. Men choose to notice the name, and thus to enter the house. Let us therefore recall from the holy Scripture in Genesis, what was created on the first day; we find light: what was created on the second day; we find the firmament, which God called heaven: what was created on the third day; we find the form of earth and sea, and their separation, that all the gathering together of the waters was called sea, and all that was dry, the earth. On the fourth day, the Lord made the lights in heaven: The sun to rule the day: the moon and stars to govern the night: this was the work of the fourth day. What then is the reason that the Psalm hath taken its title from the fourth day: the Psalm in which patience is enjoined against the prosperity of the wicked, and the sufferings of the good. Thou findest the Apostle Paul speaking. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. The comparison from the light is applied to the saints, that they may dwell without murmurings in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.

4. But that no one may imagine that the lights of heaven are to be worshipped and adored, because a likeness hath from them been drawn to signify the saints: let us first explain, in Christ’s name, how unreasonable it

is to suppose that thou shouldest adore the sun, moon, stars, or heaven, because some figure of likeness applied to the saints hath been derived from them: since there are many things of which a similitude has been adopted to denote the saints, which are not worshipped. For if thou thinkest that every thing which supplieth a similitude for the saints, ought to be adored; adore the mountains and hills, because it is said, The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like young sheep. Thou speakest of the saints: I of Christ Himself. Worship the lion; for it is written, The lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed: worship the rock; for it is written, For that rock was Christ. But if thou dost not in Christ worship those earthly things, although they have supplied certain similitudes; from whatever part of creation an emblem may have been drawn to signify the saints, understand thou the likeness in the creature, and worship the Maker of the creature. Our Lord Jesus Christ is called the sun: is it this sun which even the minutest animals discern in common with ourselves? No. But it is that of which it is said, That was the true light, which lighteth every man which cometh into the world. For that light lighteneth not man only, but also beasts of burden, and cattle, and all animals; but that which lighteneth every man, lighteneth him in the heart, where alone he hath understanding.

5. Understand therefore, beloved, when the Apostle said, In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, that is, amid the wicked, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life: in a certain way he hath warned us how to interpret this Psalm, and how to understand its title. For such Saints in whom is the word of life, on account of the conversation which they have in heaven, despise all the iniquities which are happening on earth: and as the heavenly luminaries traverse their onward course by day and by night, and keep their path surely, while so great evils are taking place, nor do the stars fixed above in heaven deviate, engaged in tracking their heavenly paths, as their Creator hath ordered and appointed for them: so ought the Saints, if their hearts are fixed in heaven, if they hear not in vain, and respond that they ‘lift up their heart,’ if they imitate him who said, for our conversation is in heaven; because then they dwell in the regions above, and think of things above, as it is said, For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also; from those very thoughts of things above, they become patient; and for all that is going on on earth they care

no more, while they are traversing their own course, than the luminaries of heaven care for aught save how they do their work of days and nights, although they see so great evils constantly happening on earth. Yet perhaps it is easy for the righteous to bear those iniquities of the wicked which do not affect themselves: but as they bear those of which others are the victims, so let them bear what is aimed against themselves. For they ought to endure them not only because others are the sufferers: and if they suffer themselves, they ought not to lose their long-suffering. For he who hath lost this, hath fallen from heaven: but he who hath his heart fixed in heaven, it is but his earth that suffereth on earth. How many things do men invent of the luminaries themselves, and yet they bear them with patience; even as the righteous ought to endure all the false charges that can be brought against themselves. For instance, the very thing I spoke of above, that this star is Mercury's, that Saturn's, this again Jupiter's: all this is a reproach unto the stars. What? They when they hear such reproaches, are they moved at all, or do they cease to persevere in their course? Thus then a man who in a nation crooked and perverse hath the word of God, is like a star that shineth in heaven. In what numbers do they who think they are honouring the sun, speak falsely concerning it? They who say, Christ is the sun, lie concerning the sun. The sun knoweth that Christ is its Lord and Creator. And if it can be angry, it is more bitterly indignant against one who falsely honoureth it, than against one who revileth it; for to a good servant injury to his Lord is worse than contumely against himself. How falsely do some speak of the stars themselves? Yet they bear it, they endure, they move not. Why? because they are in heaven. But what is heaven? Let us not pass over even this: what lies do men tell, when they see the moon becoming darkened, and say, the wicked are drawing her down? Since at certain seasons she hath her eclipse according to the appointment of God. Yet she, who is in heaven, regardeth not those words of men. But what is this, in heaven? she is in the firmament of heaven. He therefore, whose heart is in the firmament of the book of God, regardeth not these things. For heaven, that is, the firmament, is figuratively taken for the book of the Law. Thus it is somewhere written, Thou spreadest out the heavens as a skin. If it is spread out like a skin, it is spread out as a book, that it may be read. But after its season hath elapsed, it is not read. For the law is read, because we have not as yet reached that Wisdom which filleth the hearts and minds of those who look upon it: and there will be no need for us to have any thing read to us when there. For in what is read to us, syllables sound and pass away: that light of Truth passeth not away, but remaining stedfast satisfieth the hearts of those who witness it; as it is said, They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of Thy house: and Thou shalt give them drink of Thy pleasures, as out of the river; for with Thee is the well of life. And behold the well itself: and in Thy light, he addeth, shall we see light. For reading is only necessary, as long as we know in part, and prophesy in part, as the Apostle saith; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. For it is not thus in that city of Jerusalem, where the angels dwell, apart from which we are now wandering, and groaning in our pilgrimage; for we groan if we know we are but pilgrims: since a man hateth his country much indeed, if he thinketh himself happy while he wandereth;—is the Gospel, or the Apostle, read in that city wherein are the angels? They feed upon the Word of God: in order for which Word of God to sound forth unto us for a season, The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Nevertheless, the written law itself is our firmament; if our heart be there, it is not plucked up by the wickednesses of men. It is therefore said, Thou spreadest out the heaven as a skin. But when the season of need for the books passeth away, what is written, The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll? He therefore whose heart is on high, hath a light in his own heart: he shineth in heaven, and is not overcome by the darkness. For the darkness is beneath: but iniquity is darkness; not a darkness that cannot change. We have spoken of this yesterday. But those who to-day are darkness, may be, if they choose, to-morrow, light: those who have come here in darkness, may at this moment, if they wish, become light. For the Apostle saith openly, that no man might imagine that sins are natural, and cannot be changed: for ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light. Light, he saith, in the Lord, not in yourselves. The heart is therefore in the book: if in the book, it is in the firmament of heaven. If the heart be there, let it shine thence, and it shall not be moved by the wickedness in the world beneath; not because it is there in heaven in the flesh, but because it is there by its conversation, as it is said, but our conversation is in heaven. Thou canst not imagine that city, because thou seest it not as yet. Dost thou wish to imagine heaven? Think of the book of God. Hear the Psalm; and in His law will he exercise himself day and night. And there he is called blessed, that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners: and hath not sat in the seat of the scornful: but his delight is in the law of the Lord. Behold a luminary in heaven: and in His law will he exercise himself day and night. Doth he wish to bear all things patiently? Let him not come down from heaven, and let him exercise himself in His law day and night. His heart is then in heaven: if his heart is in heaven, all the wickedness which taketh place for a season upon earth, all the successes of the wicked, all the sufferings of the righteous, to him who exerciseth himself day and night in the law of God, are as nought; patiently he endureth all, and blessed shall he be, instructed by the Lord. How is he in the firmament of heaven? because the law is a firmament. Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him in Thy law; that Thou mayest give him patience in time of adversity: until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. Attend therefore to the lights of heaven, how they go forth, and set, and return, and move on in their courses; how they distinguish day from night, revolve years and seasons; while such evils are happening on earth, yet they have rest in heaven. What is it then that God teacheth us? Let us now attend to the Psalm.

7. Ver. 1. The Lord is the God of vengeance; the God of vengeance hath dealt confidently. Dost thou think that He doth not punish? The God of vengeance punisheth. What is, The God of vengeance? The God of punishments. Thou murmurest surely because the bad are not punished: yet do not murmur, lest thou be among those who are punished. That man hath committed a theft, and liveth: thou murmurest against God, because he who committed a theft on thee dieth not. See if thou do not still commit theft: if thou dost not now, see whether thou hast at any time. If thou art now day, remember thy night: if thou art now fixed in heaven, bear in mind thy earth. Perhaps thou findest that thou wast at some time a thief; and perhaps that some other person was incensed, because thou also didst live, though a thief, and hadst not died: but as thou, when thou didst commit the sin, didst live for this reason, that thou mightest not repeat it; do not, because thou hast passed over, wish to overthrow the bridge of God’s compassion. Art thou ignorant that many are yet to pass where thou too hast passed? Wouldest thou now live to murmur, if he who before murmured against thee had been heard against thee? Nevertheless, even now, thou desirest God’s

vengeance against the wicked, that the thief may die, and thou murmurest against God, because the thief dieth not. Weigh in the balance of equity the thief and the blasphemer; thou now sayest that thou art not a thief, but in murmuring against God, thou art a blasphemer. The thief watcheth for a man's sleep, that he may seize something: and thou sayest that God is asleep, and seeth not man. Therefore, if thou wouldest have another correct his hand, do thou first correct thy tongue: thou wouldest have him correct his heart towards man, correct thy heart towards God; lest perchance, when thou desirest the vengeance of God, if it come, it find thee first. For He will come: He will come, and will judge those who continue in their wickedness, ungrateful for the prolongation of His mercy, for His longsuffering, treasuring up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who will render to every man according to his deeds: because, The Lord is the God of vengeance, therefore hath He dealt confidently. For He spared no man, when He was speaking here: the Lord Himself was in the weakness of the flesh, but in strength of speech. He respected not the persons of the Jewish rulers. What words did He address unto them? and, as it is written, truly in confidence, because it is said in the Psalms of Him, Now for the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy, and because of the deep sighing of the poor, I will up, saith the Lord. Who are the needy? Who are the poor? Those who have no hope except in Him, in whom alone hope reposed is never deceived. Observe this, my brethren, when the needy are mentioned in Scripture, they do not seem to be meant only who have nothing. For thou findest a poor man, who when he suffereth any injury, applieth to no one but his patron, in whose mansion he perhaps dwells, whose inmate, tenant, client he is; and declareth that he hath suffered an indignity because he belongeth to him: his heart is in the man, his hope is in the man, ashes in ashes. But there are others that are opulent, and supported by the honours of mankind in this life: who yet neither place their hopes in their money, nor place their hopes in their estates, nor place their hope in their household, nor in the splendour of a transitory dignity; but their whole hope they repose in Him, Who hath no successor, Who cannot die, Who cannot be deceived, and cannot deceive; such men, although they seem to have many things in this life, yet use them well for the support of the indigent; they are counted among the Lord's poor. For they see that they are living in peril in this life; they feel that they are pilgrims; they dwell amid their opulence, like the traveller in the inn, who is to pass onward, not to remain as its possessor. What then saith the Lord? For the comfortless troubles' sake of the needy, and because of the deep sighing of the poor, I will up, saith the Lord, and will set him in safety. Our safety is our Saviour: in Him He would place the hope of all the needy and poor. And what saith He? I will deal confidently in Him. What meaneth this? He will not fear, will not spare the lusts and vices of men. Truly, as a faithful physician, with the healing knife of preaching in His hand, He hath cut away all our wounded parts. Therefore such as He was prophesied and preached beforehand, such was He found. He was speaking on the Mount, when He said, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. There they are called blessed, who are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs (it is said in this very sermon) is the kingdom of heaven. And that He might make them lights, that is, patiently enduring all those iniquities which are transitory, He added, Blessed shall ye be, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven. Further on in the sermon, when He was beginning to teach them, although the crowd surrounded Him, He said things to His disciples, which would strike the very face of the Pharisees and Jews, who had a kind of supremacy as interpreters of all the Scripture, who appeared to themselves righteous, or imagined that they seemed so, before whose supremacy the people seemed to bow in subjection. He spared them not, saying, When ye pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men; and so forth. He touched all; He feared no man. And when He had finished the whole sermon, the Gospel concludeth respecting Him thus, It came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes. How great things then did He, of Whom it is said, He taught them as one having authority, say unto them? Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! What great things did He say unto them, before their face? He feared no one. Why? Because He is the God of vengeance. For this reason He spared them not in words, that they might remain for Him after to spare them in judgment; because if they were unwilling to accept the healing of His word, they would afterwards incur their Judge's doom. Wherefore? Because He hath said, The Lord is the God of vengeance, the God of vengeance hath dealt confidently; that is, He hath spared no man in word. He who spared not in word when about to suffer, will He spare in judgment when about to judge? He who in His humility feared no man, will He fear any man in His glory? From His dealing thus confidently in time past, imagine how He will deal at the end of time. Murmur not then against God, Who seemeth to spare the wicked; but be thou good, and perhaps for a season He may not spare thee the rod, that He may in the end spare thee in judgment. The Lord is the God of vengeance, the God of vengeance hath dealt confidently.

8. Ver. 2. And because He dealt confidently, they endured not His confidence: and because He came humble, and in mortal flesh, and to die, not to do as sinners, but to suffer as sinners: when He had come for these reasons, and had dealt confidently, and they could not bear His confidence of speech, what did they do? They seized Him, they scourged, mocked, buffeted, besmeared Him with spitting, crowned Him with thorns, lifted Him up on the Cross, at last slew Him. And what followed, because He dealt confidently? Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world. Because they imprisoned Him when humble, thinkest thou they will imprison Him when exalted? Because they judged Him when mortal, will they not be judged by Him when immortal? What then saith He? Be exalted, Thou, Who hast dealt confidently, the confidence of Whose word the wicked bore not, but thought they did a glorious deed, when they seized and crucified Thee; they who ought to have seized on Thee with faith, seized Thee with persecution. Thou then Who hast among the wicked dealt confidently, and hast feared no man, because Thou hast suffered, be exalted; that is, arise again, depart into heaven. Let the Church also bear with long-suffering what the Church’s Head hath borne with long-suffering. Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world: and reward the proud after their deserving. He will reward them, brethren. For what is this, Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world: and reward the proud after their deserving. This is the prophecy of one who doth predict, not the boldness of one who commandeth. Not because the Prophet said, Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world, did Christ obey the Prophet, in arising from the dead, and ascending into heaven; but because Christ was to do this, the Prophet predicted it. He seeth Christ abased in the spirit, abased he

seeth Him: fearing no man, in speech sparing no man, and he saith, He hath dealt confidently. He seeth how confidently He hath dealt, he seeth Him arrested, crucified, humbled, he seeth Him rising from the dead, and ascending into heaven, and from thence to come in judgment of those, among whose hands He had suffered every evil: Be exalted, he saith, Thou Judge of the world, and reward the proud after their deserving. The proud He will thus reward, not the humble. Who are the proud? Those to whom it is little to do evil: but they even defend their own sins. For on some of those who crucified Christ, miracles were afterwards performed, when out of the number of the Jews themselves there were found believers, and the blood of Christ was given unto them. Their hands were impious, and red with the blood of Christ. He whose blood they had shed, Himself washed them. They who had persecuted His mortal body which they had seen, became part of His very body, that is, the Church. They shed their own ransom, that they might drink their own ransom. For afterwards more were converted. When many miracles were wrought by the Apostles, several thousand men in one day believed: and they were found to be in such close union with one another, that they sold all their possessions, and laid before the Apostles' feet the price of them; to every one was distributed according to his necessity: and they had one heart and one soul in the Lord. This was the case even with the very crucifiers of our Lord. And why were they not rewarded? Because it is said, Render a recompense to the proud: but they chose not to be proud. For when they saw many miracles wrought in the name of Christ, Whom they imagined they had slain: moved by those miracles, they heard from Peter in Whose name they were wrought: for they, as servants, would not assume to themselves the power of their Lord, so as to assert that His work in them was their own work. Those servants then gave the honour to their Lord: they said, that what they wondered at, was wrought in His name Whom they crucified. They then became humble, they were pricked in heart, they were moved to confession of their sin, and asked advice, saying, What shall we do? Not in despair of salvation, but in search of healing. Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those who repented were humble: to them therefore recompense was not rendered, because—see what this Psalm saith, Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world, and render recompense to the proud. These then were excepted from among the number of the proud: in them those words of our Lord, spoken as He was hanging on the Cross, availed: Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do. Be exalted, Thou Judge of the world, and render a recompense to the proud. Will He then render a recompense? He will: but to the proud.

9. Ver. 3, 4. But when, when will He reward them? In the mean while the wicked triumph, exult, blaspheme, and do all manner of evil. Doth this move thee? Ask the reason in a pious spirit: blame not in thy pride. Doth it move thee? This Psalm sympathiseth with thee, it seeketh with thee, not because it knoweth not; but that thou mayest find in it what thou wast ignorant of; for this reason, it seeketh with thee what it knoweth. Just as he who wisheth to console any man, cannot cheer him unless he grieve with him: he first grieveth with him, and then cheereth him with consolatory words. But if he approacheth him laughing at his sorrow, he hath not what we have just spoken of, as the Apostle telleth us, to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and to weep with them that weep. That he therefore may rejoice with thee, thou first dost weep with him; thou art sorrowful with him, that thou mayest cheer him: thus this Psalm and the Spirit of God, surely knowing all things, seeketh with thee, as it were in thine own words: Lord, how long shall the ungodly, how long shall the ungodly triumph? They answer, and will speak wickedness, they all will speak that work unrighteousness. What is their saying, but against God, when they say: What profiteth it us that we live thus? What wilt thou reply? Doth God truly regard our deeds? For because they live, they imagine that God knoweth not their actions. Behold, what evil happeneth unto them! If the officers knew where they were, they would arrest them; and they therefore avoid the officer’s eyes, that they may escape instant apprehension; but no one can escape the eye of God, since He not only seeth within the closet, but within the recesses of the heart. Even they themselves believe that nothing can escape God: and because they do evil, and are conscious of what they have done, and see that they live while God knoweth, though they would not live if the officer discovered them; they say unto themselves, These things please God: and, in truth, if they displeased Him, as they displease kings, as they displease judges, as they displease governors, as they displease recorders, yet could we escape the eye of God, as we do escape the eyes of those authorities? Therefore these things please God. Therefore it is said in

another Psalm to a sinner, These things hast thou done, and I held My tongue, and thou thoughtest unrighteousness, that I will be like thyself. What meaneth this, that I will be like thyself? That as thy sins please thyself, so thou dost think that they also please Me. And He threateneth for the future: but I will reprove thee. He then Who said, I held My tongue, is not silent. Though He said, These things hast thou done, and I held My tongue: and thou thoughtest unrighteousness, that I will be such as thyself: yet He held not His tongue. For while we are speaking, He is not silent: while the reader readeth, He is not silent: while the Psalm chanteth thus, He is not silent: and all this is the voice of God throughout the round world. How then is He silent? How is He not silent? In speech He is not silent: in vengeance He is silent. What then mean the words, These things hast thou done, and I held My tongue? These things thou hast done, and I have not punished. Thou thoughtest unrighteousness, that I will be like thyself. On the very silence, that is, delay of punishment, He saith in another passage, I have long time holden My peace; shall I hold My peace alway? Lord, how long shall the ungodly, how long shall the ungodly triumph? They answer, and will speak unrighteousness; they will speak, all that work unrighteousness? And he signifieth all their works. What meaneth answer? They have a reply to make against the righteous. Some righteous man cometh, and saith, Do not commit iniquity. Wherefore? That thou mayest not die. Behold, iniquity I have committed: why do I not die? That man wrought righteousness: and he is dead: why is he dead? I have wrought iniquity: why hath not God carried me off? Behold, that man did righteously: and why hath He thus visited him? why suffereth He thus? They answer; this is the meaning of the word answer: for they have a reply to make; because they are spared, from the longsuffering of God, they discover an argument for their reply. He spareth them for one reason, they answer for another, because they still live. For the Apostle telleth us wherefore He spareth, he expoundeth the grounds of the longsuffering of God: And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the longsuffering of God leadeth thee to repentance? But thou, that is, he who answereth and saith, If I displeased God, He would not spare me, hear what he worketh for himself; hear the

Apostle; But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds. He therefore increaseth His longsuffering, thou increasest thine iniquity. His treasure will consist in eternal mercy towards those who have not despised His mercy; but thy treasure will be discovered in wrath, and what thou daily layest up by little and little, thou wilt find in the accumulated mass; thou layest up by the grain, but thou wilt find the whole heap. Omit not to watch thy slightest daily sins: rivers are filled from the smallest drops.

10. Ver. 5, 6. What do they do, who answer, and will speak unrighteousness, because they sin and are spared? They humbled Thy people, O Lord: that is, all those who live righteously, against whom all the wicked like to vent their pride. They have humbled Thy people, O Lord; and have troubled Thine heritage. They have murdered the widow, and the fatherless: and slain the proselyte; that is, the traveller, the pilgrim: the comer from far, as the Psalmist calleth himself. Each of these expressions is too clear in meaning to make it worth while to dwell upon them.

11. Ver. 7. And they have said, The Lord shall not see: He observeth not, regardeth not these things: He careth for other matters, He understandeth not. These are the two assertions of the wicked: one which I have just quoted, These things hast thou done, and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest unrighteousness, that I will be like thyself. What meaneth, that I will be like thyself? Thou thinkest that I see thy deeds, and that they are pleasing unto Me, because I do not punish them. There is another assertion of the wicked: because God neither regardeth these things, nor observeth that He may know how I live, God heedeth me not. Doth then God make any reckoning of me? or doth He even take account of me? or of men in general? Unhappy man! He cared for thee, that thou mightest exist: doth He not care that thou live well? Such then are the words of these last; and yet they have said, The Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.

12. Ver. 8. Take heed now, ye that are unwise among the people: O ye fools, some time understand! He teacheth His people whose feet might slip: any one among them seeth the prosperity of the wicked, himself living well

among the Saints of God, that is, among the number of the sons of the Church: he seeth that the wicked flourish, and work iniquity, he envieth, and is led to follow them in their actions; because he seeth that apparently it profiteth him nothing that he liveth well in humility, hoping for his reward here. For if he hopeth for it in future, he loseth it not; because the time is not yet come for him to receive it. Thou art working in a vineyard: execute thy task, and thou shalt receive thy pay. Thou wouldest not exact it from thy employer, before thy work was finished, and yet dost thou exact it from God before thou dost work? This patience is part of thy work, and thy pay dependeth upon thy work: thou who dost not choose to be patient, choosest to work less upon the vineyard: since this act of patience belongeth to thy labouring itself, which is to gain thy pay. But if thou art treacherous, take care, lest thou shouldest not only not receive thy pay, but also suffer punishment, because thou hast chosen to be a treacherous labourer. When such a labourer beginneth to do ill, he watcheth his employer’s eyes, who hired him for his vineyard, that he may loiter when his eye is turned away; but the moment his eyes are turned towards him, he worketh diligently. But God, Who hired thee, averteth not His eyes: thou canst not work treacherously: the eyes of thy Master are ever upon thee: seek an opportunity to deceive Him, and loiter if thou canst. If then any of you had any such ideas, when ye saw the wicked flourishing, and if such thoughts caused your feet to slip in the path of God; to you this Psalm speaketh: but if perchance none of you be such, through you it doth address others, in these words, Take heed now; since they had said, The Lord shall not see: neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. Take heed, it saith, now, ye that are unwise among the people: and ye fools, some time understand!

13. Ver. 9, 10. He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He who enabled thee to hear, shall He not be able Himself to hear? He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? or He that made the eye, doth He not consider? or He that instructeth the nations, shall not He reprove? Listen earnestly to this, brethren, He that instructeth the nations, shall not He reprove? This is what God is at present doing: He is instructing the nations: for this reason He sent His word to man throughout the world: He sent it by Angels, by Patriarchs, by Prophets, by servants, through so many heralds going before the Judge. He sent also His own Word Himself, He sent His own Son in

Person: He sent the servants of His Son, and in these very servants His own Son. Throughout the world is every where preached the word of God. Where is it not said unto men, Abandon your former wickedness, and turn yourselves to right paths? He spareth, that ye may correct yourselves: He punished not yesterday, in order that to-day ye may live well. He teacheth the heathen, shall He not therefore reprove? will He not hear those whom He teacheth? will He not judge those to whom He hath beforehand sent and sown lessons of warning? If thou wast in a school, wouldest thou receive a task, and not repeat it? When therefore thou receivest it from thy master, thou art being taught: the Master giveth thy task into thy hands, and shall He not exact it from thee when thou comest to repeat it? or when thou hast begun to repeat it, shalt thou not be in fear of stripes? At present then we are receiving our work: afterwards we are placed before the Master, that we may give up to Him all our past tasks, that is, that we may give an account of all those things which are now being bestowed upon us. Hear the Apostle's words: We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ: that every one may receive according to the things done in his body, whether it be good or bad.

Or He that instructeth the heathen, shall He not reprove? it is He that teacheth man knowledge. Doth He not know, Who maketh thee to know? It is He that teacheth man knowledge.

14. Ver. 11. The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vain. For although thou knowest not the thoughts of God, that they are righteous; He knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vain. Even men have known the thoughts of God: but those to whom He hath become a friend, it is to them He sheweth His counsel. Do not, brethren, despise yourselves: if ye approach the Lord with faith, ye hear the thoughts of God; these ye are now learning, this is told you, and for this reason ye are taught, why God spareth the wicked in this life, that ye may not murmur against God, Who teacheth man knowledge. The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vain. Abandon therefore the thoughts of man, which are vain: that ye may take hold on the thoughts of God, which are wise. But who is he who taketh hold on the thoughts of God? He who is placed in the firmament

of heaven. We have already chaunted that Psalm, and have expounded this expression therein.

15. Ver. 12, 13. Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord: and teachest him from Thy law; that Thou mayest give him patience in time of malice: until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. Behold, thou hast the counsel of God, wherefore He spareth the wicked: the pit is being digged for the sinner. Thou wishest to bury him at once: the pit is as yet being dug for him: do not be in haste to bury him. What mean the words, until the pit be digged up for the sinner? or whom doth He mean by sinner? One man? No. Whom then? The whole race of such that are sinners? No; them that are proud; for he had said before, Reward the proud after their deserving. For that publican, who would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner, was a sinner; but since he was not proud, and since God will render a recompense to the proud; the pit is being dug not for him, but for them that are such, until He render a recompense to the proud. In the words then, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly, understand the proud. Who is the proud? He who doth not by confession of his sins do penance, that he may be healed through his humility. Who is the proud? He who chooseth to arrogate to himself those few good things which he seemeth to possess, and who doth detract from the mercy of God. Who is the proud? He who although he doth ascribe unto God his good works, yet insulteth those who do not those good works, and raiseth himself above them. For even that Pharisee said, I thank Thee: he said not, I do these works of my own power. He thanked God for the works which he did: he was therefore conscious that he did well, and that his doing so was of God. Whence then was he rebuked? Because he insulted the publican. Attend to this, that ye may become perfect. There ought to come first, whether in man or woman, a confession of sins, a healthful penitence which may avail to reform the man, not to mock God: but when, after repentance, he hath begun a good life, he hath yet to be careful, that he ascribe not his works to himself, but give thanks to Him, by Whose grace he hath been enabled to live well; for it is He Who called, He Who enlightened him. Is this man then perfect? No. Something is yet wanting to him. What is that? That he be not proud over those who do not as yet live as he liveth. Such a man is at last safe: the recompense spoken of above is not

rendered unto him: he is not among those for whom the pit is being dug. Consider him who said, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, even as this publican. How did he exalt himself, when he said, I am not as this publican? but the other, with downcast eyes, smote his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner! The one was proud of his good works, the other humble in his bad deeds. See, brethren, that humility in bad works pleased God more than pride in good works: thus God hateth the proud. And therefore He thus concluded, Verily I say unto you, the publican went down to his house justified rather than the Pharisee; and He saith why: For every one that exalteth himself, shall be abased: and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted. My brethren, even hence we learn that Christ hath taught us humility, because God became Man. This is the very humility which displeaseth the pagans; whence they mock us. What manner of God do ye worship, that was born? What manner of God do ye worship, that was crucified? The humility of Christ displeaseth the proud: but if it pleaseth thee who art a Christian, imitate it. If thou hast imitated it, thou wilt not labour: for Himself hath said, Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart. This then is the Christian doctrine: no man doeth any thing well, except by His grace. A man’s bad acts are his own: his good he doth of God’s bounty. When he hath begun to do well, let him not ascribe it unto himself: when he hath not attributed it to himself, let him give thanks to Him from Whom he hath received it. But when he doeth well, let him not insult him who doth not as he doth, nor exalt himself above him: for the grace of God is not stayed at him, so that it cannot reach another.

16. That Thou mayest give him patience in days of malice: until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. Have patience therefore every one, if thou art a Christian, in time of malice. Days of malice are those in which the ungodly appear to flourish, and the righteous to suffer; but the suffering of the righteous is the rod of the Father, and the prosperity of the ungodly is their own snare. For because God giveth you patience in time of adversity, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly, do not think that the Angels are standing in some place with mattocks, and are digging that great pit which shall be able to contain the whole race of the ungodly; and because ye see

that the wicked are many, and say unto yourselves carnally: Truly what pit can contain so great a multitude of the wicked, such a crowd of sinners? where is a pit of such dimensions, as to contain all, dug? when finished? therefore God spareth them. This is not so: their very prosperity is the pit of the wicked: for into that shall they fall, as it were into a pitfall. Attend, brethren, for it is a great thing to know that prosperity is called a pitfall: until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. For God spareth him whom He knoweth to be ungodly and impious, in His own hidden justice: and this very sparing of God, causeth him to be puffed up through his impunity. He thinketh himself exalted, and he falleth: in this very thing he falleth, in that he thinketh himself exalted. In this he thinketh that he is treading on high, and God calleth this a pit. A pit tendeth downwards, not heavenwards: but the proud ungodly appear to be ascending towards heaven, while actually they are being sunk beneath the earth. On the contrary, the humble seem to bow themselves down to the ground, but really are ascending into heaven. Have patience then, every believer, if thou hast been taught from the law of God, that thy heart may be in the firmament of heaven: for God made the lights on the fourth day, which is termed the fourth of the week; whence this Psalm hath taken its title. As thou seest the constellations in perfect patience pursue their own courses, without regarding what men say concerning them; so also do thou not regard whatever flesh may have done towards thee. For every man is flesh and blood. For thou art not vile in comparison with another’s flesh, by which thou seemest to be oppressed: because He assumed the flesh for thee, and for thee He poured forth His blood, Who will bring both thee and that man before His own judgment; and if He gave thee such blessings when thou wast in thy sins, what doth He reserve for thee, if thou art faithful? Hence take patience. How art thou to take patience? When thou sayest, Because it is the will of God, therefore the wicked flourish: He wisheth to spare the wicked, He leadeth to repentance those whom He spareth; but they do not reform: He knoweth how to judge them. But a man is impatient, when he chooseth to gainsay either the goodness of the Lord, or His long-suffering, or His power, or the justice of his Judge. The proud man raiseth himself up against God: God sinketh him: and he sinketh by the very act of raising himself up against God. For in another Psalm he thus saith, Thou hast cast them down, while they were being exalted. He said not, Thou hast cast them down, because they were exalted; or, Thou hast cast them down, after they were exalted; so that the period of their exaltation be one, of their casting down another: but in the very act of their exaltation were they cast down. For in proportion as the heart of man is proud, so doth it recede from God; and if it recede from God, it sinketh down into the deep. On the other hand, the humble heart bringeth God unto it from heaven, so that He becometh very near unto it. Surely God is lofty, God is above all the heavens, He surpasseth all the Angels: how high must these be raised, to reach that exalted One? Do not burst thyself by enlarging thyself; I give thee other advice, lest perchance in enlarging thyself thou burst, through pride: surely God is lofty: do thou humble thyself, and He will descend unto thee.

17. Ver. 14. We have heard why He spareth the wicked: this very thing is their pitfall. God saith to thee, How the pit is dug for them, and why it is dug, it is not thine to know; but from My law learn that patience is thy duty, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. And what, thou sayest, of one who suffers, and that among the ungodly themselves? The next verse answereth thee: For the Lord will not cast off His people. He trieth them, He doth not cast them off. For how speaketh Scripture in another passage? For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. He receiveth thee after thou art scourged; and dost thou say, that He casteth thee off? We see men do this in the case of their own sons: sometimes they allow their sons when despaired of to go and live at their own pleasure; those whom they hope for, they scourge; those whom they see to be utterly hopeless and intractable, they leave to live as they choose. The one whom he thus abandons to do as he pleases, he means not to admit to his inheritance: while he scourgeth that son for whom he keepeth the inheritance. But when God scourgeth a son, let him run beneath the hand of his Father while He scourgeth him; because He who scourgeth him, is chastening him in preparation for his heritage. He doth not cast off from the inheritance His son whom He scourgeth: but He scourgeth him, in order that he may receive it. Let him not be so foolish and childish in his thoughts as to say, My father loveth my brother more, whom he alloweth to do whatever he will: I, if I move against my father’s orders, find the scourge. Do thou rejoice beneath the scourge: because the heritage is kept for thee, for the Lord will not cast off His people. He chasteneth for a season, He

condemneth not for ever: the others He spareth for a season, and will condemn them for evermore. Make thy choice: dost thou wish temporary suffering, or eternal punishment? temporal happiness, or eternal life? What doth God threaten? Eternal punishment. What doth He promise? Eternal rest. His scourging the good, is temporary: His sparing the wicked, is also temporary. For the Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance.

18. Ver. 15. Until righteousness, he saith, turn again unto judgment, and all they that have it are right in heart. Listen now, and gain righteousness: for judgment thou canst not yet have. Thou shouldest gain righteousness first; but that very righteousness of thine shall turn unto judgment. The Apostles had righteousness here on earth, and bore with the wicked. But what is said unto them? Ye shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Their righteousness therefore shall turn unto judgment. For whoever is righteous in this life, is so for this reason, that he may endure evils with patience: let him suffer patiently the period of suffering, and the day of judging cometh. But why do I speak of the servants of God? The Lord Himself, Who is the Judge of all living and dead, first chose to be judged, and then to judge. Until righteousness turn again unto judgment; and all such as have it are right in heart. Those who have righteousness at present, are not yet judges. For the first thing is to have righteousness, and afterwards to judge: He first endureth the wicked, and afterwards judgeth them. Let there be righteousness now: afterwards it shall turn again unto judgment. And so long He endureth wicked men, as God doth will, as long as God’s Church shall endure them, that she may be taught through their wickedness. Nevertheless, God will not cast off His people, until righteousness be turned again unto judgment: all such as have it are right in heart. Who are those who are right in heart? Those whose will is the will of God. He spareth sinners: thou dost wish Him at once to destroy sinners. Thy heart is crooked and thy will perverted, when thy will is one way and the will of God another. God wisheth to spare sinners: thou dost not wish sinners spared. God is of long-suffering to sinners: thou dost not wish to endure sinners. But as I had begun saying, thou wishest one thing, God willeth another: turn thy heart, and direct it unto God: because the Lord also hath had compassion on the weak. He saw in His body, that is, in His

Church, the weak, who first tried to follow their own will, but when they saw that the will of God was different, directed themselves and their heart to undertake and follow the will of God. Wish not to bend the will of God to thy will, but rather correct thy will to His. The will of God is like a rule: behold, suppose, thou hast twisted the rule: whence canst thou be set straight? But the rule itself continueth straight: for it is immutable. As long as the rule is straight, thou hast whither to turn thyself, and straighten thy perversity; thou hast a means of correcting what is crooked in thee. But what do men will? It is not enough that their own will is crooked; they even wish to make the will of God crooked according to their own heart, that God may do what they themselves will, when they ought to do that which God willeth.

19. But how did our Lord unite two wills in one, in the Man which He carried with Him? Prefiguring that in His body, that is, in His Church, there would be some who would wish to do their own will, but would afterwards follow the will of God; because He hath shewn that some weak ones belong unto Himself, and hath prefigured them in Himself. For it was for this reason that He sweated blood from His whole body, because in His body, that is, in His Church, He shewed the blood of Martyrs. From His whole body blood flowed: thus His Church hath her Martyrs, through her whole body is poured forth blood. Prefiguring therefore in Himself, or in His body, some weak persons, in the person of the weak, sympathising with them, He saith, O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me! He sheweth the will of a man: if He remained in this will, He would then seem to be shewing a heart not right. But if He hath shewn compassion on thee, and in Himself also He freeth thee; imitate what follows, and say, Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou, Father, wilt. If thy human will hath begun to creep on thee, O that God would slay that mine enemy, so that he could not persecute me! O if it could fall out that I might not suffer so much from him! But if thou hast persevered, and hast set thy mind on something, though thou seest that it is not the will of God, thou art wicked in heart, thou hast not righteousness that shall turn again unto judgment: for all who have it, are right in heart. And who are right in heart? Those who are found as Job was found, who saith, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as the Lord willed, so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord. Behold a

righteous heart: a second time under a heavy stroke, what said he to his wife, whom the devil had left and had not slain, that he might have an assistant, and not her husband a consoler? For he remembered that Adam was deceived by that Eve, and he thought this Eve was necessary to him. She came to Job, like Eve: but this Adam was happier when he conquered on the dunghill, than the Adam who was conquered in Paradise; for what did he answer unto that woman? Behold a heart prepared, a righteous heart. Did he not suffer persecutions, and those heavy ones? And all Christians suffer them; and if men rage not, yet the devil rageth: and if emperors have become Christians; hath the devil also become a Christian? Attend therefore, holy brethren, to what maketh a righteous heart. She came and said unto him, Say somewhat against God, and die. She counted all his or her own miseries: Say somewhat against God, she said, and die. And he now recognising Eve, wishing to return whence he had fallen, with his heart fixed in God, as a luminary in the firmament, dwelling in his heart in the book of God, saith, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not endure evil? Because his heart was fixed in God, therefore was it right: for because God is right, when thou dost fix thine heart in Him, He becometh thy standard, that thine heart may be right. Fix therefore thine heart in Him, and it will be right. But the human will was beginning to seduce thee. Something of the weakness of the flesh was deceiving thy mind: do not yet despair. The Lord in His weakness prefigured thee, not Himself: for the Lord, Who was to rise again on the third day, feared not to suffer. If He suffered altogether as a man, and was not about to suffer as God, and if He knew that He would rise again in three days, He could not in any way feel dread when about to die, as Paul feared not, knowing that he should rise again at the end of time. For he saith; For I am in a strait betwixt the two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. For it was a weariness to him to remain in the flesh, he felt an ardent longing in two ways; to be released and to be with Christ, he said, was far best. Thus when his martyrdom was close at hand, how did he exult! how did he glory! I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. He rejoiceth when about to be crowned, and yet He who will crown him is sorrowful: the Apostle thus rejoiceth, and our Lord Christ saith, O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. But He took upon Himself sorrow, as He did the flesh. For ye must not think, that I assert that our Lord was not sorrowful. For if I asserted that He was not sorrowful, when the Gospel saith, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; it might follow that when the Gospel saith, Jesus slept, He did not sleep: when the Gospel saith, Jesus ate, that He did not eat: the worm of corruption hath thus crept in, and left nothing whole. So that it may be said, that He had not a true body, and had not a true flesh. Whatever therefore is written of Him, brethren, really happened, and is true. Was He therefore sorrowful? Assuredly sorrowful, but with sorrow taken of His own free will, even as He assumed the flesh of His own will; as He of His own will took upon Him true flesh, so did He of His own will take upon Him true sorrow. Thus also of His own will hath He shewn in Himself, that if perchance some weakness hath come over thee, and thou hast begun to wish otherwise than God doth will, thou mayest see how thine own heart hath turned itself aside from the straight rule, thou mayest fix thy heart after the rule, and thy heart which in the man had begun to be crooked, may be directed after God. Thus then the Lord, as a guide to thee, saith: My soul is sorrowful even unto death: and, O Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. But say then at once what He said, that He might teach thee: Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou, Father, wilt. For if ye do this, ye will have righteousness: if ye follow righteousness, your heart is right; if your heart be right, that righteousness, which now endureth, will turn again unto judgment, and afterwards, when thy Lord judgeth, thou shalt not only not dread evils, but shalt also glory in thy crown. Then shalt thou see how the longsuffering of God hath profited, either for their punishment or for thy crown: at present thou seest not: believe what thou seest not as yet, lest thou be ashamed when thou shalt see. Until righteousness turn again unto judgment: all such as have it are right in heart.

20. Ver. 16. Who will rise up for me against the wicked? or who will take my part against the evil doers? Many persuade us to divers evils: the serpent ceaseth not to whisper to thee to work iniquity: whichever way thou shalt turn, if perchance thou hast done well, thou seekest to live well with some

one, and thou hardly findest any one; many wicked men surround thee, for there are few grains of wheat, and much chaff. This floor hath its grains of corn, but as yet they suffer. Therefore the whole mass of the wheat, when separated from the chaff, will be great: the grains are few, but when compared with the chaff, still many in themselves. When therefore the wicked cry out on every side, and say, Why livest thou thus? Art thou the only Christian? Why dost thou not do, what others also do? Why dost thou not frequent the theatres, as others do? Why dost thou not use charms and amulets? Why dost thou not consult astrologers and soothsayers, even as others do? And thou crossest thyself, and sayest, I am a Christian, that thou mayest repel them, whosoever they are; but the enemy presses on, urges his attacks; what is worse, by the example of Christians he choketh Christians. They toil on, in the midst of heat: the Christian soul suffereth tribulation: yet it hath power to conquer: hath it such power of itself? For this reason remark what he saith. For he answereth, What doth it profit me that I now find charms for myself, and gain a few days? I depart hence from this life, and repair unto my Lord, Who shall send me into the flames; because I have preferred a few days to life eternal, He shall send me into hell. What hell? That of the eternal judgment of God. Is it really so, (the enemy answereth,) unless indeed thou really believest that God careth how men live? And perhaps it is not an acquaintance who speaketh thus to thee in the street, but thy wife at home, or possibly the husband to the faithful and holy wife, her deceiver. If it be the woman to her husband, she is as Eve unto him; if as the husband unto the wife, he is as the devil unto her: either she is herself as Eve unto thee, or thou art a serpent unto her. Sometimes the father would incline his thoughts to his son, and findeth him wicked, utterly depraved: he is in a fever of misery, he wavers, he seeketh how to subdue him, he is almost drawn in, and consenteth: but may God be near him. Hear therefore the Psalm: Who will rise up for me against the wicked? So many are there; wherever I look round, they meet my eyes. Who shall withstand the devil, the prince of iniquity, and his angels, and the men that have been seduced by him?

21. Ver. 17. If the Lord, he saith, had not helped me: within a little my soul had dwelt in hell. I had almost plunged into that pit which is preparing for sinners: that is, my soul had dwelt in hell. Because he already began to

waver, and nearly to consent, he looked back unto the Lord. Suppose, for example's sake, he was insulted to tempt him to iniquity. For sometimes the wicked flock together, and insult the good; especially if they are more in number, and if they have taken him alone, as there is often much chaff about one grain of wheat; (though there will not be when the heap hath been fanned;) he is then taken among many wicked ones, is insulted, and surrounded; they wish to place themselves over him, they torment him and insult him for his very righteousness. A great Apostle! say they; Thou hast flown into heaven, as Elias did! Men do these things, so that sometime, when he listeneth to the tongue of men, he is ashamed to be good among the wicked. Let him therefore resist the evil; but not of his own strength, lest he become proud, and when he wishes to escape the proud, himself increase their number. But what should he say? Who will rise up for me against the wicked: or who will take my part against the evil-doers? If the Lord had not helped me, within a little my soul had dwelt in hell.

22. Ver. 18, 19. If I said, My foot hath slipt; Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up. See how God loveth confession. Thy foot hath slipt, and thou sayest not, my foot hath slipt; but thou sayest thou art firm, when thou art slipping. The moment thou beginnest to slip or waver, confess thou that slip, that thou mayest not bewail thy total fall; that He may help, so that thy soul be not in hell. God loveth confession, loveth humility. Thou hast slipped, as a man; God helpeth thee, nevertheless: yet say, My foot hath slipt. Why dost thou slip, and yet sayest, I am firm? When I said, My foot hath slipt, Thy mercy, O Lord, hath held me up. Just as Peter presumed, but not in strength of his own. The Lord was seen to walk upon the sea, trampling on the heads of all the proud in this life. In walking upon the foaming waves, He figured His own course when He trampleth on the heads of the proud. The Church too doth trample upon them: for Peter is the Church Herself. Nevertheless, Peter dared not by himself walk upon the waters; but what said he? Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water. He in His own power, Peter by His order; bid me, he saith, come unto Thee. He answered, Come. For the Church also trampleth on the heads of the proud; but since it is the Church, and hath human weakness, that these words might be fulfilled, If I said, My foot hath slipt, Peter tottered on the sea, and cried out, Lord, save me! and so what is here put, If I said, My foot hath slipt, is put there, Lord, I

perish. And what is here, Thy mercy, O Lord, hath held me up, is there put, And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, saying, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? It is wonderful how God proveth men: our very dangers render Him Who rescueth us sweeter unto us. For see what followeth: because he said, If I said, My foot hath slipt, Thy mercy, O Lord, hath held me up. The Lord hath become especially sweet unto him, in rescuing him from danger; and thus speaking of this very sweetness of the Lord, he exclaimeth and saith, O Lord, in the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart, Thy comforts have refreshed my soul. Many sorrows, but many consolations: bitter wounds, and sweet remedies.

23. Ver. 20. Wilt Thou have any thing to do with the stool of iniquity, Who makest sorrow in learning? He hath said this, No wicked man sitteth with Thee, nor shalt Thou have any thing to do with the stool of iniquity. And he giveth an account whereof he understandeth this, For Thou makest sorrow in learning. For from this, because Thou hast not spared us, do I understand that Thou hast nothing to do with the stool of iniquity. Thou hast this in the Epistle of the Apostle Peter, and for this reason he hath adduced a testimony from the Scripture: for the time is come, he saith, that judgment must begin at the house of God; that is, the time is come for the judgment of those who belong to the house of God. If sons are scourged, what must the most wicked slaves expect? For which reason he added: And if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Goopel of God? To which he addeth this testimony: For if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? How then shall the wicked be with Thee, if Thou dost not even spare Thy faithful, in order that Thou mayest exercise and teach them? But as He spareth them not, for this reason, that He may teach them: he saith, For Thou makest sorrow in learning. Makest, that is, formest: from whence comes the word figulus (from fingo), and a potter’s vessel is called fictile: not in the meaning of fiction, as a falsehood, but of forming so as to give any thing being and some sort of form; as before he said, He that fabricated (finxit) the eye, shall He not see? Is that, ‘fabricated the eye’ a falsehood? Nay, it is understood He fashioned the eye, made the eye. And is He not a potter when He makes men frail, weak, earthly? Hear the Apostle: We have this treasure in earthen vessels. But perhaps some one else made these vessels for us? Hear him speaking: What art thou, O man,

who answerest against God? Can the vessel say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me so? Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make one vessel to honour, another to dishonour? Behold our Lord Himself, how He sheweth Himself a potter. Because He had made man of clay, He anointed him with clay, for whom He had not made eyes in the womb. And so when he saith, Hast Thou any thing to do with the stool of wickedness, Who makest grief in learning? let us say it in this sense; Hast Thou any thing to do with the stool of wickedness, Who makest grief in learning? Makest, he saith, grief in learning, that is, out of grief makest learning for us, so that grief itself becomes our instruction. How is sorrow our learning? When He scourgeth thee Who died for thee, and Who doth not promise bliss in this life, and Who cannot deceive, and when He giveth not here what thou seekest. What will He give? when will He give? how much will He give, Who giveth not here, Who here teacheth, Who maketh sorrow in learning? Thy labour is here, and rest is promised thee. Thou takest thought that thou hast toil here: but take thought what sort of rest He promiseth. Canst thou conceive it? If thou couldest, thou wouldest see that thy toil here is nothing toward an equivalent. Hear one who had seen it in part, who said, Now I know in part. What saith this Apostle? For our light affliction, which is for the present, and temporal, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, after an incredible measure, and to an incredible measure. What is the, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory? For when doth it work? while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. Be not slothful in thy toil for a short space: and thou shalt rejoice without ceasing. God will give thee eternal life: consider with how much toil it should be purchased.

24. Attend, brethren; it is for sale. What I have is for sale, saith God unto thee, buy it. What hath He for sale? I have rest for sale; buy it by thy toil. Attend, that we may be in Christ’s name brave Christians: the remainder of the Psalm is but a little, let us not be weary. For how can he be strong in doing, who faileth in hearing? The Lord will help us to expound unto you the remainder. Attend then: God hath, as it were, proclaimed the kingdom of heaven for sale. Thou sayest unto Him, What is its value? The price is toil: if He were to say, its price is gold, it would not suffice to say this only,

but thou wouldest seek to know how much gold; for there is a mass of gold, and half an ounce, and a pound, and the like. He said price, that thou mightest not be at pains to enquire, how long thou shouldest find it. The price of the commodity is toil: how much toil is it? Now seek how much thou shouldest toil for it. Thou art not as yet told how great that toil is doomed to be, or how much toil is required of thee: God saith this unto thee, I shew thee how great that rest will be; do thou judge with what measure of toil it should be bought. Let God therefore say how great that rest is destined to be: Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be for ever praising thee. This is eternal rest: this rest will be without end; this joy will be without end, this pleasure will be without end, this incorruptibility will be without end; thou shalt have eternal life; a rest which is without end. What toil is that rest worth which hath no end? If thou wishest to make a true judgment, surely eternal rest is rightly purchased by eternal toil. This is true: but do not fear: God is merciful. For if thou hadst eternal toil, thou wouldest never reach eternal rest. Always toiling, when wouldest thou reach that which worthily indeed would be the price of eternal toil, because the rest is eternal? Make the price an equivalent: surely eternal rest is worthy of comparison with eternal toil! But if thou didst always toil, thou wouldest never reach eternal rest. That thou mayest therefore at some time gain what thou buyest, thou must not toil for ever: not that it is not of so much value, but that what is bought may be possessed. It is indeed worthy of being bought by perpetual toil; but it is necessary that it be bought by temporary toil. Certainly it ought to be so much, that is, eternal labour for eternal rest. What is the value of a million of years in toil? A million of years have an end: what I will give thee, saith God, shall not have an end. What then is the mercy of God? He saith not, toil for a million of years: he saith not, toil even for a thousand years: not, toil for five hundred years: toil while thou dost live, for a few years; thence shall thy rest commence, and be without end. Hear what followeth: Lord, in the multitude of sorrows that I had in my heart, Thy comforts have refreshed my soul. Thou toilest not only a few years, but in those very years, consolation is not wanting, daily joys are not wanting. But rejoice not in the world: rejoice in Christ, rejoice in His word, rejoice in His law. What I am speaking of, what ye are listening to, belongeth to these very joys. How great then are those consolations amid so great toils? True, there is what the Apostle saith, For our light affliction, which is but for a time, after an incredible measure and to an incredible measure, worketh for us an eternal weight of glory. See how small a price do we give; as it were, a single grain of pulse to receive eternal treasures; a single mite of toil, for a rest which is beyond our conception, according to what is said, it worketh for us, after an incredible measure and to an incredible measure, an eternal weight of glory. Thou rejoicest for a season: trust not therein; thou art sorrowful for a season: do not despair. Let not prosperity corrupt thee, nor adversity break thee down: lest perchance thou mayest say in thy mind, it cannot be that God, Who chasteneth even the righteous that He may save them, that He may teach them, can admit unto Himself the wicked. For if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? Hast Thou any thing to do with the stool of iniquity? that is, Dost Thou share the seat of the wicked? Thou Who makest sorrow in learning; Who hast chosen thus to try these Thy children, and to teach them thus, to give them such lessons, as to leave them still in fear, lest they should love something else, and forget Thee their true good. God is good: but if He were to cease, and not to mingle bitternesses with our temporal bliss, we should forget Him.

25. But where the anguish of trouble raiseth waves in the soul, then that faith, which was sleeping there, is aroused. For it was calm, when Christ was asleep on the sea: while He was sleeping, a storm arose, and they began to be in danger. Both tranquillity then and peace will be in the Christian’s heart: but as long as our faith is on the watch: but if our faith sleepeth, we are in danger. For Christ sleeping signifieth, that some forget their faith, and are in danger. But as when that ship was tossing on the waves, Christ was aroused by the tossed crew, who cried, Lord, we perish! He arose, and commanded the winds, commanded the waves, and it became calm; thus when evil lusts, evil persuasions, disturb thee, they are waves, they will be calmed. Thou dost now despair, and believest that thou dost not belong unto the Lord: let thy faith awake: awake Christ in thy heart; when faith riseth, thou recognisest where thou art: and if perchance the waves of lust tempt thee, thou beholdest what God hath promised; and the sweetness of His promises will make thee a despiser of the sweetnesses of the world; and if perchance many threats of the powerful wicked oppress thee, and drive thee

from righteousness, thou listenest to the threat of God, Go into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, and thou dost not leave thy righteousness: in fear therefore of eternal fire thou despisest temporal pain: and for the promises of God, thou scornest temporal happiness. He promised rest: suffer trouble. He threateneth eternal fire; despise temporal pains: and while Christ doth watch, let thy heart be calmed, that thou also mayest reach the harbour. For He would not fail to prepare a harbour, Who provided a vessel. Hast Thou any thing to do with the stool of iniquity, Thou Who makest sorrow in learning? He trieth us with the wicked, and by their persecution He teacheth us. By means of the malice of the wicked the good is scourged, through the slave the son is chastened: thus is learning taught by sorrow. What God alloweth them power to do, that do wicked men, whom He spareth for a season, do.

26. Ver. 21. For what followeth? They will be captious against the soul of the righteous. Why will they be captious? Because they can find no true ground of accusation. For how were they captious against our Lord? They made up false accusations, because they could not find true ones. And will condemn the innocent blood. Why all this taketh place, he will shew in the sequel.

27. Ver. 22. And the Lord is become my refuge, he saith. Thou wouldest not seek such a refuge, if thou wert not in danger: but thou hast therefore been in danger, that thou mightest seek for it: for He teacheth us by sorrow. He causeth me tribulation from the malice of the wicked: pricked with that tribulation, I begin to seek a refuge which I had ceased to seek for in that worldly prosperity. For who, that is always prosperous, and rejoiceth in present hopes, findeth it easy to remember God? Let the hope of this life give way, and the hope of God advance; that thou mayest say, And the Lord is become my refuge: may I sorrow for this end that the Lord may become my refuge! And my God the help of my hope. For as yet the Lord is our hope, since as long as we are here, we are in hope, and not in possession. But lest we fail in hope, there is near us a provision to encourage us, and to mitigate those very evils which we suffer. For it is not said in vain, God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to

bear it: who will so put us into that furnace of tribulation, that the vessel may be hardened, but not broken. And the Lord is become my refuge: and my God the help of my hope. Why then did He seem to thee to be as it were unjust, in that He spareth the evil? See then how the Psalm is now set right, and be thou set right together with the Psalm: for, for this reason the Psalm contained thy words. What words? Lord, how long shall the ungodly, how long shall the ungodly triumph? The Psalm just now used thy words: use therefore thyself the Psalm's words in thy turn. What are these words of the Psalm? And the Lord is become my refuge: and my God the help of my hope.

28. Ver. 23. And the Lord shall recompense them according to their works, and after their own malice; the Lord our God shall destroy them. The words, after their own malice, are not said without meaning. I am benefitted through them: and yet it is said to be their malice, and not their benefits. For assuredly He trieth us, scourgeth us, by means of the wicked. To prepare us for what doth He scourge us? Confessedly for the kingdom of heaven. For He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? and when God doth this, He is teaching us in order to an eternal heritage: and this learning He often giveth us by means of wicked men, through whom He trieth and perfecteth our love, which He doth will to be extended even to our enemies. For the love of a Christian is not perfect, unless it fulfil the precept of Christ, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. Hence is the devil himself conquered; hence the crown of victory is gained. Behold how great blessings doth God bestow upon us through the ungodly: and yet He recompenseth them, not according to what He giveth us through them, but after their own malice. For see what blessings He hath heaped upon us, even by means of the enormous iniquity of Judas the betrayer. For Judas betrayed unto the cross the Son of God, by Whose suffering all nations are redeemed unto salvation: and yet for the salvation of nations no reward was given unto Judas, but for his own malice a due punishment hath been dealt unto him. For if the betrayal of Christ, and not the intention of the betrayer, is to be considered, Judas did what God the Father did, of Whom it is written, that He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. Judas did that, which our Lord Christ Himself did, of Whom it is written,

Who hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour: and again, Even as Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it. And yet we offer thanksgivings unto God the Father, in that He spared not His only Son, but delivered Him for us; we offer thanksgivings unto the Son Himself, Who delivered up Himself for us, and in that very act fulfilled His Father’s will: and we execrate Judas, through whose deed God hath conferred so great a blessing upon us; and we rightly say, God hath recompensed him after his iniquity: and in his malice hath He destroyed him. For he delivered not Christ up for us, but for the silver for which he sold Him; although the betrayal of Christ be our recovery; and his fall be our redemption. Thus also they who persecuted the Martyrs, by persecuting them on earth, sent them into heaven: knowingly they caused them the loss of the present life, while unconsciously they were bestowing upon them the gain of a future life: but, nevertheless, unto all who persevered in their wicked hatred of the righteous, will God recompense after their own iniquities, and in their own malice will He destroy them. For as the goodness of the righteous is hurtful unto the wicked, so is the iniquity of the wicked beneficial unto the righteous. For our Lord saith, I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind; and the Apostle, To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other, the savour of life unto life. But the malice of the wicked is the left hand arms of the righteous; as the same Apostle saith, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, that is, by honour and dishonour; and he then severally recounteth the other points, shewing what were their right hand arms, viz. the glory of God, good report, truth by which it was known of them that they lived, that they were not brought to death, that they rejoiced, that they enriched many, that they possessed all things; and that their left hand arms were, that they were held in dishonour, of evil report, that they were thought deceivers, that they were unknown, slain, imprisoned, made sorrowful, seemed to be in want, and to have nothing. And what wonder is it if the soldiers of Christ overpower the devil at once by left and right hand weapons? But as peace cometh unto men of good will, even when they are unto others a savour of death unto death; so doth destruction come unto men of ill-will, even when they are the left hand weapons of the righteous towards their salvation. He will therefore recompense them not according to the profit we derive from them; but after their own iniquity, by loving which they hate their own souls; and not according to the blessings which through them He doth dispense unto us, doth He honour them, He Who maketh a good use even of the wicked; but after their own malice shall the Lord our God destroy them.

29. Let therefore the righteous bear with the ungodly; let the temporal suffering of the righteous bear with the temporal impunity of the wicked; for the just shall live by faith. For there is no righteousness of man in this life except to live by faith, which worketh by love. But if he liveth by faith, let him believe both that he will himself inherit rest after his present toil, and that they will suffer eternal torments after their present exultation. And if faith worketh by love, let him love his enemies also, and, as far as in him lies, have the will to profit them; for thus he will prevent their injuring him when they have the will. And whenever perchance they have received power to hurt and tyrannise; let him lift his heart above, where no man hurteth him, well taught and chastened in the law of God, that he may have patience given him in the days of adversity, until the pit be digged up for the ungodly. For if his delight is in the law of God, and in it he will exercise himself day and night, whose conversation is in heaven; he shineth over the earth from the firmament above; whence this Psalm hath received its title from the fourth day of the week, when the heavenly bodies were made; so that we may do all things without murmuring, holding the word of life in a nation crooked and perverse. For as the night doth not extinguish the stars in heaven; so iniquity overcometh not the minds of the faithful, when fixed in the firmament of God’s Scriptures. And this very fact, that our earthly possessions are sometimes given into the power of the wicked, not only pertaineth unto our learning, so that God may become our refuge, and the help of our hope; but also profiteth towards the very pit of the ungodly, of whom it is said in another Psalm, He will be bent down and fall, when he shall have mastery of the poor.

30. Possibly the length of this discourse hath been tedious to you: although this doth not appear amid the eagerness of your attention. But though it be so, forgive me: first, because I did so by command; the Lord our God having ordered me through those Brethren, in whom He dwelleth. For God

doth not command, save from His own throne. Secondly, as you have been so eager toward us, so, we confess, have we been toward you. May our God therefore console us for this toil, so that it may result in your advancement unto salvation, not in a testimony to accuse you. This I say, brethren, that ye may profit from what ye have heard, and ruminate within yourselves: permit not yourselves to forget, not only by thinking over again upon these subjects, and discoursing upon them, but also by so living. For a good life which is led after God's commands, is like a pen, because it is heard writing in our hearts. If it were written on wax, it would easily be blotted out: write it in your hearts, in your character, and it shall never be blotted out.

PSALM 95

1. Ver. 1. I could wish, brethren, that we were rather listening to our father: but even this is a good thing, to obey our father. Since therefore he who deigneth to pray for us, hath ordered us, I will speak unto you, beloved, what from the present Psalm Jesus Christ our common Lord shall deign to give us. Now the title of the Psalm is David’s Song of praise. The Song of praise signifieth both cheerfulness, in that it is a song; and devotion, for it is praise. For what ought a man to praise more than that which pleaseth him so, that it is impossible that it can displease him? In the praising of God therefore we praise with security. There he who praiseth is safe, where he feareth not lest he be ashamed for the object of his praise. Let us therefore both praise and sing; that is, let us praise with cheerfulness and joy. But what we are about to praise, this Psalm in the following verses sheweth us.

2. O come, let us sing unto the Lord. He calleth us to a great banquet of joy, not one of this world, but in the Lord. For if there were not in this life a wicked joy which is to be distinguished from a righteous joy, it would be enough to say, Come, let us rejoice; but he has briefly distinguished it. What is it to rejoice aright? To rejoice in the Lord. Thou shouldest piously joy in the Lord, if thou dost wish safely to trample upon the world. But what is the word, Come? Whence doth He call them to come, with whom he wisheth to rejoice in the Lord; except that, while they are afar, they may by coming draw nearer, by drawing nearer they may approach, and by approaching rejoice? But whence are they afar? Can a man be locally distant from Him who is every where? Dost thou wish to be far from Him? Where wilt thou go, that thou mayest be far from Him? For a certain sinner indeed, but yet penitent with the hope of salvation and sorrowing for his sins, and fearing the anger of God, and wishing to appease Him, speaketh this in another Psalm, Whither shall I go then from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I go then from Thy presence? If I climb up into heaven, Thou art there. What remaineth then? For if he climb up into heaven, and there find God: whither shall he go, that he may fly far from God? See what he saith, If I go down to hell, Thou art there also? If therefore by climbing into heaven, he

there findeth God; if by going down into hell, he escapeth Him not; whither shall he go, whither shall he fly, from that angry God, unless unto Himself appeased? And yet, though no man could possibly fly from Him who is every where; unless some were far from God, it would not be written, This people do honour Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. It is not therefore by place, but by being unlike Him, that a man is afar from God. What is to be unlike Him? it meaneth, a bad life, bad habits; for if by good habits we approach God, by bad habits we recede from God. One then and the same man standing bodily in the same spot, by loving God doth approach Him, and by loving iniquity doth recede from Him: he no where moveth his feet, and yet he can both approach and recede. For our affections are our feet in this journey, according as each man hath affection, according as each hath love, so doth he either approach or recede from God. Do we not usually say, when we find any things unlike, This is far from that? When we are comparing any two men, two horses, two garments, and some one saith, This garment is like, it is such as that; or, This man is such as that man; what doth he say who contradicts it? It is no such thing: it is far from it. What meaneth, It is far from it? It is unlike it. They stand close together: and yet this man is far from that. But two ungodly men, alike in life and habits, if one be in the east, the other in the west, are near each other. In the same way two righteous men, one in the east, the other in the west, are with one another, since they are in God. On the other hand, one righteous, and one ungodly man, even though they be bound with one chain, yet are widely separated from one another. If therefore by unlikeness we recede from God, by likeness we approach unto God. What likeness? That after which we were created, which by sinning we had corrupted in ourselves, which we have received again through the remission of sins, which is renewed in us in the mind within, that it may be engraved a second time as if on coin, that is, the image of our God upon our soul, and that we may return to His treasures. For what was the reason, brethren, that our Saviour chose to discover to His tempters, from a piece of money, what God demandeth? For when they resolved, by way of seeking a pretext of false accusation, to question the Master of Truth respecting the tribute paid to Cæsar, and by consulting Him to tempt Him as to whether it were lawful to pay tribute unto Cæsar; what answered He? Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites? He asked them to shew Him the tribute money, and they brought unto Him a penny; and He saith unto them, Whose image and superscription hath it? They say unto Him, Cæsar’s. Then saith He unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s. As if He should say: If Cæsar seeketh on a coin his own image, doth not God seek in man His Image? Our Lord Jesus Christ, inviting us to the resemblance of this image, commandeth us also to love our enemies; and giveth us an example from God Himself: As your Father, He saith, which is in heaven; Who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father. When He saith, Be ye therefore perfect, as He is, He calleth us to resemble Him. If therefore He invite us to resemble Him, it is clear that by being unlike we had receded from God, and had become far from Him through unlikeness, and are made near unto Him by means of our resemblance to Him, that what is written may be realized in us; Come near unto Him, and be lightened. To some therefore, dwelling afar, and living evilly, this Psalm saith, O come, let us rejoice unto the Lord! Whither do ye go? whither retire? whither depart? whither do ye fly, by rejoicing in the world? O come, let us rejoice unto the Lord! Whither do ye go to rejoice, when ye turn away? O come, let us rejoice unto Him by Whom we were created! O come, let us rejoice unto the Lord!

3. Let us make a joyful noise unto God, our salvation. What is to make a joyful noise? Not to be able to express one’s joy in words, and yet to testify by the voice what hath been conceived within, and refuseth to be compassed within words: this is to make a joyful noise. Consider, beloved, those who make a joyful noise in any ordinary songs, as in a sort of competition of worldly joy; and ye see them while reciting the written lines bursting forth with a joy, that the tongue sufficeth not to express the measure of; how they shout, indicating by that utterance the feeling of the mind, which cannot in words express what is conceived in the heart. If they then in earthly joy make a joyful noise; might we not do so from heavenly joy, which truly we cannot express in words?

4. Ver. 2. Let us prevent His face by confession. Confession hath a double meaning in Scripture. There is a confession of him who praiseth, there is that of him who groaneth. The confession of praise pertaineth to the honour

of Him Who is praised: the confession of groaning to the repentance of him who confesseth. For men confess when they praise God: they confess, when they accuse themselves; and the tongue hath no more worthy use. Truly, I believe these to be the very vows, of which he speaketh in another Psalm: I will pay Thee my rows, which I distinguished with my lips. Nothing is more elevated than that distinguishing, nothing is so necessary both to understand and to do. How then dost thou distinguish the vows which thou payest unto God? By praising Him, by accusing thyself; because it is His mercy, to forgive us our sins. For if He chose to deal with us after our deserts, He would find cause only to condemn. O come, he said therefore, that we may at last go back from our sins, and that He may not cast up with us our accounts for the past; but that as it were a new account may be commenced, all the bonds of our debts having been burnt. How great then is His praise; how great His mercy. This let us confess, that is, by praising Him. For if confession were always the act of a penitent, it would not be spoken of in the Gospel of our Lord Himself: In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Because Christ confessed, was He in any way a penitent? He could repent of nothing, Who had not done one action wrongly: but He confessed, by His praises of His Father. Therefore, since this also is a passage of exultation, we ought perhaps to understand that confession which consists in the praise of God: whence also it is styled, The song of praise, that we may not here understand the confession of penitents, but of those who praise God. And why is it that he at once admonisheth us of some confession, when he saith, Let us prevent His face by confession? What meaneth this? He will come: Let us prevent His face by confession, beforehand: before He arrive, let us by confession condemn what we have done, that He may find that which He may crown, not what He must condemn. But doth not this very act of confessing thy sins pertain to the praise of God? Yea truly it most fully doth pertain to God's praise. And why? Because the more desperate was the state of the sufferer, so much greater is the honour of the physician. The more therefore thou despairedst of thyself on account of thy iniquities, do thou confess thy sins; for so much greater is the praise of Him Who forgiveth, as is the fulness of the penitent's confession more abundant. Let us not therefore imagine that we have receded from the song of praise, in understanding here that confession by which we acknowledge our transgressions: this is even a part of the song of praise; for when we confess our sins, we praise the glory of God. Let us prevent His face in confession.

5. And make a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms. We have already said what it is to make a joyful noise: the word is repeated, that it may be confirmed by the act: the very repetition is an exhortation. For we have not forgotten, so as to wish to be again admonished, what was said above, that we should make a joyful noise: but usually in passages of strong feeling a well-known word is repeated, not to make it more familiar, but that the very repetition may strengthen the impression made: for it is repeated that we may understand the feeling of the speaker. Hence our Lord's words, Verily, verily, I say unto you: one verily sufficed: why, Verily, verily, unless because the repetition strengthens? Let us, he saith then, make a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms. And what shall we say in Psalms? what shall we say, or rather feel, in that burst of joy? what are the topics which belong to this song of praise? Hear now: (ver. 3.) For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. Let us therefore make a joyful noise unto Him. For the Lord will not cast off His people; let us make a joyful noise unto Him. (Ver. 4.) For in His hands are all the corners of the earth: and the heights of the hills are His also: for all these reasons let us make a joyful noise unto Him. (Ver. 5.) For the sea is His, and He made it: and His hand prepared the dry land: let us make a joyful noise unto Him. Now time sufficeth not for a proportionate exposition of what all this meaneth: yet if it be utterly neglected, we shall remain debtors. Hear then some brief remarks, as the time alloweth, gleaning as much as I shall be able: since even a few seeds, where the soil is fruitful, bear the richest crop.

6. Ver. 3. First, he mentions this, as a reason for our song to praise. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. There are therefore gods above whom is our great God, to Whom we make a joyful noise, in Whom we heartily rejoice, to Whom we utter a song of praise. There are: but not unto us. For the Apostle saith: For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God the Father, of Whom are all things,

and we by Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we in Him. If therefore not unto us, unto whom? Hear from another Psalm, As for all the gods of the heathen, they are but devils; but it is the Lord who made the heavens. The Holy Spirit could not in terms more magnificent and lofty commend unto thee through the Prophet thy God and Lord. It was not enough to say that God is terrible above all devils: why is it high praise enough to say, that He is above all devils? For all the gods of the heathen are but devils. But where is thy Lord? But it is the Lord Who made the heavens. Thy God created that, where devils cannot dwell: for the devils were cast down from heaven. The heavens are preferred to the devils, thy Lord even to the heavens: because thy Lord made also the heavens. How much higher therefore than the heathen gods, that are devils, is He, Who is higher than the heavens, whence fell the angels, to become devils? And yet all nations were under these devils: temples were built to devils, altars reared to devils, priests established to devils, sacrifices offered to devils, men brought in for prophets that were possessed with devils! All these honours the heathen offered to devils: all, in their true use, are only due to the one great God. The heathen erected a temple to devils; God hath a temple: the heathen established priests for devils; God hath a priest; the heathen offered sacrifice to devils; God hath a sacrifice. For those devils who wished to appear gods, would not exact such honours in order to deceive, unless because they know that they are due unto the true God; for what a false deity arrogates to himself, is usually due to the True God. We therefore acknowledge a true temple of God. For the temple of God is holy, saith St. Paul, which are ye. If therefore we are the temple of God, our soul is the altar of God. What is the sacrifice of God? Perhaps we are at the present moment offering sacrifice on the altar of God, when we praise God; for the Psalm teacheth us, in these words: The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me: and there is the way, where I will shew the salvation of God. But if thou seekest for a Priest, there is One above the heavens; He intercedeth for thee, Who on earth died for thee. Therefore, The Lord our God is a great God: and a great King above all gods. Understand here men by the word gods: for the Lord is not King over devils. And hence we have Scripture testimony: God standeth in the congregation of princes: He is a Judge among gods. He calleth them gods, because they partake of the Divine Nature, not because they are in their own nature gods; by grace, through which He willed to make them gods. How great is that God Who maketh gods! or what sort of gods are those whom a man maketh? As He is great in making gods, so are they nothing who are made by man. The true God maketh gods of those who believe in Him, to whom He hath given power to become the sons of God. And for that reason He is the True God, because He is not a created God: but we who are created, are not true gods, though better than those which man maketh. Since the images of the heathen are of gold and silver, the work of men’s hands: they have mouths, and speak not: eyes have they, and see not. For us our God hath created eyes that see; and yet He hath not created us gods, in that He hath made for us eyes that see; for this He hath done also for cattle: but He hath made us gods, because He hath enlightened our inner eyes. Unto Him therefore be praise, unto Him be confession, unto Him shouts of joy: For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

7. (Ver. 3. in LXX.) For the Lord will not cast off His people. Praise be unto Him, and shouts of joy be unto Him! What people shall He not cast off? we have no right to make our own explanation here: for the Apostle hath prescribed this unto us, he hath explained whereof it is said. For this was the Jewish people, the people where were the prophets, the people where were the patriarchs, the people begotten according to the flesh from the seed of Abraham; the people in which all the mysteries which promised our Saviour preceded us; the people among whom was instituted the temple, the anointing, the Priest for a figure, that when all these shadows were past, the Light itself might come; this therefore was the people of God; to it were the prophets sent, in it those who were sent were born; to it were delivered and entrusted the revelations of God. What then? is the whole of that people condemned? far be it. It is called the good olive-tree by the Apostle, for it commenced with the patriarchs: but there were boughs there that were dry, because they were raised too high in pride; they were therefore lopped off owing to their barrenness, and the wild olive engraffed owing to its humility. Nevertheless, most beloved, lest the wild olive when engraffed should become proud, what saith the Apostle? If thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive-tree; how much more shall these which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive-tree? As thou, by not remaining in thy

infidelity, hast deserved to be engraffed upon the good olive, when thou wast a wild olive; so will they when repentant naturally be graffed more easily upon their own olive: such are the Apostle's words respecting them. This then is the tree itself: though some of its boughs have been broken, yet all have not. For if all the boughs were broken, whence is Peter? whence John? whence Thomas? whence Matthew? whence Andrew? whence are all those Apostles? whence that very Apostle Paul who was speaking to us but now, and by his own fruit bearing witness to the good olive? Were not all these of that people? Whence also those five hundred brethren to whom our Lord appeared after His resurrection? Whence were so many thousands at the words of Peter, (when the Apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke with the tongues of all nations,) converted with such zeal for the honour of God and their own accusation, that they who first shed the Lord's blood in their rage, learnt how to drink it now that they believed? And all these five thousand were so converted that they sold their own property, and laid the price of it at the Apostles' feet. That which one rich man did not do, when he heard from the Lord's mouth, and sorrowfully departed from Him, this so many thousands of those men by whose hands Christ had been crucified, did on a sudden. In proportion as the wound was deeper in their own hearts, with the greater eagerness did they seek for a physician. Since therefore all these were from thence, the Psalm saith of them, For the Lord will not cast off His people. For the Apostle, speaking on this point, hath quoted this as a testimony: I say then, Hath God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew. If in fact the Lord were to cast away His people, there would have been no root for Paul himself to spring from: and whence he was, there were others also. In these is the Lord's people, not in all; but, as it is written, a remnant shall be saved. Not in all: but the floor hath been fanned: the wheat been garnered within: the chaff lieth left. In all that thou seest of the reprobate Jews, thou seest the chaff. The wheat hath already been gathered from the floor whereon thou seest this chaff, and hath been stored up in the barn. Let us see both, and distinguish both.

8. Ver. 4. What doth the Psalm add? In His hand are all the corners of the earth: we recognise the corner stone: the corner stone is Christ. There

cannot be a corner, unless it hath united in itself two walls: they come from different sides to one corner, but they are not opposed to each other in the corner. The circumcision cometh from one side: the uncircumcision from the other; in Christ both peoples have met together: because He hath become the stone, of which it is written, The stone which the builders rejected, hath become the head of the corner. If then Christ be the head of the corner, let us not regard the difference of those who come from afar, but the nearness of those who are united in Christ. Therein let us see verified the words: The Lord shall not cast off His people. Behold one wall, in which now as we have said, the Lord hath not cast off His people. Thence are the Apostles: thence all the Israelites who believed, and who threw the price of their possessions which they had sold at the Apostles' feet; poor by their own resolution, in God rich. We have recognised one wall, and what we have said, that the Lord will not cast off His people, hath therein been fulfilled: let us see another also. For in His hand are all the corners of the earth. Behold another wall in all the heathen, all the heathen came unto the Corner Stone, where they acknowledged the kiss of peace: to Him, One, who made the two one; not as the heretics, who made two of one. For the Apostle saith this same of our Lord Christ: For He is our peace, Who hath made both one. Let us therefore shout for joy in Him. Why? Because the Lord will not cast off His people. Again: Why? For in His hand are all the corners of the earth: and the heights of the hills are His also. The heights of the hills meaneth the high places of the earth. Sometimes these high places, that is, earthly powers, are adverse to the Church; they have promulgated laws against the Church, and endeavoured to blot out the name of Christian from off the earth: but after the fulfilment of the prophecy, All the kings of the earth shall fall down before Him, what is here said happened, the heights of the hills are His also.

9. Ver. 5. But perhaps thou art busied with temptations, and hence it is that, though placed in so great grace of God's promises, thou art disturbed by the world's stumbling-blocks? But those very stumbling-blocks do not really any thing to thee; since they have received their measure from God: For the sea is His. For the sea is this world, but God made also the sea: nor can the waves rage save only so far as to the shore, where He hath marked their bounds. There is therefore no temptation, that hath not received its measure

from the Lord. Let there be therefore temptations, let there be tribulations; thou art perfected, not consumed by them. Consider whether those very temptations be not useful. Hear the Apostle; God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. He saith not, He will not suffer you to be tempted at all; for if thou wert to refuse temptation, thou wouldest also refuse reformation. Thou art therefore reformed: and if thou art reformed, thou art in His hands Who formed thee. He taketh something from thee: He chasteneth thee in some way, He levelleth somewhat, He cleanseth somewhat in thee: He worketh with certain tools of His own: these are the stumbling-blocks of this world: do thou only be careful not to fall out of thy Maker's hands. No temptation beyond thy strength will approach thee. This God alloweth for thy benefit, whence thou mayest profit. Lastly, hear the Apostle himself adding this: But will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Perhaps then the sea was a subject of fear to thee? Fear not. For the sea is His, and He made it. Fearest thou stumbling-blocks from the heathen? He made the heathen also Himself; He will not permit them to rage beyond the measure which He knoweth, whence thou mayest profit. Saith not another Psalm, All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord! if all the nations which Thou hast made, it is clear that He also created the nations: therefore, The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands prepared the dry land. Be thou the dry land: thirst for the grace of God: that as a sweet shower it may come upon thee, may find in thee fruit. He alloweth not the waves to cover what He hath sown. And His hands prepared the dry land. Hence also therefore let us shout unto the Lord.

10. Since then these things are thus: since we have expounded so great things pertaining unto the praise of God, return ye to where he commenced: (ver. 6.) O come, let us worship, and fall down to Him; and mourn before the Lord our Maker. Let us rejoice, because He made this and that. He hath enumerated many things, and he now repeateth his exhortation, O come, let us worship, and fall down to Him: let us mourn before the Lord our Maker. Now that I have mentioned the praises of God, be not slothful, and stand not afar in life and habits. O come, let us worship, and fall down to Him. But possibly ye are anxious on account of your sins, which have made you

afar from God; let us do as followeth: And mourn before the Lord our Maker. Perhaps thou art burning with the consciousness of a fault; blot out with tears the flame of thy sin: mourn before the Lord: fearlessly mourn before the Lord, Who made thee; for He despiseth not the work of His own hands in thee. Think not thou canst be restored by thyself. By thyself thou mayest fall off, thou canst not restore thyself: He Who made thee restoreth thee. Let us mourn before the Lord our Maker: weep before Him, confess unto Him, prevent His face in confession. For who art thou who mournest before Him, and confessest unto Him, but one whom He created? The thing created hath no slight confidence in Him Who created it, and that in no indifferent fashion, but according to His own image and likeness. O come, let us worship, and fall down to Him; and mourn before the Lord our Maker.

11. Ver. 7. For He is the Lord our God. But that we may without fear fall down and kneel before Him, what are we? We are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. See how elegantly he hath transposed the order of the words, and as it were not given its own attribute to each word; that we may understand these very same to be the sheep, who are also the people. He said not, the sheep of His pasture, and the people of His hand; which might be thought more congruous, since the sheep belong to the pasture; but He said, the people of His pasture. The people are therefore sheep, since he saith, the people of His pasture: the people themselves are sheep. But again, since we have sheep which we buy, not which we create; and he had said above, Let us fall down before our Maker; it is rightly said, the sheep of His hand. No man maketh for himself sheep, he may buy them, they may be given, he may find them, he may collect them, lastly, he may steal them; make them he cannot. But our Lord made us; therefore the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand, are the very sheep which He hath deigned by His grace to create unto Himself. He praiseth these sheep also in the Song of Solomon, speaking of some perfect ones as the teeth of His Spouse the Holy Church: Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which come up from the washing; whereof every one beareth twins, and there is none barren. What meaneth, Thy teeth? These by whom thou speakest: for the teeth of the Church are those through whom she speaketh. Of what sort are thy teeth? Like a flock of sheep that are

shorn. Why, that are shorn? Because they have laid aside the burdens of the world. Were not those sheep, of which I was a little before speaking, shorn, whom the bidding of God had shorn, when He saith, Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt find treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me? They performed this bidding: shorn they came. And because those who believe in Christ are baptized, what is there said? which come up from the washing; that is, come up from the cleansing. Whereof every one beareth twins. What twins? Those two commandments, wherefrom hang all the Law and the Prophets. We, therefore, are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.

12. Ver. 8. Therefore, To-day if ye will hear His voice. O my people, the people of God! God addresses His people: not only the people of His which He shall not cast off, but also all His people. For He speaketh in the corner-stone to each wall: that is, prophecy speaketh in Christ, both to the people of the Jews, and the people of the Gentiles. To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. For sometime ye heard His voice through Moses, and hardened your hearts. He then, when you hardened your hearts, spoke through a herald; He now speaketh by Himself, let your hearts soften. He who used to send heralds before Him, hath now deigned to come Himself; He here speaketh by His own mouth, He Who used to speak by the mouths of the Prophets. To-day, therefore, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.

13. Ver. 9. Why hath he said, Harden not your hearts? Because ye remember what your fathers used to do. Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, and in the day of temptation in the wilderness. Ye surely remember, brethren, that that people tempted God, received chastening, and was governed in the desert as it were by an excellent rider, with the curb of laws, the curb of commandments; and was not forsaken by God even when unsubdued, not only in His present blessings, but in the rod of correction that never ceased. Therefore harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the desert—where your fathers—proved me. Let such be no more your fathers: imitate them not. They were your fathers, but if ye do not imitate them, they shall not be your fathers: yet as ye were born of them, they were your fathers. And if the heathen who came from the

ends of the earth, in the words of Jeremias, The Gentiles shall come unto Thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our forefathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit: if the heathen forsook their idols, to come to the God of Israel; ought Israel whom their own God led from Egypt through the Red Sea, wherein He overwhelmed their pursuing foes; whom He led out into the wilderness, fed with manna, never took His rod from correcting them, never deprived them of the blessings of His mercy; ought they to desert their own God, when the heathen have come unto Him? When your fathers tempted Me, proved Me, and saw My works. For forty years they saw My works, for forty years they provoked Me: before them I repeatedly wrought miracles by the hand of Moses, and yet they more and more hardened their hearts.

14. Ver. 10. Forty years long was I very near unto this generation. What doth very near mean? I made Myself present in signs and good works: not on one day, not on two; but forty years long was I very near unto this generation, and said, It is a people that do always err in their hearts; for they have not known My ways. The forty years have the same meaning as the word always. For that number forty indicates the fulness of ages, as if the ages were perfected in this number. Hence our Lord fasted forty days, forty days He was tempted in the desert, and forty days He was with His disciples after His resurrection. On the first forty days He shewed us temptation, on the latter forty days consolation: since beyond doubt when we are tempted we are consoled. For His body, that is, the Church, must needs suffer temptations in this world: but that Comforter, Who said, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, is not wanting. And I said, It is a people that do always err in their hearts. For this was I with them forty years, to shew such a race of men, which alway provoketh Me, even unto the end of the world: because by those forty years He meant to signify the whole of this world’s duration.

15. Ver. 11. What then? In their stead shall there not be others to enter into God’s rest? Those whom God’s mercy displeased are rejected, they who resisted God with a hardened heart; they being rejected, hath God lost His people? It will not then be true, that God is able out of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Therefore, I said, It is a people that do alway err

in their hearts, and they have not known My ways; unto whom I sware in My wrath, that they should not enter into My rest: this is an awful threat. We began with exulting joy: but this Psalm hath ended with great fear: Unto whom I sware in My wrath, that they should not enter into My rest. It is a great thing for God to speak: how much greater for Him to swear? Thou shouldest fear a man when he sweareth, lest he do somewhat on account of his oath against his will: how much more shouldest thou fear God, when He sweareth, seeing He can swear nought rashly? He chose the act of swearing for a confirmation. And by whom doth God swear? By Himself: for He hath no greater by whom to swear. By Himself He confirmeth His promises: by Himself He confirmeth His threats. Let no man say in his heart, His promise is true; His threat is false: as His promise is true, so is His threat sure. Thou oughtest to be equally assured of rest, of happiness, of eternity, of immortality, if thou hast executed His commandments; as of destruction, of the burning of eternal fire, of damnation with the devil, if thou hast despised His commandments. He therefore swore unto them in His anger, that they should not enter into His rest: and yet some must enter into His rest; for it will not be given to none. They therefore being reprobate, we shall enter: for although some of the boughs have been broken for their want of resemblance and infidelity, we shall be engrafted on account of our faith and humility. Let us therefore enter into His rest. But by what means did they who entered enter, those who were chosen, who resisted not with an hardened heart? Because it is true, that God will not cast off His people.

PSALM 96

My lord and brother Severus still defers the pleasure we shall feel in his discourse, which he oweth us; for he acknowledgeth, that he is held a debtor. For all the Churches through which he hath passed, by his tongue the Lord hath gladdened: much more therefore ought that Church to be rejoiced, out of which the Lord hath propagated his preaching among the rest. But what shall we do, but obey his will? I said, however, brethren, that he deferred, not that he defrauded us. Therefore let us keep him as a debtor bound, and release him not until he hath paid. Attend therefore, beloved: as far as the Lord alloweth, let us say somewhat of this Psalm, which indeed you already know; for the fresh mention of truth is sweet. Possibly when its title was pronounced, some heard it with wonder. For the Psalm is inscribed: When the house was being built after the Captivity. This title having been prefixed, ye were perhaps expecting in the text of the Psalm to hear what stones were hewn from the mountains, what masses were drawn to the spot, what foundations were laid, what beams were placed on high, what columns raised. Its song is of nothing of this kind: and if its song be of another sort, doth then the Psalm not agree with its title, but beareth one thing in its title, another in its words? It doth nothing of the sort, but only seeketh those who can understand it. For it speaketh of the building of the house. Let all the stones of that house know what they have sung. For the house is built unto God, not in the place where Solomon built. For he built a temple: and ye have just heard what the Lord said of that very temple. When His disciples were admiring the stones and vast masses of the temple, they discovered their admiration and wonder unto the Lord; and He said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. It is no such house that is in building; for behold where it is built, not in one spot, not in any particular region. For thus he commenceth.

2. Ver. 1. O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth. If all the earth singeth a new song, it is thus building while it singeth: the very act of singing is building: but only, if it singeth not the old song. The

lust of the flesh singeth the old song: the love of God singeth the new. Whatever thou singest of lust, thou art singing the old song; although the words of the new song sound in the mouth, yet praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner. It is better for thee to be new and silent, than to be old and sing; for if thou art new, and art silent, it soundeth not but in the ears of men; for thy heart is not silent of the new song, which reacheth the ears of God, Who made thee a new man. Thou lovest, and art silent: thy very love is a voice unto God, and that very love is a new song. Hear why it is a new song: the Lord saith, A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. The whole earth then singeth a new song: there the house of God is built. All the earth is the house of God. If all the earth is the house of God, he who clingeth not to all the earth, is a ruin, not a house; that old ruin whose shadow that ancient temple represented. For there what was old was destroyed, that what was new might be built up. And how was the old destroyed? Now I say unto you, He saith, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. The stone is Christ: but the Apostle saith, For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. If whosoever is baptized in Christ, putteth on Christ, who placeth stone upon stone, except he who layeth baptism upon Baptism? But be not terrified: there shall not be left one that shall not be thrown down. For the stones are gathered together in such a manner for the new fabric, which is built after the captivity, and love so bindeth together in unity, that it is not stone upon stone, but all the stones are one stone. Wonder not: the new song, that is, the altered law of love, hath done this. The Apostle bindeth us together into this very structure, and fasteneth us when bound together in that unity, saying, Forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Where there is this unity of Spirit, there is one stone; but one stone formed out of many. How one formed out of many? By forbearing one another in love. Therefore the house of the Lord our God is in building; it is this that is being wrought, for this are these words, for this these readings, for this the preaching of the Gospel over the whole world; as yet it is in building. This house hath increased greatly, and filled many nations: nevertheless, it hath not yet prevailed through all nations: by its increase it hath held many, and will prevail over all: and it is gainsaid by those who boast of their being of its household, and who say, it hath already lost ground. It still increaseth, still all those nations which have not yet believed are destined to believe; that no man may say, will that tongue believe? will the barbarians believe? what is the meaning of the Holy Spirit having appeared in the fiery tongues, except that there is no tongue so hard that it cannot be softened by that fire? For we know that many barbarous nations have already believed in Christ: Christ already possesseth regions where the Roman empire hath never yet reached; what is as yet closed to those who fight with the sword, is not closed to Him Who fighteth with wood. For the Lord hath reigned from the wood. Who is it who fighteth with wood? Christ. With His cross He hath vanquished kings, and fixed upon their forehead, when vanquished, that very cross; and they glory in it, for in it is their salvation. This is the work which is being wrought, thus the house increaseth, thus it is building: and that ye may know, hear the following verses of the Psalm: see them labouring upon, and constructing the house. O sing unto the Lord a new song, sing unto the Lord all the earth.

3. Ver. 2, 3. Sing unto the Lord, bless His Name: be telling good tidings of His salvation from day to day. How doth the building increase? Be telling, he saith, good tidings of His salvation from day to day. Let it be preached from day to day; from day to day, he saith, let it be built; let My house, saith God, increase. And as if it were said by the workmen, Where dost Thou command it to be built? Where dost Thou will Thy house to increase? Choose for us some level, spacious spot, if Thou wish an ample house built Thee. Where dost Thou bid us be telling good tidings from day to day? He sheweth the place: Declare His honour unto the heathen: His honour, not yours. O ye builders, Declare His honour unto the heathen. Should ye choose to declare your own honour, ye shall fall: if His, ye shall be built up, while ye are building. Therefore they who choose to declare their own honour, have refused to dwell in that house; and therefore they sing not a new song with all the earth. For they do not share with the whole round world; and hence they are not building in the house, but have erected a whited wall. How sternly doth God threaten the whited wall? There are innumerable testimonies of the Prophets, whence He curseth the whited wall. What is the whited wall, save hypocrisy, that is, pretence? Without it is bright, within it is dirt. What I am about to say, hath already been said: but since it hath been said through that Spirit, Which the Lord hath deigned

to confer even upon us, we have declared it; and whatever we now say by the same Spirit, those who were before us have said. It is not therefore to be passed by: but to be declared, since by God’s gift it hath been spoken. A certain person, speaking of this whited wall, said thus: ‘as, if in a wall which standeth alone, and is not connected with any other walls, you make a door, whoever enters, is out of doors; so in that part which hath refused to sing the new song together with the house, but hath chosen to build a wall, and that a whited one, and not solid, what availeth it that it hath a door?’ If thou enterest, thou art found to be without. For because they themselves did not enter by the door, their door also doth not admit them within. For the Lord saith, I am the door: by Me they enter in. Who are they who enter by the door? They who seek the Lord’s glory, not their own. Who enter by the door? They who do as it is said, Declare His honour unto the heathen. He that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep, saith the Lord; but he who climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. He who entereth by the door, is humble: he who climbeth up another way, is proud: for that reason He spoke of one as entering in, of the other as climbing up. But the one by entering is received, the other by climbing is thrown down. Declare His honour unto the heathen. What is, unto the heathen? Perhaps by nations but a few are meant: and that part which hath raised the whited wall hath still somewhat to say: why are not Getulia, Numidia, Mauritania, Byzacium, nations? Provinces are nations. Let the word of God take the word from hypocrisy, from the whited wall, building up the house over the whole world. It is not enough to say, Declare His honour unto the heathen; that thou mayest not think any nations excepted, he addeth, and His wonders unto all people.

4. Ver. 4. For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised. What Lord, except Jesus Christ, is great, and cannot worthily be praised? Ye know surely that He appeared as a Man: ye know surely that He was conceived in a woman’s womb, ye know that He was born from the womb, that He was suckled, that He was carried in arms, circumcised, that a victim was offered for Him, that He grew; lastly, ye know that He was buffeted, spit upon, crowned with thorns, was crucified, died, was pierced with a spear; ye know that He suffered all these things: He is great, and cannot worthily be praised. Despise not what is little, understand what is great. He became

little, because ye were such: let Him be acknowledged great, and in Him ye shall be great. For thus the house is built, thus in the house itself are the constructions raised: the stones which are brought to the building increase. Increase, therefore; acknowledge Christ to be great: and He Who was little, is great, great beyond praise. He hath finished his words: he wished to say how great; even though throughout the whole day he should say, Great, Great, yet what would he say? Saying all the day, Great, he would at length stop; because day ceaseth: His greatness is before days, beyond days, without day. What then should he say? For God is great, and cannot worthily be praised. For what can a small tongue say towards the praise of the Great One? By saying, Beyond praise, he hath spoken, and hath given to imagination what it may conceive: as if saying, What I cannot utter, do thou reflect on; and when thou shalt have reflected, it will not be enough. What no man’s thought uttereth, doth any man’s tongue utter? The Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised. Let Him be praised, and preached: His honour declared, and His house built.

5. He is more to be feared than all gods. Are there then gods, than whom He is more to be feared? Let us see whom he is speaking of, and we shall see why he speaketh. Meanwhile before we speak, most beloved, attend. He Who appeared as it were frightened among men, is more to be feared than all gods. Did not the heathen rage? Have not the people imagined vain things against the Lord, and against His Anointed? Did not those fat bulls close Him in on every side? Did not that roaring lion gape upon Him, and entering into the hearts of the raging crowd exclaim, Crucify, crucify Him! as if He could be frightened by that roar, Who is more to be feared not than all men, but than all gods? For the spot where he wished to build the house, is itself woody, where it was said yesterday, we found it in the wood. For he was seeking that very house, when he said, ‘in the wood.’ And why is that spot woody? Men used to worship images: it is not wonderful that they fed hogs. For that son who left his father, and spent his all on harlots, living as a prodigal, use to feed hogs, that is, to worship devils; and by this very superstition of the heathen, all the earth became a wood. But he who buildeth a house, rooteth up the wood; and for this reason it was said, While the house was being built, after the captivity. For men were held captive under the devil, and served devils; but they were redeemed from captivity.

They could sell, but they could not redeem themselves. The Redeemer came, and gave a price; He poured forth His Blood, and bought the whole world. Ye ask what He bought? Ye see what He hath given; find out then what He bought. The Blood of Christ was the price. What is equal to this? What, but the whole world? What, but all nations? They are very ungrateful for their price, or very proud, who say that the price is so small that it bought the Africans only; or that they are so great, as that it was given for them alone. Let them not then exult, let them not be proud: He gave what He gave for the whole world. He knew what He bought, because He knew at what price He bought it. Thus because we are redeemed, the house is built after the captivity. And who are they who held us in captivity? Because they to whom it is said, Declare His honour, are the clearers of the wood: that they may root out the wood, free the earth from captivity, and build, and raise up, by declaring the greatness of the Lord’s house. How is the wood of devils cleared away, unless He Who is above them all be preached? All nations then had devils for their gods: those whom they called gods, were devils, as the Apostle more openly saith, The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils, and not to God. Since therefore they were in captivity, because they sacrificed to devils, and on that account the whole earth had remained woody; He is declared to be great, and above all worldly praise.

6. Ver. 5. And how is His greatness shewn, that He may root out all superstitions, captive beneath which the people was held, whom He Who is more to be feared than all gods came to redeem? As if the Psalmist were asked, Why hast thou said, above all gods? Are these then gods? He addeth, As for all the gods of the heathen, they are devils. Attend, beloved. He was speaking of something great but just before: The Lord is great; and as if he failed in His praises, he addeth, and cannot worthily be praised. Did I not say this, that He left it to thee to imagine what he could not express in words? But when he was expressing it in words, what great praise did he utter concerning our Lord Jesus Christ? That He is above all devils? For when he had said, He is more to be feared than all gods: he added, As for all the gods of the heathen, they are devils. It is not a great thing to be above devils: even thou, if thou willest, shalt be so: if thou believest in Him. This then is that exalted praise, The Lord is great, and cannot worthily be

praised. For wishing to express it, as far as the human tongue is capable, and although the Holy Spirit is a powerful player of that organ, yet in the straitness of human breath, He uttereth syllables, He giveth birth to thoughts; wishing therefore to express it by this tongue, what saith he? The Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised. Say, say, how far He may be praised! He is more to be feared, he saith, than all gods. Why didst thou say, more than all gods? Because all the gods of the heathen are devils. And is this all the praise of Him Who cannot worthily be praised, that He is above all the gods of the heathen, which are devils? Wait, and hear what followeth: It is the Lord that made the heavens. Not above all gods only therefore, but above all the heavens which He made, is the Lord. If he were to say, above all gods, for the gods of the heathen are devils, and if the praise of our Lord stopped here, he had said less than we are accustomed to think of Christ; but when he said, But it is the Lord that made the heavens; see what difference there is between the heavens and devils: and what between the heavens and Him Who made the heavens; behold how exalted is the Lord. He said not, But the Lord sitteth above the heavens; for perhaps some one else might be imagined to have made them, upon which He was enthroned: but, It is the Lord that made the heavens. If He made the heavens, He made the Angels also: Himself made the Angels, Himself made the Apostles. The devils yielded to the Apostles: but the Apostles themselves were heavens, who bore the Lord. And what Lord did they bear? Him by Whom they were made. Hear that they are heavens: The heavens declare the glory of God. To these very heavens, it is said, Declare His honour among the heathen: and His wonders in all people. For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised: He is more to be feared than all gods. What gods? As for the gods of the heathen, they are devils. And He is more to be feared than all these gods. But it is the Lord that made the heavens. O heavens, which He made, declare His honour unto the heathen! Let His house be built throughout the earth, let all the earth sing a new song.

7. Ver. 6. Confession and beauty are before Him. Dost thou love beauty? Wishest thou to be beautiful? Confess! He said not, beauty and confession, but confession and beauty. Thou wast foul; confess, that thou mayest be fair: thou wast a sinner; confess, that thou mayest be righteous. Thou

couldest deform thyself: thou canst not make thyself beautiful. But of what sort is our Betrothed, who hath loved one deformed, that he might make her fair? How, saith some one, loved He one deformed? I came not, said He, to call the righteous, but sinners. Whom callest Thou? sinners, that they may remain sinners? No, saith He. And by what means will they cease to be sinners? Confession and beauty are before Him. They honour Him by confession of their sins, they vomit the evils which they had greedily devoured; they return not to their vomit, like the unclean dog; and there will then be confession and beauty: we love beauty; let us first choose confession, that beauty may follow. Again, there is one who loveth power and greatness: he wisheth to be great as the Angels are. There is a certain greatness in the Angels; and such power, that if the Angels exert it to the full, it cannot be withstood. And every man desireth the power of the Angels, but their righteousness every man loveth not. First love righteousness, and power shall follow thee. For what followeth here? Holiness and greatness are in His sanctification. Thou wast before seeking for greatness: first love righteousness: when thou art righteous, thou shalt also be great. For if thou preposterously dost wish first to be great, thou fallest before thou canst rise: for thou dost not rise, thou art raised up. Thou risest better, if He raise thee Who falleth not. For He who falleth not descendeth unto thee: thou hadst fallen: He descendeth, He hath stretched forth His hand unto thee; thou canst not rise by thy own strength, embrace the hand of Him who descendeth, that thou mayest be raised up by the Strong One.

8. What then? (Ver. 7.) If confession and beauty are before Him. Holiness and greatness in His sanctification. (This we declare, when we are building the house; behold, it is already declared unto the heathen;) what ought the heathen to do, to whom those who have cleared away the wood have declared the Lord’s honour? He now saith to the heathen themselves, Ascribe unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people: ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour. Ascribe them not unto yourselves: because they also who have declared it unto you, have not declared their own, but His honour. Do ye then ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour; and say, Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us: but unto Thy Name give the praise. Put not your trust in man. If each of you is baptized, let him say: He baptizeth me, of whom

the friend of the Bridegroom said, He baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. For when ye say this, ye ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour: Ascribe unto the Lord worship and honour.

9. Ver. 8. Ascribe unto the Lord glory unto His Name. Not unto the name of man, not unto your own name, but unto His ascribe worship. Bring sacrifices, and come into His courts. Bring sacrifices! What are ye to bring, that ye may enter into His courts? For already the house hath increased, and the courts are made: those who bring sacrifices, let them enter the courts. Are we to bring bulls, goats, or sheep? God forbid. Thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it thee. He commended unto us a present which we ought to offer. See whether that be not the present of which he hath before spoken, confession and beauty are before Him. Confession is a present unto God. O heathen, if ye will enter into His courts, enter not empty. Bring presents. What presents shall we bring with us? The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, shalt not Thou despise. Enter with an humble heart into the house of God, and thou hast entered with a present. But if thou art proud, thou enterest empty. For whence wouldest thou be proud, if thou wert not empty? For if thou wast full, thou wouldest not be puffed up. How couldest thou be full? If thou wert to bring a present, which thou shouldest carry to the courts of the Lord. Let us not retain you much longer: let us run over what remaineth. Behold the house increasing: behold the edifice pervade the whole world. Rejoice, because ye have entered into the courts; rejoice, because ye are being built into the temple of God. For those who enter are themselves built up, they themselves are the house of God: He is the inhabitor, for whom the house is built over the whole world, and this ‘after the captivity.’ Bring presents, and come into His courts.

10. Ver. 9, 10. O worship the Lord in His holy court: in the Catholic Church; this is His holy court. Let no man say, Lo, here is Christ, or there. For there shall arise false prophets. Say this unto them, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. Ye are calling me to the whited wall; I adore my God in His holy court.

11. Let the whole earth be moved before His face. Tell it out among the nations, that the Lord reigneth from the wood: and that it is He Who hath

made the round world so fast that it cannot be moved. What testimonies of the building of the house of God! The clouds of heaven thunder out throughout the world that God’s house is being built; and the frogs cry from the marsh, We alone are Christians. What testimonies do I bring forward? That of the Psalter. I bring forward what thou singest as one deaf: open thine ears; thou singest this; thou singest with me, and thou agreest not with me; thy tongue soundeth what mine doth, and yet thine heart disagreeth with mine. Dost thou not sing this? Behold the testimonies of the whole world: Let the whole earth be moved before His face: and dost thou say, that thou art not moved? Tell it out among the heathen, that the Lord hath reigned from the wood. Shall men perchance prevail here, and say they reign by wood, because they reign by means of the clubs of their bandits? Reign by the Cross of Christ, if thou art to reign by wood. For this wood of thine maketh thee wooden: the wood of Christ passeth thee across the sea. Thou hearest the Psalm saying, He hath set aright the round world, that it cannot be moved; and thou sayest it hath not only been moved since it was made fast, but hath also decreased. Dost thou speak the truth, and the Psalmist falsehood? Do the false prophets, when they cry out, Lo, here is Christ, and there, speak truth; and doth this Prophet lie? Brethren, against these most open words ye hear in the corners rumours like these; “such an one was a traditor,” and, “such an one was a traditor.” What dost thou say? Are thy words, or the words of God, to be heard? For, it is He Who hath set aright the round world, that it cannot be moved. I shew unto thee the round world built: bring thy present, and come into the courts of the Lord. Thou hast no presents: and on that account thou art not willing to enter. What is this? If God were to appoint unto thee a bull, goat, or ram, for a present, thou wouldest find one to bring: He hath appointed a humble heart, and thou wilt not enter; for thou findest not this in thyself, because thou art swollen with pride. He hath set aright the round world, that it cannot be moved: and He shall judge the people righteously. Then shall they mourn, who now refuse to love righteousness.

12. Ver. 11. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad. Let the heavens, which declare the glory of God, rejoice; let the heavens rejoice, which the Lord made; let the earth be glad, which the heavens rain upon. For the heavens are the preachers, the earth the listeners. Let the sea be

stirred up, and the fulness thereof. What sea? The world. The sea hath been stirred up, and the fulness thereof: the whole world was roused up against the Church, while it was being extended and built over all the earth. Concerning this stirring up, ye have heard in the Gospel, They shall deliver you up to councils. The sea was stirred up: but how should the sea ever conquer Him Who made it?

13. Ver. 12, 13. The plains shall be joyful, and all things that are in them. All the meek, all the gentle, all the righteous, are the ‘plains’ of God. Then shall all the trees of the woods rejoice. The trees of the woods are the heathen. Why do they rejoice? Because they were cut off from the wild olive, and engraffed into the good olive. Then shall all the trees of the woods rejoice: because huge cedars and cypresses have been cut down, and undecaying timbers have been bought for the building of the house. They were trees of the woods; but before they were sent to the building: they were trees of the woods, but before they produced the olive.

14. Then shall all the trees of the woods rejoice before the face of the Lord. For He cometh, for He cometh to judge the world. He came at first, and will come again. He first came in His Church in clouds. What are the clouds which bore Him? The Apostles who preached, respecting whom ye have heard, when the Epistle was being read: We are ambassadors, he saith, for Christ: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. These are the clouds in whom He cometh, excepting His last Advent, when He will come to judge the quick and the dead. He came first in the clouds. This was His first voice which sounded forth in the Gospel: From this time shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds. What is, from this time? Will not the Lord come in later times, when all the tribes of the earth shall mourn? He first came in His own preachers, and filled the whole round world. Let us not resist His first coming, that we may not tremble at His second. But woe to them that are with child, and that give suck in those days! Ye have heard but now in the Gospel: “Take ye heed, for ye know not at what hour He cometh.” This is said figuratively. Who are those with child, and who give suck? Those who are with child, are the souls whose hope is in the world: but those who have gained what they hoped for, are meant by ‘they who give suck.’ For example: one wisheth to buy a country seat; he is with child,

for his object is not gained as yet, the womb swelleth in hope: he buyeth it; he hath brought forth, he now giveth suck to what he hath bought. Woe to them that are with child, and that give suck in those days! Woe to those who put their hope in the world; woe to them that cling to those things which they brought forth through hope in the world. What then should the Christian do? He should use, not serve, the world. What is this? Those that have as those that have not. Thus he saith, thus he exhorteth those whom he wisheth not to be found by that day as it were with child, and as they that give suck: But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you without carefulness. He who is without carefulness, waiteth without fear for his Lord’s coming. For what sort of love is it of Christ, to fear lest He come? Brethren, are we not ashamed? We love Him, and yet we fear lest He come. Are we sure that we love Him? or do we love our sins more? Therefore let us hate our sins for their own sake, and love Him Who will come to punish our sins. He will come, whether we like or not: for because He cometh not just now, it is no reason that He will not come at all. He will come, and when thou knowest not; and if He shall find thee ready, thy ignorance is no hurt to thee. Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord; for He cometh: at His first coming. And what afterwards? For He cometh to judge the earth. And all the trees of the woods shall rejoice. He came first: and later to judge the earth: He shall find those rejoicing who believed in His first coming, for He cometh.

15. For with righteousness shall He judge the world: not a part of it, for He bought not a part: He will judge the whole, for it was the whole of which He paid the price. Ye have heard the Gospel, where it saith, that when He cometh, He shall gather together His elect from the four winds. He gathereth all His elect from the four winds: therefore from the whole world. For Adam himself (this I had said before) signifieth in Greek the whole world; for there are four letters, A, D, A, and M. But as the Greeks speak, the four quarters of the world have these initial letters, Ἀνατολὴ, they call the East; Δύσις, the West; Ἄρκτος, the North; Μεσημβρία, the South: thou

hast the word Adam. Adam therefore hath been scattered over the whole world. He was in one place, and fell, and as in a manner broken small, he filled the whole world: but the mercy of God gathered together the fragments from every side, and forged them by the fire of love, and made one what was broken. That Artist knew how to do this; let no one despair: it is indeed a great thing, but reflect Who that Artist was. He Who made, restored; He who formed, reformed; With righteousness shall He judge the world, and the peoples in His truth. What is righteousness and truth? He will gather together His elect with Him to the judgment, but the rest He will separate one from another; for He will place some on the right, others on the left hand. But what is more just, what more true, than that they shall not expect mercy from their Judge, who have refused to act mercifully, before their Judge come? But those who chose to act with mercy, with mercy shall be judged. For it shall be said unto them placed on the right hand: Come, ye blessed of My Father: inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. And He imputeth to them works of mercy: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; and so forth. Again, what is imputed unto those who are placed on the left hand? That they refused to do mercifully. And whither shall they go? Into everlasting fire. This evil hearing will call forth deep wailings. But what saith another Psalm? The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance, He will not be afraid of any evil hearing. What is evil hearing? Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. He who shall rejoice in good, shall not fear for evil hearing. How shall they rejoice in good hearing? Come, ye blessed of My Father. And for what hearing shall they not fear? Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. This is righteousness, this is truth. For He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth. Because thou art unrighteous, shall thy Judge not be righteous? Because thou art a liar, shall not Truth be true? But if thou wishest to find Him merciful, be merciful before He cometh: forgive whatever hath been done against thee, give from out of thine abundance. And from whose abundance, but His, dost thou give? If of thine own thou gavest, it would be bounty: since thou givest of His, it is restitution. For what hast thou, that thou hast not received? These are the most acceptable offerings unto God, mercy, humility, confession, peace, love. These let us bring, and without fear we shall await the coming of our Judge, Who with righteousness shall judge the world, and the peoples with His truth.

PSALM 97

A Discourse to the people.

God affordeth mighty spectacles to the Christian heart, than which truly nothing more delightful can be discovered; if only the palate of faith be at hand to taste the honey of God. We believe that in all of you, who have with all your heart believed in our Saviour, there dwelleth His Spirit, that may delight you when the Prophecies are read, so many years ago uttered by the mouth of the Saints, and so many years after fulfilled in the faith of nations. For those holy Prophets felt the liveliest joy, when they saw those things in the Spirit, not as yet fulfilled, but destined to be fulfilled. They felt great delight: and yet, by reason of the love with which they were inspired for us, whom they saw not as yet, but in the Spirit travailed of us; they wished, if possible, to live with us in these times, and to see what they were prophesying in the Spirit, fulfilled. Thence our Lord saith unto His disciples, when they began to discern these things: Many righteous men and prophets have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. For although they saw these things in the Spirit, yet they were figured unto them as future: but to the Apostles they were fulfilled before their eyes. Whence that Simeon, a righteous old man, rejoiced much when he saw the infant Jesus, recognising the great in the small, and in that little body the Creator of heaven and earth. He rejoiced therefore much, because he had been answered, that he should not depart from this life, before he should see the salvation of God. He therefore recognised Him, he was delighted, and exulted with joy; saying these words, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation. Great therefore is this gladness; and love createth it. We were pleased, when this Psalm was sung: and some things therein were understood by all; but some, as I think, either by few, or certainly not by all. Let us therefore at once consider it in this discourse, in which we are serving you; and let us see with how great goodness God hath been pleased to make us glad, by making what He hath promised present to us, and by displaying unto us the truth of His promises.

2. (Title.) This Psalm is entitled, A Psalm of David’s, when his land was restored. Let us refer the whole to Christ, if we wish to keep the road of a right understanding: let us not depart from the corner-stone, lest our understanding suffer a fall: in Him let that become fixed, which wavered with unstable motion; let that rest upon Him, which before was waving to and fro in uncertainty. Whatever doubt a man hath in his mind when he heareth the Scriptures of God, let him not depart from Christ; when Christ hath been revealed to him in the words, let him then be assured that he hath understood; but before he arriveth at the understanding of Christ, let him not presume that he hath understood. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. What doth this mean, and how are these words understood in Christ, When his land was restored? For it is easy to understand how Christ is represented by David; for Christ was born of Mary, and from David’s seed; and since He was to be born of David’s seed, on that account He is prophesied of, figuratively, under David’s name. David is therefore Christ; because also the signification of David is Strong of Hand: and who is so strong, as He Who by the Cross conquered the world? For after His resurrection and ascension, when the Holy Spirit had been received, and the Apostles were speaking with different tongues, a multitude of those very persons who had crucified Him, were roused to seek the counsel of salvation; received it, and believed; they were forgiven, their guilt in the blood of Christ was remitted unto them, the drinking of His blood imparted unto them; they became faithful disciples of Him whose persecutors they had been; they believed in Him Whom they crucified, and before Whom they bowed their heads in mockery; Himself they chose to hold as their Head. Thus then in the words of the title of the Psalm, was His land restored; for this land was Judæa, all of which had been lost, when in their ignorance they crucified their Lord, like delirious men raving against their physician, and in their frenzy rejecting the means of safety. The whole of Judæa then had as it were been lost: how the whole? The very Apostles even wavered; Peter, who was following Him with a courageous devotion, thrice in the confusion of fear denied Him. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, on His resurrection, found some of them talking together about Himself in the road, in such a state as to reply unto Him on His asking them the subject of their conversation: Art thou alone a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that are come to pass there in these days? And He said

unto them, What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him. But we hoped that it had been He that should have redeemed Israel. They had already lost their hope in Christ. For they said not, we hope that He shall redeem Israel; but, we hoped that it had been He that should have redeemed Israel. He was with them in Person, and hope in Him was not in them. He shewed Himself unto them, He was manifested even to the rest of His disciples, seen, touched, and found by those to whom He seemed already to have perished: the faith of those who had fallen was brought back; His land was restored. Then after speaking forty days with them, He ascended into heaven; and, as I mentioned a little before, by sending His Holy Spirit, He caused His disciples, unlearned men, to speak with the tongues of all nations. Then they, in whose behalf He had prayed not in vain, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do, moved, as I have said, sought for safety, received counsel to believe in Him; three thousand believed in one day, and again five thousand; the Church of Christ began to be rife throughout Judæa, where the reproach of Christ had been rife; and His land was restored. But since He had Himself said, Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd; the Apostles were sent to the Gentiles also, to whom the Prophets had not been sent. They were sought, who had not sought; they were found, who were expecting nothing; that God, Whom they knew not as Promiser, they found a Redeemer. For the Jews before His advent held Him bounden unto them by promises, because the Prophets had there preached Christ, there had promised Christ; but they had not recognised Him when present Whom they had heard promised; while to the Gentiles no promise was made; although that they should believe also had been mentioned in the Prophets. Though not addressed to them, it was said of them. The Gospel was sent unto them also: and ye have heard this from the dispensation of God; for that lesson hath just been read unto you in the Acts of the Apostles, how the centurion Cornelius believed: for Cornelius the centurion was not of the Jewish nation. He prayed, fasted, gave alms. God deserted him not, although placed among the Gentiles; and an Angel was sent to announce unto him, that his prayer and his alms were had in remembrance in the sight of God; he believed, when he had invited Peter unto him. Could not the Angel teach him? He sent him unto Peter, that his faith might be the rather made sure unto him by a man, that God had deigned to visit men: nor did He, Who deigned to be Man, disdain to teach by means of men. Thus then was His land restored; one wall coming from the Jews, another wall from the Gentiles; which two walls meeting from opposite sides, He was Himself the corner stone, where both should be joined together.

3. Again, how do we understand the words, when His earth was restored? When His Flesh was raised again. For another interpretation, not departing from Christ, may thus occur to us: the earth restored is the resurrection of the flesh; for after His resurrection, all those things which are sung of in the Psalm were done. Let us then hear a Psalm full of joy on the restoration of the Earth. Let the Lord our God excite in us a hope and a pleasure worthy of so great a thing; may He rule our discourse, that it be fit for your hearts, that whatever joy our heart doth feel in such sights, He may bring on to our tongue, and thence conduct it into your ears, then to your heart, thence to your actions.

4. Ver. 1. The Lord is King. He Who stood before the judge, He Who received blows, He Who was scourged, He Who was spit upon, He Who was crowned with thorns, He Who was struck with fists, He Who hung upon the cross, He Who as He hung upon the wood was mocked, He Who died upon the cross, He Who was pierced with the spear, He Who was buried, Himself arose from the dead. The Lord is King. Let kingdoms rage as much as they can; what can they do to the King of kingdoms, the Lord of all kings, the Creator of all worlds? Is He despised, because He appeared so submissive, so humble? That was His mercy, not His want of power: for He appeared humble, that we might take Him. But let us now see: The Lord is King, let the earth be glad: yea, let the multitude of the isles be joyous. It is so indeed, because the word of God hath been preached not in the continent alone, but also in those isles which lie in mid sea: even these are full of Christians, full of the servants of God. For the sea doth not retard Him Who made it. Where ships can approach, can not the words of God? The isles are filled. But figuratively the isles may be taken for all the Churches. Why isles? Because the waves of all temptations roar around them. But as an isle

may be beaten by the waves which on every side dash around it, yet cannot be broken, and rather itself doth break the advancing waves, than by them is broken: so also the Churches of God, springing up throughout the world, have suffered the persecutions of the ungodly, who roar around them on every side; and behold the isles stand fixed, and at last the sea is calmed. Yea, let the multitude of the isles be joyous.

5. Ver. 2. Clouds and darkness are round about Him: righteousness and judgment are the direction of His seat. For whom are clouds and darkness round about Him? For whom are righteousness and judgment the direction of His seat? Clouds and darkness for the ungodly, who have not understood Him: righteousness and judgment for the faithful, who have believed in Him; for the former have not seen through pride, the latter have deserved to be guided by their humility. Hear the clouds and darkness, and hear righteousness and judgment. The Lord Himself saith: For judgment I am come into this world; that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind. What meaneth, that they which see might be made blind? They who seem unto themselves to see, who think themselves wise, who think healing not needful for them, that they may be made blind, may not understand. And that they which see not may see; that they who confess their blindness may obtain to be enlightened. Let there be therefore clouds and darkness round about Him, for those who have not understood Him: for those who confess and humble themselves, righteousness and judgment are the direction of His seat. He called those who believe in Him His seat: for from them hath He made Himself a seat, since in them Wisdom sitteth; for the Son of God is the Wisdom of God. But we have heard from another passage of Scripture a strong confirmation of this interpretation. The soul of the righteous is the seat of Wisdom. Because then they who have believed in Him have been made righteous: justified by faith, they have become His own seat: He sitteth in them, judging from them, and guiding them. Wherefore? because He found them meek, like obedient cattle, not kicking backward, not shaking their heads in pride against His yoke, not refusing His scourge: they became good and obedient cattle of His; and deserved what is said in another Psalm, “Them that are meek shall He guide in judgment: and such as are gentle, them shall He learn His way.” Clouds and

darkness, therefore, are around Him, unto them who are not righteous; but to the meek, righteousness and judgment shall be the habitation of His seat.

6. Ver. 3. There shall go a fire before Him, and burn up His enemies on every side. Of what fire doth he say, brethren, a fire shall go before Him, and burn up His enemies on every side? I do not think it is said of that fire, into which the ungodly are to be sent by that sentence of the last judgment, to whom when set apart on the left, as we remember having read in the Gospel, He shall say, Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. I do not think it is said of that fire. Why do I not? Because he speaketh of some fire, which shall go before Him, before He cometh to judgment. For it is said, that the fire goeth before Him, and burneth up His enemies on every side, that is, throughout the whole world. That fire will burn after His advent: this, on the contrary, will go before Him. What fire then is this? We may understand it of the punishment of the wicked, we may understand it of the salvation of the redeemed. Of the punishment of the wicked, how? Because when Christ was preached, the heathen were enraged, and stirred up persecution: which was the fury of fire, consuming rather those who persecuted, than those whom they persecuted. For when we see two persons, the one enraged, the other meekly enduring, it is for you to judge, which of them is on fire. Ye may behold such a spectacle in the human race. Place before your eyes an unjust man, excited in mind, savage in countenance, with flaming eyes, with flashing words, carried on to another’s death, to depredations, injury, insult, not able to hold, to restrain himself; the other patiently enduring his words, his blows, whatsoever he chooseth to inflict upon him, and when he striketh his cheek, offering unto him the other: when thou hast seen on the one side fury, on the other mildness; on the one anger, on the other endurance: on the one flames, on the other patience; wilt thou hesitate to pronounce which of these is on fire, and suffereth punishment? He whose body is assaulted, or he whose mind is laid waste? On which account the prophet Isaiah also saith, The fire of thine enemies shall devour them, even now. What is, even now? Before that great day of judgment cometh, those who will afterwards burn with the punishment of eternal fire, already burn in their own rage. Unless indeed ye imagine, brethren, that injustice, which proceedeth out of one man to the injury of another, hurteth him to whom it proceedeth, and hurteth not him

from whom it proceedeth. How can it be so? Sometimes a burning brand is applied to a damp and green log of wood, without burning it, though it is on fire itself; thus also thine enemy. If perchance there be any unjust man who plotteth snares against thee, or deviseth any trouble, he is unjust: then if thou art green wood, that is, if vigorous and flourishing with spiritual sap, thou shalt resist the fire of his hostilities, by praying for him who persecuteth thee: he is on fire, thou remainest whole; and his injustice hurteth him, thee not at all. Unless indeed thou thinkest that it hurteth thee, if he hath done ought unto thy body, and thy soul hath come patient and incorrupt to be crowned before God, following the example of its Lord, Who chose rather to suffer from the Jews, and who could have avoided death, but yet died, just as He was born, though He needed not to have been born. For thou wast born by the law of thy nature, He of His own will; thou diest from thy nature, He from His mercy. As then the Jews did Him no harm; so neither doth any persecuting enemy hurt thee, if thou hast chosen to be a member of Him thy Head.

7. Behold, we have understood the fire that goeth before Him, that is to be understood of a kind of temporal punishment of the unbelieving and ungodly: let us understand the fire, if possible, of the salvation of the redeemed also; for thus we had proposed. The Lord Himself saith: I am come to send fire on the earth: ‘fire’ in the same way as a ‘sword; as in another passage He saith, that He was not come to send peace, but a sword, upon earth. The sword to divide, the fire to burn: but each salutary: for the sword of His own word hath in salutary wise separated us from evil habits. For He brought a sword, and separated every believer either from his father who believed not in Christ, or from his mother in like manner unbelieving: or at least, if we were born of Christian parents, from his ancestors. For no man among us had not either a grandsire, or great grandsire, or some ancestry among the heathen, and in that unbelief which is accursed before God. We are separated from that which we were before; but the sword which separateth, but slayeth not, hath cut between us. In the same way the fire also: I am come to send fire upon the earth. Believers in Him were set on fire, they received the flame of love: and for this reason when the Holy Spirit itself had been sent to the Apostles, It thus appeared: There appeared, he saith, unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of

them. Burning with this fire they set out on their march through the world, to burn and set on fire His enemies on every side. What enemies of His? They who forsaking the God Who made them, adored the idols they had made. They were burnt, if they were evil, unto their consumption: if good, unto their restoration: either the man was burnt, who refused to believe, by that fire, becoming worse when he heard the word of God, being burnt up and consumed by his own malice; or if he were converted and believed, yet it was not as if nothing had burnt within him. For the grass had burnt, that the gold might be refined. Faith is gold, carnal lust is grass. All flesh is grass, saith Isaiah, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the grass. Whatever there is therefore in carnal man lusting for things vain and worldly, is grass. How many perchance, even brethren of ours, have been to the theatre? they were led by grass. Is not this fire to be desired by them, that the grass may burn, and the gold be refined? For whatever faith there be in them, is choked by the grass. It is therefore good for them to burn with a holy fire, that when the grass hath been consumed, the treasure which Christ redeemed may shine. Therefore, there shall go a fire before Him, and shall burn up His enemies on every side. There are some who have burned for their own health, they are to-day His faithful; they were His enemies, and they are now at last His faithful: thou seekest for enemies, they are not; they are consumed, they have been on fire; love hath consumed in them that which made them persecute Christ, and hath refined within them their belief in Christ. And it shall burn up His enemies an every side.

8. Ver. 4. His lightnings gave shine unto the world. This is great joy. Do we not see? is it not clear? His lightnings have shined unto the whole world: His enemies have been set on fire, and burnt. All that gainsaid hath been burnt, and His lightnings have given shine unto the world. How have they shone? That the world might at length believe. Whence were the lightnings? From the clouds. What are the clouds of God? The preachers of the truth. But thou seest a cloud, misty and dark in the sky, and it hath I know not what hidden within it. If there be lightning from the cloud, a brightness shineth forth: from that which thou didst despise, hath burst forth that which thou mayest dread. Our Lord Jesus Christ therefore sent His Apostles, as His preachers, like clouds: they were seen as men, and were despised; as clouds appear, and are despised, until what thou wonderest at gleameth

from them. For they were in the first place men encumbered with flesh, weak; then, men of low station, unlearned, ignoble: but there was within what could lighten forth; there was in them what could flash abroad. Peter a fisherman approached, prayed, and the dead arose. His human form was a cloud, the splendour of the miracle was the lightning. So in their words, so in their deeds, when they do things to be wondered at, and utter words to be wondered at, His lightnings gave shine unto the world; the earth saw it, and was afraid. Is it not true? Doth not the whole Christian world at length exclaim, Amen, afraid at the lightnings which burst forth from those clouds? The earth saw it, and was afraid.

9. Ver. 5. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord. Who are the hills? The proud. Every high thing raising itself against God, at the deeds of Christ and of the Christians, trembled, yielded, and when I say, what hath been already said, melted, a better word cannot be found. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord. Where is the elevation of powers? where the hardness of the unbelieving? The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord. The Lord was a fire unto them, they melted at His presence like wax; so long hard, until that fire was applied. Every height hath been levelled; it dareth not now blaspheme Christ: and though the Pagan believeth not in Him, he blasphemeth Him not; though not as yet become a living stone, yet the hard hill hath been subdued. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord: at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth: not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, as the Apostle saith; for He is not the God of the Jews alone, but of the Gentiles also. He is therefore the Lord of the whole earth, the Lord Jesus Christ born in Judæa, but not born for Judæa alone, because before He was born He created all men; and He Who created, also new created, all men. At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

10. Ver. 6. The heavens have declared His righteousness: and all the people have seen His glory. What heavens have declared? The heavens declare the glory of God. Who are the heavens? Those who have become His seat; for as God sitteth in the heavens, so doth He sit in the Apostles, so doth He sit in the preachers of the Gospel. Even thou, if thou wilt, shalt be a heaven. Dost thou wish to be so? Purge from thy heart the earth. If thou hast not

earthly lusts, and hast not in vain uttered the response, that thou hast ‘lifted up thy heart,’ thou shalt be a heaven. If ye be risen with Christ, saith the Apostle to believers, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth upon the right hand of God: set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth. Thou hast begun to set thine affection upon things above, not on things upon earth; hast thou not become a heaven? Thou earnest flesh, and in thy heart thou art already a heaven; for thy conversation will be in heaven. Being such, thou also declarest Christ; for who of the faithful declareth not Christ? Attend, beloved: do ye imagine that we standing here alone declare Christ, and do ye not declare Him? Whence do they come unto us, wishing to be Christians, whom we have never seen, whom we know not, unto whom we have never preached? Have they believed, perchance, without any preacher? The Apostle saith: How shall they believe in Him, of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? Therefore the whole Church preacheth Christ, and the heavens declare His righteousness; for all the faithful, whose care it is to gain unto God those who have not yet believed, and who do this from love, are heavens. From them God thundereth forth the terror of His judgment; and he who was unbelieving trembleth, and is alarmed, and believeth. He shews unto men what power Christ had throughout the world, by pleading with them, and leading them to love Christ. For how many this day have led their friends either to some pantomimist, or flute-player? Why, except from their liking him? And do ye love Christ. For He Who conquered the world hath exhibited such spectacles, as that no man can say that he findeth in them cause for blame. For each person’s favourite in the theatre is often vanquished there. But no man is vanquished in Christ: there is no reason for shame. Seize, lead, draw, whom ye may: be without fear, ye are leading unto Him, Who displeaseth not those who see Him; and ask ye Him to enlighten them, that they may behold to good account. The heavens have declared His righteousness: and all the people have seen His glory.

11. Ver. 7. Confounded be all they that worship carved images. Hath not this come to pass? Have they not been confounded? Are they not daily confounded? For carved images are images wrought by the hand. Why are all who worship carved images confounded? Because all people have seen His glory. All nations now confess the glory of Christ: let those who

worship stones be ashamed. Because those stones were dead, we have found a living stone: indeed those stones never lived, so that they cannot be called even dead; but our Stone is living, and hath ever lived with the Father, and though He died for us, He revived, and liveth now, and death shall no more have dominion over Him. This glory of His the nations have acknowledged; they leave the temples, they run to the Churches. Confounded be all they that worship carved images. Do they still seek to worship carved images? Have they not chosen to forsake their idols? They have been forsaken by their idols. Confounded be all they that worship carved images, who glory in their idols. But there is a certain disputer who seemeth unto himself learned, and saith, I do not worship that stone, nor that image which is without sense; your prophet could not be aware that they have eyes and see not, and I be ignorant that this image neither hath a soul, nor seeth with its eyes, nor heareth with its ears: I worship not this image; but I adore what I see, and serve him whom I see not. Who is that? Some invisible deity, he replieth, who presideth over that image. By giving this account of their images, they seem to themselves able disputants, because they do not worship idols, and yet do worship devils. The things, brethren, saith the Apostle, which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils, and not to God; and I would not, he addeth, that ye should have fellowship with devils; for we know that an idol is nothing in the world. The Apostle himself saith this, we know that an idol is nothing: and that what the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Let them not therefore excuse themselves on this ground, that they are not devoted to insensate idols; they are rather devoted to devils, which is more dangerous. For if they were only worshipping idols, as they would not help them, so they would not hurt them; but if thou worship and serve devils, they themselves will be thy masters. And who will be thy masters? Those who are jealous of thee: they must necessarily be jealous of thy freedom, always wish to possess thee, always to render thee such, as they may be able to draw along with them. For those evil spirits have a sort of inherent malevolence, and love of destruction: they rejoice in the evil of man; and feed upon our delusion, if they have deceived us. And what do they seek? Not those over whom they may for ever have dominion, but with whom they may for ever undergo damnation; just as an evil-minded robber is wont to accuse the innocent. If a man is burnt alive, doth he burn the less, if two men are burning? doth he die the less, if he die in company with another? His punishment is not lessened, but his malignity is fed. ‘Let him die with me;’ not meaning that he will the less himself die, but another’s ill brings consolation. Such is the devil; he wisheth to seduce those who with him may be punished: and because God is a Judge whom he cannot deceive, (for he accuseth not before Him the innocent,) wishing to have true charges to prefer, he persuadeth to sin. Behold what master they who worship idols and devils create for themselves: for the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

12. But what sort of God have we? Hear what followeth. For when he had said, Confounded be all they that worship carved images, and that glory in their idols: lest men should try to stand in defence of their images, by saying, We are not worshipping stones, but deities: what deities dost thou worship? Tell me, dost thou worship devils, or good spirits, such as are the Angels? For there are holy Angels, and there are evil spirits. I say, that in thy temples none are worshipped but evil spirits; who in their pride exact sacrifice for themselves, and wish themselves to be worshipped as gods; who are malignant and proud. Such also are wicked men, who seek their own glory, and despise the glory of God. But observe holy men, who are like the Angels. When thou hast found some holy man who serveth God, if thou wish to worship him instead of God, he forbiddeth thee: he will not arrogate to himself the honour due to God, he will not be unto thee as God, but be with thee under God. Thus did the holy Apostles Paul and Barnabas. They preached the word of God in Lycaonia. When they had performed wonderful works in Lycaonia, the people of that country brought victims, and wished to sacrifice to them, calling Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercury: they were not pleased. Did they perchance refuse to be sacrificed to, because they abhorred to be compared to devils? No, but because they shuddered at divine honour being paid to men. Their own words shew this: it is no guess of ours; for the text of the book goeth on to say how they were moved: then Barnabas and Paul rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, Men and brethren, why do ye these things? we also are men of like passions with you. Attend. Just then, as good men forbid those

who had wished to worship them as gods, and wish rather that God alone be worshipped, God alone be adored, to God alone sacrifice be offered, not to themselves; so also all the holy Angels seek His glory Whom they love; endeavour to impel and to excite to the contemplation of Him all whom they love: Him they declare to them, not themselves, since they are angels; and because they are soldiers, they study only how to seek the glory of their Captain; but if they have sought their own glory, they are condemned as usurpers. Such were the devil and his angels: he claimed for himself divine honour, and for all his demons; he filled the pagan temples, and persuaded them to offer images and sacrifices to himself. Was it not better to worship holy Angels than devils? They answer: we do not worship devils; we worship angels, as ye call them, the powers and the ministers of the great God. I wish ye would worship them: ye would easily learn from themselves not to worship them. Hear an Angel teaching. He was teaching a disciple of Christ, and shewing him many wonders in the Revelation of John: and when some wonderful vision had been shewn him, he trembled, and fell down at the Angel’s feet; but that Angel, who sought not but the glory of God, said, See thou do it not; for I am a fellow servant of thee, and of thy brethren the prophets. What then, my brethren? Let no man say, I fear lest the Angel may be angry with me, if I worship him not as my God. He is then angry with thee, when thou hast chosen to worship him: for he is righteous, and loveth God. As devils are angry if they are not worshipped, so are Angels angry if they are worshipped instead of God. But lest the weak and trembling heart perchance say unto itself: If then the demons are incensed because they are not worshipped, I fear to offend them; what can even their chief the devil do unto thee? If he had any power over us, no one of us would remain. Are not daily so many things said against him by the mouth of Christians, and yet the harvest of Christians increaseth. When thou art angry with the most depraved of thy slaves, thou givest him the name, Satan, Devil. Perhaps in this thou dost err, since thou sayest it to a man, and thy immoderate anger hurrieth thee to revile the image of God: and yet thou choosest a term thou deeply hatest, to apply to him. If he could, would he not revenge himself? But it is not allowed: and he doth so much only as is allowed him. For when he wished to tempt Job, he had to ask power to do so: and he could do nothing had he not received power. Why then dost thou not fearlessly worship God, without Whose will no one hurteth thee, and by Whose permission thou art chastened, not overcome? For if it shall have pleased the Lord thy God to permit some man to hurt thee, or some spirit: He will chasten thee, that thou mayest cry unto Him: “The Lord hath chastened and corrected me: but He hath not given me over unto death.” Confounded, therefore, be all they that worship carved images, and that delight in vain gods: worship Him, all ye His angels. Let pagans learn to worship God: they wish to worship Angels: let them imitate Angels, and worship Him Who is worshipped by Angels. Worship Him, all ye His angels. Let that Angel worship who was sent to Cornelius, (for worshipping Him he sent Cornelius to Peter,) himself Peter’s fellow-servant; let him worship Christ, Peter’s Lord. Worship Him, all ye gods!

13. Ver. 8. Sion heard of it, and rejoiced. What did Sion hear? That all His Angels worship Him. What heard Sion? Behold what she heard: The heavens have declared His righteousness: and all the people have seen His glory. Confounded be all they that worship carved images, and that delight in their idols. For the Church was not as yet among the Gentiles; in Judæa the Jews had some of them believed, and the very Jews who believed thought that they only belonged to Christ: the Apostles were sent to the Gentiles, Cornelius was preached to; Cornelius believed, was baptized, and they who were with Cornelius were also baptized. But ye know what happened, that they might be baptized: the reader indeed hath not reached this point, but, nevertheless, some recollect; and let those who do not recollect, hear briefly from me. The Angel was sent to Cornelius: the Angel sent Cornelius to Peter; Peter came to Cornelius. And because Cornelius and his household were Gentiles, and uncircumcised: lest they might hesitate to give the Gospel to the uncircumcised: before Cornelius and his household were baptized, the Holy Spirit came, and filled them, and they began to speak with tongues. Now the Holy Spirit had not fallen upon any one who had not been baptized: but upon these It fell before baptism. For Peter might hesitate whether he might baptize the uncircumcised: the Holy Spirit came, they began to speak with tongues; the invisible gift was given, and took away all doubt about the visible Sacrament; they were all baptized. And thou hast it there written; And the apostles and brethren that were in Judæa heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. This is what he here mentions; Sion heard of it, and rejoiced: and the daughters of

Judah were glad. What did Sion hear, and rejoice at? That the Gentiles also had received the word of God. One wall had come, but the corner existed not as yet. The name Sion is here peculiarly given to the Church which was in Judæa. Sion heard of it, and rejoiced: and the daughters of Judah were glad. Thus it is written, The apostles and brethren that were in Judæa heard. See if the daughters of Judæa rejoiced not. What did they hear? That the Gentiles had also received the word of God. Where did this Psalm express this? The heavens have declared His righteousness: and all the people have seen His glory. And because even the Gentiles, who used to worship idols, had believed, he goeth on to say, Confounded be all they that worship carved images, and that delight in their idols. Sion heard of it, and rejoiced: and the daughters of Judah were glad. Afterwards some of the circumcised chose to reproach Peter, saying unto him, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. But he gave them a reason, telling how while he prayed a vessel let down by four corners was shewn Him. This vessel which contained all living things, signified all nations. But it hung by four corners, because there are four quarters of the globe, whence the people were to come: and four Gospels preach Christ, that His grace may be understood to belong to all the four quarters of the globe. Because therefore such a vision had been shewn to Peter, he rehearsed to them the whole, how Cornelius believed, and that, before the Gentile was baptized, the Holy Spirit came upon him. When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. Behold, Sion heard of it, and rejoiced, and the daughters of Judah were glad because of Thy judgments, O Lord. What judgments? Because God is no accepter of persons. For Peter himself, when he had seen Cornelius the centurion, and those who were with him, filled with the Holy Ghost, cried out and said, Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons. Therefore, The daughters of Judah rejoiced because of Thy judgments, O Lord. What is, because of Thy judgments? Because in any nation, and in any people, he that serveth Him is accepted of Him: for He is not the God of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.

14. Ver. 9. See if this be not the reason for the joy of the daughters of Judah. And the daughters of Judah were glad because of Thy judgments, O Lord. For Thou, Lord, art most high over all the earth. Not in Judæa alone, but

over Jerusalem; not over Sion only, but over all the earth. To this whole earth the judgments of God prevailed, so that it assembled its nations from every quarter: judgments with which they who have cut themselves off have no communion: they neither hear the prophecy, nor see its completion; For Thou, Lord, art most high over all the earth: Thou art exalted far above all gods. What is far? For it is said of Christ. What then meaneth far, except that Thou mayest be acknowledged coequal with the Father? What meaneth, above all gods? Who are they? Idols have not life, have not sense: devils have life and sense; but they are evil. What great thing is it that Christ is exalted above devils? He is exalted above devils: but neither is this very great; the heathen gods indeed are devils, but He is far above all gods. Even men are styled gods: I have said, Ye are gods: and ye are all the children of the Most Highest: again it is written, God standeth in the congregation of princes: He is a Judge among gods. Jesus Christ our Lord is exalted above all: not only above idols, not only above devils; but above all righteous men. Even this is not enough; above all Angels also: for whence otherwise is this, Worship Him, all ye gods? Thou art far exalted above all gods.

15. Ver. 10. What then do we all, who have assembled before Him, before Him Who is exalted far above all gods? He hath given us a brief commandment, O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil! Christ doth not deserve that with Him thou shouldest love avarice. Thou lovest Him: thou shouldest hate what He hateth. There is a man who is thine enemy, he is what thou art; ye are the work of one Creator, with the same nature: and yet if thy son were to speak unto thine enemy, and come to his house, and constantly converse with him, thou wouldest be inclined to disinherit him; because he speaketh with thine enemy. And how so? Because thou seemest to say justly, Thou art my enemy’s friend, and seekest thou ought of my property? Attend then. Thou lovest Christ: avarice is Christ’s foe; why speak with her? I say not, speak with her; why dost thou serve her? For Christ commandeth thee to do many things, and thou dost them not; she commandeth thee, and thou dost them. Christ commandeth thee to clothe the poor man: and thou dost it not; avarice biddeth thee defraud, and this thou dost in preference. If such be the case, if such thou art, do not very confidently promise thyself Christ’s heritage. But

thou sayest, I love Christ. O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil! Hence it appeareth that thou lovest what is good, if thou shalt be found to hate what is evil. O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil!

16. But when we have begun to hate evil, persecutions will follow. We hate evil; some persecutor saith to us, Defraud; saith to us, Worship that image; saith to us, Offer frankincense to devils: but we have heard, O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil. We have heard indeed: but if we do not these things, the persecutor rageth. To what degree doth he rage? What will he take away? Answer: Wherefore art thou a Christian? on account of thy eternal heritage, or thy temporal happiness? Ask the question of thy faith, place thy soul on the frame of conscience, torture thyself with the fear of judgment, answer whom thou hast believed in, why thou hast believed. Thou sayest to me, I have believed in Christ. What hath Christ promised thee, but what He hath shewn in Himself? What hath He shewn in Himself? He died, and arose from the dead, ascended into heaven. Dost thou wish to follow? Imitate His passion: expect His promise. What then can the enraged persecutor deprive thee of, when thou hast begun to hate the evil, because thou lovest the Lord? What can he deprive thee of? Thy patrimony? Can he deprive thee of heaven? Lastly, whatever God hath given thee, let him take: (he taketh not indeed, unless God wills; but if God will, he taketh away what God gave, lest God take Himself away from thee:) no one can deprive thee of God; thou deprivest thyself of Him, if thou fliest from Him.

17. Perhaps thou answerest: I am not concerned for my patrimony. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; I may say, Blessed be the name of the Lord: but I fear, lest he slay me. This is all. Hear the Psalm consoling thee: The Lord preserveth the souls of His servants. Because then he had said above, O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil, lest ye should fear to hate evil, lest he should kill thee, he addeth instantly, The Lord preserveth the souls of His servants. Hear Him preserving the souls of His servants, and saying, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. He who hath most power against thee, slayeth the body. What hath he done unto thee? What he also did to the Lord thy God.

Why lovest thou to have what Christ hath, if thou fearest to suffer what Christ did? He came to bear thy life, temporal, weak, subject unto death. Surely fear to die, if thou canst avoid dying. What thou canst not avoid through thy nature, why dost thou not undergo by faith? Let the adversary who threateneth take away from thee that life, God giveth thee another life: for He gave thee this life also, and without His will even this shall not be taken from thee; but if it be His will that it be taken from thee, He hath a life to give thee in exchange; fear not to be robbed for His sake. Art thou unwilling to put off a patched garment? He will give thee a robe of glory. What robe dost thou tell me of? This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. This very flesh of thine shall not perish. Thine enemy can rage as far as to thy death: he hath not power beyond, either over thy soul, or even over thy flesh; for although he scatter thy flesh about, he hindereth not the resurrection. Men were fearful for their life: and what said the Lord unto them? The very hairs of your head are all numbered. Dost thou, who losest not a single hair, fear the loss of thy life? All things are numbered with God. He Who created all things, will restore all things. They were not, and they were created: they were, and shall they not be restored? Believe then with your whole heart, my brethren, and ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil. Be strong, not only in the love of God, but also in the hatred of evil. Let no man frighten you: He Who called you is more powerful, He is Almighty; He is stronger than all the strong, higher than all the exalted. The Son of God hath died for us: fear not but that thou shalt receive His life, who hast a pledge in His death. For, for whom hath He died? was it for the righteous? Ask of Paul: for Christ died for the ungodly. Thou wast ungodly, and He died for thee: thou art justified, and will He desert thee? He Who justified the ungodly, shall He desert the godly? O ye that love the Lord, see that ye hate the thing which is evil! Let no man fear: The Lord preserveth the souls of His saints; He shall deliver them from the hand of the ungodly.

18. But perhaps thou wilt say, I lose this light. (Ver. 11.) There is sprung up a light for the righteous. What light fearest thou thou mayest lose? fearest thou thou mayest be in darkness? Fear not thou mayest lose light; nay, fear lest while thou art guarding against the loss of this light, thou mayest lose that true light. For we see to whom that light is given which thou fearest

losing, and with whom it is shared. Do the righteous only see this sun, when He maketh it rise over the just and unjust, and raineth upon the just and unjust? Wicked men, robbers, the unchaste, beasts, flies, worms, see that light together with thee. What sort of light doth He keep for the righteous, Who giveth this even to such as these? Deservedly the Martyrs beheld this light in faith; for they who despised this light of the sun, had some light in their eyes, which they longed for, who rejected this. There is sprung up a light for the righteous: and joyful gladness for such as are true-hearted. Do you imagine that they were really in misery, when they walked in chains? Spacious was the prison to the faithful, light were the chains to the confessors. They who preached Christ amid their torments, had joy in the iron-chair. There is sprung up a light for the righteous. What light hath sprung up for the righteous? Not that which springeth up for the unrighteous; not that which He causeth to rise over the good and bad. There is a different light which springeth up to the righteous; of which light, that never rose upon themselves, the unrighteous shall in the end say, Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined upon us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us. Behold, by loving this sun they have lain in the darkness of the heart. What did it profit them to have seen with their eyes this sun, and not in mind to have seen that light? Tobit was blind, but he used to teach his son the way of God. Ye know this, that Tobit warned his son, and said to him, Son, give alms of thy substance; because that alms suffer not to come into darkness. Even he who was in darkness spoke thus. Do ye see that there is another light which springeth up to the righteous, and joyful gladness for such as are true-hearted? He had not sight: and he said to his son, Give alms of thy substance; alms suffer not to come into darkness. Nor did he fear, lest his son should say to him in his heart, And hast not thou then given alms? why dost thou, that art blind thyself, thus enjoin me? Behold, thy alms have brought thee to darkness, and how sayest thou to me, Give alms: alms suffer not to come into darkness. How could he speak with such confidence, except because he had in sight another light? The son gave his arm to his father, that he might walk: but the father taught the son the way that he might live. There is therefore another light which springeth up to the righteous: There is sprung up a light for the righteous: and joyful gladness for the true-hearted. Dost thou wish to know that light? Be true-hearted.

What is, be true-hearted? Be not of a crooked heart before God, withstanding His will, and wishing to bend Him unto thee, and not to rule thyself to please Him; and thou wilt feel the joyful gladness which all the true-hearted know. There is sprung up a light for the righteous: and joyful gladness for the true-hearted.

19. Ver. 12. Be glad, ye righteous. Perhaps already the faithful hearing the word, Be glad, are thinking of banquets, preparing cups, waiting for the season of roses; because it is said, Be glad, ye righteous! See what followeth, Be glad in the Lord. Thou art waiting for the season of spring, that thou mayest be glad: thou hast the Lord for joyful gladness, the Lord is always with thee, He hath no special season; thou hast Him by night, thou hast Him by day. Be true-hearted; and thou hast ever joy from Him. For that joy which is after the fashion of the world, is not true joy. Hear the prophet Isaiah: There is no joy, saith my God, to the wicked. What the wicked call joy is not joy, such as he knew who made no account of their joy: let us believe him, brethren. He was a man, but he knew both kinds of joy. He certainly knew the joys of the cup, for he was a man, he knew the joy of the table, he knew the joys of marriage, he knew those joys worldly and luxurious. He who knew them saith with confidence, There is no joy to the wicked, saith the Lord. But it is not man who speaks, it is the Lord: of the truth of the Lord it is said, There is no joy to the wicked. For they but seem to themselves to rejoice: But there is no joy to the wicked, saith not a man, but the Lord. Whence he who saw real joy, saith, Neither have I desired the day of men, thou knowest. Thou Who shewest me another day, Who teachest me another light, Who fillest me with another joy, Who dost inspire my heart with another feeling, Thou hast made me not desire the day of men. Isaiah saw men in drink, in luxury, in theatres and spectacles, the whole world indulging itself in various trifles, and yet he cried, There is no joy, saith the Lord, to the wicked. If this was not joy, what sort of joy was that which he saw, in comparison with which this was not joy? As if thou hadst known the sun, and wert to say to some person who was praising a lamp, This is not light. Why is it not light? He holdeth it in high esteem, he rejoiceth, he is delighted: and thou sayest, This is not light. Or if any one were admiring an ape, thou wouldest say, This is not beauty. And if perchance he were engaged in tracing the composition of the brute’s limbs,

and admiring all their fitness of adaptation to each other, thou who hadst known another beauty wouldest deny it, and say, it is not so. Why? Because thou knowest another. But thou sayest, I see not that light which Isaiah saw. Believe, and thou shalt see it. For perhaps thou hast not the eye to see it; for it is an eye by which that beauty is discerned. For as there is an eye of the flesh, by means of which this light is seen: so there is an eye of the heart, by which that joy is perceived: perhaps that eye is wounded, dimmed, disturbed by passion, by avarice, by indulgence, by senseless lust; thine eye is disturbed: thou canst not see that light. Believe, before thou seest: thou shalt be healed, and shalt see. There is sprung up a light for the righteous: and joyful-gladness for the true-hearted.

20. Be glad, he saith, in the Lord, ye righteous: and confess to the remembrance of His holiness. Now made glad, now rejoicing in the Lord, confess unto Him; for unless it were His will, ye would not rejoice in Him. For the Lord Himself saith: These things I have spoken to you: that in Me ye might have peace. But in the world ye shall have tribulation. If ye are Christians, look for tribulations in this world; look not for more peaceful and better times. Brethren, ye deceive yourselves; what the Gospel doth not promise you, promise not to yourselves. Ye know what the Gospel saith; we are speaking to Christians; we ought not to disobey the faith. The Gospel saith this, that in the last times many evils, many stumbling-blocks, many tribulations, much iniquity, shall abound; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. The love, it saith, of many shall wax cold. Whosoever then hath been stedfastly fervent in spirit, as the Apostle saith, fervent in spirit, his love shall not wax cold: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Which is given unto us. Let no man therefore promise himself what the Gospel doth not promise. Behold, happier times will come, and I am doing this, and purchasing this. It is good for thee to listen to Him Who is not deceived, nor hath deceived any man, Who promised thee joy not here, but in Himself; and when all here hath passed away, to hope that with Him thou wilt for ever reign; lest when thou dost wish to reign here, thou mayest neither enjoy gladness here, nor find it there.

PSALM 98

A Discourse to the People.

1. Ver. 1. O sing unto the Lord a new song. The new man knoweth this, the old man knoweth it not. The old man is the old life, and the new man the new life: the old life is derived from Adam, the new life is formed in Christ. But in this Psalm, the whole world is enjoined to sing a new song. More openly elsewhere the words are these: O sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth; that they who cut themselves off from the communion of the whole earth, may understand that they cannot sing the new song, because it is sung in the whole, and not in a part of it. Attend here also, and see that this is said. And when the whole earth is enjoined to sing a new song, it is meant, that peace singeth a new song. O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvellous things. What marvellous things? Behold, the Gospel was just now being read, and we heard the marvellous things of the Lord. The only son of his mother, who was a widow, was being carried out dead: the Lord, in compassion, made them stand still; they laid him down, and the Lord said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak: and He delivered him unto his mother. Behold, the Lord hath done marvellous things: but it is much more marvellous, that He hath aroused from everlasting death the whole world, than that He recalled to life the only son of a widowed mother. O sing then unto the Lord a new song; for the Lord hath done marvellous things. What marvellous things? Hear: His own right hand, and His holy arm, hath healed for Him. What is the Lord’s holy arm? Our Lord Jesus Christ. Hear Isaiah: Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? His holy arm then, and His own right hand, is Himself. Our Lord Jesus Christ is therefore the arm of God, and the right hand of God: for this reason is it said, hath He healed for Him. It is not said only, “His right hand hath healed the world,” but hath healed for Him. For many are healed for themselves, not for Him. Behold how many long for that bodily health, and receive it from Him: they are healed by Him, but not for Him. How are they healed by Him, and not for Him?

When they have received health, they become wanton: they who when sick were chaste, when cured become adulterers: they who when in illness injured no man, on the recovery of their strength attack and crush the innocent: they are healed, but not unto Him. Who is he who is healed unto Him? He who is healed inwardly. Who is he that is healed inwardly? He who trusteth in Him, that when he shall have been healed inwardly, reformed into a new man, afterwards this mortal flesh too, which doth languish for a time, may in the end itself even recover its most perfect health. Let us therefore be healed for Him. But that we may be healed for Him, let us believe in His right hand; because His own right hand, and His holy arm, hath healed for Him.

2. Ver. 2. The Lord hath made known His salvation. This very right hand, this very arm, this very salvation, is our Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom it is said, And all flesh shall see the salvation of God; of Whom also that Simeon who embraced the Infant in his arms, spoke, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." The Lord hath made known His salvation. To whom did He make it known? To a part, or to the whole? Not to any part specially. Let no man betray, no man deceive, no man say, Lo, here is Christ, or there: the man who saith, Lo, He is here, or there, pointeth to some particular spots. To whom hath the Lord declared His salvation? Hear what followeth: His righteousness hath He openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the right hand of God, the arm of God, the salvation of God, and the righteousness of God.

3. Ver. 3. He hath remembered His mercy to Jacob, and His truth unto the house of Israel. What meaneth this, He hath remembered His mercy and truth? He hath pitied, so that He promised; because He promised and shewed His mercy, truth hath followed: mercy hath gone before promise, promise hath been fulfilled in truth. He hath remembered His mercy to Jacob, and His truth unto the house of Israel. And what? only to Jacob? and only to the house of Israel? The house of the Jews and that offspring of Abraham according to the flesh, is wont to be called the house of Israel, and Israel is Jacob. For Jacob was Isaac's son, and Isaac himself was Abraham's son. Jacob therefore was the grandson of Abraham; and Jacob had twelve

sons, and of these twelve sons descended the whole race of the Jews. Was Christ promised to them only? If thou reflect what is Israel, Christ is promised unto Israel. Israel meaneth ‘seeing God.’ We shall see Him face to face, if only we now see Him by faith. Let our faith have eyes, and its truth shall be displayed: let us believe in Him Whom we see not, and rejoicing we shall see; let us long for Him we have not seen, and we shall enjoy Him seen. Now therefore is it Israel by faith: but then Israel face to face. No longer through a glass darkly; but as it is said by John, Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. Prepare ye your hearts for this vision, prepare your souls for this joy: just as if God willed to shew the sun, He would warn us to make ready the eyes of the flesh; but because He deigneth to shew you the fashion of His Wisdom, prepare the eyes of your heart. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

He hath remembered His mercy unto Jacob, and His truth unto the house of Israel. Who is this Israel? That ye may not perchance think of one nation of the Jews, hear what followeth: All the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God. It is not said, all the earth: but, all the ends of the world: as it is said, from one end to the other. Let no man cut this down, let no man scatter it abroad; strong is the unity of Christ. He who gave so great a price, hath bought the whole: All the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God.

4. Ver. 4. Because they have seen, then, Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands Ye already know what it is to make a joyful noise. Rejoice, and speak. If ye cannot express your joy, shout ye; let the shout manifest your joy, if your speech cannot: yet let not joy be mute; let not your heart be silent respecting its God, let it not be mute concerning His gifts. If thou speakest to thyself, unto thyself art thou healed; if His right hand hath healed thee for Him, speak thou unto Him for Whom thou hast been healed. All the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands; sing, rejoice, and make melody.

5. Ver. 5. Make melody unto the Lord upon the harp: on the harp and with the voice of a Psalm. Praise Him not with the voice only; take up works,

that ye may not only sing, but work also. He who singeth and worketh, maketh melody with psaltery and upon the harp.

6. Ver. 6. Now see what sort of instruments are next spoken of, in figure: With ductile trumpets also, and the sound of the pipe of horn. What are ductile trumpets, and pipes of horn? Ductile trumpets are of brass: they are drawn out by hammering; if by hammering, by being beaten, ye shall be ductile trumpets, drawn out unto the praise of God, if ye improve when in tribulation: tribulation is hammering, improvement is the being drawn out. Job was a ductile trumpet, when suddenly assailed by the heaviest losses, and the death of his sons, become like a ductile trumpet by the beating of so heavy tribulation, he sounded thus: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. How did He sound? How pleasantly doth his voice sound? This ductile trumpet is still under the hammer: he is given into Satan’s power, so that even his flesh might be struck; it is struck: it beginneth to be corrupted and to be covered with worms. Eve placed ready for his seduction from God, his wife, kept for the service of the devil, and not for her husband’s comfort, suggesteth blasphemy; he complieth not. The Adam in Paradise obeyed Eve: the Adam on the dunghill repelleth Eve. For Job was sitting on a dunghill, while his flesh was running and wasting with worms! Better was Job in his rottenness, than he that was whole in Paradise. But as yet she was Eve, he was not Adam. He answered Eve, prepared thus to deceive and tempt him: (we have heard how this trumpet was beaten. The devil struck him with a terrible disease from head to foot; and, covered with worms, he sat upon a dunghill. We have heard how he was hammered; let us hear how he soundeth: let us, if it please you, hear the sweet sound of this ductile trumpet:) Thou speakest, he said, as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? O courageous, O sweet sound! whom will not that sound awake from sleep? whom will not confidence in God awake, to march to battle fearlessly against the devil; not to struggle with his own strength, but His Who proveth him. For He it is Who hammereth: for the hammer could not do so of itself. Of the devil’s future punishment the Prophet maketh mention, and saith, The hammer of the whole earth is cut asunder and broken. He meant the devil to be understood by the hammer of the whole earth. By means of this hammer placed in the hand of God, that

is, in His power, the ductile trumpets are beaten out, that they may re-echo His praises. See how (I dare so speak, my brethren) even the Apostle was beaten with this very hammer: Lest I should be exalted, he saith, above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me. Behold he is under the hammer: let us hear how he speaketh of it: For this thing, he saith, I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. I, saith His Maker, wish to make this trumpet perfect; I cannot do so unless I hammer it; in weakness is strength made perfect. Hear now the ductile trumpet itself sounding as it should; When I am weak, then am I strong. And the Apostle himself, as if clinging to Christ, clinging to that right hand which holdeth the hammer to draw out the trumpet, placed in that right hand himself with the same hammer; as he saith of some, Whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme. He gave them up to be beaten with the hammer. They sounded ill before they were beaten out; when hammered upon, and made ductile trumpets, leaving off blasphemy, they sounded the praises of the Lord. These are the ductile trumpets.

7. The voice of the pipe of horn, what is it? The horn riseth above the flesh: in rising above the flesh it needs must be solid so as to last, and able to speak. And whence this? Because it hath surpassed the flesh. He who wisheth to be a horn trumpet, let him overcome the flesh. What meaneth this, let him overcome the flesh? Let him surpass the desires, let him conquer the lusts of the flesh. Hear the horn trumpets: If ye then be risen with Christ, saith the Apostle, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth. What meaneth this, Set your affection on things above? It meaneth, Rise above the flesh, think not of carnal things. They were not yet horn trumpets, to whom he now spoke thus: I could not speak unto you, brethren, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it: neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal. They were not therefore horn trumpets, because they had not risen above the flesh. Horn both adhereth to the flesh, and riseth above the flesh; and

although it springeth from the flesh, yet it surpasseth it. If therefore thou art spiritual, when before thou wast carnal; as yet thou art treading the earth in the flesh, but in spirit thou art rising into heaven: for though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. Let not us pass by this, brethren, unto whom the Apostle spoke. What did he say unto them, by which he proved that they were carnal, and had carnal lusts, and were not as yet become horn trumpets? For while one saith, I am of Paul: and another, I am of Apollos: are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers of God, by whom ye believed? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. He therefore wisheth them to be raised from the hope which they had placed in man, and to reach the spiritual things of Christ; in order that they might be horn trumpets, if they could conquer the flesh. Brethren, do not reproach brethren whom the mercy of God hath not yet converted; know that as long as ye do this, ye savour of the flesh. That is not a trumpet which pleaseth the ears of God: the trumpet of boastfulness maketh the war fruitless. Let the horn trumpet raise thy courage against the devil; let not the fleshly trumpet raise thy pride against thy brother. With ductile trumpets, and in the voice of the trumpet of horn, make a joyful noise in the sight of the Lord the King.

8. Ver. 7, 8. While ye are rejoicing, and delighted with the ductile trumpets, and the voice of the horn, what followeth? Let the sea be stirred up, and the fulness thereof. Brethren, when the Apostles, like ductile trumpets and horns, were preaching the truth, the sea was stirred up, its waves arose, tempests increased, persecutions of the Church took place. Whence hath the sea been stirred up? When a joyful noise was made, when Psalms of thanksgiving were being sung before God: the ears of God were pleased, the waves of the sea were raised. Let the sea be stirred up, and the fulness thereof: the round world, and all that dwell therein. Let the sea be stirred up in its persecutions. Let the floods clap their hands together. Let the sea be aroused, and the floods clap their hands together; persecutions arise, and the saints rejoice in God. Whence shall the floods clap their hands? What is to clap their hands? To rejoice in works. To clap hands, is to rejoice; hands, mean works. What floods? Those whom God hath made floods, by giving them that Water, the Holy Spirit. If any man thirst, saith He, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow

rivers of living water. These rivers clapped their hands, these rivers rejoiced in works, and blessed God.

9. The hills shall be joyful together, (ver. 9.) Before the Lord, for He is come; for He is come to judge the earth. The hills signify the great. The Lord cometh to judge the earth, and they rejoice. But there are hills, who, when the Lord is coming to judge the earth, shall tremble. There are therefore good and evil hills; the good hills, are spiritual greatness; the bad hills, are the swelling of pride. Let the hills be joyful together before the Lord, for He is come; for He is come to judge the earth. Wherefore shall He come, and how shall He come? For He is come to judge the earth. With righteousness shall He judge the world, and the people with equity. Let the hills therefore rejoice; for He shall not judge unrighteously. When some man is coming as a judge, to whom the conscience cannot lie open, even innocent men may tremble, if from him they expect a reward for virtue, or fear the penalty of condemnation; when He shall come who cannot be deceived, let the hills rejoice, let them rejoice fearlessly; they shall be enlightened by Him, not condemned; let them rejoice, because the Lord will come to judge the world with equity; and if the righteous hills rejoice, let the unrighteous tremble. But behold, He hath not yet come: what need is there they should tremble? Let them mend their ways, and rejoice. It is in thy power in what way thou wiliest to await the coming of Christ. For this reason He delayeth to come, that when He cometh He may not condemn thee. Lo, He hath not yet come: He is in heaven, thou on earth: He delayeth His coming, do not thou delay wisdom. His coming is hard to the hard of heart, soft to the pious. See therefore even now what thou art: if hard of heart, thou canst soften; if thou art soft, even now rejoice that He will come. For thou art a Christian. Yea, thou sayest. I believe that thou prayest, and sayest, Thy kingdom come. Thou desirest Him to come, Whose coming thou fearest. Reform thyself, that thou mayest not pray against thyself.

PSALM 99

A Sermon to the people.

1. Beloved brethren, it ought already to be known to you, as sons of the Church, and well instructed in the school of Christ through all the books of our ancient Fathers, who wrote the words of God and the great things of God, that their wish was to consult for our good, who were to live at this period, believers in Christ; Who, at a seasonable time came unto us, the first time, in humility; at the second, destined to come in exaltation. For at the first time He came to stand before the judge: He will afterwards come to sit as Judge, that the human race may stand before Him according to its deserts. Many heralds went before Him: as before a mighty Judge, and that Judge as yet to come in humility. Many heralds went before Him, Who was yet to be born of the Virgin Mary, Who was yet to be an Infant, yet to suck milk; many heralds went before Him Who was to be a Child, the Word of God by Whom all things were made, and announced these future times; but they spoke so as to cover their meaning under certain figures of other objects, and that the covering which concealed the truth in the books of the old prophets, might then be removed, when the Truth Itself should arise from the earth. For thus it is said in the Psalms: Truth shall flourish out of the earth: and righteousness hath looked down from heaven. Now, therefore, our whole design is, when we hear a Psalm, a Prophet, or the Law, all of which was written before our Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh, to see Christ there, to understand Christ there. Attend therefore, beloved, to this Psalm, with me, and let us herein seek Christ; certainly He will appear to those who seek Him, Who at first appeared to those who sought Him not; and He will not desert those who long for Him, Who redeemed those who neglected Him. Behold, the Psalm beginneth concerning Him: of Him it is said:

2. Ver. 1. The Lord is King, be the people angry. For our Lord Jesus Christ began to reign, began to be preached, after He arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, after He had filled His disciples with the confidence

of the Holy Spirit, that they should not fear death, which He had already killed in Himself. Our Lord Christ began then to be preached, that they who wished for salvation might believe in Him; and the peoples who worshipped idols were angry. They who worshipped what they had made were angry, because He by Whom they were made was declared. He announced, in fact, through His disciples, Himself, Who wished them to be converted unto Him by Whom they were made, and to be turned away from those things which they had made themselves. They were angry with their Lord in behalf of their idols, they who even if they were angry with their slave on their idol's account, were to be condemned. For their slave was better than their idol: for God made their slave, the carpenter made their idol. They were so angry in their idol's behalf, that they feared not to be angry with their Lord. But the words, be they angry, are a prediction, not a command; for in a prophecy it is that this is said, The Lord is King, be the people angry. Some good resulteth even from the enraged people: let them be angry, and in their anger let the Martyrs be crowned. What did they do to the preachers of the Word of Truth, those the clouds of God travelling around the world, and raining upon the field of God? What did the angry people unto them, except afflict their flesh with their hands, and cause their spirit to be crowned by the hands of Christ? Nor did even that flesh, which the persecutors had power to kill, so die as to perish for ever: for it will have its season when even itself may arise again: for our Lord hath already shewn the resurrection of the flesh in Himself. For this reason He was willing to receive it from us, that we might not despair of our own. Therefore, brethren, the flesh of those servants, which the worshippers of idols slew, will rise again in its own time: never more will carpenter fashion the idols that Christ broke. Ye heard when Jeremiah was being read before the reading of the Apostle, if ye listened; ye saw therein the times in which we now live. He said, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, let them perish from the earth, and from under the heaven. He said not, The gods that have not made the heavens and earth, let them perish from the heaven and from the earth; because they never were in heaven: but what did he say? The gods that have not made heaven and earth, let them perish from the earth, and from under the heaven. As if, while the word earth was repeated, the repetition of the word heaven were wanting, (because they never were in heaven:) he repeateth the earth twice, since it is under heaven.

Let them perish from the earth, and from under the heaven, from their temples. Consider if this be not now taking place; if in a great measure it hath not already happened: for what, or how much, hath remained? The idols remained rather in the hearts of the pagans, than in the niches of the temples.

3. Therefore, the Lord is King, be the people angry: He Who sitteth between the cherubims: thou dost understand, He is King: let the earth be stirred up. He repeateth, Be the people stirred up. For the word, Lord, is repeated in the expression, He Who sitteth between the cherubim: the words, is King, he maketh us understand in the next verse: and the words, be the people angry, are here repeated, in the following, Be the earth stirred up. For what are people, but the earth? Let the earth be as angry as it can with Him Who is now sitting in the heavens. For the Lord was both upon the earth, and took upon Himself earth in which to abide when on earth. He clothed Himself with flesh, and chose first to suffer the angry people. That His servants might not fear the anger of the people, He chose first to suffer it Himself: and as the anger of the people against His servants was necessary for them, that they might be cured, and healed from all their sins by means of tribulations; the Physician first drank the bitter cup, that the sick man might not fear to drink it. Therefore, The Lord is King, let the people be angry. Let the people be angry, because by their anger God hath wrought many blessings. They are impatient, and God’s servants are cleansed; they are crowned, who are tried. Be the people angry; He Who sitteth between the cherubims, He is King: be the earth stirred up. The Cherubim is the seat of God, as the Scripture sheweth us, a certain exalted heavenly throne, which we see not; but the Word of God knoweth it, knoweth it as His own seat: and the Word of God and the Spirit of God hath Itself revealed to the servants of God where God sitteth. Not that God doth sit, as doth man; but thou, if thou dost wish that God sit in thee, if thou wilt be good, shalt be the seat of God; for thus is it written, The soul of the righteous is the seat of wisdom. For a throne is in our language called a seat. For some, conversant with the Hebrew tongue, have interpreted cherubim in the Latin language (for it is a Hebrew term) by the words, fulness of knowledge. Therefore, because God surpasseth all knowledge, He is said to sit above the fulness of knowledge. Let there be therefore in

thee fulness of knowledge, and even thou shalt be the throne of God. But perhaps thou wast about to say, and when shall there be in me fulness of knowledge? And who can attain such a height, that there may be in him fulness of knowledge. Thinkest thou it is the will of God that there be in us that fulness of knowledge, that we may know either how many stars, or grains of wheat, (not to say of sand,) there are, or how many apples hang on a tree? He knoweth all things: for our hairs are numbered before God. But the fulness of knowledge which He willed man to know is different from this; the knowledge which He willed thee to have, pertaineth to the law of God. And who can, thou mayest perhaps say unto me, perfectly know the Law, so that he may have within himself the fulness of the knowledge of the Law, and be able to be the seat of God? Be not disturbed; it is briefly told thee what thou hast, if thou dost wish to have the fulness of knowledge, and to become the throne of God: for the Apostle saith, Love is the fulfilling of the Law. What followeth then? Thou hast lost the whole of thine excuse. Ask thine heart; see whether it hath love. If there be love there, there is the fulfilment of the Law there also; already God dwelleth in thee, thou hast become the throne of God. Be the people angry; what can the angry people do against him who hath become the throne of God? Thou givest heed unto them who rage against thee: Who is it That sitteth within thee, thou givest not heed. Thou art become a heaven, and fearest thou the earth? For the Scripture saith in another passage, that the Lord our God doth declare, The heaven is My throne. If therefore even thou by having the fulness of knowledge, and by having love, hast been made the throne of God, thou hast become a heaven. For this heaven which we look up to with these eyes of ours, is not very precious before God. Holy souls are the heaven of God; the minds of the Angels, and all the minds of His servants, are the heaven of God. Be the people, therefore, angry. Be the earth stirred up; what can they do, or what can it do, to the throne of God, and to the heaven whereon God is enthroned?

4. Ver. 2. The Lord is great in Sion, and high above all people. Lo, if the words, He Who sitteth above the Cherubims, were obscure to thee, thou wast ignorant what Cherubim is; and perhaps thou didst figure to thyself in mind some heavenly throne, vast, and jewelled, and didst call it Cherubim, fluttering among phantasms in thy carnal sense; and it was said to thee, that

fulness of knowledge, not of every knowledge, but of the knowledge of the Law, is profitable for man; and that thou shouldest not despair of this very knowledge of the Law, it is briefly told thee, Love is the fulfilling of the Law. Have, therefore, love unto God, and unto thy neighbour, and thou shalt be a throne of God; thou shalt belong to the Cherubim. But if thou dost not yet understand, hear what followeth: The Lord is great in Sion. He Whom I spoke to thee of as above the Cherubims, is great in Sion. Ask thou now, what is Sion? We know Sion to be the city of God. The city of Jerusalem is called Sion; and is so called according to a certain interpretation, for that Sion signifieth watching, that is, sight and contemplation; for to watch is to look forward to, or gaze upon, or strain the eyes to see. Now every soul is a Sion, if it trieth to see that light which is to be seen. For if it shall have gazed upon a light of its own, it is darkened; if upon His, it is enlightened. But, now that it is clear that Sion is the city of God; what is the city of God, but the Holy Church? For men who love one another, and who love their God Who dwelleth in them, constitute a city unto God. Because a city is held together by some law; their very law is Love; and that very Love is God: for openly it is written, God is Love. He therefore who is full of Love, is full of God; and many, full of love, constitute a city full of God. That city of God is called Sion; the Church therefore is Sion. In it God is great. Be thou in it, and God shall not be apart from thee. And when God shall be in thee, because thou hast become a citizen of Sion, a member of Sion, belonging to the society of the people of God; God will be high in thee, above all people, above those who are enraged, or above those who have been enraged. For do ye imagine that they were then enraged, and are not now enraged? They were then enraged; but because they were more numerous, they were enraged openly; now that they have dwindled into a few, they are enraged secretly. In the meantime, their boldness hath been broken; their rage also shall have an end.

5. For do ye imagine, brethren, that they whose instruments re-echoed yesterday, are not angry with our fastings? But let us not be angry with them, but let us fast for them. For the Lord our God Who sitteth in us hath said, He hath Himself commanded us to pray for our enemies, to pray for them that persecute us: and as the Church doth this, the persecutors are almost extinct. For she was heard when she did this, and she is still heard

when she doth it: they prevailed to their evil, they have been brought to an end to their good. But do ye wish to know how they were brought to an end? They were eaten up by the Church. Thou seekest them in themselves, and findest them not; seek for them in her who hath eaten them up, and they are discovered in her entrails. For by passing over to the Church, they have become Christians; persecutors have disappeared, preachers have increased. Therefore throughout their festal days, since we see those of them who have been left behind, still frenzied in their wicked and perverse pleasures, we pray God in their behalf, that they who hear the instrument of music with delight, may with greater delight listen to the voice of God. For it cannot be, that while that which soundeth without reason delighteth the ear, the word of God also should be unable to delight the heart. But we pray for them for this reason, when we fast on their holidays, that they may become a spectacle unto themselves. For when they shall have seen themselves, they will displease themselves; but they do not displease themselves, because they do not heed themselves. The drunken man doth not offend himself, but he offendeth the sober man. Shew me a man who is at last happy in God, liveth gravely, sigheth for that everlasting peace which God hath promised him; and see that when he hath seen a man dancing to an instrument, he is more grieved for his madness, than for a man who is in a frenzy from a fever. If then we know their evils, considering that we also have been freed from those very evils, let us grieve for them; and if we grieve for them, let us pray for them; and that we may be heard, let us fast for them. For we do not keep our own fasts in their holidays. Different are the fasts which we celebrate through the days of the approaching Passover, through different seasons which are fixed for us in Christ: but through their holidays we fast for this reason, that when they are rejoicing, we may groan for them. For by their joy they excite our grief, and cause us to remember how wretched they are as yet. But since we see many freed thence, where we also have been, we ought not to despair even of them. And if they are still enraged, let us pray; and if still a particle of earth that hath remained behind be stirred up against us, let us continue in lamentation for them, that to them also God may grant understanding, and that with us they may hear those words, in which we are at this moment rejoicing: The Lord is great in Sion: and high above all people.

6. Ver. 3, 4. Let them confess unto Thy Name, which is great. All these very people, over whom Thou art great in Sion, Let them confess unto Thy Name, which is great. Thy Name was little when they were enraged: it hath become great; let them now confess. In what sense do we say, that the Name of Christ was little, before it was spread abroad to so great an extent? Because His report is meant by His Name. His Name was small; already it hath become great. What nation is there that hath not heard of the Name of Christ? Therefore let now the people confess unto Thy Name, which is great, who before were enraged with Thy little Name: Let them confess unto Thy Name, which is great. Wherefore shall they confess? Because it is wonderful and holy. Thy very Name is wonderful and holy. He is so preached as crucified, so preached as humbled, so preached as judged, that He may come exalted, that He may come living, that He may come to judge in power. He spareth at present the people who blaspheme Him, because the longsuffering of God leadeth to repentance. For He Who now spareth, will not always spare: nor will He, Who is now being preached that He may be feared, fail to come to judge. He will come, my brethren, He will come: let us fear Him, and let us live so that we may be found on His right hand. For He will come, and will judge, so as to place some on the left hand, some on the right. And He doth not act in an uncertain manner, so as to err perchance betwixt men, so that he who should be set on the right hand, be set on the left; or that he who ought to stand on the left, by a mistake of God should stand on the right: He cannot err, so as to place the evil where He ought to set the good; nor to place the good, where He should have set the evil. If He cannot err, we err, if we fear not; but if we have feared in this life, we shall not then have what to fear for. For Thy Name is wonderful and holy. The King’s honour loveth judgment. Let the people therefore so fear Him as to reform themselves: let them not, as in great presumption on His mercy, set themselves at liberty, and live evilly; for while He loveth mercy, He loveth also judgment. What is mercy? His preaching to thee truth at present, His crying unto thee now to be converted. Is it little mercy that thou hast lived in evil deeds, and He did not carry thee off when thou wast in thy sins, that He might forgive thy sins when thou didst believe? is that a slight act of mercy? Dost thou imagine that such mercy will for ever last, so that He will punish no man? Think not so! His Name is wonderful and holy; and the King’s power loveth judgment. For judgment is unjust, and absolutely is not

judgment, unless each man's deserts are recompensed, according as each man hath done in his body, whether it be good or bad: And the King's honour loveth judgment. Let us therefore fear, let us therefore work righteousness, let us therefore do equity.

7. But who doth equity? Who executeth righteousness? The sinner, the ungodly, the perverse man, the man who is turned aside from the light of truth? What ought a man to do? To turn himself unto God only, that He may work that righteousness in Him, which he cannot form for himself, though he can deform it. A man is capable of wounding himself; is he capable of curing himself? He is sick, when he doth wish, he riseth not when it is his wish. If he will, let him live intemperately in cold or heat; he is sick on that day when he shall will to be sick: when by intemperate living his sickness hath commenced, let him rise when he will; let him who hath lain down when he willed, rise, if he can, when he willeth. His intemperance was needful for him to lie down sick: but to rise, he findeth his Creator's healing needful. Thus then, in order that a man may sin, he sufficeth to himself: to his being justified, he is not self-sufficient, unless he be justified by Him, who alone is Just. In order then that men may surrender themselves to be formed to righteousness, after this Psalm had alarmed the people, and had said, Let them confess unto Thy Name, which is great, wonderful, and holy. The King's power loveth judgment: as if the trembling people were seeking how they should live righteously, since they cannot have righteousness in themselves, it recommendeth to them one who will form their righteousness, and saith as followeth: Thou hast prepared equity; Thou hast wrought judgment and righteousness in Jacob. For we too ought to have judgment, we ought to have righteousness; but He worketh in us judgment and righteousness, Who created us in whom He might work them. How ought we too to have judgment and righteousness? Thou hast judgment, when thou dost distinguish evil from good: and righteousness when thou followest the good, and turnest aside from the evil. By distinguishing them, thou hast judgment; by doing, thou hast righteousness. Eschew evil, he saith, and do good; seek peace, and ensue it. Thou shouldest first have judgment, then righteousness. What judgment? That thou mayest first judge what is evil, and what is good. And what righteousness? That thou mayest

shun evil, and do good. But this thou wilt not gain from thyself; see what he hath said, Thou hast wrought judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

8. Ver. 5. O magnify the Lord our God. Magnify Him truly, magnify Him well. Let us praise Him, let us magnify Him Who hath wrought the very righteousness which we have; Who wrought it in us, Himself. For Who but He Who justified us, wrought righteousness in us? For of Christ it is said, Who justifieth the ungodly. We then are the ungodly, He the Justifier, since He Himself wrought in us that very righteousness by which we are to please Him, that He may place us on the right hand, and not on the left: that He may say unto those placed on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; and that He may not place us on the left, among those unto whom He will say, Depart into everlasting fire, that is prepared for the devil and his angels. He Who will crown in us not our own deserts, but His own gifts, how greatly ought He to be magnified! O magnify the Lord our God!

9. And fall down before His footstool: for He is holy. What are we to fall down before? His footstool. What is under the feet is called a footstool, in Greek, ὑποπόδιον, in Latin, Scabellum, or, Suppedaneum. But consider, brethren, what he commandeth us to fall down before. In another passage of the Scriptures it is said, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Doth he then bid us worship the earth, since in another passage it is said, that it is God’s footstool? How then shall we worship the earth, when the Scripture saith openly, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God? Yet here it saith, fall down before His footstool: and, explaining to us what His footstool is, it saith, The earth is My footstool. I am in doubt; I fear to worship the earth, lest He who made the heaven and the earth condemn me; again, I fear not to worship the footstool of my Lord, because the Psalm biddeth me, fall down before His footstool. I ask, what is His footstool? and the Scripture telleth me, the earth is My footstool. In hesitation I turn unto Christ, since I am herein seeking Himself: and I discover how the earth may be worshipped without impiety, how His footstool may be worshipped without impiety. For He took upon Him earth from earth; because flesh is from earth, and He received flesh from the flesh of Mary. And because He walked here in very flesh, and gave that very flesh to us to eat for our

salvation; and no one eateth that flesh, unless he hath first worshipped: we have found out in what sense such a footstool of our Lord's may be worshipped, and not only that we sin not in worshipping it, but that we sin in not worshipping. But doth the flesh give life? Our Lord Himself, when He was speaking in praise of this same earth, said, It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. Therefore when thou bowest thyself down prostrate before the 'earth,' look not as if unto earth, but unto that Holy One Whose footstool it is that thou dost worship; for thou dost worship it on His account: wherefore he hath added here also, fall down before His footstool, for He is holy. Who is holy? He in whose honour thou dost worship His footstool. And when thou worshippest Him, see that thou do not in thy thought remain in the flesh, and be not quickened by the Spirit; for, He saith, it is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing. But when our Lord praised it, He was speaking of His own flesh, and He had said, Except a man eat My flesh, he shall have no life in him. Some disciples of His, about seventy, were offended, and said, This is an hard saying, who can hear it? And they went back, and walked no more with Him. It seemed unto them hard that He said, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you: they received it foolishly, they thought of it carnally, and imagined that the Lord would cut off parts from His body, and give unto them; and they said, This is a hard saying. It was they who were hard, not the saying; for unless they had been hard, and not meek, they would have said unto themselves, He saith not this without reason, but there must be some latent mystery herein. They would have remained with Him, softened, not hard: and would have learnt that from Him which they who remained, when the others departed, learnt. For when twelve disciples had remained with Him, on their departure, these remaining followers suggested to Him, as if in grief for the death of the former, that they were offended by His words, and turned back. But He instructed them, and saith unto them, It is the Spirit that quickeneth, but the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. Understand spiritually what I have said; ye are not to eat this body which ye see; nor to drink that blood which they who will crucify Me shall pour forth. I have commended unto you a certain mystery; spiritually understood, it will quicken. Although it is needful that this be visibly celebrated, yet it must be spiritually understood. O magnify the Lord our God, and fall down before His footstool, for He is holy.

10. Ver. 6–8. Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among such as call upon His Name: these called upon the Lord, and He heard them. He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar. Those men of old, Moses and Aaron and Samuel, servants of God, were great among the men of old. Ye know that Moses led forth, in the strength of God, the people of Israel from Egypt, through the Red Sea, and guided them in the wilderness; and all those who cheerfully listen to those Scriptures in the Church, or read them at home, or have learnt them in any way, know how great miracles God wrought at that season by the hand of Moses; Aaron was his brother, whom he ordained priest also. And there indeed there seemeth to be no priest besides Aaron. For in those Scriptures Aaron is openly styled the priest of God: of Moses it is not there stated that he was a priest. But if he was not this, what was he? Could he be any thing greater than a priest? This Psalm declareth that he also was himself a priest: Moses and Aaron among His priests. They therefore were the Lord's priests. Samuel is read of later in the Book of Kings: this Samuel is in David's times; for he anointed the holy David. Samuel from his infancy grew up in the temple. His mother was barren: anxious to have a son, she prayed with deep groaning unto the Lord, and entreating that God might give her a son, she shewed that she did not wish to have one carnally, and that son she gave unto Him, who willed that he should be. For she vowed him to the Lord God, saying, "If there be born unto me a man child, then shall he serve in Thy Temple all the days of his life:" and thus she did. Holy Samuel after his birth, during his suckling, remained with his mother; presently, when she had weaned him, she gave him up to the Temple, that there he might grow, there be strengthened in spirit, there serve God: he became a great priest, a holy priest at that season. He mentioneth these: and by these desireth us to understand all the saints. Yet why hath he here named those? Because we said that we ought here to understand Christ. Attend, holy brethren. He said above, O magnify the Lord our God: and fall down before His footstool, for He is holy: praising some one, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ; Whose footstool is to be worshipped, because He assumed flesh, in which He was to appear before the human race; and wishing to shew unto us that the ancient Fathers also

had preached of Him, because our Lord Jesus Christ is Himself the True Priest, he mentioned these, because God spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar. What meaneth, out of the cloudy pillar? He was speaking figuratively. For if He spoke in some cloud, those obscure words predicted some one unknown, yet to be manifest. This unknown one is no longer unknown; for He is known by us, our Lord Jesus Christ. Moses and Aaron among His priests: and Samuel among such as call upon His Name: these called upon the Lord, and He heard them. He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar. He Who first spoke out of the cloudy pillar, hath in Person spoken unto us in His footstool; that is, on earth, when He had assumed the flesh, for which reason we worship His footstool, for He is holy. He Himself used to speak out of the cloud, which was not then understood: He hath spoken in His own footstool, and the words of His cloud have been understood. He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar.

11. Let us attend, therefore, brethren: see whom and of what sort he hath termed holy. They kept His testimonies, and the law that He gave them. They kept it certainly, attend ye. They kept His testimonies, and the law that He gave them. This he saith, and it cannot be denied. Had they nothing of sin? How so? Since they kept His testimonies, and the law that He gave them. See of what sort He would have us to be formed, that we may not presume in our righteousness as perfect. Behold, Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among those that call upon His Name, unto whom He spake out of the cloudy pillar, so openly did He hear them who kept His testimonies, and the law that He gave them. Thou heardest them, he saith, O Lord our God: Thou wast forgiving to them, O God. God is not said to be forgiving toward any thing but sins: when He pardoneth sins, then He forgiveth. And what had He in them to punish, so that He was forgiving in pardoning them? He was forgiving in pardoning their sins, He was also forgiving in punishing them. For what followeth? Thou wast forgiving toward them, O God, and punishedst all their own affections. Even in punishing them Thou wast forgiving toward them: for not in remitting, but also in punishing their sins, hast Thou been forgiving. Consider, my brethren, what he hath taught us here: attend. God is angry with him, whom, when he sinneth, He scourgeth not: for unto him to whom He is truly

forgiving, He not only remitteth sins, that they may not injure him in a future life; but also chasteneth him, that he delight not in continual sin.

12. Come, my brethren; if we ask how these were punished, the Lord will aid me to tell you. Let us consider these three persons, Moses, Aaron, and Samuel: and how they were punished, since he said, Thou hast punished all their own affections: meaning those affections of theirs, which the Lord knew in their hearts, which men knew not. For they were living in the midst of the people of God, without complaint from man. But what do we say? That perhaps the early life of Moses was sinful; for he fled from Egypt, after slaying a man. The early life of Aaron also was such as would displease God; for he allowed a maddened and infatuated people to make an idol to worship; and an idol was made for God’s people to worship. What sin did Samuel, who was given up when an infant to the temple? He passed all his life amid the holy sacraments of God: from childhood the servant of God. Nothing was ever said of Samuel, nothing by men. Perhaps God knew of somewhat there to chasten; since even what seemeth perfect unto men, unto that Perfection is still imperfect. Artists shew many of their works to the unskilful; and when the unskilful have pronounced them perfect, the artists polish them still further, as they know what is still wanting to them, so that men wonder at things they had imagined already perfect having received so much additional polish. This happeneth in buildings, and in paintings, and in embroidery, and almost in every species of art. At first they judge it to be already in a manner perfect, so that their eyes desire nothing further: but the judgment of the in-experienced eye is one, and that of the rule of art another. Thus also these Saints were living before the eyes of God, as if faultless, as if perfect, as if Angels: but He Who punished all their own affections, knew what was wanting in them. But He punished them not in anger, but in mercy: He punished them that He might perfect what He had begun, not to condemn what He had cast away. God therefore punished all their affections. How did He punish Samuel? where is this punishment? This I say, that Christians, who have already known Christ, to whom He came in His footstool, whom He loved so, for whom He shed His blood, may know how those are beaten, who have made such progress. We seek punishment in Moses; he hath almost none: except that at the last God saith unto him, Get thee up into this mountain, and die. He said to the aged

man, Die: he had already passed through the seasons of life: was he never to die? what sort of punishment was that? Did He shew His punishment in the words, Thou shalt not go up into the land of promise, where the people were about to go? Moses represented certain persons in a type. For was it a great punishment for one who entered into the kingdom of heaven, not to reach that land which was promised for a season, that it might display the shadow, and then pass away? Did not many faithless men enter that land? did they not when living in that land do many evil deeds, and offend God? Did they not follow idolatry in that very land? Was it a great thing not to have given that land to Moses? But He intended Moses to typify those who were under the Law, since the Law was given through Moses: and He sheweth that those who chose to be under the Law, and chose not to be under grace, could not enter into the land of promise. Therefore, what was said unto Moses was a type, not a punishment. What punishment is death to an old man? What punishment was it, not to enter into that land, into which unworthy men entered? But what is said of Aaron? He also died an old man: his sons succeeded him in the priesthood: his son afterwards ruled in the priesthood: how did He punish Aaron also? Samuel also died a holy old man, leaving his sons as his successors. I seek for the punishment inflicted upon them, and according to men I find it not: but according to what I know the servants of God suffer every day, they were day by day punished. Read ye, and see the punishments, and ye also who are advanced bear the punishments. Every day they suffered from the obstinate people, every day they suffered from the ungodly livers; and were compelled to live among those whose lives they daily censured. This was their punishment. He unto whom it is small hath not advanced far; for the ungodliness of others tormenteth thee in proportion as thou hast departed far from thine own. For when thou art become wheat, that is, good blade from good seed, a son of the kingdom, when thou hast begun to yield fruit, then tares will appear unto thee: for when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. When the tares have begun to appear, thou wilt see thyself among the wicked. Thou mayest wish to separate thyself from the wicked, and to separate all the wicked from the Church; our Lord's injunction will answer thee, Let both grow together unto the harvest, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. According to our Lord's words, it will be needful to spare the tares;

according to the condition of a servant, it will be needful to live among the tares: thou canst not separate them, thou must endure them. See what wounds thou sufferest in heart, when with thy body whole thou livest among the wicked. Whoever of you shall advance far will prove this, whoever of you have already advanced far have proved it. These things therefore must be endured; and perhaps this pertaineth unto it: That servant which knoweth His Lord’s will, and doth not worthily, shall be beaten with many stripes. In many cases the more the will of God becometh known to us, the more doth our guilt become known to us; and the more He becometh known unto us, the more do we weep and groan. For we see how just what God demandeth of us is: and in what an imperfect state we lie; and what is said, happeneth in us; He that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow. Lo, let love abound in thee, thou wilt grieve more for the sinner. The more love there be in thee, the more will he whom thou bearest with torment thee: he will not torment thee with anger against him, but with grief for him.

13. Consider what the Apostle Paul suffered: consider who he was, and what he suffered: Besides those things, he saith, which are without, (for he had spoken of many things which he suffered, and he now beginneth to speak of things within, besides those things which were without, which he suffered from the evil persecutors of Christ,) that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches. Consider how like a father’s, how like a mother’s care, was his; see how he was beaten, that all his affections might be punished; we will mention those affections of his, which God punished. Who is weak, he saith, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? The greater his love, the greater were his wounds from the sins of others. He indeed had received a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet him. Behold in what way God was forgiving unto him, punishing all his affections. What are the affections, in which God thus punished him? He hath declared them himself: Lest, saith he, I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me. He was so far perfect, that even yet there was ground for fear, lest he should be exalted above measure: for God would not apply a cure where was no wound. And he prayed that it might be taken away; in his sickness he prayed that the cure might be removed: For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, he saith,

that it might depart from me. That is, the thorn of the flesh by which he was buffeted, perhaps some bodily pain: I besought the Lord thrice, he saith: and He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. I know whom I heal: let not him that is sick give Me counsel. Like a biting plaister, it stingeth thee, but it healeth thee. He asketh the physician to take away the plaister, and he taketh it not away, unless when that upon which he hath laid it shall be healed. Strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, brethren, let not any of us who are advanced in Christ imagine that we shall be without the scourge; since, advance as far as we may, He knoweth our sins; oftentimes too He sheweth them unto us, and even we see our sins. And when we have begun to live among such men, so that men no longer see in us matter for blame; yet He Who knoweth all things blameth us still, and punisheth all our affections, because He is forgiving unto us. For were He not to punish us, but to forsake us, we are lost. Thou wast forgiving to them, O God, and punishedst all their own affections.

14. Ver. 9. O magnify the Lord our God! Again we magnify Him. He Who is merciful even when He striketh, how is He to be praised, how is He to be magnified? Canst thou shew this unto thy son, and cannot God? For thou art not good when thou dost caress thy son, and evil when thou strikest him. Both when thou dost caress him thou art a father, and when thou strikest him, thou art his father: thou dost caress him, that he may not faint; thou strikest him, that he may not perish. O magnify the Lord our God, and worship Him upon His holy hill: for the Lord our God is holy. As he said above, O magnify the Lord our God, and fall down before His footstool: now we have understood what it is to worship His footstool: thus also but now after he had magnified the Lord our God, that no man might magnify Him apart from His hill, he hath also praised His hill. What is His hill? We read elsewhere concerning this hill, that a stone was cut from the hill without hands, and shattered all the kingdoms of the earth, and the stone itself increased. This is the vision of Daniel which I am relating. This stone which was cut from the hill without hands increased, and became, he saith, a great mountain, and filled the whole face of the earth. Let us worship on that great mountain, if we desire to be heard. Heretics do not worship on that mountain, because it hath filled the whole earth; they have stuck fast on

part of it, and have lost the whole. If they acknowledge the Catholic Church, they will worship on this hill with us. For we already see how that stone that was cut from the mountain without hands hath increased, and how great tracts of earth it hath prevailed over, and unto what nations it hath extended. What is the mountain whence the stone was hewn without hands? The Jewish kingdom, in the first place; since they worshipped one God. Thence was hewn the stone, our Lord Jesus Christ. He Himself is styled, the stone which the builders rejected; the same hath become the head of the corner. This stone hewn without hands from the hill, broke all the kingdoms of the earth: we see all the kingdoms of the world shattered by that stone. What were the kingdoms of the earth? The kingdoms of idols, and kingdoms of devils, were broken. Saturn reigned among many men; where is his kingdom? Mercury reigned over many men; where is his kingdom? It is broken: those over whom he reigned, have been reduced into the kingdom of Christ. How great was the kingdom of Cœlestis at Carthage! where is now her kingdom? That stone, that was hewn without hands from the hill, hath broken all the kingdoms of the earth. What meaneth, hewn from the hill without hands? Born of the Jewish nation without work of man. For all who are born, are born of the work of marriage: He Who was born of a virgin, was born without hands; for by hands is signified the work of man: where human hands never reached, where there was no conjugal embrace, yet there was conception. That stone then was born of the mountain without hands: it increased, and by its increase broke all the kingdoms of the earth. It hath become a great mountain, and hath filled the whole face of the earth. This is the Catholic Church, in whose communion rejoice that ye are. But they who are not in her communion, since they worship and praise God apart from this same mountain, are not heard unto eternal life; although they may be heard unto certain temporal things. Let them not flatter themselves, because God heareth them in some things: for He heareth Pagans also in some things. Do not the Pagans cry unto God, and it raineth? Wherefore? Because He maketh His sun to rise over the good and the bad, and sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust. Boast not therefore, Pagan, that when thou criest unto God, God sendeth rain, for He sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust. He hath heard thee in temporal things: He heareth thee not in things eternal, unless thou hast worshipped in His holy hill. Worship Him upon His holy hill: for the Lord our God is holy.

15. Let this suffice you, beloved, concerning the Psalm; as far as the Lord hath granted, we have spoken. And whatever we speak in the name of God, since it is God Who speaketh in us, is the shower of God: consider what sort of earth ye are. For when rain cometh upon the earth, if it be good soil, it produceth good fruit; if it be bad soil, it beareth thorns: yet the rain is sweet, both over the fruits, and over the thorns. He who when he hath heard these words hath become worse, and produced thorns from the rain, let him expect the fire, let him not accuse the rain: but he who hath become better, and hath produced fruits from a good soil, let him expect the barn, and praise the rain. But what are the clouds, or what is the rain, but the mercy of God, Who doth all things concerning those whom He loveth, and unto whom He hath granted that He may be loved by them.

PSALM 100

A Sermon to the People, in which he speaketh remarkably concerning enduring evil men in the Church, or in a Monastery.

1. Ye heard the Psalm, brethren, while it was being chaunted: it is short, and not obscure: as if I had given you an assurance, that ye should not fear fatigue. Let us however consider more attentively, and with as much care as freedom, what the literal expressions mean; that, so far as the Lord deign to allow, they may be spiritually understood. The voice of God, from whatever instrument it sound, is yet the voice of God; for nothing, save His voice, pleaseth His ears; for we also, when we speak, please Him when He is Himself speaking from us.

2. The title of this Psalm is, a Psalm of confession. The verses are few, but big with great subjects; may the seed bring forth within your hearts, the barn be prepared for the Lord's harvest. This Psalm giveth this exhortation to us, that we jubilate unto the Lord. Nor doth it, as it were, exhort one particular corner of the earth, or one habitation or congregation of men; but since it is aware that it hath sown blessings on every side, on every side it doth exact jubilance.

3. Ver. 1. Jubilate, therefore, unto the Lord, all ye lands. Doth all the earth at this moment hear my voice? And yet the whole earth hath heard this voice. All the earth is already jubilant in the Lord; and what is not as yet jubilant, will be so. For blessing, extending on every side, when the Church was commencing to spread from Jerusalem throughout all nations, every where overturneth ungodliness, and every where buildeth up piety: the good are mingled with the wicked throughout all lands. Every land is full of the discontented murmurs of the wicked, and of the jubilance of the good. What then is it, to jubilate? For the title of the present Psalm especially maketh us give good heed to this word, for it is entitled, A Psalm of confession. What meaneth, to jubilate with confession? It is the sentiment thus expressed in another Psalm: Blessed is the people that understandeth jubilance. Surely

that which being understood maketh blessed is something great. May therefore the Lord our God, Who maketh men blessed, grant me to understand what to say, and grant you to understand what ye hear: Blessed is the people, that understandeth jubilance. Let us therefore run unto this blessing, let us understand jubilance, let us not pour it forth without understanding. Of what use is it to be jubilant and obey this Psalm, when it saith, Jubilate unto the Lord, all ye lands, and not to understand what jubilance is, so that our voice only may be jubilant, our heart not so? For the understanding is the utterance of the heart.

4. I am about to say what ye know. One who jubilates, uttereth not words, but it is a certain sound of joy without words: for it is the expression of a mind poured forth in joy, expressing, as far as it is able, the affection, but not compassing the feeling. A man rejoicing in his own exultation, after certain words which cannot be uttered or understood, bursteth forth into sounds of exultation without words, so that it seemeth that he indeed doth rejoice with his voice itself, but as if filled with excessive joy cannot express in words the subject of that joy. You observe this in those even who sing licentiously. For our jubilance will not be such as theirs is; for we ought to be jubilant in justification, while they are jubilant in iniquity; we therefore shall do it in confession, they in confusion. Yet that ye may understand what I say, call to mind what ye well know; those who are engaged at work in the fields are most given to jubilate; reapers, or vintagers, or those who gather any of the fruits of the earth, delighted with the abundant produce, and rejoicing in the very richness and exuberance of the soil, sing in exultation; and among the songs which they utter in words, they put in certain cries without words in the exultation of a rejoicing mind; and this is what is meant by jubilating. If perhaps any one fail to recognise this, because he hath not heeded it, let him heed it in future. And I hope he may not find any to remark it in, lest God find some whom He will overthrow. But nevertheless, since thorns cease not to grow, let us observe in those, who wrongly rejoice, a jubilating to be censured, and let us offer unto God a jubilance that may be crowned.

5. When then are we jubilant? When we praise that which cannot be uttered. For we observe the whole creation, the earth and the sea, and all things that

therein are: we observe that each have their sources and causes, the power of production, the order of birth, the limit of duration, the end in decease, that successive ages run on without any confusion, that the stars roll, as it seemeth, from the East to the West, and complete the courses of the years: we see how the months are measured, how the hours extend; and in all these things a certain invisible element, I know not what, but some principle of unity, which is termed spirit or soul, present in all living things, urging them to the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain, and the preservation of their own safety; that man also hath somewhat in common with the Angels of God; not with cattle, such as life, hearing, sight, and so forth; but somewhat which can understand God, which peculiarly doth belong to the mind, which can distinguish justice and injustice, as the eye discerneth white from black. In all this consideration of creation, which I have run over as I could, let the soul ask itself: Who created all these things? Who made them? Who made among them thyself? What are these things which thou art considering? What art thou thyself who art considering them? Who is He Who made them to be considered, and thee to consider? Who is He? Say Who He is? That thou mayest say Who He is, think of Him. For thou canst imagine somewhat that thou canst not perhaps express; but by no means canst thou express what thou canst not imagine. Imagine Him, then, before thou speakest of Him; that thou mayest imagine Him, approach Him. For whatever thou dost wish to see clearly, in order that thou mayest be able to speak of it, thou dost approach in order to gaze upon it, that thou mayest not be deceived by seeing it afar off. But as those bodies are seen by the eyes, so is He by the mind, by the heart He is recognised and seen. And where is the heart by which He may be seen? Blessed, He saith, are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. I hear, I believe, as far as I can I understand, that God is seen by the heart, and that He can only be seen by the pure heart; but I hear another passage of Scripture: Who shall boast that he hath his heart clean, or who shall boast that he is pure from sin? I have observed the whole creation, as far as I could? I have observed the bodily creation in heaven and on earth, and the spiritual in myself who am speaking, who animate my limbs, who exert voice, who move the tongue, who pronounce words, and distinguish sensations. And when can I comprehend myself in myself? How then can I comprehend what is above myself? Yet the sight of God is promised to the human heart, and a certain operation of purifying the heart is enjoined; this is the counsel of Scripture. Provide the means of seeing what thou lovest, before thou try to see it. For unto whom is it not sweet to hear of God and His Name, except to the ungodly, who is far removed, separated from Him? For lo, saith he, they that make themselves far from Thee shall perish: Thou hast destroyed every one that committeth fornication against Thee. But what is said unto us? Because they are afar off, and therefore in darkness, with eyes so wounded in the darkness, that they not only do not long for, but even dread, the light; what is said unto us, when found afar off? Come unto Him, and be lightened? But that thou mayest approach and be lightened, thy darkness must offend thee; condemn what thou art, that thou mayest deserve to be what thou art not. Thou art ungodly, thou oughtest to be righteous: thou wilt never understand righteousness, if iniquity still please thee. Crush it in thy heart, and purify that; drive it from thy heart, wherein He Whom thou wishest to see wills to dwell. The human soul, then, cometh near as it may, the inner man is regenerated to the image of God, since he was created in the image of God; he had become far from God in proportion as he had become unlike God. For we do not approach or recede from God by intervals of space; when thou hast become unlike, thou hast receded far: when thou hast become like, thou hast approached very close. See in what manner the Lord wisheth us to approach, first by making us like, that we may approach. Be ye, He saith, like your Father Which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Learn to love thine enemy, if thou dost wish to guard against thine enemy. But in proportion as charity increaseth in thee, creating and restoring thee unto the likeness of God, it extendeth unto thine enemies; that thou mayest be like Him, Who maketh His sun to rise, not only upon the good, but upon the good and upon the evil; and sendeth rain not only on the just, but on the just and on the unjust. The nearer thou approachest unto His likeness, the more thou dost advance in charity, and the more thou beginnest to perceive God. And whom dost thou perceive? One who cometh unto thee, or unto whom thou returnest? For He never departed from thee: God departeth from thee when thou departest from God. All things are present to the blind as to the seeing: a blind man and one who hath sight, standing on one spot, are each surrounded by the same forms of things; but one is present to them, the other absent; of two men who are standing in one place, the one is present, the other absent: not because the things themselves approach the one and recede from the other, but on account of the difference of their own eyes. He who is called blind, because that is extinguished there which is wont to adapt itself to the light which clothes all things, is in vain present to things which he doth not see; indeed he is more rightly styled absent than present; for where his perception is not, he is rightly called absent; for not to be present in sense, is to be absent. Thus also God is every where present, every where whole. His wisdom reacheth from one land to another mightily, and sweetly doth it order all things. But what God the Father is, this His Word and His Wisdom is, Light of Light, God of God. What, then, dost thou wish to see? What thou dost wish to see is not far from thee. The Apostle indeed saith that He is not far from each of us: For in Him we live, and move, and have our being. How great a misery is it then, to be far from Him Who is every where?

6. Be therefore like Him in piety, and earnest in meditation: for the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; look upon the things that are made, admire them, seek their author. If thou art unlike, thou wilt turn back; if like, thou wilt rejoice. And when, being like Him, thou shalt have begun to approach Him, and to feel God, the more love increaseth in thee, since God is love, thou wilt perceive somewhat which thou wast trying to say, and yet couldest not say. Before thou didst feel God, thou didst think that thou couldest express God; thou beginnest to feel Him, and then feelest that what thou dost feel thou canst not express. But when thou hast herein found that what thou dost feel cannot be expressed, wilt thou be mute, wilt thou not praise God? Wilt thou then be silent in the praises of God, and wilt thou not offer up thanksgivings unto Him Who hath willed to make Himself known unto thee? Thou didst praise Him when thou wast seeking, wilt thou be silent when thou hast found Him? By no means; thou wilt not be ungrateful. Honour is due to Him, reverence is due to Him, great praise is due to Him. Consider thyself, see what thou art: earth and ashes; look who it is hath deserved to see, and What; consider who thou art, What to see, a man to see God! I recognise not the man’s deserving, but the mercy of God. Praise therefore Him Who hath mercy. How, sayest thou, shall I praise Him? I cannot now unfold that little which I can discern in part through a glass, darkly: Hear therefore the

Psalm, Jubilate unto the Lord, all the earth. Thou hast understood the jubilance of the whole earth, if thou dost jubilate unto the Lord. Jubilate unto the Lord; dissipate not thy jubilating among several different objects. Lastly, all other things may be described in some way; He alone, Who spoke, and all things were made, cannot be spoken of. For He spake, and we were made: but we cannot speak of Him. His Word, by Whom we were uttered, is His Son: He was made weak, that He might be spoken by us, however weak. Word for word we cannot utter: but for the Word we can utter jubilation. Jubilate unto the Lord, all ye lands.

7. Serve the Lord with gladness. All servitude is full of bitterness: all who are bound to a lot of servitude both are slaves, and discontented. Fear not the servitude of that Lord: there will be no groaning there, no discontent, no indignation; no one seeketh to be sold to another master, since it is a sweet service, because we are all redeemed. Great happiness, brethren, it is, to be a slave in that great house, although in bonds. Fear not, bound slave, confess unto the Lord: ascribe thy bonds to thine own deservings; confess in thy chains, if thou art desirous they be changed into ornaments. It was not said in vain, nor without being heard above, "O let the sorrowful sighing of the fettered ones come before Thee." Serve the Lord with gladness. The service of the Lord is free: a service of freedom, where not compulsion, but love serveth. For, brethren, he saith, ye have been called unto liberty: only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love in the Spirit serve one another. Let love make thee a slave, since Truth maketh thee free. If, said our Lord, ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. At the same time thou art slave, and free; slave, because thou art created such; free, because thou art loved by God, by Whom thou wast created: yea, free indeed, because thou lovest Him by Whom thou wast made. Serve not with discontent; for thy murmurs do not tend to release thee from serving, but to make thee a wicked servant. Thou art a slave of the Lord, thou art a freedman of the Lord: seek not so to be emancipated as to depart from the house of Him Who frees thee.

8. Serve the Lord with gladness. That gladness will be full and perfect, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall

have put on immortality: then will gladness be complete, then will be that perfect jubilance, then praise without ceasing, then love without offence, then enjoyment without fear, then life without death. What is there here? is there no joy? If no joy, there is no jubilance: how then, Jubilate in the Lord, all ye lands? Even here there is clearly joy: we have a taste here of the hope of a future life, with which we are to be satisfied there. But it is needful that the corn bear much amid the tares: the true wheat is amongst the chaff, the lily is among thorns. For what is said of the Church? As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. It is not said, among strangers, but, among the daughters. O Lord, how dost Thou console, how dost Thou comfort, how dost Thou terrify? What is it that thou sayest? As the lily among what thorns? so is my beloved among what daughters? What dost thou call thorns? the daughters themselves? He answereth; They are thorns, on account of their own conduct; daughters, on account of My sacraments. Would that our groans were among the groans of strangers: those groans would be less. This is a cause for deeper groans: For it is not an open enemy that hath done me this dishonour: for then I could have borne it. Neither was it mine adversary, that did magnify himself against me: for then peradventure I would have hid myself from him. These are the words of a Psalm: he who knoweth our letters, followeth them: let him who knoweth them not, learn, that he may follow them. Neither was it mine adversary, that did magnify himself against me: for then peradventure I would have hid myself from him. But it was even thou, my companion, my guide, my own familiar friend. We took sweet food together. What sweet food do they take with us, who are not to be with us for ever? what sweet food, but this, Taste, and see how sweet the Lord is? Amongst these we must needs groan.

9. But where can the Christian live apart, that he may not groan among false brethren? Whither is he to go? What is he to do? Is he to seek solitudes? Stumbling-blocks follow him. Is he who is well advanced, to separate himself, that he may have to suffer no man? What if no one should choose to endure this very man, before he lived well? If therefore, because he liveth well, he will not endure any man, by the very fact of his refusal he is convicted of not living well. Attend, beloved: Forbearing one another, saith the Apostle, in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. “Forbearing one another;” hast thou nothing for another to forbear

in thee? I am surprised if it be not so; but suppose it be not thus; for that reason thou art the stronger to forbear others, in proportion as thou hast no longer what others must forbear in thee. Thou art not forborne, forbear others. I cannot, thou sayest. Thou hast what others must forbear in thee. Forbearing one another in love. Thou forsakest human affairs, and separatest thyself, so that no one seeth thee; whom wilt thou profit? Wouldest thou have advanced so far, had no one profited thee? Because thou seemest to have had quick feet in passing over, wilt thou cut off the bridge? I exhort all men, the voice of God exhorteth all men: Forbearing one another in love.

10. I will live apart, saith some one; with a few good men; with them I shall be doing well. For to do good to no man is wicked and cruel. My Lord taught me not this; for He condemned not the slave who pilfered what he received, but the slave who put it not out at trade. Let the punishment of the pilferer be inferred from that of the slothful servant. Thou wicked and slothful servant, saith the Lord in condemnation: he saith not, Thou hast pilfered my money: he saith not, I gave thee money: and thou hast not restored to me whole what I gave thee; because it hath not increased, because thou hast not put it out at interest, for that reason, he saith, will I punish thee. God is covetous our salvation. I will, therefore, saith he, live separate with a few good men: why should I live in common with crowds? Well: those very few good men, from what crowds have they been strained out? If however these few are all good: it is, nevertheless, a good and praiseworthy design in man, to be with such as have chosen a quiet life; distant from the bustle of the people, from noisy crowds, from the great waves of life, they are as if in harbour. Is there therefore here that joy? that jubilant gladness which is promised? Not as yet; but still groans, still the anxiety of temptations. For even the harbour hath an entrance somewhere or other; if it had not, no ship could enter it; it must therefore be open on some side: but at times on this open side the wind rusheth in; and where there are no rocks, ships dashed together shatter one another. Where then is security, if not even in harbour? And yet it must be confessed, it is true, that persons in harbour are in their degree much better off than when afloat on the main. Let them love one another, as ships in harbour, let them be bound together happily; let them not dash against one another: let absolute equality be

preserved there, constancy in love; and when perchance the wind rusheth in from the open side, let there be careful pilotting there.

11. Now what will one who perchance presideth over such places, nay, who serveth his brethren, in what are called monasteries, tell me? I will be cautious: I will admit no wicked man. How wilt thou admit no evil one? I will not allow any wicked man, any wicked brother, to enter; with a few good men my lot will be a happy one. How dost thou recognise the person whom perhaps it is thy wish to exclude? That he may be known to be wicked, he must be tested within; how then dost thou shut out one about to enter, who must be proved afterwards, and cannot be proved, unless he hath entered? Wilt thou repel all the wicked? Thou sayest so, and thou knowest how to inspect them. Do all come unto thee with their hearts bare? Those who are about to enter, do not know themselves; how much less dost thou know them? For many have promised themselves that they were about to fulfil that holy life, which has all things in common, where no man calleth any thing his own, who have one soul and one heart in God: they have been put into the furnace, and have cracked. How then knowest thou him who is unknown even to himself? Wilt thou shut out wicked brethren from the company of the good? Whoever thou art who speakest thus, exclude, if thou canst, all evil thoughts from thy heart: let not even an evil suggestion enter into thy heart. “I consent not,” thou sayest, yet it entered, so as to suggest to thee. For we all wish to have our hearts fortified, that no evil suggestion may enter. But who knoweth, whence it entereth? Even every day we fight in our own heart; one man within his own heart is at strife with a crowd. Avarice suggests, lust suggests, gluttony suggests, that rejoicing of the people suggests, all things suggest: he restraineth himself from all, answereth to all, turneth away from all; it is hard for him not to be wounded by some one. Where then is security? Here no where; in this life no where, except solely in the hope of the promise of God. But there, when we shall reach thereunto, is complete security, when the gates are shut, and the bars of the gates of Jerusalem made fast; there is truly full jubilance, and great delight. Only do not thou feel secure in praising any sort of life: judge no man blessed before his death.

12. By this means men are deceived, so that they either do not undertake, or rashly attempt, a better life; because, when they choose to praise, they praise without mention of the evil that is mixed with the good: and those who choose to blame, do so with so envious and perverse a mind, as to shut their eyes to the good, and exaggerate only the evils which either actually exist there, or are imagined. Thus it happeneth, that when any profession hath been ill, that is, incautiously, praised, if it hath invited men by its own reputation, they who betake themselves thither discover some such as they did not believe to be there; and offended by the wicked recoil from the good. Brethren, apply this teaching to your life, and hear in such a manner that ye may live. The Church of God, to speak generally, is magnified: Christians, and Christians alone, are called great, the Catholic (Church) is magnified; all love each other; each and all do all they can for one another; they give themselves up to prayers, fastings, hymns; throughout the whole world, with peaceful unanimity God is praised. Some one perhaps heareth this, who is ignorant that nothing is said of the wicked who are mingled with them; he cometh, invited by these praises, findeth bad men mixed with them, who were not mentioned to him before he came; he is offended by false Christians, he flieth from true Christians. Again, men who hate and slander them, precipitately blame them: asking, what sort of men are Christians? Who are Christians? Covetous men, usurers. Are not the very persons who fill the Churches on holidays the same who during the games and other spectacles fill the theatres and amphitheatres? They are drunken, gluttonous, envious, slanderers of each other. There are such, but not such only. And this slanderer in his blindness saith nothing of the good: and that praiser in his want of caution is silent about the bad. But if the Church of God is praised at this time, as the Scriptures praise her, as I have now said, As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters: a man heareth, considereth, the lily pleaseth him, he entereth, clingeth to the lily, beareth with the thorns; the lily will deserve the praise and kisses of her spouse, who saith, As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. Thus also in the case of the clergy. The eulogists of the clergy point to the good ministers, faithful stewards, who bear with all things, sacrificing their own bowels for those whom they wish to profit, not seeking what is their own, but what is Jesus Christ’s. They praise these things, but forget that they are mingled with bad men. Again, they who

blame them, talk of the avarice of the clergy, the dishonesty of the clergy, the litigations of the clergy, they are loud on those greedy of the property of others, gluttonous and drunken. Thou enviously blamest, and thou indiscreetly praisest: do thou who praisest, speak of the wicked who are mingled with them: do thou who blamest, see the good there also. Thus also in that common life of brethren, which exists in a monastery: great and holy men live therein, with daily hymns, prayers, praises of God; their occupation is reading; they labour with their own hands, and by this means support themselves; they seek nothing covetously; whatever is brought in for them by pious brethren, they use with contentedness and charity; no one claimeth as his own what another hath not; all love, all forbear one another mutually. Thou hast praised them; thou hast praised; he who knoweth not what is going on within, who knoweth not how, when the wind entereth, ships even in harbour dash against one another, entereth as if in hope of security, expecting to find no man to forbear; he findeth there evil brethren, who could not have been found evil, if they had not been admitted, (and they must be at first tolerated, lest they should perchance reform; nor can they easily be excluded, unless they have first been endured:) and becometh himself impatient beyond endurance. Who asked me here? I thought that love was here. And irritated by the perversity of some few men, since he hath not persevered in fulfilling his vow, he becometh a deserter of so holy a design, and guilty of a vow he hath never discharged. And then, when he hath gone forth himself too, he also becometh a reproacher, and a slanderer; and records those things only, (sometimes real,) which he asserts that he could not have endured. But the real troubles of the wicked ought to be endured for the society of the good. The Scripture saith unto him; Woe unto those that have lost patience. And what is more, he belcheth abroad the evil savour of his indignation, as a means to deter them who are about to enter; because, when he had entered himself, he could not persevere. Of what sort are they? Envious, quarrelsome, men who forbear no man, covetous; saying, He did this there, and he did that there. Wicked one, why art thou silent about the good! Thou sayest enough of those whom thou couldest not endure: thou sayest nothing of those who endured thy wickedness.

13. This saying of our Lord in His Gospel, is most justly extolled, most beloved brethren: There shall be two in the field: the one shall be taken, and

the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill: the one shall be taken, and the other left. Who are the two in the field? This is what the Apostle saith: I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. Ye are God’s husbandry. We are labouring in the field. The two in the field, are clergy; the one shall be taken, and the other left? the good shall be taken, the bad shall be left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill, applieth to the laity. Why in the mill? Because they are held bound by the world, in the whirl of temporal things, as by a millstone. Thence shall the one be taken, and the other left. Who shall be taken thence? The one who doth good works, ministering to the indigence of God’s servants, to the wants of the poor, faithful in confessing God, sure in the joyfulness of hope, watchful towards God, wishing no one evil, loving, as far as he can, not friends only, but enemies also, the man who knoweth no woman but his own wife, the woman who knoweth no man save her own husband; this one shall be taken even from the mill; but the one who shall be otherwise, shall be left. But others say, We are anxious for repose; we wish to have no one to endure, we are removing from crowds; we shall have a happy lot in a sort of security. If thou seekest repose, turn not, as it were, seeking a couch, to repose upon without any anxiety. And thence shall one be taken, the other left. Let no man deceive you, brethren: if ye wish not to be deceived, and to love your brethren, know that every profession in the Church containeth hypocrites. I said not that every man was a hypocrite, but that every profession had within itself hypocrites: there are wicked Christians, but there are also good ones. Thou seemest to see more wicked than good, because they are like chaff, which prevents your eye reaching the wheat; but there is wheat there also: approach, try them, sift them, judge of them by their taste. Thou findest nuns devoid of self-discipline: is a monastic life for this reason to be blamed? Many remain not in their own houses. They make visits to others’ houses, busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not, proud, tattlers, drunken: though they be virgins, what profiteth the flesh being whole, while the mind is corrupt? Humble wedlock is better than proud virginity. For if such a woman were to marry, she would not have the name of virgin to raise her pride, while she would have a curb to govern her. But are we, on account of wicked virgins, to condemn those who are holy both in body and mind? or, on account of these praiseworthy ones, shall we necessarily praise those who deserve censure? On every side the one shall be taken, and the other left.

14. Ver. 2. Let us then, brethren, finish the Psalm, which is plain. O serve the Lord with gladness: he addresseth you, whoever ye are who endure all things in love, and rejoice in hope. Serve the Lord, not in the bitterness of murmuring, but in the gladness of love. Come before His presence with rejoicing. It is easy to rejoice outwardly: rejoice before the presence of God. Let not the tongue be too joyful: let the conscience be joyful. Come before His presence with a song.

15. Ver. 3. Be ye sure that the Lord He is God. Who knoweth not that The Lord, He is God? But He speaketh of the Lord, Whom men thought not God: Be ye sure that the Lord He is God. Let not that Lord become vile in your sight: ye have crucified Him, scourged Him, spit upon Him, crowned Him with thorns, clothed Him in a dress of infamy, hung Him upon the Cross, pierced Him with nails, wounded Him with a spear, placed guards at His tomb; He is God. Be ye sure that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves. It is He that hath made us: All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. What reason have ye for exultation, what reason have ye for pride? Another made you; the Same Who made you, suffereth from you. But ye extol yourselves, and glory in yourselves, as if ye were created by yourselves. It is good for you that He Who made you, make you perfect. It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves. We ought not to be proud: all the good that we have, we derive from our Creator; we are condemned for what we have done in ourselves; for what He hath done in us, we are crowned. It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves: we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Sheep and one sheep. These sheep are one sheep: and how loving a Shepherd we have! He left the ninety and nine, and descended to seek the one, He bringeth it back on His own shoulders ransomed by His own blood. That Shepherd dieth without fear for the sheep, Who on His resurrection regaineth His sheep. We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

16. Ver. 3, 4. Enter into His gates with confession. At the gates is the beginning: begin with confession. Thence is the Psalm entitled, A Psalm of

Confession: there be joyful. Confess that ye were not made by yourselves, praise Him by Whom ye were made. Let thy good come from Him, in departing from Whom thou hast caused thine evil. Enter into His gates with confession. Let the flock enter into the gates: let it not remain outside a prey for wolves. And how is it to enter? With confession. Let the gate, that is, the commencement for thee, be confession. Whence it is said in another Psalm; Begin unto the Lord with confession. What he there calleth Begin, here he calleth Gates. Enter into His gates in confession. What? And when we have entered, shall we not still confess? Always confess Him: thou hast always what to confess for. It is hard in this life for a man to be so far changed, that no cause for censure be discoverable in him: thou must needs blame thyself, lest He Who shall condemn blame thee. Therefore even when thou hast entered His courts, then also confess. When will there be no longer confession of sins? In that rest, in that likeness to the Angels. But consider what I have said: there will there be no confession of sins. I said not, there will be no confession: for there will be confession of praise. Thou wilt ever confess, that He is God, thou a creature; that He is thy Protector, thyself protected. In Him thou shalt be as it were hid: as it is written, “Thou shall hide them in the secret of Thine own presence.” Go into His courts with hymns; and confess unto Him. Confess in the gates; and when ye have entered the courts, confess with hymns. Hymns are praises. Blame thyself, when thou art entering; when thou hast entered, praise Him. Open me the gates of righteousness, he saith in another Psalm, that I may go into them, and confess unto the Lord. Did he say, when I have entered, I will no longer confess. Even after his entrance, he will confess. For what sins did our Lord Jesus Christ confess, when He said, I confess unto Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth. He confessed in praising Him, not in accusing Himself.

17. Speak good of His Name; for the Lord is pleasant. Think not that ye faint in praising Him. Your praise of Him is like food: the more ye praise Him, the more ye acquire strength, and He Whom ye praise becometh the more sweet. Speak good of His Name; for the Lord is pleasant: His mercy is everlasting. For He will not cease to be merciful, after He hath freed thee: it belongeth to His mercy to protect thee even unto eternal life. His mercy, therefore, is to everlasting: and His truth from generation to generation. Understand by from generation to generation, either every generation, or in

two generations, the one earthly, the other heavenly. Here there is one generation which produceth mortals; another which maketh such as are everlasting. His Truth is both here, and there. Imagine not that His truth is not here, if His truth were not here, he would not say in another Psalm; Truth is risen out of the earth; nor would Truth Itself say, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

PSALM 101

A Discourse to the people.

1. Ver. 1. In this 101st Psalm, we ought to seek in the whole body of it what we find in the first verse: Mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord. Let no man flatter himself that he will never be punished through God’s mercy; for there is judgment also; and let no man who hath been changed for the better dread the Lord’s judgment, seeing that mercy goeth before it. For when men judge, sometimes overcome by mercy, they act against justice; and mercy, but not justice, seemeth to be in them: while sometimes, when they wish to enforce a rigid judgment, they lose mercy. But God neither loseth the severity of judgment in the bounty of mercy, nor in judging with severity loseth the bounty of mercy. Suppose we distinguish these two, mercy and judgment, by time; for possibly, they are not placed in this order without a meaning, so that he said not ‘judgment and mercy,’ but ‘mercy and judgment:’ so that if we distinguish them by succession in time, perhaps we find that the present is the season for mercy, the future for judgment. How is it that the season of mercy cometh first? Consider first how it is with God, that thou also mayest imitate the Father, in so far as He shall permit thee. For it is not arrogance to say, that we ought to imitate our Father; since our Lord, the only Son of God, exhorteth us to this, saying, Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. When He said to them, Love your enemies, pray for them which persecute you; that ye may, He addeth, be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Behold mercy. When thou seest the just and the unjust behold the same sun, enjoy the same light, drink from the same founts, satisfied with the same rain, blessed with the same fruits of the earth, inhale this air in the same way, possess equally the world’s goods; think not that God is unjust, Who giveth these things equally to the just and the unjust. It is the season of mercy, not as yet of judgment. For unless God spared at first through mercy, He would not find those

whom He could crown through judgment. There is therefore a season for mercy, when the long-suffering of God calleth sinners to repentance.

2. Hear the Apostle distinguishing each season, and do thou also distinguish it: Thinkest thou this, he saith, O man, that judgest them that do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Remark this. For he saw that he himself (but to whom saith he it? for it is the whole race of men, not one only, that he is addressing) did many evil things daily, and yet lived, that no harm happened to him; and imagined that God was either sleeping, or that He regarded not human affairs, or loved men's evil deeds. He erases this notion from the heart of all disposed to a right understanding. Thinkest thou, he saith, O man, that judgest them that do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? And as if we were to reply, Why do I commit such sins daily, and no evil occurreth unto me? he goeth on to shew to him the season of mercy: Despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering? And he did indeed despise them; but the Apostle hath made him auxious. Not knowing, he saith, that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? Behold the season of mercy. But that he might not think this would last for ever, how did he in the next verse raise his fears? But thou: (now hear the season of judgment; thou hast heard the season of mercy, on which account, mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord:) “But thou,” saith the Apostle, “after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who will render to every man according to his deeds.” Lo, mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord. But he hath threatened concerning judgment: is therefore the judgment of God to be feared only, and not to be loved? To be feared by the wicked on account of punishment, to be loved by the good on account of the crown. Because then the Apostle hath alarmed the wicked in the testimony which I have quoted, hear where he giveth hope concerning judgment to the good. He puts forth himself, and shews in himself too the season of mercy. For unless he found a period of mercy, in what condition would judgment find him? A blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurer of others. For he thus speaketh, and praiseth the season of mercy, in which season we are now living: I who was before, he saith, a blasphemer, and a persecutov, and injurious: but I

obtained mercy. But perhaps he only hath obtained mercy? Hear how he cheereth us: That in me, he saith, first, Christ Jesus might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting. What meaneth, that He might shew forth all longsuffering? That every sinner and wicked man might see that Paul received pardon, and might not despair of himself? Lo, he hath instanced himself, and thereby cheered others also. Wherein? In the season of mercy. Hear what he saith of the good at the time of judgment, again speaking of himself and of others. In the first place, he obtained mercy. Why? Because he was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. The Lord came to give to Paul, not to reward him. For if He chose to reward, what would He find wherewith to give the sinner his due, except punishment? He willed not to requite him punishment, but to give him grace. Hear now that he, to whom He gave grace, holdeth even the Lord indebted to him. He found in Him a free Giver in the season of mercy, he holdeth Him a debtor at the season of judgment. See how he saith this. For I am now, he saith, ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. This, in the time of mercy: now hear of judgment: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render to me at that day. He said not, ‘giveth,’ but, shall render. When He gave, He was merciful: when He ‘shall render,’ He will be a Judge: because, Mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord. By pardoning his offences, He came to owe him a crown: there I have obtained mercy. The Lord therefore was merciful at first, but here He will render me a crown of righteousness. Why will He render it? Because He is a just Judge. Wherefore a just Judge? Because, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. A just Judge then cannot but crown these things. For He found there things to crown: but what had He found before? One who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious. He pardoned these latter: He will crown the former deeds; He pardoned the one at the season of mercy, He will crown the other at the season of judgment: for, Mercy and judgment will I sing, unto Thee, O Lord. But did Paul alone deserve this? For I had asserted, that as he raised our fears by the former testimony, so did he encourage us by the latter. When he said, The Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render to me at that day: he addeth, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing and His kingdom.

3. Since therefore, brethren, we have a season of mercy, let us not on that account flatter, or indulge ourselves, saying, God spareth ever. Behold what I did yesterday, God spared; I do so to-day also, and God spareth; I will do so to-morrow also, because God spareth. Thou heedest His mercy, but fearest not His judgment. If thou dost wish to sing of mercy and judgment, understand that He spareth, that thou mayest amend, not that thou mayest remain in thy wickedness. Do not treasure up for thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. For it is said in another Psalm of the time of mercy; But unto the ungodly said God, Why dost thou preach My laws, and takest My covenant in thy mouth? whereas thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast My words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst unto him: and hast been partaker with the adulterers. Thou satest, and spakest against thy brother: yea, and hast slandered thine own mother’s son. These things hast thou done, and I held My tongue. Behold the season of mercy; what meaneth, I held My tongue? Doth it mean, I reproved him not? Rather, I judged not. For how doth He hold His tongue, Who daily crieth out in the Scriptures, in the Gospel, in His own preachers? These things hast thou done, and I held My tongue; and because God was silent, that is, punished not; what said the ungodly in his heart? Listen: Thou thoughtest wickedness, that I will be such a one as thyself. That is, it was not enough that thou wast such thyself; thou hast thought Me such also. When He had shewn unto him the season of mercy, He alarmed him with that of judgment: But I will reprove thee, and set thee before thine own face. Thou placest thyself behind thyself: I will place thee before thyself. For every man who will not see his own sins, placeth himself behind his back, and observeth sharply the sins of others, not from diligence, but envious feeling; not wishing to heal, but to accuse: but he forgetteth himself. Whence our Lord saith to such persons: Thou beholdest the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye. Since then mercy and judgment are our song, let us, while we do mercy, fearlessly await judgment: and let us be in His body, and let us sing these things. For Christ singeth this; if the Head alone singeth it, this song cometh from the Lord; but if the whole of Christ, that

is, His Head and Body, be thou among His members, cling unto Him by Faith, and by Hope, and by Love; and thou singest in Him, thou rejoicest in Him: for He Himself toileth in thee, thirsteth in thee, is hungred and in tribulation in thee. He is still dying in thee: and thou in Him hast already risen from the dead. For if He did not die in thee, He would not have had Himself spared in thee by the persecutor, when He said, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Christ therefore, my brethren, singeth; but how, ye know: we have expounded Christ to you constantly: and I know that these things are not new to you. Our Lord Christ is the Word of God, by Whom all things were made. This Word, that He might redeem us, became flesh, and dwelt in us; God, Who is above all things, the Son coequal with the Father, became man; He became man, that God as man might be a Mediator between men and God; and might reconcile those who were at a distance from one another, join the separated, recall the estranged, bring back the exiled: for this He became man. He became then Head of the Church; He hath both body and limbs. Seek for His limbs; they are at present groaning throughout the whole world: they will rejoice then, in the end, in the crown of righteousness, of which St. Paul saith, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render me at that day. At present then let us all sing in hope, all gathered together into one. For having put on Christ, we are Christ together with our Head: inasmuch as we are the seed of Abraham. The Apostle saith this; as to what I said, that ‘we are Christ,’ the Apostle saith this, in these words: Then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. Ye are the seed of Abraham; let us see whether the seed of Abraham be Christ. In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. He saith not, In thy seeds, as in many; but as of one, In thy seed, which is Christ. And to us he saith, therefore ye are Abraham’s seed. It is clear that we belong to Christ; and because we are His members and body, we are one Man with our head. Let us therefore sing of mercy and judgment unto Thee, O Lord!

4. Ver. 2. I will sing to the harp, and will have understanding, in the spotless way. When Thou shalt come unto me. Except in the spotless way, thou canst neither sing to the harp, nor understand. If thou dost wish to understand, sing in the spotless way, that is, work with cheerfulness before thy God. What is the spotless way? Hear what followeth: I walked in innocence, in the midst of my house. This spotless way beginneth from innocence, and it

endeth also in innocence. Why seek many words? Be innocent: and thou hast perfected righteousness. But what is it to be innocent? For a man injureth in two ways, as far as is in himself; either by making others miserable, or by deserting them in misery; for thou also dost not wish to be made wretched by another, or to be deserted by another, if thou art wretched. Who is it who maketh men wretched? He who assaulteth them with outrages, or with snares, robbeth others of their property, oppresseth the poor, stealeth, soliciteth another’s wife, is a slanderer, wisheth to cause sorrow to men, through a malignant disposition. Who is he who forsaketh the wretched? He who seeth the poor man in need of some aid, and possessing the means of giving that aid, yet scorneth him; estrangeth his heart from him. And if he were in such a condition, as to have no need whatever of any mercy, he would be proud, if he forsook the wretched; he is still placed in the tribulation of the flesh, not knowing what may happen to him to-morrow, and yet despiseth the tears of the wretched; he is not innocent. But who is innocent? He who while he hurteth not another, injureth not himself. For he who hurteth himself, is not innocent. Some one saith; Lo, I have not robbed any one, I have not oppressed any one: I will live happily on my own substance, the fruits of my virtuous toil; I wish to have fine banquets, I wish to spend as much as pleaseth me, to drink with those whom I like as much as I please; whom have I robbed, whom have I oppressed, who hath complained of me? He seemeth innocent. But if he corrupt himself, if he overthrow the temple of God within himself, why hope that he will act with mercy toward others, and spare the wretched? Can that man be merciful to others, who unto himself is cruel? The whole of righteousness, therefore, is reduced to the one word, innocence. But the lover of iniquity, hateth his own soul, When he loved iniquity, he fancied he was injuring others. But consider whether he was injuring others: He who loveth iniquity, he saith, hateth his own soul. He therefore who wishes to injure another, first injureth himself; nor doth he walk, since there is no room. For all wickedness suffereth from narrowness: innocence alone is broad enough to walk in. I walked in the innocence of my heart, in the midst of my house. By the middle of his house, he either signifieth the Church herself; for Christ walketh in her: or his own heart; for our inner house is our heart: as he hath explained in the above words, in the innocence of my heart. What is the innocence of the heart? The middle of his house? Whoever hath a bad house in this, is driven out of doors. For whoever is oppressed within his heart by a bad conscience, just as any man in consequence of the overflow of a waterspout or of smoke goeth out of his house, suffereth not himself to dwell therein; so he who hath not a quiet heart, cannot happily dwell in his heart. Such men go out of themselves in the bent of their mind, and delight themselves with things without, that affect the body; they seek repose in trifles, in spectacles, in luxuries, in all evils. Wherefore do they wish themselves well without? Because it is not well with them within, so that they may rejoice in a good conscience. Thus when the Lord had cured the palsied man, He saith, Take up thy bed, and go into thine house. Let the soul which is, as it were, relaxed with palsy, do this: in the members of good works let it new string its powers, that it may do good works, let it take up its bed, let it rule its body: let it now go into its own house, let it enter into its own conscience, it will now find it broad enough to walk in, and to sing, and to understand.

5. Ver. 3, 4. I set no wicked thing before my eyes. What meaneth this? I did not love such. For it is often said, as ye are aware, of a man who is loved of any one, he hath him before his eyes: and one who is despised, thus complaineth, He hath not me before his eyes. What is it then, to have one before one’s eyes? To love. What is it, not to love? Not to dwell there in heart. He said therefore, I did set no wicked thing before my eyes: I did love no wicked thing. And he explaineth this same wicked thing: I hated them that do unfaithfulness. Attend, my brethren. If ye walk with Christ in the midst of His house, that is, if either in your heart ye have a good repose, or in the Church herself proceed on a good journey in the way of godliness; ye ought not to hate those unfaithful only who are without, but whomsoever also ye may have found within. Who are the unfaithful? They who hate the law of God; who hear, and do it not, are called unfaithful. Hate the doers of unfaithfulness, repel them from thee. But thou shouldest hate the unfaithful, not men: one man who is unfaithful, hath, ye see, two names, man, and unfaithful: God made him man, he made himself unfaithful; love in him what God made, persecute in him what he made himself. For when thou shalt have persecuted his unfaithfulness, thou killest the work of man, and freest the work of God. I hated the doers of unfaithfulness.

6. The wicked heart hath not cleaved unto me. What is a wicked heart? A crooked heart. What is a crooked heart? A heart not straight. What is a heart not straight? See what is a straight heart, and then thou wilt see what is a heart not straight. The heart of a man, who wisheth not any thing contrary to any that God wisheth, is called straight. Attend. Some one prayeth that something may not happen: he prayeth, and it is not hindered. Let him ask as much as he can: but something happeneth contrary to his own will; let him submit himself to the will of God, let him not resist the Great Will. For our Lord Himself thus explaineth it, shewing our weakness in Himself, when He was about to suffer; saying, My soul is sorrowful, even unto death. For He did not truly fear death, who had the power of laying down His own life, and had the power of again resuming it. And the Apostle Paul, His own soldier, His own servant, exclaimeth, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render me at that day. He rejoiceth in that he is about to die; and is his Lord and General sorrowful, because he is about to die? Is then the servant better than his Lord? And where then are our Lord’s own words? It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his Lord. Behold, is Paul brave at the prospect of death, and is the Lord sorrowful? I had a desire, he saith, to depart, and to be with Christ. He rejoiceth, in that he is departing, to be with Christ; and is Christ Himself, with Whom Paul rejoiceth that he is about to be, sorrowful? But what were those words, save the sound of our weakness? Many as yet weak are saddened by coming death; but let them have a straight heart; let them avoid death, as far as they can; but if they cannot, let them say what our Lord Himself said, not on His own account, but on ours. For what said He? O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. Behold thou hast the human will expressed: now see the righteous heart; Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou, Father, will. If therefore the righteous heart followeth God, the crooked heart resisteth God. Suppose something untoward happeneth to him, he crieth out, ‘God, what have I done unto Thee? What sin have I committed?’ He wisheth himself to appear just, God unjust. What is so crooked as this? It is not enough that thou art crooked thyself: thou must think thy rule crooked also. Reform thyself, and thou findest Him straight, in departing from Whom thou hast made thyself crooked. He doth justly, thou unjustly; and for this

reason thou art perverse, since thou callest man just, and God unjust. What man dost thou call just? Thyself. For when thou sayest, “What have I done unto Thee?” thou thinkest thyself just. But let God answer thee: “Thou speakest truth: thou hast done nothing to Me: thou hast done all things unto thyself; for if thou hadst done any thing for Me, thou wouldest have done good. For whatever is done well, is done unto Me; because it is done according to My commandment; but whatever of evil is done, is done unto thee, not unto Me; for the wicked man doth nothing except for his own sake, since it is not what I command.” When ye see such men, brethren, reprove them, convince and correct them: and if ye cannot reprove or correct them, consent not to them; that ye may say, The wicked heart hath not cleaved unto me.

7. When the wicked man departed from me, I knew him not. What is, I knew him not? I approved him not, I praised him not, he pleased me not. For we find the word to know occasionally used in Scripture, in the sense of to be pleased. For what is hidden from God, brethren? Doth He know the just, and doth He not know the unjust? What dost thou think of, that He doth not know? I say not, what thinkest thou; but what wilt thou ever think, that He will not have seen beforehand? God knoweth all things, then; and yet in the end, that is in judgment after mercy, He saith of some persons; Many will come and say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not in Thy Name cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works? in Thy Name we have eaten and drunken. And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity. Was there any one He did not know? But what meaneth, I never knew you? I acknowledge you not in My rule. For I know the rule of My righteousness: ye agree not with it, ye have turned aside from it, ye are crooked. Therefore He said here also: I knew him not. When the wicked man departed from Me, I knew him not. What meaneth, I knew him not? Is it because when perchance a wicked man meeteth a righteous man in a narrow street, the righteous saith unto himself, as it is written in the Wisdom of Solomon: He is grievous unto us even to behold; and changeth his path that he may not see one whom he doth not wish to see? But how many wicked men are there whom we see, and who see us, and not only do not turn aside from us, but run unto us, and frequently desire their iniquities to be fulfilled through us. This often

happeneth to us. How then do they depart? He departeth from thee, who is unlike thee. What is, departeth from thee? followeth thee not. What is, followeth thee not? doth not imitate thee. Therefore, when the wicked man departed from me, that is, when the wicked man was unlike me, and was unwilling to imitate my paths, was unwilling in his wickedness to live as I had proposed myself for his imitation; I knew him not. What meaneth, I knew him not? Not that I was ignorant of him, but that I did not approve him.

8. Ver. 5. Whoso privily slandered his neighbour, him I persecuted. Behold the righteous persecutor, not of the man, but of the sin. With the proud eye, and the insatiable heart, I did not feed. What meaneth, I did not feed with? I did not eat in common with such. Attend, beloved; since ye are about to hear something wonderful. If he did not feed with this man, he did not eat with him; for to feed is to eat; how is it then that we find our Lord Himself eating with the proud? It was not only with those publicans and sinners, for they were humble: for they acknowledged their weakness, and asked for the physician. We find that He ate with the proud Pharisees themselves. For a certain proud man had invited Him: it was the same who was displeased because a sinning woman, one of ill repute in the city, approached the feet of our Lord; and he said in his heart; (for such was the purity of the Pharisees, that no wicked person was to touch them; if any unclean person had even slightly touched them, they shuddered, lest the unclean touch should render them in a manner unclean;) when therefore this sinner came to weep at the Lord’s feet, and he saw her, he said in his heart; This Man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that hath come to His feet. How did he know that Jesus knew not, unless he suspected that He knew not, because He repelled not the woman? Because if it had been himself, he would repel the woman from him. But the Lord not only knew that the woman was a sinner, but the Physician also saw that the wounds of that proud man were incurable. For when He had heard him thinking, He said, in order that He might shew how proud that man was; Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee: There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed him fifty pence, and the other five hundred: and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell Me, then, which of them loved Him most? And the man gave his

opinion against himself, the Truth extorting confession from him: I suppose, Sir, that he to whom he forgave most. And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet: but she hath washed My feet with tears: and the rest as ye know; we need not dwell further on the account, more than what we have mentioned for our purpose. That Pharisee was proud: the Lord ate with him; what is it therefore that he saith? With a proud eye, and an insatiable heart, with such an one I did not eat. How doth He enjoin unto us what He hath not done Himself? He exhorteth us to imitate Himself: we see that He ate with the proud; how doth He forbid us to eat with the proud? We indeed, brethren, for the sake of reproof, abstain from communion with our brethren, and do not eat with them, that they may be reformed? We rather eat with strangers, with Pagans, than with those who hold with us, if we have seen that they live wickedly, that they may be ashamed, and amend; as the Apostle saith, And if any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. For the sake of healing others we usually do this; but nevertheless we often eat with many strangers and ungodly men.

9. What is it that he saith, With a proud eye, and insatiable heart, with such an one I did not eat? The pious heart hath its banquets, the proud heart hath its banquets: for it was on account of the food of the proud heart, that he said, with an insatiable heart. How is the proud heart fed? If a man is proud, he is envious: otherwise it cannot be. Pride is the mother of enviousness: it cannot but generate it, and ever coexist with it. Every proud man is, therefore, envious: if envious, he feedeth on the misfortunes of others. Whence the Apostle saith, But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed of one another. Ye see them, then, eating: eat not with these: fly such banquets: for they cannot satisfy themselves with rejoicing in others’ evils, because their hearts are insatiable. Beware thou art not caught in their feasts by the devil’s noose. On such meat the Jews feasted, when they crucified our Lord; that is, they fed in a manner on His punishment. (For we also feed on the Lord’s Cross, since we eat His Body.) For they said, when they saw Him hanging on the cross, insulting Him, since they were insatiable in heart; they said, If He is the Son of God, let

Him come down from the Cross; He saved others, Himself He cannot save. They were feeding on the meat of their own cruelty, and He was feeding on the meat of His own mercy. Father, He saith, forgive them; for they know not what they do. They therefore had one, He another, sort of feast. But hear what is said of the table of the proud: Let their table be made a snare before themselves, and let the things that should have been for their wealth, be unto them a recompense and an occasion to them for falling. They fed, they were taken. Just as birds feed at the trap, or fishes at the hook, they were taken, when they fed. The ungodly therefore have their own feasts, the godly also have theirs. Hear the feasts of the godly: Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. If therefore the godly eateth the meat of righteousness, and the ungodly of pride; it is no wonder if he is insatiable in heart. He eateth the meat of iniquity: do not eat the meat of iniquity, and the proud in eye, and the insatiable in heart, eateth not with thee.

10. Ver. 6. And whence wast thou fed? And what pleased thee, when he did not eat with thee? Mine eyes, he saith, were upon such as are faithful in the land, that they might sit with me. The Lord saith, Mine eyes were upon the faithful in the land, that they might sit with Me. That is, that with Me they might be seated. In what sense are they to sit? Ye shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The faithful of the earth judge, for to them it is said, Know ye not, that we shall judge angels? Mine eyes were upon such as are faithful in the land, that they might sit with me. Whoso walketh in a spotless way, he ministered unto me. To Me, he saith, not to himself. For many minister the Gospel, but unto themselves; because they seek their own things, not the things of Jesus Christ. What is to serve Christ? To seek the things of Christ. And indeed when wicked men teach the Gospel, others are saved, they are punished. For it is said: Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works. Fear not then, when thou hearest the Gospel from a wicked man. Woe unto him who serveth himself, that is, who seeketh his own things therein: do thou receive the words of Christ. Whoso leadeth a godly life, he shall be my servant.

11. Ver. 7. The proud man hath not dwelt in the midst of my house. Understand this of the heart. The proud did not dwell in my heart: no such dwelt in my heart: for he hurried away from me. None but the meek and peaceful dwelt in my heart; the proud dwelt not there, for the unrighteous one dwelleth not in the heart of the righteous. Let the righteous be distant from thee, I know not how many miles and stations; ye dwell together, if ye have one heart. The proud doer hath not dwelt in the midst of my house: he that speaketh unjust things hath not directed in the sight of my eyes. This is the spotless way, where we understand when the Lord cometh unto us.

12. Ver. 8. In the morning I destroyed all the ungodly that were in the land. This is obscure: be so good as to attend: it is near the end of the Psalm. In the morning I destroyed all the ungodly that were in the land. Wherefore? That I may root out all wicked doers from the city of the Lord. There are then wicked doers in the city of the Lord, and they at present, seemingly, spared. Why so? Because it is the season of mercy: but that of judgment will come; for the Psalm thus began, Of mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord. He said above, that none but the righteous cleaved unto him. He clave not to the wicked, nor was he pleased with the feasts of iniquity of those who served themselves, not their Lord; that is, sought their own interests; and as if he were asked: How then hast thou so long endured such persons in thy city? It is, he replieth, the season of mercy. What meaneth, the season of mercy? Judgment hath not yet been revealed: it is night; day will appear, judgment will appear. Hear the Apostle: Therefore judge nothing before the time. What is, before the time? Before day. Hear that he meant before day: Until the Lord come, Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God. For at present, since thou seest not my heart, and I see not thine, it is night. Thou hast asked something of a man: thou hast not received: thou believest thyself despised; and perhaps thou art not despised; for thou seest not the heart; and thou dost at once blaspheme; pardon must be given thee as thou art erring by night. Some man perhaps loveth thee: and thou thinkest that he hateth thee; or he hateth thee, and thou thinkest that he loveth thee: but be it what it may, it is night. Fear not: trust in Christ, in Him have day: thou canst not think any thing evil of Him, since we are secure, and certain, that He cannot be

deceived: He loveth us. But we are not as yet sure of one another. For God knoweth our love for one another: but we, although we love one another, who knoweth with what mind our intercourse is carried on? How is it that no man seeth the heart? Because it is night. In this night temptations abound. The Psalm seemeth to speak of this same night: Thou makest darkness, that it may be night: wherein all the beasts of the forests will move. The lion's whelps roaring after their prey, and to seek their meat from God. The lion's whelps seek their prey at night. Who are the lion's whelps? The princes and powers of the air, fiends and angels of the devil. How do they seek their prey? When they tempt. But because they approach not, unless God hath given them power; for that reason it is said, they seek their meat from God. The devil sought Job, to tempt him. What sort of meat? Rich, fat, the righteous one of God, unto whom God Himself bore witness, calling him a perfect and an upright man; was a true worshipper of God. He sought him to be tempted, seeking food of God; and he received him to be tempted, but not to be crushed; to be purified, not to be overthrown; or perhaps not even to be purified, but to be proved. Yet even they who are tempted, are sometimes delivered up from secret deservings of their own into the tempter's hands, since perhaps they have been delivered up to their own lusts. For the devil hurteth no man, unless he hath received power of God. But when? at night. What is, at night? in this season. But when night shall have passed away, and day arrived, the wicked are sent with him into eternal fire, and the righteous into life eternal. There, there will be no tempter, because there are no lion's whelps there: because the night hath passed. Thus our Lord saith to His disciples, This night Satan hath desired to vex you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not. What is, to vex as wheat? As wheat is not eaten by man, before it be ground, so as to make bread; so the devil eateth no man, unless he hath first overthrown him by means of tribulation. He bruiseth, that he may eat: but when thou art in tribulation, if thou remain wheat, be not disturbed; nothing shall befall thee. How? When oxen thresh, do they enter in unto the wheat only? They are sent into the floor together with the threshing engine. But is any thing to be feared by the wheat? Far from it. Nothing save the chaff is chopped up, the wheat is stripped of its incumbrances, and when the fanning cometh, it shall find the mass purified:

whomsoever He findeth wheat, He shall send into His garner, while He shall burn with inextinguishable fire the heap of chaff.

13. Why have I said this? Because we have day in hope. Our day ought to be in Christ. For as long as we are among temptations, it is night. In that night God spareth sinners, that He may not cut them off; He scourgeth them with temptations, that they may be amended; He endureth them in His city. Do we imagine He will alway endure them? If mercy is always, there is no judgment; but if, I will sing unto Thee, O Lord, of mercy and judgment; He at present spareth, He will then judge. But when will He judge? When night shall have passed away. For this reason He hath said; In the morning I destroyed all the ungodly that were in the land. What meaneth, in the morning? When the day shall at last have arrived, night having passed by. In the morning I destroyed all the ungodly that were in the earth. Why doth He spare them until the dawn? Because it was night. What meaneth, it was night? Because it was the season for mercy: He was merciful, while the hearts of men were hidden. Thou seest some one living ill; thou endurest him: for thou knowest not of what sort he will prove to be; since it is night; whether he who to-day liveth ill, to-morrow may live well; and whether he who to-day liveth well, to-morrow may be wicked. For it is night, and God endureth all men, since He is of long-suffering: He endureth them, that sinners may be converted unto Him. But they who shall not have reformed themselves in that season of mercy, shall be slain. And wherefore? That they may be scattered abroad from the city of the Lord, from the fellowship of Jerusalem, from the fellowship of the Saints, from the fellowship of the Church. But when shall they be slain? At dawn. What meaneth, at dawn? When night shall have passed away. Wherefore now doth he spare? Because it is the season of mercy. Why doth He not always spare? Because, Mercy and judgment will I sing unto Thee, O Lord. Brethren, let no man flatter himself: all the doers of iniquity shall be slain; Christ shall slay them at the dawn, and shall destroy them from His city. But now while it is the time of mercy, let them hear Him. Every where He crieth out by the Law, by the Prophets, by the Psalms, by the Epistles, by the Gospels: see that He is not silent; that He spareth: that He granteth mercy; but beware, for the judgment will come.

ADVERTISEMENT

The present Volume is the last but one of St. Augustine’s Commentary on the Psalms, translated by the Rev. H. M. Wilkins, M.A. of Merton College, Oxford. The remaining Volume, containing the last twenty-five Psalms, and the Indices, may be expected in about a year. Meanwhile it is hoped that a Volume of St. Athanasius, containing his recently discovered Paschal Epistles, and a Volume of St. Justin Martyr, may be brought out. A statement of the remaining Works, which it is proposed to comprise in the Library, will be found at the end of the Volume.

C. M.

Feast of St. Mark, 1853.

PSALM 102

1. Behold, one poor man prayeth, and prayeth not in silence. We may therefore hear him, and see who he is: whether it be not perchance He, of Whom the Apostle saith, Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich. If it is He, then, how is He poor? For in what sense He is rich, who seeth not? For whence are men rich? I suppose from their gold, and silver, their slaves, their land; but all things were made by Him. What then is richer than He, by Whom riches were made, even those which are not true riches? For through Him we have even these riches, ability, memory, character, health of body, the senses, and the conformation of our limbs: for when these are safe, even the poor are rich. Through Him also are those greater riches, faith, piety, justice, charity, chastity, good conduct: for no man hath these, except through Him Who justifieth the ungodly. Behold, how rich! For which is rich, he who hath what he desireth when another doeth it for him, or he who doth what he desireth when another possesseth it? I conceive that He is richer Who made what thou hast; because thou hast not, what He hath. Behold, how rich! In one so rich, how are we to recognise these words? I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping. Have these so great riches come to this? The former state is a very high one, this is a very lowly one. What shall we do? How shall we reconcile these low things with those high ones? They are too far from one another? I do not as yet recognise this poor man: he is possibly some one else; but let us still seek. For as to the reason why He appeareth not the same unto us, it is wonderful if thou dost ask, and dost not dread His riches. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. He who said this, while he was saying it, was rich; how much more rich He of Whom he said, “In the beginning was the Word:” and not any word, but the “Word that was God:” and not any where only, but “with God:” and not inactive, but “by Whom all things were made?” Did He eat ashes as it were bread: and

mingle His drink with weeping? It is to be feared lest our poverty do injury to so great riches. Yet still examine whether this poor man be He; since, The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Reflect also upon these words: I am Thy servant, and the Son of Thine handmaid. Observe, this handmaid, chaste, a virgin, and a mother: for there He received our poverty, when He was clothed in the form of a servant, emptying Himself; lest thou shouldest dread His riches, and in thy beggarly state shouldest not dare approach Him. There, I say, He put on the form of a servant, there He was clothed with our poverty; there He made Himself poor, and us rich. We are now drawing near to understand these things of Him: nevertheless we may not as yet rashly pronounce. The offspring of a virgin was the stone hewn from the hills without hands, where no man laboured: where was no concupiscence handed down, but faith alone was lit up, and the Flesh of the Word conceived. Then He came forth from the womb: the heavens spake; Angels declared it to the shepherds; the star drew the Magi to worship the King; Simeon, filled with the Holy Ghost, recognised the infant God in His Mother’s hands. Age came, not to His Divinity, but to His flesh. Ignorant old men are astonished at the wisdom of a boy of twelve years. Or even if they were learned old men, what was their wisdom to the Word of God? What was their wisdom to the Wisdom of God? Shall not the learned, unless He help them, always perish? He still increaseth in the age of His body: He cometh to the river to be baptized: the baptizer recogniseth God, confessing himself unworthy to loose the string of His sandal. From that moment the blind are enlightened, the hearing of the deaf restored, the dumb speak, the leprous are cleansed, the palsied regain strength, the sick recover, the dead arise.

2. I now indeed acknowledge the poverty of riches, in comparison with that Word, by Whom all things were made; but how far as yet is He from ‘ashes,’ and ‘weeping with His drink?’ As yet, I fear to say, it is Himself; and yet I wish. For there are things here which urge me to wish to do so, and again, reasons which cause me to fear doing so. It is Himself, and yet it is not Himself. He is now in the form of a servant, he as yet carrieth frail and mortal flesh, He now cometh before us as about to die, and yet He is not understood in this want. I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping. Let him add poverty then to poverty: let

Him transfigure into Himself our humble body: let Him be our Head, we His limbs, let there be two in one flesh. For that He might at first become poor, taking the form of a servant, He left His Father: and since He was born of a virgin, let Him also leave His mother, and cleave to His wife, and let them be twain in one flesh. For thus the twain shall have one voice also, and in that one voice we shall no longer wonder at our own words. I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping. For He hath deigned to hold even us as His limbs. The penitent also are among His limbs. For they are not shut out, nor separated from His Church: nor would He make the Church His spouse, unless by words like these: Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Let us then hear what the head and the body prayeth, the bridegroom and bride, Christ and the Church, both one Person; but the Word and the flesh are not both one thing; the Father and the Word are both one thing; Christ and the Church are both one Person, one perfect man in the form of His own fulness: Till we are all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. But until we are come, poverty is our lot here, toil and groaning is our lot here. Thanks be unto His loving-kindness! Whence hath He toil, whence doth the Word groan, through Whom all things were made? If He hath deigned to submit to our death, shall He not grant unto us His life? He hath raised us up to a great hope, we groan even with great hope. Groaning causeth sorrowfulness, but these are groans that create joy. I believe that Sarah, the barren one, groaned amid her joy, when she was giving birth; and we also from the fear of Thee have conceived and brought forth the Spirit of salvation. Let us hear therefore Christ, poor within us and with us, and for our sakes. For the title itself indicates the poor one. Lastly, remember that I conjectured who that poor one was: let us hear His prayer, and recognise His Person; and mistake not, when thou shalt have heard any thing that cannot apply to His Head; it was for this reason that I have prefaced as I have, that whatever thou shalt hear of this description, thou mayest understand as sounding from the weakness of the body, and recognise the voice of the members in the head. The title is, A Prayer of the afflicted, when he was tormented, and poured out his prayer before the Lord. It is the same poor one who elsewhere saith: From the ends of the earth will I call upon Thee, when my heart is in heaviness. He is afflicted because He is also

Christ; Who in the Prophet's words calleth Himself both Bridegroom and Bride: He hath bound on me the diadem as on a bridegroom, and as a bride hath adorned me with an ornament. He called Himself Bridegroom, He called Himself Bride; wherefore this, unless Bridegroom applieth to the Head, Bride to the body? They are one voice then, because they are one flesh. Let us hear, and recognise ourselves in these words; and if we see that we are without, let us labour to be there.

3. Ver. 1. Hear my prayer, O Lord: and let my crying come unto Thee. Hear my prayer, O Lord, is the same as, Let my crying come unto Thee: the feeling of the suppliant is shewn by the repetition. Turn not Thy face away from me. When did God turn away His Face from His Son? when did the Father turn away His Face from Christ? But for the sake of the poverty of my members, Turn not away Thy face from me: whatsoever day I am troubled, incline Thine ear unto me. For I am troubled below; but Thou art above: if I exalt myself, Thou art far from me; if I humble myself, Thou dost incline Thine ear unto me. But what meaneth, whatsoever day I am troubled? For is He not troubled now? or would He speak thus, if He were not troubled? This would therefore suffice; Incline Thine ear unto me, since I am in trouble. Whatsoever day I am troubled, incline Thine ear unto me: as if the body were one with its Head: if one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it. Thou art in trouble this day, I am in trouble; another is in trouble to-morrow, I am in trouble; after this generation other descendants, who succeed your descendants, are in trouble, I am in trouble; down to the end of the world, whoever are in trouble in My body, I am in trouble. Whatsoever day I am troubled, therefore, incline Thine ear unto me. Whatsoever day I call, O hear me, and that right soon. This is the same thing. Even now I call; but, Whatsoever day I call upon Thee, hear me right soon. Peter prayed, Paul prayed, the rest of the Apostles prayed; the faithful prayed in those times, the faithful prayed in the following times, the faithful prayed in the times of the Martyrs, the faithful pray in our times, the faithful will pray in the times of our descendants: Whatsoever day I call upon Thee, hear me right soon. Right soon: for I now ask that which Thou art willing to grant. I ask not earthly things, as an earthly man; but redeemed at last from my former captivity, I long for the kingdom of heaven; Hear me right soon: for it is only to such a longing that Thou hast said, "Even while Thou art

speaking, I will say, Here I am.” Whatsoever day I call, hear me right soon. Wherefore dost thou call? in what tribulation? in what want? O poor one, before the gate of God all-rich, in what longing dost thou beg? from what destitution dost thou ask relief? from what want dost thou knock, that it may be opened unto thee? Say, let us hear this very want; let us both discover ourselves in it, and pray together with Thee. Hear and recognise, if thou canst.

4. Ver. 3. For my days are consumed away like smoke. O days! if days: for where day is heard of, light is understood. But my days are consumed away like smoke. My days, my times; wherefore, like smoke, unless from the puffing up of pride? Such days proud Adam, of whom Christ received the flesh, was worthy of receiving. Christ therefore is in Adam, and Adam in Christ. He who deigned to accept the voice of the days of smoke, hath indeed rescued from the days of smoke. For my days are consumed away like smoke. See smoke, like pride, ascending, swelling, vanishing: deservedly therefore failing, and not stedfast. For my days are consumed away like smoke: and my bones are scorched up as it were in an oven. Both my bones, and my strength, not without tribulation, not without burning. The bones of the body of Christ, the strength of His body, is it any where greater than in the Holy Apostles? And yet see that the bones are scorched. Who is offended, and I burn not? They are brave, faithful, able interpreters and preachers of the word, living as they speak, speaking as they hear; they are clearly brave, yet all who suffer offences, are an oven to them. For there is love there, and more so in the bones. The bones are within all the flesh, and support all the flesh. But if any man suffer any offence, and endanger his soul; the bone is scorched in proportion as it loveth. Love wanting, no man is scorched; if love exist, and if one member suffereth in sympathy with another that is suffering; how are they scorched who sustain all the members? My bones are scorched up as it were in an oven.

5. Ver. 4. My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass. Look back to Adam, whence the human race sprung. For how but from him was misery propagated? whence but from him is this hereditary poverty? Let him then, who in his own body was at one time in despair, now that he is set in Christ’s body, say with hope, My heart is smitten down, and withered like

grass. Deservedly, since all flesh is grass. But how did this happen unto thee? Since I have forgotten to eat my bread. For God had given His commandment for bread. For what is the bread of the soul? The serpent suggesting, and the woman transgressing, he touched the forbidden fruit, he forgot the commandment: his heart was smitten as it deserved, and withered like grass, since he forgot to eat his bread. Having forgotten to eat bread, he drinketh poison: his heart is smitten, and withered like grass. This is that same smitten one in Isaiah, of whom and to whom it is said, I will not contend with you for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit proceedeth from me, and I have made every breath. Because of sin for a little while have I grieved him, and smitten him, and hid my face from him. With reason then it was said here, Turn not away Thy face from me: that is, from the smitten one, of whom Thou hast said, I have smitten him: of whom Thou hast said, “I have seen his ways, and have healed him.” My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass: since I have forgotten to eat my bread. Now eat that bread which thou hadst forgotten. But this very Bread hath come, in Whose body thou mayest remember the voice of thy forgetfulness, and cry out in thy poverty, so that thou mayest receive riches. Now eat: for thou art in His body, Who saith, I am the living bread which came down from heaven. Thou hadst forgotten to eat thy bread; but after His crucifixion, all the ends of the earth shall be reminded, and be converted unto the Lord. After forgetfulness, let remembrance come, let bread be eaten from heaven, that we may live; not manna, as they did eat, and died; that bread, of which it is said, Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

6. Ver. 5. For the voice of my groaning, the bones cleave unto my flesh. For the voice which I understand, for the voice which I know: for the voice of my groaning, not for the voice of the groaning of those for whom I have a fellow-feeling. For many groan, and I also groan; even for this I groan, because they groan for a wrong cause. That man hath lost a piece of money, he groaneth: he hath lost faith, he groaneth not: I weigh the money and the faith, and I find more cause for groaning for him who groaneth not as he ought, or doth not groan at all. He committeth fraud, and rejoiceth. With what gain, with what loss? He hath gained money, he hath lost righteousness. For the latter reason, he who knoweth how to groan,

groaneth; he who is near the head, who righteously clingeth to Christ’s body, groaneth for this reason. But the carnal do not groan for this reason, and they cause themselves to be groaned for, because they do not groan for this reason; nor can we despise them, whether they groan not at all, or groan for the wrong cause. For we wish to correct them, we wish to amend them, we wish to reform them: and when we cannot, we groan; and when we groan, we are not separated from them. For, for the voice of my groaning my bones cleave unto my flesh: the strong cleave unto the weak, the stable cleave unto the unstable. How have they cleaved unto them? For the voice of their own groaning, not for the voice of the groaning of those others. By what law do they cleave, but that which saith, “we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak?” My bones cleave unto my flesh.

7. Ver. 6, 7. I am become like a pelican in the wilderness, and like an owl among ruined walls. I have watched, and am even as it were a sparrow, that sitteth alone upon the house-top. Behold three birds and three places; may the Lord grant us to explain what they mean, and that ye may hear profitably what is said for your good. What mean the three birds, and the three places? What are the three birds? The pelican, the owl, and the sparrow; and the three places are severally, the wilderness, the ruined walls, and the house-top. The pelican in the wilderness, the owl in the ruined walls, and the sparrow in the house-top. In the first place we must explain, what the pelican signifieth; since it is born in a region, which maketh it unknown to us. It is born in lonely spots, especially those of the river Nile in Egypt. Whatever kind of bird it is, let us consider what the Psalm intended to say of it. It dwelleth, it saith, in the wilderness. Why enquire of its form, its limbs, its voice, its habits? As far as the Psalm telleth thee, it is a bird that dwelleth in solitude. The owl is a bird that loveth night. “Parietinæ,” or ruins, as we call them, are walls standing without roof, without inhabitants, these are the habitation of the owl. And then as to the house-top and the sparrows, ye are familiar with them. I find, therefore, some one of Christ’s body, a preacher of the word, sympathising with the weak, seeking the gains of Christ, mindful of his Lord to come, that He may not say, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou oughtest to have put my money to the exchangers. Let us see these three things from the office of His steward. Hath such a man come among those who are not Christians?

He is a pelican in the wilderness. Hath he come among those who were Christians, and have relapsed? He is an owl in the ruined walls; for he forsaketh not even the darkness of those who dwell in night, he wisheth to gain even these. Hath he come among such as are Christians dwelling in a house, not as if they believed not, or as if they had let go what they had believed, but walking lukewarmly in what they believe? The sparrow crieth unto them, not in the wilderness, because they are Christians; nor in the ruined walls, because they have not relapsed; but because they are within the roof; under the roof rather, because they are under the flesh. The sparrow above the flesh crieth out, husheth not up the commandments of God, nor becometh carnal, so that he be subject to the roof. Let not him which is on the house-top come down to take any thing out of the house; and, what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye on the house-tops. There are three birds and three places; and one man may represent the three birds, and three men may represent severally the three birds; and the three sorts of places, are three classes of men: yet the wilderness, the ruined walls, and the house-top, are but three classes of men.

8. But why so much of these? Let us turn to our Lord Himself, if perchance it be Himself, and so it may be better to recognise Himself as the pelican in the wilderness, as the owl in the ruinous walls, and as the lone sparrow on the housetop. Let that poor one, our Head, speak unto us; let the poor of His own will speak unto the poor of necessity. Let us not pass over what is said, or even read, of this bird, that is, the pelican; not rashly asserting any thing, but yet not passing over what has been left to be read and uttered by those who have written it. Do ye so hear, that if it be true, it may agree; if false, it may not hold. These birds are said to slay their young with blows of their beaks, and for three days to mourn them when slain by themselves in the nest: after which they say the mother wounds herself deeply, and pours forth her blood over her young, bathed in which they recover life. This may be true, it may be false: yet if it be true, see how it agreeth with Him, Who gave us life by His blood. It agreeth with Him in that the mother’s flesh recalleth to life her young with her blood; it agreeth well. For He calleth Himself a hen brooding over her young: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. For He hath the authority of a

father and the affection of a mother: even as Paul is both father and mother; not through himself, but through the Gospel: father, where he saith, For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Jesus Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel; and mother where he saith, My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you. If, then, it be so truly, this bird doth closely resemble the flesh of Christ, by Whose blood we have been called to life. But how may it agree with Christ, that the bird herself slays her own young? Doth not this agree with it? I will slay, and I will make alive? I will wound, and I will heal. Would the persecutor Saul have died, unless he were wounded from heaven; or would the preacher be raised up, unless by life given him from His blood? But let those who have written on the subject see to this; we ought not to allow our understanding of it to rest upon doubtful ground. Let us rather recognise this bird in the wilderness; as the Psalm expresseth it, A pelican in the solitude. I suppose that Christ born of a Virgin is here meant; for thus He is alone, therefore the word solitude applieth well: He was born in loneliness, because He alone was thus born. After the nativity, we come to His Passion: by whom was He crucified? was it by those who stood? was it by those who mourned? It was, as it were, in the night of their own ignorance, and in the ruins of their own fall. Behold the owl, and it that dwelleth in ruinous walls; He loveth the night too. For if He loved them not, how could He say, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Born in the wilderness, because alone so born; suffering in the darkness of the Jews as it were in night, in their sin, as it were in ruins: what next? I have watched. Thou hadst then slept amid the ruins, and hadst said, I laid me down, and slept. What meaneth, I slept? Because I chose, I slept: I slept for love of night: but, I rose again, followeth. Therefore I watched, is here said. But after He watched, what did He? He ascended into heaven, He became as a sparrow by flying; that is, by ascending; alone on the housetop; that is, in heaven. He is therefore as the pelican by birth, as the owl by dying, as the sparrow by ascending again: there in the wilderness, as one alone; here in the ruined walls, as one slain by those who could not stand in the building; and here again watching and flying for our sakes alone on the housetop, He there intercedeth in our behalf. For our Head is as the sparrow, His body as the turtle-dove. For the sparrow hath found her an house. What house? In heaven, where He doth mediate for us. And the turtle-dove a nest, the Church of God hath found a nest from the wood of His Cross, where she may lay her young, her children. I have watched: and am become even as it were a sparrow, that sitteth alone upon the housetop.

9. Ver. 8. Mine enemies revile me all day, and they that praised me are sworn together against me. With their mouth they praised, in their heart they were laying snares for me. Hear their praise: Master, we know that Thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any man. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? Thou trippest up Him whom thou praisest. Wherefore, but that they who praised me are sworn together against me? And whence this evil repute, except because I came to make sinners my members, that by repentance they may be in my body. Thence is all the calumny, thence the persecution. Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? They that be whole need not a physician, but they that be sick. Would that ye were aware of your sickness, that ye might seek a physician; ye would not slay Him, and through your infatuated pride perish in a false health.

10. Ver. 9. But why do mine enemies revile me all the day long? why do they that praised me conspire together against me? Because I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping. Because He chose to have among His members these kinds of men, that they should be healed and set free, thence is the evil repute. Now at this day what is the character of Pagan calumny against us? what, brethren, do ye conceive they tell us? Ye corrupt discipline, and pervert the morality of the human race. Why dost thou attack us; say why? what have we done? By giving, he replieth, to men room for repentance, by promising impunity for all sins: for this reason men do evil deeds, careless of consequences, because every thing is pardoned them, when they are converted. Hence therefore is the evil repute: since I have eaten ashes as it were bread, and mingled my drink with weeping. O thou who abusest us, I invite thee to that bread! For thou durst not say thou art not a sinner. Sift thy conscience, ascend the tribunal of thy mind, spare not thyself, examine thyself, let the marrow of thy heart address thee; see whether thou darest make profession of innocence. Here, clearly, if he hath looked back upon himself, he will be disturbed; if he hath

not flattered himself, he will confess. And what is to become of thee, miserable man, if there shall be no harbour of impunity? If there is only licence for sinning, and no pardon for sins, where wilt thou be, whither wilt thou go? Surely even for thee did it happen, that that afflicted one ate ashes as it were bread, and mingled His drink with weeping. Doth not such a feast now please thee? But nevertheless, he replieth, men add to their sins under the hope of pardon. Nay, but they would add to them if they despaired of pardon. Dost thou not observe in what licentious cruelty gladiators live? whence this, except because, as destined for the sword and sacrifice, they choose to sate their lust, before they pour forth their blood? Wouldest not thou also thus address thyself? I am already a sinner, already an unjust man, one already doomed to damnation, hope of pardon there is none: why should I not do whatever pleaseth me, although it be not lawful? why not fulfil, as far as I can, any longings I may have, if, after these, nothing but torments only be in store? Wouldest thou not thus speak unto thyself, and from this very despair become still worse? Rather than this, then, He who promiseth forgiveness, doth correct thee, saying, Return unto the heart, O ye transgressors. As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Doubtless, when this harbour is set before thee, thou furlest the sails of iniquity, turnest thy prow, makest sail on the track of righteousness, and, hoping for life, dost not neglect thy cure. And let not God displease thee in this, as if He had through this promise of forgiveness made sinners careless. For in order that men might not live the worse from despair, He promised a harbour of forgiveness; again, that they might not live the worse from hope of pardon, He made the day of death uncertain: fixing both with the utmost providence, both as a refuge for the returning, and a terror to the loitering. Eat ashes as bread, and mingle thy drink with weeping; by means of this banquet thou shalt reach the table of God. Despair not; pardon hath been promised thee. Thanks be to God, he saith, because it is promised; I hold fast the promise of God. Now therefore live well. To-morrow, he replieth, I will live well. God hath promised the pardon; no one promised thee to-morrow. If thou hast lived ill, live well even now, this very day. Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. I say not, Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? But, according as thou hast lived, where wilt thou be? Amend thyself therefore, that thou mayest in the body of Christ speak these words, which, if I am not deceived, thou dost willingly recognise; For I have eaten ashes as it were bread: and mingled my drink with weeping.

11. Ver. 10. And that because of thine indignation and wrath: because thou hast taken me up, thou hast cast me down. This is thy wrath, O Lord, in Adam: that wrath in which we were all born, which cleaveth unto us by our birth; the wrath from the stock of iniquity, the wrath from the mass of sin: according to what the Apostle saith, We also were once the children of wrath, even as others; and according to our Lord's words, The wrath of God abideth on him, because he hath not believed on the only-begotten Son of God. For He saith not, the wrath of God shall come upon him: but, abideth upon him: because that wrath in which he was born is not taken away. Wherefore then, and what is the meaning of that saying, Because thou hast taken me up, thou hast cast me down? For he saith not, Because thou hast taken me up, and hast cast me down; but, Because Thou hast taken me up, for this reason Thou hast cast me down. Therefore Thou hast cast me down, because Thou hast taken me up. Whence this? Man set in honour, is made in the image of God: raised up to this honour, lifted up from the dust, from the earth, he hath received a reasonable soul; by the vivacity of that very reason, he is placed before all beasts, cattle, birds that fly, and fishes. For which of these hath reason to understand? Because none of them is created in the image of God. Just as none of these hath this honour, so none of them hath this misery. For what beast of burden groaneth for its sins? what bird feareth the hell of everlasting fire? Because it hath no share in a life of bliss, it hath also no stings of wretchedness. But man, because he was made for a life of bliss, if he shall have lived well; shall for this reason have a wretched life, if he hath lived ill. Therefore, Because Thou hast taken me up, Thou hast cast me down: punishment followeth me, because Thou hast given me a free choice. For if Thou hadst not given me a free choice, and for this reason didst not make me better than cattle, just condemnation would not follow me when I sinned. Thus Thou hast taken me up in giving me freedom of choice, and by Thy just judgment Thou hast cast me down.

12. Ver. 11. My days have declined like a shadow. For thy days might not have been declining, hadst thou not declined from the true day. Thou hast

declined, and hast received declining days. What wonder, if thy days have been made like thyself? For thy days are days of decline, because thou hast declined, as they are days of smoke, because thou hast been puffed with pride. For he had said above, My days are consumed away like smoke; and he now saith, My days have declined like a shadow. In this shadow, day must be recognised; in this shadow, light must be discerned; lest afterward it be said in late and fruitless repentance, What hath pride profited us? or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things are passed away like a shadow. Say at this season, all things will pass away like a shadow, and thou mayest not pass away like a shadow. My days have declined like a shadow, and I am withered like grass. For he had said above, My heart is smitten down, and I am withered like grass. But the grass bedewed with the Saviour's blood will flourish afresh. I have withered like grass; I, that is, man, after that disobedience; this I have suffered from Thy just judgment: but what art Thou?

13. Ver. 12. But Thou, O Lord, endurest for ever. My days have declined like a shadow, but Thou endurest for ever: let the eternal save the temporal! For not because I have fallen, hast Thou grown old: for Thou art strong to set me free, Who hast been strong to humble me. But Thou, O Lord, endurest for ever: and Thy remembrance throughout all generations. Thy remembrance, because Thou dost not forget: throughout all generations, forasmuch as we know the promise of life, both present and future.

14. Ver. 13. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion: for it is time that Thou have mercy upon her. What time? But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law. And where is Sion? To redeem them that were under the Law. First then were the Jews: for thence were the Apostles, thence those more than five hundred brethren, thence that later multitude, who had but one heart and one soul toward God. Therefore, Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion: for it is time that Thou have mercy upon her, yea, the time is come. What time? Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation. Who saith this? That Servant of God, that Builder, who said, Ye are God's building: who said, As a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation;

and, Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

15. Ver. 14. Here therefore what saith he? For thy servants take pleasure in her stones. In whose stones? In the stones of Sion? But there are those there that are not stones. Not stones of what? What then followeth? and pity the dust thereof. Let us acknowledge the stones in Sion; let us acknowledge the dust of Sion. For he saith not, they will pity her stones; but what saith he? For thy servants take pleasure in her stones: and pity the dust thereof. I understand by the stones of Sion all the Prophets: there was the voice of preaching sent before, thence the ministry of the Gospel assumed, through their preaching Christ became known. Therefore thy servants have taken pleasure in the stones of Sion. But those faithless apostates from God, who offended their Creator by their evil deeds, have returned to the earth, whence they were taken. They have become dust, they have become ungodly: of whom it is said, As for the ungodly, it is not so with them; but they are like the dust which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth. But wait, Lord; bear with us, Lord; be longsuffering, O Lord: let not the wind rush in, and sweep away this dust from the face of the earth. Let thy servants come, let them come, let them acknowledge in the stones thy voice, let them pity the dust of Sion, let them be formed in thy image: let the dust say, lest it perish, Remember that we are but dust.

And shall pity her dust. This of Sion: was not that, which crucified the Lord, dust? What is worse, it was dust from the ruined walls; altogether dust it was, but nevertheless it was not in vain said of this dust, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. From this very dust there came a wall of so many thousands who believed, and who laid the price of their possessions at the Apostles’ feet. From that dust then there arose a human nature formed and beautiful. Who among the heathen acted thus? How few are there whom we admire for having done thus, compared with the many thousands of these converts? At first suddenly three, afterwards five thousand; all living in unity, all laying the price of their possessions, when they had sold them, at the Apostles’ feet, that it might be distributed to each, as each had need, who had one soul and one heart toward God.

Who made this even of that very dust, but He who created Adam himself out of dust? This then is concerning Sion, but not in Sion only.

16. Ver. 15. What then followeth? The heathen shall fear Thy Name, O Lord; and all the kings of the earth Thy Majesty. Now that Thou hast pitied Sion, now that Thy servants have taken pleasure in her stones, by acknowledging the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets; now that they have pitied her dust; so that man is formed, or rather re-formed, in life out of dust; hence preaching hath increased among the heathen: let the heathen fear Thy Name, and all the kings of the earth Thy Majesty; let another wall approach also from the heathen, let the Corner-Stone be recognised, let the two who come from different regions, but who no longer differ in belief, meet in close union.

17. Ver. 16. For the Lord shall build up Sion. This work is going on now. O ye living stones, run to the work of building, not to ruin. Sion is in building, beware of the ruined walls: the tower is building, the ark is in building; remember the deluge. This work is in progress now, for the Lord shall build up Sion; but when Sion is built, what will happen? and He will appear in His glory. That He might build up Sion, that He might be a foundation in Sion, He was seen by Sion, but not in His glory: we have seen Him, and He had no form nor comeliness. But truly when He shall have come with His Angels to judge, when all nations shall be gathered before Him, when the sheep shall be set apart on the right hand, and the goats on the left, shall they not look then upon Him whom they have pierced? and they shall be put to confusion when too late, who refused confusion in early and healthful repentance. The Lord shall build up Sion, and will appear in His glory. He who was first seen in her in His infirmity.

18. Ver. 17. He hath turned Him unto the prayer of the poor destitute, and despised not their desire. This is going on now in the building of Sion: the builders of Sion pray, they groan: He is the one poor, because the poor are many; because the thousands among so many nations are one in Him, because He is the unity of the peace of the Church, He is one, He is many: one, through love: many, on account of His extension. Therefore we now pray, we now run: now, if any man hath used to be otherwise, and lived differently, let him eat ashes as it were bread, and mingle his drink with

weeping. Now is the time, when Sion is in building: now the stones are entering into the structure: when the building is finished, and the house dedicated, why dost thou run, to ask when too late, to beg in vain, to knock to no purpose, doomed to abide without with the five foolish virgins? Therefore now run: for He hath turned Him unto the prayer of the poor destitute, and despised not their desire.

19. Ver. 18, 19. Let these things be written for those that come after. When these words were written, they profited not so much those among whom they were written: for they were written to prophesy the New Testament, among men who lived according to the Old Testament. But God had both given that Old Testament, and had settled in that land of promise His own people. But since Thy remembrance is from generation to generation, belongeth not to the ungodly, but to the righteous; "in our generation" belongeth to the Old Testament; while "in the other generation" belongeth to the New Testament; and since the New Testament announceth this that was prophesied, Let these things be written for those that come after: and the people which shall be created, shall praise the Lord. Not the people which is created, but the people which shall be created. What is clearer, my brethren? Here is prophesied that creation of which the Apostle saith: Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God. What meaneth, and all things are of God? both old and new, because Thy remembrance is from generation to generation: and the people which shall be born shall praise the Lord. For He hath looked down from His lofty sanctuary. He hath looked down from on high, that He might come unto the humble: from on high He hath become humble, that He might exalt the humble.

sermon ii

On the Second Part of Psalm 102.

1. Yesterday we heard the groaning of some poor one in prayer: and we acknowledged this one as Him Who for our sakes became poor, when He was rich, and the members which cleave unto Him, and speak by means of their Head. For we beheld there even ourselves; if indeed through His grace

even we are any thing. But the words of groaning were now finished, and those of consolation had begun; but these could never have been finished had we treated of them yesterday: in what remain, let us hear to-day the poor no longer groaning, but rejoicing; rejoicing, because hoping; hoping, because not presuming in himself. He foretold in the holy Scriptures the blessedness which men should have, and added, Let these things be written for those that come after: and the people which shall be born shall praise the Lord. For He hath looked down from His lofty sanctuary. So far yesterday's discourse reached: consider what followeth.

2. Ver. 19, 20. Out of the heaven did the Lord look down upon the earth: that He might hear the mournings of such as are in fetters, and deliver the children of such as are put to death. We have found it said in another Psalm, O let the sorrowful sighs of the fettered come before Thee; and in a passage where the voice of the martyrs was meant. Whence are the martyrs in fetters? Are they not rather in chains? For we know that the holy martyrs of God, led after the judges in their circuit of the provinces, were thrown into chains; but we are not aware that they were thrown into fetters. Fetters are also recognised in the teaching of God, and the fear of Him, concerning which it is said, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. For through this fear the servants of God feared not those who slay the body, but cannot slay the soul: inasmuch as they feared Him Who hath power to slay both body and soul in everlasting fire. For unless the martyrs had been bound by the fetters of fear; when would they have endured all the cruel severities of their persecutors, when they were free to do what they were constrained to, and to escape what they were suffering? But God had bound them with these fetters, hard indeed and painful for a season, but endurable on account of His promises, unto Whom it is said, On account of the words of Thy lips, I have kept hard ways. We must indeed groan in these fetters in order to gain the mercy of God; whence are those words of the martyrs in another Psalm, Let the sorrowful sighing of the fettered come before Thee: yet these fetters must not be shunned, in order to gain a destructive freedom and the temporal and brief pleasure of this life, to be followed by perpetual bitterness. Accordingly Scripture, that we may not refuse the fetters of wisdom, thus addresseth us: Give ear, my son, refuse not my advice, and receive my counsel, and put thy feet into her fetters, and thy neck into her

chain. Bow down thy shoulder, and bear her, and be not grieved with her bonds. Come unto her with all thy heart, and keep her ways with all thy power. Search and seek, and she shall be made known unto thee: and when thou hast got hold of her, let her not go. For at the last thou shalt find her rest, and that shall be turned to thy joy. Then shall her fetters be a strong defence for thee, and her chains a robe of glory. For there is a golden ornament upon her, and her bands are purple lace. Thou shalt put her on as a robe of honour, and shalt put her about thee as a crown of joy. Let the fettered therefore cry out, as long as they are in the chains of the discipline of God, in which the martyrs have been tried: the fetters shall be loosed, and they shall fly away, and these very fetters shall afterwards be turned into an ornament. This hath happened with the martyrs. For what have the persecutors effected by killing them, except that their fetters were thereby loosed, and turned into crowns?

3. Out of heaven, therefore, the Lord looked down, that He might hear the mournings of such as are in fetters, and deliver the children of those that were put to death. They were put to death: but who are the children of those that were put to death, except ourselves? But how are we loosed, except when we say unto Him, Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder; I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving. For every one is released from the chains of evil lusts, or from the entanglements of his sins. The remission of sins, is the loosing. For what would it have profited Lazarus, that he came forth from the tomb, unless it were said to him, loose him, and let him go? Himself indeed with His voice aroused him from the tomb, Himself restored his life by crying unto him, Himself overcame the mass of earth that was heaped upon the tomb, and he came forth bound hand and foot: not therefore with his own feet, but by the power of Him who drew him forth. This taketh place in the heart of the penitent: when thou hearest a man is sorry for his sins, he hath already come again to life; when thou hearest him by confessing lay bare his conscience, he is already drawn forth from the tomb, but he is not as yet loosed. When is he loosed, and by whom is he loosed? Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, He saith, shall be loosed in heaven. Forgiveness of sins may justly be granted by the Church: but the dead man himself cannot be aroused except by the Lord crying within him; for God doth this within him. We speak to your ears: how do we know what

may be going on in your hearts? But what is going on within, is not our doing, but His.

4. He hath then looked back, that He may deliver the children of them that were put to death. Who these were, and who were their children, ye have heard. For what follows? (Ver. 21.) That the name of the Lord may be declared in Sion. For at first, when the fettered were appointed unto death, the Church was oppressed: since these tribulations the Name of the Lord has been declared in Sion, with great freedom, in the Church herself. For she is Sion: not that one spot, at first proud, afterwards taken captive; but the Sion whose shadow was that Sion, which signifieth a watch-tower; because when placed in the flesh, we see into the things before us, extending ourselves not to the present which is now, but to the future. Thus it is a watch-tower: for every watcher gazes far. Places where guards are set, are termed watch-towers: these are set on rocks, on mountains, in trees, that a wider prospect may be commanded from a higher eminence. Sion therefore is a watch-tower, the Church is a watch-tower. Why a watch-tower? To see afar, this is watching. For toil is before me, until I enter into the sanctuary of God: then understand I the end. What sort of vision is this, to understand the end? To pass the sea by sight, not by sailing, and to remain in the uttermost parts thereof; that is, to put our trust in that which will be at the end of the world. If therefore the Church be a watch-tower, the Name of the Lord is already declared there. Not the Lord’s Name only is declared in that Sion, but His praise, He saith, in Jerusalem.

5. Ver. 22. And how is it declared? In the nations gathering together in one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord. How is this accomplished, unless by the blood of the slain? How accomplished, but by the groans of the fettered? Those therefore who were in tribulation and humility have been heard; that in our times the Church might be in the great glory which we see her in, so that the very kingdoms which then persecuted her, now serve the Lord.

6. Ver. 23. She answered Him in the way of His strength. Whom did she answer, but the Lord? Who answered, let us see above. And His praise, He saith, in Jerusalem; in the nations gathering together into one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord. She answered Him in the way of

His strength. Who answered Him, in the way of His strength? Let us first then examine who answered, and then we will enquire what is the path of His strength. The preceding words shew, that either His praise, or Jerusalem, answered: for it was said, “And His praise in Jerusalem; in the nations gathering together in one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord. Respondit ei.” We cannot say, “the kingdoms answered,” for he would have said “responderunt.” “Respondit ei.” We cannot say, “the nations answered,” for he would have said, “responderunt,” (in the plural.) Since then it is “Respondit ei,” in the singular, and we look for the singular number above, and find that the words, His praise, and Jerusalem, are the only words in which we find it. But since it is doubtful, whether it be His praise, or Jerusalem, let us expound it each way. How did His praise answer Him? When they who are called by Him thank Him. For He calleth, we answer; not by our voice, but by our faith; not by our tongue, but by our life. For if God calleth thee, and enjoineth thee to live well, and thou livest ill, thou dost not answer His call, nor doth His praise answer Him from thee; because thy life is such that He is rather blasphemed than worshipped through thee: but when we live in such a way, that through us God is praised, His praise answereth Him. From His elect and holy men, Jerusalem also answereth Him. For Jerusalem also was called: and the first Jerusalem refused to hear, and it was said unto her, Behold, thy house shall be left unto thee desolate. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, (He crieth, and is not answered,) how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! There is no answer: rain cometh from above, and thorns are brought forth instead of fruit. But that Jerusalem, of whom it was written, “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear: break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than those of the married wife.” She hath answered Him. What meaneth, She hath answered Him? She despiseth Him not when He called. What meaneth, She hath answered Him? He sent rain, She gave fruit.

7. She answered Him: but where? in the path of His strength. Did She so in Herself? For what could there be in herself, or what voice could she find within and from herself, except the voice of sin only, the voice of iniquity? Consider her own words; what findest thou but, as ever, I said, Lord, be

merciful unto me: heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee? Moreover, if she be justified, she answereth Him, not after her own deservings, but from the work of His own hands. Wherein? In the way of His strength. Christ Himself is this: I am, He said, the Way, the Truth, and the Life! But before His resurrection, He was acknowledged by His own people: and when He was crucified through weakness, it was especially hidden Who He was, until by His resurrection He appeared strong. The Church therefore answered Him not in the way of weakness, but in the way of His strength: because after His resurrection He called the Church from the whole world, no longer weak upon the cross, but strong in heaven. For it is not the praise of the Christian faith that they believe that Christ died, but that they believe that He arose from the dead. Even the Pagan believeth that He died; and maketh this a charge against thee, that thou hast believed in one dead. What then is thy praise? It is that thou believest that Christ arose from the dead, and that thou dost hope that thou shalt rise from the dead through Christ: this is the praise of faith. For if thou shalt confess with thy mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. He saith not, if thou shalt believe that God gave Him up to be slain: but, if thou shalt believe—that God hath raised Him from the dead, then shalt thou be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness: and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. But wherefore do we believe that He died also? Because we cannot believe that He arose from the dead, unless we believe that He died first. For who riseth again, who hath not died? who waketh from sleep, unless he hath slept before? but shall not he who sleepeth, also rise again? This is the faith of Christians. In this faith then, in which the Church is gathered, in which "the children of the barren one are more than those of her that hath the husband;" She hath answered Him. She gave Him worship according to His commandments; in the path of His strength, not in the path of His weakness.

8. How she answered Him, ye have already heard above. In the gathering of the nations into one, and the kingdoms, that they might serve the Lord. Herein she answered Him, in unity: he who is not in unity, answereth Him not. For He is One, the Church is unity: none but unity answereth to Him who is One. But there are those who assert: "this hath already happened; the

Church hath answered Him in all nations, bringing forth many more children than the married wife; she hath answered in the path of His strength; for she hath believed in the resurrection of Christ, all nations have believed in Him; but that Church which was the Church of all nations no longer existeth; she hath disappeared.” This is what they who are not in her say. O impudent words! Hath she ceased to be, because thou art not in her? Beware lest thou shouldest cease to be, for this very reason; for she will remain, although thou dost not. The Spirit of God hath foreseen this abominable, detestable assertion, full of presumption and falsehood, supported by no truth, enlightened by no wisdom, seasoned with no salt, vain, rash, headlong, destructive, and as if specially against these men the Spirit declaring the unity of the Church: in gathering the people together into one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord; and when He had added, She hath answered Him, that is, His worship, that is, Jerusalem our Mother, doomed to be recalled from her wandering, prolific with many sons, more than the married wife; since some were destined to say against her, She hath existed, and no longer doth exist; Shew me, He saith, the shortness of my days, what is it, that I know not what apostates from me murmur against me? why is it that lost men contend that I have perished? For they surely say this, that I have been, and no longer am: Shew me the shortness of my days. I do not ask from Thee about those everlasting days: they are without end, where I shall be; it is not those I ask of: I ask of temporal days; shew unto me my temporal days; shew me the shortness, not the eternity, of my days. Declare unto me, how long I shall be in this world; on account of those who say, She hath been, and is no more: on account of those who say, The Scriptures are fulfilled, all nations have believed, but the Church hath become apostate, and hath perished from among all nations. What meaneth this, Shew me the shortness of my days? He hath declared, that word too was not in vain. Who, but the Way Himself, hath declared? How hath He declared? Behold, I am with you, even unto the end of the world.

9. But here also they meet us, and say, Behold, I am with you. He said, unto the end of the world; because He foresaw us, and that we, the party of Donatus, would be on the earth. Was it this sect which said, Shew me the shortness of my days; and not She rather who thus spoke above; In

gathering the nations into one, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord? Why is your heart grieved? Because even emperors enact prohibitions against heretics, therein are fulfilled the words, and the kingdoms, that they may serve the Lord. For ye are not the sons of those that were put to death, whose voice when in their fetters was heard by the Lord. Far from it: your deeds shew not this; your pride sheweth not this, your vanity sheweth not this: ye have no savour, and are cast out of doors: ye are the salt that hath lost its savour, and for this reason also ye are trodden down by men. Hear what he saith: what is the Church? She who gathered the nations into one. What is the Church? She who gathered together the kingdoms to serve the Lord. Moved by your words and your false opinions, She asketh of God that He will declare unto Her the shortness of Her days, and findeth that the Lord hath said, Behold, I am with you, even unto the end of the world. Here ye say: He said this of us; we exist, we shall exist even unto the end of the world. Let Christ Himself be asked, for unto Him it was said, “Declare unto me the shortness of my days.” The Gospel of the kingdom, He replieth, shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. Why didst thou say, This indeed was, and hath ceased? Hear the Lord declaring the shortness of my days. This Gospel, He saith, shall be preached. Where? in the whole world. Unto whom? for a witness unto all nations. What after this? and then shall the end come. Seest thou not that there are still nations among whom the Gospel hath not been preached? Since then it is needful that what the Lord spoke shall be fulfilled, declaring unto the Church the shortness of my days, that this Gospel be preached in all nations, and then that the end may come, why is it that thou sayest that the Church hath already perished from among all nations, when the Gospel is being preached for this purpose, that it may be in all nations? Therefore the Church remaineth even unto the end of the world, in all nations; and this is the shortness of Her days, because all that is limited is short; so that She may pass into eternity from this brief existence. May heretics be lost, may that which they are be lost, and may they be found, that they may be what they are not. Shortness of days will be unto the end of the world: shortness for this reason, because the whole of this season, I say not from this day unto the end of the world, but from Adam down to the end of the world, is a mere drop compared with eternity.

10. Ver. 24. Let not therefore heretics flatter themselves against me, because I said, the shortness of my days, as if they would not last down to the end of the world. For what hath he added? O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days. Deal Thou not with me according as heretics speak. Lead me on unto the end of the world, not only to the middle of my days; and finish my short days, that Thou mayest afterwards grant unto me eternal days. Wherefore then hast thou asked concerning the shortness of thy days? Wherefore? Dost thou wish to hear? Thy years are in the generation of generations. This is why I asked concerning those short days, because although my days should endure unto the end of the world, yet they are short in comparison of Thy days. For Thy years are in the generation of generations. Wherefore doth he not say, Thy years are unto worlds of worlds; for thus rather is eternity usually signified in the holy Scriptures; but he saith, Thy years are in the generation of generations? But what are thy years? what, but those which do not come, and then pass away? what, but they which come not, so as to cease again? For every day in this season so cometh as to cease again; every hour, every month, every year; nothing of these is stationary; before it hath come, it is to be; after it hath come, it will not be. Those everlasting years of thine, therefore, those years that are not changed, are in the generation of generations. There is a "generation of generations;" in that shall thy years be. There is one such, and if we acknowledge it aright, we shall be in it, and the years of God shall be in us. How shall they be in us? Just as God Himself shall be in us: whence it is said, That God may be all in all. For the years of God, and God Himself, are not different: but the years of God are the eternity of God: eternity is the very substance of God, which hath nothing changeable; there nothing is past, as if it were no longer: nothing is future, as if it existed not as yet. There is nothing there but, Is: there is not there, Was, and Will be; because what was, is now no longer: and what will be, is not as yet: but whatever is there, simply Is. God justly sent His servant Moses thus: for he asked the name of Him that sent him; he asked, and heard, nor was the longing of a good desire forsaken. But he asked, not from presumptuous curiosity, but from his own need in His service: What, he asked, shall I say unto the children of Israel, if they shall say to me, Who sent thee unto us? and He, exhibiting Himself as the Creator to the created, God unto man, Immortal unto mortal, Eternal unto temporal: I, He replied, Am That I Am. Thou

wouldest say, I am. Who? Gaius: another, Lucius: another, Marcus. Wouldest thou say any thing else than thy name? This was expected of God. For it was this which was asked. What art Thou called? From Whom shall I answer to those who ask, that I am sent? “I Am”—who?—“That I Am.” Is this Thy name? is this all that Thou art called? Would Thy name be To Be, unless whatever else “Is,” when compared with Thee, was found not to Be truly? This is Thy Name: explain it more clearly. Go, He saith, and say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you. I Am That I Am: I Am hath sent me unto you. Behold this great I Am! What is man’s being to this? To this great I Am, what is man, whatever he be? Who can understand that To Be? who can share it? who can pant, aspire, presume that he may be there? Despair not, human frailty! I am, He saith, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Thou hast heard what I am in Myself: now hear what I am on thy account. This eternity then hath called us, and the Word burst forth from eternity. It is now eternity, it is now the Word, and no longer time. Why not time? Because time also was created. How so? All things were made by Him: and without Him was not any thing made that was made. O Word before seasons, through Whom seasons were created, born also in time, though It be eternal life, calling the temporal, making the eternal. This is the “generation of generations.” For one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh. Now ye see the generations of men exist upon the earth as leaves do on a tree; on the olive, however, or the laurel, or any other evergreen. Thus the earth beareth the human race as it were leaves: it is full of men, while those who die are continually succeeded by others being born. For that tree is ever adorned with a green garment: but observe how many dry leaves thou treadest on beneath.

11. There was then a generation under Adam; it passed away. Even at that season some were thence born who should share in God’s eternity: for thence sprung Abel, thence Seth, thence Enoch. That generation passed away, the deluge came, one family remained. Even that generation gave some, Noah himself, his three sons, and three daughters in law; for in the whole of this family of eight, only one sinner was found. The former generation was increased in numbers. Next the whole world was filled from the three sons of Noah, as it were with three measures of meal. Abraham

was chosen, Isaac, and Jacob; they were holy men, patriarchs, who pleased God. This generation produced also others following, which gave birth to the prophets, gave birth to the messengers of God. Afterwards our Lord Jesus Christ Himself also came; He sent the leaven into the three measures of meal, until the whole should be leavened. In the times while His flesh was still upon the earth, the Apotsles lived, and the saints; after them other saints: and whatever saints there now are in the name of Christ, and whatever saints there shall be after us, and down to the end of the world whatsoever saints shall be. From so many generations thou wilt gather together all the holy offspring of all generations, and wilt form one generation thence: In this generation of generations are Thy years, that is, that eternity will be in that generation, which is collected from all generations, and reduced into one; this shall share in Thy eternity. Other generations are born for fulfilling their times, out of which this one is regenerated for ever; though changed it shall be endued with life, it shall be fitted to bear Thee, receiving strength from Thee. In the generation of generations are Thy years.

12. Ver. 25. Thou, O Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth. I know Thy eternity, in which Thou art before all the things Thou hast made. Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the Heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure: they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same. Who art Thou? Thou art the same. Thou Who hast said, I Am That I Am, art the same. And although these things would have no being but from Thee, and through Thee, and in Thee, yet are they not what Thou art Thyself: for Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. Those years of Thine shall not fail, those years of Thine, which shall be in the generation of generations, shall not fail. Knowing this, then, I would ask the shortness of my days of Thee, did I not know that all the days of the world from the beginning to the end are short when compared with Thy eternity. I know therefore why I have asked. Let not the heretics puff themselves up, as if the days of the Church were brief, diffused as she is over the whole world; for even though her days last unto the end, they are short. Why are they brief? Because at some period they must cease. Those years that shall be in the generation of

generations, these are to be loved, these we ought to long and to sigh for; on account of these we must remain in unity, on account of these all the evil caused by heretics must be shunned, on account of these we must answer the lost, on account of these we must recover those who had perished, and gain those who had strayed: there our longings ought to be. Yet, that I may answer the talkative, idle tattlers, the slanderers, whisperers, and detractors, for this reason, Tell me the shortness of my days; and take me not away in the midst of my days, so as to withdraw me from the earth, before the whole world be filled with the Gospel, against the answer of my Lord, Who saith, The Gospel must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. What can we add to these words, brethren? They are plain, they are clear; God laid the foundation of the earth, we know: the heavens are the works of His hands. For do not imagine that God doth one thing with His hand, another by His word. What He doth by His word, He doth by His hand: for He hath not distinct bodily members, Who said, I Am That I Am. And perhaps His Word is His hand, assuredly His hand is His power. For inasmuch as it is said, Let there be a firmament, and there was a firmament; He is understood to have created it by His Word; but when He said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; He seemeth to have created him by His hand. Hear therefore: The heavens are the work of Thy hands. Lo, what He created by His word, He created also by His hands; because He created them through His excellence, through His power. Observe rather what He created, and seek not to know in what manner He created them. It is much to thee to understand how He created them, since He created thyself so, that thou mayest first be a servant obeying, and afterwards perhaps a friend understanding. Therefore, the heavens are the works of Thy hands.

13. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure. The Apostle Peter saith this openly: By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, to be reserved unto fire. He hath said then that the heavens have already perished by the flood: and we know that the heavens perished as far as the extent of this atmosphere of ours. For the water increased, and filled the whole of that space in which birds fly;

thus perished the heavens that are near the earth; those heavens which are meant when we speak of the birds of heaven. But there are heavens of heavens higher than these in the firmament: but whether these also shall perish by fire, or those only which perished also by the flood, is a much harder question among the learned, nor can it easily, especially in a limited space of time, be explained. Let us therefore dismiss or put it off; nevertheless, let us know that these things perish, and that God endureth. And if some things which were made by God remain with God, they do not endure in themselves, but in God, by not departing from God. For what? Are we to say, brethren, that the Angels will perish in the fire with which the world shall burn? Far be it! But what? Shall we say that God made not the Angels? Far be it! But what shall we say? and whence could they exist, if they were not made by Him? For He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created. Now this was said in the course of a commemoration of His works, among which the Angels also are mentioned. The Angels therefore will be with Him, even when the world is blazing with fire; and there will be a conflagration of the world, that shall not burn the saints of God: what the monarch’s furnace was to the three youths, this the burning world will be to the righteous sealed in the Trinity.

14. Perhaps by the heavens we here may understand, without being far-fetched, the righteous themselves, the saints of God, abiding in whom God hath thundered in His commandments, lightened in His miracles, watered the earth with the wisdom of truth, for The heavens have declared the glory of God. But shall they perish? Shall they in any sense perish? In what sense? As a garment. What is, as a garment? As to the body. For the body is the garment of the soul; since our Lord called it a garment, when He said, Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? How then doth the garment perish? Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. They then shall perish: but as to the body: But Thou shalt endure. If then they shall perish according to the body, where then is the resurrection of the flesh? Where is the example for the members which went before in the Head? Where? Dost thou wish to hear? It shall be changed; it shall not be such as it was. Hear the Apostle, saying, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. How shall we be changed? It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. It is sown

corruptible, it shall be raised incorruptible. We are therefore expecting a change: thus shall the heavens perish, and the heavens shall be changed. But perhaps the heavens are not correctly taken for the bodies of the saints? If they bear not God, let them not be heavens. Yet whence, thou sayest, dost thou prove to me that they bear God? Hast thou then so far forgotten, glorify and bear God in your body? Such heavens therefore shall perish; not, however, for ever; they shall perish, that they may be changed. Doth not the Psalm say this? Read the following: They shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. Thou hearest of the garment, of the vesture, and dost thou understand any thing but the body? We may therefore hope for the change of our bodies also, but from Him Who was before us, and abideth after us; from Whom we are what we are, to Whom we shall come when we shall have been changed; He Who changeth, and is not changed; Who createth, without being created; Who moveth, yet abideth; and as it may be understood by flesh and blood, I Am That I Am: therefore Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. But what are we to those years with these beggarly years? and what are they? Yet we ought not to despair. He had already said in His great and exceeding Wisdom, I Am That I Am; and yet He saith to console us, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: and we are Abraham’s seed: even we, although abject, although dust and ashes, trust in Him. We are servants: but for our sakes our Lord took the garb of a servant: for us who are mortal the Immortal One deigned to die, for our sakes He shewed His example of resurrection. Let us therefore hope that we may reach these lasting years, in which days are not spent in a revolution of the Sun, but what is abideth even as it is, because it alone is truly.

15. Ver. 28. But say whether we may ever be there. Hear and consider whether thou oughtest to despair; hear what followeth: The children of Thy servants shall dwell there. Where, but in the years that shall not fail? The children of Thy servants shall dwell there: and their seed shall stand fast for ages: for the age of ages, the age of eternity, the age that abideth. But, the children, he saith, of Thy servants: it is to be feared lest we be the servants of God, and our children, and not ourselves, dwell there? Or if we are the children of the servants, inasmuch as we are the Apostles’ children, what

are we to say? Can those children rising after have so unhappy a presumption, as to boast in their late succession, and so to venture to say, We shall be there; the Apostles will not be there? May this be far from from their piety as children, from their faith as little ones, from their understanding when of age! The Apostles also will be there: rams go before, lambs follow. Wherefore then, the children of Thy servants; and not in brief, Thy servants? Both they are Thy servants, and their children are Thy servants; and the children of these, their grandsons, what are they but Thy servants? Thou wouldest include them all briefly, if Thou shouldest say, Thy servants shall dwell therein. Let us consider what he wished to teach us. For a thing was done in the former ages. For forty years the children of Israel were worn in the wilderness: not one of them entered into the land of promise, but their children did; two indeed, as we now call to mind, did enter; if I am right, the rest did not. Two out of so many thousands entered. So much toil was borne with them: but God toileth not; surely His servants toiled. How much did Moses bear, what revilings did he hear, for the sake of men who were never to enter into the land of promise? Their children entered, what signifieth this? New men entered: the old men entered not yet; of these, two did enter, One and Unity, Head as it were and body, Christ and the Church, with all the youth, I mean, the children. Therefore, The children of Thy servants shall dwell therein. The children of Thy servants, are the works of Thy servants; no one shall dwell there, but through his own works. What therefore meaneth, Their children shall dwell? Let no man boast that he shall dwell there, if he calleth himself God’s servant, and hath not works; for none but children shall dwell there. What meaneth therefore, The children of Thy servants shall dwell there? Thy servants shall dwell there by their own works, Thy servants shall dwell there through their own children. Be not therefore barren, if thou dost wish to dwell there; send before the children whom thou mayest follow, by sending them before thee, not by burying them. Let thy children lead thee to the land of promise, the land of the living, not of the dying: whilst thou art living here in this pilgrimage, let them go before thee, let them receive thee. For the sake of providing for the flesh, his son went before Jacob into Egypt, and saith to his father and his brethren, “I came before you to prepare food for you.” Let therefore thy children go before thee, let thy works go before thee; such children as thou hast sent before, such shalt thou follow.

PSALM 103

A Sermon delivered on a feast of the Martyrs.

1. Ver. 1. In every gift of the Lord our God, in every consolation of His, in every chastisement of His, in the grace which He hath deigned to grant, in the indulgence with which He hath recompensed not as we deserved, in all His works, let our soul praise the Lord. For it is this that we have sung; thence beginneth the Psalm, of which we will speak, whatever we can do being His gift, Whom our soul blesseth. Let each one of us arouse and exhort his soul, and say unto it, Bless the Lord, O my soul. Both all of us, and all the brethren every where in Christ, must, as one man, whose Head is in Heaven, individually exhort his own soul, and say unto it, Bless the Lord, O my soul. He listeneth, he obeyeth, he doth this, he is persuaded of it, not from our gift, but from His Whom our soul blesseth. For this Psalm undertakes to shew us wherefore our soul blesseth the Lord, as if the soul had replied unto it, Wherefore sayest thou unto me, Bless the Lord? Let us therefore hear, let our soul itself hear, let it weigh all the causes which arouse it, that it may not be slothful in blessing the Lord; and let it consider whether what is said to it be just, Bless the Lord, O my soul: let it consider whether it ought to bless any thing beside the Lord. Bless, it saith, the Lord, O my soul!

2. It repeateth this, and saith more expressly what it had said, Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me, His holy Name. I suppose that he speaketh not of what is within the body; I do not suppose him to mean this, that our lungs and liver, and so forth, are to burst forth into the voice of blessing of the Lord. There are lungs in our breast indeed, like a kind of bellows, which send forth successive breathings, which breathing forth of the air inhaled is pressed out into voice and sound, when the words are articulated; nor can any utterance sound forth from our mouth, but what the pressed lungs have given vent to; but this is not the meaning here; all this relateth to the ears of men. God hath ears: the heart also hath a voice. A man speaketh to the things within him, that they may bless God, and saith

unto them, all that is within me bless His holy Name! Dost thou ask the meaning of what is within thee? Thy soul itself. In saying then, all that is within me, bless His holy Name, it only repeateth the above, Bless the Lord, O my soul: for the word Bless, is understood. Cry out with thy voice, if there be a man to hear; hush thy voice, when there is no man to hear thee; there is never wanting one to hear all that is within thee. Blessing therefore hath already been uttered from our mouth, when we were chanting these very words: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, His holy Name. We sung as much as sufficed for the time, and were then silent: ought our hearts within us to be silent to the blessing of the Lord? Let the sound of our voices bless Him at intervals, alternately, let the voice of our hearts be perpetual. When thou comest to church to recite a hymn, thy voice soundeth forth the praises of God: thou hast sung as far as thou couldest, thou hast left the church; let thy soul sound the praises of God. Thou art engaged in thy daily work: let thy soul praise God. Thou art taking food; see what the Apostle saith: Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God. I venture to say; when thou sleepest, let thy soul praise the Lord. Let not thoughts of crime arouse thee, let not the contrivances of thieving arouse thee, let not arranged plans of corrupt dealing arouse thee. Thy innocence even when thou art sleeping is the voice of thy soul. Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, His holy Name.

3. Ver. 2. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His rewards. Bless, he saith, the Lord, O my soul. What is, thy soul? all that is within thee. Bless the Lord, O my soul. The repetition giveth force to the exhortation. But that thou mayest ever bless God, forget not all His rewards. If thou dost forget, thou wilt be silent. But the rewards of the Lord cannot be before thine eyes unless thy sins are before thine eyes. Let not delight in past sin be before thine eyes, but let the condemnation of sin be before thine eyes: condemnation from thee, forgiveness from God. For thus God rewardeth thee, so that thou mayest say, How shall I reward the Lord for all His rewards unto me? This it was that the martyrs considering, (whose memory we are this day celebrating,) and all the saints who have despised this life, and as ye have heard in the Epistle of St. John, laid down their lives for the brethren, which is the perfection of love, even as our Lord saith: Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends: this

the holy martyrs, then, considering, despised their lives here, that they might find them there, following our Lord's words when He said, He that loveth his life, shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for My sake, shall keep it unto life eternal. For they wished to pay their reward: who? and what reward? and unto whom? Men paid the reward of their ministry to God even unto death. What paid they that He had not given them? what gave they that they received not? He therefore truly rewardeth, Who alone giveth; but He rewardeth not our sins; for other rewards than those which were due have been paid us. Forget not, he saith, all His rewards: not awards, but rewards. For something else was due, and what was not due hath been paid. Whence also these words: What, he asketh, shall I reward the Lord for all His rewards unto me? He saith not, His awards, but His rewards. Thou hast rewarded good with evil: He rewardeth evil with good. How hast thou, O man, rewarded thy God with evil for good? Thou who hast once been a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious, hast rewarded blasphemies. For what good things? First: because thou art: but a stone also is. Next, because thou livest: but a brute also liveth. What reward wilt thou give the Lord, for His having created thee above all the cattle; and above all the fowls of the air, in His image and likeness? Seek not how to reward Him: give back unto Him His own image: He requireth no more; He demandeth His own coin. But thou instead of giving thanks, instead of humility, of obedience, of religious worship, that is, instead of all these good things which thou didst owe to thy God, for the good things which thou hast received, which I have described, hast rewarded blasphemies. What then doth He? Confess: I forgive thee. I also reward: but not as thou hast rewarded: thou hast rewarded evil for good: I reward good for evil.

4. Think thou, soul, of all the rewards of God, in thinking over all thy wicked deeds: for as many as are thy sins, so many are His rewards of good. And what present, what offering, what sacrifice, canst thou ever tender unto Him? If thou dost not forget His rewards, He is pleased with this sacrifice: Bless the Lord, O my soul. “The sacrifice of praise honoureth Me:” “Offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows to the Most Highest.” God wisheth Himself to be praised: and this, that thou mayest profit, not that He may be exalted. It is not possible that thou canst reward Him; and what He requireth, He requireth not for Himself, but for thee; thee it shall

profit, for thee it is reserved. He loveth not that from thee which may honour Him, but which may lead thee to Him. For this reason the martyrs sought, and failed in a manner in discovering, and said, How can I reward the Lord, for all His rewards unto me? and they found no reward that they could give, except this: I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. What wilt thou reward the Lord with? For thou wast reflecting, and couldest not find: I will receive the cup of salvation. What? hath not the Lord Himself given the cup of salvation? Reward Him from thine own, if thou canst. I would say, No, do it not; reward Him not from thine own; God doth not will to be rewarded from thine own. If thou rewardest Him from thine own, thou rewardest sin. For all that thou hast thou hast from Him: sins only thou hast of thine own. He doth not wish to be rewarded from thine, He doth will from His own. Just as, if thou shouldest bring to a husbandman, from the land which he hath sown, an ear of wheat, thou hast rewarded him from the husbandman's own produce; if thorns, that hast offered him of thine own. Reward truth, in truth praise the Lord: if thou shalt choose to reward Him from thine own, thou wilt lie. He who speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own. If he who speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own: so he who speaketh truth, speaketh of the Lord's. But what is to receive the cup of salvation, but to imitate the Passion of our Lord? This did the Martyrs. This He said to the proud, and those who were seeking exalted seats, and who were avoiding the vale of lamentation, who wished to sit, one at the right hand, the other at the left. What then said He? Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? Now therefore the Martyr ready for the holy offering saith, I will receive the cup of salvation: I will receive the cup of Christ, I will drink of our Lord's Passion. Beware that thou fail not. But, I will call upon the Name of the Lord. They then who failed, called not upon the Lord; they presumed in their own strength. Do thou so return, as remembering that thou art returning what thou hast received. So then let thy soul bless the Lord, as not to forget all His rewards.

5. Ver. 3–5. Hear ye all His rewards. Who forgiveth all thy sin: Who healeth all thine infirmities; Who saveth thy life from corruption; Who crowneth thee with mercy and lovingkindness. Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, making thee young and lusty as an eagle. Behold His rewards. What, save punishment, was due unto the sinner? What was due to the

blasphemer, but the hell of burning fire? He gave not these rewards: that thou mayest not shudder with dread: and without love fear Him. Forget not all His good rewards; and now change, lest thou experience His—what shall I say? Evil rewards? if just, not evil. To thee evil, therefore: but with respect to God, what thou sufferest is not evil: for if just, it is good; but to thee, who sufferest, these things are evil. Thou dost not wish that those things, which in God are just, should be evil unto thee? Let not thy wickedness be evil in the sight of God. For He hath not ceased to call thee, or neglected to strengthen thee when called, or ceased to perfect thee when strengthened, or neglected to crown thee when perfected. What sayest thou? That thou art a sinner? Turn again, and receive these His rewards: He forgiveth all thy sin. After the remission of thy sins thou bearest a body that is infirm: there must needs be some carnal desires to tickle thee, and to suggest to thee illicit delights; they come in consequence of thy infirmity. For as yet thou bearest flesh that is weak: death hath not as yet been swallowed up in victory: not as yet hath this corruptible put on incorruption: as yet even after remission of sins the soul herself is shaken by certain passions; still is she amid the dangers of temptation, still is she pleased with certain suggestions; with some she is not pleased, and sometimes she consenteth unto some of those with which she is pleased: she is taken. This is infirmity: but He healeth all thine infirmities. All thine infirmities shall be healed: fear not. They are great, thou wilt say: but the Physician is greater. No infirmity cometh before the Almighty Physician as incurable: only suffer thou thyself to be healed: repel not His hands; He knoweth how to deal with thee. Be not only pleased when He cherisheth thee, but also bear with Him when He useth the knife: bear the pain of the remedy, reflecting on thy future health. For consider, my brethren, in these bodily infirmities how much men bear, that after living for a few days they may die, and these few, days of uncertainty. For many after they have borne great pains when they were under the physician’s knife, have either died under the physician’s hands, or, some fresh attack coming on, have sunk beneath it. If they believed death so near them, would they endure those great pains? Thou dost not endure in uncertainty: He Who promised thee health, cannot be deceived. The physician is often deceived: and promiseth health in the human body. Why is he deceived? Because he is not healing his own creature. God made thy body, God made thy soul. He knoweth how to restore what He hath made, He knoweth how to fashion again what He hath already fashioned: do thou only be patient beneath the Physician's hands: for He hateth one who rejects His hands. This doth not happen with the hands of a human physician. Men choose to be bound, and to suffer the operation; ready to admit certain pain for uncertain recovery, a high price. God both surely, and without charge, healeth thee, whom He created. Bear then His hands, O soul, who blessest Him, not forgetful of His rewards: for He healeth all thine infirmities.

6. Who redeemeth thy life from corruption. He healeth all thine infirmities, because He saveth thy life from corruption. Behold, the body which is corrupted, weigheth down the soul. The soul then hath life in a corruptible body. What sort of life? It suffereth burdens, it beareth weights. How great obstacles are there to thinking of God Himself, as it is right that men should think of God, as if interrupting us from the necessity of human corruption? how many influences recall us, how many interrupt, how many withdraw the mind when fixed on high? what a crowd of illusions, what tribes of suggestions? All this in the human heart, as it were, teemeth with the worms of human corruption. We have set forth the greatness of the disease, let us also praise the Physician. Shall not He then heal thee, Who made thee such as to be in health, hadst thou chosen to keep the law of health which thou hadst received? Did He not arrange and enjoin to thee what thou shouldest touch, and what thou shouldest not touch, in order to retain thy health? Thou wouldest not hear to retain thy health, hear therefore in order to recover it. By thine infirmity thou hast experienced how justly He had thus ordered. At last then, let man who kept not the Law when he was warned, keep it now he hath had experience of it. How great is that hardness, which not even experience teacheth? Shall not He then heal thee, Who created thee such as that thou shouldest never feel sickness, hadst thou chosen to keep His commandments? Shall not He heal thee Who made the Angels, and Who will make thee equal with the Angels when thou art restored? Shall not He heal one who was created in His own image—He Who made Heaven and earth? He will heal thee: but thou must wish to be healed. He indeed healeth all the infirm, whomsoever; but He healeth no man against his will. What can be more happy than thou, who canst hold thy health as it were in thine own hands, that is, in thine own free-will? If thou didst wish

for some exalted honour in this world; if thou wast ambitious of a duchy, a proconsulate, a prefecture; couldest thou at once have as thou wast desirous? would power be in attendance upon thy first wish? Many wish to attain these things, but cannot: and if they could, of what use is honour to the sick? For who is not sick in this life? who doth not drag on tedious infirmity? To be born here in a mortal body, is to begin to be sick. Our wants are supported by daily medicines, the means of restoration for all wants are daily medicines. Would not hunger cause thy death, unless thou didst apply what would cure it? would not thirst destroy thee, unless thou didst by drinking satisfy it for a season, though not for ever? For thirst will return in a short interval, though checked. We therefore by these means of healing do assuage the troubles of our distempered state. Thou wast wearied with standing, by sitting down thou art refreshed; the very act of sitting is the cure of thy fatigue: by this very remedy thou art in turn fatigued; thou canst not long sit. Whenever one cause of fatigue is counteracted, a fresh one is created. Why then, infirm as thou art, dost thou long for these things? First think of thine own health. Sometimes a man is stricken in his own house, on his bed, with a more than usually manifest disorder; although this disorder too, which men dislike to contemplate, be plain; yet each man may be attacked with that sickness for which human physicians are sought, and may gasp with fever in his bed; perhaps he may wish to consider of his domestic affairs, to make some order or disposition relating to his estate or his house; at once he is recalled from such cares by the anxiety of his friends, plainly expressed around him, and he is advised to dismiss these subjects, and first to take thought for his health. This then is addressed unto thee, and to all men: if thou art not sick, think of other things: if thy very infirmity prove thee sick, first take heed of thy health. Christ is thy health: think therefore of Christ. Receive the cup of His saving Health, Who healeth all thine infirmities; if thou shalt choose, thou shalt gain this Health. When thou hast sought for honours and wealth, thou wilt not gain them at once, though thou wishest: this is even more precious, and it followeth thy will. He Who healeth all thine infirmities: and Who redeemeth thy life from corruption. There shall all thine infirmity be healed, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption. For thy life hath been redeemed from corruption: rest secure now: the contract of good faith hath been entered upon; no man deceives, no man circumvents, no man oppresses, thy Redeemer. He hath here made a barter, He hath already paid the price, He hath poured forth His blood. The only Son of God, I say, hath shed His blood for us: O soul, raise thyself, thou art of so great price. He redeemeth thy life from corruption. He hath shewn by His example, what He hath promised in the reward. He died for our transgressions, and rose again for our justification. Let the members hope for that which hath been shewn in the Head. Will He not heal those members of His own, whose Head He raised into heaven? Therefore, He redeemeth thy life from corruption.

7. Who crowneth thee with mercy and lovingkindness. Thou hadst perhaps begun to be in a manner proud, when thou didst hear the words, He crowneth thee. I am then great, I have then wrestled. By whose strength? By thine, but supplied by Him. For thou dost strive, it is clear, and therefore thou shalt be crowned, because thou wilt conquer: but see Who conquered first, Who hath made thee a conqueror, even though in the second place. I have overcome the world, He said: be of good cheer. And whence are we of good cheer, if He hath overcome the world? as if we overcame it? Surely for this reason we rejoice, because we ourselves have overcome it. We who were overcome in ourselves, have in Him overcome. He crowneth thee, because He is crowning His own gifts, not thy deservings. I laboured more abundantly than they all, said the Apostle; but see what he addeth: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. And after all his toils he hopeth for the crown itself, and saith, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. Why? Because I have fought a good fight. Wherefore? Because I have finished my course. Wherefore? Because I have kept the faith. How hast thou fought? By what power hast thou kept the faith? Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. It is then by His mercy that thou art crowned; in nothing be proud; ever praise the Lord; forget not all His rewards. It is a reward when thou, a sinner and an ungodly man, hast been called, that thou mayest be justified. It is a reward, when thou art raised up and guided, that thou mayest not fall. It is a reward, when strength is given thee, that thou mayest persevere unto the end. It is a reward, that even that flesh of thine by which thou wast oppressed riseth again, and that not even a hair of thy head perisheth. It is a reward, that after thy resurrection thou art

crowned. It is a reward, that thou mayest praise God Himself for evermore without ceasing. Forget not all His rewards, if thou dost wish that thy soul may praise the Lord, Who crowneth thee with mercy and lovingkindness.

8. And what shall I do when crowned? Lo, I was supported while I was striving; I shall be crowned when the fight is finished; there will be no longer any remaining suggestion or corruption of the enemy with which to strive. For in this life we are ever striving with this corruption; but what is written? The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. After the destruction of death thou shalt fear no enemy: thenceforward death is swallowed up in victory. Then therefore will be the victory, then the crown. After the battle, then, I shall be crowned; after the crown, what shall I do? He Who satisfieth thy longing with good things. For at present thou hearest of good, and dost pant for it: thou hearest of good, and sighest for it: and even whenever thou sinnest, it is perhaps because thou art mistaken in the eagerness of thy choice of good; and in this thou art liable to condemnation, that thou hearest not the good counsel of God, as to what ought to be spurned, and what to be chosen; in that perhaps thou neglectest to learn, if thou wast deceived in thy choice of good. Wherever thou sinnest, thou art as it were seeking for a good, longing for refreshment. These objects of thy search are good; but unto thee they will be evil, if He by Whom they were made good be forsaken. Seek thy own good, O soul. For one thing is good to one creature, another to another, and all creatures have a certain good of their own, to the completeness and perfection of their nature. There is a difference as to what is essential to each imperfect thing, in order that it may be made perfect; seek for thy own good. There is none good but One, that is, God. The highest good is thy good. What then is wanting unto him to whom the highest good is good? For there are inferior goods, which are good to different creatures respectively. What, brethren, is good unto the cattle, save to fill the belly, to prevent want, to sleep, to indulge themselves, to exist, to be in health, to propagate? This is good to them: and within certain bounds it hath an allotted measure of good, granted by God, the Creator of all things. Dost thou seek such a good as this? God giveth also this: but do not pursue it alone. Canst thou, a coheir of Christ, rejoice in fellowship with cattle? Raise thy hope to the good of all goods. He will be thy good, by Whom thou in thy kind hast been made good, and by Whom

all things in their kind were made good. For God made all things very good. If therefore we say that That good, which is God, is very good, it hath already been said of the creation: God made every thing very good. What therefore is that good whereof it is said, There is none good but One, that is, God? Do we say that it is very good? We call to mind that this is said of the whole creation, God made all things very good. What then are we to say? Our words are wanting, but not our feeling. Let us remember the Psalm lately treated of: we cannot express our feeling; let us shout for joy. God is good. What sort of good, who can say? Lo, we cannot say, and we are not allowed to be silent. If then we cannot say, and for our joy are not able to be silent; let us neither speak, nor be silent. What then are we to do, neither speaking, nor silent? Let us shout for joy. Jubilate unto the God of our salvation. Jubilate unto God, every land. What meaneth, Jubilate? Utter the ineffable accents of your joy, and let your delight burst forth before Him. And what will this burst be after the full feast, if even now after slight refreshment the soul is so much affected? what will it be, when it shall be done after our redemption from all corruption, as is said in this Psalm, He shall satisfy thy longing with good things?

9. And as if thou didst ask, when doth He satisfy us? for at present I am not satisfied; whatever I turn myself unto, becometh vile when gained, although it incited me when desired; when I despise all those things after attaining them, which I love only when I have them not, what good thing will satisfy me? The praise of God? Even by this, while the corrupt body weigheth it down, and its earthly abode overpowers the reflecting mind, the soul, not satisfied, is not perfected; other pleasures attached to my wants, and arising from corruption, turn me aside from it. When shall my longing be satisfied with good things? when, dost thou ask? Thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle’s. Dost thou then ask when thy soul is to be satisfied with good things? When thy youth shall be restored. And he addeth, as an eagle’s. Something here lieth hidden; what however is said of the eagle, we will not pass over silently, since it is not foreign to our purpose to understand it. Let this only be impressed upon our hearts, that it is not said without cause by the Holy Spirit, Thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle’s. For it hath intimated unto us a sort of resurrection. And indeed the youth of the eagle is restored, but not into immortality, for a similitude hath been given, as far as

it could be drawn from a thing mortal to signify a thing immortal, not to demonstrate it. The eagle is said, after it becometh overpowered with bodily age, to be incapable of taking food from the immoderate length of its beak, which is always increasing. For after the upper part of its beak, which forms a crook above the lower part, hath increased from old age to an immoderate length, the length of this increase will not allow of its opening its mouth, so as to form any interval between the lower beak and the crook above. For unless there be such an opening, it hath no power of biting like a forceps, by which to shear off what it may put within its jaws. The upper part therefore increasing, and being too far hooked over, it cannot open its mouth, and take any food. This old age doth to it, it is weighed down with the infirmity of age, and becometh too weak from want of power to eat; two causes of infirmity assaulting it, old age, and want. By a natural device, therefore, in order in some measure to restore its youth, the eagle is said to dash and strike against a rock the upper lip of its beak, by the too great increase of which the opening for eating is closed: and by thus rubbing it against the rock, it breaketh off the weight of its old beak, which impeded its taking food. It cometh to its food, and every thing is restored: it will be after its old age like a young eagle; the vigour of all its limbs returneth, the lustre of its plumage, the guidance of its wings, it flieth aloft as before, a sort of resurrection taketh place in it. For this is the object of the similitude, like that of the Moon, which after waning and being apparently intercepted, again is renewed, and becometh full; and signifieth to us the resurrection; but when it is full it doth not remain so; again it waneth, that the signification may never cease. Thus also what hath here been said of the eagle: the eagle is not restored unto immortality, but we are unto eternal life; but the similitude is derived from hence, that the rock taketh away from us what hindereth us. Presume not therefore on thy strength: the firmness of the rock rubbeth off thy old age: for that Rock was Christ. In Christ our youth shall be restored like that of the eagle. For we have grown old among our enemies, in the well-known words of the Psalm, I have grown old amid all mine enemies. How have we grown old? By our mortal flesh, by that flesh of grass: and therefore, My heart is smitten down, and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread. I have forgotten, he saith, to eat my bread. Old age hath increased, it hath closed the mouth, let it be rubbed away by the rock.

10. Thus also in this Psalm which we are now concerned with, when he had said, He satisfieth thy mouth with good things, the soul seemeth to reply, I will not be satisfied with things perishable, with things temporal; let Him give me something everlasting: let Him grant me His Wisdom, His Word: let Him give me God with God, and Himself God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I stand as a beggar before His door, He whom I call upon sleepeth not, let Him give me Three Loaves. Remember the Gospel: behold what it is to know the words of God; they who have read them are moved. For ye remember that a person in want came to the house of his friend, and begged of him three loaves. And he, it is said, while in bed answered him, saying, The door is now shut; and my children are with me in bed. He through persevering entreaty, extorted by importunity what he could not of his own deserts. But God is willing to give: but He giveth not except to him who asketh, that He may not give to him who receiveth not. He wants not to be aroused by thine importunity. For when thou prayest, thou art not troublesome as to one who sleepeth. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. Once hath Christ slept, that from His side a wife might be created: He slept on the Cross, it is clear. For He died, so that He said, I have laid me down and slept. But shall not he who sleepeth also rise? For this reason it is said, I rose up again, for the Lord sustained me. But what doth the Apostle say? Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death shall have no more dominion over Him. He therefore doth not sleep: beware lest thy faith sleep. Let then the soul that longeth to be satisfied with some exalted, ineffable good, to which it rather shouteth for joy, and for which it rather shouteth, than uttereth any description; for it already wisheth, it already perceiveth somewhat thereof: it seeth that it is hindered by the weighing down of the body, that it cannot be satisfied in this life; let it answer, and say, What sayest thou to me? Shall my longing be satisfied with good things? I know that good of His which I am to desire, I know what is enough for me, I see this in Philip: Shew us, he said, the Father, and it sufficeth us. He seemingly longed for the Father alone: our Lord shewed that three loaves were to be desired: He Who is one loaf shewed him this, saying, Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known the Father, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father. He promised also the Holy Ghost: Whom the Father, He said, will send in My Name; and again He saith, Whom I will send you from the

Father: His own gift coequal with Himself. I know what I long for: but when shall I be satisfied with it? Lo, now my thoughts are of the Trinity, in such wise as I can about the Trinity, I hardly dare to perceive any thing even darkly in a looking-glass; when shall I be satisfied? Thy youth shall be renewed as an eagle's. Thou art not satisfied at present, because thy soul is not fit for that great and solid food; for when thy beak is closed, it is not fit for it. Old age hath closed thy mouth, for this reason is the Rock given, where, oldness rubbed off, thy youth may be restored as that of an eagle; that thou mayest be able to eat thy bread, Him Who saith, I am the living bread, Who came down from Heaven. Thy youth shall be renewed as an eagle's: then shalt thou be satisfied with good things.

11. Ver. 6. The Lord executeth mercy and judgment for all them that are oppressed with wrong. He doth so now, brethren, before we come to our restoration like that of the eagle, before we are satisfied with good things. For what here, what in this pilgrimage, what in this life? are we forsaken? No. The Lord executeth mercy. Now see how He executeth mercy, not leaving us in the desert, not leaving us in the wilderness, until we reach our country: He executeth mercy; but unto whom? Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy, ye have heard lately, brethren, while the Gospel was being read. Let not therefore any man imagine, that the mercy of God will light upon him, if he is unmerciful himself. But hear what is the measure of mercy, lest perhaps it be only towards a friend, and not towards an enemy. It is said, Love your enemies. Thou dost wish to be satisfied with the good things of God; let mercy be satisfied within thee. Full mercy, this is perfect mercy; it is this which loveth, which loveth him even who hateth herself. But what shall I do? thou sayest. If I begin to love mine enemy, shall I receive injuries, and bear injuries, and shall not I seek redress, when the laws protect me? It is right for thee to redress thyself; it is allowed, that it is just: see whether thou hast nothing to redress within thyself, and redress it. For thou speakest thus, shall I not then redress myself? as if God were restraining the justice of redress, and not extinguishing the pride of him who redresseth. Or was not that adulterous woman worthy of being stoned? or if she were stoned, would an act of injustice have been done? If it were unjust, the commandment was unjust; but the Law commanded it, God commanded it. Yet, O ye avengers, see whether ye be not sinners. An

adulterous woman is brought forward to be stoned according to the Law, but she is brought before the Lawgiver Himself. Thou who bringest her forth, dost rage against her: see who thou art who art cruel, and against whom thou art cruel; if sinner against sinner, be cruel no more, first confess; if thou a sinner dost rage against a sinner, leave her; He knoweth what to think of her, what to judge, how to spare, how to heal. Art thou angry according to the Law? He Who made the Law, which causeth thy rage, knoweth better what to do. Our Lord, at the time she was brought before Him, bending His Head, began writing on the earth. When He bent Himself down upon the earth, He then wrote on the earth: before He bent upon the earth, He wrote not on the earth, but on stone. The earth was now something fertile, ready to bring forth from the Lord's letters. On the stone He had written the Law, intimating the hardness of the Jews: He wrote on the earth, signifying the productiveness of Christians. Then they who were leading the adulteress came, like raging waves against a rock: but they were dashed to pieces by His answer. For He said to them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again bending His head, He began writing on the ground. And now each man, when he asked his own conscience, came not forward. It was not a weak adulterous woman, but their own adulterate conscience, that drove them back. They wished to punish, to judge; they came to the Rock, their judges were overthrown by the Rock.

12. The Lord doeth mercies: but unto whom? Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Be merciful unto all men. What mercy art thou to shew to the righteous? Only in his bodily wants; if they are not supported by thee, they will not be abandoned by God. What therefore thou dost, profiteth thyself more. Thou givest to a beggar when passing by and asking alms: thou seekest also a righteous man unto whom thou mayest give, through whom thou mayest be received into eternal tabernacles; since he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, receiveth a righteous man's reward. A beggar seeketh thee: do thou look for a righteous man. For of one thing it is said, Give to every man that asketh of thee: and of another, "Let almsgiving toil in thy hand, until thou find a righteous man, to whom thou mayest give. And if after a long time he be not found; seek long: thou wilt find." But what wilt thou give? is not more given thee? If we

have sown unto you, saith the Apostle, spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? Thence also is the passage which we have already expounded by our Lord’s permission, that the earth bringeth forth grass for cattle, that is, carnal things for those who thresh the wheat: for, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Whence we have exhorted you to be in this matter diligent, cautious, sober; that ye think your works your treasures. But do we, brethren, say this, that these works may be done towards ourselves? I think that although from weak men, this exhortation may be nevertheless made in the name of the Lord, and Apostolic; but it is profitable unto you, as the Apostle saith, Not because I desire a gift, but that I desire fruit that may abound to your account. What alms then wilt thou give to the righteous? The widow did not feed him, the crow fed him; because He Who made the crow fed him: Elias, I mean. There is therefore no deficiency in what God giveth to His own: do thou see what thou art buying, when thou mayest buy, and at what price? For thou art buying the kingdom of heaven: and there is no time for buying, except in this life. Remark also, at how low a price thou buyest. Its value to thee is that of all that thou canst ever possess.

13. Execute mercy to the wicked, not as being wicked. Do not receive the wicked, in so far forth as he is wicked: that is, do not receive him as if from inclination towards and love for his iniquity. For it is forbidden to give unto a sinner, and to receive sinners. Yet how is this, Give unto every man that asketh of thee? and this, if thine enemy hunger, feed him? This is seemingly contradictory: but it is opened to those who knock in the name of Christ, and will be clear unto those who seek. Help not a sinner: and, give not to the ungodly; and yet, give unto every man that asketh of thee. But it is a sinner who asketh of me. Give, not as unto a sinner. When dost thou give as unto a sinner? When that which maketh him a sinner, pleaseth thee so that thou givest. Attend for a short space, beloved, until this matter, which is very useful to understand, be unfolded by illustrations. He said this, If any man be hungry, if thou hast whence to give, give; if thou seest that thou oughtest to give in order to his support, give. Let not the bowels of mercy become sluggish within thee, because a sinner meeteth thee: the sinner who meeteth thee is a man. When I say, the sinner who meeteth thee is a man, I mention two names; these two names are not superfluous: two names, one

that he is a man, another that he is a sinner; that he is a man, is the work of God: that he is a sinner, is the work of the man: give unto the work of God, give not to that of man. Yet how, thou askest, dost thou forbid me to give to the work of the man? what is to give to the man’s work? To give to the sinner in consideration of his sin, because he pleaseth thee by his sin. And who will do this, sayest thou? Who will do this? Would that no man would, would that few only, would that it were not in public! Let those who give to a man, who fights with wild beasts, tell me why they give? Why doth he give to this man? He loveth that in him, in which consists his greatest sin; this he feedeth, this he clotheth in him, wickedness itself, made public by all witnessing it. Why doth the man give, who giveth to actors, or to charioteers, or to courtesans? Do not these very persons give to human beings? But it is not the nature of God’s work that they attend to, but the iniquity of the human work. Dost thou wish to see what thou art honouring in the man who encounters beasts, when thou clothest him? Suppose it is said unto thee: Become like him: thou lovest him, thou rejoicest in him, thou art seemingly glad to strip thyself, and to clothe him; take it not as an insult, if it be said to thee, May thy sons be such as this man! This is an insult, thou sayest. Why an insult, save because that is wickedness? Why an insult, unless because that is infamy? When therefore thou givest, thou givest to infamy, not to bravery. As then he who giveth to the fighter of beasts, giveth not to the man, but to a most infamous profession; for if he were only a man, and not a fighter of beasts, thou wouldest not give; thou honourest in him vice, not nature: so on the other hand, if thou give to the righteous, if thou give to the prophet, if thou give to the disciple of Christ any thing of which he is in want, without thinking that he is Christ’s disciple, that he is God’s minister, that he is God’s steward; but art thinking in that case of some temporal advantage, for instance, that when perchance he shall be needful to thy cause, he may be bought for thee, because thou hast given him something; thou hast no more given to the righteous, if thou hast thus given, than he gave to the man, when he gave to the beast-fighter. The matter, then, most beloved, is quite open to us, and I conceive, that although it was obscure, it is now clear. It was to this that the Lord bound thee, when He said, He who hath received the righteous man. That were enough. But as the righteous may be received with another intention, when it is imagined that he may be profitable for some temporal purpose, perhaps to supply thy greedy desires, perhaps to assist in the circumvention or oppression of another man; thou perhaps receivest him, because thou art seeking some such service from him: He denied thee the reward of the righteous man, except with this addition. For He saith, He who receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man: that is, receiving him in consideration of his righteousness: and, he who receiveth a prophet; and not simply receiveth a prophet, but, in the name of a prophet: honouring in him his being a prophet: lastly, whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these least ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple; that is, because he is Christ's disciple, because he is a steward of the Mystery: Verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward: as therefore thou understandest, he who receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward; so understand, he who receiveth a sinner in the name of a sinner shall lose his reward.

14. Therefore, brethren, exercise mercy. There is no other bond of charity, there is no other vehicle to lead us out of this life into that country: extend your love even unto your enemies: be without apprehension. For this reason came Christ, to Whom so long before it had been said, Out of the mouth of very babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger: where some copies read, "defender:" but "avenger" is the truer reading. The Lord wished to still the avenger, that is, him who would avenge himself, so that such an one's sins should not be remitted him. What then, sayest thou? Shall discipline sleep? Shall all punishment be removed? It shall not. For what wilt thou do with a profligate son? Wilt thou not chastise, wilt thou not scourge him? Wilt thou curb thy very servant, if thou shalt see him living ill, with some punishment, yea with strokes? Be it so, be it so: God alloweth it: indeed He blameth, if it be not done; but do it in the temper of affection, not in that of revenge. But when thou shalt have suffered from the injuries of some of the more powerful, where thou hast neither power of correcting them by discipline, nor even perhaps of admonishing and counselling: bear, bear fearlessly: hear the Gospel that hath just been read, Blessed shall ye be when men shall persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my name's sake. And He added there for whose sake, lest the revilings thou bearest be not of thine own deserving, not for the sake of

God’s righteousness. For a man is not righteous because he is reviled: but he who being righteous is unjustly reviled; and if he be unjustly reviled, a reward is given unto him. On this account therefore be merciful without fear, extend love even unto thine enemies: punish those who chance to belong to thy government, restrain them with affection, with charity, in regard to their eternal salvation; lest while thou sparest the flesh, the soul perish. Do this: and though thou have to endure many, over whom thou canst not exercise discipline, because thou hast no lawful authority over them; bear their injuries; be without apprehension. For the Lord executeth mercy and judgment unto all them that are oppressed with wrong. Thus will He shew mercy unto thee if thou shalt have been merciful: thou shalt be merciful, without the injuries thou sufferest losing their punishment; To Me belongeth vengeance, I will repay, saith the Lord.

15. Ver. 7. He made His ways known unto Moses. What ways of His hath He made known to Moses? Why is Moses here chosen? By Moses understand all the righteous, all saints: He hath mentioned one, let all be understood. Nevertheless, by Moses was the Law given, and the very delivery of the Law hath somewhat obscure. For the Law was given with this view, that the sick might be convinced of his infirmity, and pray for the physician. This is the hidden way of God. Thou hadst long ago heard, Who healeth all thine infirmities. Their infirmities were as yet hidden in the sick, the five books were given to Moses: the pool was surrounded by five porches; he brought forth the sick, that they might lie there, that they might be made known, not that they might be healed. The five porches discovered, but healed not, the sick; the pool healed when one descended, and this when it was disturbed: the disturbance of the pool was in our Lord’s Passion. For when He came, and was unknown, when it was said by some, He is Christ; by others, He is not Christ; He is righteous, He is a sinner; He is a master, He is a seducer: He disturbed the water, that is, the people; and in the whole of that disturbance of the water one was healed, because in the Lord’s Passion unity is healed. He who shall be without the pale of unity, although he shall lie in the porches, cannot be healed: although he holdeth the Law, he reacheth not salvation. Since therefore this is a mystery there, he teacheth that the Law was given that sinners might be convinced of their sin, and call upon the Physician in order to receive grace. How was he

convinced, whom the Apostle Paul representeth by himself, in the words, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? For through the commandment there had been shewn to him a kind of strife within himself, whereof he saith, I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. He acknowledged himself in misery, in groaning, in strife and contention; he himself not agreeing with himself, at variance with himself, recoiling from himself: and what saith he, wishing for peace, true peace, peace above? O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ: for where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Whence did sin abound? The Law entered in, that sin might abound. But why did sin abound when the Law entered in? Because men would not confess themselves sinners; when the Law was given them, they became also transgressors: for none is a transgressor, but he who hath transgressed the Law. The Apostle himself saith this: for where no law is, there there is no transgression. Sin therefore abounded, that grace might still more abound. Therefore, as I had begun to say, because this is a great mystery in the Law, that it was given with this view, that by the increase of sin, the proud might be humbled, the humbled might confess, the confessing might be healed; these are the hidden ways, which He made known to Moses, through whom He gave the Law, by which sin should abound, that grace might more abound. God did not this in cruelty, but with the design of healing. For sometimes a man seemeth to himself well, when he is really ill; and since he is ill without being aware, he seeketh not a physician; the disease is increased, the trouble is augmented, the physician is sought, and the whole is healed. He hath made His ways known unto Moses: His good pleasure unto the children of Israel. To all the children of Israel? To the true children of Israel; yea, to all the children of Israel. For the treacherous, the insidious, the hypocrites, are not children of Israel. And who are the children of Israel? “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.”

He hath made known His good pleasure unto the children of Israel.

16. Ver. 8. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: long-suffering, and of great mercy. Why so long-suffering? Why so great in mercy? Men sin and

live; sins are added on, life continueth: men blaspheme daily, and He maketh His sun to rise over the good and the wicked. On all sides He calleth to amendment, on all sides He calleth to repentance, He calleth by the blessings of creation, He calleth by giving time for life, He calleth through the reader, He calleth through the preacher, He calleth through the innermost thought by the rod of correction, He calleth by the mercy of consolation: He is long-suffering, and of great mercy. But take heed lest by ill using the length of God's mercy, thou treasure up for thyself, as the Apostle saith, wrath in the day of wrath. For this the Apostle saith: or despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the patience of God leadeth thee to repentance? Because He spareth thee, dost thou imagine that thou pleasest Him? These things hast thou done, He saith, and I held my tongue, and thou thoughtest of iniquity that I am even such a one as thyself. Sins please Me not, but with long-suffering I seek good deeds. If I were to punish sinners, I should not find confessors. God therefore by His long-suffering in sparing leadeth thee to repentance: but whilst thou daily sayest, This day is over, and thus will I be to-morrow also, for to-morrow will not be my last day; and so on the third day; then suddenly His anger cometh. Brother, defer not to turn unto the Lord. For some there are who prepare to turn, and yet put it off, and in them crieth out the raven's voice, "Cras! Cras!" The raven which was sent from the ark, never returned. God seeketh not procrastination in the raven's voice, but confession in the wailing of the dove. The dove, when sent forth, returned. How long, To-morrow! To-morrow!? Look to thy last morrow: since thou knowest not what is thy last morrow, let it suffice that thou hast lived up to this day a sinner. Thou hast heard, often thou art wont to hear, thou hast heard to-day also; daily thou hearest, and daily thou amendest not. But thou, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: who will render to every man according to his deeds. Let not God seem to thee in such wise merciful as to forego justice. The Lord is merciful, and a shewer of mercy. I hear, and I rejoice: so thou sayest. Hear and rejoice; he hath added further, long-suffering, and of great mercy: and at the end, and true. At the former words thou rejoicest: at the latter tremble. He is long-suffering and merciful, so as also to be true. When thou shalt have treasured up unto thyself wrath in the day of wrath, shalt thou not find Him just, whom thou hast despised when merciful?

17. Ver. 9. He will not alway be chiding: neither keepeth He His anger for ever. Since it is in consequence of His anger that we live in the scourges and corruption of mortality: we have this in punishment for the first sin. My brethren, we ought not only to consider how we may avoid His future threats, but also His present wrath; for this is His wrath, of which the Apostle calleth himself and us sons, when he saith, We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. It is therefore in consequence of His anger that man is a pilgrim here, that he toileth. Is it not through His anger, my brethren, that in the sweat of thy face and in toil thou shalt eat bread, and the earth shall bear thorns and thistles unto thee? This was said to our forefathers. Or if our life is different from this; if thou canst, turn unto some pleasure, where thou mayest not feel thorns. Choose what thou hast wished, whether thou art covetous or luxurious; to name these two alone; add a third passion, that of ambition; how great thorns are there in the desire of honours? in the luxury of lusts how great thorns? in the ardour of covetousness how great thorns? What troubles are there in base loves? What terrible anxieties here in this life? I omit hell. Beware lest thou even now become a hell unto thyself. The whole of this, my brethren, is the result of His anger: and when thou hast turned thyself unto works of righteousness, thou canst not but toil upon earth; and toil endeth not before life endeth. We must toil on the way, that we may rejoice in our country. He therefore consoleth by His promises thy toil, thy labours, thy troubles, saying to thee, He will not alway be chiding: neither will He keep His anger for ever.

18. Ver. 10, 11. He hath not dealt with us according to our sins. Thanks unto God, because He hath vouchsafed this. We have not received what we were deserving of: He hath not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickednesses. For as the height of heaven above the earth, so hath the Lord confirmed His mercy toward them that fear Him. The Lord hath confirmed His mercy toward them that fear Him, so great—as what?—as the height of heaven above the earth. What hath he said? If the heaven can ever cease to protect the earth it covereth, at some time God

may cease to protect them who fear Him. Observe the heaven: every where on every side it covereth the earth, nor is there any part of the earth not covered by the heaven. Men sin beneath heaven: they do all evil deeds beneath the heaven; yet they are covered by the heaven. Thence is light for the eyes, thence air, thence breath, thence rain upon the earth for the sake of its fruits, thence all mercy from heaven. Take away the aid of heaven from the earth: it will fail at once. As then the protection of heaven abideth upon the earth, so doth the Lord's protection abide upon them that fear Him, Thou fearest God, His protection is above thee. But perhaps thou art scourged, and conceivest that God hath forsaken thee. God hath forsaken thee, if the protection of heaven hath forsaken the earth: for as the height of heaven above the earth, so hath the Lord confirmed His mercy toward them that fear Him.

19. What then hath He done? He hath not rewarded us according to our sins.

Ver. 12. Look, how wide the east is from the west; so far hath He set our sins from us. According to the height of the heaven above the earth, hath the Lord confirmed His mercy towards them that fear Him. I have said wherefore: for our protection. How so? How wide the east is from the west, so far hath He set our sins from us. They who know the Sacraments know this; nevertheless, I only say what all may hear. When sin is remitted, thy sins fall, thy grace riseth; thy sins are as it were on the decline, thy grace which freeth thee on the rise. Truth springeth from the earth. What meaneth this? Thy grace is born, thy sins fall, thou art in a certain manner made new. Thou shouldest look to the rising, and turn away from the setting. Turn away from thy sins, turn unto the grace of God; when thy sins fall, thou risest and profitest. But the part of heaven which riseth, again falleth. Illustrations can not be drawn in exact analogy from all topics: but the subjects themselves may be paralleled with those which they are used to illustrate: as he said of the eagle, as of the moon, so also here. One region of the heaven falleth, another riseth: but the region which is now rising will set after twelve hours. Not like this is the grace which riseth unto us: both our sins fall for ever, and grace abideth for ever.

20. Ver. 13. But why hath He set our sins as far as the east is from the west, so far from us, so that while our sins fall, our grace riseth? Why, do ye conceive? Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so hath the Lord had mercy on them that fear Him. Let Him be as angry as He shall will, He is our Father. But He hath scourged us, and afflicted us, and bruised us: He is our Father. Son, if thou bewailest, wail beneath thy Father; do not so with indignation, do not so with the puffing up of pride. What thou sufferest, whence thou mournest, it is medicine, not punishment; it is thy chastening, not thy condemnation. Do not refuse the scourge, if thou dost not wish to be refused thy heritage: do not think of what punishment thou sufferest in the scourge, but what place thou hast in the Testament. Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear Him.

21. Ver. 14. For He knoweth our forming: that is, our infirmity. He knoweth what He hath created, how it hath fallen, how it may be repaired, how it may be adopted, how it may be enriched. Behold, we are made of clay: The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. He sent even His own Son, Him Who was made the second man, Him Who was God before all things. For He was second in His coming, first in His returning: He died after many, He arose before all. He knoweth our forming. What forming? Ourselves. Why sayest thou that He knoweth? Because He hath pitied. Remember that we are but dust. Addressing God Himself, he saith, Remember, as if God could forget: He perceiveth, He knoweth in such a manner that He cannot forget. But what meaneth, Remember? Let thy mercy continue towards us. Thou knowest our forming; forget not our forming, lest we forget thy grace. Remember that we are but dust.

22. Ver. 15. Man, his days are but as grass. Let man consider what he is; let not man be proud. His days are but as grass. Why is the grass proud, that is now flourishing, and in a very short space dried up? Why is the grass proud that flourisheth only for a brief season, until the sun be hot? It is then good for us that His mercy be upon us, and from grass make gold. For, Man, his days are but as grass: for he flourisheth as a flower of the field. The whole splendour of the human race; honour, powers, riches, pride, threats, is the

flower of the grass. That house flourisheth, and that family is great, that family flourisheth; and how many flourish, and how many years do they live! Many years to thee, are but a short season unto God. God doth not count, as thou dost. Compared with the length and long life of ages, all the flower of any house is as the flower of the field. All the beauty of the year hardly lasteth for the year. Whatever there flourisheth, whatever there is warmed with heat, whatever there is beautiful, lasteth not; nay, it cannot exist for one whole year. In how brief a season do flowers pass away, and these are the beauty of the herbs! This which is so very beautiful, this quickly falleth. All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness of man is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the Word of the Lord standeth for ever. Inasmuch then as He knoweth as a father our forming, that we are but grass, and can only flourish for a time; He sent unto us His Word, and His Word, which abideth for evermore, He hath made a brother unto the grass which abideth not for evermore: He hath made His Only-Begotten by nature, the only One born of His own Substance, brother unto so many adopted brethren. Wonder not that thou shalt be a sharer of His Eternity; He became Himself first a sharer of thy grass. Will He Who assumed from thee what was lowly, deny unto thee what is exalted in respect of thee? Man then, as far as pertaineth unto man, his days are but as grass: as a flower of the field so shall he flourish.

23. Ver. 16. The wind shall go over on it, it shall not be; and the place thereof shall know it no more. As it were a kind of destruction; as it were a kind of perishing. Behold he who puffeth himself up. Behold he who dwelleth with pride. Behold he who lifteth himself up. The wind shall go over him, he shall not be: and his place shall know him no more. See them daily dying; and this will be all, this will be their end. For he is not speaking of grass, but of that for whose sake even the Word became grass. For thou art man, and on thy account the Word became man. All flesh is grass: and the Word was made flesh. How great then is the hope of the grass, since the Word hath been made flesh? That which abideth for evermore, hath not disdained to assume grass, that the grass might not despair of itself.

24. Ver. 17. In thy reflections therefore on thyself, think of thy low estate, think of thy dust: be not lifted up: if thou art any thing better, thou wilt be

so by His Grace, thou wilt be so by His mercy. For hear what followeth: but the mercy of the Lord endureth for ever and ever upon them that fear Him. Ye who fear not Him, will be grass, and in grass, and in torment with the grass: for the flesh shall arise unto the torment. Let those who fear Him rejoice, because His mercy is upon them.

25. Ver. 18. And His righteousness upon children’s children. He speaketh of reward, upon children’s children. How many servants of God are there who have not children, how much less children’s children? But He calleth our works our children; the reward of our works, our children’s children. His righteousness upon children’s children; even upon such as keep His covenant. Let men beware that all may not conceive what is here said to belong to themselves: let them choose, while they have the choice. Upon such as keep His covenant: and keep in memory His commandments to do them. Thou wast already disposed to flatter thyself, and perhaps to recite to me the Psalter, which I have not by heart, or from memory to say over the whole Law. Clearly thou art better in point of memory than I, better than any righteous man who doth not know the Law word for word: but see that thou keep the commandments. But how shouldest thou keep them? Not by memory, but by life. Such as keep in memory His commandments: not, to recite them; but, to do them. And now perhaps each man’s soul is disturbed. Who remembereth all the commandments of God? who remembereth all the writings of God? Lo, I wish not only to hold them in my memory, but also to do them in my works: but who remembereth them all? Fear not: He burdeneth thee not: on two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. But I wish to keep all the Law in my mind. Keep it, if thou canst, when and how thou canst. Whatever page thou shalt have enquired of, will answer thee this; whatever thou hast, keep: keep charity: the end of the commandment is charity. Think not of the multitude of boughs, hold the root, and the whole tree is in thee. And upon such as keep in memory His commandments to do them.

26. Ver. 19. The Lord hath prepared His throne in heaven. Who but Christ hath prepared His throne in heaven? He Who descended and ascended, He Who died, and rose from the dead, He Who lifted up to heaven the manhood He had assumed, hath Himself prepared His throne in heaven.

The throne is the seat of the Judge: observe therefore ye who hear, that He hath prepared His throne in heaven. Let each man do what he wisheth on earth, the sin will not be unpunished, righteousness will not be fruitless; since the Lord, Who was mocked before the throne of a man His judge, hath prepared His throne in heaven. The Lord hath prepared His throne in heaven: and His kingdom shall rule over all. The kingdom is the Lord’s, and He shall be the Governor among the people. And His kingdom shall rule over all.

27. Ver. 20. Bless ye the Lord, ye Angels of His, ye that are mighty in strength: ye that fulfil His word. By the word of God, then, thou art not righteous, nor faithful, unless when thou dost it. Ye that are mighty in strength, ye that fulfil His commandment, and hearken unto the voice of His words.

28. Ver. 21. Bless ye the Lord, all ye His hosts: ye servants of His that do His pleasure. All ye angels, all ye that are mighty in strength: ye that do His word: all ye His hosts, ye servants of His that do His pleasure, do ye, ye bless the Lord. For all they who live wickedly, though their tongues be silent, by their lips do curse the Lord. What doth it profit if thy tongue singeth a hymn, while thy life breatheth sacrilege? By living ill thou hast set many tongues to blasphemy. Thy tongue is given to the hymn, the tongues of those who behold thee, to blasphemy. If then thou dost wish to bless the Lord, do His word, do His will. Build upon the rock, build not upon the sand. To hear and not to do, is to build upon the sand: to hear and to do, is to build upon a rock: neither to hear, nor to do, is not to build at all. If thou buildest on the sand, thou buildest ruin: if thou buildest nothing, exposed to rain, rivers, winds, thou wilt be hurried away before thou hast gained thy footing. We must not therefore loiter, but build; nor build so, that a ruin be built; but we must build upon a rock, that temptation may not overwhelm us. If it be thus with thee, bless the Lord; if it be not thus, flatter not thy tongue; question thy life, let it answer thee. Thou findest out the evil that is in thee: groan, confess; thy confession must be a blessing of God; but let thy changed state persevere in blessing Him.

29. Ver. 22. Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of His, in all places of His dominion. Therefore in every place. Let Him not be blessed where He

ruleth not: in all places of His dominion. Let no man perchance say; I cannot praise the Lord in the East, because He hath departed unto the West; or, I cannot praise Him in the West, because He is in the East. For neither from the east, nor from the west, nor yet from the desert hills. And why? God is the Judge. He is every where, in such wise that every where He may be praised: He is in such wise on every side, that we may be joyful in Him on every side: He is in such wise blessed on every side, that on every side we may live well. Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of His. For when in a good life thou hast begun to bless the Lord, His works bless Him, not thy deservings. For through thee and in thee He worketh good, as the Apostle saith: Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you. That thou mightest not extol thyself, then, because thou dost fulfil His word, because thou dost fulfil His will, He chose thou shouldest be humbled, by looking back to His grace, whence thou hast gained this. In every place of His dominion: bless thou the Lord, O my soul! The last verse is the same as the first: blessing is at the head of the Psalm, blessing at the end; from blessing we set out, to blessing let us return, in blessing let us reign.

PSALM 104

Exposition

Discourse I. on the first part of the Psalm.

Three days since, if ye deign to remember it, ye were abundantly refreshed: but since even after so long a discourse ye left me very anxious to hear more, I think ye ought not, holy brethren, to be defrauded of what is due to you on this day: so that this will be only what is due to you, the former will be your gain. The Psalm which has been read, almost wholly consists of figures and of mysteries, and hath need not only of mine, but of your diligent attention; although even all that is said, may be taken literally in a religious sense. For although all the works of God are not enumerated, yet many are, and they are known to all who look upon them, who know even from these things which are made and seen, to behold in the mind His invisible things. For we see an ample fabric of the world consisting of heaven and earth, and of all the things which in them are; and from the magnitude and beauty of this fabric, we already love even though we as yet see not the inestimable magnitude and beauty of Him Who made it. For He, Who cannot as yet be seen in the purity of our heart, hath not ceased to place His works before our eyes, that seeing what we are able, we may love Him Whom we are not able to see, that by the merit of that love we may at length be enabled to see. Yet in all of what is said, a spiritual meaning must also be sought for, to discover which your longings in Christ's Name will help us.; by which as it were with invisible hands ye knock at an invisible door, that it may be invisibly opened unto you, and ye may enter invisibly, and invisibly be healed.

2. Ver. 1. Bless the Lord, O my soul, therefore, let us all say. Let us all address our own soul: because the soul of all of us by one faith is one soul; and all of us who believe in Christ, through the unity of His body, are one man. Let our soul praise the Lord for so great blessings of His, for so numerous and so great gifts of His graces, which gifts we discover in

considering this Psalm, and shaking off the cloud of carnal thought, as far as we can with mind aroused, and as far as we can with uplifted gaze, and as far as we can with the eye of our heart pure, as far as this life hindereth not, as far as desires of things present engage us not, as far as worldly lust blindeth us not. Thus eager then, we are about to hear those great, joyful, beautiful, desirable gifts of His, so full of delight and happiness; which he who had conceived this Psalm already saw in mind, and in the exultation of that sight burst forth in the words, Bless the Lord, O my soul.

3. O Lord my God, Thou art become exceeding glorious. Behold the glorious things which he is about to describe; in which glorious things He only is to be praised Who is the Author of all glorious things. Thou art clothed with confession and honour. O Lord my God, Who art become exceeding glorious, whence hast Thou become exceeding glorious? Art Thou not always great, art Thou not always glorious? Art Thou in aught imperfect, that Thou mayest increase? Art Thou failing, so that at some time Thou mayest decrease? But because Thou art what Thou art, and truly art, Thou hast spoken Thy Name to Thy servant Moses, I am That I am: Thou art indeed great, and Thy greatness is eternal, neither beginning nor ending; neither doth it begin from the beginning of time, nor doth it run out at the end of time, nor doth it suffer any thing in the interval: for Thy greatness is unchangeable. How then art Thou become exceeding glorious? Another Psalm teacheth us: for it saith, Thy knowledge hath been made wonderful from me. If it be rightly said, Thy knowledge hath been made wonderful from me; it is rightly said, Thou art become exceeding glorious, O Lord God, from me. But this also must be further enquired into. Is my God made glorious through me? Through me then He becomes great. Our daily prayer for our salvation teacheth us also somewhat. Hallowed be Thy Name: each day we ask, each day we beg, that this may be. Suppose some one were to ask us, why is it that ye ask that God’s Name may be hallowed? is it then at some times not hallowed, so that it may now be hallowed? and yet unless we wished this to happen, we should not beg that it might happen. For thanksgiving is different from prayer: we give thanks for what already doth exist: we pray that what is not, may be. What then meaneth, Hallowed be Thy Name? and we understand the words here, O Lord my God, Thou art become exceeding glorious. This is the meaning of,

Hallowed be Thy Name. May Thy Name be hallowed among men. For Thy Name is ever hallowed, but unto some unclean ones Thy Name is not yet hallowed. For the Apostle saith, Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure. If nothing is pure to the defiled and unbelieving, I seek the reason: but, he addeth, even their mind and conscience is defiled. If nothing is pure unto them, neither is God: unless indeed ye imagine that God seemeth pure unto those who daily blaspheme Him. If He be pure, let Him please them; if He pleaseth them, let Him be praised: but if He is blasphemed, He displeaseth them; and if He displeaseth them, how can He who displeaseth thee be pure unto thee? Why then do we pray, Hallowed be Thy Name? That unto those men who through their unbelief hold not as yet God's Name hallowed, it may become hallowed, unto whom He is not as yet holy, Who by Himself, and in Himself, and in His own saints, is holy. We pray for the human race, for the whole world, for all nations, who daily sit and dispute that God is not righteous, and that God judgeth not righteously; that sometime they may amend themselves, and bring a righteous heart unto His righteousness; and thus, cleaving unto Him, made straight by Him Who is straight, may no longer blame Him, but He who is righteous may please them, become righteous themselves; since, Truly God is loving unto Israel: but unto such as are of a right heart. When therefore the Psalmist, that is, we ourselves, the body, the limbs of Christ, saw how great gifts God had bestowed upon the human race, he who before thought not of any God, or of a false one, or of God as not so great, when he saw Him in His works; O Lord my God, he said, Thou art become exceeding glorious; that is, I who did not as yet understand Thee, understand Thee now to be great. Ever great, even when hidden; but unto me now (made manifest as) great, when Thou hast appeared. Through me therefore Thou hast become exceeding glorious: as Thy knowledge hath been made wonderful from me; for it hath been made to be admired through me. I wonder at it now that I am turned towards it; but it, although I am not turned, although after conversion I again turn away, abideth whole. But I am now become great in it, and having been made whole in it when I was incomplete before, wonder at what I knew not; not that since I learnt, it hath lately become great, but that I am become great since I learnt it. Now hear wherein God seemeth to have become exceeding glorious, Who is ever glorious; for He hath become exceeding glorious in His works towards us.

4. Thou hast clothed thyself with confession and honour. Before honour he hath set confession, honour is in beauty. Thou seekest beauty: thou art seeking a good thing. But wherefore seekest thou beauty, O soul? That thy Betrothed may love thee; for thou displeasest him by thy deformity. For what is He like? Fairer than the sons of men. Thou who art deformed dost wish to kiss Him Who is beautiful; but thou heedest not that thou thyself art full of iniquities. And full of grace are Thy lips. For thus it is said of Him: Fairer than the sons of men: full of grace are Thy lips; for which the maidens love Thee. There is then one who is beautiful and fairer than the sons of men; although a son of man, yet fairer than the sons of men. Dost thou wish to please Him, O human soul, O thou one in many? Let us hear of the Church, that they had one heart and one soul unto God; the Psalm addresseth the Church. Dost thou wish to please Him? Thou canst not, as long as thou art deformed: what wilt thou do that thou mayest be beautiful? First let thy deformity displease thee, and then thou wilt deserve beauty from Him, unto Whom it is thy wish to be pleasing by thy beauty. For He who fashioned thee, shall fashion thee anew. Heed therefore first who thou art, that thou mayest not dare in thy deformity to seek the kisses of the beautiful. Looking upon what, thou askest, shall I see myself? He hath set before thee a mirror in His Scriptures: it is read to thee. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. A mirror bath been set before thee in this verse, see if thou art what it saith; if as yet thou art not, groan that thou mayest be. The mirror will disclose unto thee thy face: as thou wilt not find a flatterer in the mirror, so flatter not thyself. This brightness sheweth thee the very thing that thou art: see what thou art: if it displease thee, seek that thou mayest not be such. For if while thou art deformed thou art displeasing to thyself, thou already dost please the beautiful. What then? Since thy deformity displeaseth thee, thou beginnest with confession unto Him; as it is elsewhere said, Begin with confession unto the Lord. First accuse thy deformity: for the deformity of the soul cometh of sins, of iniquities. Begin to praise Him by accusing thine own deformity, by thy confession thou beginnest to be adorned: who adorning thee, save He who is fairer than the sons of men?

5. But that He might render her beautiful, I venture to assert, He loved her when deformed. What meaneth this, He loved her when deformed? For Christ died for the ungodly. What a life doth He keep for thee when justified, Who gave thee when ungodly His own death? Lo, He, beautiful and fairer than the sons of men, because He is preeminently righteous above the sons of men, since He came to the deformed, to render her beautiful, (I will say this also, since I find it in Scripture,) He became Himself deformed. Not to me listen ye in this, lest I may have rashly slipped into this expression. For as I had said, He loved her even when deformed; and this I had not said as it were agreeably to some that love Him, unless testimony bore me out; I said also what the Apostle said: dost thou wish to know that He loved her even when deformed? Christ died for the ungodly; so also, how shall I prove what I just now asserted, that He became Himself deformed, that He might come unto her who was deformed; since the divine voice hath already spoken of Him as fairer than the sons of men? But again, I find in this very divine voice the words, We have seen Him: He had no form or comeliness. Fairer than the sons of men: we have seen Him: He hath no form or comeliness. He said not, we have not seen, and therefore we knew not whether He had form or comeliness: behold, “we have seen Him, and He had no form or comeliness.” Where then did he, who said, He was fairer than the sons of men, see Him? and where did he, who said, He hath no form or comeliness, see Him? Hear where he, who spoke of Him as fairer than the sons of men, saw Him. Being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Justly fairer than the sons of men, because equal with God: behold, O man, understand, and acknowledge where he, who said, “Fairer than the sons of men,” saw Him. For he answered us, Dost thou ask where I saw Him? “In the form of God.” And by what means hast thou seen Him in the form of God? How hast thou seen Him in the form of God? Because the invisible things of Him are understood by the things that are made. Very well: I understand, I recognise Whom thou hast seen, and in what form, where, and by what means. Whom hast thou seen? Our Betrothed. In what form? Fairer than the sons of men. Where hast thou seen Him? When in the form of God. By what means? His invisible things are understood by the things that are made. Let us see what another prophet also, but not another spirit, (for they do not disagree with one another,) saith of Him. One hath displayed Him unto us, “fairer than the

sons of men let the other also display Him in his own words; “We have seen Him: He hath no form or comeliness.” One Apostle Paul connects both prophets; one chapter of Paul gives testimony to either prophet. There I find Him Who was “fairer than the sons of men:” Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Here he speaketh of Him as another also saw Him, “having no form or comeliness:” for He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. Justly they saw Him, and He had not form or comeliness. Justly before the Cross they wagged their heads, asking, Is this all the Son of God? If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross. But He had not form or comeliness. Even so, O ye whom He pleaseth not, because He had no form or comeliness! O ye who wagged your heads before the Cross, and who fixed not your head upon that Head which hung upon the Cross! The head of those who mocked Him wags deservedly, until He Himself who was insulted becometh their head. Lo, He resumeth beauty and great beauty. Behold, what thou sayest is less than what He hath achieved. Thou sayest, If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross: behold, He hath not come down from the Cross, but hath arisen from the tomb.

6. Therefore, O soul, thou canst not be beautiful, unless thou hast confessed thy deformity to Him Who is evermore beautiful, but was for thy sake for a season not beautiful: and in such a manner not beautiful for a season in the form of a servant, as never to have abandoned that beauty which is in the form of God. Thou, therefore, O Church, hast beauty. It is said unto thee also in the Song of Songs, O thou fairest among women. It is also said of thee, Who is this that cometh up, made white? What meaneth, made white? Illumined: not whitened, as by a dye, even as women paint themselves white when they wish to seem other than what they are: not whitened like a whitened wall; for the whitened wall, that is, hypocrisy and semblance, shall be destroyed, as the Apostle saith. The whitened wall is clean plaster without, filth within. She therefore is not thus whitened; but she is whitened, illumined, in that she is not of herself white. Formerly, he saith, I was a blasphemer; and, We were by nature the children of wrath, even as

others. Grace cometh, illumining and whitening: at first thou wast black, but thou hast become white by His grace. For ye were sometimes darkness: but now are ye light in the Lord. Of thee also it is therefore said, Who is this that cometh up, made white? She is now to be admired, now hardly to be gazed upon. For it is for one who admireth to say, Who is this who cometh up white, so beautiful, so luminous, so free from spot or wrinkle? Is it not she who once lay in the mire of her iniquities? is it not she who once lay in the fornication of idols? is it not she who was once unclean in every carnal lust and desire? Who then is she who cometh up, become white? Consider who is He Who for her became without form or comeliness, and thou wilt understand how bright is this honour. If thou dost admire His humility for her sake, do not any longer wonder at her elevation on His account. How great is the happiness of this whitened one, in that even when she was black, she brought down unto herself the beautiful Betrothed, who should die for the ungodly. Our Lord then hath clothed Himself with confession and beauty, He hath clothed Himself with the Church: for the Church herself is confession and beauty. First confession, then beauty: confession of sins, beauty of good works: Thou hast put on confession and beauty.

7. Ver. 2. Thou deckest Thyself with light as it were with a garment. This is His garment, of which I have already spoken: without spot or wrinkle. It is called light; and this I have already said: Ye were sometime darkness; but now are ye light in the Lord. Not in yourselves, therefore; for in yourselves ye are darkness but light in the Lord. Therefore, Thou deckest thyself with light as it were with a garment; and spreadest out the heavens like a skin. How He hath clothed Himself with the light of the Church as with a garment, he wishes to describe by certain figurative emblems: let us hear, how the Church hath been made light, how she became without spot or wrinkle, how she became white, splendid, refulgent in the garb of her Betrothed, cleaving unto Him. Thou spreadest the heaven like a hide. Now this indeed I see; for, save God, Who spread out this heaven, which we gaze upon with our fleshly eyes? These words, Thou spreadest it out like a hide, refer to the ease with which it was spread out, if thou understandest it literally. For when thou hast seen this great fabric, (since if any man hath spread out even one small vault, he doth it with a great effort, with much toil and difficulty, and long work,) that human weakness might not imagine

toil of this sort in the works of God, he mentioneth a thing that is easy in proportion to thy power, that thus thou mayest begin to believe that God worketh easily, and not to imagine that He hath spread out the heavens with as much toil as thou hast the roof of thy house; but that it was as easy for Him to spread out so broad a heaven, as for thee to stretch out a single hide. Wonderful ease: but even yet in thee the Spirit speaketh to one of slow comprehension. For God doth not spread out heaven, as thou dost a hide. For if He doth thus spread it out, behold the hide is placed before thee either wrinkled or rolled; command it to be spread out, by thy word spread out the hide. I cannot, thou sayest. Therefore even in spreading out the hide thou art far from the ease of God. For, He spake, and they were made: He said, Let there be a firmament between water and water, and it was so. Yet in order to signify the ease of this work, thou mayest in the mean while take it in a literal sense, according to thy understanding.

8. But if, figuratively, we wish somewhat hidden to be revealed, and to knock at what is closed, we find that God hath spread out heaven as a hide, so that we may understand by heaven holy Scripture. This authority God first placed in His Church; thence He began to follow out the rest: for He set the heaven, and spread it out like a hide, and not like a hide without a meaning. First, He hath spread out the report of His preachers as a hide: the hide signifieth mortality: for this reason also those two first parents of ours, the authors of the sin of the human race, Adam and Eve, when in Paradise, in contempt of God’s commandment, they had transgressed what God had ordered by yielding to the serpent’s suggestion, being made mortal, were dismissed from Paradise; and that this mortality of theirs might be signified, they were clothed with garments of hides, for they received garments made of hides: but hides are only stripped from dead animals: by hides therefore that state of mortality is signified. What then, if divine Scripture is here signified under the name of a hide, how did God make heaven from a hide, and spread out the heaven like a hide? Because they by whom Scripture was preached to us, were mortal. That word of God indeed is evermore the same, ever immutable, and never failing. Behold, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Was it so, and is it not so now? It both is, and ever will be. If then the Word of God is God with God, read it if thou canst. But what sayest thou? that it is above, and

that therefore thou canst not read? The Word of God is every where; it reacheth from one end to another mightily: it passeth and goeth through all things by reason of its pureness. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him: and when He came, He was here; for He came in the flesh, never absent in the Godhead. Why then couldest thou not read? Because in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, placed there by the wisdom of God, (for therein are all things, and if that be subtracted, all things are nought,) placed there thou couldest not by wisdom know God: therefore what followeth was necessary, It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. If they who believe were to be saved by the foolishness of preaching, God hath chosen certain mortal things, He hath chosen men mortal, and doomed unto death; using the human tongue, He hath spoken in a human voice; using the stewardship of mortals, He hath used mortal instruments, and in Him a heaven hath been made in thy sight, that thou mightest in what is mortal recognise the Immortal Word, and that thou also by sharing in the same Word mightest become immortal. Moses lived, and died: for God said unto him, Get thee up into this mountain, and die. Jeremiah and so many Prophets have died; and their words though they be dead abide even to our posterity, because they were not theirs, but His by them, Who spreadeth out the heaven like a hide. Behold the Apostle, who said, that to depart, and to be with Christ, was far better, now liveth with Christ, released from this life, even as all those Prophets live with Christ: but by what instrument did He bestow upon us what we read? By what was mortal, by mouth, by tongue, teeth, hands. All those means by which the Apostle achieved the whole work which we read of, are functions of the body, but at the command of the soul which God commanded: for this reason the heaven is spread out like a hide. We are now reading beneath the heaven, as it were beneath the hide of the divine Scriptures, when it is spread. For afterwards, the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. It is not without meaning, brethren, in this passage said to be as a hide, in the former a scroll. Somewhat is here figured unto us. With respect to holy Scripture, the discourse of the dead is spread: for this reason then it is spread out as a hide; and much more spread out, since they are dead. For after death the Apostles and Prophets became more known; they were not so well known while alive; Judæa only possessed the Prophets when alive, all nations when they were dead. For while they lived, the hide was not as yet spread out, the heaven was not yet outspread, that it might cover the whole world. He, therefore, spread out the heaven like a hide.

9. Ver. 3. Who covereth the upper parts of it with waters. We read this also, and it is well understood after the letter. For when He commanded that a firmament should be made between waters and waters, it was made, so that there are lower waters which overflow the earth, and waters above, removed from our sight, but presented to our faith. Let the waters praise Him, he saith, which are above the heavens; for He spake the word, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created. The sense therefore hath been explained to the letter; for He covereth the upper parts of it with waters. What is its meaning figuratively? Since we have interpreted figuratively the hide as holy Scripture, and the authority of the divine Word dispensed unto us by mortals, through whom when dead the report of the same dispensation is spread abroad; according to this exposition, in what sense doth He cover the upper parts of it with waters? The upper parts of what? Of heaven. And what heaven? The holy Scripture. What are the upper parts of holy Scripture? What do we find higher than the rest in the holy Scriptures? Ask Paul. I shew unto you, he saith, a more excellent way. What doth he call the more excellent way? Though I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. If therefore nothing can be found in holy Scripture more excellent than charity, how are the upper parts of heaven covered with waters, if the higher commandments of Scripture are those of charity? Hear in what way; The love of God, he saith, is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. In the expression shed abroad, understand waters in the love of the Holy Spirit. These are the waters, respecting which it is said in a passage of Scripture: Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad in thy streets; let them be only thine own, and not stranger’s with thee. For all who are strangers from the way of truth, whether Pagans, or Jews, or heretics, and all wicked Christians, may have many good gifts, love they cannot have. How great a gift is this! not to speak of other outward gifts, which all men have, because He maketh His sun to arise over the good and the bad: they are the gifts of God, and not only common to good and bad men, but also to beasts and to cattle. Existence itself, life, sight, feeling, hearing, and the discharge of the other

functions of the senses, are God’s gifts: but consider with what creatures, and with how many, they are enjoyed in common, and with those whom thou wouldest not choose to imitate. Even an acute intellect the worst men have, even the vilest stage players are skilful and industrious in their arts, even robbers have riches, many wicked men have wives and children, all are God’s fair gifts, no one gainsayeth; but consider with whom they are in common. Look back upon the gifts of the Church herself. What sort of gift is that of the Sacraments, in Baptism, in the Eucharist, in the other holy Sacraments? Even the sorcerer Simon attained this gift. What sort of gift is Prophecy? Even Saul the wicked monarch prophesied, even then did he prophesy, when he was persecuting holy David. Remark: I said not, when he had persecuted him; for perchance after having persecuted him, he repented, and became worthy of the spirit of prophesying. He prophesied not when he had, nor when he was about to persecute, but whilst he was persecuting. He sent his officers to arrest David: David was at that season among the prophets, where also was holy Samuel; the messengers were filled with the spirit of prophecy, and they prophesied. But perhaps these came with good intentions, or from the necessity of their office, or not intending to execute what was commanded. He sent others also; this happened unto them too; let us understand their intentions to have been the same. Since they were long, he came in person, raving, breathing slaughter, thirsting for the blood of the innocent saint, to whom he was withal ungrateful; and he also was filled with the prophetic spirit, and prophesied. Let not therefore those men be boastful, who perchance have enjoyed without love this holy gift of God, even as holy Baptism; but let them reflect what account they will have with God, who do not use holy things holily. Among these will be those who shall say, In Thy Name we have prophesied. It will not be said unto them, Ye lie: but, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity. For though I have all prophecy, and have not charity, I am nothing. Saul even prophesied, but he was working iniquity. But who worketh iniquity, except he who hath not charity? For, Love is the fulfilment of the Law. Therefore, He covereth the upper parts of it with the waters. What hath he said? In all the Scriptures charity obtaineth the most excellent way, and the most excellent place; none but the good approach it, the wicked share it not with us: they may share Baptism, they may share the other Sacraments, they may share prayer, they may share these walls and this meeting; charity they cannot share with us. For He is their own fountain to the good, their own to saints, of which it is said, Let no stranger have it in common with thee. Who are strangers? All they that hear, I know you not. For if they are not known, doubtless they are strangers, to whom it is said, I know you not. Therefore the more excellent way of charity hath in it those who properly belong to the kingdom of heaven. Therefore the commandment of charity is above the heavens, above all books; for books are subservient to it, every tongue of the saints serves under it, and every movement of the stewards of God, both of mind and body. That way therefore is excellent above all, and is well said to 'protect in waters the upper parts of heaven,' because you find nothing higher than charity in the books of God.

10. But hear now yet more distinctly, what is the 'water.' For we said, that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who is given unto us. We said also, Let thy waters run abroad in the streets. And some one saith to me, it is not there expressly said, whether I ought to understand charity: what if another understand something else? Only remember what the Apostle saith, The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. Whence? By the Holy Spirit, Who is given unto us. Hear now the Lord, the Master of the Apostles: If any one thirst, let him come and drink. Let Him also say, He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. What is this? Let the Evangelist expound. But this, saith he, He said of the Spirit, Which they that believed on Him should receive. For the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Therefore, brethren, if for this reason the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified; when He is glorified and ascended into heaven, the Spirit was sent, and the Apostles were filled with charity, shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who was given unto them, because the upper parts of heaven are covered with waters. And rightly, because the Lord ascended into the heavens, so as to be above the heavens, and thence to send charity. For God doth not so cover as to be in any wise sustained by that which He covereth. He lifteth up, and doth not press down, whom He covereth. So, therefore, doth He cover the heaven with waters, that it is rather lifted up by the Divine Spirit. What lifteth is above; what is lifted is beneath: one holdeth up, the other hangeth. If then that lifteth, this hangeth;

hear that this ‘heaven’ of the Scriptures hangeth upon charity. For there are those two well-known commandments of love: On these two commandments hangeth all the Law and the Prophets. “Who covereth with waters the higher parts thereof.”

11. Ver. 3. Who placeth clouds His ascent. This is also well understood after the letter. The Lord visibly ascended into Heaven. How were clouds set the ascents of heaven? When He had said these things, a cloud received Him. You have it also foretold of the resurrection: And the dead, he saith, in Christ shall rise first; afterward also we that are alive shall be caught up with them in clouds to meet Christ into the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Thou hast clouds the ascent of Heaven: I will shew thee also clouds the ascent of this Heaven, that is, of the Divine Scriptures. What is this, brethren? I would the Lord may deign to number me among those clouds, such as they be; He will see how misty a cloud I am; yet all the preachers of the word of truth, you are to understand, are clouds. Whosoever therefore of their infirmity cannot ascend into this Heaven, that is, to the understanding of the Scriptures, let them ascend by the clouds. For perchance it is even now doing in yourselves, if we effect any thing, if our labour and sweat is not fruitless, ye ascend into the Heaven of the Divine Scriptures, that is, into the understanding of them, by our preaching. How high was the Heaven in this Psalm! For no one of you saw what was that in figure: He stretcheth out the Heaven like a skin, Who covereth the upper parts of it in water. This very thing which was said, Who placeth clouds the ascent of it, behold, is now understood, so far as the Lord hath granted, by our preaching; for the clouds rain not by their own gift. Do ye by understanding ascend, in that ye understand bear fruit; lest ye be like that vineyard of which it is said in the Prophet, I will command my clouds that they rain not upon it. For a certain vineyard was accused, that for grapes it had borne thorns, and had made no worthy return for sweet rain. For he who heareth good things, and worketh evil things, is rained on with sweet rain, and beareth thorns. We may not suspect, brethren, that the Lord spake of any earthly vineyard, and of this visible kind. For these, lest under the obscurity of speech the excuse of wickedness should find shelter, the Lord Himself expounded unto what vineyard He spake, and of what vineyard He said those things. The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, He saith, is the House

of Israel. Why wander your hearts, ye unrighteous, over the mountains and hills of the vinedressers? I know, He saith, of what vineyard I speak, I know where I sought grapes and found thorns: without reason do ye suspect and imagine one thing and another, unwilling to understand that ye may do well. For this also is written, He would not understand, that he might do well. Away with all your guesses. The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the House of Israel, and the men of Judah His beloved plant. Beloved when it was planted; condemned when it bore thorns. Therefore, brethren, perchance the House of Israel was a vineyard, and we are not a vineyard? With fear let us listen to what we see was said to the Jews. See how the Apostle alarms the branches graffed in, from the branches broken off; and in the case of the broken branches sets forth severity to be feared, in the graffed branches sets forth goodness to be loved. Be not unfruitful in goodness, lest, being barren, thou feel severity. But I am not a vine, thou sayest to me. Where is the saying of the Lord; I am the Vine, ye are the branches, My Father is the Husbandman? Where is the saying of the Apostle, Who planteth a vineyard, and receiveth not of its fruit? Thou, O Church, thou art a vineyard, and hast God for thy Husbandman. No man that is an husbandman raineth on his own vineyard. Therefore, most beloved brethren, bowels of the Church, pledges of the Church, children of Mother Church, hear, when there is time. God threatened that vineyard with a most dreadful commination. I will command my clouds, He said, that they rain not upon it. And so it was; the Apostles came to the Jews, they rejected them, and they said to them, Unto you we were sent, but since ye have rejected the word of God, we go to the Gentiles. Ye see how in the same Spirit of God, He commanding within Who dwells in the hearts of His own, it was commanded the clouds of God that they should not rain on the vineyard, which, when it was expected it should bear grapes, bore thorns. Therefore also He made the clouds the ascent of it, and stretched forth the Heaven like a skin. There is no reason for you to complain: the authority of the Scriptures is spread out over the world, clouds are not wanting, the word of truth is preached, all things that are obscure are expounded, that your hearts may ascend by the clouds. Look how ye believe, look what ye receive: after the preacher will come the Judge, after the dispenser will come the exactor. Who placeth clouds the ascent of it.

12. Who walketh above the wings of the wind. This it is now hazardous to take to the letter. Or what are the wings of the wind? Or, however, as in a picture, are we to make ourselves winds flying and having wings? There is no wind, brethren, but that we feel, a certain motion, and as it were wave of the air, driving what it can according to its strength. What wings are those of the wind? But again, what wings of God? And yet it was said, Under the shadow of Thy wings they shall hope. Let us endeavour, therefore, to take this also of the letter, as it was properly done in the case of that creature. Perchance the swiftness of the word is what the Scripture commendeth; of which swiftness we have already before spoken on another Psalm, where it is written, Even unto swiftness His word runneth; because men know nothing swifter than the wind. Even as that ease was set forth in the skin; for nothing is easier for a man to stretch out than a skin: so also here, signifying that God, or His word, every where present, by swiftness of motion leaveth not any thing, because thou knowest not any thing swifter than the wind, he saith, He walketh above the wings of the wind, that is, His swiftness surpasseth the swiftness of the wind: so that by the wings of the wind thou mayest understand the swiftness of the wind, and the word of God thou mayest understand to be swifter than all winds. And thus in the first view of consideration: let us knock for something more inward, and let these literal sayings point out something to us in a figure.

13. The winds indeed we understand in a figure not unfitly of souls; not that the soul is wind, but because the wind is invisible, though a bodily thing, moving bodies; yet as it evades the sight of the human eye, and the soul is invisible, therefore we may well understand souls by wind. Thence it is that God is also said to have breathed the breath of life into man, when He had formed him, and man became a living soul. Therefore winds are not unfitly taken in allegory for souls. But beware lest you suppose that when I named allegory, I spoke of any thing like a pantomime. For some words, because they are words, and proceed from the tongue, are used by us in common with ridiculous and unworthy subjects, yet those words have their place in the Church, and their place on the stage. For I did not say any thing but what the Apostle said when he spoke of the two sons of Abraham: which are, he saith, in allegory. It is called allegory, when any thing appears to sound in words of one thing, and in meaning to signify another. As Christ is

called a Lamb: is He cattle? Christ a Lion: is He a wild beast? Christ a Rock: is He hardness? Christ a Mountain: is He a swelling of the earth? and so many things seem to have one sound and another meaning, and that is called allegory. For he that thinks I said allegory with reference to the theatre, let him think that the Lord also spake "parabola" of the amphitheatre. Ye see what comes of a city where shows abound! I should speak more safely in the country; for there perchance men would not have learned what allegory is, save in the Scriptures of God. Therefore, in that we say a figure is an allegory, allegory is a sacred meaning figured. And for what do we take here, He walketh above the wings of the winds? We said that the winds might well be taken for souls. The wings of the winds, the wings of souls, what are they but that whereby they are raised upward? The wings of souls, then, are virtues, good works, right deeds. In two wings they have all their feathers, for all the commandments are in two commandments. Whoever loves God and his neighbour, has a winged soul, with free pinions, with holy love flying to the Lord. Whoever is entangled in carnal love has birdlime on his wings. For if the soul has not wings and feathers, whence saith that one groaning in his tribulations, Who will give me wings like a dove's? and it follows, And I will fly away, and be at rest. Also in another place, Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, and whither shall I fly from Thy face? If I shall ascend into Heaven, Thou art there; if I shall go down into Hell, Thou art present. If I shall take my wings, like a dove, and shall fly into the uttermost parts of the sea. As though he should say, Thus I am able to fly from the face of Thy wrath, if I shall take wings as a dove, and fly into the uttermost parts of the sea. To fly into the uttermost parts of the sea, is to carry forward hope even to the end of the world; as he who saith, This is a labour before me, until I enter into the sanctuary of God, and understand for the last things. And how came he into the uttermost parts of the sea, even when he had taken wings? For there, he saith, Thy hand shall lead me, and Thy right hand shall guide me. For even with my wings I shall fall, except Thou lead me. Therefore those souls have good and free wings, and bound with no birdlime, that well fulfil the commandments of God, holding charity of a pure conscience and faith unfeigned. But howsoever they be endued with the virtues of charity, what is it to that love of God, with which they were loved even while they were yet entangled in birdlime? Greater therefore is the love of God toward us, than ours toward Him. Our love is our wings, but He walketh even above the wings of the winds.

14. Now the Apostle said to some, I bend my knees for you unto the Father—that He may give you, after the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love. He already gives them love, He already gives them wings and feathers, that ye may be able, He saith, to comprehend what is the breadth, the length, the height, and the depth. Perhaps he signifieth the Cross of the Lord. For there was breadth, to which the hands were stretched out; a length rising from the earth, on which the Body was fixed; a height which standeth out above from that hanging beam; a depth, where the Cross was fixed, and there all the hope of our life. For breadth is in good works, length in persevering even to the end, height because of ‘Lift up the heart,’ that we may do all our good works, in which we persevere even to the end, having breadth in which we work well, and length in which we persevere even to the end, no otherwise than in the hope of heavenly rewards. For that is height, not to seek reward here, but above, lest it be said to us, Verily I say unto you, they have had their reward. But what I called depth, where a part of the Cross was fixed, which was not seen; thence arose the parts that were seen. What is that which is hidden, and is not public in the Church? The Sacrament of Baptism, the Sacrament of the Eucharist. For our good works even pagans see, but Sacraments are hidden from them. But from these which they do not see, arise those which they see; as from the depth of the Cross, which is fixed in the earth, rises the whole Cross which appears and is seen. And what afterwards? When the Apostle had said this, he added, to know also the knowledge, which is above all, of the love of Christ: when he had already said, rooted and grounded in love. For ye love Christ, and therefore ye work in the Cross. But do ye love as much as He loved? But by loving as much as ye do love, ye fly to Him, that ye may know how much He hath loved you: that is, that ye may know the exceeding excellency of the love of Christ. For ye love as much as ye can, and fly as much as ye can: but He walketh even above the wings of the winds. Who walketh above the wings of the winds.

15. Ver. 4. Who maketh spirits His angels, and flaming fire His ministers. And this, although we see not the appearance of angels; for it is hidden

from our eyes, and is in a certain vast realm of God’s empire, yet we know that there are angels from faith, and we read it written that they have appeared to many, and we hold it, nor is it allowed us to doubt of that. But the angels are spirits, and when they are spirits they are not angels; when they are sent, they become angels. For angel is a name of office, not of nature. Thou askest the name of this nature, it is spirit; thou askest the office, it is angel; by that it is, it is spirit; by that it does, it is angel. See the same in man. Man (homo) is the name of nature, soldier of office: man (vir) is the name of nature, herald of office. For a man becometh a herald; that is, he that was before a man becomes a herald, not he that was before a herald a man. Thus, therefore, those who were already made spirits by God the Creator, them He maketh angels, by sending them to declare what He hath commanded, and He maketh a flaming fire His ministers. We read that a fire appeared in the bush. We read also that fire was sent from above, and fulfilled what was commanded. It ministered, therefore, when it fulfilled: when it existed, it was in its own nature: when it did what was commanded, it fulfilled a ministry. Thus after the letter in the creature.

16. But what is it figuratively in the Church? How do we take, Who maketh spirits His Angels, and flaming fire His ministers? Spirits He calleth spiritual men. Well is He said to make spiritual men His Angels, that is, the messengers of His word, for He that is spiritual judgeth all things, but himself is judged of no man. Behold a spiritual man made an Angel of God. I could not, he saith, speak unto you as to them that are spiritual, but as unto the carnal. Of a certain spiritual affection He was sent unto the carnal, as though an angel from Heaven to earth. How saith he, and a flaming fire His ministers, save as he saith, Fervent in spirit? For being thus fervent in spirit, every minister of God is a flaming fire. Did not Stephen burn? With what fire did he burn? And what was that fire, when he was stoned, and prayed for them that were stoning him? When thou hearest the minister of God is a fire, dost thou think he will burn? Let him burn, but let it be thy straw, that is, all thy carnal desires let the minister of God burn up, preaching the word of God. Hear him: Thus let a man account of us, as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. But how did he burn when he said, Our mouth is open unto you, O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged? He burned and flamed with charity, and went towards them to set them on fire.

This fire the Lord said He would send on earth when He said, I came to send fire on earth. As a sword, so fire. The sword divideth carnal affection, the fire consumeth it. Understand the whole in the Word of God, know the whole in the Spirit of God. Begin to be fervent with charity through the Word of God which thou hearest, and see what effect the fire, the minister of God, hath had on thee. Who maketh spirits His angels, and flaming fire his ministers.

17. Ver. 5. He hath founded the earth upon its firmness, it shall not be bowed for ever and ever. To take this of this earth, I know not if there be any opening; whether it be rightly said, It shall not be bowed for ever and ever, whereof it is said, Heaven and earth shall pass away. Here there is a difficulty, if you try to take it to the letter. For as to that He saith, He hath founded the earth upon its firmness; perchance there is some firmness hidden from us, which upholdeth the earth; and this he meant by founded. Upon what? Upon the firmness of the earth itself, which He put under it that it might be upheld, which perchance escapeth thine eyes. Let there be then dark things in the creature, the Creator shall not be hidden from the darkness of the creature. What we are able let us see; from these which we see, let us praise Him and love Him. Let us turn ourselves to seek something here put in a figure. He hath founded the earth, I understand the Church. The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof. I understand the Church by the earth. She is that thirsty land, she it is that saith in the Psalms; for one saith it from all; My soul is like earth without water unto Thee. What is, without water? Thirsty. So doth my soul thirst toward Thee, as earth without water: for unless it thirsteth, it will not be rightly watered. Rain on a drunken soul is a deluge, she must be thirsty. For, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness. And she must say, My soul is as earth without water unto Thee: because she saith elsewhere, My soul hath thirsted for the living God. The earth, therefore, I understand the Church. What is its firmness, on which it is founded, save its foundation? Do we unfitly understand the firmness on which the earth is founded of the foundation on which the Church is established? What is that foundation? Other foundation, he saith, can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. There, therefore, we are founded. Truly, because we are there founded, we shall not be bowed for ever and ever: for nothing is firmer than

that foundation. Weak thou wast, but a firm foundation beareth thee. In thyself thou couldest not be firm: thou wilt be firm always, if from that firm foundation thou depart not. It shall not be bowed for ever and ever. It is the predestined pillar and ground of the truth.

18. Ver. 6–17. The deep, as a garment, is its clothing: above the mountains shall the waters stand. 7. From Thy rebuke they shall flee, from the voice of Thy thunder they shall be afraid. 8. The mountains go up, and the plains descend, into the place which Thou hast founded for them. 9. Thou hast set a bound, which they shall not pass, nor return to cover the earth. 10. Who sendest out waters in the valleys, between the midst of the mountains shall the waters pass through. 11. All the beasts of the field shall drink, the wild asses shall take for their thirst. 12. On them the fowls of the heaven shall inhabit, from the midst of the rocks they shall give their voice. 13. Watering the mountains from His higher places: from the fruit of Thy works shall the earth be satisfied. 14. Bringing forth hay for the cattle, and herb for the service of men. 15. That he may bring out bread from the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man. That He might brighten His face with oil; and bread strengtheneth man’s heart. 16. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, and the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted. 17. There the sparrows shall build nests: the house of the waterfowl is the leader of them. Ye observe the heaven stretched out. Ye wish to ascend in understanding, and I see it. Yet how high it is, I think that your love observeth, as well as myself. For therefore I thought fit to pronounce a number of verses, that ye may see how high aloft are placed the mysteries of God, lest we should disdain them when offered, lest when at hand they be held cheap, that always after seeking, though with difficulty, they may be found with the greater pleasure. Amongst other things, however, brethren, which may be taken to the letter; on this too, which was said, There the sparrows shall build nests, the house of the waterfowl is the leader of them. Is the house of the waterfowl the leader of sparrows? or is the house of the waterfowl the leader of cedars? For this also is there, And the cedars of Libanus, which He hath planted, there the sparrows shall build nests, the house of the waterfowl is the leader of them. And indeed in the Latin language we cannot understand of them (masculine) of the cedars; for cedars are of the feminine gender. The house of the waterfowl, therefore, how is it the leader

of sparrows? For this can in no wise be understood of that creature which is before our eyes. For we know that waterfowl are birds of the sea or of lakes. Let the house of the waterfowl be the nest of the waterfowl: how then is the house of the waterfowl the leader of sparrows? Wherefore doth the Holy Spirit mix up amongst the visible things some that are in a manner absurd, if it be not that from that which we cannot take to the letter, He may compel us to enquire into those things in a spiritual sense?

19. Therefore if, as I said before, ye desire to ascend unto the heaven in understanding, unto that skin extended, and He hath made clouds the ascent thereof; this cloud which speaketh unto you is not able this day to explain all those things. Make allowance, if not for your own, at least for my infirmity. Your eagerness, indeed, I see to be such, that ye are always ready to hear, but there are two things of which the consideration is not to be despised. For both the weakness of our body is to be considered, and our memory of the very things that are under exposition. Meanwhile think upon what ye have heard. What did I say? Ruminate that ye have eaten. For thus will ye be clean animals, and fit for the feasts of God. But your fruit observe in your works. For he digesteth very ill, who heareth well, and worketh not well: because the Lord our God faileth not to feed. It is known to all, that of the bread which we have received, and which we expend, we shall have to give account. Your love knoweth very well, for the sacred page is not silent toward us, nor doth God flatter us. From this place ye may take notice how free we are toward you: and if perchance I am not free enough, or if all we, that speak to you in this place, are wanting in freedom, certainly the word of God itself feareth no man. But we, whether we fear or are free, are compelled to announce Him Who feareth no man. This not men but God gave you, that even by the fearful ye should hear Him that is free. Excuse in God’s Judgment ye will have none, unless ye shall have practised yourselves in good works, and borne some fruit suitable to the rain, as it were, of the things ye have heard. Suitable fruit are good works; suitable fruit is unfeigned love, not only of a brother, but also of an enemy. Scorn none that entreateth thee, and when thou canst not give any that he asketh, spurn him not: if thou canst give it, give; if thou canst not, shew thyself affable. God crowneth will within, when He findeth not ability. Let no one say, ‘I have nothing.’ Charity is not served out from the bag: because

whatsoever things we say, and whatsoever we have said, and whatsoever we shall ever be able to say, either we, or any after us, or they that were before us, have no end save charity; because the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned. Question your own hearts, when ye pray to God: see how ye utter that verse. Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. Thou wilt not be praying, unless thou sayest that (prayer): if thou sayest another, He heareth thee not; because it is not the one which the Advocate Whom He sent thee dictated. It is necessary therefore that even when we say our own words in prayer, we pray after the manner of that, and that when we say the very words, we should rightly understand what we say, because God willed that it should be manifest. If therefore ye shall not pray, ye will have no hope: if ye shall pray otherwise than the Master taught, or if ye shall be false in prayer, ye shall not obtain. Therefore ye must both pray, and ye must say truth, and ye must so pray as He taught. Whether thou wilt or wilt not, thou wilt be saying daily, 'Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.' Wouldest thou say it without fear? Do what thou sayest.

Discourse II

I know that ye hold us debtors, not by necessity, but, what is stronger, by charity. But we owe this in the first place to the Lord our God, Who dwelling also in you requireth these things of us, next to our Lord and Father who is present, and bids me, and prays for me; and then to your violence, by which ye extort it even from our insufficient strength. Yet, so much as the Lord may grant, Who I pray may grant strength to you also as ye pray, since we have already treated of the first parts of this Psalm on the day lately past, what follows too must be taken up, and by His help in Whose name we began must be finished. Now we had set before you all, who were present, that the whole of this Psalm was inwoven with figured mysteries, whence that which is sought with more labour useth to be found with more pleasure. Nor think ye that these things are hidden from you by obscurity, but seasoned by difficulty, for this purpose, which we have often mentioned before, that it may be given to them that ask, and that they that seek may find, and they that knock have entrance. But we have need of somewhat more both of silence and of patience from you, that the few words we have to say may not, through the noise, take up too much time. For the straitness of the time compels us to say but little, because your Love also knoweth that we owe the solemn attendance to the funeral of the body of a Believer. See then, let us not be compelled now to repeat what has been said, and to expound the same again; if any were absent, there would not be wanting some who have not heard; but it is good perhaps for them that they do not hear now, what those heard who were present, that they also may learn to be here. Let us then read it cursorily.

2. Ver. 1. Bless the Lord, O my soul. Let the soul of us all, made one in Christ, say this. O Lord my God, Thou art magnified exceedingly! Where art Thou magnified? Confession and beauty Thou hast put on. Confess ye, that ye may be beautified, that He may put you on. (Ver. 2.) Clothed with light as a garment. Clothed with His Church, because she is made light in Him, who before was darkness in herself, as the Apostle saith; Ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord.

Stretching out the heaven like a skin: either as easily as thou dost a skin, if it be ‘as easily,’ so that thou mayest take it after the letter; or let us understand the authority of the Scriptures, spread out over the whole world, under the name of a skin; because mortality is signified in a skin, but all the authority of the Divine Scriptures was dispensed unto us through mortal men, whose fame is still spreading abroad now they are dead.

3. Ver. 3. Who covereth with waters the upper parts thereof. The upper parts of what? Of Heaven. What is Heaven? Figuratively only we said, the Divine Scripture. What are the upper parts of the Divine Scripture? The commandment of love, than which there is none more exalted. But wherefore is love compared to waters? Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Who is given unto us. Whence is the Spirit Himself water? because Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Whence do we prove that it was said of the Spirit? Let the Evangelist himself declare, who followeth it up, and saith, But this spake He of the Spirit, which they were to receive, who should believe on Him.

Who walketh above the wings of the winds; that is, above the virtues of souls. What is the virtue of a soul? Love itself. But how doth He walk above it? Because the love of God toward us is greater than ours toward God.

4. Ver. 4. Who maketh spirits His angels, and flaming fire His ministers: that is, those who are already spirits, who are spiritual, not carnal, He maketh His Angels, by ending sthem to preach His Gospel. And flaming fire His ministers. For unless the minister that preacheth be on fire, he enflameth not him to whom he preacheth.

5. Ver. 5. He hath founded the earth upon its firmness. He hath founded the Church upon the firmness of the Church. What is the firmness of the Church, but the foundation of the Church. What is the foundation of the Church, but that of which the Apostle saith, Other foundation can no man lay but that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. And therefore, grounded on such a foundation, what hath she deserved to hear? “It shall not be bowed for ever and ever.” He hath founded the earth upon the firmness of it. That is, He hath founded the Church upon Christ the foundation. The Church will totter if the foundation totter; but when shall Christ totter, before Whose coming unto us, and taking flesh on Him, all things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made; Who holdeth all things by His Majesty, and us by His goodness? Since Christ faileth not, she shall not be bowed for ever and ever. Where are they who say that the Church hath perished from the world, when she cannot even be bowed.

6. But whence did the Lord begin to maintain this Church, to reveal, to commence, to display, to spread her abroad? Whence did He begin this? What was in the first place? because He hath founded the earth on its firmness thereof, it shall not be bowed for ever and ever.

Ver. 6. The deep, like a garment, is its clothing. Whose? Is it perchance God’s? But he had already said of His clothing, Clothed with light as with a garment. I hear of God clothed in light, and that light, if we will, are we. What is, if we will? if we are no longer darkness. Therefore if God is clothed with light, whose clothing, again, is the deep? For an immense mass of waters is called the deep. All water, all the moist nature, and the substance every where shed abroad through the seas, and rivers, and hidden caves, is all together called by one name, the Deep. Therefore we understand the earth, of which he said, He hath founded the earth upon the firmness thereof, it shall not be bowed for ever and ever. Of it I believe he said, The deep, like a garment is its clothing. For the water is as it were the clothing of the earth, surrounding it and covering it. But some time in the deluge this clothing of the earth so increased, that it quite covered over all things, and rose above the highest mountains, as the Scripture witnesseth, by about fifteen cubits. Perchance it was that very time this Psalm signified, when he said, The deep, like a garment is its clothing.

7. Above the mountains the waters shall stand: that is, the clothing of the earth, which is the deep, so increased, that the waters stood even above the mountains. We read of this taking place, as I said, in the deluge. Is the prophet speaking of that? Was he relating to us past events, or foretelling future? But if he were relating the past, he would not say to us, Above the mountains the waters shall stand; but, ‘above the mountains the waters did stand.’ For that the past tense useth to be put for the future in the Scriptures, the Spirit foreseeing things that are to come, in such wise as if they had already taken place, we are accustomed to read. Thence it is that we all know, that in another Psalm, where there is as it were a Gospel recited, They pierced My hands and My feet, they numbered all My bones, upon My vesture did they cast lots. All things are commemorated as already done, which in fact were foreseen as yet to come. But how much can our diligence effect? Nay, what can be done with so much occupation? or when are we so at leisure that we can say for certain it is so? We have observed the Prophets often express in the past tense things that were future, but that they express the past in the figure of the future doth not easily occur to one in reading. I dare not say there is no instance; but I would certainly point out to students in such learning what they may look for. If they shall have found it, and brought it to us, we busy old men shall congratulate the young on their studies, and shall learn something ourselves too from their ministering to us. For we do not disdain it, since Christ teaches from all. This therefore he saith: Above the mountains the waters shall stand. The Prophet minding to foretel future things, not to relate the past, therefore said it, because he would have it understood that the Church should be in a

deluge of persecutions. For there was a time when the floods of persecutors had covered God’s earth, God’s Church, and had so covered it, that not even those great ones appeared, who are the mountains. For when they fled every where, how did they but cease to appear? And perchance of those waters is that saying, Save me, O God, for the waters are come in even unto my soul. Especially the waters which make the sea, stormy, unfruitful. For whatsoever earth the sea-water may have covered, it will not rather make it fruitful than bring it to barrenness. For there were also mountains beneath the waters, because above the mountains waters stood. The resisting nations had conquered the authority of all that every where boldly preached the word of God, the waters had covered them, and the waters stood over them; they said “Press,” “Press,” and they pressed: “Extinguish! Let them no more be seen!” They said these things, and they prevailed over the Martyrs, and the Christians fled every where, and in some sort of flight even the Apostles were hidden. Why were the Apostles hidden by flight? Because above the mountains the waters stood. The power of the waters was great, but how long? Hear what followeth.

8. Ver. 7. From Thy rebuke they shall fly. And this was done, brethren; from God’s rebuke the waters did fly; that is, they went back from pressing on the mountains. Now the mountains themselves stand forth, Peter and Paul: how do they tower! They who before were pressed down by persecutors, now are venerated by emperors. For the waters are fled from the rebuke of God; because the heart of kings is in the hand of God, He hath bent it whither He would; He commanded peace to be given by them to the Christians; the authority of the Apostles sprang up and towered high. Had the greatness of the mountains failed even when the waters were above? But yet, my brethren, that all might see the height of the mountains, through which mountains salvation was to come to the human race, because I have lifted up mine eyes unto the hills, whence shall come help for me; the waters fled from the rebuke of God. From the voice of Thy thunder they shall be afraid. Now who is there that would not be afraid, from the voice of God through the Apostles, the voice of God through the Scriptures, through His clouds? The sea is quieted, the waters have been made afraid, the mountains have been laid bare, the emperor hath given the order. But who would have given the order, unless God had thundered? Because God

willed, they commanded, and it was done. Therefore let no one of men arrogate any thing to himself; the waters were afraid, but from the voice of Thy thunder. For behold, when God would, the waters fled, no longer to press the mountains. Before that was done, even under the waters the mountains were firm.

9. Ver. 8. The mountains ascend, and the plains go down, into the place which Thou hast founded for them. He is still speaking of waters. Let us not here understand mountains as of earth; nor plains, as of earth: but waves so great that they may be compared to mountains. The sea did sometime toss, and its waves were as mountains, which could cover those mountains the Apostles. But how long do the mountains ascend and the plains go down? They raged, and they are appeased. When they raged they were mountains: now they are appeased they are become plains: for He hath founded a place for them. There is a certain channel, as it were a deep place, into which all those lately raging hearts of mortals have retired. How many now are both salt and bitter, and yet quiet? How many are there who are unwilling to grow sweet? Who are they that will not grow sweet? They that still will not believe in Christ. And although there are many, who have not yet believed, what do they to the Church? They were mountains formerly, now they are plains: yet, my brethren, even a dead calm is sea. For wherefore are they not now violent? wherefore do they not rage? Wherefore do they not try, if they cannot overthrow our earth, at least to cover it? Wherefore not? Hear. (Ver. 9.) Thou hast set a bound which they shall not pass over, neither shall they turn again to cover the earth.

10. What then, because now the bitterest waves have received a measure, that we must be allowed to preach such things even with freedom; because they have had their due limit assigned, because they cannot pass over the bound that is set, nor shall they return to cover the earth; what is doing in the earth itself? What workings take place therein, now that the sea hath left it bare? Although at its beach slight waves do make their noise, although Pagans still murmur round; the sound of the shores I hear, a deluge I dread not. What then; what is doing in the earth? (Ver. 10.) Who sendeth out springs in the little valleys. Thou sendest out, he saith, springs in the little valleys. Ye know what little valleys are, lower places among the lands. For

to hills and mountains, valleys and little valleys are opposed in contrary shape. Hills and mountains are swellings of the land: but valleys and little valleys, lownesses of the lands. Do not despise low places, thence flow springs. Thou sendest out springs in the little valleys. Hear a mountain. The Apostle saith, I laboured more than they all. A certain greatness is brought before us: yet immediately, that the waters may flow, he hath made himself a valley: Yet not I, but the grace of God with me. It is no contradiction that they who are mountains be also valleys: for as they are called mountains because of their spiritual greatness, so also valleys because of the humility of their spirit. Not I, he saith, but the grace of God with me. Not I, is the valley, and the grace of God with me is the spring. Who sendeth out springs in the little valleys. That which I just now quoted was said of the Spirit, If any man thirsteth, let him come to Me and drink: He that believeth in Me, from his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this He said of the Spirit, which they that were to believe in Him should receive. Let us see if they be valleys, that springs may be sent forth in the valleys. Hear the Prophet: Upon whom shall My Spirit rest, save on the humble and quiet one, and him that feareth My word? What is, Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? Upon the humble and quiet one. Who shall have My spring? The little valley.

11. Between the midst of the mountains the waters shall pass through. Thus far the Psalm was recited by the Reader. Thus far let it suffice your love. This we will say, and in the Name of God will end our discourse. What is, In the midst between the mountains the waters shall pass through? We have heard who are the mountains, the great Preachers of the word, the exalted Angels of God, though still in mortal flesh; lofty not by their own power, but by His grace; but as far as relates to themselves, they are valleys, in their humility they send forth springs. In the midst, he saith, between the mountains, the waters shall pass through. Let us suppose this said thus, “In the midst between the Apostles shall pass through the preachings of the Word of Truth.” What is, in the midst between the mountains waters shall pass through? What is, in the midst between the Apostles? What is called in the midst, is common. A common property, from which all alike live, is in the midst, and belongs not to me, but neither belongs it to thee, nor yet to me. Therefore we speak thus also of some men. They have peace between

themselves, they have good faith between themselves, they have love between themselves: so certainly we speak. What is, between themselves? In the midst of themselves. What is, in the midst of themselves? It is common to them. Hear the waters in the midst between the mountains. Because the faith was common to them, nor had each one the waters as if appropriated and his own. For if they are not in the midst, they are as it were private, they flow not for public use, and I have mine, and he has his own, it is not in the midst for both me and him to have it; but such is not the preaching of peace. But that in the midst between the mountains waters may flow, hear the voice of a mountain: The God of peace, he saith, grant you to be of one mind toward one another. And again, That ye may be all of one mind, and that there be no divisions among you. What I think, thou thinkest, the water floweth in the midst: I have it not as private of my own, nor thou private of thy own. Let the Truth be neither my private property nor thine, that it may be both thine and mine. In the midst between the mountains the waters shall pass through. Hear the Mountain himself, as I said, because in the midst between the mountains waters shall pass through. But whether it be I, or they, so we preach, and so ye believed. Fearless he said, whether it be I, or they, so we preach, and so ye have believed; for in the midst between the mountains the waters flowed; there was no disagreement of the mountains about the waters, but the peace of consent, and the partnership of charity. But if any one wished to preach another thing, then he would be preaching of his own, not of that in the midst. And hear what is said of him even by Him Who sent forth springs in the little valleys: He that speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own. Therefore lest any mountain should be accepted sending forth a stream of his own, not from the midst, the Apostle saith, Whosoever shall have preached unto you a Gospel other than ye have received, let him be anathema. And behold how he would not that there should be any presuming upon the mountain; lest perchance a mountain depart from the waters running through the midst, and choose to flow in with any thing of his own. Yea even if we—(and how great a mountain said this! How abundantly did water flow from his valley! Yet he would have this run in the midst between the mountains, and that there should be the certain faith of the nations, the same which the Apostles held amongst themselves in the midst and in common)—Yea even if we, he said. And thou, Paul, canst thou preach any thing otherwise? The question is of Paul;

hear what followeth: Yea even if we, or an Angel from Heaven, shall have declared unto you otherwise than ye have received, let him be anathema. If a mountain come preaching another Gospel, let him be anathematized: if any Angel come preaching another Gospel, let him be anathematized. Whence this? Because he hath chosen to give a stream of his own, not from the midst. And this, perchance a man hampered with the clouds of the flesh, and driven from the common fountain to his own falsehood, may do: can an Angel too? Truly, can an Angel too? If an Angel, streaming forth of his own, had not been listened to in Paradise, we had not been cast down into death. The water was placed in the midst for men, the commandment of God. The water in the midst, water in a manner public, was good without deceit, as we said to your Love, it flowed without taint, without mire. If that same water were always drunk, there were life for evermore. An angel came, fallen from Heaven, become a serpent, because he wished now insidiously to scatter his venom: he gave out his venom; he spake of the private stock, of his own; because he that speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own; and the unhappy creatures, by hearing him, lost what was common, what made them blessed; and they were reduced to what was their own, while wishing, perversely, to be like God, (for this he had said to them, Take, and ye shall be as gods;) desiring what they were not, they lost what they had received. Therefore, brethren, let what we have said to your Love serve to this purpose, because of the springs: that they may flow from you, be ye valleys, and communicate with all that which ye have from God. Let the waters flow in the midst, envy ye no one, drink, be filled, flow forth when ye are filled. Every where let the common water of God have the glory, not the private falsehoods of men.

Discourse III

That for the treating of the remaining parts of this Psalm we are debtors, your Love remembereth. There is no need, then, that I should engage your attention by any preface. For I see that ye are in the suspense of full eagerness to understand the prophetic mysteries, nor is there any need for my discourse to make those attentive, whom the Spirit of God has already made so. This rather let us do, which is needful. Of the springs sent forth in the little valleys, and of the waters passing through in the midst of the mountains, we have already spoken: but thus far have we spoken, from this point forward let us begin.

2. Ver. 11. For it follows, All the beasts of the wood shall drink. What shall they drink? The waters passing through in the midst between the mountains. What shall they drink? Springs sent forth in the little valleys. And who shall drink? The beasts of the wood. We do indeed see this also in the visible creation, that the beasts of the wood drink of springs, and of streams that run between the mountains: but now since it hath pleased God to hide His own wisdom in the figures of such things, not to take it away from earnest seekers, but to close it to them that care not, and open it to them that knock; it hath also pleased our Lord God Himself to exhort you by us to this, that in all these things which are said as if of the bodily and visible creation, we may seek something spiritually hidden, in which when found we may rejoice. The beasts of the wood, we understand the Gentiles, and Holy Scripture witnesses this in many places. But yet two most evident proofs readily occur, namely, that in Noah's ark, by which no one of us doubts but the Church was prefigured, there would not have been included all sorts of animals, unless in that unity of structure all nations were signified: unless perchance we think that if all such things had been utterly destroyed by the deluge, God would have wanted the power to bid the earth produce them, as at His first word it had produced. Not therefore in vain, not by chance, not by any want in God, or lack of power, were those animals ordered to be shut up in the ark. For after that the time came; (for now we must add also another most evident testimony;) when, therefore, the time came for that which had been prefigured in the ark now to be fulfilled in the Church, Peter the Apostle, hesitating to give the Sacrament of the Gospel to uncircumcised Gentiles; nay, not doubting, but altogether thinking it was not to be given; on a certain day being hungry, when he wished to dine, went up to pray. This in the Acts of the Apostles is known to all that read well and hear well. He, then, praying, there came on him that transport of mind which the Greeks call ecstasis; that is, his mind was turned from corporeal usage to contemplate a certain vision, being transported out of present things. Then he saw a certain vessel, like a sheet, let down by four cords from Heaven, where were all animals, beasts of every kind; and a voice sounded to him, Peter, kill and eat. But he, who had been instructed in

the Law, and had grown up in Jewish practice, and held the commandment given through Moses the servant of God, and had kept it faithfully all his life, answered, Far be it from me, O Lord; never did any thing common enter into my mouth. But that ‘common’ means unclean with the Jews and with the Law, they know well who have studied the learning of the Church. And the voice said to him, What God hath chosen, that call not thou unclean. But this was done thrice, and that circle was taken away, which was shewn thrice let down from Heaven. The circle that was held by four lines, is the round world, in its four parts. These four parts Scripture doth often mention, the East and the West, the North and the South. Therefore because the whole world was called by the Gospel, four Gospels were written. But the vessel thrice let down from Heaven signifies this, that it was said to the Apostles, Go ye, and baptize all nations, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Thence is formed, as ye already know, also the number twelve, the number of the Disciples. For it was not without cause that He would have twelve: and so consecrated was that number, that in the place of one that fell there could not be but another ordained. Wherefore twelve Apostles? For because there are four parts of the world, and the whole world was called in the Gospel, whence four Gospels were written, and the whole world is called in the name of the Trinity, that the Church may be gathered; four taken thrice, make twelve. Let us not therefore wonder if of those waters passing in the midst between the mountains, in that teaching of the Apostles which flows in the midst, because of the agreement of communion, all beasts of the field drink. For all were in the ark, all in the round vessel; all doth Peter kill and eat; because Peter is the rock, the rock the Church. What is it to kill and eat? To kill in them that they were, and to take them into one’s own bowels. Thou hast persuaded a pagan to leave his sacrileges, thou hast slain that he was: by giving him the Sacrament of Christ, thou hast taken him into the body of the Church, thou hast eaten him.

3. These beasts, then, drink those waters, but passing; not staying, but passing; for all that teaching which in all this time is dispensed passeth. Thence the Apostle saith, Both knowledge shall be done away, and prophecy shall be made void. Wherefore shall those things be made void? For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is

perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be made void. Unless perchance your Love thinketh that in that city to which it is said, Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, praise thy God, O Sion; for He hath made strong the bars of thy gates; when the bars are now strengthened and the city closed, whence, as we said some time since, no friend goeth out, no enemy entereth; that there we shall have a book to read, or speech to be explained as it is now explained to you. Therefore is it now treated, that there it may be held fast: therefore is it now divided by syllables, that there it may be contemplated whole and entire. The Word of God will not be wanting there: but yet not by letters, not by sounds, not by books, not by a reader, not by an expositor. How then? As, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. For He did not so come to us as to depart from thence; because He was in this world, and the world was made by Him. Such a Word are we to contemplate. For the God of gods shall appear in Zion. But this when? After our pilgrimage, when the journey is done: if however after our journey is done we be not delivered to the Judge, that the Judge may send us to prison. But if when our journey is ended, as we hope, and wish, and endeavour, we shall have reached our Country, there shall we contemplate What we shall ever praise; nor shall That fail Which is present to us, nor we, who enjoy: nor shall he be cloyed that eateth, nor shall that fail which he eateth. Great and wonderful shall be that contemplation, and who speaketh worthily of it in this time, while the waters flow between the mountains? In the mean time, therefore, let the waters flow between the mountains, and pass: when the waters pass through, there is drink for us in our pilgrimage, lest for thirst on the way we faint. All the beasts of the wood shall drink. Thence ye came, from the wood ye were gathered. And what a wood? No man used to pass there, because no prophet had been sent thither. But to build the Ark, timbers of the wood were cut: thence were the timbers, thence the beasts, thence ye came. Therefore drink. All the beasts of the wood shall drink.

4. The onagers shall take for their thirst. By onagers he meaneth some great beasts. For who knoweth not that wild asses are called onagers? He meaneth, therefore, some great untrained ones. For the Gentiles had no yoke of the Law: many nations lived after their own customs, ranging in proud boastfulness as in a wilderness. And so indeed did all the beasts, but

the wild asses are put to signify the greater sort. They too shall drink for their thirst, for for them too the waters flow. Thence drinks the hare, thence the wild ass: the hare little, the wild ass great; the hare timid, the wild ass fierce: either sort drinks thence, but each for his thirst. The water doth not say, ‘I am enough for the hare,’ and refuse the wild ass; nor doth it say, ‘Let the wild ass come, the hare, if he cometh, shall be swept away.’ So faithfully and gently doth it flow, as at once to satisfy the wild ass, and not to alarm the hare. The sound of Tully’s voice rings out, Cicero is read, it is some book, it is a dialogue of his, whether his own, or Plato’s, or by whatever such writer: some hear that are unlearned, weak ones of less mind; who dareth to aspire to such a thing? It is a sound of water, and that perchance turbid, but certainly flowing so violently, that a timid animal dare not draw near and drink. For whom hath sounded, In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth, and he hath not dared to drink? To whom soundeth a Psalm, and he saith, It is too much for me? Behold now what the Psalm soundeth; certainly they are hidden mysteries, yet so it soundeth, that even children are delighted to hear, and the unlearned come to drink, and when filled burst forth in singing. These drink, then, lesser hearts and greater; but the greater more largely, because the wild asses shall take for their thirst. Let the lesser drink that which is said, Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ hath loved the Church. Let the women be subject to their own husbands. Let the lesser drink. It was said unto the Lord, Is it lawful to put away a wife for every cause? The Lord forbade, and said that it was not lawful. Know ye not, said He, that God from the beginning made them male and female? What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. Then He added, Whosoever shall have put away his wife saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and if he shall have taken another, he committeth adultery. He hath confirmed the word: this is expedient to him that is bound; he should have looked to it sooner not to be bound. Art thou bound to a wife? seek not to be loosed. If thou art not yet a wild ass, and art free from a wife, thou hast there what thou mayest drink even as a hare: and if thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned. But when the Disciples heard it said by the Lord, that it was not lawful for marriages to be loosed in any wise except for the cause of fornication, If such, they said, is the case with a wife, it is not expedient to take one. But are only the wild asses to drink? Not all men receive this saying, many receive it not. And who are they that receive it? The wild asses shall take for their thirst. What is, The wild asses shall take for their thirst? “He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.”

5. Then the Psalm goes on in its text, (ver. 12.) Upon them the fowls of the heaven shall inhabit. Upon which? Upon the wild asses, or rather upon the mountains? For from them the sense runs, In the midst between the mountains the waters shall pass through; all the beasts of the wood shall drink; the wild asses shall take for their thirst: upon them the fowls of the air shall have their habitation. We more suitably understand it, upon the mountains, because this is also like this creation. Upon the mountains fowls may inhabit, not upon wild asses: this we should understand, if necessity compelled. Upon the mountains, then, the fowls of the air shall have their habitation. We see these birds dwell upon the mountains, but many of them dwell in plains, many in valleys, many in groves, many in gardens, not all upon mountains. There are some fowls that dwell not save on the mountains. Some spiritual souls doth this name denote. Fowls are spiritual hearts, which enjoy the free air. In the clearness of heaven these birds delight, yet their feeding is on the mountains, there will they dwell. Ye know the mountains, they have been already treated of. Mountains are Prophets, mountains are Apostles, mountains are all preachers of the truth. Whosoever would be spiritual, there let him dwell: let him not wander away in his own heart; let him inhabit, let him carry by flying. We have birds that signify something spiritual. It is not in vain that it is said, Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle’s. Not in vain is it said of Abraham, But the birds he divided not. Abraham, in that very mystical sacrifice, took three animals, a ram of three years old, a heifer of three years old, a she goat of three years old, and a turtle dove and a pigeon. The ram was divided, and the parts placed opposite each other; the she goat was divided, and equally the parts were placed opposite one another; the heifer was divided, and it was done in like manner with its flesh: and the Scripture hath added, but the birds he divided not. Then it is said, a ram of three years old, a heifer of three years old, a she goat of three years old; of the age of the birds there is no mention. Whence, I pray you, but that in the birds are denoted some spiritual ones, whose temporal age is therefore not named, because they meditate on eternal things, and in longing and understanding go beyond all temporal

things? Spiritual men are they that judge of all things, and are judged of no man: therefore they alone are not divided into heresies and schisms. In the ram are understood they that are set over others, for they lead the flocks. In the cow is understood the common people of the Jews, for it had the yoke of the Law, under which it laboured. In the she goat is understood the Church from the Gentiles; for it used to leap with a kind of free springings, and to feed on the bitter wild olive. These animals were said to be of three years old, because in the third period grace was revealed. For the first was before the Law; the second from the time the Law was given; the third, that which now is, since the kingdom of Heaven hath been preached. What then do we say, that the ram is not divided? Have not bishops been authors of schisms and heresies? Then, however, if the people themselves had not been divided, that is, if the cow were not divided, they might perchance have been put to shame in their divisions, and returned to the bond of unity. The leaders are divided, the peoples are also divided, that the blind may follow the blind, and they may fall together into the ditch; they are placed opposite one another. But the birds he divided not: spiritual men have no division, they do not think of schisms: there is peace in them, they keep it in others as much as they can; when they fail in others, they keep it in themselves. If there shall be there, He saith, a son of peace, your peace shall rest upon him: if not, it shall return unto you. He is not a son of peace, he hath chosen to be divided, thy peace shall return unto thee; because the birds he divided not. The furnace also shall come, for Abraham sat there until the evening, and the great terror of the Day of Judgment came. For that evening is the end of the world, and that furnace that came the Day of Judgment. The furnace also divided between the midst of those things that were divided. If the furnace passed between the midst of them, it separated some to the right, others to the left. There are therefore some that are carnal, and yet are held in the bosom of the Church, living after a certain manner of their own, for whom we fear lest they be seduced by heretics. For as long as they are carnal, they are liable to division. The birds, that is, he divided not: the carnal are divided. I could not speak to you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. And how is it proved that carnal ones come to be divided? He addeth, for when each one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? I ask you, brethren, listen, and improve; shake yourselves out of the carnal place, go to the turtle dove and the pigeon; for the birds he divided not. But whosoever shall have remained such, and after a certain manner of life suited to the carnal, and not departed from the bosom of the Church, and not been led away by heretics, so as to be divided on the contrary part, the furnace shall come, and he will not be able to be put on the right side without the furnace. But if he would not suffer the furnace, let him go to the turtle dove and the pigeon. He that can receive it, let him receive it. But if it shall not be so, and he shall have built on the foundation wood, hay, stubble, that is, hath built worldly attachments on the foundation of his faith; yet if Christ be in the foundation, so that He have the first place in the heart, and nothing absolutely is preferred to Him; even such are borne, even such are tolerated. The furnace shall come, it shall burn the wood, the hay, the stubble: But himself, he saith, shall be saved, yet so as by fire. This shall the furnace do, some it shall sever to the left, others it shall in a manner melt out to the right. But the birds he divided not. But let the birds see whether they are such birds as dwell upon those mountains: they must not follow the height of their own heart, like those of which it is said, They have set their mouth unto heaven. Lest they be taken up by the winds, let them rest on the mountains. They have the authority of the Saints, let them rest on the mountains, on the Apostles, on the Prophets: there let such birds dwell, because in the mountains they find rocks, certain firm places of commandments. For as that One Rock is Christ, the Word of God, so are many words of God, many rocks, and those rocks in the mountains. Behold, the birds there dwelling: upon them the fowls of heaven shall have their habitation.

6. But think not that those fowls of heaven follow their own authority; see what the Psalm saith: From the midst of the rocks they shall give their voice. Now, if I shall say to you, Believe, for this said Cicero, this said Plato, this said Pythagoras: which of you will not laugh at me? For I shall be a bird that shall send forth my voice not from the rock. What ought each one of you to say to me? what ought he who is thus instructed to say? If any one shall have preached unto you a gospel other than that ye have received, let him be anathema. What dost thou tell me of Plato, and of Cicero, and of Virgil? Thou hast before thee the rocks of the mountains, from the midst of the rocks give me thy voice. From the midst of the rocks they shall give

their voice. Let them be heard, who hear from the rock: let them be heard, because also in those many rocks the One Rock is heard: for the Rock was Christ. Let them therefore be willingly heard, giving their voice from the midst of the rocks. Nothing is sweeter than such a voice of birds. They sound, and the rocks resound: they sound; spiritual men discuss: the rocks resound, testimonies of Scripture give answer. Lo! thence the fowls give their voice from the midst of the rocks, for they dwell on the mountains.

7. The mountains themselves, and those rocks, whence have they a voice? For that we may be watered with the Scriptures, we fly to the Apostle Paul. Whence hath he them? We fly to Isaiah. Isaiah whence? Hear whence. (Ver. 13.) Watering the mountains from the higher places. Now if a Gentile uncircumcised man comes to us, about to believe in Christ, we give him baptism, and do not call him back to those works of the Law. And if a Jew asks us why we do that, we sound from the rock, we say, This Peter did, this Paul did: from the midst of the rocks we give our voice. But that rock, Peter himself, that great mountain, when he prayed and saw that vision, was watered from above. Paul the Apostle saith to the Gentiles, If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. Paul saith this as a mountain: thence we say it, sounding from the rock. Let the Lord water the rock itself from His higher places. For when that rock was yet rough in unbelief, willing to bedew it from His higher places, that water might flow in the valley, He cried, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? He did not read to him a Prophet, He did not read to him another Apostle; for the great mountain would despise all those things: He watered him from his higher places; and immediately, when watered, and willing to flow, Lord, he said, what biddest Thou me to do? Take that mountain or rock, whence thou mayest be able to give thy voice; take him, and see him watered from above, and flowing out below. Hear this also in one place. Whether, he saith, we be out of our minds unto God, or whether we be sober unto you. What he saith, we be out of our minds, ye cannot understand. For we have gone out of all those carnal things, ye are yet carnal. To God, therefore, we have gone out of our minds, and what we see when we are out of our minds, we cannot utter. For there he heard unutterable words, which it is not permitted a man to speak. What then, say those carnal ones, those hares, are we not to be watered? shall nothing come to us? And how doth He send out

springs in the little vallies? and how in the midst between the mountains shall the waters pass? To this therefore belongs, whether we be sober unto you. Whence is this? Whom do we imitate? The love of Christ, he saith, compelleth us. Thou a partaker of the word, although to-day spiritual, yesterday carnal, disdainest thou to descend to the carnal, when the Word Itself was made flesh, to dwell among us.

8. Let us therefore bless the Lord, and praise Him Who watereth the mountains from the higher places. Thence shall come watering for the earth, thence also the low places shall be satisfied. For He proceedeth,

From the fruit of Thy works shall the earth be satisfied. What is, From the fruit of Thy works? Let no man glory in his own works: but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. With Thy grace he is satisfied, when he is satisfied: let him not say that grace was given for his own merits. If it is called grace, it is gratuitously given; if it is returned for works, wages are paid. Freely therefore receive, because ungodly thou art justified. From the fruit of Thy works the earth shall be satisfied.

9. Ver. 14. Bringing forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. This is true, I perceive; I recognise the creation: the earth doth bring forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. But I perceive other cattle of the Lord also, which are signified by the words, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox which treadeth out the corn: for one of these very cattle saith, Doth God take care for oxen? For our sakes therefore the Scripture saith it. How then doth the earth bring forth grass for the cattle? Because the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. He sent preachers, saying unto them, Eat such things as are set before you of them: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. For when He had said, Eat such things as are set before you; that they might not say, Shall we be importunate beggars at other men’s tables when we are in want, wilt Thou have us so shameless? No, He replieth, it is not their gift, but your wages. Wages for what? What do they give, and what do they receive? They give spiritual, they receive carnal things; they give gold, they receive grass. For, All flesh is grass; and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. All the temporal things whereof thou hast abundance and superfluity are the grass of the cattle. Why? Because they are carnal?

Hear unto what cattle the grass doth belong. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things? This the Apostle said, a preacher so laborious, so indefatigable, so well tried, that he giveth this very grass to the earth. Nevertheless, he saith, we have not used this power. He sheweth that it is due to him, yet he received it not; nor hath he condemned those who have received what was due. For those were to be condemned who exact what is not due, not they who accept their recompense: yet he gave up even his own recompense. Thou dost not cease to owe to another, because one hath given up his dues, otherwise thou wilt not be the watered earth which bringeth forth grass for the cattle. The earth, he saith, shall be filled with the fruit of Thy works, bringing forth grass for the cattle. Be not thou barren, bring forth grass for the cattle: if the cattle decline thy grass, nevertheless let them not find thee barren. Thou receivest spiritual things, give carnal things in return: to the soldier they are due, to the soldier thou returnest them; thou art the paymaster of Christ. Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? I speak not thus, that it should be so done unto me. There has been such a soldier as gave up his rations of food even to the paymaster: yet let the paymaster pay the rations. But to use the figure of this Psalm, I will call them cattle: Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox which treadeth out the corn. Bringing forth, he saith, grass for the cattle; and as if in exposition of this he addeth, and green herb for the service of men: lest thou shouldest not understand the words, it bringeth forth grass for the cattle, he hath by the repetition explained what he placed first. For the word green herb answereth to grass: and for the cattle findeth its equivalent in for the service of men. For the service then, and not for freedom. What meaneth then, ye have been called unto liberty? But hear the very same Apostle; for though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. To whom said he, Ye have been called unto liberty? and what hath he added? Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. Those whom he had called free, he maketh servants; not by their condition, but by Christ’s redemption; not by necessity, but by love; By love, he saith, serve one another. But, he saith, we serve Christ mutually: not the people, not the carnal, not the weak. Thou servest Christ well, if thou servest those whom Christ hath served. Was it not said of Him, well serving many? It is a Prophet we read: it is usually understood of none save Christ. Nevertheless, let us hear His actual words in the Gospel: Whosoever, He saith, will be chief among you, let him be your servant. He hath made thee my servant, who made thee free with His own blood. Say this to us, for ye say the truth. Hear Him in another passage: but ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. Love well your servants, but in your Lord. May He enable us to serve well! For whether we will or no, we are servants: and, nevertheless, if we are willing, we serve not by compulsion, but from love. The servant's pride seemed in some measure offended, when our Lord said, Whosoever shall be great among you, let him be your minister. For the sons of Zebedee were already seeking the highest seats; one wished to sit on the right hand, the other on the left, expressing through their mother their own desires. The Lord did not grudge them those seats, but first He shewed the valley of lamentation, as much as if He said, Ye wish to reach unto where I am? Come by the same path as I. What is, Come by the same path as I? By humility. I descended from on high, and having been humbled, I ascend: I found you on earth, and ye wish to fly before ye be fed; first be reared, brought up, bear to be in the nest. For what said He? How did He recal those to humility, who were already seeking exaltation? Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? They, proud even in this, reply, We are able. Just as Peter said, I will go with Thee, even unto death. Valiant man he was, until a woman said, This man also was with them. Thus they also: We are able. Are ye able? We are able? And He then said, Ye shall drink indeed of My cup, although ye cannot now, ye shall drink indeed; as He said unto Peter, Thou canst not follow Me now; but thou shalt follow Me afterwards. Ye shall indeed drink of My cup; but to sit on My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give. What meaneth, Is not Mine to give? It is not Mine to give to the proud. At present ye to whom I speak are proud; on this account I said, It is not Mine to give. But perhaps they might say, We will be humble. In that case ye will not be yourselves: I said, to you. I said not, I will not give to the humble, but I will not give to the proud. But he who from having been proud hath become humble, is not the man he was.

10. The preachers of the word then are both cattle and servants. Let the earth, if it hath been watered, bring forth grass for the cattle, and green herb

for the service of men. For this is the fruit, that what was said in the Gospel may happen, That they may receive you into everlasting habitations. Beware what thou dost with the grass, beware what thou buyest for this poor stuff. That they may receive you, He saith, into everlasting habitations: where they will be themselves, there they will receive you. Wherefore this? Because, he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward; and he that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophet's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water, only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. What reward shall he not lose? "They shall receive you into everlasting habitations." Who would not hasten? who would not run more eagerly? If ye are earth, be watered with the fruit of God's works: say not, There are none with whom we may deal thus; our preachers, the cattle who tread out the corn, the men who serve, have no need of us. Make enquiry nevertheless, whether there be no man that wanteth: lastly, let him who wanteth not, find in thee what he may not wish to receive. For he receiveth good will, while thou receivest peace; for though he desireth not a gift, yet he requireth a return of fruit. Enquire, however, lest there be any that may want: and say not, if he ask, I will give. Dost thou then wait for him to ask? Dost thou feed God's cattle, as a passing beggar? Thou givest him when he asketh, because it is written, Give to every man that asketh of thee. What is written of this man? Blessed is the man that considereth the poor and needy. Seek for some one unto whom to give: for, blessed is the man that considereth the poor and needy, who doth anticipate the words of him who is about to beg. If the soldiers of Christ are so poor among you, that they even beg: beware lest they judge you, before they beg. How, thou sayest, am I to enquire? Be inquisitive, provident; look before thyself, mark whence each man liveth, whence his subsistence, whence his means; this inquisitiveness of thine will not be blamed; thou wilt be earth that bringeth forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. Be inquisitive, and consider the poor and needy. One man cometh to thee to beg; anticipate another, that he may not beg. For as it is said respecting him who seeketh thee, Give to every man that asketh of thee; so is it said of him whom thou shouldest search for: let alms toil in thy hand, until thou find a righteous man to give them to. For since thou must give to these poor also when they beg; for God hath not withheld alms from them, since Christ saith of them, When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the lame, the maimed, the blind; who have no means to recompense thee; and thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just: invite these even, feed these even; feast, when they feast; be delighted when they are being satisfied; they with thy bread, thou with the righteousness of God. Let no man tell you: Christ commanded that it be given to the servant of God, not given to the beggar. God forbid; such are the words of a very wicked man. Give to the one, but much more to the other. For the one doth beg, and at the sound of his begging thou dost recognise one unto whom thou mayest give: but the less the other doth beg, the more must thou watch to anticipate his begging: or perhaps he will not beg now, and at a future time will condemn thee. Be therefore, my brethren, inquisitive respecting these things; ye will find want in many servants of God, only if ye have the will to find. But ye find not, because ye are pleased with the excuse, in which ye like to say, we knew not of any.

11. Our Lord Himself had money bags, in which what was needful was put, and money was possessed for the uses of those who were with Him and His: for the Evangelist when he said, He was an hungred, spake no untruth. He chose to be hungry on thy account, that thou mightest not be hungry in Him, Who became poor, when He was rich, that by His poverty we might be enriched. He had money-bags; and it is said of certain religious women, that they walked on the track of His evangelizing feet, and ministered unto Him of their own substance. These women are mentioned by name in the Gospel; among them was also one the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward. Consider what was the reason of this. Paul was to come after, who never sought any such aid, and who granted all to the paymasters. But since many weak ones were doomed to seek this relief, Christ preferred to represent the weak. Paul was very exalted in his conduct; was he more so than Christ? Christ was the more exalted, for His act was more merciful. For since He saw that Paul would not seek this aid, He provided that he who should seek it should not be condemned, and gave an example to the weak; just as, when He saw many would eagerly and joyfully go to the Martyrdom of suffering, would exult in the suffering itself, brave ones, men of a hundred-fold fruit ripe for the barn; yet He chose to represent those weak ones in His

Passion, who He saw might be disturbed by their destined Martyrdom, that they might not faint, but rather join their human will to the will of the Creator; saying, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death; and again, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me! He hath taught us what the weak one would say, but in the following verse He hath shewn what the weak man should do: nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt, Father. As therefore in His Passion He sustained the person of the weak, which was prefigured in His body, since these too are His limbs; for it was not said without meaning, Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect: and in Thy book shall they all be written: thus in keeping money-bags, and exacting in a certain manner provision, not to be sought, but rather paid as due, He took on Him indigence. Zacchæus received Him, and with joyfulness. To whom was this a blessing? To Christ, or to Zacchæus? Verily, if Zacchæus received Him not, would there be no place where the Creator of the world might remain? or if Zacchæus fed Him not, would He be in want, who filled so many thousands of men with five loaves? When therefore any man receiveth a saint, it is not bestowed upon the person who is received, but upon him who receiveth. Was not Elias fed in that famine? did not the raven bring bread and meat, the creature serving the servant of God? Yet he was sent to the widow to be fed; not that aught might be bestowed upon the soldier, but upon the paymaster.

12. Since then, brethren, we were speaking of feeding the poor; although our Lord had money-bags, yet when He said to Judas who was about to betray Him, What thou dost, do quickly; the rest, who did not understand what He had said, imagined that He had ordered him to prepare somewhat to be given to the poor. For he had the money-bags; this is written in the Gospel. Could they have supposed thus, had it not been usual with our Lord? But of what then was given, and put into the bags, charity was bestowed on those poor, who God taught were not to be despised. But if thou despisest not the poor man, how much less wilt thou despise the ox by whom this floor is threshed? how much less wilt thou despise thine own servant? He is not in want of meat; perhaps he is of clothes. He wanteth not clothes, perhaps he wanteth a roof, perhaps he is building a church, perhaps he is designing somewhat useful in the house of God; he expecteth that thou wilt heed, and consider the poor and needy. Thou, on the contrary, hard,

stony earth, unwatered, or watered in vain, dost reserve this excuse to thyself. I was not aware of it, I knew it not: no man told me. No man told thee! Christ ceaseth not to tell thee: the Prophet ceaseth not to tell thee: Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy. Thou seest not the empty chest of thy spiritual master: yet thou surely seest the rising fabric, into which thou art to enter and to pray. Is not this brought before thine eyes? Unless, perhaps, ye imagine that your pastors are laying up treasures: yet we have known many who lay not up treasure, in want of daily necessaries, of whom no one believes this; whom ye also might find, if ye were zealous, if ye would look round, if ye would watch for occasion of yielding fruit. I have said what I could, in what measure I could. But I suppose ye are well aware, that, as the Apostle saith, we are not speaking thus, that ye may deal thus towards us. May God grant that I may not have spoken this in vain! May God grant that ye may be a watered soil, not a stony one, like that of the Jews, whence they deserved to receive tables of stone; but a fruitful soil, a soil which when watered, may yield return to the farmer! Even they with that stony heart, an emblem of which were their tablets of stone, gave a tenth. Ye even groan, and yet there is no issue. If ye groan, travail: if ye travail, bring forth. Why are your groans in vain? why are they barren? Your bowels are wrung: is there nothing within to come forth? He watereth the hills from His higher places: the earth shall be filled with the fruit of Thy works. Blessed are they who do so; blessed are they who hear these words and bear fruit; blessed are they who cry not out in vain. The earth shall be filled with the fruit of Thy works: it bringeth forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men. Why so? That it may bring forth bread out of the earth. What bread? Christ. Out of what earth? From Peter, from Paul, from the other stewards of the truth. Hear that it is from the earth: We have, saith St. Paul, this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. He is the bread Who descended from heaven, that He might be brought forth out of the earth, when He is preached through the flesh of His servants. The earth bringeth forth grass, that it may bring forth bread from the earth. What earth bringeth forth grass? Pious, holy nations. That bread may be brought forth out of what earth? The word of God out of the Apostles, out of the stewards of God’s Sacraments, who still walk upon the earth, who still carry an earthly body.

13. Ver. 15. And wine maketh glad the heart of man. Let no man prepare himself for intoxication; nay, let every man prepare him for intoxication. How excellent is Thy cup which maketh drunk! We choose not to say, Let no man be drunk. Be intoxicated; yet beware, from what source. If the excellent cup of the Lord doth intoxicate you, your intoxication shall be seen in your works, it shall be seen in the holy love of righteousness, it shall, lastly, be seen in the estrangement of your mind, but from things earthly to heavenly. To make him a cheerful countenance with oil. I see what land it is, and how much fruit it beareth, if it bear grass for the cattle. Those servants sell not what they give; for they are not sellers of the Gospel; freely they give, since freely they have received. They rejoice in your good works; for this is profitable for you; for they seek not a gift, but desire fruit. What is the making the countenance cheerful with oil? The grace of God; a sort of shining for manifestation; as the Apostle saith, The Spirit is given to every man for manifestation. A certain grace which men can clearly see in men, to conciliate holy love, is termed oil, for its divine splendour; and since it appeared most excellent in Christ, the whole world loveth Him; Who though while here He was scorned, is now worshipped by every nation: For the kingdom is the Lord’s, and He shall be Governor among the people. For such is His grace, that many, who do not believe on Him, praise Him, and declare that they are unwilling to believe on Him, because no man can fulfil what He doth command. They who with reproaches once raged against Him, are hindered by His very praises. Yet by all is He loved, by all is He preached; because He is excellently anointed, therefore He is Christ: for He is called Christ from the Chrism or anointing which He had. Messiah in the Hebrew, Christ in the Greek, Unctus in the Latin: but He anointeth over His whole Body. All therefore who come, receive grace, that their countenances may be made glad with oil.

14. And bread strengtheneth man’s heart. What is this, brethren? As it were, he hath forced us to understand what bread he was speaking of. For while that visible bread strengtheneth the stomach, feedeth the belly, there is another bread which strengtheneth the heart, in that it is the bread of the heart. For he had said of the bread above, to bring forth bread out of the earth, but he had not said what sort of bread that was. And wine maketh

glad the heart of man. Seemingly he here speaketh of spiritual wine; for that maketh glad the heart of man. But let it as yet be thought to mean this wine, because the drunken seem as it were to appear glad in heart. Would that they would rejoice, and not quarrel! Thou sayest to me, What is more joyful than an intoxicated man? yea, what is more insane than a drunken man? what usually is more irritable? There is therefore a wine that truly maketh glad the heart, and knoweth not to do aught else than to gladden the heart. But that thou mayest not imagine that this indeed should be taken of the spiritual wine, but not of that spiritual bread; He hath shewn this very point, that it is also spiritual: and bread, he saith, strengtheneth man’s heart. So understand it therefore of the bread as thou dost understand it of the wine; hunger inwardly, thirst inwardly: Blessed are they, saith our Lord, who hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled. That bread is righteousness, that wine is righteousness: it is truth, Christ is truth. I am, He said, the living bread, Who came down from heaven; and, I am the Vine, and ye are the branches. And bread strengtheneth man’s heart.

15. Ver. 16. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied: but with this grace, brought forth out of the earth. The trees of the plain, are the lower orders of the nations. And the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted. The cedars of Libanus, the powerful in the world, shall themselves be filled. The bread, and wine, and oil of Christ hath reached senators, nobles, kings; the trees of the plain are filled. First the humble are filled; next also the cedars of Libanus, yet those which He hath planted; pious cedars, religious faithful; for such hath He planted. For the ungodly also are cedars of Libanus; for, The Lord shall break the cedars of Libanus. For Libanus is a mountain: there are those trees, even according to the letter most long-lived and most excellent. But Libanus is interpreted, as we read in those who have written of these things, a brightness; and this brightness seemeth to belong to this world, which at present shineth and is refulgent with its pomps. There are the cedars of Libanus, which the Lord hath planted; those which the Lord hath planted shall be filled. For, saith our Lord, Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

And the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted.

16. Ver. 17. There shall the sparrows build their nests: their leader is the house of the coot. Where shall the sparrows build? In the cedars of Libanus. We have already heard what the cedars of Libanus are, nobles of the world, exalted in race, in power, in honours: and the cedars themselves are filled, those which He Himself hath planted. In these cedars the sparrows build their nests. Who are the sparrows? Sparrows are birds indeed, and fowls of the air, but small fowls are wont to be called sparrows. There are therefore some spiritual ones that build in the cedars of Libanus: that is, there are certain servants of God who hear in the Gospel, Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow Me. And not only have the great heard this, but the humble have also heard, and the humble have chosen to do this also, and to be spiritual; not to be connected with wives, and tormented with the care of sons; not to have habitations of their own to bind them down, but to betake themselves to a sort of common life. But what have these sparrows resigned? For the little ones of this world are like sparrows. What have they resigned? what great thing have they resigned? One man hath turned himself, hath left the poor hut of his father, hardly one bed and one chest, yet he hath turned himself, he hath become a sparrow, he hath sought spiritual things. Well, very well; let us not mock him, let us not say, thou hast resigned nothing. Let him who hath resigned many things, not be proud. We know that Peter was a fisherman: what then could he give up, to follow our Lord? Or his brother Andrew, or John and James the sons of Zebedee, themselves also fishermen; and yet what did they say? Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee. Our Lord said not to him, Thou hast forgotten thy poverty; what hast thou resigned, that thou shouldest receive the whole world? He, my brethren, who resigned not only what he had, but also what he longed to have, resigned much. For what poor man doth not swell with hope of this life? Who doth not daily desire to increase what he hath? That desire was cut off: it was exceeding all bounds, it received a limit, and yet was nothing resigned? Peter did indeed resign the whole world: and Peter did indeed receive the whole world. They were like men who had nothing, and yet possessed all things. Many do this: men who have little act thus, and come and become useful sparrows. They seem small: because they have not the loftiness of secular dignity: they build their nests in the cedars of Libanus. For the cedars of Libanus also, the noble, and rich, and exalted of this

world, since they hear with awe the words, Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy; take thought on their own possessions, their villas, and all their superfluous wealth, by which they seem exalted, and they give them to the servants of God; they give lands, they give gardens, they build churches, monasteries, collect sparrows, that the sparrows may build in the cedars of Libanus. Therefore the cedars of Libanus which the Lord hath planted are filled, and therein shall the sparrows build their nests. Observe the whole earth, and see whether it be not thus. That I might speak these things, I have not only believed, but I have also seen; I have learned by my experience to understand. Ye who know, ask over the broadest lands, and see in how many cedars of Libanus those sparrows, of whom I have spoken, build.

17. But nevertheless, my brethren, if these sparrows are spiritual, although they may build their nests in the cedars of Libanus, they ought not to esteem at too high a rate the cedars of Libanus, and to think those above them by whom their necessaries are supplied. For they are sparrows; but those are cedars of Libanus. Therefore the coots' house is the leader of the sparrows. Although the sparrows may build in the cedars of Libanus, yet the cedars of Libanus are not the chiefs of the sparrows. Behold the trees of the plain, all nations shall be filled; and the cedars of Libanus, planted by the Lord, all the noble and exalted ones who are faithful, shall be filled. There, that is, in the cedars of Libanus, shall the sparrows build. They shall devote the branches of their wealth to gathering together the little spiritual ones. They bestow these things, the cedars of Libanus which the Lord hath planted do these things; they do so, and they do so willingly; they know what they are doing, and they know what they receive. But although the sparrows will build in the cedars of Libanus, the house of the coot is their leader. What is the house of the coot? The coot, as we all know, is a water bird, dwelling either among the marshes, or on the sea. It hath rarely or never a home on the shore; but in places in the midst of the waters, and thus usually in rocky islets, surrounded by the waves. We therefore understand that the rock is the fit home of the coot, it never dwelleth more securely than on the rock. On what sort of rock? One placed in the sea. And if it is beaten by the waves, yet it breaketh the waves, is not broken by them: this is the excellency of the rock in the sea. How great waves beat on our Lord Jesus Christ? The

Jews dashed against Him; they were broken, He remained whole. And let every one who doth imitate Christ, so dwell in this world, that is, in this sea, where he cannot but feel storms and tempests, that he may yield to no wind, to no wave, but remain whole, while he meets them all. The home of the coot, therefore, is both strong and weak. The coot hath not a home on lofty spots; nothing is more firm and nothing more humble than that home. Sparrows build indeed in cedars, on account of actual need: but they hold that rock as their leader, which is beaten by the waves, and yet not broken; for they imitate the sufferings of Christ. And if perchance the cedars of Libanus shall be angry, and have caused any trouble or scandal to God's servants in their boughs, the sparrows indeed will fly from thence; but woe to the cedar that abideth without the nests of the sparrows. For the sparrows shall not suffer shipwreck, they shall not perish; because the house of the coot is their leader.

18. Ver. 18. What then followeth? The loftiest hills are for the stags. The stags are mighty, spiritual, passing in their course over all the thorny places of the thickets and woods. He maketh my feet like harts' feet, and setteth me up on high. Let them hold to the lofty hills, the lofty commandments of God; let them think on sublime subjects, let them hold those which stand forth most in the Scriptures, let them be justified in the highest: for those loftiest hills are for the stags. What of the humble beasts? what of the hare? what of the hedgehog? The hare is a small and weak animal: the hedgehog is also prickly: the one is a timid animal, the other is covered with prickles. What do the prickles signify, except sinners? He who sinneth daily, although not great sins, is covered over with the smallest prickles. In his timidity he is a hare: in his being covered with the minutest sins, he is a hedgehog: and he cannot hold those lofty and perfect commandments. For the loftiest hills are for the stags. What then? do these perish; No. For as the highest hills are for the stags, so is the rock the refuge for the hedgehogs and the hares. For the Lord is a refuge for the poor. Place that rock upon the land, it is a refuge for hedgehogs, and for hares: place it on the sea, it is the home of the coot. Every where the rock is useful. Even in the hills it is useful: for the hills without the rock's foundation would fall into the deep. Was it not above said of the hills, There shall the fowls of Heaven have their habitation; from the midst of the rocks shall they give forth their

voices? Every where therefore the rock is our refuge: whether it be raised aloft on the hills, or whether it be beaten with the waves upon the sea, it is not broken, or whether it be fixed firm upon the ground; to it the stags, to it the coot, to it the hare and the hedgehog fly. Let the hares beat their breasts, and let the hedgehogs confess their sins; although they be covered over with certain minute and daily sins, yet the Rock, which taught them to say, Forgive us our sins, as we forgive them that sin against us, is not wanting to them. The rock is the refuge for hedgehogs and hares.

29. Ver. 19. He appointed the Moon for certain seasons. We understand spiritually the Church increasing from the smallest size, and growing old as it were from the mortality of this life; yet so, that it draweth nearer unto the Sun. I speak not of this moon visible to the eye, but of that which is signified by this name. While the Church was in the dark, while she as yet appeared not, shone not forth as yet, men were led astray, and it was said, This is the Church, here is Christ; so that while the Moon was dark, they shot their arrows at the righteous in heart. How blind is he who now, when the Moon is full, wandereth astray? He appointed the Moon for certain seasons. For here the Church temporarily is passing away: for this subjection to death will not remain for ever: there will some time be an end of waxing and waning; it is appointed for certain seasons. And the sun knoweth his going down. And what sun is this, but that Sun of righteousness, whom the ungodly will lament on the day of judgment never having risen for them; they who will say on that day, Therefore we wandered from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness shone not on us, and the sun did not arise upon us. That sun riseth for him, who understandeth Christ. But Christ doth recede from the comprehension of him, who shall have been so angry with his brother, as to retain his ill will. Be angry, therefore, and sin not. Although charity is sometimes angry that she may chasten, she is not held guilty; since anger hath not grown so old, as to be changed into hatred. But if anger hath been changed into hatred, the sun hath gone down upon your anger. Let not the sun, therefore, go down upon your wrath.

20. Nor think, brethren, that the sun ought to be worshipped by some men, because the sun doth sometimes in the Scriptures signify Christ. For such is

the madness of men; as if we said that a creature should be worshipped, when it is said, the sun is an emblem of Christ. Then worship the rock also, for it also is a type of Christ. He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter: worship the lamb also, since it is a type of Christ. The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed; worship the lion also, since it signifieth Christ. Observe how numerous are the types of Christ: all these are Christ in similitude, not in essence. Dost thou seek the essence of Christ? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. Behold the essence of Christ, by which thou wast made. Wouldest thou have also that essence of His through which thou wast new made? And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. The rest are similitudes. Understand, know how to hold Scripture, so that thou mayest see one thing put before thine eyes, another hinted to thy heart.

21. That Sun, therefore, we now say it without apprehension, that Sun of Righteousness, doth not without cause refuse to rise to the ungodly, even though they wish: for Wisdom herself saith, The wicked shall seek me, but they shall not find me; they shall seek, and shall not find. And wherefore? For they hate wisdom. Wisdom herself speaketh, and saith, The wicked shall seek me, but they shall not find me; for that they hated wisdom. If they hate it, then, why do they seek it? They seek it, not that they may use it, but that they may be puffed up; they seek it in their discourses, but they hate it in their conduct: for the Holy Spirit of discipline will free from the hypocrite, and will withdraw Itself from the thoughts that are without understanding. That sun then riseth not for the ungodly, riseth not for the wicked. But what is said of the (visible) sun? He maketh the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Concerning therefore the Sun of righteousness doth this Psalm signify somewhat mystically, for we see that these things happen in the creation even according to the appearance of things visible. The sun knoweth his going down. What meaneth this? Christ knew His Passion: the going down of Christ is the Passion of Christ. But hath the Sun gone down, so that it will not rise again? Shall not He who sleepeth rise also? Hath He not said, I slept undisturbed? and is it not said of Him, Set thyself up, O God, above the heavens? Therefore, the sun knoweth his going down: what means, Knoweth? He hath approved, it hath pleased Him. And whence do we shew

that He knew it, that is, that it pleased Him? For what doth not God know? what doth not Christ know? and yet He will say unto some in the end, I know you not. As there, ‘I know you not,’ means not, ye are unknown to Me, but, ye please Me not; so here also, He knoweth His going down, meaneth His going down pleaseth Him. For if not, how would He suffer? For although a man be not pleased with his suffering, yet, since he is not that Sun, he suffers what he wishes not. But He would not suffer, unless it pleased Him; that is, unless He knew His going down, He would not go down; forasmuch as He Himself saith: I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again; no man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. Therefore, He knoweth His going down.

22. Ver. 20, 21. What then, when the sun went down, when our Lord suffered? There was a sort of darkness with the Apostles, hope failed, in those to whom He at first seemed great, and the Redeemer of all men. How so? Thou didst make darkness, and it became night; wherein all the beasts of the forest shall move. The lion’s whelps roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God. What shall I spiritually understand by lion’s whelps, save spiritual powers of wickedness? What am I to understand, save the evil demons, which demons feed upon the errors of men? For there are princes of the evil spirits, and there are some evil spirits that are contemptible. These demons seek to seduce souls, but when the Sun hath not risen; for they are darkness. And while the darkness is, the lion’s whelps seek whom they may devour. What is said of the greater lion himself, the prince of all such lions? Know ye not that your adversary the devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour? Therefore, seeking their meat from God; since no man can even be tempted by the devil, unless by God’s permission. Holy Job was before the devil, and yet he was far from him: in aspect before him, in power removed from him. When would he have dared even to assail his flesh, or the wealth which he possessed, had he not received power? But why is power given? Either to condemn the ungodly, or to prove the pious. The Lord doth all this justly; and the devil hath not power over any man, or over aught of his, unless by His permission, whose Power is chief and above all things. Thus neither the devil nor man hath any power over man, unless it be given from above. The Judge of the quick and the dead stood before a human judge, and that human judge prided himself

when he saw Christ before him, saying, Knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify Thee, and that I have power to release Thee? To which He, Who had come to teach even His judge, replied, Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above. Both man and the devil only injure when they have received power, and all devils also whatsoever; but they hurt not those who live well. To the wicked they are as fire to the hay; to the good, as fire to gold. Judas was devoured as hay; Job was tried as gold. Thou didst make darkness, and it became night; wherein all the beasts of the forest shall move. Here the beasts of the forest are used in different ways: for these things are always understood in varying senses; as our Lord Himself is at one time termed a lion, at another a lamb. What is so different as a lion and a lamb? But what sort of lamb? One that could overcome the wolf, overcome the lion. He is the Rock, He the Shepherd, He the Gate. The Shepherd entereth by the gate: and He saith, I am the good Shepherd: and, I am the Door of the Sheep. The term lion signifieth the Lord: as, the Lion of the tribe of Judah prevailed; and also the devil; The young lion and the adder shalt Thou tread under Thy feet. Learn thus to understand, when these things are spoken figuratively; lest perchance when ye have read that the Rock signifieth Christ, ye may understand it to mean Him in every passage. In one place it meaneth one thing, another in another, just as we can only understand the meaning of a letter by seeing its position. If thou hast heard the first letter in the word Deus, and thinkest it must always belong to it alone, thou wilt blot it out in the word Diabolus. For the word Deus beginneth with the same letter as the word Diabolus; and nothing is so far apart, as God from the devil. Consider how utterly ignorant of things both human and divine he must be, who shall say of the letter D, it ought not to be used in the beginning of the word devil; and when thou hast asked the reason, replieth, I read that letter in the name of God. Such a man is laughed at: for he is not worthy of an argument. Do not then so childishly interpret these divine things, as if any of you were to think, from my having said above that the beasts of the forest signify the Gentiles, while I now say that they signify devils and the angels of disobedience, that I am contradicting what I said before. For they are only figures, and wherever they occur, are explained by the context they have. Wherein shall all the beasts of the forest move. Where? In the night which the Lord hath made, for the sun knoweth his going down. The lion’s whelps roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God. Justly then our Lord, when nigh unto His going down, the very Sun of Righteousness recognising His going down, said to His disciples, as if darkness being about to come, the lion would roam about to seek whom he might devour, that that lion could devour no man, unless with leave: Simon, said He, this night Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. When Peter thrice denied, was he not already between the lion’s teeth? The lion’s whelps roaring after their prey, do seek their meat from God.

23. Ver. 22. The Sun hath arisen. He Who said, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again; knew His going down, and laid down His life: the Sun arose, and He took it again. The Sun arose, because the Sun went down, but the Sun was not extinguished. Still unto those who understand not Christ it is night. Still to them the Sun hath not risen: let them press on, that they may understand, lest they fall a prey to the roaring lion. For behold, the lion’s whelps dare not assail those unto whom He hath risen. For it goeth on; The Sun hath arisen, and they get them away together, and lay them down in their dens. More and more as the Sun riseth, so that Christ is recognised by the round world, and glorified therein, do the lion’s whelps get them away together; those devils recede from the persecution of the Church, who instigated men to persecute the house of God, by working in the sons of unbelief. For it is said, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Now that none of them dareth persecute the Church, the Sun hath arisen, and they get them away together. And where are they? And they lay them down in their dens. Their dens are the hearts of the unbelieving. How many carry lions crouching in their hearts? They burst not forth thence, they make no assault upon the pilgrim Jerusalem. Wherefore do they not so? Because the Sun is already risen, and is shining over the whole world.

24. Ver. 23. See therefore what followeth, for the Sun hath arisen, and they get them away together, and lay them down in their dens. What art thou doing, O man of God? thou, O Church of God? what art thou, O body of Christ, whose Head is in Heaven? what art thou doing, O man, His unity?

Man, he saith, shall go forth to his work. Let therefore this man work good works in the security of the peace of the Church, let him work unto the end. For sometime there will be a sort of general darkening, and a sort of assault will be made, but in the evening, that is, in the end of the world: but now the Church doth work in peace and tranquillity; for man shall go forth to his work, and to his labour, unto the evening.

25. Ver. 24. O Lord, how great are made Thy works! Justly great, justly sublime! where were those works made, that are so great? what was that station where God stood, or that seat whereupon He sat, when He did those works? what was the place where He worked thus? whence did those so beautiful works proceed at the first? To take it word for word, every ordained creation, running by ordinance, beautiful by ordinance, rising by ordinance, setting by ordinance, going through all seasons by ordinance, whence hath it proceeded? whence hath the Church herself received her rise, her growth, her perfection? In what manner is she destined to a consummation in immortality? with what heralding is she preached? by what mysteries is she recommended? by what types is she concealed? by what preaching is she revealed? where hath God done these things? I see great works. How great are made Thy works, O Lord! I ask where He hath made them: I find not the place: but I see what followeth: In Wisdom hast Thou made them all. All therefore Thou hast made in Christ. He Who was despised, Who was buffeted, He Who was spit upon, He Who was crowned with thorns, He Who was crucified, all things Thou hast made in Him. I hear, I hear, what Thou dost announce to men by this Thy Soldier; what Thou dost preach unto the Gentiles by that holy Preacher, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. Let the Jews laugh at Christ crucified, because unto them He is a stumbling-block: let the heathen laugh at Christ crucified, for to them He is foolishness. But we, he saith, preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God. In wisdom Thou hast made them all.

26. The earth is full of Thy creation. The earth is full of the creation of Christ. And how so? We discern how: for what was not made by the Father

through the Son? Whatever walketh and doth crawl on earth, whatever doth swim in the waters, whatever flieth in the air, whatever doth revolve in heaven, how much more then the earth, the whole universe, is the work of God. But he seems to me to speak here of some new creation, of which the Apostle saith, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God. All who believe in Christ, who put off the old man, and put on the new, are a new creature. The earth is full of Thy works. On one spot of the earth He was crucified, in one small spot that seed fell into the earth, and died; but brought forth great fruit. Alone Thou wast, Lord Jesus, until Thou hadst passed away: in another Psalm I recognise Thy voice, saying, I am alone, until I pass away. Alone then Thou wast, until Thou hadst passed away: alone, when Thou didst know Thy going down; but from Thy going down Thou didst pass to a rising. Thou didst arise, shiuedst, wast glorified, when Thou didst ascend into heaven, and the whole earth was filled with Thy creation. We have not yet finished the Psalm, my brethren: but some of it let us defer in Christ's name unto the Lord's day.

Discourse IV

Ye remember, beloved, that although there be one language of God spread abroad in all the Scriptures, and though one Word doth sound through many mouths of the saints, Which, since It is God with God in the beginning, hath not in that respect syllables, because It hath not times; and though we ought not to wonder, that on account of our infirmity It hath descended to the particles of our sounds, since It hath descended to assume the infirmity of our body: nevertheless, this Psalm hath already occasioned us many discourses, and the opening, unto those who knock, the mysteries which are herein concealed hath caused no slight delays for some days, while they were being declared, praised, shewn to be concealed, opened, drawn forth, displayed; you remember, beloved, as I said, that we could not on this account on the former day either arrive at the end of this Psalm, and that we put it off unto this day. The Lord hath willed both to shew us a day of payment of our promise, and that I the debtor should discharge my debt, and thus make my creditors more secure: may He, therefore, give us good to return, Who hath not returned unto us whatever evil we have done.

2. Ver. 24, 25. Our inmost hearts, as ye know, as ye remember with piety and joy, cried out with the Psalm, cried out and said, O Lord, how great are made Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy creation. Whatever hath been made by God, hath been made in Wisdom, and hath been made by Wisdom. Whatever knoweth Wisdom, and whatever knoweth not Wisdom, and yet is in the creation of God, is made in Wisdom, and is made by Wisdom. They who know wisdom, have Wisdom for their light; they who know It not, have yet Wisdom for their Creator, although they be themselves held down by folly: and they who have It for their light, have It also for their Creator; I do not say all who have Wisdom for their Creator, have It also for their light. And indeed there are many among men who are made sharers of it, and are called wise; many void of it, are called fools. They are therefore called fools, a term implying fault, because if they study wisdom, if they seek it, if they look for it, if they knock at the door, they may reach to the sharing of it: for it is not denied to their nature, but to their negligence. But there are other creatures, which cannot become partakers in wisdom; as all beasts, all cattle, all trees, which have not even any understanding. Because they cannot share in Wisdom, is that any reason that they were not made in Wisdom, and by Wisdom? God doth not then exact understanding in the horse and the mule; but unto men He saith, Be not like to horse and mule, which have no understanding. What is nature to the horse, is a reproach unto man. God then saith this: I do not exact a share of My wisdom from those whom I have not made in My image; but where I have made, there I exact, and demand the using of that thing which I have given. Men, therefore, who render unto God the things that are God’s, if unto Cæsar they render the things that are Cæsar’s; that is, rendering unto Cæsar his image, unto God His Image, raise their mind, not unto themselves, but to their Creator, and to the light whence they are, and to that spiritual fervour whence they glow, removed from whence they grow cold, receding whence they are darkened, returning whither they are enlightened: and, as they said piously, Thou, O Lord, shall light my candle: Thou, my God, shall make my darkness to be light. Having flung aside the darkness of earthly folly, opening their mouth, and drawing in breath, they raise up, as I said, the faithful eye of the heart; and in their mind see the whole universe, the earth, the sea, and the heavens, and seeing all things beautifully disposed, travelling in a course ordained, distributed in species,

maintained by seeds, changed in successions, running in seasons, the Creator doth so please them in this way, that they themselves become pleasing unto their Creator in His creation: and exclaim in their great joy, because truly nothing can be compared with this pleasure, O Lord, how great and many are Thy works: in wisdom hast Thou made them all! Where is that Wisdom in which Thou hast made all things? by what understanding is It reached? by what eye is It discerned? by what exertion is It sought? by what merit is It gained? How, do you imagine, but by His grace? He Who granted us to be, granteth us to be good. He granteth it to the converted: and did not He seek them before they were converted, and when turned aside from Him, they were going after ways of their own? did He not come down? did not The Word become flesh, and dwell in us? did He not light the lamp of His flesh, while He was hanging on the Cross, and seek the lost piece of silver? He sought, and found it: His neighbours rejoicing with Him, that is, every spiritual creature which doth approach nearly unto God. To the joy of the neighbours the piece of silver was found; to the joy of the angels the human soul was found. It was found, let it therefore rejoice, and say, O Lord, how great are made Thy works: in Wisdom hast Thou made them all!

3. The earth is full of Thy creation. Of what creation of Thine is the earth full? Of all trees and shrubs, of all animals and flocks, and of the whole of the human race; the earth is full of the creation of God. We see, know, read, recognise, praise, and in these we preach of Him; yet we are not able to praise respecting these things, as fully as our heart doth abound with praise after the beautiful contemplation of them. But we ought rather to heed that creation, of which the Apostle saith, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. What old things have passed away? In the Gentiles, all idolatry; in the Jews themselves, all that servitude unto the Law, all those sacrifices that were harbingers of the present Sacrifice. The oldness of man was then abundant; One came to renovate His own work, to melt His silver, to form His coin, and we now see the earth full of Christians believing in God, turning themselves away from their former uncleanness and idolatry, from a past hope to the hope of a new age: and behold it is not yet realised, but is already possessed in hope, and through that very hope we now sing, and say, The earth is full of Thy creation. We do not as yet sing this in our

country, nor yet in that rest which is promised, the bars of the gates of Jerusalem not being as yet made fast; but still in our pilgrimage gazing upon the whole of this world, upon men who on every side are running unto the faith, fearing hell, despising death, loving eternal life, scorning the present, and filled with joy at such a spectacle, we say, The earth is full of Thy creation.

4. But this world is as yet tossed by the waves of temptation, is as yet disturbed by the tempests and storms of tribulations and heavings: yet this is our road. Let the sea threaten, and swell with waves, and be pregnant with storms; this is our road, the Wood is granted us to sail in: The earth is full of Thy creation. But we are not yet in the land of the living, this is as yet the land of the dying; but we cry out, and say, Thou art my hope, and my portion in the land of the living. My hope in the land of the dying, my portion in the land of the living. Behold this earth which is full of the creation of God. He who is as yet in this land of the dying, not as yet in the living, how doth he pass over? Hear the following: So is the great and wide sea also; wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. He speaketh of the sea as terrible; therein are things creeping innumerable. Snares creep in this world, and surprise the careless suddenly; for who numbereth the temptations that creep? They creep, but beware, lest they snatch us away. Let us keep watch on the Wood; even in the water, even on the waves, we are safe: let not Christ sleep, let not faith sleep; if He hath slept, let Him be awakened; He will command the winds; He will calm the sea; the voyage will be ended, and we shall rejoice in our country. Wherein are creeping things innumerable, both small beasts and great. For I see in this terrible sea unbelievers still; for they dwell in barren and bitter waters: but they are both small and great. We know this: many little men of this world are still unbelievers, many great men of this world are so: there are living creatures, both small and great, in this sea. They hate the Church: the name of Christ is a burden to them: they rage not, because they are not permitted; the cruelty which cannot burst forth in deeds, is shut up within the heart. For all, whether small or great, creeping things, both small and great, who at present grieve at the temples being shut, the altars overthrown, the images broken, the laws which make it a capital crime to sacrifice to idols; all who mourn on this account, are still in the sea. What then of us?

And by what road then are we to journey unto our country? Through this very sea, but on the Wood. Fear not the danger; that wood which holdeth together the world doth bear thee up. Listen therefore: the great and wide sea: wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. Fear not, be not terrified; long for thy country, understand this as thy pilgrimage.

5. Ver. 26. There shall go the ships. Lo, ships float upon that which alarmed you, and sink not. By ships we understand churches; they go among the storms, among the tempests of temptations, among the waves of the world, among the beasts, both small and great. Christ on the wood of His cross is the Pilot. There shall go the ships. Let not the ships fear, let them not much mind where they float, but by Whom they are steered. There shall go the ships. What voyage do they find tedious, when they feel that Christ is their Pilot? They will sail safely, let them sail diligently, they will reach their promised haven, they will be led to the land of rest.

6. There is also in that sea somewhat which transcends all creatures, great and small. What is this? Let us hear the Psalm: There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to make sport of him. There are creeping things innumerable, both small and great beasts; there shall the ships go, and shall not fear, not only the creeping things innumerable, and beasts both small and great, but not even the serpent which is there; whom Thou, he speaketh unto God, hast made to make sport of him. This is a great mystery; and yet I am about to utter what ye already know. Ye know that a certain serpent is the enemy of the Church: ye have not seen him with the eyes of the flesh, but ye see him with the eyes of faith. It is he who is also styled a lion: of him the Scripture saith, The lion and the dragon shalt Thou tread under Thy feet. He is made subject to thy Head, he shall be made subject also to His body: only let the members still cling to their Head, so that they be His members. It is said of the first woman, whom this serpent led astray; viz. that Eve unto whom he gave counsel of death, and by his cunning persuasion crept like a serpent into her female heart. That was done which we well know, which even we ourselves did there; which we deplore. For the whole human race is in those two persons: thence sprang the offspring of death, thence even in children, debts, trespasses. For who is clean, saith

the Scripture, in Thy sight? Not even the child, who hath but the life of one day upon the earth. The transmission of sin is a transmission of death from the first sin. For ye know what was said to the woman, or rather to the serpent, when God heard the sin of the first man: She shall watch for thy head, and thou shalt watch for her heel. These words are a great mystery, spoken in figure of the future Church, which was made from the side of Her Husband, and that while He slept. But Adam was the figure of Him that was to come; as the Apostle saith, who is the figure of Him that was to come. That was prefigured which should come to pass afterwards, the Church was made out of the side of the Lord sleeping on the Cross. For from the stricken side of Him Who was crucified, the Sacraments of the Church flowed forth. What then is said unto the Church? Now hear at once, understand, and beware: She shall watch for thy head, and thou for her heel. O Church, watch for the head of the serpent. What is the serpent's head? The first suggestion of sin. Something unlawful hath come into thy mind; keep not thy mind there, consent not. What hath come into thy mind is the serpent's head; trample upon his head, and thou shalt escape the rest of his efforts. What is, Tread upon his head? Spurn the very suggestion. But he suggested gain: there is great gain there, much gold; commit this fraud, and thou shalt be rich. It is the serpent's head, trample upon it. What is, trample upon it? Spurn what he hath suggested. But he suggested much gold. And what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Let the world's gain perish, that it become not the loss of the soul. In speaking thus, thou hast watched the serpent's head, and trampled on him. But the devil watcheth for thy heel. What meaneth this? He watcheth when thou mayest slip from the path of God. Thou dost watch the first suggestion, he watcheth thy slip; for if thou hast slipped, thou shalt fall; if thou hast fallen, he will gain thee. But that thou mayest not fall, go not out of the way. God hath made for thee a narrow path; whatever is beyond it, is slippery. On this account Christ is the light, and Christ is the way: That was the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; and, I am the way, the truth, and the life. Through Me thou comest, unto Me thou comest. If therefore He is the light, and He is the way: if thou depart from Him, thou wilt neither be in the light nor in the way. And what followeth thee? That which one of the Psalms saith of the wicked; Let their way be dark and slippery.

7. This serpent then, our ancient enemy, glowing with rage, cunning in his wiles, is in the mighty sea. Here is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast formed to make sport of him. Do thou now make sport of the serpent: for for this end was this serpent made. He falling by his own sin from the sublime realms of the heavens, and made devil instead of angel, received a certain region of his own in this mighty and spacious sea. What thou thinkest his kingdom, is his prison. For many say: wherefore hath the devil received so great power, that he may rule in this world, and prevaileth so much, can do so much? How much prevaileth he? How much can he do? Unless by permission, he can do nothing. Do thou so act, that he may not be allowed to attack thee; or if he be allowed to tempt thee, he may depart vanquished, and may not gain thee. For he hath been allowed to tempt some holy men, servants of God: they overcame him, because they departed not from the way, they whose heel he watched, fell not. That holy Job sat upon a heap of dung, and was running on his way: consider how he watched the devil's head, and how the devil watched his heel. The one repelled the tempter, the other hoped he would fall: he attacked his wife also; he carried away all he had, he left only as his own assistant one who was not the consoler, but rather the tempter, of her husband; he took her as his prey while she watched not his head. For she was still Eve; though he was no longer Adam. When all had been taken away, Job remained with his wife, through whom he was tempted; and with God, by Whom he was governed. If thou lookest to his home, what ever became suddenly more destitute? what richer than he, if thou regardest his heart? Consider the poverty of his house, with every thing swept away. Consider the riches of his heart: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away:" he knew his ruler and his tempter; he knew Him Who allowed the tempter to assail him. Let the devil, he saith, take nothing to himself; he hath the will to hurt, but unless he received the power, he would not have it; I suffer just in proportion as he hath received power: I suffer not from him then, but from Him Who gave the power; let the pride of my tempter be despised, the rod of my Father be endured. The tempter was repelled, his head was watched, he could not penetrate into the heart. He besieged from without a walled city, but reduced it not. Another temptation was added: the devil was allowed to assault his body, and smote him with a severe wound from head to foot: he

wasted away with sore boils, he was full of worms, leaving his home he sat on a dung-heap. There Eve taken captive, set on by the devil not to help her husband, but to cause him to fall, suggests to him to blaspheme God. She first suggested in Paradise to despise God: now to blaspheme God. She then prevailed over one in full strength, she is now beaten by one covered with boils; the devil was the conqueror in Paradise, and conquered on the dung-heap. But that serpent watched whether Job would slip with his tongue; for every man setteth foot in that which he doeth: wherein he moveth, there as it were he walketh. He said many things; how many were Job’s words, they who read, know: in these so numerous words the serpent watched the heel for the fall of the man. But he, who kept watch on the serpent’s head, repelled every suggestion. He also answered the woman, as she deserved answering: Thou speakest, he saith, as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive evil? And in all this that he said, Job did not slip, which many persons do not understand in these words, and take some of them in such a sense, as if Job had said something hard against God.

8. For among many things he said this also, as if indignant against God, as it seemed to those who understood it not: but Job was bearing the high character of an exalted prophecy: Would that, he saith, speaking unto God, there were some days-man between us! What meaneth this; Would that there were some days-man between us? One who might judge between us, and under whose judgment my cause might conquer. Thus it is understood at the first sound: but examine thyself, that thou slip not; for that serpent is ever on the watch for thy heel. What did Job seem to have said? Would that there were some days-man between us! Would that there were some umpire to judge between me and Thee! This the speech of a man unto God, of a man sitting on a dung-heap! This the speech even of an angel in heaven unto God! Would that we had a days-man between us! But what did he foresee? what did he wish? Many, saith the Lord, prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them. He desired an umpire. What is an umpire? One who goeth between to settle a cause. Were we not enemies of God, and had we not a bad cause against God? Who could settle this bad cause, except that intervening Mediator, without Whose advent the path of mercy had been lost? Of Whom the

Apostle speaketh: For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. If He be not a Man, He is not a Mediator, for He is God coequal with the Father. He saith in another passage: Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. A mediator is between two: Christ therefore is Mediator between man and God. Not because He is God, but because He is Man: for in that He is God, He is coequal with the Father; but one coequal with the Father is not a mediator. To become a mediator, let Him descend from the higher to the lower, from equality with the Father; let Him do what the Apostle saith: He made Himself of no reputation, but took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and was found in fashion as a man. Let Him pour forth His blood, let Him blot out the handwriting that was against us, let Him mediate between God and us; correcting our will unto righteousness, bending His sentence unto mercy. Since therefore we have explained this one point, as far as the Lord hath allowed, which seemed to have been hardly spoken by Job; so also the other words which there seem hard and blasphemous, have a sense of their own; which we should imagine to be otherwise, unless God gave His testimony, both before Job spoke, and after he had spoken the whole. God in the first place gave His testimony, in these words: A perfect and upright man, one that truly serveth God. God spoke thus, and that before his temptation. But lest any one from misrepresentation by chance might stumble in these words, and might think that Job was indeed a righteous man before his temptation, but that he sank under heavy temptation, and fell into sacrilegious blasphemy; after all the discourses were concluded, both of Job himself, and of his friends by whom consolation was offered to him, the Lord giveth His testimony, that they spoke not the truth, like His servant Job. Ye have not spoken, He saith, of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job hath. He then ordereth that Job offer up sacrifices for them, by which their sins may be atoned for.

9. He then, my brethren, who doth wish to watch the serpent’s head, and safely to pass this sea; for it must be that this serpent dwelleth here, and, as I had commenced saying, the devil when he fell from heaven received this region; let him watch his head, on the part of the fear of the world, and of the lusts of the world. For it is hence that he suggesteth some object of fear or of desire; he trieth thy love, or thy fear. If thou fearest hell, and lovest the

kingdom of God, thou wilt watch his head. The head avoided, thou wilt be safe; nor will he gain thy fall, or rejoice in thy ruin. But let no man say, as I said; he hath great power. For men see how much power he hath received; what he lost, they see not. That holy Job in his mystical and deeply hidden words, speaking of that power which the devil is said to have, and describing it in many ways in the forms of similitudes, while he explaineth what he is, and what power he hath, addeth this also: Upon earth there is not his like created, for the mocking of him by My angels. (God there speaketh in the Book of Job.) Upon earth there is not his like created, for the mocking of him by My angels. He seeth all the deep: and is himself king over all that are in the waters. With which testimony this passage in the Psalm agreeth. For while he was speaking of the mighty and spacious sea, where are beasts great and small, where are creeping things without number, where the ships sail safe in their wood; he saith, there is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast made to make sport of him. If to make sport of him, how doth God make sport of him? Did He give him up to be mocked? We might imagine that God made sport of him, had not the Scripture of Job solved the question; for it is there said, for the making sport of him by My angels. Dost thou wish to mock the serpent? become an angel of God. But thou art not as yet an angel of God. Until thou art, if thou holdest on that course that thou mayest be so, there are angels to mock the serpent, that he may not injure thee. For there are angels of heaven set over the powers of the air; and this is the source of the expression in the text. For they look upon a law fixed, a law eternal, that commandeth without writing, without syllables, without sound, ever fixed and permanent; the angels look upon it with a pure heart, and according to it do all that is done here, and powers from the highest to the lowest are ordered by it. And if the powers of the highest heavens are ruled by the Word of God, how much more the lower and earthly powers? In the wicked, therefore, nothing but the wish to do harm remaineth. This wish to injure, this will to work ruin, a man hath in his power. But if he hath succeeded in injuring any one, let him not boast; he did not injure of his own power: the power was given him. It hath once been said, and it remaineth sure: There is no power but of God. What then fearest thou? Let the dragon be in the waters, let the dragon be in the sea: thou art to pass through it. He is made so as to be made sport of, he is ordained to inhabit this place, this region is given him. Thou thinkest that this habitation is a great thing for him, because thou knowest not the dwellings of the angels whence he fell: what seemeth to thee his glory, is his damnation.

10. Hear a similitude in a few words: for indeed it is a great thing to know and understand this. Imagine the whole of this government of creation to be a large house: this large house hath a master, hath slaves, and among those slaves those nearest the master provided with ampler stores of garments, treasures, barns, great possessions; it hath also slaves engaged in the lowest offices, powers being so subject to one another, that it hath some even for cleaning the sewers: how many gradations are there from the highest officers to these the lowest of employments. Suppose then some high officer offend, and, by the punishment of his lord, for example's sake, become a doorkeeper in some very low station; if, in the exercise of the power entrusted him, he harass those who wish to enter or depart, according to the measure of authority which he hath received from his master, while they know not that he once was a high officer; they imagine that his power is great, because they know not what he hath lost. And yet, my brethren, this doorkeeper of whom I spoke, according to the image of this great earthly house, may do something without the knowledge of his lord, and harass some one without his command: but that other one is not placed at that door, by which we enter unto God. For Christ is that Door, and through Christ we enter into life eternal. But there is a certain door, through which we enter into this life, a sort of gate of mortality: among the things in which this infirm flesh hath its waste and refuse, at this gate there is, as it were, a doorkeeper; he hath power in this sea, where the ships come and go, but not such power as that he can do any thing without the knowledge or without the will of his Lord. So that no man may say, He has indeed lost the great power of the higher services; but I am among these lowest officers, he may hold me in his power, I must needs serve him. Be not deceived: thy Lord knoweth thee, and so knoweth thee, that He hath the hairs of thy head numbered. What then fearest thou? Perhaps he is about to try thy flesh: it is the scourge of thy Lord, not the power of thy tempter. His wish is to injure that salvation which is promised: but he is not allowed: but that he may not be allowed, have Christ for thy Head; repel the serpent's head: consent not

unto his suggestion, slip not from thy path. There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast made to make sport of him.

11. Ver. 27–29. Dost thou wish to see how incapable he is of hurting thee, unless permitted? These, he saith, wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season. And this serpent wisheth to devour, but he devoureth not whom he wisheth. All wait upon Thee, O Lord, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season; both the creeping things innumerable, and small and great beasts, and the serpent himself, and all Thy creation with which Thou hast filled the earth; These wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season, to each his own meat. Thou hast thine own meat: the serpent also hath his own meat. If thou live well, thou wilt have Christ for thy food; if thou depart from Christ, thou wilt be food for the serpent. These all wait upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season. What is said unto the serpent himself? Dust thou shalt eat. It is said to the serpent; Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. Thou hast heard what the serpent's meat is. Thou dost not wish that God give thee to be devoured by the serpent; become not the serpent's food: i.e. forsake not the Word of God. For where it is said to the serpent, Dust thou shalt eat, it is said to the transgressor, Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return. Thou dost not wish to be the serpent's food? be not dust. How, thou repliest, shall I not be dust? If thou hast not a taste for earthly things. Hear the Apostle, that thou mayest not be dust. For the body which thou wearest is earth: but do thou refuse to be earth. What meaneth this? If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. If thou dost not set thy affections on earthly things, thou art not earth: if thou art not earth, thou art not devoured by the serpent, whose appointed food is earth. The Lord giveth the serpent his food when He will, what He will: but He judgeth rightly, He cannot be deceived, He giveth him not gold for earth. These wait all upon Thee, O Lord, that Thou mayest give them meat in due season. When Thou hast given it them, they gather it. It is before them: but they will not gather, unless when Thou hast given leave. Job was before the devil; and indeed he devoured not Job, but dared not even tempt him, unless when the Lord had given leave. They wait

all upon Thee: when Thou hast given it them, they shall gather it; if Thou hast not given it them, they shall not gather.

12. And what of us? What meat have we, brethren? What followeth is concerning our meat. When thou openest Thy hand, they shall all be filled with good. What is it, O Lord, that Thou openest Thy hand? Christ is Thy hand. To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? To whom it is revealed, unto him it is opened: for revelation is opening. When Thou openest Thy hand, they shall all be filled with good. When Thou revealest Thy Christ, they shall all be filled with good. But they have not good from themselves; this is oftentimes proved unto them. When Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled. Many filled with good have attributed to themselves what they had, and have wished to boast as in their own righteousnesses, and have said to themselves, I am righteous; I am great: and have become self-complacent. Unto these the Apostle speaketh: What hast thou, that thou didst not receive? But God, wishing to prove unto man that whatever he hath he hath from Him, so that with good he may gain humility also, sometimes troubleth him; He turneth away His face from him, and he falleth into temptation; and He sheweth him that his righteousness, and his walking aright, was only under His government. When Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled. Consider what he saith in another Psalm also: In my prosperity I said, I shall never be removed. He presumed upon himself; he was filled with blessings; all of which he thought came from himself, and said, I shall never be removed. But since he was now aware that he had received the grace of God, for that which he had experienced, he returned thanks: O Lord, in Thy good pleasure Thou hast granted strength to my glory. Thou didst turn Thy face from me: and I was troubled. And here also, When Thou openest Thy hand; Thou shalt open Thy hand, and they shall all be filled with good; not by their own hand, but by Thy hand opened. But when Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled.

13. But wherefore dost Thou do this? wherefore dost Thou hide Thy face, that they may be troubled? Thou shalt take away their breath, and they shall fail. Their breath was their pride; they boast, they attribute things to themselves, they justify themselves. Hide, therefore, Thy face, that they may be troubled: take away their breath, and let them fail; let them cry unto

Thee, Hear me, O Lord, and that soon, for my spirit waxeth faint: hide not Thy face from me. Thou shalt take away their breath, and they shall fail, and shall be turned to their dust. The man who repenteth of his sin discovereth himself, that he had not strength of himself; and doth confess unto God, saying, that he is earth and ashes. O proud one, thou art turned to thine own dust, thy breath hath been taken away; no longer dost thou boast thyself, no longer extol thyself, no longer justify thyself; thou seest that thou art made of dust, and when the Lord turneth away His face, thou hast fallen back into thine own dust. Pray, therefore, confess thy dust and thy weakness.

14. Ver. 30. And see what followeth: Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made. Thou shalt take away their spirit, and send forth Thine own: Thou shalt take away their spirit: they shall have no spirit of their own. Are they then forsaken? Blessed are the poor in spirit: but they are not forsaken: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. They refused to have a spirit of their own: they shall have the Spirit of God. Such were our Lord’s words to the future martyrs: When they take you and deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Attribute not your courage to yourselves. If it is yours, He saith, and not Mine, it is obstinacy, not courage. Thou shalt take away their spirit, and they shall fail; Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made. For we are His workmanship, saith the Apostle, created unto good works. From His Spirit we have received grace, that we may live unto righteousness: for it is He that justifieth the ungodly. Thou shalt take away their spirit, and they shall fail; Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be made: and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth: that is, with new men, confessing themselves to have been justified, not righteous of their own power, so that the grace of God is in them. Consider what manner of men they are, by whom the face of the earth hath been renewed. Paul saith, I laboured more abundantly than they all. What is this, Paul? Give heed, whether it be thyself, whether thy spirit. Yet not I, he saith, but the grace of God which was with me.

15. Ver. 31. What then? When He hath taken away our spirit, we shall be turned again to our dust, beholding to our edification our weakness, that

when we receive His Spirit we may be refreshed. See what followeth: Be the glory of the Lord for ever. Not thine, not mine, not his, or his; Be the glory of the Lord, not for a season, but for ever. The Lord shall rejoice in His works. Not in thine, as if they were thine: because if thy works are evil, it is through thy iniquity; if good, it is through the grace of God. The Lord shall rejoice in His works.

16. Ver. 32. Who looketh on the earth, and maketh it tremble; Who toucheth the hills, and they shall smoke. O earth, thou wast exulting in thy good, to thyself thou didst ascribe thy fulness and opulence; behold, the Lord looketh on thee, and causeth thee to tremble. May He look on thee, and make thee tremble: for the trembling of humility is better than the confidence of pride. Consider how the Lord beholdeth the earth, and causeth it to tremble. The Apostle speaketh to the earth as if it trusted and exulted in itself: Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. “With fear and trembling;” for it is God Which worketh in you. Thou sayest, O Paul, Work: thou commandest us to work: wherefore with trembling? For it is God, he saith, Which worketh in you. For this reason then with trembling, because God worketh in you. Because He gave, because what thou hast cometh not from thee, thou shalt work with fear and trembling, for if thou fearest not Him, He will take away what He gave. Work, therefore, with trembling. Hear another Psalm: Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling. If we must rejoice with trembling, God beholdeth us, there cometh an earthquake; when God looketh upon us, let our hearts tremble; then will God rest there. Hear Him in another passage: Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? Even on him that is lowly and quiet, and who trembleth at My Word.

Who looketh on the earth, and maketh it tremble; Who toucheth the hills, and they shall smoke. The hills were proud, and boastful of themselves, God had not touched them: He toucheth them, and they shall smoke. What meaneth the smoking of the hills? That they pray unto the Lord. Behold great hills, proud hills, vast hills, prayed not to God: they wished themselves to be entreated, and entreated not Him Who was above them. For what powerful, arrogant, proud man is there upon earth, who deigneth humbly to entreat God? I speak of the ungodly, not of the cedars of

Libanus, which the Lord hath planted. Every ungodly man, unhappy soul, knoweth not how to entreat God, while he wisheth himself to be entreated by men. He is a hill; it is needful that God touch him, that he may smoke: when he hath begun to smoke, he will offer prayers unto God, as it were the sacrifice of his heart. He smoketh unto God, he then beateth his breast: he beginneth to weep, for smoke doth elicit tears. He toucheth the hills, and they shall smoke.

17. Ver. 33. I will sing unto the Lord in my life. What will sing? Every thing that is willing. Let us sing unto the Lord in our life. Our life at present is only hope; our life will be eternity hereafter: the life of mortal life, is the hope of an everlasting life. I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will praise my God while I have my being. Since I am in Him for ever and ever, while I have my being, I will praise my God. Let us not imagine that, when we have commenced praising God in that state, we shall have any other work: our whole life will be for the praises of God. If we become weary of Him Whom we praise, we may also become weary of praising. If He is ever loved, He is ever praised by us: I will praise my God while I have my being.

18. Ver. 34. Let my discourse be pleasing to Him: my joy shall be in the Lord. Let my discourse be pleasing to Him: what is the discourse of man unto God, save the confession of sins? Confess unto God what thou art, and thou hast discoursed with Him. Discourse unto Him, do good works, and discourse. Wash you, make you clean, saith Isaiah; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. And come, and let us discourse together. What is it to discourse unto God? Unfold thyself to Him Who knoweth thee, that He may unfold Himself to thee who knowest not Him? Let my discourse be pleasing to Him. Behold, it is thy discourse that pleaseth the Lord; the offering of thy humility, the tribulation of thy heart, the holocaust of thy life, this pleaseth God. But what is pleasing to thyself? My joy shall be in the Lord. This is that discoursing which I meant between God and thyself: shew thyself to Him Who knoweth thee, and He sheweth Himself unto thee who knowest not Him. Pleasing unto Him is thy confession: sweet unto thee is His grace. He

hath spoken Himself unto thee. How? By the Word. What Word? Christ. It was unto thee that He spake, and Himself that He spake. In that He sent Christ, He spake Himself. So, clearly, let us hear the Word Himself: He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.

But my joy shall be in the Lord.

19. Ver. 35. Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth. He seemeth angry! O holy soul, which here doth sing and groan! Would that our soul were with that very soul! Would that it were coupled with it, associated, conjoined with it! It shall behold also his lovingkindness when he is angry. For who, but he who is filled with charity, understandeth this? Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth. Thou tremblest, because he curseth. And who doth curse? A saint. Without doubt he is listened to. But it is said unto the saints, Bless, and curse not. What is then the sense of the words, Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth? Let them utterly be consumed; let their spirit be taken away, that He may send forth His own Spirit, and they may be restored. Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and the ungodly, so that they be no more. In what that they be no more, save as wicked men? Let them therefore be justified, that they may no longer be ungodly. The Psalmist saw this, and was filled with joy, and repeateth the first verse of the Psalm: Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Let our soul bless the Lord, brethren, since He hath deigned to give unto us both understanding and the power of language, and unto you attention and earnestness in hearing. Let each, as he can recall to mind what he hath heard, by mutual conversation stir up the food ye have received, ruminate on what ye have heard, let it not descend in you into the bowels of forgetfulness. Let the treasure to be desired rest upon your lips. These matters have been sought out and discovered with great labour, with great labour have they been announced and discoursed of; may our toil be fruitful unto you, and may our soul bless the Lord.

PSALM 105

Exposition

1. Ver. 1. The 104th Psalm is the first of those to which is prefixed the word Allelujah; the meaning of which word, or rather two words, is, Praise the Lord. For this reason he beginneth with praises: O confess unto the Lord, and call upon His Name; for this confession is to be understood as praise, just as these words of our Lord, I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth. For after commencing with praise, calling upon God is wont to follow, whereunto he that prayeth doth next add his longings: whence the Lord’s Prayer itself hath at the commencement a very brief praise, in these words, Our Father, Which art in Heaven. The things prayed for, then follow. Thus it is said elsewhere in a Psalm: Unto Thee, O God, will we confess, and will call upon Thy Name. And this is elsewhere more clearly said: I will call upon the Lord with praises: so shall I be safe from my enemies; so in the text, O confess unto the Lord, and call upon His Name; which is the same as if he were to say, Praise the Lord, and call upon His Name. For He heareth him when he calleth, whom He seeth praising Him: He seeth him praise Him, whom He hath proved to love Him. And in what way did the Lord will the love of a good servant towards Himself to be shewn chiefly, save in this command which He giveth him, Feed My sheep: whence this also followeth, Tell the people what things He hath done; or rather, to translate literally from the Greek, as other Latin copies too have it, Preach the Gospel of His works among the Gentiles. Unto whom is this addressed, save unto the Evangelists in prophecy?

2. Ver. 2, 3. O sing unto Him, and play on instruments unto Him. Praise Him both by word and deed; for we sing with the voice, while we play with an instrument, that is, with our hands. Let your talking be of all His wondrous works; be ye praised in His holy Name. These two verses may without any absurdity seem paraphrases of the two words above; so that, Let your talking be of all His wondrous works, may express the words, O sing unto Him; and what followeth, be ye praised in His holy Name, may be

referred to the words, and play on instruments unto Him; the former relating to the ‘good word’ wherewith we sing unto Him, in which His wondrous works are told; the latter to the good work, in which sweet music is played unto Him, so that no man may wish to be praised for a good work on the score of his own power to do it. For this reason, after saying, be ye praised, which assuredly they who work well deservedly may, he added, in His holy Name, since he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. Let them, therefore, who wish to play not unto themselves, but unto Him, beware of doing their righteousness before men, that they may be seen by them; otherwise they will receive no reward with the Father Which is in Heaven; but let their works shine before men, not with the view that they themselves be seen by men, but that others may see their good works, and glorify their Father Which is in Heaven. This is to be praised in His holy Name. Whence we read also in another Psalm: My soul shall be praised in the Lord: let the meek hear thereof, and be glad; which here in a sense followeth, Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord: for thus the meek are glad, who do not rival with a bitter jealousy those whom they imitate as already workers of good.

3. Ver. 4. Seek the Lord, and be strengthened (confortamini). This is very literally construed from the Greek, though it may seem not a Latin word: whence other copies have, ‘be ye confirmed;’ others, ‘be ye corroborated.’ So it is said to Him elsewhere: My strength; and, My strength will I ascribe unto Thee: that by seeking Him and approaching Him, we may be both enlightened and strengthened; that we may not from blindness be unable to see what ought to be done, or from weakness accomplish not even what we see. While these words, then, Come unto Him, and be enlightened, apply to seeing; those in the text relate to doing: Seek the Lord, and be strengthened. Seek, he saith, His face evermore. What is the face of the Lord, save the presence of God? Like the face of the wind, or the face of fire; for it is said, Like as the stubble before the face of the wind; and, like as wax melteth before the face of the fire. Many other instances occur in Scripture, where nothing else is intended to be understood by the face of the things named, than their presence. But what meaneth, Seek His face evermore? I know indeed that to cling unto God is good for me; but if He is always being sought, when is He found? Did he mean by evermore, the whole of the life

we live here, whence we become conscious that we ought thus to seek, since even when found He is still to be sought? To wit, faith hath already found Him, but hope still seeketh Him. But love hath both found Him through faith, and seeketh to have Him by sight, where He will then be found so as to satisfy us, and no longer to need our search. For unless faith discovered Him in this life, it would not be said, Seek the Lord; and when ye have found Him, Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. Also, if when discovered by faith, He were not still to be diligently sought, it would not be said, For if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it; and that which John saith, We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. Or when we shall have seen Him face to face as He is, will He still have to be sought, and to be sought without end, because to be loved without end? For we say to any one present, ‘I am not looking for you;’ meaning, I do not like you. And thus he who is loved, is sought even when present, while there is constant love, which busies itself that he never become absent. Besides, he who loveth any one, even when he seeth him, without ever being tired of him, wisheth him ever to be present, that is, he always seeketh his presence. And truly this is the sense of the words, Seek His face evermore; meaning that discovery should not terminate that seeking, by which love is testified, but with the increase of love the seeking of the discovered One should increase.

4. Ver. 5. This fervid praiser of God doth now moderate himself, while he cometh down to wider expressions, nourishing his weak and infant love with the temporal wonders of God. Remember, he saith, His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth. This passage seemeth like that, when He had replied to the question of Moses as to who He was, ‘I am that I am,’ and, Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you: (an expression which in ever so small part scarce a mind taketh in:) then mentioning His own Name, He mercifully mingled in His grace towards men, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; this is My Name for ever. By which He would have it to be understood, that they whose God He declared Himself, lived with Him for ever, and He said this, which might be understood even by children, that they who by the great powers of love

knew how to seek His face for evermore, might according to their capacity comprehend, I am that I am. If therefore it be of great concern to you either to see or to seek what He is, Remember His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth.

5. Ver. 6, 7. Unto whom is it said, O ye seed of Abraham His servant, ye children of Jacob His chosen? Ye, the seed of Abraham, ye, the seed of Jacob, remember His marvellous works that He hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth. But that no man might attribute this to the single race of the Israelites in the flesh, and not understand that the sons of promise are the seed of Abraham rather than the seed of the flesh, to the former, of whom the Apostle speaketh, in addressing the Gentiles, Then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise; he next addeth, He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the world. This is said through Isaiah unto the free Jerusalem, our mother, Thy Redeemer, even thy God; of the whole earth shall He be called. Is He the God of the Jews only? God forbid! He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the world: because the Church, where His judgments are preached, is in all the world. What then doth he say in another Psalm: He sheweth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and ordinances unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation, neither hath He made known unto them His judgments. This is said, because he wished one nation to be understood as belonging to the seed of Abraham: which has been called indeed from all nations, and all nations are so expressed in it, that there is one nation called into adoption. Beyond that nation He made known His judgments unto none; for although declared, they were not made known to those who believed not; because unless they believe, they will not understand.

6. Ver. 8–11. He hath been alway mindful of His covenant. Other copies read, for evermore; and this arises from the ambiguity of the Greek. But if we are to understand alway of this world and not of eternity, why, when he explaineth what covenant He was mindful of, doth he add, The word that He made to a thousand generations? Now this may be understood with a certain limitation; but he afterwards saith, Even the covenant that He made with Abraham: and the oath that He sware unto Isaac; and appointed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting testament. Where

there is no room for doubt: for the Greek has αἰώνιον, which our interpreters have never rendered by any other word than eternal; though scarce any authors in any passage have used αἰώνιος in the sense of everlasting. Unless perhaps, because they render αἴων as meaning time, in a more familiar way, they may choose to interpret αἰώνιον, not eternal, but ‘for an age;’ which I do not remember any one having ventured to do. But if in this passage the Old Testament is to be understood, on account of the land of Canaan; for thus the language of the Psalm runneth, And appointed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting testament; saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan: the lot of your inheritance: how is it to be understood as everlasting, since that earthly inheritance could not be everlasting? And for this reason it is called the Old Testament, because it is abolished by the New. But a thousand generations do not seem to signify any thing eternal, since they involve an end; and yet are also too numerous for this very temporal state. For by howsoever few years a generation is limited, such as in Greek is called γενέα, whereof the shortest period some have fixed is at fifteen years, after which period man hath the power of generation; what then are those thousand generations, not only from the time of Abraham, when that promise was made him, unto the New Testament, but from Adam himself down to the end of the world? For who would dare to say that this world should last for 15000 years?

7. Hence it seemeth to me that we ought not to understand here the Old Testament, which it said through the prophet was to be cancelled by the New: Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Jacob, not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I led them out of the land of Egypt; but the covenant of faith, which the Apostle praiseth, when he setteth before us Abraham to imitate, and doth convict those who boasted in the works of the Law, in that Abraham believed in God even before his circumcision, and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. Lastly, after saying, He hath been mindful of His covenant unto an age; which we ought to understand as lasting for evermore, the covenant, namely, of justification and an eternal inheritance, which God hath promised to faith; he addeth, and the Word that He commanded unto a thousand generations. What meaneth commanded? For the words, Unto thee will I give the land of

Canaan, is not a command, but a promise: now a command is that which we ought to execute, a promise that which we should receive. The command then was faith, that the righteous should live by faith; and an eternal inheritance is set before this faith. A thousand generations, then, are, on account of the perfect number, to be understood for all; that is, as long as generation succeedeth generation, so long is it commanded to us to live by faith. This the people of God doth observe, the sons of promise who succeed by birth, and depart by death, until every generation be finished; and this is signified by the number thousand; because the solid square of the number ten, ten times ten, and this taken ten times amounts to a thousand. Even the covenant, he saith, which He made with Abraham: and the oath that He sware unto Isaac; and appointed the same unto Jacob, that is, Jacob himself, for a law. These are the very three patriarchs, whose God He calleth Himself in a special sense, whom the Lord also doth name in the New Testament, where He saith, Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. This is everlasting inheritance. For here also, where he saith, He appointed the same unto Jacob for a law; he sheweth that it is the law of faith, for he would not call a promise a law. For if there be work in the law, there is a reward in the promise. This is the work of God, saith our Lord, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent. This word therefore which He hath commanded, alway mindful of His covenant, that is, “the word of faith which we preach,” He appointed it unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, that is, because in the fulfilment of this very promise and law He was to give something eternal. Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance. How then is this eternal, unless it signifieth something eternal? For the land of promise is described as one flowing with milk and honey. All this signifieth that grace, by which we taste how sweet is the Lord, which belongeth not to all men; for all men have not faith. For this reason he added, the lot of your inheritance. Whence in another Psalm, the seed of Abraham, which is Christ, is understood to speak, where he saith, The lot is fallen unto me in a fair ground: yea, I have a goodly heritage. Why the land is called Canaan, the interpretation of the word doth disclose; for Canaan meaneth humble. Now if it be referred to that declaration of holy Noah, when he announced that this same Canaan should be his brother’s servant, to this belongs also servile fear. But the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for ever. Therefore the Canaanite is excluded, and the land of promise given to the seed of Abraham. For perfect love casteth out fear, so that the Son abideth in the house for ever. Whence it is said, And to Israel for an everlasting testament.

8. Ver. 12. He next followeth out the history well known in the truth of the holy Scriptures. When they were in small numbers, very few, and they strangers in the land; that is, in the land of Canaan. While the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, dwelt there, before they received this inheritance, in their own families they were very few, and they strangers in the land. But some copies have the words very few, and they strangers, in the accusative case, the translator having turned the Greek phrase too literally into Latin. If we were to render the whole clause in this way, we must say, that they were very few, and they strangers; but the phrase, while they were, is the meaning of the Greek; and the verb, to be, takes not an accusative, but a nominative after it. For we cannot say, ‘cum essent paucissimos,’ but ‘cum essent paucissimi.’

9. Ver. 13–15. When therefore they were in small number, (or small in number,) very few, and they strangers in the land, what time as they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. This is a repetition of what he had said, ‘from one nation to another.’ He suffered no man to do them harm: but reproved even kings for their sakes. Touch not, He said, Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm. He declareth the words of God chiding or reproving kings, that they might not harm the holy fathers, while they were small in number, very few, and they strangers in the land of Canaan. Although these words be not read in the books of that history, yet they are to be understood as either secretly spoken, as God speaketh in the hearts of men by unseen and true visions, or even as announced through an Angel. For both the king of Gerar and the king of the Egyptians were warned from Heaven not to harm Abraham, and another king not to harm Isaac, and others not to harm Jacob; while they were very few, and strangers, before he went over into Egypt to sojourn with his sons: which is understood to be herein mentioned; they went from one nation to another: from one kingdom to another people. But since it occurred to ask,

before they passed over and multiplied in Egypt, how so few in number, and those strangers in a foreign land, could maintain themselves: he next addeth, He suffered no man to do them wrong: but reproved even kings for their sakes. Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm.

10. But it may well excite a question, in what sense they were styled (Christs, or) anointed, before there was any unction, from which this title was given to the kings; which began with Saul, to whom David succeeded in the kingdom; and from thence the rest of the kings, both of Judah and Israel, were anointed in the continuation of the sacred custom: in which unction was figured the one true Anointed (Christ), unto Whom it is said, God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. Whence then were those patriarchs at that time called anointed? For that they were prophets, we read concerning Abraham; and certainly, what is manifestly said of him, should be understood of them also. Are they styled Christs, because, even though secretly, yet they were already Christians? For although the flesh of Christ came from them, nevertheless Christ came before them; for He thus answered the Jews, Before Abraham was, I am. But how could they not know Him, or not believe in Him; since they are called prophets for this very reason, because, though somewhat darkly, they announced the Lord beforehand? Whence He saith Himself openly, Your father Abraham desired to see My day, and he saw it, and was glad. For no man was ever reconciled unto God outside of that faith which is in Christ Jesus, either before His Incarnation, or after: as it is most truly defined by the Apostle; For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

11. Ver. 16. He then beginneth to relate how it happened that they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. He called, he saith, for a famine upon the land: and brake all the staff of bread. But He had sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold to be a bondservant. Thus it happened that they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. But the expressions of the holy Scriptures are not to be negligently passed by. He called, he saith, for a famine upon the land; as if famine were some person, or some animated body, or some spirit that would obey Him Who called; whereas famine is a

wasting that cometh for want of food, and is such in those who suffer from it, as any disease. For as the cessation of a disease usually is effected by medicine, thus also famine is healed in a manner by nourishment. What then meaneth, He called for a famine? Have then the evils which men suffer, certain evil angels set over them? (for in another Psalm also he saith, that God afflicted men by sending evil angels among them, His judgment being far from erring;) and perhaps these words, He called for a famine, mean the angel set over famine, and styled from the name of the office over which he was set. Under this impression the old Romans consecrated some such deities, as the goddess Fever, and the god Paleness. Or meaneth it, as is more credible, He said there should be famine; so that calling be the same thing as mentioning by name; mentioning by name, as speaking; speaking, as commanding? For He called for a famine, Who calleth those things which are not as though they were. Nor doth the Apostle say here, He calleth those things which be not, that they may be; but, as though they were. For with God that hath already happened which, according to His disposition, is fixed for the future; for of Him it is elsewhere said, He Who made things to come. And here when famine happened, then it is said to have been called, that is, that that which had been determined in His secret government, might be realized. Lastly, he at once expounds, how He called for the famine, saying, He brake all the staff of bread.

12. Ver. 17. But He had sent a man before them. What man? Even Joseph. How did He send him? Joseph was sold to be a bond-servant. When this happened, it was the sin of his brethren, and, nevertheless, God sent Joseph into Egypt. We should therefore meditate on this important and necessary subject, how God useth well the evil works of men, as they on the other hand use ill the good works of God.

13. Ver. 18, 19. Next he doth relate the story, mentioning what Joseph suffered in his low estate, and how he was raised on high. His feet they hurt in the stocks: the iron entered into his soul, until his word came. That Joseph was put in irons, we do not indeed read; but we ought no ways to doubt that it was so. For some things might be passed over in that history, which nevertheless would not escape the Holy Spirit, Who speaketh in these Psalms. We understand by the iron which entered into his soul, the

tribulation of stern necessity; for he did not say body, but soul. There is a somewhat similar expression in the Gospel, where Simeon saith unto Mary, Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against: yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. That is, the Passion of the Lord, which was a fall unto many, and in which the secrets of many hearts were revealed, since their sentiments respecting the Lord were extorted from them, without doubt made His own Mother exceeding sorrowful, heavily struck with human bereavement. Now Joseph was in this tribulation, until his word came, with which he truly interpreted dreams: whence he was introduced to the king, that unto him also he might foretell what would happen in respect to his dreams. But since he said, Until his words were heard, that we might not altogether so understand his, that any one might think so great an event was to be ascribed unto man; he at once added, The word of the Lord inflamed him; or, as other copies have it more closely from the Greek, The word of the Lord fired him, that he also might be reputed amongst those, to whom it is said, “Receive ye praise in His holy Name.” The word of the Lord inflamed him. With reason when the Holy Ghost was sent by our Lord, there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire; and the Apostle saith, fervent in spirit. From that fire those depart, of whom it is said, The love of many shall wax cold.

14. Ver. 20, 22. The king sent and loosed him, the prince of the peoples, and let him go free. The king is the same as the prince of the peoples: he loosed him from his bonds, and let him go free from his prison. He made him lord also of his house: and ruler of all his substance. That he might inform his princes like unto himself, and teach his old men wisdom. The Greek hath, and teach his elders wisdom. Which might altogether be rendered to the letter thus; Might inform his princes like unto himself, and make his elders wise. The word translated old men being presbyters or elders, not gerontas, old men: and to teach wisdom being from the Greek to sophize, which cannot be rendered by a single word in Latin, and is from the word sophia, wisdom, different from prudence, which is in Greek phronesis. Yet we do not read this in the high elevation of Joseph, as we read not of fetters in his low estate. But how could it happen that so great a man, the worshipper of the One True God, whilst in Egypt, should have been intent upon the

nourishing of bodies, and the government of carnal matters only, and have felt no anxiety for souls, and how he could render them better? But those things are written in that history, which, according to the intention of the writer, in whom was the Holy Spirit, were judged sufficient for signifying future events in that narration.

15. Ver. 23. Joseph also came into Egypt, and Jacob was a stranger in the land of Ham. Israel is the same with Jacob, as is Egypt with the land of Ham. Here it is very plainly shewn, that the Egyptian race sprang from the seed of Cham, the son of Noah, whose first-born was Canaan. So that in those copies wherein in this passage Canaan is read, we must alter the reading. It is better construed, was a stranger, than dwelt, as other copies have it: which would be the same as ‘was an inhabitant,’ for it meaneth nothing different; the very same word is used in the Greek passage above, where it is said, Very few, and they strangers in the land. Moreover, the state of an ‘incola’ or ‘accola’ doth not signify a native, but a stranger. Behold how they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people. What had been briefly proposed, hath been briefly explained in the narration. But from what kingdom they passed over to another people may well be asked. For they were not yet reigning in the land of Canaan, because the kingdom of the people of Israel had not yet been established there. How then can it be understood, except by anticipation, because the kingdom of their seed was destined there to exist?

16. Ver. 24. Next is related what happened in Egypt. And He increased, he saith, His people exceedingly, and made them stronger than their enemies. Even the whole of this is briefly set forth, in order that the manner in which it took place may be afterwards related. For the people of God was not made stronger than their enemies the Egyptians, at the time when their male offspring were slain, or when they were worn out with making bricks; but when by His powerful hand, by the signs and portents of the Lord their God, they became objects of fear and of honour, until the opposition of the hardened king was overcome, and the Red Sea overwhelmed the persecutor with his army.

17. Ver. 25. As if we should ask, how that which he had briefly expressed in the words, He made His people stronger than their enemies, happened, he

begins now to say, and determines this too in his narration: And He turned their heart so, that they hated His people, and dealt untruly with His servants. Is it to be in any wise understood or believed, that God turneth man’s heart to do sin? is it not a sin, or is it a slight sin, to hate the people of God, and to deal untruly with His servants? who would say it is not? Is therefore God in any wise the author of these so heavy sins, Who is not to be believed to be the author of any even the very slightest sin? Who is wise, and he will understand these things? For this is that wonderful goodness of God, by which He useth for good even the wicked, either angels or men. For while they themselves are wicked by their own fault, He doeth good out of their wickedness. For they were not good before they hated His people; but being malignant and ungodly, they were such as would readily envy their prosperous sojourners. And so, in that He multiplied His own people, this bountiful act turned the wicked to envy. For envy is the hatred of another’s prosperity. In this sense, therefore, He turned their heart, so that through envy they hated His people, and dealt untruly with His servants. It was not then by making their hearts evil, but by doing good to His people, that He turned their hearts, that were evil of their own accord, to hatred. For He did not pervert a righteous heart, but turned one perverted of its own accord to the hatred of His people, while He was to make a good use of that evil; not by making them evil, but by lavishing blessings upon those, which the wicked might most readily envy. The following verses, which are sung in praise of Him when Allelujah is chanted, shew how He used this hatred of theirs, both for the trial of His own people, and for the glory of His Name, which is profitable for us.

18. Ver. 26. He sent Moses His servant, and Aaron whom He had chosen him. Whom He had chosen, would be sufficient; but there is no difficulty in the addition of him. It is a phrase of Scripture, as, The land in which they shall dwell in it: a phrase which the divine pages are full of.

19. Ver. 27. He set forth in them the words of His tokens, and of His wonders in the land of Ham. We ought not to understand by the words of His tokens, words literally, words with which the tokens and wonders were worked, that is, which they uttered, that these tokens and wonders might take place. For many were performed without words, either with a rod, or

with outstretched hand, or by ashes sent towards heaven. But since their deeds were not destitute of some signification, even as the words we speak; for this reason they also are called words, not relating to voices and sounds, but to tokens and wonders. He set forth in them, that is, He wrought through them.

20. Ver. 28. He sent darkness, and made it dark. This is also written among the plagues with which the Egyptians were smitten. But what followeth, is variously read in different copies. For some have, and they provoked His words; while others read, and they provoked not His words; but the reading first mentioned we have found in most; while, where the negative particle is added, we could hardly discover two copies. But perhaps the false reading has abounded owing to the easy sense; for what is easier understood than this, They provoked His words, that is, by their contumacious rebellions? We have endeavoured to explain the other reading also according to some true sense: and this for the present occurs; They provoked not His words, that is, in Moses and Aaron; because they most patiently bore with a very stiffnecked people, until all things which God had determined to work by them, were fulfilled in order.

21. Ver. 29, 30. He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish. He made their land frogs, yea, even in the king’s chambers: as if he were to say, He turned their land into frogs. For there was so great a multitude of frogs, that this might well be said by hyperbole.

22. Ver. 31. He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies, and lice in all their quarters. If it be asked when He spake, it was in His Word before it took place; and there it was, without time, at what time it should take place: although even then He commanded it to be done, when it was to be done, through Angels, and through his servants Moses and Aaron.

23. Ver. 32. He made their rains hail. It is a similar expression to the former, He made their land frogs; except that the whole land was not actually turned into frogs, though the whole of the rain may have been turned into hail. A burning fire in their land: understand, He sent.

24. Ver. 33. He smote their vines also and fig-trees; and brake every tree of their coasts. This was done by the violence of the hail, and by lightnings;

whence he spoke of the fire as burning.

25. Ver. 34. He spake the word, and the locust came, and the caterpillar, of which there was no number. The locusts and the caterpillars are one plague: of which the one is the parent, the other the offspring.

26. Ver. 35. And did eat up all the grass in their land, and devoured the fruit of the ground. Even grass is fruit, as Scripture is wont to speak, which calleth even the ripe corn grass; but it wished these two things to harmonise in number with the two which it had spoken of before, that is, the locust and the caterpillar. But the whole of this doth belong to the variety of speech, which is a remedy for weariness, not to any difference of senses.

27. Ver. 36. He smote every first-born in their land: even the first-fruits of all their strength. This is the last plague, excepting the death in the Red Sea. The first-fruits of all their strength, I imagine to be an expression derived from the first-born of cattle. These plagues are ten in number, but they are not all mentioned, nor in the same order in which they are there read to have happened. For praise-giving is free from the law which bindeth one who is relating or composing a history. And since the Holy Spirit is the Author and Dictator, through the Prophet, of this praise; by the very same authority with which He guided him who wrote that history, he doth both mention something to have taken place which is not there read, and passeth over what is there read.

28. Ver. 37. Now he addeth this also to the praises of God, that He led the Israelites out of Egypt enriched with silver and gold; because even they were then in such a condition, that they could not as yet despise the just and due, though temporal, reward of their toils; nor in the deceit which they practised upon the Egyptians, of whom they sought a loan of gold and silver, is God to be imagined either to command such tricks, or to approve of them, if committed, by those whose hearts are on high. They were rather permitted than commanded to do these things, through those words of God, Who saw so well their heart, and weighed their lusts; not however without some improvement of their carnal mind, because they did this unto those who suffered such things justly, and took what ought to have been paid to them as their due from wicked men, although deceitfully. But God divinely

used their weakness, as He used the iniquity of the Egyptians, to figure and announce beforehand all that was needful through these acts. He brought them forth also in silver and gold: this too is a Scripture idiom; for in silver and gold is said for the same as if it had been said with silver and gold: there was not one feeble person among their tribes: in body, not in mind. This also was a great blessing of God, that in this necessity of removal there was no infirm person.

29. Ver. 38. Egypt was glad at their departing: for their fear fell upon them; that is, the fear of the Hebrews upon the Egyptians. For their fear is not that with which the Hebrews feared, but that with which they were feared. Some one will say, how then were the Egyptians unwilling to dismiss them? why did they let them go as if they expected them to return? why did they lend them gold and silver, as to men who were to return, and to repay them, if Egypt was glad at their departing? But we must understand, after that final destruction of the Egyptians, and the terrible overthrow of the mighty pursuing army in the Red Sea, that the rest of the Egyptians feared lest the Hebrews should return, and with great ease crush the relics of them. Then was fulfilled the former passage, where after these words, He increased them exceedingly, he added, He made them stronger than their enemies. To explain the sentiment expressed in this verse, he added the rest of the narration in this praise of their overthrow, as far as where he said, Egypt was glad at their departing, for they were afraid of them; as if illustrating what he had stated, that He made His people stronger than their enemies.

30. Ver. 39. He now proceedeth to the divine blessings which were conferred upon them as they wandered in the desert. He spread out a cloud to be their covering: and fire to give them light in the night season. This is as clear as it is well known.

31. Ver. 40. They asked, and the quail came. They did not desire quails, but flesh. But since the quail is flesh, and in this Psalm he speaketh not of the provocation of those who did not please God, but of the faith of the elect, the true seed of Abraham; they are to be understood to have desired that that might come which might crush the murmurs of those who provoked. Then in the next line, And He filled them with the bread of heaven, he has

not indeed named manna, but it is obscure to none who hath read those records.

32. Ver. 41. He opened the rock of stone, and the waters flowed out: so that rivers ran in the dry places. This fact too is understood as soon as read.

33. Ver. 42–44. But in all these blessings of His, God doth commend in Abraham the merit of faith. For the Psalmist goeth on to say, For why? He remembered His holy promise, which He made to Abraham His servant. And He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness. What he said, His people, he has repeated in, His chosen. So also what he said, with joy, he has repeated in, with gladness. And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they took the labours of the people in possession. The lands of the heathen, and the labours of the people, are the same; and the words, He gave, are repeated in these, they took in possession.

34. Ver. 45. And as if we asked for what good these blessings were vouchsafed? that the happiness given in their temporal affairs to the people of God might not be thought the highest good, he hath at once referred it to another end, where the highest good ought to be sought. That, he saith, they might keep His statutes, and seek out His law. Where it is to be understood, that the servants of God and the chosen sons of promise, the true and genuine seed of Abraham, imitating the faith of Abraham, receive these earthly blessings from God, not that they may be dissolved in luxury through them, or become torpid in a perverse security; but that they may by Divine mercy have all these things prepared, in the search of which they might have been occupied in the most busy toils, in order that they may have leisure whence everlasting good may be acquired; i.e. That they may keep His statutes, and seek out His law. Lastly, since by the seed of Abraham he wished those to be understood here, who were truly the seed of Abraham, such as were not wanting even in that people; as the Apostle Paul clearly sheweth, when he saith, But not in all of them was God well pleased; for if He was not pleased with all, surely there were some in whom He was well pleased: since then this Psalm praiseth such men as this, he hath said nothing here of the iniquities and provocations and bitterness of those with whom God was not well pleased. But since not only the justice but also the mercy of Almighty God, the merciful, was shewn even unto the

wicked; concerning these attributes the rest of the Psalm pursueth the praises of God. And yet both sorts were in one people: nor did the latter pollute the good with the contagion of their iniquities. For, the Lord knoweth who are His; and if he cannot separate in this world from wicked men, yet, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

35. To endeavour, then, so to speak, to discover the hidden soul in the body of this Psalm, that is, the inner meaning in what may be called the outward words: it seemeth to me that the seed of Abraham, who are all the sons of promise, who belong to the eternal inheritance of an everlasting covenant, are admonished to choose unto themselves God, as it were, as that very inheritance, and to worship Him with no further object, that is, on His own account, not on account of any reward beyond Himself; and to do this, praising, calling upon Him, preaching, doing good works by faith, not for their own, but for His glory, rejoicing in hope, fervent in love. All this soundeth in these verses: (ver. 1–4.) Confess ye unto the Lord, and call upon His Name: tell the people what things He hath done. O let your songs be of Him, and play unto Him: and let your talking be of all His wondrous works. Receive ye praise in His holy Name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord, and be strengthened: seek His face evermore.

36. Next, in order to feed the hearts of the young, that they may be strengthened in the faith, examples of the Patriarchs are brought forward, both of their faith, and of the promise of God, that by imitating and hoping we may be their seed, not of the race of the Hebrews only, but those as many as receive that grace in all the earth. All of which is contained in these verses: (ver. 5–11.) Remember His marvellous works that He hath done: His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth. O ye seed of Abraham His servant: ye children of Jacob His chosen. He is the Lord our God: His judgments are in all the earth. He hath been alway mindful of His covenant, the word that He commanded to a thousand generations; even the covenant that He made with Abraham, and the oath that He sware unto Isaac; and appointed the same unto Jacob for a law, and unto Israel for an everlasting testament: saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the line of your

inheritance. All which things, in proportion to my small measure of ability, I have expounded, in what sense they were to be taken.

37. Here it would occur to the mind of slight faith: if then God is to be worshipped for nought, and He Himself to be sought from Himself as the inheritance of the everlasting covenant; doth not that inheritance even in the fulness of His mercy leave unprovided for the mortal life of those who seek Him, and their temporal necessities? Hear attentively what He gave unto our fathers, either those whom He made examples of faith, or those who, while they sprang from their flesh, imitated also their faith. (Ver. 12–15.) When they were yet but in small number, and they strangers in the land; that is, in the land of Canaan; what time as they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; He suffered no man to do them wrong: but reproved even kings for their sake. Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm.

38. But if ye ask, how they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; hear, (ver. 16–23.) He called for a famine upon the land, and brake all the staff of bread. But He had sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold to be a bond-servant; whose feet they humbled in the stocks: the iron entered into his soul; until his word came: the utterance of the Lord inflamed him. The king sent, and loosed him, the prince of the people let him go free. He made him lord also of his house, and ruler of all his substance; that he might inform his princes like unto himself, and teach his elders wisdom. Israel also came into Egypt, and Jacob was a stranger in the land of Ham. Behold, how they went from one nation to the other; from one kingdom to another people.

39. Ver. 24–38. And He increased His people exceedingly, and made them stronger than their enemies. But if ye wish to know how He made them stronger than their enemies, listen: He turned their heart, so that they hated His people, and dealt untruly with His servants. Then sent He Moses His servant, and Aaron whom He had chosen. He shewed forth in them the words of His tokens, and wonders in the land of Ham. He sent darkness, and made it dark; and they provoked His words. He turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish. He made their land frogs, yea, even in their king’s chambers. He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies,

and lice in all their quarters. He gave them hailstones for rain, and a burning fire in their land. He smote their vines also, and fig-trees, and destroyed every tree of their coasts. He spake the word, and the locust came, and the caterpillar that was without number: and did eat up all the grass in their land, and devoured all the fruit of their ground. And He smote all the first-born in the land, even the first-fruits of all their strength. He brought them forth also with silver and gold; there was not one feeble person among their tribes. Egypt was glad at their departing, for their fear was fallen upon them. Behold in what manner He made His people stronger than their enemies.

40. Since then His justice inflicted these evils upon their enemies; hear now even the temporal blessings which His lovingkindness lavished upon themselves. (Ver. 39–45.) He spread out a cloud to be their protection, and fire to give light in the night season. They asked, and the quail came, and He filled them with the bread of Heaven. He opened the rock of stone, and the waters flowed out, so that rivers ran in the dry places. For why? He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant. And He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness; and gave them the lands of the heathen, and they took the labours of the people in possession. Not that they should worship Him on account of these blessings, but that they should refer and apply these also to everlasting good; that is, that they might keep His statutes, and seek out His law. Whatever other blessings therefore God giveth, are to be used with a view to His worship for nought: but that worship in itself is to have no reference to those other goods, which God giveth; for then only will it be for nought. The enemy, challenging unto this contest, dared to say unto God, Doth Job fear God for nought? Moreover, if Joseph, sold as a bond-servant, and humbled, and exalted, made way for the temporal good of the people of God, that it might be made stronger than its enemies; how much more doth Jesus, Who was sold and humbled by His brethren in the flesh, and exalted in the heavens, make way for the everlasting good of God’s people, triumphing over the Devil and his angels? Hear therefore, ye seed of Abraham, boasting not in his flesh, but imitating his faith; hear, ye servants of God, and ye elect of God, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. If there are hard temptations in this world, think upon Joseph in the prison, Jesus on

the Cross. If prosperity in temporal concerns attend you, use not God on account of it, but use it on account of God: nor think that He is worshipped by His worshippers for the sake of the necessaries of this life, which He giveth even unto His blasphemers; but seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

PSALM 106

Exposition

1. The 105th Psalm also hath the title Allelujah prefixed to it: and this twice. But some say, that one Allelujah belongeth to the end of the former Psalm, the other to the beginning of this. And they assert, that all the Psalms bearing this title have Allelujah at the end, but not all at the beginning; so that they will not allow any Psalm which hath not Allelujah at the end, to have it at the beginning; supposing that what seemeth to belong to the commencement, really belongeth to the end of the former Psalm. But until they persuade us by some sure proofs that this is true, we will follow the general custom, which, whenever it findeth Allelujah, attributes it to the same Psalm, at the head of which it is found. For there are very few copies (and I have found this in none of the Greek copies, which I have been able to inspect) which have Allelujah at the end of the 150th Psalm; after which there is no other which belongeth to the same canon. But not even this could outweigh custom, although all the copies had it so. For it might be that, with some reference to the praise of God, the whole book of Psalms, which is said to consist of five books, (for they say that the books severally end where it is written Amen, Amen,) might be closed with this last Allelujah, after all that hath been sung; nor, on account of the end of the 150th Psalm, do I see that it is necessary that all the Psalms entitled Allelujah, should have Allelujah at the end. But when there is a double Allelujah at the head of a Psalm, why as our Lord sometimes once, sometimes twice over, saith Amen, in the same way Allelujah may not sometimes be used once, sometimes twice, I know not: especially, since as in this 105th, both the Allelujahs are placed after the mark by which the number of the Psalm is described, whereas the one, if it belonged to the end of the former Psalm, ought to have been placed before the number; and the Allelujah which belonged to the Psalm of this number, should have been written after the number. But perhaps even in this an ignorant habit hath prevailed, and some reason may be assigned of which we are as yet uninformed, so that the judgment of truth ought rather to be our guide than

the prejudice of custom. In the mean time, before we are fully instructed in this matter, whenever we find Allelujah written, whether once or twice, after the number of the Psalm, according to the most usual custom of the Church, we will ascribe it to that Psalm to which the same number is prefixed; confessing that we both believe the mysteries of all the titles in the Psalms, and of the order of the same Psalms, to be important, and that we have not yet been able, as we wish, to penetrate them.

2. Ver. 1. But I find these two Psalms, the 104th and 105th, so connected, that in one of them, the first, the people of God is praised in the person of the elect, of whom there is no complaint, whom I imagine to have been there in those with whom God was well pleased; but in the following Psalm those are mentioned among the same people who have provoked God; though the mercy of God was not wanting even to these. But these things are said in the person of those who turn and pray for pardon; and examples are given of those towards whom, even though sinners, the mercy of God hath been richly shewn. This Psalm therefore beginneth like the former; Confess ye unto the Lord. But in that Psalm these words follow: And call upon His Name: whereas here, it is as follows, For He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever. Wherefore in this passage a confession of sins may be understood; for after a few verses we read, We have sinned with our fathers, we have done amiss, and dealt wickedly; but in the words, For He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever, there is chiefly the praise of God, and in His praise confession. Although when any one confesses his sins, he ought to do so with praise of God; nor is a confession of sins a pious one, unless it be without despair, and with calling upon the mercy of God. It therefore doth contain His praise, whether in words, when it calleth Him gracious and merciful, or in the feeling only, when he believeth this. For that publican, of whom these words alone are mentioned, God be merciful to me a sinner, although he said not, for Thou art gracious and merciful, or any thing of this sort: nevertheless would not say that, unless he believed this; since he prayed with hope, which could not exist without that faith. The praise of God therefore may be sincere and pious, where there is no confession of sins; and this praise is much more frequently styled confession in the Scriptures: but there is no pious and profitable confession of sins where God is not praised, either in the heart, or in the mouth and

language. Some copies read, for He is gracious, others, for He is sweet: one Greek word, χρηστὸς, having been differently translated. Also in the words, for His mercy endureth to the end of the world; the Greek hath εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, which may be interpreted for ever. If that mercy be here understood, in respect of which no man can be happy without God; we may render it better, for ever: but if it be that mercy which is shewn to the wretched, that they may either be consoled in misery, or even freed from it; it is better construed, to the end of the world, in which there will never be wanting wretched persons to whom that mercy may be shewn. Unless indeed any man ventured to say, that some mercy of God will not be wanting even to those who shall be condemned with the devil and his angels; not a mercy by which they may be freed from that condemnation, but that it may be in some degree softened for them: and that thus the mercy of God may be styled eternal, as exercised over their eternal misery. Now we read, that some will receive a more tolerable condemnation than others; yet who would dare to say, that that punishment to which any one hath been delivered will be mitigated, or have any pause for certain intervals, since the rich man was not counted worthy of one drop of water? But on so important a point we must discourse when at leisure; we shall already have said enough respecting it, as concerneth this Psalm.

3. Ver. 2. Who can express the mighty acts of the Lord? Full of the consideration of the Divine works, while he entreateth His mercy, Who, he saith, can express the mighty acts of the Lord, or make all His praises heard? We must supply what was said above, to make the sense complete here, thus, Who shall make all His praises heard? that is, who is sufficient to make all His praises heard? Shall make them heard, he saith; that is, cause that they be heard; shewing, that the mighty acts of the Lord and His praises are so to be spoken of, that they may be preached to those who hear them. But who can make all heard? Is it that as the next words are, Blessed are they that alway keep judgment, and do righteousness in every time; he perhaps meant those praises of His, which are understood as His works in His commandments? For it is God, saith the Apostle, Who worketh in you. And it is said to the seed of Abraham, Sing unto Him, and play unto Him: which we understand to be so spoken, as if it had been said, Both speak and do good things in His praise: and the two following verses we have seen

agree with the two words, singing and playing: so that, Let your talking be of all His wondrous works, agreeth with, Sing unto Him, and, Receive ye praise in His holy Name, with, Play unto Him. Thus unto this seed our Lord Himself saith, Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven. Here therefore, considering the commandments of God themselves, the works of which commandments are the praises of Him Who doth work in His chosen, he saith, Who shall express the mighty acts of the Lord? Since He worketh in these things in a manner that cannot be spoken. Who will do all His praises heard? that is, who, when he hath heard them, doth all His praises? which are the works of His commandments. As far as they are done, although all which are heard are not performed, He is to be praised, Who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. For this reason, while he might have said, all His commandments, or, all the works of His commandments; he preferred saying, His praises, because, as hath been said, in so far as they are performed, He is to be praised. Who, nevertheless, is able to do these praises when heard? that is, when they have been heard, who is capable of performing them all?

4. Ver. 3. Blessed are they that keep judgment, and do righteousness alway: that is, from when they begin their life of time. For he that endureth to the end, shall be saved. But it may appear a repetition: it may be thought, that to keep judgment and to do righteousness are the same: that in the former verse alway should be understood, as in the latter, Blessed; so that, expressing fully what is understood, we should say, Blessed are they that alway keep judgment: and blessed are they that alway do righteousness. But unless there were some difference between judgment and righteousness, we should not read in another Psalm, Until righteousness turn again unto judgment. The Scripture, indeed, loveth to place these two words together; as, Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His seat; and this, He shall make thy righteousness as clear as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day; where there is apparently a repetition of the same sentiment. And perhaps on account of the resemblance of signification one may be put for the other, either judgment for righteousness, or righteousness for judgment: yet, if they be spoken of in their proper sense, I doubt not that there is some difference; viz. that he is said to keep judgment who judgeth rightly, but he

to do righteousness who acts righteously. And I think that the verse, Until righteousness turn again unto judgment, may not absurdly be understood in this sense: that here also those are called blessed, who keep judgment in faith, and do righteousness in deed. For a time will come when judgment, which is now kept in faith, may be exercised in deed, when righteousness shall turn again unto judgment, that is, when the righteous shall have received the power of judging those righteously, by whom they are at present unrighteously judged. Whence elsewhere the very Body of Christ is understood to say, When I receive the time, I shall judge righteousnesses. This, if literally translated, would rather stand thus, I will judge equities. He said not, When I receive the time, I will do righteousness; because it must be done at all times, even as he here saith, who do righteousness alway.

5. Ver. 4, 5. Next, since God justifieth, that is, maketh men righteous, by healing them from their iniquities, a prayer followeth: Remember me, O Lord, according to the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: that is, that we may be among those with whom Thou art well pleased; since God is not well pleased with them all. O visit me with Thy salvation. This is the Saviour Himself, in Whom sins are forgiven, and souls healed, that they may be able to keep judgment, and do righteousness; and since they who here speak know such men to be blessed, they pray for this themselves. Of that salvation it is elsewhere said, That we may know Thy way upon earth: and as if we asked, ‘where upon earth?’ he added, among all nations. Again, as if we asked, what way? he added, Thy saving health. Of Him spoke the aged Simeon, For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation Who said of Himself, I am the way. Visit us, then, with Thy salvation, that is, with Thy Christ. To see the felicity of Thy chosen, and to rejoice in the gladness of Thy people: that is, visit us for this reason with Thy salvation, that we may see the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people. For felicity some copies read sweetness; as in the former passage, For He is gracious; where others read, for He is sweet. And it is the same word in the Greek, as is elsewhere read, The Lord shall shew sweetness: which some have translated felicity, others bounty. But what meaneth, Visit us to see the felicity of Thy chosen: that is, that happiness which Thou givest to Thine elect: except that we may not remain blind, as those unto whom it is said, But now ye say we see: therefore your sin remaineth. For the Lord giveth

sight to the blind, not by their own merits, but in the felicity He giveth to His chosen, which is the meaning of the felicity of Thy chosen: as, the help of my countenance, is not of myself, but is my God. And we speak of our daily bread, as ours, but we add, Give unto us. Visit us, then, with Thy salvation, to see (that is, that we may see) the felicity of Thy chosen, and to rejoice (that is, that we may rejoice) in the gladness of Thy people. By the one people of God we ought to understand the whole seed of Abraham; but the sons of the promise, not of the flesh. They therefore, who here speak, desire to have the gladness of the same people. And what is the gladness of this people, save their God? To Whom is said, Thou art my hope, deliver me: and, O Lord, the light of Thy countenance is signed upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart: viz. the highest, the unchangeable good, which worketh good, which is God Himself. That Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance. I wonder this verse hath been so interpreted in many copies, since the Greek phrase is one and the same in these three verses, so that if this verse be rightly read, That Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance; it may rightly be said, That Thou mayest see the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people: the whole sense being thus arranged: Visit us with Thy salvation, that Thou mayest see the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people, and be praised with Thine inheritance. Whereas according to our own reading, Visit us, that we may see the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people: we ought next to read, and that we may be praised with Thine inheritance: to which inheritance it was said, Receive ye praise in His holy Name. But since this seemeth a doubtful expression, if that sense be true according to which interpreters have preferred, That Thou mayest be praised, the two preceding verses also must be so understood, because, as I have said, there is one Greek expression in these three verses; so that the whole should be thus understood, Visit us with Thy salvation, that Thou mayest see the felicity of Thy chosen; that is, visit us for this purpose, that Thou mayest cause us to be there, and mayest see us there; that Thou mayest rejoice in the gladness of Thy people, that is, that Thou mayest be said to rejoice, since they rejoice in Thee; that Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance, that is, mayest be praised with it, since it may not be praised save for Thy sake. Whether then the words, ‘to see,’ ‘to rejoice,’ ‘to praise,’ are to be understood in this way or in the other, the meaning is, they wish to be visited in God’s salvation, that is, in Christ, that they may not be separated from His people, and from those in whom God is well pleased.

6. Ver. 6, 7. But let us hear what they next confess: we have sinned with our fathers: we have done amiss, and dealt wickedly. What meaneth, with our fathers? Is it in the sense in which the Epistle to the Hebrews saith, that Levi gave tithes with Abraham, since he was in his loins, when he gave tithes to Melchisedec the priest; so these also sinned with their fathers, in whose loins they were when they were in Egypt? For those who lived in the time when this Psalm was written, and much more their descendants, (since it might either be said of those then alive, or prophesied of those to come,) were far distant from the age of those who sinned in Egypt, not understanding the wondrous works of God. For this followeth, in explaining how they sinned: Our fathers, he saith, regarded not Thy wonders in Egypt; and the many other things which he doth relate of their sins. Or is, we have sinned with our fathers, to be understood as meaning, we have sinned like our fathers, that is, by imitating their sins? If it be so, it should be supported by some example of this mode of expression: which did not occur to me when I sought on this occasion an instance of any one saying that he had sinned, or done any thing, with another, whom he had imitated by a similar act after a long interval of time.

7. What meaneth then, Our fathers understood not Thy wonders; save this, they did not know what Thou didst wish to convince them of by these miracles? What indeed, save life eternal, and a good, not temporal, but immutable, which is waited for only through endurance? For this reason they impatiently murmured, and provoked, and they asked to be blessed with present and fugitive blessings; Neither were they mindful of the greatness of Thy mercy. He reproveth both their understanding and memory. Understanding there was need of, that they might meditate unto what eternal blessings God was calling them through these temporal ones; and of memory, that at least they might not forget the temporal wonders which had been wrought, and might faithfully believe, that by the same power which they had already experienced, God would free them from the persecution of their enemies; whereas they forgot the aid which He had given them in Egypt, by means of such wonders, to crush their enemies.

And they provoked, as they went up to the sea, even to the Red Sea. The copy which I was reading from, had the passage thus; and a star had been prefixed to these two last words, even the Red Sea: which doth mark those readings which occur in the Hebrew, and not in the Septuagint translation. But most of the copies, whether Greek or Latin, which I have been able to inspect, read thus: and they provoked, or, and this is more literally from the Greek, and they wrought bitterness, as they went up in the Red Sea. He who readeth that history, when they went out from Egypt, and passed through the Red Sea, grieveth for their unbelief, that they were in so great alarm and despair, presently after so many and so great miracles in Egypt; which great goodness of God, he saith, that they remembered not. The word, went up, is used, from the position of the land being such, that we speak of going down from the land of Canaan into Egypt, and of going up from Egypt into it. We ought especially to notice how the Scripture doth censure the not understanding that which ought to have been understood, and the not remembering that which ought to have been remembered; which men are unwilling to have ascribed to their own fault, for no other reason than that they may pray less, and be less humble unto God, in Whose sight they should confess what they are, and might by praying for His aid, become what they are not. For it is better to accuse even the sins of ignorance and negligence, that they may be done away with, than to excuse them, so that they remain; and it is better to clear them off by calling upon God, than to clench them by provoking Him.

8. Ver. 8. He addeth, that God acted not according to their unbelief. Nevertheless, he saith, He saved them for His Name’s sake: that He might make His power to be known: not on account of any deservings of their own.

9. Ver. 9. He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up. We do not read that any voice was sent forth from Heaven to rebuke the sea; but he hath called the Divine Power by which this was effected, a rebuke: unless indeed any one may choose to say, that the sea was secretly rebuked, so that the waters might hear, and yet men could not. The power by which God acteth is very abstruse and mysterious, a power which He causeth that even things devoid of sense instantly obey at His will. So He led them through the

deeps, as through a wilderness. He calleth a multitude of waters the deeps. For some wishing to give the sense of this whole verse, have translated, So He led them forth amid many waters. What then doth through the deeps, as through a wilderness, mean, except that that had become as a wilderness from its dryness, where before had been the watery deeps?

10. Ver. 10. And He saved them from the hating ones. Some translators, in order to avoid an expression unusual in Latin, have rendered the word, by a circumlocution, And He saved them from the hand of those that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. What price was given in this redemption? Is it a prophecy, since this deed was a figure of Baptism, wherein we are redeemed from the hand of the devil at a great price, which price is the Blood of Christ? whence this is more consistently figured forth, not by any sea indiscriminately, but by the Red sea; since blood hath a red colour.

11. Ver. 11. As for those that troubled them, the waters overwhelmed them: there was not one of them left; not of all the Egyptians, but of those who pursued the departing Israelites, desirous either of taking or of killing them.

12. Ver. 12. Then believed they in His words. The expression seemeth barely Latin, for he saith not believed His word, or on His words, but in His words; yet it is very frequent in Scripture. And praised praise unto Him; such an expression as when we say, ‘This servitude he served,’ ‘such a life he lived.’ He is here alluding to that well-known hymn, commencing, I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and the rider hath He thrown into the sea.

13. Ver. 13. They acted hastily: they forgot His works: other copies read more intelligibly, They hastened, they forgot His works, and would not abide His counsel. For they ought to have thought, that so great works of God towards themselves were not without a purpose, but that they invited them to some endless happiness, which was to be waited for with patience; but they hastened to make themselves happy with temporal things, which give no man true happiness, because they do not quench insatiable longing: for whosoever, saith our Lord, shall drink of this water, shall thirst again.

14. Ver. 14. Lastly, And they lusted a lust in the wilderness, and they tempted God in the dry land. The dry land, or land without water, and desert, are the same: so also are, they lusted a lust, and, they tempted God. The form of speech is the same as above, They praised a praise.

15. Ver. 15. And He gave them their desire, and sent fulness withal into their souls. But He did not thus render them happy: for it was not that fulness of which it is said, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. In this passage he doth not speak of the rational soul, but of the soul as giving animal life to the body; to the substance of which belong meat and drink, according to what is said in the Gospel, Is not the soul more than meat, and the body than raiment? as if it belonged to the soul to eat, to the body to be clothed. In the same sense saith Isaiah; Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and Thou sawest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and Thou takest no knowledge?

16. Ver. 16. And they angered Moses in the tents, and Aaron the saint of the Lord. What angering, or, as some have more literally rendered it, what provocation, he speaketh of, the following words sufficiently shew.

17. Ver. 17. The earth opened, he saith, and swallowed up Dathan, and covered over the congregation of Abiram: swallowed up answereth to covered over. Both Dathan and Abiram were equally concerned in a most sacrilegious schism.

18. Ver. 18. And the fire was kindled in their company; the flame burnt up the sinners. This word is not in Scripture usually applied to those, who, although they live righteously, and in a praiseworthy manner, are not without sin. Rather, as there is a difference between those who scorn and scorners, between men who murmur and murmurers, between men who are writing and writers, and so forth; so Scripture is wont to signify by sinners such as are very wicked, and laden with heavy loads of sins.

19. Ver. 19, 20. And they made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the graven image. Thus they changed their glory, in the similitude of a calf that eateth hay. He saith not ‘into’ the likeness, but in the likeness. It is such a form of speech as where he said, and they believed in His words. With great effect in truth he saith not, they changed the glory of God when they did this; as

the Apostle also saith, They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man: but their glory. For God was their glory, if they would abide His counsel, and hasten not; unto Whom is said, Thou art my glory, and the lifter up of my head. That their glory, that is, God, they changed in the similitude of a calf that eateth hay, that they might be devoured by him, by whom those who are wise according to the flesh are devoured: for all flesh is grass.

20. Ver. 21, 22. They forgat God Who saved them. How did He save them? Who did so great things in Egypt; wondrous works in the land of Ham, and fearful things in the Red sea. The things that are wondrous, are also fearful; for there is no wonder without a certain fear: although these might be called fearful, because they beat down their adversaries, and shewed them what they ought to fear.

21. Ver. 23. So He said, He would have destroyed them. Since they forgot Him who saved them, the Worker of wondrous works, and made and worshipped a graven image, by this atrocious and incredible impiety they deserved death. So He said, He would have destroyed them, had not Moses His chosen stood before Him in the breaking. He doth not say, that he stood in the breaking, as if to break the wrath of God, but in the way of the breaking, meaning the stroke which was to strike them: that is, had he not put himself in the way for them, saving, Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book. Where it is proved how greatly the intercession of the saints in behalf of others prevaileth with God. For Moses, fearless in the justice of God, which could not blot him out, implored mercy, that He would not blot out those whom He justly might. Thus he stood before Him in the breaking, to turn away His wrathful indignation, lest He should destroy them.

22. Yea, they thought scorn of that pleasant land. But had they seen it? How then could they scorn that which they had not seen, except as the following words explain, and believed not in His words. Indeed, unless that land which was styled the land that flowed with milk and honey, signified something great, through which, as by a visible token, He was leading those who understood His wondrous works to invisible grace and the kingdom of heaven, they could not be blamed for scorning that land, whose temporal

kingdom we also ought to esteem as nothing, that we may love that Jerusalem which is free, the mother of us all, which is in heaven, and truly to be desired. But rather unbelief is here reproved, since they gave no credence to the words of God, Who was leading them to great things through small things, and hastening to bless themselves with temporal things, which they carnally savoured of, they abided not His counsel, as is said above.

23. Ver. 25. But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord; Who strongly forbad them to murmur.

24. Ver. 26, 27. Then lift He up His hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness; to cast out their seed among the nations: and to scatter them in the lands.

25. Ver. 28, 29. Here before he said that any one interceded with the great indignation of God, and appeased Him by any means, he added, They were initiated also unto Baalpeor; that is, were consecrated to the Gentile idol; and ate the offerings of the dead. Thus they provoked Him to anger with their own inventions; and destruction was multiplied among them. As if He had deferred the lifting up of His hand which was to cast them down in the desert, and to cast out their seed among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands, in order that, being given up to a reprobate mind, they might commit such a thing as by the higher crime to draw down punishment with evident justice, as the Apostle saith: And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.

26. Ver. 30. Lastly, so great was their wickedness, in being consecrated to the idol, and eating the sacrifices of the dead, (that is, because the Gentiles sacrificed to dead men as to God,) that God would not be otherwise appeased than as Phineas the Priest appeased Him, when he slew a man and a woman together whom he found in adultery. If he had done this from hatred towards them, and not from love, while zeal for the house of God devoured him, it would not have been counted unto him for righteousness. For by this deed he struck as it were with a rod, as one man, that people whose destruction would otherwise have been greater, in order that he

might save their soul from death. Christ our Lord indeed, when the New Testament was revealed, chose a milder discipline; but the threat of hell is more severe, and this we do not read of in those threatenings held out by God in His temporal government. Destruction, therefore, was multiplied among them, when they were heavily punished for their heavy sins. Then stood up Phineas, and appeased Him, and the shaking ceased. He hath related the whole briefly, because he is not here teaching the ignorant, but reminding those who know the history. The word shaking here is the same as breaking before. For it is one word in the Greek.

27. Ver. 31. And that was counted unto him for righteousness among all posterities for evermore. God counted this unto His Priest for righteousness, not only as long as posterity shall exist, but for evermore; for He Who knoweth the heart, knoweth how to weigh with how much love for the people that deed was done.

28. Ver. 32, 33. And they angered Him at the waters of strife: so that Moses was vexed for their sakes; because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake doubtfully with his lips. What is spake doubtfully? As if God, Who had done so great wonders before, could not cause water to flow from a rock. For he touched the rock with his rod with doubt, and thus distinguished this miracle from the rest, in which he had not doubted. He thus offended, thus deserved to hear that he should die, without entering into the land of promise. For being disturbed by the murmurs of an unbelieving people, he held not fast that confidence which he ought to have held. Nevertheless, God giveth unto him, as unto His chosen, a good testimony even after his death, so that we may see that this wavering of faith was punished with this penalty only, that he was not allowed to enter that land, whither he was leading the people. But God forbid that we should believe him alienated from the kingdom of God, which that land of promise typified, whence milk and honey were said to flow. Rather this is an everlasting testament which he delivered unto Abraham, our father not according to the flesh, but according to faith.

29. Ver. 34–36. But they of whose iniquities this Psalm speaketh, when they had entered into that temporal land of promise, destroyed not the heathen, which the Lord commanded them; but were mingled among the heathen,

and learned their works. Insomuch that they worshipped their idols, which became to them an offence. Their not destroying them, but mingling with them, became to them an offence.

30. Ver. 37–40. Yea, they offered their sons and their daughters unto devils; and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they offered unto the idols of Canaan. That history doth not relate that they offered their sons and daughters to devils and idols; but neither can that Psalm lie, nor the Prophets, who assert this in many passages of their rebukes. But the literature of the Gentiles is not silent respecting this custom of theirs.

31. But what is it that followeth? And the land was slain with bloods. We might suppose that this was a mistake of the writer, and that he had written interfecta for infecta, were it not for the goodness of God, Who hath willed His Scriptures to be written in many languages; were it not that we see it written as in the text in many Greek copies which we have inspected; the land was slain with bloods. What meaneth then, the land was slain, unless this be referred to the men who dwelt in the land, by a metaphorical expression, which doth substitute that which containeth for that which is contained, even as we speak of an evil house, meaning one in which evil men dwell; and a good house, as one in which good men dwell? For they themselves were slaying their own souls when they offered up their sons, and when they shed the blood of infants who were far from consent to this crime: whence it is said, They shed innocent blood. The land therefore was slain with bloods, and defiled by their works, since they themselves were slain in soul, and defiled by their works; and they went a whoring after their own inventions. By inventions are meant what the Greeks call ἐπιτηδεύματα: for this word doth occur in the Greek copies both in this and a former passage, where it is said, They provoked Him to anger with their own inventions; inventions in both instances signifying what they had initiated others in. Let no man therefore suppose inventions to mean what they had of themselves instituted, without any example before them to imitate. Whence other translators in the Latin tongue have preferred pursuits, affections, imitations, pleasures, to inventions: and the very same who here write inventions, have elsewhere written pursuits. I chose to

mention this, lest the word inventions, applied to what they had not invented, but imitated from others, might raise a difficulty.

32. Ver. 40–43. Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against His own people. Our translators have been unwilling to use the word anger, for the Greek θυμὸς; though some have used it; while others translate by ‘indignation’ or ‘mind.’ Whichever of these terms be adopted, passion doth not affect God; but the power of punishing hath assumed this name metaphorically from custom.

33. Insomuch that He abhorred His own inheritance; and He gave them over into the hand of the heathen: and they that hated them were lords over them: and their enemies oppressed them, and they were brought low under their hands. Since he hath called them the inheritance of God, it is clear that He abhorred them, and gave them over into their enemies’ hands, not in order to their perdition, but for their discipline. Lastly, he saith, Many a time did He deliver them.

34. But they provoked Him with their own counsels. This is what he said above, They did not abide His counsel. Now a man’s counsel is pernicious to himself, when he seeketh those things which are his own only, not those which are God’s. In Whose inheritance, which inheritance He Himself is to us, when He deigneth His presence for our enjoyment, being with the Saints, we shall suffer no straitening from the society, by our love of any thing as our own possession. For that most glorious city, when it hath gained the promised inheritance, in which none shall die, none shall be born, will not contain citizens who shall individually rejoice in their own, for God shall be all in all. And whoever in this pilgrimage faithfully and earnestly doth long for this society, doth accustom himself to prefer common to private interests, by seeking not his own things, but Jesus Christ’s: lest, by being wise and vigilant in his own affairs, he provoke God with his own counsel; but, hoping for what he seeth not, let him not hasten to be blessed with things visible; and, patiently waiting for that everlasting happiness which he seeth not, follow His counsel in His promises, Whose aid he prayeth for in his prayers. Thus he will also become humble in his confessions; so as not to be like those, of whom it is said, They were brought down in their wickedness.

35. Ver. 44, 45. Nevertheless, God, full of mercy, forsook them not. And He saw when they were in adversity, when He heard their complaint. And He thought upon His covenant, and repented, according to the multitude of His mercies. He saith, He repented, because He changed that wherewith He seemed about to destroy them. With God indeed all things are arranged and fixed; and when He seemeth to act upon sudden motive, He doth nothing but what He foreknew that He should do from eternity; but in the temporal changes of creation, which He ruleth wonderfully, He, without any temporal change in Himself, is said to do by a sudden act of will what in the ordained causes of events He hath arranged in the unchangeableness of His most secret counsel, according to which He doth every thing according to defined seasons, doing the present, and having already done the future. And who is capable of comprehending these things? Let us therefore hear the Scripture, speaking high things humbly, giving food for the nourishment of children, and proposing subjects for the research of the older. And He saw when they were in adversity: when He heard their complaint, He thought upon His covenant: that everlasting covenant which He made with Abraham, not the old which is abolished, but the new which is hidden even in the old. And pitied them according to the multitude of His mercies. He did that which He had covenanted, but He had foreknown that He would yield this to them when they prayed in their adversity; since even their very prayer, when it was not uttered, but was still to be uttered, undoubtedly was known unto God.

36. Ver. 46. Yea, He gave them unto compassions. That they might not be vessels of wrath, but vessels of mercy. The compassions unto which He gave them are named in the plural for this reason, I imagine, because each one hath a gift of his own from God, one in one way, another in another. So He gave them unto compassions, in the sight of all that had taken them captive. Come then, whosoever readest this, and dost recognise the grace of God, by which we are redeemed unto eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, by reading in the apostolical writings, and by searching in the Prophets, and seest the Old Testament revealed in the New, the New veiled in the Old; remember him whom the Apostle Paul called, the prince of the powers of the air, who worketh in the children of disobedience: and what he saith of some, that they may recover themselves out of the snares of the

devil, who are taken captive by him at his will: and the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, where, when He driveth him out of the hearts of the faithful, He saith, Now is the prince of this world cast out: and again of the same Apostle, when he saith, Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son. Meditate on these and such like things, examine also the Old Testament, and see what is sung in that Psalm, the title of which is, When the temple was being built after the captivity: for there it is said, Sing unto the Lord a new song. And, that thou mayest not think it doth refer to the Jewish people only, he saith, Sing unto the Lord, all the whole earth: sing unto the Lord, and praise His Name: declare, or rather, give the good news of, or, to transfer the very word used in the Greek, evangelize day from day, His salvation. Here the Gospel (Evangelium) is mentioned, in which is announced the Day that came from Day, our Lord Christ, the Light from Light, the Son from the Father. This also is the meaning of His salvation: for Christ is the Salvation of God, as we have shewn above. Declare His honour unto the heathen, and His wonders unto all people. For the Lord is great, and cannot worthily be praised: He is more to be feared than all gods; as for all the gods of the heathen, they are but devils. These enemies, then, with the devil their king, held captive the people of God. Since we are redeemed from this captivity, and the prince of this world is cast out, the temple is being built up after the captivity; whose corner-stone is Christ; Who hath made in Himself of twain one new man, making peace, the good tidings of which He, Day from Day, preached unto those who were nigh, and those who were far off, having made both one; and bringing other sheep who are not of this fold, that there may be one flock and one shepherd. And thus God gave His predestined unto compassions: (for ‘it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy:’) in the sight of all who had taken them captive. These enemies, then, the devil and his angels, had taken captive those predestined to the kingdom and glory of God: now, they who used within to rule over the unbelieving, when cast out by our Redeemer, assail the faithful from without. But they assail, they do not conquer those who cling unto the strong tower against the enemy. Their inducement to assail us is, that they see in us the relics of weakness, on account of which we say, Forgive us our trespasses: and, Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. By casting out therefore these enemies, our Lord Christ made the health of the body perfect, the head of which He is Himself, the Saviour of the body, that in that same body he might on the third day be perfected. For thus He spoke: Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected: that is, I am perfected, when we all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

37. Ver. 47, 48. Therefore, by casting out devils, by whom we were held captive, he perfecteth health. Thus here also when He had said, He gave them unto compassions in the sight of all those that had taken them captive; as if the devils who had taken them captive had been cast out, there followeth a prayer that He may perfect their health. Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations; (other copies read, from the heathen;) that we may give thanks unto Thy holy Name, and make our boast of Thy praise. Then he hath briefly added this very praise, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting, and world without end: by which we understand from everlasting to everlasting; because He shall be praised without end by those of whom it is said, Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be alway praising Thee. This is the perfection of the Body of Christ on the third day, when the devils had been cast out, and cures perfected, even unto the immortality of the body itself, the everlasting reign of those who perfectly praise Him, because they perfectly love Him; and perfectly love Him, because they behold Him face to face. For then shall be completed the prayer at the commencement of this Psalm: Remember us, O Lord, according to the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people: O visit us with Thy salvation; that we may see in the felicity of Thy chosen, and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people, that Thou mayest be praised with Thine inheritance. For from the Gentiles He doth not gather only the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but also those which do not belong to that fold; so that there is one flock, as is said, and one Shepherd. But when the Jews suppose that that prophecy belongeth to their visible kingdom, because they know not how to rejoice in the hope of good things unseen, they are about to rush into the snares of him, of whom the Lord saith, I am come in My Father’s Name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. Of whom the Apostle Paul saith: that Man of Sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself

above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as if he were God. And a little after he saith, Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them a working of delusion, that they should believe a lie: and that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. Through that Apostate, through him who exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, it seemeth to me, that the carnal people of Israel will suppose that prophecy to be fulfilled, where it is said, Deliver us, O Lord, and gather us from among the heathen; that under His guidance, before the eyes of their visible enemies, who had visibly taken them captive, they are to have visible glory. Thus they will believe a lie, because they have not received the love of truth, that they might love not carnal, but spiritual blessings. For they were thus deceived by the devil, so that they slew Christ, when they said, If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on Him; and the Romans shall come, and take away both our place and nation. When Caiaphas, one of them, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this, as the Evangelist judged, spake he not of himself; but, being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation, that is, for the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. For He had other sheep that were not of this fold: but the devil and his angels had taken captive all those sheep, both among the Israelites and the Gentiles. The power, therefore, of the devil having been cast out of them, in the sight of the evil spirits who had taken them captive, their cry in this prophecy is, that they may be saved and perfected for evermore: Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen. Not, as the Jews imagine it, fulfilled through Antichrist, but through our Lord Christ coming in the name of His Father, Day from day, His salvation; of Whom it is here said, O visit us in Thy salvation! And let all the people say, the predestined people of the circumcision and of the uncircumcision, a holy race, an adopted people, So be it! So be it!

PSALM 107

Exposition

1. This Psalm commendeth unto us the mercies of God, proved in ourselves, and is therefore the sweeter to the experienced. And it is a wonder if it can be pleasing to any one, except to him who has learned in his own case, what he hears in this Psalm. Yet was it written not for any one or two, but for the people of God, and set forth that it might know itself therein as in a mirror. Its title needeth not now to be treated, for it is Halleluia, and again Halleluia. Which we have a custom of singing at a certain time in our solemnities, after an old tradition of the Church: nor is it without a sacred meaning that we sing it on particular days. Halleluia we sing indeed on certain days, but every day we think it. For if in this word is signified the praise of God, though not in the mouth of the flesh, yet surely in the mouth of the heart. His praise shall ever be in my mouth. But that the title hath Halleluia not once only but twice, is not peculiar to this Psalm, but the former also hath it so. And as far as appears from its text, that was sung of the people of Israel, but this is sung of the universal Church of God, spread through the whole world. Perchance, it not unfitly hath Halleluia twice, because we cry, Abba, Father. Since Abba, is nothing else but Father, yet not without meaning the Apostle said, in whom we cry, Abba, Father; but because one wall indeed coming to the Corner-stone crieth Abba, but the other, from the other side crieth Father; viz. in that Corner-stone, Who is our Peace, Who hath made both one. Let us see therefore here what we are admonished of, and for what called to rejoice, and for what we ask help, for what we are forsaken, for what we are relieved, what we are by ourselves, what by the mercy of God, how our pride is crushed that His grace may be glorified. To every man may what I am about to say, if possible, occur in his own case, but I speak to men who walk the way of God, and stand in some sort of spiritual advancement; whence, if any perchance for this reason scarce understand me, let them find out where they are, and by advancement hasten to understanding. But I do not think that God will be wanting to our endeavour, that what we speak may reach unto all, whether

experienced or inexperienced, that the experienced may approve, the inexperienced may feel a longing; and that my discourse may be pleasing to all, which will first be pleasing to the Lord, if it shall be truthful. But it will be truthful if it shall come to me, not from myself, but from Him. Thus the Psalm begins.

2. Ver. 1. Confess unto the Lord that He is sweet, because for aye is His mercy. This confess ye that He is sweet: if ye have tasted, confess. But he cannot confess, who hath not chosen to taste, for whence shall he say that that is sweet, which he knoweth not. But ye if ye have tasted how sweet the Lord is, Confess ye to the Lord that He is sweet. If ye have tasted with eagerness, break forth with confession. For aye is His mercy, that is, for ever. For here for aye, is so put, since also in some other places of Scripture, for aye, that is, what in Greek is called εἰς αἰῶνα, is understood for ever. For His mercy is not for a time, so as not to be for ever, since for this purpose His present mercy is over men, that they may live with the Angels for ever.

3. Ver. 2. Let them say who are redeemed of the Lord. Redeemed indeed it seems was also the people of Israel from the land of Egypt, from the hand of slavery, from fruitless labours, from miry works; yet let us see whether those who say these things, are they who were freed by the Lord from Egypt. It is not so. But who are they? Those whom He redeemed from the hand of their enemies. Still one might take it also of them, as redeemed from the hand of their enemies, that is, of the Egyptians. Let them be expressed exactly who they are, for whom this Psalm would be sung. He gathered them from the lands; these might still be the lands of Egypt, for there are many lands even in one province. Let him speak openly. (Ver. 3.) From the east and the west, from the north and the sea. Now then we understand these redeemed, in the whole circle of the earth. This people of God, freed from a great and broad Egypt, is led, as through the Red Sea, that in Baptism it may make an end of its enemies. For by the sacrament as it were of the Red sea, that is, by Baptism consecrated with the Blood of Christ, the pursuing Egyptians, the sins, are washed away. And as thou comest out, not one of the enemy that pressed on thee is left. Let these, therefore, say these words, and let us now hear, brethren, (since this is the

people of God that is leading on,) what is here doing in the congregation of all nations, that is redeemed through Christ. Not as though all these things which are sung take place in all at once, but severally in each that believe, but otherwise in that people. For the whole people, that whole nation of the seed of Abraham after the flesh, the whole multitude of the house of Israel, was led once out of Egypt, brought once through the Red sea, brought home once to the promised land, for they were all together, with whom these things took place. But all these things happened to them in a figure, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come. But we not altogether, but by degrees, and one by one, coming to believe, are gathered into one certain city, and into one people of God. But in each one of us, even as an individual, these things befal. Those which are written befal a people, for a people is composed of individuals, and individuals of a people. For is one man of peoples? nay, but a people consisteth of individual men. Whatsoever, therefore, when I speak of it, thou mayest recognise in thyself, whoever thou art who hast experience, do not in thy thought, as it were, stay at thyself, and think that it taketh place in thee alone, but believe that these things take place, either in all, or almost in all, who come to this people, and are redeemed from the hand of their enemies with the precious Blood.

4. For he is about to repeat constantly what we have now sung. (Ver. 8, 15, 21, 31.) Let them confess unto the Lord His mercies, and His wonders towards the sons of men. These verses as far as I could observe, which you may also do, he repeats four times. In which number, as far as we have been able by God’s help to make out, he signifies to us certain four temptations, from which He frees us, unto Whom we confess His mercies. For suppose a man first seeking nothing, living after the old life, in a seductive security; not thinking there is any thing else after this life, when it shall sometime end; one negligent and listless, with his heart buried in the allurements of the world, and lulled to sleep with deadly delights: that such an one may be roused to seek the grace of God, that he may become anxious, and as it were awake out of sleep; doth not the Hand of God arouse him? But yet, by whom he was aroused he knoweth not; however he begins now to belong to God, when he has come to know the belief of the Truth. But before he knoweth, he grieveth for his error. For he findeth himself in error, wisheth

to know the Truth; knocketh where he can, trieth what he can, wandereth which way he can, feeleth even a hunger after the Truth itself. So then the first temptation is of wandering and hunger. When he hath grown weary in this temptation and cried unto God, he is led to the way of faith, whereby he may begin to proceed toward the city of rest. He is led therefore to Christ, Who said, I am the Way.

5. When therefore he is come there, now knowing what he ought to observe, sometimes through taking too much upon himself, and as it were presuming on his own strength, he beginneth to think of striving against sins, and through his pride to get the worst. So then he findeth himself bound with difficulties from his desires, and for his fetters unable to walk on his way. He feeleth himself shut up with difficulty from his vices, and with a wall, as it were, of impossibility built up, and gates shut upon him, how to get forth and live aright he findeth not. Now he knoweth how he ought to live, for before he was in wandering and suffered hunger for the truth, but he hath now received the food of truth, and is placed in the way. He heareth, Live well, according to that thou knowest, for before thou knewest not how thou shouldest live. Now thou hast received and knowest. He tries; he cannot. He feels himself bound; he cries unto the Lord. The second temptation then is that of difficulty in working well, as that first was of wandering and hunger. In this also he crieth unto the Lord, and the Lord delivereth him from his necessities, breaketh the chains of difficulty, establisheth him in the working of righteousness. That now begins to be easy to him, which had been difficult. To keep from evil things, not to commit adultery, not to steal, to do no murder, no sacrilege, not to covet what is another’s. That has become easy which before was hard. The Lord could grant this without the difficulty, but if we had it without the difficulty, we should not acknowledge the Giver of this good gift. For if man at first, when he wished, were able, and felt not his desires striving against him, and if his soul did not bruise itself through the weight of its chains, he would attribute to his own strength what he felt himself able to do, and would not confess to the Lord His mercies.

6. After these two temptations, the first of wandering and wanting the truth, the second of difficulty in doing well, a third temptation meets a man. One,

I mean, who has already gone through these two; for these two, I confess, are known to many. For who knows not that he came out of ignorance unto truth, out of wandering unto the way, out of a lack of wisdom to the word of faith. Then there are many that struggle with difficulties from their own bad dispositions, and still bound by habit, groan as in prison and fetters. They acknowledge also that temptation, although they may now be saying, if perchance they say it, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? For behold the straitest chains: the flesh, he saith, lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, that ye may not do the things that ye would. Now then, let him, who has already been helped by the Spirit, that, as he would not be an adulterer, so he is not; as he would not be a thief, so he is not; and all these other things which men desire to conquer, and often are bowed down and overcome, so as to cry out unto God, that He may deliver them from their necessities, and thence, being freed, confess unto the Lord His mercies: whoever, I say, is such an one, and hath conquered those difficulties, and now liveth respectably amongst men, without any complaint of evil living, is met by a third temptation, of a kind of weariness in the length of this life, so that sometimes it is no pleasure to him either to read or to pray. The third temptation is contrary to the former, for first he was in danger through hunger, afterward through fulness. Whence this too, but from a certain sickness of soul? Now adultery allures thee no more, yet doth not the Word of God delight thee. Now after the danger of ignorance and of lust, from which too thou art glad to have escaped, see that weariness and satiety slay thee not. This too is no slight temptation; know thyself in that, and cry out unto the Lord, that here also He may free thee from thy necessities; and, when thou art free from this temptation, let His mercies confess unto Him.

7. But when freed from wandering, freed from the difficulty of doing well, freed from weariness and satiety of the Word of God, perchance thou mayest be worthy to have a people committed to thee. Thou mayest be placed at the helm of the ship to rule the Church. Then is a fourth temptation, tempests of the sea, tossing the Church, alarm her steersman. Finally, these three temptations any pious believer of the people of God may experience, that fourth is ours. For the more we are honoured, the more we are in peril. It is to be feared, lest the danger of error turn any one of you

from the truth. It is to be feared, lest each one's desire overcome him, and he choose to follow it, rather than from the difficulties of it to cry out unto God. It is to be feared, lest to each one of you the Word of God lose its relish, and he die of satiety, but the temptation of governing, the temptation of danger in ruling the Church, touches us especially. But how shall ye, too, have no share in it, if the whole ship shall be in danger? which I said for this reason, that ye might not be less anxious in this fourth temptation, as a special one of ours, when there is need that ye cease not from prayers, for ye are the first who suffer shipwreck. For what, brethren, because ye sit not at the same helm, do ye not sail in the same ship?

8. After these four temptations, four cryings out, four deliverances, four confessions of the mercies of the Lord, the Church herself is next generally set forth in this Psalm, that ye may most evidently know concerning whom the Psalm spake from the beginning. But she is so set forth, that in all things is proclaimed to us the grace of God, Who resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble; because, to this end He came, that they who see not may see, and they who see may be made blind; because every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low. Which thing being set forth, a thing is said which may also be understood of heretics, by whom, as by civil war, the Church is shaken. And the Psalm is concluded, which I have now expounded, more briefly perhaps than ye thought, for I suppose that I have so far explained the whole of this somewhat long Psalm, that now ye expect of me not the work of a disputant, but scarce more than that of a reader, if ye retain what I have said. For I think things are placed before your eyes, but that it may be the better set forth, let them be briefly repeated. The first temptation is that of wandering and hunger for the Word; the second, that of difficulty in conquering desires; the third, that of weariness and satiety; the fourth, that of storms and perils in governing Churches. And in all these there are cryings out, and deliverances, and confessions of the mercies of God. At the end there is a setting forth of the Church herself, which is both saved through the grace of our God, not through her own merit, and the overthrow of her enemies is commemorated, on whose destruction the Church was built up; for their pride, and because of certain plots to her detriment, on the part of heretics, and because of evils, in a manner, domestic, and from these the acts of divine goodness

toward the Church; then the conclusion of the Psalm. Let us now rather read than discuss.

9. Ver. 2. Let them say who are redeemed of the Lord, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemies; (Ver. 3.) and gathered them from the lands, from the east, and the west, and the north, and the sea; let these Christians say, called together from the whole world. (Ver. 4.) They wandered in the wilderness, in a dry place, they found not the way of a city to dwell in. We have heard a wretched wandering; what of want? (Ver. 5.) Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. But wherefore did it faint? for what good? For God is not cruel, but He maketh Himself known, in that it is expedient for us, that He be entreated by us fainting, and that aiding us He be loved. And therefore after this wandering, and hunger, and thirst, (Ver. 6.) And they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distress. And what did He for them, as they were wandering? (Ver. 7.) And He led them in the right way. They found not the way of a city to dwell in, with hunger and thirst they were vexed and faint, and He led them into the right way, that they might go into a city to dwell in. How He helped their hunger and thirst, He saith not, but even this expect ye; (Ver. 8.) Let them confess unto the Lord His mercies, and His wonders towards the children of men. Tell them, ye that are experienced, to the inexperienced; ye that are already in the way, already directed towards finding the city, already at last free from hunger and thirst. (Ver. 9.) Because He hath satisfied the empty soul, and filled the hungry soul with good things.

10. Live therefore well. Thou art now put in the way. Thou hast now heard what thou oughtest to do, what to hope. What further meeteth thee, since thou strivest and art overcome? (Ver. 10.) Them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, fast bound in beggary and iron. Whence this, but that thou wast attributing things to thyself? that thou wast not owning the grace of God? that thou wast rejecting the counsel of God concerning thee? For see what He addeth; (Ver. 11.) Because they rebelled against the words of the Lord through pride, not knowing the righteousness of God, and wishing to establish their own, and they were bitter against the counsel of the Most High. (Ver. 12.) And their heart was brought low in labour. And now fight

against lust; if God cease to aid thou mayest strive, thou canst not conquer. And when thou shalt be pressed by thine evil, thy heart will be brought low in labour, so that now with humbled heart thou mayest learn to cry out, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?—Their heart therefore was brought low in labour, they were made weak, and there was none to help them. What then remaineth, save wherefore it was done? For if a law had been given that could have given life, doubtless righteousness had been of the Law; but the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But the Law came in by the way, that the offence might abound. Thou hast received the word, hast received the commandment, and yet ceasest not to do the ill thou didst, and having received the commandment, dost aggravate thy sins by transgression. Proud one, if thou didst not know thyself, learn thyself at least as brought low. Thou wilt cry, thou wilt be freed from distress. Freed, thou wilt confess the mercies of the Lord. (Ver 13.) And they cried unto the Lord when they were troubled, and He delivered them out of their distresses. They were freed from the second temptation. There remains that of weariness and loathing. But first see what He did for them when freed. (Ver. 14.) And He led them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bonds asunder. (Ver. 15.) Let them confess to the Lord His mercies, and His wonders to the children of men. Wherefore? what difficulties hath He overcome? (Ver. 16.) Because He brake the gates of brass, and snapped the bars of iron. (Ver. 17.) He took them up from the way of their iniquity, for because of their unrighteousnesses they were brought low. Because they gave honour to themselves, not to God, because they were establishing their own righteousness, not knowing the righteousness of God, they were brought low. They found that they were helpless without His aid, who were presuming on their own strength alone.

11. But what other sort remaineth? (Ver. 18.) Their soul abhorred all manner of meat. Now they suffer satiety. They are sick of satiety. They are in danger from satiety. Unless perchance thou thinkest they could be killed with famine, but cannot with satiety. See what followeth. When he had said, Their soul abhorred all manner of meat, lest thou shouldest think them, as it were, safe of their fulness, and not rather see that they would die of satiety:

And they came near, he saith, even unto the gates of death. What then remaineth? That even when the word of God delighteth thee, thou account it not to thyself; nor for this be puffed up with any sort of arrogance, and having an appetite for food, proudly spurn at those who are in danger from satiety. Understand that to thyself also this is a gift, and is not in thee of thyself; for, what hast thou which thou hast not received? This then understanding, and being in danger from this fault and sickness, do what followeth. (Ver. 19.) And they cried out unto the Lord when they were in trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses. And because it was a sickness not to be pleased, (Ver. 20.) He sent His Word, and healed them. See what evil there is in satiety; see whence He delivers, to whom he crieth that loathes his food. He sent His Word, and healed them, and snatched them, from whence? not from wandering, not from hunger, not from the difficulty of overcoming sins, but from their corruption. It is a sort of corruption of the mind to loathe what is sweet. Therefore also of this benefit, as of the others before, (Ver. 21.) Let them confess to the Lord His mercies, and His wonders unto the sons of men. (Ver. 22.) And sacrifice the sacrifice of praise. For now that He may be praised, the Lord is sweet, and let them tell out His works with gladness. Not with weariness, not with sadness, not with anxiety, not with loathing, but with gladness.

12. That fourth remains, in which we are all in danger. For we are all in the ship, some work, others are conveyed, yet all together are both in peril in the storm, and find safety in the haven. For after all this, it follows; (ver. 23.) They who go down on the sea in ships, doing their business on the mighty waters; that is, amongst many peoples. For that waters are often put for peoples, the Apocalypse of John is witness, when on John’s asking, what those waters were, it was answered him, they are peoples. They then who do their business on mighty waters, (Ver. 24.) they have seen the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. For what is deeper than human hearts? hence often break forth winds; storms of sedition, and dissensions, disturb the ship. And what is done in them? God, willing that both they who steer, and they who are conveyed, should cry unto Him, (Ver. 25.) He spake, and the breath of the storm stood. What is, stood? Abode, continued, still disturbeth, long tosseth; rageth, and passeth not away. For He spake, and the breath of the storm stood. And what did that breath of the storm? (Ver.

26.) They go up even to the heavens, in daring; they go down even into the deeps, in fearing. They go up even to the heavens, they go down even to the deeps. “Without are fightings, within are fears.” Their soul wasted in miseries. (Ver. 27.) They were disturbed, and moved like a drunken man. They who sit at the helm, and they who faithfully love the ship, feel what I say. They were disturbed, and moved like a drunken man. Certainly, when they speak, when they read, when they interpret, they appear wise. Woe for the storm! and all their wisdom, he saith, was swallowed up. Sometimes all human counsels fail; whichever way one turns himself, the waves roar, the storm rageth, the arms are powerless: where the prow may strike, to what wave the side may be exposed, whither the stricken ship may be allowed to drift, from what rocks she must be kept back lest she be lost, is impossible for her pilots to see. And what is left but that which follows? (Ver. 28.) And they cried out unto the Lord when they were troubled, and He delivered them from their distresses. (Ver. 29.) And He commanded the storm, and it stood unto clear air. It stood, not unto tempest, but unto clear air, and the waves of it were still. Hear on this point the voice of a steersman, one that was in peril, was brought low, was freed. I would not, he saith, have you ignorant, brethren, of our distress, which befel us in Asia, that we were pressed above strength, and above measure, (I see all his ‘wisdom swallowed up,’) so that we were weary, he saith, even of life. And why should He so leave men to faint? Or did they not faint for this very cause, that He might find glory with them? Finally, what followeth? But we ourselves had the answer of death in ourselves, that we may not be trusting in ourselves, but in God, Who raiseth the dead.

And He commanded the storm, and it stood into clear air. Already those men, all whose wisdom had been swallowed up, had had the answer of death in themselves. And its waves were still. (Ver. 30.) And they were glad, because they were still, and He brought them into the haven of their desire. (Ver. 31.) Let His mercies confess unto the Lord, and His wonders towards the sons of men. Every where, without exception, let not our merits, not our strength, not our wisdom, confess unto the Lord, but, His mercies. Let Him be loved in every deliverance of ours, Who has been invoked in every distress. Let His mercies confess unto the Lord, and His wonders toward the children of men.

13. And observe whereof he speaketh, whereof he said all those things before, whereof he hath enumerated all these, where these things are done. (Ver. 32.) And let them exalt Him in the assembly of the people, and praise Him in the seat of the elders. And let them exalt Him, that is, praise Him: and praise Him, that is, exalt Him. Let them exalt, let them praise, peoples and elders, merchants and pilots. For what hath He done in this assembly? What hath He established? Whence hath He rescued it? What hath He granted it? Even as He resisted the proud, and gave grace to the humble: the proud, that is, the first people of the Jews, arrogant, and extolling itself on its descent from Abraham, and because to that nation were entrusted the oracles of God. These things did not avail them unto soundness, but unto pride of heart, rather to swelling than to greatness. What then did God, resisting the proud, but giving grace to the humble; cutting off the natural branches for their pride; graffing in the wild olive for its humility? What did God? Hear these two things: first, how God resisteth the proud; then, how He giveth grace to the humble.

Ver. 33. He made the rivers a wilderness. Waters did run there, prophecies were in course. Seek now a prophet among the Jews; thou findest none. For, He made the rivers a wilderness, and the outgoings of waters to be thirst. He made the rivers to be a wilderness. Let them say, Now there is no prophet more, and He will not know us any more.—He made the rivers to be a wilderness, and the goings out of waters to be thirst. (Ver. 34.) A fruitful land to be salt-pools. Thou seekest there the faith of Christ, thou findest not: thou seekest a prophet, thou findest not: thou seekest a sacrifice, thou findest not: thou seekest a temple, thou findest none. Wherefore this? Because He made the rivers to be a wilderness, and the goings out of waters to be thirst. Whence? of what merit? From the wickedness of them that dwell therein. Behold how He resisteth the proud: hear how He giveth grace to the humble. (Ver. 35.) He made the wilderness to be a standing water, and the dry ground to be outgoings of waters. (Ver. 36.) And He caused the hungry to dwell there. Because to Him it was said, Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec. For thou seekest a sacrifice among the Jews; thou hast none after the order of Aaron, because He hath made the rivers to be a wilderness. Thou seekest it after the order of Melchizedec; thou findest it not among them, but through the whole world it is celebrated in the Church. From the rising of the sun to the setting thereof the name of the Lord is praised. And God saith to those whose rivers He hath made to be a wilderness, I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord, nor will I receive a sacrifice from your hands: because from the rising of the sun even to the setting, a pure sacrifice is offered to My Name. Where were all the unclean sacrifices, when it was a wilderness, when they were filthy, when all nations were salt-pits; there now are there fountains, there now rivers, there now pools of waters, and outgoings of waters. Therefore, He hath resisted the proud, and given grace to the humble. And, He caused the hungry to dwell there; because, The poor shall eat and be satisfied. And they set up a city of habitation. For the present of habitation in hope: since He that heareth Me, He saith, dwelleth in hope. And they set up a city of habitation. (Ver. 37.) And they sowed fields, and planted vineyards, and gat fruit of corn: at which that workman rejoiceth, who saith, Not because I desire a gift, but I seek fruit. (Ver. 38.) And He blessed them, and they were multiplied exceedingly, and their cattle were not diminished. This standeth. For, The foundation of God standeth sure; because the Lord knoweth them that are His. They are called beasts of burden, and cattle, that walk simply in the Church, yet are useful; not much learned, but full of faith. Therefore, whether spiritual or carnal, He blessed them, and they were multiplied exceedingly, and their cattle were not diminished.

14. Ver. 39. And they became few, and were vexed. Whence this? From athwart? Nay, from within. For that they should ‘become few,’ They went out from us, but they were not of us. But therefore he speaketh as of these, of whom he spake before, that they may be discerned with understanding; because he speaketh as if of the same, because of the sacraments they have in common. For they belong to the people of God, though not by the virtue, yet surely by the appearance of piety: for concerning them we have heard the Apostle, In the last times there shall come grievous times, for there shall be men lovers of themselves. The first evil is, lovers of themselves; that is, as being pleased with themselves. Would that they were not pleasing to themselves, and were pleasing to God: would that they would cry out in their difficulties, and be freed from their distresses. But while they presumed greatly on themselves, they were made few. It is manifest, brethren: all who separate themselves from unity become few. For they are

many; but in unity, while they are not parted from unity. For when the multitude of unity hath begun no more to belong to them, in heresy and schism, they are few. And they became few, and were vexed, from distress of miseries and grief. (Ver. 40.) Contempt was poured on princes. For they were rejected by the Church of God, and the more because they wished to be princes, therefore they were despised, and became salt that had lost its savour, cast out abroad, so that it is trodden under foot of men. Contempt was poured on princes, and He led them astray in the pathless place, and not in a way. Those above in the way, those directed to a city, and finally led thither, not led astray; but these, where there was no way, led astray. What is, Led them astray? God gave them up to their own hearts' lusts. For led astray means this, gave them up to themselves. For if thou enquire closely, it is they that lead themselves astray. For he that thinketh he is something, when he is nothing, leadeth himself astray. What then is, Led them astray? Let them alone. In a pathless place, and not in a way. For how are those men in the way, who hold a part, and let go the whole? How in the way? What then is the way? or where is the way known? The Lord, he saith, have mercy on us, and bless us, shew the light of His countenance upon us, that we may know Thy way in the earth. In what earth? Thy salvation among all nations. Certainly such men, that they may become few, that they may be diminished, go out from us. They have all gone out from the multitude of unity, as I mentioned a little before, that it was said of them; They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would surely have abode with us. But if perchance they are ours in the hidden foreknowledge of God, they must needs return. How many that are not ours, are yet, as it were, within; and how many that are ours are still, as it were, without. The Lord knoweth them that are His. And they that are not ours, who are within, when they have found their opportunities, go out; and they that are ours, who are without, when they have found opportunities, return. That then understand, which God knoweth; in that respect He led them astray in a pathless place, and not in a way. And what did He with them? What I had begun to say, what ye should hear with attention. He might have borne with them always within, but we should not profit by them: but when they have been separated from us, and by malicious questions disquiet us, we have set before us in them both an incitement of enquiry, and an example for warning. Each one is alarmed, when he seeth that another hath gone out, as if from his going out it had been said to him, Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. They are of use then, because they go out; for if they continued within, and were so wicked, there would be no profit from them. What is said of them in a certain Psalm? The multitude of bulls, that is, of stiffnecked and proud people: The multitude of bulls among the cows of the peoples. By cows he meaneth souls easy to seduce, that easily yield to the seducing bulls. But wherefore thus? That those may be separated apart that have been tried by silver. What meaneth, That they may be separated. That those who have been tried in the words of the Lord may appear, may be clearly seen. For when heretics are answered of necessity, Catholics are built up by that which is profitable. This sentiment Paul hath clearly expressed: There must be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. There must also be bulls who seduce, that those who have been tried by silver may be made manifest among you, that is, be set apart. What meaneth, tried by silver? The words of the Lord are pure words, silver, which from the earth is tried, and purified seven times in the fire. Whoever are tried in this silver, that is, in the words of the Lord, cannot fully purge this silver from the dross, unless they are harassed by the questionings of heretics. And observe here, that this is not omitted: behold contempt is poured out upon their princes, upon those bulls. Wherefore are they despised? Because they preach some other things. How are they despised? By being anathematized. For whosoever shall preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be anathema. What is so despised as salt without flavour, which is cast out of doors, and trampled under foot? And consider if they be not princes; hear Paul himself; though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel to you than that ye have received, let him be anathema. They are princes, they are learned, they are great, they are precious stones. What more wilt thou say: are they angels? And yet, though an angel from heaven preach unto you any other Gospel than that ye have received, let him be anathema: for the devil himself was an angel fallen from heaven. Contempt then was poured out upon their princes. And He helped the poor out of beggary. What meaneth this, brethren? Princes are despised, and the poor helped. The proud are cast aside, and the humble provided for. He hath done this, and by doing so hath helped the poor out of beggary. He is a beggar, who ascribeth nothing to himself, who hopeth all from God’s mercy; he crieth every day before the Lord's gate, knocking, that it may be opened unto him, naked and trembling, that he may be clothed, casting down his eyes towards the earth, beating his breast. God hath greatly helped this beggar, this poor man, this humble man, even by this very setting apart of heretics; because they have been reduced to fear, and have been vexed, and led astray in the wilderness and not in the path. Lastly, what happeneth to the poor man who hath been helped, from the minishing, the misleading, the making few, the vexing of those heretics? And made him households like sheep. Thou understandest one poor man and one beggar of him concerning whom he said, He hath helped the poor out of misery: this poor man is now many households, this poor man is many nations; many Churches are one Church, one nation, one household, one sheep. And maketh him households like sheep. These are great mysteries, great types, how profound, how full of hidden meanings; how sweetly discovered, since long hidden. Therefore, (Ver. 42.) the righteous will consider this, and rejoice: and the mouth of all wickedness shall be stopped. That wickedness that doth prate against unity, and compelleth truth to be made manifest, shall be convicted, and have its mouth stopped.

15. Ver. 43. Who is wise? and he will consider these things; and will understand the mercies of the Lord. See how he hath concluded; Who is wise? and he will consider these things. And what will the wise man consider? that is, if he be poor, he considereth them; if he be not rich, that is, be not proud, be not puffed up, he considereth these things. For why doth he consider them? Because he will understand the mercies of the Lord; not his own deservings, not his own strength, not his own power; but the mercies of the Lord; Who, when he was wandering and in want, led him back to the path, and fed him; Who, when he was struggling against the difficulties of his sins, and bound down with the fetters of habit, released and freed him; Who, when he loathed the Word of God, and was almost dying with a kind of weariness, restored him by sending him the medicine of His Word; Who, when he was endangered among the risks of shipwreck and storm, stilled the sea, and brought him into port; Who, finally, placed him in that people, where He giveth grace to the humble; not in that where he resisteth the proud; and hath made him His own, that remaining within he may be multiplied, not that going out he may be minished. The righteous

see this, and rejoice. The mouth, therefore, of all wickedness shall be stopped; and he who is wise shall consider these things. How shall he consider them? By humility, by understanding the mercies of the Lord; because it is every where said, O that men would praise the Lord for His mercies, and declare the wonders that He doeth for the children of men!

PSALM 108

Why no Exposition is here given.

1. I have not thought that the 108th Psalm required an exposition; since I have already expounded it in the 56th Psalm, and in the 59th, of the last divisions of which this Psalm consisteth. For the last part of the 56th is the first of this, as far as the verse, Thy glory is above all the earth. Henceforth to the end, is the last part of the 59th: as the last part of the 134th, is the same as that of the 113th, from the verse, The images of the heathen are but gold and silver: as the 13th and 54th, with a few alterations in the middle, have every thing the same from the beginning to the end. Whatever slight differences therefore occur in this 107th Psalm, compared with those two, of parts of which it is composed, are easy to understand; just as we find in the 56th, I will sing and give praise; awake, O my glory: here, I will sing and give praise, with my glory. Awake, is said there, that he may sing and give praise therewith. Also, there, Thy mercy is great (or, as some translate, is lifted up) unto the heavens; but here, Thy mercy is great above the heavens. For it is great unto the heavens, that it may be great in the heavens; and this is what he wished to express by above the heavens. Also in the 59th, I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem: here, I will be exalted, and will divide Shechem. Where is shewn what is signified in the division of Shechem, which it was prophesied should happen after the Lord’s exaltation, and that this joy doth refer to that exaltation; so that He rejoiceth, because He is exalted. Whence he elsewhere saith, Thou hast turned my heaviness into joy; Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness. Also there, Ephraim, the strength of my head: but here, Ephraim the taking up of my head. But strength cometh from taking up, that is, He maketh men strong by taking up, causing fruit in us; for the interpretation of Ephraim is, bearing fruit. But taking up, may be understood of us, when we take up Christ; or of Christ, when He, Who is the Head of the Church, taketh us up. And the words, them that trouble us, in the former Psalm, are the same with our enemies, in this.

2. We are taught by this Psalm, that those titles which seem to refer to history are most rightly understood prophetically, according to the object of the composition of the Psalms. For what is so different, historically, as the title of the 56th, At the end, do not corrupt; David’s own, the title, when he fled from the face of Saul in the cave; and that of the 59th, At the end, to those who shall be changed, David’s own, for a lesson, when he burned Mesopotamia, Syria, and Syria Sobal, when Joab returned, and smote in the valley of salt twelve thousand. For besides the words, title, David’s own, and, at the end; the rest are so different, that David in the former passage hath humility; in the latter, strength: in the former, flight; in the latter, victories. And yet this Psalm is composed of the latter portions of these two, whose titles are so different. Where it is signified that each concur in a common object, not in the surface of the history, but in the depth of prophecy, the objects of both being united in this one, the title of which is, A Song or Psalm of David: resembling neither of the former titles, otherwise than in the word David. Since, in many places, and in diverse manners, as the Epistle to the Hebrews saith, God spoke in former times to the fathers through the Prophets; yet He spoke of Him Whom He sent afterwards, that the words of the Prophets might be fulfilled: for all the promises of God in Him are yea.

PSALM 109

Exposition

1. Every one who faithfully readeth the Acts of the Apostles, acknowledgeth that this Psalm containeth a prophecy of Christ; for it evidently appeareth that what is here written, let his days be few, and let another take his office, is prophesied of Judas, the betrayer of Christ, alluding to the time when Matthias, being ordained into the place of Judas, was added a twelfth to the number of the Apostles. But if we attempt to understand of this one man all that is here said of a wicked man, our exposition will hardly be consistent; whereas if we take it in reference to all wicked men of this kind, by which I mean enemies of Christ and ungrateful Jews, every thing seemeth to me to be capable of a clearer explanation. For as some things are said which seem peculiarly to apply to the Apostle Peter, and yet are not clear in their meaning, unless when referred to the Church, whom he is acknowledged to have figuratively represented, on account of the primacy which he bore among the Disciples; as it is written, I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and other passages of the like purport: so Judas doth represent those Jews who were enemies of Christ, who both then hated Christ, and now, in their line of succession, this species of wickedness continuing, hate Him. Of these men, and of this people, not only may what we read more openly discovered in this Psalm be conveniently understood, but also those things which are more expressly stated concerning Judas himself; as the passage I have just mentioned, Let his days be few, and let another take his office: and this will appear, with the Lord’s help, when, in the course of exposition, we reach those verses.

2. Ver. 1, 2. The Psalm, then, beginneth thus: O God, be not silent as to my praise; for the mouth of the ungodly, yea, the mouth of the deceitful is opened upon me. Whence it appeareth, both that the blame, which the ungodly and the deceitful is not silent of, is false, and that the praise, which God is not silent of, is true. For God is true, but every man a liar; for no man is true, except him in whom God speaketh. But the highest praise is

that of the only-begotten Son of God, in which He is proclaimed even That which He is, the only-begotten Son of God. But this did not appear, but, when His weakness appeared, lay hid, when the mouth of the ungodly and deceitful was opened upon Him; and for this reason his mouth was opened, because His virtue was concealed: and he saith, the mouth of the deceitful was opened, because the hatred which was covered by deceit burst out into language. This also is more plainly stated in the following verses.

3. Ver. 3. They have spoken against me with false tongues: then chiefly when they praised him as a good Master with insidious adulation. Whence it is elsewhere said; and they that praised me, are sworn together against me. Next, because they burst into cries, Crucify Him, crucify Him; he hath added, They compassed me about also with words of hatred. They who with a treacherous tongue spoke words seemingly of love, and not of hatred, against me, since they did this insidiously; afterwards compassed me about with words not of false and deceitful love, but of open hatred, and fought against me without a cause. For as the pious love Christ for nought, so do the wicked hate Him for nought; for as truth is earnestly sought by the best men on its own account, without any advantage, external to itself, in view, so is wickedness sought by the worst men. Whence among secular authors it is said of a very bad man, ‘he was wicked and cruel for no object.’

4. Ver. 4. In place, saith he, of loving me, they detracted from me. There are six different acts of this class, which may, when mentioned, very easily be borne in mind; to return good for evil, not to return evil for evil; to return good for good, to return evil for evil; not to return good for good, to return evil for good. The two first of these belong to the good, and the first of these two is the better; the two last belong to the wicked, and the latter of the two is the worse; the two middle to a sort of middle class of persons, but the first of these borders upon the good, the latter on the bad. We should remark these things in the holy Scriptures. Our Lord Himself returneth good for evil, Who justifieth the ungodly; and Who, when hanging upon the Cross, said, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Whose steps the holy Stephen followed, when with bended knees he prayed for those who were stoning him, saying, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And unto this the commandment doth pertain, Love your enemies, bless

them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which persecute you. The Apostle Paul saith, that evil is not to be returned for evil: Recompensing to no man evil for evil: and the Apostle Peter; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; whence also it is read in the Psalms; If I have rewarded evil unto them that dealt evil unto me. The less wicked of the two last pertaineth to the nine lepers, who, when they had been cleansed by the Lord, gave no thanks; but that last act, than which nothing is worse, belongeth to those of whom it is read in the Psalm, In place of loving me, they detracted from me.

4. For they owed love in return for such blessings of the Lord, but they not only did not pay it, but even returned evil for those blessings. But those two middle qualities, which we stated to belong to a sort of middle class of men, are such, that the first of them, I mean the returning good for good, is possessed by the good, and the moderately good and the moderately bad. For this reason the Lord doth not blame this, but yet doth not wish His disciples to abide in this alone, for He doth wish to elevate them to a higher state when He saith to them, For if ye love them which love you, that is, if you return good for good, what reward have ye? that is, what great deed will ye have done? Do not even the Publicans the same? But He wisheth them to do both this and much more, that is, to love not only their friends, but even their enemies. But the last quality, I mean the returning evil for evil, both the wicked, and the moderately wicked, and the moderately good, may possess. So much so, that the law hath given them a measure of retaliation, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; which, if I may so speak, is the justice of the unjust. Not that it is iniquitous that each man should receive what he hath done, (otherwise the law would never enact thus,) but because the lust of revenge is vicious, and it rather belongeth to the judge to fix this between others, than to the good man to demand it for himself. Into how great a depth of malignity, therefore, have the wicked plunged, falling from that high state of goodness in which good deeds are returned for evil, when they have returned evil for good! With how terrible a fall have they passed over so many steps between! Nor ought it to be thought a slight thing that he doth not say, in place of loving me, they slew me; but, they detracted from me: since they slew Him in that they detracted from Him by denying Him to be the Son of God, and saying that He cast

out devils by the chief of the devils; and that, He hath a devil and is mad; why hear ye Him? and other sayings of the same sort. For by this detraction they turned away from Him those whose conversion He was seeking; and indeed, he preferred this expression in order to shew that those do more harm who detract from Christ, and by this means slay souls, than they who in their fury destroyed His mortal flesh, especially as it was so soon to rise.

5. But after he had said, in place of loving me, they detracted from me; what doth he add? But I gave myself unto prayer. He said not indeed what he prayed, but what can we better understand than for them themselves. For they were detracting greatly from Him Whom they crucified, when they ridiculed Him as if He were a man, whom in their opinion they had conquered; from which Cross He said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do; so that while they in the depth of their malignity were rendering evil for good, He in the height of His goodness was rendering good for evil. Although He may also be well understood to have prayed for His disciples, as He said even before His Passion, lest their faith should fail, while He, hanging on the tree, that He might recommend endurance unto them, did not display His power amid the calumnies of those who were detracting from Him, whom He might have destroyed by His divine power. But for us it was more profitable that He shewed an example of endurance, than if by destroying His enemies without delay, He had trained us up to hasten impatiently to be revenged of those wicked men from whom we suffer; since it is written, He that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty. The divine words then teach us by our Lord’s example, when we hear, In place of loving me, they detracted from me; but I gave myself unto prayer; that when we feel others ungrateful to us, not only in that they do not repay us with good, but even return evil for good, we should pray; He indeed for others who were raging against Him, or in sorrow, or endangered in faith; but we for ourselves in the first place, that we may by the mercy and aid of God conquer our own mind, by which we are borne on to the desire of revenge, when any detraction is made from us, either in our presence or our absence. Next, when we call to mind the patience of Christ, as if He Himself were aroused from sleep, (as actually happened, when He was sleeping in the ship,) Who doth tranquillize the perturbation and tempest of our heart, with a spirit serene and pacified, let us pray for our very

calumniators, that we may without fear pray, Forgive us, as we also forgive. But He forgave them, Who indeed had no trespass that should be forgiven Him.

6. Ver. 5. He addeth, Thus have they rewarded me evil for good. And as if we asked, what evil? for what good? And hatred, he saith, for my good will. This is the sum total of their great guilt. For how could the persecutors injure Him, Who died of His own free-will, and not by compulsion? But this very hatred is the greatest crime of the persecutor, although it be the willing atonement of the sufferer. And he hath sufficiently explained the sense of the above words, In place of loving me, since they owed love not as a general duty only, but in return for His love: in that he hath here added, for my good will. This love He mentioneth in the Gospel, when He saith, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not!

7. He then beginneth to prophesy what they should receive for this very impiety; detailing their lot in such a manner, as if he wished its realization from a desire of revenge; while He declareth what was to happen with the most absolute certainty, and what of God’s justice would come upon such worthily. Some not understanding this mode of predicting the future, under the appearance of wishing evil, suppose hatred to be returned for hatred, and an evil will for an evil will: since in truth it belongeth to few to distinguish, in what way the punishment of the wicked pleaseth the accuser, who longeth to satiate his enmity; and in how widely different a way it pleaseth the judge, who with a righteous mind punisheth sins. For the former returneth evil for evil: but the judge when he punisheth doth not return evil for evil, since he returneth justice to the unjust; and what is just, is surely good. He therefore punisheth not from delight in another’s misery, which is evil for evil; but from love of justice, which is good for evil. Let not then the blind pervert the light of the Scriptures, imagining that God doth not punish sins: nor let the wicked flatter themselves, as if He rendered evil for evil. Let us therefore hear the sequel of this divine composition; and in the words of one who seemeth to wish ill, let us recognise the predictions

of a prophet; and let us see God making a just retribution, raising our mind up to His eternal laws.

8. Ver. 6. Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him; and let Satan stand at his right hand. Though the complaint had been before concerning many, the Psalm is now speaking of one. For he had said before; they have spoken against me with false tongues; they compassed me about with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause; in place of loving me they detracted from me, but I gave myself unto prayer: thus have they rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my good will. All this is concerning many persons. But now, declaring what they deserved for their iniquities, and what was in store for them by the Divine judgment, he saith, Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him, as if threatening singly that man who gave himself over to such enemies of his as he was before describing. Since therefore he is here speaking of the traitor Judas, who, according to the Scripture in the Acts of the Apostles, was to be punished with the penalty due to him, what meaneth, set thou an ungodly man over him, save him whom in the next verse he mentioneth by name, when he saith, and let Satan stand at his right hand? He therefore who refused to be subject unto Christ, deserved this, that he should have the devil set over him, that is, that he should be subject unto the devil. The expression, stand at his right hand, is used because he preferred the works of the devil to the works of God: for that which he doth prefer is justly said to be at the right of any man, even as the right hand is preferred to the left. For this reason also it is said of those, who preferring the pleasures of this world to God, styled the people blessed who have such and such things, their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. For because they called the people who had such and such things blessed, their mouth hath spoken vanity; as is said of them above. But he whose mouth speaketh truth, contrary to what they said of the people who have such things, ought himself to say, what followeth in the same Psalm: Blessed are the people that have the Lord for their God; for this man hath not the devil at his right hand, but the Lord; even as he elsewhere saith, I have set God always before me, for He is on my right hand, therefore I shall not be moved. The devil therefore stood at his right hand, when he preferred avarice to wisdom, and money to his salvation, so that he betrayed Him, by Whom he ought to have been possessed, that he might not be possessed by

him, whose works Christ Himself, by Whom he refused to be possessed, destroyed.

9. Ver. 7. When sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned. For he refused to be one of those to whom it should be said, enter into the joy of thy Lord; and preferred to be such an one of whom it is said, cast him into outer darkness. And let his prayer be turned into sin. For prayer is not righteous except through Christ, Whom he sold in his atrocious sin: but the prayer which is not made through Christ, not only cannot blot out sin, but is itself turned into sin. But it may be inquired, on what occasion Judas could have so prayed, that his prayer was turned into sin. I suppose that before he betrayed the Lord, while he was thinking of betraying Him; for he could no longer pray through Christ. For after he betrayed Him, and repented of it, if he prayed through Christ, he would ask for pardon; if he asked for pardon, he would have hope; if he had hope, he would hope for mercy; if he hoped for mercy, he would not have hung himself in despair: therefore after he had said, when sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned; that he might not be supposed to have been able to liberate himself by prayer from the condemnation which hung over him; that prayer which he had learnt together with his fellow-disciples, where it is said, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; let his prayer, he saith, be turned into sin, because it is not made through Christ, Whom he chose not to follow, but to persecute.

10. Ver. 8. Let his days be few. By his days, he meant the days of his apostleship, which were few; since before the Passion of our Lord, they were ended by his crime and death. And as if it were asked, What then shall become of that most sacred number twelve, within which our Lord willed, not without a meaning, to limit His twelve first Apostles? he at once addeth, and let another take his office. As much as to say, let both himself be punished according to his desert, and let his number be filled up. And if any one desire to know how this was done, let him read the Acts of the Apostles.

11. Ver. 9. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. After his death, both his children were fatherless, and his wife a widow.

12. Ver. 10. Let his children be vagabonds, and be carried away, and beg their bread. By vagabonds he meaneth, uncertain whither to go, destitute of all help. Let them be driven from their habitations. He here explaineth what he had said above, Let them be carried away. How all this happened to his wife and children, the following verses explain.

13. Ver. 11, 12. Let the extortioner search out all his substance, and let the strangers spoil his labour. Let there be no man to help him: that is, to guard his posterity; wherefore followeth, nor to have compassion on his fatherless children.

14. Ver. 13. But as even orphans may, without one to help them, and without a guardian, nevertheless, increase amid trouble and want, and preserve their race by descent; he next saith, Let his posterity be destroyed; and in the next generation let his name be clean put out: that is, let what hath been generated by him, generate no more, and quickly pass away.

15. Ver. 14. But what is it that he next addeth? Let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be done away. Is it to be understood, that even the sins of his fathers shall be visited upon him? For upon him they are not visited, who hath been changed in Christ, and hath ceased to be the child of the wicked, by not having imitated their conduct: for this is most truly written, I will visit the sins of their fathers upon the children; and this, which is declared through the Prophet, both the soul of the father is Mine, and the soul of the son is Mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die. Now this is said of those who turn unto God, and do not imitate the evil deeds of their parents; and this the Prophet evidently declareth, when he saith, that the iniquities of their fathers injure not the children, who, by working righteousness, are unlike them. And to these words, I will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, is added, who hate Me; that is, hate Me as their fathers hated Me: so that as the effect of imitating the good is that even their own sins are blotted out, so the imitation of the wicked causeth men to suffer not their own deservings only, but those also of those whom they have imitated. If therefore Judas had held unto that to which he had been called, by no means would either his past wickedness, or that of his parents, have affected him; but since he held not his adoption in the household of God, but preferred the

iniquity of his ancient race; the iniquity of his fathers was had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord, that it also might in him be punished; and the sin of his mother was not done away in him.

16. Ver. 15. Let them alway be against (contra) the Lord; that is, let his father and his mother be alway against the Lord; not that they may be opposed to the Lord, but that the Lord may not forget in this man their very ill deserts, when He shall avenge them upon him. Against the Lord, meaneth in the Lord's sight: for other translators have rendered this line, let them be always in the sight of the Lord; while others have rendered it, let them be before the Lord alway; as it is elsewhere said, Thou hast set our misdeeds in Thy sight. By alway, he meaneth that this great crime should be without pardon, both here, and in a future life. Let the memorial of them perish from off the earth: that is, of his father and of his mother. By memorial of them, he meaneth, that which is preserved by successive generations: this he prophesied should perish from the earth, because both Judas himself, and his sons, who were the memorial of his father and mother, without any succeeding offspring, as it is said above, were consumed in the short space of one generation.

17. Suppose some one saith; Is it to be believed, that even this belongeth to the punishment of Judas, that after his death his wife and children came to beggary, and were made vagabonds and outcasts from their homes, the extortioner searching out all his substance, and strangers spoiling his labour, no man aiding or pitying his orphans, and that they died speedily without posterity? Doth any pain reach the dead, resulting from what happeneth among a man's relations after his death? or are they, whose powers of perception are in different places, according to their deservings, whether good or evil, to be supposed to be conscious of these things? To this I answer, that it is indeed a great question, and not one to be discussed at present, because it belongeth to a labour of greater extent, whether, or to what degree, or in what manner, the spirits of the dead are aware of what is passing around us. Nevertheless, as may briefly be alleged, if they had no concern for us, our Lord would not represent that rich man who was suffering torment in hell to have said, I have five brethren, * * * * * lest they also come into this place of torment. But let those who attempt to

understand this otherwise, understand it in whatever sense they please; and since it must be confessed, that it doth not follow, that if the dead know that their relations are living, because they see them neither in the regions of punishment, where that rich man was, nor in the repose of the blessed, where he recognised Lazarus and Abraham, at however great a distance, that they must needs for that reason know all the joyful and sorrowful events that affect those dear unto them: this I assert, that there are few men of such a disposition as to neglect, or altogether scorn during their own life, what of good or evil may happen to their kindred after their death; but that many, as is shewn by their great care in expressing their last will and testament, such as it may be, exert themselves sufficiently to secure prosperity to their friends, when they die themselves. But the continuance of their posterity through successive generations is despised in a praiseworthy spirit by those alone, who cut off themselves on account of the kingdom of heaven, and desire their sons to do this, or long to be crowned with martyrdom, so that none of them remain on earth: but all, or nearly all, the rest, wish their kindred to be happy in this life after their own death, and are unwilling that their race should perish. Wherefore in that, after Judas had so miserably perished, his widowed wife and fatherless children survived in such a state, that, the extortioner searching out all his substance, and strangers spoiling all his labours, they became outcasts from their houses, and his orphans found none to pity them, and that they perished in one generation without posterity; if the dead feel these things, it is an aggravation of their evils: if they do not feel them, they are a fear for the living. But if the question occur, how he could have substance which the extortioner might search out, and strangers spoil, since he had before this been following the Lord with the other eleven: we may believe that he had given up all that he had to his wife and children in such a manner as not sincerely and perseveringly to have torn from him the chain of avarice: since although he seemed to be selling his property for distribution among the poor, he was in reality doing what Ananias did after the ascension of our Lord. For he would not fear lest the Lord by His Divinity should be aware of this, since he imagined that he had escaped His notice, when he was stealing from out of the bags what was dropped in.

18. Ver. 6–15. But let us now consider, if we can, as far as the Lord aideth us, how these words suit the Jewish people, whose enmities against the Lord continued with a persevering hatred: which people, we have said, Judas figuratively represented, as Peter did the Church. Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand. As in the case of Judas, so it must be understood of this people; who, when Christ was rejected by them, became subject to the devil, whose persuasions in all depraved and earthly lusts it preferred to everlasting salvation. When sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned; because by persisting in wickedness and unbelief, they treasure up for themselves wrath on the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who will render unto every man according to his works. And let his prayer be turned into sin. Because it is not offered through the Mediator between God and men, the Man Jesus Christ, and Priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedec. Let his days be few. This must be understood of the kingdom: since the Jewish kingdom did not long continue afterwards. And let another take his office. I think that our Lord Christ Himself may without inconsistency be understood by the Episcopate of the Jewish people, since He was born of the tribe of Judah, according to the flesh: and the Apostle saith, Now I say that Jesus Christ was a Minister of circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. And He Himself saith, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel; because He shewed unto them His presence in the flesh. And the Magi who came from the East said this, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? And this was written on the title above Him when crucified: whence Pilate replied, not without a meaning, to those who desired to alter it, What I have written, I have written. Another then, that is, the Gentiles, received this Episcopate of the Jewish people, that is, Christ. Let his sons be fatherless: they of whom it is said, The children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness. They became fatherless by the loss of this very kingdom, as if they had thereby lost their father, although they may be well understood to have lost God their Father; for, saith Truth, “Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.” And his wife a widow. The people may be understood as the wife of a kingdom, over which kings rule; but she became widowed by the loss of this very kingdom. Let his sons be bowed down, and carried away, and beg their bread. They bowed down before their

dangers; the conquered sons of the kingdom of the Jews were carried away by overwhelming enemies. But what is the meaning of begging their bread, save living on the mercy of men, as they live beneath the kings of those nations into which they have been carried away? Let them be outcasts from their homes. Thus it hath happened. Let the extortioner search out all their substance, that is, all the substance of that people. This cannot be better understood, than that their trespasses are not pardoned, because they are pardoned in Christ alone, Whom they rejected, Who also taught them to say, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. By all substance, is meant all its life, so that no debts, that is no sins, be remitted to it. And let the stranger spoil his labours; the devil and his angels, because they who have not Christ do not lay up store in Heaven. Let there be no man to help him; Who can help him whom Christ helpeth not? Nor to have compassion upon his fatherless children. Who, having lost their father, that is, their kingdom, remained in this state, as having lost their God, Whose Son they persecuted and hated, cannot find any one to pity them, not to support their life in this world, but their true, that is their eternal, life. Let his posterity be destroyed, be destroyed indeed for evermore. And in the next generation let his name be clean put out. Because they were generated and not regenerated, therefore are they blotted out in one generation; for in the other, that is, in regeneration, if they understood and held it, they would not be blotted out. Let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord, that the Lord may visit upon the same people, when persisting in their wickedness, even their fathers' iniquity. For this He saith unto them, Ye are witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the Prophets: and a little after he saith, That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias.—And let not the sin of his mother be done away. The sin of Jerusalem, who is a slave together with her children, who slayeth the Prophets, and stoneth those that are sent unto her. Let them alway be before the Lord; their sin and iniquity; that is, that they may not be blotted out from the sight of the Lord, God punishing them for evermore. And let the memorial of them perish from off the earth. The earth of the Lord is the Lord's field: the Lord's field is the Church: from which earth the memorial of them hath been rooted out, for though they were the natural branches, through their unbelief were they broken off.

19. Ver. 16, 17. And that, because he remembered not to act mercifully; either Judas, or the people itself. But remembered not is better understood of the people: for if they slew Christ, they might well remember the deed in penitence, and act mercifully towards His members, whom they most perseveringly persecuted. For this reason he saith, but persecuted the poor man and the beggar. It may indeed be understood of Judas; for the Lord did not disdain to become poor, when He was rich, that we might be enriched by His poverty. But how shall I understand the word beggar, save perhaps because He said to the Samaritan woman, Give me to drink, and on the Cross He said, I thirst. But as to what followeth, I do not see how it can be understood of our Head Himself, that is, the Saviour of His own body, Whom Judas persecuted. For after saying, He persecuted the poor man and the beggar: he addeth, and to slay, that is, that he might slay Him, for some have so rendered it, Him that was pricked at the heart. This expression is not commonly used except of the stings of past sins in the sorrows of penitence; as it is said of those, who, when they had heard the Apostles after our Lord’s ascension, were pricked in heart, even they who had slain the Lord. The most blessed Peter addressed them, using these words among others, Repent, and be baptized each man of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. But since those very same men became His members, Whose limbs they had nailed upon the Cross, the Jewish people remembered not to act mercifully; they persecuted the poor man and the beggar, but in His members; of whom He will speak what pertaineth to these very works of mercy, Inasmuch as ye have not done it unto one of the least of these, ye have not done it unto Me. And, that he might slay him that was pricked at the heart: certainly pricked at the heart, but in His members. Now among those who persecuted that they might slay him that was pricked at the heart, there was Saul also, consenting unto the death of Stephen, that was pricked at the heart; for Stephen himself also was one of those who were pricked at the heart. But Saul remembered to act mercifully; and he who in the morning devoured the prey, at night divided the spoil; he himself also pricked at the heart, so that this very people in him persecuted a poor man, wishing to slay him that was pricked at the

heart. For they hated the Apostle Paul for this reason, that when pricked at the heart, he began to preach Him Whom he had persecuted before. For when persecuting, that he might himself slay the poor and helpless man in his members, he heard from heaven the words, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? and when pricked at the heart, he began to suffer such things as he had inflicted before upon those who were pricked at heart.

20. Ver. 18. The Psalm then continueth: His delight was in cursing, and it shall happen to him. Although Judas loved cursing, both in stealing from the money bag, and selling and betraying the Lord: nevertheless, that people more openly loved cursing, when they said, His blood be on us, and on our children. He loved not blessing, therefore it shall be far from him. Such was Judas indeed, since he loved not Christ, in Whom is everlasting blessing; but the Jewish people still more decidedly refused blessing, unto whom he who had been enlightened by the Lord said, Will ye also be His disciples? They refused this blessing, and held it as a curse; and replied, Thou art His disciple: and blessing was made far from them, for it passed over to the Gentiles. He clothed himself with cursing, like as with a raiment: either Judas, or that people. And it came into his bowels like water. Both without, then, and within; without, like a garment; within, like water: since he hath come before the judgment-seat of Him Who hath power to destroy both body and soul in hell; the body without, the soul within. And like oil into his bones. He sheweth that he worketh evil with delight, and storeth up cursing for himself, that is, everlasting punishment; for blessing is eternal life. For at present evil deeds are his delight, flowing like water into his bowels, like oil into his bones; but it is styled cursing, because God hath appointed torments for such men. But cursing is like oil in their bones, when men think themselves strong, because they are allowed to commit evil deeds with impunity.

21. Ver. 19. Let it be unto him as the cloak which covereth him. Since he hath before spoken of the cloak, why doth he repeat it? When he said, He clothed himself with cursing as with a raiment; doth the raiment with which he is covered differ from that with which he is clothed? For every man is clothed with his tunic, covered with his cloak; and what is this, save boasting in iniquity, even in the sight of men? and as the girdle, he saith,

that he is alway girded withal. Men are girded chiefly that they may be better fit for toil, that they may not be hindered by the folds of their dress. He therefore girdeth himself with curses, who designeth an evil which he hath carefully contrived, not on a sudden impulse, and who learneth in such a manner to do evil, that he is always ready to commit it: whence he here saith, and as the girdle that he is alway girded withal.

22. Ver. 20. This is the work of them that slander me before the Lord. He said not, their reward, but, their work: for it is clear that by the clothing, covering, water, oil, and girdle, he was describing the very works by which eternal curses are procured. It is not then one Judas, but many, of whom it is said, This is the work of them that slander me before the Lord. Although indeed the plural number might have been put for the singular; even as, when Herod died, it was said by the Angel, They are dead which sought the young Child's life. But who slander Christ more before the Lord, than they who slander the very words of the Lord, by declaring that it is not He whom the Law of the Lord and His Prophets announced beforehand? And of those that speak evil against my soul: by denying that He, when He had willed, could have arisen: though He saith, I have power to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again.

23. Ver. 21. But work Thou with me, O Lord God. Some have thought mercifully should be understood, some have actually added it; but the best copies have the words thus: But work Thou with me, O Lord God, for Thy Name's sake. Whence a higher sense should not be passed over, supposing the Son to have thus addressed the Father, Deal Thou with Me, since the works of the Father and of the Son are the same. Where although we understand mercy, (for these words follow, for sweet is Thy mercy,) because he said not, In me, or, over me; or any thing of this sort: but, work Thou with Me; we rightly understand that the Father and Son together work mercifully towards the vessels of mercy. Work with me, may also be understood to mean, help me. We use this expression in our daily language, when we are speaking of any thing which is in our favour; It works with us. For the Father aideth the Son, as far as the Deity aideth Man, on account of His having assumed the form of a servant, to which Man, God, and to which Form of a servant, the Lord too is Father. For in the Form of God, the

Son needeth not aid, for He is equally all-powerful with the Father, on which account He also is the helper of men; for, as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will; nor doth the Father quicken any other persons than the Son, nor the Father in one manner, the Son in another; because He doeth both the same things and in the same way. Whence, in so far as the Son of God is Man, God raised Him from the dead, that is, the Father to Whom He saith in the Psalms, Raise Thou Me up again, and I shall reward them: but in so far as He is God, He raised Himself, on which account He said, Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days. And this He signified even here, if any one carefully reflect, for He ordered us to search the Scriptures, which bear witness of Him, and not to pass them over superficially. For He doth not only say, Work Thou with me, Lord, Lord; but he saith, Thou also. What meaneth, Thou also, save I also? And that He saith not only once, O Lord, but repeateth it; O Lord, O Lord, implieth the feeling of one praying: as it is said, God, my God. And because when he had said, Work Thou with me, he added, for Thy Name's sake, he hath commended grace. For without previous deserving works, human nature was raised to such a height, that the whole in one, the Word and Flesh, that is, God and Man, was styled the Only-begotten Son of God. And this was done that that which had been lost might be sought by Him Who had created it, through that which had not been lost; whence the following words, For Thy mercy is sweet.

24. Ver. 22. O deliver me, for I am needy and poor. Need and poverty is that weakness, through which He was crucified. And my heart is disturbed within me. This alludeth to those words which He spoke when His Passion was drawing near, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.

25. Ver. 23. I go hence like a shadow that declineth. By this he signified death itself. For as night comes of the shadow's declining, so death comes of mortal flesh. And am driven away as the locusts. This I think would be more suitably understood of His members, that is, of His faithful disciples. That he might make it much plainer, he preferred writing locusts in the plural number: although many may be understood where the singular number is used, as in that passage, He spake, and the locust came; but it would have been more obscure. His disciples, then, were driven away, that

is, were put to flight by persecutors, either the multitude of whom He wished to be signified by the word locusts, or their passing from one place to another.

26. Ver. 24. My knees are weak through fasting. We read, that our Lord Christ underwent a fast of forty days: but had fasting so great power over Him, that His knees were weakened? Or is this more suitably understood of His members, that is, of His saints? And my flesh is changed because of the oil: because of spiritual grace. Whence Christ was so called from the Greek word, chrisma, which signifies unction. But the flesh was changed through the oil, not for the worse, but for the better, that is, rising from the dishonour of death to the glory of immortality. After he had said, therefore, My knees are weak through fasting, whereby I suppose those to be meant among His members who seemed strong, yet as if the presence of that bread which supported them had been taken away, fell away even unto denial, at His Passion, as appeared in Peter; he added, as if to strengthen them, that when they drooped they might not utterly fall, And my flesh is changed for the oil, so that I should strengthen these by My resurrection, who were fainting because of My death, and anoint them with the Holy Ghost, Who could not have come unto them, had I not left them. For He had said this; If I go not away, He cannot come unto you: and the Evangelist saith, The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified. His flesh was not yet changed. But whether the Holy Spirit be represented by water through the notion of ablution or irrigation, or by oil through that of exultation and the inflaming of charity; It doth not differ from Itself, because Its types are different. For there is a great difference between the lion and the lamb, and yet Christ is represented by both. He is termed a lion on account of one attribute, a lamb on account of another; yet He is not different Himself: for a lamb is not courageous, nor a lion innocent; yet Christ is both innocent like a lamb, and courageous as a lion. In Isaiah Jesus Christ Himself saith, The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because the Lord hath anointed Me.

27. Ver. 25. I became also a reproach unto them: through the death of the Cross. For Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. They looked upon Me, and shaked their heads. Because they

beheld His crucifixion, without beholding His resurrection: they saw when His knees were weakened, they saw not when His flesh was changed.

28. Ver. 26. Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to Thy mercy. This may be referred to the whole, both to the Head and to the body: to the Head, owing to His having taken the form of a servant; to the body, on account of the servants themselves. For He might even in them have said unto God, Help Me: and, O save Me: as in them He said unto Paul, Why persecutest thou Me? The following words, according to Thy mercy, describe grace given gratuitously, not according to the merit of works.

29. Ver. 27. And let them know how that this is Thy Hand, and that Thou, Lord, hast made it. He said, Let them know, of those for whom He even prayed while they were raging; for even those who afterwards believed in Him were among the crowd who shook their heads in mockery of Him. But let those who ascribe unto God the shape of the human body, learn in what sense God hath a hand. For if He doth what He doth with His Hand, doth He create this very Hand with itself? In what sense then is it said, They shall know how that this is Thy Hand, and that Thou, Lord, hast made it? Let us therefore understand, that the Hand of God meaneth Christ: whence it is elsewhere said, Unto whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? This Hand both was, and He made it; for, In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was made flesh; and was without time, according to the Godhead; and was made for Him of the seed of David according to the flesh.

30. Ver. 28. Though they curse, yet bless Thou. Vain therefore and false is the cursing of the sons of men, that have pleasure in vanity, and seek a lie; but when God blesseth, He doth what He saith. Let them be confounded that rise up against me. For their imagining that they have some power against Me, is the reason that they rise up against Me; but when I shall have been exalted above the heavens, and My glory shall have commenced spreading over the whole earth, they shall be confounded. But Thy servant shall rejoice: either on the right hand of the Father, or in His members when they rejoice, both in hope among temptations, and after temptations for evermore.

31. Ver. 29. Let my slanderers be clothed with shame: that is, let it shame them to have slandered me. But this may also be understood as a blessing, in that they are amended. And let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a double cloak; for diploïs is a double cloak; that is, let them be confounded both within and without: both before God and before men.

32. Ver. 30. As for me, I will confess greatly unto the Lord with my mouth. The word nimis is used in Latin to express excess, the contrary to parum, which meaneth deficiency. The Greek word for nimis is ἄγαν: but this verse hath σφόδρα, not ἄγαν; which our translators have some times rendered by nimis, sometimes by valdè. Now if nimis be taken as equivalent to valdè, it may be understood of praise: for this confession signifieth praise. For the next words are, And I will praise Him among the multitude. He saith in another Psalm, In the midst of the congregation will I sing of Thee. But since the Church, which is the body of Christ, herself doth praise Him, how doth the Church praise Him in the midst of the Church? So here also, while many who are members of Christ praise Him, He praiseth also, for they are His members; how doth He praise among the multitude, when He is said to praise in the praises of the multitude? Is He said to praise among the multitude because He is with His Church here even unto the end of the world; so that we may understand by among the multitude, that He is honoured by this very multitude? For he is said to be in the midst, unto whom the chief honour is paid. But if the heart is, as it were, that which is midmost of a man, no better construction can be put on this passage than this, I will praise Him in the hearts of many. For Christ dwelleth through faith in our hearts; and therefore he saith, with my mouth, that is, with the mouth of my body, which is the Church. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

33. Ver. 31. For he stood at the right hand of the poor. It was said of Judas, Let Satan stand at his right hand; since he chose to increase his riches by selling Christ; but here the Lord stood at the right hand of the poor, that the Lord Himself might be the poor man’s riches. He stood at the right hand of the poor, not to multiply the years of a life that one day must end, nor to increase his stores, nor to render him strong in the strength of the body, or

secure for a time; but, he saith, to save my soul from the persecutors. Now the soul is rendered safe from the persecutors, if we do not consent to them unto evil; but there is no such consent to them when the Lord standeth at the right hand of the poor, that he may not give way through his very poverty, that is, weakness. This aid was given to the Body of Christ in the case of all the holy Martyrs.

PSALM 110

Exposition

A Sermon to the People.

We have undertaken, as far as the Lord granteth, Who caused us, as ministers of His Word and Sacrament, to serve you in the richness of His lovingkindness, to consider as we are enabled, and expound this Psalm, which we have just chanted; brief in the number of its words, great in the depth of its meaning, with the aid of Him Who made you eager listeners, to render us also equal to the task. May your soul live, and watch for the Lord. For God fixed a time for His promises, and a time for fulfilling what things He promised. The period of His promises was from the time of the Prophets unto John the Baptist: but from him and thenceforth unto the end is the period for fulfilling what He promised. God is faithful, Who made Himself our Debtor: not by accepting any thing from us, but by promising us so great blessings. Promise was not enough, He even chose that He should be bound by writing, creating for us a kind of bond for His promises; so that when He began to fulfil His promises, we might contemplate in Scripture the order of their accomplishment. The period of prophecy, then, as we have before now frequently said, was the announcement of the promises. He promised everlasting salvation, and a life of bliss with the Angels without end, an heritage that should never wither, everlasting glory, the sweetness of His countenance, the home of His sanctification in the heavens, from the resurrection from the dead no further fear of death. This is, as it were, His final promise, whither all our endeavours tend, which after we have reached, we shall seek nothing more, expect nothing more. Nor hath He passed over in silence in what order that which shall happen at the end shall be reached, in His promises and prophecies. For He promised unto men the Divine Nature; to mortals, immortality; to sinners, justification; to cast-aways, a state of glory. Whatever He promised, He promised to the unworthy, so that not a reward was promised to works, but that grace was given by His Name for nought. For even this very thing, that man liveth righteously, so far as he can live righteously, is not the fruit of human merit, but of divine blessing. For no man liveth righteously, save he who is justified, that is, made righteous; and it is by Him that a man is made righteous, Who can never be unrighteous. For as a lamp is not lit by itself, so also the human soul doth not give itself light; but crieth unto God, Thou shall light my candle.

2. Since, therefore, the kingdom of Heaven has been promised unto sinners not remaining in their sin, but liberated from their sin, and serving righteousness; and that they may do this, they are aided, as we have said, by grace, and justified by Him Who is always righteous; it appeared incredible, that God could have so great care for man. And at this day, those who despair of divine grace, and refuse to turn from the most depraved conduct unto God, that they may be justified by Him, and through His mercy, after all their sins are blotted out, begin to live righteously in Him Who never lived unrighteously, have entertained thoughts so destructive to themselves as to say, that God careth not for human affairs, and that the Creator and Ruler of this world cannot understand in what manner each mortal liveth on the earth. Thus man, who was made by God, doth not even think that he is held in account by God. If we could address such a man, if he would admit us first to his ears, and afterwards to his heart; if he would not repel by resistance Him who sought him, if he would in his lost state suffer himself to be found; we might say to him, ‘O man, how shall God, Who took care that thou shouldest be created, fail to take account of thee when created? Why dost thou imagine thou art not numbered in the rank of things created? Believe not the seducer; thy hairs are counted by thy Creator.’ This our Lord said to His disciples in the Gospel, that they might not fear death, that they might not think that any thing of them should be destroyed by death. They were fearful for their souls in death; He guaranteed to them security even for their hairs. Doth then the soul of him perish, whose hair doth not perish? Nevertheless, brethren, because what God promised seemed incredible to men, that men from this mortality, corruption, weak and abject state, this dust and ashes, shall become equal to the Angels of God; He not only made a written covenant with men that they might believe, but also gave them a Mediator as a pledge of His promise; not any prince, or any Angel, or Archangel, but His only Son; so that the way through which He

was to lead us to that end which He promised, He might both shew, and give unto us by the Same, His own Son. For it was not enough for God to give us in His Son one who should shew us the path, He made Him Himself the way, that thou mightest go through Him ruling thee, as thou walkest through Himself.

3. He therefore promised that we should come to Him, that is, to that ineffable immortality, and equality with His Angels. How far off were we? how much was He above us, how much we beneath Him? On what a height was He, in what a depth were we lying in despair? We were sick without any hope of cure; a physician was sent whom the sick man recognised not: For if they had known Him, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. But even this proved a source of cure to the sick man, that the sick killed his physician; He came to visit him, He was killed to cure Him. He introduced Himself as God and Man among those who believed in Him; as God through Whom we were made, as Man through Whom we were new made. The one attribute appeared in Him, the other was concealed; and that which was concealed, was by far more excellent than that which appeared; but that which was more excellent could not be seen. The sick man was under treatment through means which he could not see, that he might become able to see that which was deferred by its concealment, not taken away by a denial of it. The only Son of God then, Who was to come unto man, was to assume the Manhood, to become Man through this assumption, to die, to rise again, to ascend into Heaven, to sit at the right hand of the Father, and to fulfil among the nations what He promised; and after the fulfilment of His promise among the nations, to fulfil His coming also; to demand what He gave, to separate the vessels of wrath from the vessels of mercy, to award to the ungodly what He threatened, to the righteous what He promised; the whole of this was to be prophesied, was to be announced beforehand, was to have its future coming declared, that it might not be dreaded by coming suddenly, but might be believed and expected. This Psalm is one of these promises, surely and openly prophesying our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; so that we are utterly unable to doubt that Christ is announced in this Psalm, since we are now Christians, and believe the Gospel. For when our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ asked of the Jews, whose Son they alleged Christ to be, and they had replied, the Son of

David; He at once replied to their answer, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? If then, He asked, David in the spirit call Him Lord, how is He his son? With this verse this Psalm beginneth.

4. Ver. 1. The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. We ought, therefore, thoroughly to consider this question proposed to the Jews by the Lord, in the very commencement of the Psalm. For if what the Jews answered be asked of us, whether we confess or deny it; God forbid that we should deny it. If it be said to us, Is Christ the Son of David, or not? if we reply, No, we contradict the Gospel; for the Gospel of St. Matthew thus beginneth, The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. The Evangelist declareth, that he is writing the book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. The Jews, then, when questioned by Christ, whose Son they believed Christ to be, rightly answered, the Son of David. The Gospel agreeth with their answer. Not only the suspicion of the Jews, but the faith of Christians, doth declare this. I see, besides, other proofs. The Apostle saith, Which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; he saith also unto Timothy: Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my Gospel. And, what saith he of the Gospel itself? Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. The Apostle suffered trouble even unto bonds, then, for his Gospel. That is, for the Gospel dispensation which he preached to the nations, which he bestowed on the nations. He who had ravined in the morning, in the evening divided the spoil. He laboured then even unto bonds for the Gospel. What Gospel? That which declared that Christ Jesus arose from the dead, of the seed of David. It was for this Gospel that the Apostle suffered trouble: and yet it was concerning this that Christ questioned the Jews: and when the Jews had replied what the Apostle preached, answered them seemingly in words of contradiction, saying, How then doth David in the spirit call Him Lord? and interposed the testimony from this Psalm, The Lord said unto my Lord. If then David in the spirit called Him Lord, how is He his son? The Jews were silent at this question: they found no further reply: yet they did not seek Him as the Lord, for they

did not acknowledge Him to be Himself that Son of David. But let us, brethren, both believe and declare: for, with the heart we believe unto righteousness: but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; let us believe, I say, and let us declare both the Son of David, and the Lord of David. Let us not be ashamed of the Son of David, lest we find the Lord of David angry with us.

5. For when the blind men very rightly hailed Him as He passed as the Son of David, they gained their enlightening. For Jesus was passing by, and they, hearing the sound of the crowd passing, already recognising with the ear what they could not as yet with the eye, cried out with a loud voice, and said, Have mercy on us, Thou Son of David. But the crowd rebuked them, bidding them be silent: yet they nevertheless, from their desire for light, overcoming the opposition of the crowd, persevered in their cries: they detained Him as He was passing, and deserved to gain their sight from His touch. For they said to Him as He passed, Have mercy on us, Thou Son of David! He stood still, and, when the clamour of those who interrupted them was overcome, said unto them, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They answered, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. He touched, and opened their eyes: they saw Him before them, Whom they had felt to be passing them. The Lord, therefore, did somewhat that was transitory; but there is somewhat also that abideth. There is, I say, one thing that is transitory in the Lord: another that is abiding. What is transitory is, the Virgin’s delivery, the Incarnation of the Word, the gradation of ages, the exhibition of miracles, the endurance of Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, Ascent into heaven, all this was transitory. For Christ is no longer in birth, or dying, or rising again, or ascending into heaven. Do ye not see that these acts held their course through seasons, through certain periods exhibited to those on the way something transitory, so that they should not abide on the path, but reach their country? Lastly, these blind men also were sitting by the path; there they saw Him passing, and arrested Him by their cries. In the path, therefore, of this world, the Lord did this transitory work of His, and this transitory work belongeth to the Son of David. Thus they said unto Him, The Lord, as He was passing, Have mercy upon us, Thou Son of David. As if they said, We recognise the Son of David in Him Who is passing: we learn that He became the Son of David in His passage. Let us also

acknowledge Him, and confess that He is the Son of David, that we may deserve to be enlightened. For we perceive the Son of David passing, and are enlightened by the Lord of David.

6. Lo, then, since our Lord questioned the Jews, and they refused to answer, because they were resolved not to be His disciples; lo, what should we answer, if He asked us? The Jews failed in this question: let Christians profit: let them not be disturbed, but taught. For our Lord doth not ask them because He wishes to learn: He questioneth them as their teacher. The wretched Jews should say, Tell Thou us. But they preferred to swell to bursting in proud silence, rather than to come to learning by an humble confession. Suppose then our Master speaketh unto us; and let us consider what we should answer Him when He questioneth us: What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He? Let us answer exactly as the Jews did: but let us not remain where the Jews did. Let us remember the Gospel which we believe: The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. Because we are being questioned, let it not on that account slip from our mind, that Christ is the Son of David, which the Apostle impresseth on our memory. Remember, Christian, that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised again from the dead. Suppose then we are asked, What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He? Let the unanimous voice of Christians reply, The Son of David. Suppose our Teacher were to answer us, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? How should we reply, unless we learnt from Thee? Now, therefore, since we have learnt, we reply: In the beginning Thou wast the Word, and Thou the Word wast with God, and Thou the Word wast God; all things were made by Thee: behold the Lord of David. But on account of our weakness, because we lay prostrate despairing flesh, Thou the Word wast made flesh, that Thou mightest dwell in us: behold the Son of David. Certainly when Thou wast in the form of God, Thou didst think it no robbery to be equal with God: behold David’s Lord: but Thou didst make Thyself of no reputation, taking upon Thyself the form of a servant: hence Thou art the Son of David. Lastly, in the very words of Thy question, How is He his Son? Thou didst not deny Thyself to be his Son, but didst ask in what sense it was thus? For Thou sayest, David calleth Him Lord: how is He his Son? I deny it not, but

tell Me in what sense He is so. Ought not they, then, to have replied from the Scriptures which they read, but understood not, if they were endeavouring to call to mind the sense of the expression; Dost thou ask in what sense? Behold, a Virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God with us. A Virgin shall be with child, a Virgin from the seed of David shall bring forth a Son, so that He is the Son of David; for Joseph and Mary were of the family and and country of David. But they shall call His Name, Whom she brought forth, Emmanuel, God with us. Lo, thou hast also the Lord of David.

7. Perhaps this Psalm will give us some intimation of this matter, how Christ is said to be David's Son and David's Lord. Let us therefore listen: let us thoroughly treat it: let us knock in piety: let us extort by charity. David, then, himself saith; for it is not lawful to contradict the Lord; David, He saith, in spirit calleth Him Lord. What then doth David himself say of Christ? For, this Psalm is David's own: and this is the whole of the title, simple, without figure of question, without any knot of difficulty. What then saith David? The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Thy footstool is equivalent to beneath Thy feet: for a footstool is beneath the feet. The Lord said, he saith, unto my Lord. David heard this, he heard it in the spirit: when and where he heard it, we have not heard; but we believe him when he saith, and writeth that he heard it. He then doubtless heard it, he heard it in some secret place of truth, he heard it in some sanctuary of mysteries: where the Prophets heard in secret, what they preached openly: there David heard, what he speaketh with much confidence: The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. We know that Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father, since His resurrection from the dead, and ascent into heaven. It is already done: we saw not it, but we have believed it: we have read it in the Scripture, have heard it preached, and hold it by faith. So that by the very circumstance that Christ was David's Son, He became His Lord also. For That Which was born of the seed of David was so honoured, that It was also the Lord of David. Thou wonderest at this, as if the same did not happen in human affairs. For if it should happen, that the son of any private person be made a king, will he not be his

father’s lord? What is yet more wonderful may happen, not only that the son of a private person, by being made a king, may become his father’s lord; but that the son of a layman, by being made a Bishop, may become his father’s father. So that in this very circumstance, that Christ took upon Him the flesh, that He died in the flesh, that He rose again in the same flesh, that in the same He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of His Father, in this same flesh so honoured, so brightened, so changed into a heavenly garb, He is both David’s Son, and David’s Lord. For according to this dispensation of Christ’s passage, this also is said by the Apostle, Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. He gave Him, he saith, a Name which is above every name; to Christ in His human nature, to Christ Who died in the flesh, arose, ascended, He hath given a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. Where can David be, that He should not be his Lord? Whether he be in Heaven, on the earth, or under the earth: He will be his Lord, Who is the Lord of things in heaven, of things on the earth, and of things under the earth. Let therefore David rejoice with us, honoured as he is by the birth of his Son, freed by His dominion; and let him say with joy, let him be heard by rejoicing listeners: The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.

8. Sit, not only on high, but in a hidden place: on high, that Thou mayest be Lord; in secret, that Thou mayest be believed in. For what reward would there be for faith, if what we believed were not hid? But the reward of faith is, to see what we believed before we saw it; as the Scripture telleth us, the righteous man liveth by faith. There would then be no righteousness in faith, unless that which we should believe when preached, were hidden; and unless we reached the sight of it by believing in it. For, O how plentiful is Thy goodness, O Lord, that Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee. Hast Thou then hidden it, and have they fallen back? God forbid! and that Thou hast fulfilled to them that put their trust in Thee. Wonderful indeed is the mystery of Christ sitting on the right hand of God: it hath been hidden that it might be believed, it hath been withdrawn that it might be hoped for. For

we are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? These are the Apostle’s words. Ye indeed recognise them, but for the sake of the ignorant I speak of them unto you. What then saith the Apostle? We are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Since then that which is seen is not hope, Thou hast hidden Thy goodness for them that fear Thee. Because we hope for what we see not, and wait for it with patience; Thou hast fulfilled it to those who trust in Thee. Lastly, most beloved, hear with attention what I am about to say. Since our righteousness is from faith, and our hearts are cleansed by faith, so that we may see what we have believed in; for both these things are stated in Scripture; both, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; and, Purifying their hearts by faith. Since then this is the righteousness of faith, to believe what thou seest not, and by this very merit of faith to reach in its time unto sight; our Lord in the Gospel, when He was promising the Holy Spirit, saith this; He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of what sin, of what righteousness, of what judgment? He proceedeth and explaineth; He alloweth not the conjectures of men: of sin, He saith, because they believe not on Me. How great were other sins of the Jews! and yet, as if this were the only one, He thus spoke: of sin, because they believe not on Me. This is that sin, of which He elsewhere saith, If I had not come, they would not have sin. What meaneth this, If I had not come, they would not have sin? Hast Thou then come to the righteous, and rendered them sinners? But, leaving out other sins, which might be pardoned through faith, He mentioned this one only, which if they had not committed, all might be forgiven. Of sin, He saith, because they believed not on Me: and elsewhere, If I had not come, they would not have sin. For by this very circumstance, that He came, and they believed not on Him, they fell into sin: but if they had not thus fallen, all their other sins might have been pardoned through the merciful dispensation of grace gained by faith. Of sin, therefore, because they believed not on Me: of righteousness, because I go My Father, and ye see Me no more. This is righteousness, because Thou goest to the Father, and they shall no longer see Thee: for this righteousness is of faith. For, the righteous liveth by faith: and he then liveth by faith, when he seeth not what he believeth. Since then it belongeth to righteousness to live by faith, and no man liveth by faith, save by not seeing what he believeth; that He might create righteousness itself among men, that is, that they might believe what they see not; Of righteousness, He saith, because I go to My Father, and ye shall see Me no more. This, He saith, shall be your righteousness, that ye believe in Him Whom ye see not, and cleansed by faith, may afterwards see Him on Whom ye have believed, on the day of resurrection.

9. Christ, therefore, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Son is on the right hand of the Father, hidden from us. Let us believe. Two things are here said: that God said, Sit Thou on My right hand; and added, until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool; that is, beneath Thy feet. Thou dost not see Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father: yet thou canst see this, how His enemies are made His footstool. While the latter is fulfilled openly, believe the former to be fulfilled secretly. What enemies are made His footstool? Those to whom imagining vain things it is said, Why do the heathen so furiously rage together: and why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed. And have said, Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yoke from us: let them not rule over us, let them not subject us to them. He that dwelleth in Heaven shall laugh them to scorn. Thou wast His enemy; thou shalt be beneath His feet, either as adopted or overcome. Consider, then, what place thou holdest beneath the feet of the Lord thy God: for thou must needs hold one either of grace or of punishment. He therefore sitteth at the right hand of God, till His enemies be placed beneath His feet. This is going on, this is taking place: although it is accomplished by degrees, it is going on without end. For though the heathen rage, and though the people imagine a vain thing: though the kings of the earth have stood up, and the rulers taken counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed; will they by their raging, will they by their imagining a vain thing, will they taking counsel together against Christ, prevent the fulfilment of these words; I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession? It shall be surely fulfilled, though they rage, and meditate a vain thing; I will give to thee the heathen for an inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession. For they imagine a vain thing: but, that it may be fulfilled, it

was not any vain babbler, but the Lord, Who said unto Me, I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession. So also we may say in this Psalm: He said; that is, not any man, not they who rage and imagine a vain thing; but, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Let them rage, let them imagine vain things, let them cry aloud; shall it not be fulfilled? Their memorial is perished with a cry. Their memorial is perished with a cry; but, The Lord shall endure for ever: as another Psalm, but not another spirit, saith. He therefore, Who, when their memorial hath perished, for ever endureth, Himself said to my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand. For He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, till He make His enemies His footstool.

10. Ver. 2. And what followeth? The Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion. It appeareth, brethren, it most clearly appeareth, that the Prophet is not speaking of that kingdom of Christ, in which He reigneth for ever with His Father, Ruler of the things which are made through Him: for when doth not God the Word reign, Who is in the beginning with God? For it is said, Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. To the King eternal be honour and glory for ever and ever; to what eternal King? To one invisible, incorruptible. For in this, that Christ is with the Father, invisible, and incorruptible, because He is His Word, and His Power, and His Wisdom, and God with God, through Whom all things were made; He is King eternal; but, nevertheless, that reign of temporal government, by which, through the mediation of His flesh, He called us into eternity, beginneth with Christians; but of His reign there shall be no end. His enemies therefore are made His footstool, while He is sitting on the right hand of His Father, as it is written; this is now going on, this will go on unto the end. Let no man say, that what hath been commenced, cannot be fulfilled. Why dost thou despair of a result of what hath been begun? The Almighty hath begun, the Almighty hath promised that He will fulfil what He hath commenced. But how hath He commenced? The Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion. Jerusalem herself is the same with Sion. Hear the Lord Himself: It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day. Hence He sitteth at the right hand of God, by rising again where He

was before. Then when He sitteth at the right hand of God, what is doing? what is doing, that His enemies may be made His footstool? Hear Him teaching and expounding: And repentance and remission of sins shall be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. For, the Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion. The rod of Thy power, that is, the reign of Thy power; for, Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron. The Lord shall send the rod out of Sion; for it is said, beginning with Jerusalem.

11. When therefore He hath sent the rod of His power out of Sion: what shall happen? Be Thou ruler, even in the midst among Thine enemies. First, Be Thou ruler in the midst of Thine enemies: in the midst of the raging heathen. For shall He rule in the midst of His enemies at a later season, when the Saints have received their reward, and the ungodly their condemnation? And what wonder if He shall then rule, when the righteous reign with Him for ever, and the ungodly burn with eternal punishments? What wonder, if He shall then? Now in the midst of Thine enemies, now in this transition of ages, in this propagation and succession of human mortality, now while the torrent of time is gliding by, unto this is the rod of Thy power sent out of Sion, that Thou mayest be Ruler in the midst of Thine enemies. Rule Thou, rule among Pagans, Jews, heretics, false brethren. Rule Thou, rule, O Son of David, Lord of David, rule in the midst of Pagans, Jews, heretics, false brethren. Be Thou Ruler in the midst of Thine enemies. We understand not this verse aright, if we do not see that it is already going on. Sit Thou therefore on the right hand of God, be hidden that Thou mayest be believed in, until the times of the nations be fulfilled. For thus it is written, Whom the heaven must needs receive until the times of the restitution of all things. Thou hast died, that Thou mightest rise again; Thou hast risen again, that Thou mightest ascend; Thou hast ascended, that Thou mightest sit on the right hand of the Father; therefore, Thou hast died, that Thou mightest sit on the right hand of the Father. For of death came resurrection; of resurrection, ascension; of ascension, sitting on the right hand: the whole of this, therefore, began with death. This exceeding splendour hath a beginning of humility. Whilst Thou then sittest at the right hand of the Father, the times of the Gentiles are being fulfilled, all enemies are made Thy footstool; and that this may be realized, Thou shalt first rule

in the midst of Thine enemies: for for this The Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion. But that Thou mightest die, and that by Thy death the handwriting of sins might be blotted out, and that repentance and remission of sins might be preached throughout all nations, beginning with Jerusalem, hath come by the blindness of the Jews. For blindness in part hath happened to Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in; and so all Israel might be saved. Israel, who had become in part blind, slew Thee; when slain Thou didst arise again, with Thy blood Thou didst wash away the sins of the heathen; sitting at the right hand of the Father, Thou hast drawn together from every quarter those who suffer, and who fly unto Thee. Blindness, then, in part hath happened to Israel, hath happened, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in; and so all Israel might be saved, and all Thine enemies be made Thy footstool. But this is happening now, what afterwards?

12. Ver. 3. With Thee the beginning on the day of Thy power. What is this day of His power, when is there beginning with Him, or what beginning, or in what sense is there beginning with Him, since He is the Beginning? May the Lord help, that I may neither be confused in explaining to you, nor you in hearing. For I see what has already happened, and I see together with you with the eyes of faith; with the eyes of the flesh also I see what is now going on, and again with the eyes of faith I hope for the future with you. What then hath taken place, what is taking place, and what is to take place? Christ hath suffered, hath died, hath risen on the third day, ascended into heaven, as we know, on the fortieth day, sitteth on the right hand of His Father; this has already taken place, this we have not seen, but we believe. What is going on now? He ruleth in the midst of His enemies, the rod of His power having been sent forth out of Sion: this is going on now. His servants saw Him when present in the form of a servant; His servants believe in Him now that He is absent. We believe this concerning the form of a servant, which we can understand whilst we are still servants. For this is that very milk of infants, which He tempered, making bread pass through flesh. For that bread of angels was in the beginning the Word, yet that man might eat angels’ bread, the Creator of angels was made man. Thus we became capable of receiving the Incarnate Word, which we should not be able to receive unless the Son coequal with God had made Himself of no

reputation, taking upon Him the form of a servant, and being found in the likeness of men. That we might therefore in some way receive Him Who could not be received by mortals, He Who was immortal became mortal, that after His death He might make them immortal, and might give something to be beheld, something to be believed, and something to be afterwards seen. He gave the form of a servant to be seen to those who were present, not only to be seen with the eye, but even to be touched with the hands. With the same form He ascended into Heaven, He commanded us to believe what He allowed them to see. But we also have something to see; they saw the rod that was sent out of Sion, we see Him ruling in the midst of His enemies. All this, brethren, pertained unto the assumption of the form of a servant, which is understood tolerably by servants, and loved by His future sons. For that immutable Truth which is the Word of God, God with God, through Whom all things were made, abiding in Himself, altereth all things. In order that we may see this, a great and perfect purity of heart is necessary, and this only cometh through faith. For the form of a servant having been shewn, Truth was delayed as to shewing the form of God. For He when speaking to His servants in the form of a servant saith, He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father; and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. He promised that He would manifest Himself to those who saw Him. What did they see? What did He promise? They saw the form of a servant, He promised the form of God; I will manifest Myself, He saith, to him. This is the very clear light into which the kingdom which is now gathering together in the transition of this world is being led; for it is being led to a certain ineffable sight, which the ungodly shall not deserve. Nevertheless, while the form of a servant was here, it was seen by the ungodly; they who believed saw it, they also who slew Him saw it. That thou shouldest not suppose it was any thing great that that form should be seen, His friends saw it, His enemies saw it; and some who saw it, slew Him, some who saw it not, believed. Both the godly and ungodly, then, shall see in the Judgment that form of a servant, which both the godly and ungodly saw in humiliation here. For when the Lord before the eyes of His disciples was being borne into heaven, the voice of an Angel was heard by those who beheld Him: Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven. “In like manner,” then, in like manner,” meaneth in the same form: for it is said of the ungodly, They shall look upon Him Whom they have pierced. They shall see Him when about to judge, Whom they mocked when judged. This form of the servant then will be conspicuous both to the righteous and unrighteous, the godly and the ungodly, the faithful and the unbelieving. What then shall the ungodly not see? For those of whom it is said, They shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced: of whom it is also said, Let the ungodly be rooted out, that he may not behold the brightness of the Lord. What is this, brethren? Let us discern it, let us sift it. The ungodly is awakened, that he may see something: he is taken away, that he may not see something. We have already shewn what he will see: that form of which it is said, In like manner He will come. What then will he not see? And I will shew Myself unto him. What meaneth, Myself? Not the form of a servant. What meaneth Myself? The form of God, in which I have not thought it robbery to be equal with God. What meaneth, Myself? Beloved, now are we the sons of God: and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. This is the brightness of God, the ineffable light, a fountain of light that can never change, truth without defect, wisdom abiding in itself, altering all things: this is the Substance of God. The ungodly therefore shall be rooted out, that he may not see this honour of the Lord. For, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

13. It seemeth therefore to me, my brethren, as far as the Lord deigneth to give me understanding, to be said of time itself: if indeed I should say time; for at some time we shall reach what is not time: it seemeth to be said with this meaning; and I will say this without prejudice, if any man can understand it in a better, a more natural, or more probable sense: this seemeth to me to be the meaning of the words, With Thee is the beginning in the day of Thy power. Besides, he explaineth this adequately, in my opinion, in the following verse. For since His power is here spoken of, by which He subjected nations to His yoke, with which He overthrew peoples, not with the sword but with the wood, although in the flesh, although in humility, although as yet in so far as the form of a servant doth allow, yet His great power is understood; because, the weakness of God is stronger

than men; since His power is spoken of here, which he set forth when he said, The Lord shall send the rod of Thy power out of Sion; be Thou Ruler, even in the midst among Thine enemies: for how great is His power when He ruleth in the midst of His enemies, who rage against Him, who can avail nothing against Him, who are every day saying to themselves, When shall He die, and His name perish? When His glory increaseth among the nations, when they are made subject unto His name, when the ungodly seeth and is wroth, gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away. Since then this also is His power, the prophet wishing to praise His power otherwise, as it is Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, in the perpetual light of an unchangeable truth; for which sight we are reserved, for which sight we are put off for a season, for which sight we are cleansed by faith, from which sight the ungodly is taken away, that he may not see the brightness of the Lord; wishing then to shew this, With Thee, he saith, is the beginning, on the day of Thy power. What meaneth, With Thee is the beginning? Suppose any thing you please as the beginning. Of Christ Himself, it would rather have been said, Thou art the Beginning, than, With Thee is the beginning. For He answered to those who asked Him, Who art Thou? and said, Even the same that I said unto you, the Beginning; since His Father also is the Beginning, of Whom is the only-begotten Son, in which Beginning was the Word, for the Word was with God. What then, if both the Father and the Son are the beginning, are there two beginnings? God forbid! For as the Father is God, and the Son is God, but the Father and the Son are not two Gods, but one God: so is the Father Beginning and the Son Beginning, but the Father and the Son are not two, but one Beginning. With Thee is the beginning. Then it shall appear in what sense the beginning is with Thee. Not that the beginning is not with Thee here also. For hast Thou not also said, Behold, ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone; but I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. Here therefore also, the beginning is with Thee. For Thou hast said elsewhere also, But the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth His works.—With Thee is the beginning: nor was the Father ever separated from Thee. But when the Beginning shall appear to be with Thee, then shall it be manifest unto all who are made like Thee; since they shall see Thee as Thou art; for Philip saw Thee here, and sought the Father. Then therefore shall be seen what now is believed: then shall the beginning be with Thee in the sight of the righteous, in the sight of saints; the ungodly being removed, that they may not see the brightness of the Lord.

14. Let us therefore believe now, brethren, what we shall see then. For Philip himself was reproved because he sought to see the Father, and did not recognise the Father in the Son Himself; Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father. He saith, he that hath seen Me: not he that hath seen the form of a servant in Me. He therefore who hath seen Me, such as I have hidden Myself for those who fear Me, such as I will give to them to see, who put their trust in Me, have seen the Father also. But since that sight will be afterwards, what shall we have instead of it now? Let us see what He said to Philip, to whom He hath said, He who hath seen Me hath seen the Father. As if Philip silently answered Him, And how shall I see Thee, if Thou appearest otherwise than in the form of a servant? or how shall I see the Father, I a weak mortal, dust and ashes? turning unto him, putting off the sight, commanding faith, after He said, He who hath seen me, hath seen the Father, because it was much unto Philip, and the sight was far distant from him; Dost thou not believe, He said, that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? Believe what thou canst not yet see, that thou mayest deserve to see it. When therefore the time shall be come that we shall see, then will appear with Thee the beginning in the day of Thy power. Of Thy power, not of the power of Thy weakness, since there is power there. Of Thy power: men have now their own virtues, in faith, in hope, in charity, in good works, but they shall go from strength to strength. With Thee therefore is the beginning. Thou shalt appear with the Father, in the Father, as the Father is with Thee the Beginning on the day of Thy power, of that power of Thine which the ungodly shall not see. For this weakness of Thine is stronger than men. For with Thee is the beginning on the day of Thy power.

15. Explain of what power thou speakest. Because here also, as is said, His power is mentioned, when the rod of His power is sent forth out of Sion, that He may be Ruler in the midst of His enemies. Of what power speakest thou, In the splendour of the saints? In the splendour, he saith, of the saints. He speaketh of that power when the saints shall be in splendour; not when still carrying about their earthly flesh, and groaning in a mortal and

corruptible body, which oppresseth the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth on many things; when those very musings do not appear to one another; but what meaneth, in the splendour of the saints? “Until the Lord come, Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God. This will be, in the splendour of the saints,—Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” Listen to the meaning of the words, in the splendour of the saints; the harvest, He saith, shall come, the end of the world shall come: then the Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. In what kingdom? Consider if some sight is reserved concerning which it is said unto us, with Thee the Beginning. In what kingdom? Surely in eternal life. For, He shall say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: then when the ungodly are condemned, and the righteous set apart and praised, what followeth His words, ‘Receive ye the kingdom?’ Then shall the ungodly go away into everlasting fire, but the righteous into life eternal: what He had termed the kingdom, He now calleth life eternal, whither the ungodly shall not go. Consider whether the life eternal be not a certain vision; for this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent, for with Thee the beginning on the day of Thy power; therefore, with Thee the beginning on the day of Thy power in the splendour of the saints.

16. But this is put off, this will be granted afterwards: what is there now? From the womb I have begotten Thee, before the morning star. What is here? If God hath a Son, hath He also a womb? Like fleshly bodies, He hath not; for He hath not a bosom either; yet it is said, He Who is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared Him. But that which is the womb, is the bosom also: both bosom and womb are put for a secret place. What meaneth, from the womb? From what is secret, from what is hidden; from Myself, from My substance; this is the meaning of, from the womb; for, Who shall declare His generation? Let us then understand the Father saying unto the

Son, From My womb before the morning star have I brought Thee forth. What then meaneth, before the morning star? The morning star is put for the stars, as if the Scripture signified the whole from a part, and from one conspicuous star all the stars. But how were those stars created? That they may be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years. If therefore the stars are put for signs and for seasons; and if the morning star be put for the other stars; what is before the morning star is also before the stars; and what is before the stars, that is before seasons; if before seasons, that is from eternity: seek not when: eternity hath no when. When and some-when are words applied to seasons. He by Whom seasons were made, was not created by the Father in time. It is therefore said, as it ought to have been said, figuratively, prophetically, so that both the womb is put for invisible substance, and the morning star for seasons. Do ye wish that we should carry our view back to David himself, who called his son his Lord? In order that he might speak thus, he heard this from his Lord; from Him he heard Who could not be deceived: and he then called Him his Lord, because, The Lord, he saith, said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand. He himself speaketh here; it is, as it were, a discourse of his that hath been composed. If then he himself speaketh, he might perhaps himself say, from the womb before the morning star have I begot Thee: from the Virgin's womb, from the womb before the morning star have I begot Thee. For if Christ was born of the womb of that Virgin who was descended from the flesh of David, He was as it were begotten from the womb by David. From the womb, whither no man approached: from the womb altogether, from the womb in a peculiar sense, because He alone was born of the womb alone. Therefore, he saith, from the womb, he who called Him his Lord, from the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. This expression also, before the morning star, is used both figuratively and literally, and was thus fulfilled. For the Lord was born at night from the womb of the Virgin Mary; the testimony of the shepherds doth assert this, who were keeping watch over their flock. From the womb before the morning star have I begotten Thee. O Thou, my Lord, Who sittest at the right hand of my Lord, whence art Thou my Son, except because, From the womb before the morning star I have begotten Thee?

17. Ver. 4. And unto what art Thou born? The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. For unto this wast Thou born from the womb before the morning star, that Thou mightest be a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. For in that character in which He was born of the Father, God with God, coeternal with Him Who begot Him, He is not a Priest; but He is a Priest on account of the flesh which He assumed, on account of the victim which He was to offer for us received from us. The Lord, then, hath sworn. What then meaneth, the Lord hath sworn? Doth the Lord, Who forbiddeth men to swear, Himself swear? Or doth He possibly forbid man to swear chiefly on this account, that he may not fall into perjury, and for this reason the Lord may swear, since He cannot be forsworn. For man, who, through a habit of swearing, may slip into perjury, is rightly forbidden to swear: for he will be farther from perjury in proportion as he is far from swearing. For the man who sweareth, may swear truly or falsely; but he who sweareth not, cannot swear falsely; for he sweareth not at all. Why then should not the Lord swear, since the Lord's oath is the seal of the promise? Let Him swear by all means. What then dost thou, when thou swearest? Thou callest God to witness: this is to swear, to call God to witness; and for this reason there must be anxiety, that thou mayest not call God to witness any thing false. If therefore thou by an oath dost call God to witness, why then should not God also call Himself to witness with an oath? I live, saith the Lord, this is the Lord's oath. Thus He swore concerning the seed of Abraham: I live, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is by the sea shore; and in thy seed shall all nations be blessed. And the seed of Abraham, which is Christ, that seed of Abraham, assuming the flesh from the seed of Abraham, shall be a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Concerning the Priesthood, therefore, after the order of Melchisedec, The Lord sware, and will not repent. What of the Priesthood after the order of Aaron? Doth God repent like a man, or is He compelled to do any thing against His will, or doth He stumble forward unawares unto doing a thing, so that it repenteth Him afterwards of His fall? He knoweth what He is doing: He knoweth how far every thing will advance; the means of its being changed into something else, is in the power of the Ruler. Now

by repentance is meant an alteration of things. For just as thou, when any thing maketh thee repent, dost grieve at the deed thou hast done; so when God changeth any thing beyond men’s expectation, that is, otherwise than men expect, He saith that He repenteth: even so far that He repenteth of our punishment, if we repent of our sinful life. The Lord sware, then, that is, confirmed: He will not repent, He will not change. What? Thou art a Priest for ever. For ever, for He will not repent. But Priest, in what sense? Will there be those victims, victims offered by the Patriarchs, altars of blood, and tabernacle, and those sacred emblems of the Old Covenant? God forbid! These things are already abolished; the temple being destroyed, that priesthood taken away, their victim and their sacrifice having alike disappeared, not even the Jews have these things. They see that the priesthood after the order of Aaron hath already perished, and they do not recognise the Priesthood after the order of Melchisedec. Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. I speak unto believers. If catechumens understand not something, let them lay aside sloth, and hasten unto knowledge. It is not therefore needful for me to disclose mysteries here: let the Scriptures intimate to you what is the Priesthood after the order of Melchisedec.

18. Ver. 5. The Lord on Thy right hand. The Lord had said, Sit Thou on My right hand; now the Lord is on His right hand, as if they changed seats. Or are not the words, the Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever, rather addressed to Christ? The Lord sware, Thou art a Priest for ever. What Lord? That Lord Who said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, hath Himself sworn, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec; and these words, the Lord upon Thy right hand, are addressed to the same Lord Who swore thus. O Lord, Thou Who hast sworn and said, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, He is the Priest for ever, the Lord upon Thy right hand; Himself, I say, the Priest for ever, of Whom Thou hast sworn, is the Lord on Thy right hand; because Thou hast said to the same My Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. This Lord, then, Who is on Thy right hand, of Whom Thou hast sworn in these words, Thou art a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, shall wound even kings in the day of His wrath. That very Christ, the Lord on Thy right hand, unto Whom Thou hast sworn, and it will

not repent Thee: what doth He, Priest for evermore? What doth He, Who is at the right hand of God, and intercedeth for us, like a priest entering into the inner places, and into the holy of holies, into the mysteries of heaven, He alone being without sin, and therefore easily purifying from sins. He therefore on Thy right hand shall wound even kings in the day of His wrath. What kings, dost thou ask? Hast thou forgotten? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed. These kings He wounded by His glory, and by the weight of His Name made kings weak, so that they had not power to effect what they wished. For they strove amain to blot out the Christian name from the earth, and could not; for Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken. Kings therefore fall on this stone of offence, and are therefore wounded, when they say, Who is Christ? I know not what Jew or what Galilean He may have been, who died, who was slain in such a manner! The stone is before thy feet, lying, so to speak, mean and humble: therefore by scorning thou dost stumble, by stumbling thou fallest, by falling thou art wounded. If then so great is the wrath when hidden, what will be His judgment when made manifest? Ye have heard the wrath of the Hidden One, respecting which a Psalm is entitled, For the hidden things of the Son: the ninth Psalm, if I remember right, is entitled, for the hidden things of the Son: and there the secret judgment of hidden wrath is displayed. They who strike upon that stone live beneath the wrath of God; they are wounded. What is the meaning of their being wounded? Hear this of the judgment to come: Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be wounded; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. When therefore any one falleth upon it, it lieth as it were low; it then woundeth: but when it shall grind him to powder, then it will come from above. See how in these two words, it shall wound him and grind him to powder: he striketh upon it, and it shall come down upon him: are distinguished the two seasons, of the humiliation and the majesty of Christ, of hidden punishment and future judgment. He will not crush, when He cometh, that man whom He doth not wound when He lieth. I mean by lying, a contemptible appearance; for He is on the right hand of God, and loudly He crieth from Heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? but nevertheless, although from Heaven, He would not say, why persecutest thou Me, when no one touched Him, unless He were sitting in Heaven, on the right hand of the Father, in such a manner that He was still, as it were, lying among us on earth. The Lord is on thy right hand, He shall wound even kings in the day of His wrath.

19. Ver. 6. He shall judge among the heathen, but at present for the hidden things, but there will be a judgment made manifest. He shall judge among the heathen, even now it is going on, their memorial hath perished. In this same Psalm it is written, For the hidden things; their memorial is perished with a noise: but the Lord shall endure for ever; He hath also prepared His seat for judgment: and, He shall judge the world in righteousness. It is there said, Thou hast rebuked the heathen, and destroyed the ungodly: Thou hast put out their name for ever and ever: this is going on in secret. In the day therefore of His wrath He shall wound even kings. He shall judge among the heathen. How? Hear what followeth; He shall fill up what hath fallen. At present He so judgeth among the nations, that He filleth up what hath fallen; for when He shall judge at the end, He will condemn what hath fallen. He will fill up what hath fallen. What that hath fallen? Whoever hath feared His Name shall fall: when he hath fallen, what he was before shall be overthrown, that what he was not may be built up. He shall judge among the heathen: He shall fill up what hath fallen. Whoever thou art who art obstinate against Christ, thou hast raised on high a tower that must fall. It is good that thou shouldest cast thyself down, become humble, throw thyself at the feet of Him Who sitteth on the right hand of the Father, that in thee a ruin may be made to be built up. For if thou abidest in thy evil height, thou shalt be cast down when thou canst not be built up. For of such the Scripture saith in another passage; Therefore shall He break down, and not build them up. Beyond doubt he would not say of some, “therefore He shall break them down, and not build them up:” unless there were some whom He broke down so as to build them up again. And this is going on at this time, while Christ is judging among the heathen in such a manner as to fill up what hath fallen. He shall smite many heads over the earth. Here upon the earth in this life He shall smite many heads. He maketh them humble instead of proud; and I dare to say, my brethren, that it is more profitable to walk here humbly with the head wounded, than with the head erect to fall into the judgment of eternal death. He will smite many heads when he causeth them to fall, but He will fill them up and build them up again.

20. Ver. 7. He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up his head. Let us consider Him drinking of the brook in the way: first of all, what is the brook? the onward flow of human mortality: for as a brook is gathered together by the rain, overflows, roars, runs, and by running runs down, that is, finishes its course; so is all this course of mortality. Men are born, they live, they die, and when some die others are born, and when they die others are born, they succeed, they flock together, they depart and will not remain. What is held fast here? what doth not run? what is not on its way to the abyss as if it was gathered together from rain? For as a river suddenly drawn together from rain from the drops of showers runneth into the sea, and is seen no more, nor was it seen before it was collected from the rain; so this hidden rain is collected together from hidden sources, and floweth on; at death again it travelleth where it is hidden: this intermediate state soundeth and passeth away. Of this brook He drinketh, He hath not disdained to drink of this brook; for to drink of this brook was to Him to be born and to die. What this brook hath, is birth and death; Christ assumed this, He was born, He died; thus He drinketh of the brook in the way, for He rejoiced as a giant to run his course. He therefore drinketh of the brook in the way, because He stood not in the way of sinners; since, therefore, He drinketh of the brook in the way, therefore hath He lifted up His head; that is, because he was humble, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: therefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ the Lord is in the glory of God the Father.

PSALM 111

Exposition

A Sermon to the people at the Paschal Festival.

1. The days have come for us to sing Allelujah. Attend carefully, brethren, in order to perceive what the Lord doth supply for our exhortation, and to nourish charity, by means of which it is good for us to cling unto God. Listen attentively, good singers, sons of the praise and eternal glory of the true and incorruptible God. Listen attentively, ye who know how to sing and to play in your hearts unto the Lord, Always giving thanks for all things: and praise God; for this is Allelujah. Now these days come only to pass away, and pass away to come again, and typify the day which does not come and pass away, because it is neither preceded by yesterday to cause it to come, nor pressed upon by the morrow to cause it to pass. And to which indeed when we have come, clinging unto Him, we shall not pass away; and as in a certain passage it is sung unto God, Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, they will be alway praising Thee; this will be their easy business, this their leisure toil, these their resting works, this their happy care. For as these days succeed in regular season, with a joyful cheerfulness, the past days of Lent, whereby the misery of this life before the Resurrection of the Lord’s body is signified; so that day which after the Resurrection shall be given to the full body of the Lord, that is, to the holy Church, when all the troubles and sorrows of this life have been shut out, shall succeed with perpetual bliss. But this life demandeth from us self-restraint, that although groaning and weighed down with our toil and struggles, and desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven, we may refrain from secular pleasures: and this is signified by the number of forty, which was the period of the fasts of Moses, and Elias, and our Lord Himself. For it is enjoined unto us both by the Law and the Prophets and the Gospel itself, (which hath testimony from the Law and the Prophets; for which reason also our Lord shone in the midst between the representatives of each, that we should restrain our eagerness, as it were, by

the fasting of temperance from all the snares of the world, by which men are held captive, and forget God; as long as the fulfilment of the Law of the Ten Commandments, like the Psaltery of the ten strings, is preached through the four quarters of the same world, that is, over the whole globe, so that ten multiplied by four result in the number forty. But by the number fifty after our Lord's resurrection, during which season we sing Allelujah, not the term and passing away of a certain season is signified, but that blessed eternity; because the denary added to forty signifieth the reward paid to the faithful who toil in this life, which our Father hath prepared an equal share of for the first and for the last. Let us therefore hear the heart of the people of God full of divine praises. He representeth in this Psalm some one exulting in happy joyfulness, he prefigureth the people whose hearts are overflowing with the love of God, that is, the body of Christ, freed from all evil.

2. Ver. 1, 2. I will make confession unto Thee, O Lord, he saith, with my whole heart. Confession is not always confession of sins, but the praise of God is poured forth in the devotion of confession. The former mourneth, the latter rejoiceth: the former sheweth the wound to the physician, the latter giveth thanks for health. The latter confession signifieth some one, not merely freed from every evil, but even separate from all the ill-disposed. And for this reason let us consider the place where he confesseth unto the Lord with all his heart. In the counsel, he saith, of the upright, and in the congregation: I suppose, of those who shall sit upon the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. For there will be no longer an unjust man among them, the thefts of no Judas are allowed, no Simon Magus is baptized, wishing to buy the Spirit, whilst he designeth to sell it; no coppersmith like Alexander doth many evil deeds, no man covered with sheep's clothing creepeth in with feigned fraternity; such as those among whom the Church must now groan, and such as she must then shut out, when all the righteous shall be gathered together.

Ver. 2. These are the great works of the Lord, sought out unto all His wills: through which mercy forsaketh none who confesseth, no man's wickedness is unpunished: since He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. But if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

Let man choose for himself what he listeth: the works of the Lord are not so constituted, that the creature, having free discretion allowed him, should transcend the will of the Creator, even though he act contrary to His will. God willeth not that thou shouldest sin; for He forbiddeth it: yet if thou hast sinned, imagine not that the man hath done what he willed, and that hath happened to God which He willed not. For as He would that man would not sin, so would He spare the sinner, that he may return and live; He so willeth finally to punish him who persisteth in his sin, that the rebellious cannot escape the power of justice. Thus whatever choice thou hast made, the Almighty will not be at a loss to fulfil His will concerning thee. For great are the works of the Lord, and sought out unto all His wills.

3. Ver. 3. Confession and glorious deeds are His work. What is a more glorious deed than to justify the ungodly? But perhaps the work of man preventeth that glorious work of God, so that when he hath confessed his sins, he deserveth to be justified. For the Publican went down from the temple justified rather than the Pharisee; because he would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. This is the glorious work of the Lord, the justification of the sinner; for every one that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and every one that exalteth himself shall be abased. This is the glorious work of the Lord: for he loveth most, to whom most is forgiven. This is the glorious work of the Lord: for where sin abounded, there did grace much more abound. But perhaps a man would deserve justification from works. Not, saith he, of works, lest any man boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. For a man worketh not righteousness save he be justified: but by believing on Him That justifieth the ungodly, he beginneth with faith; that good may not by preceding shew what he hath deserved, but by following what he hath received. Where then is this confession? It is not as yet indeed the work of righteousness, but the condemnation of sin; but whatever it be, do not, O man, even in this glory in thyself, since He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For what hast thou that thou hast not received? It is not only then through this glorious work by which the ungodly is justified, but confession and glorious works are His work. What shall we say then? Because He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth. Is

there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For, His righteousness endureth for ever. Nay but O man of this world, who art thou who repliest against God?

4. Ver. 4, 5. He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered: by abasing this man, exalting that. He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered: reserving unusual miracles for a fit season, that thus human weakness, intent upon novelty, may remember them, although His daily miracles be greater. He createth so many trees throughout the whole earth, and no one wondereth: He dried up one with a word, and the hearts of mortals were thunderstruck; but He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered. For that miracle, which hath not through its frequency become common, will cling most firmly to the heart.

5. But of what use were the miracles, save that He might be feared? What too would fear profit, unless the gracious and merciful Lord gave meat unto them that fear Him? meat that doth not spoil, bread that cometh down from heaven, which He gave to no deservings of ours. For Christ died for the ungodly. No one then would give such food, save a gracious and merciful Lord. But if He gave so much to this life, if the sinner who was to be justified received the Word made flesh; what shall he receive when glorified in a future world? For, He shall ever be mindful of His covenant. Nor hath He Who hath given a pledge, given the whole.

6. Ver. 6–9. He shall shew His people the power of His works. Let not the holy Israelites, who have left all their possessions and have followed Him, be saddened; let them not be sorrowful and say, Who then can be saved? For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. For He shewed them the power of His works: for with men these things are impossible, but with God all things are possible.

That He may give them the heritage of the heathen. For they went to the heathen, and enjoined the rich of this world not to be high-minded, nor to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, to Whom that is easy which is difficult for men. For thus many were called, thus the heritage of the heathen has been occupied, thus it hath happened, that even many who have not abandoned all their possessions in this life in order to follow Him, have despised even life itself for the sake of confessing His Name; and like camels humbling themselves to bear the burden of troubles, have entered as it were through a needle’s eye, through the piercing straits of suffering. He hath wrought these effects, unto Whom all things are possible.

7. Ver. 7. The works of His hands are verity and judgment. Let verity be held by those who are judged here. Martyrs are here sentenced, and brought to the judgment-seat, that they may judge not only those by whom they have been judged, but even give judgment on angels, against whom was their struggle here, even when they seemed to be judged by men. Let not tribulation, distress, famine, nakedness, the sword, separate from Christ. For all His commandments are true; He deceiveth not, He giveth us what He promised. Yet we should not expect here what He promised; we should not hope for it: but (Ver. 8.) they stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and equity. It is equitable and just that we should labour here and repose there; since (Ver. 9.) He sent redemption unto His people. But from what are they redeemed, save from the captivity of this pilgrimage? Let not therefore rest be sought, save in the heavenly country.

8. God indeed gave the carnal Israelites an earthly Jerusalem, which is in bondage with her children: but this is the Old Covenant, pertaining unto the old man. But they who there understood the figure, even then were heirs of the New Covenant; for Jerusalem which is above is free, which is our everlasting mother in heaven. But that transitory promises were given in that Old Testament is proved by the fact itself: however, He hath commended His covenant for ever. But what, but the New? Whosoever dost wish to be heir of this, deceive not thyself, and think not of a land flowing with milk and honey, nor of pleasant farms, nor of gardens abounding in fruits and shade: desire not how to gain any thing of this sort, such as the eye of covetousness is wont to lust for. For since covetousness is the root of all evils, it must be cut off, that it may be consumed here; not be put off, that it may be satisfied there. First escape punishments, avoid hell; before thou longest for a God Who promiseth, beware of one Who threateneth. For holy and reverend is His Name.

9. Ver. 10. But instead of all the delights of this world, which thou hast either experienced, or mayest contrive the means of enhancing and multiplying, long for wisdom, the mother of immortal delights; but, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It will delight, and beyond all doubt will ineffably delight, with the chaste and eternal embraces of truth: but thy debts must first be forgiven thee, before rewards must be asked for. The fear of the Lord, therefore, is the beginning of wisdom. Understanding is good. Who gainsayeth? But to understand, and not to do, is dangerous. It is good, therefore, to those that do thereafter. Nor let it lift up the mind unto pride; for, the praise of Him, the fear of Whom is the beginning of wisdom, endureth for ever: and this will be the reward, this the end, this the everlasting station and abode. There are found the true commandments, made fast for ever and ever; here is the very heritage of the New Covenant commanded for ever. One thing, he saith, I have desired of the Lord, which I will require: even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. For, blessed are they that dwell in the house of the Lord: they will be alway praising Him; for His praise endureth for ever.

PSALM 112

Exposition

A Discourse to the People.

1. I believe, brethren, that ye remarked and committed to memory the title of this Psalm. The conversion, he saith, of Haggai and Zechariah. These prophets were not as yet in existence, when these verses were sung. For between the time of David, and the removal of the people of Israel to Babylon, fourteen generations are computed, as holy Scripture, and chiefly St. Matthew the Evangelist, doth witness; while the restoration of the overthrown temple was expected seventy years after that migration: and when these years were completed, under Darius, king of Babylon, these two Prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, were filled with the Holy Ghost; and either within one year after other began to prophesy that which seemeth to pertain to the restoration of the temple, as was foretold so long before. But whoever fixeth the eye of his heart on things done in the body, and doth not extend his view into the grace of spiritual apprehension, dwelleth in mind among the stones of the temple, wherein a visible fabric is raised aloft by the hands of men; nor is he made a living stone, fit for the temple, which the Lord first typified in His own body, when He said, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. For the holy Church herself is the more full body of the Lord, whose wead ascended into heaven, Who is in the highest sense a living stone, of Whom the blessed Peter saith, To Whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him, shall not be confounded. Therefore that each man may become a living stone fit for such a building, let him understand spiritually the restoration of the temple from the ancient ruin which was made in Adam, as the renovation of a new people, according to the new and heavenly man: that as we have borne the

image of the earthly, we may also bear the image of Him Who is from Heaven, that we may after all the ages of this world, the seventy years, as it were, which are fixed beforehand in the mystic number of perfection, and, as it were, after the bondage of a long pilgrimage, not be built together in a framework that shall fall, but be made firm by an immortality that shall last for evermore. For ye should consider the spiritual Jerusalem as no less your own than of the Jews. For so the Apostle saith, Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in Whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. This is the temple of God, unto which pertaineth the mystery of the prophecy of Haggai and Zechariah: to which again the same Apostle saith, For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Whoever therefore converteth himself to the work of this building together, and to the hope of a firm and holy edifice, like a living stone from the miserable ruin of this world, understandeth the title of the Psalm, understandeth the conversion of Haggai and Zechariah. Let him therefore chaunt the following verses, not so much with the voice of his tongue as of his life. For the completion of the building will be that ineffable peace of wisdom, the beginning of which is the fear of the Lord: let him therefore, whom this conversion buildeth together, begin thence.

2. Ver. 1. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord: he will have great delight in His commandments. God, Who alone judgeth both truthfully and mercifully, will see how far he obeyeth His commandments: since the life of man on earth is a temptation, as holy Job saith. And again it is written: for the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth many things. But He who judgeth us is the Lord, nor ought we to judge before the time, until the Lord cometh, and bringeth to light the hidden things of darkness, and shall make clear the counsels of the heart: and then shall every man have praise of God. He therefore will see how far each man profiteth in His commandments; yet he who loveth the peace of this building together, shall have great delight in

them; nor ought he to despair, since he shall have great delight in His commandments, and there is peace on earth for men of good will.

3. Ver. 2, 3. Next follows, His seed shall be mighty upon earth. The Apostle witnesseth, that the works of mercy are the seed of the future harvest, when he saith, Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap; and again, But this I say, He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly. But what, brethren, is more mighty than that not only Zacchæus should buy the kingdom of Heaven by the half of his goods, but even the widow for two mites, and that each should possess an equal share there? What is more mighty, than that the same kingdom should be worth treasures to the rich man, and a cup of cold water to the poor? But there are persons who do these things, while they are seeking earthly possessions, either hoping for a reward from the Lord here, or desiring the praise of men; but, the generation of the right ones shall be blessed; that is, the works of those whose gracious God is the God of Israel, who are right-hearted; now a right heart is not to withstand the Father when He chasteneth, and to trust Him when He promiseth; not theirs, whose feet are moved away, whose treadings go astray and slip, as it is sung in another Psalm, while they are grieved at the wicked, seeing the ungodly in such prosperity, and imagine that their works perish, because a perishable reward is not given them. But that man who feareth God, and who by the conversion of an upright heart is fitted for an holy temple of God, neither seeketh the glory of men, nor lusteth for earthly riches; but nevertheless, glory and riches shall be in his house. For his house is his heart; where, with the praise of God, he liveth in greater riches with the hope of eternal life, than with men flattering, in palaces of marble, with splendidly adorned ceilings, with the fear of everlasting death. For his righteousness endureth for ever: this is his glory, there are his riches. While the other’s purple, and fine linen, and grand banquets, even when present, are passing away; and when they have come to an end, the burning tongue shall cry out, longing for a drop of water from the finger’s end.

4. Ver. 4–9. Unto the right-hearted there ariseth up light in the darkness. Justly do the godly direct their heart unto their God, justly do they walk with their God, preferring His will to themselves; and having no proud

presumption in their own. For they remember that they were some time in darkness, but are now light in the Lord. Merciful, pitying, and just is the Lord God. It delighteth us that He is merciful and pitying, but it perhaps terrifieth us that the Lord God is just. Fear not, despair not at all, happy man, who fearest the Lord, and hast great delight in His commandments; be thou sweet, be merciful and lend. For the Lord is just in this manner, that He judgeth without mercy him who hath not shewn mercy; but, (ver. 5.) Sweet is the man who is merciful and lendeth: God will not spew him out of His mouth as if he were not sweet. Forgive, He saith, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you. Whilst thou forgivest, that thou mayest be forgiven, thou art merciful; whilst thou givest that it may be given unto thee, thou lendest. For though all be called generally mercy where another is assisted in his distress, yet there is a difference where thou spendest neither money, nor the toil of bodily labour, but by forgiving what each man hath sinned against thee, thou gainest free pardon for thine own sins also. I imagine that these two offices of kindness, of forgiving sins, as in the passage of the Gospel, forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; give, and it shall be given unto you; are thus distinguished in this verse also, sweet is the man who is merciful and lendeth. Let us not be slothful in these matters, brethren. He who desireth that he himself be avenged, seeketh glory; but listen to the words of Scripture, he that conquereth his anger is better than he that taketh a city. He who is unwilling to give to the poor, seeketh riches; listen to what is written, Thou shalt have treasure in heaven. Thou wilt not then lose honour by forgiving: for it is a very laudable triumph to conquer anger: wilt not grow poor by giving; for a heavenly treasure is a more safe possession. The former verse, Riches and plenteousness shall be in his house, was pregnant with this verse.

5. He therefore who doth these things, shall guide his words with discretion. His deeds themselves are the words whereby he shall be defended at the Judgment; which shall not be without mercy unto him, since he hath himself shewn mercy. (Ver. 6.) For he shall never be moved: he who, called to the right hand, shall hear these words, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For no works of theirs, save works of mercy, are there mentioned. He therefore shall hear, Come, ye blessed of My Father; for, the generation of the right

ones shall be blessed. Thus, the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance. (Ver. 7.) He will not be afraid of any evil hearing; such as the words which he will hear addressed to those on the left hand, Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

6. He therefore who seeketh here not his own things, but those of Jesus Christ, most patiently endureth sufferings, waiteth for the promises with faith. Nor is he broken down by any temptations: (ver. 8.) His heart is established, and will not shrink, until he see beyond his enemies. His enemies wished to see good things here, and when invisible blessings were promised them, used to say, Who will shew us any good? Let our heart therefore be established, and shrink not, until we see beyond our enemies. For they wish to see good things of men in the land of the dying; we trust to see the good things of the Lord in the land of the living.

7. But it is a great thing to have the heart established, and not to be moved, while they rejoice who love what they see, and mock at him who hopeth for what he seeth not; and he shall not shrink, until he also see not here below, what his enemies see, but above, higher than his enemies, what the eye hath not seen, nor hath the ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man what the Lord hath prepared for them that love Him. How great is the value of this which is not seen, and it is bought for so much as each man is able to give for it. On this account he also dispersed abroad, and gave to the poor: he saw not, yet he kept buying; but He was storing up the treasure in heaven, Who deigned to hunger and thirst in the poor on earth. It is no wonder then if his righteousness remaineth for ever: He who created the ages being his guardian. His horn, whose humility was scorned by the proud, shall be exalted with honour.

8. Ver. 10. The ungodly shall see it, and he shall be angered: this is that late and fruitless repentance. For with whom rather than himself is he angered, when he shall say, Our pride, what hath it profited us? the boastfulness of our riches, what hath it given us? seeing the horn of him exalted with honour, who dispersed abroad, and gave to the poor. He shall gnash with his teeth, and consume away: for, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For he will no more bring forth leaves and bloom, as would happen if he had repented in season: but he will then repent, when the desire of the

ungodly shall perish, no consolation succeeding. The desire of the ungodly shall perish, when all things shall pass away like a shadow, when the flower shall fall down on the withering of the grass. But the word of the Lord that endureth for ever, as it is mocked by the vanity of the falsely happy, so will laugh at the perdition of the same when truly miserable.

PSALM 113

Exposition

A Discourse to the people.

1. Ver. 1–3. Ye know, brethren, and ye have very often heard the Lord say in the Gospel. Suffer little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven; and again, If any man receive not the kingdom of heaven as a little child, he shall in no case enter therein: and in many other passages our Lord, through an extraordinary pattern of humility, chargeth the pride of the old man to lead a new life humbly, by the similitude of the age of infancy. Wherefore, most beloved, when ye hear sung in the Psalms, Praise the Lord, ye children; imagine not that that exhortation pertaineth not unto you, because having already passed the youth of the body, ye are either blooming in the prime of manhood, or growing grey with the honours of old age: for unto all of you the Apostle saith, Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. What malice in particular, save pride? For it is pride that, presuming in false greatness, suffereth not man to walk along the narrow path, and to enter by the narrow gate; but the child easily entereth through the narrow entrance; and thus no man, save as a child, entereth into the kingdom of heaven. But what is worse than the malice of pride, which disliketh to have even God set over it! For it is written, The beginning of pride is when one departeth from God. This pride when it raiseth up itself with swelling neck against the divine commandments, and resisteth the gracious yoke of the Lord, throw ye down, break, crush, and consume, and Praise the Lord, ye children, praise the Name of the Lord. For when pride is laid prostrate and extinguished, praise is perfected from the mouth of babes and infants: when it is crushed and annihilated, let him who glorieth, glory in the Lord. They who think themselves great do not sing thus; they sing not thus who, though they know God, have not glorified Him as God, or given thanks; they praise themselves, not God; for they are not children. They rather wish their own name to be celebrated, and praise not the Name of the Lord. Therefore, they

have become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened; and professing themselves to be wise, they have become fools; their own name they wished to be celebrated far and wide to the latest posterity, themselves soon to pass away into a narrow space. It becometh God, it becometh the Lord, to be both always and every where proclaimed. Let Him therefore be alway proclaimed: (ver. 2.) Blessed be the Name of the Lord, from this time forth for evermore. Let Him be proclaimed every where: (ver. 3.) From the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same, praise ye the Name of the Lord.

2. If any of the holy children who praise the Name of the Lord were to ask of me and say to me, for evermore I understand to mean unto all eternity; but why from this, and why is not the Name of the Lord blessed before this, and before all ages? I will answer the infant, who asketh not in contumacy. Unto you it is said, masters and children, unto you it is said, Praise the Name of the Lord; blessed be the Name of the Lord: let the Name of the Lord be blessed, from this, that is, from the moment ye speak these words. For ye begin to praise, but praise ye without end. Say not, We begin indeed to praise the Lord, because we are children; but when we have grown up, we shall praise ourselves. Not thus, children, not thus; for the Lord saith in Isaiah, Even to your old age, I AM. He Who IS, is ever to be praised. Praise Him, children, from this, praise Him, old men, for evermore. For your old age will indeed grow white with the hoary hairs of wisdom, but will not wither with the age of the flesh. Or, since in this passage he seemeth to signify rather humility than childhood, the contrary of which is the vain and false greatness of pride; and for this reason none but children praise the Lord, since the proud know not how to praise Him; let your old age be childlike, and your childhood like old age; that is, that neither may your wisdom be with pride, nor your humility without wisdom, that ye may praise the Lord from this for evermore. Wherever the Church of Christ is diffused in her childlike saints, Praise ye the Name of the Lord; that is, from the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same, praise ye the Name of the Lord.

3. Ver. 4. The Lord is high above all heathen. The heathen are men: what wonder if the Lord be above all men? They see with their eyes those whom

they worship high above themselves to shine in heaven, the sun and moon and stars, creatures which they serve while they neglect the Creator. But not only is the Lord high above all heathen; but His glory also is above the heavens. The heavens look up unto Him above themselves; and the humble have Him together with them, who do not worship the heavens instead of Him, though placed in the flesh beneath the heavens.

4. Ver. 5, 6. Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high; and yet beholdeth the humble things? Any one would think that He dwelleth in the lofty heavens, whence He may behold the humble things on earth; but He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth: what then is His high dwelling, whence He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth? Are the humble things He beholdeth His own high dwelling itself? For He thus exalteth the humble, so as not to make them proud. He therefore both dwelleth in those whom He raiseth high, and maketh them heaven for Himself, that is, His own abode; and by seeing them not proud, but constantly subject to Himself, He beholdeth even in heaven itself these very humble things, in whom raised on high He dwelleth. For the Spirit thus speaketh through Isaiah: Thus saith the Highest that dwelleth on high, that inhabiteth eternity; the Lord Most High, dwelling in the holy. He hath expounded what He meant by dwelling on high, by the more full expression, dwelling in the holy. But who are holy, but the humble, who as children praise God? He therefore addeth: and giving courage to the meek, and life unto them that are of a humble spirit. To the holy in whom He dwelleth, unto these humble ones He giveth courage. By giving them courage He setteth them on high, in Whom He hath rest, and dwelleth in them Whom He hath exalted. But since it is the meek to whom He giveth courage, He beholdeth the humble in those very persons in Whom He dwelleth on high. Yet, he saith, He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth.

5. And he hath moved us also to enquire whether the Lord our God beholdeth the same humble things in heaven and in earth: or different humble things in heaven to what He beholdeth on earth. For if they are the same, I see how I can understand this according to the Apostle’s words: For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons

of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God. Whence then are they mighty, save because they are spiritual? Since therefore the Apostle at once walketh in the flesh, and warreth in the spirit, it is no wonder if his humility both be beholden in heaven on account of the spirit's freedom, and on earth on account of the servitude of the body. For he saith in another passage, For our conversation is in heaven: and also of himself, that it was far better for him to depart, and be with Christ, but to abide in the flesh, he saith, is more needful for your sakes. Whoever therefore understandeth both the conversation of the Apostle in heaven, and his abode in the flesh on earth; should at the same time understand the Lord our God dwelling in the exalted saints, how He beholdeth the same, nevertheless, humble before Himself; both in heaven, since they who have in hope risen again with Christ, set their affections on things above; and on earth; since they are not as yet released from the chain of the flesh, so that they may be with all their life in Christ. But if the Lord our God beholdeth other humble things in heaven to what He doth on earth; I suppose that He already beholdeth in heaven those whom He hath called, and in whom He dwelleth; while on earth He beholdeth those whom He is now calling, that He may dwell in them. For He hath the one with Him musing on heavenly things, the others He is waking, while they yet dream things earthly.

6. But since it is difficult to call even those humble, who have not as yet submitted their necks in piety to the gracious yoke of Christ, since the divine writings throughout the whole Psalm warn us to understand holy by the word humble; there is also another interpretation, which, Beloved, ye may consider with me. I believe that those are now meant by heavens who shall sit upon twelve thrones, and shall judge with the Lord; and under the name of the earth, the rest of the multitude of the blessed, who shall be set on the right hand, that through works of mercy they may be praised and received into everlasting habitations by those, whom they have made friends to themselves from the mammon of unrighteousness in this mortal life. For unto them the Apostle saith, If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things? Which may be said in these words: if we have sown unto you heavenly things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your earthly things? In heaven therefore He beholdeth these sowing heavenly things, in earth those yielding earthly

things; yet both these and those humble. For, He beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and in earth; because both are mindful of what they were through their own wickedness, and of what they have become through the Lord’s grace. For not unto them alone saith the Vessel of Election, For ye were sometimes darkness; but now are ye light in the Lord: and again, By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast; but he next addeth himself also, saying, For we are His workmanship, created unto good works. He speaketh also separately of himself and of those who are beheld in heaven, for we were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. And again, For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another: but after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration. Behold the humble things which are beheld in heaven. For they are spiritual, and judge all things; but nevertheless humble, lest they be cast down and judged. What saith he of himself individually; are not his words of like sort? For I am not meet, he saith, to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

7. Ver. 6–8. Lastly, after these verses, in which the Spirit saith in the Psalm, Who is like unto the Lord our God, that hath His dwelling so high, and beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth? wishing to teach us why they are called humble things in heaven, when they are now mighty in spiritual power and worthy of judgment-seats; he added at once, (ver. 6.) He taketh up the destitute out of the dust, and lifteth the poor out of the mire; (ver. 7.) that He may set Him with the princes, even with the princes of His people. Let not then the heads of the exalted disdain to be humble, beneath the Lord’s right hand. For though the faithful steward of the Lord’s money be placed together with the princes of the people of God, although he be destined to sit on the twelve seats, and even to judge angels; yet he is taken up destitute from the dust, and lifted from out of the mire. Was not he possibly lifted up from the mire, who served divers lusts and pleasures? But perhaps when he was writing this, he was no longer destitute, no longer

poor. Why then doth he still groan beneath his burden, longing to be clothed with a heavenly habitation? Why, lest he be lifted up, is he buffetted, and made subject to the angel of Satan, the thorn of his flesh? He is high indeed, the Lord dwelling in him, and having that Spirit which searcheth all things, even the deep things of God: he is therefore in heaven; but even in heaven the Lord beholdeth humble things.

8. What then, brethren, if we have already heard of those humble things which are in heaven, lifted up from the mire, that they might be set with the princes of the people; have we by consequence heard nothing of the humble things which the Lord beholdeth on the earth? For those friends who will judge with their Lord are fewer, while those whom they receive into everlasting habitations are more in number. For although the whole of a heap of corn compared with the separate chaff may seem to contain few in number; yet considered by itself, it is abundant. For more are the children of the desolate than those of her that hath the husband: more are the children of her who conceived through grace in old age, than of her who from her childhood hath been wedded to the bond of the Law. And I say, hath conceived in old age; regarding Sarah our mother in the one Isaac, the mother of the faithful throughout all nations. But consider the character in Isaiah: as if by no means that of a mother, nor of one who hath given birth to any. And yet what is said unto her? The children, he saith, which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thy ears, The place is too strait for us; make room yet for us that we may dwell. Then thou shalt say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing that I know I am childless and a widow? Who hath brought me up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been? The Church then speaketh thus in that sense, wherein she seemeth to bear no offspring among those crowds who have not given up all things, that they might follow the Lord, and might sit upon the twelve thrones. But how many in the same crowd, who make unto themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, shall stand on the right hand through works of mercy? He not only then lifteth up from the mire him whom He is to place with the princes of His people; but also, (ver. 9.) Maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children: He who dwelleth on high, and beholdeth the humble things that are in heaven and earth, the seed of Abraham like the

stars of heaven, holiness set on high in heavenly habitations; and like the sand on the sea shore, a merciful and countless multitude gathered together from the harmful waves, and the bitterness of impiety.

PSALM 114

Sermon I. On the first part of the Psalm.

1. We read indeed, and hold it in our minds, most beloved brethren, as a well-known truth, that, as is detailed in the Book of the Exodus, the people of Israel, when freed from the unjust domination of the Egyptians, passed over by a dry path between the divided waves of the sea: that the river Jordan also, when they were entering across it into the land of promise, when touched by the feet of the priests who bore the Ark, stood still from above with bridled stream, while it flowed down from below, where it ran on into the sea, until the whole people passed over, the priests standing on the dry ground; we know these things, but yet we should not imagine that in this Psalm, to which we have now answered by chaunting Allelujah, it is the purpose of the Holy Spirit, that while we call to mind those deeds of the past, we should not consider that things like unto them were yet to take place. For these things, as the Apostle saith, happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the world are come. When therefore we read in the Psalm, (ver. 1.) When Israel came out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among the strange people, (Ver. 2.) Judah was His sanctuary, and Israel His dominion; (Ver. 3.) the sea saw that and fled, Jordan was driven back: think not that past deeds are related unto us, but rather that the future is predicted; since, while those miracles also were going on in that people, things present indeed were happening, but not without an intimation of things future. And therefore that he, who in his Psalms was prophesying these events, might shew that he was acting the same scene in words as was there acted in deeds, one and the same Spirit performing both those deeds and these words, that that which was reserved to be manifested at the end of the world, might be announced by foregoing figures of words and deeds; he hath not described exactly the same deeds as were there done, but some things he hath related differently to what we have learnt and read there: that he might not truly be thought to be repeating past acts rather than to be prophesying future things. For in the first place, we read not that the Jordan was driven back, but that it

stood still on the side nearest the source of its streams, while the people were passing through; next, we read not of the mountains and hills skipping: all which he hath added, and repeated. For after saying, The sea saw that, and fled; Jordan was driven back: he added, (Ver. 4.) The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like young sheep: and then asketh, (Ver. 5.) What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest: and thou, Jordan, that thou wast driven back? (Ver. 6.) Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like young sheep?

2. Let us therefore consider what we are taught here; since both those deeds were typical of us, and these words exhort us to recognise ourselves. For if we hold with a firm heart the grace of God which hath been given us, we are Israel, the seed of Abraham: unto us the Apostle saith, Therefore are ye the seed of Abraham. Since as he saith elsewhere; Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision—faith was counted unto Abraham for righteousness; and, he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them that are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had, yet being uncircumcised. For he unto whom it was said, I have made thee a father of many nations, was not a father to the carnally circumcised nation only. Many nations meaneth not some in particular, but all: and this is openly expressed in the words, And in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Let therefore no Christian consider himself alien to the name of Israel. For we are joined in the corner-stone with those among the Jews who believed, among whom we find the Apostles chief. Hence our Lord in another passage saith, And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, that there may be one fold and one Shepherd. The Christian people then is rather Israel, and the same is preferably the house of Jacob; for Israel and Jacob are the same. But that multitude of Jews, which was deservedly reprobated for its perfidy, for the pleasures of the flesh sold their birthright, so that they belonged not to Jacob, but rather to Esau. For ye know that it was said with this hidden meaning, That the elder shall serve the younger.

3. But Egypt, since it is said to mean affliction, or one who afflicteth, or one who oppresseth, is often used for an emblem of this world; from which we must spiritually withdraw, that we may not be bearing the yoke with unbelievers. For thus each one becometh a fit citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, when he hath first renounced this world; just as that people could not be led into the land of promise, save first they had departed from Egypt. But as they did not depart thence, until freed by Divine help; so no man is turned away in heart from this world, unless aided by the gift of the Divine mercy. For what was there once prefigured, the same is fulfilled in every faithful one in the daily travailings of the Church, in this end of the world, in this, as the blessed John writeth, last time. Hear the Apostle the teacher of the Gentiles, thus instructing us: I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples. What more do ye wish, most beloved brethren? For it is surely clear, not from human conjecture, but from the declaration of an Apostle, that is, of God and our Lord: for God spoke in them, and though from clouds of flesh, yet it was God who thundered: surely then it is clear by so great testimony that all these things which were done in figure, are now fulfilled in our salvation; because then the future was predicted, now the past is read, and the present observed.

4. Hear what is even more wonderful, that the hidden and veiled mysteries of the ancient books, are in some degree revealed by the ancient books. For Micah the prophet speaketh thus. According to the days of thy coming out of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might; they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf: licking the dust like serpents, dragging the earth: they shall be disturbed from their close places: they shall be beside themselves at the Lord our God, and shall fear because of Thee. Who is like unto this God, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of Thine heritage? He retaineth not His anger for a testimony,

because He is of good will and merciful. He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will drown our iniquities: and Thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. Ye see, brethren, that the holy mysteries are here more clearly revealed. In this Psalm, therefore, although the wonderful spirit of prophecy doth look into the future, yet it seemeth as it were, to be merely detailing the past. Judah, he saith, was His sanctuary: the sea saw that and fled: was, saw, and fled, are words of the past tense; and Jordan was driven back, and the mountains skipped, and the earth trembled, in like manner have a past expression, without however any difficulty in understanding by them the future. Otherwise we are compelled, contrary to the testimony of the Gospel, to understand these words not as foretold of the future, but as related of the past: They parted My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture. Although these words are expressed in the past tense, nevertheless they foretold that which, being destined to happen so long afterwards, should be fulfilled in our Lord’s Passion. Nevertheless, most beloved, that prophet whom I have mentioned hath sharpened even dull minds, and extended their view without hesitation to understand the future from the past: so that not only on apostolical authority do we believe that they were our examples, but that this was not passed over even by the prophets themselves, so that even by their declarations, seeing and rejoicing, sure and fearless, from the treasury of God we may bring forth both new and old things, agreeing harmoniously with each other. For though it was so long after the departure of that people from Egypt, and so long before these seasons of the Church, that he sang what I have quoted; nevertheless, he witnesseth that he is foretelling the future without any question. According to the days, he saith, of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things. The nations shall see and be confounded. This is what is here said, The sea saw that, and fled: for if in this passage, through words of the past tense the future is secretly revealed, as is the case; who would venture to explain the words, shall see and be confounded, of past events? And a little lower down he alludeth more clearly than light itself to those very enemies of ours, who followed us flying, that they might slay us, that is, our sins, which are overwhelmed and extinguished in Baptism, just as the Egyptians were drowned in the sea, saying, Since He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He is of good will and merciful, He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us, He will drown our iniquities: and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

5. What is it, most beloved? ye who know yourselves to be Israelites according to Abraham's seed, ye who are of the house of Jacob, heirs according to promise, know that even ye have gone forth from Egypt, since ye have renounced this world; that ye have gone forth from a foreign people, since by the confession of piety, ye have separated yourselves from the blasphemies of the Gentiles. For it is not your tongue, but a foreign one, which knoweth not how to praise God, to Whom ye sing Allelujah. For Judah hath become His sanctuary in you; for he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and by circumcision of the heart. Examine then your hearts, if faith hath circumcised them, if confession hath cleansed them; in you Judah hath become His sanctuary, in you Israel hath become His dominion. For He gave unto you the power to become the sons of God.

6. And now let each of you call to mind, that when he wished to apply his heart unto God, and to submit his devout mind to His gracious yoke, departing from the former longings of his ignorance, and forsaking and throwing aside the carnal deeds of this world, (in which he toiled fruitlessly, as if he were making bricks in Egypt beneath the cruel domination of the devil,) when he hath heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, to run beneath the light burden of Christ: let therefore each of you call to mind how all worldly obstacles yielded, how the voices of those who would dissuade have either not dared to burst forth, or when they have meditated on the Name of Christ that hath been exalted and honoured throughout all lands, have been silenced in trembling. Therefore, the sea saw that, and fled; that the road might without opposition be opened for thee towards spiritual liberty.

7. But I would not that ye should seek without yourselves, how the Jordan was turned back, I would not ye should augur any thing evil. For the Lord chideth those who have turned their back unto Him, and not their face. And whoever forsaketh the source of his being, and turneth away from his Creator; as a river into the sea, he glides into the bitter wickedness of this

world. It is therefore good for him that he turn back, and that God Whom he had set behind his back, may be before his face as he returneth; and that the sea of this world, which he had set before his face, when he was gliding on towards it, may become behind him; and that he may so forget what is behind him, that he may reach forward to what is before him; which is profitable for him when once converted. For before he is converted, if he forgetteth what is behind him, he forgetteth God; because he had rendered Him behind him, towards Whom he had turned his back: and if he reacheth forth unto those things which are before him, he reacheth forth towards the world; since he had placed the world, whither he was eagerly running, before his face. The Jordan therefore signifieth those who have received the grace of Baptism; and thus the Jordan is turned back, when they are turned unto God, so that they may no longer have Him behind them, but with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, may be changed into the same image from glory to glory.

8. Ver. 4. The mountains skipped like rams: the faithful stewards of the word of truth, the holy Apostles, the holy preachers of the Gospel. And the little hills like young sheep. These are those unto whom it is said, In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel: these are they to whom it is said, I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you; these are they of whom it is said, Bring young rams unto the Lord. Listen throughout all lands, ye who know how to admire these things, and how to rejoice and sing unto the Lord your God; observe how these things, which so long before were done and prophesied in figure, are fulfilled throughout all nations.

9. Ask in these words: (ver. 5.) What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest: and thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back? (ver. 6.) ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams, and ye little hills like young sheep? Why is it, O world, that thy hindrances have yielded? Why is it, O so many thousands of faithful ones in the whole world, who renounce this world, that ye have turned unto your Lord? Why is it that ye rejoice, ye unto whom it shall be said at the end, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things? Why is it that ye rejoice, ye unto whom it shall be said in the end,

Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world?

10. All these things will respond to you, and you will respond to yourselves: (ver. 7.) Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob. What meaneth, at the presence of the Lord, save at the presence of Him Who said, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. For the earth trembled; but because it had remained slothful, it was made to tremble, so that it might be more firmly fixed at the presence of the Lord.

11. Ver. 8. Who turned the hard rock into standing waters, and the flint stone into springing wells. For He melted Himself, and what may be called His hardness to water those who believe on Him, that He might in them become a fountain of water gushing forth unto everlasting life; because formerly, when He was not known, He seemed hard. Hence they who said, This is an hard saying, Who can bear it? were confounded, and waited not until He should flow and stream upon them when the Scriptures were revealed. The rock, that hardness, was turned into pools of water, that stone into fountains of waters, when on His resurrection, He expounded unto them, commencing with Moses and all the prophets, how Christ ought to suffer thus; and sent the Holy Ghost, of Whom He said, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.

12. Psalm 115. ver. 1. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the praise. For that grace of the water that gushed from the rock, (now that rock was Christ, was not given on the score of works that had gone before, but of His mercy that justifieth the ungodly. For Christ died for sinners, that men might not seek any glory of their own, but in the Lord’s Name.

13. Ver. 2. For Thy loving mercy, and for Thy truth’s sake. Observe how often these two qualities, loving mercy and truth, are joined together in the holy Scriptures. For in His loving mercy He called sinners, and in His truth He judgeth those who when called refused to come. That the heathen may not say, Where is now their God? For at the last, His loving mercy and truth will shine forth, when the sign of the Son of man shall appear in heaven,

and then shall all tribes of the earth cry woe; nor shall they then say, Where is their God? when He is no longer preached unto them to be believed in, but displayed before them to be trembled at.

14. Ver. 3. As for our God, He is in heaven above. Not in heaven, where they see the sun and moon, works of God which they adore, but in heaven above, which overpasseth all heavenly and earthly bodies. Nor is our God in heaven in such a sense, as to dread a fall that should deprive Him of His throne, if heaven were withdrawn from under Him. In heaven and earth He hath made whatsoever pleased Him. Nor doth He stand in need of His own works, as if He had place in them where He might abide; but endureth in His own eternity, wherein He abideth and hath done whatsoever pleased Him, both in heaven and earth; for they did not support Him, as a condition of their being created by Him: since, unless they had been created, they could not have supported Him. Therefore, in whatsoever He Himself dwelleth, He, so to speak, containeth this as in need of Himself, He is not contained by this as if He needed it. Or it may be thus understood; In heaven and in earth He hath done whatsoever pleased Him, whether among the higher or the lower orders of His people, He hath made His grace His free gift, that no man may boast in the merits of his own works: since whether the mountains skip like rams, or the little hills like young sheep; the earth hath trembled before the face of the Lord, that men might not abide for ever in earthly degradation.

PSALM 115

Exposition ii

On the second part of the Psalm.

(i.e. on Psalm 115.)

1. Although perhaps there is one connection of all the Psalms visible to such as carefully regard them, so that none succeedeth which may not follow from the preceding one; nevertheless, let us so consider this, as if both were one, this, namely, and the preceding one. For as in the former it was said, Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the praise, for Thy loving mercy, and for Thy truth’s sake: that the heathen may not say, Where is their God? because we worship an invisible God, Who is known unto the bodily eyes of none, and to the pure hearts of few; as if the heathen might say, Where is their God? because they can shew their gods to the eyes; he first reminded us, that the presence of our God is shewn by His works; for since He is in heaven above, in heaven and in earth He hath done whatsoever pleased Him. And as if he should say, let the heathen shew their gods; (ver. 4.) Their idols, he saith, are silver and gold, even the work of men’s hands; that is, although we cannot display our God to your carnal eyes, Whom ye ought to recognise through His works; yet be not seduced by your vain pretences, because ye can point with the finger to the objects of your worship. For it were much worthier for you not to have what to point to, than that your hearts’ blindness should be displayed in what is exhibited to these eyes by you: for what do ye exhibit, save gold and silver? They have indeed both bronze, and wood, and earthenware idols, and of different materials of this description; but the Holy Spirit preferred mentioning the more precious material, because when every man hath blushed for that which he sets more by, he is much more easily turned away from the worship of meaner objects. For it is said in another passage of Scripture concerning the worshippers of images, Saying to a stock, Thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth. But lest that man

who speaketh thus not to a stone or stock, but to gold and silver, seem wiser to himself; let him look this way, let him turn hitherwards the ear of his heart: The idols of the Gentiles are gold and silver. Nothing mean and contemptible is here mentioned: and indeed to that mind which is not earth, both gold and silver is earth, but more beautiful and brilliant, more solid and firm. Employ not then the hands of men, to create a false Deity out of that metal which a true God hath created; nay, a false man, whom thou mayest worship for a true God; one whom any man who should receive into his friendship as a true man, would be insane. For resemblance of figure, and the imitation of the limbs, hurrieth away the weak hearts of mortals with its degrading affection: but as thou shewest each member as it is constructed, so also shew the duties of each of those members, whose figure, O human vanity, doth attract thee.

2. Ver. 5–7. For they have mouths, and speak not: eyes have they, and see not. They have ears, and hear not: noses have they, and smell not. They have hands, and handle not; feet have they, and walk not; neither cry they through their throat. Even their artist therefore surpasseth them, since he had the faculty of moulding them by the motion and functions of his limbs: though thou wouldest be ashamed to worship that artist. Even thou surpassest them, though thou hast not made these things, since thou doest what they cannot do. Even a beast doth excel them; for unto this it is added, neither cry they through their throat. For after he had said above, they have mouths, and speak not; what need was there, after he had enumerated the limbs from head to feet, to repeat what he had said of their crying through their throat; unless, I suppose, because we perceive that what he mentioned of the other members, was common to men and beasts? For they see, and hear, and smell, and walk, and some, apes for instance, handle with hands. But what he had said of the mouth, is peculiar to men: since beasts do not speak. But that no one might refer what hath been said to the works of human members alone, and prefer men only to the Gods of the heathen; after all this he added these words, neither cry they through their throat: which again is common to men and cattle. Whereas if he had first said it, when he began to enumerate the members from the mouth, they have a mouth, and speak not; even thus every thing will apply to human nature, nor would the perceptions of the hearer remark any thing common to beasts.

But since he said of the mouth what is peculiar to man, and after enumerating the parts of the body which he seemed to have concluded by the mention of the feet, added, neither cry they through their throat; he hath attracted the attention of the reader or listener, so that while he seeketh why this was added, he findeth himself admonished, that he ought to prefer not men only, but even beasts, to the idols of the heathen: so that if they are ashamed to worship a beast whom God hath created with sight, hearing, smell, touch, powers of walking, crying with its throat, they might see how shameful a thing it is to worship a dumb idol, destitute of life and sensibility; possessed of a resemblance to human limbs for this reason, that a soul devoted to carnal senses might yield its affections to a figure that seemed to live and have animation, when it saw those members which it knew to be endued with life and animation in its own body. How much better then do mice and serpents, and other animals of like sort, judge of the idols of the heathen, so to speak, for they regard not the human figure in them when they see not the human life. For this reason they usually build nests in them, and unless they are deterred by human movements, they seek for themselves no safer habitations. A man then moveth himself, that he may frighten away a living beast from his own god; and yet worshippeth that god who cannot move himself, as if he were powerful, from whom he drove away one better than the object of his worship. For he drove away a thing that saw from a thing that was blind: one that heard from one that was deaf, one that had voice from one that was dumb, one that walked from one that could not move, one that had feeling from the insensible, the living from the dead, nay the worse than the dead. For as it is clear that the dead liveth not, so also it is clear that he hath once lived. Wherefore even the dead surpasseth a deity who neither liveth nor hath lived.

3. What, my most beloved brethren, is more clear, what more evident than this? What child if questioned would not reply, that this was certain, that the idols of the heathen have mouths, and speak not; have eyes, and see not; and the rest, as the inspired text hath described? Why then doth the Holy Spirit take such care to insinuate and inculcate these things in many passages as if men were ignorant of them, as if they were not most open and notorious to all men; except that the figure of the limbs, which they have seen endued with life in living beings, and which we are wont to feel in

ourselves, although, as they maintain, constructed for a certain statue and set on a lofty pedestal, when it hath begun to be adored and honoured by the multitude, produceth in each man a most depraved and deceptive feeling, so that, since he findeth not a vital power of motion, he believeth a hidden deity; and yet doth not think that the image, which is like a living body, is without a living inhabitant, being seduced by its figure, and influenced by the authority of seemingly wise institutions and reverential crowds. Hence such notions of men invite evil spirits to take possession of such idols of the heathen, by the varied deceptions of whom, when presiding over them, deadly errors are sown and multiplied. In other passages the inspired writers guard against these things, lest any one should say, when the idols have been ridiculed, “I worship not this visible thing, but the divinity which doth invisibly dwell therein.” Thus in another Psalm the same Scripture thus condemneth these divinities, As for all the Gods of the heathen, they are but idols: but it is the Lord that made the heavens. The Apostle also saith; Not that the idol is any thing, but that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

4. But they seem to themselves to have a purer religion, who say, I neither worship an idol, nor a devil; but in the bodily image I behold an emblem of that which I am bound to worship. They therefore interpret these images, by stating one to represent the earth, whence they constantly call it the temple of Tellus; another the sea, as the image of Neptune; another air, as that of Juno; another fire, as that of Vulcan; another the morning star, as that of Venus; another the sun, another the moon, to whose images they give the same name, as in that of Tellus; the various stars too they represent by various figures, and so with other works of creation; for we cannot enumerate them all. And when they begin to be ridiculed for worshipping bodies, and chiefly the earth, and air, and the sea, and fire, all of which we use in common: (for they are not so much ashamed of their adoration of heavenly bodies, since we cannot touch or reach them with our bodies, save by the light of our eyes:) they presume to reply, that they worship not the bodies themselves, but the deities which preside over the government of them. One sentence of the Apostle, therefore, testifieth to their punishment and condemnation; Who, he saith, have changed the truth of God into a lie,

and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever. For in the former part of this sentence he condemned idols; in the latter, the account they give of their idols: for by designating images wrought by an artificer by the names of the works of God’s creation, they change the truth of God into a lie; while, by considering these works themselves as deities, and worshipping them as such, they serve the creature more than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever.

5. But who worshippeth or prayeth with his eyes upon an idol, who is not so affected, as to imagine that he is listened to, as to hope that what he desireth is given him by his idol? Thus men who are bound by such superstitions, usually turn their back to the sun itself, pour forth their prayers to a statue which they call the sun; and when they are struck by the dashing of the waves behind them, they strike with their groans the statue of Neptune, as if it could perceive, which they worship in place of the sea itself. For this is a sort of necessary effect of this figure endued with limbs, that the mind which liveth in the bodily senses, should be inclined to suppose that that body which it seeth so closely to resemble its own body, is more apt to feel than a circular sun and an expanse of waves, and any thing which it beholdeth not formed with the same features as those which it constantly seeth endowed with life. In opposition to this affection, whereby human and carnal weakness may easily be snared, the holy Scripture setteth forth sentiments universally recognised, whereby it may arouse the minds of men sleeping in the thraldom of their bodies. The idols, it saith, of the heathen are gold and silver. But it is God Who made gold and silver. Their idols, he saith, are the work of men’s hands: for they worship what they have constructed out of gold and silver.

6. But, it will be said, we also have very many instruments and vessels made of materials or metal of this description for the purpose of celebrating the Sacraments, which being consecrated by these ministrations are called holy, in honour of Him Who is thus worshipped for our salvation: and what indeed are these very instruments or vessels, but the work of men’s hands? But have they mouth, and yet speak not? have they eyes, and see not? do we pray unto them, because through them we pray unto God? This is the chief cause of this insane profanity, that the figure resembling the living person,

which induces men to worship it, hath more influence in the minds of these miserable persons, than the evident fact that it is not living, so that it ought to be despised by the living. For idols have more power in perverting an unhappy mind because they have a mouth, have eyes, have ears, noses, hands, feet, than in rectifying it, because they speak not, see not, hear not, smell not, touch not, walk not.

7. The result that ensueth is that described in the next verse; (ver. 8.) They that make them are like unto them, and so are all such as put their trust in them. Let them therefore see with open eyes, and worship with shut and dead understandings, idols that neither see nor live.

8. Ver. 9–11. But the house of Israel hath hoped in the Lord. For hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. But that this patience may endure to the end, He is their helper and defender. Do perhaps spiritual persons (by whom carnal minds are built up in the spirit of meekness, because they pray as higher for lower minds) already see, and is that already to them reality which to the lower is hope? It is not so. For even (ver. 10.) the house of Aaron hath hope in the Lord. Therefore, that they also may stretch forward perseveringly towards those things which are before them, and may run perseveringly, until they may apprehend that for which they are apprehended, and may know even as they are known, He is their helper and defender. For both fear the Lord, and have hoped in the Lord: He is their helper and defender.

9. For we do not by our deservings prevent the mercy of God; but, (ver. 12.) The Lord hath been mindful of us, and hath blessed us. He hath blessed the house of Israel, He hath blessed the house of Aaron. But in blessing both of these, (ver. 13.) He hath blessed all that fear the Lord. Dost thou ask, who are meant by both of these? He answereth, both small and great. That is, the house of Israel with the house of Aaron, those who among that nation believed in Jesus the Saviour; for God was not well pleased with all of them. For what, if some did not believe, shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid. For they are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither, because they are of the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, as it is written, a remnant was saved. For in the character of

those who out of that nation believed, it is said, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. Seed, because when it has been scattered over the earth, it multiplied.

10. For the great ones, of the house of Aaron, have said, (ver. 14.) May the Lord increase you more and more, you and your children. And thus it hath happened. For children that have been raised even from the stones have flocked unto Abraham: sheep which were not of this fold, have flocked unto him, that there might be one flock, and one shepherd; the faith of all nations was added, and the number grew, not only of wise priests, but of obedient peoples; the Lord increasing not only their fathers more and more, who in Christ might shew the way to the rest who should imitate them, but also their children, who should follow their fathers' pious footsteps. For he speaketh thus unto those whom through the Gospel he had begotten in Christ: Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me, even as I of Christ. The Lord therefore hath added, not only unto the mountains that skip like rams, but also unto the little hills that skip like young sheep.

11. Therefore the Prophet saith unto these great and small, the mountains and the little hills, the rams and the young sheep, what followeth; (ver. 15.) Ye are the blessed of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth. As if he should say, Ye are the blessed of the Lord, Who made the heaven in the great, earth in the small: not this visible heaven, studded with luminaries which are objects to these eyes. For, (Ver. 16.) The heaven of heavens is the Lord's; Who hath elevated the minds of some saints to such a height, that they became teachable by no man, but by God Himself; in comparison of which heaven, whatever is discerned with carnal eyes is to be called earth; which He hath given to the children of men; that when it is contemplated, whether in that region which illumineth above, as that which is called heaven, or in that which is illumined beneath, which is properly called earth, (since in comparison with that which is called heaven of heaven, the whole, as we have said, is earth;) the whole therefore of this earth He hath given to the children of men, that by the consideration of it, as far as they can, they may conceive of the Creator, Whom with their yet weak hearts they cannot see without that aid to their conception.

12. There is another way of understanding these words, The heaven of heavens is the Lord’s; but the earth hath He given to the children of men; which I ought not to conceal; that your attention may not stray away from what I have said. For I had said, that the small and the great are signified by what followeth: Ye are the blessed of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth. If therefore we understand the great by the word heaven, the small by earth; since the small are destined to become heaven by growth, and in this very hope are nourished by milk; so those great ones are the heaven of the earth, when they nourish the little ones, that they may understand that they are heaven of heaven, when they consider in what hope the little ones are nourished. But nevertheless since they derive the truth and richness of wisdom, not from man nor through man, but through God Himself, they have received little ones who shall be heaven, that they may know that they are heaven of heaven; as yet however earth, unto which they say, I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. For to those very sons of men whom He made heaven, He Who knoweth how to provide for the earth through heaven, hath given earth upon which they may work. May they therefore abide, heaven and earth, in their God, Who made them, and let them live from Him, confessing unto Him, and praising Him; for if they choose to live from themselves, they shall die, as it is written, From the dead, as though he were not, confession ceaseth. But, (ver. 17.) The dead praise not Thee, O Lord, neither all they that go down into silence. For the Scripture in another passage proclaimeth, The sinner, when he cometh into the abyss of wickednesses, scorneth. But we, who live, will praise the Lord, from this time forth for evermore.

PSALM 116

Exposition

A Sermon to the common people.

1. Ver. 1. I have loved, since the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer. Let the soul that is sojourning in absence from the Lord sing thus, let that sheep which had strayed sing thus, let that son who had died and returned to life, who had been lost and was found; let our soul sing thus, brethren, and most beloved sons. Let us be taught, and let us abide, and let us sing thus with the Saints: I have loved: since the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer. Is this a reason for having loved, that the Lord will hear the voice of my prayer? and do we not rather love, because He hath heard, or that He may hear? What then meaneth, I have loved, since the Lord will hear? Doth he, because hope is wont to inflame love, say that he hath loved, since he hath hoped that God will listen to the voice of his prayer?

2. Ver. 2, 3. But whence hath he hoped for this? Since, he saith, He hath inclined His ear unto me: and in my days I have called upon Him. I loved, therefore, because He will hear; He will hear, because He hath inclined His ear unto me. But whence knowest thou, O human soul, that God hath inclined His ear unto thee, except thou sayest, I have believed? These three things, therefore, abide, faith, hope, charity: because thou hast believed, thou hast hoped; because thou hast hoped, thou hast loved. If I now seek why the soul believed that God inclined His ear unto it: shall I not be answered, Because He first loved us, and spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. For how shall they call upon Him in Whom they have not believed? saith the Teacher of the Gentiles: and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? When I perceived all these things done towards me, how should I not believe that the Lord hath inclined his ear unto me? But He hath so commended His love towards us, that Christ died for the ungodly. When therefore the

beautiful feet of them that preached peace, that published good tidings, preached these things to me, that whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved, I believed that His ear was inclined unto me, and in my days I have called upon Him.

3. And what are thy days, since thou hast said, In my days I have called, upon Him? Are they those perchance, in which the fulness of time came, and God sent His Son, Who had already said, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee? Thou hast heard from the lips of the preacher who came unto thee with beautiful feet, Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation; and thou hast believed, and in thy days hast called upon the Lord, and said, (ver. 5.) O Lord, deliver my soul. This is indeed true: but I may rather call my days the days of my misery, the days of my mortality, the days according to Adam, full of toil and sweat, the days according to the ancient corruption. For I lying, stuck fast in the deep mire, in another Psalm also have cried out, Behold, Thou hast made my days old; in these days of mine have I called upon Thee. For my days are different from the days of my Lord. I call those my days, which by my own daring I have made for myself, whereby I have forsaken Him: and, since He reigneth every where, and is all powerful, and holdeth all things, I have deserved prison; that is, I have received the darkness of ignorance, and the bonds of mortality. I will call upon Him in these my days; for elsewhere also I cry out, Bring my soul out of prison; and since, in the day of salvation, which He hath given me, He hath aided me; the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners cometh before Him. For in these days of mine, (ver. 3.) The snares of death compassed me round about, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: pains that would not have overtaken me, had I not wandered from Thee. But now they have overtaken me; but I found them not, while I was rejoicing in the prosperity of the world, in which the snares of hell deceive the more.

4. Ver. 4–6. But after I too found trouble and heaviness, I called upon the Name of the Lord. For trouble and profitable sorrow I did not feel; trouble, wherein He giveth aid, unto Whom it is said, O be Thou our help in trouble: and vain is the help of man. For I thought I might rejoice and exult in the vain help of man; but when I had heard from my Lord, Blessed are they that

mourn, for they shall be comforted: I did not wait until I should lose those temporal blessings in which I rejoiced, and should then mourn: but I gave heed to that very misery of mine which caused me to rejoice in such things, which I both feared to lose, and yet could not retain; I gave heed to it firmly and courageously, and I saw that I was not only agonised by the adversities of this world, but even bound by its good fortune; and thus I found the trouble and heaviness which had escaped me, and called upon the Name of the Lord; (ver. 5.) O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul. wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death, save the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord? Let then the holy people of God say, I have found trouble and heaviness, and I called upon the Name of the Lord: and let the remainder of the heathen hear, who do not as yet call upon the Name of the Lord; let them hear and seek, that they may discover trouble and heaviness, and may call upon the Name of the Lord, and be saved. We do not enjoin them to seek for a sorrow they have no cause for, but to discover that which they unwittingly harbour; nor is it our desire concerning them, that those earthly necessaries, which they require while they live in this mortal state, should be wanting to them; but that they may mourn for this, that, having lost that fulness that cometh from heaven, they have deserved to be in want of those earthly blessings which are not permanently to be enjoyed, but which are needful for sustenance. Let them acknowledge and mourn for this misery; He who willed not even that they should be miserable, will make them blessed in their mourning.

5. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. He is gracious, righteous, and merciful. Gracious in the first place, because He hath inclined His ear unto me; and I knew not that the ear of God had approached my lips, till I was aroused by those beautiful feet, that I might call upon the Lord’s Name: for who hath called upon Him, save he whom He first called? Hence therefore He is in the first place gracious; but righteous, because He scourgeth; and again, merciful, because He receiveth; for He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth; nor ought it to be so bitter to me that He scourgeth, as sweet that He receiveth. For how should not (ver. 6.) The Lord, who keepeth little ones, scourge those whom, when of mature age, He seeketh to be heirs; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? I was in misery, and He helped me. He helped me, because

I was in misery; for the pain which the physician causeth by his knife is not penal, but salutary.

6. Ver. 7. Turn again then unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath done good to thee: not for thy deservings, or through thy strength; but because the Lord hath done good to thee. (Ver. 8.) Since, he saith, He hath delivered my soul from death. It is wonderful, most beloved brethren, that, after he had said that his soul should turn unto rest, since the Lord had rewarded him; he added, since He hath delivered my soul from death. Did it turn unto rest, because it was delivered from death? Is not rest more usually said of death? What is the action of him, whose life is rest, and death disquietude? Such then ought to be the action of the soul, as may tend to a quiet security, not one that may increase restless toil; since He hath delivered it from death, Who, pitying it, said, Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Meek therefore and humble, following, so to speak, Christ as its path, should the action of the soul be that tendeth towards repose; nevertheless, not slothful and supine; that it may finish its course, as it is written, In quietness make perfect thy works. For, that quietness might not lead to sloth, it is added, make perfect thy works. For it is not as it is in this life, where the repose of sleep doth refresh us for action; but a good habit of the soul leadeth to an ever watchful rest.

7. But that God, of Whom it is here said, For the Lord hath done good to me. And why? Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling: bestoweth all things. Whoever feeleth the chain of this flesh, chaunteth these things as fulfilled in hope towards himself. For it is truly said, I was in misery, and He delivered me; but the Apostle saith this also truly, that we are saved by hope. And that we are delivered from death, is well said to be already fulfilled, so that we may understand the death of unbelievers, of whom he saith, Leave the dead to bury their dead: and that in the former Psalm, The dead praise not Thee, O Lord, neither all they that go down into silence; but we who live will praise the Lord. A faithful believer may therefore understand that his soul is delivered from this death, for this very reason, that instead of being

unbelieving it hath believed; whence the Saviour Himself saith, He that believeth on Me, is passed from death unto life. But the rest is fulfilled in hope in those who have not yet departed from this life. But now when we consider our most dangerous falls, our eyes cease not from tears; but He will then clear our eyes of tears, when He shall save our feet from falling. For there will then be no slipping of our feet as they walk, when there will be no sliding of the weak flesh. But now, however firm our path, which is Christ, be; yet since we place flesh, which we are enjoined to subdue, beneath us; in the very work of chastening and subduing it, it is a great thing not to fall: but not to slip in the flesh, who can attain?

8. Wherefore since we both are in the flesh, and are not in the flesh, (for we are in the flesh in respect of that chain which is not as yet loosened, because, to be released and to be with Christ is by far the best; and we are not in the flesh, because we have given the first-fruits of the Spirit unto God, if we are able to say that our conversation is in heaven; and if, as it were, with our head we please God, while with our feet, as it were, with the farthest regions of the soul we perceive the slippery ground we tread upon,) hear how that which is expressed as if it were already accomplished belongeth to hope: He hath delivered, it is said, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling: and yet he saith not, I please; but, I shall please in the sight of the Lord, in the land of the living; sufficiently shewing that he doth not as yet please in the sight of the Lord, on that side which is in the land of the dead, that is, in mortal flesh. For they that are in the flesh, cannot please God. Whence the same Apostle goeth on to add, But ye are not in the flesh; which he saith in this sense, that the body indeed is dead because of sin; but the Spirit of life because of righteousness; in respect of which they pleased God, because in respect of the Spirit they were not in the flesh. But who can please a living God, in a dead body? But what saith he? But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. Then shall we be in the land of the living, pleasing in the sight of the Lord in every respect, absent from Him in no respect. For whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; and, inasmuch as we are absent from Him, so far we are not in the land of the living. But we are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body,

and to be present with the Lord; wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. We labour indeed now, because we are awaiting the redemption of our body: but, when death shall have been swallowed up in victory, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality; then there will be no weeping, because there will be no falling; and no falling, because no corruption. And therefore we shall then no longer labour to please, but we shall be entirely pleasing in the sight of the Lord, in the land of the living.

1. I imagine that what the Apostle saith is very well known to you, holy brethren: for all men have not faith; and that the number of the unbelieving is wont to be the greater, ye are not ignorant: on which account it is said, Lord, who hath believed our report? Among whom we numbered those also, of whom the Apostle saith, For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's; who, in another passage he saith, preach the word of God, not in sincerity, but for occasions, not purely, that is, not in a temper of pure and sincere love. For they felt one thing, as appeared in their conduct, and preached another, that under a holy name they might please men: for of these again he saith, For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly. Yet He alloweth them to preach Christ. For though they rather believed those things which they did, tending unto death: yet they preached those things, which, if others did, believing them, they would be saved; for they preached nothing beside the rule of faith. For these the Apostle doth exclude, in these words, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. They who preach falsehood, preach not Christ; for Christ is Truth. But of these men he saith that they preach Christ, but not purely, that is, not with a mind simple and pure, and with sincere faith that worketh by love; for while they were providing for earthly desires, they preached the kingdom of heaven, with falsehood in their hearts, and truth on their tongue. The Apostle therefore, aware that they who believed even by the preaching of Judas were delivered, alloweth these men in this way: Whether, he saith, in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached. For it was truth which they preached, though they preached not with truth, that is, with a true heart. These now speak what they believe not, and are therefore reprobate; although they may be profitable unto those whom the Lord teacheth, saying, Whatsoever they bid

you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works, for they say, and do not. Wherefore, except because they believe not that what they enjoin is profitable? But others there are, who believe and say not what they believe, either from sloth or fear. For although the servant had a talent, yet because he chose not to spend it, he is addressed, by the Lord his judge, Thou wicked and slothful servant. And in another passage of the Gospel it is said, that many would have believed in Him among the chief men of the Jews, but that they did not acknowledge Him, that they might not be expelled from the synagogues; but they also were reproved and censured; for the Evangelist goeth on to say, For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. If therefore both they who believe not the truth which they utter, and they who utter not the truth which they believe, are deservedly reproved; what servant shall he be who may truly be termed faithful, save he to whom it is said, Well done, thou good servant, since thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord? Such a servant, then, neither speaketh before he believeth, nor is silent when he hath believed: lest he should use his talent so as not to have it himself, or by not using it while he hath it should cease to have it. For thus it is said, For unto him that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

2. Ver. 10. Let therefore that good servant, singing Allelujah, that is, offering unto the Lord the sacrifice of praise, from Whom he will hear the words, Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord; let him rejoice and say, I believed, and therefore will I speak: that is, I have believed perfectly. For they who refuse to utter what they believe, do not perfectly believe: for to this very belief it pertaineth to believe that which is said, Whosoever shall confess Me before men, Him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. For that servant was called faithful, not only because he received, but because he expended and gained more. So also in this passage he saith not, I believed, and I spoke; but he saith, that he spoke, because he believed. For he at the same time believed both what reward he ought to expect for speaking, and what punishment for keeping silence. I believed, saith he, and therefore did I speak. But I was sorely brought down. For he suffered many tribulations, for the sake of the word which he faithfully

held, faithfully preached; and he was sorely brought down; as they feared who loved the praise of men better than that of God. But what meaneth, But I? He should rather say, I believed, and therefore I have spoken, and I was sorely brought down: why did he add, But I, save because a man may be sorely brought down by those who oppose the truth, the truth itself cannot, which he believeth and speaketh? Whence also the Apostle, when he was speaking of his chain, saith, the word of God is not bound. So this man also, since there is one person of the holy witnesses, that is, of the Martyrs of God, saith, I believed, and therefore will I speak. But I; not that which I believed, not the word which I have delivered; but I was sorely brought down.

3. Ver. 11. I said in my trance, All men are liars. By trance he meaneth fear, which when persecutors threaten, and when the sufferings of torture or death impend, human weakness suffereth. For this we understand, because in this Psalm the voice of Martyrs is heard. For trance is used in another sense also, when the mind is not beside itself by fear, but is possessed by some inspiration of revelation. But I said in my haste, All men are liars. In consternation he hath had regard to his infirmity, and hath seen that he ought not to presume on himself; for as far as pertaineth to the man himself, he is a liar, but by the grace of God he is made true; lest yielding to the pressure of his enemies he might not speak what he had believed, but might deny it; even as it happened to Peter, since he had trusted in himself, and was to be taught that we ought not to trust in man. And if every one ought not to trust in man, surely not in himself; because he is a man. Rightly therefore in his fear did he perceive that every man was a liar; since they also whom no fear robs of their presence of mind, so that they never lie by yielding to the persecutors, are such by the gifts of God, not by their own strength. Therefore it is most truly said, Every man is a liar; but God is true, Who said, I have said, ye are Gods, and ye are all the children of the Most Highest. But ye shall die like men: and fall like one of the princes. He consoleth the humble, and filleth them not only with the faith to believe, but with the courage to preach the truth, if they be continually subject to God, and imitate not the devil, one of the princes, who abode not in the truth, and fell. For if all men are liars, so far will they not be liars, as they are not men; since they will be Gods, and the children of the Most Highest.

4. Ver. 12. The most devoted people of faithful witnesses, then, considering this, how the mercy of God doth not abandon human infirmity, in the fear of which infirmity it is said, All men are liars; how it consoleth the meek, and filleth with the spirit of courage the fearful, so that they live again when their heart is nigh dead, and trust not in themselves, but in Him Who raiseth the dead, and maketh the tongues of children eloquent; Who saith, But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you; he then who had said, I said in my haste, All men are liars, considering all these things, and seeing that he was made thankful by the grace of God; What, he asketh, what reward shall I give unto the Lord, for all the benefits that He hath returned unto me? He saith not, for all the benefits that He hath done unto me; but, for all the benefits that He hath returned unto me. What deeds then on the man’s part had preceded, that all the benefits of God were not said to be given, but returned? What had preceded, on the man’s part, save sins? God therefore repayeth good for evil, whilst unto Him men repay evil for good; for such was the return of those who said, This is the heir: come, let us kill him.

5. Ver. 13–15. But this man seeketh what he may return unto the Lord, and findeth not, save out of those things which the Lord Himself returneth. (Ver. 13.) I will receive, he saith, the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. O man, a liar by thy own sin, true by the gift of God, and therefore no longer a man; Who hath given thee the cup of salvation, which when thou takest, and callest upon the Name of the Lord, thou shalt return unto Him a reward for all that He hath returned unto thee? Who, save He Who saith, Are ye able to drink the cup that I shall drink of? Who hath given unto thee to imitate His sufferings, save He Who hath suffered before for thee? And therefore, (ver. 15.) Right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints. He purchased it by His Blood, which He first shed for the salvation of slaves, that they might not hesitate to shed their blood for the Lord’s Name; which, nevertheless, would be profitable for their own interests, not for those of the Lord.

6. Ver. 16. Let therefore the slave purchased at so great a price confess his condition, and say, Behold, O Lord, how that I am Thy servant: I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid. He is then both bought, and a home-bred slave. Was he bought together with his mother? Or, since he is a home-bred slave, was he stolen for the sin of his running away, and therefore bought, because redeemed? For he is the handmaid's son, because all creation is subject to the Creator, and oweth a most true service to the most true God: which while it yieldeth, it is free, receiving this grace from the Lord, that it may serve Him, not by compulsion, but by free-will. This, therefore, is the son of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is above, the free mother of us all. And free indeed from sin she is, but the handmaid of righteousness; to whose sons still pilgrims it is said, Ye have been called unto liberty; and again he maketh them servants, when he saith, but by love serve one another: to whom it is also said, When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. But now, being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Let therefore that servant say unto God, Many call themselves martyrs, many Thy servants, because they hold Thy Name in various heresies and errors; but since they are beside Thy Church, they are not the children of Thy handmaid. But I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid.

7. Ver. 17. Thou hast broken my bonds asunder. I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of praise. For I have not found any deserts of mine, since Thou hast broken my bonds asunder; I therefore owe Thee the sacrifice of praise; because, although I will boast that I am Thy servant, and the son of Thy handmaid, I will glory not in myself, but in Thee, my Lord, Who hast broken asunder my bonds, that when I return from my desertion, I may again be bound unto Thee.

8. Ver. 18. I will pay my vows unto the Lord. What vows wilt thou pay? What victims hast thou vowed? what burnt-offerings, what holocausts? Dost thou refer to what thou hast said a little before, I will receive the cup of salvation, and will call upon the Name of the Lord; and, I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving? and indeed whosoever well considereth what he is vowing to the Lord, and what vows he is paying, let him vow

himself, let him pay himself as a vow: this is exacted, this is due. On looking at the coin, the Lord saith, Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things which are God’s: his own image is rendered unto Cæsar: let His image be rendered unto God.

9. Ver. 19. But he who remembereth that he is not only the servant of God, but also the son of God’s handmaid, seeth where he may pay his vows, being made like unto Christ through the cup of salvation. In the courts, he saith, of the Lord’s house. What is the Lord’s house, the same is the Lord’s handmaid: and what is God’s house, save all His people? It therefore followeth, In the sight of all His people. And he now more openly nameth his mother herself. For what else is His people, but what followeth, In the midst of thee, O Jerusalem? For then that which is returned is grateful, if it be returned from peace, and in peace. But they who are not sons of this handmaid, have loved war rather than peace. But that no one may think that by the courts of the Lord’s house, and all His people, the Jews are meant, because he closed this Psalm with the words, In the midst of thee, Jerusalem, in whose name the carnal Israelites glory; hear the following Psalm, which is comprised in four verses.

PSALM 117

Exposition

A Sermon to the people.

1. Ver. 1. O praise the Lord, all ye heathen: praise Him, all ye nations. These are the courts of the Lord’s house, this all His people, this the true Jerusalem. Let those rather listen who have refused to be the children of this city, since they have cut themselves off from the communion of all nations. (Ver. 2.) For His merciful kindness is ever more and more towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. These are those two things, loving-kindness and truth, which in the 113th Psalm I admonished you should be committed to memory. But the merciful kindness of the Lord is ever more and more towards us, since the furious tongues of hostile nations have yielded to His Name, through which we have been freed: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever, whether in those things which He promised to the righteous, or in those which He hath threatened to the ungodly.

PSALM 118

Exposition i

1. We have heard, my brethren, the Holy Spirit warning and exhorting us to offer the sacrifice of confession unto God. Now confession is either of His praise, or of our sins. Now that confession, whereby we confess unto God our sins, is known unto all; so that the less learned multitude imagine that this only is meant by the word confession in the holy Scriptures; for when this word hath once been heard from the lips of the reader, immediately the pious sound of the beating of breasts followeth. But they ought to consider in what sense it is said in another Psalm: For I will enter into the place of the admirable tabernacle, even unto the house of God; in the voice of thanksgiving and confession; of the sound of them that keep holy day. For here it is surely clear, that the voice and sound of confession doth not relate to the sadness of penitence, but to the joyfulness of a crowded festivity. Or if any one still doubteth concerning so clear a testimony, what will he say to this passage in Ecclesiasticus: Bless the Lord, all His works, magnify His Name, and confess to His praise with the songs of your lips, and with harps, and in confession. Ye shall say after this manner: All the works of the Lord are exceeding good. Here certainly the dullest person cannot doubt that confession meaneth the praises of God; unless indeed there is perversity so great in any man’s mind, that he dare to say even that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself confessed His sins unto His Father. But if any ungodly person should attempt to make this objection on the ground of the word confession, he would easily be refuted by the context itself: for thus He speaketh: I confess unto Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight. Who would not understand Him to say this in praise of the Father? Who would not see that this confession doth not pertain to sorrowfulness of heart, but to joy; especially since the Evangelist saith immediately before, In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, I confess unto Thee, O Father.

2. Ver. 1. Wherefore, most beloved, since it is not on any ground to be questioned, with so many concurrent testimonies, the like of which ye may of yourselves remark in the Scriptures, that the word confession is used in the inspired writings, not only in the sense of sin, but in that of the praises of God; what more harmonious interpretation can we arrive at, than that we are taught in this Psalm, when we chaunt Allelujah, which meaneth, Praise the Lord, that we should, when we hear the words, Confess unto the Lord, praise the Lord? The praise of God could not be expressed in fewer words than these, For He is good. I see not what can be more solemn than this brevity, since goodness is so peculiarly the quality of God, that the Son of God Himself when addressed by some one as, Good Master, by one, namely, who beholding His flesh, and comprehending not the fulness of His divine nature, considered Him as man only, replied, Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but one, that is, God. And what is this but to say, If thou wishest to call Me good, recognise Me as God? But since it is addressed, in revelation of things to come, to a people freed from all toil and wandering in pilgrimage, and from all admixture with the wicked, which freedom was given it through the grace of God, Who not only doth not evil for evil, but even returneth good for evil; it is most appropriately added, Because His mercy endureth for ever.

3. Ver. 2. Let Israel now confess that He is good, and that His mercy endureth for ever. (Ver. 3.) Let the house of Aaron now confess that His mercy endureth for ever. (Ver. 4.) Yea, let all now that fear the Lord confess that His mercy endureth for ever. Ye remember, I suppose, most beloved, what is the house of Israel, what is the house of Aaron, and that both are those that fear the Lord. For they are the little and the great, who have already in another Psalm been happily introduced into your hearts: in the number of whom all of us should rejoice that we are joined together, in His grace Who is good, and Whose mercy endureth for ever; since they were listened to who said, May the Lord increase you more and more, you and your children; that the host of the Gentiles might be added to the Israelites who believed in Christ, of the number of whom are the Apostles our fathers, for the exaltation of the perfect and the obedience of the little children; that all of us when made one in Christ, made one flock under one Shepherd, and the body of that Head, like one man, may say, I called upon the Lord in

trouble, and the Lord heard me at large. The narrow straits of our tribulation are limited: but the large way whereby we pass along hath no end. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect?

4. Ver. 6, 7. The Lord is my helper; I will not fear what man doeth unto me. But are men, then, the only enemies that the Church hath? What is a man devoted to flesh and blood, save flesh and blood? But the Apostle saith, We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the princes and rulers of the darkness of this world; that is, the rulers of the wicked, of those who love this world, and are therefore darkness; for we also were at one time darkness, but now are we light in the Lord. Against, he saith, spiritual wickedness in high places; that is, the devil and his angels; that devil whom elsewhere he calleth the prince of the power of the air. Hear therefore what followeth: (ver. 7.) The Lord is my helper: therefore shall I despise mine enemies. From what class soever my enemies may arise, whether from the number of evil men, or from the number of evil angels; in the Lord’s help, unto Whom we chaunt the confession of praise, unto Whom we sing Allelujah, they shall be despised.

5. Ver. 8. But, when my enemies have been brought to contempt, let not my friend present himself unto me as a good man, so as to bid me repose my hope in himself: for It is better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in man. Nor let any one, who may in a certain sense be styled a good angel, be regarded by myself as one in whom I ought to put my trust: for no one is good, save God alone; and when a man or an angel appear to aid us, when they do this of sincere affection, He doth it through them, Who made them good after their measure. (Ver. 9.) It is therefore better to trust in the Lord, than to put any confidence in princes. For angels also are called princes, even as we read in Daniel, Michael, your prince.

6. Ver. 10, 11. All nations compassed me round about, but in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them. They kept me in on every side, they kept me in, I say, on every side; but in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them. In the words, All nations compassed me round about, but in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them, he signifieth the toils and the victory of the Church; but, as if the question were asked how she could have overcome so great evils, he looketh back to the

example, and declareth what she had first suffered in her Head, by adding what followeth, They kept me in on every side: and the words, All nations, are with reason not repeated here, because this was the act of the Jews alone. But in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them, because there that very religious nation, (which is the body of Christ, and in behalf of which was done all that was done in mortal form with immortal power, by that inward divinity, through the outward flesh,) suffered from persecutors, of whose race that flesh was assumed and hung upon the Cross.

7. Ver. 12. They came about me as bees do a hive, and burned up even as the fire among the thorns: and in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them. Here then the order of the words corresponds with the order of events. For we rightly understand that our Lord Himself, the Head of the Church, was surrounded by persecutors, even as bees surround a hive. For the Holy Spirit is speaking with mystic subtlety of what was done by those who knew not what they did. For bees make honey in the hives: while our Lord's persecutors, unconscious as they were, rendered Him sweeter unto us even by His very Passion; so that we may taste and see how sweet is the Lord, Who died for our sins, and arose for our justification But what followeth, and burned up even as the fire among the thorns, is better understood of His Body, that is, of a people spread abroad, whom all nations compassed about, since it was gathered together from all nations. They burned up even as the fire among the thorns, when they consumed this sinful flesh, and the grievous piercings of this mortal life, in the flame of persecution. And, he saith, in the Name of the Lord have I taken vengeance on them: either because they themselves, that wickedness, which in them persecuted the righteous, having been extinguished, were joined with the people of Christ; or because the rest of them, who have at this time scorned the mercy of Him Who calleth them, will at the end feel the truth of Him Who judgeth them.

8. Ver. 13. I have been driven on like a heap of sand, so that I was falling, but the Lord upheld me. For though there were a great multitude of believers, that might be compared to the countless sand, and brought into one communion as into one heap; yet what is man, save Thou be mindful of Him? He said not, the multitude of the Gentiles could not surpass the

abundance of my host, but, the Lord, he saith, hath upheld me. The persecution of the Gentiles succeeded not in pushing forward, to its overthrow, the host of the faithful dwelling together in the unity of the faith; since they trusted in Him, Who would uphold both individuals and all collectively; because He could never have been wanting to them when they called upon Him.

9. Ver. 14. The Lord is my strength and my praise, and is become my salvation. Who then fall, when they are pushed, save they who choose to be their own strength and their own praise? For no man falleth in the contest, except he whose strength and praise faileth. He therefore whose strength and praise is the Lord, falleth no more than the Lord falleth. And for this reason He hath become their salvation; not that He hath become any thing which He was not before, but because they, when they believed on Him, became what they were not before, and then He began to be salvation unto them when turned towards Him, which He was not to them when turned away from Himself.

10. Ver. 15. The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous; where they who raged against their bodies thought there was the voice of sorrow and destruction. For they did not know the inward joy of the saints in their future hope. Whence the Apostle also saith, As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; and again, And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also.

11. Ver. 16. The right hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass. What mighty things? saith he. The right hand of the Lord, he saith, hath exalted me. It is a mighty thing to exalt the humble, to deify the mortal, to bring perfection out of infirmity, glory from subjection, victory from suffering, to give help, to raise from trouble; that the true salvation of God might be laid open to the afflicted, and the salvation of men might remain of no avail to the persecutors. These are great things: but what art thou surprised at? hear what he repeateth. Man exalted not himself, man perfected not himself, man gave not himself the glory, man conquered not, man was not salvation to himself: The right hand of the Lord hath brought mighty things to pass.

12. Ver. 17. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. But they, while they were dealing havoc and death on every side, thought that the Church of Christ was dying. Behold, he now declareth the works of the Lord. Every where Christ is the glory of the blessed Martyrs. By being beaten He conquered those who struck Him; by being patient of torments, the tormentors; by loving, those who raged against Him.

13. Ver. 18. Nevertheless, let him point out to us, why the body of Christ, the holy Church, the people of adoption, suffered such indignities. The Lord, he saith, hath chastened and corrected me, but He hath not given me over unto death. Let not then the boastful wicked imagine that aught hath been permitted to their power: they would not have that power, were it not given them from above. Oft doth the father of a family command his sons to be corrected by the most worthless slaves; though he designeth the heritage for the former, fetters for the latter. What is that heritage? Is it of gold, or silver, or jewels, or farms, or pleasant estates? Consider how we enter into it: and learn what it is.

14. Ver. 19. Open me, he saith, the gates of righteousness. Behold, we have heard of the gates. What is within? That I may, he saith, go into them, and give thanks unto the Lord. This is the confession of praise full of wonder, even unto the house of God, in the voice of joy and confession of praise, among such as keep holiday: this is the everlasting bliss of the righteous, whereby they are blessed who dwell in the Lord’s house, praising Him for evermore.

15. Ver. 20. But consider how the gates of righteousness are entered into. These are the gates of the Lord, he saith, the righteous shall enter into them. At least let no wicked man enter there, that Jerusalem which receiveth not one uncircumcised, where it is said, Without are dogs. Be it enough, that in my long pilgrimage I have had my habitation among the tents of Kedar: and that, with them that were enemies unto peace I laboured for peace: I endured even unto the end the intercourse of the wicked, but these are the gates of the Lord: the righteous shall enter into them.

16. Ver. 21. I will confess unto Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. How often is that confession proved to be one of

praise, that doth not point out wounds to the physician, but giveth thanks for the health it hath received. But the Physician Himself is the Salvation.

17. Ver. 22. But who is this Whom we speak of? The Stone which the builders rejected; for, It hath become the head Stone of the corner; to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body; circumcision, to wit, and uncircumcision.

18. Ver. 23. By the Lord was it made unto it: that is, it is made into the head stone of the corner by the Lord. For although He would not have become this, had He not suffered; yet He became not this through those from whom He suffered. For they who were building, refused Him: but in the edifice which the Lord was secretly raising, that was made the head stone of the corner which they rejected. And it is marvellous in our eyes: in the eyes of the inner man, in the eyes of those that believe, those that hope, those that love; not in the carnal eyes of those who, through scorning Him as if He were a man, rejected Him.

19. Ver. 24. This is the day which the Lord hath made. This man remembereth that he had said in former Psalms, Since He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live; making mention of his old days; whence he now saith, This is the day which the Lord hath made; that is, wherein He hath given me Salvation. This is the day whereof He said, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of Salvation have I helped thee; that is, a day wherein He, the Mediator, hath become the head Stone of the corner. Let us rejoice, therefore, and be glad in Him.

20. Ver. 25. Save me now, O Lord: prosper Thou well my way, O Lord. Because it is the day of Salvation, save me: because we, returning from a long pilgrimage, are separated from those who hated peace, with whom we were peaceful, and who, when we spoke to them, made war upon us without a cause; prosper well our way as we return, since Thou hast become our Way.

21. Ver. 26. Blessed be He that cometh in the Name of the Lord. Cursed, therefore, is he that cometh in his own name; as He saith in the Gospel; “I

am come in My Father's Name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." We have blessed you out of the house of God. I believe that these are the words of the great to the little, of those great ones, to wit, who in spirit commune with God the Word, Who is with God, as they may in this life; and yet temper their discourse for the sake of the little ones, so that they may sincerely say what the Apostle saith: For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us. They bless the little children from the inner house of the Lord, where that praise faileth not age after age: consider therefore what they proclaim from thence.

22. Ver. 27. God is the Lord, Who hath shewed us light. That Lord, Who came in the Lord's Name, Whom the builders refused, and Who became the head Stone of the corner, that Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, is God, He is equal with the Father, He hath shewed us light, that we might understand what we believed, and declare it to you who understand it not as yet, but already believe it. But that ye also may understand, Declare a holy day in full assemblies, even unto the horns of the altar; that is, even unto the inner house of God, from which we have blessed you, where are the high places of the altar. Declare a holy day, not in a slothful manner, but in full assemblies. For this is the voice of joyfulness among those that keep holy day, who walk in the place of the wonderful tabernacle, even unto the house of God. For if there be there the spiritual sacrifice, the everlasting sacrifice of praise, both the Priest is everlasting, and the peaceful mind of the righteous an everlasting altar. This we say more openly, brethren: whoever desire to understand God the Word, let not flesh suffice for them, because for their sakes the Word was made flesh, that they might be nourished with milk; nor let this holy day suffice on earth, in which that Lamb was slain: but let it be declared in the public paths, until, our minds being raised by God, we reach the inner Divinity of Him, Who hath deigned to vouchsafe to us, that we might be fed with milk, a human nature outwardly.

23. Ver. 29. And what shall we sing there, save His praises? What else shall we say there, save, Thou art my God, and I will confess unto Thee; Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee. I will confess unto Thee, for Thou hast heard me, and art become my Salvation. We will not say these things in

loud words; but the love that abideth in Him of itself crieth out in these words, and these words are love itself. Thus, as he began with praise, so he endeth: (ver. 29.) Confess unto the Lord, for He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever. With this the Psalm commenceth, with this it endeth; since, as from the commencement which we have left behind, so in the end, whither we are returning, there is not any thing that can more profitably please us, than the praise of God, and Allelujah evermore.

PSALM 119

Exposition

Preface.

I have expounded all the rest of the Psalms, which we know the Book of the Psalms containeth, which by the custom of the Church is styled the Psalter, partly by preaching among the people, partly by dictations, as well as I, by the Lord’s help, was able: but I put off the 118th Psalm, as well on account of its well-known length, as on account of its depth being fathomable by few. And when my brethren deeply regretted that the exposition of this Psalm alone, as far as pertaineth to the Psalms of the same volume, was wanting to my works, and strongly pressed me to pay this debt, I yielded not to them, though they long entreated and solicited me; because as often as I began to reflect upon it, it always exceeded the utmost stretch of my powers. For in proportion as it seemeth more open, so much the more deep doth it appear to me; so that I cannot shew how deep it is. For in others, which are understood with difficulty, although the sense lie hid in obscurity, yet the obscurity itself appeareth; but in this, not even this is the case; since it is superficially such, that it seemeth not to need an expositor, but only a reader and listener. And now that at length I approach its interpretation, I am utterly ignorant what I can achieve in it: nevertheless, I hope that God will aid me with His Presence, that I may effect something. For thus He hath done in all those which, though at first they seemed to me difficult, and almost impracticable, I have succeeded in adequately expounding. But I decided to do this by means of sermons, which might be delivered among the people, such as the Greeks term ὁμιλίαι. For this is, I think, more equitable, that the assemblies of the Church be not defrauded of the comprehension of this Psalm, by the singing of which, as much as by that of others, they are wont to be charmed. But let the preface end here: we must now speak of the Psalm itself, to which we have thought it right to make this Preface.

Discourse I

1. Ver. 1. From its commencement, dearly beloved, doth this great Psalm exhort us unto bliss, which there is no one who desireth not. For who either can, or could, or ever will be found, who is unwilling to be blessed? What need therefore is there of exhortation unto that which the human mind of its own accord seeketh? For truly, he who exhorteth aims at this, that the will of him with whom he dealeth may be excited towards that on account of which the exhortation is employed. Why then are we exhorted to will that which we cannot but will; save because, though all desire bliss, yet most men know not by what means to attain to it? And therefore this is the lesson which he teacheth, who saith, Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. As much as to say, I know what thou wishest, thou art seeking bliss: if then thou wouldest be blessed, be undefiled. For the former all desire, the latter fear: yet without it, what all wish cannot be attained. But where will any one be undefiled, save in the way? In what way, save in the law of the Lord? And on this account, Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord, is not said superfluously, but is an exhortation necessary to our minds. For what good that is whereunto many are slothful, (that is, that they should walk undefiled in the way, which is the law of the Lord,) is thus shewn, when it is declared, that they who do this are blessed, so that on account of that which all wish, that may be done which most do not wish. For to be blessed is so great a good, that both good and bad men wish for it. Nor is it wonderful that good men are good on this account; but this is wonderful that wicked men are wicked, that they may be blessed. For whoever abandons himself to lusts, and is corrupted by luxury and debauchery, seeketh somewhat blissful in his wickedness, and thinketh himself miserable, when he attaineth not to the pleasure and joy of his lust, while he never hesitates to boast of his bliss, when he doth attain it. And whoever burneth with the flames of avarice, collecteth for this reason riches by every means he can, that he may be blessed; whoever desireth to shed the blood of his enemies, whoever seeketh dominion, whoever feedeth his cruelty by the disasters of others, seeketh bliss in all his crimes. These then, wanderers, and seekers of a false bliss by true misery, are recalled to the way by these divine words, if they be listened to: Blessed are those that are undefiled in

the way: who walk in the law of the Lord: as if he said, Whither are ye going? ye are perishing, and ye know it not. The road ye are traversing is not the road to where ye wish to go: for ye wish to be blessed; but those roads whereby ye run are miserable, and lead unto still greater misery. Seek not so great a good through evil means: if ye wish to reach that end, come hither, travel by this road. Ye who cannot abandon the wish for blessedness, abandon the wickedness of a perverse road. Ye are wearied with fruitless endeavours to reach what ye are polluted by attaining. But they are not blessed who are polluted with error, who walk in the perverse ways of the world; but, Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way; who walk in the law of the Lord.

2. Ver. 2. Listen now to what he addeth: Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and seek Him with their whole heart. No other class of the blessed seemeth to me to be mentioned in these words, than that which has been already spoken of. For to examine into the testimonies of the Lord, and to seek Him with all the heart, this is to be undefiled in the way, this is to walk in the law of the Lord. He then goeth on to say, (ver. 3.) For they who do wickedness, shall not walk in His ways. If therefore they who walk in the way, that is, in the law of the Lord, are those who search His testimonies, and seek Him with all their heart; doubtless they who do wickedness, search not His testimonies. And yet we know that the workers of wickedness do search the testimonies of the Lord for this reason, that they prefer being learned to being righteous: we know that others also search the testimonies of the Lord, not because they are already living well, but that they may know how they ought to live. Such then do not as yet walk undefiled in the law of the Lord, and for this reason are not as yet blessed. How then are we to understand, Blessed are they that search His testimonies; since we see men search into His testimonies without being blessed, because they are not undefiled? For the Scribes and Pharisees, sitting in the seat of Moses, of whom the Lord saith, All that they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works, for they say and do not; even they searched into the testimonies of the Lord, that they might have good things to say, though they did evil things. But let us leave these men, for we shall be justly answered, that they do not search into the testimonies of the Lord. For they do not seek them themselves, but they

seek somewhat else through them, that is, that they may be glorified by men, or enriched. This is not to search into the testimonies of God, not to love what they shew, and to refuse to go where they lead, that is, unto God. Or if they themselves search the testimonies of God, yet if they do so not that they may seek and find Him, but something else, from these testimonies; surely they do not seek Him with all their heart, which we thus see is added here not without a purpose. For the Spirit Who saith this, aware that many search His testimonies for the sake of some other object, not for that which is set before them, hath not only said, Blessed are they that search His testimonies, but hath added, and seek Him with their whole heart, as if teaching in what manner, or with what object, the testimonies of the Lord should be searched. Lastly, Wisdom itself speaking in the Book of Wisdom, saith, The wicked seek Me, but they find Me not; for they hate knowledge. And what else is this, save, they hate Me? They seek Me, He saith, and they who hate Me find Me not. In what sense then are they said to seek what they hate, save because they seek not this, but somewhat else there? For they desire not to be wise for the glory of God, but they wish to seem wise for the glory of men. For how do they not hate wisdom, which teacheth that what they love ought to be despised? Therefore, Blessed are those that are undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that search His testimonies, and seek Him with their whole heart. For by searching His testimonies thus, that they may seek Him with their whole heart, they walk undefiled in the law of the Lord. Did he then, who said, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life, not search His testimonies, not seek Him? But how did he seek Him with his whole heart, to Whose counsel he preferred his own wealth, on hearing Whose counsel he went away very sorrowful? For the prophet Isaiah also saith, Seek the Lord; and when ye have found Him, let the ungodly man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.

3. Both the ungodly and the unrighteous, then, seek the Lord, that when He is found, they may not be wicked and ungodly. How then are men already blessed, when they are searching His testimonies, and seeking Him, since even the wicked and ungodly can do this? But that the wicked and ungodly are blessed, what wicked or ungodly man even can say? Through hope, then, are they blessed, as they are blessed who suffer persecution for

righteousness’ sake: not for what is present to them, as long as they suffer evils; but for what will be present, since the kingdom of heaven is theirs; and, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; not because they hunger and thirst, but for what followeth, for they shall be filled; and, Blessed are they that weep, not because they weep, but because they shall laugh. Therefore, Blessed are they that search His testimonies, and seek Him with their whole heart: not because they search and seek, but because they will find what they seek: for they seek with their whole heart, not negligently. If therefore they are blessed in hope, in hope perhaps also they are undefiled. For truly in this life, though we may walk in the law of the Lord, although we search His testimonies, and seek Him with our whole heart, yet, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But this must be more carefully enquired into. For the next words are, For they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways. From which it may seem, that they who walk in the way of the Lord, that is, in the law of the Lord, by searching His testimonies, and seeking Him with their whole heart, may be already undefiled, that is, without sin, on account of the following words: For they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways. But, Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law, saith the blessed John; and he addeth, for sin is the transgression of the law. But this discourse must now be closed, nor ought so important a question to be contracted within a narrow space.

Discourse II

1. Ver. 3. It is written, and is read, and is true, in this Psalm, that They who do wickedness, walk not in His ways. But we must endeavour, with the help of God, in Whose hand are both we and our words, that what is rightly said, by not being rightly understood, may not confuse the reader or hearer. For we must beware, lest all the Saints, whose words these are, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; may either not be thought to walk in the ways of the Lord, since sin is wickedness, and they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways; or, because it is not doubtful that they walk in the ways of the Lord, may be thought to have no sin, which is beyond doubt false. For it is not said, If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, merely for the sake of

avoiding arrogance and pride. Otherwise it would not be added, And the truth is not in us; but it would be said, Humility is not in us: especially because the following words throw a clearer light on the meaning, and remove all the causes of doubt. For when the blessed John had said this, he added, If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. What doth the damnable pride of ungodliness say here, what doth it say in answer? For if the Saints refuse to say that they have no sin, for the sake of avoiding arrogance, and not of confessing the truth; what is it that they confess, that they may gain remission and cleansing? Is this also done, that arrogance may be avoided? How then can a true cleansing of sins be entreated, when the confession of them is false? Let then this grass-like self-exaltation of the proud, that deceiveth itself, be silenced, and dry up, which in the ears of men with a feigned humility declareth that it hath sin, but in its heart with ungodly pride denieth that it hath sin. For they who say this, deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them. But when they say this in the ears of men, they deceive not only themselves, but others also, with the perversity of their insane doctrine; but when they say this in their heart, there they deceive themselves, there truth is not in them; and thereby they deceive themselves in their own hearts, and in their own heart lose the light of truth. But let the holy family of Christ exclaim, producing fruit and increasing in the whole world, humbly true and truly humble; let them exclaim, I say, If we say, that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. As these words are spoken, so let them be felt. For then will humility be sincere, if it be not merely displayed upon the tongue; so that we may be, according to the Apostle, Not minding high things, but consenting with men of lowliness: he saith not, taking with them, but, consenting with them; which is not the part of the mouth, but of the heart. Hypocrite, if thou sayest that thou hast, though thou believest that thou hast not, sin: without, thou feignest humility; within, thou dost embrace vanity. Therefore both in thy mouth and in thy heart, thou hast not truth. What doth it profit thee that that seemeth to men to be humble, which thou sayest, if God seeth that thy thoughts are high? Surely, if the divine oracle thus sounded in thy ears, Speak not high words; even thus, thou wouldest not be condemned unjustly, if thou shouldest speak proudly with thy tongue before men, and proudly with thy heart before God. But when thou art told, Be not high-minded, but fear; (for he speaketh not of words, but of the mind;) why art thou not humble within, where thou mindest? Is the mind puffed up with lofty thoughts, that the tongue may feign a false humility? Thou readest, or hearest, Be not high-minded, but fear: and thou art so far high-minded, that thou thinkest thou hast not sin; and for this reason, because thou wilt not fear, nothing remaineth for thee, save to be puffed with pride.

2. For why, thou askest, is it written, For they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways? Do not then the Saints of the Lord walk in the paths of the Lord? If they walk, he saith, they do wickedness: if they do no wickedness, they have no sin: for sin is wickedness. Lord Jesus, rise to my assistance, and aid me, through the Apostle confessing, against the proud heretic. Behold, where is that man of Thine, who maketh himself empty, that he may be filled with Thee? Let us hear himself, my brethren; let us ask him concerning this question, if it pleaseth, nay, since it doth please you. Tell us, most blessed Paul, whether thou didst walk in the ways of the Lord, while thou wast still living in the flesh? He answereth: Why did I say, Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule? Why did I say, Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same footsteps? Why did I say, Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight. What is a more certain way of the Lord, than that faith from which the righteous liveth? What other path was I traversing towards the regions above, when I said, This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? Lastly, in what other path had I run, when I said, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course? Let these answers suffice, whereby we have learnt that the Apostle Paul walked in the ways of the Lord, but let us ask another question also of him. Tell us, I beseech thee, O Apostle, since whilst thou still wast living in the flesh thou didst walk in the ways of the Lord; hadst thou sin, or wast thou without sin? Let us hear whether he deceiveth himself, or whether he hath the same mind as the blessed John, his brother Apostle; since truth was in them. And here therefore he answereth; Have ye not read where I

confess, saying, For the good which I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that do I? This also we have heard; we therefore now ask this, how didst thou walk in the ways of the Lord, if thou didst that evil, which thou didst hate; when the holy Psalm saith, They who do wickedness, walk not in the ways of the Lord? Hear him answering in the next sentence: If then I do that which I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. Behold how they who walk in the ways of the Lord, do not commit sin, and nevertheless are not without sin; because they no longer work it themselves, but the sin which dwelleth in them.

3. Here some one will say, How did he do that evil which he wished not to do: how was it not he that did it, but the sin that dwelt in him? Meanwhile this question hath been now answered, and it hath sufficiently appeared by the authority of canonical Scripture, that it may be that men walking in the ways of the Lord, though they be not without sin, may not nevertheless themselves commit it. For they who do wickedness, that is, sin, since sin is wickedness, walk not in His ways. Yet in what way we may understand, how he did this on account of the body of this death, in which the law of sin dwelleth, and how he did it not himself on account of the ways of the Lord in which he walketh; we must explain in another discourse, since this must be closed.

Discourse III

1. Ver. 3. In the words of this Psalm, For they who do wickedness, walk not in His ways, since sin is wickedness, as the Apostle John saith, a difficult question arose, viz. How could the saints in this life both be not without sin; since this is true, If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; and nevertheless walk in the ways of the Lord, which they who do wickedness do not walk in; which was solved in the words of the Apostle Paul, It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For how is he without sin, in whom sin dwelleth? Yet he walketh in the ways of the Lord, which they who do wickedness walk not in; because it is no longer he himself that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in him. But this question has been solved in such a way, that another more difficult arises. How can a man do what he himself doth not? For he saith both: What I would, that I do not; and, It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. Whence we ought

to understand, that when the sin that dwelleth in us, worketh in us, that then we do not act ourselves; when our will by no means consenteth unto it, and even commandeth the members of the body, so that they may not obey its desires. For what doth sin work without our will, save illicit desires only? And if the assent of the will be denied them; some passion indeed is excited, but no effect is yielded to it. This the same Apostle enjoined, when he said, Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. There are therefore desires of sin, which he forbad us to obey. These desires therefore work sin; which if we obey, we also work sin: but if we obey the Apostle and do not obey them, it is not we who do the sin, but the sin that dwelleth in us. But if we had no unlawful desires, neither we, nor sin could work any evil in us. Moreover, we are said to be agents in the motion of an unlawful desire, by not obeying which we are not ourselves the authors of it, for this reason, that it is not the power of another’s nature, but the weakness of our own; from which weakness we shall be altogether safe, when we shall have become immortal both in mind and body. Wherefore, on the one hand, because we walk in the ways of the Lord, we obey not the desires of sin; and, on the other hand, because we are not without sin, we have the desires of sin. And for this reason we no longer ourselves act in them, by not obeying them; but, the sin dwelleth in us, by stirring them up. For they who do wickedness, that is, obey the desires of sin, walk not in the ways of the Lord.

2. We have now to enquire what we pray to be forgiven us, when we say to God, Forgive us our trespasses: whether the sins we commit, when we obey the desires of sin; or whether we pray that the desires themselves may be forgiven us, which are not our own work, but that of the sin which dwelleth in us. As far indeed as I can understand, the whole guilt of that our sickness and weakness, whence unlawful desires spring, which the Apostle calleth sin, is washed away by the Sacrament of Baptism, together with all that we have done, said, thought, in obedience to it; nor would that sickness be imputed to us again, though it were in us, if we never yielded any obedience to any of its unlawful suggestions, whether by deed, word, or silent consent; until even this itself were healed, when that should be fulfilled which we pray for, whether in the words, Thy kingdom come; or in these, Deliver us

from evil; but, since the life of man on earth is temptation; although we be far from actual crimes, yet there is no want of occasions when we yield to the desires of sin, either in deed, word, or thought, since when we are watching against greater temptations, certain minute ones creep upon us while we are off our guard, which if they be gathered together against us, though they do not singly crush us with their own weight, yet all together overwhelm us in the heap. And for these reasons, even those who walk in the ways of the Lord, say, Forgive us our debts: since both prayer itself and confession pertain to the ways of the Lord; although sins pertain not to them.

3. In the ways of the Lord then, all of which our faith doth embrace, whereby we believe in Him, Who justifieth the ungodly, Who also said, I am the way; no man doth work sin, but confesseth it. He departs from the way then, when he sinneth; and therefore the sin which is committed by a deviation from the way, is not ascribed to the way; but in the way of faith they are held not to be sinners, unto whom sins are not imputed. Concerning whom the Apostle Paul, commending the righteousness of faith, hath shewn that it is written in the Psalms, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. This the ways of the Lord give; and through this, since the righteous liveth by faith, that iniquity, which is unbelief, doth estrange from the way of the Lord. But in this path, that is, in pious faith, whosoever walketh, either doth no sin, or if any is committed by his deviating from the way, it is not imputed to him on account of the way, and he is accepted as if he had not committed sin. And therefore the words, They who do wickedness, walk not in His ways, are well understood to signify that wickedness, which departeth from faith, or which doth not advance to faith. For as the Lord saith of the Jews, If I had not come, they had not had sin; nor were they without any sin, before Christ came in the flesh, and, since He came, then began to have sin; but He would have some particular sin, that is, of unbelief, to be understood, since they did not believe in Him: thus they who do wickedness, not any wickedness in general, but that of unbelief in particular, walk not in His ways; for, All the the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth; but both are in Christ, and besides Christ they exist no where. Now I say, that Christ, saith the Apostle, was a minister of

circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy. Mercy in that He redeemed us; truth in this, that He fulfilled what He promised, and will fulfil what He promiseth. They then who do wickedness, that is, are unbelievers, walk not in His ways; because they have not believed in Christ. Let them therefore be converted, and piously believe in Him Who justifieth the ungodly, and let them find in Him mercy when their sins are pardoned, and truth when His promises are completed, that is, all the ways of the Lord, walking in which they will not do wickedness; because they will not hold to unbelief, but to faith which worketh by love, and to which sin is not imputed.

Discourse IV

1. Ver. 4. Who is it, most beloved, who saith to the Lord, Thou hast charged that we shall keep Thy commandments too much? (Ver. 5.) O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes. (Ver. 6.) So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments. Who is he Who saith this, save every member of Christ, or rather the whole body of Christ? And what meaneth, Thou hast charged that we shall keep Thy commandments too much? is it, Thou hast charged too much? or, to keep too much? Whichever of these we understand, the sense seems contrary to that memorable and noble sentiment which the Greeks praise in their wise men, and which the Latins agree in praising. ‘Do nothing too much?’ For if it be true, that nothing be done too much; how is that true which is here said, Thou hast charged that we shall keep Thy commandments too much? since how could God either charge any thing too much, or wish any thing to be kept too much, if all that was too much was worthy of blame? We should therefore say, that we are not bound by any authority of the Greek writers, considering what is written, Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? and should rather believe that sentiment to be false, whereby it is said, ‘Do nothing too much?’ than the divine words, where we read and sing, Thou hast charged that we keep Thy commandments too much; unless, not Greek vanity, but true reason recalled us. For that is said to be, too much, which is more than it ought to be. For too little and too much are contrary to one another. For too little is, what is less than it ought to be; and

too much, more than it ought to be. There is a measure between these, which is called enough. As therefore it is useful in life and morals, that we should do nothing more than we ought; we ought indeed rather to confess the sentiment, ‘Do nothing too much,’ to be true, than to deny it. But the Latin language sometimes uses this word “nimis” in such a sense, that we find it in the holy Scripture, and employ it in our discourses, as signifying, very much. In this passage, Thou hast charged that we keep Thy commandments too much, we simply understand very much, if we understand rightly; and if we say to any very dear friend, I love you too much, we do not wish to be understood to mean more than is fitting, but very much. Lastly, this Greek sentiment does not contain a word answering to that which is here read: for there, ἄγαν is used, which is nimis; but here σφόδρα, which is equivalent to valdè, very much. But sometimes, as we have said, we find nimis used, and use it ourselves, for what means valdè, whence some Latin copies have not, Thou hast charged that we keep Thy commandments too much, but very much. Very much therefore hath God charged this: and very much ought the commandments of God to be kept.

2. Ver. 5. But listen to what pious humility or humble piety, and faith not unmindful of grace, addeth, O that, he saith, my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes. Thou indeed hast charged: O that I could realize what Thou hast charged. When thou hearest, O that, recognise the words of one wishing; and having recognised the expression of a wish, lay aside the pride of presumption. For who saith that he desireth what he hath in such a manner in his power, that without need of any help he can do it? Therefore if man desireth what God chargeth, God must be prayed to grant Himself what He enjoineth. For from whom must it be desired, save from Him, from that Father of lights, from Whom every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down, by the testimony of holy Scripture? But on account of those who think that we are helped from heaven by this means alone to works of righteousness, because the commandments of God are brought to our knowledge, that these when known, without any grace of God, may be fulfilled solely by the strength of our own will; he doth not here wish his ways directed to keep the statutes of God, until he hath received His commandment from His own injunction. For what he said before pertaineth unto this, Thou hast charged that we should diligently

keep Thy commandments. As if he should say, I have already received Thy law, I know it; for Thou hast charged that we shall diligently keep Thy commandments: and Thy commandments are holy, righteous, and good; but sin worketh death to me by that which is good, unless Thy grace aid me. O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes!

3. Ver. 6. So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments. We ought to look upon the commandments of God, whether when they are read, or when they are recalled to memory, as a looking glass, as the Apostle James saith, If any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. This man wisheth himself to be such, that he may regard as in a looking glass the commandments of God, and may not be confounded; because he chooses not merely to be a hearer of them, but a doer. On this account he desireth that his ways may be made direct to keep the statutes of God. How to be made direct, save by the grace of God? Otherwise he will find in the law of God not a source of rejoicing, but of confusion, if he hath chosen to look into commandments, which he doth not.

4. Ver. 7. I will confess unto Thee, he saith, O Lord, in the directing of my heart; in that I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness. This is not the confession of sins, but of praise; as He also saith in Whom there was no sin, I will confess unto Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth; and as it is written in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, Thus shalt thou say in confession, of all the works of God, that they are very good. I will confess unto Thee, he saith, in the directing of my heart. Indeed, if my ways are made straight, I will confess unto Thee, since Thou hast done it, and this is Thy praise, and not mine. Then indeed I will confess, when I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness, if I shall have a heart made straight, when my ways are made straight so that I may keep Thy statutes. For what will it profit me, if I shall have learnt them, if I in my wicked heart

go away to evil ways? For I shall not rejoice in them, but I shall be accused by them.

5. Ver. 8. Next he addeth; I will keep Thy ordinances. All which things are connected with those words, O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes! So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments. And I will confess unto Thee in the directing of my heart, and I will keep Thy ordinances. But what is it that followeth? O forsake me not even exceedingly! or, as some copies have it, even too much, instead of, even exceedingly. For the same Greek word is here too, namely, σφόδρα: as though he wished himself to be forsaken of God, but not even exceedingly. Far be it! But since God had left the world to the desert of sins, He would have forsaken it even exceedingly, if so powerful a cure had not supported it, that is, the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ; but now, according to this prayer of the body of Christ, He forsook it not even exceedingly; for, God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. It may also be understood, as the words of him, who when he had said in his abundance, I shall never be removed, as if relying in his own might, that God might shew him that He had given power to his excellency not from merits of his own, but of His will, found the face of God turned from him, and was troubled. Finding therefore what he was, and no longer presuming in himself, he crieth, O forsake me not even exceedingly. For if Thou hast forsaken me, so that I am seen to be weak without Thy help, forsake me not even exceedingly, lest I perish. Thou, then, hast charged, that we shall diligently keep Thy commandments: I can no longer excuse myself on the ground of ignorance; but since I am weak, O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy statutes! So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments. Then will I confess unto Thee in the directing of my heart; when I shall have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness; then will I keep Thy ordinances; and if Thou hast forsaken me, lest I should glory in myself, do not forsake me even exceedingly, and when justified by Thee, I will glory in Thee.

Discourse V

1. Ver. 9. Let us, most beloved, consider these verses in this Psalm, and, as the Lord giveth, let us search into His sacred Book: Wherewithal shall a

young man correct his way? even by keeping Thy words. He questioneth himself, and answereth himself. Wherewithal shall a young man correct his way? So far it is a question: next cometh the answer, even by keeping Thy words. But in this place the keeping of the words of God, must be understood as the obeying His commandments in deed: for they are kept in memory in vain, if they are not kept in life also. For some men in keeping the words of God are concerned only to avoid forgetting them, and not to correct themselves in life: but this man saith not, wherewithal shall the young man exercise his memory? but, wherewithal shall a young man correct his ways? and replieth thereto, By keeping Thy words. Nor can the way ever be called straight, as long as the life shall be crooked.

2. But what is meant by young man here? For he might have said, wherewithal shall any one (homo) correct his way? or, wherewithal shall a man (vir) correct his way? which is usually put by the Scriptures in such a way, that the whole human race, understood by the more honoured sex, by a mode of expression wherein the whole is signified by a part. For we cannot but suppose that a woman is blessed, who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly; where nevertheless the words are, Blessed is the man. But in this passage he saith neither any one, nor a man, but, a young man. Is then an old man to be despaired of? or doth an old man correct his way by any other means than by ruling himself after God’s word? Or is it perhaps an admonition at what age we ought chiefly to correct our way; according to what is elsewhere written, My son, gather instruction from thy youth up: so shalt thou find wisdom till thy gray hairs. There is another mode of interpreting it, by recognising in the expression the younger son in the Gospel, who having departed from his father to a distant region, spent his substance in riotous living with harlots; and after he had fed swine, suffering poverty and hunger, at length returned to himself, and said, I will arise and go to my father. Wherewithal did he correct his way, save by ruling himself after the words of God, which he desired as one longing for his father’s bread. For his elder brother, who said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time Thy commandment, corrected not his way. The younger son then corrected his way, which he confessed that he had so depraved and perverted, that he said to his father, I am no longer worthy to be called thy son. A third

interpretation occurreth to me, which I indeed, according to the slight measure of my knowledge, prefer to the two former: by which the elder is understood to mean the old man; the young man, to mean the new man; the elder, who beareth the image of the earthly man; the younger, who beareth that of the heavenly: because that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. However decrepit therefore any man may be from old age of body, he will be young in the sight of God when converted by the newness of grace, which he hath received; and herein he correcteth his way, by keeping God’s words, that is, the word of faith which we preach, and this is the faith which worketh through love.

3. Ver. 10. But this younger people, the child of grace, the new man, who singeth the new song, the heir of the new covenant, this younger people, not Cain, but Abel; not Ishmael, but Isaac; not Esau, but Israel; not Manasses, but Ephraim; not Heli, but Samuel; not Saul, but David; hear what it addeth, With my whole heart, he saith, have I sought thee; O repel me not from Thy commandments. Behold, he prayeth that he may be aided to keep the words of God, wherewith he had said that the young man corrected his way. For this is the meaning of the words, O repel me not from Thy commandments: for what is it to be repelled of God, save not to be aided? For human infirmity is not equal to obeying His righteous and exalted commandments, unless His love doth prevent and aid. But those whom He aideth not, these He is justly said to repel, as the unworthy are repelled by a flaming sword from stretching forth their hand to the tree of life. But who is worthy, since sin entered into the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus passed into all men, since all have sinned? But our deserved misery is healed by the undeserved mercy of God. For how could he who saith, With my whole heart have I sought Thee, do this, unless He unto whom it is said, Wilt Thou not turn again and quicken us, turned him unto Himself when he was turned away, and unless He who saith, I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, sought him when lost, and recalled him when wandering?

4. Ver. 11, 12. Hence it is too that he correcteth his path by keeping the words of God, from Him ruling, Him working; for he could not do it by

himself, since the prophet Jeremiah confesseth and saith, O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. For the Psalmist also desired this of the Lord above, where he saith, O that my ways were made so direct: and here where he addeth, (ver. 11.) Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I may not sin against Thee; he at once sought the Divine aid, lest the words of God might be hidden without fruit in his heart, unless works of righteousness followed. For after saying this, he added, Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy righteousnesses. Teach me, he saith, as they learn who do them; not as they who merely remember them, that they may have somewhat to speak of. For he had already said, Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I may not sin against Thee: why then doth he still seek to learn those things which he already keepeth hidden within his heart? which he surely would not have done, had he not learnt them. Why then doth he add, and say, Teach me Thy righteousnesses, save because he wisheth to learn them by deeds, not by speaking or retaining them in his memory? Since then, as it is read in another Psalm, He shall give blessing, Who gave the law; therefore, Blessed art Thou, O Lord, he saith, O teach me Thy righteousness. For because I have hidden Thy words in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee, Thou hast given a law; give also the blessing of Thy grace, that by doing right I may learn what Thou by teaching hast commanded. Let this suffice, so that your minds may be nourished without being wearied. What followeth calls for another discourse.

Discourse VI

1. Ver. 13. This verse, With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth, is the commencement of our discourse in the Psalm on which we are commenting. What is this, most beloved? What is this? Who can tell all the judgments of God, since he cannot trace them? Do we hesitate to exclaim with the Apostle, O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! The Lord saith, I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. And though He promised them at once all truth through the Holy Ghost; yet the blessed Paul crieth out, we know in part: so that we may understand that we are led unto all truth by the

Holy Ghost, whence we have received a pledge: but we shall only know Him, when we have reached another life, after the looking glass and darkness of this life, and when we shall see face to face. How then doth he say, With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth? And it is he who saith this, who in a former verse a little before had said, Teach me Thy righteousnesses. How then could he, who still wisheth to learn His righteousness, tell of all the judgments of His mouth? Did he already know all His judgments, and did he yet long to know His righteousness? But this is still more wonderful, if he already knew the unsearchable things of God, and yet knew not what He enjoined upon men to do. For by His righteousness is meant not the words, but the deeds, of justice; the works, that is, of the righteous, which God commandeth. They are said to be God's deeds, although they are done by us, because they are not done, save by His gifts. Those also are God's judgments, whereby the world is judged by Him both now and at the end of the world. But since all, that is, both the righteousnesses and the judgments of God are comprised in His works; why doth he who saith that he hath hidden the words of God in his heart, still seek to learn His righteousnesses? For he saith, Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I should not sin against Thee: and then goeth on to say, Blessed art Thou, O Lord: O teach me Thy righteousnesses; and next, With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth. These two things indeed do not seem opposed to each other, but rather kindred and connected; viz. that since he hath hidden the words of God in his heart, he may tell with his lips of His judgments; for, with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation: but how what is read between these two verses, Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy righteousnesses, suiteth a man in whose heart are the words of God, and who told with his lips all the judgments of God: how it agreeth with this, that he still wisheth to learn the righteousnesses of God, save that he may be understood to wish to learn them by acts, not by retaining them in his memory, and speaking of them; and he hath shewn that we ought to seek this of the Lord, without Whom we can do nothing. But this we have already treated of in another discourse: but we have undertaken, as far as the Lord alloweth, to treat the question, in what sense he hath said that he hath told all the judgments of God with his lips, though they have been styled unsearchable, and though it is elsewhere said of their depth, Thy judgments are like the great deep.

2. Consider now, what we ought to understand here. Doth not the Church know the judgments of God? Surely she knoweth them. For she knoweth unto what sort of persons the Judge of the quick and the dead will say, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom: and unto what sort of persons He shall say, Depart into everlasting fire. She knoweth, I say, that neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor such and such whom the Apostle Paul here enumerateth, shall inherit the kingdom of God: she knoweth that wrath and indignation, tribulation and distress, are in store for the soul of every man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. These and the like clearly revealed judgments of God the Church knoweth: but these are not all; since some are unsearchable, and, like the great deep, profound and hidden. And are these also known to some of the more excellent members of this man, who with the Saviour, the Head, is the whole Christ? For they are perhaps said to be unsearchable to man, because by his own strength he cannot investigate them. But why can he not by the gift of the Holy Spirit, he, that is, upon whom the Lord deigneth to confer this gift? For thus it is said, God dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto; and yet we hear, Come unto Him, and be enlightened. This question is thus answered, He is unapproachable to our strength, but we may approach Him through His own gifts. Nevertheless, although it is given to none of the Saints, as long as the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, to know all the judgments of God, since it is too much for man, because (to give an illustration whereby the infinitude of God’s judgments may be conjectured) no man without the judgment of God is slow in mind, or halt in body: yet the Church, that is the purchased people, hath ground for saying, and truly saying, with my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of Thy mouth; that is, I have kept silent nothing of Thy judgments, which Thou didst will should become known to me through Thy words, but I have been telling of all of them without exception with my lips. This he seemeth to me to signify, since he saith not, all Thy judgments, but, all the judgments of Thy mouth; that is, which Thou hast revealed unto me: that by His mouth we may understand His word, which

He hath discovered unto us in many revelations of the Saints, and in the two Testaments; all which judgments the Church ceaseth not to declare at all times with her lips.

3. Ver. 14. He then subjoineth, I have had as great delight in the way of Thy testimonies, as in all manner of riches. We understand that there is no more speedy, no more sure, no shorter, no higher way of the testimonies of God than Christ, in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Thence he saith that he hath had as great delight in this way, as in all riches. Those are the testimonies, by which He deigneth to prove unto us how much He loveth us. But God commendeth His love in us, since while we yet were sinners, Christ died for us. Since therefore He Himself saith, I am the way, and the humility of His carnal Birth and Passion are evident testimonies of the divine love towards us; beyond doubt Christ is the way of the testimonies of God. For through these testimonies, which we see fulfilled in Him, we expect and trust that the everlasting promises of the future will be fulfilled. For He Who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how hath He not with Him also freely given us all things?

4. Ver. 15, 16. I will talk of Thy commandments, and have respect unto Thy ways. The Greek word is, ἀδολεσχήσω, which the Latin translators have rendered sometimes by talking, sometimes by being exercised in: and these seem different from one another: but if the exercise of the understanding be understood, with a certain delight in uttering, they are connected with one another, and one thing, in a manner, is made up of both, so that talking is not foreign to this sort of exercise. And thus the Church doth exercise herself in the commandments of God, by speaking in the copious disputations of the learned against all the enemies of the Christian and Catholic faith; which are fruitful to those who compose them, if nothing but the ways of the Lord is regarded in them; but All the ways of the Lord are, as it is written, mercy and truth; the fulness of which both is found in Christ. Through this sweet exercise is gained also what he subjoineth: My meditation shall be in Thy statutes, and I will not forget Thy word.—My meditation shall be therein, that I may not forget them. Thus the blessed man in the first Psalm shall meditate in the law of the Lord day and night.

5. In all that I have above said, as I could, let us remember, most beloved, that he who hideth in his heart the words of the Lord, and telleth with his lips all the judgments of His mouth, and in the way of His testimonies taketh as much delight as in all manner of riches, and talking or exercising himself in His commandments, hath respect unto His ways, and doth meditate on His statutes, that he may not forget His words, through all which things he appeareth armed with the law and learning of God; yet prayeth and saith, Blessed art Thou, O Lord: O teach me Thy statutes. Where he is understood to ask nothing else, save the aid of grace, that he may learn in deeds what he already knoweth in words.

Discourse VII

1. Ver. 17. If, most beloved, ye remember the former parts of this Psalm, they ought to help us to understand what followeth. For those which seemingly speak in the person of an individual, are the members of Christ, and pertain to one Head as one body. He had said above, Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? Even by keeping Thy words. Behold he now more openly asketh aid that he may do this: Reward, he saith, Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word. If he asked that good might be rewarded him for good deeds, he had already kept God’s words. But he said not, Reward Thy servant, because I have kept Thy words: as if he were demanding a recompense of good for the good of obedience: but he said, Reward Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word. And what is this, but to declare the dead incapable of keeping God’s words? that is, the unbelieving of whom it is said, Suffer the dead to bury their dead. If therefore we understand the unbelieving by the dead, and believers by the living: since the righteous liveth by faith, and the word of God cannot be kept without faith, which worketh by love; it is this that he asketh who saith, Reward Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word. And since before faith nought save evil for evil is due unto man, and as God, through grace which is not due, rewardeth good for evil; it is this reward that he asketh, who saith, Reward Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word. For there are four modes of reward: either evil for evil, as God will reward everlasting fire to the unrighteous: or good for good, as He will reward an everlasting kingdom to the righteous: or good for evil, as Christ by grace

justifieth the ungodly; or evil for good, as Judas and the Jews through their wickedness persecuted Christ. Of these four modes of reward, the first two belong to justice, whereby evil is rewarded for evil, good for good; the third to mercy, whereby good is rewarded for evil: the fourth God knoweth not; for to none doth He reward evil for good. But that which I have placed third in order, is in the first instance necessary: for unless God rewarded good for evil, there would be none to whom He could reward good for good.

2. Consider that Saul, afterwards Paul: Not by works of righteousness, he saith, which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration. And again: I who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And again: Yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful: that is, to live; for the righteous liveth by faith. He was therefore dead formerly owing to his own unrighteousness, before he lived through the grace of God. Moreover he thus confesseth his own death: When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. God therefore rewardeth unto him good for evil, that is, life for death; such a reward, in fact, as is here asked for, where it is said, Reward Thy servant: let me live, and keep Thy word. He both lived, and kept His word, and began to belong to another reward, wherein good is rewarded for good: on account of which he saith, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day. Righteous truly, in rewarding good for good: for He was merciful in the former case, in rewarding good for evil. Although justice itself, whereby good things are rewarded for good, is not separate from mercy: for thus it is written, Who crowneth thee with compassion and mercy. For he who said, I have fought a good fight, how could he conquer, save by the gift of Him of Whom he saith, Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. And he who finished his course, how could he run, how could he reach the goal, save by the aid of Him of Whom he saith, It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. And he who kept the faith, how could he do this, unless, as he himself saith, he had obtained mercy that he might be faithful.

3. No where then let human pride raise itself up: God giveth good rewards unto His own gifts. But this man who now prayeth, saying, Reward Thy servant: let me live; if he were entirely dead, would not pray: but from Him he received the beginning of a good desire, from Whom he asketh the life of obedience. For they who said, Lord, increase our faith, had some faith. But he who, when he was questioned whether he believed, said, I believe, Lord, help Thou mine unbelief: confessed his own want of faith, and yet did not deny his faith. He then, who when he believeth prayeth for obedience, now beginning to live prayeth for life: not for a reward for having preserved it, but for help that it may be preserved. For he who is renewed day by day, is quickened with increasing life every day.

4. Ver. 18. But, knowing that the words of God cannot be kept through obedience, unless they be seen by understanding, this also he addeth to his prayer, and saith, Open Thou mine eyes, and I will consider wondrous things of Thy law. What he addeth, (Ver. 19.) I am a lodger upon earth: or, as some copies read, I am a sojourner upon earth, O hide not Thy commandments from me, hath the same meaning; for what he said before, in, open Thou mine eyes; the same he said afterwards, in, hide not from me: Also what he said there, in, wonderful things of Thy law, the same he repeats in other words, Thy commandments. But there is nothing more wonderful in the commandments of God, than, Love your enemies; that is, reward good for evil. But my discourse respecting this pilgrimage must not be narrowed: and therefore we must not now treat of the subject, but hope to do so in another discourse, which we shall deliver to you with the Lord’s help.

Discourse VIII

1. Ver. 19. I must now answer your expectations, beloved brethren, by discoursing on the sequel of this long Psalm, beginning with the verse, I am a sojourner upon earth; O hide not Thy commandments from me! or, as some copies read, I am a lodger upon earth. For the Greek word πάροικος is variously rendered by our translators, incola, inquilinus, or advena. Lodgers (inquilini) who have no house of their own, dwell in another man’s; but sojourners (incolæ), or strangers (advenæ), are spoken of as foreigners (adventitii). Here an important question ariseth respecting the soul. For the

words, I am a sojourner, or lodger, or stranger upon earth, cannot seem to have been said in reference to the body, since the body derives its origin from the earth. But in this most profound question I dare not define any thing. For if it might justly have been said in respect of the soul, (which God forbid we should suppose derived from the earth,) I am a lodger, or stranger upon earth; or in reference to the whole man, since he was at one time an inhabitant of Paradise, where he who spake these words was not; or, what is more free from all controversy, if it be not every man who could say this, but one to whom an everlasting country hath been promised in heaven: this I know, that the life of man on earth is a temptation; and that there is a heavy yoke upon the sons of Adam. But it pleaseth me more to discuss the question in accordance with this construction, that we say we are tenants or strangers upon earth, because we have found our country above, whence we have received a pledge, and where when we have arrived we shall never depart. For he also who in another Psalm saith, I am a stranger with Thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were; saith not, as all men: but by saying, as all my fathers, beyond doubt intends the righteous to be understood, who preceded him in time, and in this pilgrimage sighed with pious groans for their country above. Concerning whom it is written to the Hebrews, These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city. And these words, Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, may be understood here not to refer to all men, but to the believing: for all men have not faith: and we see what the Apostle addeth to these words; for, after saying, As long as we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; he saith, for we walk by faith, not by sight: that we might understand that this pilgrimage belongs to those, who walk by faith. But the unbelieving, whom God hath not foreknown, or predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, cannot truly call themselves strangers upon earth, since they are there where they were born after the flesh: for they have not a city elsewhere; and for this reason they are not aliens on the earth, but natives of the earth. Whence another passage of Scripture saith of some one, He hath made his home with death, and his chariot he hath set in hell with the earth-born. But these very persons are aliens and sojourners, not in respect of this earth, but of the people of God, from which they are estranged. Whence the Apostle saith to them that believe, and are beginning to possess a holy city, which is not of this world: Now therefore ye are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. These then are citizens of the earth, who are strangers to the people of God; while they who are citizens in the people of God, are strangers upon earth; because the whole of the same people, as long as it is in the body, is sojourning away from the Lord. Let it therefore say, I am a stranger upon earth: O hide not Thy commandments from me.

2. But who are they from whom God hideth His commandments? Hath not God willed that they be every where preached? Would that they were dear to many, as they are clear to many! For what is clearer than this, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and, Thou shall love thy neighbour even as thyself? On which two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. And who is he from whom these commandments are hid? For they are known to all believers, and to many unbelievers. Why then doth the believer pray, that that may not be hidden from him which he seeth not to be hidden even from the unbeliever? Because it is difficult to know God, doth it follow then that it must be difficult to understand the words, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, lest one thing be loved in place of another? For it seemeth easier to know one’s neighbour. For every man is every man’s neighbour, nor is any distance of race to be thought of, where there is a common nature. Although he who said to the Lord, And who is my neighbour? knew not even his neighbour. A certain man was then set before him, who while going from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among robbers: whose neighbour the very person who had asked judged no man to have been, save him who shewed him pity; and it was clearly shewn, that in doing an act of mercy, none should be held a stranger by him who loveth his neighbour. But many know not even themselves; because to know one’s self, as a man ought to know himself, is not all men’s lot. How then can he, who knoweth not himself, love his

neighbour as himself? It was not, then, without reason that the younger son, who departed into a far country, and there squandered his substance by riotous living, in order that he might say, I will arise and go to my father, first came to himself, but because he had wandered so far, that he had lost even himself. Yet he could not return to himself, if he were utterly ignorant of himself; nor could he say, I will arise, and go to my father, if he were utterly ignorant of God. Wherefore to some extent these things are known, and are not undeservedly the subject of petitions that they may be even better known. Wherefore in order that we may know how to love God, God must be known; and that a man may know how to love his neighbour as himself, he first ought through loving God to love himself: and how can he do this, if he knoweth not God, if he knoweth not even himself? Rightly then is it said unto God, I am a stranger upon earth: O hide not Thy commandments from me! For justly they are hidden unto those who are not strangers upon earth: for although they hear these commandments, they savour not of them; because they savour of earthly things. But those whose conversation is in heaven, as far as they converse here, are in truth strangers. Let them pray therefore that the commandments of God may not be hidden from them, whereby they may be freed from this temporary sojourn, by loving God, with Whom they will be for evermore; and by loving their neighbour, that he may be there where they also themselves will be.

3. Ver. 20. But what is loved by loving, if love itself be not loved? Whence by consequence that stranger upon earth, after praying that the commandments of God might not be hidden from him, wherein love is enjoined either solely or principally; declareth that he desireth to have a love for love itself, saying, My soul hath coveted to have a desire alway after Thy judgments. This coveting is worthy of praise, not of condemnation. It is not of this that it is said, Thou shalt not covet; but of that whereby the flesh lusteth against the spirit. But seek where it is written of this good coveting whereby the spirit lusteth against the flesh; and thou wilt find, Therefore the coveting of wisdom bringeth to a kingdom; and many other testimonies are found of a good coveting. But there is this difference, that the object of the coveting is mentioned when a good coveting is spoken of: but when the object of the coveting is not subjoined,

but the coveting alone mentioned, none but an evil passion is meant. As in the passage just quoted, if he had not added the word wisdom, he could not say, Coveting bringeth to a kingdom. But the Apostle, in the words, I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet: added not the object of the lust, or what thou art not to covet; for it is certain that by this expression none save an evil coveting is understood. What then did this man's soul covet? to have a desire, he saith, after Thy judgments alway. I conclude he did not desire them as yet, when he coveted to desire them. But by judgments are meant righteous deeds, that is, works of righteousness. Since then he who already desireth them, hath them not as yet, how far from them was he who as yet coveted to desire them? and how much farther are they who do not even covet to desire them?

4. But it is wonderful how a desire can be coveted without that desire being in us, the coveting of which is in us. For it is not some beautiful substance, as gold, or a beautiful person, which a man may long for without having, because it is situate without, not in the man. Who knoweth not that coveting is, and that desire is, in a man? Why then is its possession coveted after, as though it were brought in from without? Or how can the coveting of it be felt without itself, since it is even itself nothing but a coveting? For to desire is beyond doubt to covet. What is this wonderful and inexplicable infirmity? Yet it doth exist. For the sick man who laboureth from loathing of food, and wisheth to escape this evil, coveteth to have a desire for food, while he coveteth not to have loathing; but this loathing is a disease of the body. Whereas that longing whereby he longeth to desire food, that is, to be free from his loathing, is in the mind, not in the body; and it is not the delight of the gullet and the palate that inspires it, for that is impeded by the loss of appetite: but the hope of recovering health, whereby it is foreseen that the loathing will be remedied. And in this case we need not wonder if the mind desire that the body may desire, since the mind desires here, without the body desiring. But when both acts belong to the mind, and when both are acts of coveting, why do I covet a desire of the judgments of God? How is it that in one and the same mind of mine I have the coveting of this desire, and have not the desire itself? or how is it that there are two acts and not one? How is it that I long to desire these judgments, and that I do not rather covet the judgments themselves than the desire of them? or

how can I covet a desire of these judgments, and yet not covet the judgments themselves; since I long for the desire of them, for this reason, that I desire to have them themselves? And if this be so, I already long for them. What need then that I should covet the desire of them, since I already have, and am aware that I have it? For I could not covet the desire of righteousness, save coveting righteousness? Is this what I said above, that the love itself whereby that is loved, which is a right object of love, should be loved? For we detest that coveting of ours whereby the flesh lusteth against the spirit; and what is this coveting, save an evil love? And we love that coveting of ours, whereby the spirit lusteth against the flesh; and what is that coveting, save a righteous love? And when it is said, it must be loved; what else is said than this, it should be coveted? Wherefore, since the judgments of God are rightly coveted, the coveting of the judgments of God is rightly longed for. For this may be otherwise expressed; if the judgments of God are rightly loved, the love of the judgments of God is rightly loved. Is it one thing to covet, another to desire? Not that coveting is not desire, but because not all coveting is desire. For both things which are possessed, and things which are not possessed, are coveted; for by coveting them, a man enjoyeth the things that he hath; but by desiring them, he coveteth things absent. What then is desire, save the coveting things absent? But how can the judgments of God be absent, save when they are not known? And when they are known, and are not practised, are they to be regarded as absent? For what are judgments, save righteous deeds, not words? And for this reason they may through the weakness of the soul not be desired; and the desire of them may be coveted by the reason in the mind, when it is apparent how profitable and salutary they are. For we often see what ought to be done, and yet do it not; because it delighteth us not to do it, and we desire it may delight us. The intellect flieth in advance; and the weak affection of men followeth slowly, and sometimes followeth not at all. For this reason therefore he coveted to desire those things which he saw to be goods, wishing to take delight in those things the reason of which he could discern.

5. But he saith not, coveteth, only; but, My soul hath coveted to desire Thy judgments. For perhaps this stranger upon earth was one who had already arrived at what he coveted, and was now desiring those judgments, the

desire of which, he saith, he had at one time coveted. But if he already desired them, why had he not them? For there is no obstacle to possessing the judgments of God, save that they are not desired, while love hath no warmth toward winning them, though their light is so clear and shining. Did he possess them, and did he practsie them? For a little after he saith; For Thy servant is occupied in Thy statutes. But by what steps, so to speak, they are arrived at, he sheweth. For the first is, that it may appear how useful and honourable they are; next, that the desire of them be coveted; lastly, that with the increase of light and health the practice of those judgments may please, only the notion of which pleased before. But what followeth shall, with the Lord's help, be discussed in another discourse with more convenience, since this is already of considerable length.

Discourse IX

1. Ver. 21. The parts of this Psalm which remain to be treated of, warn us to remember the cause of our misery. For after he had said, My soul hath coveted to desire Thy judgments, in all time; that is, whether in prosperity or adversity, because righteousness ought to delight us both in toil and in sufferings, nor ought to be loved in peaceful times in such a sense as that it may be forsaken in stormy times, but it should be embraced in all time: he instantly added, (ver. 21.) Thou hast rebuked the proud: and cursed are they that do err from Thy commandments. For the proud err from the commandments of God. For it is one thing not to fulfil the commandments of God through infirmity or ignorance; another to err from them through pride; as they have done, who have begotten us in our mortal state unto these evils. For the words, Ye shall be as gods, pleased them; and thus through this pride they erred from the commandment of God, which they knew that He had enjoined upon them, and which they might have fulfilled with the greatest ease, without any weakness recalling, impeding, retarding them. And behold, the whole of this hard and unhappy anxiety of mortals, is in some respect an hereditary rebuke of the proud. For when God said, Adam, where art thou? He was not ignorant where he was, but He rebuked his pride. Where he then was, that is, what misery he had come to, He desired not to know, but in the question He admonishes him, and with rebuke. But consider now, after saying, Thou hast rebuked the proud, he

saith not, Cursed are they that have erred from Thy commandments; so that only that sin of the first men should come into the mind; but he saith, Cursed are they that do err. For it was needful that all might be terrified by that example, that they might not err from the divine commandments, and by loving righteousness in all time, recover in the toil of this world, what we lost in the pleasure of Paradise.

2. Ver. 22. But since the proud even after such a rebuke lower not their necks, and when they are cast down by the punishment of toil and death, are yet exalted by the puffing up of pride, imitating the exaltation of the falling, mocking the humility of the rising; the body of Christ prayeth for them, saying, O turn from me shame and rebuke; for I have sought out Thy testimonies. Testimonies are called in Greek μαρτύρια, which word we now use for the Latin word: whence those who on account of their testimony to Christ have been brought low by various sufferings, and have contended unto death for the truth, are not called ‘testes,’ but by the Greek term Martyrs. Since then ye hear in this term one more familiar and grateful, let us take these words as if it were said, O turn from me shame and rebuke; because I have sought out Thy martyrdoms. When the body of Christ speaketh thus, doth it consider it any punishment to hear rebuke and shame from the ungodly and the proud, since it rather reacheth the crown by this means? Why then doth it pray that it should be removed from it as something heavy and insupportable, save because, as I said, it prayeth for its very enemies, to whom it seeth it is destructive, to cast the holy name of Christ as a reproach to Christians, and, through the abiding and increase of the same pride, to despise that Cross which was mocked at by the Jews, and the whole medicine of Christian humility, whereby alone that pride is healed, which puffed us up to our fall, and yet worse puffed us up when fallen? Let therefore the body of Christ say; for it hath already begun to love its enemies; let it say to the Lord its God, O take Thou away from me shame and rebuke, because I have sought out Thy martyrdoms: that is, the rebuke which I hear, and the shame whereby I am despised, because I have sought out Thy testimonies—take them away from me. For my enemies, whom Thou enjoinest to be loved by me, who more and more die and are lost, when they despise Thy martyrdoms and accuse them in me, will indeed be recalled to life and be found, if they reverence Thy martyrdoms

in me. Thus it hath happened: this we see. Behold, martyrdom in the name of Christ, both with men and in this world, is not only not a disgrace, but a great ornament: behold, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of men, precious is the death of His Saints; behold, His martyrs are not only not despised, but honoured with great distinctions. Behold that younger son, who in place of the swine which he fed, that is, of the unclean devils he worshipped, once persecuted the part of him that went before in the few Christians, now most religiously proclaiming among many great Gentile nations those Martyrs, upon whom formerly he heaped rebukes, and exalting with the highest praises those whom he despised, had died and returned to life, had been lost and was found. In this so great gain of the chastening, the conversion, and redemption of their enemies, the body of Christ said unto God, O turn from me shame and rebuke: and as if it were asked, Shame in what, rebuke from what? he subjoins, Because I have sought out Thy testimonies.

3. Ver. 23, 24. Where is now that rebuke? where now that shame? They have departed and have passed away; and because they who had been lost have been found, they have been lost sight of. But while the Church prayed for such a result, she was suffering that shame and rebuke. For, (ver. 23.) Princes did sit and speak against me, he saith. Thence arose heavy persecution, because princes sitting, that is, raised on their judicial seats, decreed it. Apply this to the Head Himself: thou wilt find that the princes of the Jews sat, taking counsel how they might slay Christ. Apply this to His Body, that is, the Church; thou wilt find that the kings of the earth considered and gave commands by what means the Christians might cease to exist. For princes also did sit and speak against me: but Thy servant is exercised in Thy statutes. Thou who desirest to know what sort of exercise this was, understand what he hath added, For Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counsellors. Remember what I have above instructed you, that testimonies are acts of martyrdom. Remember that among the statutes of the Lord there is none more difficult and more worthy of admiration, than that every man should love his enemies. Thus then the body of Christ was exercised, so that it meditated on the acts of martyrdom that testified of Him, and loved those from whom, while they rebuked and despised the Church for these very martyrdoms, she suffered

persecutions. For it was not for herself, as I have already said, but for them rather that she prayed thus, O take Thou from me shame and rebuke. Princes, therefore, did sit and speak against me: but Thy servant was exercised in Thy statutes. In what manner? For Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counsellors. Counsel against counsel: the counsel of princes sitting on their judgment-seats was to destroy the Martyrs whom they found: the counsel of the suffering Martyrs was to recover their lost enemies. The former then were returning evil for good: the latter, good for evil. What wonder then if the former failed in slaying them; the latter conquered by dying? What wonder, I ask, is it if the Martyrs, when the heathen raged, most patiently bore a temporal death, and the heathen at the prayer of the Martyrs could arrive at everlasting life; while the body of Christ is exercised in such a way that it doth meditate martyrdoms, and pray for blessings upon the wicked persecutors of the Martyrs?

Discourse X

1. Ver. 25. These words follow in this great Psalm, which it is our duty to consider, and to expound throughout, in so far as the Lord shall grant us. My soul cleaveth to the pavement: O quicken Thou me according to Thy word. What meaneth, My soul cleaveth to the pavement? For when he addeth, O quicken Thou me according to Thy word, he hath before stated the reason why he prayeth that he may be quickened, in these words, My soul cleaveth to the pavement. Since then he prayeth to be quickened, because his soul cleaveth to the pavement, it is wonderful if he wisheth any thing good to be understood by this. The whole sentence is as if he should say, I am dead: O quicken Thou me. What then meaneth the pavement? If we look upon the whole world as one great house, we see that the heavens represent its vaulting, the earth therefore will be its pavement. He wisheth therefore to be rescued from earthly things, and to say with the Apostle, Our conversation is in heaven. To cling therefore to earthly things is the soul's death; the contrary of which evil, life is prayed for, when he saith, O quicken Thou me.

2. But we must see whether these words suit that man who had before spoken things which implied that he had clung rather to God than to the

dust of the pavement, so that his conversation was held not in earthly things, but in heavenly. For how could he be understood to have clung to earthly things, who saith, But Thy servant is occupied in Thy statutes; for Thy testimonies are my meditation, and Thy statutes are my counsellors? For such are his foregoing words of which these are the sequel, My soul cleaveth to the pavement. Ought we to understand from this, that however much any man may advance in the statutes of God, he yet hath the affection of mortal flesh towards those earthly things, wherein the life of man upon the earth is a temptation, and if he perseveringly recovereth himself from this death, that he every day returns to life, by the quickening Spirit of Him, by Whose grace our inner man is renewed day by day? For when the Apostle was saying these words, Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord, and desired to depart and to be with Christ; his soul had clung to the pavement. Whence the body itself also, because it is of the earth, is reasonably understood by the word pavement; since, because it is still corruptible and weigheth down the soul, we justly groan while in it, and say unto God, My soul cleaveth to the dust of the pavement: O quicken Thou me according to Thy word. For we shall not be without our bodies when we shall be for evermore with the Lord; but then, because they will not be corruptible, nor will they weigh down our souls, if we view it strictly, we shall not cleave unto them, but they rather unto us, and we unto God. Wherefore these are the words of another Psalm, But it is good for me to hold me fast by God: so that our bodies will live from us, by cleaving unto us; but we draw our life from God: because it is good for us to hold fast by God. For the expression, My soul cleaveth to the pavement, doth not seem to me to signify the union of the flesh and the soul, although some have understood this also; but rather the carnal affection of the soul, whereby the flesh lusteth against the spirit. And if this be a right interpretation, he certainly who saith, My soul cleaveth to the dust of the pavement: O quicken Thou me according to Thy word, prayeth not that he may be released from the body of this death, by the intervention of the death of this body; which the last day of this life, which on account of its brevity cannot last long, will at some time bring about; but that the lust whereby we lust against the Spirit, may be more and more diminished, and that the lust whereby we lust against the flesh may more and more increase, until this is brought to an end within us, and that the lust of the spirit against the flesh is perfected through the Holy Spirit which is given us.

3. Ver. 26. He justly saith not, O quicken Thou me according to my merit, but, according to Thy word: and what else is this, save according to Thy promise? He wisheth to be the son of promise, not the son of pride; so that the promise may be firm to all the seed according to grace. For this is the word of promise: In Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they which are the children of flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For what he was by himself, he confesseth in the following words: I have acknowledged my ways, and Thou heardest me. Some copies indeed read, Thy ways: but more, and the best Greek, read my ways, that is, evil ways. For he seemeth to me to say this; I have confessed my sins, and Thou hast heard me; that is, so that Thou wouldest remit them. O teach me Thy statutes. I have acknowledged my ways: Thou hast blotted them out: teach me Thine. So teach me, that I may act; not merely that I may know how I ought to act. For as it is said of the Lord, that He knew not sin, and it is understood, that He did no sin; so also he ought truly to be said to know righteousness, who doeth it. This is the prayer of one who is improving. For if indeed he utterly neglected acts of righteousness, he would not say those words above, But Thy servant was occupied in Thy statutes. He doth not then wish to learn from the Lord those wherein he was occupied; but he desireth to arrive from these at others, by edification, as it were by growth.

4. Ver. 27, 28. Finally he addeth, Intimate to me the way of Thy righteousnesses; or, as some copies have it, instruct me; which is expressed more closely from the Greek, Make me to understand the way of Thy righteousnesses; so shall I be exercised in Thy wondrous things. These higher commandments, which he desireth to understand by edification, he calleth the wondrous things of God. There are then some righteousnesses of God so wondrous, that human weakness may be believed incapable of fulfilling them by those who have not tried. Whence the Psalmist, struggling and wearied with the difficulty of obeying them, saith, My soul hath slumbered for very heaviness: O stablish Thou me with Thy word! What meaneth, hath slumbered? save that he hath cooled in the hope which

he had entertained of being able to reach them. But, he addeth, Stablish Thou me with Thy word: that I may not by slumbering, fall away from those duties which I feel that I have already attained: stablish Thou me therefore in those words of Thine that I already hold, that I may be able to reach unto others through edification.

5. Ver. 29. And what hindereth to walk in the commandments of God in such a manner, that a man may easily arrive at those wonderful things? What, do we suppose, save that which he prayeth in the next words may be removed from him: Take Thou from me the way of iniquity? And since the law of works hath entered in, that sin might abound; he addeth, And pity me according to Thy law. By what law, save by the law of faith? Hear the Apostle: Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works. Nay: but by the law of faith. This is the law of faith, whereby we believe and pray that it may be granted us through grace; that we may effect that which we cannot fulfil through ourselves; that we may not, ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish our own, fail to submit ourselves unto the righteousness of God. In the law of works, therefore, is the righteousness of God Who commandeth; but in the law of faith, the mercy of Him Who aideth.

6. Ver. 30–32. But after he had said, And pity me according to Thy law; he mentioneth some of those blessings which he hath already obtained, that he may ask others that he hath not yet gained. For he saith, I have chosen the way of truth: and Thy judgments I have not forgotten. (Ver. 31.) I have stuck unto Thy testimonies: O Lord, confound me not—I have chosen the way of truth, wherein to run: Thy judgments I have not forgotten, that I might run. I have stuck unto Thy testimonies, while I was running: O Lord, confound me not: may I persevere in striving toward the point whereunto I am running: may I arrive whither I am running! So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. He next saith, I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast widened my heart. I could not run hadst Thou not widened my heart. The sense of the words, I have chosen the way of truth, and Thy judgments I have not forgotten: I have stuck unto Thy testimonies, is clearly explained in this verse. For this running is along the way of the commandments of God. And

because he doth allege unto the Lord rather His blessings than his own deservings; as if it were said unto him, How hast thou run that way, by choosing, and by not forgetting the judgments of God, and by sticking to His testimonies? Couldest thou do these things by thyself? I could not, he replieth. What then? I will run, he saith, the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast widened my heart. It is not therefore through my own will, as though it needed no aid of Thine; but because Thou hast widened my heart. The widening of the heart is the delight we take in righteousness. This is the gift of God, the effect of which is, that we are not straitened in His commandments through the fear of punishment, but widened through love, and the delight we have in righteousness. For He promiseth us His own breadth, when He saith, I will dwell in them, and walk in them. For how large is the place where the Lord walketh! in this breadth is love shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which is given us. Whence also it is said, and let rivers of waters be dispersed in thy streets; for the word signifying streets in Latin (platea) is derived from the Greek πλατὺ, which meaneth, broad. These are the waters of which the Lord saith, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and, He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: and the Evangelist explaineth what He meant; but this spake He of the Spirit, which they who believe on Him should receive. Many things might be said of this breadth of heart, but ye already complain of the length of this discourse.

Discourse XI

1. Ver. 33. In this great Psalm there cometh next in order that which, with the Lord’s help, we must consider and treat of. Set a law for me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes, and I shall seek it alway. The Apostle saith, The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, and the like characters, the mention whereof he concludeth with these words: And if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. Was he then who said, Set a law for me, O Lord, like in character to those for whom the blessed Paul declareth that the law was made? God forbid! For if he had been such, he would not have said above, I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast widened my

heart. Why then doth he pray that the law may be taught him by the Lord, if it be not taught the righteous? Is it given to the righteous not in the same sense as it was given to a stiffnecked people, on tables of stone, not in fleshly tables of the heart? according to the old covenant from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, not according to the new covenant, concerning which it is written through Jeremiah the Prophet, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; for they abode not in my covenant, and I forsook them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After these days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. Behold in what manner this man wisheth a law to be set him by the Lord: not as it is laid down for the unholy and the disobedient, who belong to the old covenant, on tables of stone; but as it is given in the mind to the holy sons of the free, that is, the heavenly Jerusalem, the sons of promise, the sons of an everlasting heritage, by the Holy Spirit, as it were by the finger of God, and written in the heart: not one which they may hold in remembrance, and neglect in life; but which they may know by understanding, perform by loving, in the breadth of love, not in the narrowness of fear. For he who doth the work of the law through fear of punishment, not from love of righteousness, truly doth it against his will. But what he doth against his will, if it could be so, he would prefer should not be commanded at all: and thus he is not a friend, but a foe of the law, which he would wish should not exist; nor is he who is unclean in will, cleansed by his act. Such a man cannot say what this man said in the foregoing verses, I did run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hadst widened my heart: for that widening signifieth love, which according to the Apostle is the fulfilling of the Law.

2. Why then doth this man still pray for a law to be laid down for him; which, if it had not been laid down for him, he could not have run the way of God’s commandments in the breadth of his heart? But since one speaketh who is growing in grace, and who knoweth that it is God’s gift that he profiteth in grace; what else doth he pray, when he prayeth that a law may be laid down for him, save that he may profit more and more? As, if thou

boldest a full cup, and givest it to a thirsty man; he both exhausts it by drinking it, and prayeth for it by still longing for it. But those unrighteous and disobedient men for whom the law is laid down on tablets of stone, are thereby made guilty of transgression, not the sons of promise. But he also who remembereth it, and yet loveth it not, is guilty in this way, because his memory is as it were a sort of written stone, not to adorn him, but to weigh him down; an onerous load, not a title of honour. This law he hath termed the way of the judgments of God; nor is the path of His commandments, which he had already stated he had run when his heart was expanded, different. He therefore both hath run and is running, until he reach the palm of the heavenly calling of God. Lastly, after he had said, Set a law for me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes; he addeth, and I shall seek it evermore. For why doth he seek for what he hath, save because he both hath it by acting, and seeketh it by improving?

3. But what meaneth, Evermore? Will there be no end of seeking; as it is said, His praise shall be ever in my mouth; because there will be no end of praising Him: for we shall not cease to praise God, when we shall have reached His everlasting kingdom, since we read, Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be alway praising Thee? Doth evermore mean as long as we live here, because we progress in grace so long; but after this life, he who was in a good course of improvement here, is made perfect there? Just as it is said of certain women, that they were ever learning: but these learnt ill, for he addeth, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. But he who always profiteth in growth unto edification here, arrives at the goal which he striveth to attain by progress in grace, where he will no longer progress, because he here resteth, made perfect, without end. But the expression, Ever learning is not used of those women to mean that even after death they continue endeavouring to learn vain and fruitless things; since everlasting punishments, not studies, succeed that species of learning. Here therefore the law of God is examined into, as long as we progress in it, both by knowing it and by loving it: but there its fulness abideth for our enjoyment, not for our examination. Thus also is this spoken, Seek His face evermore. Where, evermore, save here? For we shall not there also seek the face of God, when we shall see face to face. Or if that which is loved without a change of affection is rightly said to be sought

after, and our only object is, that it be not lost, we shall indeed evermore seek the law of God, that is, the truth o God: for in this very Psalm it is said, And Thy law is the truth. It is now sought, that it may be held fast; it will then be held fast that it may not be lost: even as it is said of the Spirit of God, that It searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God; not indeed, that It may discover what It knoweth not, but because It leaveth nothing that It knoweth not.

4. Ver. 34. The grace of God therefore is particularly commended unto us, when he who already knew the law according to its letter, prayeth that a law may be set for him by the Lord. But since the letter killeth, while the Spirit giveth life; he prayeth that he may be enabled through the Spirit to perform that which he knew through the letter; lest, on account of his knowledge of a commandment which he had not obeyed, the charge even of disobedience might come upon him. However no man, unless he hath received the comprehension thereof from the Lord, can comprehend how the law is to be known as it ought to be, that is, how its real meaning may be understood, why it was imposed upon those who were not to keep it, what profit even this hath in it, that the law entered that sin might abound: whence he addeth, (ver. 34.) Give me understanding, and I shall search Thy law, yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart. For when each man hath searched the law, and searched its deep things, in which its whole meaning doth consist; he ought indeed to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind; and his neighbour as himself. For on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. This he seemeth to have promised, when he said, Yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.

5. Ver. 35. But since he hath no power to do even this, save he be aided by Him Who commandeth him to do what He commandeth, Make me, he addeth, to go in the path of Thy commandments, for therein is my desire. My desire is powerless, unless Thou Thyself makest me to go where I desire. And this is surely the very path, that is, the path of God’s commandments, which he had already said that he had run, when his heart was enlarged by the Lord. And this he calleth a path, because the way is narrow which leadeth unto life; and since it is narrow, we cannot run therein save with a heart enlarged.

6. Ver. 36. But since he still profiteth, he still runneth; and he therefore seeketh the Divine help whereby he may be conducted, since it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy: for it is God that worketh in us even to will, for the will is prepared by the Lord. He next saith, Incline mine heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. This then he prayeth, that he may profit in the will itself. But what are the testimonies of God, save those wherein He beareth witness to Himself? For something is proved by testimonies; and on this account the judgments and commandments of God are proved by the testimonies of God: and whatever God willeth to persuade us, He persuadeth us by His own testimonies: towards which the Psalmist prayeth that his own heart may be inclined, and not to covetousness. For God enjoins us by His testimonies to worship Him for nought; which covetousness, the root of all evils, hindereth. He useth here a Greek expression, from which covetousness generally may be understood, whereby every man seeketh more than is enough: for the word πλέον meaneth more, and ἕξις signifieth having, being derived from the verb to have. It is therefore termed πλεονεξία, from having too much: a word which the Latin translators in this passage have variously rendered by emolument, utility, and avarice, which last is best. But the Apostle saith, Avarice is the root of all evils. But in the Greek, whence these words have been rendered into our tongue, the word used by the Apostle is not πλεονεξία, which occurs in this passage of the Psalms; but φιλαρλυρία, by which is signified love of money. But the Apostle must be understood to have meant genus by species when he used this word, that is, to have meant avarice universally and generally by love of money, which is truly the root of all evils. For the first human beings would not have been deceived and cast down by means of the serpent, unless they had desired to have more than they had received, and to be more than they had been made. For this was the tempter’s promise, Ye shall be as gods. By this covetousness then (πλεονεξίᾳ) they were ruined. For by wishing to have more than they had received, they lost even what they had received. A trace of this truth, which hath been universally diffused, may be found in the civil law, which provides that he who claimeth more than his due shall be nonsuited: that is, that he who hath demanded more than was due to him, should lose even what was due to him. But all covetousness is cut away from about us, if God be worshipped for nought. This is the

challenge given by the tempter to Job in his temptation, when he asketh respecting him, Doth Job fear God for nought? For the devil thought, that in fearing God the righteous man's heart was inclined to covetousness, and served Him, like a hireling, for his wages, for the sake of profit, or the advantage of his temporal fortunes wherewith God had enriched him; but when he was tempted, it appeared how that he served God for nought. If therefore our heart be not inclined to covetousness, we fear God only for God's sake, so that He is the only reward of our serving Him. Let us love Him in Himself, let us love Him in ourselves, Him in our neighbours whom we love as ourselves, whether they have Him, or in order that they may have Him. Since this is given to us by His own gift, it is therefore said to Him, Incline mine heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. But what followeth, must be treated of in another discourse.

Discourse XII

1. Ver. 37. The next words in the Psalm which we have undertaken to expound are, O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity: and quicken Thou me in Thy way. Vanity and truth are directly contrary to one another. The desires of this world are vanity: but Christ, Who freeth us from the world, is truth. He is the way, too, wherein this man wisheth to be quickened, for He is also the life: I am the way, the truth, and the life, are His own words. But what meaneth, O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity? While we are in this world, can we avoid seeing vanity? For every creature was made subject unto vanity, which is understood to be in man; and, All is vanity; what profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun? Doth he pray that his life may not be under the sun, where all is vanity; but in Him, in Whom he prayeth that he may be quickened? For He ascended not only above the sun, but far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. And they who do not fruitlessly hear what the Apostle saith, live rather in Him than under the sun: Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Therefore if our life be there where Truth is, our life is not under the sun, where is vanity. But this so great blessing we have rather in hope than possess in deed. And the blessed Apostle spake those words according to our hope; for after he had said, The creature is made subject to

vanity, he added, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who hath subjected the same in hope. In hope therefore, wherein we hope that we shall cling to the contemplation of the Truth, we are meanwhile made subject unto vanity. For the whole of this spiritual, animal, and bodily creation is in man; yea, it is man. It willingly sinned, and became an enemy to truth; but that it might justly be punished, it was not willingly made subject unto vanity. Lastly, after a few words; not only they, (that is, the whole creation,) but ourselves also who have the first-fruits of the Spirit: that is, who not in our whole substance, but in that part of it whereby we surpass cattle, are subject unto God, not unto vanity, that is, through the first-fruits of the Spirit: we also ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. As long therefore as we are here according to the flesh, whose adoption and redemption we here wait for in patience of hope: so long, in that respect in which we are under the sun, we are made subject unto vanity. As long therefore as we are in this state, how can we avoid seeing vanity, whereunto we are even subject in hope? What then is the meaning of his words, O turn Thou mine eyes away, lest they behold vanity? Doth he pray this, that what we hold in hope may not indeed in this life be fulfilled, but that its lot may be this, which may be at some time fulfilled in Him, when it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, both in spirit, soul, and body, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, where it shall no longer see vanity?

2. These words may indeed thus be understood, not beside the rule of faith; but there is here another sense, which I confess pleaseth me more. The Lord saith in the Gospel, If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! It is therefore of great consequence, when we do any thing good, what object we have in view in doing it. For our duty should be weighed, not by the act of duty, but by our end; so that we should consider not merely whether what we are doing be good, but especially if the object on account of which we do it be good. He prayeth that those eyes wherewith we consider on what account we do what we do, may be turned away that they behold not vanity;

that is, that he may not look to vanity, as his motive, when he doeth any thing good. In this vanity the first place is held by the love of men’s praise, on account of which many great deeds have been wrought by those who are styled great in this world, and who have been much praised in heathen states, seeking glory not with God, but among men, and on account of this living in appearance prudently, courageously, temperately, and righteously; and when they have reached this they have reached their reward: vain men, and vain reward. The Lord, anxious to turn away the eyes of His disciples from this vanity, saith, Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in Heaven. Presently, in detailing certain offices of righteousness, and giving precepts concerning alms, prayer, and fasting, He every where warns us that none of these things be done for the sake of the glory of men, and He every where saith that they who do them for this reason have received their reward; that is, not the everlasting one, which is laid up for the Saints with the Father, but the temporal one, which they who regard vanity in their works seek for: not that the praise of men by itself is to be blamed, (for what is so desirable for men, as that those deeds which they ought to imitate should please them?) but to do good for the sake of praise, this is to regard vanity in one’s works. Since, however bountifully the praise of men may have been conferred on a righteous man, the end of his good deeds ought not to be placed in that praise, but this very praise should be referred to the praise of God, for Whose sake the truly good do good deeds; since they are not made good by themselves, but by Him. Lastly, in the same discourse our Lord had said to them, Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. We ought to look thither, where He hath placed our end, when we do any thing good, if our eyes are turned away from vanity. Let not therefore the end of a good work be in the praises of men, but let us correct these very praises of men, and refer all things to the praises of God, by Whom every thing is given unto us which is praised without error on the part of him Who praiseth. Moreover, if it be a vain thing to do good works for the sake of men’s praises, how much more vain for the sake of getting money, or increasing it, or retaining it, and any other temporal advantage, which cometh unto us from without? Since all things are vanity: what is man’s abundance, with all his toil, wherein he laboureth under the sun? For our temporal welfare itself finally we ought not to do our good works, but rather for the sake of that everlasting welfare which we hope for, where we may enjoy an unchangeable good, which we shall have from God, nay, what God Himself is unto us. For if God’s Saints were to do good works for the sake of this temporal welfare, never would the martyrs of Christ achieve a good work of confession in the loss of this same welfare. But they received aid in trouble, not beholding vanity, for vain is the help of man; and they desired not the day of man, for man is like a thing of nought, and his time passeth away as a shadow.

3. Ver. 38. But when God is prayed that those things which are seemingly in our own power, that is, the turning away of the eyes lest they behold vanity, may be granted us by Him, what else than His grace is praised? For some have not turned away their eyes from that vanity, because they have imagined that they become righteous and good of themselves, and have loved the praise of men more than the praise of God; for they are themselves men, who have been too much pleased with themselves, and have presumed on the strength of their own will: but this also is vanity and vexation of spirit. After he had said, therefore, O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity: and quicken Thou me in Thy way: and this way is not vanity, but truth: he addeth, (ver. 38.) O stablish Thy word in Thy servant, that I may fear Thee. And what else is this than, Grant unto me that I may do according to what Thou sayest? For the word of God is not stablished in those who remove it in themselves by acting contrary to it; but it is stablished in those in whom it is immoveable. God therefore stablisheth His word, that they may fear Him, in those unto whom He giveth the spirit of the fear of Him; not that fear of which the Apostle saith, Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; for perfect love casteth out this fear, but that fear which the Prophet calleth the spirit of the fear of the Lord; that fear which is pure, and endureth for ever; that fear which feareth to offend Him Whom it loveth. For the adulteress hath a different fear of her husband from that of the chaste wife: the adulteress feareth him, lest he come: the chaste feareth, lest he forsake her.

4. Ver. 39. Take away my reproach which I have suspected, for Thy judgments are sweet. Who is he who suspected his own reproach, and who

doth not know his own reproach better than that of his neighbour? For a man may rather suspect another’s than his own; since he knoweth not that which he suspecteth; but in each one’s own reproach there is not suspicion for him, but knowledge, wherein conscience speaketh. What then mean the words, the rebuke which I have suspected? The meaning of them must be derived from the former verse; since as long as a man doth not turn away his eyes lest they behold vanity, he suspecteth in others what is going on in himself; so that he believeth another to worship God, or do good works, from the same motive as himself. For men can see what we do, but with a view to what end we act, is hidden; and there is thus room allowed for suspicions, so that one man dareth to judge of the hidden secrets of another, and generally falsely, and to suspect at random things that are unknown to him, even if they be true. On this account the Lord, when He was speaking of the end, on account of which we ought to act righteously, in order that He might turn away our eyes from beholding vanity, warned us not to do good works for the sake of the praise of men, in these words: Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them. He warned them against doing them for the sake of money, thus: Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth; and, Ye cannot serve God and mammon. He warned them against doing so for the sake even of their necessary food and raiment: Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. And after He had given all these warnings, since we may suspect that they whom we see living righteously, though we see not with what object they do so, do good works from some such motive as those mentioned, He added, Judge not, that ye be not judged. For this reason, after the Psalmist had said, Take away my reproach that I have suspected; he added, for Thy judgments are sweet; that is, Thy judgments are true. For a lover of truth declareth that to be sweet which is true. But the judgments of men concerning the hidden secrets of men are not sweet, but rash. And therefore he called that his reproach, which he had suspected of others; for this too the Apostle saith, Comparing themselves with themselves they understand not: for a man the more readily suspecteth in another what he is conscious of in himself. This reproach of his therefore he prayed might be taken away, viz. what he had felt in himself, and had suspected in others; that he might not be like the devil, who had suspected concerning the hidden things of the holy Job, that he did not worship God for nought. Job, whom he demanded to be allowed to tempt, that he might discover some charge to impute against him.

5. Ver. 40. But since nothing save envy suspecteth another's reproach, while a good work cannot be censured, because that which is open speaketh for itself; and since it is censured on the score of the motive from which it is done; and thus any man who pleaseth may suspect him of evil, because he seeth not what is hidden, and envieth what is above himself; against this fault truly, under the influence of which each man suspecteth of a man evil which he discerneth not, charity must be held fast, which envieth not; which our Lord especially commendeth, where He saith, A new commandment give I unto you, That ye love one another; and, By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye hare love one to another; and, speaking of the love of God and of our neighbour, On these two commandments, he saith, hang all the Law and the Prophets. Whence the Psalmist also, against the reproach of his suspicion which he longeth to be cut off, saith, (ver. 40.) Behold, I have coveted Thy commandments: O quicken Thou me in Thy righteousness. Behold, I have coveted to love Thee with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my mind, and my neighbour as myself, but, O quicken Thou me not in my own, but in Thy righteousness, that is, fill me with that love which I have longed for. Aid me that I may do that which Thou chargest me: Thyself give what Thou dost command. O quicken Thou me in Thy righteousness: for in myself I had that which would cause my death: but I find not save in Thee whence I may live. Christ is Thy righteousness, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. And in Him I find Thy commandments, which I have coveted, that in Thy righteousness, that is, in Him, Thou mayest quicken me. For the Word Himself is God; and the Word was made flesh, that He Himself also might be my neighbour.

Discourse XIII

1. Ver. 41. With the foregoing exposition on this Psalm, the longest of all, we must connect this, on the words which follow in it. And let Thy loving mercy come also unto us, O Lord. This sentence seems annexed to the foregoing: for he doth not say, Let it come unto me, but, And let it come

unto me. Now the foregoing verse is this, Behold, I have coveted Thy commandments: O quicken me in Thy righteousness: next to which come the words, and let Thy loving mercy come upon me, O Lord. What then doth he here pray for, save that through His loving mercy Who commanded, he may perform the commandments which he hath coveted? For he explaineth in some degree what he meant by the words, Quicken me in Thy righteousness; by adding, And let Thy loving mercy come upon me, O Lord: even Thy salvation, according to Thy word: that is, according to Thy promise. Whence the Apostle desireth us to be understood as the children of promise: that we may not imagine that what we are is our own work, but refer the whole to the grace of God. For Christ is of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. In the words then, Quicken me in Thy righteousness; he prayeth to be quickened in Christ, and this is the very loving mercy which he prayeth may come upon him. Christ Himself is the salvation of God; the expression by which he hath explained what loving mercy he was speaking of when he said, And let Thy loving mercy come upon me, O Lord. If therefore we ask, what is that loving mercy, let us hear what followeth: Thy salvation, according unto Thy word. For this was promised by Him, Who calleth those things which be not as if they were. For those unto whom the promises were made were not as yet in existence, that no man might glory in his deservings. And those unto whom it was promised, were themselves also promised; so that the whole body of Christ may say, By the grace of God I am what I am.

2. Ver. 42. And so shall I make answer, he saith, to them that reproach me with the word. It is doubtful whether it be ‘reproach me with a word;’ or, ‘I will answer with a word;’ but either signifieth Christ. They to whom Christ crucified is a stumblingblock or foolishness, reproach us with Him; ignorant that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us; the Word which was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God. But although they may not reproach us with the Word Which is unknown unto them, because His Divinity is not known unto those by whom His weakness on the Cross is despised; let us nevertheless make answer of the Word, and let us not be terrified or confounded by their reproaches. For if they had known the Word, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. But he, unto

whom hath come the loving mercy of God, answereth those who blaspheme the Word; that is, His salvation cometh to protect, not to crush. For He will come upon some and crush them, who, while they scorn His humility, are shaken by stumbling against Him. For thus He saith in the Gospel; Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. They therefore who make Him a reproach unto us, stumble and fall over Him. But let us not fear their reproaches, that we may not stumble and fall, but let us answer unto them the Word. This is the word of faith which we preach. That if, he saith, thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. It is not enough, therefore, to have Christ in the heart, and to have no will to confess Him when reproach is feared; but the Word must be answered to them that blaspheme Him. Now that the martyrs might be able to do this, it was promised them, For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Therefore, when the Psalmist had said, I will make answer unto them that reproach me with the word: he at once addeth, For my trust is in Thy words, which meaneth exactly, in Thy promises.

3. Ver. 43. But since very many, although members of Christ’s very Body, Whose words these are, when the heavy weight of persecution pressed upon them, had not courage to endure the reproach, and through fainting denied Christ, he addeth, O take not the word of Thy truth away out of my mouth even exceedingly. He saith, out of my mouth, because the unity of the body is speaking, among whose members those also are counted who failed at the hour by denying, but by penitence afterwards came again to life, or even, by renewing their confession, received the palm of martyrdom, which they had lost. The word of truth, therefore, was not even exceedingly, or, as some copies have it, even every way, that is not altogether taken from the mouth of Peter, in whom was the type of the Church; because although he denied for the hour, being disturbed with fear, yet by weeping he was restored, and by confessing was afterwards crowned. The whole body of Christ therefore speaketh, that is, the whole of the holy Church; in which body either because, while very many denied, there remained brave men who

contended for the truth even unto death, or because out of those who had denied many were restored, the Word of truth was not taken away from her mouth, even exceedingly. In the words, O take not, we must understand, Suffer not to be taken; on which account we say in praying, Lead us not into temptation. And the Lord Himself saith unto Peter, I have prayed, that thy faith fail not; that is, that the word of truth be not taken out of thy mouth even exceedingly. Next followeth, for I have hoped in Thy judgments. Or, as some have more strictly rendered it from the Greek, I have hoped more; a word which, although compounded in a somewhat unusual way, yet answers the necessary purpose of conveying the truth in a translation. We must more attentively search into the meaning of these words, I have hoped in Thy word, and, I have hoped more in Thy judgments. I will make answer, he saith, of the word to them that reproach me, for I have hoped in Thy words: that is, since Thou Thyself hast promised me this. O take not the word of Thy truth even utterly out of my mouth, for I have hoped in Thy judgments: that is, since Thy judgments, by which Thou chastenest and scourgest me, do not only not destroy my hope, but even increase it: for the Lord chasteneth whom He loveth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Behold the saints and the humble in heart when they have trusted in Thee, have not failed in persecutions: behold also those who from trusting in themselves have failed, and nevertheless have belonged to the Very Body, have wept when they became known unto themselves, and have found Thy grace a more solid support, because they have lost their own pride. Therefore, O take not the word of Thy truth even utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in Thy judgments.

4. Ver. 44. So shall I alway keep Thy law: that is, if Thou wilt not take the word of Thy truth out of my mouth, I will alway keep Thy law. Yea, unto age, and age of age: he sheweth what he meant by alway. For sometimes by alway is meant, as long as we live here; but this is not, unto age, and age of age. For it is better thus translated than as some copies have, to eternity, and to age of age, since they could not say, and to eternity of eternity. That law therefore should be understood, of which the Apostle saith, Love is the fulfilling of the law. For this will be kept by the saints, from whose mouth the word of truth is not taken, that is, by the Church of Christ Herself, not only during this world, that is, until this world is ended; but for another also

which is styled, world without end. For we shall not there receive the commandments of the Law, as here, to keep them, but we shall keep the fulness of the Law itself, as I have said, without any fear of sinning; for we shall love God the more fully when we shall have seen Him; and our neighbour too; for God will be all in all; nor will there be room for any false suspicion concerning our neighbour, where no man will be hidden to any.

Discourse XIV

1. Ver. 45–48. The former verses of this long Psalm contain a prayer; but these following, the subject of our present exposition, a narration. For the man of God in the above lines was praying for the aid of God’s grace, when he said, Quicken me in Thy righteousness: and let Thy loving mercies come also upon me, O Lord! and other passages of the same kind both above and after this. But he now saith, And I walked at liberty: for I sought Thy precepts. (Ver. 46.) And I spoke of Thy testimonies also before kings, and was not ashamed. (Ver. 47.) And I meditated on Thy commandments, which I have loved. (Ver. 48.) My hands also have I lifted up unto Thy commandments, which I have loved; and I was exercised in Thy statutes. Where these are the words of one narrating, not of one praying; as if, after he had received what he had prayed for, he were confessing in the praises of God what the loving mercy of God had made him, which he had prayed might come upon him. For he hath not connected these lines with the preceding, as if he had written thus, “And take not from my mouth the word of truth even utterly, for I have hoped more in Thy judgments, and I will keep Thy law continually for ever and ever, and I will walk at liberty, for I have sought out Thy precepts, and I will talk of Thy statutes in the sight of kings, and will not be ashamed;” and the rest in this way: for this would seem to have been the mode in which what follows should have been connected with the foregoing verses; but he says, And I walked at liberty. Here the copulative conjunction, and, is not used as a connecting particle; for he doth not say, and I will walk, as he had said, and I will keep Thy commandments for ever and ever: or if this latter verse be in the optative mood, and may I keep Thy law; he doth not add, And may I walk at liberty, as if he had desired and prayed for both of these things; but he saith, And I walked at liberty. If this conjunction were not used here, and if the sentence

were introduced free from any such connection with what preceded, I walked at liberty, the reader would never be induced by any thing unusual in the mode of speech to think he should seek for some hidden sense. Doubtless, then, he wished what he hath not said to be understood, that is, that his prayers had been heard; and he then added what he had become: as if he were to say, When I prayed for these things, Thou heardest me, And I walked at liberty; and so with the remaining expressions which he hath added to the same purpose.

2. What then mean the words, And I walked at liberty, save, I walked in love, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given us. In this liberty he walked who said, O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you: our heart is enlarged. Now the whole of this love is comprised in those two commandments, the love of God, and the love of our neighbour, on which all the Law and the Prophets hang. Whence after he had said, And I walked at liberty, he subjoined the reason, For I sought out Thy commandments. Some copies have not commandments but testimonies: but we find commandments in most, and especially in the Greek; and who would hesitate rather to believe this tongue, as prior to our own, and that from which these Psalms have been rendered into Latin? If then we wish to know how he sought out these commandments, or how they ought to be sought out, let us consider what our good Master, Who both taught and gave them, saith: Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. And a little lower, If ye then, He saith, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him? Where He evidently sheweth, that the words He had spoken, seek, ask, knock, belong only to earnestness in asking, that is, in praying. Moreover, another Evangelist saith not, He will give good things to them that ask Him; which may be understood in many ways, either as earthly or spiritual blessings; but has excluded other interpretations, and very carefully expressed what our Lord wished us to pray earnestly and instantly for, in these words: How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. This is that Spirit by which love is shed abroad in our hearts, so that by loving God and our neighbour we may execute the divine commandments. That is that Spirit in which we cry,

Abba, Father! And on this account it is He Himself Whom we desire to receive Who causeth us to ask: Himself causeth us to seek, Whom we wish to find: Himself causeth us to knock, unto Whom we strive to come. This the Apostle teacheth; for while in one passage he saith that we cry out in the Holy Spirit, Abba, Father, in another passage again he saith, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. How do we cry, if He Himself crieth in us, save because He caused us to cry, when He began to dwell in us? Also, He so acteth when He is received, that He is desired by asking, by seeking, by knocking, to be more fully received. For whether He leadeth them to seek a good life, or to live well; as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. Therefore he saith, I walked at liberty, for I sought out Thy commandments. He had sought and found, since He had sought and received the good Spirit, whereby having been made good he might do good works well, by faith which worketh by love.

3. Ver. 46. I spoke of Thy testimonies also, he saith, before kings, and I was not ashamed: as one who had sought and had received grace to answer those who reproached him with the word, and the promise that the word of truth should not be taken from his mouth. Struggling for this truth even unto death, not even before kings was he ashamed to speak of it. For testimonies, whereof he doth avow that he was speaking, are in Greek styled μαρτύρια, a word which we now employ instead of the Latin. The name of Martyrs, unto whom Jesus foretold, that they should confess Him even before kings, is derived hence.

4. Ver. 47. And I meditated, he saith, on Thy commandments, which I have loved. (Ver. 48.) My hands also have I lifted up unto Thy commandments, which I have loved; or, as some copies read, which I have loved exceedingly, or too much, or vehemently, as they have chosen to render the Greek work σφόδρα. He then loved the commandments of God because he walked at liberty; that is, through the Holy Spirit, through Whom love itself is shed abroad, and enlargeth the hearts of the faithful. But he loved, both in thought and in acts. With a view to thought, he saith, And I meditated on Thy commandments: as to action, My hands also have I lifted up unto Thy commandments. But to both sentences he hath annexed the words, which I

have loved: for the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart. When the commandment of God is obeyed with this end, then a really good work is done; and then our hands are lifted up, because that towards which they are lifted is above. On this account, when the Apostle was about to speak of charity, he saith, I shew unto you a higher way; and in another passage, To know the love of Christ, which is exceeding high, above knowledge. For if the reward of earthly happiness be sought for from the performance of God's commandments, the hands are rather lowered than lifted up; since earthly rewards, which are not above but below, are sought for by that obedience. The following words, And my study was in Thy statutes, relate to both. This expression most of the translators have preferred to this, I rejoiced in, or I talked of, a version which some have given from the Greek ἠδολέσχουν. For he who keepeth the commandments of God, which he loveth, both in thought and in works taking delight in them, is exercised with joy, and with a certain abundance of speech, in the judgments of God.

Discourse XV

1. Ver. 49. Let us consider, as far as the Lord alloweth, and let us thoroughly treat of these verses of this great Psalm: O remember Thy word unto Thy servant, wherein Thou hast given me hope. Is forgetfulness incident to God, as it is to man? Why then is it said unto Him, O remember? Although in other passages of holy Scripture this very word is used, as, Why hast Thou forgotten me? and, Wherefore forgettest Thou our misery? and God Himself, through His Prophet, says, I will forget all his transgressions: and in other passages this is read again and again frequently. But these things are not understood of God in the same way as they happen among men. For as it is said that God repenteth, when He changeth things contrary to men's expectation, without His counsel being changed, for The Lord's counsel endureth for ever; He is said to forget, when He seemeth to delay His aid or His promise, or not to recompense sinners as they deserve, or any thing of this sort, as if what is either hoped or feared had slipped from His memory, and so doth not take place. These expressions are borrowed from moral discourses on human affections; although God doth these things according to a fixed dispensation, with no failing memory, nor with an understanding

obscured, nor with a will changed. When therefore it is said unto Him, O remember, the desire of him who prayeth is displayed, because he asketh for what was promised; God is not admonished, as if the promise had escaped from His mind. O remember, he saith, Thy word unto Thy servant: that is, fulfil Thy promise to Thy servant. Wherein Thou hast given me hope: that is, in Thy Word, since Thou hast promised, Thou hast caused me to hope.

2. Ver. 50. The same is my comfort in my humiliation. Namely, that hope which is given to the humble, as the Scripture saith: God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Whence also our Lord Himself saith with His own lips, For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. We well understand here that humiliation also, not whereby each man humbleth himself by confessing his sins, and by not arrogating righteousness to himself; but when each man is humbled by some tribulation or mortification which his pride deserved; or when he is exercised and proved by endurance; whence a little after this Psalm saith, Before I was troubled, I went wrong. And this passage in the Book of Wisdom; In grief, hold up, and have patience in thy humiliation. For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation. In the expression, acceptable, he hath inspired a hope which may console us in our humiliation. And the Lord Jesus, when He foretold that this humiliation would be brought upon His disciples by their persecutors, did not leave them without a hope; but gave them one, whereby they might find comfort, in these words: In your patience shall ye possess your souls; and declared even of their very bodies, which might be put to death by their enemies, and seemingly be utterly annihilated, that not a hair of their heads should perish. This hope was given to Christ’s Body, that is, to the Church, that it might be a comfort to Her in her humiliation. On account of which hope saith also the Apostle Paul: But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. But this is the hope of everlasting rewards: there is also another hope, which in the low estate of tribulation comforteth very much, a hope that is given to the Saints in the Word of God, Who promiseth the aid of His grace, that no man may faint. Of this hope the Apostle saith, God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a

way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. This hope our Saviour gave also with His own lips, when He said, This night Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not. This hope He gave in the prayer which He taught us, where He enjoined us to say, Lead us not into temptation: for He in a manner implicitly promised that He would give to His disciples in their danger that which He taught them to ask for in their prayers. And indeed this Psalm is rather to be understood to speak of this hope: (ver. 50.) The same is my comfort in my humiliation, for Thy word hath quickened me. Which they have rendered more closely who have put not word, but utterance. For the Greek has λόγιον, which is utterance; not λόγος, which is word.

3. Ver. 51. The next verse is, The proud dealt exceeding wickedly: yet have I not shrinked from Thy law. By the proud he wished to be understood the persecutors of the pious; and he therefore added, yet have I not shrinked from Thy laws, because the persecution of the proud attempted to force him to do this. He saith that they dealt exceeding wickedly, because they were not only wicked themselves, but even tried to make the godly wicked. In this humiliation, that is, in this tribulation, that hope comforted him which was given in the word of God, Who promised aid, that the faith of the Martyrs might not faint; and Who by the Presence of His Spirit gave strength to them in their toils, that they might escape from the snare of the fowlers, and say, If the Lord Himself had not been on our side, perchance they had swallowed us up quick.

4. When he saith, The same is my comfort in my humiliation, doth he mean that humiliation whereby man was thrown down and delivered unto death, in consequence of that sin which was most unhappily committed in the bliss of Paradise? For in this humiliation, wherein man is made like unto vanity, and his days pass away as a shadow, all are sons of wrath, but that they are reconciled unto God through the Mediator, who were predestined to everlasting salvation before the foundation of the world; that Mediator in Whom the righteous of old had hope, when they foresaw His coming by the spirit of prophecy. That word then which came to them concerning Him is well understood as the word here spoken of, if we understand the passage of these men; that word of which it is said, (ver. 49.) O remember Thy word

unto Thy servant, wherein Thou hast given me hope. (Ver. 50.) The same is my comfort in my humiliation: that is, in this my mortal state: for Thy word hath quickened me; so that when cast out unto death, I had hopes of life. The proud dealt very wickedly: since indeed not even the low estate of mortality tamed their pride. Yet have I not shrinked from Thy law: which the proud were attempting to make me do.

5. Ver. 52. For I was mindful of Thy judgments from the beginning of the world, O Lord, and received comfort; or, as other copies have it, and I was exhorted, that is, I received exhortation. For either might be rendered for the Greek παρεκλήθην. From the beginning of the world, that is, from the birth of the human race, I was mindful of Thy judgments upon the vessels of wrath, which are fitted unto perdition: and I received comfort, since through these also hast Thou shewn the riches of Thy glory on the vessels of Thy mercy.

6. Ver. 53. Weariness hath held me; for the ungodly that forsake Thy law. (Ver. 54.) Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. This is the low estate, in the house of mortality, of the man who sojourneth away from Paradise and the Jerusalem above, whence one going down to Jericho fell among robbers; but, in consequence of the deed of mercy which was done him by that Samaritan, the statutes of God became his song in the house of his pilgrimage; although he was weary for the ungodly that forsook the law of God, since he was compelled to converse with them for a season in this life, until the floor be threshed. But these two verses may be adapted to the two clauses of the preceding verse, respectively: so that the words, I was mindful of Thy judgments from the beginning of the world, O Lord, be referred to these, Weariness hath seized me, for the ungodly who forsake Thy law: and the words, I received comfort, may be referred to these, Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

7. Ver. 55. I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season, and have kept Thy law. Night is that low estate, wherein is the trouble of mortality: night is in the proud who deal exceeding wickedly: night is the fear for the ungodly who forsake the law of the Lord; night is, lastly, the house of this pilgrimage, until the Lord come, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and

then shall every man have praise of God. In this night, therefore, man ought to remember the Name of the Lord; So that he who glorieth, may glory in the Lord; on which account this also is written, Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the glory. For thus every man keepeth the law of God, not in his own glory, but in the glory of the Lord; because he doth it not in his own righteousness, but in that of God, that is, in the righteousness given him of God; even as this man saith, I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night season, and have kept Thy law. But he would not have kept it, if trusting in his own strength, he had not thought upon the Name of the Lord: for our help standeth in the Name of the Lord.

8. Ver. 56. Considering this, he addeth, This was made unto me, because I sought out Thy righteousnesses. Thy righteousnesses, whereby Thou dost justify the ungodly; not mine, which never make me godly, but proud. For this man was not one of those who, ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. Others have better interpreted these righteousnesses, as those whereby men are justified for nought through God's grace, though by themselves they cannot be righteous, justifications; since the Greek hath not δικαιόσυναι, that is, acts of righteousness; but δικαιώματα, acts of justification. But what meaneth, This was made unto me? What is This? It is perhaps the law? as he had said, and I have kept Thy law; to which he subjoins, This was made unto me, meaning, This was made my law. But we need not delay by expounding in what manner the law of God was made his law. For the Greek words whence these Latin words have been translated, sufficiently declare that it could not have been said of the law, for the word law is in Greek of the masculine gender, and the feminine pronoun is used in the Greek text as well. We must therefore enquire first what was thus made unto him, next in what manner, whatever it may have been, was made unto him. This, he saith, was made unto me: not, This law, for the Greek, as I have said, refuseth this sense. Perhaps then, This night: since the whole of the preceding sentence stands thus: I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season: and have kept Thy law; and the next words are, This was made unto me: since then it is not the law, it must truly be the night which is thus spoken of. What then meaneth, I had the night-season: for I have

sought out Thy righteousnesses? Rather light had come unto him than night, since he sought out the righteousnesses of God. And it is thus rightly understood, It was made unto me, as if it were said, It became night for my sake, that is, that it might profit me. For if that low estate of mortality is not absurdly understood as night, where the hearts of mortals are hid to one another, so that from such darkness innumerable and heavy temptations arise, so that in the same night wild beasts of the forest pass through, the young of the lions roaring, seeking their meat from God; whence of that lion who roareth and seeketh whom he may devour, our Lord saith what I have mentioned above, This night Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you like wheat; that is, in this night, wherein the beasts of the forest roam about, that great lion sought you from God as his prey: indeed this very low estate in the house of this pilgrimage, which is rightly understood as night, profiteth those who are healthfully exercised in it, that they may learn not to be proud; since that is the sin on account of which man was banished into this night. For the beginning of pride is when one departeth from God. But let him who hath been justified for nought, and who hath encountered various temptations of this night that he may profit in this low estate, when he now understandeth, say, what is said some verses below in this Psalm, It is good for me that Thou hast brought me low, that I may learn Thy righteousnesses. For what else meaneth, It is good for me that Thou hast brought me low, save that this low estate which is called night, was made for me, that is, was made that it might profit me? But wherefore this? Because I have sought out Thy righteousnesses, not mine own.

9. We may also so understand what is here said, This was made for me, so that neither the law, nor night be understood, but the pronoun this be taken as it is found in another Psalm, where it is said, One thing have I desired of the Lord, this I will require. He saith not what is this one thing, or what one, of which he said, This I will require; but the feminine gender (hanc requiram) is seemingly put for the neuter. For it is an unusual expression, Unam petii, hanc requiram; where it is not understood what that one is: the more common construction would be, “Unum petii a Domino, hoc requiram, ut inhabitem in domo Domini.” For in these neuters we do not usually look for any neuter which is to be understood, as, for instance, one

good thing, or one gift, or any thing of this sort; but whatever it is, though it have its name of the masculine or feminine gender, or without any gender be set forth in any form of expression, according to a well-known rule it is understood in the neuter gender. In this way therefore the words, Hæc facta est mihi, may have been used, as if it had been said, Hoc factum est mihi. But if we enquire what this be, what he had said above occurs, I have thought upon Thy Name, O Lord, in the night-season, and have kept Thy law. This hath been done for me; that is, my having kept Thy law, was not done through myself, but was done for me, by Thee: because I sought out, not my but Thy righteousnesses. For, it is God, saith the Apostle, that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. For God saith this through the Prophet: And I will cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them. Wherefore since God saith, I will cause you to keep My judgments and do them; he very rightly saith, This hath been made for me: so that when thou askest what that is, he answereth what he had said above, that I might keep the law of God. But since this exposition hath already reached a great length, what followeth will, with the Lord’s help, be better treated with in a fresh beginning.

Discourse XVI

1. Ver. 57. We will now attempt to treat of these verses of this great Psalm, with the will of God; The Lord is my portion; for which some read, My portion, O Lord. Whether this be said, because each one who clingeth unto Him shareth in Him, as it is written, But it is good for me to hold me fast by God; for it is not by themselves being so that men become gods, but by sharing in that one God Who is the true God: or because men choose themselves parts in this world, or take by lot, one man one thing, another another, whence each may live; in a certain sense God is the portion of the pious whereby they may alway live: either sense is not absurd. But let us hear what followeth: I have promised to keep Thy law. What meaneth, My portion, O Lord: I have promised to keep Thy law; save because the Lord will be each man’s portion then, when he hath kept His law?

2. Ver. 58. But how doth he keep it, unless the lifegiving Spirit grant this, and aid him unto this; that the letter may not kill, and that sin, taking occasion by the commandment, may not work in man all manner of

concupiscence. He must therefore be called upon: for thus doth faith gain from Him what the law commandeth: for whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved. Consider therefore what he subjoineth: I entreated Thy face with my whole heart: and saying in what manner he prayed: O be merciful, he saith, unto me, according to Thy word. And as if he had been heard and aided by Him Whom he prayed unto, I thought, he saith, on mine own ways, and turned away my feet unto Thy testimonies. That is, I turned them away from mine own ways, which displeased me, that they might follow Thy testimonies, and there might find a path. For most of the copies have not, Because I thought, as is read in some; but only, I thought. But what is here written, and I turned away my feet: some read, Because I thought, Thou also hast turned away my feet: that this may rather be ascribed to the grace of God, according to the Apostle’s words, For it is God Who worketh in us; unto Whom also it is said, O turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity. If the eyes, lest they behold vanity, why not the feet also, lest they follow error? On which account this also was written: Mine eyes are ever looking unto the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net. But whether, Thou hast turned my feet, or, I have turned, be read, we do this by His means, Whose Presence he prayed for with his whole heart, and unto Whom he said, O be merciful unto me, according to Thy word, that is, according to the word of Thy promise. For the children of the promise are counted for the seed of Abraham.

3. Ver. 60. Lastly, when he had received this blessing of grace, he saith, I was ready, and was not disturbed, that I may keep Thy commandments. Which some have rendered, to keeping Thy commandments, some that I should keep, others to keep, the Greek being τοῦ φυλάξασθαι.

4. Ver. 61. But in what manner he was ready to keep the divine commandments, he hath added, in these words: The bands of the ungodly have surrounded me: but I have not forgotten Thy law. The bands of the ungodly are the hindrances of our enemies, whether spiritual, as the devil and his angels, or carnal, the children of disobedience, in whom the devil worketh. For this word peccatorum is not from ‘peccata,’ ‘sins,’ but from ‘peccatores,’ ‘sinners.’ Therefore when they threaten evils, with which to alarm the righteous, that they may not suffer for the law of God, they, so to

speak, entangle them with bands, with a strong and tough cord of their own. For they draw iniquity like a long rope, and thus endeavour to entangle the holy, and sometimes are allowed so to do. But if they entangle the body, they do not entangle the mind, when it hath not forgotten the law of God; because the word of God is not bound.

5. Ver. 62. At midnight, he saith, I rise to give thanks unto Thee: because of Thy righteous judgments. This very fact, that the bands of the ungodly surround the righteous, is one of the righteous judgments of God. On which account the Apostle Peter saith, The time is come when judgment must begin at the house of the Lord: and if it first begin at us, he addeth, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? For he saith this of the persecutions which the Church suffered, when the bands of the ungodly surrounded them. I suppose, therefore, that by midnight we should understand the heavier seasons of tribulation. In which he said, I arose: since He did not so afflict him, as to cast him down; but tried him, so that he arose, that is, that through this very tribulation he might advance unto a bolder confession.

6. Ver. 63, 64, But, since these things are brought about by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, the Saviour Himself addeth the voice of His own Person to His Body through the medium of this prophecy. For I imagine that what followeth, I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and keep Thy commandments, doth relate to the Head Himself, as it is in the Epistle which is inscribed to the Hebrews: Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren. And a little lower, Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part in the same. And what else meaneth this than, He became their companion? For we should not be made sharers in His Divinity, unless He were made a sharer in our mortal nature. For in the Gospel it is said in these words, that we have been made sharers in His Divine nature: To them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. But that this might be so, since He also hath become a sharer in

our mortal nature, it is also said, And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Through this sharing of His in our flesh, grace is ministered unto us, that we may have a chaste fear of God, and may keep His commandments. Therefore Jesus Himself speaketh in this prophecy: some things in His Members and in the Unity of His Body, as if in one man diffused over the whole world, and growing up in succession throughout the roll of ages: and some things in Himself our Head. Whence are these words: I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and keep Thy commandments. And on this account, that since He became the companion of His brethren, God of men, the Immortal of the mortal, for this reason the seed fell upon the earth, that by its death it might produce much fruit; he next addeth concerning this very fruit, The earth, O Lord, is full of Thy mercy. And whence this, save when the ungodly is justified? That we may make progress in the knowledge of this grace, he addeth, O teach me Thy righteousnesses!

Discourse XVII

1. Ver. 65. These verses of this Psalm, on which by the will of God we are about to speak, commence thus: O Lord, Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant: according unto Thy word; or rather, according unto Thine utterance. The Greek word χρηστόης hath been variously rendered by our translators by the words sweetness and goodness. But since sweetness may exist also in evil, since all unlawful and unclean things afford pleasure, and it may also exist in that carnal pleasure which is permitted; we ought to understand the word sweetness, which the Greeks termed χρηστότης, of spiritual blessings: for on this account our translators have preferred to render it by goodness. I think therefore that nothing else is meant by the words, Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant, than this, Thou hast made me feel delight in that which is good. For when that which is good delighteth, it is a great gift of God. But when the good work which the law commandeth is done from a fear of punishment, not from a delight in righteousness, when God is dreaded, not loved; it is the act of a slave, not of a freeman. Now the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for ever: for perfect love casteth out fear. Thou hast, therefore, dealt in sweetness with Thy servant, O Lord: by making him a son, who was a

slave: according unto Thine utterance, that is, according unto Thy promise; that the promise might be sure to all the seed through faith.

2. Ver. 66. O learn me sweetness, and understanding, and knowledge, he saith, for I have believed Thy commandments. He prayeth these things may be increased and perfected; for how could he who had just said, Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant, say, O learn me sweetness, save in this sense, that the grace of God may become more and more known unto him through the sweetness of goodness? For they who said, Lord, increase our faith, had faith. And as long as we live in this world, these are the words of those who are making progress. But he addeth, understanding, or, as most copies read, discipline. Now the word discipline, for which the Greeks use παιδεία, is employed in Scripture, where instruction through tribulation is to be understood: according to the words, Whom the Lord loveth He disciplineth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. In the literature of the Church this is usually called discipline, translated from the Greek παιδεία. For this word is used in the Greek in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the Latin translator saith, “No discipline for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that have been exercised thereby.” He therefore toward whom the Lord dealeth in sweetness, that is, he in whom He mercifully inspires delight in that which is good; to speak more plainly, he unto whom is given by God the love of God, and the love of our neighbour on account of God; he indeed ought to pray instantly, that this gift may be so increased unto him, that he may not only despise all other delights in comparison with it, but also that he may endure any amount of sufferings for its sake. Thus is discipline healthfully added to sweetness. This discipline ought not to be desired, and prayed for, for a small measure of grace and goodness, that is, holy love; but for so great, as may not be extinguished by the weight of the chastening; but, like a great conflagration under the impulse of the wind, in proportion as it is withstood, may rekindle with redoubled ardour. For this reason it was not enough to say, Thou hast dealt in sweetness toward Thy servant: without again praying that He would teach him sweetness, so much in fact as to enable him to endure with the utmost patience the discipline. In the third place is mentioned knowledge; since, if knowledge in its greatness outstrips the increase of love, it doth not

edify, but puffeth up. When therefore love in the sweetness of goodness shall be so strong, as that it cannot be extinguished by the tribulations which discipline useth; then will knowledge be useful, whereby a man learneth what he hath himself deserved, and what hath been given him of God, through which he discovereth that he can do what he knew not that he could do, and what he could not do by any means by himself.

3. But in that he saith, not, Give unto me; but, O learn me; how is the sweetness taught, if it be not given? Since many know what doth not delight them, and find no sweetness in things of which they have knowledge. For sweetness cannot be learnt, unless it please. Also discipline, which signifieth the tribulation which chasteneth, is learnt by receiving; that is, not by hearing, or reading, or thinking, but by feeling. But knowledge, which he hath placed third of the things of which he says, Teach me, is given by teaching. For what is to teach, save to give knowledge? and these two things are so mutually connected, that the one cannot exist without the other. For no one is taught except he learn, and no one learneth save he be taught. And therefore if a pupil be not able to understand what is said by the teacher, the teacher cannot say, I taught him, but he did not learn: though he may say, I told him what was to be said, but he did not learn; because he had no perception, no comprehension, no understanding. For, in truth, he too would have learnt, if the teacher had taught. And therefore God, when He would teach, first giveth understanding, without which a man cannot learn those things which pertain to the divine doctrine: whence also the Psalmist a little below saith, O give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments. A man may then, when he wisheth to teach any one, say those words which our Lord said to His disciples, after He rose from the dead: but he cannot do what He did. For the Gospel saith, Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them. But what He said unto them, is read there: but they understood what He said, because He opened unto them the means of understanding it. God therefore teacheth sweetness by inspiring delight, He teacheth discipline by tempering tribulation, he teacheth knowledge by insinuating perception. Since then there are some things which we learn merely that we may know them, others that we may also do them; when God teacheth them, He so teacheth that we may know what ought to be known, by

opening the truth; so teacheth that we may do what we ought to do, by inspiring sweetness. For it is no idle prayer to Him: Teach me that I may do Thy will. He saith, Teach me that I may do, not merely that I may know. For the righteous deeds we work, are the fruits which we render unto our Landlord; but Scripture saith, The Lord shall give sweetness, and our land shall yield her increase. But what is that land, save that concerning which it is said to Him Who giveth sweetness, My soul gaspeth unto Thee as a thirsty land.

4. After saying, O learn me sweetness, discipline, and knowledge, he addeth, for I have believed Thy commandments: and herein we may justly enquire, why he said not, I obeyed, rather than, I believed. For commandments are one thing, promises another. We undertake to obey commandments, that we may deserve to receive promises. We therefore believe promises, obey commandments. What then meaneth, I have believed Thy commandments, save this, I believe that Thou didst command them; Thou, not some human being, although they have been ministered unto men through men? Since therefore I believed that they were Thy commandments, let that faith of mine whereby I believed this, gain from Thee grace whereby I may do what Thou hast commanded. For if a man were to command me this outwardly, would he assist me inwardly to do what he ordered? Teach me therefore sweetness by inspiring charity, teach me discipline by giving patience, teach me knowledge by enlightening my understanding: for I have believed Thy commandments. I have believed that Thou Who art God, and Who givest unto man whence Thou mayest cause him to do what Thou commandest, hast commanded these things.

5. Ver. 67. Before I was humbled, I went wrong; wherefore I have kept Thy word; or, as some have it more closely, Thy utterance, that is, lest I should be humbled again. This is better referred to that humiliation which took place in Adam, in whom the whole human creature, as it were, being corrupted at the root, as it refused to be subject to truth, was made subject to vanity. Which it was profitable to the vessels of mercy to feel, that by throwing down pride, obedience might be loved, and misery perish never again to return.

6. Ver. 68. Sweet art Thou, O Lord; or, as many have it, Sweet art Thou, even Thou, O Lord. Some also, Sweet art Thou, or, Good art Thou: as we have before treated of this word: and in Thy sweetness teach me Thy statutes. He truly desireth to do the righteousnesses of God, since he desireth to learn them in His sweetness from Him unto Whom he hath said, Sweet art Thou, O Lord.

7. Ver. 69. Next he saith, The iniquity of the proud hath been multiplied upon me: of those, that is, whom it profited not that human nature was humbled after it went wrong. But I will search Thy commandments with my whole heart. Howsoever, he saith, iniquity shall abound, love shall not grow cold in me. He, as it were, saith this, who in His sweetness learneth the righteousnesses of God. For in proportion as the commandments of Him Who aideth us are the more sweet, so much the more doth he who loveth Him search after them, that he may perform them when known, and may learn them by doing them; because they are more perfectly understood when they are performed.

8. Ver. 70. Their heart is curdled as milk. Whose, save the proud, whose iniquity he hath said hath been multiplied upon him? But he wisheth it to be understood by this word, and in this passage, that their heart hath become hard. It is used also in a good sense, as in the 67th Psalm, A hill that is cheesed, a rich hill; and is understood to mean, full of grace: for this word, some have also interpreted curdled. But see what he contrasts on his own part with their hardness of heart: But I, he saith, delight in Thy law. What law? One that is most just, and most merciful; whence it is said unto Him, And have mercy upon me according to Thy law. He resisteth the proud, that they may become hardened; but giveth grace to the humble, that they may love obedience, and receive excellence. For by delight in this law voluntary humiliation is preserved, so that penal humiliation be escaped, of which he presently speaketh.

9. Ver. 71. It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me: that I might learn Thy righteousnesses. He hath said something kindred to this above: Before I was troubled, I went wrong: therefore have I kept Thy word. For by the fruit itself he sheweth that it was a good thing for him to be humbled; but in the former passage he hath stated the cause also, in that he had felt

beforehand that humiliation which resulted from his punishment, when he went wrong. But in these words, Wherefore have I kept Thy word: and again in these, That I might learn Thy righteousnesses: he seemeth to me to have signified, that to know these is the same thing as to keep them, to keep them the same thing as to know them. For Christ knew what He reproved; and yet he reproved sin, though it is said of Him that He knew not sin. He knew therefore by a kind of knowledge, and again he knew not by a kind of ignorance. Thus also many learn the righteousnesses of God, and learn them not. For they know them in a certain way; and again do not know them from a kind of ignorance, since they do them not. In this sense the Psalmist therefore is to be understood to have said, That I might learn Thy righteousnesses, meaning that kind of knowledge whereby they are performed.

10. Ver. 72. But that this is not gained, save through love, wherein he who doeth them hath delight, on which account it is said, In Thy sweetness teach me Thy righteousnesses: the following verse sheweth, wherein he saith, The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver: so that love loveth the law of God more than avarice loveth thousands of gold and silver.

Discourse XVIII

1. Ver. 73. When God made man out of dust, and gave him life with His breath, it is not there mentioned that He made him with His hands. Why therefore some should have thought that God created every thing else by His word, but man, as if the chief part of His creation, with His hands, I do not see: save perhaps, because the human body is said to have been formed out of dust, they imagine it could not have been created except by hands; nor do they heed that as it is written in the Gospel concerning the word of God, All things were made by Him, this cannot be consistent, unless the human body also was made by the Word. But they adduce testimony from this Psalm, saying, Behold where a man so clearly crieth out, (ver. 73.) Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me. As if it were not also openly said, I will consider the heavens, the work of Thy fingers: nor less openly, And the heavens are the work of Thy hands; and even more openly, and His hands formed the dry land. The hands of God are therefore the power of God. Or

if the plural number moveth them, since it is not said, Thy hand, but, Thy hands; let them understand by the hands of God the power and wisdom of God, both of which titles are given to one Christ; Who is also understood under the figure, Arm of the Lord, where it is read, And unto whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Or let them understand by the hands of God, the Son and the Holy Spirit; since the Holy Spirit worketh conjointly with the Father and the Son: whence saith the Apostle, But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit: he said, one and the self-same; lest as many spirits as works might be imagined, not that the Spirit worketh without the Father and the Son. It is easy therefore to see how the hands of God are to be understood: provided, at the same time, that He be not denied to do those things through His Word which he doth by His hands: nor be considered not to do those things with His hands, which He doth through His word; nor on account of the expression, hands, a bodily form, one left and another right hand; nor on account of the term, word, any oral sound, or passing emotion of the mind, be supposed to exist in God Who worketh.

2. And there have been some who thus distinguished these two words, made and fashioned me, as to say that God made the soul, and fashioned the body; because God saith of the soul, I have made every soul; while it is said of the body, And God formed man of the dust of the ground; as if every thing that was formed were made, although every thing that is made is not also formed. Thus they assert, that the soul was rather made than formed because it is not body, but spirit; as if it were not written, He who formed the spirit of man within him. Nevertheless, when each of these words is used of man in the same passage, and since each element of man, that is, both soul and body, are not denied to be divinely created: special epithets are with some elegance applied to each, respectively; so that the soul is understood to be made, but the body to be formed, or fashioned, or shaped. (For some translators have not chosen to put finxerunt me, but plasmaverunt; being better pleased to derive an indifferent Latin word from the Greek, than to say finxerunt, which is sometimes used also for making a counterfeit.)

3. But is this said in respect of Adam? from whom since all men were propagated, what man, since Adam was made, may not say that he himself

also was made by reason of procreation and generation from Adam? Or may it rightly be said, in this sense, Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me, namely, that every man is born even of his parents not without the work of God, God creating, they generating? Since, if the creative power of God be withdrawn from things, they perish: nor is any thing at all, either of the world's elements, or of parents, or of seeds, produced, if God doth not create it. On which account He saith to the prophet Jeremiah, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee. But did God make man without understanding, either the first man, or each man born, so that he now saith unto Him, Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me: O give me understanding? Was not understanding given to human nature itself, that it might thus be distinguished from the herd? Hath it been so deformed by sinning, that even this must needs be formed again in it? On which account also the Apostle saith unto all who belong to the regeneration, Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind: and the understanding is, of course, in the mind. Hence again he saith, Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind; and of those who were not partakers of this regeneration, This I say, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. On account therefore of these inward eyes, whose blindness it is not to understand, that they may be opened, and may be made more and more clear, hearts are purified by faith. For although, unless he understand somewhat, no man can believe in God; nevertheless, by the very faith whereby he believeth, he is helped, that he may understand greater things. For there are some things which we do not believe, save we understand them; and there are other things which we do not understand, save we believe them. For since faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ; how can one believe him who preacheth the faith, if he (to say nothing of other points) understandeth not the very tongue which he speaketh? But unless, on the other hand, there were some things which we cannot understand, unless we believe them first, the prophet would not say, if ye will not believe, ye shall not understand. Our understanding therefore profiteth to the understanding of that which it believeth, and faith profiteth to the believing of that which it understandeth; and the mind itself, in proportion as these things are more and more understood, in the very comprehension of them profiteth. But this doth not take place of its own or natural strength: but by the aid and gift of God; as it happeneth by medicine, not through nature, that the diseased eye recovereth its power of sight. He therefore who saith unto God, O give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments, is not altogether devoid of it, as if a beast; nor in such a state, though a man, as to be reputed among the number of those who walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God. For if he were such, he would not even say this. For the understanding which knoweth from whom understanding should be sought, is not of slight value; and we must reflect in how much deeper a sense the Divine commandments should be understood; since he, who already to such a degree understandeth them, and hath already declared that he hath kept the words of God, still prayeth that understanding may be given him to learn them.

4. The Greek version hath a more concise expression for our, Give me understanding, συνέτισόν με, expressing ‘give understanding’ by the single word συνέτισον, which the Latin cannot do; as if one could not say, Heal me; and it were necessary to say, Give me health, as it is here said, Give me understanding; or, make me whole, as here it may be said, make me intelligent. This indeed an Angel could do: for he said to Daniel, I am come to give thee understanding; and this word is in the Greek, as it is here also, συνέτισαί σε; as if the Latin translator were to render θεραπεῦσαί σε by sanitatem dare tibi. For the Latin interpreter would not make a circumlocution by saying, to give thee understanding, if, as we say from health, “to heal thee,” so one could say from intellect, “to intellectuate thee.” But if an Angel could do this, what reason is there that this man should pray that this be done for him by God? Is it because God had commanded the Angel to do it? Just so: for Christ is understood to have given this command to the Angel, in the passage where the Prophet saith, And it came to pass, when I Daniel had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me the appearance of a man, and I heard a man’s voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Make this man to understand the vision: and in the Greek the same word συνέτισον is used as here. God therefore, of Himself, because He is light,

enlighteneth pious minds, so that they may understand the divine truths which are declared or exhibited. But if He employeth an Angel for His minister towards this object, an Angel may work something in a man's mind, towards his taking in the light of God, and understanding through it; but he is said to give a man understanding, and as it were, so to speak, to intellectuate him; as any one is said to give light to a house, or to illuminate a house, for which he maketh a window; when he doth not penetrate and light it by a light of his own, but merely open an entrance whereby it may be penetrated and enlightened. But neither the sun who lighteneth a house through a window, hath himself created the same house, or the man who made the window in the house; nor hath he commanded him to make it, nor hath he aided the man in making it, or done any thing to open an entrance for the infusion of his beams: whereas God hath created man's mind rational and intellectual, whereby he may take in His light; and He made an Angel such as might work something whereby the human mind might be assisted to take in the light of God; and He so aideth the mind, as to fit it for the reception of angelic working; and He so enlighteneth it of Himself, that not only those things which are displayed by the truth, but even truth itself may be perceived by the mind's eye. But as we have treated with prolixity of these subjects; necessary however to be treated of, in my opinion; let us, putting off our discourse on the remaining verses of this Psalm, close this discourse here.

Discourse XIX

1. Ver. 73. Our Lord Jesus in this Psalm hath through His prophet sought that understanding be given by God to His Body, which is the Church, as if to Himself, to learn the commandments of God. For with Him the life of His Body, that is, of His people, is hid in God, and He Himself, in this very Body of His, suffereth want, and prayeth for that which is needful for His members. Thy hands, he saith, have made me and fashioned me; O give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments. Since Thou, saith he, hast formed me, do Thou new form me; that that may be done in Christ's Body, which the Apostle speaks of, Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

2. Ver. 74. They that fear Thee, he saith, will see me, and be glad: or, as other copies have it, will be joyful: because I have hoped in Thy word: that is, in the things which Thou hast promised, that they may be the sons of promise, the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations are blessed. Who are they who fear God, and whom will they see and be glad, because he hath put his trust in the word of God? Whether it be the body of Christ, that is, the Church, whose words these are through Christ, or within it, and concerning it, these are as it were the words of Christ concerning Himself; are not they themselves among those who fear God? Who then is he whom they see, and are glad? Doth the people see itself, and rejoice; and is it thus written, They who fear Thee shall see me, and be glad, because I have hoped in Thy word; or, as others have more carefully rendered it, I have more hoped: as if he should say, They who fear Thee, shall see Thy Church, and be glad, because I have more hoped in Thy words; since the same persons, who see the Church and are glad, are the Church? But why said he not, They who fear Thee see me, and are glad: whereas he hath written, fear Thee, in the present tense; while the verbs shall see, and shall be glad, are futures? Is it because in the present state there is fear, as long as man’s life is a temptation upon earth; but the gladness which he desired to be understood, will be then, when the righteous shall shine in the kingdom of their Father like the sun. For on this account we read thus in another Psalm also: O how plentiful is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee! Now, therefore, as long as they fear, they do not as yet see; but they will see, and will be glad: because it there also followeth, and that Thou hast perfected for them that hope in Thee; and here, because I have hoped, or have more hoped in Thy words: so that we may understand by the word so compounded, the full sense of which is thus given by the care of a very diligent translator, this, that God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think; so that, because they are above all that we ask or think, it is not enough to hope these things, but we are bound to hope more.

3. Ver. 75, 76. Since then the Church who is in this life still feareth, and doth not as yet behold herself in that kingdom, where her gladness will be free from care, but still toileth among perilous temptations in this world, where she heareth the words, Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed

lest he fall; considering the misery of this mortal state, during which a heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their mother’s womb, till the day that they return in burial to the mother of all things; so that on account of the flesh lusting against the spirit, even the regenerate are compelled to groan beneath its heaviness; considering this then, (ver. 75.) I know, she saith, O Lord, that Thy judgments are righteous, and that in Thy truth Thou hast humbled me. O let Thy merciful kindness be my comfort, according to Thy word unto Thy servant. Mercy and truth are so spoken of in the Divine Word, that, while they are found in many passages, especially in the Psalms, it is also so read in one place, All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. And here indeed he hath placed truth first, whereby we are humbled unto death, by the judgment of Him Whose judgments are righteousness: next mercy, whereby we are renewed unto life, by the promise of Him Whose blessing is His grace. For this reason he saith, according to Thy word unto Thy servant: that is, according to that which Thou hast promised unto Thy servant. Whether therefore it be regeneration whereby we are here adopted among the sons of God, or faith and hope and charity, which three are built up in us, although they come from the mercy of God; nevertheless, in this stormy and troublesome life they are the consolations of the miserable, not the joys of the blessed: for this reason is it said, O let Thy merciful kindness be my comfort.

4. Ver. 77. But since those things are destined to happen after and through these, he next saith, O let Thy loving mercies come upon me, and I shall live. For then indeed I shall truly live, when I shall not be able to fear lest I die. This is styled life absolutely and without any addition; nor is any life save that which is everlasting and blessed understood, as though it alone were to be called life, compared with which that which we now lead ought rather to be called death than life: according to those words in the Gospel, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. Did He add life eternal, or blessed? Again, when speaking of the resurrection of the flesh, He saith, They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life: nor doth He here add everlasting or blessed. So also here: O let Thy loving mercies come upon me, and I shall live: nor doth he here say, I shall live for ever, or, I shall live blissfully, as if it were no other thing to live than to live without any end and without any misery. But what is this a reward for? For Thy law,

he saith, is my meditation. Unless this meditation were in faith, which worketh by love, no man could arrive at that life on account of it. This I have thought it necessary to state, that no man when he hath committed to memory the whole law, and hath repeated it over and over again in constant recollection of it, not silent as to what it enjoineth, yet not living as it enjoineth, may imagine that he hath done what he readeth, Thy law is my meditation; and hence imagine that he shall gain, what in the words above the Psalmist hath prayed for on account of this merit, which he here mentioneth in these words; O let Thy loving mercies come upon me, and I shall live. This meditation is the thought of one who loveth, and who loveth so fervently, that the love of this meditation of his groweth not cold, by howsoever great abundance of others' wickedness it be thronged around.

5. Ver. 78. He then goeth on as follows; Let the proud be confounded, for they have unrighteously practised iniquity against me: but I will be occupied in Thy commandments. Behold, what he saith, the meditation of the law of God, or rather, his meditation the law of God.

6. Ver. 79. Let such as fear Thee, he saith, and have known Thy testimonies, be turned unto me. In some copies, both Greek and Latin, we have found convertantur mihi, which I consider to mean just the same as if it were, ad me. But who is he who saith this? For no mortal will venture to say this, or if he say it, should be listened to. Indeed, it is He who above also hath interposed His own words, saying, I am a partaker with all them that fear Thee. Because He was made sharer in our mortal state, that we might also become partakers in His Divine Nature, we became sharers in One unto life, He a sharer in many unto death. He it is unto Whom they that fear God turn, and who know the testimonies of God, so long before predicted of Him through the Prophets, a little before displayed in His presence through miracles.

7. Ver. 80. O let my heart, he saith, be unspotted in Thy righteousnesses, that I be not ashamed. He returneth to the words of His body, that is, His holy people, and now prayeth that his heart may be made unspotted, that is, the heart of His members; in the righteousnesses of God, not in their own strength: for He hath prayed for this, not presumed upon it. In the words he hath added, that I be not ashamed, there is a resemblance to some of the

earlier verses of this Psalm, where he saith, O that my ways were made so direct, that I might keep Thy righteousnesses! So shall I not be confounded, while I have respect unto all Thy commandments. Whereas there, in the words, O that, he signifieth a wish, he hath here expressed himself in the more open words of one praying: O let my heart be sound: so that in neither of these two sentences, each of which is one and the same, there is found the boldness of one who trusteth in his own free will against grace. While he saith there, so shall I not be confounded: he saith here, that I be not ashamed. The heart then of the members and the body of Christ is made unspotted, through the grace of God, by means of the very Head of that Body, that is, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by the laver of regeneration, wherein all our past sins have been blotted out; through the aid of the Spirit, whereby we lust against the flesh, that we be not overcome in our fight; through the efficacy of the Lord’s Prayer, wherein we say, Forgive us our trespasses. Thus regeneration having been given to us, our conflict having been aided, prayer having been poured forth, our heart is made unspotted, so that we be not ashamed: since this also relateth to the statutes of God, it being enjoined among the rest of His commandments, Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: give, and it shall be given unto you.

Discourse XX

1. Ver. 81. With the Lord’s help, we have undertaken to consider and expound this part of this great Psalm, where it is said, My soul hath failed for Thy salvation: and I have hoped because of Thy word. It is not every failing that should be supposed to be blameable or deserving punishment: there is also a failing that is laudable or desirable. For as these two things, to advance (proficere), and to fail (deficere), are contrary to one another; succeeding is generally taken in a good sense, failing in a bad, when it is not added or understood wherein there is advance or failure: but when it is added, it may be at once a bad thing to advance, and a good thing to fail. For the Apostle saith openly, Shun profane and vain babblings: for they will advance unto more ungodliness: he saith also of some: They shall wax worse. So also failing from a good state towards a bad one, is bad, from a bad state towards a good one, is good. For it is said of a good failing: My soul hath a desire and failing to enter into the courts of the Lord. So also

here he saith not, faileth away from Thy salvation, but faileth for Thy salvation, that is, towards Thy salvation. This losing ground is therefore good: for it doth indicate a longing after good, not as yet indeed gained, but most eagerly and earnestly desired. But who saith this, save the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, the peculiar people, longing for Christ from the origin of the human race even unto the end of this world, in the persons of those who, each in his own time, have lived, are living, or are to live here? Witness the most holy old man Simeon, who when he had taken Him up, an infant, in his arms, said, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation. For he had received a divine oracle, that he should not taste of death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Now we must believe that there was such a longing in all the saints of former times, as there was in this old man. Whence also our Lord Himself saith to His disciples, Many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them; so that their own words also are recognised in this passage, My soul hath failed for Thy salvation. Neither at that time, then, had this longing of the Saints found rest, nor is it now at rest in the body of Christ, which is the Church, until the end of the world, until the Desire of all nations come, as is promised through the Prophet. Wherefore the Apostle saith, Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also which love His appearing. This desire then of which we are now speaking, ariseth from the love of His appearing; of which he also saith, When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. The first seasons of the Church, therefore, had Saints, before the Virgin's delivery, who desired the advent of His Incarnation: but these times, since He hath ascended into heaven, have Saints who desire His manifestation to judge the quick and the dead. Nor hath this desire of the Church had any rest from the beginning unto the end of the world, save during the short season when He was here in the flesh with His disciples, so that the voice of the whole Body of Christ groaning in this life maybe conveniently understood, My soul hath failed for thy salvation, and I have hoped because of Thy word: that is, of Thy promise; a hope which causeth us to await with patience that which is not seen by those who believe. Here also the Greek hath the word ἐπήλπισα, which some of our translators have preferred rendering by, hoped-more; since beyond doubt it will be greater than can be described.

2. Ver. 82. Mine eyes, he saith, have failed for Thy word, saying, O when wilt Thou comfort me? Behold that praiseworthy and blessed failing, in the eyes again, but his inner eyes, not arising from infirmity of mind, but from the strength of his longing for the promise of God: for this he saith, for Thy word. But in what sense can such eyes say, When wilt Thou comfort me? save when we pray and groan with such earnestness and ardent expectation. For the tongue, not the eyes, is wont to speak: but in some sense the voice of the eyes is the longing of prayer. But in the words, When wilt thou comfort me? he sheweth that he endureth as it were delay. Whence is this also, How long, Lord, wilt Thou punish me? And this is done either that the happiness may be the sweeter when deferred, or this is the sentiment of those who long, since the space of time, which may be short to Him Who cometh to their aid, is tedious to the loving. But God knoweth what he doth and when, for He hath ordered all things in measure and number and weight.

3. Ver. 83. But when spiritual desires burn, carnal desires without doubt cool: on this account followeth, Since I am become like a bottle in the frost, I do not forget Thy righteousnesses. Truly he desireth this mortal flesh to be understood by the bottle, the heavenly blessing by the frost, whereby the lusts of the flesh as it were by the binding of the frost become sluggish; and hence it ariseth that the righteousnesses of God do not slip from the memory, as long as we do not meditate apart from them; since what the Apostle saith is brought to pass: Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. Therefore when he had said, For I have become like a bottle in the frost, he added, and I do not forget Thy righteousnesses: that is, I forget them not, because I have become such. For the fervour of lust hath cooled, that the memory of love might glow.

4. Ver. 84. How many are the days of Thy servant? when wilt Thou be avenged of them that persecute me? In the Apocalypse, these are the words of the Martyrs, and long-suffering is enjoined them until the number of their brethren be fulfilled. The body of Christ then is asking concerning its days,

what they are to be in this world, and that no man might suppose that the Church would cease to exist here before the end of the world came, and that some time would elapse in this world, while the Church was now no more on earth; therefore, when he had enquired concerning the days, he added also respecting the judgment, shewing indeed that the Church would exist on earth until the judgment, when vengeance shall fall upon Her persecutors. But if any one wonder why he should ask that question, to which when asked by the disciples, their Master replied, It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power; why should we not believe that in this passage of the Psalm it was prophesied that they should ask this very question, and that the words of the Church, which were so long before uttered here, were fulfilled in their question?

5. Ver. 85. In what followeth: The wicked have told me pleasant tales: but not like Thy law, O Lord: the Latin translators have endeavoured to render the Greek ἀδολεσχίας, which cannot be expressed in one Latin word, so that some have rendered it ‘delights,’ and others ‘fablings,’ so that we must understand to be meant some kind of compositions, but in discourse of a nature to give pleasure. Both secular literature, and the Jewish book entitled Deuterosis, containing besides the canon of divine Scripture thousands of tales, comprise these in their different sects and professions; the vain and wandering loquacity of heretics holds them also. All these he wished to be considered as wicked, by whom he saith that ἀδολεσχίαι were related to him, that is, compositions which gave pleasure solely in their style: But not, he addeth, as Thy law, O Lord; because truth, not words, pleases me therein.

6. Ver. 86. Lastly, he addeth, All Thy commandments are truth: they have persecuted me unjustly; O be Thou my help. And the whole sense dependeth upon the foregoing: How many are the days of Thy servant: when wilt Thou be avenged of them that persecute me? For that they may persecute me, they have related to me these pleasant tales; but I have preferred Thy law to them, which on that account hath pleased me more, because all Thy commandments are true; not as in their discourses, where vanity aboundeth. And for this reason they have persecuted me falsely,

because in me they have persecuted nothing save the truth. Therefore help Thou me, that I may struggle for the truth even unto death; because this is at once Thy commandment, and therefore it is also the truth.

7. Ver. 87. When the Church acted thus, She suffered what he hath added, They had almost made an end of me upon earth: a great slaughter of martyrs having been made, while they confess and preach the truth. But since it is not in vain said, O help Thou me; he addeth, But I forsook not Thy commandments.

8. Ver. 88. And that She might persevere unto the end, O quicken me, he saith, after Thy loving mercy: and so shall I keep the testimonies of Thy mouth; where the Greek hath Μαρτύρια. This was not to be passed over in silence, on account of that sweetest name of Martyrs, who beyond doubt when so great cruelty of the persecutors was raging, that the Church was almost made an end of upon earth, would never have kept the testimonies of God, unless that had been vouchsafed them which is here spoken of, O quicken me after Thy loving-kindness. For they were quickened, lest by loving life, they should deny the life, and by denying it, should lose it: and thus they who for life refused to forsake the truth, lived by dying for the truth.

Discourse XXI

1. Ver. 89. The man who speaketh in this Psalm, as if he were tired of human mutability, whence this life is full of temptations, among his tribulations, on account of which he had above said, The wicked have persecuted me; and, They have almost made an end of me upon earth; burning with longings for the heavenly Jerusalem; looked up to the realms above, and said, O Lord, Thy word endureth for ever in heaven: that is, among Thy Angels who serve everlastingly in Thine armies, without desertion.

2. Ver. 90. But the next verse, after heaven, pertaineth consequently to earth. For this is one verse of the eight which relate to this letter. For eight verses are appended to each of these Hebrew letters, (apices,) until this long Psalm be ended. Thy truth also remaineth from one generation to the other: Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth. Beholding

therefore the earth next after heaven with the gaze of a faithful mind, he findeth in it generations which are not in heaven, and saith, Thy truth remaineth from one generation to the other: signifying all generations by this expression, from which the Truth of God was never absent in His saints, at one time fewer, at one time more in number, according as the times happened or shall happen to vary; or wishing two particular generations to be understood, one pertaining to the Law and the Prophets, another to the Gospel. And as if opening the reason why truth is never wanting to these generations even, he addeth, Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth: meaning by the earth those that are on the earth. But other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. For no other than Christ was also the foundation of that generation which belonged to the Law and the Prophets, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. Or are Moses and the Prophets to be counted as the sons of the bondwoman who bore sons unto slavery, not of the freewoman, who is the mother of us all; to whom a man shall say, Mother Sion; and He was born in her, and the Most High shall stablish her? For He is Himself Most High with His Father, and for our sake was born most humble of His mother; since He Who was God above her, became a man in her. On this foundation then, O Lord, hast Thou founded the earth, and it abideth, since, firmly grounded on such a foundation, it shall not move at any time; abiding most truly among them unto whom Thou wilt give eternal life. But those whom the bondwoman brought forth, belonging to the Old Testament, in the figures of which, nevertheless, the New lay hid, because they savoured of nothing save earthly promises, do not abide. For the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for ever.

3. Ver. 91. Day continueth according to Thy ordinance. For all these things are day: and this is the day which the Lord hath made: let us rejoice and be glad in it: and let us walk honestly as in the day. For all things serve Thee. He said all things of some: all which belong to this day, serve Thee. For the ungodly of whom it is said, I have compared thy mother unto the night, do not serve Thee.

4. Ver. 92. He then looketh back towards the source of this earth’s deliverance, which caused it to abide when founded; and addeth, If my

delight had not been in Thy law, I should perchance have perished in my humiliation. This is the law of faith, not a vain faith, but that which worketh through love. Through this grace is gained, which maketh men courageous in temporal tribulation, that they may not perish in the humiliation of mortality.

5. Ver. 93. I will never forget, he saith, Thy righteousnesses, for with them Thou hast quickened me. Behold how it was that he did not perish in his humiliation. For, save God quickeneth, what is man, who can indeed kill, but cannot quicken himself?

6. Ver. 94. He next addeth: I am Thine: O save me, for I have sought Thy righteousnesses. We must not understand lightly the words, I am Thine. For what is not His? Because God is in heaven, are we to suppose that there is any thing on earth which is not His; when another Psalm saith, The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is: the compass of the world, and they that dwell therein. Why then is it that the Psalmist hath commended himself unto God somewhat in a more familiar sense, in these words, I am Thine: O save me; save because he wished it to be understood that he had desired to be his own only to his harm, which is the first and the greatest evil of disobedience? and as if he should say, I wished to be my own, and I lost myself: I am Thine, he saith, O save me, for I have sought Thy righteousnesses; not my own inclinations, whereby I was my own, but Thy righteousnesses, that I might now be Thine.

7. Ver. 95. The ungodly, he saith, have awaited me that they might destroy me; but I have understood Thy testimonies. What meaneth, have awaited me that they might destroy me? does it mean that they beset the road with an ambush, waiting that they might slay him when he passed? Did he then fear that he should perish altogether at the death of his body? God forbid! and what meaneth, have awaited me, save that he should consent with them unto iniquity? For then they would destroy him. And he hath said why he hath not perished: I understood Thy testimonies. The Greek word, Μαρτύρια, soundeth more familiarly to the ears of the Church. For though they should slay me not consenting unto them, yet while I confessed Thy testimonies (martyria) I should not perish; but they who, that they might destroy me, were waiting till I should consent unto them, tortured me even

when I did confess them. Yet he did not leave that which he had understood, looking on it and seeing an end without end, if only he should persevere unto the end.

8. Ver. 96. Lastly, he next saith, I have seen an end of all consummation: but Thy commandment is exceeding broad. For he had entered into the sanctuary of God, and had understood the end. Now all consummation appeareth to me in this place to signify, the striving even unto death for the truth, and the endurance of every evil for the true and chief good: the end of which consummation is to excel in the kingdom of Christ, which hath no end; and there to have without death, without pain, and with great honour, life, acquired by the death of this life, and by sorrows and reproaches. But in what he hath added, Thy commandment is exceeding broad; I understand only love. For what would it have profited him, whatever death impended over him, in the midst of whatsoever torment, to confess those testimonies, if love were not in the confessor? Let us hear the Apostle: though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Now the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which is given us. In this shedding abroad there is breadth, in which we walk even in a strait path without straitness, by the gift of Him unto Whom it is said, Thou shalt make room enough under me for me to go, and my footsteps shall not slide. Broad therefore is the commandment of charity, that twofold commandment, whereby we are enjoined to love God and our neighbour. But what is broader than that, on which hang all the Law and the Prophets?

Discourse XXII

1. Ver. 97. We have frequently admonished you, that love was to be understood by that praiseworthy breadth, by means of which, while we do the commandments of God, we feel no straitness. On this account also after saying above in this great Psalm, Thy commandment is exceeding broad: in the following verse he sheweth wherefore it is broad: what love have I unto Thy law, O Lord! Love is therefore the breadth of the commandment. For how can it be that what God commandeth to be loved, be loved, and yet the commandment itself be not loved? For this itself is the law; in all the day, he saith, is my study in it. Behold how I have loved it, that in the whole day my study is in it; or rather, as the Greek hath it, all the day long, which

more fully expresses the continuance of meditation. Now that is to be understood through all time; which is, for ever. By such love lust is driven out: lust, which repeatedly opposeth our performing the commandments of the law, when the flesh lusteth against the spirit: against which the spirit lusting, ought so to love the law of God, that it be its study during the whole day. But the Apostle saith, Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. This is the faith which worketh by love; since it prayeth for the good Spirit by seeking, asking, knocking, through Whom love itself is shed abroad in our hearts. For all who are led by this Spirit of God, are the sons of God; who are received that they may sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, the servant being driven out, who doth not remain in the house for ever; that is, Israel according to the flesh, unto whom it is said, When ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the East, and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last. But the Gentiles, saith the Vessel of Election, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. Thus they became the enemies of Him who here speaketh in the prophecy.

2. Ver. 98. And he then addeth: Thou hast made me to understand Thy commandment above mine enemies; for it is ever with me. For they have indeed a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God’s righteousness, they go about to establish their own righteousness, not being subject to the righteousness of God. But the Psalmist, who understandeth the commandment of God above these his enemies, wishes to be found with the Apostle, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Christ, which is of God; not that the Law which his enemies read is not of God, but because they do not understand it, like him who understandeth it above his enemies, by clinging to the Stone upon which they stumbled. For Christ is the end of the law for

righteousness to every one that believeth; that they may be justified freely through His grace; not like those who imagine that they obey the law of their own strength, and are therefore, though by God’s law, yet still endeavouring to set up their own righteousness; but as the son of promise, who hungering and athirst after it, by seeking, by asking, by knocking, as it were begs it of the Father, that being adopted he may receive it through His only-begotten Son. But when would he thus have understood the commandment of God, unless He Himself had caused him to understand it, unto Whom he saith, Thou hast made me to understand Thy commandment above mine enemies? For those his enemies, born, as it were, of Agar, unto bondage, sought from the same commandment temporal rewards; and therefore it was not unto them for ever, as it was unto this man. For they who have translated for ever have rendered better than they who have written for an age, since at the end of time there can be no longer a commandment of the law. In this sense indeed there will be none, none written in visible tablets and books; but in the tablets of the heart, the love of God and of our neighbour will abide for ever; on which twofold commandment the whole Law and the Prophets hang; and He Who gave the commandment will Himself be the reward of the keeping of this commandment, and He Who is loved will be the reward of love, when God shall be all in all.

3. Ver. 99. But what meaneth the following verse, I have more understanding than my teachers? Who is he who had more understanding than all his teachers? Who, I ask, is he, who dareth to prefer himself in understanding above all the Prophets, who not only by speaking taught with so excellent authority those who lived with them, but also their posterity by writing? On Solomon indeed such wisdom was conferred, that he seemeth to have been preferred to all those who were before him; but it is not to be believed that he could here have been prophesied of by his father David; chiefly because what is here said, I have refrained my feet from every evil way, could not have been spoken in Solomon’s person. Moreover if, and this is more probable, this prophet foretels Christ, at one time in the Head which is the Saviour Himself, at another in the Body which is the Church, uttering the words of prophecy, and making it seem as though one spake, on account of that great mystery, where it is said, And they two shall be one

flesh; I recognise plainly Him Who had more understanding than His teachers, since when He was a boy of twelve years of age, Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, and was found by His parents after three days' space, sitting in the temple among the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions; when all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. And justly, since He had already said through this prophecy, I have more understanding than my teachers. For He meaneth all men, not God the Father, to be understood; of Whom the Son Himself hath said, As My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things. It is very difficult to understand this of the Person of the Word; unless we can comprehend that it is the same thing for the Son to be taught as to be begotten of the Father. For to another it is one thing to be, another to have been taught, but to Him it is the same thing to be, and to have been taught; indeed from Whom He hath His Being, from the Same hath He therewith His teaching. But He is more easily understood to have learnt from the Father what He spoke, in the character of man, when He took upon Himself the form of a servant; for when He had assumed this form, men of more advanced age might think Him fit to be taught as a boy; but He Whom the Father taught, had more understanding than all His teachers. For Thy testimonies, He saith, are my study. For this reason He had more understanding than all His teachers, because He studied the testimonies of God, which, as concerning Himself, He knew better than they, when He spoke these words: Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in His light. But I have greater witness than that of John. Such testimonies He studied, when He had more understanding than all His teachers.

4. Ver. 100. But these teachers may be understood very reasonably to be those aged men, of whom he presently saith, I am wiser than mine elders. And this seemeth to me to be repeated here thus, that that age of His which is well known to us in the Gospel might be called to our remembrance; the age of boyhood, during which He was sitting among the aged, understanding more than all His teachers. For the smaller and the greater in age are wont to be termed younger and elder, although neither of them hath arrived at or approached old age; although if we are concerned to seek in

the Gospel the express term, elders, more than whom He understood, we find it when the Scribes and Pharisees said unto Him, Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. Behold the transgression of the tradition of the elders is objected to Him. But He who was wiser than His elders, let us hear what answer He made them. Why do ye also, He asked, transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? Then a little after, that not only Himself Who is the Head of the Body, but also the Body itself and its members might be wiser than the elders, whose tradition was held concerning the washing of hands, calling the crowd together He said unto them, Hear and understand. As much as to say, Do ye also understand more than those elders, so that it may be clear that the prophecy was declared concerning yourselves also, in these words, I am wiser than mine elders: and that it might be adapted not to the Head alone, but to the Body also, and thus to the whole Christ. Not what entereth into the mouth defileth a man, but those things which proceed out of the mouth defile a man. This those elders who had handed down their commandments as if they were of great consequence, concerning the washing of hands, understood not. The very members also of that Head Who understood more than the elders, understood not as yet what He had said. Lastly, Peter, after a few sentences, answering, said unto Him, Declare unto us this parable. He still imagined that what the Lord had spoken without any figures, was a parable. But He replied: Are ye also yet without understanding? Do ye not understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and they defile the man. Are ye yet without understanding, and are ye not wiser than those elders? But, certainly, when we have heard such a Master, our Head, each one of us may say, I am wiser than the elders. For what he proceedeth to add, suiteth the Body also: Because I have sought out Thy commandments. Thy commandments, not the commandments of men: Thy commandments, not the commandments of the elders, who wishing to be teachers of the law, understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. It is justly replied to those who preferred the authority of their commandments to the Truth, by a reference to those commandments, which must be carefully sought out, in order that they may be understood better than they were by those elders: Why do ye also transgress the commandments of God to establish your tradition?

5. Ver. 101. But what cometh next, doth not seem to apply to the Head, but to the Body: I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Thy words. For that Head of ours, the Saviour of the Body Himself, could not be borne by carnal lust into any evil way, so that it should be needful for Him to refrain His feet, as though they would go thither of their own accord; which we do, when we refrain our evil desires, which He had not, that they may not follow evil ways. For thus we are able to keep the word of God, if we go not after our evil lusts, so that they attain unto the evils desired; but rather curb them with the spirit which lusteth against the flesh, that they may not drag us away, seduced and overthrown, through evil ways.

6. Ver. 102. I have not shrunk, he saith, from Thy judgments: for Thou hast laid down a law for me. He hath stated what made him fear, so that he refrained his feet from every evil way. For what meaneth, I have not shrunk from Thy judgments; save what he saith in another place, I have been afraid of Thy judgments? I have believed them perseveringly: for Thou hast laid down a law for me. Thou, more inward than my inmost self, Thou hast laid down a law within my heart by Thy Spirit, as it were by Thy fingers, that I might not fear it as a slave without love, but might love it with a chaste fear as a son, and fear it with a chaste love.

7. Ver. 103. Consider then what followeth: O how sweet are Thy words unto my throat! or, as it is more literally rendered from the Greek, Thy utterances, above honey and the honeycomb unto my mouth. This is that sweetness which the Lord giveth, So that the earth yield her increase: that we do good truly in a good spirit, that is, not from the dread of carnal evil, but from the gladness of spiritual good. Some copies indeed do not read honeycomb: but the majority do. Now the open teaching of wisdom is like unto honey; but that is like the comb which is squeezed from the more recondite mysteries, as if from cells of wax, by the mouth of the teacher, as if he were chewing it: but it is sweet to the mouth of the heart, not to the mouth of the flesh.

8. Ver. 104. But what mean the words, Through Thy commandments I get understanding? For the expressions, I have understood Thy commandments: and, I get understanding through Thy commandments, are different. Something else then he signifieth that he hath understood from the commandments of God: that is, as far as I can see, he saith, that by obeying God’s commandments he hath arrived at the comprehension of those things which he had longed to know. On which account it is written, If thou desire wisdom, keep the commandments, and the Lord shall give her unto thee: lest any one, inverting the natural order of things, before he hath the humility of obedience, may wish to arrive at the height of wisdom, which he cannot reach, save he hath approached it in regular order. Let him therefore hear these words: Seek not out the things that are too high for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength, but what the Lord hath commanded thee, think thereon ever. Thus man reacheth the wisdom of hidden things through obedience to the commandments. But when he had said, What the Lord hath commanded thee, think thereon; he added, ever, because obedience must both be kept, that wisdom may be received, and when wisdom hath been received, obedience must not be given up. These then are the words of the spiritual members of Christ, Through Thy commandments I get understanding. For the body of Christ rightly saith these words in those, to whom, while they keep the commandments, a richer knowledge of wisdom is given on account of this very keeping of the commandments. Therefore, he addeth, I hate all evil ways. For it is needful that the love of righteousness should hate all iniquity: that love, which is so much the stronger, in proportion as the sweetness of a higher wisdom doth inspire it, a wisdom given unto him who obeyeth God, and getteth understanding from His commandments.

Discourse XXIII

1. Ver. 105. We undertake, according to the strength which the Lord giveth, to examine and treat of these verses of this Psalm, the first of which is, Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths. The word lantern appears in the word light; my feet are also repeated in my paths. What then meaneth Thy Word? Is it He who was in the beginning God with God, that is, the Word by Whom all things were made? It is not thus. For that Word is

a light, but is not a lantern. For a lantern is a creature, not a creator; and it is lighted by participation of an unchangeable light. This was John, of whom God the Word saith, He was a burning and a shining lantern. But he is both light and lantern; nevertheless compared with the Word, of Whom it is said, The Word was God, he was not the light; but was sent to give witness of the light. For that was the true light, which was not lighted as a man, but which lighteth every man. But unless a lantern also were a light, He would not say to His Apostles, Ye are the light of the world, when they had heard that they might not imagine themselves to be that, which He was Who had said this; for of Himself also He in a certain passage saith, I am the light of the world; He saith unto them of themselves, A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men; that they might know that they were, as it were, lanterns lit by that light which shineth without change. For no creature, howsoever rational and intellectual, is lighted by itself, but is lighted by participation of eternal Truth: although sometimes day is spoken of, not meaning the Lord, but that day which the Lord hath made, and on account of which it is said, Come unto Him, and be lightened. On account of which participation, inasmuch as the Mediator Himself became Man, He is styled lantern in the Apocalypse. But this sense is a solitary one; for it cannot be divinely spoken of any of the saints, nor in any wise lawfully said of any, The Word was made flesh, save of the one Mediator between God and men. Since therefore the only-begotten Word, coequal with the Father, is styled a light; and man when enlightened by the Word is also called a light, who is styled also a lantern, as John, as the Apostles; and since no man of these is the Word, and that Word by Whom they were enlightened is not a lantern; what is this word, which is thus called a light and a lantern at the same time, (for he saith, Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths,) save we understand the word which was sent unto the Prophets, or which was preached through the Apostles; not Christ the Word, but the word of Christ, of which it is written, Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. For the Apostle Peter also, comparing the prophetical word to a lantern, saith, We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lantern, that shineth in a dark place. What, therefore, he here saith, Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths, is the word which is contained in all the holy Scriptures.

2. Ver. 106. I have sworn, and am stedfastly purposed to keep Thy righteous judgments: as one who walked aright in the light of that lantern, and kept to straight paths. In the following word the preceding one is explained. For as if we asked what I have sworn, meant, he hath added, I am stedfastly purposed. For he calleth what he hath determined by a sacrament, an oath; because the mind ought to be so fixed in keeping the righteous judgments of God, that its determination should be in the place of an oath.

3. Now the righteous judgments of God are kept by faith; when, under the righteous judgment of God, neither any good work is believed to be fruitless, nor any sin unpunished; but, because the body of Christ hath suffered many most grievous evils for this faith, he saith, I was humbled above measure. He doth not say, I have humbled myself, so that we must needs understand that humiliation which is commanded; but he saith, I was humbled above measure; that is, suffered a very heavy persecution, because he swore and was stedfastly purposed to keep the righteous judgments of God. And, lest in such trouble faith herself might faint, he addeth, Quicken me, O Lord, according to Thy word: that is, according to Thy promise. For the word of the promises of God is a lantern to the feet, and a light to the paths. Thus also above, in the humiliation of persecution, he prayed that God would quicken him: They had almost made an end of me upon earth: but I forsook not Thy commandments. O quicken me after Thy loving-kindness: and so shall I keep the testimonies, that is the martyrdoms, of Thy mouth. Where it is meant, that if He quickened not by giving patience, on account of which it is written, In your patience shall ye possess your souls; and of which it was said, my patience is from Him; it is not the body which is done to death in persecution, but the soul, because it keepeth not the testimonies and righteous judgments of God.

4. Ver. 108. Make the freewill offerings of my mouth well pleasing, O Lord: that is, let them please Thee; do not reject, but approve them. By the freewill offerings of the mouth are well understood the sacrifices of praise, offered up in the confession of love, not from the fear of necessity; whence it is said, a freewill offering will I offer Thee. But what doth he add? and

teach me Thy judgments? Had he not himself said above, From Thy judgments I have not swerved? How could he have done thus, if he knew them not? Moreover, if he knew them, in what sense doth he here say, and teach me Thy judgments? Is it as in a former passage, Thou hast dealt in sweetness with Thy servant: presently after which we find, teach me sweetness? This passage we explained as the words of one who was gaining in grace, and praying that he might receive in addition to what he had received.

5. Ver. 109. My soul is alway in Thy hand. Some copies read, in my hand: but most, in Thy hand; and this latter is indeed easy. For the souls of the righteous are in God’s hand: in Whose hand are both we and our words. And I do not forget Thy law: as if his memory were aided to remember God’s law by the hands of Him in Whose hands is his soul. But how the words, My soul is in my hands, can be understood, I know not. For these are the words of the righteous, not of the ungodly; of one who is returning to the Father, not departing from the Father. For that younger son may well seem to have wished to have had his soul in his own hands, when he said to his father, Give me my substance: but it is on this account that he was dead, that he was lost. Is it perhaps said, My soul is in my hands, in this sense, as if he offered it to God to be quickened? Whence in another passage it is said, Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. Since here too he had said above, Quicken Thou me.

6. Ver. 110. The ungodly, he saith, have laid a snare for me: but yet I swerved not from Thy commandments. Whence this, unless because his soul is in the hands of God, or in his own hands is offered to God to be quickened?

7. Ver. 111. Thy testimonies have I gained in heritage for ever. Some wishing to express in one word what is put in one word in the Greek, have translated it hereditavi. Which although it might be Latin, yet would rather signify one who gave an inheritance than one who received it, ‘hereditavi’ being like ‘ditavi.’ Better, therefore, the whole sense is conveyed in two words, whether we say, I have possessed in heritage, or, I have gotten in heritage: not gotten heritage, but gotten in heritage. If it be asked, what he gained in heritage, he replieth, Thy testimonies. What doth he wish to be

understood, save that he might become a witness of God, and confess His testimonies, that is, that he might become a Martyr of God, and might declare His testimonies, as the Martyrs do, was a gift bestowed upon him by the Father, of Whom he is heir? For many have wished, yet have not been able: yet none have been able, save they who have wished; because they would not have been able, if they had wished to deny the testimonies of God. But even their wish was prepared by the Lord. For this reason he saith he hath gained them in heritage, and this for ever; because they have not in them the temporal glory of men who seek vain things, but the eternal glory of those who suffer for a short season, and who reign without end. Whence the next words, Because they are the very joy of my heart: although the affliction of the body, yet the very joy of the heart.

8. Ver. 112. He then addeth: I have applied my heart to fulfil Thy righteousness for ever, for my reward. He who saith, I have applied my heart, had before said, Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies: so that we may understand that it is at once a divine gift, and an act of free will. But are we to fulfil the righteousnesses of God for ever? Those works which we perform in regard to the need of our neighbours, cannot be everlasting, any more than their need; but if we do not do them from love, there is no righteousness; if we do them from love, that love is everlasting, and an everlasting reward is in store for it; for the sake of which reward he saith he hath applied his heart to fulfil the righteousnesses of God, that by loving for ever, he may deserve to have for ever that which he loveth.

Discourse XXIV

1. Ver. 113. The passage of this Psalm, of which by the will of God we are about to treat, thus beginneth; I have hated the unrighteous; and Thy law have I loved. He saith not, I hate the wicked, and love the righteous; or, I hate iniquity, and love Thy law; but, after saying, I have hated the unrighteous, he explains why, by adding, and Thy law have I loved; to shew, that he did not hate human nature in unrighteous men, but their unrighteousness, whereby they are foes to the law, which he loveth.

2. Ver. 114. He next addeth: Thou art my helper and my taker up: my helper, to do good works: my taker up, to escape evil ones. In the next

words, I have hoped more on Thy word, he speaketh as a son of promise.

3. Ver. 115. But what is the meaning of the following verse: Away from me, ye wicked, and I will search the commandments of my God? For he saith not, I will perform; but, I will search. In order, therefore, that he may diligently and perfectly learn that law, he bids the wicked depart from him, and even forcibly driveth them away from his company. For the wicked exercise us in the fulfilment of the commandments, but lead us away from searching into them; not only when they persecute, or wish to litigate with us; but even when they court us, and honour us, and yet expect us to occupy ourselves in aiding their own vicious and busy desire, and to bestow our time upon them; or at least harass the weak, and compel them to bring their causes before us: to whom we dare not say, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? For the Apostle instituted ecclesiastical judges of such causes, forbidding Christians to contend in the forum. Not even to those who do not carry off others’ property, but avariciously reclaim their own, do we say, beware of all covetousness, placing before their eyes the man unto whom it was said, Thou fool! this night shall thy soul be required of thee; then whose shall be those things which thou hast provided? because even when we do say this, they do not leave us; but press upon us with urgency, entreaty, tumult, exigence, rather to occupy ourselves with their interests, than in revealing the commandments of God. O with what weariness of turbulent crowds, and what ardent longing after the divine word, is it said, Away from me, ye wicked! I will search the commandments of my God! I ask the pardon of those obedient faithful ones, who rarely apply to us in behalf of their secular affairs, and most readily acquiesce in our judgments; and do not wear us out with litigation, but rather console us by their obedience. Certainly, on account of those who carry on law suits pertinaciously with one another, and, when they harass the good, scorn our judgments, and cause us to lose the time that should be employed upon things divine; surely, I say, on account of these men we also may exclaim in these words of the Body of Christ, Away from me, ye wicked! and I will search the commandments of my God.

4. Ver. 116. Then, after he had driven away the flies which poured upon him, as it were, from the eyes of his heart, he returneth unto Him unto

Whom he was saying, Thou art my helper, and my taker up: I have hoped in Thy word; and, continuing his prayer, saith, O stablish me according to Thy word, and I shall live: and let me not be disappointed of my hope. He who had before said, Thou art my taker up, prayeth that he may be more and more borne up, and be led unto that, for the sake of which he endureth so many troubles; trusting that he may there live in a truer sense, than in these dreams of human affairs. For it is said of the future, and I shall live, as if we did not live in this dead body. For the body is dead because of sin: and, while we await the redemption of our body, we are saved by hope, and hoping for that we see not, we await with patience. But hope disappointeth not, if the love of God be spread abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which is given unto us? To receive this in a more ample measure, he crieth unto the Father, And let me not be disappointed of my hope.

5. Ver. 117. And, as though it were answered him in silence, Thou dost not wish to be disappointed of thy hope? Cease not to meditate upon My righteousnesses: and, feeling that this meditation is usually hindered by the weaknesses of the soul, (ver. 117.) Help me, he saith, and I shall be safe; yea, I will meditate in Thy righteousnesses always.

6. Ver. 118. Thou hast scorned all, or, as it seems more closely translated from the Greek, Thou hast brought to nought all them that depart from Thy righteousnesses: for their thought is unrighteous. For this reason he exclaimed, Help Thou me, and I shall be safe; yea, I will meditate in Thy righteousnesses always: because God bringeth to nought all those who depart from His righteousnesses. But why do they depart? Because their thought is, he saith, unrighteous. They advance in that direction, while they depart from God. All deeds, good or bad, proceed from the thoughts: in his thoughts every man is innocent, in his thoughts every man is guilty. On this account it is written, Holy thoughts shall preserve thee: and elsewhere it is read, Inquisition shall be made into the thoughts of the ungodly; and the Apostle saith, Their thoughts excusing or accusing one another. But how is he happy who is miserable in his thoughts? or how is he otherwise than wretched there, who hath been brought to nought? For iniquity is a mighty desolation. Justly is it said, confounded be the unrighteous who do vainly: that is, emptily, as they that are brought to nought.

7. Ver. 119. The next words in the Psalm are, I have counted, or thought, or esteemed, all the ungodly of the earth as transgressors. In the Latin version many different renderings are given of the Greek ἐλογισάμην; but this passage hath a deep meaning, which we must endeavour to penetrate at greater length, if the Lord will aid us, in another discourse. For the following words, Therefore have I ever loved Thy testimonies: make it far more profound. For the Apostle saith, The law worketh wrath; and, explaining these words, he addeth, For where no law is, there is no transgression: thereby shewing that not all are transgressors. For all have not the law. That all have not the law, he declareth more explicitly in another passage, as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law. What then meaneth, I have held all the ungodly of the earth as transgressors? But let it suffice here to have proposed the question, to be discussed in another exposition, if God grant, lest the length of this force it to be expounded in too narrow a space to admit of the explanation being clearly understood.

Discourse XXV

1. Ver. 119. We are seeking, if by the bounty of God we may discover, in what sense the words of this great Psalm are to be understood; I have held all the sinners of the earth as transgressors; or rather transgressing, for the Greek saith, παραβαίνοντας, not παραβάτας. We ask therefore how we are to understand, I have held all the sinners of the earth to be transgressing, because the Apostle saith, Where no law is, there is no transgression. This he said, while he was distinguishing the promise from the law. For that the sense may be more fully gathered from what goes before, we will cite the preceding sentence: The promise, that he should be the heir of the world, he saith, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. Because the law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. Why doth the Apostle say this, save to shew that the law without the grace of the promise doth not only fail

to remove sin, but actually increaseth it? Whence also he saith, The law entered that sin might abound. But since all sins are remitted through grace, not only those which are committed without the law, but those also which are committed in the law; he addeth, But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. The Apostle therefore doth not hold all sinners as transgressing: but those only who transgress the law. For where law is not, he saith, there is no transgression. Thus, then, according to the Apostle, every transgressor indeed is a sinner, because he sinneth in the law: but not every sinner is a transgressor, because some sin without the law; and where no law is, there is no transgression. Moreover, if no man could sin without the law, the same Apostle would not say, As many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law. But according to this Psalm, if all the sinners of the earth are transgressors, there is no sin without transgression; but there is no transgression without the law; there is therefore no sin, save in the law. He therefore who saith, I have held all the sinners of the earth as transgressing, wishes it to be understood that there are altogether no sinners, save they who have transgressed the law; and herein is opposed to him who hath said, As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law. For according to the Apostle there are some sinners, although they be not transgressors, that is, men who have sinned without law; for where no law is, there is no transgression; but according to the former, there is no sinner without transgression; because he holdeth all the sinners of the earth as transgressing. No man, therefore, according to him hath sinned without the law; for where no law is, there is no transgression. Shall we say, that it is indeed true that there is no transgression where there is no law, but that it is not true that any have sinned without the law; or, that it is true indeed that some have sinned without the law, but that it is not true that transgression cannot exist, where there is no law? But both of these things the Apostle hath affirmed; both therefore are true; because Truth hath spoken both through the Apostle. How then can it be true that in this Psalm the same Truth hath spoken without doubt, I have held all the sinners of the earth as transgressing? For they answer us: Who then are they who according to the Apostle have sinned without law? For each of these is not to be held as transgressing, since, according to the same Apostle, transgression cannot exist where there is no law.

2. But, indeed, when the Apostle said, As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law, he was speaking of that law which God gave to His people Israel through Moses His servant. The context shews this. For he was speaking of the Jews, and of the Greeks, that is, the Gentiles, who belong not to circumcision, but to uncircumcision; speaking of them as without the law, because they had not received the law which the Jews gloried in having received: whence he saith to them, Behold, thou art called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God. We must now consider how he came to pronounce this sentence: As many as have sinned without law, shall perish without law.—Indignation and wrath, he saith, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God. To these words he addeth those which are the source of the present question: For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law. Wishing by the latter the Jews, by the former the Greeks, to be understood, since he was speaking of these; proving that both were subject unto sin, that each might confess themselves in need of grace: on which account he saith, For there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Who are they then, all of whom he declareth to have sinned, save the Jews and the Greeks, of whom he had said, For there is no difference? For of these he had a little before said, For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are under sin. And therefore, all who have sinned without law, that law, to wit, in which the Jews gloried, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, that is, the Jews themselves, shall be judged by the law. But we are not on this account to conclude that they will not perish, unless they believe in Him Who came to seek that which was lost.

3. For some even Catholic expositors, from a want of sufficient heedfulness, have pronounced contrary to the truth, that those who have sinned without the law perish; and that those who have sinned in the law, are only judged, and do not perish, as if they should be considered destined to be cleansed by means of transitory punishments, as he of whom it is said,

he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. This is well understood to be owing to the merits of the Foundation, of Whom the Apostle was speaking above in these terms: As a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Christ Jesus: and so on to the verse where he stated, that he who had built upon this foundation, not gold, silver, or precious stones, but wood, hay, and stubble, should be saved so as by fire; yet such a man doth not refuse to receive, nor when received, doth he forsake, the foundation; and he preferreth it to all his carnal delights, wherein he is captivated and used to yield, when the alternative is set before him, either to choose these or Christ; in which case if Christ be not preferred, he hath not the foundation. For the foundation is preferred to all the subsequent parts of the building. Nor do I suppose that they who have thought that those of whom it is said, They shall be judged by the law, do not perish, have had any notion of their not having Christ for their foundation. They therefore have not sufficiently attended to what we have proved; and Scripture itself declareth that the Apostle saith this of the Jews, who have not the foundation of Christ. But what Christian would assert that a Jew perishes not, if he believeth not in Christ, but that he is only judged: when Christ Himself testifieth that He was sent to the same nation, for the sake of the sheep which had been lost therein; and declares that it shall be more tolerable for the men of Sodom in the day of judgment which perished without law, than for the Jewish state which did not believe in Him when He performed miracles with such mighty power?

4. If therefore the Apostle asserted that the other nations were without the law, in the sense of that law which God gave to the people of Israel through Moses, but gave not to the rest of the nations; what are we to understand to be meant in this Psalm, I have held all the sinners of the earth as transgressing, unless we understand some law not given by Moses, in respect of which the sinners of other nations were transgressing? For where the law is not, there is no transgression. What law is this, save that of which the same Apostle saith, When the Gentiles, having not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves? According then to these words, having not the law; they have

sinned without the law, and will perish without the law; but according to these words, They are unto themselves a law; all the sinners of the earth are justly esteemed transgressors. For there is no man who doeth another wrong, but who is unwilling the wrong should be done to himself: and herein he transgresseth the law of nature, which he is not allowed to be ignorant of, while he does that which he is unwilling to suffer. But had not the people of Israel this natural law? They had, surely, since they were themselves men: but they would have been without the law of nature, if they could have been beside the nature of the human race. In a much wider sense, then, were they transgressors by the divine law, whereby that natural law was either restored, or enlarged, or confirmed.

5. Now if infants even, on account of the chains of original sin, are not unfitly enumerated among all the sinners of the earth; even they in the similitude of Adam’s transgression, are shewn to belong to that transgression, which, when the law had been given in Paradise, was the first ever committed; and on this account all the sinners of the earth, without a single exception, are held as transgressors. For all have sinned, and have come short of the glory of God. The Saviour’s grace, therefore, found all transgressors, some more, some less. For in proportion as the knowledge of the law was greater in each, so much less was the excuse for sin; in proportion as the excuse for sin was less, so much clearer was the transgression. It remained, therefore, that not their own righteousness, but that of God, by which I mean that given them of God, should be their resource. Whence the Apostle saith, By the law is the knowledge of sin, not the taking away, but the knowledge. But now, he saith, the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. For this reason the Psalmist also hath subjoined: Therefore I loved Thy testimonies. As if he should say: Since the law, whether given in paradise, or implanted by nature, or promulgated in writing, hath made all the sinners of the earth transgressors; Therefore I loved Thy testimonies, which are in Thy law, of Thy grace; so that not my but Thy righteousness is in me. For the law profiteth unto this end, that it send us forward unto grace. For not only because it testifieth towards the manifestation of the righteousness of God, which is without the law; but also in this very point that it rendereth men transgressors, so that the letter even slayeth, it driveth

us to fly unto the quickening Spirit, through Whom the whole of our sins may be blotted out, and the love of righteous deeds be inspired: Therefore, he saith, have I loved Thy testimonies. Some copies read, always, some do not. If it be correct, it must be understood to mean, during our present life on earth. For here testimonies are necessary, from the Law and the Prophets, attesting the righteousness of God, whereby we are freely justified: here even our testimonies are necessary, for which the Martyrs laid down that life which is here spent.

6. Ver. 120. The grace of God, then, being known, which alone freeth from transgression, which is committed through knowledge of the law, he saith, in prayer, Fix with nails my flesh in thy fear. For thus some Latin interpreters have literally rendered the Greek καθήλωσον, which that language has expressed in one word. Some have preferred to render this by the word confige, without adding clavis; and while they thus desire to construe one Latin by one Greek word, have failed to express the full meaning of the Greek καθήλωσον, because in confige nails are not mentioned, but καθήλωσον cannot be taken but of nails, nor can ‘fix with nails’ be expressed without using two words in Latin. What is here meant, save what the Apostle saith, God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world? And again: I am crucified, he saith, with Christ; nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And what else is this than, My righteousness is not in me, which is from the law, whereby I was made a transgressor; but the righteousness of God, that is, which is of God unto me, not from me? Thus in me liveth, not I myself, but Christ, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. He also saith, They that are Christ’s, have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. Since it is here said that they have themselves crucified their own flesh, in this Psalm God is entreated to do this, in these words, Fix my flesh with nails in Thy fear; that we may understand that even what we do well should be ascribed to God’s grace, Who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

7. But Why, after saying, Fix my flesh with nails in Thy fear, hath he added, For I have feared Thy judgments? What meaneth, Fix me in Thy fear: for I have feared? If he had already feared, or if he was now fearing, why did he still pray God to crucify his flesh in His fear? Did he wish so much additional fear imparted to him as would suffice for crucifying his flesh, that is, his carnal lusts and affections; as though he should say, Perfect in me the fear of Thee; for I have feared Thy judgments? But there is here even a higher sense, which must, as far as God alloweth, be derived from searching the recesses of this Scripture. Fix, he saith, my flesh with nails in the fear of Thee: for I have feared Thy judgments: that is, in the chaste fear of Thee, which abideth from age to age, let my carnal desires be quenched; For I have feared Thy judgments, when the law, which could not give me righteousness, threatened me punishment. But perfect love driveth away this fear, whereby punishment is dreaded; love, which freeth us not by fear of punishment, but by delight in righteousness. For that fear, whereby righteousness is not loved, but punishment dreaded, is servile, because it is carnal; and for this reason doth not crucify the flesh. For the inclination to sin liveth, and it then appeareth in deed, when impunity may be hoped for. But when punishment is considered sure to follow, it liveth latently: nevertheless it liveth. For it would rather it were lawful to sin, and it grieveth that what the law forbiddeth, is not lawful; because it is not spiritually delighted with the blessing of the law, but carnally feareth the evil which it threateneth. But that love, which casteth out this fear, feareth with a chaste fear to sin, although no punishment follow; because it doth not even judge that impunity will follow, since from love of righteousness it considereth the very sin itself a punishment. With such a fear the flesh is crucified; since carnal delights, which are forbidden rather than avoided by the letter of the law, are overcome by the delight in spiritual blessings, and also when the victory is perfected are destroyed. Fix, therefore, he saith, my flesh with nails in Thy fear, for I have feared Thy judgments: that is, give me a chaste fear, to seek which the fear of the law hath conducted me like a schoolmaster, that fear whereby I have feared Thy judgments.

Discourse XXVI

1. Ver. 121. We have now undertaken to consider and to treat of these verses of this great Psalm; I have dealt judgment and righteousness; O give me not over unto mine oppressors. It is not wonderful that he should have dealt judgment and righteousness, since he had above prayed for a chaste fear from God, whereby to fix with nails his flesh, that is, his carnal lusts, which are wont to hinder our judgment from being right. But although in our customary speech judgment is either right or wrong, whence it is said unto men in the Gospel, Judge not according to the persons, but judge righteous judgment: nevertheless in this passage judgment is used as though, if it were not righteous, it ought not to be called judgment; otherwise it would not be enough to say, I have dealt judgment, but it would be said, I have dealt righteous judgment. In this sense our Lord Jesus hath spoken: Ye have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith. And here judgment is used in such a sense, as if it were not judgment, if it be perverse. And in many passages of the holy Scriptures it is so put, such as is this: My song shall be of mercy and judgment: unto Thee, O Lord; and that in Isaiah, I looked that he should deal judgment, but he dealt iniquity. He saith not, I looked that he should deal righteous judgment, but he dealt unrighteous; but as if, because an act was judgment, it must be righteous; and what was unrighteous, could not be judgment. Now righteousness is not wont to be called good righteousness or evil righteousness, as judgment is occasionally called good or evil judgment; but it is already good from the very fact of its being righteousness. The common way of speaking then, which allows of the terms good and bad judgment, is like that which allows the words good and bad to be applied to a judge: but righteousness is not styled good or bad in the same sense, even as we do not speak of a good righteous man, or an evil righteous man, because a man must be good, if he be righteous. Righteousness therefore is a virtue of the mind, a great and most praiseworthy virtue, concerning which there is now no need of a more copious discussion. But judgment, since the more definite way of speaking useth it only of the righteous, is the operation of this virtue. For he who hath righteousness, judgeth rightly: yea, according to this way of speech, he who hath righteousness, judgeth; because he doth not judge at all, if he do not judge rightly. Under the name of righteousness in this passage, not the virtue itself, but its work, is signified. For who maketh righteousness in man, save He Who justifieth the ungodly, that is, through His grace

rendereth him righteous instead of ungodly? Whence the Apostle saith, Justified freely through His grace. He therefore who hath within himself righteousness, that is, the work of grace, dealeth righteousness, that is, the work of righteousness.

2. I have dealt righteousness and judgment, O give me not over to mine oppressors: that is, I have dealt just judgment, O give me not over to them who on that account persecute me. For some copies read, to them that persecute me: the Greek words τοῖς ἀντισικοῦσι, being variously interpreted by the Latin nocentibus, persequentibus, and calumniantibus. I wonder, however, that I have never met with the version adversantibus in any of the copies which I have read, since there is no doubt, that the Greek ἀντίσικος is the same as the Latin adversarius. While he prays therefore that he may not be given up to his adversaries by the Lord, what doth he pray, save what we pray, when we say, Lead us not into temptation? For he is the adversary of whom the Apostle saith, Lest perchance the tempter tempt you. Unto him God giveth up whom He forsaketh. For the tempter deceiveth not him whom God forsaketh not, of His free will “giving strength to man’s beauty.” But He turned away His countenance from him who had said in his strength, I will not ever be moved; and he became confounded, and was displayed unto himself. Whoso therefore in the chaste fear of God hath his flesh crucified, and corrupted by no carnal allurement, dealeth judgment and the work of righteousness, ought to pray that he may not be given up to his adversaries; that is, that he may not, through his dread of suffering evils, yield unto his adversaries to do evil. For he receiveth power of endurance, which guardeth him from being overcome with pain, from Him from Whom he receiveth the victory over lust, which preventeth his being seduced by pleasure: since of whom it is said, The Lord shall shew lovingkindness, of Him it is also said, From Thee is my patience.

3. Ver. 122, 123. He next saith, Take off Thy servant to that which is good, that the proud calumniate me not. They drive me on, that I may fall into evil; do Thou take me off to that which is good. They who rendered these words by the Latin, calumnientur, have followed a Greek expression, not commonly used in Latin. Have the words, Let not the proud calumniate me, the same force, as, Let them not succeed in calumniating me?

4. But many calumnies of the proud, by whom Christian humility is spurned, may be understood; and this is the chief, if men are understood to be called proud in this passage, because they object to us that we worship one who died. For Christian humility is taught by the death of Christ itself, and is thus divinely commended unto us. Now this scandal is common to both classes of infidels, I mean, Jews and Gentiles. Heretics have their scandals also, peculiar to their several heresies: schismatics have also, all of whom pride hath cast asunder from the communion of the members of Christ. But how great is the scandal of the devil himself, whereby he doth calumniate the righteous, saying, Doth Job fear God for nought? The calumnies of all these proud ones are overcome, like the poison of the serpents, when we fix our minds upon Christ crucified with a most earnest and watchful piety. To prefigure His Cross, Moses by the merciful command of God raised aloft on a pole the image of a serpent in the desert, that the likeness of sinful flesh which must be crucified in Christ might be prefigured. By gazing upon this healing Cross, we cast out all the poison of the scandals of the proud: the Cross, which the Psalmist intently looking upon, saith, (ver. 123.) My eyes have failed for Thy salvation, and for the words of Thy righteousness. For God made Christ Himself to be sin for us, on account of the likeness of sinful flesh, that we may be made the righteousness of God in Him. For His utterance of the righteousness of God he therefore saith that his eyes have failed, from gazing ardently and eagerly, while, remembering human infirmity, he longeth for divine grace in Christ.

5. Ver. 124. In connexion with this he goes on to say, O deal with Thy servant according to Thy loving mercy; not according to my righteousness. And teach me, he saith, Thy righteousnesses; those beyond doubt, whereby God rendereth men righteous, not they themselves.

6. Ver. 125. I am Thy servant. For it was not well for me, when I wished to be free as my own, not Thy servant. O grant me understanding, that I may know Thy testimonies. This petition must never be intermitted. For it sufficeth not to have received understanding, and to have learnt the testimonies of God, unless it be evermore received, and evermore in a manner quaffed from the fountain of eternal light. For the testimonies of

God are the better and the better known, the more understanding a man attaineth to.

7. Ver. 126. It is time, he saith, for the Lord to lay to His hand. For this is the reading of most copies: not as some have, O Lord. What time then, and for doing what, did he mean to be understood? What he had a little before said: Deal with Thy servant according to Thy loving mercy: it is the time for the Lord to do this. Now what is this, save the grace which was revealed in Christ at its own time? Of which season the Apostle saith, But when the fulness of time was come, God sent His Son. In reference to this also, adding a prophetical testimony in another passage, he saith, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; lo, now is the accepted time: lo, now is the day of salvation. But wherefore is it that, seemingly anxious to shew the Lord that it was time to lay to His hand, he hath subjoined, They have scattered Thy law; as if it were the season for the Lord to act, because the proud scattered His law, who, not knowing the righteousness of God, and wishing to set up their own, are not subject unto the righteousness of God? For what meaneth, They have scattered Thy law, save this, In the wickedness of transgression, they have not guarded its integrity. It was needful therefore that the Law should be given to the proud and those presuming in the freedom of their own will, after a transgression of which whosoever were contrite and humbled, might run no longer by the Law, but by faith, to aiding grace. When the Law therefore was scattered, it was time that mercy should be sent through the only-begotten Son of God. For the Law entered that sin might abound; by which sin the Law was destroyed; and Christ came now in an opportune season, that where sin had abounded, grace might much more abound.

8. Ver. 127. Therefore, he saith, I love Thy commandments above gold and topaz. Grace hath this object, that the commandments, which could not be fulfilled by fear, may be fulfilled by love. For, by the grace of God, love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Which is given unto us. Thus our Lord Himself saith, I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it; and the same Apostle, Love is the fulfilling of the Law. Therefore, they are above gold and topaz stones. For this is read in another Psalm also, Above

gold and exceeding precious stones. For topaz is a stone considered very precious. But they not understanding the hidden grace which was in the Old Testament, skreened as it were by the veil, (this was signified when they were unable to gaze upon the face of Moses,) endeavoured to obey the commandments of God for the sake of an earthly and carnal reward, but could not obey them; because they did not love them, but something else. Whence these were not the works of the willing, but rather the burdens of the unwilling. But when the commandments are loved for their own sake above gold and exceeding precious stones, all earthly reward compared with the commandments themselves is vile; nor are any other goods of man comparable in any respect with those goods whereby man himself is made good.

9. Ver. 128. Therefore, he saith, was I made straight unto all Thy commandments. I was made straight, doubtless, because I loved them; and I clung by love to them, which were straight, that I might also myself become straight. Then what he addeth, naturally follows; and every unrighteous way I utterly abhor. For how could it be that he who loved the straight could do aught save abhor an unrighteous way? For as, if he loved gold and precious stones, he would abhor all that might bring loss of such property: thus, since he loved the commandments of God, he abhorred the path of iniquity, as one of the most savage rocks in the sailor’s track, whereon he must needs suffer shipwreck of things so precious. That this may not be his lot, he who saileth on the wood of the Cross with the divine commandments as his freight, steereth far from thence.

Discourse XXVII

1. Ver. 129. The following are the words of the Psalm, on which, by the Lord’s help, we are about to discourse: Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore hath my soul searched them. Who counteth, even by their kinds, the testimonies of God? Heaven and earth, His visible and invisible works, declare in some manner the testimony of His goodness and greatness; and the very ordinary and accustomed course of nature, whereby the seasons are rapidly revolved, in all things after their kinds, however temporal and perishable, however held cheap through our constant experience of them, give, if a pious thinker give heed to them, a testimony to the Creator. But

which of these is not wonderful, if we measure each not by its habitual presence, but by reason? But if we venture to bring all nature within the comprehensive view of one act of contemplation, doth not that take place in us which the prophet describeth, I considered Thy works, and trembled? Yet the Psalmist was not terrified in his wonder at creation, but rather said that this was the reason that he ought to search it, because it was wonderful. For after saying, Thy testimonies are wonderful; he addeth, therefore hath my soul searched them; as if he had become more curious from the difficulty of thoroughly searching them. For the more abstruse are the causes of any thing, the more wonderful it is.

2. If therefore we were to meet such a man, as would say that he searched the testimonies of God for this reason, because they are wonderful, while the whole creation, both visible and invisible, is full of them; should we not restrain him, saying, Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength: but that which the Lord hath commanded thee, meditate thereupon always? But if he answer us, and say, These very commandments of the Lord, which ye enjoin me to meditate upon, are His wonderful testimonies; since they attest Him to be the Lord, because He commandeth, and to be good and great, because He commandeth such things; shall we venture to recall the man from searching into such things, and not rather exhort him carefully to continue doing so, and to devote as much attention as possible to so great a subject? Shall we confess that the commandments of God are testimonies of His goodness, and yet deny them to be wonderful? For what wonder is it, if a good Lord giveth good commandments? Yea, it is this which is to be wondered at, and should have its reasons carefully examined, that, while a good God hath commanded good things, yet He hath given a good law unto them, to whom that law could not give life, so that there was no righteousness to be gained from that good law. For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. Why then was one given which could not give life, and out of which there was no righteousness? We may well wonder, well feel astonished at this. These then are the wonderful testimonies of God: on this account this man’s soul hath searched them, since concerning them it could not be said unto him, Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search that which

is above thy strength; but that which is commanded thee, meditate thereupon always. These very things are the Lord's commandments; and for this reason they should ever be meditated upon. Let us therefore rather consider what this man's soul searched, what it discovered.

3. Ver. 130. When thy word goeth forth, he saith, it giveth light, and maketh His little ones to understand. What is the little one save the humble and weak? Be not proud therefore, presume not in thine own strength, which is nought; and thou wilt understand why a good law was given by a good God, though it cannot give life. For it was given for this end, that it might make thee a little one instead of great, that it might shew that thou hadst not strength to do the law of thine own power: and that thus, wanting aid and destitute, thou mightest fly unto grace, saying, Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak. By searching, then, this little one understood the same, that Paul, the least, that is, the simplest of the Apostles, sheweth, that the Law, which could not give life, was given because Scripture hath concluded all things under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to all that believe. Do thus, do thus, merciful Lord; command what cannot be fulfilled, yea, command what cannot, save through Thy grace, be fulfilled: that when men have proved incapable of fulfilling Thy commandments through their own strength, every mouth may be stopped, and no man may seem great unto himself. Let all be little ones, and let all the world be guilty before Thee: because by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in Thy sight; for by the Law is the knowledge of sin. But now Thy righteousness without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. These are Thy wonderful testimonies, which the soul of this little one hath searched; and hath therefore found, because he became humbled and a little one. For who doth Thy commandments as they ought to be done, that is, by faith which worketh through love, save love itself be shed abroad in his heart through the Holy Spirit?

4. Ver. 131. This is confessed by this little one; I opened my mouth, he saith, and drew in the spirit: for I longed for Thy commandments. What did he long for, save to obey the divine commandments? But there was no possibility of the weak doing hard things, the little one great things: he

opened his mouth, confessing that he could not do them of himself: and drew in power to do them: he opened his mouth, by seeking, asking, knocking: and athirst drank in the good Spirit, which enabled him to do what he could not do by himself, the commandment holy and just and good. For if we, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto our children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? For not they that are led by their own spirit, but as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God; not that they themselves do nothing; but that they may not do nothing good, they are moved to act by the good Spirit. For so much the more is every man made a good son, in proportion as the good Spirit is given unto Him by the Father in a greater measure.

5. Ver. 132. He still prayeth. He hath opened his mouth, and drawn in the Spirit; but he still knocketh in prayer unto the Father, and seeketh: he drinketh, but the more sweet he findeth it, the more eagerly doth he thirst. Hear the words of him in his thirst. O look Thou upon me, he saith, and be merciful unto me: according to the judgment of those that love Thy Name: that is, according to the judgment Thou hast dealt unto all who love Thy Name; since Thou hast first loved them, to cause them to love Thee. For thus saith the Apostle John, We love God, because He first loved us.

6. Ver. 133. See what the Psalmist next most openly saith: Order my steps after Thy word: and so shall no wickedness have dominion over me. Where what else doth he say than this, Make me upright and free according to Thy promise. But so much the more as the love of God reigneth in every man, so much the less hath wickedness dominion over him. What else then doth he seek than that by the gift of God he may love God? For by loving God he loveth himself, so that he may healthily love his neighbour also as himself; on which commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. What then doth he pray, save that God may cause the fulfilment by His help of those commandments which He imposeth by His bidding?

7. Ver. 134. But what meaneth this that he saith, O deliver me from, the calumnies of men: so shall I keep Thy commandments? If those men impute true charges against him, they do not calumniate: if false, what reason is there that he should long to be delivered from these calumnies,

that is, from false charges, which cannot injure him? For a false charge, that is, a calumny, doth not make a man guilty, save before a human judge: but when God is Judge, no man is injured by a false accusation; because it is imputed not to him against whom it is preferred, but to him who chargeth it. Is the prayer of the Church here prefigured,—the prayer of the whole Christian people,—which was delivered from the calumnies of men, whereby the Christians were harassed in every part of the world? But doth he on this account keep the commandments of God? Did not the holy people of God much the more gloriously keep the commandments among these very calumnies, when they were at their hottest in the midst of tribulations, when they yielded not to their persecutors to commit impieties? But, in truth, the meaning of these words, O deliver Thou me from the calumnies of men, so shall I keep Thy commandments, is this: Do Thou, by pouring upon me Thy Spirit, guard me from being overcome by the terrors of human calumny, and from being drawn over to their evil deeds away from Thy commandments. For if Thou hast thus dealt with me, that is, if Thou hast in this manner delivered me by the gift of patience from their calumnies, so that I fear not the false charges they prefer against me; among those very calumnies I will keep Thy commandments.

8. Ver. 135. Shew the light of Thy countenance on Thy servant, and teach me Thy statutes: that is, manifest Thy presence, by succouring and aiding me. And teach me Thy righteousnesses. Teach me to work them: as it is more plainly expressed elsewhere, Teach me to do Thy will. For they who hear, although they retain in their memories what they hear, are by no means to be considered to have learnt, unless they do. For it is the word of Truth: Every man that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me. He therefore who obeyeth not in deed, that is, who cometh not, hath not learnt.

9. Ver. 136. The Psalmist, recalling to mind his sorrowful penitence for his transgression, saith, My eyes have descended streams of waters, because they have not kept Thy law: that is, my eyes. For in some copies there is this reading, Because I have not kept Thy law, streams of waters therefore descended, that is, floods of tears. And in the same form of speech as he might say, ‘My feet have descended mountains,’ without saying, ‘over

mountains,’ or ‘on mountains;’ so we say, ‘he descended ladders,’ though one say not ‘by ladders;’ or ‘he went down the well,’ without saying, ‘into the well.’ And he rightly said, descended, marking the humility of his penitence. For his eyes ascended, when they were raised aloft and elate with contumacious pride. For they seemed to themselves to be raised on high, when, not knowing the righteousness of God, they wished to set up their own; wherein being wearied and confused by their transgression of the law, they have descended from that elevation in tears, that they might rather gain the righteousness of God by repentance. There are copies which do not read descended, but, overpassed, meaning that he said hyperbolically, that in weeping he had overpast streams of waters, that is, by weeping more than the waters flow in their streams. But why doth he thus weep for not keeping of the law, save to obtain grace, which blotteth out the iniquity of the penitent, and aideth the will of the believer?

Discourse XXVIII

1. Ver. 137, 138. He who singeth this Psalm had said above, My eyes have descended streams of waters, since they have not kept Thy law: where he testifieth that he hath wept much for his transgression. Thus, then, as if giving a reason why he had cause to weep much, and to mourn deeply for his sin, he saith, Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and true is Thy judgment. Thou hast commanded Thy testimonies, righteousness, and Thy truth exceedingly. This righteousness of God and righteous judgment and truth, is to be feared by every sinner: for thereby all who are condemned are condemned of God; nor is there one who can righteously complain against the righteous God of his own damnation. Therefore the tears of the penitent are needful; since if his impenitent heart were condemned, he would be most justly condemned. He indeed calleth the testimonies of God righteousness: for He proveth himself righteous by giving righteous commandments. And this is truth also, that God may become known by such testimonies.

2. Ver. 139. But what is it that followeth: My zeal hath caused me to pine; or, as other copies read, Thy zeal? Others have also, The zeal of Thy house: and, hath eaten me up, instead of, hath caused me to pine. This, as it seems to me, has been considered as an emendation to be introduced from another

Psalm, where it is written, The zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up: a text quoted also, as we know, in the Gospel. The two words, however, hath caused me to pine, and hath eaten me up, are somewhat like. But the words, my zeal, which most of the copies read, occasion no dispute: for what wonder is it if every man pineth away from his own zeal? The words read in other copies, Thy zeal, signify a man zealous for God, not for himself: but there is no difficulty in using my in the same sense. For what else doth the Apostle say, I am jealous over you for God, with a godly jealousy? In saying, I am jealous over you, doth he not display a jealousy of his own? But as he said for God, that is, not for himself, but for God, he addeth, with a godly jealousy. For God inspireth this among His faithful by His own Spirit: for it is a sign of love, not of envy. For what induced the Apostle to say this? I have betrothed you, he saith, to one husband, to present you a chaste virgin unto Christ. But I fear lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his cunning, so also your minds be corrupted from the simplicity and purity that is in Christ. The zeal of the house of God devoured him, yet this jealousy he felt for Christ, not for himself. For the Bridegroom is jealous of the Bride for Himself, but the friend of the Bridegroom should not be jealous of her for himself, but for the Bridegroom. The Psalmist’s jealousy is therefore also to be understood in a good sense: for he addeth the cause, and saith, Because mine enemies have forgotten Thy words. They then were returning evil for good, because he was jealous of them for God so vehemently and ardently, that he said he was wasted with that zeal; but they for this cause carried on hostilities against him: because in fact he wished those, of whom from love he was jealous, to love the Lord. For not being ungrateful to the grace of God, by which he, who was before an enemy, had been reconciled to God, he too loved his own enemies, and was jealous of them for God, grieving and pining away, because they had forgotten His word.

3. Ver. 140. Then considering with himself with what a flame of love he burned for the commandments of God: Fiery, saith he, is Thy word exceedingly, and Thy servant hath loved it. Justly jealous was he of the impenitent heart in His enemies, who had forgotten God’s word: for he endeavoured to bring them unto that which he himself most ardently loved.

4. Ver. 141. I am young, and of no reputation: yet do I not forget Thy righteousnesses: not as my enemies, who have forgotten Thy words. The younger seems to grieve for those older than himself who had forgotten the righteousnesses of God, while he himself had not forgotten. For what meaneth, I am young, yet do I not forget? save this, Those older than me have forgotten. For the Greek word is νεώτερος, the same as that used in the words above, Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? This is a comparative, and is therefore well understood in its relation to some one older. Let us therefore here recognise the two nations, who were striving even in Rebecca’s womb; when it was said to her, not from works, but of Him that calleth, The elder shall serve the younger. But the younger saith here that he is of no reputation: for this reason he hath become greater: since God hath chosen the base things of the world, and things that are despised, yea, and things that are not as though they were, to bring to nought things that are. And, behold, they that were first are last, and they that were last first.

5. Ver. 142. It is no wonder that they have forgotten the words of God, who have chosen to set up their own righteousness, ignorant of the righteousness of God; but he, the younger, hath not forgotten, for he hath not wished to have a righteousness of his own, but that of God, of which he now also saith, Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is the truth. For how is not the law truth, through which came the knowledge of sin, and that which giveth testimony of the righteousness of God? For thus the Apostle saith: The righteousness of God is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.

6. Ver. 143. On account of this law the younger suffered persecution from the elder, so that the younger saith what followeth: Trouble and hardship have taken hold upon me: yet is my meditation in Thy commandments. Let them rage, let them persecute; as long as the commandments of God be not abandoned, and, after those commandments, let even those who rage be loved.

7. Ver. 144. Thy testimonies are righteousness unto everlasting: O grant me understanding, and I shall live. This younger one prayeth for understanding; which if he had not, he would not be wiser than the aged; but he prayeth for

it in trouble and hardships, that he may thereby understand how contemptible is all that his persecuting enemies can take from him, by whom he saith he hath been despised. Therefore he hath said, and I shall live: because if trouble and heaviness reached such a pitch, that his life should be terminated by the hands of his persecuting enemies, he will live for ever, who preferreth righteousness to temporal things, which remaineth for evermore. This righteousness in trouble and hardship are the Martyria Dei, that is, the testimonies of God, for which Martyrs have been crowned.

Discourse XXIX

1. Ver. 145. Who can doubt, that cries unto the Lord, made in prayer, if uttered only from the mouth of the body, and not with the heart fixed upon God, sound in vain? But if they proceed from the heart, though the voice of the body be silent, they may escape any other man whomsoever, but not God. Whether then we cry unto the Lord, when we pray, with our fleshly voices, when there is occasion for them, or in silence, we must cry from the heart. Now the cry of the heart is a solemn earnestness of thought; which when vented in prayer, doth express a deep longing and affection of him that prayeth, so that he despaireth not of success. Then also we cry with the whole heart, when we have no thoughts elsewhere. Such prayers are rare among the many, frequent among the few; whether all are such with any one person, I know not. He who singeth this Psalm, mentioneth such a prayer of his own: I have called with my whole heart; hear me, O Lord! For to what end his cry profiteth, he addeth: I will search out Thy righteousnesses. For this purpose then he hath called with his whole heart, and hath longed that this might be given him by the Lord listening unto him, that he may search out His righteousnesses. That therefore which we are commanded to do, we pray that we may search out. How far is he who seeketh from him that doeth? For it doth not follow that he who seeketh should find; or that he who findeth, should do: but he cannot do, unless he hath found; nor find, unless he hath sought. But our Lord Jesus inspired great hope by saying, Seek, and ye shall find. But again, Wisdom (and what is this, save Himself? saith, The wicked shall seek me, and shall not find me. It is not said, therefore, to the wicked, but to the good, Seek, and ye shall find. Nay, but it is said to those, to whom it is said a little after in the

same passage, If then ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children. How then is it said to the wicked, Seek, and ye shall find; and again said, The wicked shall seek Me, and shall not find Me? Did the Lord wish them to seek any thing save wisdom, when He promised that they should find it if they would seek it? For in it are all things which are to be sought by those who wish to be happy. The righteousnesses of God therefore are there also. It remaineth therefore for us to understand, not that all wicked men do not find wisdom, if they seek it; but those who are so far evil as to hate it. For thus He hath said: The wicked shall seek Me, and shall not find Me, for they hate wisdom. They fail to find it then, because they hate it. But again, if they hate it, why do they seek it; save because they do not seek it on its own account, but for the sake of something which the wicked love, and think they will more readily arrive at through Wisdom! For there are many who most studiously examine into the words of wisdom, and wish to have it in doctrine, not in life; not so that they may reach the light of God, which is wisdom herself, by means of the conduct which wisdom prescribes, but that by means of the discourses which she yieldeth, they may reach the praise of men, which is vain glory. They do not therefore seek wisdom even when they are seeking her; because they do not seek her for her own sake, otherwise they would live according to her: but they wish to be puffed up with her words; and the more they are puffed up, the further they are placed without her pale. Whereas the Psalmist, seeking this very thing of the Lord, which the Lord commandeth him to do, that He may work in him what He commandeth; for it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure; saith, I have called with my whole heart: hear me, O Lord: I will search out Thy righteousnesses: to do them, not merely to know them: that I may not become like that stiffnecked servant, who, although he understand, will not obey.

2. Ver. 146. I have called, save me; or as some copies, both Greek and Latin, have it, I have called to Thee. But what is, I have called to Thee, save that by calling I have invoked Thee? But when he had said, save me; what did he add? And I will keep Thy testimonies: that is, that I may not, through infirmity, deny Thee. For the health of the soul causeth that to be done which it is known to be our duty to do, and thus in striving even to the death of the body, if the extremity of temptation demand this in defence of the

truth of the divine testimonies: but where there is not health of the soul, weakness yieldeth, and truth is deserted.

3. Ver. 147. But what follows contains something obscure, which must be explained at somewhat greater length. I have prevented in the night watches (intempestâ nocte). Many copies have not, intempestâ nocte: but, immaturitate (at an unseasonable time): but hardly one is found which has the preposition doubled, in immaturitate. Immaturitas means in this passage a season at night, which is not mature, that is, opportune for any thing being done waking: just what is commonly called, an unseasonable hour. Night is also called intempesta, that is, midnight, when we ought to be at rest, because it is inopportune for the actions of men awake. For by tempestivum the ancients meant opportune: and by intempestivum, inopportune: the word being derived from tempus, time, not from that sense of tempestas, which, according to the custom of the Latin tongue, signifies a storm in the sky. Although historians willingly use this word, eâ tempestate for eo tempore: and in the words of a great master of expression,

——“Unde hæc tam clara repente

Tempestas.”

——Whence on a sudden this so bright

Tempestas.

A sky disturbed with clouds and winds is not meant, but one refulgent with a sudden and splendid serenity. What therefore is called in Greek, ἐν ἀωρίᾳ, not in one word, but in two, that is, a preposition and a noun; this some of our translators have rendered by intempestâ nocte: more by, immaturitate, not two words, but one, the nominative of which is immaturitas: some again, by two words, like the Greek, in immaturitate: for ἀωρία is immaturitas, ἐνʼ αωρίᾳ is in immaturitate: as though he also who said, intempestâ nocte, wished to double the preposition, and say, in intempestâ; so that one preposition might signify in such a time, the other might belong to the composition of the word. It matters nothing to the sense, whether any one say he did something galli cantu, or, in galli cantu: and so it would matter nothing, whether he said that he cried forth intempestâ, or in intempestâ nocte, that is, in nocte intempestâ. Yet the Greek said in nocte intempestâ, which would mean the same if it were expressed by in immaturitate, that is, at an unseasonable time of night. So far we have discoursed on an obscure word: now let us see what the sense itself is.

4. I have prevented in midnight, he saith, and have cried: In Thy words have I trusted. If we refer this to each of the faithful, and to the literal character of the act; it oft happeneth that the love of God is awake in that hour of the night, and, the love of prayer strongly urging us, the time of prayer, which is wont to be after the crowing of the cock, is not awaited, but prevented. But if we understand night of the whole of this world's duration; we indeed cry unto God at midnight, and prevent the fulness of time in which He will restore us what He hath promised, as is elsewhere read, Let us prevent His presence with confession. Although if we choose to understand the unripe season of this night, before the fulness of time had come, that is, the ripe season when Christ should be manifested in the flesh; neither was the Church then silent, but preventing this fulness of time, in prophecy cried out, and trusted in the words of God, Who was able to do what He promised, that in the seed of Abraham all nations should be blessed.

5. Ver. 148. The Church saith also what followeth, Mine eyes have prevented the morning watch, that I might meditate on Thy words. Let us suppose the morning to mean the season when a light arose for them that sat in the shadow of death; did not the eyes of the Church prevent this morning watch, in those Saints who before were on earth, because they foresaw beforehand that this would come to pass, so that they meditated on the words of God, which then were, and announced these things to be destined in the Law and the Prophets?

6. Ver. 149. Hear my voice, O Lord, according to Thy loving-mercy; and quicken Thou me according to Thy judgment. For first God according to His loving-mercy taketh away punishment from sinners, and will give them life afterwards, when righteous, according to His judgment; for it is not without a meaning that it is said unto Him, My song shall be of mercy and judgment: unto Thee, O Lord; in this order of the terms: although the

season of mercy itself be not without judgment, whereof the Apostle saith, If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord: but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world: and his fellow Apostle, The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end of them be that obey not the Gospel of God? And the final season of judgment shall not be without mercy, since as the Psalm saith, He crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness. But judgment shall be without mercy, but unto those on the left, who have not dealt mercy.

7. Ver. 150. They draw nigh, that of malice persecute me: or, as some copies read, maliciously. Then they that persecute draw nigh, when they go the length of torturing and destroying the flesh: whence the twenty-first Psalm, wherein the Lord’s Passion is prophesied, saith, O go not from me, for trouble is hard at hand; where those things are spoken of which He suffered when His Passion was not imminent upon Him, but actually realised. But by trouble being nigh at hand, he meant that which took place in the flesh; for there is nothing nearer to the soul than the flesh which it weareth. The persecutors therefore drew near, by afflicting their flesh, whom they persecuted. But heed what followeth: and are far from Thy law. The nearer they drew to the persecuting the righteous, so much the farther were they from righteousness. But what harm did they do unto those, to whom they drew near by persecution; since the approach of their Lord is nearer unto their souls, by Whom they no wise are forsaken?

8. Ver. 151. Lastly, it followeth, Thou art nigh at hand, O Lord, and all Thy ways are truth. Even in their troubles, it hath been a wonted confession of the saints, to ascribe truth unto God, because they suffer them not undeservedly. So did Queen Esther, so did holy Daniel, so did the three men in the furnace, so do other associates in their sanctity confess. But it may be asked, in what sense it is here said, All Thy ways are truth; since in another Psalm it is read, All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth. But towards the saints, All the ways of the Lord are at once mercy and truth: since He aideth them even in judgment, and thus mercy is not wanting; and in having mercy upon them, He performeth that which He hath promised, so that truth is not wanting. But towards all, both those whom He freeth, and those

whom He condemneth, all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth; because where He doth not shew mercy, the truth of His vengeance is displayed. For He freeth many who have not deserved, but He condemneth none who hath not deserved it.

2. Ver. 152. From the beginning I have known, he saith, as concerning Thy testimonies, that Thou hast grounded them for ever. The Greek word καταρχὰς hath been variously rendered by the Latin translators by ab initio, initio, and in initiis. Those who rendered it in the plural, have followed the Greek phrase. But it is more usual in the Latin tongue to express the idea conveyed by καταρχὰς, which in Greek is used in the plural or adverbially, by the words ab initio, or initio; just as with us, when we say, Otherwise I do this (alias hoc facio), we seem to be using the plural of the feminine gender, whereas the word is an adverb, and signifies, at another time. What then meaneth, From the beginning have I known as concerning Thy testimonies, that Thou hast grounded them for ever? He saith that the testimonies of the Lord were grounded by Him for ever, and he testifieth that he knew this from the beginning, and knew it from no other source than from those very testimonies. What are these testimonies, save those wherein God hath declared that He will give an everlasting kingdom unto His sons? And since He hath declared that He will give this in His only-begotten Son, of Whom it is said, Of His kingdom there shall be no end; he said that the testimonies themselves were grounded for ever, since that which God hath promised through them, was everlasting. For the testimonies will not of themselves be needful, when the reality, for the sake of the belief in which, testimonies are now required, shall be displayed. And for this reason the words, Thou hast grounded them, are rightly thus understood, because they are shewn to be true in Christ. For no man can lay any other foundation than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Whence then did the Psalmist know this in the beginning, save because the Church speaketh, which was not wanting to the earth from the commencement of the human race, the first-fruits whereof was the holy Abel, himself sacrificed in testimony of the future blood of the Mediator that should be shed by a wicked brother? For this also was at the beginning, They two shall be one flesh: which great mystery the Apostle Paul expounding, saith, I speak concerning Christ and the Church.

Discourse XXX

1. Ver. 153. Let no man, set in Christ’s body, imagine these words to be alien from himself, (since in truth it is the whole body of Christ placed in this humble state that speaketh,) whence beginneth the reading of this Psalm, concerning which we have now undertaken to treat: O consider my humiliation, and deliver me: for I forget not Thy law. In this place we cannot understand any law of God so suitably, as that whereby it is immutably determined that every one that exalteth himself, shall be abased; and every one that humbleth himself, shall be exalted. The proud therefore is involved in evils, that he may be humbled; the humble is delivered from evils, that he may be exalted.

2. Ver. 154. Avenge Thou, he saith, my cause, and deliver me. The former sentence is here almost repeated. For the words, O consider mine humiliation; answer unto these, Avenge Thou my cause: and the words, deliver me, also occur above. And what is there said, For I do not forget Thy law, agreeth with what we read here, Quicken me, according to Thy word. For these words are the law of God, which he hath not forgot, so that he hath abased himself, and will therefore be exalted. But the words, Quicken me, pertain to this very exaltation; for the exaltation of the saints is everlasting life.

3. Ver. 155. Health, he saith, is far from the ungodly: for they regard not Thy righteousnesses. For who discerneth thee, O thou who hast said, Health is far from the ungodly: who separateth thee from the ungodly, so that health is not far from thee, but with thee? This separateth thee, that what they have not done, thou hast done, that is, thou hast regarded the righteousnesses of God. But what hast thou that thou hast not received? Art thou not he who a little before didst say, I call with my whole heart: Hear me, O Lord: I will keep Thy righteousnesses? Thou therefore hast received from Him, unto Whom thou didst call, the power to keep them. He therefore doth Himself separate thee from those from whom health is far, because they have not regarded the righteousnesses of God.

4. Ver. 156. This he saw himself also. For I should not see it, save I saw it in Him, save I were in Him. For these are the words of the Body of Christ,

whose members we are. He saw this, I say, and at once added, Great are Thy mercies, O Lord. Even our seeking out Thy righteousnesses, then, cometh of Thy mercies. Quicken me according to Thy judgment. For I know that Thy judgments will not be upon me without Thy mercy.

5. Ver. 157. Many there are that trouble me, and persecute me; yet do I not swerve from Thy testimonies. This hath been realised: we know it, we recollect it, we acknowledge it. The whole earth hath been crimsoned by the blood of Martyrs; heaven is flowery with the crowns of Martyrs, the Churches are adorned with the memorials of Martyrs, seasons distinguished by the birthdays of Martyrs, cures more frequent by the merits of Martyrs. Whence this, save because that hath been fulfilled which was prophesied of that Man Who hath been spread abroad around the whole world, Many there are that trouble me, and persecute me: yet have I not swerved from Thy testimonies? We recognise this, and render thanks to the Lord our God. For thou, man, thou hast thyself said in another Psalm, If the Lord Himself had not been on our side, they would have swallowed us up quick. Behold the reason why thou hast not swerved from His testimonies, and hast won the palm of thy heavenly calling amid the hands of the many who persecuted and troubled thee.

6. Ver. 158. I have seen, he saith, the foolish, and I pined: or, as other copies read, I have seen them that keep not covenant: this is the reading of most. But who are they who have not kept covenant, save they who have swerved from the testimonies of God, not bearing the tribulation of their many persecutors? Now this is the covenant, that he who shall have conquered shall be crowned. They who, not bearing persecution, have by denial swerved from the testimonies of God, have not kept the covenant. These then the Psalmist saw, and pined, for he loved them. For that jealousy is good, springing from love, not from envy. He addeth in what respect they had failed to keep the covenant, Because they kept not Thy word. For this they denied in their tribulations.

7. Ver. 159. And he commendeth himself as differing from them, and saith, Behold, how I have loved Thy commandments. He saith not, I have not denied Thy words or testimonies, as the Martyrs were urged to do, and, when they refused, suffered intolerable torments: but he said this wherein is

the fruit of all sufferings; for, if I give up my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. The Psalmist, praising this virtue, saith, Behold, how I have loved Thy commandments. Then he asketh his reward, O Lord, quicken me, according to Thy mercy. These put me to death, do Thou quicken me. But if a reward be asked of mercy, which justice is bound to give; how much greater is that mercy, which enabled him to gain the victory, on account of which the reward was sought for?

8. Ver. 160. The beginning, he saith, of Thy words is truth; all the judgments of Thy righteousness endure for evermore. From truth, he saith, Thy words do proceed, and they are therefore truthful, and deceive no man, for in them life is announced to the righteous, punishment to the ungodly. These are the everlasting judgments of God's righteousness.

Discourse XXXI

1. Ver. 161. We know what persecutions the body of Christ, that is, the holy Church, suffered from the kings of the earth. Let us therefore here also recognise the words of the Church: Princes have persecuted me without a cause: and my heart hath stood in awe of Thee. For how had the Christians injured the kingdoms of the earth, although their King promised them the kingdom of heaven? How, I ask, had they injured the kingdoms of earth? Did their King forbid His soldiers to pay and to render due service to the kings of the earth? Saith He not to the Jews who were striving to calumniate Him, Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's? Did he not even in His own Person pay tribute from the mouth of a fish? Did not His forerunner, when the soldiers of this kingdom were seeking what they ought to do for their everlasting salvation, instead of replying, Loose your belts, throw away your arms, desert your king, that ye may wage war for the Lord, answer, Do violence to no man: neither accuse any falsely: and be content with your wages? Did not one of His soldiers, His most beloved companion, say to his fellow soldiers, the provincials, so to speak, of Christ, Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers? and a little lower he addeth, Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due: custom to whom custom: fear to whom fear: honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another. Does he not enjoin the Church to pray for even kings themselves? How then have the

Christians offended against them? What due have they not rendered? in what have not Christians obeyed the monarchs of earth? The kings of the earth therefore have persecuted the Christians without a cause. But heed what he hath subjoined: And my heart hath stood in awe of Thy word. They too had their threatening words: I banish, I proscribe, I slay, I torture with claws, I burn with fires, I expose to beasts, I tear the limbs piecemeal: but rather of Thy word hath my heart stood in awe. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. My heart hath stood in awe of these words of Thine; and I have scorned man who persecuteth me, and have overcome the devil that would seduce me.

2. Ver. 162. Then follows, I am as glad of Thy word as one that findeth great spoils. By the same words he conquered, of which he stood in awe. For spoils are stripped from the conquered; as he was overcome and despoiled of whom it is said in the Gospel, No man entereth into the strong man's house to spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man. But many spoils were found, when, admiring the endurance of the Martyrs, even the persecutors believed; and they who had plotted to injure our King by the injury of His soldiers, were gained over by Him in addition. Whoever therefore standeth in awe of the words of God, fearing lest he be overcome in the contest, rejoiceth as conqueror in the same words.

3. Ver. 163. For lest we should imagine it possible that hatred of God's words might have crept in, in consequence of this fear, although he had already said, I am glad of Thy word, which he certainly would not say, if he hated it; nevertheless he added, As for iniquity, I hate and abhor it; but Thy law have I loved. That awe, therefore, of His word did not create hatred of those words, but maintained his love unimpaired. For the words of God are no other than the law of God. Far be it therefore that love perish through fear, where fear is chaste. Thus fathers are at once feared and loved by affectionate sons; thus doth the chaste wife at once fear her husband, lest she be forsaken by him, and loveth him, that she may enjoy his love. If then the human father and the human husband desire at once to be feared and loved; much more doth our Father Who is in heaven, and that Bridegroom, beautiful beyond the sons of men, not in the flesh, but in goodness. For by

whom is the law of God loved, save by those by whom God is loved? And what that is severe hath the father's law to good sons? Is it hard that He chasteneth whom He loveth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth? But he who refuseth these judgments, receiveth not the promises. Let the Father's judgments therefore be praised even in the scourge, if His promises be loved in the reward.

4. Ver. 164. Such was, assuredly, the conduct of the Psalmist, who saith, Seven times a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous judgments. The words seven times a day, signify evermore. For this number is wont to be a symbol of universality; because after six days of the divine work of creation, a seventh of rest was added; and all times roll on through a revolving cycle of seven days. For no other reason it was said, a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: that is, the just man perisheth not, though brought low in every way, yet not induced to transgress, otherwise he will not be just. For the words, falleth seven times, are employed to express every kind of tribulation, whereby man is cast down in the sight of men: and the words, riseth up again, signify that he profiteth from all these tribulations. The following sentence in this passage sufficiently illustrates the foregoing words: for it follows, but the wicked shall fall into mischief. Not to be deprived of strength in any evils, is therefore the falling seven times, and the rising again of the just man. Justly hath the Church then praised God seven times in a day for His righteous judgments; because, when it was time that judgment should begin at the house of God, she did not faint in all her tribulations, but was glorified with the crowns of Martyrs.

5. Ver. 165. Great is the peace, he saith, that they have who love Thy law: and there is no offence to them. Doth this mean that the law itself is not an offence to them that love it, or that there is no offence from any source unto them that love the law? But both senses are rightly understood. For he who loveth the law of God, honoureth in it even what he doth not understand; and what seemeth to him to sound absurd, he judgeth rather that he doth not understand, and that there is some great meaning hidden: thus the law of God is not an offence to him. But that he may suffer no offence at all, let him not heed men of each holy profession to such a degree as to allow his

faith to depend upon their conduct; lest, if some fall, whom he highly esteemed, he perish by an offence: but let him love the law of God itself, and he shall have much peace, and no offence. For he is safe in loving that, which, although many sin in it, doth not itself know sin.

6. Ver. 166. I have waited, he saith, for Thy saving health, O Lord, and have loved Thy commandments. For what would it have profited the righteous of old to have loved the commandments of God, save Christ, Who is the saving health of God, had freed them; by the gift of whose Spirit also they were able to love the commandments of God? If therefore they who loved God's commandments, waited for His saving health; how much more necessary was Jesus, that is, the saving Health of God, for the salvation of those that did not love His commandments? This prophecy may suit also the Saints of the period since the revelation of grace, and the preaching of the Gospel, for they that love God's commandments look for Christ, that when Christ, our life, shall appear, we may then appear with Him in glory.

7. Ver. 167, 168. My soul hath kept Thy testimonies, and I have loved them exceedingly: or, as some copies read, hath loved them, understanding, my soul. The testimonies of God are kept, while they are not denied. This is the office of Martyrs, for testimonies are called Martyria in Greek. But since it profiteth nothing, even to be burnt with flames without charity, he addeth, and I have loved them exceedingly. He had said above, I have loved Thy commandments; then in the following verse, I have kept and have loved Thy testimonies: further down, I have kept both Thy commandments and Thy testimonies; for he saith, I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies. For he who loveth, keepeth them in the Spirit of truth and faithfulness. But generally, while the commandments of God are kept, they against whose will they are kept become our foes: then, indeed, His testimonies also must be kept courageously, lest they be denied when the enemy persecuteth.

8. After the Psalmist, then, had declared that he had done both these things, he ascribeth unto God his having been enabled to do so, by adding, because all my ways are in Thy sight. He saith therefore, I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies; because all my ways are in Thy sight. As much as to say, Hadst Thou turned away Thy face from me, I should

have been confounded, nor could I keep Thy commandments and testimonies. I have kept them, then, because all my ways are in Thy sight. With a look favouring and aiding man, he meant it to be understood that God seeth his ways: according to the prayer, O hide not Thou Thy face from me. For, the face of the Lord is also over them that do evil, but so, that He may blot out the memory of them from the earth. Not in this sense indeed hath the Psalmist said that his ways are seen of Him, but as the Lord knoweth the ways of the righteous, and as He saith unto Moses, I know Thee above all. For if this did not aid him as he walked, that his ways are before God, he would not say that he had kept his commandments and testimonies, because all his ways were before the Lord. For he knew how to hear, Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with reverence. Take hold on discipline, lest the Lord be angry, and so ye perish from the right way: for, save he were in the sight of the Lord, his way would not be the right way. For the Apostle Paul enjoineth this fear and trembling upon those to whom he saith, Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; and, explaining why he speaketh thus, For it is God, he addeth, Who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. For this end, then, the ways of the righteous are before the Lord, that He may direct their steps, since these are the ways of which it is said in Proverbs, The Lord knoweth the paths that are on the right: but they that are on the left are perverse: so that we may understand that the Lord knoweth them not, because He will say to the perverse, I know you not. Moreover, to shew the fruit of the Lord’s knowing those paths which are on the right, that is, those of the righteous, he at once addeth, For He will make Thy paths straight, and will lead thy footsteps in peace. Behold then the reason why the Psalmist also saith, I have kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies. And, as though we asked how he was able to keep them, he answereth, Because all my ways are in Thy sight, O Lord.

Discourse XXXII

3. Ver. 169. Let us now hear the words of one praying: since we know who is praying, and we recognise ourselves, if we be not reprobate, among the members of this one praying. Let my prayer come near in Thy sight, O Lord: for, The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart. Give me

understanding, according to Thy word. He claimeth a promise. For he saith, according to Thy word, which is to say, according to Thy promise. For the Lord promised this when He said, I will inform thee.

2. Ver. 170. Let my request come before Thy presence, O Lord: deliver me, according to Thy word. He repeateth what he hath asked. For his former words, Let my prayer come near in Thy presence, O Lord: are like unto what he saith, Let my request come before Thy presence, O Lord: and the words, Give me understanding according to Thy word, agree with these, Deliver me according to Thy word. For by receiving understanding he is delivered, who of himself through want of understanding is deceived.

3. Ver. 171. My lips shall burst forth praise: when Thou hast taught me Thy righteousnesses. We know how God teacheth those who are docile unto God. For every one who hath heard from the Father and hath learned, comes unto Him Who justifieth the ungodly: so that he may keep the righteousnesses of God not only by retaining them in his memory, but also by doing them. Thus doth he who glorieth, glory not in himself, but in the Lord, and burst forth praise.

4. Ver. 172. But as he hath now learned, and praised God his Teacher, he next wisheth to teach. Yea, my tongue shall declare Thy word: for all Thy commandments are righteousness. When he saith that he will declare these things, he becometh a minister of the word. For though God teach within, nevertheless faith cometh from hearing: and how do they hear without a preacher? For, because God giveth the increase, is no reason why we need not plant and water.

5. Ver. 173, 174. But he is aware what perils will follow from the adversaries and persecutors, when he shall become a declarer of God’s words: wherefore he hath added, Let Thy hand be stretched forth (fiat, be made) to save me, for I have chosen Thy commandments. That I might not fear, and that not only might my heart hold fast, but my tongue also utter Thy words: I have chosen Thy commandments, and have stifled fear with love. Let Thy hand therefore be stretched forth, to save me from another’s hand. Thus God saved the Martyrs, when He permitted them not to be slain in their souls: for rain is the safety of man in the flesh. The words, Let Thy

hand be made, may also be taken to mean Christ the Hand of God: in the sense of those words of Isaiah, And unto Whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? For the Only-Begotten was not created, since by Him were all things created; but He was made of the seed of David, that He might be Jesus, that is the Saviour, Who was already the Creator. But as these are familiar Scriptural phrases, Let Thy hand be stretched forth (lit. made); and, the Hand of the Lord was made: I know not whether this sense can be found in all these passages. Certainly where we read the following words, (ver. 174.) I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord: even if all our foes be reluctant, let Christ the Salvation of God occur to us: the righteous men of old confess that they longed for Him, the Church longed for His destined coming from His mother's womb, the Church longeth for His coming at His Father's right hand. Subjoined to this sentence are the words, And Thy law is my meditation: for the Law giveth testimony unto Christ.

6. Ver. 175. But in this faith, while with the heart we believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; though the heathen rage furiously, and the people imagine a vain thing: though the flesh be slain while it preacheth Thee: My soul shall live, and shall praise Thee: and Thy judgments shall help me. These are those judgments, which it was time should begin at the house of the Lord. But they will help me, he saith. And who cannot see how much the blood of the Church hath aided the Church? how great a harvest hath risen in the whole world from that sowing?

7. Ver. 176. At length he openeth himself completely, and sheweth what person was speaking throughout the whole Psalm. I have gone astray, he saith, like a sheep that is lost: O seek Thy servant, for I do not forget Thy commandments. Some copies have not seek, but quicken. For there is a difference only of one syllable, between the corresponding Greek words ζῆσον and ζήτησον: whence the Greek copies themselves derive the variation. But whichever of these be right, let the lost sheep be sought, let the lost sheep be quickened, for whose sake its Shepherd left the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and while seeking it, was torn by Jewish thorns. But it is still being sought, let it still be sought, partly found let it still be sought. For as to that company, among whom the Psalmist saith, I do not forget Thy

commandments, it hath been found; but through those who choose the commandments of God, gather them together, love them, it is still sought, and by means of the blood of its Shepherd shed and sprinkled abroad, it is found in all nations.

8. As far as I have been able, as far as I have been aided by the Lord, I have treated throughout, and expounded, this great Psalm. A task which more able and learned expositors have performed or will perform better; nevertheless, my services were not to be withheld from it on that account, when my brethren earnestly required it of me, to whom I owed this office. That I have said nothing of the Hebrew alphabet, in which every eight verses are ranged under a particular letter, and the whole Psalm arranged in this manner, let no one wonder, since I found nothing that related especially to this Psalm: for it is not the only one which hath these letters. Let those who cannot find it in the Latin and Greek versions, since it is not adopted there, know that every set of eight verses in the Hebrew copies beginneth with that letter which is prefixed to them; as is indicated to us by those who are acquainted with the Hebrew tongue. This is done with much more care, than our writers have shewn in their Latin or Punic compositions of Psalms which they style abecedarii. For they do not begin all the verses down to the close of a period, but the first only with the same letter which they prefix to it.

PSALM 120

1. Ver. 1. The Psalm which we have just heard chanted, and have responded to with our voices, is short, and very profitable. Ye will not long toil in hearing, nor will ye toil fruitlessly in working. For it is, according to the title prefixed to it, A song of degrees. In Greek it is written, ἀναβαθμῶν. Degrees are either of ascent or of descent. But degrees, as they are used in this Psalm, are of ascending. Let us understand it therefore as men who are resolved to ascend: and let us not seek ascent with our bodily feet, but, as it is written in another Psalm, He hath set steps of ascent in his heart, in the vale of misery, towards the place that He hath ordered. He saith, steps of ascent: where? in the heart. Whence? from the vale of misery. Now whither we ascend, since human language faileth, we cannot unfold, nor even imagine. Ye heard but now, when the Apostle was being read, the words, Which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it ascended into the heart of man. It hath not ascended into the heart of man: let man's heart ascend thither. Since therefore eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it ascended into the heart of man; how can it be said whither we must ascend? Since therefore it was impossible to utter this, he said, unto the place which He hath ordered. What more shall I tell thee, saith he, through whom the Holy Spirit spoke? unto such or such a place? Whatever I should say, thou thinkest of some earthly spot, thou crawlest on the ground, thou bearest flesh: the corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle presseth down the mind that museth upon many things. Unto whom shall I speak? Who will hear? Who will understand, where we shall be after this life, if we ascend in heart? Since then no one can conceive of this; hope for some ineffable realm of bliss, which He hath fixed for thee who set steps of ascent in thy heart. But where? In the vale of misery. A vale signifieth humility: a mountain signifieth loftiness. There is a mountain whither we may ascend, a kind of spiritual loftiness. And what is this mountain, whither we ascend, save our Lord Jesus Christ? He Himself made for thee, by suffering, a vale of misery, Who made, by His abiding, a mountain of ascent. What is a vale of misery? The Word was made flesh,

and dwelt among us. What is a vale of misery? He giveth His cheek to him that smiteth Him: He is filled full with reproach. What is a vale of misery? He was buffeted, spit upon, crowned with thorns, crucified. This is the vale of misery whence thou must ascend. But whither must thou ascend? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. For the Word Himself was made flesh, and dwelt among us. He so descended unto thee, as still to abide in Himself: He descended unto thee, so as to become for thee a vale of misery: He abode in Himself, that He might be for thee a mountain of ascent. There will be, saith Isaiah, in the last days, the mountain of the Lord set forth on the top of the mountains. Behold, whither we must ascend. But conceive not any thing earthly, nor, because thou hast heard of a mountain, think of the high places of the earth: nor, when thou hearest a stone or a rock mentioned, understand hardness; nor, when thou hearest of a lion, imagine ferocity: nor, when thou hearest of a lamb, think of a brute animal. There is none of these in Him, and He became all these for thy sake. Hence therefore we must ascend, thitherward we must ascend; from His example, unto His Divinity. For He made Himself an example by humbling Himself. For they who refused to ascend from the vale of misery, were rebuked by Him. For they wished to ascend too rapidly, they thought of exalted honour, they thought not of the path of humility. Beloved brethren, understand ye what I mean: the two disciples wished to sit at their Lord’s side, one at the right, the other at the left: the Lord saw that they were too hastily, and out of due order, thinking of honours, when they ought first to have learnt humiliation, that they might be exalted; and said unto them, Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? For He was to drink the cup of His Passion in the vale of misery; while they, not heeding Christ’s humiliation, wished to attain the loftiness of Christ. He recalled them unto the way, as wanderers; not meaning to deny them what they wished, but to shew them the path whereby to attain it.

2. Let us therefore, my brethren, chant this Psalm of ascension, ourselves resolved to ascend in heart; for He descended unto us that we might ascend. Jacob saw a ladder, and some appeared unto him ascending and descending; he saw both. We may conceive that those who were seen to ascend, were those who were spiritually progressing; those who were seen to descend, those who were falling off; for we actually find this in the people of God:

some progress, others fall back. This ladder might signify the latter: but perhaps it is better to understand all as good men on that ladder, both in those who were ascending and in those who were descending. For it is not without a meaning that the word descending is used instead of falling. There is a wide difference between these two words. For because Adam fell, therefore Christ descended: the one fell, the other descended: the one fell from pride, the other descended in mercy. But He did not alone descend: though indeed He alone descended from heaven: but many saints in imitation of Him descend unto us, and have descended unto us. For the Apostle was dwelling in a kind of loftiness of heart, when he said, Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God. In his mental transport, he was transported unto God. Transported in his mind beyond all human frailty, all the temporal interests of the world, all the things which, in alternate birth and death, vanish away, all these transitory things; he dwelt in heart in a certain ineffable contemplation, as far as he was able, of which he saith, that he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. He could not reveal these words to thee: yet he could see those things in a degree, which he could not reveal to thee. If therefore he chose ever to remain in that which he saw, and could not describe, he could not raise thee where thou also couldest see. But what did he do? He descended. For he there saith, For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your sake. What meaneth, whether we be sober? Whether we speak so that you may understand. For Christ also made Himself so by His Birth and Passion, that men might speak of Him: for a man easily speaketh of a man. When can man so speak of God, as God Is? But man speaketh easily of man. That the great, therefore, might descend unto the humble, and yet might tell them nought save great things; He Who was great, became humble, that the great might speak of Him to the humble. Ye have just heard what I am speaking, whilst the Apostle was being read. If ye heeded, he said this; I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. To the spiritual therefore he speaketh in lofty terms; but, that he may speak to the carnal, he descendeth. And that ye may be sure that when he descendeth, he speaketh of Him Who descended; behold, John speaketh of Him abiding in Himself: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. Take this, if thou canst; take it eagerly, it is food. But thou wilt answer me, That indeed is meat, but I am an infant, I must be suckled with milk, that I may be fit to eat meat. Since thou then must be nourished with meat, and He is meat, this Meat hath been through the flesh brought unto thy mouth. As the mother, therefore, doth eat the meat, that she may through the flesh transmit it to her infant when it hath become milk; so the Lord, the Word, the Food of Angels, was made flesh, and became milk; and the Apostle saith, I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, nor yet are ye able. By giving milk, then, he descended unto the infants: and in descending, gave Him Who descended. For he saith, Did I say that I knew any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified? For if he said only, Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is also after His Divine Nature, in that He was the Word with God, Jesus Christ the Son of God: but infants understand Him not thus, that is, spoken of in this character. How then do they who take milk, receive Him? Jesus Christ, he saith, and Him crucified. Suck thou that which He became for thee, and thou growest unto that which He Is. There are therefore both those who ascend and those who descend on that ladder. Who are they that ascend? They who progress towards the understanding of things spiritual. Who are they that descend? They who, although, as far as men may, they enjoy the comprehension of things spiritual: nevertheless, descend unto the infants, to say to them such things as they can receive, so that, after being nourished with milk, they may become fitted and strong enough to take spiritual meat. Isaiah, my brethren, himself was one of those who descend unto us: for the very steps of his descent are clearly traceable. For when he said of the Holy Spirit, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding shall rest upon him, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; he began with wisdom, and descended unto fear. As he who taught, descended from wisdom unto fear; thou who learnest, if thou art profiting, ascend from fear unto wisdom; for it is written, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Now therefore hear ye the Psalm. Let us place before our eyes a man who is about to ascend. To ascend wherein? in heart. Whence? From humility, that is, from the vale of misery. To ascend whither? To that unspeakable bliss, which, since it could not be named, is described as the place that He hath fixed.

3. When therefore a man hath commenced thus to order his ascent; to speak more plainly, when a Christian hath begun to think of spiritual amendment, he beginneth to suffer the tongues of adversaries. Whoever hath not yet suffered from them, hath not yet made progress; whoever suffereth them not, doth not even endeavour to improve. Doth he wish to know what we mean? Let him at the same time experience what is reported of us. Let him begin to improve, let him begin to wish to ascend, to wish to despise earthly, fragile, temporal objects, to hold worldly happiness for nothing, to think of God alone, not to rejoice in gain, not to pine at losses, to wish even to sell all his substance, and distribute it among the poor, and to follow Christ; let us see how he suffereth the tongues of detractors and of constant opponents, and—a still greater peril—of pretended counsellors, who lead him astray from salvation. For whoever counselleth another, counselleth him with a view to his salvation, counselleth him for his own good; but the feigned adviser draweth him back from salvation. Because, therefore, he seemeth to be wrapped in the robe of a counsellor, and hath the poison of a murderer, he is styled the deceitful tongue. He then, who will ascend, first of all prayeth God against these very tongues: for he saith, When I was in trouble, I called on the Lord; and He heard me. Why did He hear him? That He might now place him at the steps of ascent.

4. Ver. 2. And since now that he is resolved to rise, he hath been heard: what doth he pray? Deliver my soul, O Lord, from unrighteous lips, and from a deceitful tongue. What is a deceitful tongue? A treacherous tongue, one that hath the semblance of counsel, and the bane of real mischief. Such are those who say, And wilt thou do this, that nobody doth? Wilt thou be the only Christian? And if he shall shew that others do this, and hath quoted the Gospel where the Lord hath enjoined it to be done, or read the Acts of the Apostles: what do they say with their deceitful tongue and unrighteous lips? “You will probably be unable to fulfil it: it is too much that you attempt.” Some deter by dissuasion, others discourage yet more by their praise. For since such is the life that hath for some time been diffused over the world, so great is the authority of Christ, that not even a pagan ventureth to blame Christ. He Who cannot be censured is read. He Who said, Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and follow Me: they cannot contradict Christ, they cannot contradict the Gospel, Christ cannot be censured; the

deceitful tongue turneth itself to praise as an hindrance. If thou praisest, exhort. Why dost thou discourage with thy praise? Thou wouldest better blame, than deceitfully praise. For what wouldest thou say if thou didst blame? God forbid! this is a foul life, an evil life! But as thou knowest that, if thou sayest this, thou mayest be pressed with the authority of the Gospel; thou turnest thyself to another mode of dissuasion, that by false praise, thou mayest turn me away from true praise; nay, that by praising Christ, thou mayest keep me away from Christ, saying, What is this? Behold these men have done this: thou, perhaps, wilt not be able: thou beginnest to ascend, thou fallest. It seemeth to warn thee: it is the serpent, it is the deceitful tongue, it hath poison. Pray against it, if thou wishest to ascend, and say unto thy God, Lord, deliver my soul from unrighteous lips, and from a deceitful tongue.

5. Ver. 3–4. And thy Lord saith unto thee, What shall be given thee, or what shall be set before thee, against the deceitful tongue? What shall be given thee, that is, as a weapon to oppose to the deceitful tongue, to guard thyself against the deceitful tongue? What shall be given thee, or what shall be set before thee? He asketh to try thee: for He will answer His own question. For He answers following up his own enquiry, even sharp arrows of the Mighty One, with coals that desolate, or that lay waste. They that desolate, or that lay waste, (for it is variously written in different copies,) are the same, because by laying waste, as ye may observe, they easily lead unto desolation. What are these coals? First, beloved brethren, understand what are arrows. The sharp arrows of the Mighty One, are the words of God. Lo, they are shot, and they transfix hearts: but when hearts have been tranfixed by the arrows of God’s word, love is roused, not destruction brought about. The Lord knoweth how to shoot arrows of love: and no one more graciously shooteth arrows of love, than he who shooteth with the Word; yea, He shooteth the heart of him that loveth, that He may aid the loving; He shooteth, that He may make him loving. Arrows they are, when we plead with words. What then are the coals that lay waste? It is not enough to plead with words against a deceitful tongue and unrighteous lips: it is not enough to plead with words; we must plead with examples also. The coals that lay waste are the examples. Wherefore they be styled coals, beloved brethren, briefly hear. First, consider, how we should deal with examples. The

deceitful tongue, the more deceitful it is, knoweth nothing so well to allege, as this: “consider that thou mayest not be able to fulfil this duty; for it is a hard task for thee to attempt it.” Thou hast received the evangelical precept, thou hast the arrow; but thou hast not as yet the coals. It is to be feared lest the arrow alone may not avail to guard thee against the deceitful tongue; there are the hot coals also. For instance, suppose God beginneth to say unto thee, Thou canst not; wherefore can that man? Wherefore could the other? Art thou more delicate than that Senator? Art thou weaker than this man or that in health? Art thou weaker than women? Women have been able, are not men able? delicate wealthy men have been able, are poor men not able? But I, he replieth, have sinned greatly, and am a great sinner. They also who have greatly sinned are mentioned: and the more that hath been forgiven them, the more have they loved: as it is said in the Gospel, To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. Since these things have been mentioned, and men have been named who have succeeded, he, when he hath received the arrow in his heart, with the hot coals that lay waste in addition, hath his earthly thoughts therein laid waste. What doth this word, ‘laid waste,’ mean? Is brought unto desolation. For there were many things in him which had bloomed with rank luxuriance, many carnal thoughts, many secular affections: these are burned with the coals that lay waste, that the place thus made desolate may be cleared, in whose clean space God may build His House; for the devil there hath come to ruin, and Christ is now built there: for as long as the devil abideth there, Christ cannot be built. The coals that lay waste come thither, and throw down what had been built for evil, and when the spot hath been made desolate, a structure of perpetual bliss is raised. Consider therefore why they are called hot coals. Because they who turn themselves unto the Lord, live again from the dead. They that are coals when they are set on fire, before they were set on fire, were extinguished. Extinguished coals are called dead; burning coals are called live. The word coals, then, is used to express the examples of many sinners converted to the Lord. Thou hearest men wonder, and say, I knew that man, how addicted he was to drinking, what a villain, what a lover of the circus, or of the amphitheatre, what a cheat: now how he serveth God, how innocent he hath become! Wonder not; he is a live coal. Thou rejoicest that he is alive, whom thou wast mourning as dead. But when thou praisest the living, if thou knowest how to praise, apply him to the dead, that he may be inflamed; whosoever is still slow to follow God, apply to him the coal which was extinguished, and have the arrow of God’s word, and the coal that layeth waste, that thou mayest meet the deceitful tongue and the lying lips.

6. What followeth? This man hath received the burning arrows, let him receive the coals that lay waste. He now repelleth the deceitful tongue and the unrighteous lips, he now ascendeth a step, he beginneth to improve: but he still liveth among wicked, unrighteous men: the floor hath not yet been winnowed: suppose he hath become wheat, yet is he in the barn? It is needful that he be crowded with much chaff; and the more he improveth, the greater offences doth he see in the people. For if he were not improving, he would not discern iniquities; if he be not a faithful Christian himself, he seeth not the hypocrites. The Lord, my brethren, teacheth us this lesson from that parable also, concerning the corn and the tares. But when the blade had sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also; that is, that the wicked appear unto no man, save he himself hath become good; for when the blade had sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. He therefore now beginneth to amend, and beginneth to see the wicked, and many evils which he had not known before, and crieth unto the Lord: (ver. 5.) Alas, that my sojourning is become far off! It hath departed far from Thee: my pilgrimage hath become a far one. I have not yet reached that country, where I shall live with no wicked person; I have not yet reached that company of Angels, where I shall not fear offences. But why am I not as yet there? Because my sojourning is become so far off. Sojourning is pilgrimage. He is called a sojourner who dwells in a foreign land, not in his own country. My sojourning, he saith, is become far off. And when is it far off? Sometimes, my brethren, when a man goeth abroad, he liveth among better persons, than he would perhaps live with in his own country: but it is not thus, when we go afar from that heavenly Jerusalem. For a man changeth his country, and this foreign sojourn is sometimes good for him; in travelling he findeth faithful friends, whom he could not find in his own country. He had enemies, so that he was driven from his country; and when he travelled, he found what he had not in his country. Such is not that country Jerusalem, where all are good: whoever travelleth away from thence, is among the evil;

nor can he depart from the wicked, save when he shall return to the company of Angels, so as to be where he was before he travelled. There all are righteous and holy, who enjoy the word of God without reading, without letters: for what is written to us through pages, they perceive there through the Face of God. What a country! A great country indeed, and wretched are the wanderers from that country.

7. But what he saith, My pilgrimage hath been made distant, are the words of those, that is, of the Church herself, who toileth on this earth. It is her voice, which crieth out from the ends of the earth in another Psalm, saying, From the ends of the earth have I cried unto Thee. Which of us crieth from the ends of the earth? Neither I, nor thou, nor he, but the whole body of the Church, the whole inheritance of Christ crieth; for the Church is His heritage, and it is said of the Church, Desire of Me, and I shall give the heathen for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession. If therefore the possession of Christ extends to the utmost parts of the earth, and all the saints are the possession of Christ, and all the saints are one man in Christ, because holy unity is in Christ; this one man saith, From the ends of the earth have I called unto Thee, when my heart was in heaviness. The pilgrimage of this man, then, became distant among the wicked. And as if it were said unto him, With whom then dost thou dwell, that thou dost groan? My pilgrimage, he saith, is become far distant. But what, if it were with the good? If it were with the good, he would not say, Alas! Alas is an expression of misery, is an expression of calamity and unhappiness; but nevertheless in hope, since he hath already learnt even to groan. For many are wretched, and groan not, and wander afar, and yet are reluctant to return. This one now wishing to return, learneth the unhappiness of his wandering: since he hath recognised it, he returneth; and beginneth to ascend, for he beginneth to sing the ‘song of steps.’ Where then doth he groan, and among whom doth he dwell? I have had my habitation among the tents of Kedar. Since this is a Hebrew word, beyond doubt ye have not understood it. What meaneth, I have had my habitation among the tents of Kedar? Kedar, as far as we remember of the interpretation of Hebrew words, signifieth darkness. Kedar rendered into Latin is called tenebræ. Now ye know that Abraham had two sons, whom indeed the Apostle mentioneth, and declareth them to have been types of

the two covenants: one was the son of a bondwoman, the other of a freewoman. Ishmael was the son by the bondwoman; Isaac the son whom he received, after he had ceased to hope it, through faith, from Sarah the freewoman. Each was of the seed of Abraham: but each was not the heir of Abraham. One is born of Abraham, yet he doth not receive the heritage: the other is also the heir; not the son only, but the heir. In Ishmael are all they who carnally worship God. For unto them the old covenant also doth pertain: for the Apostle speaketh thus, Ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants. What are the two covenants? One is the old, the other is the new. The old covenant is from God, and the new covenant is from God; as both Ishmael and Isaac were sons of Abraham. But Ishmael belongeth to the earthly, Isaac to the heavenly, kingdom. Therefore the old covenant hath earthly promises, an earthly Jerusalem, an earthly Palestine, an earthly kingdom, an earthly salvation, the subjugation of enemies, abundance of sons, exuberance of fruits. All these things are earthly promises. They are understood spiritually as figurative, as the earthly Jerusalem was the shadow of the heavenly kingdom, and the earthly kingdom was the shadow of the kingdom of heaven. Ishmael was in the shadow, Isaac in the light. If then Ishmael was in the shadow, it is no wonder that there was darkness there. For darkness is only a deeper shadow. Ishmael therefore was in darkness, Isaac in light. Whoever here also seek earthly felicity in the Church, from God, shall belong to Ishmael. These are the very persons who gainsay the spiritual ones who are progressing, and detract from them, and have deceitful tongues and unrighteous lips. Against these the Psalmist, when ascending, prayed, and hot coals that lay waste, and swift and sharp arrows of the Mighty One, were given him for his defence. For among these he still liveth, until the whole floor be winnowed: he therefore said, I have dwelt among the tents of Kedar. The tents of Ishmael are called those of Kedar. Thus the book of Genesis hath it: thus it hath, that Kedar belongeth unto Ishmael. Isaac therefore is with Ishmael: that is, they who belong unto Isaac, live among those who belong unto Ishmael. These wish to rise above, those wish to press them downwards: these wish to fly unto God, those endeavour to pluck their wings. For with the Apostle it is thus spoken: But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now. The spiritual then suffer persecution from the carnal. But what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. When will this word, ‘cast out,’ be fulfilled? When the floor shall begin to be winnowed. But at present, before he be cast out, Alas me! that my sojourning hath become far off. I have dwelt with the tents of Kedar. And he explaineth unto us, who are they who belong to the tents of Kedar.

8. Ver. 6. My soul hath wandered much. Lest thou shouldest understand bodily wandering, he hath said that the soul wandered. The body wandereth in places, the soul wandereth in its affections. If thou love the earth, thou wanderest from God: if thou lovest God, thou risest unto God. Let us be exercised in the love of God, and of our neighbour, that we may return unto charity. If we fall towards the earth, we wither and decay. But one descended unto this one who had fallen, in order that he might arise. Speaking of the time of his wandering, he said that he wandered in the tents of Kedar. Wherefore? Because my soul hath wandered much. He wandereth there where he ascendeth. He wandereth not in the body, he riseth not in the body. But wherein doth he ascend? The ascent, he saith, is in the heart. If therefore he ascendeth in heart, it is only the soul which wandered that ascendeth through the ascent of the heart. But until he arrive, My soul hath wandered much. Where? In the tents of Kedar.

9. Ver. 7. With them that hated peace, I was peaceful. But howsoever ye may hear, most beloved brethren, ye will not be able to test how truly ye sing, unless ye have begun to do that which ye sing. How much soever I say this, in whatsoever ways I may expound it, in whatsoever words I may turn it, it entereth not into the heart of him in whom its operation is not. Begin to act, and see what we speak. Then tears flow forth at each word, then the Psalm is sung, and the heart doeth what is sung in the Psalm. For how many sound in words, and are remote in heart? and how many are silent in their lips, and cry forth in their feelings! Because the ears of God are unto man’s heart: even as the ears of the body unto the mouth of man, so is the heart of man to the ears of God. Many whose mouths are closed are heard, and many, though they cry loudly, are not heard. We ought to pray with our

feelings, and to say, My soul hath wandered much: with them that hate peace, I was peaceful. For what else say we to these heretics, save, Learn peace, love peace? Ye call yourselves righteous. But if ye were righteous, ye would groan as wheat among chaff. For since there are ears of wheat in the Catholic Church, and they are true ears; therefore they endure the chaff, until the floor be threshed; because they cry among the chaff, Alas me! that my sojourning hath been made far off! I have dwelt with the tents of Kedar! I have dwelt, he saith, with chaff. But as much dust goeth out of the chaff, so darkness goeth forth from Kedar. I have dwelt with the tents of Kedar; my soul hath wandered much. These are the words of the ears of wheat, groaning among the chaff. This we say to them that hate peace: With those, we say, that hated peace, was I peaceful. Who are they who hate peace? They who tear asunder unity. For had they not hated peace, they would have abode in unity. But they separated themselves, forsooth on this account, that they might be righteous, that they might not have the ungodly mixed with them. These words are either ours or theirs: decide whose. The Catholic Church saith, Unity must not be lost, the Church of God must not be cut off. God will judge afterwards of the wicked and the good. If the evil cannot now be separated from the good, they must be endured for a season: the wicked may be with us on the floor, in the barn they cannot be. And perhaps they who to-day appear evil, to-morrow will be good; and they who to-day pride themselves in their goodness, will to-morrow be discovered to be evil. Whoever therefore beareth with the wicked for a season humbly, he shall reach everlasting repose. This is the Catholic voice. But what are the words of those, who understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm?—Touch no unclean thing: and, Whosoever hath touched an unclean thing, the same is unclean: let us separate ourselves, that we may not be mingled with the evil. And we say unto them, Love peace, love unity. Are ye ignorant from how many good men ye are separated, while ye slanderously call them wicked? They rage, and storm, when we speak thus: for they seek even to slay us. Their attempts, their snares, have often been disclosed. While therefore we live among their snares, and while they unto whom we say, Love ye peace, are our foes; are not these our words, With them that hated peace, I was peaceful? When I spoke unto them, they made war upon me for nought. What meaneth, brethren, they made war upon me? It was not even enough, without he added, for nought. Unto whom we say, Love peace, love Christ: do we say, Love and honour us? But, Honour Christ, we wish not ourselves to be honoured, but Him. For what are we to the Apostle Paul? He nevertheless said to those babes, whom evil men and evil advisers wished to cut off from unity into schisms: Was Paul crucified for you, or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? This we also say: Love ye peace, love ye Christ. For if they love peace, they love Christ. When therefore we say, Love ye peace, we say this, Love ye Christ. Wherefore? For the Apostle saith of Christ, He is our peace, Who hath made both one. If Christ is therefore peace, because He hath made both one: why have ye made two of one? How then are ye peacemakers, if, when Christ maketh one of two, ye make two of one? But since we say these things, we are peace-makers with them that hate peace; and yet they who hate peace, when we spake to them, made war on us for nought.

PSALM 121

Exposition

A Sermon to the people on the day of St. Crispina.

1. This is the second Psalm of those whose title is, A song of degrees. For there are many, which signify, as ye have already heard in the first of them, our ascent, which goeth on in the heart unto God, from the vale of misery, that is, from the humble state of tribulation. For our ascent cannot be profitable unto us, save being first humbled, we remember that we must ascend from the vale: (for a vale is a lowly spot of land: as mountains and hills are lofty places of the earth, so is a vale a lowly place,) lest while we seek in too much haste, and before the proper season, to be exalted, we may not ascend, but fall. Now our Lord Himself taught us that we must ascend from the vale of misery, when He deigned to be humbled for us unto the death of the Cross, and to suffer. Let us not abandon His example: the Martyrs understood this vale of misery. Whence did they understand it? Whence? Because they themselves also ascended from the vale of misery, that they might be crowned.

2. This Psalm, A song of degrees, suiteth this day also, for it is said of them, They went on their way weeping, sowing their seed. This is the vale of misery, where seeds are sown in tears. But what are these seeds? Good works wrought in this earthly tribulation. He who worketh well in the vale of misery, is like unto a man who soweth seed through the winter. Is he deterred from his work by the cold? Thus we ought not to be deterred from a good work by the tribulation of the world; for thou seest what followeth: They went on their way weeping, sowing their seed. Very miserable, if they alway wept; very miserable, if they were never to be freed from tears. But consider what followeth: but they shall come again with joy, and bring their sheaves with them.

3. We are taught nothing else by these songs, brethren, than to ascend; but to ascend in heart, in good affections, in faith, in hope and charity, in the

longing for perpetuity and for everlasting life. Thus we ascend. It is fitting for us to say in what manner we must ascend. How many more terrible words have ye heard, Beloved, read from the Gospel! Ye see, surely, that the hour of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. If the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his wall to be broken through. Do ye say now, Who then knoweth in what hour He will come, for the hour will be as a thief? Thou knowest not in what hour He will come, watch alway; that, since thou knowest not when He will come, He may find thee ready when He cometh. Perhaps, too, it is for this reason that thou knowest not when He will come, that thou mayest alway be prepared. For that hour will suddenly surprise that master of the house, who, by the term master of the house, is described as a proud man. Wish not to be a master of the house, and that hour will not come upon thee suddenly. And what shall I be, thou askest? Such as thou hast heard of in the Psalm, I am poor and in heaviness. For if thou art poor and in heaviness, thou wilt not be a master of a house, whom that hour will surprise, and suddenly crush. For the masters of houses are they that presume in their lusts, and swell with the abundance of this world's delights; and exalt themselves against the humble, and trample on the saints who understand the narrow way, which leadeth unto life. For to such that hour will come suddenly; for such were men in the days of Noah also, a description of which days ye have heard in the Gospel. As the days of Noe were, so, He saith, shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, they were planting, they were building, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away. What then? Shall all perish who do these things, who marry, who give in marriage, who plant vineyards, who build? No: but they who put their trust in these things, who prefer these things to God, who for the sake of these things are easily ready to offend God. But they who either use not these things at all, or who use them as though they used them not, trusting more in Him Who gave them, than in the things given, and understanding in them His consolation and loving-kindness, and not taken up with the gifts, lest they may fall away from the giver; they who are such, that hour will not find them unprepared as a thief. To such the Apostle said, Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day. The Lord therefore when He declared that the hour was to be dreaded as a thief, spoke of night; and so the Apostle saith, for the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. Dost thou hope that it may not find thee? Be not in night. What meaneth, Be not in night? Ye are all the children of light and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Who are the children of the night and of darkness? The wicked, the ungodly, the unbelieving.

4. Ver. 1. But let these also hear before the hour come, and let the Apostle say unto them, Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. As this Psalm saith, let them awake. The hills are already lightened: why do they still sleep? Let them lift up their eyes to the hills, whence cometh their help. What meaneth, The hills have been lightened? The Sun of righteousness hath already risen, the Gospel hath been already preached by the Apostles, the Scriptures have been preached, all the mysteries have been laid open, the veil hath been rent, the secret place of the temple hath been revealed: let them now at length lift their eyes up to the hills, whence their help cometh. This the present Psalm—the second of those entitled, a song of degrees—enjoineth. But let them not again trust in the hills; for the hills themselves shine not of their own light, but of His of Whom it is said, That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. By hills may be understood, great or illustrious men. And who was greater than John the Baptist? What a hill was that, of whom the Lord Himself saith, Among them that are born of women, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist? Ye now see this great hill shining: hear him now confessing. Confessing what? Of His fulness have all we received, he saith. Thy help therefore is from Him, of Whose fulness the hills received, not from the hills; towards which, nevertheless, save thou lift thine eyes through the Scriptures, thou wilt not approach, so as to be lighted by Him.

5. Ver. 3. Sing therefore what followeth; if thou wish to hear how thou mayest most securely set thy feet on the steps, so that thou mayest not be fatigued in that ascent, nor stumble and fall: pray in these words: Suffer not my foot to be moved! Whereby are feet moved; whereby was the foot of him who was in Paradise moved? But first consider whereby the feet of him

who was among the Angels were moved: who when his feet were moved fell, and from an Angel became a devil: for when his feet were moved he fell. Seek whereby he fell: he fell through pride. Nothing then moveth the feet, save pride: nothing moveth the feet to a fall, save pride. Charity moveth them to walk and to improve and to ascend; pride moveth them to fall. What then doth he say in the Psalm? The children of men shall put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. If beneath the shadow, they are ever humble, ever trusting in God, ever not presuming on themselves. Under the shadow of Thy wings shall they put their trust: for they are not sufficient for their own bliss. But what followeth? They shall be inebriated with the plenteousness of Thy house: and Thou shalt give them drink of Thy pleasures as out of a river. Behold them thirsty, behold them satisfied: behold, they thirst, behold, they drink: but they do not drink of themselves: they are not a well unto themselves. But whereof do they drink? Under the shadow of Thy wings shall they put their trust. If beneath Thy wings, they are humble. Why? Because with Thee, he saith, is the well of life. The hills therefore are not watered by themselves, even as the hills are not lighted by themselves. For see what followeth: In Thy light shall we see light. If then we shall see light in His light, who falleth from that light, save he unto whom He is not a light? And he who wisheth to be a light unto himself, himself falleth away from the light whereby he is lighted. Knowing therefore that none falleth save he who wisheth to shine unto himself, since he is by himself darkness; he addeth, Let not the foot of pride come unto me: and let not the hand of the ungodly move me: that is, let not the imitation of their sins move me, so that I fall from Thee. Wherefore hast thou feared, and hast said, Let not the foot of pride come against me? The next words answer: There are they fallen, all that work wickedness. Those whom thou but now sawest working wickedness, have been already condemned: the cause of their condemnation was their having fallen when the foot of pride came unto them. Rightly therefore the Psalmist, hearing how he may ascend and may not fall, prayeth unto God that he may profit from the vale of misery, and may not fail in the swelling of pride, in these words, Suffer not my feet to be moved! And He replieth unto him, Let him that keepeth thee not sleep. Attend, my beloved. It is as if one thought were expressed in two sentences; the man while ascending and singing the song of degrees, saith, Suffer not my foot to be moved: and it is as if God answered, Thou sayest unto Me, Let not my feet be moved: say also, Let Him that keepeth thee not sleep, and thy foot shall not be moved.

6. Ver. 4. But suppose he hath replied: Is it in my power that he who keepeth me may not slumber? I wish he may not sleep, or slumber. Therefore choose for thyself Him, who will neither sleep nor slumber, and thy foot shall not be moved. God is never asleep: if thou dost wish to have a keeper who never sleepeth, choose God for thy keeper. Suffer not my feet to be moved, thou sayest: well, very well: but He also saith unto thee, Let not him that keepeth thee slumber. Thou perhaps wast about to turn thyself unto men as thy keepers, and to say, whom shall I find who will not sleep? what man will not slumber? whom do I find? whither shall I go? whither shall I return? The Psalmist telleth thee: He that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep. Dost thou wish to have a keeper who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth? Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep: for Christ keepeth Israel. Be thou then Israel. What meaneth Israel? It is interpreted, Seeing God. And how is God seen? First by faith: afterwards by sight. If thou canst not as yet see Him by sight, see Him by faith. If thou canst not see His face, since that is sight, see His back parts. This was said unto Moses by the Lord: Thou canst not see My face, but thou shalt see My back parts, when I pass by. Thou perhaps art waiting His passing by: He hath already passed: do thou see His back parts. Where hath He passed? Hear John: When the hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father. Our Lord Jesus Christ hath already kept the Passover: for the meaning of the word Pascha is Passing Over. For it is a Hebrew word: though men imagine it to be a Greek word, signifying Passion: but it is not so. By the more diligent and learned, it hath been discovered that Pascha is a Hebrew word; and they do not interpret it as Suffering, but as Passing over. For by His Passion our Lord passed from death unto life; and made a way for us who believe in His resurrection, that we also may pass from death unto life. It is not a great thing to believe that Christ died: this the Pagans also, and the Jews, and all the wicked believe. This all believe, that He died: the resurrection of Christ is the faith of Christians: this we hold a great thing, that we believe that He rose from the dead. Therefore He wished Himself to be seen then, when He was passing away, that is, when He had risen from the dead. He wished us to believe on Him, when He was

passing: because He was delivered up for our sins, and was raised again for our justification. The Apostle also hath chiefly enjoined this very faith in Christ’s resurrection: If thou believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. He said not, If thou hast believed that Christ died, which the Pagans, Jews, and all His enemies believe: but, if thou believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. To believe this, is to be Israel, this is to see God: although thou as yet seest only His back parts, yet, when thou believest in His back parts, thou wilt come to the sight of His face. What meaneth this? When thou hast believed in that which Christ became afterwards for thee; when thou hast believed in that which Christ took upon Him afterwards. For what is His Countenance in the beginning? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. What are His back parts? and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. When therefore thou believest in this, that the Word was made flesh for thy sake, and that the Word rose again in the Flesh, that thou mightest not despair of thy flesh, thou art made Israel. But when thou hast been made Israel, He that keepeth thee will not slumber nor sleep; because thou art now Israel, and hast heard in the Psalm, He that keepeth Israel shall not slumber nor sleep. For Christ Himself slept, but He rose again. For what saith He Himself in the Psalm? I laid me down and slept. Did He continue in sleep? I rose again, He saith, for the Lord shall take me up. If then He hath already risen, He hath already passed over; if He hath already passed over, see His back parts. What meaneth, see His back parts? Believe in His resurrection. And since the Apostle saith, For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God: and again saith, Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more: death hath no more dominion, over Him: he justly singeth unto thee, Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. Perhaps thou still seekest in thy carnal sense, Who is there, who will neither slumber nor sleep? and when thou seekest among men, thou art deceived; thou wilt never find one. Trust not then in any man: every man slumbereth, and will sleep. When doth he slumber? When he beareth the flesh of weakness. When will he sleep? When he is dead. Trust not then in man. A mortal may slumber, he sleepeth in death. Seek not a keeper among men.

7. Ver. 5. And who, thou askest, shall help me, save He Who slumbereth not, nor sleepeth? Hear what followeth: The Lord Himself is thy keeper. It is not therefore man, that slumbereth and sleepeth, but the Lord, that keepeth thee. How doth He keep thee? The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand. Let us, my brethren, with the Lord’s help, understand what is the meaning of, The Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand. For it seemeth to me to have a hidden sense: otherwise he would have simply said, without qualification, The Lord will keep thee, without adding, on thy right hand. For how? Doth God keep our right hand, and not our left? Did He not create the whole of us? Did not He Who made our right hand, make our left hand also? Finally, if it pleased Him to speak of the right hand alone, why said He, on the hand of thy right hand, and not at once upon thy right hand? Why should He say this, unless He were keeping somewhat here hidden for us to arrive at by knocking? For He would either say, The Lord shall keep thee, and add no more; or if He would add the right hand, The Lord shall keep thee upon thy right hand; or at least, as He added hand, He would say, The Lord shall keep thee upon thy hand, even thy right hand, not upon the hand of thy right hand. What the Lord Himself deigneth to suggest, I will lay before you; He who dwelleth in you, without doubt causeth you to approve of that which I say, as true. For ye know not what I am about to say; but when we shall have said it, we shall not shew of ourselves that what we say is true, but ye yourselves shall recognise the truth of what we say. But whence shall ye recognise it, save He sheweth Who dwelleth in you, as far as ye are of that number, who say, Suffer not my feet to be moved; and unto whom it is said, Let not Him that keepeth thee slumber. For Christ must not sleep in you, and ye will presently understand that what we say is true. How, thou wilt ask? Because if your faith sleep, Christ sleepeth in you. For Christ in your heart is the faith of Christ. The Apostle saith, That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. In whom faith sleepeth not, in him Christ watcheth. And if perchance thy faith slept, and thou didst therefore waver when thou didst ask that question, as that vessel that encountered the tempest, when Christ slept; arouse Christ, and the tempests will be appeased.

8. I ask therefore your faith, most beloved; since ye are sons of the Church, and have profited in the Church, and ye who have not as yet profited in the

Church will profit in the Church, and ye who have already profited have to profit further in the Church; I ask you, how ye interpret what is said in the Gospel, Let not your left hand know what your right hand doeth? For if ye understand this, ye will discover what is your right hand, and what is your left: at the same time ye will also understand that God made both hands, the left and the right; yet the left ought not to know what the right doeth. By our left hand is meant all that we have in a temporal way; by our right hand is meant, whatever our Lord promiseth us that is immutable and eternal. But if He Who will give everlasting life, Himself also consoleth our present life by these temporal blessings, He hath Himself made our right hand and our left. The Psalm speaks of some, Whose mouth talketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. He therefore found some whom he blamed, who held their true right hand for their left, and their real left hand for their right: he explaineth in order who these are. Every man who doth not think that happiness is man’s, except only in these temporal resources and delights, and in the affluence and abundance of this world: he is a foolish and perverse man, who maketh his left hand his right: such were they of whom the Psalm speaketh; not that they had not received from God what they possessed temporally, but because they supposed this alone to be a happy life, and sought for nought else. Hear what he presently after saith of them: Whose mouth talketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. He goeth on thus: Whose sons grow up as the young plants, and whose daughters are adorned after the likeness of a temple: whose garners are full and bursting with store: whose sheep bring forth abundantly, multiplying in their streets: their oxen are strong to labour; there is no fall of their fence, nor of their way; nor any complaining in their streets. He hath described the great prosperity of some man; yet any righteous man might enjoy the same prosperity: as did Job: but Job held it for his left hand, not for his right; for he had no other right hand than his perpetual and everlasting happiness with God. His left hand therefore was given up to be stricken: and his right sufficed for him. In what manner was his left hand stricken? By the temptations of the devil. The devil suddenly robbed him of all things, by God’s permission indeed, that the righteous might be approved, the ungodly punished; he took away all: but Job, who knew that his left hand was his left hand, and that his right was indeed his right hand; how did he hold unto his right hand? He rejoiced in the Lord, he was consoled for his losses, for he had not suffered loss of his inner riches; he had a heart full of God. The Lord, he said, hath given, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord. This was his right hand, the Lord Himself; eternal life itself, that possession of light, the well of life; the light in light. They shall be filled with the plenteousness of Thy house: this was his right hand. But his left was as an aid of consolation: not as the foundation of his happiness. For God was his true and genuine happiness. But those of whom David saith, that their mouth talked vanity, and their right hand was a right hand of iniquity; he doth not blame them on the ground that they abounded with all these things, but because their mouth talked vanity. For what followeth? After he had mentioned their abundance, he addeth, Happy they have called the people who are in such a case. This is the vanity which their mouth has spoken, when they declared the people happy who are in such a case. What sayest thou, who knowest what is the left hand, and what is the right? He goeth on to say: Blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God.

9. Attend then, beloved. We have seen the left hand, we have seen also the right. Hear this confirmed in the Song of Songs: His left hand, it is said, is beneath my head. The spouse saith this of her husband, the Church saith it of Christ in the embrace of piety and love. What doth she say? His left hand is beneath my head, and His right hand doth embrace me. But how, because His right hand was above, His left hand below, and thus the Husband embraced the Spouse, supporting her with the consolation of His left hand, and laying upon her His right hand for her protection? His left hand, she saith, is beneath my head. God giveth that left hand: therefore it is His left hand, because God giveth all these temporal blessings. How vain they are, how impious, who seek these things from idols, from devils! How many seek these things from devils, and have them not? and again, they who seek them not from devils, have them; but they are not given by devils. Also many seek them of God, and have them not. For He knoweth how to dispense the left hand, who calleth unto the right. If therefore it be the left hand, be it so: but let it be beneath thy head: let thy head be above it, that is, let thy faith be above it, where Christ dwelleth. Prefer not temporal things to thy faith; and the left hand will not be above thy head: but place all temporal things beneath thy faith, and prefer thy faith to all temporal things;

and the left hand will be beneath thy head, and His right hand will rightly embrace thee.

10. Hear this very thing expounded in the Proverbs: what is the left hand, what is the right: when he saith of Wisdom, Length of days and years of life are in her right hand: and in her left hand riches and honour. That length of days is eternity. For Scripture calleth that long which is eternal, with much propriety: for whatever hath an end, is short. In another passage it is said, With long life will I satisfy him. And would it otherwise be said as a great thing, Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land? In what land, save that whereof he saith, Thou art my hope and my portion in the land of the living. What meaneth length of days there, save to live there for ever? For what meaneth length of days here, save to reach old age? Although age seem long, when it hath passed, it is proved to be short, in that it cometh to an end. And many who curse their parents, grow old in this world; while many who obey their parents, soon go to the Lord. Is this therefore fulfilled by length of days in this world? No: length of days is there used for eternity. Length of days is in His right hand: but riches and honour, that is, the sufficiency of this life, what are considered good things by men, are in His left hand. Somebody cometh, and wisheth to strike thee on the right, that is, to rob thee of thy faith: thou hast received a blow on the right, offer him the left, that is, let him take that which is temporal, and not thy everlasting possessions. Hear the Apostle Paul doing this. Men persecuted him for being a Christian: his right is smitten, he offered the left, saying, I am a Roman. They scorned his right hand, and he affrighted them with his left: for they could not fear his right hand; as they had not yet believed in Christ. What then, if the right hand embrace, the left is under thy head; what meaneth, Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth? That is, after thou doest a good work, do it for eternal life. For if thou doest a good work on earth, that earthly things may abound to thee; thy left hand knoweth what thy right hand doeth, thou hast mingled thy right hand with thy left. Act not, save for everlasting life. Act for this reason, and thou wilt work without fear: for this God hath commanded. If thou doest what thou doest for human interest alone and this life alone, thy left hand alone worketh: but if thou work for life eternal, thy right hand alone worketh; but if thou hast earnest hope for eternal life, but still the lusts of

this temporal life creep upon thee, so that thou heedest this even when thou doest a good work, hoping thou mayest have some reward here, thy left hand mingleth itself with the works of thy right hand: this God forbiddeth.

11. Let us now come to this verse of the Psalm: The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand. By hand he meaneth power. How do we prove this? Because the power of God also is styled the hand of God. For the devil who tempted Job, saith this to God; Put forth Thy Hand now, and touch all that he hath; and see if he will not curse Thee to Thy face. What meaneth, Put forth Thine Hand, save, give Thy power? Hear this more clearly proved, my brother, that thou mayest not in thy carnal sense still think God hath distinct members: hear more clearly in what sense hand is called power. Scripture saith in one passage, Death and life are in the hands of the tongue. We know tongues as certain slices of flesh; they move in the mouth, and by striking the palate and the teeth, make distinct the sounds by which we speak: let the hands of the tongue be shewn me. The tongue therefore hath not hands, and yet it hath hands. What are the hands of the tongue? The power of the tongue. What meaneth, “Death and life are in the hands of the tongue?” By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. If therefore the hand is power, what meaneth the hand of the right hand? I think no more consistent sense can be put upon the meaning, than that hand signifieth the power which God hath given thee, that if thou art willing, thou mayest be, by God’s gift, on the right hand. For all the ungodly will be on the left hand; but all the good sons will be on the right, unto whom shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. But thou hast received power to be on the right hand, that is, to be a son of God. What power? That whereof John saith, He gave unto them power to become the sons of God. Whence hast thou received this power? To them, he saith, that believe in His Name. If then thou believest, this very power is given thee, to be among the sons of God. But to be among the sons of God, is to belong to the right hand. Thy faith therefore is the hand of thy right hand: that is, the power that is given thee, to be among the sons of God, is the hand of thy right hand. But what availeth this very power which man hath received, save the Lord protect him? Behold, he hath believed: he now walketh in faith: he is weak, he is buffeted amidst temptations, among

troubles, amid carnal corruptions, amid the suggestions of lust, and amid the cunning and the snares of a foe. What availeth it then, that he hath power, and hath believed in Christ, that he may be among the sons of God? Woe unto that man, except the Lord shield his faith also: that is, suffer thee not to be tempted beyond thy power to resist; as the Apostle saith, God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able. He, therefore, Who suffereth us not to be tempted above that we are able, although we are already faithful, although we have already the hand of our right hand, shieldeth us upon the hand of our right hand. It sufficeth us not to have the hand of the right hand, unless He also defend the hand of the right hand.

12. Ver. 6. Behold, this I have said concerning temptations: listen to what followeth. May the Lord shield thee upon the hand of thy right hand. I have said, and I believe ye have recognised it. For had ye not recognised it, and that from the Scriptures, ye would not signify your understanding of it by your voices. Since then ye have understood, brethren, consider what followeth; wherefore the Lord shieldeth thee upon the hand of thy right hand, that is, in thy faith, wherein we have received power to become the sons of God, and to be on His right hand: wherefore should God shield us? On account of offences. Whence come offences? Offences are to be feared from two quarters, for there are two precepts upon which the whole Law hangeth and the Prophets, the love of God and of our neighbour. The Church is loved for the sake of our neighbour, but God for the sake of God. Of God, is understood the sun figuratively: of the Church, is understood the moon figuratively. Whoever can err, so as to think otherwise of God than he ought, believing not the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost to be of one Substance, has been deceived by the cunning of heretics, chiefly of the Arians. If he hath believed any thing less in the Son or in the Holy Spirit than in the Father, he hath suffered an offence in God; he is scorched by the sun. Whoever again believeth that the Church existeth in one province only, and not that she is diffused over the whole world, and whoso believeth them that say, Lo here, and Lo there, is Christ, as ye but now heard when the Gospel was being read; since He Who gave so great a price, purchased the whole world: he is offended, so to speak, in his neighbour, and is burnt by the moon. Whoever therefore erreth in the very Substance of Truth, is burnt

by the sun, and is burnt through the day; because he erreth in Wisdom itself, of which it is said, One day telleth another: whence also the Apostle saith, Comparing spiritual with spiritual things.—One day telleth another:—comparing spiritual things with spiritual.—One day telleth another: we speak wisdom among them that are perfect. What meaneth, and one night certifieth another? The humility of Christ is preached unto infants, and the flesh of Christ, and the crucifixion of Christ; for this is the milk which sufficeth infants, and therefore infants are not forsaken during the night, since the moon shineth during the night; that is, the Church is preached through the Flesh of Christ, for the Flesh of Christ itself is the Head of the Church. Whoever therefore is not offended there, in the Church and flesh of Christ itself, is not burnt by the moon. Whosoever shall not have been offended in that immutable and uncontaminable Truth, is not burnt by the sun: it is not by that sun that he is not burnt, which flies and cattle see as well as we; but by that Sun of which the ungodly say in the end, What hath pride profited us? or what hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things have passed over like a shadow. And after they had said these things: Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shone upon us, and the sun rose not upon us. Doth not this sun rise upon all the ungodly, by the institution of Him of Whom it hath been said, He causeth His sun to rise upon the good and the evil? God therefore hath made one sun, which riseth upon the good and the evil, that sun which the good and the evil see; but that Sun is another one, not created, not born, through Whom all things were made, where is the intelligence of the Immutable Truth: of this the ungodly say, the Sun rose not upon us. Whosoever erreth not in Wisdom itself, is not burnt by the sun. Whosoever erreth not in the Church, and in the Lord's Flesh, and in those things which were done for us in time, is not burnt by the moon. But every man although he believeth in Christ, erreth either in this or that respect, unless what is here prayed for, The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand, is realized in him. For when he had said, The Lord is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand: as if he had enquired and replied, Lo, here is the hand of my right hand, I have already chosen to believe in Christ, I have received power to be among the sons of God, why is it that God is still my defence upon the hand of my right hand? he goeth on to say, (ver. 6.) So that the sun shall not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night.

Thy defence, therefore is upon the hand of thy right hand for this reason, that the sun may not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night. Understand hence, brethren, that it is spoken figuratively. For, in truth, if we think of the visible sun, it burneth by day: doth the moon burn by night? But what is burning? Offence. Hear the Apostle’s words: Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

13. Ver. 7. By day, then, the sun shall not burn thee: nor the moon by night. Wherefore? For the Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. From offences in the sun, from offences in the moon, from all evil shall He preserve thee, Who is thy defence upon the hand of thy right hand, who will not sleep nor slumber. And for what reason? Because we are amid temptations: The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. The Lord preserve thy soul: even thy very soul. The Lord preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth for evermore. Not thy body; for the Martyrs were consumed in the body; but the Lord preserve thy soul; for the Martyrs yielded not up their souls. The persecutors raged against Crispina, whose birthday we are to-day celebrating; they were raging against a rich and delicate woman: but she was strong, for the Lord was her defence upon the hand of her right hand, He Who kept her. Is there any one in Africa, my brethren, who knoweth her not? For she was most illustrious, noble in birth, abounding in wealth: but all these things were in her left hand, beneath her head. An enemy advanced to strike her head, and the left hand was presented to him, which was under her head. Her head was above, the right hand embraced her from above. What could the persecutor do, although to a delicate woman? She was indeed weak by sex, and perhaps feebler still through her riches, and the habits of her life; but what was this against such a defence? What to that Husband Who placed His left hand beneath her head, and embraced her with His right? When could the enemy strike her thus defended? Yet he did strike her, but her body. But what saith the Psalm? The Lord preserve thy soul. Her soul yielded not, her body was smitten. And her body was smitten but for a season: for it will rise again in the end. For He also, Who deigned to be the Head of the Church, gave up His body to be smitten for a season; but He quickened His flesh again in three days; He will quicken our flesh in the end. The Head was raised again, that the Body might heed its resurrection, and thus might not faint. The Lord preserve thy soul. Let it not

yield, let it not be broken down by offences; let it not yield by giving way in persecutions and in tribulations: even as the Lord saith: Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him Who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. This soul of thine then the Lord shall keep, that thou yield not to the evil persuader, that thou yield not to him that promiseth falsely, that thou yield not to him that threateneth temporal harm, and the Lord shall keep thy soul.

14. Ver. 8. The Lord preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth for evermore. Heed thy coming in for a season. The Lord preserve thy coming in and thy going out from this time forth for evermore. May He preserve thy going out also. What mean, coming in, and, going out? When we are tempted, we come in: when we overcome temptation, we go out. Listen to, the coming in: listen to, the going out. furnace proveth the potter's vessels, saith Scripture, and the trial of tribulation the righteous man. If righteous men are like a potter's vessels, the potter's vessels must needs enter the furnace, and the potter is not free from anxiety when they enter in, but when they have come out. But the Lord is without care, for He knoweth who are His, and He knoweth who do not crack in the furnace. They crack not, who have not the wind of pride. Humility therefore is our guardian in every temptation: for we rise from the vale of misery, chaunting the song of degrees; and the Lord preserveth our coming in, that we may come in safe. Let us be of sound faith when temptation happeneth; and He preserveth our going out from now for evermore. For when we have gone out from all temptation, henceforth for evermore no temptation will alarm us, no lust will even solicit us. Hear the Apostle declaring what I have but just declared: God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able. Behold, thy coming in is guarded; when God suffereth not a temptation which thou canst not bear to befall thee, He preserveth thy coming in: see whether He also preserve thy going out. But will make, he addeth, with the temptation a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Can we, my brethren, interpret otherwise than the Apostle's very words have taught? Preserve yourselves then, but not by yourselves, for the Lord is your defence, Who preserveth you, Who will neither slumber nor sleep. Once hath He slept for us; He hath risen again; He will never more. Let no man presume in Himself. We are going up from the vale of misery; let us

not tarry in the way. Steps in the road remain: we ought not to remain loitering, we ought not through pride to fall: let us say unto God, Let not our foot be moved. He who keepeth us will not sleep. It is in our power, by God’s gift, if we make Him our keeper, Who slumbereth not, nor sleepeth, Who keepeth Israel. What Israel? Him that seeth God. Thus will thy aid be from the Lord, thus will thy defence be upon the hand of thy right hand; thus is thy coming in and thy going out preserved from now for evermore. For if thou trust in thyself, thy foot hath been moved; if thy foot hath been moved, thou already thinkest thyself to be on some advanced step; thence thou fallest, if thou art proud; for the humble one in the vale of misery saith, Suffer not my foot to be moved.

15. Although the Psalm is short, yet our exposition and discourse on it hath been long. Imagine, my brethren, that owing to the birthday of the blessed Crispina I have invited you, and have been immoderate in protracting the banquet. Might not this have happened to you, if any military officer were to invite you, and compel you to drink at his table without measure? May it be lawful for us to do this in a sacred exposition, that ye may be inebriated and satisfied to the full, even as the Lord hath deigned to water the earth with His temporal rain, that He might suffer us to go to the abode of the Martyrs with the greater joy, as we had promised yesterday! For those Martyrs are here with us without toil.

PSALM 122

Exposition

A Discourse to the common People.

1. As impure love inflames the mind, and summons the soul destined to perish to lust for earthly things, and to follow what is perishable, and precipitates it into the lowest places, and sinks it into the abyss; so holy love raiseth us to heavenly things, and inflames us to what is eternal, and excites the soul to those things which do not pass away nor die, and from the abyss of hell raiseth it to heaven. Yet all love hath a power of its own, nor can love in the soul of the lover be idle; it must needs draw it on. But dost thou wish to know of what sort love is? See whither it leadeth. We warn you not then to love nothing; but that ye love not the world, that ye may freely love Him Who made the world. For the soul when bound by the love of earth, hath as it were birdlime on its wings; it cannot fly. But when purged from the sordid affections of the world, extending as it were its pair of wings, and freeing them from every obstacle, it flieth upon them, that is, upon the two commandments of love unto God and our neighbour. Whither, save rising by flight unto God? for it riseth by loving. Before it can do this, it groaneth on earth, if it hath in it now the desire for flight; and saith, O that I had wings as a dove, for then would I flee away, and be at rest! But whither will it fly, save from the midst of offences, where he also, whose cry I have here quoted, was groaning? From the midst of offences, then, from the medley of evil men, from the chaff mingled with the wheat, it longeth to fly, where it may not endure the society of any wicked one, but may live in the holy company of angels, the citizens of the everlasting Jerusalem.

2. Ver. 1. Therefore this Psalm, which we have this day undertaken to expound to you, holy brethren, longeth for Jerusalem herself; that is, he who ascendeth in this Psalm: for it is a Song of degrees; as we have often said to you, for these degrees are not of descent, but of ascent. He therefore longeth to ascend. And whither doth he wish to ascend, save into heaven?

What meaneth, into heaven? Doth he wish to ascend that he may be with the sun, moon, and stars? Far be it! But there is in heaven the eternal Jerusalem, where are our fellow-citizens, the Angels: we are wanderers on earth from these our fellow-citizens. We sigh in our pilgrimage; we shall rejoice in the city. But we find companions in this pilgrimage, who have already seen this city herself, and summon us to run towards her. At these he also rejoiceth, who saith, I rejoiced in them who said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord. Brethren, recall to mind, that when any festival of the Martyrs, or any holy spot is named, that on a certain day crowds may flock unto it to celebrate an anniversary; how those crowds encourage one another, how they exhort one another, and say, Let us go, let us go. People ask, whither are we to go? They reply, to that place, to the consecrated spot. They speak with one another by turns, and as it were set on fire one by one, make one flame; and this one flame, kindled from the conversation of those who take fire from one another, hurrieth them to the holy place, and holy thoughts sanctify them. If therefore holy love thus hurrieth them to a temporal spot; what love should that be which hurrieth men unanimously toward heaven, saying to each other, Let us go into the house of the Lord? Let us therefore run, let us run, for we will go into the Lord's house. Let us run, and not be wearied; for we shall arrive there, where we shall not be wearied. Let us run into the house of the Lord, let our soul be rejoiced in those who say these words unto us. For they who speak thus unto us, have seen before us that country, crying from a distant age unto their posterity, We will go into the house of the Lord: walk, run. The Apostles have seen it, and have said unto us, Run, walk, follow; we will go into the Lord's house. And what doth each of us reply? I am rejoiced in those who said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord. I am rejoiced in the Prophets, I am rejoiced in the Apostles. For they all said unto us, We will go into the house of the Lord.

3. Ver. 2. Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem. Behold, thou hast the Lord's house, if thou seekest it. In that house of the Lord, He Who built the house is praised; He is the delight of all who dwell in the house; He is their only hope here, and reality there. They that run thither, what should they think? Even as if they were already there, and already stood there. For it is a great thing to stand there among the Angels, and not to fail.

For he who fell thence, abode not in the truth. But all who have not fallen, abide in the truth: and he standeth, who enjoyeth God; but he who wisheth to enjoy himself, falleth. But who wisheth to enjoy himself? He who is proud. He therefore who wished alway to stand in the courts of Jerusalem, saith, In Thy light shall we see light; not in any light; and, With Thee is the well of life; not with me. And what did he add? O let not the foot of pride come unto me: and let not the hand of the ungodly cast me down. There fell all that work wickedness; they are cast down, and were not able to stand. If then they were not able to stand, because they were proud; do thou ascend humbly, that thou mayest be able to say, Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem. Consider what thou wilt be there; and although thou art as yet on the road, place this before thine eyes, as if thou wert already standing, as if thou wert already rejoicing without ceasing among the Angels, and that which is written were realised in thee: “Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be alway praising Thee.”—Our feet stood in the courts of Jerusalem. What Jerusalem? This earthly Jerusalem also is wont to be called by the name: though this Jerusalem is but the shadow of that. And what great thing is it to stand in this Jerusalem, since this Jerusalem hath not been able to stand, but hath been turned into a ruin? Doth then the Holy Spirit pronounce this, out of the kindled heart of the loving Psalmist, as a great thing, when he saith, Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem? Is not it that Jerusalem, unto whom the Lord said, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee? What great thing then did he desire, to stand among those who slew the Prophets, and stoned them that were sent unto them? God forbid that he should think of that Jerusalem, who so loveth, who so burneth, who so longeth to reach that Jerusalem, our Mother, of which the Apostle saith, that She is eternal in the Heavens.

4. Ver. 3. Hear for thyself: trust not me; hear what followeth, and what Jerusalem he is pointing out to our minds. For after saying, Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem; as if he were asked, Of what Jerusalem speakest thou? he at once addeth, Jerusalem that is being built as a city. Brethren, when David was uttering these words, that city had been finished, it was not being built. It is some city he speaketh of, therefore, which is now being built, unto which living stones run in faith, of whom Peter saith,

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house; that is, the holy temple of God. What meaneth, ye are built up as lively stones? Thou livest, if thou believest: but if thou believest, thou art made a temple of God; for the Apostle Paul saith, The temple of God is holy, which temple are ye. This city is therefore now in building; stones are cut down from the hills by the hands of those who preach truth, they are squared that they may enter into an everlasting structure. There are still many stones in the hands of the Builder: let them not fall from His hands, that they may be built perfect into the structure of the temple. This, then, is the Jerusalem that is being built as a city: Christ is its foundation. The Apostle Paul saith, Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. When a foundation is laid on earth, the walls are built above, and the weight of the walls tends towards the lowest parts, because the foundation is laid at the bottom. But if our foundation be in heaven, let us be built towards heaven. Bodies have built the edifice of this basilica, the ample size of which ye see; and since bodies have built it, they placed the foundation lowest: but since we are spiritually built, our foundation is placed at the highest point. Let us therefore run thither, where we may be built; for it is said of Jerusalem herself, Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem. But of what Jerusalem? Of Jerusalem which is being built as a city. He hath not said enough to describe Jerusalem, in saying, it is built as a city: that bodily Jerusalem may still be understood. For what if any one were to stand up and say, Even then, when these verses were being written and sung, in David’s time, that city was finished; but he saw in the spirit that it would be destroyed, and would have to be built up a second time. For that city was stormed, and the captive people compelled to migrate to Babylon; an event called in Scripture, the transmigration to Babylon. And Jeremiah prophesied, that after seventy years of captivity that city might be rebuilt, which had been destroyed by the conquering host. Perhaps some one saith: David saw this in the Spirit, that the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed by its besiegers, and that it might again be rebuilt after seventy years: and he therefore said, Jerusalem which is being built as a city: think not then that that city is here mentioned which consisteth of Saints, as of living stones. What followeth, to remove all doubt? Why, he saith, our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem. But what Jerusalem do I speak of? Is it that, he asketh, which ye see standing, raised on the structure of its walls?

No; but the Jerusalem which is being built as a city. Why not, a city, instead of, as a city; save because those walls, so built in Jerusalem, were a visible city, as it is by all called a city, literally; but this is being built as a city, for they who enter it, are like living stones; for they are not literally stones? Just as they are called stones, and yet are not so: so the city styled as a city, is not a city; for he said, is being built. For by the word building, he meant to be understood the structure, and cohesion of bodies and walls. For a city is properly understood of the men that inhabit there. But in saying ‘is building,’ he shewed us that he meant a town. And since a spiritual building hath some resemblance to a bodily building, therefore it is building as a city.

5. But let the following words remove all doubt that we ought not to understand carnally the words, Jerusalem that is building as a city, whose partaking is in the same. Now, therefore, brethren, let every one who raiseth the eye of his mind, who layeth aside the mist of the flesh, who cleanseth the eye of the heart, lift up his mind to contemplate, the same. What meaneth, the same? How am I to say, save by repeating the word, the same? Brethren, if ye can, understand the same. For whatever else I shall say, I shall not say, the same. Let us, however, endeavour by some neighbouring phrases and senses to lead the weakness of the mind to consider this word, the same. What meaneth, the same? What is ever in the same state; not what is now in one state, now in another. What then is, the same, save that which is? What is that which is? That which is everlasting. For what is always different at different times, is not, because it abideth not: not altogether is not, but is not in the highest sense. And what is, that which is, save He Who when He sent Moses, said unto him, I Am That I Am? What is this, save He, Who, when His servant said, Behold, Thou sendest me, and if the people shall say unto me, Who sent thee? what shall I say unto them? would not give His Name any otherwise than this, I Am That I Am; and replied, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. Behold The Same: I Am That I Am, I AM hath sent me unto you. Thou canst not understand; it is much to understand, it is much to apprehend. Remember what He, Whom thou canst not comprehend, became for thee. Remember the flesh of Christ, towards which thou wast raised when sick, and when left half dead from the wounds of robbers, that thou mightest be

brought to the Inn, and there mightest be cured. Let us therefore run unto the Lord's house, and reach the city where our feet may stand; the city that is building as a city: whose partaking is in The Same. For what oughtest thou to hold? That which Christ became for thee, for He is Christ; and Christ Himself is rightly understood in the words, I Am That I Am, as He is in the form of God, where He hath not thought it robbery to be equal with God, there He is The Same. But that thou mayest be a partaker in The Same, He first partook of thy nature; and the Word became flesh, that the flesh might partake of the Word. But in that the Word became Flesh, and dwelt among us, He came from the seed of Abraham; but it was promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that in their seed all nations should be blessed; and we find in consequence that the Church hath been spread over the whole world: God speaketh to the weak. He sought for firmness of heart, when He said, I Am That I Am: He sought for firmness of heart, and an elevated gaze of contemplation, when He said, I AM sent me unto you. But perhaps thou hast not as yet this power of contemplation: faint not, despair not. I AM willed to be a man as thou art: and therefore presently telleth Moses, when as it were terrified, His Name. What Name? That Is, Is. And the Lord said unto Moses, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: this is My Name for ever. Despair not of thyself, because He hath said, I Am That I Am, and, I AM hath sent me unto you: because thou at present waverest, and through the mutability of things, and the variety of mortal affairs, canst not perceive the meaning of The Same. I come down, because thou canst not come. I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. In the seed of Abraham hope somewhat, that thou mayest be strengthened to see Him Who came unto thee in the seed of Abraham.

6. This then is The Same, of Whom it is said, Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. Behold The Same, Whose years shall not fail. Brethren, do not our years daily fail, and abide not at all? For those which have come, already are not; and they that are to come, are not: those have already failed, and others, destined to fail, are to come. In this one day, brethren, behold what we are now saying is at one moment of time. Past hours have gone by, future hours have not as yet come; and when they shall have come, they also will

themselves go by and fail. What are those years that will not fail, save they that abide? If therefore the years stand there, the very years also that stand are one year, and the very year which standeth is one day; for this one day hath neither rise or setting, nor is it commenced from a yesterday, nor closed by a tomorrow, but that day abideth for ever: and thou callest that day what thou pleasest; if thou choose, they are years; if thou choose, it is a day; whatever light thou regardest it in, it nevertheless standeth: that city which partaketh in the same, partaketh in its stability: justly therefore, since he is made a sharer in its stability, saith he who runneth thither, Our feet were standing in the courts of Jerusalem. For all things there stand where nought passeth by. Dost thou too wish to stand there and not to pass by? Run thither. Nobody hath the same from himself. Attend, brethren. The body that he hath is not the same; for it standeth not in itself. It is changed through seasons, it is changed through changes of places and times, it is changed through diseases and wastings of flesh: it standeth not therefore in itself. Celestial bodies stand not in themselves, they have certain changes of their own, although hidden ones; they are certainly changed from place to place, they ascend from the east to the west, and again go round unto the east; they therefore stand not, they are not the same. Even the human soul standeth not. For with how many changes and imaginations is it altered? by how many pleasures is it changed? by what powerful lusts is it lacerated and torn asunder? Man’s mind itself, which is called rational, is changeable, it is not the same. At one time, it wisheth, at another it wisheth not; at one time it knoweth, at another it knoweth not; at one time it remembereth, at another it forgetteth: therefore no one hath the same from himself. He who wished to have the same from himself, so that he might in some sort be the same unto himself, fell: the angel hath fallen, and hath become a devil. The devil hath pledged the man in the cup of pride, he hath, in envy, thrown down together with himself him who was standing. These have wished to be the same unto themselves: they have wished to be princes and lords over themselves; they have been unwilling to recognise the true Lord, who truly is The Same, unto Whom it is said, Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art ever the same. Let therefore the humbled soul, after so much weariness, so many diseases, difficulties, toils, return unto itself; and let it be in that city whose partaking is in the same.

7. Ver. 4. For thither the tribes went up. We were asking whither he ascendeth who hath fallen; for we said, it is the voice of a man who is ascending, of the Church rising. Can we tell whither it ascendeth? whither it goeth? whither it is raised? Thither, he saith, the tribes went up. Whither did the tribes go up? To a city whose partaking is the same. Therefore they ascend to Jerusalem. But the man who descended from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among robbers. If he did not descend, he would not fall among robbers. But since by descending he fell among robbers, let him by ascending come unto Angels. Let him therefore ascend, because the tribes have ascended. But what are the tribes? Many know, many know not. But let us who know, descend unto them that know not the tribes, that they may ascend with us whither the tribes have ascended. The tribes may be termed ‘curies’ under another name, but not in the primary sense of the word. What are called tribes under one name cannot be called in the same sense by another: but they are called ‘curies’ in a kindred sense. For if we use the word ‘curies’ in its proper sense, we understand nothing, save the ‘curies’ which exist in each particular city, whence the terms ‘curiales’ and ‘decuriones,’ that is, the citizens of a curia or a decuria; and ye know that each city hath such curies. But there are, or were at one time, curies of the people in those cities, and one city hath many curies, as Rome hath thirty-five curies of the people. These are called tribes. The people of Israel had twelve of these, according to the sons of Jacob.

8. There were twelve tribes of the people of Israel: but there were good, and there were bad among them. For how evil were those tribes which crucified our Lord! How good those who recognised the Lord! Those tribes then who crucified the Lord, were tribes of the devil. When therefore he here said, For thither the tribes go up; that thou mightest not understand all the tribes, he added, even the tribes of the Lord. What meaneth, tribes of the Lord? They which knew the Lord. For out of those twelve evil tribes, there were good men there, of the good tribes, who recognised the Builder of the City; and these were the grains of wheat among those tribes, mingled with the chaff. For they went up, not with the chaff, but tribes winnowed, chosen, as the tribes of the Lord. Thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord. What are the tribes of the Lord? A testimony unto Israel. Hear, brethren, what this meaneth. A testimony to Israel: that is, whereby it may be known

that it is truly Israel. For what meaneth Israel? The meaning of this word has already often been declared, and let it often be declared; for perchance, though it hath recently been declared, it hath slipped from you. In repeating it, let us effect that it may not slip even from those who know not, or refuse, to read: let us be their dictionary. Israel is interpreted to mean, ‘Seeing God:’ indeed, if more carefully rendered, Israel will be found to mean, ‘is seeing God:’ both meanings; is, and, seeing God. For man is not in himself; for he is changed and altered, if he share not in Him Who is The Same. Then he is, when he seeth God. For then he is, when he seeth Him Who is; and by seeing Him Who is, he also according to his measure beginneth to be. He is then Israel, and Israel is seeing God. The proud man therefore is not Israel; for he hath no share in The Same; because he chooseth to be the same unto himself. He who wisheth to be the beginning to himself is not Israel. Every false one therefore is not Israel, for every proud man must needs be a false one. This I say, brethren: it needs must be that every proud man wish to seem what he is not; otherwise, my brethren, it cannot be. And I wish the proud man wished to seem what he is not in the same way as, for example’s sake, to seem a fluteplayer, when not really a fluteplayer. For it would soon be tested: it would be said to him, Play; let us see if thou art a fluteplayer. He would not be able; he would be discovered to have wished falsely to seem what he was not. If he called himself eloquent, it would be said to him, Speak: and prove thyself. If he should speak, he would be found not to be that which he had professed. The proud man (and this is worse) wishes himself to appear righteous, though he be not so; and as it is difficult to comprehend righteousness, it is difficult to detect the proud. The proud therefore wish to appear what they are not: for this reason, they have no share in The Same; they belong not to Israel, which meaneth, Seeing God. Who then belongeth to Israel? He who shareth in The Same. Who is he? He who confesses that he is not what God is, and that he hath from Him all the good he is capable of having; and that there is nought save sin flowing from himself, that righteousness cometh unto him from God? He is such in whom there is no guile. And what did the Lord say, when He saw Nathanael? Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. If therefore he is a true Israelite, in whom there is no guile, those tribes go up to Jerusalem, in whom there is no guile. And these are the testimony of Israel: that is, owing to these it is acknowledged that there were grains among that chaff, since when the floor was looked upon, all was thought to be chaff. There were therefore grains there: but when they have ascended into that glory above, when the floor shall have been winnowed, then will there be a testimony of Israel; then will all the wicked say, Truly there were here righteous men among the wicked, when all seemed to us wicked, and when we thought all such as we ourselves were, a testimony of Israel. Whither do they go up? Wherefore do they go up? To confess unto Thy Name, O Lord. It could not be more nobly expressed. As pride presumeth, so doth humility confess. As he is a presumer, who wishes to appear what he is not, so is he a confessor, who does not wish that to be seen which himself is, and loves That which He is. To this therefore do Israelites go up, in whom is no guile, because they are truly Israelites, because in them is the testimony of Israel. To this do they go up, to confess unto Thy Name, O Lord.

9. Ver. 5. For there were seated seats for judgment. This is a wonderful riddle, a wonderful question, if it be not understood. He calleth those seats, which the Greeks call thrones. The Greeks call chairs thrones, as a term of honour. Therefore, my brethren, it is not wonderful if even we should sit on seats, or chairs; but that these seats themselves should sit, when shall we be able to understand this? As if some one should say: let stools or chairs sit here. We sit on chairs, we sit on seats, we sit on stools; the seats themselves sit not. What then meaneth this, For there were seated seats for judgment? Ye are indeed wont to hear these words of God, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. But in Latin the whole is expressed thus, The heaven is My seat. Who are these, save the righteous? Who are the heavens, save the righteous? They who are heaven, are heavens themselves: for they which are the Church, are themselves Churches; they are many in such a way as to be one: so therefore are the righteous also; the righteous are heaven in such a way as that they are heavens. Now God sitteth in them, and judgeth from them: nor is it said without a deep meaning, that The heavens declare the glory of God. For the Apostles have become a heaven. Whence have they become heaven? Because they have been justified. As the sinner hath become earth, for unto him it is said, Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return; so have the justified become heaven. They bore God: and from them God lightened forth His wonders, thundered terrors, rained consolations. They were therefore, they were heaven, and they declared the

glory of God. For that ye may know that they were called heaven, he saith in the same Psalm, Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world. Thou askest, whose? and thou wilt find, of these heavens. If therefore heaven be the seat of God, and the Apostles are heaven; they themselves are become the seat of God, the throne of God. It is said in another passage: The soul of the righteous is the throne of wisdom. A great truth, a great truth, is declared; the throne of wisdom is the soul of the righteous; that is, wisdom sitteth in the soul of the righteous as it were in her chair, in her throne, and thence judgeth whatsoever she judgeth. There were therefore thrones of wisdom, and therefore the Lord said unto them, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. So they also shall sit upon twelve seats, and they are themselves the seats of God; for of them it is said, For there were seated seats. Who sat? Seats. And who are the seats? They of whom it is said, The soul of the righteous is the seat of wisdom. Who are the seats? The heavens. Who are the heavens? Heaven. What is heaven? That of which the Lord saith, Heaven is My seat. The righteous then themselves are the seats; and have seats; and seats shall be seated in that Jerusalem. For what purpose? For judgment. Ye shall sit, He saith, on twelve thrones, O ye thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Judging whom? Those who are below on earth. Who will judge? They who have become heaven. But they who shall be judged, will be divided into two bodies: one will be on the right hand, the other on the left. For the Lord will come to judgment with the ancients of His people, saith Isaiah. There are then some who will judge with Him; others who will be judged by Him, and by those who will judge with Him. These therefore will be divided into two parts: one will he set on the right, to whom will be enumerated the merciful deeds they have wrought; the other will be set on the left, unto whom will be enumerated their cruelty and barrenness of mercy. And to those placed on the right it will be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Wherefore? I was an hungred, He replieth, and ye gave me meat. They answer: Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred? He answereth: Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me. What, then, my brethren? They shall judge, of whom it is said that men should make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that they also, He saith, may receive you into everlasting habitations. The

Saints will sit with the Lord to mark those who have wrought mercy, and will bring them, set apart on the right, into the kingdom of heaven: and this is the peace of Jerusalem. What is the peace of Jerusalem? That bodily works of mercy may be joined with spiritual works of preaching, and that peace may result from giving and receiving. For the Apostle, who hath declared that this almsgiving is a balance of giving and receiving, saith, If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? And concerning the same thing he elsewhere saith: He that had gathered much, had nothing over: and he that had gathered little, had no lack. Why had he nothing over, who had gathered much? Because what he had over, he gave to the needy. And what meaneth, he that had gathered little, had no lack? Because he received from the other's abundance, that there might be equality, as he saith. This is the peace, whereof it is said, Peace be in thy strength.

10. Ver. 6. For after saying, For there were seated seats for judgment, seats over the house of David, that is, over the family of Christ, to whom they gave meat in season; he at once addeth, as unto the seats themselves, Enquire ye the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem. O ye seats, who now sit unto judgment, and are made the seats of the Lord Who judgeth, (since they who judge, enquire; they who are judged, are enquired of,) Enquire ye, he saith, the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem. What will they find by asking? That some have done deeds of charity, that others have not. Those whom they shall find to have done deeds of charity, they will summon them unto Jerusalem; for these deeds are for the peace of Jerusalem. Love is a powerful thing, my brethren, love is a powerful thing. Do ye wish to see how powerful a thing love is? Whosoever through some insurmountable obstacle can not fulfil what God commandeth, let him love him who fulfilleth it, and he fulfilleth it in him. I pray your attention, my brethren. For example's sake, he hath a wife, whom he may not divorce; he must obey the Apostle who saith, Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and, Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. It cometh into his mind that that life is better, whereof the Apostle saith, I would that all men were even as myself. He observeth those who have done this; he loveth them, and fulfilleth in them what he cannot in himself. Love is a powerful thing. This is our strength; for if we be not in it, whatever else

we have profiteth nothing. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, saith the Apostle, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. He addeth yet another great thing: and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. But if charity be destitute of means, so that it cannot find what to bestow upon the poor, let it love: let it give one cup of cold water; as much shall be laid to its account, as to Zaccheus who gave half his patrimony to the poor. Wherefore this? The one gave so little, the other so much, and shall so much be imputed to the former? Just so much. For though his resources are unequal, his charity is not unequal.

11. They therefore enquire: do ye reflect upon what ye are. It hath been already said unto us, We will go into the house of the Lord. We took delight in those who said unto us, We will go into the house of the Lord. Consider therefore whether we really go. For we go not with our feet, but with our affections. Consider if we go, let each of you ask himself what he is towards a poor saint, towards an indigent brother, what he is towards an indigent beggar, let him see whether his bowels are not narrow. For the Seats which will sit for judgment will have to enquire of thee, and ought to discover things that are for the peace of Jerusalem. And how do they enquire? As the seats of God. God asketh. If any thing escape God, something may escape those seats also who enquire. Enquire ye the things that are for the peace of Jerusalem. But what are for the peace of Jerusalem? And plenteousness, he addeth, for them that love thee. He addresses Jerusalem herself, They have plenteousness who love her. Plenteousness after want: here they are destitute, there they are affluent; here they are weak, there they are strong; here they want, there they are rich. How have they become rich? Because they gave here what they received from God for a season, and received there what God will afterwards pay back for evermore. Here, my brethren, even rich men are poor. It is a good thing for a rich man to acknowledge himself poor: for if he think himself full, that is mere puffing, not plenteousness. Let him own himself empty, that he may be filled. What hath he? Gold. What hath he not yet? Everlasting life. Let him consider what he hath, and see what he hath not. Brethren, of that which he hath, let him give, that he may receive what he hath not; let him purchase out of that

which he hath, that which he hath not, and plenteousness for them that love thee.

12. Ver. 7. Peace be in thy strength. O Jerusalem, O city, who art being built as a city, whose partaking is in The Same: Peace be in thy strength: peace be in thy love; for thy strength is thy love. Hear the Song of songs: Love is strong as death. A great saying that, brethren, Love is strong as death. The strength of charity could not be expressed in grander terms than these, Love is strong as death. For who resisteth death, my brethren? Consider, my brethren. Fire, waves, the sword, are resisted: we resist principalities, we resist kings; death cometh alone, who resisteth it? There is nought more powerful than it. Charity therefore is compared with its strength, in the words, Love is strong as death. And since this love slayeth what we have been, that we may be what we were not; love createth a sort of death in us. This death he had died who said, The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world: this death they had died unto whom he said, Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Love is strong as death. If therefore it is strong, it is courageous, and of great power, and is strength itself, and through it the weak are ruled by the firm, earth by heaven, peoples by the seats; therefore, Peace be in thy strength, meaneth, Peace be in thy love. And through this strength, through this love, through this peace, let there be plenteousness in thy towers: that is, in thy exalted ones. For few will sit in judgment, but many set on the right hand will constitute the people of that city. For many will belong severally to each exalted one, by whom they will be received into their everlasting habitations; and there will be plenteousness in his towers. But God Himself is the fulness of delight, and the sufficiency of riches, Himself The Same, Himself in Whom the partaking of the city is in ‘The Same:’ this will be our plenteousness also. But whence? Through charity, that is, through strength. But in whom is charity, my brethren? In him who seeketh not his own in this life. Hear the Apostle’s charity: Give none offence, he saith, even as I please all men in all things. Where then is what thou hast said: If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ? and dost thou at one time say that thou pleasest, at another, exhort them also to please? But he did not lay down as the end, that any man should please on his own account, and not for the sake of charity. He who seeketh his own glory, seeketh not the salvation of

others. For he saith, Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

13. Ver. 8. Thus as he was here speaking of charity, he addeth, For my brethren and companions’ sake, I spoke peace of thee. O Jerusalem, thou city whose partaking is in The Same, I in this life and on this earth, I poor, he saith, I a stranger and groaning, not as yet enjoying to the full thy peace, and preaching thy peace; preach it not for my own sake, as the heretics, who seeking their own glory, say, Peace be with you: and have not the peace which they preach to the people. For if they had peace, they would not tear asunder unity. I, he saith, spoke peace of thee. But wherefore? For my brethren and companions’ sake: not for my own honour, not for my own money, not for my life; for, To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But, I spoke peace of thee, for my brethren and companions’ sakes. For he wished to depart, and to be with Christ: but, since he must preach these things to his companions and his brethren, to abide in the flesh, he addeth, is more needful for you. For my brethren and companions’ sakes I spoke peace of thee.

14. Ver. 9. Because of the house of the Lord my God, I have sought good things for thee. Not on my own account have sought good things, for then I should not seek for thee, but for myself; and so should I not have them, because I should not seek them for thee; but, Because of the house of the Lord my God, because of the Church, because of the Saints, because of the pilgrims; because of the poor, that they may go up; because we say to them, we will go into the house of the Lord: because of the house of the Lord my God itself, I have sought good things for Thee. These long and needful words gather ye, brethren, eat them, drink them, and grow strong, run, and seize.

PSALM 123

Exposition

1. I have undertaken to treat of the songs of him who ascendeth in order with you, holy brethren; of one who ascendeth and loveth, and ascendeth because he loveth. All love either ascends or descends. For we are lifted up unto God by a good desire, and by an evil desire we are precipitated to the lowest depths. But since we have already fallen, through evil desire; it remaineth for us, if we know Who fell not, but descended unto us, to ascend by clinging to Him; for we cannot do so of our own strength. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself said, No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven. He seemeth to have spoken of Himself alone. Did then the rest remain below, because He Who alone came down, alone ascended? What ought the rest to do? To be united with His Body, that Christ, Who came down and ascended, may be One. The Head came down, and ascended with the Body; clothed with His Church, which He presented to Himself, not having spot or wrinkle. He therefore alone ascended. But we also when we are so with Him, that we are His members in Him, and He with us is alone, and therefore One, and evermore One, unity bindeth us unto One; and they alone ascend not with Him, who have not chosen to be one with Him. Now since He Who was set in heaven, and immortal, since He had raised up the flesh, owing to which He was for a season mortal, and suffering no persecutions in heaven, no malice or reproaches, as on this earth when He deigned to bear all things for our sakes; yet, sympathising with His Body suffering on earth, said, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Though no one touched Him Himself, He yet cried from heaven that He was suffering persecution: we ought not to exclude the hope, nay, we ought rather confidently to trust, that, if through love He is Himself with us on earth, we also are with Him in heaven through the same love. But we have said in what sense He is Himself with us on earth; we have said it was His Voice which sounded from heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? when Saul touched Him not at all, nor even saw Him; but how is it shewn that we

are also with Him in heaven? By the words of the same Paul, If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. He therefore is still below, and we are now above: He is below through the compassion of love, we are above through the hope of love. For we are saved by hope. But because our hope is sure; although it be to come, yet we are so spoken of as if it had already come to pass.

2. Ver. 1. Let therefore this singer ascend; and let this man sing from the heart of each of you, and let each of you be this man, for when each of you saith this, since ye are all one in Christ, one man saith this; and saith not, Unto Thee, O Lord, have we lift up our eyes; but, Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lift up mine eyes. Ye ought indeed to imagine that every one of you is speaking; but that One in an especial sense speaketh, Who is also spread abroad over the whole world. That One speaketh, Who elsewhere saith, From the ends of the earth did I cry unto Thee, when my heart was in heaviness. Who is it who crieth from the ends of the earth? Who is the one man spread abroad even unto the ends of the earth? Each man may cry forth in his own district; can he from the ends of the earth? But the inheritance of Christ, whereof it is said, I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession, itself crieth, From the ends of the earth did I cry unto Thee, when my heart was in heaviness. Suppose our heart to be in heaviness, and let us cry. Whence should our heart be in heaviness? Not in consequence of those things which even the wicked suffer here; for example’s sake, if they suffer a loss: for if the heart is in heaviness on this account, it is ashes. Thou hast perhaps lost some one of thy relations by the will of God: if thine heart be in heaviness on this account, what great thing is this? The hearts of infidels also are in heaviness from this cause; those who have not as yet believed in Christ, suffer these things also. What maketh the heart of a Christian heavy? Because he is a pilgrim, and longeth for his country. If thy heart be heavy on this score, although thou hast been prosperous in the world, still thou dost groan: and if all things combine to render thee prosperous, and this world smile upon thee on every side, thou nevertheless groanest, because thou seest that thou art set in a pilgrimage; and feelest that thou hast indeed happiness in the

eyes of fools, but not as yet after the promise of Christ: this thou seekest with groans, this thou seekest with longings, and by longing ascendest, and while thou ascendest dost sing the Song of Degrees, saying, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven.

3. While ascending, whither was he to raise his eyes, save towards that heaven whereunto he was bound, and longed to ascend? For he ascendeth from earth to heaven. Behold the earth is below, which we tread with our feet; behold also the heaven above, which we see with our eyes; and as we ascend sing, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven! Where then are the ladders? For we behold so great an interval between heaven and earth, there is so wide a separation, and so great a space of regions between: we wish to climb thither, we see no ladder; do we deceive ourselves, because we sing the Song of Degrees, that is, the Song of ascent? We ascend unto heaven, if we think of God, Who hath made ascending steps in the heart. What is to ascend in heart? To advance towards God. As every man who faileth, doth not descend, but falleth: so every one who profiteth, doth ascend: but if he so profit, as to avoid pride: if he so ascend as not to fall: but if while he profiteth he become proud, in ascending he again falleth. But that he may not be proud, what ought he to do? Let him lift up his eyes unto Him Who dwelleth in heaven, let him not heed himself. For every proud man heedeth himself, and he who pleaseth himself seemeth to himself to be great. But he who pleaseth himself, pleaseth a fool; for he is himself a fool, when he pleaseth himself. He alone pleaseth without danger, who pleaseth God. And who is he who pleaseth God? He Whom God hath pleased. God cannot displease Himself; may He please thee also, that thou mayest please Him. But He cannot please thee, save thou hast displeased thyself. But if thou displeasest thyself, remove thine eyes from thyself. For why dost thou regard thyself? For if thou sincerely regard thyself, thou findest in thee what will displease thee; and thou sayest unto God, My sin is ever before me. Let thy sin be before thee, that it may not be before God; and refuse to be before thyself, that thou mayest be before God. For as we wish that God may not turn away His face from us, so do we wish that He may turn His face from our sins: for both these prayers are found in the Psalms. O hide not Thou Thy face from me, are the words of the Psalm: and ours also; and see what he, who saith, O

hide not Thou Thy face from me, saith elsewhere: Turn Thy face from my sins. If thou wouldest have Him turn His face from thy sins, do thou turn thy face from thyself, and turn not thy face from thy sins. For if thou turn not thy face from them, thou art thyself incensed with thy sins; but if thou turn not away thy face from thy sins, thou dost recognise them, and He forgetteth them.

4. But raise thine eyes from thyself unto Him, and say, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven. If, my brethren, we understand by heaven the firmament which we see with our bodily eyes, we shall indeed so err, as to imagine that we cannot ascend thither without ladders, or some scaling machines: but if we ascend spiritually, we ought to understand heaven spiritually: if the ascent be in affection, heaven is in righteousness. What is then the heaven of God? All holy souls, all righteous souls. For the Apostles also, although they were on earth in the flesh, were heaven; for the Lord, enthroned in them, traversed the whole world. He then dwelleth in heaven. How? In what sense doth he say in another Psalm, But Thou dwellest in holiness, O Thou praise of Israel. He who dwelleth in heaven, dwelleth in holiness: what is holiness, save His temple? For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. But all who are as yet weak, and walking according to faith, are according to faith the temple of God, and will be at one time in sight also the temple of God. How long are they the temple according to faith? As long as Christ dwelleth in them through faith; as the Apostle saith, That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. But they are already heaven in whom God already dwelleth visibly, who see Him face to face; all the holy Apostles, all the holy Virtues, Powers, Thrones, Lordships, that heavenly Jerusalem, wanderers from whence we groan, and for which we pray with longing; and there God dwelleth. Thither hath the Psalmist lifted up his faith, thither he riseth in affection, with longing hopes: and this very longing causeth the soul to purge off the filth of sins, and to be cleansed from every stain, that itself also may become heaven; because it hath lifted up its eyes unto Him Who dwelleth in heaven. For if we have determined that that heaven which we see with our bodily eyes is the dwelling of God, the dwelling of God will pass away; for heaven and earth will pass away. Then, before God created heaven and earth, where did He dwell? But some one saith: and before God

made the Saints, where did He dwell? God dwelt in Himself, He dwelt with Himself, and God is with Himself. And when He deigneth to dwell in the Saints, the Saints are not the house of God in such wise, as that God should fall when it is withdrawn. For we dwell in a house in one way, in another way God dwelleth in the Saints. Thou dwellest in a house: if it be withdrawn, thou fallest: but God so dwelleth in the Saints, that if He should Himself depart, they fall. Whosoever then so beareth God as to be a temple of God, let him not think that God is so borne of him, that he may make God afraid if he withdraw himself. Woe to him if God withdraw Himself, for he falleth; since God abideth ever in Himself. The houses in which we live, themselves contain us: those in which God dwelleth, are themselves upheld by Him. Now consider how wide a difference there is between our dwelling and that of God: and let the soul thus speak, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in heaven: that it may understand that God wanteth not even heaven to dwell in; but heaven is in need of Him, that it may be inhabited by Him.

5. Ver. 2–4. What then followeth, since he hath said, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in Heaven? How hast thou lifted up thine eyes? Behold, even as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress: even so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us. We are both servants, and a handmaiden: He is both our Master and our Mistress. What do these words mean? What do these similitudes mean? Listen to me for a time, beloved brethren. It is not wonderful if we are servants, and He our Master; but it is wonderful if we are a maiden, and He our Mistress. But not even our being a maiden is wonderful; for we are the Church; nor is it wonderful that He is our Mistress; for He is the Power and the Wisdom of God. Hear the Apostle speaking: We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God: so that now both the people may be a servant and the Church a handmaid, thou hast heard both: Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God. When therefore thou hearest Christ, lift up thine eyes to the hands of thy Master; when thou hearest the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, lift up thine eyes to the hands of thy Mistress; for thou art both servant

and handmaiden; servant, for thou art a people; handmaiden, for thou art the Church. But this maiden hath found great dignity with God; she hath been made a wife. But until she come unto those spiritual embraces, where she may without apprehension enjoy Him Whom she hath loved, and for whom she hath sighed in this tedious pilgrimage, she is betrothed: and hath received a mighty pledge, the blood of the Spouse for Whom she sigheth without fear. Nor is it said unto her, Do not love; as it is sometimes said to any betrothed virgin, not as yet married: and is justly said, Do not love; when thou hast become a wife, then love: it is rightly said, because it is a precipitate and preposterous thing, and not a chaste desire, to love one whom she knoweth not whether she shall marry. For it may happen that one man may be betrothed to her, and another man marry her. But as there is no one else who can be preferred to Christ, let her love without apprehension: and before she is joined unto Him, let her love, and sigh from a distance and from her far pilgrimage. He will alone marry her, for he alone hath given such a pledge. For who can so marry as to die for her whom he wishes to marry? For if he chooseth to die for her, he will be no more there to marry her. But He Who when He rose again was to marry His betrothed, died without apprehension for her. Nevertheless, brethren, let us in the meanwhile be as servants and handmaiden. It is said indeed, I call you not servants, but friends: but perhaps our Lord said this to His disciples alone? Hear the Apostle Paul, saying, Thou art no more a servant, but a son: and if a son, then an heir through God. He was speaking to the people, he was speaking to the faithful. Now therefore being redeemed in the Name of the Lord by His own blood, being washed in His laver, we are sons, we are a son; because we are so many, as that we are one in Him. What then is the reason that we still speak as servants? Can we deserve as much in the Church, although we are already made sons instead of servants, as the Apostle Paul? And yet what saith he in his Epistle? Paul, servant of Jesus Christ. If he, through whom the Gospel hath been preached unto us, still calleth himself a servant; how much more ought we to acknowledge our condition, in order that His grace may be greater in us? For He first made those whom He redeemed, servants. For His blood was a price for servants, a pledge for His spouse. Acknowledging therefore our condition, although even now sons through grace, yet as servants by creation, for the whole creation serveth God, let us say, As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hands of her mistress; even so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us.

6. He hath also stated the reason, why our eyes should wait upon the Lord our God, even as the eyes of a servant look unto the hands of his master, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hands of her mistress. And as though thou shouldest ask, Why? Until, he saith, He have mercy upon us. What sort of servants then, brethren, did he wish to be understood, whose eyes look unto the hands of their masters; and what sort of maidens, whose eyes look unto the hands of their mistress, until their mistress have mercy upon them? Who are these servants and handmaidens, whose eyes thus look unto the hands of their masters, save those who are ordered to be beaten? Our eyes look unto the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us. How? As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hands of her mistress. Both servants and maidens then look thus, until their master or mistress have mercy upon them. Suppose then that some master hath commanded his servant to be beaten. The servant is beaten: he feels the pain of the strokes; he looketh upon the hands of his master, until he say, Enough. For by the hand is meant the master's power. What then shall we say, brethren? Our Lord hath commanded us to be beaten, and our mistress the wisdom of God hath ordered us to be beaten; and in this life we are beaten, and the whole of this mortal life is a chastisement. Listen to the words of the Psalm: Thou hast chastened man for sin, and hast made my soul to consume away like as it were a spider. Remember, brethren, how frail a spider is, and that with a slight touch it is shattered and dieth. And, that we might not imagine that we have a flesh alone which consumeth easily from the weakness of our mortal nature, he said not, Thou hast made me to consume away; lest we should understand it of the flesh; but, Thou hast made my soul to consume away like as it were a spider. For there is nothing weaker than our soul placed among the temptations of the world, in the midst of groans and travailing of sorrows; there is nothing weaker than it, until it clings to the firmness of heaven, and is in the temple of God, whence it may no longer fall: since it was made weak as a spider at first, so that it came into this weakness and perishable nature, and was expelled from Paradise. Then was the servant ordered to be beaten. My brethren, consider, from what point of time we have been

beaten. In all who have been born from the origin of the human race, in all who are now, in all who will hereafter be born, Adam is beaten. Adam is beaten, that is, the human race; and many have grown so hardened that they feel not their own bruises. But they who out of this race have been made sons, have received back the sense of pain: they feel that they are beaten, and they know Who commanded them to be beaten; and they have lifted up their eyes unto Him Who dwelleth in heaven; and thus their eyes are looking unto the hands of their Lord, until He have mercy upon them, even as the eyes of servants unto the hands of their masters, and as the eyes of the maiden unto the hands of her mistress. Thou seest some fortunate men smiling in this world, boasting themselves; they are not beaten; nay, they are worse beaten; in this very point they are the worse beaten, in that they have lost feeling. Let them awake, and be beaten; let them feel that they are beaten, let them know that they are beaten, and let them grieve that they are beaten. For he that increaseth knowledge, increaseth sorrow, as Scripture saith. So also the Lord in the Gospel: Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

7. Let us hear the words of the man who is beaten, and let these be the words of each of us, even when it is well with us. For who cannot understand that he is beaten when he is sick, when he is in prison, when perchance in bonds, when perchance he suffereth robbery? When troubles are inflicted upon him by any wicked men, he feeleth that he is beaten. This is an excellent sensibility, to perceive that he is beaten even when it is well with him. For the Scripture saith not in Job, Human life is full of temptations, but it saith, What is the life of man upon earth, save a temptation? He hath pronounced the whole of this life a temptation. The whole therefore of thy life on earth, is thy stripes. Mourn as long as thou livest upon earth: whether thou livest happily, or whether thou art placed in any trouble, cry, Unto Thee do I lift up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in Heaven. Look unto the hands of the Lord, Who ordered thee to be beaten, unto Whom thou sayest in another Psalm, Thou hast chastened man for sin, and hast made my soul to consume away like as a spider; cry unto the hands of Him Who beateth thee, and say, Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us. Are not these the words of one who is being beaten, Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us?

8. Ver. 3, 4. For we have been much filled with contempt. Our soul hath been filled to the utmost, a reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud. All that will live piously according to Christ, must needs suffer reproof, must needs be despised by those who do not choose to live piously, all whose happiness is earthly. They are derided who call that happiness which they cannot see with their eyes, and it is said to them, What believest thou, madman? Dost thou see what thon believest? Hath any one returned from the world below, and reported to thee what is going on there? Behold I see and enjoy what I love. Thou art scorned, because thou dost hope for what thou seest not; and he who seemeth to hold what he seeth, scorneth thee. Consider well if he doth really hold it: be not disturbed; see whether he holdeth it himself, and let him not mock thee; lest, when thou thinkest him happy in the present, thou mayest lose true happiness in future: be not, I say, disturbed: consider whether he holdeth it. What he holdeth slippeth from his hands, or he slippeth away from what he holdeth; either he must needs pass through his property, or it through him. Through whom do his possessions pass? Through him who is ruined while living. Who passeth through his property? He who dieth in his riches; for when he dieth, he carrieth them not away with him to the world below. I have my house, he hath boasted himself. Thou askest, what house of his own? That which my father left me. And whence did he derive this house? My grandfather left it him. Go back even to his great grandfather, then to his great grandfather's father, and he can no longer tell their names. Art thou not rather terrified by this thought, that thou seest many have passed through this house, and that none of them hath carried it away with him to his everlasting home? Thy father left it: he passed through it: thus thou also wilt pass by. If therefore thou hast a mere passing stay in thy house, it is an inn for passing guests, not an habitation for permanent abode. Yet since we hope for those things which are to come, and sigh for future happiness, and since it hath not yet appeared what we shall be, although we are already "sons of God;" for "our life is hidden with Christ in God: we are utterly despised, by those who seek or enjoy happiness in this world.

9. Our soul is filled exceedingly; a reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud. We were asking who were the wealthy: he hath expounded to thee, in that he hath said, the proud. Reproach and contempt are the same:

and wealthy is the same with proud. It is a repetition of the sentence, a reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud. Why are the proud wealthy? Because they wish to be happy here. Why? since they themselves too are miserable, are they wealthy? But perhaps when they are miserable, they do not mock us. Listen, my beloved. Then perchance they mock when they are happy, when they boast themselves in the pomp of their riches! when they boast themselves in the inflated state of false honours: then they mock us, and seem to say, Behold, it is well with me: I enjoy the good things before me: let those who promise what they cannot shew depart from me: what I see, I hold; what I see, I enjoy; may I fare well in this life. Be thou more secure; for Christ hath risen again, and hath taught thee what He will give in another life: be assured that He giveth it. But that man mocketh thee, because he holdeth what he hath. Bear with his mockeries, and thou wilt laugh at his groans: for afterwards there will come a season when these very persons will say, This was he whom we had sometimes in derision. These are the words of the Book of Wisdom; for the Scripture hath handed down to us what they shall say who now scorn us, and who laugh at us, and by whom we are filled with reproach and contempt: what words they will then utter, when they shall be despised by the Truth. For they shall see those, whom they had scorned when mingled with themselves, shine on the right hand, when that which the Apostle hath described hath been fulfilled in them: when Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory; and they shall say, This was he whom we had sometimes in derision, and a byword of reproach. We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints! And they pursue this discourse, and add, Therefore we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness shone not unto us, and the sun rose not on us. What hath pride profited us? and what have riches with our vaunting brought us? There thou dost not mock them, for they mock themselves. Until this come to pass, brethren, let us raise our eyes unto Him that dwelleth in heaven: and let us not take away our eyes from Him, until He have mercy upon us, and free us from all temptation and reproach and contempt.

10. To this we must add, that sometimes those also who are beneath the scourge of temporal unhappiness, mock us. Thou findest some one, after the

deserving of his iniquities, whether by the hidden judgment of God, or by an open condemnation, sent to prison, dragging a chain: and even he mocketh thee. And when he is addressed, Why didst thou not live well? behold to what thou hast come by living evilly: he answereth, Wherefore do they who live well, suffer these things? But they suffer for this reason, that they may be proved, that they may be exercised by temptations, that they may profit by scourging: for God scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. And if He scourged His only Son without sin, and delivered Him up for us all, how ought we to be scourged, who have done things on account of which we are scourged? When we speak thus, they still pride themselves even in their woe, and afflicted, not humbled, they reply, These are the words of idle Christians, who believe what they see not. If even these mock us, why should we imagine, brethren, that they are not mentioned in this Psalm, in the words, A reproach to the wealthy, and a contempt to the proud; since even they who are not wealthy mock at Christians: and when in want and troubles, do not even then cease to mock? Surely then, we are a reproach unto the wealthy: or is no one found to mock us even when vexed with some calamity? Did not the robber mock, who was crucified with our crucified Lord? If therefore they who are not wealthy mock us, why doth the Psalm say, A reproach to the wealthy? If we carefully sift the matter, even these (the unfortunate) are wealthy. How are they wealthy? Yea; for if they were not wealthy, they would not be proud. For one man is wealthy in money, and proud on that score: another is wealthy in honours, and is proud on that account: another imagines himself wealthy in righteousness, and hence his pride, which is worse. They who seem not to be wealthy in money, seem to themselves to be wealthy in righteousness towards God; and when calamity overtakes them, they justify themselves, accuse God, and say, What wrong have I been guilty of, or, what have I done? Thou repliest: Look back, call to mind thy sins, see if thou hast done nothing. He is somewhat touched in conscience, and returneth to himself, and thinketh of his evil deeds; and when he hath thought of his evil deeds, not even then doth he choose to confess that he deserves his sufferings; but saith, Behold, I have clearly done many things; but I see that many have done worse, and suffer no evil. He is righteous against God. He also therefore is wealthy: he hath his breast puffed out with righteousness; since God seemeth to him to do ill, and he seemeth to himself to suffer unjustly. And if thou gavest him a vessel to pilot, he would be shipwrecked with it: yet he wishes to deprive God of the government of this world, and himself to hold the helm of Creation, and to distribute among all men pains and pleasures, punishments and rewards. Miserable soul! yet why do ye wonder? He is wealthy, but wealthy in iniquity, wealthy in malignity; but is more wealthy in iniquity, in proportion as he seemeth to himself to be wealthy in righteousness.

11. But a Christian ought not to be wealthy, but ought to acknowledge himself poor; and if he hath riches, he ought to know that they are not true riches, so that he may desire others. For he who desireth false riches, seeketh not the true riches: while he who seeketh the true riches, is as yet poor; and justly doth he say, I am poor and in heaviness. Again, in what sense is he, who is both poor and full of iniquity, said to be wealthy? Because it displeaseth him that he is poor, and in righteousness itself he seemeth wealthy in his own heart against the righteousness of God. And what is the wealth of our righteousness? How much soever righteousness there may be in us, it is a sort of dew compared to that fountain: compared to that plenteousness it is as a few drops, which may soften our life, and relax our hard iniquity. Let us only desire to be filled with the full fountain of righteousness, let us long to be filled with that abundant richness, of which it is said in the Psalm, They shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of Thy house: and Thou shalt give them drink out of the torrent of Thy pleasure. But while we are here, let us understand ourselves to be destitute and in want; not only in respect of those riches which are not the true riches, but of salvation itself. And when we are whole, let us understand that we are weak. For as long as this body hungers and thirsts, as long as this body is weary with watching, weary with standing, weary with walking, weary with sitting, weary with eating; whithersoever it turneth itself for a relief from weariness, there it discovereth another source of fatigue: there is therefore no perfect soundness, not even in the body itself. Those riches are then not riches, but beggary; for the more they abound, the more doth destitution and avarice increase. This is not the health of the body, but weakness. We are every day refreshed with cordials from God, in that we eat and drink: these things which are set before us, are medicines. Brethren, if ye wish to see what sort of a disease is upon us; he who fasts for seven days, dieth of hunger. That hunger therefore is here; but thou

feelest it not, because every day thou givest it medicine: not even health then is to us perfect.

12. Consider, my brethren, in what sense we should understand ourselves to be poor, that we may rejoice in Him, and may lift up our eyes towards Him Who dwelleth in heaven. These are not true riches; they increase in a greater degree the coveting of those who possess them. This is not true health of body; because we carry about with us weakness that faileth every way: wherever it may turn, it faileth. In the very relief, thou wilt not find permanence: he is tired with standing: he wishes to sit: will he even in sitting last? What he hath adopted as a remedy against fatigue, in that he findeth failing. He is tired with watching: he is about to sleep; doth he never grow weary again, because he hath slept? He is tired with fasting: he is about to refresh himself: if he exceed in refreshment, thence he becometh weak. This our weakness cannot persevere in any thing. What is our righteousness? How much righteousness is there among so great temptations? We are able to refrain from homicide, from adultery, from thefts, from perjuries, from frauds; but are we able to refrain from unrighteous thoughts? are we able to refrain from the suggestions of evil desires? What then is our righteousness? Let then our whole hunger, our whole thirst, be for true riches, and true health, and true righteousness. What are true riches? That heavenly abode in Jerusalem. For who is called rich on this earth? When a rich man is praised, what is meant? He is very rich: nothing is wanting to him. That surely is the praise of him that praiseth the other: for it is not this, when it is said, He wants nothing. Consider if he really want nothing. If he desires nothing, he wants nothing: but if he still desires more than what he hath, his riches have increased in such wise, that his wants have increased also. But in that City there will be true riches, because there will be nothing wanting to us there; for we shall not be in need of any thing, and there will be true health. What is true health? when death shall have been swallowed up in victory, and when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality; then there will be true health, then there will be true and perfect righteousness, so that we shall not only be incapable of doing, but even of thinking any thing evil. But at present, destitute, poor, wanting, in heaviness we sigh, we groan, we pray, we lift up our eyes unto God: since

they who are happy in this world, scorn us; for they are wealthy: and they who are unhappy in this world, despise us; for they too are wealthy: and there is a righteousness in their hearts, but a false one. For this reason they do not arrive at a true righteousness, because they are filled with a false one. But do thou, that thou mayest arrive at the true righteousness, be poor and a beggar as to righteousness itself; and hear the Gospel, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

PSALM 124

Exposition

A Sermon to the people.

1. Ver. 1–5. Ye already well know, dearest brethren, that a Song of Degrees, is a song of our ascent: and that this ascent is not effected by the feet of the body, but by the affections of the heart. This we have repeatedly reminded you of: and we need not repeat it too often, that there may be room for saying what hath not yet been said. This Psalm, therefore, which ye have now heard sung unto you, is inscribed, A Song of Degrees. This is its title. They sing therefore while ascending: and sometimes as it were one man singeth, sometimes as it were many; because many are one, since Christ is One, and in Christ the members of Christ constitute one with Christ, and the Head of all these members is in heaven. But although the body toileth on earth, it is not cut off from its Head; for the Head looketh down from above, and regardeth the body. For if it did not regard the body, it would not say to the persecutor Saul, not as yet Paul, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? These things ye know very well, and they are familiar to you. But let not the mention of them disgust those who have not forgotten them, that through their patience they may return to the hearts of those from whom they have escaped; for they are edifying, and worthy of frequent repetition. Whether therefore one or many sing; many men are one man, because it is unity; and Christ, as we have said, is One, and all Christians are members of Christ.

2. What then do they sing? These members of Christ, what do they sing? For they love, and through their love sing, through their longing they sing. Sometimes they sing with tribulation, and sometimes they sing with exultation, when they sing in hope. For our tribulation is in the present world; but our hope is in the next world: and save the hope of a future world console us in the tribulation of the present world, we perish. Our joy therefore, brethren, is not as yet in reality, but in hope; but it is as perfect, as though it were already realized: for we do not fear, when Truth promiseth.

For Truth can neither deceive, nor be deceived: it is good for us to cling unto It; It freeth us, but if we have remained in His Word. For we now believe, we shall then see: when we believe, it is hope, in this world; when we shall see, it will be reality, in a future world. But we shall see face to face: but we shall then see face to face, when our hearts shall have been cleansed: for blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. But by what means are hearts purified, save through faith, as Peter saith in the Acts of the Apostles, Purifying their hearts by faith? Now our hearts are purified by faith, in order that they may be capable of enjoying the sight of God. For we walk now by faith, not as yet by sight; even as the Apostle saith, Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. And what means, We are absent? For we walk by faith, he saith, not by sight. He therefore who is absent, and who walketh by faith, is not yet in his country, but is still on his way; but he who believeth not, is neither in his country, nor on the way. Let us therefore so walk as if we were on the way; for the King of our country Himself hath made Himself the way. The King of our country, our Lord Jesus Christ; and there He is the Truth, but here He is the Way. Whither do we go? Unto the Truth. By what path do we go? By faith. Whither do we go? Unto Christ. By what path do we go? Through Christ. For He hath Himself said, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. For He had once said to those that believed on Him, If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed: and ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free. And ye shall know the Truth, He saith, but, if ye continue in My Word. In what word? As the Apostle saith, The word of faith, which we preach. First therefore is the word of faith; in which word of faith if we continue, we shall know the Truth, and the Truth will make us free. Truth is immortal, Truth is immutable: Truth is that Word of which it is said, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And who seeth this, save his heart be purified? How are hearts purified? And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. In that therefore the Word continueth in Itself, it is Truth unto which we are coming, and which maketh us free: but inasmuch as the word of faith is preached, in which the Lord wisheth us to continue, that we may know the truth: it is this: The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Thou believest in Christ born in the flesh, and thou wilt come unto Christ born of God, God with God.

3. They whom we read sing these verses in joyous exultation; these members of Christ sing with exultation this Psalm. And who exulteth here, save in hope, as I have said? Let this hope of ours be a certain one, and let us sing with exultation. For they who sing are not foreign to us, or the words in this Psalm other than ours. So hear, as if ye were hearing yourselves; so hear, as though in the mirror of Scripture we were observing yourselves. For when thou lookest upon the Scriptures as upon a mirror, thy countenance is gladdened: when in the exultation of hope thou shalt find thyself like to certain members of Christ, which members have sung these words: thou also wilt thyself be among those members, and wilt sing these words. Why therefore do these men sing these words with exultation? Because they have escaped. It is hope, therefore, wherewith they sing. For whilst we are here, and are absent from our home, we have not as yet escaped. Certain members indeed of that body of which we also are, which can sing in truth, have gone before us. And this the holy Martyrs have sung: for they have already escaped, and are with Christ in joy about to receive at last incorruptible bodies, the very same which were at first corruptible, wherein they have suffered pains; of the same there will be made for them ornaments of righteousness. Therefore whether they in reality, or we in hope, joining our affections with their crowns, and longing for such a life as we have not here, and shall never gain unless we have longed for it here, let us all sing together, and say, If the Lord Himself had not been in us. For they looked back upon certain tribulations which they had suffered, and considered when they were at length safe in the bliss and security of those realms, the path by which they had passed, whither they had come; and, because it was difficult to be set free from thence, unless the hand of the liberator were present, they said in joy, If the Lord Himself had not been in us. Thus they begin to sing: they have not yet said whence they have escaped; so great is their exultation, If the Lord had not been in us.

4. Now may Israel say, If the Lord Himself had not been in us. Now may Israel say, because it hath escaped; for this Psalm places before our eyes those who have already escaped. Let us place them in our hearts also, now triumphant: and as if we also were there, as it is said above, Our feet stood in the courts of Jerusalem. They were not yet there, but were on the way: but there was so much rejoicing while they hastened, such hope of arriving,

that, while yet on the way and toiling, they already seemed to themselves to be placed at the journey’s end. So let us also set ourselves in that triumph which will be in a future world, when we shall trample on death, which will then have been destroyed, when we shall say, O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? Then united with angels, and rejoicing in our King, Who willed first to rise from the dead, although He willed not to be the first to die; for many died before Him, but no man rose again for evermore; let us then, rejoicing with Him, already there in hope and in heart, because we have escaped, reflect on what we have escaped, what offences, what tribulations of the world, what persecutions of all Pagans, what deceits of all heretics, what suggestions of the devil, what struggles of our desires. Who could escape all these trials, save the Lord Himself were on our side? Now Israel may say, for Israel saith it securely, If the Lord Himself had not been in us. When? When men rose up against us. Marvel not: they have been subdued: for they were men; but the Lord was in us, man was not in us: for men rose up against us. Nevertheless men would crush other men, unless in those men who could not be crushed, there were not man, but the Lord.

5. Therefore, If the Lord Himself had not been in us, when men rose up against us. For what could men do to you, while ye rejoiced, and sang, and securely held everlasting bliss? what could men do to you when they rose against you, if the Lord had not been on your side? what could they do? Perchance they had swallowed us up quick.—Swallowed us up quick: they would not first have slain us, and so have swallowed us up. O inhuman, O cruel men! The Church swalloweth not thus. To Peter it was said, Kill and eat: not, Swallow quick. How then doth Peter, that is, the Church, kill and eat? and how would they who have risen up against us, perchance have swallowed us up quick, if the Lord Himself had not been on our side? Because no man entereth into the body of the Church, save he be slain first. What he was dieth, that he may be what he was not. Otherwise, he who is not slain, and is not eaten by the Church, may be in the visible number of the people: but he cannot be in the number of the people which is known to God, whereof the Apostle saith, The Lord knoweth who are His, save he be eaten; and eaten he cannot be, save he first be slain. The Pagan cometh, still in him idolatry liveth; he must be grafted among the members of Christ:

that he may be engrafted, he must needs be eaten; but he cannot be eaten by the Church, save first he be slain. Let him renounce the world, then is he slain; let him believe in God, then is he eaten. And then would they have swallowed us up quick, if the Lord Himself had not been on our side. For many persecutors at times arose, and now they are not wanting. They rise singly, and sometimes swallow men quick, but men in whom the Lord is not. These are they who are swallowed quick, who know that it is evil, and consent with their tongue. For some persecutors have arisen, and have said unto men, Burn incense: if ye obey not, we slay you. They loved this life: and the sweetness of this life enthralled them. They did not love in a greater degree what God promised them, than what they saw on earth. For they were ordered to believe those things which they saw not yet, but they loved what they saw before them. Holding faster unto those things which they saw, they shut out the Lord from their hearts; and because the Lord was not in them, were swallowed up quick. What meaneth, were swallowed up quick? By offering incense to idols, when they knew that an idol is nothing. For if they thought an idol was any thing, they would be swallowed up dead: but when they think an idol nothing, and know that all these inventions of the Gentiles are vain, they live; and yet when they do what their persecutors will, they are swallowed up quick. But they are swallowed up quick on this account, that the Lord is not in them. But they in whom the Lord is, are slain and die not. But they who consent and live, are swallowed quick, when swallowed up they die. But they who have suffered, and have not yielded to tribulations, rejoice and say, Now may Israel say, say rejoicing, say securely, If the Lord had not been in us, when men rose up against us, perchance they had swallowed us up quick.

6. When their fury was enraged upon us. Ye are aware, brethren, that in one of the former Psalms, at the very commencement of the Songs of Degrees, one, who was beginning to ascend, sought aid against a deceitful tongue; and said, Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and a deceitful tongue. For when a man first beginneth to ascend, and to make progress, in the very outset of his ascent, he suffereth deceitful tongues, flattering to his ruin, flattering in their evil persuasions. What art thou doing? Why dost thou this? What? Canst thou not live otherwise? Canst not thou serve God without doing this? Thou then art the only one who wishest to be what

others are not! and if thou findest some who are with thee in thy deeds, what saith that flattering and deceitful tongue? Behold, they have succeeded: perhaps thou wilt fail. Thou art attempting, thou wilt fail: and it would have been better not to have begun, than to have begun and to have failed. The deceitful tongue still flattereth. If thou hast persevered, the deceitful and flattering tongue is overcome, it beginneth to rage openly; and the tongue which flattered that it might seduce, threatens that it may terrify. But if the Lord be within thee, and thou hast not abandoned Christ in thy heart; as thou didst overcome the deceitful tongue through the sharp arrows and the hot burning coals, that is, through the word of God, whereby thy heart was transfixed, and through the examples of the righteous who have been quickened from the dead, have been made righteous from sinners, as coals revive after death: as therefore thou didst conquer them by arrows and hot burning coals, when they were deceitfully flattering and seducing by flattery; thus thou wilt conquer these who now wrathfully threaten, because they have failed to seduce by flattery. They were overcome when they flattered, let them be overcome also when they threaten. They are overcome: but how, save the Lord Himself had been in us? It is clear that thou hast not conquered, but that He hath conquered Who is in thee. Dost thou bear within thee such a general, and art thou overcome? Is not He whom thou bearest He who said, I have overcome the world? Did He not by His death before thee overcome the devil, since He was evermore above every creature, because the Word is God with God? Why did He conquer, save that He might shew thee how to fight with the devil? Yet although thou art now taught, save He be in thee Who conquered for thee first, thou art overcome. If the Lord Himself had not been in us, when men rose up against us, they had swallowed us up quick; when their fury was enraged upon us. They are now in anger, they now openly rage: perchance the water had drowned us. By water he meaneth ungodly nations: and we shall see what sort of water in the following verses. Whoever had consented unto them, water would have overwhelmed him. For he would die by the death of the Egyptians, he would not pass through after the example of the Israelites. For ye know, brethren, that the people of Israel passed through the water, by which the Egyptians were overwhelmed. The water, he saith, had drowned us.

7. But what sort of water is this? It is a torrent, it flows with violence, but it will pass by. For by torrents are meant rivers which swell with sudden showers: they have a powerful current; whoever attempts to ford them is carried away, but he in whom the Lord is not; while he in whom the Lord is, his soul passeth over the torrent. The torrent still floweth, but the soul of the Martyrs hath already passed over. Still while this world runneth on in alternate births and deaths, the torrent lasteth: hence come persecutions, from this torrent. Hence He, our Head, first drinketh, of Whom it is said in the Psalms, He shall drink of the torrent in the way. From the torrent, that stream which signifieth a persecuting people, He drank Who said to His disciples, Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? He drinketh of the torrent by the way. What means, He drinketh by the way? He drank as He passed, He stayed not there. He drank by the way, for it is said of Him, He stood not in the way of sinners. He drank as He passed. And what is said in consequence? Therefore shall He lift up His head. He shall drink, he saith, of the torrent by the way: therefore shall He lift up His head. For our Head is already exalted, because He drank of the torrent by the way; for our Lord hath suffered. If therefore our Head hath been already raised up, why doth the body fear the torrent? Without doubt, because the Head hath been raised, the body also will say hereafter, Our soul hath passed over the torrent. Perhaps our soul hath passed over the water without substance. Behold, what sort of water he was speaking of, The water perchance had overwhelmed us. But what is the water without substance? What meaneth, without substance?

8. In the first place, what meaneth, Perchance our soul hath passed over? The Latin interpreters have thus rendered as far as they were able the Greek word ἄρα. For thus the Greek copies have it; ἄρα: and as it is an expression of doubt, it is rendered by an expression of doubt, the word perchance (fortasse); but this is not the exact sense. We may express this Greek word by one not so Latin in its use, but adapted to your comprehension. The Punic word, iar, I mean not that which signifieth a wood, but the expression of doubt, is the Greek ἄρα. This the Latins may or usually do express by Putas: as in this instance, Dost thou think (putas) I have escaped this? If we say, Perchance I have escaped, ye see that it hath not this meaning: but the word, Thinkest thou, is commonly used: but not in Latin in this sense.

Although I may use it, when expounding to you; for I often use words that are not Latin, that ye may understand. But in Scripture this could not be used, because it was not Latin; and as Latin failed, that was used for it which had not this meaning. Understand however the meaning to be this: Thinkest thou our soul hath passed over the water without substance? and why do they say, Thinkest thou? Because the greatness of the danger maketh it hardly credible that he hath escaped. They have endured a great death: they have been in great dangers; they have been so much oppressed, that they almost gave consent while alive, and were all but swallowed up alive: now therefore that they have escaped, now that they are secure, but still remember the danger, the great danger, say, Thinkest thou our soul hath passed over the water without substance?

9. What is the water without substance, save the water of sins without substance? For sins have not substance: they have destitution, not substance; they have want, not substance. In that water without substance, the younger son lost the whole of his substance. For ye know that the younger son went into a far country, and said unto his father, Give me the portion of substance that falleth to me. What meanest thou? It is better preserved in thy father’s hands: it is thine: thy wish is to waste it; thou wishest to go afar. Give it me, he saith; give it me. He gave it him. Setting out into a distant country, where he lived riotously with harlots, he lost the whole of his substance: he remained in want, he fed swine; in his destitution he called to mind his father’s wealth. Had not destitution driven him, he would not have desired that fulness. Let therefore all consider their sins, let them see if their sins have substance. For what hath the sinner provoked God? If thou seest not thy sin before thou committest it, consider it even when thou hast committed it. The sweetness of this life sweeteneth thy mouth for a time; it will afterwards be turned into great bitterness. Behold, thou hast sinned, and hast made gain: what is thy having made gain? That thou mightest make gain, thou hast offended God; that thou mightest increase thy money, thy good faith hath been lessened, and thy gold hath increased. What hast thou lost, and what hast thou acquired? What thou hast acquired, is called gold; what thou hast lost, is called good faith: compare good faith with gold; if good faith were saleable in the market, it would have its price. Dost thou think of thy gains, thinkest thou not of thy losses?

Thou rejoicest in thy coffer: mournest thou not for thy heart? There is abundance of I know not what in thy coffer; but see what hath been lessened in thy heart. When thou hast opened thy coffer, thou wilt find shillings which were not there before: it is well, that thou rejoicest that there is there what was not there. Consider the coffer of thy heart; there was good faith there, and there is not. If thou rejoicest in the gain, why mournest thou not over the loss? Thou hast lost more than thou hast gained. Dost thou wish to see what thou hast lost. Not even by a shipwreck could it have been taken from thee. For men sometimes lose all things in the sea, they go out of it destitute. Many were shipwrecked with Paul: the lovers of this world suffered shipwreck, and all of them went forth destitute; they both lost what they had out of doors, and found the house of their heart empty: but Paul carried in his heart the patrimony of his faith; it could not be taken away by any waves, nor by any tempests; he went forth destitute, and he went forth rich. Such riches we ought to seek. But, thou repliest, I see them not. Foolish soul, thou seest them not with the eyes of thy flesh; have an eye of thy heart, and thou seest them. But thou seest not faith. Wherefore seest thou it in another? Why criest thou out when good faith is broken with thee, if thou seest it not? Suppose any one break faith with thee: thou criest out. Thou wishest therefore good faith to be shewn towards thyself: when it is demanded of thee to shew it, then dost thou not see it? Mourn that thou hast not towards another, what thou complainest that another hath lost towards thee, and consider that the sin thou committest is without substance. For what is acquired by sin, seemeth to be substance. But this also is not acquired. For he who knoweth how to use gold, hath gold: but he that knoweth not how to use gold, hath not the gold, but is held by it; he is not the possessor of it, but is possessed by it. Be ye the masters of your gold, not the slaves of gold: for God both made gold, and Himself also made thee over gold; gold He made for thy aid, thee He made in His own image. See what is above thee, and thou tramplest on what is below thee. What then hast thou acquired? Dost thou wish to see how the water is without substance? Take away with thee to the world below what thou hast acquired: what wilt thou do? Thou hast acquired gold: thou hast lost thy faith: after a few days thou leavest this life; thou canst not take away with thee the gold thou hast acquired by the loss of thy good faith; thy heart, destitute of faith, goeth forth into punishment—thy heart, which if full of faith, would go forth unto a crown. Behold, what thou hast done is nothing: and thou hast offended God for nothing. The water which hath overwhelmed thee is without substance. For the sake of what hath the sinner provoked God? Such as transgress without a cause shall be put to confusion. For no man transgresseth save without a cause: but no man thinketh of it.

10. Men go: they hear that common proverb; and the proverbs of God slumber in them. What proverb? “Better in hand than in hope.” Unhappy man, what hast thou in hand? Thou sayest, “Better in hand.” Hold it so as not to lose it, and then say, “Better in hand.” But if thou holdest it not, why dost thou not hold fast that which thou canst not lose? What then hast thou in hand? Gold. Keep it in hand, therefore: if thou hast it in hand, let it not be taken away without thy consent. But if through gold also thou art carried where thou wishest not, and if a more powerful robber seeketh thee, because he findeth thee a less powerful robber; if a stronger eagle pursue thee, because thou hast carried off a hare before him: the lesser was thy prey, thou wilt be a prey unto the greater. Men see not these things in human affairs: by so much avarice are they blinded. It is wonderful, my brethren; they who consider them, shudder at them. The more powerful seeketh the less powerful, and seeketh to oppress him, not on any other account, save that he hath what he may take away from him; he seeth him suffer trouble from himself, on no other ground, save because he hath somewhat; and the man heapeth upon himself that, for the sake of which the other suffereth trouble. He did not reflect, while he was persecuting the other; and he was fleeing, he was being tortured, he was fearing, he was seeking where to hide himself; whence should he suffer those evils, save because he had somewhat? Even in him learn what to avoid: that the property which thus distressed him, under thy persecutions, lest it should be taken from him by thee, may also thus torture thee under another’s persecution. Thou remarkest that he is fat: if thou pursuest him because he is fat, fear to grow fat thyself, lest another hunt thee. And all these things are done in vanity: seek the end; darkness meets thee: seek wherefore; nothing is found.

11. Ver. 6. Let therefore those who say, My soul hath passed over the water without substance, rejoice, and be glad in the Lord; and let them receive back their substance. They have lost it by living riotously; but hath the Father become poor? Let them return, and they shall find there the riches which in their distant sojourn they wasted with harlots; let them escape the water without substance, and say, Blessed be the Lord, Who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth. For the hunters were following, and had placed a bait in their trap. What bait? The sweetness of this life, so that each man for the sake of the sweetness of this life may thrust his head into iniquity, and be caught in the trap. Not they, in whom the Lord was, they who say, If the Lord Himself had not been in us; they have not been taken in the trap. Let the Lord be in thee, and thou wilt not be taken in the trap; cry, Blessed, be the Lord, Who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth.

12. Ver. 7. Our soul is escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers. Because the Lord was in the soul itself, therefore hath that soul escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. Why like a bird? Because it had fallen heedlessly, like a bird; and it could say afterwards, God will forgive me. Unstable bird, rather set thy feet firm upon the rock: go not into the trap. Thou wilt be taken, consumed, crushed. Let the Lord be in thee, and He will deliver thee from greater threats, from the snare of the fowlers. As if thou wert to see a bird about to fall into a snare, thou makest a greater noise that it may fly away from the net; so also, when perhaps some even of the Martyrs were stretching out their neck after the enjoyment of this life, the Lord, Who was in them, made the noise of hell, and the bird was delivered from the snare of the fowlers: Our soul hath escaped even as a bird from the snare of the fowlers. What then? Will that snare last for ever? The snare was the sweetness of this life: they were not entangled in the snare, and were slain; by their slaughter the net was broken; no longer did the sweetness of this life remain, that they might again be entangled by it, but it was crushed. Was the bird also crushed? Far be it! for it was not in the snare: The snare is broken, and we are delivered.

13. Ver. 8. Let them cry out, then, since they are delivered; let them fly unto God, let them triumph in God, because they are delivered: since the Lord

was in them, that they might not be caught by the snare. Why was the snare broken, and we delivered? Dost thou wish to know why? Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth. For if this were not our help, the snare would not indeed remain for ever; but when the bird was once taken, it would be crushed. For this life will pass away; and they who shall have been taken in by its pleasures, and through these pleasures have offended God, will pass away with this life. For the snare will be broken; be ye assured of this: all the sweetness of this present life will no longer exist, when the lot assigned to it hath been fulfilled; but we must not be enthralled by it, so that when the net is broken, thou mayest then rejoice and say, The snare is broken, and we are delivered. But lest thou think that thou canst do this of thy own strength, consider whose work thy deliverance is, (for if thou art proud, thou fallest into the snare,) and say, Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth.

14. The Psalm hath been treated of, and, as far as the Lord hath deigned to aid me, as I hope, expounded. Ye well know that to-morrow a discourse is due unto you, beloved; be present, and aid me with your prayers. For ye should remember our promise; nor would I say what I was designing to treat of, save that I wished aid from the devotion of your faith, and of your prayers. For ye remember that I promised you I would treat of this text in the Gospel, The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. For heretics, the Manicheans especially, are wont to censure the Law, and to declare that God gave it not. This passage must be expounded, so that it may be perceived both that God gave the Law, and that the Law was given by Moses; so that it could not save, owing to a certain reason. The Law saved not, in order that the Captain Himself, the Giver of the Law, might be longed for, to give pardon to sinners; and that the Law might be given through Moses, but that grace and truth might come through Jesus Christ. I wished to make you attend to this. The Lord’s mercy will be with us, not from our deservings, but perhaps according to the merits of your longing: nor from our faculties, but from the plenteousness of His gifts: that a subject sufficiently needful for men placed in the new covenant may be so treated, that the enemy may find no lurking place at all, wherein he may hide himself to deceive the faithful.

PSALM 125

Exposition

A Discourse to the people.

1. Ver. 1, 2. This Psalm, belonging to the number of the Songs of Degrees, (of which title we have already said much in other Psalms, and wish not to repeat it, lest we rather weary than instruct you,) teacheth us, while we ascend and raise our minds unto the Lord our God in loving charity and piety, not to fix our gaze upon men who are prosperous in this world, with a happiness that is false and unstable, and altogether seductive; where they cherish nothing save pride, and their heart freezeth up against God, and is made hard against the shower of His grace, so that it beareth not fruit. For presuming that all things abound to them, which appear needful, and more than what is needful, for this life, they are lifted up; and while they are men through their iniquity beneath all men, through their pride they consider themselves above all men. Would that they would think themselves even as other men. But by sometimes looking upon and too much heeding these, even those who worship God, waver and bow their heads, as if their reward, for the sake of which they worship God, hath perished, when they see themselves in toils, in want, in trouble, in sickness, in pain, in any exigency, and see others blessed with health of body, abounding in temporal things, rejoicing in the security of their property, flourishing in splendid honours, though they not only worship not God, but are enemies also unto all men; when they look upon those men, they waver, and say unto themselves what is openly written in a certain Psalm, How should God perceive it? Is there knowledge in the Most High? Lo, these are the ungodly, these prosper in the world, and these have riches in possession. It proceeds thus: And I said, Then have I cleansed my heart in vain, and washed mine hands in innocency. Was I a fool, who wished to live righteously, and to converse innocently among men, since I perceive those who refuse to preserve innocence, enjoy so much prosperity, and insult the righteous, prospering through their iniquity?

2. But who said those words in the Psalm? One whose heart was not as yet straight. For thus beginneth the Psalm which we have just quoted: not that which we have just taken in hand to consider and to treat of, but that in which it is said, How should God perceive it? Is there knowledge in the Most High? Lo, these are the ungodly, these prosper in the world, and have riches in possession: and I said, I have cleansed my heart in vain, and have washed mine hands in innocency. This Psalm, wherein ye see that the soul is in peril, wherein ye see that the feet waver, beginneth thus: How good is God unto Israel: even unto such as are of a clean heart. Nevertheless, he saith, my feet were almost gone: my treadings had well-nigh slipped. And why? I was envious at the wicked, I do also see the ungodly in such prosperity. He saith therefore that his feet were almost gone, and his treadings had well-nigh slipped, by a slip towards a fall from God, because he gazed upon and beheld the prosperity of the ungodly, and saw that they had peace, while he had toil. Now he hath narrated this after he had escaped, when with a heart made straight he had clung unto God, he hath narrated his past dangers. Therefore, God is good unto Israel: but unto whom? even unto such as are of a clean heart. Who are of a clean heart? They who do not censure God. Who are of a clean heart? They who direct their own will by the will of God; and do not endeavour to bend the will of God into conformity with their own will. It is a short commandment, that man make straight his heart. Dost thou wish to have thy heart straight? Do thou do what God willeth; do not wish God to do that which thou dost wish. They therefore are crooked-hearted, that is, such as have not a straight heart, who sit and discuss how God ought to have acted; not praising what He hath done, but blaming it. They wish to amend Him: it is not enough that they refuse to be amended by Him; and say, God ought not to have made men poor, they ought all to be rich; and they alone who are rich ought to live. Why is a poor man created? why doth he, live! A man blames the God of the poor. How much better would he be one of the poor of God, and become rich of God! that is, follow the will of God, and see that his poverty was temporary, and transient, but that spiritual riches would come unto him in such a way that they could by no means pass away. How much better were it thus to have faith in the riches of the heart, if it was not his lot to have gold in his coffers? For if he had gold in his coffers, he would fear thieves, and still though unwilling lose gold from his coffers; but he would

never lose faith from his heart, if he did not himself drive it from thence. However, we can quickly answer the question, dearest brethren. God made a man poor, that He might prove him; and God made a man rich, that He might prove him by means of the poor man. And God did all things which He did, well. And if we cannot see His counsel, why He made this thing so and that so; it is good for us to be subject unto His wisdom, and to believe that He made well, although we know not why He made it: and we shall have a straight heart so that we may trust and confide in the Lord, and our feet shall not be moved, and that taketh place in us as we ascend, whence this Psalm beginneth, (ver. 1.) They that put their trust in the Lord shall be even as the mount Sion: they shall not be removed for ever.

3. Who are these? (ver. 2.) They who dwell in Jerusalem. They shall stand fast for ever, who dwell in Jerusalem. If we understand this (earthly) Jerusalem, all who dwelt therein have been excluded by wars and by the destruction of the city: thou now seekest a Jew in the city of Jerusalem, and findest him not. Why then will they that dwell in Jerusalem not be moved for ever, save because there is another Jerusalem, of which ye are wont to hear much? She is our mother, for whom we sigh and groan in this pilgrimage, that we may return unto her. We had wandered from her, and had not a way: her King came, and became a way unto us, that we may return unto her. It is she, in whose courts, the courts of Jerusalem, our feet stood, as ye heard in a preceding Psalm of the Songs of Degrees, already treated of and expounded to those among you who were present; for whom he who sung, Jerusalem which is being built as a city: whose partaking is in the same, sighed. They then who dwell therein shall never be moved. But they who dwelt in that earthly Jerusalem, have been moved; first in heart, afterwards by exile. When they were moved in heart and fell, then they crucified the King of the heavenly Jerusalem herself; they were already spiritually without, and shut out of doors their very King. For they cast Him out without their city, and crucified Him without. He too cast them out of His city, that is, of the everlasting Jerusalem, the Mother of us all, who is in Heaven.

4. What is this Jerusalem? He briefly describes it. The mountains stand around Jerusalem. Is it any thing great, that we are in a city surrounded by

mountains? Is this the whole of our happiness, that we shall have a city which mountains surround? Do we not know what mountains are? or what are mountains save swellings of the earth? Different then from these are those mountains that we love, lofty mountains, preachers of truth, whether Angels, or Apostles, or Prophets. They stand around Jerusalem; they surround her, and, as it were, form a wall for her. Of these lovely and delightful mountains Scripture constantly speaketh. Heed when ye hear or read: in more passages ye find delightful mountains, than I can enumerate. Nevertheless, as far as the Lord doth suggest, it delighteth us to say many things of these mountains; and divine testimonies have occurred to us from the sacred Scriptures. They are the mountains who are enlightened by God: and they are enlightened in the first place, that light may descend from them into the valleys, or the hills; because they are not of so great height as are the mountains. They are the mountains through whom Scripture is first declared unto us, whether in Prophecy, or in the Apostles, or in the Gospel. They are the mountains of whom we sing: I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence my help shall come: because in this life we have help from the holy Scriptures. But because the mountains themselves are not protected by themselves, and it is not of themselves that they provide for us, and our hope ought not to be in the mountains, lest we should be accursed for putting our trust in men; after saying, I lifted up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence my help shall come: he added, My help shall come from the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth. They are the mountains of whom he again saith, Let the mountains receive peace for Thy people, and the little hills righteousness. The mountains are great, and the hills are less. The mountains therefore see, the hills believe: they who see, have received peace, and brought it unto those who believe. For they who believe, receive righteousness: for the righteous liveth by faith. The Angels see, they announce what they see, and we believe. John saith, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: he saw, he preached unto us that we might believe. And through the mountains that receive peace, the little hills received righteousness: for what saith he of the mountains themselves? He said not, they have peace from themselves, or they make peace, or generate peace; but, they receive peace. The Lord is the source, whence they receive peace. So therefore lift up thine eyes to the mountains for the sake of peace, that thy help may come from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth. Again, the Holy Spirit mentioning these mountains saith this: Thou dost light them wonderfully from Thy everlasting mountains. He said not, the mountains light them: but, Thou lightest them from Thy everlasting mountains: through those mountains whom Thou hast willed to be everlasting, preaching the Gospel, Thou lighting them, not the mountains. Such then are the mountains that stand around Jerusalem.

5. And that ye may know what sort of mountains these be that stand around Jerusalem; where Scripture hath mentioned good mountains, very rarely, and hardly, and perhaps never, doth it fail instantly to mention the Lord also, or allude to Him at the same moment, that our hopes rest not in the mountains. So, behold how many instances I have mentioned. I lift up mine eyes unto the mountains, from whence my help shall come; and that thou mayest not stay there, he addeth, My help is from the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth. Again, let the mountains receive peace for Thy people: in the word, receive, he sheweth that there is another source whence they receive. Again, lighting from the mountains: but, he saith, Thou lighting them from Thy everlasting mountains. Again, in this passage, after saying, The mountains stand around Jerusalem: lest thou again shouldest tarry in the mountains, he at once addeth, Even so the Lord standeth round about His people: that thy hope might not lie in the mountains, but in Him Who lighteth the mountains. For when He dwelleth in the mountains, that is, in the Saints, He Himself is round about His people; and He hath Himself walled His people with a spiritual fortification, that it may not be moved for evermore. But when Scripture speaketh of evil mountains, it addeth not the Lord unto them. Such mountains, we have already told you often, signify certain mighty, but evil, souls. For ye are not to suppose, brethren, that heresies could be produced through any little souls. None save great men have been the authors of heresies; but in proportion as they were mighty, so were they evil, mountains. For they were not such mountains as would receive peace, that the hills might receive righteousness; but they received dissension from their father the devil. There were therefore mountains: beware thou fly not to such mountains. For men will come, and say unto thee, There is a great hero, there is a great man! How great was that Donatus! How great is Maximian! and a certain Photinus, what a great man

he was! And Arius too, how illustrious he was! All these I have mentioned are mountains, but mountains that cause shipwreck. Ye see that a certain flame of eloquence shineth from them, and that a certain flame is kindled from them. If ye navigate on the Wood, and suffer night, that is, the darkness of this life; let them not deceive you, and guide not your ship thither: there there are rocks, there terrific shipwrecks take place. When therefore these mountains shall be praised before thee, and some one attempteth to persuade thee to go to those mountains, as if for help, and to repose there; answer, In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye then to my soul, that she should flee as a bird unto the mountains? For it is good for thee to lift up thine eyes unto those mountains, whence help may come unto thee from the Lord, that thou mayest flee as a bird from the snare of the fowlers, and not fly unto the mountains. For a bird is an unstable thing; quickly is it moved, quickly doth it fly hither and thither. But do thou trust in the Lord, and thou wilt be as the mountain of Sion; thou shalt not be moved for ever, and thou shalt not flee into the mountains like a bird. Hath he there so mentioned the mountains, as to speak of the Lord?

6. But love such mountains, in whom the Lord is. Then do those very mountains love thee, if thou hast not placed hope in them. See, brethren, what the mountains of God are. Thence they are so called in another passage: Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God. Not their righteousness, but Thy righteousness. Hear that great mountain the Apostle. That I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ. But they who have chosen to be mountains through their own righteousness, as certain Jews or Pharisees their rulers, are thus blamed: Being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. But they who have submitted themselves are exalted in such a manner as to be humble. In that they are great, they are mountains; in that they submit themselves unto God, they are valleys: and in that they have the capacity of piety, they receive the plenteousness of peace, and transmit the copious irrigation to the hills, only beware, at present, what mountains thou lovest. If thou wish to be loved by good mountains, place not thy trust even in good mountains. For how great a mountain was Paul? where is one like him found? (We

speak of the greatness of men.) Can any one readily be found of so great grace? Nevertheless, he feared lest that bird should place trust in him: and what doth he say: Was Paul crucified for you? But lift up your eyes unto the mountains, whence help may come unto you: for, I have planted, Apollos hath watered: but, your help cometh from the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth; for, God gave the increase. The mountains, therefore, stand around Jerusalem. But as the mountains stand around Jerusalem, even so standeth the Lord round about His people, from this time forth for evermore. If therefore the mountains stand around Jerusalem, and the Lord standeth round about His people, the Lord bindeth His people into one bond of love and peace, so that they who trust in the Lord, like the mount Sion, may not be moved for evermore: and this is, from this time forth for evermore.

7. Ver. 3. For the Lord will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto wickedness. At present indeed the righteous suffer in some measure, and at present the unrighteous sometimes tyrannize over the righteous. In what ways? Sometimes the unrighteous arrive at worldly honours: when they have arrived at them, and have been made either judges or kings; for God doth this for the discipline of His folk, for the discipline of His people; the honour due to their power must needs be shewn them. For thus hath God ordained His Church, that every power ordained in the world may have honour, and sometimes from those who are better than those in power. For the sake of illustration I take one instance; hence calculate the grades of all powers. The primary and every day relation of authority between man and man is that between master and slave. Almost all houses have a power of this sort. There are masters, there are also slaves; these are different names, but men and men are equal names. And what saith the Apostle, teaching that slaves are subject to their masters? Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh: for there is a Master according to the Spirit. He is the true and everlasting Master; but those temporal masters are for a time only. When thou walkest in the way, when thou livest in this life, Christ doth not wish to make thee proud. It hath been thy lot to become a Christian, and to have a man for thy master: thou wast not made a Christian, that thou mightest disdain to be a servant. For when by Christ’s

command thou servest a man, thou servest not the man, but Him who commanded thee. He saith this also: Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will. Behold, he hath not made men free from being servants, but good servants from bad servants. How much do the rich owe to Christ, who orders their house for them! so that if thou hast had an unbelieving servant, suppose Christ convert him, and say not to him, Leave thy master, thou hast now known Him Who is thy true Master: he perhaps is ungodly and unjust, thou art now faithful and righteous: it is unworthy that a righteous and faithful man should serve an unjust and unbelieving master. He spoke not thus unto him, but rather, Serve him: and to confirm the servant, added, Serve as I served; I before thee served the unjust. From whom but His servants did the Lord suffer so much in His Passion? from whom, but evil servants? For if they had been good servants, they would honour their Master. But since they were evil servants, they wronged Him. What did He, on the other hand? He recompensed love for hatred: for He said, Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do. If the Lord of heaven and earth, through Whom all things were created, served the unworthy, asked mercy for His furious persecutors, and, as it were, shewed Himself as their Physician at His Advent: (for physicians also, better both in art and health, serve the sick:) how much more ought not a man to disdain, with his whole mind, and his whole good will, with his whole love to serve even a bad master! Behold, a better serveth an inferior, but for a season. Understand what I have said of the master and slave, to be true also of powers and kings, of all the exalted stations of this world. For sometimes they are good powers, and fear God; sometimes they fear not God. Julian was an infidel Emperor, an apostate, a wicked man, an idolater; Christian soldiers served an infidel Emperor; when they came to the cause of Christ, they acknowledged Him only Who was in heaven. If he called upon them at any time to worship idols, to offer incense; they preferred God to him: but whenever he commanded them to deploy into line, to march against this or that nation, they at once obeyed. They distinguished their everlasting from their temporal master; and yet they were, for the sake of their everlasting Master, submissive to their temporal master.

8. But will it be thus always, that the ungodly have power over the righteous? It will not be so. See what this Psalm saith: For God will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous. The rod of the ungodly is felt for a season upon the lot of the righteous; but it is not left there, it will not be there for ever. A time will come, when Christ, appearing in his glory, shall gather all nations before Him; and shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. And thou wilt see there many slaves among the sheep, and many masters among the goats; and again many masters among the sheep, many slaves among the goats. For all slaves are not good—do not infer this from the consolation we have given to servants—nor are all masters evil, because we have thus repressed the pride of masters. There are good masters who believe, and there are evil: there are good servants who believe, and there are evil. But as long as good servants serve evil masters, let them endure for a season. For God will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous. Why will He not? Lest the righteous put forth their hand unto wickedness: that the righteous may endure for a season the domination of the ungodly, and may understand that this is not for ever, but may prepare themselves to possess their everlasting heritage. What heritage? When all principalities and powers shall be subdued, that God may be all in all. Reserving themselves for this, and contemplating this in heart, and still retaining it in faith, and, that they may see, patiently enduring, they put not forth their hand unto wickedness. For, should they see that the rod of the ungodly is for ever upon the lot of the righteous, they reflect with themselves, and say, What doth it profit me that I am righteous? Will the ungodly for ever have power over me, and shall I evermore be a servant? I also then will do wickedness; for it profiteth nothing to hold unto righteousness. But that he may not say this, faith is given him, that the rod of the ungodly may for a season be upon the lot of the righteous, but the Lord will not leave it upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hand unto wickedness; but let them withdraw their hands from wickedness, and endure, not work, iniquity. For it is better to endure than to work iniquity. How doth it appear that it will not last for ever? For God will not leave the rod of the ungodly upon the lot of the righteous.

9. Ver. 4. They who are right in heart, of whom I was speaking a little before,—they who follow the will of God, not their own will,—reflect upon this. But they who wish to follow God, allow Him to go before, and themselves to follow; not themselves to go before, and Him to follow; and in all things they find Him good, whether chastening, or consoling, or exercising, or crowning, or cleansing, or enlightening; as the Apostle saith, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God. And he therefore addeth, (ver. 4.) Do well, O Lord, unto those that are good and true of heart.

10. But as he who is righteous in heart turneth away from evil, and doeth good, because he is not envious at the wicked, seeing the ungodly in such prosperity; so he of a crooked heart, who is offended in the paths of the Lord, turneth away from God, and doeth evil, and is enticed by the sweetness of the world, and ensnared and taken by means of it, he payeth a bitter penalty. But as he turneth aside from God, Whose chastening he was unwilling to bear, the deceitful prosperity of the wicked becometh unto him a real snare. Whence the Psalmist at once addeth: (ver. 5.) As for such as turn aside, the Lord shall lead them forth unto strangling with the workers of unrighteousness: that is, those whose deeds they have imitated; because they took delight in their present pleasures, and did not believe in their punishments to come. What then shall they have, who are righteous in heart, and who turn not back? Let us now come to the heritage itself, brethren, for we are sons. What shall we possess? What is our heritage? what is our country: what is it called? Peace. In this we salute you, this we announce to you, this the mountains receive, and the little hills receive as righteousness. Peace is Christ: for He is our peace, Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Since we are sons, we shall have an inheritance. And what shall this inheritance be called, but peace? And consider that they who love not peace are disinherited. Now they who divide unity, love not peace. Peace is the possession of the pious, the possession of heirs. And who are heirs? Sons. Hear the Gospel: Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God. Hear also the conclusion of this Psalm: but peace shall be upon Israel. Israel is interpreted, ‘Seeing God;’ Jerusalem, ‘a Vision of Peace.’ Understand, my beloved, Israel is interpreted, ‘Seeing God,’

Jerusalem, a ‘Vision of Peace.’ Who are they who shall never be moved? The dwellers in Jerusalem. They then who dwell in the Vision of Peace, shall not be moved for evermore. But peace shall be upon Israel. Israel therefore, which meaneth seeing God, meaneth, seeing Peace: and Israel is the same as Jerusalem: for the people of God is the city of God. If therefore seeing peace be the same as seeing God, justly also is God Himself peace. Since then Christ the Son of God is peace, He therefore came to gather together His own, and to separate them from the wicked. From what wicked men? From those who hate Jerusalem, who hate peace, who wish to tear unity asunder, who believe not peace, who preach a false peace to the people, and have it not. To whom answer is made, when they say, “Peace be with you,” “And with thy spirit:” but they speak falsely, and they hear falsely. Unto whom do they say, Peace be with you? To those whom they separate from the peace of the whole earth. And unto whom is it said, “And with thy spirit?” To those who embrace dissensions, and who hate peace. For if peace were in their spirit, would they not love unity, and leave dissensions? Speaking then false words, they hear false words. Let us speak true words, and hear true words. Let us be Israel, and let us embrace peace; for Jerusalem is a vision of peace, and we are Israel, and peace is upon Israel.

PSALM 126

A Sermon to the People.

1. Ye will remember, that this next Psalm for us to treat in order is the hundred and twenty-fifth, which is among those Psalms the title of which is A Song of Degrees. Now this is, as ye know, the voice of them that ascend;—whither, save to that Jerusalem above, the mother of us all, which is in Heaven? The same that is above, is also everlasting. But this which was here on earth shewed a shadow of that other. So then this fell, the other abideth: this fulfilled the period of instruction, to the other belongeth the eternity of our restoration. From her we are on pilgrimage in this life, for return to her we sigh, wretched and toiling along, till we come home to her. Nor have our fellow citizens the Angels forsaken us in our pilgrimage; they have told us of our King Who is to come to us. And He came to us, and was despised among us, first by ourselves, afterwards with ourselves; and taught us to be despised, because He was despised; taught us to endure, because He endured; taught us to suffer, because He suffered; and promised that we should rise again, because He rose again; shewing in Himself what we ought to hope for. If therefore, brethren, the ancient Prophets, our fathers, before the Lord Jesus Christ came in the flesh, before He rose from the dead, and ascended into Heaven, yet sighed after that city: how much ought we to long for the place whither Himself is gone before us, and which He never left. For the Lord did not so come to us as to leave the Angels. He both abode for them, and came to us: for them He abode in majesty, to us He came in the flesh. But we were, where? If He is called our Redeemer, we were held captives. But where were we held, that He should come to redeem us as captives? Perchance among barbarians? worse than any barbarians are the devil and his angels. They were before in possession of the human race: from them He redeemed us, Who gave not gold nor silver for us, but His own Blood.

2. But how man had come into captivity, let us ask the Apostle Paul. For he especially groans in that captivity, sighing for the everlasting Jerusalem,

and has taught us to groan from that very Spirit with which he too was filled when he groaned. For this he said: The whole creation groaneth together, and is in pain until now. And again, For the creature was made subject to vanity, he says, not of itself, but because of him who subjected the same in hope. By all creation, he meant that even in those who do not believe, but are yet to believe, the creature groaneth in labours. Is it then only in those who have not yet believed? Yea, does not the creature groan nor travail in those who have believed? But not only so, he saith, but even we who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, that is, who already serve God in the Spirit, who now with the mind have believed in God, and in the very act of believing have given some sort of firstfruits, that we may follow our First-fruits. Therefore, we ourselves also groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. So then he himself also groaned, and all the faithful groan, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of their body. Where do they groan? In this mortal state. What redemption do they wait for? That of their body, which went before in the Lord, Who rose again from the dead, and ascended into Heaven. Till this be restored us, we must needs groan, though faithful, though hoping. Therefore he goes on after saying, We also ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body: as though it were said to him, What then, hath Christ profited thee, if thou still groanest; and how hath the Saviour saved thee? He who groaneth, is still sick. Therefore he subjoined and said, For we are saved in hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, by patience we wait for it. Behold wherefore it is we groan, and how it is we groan, because what we hope for we are already indeed waiting for, but have it not yet in possession, and until we have it in possession we sigh, during time, because we long for what we have not yet. Wherefore? Because we have been saved in hope. Already the flesh taken of us in the Lord is saved not in hope but in fact. For our flesh hath risen again, and ascended, in our Head, whole, though in the members it hath yet to be made whole. The members rejoice fearlessly, because they have not been deserted by their Head. For He said to His members in trouble, Behold, I am with you, even unto the consummation of the world. Thus it was done that we might be converted unto God. For we had no hope save toward the world; and thence were wretched slaves, and twice wretched, because we had placed our hope in this life, and had our face toward the world, and our back toward God. But when the Lord hath turned us, so that we begin now to have our face toward God, and our back toward the world, though still in the way, we mind our own home, and when perchance we suffer any tribulation, but yet keep on our voyage, and are borne on the Wood; the wind indeed is rough, but it is a favourable wind; with toil indeed, but quickly it beareth us, quickly it beareth us home. Since then we were groaning for our captivity; and even they groan who have already believed; but had forgotten how we became captives, and are reminded of it by the Scripture; let us ask the Apostle Paul himself. For he saith; For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. Behold whence we became captives; because we were sold under sin. Who sold us? We ourselves, who consented to the seducer. We could sell ourselves; we could not redeem ourselves. We sold ourselves by consent of sin, we are redeemed in the faith of righteousness. For innocent blood was given for us, that we might be redeemed. Whatsoever blood he shed in persecuting the righteous, what kind of blood did he shed? Righteous men's blood, indeed, he shed; they were Prophets, righteous men, our fathers, and Martyrs. Whose blood he shed, yet all coming of the offspring of sin. One blood he shed of Him Who was not justified, but born righteous: by shedding that blood, he lost those whom he held. For they for whom innocent blood was given were redeemed, and, turned back from their captivity, they sing this Psalm.

3. Ver. 1. When the Lord turned back the captivity of Sion, we became as those that are comforted. He meant by this to say, we became joyful. When? When the Lord turned back the captivity of Sion. What is Sion? Jerusalem, the same is also the eternal Sion. How is Sion eternal, how is Sion captive? In angels eternal, in men captive. For not all the citizens of that city are captives, but those who are away from thence, they are captives. Man was a citizen of Jerusalem, but sold under sin he became a pilgrim. Of his progeny was born the human race, and the captivity of Sion filled all lands. And how is this captivity of Sion a shadow of that Jerusalem? The shadow of that Sion, which was granted to the Jews, in an image, in a figure, was in captivity in Babylonia, and after seventy years that people turned back to its own city. Seventy years signify all that time which revolves in seven days.

But when all time is past, then we return to our country, as after seventy years that people returned from the Babylonish captivity, for Babylon is this world; since Babylon is interpreted confusion. See if the whole of man’s life is not confusion. Whatsoever men do in vain hope, when they have found out what they are doing they blush. Wherefore do they labour? For whom do they labour? For my children, he saith. And they for whom? For their children. And they for whom? For their children. No one, therefore, for himself. From this confusion, then, they were already turned back to whom the Apostle saith, For what glory had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? So then this whole life of human affairs is confusion, which belongeth not unto God. In this confusion, in this Babylonish land, Sion is held captive. But the Lord hath turned back the captivity of Sion.

4. And we became, he saith, as those that are comforted. That is, we rejoiced as receiving consolation. Consolation is not save for the unhappy, consolation is not save for them that groan, that mourn. Wherefore, as those that are comforted, except because we are still mourning? We mourn for our present lot, we are comforted in hope: when the present is passed by, of our mourning will come everlasting joy, when there will be no need of consolation, because we shall be wounded with no distress. But wherefore saith he as those that are comforted, and saith not comforted? This word as, is not always put for likeness: when we say As, it sometimes refers to the actual case, sometimes to likeness: here it is with reference to the actual case. But we must give examples also from the common speech of men, that we may be easily understood. When we say, As the father lived so did also the son, we say it of likeness: and, As a beast dieth, so man dieth; this too is said of likeness. But when we say, He acted as a good man; is he not a good man, but something like a good man? He acted like a just man. This ‘like’ does not deny that he is just, but denotes his actual character. Thou didst it as a senator: if he should say, Am I not then a senator? Yea, because thou art, thou didst it as a senator; and because thou art just, thou didst like a just man; and because thou art good, thou didst it like a good man. Therefore because these also were truly comforted, they rejoiced as those that were comforted. That is, great was their joy, as of those who are comforted, when He Who had died comforted those who had yet to die. For we all groan in that we die: He Who died hath comforted us, that we should

not fear to die. He rose again first, that we might have what to hope for. Since then He first rose again, He gave us hope. Because when in distress, we were comforted by hope; hence our joy is great. And the Lord hath turned back our captivity, so that now from our captivity we are on our way, and are going toward our home. Now then, being redeemed, on our way let us not fear our enemies that lay wait for us. For He therefore redeemed us, that the enemy might not dare to lay wait for us if we did not leave the way. For Christ Himself became our way. Wouldest thou not suffer from robbers? He saith to thee. I have paved thee a way to thy home, leave not the way. Such a way have I paved, that the robber cannot venture to come nigh thee: do thou beware of leaving it, and the robber dares not come nigh thee. Walk therefore in Christ, and sing rejoicing, sing as one that is comforted; because He went before thee Who hath commanded thee to follow Him.

5. Ver. 2. Then was our mouth filled with joy, and our tongue with exultation. That mouth, brethren, which we have in our body, how is it filled with joy? It useth not to be filled, save with meat, or drink, or some such thing put into the mouth. Sometimes our mouth is filled; and it is more that we say to your holiness, when we have our mouth full, we cannot speak. But we have a mouth within, that is, in the heart, whence whatsoever proceedeth, if it is evil, defileth us, if it is good, cleanseth us. For concerning this very mouth ye heard when the Gospel was read. For the Jews reproached the Lord, because His disciples ate with unwashen hands. They reproached who had cleanness without; and within were full of stains. They reproached, whose righteousness was only in the eyes of men. But the Lord sought our inward cleanness, which if we have, the outside must needs be clean also. Cleanse, He saith, the inside, and the outside shall be clean also. The Lord Himself saith in another place, But give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you. But whence proceedeth alms? From the heart. For if thou hold out thy hand, and pity not in thy heart, thou hast done nothing; but if thou hast compassion in thy heart, even though thou hast not what to bestow with thy hand, God accepteth thy alms. But they, wicked men as they were, sought cleanness without. Among them was that Pharisee, who had invited the Lord, when a woman, who had been a notorious sinner in the city, came unto Him, who washed the Lord's feet

with tears, wiped them with her hair, anointed them with ointment. The Pharisee, who had invited the Lord, and had not cleanness save outwardly in the body, but was in heart full of iniquity and rapine, said unto himself, This man if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him. How did he learn whether Jesus knew or knew not? But he concluded that He knew not, because He did not repel her from Him. If such a woman had approached this Pharisee, he whose purity was as it were in the flesh, would have blown upon her as something evil, would have repelled her, would have cast her off; that the unclean might not touch the clean, and pollute his cleanness. Because our Lord did not this, he believed Him to be ignorant what sort of woman had approached His feet: whereas the Lord not only knew her, but also heard his thoughts: for although the touch of the body doth something, O unclean Pharisee, would the Lord's flesh have been polluted by a woman's touch, or the woman have been cleansed by the Lord's touch? But the Physician allowed the sick to touch the healer; and she who had come, knew the Physician; and she who had been wont perhaps in her fornication to be bold, became even more bold for her cure. She burst into a house whither she had not been invited: but she had wounds, and had come where the Physician was reclining. But he who had invited the Physician, seemed to himself whole; and for this very reason, he was left unhealed. What followeth in the Gospel ye know; how this Pharisee was confounded, when He shewed him both that He knew this woman's character, and had heard his thoughts.

6. But let us return to what was just now read from the Gospel, relating to the verse before us, Our mouth was filled with joy, and our tongue with delight: for we are enquiring what mouth and what tongue. Listen, beloved brethren. The Lord was scoffed at, because His disciples ate with unwashed hands. The Lord answered them as was fitting, and said unto the crowds whom He had called unto Him, Hear ye all, and understand: not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. What is this? when He said, what goeth into the mouth, He meant only the mouth of the body. For meat goeth in, and meats defile not a man; because, All things are clean to the clean; and, Every creature of God is good, and none to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving. Some things were placed in a figurative relation to the Jews,

and were called unclean. But after the light itself came, the shadows were removed. We are not bound in the letter, but quickened in the Spirit: and the yoke of these ceremonial observances, imposed upon the Jew, was not imposed upon Christians; for the Lord said, For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light; and the Apostle saith, Unto the pure are all things pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure: but even their mind and conscience is defiled. What did he mean to be understood? Both bread and swine’s flesh is pure to a pure man, to an impure man neither bread nor swine’s flesh is pure. To the unbelieving and the defiled, he saith, nothing is pure. Why is nothing pure? But even their mind and conscience, he saith, are defiled: because if what is within is impure; what is without cannot be pure. If therefore to them unto whom the inner is impure, the outward cannot be pure; if thou wishest that the outside should be pure, purify the inward. For there is the mouth which shall be filled with joy, even when thou art silent: for when thou art silent and dost rejoice, thy mouth crieth unto the Lord. But consider whence thou rejoicest. If thy joy be from the world, thou criest unto God with impure joy: but if thou rejoicest in thy redemption, as this Psalm saith, When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion, then did we rejoice; then is thy mouth filled with true joy, and thy tongue with delight: it is clear that thou rejoicest in hope, and thy joy is accepted with God. In this very joy, or in this very mouth which we have within, we both eat and drink: just as we eat with this mouth for our bodily refreshment, so do we with that mouth for the refreshment of the heart. For from thence, Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

7. But if nothing make a man impure save what goeth forth from his mouth, and, when we hear this in the Gospel, if we only understand the mouth of the body; it is ridiculous and outrageously foolish, to imagine that a man doth not become impure when he eateth, and to think that he then becometh impure, if he vomit. For the Lord saith, Not that which goeth into the mouth, defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. When therefore thou eatest, thou art not unclean; when thou dost vomit, dost thou then become unclean? When thou drinkest, thou art not unclean: and when thou spewest, art thou then unclean? For when thou spewest, something goeth forth from thy mouth; when thou drinkest,

something goeth into thy mouth. What did the Lord mean to say? Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which goeth out of the mouth, that defileth a man. According to another Evangelist, He goeth on at once to describe what things go out of the mouth; that thou mayest understand that He spake not of the mouth of the body, but of the mouth of the heart. For he saith, For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things that defile a man, but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man. In what sense then, my brethren, do these things go out of the mouth, save because they go out of the heart, even as the Lord Himself saith? For they do not defile us when we speak of them. Let not any one say, When we speak of them, they go forth from our mouth, because words and sounds go forth from our mouth; and when we speak evil words, we become impure. What if any one should not speak, and should only think of evil things: is he clean, because nothing hath gone out of the mouth of his body? But God hath already heard it from the mouth of his heart. Behold, my brethren, listen to what I say. I name a theft: I have only named a theft; because I have named a theft, hath the theft defiled me? Behold, it hath gone out of my mouth, and hath not made me impure. But the thief ariseth in the night, and saith nothing with his mouth, and by his deed becometh impure. He not only saith not, but buries the deed in utter silence; and is so fearful of his voice being heard, that he wisheth not even his steps to creak: because, then, he is thus silent, is he pure? I say even more, my brethren. Lo, he still lieth in his couch, he hath not yet risen to execute the theft; he is awake, and waiting for men to sleep: he already crieth in the ear of God, he is already a thief, he is already impure, already the deed hath gone out of his inward mouth. For when doth the crime go out of his mouth? When he maketh up his mind to perpetrate it. Thou hast decided to do it: thou hast said, thou hast done it. If thou hast not committed an outward act of theft, possibly he from whom thou didst plan to take away, did not deserve to lose: and he hath lost nothing, while thou wilt be condemned for theft. Thou hast determined to kill a man; thou hast said this in thy heart, murder hath sounded from thy inward mouth: still the man liveth, and thou the murderer art punished. For the question before God is, what thou art, not what thou hast not yet appeared in the sight of men.

8. We then surely know, and ought to be certain, to maintain, that there is a mouth of the heart, there is also a tongue of the heart. That mouth itself is filled with joy: in that mouth itself we pray God inwardly, when the lips are closed, and the conscience is laid open. All is silent: and the breast crieth out: but unto whose ears? Not to the ears of man, but of God. Be therefore fearless: He who hath mercy, heareth. And again, when no man heareth evil words, if they go out of thy mouth, be not fearless, because He who condemneth, heareth. Susanna was not heard by her unjust judges, she was silent, and prayed. Her mouth was not heard by men, her heart cried forth unto God. Because her voice went not out of the mouth of her body, did she not on that account deserve to be heard? She was heard; when she prayed, no man knew. Therefore, brethren, consider what we have in the inner mouth. See that ye say no evil there within, and ye will do no evil without: for nothing can be done by man without, save what hath been said within. Guard the mouth of thy heart from evil, and thou wilt be innocent: the tongue of thy body will be innocent, thy hands will be innocent; even thy feet will be innocent, thy eyes, thy ears, will be innocent; all thy members will serve under righteousness, because a righteous commander hath thy heart.

9. Then shall they say among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them. (Ver. 3.) Yea, the Lord hath done great things for us already, whereof we rejoice. Consider, my brethren, if Sion doth not at present say this among the heathen, throughout the whole world; consider if men are not running unto the Church. In the whole world our redemption is received; Amen is answered. The dwellers in Jerusalem, therefore, captive, destined to return, pilgrims, sighing for their country, speak thus among the heathen. What do they say? The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoice. Have they done any thing for themselves? They have done ill with themselves, for they have sold themselves under sin. The Redeemer came, and did the good things for them: The Lord hath done great things for them: the Lord hath done great things for us already, whereof we rejoice.

10. Ver. 4. Turn our captivity, O Lord, as the torrents in the south. Consider, my brethren, what this meaneth. He had already said, When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion. He was speaking as it seemeth of the past: but a

Prophet, speaking of the past, usually foretells the future. He seemed to be speaking of the past, when he said in another Psalm, They pierced My hands and My feet: they numbered all My bones. He said not, they will pierce My feet: he said not, they will number: he said not, they will part My garments among them: he said not, over My raiment will they cast lots: these things were to come, and were yet related as if they had passed. For all things destined to happen, have already happened unto God. So here when he was saying, When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion, then were we like unto them that are consoled. Then was our mouth filled with joy, and our tongue with delight; that he might shew that he was thinking of things future under the figure of the past, he addeth, Then shall they say among the heathen. Shall say, is now of the future. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoice. Then when they were being sung they were future, and now they are seen as present. He therefore prayeth for them as if for things future, though he sang of future things as things past: Turn our captivity, O Lord. Their captivity therefore was not as yet turned, because the Redeemer had not as yet come. Therefore, when the Psalms were sung, what was then prayed for, is now done: Turn our captivity, O Lord, as the torrents in the south. As torrents are turned in the south, so turn our captivity. We were enquiring what this was: but it will presently appear, by the Lord's help, revealed unto your prayers. In a certain passage Scripture saith, in admonishing us concerning good works, Thy sins also shall melt away, even as the ice in fair warm weather. Our sins therefore bound us. How? As the cold bindeth the water that it run not. Bound with the frost of our sins, we have frozen. But the south wind is a warm wind: when the south wind blows, the ice melts, and the torrents are filled. Now winter streams are called torrents; for filled with sudden rains they run with great force. We had therefore become frozen in captivity; our sins bound us: the south wind the Holy Spirit hath blown: our sins are forgiven us, we are released from the frost of iniquity; as the ice in fair weather, our sins are melted. Let us run unto our country, as the torrents in the south. For we have long toiled, and even in good works we toil. For the life of man, which we have entered upon, is wretched, full of toils, sorrows, dangers, troubles, temptations. Be not seduced with a delight in human life; heed the things that should be wept for in human life. The new born infant might first laugh before he wept: why doth he commence life with weeping? He knoweth not yet how to laugh: why doth he already know how to weep? Because he hath begun to enter upon this life. But if he be among those captives, he here weepeth and groaneth: but joy will come.

11. Ver. 5. For the next words are, They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy. In this life, which is full of tears, let us sow. What shall we sow? Good works. Works of mercy are our seeds: of which seeds the Apostle saith, Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith. Speaking therefore of almsgiving itself, what saith he? This I say; he that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly. He therefore who soweth plentifully, shall reap plentifully: he who soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly: and he that soweth nothing, shall reap nothing. Why do ye long for ample estates, where ye may sow plentifully? There is not a wider field on which ye can sow than Christ, Who hath willed that we should sow in Himself. Your soil is the Church; sow as much as ye can. But thou hast not enough to do this. Hast thou the will? As what thou hadst would be nothing, if thou hadst not a good will; so do not despond, because thou hast not, if thou hast a good will. For what dost thou sow? Mercy. And what wilt thou reap? Peace. Said the Angels, Peace on earth unto rich men? No, but, Peace on earth unto men of a good will. Zacchæus had a strong will, Zacchæus had great charity. He entertained the Lord hospitably and with joy, and promised that he would give the half of his patrimony to the poor, and would restore fourfold if he had taken any thing from any man; so that thou mayest understand that he retained the half, not that he might hold it as a safe possession, but that he might have some means of paying his debts. He had a great will, he gave much, he sowed much. Did then that widow who cast her two farthings into the treasury, sow little. Nay, as much as Zacchæus. For she had narrower means, but an equal will. She gave her two mites with as good a will as Zacchæus gave the half of his patrimony. If thou consider what they gave, thou wilt find their gifts different; if thou look to the source, thou wilt find them equal; she gave whatever she had, and he gave what he had.

12. Suppose some one not to have even two coins: is there any thing still cheaper that we can sow, so that we may reap that harvest? There is:

Whosoever shall give a disciple a cup of cold water, shall not lose his reward. A cup of cold water doth not cost two coins, but is had for nothing; nevertheless, it sometimes so happeneth, that one man hath it, and another hath it not; if therefore he who hath it give it to another who hath it not; he hath given as much, if he gave what he gave with full charity, he hath given as much, I say, as the widow in her two mites, as Zacchæus in the half of his property. For He added not without cause the epithet cold to water, that he might show that the donor was poor. He said, A cup of cold water, that no man might object on the ground that he had not wood to heat the water. Whosoever shall give unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, shall in no wise lose his reward. What if he have not even this? Let him be without fear, even if he have not this; Peace on earth unto men of good will. Let him fear this only, lest he have the means and neglect to bestow them. For if he have them and give not, he hath become frozen within, his sins are not yet melted like the torrent in the south, because his will is cold. What do so great goods as we possess avail? Fervent will cometh, now set free by the southern heat; though it have nothing, the whole is reckoned unto it. How great things do beggars bestow upon one another? Consider, my beloved, how their alms are given. Verily they unto whom thou dost alms are beggars, beggars want. Ye probably attend to your brethren, if they want aught; ye give, if Christ be in you, even to strangers. But if they are beggars whose profession is asking alms, in trouble they also have what to bestow upon one another. God hath not so forsaken them, but that they have wherein they may be tried by their bestowing of alms. This man cannot walk; he who can walk, lendeth his feet to the lame; he who seeth, lendeth his eyes to the blind; and he who is young and sound, lendeth his strength to the old or the infirm, he carrieth him: the one is poor, the other is rich.

13. Sometimes also the rich man is found to be poor, and something is bestowed upon him by the poor. Somebody cometh to a river, so much the more delicate as he is more rich; he cannot pass over: if he were to pass over with bare limbs, he would catch cold, would be ill, would die: a poor man more active in body cometh up: he carries the rich man over; he giveth alms unto the rich. Think not therefore those only poor, who have not money. Attend to every man in that wherein he wanteth: for perhaps thou art rich in this, wherein he is poor, and hast wherewith thou mayest help

him. Perhaps thou lendest him thy limbs, and this is more than if thou shouldest lend him money. He wanteth counsel, thou art full of counsel; he is poor, thou art rich in counsel. Lo, thou dost not toil, nor losest any thing; thou givest counsel, and thou hast given alms. Now, my brethren, while we are speaking, ye are as it were poor, compared unto us: and since God hath deigned to give unto us, we bestow therefore upon you; and we all receive from Him, Who alone is rich. Thus therefore the body of Christ holdeth itself; thus the kindred members are held together and made one in charity and the bond of peace, when each man giveth what he hath unto him who hath it not; in that which he hath he is rich; in that which the other hath not, he is poor. Thus love ye, thus be ye affectioned unto one another. Attend not solely to yourselves: but to those who are in want around you. But because these things take place in this life with troubles and cares, faint not. Ye sow in tears, ye shall reap in joy. How, my brethren? When the farmer goeth forth with the plough, carrying seed, is not the wind sometimes keen, and doth not the shower sometimes deter him? He looketh to the sky, seeth it lowering, shivers with cold, nevertheless goeth forth, and soweth. For he feareth lest while he is observing the foul weather, and awaiting sunshine, the time may pass away, and he may not find any thing to reap. Put not off, my brethren; sow in wintry weather, sow good works, even while ye weep; for, They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy. They sow their seed, good will, and good works.

14. Ver. 6. They went on their way and wept, casting their seed. Why did they weep? Because they were among the miserable, and were themselves miserable. It is better, my brethren, that no man should be miserable, than that thou shouldest do alms. For he who desireth that there should be sufferers in order that he may give alms, hath but a cruel compassion; just as if a physician should wish there were many sick, that he might exercise his art, it would be a cruel medicine. It is better that all should be whole, than that the physician’s art should be exercised. It is better therefore that all should blissfully reign in that country, than that there should be objects for the exercise of compassion. Nevertheless, as long as there are objects for its exercise, let us not fail amid those troubles to sow our seed. Although we sow in tears, yet shall we reap in joy. For in that resurrection of the dead, each man shall receive his own sheaves, that is, the produce of his

seed, the crown of joys and of delight. Then will there be a joyous triumph, when we shall laugh at death, wherein we groaned before: then shall they say to death, O death, where is thy strife? O death, where is thy sting? But why do they now rejoice? Because they bring their sheaves with them. For they went on their way weeping, and casting their seed. Why casting their seed? Because they that sow in tears, shall reap in joy.

15. In this Psalm we have chiefly exhorted you to do deeds of alms, because it is thence that we ascend; and ye see that he who ascendeth, singeth the song of steps. Remember: do not love to descend, instead of to ascend, but reflect upon your ascent: because he who descended from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves. If he had not descended, he would not have fallen among thieves. Adam hath already descended, and fallen among thieves: and we are all Adam. But the priest passed by, and took no notice: the Levite passed by, and took no notice; for the Law could not heal. A certain Samaritan passed by, that is, our Lord Jesus Christ: for unto Him it was said, Say we not well that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? He replied not, I am not a Samaritan; but, I have not a devil. For the word Samaritan meaneth, a Keeper. If He had said, I am not a Samaritan, He would have denied that He was a Guardian. And who else could guard us? Then figuring the likeness: a Samaritan passed by, and had compassion upon him, as ye know. He was lying wounded by the road side, because he had descended. The Samaritan as He passed by slighted us not: He healed us, He raised us upon His beast, upon His flesh; He led us to the inn, that is, the Church; He entrusted us to the host, that is, to the Apostle; He gave two pence, whereby we might be healed, the love of God, and the love of our neighbour: for on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. He said also unto the host, Whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. The Apostle spent more; for, though it was allowed unto all the Apostles to receive, as Christ’s soldiers, pay from Christ’s subjects, that Apostle, nevertheless, toiled with his own hands, and excused the subjects the maintenance owing to him. All this hath already happened: if we have descended, and have been wounded; let us ascend, let us sing, and make progress, in order that we may arrive.

PSALM 127

Exposition

A Sermon to the Common People.

1. Among all the Songs entitled the Song of degrees, this Psalm hath a further addition in the title, that it is Solomon's. For thus it is entitled, A Song of degrees of Solomon. It hath therefore aroused our attention, and caused us to enquire the reason of this addition, of Solomon. For it is needless to repeat explanations of the other words, Song of degrees; for much has been said on this subject, for the voice of one ascending singeth with feelings of piety and love for that heavenly Jerusalem, for whom we sigh while absent from her, and wherein we shall rejoice on our return from our wandering. Every man who is amending ascendeth towards her. Every man who is losing ground falleth away from her. Think not that thou descendest by thy feet, nor seek to rise by thy feet; by loving God, thou risest: by loving the world, thou fallest. These then are the songs of those who love, who burn with a sort of holy longing. They who sing these verses from their heart burn, and their ardent heart is discovered also in their conduct, in good conversation, in works according to the commandments of God, in contempt of temporal things, in love of things eternal. I will now explain to you, beloved, as far as the Lord shall allow me, the meaning of the additional word, Solomon's.

2. Solomon was in his time David's son, a great man, through whom many holy precepts and healthful admonitions and divine mysteries have been wrought by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. Solomon himself was a lover of women, and was rejected by God: and this lust was so great a snare unto him, that he was induced by women even to sacrifice to idols, as Scripture witnesseth concerning him. But if, by his fall what was delivered through him were blotted out, it would be judged that he had himself delivered these precepts, and not that they were delivered through him. The mercy of God, therefore, and His Spirit, excellently wrought that whatever of good was

declared through Solomon, might be attributed unto God; and the man’s sin, unto the man. What marvel that Solomon fell among God’s people? Did not Adam fall in Paradise? Did not an angel fall from heaven, and become the devil? We are thereby taught, that no hope must be placed in any among men. Since that very Solomon had built a temple to the Lord, in the type and figure of the Church which was to come, and of the Lord’s Body; whence He saith in the Gospel, Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up; since then He had Himself built, I say, this Temple, the True Solomon, our Lord Jesus Christ, the True Peacemaker, built unto Himself a Temple. For the name of Solomon is interpreted to mean peacemaker: now He is the True Peacemaker, of Whom the Apostle saith, He is our Peace, Who hath made both one. He is the True Peacemaker, Who joined together in Himself two walls coming from different sides, wherein He became the chief Corner Stone, both to the believing host who came from circumcision, and to the believing people who came from the uncircumcision of the Gentiles; He made one Church of two nations, He became unto them a chief Corner Stone, and for this reason was the True Peacemaker. Since, therefore, He is the true Solomon; for that Solomon, who was the son of David of the woman Bersabe, the king of Israel, was the figure of this Peacemaker, when he built the temple; that thou mayest not think he who built the house unto God was the true Solomon, Scripture shewing unto thee another Solomon thus commences this Psalm: (ver. 1.) Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it. The Lord, therefore, buildeth the house, the Lord Jesus Christ buildeth His own house. Many toil in building: but, except He build, their labour is but lost that build it. Who are they who toil in building it? All who preach the word of God in the Church, the ministers of God’s mysteries. We are all running, we are all toiling, we are all building now; and before us others have run, toiled, and built: but except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it. Thus the Apostles seeing some fall; and Paul in particular saith, Ye observe days and months and times and years; I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. Because he knew that he himself was builded inwardly by the Lord, he bewailed these men, in that he had laboured in vain for them. We, therefore, speak without, He buildeth within. We can observe with what attention ye hear us; He alone Who knoweth your thoughts, knoweth what ye think. He Himself buildeth, He Himself admonisheth, He Himself openeth the understanding, He Himself kindleth your understanding unto faith; nevertheless, we also toil like workmen; but, except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it.

3. But that which is the house of God is also a city. For the house of God is the people of God; for the house of God is the temple of God. And what doth the Apostle say? The temple of God is holy, which are ye. But all the faithful, who are the house of God, not only those who now exist, but those also who have been before us and have already slept, and they who are to come after us, unto the world's end, innumerable hosts of the faithful gathered into one body, but counted by the Lord, of whom the Apostle saith, The Lord knoweth them that are His; those grains of wheat which as yet groan among the chaff, which will constitute one mass, when the floor shall in the end have been winnowed: the whole number of faithful Saints, destined to be changed from the human state, that they become equal with the Angels of God; themselves joined unto the Angels, who are no longer pilgrims, but are awaiting us on our return from our pilgrimage; all make together one house of God, and one city. This is Jerusalem: she hath guards: as she hath builders, labouring at her building up, so also hath she guards. To this guardianship these words of the Apostle relate: I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ. He was guarding the Church. He kept watch, to the utmost of his power, over those over whom he was set. The Bishops also do this. For a higher place was for this reason given the Bishops, that they might be themselves the superintendents and as it were the guardians of the people. For the Greek word Episcopus, and the vernacular Superintendent, are the same; for the Bishop superintends, in that he looks over. As a higher place is assigned to the vinedresser in the charge of the vineyard, so also to the Bishops a more exalted station is allotted. And a perilous account is rendered of this high station, except we stand here with a heart that causeth us to stand beneath your feet in humility, and pray for you, that He Who knoweth your minds may be Himself your keeper. Since we can see you both coming in and going out; but we are so unable to see what are the thoughts of your hearts, that we cannot even see what ye do in your houses. How then can we guard you? As men: as far as we are able, as far as we have received power. And

because we guard you like men, and cannot guard you perfectly, shall ye therefore remain without a keeper? Far be it! For where is He of Whom it is said, Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain? We are watchful on our guard, but vain in our watchfulness, except He Who seeth your thoughts guard you. He keepeth guard while ye are awake, He keepeth guard also whilst ye are asleep. For He hath once slept on the Cross, and hath risen again; He no longer sleepeth. Be ye Israel: for the Keeper of Israel neither sleepeth nor slumbereth. Yea, brethren, if we wish to be kept beneath the shadow of God’s wings, let us be Israel. For we guard you in our office of stewards; but we wish to be guarded together with you. We are as it were shepherds unto you; but beneath that Shepherd we are fellow-sheep with you. We are as it were your teachers from this station; but beneath Him, the One Master, we are schoolfellows with you in this school.

4. Ver. 2. If we wish to be guarded by Him Who was humbled for our sakes, and Who was exalted to keep us, let us be humble. Let no one assume any thing unto himself. No man hath any good, except he hath received it from Him Who alone is good. But he who chooseth to arrogate wisdom unto himself, is a fool. Let him be humble, that wisdom may come, and may enlighten him. But if, before wisdom cometh unto him, he imagine that he is wise; he riseth before light, and walketh in darkness. What doth he hear in this Psalm? It is but lost labour that ye haste to rise up before dawn. What meaneth this? If ye arise before light ariseth, ye must needs lose your labour, because ye will be in the dark. Our light, Christ, hath arisen; it is good for thee to rise after Christ, not to rise before Christ. Who rise before Christ? They who choose to prefer themselves to Christ. And who are they who wish to prefer themselves to Christ? They who wish to be exalted here, where He was humble. Let them, therefore, be humble here, if they wish to be exalted there, where Christ is exalted. For He saith of those who had clung in faith unto Him, among whom we also are, if we too believe on Him with a pure heart: Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am. A great gift, a great grace, a great promise, my brethren! And who doth not wish to be with Christ, where Christ is? But Christ is now exalted; dost thou wish to be there where He is exalted? Be thou humble, where He also was humble. On this account the Light Himself

saith unto them, The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. The disciples who wished to be above their Master, and the servants who wished to be above their Lord, wished to rise before light; their labour was lost, because they went not forth after the light. To them, therefore, this Psalm saith, It is but lost labour that ye rise before dawn. Such were the sons of Zebedee, who, before they were humbled according to the Lord's Passion, were already choosing themselves places, where they might sit, the one on the right hand, the other on the left; they wished to rise before dawn; for this reason their labour was lost. The Lord recalled them to humility, when He heard this, and said unto them, Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of? I came to be humble: and are ye wishing to be exalted before Me? The way I go, do ye follow, He saith. For if ye choose to go this way where I do not go, your labour is lost, in rising before dawn. Peter too had risen before the light, when he wished to give the Lord advice, deterring Him from suffering for us. He had spoken of His Passion, wherein we were to be saved, of humiliation itself; for He suffered humbly: when, therefore, He was foretelling His destined Passion, Peter was alarmed, though he had called Him, a little before, the Son of God; he feared lest He should die, and said unto Him, Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee. He was wishing to rise before the Light, and to give counsel unto the Light. But what did our Lord do? He caused him to rise after the Light: Get thee behind Me, Satan. He was Satan, because he wished to rise before Light. Get thee behind Me: that I may precede, thou mayest follow: where I go, there thou mayest go; and mayest not wish to lead Me, where thou wouldest go.

5. The Psalm then saith unto those who wished to rise before light, It is but lost labour that ye haste to rise before light. When shall we rise, then? When we have been humbled: Rise after ye have sitten. Rising signifieth exaltation: sitting signifieth humility. In some passages sitting is understood of judging in honour, in others it meaneth humility. How does sitting signify judging in honour? Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. How is sitting a sign of humility? About the sixth hour, Jesus being wearied, sat upon the well. The Lord's weariness was the weakness of the Lord, the weakness of Power, the weakness of Wisdom: but this very weakness is humility. If therefore He sat down from weakness,

that sitting down signifieth humility. And this His sitting, that is His humility, saved us; because, The weakness of God is stronger than men. He therefore saith in a certain Psalm, Lord, Thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine up-rising; that is, my humility and mine exaltation. Why then do ye, O sons of Zebedee, wish to be exalted before light? For let us thus speak, and rather make mention of them, who are not angry with us; for these things are written concerning them for this reason, that others might beware of that pride for which they were corrected. Why then do ye wish to rise before the light? Your labour is lost. Do ye wish to be exalted, before ye are humbled? Your Lord Himself, Who is your light, was humbled that He might be exalted. Hear Paul saying, Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. How was it not robbery in Him? Because it was His nature, because He was born for this, that He might be equal with Him by Whom He was begotten. But what did He do? He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. This is His sitting. Now hear of His rising again. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name. Ye are now hastening unto that name: rise, but after ye have sat down. Ye wish to rise: but first sit: and rising from humility, thou reachest the kingdom. For if thou art in a hurry to reach the kingdom, thou fallest from the kingdom before thou risest. Are ye able, He saith, to drink of the cup which I shall drink of? They reply, We are able. He answereth, Ye shall drink indeed of My Cup; but to sit on My right hand and on My left, is not Mine to give unto you, but it is prepared of My Father for others. What meaneth, It is not Mine to give? It is not Mine to give to the proud: for such they as yet were. But if ye wish to receive this, be not what ye are. It is prepared for others: do ye become others, and for you it is prepared. What meaneth, Become others? Do ye who already wish to be exalted, first be humbled. They therefore understood that humility would benefit them, and were rebuked. Let us too therefore listen to this, for this Psalm giveth us the same lesson in these words: Rise after ye have sat down.

6. But lest any one should imagine that he sitteth that he may be honoured; that he might shew that by this sitting his intent was to enjoin humility; that

no man might suppose that he was ordered to sit either for judgment, or banquetting and rejoicing, and thereby seek a higher pride; to signify humility he hath added, Ye that eat the bread of grief. They therefore eat the bread of grief, who groan in this pilgrimage. They are in the vale of misery. For God placeth ascending steps in the heart. Where hath he placed them? He hath set, saith the Psalmist, steps of ascent in his heart. Who? God. If steps of ascent in the heart, therefore they sing the Song of steps. Let us be humbled in the world, let us ascend. How? in the heart. Because the ascent of the heart itself riseth from the vale of misery. In the vale, saith he, of misery. As the mountains are erect, so do the valleys sit: for by valleys are meant the low spots of the earth; while hills signify the eminences of lower height than mountains: very high spots of the earth are called mountains. It is not enough; he saith not, rise from the hills; nor, from the plain; but, from the valley, meaning something more lowly than the plain. If therefore thou eatest the bread of grief in the valley of misery, and sayest, My tears have been my meat day and night: while they say unto me, Where is now thy God? thou risest rightly, because thou hast sat down.

7. And as if thou shouldest say, When shall we rise? we are ordered now to sit: when will be our rising? When the Lord’s was. Look unto Him, Who went before thee: for if thou heedest not Him, it is lost labour for thee to rise before dawn. When was He raised? When He had died. Hope therefore for thine uplifting after thy death: have hope in the resurrection of the dead, because He rose again and ascended. But where did He sleep? On the Cross. When He slept on the Cross, He bore a sign, yea, He fulfilled what had been signified in Adam: for when Adam was asleep, a rib was drawn from him, and Eve was created; so also while the Lord slept on the Cross, His side was transfixed with a spear, and the Sacraments flowed forth, whence the Church was born. For the Church the Lord’s Bride was created from His side, as Eve was created from the side of Adam. But as she was made from his side no otherwise than while sleeping, so the Church was created from His side no otherwise than while dying. If therefore He rose not from the dead save when He had died, dost thou hope for exaltation save after this life? But that this Psalm might teach thee, in case thou shouldest ask, When shall I rise? perhaps before I have sat down? he addeth, When He hath given His beloved sleep. God giveth this when His

beloved have fallen asleep; then His beloved, that is, Christ’s, shall rise. For all indeed shall rise, but not as His beloved. There is a resurrection of all the dead; but what saith the Apostle? We shall all rise, but we shall not all be changed. They rise unto punishment: we rise as our Lord rose, that we may follow our Head, if we are members of Him. And if we are members of His, then are we His beloved; then pertaineth unto us that resurrection which went before in the Lord, so that the Light rose before us, we after the Light; because it is but lost labour for us to rise before light, that is, to seek exaltation before we die; since Christ our Light was not exalted in the flesh, save after He had died. Constituted then His members, and in His members His beloved, when we have received our sleep, then shall we rise in the resurrection of the dead. One hath risen from the dead, to die no more. Lazarus rose, but to die: the daughter of the ruler of the Synagogue rose, but to die; the widow’s son rose, but to die; Christ rose, no more to die. Hear the Apostle: Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. Hope for such a resurrection; and for the sake of this be a Christian, not for the sake of this world’s happiness. For if thou wish to be a Christian for the sake of this world’s happiness, since He thy Light sought not worldly happiness; thou art wishing to rise before the light; thou must needs continue in darkness. Be changed, follow thy Light; rise where He rose again: first sit down, and thus rise, when He giveth His beloved sleep.

8. Ver. 3. As if thou shouldest ask again, Who are the beloved? Lo, children, the reward of the fruit of the womb, are an heritage of the Lord. Since he saith, fruit of the womb, these children have been born in travail. There is a certain woman, in whom what was said unto Eve, in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, is shewn after a spiritual manner. The Church beareth children, the Bride of Christ; and if she beareth them, she travaileth of them. In figure of her, Eve was called also the Mother of all living. He who said, My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you, was amongst the members of her who travaileth. But she travailed not in vain, nor brought forth in vain: there will be a holy seed at the resurrection of the dead: the righteous who are at present scattered over the whole world shall abound. The Church groaneth for them, the Church travaileth of them; but in that resurrection of the dead, the offspring of the

Church shall appear, pain and groaning shall pass away. And what shall be said? Lo, children, the reward of the fruit of the womb, are an heritage of the Lord. The word fruit is in the possessive case. It is, the reward of the fruit of the womb. What is this reward? Resurrection from the dead. What is this reward? To rise, after thou hast sat down. What is this reward? Rejoicing, after thou hast eaten the bread of sorrow. Of what womb? Of the Church: in whose womb, for Rebecca was her type, those two twins as two people strove. One mother contained in her womb brethren, who disagreed before they were born; they agitated their mother's womb with internal discords; she groaned, and suffered violence; but when she brought forth, she discerned what twins she had endured when pregnant. Thus also now, brethren, as long as groans are given unto the Church, as long as the Church travaileth, there are within her both good and evil. But the fruit of the womb was in Jacob, for his mother loved him. Jacob have I loved, said God, but Esau have I hated. Both went forth from one womb; one deserved to be loved, the other to be reprobated. Her fruit will be, therefore, among the beloved. The fruit of the womb, therefore, hath a reward.

9. Ver. 4. Like as the arrows in the hand of the mighty one, even so are the children of those that are shot out. Whence hath sprung this heritage, brethren? Whence hath sprung so numerous a heritage, as that whereof he saith at the end, Lo, children, the reward of the fruit of the womb, are an heritage of the Lord? Some have been shot out from the Lord's hand, as arrows, and have gone far, and have filled the whole earth, whence the Saints spring. For this is the heritage whereof it is said, Desire of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. And how doth this possession extend and increase unto the world's uttermost parts? Because, like as the arrows in the hand of the mighty one, even so are the children of those that are shot out. Arrows are shot forth from the bow, and the stronger the arm which hath sent it forth, the farther flieth the arrow. But what is stronger than the darting of the Lord? From His bow He sendeth forth His Apostles: there could not be a spot left where an arrow shot by so strong an arm would not reach; it hath reached unto the uttermost parts of the earth. The reason it went no farther was, that there were no more of the human race beyond. For He hath such strength, that even if there were a spot beyond, whither the

arrow could fly, He would dart the arrow thither. Such are the children of those who are shot forth as they that are shot forth. It hath been a question respecting this word, agitated by those who before us have treated these subjects, why they are called children of those who have been shot forth, or who are to be understood by the sons of those who have been shaken forth; and to some it hath appeared, as I have just said, that the children of those who have been shaken forth, are the children of the Apostles.

10. Beloved, listen for a short season. The question hath been raised, why the Apostles are ‘shot’ or ‘shaken’ out: some allege, that they are thus styled, because the Lord enjoined them, When ye depart out of that house, or of that city, shake off the dust from off your feet. Another saith, They ought not then to be called the sons of those who have been shaken forth, but the sons of those who shake out; for the Lord made those unto whom He said, Shake off the dust from off your feet; shaking out, not shaken off. He indeed who before us treated this subject, wished with subtilty to contradict the foregoing opinion: nevertheless we, with the Lord’s help, seeking in what sense they might rightly be called shaken out, unto whom our Lord saith, Shake off the dust from off your feet, find that they can thus be termed without absurdity. For although they themselves shook off, they shook themselves out. I mean this: he who shaketh out, either shaketh himself out, or something else; if he shaketh off any thing else, he shaketh out, he is not shaken out; but if he shake out himself, he both shaketh out and hath been shaken out. Listen, I will say this more clearly, if I can. If he shake out any thing else, he shaketh out, and is not shaken out; if he be shaken out by another, he is shaken out, and doth not shake out; but if he shake out himself, he shaketh out, because he shaketh out himself; and is shaken out, because he is shaken out by himself. A question, therefore, is raised, whom the Apostles shook out? Themselves, surely: for they shook off dust from their own feet. But some one saith, They shook not out themselves, but the dust. This is clearly a cavil. For we say, that something is shaken out in two ways: either that which is shaken out thence, or that whence it is shaken out. For we say both the dust hath been shaken out, and the garment hath been shaken out. Some hold and shake the garment; and thence issueth dust, that had clung unto it. What sayest thou of the dust? The dust hath been shaken out. What sayest thou of the garment? The

garment hath been shaken out. If, therefore, both that which issueth forth from the shaking, and that from which the dust issueth forth, is said to be shaken out; both the dust hath been shaken out, and the Apostles have been shaken out. Why then are not the children of those that have been shaken out, called the children of the Apostles?

11. But there is another opinion also which we ought not to pass over. For perhaps the words are rather obscurely expressed for this reason, that they may call forth many understandings, and that men may go away the richer, because they have found that closed which might be opened in many ways, than if they could open and discover it by one interpretation. We say also that any thing is shaken out; that what is perhaps concealed may come out thence. For we say with one meaning that a garment is shaken, that they may shake out dust thence; and in another sense we say that a sack is shaken, that what lay concealed within may issue forth. I understand therefore, brethren, as far as I am able, that perhaps the Apostles themselves are styled the sons of those who have been shaken out, the sons of the Prophets. For the Prophets comprised closed and covered mysteries: they were shaken, that they might come forth thence manifestly. Suppose therefore, a Prophet to have said, as one truly saith, The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know Me. This illustration cometh before my mind at present, to speak of a prophet; had another occurred, I would have adduced it. When a man heareth this, if he think of an ass and an ox, and cattle, and beasts of burden, he will be treating an interior meaning in its outward aspect, ignorant of the latent sense. The ass and the ox signify something. What then is said unto a man who wisheth to know how to preach the truth? Wait; what thou art touching is closed, shake off the covering; the Prophet conceals something beneath this veil of language; he meaneth something by the ass, something by the ox. For the ass, figuring the people of God, is God’s beast of burden, carrying the Lord its Rider, that it may not stray in its path: and that ox whereof the Apostle saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn: doth God take care for oxen, he asks, or saith He it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, he saith, without doubt this is written. Every preacher of God’s Word, therefore, warneth, chideth, frighteneth, thresheth the floor, and filleth the office of the ox. The ox came

from the Jews’ nation; for thence came the Apostles, Preachers: the ass came from the nation of the uncircumcised, that is, from the Gentiles. He came to carry the Lord: and therefore the Lord sat upon an ass that never had carried man; since the Law was not sent to the Gentiles, nor the Prophets. Since therefore our Lord Jesus Christ willed to be our meat, and on this account was laid in the manger at His birth, the ox knew his owner, and the ass his master’s crib. But would these meanings issue forth, unless the bag were shaken out? Except the prophecy involved were sifted with diligence, would the concealed meanings come forth unto us? All these meanings were therefore closed before the Lord’s advent. The Lord came, and shook out these hidden meanings, and they were made manifest; the Prophets were shaken out, and the Apostles were born. Since then they were born of the Prophets who had been shaken out, the Apostles are sons of those that were shaken out. They, placed as the arrows in the hand of the giant, have reached the uttermost parts of the earth. How must it needs be said of the end, Lo, children, the reward of the fruit of the womb, are the heritage of the Lord. Lord. Because this heritage is gathered from the uttermost parts of the earth: because, Like as the arrows in the hand of the mighty one, even so are the children of them that are shaken out; that is, the Apostles the sons of the Prophets have been like as the arrows in the hand of a mighty one. If He is mighty, He hath shaken them out with a mighty hand; if He hath shaken them out with a mighty hand, they whom He hath shaken forth have arrived even at the uttermost parts of the earth.

12. Ver. 5. Blessed is the man who hath filled his desire from them. Well, my brethren, who filleth his desire from them? Who loveth not the world. He who is filled with the desire of the world, hath no room for that to enter which they have preached. Pour forth what thou carriest, and become fit for that which thou hast not. That is, thou desirest riches: thou canst not fill thy desire from them: thou desirest honours upon earth, thou desirest those things which God hath given even unto beasts of burden, that is, temporal pleasure, bodily health, and the like; thou wilt not fulfil thy desire from them. But if thou desirest thus, even as the hart longeth for the streams of waters; if thou sayest, My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of the Lord; thou fillest thy desire from them; not that they can fulfil

such a desire, but by imitating such thou comest unto Him Who hath filled their desire.

13. He shall not be ashamed, when he speaketh with his enemies in the gate. Brethren, let us speak in the gate, that is, let all know what we speak. For he who chooseth not to speak in the gate, wisheth what he speaketh to be hidden, and perhaps wisheth it to be hidden for this reason, that it is evil. If he be confident, let him speak in the gate; as it is said of Wisdom, She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city. As long as they hold unto righteousness in innocency, they shall not be ashamed: this is to preach at the gate. And who is he who preacheth at the gate? He who preacheth in Christ; because Christ is the gate whereby we enter into that city. I lie, had He not Himself said; I am the door. If He be the door, He is also the gate; for door is applied to a house; the door of a city is its gate, the gate of a house is its door. But perhaps the term gate is not aptly used: if that which is called a house be not rightly termed a city. For both are said a little before: Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it; and lest thou shouldest think this house some small thing, he addeth, Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. The house, therefore, and the city are the same. The city hath a door like a house, and hath a gate as a city. He, therefore, Who is the door of the house, is Himself the gate of the city. If, therefore, Christ be the gate of the city, he is not ashamed who standeth in Christ, and thus preacheth. But he who preacheth against Christ, against him the gate is shut. Who are they who preach against Christ? They who deny that the arrows are sent from the hand of the Mighty One, and have reached the uttermost parts of the earth; and this is the heritage of the Lord, of which it is said, Desire of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession. It was preached, it was listened to, before it was fulfilled; and now that it hath been fulfilled, they refuse to acknowledge it. They, therefore, who speak against Christ, are without the gate; because they seek their own honours, not those of Christ. But he who preacheth in the gate, seeketh Christ’s honour, not his own: and, therefore, he who preacheth in the gate, saith, Trust not in me; for ye will not enter through me, but through the gate. While they who wish men to trust in themselves, wish them not to enter through the gate: it is no marvel if the gate be closed against them, and if

they vainly knock for it to be opened. Be present in mind, therefore, brethren, on account of to-morrow’s discourse also, which shall be delivered to you, according to our promise, by the Lord’s help, from the Gospel concerning the dove. In Whose Name we have promised, in His mercy we will fulfil our promise. But, that we may fulfil it worthily, and may not have been too daring in promising, do ye pray for us.

PSALM 128

Exposition

A Sermon to the People, on the day of St. Felix the Martyr.

1. Ver. 1–4. As the Apostle saith, dearest brethren, Comparing spiritual things with spiritual; but the natural man receiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God; we must be on our guard lest natural men, not receiving the things that are of the Spirit of God, may rather be scandalized than edified by this Psalm. For briefly (though we heard it in the singing) I am running through it, since it is brief, not expounding, but reading it. Now consider that if every man hath desired such things as a great gift from God, as this Psalm mentioneth; and perhaps, not because he is forsaken by God, but because he is more loved, hath not received them; and seeth that what he hath here heard described as the rewards of them that fear God, abound unto those who fear not God: his steps totter, and his footsteps slip, and he saith in his heart, that he hath feared God without a cause, since he hath not received those rewards which God hath promised to them that fear Him; while they have received over and above, who not only have not feared, but have even blasphemed Him. Consider what he saith, Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in His ways. For thou shalt eat the labours of thy hands. O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be. We may, as far as this, though we be natural men, think of the bliss of a future life: but consider what followeth: Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine upon the walls of thine house. Thy children like the olive-branches, round about thy table. Lo, thus shall the man be blessed, that feareth the Lord. How? In that his wife shall be as the fruitful vine, upon the walls of his house: and his children like the olive-branches, round about his table. Have they then, who for God’s sake have even refused to marry, lost their reward? No: he who refuseth to marry saith: God will bless me in other ways. Nay truly: either He will bless thee thus, or He will not bless thee at all; the language of the Psalm is plain, Lo, thus shall the man be blessed, that feareth the Lord.

2. What then, brethren, is the meaning of this? That we may not, by desiring temporal and earthly blessings, lose our heavenly happiness, the Prophet setteth before us a sort of veil, this veil hath I know not what within. You remember, beloved, when I was expounding the preceding Psalm to you, which goeth before this, we met with a certain obscure verse, where it was said, Like as the arrows in the hand of a mighty one, so are the sons of them that are shaken out; and when we enquired who the sons of them that are shaken out were, it seemed to us, that the Apostles (the Lord suggesting this, as we believe) were termed the sons of them that were shaken out, the sons of the Prophets: because the Prophets spoke in enigmas, and under figures as with the veil of mysteries covered their meaning; which meaning could not issue forth unto men, unless these veils were shaken out; whence they were called the sons of those that are shaken out, who gained spiritual profit by the opening out the Prophets. Let us too, therefore, shake out this one, that we may not be deceived through the coverings, lest touching what is within and not seeing it, we may perchance say wood for gold, and tiles for silver. Let us shake it out, if it seem good unto you, beloved; the Lord will aid, that what is within may come forth; especially, my brethren, as we are celebrating the birthdays of the Martyrs. How great evils have the Martyrs endured, what deaths, what terrible tortures, what filthy prisons, pinching of chains, fury of wild beasts, heat of flames, stings of insults! Would they have endured all these things, unless they saw somewhat, whither they were tending, not belonging to the happiness of this world? Now it is shameful for us to celebrate the birthdays of the Martyrs, that is, of those servants of God who despised this world for the sake of everlasting bliss, and understand what is here written in the sense of present happiness; so that we should say of any faithful man of God, citizen of that Jerusalem, to whom marriage may have brought no issue, This man feareth not the Lord; for if he feared the Lord, his wife would be as the fruitful vine upon the walls of his house, not barren, so that she could give birth to none; and if this man feared the Lord, his sons would surround his table, like olive-branches. For if we should speak thus, we are natural men, not receiving the things that are of the Spirit of God. Let us also begin to shake them out, that we also may be the sons of them that are shaken out. For if we shall be the sons of them that are shaken out, we shall be like as the arrows in the hand of the giant, and He will dart us from His commandment into the hearts of

men who do not as yet love Him, that, struck by the arrows of God’s words, they may love. For if we begin to preach to them such words as these, My sons, or my brethren, fear ye the Lord, that ye may have children and grandchildren, that your house may be joyful; we are not leading them to love that everlasting Jerusalem; they will remain in the love of earthly things, and seeing these things abound to the ungodly, though they dare not speak so to us, they will say in their heart, Why hath he who feareth not God, his house full of children? And if perchance another say to him, As yet thou knowest not what may happen; what if he shall have to bury them, because he feareth not God; what if many sons were born unto him for this reason, that he might suffer greater pain from their death? But if thou speak thus, he will answer thee: I know of a man who was ungodly, a heathen, sacrilegious, a worshipper of idols, (and perhaps he doth know, and saith the truth, and knoweth not one only, nor even two or three only,) whom numerous sons and grandsons have carried to the grave, an old man, bowed down with years, who had died in his bed. Lo, he feared not the Lord, and yet a most numerous offspring of his house hath closed his eyes. What shall we say to this? Nothing evil can happen to him, for he can never, in his lifetime, bury his children, since he hath already died, and been borne to an honourable tomb by his children.

3. Let us shake this out then, let us shake it out, if we wish to be the sons of them that are shaken out: let some meaning be educed from it. For there is a certain Man who is thus blessed: and no one feareth the Lord, except he be in the members of this Man: and there are many men, and there is one Man; for there are many Christians, and there is One Christ. The Christians themselves with their Head, Who hath ascended into heaven, are one Christ. He is not One, and we many, but we many are one in That One. Christ then is one Man, the Head of the Body. What is His Body? His Church, as the Apostle saith: We are members of His Body; and, ye are the body of Christ, and His members in particular. Let us therefore understand the words of this Man, in whose body we are one man; and we shall there see the true good things of Jerusalem. For thus he saith at the end: That thou mayest see the good things that are of Jerusalem. But if thou hast looked for these good things with an earthly eye, the abundance of children and grandchildren, and the fecundity and fruitfulness of his wife, are not the good things of that

Jerusalem; for these good things are in the land of the dying, that is the land of the living. Hold it not as a very great thing, if thou hast sons who will die, although not before thee, yet certainly after thee. Dost thou wish to have children who will never die, and who will ever live with thee? Be thou in His Body, of Whom it hath been said, Ye are the Body of Christ, and His members in particular.

4. That this Psalm also might shew this, since it is so far obscure that it admonisheth us to knock at it, so far covered that it doth wish to be shaken out, it beginneth with speaking of many: Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in His ways. He speaketh to many; but since these many are one in Christ, in the next words he speaketh in the singular: For thou shalt eat the labours of thy fruits. He had said above, Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in His ways; why doth he now say, Thou shalt eat the labours of thy fruits: and not, ye shall eat? and why, the labours of thy fruits, and not the labours of your fruits. Hath he forgotten that so lately as in the preceding verse he was speaking of more than one? If thou hast already shaken it out, what doth he answer thee? When I speak of Christians in the plural, I understand one in the One Christ. Ye are therefore many, and ye are one; we are many, and we are one. How are we many, and yet one? Because we cling unto Him Whose members we are; and since our Head is in heaven, that His members may follow.

5. Let him therefore now go on with his description: for it is now clear Whom he is describing. Thus will all that followeth be open: only do ye fear the Lord, and walk in His ways, and do not envy those who walk not in His ways, when ye shall see them happy without happiness. For men of the world are happy without happiness; but the Martyrs were unhappy with happiness. For they were unhappy for a season, but happy for evermore; and herein that they were unhappy for a season, they were thought to be more unhappy than they were. For what saith the Apostle? As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing. Why, alway? Both here and there: altogether both here and there. For whence do we rejoice here? In hope. Whence shall we rejoice there? In fulfilment. The hope of one rejoicing hath great joy, and if rejoicing in hope, see what followeth, patient in tribulation. The Martyrs were therefore patient in tribulation, because they rejoiced in hope. But

because that which is promised did not yet exist, what saith the Apostle? For hope which is seen is not hope: but if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Behold the reason why the Martyrs endured all things, because they waited patiently for what they saw not. They who slew them, loved what they saw: they who were slain, sighed for those things which they saw not, and hastened to reach those things which they saw not; and in that they were put to a lingering death, thought they were delayed.

6. Therefore, brethren, Felix the Martyr, truly Felix both in his name and his crown, whose birthday this is, despised the world. Was he, because he feared the Lord, thence happy, thence blessed, because his wife was as a fruitful vine upon the earth, and his children stood around his table? All these blessings he hath perfectly, but in the Body of Him Who is here described; and, because he understood them in this sense, he scorned things present, that he might receive things future. Ye are aware, brethren, that he suffered not the death that other martyrs suffered. For he confessed, and was set aside for torments; on another day his body was discovered lifeless. They had closed the prison to his body, not to his spirit. The executioners found him gone; when they were preparing to torture, they spent their rage for nought. He was lying dead, without sense to them, that he might not be tortured; with sense with God, that he might be crowned. Whence was he also happy, brethren, not only in name, but in the reward of everlasting life, if he loved these things.

7. Let us therefore so hear this Psalm, as considering it to be spoken of Christ: and all of us who cling unto the Body of Christ, and have been made members of Christ, walk in the ways of the Lord; and let us fear the Lord with a chaste fear, with a fear that abideth for ever. For it is another fear which charity excludeth, as St. John saith, There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear. He saith not of every fear that it is cast out by love; for thou findest the Psalm saying, The fear of the Lord is clean, and endureth for ever. One fear therefore endureth, the other is cast out. The fear which is cast out, is not clean: but that which endureth, is clean. What is the fear which is cast out? Deign to consider. Some fear only for this reason, lest they suffer some evil on earth,—lest sickness befall them, lest

loss, lest bereavement of children, lest the loss of any that is dear, lest exile, lest condemnation, lest prison, lest any tribulation; for these reasons they fear and tremble: still this fear is not a chaste one. Still hear. Another feareth not on this earth, but feareth hell, whereby the Lord also alarmed men. Ye have heard when the Gospel was being read, Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. Men hear these words; and because they will really happen to the ungodly, they fear, and restrain themselves from sin. They have fear, and through fear restrain themselves from sin. They fear indeed, but love not righteousness. But when through fear they restrain themselves from sin, righteousness becometh a habit, and what was hard beginneth to be loved, and good becometh sweet: and man now beginneth to live righteously for this reason, not because he feareth punishments, but because he loveth eternity. Fear therefore is cast out by love; but a clean fear hath succeeded.

8. What is this clean fear? According to which we ought, my brethren, to understand what is said, Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in His ways. If I shall be enabled to speak worthily of this clean fear, by the help of the Lord our God, many will perchance be inflamed by this clean fear unto a clean love. Nor can I perhaps explain, unless by putting forward some similitude. Suppose some chaste woman, fearing her husband: suppose another an adulterous woman; she also feareth her husband. The chaste woman feareth lest her husband depart: the adulterous wife feareth him, lest he come. What if both be absent? The one feareth lest he come: the latter, lest he delay. He is in a certain sense absent unto Whom we have been betrothed; He is absent, Who gave unto us as a pledge His Holy Spirit; He is absent, Who redeemed us with His blood; that Husband than Whom nothing is more beautiful, Who seemed as it were deformed among the hands of His persecutors, of Whom a little before Isaiah said, He hath no form or comeliness. Is then our Bridegroom deformed? God forbid! for how would the virgins love Him, who have not sought husbands on earth? He therefore seemed deformed to His persecutors: if they thought Him not such, they would not insult Him, they would not strike Him with whips, would not crown Him with thorns, would not defile Him with spittle; but because He seemed such unto them, they did these things unto Him; for they had not eyes whereby Christ could seem beautiful. To what sort of eyes

did Christ seem beautiful? To such as Christ Himself sought, when He said unto Philip, Have I been so long with you, and hast thou not known Me, Philip? These eyes must be cleansed, that they may see that light; and, though slightly touched with the splendour, they are kindled with love, that they may wish to be healed, and may become enlightened. For that ye may know that Christ, Who is loved, is beautiful, the Prophet saith, Fairer in beauty than the children of men. His beauty surpasseth all men. What is it we love in Christ? His crucified members, His transfixed side, or His love? When we hear that He suffered for us, what do we love? Love is loved. He loved us, that we might in turn love Him; and that we might return His love, He hath visited us with His Spirit. He is beautiful, and is absent. Let the spouse ask herself if she be chaste. We are all among His members, my brethren; we are among His members, we are for this reason one Man. Let each man see what sort of fear he hath, whether that which love casteth out, or that clean fear which endureth for evermore. He hath lately proved this; I say unto you, He will also prove it. Our Bridegroom is afar: ask thy conscience; dost thou wish that He come, or dost thou still wish that He delay? Consider, brethren: I have knocked at the doors of your hearts; He hath heard the voice of them that dwell therein. What the consciences of each of you may have answered, could not reach my ears, since I am but a man: He Who is afar in respect of bodily presence, but is present in the strength of His Majesty, hath heard you. How many, if it be said unto them, Lo, here is Christ, to-morrow is the day of judgment; say not, Would that He may come! They who speak thus, love much; and if they are told, He will delay, they fear lest He delay, because their fear is clean. And as His delaying is now feared: so, after His coming, His leaving us will be feared. That will be a clean fear, for it is tranquil and secure. For we shall not be forsaken of Him, when He hath found us, since He sought us before we sought Him: a chaste fear therefore, my brethren, hath this source: it cometh from love. But that fear which is not yet chaste, feareth His Presence, and its punishment. From fear it doeth whatever of good it doeth: not from fear of losing that good, but from fear of suffering that evil. He feareth not lest he lose the embrace of his most comely bridegroom, but lest he be cast into hell. This fear is good, is useful; it will not indeed remain for evermore: but it is not as yet of that clean sort, that abideth for evermore.

9. In whom is it clean? I am now asking a question for the second time, which ye may ask of yourselves. If God should come and speak unto us with His Own Voice, (although He ceaseth not to speak through His Scriptures,) and should say unto man, Thou wishest to sin: sin; do whatsoever pleaseth thee; whatever thou loveston the earth, let it be thine: whoever thou art angry with, let him perish; whomsoever thou wishest to seize upon, let him be seized; whomsoever to kill, let him be killed; whomsoever to condemn, let him be condemned; whomsoever thou wishest to possess, possess him: let no man resist thee, let no man say unto thee, What art thou doing? No man, Do it not; no man, Why hast thou done it? Let all those earthly things which thou hast desired abound unto thee, and live in them, not for a season, but for evermore: only thou shalt never see My Face. My brethren, wherefore did ye groan, save because that already a clean fear, enduring alway, hath been born? Why is your heart stricken? If God should say, Thou shalt never see My Face: lo, thou wilt abound in all that earthly felicity; temporal goods will surround thee: thou losest them not, thou forsakest them not; what dost thou wish more? Clean fear would weep indeed and would groan, and would say, Nay, let all things be taken away, and let me see Thy Face. Clean fear would cry out from the Psalm, and would say, Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts: shew us the light of Thy countenance, and we shall be whole. Clean fear would cry forth from the Psalm, and would say, One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require. See how ardent is that clean fear, that true love, unmixed love. One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require. What is this? Even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. What if he desire this for the sake of earthly happiness? Hear what followeth: to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and to be protected; that is, to be His Temple, and to be protected by Him, this one thing have I desired of the Lord. If ye ask this one thing, if ye train your hearts toward this one thing, and fear to lose this one thing only, ye will not envy earthly delights, and ye will hope for that true happiness, and will be in His Body to Whom it is sung, Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in His ways.

10. Ver. 2. Thou shalt eat the labours of thy fruits. And ye, O thou, ye many who are One, Thou shalt eat of the labours of thy fruits. He seemeth to speak perversely to those who understand not: for he should have said, thou

shalt eat the fruit of thy labours. For many eat the fruit of their labours. They labour in the vineyard; they eat not the toil itself; but what ariseth from their labour they eat. They labour about trees that bear fruit: who would eat labours? But the fruit of these labours, the produce of these trees; it is this that delighteth the husbandman. What meaneth, Thou shalt eat the labours of thy fruits? At present we have toils: the fruits will come afterwards. But since their labours themselves are not without joy, on account of the hope whereof we have a little before spoken, Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation; at present those very labours delight us, and make us joyful in hope. If therefore our toil has been what could be eaten, and could also delight us; what will be the fruit of our labour when eaten? They who went weeping on their way, scattering their seed, did eat their labours; with how much greater pleasure will they eat the fruits of their labours, who shall come again with joy, bearing their sheaves with them? And that ye may know, brethren, that this labour is eaten, in the former Psalm ye have heard it said to the proud, who wished to rise before light, that is, before Christ, not through humility, whereby Christ rose; it was said unto them, Rise after ye have sat down; that is, be humbled, and thence rise; since He also, Who hath been exalted on account of you, came to be humbled. And what is said? Who eat the bread of grief. This is the labour of fruits, the bread of grief. For unless it were eaten, it would not be called bread; unless this bread had some sweetness, no one would eat it. With how much sweetness doth he weep in his groanings, who prayeth? The tears of the praying are sweeter than the joys of theatres. And hear the flame of longing, wherewith this bread is eaten, of which he saith here, Ye who eat the bread of grief. In another passage this lover saith, whose voice we usually recognise in the Psalm, My tears have been my meat day and night. How have tears become meat? While they daily say unto me, Where is now thy God? For before we see Him Who loved us, Who hath given us a pledge, to Whom we are betrothed, the Heathen insult us, and say, Where is that which Christians worship? Let them shew us Him Whom they adore. Behold, I shew them my deity, and let them shew me their Deity. When the Heathen speaketh thus to thee, thou findest not what to shew unto him; for thou hast no man to shew it unto. Thou returnest therefore, and weepest before God; for thou sighest for Him, before thou seest Him; and groanest from longing for Him; and because thou weepest in thy longing for Him, tears themselves are even sweet, and will be as meat unto thee, since they have been made unto thee as meat day and night, while it is said to thee, Where is thy God? But thy God, concerning Whom it is asked, Where is He? will come, and will wipe away thy tears, and will Himself be in stead of the bread of tears unto thee, and will feed thee for evermore; because the word of God, upon which Angels feed, will be with us. Meanwhile, now are the labours of our fruits, afterwards will come the fruit of our labours. Thou shalt eat the labours of thy fruits. Blessed art thou, and well shall it be with thee. Blessed art thou, is of the present: well shall it be with thee, is of the future. When thou eatest the labours of thy fruits, blessed art thou; when thou hast reached the fruit of thy labours, well shall it be with thee. What hath he said? For if it be well with thee, thou wilt be happy: and if thou wilt be happy, thou wilt also have all well with thee. But there is a difference between hope and attainment. If hope be so sweet, how much sweeter will reality be?

11. Let us now come to the words, Thy wife: it is said unto Christ. His wife, therefore, is the Church: His Church, His wife, we ourselves are. As a fruitful vineyard. But in whom is the vineyard fruitful? For we see many barren ones entering those walls; we see that many intemperate, usurious persons, slave dealers, enter these walls, and such as resort to fortune-tellers, go to enchanters and enchantresses when they have a headache. Is this the fruitfulness of the vine? Is this the fecundity of the wife? It is not. These are thorns, but the vineyard is not every where thorny. It hath a certain fruitfulness, and is a fruitful vine; but in whom? Upon the sides of thy house. Not all are called the sides of the house. For I ask what are the sides. What shall I say? Are they walls, strong stones, as it were? If he were speaking of this bodily tenement, we should perhaps understand this by sides. We mean by the sides of the house, those who cling unto Christ. For we do not say without reason of any person in daily discourse, who perchance is faring ill, owing to the counsels of bad friends, “He hath bad sides.” What is, “He hath bad sides?” Bad men cling to him. It is therefore said of another also, He hath good sides: he liveth according to good counsels. What meaneth this? He is ruled by good counsels. They therefore who cling to Christ are the sides of the house. Nor hath His wife been created from His side without a cause. When her spouse slept, Eve was

created: when Christ died, the Church was created; she was born of her husband’s side, whence a rib had been withdrawn; and the Church was born of the side of Her spouse, when His side was transfixed with a lance, and the Sacraments flowed forth. Therefore thy wife shall be fruitful as a vine. But upon what? Upon the sides of thine house. Among others, who cling not unto Christ, it is barren. But I will not even reckon them in the vine.

12. Thy children. The wife and the children are the same. In these carnal marriages and wedlocks, the wife is one, the children other: in the Church, she who is the wife, is the children also. For the Apostles belonged to the Church, and were among the members of the Church. They were therefore in His wife, and were His wife according to their own portion which they held in His members. Why then it is said concerning them, When the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, then shall the children of the Bridegroom fast? She who is the wife, then, is the children also. I speak a wonderful thing, my brethren. In the words of the Lord, we find the Church to be both His brethren, and His sisters, and His mother. For when His mother and His brethren were announced to Him to be standing without; in that they stood without, they were a figure. Who is the type of His mother? The Synagogue. Who is the type of carnal brethren? The Jews who stood without. And the Synagogue also standeth without. For Mary was among the sides of His House, and His relatives coming of the kindred of the Virgin Mary, who believed on Him, were among the sides of His House; not in respect of their carnal consanguinity, but inasmuch as they heard the Word of God, and obeyed it. For the Lord answered thus: Who is My mother, and who are My brethren? Whence some have attempted to say that Christ had not a mother, because He said, Who is My mother? Why? Had not then Peter and John and James, and the other Apostles, fathers upon earth? And yet what saith He unto them? Call no man your father upon earth: for One is your Father, Who is in Heaven. What, therefore, He taught His disciples in the case of their father, this He Himself shewed them in that of His mother. For our Lord’s will is that we prefer God to our earthly connections. Respect thy father, because he is thy father: reverence God, because He is God. Thy father begot thee by lending his flesh; God created thee by an exertion of His Power. Let not the father be angry when God is preferred to him: let him rather rejoice that so much respect is paid him, that

He alone is found to be preferred to him. What then thall I say? What saith the Lord? Who is My mother? and who are My brethren? And he stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren. They were His brethren; how were they His mother? He added; For whosoever shall do the will of My Father Which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother. Brother, perhaps, on account of the male sex whom the Church hath: sister, on account of the women whom Christ hath here in His members. How mother, save that Christ Himself is in those Christians, whom the Church daily bringeth forth Christians through baptism? In those therefore in whom thou understandest the wife, in them thou understandest the mother, in them the children.

13. Let us therefore say what should the character of these children be. Peacemakers they should be. Why peacemakers? Because, Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Since therefore in the olive is the fruit of peace: for oil signifieth peace, because it signifieth love; without love there is no peace: and it is clear that they who have rent asunder peace, will not have love. I have already explained to you, beloved, on this principle, why the dove carried the leaves with fruit unto the ark: to signify that they also who have been baptized without, as those branches were baptized without the ark, if they have not leaves alone, that is, words only, but have fruit also, which is love, are borne by the dove to the ark, and come unto unity. Such children ought therefore to be around the Lord’s table, like olive-branches. A complete Vine it is, a great bliss: who would now refuse to be there? When thou seest any blasphemer have a wife, children, grandchildren, and thyself perchance without them, envy them not; discern that the promise hath been fulfilled in thee also, but spiritually. Perchance thou art not in His members? If thou art not there, lament that thou art neither here nor there. But if thou be there, be secure; for although thy reward be there and not here, it is a more fruitful one there than here.

14. Ver. 4. If therefore we have, why have we? Because we fear the Lord. Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. He is the man, who is also the men; and the men are one man; because many are one, because Christ is One.

15. Ver. 5, 6. The Lord from out of Sion bless thee. For thou hadst begun to heed the words, Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord: already perchance thine eyes were ranging through those who fear not the Lord, and saw there fruitful wives, children in abundance around their father’s table: I know not whither thou wast going: The Lord from out of Sion bless thee. Seek not those blessings which are not out of Sion. Hath not the Lord blessed such, my brethren? This is the Lord’s blessing: or if it be not from the Lord, who will marry a wife, if the Lord be unwilling? who can be in sound health, if the Lord deny him? or who can be rich, if the Lord refuse? He giveth these things: but seest thou not that He hath also given them to cattle? This blessing is not therefore from Sion. The Lord from out of Sion bless thee: and mayest thou see the good things that are of Jerusalem. For these good things are not those of Jerusalem. Dost thou wish to see that they are not the good things of Jerusalem? Even to the birds was it said, Be fruitful and multiply. Dost thou wish to hold as a great blessing what was given unto birds? Who can be ignorant, that it was given indeed by the voice of God? But use these goods, if thou receive them; and rather think how thou mayest nourish those who have been born, than that others may be born. For it is not happiness to have children, but to have good ones. Labour in the task of nourishing them, if they be born; but if they be not born, give thanks unto God. Perchance thou wilt be less anxious, and yet thou hast not remained barren in that Mother. Perhaps through thee are spiritually born of that Mother, they who are as olive branches around the Lord’s table. May the Lord therefore console thee, that thou mayest see the goods of Jerusalem. For these goods indeed are. Why are they? Because they are everlasting. Why are they? Because the King is there, I am That I am. But these goods are and are not: for they stand not; they slip away, they flow. Thy children are infants: thou dost caress the infants: the infants caress thee: do they abide thus? But thou wishest they may grow, thou wishest that their age may increase. But consider that when one age cometh, another dieth. When boyhood cometh, infancy dieth; when youth cometh, boyhood dieth: when manhood cometh, youth dieth; when old age cometh, manhood dieth: when death cometh, all age dieth. As many successions of ages as thou wishest for, so many deaths of ages dost thou wish for. These things therefore are not. Finally, are children born unto thee to share life with thee on earth, or rather to shut thee out and to succeed thee? Rejoicest

thou in those born to exclude thee? Boys when born speak somewhat like this to their parents: “Now then, begin to think of removing hence, let us too play our parts on the stage.” For the whole life of temptation in the human race is a stage play; for it is said, Every man living is altogether vanity. Nevertheless, if we rejoice in children who will succeed us; how much must we rejoice in children with whom we shall remain, and in that Father for Whom we are born, Who will not die, but that we may evermore live with Him? These are the good things of Jerusalem: for they are. The Lord from out of Sion bless thee: and mayest thou see the good things that are of Jerusalem. For thou seest as one blind those goods, which thou heedest. Mayest thou see: but those goods which are seen by the heart. And how long shall I see the good things of Jerusalem? All thy life long. If thy life be for ever, thou wilt see the good things of Jerusalem for evermore. But if, my brethren, these goods are, yet thou seest them not all the days of thy life: for thou diest not, when thou goest forth from the body. Thy life continueth: thy body dieth, but the life of the spirit continueth. The eyes see not, for he who saw through the eyes hath departed. Wheresoever he be, who saw through the eyes, he seeth something. For the rich man, who when on earth was clothed with purple and fine linen, was not dead; if he was dead, he would not have been tormented in hell. It would have been desirable for him to die, but he lived in hell to his hurt. For he was tormented, and saw not those goods which he had left on earth: behold, such was his life, and he saw not those goods. Do thou therefore desire such goods as thou mayest see all thy life long, that is, that thou mayest live with these goods for evermore.

16. Consider therefore, brethren, what those goods are. Can these be called goods? Is it gold; is it silver; is it a pleasant estate; is it walls of marble; is it fretted ceilings? God forbid! The poor have these goods more abundantly than the rich in this life: for it is more to a poor man to see the starry heaven, than to a rich man to see a gilded ceiling. What then, brethren, is that good, whereby we are inflamed, for which we sigh, whereby we are kindled, for the attainment of which good we endure so many toils, as ye have heard when the Apostle was read, that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution? For it doth not follow that, because the devil rageth not through kings, Christians do not at this hour suffer persecution. If

the devil be dead, our persecutions are dead; but if he our adversary liveth, whence doth he not suggest temptations? Whence doth he not rage? whence doth he not procure threats or offences? O if thou wouldest begin to live godly, thou wilt see that every one who will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. For the sake of what, then, do we suffer so great persecutions? For, if in this life only, saith the Apostle, we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. For what reason were the Martyrs condemned to beasts? What is that good? Can it be declared? by what means, or what tongue can tell it? or what ears can hear it? That indeed, Neither ear hath heard, nor hath it entered into man’s heart: only let us love, only let us grow in grace: ye see, then, that battles are not wanting, and that we fight with our lusts. We fight outwardly with unbelieving and disobedient men; we fight inwardly with carnal suggestions and perturbations: we every where as yet fight, because the corruptible body weigheth down the soul; we fight as yet, since if the spirit be life, yet is the body dead through sin. But what will be the issue? But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. When therefore our mortal members shall have been quickened, nothing will then resist our spirit. There will be no hunger, no thirst, because these arise from the corruption of the body. Thou refreshest thyself, because something departeth from thee. The lusts of carnal delights fight against us. We carry with us death in the infirmity of the body: but when death itself shall have been changed into that unchangeableness, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,—what will then be said unto death? O death, where is thy sting? O death, where is thy sting? Perchance, he dieth, and it will be said, do any enemies remain? No; death is the last enemy. When this shall have been destroyed, immortality will succeed. If there shall be no enemy, as ‘the last’ will death be destroyed. Our good, for which we sigh, will be peace. Behold, brethren, peace is called a good, a great good. Ye were seeking what was called a good: whether it were gold, or silver, or an estate, or raiment? It is peace: not such a peace as the unstable, treacherous, mutable, uncertain peace which prevails among men; nor such peace as the individual hath with himself. For I have said that a man contendeth also with himself; until he subdue all his lusts, he still fighteth. What sort of peace then is this? One that the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard of. What sort of peace? One from Jerusalem, for Jerusalem is interpreted, A vision of Peace. Thus then the Lord from out of Sion bless thee: and mayest thou see the good things that are of Jerusalem, and that, all thy life long—and mayest thou see, not only thy children, but, thy children's children. What meaneth, Thy children? Thy works which thou here dost. Who are thy children's children? The fruits of thy works. Thou givest alms: these are thy children: for the sake of thine alms thou receivest everlasting life, these are thy children's children. Mayest thou see thy children's children; and there shall be peace upon Israel, the last words of the Psalm. This peace is preached unto you by us: it is loved by us, we wish that it may be loved by you. Unto this peace they come who have been here also peacemakers. They who are peacemakers there, are here such also; who stand around the Lord's table like olive branches, so that the tree is not barren as was that fig-tree, where the Lord when hungry found no fruit. Ye see what happened unto it. It had leaves only, it had not fruit: thus are they who have words, and have not deeds. The Lord when He came unto it hungry found not there what to eat; for the Lord hungereth for faith and for good works on our part. Let us feed Him by living well, and He will feed us for evermore by giving us everlasting life.

PSALM 129

Exposition

A Sermon to the people.

1. The Psalm which we have sung is short: but as it is written in the Gospel of Zacchæus that he was little of stature, but mighty in works; as it is written of that widow who cast two mites into the treasury, little was the money, but great was her charity; thus also this Psalm, if thou count the words, is short; if thou weigh the sentiments, is great. It will not therefore detain us long unto weariness. Wherefore? Let your wisdom attend, and let Christian zeal aid you: let the word of God sound to you whether willing or unwilling, in season or out of season. It hath found itself a place, it hath found hearts where it may rest, it hath found a soil where it may blossom and bear fruit. For it is clear that there are many evil and godless men whom the Church beareth even unto the end; and there are they to whom God’s Word is superfluous: and it either falleth among them, as the seed by the way-side is trodden under foot, and gathered up by the birds; or as the seed on rocky places, where it hath not much earth, and withereth under the hot sun as soon as the blade is above ground, because it hath no root; or as the seed that falleth among thorns, which although it sprout and endeavour to rise into the air, is stifled by the multitude of thorns. Such are they who trample on the Word of God as on the seed on the way-side, or they who rejoice for an hour, and when tribulation cometh, wither, as by the sun’s heat; or they who stifle what had begun to germinate in them, by the anxieties and cares of this world, as it were by the thorns of avarice. But there is also good earth, where when the seed falleth it beareth fruit, some thirty-fold, other sixty-fold, some a hundred-fold; whether little or much, all shall be in the barn. Such therefore are these: and for their sakes we speak. On account of these the Scripture speaketh, on account of these the Gospel is not silent. But let those too hear, if haply they may be one thing to-day, another to-morrow: if haply they may be changed by hearing, or plough up the way, or clear away the stones, or pluck up the thorns. Let the Spirit of

God speak, let It speak to us, let It sing to us; whether we wish or wish not to dance, let It sing. For as he who danceth, moveth his limbs to the time; so they who dance according to the commandment of God, in their works obey the sound. What therefore saith the Lord in the Gospel to those who refused to do this? We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced: we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. Let Him therefore sing; we trust in God's mercy, for there will be those by whom He consoleth us. For they who are obstinate, continuing in wickedness, although they hear the Word of God, by their offences daily disturb the Church. Of such this Psalm speaketh; for thus it commenceth;

2. Ver. 1–3. Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up. The Church speaketh of those whom She endureth: and as if it were asked, "Is it now?" The Church is of ancient birth: since saints have been so called, the Church hath been on earth. At one time the Church was in Abel only, and he was fought against by his wicked and lost brother Cain. At one time the Church was in Enoch alone: and he was translated from the unrighteous. At one time the Church was in the house of Noah alone, and endured all who perished by the flood, and the ark alone swam upon the waves, and escaped to shore. At one time the Church was in Abraham alone, and we know what he endured from the wicked. The Church was in his brother's son, Lot, alone, and in his house, in Sodom, and he endured the iniquities and perversities of Sodom, until God freed him from amidst them. The Church also began to exist in the people of Israel: She endured Pharaoh and the Egyptians. The number of the saints began to be also in the Church, that is, in the people of Israel; Moses and the rest of the saints endured the wicked Jews, the people of Israel. We come unto our Lord Jesus Christ: the Gospel was preached, as it was said in the Psalms: I have preached and have spoken: they have been multiplied above number. What meaneth, above number? Not only have they believed who belong to the number of the saints, but some have entered above number: many righteous, but also more unrighteous; and the righteous have endured the unrighteous. When? In the Church. Is it now only, since he counteth, since he mentioneth them? For this reason, lest the Church wonder now, or lest any one wonder in the Church, who wisheth to be a good member of the Church, let him hear the

Church herself his Mother saying to him, Marvel not at these things, my son: Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up.

3. There is great feeling in this commencement of the Psalm: Many a time have they vexed me from my youth up. She now seemeth to be speaking of herself: for she seemed not to have commenced herself, but to have answered. But to whom hath she replied? To them that think and say, How great evils do we endure, how great are the scandals that every day thicken, as the wicked enter into the Church, and we have to endure them? But let the Church reply through some, that is, through the voice of the stronger, let her reply to the complaints of the weak, and let the stable confirm the unstable, and the fullgrown the infant, and let the Church say, Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up. Now may Israel say, (ver. 2.) Many a time have they vexed me from my youth up. Let the Church say this: let her not fear it. For what is the meaning of this addition, From my youth up, after the words, Many a time have they fought against me? At present the old age of the Church is assailed: but let her not fear: let her say, Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up. Hath she then failed to arrive at old age, because they have not ceased to fight against her from her youth up? have they been able to blot her out? Now may Israel say; and let Israel comfort herself, let the Church console herself with past examples, and say, Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up.

4. Why have they fought against me? For they could not prevail against me. (Ver. 3.) Upon my back have sinners built; they have done their iniquity afar off. Why have they fought against me? Because they could not prevail upon me. What is this? They could not build upon me. I consented not with them unto sin. For every wicked man persecuteth the good on this account, because the good man consenteth not with him to evil. Suppose he do some evil, and the Bishop censure him not, the Bishop is a good man: suppose the Bishop censure him, the Bishop is a bad man. Suppose he carry off any thing, let the man robbed be silent, he is a good man: let him only speak and rebuke, even though he doth not reclaim his goods, he is every thing bad. He is bad then who blameth the robber, and he is good who robbeth! Let him go on, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. On the contrary

the Apostle saith, Evil communications corrupt good manners. Be ye sober, righteous, and sin not. The word soundeth, the discourse soundeth that gainsayeth lust: but he, the lover of his own lust, and the enemy of the discourse that gainsayeth his mistress, is hostile, and hateth the word of God. Lust is become his beloved, God his enemy. For God opposeth avarice, and wisheth nothing to be possessed by avarice. Let Me be possessed, He saith. Why wishest thou to be possessed by avarice? It commandeth hard things, I command light things: its load is heavy, My burden is light; its yoke is hard, Mine is gentle. Wish not to be possessed by avarice. Avarice commands thee to cross the sea, and thou obeyest: it commands thee to trust thyself to the winds and waves; I command thee to give before thy door out of what thou hast to the poor: thou art slothful in doing a good work before thy door, and thou art strenuous to pass over the sea. Because avarice commands, thou obeyest: because God commands, thou hatest. And why? When he beginneth to hate, he beginneth to wish to accuse those from whom he heareth good precepts, and to wish to seek out charges against the servants of God through his suspicions. Do not those who tell us these things do such things, themselves? These things, whether done or undone, are said to be done: and what are done well, are said to be done ill: and what we endure, are ascribed to us as a fault. What do we answer? Heed not me: heed this word: it speaketh to thee through any channel; thou art its enemy. Agree with thine adversary, while thou art with him in the way: thou hast made the word of God thine adversary. Heed not that such an one speaketh to thee: it is a wicked man through whom It speaketh to thee; but the word of God, that speaketh to thee, is not wicked. Accuse God: accuse Him, if thou canst!

5. Do ye believe, brethren, that they of whom it is said, Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up, reached such a pitch as even not to hesitate to accuse God? Thou accusest a man of avarice, and he accuseth God on the ground that He made gold. Be not covetous. And God, thou repliest, should not make gold. This now remaineth, because thou canst not restrain thine evil deeds, thou accusest the good works of God: the Creator and Architect of the world displeaseth thee. He ought not to make the sun either; for many contend concerning the lights of their windows, and drag each other before courts of law. O if we could restrain our vices! for all

things are good, because a good God made all things: and His works praise Him, when their goodness is considered by him who hath the spirit of considering them, the spirit of piety and wisdom. God is on every side praised by His works. How do His works praise Him through the mouth of the Three Children? What is passed over? The heavens praise Him, the Angels praise Him, the stars, the sun and moon, praise Him, the days and the nights praise Him, whatever blossoms on earth praises Him, whatever swims upon the sea praises Him, whatever flies in the air praises Him, all the mountains and hills praise Him, the cold and the heat praise Him; and all things else that God hath made, ye have heard, praise God: heard ye there that avarice praiseth God, that luxury praiseth God? These things praise Him not, for He made them not. There, men praise God: God is man's creator. Avarice is the work of a wicked man: man himself is the work of God. And what doth God wish? To kill in thee what thou hast thyself made, and to save what He hath Himself made.

6. Lend not money at interest. Thou accusest Scripture which saith, He that hath not given his money upon usury. I wrote not this: it went not forth first from my mouth: hear God. He replieth: let not the clergy lend upon usury. Perchance he who speaketh to thee, lendeth not at interest: but if he do so lend; suppose that he doth so lend; doth He Who speaketh through him lend at interest? If he doth what he enjoineth thee, and thou dost it not; thou wilt go into the flame, he into the kingdom. If he doth not what he enjoineth thee, and equally with thee doth evil deeds, and preaches duties which he doth not; ye will both equally go into the flames. The hay will burn; but the word of the Lord abideth for evermore. Doth the word which hath spoken to thee through him burn? Either Moses speaketh to thee, that is, a good and righteous servant of God; or a Pharisee sitting in the seat of Moses. Ye have heard concerning these too: all whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do not ye after their works. Thou hast no means whereby to excuse thyself, when the word of God speaketh unto thee. Because thou couldest not slay the word of God, thou seekest to accuse those through whom the word of God speaketh unto thee. Seek as far as thou wilt, speak as far as thou wilt, blaspheme as far as thou wilt. Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up, now may Israel say, many a time have they fought against me from my youth up. Usurers even

dare to say: I have no other means of livelihood. This a robber might also say, when caught in a hollow way; this a housebreaker might say, caught about another man’s wall; this a pander might tell me, in the act of buying girls for prostitution; this an enchanter uttering curses, and selling his iniquity, might say: whatsoever of this sort we should endeavour to prohibit, all might answer that they had no other means of life, and that they lived on this resource; as if this very thing were not a chief cause for punishment in them, that they chose a wicked trade to support their life by, and that they choose to feed themselves by means offensive to Him by Whom all are fed.

7. But when thou hast cried and spoken thus, they answer, If it be thus, we come not hither; if it be thus, we enter not into the Church. Let them come, let them enter, let them hear. Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up. But they could not prevail against me. upon my back have sinners built; that is, they could not prevail upon me to consent; they have given me somewhat to bear. How admirably is it said, how excellently hath he signified this: They could not prevail against me; upon my back have the sinners built. They endeavour to prevail with us, first to consent unto them to do evil deeds: if we consent not, suffer us, they say. Since therefore thou hast not prevailed against me, mount upon my back: I can carry thee until the end come: for thus it is commanded me, to bring forth fruit with patience. I chasten thee not, I suffer thee: or perchance, when I suffer thee, thou chastenest thyself. If thou chastenest not thyself unto the end, I suffer thee unto the end; and unto the end thou shalt be upon my back, even to the time. Wilt thou ever be upon my back? No: one will come who will shake thee off: harvest season will come, the end of the world will come; God will send in the reapers. The reapers are the angels: they separate the wicked from the midst of the righteous, as the tares from the wheat; they will store the corn in the barn, but the chaff they will burn with unquenchable fire. I have carried as far as I could, now with joy do I pass into the Lord’s barn, and securely sing, Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up.

8. What could they do unto me, in that they have fought against me from my youth up? They have exercised me, they have not crushed me. They have been to me what fire is to gold, not what fire is to hay. For fire when it

approacheth gold, removeth dross: when it approacheth hay, turneth it into ashes. For they could not prevail against me; for I consented not, for they have not made me what they are themselves. The sinners have built upon my back; they have made their iniquity afar off. They have given me what to endure, and have not prevailed upon me to consent to them. Their injustice therefore is afar from me. The evil are mingled with the good, not only in the world, but within the Church herself the evil are mingled with the good. Ye know, and ye have proved this: and ye will still further prove it, if ye are good. For when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. There seem to be none evil in the Church, save unto the good man. Ye know therefore that they are mingled, and always and every where Scripture saith they shall not be separated, except in the end. Thus, as they are mingled, they are afar from one another. Lest then any man should suppose, that because evil are mingled among good men, therefore wickedness is near unto righteousness, he saith, They could not prevail against me; that is, they said, and wickedly said, Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. Evil communications corrupted not good manners: in that which I heard from God, I have not yielded to the discourses of men. Sinners have given me what to carry, not what I must mingle with, and their iniquity hath been made afar from me. For what is so near, as two men in one Church? what is so distant, as iniquity from righteousness? For where there is consent there is neighbourhood. Two men are handcuffed together, and brought before a judge; one is a robber, one is merely in bonds: the one wicked, the other innocent, bound with one chain, and far from one another. How far are they from one another? As far as wickedness is from innocence. Behold these are far from one another. One robber perpetrates his crimes in Spain, his next neighbour is the robber who doth the same in Africa. How near? As near as crime and crime are joined, as near as robbery is to robbery. Let no man fear therefore evil men mingled with him in the body. Let him be afar from them in heart, and he beareth safely what he feareth not: They have made their iniquity afar off.

9. What is the result? They who reign unjustly flourish, and, to use the vulgar phrase, the unrighteous thunder, and are puffed up unto vain airs and calumnies. What then? Will this be alway? No. Hear what followeth: (ver. 4.) The righteous Lord shall hew the necks of the sinners. Listen, my

beloved. The righteous Lord, he saith, shall hew the necks of the sinners. Who would not tremble? For who hath not sinned? The righteous Lord will hew the necks of the sinners. In all that hear, there entereth a trembling of heart, if they believe God's Scripture. For if men beat their breasts without cause, they lie in that they beat their breasts; if they be righteous, even in that they lie unto God, they become sinners. If therefore they truly beat their breasts, they are sinners. And which of us doth not beat his breast? And which of us doth not fix his eyes upon the earth, like the Publican, and say, Lord, be merciful unto me a sinner? If therefore all are sinners, and none is found without sin; all must fear the sword that hangs above their neck, because the righteous Lord shall hew the necks of the sinners. I do not imagine, my brethren, of all sinners; but in the member which He striketh, He marks what sinners He striketh. For it is not said, The righteous Lord will hew the hands of the sinners; or their feet; but because proud sinners were meant to be understood, and all proud men carry lofty necks, and not only do evil deeds, but even refuse to acknowledge them to be such, and when they are rebuked, justify themselves: (Behold thou hast done this; at least acknowledge thine act: God hateth a sinner, do thou also hate one; join thyself unto God: persecute with Him thy sin. No, he replieth: I have done well, God hath done ill. What is this? I, he saith, have done no evil; for Saturn did this, Mars did it, Venus did it; I have done nothing, the stars have done it. Thou justifiest thyself, thou accusest God Who made the stars, Who adorned the heaven:) therefore since thou justifiest thy sin, and art proud against God, because thou placest thyself out of fault, and God in fault, and hast only raised thy neck, and hast run against God, as it is written in Job, (he was speaking of an ungodly sinner,) he runneth against God, even upon his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers; and he here nameth the neck, because it is thus thou exaltest thyself, and dost not fix thine eyes upon the ground, and beat thy breast, and say, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner, but boastest thyself in thy deserts, and wishest, saith God, to plead with Me, to enter into judgment with Me; while thou shouldest in thy guilty state atone unto God, and cry unto Him, as it is cried in another Psalm, If Thou, Lord, art extreme to mark what is amiss, who may abide it? shouldest cry unto Him, as it is cried in another Psalm, I said, Lord, be merciful unto me, for I have sinned against Thee: since thou dost not choose to say this, but justifiest thy deeds against the Word of God; what followeth in

Scripture cometh upon thee: the righteous Lord shall hew the necks of sinners.

10. Ver. 5. Let them be confounded and turned backward, as many as have evil will at Sion. They who hate Sion, hate the Church: Sion is the Church. And they who hypocritically enter into the Church, hate the Church. They who refuse to keep the Word of God, hate the Church: Upon my back have they built: what will the Church do, save endure the burden even unto the end?

11. Ver. 6, 7. But what saith he of them? The next words are, Let them be even as the grass of the house tops: that withereth before it be plucked up. The grass of the house tops is that which groweth on house tops, on a tiled roof: it is seen on high, and hath not a root. How much better would it be if it grew lower, and how much more joyfully would it bloom? As it is, it riseth higher to a quicker withering. It hath not yet been plucked up, yet hath it withered: not yet have they received sentence from the judgment of God, and already they have not the sap of bloom. Observe their works, and see that they have withered. But they live, and are here: not as yet therefore have they been plucked up. They have withered, but have not as yet been plucked up: they have become as the grass of the house tops: which withereth afore it be plucked up.

12. But the reapers will come, but they fill not their sheaves from these. For the reapers will come, and will gather the wheat into the barn, and will bind the tares together, and cast them into the fire. Thus also is the grass of the house tops cleared off, and whatever is plucked from it, is thrown into the fire; because it had withered even before it was plucked up. The reaper filleth not his hands thence. His next words are, (ver. 7.) Whereof the reaper filleth not his hand; neither he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom. And, the reapers are the angels, the Lord saith.

13. Ver. 8. So that they who go by say not so much as, The blessing of the Lord be upon you: we have blessed you in the name of the Lord. For ye know, brethren, when men pass by others at work, it is customary to address them, The blessing of the Lord be upon you. And this was especially the custom in the Jewish nation. No one passed by and saw any one doing any

work in the field, or in the vineyard, or in harvest, or any thing of the sort; it was not lawful to pass by without a blessing. They who bind the sheaves, are different from the passers by on the way. They who gather the sheaves, do not fill their hands with them; because the grass of the house tops is not gathered for the barn. Who are they who gather together the sheaves? The reapers. Who are the reapers? The Lord hath said, The reapers are the angels. Who are the passers by? They who have already passed hence to their country through this road, that is, through this life: the Apostles were passers by in this life, the Prophets were passers by. Whom did the Prophets and Apostles bless? Those in whom they saw the root of charity. But those whom they found lifted on high on their house tops, and proud in the bosses of their bucklers, they declared against these what they were doomed to become, but they gave them no blessing. Ye therefore who read in the Scriptures, find all those wicked men whom the Church beareth, who are declared cursed, pertain unto Antichrist, pertain unto the devil, pertain to the chaff, pertain to the tares. Innumerable things are said through figures of them: for not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Ye find no passage of Scripture which speaketh well of them, because they who passed by on the way blessed them not. The Prophets who passed by said all evil things of them. Behold, he also whom we hold in our hand, David, passed along the way; ye have heard what he said of them: The righteous Lord shall hew the necks of the sinners. Let them be confounded, and turned backward, as many as have evil will at Sion. Let them be even as the grass of the house tops, which withereth afore it be plucked up; whereof the mower filleth not his hand, neither he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom. Thus he hath spoken of them. David then, when he passed by, blessed not these, and even through him was fulfilled what he himself said, So that they who go by say not so much as, We have blessed you in the name of the Lord. These men, when they passed by, whether Prophets, or Patriarchs, or Apostles, whoever passed by, if we live well, brethren, have blessed us in the name of the Lord. When, thou askest, did Paul bless me? When did Peter bless me? Observe in the Scriptures, see if thou livest well, and see that thou hast therein been pronounced blessed. They have blessed all who live well. And how have they blessed? In the name of the Lord; not in their own names, as heretics. For they who say, What we give, this is holy; wish to bless in their own name, not in the name of the Lord. But they who say, None save God sanctifieth, nor is any man good save by the gift of God; they bless in the name of the Lord, not in their own name: because they are the friends of the bridegroom, they refuse to be adulterers of the bride.

PSALM 130

Exposition

A Sermon to the People.

1. Ver. 1–3. Since we presume that ye are watchful not only with the eyes of the body, but also with the heart, we must sing with understanding: Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. For this is the voice of one ascending, belonging to the ‘Song of Degrees.’ Each of us ought therefore to see in what deep he is, out of which he crieth unto the Lord. Jonas cried from the deep; from the whale’s belly. He was not only beneath the waves, but also in the entrails of the beast; nevertheless, those waves and that body prevented not his prayer from reaching God, and the beast’s belly could not contain the voice of his prayer. It penetrated all things, it burst through all things, it reached the ears of God: if indeed we ought to say that, bursting through all things, it reached the ears of God, since the ears of God were in the heart of him who prayed. For where hath not he God present, whose voice is faithful? Nevertheless, we also ought to understand from what deep we cry unto the Lord. For this mortal life is our deep. Whoever hath understood himself to be in the deep, crieth out, groaneth, sigheth, until he be delivered from the deep, and come unto Him Who sitteth above all the deeps and above Cherubim, above all things He hath created, not only bodily, but also spiritual things; until the soul come unto Him, until His own image be liberated by Him, that image which is man, which in this deep tossed by constant billows, hath thereby been worn away; and except it be renewed and repaired by God, Who impressed it when He formed man, (man could be equal to his own fall, he is not equal to his own rising again,) he is always in the deep; unless, as I have said, he be freed, he is ever in the deep. But when he crieth from the deep, he riseth from the deep, and his very cry suffereth him not to be long at the bottom. For they are very deep in the deep, who do not even cry from the deep. The Scripture saith, When the wicked hath reached the depth of evils, he despiseth. Now consider, brethren, what sort of deep that is, where God is

despised. When each man seeth himself overwhelmed with daily sins, pressed down by heaps and weights, so to speak, of iniquities: if it be said unto him, Pray unto God, he laughs. In what manner? He first saith, If crimes were displeasing unto God, should I live? If God regarded human affairs, considering the great crimes which I have committed, should I not only live, but be prosperous? For this is wont to happen to those, who are far in the deep, and are prosperous in their iniquities: and they are the more plunged in the deep, in proportion as they seem to be more happy; for a deceitful happiness is itself a greater unhappiness. Then men are also wont to say this: Since I have now committed many crimes, and condemnation is hanging over me, I lose by foregoing the opportunity of doing whatever I can; and, From henceforth I am lost, why do I not do whatever I have the power to do? What is the usual language of desperate robbers? The judge will put me to the same death for ten murders as for five, as for one: why then do I not take advantage of every fresh opportunity? This is, The wicked, when he hath reached the depth of evil deeds, despiseth. But our Lord Jesus Christ, Who despised not even our deeps, Who hath deigned to descend to this life, promising remission of all sins; He raised man even from the deep, that he might cry from the deep beneath the weight of his sins, and that the sinner's voice might reach unto God; crying whence, save from the depth of evils?

2. See also that the voice of the sinner crieth from the deep: Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let Thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. Whence doth he cry? From the deep. Who is it then who crieth? A sinner. And with what hope doth he cry? Because He who came to absolve from sins, gave hope even to the sinner down in the deep. What therefore followeth after these words: If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? So, he hath disclosed from what deep he cried out. For he crieth beneath the weights and billows of his iniquities. He hath looked round about himself, he hath looked round upon his own life; he hath seen it every where covered with excesses and crimes: wherever he looketh round, he findeth nothing good in himself, none of the calmness of righteousness can meet his gaze. And when he seeth so many and so great sins, and such troops of his own crimes, he crieth out, as if terror-struck, If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme

to mark what is amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? He said not, I may not abide it: but, who may abide it? For he saw that nigh the whole of human life on every side was ever bayed at by its sins, that all consciences were accused by their thoughts, that a clean heart trusting in its own righteousness could not be found. If therefore a clean heart cannot be found, that can trust in its own righteousness; let the heart of all trust in the mercy of God, and say, If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is amiss, who, O Lord, may abide it?

3. Ver. 4–6. But wherefore is there hope? For there is propitiation with Thee. And what is this propitiation, except sacrifice? And what is sacrifice, save that which hath been offered for us? The pouring forth of innocent blood blotted out all the sins of the guilty: so great a price paid down redeemed all captives from the hand of the enemy who captured them. With Thee, then, there is propitiation. For if there were not mercy with Thee, if Thou chosest to be Judge only, and didst refuse to be merciful, Thou wouldest mark all our iniquities, and search after them. Who could abide this? Who could stand before Thee, and say, I am innocent? Who could stand in Thy judgment? There is therefore one hope: For with Thee there is propitiation: for the sake of Thy law have I borne Thee, O Lord. What law? That which made men guilty. For a law holy, just, and good, was given to the Jews; but its effect was to make them guilty. A law was not given that could give life, but which might shew his sins to the sinner. For the sinner had forgotten himself, and saw not himself; the law was given him, that he might see himself. The law made him guilty, the Lawgiver freed him: for the Lawgiver is the Supreme Power. A law was given that should terrify and bind unto guiltiness; and the law doth not release from sins, but sheweth sins, and perchance placed beneath this law, he observeth in the deep how great transgressions he hath been guilty of against the law, and crieth out thus, If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? There is therefore a law of the mercy of God, a law of the propitiation of God. The one was a law of fear, the other is a law of love. The law of love giveth forgiveness to sins, blotteth out the past, warneth concerning the future; forsaketh not its companion by the way, becometh a companion to him whom it leadeth on the way. But it is needful to agree with the adversary, whilst thou art with him in the way. For the

Word of God is thine adversary, as long as thou dost not agree with it. But thou agreest, when it has begun to be thy delight to do what God's Word commandeth. Then he who was thine adversary becometh thy friend: so, when the way is finished, there will be none to deliver thee to the Judge. Therefore, For the sake of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord, because thou hast condescended to bring in a law of mercy, to forgive me all my sins, to give me for the future warnings that I may not offend: if I perchance have slipped after these warnings, Thou hast given me a remedy, whereby I may pray Thee, in these words, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. Thou hast decreed this law for me, that, as I forgive, so I may be forgiven. For the sake, therefore, of this law I have waited for Thee, O Lord. I have waited until Thou mayest come and free me from all need, for in my very need Thou hast not forsaken the law of mercy.

4. Hear what law he speaketh of, if thou hast not yet understood that he is now speaking of the law of love; hear the Apostle; Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Who bear one another's burdens, save they who have love? They who have not love, are offensive to one another; but they who have love, bear with one another. Some one hath injured thee, he asketh thy pardon: if thou forgive him not, thou bearest not thy brother's burden; if thou dost forgive, thou bearest the weak: and if perchance thou hast fallen into any infirmity, as a man, he also should bear with thee, as thou didst with him. Hear what went before: Brethren, if a man be overtaken in any fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness. And lest perchance, since he had warned the spiritual, they might seem to themselves secure, he at once added, Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. He then subjoins what I have just quoted, Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ: whence saith David, For the sake of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord. Stags are said, when they cross straits to the nearest islands, for the sake of pasture, to lay their heads one upon the other; but one, who goes before, carries his head alone, and doth not lay it upon another: but when he himself also faints, he retreats from his position in front and retires behind, that he also may rest upon another: and thus all bear their own burdens, and reach what they desire; and suffer not shipwreck, because love is as a ship unto them.

Love therefore beareth burdens: but let it not fear lest it be overwhelmed by such burdens: let it heed, lest each man be overpowered by his own sins. For when thou bearest thy brother's infirmity, his sins do not burthen thee. Certainly if thou consent, then thine own sins overwhelm thee, not another's. For every man who hath consented to a sinner, is oppressed by another's sins, not his own. For consent to another's sin becometh thine own sin; and there is no room for thee to complain that another's sins weigh thee down. For it is said unto thee, Sins do weigh thee down, but thine own. When thou sawest a thief, thou didst run with him. What is this? With thy feet thou didst walk to a theft; yea, thou didst join thyself in mind to the thief: what was his deed alone, has become thine too: because it pleased thee. But if it displeased thee, and thou didst pray for him, and when entreated freely forgavest, so that thou mayest with a free countenance say in thy prayers, which the heavenly Counsellor hath dictated to thee, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us; thou hast learnt to bear thy brother's burdens: so that another also may bear any there may be of thine, and the words of the Apostle may be realised in you, Bear each other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Thus thou securely singest the words we have just read, For the sake of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord.

5. But he who keepeth not this law, neither doth he wait for the Lord; nor, if he should wish to wait for Him, is there a reason why he should wait; he waiteth fruitlessly. For the Lord will come, and will discover thy sins. But that thou hast lived in perfect righteousness,—He will not perhaps discover murders, for these are heavy and extreme offences; He will not discover adultery, He will not discover thefts, He will not discover robbery, He will not discover enchantments, He will not discover idolatry; none of these will He perchance discover. Will He therefore discover nothing? Hear the words of the Gospel: He who saith to his brother, Thou fool. Who abstaineth from these most minute sins of the tongue? But perhaps thou sayest, They are slight. He shall be in danger, saith our Lord, of hell fire. If it seemed but a slight or no very great thing to thee to say unto thy brother, Thou fool, at least let the fire of hell seem great to thee; if thou didst little regard the sin, at least be deterred by the magnitude of the punishment. But thou sayest, These things are slight, they are trivial: this life cannot be without them.

Heap together slight things, and they constitute a great heap. For grains are minute, and yet they make a lump: and drops are minute, yet they fill rivers, and drag masses with them. He therefore considering how many minute sins man daily committeth, if nothing else, at least by his thoughts and his tongue, heeds how many they be; and if he heed how minute they be, he seeth that by many minute sins a great heap is produced; and, not thinking of his own former sins, but of human weakness itself, now rising saith, Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let Thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? I can avoid murders, adulteries, robberies, perjuries, enchantments, idolatry; can I avoid sins of the tongue also? Can I avoid sins of the heart also? It is written, Sin is the transgression of the law. Who then may abide, if Thou wilt be extreme to mark transgressions? If Thou wilt deal with us as a severe judge, not as a merciful father, who shall stand before Thine eyes? But with Thee there is propitiation: for the sake of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord. What is the nature of this law? Bear each other's burdens, and so shall ye fulfil the law of Christ. Who bear each other's burdens? They who say faithfully, Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

6. Ver. 6. My soul hath waited for Thy word. No man waiteth, save he who hath not as yet received what hath been promised; for what doth he, who hath already received, wait for? We have received remission of sins; but the kingdom of heaven is promised us; our debts have been blotted out; but our reward is still to come; we have received pardon, but we hold not as yet everlasting life. But He Who gave pardon, Himself promised also everlasting life. If it were our own word, we ought to fear: because it is the word of God, it deceiveth not. We therefore trust (ver. 5.) without fear on the word of Him Who cannot deceive. My soul hath trusted in the Lord, from the morning watch even unto night. What is that he saith? hath he hoped in the Lord for one day, and hath all his hope terminated? From the morning watch even unto night hath my soul trusted in the Lord. This morning watch is the end of night; hence my soul hath trusted in the Lord even unto night. We must therefore understand it so that we may not suppose we are to trust in the Lord for one day only. What do you conceive

to be the sense, then, brethren? The words, My soul hath trusted in the Lord from the morning watch unto night, mean this: that the Lord, through Whom our sins have been remitted, arose from the dead at the morning watch, so that we may hope that what went before in the Lord will take place in us. For our sins have been already forgiven: but we have not yet risen again: if we have not risen again, not as yet hath that taken place in us whih went before in our Head. What went before in our Head? Because the flesh of that Head rose again; did the Spirit of that Head die? What had died in Him, rose again. Now He arose on the third day; and the Lord as it were thus speaketh to us: What ye have seen in Me, hope for in yourselves; that is, because I have risen from the dead, ye also shall rise again.

7. But there are who say, Behold, the Lord hath risen again; but must I hope on that account that I also may rise again? Certainly, on that account: for the Lord rose again in that which He assumed from thee. For He would not rise again, save He had died; and He could not have died, except He bore the flesh. What did the Lord assume from thee? The flesh. What was He that came Himself? The Word of God, Who was before all things, through Whom all things were made. But that He might receive something from thee, The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. He received from thee, what He might offer for thee; as the priest receiveth from thee, what he may offer for thee, when thou wishest to appease God for thy sins. It hath already been done, it hath been done thus. Our Priest received from us what He might offer for us: for He received flesh from us, in the flesh itself He was made a victim, He was made a holocaust, He was made a sacrifice. In the Passion He was made a sacrifice; in the Resurrection He renewed that which was slain, and offered it as His first-fruits unto God, and saith unto thee, All that is thine is now consecrated: since such first-fruits have been offered unto God from thee; hope therefore that that will take place in thyself which went before in thy first-fruits.

8. Since He then rose with the morning watch, our soul began to hope from hence: and how far? Even unto night; until we die; for all our carnal death is as it were sleep. Thou hast begun to hope since the Lord rose again, fail not to hope until thou goest forth from this life. For if thou hope not even unto night, all that thou hadst hoped is destroyed. For there are men who begin to

hope, but persevere not unto night. They begin to suffer some tribulations, they begin to suffer temptations, they see wicked and unrighteous men flourish in temporal prosperity: and since they hoped for such things from the Lord, that they might here be happy, they observe that those who have committed crimes, possess what they desired to possess themselves; and their feet fail, and they cease to hope. Why? Because they began not to hope from the morning watch. They did not begin to hope this thing of the Lord, which went before in the Lord from that morning watch: but they hoped from the Lord, that if they were Christians, they might have a house full of corn, wine, oil, gold, silver: none of them would die prematurely; if any had not children, he would obtain them; if he had not married a wife, he would marry one: not only no woman in his house, but not even his cattle would miscarry; his vats would not turn sour, his vineyard would not suffer from hail storms. He who thus trusted in the Lord, observed that they who worship not the Lord abound with these things, and his feet slipped, and he hoped not until night; because he commenced not to hope from the morning watch.

9. Who then beginneth thus to hope from the morning watch? He who hopeth that from the Lord, which He began to shew from the morning watch in which He rose again. For before no man had arisen to live for ever. Listen, my beloved. The dead were raised again before our Lord’s advent: for Elias also raised a dead man, and Elisæus, but they rose again doomed to die again. They whom the Lord Himself raised, rose to die again; whether that youth the widow’s son, or the girl of twelve years of age, the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, or Lazarus: they were raised by different ways, but all doomed to die; once they were born, but twice they died. No man had risen again never to die, except the Lord. But when did the Lord rise again never to die? From the morning watch. Do thou also hope this from the Lord, that thou wilt rise again, not as Lazarus rose, not as the widow’s son and the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue rose, not as they rose whom the Prophets of old raised; but hope that thou wilt rise again as the Lord rose, so that after thy resurrection thou mayest no more fear that thou wilt die: and thou hast begun to hope from the morning watch.

10. But hope even until night, until this life be finished, until the night of the whole human race come on at the sunset of the world. Why is this, until? Because after this night, there will no longer be hope, but reality. For the hope that is seen is not hope, saith the Apostle: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. If therefore we ought patiently to wait for that we see not, let us hope even unto night, that is, even to the end of this life or of the world. But when this night shall have passed over, that will come at last which we hoped for; and we shall no longer hope, nor shall we be in despair. For we blame men who despair, and sometimes we detest a man, and say, He hath no hope. It is not always an evil not to have hope. When we are in this life, it is an evil not to have hope: for he who hath not hope now, will not have the reality afterwards. We ought therefore to have hope now. But when the reality is come, will there be hope? For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? The Lord our God will come, first to shew to the human race that form wherein He was crucified and rose again, that the godly and the ungodly may see: let those see, and be thankful that they have discovered what they believed before they saw; and let these blush not to have believed what they will see. They who are ashamed will be condemned, and they who are thankful will be crowned. It will be said to them that are confounded, Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: it will be said to them that rejoice, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, which when they shall have received, hope will be no longer, because the reality will be theirs. When hope therefore is done, that night will pass by; but until this happen, let our soul hope in the Lord from the morning watch.

11. And he returns to this, From the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord. From the morning watch even unto night hath my soul hoped in the Lord. But what hath it hoped? From the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord. Not only let Israel hope in the Lord, but from the morning watch let Israel hope. Do I then blame the hope of the world, when it is placed in the Lord? No; but there is another hope belonging to Israel. Let not Israel hope for riches as his highest good, not for health of body, not for abundance of earthly things: he will indeed have to suffer tribulation here, if

it should be his lot to suffer any troubles for the sake of the truth. For the Martyrs lacked not hope in God, and yet they suffered such things as do robbers, as do wicked men: cast before beasts, burnt with fires, stricken with the sword, mangled with instruments of torture, bound in chains, worn to death with prisons, suffering all these evils, did they not hope in the Lord? or was their hope this, that they should be freed from these evils, and enjoy this life? Certainly not: because they hoped from the morning watch. What meaneth this? They considered that morning watch, wherein their Lord arose, and they saw that before He rose again, He Himself also had suffered such things, as they were now suffering, and they despaired not that they also should rise again after such sufferings unto life eternal. Israel hath trusted in the Lord, from the morning even unto night.

12. Ver. 7, 8. For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. Admirable! This could not have been better said in its own place, on account of the words, From the morning watch let Israel trust in the Lord. Wherefore? Because the Lord rose again from the morning watch; and the body ought to hope for that which went before in the Head. But, lest this thought should be suggested: The Head might rise again, because It was not weighed down with sins, there was no sin in Him; what shall we do? Shall we hope for such a resurrection, as went before in the Lord, whilst we are weighed down by our sins? But see what followeth: For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his sins. Though therefore he was weighed down with his sins, the mercy of God is present to him. For this reason, He went before without sin, that He may blot out the sins of those that follow Him. Trust not in yourselves, but trust from the morning watch. See that your Head hath risen again, and hath ascended into heaven. In Him there was no fault, but through Him your faults will be blotted out; He shall redeem Israel from all his sins. Because Israel could sell himself, and become a bondsman under sin; he cannot redeem himself from his sins. He could redeem, Who could not sell Himself: He Who committed no sin, He is the Redeemer from sin. He will redeem Israel. From what will He redeem him? From this sin, or from that? From all his sins. Let him not therefore, when about to come before God, fear any of his sins: let him only come with a full heart, and cease to do any more what he before did, and not say, That sin is not

forgiven me. For if he saith this, on account of that very sin which he supposeth not to be forgiven him, he converteth not himself, and by doing the rest, not even that which he feared not is forgiven him. As I have committed, he saith, a great crime, and it cannot be forgiven me; I will now do the rest also: for I lose this which I do not do. Fear not: thou art in the deep, scorn not to cry unto God from the depths, and to say, If Thou, O Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? Think of Him, and wait for Him, and endure on account of His law. What law hath He given thee? Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Hope that thou wilt rise again, and that thou wilt be there altogether without sin, since He rose again Who first was without sin. Hope from the morning watch. Say not, I am not worthy on account of my sins. Thou art not worthy: but, with Him there is plenteous redemption: and He will redeem Israel from all his sins.

PSALM 131

Exposition

A Sermon to the Common People.

1. In this Psalm, the humility of one that is a servant of God and faithful is commended unto us, by whose voice it is sung; which is the whole body of Christ. For we have often warned you, beloved, that it ought not to be received as the voice of one man singing, but of all who are in Christ's Body. And since all are in His Body, as it were one man speaketh: and he is one who also is many. For they are many in themselves, but one in Him Who is one. Now this is the very temple of God, of which the Apostle saith, The temple of God is holy, which are ye; that is, all who believe in Christ, and so believe as to love. For this is to believe in Christ, to love Christ: not as the devils believed, but loved not; and therefore, although they believed, said, What have we to do with Thee, Thou Son of God? But let us so believe, that we may believe on Him, loving Him, and may not say, What have we to do with Thee? but may rather say, Unto Thee we belong; Thou hast redeemed us. All therefore who thus believe, are as living stones, whereof the temple of God is built; and as timber that doth not decay, whereof that ark was made, which could not be overwhelmed in the deluge. This is the temple, that is, the men themselves, wherein God is prayed to, and heareth. For whosoever beside the temple of God prayeth God, is not heard unto that peace of the heavenly Jerusalem, although He is heard for certain temporal things, which God hath given to the heathen also. For the devils themselves were heard, that they might enter into the swine. To be heard unto everlasting life is another thing, nor is it granted save unto him who prayeth in the temple of God. Now he prayeth in the temple of God, who prayeth in the peace of the Church, in the unity of Christ's Body; which Body of Christ consisteth of many who believe in the whole world: and therefore he who prayeth in the temple, is heard. For he prayeth in the spirit and in truth, who prayeth in the peace of the Church; not in that temple, wherein was the figure.

2. For according to a figure our Lord shut out men from the Temple, those who sought their own, that is, who resorted to the temple for the sake of selling and buying. But if that Temple was a figure, it is clear that the Body of Christ also, which is the true Temple whereof that was the image, hath mingled with it buyers and sellers, that is, such as seek their own things, not the things of Jesus Christ. Now they are driven out thence with a whip of cords. For a cord signifieth sins, as is said through the Prophet: Woe unto them that draw sin as it were with a long rope. They who add sins to sins, draw a long rope of sin; they who when they have committed one sin, commit another, to cover it. For as yarn is added to yarn, to make a rope; and it doth not progress in a straight line, but is twisted: so all evil deeds, which are sins when added one to another, when sin cometh from sin, and sin is annexed to sin, become a long rope. Whose paths are crooked, and their ways are full of windings. What is the use of this rope, save that by it each man's hands and feet are to be bound, and he is to be cast forth into outer darkness? For ye remember it is said of a certain sinner in the Gospel, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. There would be no means of binding his hands and feet, had he not made for himself a rope. Whence it is most openly said in another passage, The wicked shall be holden with the cords of his sins. Since therefore men are beaten by means of their own sins, therefore did the Lord make a whip of cords, and with it drove out of the Temple all who sought their own, not the things that are of Jesus Christ.

3. It is therefore the voice of this Temple in the Psalm. In this Temple, as I have said, God is prayed unto: and heareth in Spirit and in Truth; not in that bodily Temple. For there was the shadow, wherein might be shewn what was to come: therefore that Temple hath already fallen. Hath therefore the house of our prayer fallen? God forbid! For that temple which fell could not be called the house of prayer, whereof it is said, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations. For ye have heard what our Lord Jesus Christ said, It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves. Did they who wished to make the house of God a den of thieves, effect the ruin of the Temple? So they also who live ill in the Catholic Church, as far as in them is, wish to make the house of God a den of thieves; yet they do not on that account overthrow the Temple.

For a time will come, when they will be cast out of doors with the rope of their sins. But this Temple of God, this Body of Christ, this Congregation of the faithful, hath one voice, and singeth in the Psalm as one man. We have already heard its voice in many Psalms; let us also hear it in this. If we will, it is our voice; if we will, we hear it with the ear singing, and we sing in heart. But if we refuse, we shall be in that Temple as buyers and sellers, that is, seeking our own things: we enter the Church, not for those purposes that please the eyes of God. Let therefore any one among you consider in what manner he heareth, whether he hear and laugh, whether he hear and cast it behind him, whether he hear and respond, that is, perceive his own voice here, and join the voice of his own heart to the voice of this Psalm. Yet the voice of this Psalm is not mute; let them who are able, nay, who wish, be instructed; they who wish not, let them not hinder. Let humility be recommended unto us; thence he beginneth.

4. Ver. 1. Lord, my heart is not lifted up. He hath offered a sacrifice. Whence do we prove that he hath offered a sacrifice? Because humility of heart is a sacrifice. It is said in another Psalm, If Thou hadst desired a sacrifice, surely I would have given it Thee. He wished to atone unto God for his sins, he wished to propitiate Him, that he might receive pardon for his sins: and, as it were, seeking by what means he might propitiate Him; If thou hadst desired, he saith, a sacrifice, I would have given it Thee; but Thou delightest not in burnt offerings. It was superfluous therefore for him to seek either rams, or bulls, or any such victim, wherewith he might appease God. What then? Since God is not pleased with burnt-offerings, doth He not receive a sacrifice, and is He appeased without a sacrifice? If there is no sacrifice, there is no Priest. But if we have a High Priest in Heaven, Who intercedeth with the Father for us, (for He hath entered into the Holy of Holies, within the veil, where the priest in figure entered not save once in the year, as the Lord also in the whole of time was once offered. He offered Himself, the High Priest Himself, Himself the Victim, and entered once into the Holy of Holies, and now dieth no more, and death hath no more dominion over Him. We are safe, for we have a Priest; let us offer our sacrifice there. Let us consider what sacrifice we ought to offer; for God is not pleased with burnt offerings, as ye have heard in the Psalm. But in that place he next sheweth what he offereth; The sacrifice of God is a

troubled spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, shalt Thou not despise. If therefore a humbled heart be the sacrifice of God, he who said, O Lord, my heart is not lifted up, offered a sacrifice. See him in another passage thus offering: Look upon mine humility and my misery, and forgive me all my sin.

5. Lord, my heart was not lifted up, neither were mine eyes raised on high; I have not exercised myself in great matters, nor in wonderful things which are too high for me. Let this be more plainly spoken and heard. I have not been proud: I have not wished to be known among men as for wondrous powers; nor have I sought any thing beyond my strength, whereby I might boast myself among the ignorant. Observe, beloved, a great matter is set before you. As that Simon the sorcerer wished to advance into wonders above himself, on that account the power of the Apostles more pleased him, than the righteousness of Christians. But when he saw the imposition of hands by the Apostles, and that God gave the Holy Ghost to the faithful through their prayers; and since then the Advent of the Holy Ghost was shewn through a miracle, so that they spoke with tongues, which they had not learnt, that is, all upon whom the Holy Ghost descended. (Not that the Holy Ghost is not given now, because believers speak not with tongues. For they then needs must speak with tongues, to signify that all tongues should believe in Christ. When what was signified was fulfilled, the miracle was taken away.) When therefore Simon saw this, he wished to do the like, not to be like the Apostles; and ye are aware that he even imagined that the Holy Ghost might be gained with money. He therefore was one of those that enter into the temple to buy and sell; he wanted to buy what he designed to sell: and truly, my brethren, it was thus, because he was such an one, and had in such wise come amongst them. The Lord cast forth from the temple the sellers of doves; now a dove signifieth the Holy Spirit; Simon therefore wished to buy the dove, and to sell the dove. Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who dwelt in Peter, came up, and with a whip of cords drove forth the ungodly trader.

6. There are then men whom it pleaseth to perform a miracle, and they exact a miracle from those who have grown in grace in the Church; and they who seem to themselves far advanced, wish to do the like, and suppose

they belong not to God, if they can not do it. But the Lord our God, Who knoweth what He giveth and to whom, and how the framework of the body may be preserved in peace, addresses the Church through the Apostle: The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? ye see then, brethren, how in our members each hath its own office. The eye seeth, and heareth not: the ear heareth, and seeth not; the hand worketh, but it neither heareth nor seeth; the foot walketh, but it heareth not, nor seeth, nor doth what the hand doth. But if there be health in one body, and the members contend not against one another, the ear seeth in the eye, the eye heareth in the ear; nor can it be objected to the ear that it seeth not, so as to say to it, You are nothing, you are inferior; can you see and discern colours, as the eye doth? For the ear answereth from the peace of the body, and saith, I am where the eye is, I am in that body; in myself I see not, in that wherewith I exist I see. So when the ear saith, My eye seeth; the eye saith, My ear heareth; the eyes and ears say, Our hands work for us: the hands say, The eyes and the ears see and hear for us: the eyes and ears and hands say, The feet walk for us: while all members do their work in one body, if there be health therein, and the members agree, they rejoice, and rejoice with each other. And if there be any trouble in any member, they forsake not each other, but suffer with one another. Because in the body the foot seemeth far from the eyes, (for they are placed aloft, the feet below,) if the foot happen to tread upon a thorn, do the eyes forsake it? and is not, as we see, the whole body contracted, so that the man sitteth, the spine of the back is curved, that the thorn which hath stuck in the foot may be sought? All the members do all they can, that the thorn which had stuck in may be drawn forth from that lowest and diminutive part.

Thus then, brethren, whosoever in the body of Christ cannot restore to life the dead, let him not seek this power, but let him seek that he may not disagree in the body; as if the ear should seek to see, it may disagree. For what it hath not received it cannot do. But if it be objected to him and said, If thou wert righteous, thou wouldest raise again a dead man, as Peter raised them. (For the Apostles seem to have wrought greater works in Christ, than the Lord Himself. But how could it be that the shoots should have more power than the root? Yet how do they appear to have wrought greater works than He? At the voice of the Lord the dead arose, at the shadow of Peter as he passed by a dead man arose. The latter seemeth greater than the former. But Christ could work without Peter, Peter could not, save in Christ: for without Me, saith He, ye can do nothing.) When therefore a man who is gaining grace heareth this, as it were a calumny cast in his teeth by ignorant heathens, by men who know not what they speak of; in the membership of the Body of Christ let him answer and say, Thou who sayest, Thou art not righteous, because thou dost not work miracles; thou mightest also say to the ear, Thou art not in the body, for thou seest not. You, he saith, should do what Peter did. But Peter did it for me also, since I am in the body, wherein Peter wrought it: in him I can do what he can, from whom I am not divided; in that I can do less, he suffereth together with me, and in that he can do more, I rejoice with him. The Lord Himself cried from above concerning His Body, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? and no man touched Him; but the Head cried from heaven for the Body suffering on earth.

7. If therefore, brethren, each doeth righteously what he can, and in that wherein another can do more envieth not, but rejoiceth with him as if set in one body with him: these words of the Psalm relate to him, Lord, my heart is not lifted up, neither are mine eyes raised on high; nor have I exercised myself in great matters, nor in wonderful things which are too high for me. What is above my strength, he saith, I have not sought; I have not stretched myself out there, I have not chosen to be magnified there. How deeply this self-exaltation in the abundance of graces is to be feared, that no man may pride himself in the gift of God, but may rather preserve humility, and may do what is written: The greater thou art, the more humble thyself and thou shalt find favour before the Lord: how deeply pride in God’s gift should be feared, we must again and again impress upon you, beloved brethren, especially as the shortness of this Psalm alloweth of our speaking. Although the Apostle Paul became a preacher from a persecutor, he gained more abundant grace in every Apostolic labour, than the rest of the Apostles; so that God might the more shew that what He giveth is His own, not man’s. As physicians are wont to display the power of their art in those that are despaired of, so our Lord Jesus Christ, our Physician and Saviour, in one despaired of, who had been a persecutor of the Church, displayed the

greatness of His art, in that He not only made him a Christian, but an Apostle also: nor an Apostle only, but, as he himself saith, one who toiled more than all of them. He had therefore transcendent grace. And ye see, brethren, that at present in the Church the Epistles of the Apostle Paul flourish more than those of his fellow Apostles. For some wrote not, but only spoke in the Church: for what are alleged by those who are in error under their name, are not their own, and therefore are reprobated, and not received by the Church. While others who have written, have neither written so much, nor with so great grace. Since he then had great grace, and had received great gifts from God, what saith he in a certain passage? Lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations. Heed me: I am speaking to you of a subject of awe: Lest, he saith, I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me. What is this, brethren? That he might not be exalted as a grown man, he was buffeted as a boy. And by whom? By a messenger of Satan. What is this? He is said to have been violently afflicted with some bodily pain: now bodily pains are generally sent by messengers of Satan; but they cannot do this, save they be allowed. For the holy Job also was thus proved. Satan was allowed to prove him, and struck him with a wound, which caused him to rot with worms. For the unclean had the permission, but the holy was put to proof. The devil knoweth not how great blessings are wrought through him, even when he rageth. Raging he entered into the heart of Judas, raging he betrayed Christ, raging he crucified Him: and by the crucifixion of Christ, the whole world was redeemed. Behold, the rage of the devil was an hindrance to the devil, but a profit unto us. For by raging, he lost those whom he held, redeemed by the Lord’s blood, which He shed while he raged. If he had known that he would suffer so great a loss, he would not have poured upon the earth a ransom whereby the human race was redeemed. Thus therefore that messenger of Satan was, of his own will as it were, permitted to buffet the Apostle; but nevertheless the Apostle was treated for his cure. And because what the physician had applied was troublesome to the sick one, he prayed the Physician to take it away. Just as a physician applieth to the body some painful and burning plaster, whereby nevertheless he whose inner parts were swollen must be cured; when the patient begins to burn and be tormented with the remedy, he begs the physician to take it off: but the physician consoleth him, recommendeth him patience, because he knoweth how useful is the remedy he hath applied. Thus the Apostle goeth on to say, after saying, There was given me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me. (He had already given us the reason: Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me.) For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that He would take it away from me. That is to say, I begged the physician to take away from me the troublesome plaster which he had applied. But hear the reply of the physician, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness. I know what I have applied, I know the cause of thy sickness, I know the means of thy cure.

8. If therefore, most beloved, the Apostle Paul could be lifted up with the greatness of the revelations, except he received a messenger of Satan to buffet him; who can feel secure about himself? He who hath received less, seemeth to walk more safely; but if he do not perversely seek for what he hath justly not received, let him seek that without which he cannot be in Christ's Body, or without which he is there to his own hurt. For a sound finger is safer in the body, than a blear eye. The finger is a small thing; the eye a great thing, it hath great power: yet it is better to be the finger and be sound, than to be the eye and to be disturbed, to be bleared, to be blind. Let therefore every man seek nothing in the Body of Christ, save soundness. According to soundness let him have faith; by means of faith his heart is cleansed, by the cleansing of his heart he will see that face of which it hath been said, Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God. Both he who hath wrought miracles, and he who hath not wrought miracles in the Body of Christ, ought not to rejoice, save in the Presence of God. The Apostles returned, and said to the Lord, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy Name. The Lord saw that they were tempted by pride arising from the power of miracles; and He Who had come as a Physician to cure our swellings, and to bear our infirmities, at once replied, In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. Not all good Christians cast out devils; yet the names of all are written in heaven. He wished them not to rejoice in the peculiar gift they possessed, but in this, that they had salvation in

common with the rest: He wished the Apostles to rejoice whence thou also dost rejoice. Heed me, beloved. No believer hath hope, if his name be not written in heaven. The names of all the faithful who love Christ, who walk humbly in His way, which He, humble Himself, taught, are written in heaven. The name of every mean person in the Church, who believeth in Christ, and loveth Christ, and loveth the peace of Christ, is written in heaven; of every one whom thou scornest. And in what is such an one like the Apostles, who wrought so great miracles? Yet the Apostles are censured because they rejoiced in their own special gifts, and are ordered to rejoice thence whence every such mean person rejoiceth.

9. Ver. 2. It is not without cause, my brethren, that he speaketh so humbly, Lord, my heart is not lifted up, nor mine eyes raised on high. I do not exercise myself in great matters, nor in wonderful things above me. If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul, as one taken from his mother’s breast, such the reward for my soul. He seemeth as it were to have bound himself by a curse. As in another passage he saith in the Psalm, O Lord, my God, if I have done any such thing, or if there be any wickedness in my hands; if I have rewarded evil unto him that dealt friendly with me; then let me deservedly fall back empty from mine enemies: and so forth; in the same spirit he seemeth to say here also, If had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul. Look, as though he had been going to say, Let it so happen to me. As there also, If I have returned evil to them that dealt friendly with me, let it so happen to me. How? Let me deservedly fall back from mine enemies empty. So also here, If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul, as one taken away from his mother’s breast, may be my soul’s reward. The condition and the imprecation in the respective clauses answer to one another. Attend. Ye know that the Apostle saith to some weak brethren, I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. There are weak persons who are not fit for strong meat; they wish to grasp at that which they cannot receive: and if they ever do receive, or seem to themselves to receive what they have not received, they are puffed up thereby, and become proud thereupon; they seem to themselves wise men. Now this happeneth to all heretics; who since they were animal and carnal, by defending their depraved opinions, which they could not see to be false,

were shut out of the Catholic Church. I will explain to you, beloved, as far as I am able. Ye know that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Word of God, according to these words of John, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. He therefore is bread: thence the Angels live. Behold, the bread is prepared for thee; but grow by means of the milk, that thou mayest come to the bread. And how, thou sayest, do I grow from milk? That which Christ became for thee for thy weakness, this first believe, and steadily hold. As then the mother when she seeth her child unfit for taking meat, giveth him meat, but meat that hath passed through her flesh: for the bread upon which the infant feeds, is the same bread as that whereupon the mother feeds; but the infant is not fit for the table, he is fit for the breast, and therefore bread is passed from the table through the mother's breast, that the same aliment may thus reach the little infant; thus our Lord Jesus Christ, when He was the Word with the Father, through Whom all things were made; Who since He was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; such as the Angels might receive according to their degree, and whence the Powers and Virtues, intellectual spirits, might feed; while man lay weak and wrapped in flesh on the earth, and the heavenly bread could not reach him; that man might eat the bread of Angels, and that manna might descend to the truer people of Israel, The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

10. On which account the Apostle Paul saith this to the weak, those whom he calleth natural and fleshly. Did I say that I knew any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified? For there was Christ, and not crucified: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And because the Word was made flesh, the Word was also crucified: but was not changed into man; man was changed in Him. Man was changed in Him, that he might become better than he was, not that he might be turned into the very Substance of the Word. In that therefore He was Man, God died; and in that He was God, Man was raised, and arose, and ascended into heaven. Whatever the Man suffered, God cannot be said not to have suffered, because He was God when He took upon Himself man; but He was not changed into man: just as thou canst not say that thou

hast not suffered injury, if thy garment be torn. And when thou complainest either to thy friends, or in a court of law, thou sayest this to the judge, He tore me; thou sayest not, He tore my robe. If thy garment can be and deserveth to be called thyself, though it is not thyself, but thy garment; how much the more hath the flesh of Christ deserved to be called Himself, the Temple of the Word one with the Word, so that whatever the Word suffered in the flesh, God Himself should suffer: although the Word could neither die, nor be corrupted, nor be changed, nor be slain; but whatever of these He suffered, He suffered in the flesh? Marvel not that the Word suffered nothing: even the soul cannot suffer any thing when the flesh is slain, as the Lord Himself saith, Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. If the soul cannot be killed, could the Word of God be killed? Yet what saith he? He hath scourged me, he hath buffeted me, he hath smitten me, he hath lacerated me: all this happeneth not in the soul; nevertheless, he useth no other word than me, on account of the unity of this alliance (consortii).

11. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the bread, made Himself milk for us, being incarnate and appearing in mortal shape, that in Him death might be finished, and that we might not wander from the Word, believing on the flesh which the Word was made. Hence let us grow, by this milk let us be nourished; before we are strong enough to receive the Word, let us not depart from faith in our milk. But the heretics, anxious to discourse concerning what they could not understand, declared that the Son is inferior to the Father, and that the Holy Ghost is inferior to the Son; they have created degrees, and have introduced into the Church Three Gods. For they cannot deny that the Father is God, that the Son is God, that the Holy Ghost is God. But if God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Ghost be unequal, and not of the same substance; there is not One God, but Three Gods. Discoursing therefore on what they could not understand, they were puffed up with pride, and what is said in this Psalm took place in them, If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul; as one taken from his mother’s breast, so may be my soul’s reward. For our mother the Church is of God, from Whom they are cut off: they ought to have been suckled and nourished there, that they might grow so as to receive the Word, God with God, in the form of God equal with the Father.

12. Another opinion indeed hath been entertained by those who have treated these points before ourselves, and another sense in these words, which I will not leave untold to you, Beloved Brethren. They spoke thus: Every proud man displeaseth God, and the human soul ought to humble itself, that it may not displease God, and ought to contemplate with its whole heart the words, The greater thou art, the more humble thyself, and thou shalt find favour before the Lord. But again, there are some men who, when they have heard that they ought to be humble, neglect themselves, wish to learn nothing, imagining that if they learn any thing they will be proud; and they abide in milk alone. These the Scripture blameth, saying, Ye are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For God wisheth us to be so suckled with milk, that we abide not therein; but, by growing through milk, we may arrive at strong meat. Man therefore ought not to raise his heart unto pride, but to raise it unto the teaching of the Word of God. For if the soul were not to be lifted up, it would not be said in another Psalm, Unto Thee, Lord, will I lift up my soul. And except the soul overflow herself, she reacheth not unto the sight of God, and unto the knowledge of that immutable Substance. For while it is still in the flesh, it is thus addressed: Where is thy God? But the soul's God is within, and is within spiritually, and is lofty spiritually; not as it were by intervals of places, as places are higher through intervals. For if such an altitude is to be sought, the birds surpass us in approaching God. God is therefore lofty within, and spiritually lofty; nor doth the soul reach Him, save it hath passed itself. For whatever thou thinkest concerning God according to the body, thou errest much. Thou art indeed an infant, if thou thinkest concerning God even after the human soul, so that God may either forget, or be wise so as that He may be unwise, or do any thing and yet repent of it: for all these things are said in the Scriptures, that God may be commended unto us yet unweaned; not that we may hear these expressions literally of Him and understand them as if God repented, and were now learning something that He knew not, and understanding what He understood not, and remembering what He had forgotten. Such things belong to the soul, not unto God. Unless therefore he hath passed the measure of his own soul, he will not see that God is what He is; Who said, I am That I am. What then did he reply, to whom it was said, Where is thy God?—My tears have been my meat day and night, while they daily say unto me, Where is thy God? But that he might find his

God, what did he do? Now when I thought thereupon, he saith, I poured out my heart beyond myself. That he might find God, he poured out his heart beyond himself. It is not therefore said unto thee, be humble, with a view that thou mayest not be wise. Be humble, in respect of pride: be high, in respect of wisdom. Hear a plain sentence in this matter. Become not children in your understandings; howbeit in malice be ye children, that ye may be perfected in your understandings. It has been evidently explained, my brethren, where God would have us to be humble, where lofty. Humble, in order to provide against pride; lofty, to take in wisdom. Feed upon milk, that thou mayest be nourished; be nourished, so that thou mayest grow; grow, so that thou mayest eat bread. But when thou hast begun to eat bread, thou wilt be weaned, that is, thou wilt no longer have need of milk, but of solid food. This he seemeth to have meant: If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul: that is, if I was not an infant in mind, I was in wickedness. In this sense, he said before, Lord, my heart was not lifted up, nor mine eyes raised on high: I do not exercise myself in great matters, nor in wonderful things above me. Behold, in wickedness I am an infant. But since I am not an infant in understanding, If I had not lowly thoughts, but have lifted up my soul, may that reward be mine which is given unto the infant that is weaned from his mother, that I may at length be able to eat bread.

13. This interpretation, also, brethren, displeaseth me not, since it doth not militate against the faith. Yet I cannot but remark that it is not only said, As one taken away from milk, such may be my soul’s reward; but with this addition, As one taken away from milk when upon his mother’s breast, such may be my soul’s reward. Here there is somewhat that induces me to consider it a curse. For it is not an infant, but a grown child that is taken away from milk; he who is weak in his earliest infancy, which is his true infancy, is upon his mother’s breast: if perchance he hath been taken away from the milk, he perisheth. It is not without a reason then that it is added, Upon his mother’s breast. For all may be weaned by growing. He who groweth, and is thus taken away from milk, it is good for him; but hurtful for him who is still upon his mother’s breast. We must therefore beware, my brethren, and be fearful, lest any one be taken away from milk before his time. For every fullgrown child is separated from milk. But let none be

taken away from milk, when he is upon his mother’s breast. But while he is carried in his mother’s hands, who hath been carried in her womb, (for he was carried in her womb, that he might be born; he is carried in her arms, that he may grow,) he hath need of milk; he is still upon his mother’s breast. Let him not therefore wish to lift up his soul, when perchance he is not fit to take meat, but let him fulfil the commandments of humility. He hath wherein he may exercise himself: let him believe in Christ, that he may understand Christ. He cannot see the Word, he cannot understand the equality of the Word with the Father, he cannot as yet see the equality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Word; let him believe this, and suck it. He is safe, because, when he hath grown, he will eat, which he could not do before he grew by sucking: and he hath a point to stretch towards. Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, and search not the things that are above thy strength; that is, things which thou art not as yet fit to understand. And what am I to do? thou repliest. Shall I remain thus? But what things the Lord hath commanded thee, think thereupon always. What hath the Lord commanded thee? Do works of mercy, part not with the peace of the Church, place not thy trust in man, tempt not God by longing for miracles. If there be fruit in thee, thou knowest that thou endurest tares together with the good until the harvest; that thou canst be with the wicked for a season, not for evermore. The chaff is here mingled during this season on the floor; it will not be with thee in the barn. Here, What the Lord hath commanded, think thereupon always. Thou shalt not be taken away from the milk as long as thou art upon thy mother’s breast; lest thou perish from hunger, before thou art fit to eat bread. Grow: thy powers will be strong, and thou wilt see what thou couldest not, and wilt receive what thou receivedst not.

14. What then? When I shall see what I could not see, and shall receive what I could not receive, shall I then lay aside apprehension? shall I then be perfect? No, not as long as thou livest. Our very perfection is humility. Ye have heard the conclusion of the reading from the Apostle, if it hath been retained in your memory; how he who received a buffet that he might not be exalted by the revelations (how great things were revealed to him!) on account of the very magnitude of those revelations, because he might have been exalted, except he had received the messenger of Satan: nevertheless, what doth he, to whom so great things were revealed, say? Brethren, I count

not myself to have apprehended. Paul saith, Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; he who received the buffeting messenger of Satan that he might not be exalted above measure by the greatness of the revelations. Who dareth to say that he apprehendeth? Lo, Paul hath not apprehended, and saith, I count not myself to have apprehended. And what sayest thou, Paul! I follow after, he saith, if that I may apprehend. Paul is still on the path, and dost thou think thyself at thy home? This one thing I do; forgetting, he saith, those things which are behind. This do thou also do, and forget thy past wicked life. If at one time vanity pleased thee, let it please thee no more. Forgetting those things, he saith, which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. I hear the voice of God from above, and I run that I may apprehend. For He hath not left me to abide in the path, since He ceaseth not to address me. God therefore, my brethren, ceaseth not to address us. For if He ceaseth, what are we doing? What is the use of inspired lessons and inspired Psalms? Forget therefore what is behind, and reach forth unto the things that are before. So suck in milk, that ye may grow unto meat. When therefore ye shall have come into your home, ye will rejoice. And still observe, that the Apostle followeth unto the prize of his heavenly calling. For he saith, Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded. I speak not, he saith, to the imperfect, unto whom as yet I cannot speak wisdom, who still must be nourished with milk, and are not fed with strong meat; but unto them I speak, who are now eating strong meat. They seem now to be perfect, because they understand the equality of the Word with the Father: still as yet they see not, as we must see, face to face; still in part only, in a mystery. Let them run therefore, since, when our path shall have been ended, we then return unto our home; let them run, let them reach forth. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal this unto you. If perchance thou errest in any thing, why returnest thou not unto thy mother’s milk? For if ye be not exalted, if ye raise not your heart on high, if ye tread not in great matters that are too high for you, but preserve humility, God will reveal unto you what ye are otherwise minded in. But if ye choose to defend this very thing, which ye are otherwise minded about, and with pertinacity assert it, and against the peace of the Church; this curse which he hath described is entailed upon you; when ye are upon your mother’s breast, and are removed away from the milk, ye shall die of hunger apart from your mother’s breast. But if ye continue in Catholic peace, if perchance ye are in any thing otherwise minded than ye ought to be, God will reveal it to you, if ye be humble. Wherefore? Because God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble.

15. Ver. 3. This Psalm therefore concludeth to this purpose: O Israel, trust in the Lord, from this time forth and even unto eternity. The Greek words, ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν καὶ ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος, are rendered in the Latin, ex hoc nunc et usque in seculum. But the word seculum doth not always mean this world, but sometimes eternity; since eternity is understood in two ways; until eternity, that is, either evermore without end, or until we arrive at eternity. How then is it to be understood here? Until we arrive at eternity, let us trust in the Lord God; because when we have reached eternity, there will be no longer hope, but the thing itself will be ours.

PSALM 132

Exposition

A Sermon to the common People.

1. Ver. 1, 2. It was right indeed, most beloved, that we should rather hear our Brother, my colleague, when present before all of us. And just now he refused not, but put us off; and I tell you this, Beloved, that with me ye may claim the promise. It could not, however, seem strange to you, Beloved, that I first came forward in obedience to his invitation: for he extorted from me that he might now listen to me, on the condition that I also may listen to him, for in charity itself we are all listening unto Him, Who is our One Master in heaven. Attend therefore to the Psalm, which, as ye know, we have to treat of next in order. This is also entitled, A Song of Degrees; and is considerably longer than the rest under the same title. Let us not therefore linger, save where necessity shall compel us: that we may, if the Lord permit, explain the whole. For ye also ought not to hear every thing as men untaught; ye ought in some degree to aid us from your past listenings, so that it may not be needful that every thing should be declared to you as though new. New indeed we ought to be, because the old man ought not to creep upon us; but we must grow also and advance. Of this very advancement the Apostle saith Though our outward man perish, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. Let us not so grow as to become old after being new, but let the newness itself grow.

2. Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. How he sware unto the Lord, and vowed a vow unto the Almighty God of Jacob. David according to the truth of history was one man, king of Israel, son of Jesse. He was indeed meek, as the Divine Scriptures themselves mark and command him, and so meek that he did not even render evil for evil to his persecutor Saul. He preserved towards him so great humility, that he acknowledged him a king, and himself a dog: and answered the king not proudly nor rudely, though he was more powerful in God; but he rather endeavoured to appease

him by humility, than to provoke him by pride. Saul was even given into his power, and this by the Lord God, that he might do to him what he listed: but since he was not commanded to slay him, but had it only placed in his power;—now a man is permitted to use his power;—he rather turned towards mercy what God gave him. If he had chosen to slay him, he would have been rid of an enemy; but how could he then say, Forgive me my trespasses, as I forgive them that trespass against me? Saul entered into a cavern where David was, not knowing that David was there. He went in for the occasions of the body. David arose privily, and cut off the skirt of his robe, that he might shew it to him, to convince him that he had him in his power; and that he had spared him not of compulsion but of free-will, and chose not to slay him. He perhaps was commending this very act of meekness in the words, Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. This is according to the truth of history, which Holy Writ, as I have said, containeth. But our practice is in the Psalms not to heed the letter, as in all prophecy, but to search mysteries through the letter. You remember, Beloved, that we are wont to hear the voice of one Man in all the Psalms; that One Who hath Head and body. The Head is in heaven, the body on the earth: but the body also will follow whither the Head hath gone before. I no longer explain who is the Head, who the body; because I am speaking to those that know.

3. The humility of David is therefore commended, the meekness of David is commended; and it is said to God, Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. For what purpose saith he, Lord, remember David?—How he sware unto the Lord, and vowed a vow unto the Almighty God of Jacob. Therefore remember for this, that he may fulfil what he hath promised. David himself vowed as though he had it in his power, and he prayeth God to fulfil his vow: there is devotion in the vow, but there is humility in the prayer. Let no one presume to think he fulfilleth by his own strength what he hath vowed. He who exhorteth thee to vow, Himself aideth thee to fulfil. Let us therefore see what he vowed, and hence we comprehend how David should be understood in a figure. ‘David’ is interpreted, ‘Strong of hand,’ for he was a great warrior. Trusting indeed in the Lord his God, he despatched all wars, he laid low all his enemies, God helping him, according to the dispensation of that kingdom; prefiguring nevertheless

some One strong of hand to destroy His enemies, the devil and his angels. These enemies the Church warreth against, and conquereth. And how conquereth she? by meekness. For by meekness, our King Himself overcame the devil. The devil raged: He endured; he who raged was overcome; He who endured conquered. With this meekness the body of Christ, which is the Church, conquereth her enemies. Let her be strong of hand, let her overcome by working. But since the Body of Christ is both a temple, and a house, and a city; and He Who is the Head of the Body, is also the Dweller in the House, and the Sanctifier of the temple, and the King of the city: as the Church is all those things, so Christ is all these. What therefore have we vowed unto God, save to be His temple? We cannot offer unto Him any thing more acceptable, than in saying with Isaiah, Lord, possess us. In earthly possessions indeed a benefit is given to the master of a house, when possession is given him: not thus is it with that possession which is the Church; the benefit is given the possession itself, that it may be possessed by such a one.

4. What then doth he mean, How he sware unto the Lord, and vowed a vow unto the God of Jacob? Let us see what vow is this? We can offer God nothing more pleasing than to swear. Now to swear is to promise firmly. Consider this vow, that is, with what ardour he vowed what he vowed, with what love, with what longing; nevertheless, he prayeth the Lord to fulfil it in these words, O Lord, remember David, and all his meekness. In this temper he vowed his vow, that there should be a house of God: I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house, nor climb up into my bed; I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep. This seemeth not enough; he adds, nor mine eyelids to slumber, neither the temples of my head to take any rest, until I find out a place for the Lord; an habitation for the God of Jacob. Where did he seek a place for the Lord? If he was meek, he sought it in himself. For how is one a place for the Lord? Hear the Prophet: Upon whom shall My Spirit rest? Even upon him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My words. Dost thou wish to be a place for the Lord? Be thou poor in spirit, and contrite, and trembling at the word of God, and thou wilt thyself be made what thou seekest. For if what thou seekest be not realized in thyself, what doth it profit thee in another. God indeed sometimes worketh the salvation of another through the preacher only, if he preach and

do not; and through his tongue there is made in another a place for the Lord, but he becometh not himself a place for the Lord. But he who doth well what he teacheth, and teacheth well also, becometh a place for the Lord, together with him whom he teacheth, because all believers constitute one place for the Lord. For the Lord hath His place in the heart; for the heart of all joined together in love is one.

5. How many thousands believed, my brethren, when they laid down the price of their possessions at the Apostles’ feet! But what saith Scripture of them? Surely they are become a temple of God; not only each respectively a temple of God, but also all a temple of God together. They have therefore become a place for the Lord. And that ye may know that one place is made for the Lord in all, Scripture saith, They were of one heart and one soul toward God. But many, so as not to make a place for the Lord, seek their own things, love their own things, delight in their own power, are greedy for their private interests. Whereas he who wisheth to make a place for the Lord, should rejoice not in his private, but the common good. They did this with their private goods; they made them common. Did they love what they had of their own? If they held their goods alone, and each man had his own, he would have that only which he had of his own; but when he made that which was his special property common, those things also which belonged to others were made his own. Consider this, beloved; that on account of private possessions exist lawsuits, enmities, discords, wars among men, riots, dissensions against one another, offences, sins, iniquities, murders. On account of what? On account of what we each possess. Do we litigate in behalf of what we possess in common? In common we inhale this air, in common we all behold the sun. Blessed then are they who so make a place for the Lord, as not to rejoice in their private goods. Such a one indeed the Psalmist describes in the words, I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house. This was private. He knew that he was hindered by what was his own only, so that he could not make a place for the Lord; and he mentions what belonged to himself: I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house, until I find out: what? when thou hast found a place for the Lord, wilt thou come within thy tabernacle? Or will itself be thy tabernacle, when thou shalt have found a place for the Lord? Wherefore? Because thou

wilt thyself be the place of the Lord, and thou wilt be one with those who shall be the Lord’s place.

6. Let us therefore, brethren, abstain from the possession of private property; or from the love of it, if we may not from its possession; and we make a place for the Lord. It is too much for me, saith some one. But consider who thou art, who art about to make a place for the Lord. If any senator wished to be entertained at your house, I say not senator, the deputy of some great man of this world, and should say, something offends me in thy house; though thou shouldest love it, thou wouldest remove it, nevertheless, lest thou shouldest offend him, whose friendship thou wast courting. And what doth man’s friendship profit thee? Perchance thou wouldest find there not merely no aid, but even danger. For many were not endangered before they combined with greater men; they earnestly desired the friendship of the great, but to incur greater dangers. Desire the friendship of Christ without fear: He wishes to be entertained at thy house; make room for Him. What is, make room for Him? Love not thyself, love Him. If thou love thyself, thou shuttest the door against Him; if thou love Him, thou openest unto Him: and if thou open and He enter, thou shalt not be lost by loving thyself, but shalt find thyself with Him Who loveth thee.

7. Ver. 3. I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house, nor climb up into the couch of my bed. For private property of itself, where a man yields to its influence, makes him proud: therefore he said, I will not climb up. In any property which any man possesses of his own, he must needs be proud; for on that account man stretches himself before man, though both be flesh. What is a man, brethren? Flesh? And what is the other man? Another piece of flesh. Nevertheless, the rich flesh stretcheth out itself against the poor flesh; as if that flesh brought any thing when it was born, or taketh away any thing when it dieth. It had more only to swell the more. But the Psalmist who wisheth to find a place for the Lord, saith, I will not climb up into the couch of my bed.

8. Ver. 4. I will not give sleep to mine eyes. For many when they sleep, make not a place for the Lord. Such the Apostle arouseth: Awake, thou that steepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light; and in another passage, Ye are all the children of the day; we are not of the night,

nor of darkness; therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken, are drunken in the night. Meaning by the night iniquity, wherein they go to sleep because they desire these earthly things. And all these seeming sources of worldly happiness, are the dreams of sleepers. And as he who seeth treasures in his sleep, while he sleeps is rich; but will sometimes awake, and be poor; thus it is in sleep that men rejoice in all those vanities of this world that please them; but they will awake when they would not, if they wake not now when it is profitable for them; and they will find those to have been dreams, that have passed away, as Scripture saith, As a dream when one awaketh; and in another passage, They have slept their sleep, and all the men whose hands are mighty have found nothing. They have slept their sleep, their sleep is over, and they have found nothing in their hands; because they beheld transitory riches in their sleep. The Psalmist therefore, wishing to find a place for the Lord, saith, I will not give sleep to mine eyes. But there are some who sleep not, but slumber. They in a great degree draw themselves off from the love of temporal things, and are again rolled back into it; like slumberers, they often nod their heads. Awake, shake off sleep; by slumbering thou wilt fall. The Psalm wisheth not that he who desires to find a place for the Lord, should give sleep to his eyes or slumber to his eyelids.

9. Ver. 5. Neither rest, he saith, to the temples of my head. From the rest of the temples sleep cometh to the eyes. The temples are around the eyes. Heaviness of the temples is as it were impending sleep. For when men are about to sleep, their temples begin to feel heavy; and when they feel their temples heavy, then sleep commenceth: if sleep is to be imparted to the eyes, they give their temples rest, and sleep cometh; if they give not rest to their temples, sleep cometh not. When therefore any temporal pleasure beginneth to delight thee unto sin, already thy temples are heavy. Dost thou wish to keep awake, and not to sleep, nor to slumber? Trust not thyself to such pleasure; it will give greater pain than sweetness. Rubbing thy forehead as it were with this thought, thou shakest off sleep, and preparest a place for the Lord.

10. Until I find out a place for the temple of the Lord, a tabernacle for the mighty God of Jacob. Although the tabernacle of God is sometimes called the house of God, and the house of God the tabernacle of God; yet in a more definite sense, dearest brethren, the tabernacle means the Church of this world; the ‘house’ the Church of the heavenly Jerusalem, whither we shall go. For a tabernacle applies rather to soldiers in the field: tabernacles are used for soldiers ready for action, on an expedition; whence they are called contubernales, as having the same tents and dwelling in them. As long therefore as we have an enemy with whom to fight, we make a tabernacle for God. But when the time for fighting hath passed by, and that peace hath come which passeth all understanding, as the Apostle saith, the peace of Christ which passeth all understanding; for how much soever thou mayest reflect upon that peace, the mind is scarce able to conceive it while set amid the heaviness of the body; when that country hath come, then it will be the house, which no adversary will attempt, so as to cause it to be styled a tabernacle. We shall not sally forth to conflict, but we shall abide for praise-giving. For what is said of that house? Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be alway praising Thee. In the tabernacle we as yet groan: in the house we shall praise. Why? Because groaning is for pilgrims, praise for those who have reached their country. Here first be there sought a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.

11. Ver. 6. Lo, we heard of the same at Ephrata. What? A place for the Lord. We heard of it at Ephrata: and found it in the plains of the forests. (We hear those things in Ephrata, we find them in the woodland plains.) Did he hear it where he found it? or did he hear it in one place, find it in another? Let us therefore enquire what Ephrata is, where he heard it; let us also enquire what mean the plains of the forests, where he found it. Ephrata, a Hebrew word, is rendered in Latin by Speculum, as the translators of Hebrew words in the Scriptures have handed down to us, that we might understand them. They have translated from Hebrew into Greek, and from Greek we have versions into Latin. For there have been who watched in the Scriptures. If therefore Ephrata meaneth a mirror, that house which was found in the woodland plains, was heard of in a mirror. A mirror hath an image: all prophecy is an image of things future. The future house of God, therefore, was declared in the image of prophecy. For we have heard of it in the

mirror, that is, we have heard of it in Ephrata. We have found it in the plains of the forests. What are the plains of the forests? ‘Saltus’ is not here used in its common sense, as a plot of ground of so many hundred acres; saltus properly signifies a spot as yet untilled and woody. For some copies read, in the plains of the wood. What then were the woodland plains, save nations yet untilled? what were they, save regions yet covered with the thorns of idolatry? Thus, though there were thorns of idolatry there, still we find a place for the Lord there, a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. What we heard of in Ephrata, we found in the plains of the forests; what was declared in the image to the Jews, was manifested in the faith of the Gentiles.

12. Ver. 7. We will go into His tabernacles. Whose? Those of the Lord God of Jacob. They who enter to dwell therein, are the very same who enter that they may be dwelt in. Thou enterest into thy house, that thou mayest dwell therein; into the house of God, that thou mayest be dwelt in. For the Lord is better, and when He hath begun to dwell in thee, He will make thee happy. For if thou be not dwelt in by Him, thou wilt be miserable. That son who said, Father, give me the portion of the goods that falleth to me, wished to be his own master. It was well kept in his father’s hands, that it might not be wasted with harlots. He received it, it was given into his own power; going to a far country, he squandered it all with harlots. At length he suffered hunger, he remembered his father; he returned, that he might be satisfied with bread. Enter therefore, that thou mayest be dwelt in; and mayest be not thine own, so to speak, but His: We will go into His tabernacles.

13. We will worship on the spot where His feet stood. Whose feet? The Lord’s, or those of the house of the Lord itself? For that is the Lord’s house, wherein he saith He ought to be worshipped. We will worship on the spot where His feet stood. Beside His house, the Lord heareth not unto eternal life; for he belongeth to God’s house, who hath in charity been built in with living stones. But he who hath not charity, falleth; and while he falls, the house stands. Let no one then threaten the house, where he beginneth to be as a stone, as if, should he choose to fall, he injureth the house in any way. Such had been the pride of the first nation of the Jews, who said, God will surely not deceive our father Abraham, to whom He promised so great things from his seed: and they did all evil deeds as though safe in the

promise of God, because He spared them, not for their own merit, who committed crimes, but for the merit of Abraham, and would gather together all the wicked children of Abraham into His own house unto everlasting life. But what saith John? O generation of vipers! When these very children of Abraham came unto him to be baptized in the water of repentance, he said not unto them, Generation of Abraham, but, of vipers. Such were they, as were those whom they imitated: not the children of Abraham, but children of the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Gergesite, the Jebusite, and of all who offended God: they were their children, because they followed their deeds. O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. And think not to say to yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for God is able out of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. There were certain stones then which he saw in the ‘woodland plains,’ out of which children were raised up to Abraham. For they are rather children who imitated his faith, than they who were born of the flesh. Let no man therefore threaten the house of God, as much as to say, I withdraw myself, and the house will fall. For it is good for him that he be built up together, and that he have charity. For if he himself fall, the house will stand. Therefore, brethren, the house of God is in those whom He hath predestined, and who He foreknew would persevere: of these it was said, Where His feet stood. For there are those who persevere not, and His feet stand not in them. They therefore are not the Church; they belong not to that which is now a tabernacle, but will then be the house. But where did His feet stand? Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. Among those in whom love waxeth cold, His feet stand not. But what doth He proceed to say? But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Lo, in whom His feet have stood: on that spot worship thou, that is, be thou among those in whom the Lord’s feet have stood.

14. But if ye incline to understand it of the house itself, where the feet of that house have stood; let thy feet stand in Christ. They will then stand, if thou shalt persevere in Christ. For what is said of the devil? He was a murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth. The feet of the devil therefore stood not. Also what saith he of the proud? O let not the foot of pride come against me; and let not the hand of the ungodly cast me

down. There are they fallen, all that work wickedness: they are cast down, and were not able to stand. That then is the house of God, whose feet stand. Whence John rejoicing, saith: what? He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom standeth and heareth him. If he stand not, he heareth him not. And rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. Justly he standeth, because he rejoiceth on account of the bridegroom’s voice: for if he rejoiced because of his own voice, he would fall. Now therefore ye see why they fell, who rejoice because of their own voice. That friend of the Bridegroom said, The same is He Which baptizeth. Some say, We baptize: rejoicing in their own voice, they could not stand; and belong not to that house of which it is said, where His feet stood.

15. Ver. 8. Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting place. He saith unto the Lord sleeping, Arise. Ye know already Who slept, and Who rose again. For He Himself saith in a certain passage of the Psalms, I slept disturbed. Well is it said unto Him, Arise, O Lord, unto Thy resting place. No more wilt Thou be disturbed, since Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more, and death shall no more have dominion over Him. It is His voice in another Psalm that saith, I laid me down and slept, and rose again, for the Lord shall sustain me. He Himself slept; unto Him is said, Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting place, Thou, and the ark of Thy sanctification: that is, Arise, that the ark of Thy sanctification, which Thou hast sanctified, may arise also. He is our Head; His ark is His Church: He arose first, the Church will arise also. The body would not dare to promise itself resurrection, save the Head arose first. O Lord, arise into Thy resting place, Thou, and the ark of Thy sanctification. The Body of Christ, that was born of Mary, hath been understood by some to be the ark of sanctification; so that the words, Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting place, Thou, and the ark of Thy sanctification, mean, Arise with Thy Body that they who believe not may handle. Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting place, Thou, and the ark of Thy sanctification.

16. Ver. 9. Let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness, and let Thy saints sing with joyfulness. When Thou risest from the dead, and goest unto Thy Father, let that royal Priesthood be clothed with faith, since the righteous liveth by faith; and, receiving the pledge of the Holy Spirit, let the members

rejoice in the hope of resurrection, which went before in the Head: for to them the Apostle saith, Rejoicing in hope.

17. Ver. 10. For Thy servant David’s sake, turn not away the face of Thine Anointed. These words are addressed unto God the Father. For Thy servant David’s sake, turn not away the face of Thine Anointed. The Lord was crucified in Judæa; He was crucified by the Jews; harassed by them, He slept. He arose to judge those among whose savage hands He slept: and He saith elsewhere, Raise Thou Me up again, and I shall reward them. He both hath rewarded them, and will reward them. The Jews well know themselves how great were their sufferings after the Lord’s death. They were all expelled from the very city, where they slew Him. What then? have all perished even from the root of David and from the tribe of Judah? No: for some of that stock believed, and in fact many thousands of men of that stock believed, and this after the Lord’s resurrection. They raged and crucified Him: and afterwards began to see miracles wrought in the Name of Him Crucified; and they trembled still more that His Name should have so much power, since when in their hands He seemed unable to work any; and pricked at heart, at length believing that there was some hidden divinity in Him Whom they had believed like other men, and asking counsel of the Apostles, they were answered, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Since then Christ arose to judge those by whom He had been crucified, and turned away His Presence from the Jews, turning His Presence towards the Gentiles; God is, as it seemeth, besought in behalf of the remnant of Israel; and it is said unto Him, For Thy servant David’s sake, turn not away the presence of Thine Anointed. If the chaff be condemned, let the wheat be gathered together. May the remnant be saved, as Isaiah saith, And the remnant hath clearly been saved: for out of them were the twelve Apostles, out of them more than five hundred brethren, to whom the Lord shewed Himself after His Resurrection: out of their number were so many thousands baptized, who laid the price of their possessions at the Apostles’ feet. Thus then was fulfilled the prayer here made to God: For Thy servant David’s sake, turn not away the presence of Thine Anointed.

18. Ver. 11. The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David, and He shall not repent. What meaneth, hath made an oath? Hath confirmed a promise through Himself. What meaneth, He shall not repent? He will not change. For God suffereth not the pain of repentance, nor is He deceived in any matter, so that He would wish to correct that wherein He hath erred. But as when a man repents of any thing, he wisheth to change what he hath done; thus where thou hearest that God repenteth, look for an actual change. God doth it differently from thee, although He calleth it by the name of repentance; for thou dost it, because thou hadst erred; while He doth it, because He avengeth, or freeth. He changed Saul's kingdom, when He repented, as it is said: and in the very passage where the Scripture saith, It repented Him; it is said a little after, for He is not a man that He should repent. When therefore He changeth His works through His immutable counsel, He is said to repent on account of this very change, not of His counsel, but of His work. But He promised this so as not to change it. Just as this passage also saith: The Lord sware, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec; so also since this was promised so that it should not be changed, because it must needs happen and be permanent; he saith, The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David, and He shall not repent; Of the fruit of thy body shall I set upon thy seat. He might have said, 'of the fruit of thy loins,' wherefore did He choose to say, 'Of the fruit of thy body?' Had He said that also, it would have been true; but He chose to say with a further meaning, 'Ex fructu ventris,' because Christ was born of a woman without the man.

19. Ver. 12. What then? The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David, and He shall not shrink from it; Of the fruit of thy body shall I set upon thy seat. If thy children will keep My covenant and My testimonies that I shall learn them, their children also shall sit upon thy seal for evermore. If thy children keep My covenant, their children also shall sit for evermore. The parents establish a desert on behalf of their children. What if his children should keep the covenant, and their children should not keep it? Why is the happiness of the children promised in relation to their parents' deservings? For what saith He, If thy children will keep My covenant, their children also shall sit for evermore—He saith not, if thy children keep My covenant, they shall sit upon thy seat; and if their children keep My covenant, they also

shall sit upon thy seat: but he saith, If thy children keep My covenant, their children also shall sit upon thy seat for evermore—except because He here wished their fruit to be understood by their children? If thy children, He saith, will keep My covenant, and if thy children shall keep My testimonies that I shall learn them; their children also shall sit upon thy seat: that is, this will be their fruit, that they sit upon thy seat. For in this life, brethren, do all of us who labour in Christ, all of us who tremble at His words, who in any way endeavour to execute His will, and groan while we pray His help that we may fulfil what He commandeth; do we already sit in those seats of bliss which are promised us? No: but holding His commandments, we hope this will come to pass. This hope is spoken of under the figure of sons; because sons are the hope of man living in this life, sons are his fruit. For this reason also men, when excusing their avarice, allege that they are reserving for their children what they hoard up; and, unwilling to give to the destitute, excuse themselves under the name of piety, because their children are their hope. For all men who live according to this world, declare it to be their hope, to be fathers of children they may leave behind them. Thus then He describes hope generally under the name of children, and saith, If thy children will keep My covenant and My testimonies that I shall learn them, their children also shall sit upon thy seat for evermore: that is, they shall have such fruits, that their hope shall not deceive them, that they may come there where they hope to come. At present therefore they are as fathers, men of hope for the future; but when they have attained what they hope, they are children; because they have brought forth and produced in their works that which they gain. And this is preserved unto them for the future, because futurity itself commonly signifieth children.

20. Or if thou understand actual men to be meant by children, the words, If thy children will keep My covenant and My testimonies that I shall teach them, may mean, If thy children will keep My covenant and testimonies that I shall teach them, and their children also; that is, if they too keep My covenant; so that here thou must make a slight pause, and then infer that they shall sit upon thy seal for evermore; that is, both thy children and their children, but all if they keep My covenant. What then, if they keep it not? Hath the promise of God failed? No: but it is said and promised for this reason, that God foresaw: what, save that they would believe? But that no

man should as it were threaten God’s promises, and prefer to place in his own power the fulfilment of what God promised: for this reason he saith, He made an oath: whereby he sheweth that it will without doubt take place. How then hath He said here, If they will keep my covenant? Glory not in the promises, and leave out thy failing to keep the covenant. Then wilt thou be the son of David, if thou shalt keep the covenant; but if thou dost not keep it, thou wilt not be David’s son. God promised to the sons of David. Say not, I am David’s son, if thou degenerate. If the Jews, who were born of this very stock, say not this, (nay, they say it, but they are under a delusion. For the Lord saith openly, If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham. He thereby denied them to be children, because they did not the works,) how do we call ourselves David’s children, who are not of his race according to the flesh? It follows then that we are not children, save by imitating his faith, save by worshipping God, as he worshipped. If therefore what thou hopest not through descent, thou wilt not endeavour to obtain by works; how shall the sitting upon David’s seat be fulfilled in thee? And if it shall not be fulfilled in thee, thinkest thou that it shall not be fulfilled at all? And how hath He found it in the woodland tracts? and how did His feet stand? Whatsoever then thou mayest be, that house will stand.

21. Ver. 13. For the Lord hath chosen Sion to be an habitation for Himself. Sion is the Church Herself; She is also that Jerusalem unto whose peace we are running, who is in pilgrimage not in the Angels, but in us, who in her better part waiteth for the part that will return; whence letters have come unto us, which are every day read. This city is that very Sion, whom the Lord hath chosen.

22. Ver. 14. This shall be My rest for ever. These are the words of God. My rest: I rest there. How greatly doth God love us, brethren, since, because we rest, He saith that He also resteth! For He is not sometimes Himself disturbed, nor doth He rest as we do; but He saith that He resteth there, because we shall have rest in Him. Here will I dwell: for I have a delight therein.

23. Ver. 15. I will bless her widow with blessings, and will satisfy her poor with bread. Every soul that is aware that it is bereft of all help, save of God alone, is widowed. For how doth the Apostle describe a widow? She that is

a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God. He was speaking of those whom we all call Widows in the Church. He saith, She that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth; and he numbereth her not among the widows. But in describing true widows, what saith he? She that is a widow indeed and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. Here he addeth, but she that liveth in pleasure, is dead while she liveth. What then makes a widow? That she hath no aid from any other source, save from God alone. They that have husbands, take pride in the protection of their husbands: widows seem desolate, and their aid is a stronger one. The whole Church therefore is one widow, whether in men or in women, in married men or married women, in young men or in old, or in virgins: the whole Church is one widow, desolate in this world, if she feel this, if she is aware of her widowhood: for then is help at hand for her. Do ye not recognise this widow in the Gospel, my brethren, when the Lord declared that men ought always to pray and not to faint? There was in a city a judge, He said, which feared not God, neither regarded man. And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him day by day, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. The widow, by daily importunity, prevailed with him: for the judge said within himself, Though I fear not God, neither regard man, yet because this woman troubleth me, I will avenge her. If the wicked judge heard the widow, that he might not be molested; heareth not God His Church, whom He exhorteth to pray?

24. Also, I will satisfy her poor with bread; what meaneth this, brethren? Let us be poor, and we shall then be satisfied. Many who trust in the world, and are proud, are Christians; they worship Christ, but are not satisfied; for they have been satisfied, and abound in their pride. Of such it is said, Our soul is filled with the scornful reproof of the wealthy, and with the despitefulness of the proud: these have abundance, and therefore eat, but are not satisfied. And what is said of them in the Psalm? All such as be fat upon the earth have eaten and worshipped. They worship Christ, they venerate Christ, they pray unto Christ; but they are not satisfied with His wisdom and righteousness. Wherefore? Because they are not poor. For the poor, that is the humble in heart, the more they hunger, the more they eat; and the more empty they are of the world, the more hungry they are. He who is full refuseth whatsoever thou wilt give him, because he is full. Give me one

who hungereth; give me one of whom it is said, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled: and these will be the poor of whom he hath just said, And will satisfy her poor with bread. For in the very Psalm where it is said, All such as be fat upon the earth have eaten and worshipped; this is said of the poor also, and exactly in the same manner as in this Psalm, The poor shall eat, and be satisfied: they that seek after the Lord shall praise Him. Where it is said, All such as be fat upon earth have eaten and worshipped: it is said, The poor shall eat, and be satisfied. Why, when the rich are said to have worshipped, are they not said to be satisfied; yet when the poor are mentioned, they are said to be satisfied? And whence are they satisfied? What is the nature, brethren, of this satisfying? God Himself is their bread. The bread came down upon the earth, that He might become milk unto us; and said to His own, I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven. Hence these words in the Psalm, The poor shall eat, and be satisfied. From what source shall they be satisfied? Hear what followeth: And they that seek after the Lord shall praise Him.

25. Be ye therefore poor, be ye among the members of that widow, let your help be solely in God alone. Money is nought; not thence will ye have aid. Many have been cast headlong down for money's sake, many have perished on account of money; many for the sake of their riches have been marked out by plunderers; they would have been safe, had they not had what made men hunt for them. Many have presumed in their more powerful friends: they in whom they presumed have fallen, and have involved in their ruin those who trusted in them. Look back upon the instances to be seen in the human race. Is it any thing singular that I am telling you? We speak these things not only from these Scriptures; read them in the whole world. Take heed that ye presume not in money, in a friend, in the honour and the boasting of the world. Take away all these things: but if thou hast them, thank God if thou despisest them. But if thou art puffed up by them; think not when thou wilt be the prey of men; already art thou the Devil's prey. But if thou hast not trusted in these things, thou wilt be among the members of that widow, who is the Church, of whom it is said, I will bless her widow with blessings; thou wilt also be poor, and one of those of whom it is said, And will satisfy her poor with bread.

26. Sometimes, however, and we must not pass over this without mention, thou findest a poor man proud, and a rich man humble: we daily endure such persons. Thou hearest a poor man groaning beneath a rich man, and when the more powerful rich man presseth upon him, then thou seest him humble: sometimes not even then, but even then proud; whence thou seest what he would have been, had he any property. God's poor one is therefore poor in spirit, not in his purse. Sometimes a man goeth forth having a full house, rich lands, many estates, much gold and silver; he knoweth that he must not trust in these, he humbleth himself before God, he doth good with them; thus his heart is raised unto God, so that he is aware that not only do riches themselves profit him nothing, but that they even impede his feet, save He rule them, and aid them: and he is counted among the poor who are satisfied with bread. Thou findest another a proud beggar, or not proud only because he hath nothing, nevertheless seeking whereby he may be puffed up. God doth not heed the means a man hath, but the wish he hath, and judgeth him according to his wish for temporal blessings, not according to the means which it is not his lot to have. Whence the Apostle saith of the rich, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. What therefore should they do with their riches? He goeth on to say: That they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate. And see that they are poor in this world: Laying up in store for themselves, he addeth, a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. When they have laid hold of eternal life, then will they be rich; but since they have it not as yet, they should know that they are poor. Thus it is that God counteth among His poor all the humble in heart, who are established in that twofold charity, whatever they may have in this world—among His poor, whom He satisfieth with bread.

27. Ver. 16, 17. I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall rejoice and sing. We are now at the end of the Psalm; attend for a short space, Beloved. I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall rejoice and sing. Who is our salvation, save our Christ? What meaneth, therefore, I will clothe her priests with salvation? "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ."—And her saints shall rejoice and sing. Whence shall they rejoice and sing? Because they have been

clothed with salvation: not in themselves. For they have become light, but in the Lord; for they were darkness before. Therefore he hath added, There will I raise up the horn of David: this will be David’s height, that trust be put in Christ. For horn signifieth height: and what sort of height? Not carnal. Therefore, while all the bones are wrapped up in flesh, the horn goeth beyond the flesh. Spiritual altitude is a horn. But what is spiritual loftiness, save to trust in Christ? not to say, It is my work, I baptize; but, He it is Who baptizeth. There is the horn of David: and that ye may know that there is the horn of David, heed what followeth; I have ordained a lantern for mine Anointed. What is a lantern? Ye already know the Lord’s words concerning John; He was a burning and a shining light. And what saith John? He it is Who baptizeth. Herein therefore shall the saints rejoice, herein the priests shall rejoice: because all that is good in themselves, is not of themselves, but of Him Who hath the power of baptizing. Fearlessly therefore doth every one who hath received baptism come unto His temple; because it is not man’s, but His Who made the horn of David to flourish.

28. Ver. 18. Upon Him shall My sanctification flourish. Upon whom? Upon Mine Anointed. For when He saith, Mine anointed, it is the voice of the Father, Who saith, I will bless her widow with blessings, and will satisfy her poor with bread. I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall rejoice and sing. He Who saith, There will I raise up the horn of David, is God. He Himself saith, I have ordained a lantern for Mine Anointed, because Christ is both ours and the Father’s: He is our Christ, when He saveth us and ruleth us, as He is also our Lord: He is the Son of the Father, but both our Christ and the Father’s. For if He were not the Father’s Christ, it would not be said above, For Thy servant David’s sake, turn not Thou away the presence of Thine Anointed. Upon Him shall My sanctification flourish. It flourisheth upon Christ. Let none of men assume this to himself, that he himself sanctifieth: otherwise it will not be true, Upon Him shall My sanctification flourish. The glory of sanctification shall flourish. The sanctification of Christ therefore in Christ Himself, is the power of the sanctification of God in Christ. In that he saith, shall flourish, he refers to His glory: for when trees flourish, then are they beautiful. Sanctification therefore is in Baptism: thence it flourisheth, and is brightened. Why hath the world yielded to this beauty? Because it

flourisheth in Christ; for, put it in man’s power, and how doth it then flourish? since all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the grass.

PSALM 133

Exposition

A Public discourse, in which he defends the Monks against the Donatists.

1. This is a short Psalm, but one well known and quoted. Behold, how good and how pleasant is it, that brethren should dwell together in unity. So sweet is that sound, that even they who know not the Psalter, sing that verse. Sweet is it even as charity is sweet, which causes brethren to dwell together in unity. This fact indeed, brethren, needs neither interpretation nor explanation, to wit, how good and how pleasant it is to dwell together in unity; but that which follows contains somewhat that may open to them who knock. Yet that the comprehension of the entire substance of the Psalm may reach us from this verse, let us in the first place reflect over and over again, whether it be said of all Christians, ‘How good and how pleasant is it, that brethren should dwell together in unity;’ or whether there be some special and perfect persons who dwell together, and that the blessing does not apply to all, but to some, from whom however it may descend upon the rest.

2. For these same words of the Psalter, this sweet sound, that honeyed melody, as well of the mind as of the hymn, did even beget the Monasteries. By this sound were stirred up the brethren who longed to dwell together. This verse was their trumpet. It sounded through the whole earth, and they who had been divided, were gathered together. The summons of God, the summons of the Holy Spirit, the summons of the Prophets, were not heard in Judah, yet were heard through the whole world. They were deaf to that sound, amid whom it was sung; they were found with their ears opened, of whom it was said, They shall see him, who were not told of him; they shall understand who heard not. Yet, most beloved, if we reflect, the very blessing hath sprung from that wall of circumcision. For have all the Jews perished? and whence were the Apostles, the sons of the Prophets, the sons of the exiles? He speaks as to them who know. Whence those five hundred,

who saw the Lord after His resurrection, whom the Apostle Paul commemorates? Whence those hundred and twenty, who were together in one place after the resurrection of the Lord, and His ascension into heaven, on whom when gathered into one place the Holy Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost, sent down from heaven, sent, even as He was promised? All were from thence, and they first dwelt together in unity; who sold all they had, and laid the price of their goods at the Apostles’ feet, as is read in the Acts of the Apostles. And distribution was made to each one as he had need, and none called any thing his own, but they had all things common. And what is ‘together in unity?’ They had, he says, one mind and one heart God-wards. So they were the first who heard, Behold how good and how pleasant is it, that brethren dwell together. They were the first to hear, but heard it not alone. It was not that that love and unity of the brethren extended no further than to them. The joyfulness of love and the vow to God reached them who came after. Something was vowed to God, as it is written, Vow and pay your vows to the Lord your God. For it is better not to vow, than to vow and not perform. But the mind should be ready so as both to vow and to perform; lest when it thinks itself ill fitted to perform, it prove too slow to vow. For he will surely never pay, whoever deems that he is about to pay of his own.

3. From the words of this Psalm was taken the name of Monks, that no one may reproach you who are Catholics by reason of the name. When you with justice reproach heretics by reason of the Circelliones, that they may be saved by shame, they reproach you on the score of the Monks. See to it yourselves, in the first place, whether they may be compared: if there be any need for your words, ye are already at a disadvantage. There is no need, except to warn every one that he attend, only attend and compare them. What need is there for your words? Let them compare the drunken with the temperate, the rash with the provident, the mad with the sane, them who wander with them who live together. Yet they are wont to say, What is the meaning of the name Monks? Much better may we say, What is the meaning of the word Circelliones? But they are not, say they, called Circelliones. Perhaps we call them by some corrupt form of their name. Shall we say what is their proper name? Perchance they are called Circumcelliones, not Circelliones. Well, if they be so called, let them say

why they are so. They are called Circumcelliones, because they ramble about the cells. For they are wont to go hither and thither, having no abiding place, and to do things which you know well of; and they know also, will they or not.

4. Moreover, beloved, there are they who are false Monks, and we know men of this kind; but the pious brotherhood is not annulled, because of them who profess to be what they are not. There are false Monks, as there are false men among the Clergy, and among the faithful. All these three kinds, whom we have before commended to you, and I think more than once, have their good and their bad. Of these very three kinds it has been said, Two shall be in the field, one shall be taken, one shall be left; two shall be in bed, one shall be taken, and one shall be left; and two women at a mill, one shall be taken, and one shall be left. They are in the field, who govern the Church. Hence the Apostle said, (see whether he were not in the field,) I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. By those who are in bed, he would have them understood who love quiet; for by the bed he would have quiet understood; them who do not mingle in the crowdings and tumult of mankind, serving God in peace; yet from these one shall be taken, one left. Among these are good, and reprobate also. Fear not, because reprobates are found there, for some men are hidden, who are not found, save at the end. Two women also at the mill. He spoke of them by a word of the feminine gender, for he would have bodies of people understood. And wherefore in the mill? Because they are in that world, which is understood to be the mill; because the world turns round as a mill: woe to them whom it grinds to powder. And so there are good [and bad] among the faithful in such wise, that one is taken to destruction, another is taken to God. For the lovers of this life, the dishonest, and the hypocrites, do certain deeds of the world. But others abide therein in the manner of which the Apostle speaks; And they who use this world, as though not using it, for the fashion of this world passeth away: I would have you be without care. Dost thou hear who shall be taken from the mill? For of a truth many sins seem to belong to the rich. For when they do much, and take on them much business, and their wealth grows more and more, it is hard for them not to commit more sins; of whom it is said, that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to go into the kingdom of heaven. And when the

disciples were sorry for them, and now despaired on their account, the Lord consoled them, by saying, what is impossible with man, is easy for God. But how does God make that easy? Hear the Apostle, if thou despisest not what he commands. Charge, says he, them who are rich in this world, not to think proudly. You find the proud man poor, the humble Christian rich, because he carefully reflects, that all these things pass by and flow away; that he brought nothing into this world, can carry nothing from it; how that rich man, who was burning in fire in hell, desired that a drop of water should drop upon him from the finger of that man, who had desired the crumbs from his table. Thinking of this, they do as the Apostle says, not trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us all things abundantly to enjoy. Let them, he says, be rich in good works; let them freely give, communicate, lay up treasures. And what is their gain from this? Let them treasure up a good foundation for the time to come, that they may obtain true life. Behold the one who shall be taken from the mill. But the other shall be left, who is as that rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, and despised the poor man who lay at his gate. And so, one shall be taken from the mill, and one shall be left.

5. So Ezekiel speaks of three persons, in whom we may reasonably discern these three kinds. If the Lord send a sword upon the earth, though Noe, Daniel, and Job, were in the midst of them, they shall save neither sons nor daughters, but they alone themselves shall be saved. They have long ago been set free, but under these three names he signified three kinds. Noe signifies the rulers of the Church, because he steered the ark in the flood. But Daniel chose a quiet life, to serve God in celibacy, that is, not seeking a wife. He was a holy man, passing his life in divine longings, tried in many things, and found to be pure gold. How quiet was he, who was unmoved among lions. Thus under the name of Daniel, who was called a ‘man of desires,’ but those ever chaste and holy, are signified the servants of God, of whom it is said, Behold, how good and pleasant is it, that brethren dwell together in unity. Under the name of Job is signified, the one woman who will be taken from the mill. For he had a wife, he had sons, he had much riches; and he had so much in this life, that the devil charged him with this, that he served God not for nought, but for what he got. With this the

adversary charged the holy man, and in his temptations it was proved how entirely Job served God for nought, and not for that which he received, but for His sake Who had given. And so when all was lost, by sudden trial and affliction, his estate lost, his heirs lost, his wife alone left, not to console but to tempt him, he says as you know, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as the Lord pleased, so hath He done; blessed be the name of the Lord. There was fulfilled in him, that which we daily sing, if our lives do but agree with it, I will bless God at all times: his praise shall always be in my mouth. Thus under these three names are signified three kinds of men, and again in those three in the Gospel, whom I have mentioned.

6. What do they say then, who insult us with the name of Monks? Perchance they will say, Our people are not called Circumcelliones; you call them by a reproachful name, for we do not call them so. Let them say what they call them, and you shall hear. They call them Agonistics. An honest name we grant, if the facts agreed with it. Meanwhile let your holiness see to this. Let them who say to us, ‘Shew us where the name of Monks is written,’ themselves shew where the name of Agonistics is written. We call them so, say they, because of their striving. For they strive, and the Apostle says, I have fought a good fight. Because they are they who fight against the devil, and prevail, the soldiers of Christ are called Agonistics. Would they were soldiers of Christ, and not soldiers of the devil, whose ‘Praises to God’ is more fearful than the roaring of a lion. These venture to insult us, because the brethren, when they see men, say, ‘Thanks to God.’ What is the meaning, they say, of ‘Thanks to God?’ Are you so deaf as not to know what ‘Thanks to God’ means? He who says ‘Thanks to God,’ gives thanks to God. Consider whether a brother ought not to thank God, when he sees his brother. Is it not indeed cause for congratulation, when they who dwell in Christ, see one another? And yet you ridicule our ‘Thanks to God,’ men mourn at your ‘Praises to God.’ It is true, indeed, that you have given a reason for calling them Agnostics. Be it as you call them, be it so, we are quite willing. The Lord grant they may fight against the devil, and not against Christ, whose Church they persecute. Yet because they fight, ye call them Agonistics, and find why you call them so, because the Apostle has said, I have fought a good fight. Why then should we not call Monks so, since the Psalm says, Behold, how good and how pleasant is it, that

brethren should dwell together in one? For Monos is one, not one in any manner, for a man in a crowd is one, but though he can be called one along with others, he cannot be Monos, that is, alone, for Monos means ‘one alone.’ They then who thus live together as to make one man, so that they really possess what is written, one mind and one heart, many bodies, but not many minds; many bodies, but not many hearts; can rightly be called Monos, that is, one alone. And this is the cause why one only was healed in the pool. Let them who scoff at the name of Monks, answer us, and explain, why he who was found labouring under a disease for thirty-eight years, thus answered the Lord, When the water has been moved, I have no one who may put me in, another descends before me. One had descended, another did not descend then. One alone used to be healed, figuring the unity of the Church. Well do they scoff at the name of unity, who have cut themselves off from unity. Well do they dislike the name of Monks, because they will not live together with the brethren, but following Donatus, have rejected Christ. Your Charity has heard thus much concerning ‘one,’ and ‘one alone;’ now let us rejoice with the Psalm, that we may see what follows. It is short, we can run over it, as far as the Lord permits. I think from what has been said, that what follows will be plain, even though it seems obscure.

7. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is, that brethren should dwell together in unity. He pointed, who said, ‘Behold.’ And we, brethren, see, and bless God, and pray, that we also may say, ‘Behold.’ Let the Psalm tell us what they are like. (Ver. 2.) As the ointment on the head, which descended to the beard, to Aaron’s beard, which descended to the fringe of his garment. What was Aaron? A priest. Who is a priest, except that one Priest, Who entered into the Holy of Holies? Who is that priest, save Him, Who was at once Victim and Priest? save Him Who when he found nothing clean in the world to offer, offered Himself? The ointment is on his head, because Christ is one whole with the Church, but the ointment comes from the head. Our Head is Christ crucified and buried; He rose again, and ascended into heaven; and the Holy Spirit came from the head. Whither? To the beard. The beard signifies the courageous; the beard distinguishes the grown men, the earnest, the active, the vigorous. So that when we describe such, we say, he is a bearded man. Thus that ointment descended first upon the Apostles, descended upon those who bore the first assaults of the world,

and therefore the Holy Spirit descended on them. For they who first began to dwell together in unity, suffered persecution, but because the ointment descended to the beard, they suffered, but were not conquered. For the sufferings of the head whence the ointment descended, had preceded theirs. With such an example going before it, who could vanquish that beard?

8. Of that beard was St. Stephen. This is what it is not to be conquered; that our love be not conquered by enemies. They who persecuted the saints, thought they had vanquished them. The one slew, the other were slain; the one killed, the other were killed. Who would not think the one victors, the other vanquished? But because their charity was not conquered, the ointment descended on the beard. Consider Stephen. His love burned within him, burned against them when they heard him, prayed for them when they stoned him. For what says he, when they heard him? Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye ever resist the Holy Spirit. Behold the beard! Did he flatter them at all? fear them at all? They, when they heard the words, which were said against them;—for Stephen seemed in a manner to rage against them; he raged in word, but loved in heart, nor was his charity overcome;—they, I say, hating the word, flying like darkness from the light, began to run for stones, and to stone Stephen. As the words of Stephen had stoned them, so afterwards their stones did Stephen. When should Stephen have been rather angry, when he was stoned, or when he was heard? Behold, he became gentle when he was stoned, and raged when he was heard. Why raged he when he was heard? Because he would convert them, by whom he was heard. His love was not overcome, when the stones fell on him, because the ointment from the head had descended to the beard; and he had heard from the Head Himself, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you. He had heard from the Head Himself as He hung on the Cross, and said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And in this wise the ointment descended from the head upon the beard; for that he, when he was stoned, kneeled down and said, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.

9. So they were as a beard. For many of them were brave, and endured many persecutions. Yet if the ointment had not descended below the beard, we should have had no monasteries. But since it descended to the edge of

his garment, (as he says, which descended to the edge of his garment,) the Church followed, and begat monasteries from the garment of the Lord. For the sacerdotal garment denotes the Church. This is the garment, of which the Apostle speaks, That He might present to Himself a glorious Church, having neither spot nor wrinkle. It is cleansed, so it has no spot; it is spread out, so it has no wrinkle. Where does the fuller spread it, but on the cross? Every day we see garments as it were crucified by fullers; crucified, that they may have no wrinkle. What then is the edge of the garment? My brethren, what are we to understand by the edge of the garment? The edge is the extremity of the garment. What are we to understand by the extremity of the garment? Is it that at the end of time the Church shall have brethren dwelling together in unity? Or can we understand by the edge perfection, because the garment is perfected at the edge, and they are perfect who know how to dwell together in unity? They are perfect who fulfil the law. And how is the law of Christ fulfilled by them who dwell as brethren together in one? Hear the Apostle. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so ye will fulfil the law of Christ. This is the edge of the garment. And how, my brethren, can we understand which edge he means whither the ointment can descend? I do not think that he could have meant the edge on the sides. For there are edges on the sides. But the ointment could descend to that edge which is on the head, where the collar opens. Such are they who dwell together in one; and as the head of a man who dresses himself passes through these edges, so Christ enters in by brotherly amity Who is our Head, that He may be clothed, that the Church may cling to Him.

10. What else does he say? As the dew of Hermon, which fell upon the hills of Sion. He would have it understood, my brethren, that it is of God’s grace that brethren dwell together in unity. Not of their own strength or of their own deservings, but of His gift, of His grace, as the dew from heaven. For the earth does not rain or not for itself: what it brings forth withereth, unless the rain descend from above. He says in a certain place in a Psalm, Thou, O God, wilt separate a free rain for Thine inheritance. Why says he, free? Because it is not of our merits, but His free grace. What good have we sinners deserved? What good have we evil-doers deserved? From Adam comes Adam, and many sins are born into the world over and above Adam. Whoever is born is born Adam; accursed from accursed; and has added, by

evil living, to Adam. What good did Adam deserve? Nevertheless, the Merciful One loved, the Bridegroom loved, not because she was beautiful, but that he might make her beautiful. So he calls the grace of God the dew of Hermon.

11. But ye should know what Hermon is. It is a mountain far distant from Jerusalem, that is, from Sion. And so it is strange that he says thus: As the dew of Hermon, which fell upon the mountains of Sion, since mount Hermon is far distant from Jerusalem, for it is said to be over Jordan. Let us then seek out some interpretation of Hermon. The word is Hebrew, and we learn its meaning from them who know that language. Hermon is said to mean, a light set on a high place. For from Christ comes the dew. No light is set on a high place, save Christ. How is He set on high? First on the cross, afterwards in heaven. Set on high on the cross when He was humbled; humbled, but His humiliation could not but be high. The ministry of man grew less and less, as was signified in John; the ministry of God in our Lord Jesus Christ increased, as was shewn at their birth. The former was born, as the tradition of the Church shews, on the 24th of June, when the days begin to shorten. The Lord was born on the 25th of December, when the days begin to lengthen. Hear John himself confessing, He must increase, but I must decrease. And the passion of each shews this. The Lord was exalted on the cross; John was diminished by beheading. Thus the light set on high is Christ, whence is the dew of Hermon. Ye then who would live together in unity desire that dew, be watered from thence. Otherwise ye will not be able to keep fast what ye profess; nor will ye dare to profess, unless He first thunder, nor will ye be able to be stedfast, unless His fatness descend upon you, for that fatness descended on the mountains of Sion.

12. And the mountains of Sion are the great in Sion. What is Sion? The Church. And what are the mountains there? The great ones. They who are signified by the mountains, are also by the beard, also by the edge of the garment. The beard is not understood of any except of full-grown men. None therefore grow together in one, save those in whom the love of Christ is perfected. For they in whom the love of Christ is not perfected, even when they are together, are full of hatred, troublesome, turbulent, disturb others by their care, and seek what they may say of others; just as a restive

horse in a team not only does not draw, but breaks with his hoofs that to which he is harnessed. But if he have the dew of Hermon, which fell on the hill of Sion, he is quiet, peaceable, humble, submissive, pouring forth prayer in place of murmuring. For murmurers are admirably described in a certain passage of the Scriptures, The heart of a fool is as the wheel of a cart. What is the meaning of the heart of a fool is as the wheel of a cart? It carries hay, and creaks. The wheel of a cart cannot cease from creaking. Thus there are many brethren, who do not dwell together, save in the body. But who are they who dwell together? They of whom it is said, And they had one mind and one heart towards God. And no man said that any thing was his own, but they had all things common. Here are pointed out, and described, those who belong to the beard, who belong to the edge of the garment, who are numbered among the mountains of Sion. And if there be others who are murmurers, let them remember the word of the Lord, One shall be taken, and one shall be left.

13. Because there the Lord commanded blessing. Where did He command it? Among the brethren who dwell together. There He enjoined blessing, there they who dwell with one heart bless God. For thou blessest not God in division of heart. In vain dost thou say that thy tongue uttereth the blessing of the Lord, if in thy heart thou dost not utter it. Thou blessest with thy mouth, and cursest in thy heart. They blessed with their mouth, and cursed with their heart. Are they our words? Some persons are signified. Thou blessest the Lord when thou prayest, and continuest in thy prayer, and cursest thy enemy. This is what thou hast from the Lord Himself, Love your enemies. But if thou doest so, and lovest thine enemy, and prayest for him, there the Lord has commanded His blessing; there thou wilt have life for ever, that is, for eternity. For many who love this life, curse their enemies; wherefore, but for this life, for the goods of this world? Where hath thine enemy so straitened thee, that thou must needs curse him? Art thou straitened on earth? Depart, have thy habitation in heaven. How shall I, a man clothed in flesh, enslaved to the flesh, thou wilt say, have my habitation in heaven. First go in heart, whither thou wouldest follow in the body. Do not hear, ‘Lift up your hearts,’ with a deaf ear. Keep thy heart lifted up, and no one will straiten thee in heaven. And thus another Psalm suitably follows.

PSALM 134

commentary

Continuation of the former Discourse.

1. Behold, now, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. Why has he added, ‘in the courts?’ Courts mean the wider spaces of a house. He who stands in the courts is not straitened, is not confined, in some fashion is enlarged. Remain in this enlargement, and thou canst love thy enemy, because thou lovest not things in which an enemy could straiten thee. How canst thou be understood to stand in the courts? Stand in charity, and thou standest in the courts. Breadth lies in charity, straitness in hatred. Hear the Apostle. Wrath and indignation, tribulation and straitness, on every soul of man which doeth evil. But what sayeth he of the breadth of love? Since the love of God is spread abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who is given to us. Where you hear of spreading abroad, understand breadth; where you hear of breadth, understand the courts of the Lord; and you will have the true blessing of God, when you curse not your enemies. For the Spirit addresses them who suffer tribulation, to the intent that they may glory in their tribulation; and says to them, Behold, now, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord. What means, ‘Behold, now?’ In this time. For after the tribulations are gone through, it is clear that we shall be at leisure to praise the Lord; as it is said, Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house; they shall praise Thee for ever and ever. They who will at that time bless without ceasing, begin here to bless God, here, I say, in tribulations, in temptations, in troubles, amid the trials of this life, amid the snares of the enemy, amid the deceits and assaults of the devil; this is the meaning of, Behold, now, bless ye the name of the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, ye who stand in the house of the Lord. What is the meaning of ‘ye who stand?’ Ye who persevere. For it is said of one who was an archangel, And he stood not in the truth. And it is said of the friend of the Bridegroom, The friend of the

Bridegroom standeth, and heareth Him, and rejoiceth with joy, because of the voice of the Bridegroom.

2. Therefore, Ye who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, lift up your hands by night in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord. It is easy to bless by day. What is ‘by day?’ In prosperity. For night is a sad thing, day a cheerful. When it is well with thee, thou dost bless the Lord. When thou longest for a son, and it is born, thou dost bless the Lord. Thy wife is freed from the danger of child-bearing, thou dost bless the Lord. Thy son was sick, and he is made whole, thou dost bless the Lord. Thy son was sick, perchance thou hast sought an astrologer, a soothsayer, perchance a curse against the Lord has come, not from thy tongue, but from thy deeds, from thy deeds and thy life. Boast not, because thou blessest with thy tongue, if thou cursest with thy life. For men look at thy life, and say, Behold a Christian, behold what these Christians are. Christ is blasphemed for thy sake. See, when thy life curseth, what profit is it that thy tongue blesseth? Wherefore bless ye the Lord. When? By night. When did Job bless? When it was a sad night. All was taken away which he possessed; the children for whom his goods were stored were taken away. How sad was his night! Let us however see, whether he blesseth not in the night. The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; it is as the Lord willed; blessed be the name of the Lord. And black was the night. He was smitten with boils from the head to the feet, he was ulcerated, and wasted away. Then his Eve dared to tempt him. Say something against thy God, and die. Hear him blessing by night. Thou hast spoken, says he, as one of the foolish women. If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not endure evil? See what is, Lift up your hands by night in the sanctuary, and praise the Lord. What said Job? ‘Thou hast spoken as one of the foolish women.’ The Adam in his misery drove away Eve, as though he said, Enough is it for thee, that I am made mortal on thy account. Thou didst prevail in Paradise, thou art vanquished on the dunghill. Great is the grace of God. But how is this, save that the dew of Hermon had rained down on that soul, and the Lord had given a sweet savour, that our land might yield her fruit. By night lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

3. The Lord out of Zion bless thee, Who made heaven and earth. He exhorts many to bless, and Himself blesseth one, because He maketh one out of many, since it is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in one. It is a plural number, brethren, and yet singular, to dwell together in one. Therefore, The Lord out of Zion bless thee, Who made heaven and earth. Let none of you say, It cometh not to me. Knowest thou of whom he speaks, the Lord bless thee out of Zion. He blessed one. Be one, and the blessing cometh to thee.

PSALM 135

commentary

A Discourse to the people.

Very pleasant ought it to be to us, and we should rejoice because it is pleasant, to which this Psalm exhorteth us. For it says, Praise the name of the Lord. And it forthwith appends the reason, why it is just to praise the name of the Lord. Praise the Lord, ye servants. What more just? what more worthy? what more thankful? Yea, if His servants praised not the Lord, they would be proud, unthankful, impious. And what will they get by not praising the Lord, except to feel the Lord’s wrath. For even the thankless servant, if he will not praise his Lord, does not thereby cause himself not to be a servant. Praise Him or not, thou art still His servant; but if thou praise, thou wilt appease Him, if thou praise Him not, thou wilt displease Him. It is a good and useful exhortation, then, and hence we should occupy ourselves with the thought, how the Lord should be praised, rather than doubt whether He is to be praised. Therefore, praise the name of the Lord. The Psalm exhorts us, the Prophet exhorts us, the Spirit of God exhorts us, lastly, God Himself even exhorts us, to praise the Lord. For He increaseth not by our praises, but we do. God is neither the better, if you praise Him, nor the worse, if you reproach Him; but thou, by praising Him that is good, art the better, by reproaching, the worse; for He remaineth good, as He is. For if He teaches His own servants who have deserved well of Him, the preachers of His Word, the rulers of His Church, the worshippers of His name, the obeyers of His command, that in their own conscience they should possess the sweetness of their life, lest they be corrupted by the praise or disheartened by the reproach of men; how much the more is He above all, the unchangeable One, Who teacheth these things, neither the greater if thou praisest, or the less if thou reproachest. Yet as it is our gain to praise the Lord, in mercy He bids us praise Him, not for His own gain. Let us hear then what he says. Praise the Name of the Lord, praise the Lord, ye servants. For ye will do nothing out of place, by praising your Lord, as servants. And if ye were to be for ever only servants, ye ought to praise the Lord; how much more ought ye servants to praise the Lord, that ye may hereafter gain the privilege of sons?

2. But since it is written in another Psalm, Praise befitteth the just; and also in another place, Praise is not comely in the mouth of a sinner; and moreover in another place it is said, The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me, and there is the way in which I will shew him the salvation of God; and after, But to the sinner, saith God Why dost thou talk of My judgments, and takest My covenant in thy mouth? Whereas thou hatest instruction, and hast cast My precepts behind thee, therefore lest any should think, since it is said, Praise the Lord, ye servants, that though he be a bad servant in that great house, the praise of the Lord shall profit him, he forthwith goes on to explain who they are who should praise the Lord. Ye who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God. Ye who stand, not, ye who fall. They are said to stand, who persevere in His commands, who serve God with unfeigned faith, with firm hope, and sincere charity; who honour His Church, and give no offence, by an evil life, to them who would come in, but find stones of offence in the way. Therefore, Ye who stand in the house of the Lord, praise ye the name of the Lord. Be thankful; ye were without, and ye stand within. Since then ye stand, is it a small thing for you to think where He should be praised, Who raised you when you were cast down, and caused you to stand in His house, to know Him, and to praise Him? Is it a small boon, that we stand in the house of the Lord? Here meanwhile, in this our sojourning, in this house, which is also called the tabernacle of our sojourning: since we stand here, ought we at all to fail of thankfulness? Must we not think of it, that we stand here? Must we not remember what we have been made? Must we not remember where we were cast down, and whither we have been gathered? Must we not remember that all the wicked sought not the Lord; that them who sought Him not, He sought; whom He found, He aroused; whom He aroused, He called; whom He called, He led in, and caused to stand in His house? If one thinks of this, and is not unthankful, he will utterly despise himself in comparison with the love of his Lord, Who hath done so great things for him. And since he hath nothing wherewith to repay God for so great benefits, what remains for him but to give Him thanks, not to repay Him? It

belongs to the very act of thanksgiving, to receive the cup of the Lord, and to call upon His name. For what can the servant repay the Lord for all that He hath given him? Therefore, Ye who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, praise the Lord.

3. What reason shall I give why you should praise Him? Because the Lord is good. Briefly in one word is here explained the praise of the Lord our God. The Lord is good; good, not in the same manner as the things which He here made are good. For God made all things very good; not only good, but also very good. He made the sky and earth, and all things which are in them good, and He made them very good. If He made all these things good, of what sort is He Who made them? And yet since He made them good, and He who made is much better than the things which He made, you can find nothing better to speak of Him than that the Lord is good, if, however, you understand Him to be in a peculiar sense good, from whom other good things proceed. For He made all things good, He Himself is good, Whom no one made. He is good by His own goodness, not by any good derived from elsewhere. He by His own good, that is Himself, is good, not by attachment to some other good. But for me to attach myself to God is good; Him Who never needed one by whom He might be made good, but all other things needed Him, that they might be made good. Would you hear how He is good alone? The Lord when asked said, No one is good, save God alone. I would not briefly pass over this singularity of His goodness, and yet I am not able fitly to recommend it to you; I fear lest I should be found unthankful, if I pass over it rapidly; and withal I fear lest when I undertake to expound it, I may be oppressed by the vast burden of the Lord’s praises. Yet so, my brethren, accept me, who praise, and yet am incompetent, that the worship of my praise may be accepted, though the exposition of His praise be not fulfilled. And may He approve of my will, and pardon my failure.

4. I am filled with ineffable delight, when I hear that The Lord is good, and after examining and surveying all things which I see without, since they are all from Him, although these things please me, yet I return to Him from Whom they arise, to understand that the Lord is good. And when I penetrate toward Him as near as I can, I find Him deeper within, and higher than my

reach, because the Lord is in such sort good, as to need in no wise these things to make Him good. Lastly, I do not praise these things apart from Him. Him however I find to be perfect without them, needing nothing, unchangeable, seeking no good of another whereby He may be increased; fearing no evil, whereby He may be diminished. And what more shall I say? I find in creation that the sky is good, the sun is good, the moon is good, the stars are good, the earth is good, the things which grow in the earth, and are fixed on roots, are good, those which walk and move are good, those which fly in the air and swim in the waters are good. I say that man is good, for the good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good. I say that an angel is good, who hath not fallen by pride and become a devil, but remains in obedience to Him by whom he was made. I say all these things are good, but I do so in connexion with their names, as the good sky, a good angel, a good man; but when I betake myself to God, I think I can say nothing better than good. For truly the Lord Jesus, who Himself said, A good man; said moreover, No one is good but God alone. Did He not urge us to seek and distinguish what is that good which is made good by another good, and that Good which is by itself good? How Good must that be, from which all good things proceed? You can find no good at all, which is not good from Him. As He is properly the Good which makes things good, so is He properly the Good. For neither is it true, that these things which He hath made are not, nor yet is any wrong done to Him when we say that the things which He made are not. Why then did He make them, if they are not when He has made them? Or what did He make, if that which He made is not? But since these things which He made have being, we come still to the comparison of Him with them; and as though He alone had being, He says, I Am That I Am, and, Thou shalt say to the children of Israel, He Who Is hath sent me unto you. He did not say, The Almighty Lord God, the merciful, the just, though He would have said what was quite true, had he so spoken. Every thing being taken away, by which God might be named and called, He answered that He is called Very Being, and as though this were His name. This thou shalt say to them, he says, He Who Is hath sent me. For He Is in such wise, that in comparison with Him, things which are, are not. If He be not compared with them, they are, because they are from Him, but compared with Him they are not, because to Be truly is to Be unchangeably, and this He Is alone. For what is, is; just as the good of goods, is good. Reflect and see that whatever else ye praise, ye do praise, because it is good. He is mad, who praises what is not good. If thou praisest him who is unjust because he is unjust, wilt not thou too be unjust? If thou praisest a thief because he is a thief, wilt not thou too be a partaker? If thou praisest a just man because he is just, dost not thou too have thy part therein by praising him? For thou wouldest not praise the just, didst thou not love him; thou wouldest not love him, if thou hadst no part with him. If then whatever else we praise, we praise because it is good; thou couldest have no better or stronger or greater reason for praising God, than that He is good. Therefore, Praise the Lord, because He is good.

5. How far can we speak of His goodness? Who can conceive in his heart, or apprehend how good the Lord is? Let us however return to ourselves, and in us recognise Him, and praise the Maker in His works, because we are not fit to contemplate Him Himself. And in hope that we may be able to contemplate Him, when our heart hath been purified by faith, that hereafter it may rejoice in the Truth; now as He cannot be seen by us, let us look at His works, that we may not live without praising Him. So I have said, Praise the Lord, for He is good; sing praises unto His Name, for He is sweet. Perchance He would be good and not sweet, if He had not given thee the power of taste. But such did He shew Himself to men, that He even sent bread from heaven; and the Son Who is equal to Him, Who is what He is, He gave to be made man, and to be slain for man, that by that which thou art, thou mightest taste what thou art not. It was meet for thee to taste the sweetness of God, because it is too remote and lofty, thou art too abject, and grovelling below. In this so great severance was sent a Mediator. Being man thou couldest not come to God; and God was made Man, that as, being man, thou mayest come to Man, but canst not come to God; by Man thou mightest come to God; and there was made a Mediator between God and Man, the man Christ Jesus. But if He were man alone, by following what thou art, thou wouldest never reach Him; if He were God alone, for lack of comprehending what thou art not, thou wouldest never reach Him. So God was made man, that by following man which thou canst, thou mayest reach God which thou couldest not. He is Mediator, and thereupon is sweet. What is sweeter than angels’ food? How can God not be sweet, since man ate angels’ food? For men and angels live not on different meat. That is truth,

that is wisdom, that is the goodness of God, but thou canst not enjoy it in like wise with the angels. For how do they enjoy it? As it is written, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, by Whom all things were made. But how dost thou reach it? Because the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us. That man might eat angels' food, the Creator of the angels was made man. Therefore, Sing praises unto His Name, for He is sweet. If ye taste, sing praises; if ye have tasted how sweet the Lord is, sing praises; if that which ye have tasted has a good savour, praise it; who is so unthankful to cook or purveyor, as not to return thanks by praising what he tastes, if he be pleased by any food. If we are not silent on such occasions, shall we be silent concerning Him, Who has given us all things? Sing praises unto His Name, for He is sweet.

6. Now hear of His works. Ye have striven perchance to see the Good of all good, the Good from which all good things come, the Good without which nothing else is good, and the Good which is good without other things; ye have striven to use it; and perchance in straining the sight of your minds, you have found yourselves wanting. For thus I gather from myself, such are my feelings. But if there be any one, as may be, and well may be, stronger in this mental sight than I, who fixes the gaze of his heart for long on that which is, let him praise as he can, let him praise as we are not able. Still, thanks be to Him, who hath tempered His own praise in this Psalm, so that both strong and weak may assay it. For in the mission of His servant Moses, when He said, I Am that I Am, and thou shalt say to the sons of Israel, He who Is hath sent me to you; since it is difficult for the human mind to conceive the fact of His special Being, and a man was sent to men, though not by man; forthwith God tempered His praise, and said this of Himself, which could sweetly be apprehended; He would not abide in that praise which the worshipper could not attain to. Go, said he, tell the sons of Israel, The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me to you. This is My Name for ever. Seeing, O Lord, Thou hast that former Name, because Thou hast also said, I Am: He Who Is, hath sent me to you; why didst Thou forthwith change Thy Name so as to say, The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? Does not the force of it seem to you to answer and say, That I said, I Am that I Am, is true, but thou dost not comprehend it; that I said, I am the God of Abraham,

and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, is true, and thou dost understand it? That I Am that I Am, belongs to Me; but that I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, belongs to thee. And if thou art unable to see what I am to Myself, understand what I am to thee. And that no one may think that what God said, I Am that I Am, and, He Who Is, hath sent me unto you, is His only Eternal Name, but that what He said, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, is His temporal Name, God took not care when He said, I Am that I Am, and He Who Is hath sent me to you, to say that this His Name is eternal; for though He said not this, it would be so understood. For He is, and truly is, and for the very reason that He truly Is, He Is without beginning or end. But as for man He is, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; lest men should feel anxiety, because this is not eternal but temporal, He hath assured us, that He leads us to eternal life out of temporal things. This, He says, is My Name for ever, not because Abraham or Isaac or Jacob are eternal, but because God makes them eternal afterwards for ever. They had indeed a beginning, but shall have no end.

7. In Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, understand His whole church, understand the whole seed of Israel; but all the seed of Israel is not alone that of the flesh, but that also which is of faith. For the Apostle spake to the Gentiles, to whom he said, If then ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, heirs according to the promise. We then are all blessed in the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. He blessed indeed a certain tree, and created it an olive, as the Apostle has said, even the holy Patriarchs, from whence the people of God grew; but this olive was pruned, not cut down, and from thence the proud branches were broken off, that is, the blasphemous and impious people of the Jews. Yet good and useful branches remained, for from thence were the Apostles. And as some useful branches had been left, by God’s mercy the wild olive of the Gentiles was grafted in, to whom the Apostle said, But thou when thou wast a wild olive wert grafted among them, and wert made a partaker of the fatness of the olive-tree. Boast not thyself against the branches. But if thou boastest, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. This is the one tree which belongeth to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and, which is more, the grafted wild-olive belongeth more to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, than the branches which were broken off.

They by reason of the breaking off are not there now; but the wild-olive was not once, and is now. They deserved to be broken off by reason of their pride; that gained grace to be grafted in by its humility. They lost the root, that retains it. Since then ye are called the Israel of God, the Israel who belongeth to God, do not thereafter make yourselves strange to Him. Ye were a wild-olive, but now ye are an olive, partakers of the fatness of the olive. For would ye know how the wild-olive has been grafted into Abraham and Isaac and Jacob; lest ye think yourselves not to belong to this olive, because ye belong not to the seed of Abraham according to the flesh? When the Lord wondered at the faith of that Centurion, who was not of the people of Israel, but of the people of the Gentiles; Wherefore, saith He, I tell you, that many shall come from the east and west. Behold now the wild-olive in the hand of the grafter. Many shall come from the east and the west. We see what bears that which is to be grafted in, let us see where He grafteth it. And they shall sit down, He says, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. We see both what He grafted, and where He grafted it. What saith He of the proud natural branches. But the children of the kingdom shall go into outer darkness, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. The fact was foretold, the fact was accomplished.

8. Therefore, Sing praises to the Lord, for He is sweet. And note what He hath done for us. For the Lord hath chosen Jacob to Himself, Israel for His own possession. Praise Him, sing praises to Him, because He hath done these things. I say such words as ye can comprehend. The other nations He put under the Angels; the Lord chose Jacob for Himself, Israel for His own possession. He made His own people the field which He cultivated, which He sowed Himself; although He made all nations, He committed the others to the Angels; this He designed to be possessed and preserved by Himself, this people, this Jacob. By its merits, or of His own grace? He says of them who are not yet born, The elder shall serve the younger: so says the Apostle. What merit could they who are not yet born possess, before either of them had done either good or evil? Let not Jacob therefore extol himself, let him not boast himself, or ascribe it to his own merits. He was known before, predestinated before, elected before, not elected for his own merits, but found out, and gifted with life by the grace of God. So with all the Gentiles; for how did the wild-olive deserve, that it should be grafted in,

from the bitterness of its berries, the barrenness of its wildness? It was the wood of the wilderness, not of the Lord’s field, and yet He of His mercy grafted the wild-olive into the (true) olive. But up to this time the wild-olive was not grafted in, since the Lord chose Jacob to Himself and Israel for His own possession.

9. And what says the Prophet? Because I have known that the Lord is great. With mind flying upward, raised above the flesh, passing beyond the creature, he knew that the Lord is great. Not all can know by seeing; let them praise what He hath done. (The Lord) is sweet, the Lord hath chosen Jacob to Himself, Israel for His own possession. Hence too praise Him. For further, I have known that the Lord is great. The Prophet spoke who entered into the sanctuary of God, who heard by chance unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter; who said what could be said to man, who reserved to himself what could not be said. Let him then be heard as far as we can, and believed where we cannot. Let him be heard as far as we can, Because the Lord hath chosen Jacob to Himself, Israel for his own possession; let him be believed as far as we cannot, because he himself knew that the Lord is great. If we should say to him, we ask thee, explain to us His greatness; would he not perchance answer us, He whom I see is not so very great, if He be able to be expounded by me. Let him then return to His works, and tell us. Let him hold in his conscience the greatness of God, which he has seen, which he has committed to our faith, whither he could not lead our eyes, and enumerate some of the things which the Lord hath done here; that unto us, who cannot see His greatness as he can, He may become sweet through the works of His which we can comprehend. Because, says he, I know that the Lord is great, and our God is above all gods. What gods? As the Apostle says, Though there be who are called gods in heaven and in earth, as there are gods many, and lords many; but to us there is one God, the Father, from Whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him. Men may be called gods. For it is said, God stood in the congregation of gods. It is said, I have said, Ye are gods, and all the sons of the Highest; is not God above men? But what is there great in this, if God is above men? God is also above Angels, because the Angels did not make God, but God made the Angels; and He Who made all things must needs be above all which He

has made. He therefore knowing the greatness of the Lord, and seeing Him to be above every creature, not merely corporeal but spiritual, says, He is a great King above all gods, He is the highest God, Who has no god above Him. Let him tell us His works. They are understood.

10. All whatsoever the Lord willed, He made in the heaven, and in the earth, in the sea, and in all its deep places. Who can comprehend these things? Who can enumerate the works of the Lord in the heaven and earth, in the sea, and in all deep places? Yet if we cannot comprehend them all, we should believe and hold them without question, because whatever creature is in heaven, whatever is in earth, whatever is in the sea and in all deep places, has been made by the Lord, because all that He willed, that He made, in heaven and earth, in the sea, and in all deep places, as we have just now said. He was not forced to make all that He made, but all that He willed He made. His will was the cause of all things which He made. Thou makest a house, because if thou didst not make it, thou wouldest be left without habitation: necessity compels thee to make a home, not free-will. Thou makest a garment, because thou wouldest go about naked if thou didst not make it; thou art therefore led to making a garment by necessity, not by free-will. Thou plantest a mountain with vines, thou sowest seed, because if thou didst not do so, thou wouldest not have food; all such things thou doest of necessity. God has made things of His goodness. He needed nothing that He made; and therefore He hath made all things that He willed.

11. Dost thou think, ‘we too have what we do of free-will?’ The things we have spoken of, we do of necessity, because if we did not do them, we should be needy and helpless. Do we find any thing which we do of free-will? We do indeed, when we praise God, through loving Him. This indeed thou doest of free-will, when thou lovest that which thou praisest; for this is not of necessity, but because it pleaseth thee. Therefore God pleaseth the just and His saints even when He scourgeth them. When He displeaseth all the unjust, He pleaseth them; and though they are subject to his rod, though in toils, in labours, in wounds, in want, they praise God; He displeaseth them not, though He even torment them. This is free love, not for the receipt of specified pay, because God Himself will be thy highest reward, Whom thou lovest freely, and so oughtest to love, as not to cease to desire

Him for thy reward, as Him Who alone can satisfy thee; as Philip desired Him, when He said, Shew us the Father, and it satisfieth us. Rightly, because we do this of free-will, and we ought to do this of free-will, because we do so of our pleasure; we do so of our love, because though we be chastened by Him, He never ought to displease us, for He is always just. Thus spoke His worshipper, Upon me, O God, are Thy vows, which I will pay, of praise to Thee. And in another place, I will offer Thee free-will offerings. What means, I will offer Thee free-offerings? I will freely praise Thee. For He saith, The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me. If thou wert compelled to offer thy Lord a sacrifice, pleasing and acceptable to Him, as formerly sacrifices were vowed for a shadow of things to come, perchance thou wouldest not find a fitting bull in thy herds, or a he-goat in thy goats worthy of the altar of the Lord, or a ram in thy sheepfolds a worthy victim for thy Lord; and not finding them, thou wouldest be troubled what to do, and wouldest perchance say to God, I would and had not. Canst thou say of praise, I would and had not? The very wish is praise. God seeketh not words from thee, but the heart. Lastly, thou mayest say, I had no tongue. If any one by sickness be dumb, he has no tongue, but he has praise. For if God had ears of flesh, and needed the sound of thy body, as long as thou remainest without a tongue, thou wouldest remain without praise. But now, as He seeketh for the heart, looketh into the heart, is the witness, the judge, the approver, the helper, the giver of the crown within, it is enough that thou open thy will. When thou canst, thou confessest with thy mouth to salvation; when thou canst not, thou believest with the heart to justification. Thou praisest with the heart, blessest with the heart; with the heart thou placest sacred victims on the altar of conscience, and the answer to thee is, Peace on earth to men of good will.

12. That God then, Who is omnipotent, did whatsoever He willed in the heaven and earth, thou doest not all thou willest in thine own house. He did whatsoever He willed in the heaven and earth: do thou do all that thou willest even in thy field. Thou willest many things, but canst not do all thou wishest in thy own house. Thy wife perchance gainsays thee, thy children gainsay thee, sometimes even thy slave contumaciously gainsays thee, and thou doest not what thou willest. But thou sayest, I do what I will, because I punish the disobedient and gainsayer. Even this thou doest not when thou

willest. Sometimes thou wouldest punish, and canst not; sometimes thou threatenest, and diest before thou doest what thou threatenest. Do we think thou doest in thyself what thou willest? Dost thou bridle all thy lusts? Perchance thou dost; dost thou even bring about, that the lusts thou bridlest do not rise up? Verily thou wishest this, not to be vexed with the importunity of thy lusts, and yet, the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things ye would. Thou doest not in thyself the things thou wouldest. But our God did whatsoever He would, in the heaven and earth. May He give thee grace, that thou mayest do in thyself what thou willest, for except by His help, thou doest not in thyself what thou willest. Moreover, when he could not do in himself what he would, who said, The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things ye would; when he bewailed himself, saying, I delight in the law of God, after the inner man, but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and making me captive to the law of sin, which is in my members; because, not only in his house, not only in his field, but in his flesh, and even in his spirit, he fulfilled not what he would; he cried to God, Who did whatsoever He would in heaven and earth; and said, Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death! And as if He Who is good, He Who is sweet, had answered him, straightway he adds, Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Love therefore this Sweetness, praise this Sweetness. Understand hereby God, Who did whatsoever He would in the heaven and earth; He will do in you also what ye will; by His help ye shall fulfil your will. But while ye cannot, confess to Him; when ye shall be able, give Him thanks; when ye fall, cry to Him; when ye are raised up, be not high-minded. He therefore did whatsoever He would in heaven and earth, in the sea, and in all deep places.

13. Raising the clouds from the ends of the earth. We see these works of God in His creation. For the clouds come from the ends of the earth to the midst thereof, and rain; thou scannest not whence they arise. Hence the prophet signifies this, from the ends of the earth, whether it be from the bottom, or from the circumference of the ends of the earth, whencesoever He wills He raises the clouds, only from the earth. He hath made lightnings into rain. For lightnings without rain would frighten thee, and bestow

nothing on thee. He maketh lightnings unto rain. It lightens, and thou tremblest; it rains, thou rejoicest. He hath made lightnings unto rain. He Who terrified thee, Himself causest that thou shouldest rejoice. Who bringeth the winds out of His treasures, their causes are hidden, thou knowest not whence they come. When the wind blows, thou feelest it; why it blows, or from what treasure of His wisdom it is brought forth, thou knowest not; yet thou owest to God the worship of faith, for it would not blow unless He had bidden Who made it, unless He had brought it forth Who created it.

14. We see therefore these things in that work of His; we praise, we marvel at, we bless God; let us see what He has done among men for His people. Who smote the first-born of Egypt. But withal those divine doings are told which thou mightest love, those are not told which thou mightest fear. Attend, and see that also when He is angry, He doeth what He willeth. He smote the first-born of Egypt, from man even unto beast. He sent signs and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt! Ye know, ye have read what the hand of the Lord did by Moses in Egypt, to crush and cast down the proud Egyptians, on Pharaoh and on all his servants. Little did He in Egypt: what did He after His people was led out thence? Who smote many nations, who possessed that land, which God willed to give His people. And slew mighty kings, Sehon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan. All these things which the Psalm records simply, do we read likewise in others of the Lord’s books, and there the hand of the Lord is great. When thou seest what has been done to the wicked, take heed lest it be done to thee. For such things were done to them, that thou mightest pass by and not follow them, and not suffer such things. Yet see that the rod of the Lord is over all flesh. Do not think that thou art not seen when thou sinnest; do not think thou art despised; do not think that the Lord sleepeth; take note of the examples of God’s benefits; when thou thinkest of these things, and when thou thinkest on God’s vengeance, fear. He is Almighty, both to comfort and to chastise. Therefore are these things useful when they are read. But when the good man sees what the wicked has suffered, let him cleanse himself from all iniquity, lest he fall into a like punishment, a like chastisement. Then ye have thoroughly understood these

things. What did God then? He drove out the wicked, And he gave their land for an inheritance, even an inheritance to Israel His servant.

15. Then follows the loud cry of His praise. Thy Name, O Lord, is for ever and ever, after all these things which Thou hast done. For what do I see that Thou hast done? I behold Thy creation which Thou hast made in heaven, I behold this lower part, where we dwell, and here I see Thy gifts of clouds, and winds, and rain. I regard Thy people; Thou leddest them from the house of bondage, and didst signs and wonders upon their enemies. Thou punishedst those who caused them trouble, Thou dravest the wicked from their land, Thou killedst their kings, Thou gavest their land to Thy people: I have seen all these things, and filled with joy have said, Lord, Thy Name is for ever and ever.

16. We see these things according to the literal meaning of what is written, we know and praise them. But if they have a further meaning, let me not be burdensome while I expound them according to my ability. For behold among men can I discern, that He did whatsoever He willed in the heaven and earth. By the sky of heaven, I understand spiritual men; by the earth, carnal; for of these two, heaven and earth, consists the Church of God, and preaching belongeth to spiritual men, obedience to carnal ones. For the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims His handy-work. For were not the people of God the earth of God, the Apostle would not have said, Ye are God’s building, God’s husbandry; as a wise architect, I lay the foundation, another buildeth upon it. Therefore we are the building of God, and the field of God. Who, says he, planteth a vineyard, and receiveth not of the fruit thereof? I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So in His Church, among His preachers, among His people, just as in earth and heaven, He did whatsoever He willed. Not alone in them. He did whatsoever He willed in the sea, and in all deep places. The sea is all unbelievers, all who do not yet believe; and He hath done whatsoever He would among them; for unbelievers rage not, unless they be permitted, nor are they punished, when they are obstinate, unless He command Who has made all nations. Suppose it is sea, and not land, is it the less subject to the power of God Almighty? He did whatsoever He would on the sea, and in all deep places. What are the deep places? The

hidden hearts of mortals, the deep thoughts of men. And how does God do there what He willeth? Because the Lord trieth the just and the wicked; for he who loveth iniquity, hateth his own life. And where doth He try him? It is written elsewhere, For inquisition shall be made into the thoughts of the ungodly. Therefore He hath done whatsoever He would in all deep places. The good heart lies hid, the evil heart lies hid; there is a deep place in the good heart, and in the bad; but these things are naked before God, from Whom nothing is hid. He cheers the good heart, He torments the evil. Therefore He hath done all that He would in the sky and earth, in the sea, and in all deep places.

17. Raising the clouds from the ends of the earth. What clouds? The preachers of the word of His Truth. Of which clouds in another place, when angry with His vineyard, He says, I will order My clouds that they rain no rain upon it. And it is a small thing that He raised the clouds from Jerusalem and Israel, which He sent to preach His Gospel in the whole world; of which clouds it is said, Their sound is gone out into every land, and their words into the ends of the world. This is a small thing; but since the Lord Himself saith, This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations, and then shall be the end, He raiseth the clouds from the ends of the earth. For as the Gospel groweth, whence will be there preachers of the Gospel in the ends of the earth, unless He raise up clouds from the ends of the earth. But what doeth He with the clouds? He turned lightnings to rain. He changed threats into pity. After their terror, He watered them. How did He water them after their terror? When God threateneth thee by a Prophet or Apostle, and thou fearest, doth not the flashing frighten you? But when thou turnest in penitence, and admittest that this is done by mercy, the terror of His lightning changes to rain. Who bringeth the winds out of His treasures. I understand the same preachers both by clouds and winds, the former by reason of the flesh, the latter of the spirit. For clouds are seen, winds are felt and not seen. Lastly, since we see that flesh is of the earth, He bringeth, says He, the clouds from the ends of the world. He had declared, whence He brings the clouds. He cometh to the winds, and because we know not the spirit of man, whence it cometh, Bringing, He says, the winds out of His treasures. Attend awhile, and ye shall see the rest.

18. Who smote the first-born of Egypt, from man even unto beast. Our first-born is safe by the Lord, because He has given it to us. For that punishment is harmful, that blow is too terrible, even the death of the first-born. What is our first-born? These moral powers of ours, by which we now serve God, are our first-born. We have faith as the first-fruits, whence we begin. For He saith to the Church, Thou shalt come and shalt pass through, from the beginnings of faith. And no one begins to live well, save by faith. Our faith therefore is in our first-born. When our faith is guarded, other things can follow. For since men are cleansed daily by growing better, and by living better, the inner man being renewed day by day, (as the Apostle says, And if our outer man perish, our inner man is renewed day by day,) hence it follows, that our first-born faith lives, of which first-born faith the Apostle speaks, but not only they, but we ourselves who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, that is, who give already to God the first-fruits of our spirit, that is, faith as our first-born; nevertheless, groan in ourselves, waiting our adoption, the redemption of our body. If then it is a great grace of God that our faith is preserved, it is a great punishment to slay the first-born, when men lose their faith being involved in the afflictions of the Church. For they afflict the Church when they lose their faith, for affliction is meant by Egypt. Whoever therefore afflicts the Church, whoever causes offences to the Church, though he be called a Christian, yet his first-born is dead. They will be infidel, worthless, they will have name and sign only, but they have buried their first-born in their hearts; so much so, that when thou shalt have said any thing to him about good living, about the hope of eternal life, about the fear of eternal fire, he will mutter to himself; or if he be such as to dare before thee, he turns his face and says, Who hath returned hither from thence? men say to themselves what they will. And yet he is a Christian; but because he afflicts us, his first-born is slain, his faith is dead, and this from man even unto beast. I will tell you, brethren, what I mean. I understand that men are spiritually meant to be the learned, on account of the rational mind which is man; beasts the unlearned, but yet having faith, else they would not have a first-born. It is the learned who afflict the Church, by creating schism and heresy. Wherefore ye find no faith in them, because they are become Egypt, that is, an affliction to the people of God. Their first-born is slain, they draw after them an unlearned crowd, these are beasts. In this affliction then, wherewith the Church is afflicted, the faith of

them who afflict her perishes. The first-born dies of the learned and unlearned, because God slew the first-born of Egypt from man even unto beast.

19. He sent signs and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants. Pharaoh is the king of the Egyptians. Observe the name, and note how God doeth these things. The king of every nation is the highest one. Egypt is affliction. Pharaoh is dispersion. Affliction therefore has dispersion for its king, because they who afflict the Church, are dispersed when they afflict it. For that they may afflict it, they are scattered, as the king leads, the people follow; dispersion goes before, affliction follows. Listen ye, listen ye to these names full of typical meaning and wisdom. You will find not one of these names, which means any good thing, where God hath displayed His wrath.

20. He smote many nations, and slew strong kings. Tell me, what kings and what nations? Sehon, king of the Amorites. Listen to names pregnant with sacramental meanings. He slew, says he, Sehon, king of the Amorites. Truly He killed them, and now may He slay them from the hearts of His servants, from the temptations of His Church; and may not His hand stop in slaying such kings and such people, for Sehon is interpreted the lust of the eyes; the Amorites mean, they who cause bitterness. And here see whether we can understand how these who cause bitterness, have for their king the lust of the eyes. The lust of the eyes cannot but be lying; it has a colour, it has no truth. And now why need we wonder, if they who cause bitterness have such a king, namely, a lying king? For except deceit and lying go before, there would be none to cause bitterness in the Church, for they cause bitterness in that they lie. The lust of the eyes goes before, bitterness follows, as it went before in the devil. For is not the lust of the eyes that which transforms him to an angel of light? God's right hand slay him and them; him lest he tempt, them that they may be purged. For so that king is slain in every man, when he condemneth deception, and loveth the truth. The hand of God ceaseth not to do this. For as He did then verbally, now He doeth spiritually, that He may fulfil what he declared in prophecy. Moreover, He slew another king, and his people. And Og the king of Basan. How evil is this one? Og means shutting up, Basan means confusion. Evil is

that king, who shuts up the road to God. For this the devil does; by always bringing forward his falsehoods, by bringing forward his idols, by introducing himself as a friend by means of his fanatical soothsayers, his augurs, diviners, magicians, rites sacred to demons, he shutteth up the way. Wherefore Christ is the means, that the way may be made open, which had been shut up, for by Him one of the redeemed saith, And in my God I will pass over a wall; so that the devil is busied in nothing else, but that he may shut up the way, lest men believe in God. For if they believe in God, the way is open, and Christ himself is the Way; but if men believe not in God, the way is shut up. But if it be shut up, because He is not believed, what remains, but that when He comes Who was not believed, they should be confounded who believed not? Why? Because the shutting up precedes, confusion follows. The shutting up, as the King goes before; the confusion, as the people follow. They whom he shuts up, that they believe not in Christ, when Christ appears, will all be confounded, and their iniquities will reprove them. Then the wicked in confusion shall say, what did our pride profit us? It is a great mystery, my brethren. Scattering is the king of afflictions, they are scattered that they may be afflicted. A great mystery. The lust of the eyes, that is, deceit, is the prince of them who cause bitterness, for they deceive that they may cause bitterness. Shutting up is the prince of confusion, for they are shut up, that they may not cross over to faith, and when they come before Him in Whom we believe, they will be confounded. And all the kingdoms of Chanaan God destroyeth. Chanaan means, Ready for Humbling; Humbling seemeth to mean something good, but only if it profit, for evil humbling is punishment. If humbling were not of the nature of punishment, it would not be said, that he who exalteth himself shall be humbled. For no benefit is conferred on him, since his punishment is to be humbled. Chanaan therefore is proud now. Every wicked man, every infidel, lifteth up his heart, will not believe in God. But this exaltation is prepared for humbling on the day of judgment; he will be humbled then, when he willeth not. For there are vessels of wrath, which are made ready for destruction. Let them exalt themselves now, babble, raise themselves above the faithful, scoff at the faithful, revile Christians; let them say, ‘These are old wives’ tales, which they prate of the day of judgment.’ That haughtiness of theirs is prepared for humbling. When the Judge has come, whose advent was before laughed at, then he who now is proud shall be brought low, not to his good, but to his punishment. But he is not yet humbled, he is being made ready for it, that is, he is getting ready for damnation, getting ready for the slaughter.

21. All these things then did God overthrow, in the body at that time, when our fathers were led out of the land of Egypt, in the spirit now. Nor does His Hand cease until the end. Therefore deem not that these mighty deeds of God were then finished and have ceased. Thy Name, O Lord, he says, is for ever. That is, Thy loving-kindness ceaseth not, Thy hand ceaseth not for ever from doing these things, which then Thou didst afore declare in a figure. For all these things happened unto them in a figure, but they are written for our admonition, on whom the end of the ages is come. O Lord, Thy Memorial is from generation to generation. One generation and another generation; the generation by which we are made the faithful, and are born again by baptism; the generation by which we shall rise again from the dead, and shall live with the Angels for ever. Thy Memorial, O Lord, is above this generation, and above that; for neither doth He now forget to call us, nor then will He forget to crown us. Thy Memorial, O Lord, is from generation to generation.

22. For the Lord hath judged His people. Verily He hath fulfilled all these things upon the people of the Jews. Have His works at all remained, after He brought His people into the land of promise? Manifestly He will yet judge them. The Lord hath judged His people, and will be called upon among His servants. Already hath He judged the people. Save the final judgment, the people of the Jews is judged. What is judged? The just are taken away, the unjust are left. But if I lie, or am thought to lie, because I have said, it is already judged, hear the Lord saying, I have come for judgment into this world, that they who see not may see, and they who see may be made blind. The proud are made blind, the lowly are enlightened. Therefore, He hath judged His people. Isaiah spake the judgment. And now, thou house of Jacob, come ye, let us walk in the light of the Lord. This is a small matter; but what follows? For He hath put away His people, the house of Israel. The house of Jacob is the house of Israel; for he who is Jacob, the same is Israel. Ye know the holy Scriptures, and I think you remember, that the same Jacob, when he saw an Angel wrestling with him, received the

name of Israel. It is therefore one man, whether it be Jacob or Israel, and one person: the house of Jacob and the house of Israel, one nation, one people; this he invites, that sends away. And of a surety already thou hast killed Christ, thou house of Jacob, thou hast killed Christ; already thou hast wagged thy head before the cross; hast marked Him as He hung there; hast said, If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross. Already the Physician has prayed for the madmen, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. Surely already thou hast done all these things; and now believe on Him Whom thou hast slain, drink the Blood which thou hast poured out. And now, thou house of Jacob, I would expound the witness of Isaiah, which he hath said here, For the Lord hath judged His people, and He will be called upon among His servants. For He is understood to judge His people, by separating in that very people of His the good from the bad, the faithful from the unfaithful, the Apostles from the lying Jews. He signified this, as I began to say, when He spake by the Prophet, now after all these ill-doings of thine, O thou house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord. Wherefore do I say to you, Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord? Lest by remaining in Judaism, ye come not to Christ. But why? Did not Christ always prophesy there? But now He hath sent away His people, the house of Israel. Come, O house of Jacob, for He hath sent away His people the house of Jacob; come, O house of Israel, for He hath sent away His people the house of Israel. Who hath come, who hath been sent away, save that this is the judgment, that they who see not may see, and they who see may become blind? Therefore the Lord hath judged His people. Therefore He hath separated them, and will He not find there them whom He may restore to His kingdom? Surely He will find, and He shall be called upon among His servants. He cast not away, says the Apostle, His people whom He knew. And how does he prove this? For I also am an Israelite. Therefore God had judged His people, by separating the evil and the good; that is to say, He shall be called upon among His servants. By whom? By the Gentiles. For how vast are the nations who have come in by faith. How many farms and desert places now come in to us? They come thence no one can tell how numerously; they would believe. We say to them, What will ye? They answer, To know the glory of God. Believe, my brethren, that we wonder and rejoice at such a claim of these rustic people. They come I know not whither, roused up by I know not whom. How shall I say, I know not by whom? I know indeed by whom, because He says, No one cometh to Me, save whom the Father draweth. They come suddenly from the woods, the desert, the most distant and lofty mountains, to the Church; and many of them, nay, near all hold this language, so that we see of a truth that God teacheth them within. The prophecy of Scripture is fulfilled, when it says, And they shall all be taught of God. We say to them, What do ye long for? And they answer, To see the glory of God. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. They believe, they are sanctified, they will to have clergy ordained for them. Is it not fulfilled, and He will be called upon among His servants?

23. Lastly, after all that arrangement and dispensation, the Spirit of God turns itself to reproaching and ridiculing those idols, which are now ridiculed by their very worshippers. The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold. As God made all these things, Who made whatever He would in heaven and earth, Who hath judged His people, and will be called upon by His servants, what can any thing that man maketh be, but an object of ridicule, not adoration? Was He perchance about to speak of the idols of the Gentiles, that we might despise them all? was He about to speak of the idols of the heathen, stones and wood, plaster and pottery? I say not these, they are mean materials. I speak of that which they specially love, that which they specially honour. The idols of the Gentiles are silver and gold. Surely it is gold, surely it is silver: because silver glitters, and gold glitters, have they therefore eyes, or do they see? As it is silver, as it is gold, it is useful not to the religious, but to the covetous; nay not even useful to the covetous, but useful to him who useth it well, and who gains by spending it celestial treasure. But as these things are senseless, why make ye men of silver and gold to be gods? See ye not that the gods which ye make see not? They have eyes, and will not see; they have ears, and will not hear; they have nostrils, and will not smell; they have a mouth, and will not speak; they have hands, and will not work; they have feet, and will not walk. All these things could the carpenter, the silversmith, the goldsmith make, both eyes, and ears, and nostrils, and mouth, and hands, and feet, but he could give neither sight to the eyes, nor hearing to the ears, nor speech to the mouth, nor smell to the nostrils, nor motion to the hands, or going to the feet.

24. And man, thou laughest doubtless at what thou hast made, if thou knowest by Whom thou art made. But of them who know not, what is said? All they who make them, and all they who trust in them, are like them. And ye believe, brethren, that there is a likeness to these idols expressed not in their flesh, but in their inner man. For they have ears, and hear not. God calls to them indeed, He who hath ears to hear, let him hear. They have eyes, and see not, for they have the eyes of the body, and not the eyes of faith. Lastly, this prophecy is fulfilled among all the nations. See how it hath been said by the prophet. It is nothing allegorical or figurative I mention. Listen to a peculiar, express, simple, plain prophecy, behold its fulfilment. The Lord, says he, hath prevailed against them: so saith the prophet Zephaniah. Against the gainsayers, and rebellious, and them who make martyrs by the murder of the faithful, but know not, against them the Lord hath prevailed. And how hath He prevailed? We shall see in His Church that He hath prevailed. They wished to slay, to destroy a few Christians; they poured out their blood; from the blood of the slain so many rose up, that by them they, the murderers of the Martyrs, were overcome. And now they ask where they may hide their idols, who of yore killed Christians for the sake of their idols. Hath not the Lord prevailed against them? See whether He does what follows. The Lord hath prevailed against them. And what did He do? He hath destroyed all the gods of the Gentiles, and every man shall worship Him in his own place, all the isles of the Gentiles. What is this? Was it not prophesied? Is it not fulfilled? Is it not seen, as it is written? And they who remain have eyes, and see not; have nostrils, and smell not. They perceive not that savour. We are a good savour of Christ, as the apostle says every where. What profiteth it, that they have nostrils, and smell not that so sweet savour of Christ? Truly it is done in them, and truly it is said of them, All they who make them, and all they who trust in them, are like to them.

25. But daily do men believe through the miracles of Christ our Lord; daily the eyes of the blind, the ears of the deaf are opened, the nostrils of the senseless are breathed into, the tongues of the dumb are loosed, the hands of the palsied are strengthened, the feet of the lame are guided; sons of Abraham are raised up of these stones, to all of whom be it said, Bless the Lord, ye house of Israel. All are sons of Abraham; and if sons of Abraham

are raised up from these stones, it is plain that they are rather the house of Israel who belong to the house of Israel, the seed of Abraham, not by the flesh, but by faith. Bless the Lord, ye house of Israel. But even granting that it is said of that house, and the people of Israel is meant, from thence did the Apostles and thousands of the circumcised believe? Bless the Lord, ye house of Israel; bless the Lord, ye house of Aaron; bless the Lord, ye house of Levi. Bless the Lord, ye nations, this is, the house of Israel generally; bless Him, ye leaders, this is, the house of Aaron; bless Him, ye servants, this is, the house of Levi. What of the other nations? Ye that fear the Lord, bless the Lord.

26. Let us also with one voice say what follows: Blessed be the Lord out of Zion, who dwelleth in Jerusalem. Out of Zion is Jerusalem too. Zion is ‘watching,’ Jerusalem the ‘vision of peace.’ In what Jerusalem will He dwell now? In that which has fallen? Nay, but in that which is our mother, which is in the heavens, of which it is said, The desolate hath more children than she which hath a husband. For now the Lord is from Zion, because we watch when He will come; now as long as we live in hope, we are in Zion. When our way is ended, we shall dwell in that city which will never fall, because the Lord dwelleth in her, and keepeth her, which is the vision of peace, the eternal Jerusalem; for the praise of which, my brethren, language sufficeth not; where we shall find no enemy, either within the Church or without the Church, neither in our flesh, nor in our thoughts. For death shall be swallowed up in victory, and we shall be free to see God in eternal peace, being made citizens of Jerusalem, the city of God.

PSALM 136

Exposition

1. Give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever. This Psalm contains the praise of God, and all its verses finish in the same way. Wherefore although many things are related here in praise of God, yet His mercy is most commended; for without this plain commendation, he, whom the Holy Spirit used to utter this Psalm, would have no verse be ended. I remember, in the hundred and fifth Psalm, which begins in the same way, because the manuscript which I read had not for ever, but, for ages His mercy, that I enquired what we had better understand. For, in the Greek language, it is written, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, which may be interpreted, for ages, and, for ever. But it would be tedious to renew the enquiries I made as best I could in that place. But in this Psalm, the same manuscript has not for ages, which most have, but, for ever His mercy. Although after the judgment, by which at the end of the world the quick and the dead must be judged, the just being sent into life eternal, the unjust into everlasting fire, there will not afterwards be those, whom God will have mercy on, yet rightly may His future mercy be understood to be for ever, which He bestows on His saints and faithful ones, not because they will be miserable for ever, and therefore will need His mercy for ever, but because that very blessedness, which He mercifully bestows on the miserable, that they cease to be miserable, and begin to be happy, will have no end, and therefore His mercy is for ever. For that we shall be just from being unjust, whole from being unsound, alive from being dead, immortal from being mortal, happy from being wretched, is of His mercy. But this that we shall be, will be for ever, and therefore His mercy is for ever. Wherefore, give thanks to the Lord; that is, praise the Lord by giving thanks, for He is good: nor is it any temporal good you will gain from this confession, for, His mercy endureth for ever; that is, the benefit which He bestows mercifully upon you, is for ever. The expression, for He is good, in the Greek is ἀγαθὸς; not as in the hundred and fifth Psalm, for there 'He is good,' in

Greek is χρηστός. And so some have expounded the former, ‘Since He is sweet.’ For ἀγαθὸς is not good any how, but good most excellently.

2. Then follows, Give thanks to the God of gods, for His mercy endureth for ever. Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for His mercy, endureth for ever. We may well enquire, Who are these gods and lords, of whom He Who is the true God is God and Lord? And we find written in another Psalm, that men even are called gods; as it is, God stood in the congregation of the gods, He discerneth between the gods. And a little afterwards, I have said, Ye are gods, and all children of the High One; but ye shall die like men, and fall as one of the princes. The Lord even takes note of this testimony in the Gospel, saying, Is it not written in your Law, I have said, Ye are gods? If He called them gods, for whom the word of God was sent, and the Scriptures cannot be broken, how say ye, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God? It is not therefore because they are all good, but because the word of God came to them, that they were called gods. For were it because they are all good, He would not thus distinguish between them. For when He said, God standeth in the congregation of gods, He does not say, He distinguishes between God and men, as if He shewed what was the difference between gods and men; but He saith, He judgeth between the gods. Then follows, How long do ye judge iniquity! and the rest, which He says certainly not to all, but to some, because He saith it in distinguishing, and yet He distinguisheth between the gods.

3. But it is asked, If men are called gods to whom the word of the Lord came, are the Angels to be called gods, when the greatest reward which is promised to just and holy men is the being equal to Angels? In the Scriptures I know not whether it can, at least easily, be found, that the Angels are openly called gods; but when it had been said of the Lord God, He is terrible, above all gods, he adds, as by way of exposition why he says this, for the gods of the heathen are devils. Over such gods as these, he says, that the Lord is terrible among His holy places, the heavens which He hath made, from which the devils are frightened. For so it follows. But the Lord made the heavens. It is not therefore the gods without addition; but the gods of the Gentiles are devils; but above He says, He is terrible above all gods. He does not say, above all the gods of the Gentiles, although He would have

this understood, by adding what follows, For the gods of the Gentiles are devils. It is said that this is not the reading in Hebrew, but the gods of the Gentiles are idols. If this be true, much the more must the Seventy be believed to have interpreted by the Divine Spirit, the same Spirit as He by whom these things were said in the Hebrew. For by the working of the same Spirit this also should be said which was said, The gods of the Gentiles are devils, that we might understand what had been expressed in the Hebrew, the gods of the Gentiles are idols, meaning rather the devils which dwell in the idols. For as regards images, which in Greek are called idols, a name we now use in Latin, they have eyes and see not, and all the other things which are said of them, because they are utterly without sense; wherefore they cannot be frightened, for nothing which has no sense can be frightened. How then can it be said of the Lord, He is terrible above all gods, because the gods of the Gentiles are idols, if the devils which may be frightened are not understood to be in these images. Whence also the Apostle says, We know that an idol is nothing. This refers to its earthy senseless material. But that no one may think, that there is no living and sentient nature, which delights in the Gentile sacrifices, he adds, But what the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: I would not have you partakers with devils. If therefore we never find in the divine words that the holy Angels are called gods, I think the best reason is, that men may not be induced by the name to pay that ministry and service of religion (which in Greek is called λειτουργία or λατρία) to the holy Angels, which neither would they have paid by man at all, save to that God, Who is the God of themselves and men. Hence they are much more correctly called Angels, which in Latin is ‘Nuntii,’ that by the name of their function, not their substance, we may plainly understand that they would have us worship the God, Whom they announce. The whole then of that question the Apostle has briefly expounded, when he says, For though there be who are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there are gods many and lords many; yet we have one God the Father, from Whom are all, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him.

4. Let us therefore give thanks to the God of gods, and the Lord of lords, for His mercy endureth for ever. Who alone did wonderful things. As at the last part of every verse, it is written, For His mercy endureth for ever, so we

must understand at the beginning of each, though it be not written, Give thanks. Which indeed in the Greek is very plain. It would be so in Latin, if our translators had been able to make use of that expression. Which indeed they could have done in this verse, if they had said, ‘To Him Who doeth wonderful things.’ For where we have, Who did wonderful things, the Greek has τῷ ποιήσαντι, where we must necessarily understand, give thanks. And I would they had added the pronoun, and said to Him, Who did, or to Him Who doeth, or to Him Who made sure; because then one might easily understand, let us give thanks. For now it is so obscurely rendered, that He who either knows not or cares not to examine a Greek manuscript may think, Who made the heavens, Who made sure the earth, Who made the luminaries, for His mercy endureth for ever, has been so said, because He did these things for this reason, because His mercy endureth for ever: whereas they, whom He has freed from misery, belong to His Mercy: but not that we should believe that He makes sky, earth, and luminaries, of His Mercy; since they are marks of His Goodness, Who created all things very good. For He created all things, that they might have their being; but it is the work of His Mercy, to cleanse us from our sins, and deliver us from everlasting misery. And so the Psalm thus addresses us, Give thanks unto the God of Gods, give thanks unto the Lord of Lords. Give thanks to Him, Who alone doeth great wonders; give thanks to Him, Who by His wisdom made the heavens; give thanks to Him, Who stretched out the earth above the waters; give thanks to Him, Who alone made great lights. But why we are to praise, he setteth down at the end of all the verses, for His mercy endureth for ever.

5. But what meaneth, Who alone doeth great wonders? Is it because many wonderful things He hath done by means of angels and men? Some wonderful things there are which God doeth alone, and these he enumerates, saying, Who by His wisdom made the heavens, Who stretched out the earth above the waters, Who alone made great lights. For this reason did he add alone in this verse also, because the other wonders which he is about to tell of, God did by means of man. For having said, Who alone made great lights, he goes on to explain what these are, the sun to rule the day, the moon and stars to govern the night; then he begins to tell the wonders which He did by means of angels and men; Who smote Egypt with

their first-born, and the rest. The whole creation then God manifestly made, not by means of any creature, but alone; and of this creation he hath mentioned certain more eminent parts, that they might make us think on the whole; the heavens we can understand, and the earth we see. And as there are visible heavens too, by mentioning the lights in them, he has bid us look on the whole body of the heavens as made by Him.

6. However, whether by what he saith, Who made the heavens in understanding, or, as others have rendered it, in intelligence, he meant to signify, the heavens we can understand, or that He in His understanding or intelligence, that is, in His wisdom made the heavens, (as it is elsewhere written, in wisdom hast Thou made them all,) implying thereby the only-begotten Word, may be a question. But if it be so, that we are to understand that God by His wisdom made the heavens, why saith He this only of the heavens, whereas God made all things by the same wisdom? Is it that it needed only to be expressed there, so that in the rest it might be understood without being written; so that he means to say, Who by His wisdom made the heavens: Who laid out the earth above the waters, here understanding, by His wisdom: Who alone made great lights; the sun to rule the day, the moon and stars to govern the night, that is, by His wisdom. How then could it be alone, if in understanding or in intelligence means by His wisdom, that is, by the only-begotten Word? Is it that, inasmuch as the Trinity is not three Gods, but one God, he states that God made these things alone, because He made not creation by means of any creature?

7. But what is, Who laid out the earth above the waters? For it is a difficult question, because the earth seemeth to be the heavier, so that it should be believed not so much to be borne on the waters, as to bear the waters. And that we may not seem contentiously to maintain our Scriptures against those who think that they have discovered these matters on sure principles, we have a second interpretation to give, that the earth which is inhabited by men, and contains the living creatures of the earth, (which in another way is called the dry land, as it is written, Let the dry land appear; and God called the dry land earth,) is laid out above the waters because it stands out above the waters which surround it. For when we speak of a city on the sea being built above the waters, it is not meant that the sea is under it in the same

way as the waters are under the chambers of caverns, or under ships sailing over them; but it is said to be above the sea, because it stands up above the sea below it. Thus Pharaoh is said to have gone out over the water, (for so it is in the Greek, where some Latin versions have, to the water,) and the Lord sat on the well, because both were higher than the river and the well, the one beside the river, the other beside the well.

8. But if these words further signify something else which more closely concerns us, God by His wisdom made the heavens, that is, His saints, spiritual men, to whom He has given not only to believe, but also to understand things divine; those who cannot yet attain to this, and only hold their faith firmly, as being beneath the heavens, are figured by the name of earth. And because they abide with unshaken belief upon the baptism they have received, therefore it is said, He laid out the earth above the waters. Further, since it is written of our Lord Jesus Christ, that in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and that these two, wisdom and knowledge, differ somewhat from one another is testified by other utterances of Scripture, especially in the words of holy Job, where both are in a manner defined; (for he saith, But unto man He said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding;) not unsuitably then do we understand wisdom to consist in the knowledge and love of That Which ever is and abideth unchangeable, Which is God. For where he saith, piety is wisdom, in Greek is θεοσέβεια, and to express the whole of this in Latin, we may call it ‘Dei cultus,’ (worship of God.) But to depart from evil, which he calls knowledge, what else is it but to walk cautiously and heedfully in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in the night, as it were, of this world, that each one by keeping himself from iniquity may avoid being confounded with the darkness, distinguished by the light of his proper gift. And so, when in a certain place the Apostle would shew the harmonious variety of graces in men of God, he placed these two in the front rank, saying, To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; this I suppose is, the sun to rule the day: to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; this, the moon. And then I imagine the stars to be in a certain sense mentioned in what follows, To another faith, by the same Spirit; to another the gift of healing, by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits;

to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; for there is none of these which is not necessary in the night of this world; but when it is passed, they will not be necessary, and therefore it is said, to govern the night. To govern the day and the night, he says, that there might be the power of shining either by day or by night; and in regard of spiritual gifts, this means that He gave them power to become the sons of God. Who smote Egypt with their first-born. He smote too the world, with the things which are held chief in the world.

9. Who brought out Israel from the midst of them. He brought out also His saints and faithful ones from the midst of the wicked. With a mighty Hand and stretched-out Arm. What more powerful, what more out-stretched, than that of which is said, To whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed? Who divided the Red Sea in two parts. He divided also in such wise, that the same baptism should be to some unto life, to others unto death. And brought out Israel through the midst of it. So too He brings out His renewed people through the laver of regeneration. And overthrew Pharaoh and his power in the Red Sea. He quickly destroyeth both the sin of His people and the guilt thereof by baptism. Who led His people through the wilderness. Us too He leadeth through the drought and barrenness of this world, that we perish not therein. Who smote great kings, and slew famous kings. From us too He smites and slays the deadly powers of the devil. Sehon king of the Amorites, an ‘useless shoot,’ or ‘fiery temptation,’ for so is Sehon interpreted: the king of ‘them who cause bitterness,’ for such is the meaning of Amorites. And Og, the king of Basan. The ‘heaper-together,’ such is the meaning of Og, and, king of ‘confusion,’ which Basan signifies. For what else doth the devil heap together but confusion? And gave away their land for an heritage, even an heritage unto Israel His servant. For He giveth them, whom once the devil owned, for an heritage to the seed of Abraham, that is, Christ. Who remembered us in our low estate, and redeemed us from our enemies by the Blood of His only-begotten Son. Who giveth food to all flesh, that is, to the whole race of mankind, not Israelites only, but Gentiles too; and of this Food is said, My Flesh is meat indeed. Give thanks unto the God of Heaven, for His mercy endureth for ever. Give thanks unto the Lord of lords, for His mercy endureth for ever. For what he here says, the God of Heaven, I suppose that he meant to express in other words what He had

before said, the God of gods. For what there he subjoined, he has here also repeated. Give thanks unto the Lord of lords. But though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him; to Whom we confess that His mercy endureth for ever.

PSALM 137

A Sermon to the People.

I think ye have not forgotten, that I brought to your notice, or rather to your recollection, that every one who is trained in the holy Church ought to know of what place we are citizens, and where we are wandering, and that the cause of our wandering is sin, the gift of our return, the remission of our sins, and our justification by the grace of God. Ye have heard and know that there are two cities, for the present outwardly mingled together, yet separated in heart, running together through the course of time until the end; one whose end is everlasting peace, and it is called Jerusalem; the other whose joy is peace in this world, and it is called Babylon. The meanings of these names too ye remember, that Jerusalem means ‘vision of peace;’ Babylon, ‘confusion.’ Jerusalem was held captive in Babylon, but not all, for the Angels too are its citizens. But as regards men predestined to the glory of God, to become by adoption joint-heirs with Christ, whom He has redeemed from this very captivity by His own Blood, that this part, I say, of the citizens of Jerusalem are held captive in Babylon on account of sin, but first begin to go forth from thence in spirit by confession of sin and love of righteousness, and then afterwards at the end of the world are to be separated in body also; this we set before you in that Psalm, which we first handled here with you, beloved, which begins thus: For Thee, O God, a hymn is meet in Sion, and to Thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem. But to-day we have sung, By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered Sion. Observe, that in the former it is said, For Thee, O God, a hymn is meet in Sion; but here, By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered Sion, that Sion where a hymn is meet for God.

2. What then are the waters of Babylon? and what is our sitting and weeping in remembrance of Sion? For if we be citizens of Sion, we not only chant this, but do it. If we are citizens of Jerusalem, that is Sion, and in this life, in the confusion of this world, in this Babylon, do not dwell as citizens,

but are detained as captives, it befits us not only to chant these things, but also to do them, with affectionate regard, with religious longing for our everlasting city. This city too which is called Babylon hath its lovers, who look for peace in this world, and hope for nothing beyond, but fix their whole joy in this, end it in this, and we see them toil exceedingly for their earthly country: but whosoever live faithfully even therein, if they seek not therein pride, and perishable elation, and hateful boasting, but exhibit true faith, such as they can, as long they can, to whom they can, so far as they see earthly things, and understand the nature of their citizenship, God suffereth them not to perish in Babylon; He hath predestinated them to be citizens of Jerusalem. He understandeth their captivity, and sheweth to them another city, for which they ought truly to sigh, for which they ought to use every endeavour, to win which they ought to the utmost of their power to urge their fellow-citizens, now their fellow-wanderers. Therefore saith the Lord Jesus Christ, He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and again He saith, If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who will give you that which is your own?

3. However, brethren, observe the waters of Babylon. The waters of Babylon are all things which here are loved, and pass away. One man, for example, loveth to practise husbandry, to grow rich thereby, to employ his mind therein, thence to gain pleasure: let him observe the issue, and see that what he hath loved is not a foundation of Jerusalem, but a stream of Babylon. Another saith, It is a grand thing to be a soldier: all husbandmen fear those who are soldiers, obey them, tremble at them: if I be a husbandman, I shall fear soldiers; if a soldier, farmers will fear me. Madman! Thou hast cast thyself headlong into another stream of Babylon, and that still more boisterous and sweeping. Thou wishest to be feared by thine inferior; fear Him that is greater than thou. He who fears thee may on a sudden become greater than thou, but never will He Whom thou oughtest to fear become less. To be a pleader, saith another, is a grand thing, ever to have clients hanging on the tongue of their eloquent advocate, and from his words looking for loss or gain, death or life, ruin or safety. Thou knowest not whither thou hast cast thyself; this too is another stream of Babylon, and its loud sound is the din of the waters dashing against the rocks. Mark that it flows, it glides on; and if thou markest that it flows and glides on, mark also

that it carries things along with it. To traverse the seas, saith another, and to trade, is a grand thing, to know many lands, to make gains from every quarter, never to be obnoxious in thy country to any powerful man, and to feed thy mind with the various habits of the nations thou visitest, and to return enriched with the increase of thy gains. This too is a stream of Babylon; when will thy gains stop? When wilt thou rely upon and be secure in the gains thou makest? The richer thou art, the more fearful wilt thou be. Once shipwrecked, thou wilt come forth stripped of all, and deservedly wilt thou bewail thyself in the rivers of Babylon, because thou wouldest not sit down and weep by the waters of Babylon.

4. But then other citizens of the holy Jerusalem, understanding their captivity, mark how the natural wishes and the various lusts of men hurry and drag them hither and thither, and drive them into the sea; they see this, and they throw not themselves into the waters of Babylon, but sit down by the waters of Babylon, and by the waters of Babylon weep, either for those who are being carried away by them, or themselves whose deserts have placed them in Babylon, but sitting, that is, humbling themselves. By the waters of Babylon then we sat down and wept, when we remembered Sion. O holy Sion, where all stands firm and nothing flows! Who hath thrown us headlong into this? Why have we left thy Founder and thy society? Behold, placed where all things are flowing and gliding away, scarce one, if he can grasp the tree, shall be snatched from the stream and escape. Humbling ourselves then in our captivity, let us sit by the waters of Babylon, let us not dare to plunge ourselves in those streams, nor to be proud and lifted up in the evil and sadness of our captivity, but let us sit, and so weep. Let us sit by the waters, not beneath the waters, of Babylon; such be our humility, that it overwhelm us not. Sit by the waters, not in the waters, not under the waters; but yet sit, in humble fashion, talk not as thou wouldest in Jerusalem. There thou wilt stand; for of this very hope another Psalm speaketh, singing thus, Our feet shall stand in the courts of Jerusalem. There shalt thou be lifted up, if here by penitence and confession thou humble thyself. In the courts then of Jerusalem our feet shall stand, but by the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered thee, O Sion. For this reason is it meet that thou weep, for the remembrance of Sion.

5. For many weep with the weeping of Babylon, because they rejoice also with the joy of Babylon. When men rejoice at gains and weep at losses, both are of Babylon. Thou oughtest to weep, but in the remembrance of Sion. If thou weepest in the remembrance of Sion, thou oughtest to weep even when it is well with thee in Babylon. Therefore is it said in a certain Psalm, I found trouble and sorrow; then called I upon the name of the Lord. What meaneth he by saying, I have found? He speaketh of some kind of tribulation, as though it were to be sought; he found it, as though he had sought it. And when he had found it, what gained he by finding it? He called upon the name of the Lord. Much doth it matter, whether thou findest tribulation, or art found by tribulation. For he saith in another place, The sorrows of hell found me. What is, The sorrows of hell found me? What is, I found trouble and sorrow? When sadness suddenly overtaketh thee, through trouble in thy worldly affairs, wherein thou didst delight, when suddenly sadness of her own accord findeth thee, befalleth thee from some point, whence thou didst not think thou couldest be saddened, and thou art made sad, then the sorrows of hell have found thee. For thou thoughtest thyself aloft, whereas thou wast beneath; there hast thou found thyself beneath, where thou thoughtest thyself aloft. For thou hast found thyself grievously afflicted with sorrow, through sadness at some evil from a quarter where perchance thou hadst presumed thou wouldest not be made sad: the sorrows of hell have found thee. But when it is well with thee, when all earthly things smile on thee, none of thy loved ones hath died, no drought or hail or barrenness hath assailed thy vineyard, thy cask hath not grown sour, thy cattle have not failed, thou hast not been dishonoured in any high position of this world wherein thou hast been placed, thy friends all around thee live and preserve their friendship for thee, dependents are not wanting, thy children obey thee, thy slaves tremble before thee, thy wife liveth in harmony with thee, thy house is called happy,—then find tribulation, if in any way thou canst, that, having found tribulation thou mayest call on the name of the Lord. Perversely seemeth the word of God to teach that thou shouldest weep in joy, and rejoice in sorrow. Hear it rejoicing in sorrow, We glory, it saith, in tribulations. But see it weeping in joy, if it have found tribulation. Let each one mark his own happiness, wherein his soul hath exulted and puffed itself up in a manner with joy and elated itself, and said, ‘I am happy.’ Let him mark whether that happiness

floweth not on, if he can be sure of it that it remaineth for ever. But if he be not certain, but seeth that that wherein he rejoices floweth, it is a stream of Babylon; let him sit down by it, and weep. He will sit down and weep, if he remember Sion. O for that peace which we shall see in the presence of God! O for that holy equality with the Angels! O for that vision, that fair sight! Lo, in Babylon fair are the things which hold thee: let them not hold thee, let them not deceive thee. One thing is the solace of the captive, another the joy of the free. By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered Sion.

6. On the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our instruments of music. The citizens of Jerusalem have their instruments of music, God's Scriptures, God's commands, God's promises, meditation on the life to come; but while they are dwelling in the midst of Babylon, they hang up their instruments of music on the willows thereof. Willows are unfruitful trees, and here so placed, that no good whatever can be understood of them: elsewhere perhaps there may. Here understand barren trees, growing by the waters of Babylon. These trees are watered by the waters of Babylon, and bring forth no fruit; just as there are men greedy, covetous, barren in good works, citizens of Babylon in such wise, that they are even trees of that region; they are fed there by these pleasures of transitory things, as though watered by the waters of Babylon. Thou seekest fruit of them, and no where findest it. When we suffer such men as these, we live among those who are in the midst of Babylon. For wide is the difference between the midst of Babylon and the outside of Babylon. There are some who are not in the midst of it, that is, are not buried entirely in the lust of the world and the delights thereof. But those who, to speak plainly and briefly, are thoroughly bad, are in the midst of Babylon, and are barren trees like the willows of Babylon. When we see them, and find them so barren, that with difficulty do we find in them ought whereby they may be led on to true faith and good works, or to hope of a future life, or to desire to be set free from captivity under mortality, then we know indeed the Scriptures which we should address to them; but, because we find in them no fruit upon which to begin, we turn away our face from them, and say, 'As yet they have no taste nor capacity for them; whatever we say to them, they will consider foolish and contrary.' Therefore by deferring to apply the Scriptures to them, we hang

up our instruments of music upon the willows. For we hold them not worthy to carry our instruments. We do not therefore insert our instruments into them and bind them to them, but defer to use them, and so hang them up. For the willows are the unfruitful trees of Babylon, fed by temporal pleasures, as by the waters of Babylon.

7. And see whether the Psalm do not agree with this. On the willows in the midst thereof we hung up our instruments of music. For there they that led us captive demanded of us words of songs, and they that led us away, an hymn. They demanded of us words of songs and an hymn, who led us captive. Who have led us captive, brethren? Whom have we at some time or other experienced as our capturers. Jerusalem of old experienced captivity at the hands of the Babylonians, the Persians, the Chaldeans, and the men of those nations and regions, and that afterwards, not when these Psalms were composed. But we have already told you, beloved, that all things, which according to the letter befel that city, were our examples, and it can easily be proved that we are captives. For we breathe not the air of that our true liberty: we enjoy not the purity of truth, and that wisdom, that remaining in herself maketh all things new. We are tempted by the delights of earthly things, and we struggle daily with the suggestions of unlawful pleasures; scarce do we breathe freely even in prayer: we understand that we are captives. But who led us captive? what men? what race? what king? If we are redeemed, we once were captives. Who hath redeemed us? Christ. From whom hath He redeemed us? From the devil. The devil then and his angels led us captive: and they would not lead us, unless we consented. We were led captive. Who our capturers were, I have said. For they are the thieves who wounded the traveller who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and left him wounded and half dead. Him He, our Keeper, that is, Samaritan, (for Samaritan meaneth ‘keeper,’) whom the Jews found fault with, and said, Say we not well that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? of which two objections, the one He rejected, the other He accepted: I, He answered, have not a devil: yet He said not, ‘I am not a Samaritan:’ for had He not been our Samaritan, our Keeper, verily we had perished:—this Samaritan then, I say, passing by, saw the man left by the thieves hurt and wounded, and, as ye know, took care of him. Just as sometimes under the name of thieves are described those who have inflicted on us the wounds of sins, so,

through our consenting to being made captives, are they also called our capturers.

8. Those then who have led us captive, the devil and his angels, when have they spoken unto us, and when have they asked of us the words of songs? what then do we understand? That, when those in whom the devil worketh ask such things of us, he is to be understood to ask, who worketh in them. The Apostle saith, And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past. He sheweth that, having been redeemed, he has already begun to come forth from Babylon. But still what saith he yet? That we contend with our enemies. And that we may not wax wroth with men, who attack us with persecutions, the Apostle has diverted our efforts from hatred of men, and guided them to struggle with certain spirits, whom we see not, and yet we contend with them. For he saith, We wrestle not against flesh and blood, that is, against men, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world. What means he by ‘this world?’ The lovers of this world. These he also calleth darkness, that is, unjust, wicked, unbelievers, sinners; whom, when they have come to believe, he congratulateth after this fashion, saying, Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. So then he has laid down that we wrestle with those principalities: they it is who have led us captive.

9. But, just as the devil entered into the heart of Judas, to make him betray his Lord, yet would not have entered, unless he had made room for him; so many evil men from the midst of Babylon, by making room in their hearts for the devil and his angels, so that he may work in them and through them, sometimes ask us, and say to us, ‘Explain to us the reason.’ So too the heathen generally ask us, ‘Explain the reason why Christ came, and what benefit Christ hath been to the human race. Have not matters been worse upon earth since Christ came, and was it not better then with men than it is now? Let the Christians tell us, what good Christ hath brought, wherein they think human affairs more happy, for that Christ hath come. For thou seest that if the theatres and amphitheatres and circuses were safe and

standing, if no part of Babylon were falling, if men were surrounded by abundance of pleasures, and could sing and dance to lascivious strains, if the impure and whoremongers could indulge their rest in quiet and safety, if a man did not fear famine in his own house who cried out that the dancers should be clothed, if all this went on without discredit, without disturbance, and all these follies could be enjoyed without anxiety, these would be happy times, and Christ would have brought great happiness to human affairs.' But, forasmuch as wickednesses are now being destroyed, in order that that earthly desire being uprooted, the love of Jerusalem may be planted in; forasmuch as bitternesses are being mixed with this passing life, that men may long for the everlasting life; forasmuch as men are being disciplined with scourges, receiving a father's correction, that they may not hereafter receive a judge's sentence; Christ, they say, hath brought nothing good, Christ hath brought troubles. And thou beginnest to tell to one, how much good Christ hath done, and he receives it not. For thou settest before him the example of those who do as ye have just heard in the Gospel, who sell all that they have, and give to the poor, that they may have treasure in heaven, and follow their Lord. Thou sayest to him, 'See what Christ hath brought! How many do this, distribute their goods to the needy, and become poor not of necessity, but of free-will, following God, hoping for the kingdom of Heaven.' He mocketh at such men as fools, and saith, 'Is this the good which Christ hath brought, that man lose his own goods, and giving to the needy, remain needy himself?' What then wilt thou do? Thou takest not in the good things of Christ, for another hath filled thee who is the adversary of Christ, to whom thou hast given place in thine heart. Thou lookest back to former times, and those former times seem to thee to have been happier, which were like olives hanging on the tree, swayed by the wind, enjoying their wandering desires like a sort of liberty in the breeze. The time is come for the olive to be put into the press. For they ought not always to hang on the trees: now it is the end of the year. Not without reason are certain Psalms incribed, 'For the presses:' on the tree is liberty, in the press, pressure. For when human affairs are being crushed and pressed, thou observest that avarice increaseth: observe also that self-denial increaseth. Wherefore art thou so blind that thou seest the lees flowing down the streets, but not the oil flowing into the vats? Yet is not this without reason: for they who live ill, are generally known, they who turn to

God and are cleansed from the filth of evil desires are hidden, for in the press, or rather out the press, the lees openly flow, the oil secretly strains off.

10. At this ye shout, at this ye rejoice, because now ye can sit down by the waters of Babylon and weep. But they who have led us captive, when they enter into the hearts of men, and ask us by the tongues of them whom they possess, and say to us, Sing us the words of songs, give us a reason for the coming of Christ; tell us what is another life: when they say, I will not believe, give me a reason why thou biddest me believe. Such an one I answer and say, ‘Man, how is it that thou willest not that I bid thee believe? Thou art full of evil desires; if I tell of those good things of Jerusalem, thou takest them not in; thou must be emptied of that wherewith thou art full, that thou mayest be filled with that whereof thou art empty.’

Be not then ready to say ought to such an one: he is willow: he is barren wood. Strike not the instrument of music that it sound; hang it up rather. But he will say, ‘Tell me, sing to me, shew me the reason. Art thou not willing for me to learn?’ Thou hearest not with good intent; thou knockest not so as to deserve that it be opened to thee. He hath filled thee who hath led me captive: he asketh of me by thee. He is cunning: he asketh craftily: he asketh not to learn, but to blame. Therefore I will not speak to him; I will hang up my instrument of music.

11. But what will he yet say? Sing us the words of songs: sing us a hymn: sing us one of the songs of Sion. What answer we? Babylon beareth thee, Babylon containeth thee, Babylon nourisheth thee, Babylon speaks by thy mouth, thou knowest not to take in save what glitters for the present, thou knowest not how to meditate on things of eternity, thou takest not in what thou askest. How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land? Truly, brethren, so it is. Begin to wish to preach the truth in such measure as ye know it, and see how needful it is for you to endure such mockers, persecutors of the truth, full of falsehood. Reply to them, when they ask of you what they cannot take in, and say in full confidence of your holy song, How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land!

12. But take heed how thou dwellest among them, O people of God, O body of Christ, O high-born band of wanderers, (for thy home is not here, but elsewhere,) lest when thou lovest them who say to thee, Sing to us the words of songs, sing us an hymn, sing us one of the songs of Sion, and strivest for their friendship, and fearest to displease such men, Babylon begin to delight thee and thou forget Jerusalem. In fear then of this, see what the Psalmist subjoins, see what follows. For the man who sang thus, (and that man are we if we choose,) endured all around him men who asked these questions and allured him with flattery, who chid with biting words and falsely praised him, who asked what they took not in, were unwilling to empty themselves of that wherewith they were full; and being as it were in danger among crowds of such men, he lifted up his mind to the recollection of Sion, and his soul bound itself with a sort of oath, and said, If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, amid the speeches of those who hold me captive, amid the speeches of treacherous men, amid the speeches of men who ask with ill intent, asking, yet unwilling to learn.

13. Behold, of this number was that rich man, who asked the Lord, Good Master, what shall I do that I may attain eternal life? Did he not in asking about eternal life, ask, as it were, for a song of Sion? Keep the commandments, said the Lord to him. And he in his pride, when he heard this, said, All these have I kept from my youth. And the Lord spake to him one of the songs of Sion, and knew that he took it not in; but He gave us an example how that many ask, as it were, counsel concerning eternal life, and praise us so long as we answer what they ask. He gave from him a lesson as though to bid us, that we should afterward say to such men, How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land? Behold, He saith, Wilt thou be perfect? Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shall have treasure in Heaven, and come, follow Me. That he may learn many of the songs of Sion, let him first cast out all hindrances, let him walk without encumbrance, that he may have no burden to weigh him down, and he shall learn somewhat of the songs of Sion. But he went away sorrowing. Let us say after him, How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land? He indeed went away, yet the Lord gave hope for the rich. For the disciples were saddened, and said, Who then can be saved? And He answered them, What is impossible for man, is easy for God: For the rich too have a sort of

measure of their own, and have received a song of Sion, a song whereof the Apostle speaketh, Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. And adding what they ought to do, now he toucheth his instrument, and hangeth it not up: that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. Here is that one of the songs of Sion which the rich have received; first of all, not to be high-minded. For riches puff up; and whom they puff up, those streams sweep away. What then is enjoined to them? Above all, not to be high-minded. What riches do, that let them beware of in riches; in riches let them beware of pride. For that is the very evil which riches bring to men not on their guard. For gold is not evil, which God hath made: but the avaricious man is evil, who leaveth the Creator, and turneth to the creature. This then let him first take care, that he be not proud; let him sit by the waters of Babylon. For it is said to him, Be not high-minded; therefore let him sit: nor trust in uncertain riches; therefore let him sit by the waters of Babylon; for if he trust in uncertain riches, he is carried away by a stream of Babylon. But if he humble himself, and be not proud, and trust not in uncertain riches, he sits by the waters, he sighs for the everlasting Jerusalem, remembering Sion; and that he may reach Sion, he spendeth his riches. There thou hast the song which the rich have received from among the songs of Sion. Let them work, let them touch their instrument, let them not be idle. When they find one saying to them, ‘What art thou doing? Thou art wasting thy substance by spending so much: lay up store for thy children:’ when they see that he takes it not in, and understand that it is a willow, let them not readily say, why they do so, or what they do, let them hang up their instruments on the willows of Babylon. But beside the willows let them sing, let them not rest, let them work. For they lose not what they spend. They trust their riches to a slave, and they are safe: they trust them to Christ, and are they lost?

14. Thou hast heard the song of Sion for the rich: hear now the song of the poor. The same Paul saith, We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out: and having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare,

and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. These are waters of Babylon. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. Are then these songs contradictory? They are not. See what is said to the rich: not to be high-minded; not to trust in uncertain riches; to do good; to distribute; to lay up in store for themselves a good foundation for the time to come. But what is said to the poor? They who will be rich fall into temptation. He said not, ‘They who are rich,’ but, they who will be rich: for if they were already rich, they should hear the other song. The rich is bid to spend, the poor not to desire.

15. But while ye live among such as these, who take not in a song of Sion, hang up, as I have said, your instruments upon the willows in the midst thereof: defer what ye are about to say. If they begin to be fruitful trees, if the trees are changed, and will bear good fruit; now then it is lawful for us to sing to the ears of them that listen. But while they among whom ye live drown you with clamour, ask with ill purpose, resist the truth, bind yourselves not to be willing to please them, lest ye forget Jerusalem. And let your one soul, made one out of many by the peace of Christ, let captive Jerusalem, dwelling here on earth, say, If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget me. Vehemently hath she bound herself, my brethren, let my right hand forget me, sternly hath she tied herself down. Our right hand is life everlasting, our left, life in this world. Whatsoever thou doest for the sake of life everlasting, thy right hand doeth. If in thy works thou mingle with the love of everlasting life desire for the life of this world, or man’s praise, or any worldly advantage, thy left hand knoweth what thy right hand doeth. And thou knowest that it is enjoined in the Gospel, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. Therefore saith she, If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget me. And truly so it happens: it is a prophecy she has uttered, not a wish. To them who forget Jerusalem, this happeneth which she hath said, their right hand forgetteth them. For life everlasting abideth in itself: they abide in delights of this world, and make that to be right to them, which is left.

16. Listen to this, brethren: for the right hand’s sake let me press this upon you, for the salvation of all. Ye remember perhaps that I once spoke in this place of some who make what is left to be right, that is, who consider worldly goods of more value (than everlasting goods), and consider happiness to consist in these, not knowing what is true happiness, the true right hand. These Scripture calleth strange children, as though they were citizens not of Jerusalem, but of Babylon; for the Psalmist saith in a certain place, Lord, save me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth talketh of vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. For he goeth on and saith, Their sons are like strong young vine trees, their daughters polished like unto the temple: their garners are full and plenteous with all manner of store, their sheep bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets: their oxen are strong to labour, there is no decay, no leading into captivity, and no complaining in their streets. Is it sin then to enjoy such happiness as this? No: but to make it the right hand when it is the left. And therefore what goeth he on to say? They called the people blessed that are in such a case. Behold how their month hath spoken vanity: they have called the people blessed that are in such a case. Thou indeed art a citizen of Jerusalem, who forgettest not Jerusalem, lest thy right hand forget thee: lo! they who have spoken vanity have called the people blessed who are in such a case; sing thou to me a song of Sion. Blessed, saith he, is the people that hath the Lord for their God. Ask your hearts, brethren, whether ye long for the good things of God, whether ye long for that city, Jerusalem, whether ye desire everlasting life. Let all that earthly happiness be to you on the left hand, let that be on the right which ye will have for ever: and, if ye have that which is left, presume not thereupon. Dost thou not chide him, who chooses to eat with the left hand? If thou thinkest that a wrong is done to thy table when a guest eats with the left, how can it but be a wrong to the Table of God, if thou makest what is right to be left, and what is left, right? What then? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget me.

17. Let my tongue cleave to my jaws, if I remember not thee. That is, let me be dumb, he saith, if I remember not thee. For what word, what sound doth he utter, who uttereth not songs of Sion? That is our tongue, the song of Jerusalem. The song of the love of this world is a strange tongue, a

barbarous tongue, which we have learnt in our captivity. Dumb then will he be to God, who forgetteth Jerusalem. And it is not enough to remember: for her enemies too remember her, desiring to overthrow her. ‘What is that city?’ say they; ‘who are the Christians? what sort of men are the Christians? would they were not Christians.’ Now the captive band hath conquered its capturers; still they murmur, and rage, and desire to slay the holy city that dwells as a stranger among them; just as Pharaoh desired to destroy the people, when he slew the male children, and left the female: he strangled, that is, the virtues; the lusts he nurtured. Not enough then is it to remember: take heed how thou rememberest. For some things we remember in hate, some in love. And so, when he had said, If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget me: let my tongue cleave to my jaws, if I remember not thee; he added at once, if I prefer not Jerusalem in the height of my joy. For there is the height of joy where we enjoy God, where we are safe of united brotherhood, and the union of citizenship. There no tempter shall assail us, no one be able so much as to urge us on to any allurement: there nought will delight us but good: there all want will die, there perfect bliss will dawn on us. If I prefer not Jerusalem in the height of my joy.

18. Then he turneth to God in prayer against the enemies of that city. Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom. Edom is the same who is also called Esau: for ye heard just now the words of the Apostle read, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. Two sons were there in one womb, both twins, in the womb of Rebecca, sons of Isaac, grandsons of Abraham: both were born; one to inheritance, the other to disinheritance. But Esau was his brother’s enemy, because he, the younger, forestalled his blessing, and the prophecy was fulfilled, the younger shall serve the elder. Who then the elder is, and who the younger, and who the elder that shall serve the younger, we now understand. Elder seemed to be the people of the Jews, younger in point of time the Christians. And see how the elder serveth the younger. They carry our Scriptures, we live by their Scriptures. But that ye may understand the elder and younger generally of all mankind, the elder meaneth the carnal man, the younger the spiritual man, for first is the carnal, afterward the spiritual. Thou findest the Apostle saying clearly, The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.

As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. But above this he had said, Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. By natural he meaneth the same as he also calleth carnal. Man, when he is born, is at first natural, carnal. If he turn from his captivity in Babylon to return to Jerusalem, he is renewed, and there happeneth a renewal according to the new and inner man, which is younger in time, greater in power. Esau then signifieth all the carnal, Jacob all the spiritual: the younger the elect, the elder the reprobate. Doth he wish himself too to be of the elect? Let him become a younger son. Moreover, he is called Edom, from a certain red pottage of lentils, a red kind of food. Well boiled were the bruised lentils: Esau desired them of his brother Jacob, and, overcome by lust for eating those lentils, yielded to him his birthright. Jacob gave up the pleasant food, received the honour of preeminence. Hence, by a kind of bargain between them, it came to pass that the younger became the elder, the elder the younger, and the elder served the younger. And the elder was called Edom, which meaneth, according to them who know that language, ‘blood,’ for in Carthaginian too, blood is called ‘Edom.’ Wonder not: all carnal men belong to blood. Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God. To that Edom belongeth not: Jacob belongeth, who gave up fleshly food, and received spiritual honour. So the other became his enemy. All carnal persons are enemies to spiritual persons, for all such, desiring present things, persecute those whom they see to long for things eternal. Against these the Psalmist, looking back to Jerusalem, and beseeching God that he may be delivered from captivity, saith—what? Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom. Deliver us from carnal men, from those who imitate Esau, who are elder brethren, yet enemies. They were first-born, but the last-born have won the preeminence, for the lust of the flesh hath cast down the former, the contempt of lust hath lifted up the latter. The other live, and envy, and persecute.

19. Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem. The day of Jerusalem, wherein it was tried, wherein it was held captive, or the day of Jerusalem’s happiness, wherein it is freed, wherein it reaches its goal, wherein it is made partaker of eternity? Remember, saith he, O Lord,

forget not, the children of Edom. Which? Those who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof. Remember then, it means, that day wherein they willed to overthrow Jerusalem. For how great persecutions hath the Church suffered! How did the children of Edom, that is, carnal men, servants of the devil and his angels, who worshipped stocks and stones, and followed the lusts of the flesh, how did they say, ‘Extirpate the Christians, destroy the Christians, let not one remain, overthrow them even to the foundation!’ Have not these things been said? And when they were said, the persecutors were rejected, the martyrs crowned. They said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof. The sons of Edom say, ‘Rase it, rase it:’ God saith, ‘Serve.’ Whose words can prevail, save God’s, Who saith, The elder shall serve the younger? Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.

20. Then he turneth himself to her, O daughter of Babylon, unhappy; unhappy in thy very exulting, thy presumption, thine enmity; unhappy daughter of Babylon! The city is called both Babylon, and daughter of Babylon: just as they speak of ‘Jerusalem’ and ‘the daughter of Jerusalem,’ ‘Sion’ and ‘the daughter of Sion,’ ‘the Church’ and ‘the daughter of the Church.’ As it succeedeth the other, it is called ‘daughter;’ as it is preferred before the other, it is called ‘mother.’ There was a former Babylon; did the people remain in it? Because it succeedeth to Babylon, it is called daughter of Babylon. O daughter of Babylon, unhappy thou! Happy shall he be that payeth thee; unhappy thou, happy he.

21. For what hast thou done, and how shalt thou be repaid? Listen: happy shall he be that repayeth thee, as thou hast served us. What repayment meaneth he? Herewith the Psalm closeth, Happy, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the rock. Her he calleth unhappy, but him happy who payeth her as she hath served us. Do we ask, what reward? Happy, saith he, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the rock. This is the repayment. For what hath that Babylon done to us? We have already sung in another Psalm, The words of the wicked have prevailed against us. For when we were born, the confusion of this world found us, and choked us while yet infants with the empty notions of divers errors. The infant that is born destined to be a citizen of Jerusalem, and in God’s predestination already a citizen, but meanwhile a prisoner for a time, when learneth he to

love ought, save what his parents have whispered into his ears? They teach him and train him in avarice, robbery, daily lying, the worship of divers idols and devils, the unlawful remedies of enchantments and amulets. What shall one yet an infant do, a tender soul, observing what its elders do, save follow that which it seeth them doing. Babylon then has persecuted us when little, but God hath given us when grown up knowledge of ourselves, that we should not follow the errors of our parents. And this, as I then too mentioned, was foretold by the Prophet, The nations shall come to thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity which hath not profited them. So speak they, now grown up, who when little were slain by following these vanities, and then coming to life again increase in union with God, and repay Babylon. How shall they repay her? As she hath served us. Let her little ones be choked in turn: yea let her little ones in turn be dashed, and die. What are the little ones of Babylon? Evil desires at their birth. For there are, who have to fight with inveterate lusts. When lust is born, before evil habit giveth it strength against thee, when lust is little, by no means let it gain the strength of evil habit; when it is little, dash it. But thou fearest, lest though dashed it die not; Dash it against the Rock; and that Rock is Christ.

22. Brethren, let not your instruments of music rest in your work: sing one to another songs of Sion. Readily have ye heard; the more readily do what ye have heard, if ye wish not to be willows of Babylon fed by its streams, and bringing no fruit. But sigh for the everlasting Jerusalem: whither your hope goeth before, let your life follow; there we shall be with Christ. Christ now is our Head; now He ruleth us from above; in that city He will fold us to Himself; we shall be equal to the Angels of God. We should not dare to imagine this of ourselves, did not the Truth promise it. This then desire, brethren, this day and night think on. Howsoever the world shine happily on you, presume not, parley not willingly with your lusts. Is it a grown up enemy? let it be slain upon the Rock. Is it a little enemy? let it be dashed against the Rock. Slay the grown up ones on the Rock, and dash the little ones against the Rock. Let the Rock conquer. Be built upon the Rock, if ye desire not to be swept away either by the stream, or the winds, or the rain. If ye wish to be armed against temptations in this world, let longing for the everlasting Jerusalem grow and be strengthened in your hearts. Your

captivity will pass away, your happiness will come; the last enemy shall be destroyed, and we shall triumph with our King, without death.

PSALM 138

sermon

1. The title of this Psalm is brief and simple, and need not detain us; since we know whose resemblance David wore, and since in him we recognise ourselves also, for we too are members of that Body. Let us recognise then herein the voice of the Church, and at the same time let us rejoice that we have been thought worthy to be in her, whose voice we have heard chanting. The whole title is, ‘To David himself.’ Let us see then, what is to David himself.

2. I will confess to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. The title of the Psalm is wont to tell us what is treated of within it: but in this, since the title informs us not of this, but tells us only to Whom it is chanted, the first verse tells us what is treated of in the whole Psalm, I will confess to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. This confession then let us hear. But first I remind you, that the term confession in Scripture, when we speak of confession to God, is used in two senses, of sin, and of praise. But confession of sin all know, confession of praise few attend to. So well known is confession of sin, that, wherever in Scripture we hear the words, I will confess to Thee, O Lord, or, we will confess to Thee, forthwith, through habitually understanding in this way, our hands hurry to beating our breast: so entirely are men wont not to understand confession to be of ought, save of sin. But was then our Lord Jesus Christ Himself too a sinner, Who saith in the Gospel, I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth? He goeth on to say what He confesseth, that we might understand His confession to be of praise, not of sin, I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. He praised the Father, He praised God, because He despiseth not the humble, but the proud. And such confession are we now going to hear, of praise of God, of thanksgiving. I will confess to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. My whole heart I lay upon the altar of Thy praise, an whole burnt-offering of praise I offer to

Thee. A whole burnt-offering is a sacrifice where the whole is burnt, for the Greek word ὅλον meaneth ‘whole.’ See how he offereth a spiritual whole burnt-offering, who saith, I will confess to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. Let the flame of Thy Love, he saith, set on fire my whole heart, let nought in me be left to myself, nought wherein I may look to myself, but may I wholly burn towards Thee, wholly be on fire towards Thee, wholly love Thee, as though set on fire by Thee. I will confess to Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: for Thou hast heard the words of my mouth. What mouth, save my heart? For there have we the voice which God heareth, which ear of man knoweth not at all. They cried aloud indeed who accused Susanna, but lifted not up their eyes to heaven; she was silent, and cried with her heart; wherefore she was thought worthy to be heard, they to be punished. We have then a mouth within, there do we ask, thence do we ask, and if we have prepared a lodging or an house for God, there do we speak, there are we heard. For He is not far from every one of us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being. Nought maketh thee far off from God, save sin only. Cast down the middle wall of sin, and thou art with Him Whom thou askest. Thou hast heard, saith he, the words of my mouth; I will confess to Thee.

3. And before the Angels will I sing unto Thee. Not before men will I sing, but before the Angels. My song is my joy; but my joy in things below is before men, my joy in things above before the Angels. For the wicked knoweth not the joy of the just: There is no joy, saith my God, to the wicked. The wicked rejoiceth in his tavern, the martyr in his chain. In what did that holy Crispina rejoice, whose festival is kept to-day? She rejoiced when she was being seized, when she was being carried before the judge, when she was being put into prison, when she was being brought forth bound, when she was being lifted up on the scaffold, when she was being heard, when she was being condemned: in all these things she rejoiced; and the wretches thought her wretched, when she was rejoicing before the Angels.

4. I will worship toward Thy holy Temple. What holy Temple? That where we shall dwell, where we shall worship. For we hasten that we may adore. Our heart is pregnant and cometh to the birth, and seeketh where it may

bring forth. What is the place where God is to be worshipped? What world? what building, what abode in heaven and among the stars? We search the holy Scriptures, and find Wisdom saying, I was with Him, I was she before whom He rejoiced daily. Then she telleth us what are His works, and discloseth to us her own abode. When He established the clouds above, when He set apart His abode above the winds. His abode is His Temple. Whither then shall we go? Are we to go above the clouds to worship? If He is worshipped above the clouds, the birds are better than we. But if by the winds we understand souls, I mean souls described under the name of winds,—(just as Scripture saith in a certain place, He came flying on the wings of wind, that is, on the virtues of souls; whence also the soul is called the breath of God, a sort of wind, not that we should understand thereby the wind which we feel as it propels our body, but that by the title thereof may be signified somewhat invisible, which can neither be seen with the eye, nor inhaled by the smell, nor tasted by the palate, nor handled by the hand; a sort of life, that is, whereby we live, which is called 'soul,')—if we understand these to be meant by winds, there is no reason why we should seek visible wings to fly up with the birds to worship at the Temple of God, but we shall find that God sitteth above us ourselves, if we choose to be faithful to Him. See whether it be not so: the Temple of God is holy, saith the Apostle, which Temple ye are. But assuredly, as is manifest, God dwelleth in the Angels. Therefore when our joy, being in spiritual things, not in earthly, taketh up a song to God, to sing before the Angels, that very assembly of Angels is the Temple of God, we worship toward God's Temple. There is a Church below, there is a Church above also: the Church below, in all the faithful; the Church above, in all the Angels. But the God of Angels came down to the Church below, and Angels ministered to Him on earth, while He ministered to us; for, I came not, saith He, to be ministered unto, but to minister. What hath He ministered to us, save what to-day also we eat and drink? Since then the Lord of Angels hath ministered to us, let us not despair but that we shall be equal to the Angels. For He that is greater than the Angels came down to man; the Creator of the Angels took man's nature upon Him; the Lord of Angels died for man. Therefore, I will worship toward Thy holy Temple; I mean, not the temple made with hands, but that which Thou hast made for Thyself.

5. And I will confess to Thy Name in Thy mercy and Thy truth. In these two we confess, for so it is written in another Psalm also, All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. In these two do we confess, in Thy mercy and Thy truth. In Thy mercy Thou lookedst upon the sinner, in Thy truth Thou performedst Thy promise. In Thy mercy, therefore, and Thy truth will I confess to Thee. These also which Thou hast given to me, do I according to my power give to Thee in return: mercy, in aiding other; truth, in judging. By these God aideth us, by these we win God’s favour. Rightly, therefore, All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth. No other ways are there whereby He can come to us, no other whereby we can come to Him.

6. For Thou hast magnified Thy holy Name over every thing. What sort of thanksgiving is this, brethren? He hath magnified His holy Name over Abraham; for, Abraham believed upon God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. But all other nations offered sacrifice to idols, served devils. Of Abraham was born Isaac; over that house God was magnified; then Jacob; God was magnified, Who said, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: then came his twelve sons; then the people of Israel were freed from Egypt, led through the Red Sea, trained in the wilderness, placed in the promised land, while the Gentiles were driven out. The name of the Lord was magnified over Israel. Then came the Virgin Mary, then Christ our Lord, dying for our sins, rising again for our justification, filling the faithful with His Holy Spirit, sending forth men to proclaim throughout the Gentiles, Repent ye, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. Behold, He hath magnified His holy Name above all things.

7. In what day soever I call upon Thee, do Thou quickly hear me. Wherefore, quickly? Because Thou hast said, While yet thou art speaking I will say, Lo, here I am. Wherefore, quickly? Because now I seek not earthly happiness, I have learnt holy longing from the New Testament. I seek not earth, nor earthly abundance, nor temporal health, nor the overthrow of my enemies, nor riches, nor rank: nought of these do I seek: therefore quickly hear me. Since Thou hast taught me what to seek, grant what I seek. Let us say to this man, Askest thou ought of this kind? Let us hear, let him speak out his petition, let us see what he seeketh: let us learn of him to seek, that we may be thought worthy to receive. Thou camest to Church to-day, to ask

for somewhat. What think we thou camest to ask? Thou camest with thy longing, whatsoever it were; would it may be innocent, yet, even then, carnal. Put away iniquity, put away carnal-mindedness: learn what it is thou seekest, take heed what it is thou celebratest. Thou art celebrating the birthday of a holy and blessed woman, and thou art desiring, it may be, earthly happiness. She for her holy longing gave up the happiness which she had on earth, gave up her children who wept and grieved for what they thought their mother’s cruelty, that she seemed to have lost earthly pity, when she was hastening to an heavenly crown. Did she not know what she longed for, what she trampled on? Yea verily, she knew how to sing before the Angels of God, and to long for their society, their friendship holy and pure, where she should die no more, where she should know the Judge before Whom no lie could prevail. What then? are there no good things in that life? Yea rather, there are the only good things, not good mixed with evil, safe things, in which thou mayest joy as much as thou wilt, and none say to thee, ‘Restrain thyself.’ But here to joy in earthly goods is full of vexation and peril, lest thou joy in them so as to cling to them, and by joying amiss, perish. For wherefore doth God mingle tribulations with earthly joys, save that, feeling tribulation and bitterness, we may learn to long for everlasting sweetness?

8. Let us see then what he seeketh, with what right he hath said, quickly hear me. For what seekest thou, that thou shouldest quickly be heard? Thou shalt multiply me. In many ways may multiplication be understood. There is the multiplication of earthly generation, according to the first blessing on our nature, which we have heard, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it. Is it thus he willed to be multiplied, who said, quickly hear me? That multiplication clearly is fruitful, and cometh not save of the blessing of the Lord. And what shall I say of other multiplications? One man is multiplied in gold, another in silver, another in cattle, another in slaves, another in lands, another in all these. Many earthly multiplications are there, but more happy than all is that of children, though to avaricious men even fruitfulness is vexatious. For they fear lest if many children be born to them, they will be left poor. And this anxiety hath driven many to unnatural dealing, so that they have forgotten that they were parents, and, stripped of all human affection, have exposed their children, to make them

others’ children: so that a mother, who gave it birth, has cast out her child; another, who gave it not birth, has taken it up: the first has despised it, the second loved it; the first untruly mother after the flesh, the other more truly in will. Seeing then there be many multiplications, and many kinds of multiplications, what multiplication seeketh he who said, quickly hear me? For he saith, Thou shalt multiply me. We wait to hear, wherein. Hear then: in my soul. Not in my flesh, but in my soul: Thou shalt multiply me in my soul. Is aught further added, lest perchance even multiplication in soul signify not necessarily happiness? For men are multiplied in their soul with cares: a man seemeth to be multiplied in soul, in whom vices even are multiplied. One man is only avaricious; another only proud; another only luxurious; another is both avaricious, and proud, and luxurious, he is multiplied in his soul, but to his hurt. That is the multiplication of want, not of fulness. What then dost thou desire, thou who hast said, quickly hear me, and hast withdrawn thyself entirely from the body, from every earthly thing, from every earthly desire, so as to say to God, Thou shalt multiply me in my soul? Explain yet further what thou desirest. Thou shalt multiply me, saith he, in my soul with virtue. His wish is fully stated, his longing fully stated; it is cut off from all confusion. Were he to say, Thou shalt multiply me, thou mightest think he meant with some earthly things; he added therefore, in my soul. Again, lest thou shouldest think he spoke of vices in the soul, he added, with virtue. Nought further is there which thou mayest long for from God, if thou wishest with a good and honest front to say, quickly hear me.

9. Let all the kings of the earth confess to Thee, O Lord. So shall it be, and so it is, and that daily; and it is shewn that it was not said in vain, save that it was future. Let all the kings of the earth confess to Thee, O Lord. But neither let them, when they confess to Thee, when they praise Thee, desire earthly things of Thee. For what shall the kings of the earth desire? Have they not already sovereignty? Whatever more a man desire on earth, sovereignty is the highest point of his desire. What more can he desire? It must needs be some loftier eminence. But perhaps the loftier it is, the more dangerous. And therefore the more exalted kings are in earthly eminence, the more ought they to humble themselves before God. What do they do? Because they have heard all the words of Thy mouth. All the words of Thy

mouth, O Lord. In a certain nation were hidden the Law and the Prophets, all the words of Thy mouth: in the Jewish nation alone were all the words of Thy mouth, the nation which the Apostle praiseth, saying, What advantage hath the Jew, or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. These were the words of God. But let us take Gideon, a holy man of the time of the Judges; see what sign he sought of God. I will put, saith he, a fleece of wool in the floor; let the dew be on the fleece only, and let the floor be dry. It was done, the fleece alone was wet; the floor was dry. Again he asked a sign, Let the whole floor be wet with dew, and let the fleece alone be dry. This also was done, the floor was wet, while the fleece was dry. First, the fleece wet, the floor dry; then the floor wet, the fleece dry. What think ye, brethren, the floor meaneth? Is it not the world? What the fleece? It is like the nation of the Jews in the midst of the world, which had the grace of sacraments, not indeed openly manifested, but hidden in a cloud, or in a veil, like the dew in the fleece. The time came when the dew was to be manifested in the floor; it was manifested, no longer hidden. So came to pass what was said, Let all the kings of the earth praise Thee, O Lord, for they have heard all the words of Thy mouth. What is it, Israel, that thou wast hiding? how long didst thou hide it? the fleece hath been wrung out, and the dew hath come forth from thee. Christ alone is the sweetness of dew: Him alone thou recognisest not in Scripture, for Whom Scripture was written. But yet, let all the kings of the earth praise Thee, O Lord, for they have heard all the words of Thy mouth.

10. And let them sing in the paths of the Lord, that great is the glory of the Lord. Let all the kings of the earth sing in the paths of the Lord. In what paths? Those that are spoken of above, in Thy mercy and Thy truth; for all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. Let not then the kings of the earth be proud, let them be humble. Then let them sing in the ways of the Lord, if they be humble: let them love, and they shall sing. We know travellers that sing; they sing, and hasten to reach the end of their journey. There are evil songs, such as belong to the old man; to the new man belongeth a new song. Let then the kings of the earth too walk in Thy paths, let them walk and sing in Thy paths. Sing what? that great is the glory of the Lord, not of kings.

11. See how he willed that kings should sing on their way, humbly bearing the Lord, not lifting themselves up against the Lord. For if they lift themselves up, what follows? For the Lord is high, and hath respect unto the lowly. Do kings then desire that He have respect unto them? Let them be humble. What then? if they lift themselves up to pride, can they escape His eyes? Lest perchance, because thou hast heard, He hath respect unto the lowly, thou choose to be proud, and say in thy soul, God hath respect unto the lowly, He hath not respect unto me, I will do what I will. For who seeth me? Man cannot see; God willeth not to see me, because I am not lowly, but He hath respect unto the lowly; I do what I will. O foolish one! wouldest thou say this, if thou knewest what thou oughtest to love? Behold, even if God willeth not to see thee, dost thou not fear this very thing, that He willeth not to see thee? If thou salutest one greater than thyself, thy patron, and he be intent on something else, and see thee not, how doth thy soul grieve? And yet if God see thee not, thinkest thou thyself safe? Thy Saviour seeth thee not, the destroyer seeth thee. Yet God too Himself seeth thee. Think not that thou art not seen; rather pray that thou mayest be found worthy to be seen by Him by Whom thou art seen. For it is said, the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous. Because they are not over the unrighteous, let the unrighteous do what they will; the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous. Let him go on yet further; and His ears are open to their prayers. The unrighteous then, who thought themselves safe because the eyes of the Lord were not over them, do not they fear because His ears are not open to their prayers? Were it not better that both His eyes should be over us, and His ears open to our prayers? But when thou doest those things over which thou wishest not the eyes of the Lord to be, thou winnest not indeed by thy prayers the ears of the Lord, and yet thou turnest not away from thee, by doing ill, the eyes of the Lord. For what follows? Great is the glory of the Lord: for the Lord is high, and hath respect unto the lowly: the lofty then, it seemeth, He hath not respect unto, for it is the lowly He respecteth. The lofty—what? He considereth from afar. What then gaineth the proud? To be seen from afar, not to escape being seen. And think not that thou must needs be safe on that account, for that He seeth less clearly, Who seeth thee from afar. For thou indeed seest not clearly, what thou seest from afar; God, although He see thee from afar, seeth thee perfectly, yet is He not with thee. This thou gainest, not that thou art less perfectly seen, but that thou art not

with Him by Whom thou art seen. But what doth the lowly gain? The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart. Let the proud then lift himself up as much as he will, certainly God dwelleth on high, God is in heaven: wishest thou that He come nigh to thee? Humble thyself. For the higher will He be above thee, the more thou liftest thyself up. But the lofty He considereth from afar.

12. If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou shalt revive me. True it is: whatsoever tribulation thou art in, confess, call on Him; He freeth thee, He reviveth thee. Here however we ought the better to understand, the more closely we are united to God, and say to Him, quickly hear me. For he had said, The lofty He considereth from afar: but the lofty know not tribulation. They know not, I mean, that tribulation of which it is said in another place, I found tribulation and sorrow, and I called on the name of the Lord. For what great thing is it, if tribulation find thee? If thou hast any power, do thou find tribulation. And who is there, thou sayest, who findeth tribulation, or who so much as seeketh it? Art thou in the midst of tribulation, and knowest it not? Is this life small tribulation to thee? If it be not tribulation, it is not wandering: if it be wandering, either thou lovest thy country but little, or else without doubt thou sufferest tribulation. For who does not feel tribulation, that he is not with that which he longs for? Whence then seemeth it not to be tribulation to thee? Because thou lovest not. Love the other life, and thou shalt see that this life is tribulation, whatever prosperity it shine with, whatever delights it abound and overflow with; since not yet have we that joy most safe and free from all temptation, which God reserveth for us in the end, without doubt it is tribulation. Let us understand then what tribulation he meaneth here too, brethren. If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou shalt revive me. Not as though he said, ‘If perchance there shall any tribulation have befallen me, Thou shalt free me therefrom.’ But how saith he? If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou shalt revive me: that is, otherwise Thou wilt not revive me, unless I walk in the midst of tribulation. If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou shalt revive me. Woe to them that laugh. Blessed are they that mourn. If I walk in the midst of tribulation, Thou shalt revive me.

13. Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies, and Thy right hand hath made me safe. Let mine enemies rage: what can they do? They can take my money, strip, proscribe, banish me; afflict me with grief and tortures; at last, if they be allowed, even kill me: can they do aught more? But Thou, O Lord, hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies; over that which mine enemies can do, Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand. For mine enemies cannot separate me from Thee: but Thou avengest me the more, the more Thou as yet delayest; over the wrath of mine enemies, Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand. Let mine enemy rage as he will, he cannot separate me from God: but Thou, O God, as yet receivest me not, as yet weariest me in my wanderings, as yet givest me not Thy joy and sweetness, as yet hast not inebriated me with the plenteousness of Thine house, as yet hast not given me to drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure. For with Thee is the well of life; in Thy light shall we see light. But, lo! I have given Thee the first-fruits of my spirit, and have believed in Thee, and with my mind I serve the law of God: yet still we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies. This life hath God given to us sinners, wherein also it is needful that Adam be wearied in the sweat and toil of his face, since the earth brought forth to him thorns and thistles. Can any enemy lay more upon him? Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies: yet not to make me despair; for it follows, and Thy right hand hath made me safe.

14. It may be understood in this way also, Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies; mine enemies were wroth; Thou hast avenged me on mine enemies. The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away. Where be they that said, ‘Perish the name of Christians from off the earth?’ Verily they either die, or are converted. Therefore, Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies; while it was said, as is written, Mine enemies speak evil of me; when shall he die, and his name perish? When shall the name of Christians be blotted out from the earth? While they say this, some believed, some perished, some remained fearful. How greatly did the wrath of the enemy rage, when the blood of the martyrs was being shed! how did they think that they were blotting out the name of Christians from off the

earth! Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies, and Thy right hand hath made me safe. Lo! they who persecuted the martyrs seek the memorials of the martyrs, either to worship there, or to be inebriated there: still they seek. Thou hast stretched forth Thine hand over the wrath of mine enemies, and Thy right hand hath made me safe. According to my longing, Thy right hand hath made me safe. There is one kind of safety on the right hand, another on the left: temporal and carnal safety on the left, everlasting safety with the Angels on the right. Therefore Christ, now that He is placed in immortality, is said to sit on the right hand of God. For God hath not in Himself right hand or left, but by the right hand of God is expressed that happiness, which, since it cannot be shown to the eyes, is thus called. On this right hand of Thine Thou hast made me safe, not after temporal safety. For Crispina was slain: did God then desert her? He made her not safe on the left hand, but He did on the right. How great tortures did the Maccabees suffer? But the Three Children, while they walked in the midst of the fire, praised God. The safety of the former was on the right hand, that of the latter on the left too. Sometimes then God saveth not His Saints on the left hand, on the right He always doth. The wicked for the most part He saveth on the left, on the right He doth not save them. For they who persecuted Crispina were sound in body: she was slain, they live: their safety is on the left hand, hers on the right: Thy right hand hath saved me.

15. Thou, Lord, shalt recompense for me. I recompense not: Thou shalt recompense. Let mine enemies rage their full: Thou shalt recompense what I cannot. Thou, Lord, shalt recompense for me. Observe this in our Head Himself. For He hath left us an example, that we should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: Who when He was reviled, reviled not again; saying, Thou, Lord, shalt recompense for me. When He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. What is, Thou, O Lord, shalt recompense for me? I, saith He, seek not Mine own glory; there is one that seeketh and judgeth. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, saith the Apostle, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Thou, O Lord, shalt recompense for me.

16. There is here another sense not to be neglected, perhaps even to be preferred. Lord Christ, Thou shalt repay for me. For I, if I repay, have seized; Thou hast paid what Thou hast not seized. Lord, Thou shalt repay for me. Behold Him repaying for us. They came to Him, who exacted tribute: they used to demand as tribute a didrachma, that is, two drachmas for one man; they came to the Lord to pay tribute; or rather, not to Him, but to His disciples, and they said to them, Doth not your Master pay tribute? They came and told Him. Then said He, Of whom do the kings of the earth take tribute, of their own children, or of strangers? They answered, Of strangers. He saith, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, He saith unto Peter, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a stater, (that is, two didrachmas, for a stater is a weight equivalent to four drachmas,) that take, and give for Me and thee. Thou, Lord, shalt repay for me. Rightly have we the first fish taken by the hook, caught by the hook, the first that riseth from the sea, the First-begotten from the dead. In His mouth we find two didrachmas, that is, four drachmas: in His mouth we find the four Gospels. By those four drachmas we are free from the claims of this world, by the four Evangelists we remain no longer debtors; for there the debt of all our sins is paid. He then hath repaid for us, thanks to His mercy. He owed nothing: He repaid not for Himself: He repaid for us. Behold, He saith, the prince of this world cometh, and shall find nothing in Me. What is, shall find nothing in Me? He shall find no sin in Me: he hath not wherefore he should put Me to death. But that all may know, He saith, that I do the will of My Father: arise, let us go hence. I suffer not of necessity, but of free-will, paying that I owe not. Thou, Lord, shalt repay for me.

17. Lord, Thy mercy is for everlasting. What should I long for? not man’s day. I have not toiled from following Thee, Lord, and the day of man have I not desired: Thou knowest. Behold, if the holy martyr Crispina had longed for man’s day, she would have denied Christ. Longer would she live here, but for everlasting she would not live. She chose rather to live for everlasting, than for a little longer to live in this world. Finally, Lord, Thy mercy is for everlasting: not for a time only do I desire to be freed. Thy

mercy is for everlasting, wherewith Thou hast freed the martyrs, and so hast quickly taken them from this life. Lord, Thy mercy is for everlasting.

18. Despise not Thou the works of Thine own hands. I say not, Lord, ‘despise not the works of my hands:’ of mine own works I boast not. I sought, indeed, the Lord with my hands in the night season before Him, and have not been deceived; but yet I praise not the works of mine own hands; I fear lest, when Thou shalt look into them, Thou find more sins in them than deserts. This only I ask, this I say, this I long to obtain, Despise not Thou the works of Thine own hands. Behold in me Thy Work, not mine: for mine if Thou seest, Thou condemnest; Thine, if Thou seest, Thou crownest. For whatever good works there be of mine, from Thee are they to me; and so they are more Thine than mine. For I hear from Thine Apostle, By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast: for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Therefore whether in regard that we are men, or in regard that we have been changed and justified from our iniquity, Lord, despise not Thou the works of Thine own hands.

PSALM 139

Sermon to the People.

1. We had prepared us a short Psalm, and had desired the reader to chant it; but he, through confusion at the time, as it seems, has substituted another for it. We have chosen to follow the will of God in the reader’s mistake, rather than our own will by keeping our purpose. If then through its length we shall detain you somewhat longer than usual, impute it not to us, but believe that God hath willed that we should labour not without fruit. For neither in vain did we receive as our penalty for the first sin, that in the sweat of our face we should eat bread: only take heed that it be bread. But bread it is, if it be Christ. I am, saith He, the living Bread that came down from Heaven. Whom we have manifested in the Gospel, Him let us seek in the Prophets also. They see Him not there on whose hearts the veil still remains, whereof ye heard, beloved, yesterday. But forasmuch as for us the evening sacrifice of the Lord’s Cross hath rent the veil, so that the secrets of the Temple now lie open, so long as Christ is preached to us, though it be with labour and sweat, yet have we bread given us to eat.

2. But our Lord Jesus Christ speaketh in the Prophets, sometimes in the character of our Head, that is, Christ Himself, our Saviour, sitting at the right hand of the Father: but He also was for us born of a Virgin, and suffered, as ye know, under Pontius Pilate; by the shedding of His innocent blood, which is our price, He hath redeemed us guilty from the captivity wherein we were held by the devil, forgiving us our trespasses, and with His Blood, which is our price, blotting out the handwriting whereby we were held debtors. He is the Ruler and Spouse and Redeemer of the Church, He our Head. And verily if He be a Head, He hath a Body. But His Body is the Holy Church, which is also His bride; to whom the Apostle saith, Ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular. Whole Christ therefore is Head and Body, like an entire man: for the woman was both made of man and belongeth to man; and it was said of the first marriage, they twain shall be one flesh. But this the Apostle explains as a mystery, that it was not said

without meaning of those two persons, but because in them was already prefigured Christ and His Church. For thus the Apostle expoundeth it: they twain, saith he, shall be one flesh: this is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. He calls moreover Adam himself the figure of Him that was to come: who is, saith he, the figure of Him that was to come. If then Adam be the figure of Him that was to come, just as Eve was made from the side of Adam as he slept, so from the Side of the Lord, as He slept, that is, as He was dying in His Passion, and was pierced on the Cross by the spear, flowed forth the Sacraments, whereby the Church was to be formed. For of that same coming Passion of His He speaketh in another Psalm, I laid me down, and slept, and rose up again, for the Lord shall sustain Me. The sleep then meaneth the Passion. Eve was formed from the side of one sleeping, the Church from the side of One suffering. Our Lord Jesus Christ then speaketh in the Prophets, sometimes in His own Name, sometimes in ours, because He maketh Himself one with us; as it is said, they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore also the Lord saith in the Gospel, speaking of marriage, therefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. One flesh, because of our mortality He took flesh; not one divinity, for He is the Creator, we the creature. Whatsoever then our Lord speaketh in the person of the Flesh He took upon Him, belongeth both to that Head which hath already ascended into heaven, and to those members which still toil in their earthly wandering; for which toiling members, when Saul was persecuting them, He cried from heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Let us hear then our Lord Jesus Christ speaking in prophecy. For the Psalms were sung long before the Lord was born of Mary, yet not before He was Lord; for from everlasting He was the Creator of all things, but in time He was born of His creature. Let us believe that Godhead, and, so far as we can, understand Him to be equal to the Father. But that Godhead equal to the Father, was made partaker of our mortal nature, not of His own store, but of ours; that we too might be made partakers of His Divine Nature, not of our store, but of His.

3. Lord, Thou hast tried me, and known me. Let the Lord Jesus Christ Himself say this; let Him too say, ‘Lord,’ to the Father. For His Father is not His Lord, save because He hath deigned to be born according to the flesh. He is Father of the God, Lord of the Man. Wouldest thou know to whom He

is Father? To the coequal Son. The Apostle saith, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. To this Form God is Father, the Form equal to Himself, the only-begotten Son, begotten of His Substance. But forasmuch as for our sakes, that we might be re-made, and made partakers of His Divine Nature, being renewed unto life eternal, He was made partaker of our mortal nature, what saith the Apostle of Him, after that he had said, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God? He saith, yet He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and was found in fashion as a man. He was in the Form of God, equal to the Father; He took upon Him the form of a servant, so as therein to be less than the Father. Whence He saith both in the Gospel; both, I and the Father are one; and, For my Father is greater than I: I and the Father are one, according to the Form of God; The Father is greater than I, according to the form of a servant. Therefore since He is both Father and Lord, Father of the Form of God, Lord of the form of a servant, let Him then say, and let not us wonder or be offended that the only-begotten Son of God saith it, Lord, Thou hast proved me; and known me. Thou hast proved me, and known me; not because He did not know before, but because He made Him known to others; Thou hast proved me, he saith, and known me.

4. Thou hast known My down-sitting and Mine up-rising. What here is down-sitting, what up-rising? He who sitteth, humbleth himself. The Lord then sat in His Passion, up-rose in His Resurrection. Thou, he saith, hast known this; that is, Thou hast willed, Thou hast approved; according to Thy will was it done. But if thou choosest to take the words of the Head in the person of the Body, let us too say, Thou hast known my down-sitting and mine up-rising. For man sitteth when he humbleth himself in penitence, he riseth up when his sins are forgiven, and he is lifted up to the hope of everlasting life. Wherefore it is said also in another Psalm, Rise up after ye have sat down, ye that eat the bread of sorrow. Penitents eat the bread of sorrow; as they sing in another Psalm, saying, My tears have been my meat day and night. What then meaneth, Rise up after ye have sat down? Lift not up yourselves, unless ye have first been humbled. For many wish to rise before they have sat down, they wish to appear righteous, before they have confessed that they are sinners. If then thou take the verse in the person of

our Head, understand thus, Thou hast known My down-sitting, and Mine up-rising, that is, My Passion and My Resurrection: if in the person of the Body, Thou hast known my down-sitting and mine up-rising, before Thine eyes I have confessed my sins, and by Thy grace I have been justified.

5. Thou hast understood my thoughts from afar; Thou hast tracked out my path and my limit; and all my ways Thou hast seen beforehand. What is, from afar? While I am yet in my pilgrimage, before I reach that, my true country, Thou hast known my thoughts. Consider the younger son in the parable, for he too was made the Body of Christ, the Church which came in from the Gentiles. This younger son then had gone into a far country; for a certain father had two sons; the elder had not gone far away, but wrought in his fields, and signifieth the saints under the Law, who did the works and precepts of the Law. But the rest of the human race, which had turned aside to worship idols, had wandered into a far country. What maketh thee so far from Him Who made thee, as the false god which thou hast made for thyself? The younger son then went into a far country, taking with him his substance, and, as we learn in the Gospel, wasted it, living prodigally with harlots; and being in want, he joined himself to a certain great man of that country, who appointed him to feed his swine; and he would fain have filled himself with the husks they eat, and could not. After his toil and suffering and tribulation and want, he thought on his father, and desired to return, and said, I will arise, and go to my father. I will arise, said he, for before he had sat. Here then thou mayest recognise him saying, Thou hast known my down-sitting and mine up-rising. I sat, in want; I arose, in longing for Thy Bread. Thou hast understood my thoughts from afar. For far indeed had I gone; but where is not He whom I had left? Thou hast understood my thoughts from afar. Wherefore the Lord saith in the Gospel, that his father met him as he was coming. Truly; for he had understood his thoughts from afar. My path and my limit Thou hast tracked out. My path, he saith; what, but a bad path, the path he had walked to leave his Father, as though he could be hid from His eyes when He would punish? nay more, as though he would have been crushed in that want, or been set to feed swine, save that his Father willed to scourge him afar, that He might receive him again near. So then, like a runaway slave that is caught, when the lawful vengeance of God was following him, that vengeance that punisheth our affections,

whithersoever we go, and how far soever we have gone, like a runaway slave, I say, that is caught, he saith, Thou hast tracked out my path and my limit. What is, my path? that by which I have gone. What is, my limit? that whereunto I have reached. Thou hast tracked out my path and my limit. That limit of mine, far distant as it was, was not far from Thine eyes. Far had I gone, and yet Thou wast there. Thou hast tracked out my path and my limit.

6. And all my ways Thou hast seen beforehand. He said not, hast seen, but, hast seen beforehand. Before I went by them, before I walked in them, Thou didst see them beforehand; and Thou didst permit me in toil to go my own ways, that, if I desired not to toil, I might return into Thy ways. For there is no deceit in my tongue. What meant he by this? Lo, I confess to Thee, I have walked in mine own way, I am become far from Thee, I have departed from Thee, with Whom it was well with me, and to my good it was ill with me without Thee. For, had it been well with me without Thee, perchance I had been unwilling to return to Thee. So he, confessing his sins, saying that the Body of Christ was justified, not in itself, but by His grace, said, There is no deceit in my tongue.

7. Behold Thou, Lord, hast known all my last doings, and the ancient ones. Thou hast known my latest doings, when I fed swine; Thou hast known my ancient doings, when I asked of Thee my portion of goods. Ancient doings were the beginnings to me of latest ills: ancient sin, when we fell; latest punishment, when we came into this toilsome and dangerous mortality. And would that this may be latest to us; it will be, if now we will to return. For there is another latest for certain wicked ones, to whom it shall be said, Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And we, brethren, have heretofore abandoned God, let it be toil enough to us to have come into this mortality. Remember we our Father’s Bread; recollect we the bliss of our Father’s Home; delight we not in the husks of swine, the doctrines of devils. Behold Thou, Lord, hast known all my latest doings, and the ancient ones; the latest, whereunto I have come; the ancient, wherein I offended Thee. Thou hast fashioned me, and hast laid Thine hand upon me. Fashioned me, where? In this mortality; now, to the toils whereunto we all are born. For none is born, but God has fashioned him in

his mother’s womb; nor is there any creature, whereof God is not the Fashioner. But Thou hast fashioned me in this toil, and laid Thine hand upon me, Thine avenging hand, putting down the proud. For thus healthfully hath He cast down the proud, that He may lift him up humble. Thou hast fashioned me, and laid Thine hand upon me.

8. Thy skill hath displayed itself wonderfully in me: it hath waxed mighty: I shall not be able to attain unto it. Listen now and hear somewhat, which is obscure indeed, yet bringeth no small pleasure in the understanding thereof. Moses, the holy servant of God, with whom God spake by a cloud,—for, speaking after human fashion, He must needs speak to His servant through some work of His hands which He assumed, that is, not by His own substance, but by some bodily work of His hands which He assumed, that through it those words might be spoken, and sound in human and mortal ears; for thus did God speak then, not as He speaketh in His own substance. For how doth He speak in His own substance? The Word of God is God’s speech: and the Word of God is Christ: that Word soundeth not and then passeth away, but ever unchangeably remaineth the Word, by Whom all things were made. To which Word (for He is also the Wisdom of God) it is said, Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed, but Thou art the same; and in another place where Scripture is speaking of Wisdom it saith, remaining in herself she maketh all things new; that abiding Wisdom then, if we may even say abiding; (but it is such because He changeth not, not because He moveth not;) and that ever continueth in the same way, never varying in place or time, in no place otherwise than in any other place; at no time otherwise than in all other time; He is the Speech of God. But the speech which was addressed to Moses, being addressed to man, was by syllables, by passing sounds; and they would not be, had not God assumed one of the works of His hand, such as might utter such discourse and words—holy Moses, I say, knew that that speech of God was uttered by means of certain corporeal works of God’s hand which He assumed, and he longed and desired to see the true appearance of God, and said to God, Who was conversing with him, If now I have found grace in Thy sight, shew me Thyself. When this he desired vehemently, and would extort from God in that sort of friendly familiarity, if we may so speak, wherewith God deigned to treat him, that he might see His Glory and His Face, in such wise as we

can speak of God’s Face, He said unto him, Thou canst not see My Face; for no one hath seen My Face, and lived; but I will place thee in a clift of the rock, and will pass by, and will set My hand upon thee; and when I have passed by, thou shalt see My back parts. And from these words there ariseth another enigma, that is, an obscure figure of the truth. When I have passed by, saith God, thou shalt see My back parts; as though He hath on one side His face, on another His back. Far be it from us to have any such thoughts of that Majesty! For whoso hath such thoughts of God, what advantageth it him that the temples are closed? He is building an idol in his own heart. In these words then are mighty mysteries. The Lord spake, as I said, by one of the works of His hand, what He would say to His servant. Thereby was meant the Person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Himself; Who according to the form of God indeed, wherein He is equal to the Father, is equally with the Father invisible to eye of man. For if human wisdom cannot be seen with the eye, can the Virtue and Wisdom of God be seen by eye of flesh? But forasmuch as the Lord was about to take flesh in due time, so as to appear even to fleshly eyes, that healthfully He might cure the soul within, since thus it was needful that He should appear, foretelling this, He saith to Moses in a figure, Thou canst not see My Face, but thou shalt see My back parts, when I have passed by thee. But that thou mayest not see My Face, My Hand shall be upon thee. What was ‘to pass by’ to the Lord, save what the Evangelist saith, But when the hour was come, that Jesus should pass from this world to the Father? For ‘Pascha’ signifieth passing over; for what in Hebrew is expressed by the word ‘Pascha,’ in Latin is interpreted ‘transitus.’ What is, Thou shalt not see My Face, but thou shalt see My back parts? Whom did Moses personify when it was said to him, Thou shalt not see My Face, but thou shalt see My back parts, and that when I have passed by: but that thou mayest not see My Face, I will lay My Hand upon thee. By His Face He meant His former estate, and in a manner by His back parts, His passing from this world by His Passion. He appeared to the Jews, they knew Him not. Them Moses personified when it was said to him, Thou canst not see My Face. But whence was it that they saw not the Lord in the flesh? Because the Hand was heavy on them. For of them had Esaias said, Make the heart of this people fat, and their eyes heavy. And they say in another Psalm, Thy Hand is heavy upon me. So that they might not then perceive the divinity of Christ, (for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, and if the Lord had not been crucified, His Blood would not have redeemed the world,) what did the Lord, but what the Apostle called the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God; where he crieth out, O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to Whom be glory for ever and ever. This the Apostle saith, because above he had said, Blindness in part is happened to Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in, and so all Israel might be saved. The Jews then were blinded in part, as their pride deserved, because they called themselves righteous; and, being blinded, they crucified the Lord. He laid His Hand upon them that they might not see Him, while He passed by, that is, from this world to the Father. Let us see whether after He had passed by, they saw His back parts. The Lord rose again, appeared to His disciples, and to all who had up to this time believed on Him; not to those by whom He was crucified, because upon them He had laid His Hand while He passed by. Then He ascended into heaven, after He had tarried forty days with His disciples. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, He sent unto them His Holy Spirit. They, filled with the Holy Spirit, began to speak in all men’s tongues, who had been born in one, and had learnt one alone. Thousands of those who had crucified the Lord were amazed and astonished at so great a miracle; pricked to the heart at so great a miracle, they sought counsel of the Apostles, what they should do, when Christ was preached to them, wondering whence it came that unlearned men spake in every tongue. When then the Apostle Peter preached to them Christ, Whom they had despised, on the Cross, Whom as a mortal man they had mocked, Whom they insulted because He came not down from the Cross, whereas surely it was a much greater thing to rise from the dead, as He did, than to come down from the Cross;—when then he preached to them Christ, they said, What shall we do? They who had raged against the Lord, Whom they saw, now seek counsel how they may be saved; and it is said to them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ, and your sins shall be forgiven you. Behold, they saw the back parts of Him, Whose face they could not see. For His Hand was upon their eyes, not for ever, but while He passed by. After He had passed, He took away His Hand from their eyes. When the Hand was taken from their eyes, they say to the disciples, What shall we do? At first they are fierce, afterwards loving; at first angry, afterwards fearful; at first hard, then pleasant; at first blind, then enlightened.

9. I think that we may also recognise in this Psalm the same kind of words of the Gentiles, remembering their unbelief. For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy on all. Thou hast fashioned me, and laid Thine Hand upon me. Thy knowledge is made wonderful from me; it hath waxed mighty, I shall not be able to attain unto it. Thou hast, as it were, laid Thine Hand upon me: Thou hast been made wonderful unto me, I comprehend Thee not, with Whom I was. How easy to me was the countenance of my Father, when I said, Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. Behold now that I have gone into a far country, and am crushed with hunger, difficult is it to me, and toil is before my eyes; I cannot perceive what I have abandoned. For Thy knowledge, saith he, is made wonderful from me. From my sin came it to pass, that it was made wonderful to me, and was incomprehensible to me. For easy was it to me to contemplate Thee, when I had not through pride left Thee. Thy knowledge is made wonderful from me; it hath waxed mighty; I shall not be able to attain unto it, that is, from myself. I shall not be able to attain to it from myself. When then I shall be able, not, save of Thee, shall I be able.

10. Behold thou findest that the runaway in a far country cannot escape His eyes, from Whom he fleeth. And whither can he go now, whose limit is tracked out? Behold, what saith he? Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? for the Spirit of the Lord filleth the earth. Who can in the world flee from that Spirit, with Whom the world is filled? Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit, and whither shall I flee from Thy Face? He seeketh a place whither to flee from the wrath of God. What place will shelter God’s runaway? Men who shelter runaways, ask them from whom they have fled; and when they find any one a slave of some master less powerful than themselves, him they shelter as it were without any fear, saying in their hearts, ‘he hath not a master by whom he can be tracked out.’ But when they are told of a powerful master, they either shelter not, or they shelter with great fear,

because even a powerful man can be deceived. Where is God not? Who can deceive God? Whom doth not God see? From whom doth not God demand His runaway? Whither then shall that runaway go from the Face of God? He turneth him hither and thither, as though seeking a spot to flee to.

11. If I go up, saith he, to heaven, Thou art there: if I go down to hell, Thou art present. At length, miserable runaway, thou hast learnt, that by no means canst thou make thyself far from Him, from Whom thou hast wished to remove far away. Behold, He is every where; thou, whither wilt thou go? He hath found counsel, and that inspired by Him, Who now deigneth to recall him. If I go up to heaven, Thou art there: if I go down to hell, Thou art present. If I lift myself up, I find Thee pressing me down; if I hide myself, I find Thee seeking me, and not only seeking me, but also tracking me out. For if I pride myself on my righteousness, Thou art there, Whose is true righteousness. If by sinning I go down to the depths of wickednesses, and spurn to confess, saying, ‘Who seeth me,’ for in hell who shall confess to Thee? there also Thou art present, to punish. Whither then shall I go that I may flee from Thy presence, that is, not find Thee angry?

12. This plan he found: So will I flee, saith he, from Thy Face, so will I flee from Thy Spirit; from Thy avenging Spirit, Thy avenging Face thus will I flee. How? If I take again my wings right forward, and abide in the utmost parts of the sea. So can I flee from Thy Face. If he will flee to the utmost part of the sea from the Face of God, will not He from Whom he fleeth be there, He of Whom he said, If I go down to hell, Thou art present? Strange, if He be not in the utmost parts of the sea, Who not even in hell is absent. But I know, saith he, how I may flee from Thy wrath. I must take again my wings, not an erring course but right forward, that I neither be lifted up to proud presumption, nor be sunk down to abandoned despair. What wings will he take again, save the two pinions, the two precepts of love, on which two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets? These wings, saith he, these pinions, if I thus take again to me, and abide in the utmost parts of the sea, I can flee from Thy Face to Thy Face; from Thy Face in anger, to Thy Face appeased. For what are the utmost parts of the sea, but the end of the world? Thither let us now flee in hope and longing, with the wings of twofold love; let us have no rest, save in the utmost parts of the sea. For if

elsewhere we wish for rest, we shall be hurled headlong into the sea. Let us fly even to the ends of the sea, let us bear ourselves aloft on the wings of twofold love; meanwhile let us flee to God in hope, and in faithful hope let us meditate on that end of the sea.

13. Now listen who may bring us thither. The very same One whose face in wrath we wish to flee from. For what followeth? If I go down into hell, Thou art present: if I take again my wings right forward, and abide in the utmost parts of the sea, even thither shall Thy hand conduct me, and Thy right hand lead me. This let us meditate on, beloved brethren, let this be our hope, this our consolation. Let us take again through love the wings we lost through lust. For lust was the lime of our wings, it dashed us down from the freedom of our sky, that is, the free breezes of the Spirit of God. Thence dashed down we lost our wings, and were, so to speak, imprisoned in the power of the fowler; thence He redeemed us with His Blood, Whom we fled from to be caught. He maketh us wings of His commandments; we raise them aloft now free from lime. Let us not love the sea, but fly to the utmost parts of the sea. Let none be afraid, yet let none presume on his wings; for, winged though we be, unless He conduct us, we are thrown headlong into the depths of the sea, worn out and tired, presuming as it were on our own strength. Needs then must we have wings, and needs must He conduct us, for He is our Helper. We have free-will; but even with that free-will what can we do, unless He help us Who commandeth us. For thither shall Thy Hand conduct me, and Thy right Hand guide me.

14. And considering the length of the way, what said he to himself? And I said, Peradventure the darkness shall overwhelm me. Lo, now I have believed in Christ, now am I wafted aloft on the wings of twofold love, and the iniquity of this world aboundeth, and because iniquity aboundeth, the love of many waxeth cold. In this life amid so many offences, so many sins, so many troubles of daily temptations, daily evil suggestions, what do I? saith he. How shall I come to the utmost parts of the sea? He addeth, he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. Regarding the length of the way, I said to myself, Peradventure the darkness shall overwhelm me. And the night was light in my delight. The night was made to me light, because in the night I despaired of being able to cross so great a sea, to

surmount so long a journey, to reach the utmost parts by persevering to the end. Thanks to Him Who sought me when a runaway, who smote my back with strokes of the scourge, who by calling me re-called me from destruction, who made my night light. For it is night so long as we are passing through this life. How was the night made light? Because Christ came down into the night. Christ took flesh in this world, and enlightened for us the night. For the woman in the parable when she had lost a drachma, lighted a candle. The wisdom of God had lost a drachma. What is a drachma? A piece of money whereon was the image of our king. For man was made in the image of God, and had perished. And what did the wise woman? She lighted a lamp. A lamp is made of clay, yet has light, whereby the drachma may be found. The lamp of wisdom then, the Flesh of Christ, is made of clay, yet shines with His Word, finds the lost. And night was made light in my delight. Night was made delight to me. Our delight is Christ. See how now we delight in Him. Those shouts of yours, that joy of yours, whence are they from our delight? and whence is that delight, save that our night is enlightened, save that unto us Christ the Lord is preached? For He sought you before ye sought Him, and found you before ye found Him. And night was made light in my delight.

15. For darkness shall not be darkened by Thee. Do not thou then darken thy darkness; God darkeneth it not, but enlighteneth it yet more; for to Him is said in another Psalm, Thou, Lord, shalt light my candle: my God shall enlighten my darkness. But who are they who darken their darkness, which God darkeneth not? Evil men, perverse men; when they sin, verily they are darkness; when they confess not their sins which they have committed, but go on to defend them, they darken their darkness. Wherefore now if thou hast sinned, thou art in darkness, but by confessing thy darkness thou shalt obtain to have thy darkness lightened; by defending thy darkness, thou shalt darken thy darkness. And where wilt thou escape from double darkness, who wast in difficulty in single darkness? In what sense then doth the Lord not darken our darkness? Because he suffereth us not to have our sins unpunished, he scourgeth us in these toils, and disciplineth us. Know, my brethren, that all this misery of mankind in which the world groaneth, is medicinal pain, not penal sentence. Ye see that every where is pain, every where fear, every where need, every where toils. Avarice increaseth, but

amid evils. If for this purpose God here disciplineth us with such scourges, that our darkness may not be darkened, let us acknowledge that we are under the punishment of the scourge, and let us bless God, Who mingleth bitternesses with the sweetness of this earthly life, lest, blinded by the enjoyment of temporal delights, we long not for everlasting delights, nor be willing that the sea come to end, or ourselves to dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea. Let then the waves of the sea rage: the more the waves of the sea rage, the more does the dove soar with her wings. God then darkeneth not our darkness, because He mingleth scourges with our sins, and bitternesses with our evil delights. Let us not darken our darkness by defending our sins, and the night shall be light in our delight. For darkness shall not be darkened by Thee.

16. And night shall be lightened as the day. Night, as the day. Day to us is worldly prosperity, night adversity in this world: but, if we learn that it is by the desert of our sins that we suffer adversities, and our Father's scourges are sweet to us, that the Judge's sentence may not be bitter to us, so shall we find the darkness of this night to be, as it were, the light of this night. If it is night, how is there light there? It is night, because here mankind wander; it is night because not yet have we reached the true day, the day not straitened by yesterday and to-morrow, the day everlasting, without rising, without setting. Here then it is night, but this night has a sort of light and darkness of its own. Why it is altogether night, we have said; but what is the light of this night? Prosperity and happiness of this world, temporal joy, temporal honour, are, as it were, the light of this night. But adversity, and the bitterness of tribulations and lowness of station, these are, as it were, the darkness of this night. In this night, in this mortal condition of human life, men have darkness; their light prosperity, adversity their darkness. But when Christ our Lord has come, and has dwelt in the soul by faith, and promised other light, and inspired and given patience, and warned a man not to delight in prosperity or to be crushed by adversity, the man, being faithful, begins to treat this world with indifference; not to be lifted up when prosperity befalls him, nor crushed when adversity, but in all things to praise God, not only when he aboundeth, but also when he loseth; not only when he is in health, but also when he is sick; so that in his mouth that strain is true, I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall be ever in my

mouth. If then ever, both when this night is bright, and when it is dark; when prosperity smiles upon thee, and when adversity is sad; if ever His praise be in thy mouth, then shall it also be to thee according to what is next said, As is His darkness, so is also His light. His darkness overwhelms me not, because His light lifts me not up.

17. Behold, thou hast its light in Job: he had abundance of every thing. First is described the light of his night, in his riches. In proportion to the greatness of the goods, and the store he possessed in abundance, was the light of his night. The enemy thought that such an one as he worshipped God only because He had given him all these things, and asked that they might be taken from him. Then his night became darkness, which before had light. Still he knew that, whether it were darkness or light, it was night, wherein he was wandering in a far country, away from his God, and he had his God Himself as an inward Light, and that inner Light made him indifferent, whether it were darkness in this night, or light. And as in the light of this night, that is, in the midst of abundance, he worshipped God, when all was taken from him, when his night was made darkness, what said he? The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath it happened; blessed be the Name of the Lord. I am, so to speak, in the night of this life: my Lord dwelleth in my heart, He enlightened that night for me with certain comforts, when He gave me abundance of temporal goods; now He hath withdrawn that temporal light, and the night is, as it were, darkened. But since, as is His darkness, so is His light also; the Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord, so hath it happened; blessed be the Name of the Lord. I am not sad in this night, for as is His darkness, so is also His light; both pass away; so that they which rejoice are as though they rejoiced not, and they that weep as though they wept not; for, as is His darkness, so is also His light.

18. For Thou, O Lord, hast possessed my reins. Not without reason, as is His darkness, so is also His light. The Possessor is within; He occupieth not only the heart, but also the reins; not only the thoughts, but also the delights: He then possesseth that whence I should feel delight at any light in this world: He occupieth my reins: I know not delight, save from the inward light of His Wisdom. What then? Dost thou not delight that thy affairs are

very prosperous, times fortunate to thee? dost thou not delight in honour, in riches, in thy family? ‘I do not,’ saith he. Wherefore? Because as is His darkness, so is also His light. Whence hast thou this indifference, that as is His darkness to thee, so is also His light? Whence? Because Thou host possessed my reins, O Lord; Thou hast taken me up from my mother’s womb. While I was in my mother’s womb, I did not regard with indifference the darkness of that night and the light of that night. For my mother’s womb is the custom of my city. What city is that? That which first gave us birth in captivity. We know that Babylon, whereof we spoke yesterday, from whence all go forth who believe in and sigh for the true light, the heavenly Jerusalem. Therefore have I said, From my mother’s womb was I taken up by the Lord, thence are the darkness and light of this night become indifferent to me. But he that is in the womb of that mother, Babylon, joys in the prosperity of this world, is crushed by the adversity of this world, knows not to rejoice, unless some temporal prosperity befall him; knows not to be saddened, unless some temporal adversity befall him. Now come forth from the womb of Babylon, begin to sing a song to the Lord; come forth and be born: God shall take thee up from thy mother’s womb. What God? That God of the Apostle Paul, who said, But when it pleased God, Who separated me from my mother’s womb, to reveal His Son in me. For who was his mother? The Synagogue. And what had he learnt there, save what the Jews themselves, the people itself, had and had learnt? The name of God’s praise had remained in them, but there were not found in them deeds: there were in them the words of God, as leaves on a tree: the fruit was no where. Such a fig-tree, as ye know, the Lord when He found, withered away with a curse, for He found thereon leaves, but fruit He did not find. Some tree He was speaking of in a figure to us. For the time of figs was not yet: what all men knew, did the Maker of earth and sky not know? He therefore, Who separated Paul from his mother’s womb, hath also separated us from our mother’s womb. And who is our mother? Babylon. Being then taken up from that womb, let us now begin to entertain other hopes. He hath promised, brethren, that wherein ye may rejoice: now bring forth fruit, being set in other hopes. Now know no ill, save to offend God, and so not to be brought to those things which He promiseth. What of the goods of this world, and the ills of this world? Let us regard them with indifference; for now, having been taken up from the womb of that our mother, we look on them with indifference, and say, As is His darkness, so is also His light. Neither doth earthly prosperity make us happy, nor earthly adversity wretched. We must maintain righteousness, love faith, hope in God, love God, love our neighbours also. After these toils we shall have unfailing light, day without setting. Fleeting is all the light and darkness of this night. For Thou, Lord, hast possessed my reins: Thou hast taken me up from my mother’s womb.

19. I will confess to Thee, O Lord, for terribly hast Thou been made wonderful. Terribly hast Thou been made wonderful: in the very fact that we wonder at Thee, Thou art terrible, we rejoice with trembling. For we fear lest, being puffed up with pride at Thy gifts, we be punished by the loss of what we have gained by humility. I will confess to Thee, O Lord, for terribly hast Thou been made wonderful: wondrous are Thy works, and my soul knoweth it right well. Now my soul knoweth it right well, because Thou hast taken me up from my mother’s womb; but aforetime Thy knowledge was made wonderful from me, it had waxed great, nor could I attain unto it. From me then it had waxed great, nor could I attain unto it. Whence doth my soul now know right well, save because the night is light in my delight? save because Thy grace hath come unto me, and enlightened my darkness? save because Thou hast possessed my reins? save because Thou hast taken me up from my mother’s womb?

20. My bone is not hid from Thee, which Thou hast made in secret. His bone, he saith. What the people call ‘ossum,’ is in Latin called ‘os.’ This is the word in the Greek. For we might think the word ‘os’ is here the one which makes in the plural ‘ora,’ not ‘os’ short, which makes ‘ossa.’ He saith then, my bone is not hid from Thee, which Thou hast made in secret. I have a certain bone in secret (ossum). For this word let us prefer to use; better is it that scholars find fault with us, than that the people understand us not. ‘There is then,’ saith he, ‘a certain bone of mine, within, hidden; Thou hast made within a bone for me in secret, yet is it not hidden from Thee. In secret hast Thou made it, but hast Thou therefore hidden it from Thyself? This my bone made by Thee in secret men see not, men know not: Thou knowest, Who hast made. What bone then meaneth he, brethren? Let us seek it, it is in secret. But because as Christians we are speaking in the

Name of the Lord to Christians, now we find what bone is of this kind. It is a sort of inward strength; for strength and fortitude are understood to be in the bones. There is then a sort of inward strength of the soul, wherein it is not broken. Whatever tortures, whatever tribulations, whatever adversities rage around, that which God hath made strong in secret in us, cannot be broken, yieldeth not. For by God is made a certain strength of patience, of which is said in another Psalm, But my soul shall be subjected to God, for of Him is my patience. Observe too the Apostle Paul, how he hath within him this kind of strength. As sorrowful, saith he, yet alway rejoicing. Whence, as sorrowful? From insults, reproaches, persecutions, scourgings, stripes, stonings, imprisonment, chains. Who would not think them wretched in all these? Nay, their very persecutors would not so rage against them, did they not think that they were made wretched by their persecutions. For from their own weakness did they guess at them, not having themselves a bone hidden within; but they who had, to men without indeed seemed sad, yet within rejoiced to God, from Whom their bone was not hidden, which He Himself had made in secret. And the same Apostle Paul discloseth to us this bone made in secret by God, in these words, ‘And not only so, but we even glory in tribulation.’ Is it too small a thing that thou art not sad, but dost thou glory also? Let it suffice thee not to be sad. Too small a thing it is, saith he, to Christians; such a bone hath He made for me in secret, that it is too small a thing for me not to be crushed, if I glory not also. Wherein dost thou glory? In tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience. See how that strength is fashioned within in his heart: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost Which is given unto us. So is fashioned and made strong that hidden bone, that it maketh us even to glory in tribulations. But to men we seem wretched, because that which we have within is hidden from them. My bone is not hid from Thee, which Thou hast made in secret, and my substance is in the lower parts of the earth. Behold, in flesh is my substance, in the lower parts of the earth is my substance; yet have I a bone within, which Thou hast fashioned, such as to cause me never to yield to any persecutions of this lower region, where still my substance is. For what great matter is it, if an Angel be brave? This is a great matter, if flesh is brave. And whence is flesh brave, whence is an earthen vessel brave, save because in it is made a bone in secret? And my substance is in the lower parts of the earth.

21. What of them who are less strong? For, as I have already brought to your notice, it is Christ that speaketh. But many things are spoken in the person of the Body, hear now somewhat in the person of the Head; and that, not as though He maketh distinction, so as to introduce the person now of the Head, now of the Body. For if he make distinction, he in a manner divideth, and so there will not be two in one flesh. But if there be two in one flesh, wonder not if there be two in one voice. When our Lord Jesus Christ suffered, His disciples had not yet that inward bone, not yet had their strength of patience been made strong; and they knew not themselves, knew not their own strength, and Peter dared to promise to share his Lord's Passion even unto death: the sick man knew not himself, but the Physician knew the sick man. What was the result? I will go with Thee, saith he, even unto death. Verily I say unto thee, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice. The answer of the Physician proved truer than the presumption of the sick man. Of those then he saith, 'My bone is not hidden from Thee, which Thou hast made in secret,' in whom is this bone made strong within; especially the strength of endurance in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who when He willed lay down, when He willed rose again; when He willed, slept, when He willed, awoke; for, I have power, saith He, to lay My life down, and I have power to take it again. What of them in whom this strength was not fashioned and established? what saith He of them? See what He saith to God His Father. Thine eyes did see My imperfect one. My imperfect one, My Peter, promising and denying, presuming and failing; yet Thine eyes saw him. For because the Lord Himself turned and looked on him, as it is written in the Gospel, at length after the third denial he remembered what the Lord had foretold to him, and went out and wept bitterly; that weeping was at God's looking upon him, for, Mine imperfect one, saith He, Thine eyes did see. For he, imperfect, stumbling at his Lord's Passion, without doubt would have perished, but that Thine eyes saw him, and not him only, but all too who were imperfect, till they were strengthened by Christ's resurrection. For it was made plain to their eyes that that had not perished in their Lord which had died, and so that bone was made for them in secret, so that now they did not even fear to die

themselves. Thine eyes did see Mine imperfect one, and in Thy book shall all be written, not only the perfect, but also the imperfect. Let not the imperfect fear, only let them advance. Nor yet, because I have said, ‘let them not fear,’ let them love their imperfection, and remain there, where they are found. Let them advance, as far as in them lieth. Daily let them add, daily let them approach; yet let them not fall back from the Body of the Lord: that, compacted in one Body and among these members, they may be counted worthy to have that said of them, Thine eyes did see My imperfect one, and in Thy book shall all be written.

22. By day shall they wander, and none among them. The Day was yet on earth, even our Lord Jesus Christ. Whence He said, Walk while ye have the Day. But by day shall His imperfect ones wander. They too thought that our Lord Jesus Christ was only man, that He had not within Him the hidden Godhead, that He was not secretly God, but that He was that only which was seen: this they too thought. For even Peter himself, (for of him especially we speak, in whom is set forth to us also a pattern that we despair not of our weakness,) even Peter had said to the Lord, when He asked whom men said that He was, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And the Lord had said to him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. Wherefore? Because he has called Him the Son of God. Then, but a little after, in the same place, in the same conversation, the Lord began to speak of His coming Passion. Then did that same Peter, who already had confessed Him to be the Son of God, fear lest He should die like a son of man. He was the Son of God, He was also the Son of man; Son of God, in the Form of God, equal to the Father; Son of man, in the form of a servant, wherein He is inferior to the Father. Doubtless He was destined to come to His Passion in the form of a servant; why did Peter fear that in the form of a servant the Form of God would perish, and not rather presume that through the Form of God the form of a servant would live again? He saith to Him, That be far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee. And the Lord, Who had called him blessed in those former words, now saith, Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. Before, because he had said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, it was said to him, Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto

thee, but My Father Which is in heaven: therefore art thou a stone, therefore blessed. But now, because not from the Father's revelation, but from the flesh's weakness he had answered, he is called Satan. Thou savourest not, He says, the things that be of God, but those that be of men. And this was Christ, my brethren; He had walked among them, He had commanded the winds, He had walked on the waters before their eyes, before their eyes He had raised one who had been four days dead, before their eyes He had done all those great miracles, and yet they were amazed at His Passion, as though they had lost Him, on Whom they had in vain trusted. But by day shall they wander, and none among them. No one whatever; not even he who had said, I will go with Thee even unto death. For He had said unto them, The hour cometh, that ye shall leave Me alone, and go every one his own way; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. The Father was with Him, and He with the Father; the Father in Him, and He in the Father; He and the Father were one; yet feared they when He died. Wherefore, save because in the day they wandered, and there was no one in them. In the day they shall wander, and none among them.

23. But what is, In the day they shall wander? Shall they perish? Where then is, Thine eyes did see My imperfect one, and in Thy book shall all be written? When then did they wander in the day? When they understood not the Lord set upon earth. And what followeth? But to me Thy friends are made very honourable, O God; those very ones, who wandered in the day, and none was in them, became Thy friends, and were made very honourable to me. That bone was made in them in secret after the resurrection of the Lord, and they suffered for His Name, at whose death they had been amazed. To me Thy friends are made very honourable, O God, mightily strengthened were their chieftainships. They became Apostles, they became leaders of the Church, they became rams leading their flocks, mightily strengthened were their chieftainships.

24. I will number them, and they shall be multiplied above the sand. By means of them, who wandered in the day, and, there was none in them, lo! there has been born all this great multitude, which now is like the sand innumerable, save by God. For He said, they shall be multiplied above the sand, and yet He had said, I will number them. The very same who are

numbered, shall be multiplied above the sand. For by Him is the sand numbered, by Whom the very hairs of our head are numbered. I will number them, and they shall be multiplied above the sand.

25. I have risen, and yet am I with Thee. What is, I hare risen, and yet am I with Thee? Already have I suffered, saith He, already have I been buried; lo! I have risen, and not yet do they understand that I am with them. Yet am I with Thee, that is, not yet with them, for not yet do they recognise Me. For thus do we read in the Gospel, that after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, when He appeared to them, they did not at once know Him. There is another meaning also: I have risen, and yet am I with Thee, as though He would signify this present time, wherein he is as yet hidden at the right hand of the Father, before He is revealed in the brightness, wherein He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

26. And then He telleth what meanwhile, during this whole time when He already has risen, and remaineth still with the Father, He suffereth by the intermixture of sinners in His Body, the Church, and by the separation of heretics. If Thou, O God, shall slay the sinners, since Thou shalt say in Thy thought, Depart from Me, ye men of blood, they shall receive in vanity their cities. The words seem to be connected in this order; If Thou, O God, shall slay the sinners, they shall receive in vanity their cities. For in this way doth He mean them to be understood to be slain, when by pride, whereby they are puffed up, they lose the grace whereby they live. For the holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding. Thus are sinners slain, because, having their understandings darkened, they are alienated from the life of God. For on account of elation they lose confession, and so they are slain, and in them is fulfilled what Scripture saith, Confession perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not. And so they receive in vanity their cities, that is, their vain peoples, who follow their vanity; when, puffed up by the name of righteousness, they persuade men to burst the bond of unity, and blindly and ignorantly follow them, as being more righteous. And because it is hence for the most part that they find an occasion for separating from the unity of Christ, namely, by accusing evil men, with whom they pretend that they are unwilling to hold communion; and because it is possible that they not only disparage the

guiltless, whom they pretend to flee from as wicked, but also say truth of some wicked men, like unto themselves, among whom the wheat of Christ, preserving the bond of unity, groaneth; therefore He hath inserted, Because Thou shalt say in Thy thought, Depart from Me, ye men of blood, they shall receive in vanity their cities: that is, therefore they shall draw away to their own schism their peoples, to corrupt them with their vanity, because Thou in Thy thought shalt say, Depart from Me, ye men of blood: in order, that is, that sinners, slain in the spirit as the due reward of their pride, may therefore receive their cities, that is, their peoples, into vanity, that is, may draw them away by separation into the vanity of error; and offended, as it were, by the intermixture of the chaff, may break unity, and abandon the wheat; because He warneth the wheat, that is, good and faithful men, that before the winnowing, which is to be at the end, it separate not itself openly from the bad, lest it abandon the good that are still mingled with them; but by good conversation, and contrariety of life, it, in a manner, say silently to them, Depart from Me, ye men of blood. For this he saith to them by the Voice of God, which Voice is in thought, as God speaketh it in the thought of His holy people. For who are men of blood, save they who hate their brethren? As John saith, He who haleth his brother, is a murderer. The slain sinners then not understanding this, how God saith to the wicked in the thought of the good, Depart from Me, ye men of blood, find fault with them for holding communion with wicked men, and, separating themselves on the ground of these false charges, receive in vanity their cities. This saying, which now in the thought of the good is said to the wicked, will be openly said in that day when it shall be said to them by our Head Himself, I never knew you: depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity.

27. But now the Body of Christ, the Church, saith, Why do the proud speak falsely against me, as though I were stained by other men’s sins, and so, by separating themselves, receive in vanity their cities? Have not I hated those who hated Thee, Lord? Why do those who are worse themselves require of me to separate myself in body as well as spirit from the wicked, so as to root up the wheat, together with the tares, before the time of harvest, that before the time of winnowing I lose my power of enduring the chaff; that before all the different sorts of fishes are brought to the end of the world, as to the shore, to be separated, I tear the nets of peace and unity? Are the

sacraments which I receive, those of evil men? Do I, by consent, communicate in their life and deeds? Have not I hated those who hated Thee, Lord, and at Thine enemies wasted away? When the zeal of Thine honse eat me, did I not see the senseless ones, and waste away? Did not horror take hold of me, because of the wicked that forsake Thy law? For who are Thine enemies, save they who by their life declare how they hate Thy law? These then when I hated, why do they who receive in vanity their cities, falsely accuse me, as though their sins could be laid to my charge, whom I hated, and at whom I wasted away with zeal for the Lord's house? But where is, Love your enemies? Is it because He said yours, not 'God's?' Do good to them that hate you. He saith not, 'who hate God.' So he followeth the pattern, and saith, Have not I hated those who hated Thee, Lord? He saith not, 'Who have hated me.' And at Thine enemies did I waste away. Thine, he said, not 'mine.' But those who hate us and are enemies unto us, only because we serve Him, what else do they but hate Him, and are His enemies. Ought we then to love such enemies as these? Or do not they suffer persecution for God's sake, to whom it is said, Pray for them that persecute you? Observe then what followeth.

28. With a perfect hatred did I hate them. What is, with a perfect hatred? I hated in them their iniquities, I loved Thy creation. This it is to hate with a perfect hatred, that neither on account of the vices thou hate the men, nor on account of the men love the vices. For see what he addeth, They became mine enemies. Not only as God's enemies, but as his own too doth he now describe them. How then will he fulfil in them both his own saying, Have not I hated those that hated Thee, Lord, and the Lord's command, Love your enemies? How will he fulfil this, save with that perfect hatred, that he hate in them that they are wicked, and love that they are men? For in the time even of the Old Testament, when the carnal people was restrained by visible punishments, how did Moses, the servant of God, who by understanding belonged to the New Testament, how did he hate sinners when he prayed for them, or how did he not hate them when he slew them, save that he hated them with a perfect hatred? For with such perfection did he hate the iniquity which he punished, as to love the manhood for which he prayed.

29. Since then the Body of Christ is in the end to be severed in body also from the unholy and wicked, but now meanwhile groaneth among them, and since those slain sinners falsely accusing the good for holding communion with the wicked, and separating themselves more and more from the good and innocent, on the ground of these wicked ones, so receive in vanity their cities, that many wicked still remain who follow them not in their separation, but continue intermingled as before, for the good to endure unto the end, what amongst them doeth the Body of Christ, bringing forth fruit with patience, an hundred, or sixty, or thirty-fold? What doeth the love of Christ among the daughters, as the lily among thorns? What are her words? what her conscience? what is the appearance of the king's daughter within? Lo, hear what she saith. Prove me, O God, and know my heart. Do Thou, O God, Thou prove me, Thou know; not man, not an heretic, who neither knoweth how to prove, nor can know my heart, whereas Thou provest, and knowest that I consent not to the deeds of the wicked, while they think that I can be defiled by the sins of others; so that, while I in my long wandering do what I mourn in another Psalm, that is, while I labour for peace among them that hate peace, until I come to that Vision of peace, which is called Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all, the city eternal in the heavens; they, contending, and falsely accusing and separating themselves, may receive, not, evidently, in eternity, but in vanity, their cities. Prove me, then, my God, and know my heart; search me, and learn my paths. Why this? Observe what followeth.

30. And see, saith he, if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Search, he saith, my paths, that is, my counsels and thoughts; and see if there be any way of wickedness in me, either by act or consent; and lead me in the way everlasting. What else saith he, but 'lead me in Christ?' For who is the way everlasting, save He that is the Life everlasting? For everlasting is He Who said, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. If then thou findest any thing in my way which displeaseth Thine eyes, since my way is mortal, do Thou lead me in the way everlasting, wherein is no iniquity; for even if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins; He is the Way everlasting without sin; He is the Life everlasting without punishment.

31. These are great mysteries, brethren. How doth the Spirit of God speak with us? how doth it make us delights in this night? What is this, we ask you, brethren, whence are they sweeter, the darker they are? He mixeth us our potion after His love, in certain wondrous ways. He maketh His own sayings wondrous, so that while we were speaking what ye already knew, yet forasmuch as it was dug out of passages which seemed obscure, the knowledge itself seemed to be made new. Did ye not know, brethren, that the wicked are to be tolerated in the Church, and schisms not to be made? Did ye not already know, that within those nets which hold both good and bad fishes, we must abide even to the shore, nor must the nets be burst, because on the shore the good shall be separated into vessels, and the bad thrown away? Ye know this already; but these verses of this Psalm ye did not understand: that which ye did not understand is explained; that which ye knew has been renewed.

PSALM 140

Sermon to the people, in the presence of an assembly of Bishops.

1. Our Lords have bidden me, brethren, and in them the Lord of all, to bring this Psalm to your understanding, so far as God giveth me to. May He help your prayers, that I may say those things which I ought to say, ye to hear, that to all of us the Word of God may be profitable. For all it doth not profit, for all have not faith. But faith in the soul is like a good root, which turneth the rain to fruit; false faith, and devilish error, and evil desire, are the root of all evil, like the root of thorns, turning even the sweet rain into prickles.

2. What this Psalm containeth, I believe that ye perceived when it was being chanted; for therein the Church of Christ, set in the midst of the wicked, complaineth and groaneth, and poureth out prayer to God. For her voice is in every such prophecy the voice of one in need and want, not yet satisfied, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, for whom a certain fulness in the end hath been promised, and is reserved. Meanwhile, here let it hunger and thirst, groan and knock and seek. Let it not delight in the allurements of its wandering, let it not think the world its country, from whence Christ came to set it free, for Christ willeth to be our Head, the Head that is of a certain Body. For we cannot speak of a head where there is no body for it to be head to. Accordingly if Christ be a Head, He is also Head of some Body. The Body of that Head is the holy Church, among whose members we are, if we love our Head. Let us hear then the words of Christ's Body, our own words, that is, if we be in Christ's Body; for whoever is not there, will be among those for whom that Body groaneth. Accordingly, either thou wilt be in that Body which groaneth among the wicked; or else thou wilt not be in that Body, but wilt be among those wicked ones among whom the Body groaneth, which groaneth amongst the wicked; either thou wilt be a member of Christ, or an enemy of the Body of Christ. Nor is it meant that they are all enemies, and adversaries of the Body of Christ after one manner, neither do they all act after one manner. Chameleon-like is he who reigneth in them, and useth them as his vessels.

But many are freed from him, and pass over into the Body of Christ, and who they are, and how many there shall hereafter be, He knoweth, Who hath redeemed them, when they knew it not, with His own Blood. But some there are, destined to persevere in their wickedness, belonging not to the Body of Christ, and they assuredly are known to Him, to Whom nothing is unknown. Meanwhile, they who are already compacted with His members, not having as yet their resurrection which is to come, wherein all groaning endeth, and praise succeedeth, all tribulation shall die, and there shall be endless exultation; not yet having this in possession, yet grasping it in hope, they groan with a sort of longing, and pray to be freed from wicked men, among whom the good too must live. For to separate them now is not safe for every one. Separation will belong to Him, Who knoweth not to err. What is, 'Who knoweth not to err?' That He neither transfer the good to the right hand, nor the bad to the left. But we in this life find it difficult to know ourselves; how much less ought we to pass a hasty sentence on any one. For if to-day we know him to be evil, what he will be to-morrow we know not; and perhaps he whom we violently hate is our brother, and we know it not. Safe then is it for us to hate in the wicked their wickedness, and to love the work of God's Hand, so that, what God made in him, we love, what man has made in himself, we hate. For God made man himself, man made sin. Love what God made, hate what man hath made: for so shalt thou persecute what man hath made, that what God hath made be set free.

3. To the end, a Psalm to David himself. No other end mayest thou look to, than is laid down for thee by the Apostle himself. For Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth. Wherefore when thou hearest the Psalm say, To the end, let hearts be turned to Christ. For the title of the Psalm is, as it were, the herald of the Psalm, seeming to say, 'Lo, He is coming, of Him am I about to speak, of Christ am I about to sing.' For the words, to David himself, I understand not, save of Him, Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh. Meanwhile on account of the birth the name suiteth. His birth after the flesh was from David, His spiritual parentage above David. And not only before David, but before Abraham; not only before Abraham, but before Adam too; not only before Adam, but before earth and sky, before all the Angels, before all powers and virtues, before all things visible and invisible. Because then He was of the seed of David, not after

His Godhead, whereby He is the Creator of David, but after the flesh; therefore He deigned to be called David in prophecy: look to this end, for the Psalm is chanted to David Himself; hear the voice of His Body; be in His Body. Let the voice which thou hast heard be thine, and pray, and say what followeth.

4. Deliver me, O Lord, from the wicked man. Not from one only, but from the class; not from the vessels only, but from their prince himself, that is, the devil. Why from man, if he meaneth from the devil? Because he too is called a man in a figure: An enemy came, and sowed tares among the wheat; and when the servants said to their master, Didst not thou sow good seed, whence then have the tares appeared? He replied, An enemy hath done this. From that wicked man they pray with all their might to be delivered. For thou wrestlest not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, that is, the rulers of sinners. And this we too were, for we have just heard the words of the Apostle, Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Now then being made light, not in ourselves, but in the Lord, let us pray not only against darkness, that is, against sinners, whom still the devil possesseth, but also against their prince, the devil himself, who worketh in the children of disobedience. Deliver me from the unrighteous man. The same is from the unrighteous man, as from the wicked man. For he called him wicked because unrighteous, lest perchance thou shouldest think that any unrighteous man could be a good man. For many unrighteous men seem to be harmless; they are not fierce, are not savage, do not persecute nor oppress; yet are they unrighteous, because, following some other habit, they are luxurious, drunkards, given to pleasure. How doth he harm no one who spareth not himself? he is innocent who harmeth no one, not who harmeth himself. And can he help harming thee, who harmeth himself? Thou answerest, ‘How doth he harm me? He hath not seized on my goods, or attacked my life; he feeds himself on his own sensuality, he delights in his own pleasures: but if his pleasures be polluting, it is himself that is polluted; what hath he to do with me, who annoyeth me not? He harmeth thee at all events by example, forasmuch as he liveth with thee, and inviteth thee to what he doeth. Art not thou, when thou seest him prospering in his defilement, attracted by the delight of such

deeds? Even though thou consent not, at all events thou hast found somewhat to fight against. How then hath he not harmed thee, when thou hast hard work to conquer what he hath made in thy heart? Wicked then is every unrighteous man, who must needs be harmful, whether he be gentle or fierce. Whoever falls in his way, whoever is taken by his snares, will find how harmful is that which he thought harmless. For, brethren, even thorns prick not with their roots. Pull up thorns from the ground, handle their roots, and see whether thou feelest pain. Yet that in the upgrowth which causeth thee pain, proceeded from that root. Let not then men please you who seem gentle and kind, yet are lovers of carnal pleasure, followers of polluted lusts, let them not please you. Though as yet they seem gentle, they are roots of thorns. For by such deeds they mostly squander in sensuality what was their own; and how do they seek to replenish what they have squandered? Do they spare plunder and devices of fraud; do they spare to seek out every kind of wickedness? Now thou seest him to be a wretched man, whom erst thou thoughtest gentle. When thou sawest him drunken, he was a good man; now thou seest him a thief, thou fearest him as a robber; thorns have grown out of those roots. When thou sawest the soft roots of thorns, thou shouldest then have burnt them, if thou couldest, and then would not have grown out of them what now punisheth thee. And so, my brethren, body of Christ, members of Christ groaning among such wicked men, whomsoever ye find hurrying headlong into evil lusts and deadly pleasures, at once chide, at once punish, at once burn. Let the root be burnt, and there remaineth not whence the thorn may grow up. If ye cannot, be sure that ye will have them as enemies. They may be silent, they may hide their enmity, but they cannot love you. But since they cannot love you, and since they who hate you must needs seek your harm, let not your tongue and heart be slow to say to God, Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man, free me from the unrighteous man.

5. Who have imagined unrighteousnesses in their heart. How so? because what they dare not utter with their tongue, they keep in their heart. For on account of those he saith it, who for the most part speak good words with their lips. Thou hearest the voice of the righteous, yet is it not the heart of the righteous. Else what profit was it to go on and say, Who have imagined unrighteousnesses in their heart? From them free me, from them let Thy

hand be most powerful to deliver me. For easy is it to avoid open enmities, easy is it to turn aside from an enemy declared and manifest, while iniquity is in his lips as well as his heart; he is a troublesome enemy, he is secret, he is with difficulty avoided, who beareth good things in his lips, while in his heart he concealeth evil things. Who have imagined unrighteousnesses in their heart: all the day long did they make war. What is, war? They made for me what I was to fight against all the day. For from thence, from such hearts as these, ariseth all that the Christian fighteth against. Be it sedition, be it schism, be it heresy, be it turbulent opposition, it springeth not save from these imaginings which were concealed, and while they spake good words with their lips, all the day long did they make war. Ye hear words of peace, yet making war departeth not from their thoughts. For the words, all the day long, signify without intermission, throughout the whole time.

6. They have sharpened their tongues like serpents. If still thou seekest to make out the man, behold a comparison. In the serpent above all beasts is there cunning and craft to hurt; for therefore does it creep. It hath not even feet, so that its footsteps when it cometh may be heard. In its progress it draweth itself, as it were, gently along, yet not straightly. Thus then do they creep and crawl to hurt, having poison hidden even under a gentle touch. And so it followeth, the poison of asps is under their lips. Behold, it is under their lips, that we may perceive one thing under their lips, another in their lips. And these too he openly maketh manifest in another place, where he saith, Who speak peace with their neighbours, but evil is in their hearts.

7. Preserve me, O Lord, from the hand of the sinner, from unrighteous men deliver me. Here they wear their real colours, they are known; here we have no need to understand, but to act: we have need to pray, not to ask who they are. But how thou shouldest pray against such men, he explaineth in what followeth. For many pray unskilfully against wicked men. Who have imagined, saith he, to trip up my steps. Thus far it may be understood carnally. Every one has enemies, who seek to cheat him in trade, to rob him of money, where they are engaged together in business; every one has some neighbour his enemy, who deviseth how to bring mischief upon his family, to injure in some way his property: and surely he deviseth this by deceit, by fraud, by devilish devices he endeavoureth to accomplish this: no one can

doubt it. Yet not for these reasons are they to be guarded against, but lest they lay in wait for thee and draw thee to themselves, that is, separate thee from the Body of Christ, and make thee of their body. For as Christ is the Head of the good, so is the devil their head. Who have imagined, he saith, to trip up my steps. What is, to trip up my steps? Not as though thou shouldest be deceived in the business thou hast with him, or he cheat thee in a case which thou hast with him in the law courts. He hath tripped up thy steps, if he have hindered thee in the way of God; so that what thou didst direct aright may stumble, or fall from the way, or fall in the way, or draw back from the way, or stop on the way, or go back to the place from whence it had come. Whatsoever hath done this to thee, hath tripped thee up, hath deceived thee. Against such snares as these pray thou, lest thou lose thy heavenly inheritance, lest thou lose Christ thy Joint-heir, for thou art destined to live for ever with Him, Who hath made thee an heir. For thou art made an heir, not by one whom thou art to succeed after his death, but One together with Whom thou art to live for ever.

8. The proud have hidden a trap for me. He hath briefly described the whole body of the devil, when he saith, the proud. Hence is it that for the most part they call themselves righteous when they are unrighteous. Hence is it that nothing is so grievous to them as to confess their sins. They are men who, being falsely righteous, must needs envy the truly righteous. For none envieth another in that which he wisheth not either to be or to seem. One envieth thee because thou art rich; either he wishes to be rich, in that he envieth thee, or else he wishes to be thought rich: another envieth thee because thou art famous or of high birth; either he longeth to be so himself, or else he desires to be thought so. And so for all things which seem or are thought to be good in this world, what each one wishes to have, wherein he wishes to excel, what he desireth to be reported to have, therein doth he envy thee. But they who are falsely righteous, wish to seem righteous when they are not so; and when they see one truly righteous, they must needs envy him, and make it the object of their dealings with him, to make him love that wherein he glorieth. Hence come all allurings and trippings up of others. This the devil first wished, when falling himself he envied man who stood; and because he himself had lost the kingdom of heaven, he was and is unwilling that man should attain thither, and this is his object now, to

prevent man attaining thither, whence himself was cast down. Since then he is proud himself, and, because proud, therefore also envious, his whole body is a body of those of like character. But let us pray against him, who cannot be amended, and against those who can, so as to say to the unrighteous man, Why enviest thou the righteous, O unrighteous man? Is it because thou wishest to appear righteous? Do better at once, so shalt thou more easily be, what thou wishest to seem. Be righteous: so shalt thou love him whom thou didst envy; for so, what thou now grievest that he is, thou shalt thyself be also, and thou shalt love thyself in him and him in thyself. For if thou enviedst a rich man, it would not therefore be in thy power to be rich: if thou enviedst some honourable and high-born senator, it would not be in thy power to be high-born and illustrious: if thou enviedst one that was handsome, never wouldest thou thereby make thyself handsome: if thou enviedst one that was brave and strong, thou wouldest not thereby give thyself strength: but if thou enviest the righteous, the matter is in thy will, be what thou art grieved that another is. For thou wilt not have to buy what thou art not thyself, but another is; it is to be had for nothing, it is to be had at once. Peace on earth to men of good will.

9. But those proud ones have hidden a trap for me; they have sought to trip up my steps. And what have they done? And have stretched out cords as traps. What cords? The word is well known in holy Scripture, and elsewhere we find what cords signify. The Lord made a scourge of small cords, and with it drove out from the temple those who were ill employed there, and thereby signified to us how we were to understand cords; for each one is holden with the cords of his sins, saith another Scripture. And Esaias saith openly, Woe to them that draw sin like a long rope. And why is it called a cord? Because every sinner who persevereth in his sins, addeth sin to sin; and when he ought by accusing his sins to amend, by defending he doubleth what by confession he might have removed, and often seeketh to fortify himself by other sins, on account of the sins he hath already committed. He hath committed adultery; and, lest he be slain himself, he prepareth to commit murder; he addeth sin to sin. Again; if he happen to have committed murder, now he who feared one crime, feareth two: and so when he seeth that he feareth now more things than before he feared, he deviseth not how he may lessen what he hath done, but how he may add

what he hath not yet done: he seeketh, it may be, some other evil deed. Now he hath three. What will a man devise next? Who will end the cord of sins? Most rightly is it called a cord, for however it be twisted it is increased, and they are not straight threads, but twisted, that are added. Wickedness is intertwined, and groweth in length, and seeketh not to cut off what it has woven amiss, but to add, to protract, to lengthen, so that in the end it may have wherewith it may be bound hand and foot, and be cast into outer darkness. But these their sins they spread for the righteous, when they persuade them to do the evils which they themselves do. Therefore he said, they spread cords and traps; that is, by their sins they desired to overthrow me. And where did they this? Beside the paths have they laid a stumbling-block for me: not in the paths, but, beside the paths. Thy paths are the commandments of God. They have laid stumbling-blocks beside the paths; do not thou withdraw out of the paths, and thou wilt not rush upon stumbling-blocks. Yet will I not that thou shouldest say, ‘God should prevent them from laying stumbling-blocks beside my paths, and then they would not lay them.’ Nay, rather, God permitted them to lay stumbling-blocks beside thy paths, that thou shouldest not leave the paths. Beside the paths have they laid stumbling-blocks for me.

10. And what remaineth? what remedy amid such ills, in such temptations, such dangers? I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God. Loud is the voice of prayer, it exciteth confidence. Is He not the God of the others? Of Whom is not He God, Who is the true God? Yet is He specially theirs, who enjoy Him, who serve Him, who willingly submit to Him. For the wicked too, though unwillingly, are subject to Him. The one call upon God, to be crowned by Him; the other being under Him, flee from Him, to be condemned by Him. And whither shall the wicked, who will not have the Lord for his God, whither shall he flee from the God of all? Good is it then for him that he turn to the God of all, and make Him his God, by turning to Him, and being set among such sinners, seducers, hypocrites, proud, say to God, Whom by turning to Him he hath made his God, I have said unto the Lord, Thou art my God; hear with Thine ears the voice of my prayer. It is a simple sentence indeed, and easy to understand, yet it is pleasant perhaps to consider why he did not say, ‘Hear with Thine ears my prayer;’ but, as though expressing more plainly the affection of his heart, the voice of my

prayer, the life of my prayer, the soul of my prayer, not that which soundeth in my words, but that which giveth life to my words. For all other noises without life may be called sounds, but not words. Words belong to those that have souls, to the living. But how many pray to God, yet have neither perception of God, nor right thoughts concerning God! These may have the sound of prayer, the voice they cannot, for there is no life in them. This was the voice of the prayer of one who was alive, forasmuch as he understood that God was his God, saw by Whom he was freed, perceived from whom he was freed.

11. Commending this to the ears of God, let him say, Lord, Lord. Thou Lord-Lord, that is, most truly Lord, not like unto the lords-men, not like the lords who buy with money-bags, but the Lord Who buyeth with His Blood. Lord, Lord, Thou strength of my health, that is, Who givest strength to my health. What is the meaning of strength of my health? He complained of the stumbling-blocks and snares of sinners, of wicked men, vessels of the devil, that barked around him and laid snares around him, of the proud that envy the righteous, among the like of whom he has to pass his life, while here we live in this our pilgrimage. But that such offences should abound the Lord foretold, and said, ‘Iniquity shall abound; and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.’ But He forthwith added a comfort, He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. This he observed and feared, and, distressed at the abundance of iniquities, turned himself to hope; for, he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. He braced himself to endure, and saw that the way was long; and, because to endure is great and difficult, he prayed Him to perfect his endurance, by Whom the command was given him to endure. Verily I shall be saved, if I endure unto the end: but endurance, so as to win salvation, pertaineth unto strength; Thou art the strength of my salvation; Thou makest me to endure, that I may attain salvation. Lord, Lord, Thou strength of my salvation. And whence cometh my hope that Thou art the strength of my salvation? Thou hast overshadowed my head in the day of battle. Lo, now as yet I fight. I fight without against those who falsely pretend to be good, I fight within against mine own lusts; for, I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I

am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Toiling then in this warfare, he looked back to the grace of God; and because already he had begun to be heated and parched, he found, as it were, a shade, whereunder to live. Thou hast overshadowed my head in the day of battle: that is, in the heat, lest I be heated, lest I be parched.

12. Deliver me not over, O Lord, by my own longing to the sinner. Behold to what end Thy overshadowing shall avail for me, that I suffer not heat from myself. And what could that sinner do to me, rage as he would? For wicked men raged against the martyrs, dragged them away, bound them with chains, shut them up in prisons, slew them with the sword, exposed them to wild beasts, consumed them with fire: all this they did; yet did not God deliver them over to the sinners, because they were not delivered over by their own longing. This then pray with all thy might, that God delivered thee not over by thine own longing to the sinner. For thou by thine own longing givest place to the devil. For lo, the devil hath set before thee gain, invited thee to dishonesty; thou canst not have the gain, unless thou commit the dishonesty: the gain is the bait, dishonesty the snare: do thou so look on the bait, that thou see the snare also; for thou canst not obtain the gain, unless thou commit the dishonesty; and if thou commit the dishonesty, thou wilt be caught. I say not, thou wilt be caught, because thou wilt be found out. Sometimes thou wilt not be found out, at least by man; but canst thou escape God? Thou wilt be caught, and drawn out, and slain. For every one that doeth such things, slayeth himself. There then is the bait, there is also the snare; bridle thy longing, and thou wilt not be caught by the hook; but if thy longing for the bait conquer thee, it putteth thy neck into the snare, and the fowler of souls will take thee. Deliver me not by mine own longing to the sinner. Hence is thine head overshadowed in the day of battle. For longing causeth heat, but the overshadowing of the Lord tempers longing, that we may be able to bridle that whereby we were being hurried away, that we be not so heated as to be drawn to the snare. They have thought against me; leave me not, lest perchance they be exalted. Thou hast in another place, They that oppress me will exult if I be moved. Such are they, because such is the devil also himself. When he has led a man astray, he rejoiceth, he triumpheth over him; he himself is exalted, because the other

is humbled. And why is he humbled? Because he was evilly exalted: and he too who triumpheth over him shall hereafter be humbled. Such are all who rejoice in iniquity; they seem to themselves for the while to boast, to be proud, to lift up the neck. Let not their exaltation delight thee: they have the bait in their jaws and the hook too. There is that wherein they delight, there that whereby they are caught. Leave Thou me not, lest perchance they be exalted; that is, let them not triumph over me, let them not rejoice over me.

13. The head of their going about, the toil of their own lips shall cover them. Me, he saith, the shadow of Thy wings shall cover: for, Thou hast covered me in the day of battle. Them what shall cover? The head of their going about; that is, pride. What is, their going about? How they go about and stand not, how they go in the circle of error, where is journeying without end. He who goeth in a straight line, beginneth from some point, endeth at some point: he who goeth in a circle, never endeth. That is the toil of the wicked, which is set forth yet more plainly in another Psalm, The wicked walk in a circle. But the head of their going about is pride, for pride is the beginning of every sin. But whence is pride the toil of their own lips? Every proud man is false, and every false man is a liar. Men toil in speaking falsehood; for truth they could speak with entire facility. For he toileth, who maketh what he saith: he who wisheth to speak the truth, toileth not, for truth herself speaketh without toil. Of this man then he said to God, ‘Me Thine overshadowing shall protect; them their own lie shall cover;’ and their own lie is the toil of their own lips. Behold, he hath travailed with unrighteousness, he hath conceived sorrow, and brought forth iniquity. For in every evil work is toil, and every evil work devised hath a lie for its leader. For there is no truth, save in a good work. And forasmuch as all have toil in lying, what crieth the Truth? Come unto Me, all ye that toil and are laden, and I will refresh you. That is the voice that crieth to them that toil in another Psalm, Ye sons of men, how long will ye be heavy of heart; why love ye vanity, and seek a lie? Hear too in another place the toil of lying plainly set forth, They have taught their tongues to speak lies, they have wearied themselves to commit iniquity.

14. Coals of fire shall fall upon them upon earth, and Thou shalt cast them down. What is, upon earth? Here, even in this life, here coals of fire shall

fall upon them, and Thou shalt cast them down. What are, coals of fire? We know these coals. Are they different from those of which we are about to speak? For these I see avail for punishment, those that I am about to speak of, for salvation. For we have spoken of certain coals, when man was seeking aid against a treacherous tongue. What shall be given thee, or what shall be added to thee, against the treacherous tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty One, with devouring coals, that is, the word of God transfixing the heart, destroying the old nature, implanting love, and the patterns of men who had died and come to life again, were black, and became shining. For coals are darkness, so their colour indicateth. But when the flame of love has reached them, and they have come to life again from the dead, let them hear from the Apostle, Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. These, brethren, are the coals we look on, when we are pierced by the arrow of God, and wish to change our life, but are hindered by the evil tongues of men, such as he was just now complaining of, which endeavour to lead us astray from the way of truth, and to lead us in preference into their own errors, and say to us that even if we promise, we shall not fulfil. Then we observe these coals: he that was yesterday a drunkard, to-day is sober; he that was yesterday an adulterer, to-day is chaste; he that yesterday seized others’ goods, to-day gives freely of his own. All these are coals of fire. The examples of the coals are added to the wound of the arrows, (for I need not fear to say ‘the wound,’ when the Spouse herself saith, I am wounded with love,) and then the hay is consumed, and so they are called devouring coals. The hay is devoured, but the gold is purified, and the man exchanges death for life, and begins to be himself too a burning coal; such a coal as was the Apostle, who before was a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious, a coal black and extinguished; but when he had obtained mercy, he was set on fire from heaven, the voice of Christ set him on fire, all the blackness in him perished, he began to be fervent in spirit, to set others on fire with that wherewith he was set on fire himself. Are we to understand such coals of fire as this here too, who fall upon those evil men, and cast them down? Evidently we are not forbidden to understand it in this way. I see that here shines forth to us a sentiment not improbable and free from blame. I understand those coals to fall upon these men, that they may be cast down. For on some they come, to set them on fire; on others, to cast them down. For that coal himself said, To the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of death unto death. For they see the righteous blazing with the Spirit, bright with light, and envying them, they fall; this is how coals of fire shall fall upon them upon earth, and they shall be cast down. What is, upon earth? While they are as yet in this life, excluding the punishment which is reserved for the wicked, these coals cast them down, before the everlasting fire cometh. Coals of fire shall fall upon them upon earth, and shall cast them down. In miseries they shall not stand. Misery cometh to them, and they bear it not; but the righteous standeth, as he stood, who saith, We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of Christ is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. But when upon them any pressure, any misery hath fallen, they stand not, they fall. For when such men meet with these kind of pressures, they are unable to bear them, they fall into evil acts of iniquity, because they are delivered over by their own longing to the sinner.

15. A man full of words shall not be guided upon earth. A man full of words loveth lies. For what pleasure hath he, save in speaking? He careth not what he speaketh, so long as he speaks. It cannot be that he will be guided. What then ought the servant of God to do, who is kindled with these coals, and himself made a coal of salvation, what should he do? He should wish rather to hear than to speak; as it is written, Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak. And if it may be so, let him desire this, not to be obliged to speak and talk and teach. For behold I say to you, beloved, we speak now to you, brethren, to teach you somewhat: how much better were it that we all knew, and none taught another? so should there not be one speaking, another hearing, but all hearing Him alone, to Whom is said, To my hearing Thou shalt give exultation and joy. Whence it was that John too rejoiced, not so much because he was a preacher and a speaker, but because he was a hearer. For he saith, The friend of the bridegroom standeth and heareth him, and rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. Therefore, beloved brethren, I can quickly tell you wherein each one may prove himself, not by never speaking, but by requiring a case where it is his duty to speak; let him be glad to be silent, in will, let him speak to teach, when he must. For when must thou needs speak and teach? When thou

meetest with one ignorant, when thou meetest with one unlearned. If it delight thee always to teach, thou wishest always to have some ignorant one to teach. But if thou wishest well to others, and wishest all to be learned, thou wishest not always to have those whom thou mayest teach, and so the practice or proof of thy teaching will not be in will, but in necessity. Let thy joy be in hearing God, thy duty in thine own speaking, so shalt thou not be a man full of words, lest thou be not guided. Why art thou willing to speak, unwilling to hear? Thou ever goest without, thou declinest to return within. For He that teacheth thee is within; when thou teachest, thou, as it were, goest forth to those who are without. For from within we hear the truth, and we speak it to those who are without, outside our heart. For we are said indeed to have in our heart those of whom we are thinking, but we are said so only because we seem to have a sort of image of them stamped upon us. For, were they altogether within, surely they would know what is in our hearts, and so would have no need for us to speak to them. But if this delight thee, that thou art busy without, take heed lest thou be puffed up without, and be unable to return by the narrow way, and so thy God be unable to say to thee, Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord; but say, because that which thou lovedst was without, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness. For in shewing that it is an evil thing to be cast without, he sheweth also that it is a good thing to enter within. For to the good servant what said He? Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord: but to the wicked servant, Cast him into outer darkness. Let us not then love most what is outward, but what is inward. At what is inward let us rejoice; in what is outward let us act of necessity, not of free will. A man full of words shall not be guided upon the earth.

16. Evil shall hunt the unrighteous man to destruction. Evils come, and he standeth not; therefore said he, they shall hunt him to destruction. For many good men, many righteous men evils have befallen, evils have, as it were, found them. For therefore hath he said, shall hunt them, because every one wisheth to hide himself from evil, but when he is found by evil he is, as it were, made into a prey. But is it only the evil who fly from evils when they are sought by evils? Is it not said to the good also, When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another? Therefore when the evil pursued the good, that is, our martyrs, when they seized them, they hunted them, but not to

destruction. For the flesh was pressed down, the spirit was crowned; the spirit was cast out from the body, yet was nought done to the flesh which might hinder it for the future. Let the flesh be burned, scourged, mangled; is it therefore withdrawn from its Creator, because it is given into the hands of its persecutor? Will not He Who created it from nothing, re-make it better than it was? So then whenever the righteous are taken, the wicked have hunted them, but not to destruction. But they who shall not be guided, and are full of words, evils shall hunt them to destruction. Wherefore? Because in miseries they shall not stand.

17. I know that the Lord will maintain the right of the needy. This needy one is not full of words; for he that is full of words, wisheth to abound, knoweth not to hunger. But they are needy to whom it is said, Knock, and it shall be opened unto you; seek, and ye shall find; ask, and it shall be given unto you. He is needy of whom it is said, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. They groan among the stumbling-blocks of the wicked, they pray to their Head, to be delivered from the wicked man, and set free from the unrighteous man. These then are they whose cause the Lord will not neglect; although now they suffer hardships, their glory shall appear, when their Head appeareth. For to such while placed here it is said, Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. So then we are poor, our life is hid; let us cry to Him that is our Bread. For He is the living Bread, Which came down from heaven; and He Who in the way refresheth us, in our wants will fill us. For now we are refreshed, that we may endure; because needs must we hunger till we be filled. I know that the Lord will maintain the right of the needy. Sure was he that the Lord would maintain the right of the needy and the cause of the poor. He shall shew the unrighteous how He loveth His righteous ones; He shall shew the rich how He loveth His poor ones. By the rich, He meant the proud; by the poor, the humble: by the rich, them who through abundance seek not; by the poor, those who through longing sigh. The Lord will maintain their cause.

18. But the just shall confess to Thy Name. Both when Thou shalt plead their cause, and when Thou shalt maintain their right, they shall confess to Thy Name; nought shall they attribute to their own merits, all they shall attribute to nought save to Thy mercy: But the just shall confess to Thy

Name. And because they shall confess to Thy Name, so that how righteous soever they have been, they claim nothing to themselves as their own, attribute nothing to themselves as their own; what shall be done, that they may direct their heart? For when they turn to themselves, they twist their heart; when they turn to the Lord, they direct their heart. And where will be pleasure, where rest, where joy, where bliss? Will it be in themselves? No; but in that they are light. Now are ye light in the Lord, said he. Therefore see what followeth, see wherewith he concludeth. The upright shall dwell with Thy Countenance. For ill was it with them in their own countenance; well will it be with them with Thy Countenance. For when they loved their own countenance, in the sweat of their countenance did they eat bread. Let them return: then, their sweat being wiped away, their toils finished, their groaning done, Thy Countenance shall come to them with abundance to satisfy them. Nought more shall they seek, for nought better have they; no more shall they abandon Thee, nor be abandoned by Thee. For after His Resurrection, what was said of the Lord? Thou shalt fill me with joy with Thy Countenance. Without His Countenance He would not give us joy. For this do we cleanse our countenance, that we may rejoice in His Countenance. For now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is; for the upright shall dwell with Thy Countenance. Think we, with the Countenance of the Father, and not with that of the Son? or with the Countenance of the Son, and not of the Father? or is the Countenance of Father and Son and Holy Ghost in some sense one? Let us see whether the Son Himself do not promise us His own Countenance, to gladden us therewith. The Lord God hath just inspired us to have the following passage of the Gospel read, that it might bear witness to this Psalm. The Lord Himself saith, He that heareth these commandments of Mine and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will shew him Myself. What sort of reward is this He hath promised, beloved? Did not they already see Him, to whom He promised to shew Himself? Was He not before them? Was not the Face of His flesh close before their eyes? What is it that He willed to shew to them who already saw Him? Forasmuch as they saw Him in such form as the Jews crucified Him in, yet was He God, hidden under that flesh, because men could see the Man, but the God they could not, although in Man; because too, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; He gave the Form of Man both to good and evil, the Form of God He preserved for the pure and good, that we may rejoice in Him, and it may be well with us for ever with His Countenance.

PSALM 141

Sermon to the People.

1. Ye have heard, brethren, our instruction and our request from the mouth of the Apostle, when his Epistle was being read just now. For he saith, Continue in prayer, and watch therein; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak His mystery, that I may make it manifest as I ought to speak. Deign to consider these words mine also. For there are in Holy Scripture deep mysteries, which are for this cause hidden, lest they should be held cheap; for this cause sought, that they may employ us; for this cause opened, that they may feed us. The Psalm which we have just sung is in many parts somewhat obscure. When by the help of the Lord what has been said shall begin to be expounded and explained, ye will see that ye are hearing things which ye knew already. But for this cause are they said in manifold ways, that variety of expression may remove all weariness of the truth.

2. For what will ye hear or learn, brethren, more important or more healthful, than, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Think not that these two commandments are little; On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. Whatsoever then healthfully is either conceived in the mind, or uttered by the mouth, or is carved from any page of holy Writ, hath no end save love. For even evil-livers are enticed to one another by the fellowship of an evil conscience, and are said to love one another, to be unwilling to leave one another, to be won by intercourse among themselves, to long for one another when apart, to rejoice when they meet. This love is of hell. It hath lime, to drag down to the abyss; not wings, to lift aloft to heaven. But what is true love, that it may be separated and distinguished from others which are called love? That which is called the true love of Christians is defined by Paul, and so marked off by its definitions, as to be entirely distinguished from the rest. The end, saith he, of the commandments is love. He might have ended here; for in

other places where he was speaking as unto them that knew, he said no more; Love, saith he, is the fulfilling of the Law; and he said not what law. Therefore did he not say here, because he had said elsewhere. Here therefore, Love is the fulfilling of the Law. Thou askest, perhaps, what love? what sort of love? Thou art told in another place, The end of the commandment is love, out of a pure heart. Now see whether robbers have among themselves love out of a pure heart. This is a pure heart in regard of love, when thou lovest man according to God's will: for thou oughtest to love thyself too in such wise that the rule be not broken, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. For if thou lovest thyself amiss and unprofitably, by loving thy neighbour also in the same way, what dost thou benefit him? But in what way dost thou love thyself amiss? In the way that Scripture hinteth, which flattereth no man, and convinceth thee that thou lovest not thyself, yea rather convinceth thee that thou hatest thyself. He that loveth iniquity, it saith, hateth his own soul. If then thou lovest iniquity, thinkest thou that thou lovest thyself? Thou art mistaken. And if thou love thy neighbour in this way, thou wilt lead him to iniquity, and thy love will be the snare of him thou lovest. Love then is out of a pure heart, in agreement with God's will, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned. This love then thus defined by the Apostle hath two commandments, to love God, and to love our neighbour. In no part of Scripture seek ought else, let none enjoin on you ought else; whatever is hidden in Holy Scripture, this is hidden in it; whatever is plain in Holy Scripture, this is plain in it. If it were no where plain, it would not feed thee; if it were no where hidden, it would not exercise thee. This work crieth in these words out of a pure heart, out of the heart of them that are such as He Who here now prayeth. And who this is I will soon tell you: it is Christ.

3. But the words ye are about to hear are unworthy to be understood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one who understood not would think that it is rash in me to have said, that the speaker in this Psalm was Christ. For how can it rightly be said of our Lord Jesus Christ, of that Lamb without spot, of Him in Whom alone no sin was found, Who alone could most truly say, Behold, the prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in Me, that is, no blame, no fault, Who alone paid that which He seized not, Who alone could offer innocent blood, the only Son of God, Who took flesh, not to decrease

Himself, but to increase us; of such an one, I say, how could this be rightly understood, Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and a door of restraint around my lips; that Thou turn not aside my heart to wicked words, to making excuses in sins? For plainly this is the meaning. ‘Guard Thou, O Lord, my mouth with Thy commandments as with a gate and door, that my heart be not turned aside to wicked words.’ What wicked words? Those which make excuses for sins. Let me not choose to excuse, rather than to accuse, my sins. These words fit not our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. For what sins did He commit, which He ought to have confessed, rather than defended? These are our words: and yet assuredly it is Christ that speaketh. If they be our words, how is it Christ that speaketh? Where is the love whereof I was speaking? Know ye not that it maketh us one in Christ? Love crieth to Christ from us, love crieth from Christ for us. How doth love cry to Christ from us? And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved. How doth love cry from Christ for us? Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? Ye, saith the Apostle, are the Body of Christ, and members. If then He be the Head, we the Body, it is one that speaketh; whether the head speak or the members, it is one Christ that speaketh. And it is the property of the head to speak in the name of the members also. Observe our own habit: first, how none among our members can speak, save the head: then further, how the head in us speaketh in the name of all the members. Some one in some narrow place hath trod on thy foot; thou art treading on me, saith the head: some one hath wounded thy hand; thou hast wounded me, saith the head. The tongue which is in thy head undertaketh to represent all thy members, it speaketh for them all. In the same way then let us hear Christ speaking, but let each hear therein his own voice, adhering as it were in Christ’s Body. For sometimes He will speak words wherein none of us can find himself represented, but which belong to the Head alone: yet doth He not sever Himself from our words, and raise Himself aloft to those which are His own specially; nor doth He not return from His own special ones to ours. For of Him and the Church it is said, And they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore He Himself too saith in the Gospel of this very thing, Now therefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. All this is not new: ye have heard it continually: but it is needful that it be mentioned as occasion serves, first, because the Scriptures themselves which we handle are so interwoven, that many things are repeated in many places; and further, because it is profitable. For the cares of this world produce thorns and choke the seed: it is fitting that that be often brought to our recollection by the Lord, which the world forceth us to forget.

4. Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hear Thou me. This we all can say. This not I alone say: whole Christ saith it. But it is said rather in the name of the Body: for He too, when He was here and bore our flesh, prayed; and when He prayed, drops of blood streamed down from His whole Body. So is it written in the Gospel: Jesus prayed earnestly, and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood. What is this flowing of sweat from His whole Body, but the suffering of martyrs from the whole Church? Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hear Thou me: listen unto the voice of my prayer, while I cry unto Thee. Thou thoughtest the business of crying already finished, when thou saidst, I have cried unto Thee. Thou hast cried; yet think not thyself safe. If tribulation be finished, crying is finished: but if tribulation remain for the Church, for the Body of Christ, even to the end of the world, let it not only say, I have cried unto Thee, but also, Listen unto the voice of my prayer, while I cry unto Thee.

5. Let my prayer be set forth in Thy sight as incense, and the lifting up of my hands an evening sacrifice. That this is wont to be understood of the Head Himself, every Christian acknowledgeth. For when the day was now sinking towards evening, the Lord upon the Cross laid down His life to take it again, did not lose it against His will. Still we too are figured there. For what of Him hung upon the tree, save what He took of us? And how can it be that the Father should leave and abandon His only-begotten Son, especially when He is one God with Him? Yet, fixing our weakness upon the Cross, where, as the Apostle saith, our old man is crucified with Him, He cried out in the voice of that our old man, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? That then is the evening sacrifice, the Passion of the Lord, the Cross of the Lord, the offering of a salutary Victim, the whole burnt-offering acceptable to God. That evening sacrifice produced, in His Resurrection, a morning offering. Prayer then, purely directed from a faithful heart, riseth like incense from a hallowed altar. Nought is more delightful than the odour of the Lord: such odour let all have who believe.

6. Our old man, then, saith the Apostle, is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Therefore in the Psalm, after the words, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? far from my health, immediately is subjoined, the words of my sins. What sins, if thou regard the Head? And yet that the words in the Psalms were His, He Himself testified on the Cross, He said the very words, He uttered the very verse. There is no room left for man’s conjecture; no opportunity for denial to any Christian whatever. What I read in the Psalms, that I hear from the Lord. In the Psalm too I recognise what I read in the Gospel, They pierced My Hands and My Feet, they counted all My Bones: they considered and gazed upon Me: they parted My garments, and cast lots for My vesture. All these things as they were foretold, so did they come to pass; like as we have heard, so have we also seen. Therefore if our Lord Jesus Christ, figuring us in the love of His Body, though He was Himself without sin, yet said, The words of My sins, and said this in the name of His Body, who among His members dareth to say that he hath no sin, save he who dareth to puff himself up under the name of a false righteousness, and to accuse Christ of falsehood? Confess then, O member, that for thee thy Head uttered it. And that we may confess this, do this, not justify ourselves in the sight of Him Who alone is righteous, Who justifieth the ungodly, He hath added at once the words of His Body, Set, O Lord, a watch before my mouth, and a door of restraint around my lips. He said not a barrier of restraint, but a door of restraint. A door is opened as well as shut. If then it be a door, let it be both opened and shut; opened, to confession of sin; closed, to excusing sin. So will it be a door of restraint, not of ruin.

7. For what doth this door of restraint profit us? What doth Christ pray in the name of His Body? That Thou turn not aside My heart to wicked words. What is, My heart? The heart of My Church; the heart, that is, of My Body. Observe those words where this rule is laid down for us: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? yet had no one touched Him. I was hungry, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: and the rest. Then they ask, When saw we Thee hungry or thirsty? He answers, Forasmuch as ye did unto one of the least of Mine, ye did it unto Me. These passages ought not to be strange to Christians, especially since in them are rules established for understanding all other Scriptures too, and either they will not be

disturbed, or, if they are, will soon be set right. Just as then in that passage the righteous are to say, Lord, wherefore hast Thou said, I was hungry, and ye gave Me to eat? when saw we Thee hungry? and He is to answer, Forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me; so in this passage too let us speak to Christ inwardly, in our inner man, for there He deigneth to dwell by faith. For He is not far from us, and so not such that we can speak to Him; since He Himself hath said, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Let us then too speak to Him, since He hath given us His Voice in this Psalm. For that is His Voice, as none denieth, The lifting up of My Hands is an evening sacrifice. So thou go then and say, Set, O Lord, a watch upon my mouth, and a door of restraint around my lips, that Thou turn not aside my heart to wicked words, to making excuses in sins. Wherefore prayest Thou thus, Lord? What sins of Thine canst Thou make excuses for? He answereth, When one of My members thus prayeth, I pray thus: just as in the other place He answered, Forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me.

8. But when thine heart hath not been turned aside, O member of Christ, when thy heart hath not been turned aside to wicked words, to making excuses in sins, with men that work in iniquity, thou shalt also not unite with their elect. For this followeth, And I will not unite with their elect. Who are their elect? Those who justify themselves. Who are their elect? Those who trust in themselves that they are righteous, and despise others, as the Pharisee said in the temple, Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are. Who are their elect? This Man, if He were a prophet, would know what manner of woman this is that touched His feet. Here thou recognisest the words of that other Pharisee, who invited our Lord to his house; when the woman of that city, who was a sinner, came and approached His Feet. She, the unchaste one, who once went unabashed after fornication, but now came yet more unabashed after salvation, forced her way into a strange house. But He Who there sat at meat was not a stranger. She was not a strange woman following any chance guest, but a handmaid her Lord. She drew near to His Feet, because she desired to follow His Footsteps; she washed them with her tears, she wiped them with the hairs of her head. What are the Feet of Christ, save they by whom He hath traversed the

whole world? How beautiful are the feet of them that publish peace, that bring glad tidings of good things! How many then have received the feet of the Lord, so as by receiving a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, to receive a righteous man's reward; and received a prophet in the name of a prophet, so as to receive a prophet's reward! And whosoever, saith He, shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. He then who with such kindness received the Feet of the Lord, what did He expend save the superfluities he had in his house? Rightly, since the hair is as it were a superfluity, did she with it wipe the Lord's Feet. Thy superfluities become necessaries to thee, if thou with them follow the Feet of the Lord. She then desired to be healed, conscious of the greatness of her wound. But surely it was not a great wound, a mean Physician. The Pharisees were loth to be touched by the unclean, they shunned all contact with sinners, and if it happened that they could not avoid their touch, they washed themselves. And almost every hour they washed not only themselves, but also their vessels, their couches, their cups, their platters, as the Lord recordeth in the Gospel. Inasmuch then as the Pharisee knew this woman, and certainly, had she drawn near to his feet, would have repelled her, lest his sanctity should be defiled; for it was in his body, not in his heart; (and because he had it not in his heart, clearly it was but a false sanctity that he had in his body;) forasmuch, I say, as he would himself have repelled her, when the Lord did not so, he thought that He knew not who she was, and said within himself, This man, if He were a prophet, would know what manner of woman this is which hath approached His Feet. He said not, 'would have repelled her,' but, 'would have known who she was;' as though it followed that, if He knew, He would repel. From the fact then that He did not repel her, he felt sure further that He did not know her. But the Lord so had His eyes fixed on that woman, as to have His ears fixed upon the heart of the Pharisee: and so, when He heard his thought, He set before him the parable, which ye know. A certain creditor had two debtors: the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty: and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. I ask of thee, saith He, which of them will love him most? Then answered he, now compelled by truth to give sentence against himself, I suppose, saith he, Lord, that he to whom he forgave most. And He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no kiss, but she hath not ceased to kiss My Feet: thou gavest Me no water to My Feet, she hath washed My Feet with her tears: thou gavest Me no oil, she hath anointed Me with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. Wherefore? Because she confessed, because she wept, because her heart was not turned aside to wicked words, to offering excuses in sins; because she united not herself with their elect; that is, with those that defend themselves.

9. For even this woman herself, if her heart had turned aside to wicked words, would not have lacked wherewith to defend her sins. Do not women daily, her equals in defilement, but not her equals in confession, harlots, adulteresses, doers of shameful deeds, defend their sins? If they have not been seen, they deny them: if they have been caught and convicted, or have done their deeds openly, they defend them. And how easy is their defence, how ready, yet how headlong; how common, yet how blasphemous! Had God not willed it, I had not done it: God willed it: fortune willed it: fate willed it. She saith not, I said, Lord, have mercy upon me; she saith not, like that sinner coming to the feet of her Physician, Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. And from whom do they get this defence, my brethren? not only from the unlearned, but from the learned also. They sit and count the stars, their distances, their orbits, their speed, their positions, their movements: they observe all these, describe them, form conjectures. Men think them learned, and great. All this learning and greatness is defence of sin. Thou wilt be an adulterer, because Venus is in a particular quarter for thee: thou wilt be a murderer, because Mars is. Mars then is a murderer, not thou; Venus is an adulteress, not thou. Beware, lest for both Mars and Venus thou be condemned. For God, Who is to condemn, knoweth that thou art the man, thou that sayest, ‘It is not I,’ to the Judge that knoweth. Further, the very astrologer himself who selleth to thee the very fables that ensnare thee, that thou shouldest not obtain even thy death for nothing;—(for thou buyest death of the astrologer for a price, who hast spurned life from Christ without price;)—the very astrologer, I say, if he see his wife behave herself somewhat wantonly, or pay more than due regard to any strangers, or often to betake herself to the window, doth he not seize her, beat her, administer discipline to her in his own house? Let his wife

reply, ‘If thou canst, beat Venus, not me:’ will not he answer, ‘Fool, that which belongeth to the lord and master is one thing, what is displayed to the purchaser is another thing?’ Who then are their elect? The elect of the evil, the elect of the wicked, with whom we must not unite, that is, with whom we must have no dealings. But who are they? They that think themselves righteous, and despise others as sinners, as were the Pharisees; or who, because their sins are manifest, being either detected, or done publicly, defend and maintain them, that nothing may be laid to their charge, and that men may judge that they have done no evil, but that God has done it all, because He has either, as they say, created man so, or so ordered the stars, or because He neglects the affairs of men. These are the defences of the elect of this world. But let the members of Christ, the Body of Christ, say, let Christ say in the name of His Body, Turn not Thou aside, My Heart, to wicked words, to offering excuses in sins, with men that work iniquity, and I will not unite with their elect.

10. Ye know, my brethren, what I must not pass by, that among the Manichees certain seeming righteous ones, more exalted than the rest, who have reached as it were the highest step of righteousness, are called ‘elect.’ Let those who know this, recall it; those who knew it not, hear it. Elect indeed of God are all the saints, and this we have in the Scriptures: but they have usurped this name to themselves, and applied it to themselves, so to speak, in a more familiar manner, as though they were now called in some special sense, ‘elect.’ Who are these ‘elect?’ Men, to whom if you say, ‘Thou hast sinned,’ immediately bring forward that defence of theirs, an impious one, worse and more blasphemous than all others, ‘It is not I that have sinned, but the race of darkness.’ What is this race of darkness? That which waged war with God. And doth it sin, when thou sinnest? It doth, saith he, because I am mixed with it. Well then, what did God, Who mixed thee with it, fear? For they say, that that race of darkness rebelled against God, before the world was made: and He, to guard against His dominions being laid waste by the invasion of an enemy, sent hither His members, His substance, that which He Himself is; gold, if He be gold; light, if He be light; whatever it be, He sent it, and mixed it with the vitals of the race of darkness, and whatever sins we are said to commit, that race committeth. They seem indeed to excuse themselves from sin, but they do not excuse

their God from the charge of fear, nor the very substance of their God from the charge of being corruptible. For if God is incorruptible, incommutable, incapable of pollution or stain, impenetrable, what could that race have done to Him? It might have made what onset it would; yet how could it frighten One Who was impenetrable, inviolable, incapable of pollution, or change, or corruption? If God then be such, He is cruel, for sending you hither without cause, seeing that nothing could harm Him. Wherefore sent He you? Behold, the race of darkness could not harm Him; but He hath grievously harmed you, and He hath been more your enemy than it, though it too could harm you. It was possible for you to be oppressed, to be led captive, to be defiled, to be corrupted; so therefore could He. For a fragment, so to speak, and portion ever so small of His Nature, convicteth the whole mass. Such as is that which He hath sent hither, such is also That Which remained there. This they themselves say; themselves confess that they are two substances, one on this side, the other on that. This their books contain; if they deny it, they are read and convicted.

11. What then? To say no more on this one subject, I will not mention worse things, things yet more wicked: in this one argument, wherein they make war, see how they are conquered, and when they say that the race of darkness wages war against God, how they are caught in the battle of their own words. For nought have they to say, nothing to which to betake themselves. But thou wishest, O wicked one, O false elect, to defend thy sin, that when thou hast done any evil, thou be not thought to have done it: thou seekest on whom to cast back thy sin, and thou flingest it back upon the race of darkness. But consider God, whether thou art not flinging it back upon Him. For if that race of darkness, which thou imaginest, could speak, it would say to thee, Why dost thou accuse me? Had I the power to do ought to thy God, or had I not? If I could, I am stronger than He; if not, why did He fear me? if He feared me not, why did He send thee hither to suffer so much, seeing thou art a Member of Him, seeing thou art His own Substance? If He feared not, He envied: if He did it not through fear, He did it through cruelty. How unjust then is He, Who could receive no hurt, yet caused that His members should thus receive hurt here! Or could He be hurt? Then is He not incorruptible. When then thou wishest to defend thyself from thy sin, thou canst not praise God. Thou wouldest not fail in

the praise of God, unless thou wert puffed up in thine own. Change, and blame thyself; thou shalt then praise God. Come back to the words of the Psalms which ye curse; say, I said, Lord, have mercy upon me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee. I said, I have sinned: not fortune, not fate, not the race of darkness. If then thou hast sinned, see how enlarged is the praise of God, wherein thou wast straitened, while thou wouldest defend thyself. Better for thee to be straitened in thine own sins, and enlarged in His praise. Now then when thou hast confessed thy sin, see how God is praised thereby; for He is both just, in punishing thee while thou didst persevere; and merciful, in freeing thee now thou dost confess. Do not thou, therefore, he saith, turn aside my heart to wicked words, to making excuses in sins, so as to say that the race of darkness hath done what I have done.

12. With men that work wickedness. What wickedness? Let me mention some sinful wickedness of theirs. Let me tell you one open sinful wickedness, which they acknowledge. They say, it is better for a man to be an usurer than a husbandman. Thou askest the reason, and they assign one. See whether their reason ought not to be called madness: for they say, ‘He that employs his money in usury, injureth not the cross of light:’ (this many understand not, but I will explain:) ‘but he that is an husbandman, much injureth the cross of light.’ Thou askest, ‘What cross of light?’ Those members, he saith, of God, which were taken captive in that battle, are mixed with the universe, and are in trees, in herbs, in apples, in fruits. He vexeth the members of Christ, who cleanseth the earth with a furrow: he vexeth the members of Christ, who pulleth grass from the earth: he vexeth the members of Christ, who plucketh an apple from a tree. To avoid committing their imaginary murders in the farm, he committeth real murders in usury. He dealeth no bread to the needy. See whether there can be greater unrighteousness than this righteousness. He dealeth not bread to the hungry. Thou askest, wherefore? Lest the beggar receive the life which is in the bread, which they call a member of God, the substance of God, and bind it in flesh. What then do ye? why do ye eat? Have ye not flesh? Yes; but we, they say, forasmuch as we are enlightened by faith in Manes, by our prayers and our Psalms, forasmuch as we are elect, we cleanse thereby that bread, and transmit it into the treasure-house of the heavens. Such are the elect, that they are not to be saved by God, but saviours of God. And this is

Christ, they say, crucified in the whole universe. I received in the Gospel Christ a Saviour, but ye are in your books the saviours of Christ. Plainly ye are blasphemers of Christ, and therefore not to be saved by Christ. Therefore lest a crumb be given to the hungry, and in the crumb a member of Christ suffer, is the hungry to die of hunger? False mercy to a crumb causeth true murder of a man. But who are their elect? Turn not thou aside, my heart, to wicked words, and I will not unite with their elect.

13. The righteous One shall amend me in mercy, and convict me. Behold the sinner confessing. He desireth to be amended in mercy, rather than praised deceitfully. The righteous One shall amend me in mercy, and convict me, if He is just, if He is merciful, when He seeth me sinning. This verily certain members of Christ say, of certain members of Christ they say it, in one body they say it. The Lord deigneth to speak in the character of an amender, yet despiseth not the character of him that is amended or to be amended. For all His members are in Him, and He saith, the righteous One shall amend me. What righteous One shall amend thee? The Head amendeth all the members. The righteous One shall amend me in mercy, and shall convict me. Shall convict me, but in mercy: shall convict, yet hateth not: yea, shall all the more convict, because He hateth not. And why doth he therefore give thanks? Because, rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. The righteous One shall amend me. Because He persecuteth thee? God forbid. He requireth rather amending himself, who amendeth in hate. Wherefore then doth He amend? In mercy. And shall convict me. Wherein? In mercy. For the oil of a sinner shall not enrich my head. My head shall not grow by flattery. Undue praise is flattery: undue praise of a flatterer is the oil of a sinner. Therefore men too, when they have mocked any one with false praise, say, ‘I have anointed his head.’ Love then to be convicted by the righteous One in mercy; love not to be praised by a sinner in mockery. Have oil in yourselves, and ye shall not seek the oil of a sinner. For the wise virgins in the parable carried oil with them: the wise virgins carried oil with them, that is, their conscience bore them witness. Oil is glory, it glittereth, it shineth on the surface: but the oil should be good and true, that there it may be within, in their vessels. Hear what in their vessels meaneth: but let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have glory in himself alone, and

not in another. What is, in their vessels? Hear the Apostle himself; For this is our glory, the testimony of our conscience.

14. Lastly, since thou art in the Body of Christ, and yet bearest a kind of mortality, be thou just to thyself, be thou just against thyself. Thou art a sinner: inflict punishment upon thyself: return to thy conscience, crucify thyself; for so dost thou offer a sacrifice to God: for Thou desirest not sacrifice, saith the sinner, else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt-offerings. What then? doth He accept no sacrifice? The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. Humble thy heart, bruise thy heart, crucify thy heart, so shalt thou amend thyself in mercy. Thou hatest not thyself, when thou art fierce against thyself. Thou wilt be, in that part of thee that amendeth, righteous, though in that which is to be amended, thou art yet a sinner. For so far as thou displeasest thyself, thou art unrighteous; but so far as that in thee displeaseth thee which is unrighteous, thou art righteous. Wilt thou see how righteous thou art? That in thee displeaseth thee, which also displeaseth God: now thou hast joined thyself to the will of God, and thou hatest in thyself not what He made, but what He hateth. Insomuch as thou hatest in thyself that which thou hast made, which He too hateth Who made it not, and beginnest to be strict against thyself, He will be merciful: He will spare, because thou hast not spared. In proportion then as thine eyes agree with His, and thou delightest with Him in His law, and accusest that in thyself which His law accuseth, and because that in thee displeaseth thee, which displeaseth also the Eye of God, see how righteous thou art. In proportion as thou hast fallen, hast done those things which displease God, and by a certain frailty of human weakness art prone to these things, and as yet bearest about the infirmity of the flesh, and groanest in consciousness of a struggle, so far thou art unrighteous, and a sinner.

15. How, thou wilt say, am I in one way righteous, in another a sinner? What is this thou sayest? We are at fault: we seem to be speaking contraries, unless the authority of an Apostle come to our aid. Hear it from the Apostle, lest, understanding amiss, thou blame me: for I delight, saith he, in the law of God according to the inner man. Behold a righteous man. Is he not just who delighteth in the law of God? Whence then is he a sinner? But I see

another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity unto the law of sin. As yet I wage war against myself; not yet am I entirely renewed after the image of my Maker: I begin to be re-hewn, and so far as I am being re-fashioned, that displeaseth me which is misshapen. So long then as I am thus, what hope I? Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. The grace of God, which hath already begun to re-hew thee; the grace of God, which infuseth sweetness, so that now in the inner man thou delightest in the law of God. By the same will all the rest be healed whereby this too has been healed. Groan still, being wounded, scourge thyself, displease thyself.

16. So fight I, saith he, not as one that beateth the air; but I punish my body, and bring it into slavery, lest haply while preaching to others, I myself be found a castaway. Doth he who punisheth his body, hate his body? If a man punish his slave, doth he hate his slave? If a man scourge his son, doth he hate his son? And, to mention somewhat yet more closely connected, thy flesh is in a sort thy wife. This the Apostle himself saith, No man ever hated his own flesh, but loveth and cherisheth it, as the Lord the Church. Verily thy flesh is in a sort thy wife, and no one hateth his own flesh. Yet what saith he in another place? The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. It lusteth against thee, as though thy wife did so: love, and punish it, till by one reformation there be brought about one agreement. When will this be? When now thou criest out, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Will then this body be severed from thee, and thou then be safe? What then meaneth, We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body? It is being renewed then from mortality to immortality, and then it resisteth no longer, for no longer is their mortality to resist. Wherefore punish thy body: tame it now, that then thou mayest receive it back: now let it fail, that then it may suffice. For in this life it cannot be renewed so long as it weareth this mortality. Let it not set thee aside, let it not burst thee from it: bear it, discipline it, punish it; in the end it shall be renewed. And forasmuch as no one ever yet hated his own flesh, the flesh too shall rise again. But how? Am I then too to struggle? This corruptible, saith he, must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

17. When then it is said, He shall amend me and correct me, whether it be a brother, or a connexion, or a neighbour, or thine own self, in mercy oughtest thou to be convicted and amended. But let not the oil of a sinner fatten my head. Thou sayest to me, What am I doing? I am beset with flatterers; they cease not to besiege me; they praise in me what I would not, that praise in me what I hold in little esteem; what I hold dear they blame in me; flatterers, treacherous, deceivers. For instance, ‘Gaiuseius is a great man, great, learned, wise; but why is he a Christian? For great is his learning, great his reading, great his wisdom.’ If great is his wisdom, approve of his being a Christian; if great his learning, learnedly hath he chosen. In fine, what thou revilest, that pleaseth him whom thou praisest. But what? That praise sweeteneth not: it is the oil of a sinner. Yet ceaseth he not to speak so. Let him not therewith fatten thy head; that is, rejoice not in such things; agree not to such things; consent not to such things; rejoice not in such things; and then, if he have applied to thee the oil of flattery, yet hath thy head remained as it was, it has not been puffed up, it hath not swollen. For if it hath been puffed up and swollen, it increaseth in weight, and hurleth thee headlong. But let not the oil of a sinner fatten my head.

18. For still shall My word be wellpleasing to them. Wait awhile: now they revile Me, saith Christ. In the early times of the Christians, the Christians were blamed on all sides. Wait as yet; and My word shall be wellpleasing to them. The time shall come when they shall conquer thousands of men, who shall beat their breasts, and say, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Even now, how many remain who blush to beat their breasts? Let them then blame us: let us bear it. Let them blame; let them hate, accuse, detract; still shall My word be wellpleasing to them; the time shall come when My word shall please them. For they shall lift themselves up as though righteous in their own strength, they shall be conquered in the strife; because they have lifted themselves up proudly, they shall be dashed down, they shall be dragged by their sins, they shall see that they are unrighteous; then shall be fulfilled what was spoken by the Prophets, judgment shall begin to be feared, the eye of the soul shall turn itself to consciousness of sins, and those words that please it, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. O wordy defence of iniquity! Verily now whole nations say this, and the thunder of nations beating their breasts ceaseth not. Rightly do the

clouds thunder, wherein now God dwelleth. Where is now that wordiness, where that boasting, ‘I am righteous; nought of ill have I done?’ Verily, when thou hast contemplated in Holy Scripture the law of righteousness, how far soever thou hast advanced, thou shalt find thyself a sinner. Thou hast advanced; now thou worshippest one God: it is well: now thou goest not a whoring from Him to idols, to astrologers, fortune-tellers, diviners, augurs, evil doers; for that is committing fornication against the Lord thy God; now art thou included in some number of the members of Christ. Now begin to see also the common sins of human society. Thou murderest none; thou committest not adultery with another’s wife; thou wrongest not thy wife by going to another; thou pollutest not thyself by any grievous defilement; thou hast kept thy hands from theft, thy tongue from perjury, thy heart from coveting thy neighbour’s goods; now thou art righteous. Consider what remains: be not yet proud. Dost thou never sin in thy tongue? dost thou not fall into harsh words? But what great matter is this? What great matter? Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Now trembleth all that pride. Supposing now that he committeth no great thing, which may seem by some impiety to blaspheme God; that he hasteth not to injure any; doth not to another what he would not should be done to him; what of the tongue? who tameth that? But supposing thou hast bridled even it; (though who is so good as entirely to achieve this?) supposing thou hast bridled even it, what doest thou with thy thoughts? what doest thou with the tumult and crowd of rebellious desires? dost thou keep from giving thy members to them? I believe and see that thou dost: but still thy thoughts sometimes bend thee and carry thee away, often even when thy knees are fixed in prayer. Thou prostratest thy body, bowest down thy neck, confessest thy sins, worshippest God; I see where thy body is prostrate, I ask whither thy mind flitteth. I see thy members prostrate; let us see whether conscience standeth still; let us see whether it is fixed on Him Whom it worshippeth; whether it be not often caught by thoughts, as by some tide of the sea, and borne by the storm to one thing and another. If thou wert now speaking with me, and suddenly wert to turn away to thy servant, and leave me, I say not when thou wast asking somewhat of me, but even when thou wast conversing with me on equal terms, should I not think that a wrong was done me? That is what thou doest daily to God. What sort of man am I now speaking of, brethren? I speak of him who worshippeth God alone, who confesseth Christ, who knoweth the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost to be one God; who committeth not fornication against Him; who worshippeth not devils; who seeketh him not aid from the devil; who holdeth the Catholic Church; whom no one complaineth of as cheating; under whose oppression no weak neighbour groaneth; who assaileth not another’s wife; who is content with his own, or even without his own, in such wise as is lawful, and as Apostolical discipline permitteth, with consent of both, or when she is not yet married. Even he who is such as this, is yet overtaken in such things as I have mentioned.

19. So then the time has come which was spoken of. Yet shall My word be wellpleasing to them, whether it be that which He taught, or that whereby He intercedeth for us. For all these daily sins then what is our hope, save to say with humble heart in the Lord’s Prayer, while we defend not our sins, but confess them, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and to have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, that He may be the propitiation for our sins? Now let the proud speak: they are overpowered by numbers, by whole nations, by the whole world, from the rising to the setting of the sun, praising the Name of the Lord. What do a few maintaining the contrary? They are the judges of the wicked. What is that to thee? See what followeth: their judges have been swallowed up beside the Rock. What is, swallowed up beside the Rock? That Rock was Christ, They have been swallowed up beside the Rock. Beside, that is, compared, as judges, as mighty, powerful, learned: they are called their judges, as judging about morals, and laying down their opinions. This Aristotle said. Set him beside the Rock, and he is swallowed up. Who is Aristotle? let him hear, ‘Christ hath said,’ and he trembleth among the dead. This Pythagoras said, that Plato said. Set them beside the Rock, compare their authority to the authority of the Gospel, compare the proud to the Crucified. Say we to them, ‘Ye have written your words in the hearts of the proud; He hath planted His Cross in the hearts of kings. Finally, He died, and rose again; ye are dead, and I will not ask how ye rise again. So their judges have been swallowed up beside that Rock. So long do their words seem somewhat, till they are compared with the Rock. Therefore if any of them be found to have said what Christ too hath said, we congratulate him,

but we follow him not. But he came before Christ. If any man speak what is true, is he therefore before the Truth itself? Regard Christ, O man, not when He came to thee, but when He made thee. The sick man too might say, ‘But I took to my bed before the physician came to me.’ Why, for that very reason has He come last, because thou first has sickened.

20. See then the language of the Psalm. Yet shall My Word be well pleasing to them. But there shall be many who speak against it. Their judges have been swallowed up beside the Rock. What then will happen? They shall hear My Words, for they have prevailed. My Words have prevailed over their words. They have spoken clever things, I true things. To praise one who talketh well is one thing, to praise One who speaketh truth is another. They shall hear My Words, for they have prevailed. How have they prevailed? Who of them has been taken offering sacrifice, when such things were forbidden by the law, and has not denied it? Who of them has been taken worshipping an idol, and has not exclaimed, ‘I did it not,’ and feared lest he should be convicted? Such servants hath the devil. But how have the Words of the Lord prevailed? Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Fear not those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul; but fear Him, Who can cast both body and soul into hell fire. He gave them fear, He suggested hope, He kindled love. ‘Fear not death,’ He saith. Do ye fear death? I die first. Fear ye, lest a hair of your head perish? I first rise again in the flesh uninjured. Rightly have ye heard His Words, for they have prevailed. They spake, and were slain; they fell, and yet stood. And what was the result of so many deaths of martyrs, save that those words prevailed, and the earth being, so to speak, watered by the blood of Christ’s witnesses, the cross of the Church shot up every where? They shall hear, saith He, My Words, for they have prevailed. How have they prevailed? We have said already, when they were preached by men who feared not. Feared not what? Neither banishment, nor losses, nor death, nor crucifixion: for it was not death alone that they did not fear; but even crucifixion, a death than which none was thought more accursed. It the Lord endured, that His disciples might not only not fear death, but not even that kind of death. When then these things are said by men that fear not, they have prevailed.

21. What then have all those deaths of the martyrs accomplished? Listen: As the fatness of the earth is spread over the earth, our bones have been scattered beside the pit. Beside the pit have been scattered the bones of the martyrs, that is, the bodies of the witnesses of Christ. The martyrs were slain, and they who slew them seemed to prevail. They prevailed by persecution, that the words of Christ might prevail by preaching. And what was the result of the deaths of the saints? As the fatness of the earth is spread over the earth, our bones have been scattered beside the pit. What meaneth, the fatness of the earth is spread over the earth? We know that every thing that is refuse is the fatness of the earth. The things which are, as it were, contemptible to men, enrich the earth. For it is said also in a certain Psalm, that the dead bodies of the saints were cast out, and there was none to bury them. But all these dead bodies became the fatness of the earth. Just as the earth receives a sort of fatness from things contemptible and refuse, so from that which this world despised, the earth received fatness, so that from it the crop of the Church should sprout more plentifully. Now ye know, brethren, that the contemptible things of this earth, wherewith the soil is enriched, which I am unwilling to name, nor is it fitting to speak of them, are a kind of nourishment of the earth, and a sort of fatness: they are, as it were, vile, and are thrown away. But what hath He done, to use now His own words? He hath lifted up the needy from the earth, and raised the poor from the dunghill, to set him with the princes, the princes of His people. For he was laid upon the earth, as a sort of fatness of the earth, he was scattered over the earth; so lay Lazarus full of sores, yet was he raised by angels into Abraham’s bosom. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. As it is contemptible to the world, so is it precious to the husbandman. For he knoweth the use thereof, and its rich juice; he knoweth what he desireth, what he seeketh, whence the fertile crop ariseth; but this world despiseth it. Know ye not that God hath chosen the contemptible things of the world, and those which are not, like as those which are, that the things which are may be brought to nought? From the dunghill was Peter lifted up, and Paul; when they were put to death, they were despised: now, the earth having been enriched by them, and the cross of the Church springing up, behold, all that is noble and chief in the world, even the emperor himself, cometh to Rome, and whither does he hasten? to the temple of the emperor, or the memorial of the fisherman? For, as the

fatness of the earth is spread over the earth, our bones have been scattered beside the pit.

22. For unto Thee, Lord, are mine eyes; in Thee have I hoped, take not Thou away my life. For they were tortured in persecutions, and many failed. And because it was of the captivity of persecution that he said, As the fatness of the earth is spread over the earth, our bones have been scattered beside the pit, it occurreth to him that many have failed, many have been in hazard, and as it were in the midst of the tribulation of persecution is sent forth the voice of one praying; For unto Thee, Lord, are mine eyes: I care not what they threaten who stand around, unto Thee, Lord, are mine eyes. More do I fix mine eye on Thy promises than on their threats. I know what Thou hast suffered for me, what Thou hast promised me. To Thee, Lord, are mine eyes: in Thee have I hoped, take not away my life.

23. Keep me from the trap which they have laid for me. What was the trap? ‘If thou consentest, I spare thee.’ In the trap was set the bait of the present life; if the bird love this bait, it falleth into the trap: but if the bird be able to say, ‘The day of man have I not desired: Thou knowest:’ his eyes shall not be withdrawn from God, and He shall pluck his feet out of the net. Keep me from the trap which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them which work iniquity. Two things he hath mentioned to be distinguished the one from the other: the trap he said was set by persecutors; the stumbling-blocks came from those who have consented and apostatised: and from both he desires to be guarded. On the one side they threaten and rage, on the other consent and fall: I fear lest the one be such, that I fear him; the other such, that I imitate him. ‘This I do to thee, if thou consent not.’ Keep me from the trap which they have laid for me. ‘Behold, thy brother hath already consented.’ And from the stumbling-blocks of them which work iniquity.

24. Sinners shall fall into his nets. What then, brethren, is, sinners shall fall into his nets? Not all sinners: certain sinners, who are so great sinners, as to love this life to such a degree as to prefer it to everlasting life, shall fall into his trap. But what sayest thou? Shall they that are such, thinkest thou, fall into his nets? what of Thy disciples, O Christ? Behold, when persecution was raging, when they all left Thee alone, and went every one to his own:

(this Thou didst foretell, because Thou didst foresee: for not because Thou didst announce it beforehand, didst Thou therefore do it, or in any way deny Thyself:) but, lo! they who were closest to Thee, in Thy trial and persecution, when Thine enemies demanded Thee to be crucified, abandoned Thee. And that one bold one, who had promised Thee that he would go with Thee even unto death, heard from the Physician what was being done in him, the sick man. For being in a fever, he had said he was whole; but the Lord felt the pulse of his heart. Then came the trial; then came the test; then came the accusation; and now, questioned not by some great power, but by a humble slave, and that a woman, questioned by a handmaid, he yielded; he denied thrice. When he had once denied and was reminded, he denied a second time. When he had twice denied and was reminded, he denied a third time. This had the Lord foretold, not fore-ordered, not compelled. Or, if Peter be thought to have done rightly, because the Lord foretold it, Judas also did rightly, who betrayed Him, for this also the Lord had foretold. God forbid, my brethren. These are the words of those elect who defend their own sins also, rather than confess them. Let us rather consider Peter himself. If he sinned not, why wept he? Let us ask none concerning Peter, save the tears of Peter: more faithful witness concerning him we do not find. He wept bitterly, it saith. Not yet was he fitted to suffer. To him was said, Thou shalt follow Me afterwards. Hereafter he was to be firm, having been strengthened by the Lord’s Resurrection.

25. Not yet then was it time that those bones should be scattered beside the pit. For see how many failed, even to those who first hung on His mouth; even they failed. Wherefore? I am alone, until I pass over: for this followeth in the Psalm. Above he hath said, Keep me, O Lord, from the trap which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them who work iniquity. From the trap, and from the stumbling-blocks, from those who frighten, and from those who have fallen. But because, at His passion, even those first ones, who were destined to be leaders of the Church and pillars of the earth, failed; not yet was accomplished what He saith in another Psalm, I have strengthened the pillars thereof. What saith He? I am alone, until I pass over. This is said in the person of the Head, I am alone, until I pass over. What is, alone? In Thy Passion Thou alone sufferest, Thou alone

art slain by Thine enemies. I am alone, until I pass over. What is, until I pass over? The Evangelist saith, When the hour was come that Jesus should pass over from this world unto the Father. What then is, until I pass over, save, from this world unto the Father? For then have I strengthened the pillars thereof, that is, the pillars of the world, when in My Resurrection they have clearly learnt that death is not an object of fear. Until then I pass over, I am alone: when I have passed over, I shall be multiplied; many shall imitate Me, many shall suffer for My Name. One am I until I pass over; many shall be one in Me when I have passed over. I am alone, until I pass over. Hear farther a mystery in this word. According to the Greek method of speech, Pascha seemeth to mean Passion; but, according to the Hebrew tongue, as they explain who know it, Pascha meaneth Pass-over. For if you ask true Greeks, they say that Pascha is no Greek word. It sounds like πάσχειν, that is, 'to suffer;' but it is not wont to be derived in this way. For Passion in Greek is πάθος, not Pascha. Pascha then, as they say who know, and who have explained to us what to read, meaneth 'Pass-over.' When then the Lord's Passion was about to come, the Evangelist, as though he would use this very word, saith, When the hour was come that Jesus should pass over to the Father. We hear then of Pascha in this verse, I am alone, until I pass over. After Pascha I shall no longer be alone, after passing-over I shall no longer be alone. Many shall imitate Me, many shall follow Me. And if afterward they shall follow, what shall be the case now? I am alone, until I pass over. What is it that the Lord saith in this Psalm, I am alone, until I pass over? What is it that we have expounded? If we have understood it, listen to His own words in the Gospel. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit. This He saith in the same place where He also saith, And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me. Except a corn of wheat, He saith, fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. To that Corn of wheat then, a great crop was due; but wait; let It first die, for, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.

26. Therefore He was alone before He was put to death. Therefore too Peter had not yet sufficient strength: he was to receive strength to follow, he had not strength to go before. For for Christ's sake, that is, for confessing the

Name of Christ, whereby we are Christians, no one died before Christ, lest perchance such thought should occur to you. For many died and are martyrs, many prophets suffered the same things, yet they were not put to death because they foretold Christ, but because they told men of their sins, and freely resisted their iniquities, and so are accounted among martyrs. Rightly; for, though not for confessing the Name of Christ, yet for the truth’s sake were they slain. But so far was any from dying for the Name, that is, for confessing the Name of Christ, before that Corn of wheat fell into the ground, in whose person is said, I am alone, until I pass over, that even John, who was slain just before Him, being given by a wicked king to a dancing woman, was not put to death because he confessed Christ. Of course he might have been put to death for this, and that by many. If for another reason he was put to death by one man, how much more might he have been put to death by those very men, who put Christ to death? For John gave testimony to Christ. They who heard Christ, wished to slay Him; the man who gave testimony to Him they slew not. For had John been attacked for Christ’s sake, he would not have denied Him; for he had great strength, wherefore he was called, the friend of the Bridegroom. Great grace was there in him, great excellence; among them that are born of women hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist. He therefore was attacked, who had not so great strength: Peter was attacked, not John. For Peter received the strength afterwards, but then he was weak. For Christ’s Name he is questioned, who had not strength: he who had strength, suffers not persecution for Christ, lest for the Name of Christ he should precede Christ. He is not slain by the Jews who gave free testimony to Christ, Whom the Jews slew; he is slain by Herod, because he said to him, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother’s wife. For his brother had not died without issue. For the law of truth, for equity, for righteousness’ sake, he did die: therefore is he a saint, therefore a martyr; but yet he died not for that Name whereby we are Christians, wherefore, save that the saying might be fulfilled, I am alone, until I pass over.

PSALM 142

Sermon to the People.

This festival of the martyrs, as it claimeth from you the devotion of a crowded attendance, so doth it also claim a discourse from me, your servant. But ye ought to remember, beloved, how much was said yesterday. For we ought not, because, through the eagerness of your inward appetite, ye were present throughout the whole discourse as though ye had just arrived, therefore to forget our common weakness, first because we ought also to treat with honour excellent words, as it is written, ‘Excellent are the words of the wisdom of the Lord God.’ By us, as by earthen vessels, they are ministered to you: but, if the vessels be earthen, yet is the bread from heaven. The Apostle saith, We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God. But that which is the treasure, the same is also the bread: for, were not the treasure and the bread the same, it would not elsewhere be said of this very treasure, A treasure to be desired resteth in the mouth of the wise, but the foolish man swalloweth it up. Wherefore we exhort you, beloved, that what by hearing, ye store, so to speak, in the stomach of your memory, that by again revolving and meditating ye in a manner ruminate. For this is, A treasure to be desired resteth in the mouth of the wise, but a foolish man swalloweth it up. What he said is in brief, A wise man ruminateth, a fool doth not ruminate. And what is this in plain and downright language? The wise thinketh on that which he heareth, but the fool committeth what he hath heard to oblivion. For neither was it for any other reason that in the Law those animals are called clean which ruminate, those which do not ruminate unclean: for every creature of God is clean. To God the Creator the swine is as clean as the lamb. For He created all things very good; and every creature of God is good, saith the Apostle; and, to the pure all things are pure. Since then by nature both are clean, but in signification the lamb signifieth something clean, the swine something unclean, the lamb signifieth the innocence of wisdom that ruminateth, the swine signifieth the uncleanness of folly that forgetteth. A brief Psalm hath been said for the festival, let us see whether it can also be briefly handled.

2. With my voice have I cried unto the Lord. It were enough to say, with voice: not for nothing perhaps has my been added. For many cry unto the Lord, not with their own voice, but with the voice of their body. Let the inner man then, in whom Christ hath begun to dwell by faith, cry unto the Lord, not with the din of his lips, but with the affection of his heart. God heareth not, where man heareth: unless thou criest with the voice of lungs and side and tongue, man heareth thee not: thy thought is thy cry to the Lord. With my voice have I cried unto the Lord: with my voice have I prayed unto the Lord. What he meant by, I have cried, he explained when he said, I have prayed. For they too who blaspheme, cry unto the Lord. In the former part he set down his crying, in the latter he explained what it was. As though it were demanded, With what cry hast thou cried unto the Lord? Unto the Lord, saith he, I have prayed. My cry is my prayer, not reviling, not murmuring, not blaspheming.

3. I will pour out before Him my prayer. What is, before Him? In His sight. What is, in His sight? Where He seeth. But where doth He not see? For so do we say, where He seeth, as though somewhere He seeth not. But in this assemblage of bodily substances men too see, animals too see: He seeth where man seeth not. For thy thoughts no man seeth, but God seeth. There then pour out thy prayer, where He alone seeth, Who rewardeth. For the Lord Jesus Christ bade thee pray in secret: but if thou knowest what thy closet is, and cleansest it, there thou prayest to God. When ye pray, saith He, be not as the hypocrites, who stand praying in the roads and streets, that they may be seen of men. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and shut the door, and pray to thy Father in secret, and He Who seeth in secret shall reward thee. If men are to reward thee, pour out thy prayer before men: if God is to reward thee, pour out thy prayer before Him; and close the door, lest the tempter enter. For the tempter ceaseth not to knock, that he may break in; if he find it shut, he passeth on. Therefore the Apostle, because it is in our power to shut the door, the door of our hearts, not of our walls, for in it is our closet,—because it is in our power to shut this door, saith, neither give place to the devil. For if he have entered and taken

possession, observe that thou hast either negligently closed, or neglected to close it.

4. But what is to shut the door? This door hath as it were two leaves, desire and fear. Either thou desireth something earthy, and he enter by this; or thou fearest something earthly, and he enters by that. Close then the door of fear and desire against the devil, open it to Christ. How dost thou open these folding doors to Christ? By desiring the kingdom of heaven, by fearing the fire of hell. By desire of this world the devil entereth, by desire of eternal life Christ entereth; by fear of temporal punishment the devil entereth, by fear of everlasting fire Christ entereth. Behold, the martyrs closed the door against the devil, opened it to Christ. Many things this world promised them: they laughed; they closed the leaf of desire against the devil. The world threatened them with wild beasts, with fire, with the cross; they feared not; they closed the leaf of fear against the devil. Let us see whether they opened them to Christ. He that confesseth Me, saith He, before men, him will I confess also before My Father Which is in heaven. They loved then the kingdom of heaven, where Christ will confess them. How shall He confess them? Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. He will confess them when they are set on the right hand. Let us see whether they opened also to Christ the leaf of fear, which they closed to the devil. In one and the same place doth the Lord bid us both close it to the devil and open it to Him. Fear not, saith He, them that kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. He bade the door of fear be closed in the face of the devil. Is there nothing to be feared? Is not the approach of fear opened to Christ, which is shut to the devil? He added at once, as though He would say, Thou hast shut out him, open to me; fear Him, Who hath power to kill both soul and body in hell fire. Now then, if thou hast believed and opened to Christ, and closed it against the devil, Christ is within; there He dwelleth: pour out before Him thy prayer; seek not that He hear thee from afar. For not far off is the wisdom of God, which reacheth from one end to the other, and mightily and sweetly ordereth all things. Within then, in thyself, before Him pour out thy prayer: there are His ears. For neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the desert mountains; for God is the Judge. But, if He be the Judge, take heed what cause thou bearest in thine heart.

5. I will pour out before Him my prayer; my tribulation I will proclaim in His sight. There is a repetition, both in the two preceding sentences, and in these which follow: the sentiments are two, but both twice expressed. One is, with my voice have I cried unto the Lord; with my voice have I prayed unto the Lord; the other is, I will pour out before Him my prayer; my tribulation will I proclaim in His sight. For, in His sight, is the same as before Him; I will proclaim my tribulation, is the same as, I will pour out my prayer. When doest thou this? Being set in the midst of persecution, he saith, while my spirit failed from me. Wherefore hath thy spirit failed, O martyr, set in tribulation? That I may not claim my strength as mine own, that I may know that Another worketh in me the goodness I have. But when they shall deliver you up to judges, (so warned the Lord those whom He wished to make martyrs,) take no thought what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you. Let then thy spirit fail, let the Spirit of God speak. Rightly willed He to make them poor in spirit: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed then are they that are poor in their own spirit, rich in the Spirit of God. For every man who followeth his own spirit is proud. Let him subdue his own spirit, that he may receive the Spirit of God. He clomb to the top, let him settle down in the valley. If he climb to the top, the water flows down from him: if he settle down in the valley, he shall be filled with it, and become that belly whereof is said, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters. Therefore, while my spirit failed from me, in Thy sight did I proclaim my tribulation, being humbled, confessing to Thee with mine own spirit failing, while I am full of Thy Spirit.

6. And men perhaps have heard that my spirit hath failed within me, and have despaired of me, and have said, ‘we have taken him captive, we have overpowered him;’ and Thou hast known my paths. They thought me cast down, Thou didst see me standing upright. They who persecuted me and had seized me, thought my feet entangled, but their feet were entangled, and they fell, but we are risen, and stand upright. For mine eyes are ever unto the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net. I have persevered in walking, for he that shall persevere unto the end, the same shall be saved. They thought me overpowered, but I continued walking. Where did I walk? In paths which they saw not, who thought me prisoner, in the paths of Thy

righteousness, in the paths of Thy commandments. For, Thou knewest my paths; the persecutor knew them not; else would he not envy me in them, but would walk with me in them. What are those paths, but the ways of which in auother place is said, the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish? He said not, ‘He knoweth not the way of the ungodly,’ but ‘the way of the ungodly shall perish.’ For what He knoweth not, perisheth. In many passages of Scripture we find that God’s knowing is preservation, that God’s knowing is protection, His not knowing, damnation. For how will He, Who knoweth all things, say in the end, I know you not? Would they not rejoice at that, and say, ‘We shall not be punished, for the Judge knoweth us not?’ Therein are they punished, if the Judge know them not. What then are called the ways which the Lord knoweth, the same are here called paths, when He saith, Thou knoweth my paths. For every path is a way, but not every way is a path. Why then are those ways called paths, save because they are narrow? Broad is the way of the wicked, narrow the way of the righteous.

7. That which is ‘the way’ is also ‘the ways,’ just as ‘the Church’ is also ‘the Churches,’ the ‘heaven’ also the ‘heavens:’ they are spoken of in the plural, they are spoken of also in the singular. On account of the unity of the Church it is one Church; My dove is one, she is the only one of her mother. On account of the congregation of brethren in various places there are many Churches. The Churches of Judæa which are in Christ rejoiced, saith Paul, because he that persecuted us now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed; and they glorified God in me. Thus he spake of Churches; and of one Church he thus speaketh, Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God. Thus then are both ‘ways’ and ‘way,’ both ‘paths’ and ‘path.’ Wherefore ‘paths,’ and wherefore ‘path?’ As we have given a reason why we have both ‘Church’ and ‘Churches,’ we ought also to give a reason for this. The phrase, ‘paths of God,’ is used, because His commandments are many; and because those many commandments are reduced to one, for Love is the fulfilling of the law; therefore those ways in many commandments are gathered into one, and it is called one, because our way is Love. Let us see whether it be Love. Let us hear the Apostle; and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. What more excellent way speakest thou of, O Apostle? Hear what I say: Though I

speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal: and though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing: and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Therefore called he charity, a more excellent way. Great is that way, brethren, great is the marvel it containeth. This way certainly, because it is more excellent, is also more lofty; for that surpasseth others which is lofty. Nought is more lofty than the way of love, and none walk in that save the lowly. By these paths then he meaneth the commandments of love. Thou, saith he, knewest my paths: Thou knowest that I suffer for Thee, suffer for Love. Thou knowest that Love in me beareth all things; Thou knowest that if I give my body to be burned, I have that without which it profiteth man nought.

8. But who knoweth those ways of a man, brethren, save truly He to Whom it is said, Thou knowest my paths? For in the eyes of men all acts of men are uncertain, in what spirit they are done. And how many wicked men, measuring themselves by themselves, say of us in the Church, that we seek three things, honours, praise, temporal advantages? How many say that I address you in order that ye may applaud and praise me, and that this is my end and aim when I address you? And how do I shew to them that I speak not with such aim? It remains for me to say, Thou knowest my paths. How do they know, what ye yourselves even know not? How do they know, what I myself scarce know? For I judge not mine own self, but He that judgeth me is the Lord. Peter in ignorance presumed I know not what of himself: different was what the Physician saw in his strength. Therefore in reverence and purity let us cry unto the Lord, for truly do we cry it, Thou knowest my paths. But wishest thou that He lead thee by these paths? Be meek, be gentle; be not fierce; be not proud; be not of an up-tossed and uplifted neck, like unto horse and mule, which have no understanding. For when thou art gentle, the Lord will sit upon thee, and guide thee in His ways. For them that are meek, shall He guide in judgment; and such as are gentle, them shall He teach His ways.

9. In this way, wherein I was walking, they hid a trap for me. This way wherein I was walking, is Christ; there have they laid a trap for me, who persecute me in Christ, for Christ's Name's sake. There then have they hid for me a trap. What in me do they hate, what in me do they persecute? That I am a Christian. If this they persecute that I am a Christian, in the way wherein I was walking have they hid a trap for me. So far as in them lay, in the way wherein I was walking they have hid a trap for me: as regards their desire, as regards their endeavour, as regards their wish, in that way they desired that I should find a trap wherein I might be taken. But, the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; and, Thou hast known my paths. This indeed they desired, but Thou allowest them not to make a stumbling-block in Thee, for Thou art my way. For the heretics too wish to hide a stumbling-block for us in the Name of Christ, and are themselves deceived. What they think that they put in the way, they put outside the way, for they themselves are outside the way. They cannot set a trap where themselves are not. But this is said in regard of their desire, in regard of their wish and their thought; for it is expressly said elsewhere, Near the paths they laid stumbling-blocks for me. The expression here, in the way, is said in regard of their desire and wish: the expression there, near the way, that is, near the paths, is said in regard of the truth. For in truth they set them not in the path, they set them not in the way; for the way is Christ; so in truth they set them near the way. Christ suffereth them not to set them in the way, lest we have not where to go; He does suffer them to set them near the way, that we may not turn aside from it. The Pagan thinketh to put a stumbling-block in the way, when he saith to me, 'Thou worshippest a crucified God.' He findeth fault with the Cross of Christ, which he understandeth not. He thinketh that he setteth in Christ, what he setteth near the way. I will not depart from Christ, so shall I not fall from the way into the trap. Let him mock at Christ crucified, let me see the Cross of Christ on the foreheads of kings. What he laugheth at, therein am I saved. Nought is prouder than a sick man, who laugheth at his own medicine. If he laughed not at it, he would take it, and be healed. The Cross is the sign of humility, but he through excess of pride acknowledged not that whereby may be healed the swelling of his soul. But if I acknowledged, I am walking in the way. So far am I from blushing at the Cross, that in no secret place do I keep the Cross of Christ, but bear it on my forehead. Many sacraments we receive, one in

one way another in another: some as ye know we receive with the mouth, some we receive over the whole body. But because the forehead is the seat of the blush of shame, He Who said, Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me before men, of him will I be ashamed before My Father Which is in heaven, set, so to speak, that very ignominy which the Pagans mock at, in the seat of our shame. Thou hearest a man assail a shameless man, and say, ‘He hath no forehead.’ What is, ‘He hath no forehead?’ He hath no shame. Let me not have a bare forehead, let the Cross of my Lord cover it. So in the way wherein I was walking have they hid a trap for me, so far as in them lay: they laid it near the way: but I shall be safe, if I depart not from the way. Remember that thou goest in the midst of snares, saith Scripture. What is, in the midst of snares? In the way of Christ, and snares on this side and on that: snares on the right hand, and snares on the left: snares on the right hand, worldly prosperity; snares on the left hand, worldly adversity: snares on the right hand, promises; snares on the left hand, alarms. Do thou walk in the midst of the snares: depart not from the way: let neither promise ensnare thee, nor alarm drive thee off it. In this way, wherein I was walking, have they hidden a trap for me.

10. I considered upon the right hand, and saw. He considered upon the right hand, and saw: whoso considereth upon the left hand, is blinded. What is to consider on the right hand? Where they will be to whom shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom. For there will be certain on the left to whom shall be said, Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. While then the whole world raged, and threatened in persecutions, when on all sides the attacks and terrors of men increased, he, despising the present, looked to the future, gave heed to the right hand, where he is to be: there he meditated to be, to that he gave heed, and saw, and therefore bore all; but they who persecuted him, saw not. Therefore when he said, I considered upon the right hand, and saw, he goeth on to say, and there was none that knew me. For when thou fearest all things, who knoweth what thou regardest, whether thou directest thine eyes to the right hand or to the left? If, in bearing, thou seekest the praise of men, thou hast regarded the left: if, in bearing, thou seekest the promises of God, thou hast regarded the right hand. Hast thou regarded the right hand, thou shalt see: hast thou regarded the left hand, thou shalt be blinded. But even

when thou seest on the right hand, there will be none to know thee. For who comforteth thee save the Lord, to Whom thou sayest, And Thou hast known my paths? And there was no man that knew me.

11. Flight hath perished from me. He speaketh as though he were hemmed in. Flight hath perished from me. Let the persecutors rejoice over him; he is overpowered, he is taken, he is hemmed in, he is conquered; flight hath perished from him. Flight hath perished from him who fleeth not. But he who fleeth not, suffereth whatever he can for Christ: that is, he fleeth not in soul. For in body it is lawful to flee; it is allowed, it is permitted; for the Lord saith, When they persecute you in one city, flee to another. He then who fleeth not in soul, from him flight hath perished. But it maketh a difference why he fleeth not; whether because he is hemmed in, because he is caught, or because he is brave. For both from him that is caught flight hath perished, and from him that is brave flight hath perished. What flight then is to be avoided? what flight shall we allow to perish from us? That whereof the Lord speaketh in the Gospel, The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, when he seeth the wolf coming, fleeth. When he seeth the ravager, why fleeth he? Because he careth not for the sheep. Such flight had perished from him, whether we understand this saying in the name of the Head Himself, Christ our Lord, Who suffered for us; or whether of His members, our martyrs, who themselves too have suffered for their brethren. Hear what John saith, For as He laid down His life for us, we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren. But when they lay them down, Christ layeth down: for, when they suffer persecution, He crieth out, Why persecutest thou Me? Flight hath perished from me; and there is none to seek my life. Is there then none to seek his life? He sees men desirous to rage against him even to death, desirous to shed his blood; how is there none to seek his life? This also may be taken in two ways. Just as flight perishing may be taken in two ways, because both from him that is caught, and from him that is brave, flight perisheth; so in two ways a man’s life is sought, either by his persecutors or by his lovers. So then there is none to seek my life, he said of them; verily they persecute my life, and they seek not my life. But if they seek my life, they will find it clinging to Thee: and if they know to seek it, they know also to imitate it. For that ye may know that a man’s life is sought by his

persecutors too, therefore is it said elsewhere, Let them be confounded and ashamed that seek my life.

12. Unto thee have I cried, O Lord: I have said, Thou art my hope. When I endured, when I was in tribulation, I said, Thou art my hope. My hope here, therefore I endure. But my portion, not here, but in the land of the living. God giveth a portion in the land of the living; but not something from Himself without Himself. What will He give to one that loveth Him, save Himself?

13. Give heed unto my prayer, for much have I been humbled. Humbled by persecutors, humbled in confession. He humbleth himself out of the sight of man: he is humbled by enemies in their sight. Therefore is he lifted up by Him both visibly and invisibly. Invisibly are the martyrs already lifted up; visibly shall they be lifted up, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption in the resurrection of the dead; when this very part of him, against which alone her persecutors could rage, shall be renewed. Fear not them that kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. And what perisheth? what kill they? Is even this permitted them, that what they kill should perish? It shall not perish. Hear the promise of the Lord Himself: Verily I say unto you, there shall not an hair of your head perish. Why then art thou anxious about the rest of thy members, when thou shalt not lose even a hair?

14. Deliver me from them that persecute me. From whom thinkest thou that he prayeth to be delivered? From men who persecuted him? Is it so? are merely men our enemies? We have other enemies, invisible, who persecute us in another way. Man persecuteth, that he may slay the body; another persecuteth, that he ensnare the soul. And therefore by means of his vessels, (for of him is said, He worketh in the children of disobedience,) by his vessels, that is, men in whom he worketh, he dealeth persecution of the body, that inwardly he may effect the ruin of the soul. For if, though the body fall, the soul stand upright, the snare is broken, and we are delivered. There are then other enemies of ours too, from whom we ought to pray God to deliver us, lest they lead us astray, either by crushing us with troubles of this world, or alluring us by its enticements. Who are these enemies? Let us see whether they are plainly described by any servant of the Lord, by any soldier, now perfected, who hath engaged with them. Hear the Apostle

saying, We wrestle not against flesh and blood: as though he would say, Turn not your hatred against men; think not them your enemies; think not that it is by their hostility you are being bruised; these men whom ye fear are flesh and blood: we wrestle not against flesh and blood. Thus he chose to speak, despising mortal men. Against whom then? Against principalities, saith he, and powers, and the rulers of this world, of this darkness. Thou wast alarmed when thou heardest, the rulers of this world. If they be rulers of this world, art thou to go beyond the world, to escape suffering them? art thou to go beyond the world, to be delivered from them? Thus then understand; the rulers of the world and of this darkness, not the rulers of heaven and earth, for they are the workmanship of God. Heaven and earth are called the world, and wicked men are called the world. Wherefore are they too called the world? Because they love the world: and therefore darkness, because they are wicked. And therefore when now many out of that very number believed, what saith the Apostle? Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Before then ye were light, while ye were darkness, observe what ruler ye had. What ruler have the wicked save the devil, just as the good and faithful have Christ for their ruler. Therefore did he call the devil and his angels the rulers of the world, that is, rulers of the lovers of the world, rulers of sinners, that is, of this darkness: them have we for our enemies, and from them we ought to pray to God to be delivered.

15. Hear both worlds clearly mentioned in one passage in holy Scripture, in the Gospel, the world which God made, and the world which the devil ruleth, that is, the lovers of the world. For God made men, but He made them not lovers of the world. For to love the world is sin, and God made not sin. Hear then, as I began to say, both worlds. He was in the world, it is said. Of whom is it said, He was in the world, save of the Wisdom of God, which is Jesus Christ, of which Wisdom is said, as I mentioned just above, Wisdom reacheth from one end to another, mightily and sweetly doth she order all things? For, She passeth and goeth through all things by reason of Her pureness, and nothing defiled can fall unto Her. So then He was in this world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. Here thou hast heard of two worlds; The world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. It is not the world which was made by Jesus that is ruled

over by those princes and powers of darkness, but the world which knew not Jesus, that is, the lovers of the world, the sinners, the wicked, the proud, the unbelieving. Whence are sinners called the world? Because they love the world, and by loving dwell in the world; just as both the building and its indwellers are called ‘the house.’ ‘A good house,’ generally means ‘a good building;’ but we also say ‘a good house,’ because they are good who dwell therein. Again, ‘beware of that house, it is a bad one;’ this is said in two ways: ‘This is a bad house, beware;’ perhaps because it is ruinous, lest ought fall and crush thee: it is said also in another way, ‘Beware of that bad house, lest thou fall into the snare of the hunters; lest if poor thou be oppressed by a rich man, lest thou be in some way cheated.’ Just as then we say ‘house’ in two senses, so do we say ‘world’ in two senses. But why are not the righteous too, since they too are in the world, called the world? Because the Apostle saith, But though we walk in the flesh, yet we do not war after the flesh: for our conversation is in heaven. The righteous dwelleth here in the flesh, but in heart he is with God. And he is called the world, if there is no ground for saying to him, ‘Lift up your heart;’ but if there be ground for it, then let him dwell aloft: for ye are dead, saith the Apostle, and your life is hid with Christ in God. But they whose life is here, that is, whose longing and love cling to this, here have their use, here are entangled, well are called indwellers of the world. Well too are they who dwell in the world, called the world; just as well are they called the house, who dwell in the house. Two worlds then are there: The world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. Behold the world made by the Lord, behold the world which knew not the Lord. Praise thou the building, and love the Builder; and love not to dwell in the building, but dwell in the Builder.

16. Deliver me from them that persecute me: for they are strengthened over me. Who said, they are strengthened over me? The Body of Christ crieth out; it is the voice of the Church; the members of Christ cry out, ‘Much hath the number of sinners increased.’ Because iniquity hath abounded, the love of many waxeth cold. Deliver me from them that persecute me: for they are strengthened over me.

17. Bring forth my soul out of prison, that it may confess to Thy Name. This prison has been variously understood by former writers. And perhaps it is the prison which is called in the title, the cave. For the title of this Psalm runneth thus: Of understanding to David himself, a prayer when he was in the cave. That which is the cave, the same is also the prison. Two things have we set before us to understand, but when we have understood one, both will be understood. A man's deserts make a prison. For in one dwelling place one man finds a house, another a prison. When men keep others imprisoned, even though they keep them in their own houses, yet are they who are closely guarded in prison; must we say that the others are in prison also? There is but one dwelling place to the one and the other: to the one, liberty makes it a home; to the other, slavery makes it a prison. To some then it has seemed that the cave and prison are this world; and this the Church prayeth, that it may be brought out of prison, that is, from this world, from under the sun, where all is vanity. For it is said, All is vanity, and there is vexation of spirit in every work of a man, which he toileth under the sun. Beyond this world then God promiseth that we shall be in some sort of rest; therefore perhaps do we cry concerning this place, Bring my soul out of prison. Our soul by faith and hope is in Christ; as a little before I said, Your life is hid with Christ in God. But our body is in this prison, in this world. If he had said, 'Bring my body out of prison,' we should be safe in understanding the prison to be the world. But perhaps on account of certain earthly desires, which keep hold on us, against which we struggle and fight, because I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind; rightly do we say, Bring my soul out of this world, that is, out of the toils and troubles of this life. For not the flesh which Thou hast made, but the corruption of the flesh, and its troubles and temptations, are a prison to me.

18. But some have said, that this prison and cave is this body, so that this is the meaning of, Bring my soul out of prison. But this interpretation too is somewhat at fault. For what great thing is it to say, Bring my soul out of prison, bring my soul out of the body? Do not the souls of robbers and wicked men go forth from the body, and go into worse punishment than here they have endured? What great request then is this, Bring my soul out of prison, when, sooner or later, it must needs come forth? Perhaps the

righteous saith, ‘Let me die now; bring forth my soul from this prison of the body.’ If he be too hasty, he hath not love. He ought indeed to long for and desire, as the Apostle saith, having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, which is far better. But where is love? Therefore it followeth, but to abide in the flesh is needful for you. Let God then lead us forth from the body, when He will. Our body too might be said to be a prison, not because that is a prison which God hath made, but because it is under punishment and liable to death. For there are two things to be considered in our body, God’s workmanship, and the punishment it has deserved. All this form, stature, gait, well-ordered members, all the arrangement of the senses, sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, all this framework, and intricacy of workmanship, could not have been made, save by God, Who made all things in heaven and earth, above and below, visible and invisible. What is there in it that is a punishment to us? That the flesh is subject to corruption, that it is frail, that it is mortal, that it is needy; this will not be so in our reward. For the body will not cease to be a body when it rises. But what will not be then? Corruption. For this corruptible shall put on in corruption. If then the flesh be a prison to thee, it is not the body that is thy prison, but the corruption of thy body. For God made thy body good, for He is good: corruption he introduced in His justice, because He is Judge: the one thou hast in the way of goodness, the other in the way of punishment. Perhaps then he meant by, Bring my soul out of prison, bring my soul out of corruption. If thus we understand it, it is no blasphemy, the meaning is consistent.

19. Lastly, brethren, as I think, he meant this; Bring my soul out of prison, bring it out of straitness. For to one who rejoiceth, even a prison is wide; to one in sorrow, a field is strait. Therefore prayeth he to be brought out of straitness. For though in hope he have enlargement, yet in reality at present he is straitened. Listen to the straits of the Apostle: I had no rest in my spirit, saith he, because I found not Titus my brother. In another place: Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? But he who was both weak and burning, was not he under punishment and in prison. But these punishments through love produce a crown. Wherefore he saith again, There remaineth for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall pay me at that day. Hereto pertaineth, Bring my

soul out of prison, that I may confess Thy Name. When now it has been brought forth from corruption, what hath it to confess? There are no sins there, but there are praises. But confession is understood in two senses, of our sins, and of God's praise. Confession of our sins is well known; so well known to all the people, that whenever they hear the name of confession in the Lessons, whether it is said in praise or of sin, their fists fly to their breasts. The name of confession then is well known in regard of sins, let us seek for confession of praise. Where do we find it? Thou hast in Scripture, And thou shalt say in confession, All the works of the Lord are exceeding good. Here then confession is of praise. Elsewhere the Lord Himself saith, I confess to Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth. What did He confess? Could it be sins? So then Christ's confession was praise. Hear further His praise of the Father: Because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Since then after these straitenings of corruption we shall dwell in the house of God, our whole life will be nothing save praise of God. It has often already been set forth to you, that when need departeth, all works of need come to an end, for there we shall have nought to do. I say not day and night, for there is no night there, but all the day, since it is one day, we shall have nought to do there, save to praise Him Whom we love, because then we shall also see Him. Now we long for Him Whom we see not, and praise Him; then, when we see Him Whom we love, how shall we praise Him? There will be praise without end, because there will be love without end. Since then thus we shall be employed there, therefore, bring my soul out of prison, that it may give thanks to Thy Name. For, blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, for they shall be alway praising Thee. Now the prison hindereth, because the corruptible body weigheth down the soul. It is not the body that weigheth down the soul, (for then too we shall have the body,) but the corruptible body. It is not the body then that maketh the prison, but the corruption. Bring my soul out of prison, that it may give thanks to Thy Name. Now the words which follow seem to come from the Head, our Lord Jesus Christ. And they are the same as yesterday's last words. Yesterday's last words, if ye remember, were, I am alone, until I pass over. And here what are the last words? The righteous shall sustain me, until thou recompense me.

PSALM 143

A Sermon to the People.

1. Of the Psalm which we have chanted, I will speak to you, beloved, what the Lord shall give me. Yesterday we treated of a shorter Psalm, but the length of time gave us opportunity for saying much even on few verses: now, since the Psalm is longer, we ought not to delay so long on each several verse, lest perchance the Lord grant us not the power to go through the whole.

2. The title of the Psalm is, To David himself, when his son was pursuing him. We know from the Books of Kings that this happened: that Absalom arose in hostility to his father; that he waged against him not only civil, but even domestic war: that David, not evilly despairing, but reverently humbled, received the discipline at the Lord’s hand, endured the medicine, not returning evil for evil; but had a heart prepared to follow the Lord’s will. Thus praiseworthy was that David: but we must recognise here another David, truly ‘strong in hand,’ which is the explanation of David, even our Lord Jesus Christ. For all those events of past time were figures of things to come; nor needs it long time to commend to you, what ye have often heard, and very well remember. Let us seek then in this Psalm our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, announcing Himself beforehand in His prophecy, and foretelling what should happen at this time by things which were done long ago. For He Himself foretold Himself in the Prophets: for He is the Word of God. Nor did they say ought of this kind, save when filled with the Word of God. They announced then Christ, being filled with Christ, they went before Him about to come, and He deserted not them going before. Let us learn then how Christ too was persecuted by His son: for sons He had of whom He said, The children of the bride fast not while the bridegroom is with them: but when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then shall the children of the bridegroom fast. The sons of the bridegroom then are the Apostles, and the persecutor among these was Judas the devil. In this Psalm then Christ is about to foretel His Passion: let us listen.

3. But we again call your attention, beloved, to this, not as teaching you what ye know not, but reminding you of what ye know, that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of His Body, that He is the one Mediator between God and man, the Man Jesus, born of a Virgin, as it were in solitude, as we have heard in the Revelation. In solitude, as I think, because He alone has been so born. Him did that woman bear, to rule the nations with a rod of iron; and the woman is the ancient city of God, of which is said in the Psalm, Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of God. This city hath its beginning even from Abel, as the evil city hath from Cain. That then is the ancient city of God, ever enduring earth, hoping for heaven, which is also called Jerusalem and Sion. Truly of One born in Sion and yet Founder of Sion itself is said in another Psalm, Sion, My Mother, a man shall say. What man? And a man was born in her, and Himself the Most High hath founded her. In short, in Sion He was made Man, but as Man He was made humble, and He also, the Most High, founded that city in which He was made Man. Therefore was that woman also clothed with the sun, even with the Sun of Righteousness, Whom the wicked know not; who shall say in the end, Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the Light of Righteousness hath not shone unto us, and the Sun of Righteousness was not upon us. There is then a Sun of Righteousness, which shineth not on the wicked. Yet the sun of this world He maketh to rise on the evil and the good. Therefore was she both clothed with the sun, and bore in her womb a male child, being about to bring forth. He it was that both buildeth Sion, and is born in Sion; and that woman, the City of God, was protected by His Light, with Whose Flesh she was pregnant Rightly too had she the moon under her feel, because by virtue she trampled under foot the mortality of flesh which waxeth and waneth.

The Lord Jesus Christ then is both Head and Body; for He willed to speak in us, Who deigned to die for us; He hath made us His members. Sometimes then He speaketh in the person of His members, sometimes in His own person, as our Head. He hath somewhat which He can say without us, we nought which we can say without Him. The Apostle saith, That I may fill up what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ, in my flesh. That I may fill up, he saith, what is lacking of the afflictions, not mine own, but Christ's, in the flesh, no longer Christ's, but mine. Christ, saith he, still suffereth affliction, not in His own Flesh, wherein He hath ascended into heaven, but in my flesh, which yet toileth on earth. Christ, saith he, suffereth affliction in my flesh: for it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me. Did not Christ Himself suffer affliction in His members too, that is, in His faithful ones, Saul upon earth could not persecute Christ seated in heaven. Finally, he openly setteth this forth in a certain place, and saith, As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. He saith not, ‘so also is Christ and His Body,’ but ‘as there is one body and many members, so also is Christ.’ The whole then is Christ. And because the whole is Christ, therefore doth the Head call from heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me. Remember this, and commit to your memory, and keep it entirely fixed there, as children of the Church’s training and of the Catholic Faith, that ye may perceive Christ to be the Head and Body, and the same Christ to be also the Word of God, the Only-begotten, equal to the Father, and so may see how great is the Grace whereby ye pertain to God, that He has willed to be one with us, Who is one with the Father. How, one with the Father? I and the Father are one. How, one with us? He saith not, says the Apostle, Unto seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to Thy Seed, Which is Christ. But some one will say, ‘If Christ be the seed of Abraham, are we so also?’ Remember that Christ is Abraham’s Seed; and accordingly, if we also are the seed of Abraham, we also are Christ. As there is one body and many members, so also is Christ. And, as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Now Christ is the Seed of Abraham; nor can we gainsay the clear words of the Apostle, Thy Seed, which is Christ. See now what he saith to us, If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed. Great then is that mystery, they twain shall be one flesh. Great, saith the Apostle, is this mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. Christ and the Church are two in one flesh. The two ye must refer to the wideness apart of His Majesty from us. For we are not also the Word; we are not also God in the beginning with God; we are not also He by Whom all things were made. He cometh to the Flesh, and there Christ is both Himself and we. Let us not wonder then in the Psalms: for He saith many things in the character of the Head, many in the character of the members, and He so speaketh, as though their whole were one person. Nor wonder thou that there are two in one voice, if there be two in one flesh.

4. Judas is the son of the Bridegroom persecuting the Bridegroom. Did this merely happen then, or was it set forth beforehand as a pattern of what was to come? For the Church was destined to endure many false brethren, so that still and even unto the end that Bridegroom is persecuted by His son. For if an enemy had upbraided me, verily I should have borne it, saith He; and if he who hated me had spoken great things over me, verily I should have hid myself from him. Who is the enemy? who is he that hated me? He who saith, 'Who is Christ? Christ was a man: He neither could live, when He willed to live, and He died,' say they, 'against His will; conquered, crucified, slain.' They are enemies who say such things as this. 'He is an open enemy,' saith Christ; 'he hateth Me; he openly declareth his hostility to Me; him it is easy either to bear or to shun. What do I with Absalom? what do I with Judas? what with false brethren? what with evil sons, who yet are sons, who do not against us blaspheme Christ, but with us worship Him, and in us persecute Him?' Of these He goeth on to speak in the same Psalm. Another it was easy to bear, him who hated me, or else to hide myself from him. For thou hidest thyself from a Pagan, by entering the Church. But when there also thou findest what thou fearest, what good to seek where to hide thyself? Lastly, that very same Apostle, who groaneth in perils among false brethren, saith, without were fightings, within were fears. If then he who hated me had spoken great things over me, verily I should have hid myself from him: but thou, man of one mind—of one mind, he saith, as though one in Christ. The Church then hath what to bear without, what to groan over within: yet it is to consider both those without and those within, enemies; those without more easily to be shunned, those within with more difficulty to be borne.

5. Let then our Lord speak; let Christ with us, whole Christ, speak. Lord, hear my prayer, receive with Thine ears my entreaty. 'Hear' and 'receive with ears' are the same thing. It is repetition, it is confirmation. In Thy truth hear me, in Thy righteousness. Take it not without emphasis when it is said, in Thy righteousness. For it is a commendation of grace, that none of us think his righteousness his own. For this is the righteousness of God, which God hath given thee to possess. For what saith the Apostle of them, who would boast of their own righteousness? I bear them witness, saith he, that they have a zeal of God. Speaking of the Jews, he saith, they have a zeal of

God, but not according to knowledge. What is, not according to knowledge? For what knowledge dost thou commend as useful? Is it that which, when it is alone, puffeth up, which, unless it be accompanied with charity, edifieth not? Verily not this: but the knowledge which is the companion of charity, the mistress of humility. See whether it be this: They have a zeal of God, saith he, but not according to knowledge. Let him expound to us what knowledge he meaneth: they, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. Who then are they who go about to establish their own righteousness? They who impute to themselves whatever they have done well; whatever ill, to God; entirely perversely. Then only will they be right, when they have changed this. Thou art perverse, because thou imputest what thou hast done ill to God, what well to thyself: thou wilt be right, when thou imputest what thou hast done ill to thyself, what well to God. For thou wouldest not from being ungodly live righteously, save by having been justified by Him Who justifieth the ungodly. Therefore he saith, Hear me in Thy truth, in Thy righteousness, not in mine own; that I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of faith. Behold, in Thy righteousness hear me. For when I look upon myself, nought else do I find mine own, save sin.

6. And enter not into judgment with Thy servant. Who are willing to enter into judgment with Him, save they who, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, go about to establish their own? Wherefore have we fasted, and Thou hast not seen; wherefore have we afflicted our souls, and Thou takest no knowledge? As though they would say, ‘We have done what Thou hast commanded, wherefore dost Thou not render to us what Thou hast promised?’ God answereth thee: I will give to thee to receive what I have promised: I have given thee that thou shouldest do that whereby thou mayest receive. Finally, to such proud ones the Prophet speaketh; Wherefore will ye plead with Me? ye have all transgressed against Me, saith the Lord. Why will ye enter into judgment with Me, and recount your own righteousnesses? Recount your righteousnesses; I know your wickednesses. How shall I there approve righteousness, where I shall condemn pride? Rightly saith that humble one in the Body of Christ,

leaning on his Head, for He is meek and lowly in heart, Enter not into judgment with Thy servant. Let us not strive together, I desire not to plead with Thee, so that to set forth my righteousness Thou convict me of mine iniquity: enter not into judgment with Thy servant. Wherefore this? wherefore feareth he? For before Thee every one living shall not be justified. Every one living; living, that is, here, living in the flesh, living in expectation of death; born a man; deriving his life of man; sprung from Adam, a living Adam; every one thus living may perhaps be justified before himself, but not before Thee. How before himself? By pleasing himself, displeasing Thee: but, before Thee every one living shall not be justified. Enter not then into judgment with me, O Lord my God. How straight soever I seem to myself, Thou bringest forth a standard from Thy store-house, Thou fittest me to it, and I am found crooked. Enter not into judgment with Thy servant. Well is it said, with Thy servant. It is unworthy of Thee to enter into judgment with Thy servant, or even with Thy friend; for Thou wouldest not say, I say unto you, My friends, hadst not Thou Thyself made them of servants to become friends. Though Thou callest me friend, I confess myself a servant. I need Thy pity; I return from running from Thee; I seek peace. I am not worthy to be called Thy son. Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight every one living shall not be justified. Judge none blessed before his death; no one living whatever. What of the rams themselves, what of the Apostles themselves, of whose offspring it is said, Bring the young of rams unto the Lord? Of these is Paul, who calleth not himself perfect, not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. Finally, brethren, that ye may perceive it at once, they learnt to pray what we pray: to them was given the pattern of prayer by the heavenly Counsellor. After this manner, saith He, pray ye. And have set down certain things first, He laid down this too to be said by our rams, the leaders of the sheep, the chief members of the Shepherd and Gatherer of the one flock; even they learnt to say, Forgive us our debts, as we too forgive our debtors. They said not, ‘Thanks be to Thee, Who hast forgiven us our debts, as we too forgive our debtors,’ but, ‘Forgive, as we forgive.’ But surely the faithful prayed then, surely the Apostles prayed then, for this Lord’s Prayer was given rather to the faithful. If those debts only were meant which are forgiven by Baptism, it would befit catechumens rather to say, Forgive us our debts. Let the Apostles then say, yea let them say, Forgive us our debts, as we too forgive our debtors. And when it is said to them, ‘Wherefore say ye this? what are your debts?’ let them answer, for in Thy sight every one living shall not be justified.

7. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul: he hath humbled my life on the earth. Here we speak, here our Head speaketh for us: for the enemy hath persecuted my soul. Manifestly both the devil persecuted the Soul of Christ and Judas the Soul of his Master: and now too the same devil remaineth to persecute the Body of Christ, and one Judas succeedeth another. There lacketh not then of whom the Body too may say, For the enemy hath persecuted my soul: he hath humbled my life on the earth. He hath humbled, saith he, my life on the earth. In another place it is said, They bowed down my soul. For what doth each one who persecuteth us endeavour save to make us abandon our heavenly hope, and savour of the earth, yield to our persecutor, and love earthly things? They indeed, as far as in them lies, do this: yet let not this befall us to whom it is said, If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Seek those things which are above, not those which are on earth, for ye are dead. For in God’s sight every one living shall not be justified. They then, either openly raging, or secretly laying snares, endeavour to bring our life to the earth. Against them let us watch; that we may be able to say, Our conversation is in heaven. The enemy, saith he, hath humbled my life upon earth.

8. They have laid me in dark places, as the dead of the world. This ye hear more readily from the Head; this ye perceive more readily in the Head. For He died indeed for us, yet was He not one of the dead of the world. For who are the dead of the world? And how was not He one of the dead of the world? The dead of the world are those who have died of their own desert, receiving the reward of iniquity, deriving death from the sin transmissed to them; according as it is said, For I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin did my mother cherish me in her womb. But He came by a Virgin, taking to Him Flesh pure itself, purifying others. But they who thought Him a sinner, looked on Him as one of the dead of the world. But He, Who said in another Psalm, I paid them the things that I never took, and Who said in the Gospel, Behold, the prince of this world cometh, the captain of death, the

persuader to evil deeds, the executor of punishment, saith, Behold he cometh, and shall find nothing in Me. What is, shall find nothing in Me? No fault, nothing for which I ought to die. But that all, saith He, may know that I do the will of My Father, arise, let us go hence. In dying, saith He, I do the will of My Father, but I am not deserving of death. Nought have I done wherefore I should die, yet is it Mine own doing that I die, that by the death of an innocent One, they may be freed who had wherefore they should die. They set me in dark places, as though in Hades, as though in the tomb, as though in His very Passion, as the dead of the world, even Him they set, Who saith, I am become like one that hath no help, free among the dead. What is, free? Wherefore, free? Because every one that doeth sin is the servant of sin. Finally, He would not free from bonds, were He not free from bonds Himself. He, Himself free, slew death, bound bondage, led captivity captive, and they set Him in dark places as the dead of the world.

9. And My Spirit within me, saith He, suffered weariness. Remember, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Here we see one voice. Do we not see plainly the transition from the Head to the members, from the members to the Head? My Spirit within Me, saith He, hath suffered weariness. Here we recognise, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. But we too were there. For He transfigured in Himself the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto the Body of His glory; and our old man is crucified with Him. My heart in Me is troubled. In Me, He saith, not in others. For they forsook Me, they who had clung to Me left Me, and because they saw Me die, they thought that I was somewhat else, and were beaten by the thief, who believed, when they failed.

10. Then he goes to the members. I have called to mind the days of old. Did He call to mind the days of old, by Whom every day was made? No, but the body speaketh, each one who has been justified by His grace, who dwelleth in Him in love and devout humility, speaketh and saith, I have called to mind the days of old, I have meditated upon all Thy works: plainly because Thou hast made all things good, and nothing would have stood fast, which was not established by Thee. Thy creation is made a spectacle unto me: I have sought in the work the Artificer, in all that is made the Maker. Wherefore this, to what purpose this, save that he might understand, that

whatever there was of good in himself was made by Him; lest, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish his own righteousness, he should not submit himself to the righteousness of God: that those words above, in Thy Truth and in Thy Righteousness, might suit him? In all the works of God then, and in meditation on all the works of God, he introduceth grace, he commendeth grace, he boasteth that he hath found grace, the grace whereby we are saved without price; for without price we are saved. Why boastest thou of thine own righteousness? why liftest thou up thyself, being ignorant of the righteousness of God? Perchance thou gavest somewhat to be saved? What gavest thou to be made a man? Look back then upon the Framer of thy life, the Author of thy substance, of thy righteousness, and of thy salvation: meditate upon the works of His hands, for the righteousness too which is in thee, thou wilt find to pertain to His hand. Hear the Apostle teaching thee this, not of works, he saith, lest any should boast. Have we no good works? Plainly we have: but see what follows; for we are His workmanship, saith he. We are His workmanship: perhaps in thus speaking of workmanship, he meant to mention the nature whereby we are men? Evidently not: he was speaking of works. Not, saith he, of works, lest any should boast. But let us not make conjectures; let the text go on, for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Think not then that thou thyself doest any thing, save in so far as thou art evil. Turn thee from thine own work, to His work Who made thee; He fashioneth thee, and let Him refashion what He had fashioned, and thou hast destroyed. For that thou art, He hath wrought; that thou art good, if good thou art, He worketh. Work out your own salvation, saith the Apostle, with fear and trembling. If we do work out our own salvation, wherefore with fear, wherefore with trembling, when what we work is in our own power? Hear wherefore with fear and trembling: for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of His good pleasure. Therefore with fear and trembling, that it may delight our Maker to work in the lowly valley. For so doth He work, as it were, in that which is cast down, Who judgeth among the nations, and repaireth that which hath fallen. I have meditated on the works of Thine hands. I have seen then and looked into Thy works, that nothing good can there be in us, unless it be wrought by Thee, Who hast made us.

11. And what did I when I saw that every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning? When I saw this, I turned me from the evil work which I had wrought in myself, and I stretched forth my hands unto Thee. I stretched forth, saith he, my hands to Thee: my soul is as a land without water to Thee. Rain upon me, saith he, to bring forth from me good fruit. For the Lord shall give sweetness, that our land may give her fruit. I have stretched forth my hands to Thee; my soul is as a land without water, not to me, but, to Thee. I can thirst for Thee, I cannot water myself. My soul is as a land without water to Thee; for, my soul is athirst for the living God. When shall I come to Him, save when He hath come to me? My soul is athirst for the living God; for, my soul is as a land without water to Thee. The sea aboundeth, floodeth, is full, floweth: but it is bitter. The water is separated, my dry soul hath appeared: water it, for my soul is as a land without water to Thee.

12. Speedily hear me, Lord. For what need of delay to inflame my thirst, when already I thirst so eagerly? Thou didst delay the rain, that I might drink and imbibe, not reject, Thy inflowing. If then Thou didst for this cause delay, now give; for, my soul is as a land without water to Thee. Speedily hear me, O Lord: my spirit hath failed. Let Thy Spirit fill me, for my spirit hath failed me. This is the reason why Thou shouldest speedily hear me, because my spirit hath failed me. I am now become poor in spirit, make Thou me blessed in the kingdom of heaven. For he in whom his own spirit liveth, is proud, is puffed up with his own spirit against God. Let that happen in him to his good which elsewhere is written, Thou shalt take away their spirit, and they shall fail, and be turned to their dust; that they may confess, and say, Remember that we are but dust. But when they have said, Remember that we are but dust, then let them say, my soul is as a land without water to Thee. For what is so much a land without water, as dust? But do Thou speedily hear me, O God, rain on me, strengthen me, that I be not dust which the wind driveth away from the face of the earth. Speedily hear me, O God; my spirit hath failed: let not my need suffer longer delay. Thou hast taken away my spirit, that I might fail, and be turned to dust, and say unto Thee, my soul is as a land without water to Thee: do Thou also what followeth in that Psalm, Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they

shall be created, and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. If any one be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away: old things are passed away in his spirit, they are made new in Thy Spirit.

13. Turn not Thou away Thy Face from me. Thou didst turn it away from me when proud. For once I was full, and in my fulness I was puffed up. Once in my fulness I said, I shall never be moved. I said in my fulness, I shall not be moved, knowing not Thy Righteousness, and establishing mine own; but Thou, Lord, in Thy Will hast afforded strength to my beauty. I said in my fulness, I shall not be moved, but from Thee came whatever fulness I had. And to prove to me that it was from Thee, Thou didst turn away Thy Face from me, and I was troubled. After this trouble, whereinto I was cast, because Thou didst turn away Thy Face, after the weariness of my spirit, after my heart was troubled within me, because Thou didst turn away Thy Face, then became I like a land without water to Thee: turn not Thou away Thy Face. Thou turnedst it away from me when proud; give it back to me now I am humble. Turn not away Thy Face from me, because, if Thou turn it away, I shall be like to them that go down into the pit. What is, that go down into the pit? When the sinner has come into the depth of sins, he will shew contempt. They go down into the pit, who lose even confession; against which is said, Let not the pit close her mouth over me. This depth Scripture calleth mostly a pit, into which depth when a sinner hath come, he sheweth contempt. What is, he sheweth contempt? He no longer believeth in Providence, or if he do believe, he thinketh that he has no longer ought to do with it. He setteth before himself licence to sin, the reins of iniquity being let loose now that he has no hope of pardon. He saith not, ‘I will return to God that He may return to me;’ he heareth not, Turn ye unto Me, and I will return to you, for having come to the depth of evil, he sheweth contempt. For from the dead, saith the wise man, as though he were not, confession perisheth. Turn not then Thy Face from me, or I shall be like them that go down into the pit.

14. Make me to hear in the morning Thy mercy, for in Thee have I hoped. Behold, I am in the night, yet in Thee have I hoped, until the iniquity of the night pass away. For we have, as Peter saith, a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark

place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts. Morning then he calleth the time after the end of the world, when we shall see what in this world we believe. For, in the morning Thou shalt hear my voice; in the morning I will stand by Thee, and gaze. Make me to hear in the morning Thy mercy, for in Thee have I hoped. For if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. The night requireth patience, the day will give joy. Make me to hear in the morning Thy mercy, for in Thee have I hoped.

15. But what here, until the morning come? For it is not enough to hope for the morning; we must do somewhat. Why do somewhat? Because he saith in another Psalm, I sought God in the day of my tribulation; as it were in the time of night I sought God. How didst thou seek? With my hands in the night before Him; and I was not deceived. God is to be sought with the hands in the night. What is, with the hands? By good works. What, before Him? When Thou doest an alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee. Since then we must thus hope for the morning, and bear this night, and persevere in this patience until the day dawn, what meanwhile must we do here? lest perchance thou think that thou wilt do ought of thyself, whereby thou mayest earn to be brought to the morning. Make known to me, O Lord, the way wherein I must walk. Therefore did He kindle the lamp of prophecy, therefore did He send the Lord in the vessel, as it were, of the flesh, Who should even say, My strength is dried up like a potsherd. Walk by prophecy, walk by the lamp of future things predicted, walk by the word of God. As yet thou seest not the Word in the beginning, God with God: walk by the Form of a servant, thou shalt be brought to the Form of God. Make known to me, O Lord, the way wherein I should walk; for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul. I have lifted it up to Thee, not against Thee. With Thee is the Fountain of life: to Thee have I lifted up my soul. I have brought it as a vessel to the Fountain: fill me, therefore, for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul.

16. Deliver me from mine enemies, O Lord, for unto Thee have I fled for refuge. I who once fled from Thee, now flee to Thee. For Adam fled from the Face of God, and hid himself among the trees of Paradise, so that of him was said in the Book of Job, As a servant that fleeth from his Lord, and

findeth a shadow. He fled from the Face of his Lord, and found a shadow; for he fled to the shade among the trees of Paradise. Woe to him, if he continue in the shade, lest it be said afterward, All things are passed away like a shadow. Deliver me from mine enemies. I think not here of men enemies. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. But against whom? Against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the world. What world? For he cannot mean earth and sky, for they rule not what they have not made. Rulers of the world. But of what world? This darkness. What darkness? Clearly the wicked. For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. The rulers of this world, of this darkness, the rulers of the wicked; against these ye wrestle. Great is your conflict, not to see your enemies, and yet to conquer. Against the rulers of this world, of this darkness, the devil, that is, and his angels; not the rulers of that world, whereof is said, the world was made by Him, but that world whereof is said, the world knew Him not. Deliver me from mine enemies, O Lord, for unto Thee have I fled for refuge. From mine enemies, not from Judas, but from him who filled Judas. The one whom I see, I endure; the one whom I see not, I fight. For Judas received the sop, and Satan entered into him, that That David might suffer persecution at the hands of his son. How many Judases doth Satan fill, unworthily receiving the sop to their damnation! For whoso eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation unto himself. Not evil is that which is given, but what is good is given to the evil to damnation. It cannot be well with him who in evil wise taketh what is good. Therefore, Deliver me from mine enemies, for I have fled unto Thee for refuge. For whither should I flee? Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? If I go up into heaven, Thou art there; if I go down to hell, Thou art there. What then remaineth? If I take my wings as a dove, and fly to the farthest parts of the sea: that is, if in hope I dwell in the end of the world. For thither shalt Thine hand guide me, and Thy right hand bring me. Deliver me from mine enemies, for unto Thee have I fled for refuge, O Lord.

17. Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. Glorious confession! glorious rule! For Thou, saith he, art my God. To another will I hasten to be re-made, if by another I was made. Thou art my all, for Thou art my God. Shall I seek a father to get an inheritance? Thou art my God, not only the Giver of mine inheritance, but mine Inheritance itself. The Lord is the

portion of mine inheritance. Shall I seek a patron, to obtain redemption? Thou art my God. Lastly, having been created, do I desire to be re-created? Thou art my God, my Creator, Who hast created me by Thy Word, and re-created me by Thy Word. But Thou createdst me by Thy Word, remaining God with Thee: Thou re-createdst me by Thy Word, made Flesh for our sakes. Teach Thou me then to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. If Thou teach me not, I shall do mine own will, and my God will abandon me. Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God. Teach Thou me: for it cannot be that Thou art my God, and yet I am to be mine own master. See how grace is commended to us. This hold fast, this drink in, this let none drive out of your hearts, lest ye have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge; lest, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish your own righteousness, ye submit not yourselves to the righteousness of God. Ye recognise the words of the Apostle. Say then this, Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.

18. Thy good Spirit, not my bad one, Thy good Spirit shall lead me into the right land. For my bad spirit hath led me into a crooked land. And what have I deserved? What can be reckoned as my good works without Thy aid, through which I might obtain and be worthy to be led by Thy Spirit into the right land. What are my works? what my deserts? For Thy Name’s sake, O Lord, Thou shalt quicken me. Listen, then, with all your power, to the commendation of Grace, whereby ye are saved without price. For Thy Name’s sake, O Lord, Thou shalt quicken me. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give the glory. For Thy Name’s sake, O Lord, Thou shalt quicken me in Thy righteousness; not in mine own: not because I have deserved, but because Thou hast mercy. For were I to shew mine own desert, nought should I deserve of Thee, save punishment. Thou hast pruned off from me mine own merits; Thou hast grafted in Thine own gifts. For Thy Name’s sake, O Lord, Thou shalt quicken me in Thy righteousness. Thou shalt bring forth my soul out of tribulation: and in Thy mercy shalt bring mine enemies to destruction: and Thou shalt destroy all them that afflict my soul; for I am Thy servant.

PSALM 144

Sermon to the People.

1. The title of this Psalm is brief in number of words, but heavy in the weight of its mysteries. To David himself against Goliath. This battle was fought in the time of our fathers, and ye, beloved, remember it with me from Holy Scripture. For when the aliens were fighting against the people of God, one of them challenged a single adversary, Goliath challenged David: that in that contest the will of God for either party's success might be tested. But why do we trouble ourselves about the victory, when we see the challenger and the challenged? It was wickedness challenging goodness, pride challenging humility; lastly, it was the devil challenging Christ. Why wonder ye that the devil was vanquished? The one was great in bodily stature; the other small in stature, great in faith. Holy David took to him armour of war, to go forth against Goliath. This armour, through his age, and his smallness of stature, as we have mentioned, he could not carry. He cast away what burdened him, but helped him not; he took five stones from the river, and put them in his shepherd's vessel. Armed in body with these, in spirit with the Name of God, he went forth, and conquered. This did that David; but let us search for the hidden meaning. For we had set forth above, that this title was brief in number of words, but heavy in weight of mysteries. But call to mind that sentence of the Apostle, All these things happened unto them in a figure, that we seem not wantonly to seek for somewhat hidden, where it may be said that all is simply said without any depth of mystery. We have then authority which makes us eager to seek, watchful to trace out, attentive to hear, faithful to believe, active to do. In David is Christ; but, as ye that are learned in His school are wont to understand, Christ is both Head and Body. Hear not then any thing spoken in the person of Christ, as though it concerned not you, who are members of Christ. This being laid down as a foundation, see what followeth.

2. Ye know that the former people were laden with many rites visible and corporeal, with circumcision, with that laborious priesthood of theirs, with

the temple filled with types, with manifold kinds of whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. These our David laid aside, as armour that weighed down, but helped not. For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law. To what purpose then was the Law? It followeth; But Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to all that believe. Finally, this David, that is, Christ, both Head and Body at the time of the revelation of the New Testament, at the time when grace was to be put forward and recommended, what did He? He laid aside His armour, He took five stones: He laid aside, as we have said, the burdensome armour: He laid aside, that is, the rites of the Law, those rites of the Law which are not laid on the Gentiles, which we do not observe. For ye remember how much we read in the old Law, which we do not observe, yet understand to have been sent before, and set forth to signify somewhat; not that we cast away the Law of God, but that we celebrate not the rites of promise, now that the promise is fulfilled. For what they promised has come. For the grace of the new covenant which was veiled under the Law, is unveiled in the Gospel. We have removed the veil, and have seen what was veiled: we have seen it in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Head and Saviour, Who was crucified for us, at Whose crucifixion, moreover, the veil of the temple was rent in twain. Finally, He laid aside His armour, that is, the burden of the rites of the old Law, and took the Law itself. For the five stones signify the five Books of Moses. He took then those five stones from the river. Ye know what the river is. For this mortal life glideth on, and whatever cometh into the world floweth by. They were then in the river, that is, in that former people, stones; there they were useless, idle, profited nothing, the river flowed along over them. What did David, that the Law might be profitable? He received grace. For without grace the Law cannot be fulfilled. For love is the fulfilment of the Law: and where is this love? see if it come not from grace. The love of God, saith the Apostle, is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who is given unto us. Since then grace maketh the Law to be fulfilled, and grace is signified by milk; for milk in the flesh is without price, where the mother seeketh not to receive, but busies herself to give; where the mother giveth without price, and is saddened, if there be none to receive: how then doth David shew that the Law cannot work without grace, save when, wishing to unite those five stones, whereby was signified the Law in five Books, to grace, he placed them in his shepherd's vessel, into which he had been wont to put the milk? Armed with these, armed, that is, with grace, and so not trusting in himself, but in his Lord, he went forth against the proud Goliath, who vaunted himself, trusted in himself. He took one stone, he cast it, he smote his enemy in the forehead, he slew him through that part of his body where he had not the sign of Christ. This you may further observe. He put five stones in his scrip, he hurled but one. The five Books were chosen, but unity conquered. For the fulfilment of the Law, as we mentioned a little above, is love: and the Apostle saith, Forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep unity of spirit in the bond of peace. Then, having smitten and overthrown him, he took the enemy's sword, and with it cut off his head. This our David also did, He overthrew the devil with his own weapons: and when his great ones, whom he had in his power, by means of whom he slew other souls, believe, they turn their tongues against the devil, and so Goliath's head is cut off with his own sword. We have handled the mystery of the title, as the briefness of the time allowed; now let us see what the Psalm itself containeth.

3. Blessed be the Lord my God, Who teacheth my hands for battle, my fingers for war. These are our words, if we be the Body of Christ. Let us bless the Lord our God, Who teacheth our hands for battle, our fingers for war. It seems a repetition of sentiment; our hands for battle, and our fingers for war, are the same. Or is there some difference between hands and fingers? Certainly both hands and fingers work. Not then without reason do we take fingers as put for hands. But still in the fingers we recognise the division of operation, yet still a sort of unity. Behold that grace! the Apostle saith, To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another different kinds of tongues; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits: but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. To one, this; to another, that; there are diversities of operations; all these worketh one and the self-same Spirit; there is the root of unity. With these fingers then the Body of Christ fighteth, going forth to war, going forth to battle.

4. Now to mention the various kinds of battles and wars is, perhaps, a long task, and to wage them more easy than to explain them. We have one warfare which the Apostle recordeth; we wrestle not against flesh and blood, that is, with men, at whose hands we seem to suffer annoyance; not against those do we fight, but against principalities, and powers, and rulers of the world. And, lest we should understand by the world the earth and sky, he shewed what he meant: of this darkness, he saith: the world, that is, not which was made by Him, for the world was made by Him, but the world which knew Him not, for the world knew Him not. This darkness is not in nature, but in will. For the soul of itself shineth not; for humbly and truly doth the Psalmist sing, Thou, Lord, shalt light my candle; my God, enlighten my darkness. And, with Thee is the Fountain of Life: in Thy Light shall we see light: not in our light, but in Thy Light. For our eyes too are called lights, and yet, if light from without be wanting, even though they be sound and open, they will remain in darkness. So then we wage war against the rulers of this darkness, the rulers, that is, of unbelievers, the devil and his angels, the wielders of that sword, wherewith the devil fighteth against the faithful. But just as, when Goliath has fallen, his sword is drawn, that his head may be cut off with his own sword; so, when the unbelievers believe, it is said to them, Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Ye have fought in the hand of Goliath; now in the Hand of the Lord cut off the head of Goliath.

5. This is one battle: another each one hath in himself. This sort of warfare was just now read out of the Apostolic Epistle: The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. This also is a grievous warfare, and, what is more distressing, inward. And in this warfare each one who is victorious, will forthwith conquer enemies whom he doth not see. For the devil and his angels tempt not, save the fleshly part which ruleth in thee. For how do we conquer those enemies whom we see not, save because we do perceive the motions of our flesh within? With the battling with these we strike down those. Avarice ruleth in the love of money; to the avarice that ruleth within thee, the devil from without proposeth gain by means of deceit. For often thou attainest not to gain, unless thou art guilty of deceit. He then from without setteth that before thy avarice, which within thou hast not conquered, thou hast not

tamed, thou hast not subjected to thee; he setteth before it, as an evil master of the games before his wrestler, deceit and gain, a work and a reward: ‘Do the one, and take the other.’ But if thou tramplest upon avarice; if that rule thee not within, which thou perceiving conquerest, (for the devil lying in wait for thee thou perceivest not,) if then thou hast overcome avarice, thou observest Another setting before thee a work and a reward. What did the other propose? Deceit and gain. What doth this one propose? Innocence and a crown. ‘Do, and take,’ saith both the one and the other. Now if thou, battling within, art not conquered by avarice, but the conqueror of avarice, thou observest the one, conquerest the other. For thou discernest both, and sayest, ‘On the one side I see a work and a reward, on the other a bait and a hook.’ For thou sayest nothing within thyself, which doth not concern thyself. For through sin art thou divided against thyself. Thou hast within thee the stock of concupiscence which transmitteth. Thou hast in thee wherewith to fight. Thou hast what to overcome. But thou hast also Whom to invoke, to aid thee in thy fight, and crown thee when victor, even Him Who made thee when thou wast not.

6. Thou sayest, ‘How shall I conquer?’ Behold, the Apostle himself setteth it forth as a most difficult battle; and how toilsome, or, it may be, impossible, it is, if I understand not, he himself sheweth. The flesh, he saith, lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. How dost thou bid me conquer, when he saith, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would? Askest thou how? Mark the grace of the shepherd’s vessel; put the stone from the river in the receptacle of milk. Behold I too say to thee, yea rather the Truth itself saith to thee, Certainly thou doest not what thou wishest, while the flesh fighteth against thy spirit. If for this battle thou reliest on thyself, thou hast need to be warned, lest thou have heard in vain, Sing unto God our Helper. For if by thyself thou couldest fulfil all, thou wouldest have no need of an Helper. Again, if thou thyself of thine own will didst nothing, he would not be called an Helper, for an helper helpeth one who doeth somewhat. Finally, when he had said, The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would, and had set thee before thyself, as failing in thyself, he forthwith sent thee to an Helper: but if ye be led by the Spirit, ye are no longer under the Law. For he who is

under the Law, fulfilleth not the Law, but is oppressed by the Law, as David was under his armour. If then thou art led by the Spirit, see Who will help thee, that thou mayest fulfil what thou wilt. Thy Helper, thy Champion, thy Hope, Who teacheth thine hands for battle, and thy fingers for war. For the works of the flesh, saith he, are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, idolatry, sensuality, witchcraft, contentions, quarrels, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. For one thing thou hast need of when thou fightest; another, when thou conquerest; another, when thou hast peace and rest. Listen while I illustrate this by a few examples. Some gain is suggested to thee: it delighteth thee: it involveth deceit, but it is a great gain: it delighteth thee, yet thou consentest not: here is the battle: still it is urged on thee, still it is pressed on thee: still thou deliberatest: he then who fighteth is in danger. We have seen the battle, let us see the other matters. He hath despised justice, so as to commit deceit; he is conquered: he hath despised gain, to obey righteousness; he hath conquered. In these three, I grieve for the conquered, I fear for the combatant, I rejoice with the conqueror. But even he who hath conquered, hath he altogether achieved in himself that money tempt him not at all, that it excite in him no delight, however easy of conquest, however contemptible, however it be one that he not only doth not consent to, but doth not even deign to fight with? Yet there is in him some slight irritation of delight. That irritation and that enemy now neither fight nor reign: yet they are there, and tarry as it were in the mortal flesh, which shall not be the case hereafter. For the whole shall be led in triumph, but hereafter: now the body is dead because of sin: (and therefore in that body sin is, though sin reigneth not:) but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. But if He that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, through His Spirit, which dwelleth in you. Then shall there be no longer ought to irritate or to fight: all shall yield in peace: for no longer do two contrary natures fight against one another, but they are as husband and wife in a house. If they disagree, there is trouble, irksome and perilous: if the husband be conquered, and the wife rule, that is a perverse peace: if the wife submit, and the husband rule, that is a right peace: yet is she not another substance of another nature, for out of man was woman made, for her husband. Thy flesh is thy wife, thy handmaid: lay on her what thou wilt, thou must needs subject her; and if thou fightest, fight that she may benefit thee. For this is expedient, that the lower be subjected to the higher; that he too who wisheth what is lower than himself to be subjected to himself, may himself be subjected to Him that is higher than himself. Observe order, seek peace. Do thou be subject to God, thy flesh to thee. What more righteous, what more beautiful? Thou to Him that is greater, he that is less to thee: obey thou Him that made thee, that that may obey thee which was made for thee. For we know not nor commend this order, ‘Thy flesh to thee, and thou to God,’ but, ‘thou to God, and thy flesh to thee.’ But if thou despisest ‘Thou to God,’ never wilt thou bring about ‘Thy flesh to thee.’ Thou that obeyest not God shall be tormented by a slave. If thou dost not first submit to God that thy flesh may then submit to thee, wilt thou be able to say these words, Blessed be the Lord my God, Who teacheth my hands for battle, my fingers for war? Thou wishest to fight without instruction; thou wilt be conquered and condemned. First then submit thyself to God, then, with Him to teach thee and aid thee, fight, and say, Who teacheth my hands for battle, and my fingers for war.

7. And when thou battlest, because while thou battlest thou art in danger, say what followeth when thou art set in the peril of battle. My Mercy. I shall not then be conquered. What is this, My Mercy? Does it mean, ‘Thou shewest mercy to me, and in me manifestest Thyself merciful,’ or, ‘Thou hast given to me that I too myself should be merciful?’ For by nothing is our enemy so conquered, as when we are merciful. He is ever preparing accusations for our judgment, and he cannot bring false charges against us, because He is not one before Whom he can bring them. For if he had to do with us before a man as judge, he might deceive him by lies, and overwhelm us by false accusations; but because we have to plead with him before a Judge, Who cannot be deceived, therefore he aimeth to lead us astray to sin, that he may have true charges to bring against us. And when it happeneth that human frailty yieldeth to his deceits, let the work of humility follow in confession, let it be exercised in works of mercy and kindness. All is blotted out, when with true heart and full confidence we say to Him Who seeth, Forgive us, as we also forgive. Say with thy whole heart, say with entire confidence, say without anxiety, Forgive us, as we also forgive: or

forgive not, if we forgive not. For although thou sayest not, ‘Forgive not, if we forgive not,’ certainly He forgiveth not, if we do not forgive. For He will not be a false Promiser, that thou mayest be an unpunished sinner. Wilt thou, saith He, that I forgive? Do thou forgive. There is another work of mercy: Wilt thou that I give? Do thou give. They are both set down in one place in the Gospel, Forgive, and it shall be forgiven to you: give, and it shall be given. Somewhat, saith He, I have against thee; somewhat hast thou against another: forgive, and I forgive. Somewhat thou seekest from Me; somewhat another seeketh from thee: give, and I give. And what forgiveth, what giveth? is it not charity? And whence is charity, save by the Holy Ghost, Which is given unto us. If then by works of mercy our enemy is conquered, and we could not have works of mercy unless we had charity, and charity we could have none unless we received it by the Holy Ghost; He then teacheth our hands for battle, and our fingers for war: to Him rightly do we say, My Mercy, from whom we have also that we are merciful: for he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy.

8. Think ye that works of mercy are of small importance? I will say somewhat about them too. Regard first that sentence taken out of Holy Scripture, which I have just reminded you of, he shall have judgment without mercy, who hath shewed no mercy. Without mercy shall he be judged, who hath not shewed mercy before he be judged. What then? what followeth? But mercy rejoiceth over judgment. What is this, brethren? what is, mercy rejoiceth over judgment? Mercy is set above judgment: on whomsoever shall be found works of mercy, though he have, it may be, what in judgment may be punished, yet by the stream of mercy the fire of sin is quenched. For mercy rejoiceth over judgment. What then? when God helpeth such, when He freeth them, when He pardoneth them, is He unjust? God forbid. Here too He is just. Mercy taketh not away justice from Him, nor justice, mercy. See whether He is not just: Forgive, and I forgive: give, and I give. See if He is not just: with what measure ye mete, it shall be meted to you again. For thus far is it, with what measure; for the measure is not of the same kind: but thus far is it the same measure, Forgive, and I forgive. Thou hast with thee the measure of giving pardon; thou shalt find with Me the measure of receiving pardon: thou hast with thee the measure

of giving what thou hast; thou shalt find with Me the measure of receiving what thou hast not.

9. My Mercy and my Refuge, my Upholder and my Deliverer. Much toileth this combatant, having his flesh lusting against his spirit. Keep what thou hast. Then shalt thou have in full what thou wishest, when death shall have been swallowed up in victory; when this mortal body has been raised, and is changed into the condition of the angels, and rises aloft to a heavenly quality. The dead in Christ, saith he, shall rise first; then we that are alive and remain, when the Lord cometh, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Then shall death be swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy strife? where, O death, is thy sting? For there will not be left, either in the mind or in the body, ought to rebel against the love of God. Then will be full victory, full peace. Of this it is said to us while battling, Come, ye children, and hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Ye are in battle, ye are contending in strife, and yet ye seek some sort of rest. What man is he that lusteth to live, and would fain see good days? Who is there who doth not say, ‘I do?’ There is life, there are good days, where nought lusteth against the spirit, where it is not said, ‘Fight,’ but, ‘Rejoice.’ But who is he that lusteth for these days? Every man certainly saith, ‘I do.’ Hear what followeth. I see that thou art toiling, I see that thou art engaged in battle, and in danger; hear what followeth; He is teaching thy hands for battle, and thy fingers for war. Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile: depart from evil, and do good. For how wilt thou be able to do good, unless thou first depart from evil? What good to ask thee to clothe, when as yet thou strippest? What good to ask thee to give, when as yet thou plunderest? Depart from evil, and do good: let not the poor first weep under thee, that the poor may rejoice through thee. Depart from evil, and do good. For what reward, since now thou art fighting? Seek peace, and ensue it. Learn and say, My Mercy and my Refuge, mine Upholder and my Deliverer, my Protector: mine Upholder, lest I fall; my Deliverer, lest I stick; my Protector, lest I be stricken. In all these things, in all my toil, in all my battles, in all my difficulties, in Him have I hoped, Who subdueth my people under me. Behold, our Head speaketh together with us.

10. Lord, what is man, that Thou hast become known unto him? All is included in that Thou hast become known unto him. What is man, that Thou hast become known unto him; or the son of man, that Thou valuest him? Thou valuest him, that is, Thou makest him of such importance, Thou countest him of such price, Thou knowest under what Thou placest him, over what Thou placest him. For valuing is considering the price of a thing. How greatly did He value man, Who for him shed the blood of His only-begotten Son! What is man, that Thou hast become known unto him? To whom hast Thou become known? Who art Thou, that hast become known? What is the son of man, that Thou valuest him? that Thou countest him of so great price, that Thou valuest him at so much, that Thou shewest him to be somewhat precious? For God valueth not man in the same way as one man valueth another: he, when he findeth a slave for sale, giveth a higher price for a horse than for a man. Consider how greatly He valued thee, that thou mayest be able to say, If God be for us, who can be against us? And how greatly did He value thee, Who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all? How shall He not also with Him freely give us all things? He Who giveth this food to the combatant, what keepeth He in store for the conqueror? I am, saith He, the living Bread, Who came down from heaven. This is the Food of combatants, brought from the granaries of heaven, wherewith the angels are fed; for man did eat angels’ food. But after this warfare and food, what keepeth He in store? what will He give to the conquerors, save what is said in another Psalm: One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, and that I may be protected, His temple. What is man, that Thou hast made Thyself known unto him; or the son of man, that Thou valuest him?

11. Man is made like unto vanity: and yet Thou hast made Thyself known unto him, and valuest him. Man is made like unto vanity: what vanity? Time, which passeth on, and floweth by. For this vanity is said in comparison of the Truth, which ever abideth, and never faileth: for it too is a work of His Hand, in its degree. For, as it is written, God filled the earth with His good things. What is, His? That accord with Him. But all these things, being earthly, fleeting, transitory, if they be compared to that Truth, where it is said, I Am That I Am, all this which passeth away is called

vanity. For through time it vanisheth, like smoke into the air. And why should I say more than that which the Apostle James said, willing to bring down proud men to humility, What is, saith he, your life? It is even a vapour, which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Therefore man is made like unto vanity. By sinning is he made like unto vanity. For when he was first created, he was made like unto the Truth: but because he sinned, because he received his deserts, he was made like unto vanity. For on account of iniquity Thou hast chastened man, saith he in another Psalm, and hast made his life to waste away, even as a spider. Therefore saith he this also, Man is made like unto vanity. What saith he there? Behold, Thou hast made my days old. What saith he here? His days pass away like a shadow. Let man take heed to himself in the days of his shadow, that he do somewhat worthy of the light he longeth for; and since he is in the shadow of night, let him seek the day. For the day of this vanity to a man that knoweth it is a day of tribulation; whether the world harm us with any inconvenience and vexation, or whether it smile on us, all is to be feared and groaned over; for the life of man upon earth is temptation: whence it is said, All the day long did I walk saddened. We have need of consolations; and whatever God sheweth us now, when He sheweth it in happiness, is not the joy of the blessed, but the consolation of the wretched. Let man then, I say, do somewhat worthy of the light he longeth for in these days of his shadow, and let him seek God in the night; as it is written, In the day of my tribulation I sought God, with my hands in the night before Him, and I have not been deceived. What doth he call the day of tribulation, save what he calleth also night. With my hands in the night before Him. As yet we are in the night, and we watch by the lamp of prophecy. Something is promised us, which as yet we wait for: but what saith the Apostle Peter? We have a more sure word of prophecy, to which ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, till the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. That is the day; there is our reward. In the morning Thou shalt hear my voice: in the morning I will stand by Thee, and gaze on Thee. Work then, though it be in the night, with thine hands, that is, by good works seek God, before the day come which shall gladden thee, lest the day come which shall sadden thee. For see how safely thou workest, who art not left by Him Whom thou seekest; with my hands, saith he, I sought the Lord in the night before Him. That thy Father Which seeth in secret may reward thee openly; therefore, before Him. Have within thee mercy, charity, lest thou do ought as with the desire of pleasing men: with my hands, with my works: in the shade, in this life: where He seeth, not where I strive to please men. And what followeth? And I have not been deceived. Man is made like unto vanity; his days pass away like a shadow: and yet Thou hast made Thyself known unto him, and valuest him.

12. Lord, bow Thy heavens, and come down: touch the mountains, and they shall smoke. Flash Thy lightning, and Thou shalt scatter them; send forth Thine arrows, and Thou shalt confound them. Send forth Thy Hand from above, and deliver me, and draw me out of many waters. The Body of Christ, the humble David, full of grace, relying on God, fighting in this world, calleth for the help of God. Bow Thy heavens, and come down. What are heavens bowed down? Apostles humbled. For those heavens declare the glory of God; and of these heavens declaring the glory of God it is presently said, There is neither speech nor language, but their voices are heard among them: their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world. When then these heavens sent forth their voices through all lands, and did wonderful things, while the Lord flashed and thundered from them by miracles and commandments, the gods were thought to have come down from heaven to men. For certain of the Gentiles, thinking this, desired even to sacrifice to them. Then they, seeing that an honour not their due was being paid to them, and being alarmed and protesting, and correcting those who made so great a mistake, to shew them how their minds were troubled at it, rent their garments, and said, Why do ye this? we also are men of like passions with you. And they began after these words to commend to them the excellence of our Lord Jesus Christ, humbling themselves, that God might be commended; because the heavens were bowed, that God might come down. Bow then Thy heavens, and come down. It is done. Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke: the proud mountains, the earthly up-liftings, the swelling grandeurs: touch, saith he, touch those mountains, give of Thy Grace to those mountains: and they shall smoke, for they shall confess their sins. The smoke of sinners confessing shall draw forth also the tears of the proud when humbled. Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke. So long as they are not touched, they seem to themselves great: they are now about to say, Great art

Thou, O Lord: the mountains also are about to say, Thou only art the Most Highest over all the earth.

13. But there are some that conspire, that gather themselves together against the Lord, and against His Christ. They have come together, they have conspired. Flash forth Thy lightnings, and Thou shalt scatter them. Abound with Thy miracles, and their conspiracy shall be broken. Flash forth Thy lightnings, and Thou shalt scatter them. Now, frightened by Thy miracles, they shall not dare ought against Thee, and at Thy miracles they shall be alarmed and hesitate. Who is He, Who can do such great things? Who is He, Who is thus exalted, Whose Name so mightily prevaileth? When they say, Who is He? they are about to believe, Thou hast flashed with Thy miracles, and scattered their evil conspiracy. Send forth Thine arrows, and Thou shalt confound them. Let the sharp arrows of the Mighty One, even Thy commandments, Thy words, strike their heart. Send forth Thine arrows, and Thou shalt confound them. Let the unsound be wounded, that, being well wounded, they may be made sound; and let them say, being set now in the Church, in the Body of Christ, let them say with the Church, I am wounded with Love. Send forth Thine arrows, and Thou shalt confound them.

14. Send forth Thine Hand from on high. What afterward? What in the end? How conquereth the Body of Christ? By heavenly aid. For the Lord Himself shall come with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God shall He descend from heaven, Himself the Saviour of the body, the Hand of God. Send forth Thy Hand from above, and deliver me, and snatch me out of many waters. What is, out of many waters? From many peoples. What peoples? Aliens, unbelievers, whether assailing us from without, or laying snares within. Take me out of many waters, in which Thou didst discipline me, in which Thou didst roll me, to free me from my filth. This is the water of contradiction. Deliver me, and snatch me from many waters.

15. Let us hear now about these many waters, from which God shall deliver the Body of His Christ, from which God shall deliver the humility of David. What is, out of many waters? What hast thou said, lest waters should be understood in any other sense? Hear what I have said. From the hand of strange children. Hear, brethren, among whom we are, among whom we

live, from whom we long to be delivered. Whose mouth hath spoken vanity. All of you to-day, if ye had not gathered yourselves together to these divine shows of the word of God, and were not at this hour engaged in them, how great vanities would ye be hearing! whose mouth hath spoken vanity: when, in short, would they, speaking vanity, hear you speaking vanity? Whose mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity.

16. What doest thou among them with thy pastoral scrip with five stones in it? Say it to me in another form: that same law which thou hast signified by five stones, signify in some other way also. I will sing a new song unto Thee, O God. A new song is of grace; a new song is of the new man; a new song is of the New Testament. But lest thou shouldest think that grace departeth from the law, whereas rather by grace the law is fulfilled, upon a psaltery of ten strings will I sing unto Thee. Upon a psaltery of ten strings, upon the law of ten commandments: therein may I sing to Thee; therein may I rejoice to Thee; therein may I sing to Thee a new song; for, Love is the fulfilling of the law. But they who have not love may carry the psaltery, sing they cannot. I therefore, saith he, in the midst of the waters of contradiction will sing to Thee a new song, and never shall the waters of contradiction cause, by their din, my psaltery to be silent. On a psaltery of ten strings will I sing unto Thee.

17. Who giveth salvation to kings, when the mountains now are smoking. Who redeemeth David His servant. Ye know who David is; be yourselves David. Whence redeemeth He David His servant? Whence redeemeth He Christ? Whence redeemeth He the Body of Christ? From the sword of ill intent deliver me. From the sword is not sufficient, he addeth, of ill intent. Without doubt there is a sword of good intent. What is the sword of good intent? That whereof the Lord saith, I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword. For He was about to separate believers from unbelievers, sons from parents, and to sever all other ties, while the sword cut off what was diseased, but healed the members of Christ. Of good intent then is the sword twice sharpened, powerful with both edges, the Old and New Testaments, with the narration of the past and the promise of the future. That then is the sword of good intent: but the other is of ill intent, wherewith they talk vanity, for that is of good intent, wherewith God

speaketh verity. Therefore from the sword, of ill intent deliver me. For truly the sons of men have teeth which are spears and arrows, and their tongue is a sharp sword. From this sword of ill intent deliver me. What he hath now called a sword, the same he called above many waters. Take me out of many waters. The same which I called many waters, I now call a sword of ill intent. Finally, when he had said, out of many waters, he went on to say, from the hand of strange children, whose mouth hath spoken vanity. And that thou mightest know that the same are spoken of, when here too he had said, Deliver me from the sword of ill intent, he went on to say, And take me out of the hand of strange children, whose mouth hath spoken vanity: just as before. And that which followeth, their right hand is a right hand of iniquity, the same he had set down before also, when he called them many waters. For lest thou shouldest think that the many waters were good waters, he explained them by the sword of ill intent. Now then let him explain what he meant by, whose mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. What vanity hath their mouth spoken? and how is their right hand a right hand of iniquity?

18. Whose sons are like young vines firmly planted in their youth. He wisheth to recount their happiness. Observe, ye sons of light, sons of peace: observe, ye sons of the Church, members of Christ; observe whom he calleth strangers, whom he calleth strange children, whom he calleth waters of contradiction, whom he calleth a sword of ill intent. Observe, I beseech you, for among them ye are in peril, among their tongues ye fight against the desires of your flesh, among their tongues, set in the hand of the devil wherewith he fighteth, ye have to wrestle, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of this world, of this darkness, that is, of the wicked. Observe, that ye may discern yourselves, that ye may not think that to be true felicity, which men either weak, or of ill intent, desire for themselves. Behold, brethren, surely he hath called them strange children, surely he hath called them many waters, surely he hath called them a sword of ill intent. Behold the vanity which they speak, and beware lest ye speak the same; beware lest in speaking the same, ye imitate them. Whose mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. What vanity hath their mouth spoken, and how is their right hand a right hand of iniquity? Whose sons are as young vines

firmly planted in their youth, their daughters are fitted and adorned after the similitude of a temple: their garners are full, bursting out from one store to another: their sheep are fruitful, multiplying in their streets: their oxen are fat: their hedge is not broken down, nor their road, nor is there crying in their streets. Is not this then happiness? I ask the sons of the kingdom of heaven, I ask the offspring of everlasting resurrection, I ask the body of Christ, the members of Christ, the temple of God. Is not this then happiness, to have sons safe, daughters beautiful, garners full, cattle abundant, no downfall, I say not of a wall, but not even of a hedge, no tumult and clamour in the streets, but quiet, peace, abundance, plenty of all things in their houses and in their cities? Is not this then happiness? or ought the righteous to shun it? or findest thou not the house of the righteous too abounding with all these things, full of this happiness? Did not Abraham’s house abound with gold, silver, children, servants, cattle? Did not the holy patriarch Jacob, when he fled from the face of his brother Esau into Macedonia, after enriching himself as a servant, return, and give thanks to the Lord his God, because with his rod he had crossed the river, returned with such abundance of flocks and children? What say we? is not this happiness? Be it so, still it is on the left hand. What is, on the left hand? Temporal, mortal, bodily. I desire not that thou shun it, but that thou think it not to be on the right hand. For they were not therefore wicked, therefore vain, because they had this abundance, but because what ought to have been on the left hand they set on the right. Therefore too their right hand is a right hand of iniquity; therefore their mouth hath spoken vanity, because they set that on their right hand which ought to have been on the left. For what ought they to have set on the right hand? God, eternity, the years of God which fail not, whereof is said, and Thy years shall not fail. There should be the right hand, there should be our longing. Let us use the left for the time, let us long for the right for eternity. If riches increase, set not your heart upon them. For if, when riches increase, ye set your heart upon them, ye will make what is left, to be right. Amend yourselves, acknowledge Wisdom embracing you, to Whom it is said, His left hand shall be under my head, and His right hand shall embrace me. Behold the holy song of love, behold the song of songs, of the heavenly marriage of Christ and His Church. What saith the bride of the Bridegroom? His left hand shall be under my head, and His right hand shall embrace me. The left under the head, and the right above the head. For when one embraceth from above, his arm is above the head, but his left hand under the head. His left hand, saith he, under my head. For He will not desert me in times of need: but yet His left hand will be under my head, it will not be put above my head, but will be beneath my head, that His right hand may embrace me, promising eternal life. For so is His left hand under my head, if His right hand be above my head, and that is fulfilled which was written to Timothy, having the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. Having the promise, he saith, of the present and of the future life. What in the present? His left hand under my head. What in the future? His right hand shall embrace me. Do ye seek what is needful for the present time? Seek ye first the kingdom of God, that is, the right hand, and all these things shall be added unto you. Ye shall have here, saith He, both riches and glory, and in the world to come everlasting life: both with the left hand I will support you while weak, and with the right I will crown you when perfected. Or did perhaps the Apostles, when they left their all, or distributed what they had to the poor, remain without riches in this world? Where then is that promise of the left hand, he shall receive sevenfold in this world? He promised to multiply them. And, in truth, what can be wanting to the man of God? If any one perchance be an unbeliever, he hath but one house, or at all events a few; the whole world of riches are the faithful man's. Behold His left hand full under his head: he shall receive sevenfold in this world. Behold His right hand embracing him: and in the world to come life everlasting. Rightly is it said in another place too of Wisdom herself, in her right hand is length of days, and in her left hand riches and honour.

19. Whence then speak they vainly? wherefore hath their mouth spoken vanity? Because their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. I blame them not because their sons were as young vines firmly planted in their youth, nor because their daughters were adorned after the similitude of the temple, nor because they had every thing else in abundance, and because earthly peace was theirs. But why do I blame them? They have called the people blessed who have these things. O men that speak vanity! They have called the people blessed who have these things. They have lost the true right hand, wicked and perverse, they have put on the benefits of God inversely. O wicked ones, O speakers of vanity, O strange children! They have called

the people blessed who have these things. What was on the left hand, they have set on the right. They have called the people blessed who have these things. What dost thou, David? What dost thou, Body of Christ? What do ye, members of Christ? What do ye, not strange children, but children of God? Since the speakers of vanity, the strange children, have called the people blessed who have these things, what say ye? Blessed is the people whose Lord is their God. Have then the left hand, but on the left; long for the right, that ye may be set on the right. They had the left on the left, before whom He hungered, and they gave Him to eat; He was thirsty, and they gave Him drink; He was a stranger, and they took Him in; He was naked, and they clothed Him. All this they took from the left, and transferred to the works of the right, that they might be set on the right. So then the speakers of vanity, the strange children, called the people blessed who have these things: say ye with us, Blessed is the people, whose Lord is their God.

PSALM 145

Sermon to the People.

1. We have longed to praise the Lord with you; and since He has deigned to grant us this, in order that the praise which we give Him may be in due order, that it may not by any excess offend Him Whom it praiseth, it is better for us to seek the path of praise in the Scripture of God, that we turn not aside from the way, either to the right hand or to the left. For I venture to say to you, beloved, God hath praised Himself, that He might be properly praised by man: and because He hath deigned to praise Himself, therefore hath man found how to praise Him. For it cannot be said to God, as it is to man, let not thine own mouth praise thee. For for man to praise himself is arrogance; for God to praise Himself is mercy. It is good for us to love whom we praise: by praising one that is good, we are ourselves made better. So, since He knoweth that this is for our good, in order that we might love Him, by praising Himself, He maketh Himself lovely; and herein He endeavoureth to benefit us, in that He maketh Himself lovely. He exhorteth then our heart to praise Him, and He hath filled His servants with His Spirit, that they might praise Him. And since His Spirit in His servants praiseth Him, what doeth He but praise Himself? So then this Psalm beginneth thus:

2. I will exalt Thee, my God, my King; and I will bless Thy Name for the age, and age upon age. Ye see that the praise of God is here begun, and this praise is carried on even to the end of the Psalm. Finally, the title is, Praise, to David himself. Praise to Christ Himself. And since He is called David, Who came to us of the seed of David, yet He was our King, ruling us, and bringing us into His kingdom, therefore Praise to David himself is understood to mean, Praise to Christ Himself. Christ according to the flesh is David, because He is the Son of David: but according to His Divine Nature He is the Creator of David, and Lord of David. Finally, the Apostle too, when he would pay honour to the former people of God, out of whom both the Apostles themselves, beloved, and many of the first Churches came, doing in many thousands of men, what just now in the Gospel one

rich man heard, and went away sorrowful, that is, selling all that they had, and distributing to the poor, and seeking perfection in the Lord;—when he would praise, I say, that former people, he thus saith, Whose are the fathers, and of whom as pertaining to the flesh Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. So because Christ is of them, as pertaining to the flesh, therefore is He David: but because He is over all, God blessed for ever, therefore, I will exalt Thee, saith he, my God, my King; and I will bless Thy Name for the age, and for age upon age. Perhaps for the age meaneth here, for age upon age, for ever. Now then begin to praise, if thou intendest to praise for ever. He who will not praise in this transitory age, will be silent when age upon age has come. Accordingly in the following verses he hath said nearly this.

3. But lest any one should in any otherwise also understand what he saith, I will praise Thy Name for the age, and should seek another age, wherein to praise, he saith, Every day will I bless Thee. Praise then and bless the Lord thy God every day, that when single days have passed, and there has come one day without end, thou mayest go from praise to praise, as from strength to strength. Every day, he saith, I will bless Thee: no day shall pass by, wherein I bless Thee not. And it is no wonder, if in thy day of joy thou bless the Lord. What if perchance some day of sorrow hath dawned on thee, as is natural in the circumstances of our mortal nature, as there is abundance of offences, as temptations are multiplied; what, if something sad befall thee, a man; wilt thou cease to praise God? wilt thou cease to bless thy Creator? If thou cease, thou hast lied in saying, every day will I bless Thee, O Lord. But if thou cease not, although it seem to thee to be ill with thee in the day of thy sorrow, yet in thy God it shall be well with thee. For there are cases where it is well with thee, even when it is ill with thee. For if in any evil it is ill with thee, without doubt in any good it is well with thee. And what so good as thy God, of Whom it is said, None is good save One, that is, God. For how safe it is to praise thus, and how safe for it to be well with thee thus, thou mayest learn from the very nature of good. For if thou rejoicest at a good which accrueth to thee one day, perchance another day this good whereat thou rejoicest passeth away. ‘It has been well with me, I have spent a good day;’ because perhaps gain has come to thee, or thou hast received an invitation, or sat long at a feast. Thou rejoicest, because thou hast sat

long at a feast: another day grieveth thee, because thou hast not had to blush. However, at whatever good of this sort thou rejoicest, at all events it is fleeting. But if thou rejoicest in the Lord thy God, thou shalt hear Scripture saying, Delight thee in the Lord. The more firmly shalt thou rejoice, the more sure He is in Whom thou shalt rejoice. For if thou rejoicest in money, thou fearest the thief; but if thou rejoicest in God, what fearest thou? Lest any take God from thee? None will take God from thee, if thou send Him not from thee. For God is not like the light which shineth in the heavens. We cannot approach to it whensoever we please, for it shineth not in every place. And through our weakness perhaps it cometh to pass, that in winter we delight to be in this light; but now in summer time ye see that we rather seek a spot where we shall not stand in the light. But when thou abidest in thy God, and delightest in the light of His truth, thou seekest not a spot where thou mayest approach Him: but thy conscience approacheth, thy conscience retreateth from Him. That which is said, Approach to Him, and be enlightened, is said to the soul, not to any carriage; it is said to the affections, not to the feet. And when thou abidest in Him, thou shalt suffer no heat. For His Spirit shall breathe on thee, and under His wings thou shalt hope.

4. Thou seest then that thou hast whereof to delight every day. For thy God will not leave thee, even though any thing befall thee. For how sad was that which befell the holy man Job: how sudden, how manifold ills! how was all in which he was thought to rejoice, not all in which he did rejoice, withdrawn when the devil assailed him! how did even his sons die! All that he was careful in preserving, perished; all they for whom he was preserving it, perished; yet He perished not, Who gave both the one and the other. And even his sons, though they perished in this world, shall be recognised and received back in the world to come. Yet had that man somewhat else wherein to rejoice; and in him was that true which we have just recited, Every day will I bless Thee: because then the day wherein all perished shone upon him sadly, did therefore the inward light in his heart fail? Nay, he stood in that light, and said, The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as the Lord hath pleased, so hath it been done; blessed be the Name of the Lord. He then praised every day, who even in the day of sorrow praised. It is a short lesson, that thou ever praise God, and with true, not

false heart say, I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall be ever in my mouth. It is a short lesson: it is in fact to know that He giveth in mercy, when He giveth; that He taketh away in mercy, when He taketh away: not to believe that thou art abandoned by His mercy, Who either comforteth thee by giving lest thou fail, or punisheth thee when thou art uplifted, lest thou perish. Whether then in His gifts, or in His scourges, do thou praise. The praise of the scourger is the healing of the wound. Every day, saith he, I will bless Thee. My brethren, bless God: what ever happen, bless God. For it is He Who causeth that nothing happen which ye cannot bear. Therefore thou oughtest to be in fear when it is well with thee, and not so to prepare thyself as though thou shouldest never be tried. For if thou art never tried, thou art never proved. Is it not better to be tried and proved, than to be not tried and rejected? And I will praise Thy Name for the age, and for age upon age.

5. Great is the Lord, and very much to he praised. How much was he about to say? what terms was he about to seek? How vast a conception hath he included in the one word, very much? Imagine what thou wilt, for how can that be imagined, which cannot be contained? He is very much to be praised, and of His Greatness there is no end; therefore said he very much, because, of His Greatness there is no end: lest perchance thou begin to wish to praise, and think that thou canst reach the end of His praises, Whose Greatness can have no end. Think not then that He, Whose Greatness has no end, can ever be enough praised by thee. Is it not then better that as He has no end, so neither should thy praise have end? His Greatness is without end; let thy praise also be without end. Of His Greatness what is said? of His Greatness there is no end. Of thy praise what? I will praise Thy Name for the age, and age upon age. Therefore, as of His Greatness there is no end, so of thy praise there shall be no end. For, not even when thou art dead in this flesh, shalt thou cease to praise the Lord. It is said indeed, the dead shall not praise Thee, O Lord; but it is they, of whom it is said, from the dead, as from one that is not, confession perisheth; not they of whom He saith, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. For the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, is not the God of the dead, but of the living. For if thou shalt never be ought but His, thou shalt never be silent from His praise. Will it be possible for thee to fear, lest while thou livest here, thou mayest be His, and when thou art dead, not be His? Hear the

Apostle promising thee safely: Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's. And whence is it, that thou art His, even when dead? Because He redeemed thee with the price of His blood, even by His death. How can He lose His servant, even when dead, Whose death is thy price? Therefore when he hath said, Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's, that He might set forth the price too, he added, for for this cause Christ died and rose again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

6. However, since of His Greatness there is no end, and whom we cannot contain, we ought to praise: (for if we can contain Him, there is an end of His Greatness; but if there be no end of His Greatness, some part of Him indeed we can contain, but God entirely we cannot contain;) let us, as failing in His Greatness, that we may be refreshed by His Goodness, look to His works, and by His works praise the Worker; by what He hath made, the Maker; by His creation, the Creator. Let us look at what He hath done here, what is well known to us, what is open to our eyes. For how great things besides has His boundless Goodness and illimitable Greatness made, which we do not know! When we lift the gaze of our eyes even to the heaven, and then recall it from sun, moon, and stars to the earth, and there is all this space where our sight can wander; beyond the heavens who can extend the eyesight of his mind, not to say of his flesh? So far then as His works are known to us, let us praise Him through His works. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made. Generation and generation shall praise Thy works. Every generation shall praise Thy works. For perhaps every generation is meant by generation and generation. He did not mean to continue saying, generation and generation, till he had defined the number of all generations, but the repetition of the speaker led the mind of the thinker to infinity. Behold that generation which now is in the flesh, destined to pass from hence as it came, praiseth the works of God; and that for which it maketh way to succeed, will assuredly praise the works of God; and after that will be another, and unto the end of the world how many generations! This he meant when he said, generation and generation shall praise Thy works. Did he perchance mean to imply two generations by that repetition? For we are in this generation sons of God, we shall be in another

generation sons of the Resurrection. Scripture hath called us sons of the Resurrection; the Resurrection itself it hath called Regeneration. In the regeneration, it saith, when the Son of Man shall be seated in His Majesty. So also in another place: For they shall not marry, nor be given in marriage, for they are the sons of the Resurrection. Therefore generation and generation shall praise Thy works. We praise the works of the Lord now, while we are in this mortal nature: and if we praised while we are fettered, how shall we praise when we are crowned? Therefore let us now in this generation observe these works of the Lord, in Whose praise it is said, generation and generation shall praise Thy works, since of Thy Greatness there is no end. It is lawful to gaze on Thy works, that Thou mayest be praised Who doest such works.

7. And they shall tell out Thine excellence. For neither shall they praise Thy works, save in order to tell out Thine excellence. Boys at school are set to praise, and all such things are set before them to be praised, as God hath wrought: a mortal is set to praise the sun, the sky, the earth; to come to even lesser things, to praise a rose, or a laurel; all these are works of God: they are set, they are undertaken, they are praised: the works are lauded, of the Worker they are silent. I desire in the works to praise the Creator: I love not a thankless praiser. Dost thou praise what He hath made, and art silent of Him Who made? In that which thou seest, what is it that thou praisest? The form, the usefulness, some virtue, some power in the things. If beauty delight thee, what is more beautiful than the Maker? If usefulness be praised, what more useful than He Who made all things? If excellence be praised, what more excellent than He by Whom all things were made; by Whom too all things when made are not left alone, but are ruled and guided? Not then as some, who though eloquent are mute, since they praise the creature, but forget the Creator; not thus doth generation and generation among Thy servants praise Thee, when it praiseth Thy works. But how doth it praise? And they shall tell out Thine excellence. In praising Thy works, they shall tell out Thine excellence. Those praisers, faithful men, holy and good, true praisers; not ungrateful for grace, whence they praise this and that of God’s works, above or below, in heaven or in earth, among those works of God which they praise find themselves also, for they too are among the works of God. For He Who made all things, made us too among

all things. Accordingly, if thou praisest the works of God, thou wilt have to praise thyself too, for thou too art a work of God. Where then is, Let not thine own mouth praise thee? Behold, a way is found whereby thou mayest praise thyself too, yet not be arrogant. Praise God in thee, not thyself: not because thou art what thou art, but because He made thee so; not because thou canst do any thing, but because He can do in thee and through thee. And by this means they shall praise Thee, and tell out Thine excellence; not theirs, but Thine. Learn then to praise: gazing on the works, admire the Maker; by giving thanks, not by claiming ought as thine. Praise Him, because He hath made, because He hath thus ordered, because He hath given such things.

8. Finally, see what followeth: They shall tell out Thine excellence, saith he, and they shall speak of the magnificence of the glory of Thy Holiness, and shall record Thy wondrous deeds. And the excellence of Thy fearful works shall they speak of; and Thy greatness, they shall relate it. The remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness they shall pour forth: none but Thine. See whether this man, meditating on Thy works, hath turned aside from the Worker to the work: see whether he hath sunk from Him Who made, to the things which He made. Of the things which He hath made, he hath made a step up to Him, not a descent from Him to them. For if thou love these more than Him, thou wilt not have Him. And what profit is it to thee to overflow with the works, if the Worker leave thee? Truly thou shouldest love them; but love Him more, and love them for His sake. Tell out His excellence; speak of the magnificence of the glory of His Holiness; recount His wondrous works; tell of the excellence of His terrible deeds. For He doth not hold out promises, without holding out threats also: if He held out no promises, there would be no encouragement; if He held out no threats, there would be no correction. They that praise Thee therefore shall speak also of the excellence of Thy terrible deeds; the excellence of that work of Thy hands which punisheth and administereth discipline, they shall speak of, they shall not be silent: for they shall not proclaim Thine everlasting kingdom, and be silent about Thine everlasting fire. For the praise of God, setting thee in the way, ought to shew thee both what thou shouldest love, and what thou shouldest fear; what thou shouldest seek, and what thou shouldest shun; what thou shouldest choose, and what thou

shouldest avoid. The time of choice is now, the time of receiving will be hereafter. Let then the excellence of Thy terrible things be told. And Thy greatness, they shall recount it. Unlimited as it is, though of Thy greatness there is no end, they shall not be silent about it. That Thy greatness, of which I had said above, and of Thy greatness there is no end, that they shall recount. How shall they recount it, if there is no end of it? They shall recount it when they praise it; and because there is no end of it, so of His praise also there shall be no end. Let us prove that of His praise there shall be no end. Blessed, saith the Psalmist, who dwell in Thy house; they will be alway praising Thee. And Thy greatness, that, that boundless greatness, they shall recount it.

9. The remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness they shall pour forth. O happy feasts! What shall they eat, who thus shall pour forth! The remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness. What is, the remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness? Because Thou didst not forget us, when we had forgotten Thee. For all flesh had forgotten God, but He forgat not His own works. This remembrance of His concerning us, in that He forgat us not, is to be proclaimed, is to be told out; and because it is very sweet, it is to be eaten, and poured forth again. So eat, that thou mayest pour forth again; so receive, that thou mayest give. Thou eatest, when thou learnest; thou pourest forth again, when thou teachest: thou eatest, when thou hearest; thou pourest forth again, when thou preachest; but that thou pourest forth, which thou hast first eaten. Finally, that most eager feaster John, to whom the very table of the Lord sufficed not, unless he leaned on the Lord’s breast, and of his inmost heart drank in divine secrets; what did he pour forth? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. The remembrance, therefore, of the abundance of Thy sweetness they shall pour forth. How is it that it sufficeth not to say, Thy remembrance; or, the remembrance of Thine abundance; or, the remembrance of Thy sweetness; but, the remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness? Because, what availeth it if it be abundant, yet not sweet? So also it is annoying if it be sweet but too little.

10. Therefore, the remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness they shall pour forth: because Thou didst not forget us, and not forgetting, didst

warn us, that Thou mightest bring us also to recollection. For all the ends of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord. Because then they shall pour forth the remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness, understanding that there is nought of good in themselves, which cometh not from Thee, and that they could not turn to Thee, unless they were warned by Thee, and that they could not be brought back to Thy recollection, if Thou forgattest them; considering these things by Thy grace, they shall also exult in Thy righteousness. Considering, I say, these things by Thy grace, they shall also exult in Thy righteousness, not in their own. Brethren, if ye wish to give forth grace, drink in grace. What is, drink in grace? Learn grace, understand grace. We, before we were, were not at all; and we were made men, when before we were nothing. And then when we were made men, from the stock of the first sinner we were also wicked, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Observe we then the grace of God, not only whereby He made, but also whereby He re-made us. To Whom therefore we owe that we are, to Him we also owe that we are justified. Let none seem to attribute to God that he is, and to himself that he is just. For better is that which thou wouldest attribute to thyself, than what thou wouldest attribute to Him. For it is a better thing that thou art righteous, than that thou art a man. Thou givest that which is lower to God, that which is higher to thyself. Give all to Him, in all praise Him: so wouldest thou not fall from the hand of thy Maker. Who made thee to be? Is it not written, that God took dust from the ground, and with it made man? Before thou wast man, thou wast dust; before thou wast dust, thou wast nothing. But give not thanks to thy Maker for this making alone; hear also another making, wherein He made thee. Not of works, saith Paul, lest any one should boast. But what said he? Not of works, lest any one should boast: what said he before this? By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves. These are the words of the Apostle, not mine, by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that, namely, that ye should be saved through faith, not of yourselves. Although the very word which he had used, by grace, is clearly not of yourselves, yet he chose to set forth this still more plainly. Give me one that understandeth, and he hath said all. By grace are ye saved: when thou hearest by grace, understand ‘gratis.’ If then it be gratis, thou hast wrought nothing of thine own, hast merited nothing. For if ought is to be repaid to merits, it is reward, not grace. By grace, saith he, ye are saved, through faith. Explain this yet more clearly, on account of the arrogant; on account of the self-complacent; on account of those who are ignorant of the righteousness of God, and desire to establish their own. Hear this same thing yet more openly: and this, that ye are saved by grace, is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. But we too perhaps have done somewhat, to earn the gifts of God. Not of works, saith he, lest any should boast. What then? do we no good works? Yes, we do. But how? By Him working in us: for by faith we give place in our hearts to Him, Who in us and through us doeth good works. For hear whence it is that thou doest good works: for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, that we should walk in them. That is the abundant sweetness of His remembrance with regard to us. By uttering forth this, His preachers shall exult in His righteousness, not in their own. What then hast Thou done unto us, O Lord, Whom we praise, that we should be, that we should praise, that we should exult in Thy righteousness, that we should utter forth the remembrance of the abundance of Thy sweetness? Let us tell it, and, as we tell, let us praise.

11. Merciful and pitiful is the Lord; long suffering, and very merciful. Sweet is the Lord to all, and His compassions reach into all His works. Were He not such as this, there would be no seeking to recover us. Consider thyself: what didst thou deserve, O sinner? Despiser of God, what didst thou deserve? See if ought occur to thee but penalty, if ought occur to thee but punishment. Thou seest then what was due to thee, and what He hath given, Who gave gratis. There was given pardon to the sinner; there was given the spirit of justification; there was given charity and love, wherein thou mayest do all good works; and beyond this, He will give thee also life everlasting, and fellowship with the angels: all of His mercy. Boast not at all of thine own merits, for thy very merits are His gifts. And in Thy righteousness they shall exult. Merciful and pitiful is the Lord; Thou Who hast done all gratis. Long suffering; for how great sinners doth He bear with. Merciful and pitiful is the Lord, toward those to whom He hath given pardon: toward those to whom as yet he hath not given, long suffering; not condemning, but waiting, by His very waiting crying out, Turn ye unto Me, and I will turn to you: and in exceeding long suffering; I will not, saith He, the death of a sinner, but rather that he return, and live. He indeed is long

suffering; but thou, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who shall render to every man according to his deeds. For He is not so long suffering now in enduring, as that He will never be righteous in punishing. He divideth the times: now He calleth thee; now He exhorteth thee: He waiteth till thou come to thyself; and dost thou tarry? Great is His mercy, in this too, that He hath made the days of thy life uncertain to thee, that thou shouldest not know when thou art to depart hence; and so, while thou daily lookest to depart, shouldest at length turn to Him; in this too, great is His mercy. But if He had fixed the day for all, He would make sins to abound by men's security. He gave thee hope of pardon, that thou mightest not by despairing sin more. Both hope and despair are to be feared in sins. Behold the voice of one who despairs, so as to increase his sins; and behold the voice of one who hopeth, so as to increase his sins; and see how the Providence and the Mercy of God meeteth each. Hear the voice of one who despaireth: 'Now,' saith he, 'I must be damned; why should I not do whatsoever I will?' Hear too the voice of one who hopeth: 'Great is the mercy of the Lord; whensoever I turn to Him, He will forgive me all: why should not I do whatsoever I will?' The one despairs, so as to sin; the other hopes, so as to sin. Both are to be feared, both are perilous: woe, because of despair! woe, because of hope! How doth the mercy of God meet both these perils, both these evils? What sayest thou, who through despair didst choose to sin? 'Now I must be damned: why should I not do whatsoever I will?' Hear the Scripture: I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn, and live. By these words of God, he is brought back to hope; but there is another snare to be feared, lest through this very hope he sin the more. What then didst thou also say, thou who through hope sinnest yet more? 'Whensoever I turn, God will forgive me all; I will do whatsoever I will.' Hear thou also the Scripture: Make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, neither put off from day to day: for suddenly shall His wrath come forth, and in the time of vengeance He shall destroy thee. Say not then, 'To-morrow I will turn, to-morrow I will please God; and all to-day's and yesterday's deeds shall be forgiven me.' Thou sayest true: God hath promised pardon to thy conversion; He hath not promised a to-morrow to thy delay.

12. Sweet is the Lord to all, and His compassions are over all His works. Why then doth He condemn? why doth He scourge? Are not they whom He condemneth, whom He scourgeth, His works? Plainly they are. And wilt thou know how His compassions are over all His works? Thence is that long suffering, whereby He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good. Are not His compassions over all His works, Who sendeth rain upon the just and upon the unjust? Are not His compassions over all His works? In His long suffering He waiteth for the sinner, saying, Turn ye to Me, and I will turn to you. Are not His compassions over all His works? And when He saith, Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, this is not His compassion, but His severity. His compassion is given to His works: His severity is not over His works, but over thy works. Lastly, if thou remove thine own evil works, and there remain in thee nought but His work, His compassion will not leave thee: but if thou leavest not thy works, there will be severity over thy works, not over His works.

13. Let all Thy works, O Lord, confess to Thee, and let Thy saints bless Thee. Let all Thy works confess to Thee. How so? Is not the earth His work? Are not the trees His work? Cattle, beasts, fish, fowl, are not they His works? Plainly they too are. And how shall these too confess to Him? I see indeed in the angels that His works confess to Him, for the angels are His works: and men are His works; and when men confess to Him, His works confess to Him; but have trees and stones the voice of confession? Yes, verily; let all His works confess to Him. What sayest thou? even the earth and the trees? All His works. If all praise, how do not all confess? For confession is said not only of sin, but of praise also: lest perchance, wherever ye hear ‘confession,’ ye think that it is of nought, save of sin. For so entirely is this thought, that whenever it soundeth in the word of God, forthwith it is the habit to beat the breast. Hear that there is confession of praise too. Had our Lord Jesus Christ any sin? And yet He saith, I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth. There is confession then in praise. Accordingly, how shall we take, let all Thy works confess to Thee, O Lord? Let all Thy works praise Thee. But there ariseth the same question in regard of praise, as in regard of confession. For if earth and all things devoid of sensation therefore cannot confess, because they have no voice to confess with; neither will they be able to praise, because they have no voice

to proclaim with. But do not those Three Children enumerate all things, as they walked amid the harmless flames, who had not only not to burn, but even to praise God? They say to all things, heavenly and earthly, Bless ye the Lord, praise Him, and magnify Him for ever. Behold how they praise. Let none think that the dumb stone or dumb animal hath reason wherewith to comprehend God. They who have thought this, have erred far from the truth. God hath ordered every thing, and made every thing: to some He hath given sense and understanding and immortality, as to the angels; to some He hath given sense and understanding with mortality, as to man; to some He hath given bodily sense, yet gave them not understanding, or immortality, as to cattle: to some He hath given neither sense, nor understanding, nor immortality, as to herbs, trees, stones: yet even these cannot be wanting in their kind, and by certain degrees He hath ordered His creation, from earth up to heaven, from visible to invisible, from mortal to immortal. This framework of creation, this most perfectly ordered beauty, ascending from lowest to highest, descending from highest to lowest, never broken, but tempered together of things unlike, all praiseth God. Wherefore then doth all praise God? Because when thou considerest it, and seest its beauty, thou in it praisest God. The beauty of the earth is a kind of voice of the dumb earth. Thou observest and seest its beauty, thou seest its fruitfulness, thou seest its strength, how it receiveth seed, how it often bringeth forth what is not sown; thou seest this, and by thy consideration of it, thou, as it were, questionest it; thy very inquiry into it, is questioning it. But when thou hast inquired into it in thine admiration, and hast searched it out, and hast discovered its mighty strength, and great beauty, and surpassing excellence, since it could not of itself and in itself have this excellence, it forthwith cometh into thy mind, that it could not be of itself, without Him, the Creator. And this which thou hast found in it, is the very voice of its confession, that thou praise the Creator. When thou hast thought on the universal beauty of this world, doth not its very beauty as it were with one voice answer thee, ‘I made not myself, God made me?’

14. Therefore let all Thy works confess to Thee, O Lord, and let Thy saints bless Thee. That in confession of Thy works Thy saints may bless Thee, let Thy saints look into Thy creation confessing. And hear Thou their voice when they bless Thee. For when Thy saints bless Thee, what say they?

They shall tell the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy Power. How powerful is God, Who hath made the earth! how powerful is God, Who hath filled the earth with good things! how powerful is God, Who hath given to the animals each its own life! how powerful is God, Who hath given different seeds to the womb of the earth, that they might make to spring up such various shoots, such beautiful trees! how powerful, how great is God! Do thou ask, creation answereth, and by its answer, as by the confession of the creature, thou, O saint of God, blessest God, and talkest of His power.

15. That they may make known to the sons of men Thy power, and the glory of the greatness of the beauty of Thy kingdom. Thy saints then commend the glory of the greatness of the beauty of Thy kingdom, the glory of the greatness of its beauty. There is a certain greatness of the beauty of Thy kingdom: that is, Thy kingdom hath beauty, and great beauty. Since whatever hath beauty, hath beauty from Thee, how great beauty hath Thy whole kingdom! Let not the kingdom frighten us: it hath beauty also, wherewith to delight us. For what is that beauty, which the saints shall hereafter enjoy, to whom it shall be said, Come, ye blessed of My Father, enjoy the kingdom? Whence shall they come? whither shall they come? Behold, brethren, and, if ye can, as far as ye can, think of the beauty of that kingdom which is to come; whence our prayer saith, Thy kingdom come. For that kingdom we desire may come, that kingdom the saints proclaim to be coming. Observe this world: it is beautiful. How beautiful are earth, sea, air, heavens, stars. Do not all these frighten him who considereth them? Is not the beauty of them so conspicuous, that it seemeth as though nothing more beautiful could be found? And here, in this beauty, in this fairness almost unspeakable, here worm and mice and all creeping things of the earth live with thee, they live with thee in all this beauty. How great is the beauty of that kingdom, where none but angels live with Thee? Too little then was it to say, the glory of the beauty. For we might speak of the glory of the beauty of any beautiful thing set on this earth, or that is green on the earth, or that shineth from heaven; but the greatness of the beauty of Thy kingdom commendeth to us somewhat which as yet we see not; which, as yet unseen, we believe; which, believing, we long for, for longing for which we endure all things. There is then a greatness of a certain beauty; let it be loved before it is seen, that when it is seen, it may be retained.

16. Thy kingdom. What kingdom mean I? a kingdom of all ages. For the kingdom of this age too hath its own beauty, but there is not in it that greatness of beauty, such as in the kingdom of all ages. And Thy dominion is in every generation and generation. This is the repetition we noticed, signifying either every generation, or the generation which will be after this generation.

17. Faithful is the Lord in His words, and holy in all His works. Faithful is the Lord in His words: for what hath He promised that He hath not given? Faithful is the Lord in His words. Hereto there are certain things which He hath promised, and hath not given; but let Him be believed from the things which He hath given. Faithful is the Lord in His words. We might well believe Him, if He only spake: He willed not that we should believe Him speaking, but that we should have His Scriptures in our hands: as though thou shouldest say to a man when thou promisedst him something, 'Thou believest me not, behold, I write it for thee.' For because one generation goeth and another cometh, and so these generations hasten by as men retire and succeed one another, it was needful that the Scriptures of God should remain, and a kind of bond of God's, which all who pass by might read, and might keep to the path of its promise. And how great things hath He already paid in accordance with that bond! Do men hesitate to believe Him concerning the Resurrection of the dead and the Life to come, which alone now remaineth to be paid, when, if He come to reckon with the unbelievers, the unbelievers must blush? If God say to thee, 'Thou hast My bond: I have promised judgment, the separation of good and bad, everlasting life for the faithful, and wilt thou not believe? There in My bond read all that I have promised, reckon with me: verily even by counting up what I have paid, thou canst believe that I shall pay what still I owe. In that bond thou hast My only-begotten Son promised, Whom I spared not, but gave Him up for you all: reckon this then among what is paid. Read the bond: I promised therein that I would give by My Son the earnest of the Holy Spirit: reckon that as paid. I promised therein the blood and the crowns of the glorious Martyrs; let the mass remind you that My debt has been paid. But that this glory of the Martyrs might be paid, which is promised thee in the bond, where it is written, For Thy sake are we killed all the day long; that this might be paid, the nations raged, and the people imagined vain things; the

kings of the earth stood up, and the princes came together, against the Lord, and against His Christ. The princes came together, conspiring against the Christians. Further, did I not promise in the bond that the kings should believe, and have I not fulfilled it in deed? Listen where I promised it: All kings shall worship Him, all nations shall serve Him. Ungrateful one! thou readest what was due, thou seest what has been paid, yet thou believest not what is promised. Read another thing in My bond: because the nations raged, because Mine enemies spake evil of Me, (that is, of Christ,) When shall He die, and His Name perish? because they did and said all these things, read what I promised, what I bound Myself to pay. The Lord shall prevail against them, and shall destroy all the gods of the nations of the earth; and they shall worship Him, every one from his place. Well, now He hath prevailed, He hath destroyed all the gods of the nations of the earth. Doth He not do this, and pay it? He setteth before the eyes of all His payment of His debts: some He hath paid in the time of our ancestors, which we saw not: some He hath paid in our times, which they saw not; throughout all generations He hath paid what was written. And what remaineth? Do men not believe Him, when He hath paid all this? What remaineth? Behold thou hast reckoned: all this He hath paid: is He become unfaithful for the few things which remain? God forbid! Wherefore? Because the Lord is faithful in His words, and holy in all His works.

18. The Lord strengtheneth all that are falling. But who are all that are falling? All indeed fall in a general sense, but he meaneth those who fall in a particular way. For many fall from Him, many also fall from their own imaginations. If they had evil imaginations, they fall from them, and God strengthened all that are falling. They who lose any thing in this world, yet are holy, are as it were dishonoured in this world, from rich become poor, from honoured of low estate, yet are they God’s saints; they are, as it were, falling. But God strengtheneth. For the just falleth seven times, and riseth again; but the wicked shall be weakened in evils. When evils befall the wicked, they are weakened thereby; when evils befall the righteous, the Lord strengtheneth all that are falling. Job had fallen from the brightness of the former light of temporal things, with which he had shone for a while; he had fallen from the glory of his house. Would ye know how far he had fallen? He sat on the dunghill: yet the Lord strengthened him when falling.

How much did He strengthen him? So much that, even in the grievous wound wherewith he was smitten throughout his whole body, he answered his wife, when she, the only helper whom the devil had left him, tempted him, Thou hast spoken as one of the foolish women: if we receive good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not also endure evil? How had He strengthened him when falling! The Lord strengtheneth all that are falling. When the righteous falleth, he shall not be troubled, for the Lord strengtheneth his hand. And lifteth up all those that have been cast down: all, that is, who belong to him; for God resisteth the proud.

19. The eyes of all hope upon Thee, and Thou givest them food in due season. Just as when thou refreshest a sick man in due season, when he ought to receive, then Thou givest, and what he ought to receive, that Thou givest. Sometimes then men long, and he giveth not: he who tendeth, knoweth the time to give. Wherefore say I this, brethren? Lest any one, if perchance he hath not been heard, when making some righteous request of God: (for when he maketh any unrighteous request, he is heard to his punishment:) but when making some righteous request of God, if perchance he have not been heard, let him not be down-hearted, let him not faint, let his eyes wait for the food, which He giveth in due season. When He giveth not, He therefore giveth not, lest that which He giveth do harm. For the Apostle made no unrighteous request, when he besought that the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, whereby he was buffetted, might be taken from him: and yet he asked, and did not receive, because as yet it was the time for exercising his weakness, not the due season of food. My grace, He saith, is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness. The devil asked permission to tempt Job, and received it. Learn here, my brethren, a great mystery, needful to be learned, repeated, kept in mind, never forgotten, on account of the abundance of temptations in this world. What shall I say? Is the Apostle really to be compared with the devil? The Apostle asketh, and receiveth not; the devil asketh, and receiveth. But the Apostle received not, in order to his perfecting; the devil received, to his damnation. Finally, Job himself received healing in due season. He was put off, however, that he might be proved, and he sat long in his sores, and asked God that they might be taken from him, and yet God took them not away. More readily did He hear the devil for Job’s trial, than Job himself for

his healing. Learn then not to murmur against God, and, when ye are not heard, let not that fail in you which is written above, Every day will I bless Thee. Even the Son Himself, even the only-begotten Himself, came to suffer, to pay what He owed not, to die by the hands of sinners, to blot out with His own Blood the handwriting of our death; for this He came; and yet, that He might shew thee an example of patience, He changed the body of our humiliation, fashioning it like unto the body of His Glory. Father, He said, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. And that, although He received not what He seemed to ask, He might fulfil, Every day will I bless Thee, He said, Nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt, Father. The eyes of all hope in Thee, and Thou givest them meat in due season.

20. Thou openest Thine Hand, and fillest every living thing with blessing. Though sometimes Thou givest not, yet in due season Thou givest: Thou delayest, not deniest, and that in due season.

21. Righteous is the Lord in all His ways. Both when He smiteth and when He healeth, He is righteous, and in Him unrighteousness is not. Finally, all His saints, when set in the midst of tribulation, have first praised His righteousness, and so sought His blessings. They first have said, ‘What Thou doest is righteous.’ So did Daniel ask, and other holy men: ‘Righteous are Thy judgments: rightly have we suffered, deservedly have we suffered.’ They laid not unrighteousness to God, they laid not to Him injustice and folly. First they praised Him scourging, and so they felt Him feeding. Righteous is the Lord in all His ways. Let no one think Him unrighteous, when perchance he suffereth ought of evil, but let him praise His righteousness, and accuse his own unrighteousness. Righteous is the Lord in all His ways, and holy in all His works.

22. The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him. Where then is that, Then shall they call upon Me, and I will not hear them? See then what follows: all who call upon Him in truth. For many call upon Him, but not in truth. They seek something else from Him, but seek not Himself. Why lovest thou God? ‘Because He hath made me whole.’ That is clear: it was He that made thee so. For from none else cometh health, save Him. ‘Because He gave me,’ saith another, ‘a rich wife, whereas I before had nothing, and one that obeyeth me.’ This too He gave: thou sayest true. ‘He gave me,’ saith

another, ‘sons many and good, He gave me a household, He gave me all good things.’ Dost thou love Him for this? Seekest thou then nothing more? Be hungry: still knock at the door of the Master of the household: still hath He somewhat to give. Thou art but a beggar with all these things which thou hast received, and Thou knowest it not. Thou bearest about as yet the ragged flesh of mortality: thou hast not yet received that glorious robe of immortality, and, as if already satisfied, dost thou cease to ask? Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Therefore if God is good, Who hath given thee what thou hast, how much more blessed wilt thou be when He hath given thee Himself! Thou hast desired all these things of Him: I beseech thee desire of Him Himself also. For these things are not truly sweeter than He is, nor in any way are they to be compared to Him. He then who preferreth God Himself to all the things which he has received, whereat he rejoiceth, to the things he has received, he calleth upon God in truth. For to tell you the truth, if to such men a question were put, and it were said, ‘What, if God chose to take away from thee all those things wherein thou delightest?’ then He would be no longer loved: there would be none to say, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so hath it been done; blessed be the Name of the Lord. But what saith he, from whom He hath taken these things away? ‘What have I done to Thee, O God? wherefore hast Thou taken from me, and given to them?’ Thou givest to the unrighteous, and takest from Thine own. Thou accusest God of being unrighteous, thou praisest thyself as righteous. Turn thee, accuse thyself, praise Him. Then wilt thou be right, when in all the good which He doth, God pleaseth thee; and in all the ills which thou sufferest, He displeaseth thee not. This is to call upon God in truth. Those who thus call upon God, He heareth: He is nigh: that is, not yet hath He given what thou wishest, yet there He is. Just as if perchance a physician lays either upon eyes or stomach what is to heal by burning, though the sick man ask that it be taken from him, the physician awaiteth the time, he doeth not what the sick man asketh; yet he departeth not from him. He is near, yet he doeth it not: yea, all the more he doeth it not, because he is near. For to heal him he laid on what he hath laid on, and to heal him he doeth not what he is asked. He heareth him not in regard of his present will, yet he heareth him in regard of his future healing, and this at all events according to his will. For surely he wisheth to be made whole, even if he wish not to be burnt. Nigh then is the Lord to all that call upon Him. But what all? All that call upon Him in truth.

23. He will perform the will of them that fear Him. He will perform it, He will perform it: though He perform it not at once, yet He will perform it. Certainly if therefore thou fearest God, that thou mayest do His will, behold even He in a manner ministereth to thee; He doeth thy will. And He shall hear their prayer, and save them. Thou seest that for this purpose the Physician hears, that He may save. When? Hear the Apostle telling thee. For we are saved in hope: but hope which is seen is not hope: but if what we see not we hope for, then do we with patience wait for it: the salvation, that is, which Peter calleth ready to be revealed in the last time.

24. The Lord guardeth all that love Him, and all sinners He will destroy. Thou seest that there is severity with Him, with Whom is so great sweetness. He will save all that hope in Him, all the faithful, all that fear Him, all that call upon Him in truth: and all sinners He will destroy. What all sinners, save those who persevere in sin; who dare to blame God, not themselves; who daily argue against God; who despair of pardon for their sins, and from this very despair heap up their sins; or who perversely promise themselves pardon, and through this very promise depart not from their sins and impiety? The time will come for all these to be separated, and for the two divisions to be made of them, one on the right hand, the other on the left; and for the righteous to receive the everlasting Kingdom, the wicked to go into everlasting fire. And all sinners He shall destroy.

25. Since this is so, and we have heard the blessing of the Lord, the works of the Lord, the wondrous things of the Lord, the mercies of the Lord, the severity of the Lord, His Providence over all His works, the confession of all His works; observe how He concludeth in His praise, My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless His holy Name for ever and ever.

PSALM 146

Sermon to the people.

1. The divine songs are the delights of our spirits, wherein even weeping is not without joy. To a faithful man, and one who is a stranger in the world, no remembrance is so joyous as that of the city whence he is a wanderer: but the recollection of his city in his wanderings is not without sorrow and sighing. Yet the sure hope of our return comforteth and cheereth us when sad with our wandering. Let the words of God seize upon your hearts, and let Him, Whose ye are, claim His own possession, that is, your mind, that they be not turned aside to ought else. Let each one of you so be entirely here, that he be not here: that is, let him give himself wholly to the word of God, which soundeth on earth, that by it he may be lifted up, and not be on earth. For therefore was He God with us, that we might be with Him. For He Who came down from heaven to be with us, maketh us ascend to Him, that we may be with Him. Meanwhile He scorned not our estrangement; for no where is He a stranger, Who made all things.

2. Behold the Psalm soundeth; it is the voice of some one, (and that some one are ye, if ye will,) of some one encouraging his soul to praise God, and saying to himself, Praise the Lord, O my soul. For sometimes in the tribulations and temptations of this present life, whether we will or no, our soul is troubled; of which troubling he speaketh in another Psalm, saying, Wherefore art thou sad, O my soul, and wherefore troublest thou me? But to remove this troubling, he suggesteth joy; not as yet in reality, but in hope; and saith to it when troubled and anxious, sad and sorrowing, Hope in God, for I will yet confess to Him. The hope wherewith he lifted himself up, he set in confession, as though his soul, which troubled him with sadness, said to him, Why sayest thou to me, Hope in God? I am called back therefrom by consciousness of sins: I know what I have committed, and thou sayest to me, hope in God. Thou hast committed these things, it is true: but whence dost thou hope? Because, I will confess to Him. As God hateth one who defendeth his sin, so He helpeth one who confesseth. Having then received

this hope, which hope cannot be without joy, although we be in circumstances most difficult as concerning this life, and full of storms and tempests, yet the soul uplifted by this hope, because it rejoiceth in hope, as the Apostle saith, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, hath received a sort of lifting up to God, to praise God; and to it is said, Praise the Lord, O my soul.

3. But who saith it, and to whom saith he it? What shall we say, brethren? Is it the flesh that saith, Praise thou the Lord, O my soul? And can the flesh suggest good counsel to the soul? However much the flesh be conquered, and subjected as a servant to us through strength which the Lord imparteth, that it serve us entirely as a bond slave, enough for us that it hinder us not. In the next place, surely, brethren, men seek counsel from their betters: and if our soul be in some sense good, and our flesh is in some sense good, because He created both Who created all things very good, although, I say, both be good in their several kinds, yet the Apostle saith, the body is dead because of sin. There is indeed that body also which is promised to us, which as yet we have not, in whose redemption we rejoice in hope, as the Apostle saith, We groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies. For we are saved in hope. But hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he hope for? but if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Although then our body be in some sense good, yet, so long as it is mortal because of sin, as long as it is needy, as long as it is corruptible, as long as it is so changeable, that even for a moment it abideth not, without doubt it is such, that we must wish for its redemption, whereby it will at length cease to be such. But what will it be hereafter? Such as the same Apostle saith in another place, For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But even when our body shall have become such as this, a body now heavenly and spiritual, a body angel-like in its fellowship with angels, not even then will it give counsel to the soul. For the body, inasmuch as it is the body, is even beneath the soul; and every soul, however vile, is found more excellent than the most excellent body.

4. And let not this seem to you to be wonderful, that even any vile and sinful soul is better than any great and most surpassing body. It is better, not

in deserts, but in nature. The soul indeed is sinful, is stained with certain defilements of lusts; yet gold, though rusted, is better than the most polished lead. Let your mind then run over every part of creation, and ye will see that what we are saying is not incredible, that a soul, however blameable, is yet more praiseworthy than a praiseworthy body. There are two things, a soul and a body. The soul I chide, the body I praise: the soul I chide, because it is sinful; the body I praise, because it is sound. Yet it is in its own kind that I praise the soul, and in its own kind that I blame the soul: and so in its own kind I praise the body, or blame it. If you ask me which is better, what I have blamed or what I have praised, wondrous is the answer thou wilt receive. True, I praised the one and blamed the other, yet, when asked which is better, I answer that what I have blamed is better than what I have praised. If thou wonderest at these two things, observe the case of the two things ready to our hands, which I have already quoted, the gold and the lead. Observe: I have found fault with the gold: it is rusted: it shines not as much, it is not as clean: this lead is beautiful, as clean as can be. The former I have found fault with, the latter I have praised, and have set before you both, finding fault with the one, praising the other. After thus bestowing my blame and praise, ask me which of these is better: I shall answer, the gold, even though rusted, is better, is better than the lead when clear. How, better, and wherefore then hast thou found fault with it? Wherefore have I found fault with it? Because it is not yet the gold which it can be. What can it be? Cleansed and better. Because it hath not yet been cleansed, it is found fault with. Why hast thou praised the lead? Because it is already so clean that it cannot be better. So you speak of the best horse and the worst man; yet thou preferrest the man thou findest fault with to the horse thou praisest. For if thou wert asked which of these two was better, thou wouldest say, ‘the man,’ not by deserts, but by nature. So in trades, thou speakest of a first-rate cobbler, and findest fault with some lawyer, because he is ignorant of many laws: thou hast praised the cobbler, thou hast blamed the lawyer; yet ask which of these two is better, and the unskilled lawyer is preferred to the perfect cobbler. Observe, my beloved, after having in so many instances praised some things, blamed others, yet when asked, we for the most part prefer what we have blamed to what we have praised. The nature of the soul is more excellent than the nature of the body: it surpasseth it by far, it is a thing spiritual, incorporeal, akin to the substance of God. It is somewhat invisible, it ruleth the body, moveth the limbs, guideth the senses, prepareth thoughts, putteth forth actions, taketh in images of countless things; who is there, in short, beloved brethren, who may suffice for the praises of the soul? And yet such is the grace given to it, that this man saith, Praise the Lord, O my soul. Who can praise God? If he said, ‘praise thyself,’ perchance it would fail: he saith, praise God. Endeavour with the affection of love, still thou wilt fall short in His praise. Better is it for thee to fall short in praising God, than to go forward in praising thyself. For when thou praisest God, and unfoldest not what thou wouldest, thy thought spreads inwardly, its very spreading maketh thee more able to contain Him Whom thou praiseth.

5. Who then is it, as I began to say, who saith, Praise the Lord, O my soul? It is not the flesh that saith it. Let the body be angel-like, still it is inferior to the soul, it cannot give advice to its superior. The flesh when duly obedient is the handmaid of the soul: the soul rules, the body obeys; the soul commands, the body performs; how then can the flesh give this advice to the soul? Who then is it who saith, Praise the Lord, O my soul? We find nothing more in man than flesh and soul: the whole man consists of this, of body and soul. Is it then perchance the soul herself, who saith to herself, and in a manner commandeth herself, and exhorteth and asketh herself? For through certain passions in one part of her nature she wavered; but in another part, which they call the reasonable mind, the wisdom whereby she thinks, clinging to God, and now sighing towards Him, she perceives that certain inferior parts of her are troubled by worldly emotions, and by a certain excitement of earthly desires, betake them to outward things, leaving God Who is within; so she recalleth herself from things outward to inward, from lower to higher, and says, Praise the Lord, O my soul. What pleaseth thee in the world? what is there which thou wishest to praise? what that thou wishest to love? Whithersoever thou turnest thyself with thy corporeal senses, there meeteth thee the sky, meeteth thee the earth; what thou lovest on earth, is earthly; whatever thou lovest even in the sky, is corporeal. Every where thou lovest, and every where thou praisest: how greatly is He to be praised, Who made these things which thou praisest! Now then thou hast long lived in the midst of engagements, and hast been battered by various desires, so that thou art wounded, and bearest the mark

of their blows: thou hast been distracted between many loves, ever disquieted, never free from care; concentrate thyself within thyself; whatever before pleased thee without thee, seek now Who was its Author. For instance, there is nothing better on earth than this and that; gold, for example, or silver, or animals, or trees, or beautiful places, or the whole earth together. What is there in the sky better than sun, moon, and stars? or consider if you will the whole heaven together. All these things together are very good; for God made all things very good. On all sides is the beauty of the work, which commendeth to thee the Maker. Thou admirest the workmanship, love the Worker. Be not taken up with that which is made, and withdraw from Him Who made it. For these things with which thou art taken up, He made beneath thee, Who made thee beneath Himself. If thou cling to Him Who is above thee, thou wilt trample under thee what is below thee: if thou withdraw thyself from Him that is above thee, these things will be turned into punishment for thee. For this is the case, my brethren; man received a body to be servant to him, having God as his Lord, his body as his servant: having above him his Creator, beneath him that which was created below him; while the reasonable soul, set in a sort of middle ground, had a law laid upon it, to cling to Him Who is above it, to rule that which is below it. It cannot rule that which is below it, unless it be ruled by Him that is better than it. If it be drawn away by what is beneath it, it has abandoned Him Who is better than it. It can no longer rule what it did rule, because it would not be ruled by Him, Who used to rule it. Now then let it return, let it praise. The soul itself giveth itself counsel from the light of God by the reasonable mind, whereby it conceiveth the wisdom fixed in the everlasting nature of its Author. It readeth there of somewhat to be feared, to be praised, to be loved, to be longed for, and sought after: as yet it graspeth it not, it comprehendeth it not; it is, as it were, dazzled with brightness; it has not strength to abide there. Therefore it gathers itself, as it were, into a sound state, and saith, Praise the Lord, O my soul.

6. And what is the case, brethren? Do we not praise the Lord? Do we not daily sing our hymn? Daily doth not our mouth sound, our heart utter, according to our measure, the praise of God? And what is it which we praise? Great is that which we praise, but that wherewith we praise as yet is weak. When doth he who praiseth fully reach the excellence of Him he

praiseth? Behold a man standeth up, he singeth unto God at great length, and often his lips are moving in song, while his thoughts are flitting through I know not what desires. Our mind then stood up, as it were, to praise God; our soul the while was drifting hither and thither amid divers desires or anxieties of business. The mind, as it were, from above observeth it, drifting hither and thither, and turning, as it were, to its disquiet in its anxieties, it saith, Praise the Lord, O my soul. Why busiest thou thyself in other things? Why art thou taken up with anxiety about things of earth, and of this life? Stand with me, and praise the Lord. And then the soul, weighed down, as it were, and unable to stand up as is fitting, answereth the mind, I will praise the Lord in my life. What is, in my life? Because now I am in my death. Therefore first encourage thyself, and say, Praise the Lord, O my soul. Thy soul answereth thee, I do praise so far as I can, slightly, poorly, weakly. Wherefore? Because, while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord. Wherefore thus praisest thou the Lord, not perfectly, not stedfastly? Ask Scripture: for the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things. Take me away the body that presseth down the soul, and I praise the Lord: take me away the earthly tabernacle that weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things, that from many things I may concentrate myself to one, and I praise the Lord: but, as long as I am thus, I cannot, I am weighed down. What then? Wilt thou be silent, and not praise the Lord perfectly? I will praise the Lord in my life.

7. What is, in my life? Thou art my hope here. Here we say, Thou art my hope; but my portion, not here, but, in the land of the living: for this is the land of the dying: we pass from hence; but it makes a difference whither. For both the evil man is a wanderer here, and the good man is a wanderer here. For it is not that the good passeth away, or the evil abideth here; or that the evil passeth away, and the good remaineth here: both pass away, but not both to one end. There were two men: a beggar full of sores, lying at the rich man’s gate; and a rich man, clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day: both were here; both passed away from hence; but not both to the same place: different places receive them, because different deserts bring them thither. The beggar passed into Abraham’s bosom, the rich man passed into the torments of hell. In body they were neighbours

upon earth; one in the house, the other at the gate: after death they were so widely severed, that Abraham saith, between us and you there is a great gulph fixed. Therefore, brethren, since faith feeds us here, but our life is not perfect, save that which is promised to us, here we have groans, here temptations, here straits, here sorrows, here dangers; there our soul shall praise God as He is to be praised; according to what is said in another Psalm, Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house, they shall be alway praising Thee: when our whole business will be merely praise. But when will this be? In my life. Now what has it? It might answer thee, ‘My death.’ Whence, ‘My death?’ because I am absent from the Lord. For if to cling to Him is life, to depart from Him is death. But what comforteth thee? Hope. Now thou livest in hope: in hope praise, in hope sing. Thy death is from the sadness of this life, thou livest in hope of a future life. I will praise, saith he, my God in my life.

8. And how wilt thou praise thy Lord? I will sing unto my God, as long as I have my being. What sort of praise is this, I will sing unto my God as long as I have my being? Behold, my brethren, what sort of being this will be; where there will be everlasting praise, there will be also everlasting being. Behold, now thou hast being: dost thou sing unto God as long as thou hast being? Behold, thou wast singing, and hast turned thyself away to some business, thou singest no longer, yet thou hast being: thou hast being, yet thou singest not. It may be also thy desire turneth thee to somewhat; not only dost thou not sing, but thou even offendest His ears, yet thou hast being. What praise will that be, when thou praisest as long as thou hast being? But what meaneth, as long as I have being? Will there be any time when he will not be? Nay, rather, that long will be everlasting, and therefore it will be truly long. For whatever hath end in time, however prolonged it is, is yet not long. I will sing unto God as long as I have being.

9. Meanwhile it is well: thou shalt praise God in thy life, thou singest hereafter to thy God as long as thou hast being. It is well: whatever thou reliest on here, hope in Him. Let not hope desert us here, in this pilgrimage and trial, amid these wickednesses and snare of our enemy, while the temptations of the world roar around us on all sides, while we are set in the midst of toils and distresses on all sides. What then shall we do? Hear what

followeth. Put not your trust in princes. Brethren, here we receive a mighty task; it is a voice from heaven, from above it soundeth to us. For now through some kind of weakness the soul of man, whensoever it is in tribulation here, despaireth of God, and chooseth to rely on man. Let it be said to one when set in some affliction, ‘There is a great man, by whom thou mayest be set free;’ he smileth, he rejoiceth, he is lifted up. But if it is said to him, ‘God freeth thee,’ he is chilled, so to speak, by despair. The aid of a mortal is promised, and thou rejoicest; the aid of the Immortal is promised, and art thou sad? It is promised thee that thou shalt be freed by one who needeth to be freed with thee, and thou exultest, as at some great aid: thou art promised that Liberator, Who needeth none to free Him, and thou despairest, as though it were but a fable. Woe to such thoughts: they wander far; truly there is sad and great death in them. Approach, begin to long, begin to seek and to know Him by Whom thou wast made. For He will not leave His work, if He be not left by His work. Turn thee then to Him, to Whom thou sayest, I will praise the Lord in my life, I will sing unto my God as long as I have being. For the Psalmist warneth us as one filled with the Spirit, and saith, as to men far distant and wandering, and not only not willing to praise God, but not as yet hoping in God, Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men, in whom is no salvation. In one Son of man alone is there salvation, and in Him, not because He is the Son of man, but because He is the Son of God; not on account of that which He took of thee, but of that which He retained in Himself. In no man then is there salvation, for even in Him there is salvation only because He is God, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Of Christ is said, Of whom according to the flesh Christ came. Of whom? Of the Jews, of the fathers in Christ according to the flesh: but is Christ entirely that which He is according to the flesh? No: for neither according to the flesh is He over all, God blessed for ever. Therefore in Him is salvation, for salvation is the Lord’s. For another Psalm saith, Salvation is the Lord’s, and Thy blessing is upon Thy people. And without cause do men claim to themselves to give salvation. Let them give it to themselves. Reply to the proud man, Thou boastest in that thou sayest that thou givest me salvation: give it to thyself: see whether thou hast it; considering well thy frailty, thou seest that thou hast it not yet. Therefore bid me not look for it from thee, but look thou for it with me. Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men, in whom is no salvation. Behold, certain princes come forth I know not whence, and say, I baptize, and what I give is holy: if thou receive from another, thou hast received nothing; if thou receivest from me, thou hast received something. O man, O prince, wishest thou to be among the sons of men, and among the princes in whom is no salvation? Have I therefore salvation, because thou givest? Is what thou givest thine own? Or is it true that thou givest it? or can we say that thou givest it? So the pipe may say, that it giveth water; so too may the gutter say, that it itself runs; so too may the usher say, that he setteth free. In the water I regard the fountain, in the voice of the usher I recognise the judge. Verily thou shalt not be the author of my salvation: He shall be, on Whom I can rely: of thee I am uncertain. If thou art not presumptuous, not only am I uncertain about thee, but thou art also about thyself. From Him then is my salvation, Who is over all, for salvation is the Lord’s. Thou art amongst the sons of men, amongst the princes; but I hear the Psalm saying, Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men, from whom is no salvation.

10. Looking to the multitude of men, what are these sons of men? Wilt thou know what they are? His breath shall go forth, and he shall return to his earth. Behold all which he saith, knowing not how long he shall say it: he threateneth, knowing not how long he shall live. On a sudden his breath shall go forth, and he shall return to his earth. Shall it be when he wisheth that his breath shall go forth? It shall go forth, and shall go forth when he wisheth it not, and when he knoweth not he shall return to his earth. When the breath goeth forth, the flesh shall return to the earth. But because it was flesh that thus spake; (for none would say, Rely on me, and I will give to thee, save they to whom it is said that they are flesh:) his breath shall go forth, and he shall return to his earth: in that day shall all his thoughts perish. Where is swelling? where is pride? where is boasting? But perhaps he will have passed to a good place, if indeed he have passed. For I know not whither he who spake thus hath passed. For he spake in pride; and I know not whither such men pass, save that I look into another Psalm, and see that their passage is an evil one. I beheld the wicked lifted up above the cedars of Libanus, and I passed by, and, lo, he was not; and I sought him, and his place was not found. The good man, who passed by, and found not the wicked, reached a place where the wicked is not. Wherefore, brethren,

let us all listen: brethren, beloved of God, let us all listen; in whatsoever tribulation, in whatsoever longing for the heavenly gift, let us not trust in princes, nor in sons of men, in whom is no salvation. All this is mortal, fleeting, perishable. His breath shall go forth, and he shall return to his earth: in that day all his thoughts shall perish.

11. What then must we do, if we are not to hope in sons of men, nor in princes? What must we do? Blessed is he, whose Helper is the God of Jacob: not this man or that man; not this angel or that angel; but, blessed is he whose Helper is the God of Jacob: for to Jacob also so great an Helper was He, that of Jacob He made him Israel. O mighty help! now he is Israel, ‘seeing God.’ While then thou art placed here, and a wanderer not yet seeing God, if thou hast the God of Jacob for thy Helper, from Jacob thou wilt become Israel, and wilt be ‘seeing God,’ and all toil and all groans shall come to an end, gnawing cares shall cease, happy praises shall succeed. Blessed is he whose Helper is the God of Jacob; of this Jacob. Wherefore is he happy? Meanwhile, while yet groaning in this life, his hope is in the Lord his God. Therefore is he blessed, because his hope is in the Lord his God. In Whom his hope is, in Him will be his whole. Brethren, am I perchance wrong in saying, that the Lord will be our whole? what if I should say that He will be our inheritance? Thou art my hope, and my portion, in the land of the living. Thou shalt be my portion. Thou shalt both be a possession, and shalt possess: thou shalt be God’s possession, and God shall be thy Possession: thou shalt be His possession, to be cultivated by Him; He shall be thy possession, for thee to worship Him. For thou both worshippest God, and art cultivated by God. Rightly is it said, I worship God. But how am I cultivated by God? We find in the Apostle, Ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. And the Lord saith, I am the Vine, ye are the branches; and, My Father is the Husbandman. God then cultivateth thee, that thou mayest be fruitful; thou worshippest God, that thou mayest be fruitful. It is good for thee that God cultivateth thee: it is good for thee that thou worshippest God. If God the Cultivator depart from man, man is abandoned: if man the worshipper depart from God, it is man himself who is abandoned. God neither increaseth by thy approach to Him, nor decreaseth by thy withdrawal. He then will be our possession, that He feed us; we shall be His possession, that He rule us.

12. His hope is in the Lord his God. Who is this, Lord his God? Observe, my brethren. For many men have many gods, and call them their lords and their gods. But the Apostle saith, Although there be that be called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there are gods many and lords many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom are all things. Therefore let Him be thy hope, even the Lord thy God; in Him let thy hope be. His hope too is in the lord his god, who worshippeth Saturn; his hope is in the lord his god, who worshippeth Neptune or Mercury; yea more, I add, who worshippeth his belly, of whom is said, whose god is their belly. The one is the god of the one, the other of the other. Who of this blessed one? for his hope is in the Lord his God. But Who is He? Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them. My brethren, we have a great God; let us bless His holy Name, that He hath deigned to make us His possession. As yet thou seest not God; thou canst not fully love what as yet thou seest not. All that thou seest, He hath made. Thou admirest the world; why not the Maker of the world? Thou lookest up to the heavens, and art amazed: thou considerest the whole earth, and tremblest; when canst thou contain in thy thought the vastness of the sea? Look at the countless number of the stars, look at all the many kinds of seeds, all the different sorts of animals, all that swimmeth in the water, creepeth on the earth, flieth in the sky, hovereth in the air; how great are all these, how beautiful, how fair, how amazing! Behold, He Who made all these, is thy God. Put thy hope in Him, that thou mayest be happy. His hope is in the Lord his God. What God? Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them.

13. Observe, my brethren, the mighty God, the good God, Who maketh all these things. What then was God’s thought in this, (if indeed we may say ‘thought,’ of God,) in making heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them? Perhaps this man was about to say, ‘I see indeed that all these things are great; God hath made heaven and earth and the sea; where doth God reckon me among the things which He hath made, or do I truly partake of His care, or doth God now think of me, and know whether I am alive? What is this which thou sayest? Let not an evil thought creep into thy heart: be of those, of whom we spake a little above, I will praise God in my life, I will sing unto God as long as I have being. But he is addressing others, some

anxious ones, whom he cheereth, seeming to fear lest they despair about themselves, as though they are not even in the reckoning of God. For many have such thoughts. But therefore do they abandon God, and hurry through any kind of sin, because they believe not that God careth what they do. Hear the words of God’s mouth, despair not of thyself. He Who cared to make thee, careth He not to remake thee? If he mentioned these things only, perhaps thou wouldest answer me, ‘God, Who made heaven and earth and sea, is a great God: but doth He think of me?’ It would be said to thee, ‘He made thee.’ How so? am I heaven, or am I earth, or am I sea? Surely it is plain; I am neither heaven, nor earth, nor sea: yet I am on earth. At least thou grantest me this, that thou art on earth. Hear then, that God made not only heaven and earth and sea: for He made heaven and earth and sea, and all that is in them. If then He made all that is in them, He made thee also. It is too little to say, thee; the sparrow, the locust, the worm, none of these did He not make, and He careth for all. His care refers not to His commandment, for this commandment He gave to man alone: for the Psalm saith, Thou, Lord, shall save both man and beast, according to the multitude of Thy mercy, O God. The multitude of Thy mercy, He saith: according to this, Thou shalt save both man and beast. And the Apostle saith, Doth God take care for oxen? In the one passage, God careth not for oxen; in the other, Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast: are these contrary? For what is it that the Apostle saith? Doth God regard oxen? Where then is the command, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn: hath not God there thought about oxen? He meant then certain other oxen to be represented. For God doth not take care to bid thee how to treat thy oxen, this human nature herself careth for. Man is so made, that he knoweth how to provide for his oxen; nor in regard of them hath he received commandments from God, but it has been implanted in him by God, so that he should know how to act even without commandment; such hath God made him. But as he ruleth his cattle, so is he to be ruled by Another: from Him by Whom he is ruled, he hath received a commandment. As regards then the tenor of the commandment, God doth not take care for oxen: as regards His providential care of the universe, whereby He created all things, and ruleth the world, Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast.

14. Attend, my beloved. Here perhaps some one may say to me, God careth not for oxen, comes from the New Testament: Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast, is from the Old Testament. There are some who find fault and say, that these two Testaments agree not with one another. That he may not, as is likely, say that there is one thing in the Old Testament, another in the New, and call upon me for a sentiment from the New Testament, such as this, Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast, what do I? Nothing is so much the sum of the New Testament as the Gospel. In the Gospel I find, that God hath to do with all these things: none can gainsay it. For is the Apostle at variance with the Gospel? Let us hear the Lord Himself, the Chief and Master of the Apostles: Consider, saith He, the fowls of the air; they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Therefore even beside men, these animals are objects of care to God, to be fed, not to receive a law. As far then as regards giving a law, God careth not for oxen: as regards creating, feeding, governing, ruling, all things have to do with God. Are not two sparrows sold for one farthing, saith our Lord Jesus Christ, and one of them shall not fall to the ground without the will of your Father: how much better are ye than they. Say not then, ‘I have nought to do with God.’ Thy soul belongeth to God, thy body belongeth to God, for God made both thy soul and thy body. Perhaps thou sayest, God counteth me not in this great multitude. There follows here a wondrous passage in the Gospel; the hairs of your head are all numbered.

15. He then is my God, and in Him is my hope, Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them. But as regardeth me, how dealeth He with me? Who keepeth truth for ever. He has commended to us a God to be loved and to be feared. Who keepeth truth for ever. What truth for ever? what truth doth He keep, and wherein doth He keep it for ever? Who executeth judgment for them that suffer wrong. He avengeth them that suffer wrong. My brethren, He executeth judgment for them. For whom? for them that suffer wrong, punishing all wrong-doers. If then He will favour them that suffer wrong, and punish the wrong-doers, consider now of which number thou choosest to be. See, consider whether thou choosest to be among those who suffer wrong, or among those who do wrong. For there cometh at once to thee the voice of the Apostle; now therefore there is

altogether a fault among you, that ye go to law one with another: why do ye not rather suffer wrong? He urgeth thee not to suffer annoyance, but to suffer wrong: for not every annoyance is wrong. For whatever thou sufferest lawfully is not a wrong; lest perchance thou shouldest say, I also am among those who have suffered wrong, for I have suffered such a thing in such a place, and such a thing for such a reason. Consider whether thou hast suffered a wrong. Robbers suffer many things, but they suffer no wrong. Wicked men, evil doers, house-breakers, adulterers, seducers, all these suffer many evils, yet is there no wrong. It is one thing to suffer wrong; it is another to suffer tribulation, or penalty, or annoyance, or punishment. Consider where thou art; see what thou hast done; see why thou art suffering; and then thou seest what thou art suffering. Right and wrong are contraries. Right is what is just. For not all that is called right, is right. What if a man lay down for you unjust right? nor indeed is it to be called right, if it is unjust. That is true right, which is also just. Consider what thou hast done, not what thou art suffering. If thou hast done right, thou art suffering wrong; if thou hast done wrong, thou art suffering right.

16. Wherefore have I said this, brethren? That heretics may not puff themselves up, when they happen to suffer ought from the orders of earthly powers; that they may not number themselves among those who suffer wrong, and say, Behold, the Psalm comforteth me, for I worship God. Who shall execute judgment for them that suffer wrong. Rightly do I ask, whether thou sufferest a wrong. If thou hast done right, it is a wrong thou sufferest. Is it right to renounce Christ? Is it right in rebellious pride to set up an altar? Is it right, when His persecutors spared Christ’s robe, to rend Christ’s Church? It follows then, that if this is not right, whatever thou sufferest for this is right. Thou art not then of those who suffer wrong. I read somewhat yet more clear in the Gospel; Blessed, it saith, are they who suffer persecution. Wait: why dost thou hurry? why dost thou say, ‘I am such?’ Wait, I say; I will read the whole. Thou hast heard, Blessed are they that suffer persecution: now thou hast begun to claim somewhat to thyself: allow me to read the whole: see what followeth. Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousness’ sake. Now say, ‘I am such.’ If thou darest to say, ‘I am such,’ let us retract what I have said above: or, not to be long, I ask thee one question; If thou wast to condemn one man, whose

cause thou hadst not heard, wouldest thou dare to say thou maintainedst justice? or if thou hadst suffered any thing for this, wouldest thou call it a wrong? Thou settest up thyself on the rash tribunal of thy heart, from whence thou must be cast down; and darest thou pass sentence on a man whose cause thou hast not heard? If thou didst this in regard of one man, thou wouldest be unjust; thou doest it in regard of the whole world, and art thou just? Beloved brethren, who is it who suffereth the wrong, but the Catholic Church, which undergoeth all these things? Among all the scandals of heretics she groaneth; she seeth the weak drawn from her bosom by evil persuasion and deceit, her little ones dragged through I know not what secrets of wicked dens, sees them rebaptized, sees Christ destroyed in them; sees killed in them not their mortal being, whereby they are men, but that whereby they are to live for ever. A man is persuaded to say, ‘I am not a Christian,’ and it is called righteousness. ‘Thou art about to go before a Bishop,’ he saith to him; ‘see thou sayest not that thou art a Christian; for, if thou sayest that thou art a Christian, thou wilt not receive; in order to receive, say that thou art not. What dost thou advise, O Christian? what dost thou teach? Certainly thou sufferest persecution. How much more truly art thou thyself a persecutor! When the Emperors persecuted the Christians, they compelled by threats, what thou effectest by persuasion. Thou persuadest a Christian to deny that he is a Christian: what thou effectest by persuasion, that the persecutor effected not by slaying. A man liveth under thee, who denieth that he is a Christian. He denies, and is he alive? Nay, he hath already lost his life: he is a corpse that speaketh to thee. He who hath been smitten with the sword of the persecutor hath fallen, and yet liveth; he to whom thou speakest standeth, yet hath fallen. When thou doest thus, will whatever thou sufferest be a wrong? I would not that thou shouldest flatter thyself: if all these things which thou doest are unjust, whatever thou sufferest will be just. But for whom doth He execute judgment, Who keepeth truth for ever? For them that suffer wrong.

17. Now go thou on, and prove with those fine arguments of thine, which seem so sharp and subtle, that thou feedest others: tell me, can a hungry man feed others? that is, can a sinner give what is holy? Can a hungry man feed others? Can a sick man heal? Can one that is bound set free? Those arguments seem grand and subtle, wherewith they deceive the unskilled. Let

this Psalm shut their mouths: Who giveth food to the hungry. Behold, from thee I look for nothing: God giveth food to the hungry. Who are the hungry? All. What is, all? To all things that have life, to all men He giveth food: doth He not reserve some food for His beloved? If they have another kind of hunger, they have also another kind of food. Let us first enquire what their hunger is, and then we shall find their food. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. We ought to be God's hungry ones. Let us beg in prayers before the gate of His presence: He giveth food to the hungry. Why dost thou, O heretic, boast thyself, that thou settest free, thou liftest up, thou enlightenest? Is it, forsooth, because thou art already enlightened, and standest upright, and art a light? Far be it from thee. Listen to what was said above: put not your trust in princes, or in the children of men, in whom is no salvation. They do not give salvation. Let the heretics then depart from before us. The Lord looseth them that are fettered; the Lord lifteth up them that are dashed down; the Lord maketh wise them that are blind. Perfectly hath he by this last sentence explained to us all the preceding ones: lest perchance, when he had said, the Lord looseth them that are fettered, we should refer it to those fettered ones, who for some crime are bound in irons by their masters: and in that he said, He lifteth up them that are dashed down, there should occur to our minds some one stumbling or falling, or thrown from a horse. There is another kind of fall, there are other kinds of fetters, just as there is other darkness and other light. Whereas he said, He maketh the blind wise; he would not say, He enlighteneth the blind, lest thou shouldest understand this also in reference to the flesh, as the man was enlightened by the Lord, when He anointed his eyes with clay made with spittle, and so healed him: that thou mightest not look for any thing of this sort, when He is speaking of spiritual things, he pointeth to a sort of light of wisdom, wherewith the blind are enlightened. Therefore in the same way as the blind are enlightened with the light of wisdom, so are the fettered set free, and those who are dashed down are lifted up. Whereby then have we been fettered? whereby dashed down? Our body was once an ornament to us: now, we have sinned, and thereby have had fetters put on us. What are our fetters? Our mortality. Hear the Apostle Paul, for he too was as yet fettered in his pilgrimage here. How vast regions did he traverse in his fetters: his fetters were not heavy to him: with these fetters he preached the Gospel to the whole world: the spirit of love carried away his fetters, and he went about to the utmost of his power. Yet what saith he himself? Having a desire to be set free, and to be with Christ. What is, to be set free? From the fetters of mortality: and yet through compassion he still was willing to remain in fetters, for the sake of others who were fettered, that he might minister to them: to abide in the flesh is needful for you. The Lord, therefore, looseth them that are fettered, that is, from mortal He maketh them immortal; the Lord lifteth up them that are dashed down. Wherefore were they dashed down? Because they were up-lifted. Wherefore are they lifted up? Because they first were humbled. Adam fell, was dashed down. He fell, Christ came down. Wherefore came He down Who fell not, save that he might be lifted up, who did fall. The Lord maketh wise the blind; the Lord loveth the righteous. Therefore, He executeth judgment for them that suffer wrong.

18. And who are the righteous? How far are they righteous now? Just as thou hast; the Lord guardeth proselytes. Proselytes are strangers. Every Church of the Gentiles is a stranger. For it cometh in to the Fathers, not sprung of their flesh, but their daughter by imitating them. Yet the Lord, not any man, guardeth them. The orphan and widow He will take up. Let none think that He taketh up the orphan for his inheritance, or the widow for any business of hers. True, God doth help them; and in all the duties of the human race, he doeth a good work, who taketh care of an orphan, who abandoneth not a widow: but in a certain way we are all orphans, not because our Father is dead, but because He is absent. For among men one is an orphan whose father is dead. Yet if ye look at the truth, my brethren, since the soul dieth not, our parents are alive; and so, those who are orphans, are orphans rather because their parents are absent: if they have been evil, they are living in punishment; if good, they are living in rest: to their Creator all things remain. Yet so long as we are in this body, and inhabit the place of our wandering, our Father is absent, and we cry to Him, Our Father, Which art in Heaven. Therefore is the Church a widow, her Spouse, her Husband, being absent. Hereafter He will come, Who now protecteth her, not seen, but longed for. For we are seized with great longing, and through love of Him Whom we see not, we long. We shall cling to His embrace when we see Him, if, while as yet we see Him not, we are filled with faith in Him. By orphan and widow then, what meant He to

be understood, brethren? Those who are bereft of all hope and aid. Let the soul which is bereft in the world hope for the aid of God. Whatever thou hast here—hast thou gold, and dost thou rely on it? now thou art not a stranger, thou art not an orphan, thou art not reckoned as a widow. Hast thou a friend? if thou reliest on him and givest up God, thereby thou art no longer bereft. Hast thou all these things, and yet reliest not on them, pridest not thyself on them? Thou art God's orphan, God's widow. He taketh up the orphan, He taketh up the widow too.

19. And the way of sinners He shall root out. What is, the way of sinners? To mock at these things which we say. 'Who is an orphan, who a widow? What kingdom of heaven, what punishment of hell is there? These are fables of the Christians. To what I see, to that will I live: let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' Beware lest such men persuade you of ought: let them not enter through your ears into your heart; let them find thorns in your ears: let him, who seeketh to enter thus, go away pierced: for, evil communications corrupt good manners. But here perhaps thou wilt say, 'Wherefore then are they prosperous? Behold, they worship not God, and commit every kind of evil daily: yet they abound in those things, through want of which I toil.' Be not envious against sinners. What they receive, thou seest; what is in store for them, seest thou not? And how, saith he, do I see what is not seen? Verily faith hath eyes; eyes too, greater, and more powerful, and strong. These eyes have never deceived any one: let these eyes be ever unto the Lord, that He may pluck thy feet out of the net. The way of sinners pleaseth thee because it is broad, and many walk therein: thou seest its breadth, thou seest not its end. Behold, where it endeth is a precipice; where it endeth is a deep pit: in that end they who walk joyously along this road are whelmed. But thou canst not strain thine eyes so as to see the end: believe Him Who seeth it. And what man is there that seeth it? perhaps no man: but thy Lord hath come to thee, that thou mightest believe God. Wilt thou not believe even the Lord thy God, Who saith, Broad and spacious is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that walk by it? This way the Lord will root out, for this is the way of sinners.

20. And, when the way of sinners has been rooted out, what remaineth for us? Come, ye blessed of My Father, enjoy the Kingdom which hath been

prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Herewith the Psalm concludeth: and the way of sinners He shall root out. And how shalt thou fare? The Lord shall reign for ever. Rejoice, for for thee He shall reign: rejoice, for thou shalt be His kingdom. For see also what followeth. Certainly thou art a citizen of Sion, not of Babylon, that is, not of the perishable city of this world, but of Sion, which for a while is in toil and wandering, but for eternity shall reign. Thou hast heard then the end: to it thou belongest. The Lord shall reign for ever, thy God, O Sion. O Sion, thy God shall reign for ever; surely thy God will not reign without thee. For generation and generation. He hath said it twice, because he could not say it for ever. And think not that eternity is bounded by finite words. The word eternity consists of four syllables; in itself it is without end. It could not be commended to thee, save thus, Thy God shall reign for generation and generation. Too little hath he said: if he spoke it all day long, it were too narrow: if he spoke it all his life, must he not at length hold his peace? Love eternity: without end shalt thou reign, if Christ be thine End, with Whom thou shalt reign for ever and ever. Amen.

PSALM 147

Sermon to the People of Carthage.

1. We listened attentively, while this present Psalm was being chanted: yet not all who heard, also understood. How much more attentively then should it now be listened to, if, as I hope and desire, with the help of the prayers of all who hear me, whatever in it is perhaps obscure, may, by God’s grace, be revealed; that your hearing may be profitable; and that the hearer may not return empty, who when present listened with attention. Wherewith doth it begin? It is said to us, Praise the Lord. This is said to all nations, not to us alone. And these words, sounded forth through separate places by the Readers, each Church heareth separately; but the one same Voice of God proclaimeth unto all, that we praise Him. And as though we asked wherefore we ought to praise the Lord, behold what reason he hath brought forward: Praise the Lord, he saith, for a Psalm is good. Is this all the reward of them that praise? Let us praise the Lord. Wherefore? Because a Psalm is good. I would wish, saith one, to praise the Lord, if only He give me somewhat for my praise. For who praiseth for nothing even a man? Those who praise a man then look for some reward: ought he who praises God, to look for or seek or hope for no reward? The weak is praised, and somewhat is hoped for from him: the Almighty is praised, and is there no reward? Or do I perhaps desire that which He cannot give? What doth man desire, which is not in the hand of God? When thou hast praised a man, thou mayest perhaps desire that which he cannot supply; God thou mayest praise in safety; for none can say that He cannot supply ought that thou canst long for. Having then set before us the hope of some reward, we ought to praise God, not however as though He would give whatsoever we desire. For He is our Father; and whatever evil His sons desire, He giveth not. Let us praise and hope and long, not for this or that, but for what He, Whom we praise, judgeth meet to be given. For He knoweth what it is expedient should be given us; let us observe what it is good for us to receive. The Apostle saith, We know not what to pray for as we ought. And this very same Apostle Paul hoped that it would be good for him that the thorn in the flesh, the

messenger of Satan to buffet him, should be taken from him, as he himself confesseth, and saith, for this cause I besought the Lord thrice that it might be taken from me: and He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness. He desired a certain thing; it was not granted him as was his wish, but it might be granted as was for his health. Here then what is set before us? Praise, saith he, the Lord. Wherefore should we praise the Lord? Because a Psalm is good. The Psalm is praise of God. This then he saith, Praise the Lord, for it is good to praise the Lord. Let us not thus pass over the praise of the Lord. It is spoken, and hath passed: it is done, and we are silent: we have praised, and then rested; we have sung, and then rested. We go forth to some business which awaits us, and when other employments have found us, shall the praise of God cease in us? Not so: thy tongue praiseth but for a while, let thy life ever praise. Thus then a Psalm is good.

2. For a Psalm is a song, not any kind of song, but a song to a psaltery. A psaltery is a kind of instrument of music, like the lyre and the harp, and such kinds of instruments, which were invented for music. He therefore who singeth Psalms, not only singeth with his voice, but with a certain instrument besides, which is called a psaltery, he accompanieth his voice with his hands. Wilt thou then sing a Psalm? Let not thy voice alone sound the praises of God; but let thy works also be in harmony with thy voice. When then thou singest with thy voice, sometimes thou wilt be silent; sing with thy life in such wise, that thou be never silent. Thou art engaged in business, and meditatest some fraud: thou hast become silent from the praises of God; and, what is worse, not only hast become silent from His praise, but hast also gone on to blasphemy. For when by thy good work God is praised, thou art praising God by thy work: when by thy evil work God is blasphemed, thou art blaspheming God by thy work. To please then the ear, sing with thy voice; but with thy heart be not silent, with thy life be not still. Thou devisest no fraud in thy heart: thou singest a Psalm to God. When thou eatest and drinkest, sing a Psalm: not by intermingling sweet sounds suited to the ear, but by eating and drinking moderately, frugally, temperately: for thus saith the Apostle, whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God. If then thou doest right in eating and drinking, if thou takest food to refresh thy body and reinvigorate thy limbs,

giving thanks to Him Who gave to thee, mortal and frail as thou art, these comforting supplies, then both thy meat and thy drink praise God: but if by immoderate voracity thou exceedest the due bounds of nature, and gluttest thyself in excess of wine, however great praises of God thy tongue sound, yet thy life blasphemeth Him. After food and drink thou liest down to sleep: in thy bed neither commit any pollution, nor go beyond the licence given by the law of God: let thy marriage bed be kept chaste with thy wife: and if thou desire to beget children, yet let there not be unbridled sensuality of lust: in thy bed give honour to thy wife, for ye are both members of Christ, both made by Him, both renewed by His Blood: so doing thou praisest God, nor will thy praise be altogether silent. What, when sleep has come over thee? Let not an evil conscience rouse thee from rest: so doth the innocence of thy sleep praise God. If then thou praisest, sing not only with thy voice, but take to thee also the psaltery of good works, for a Psalm is good. Thou praisest in thy employment, thou praisest in thy eating and drinking, thou praisest while resting in thy bed, thou praisest in thy sleep: when dost thou not praise? We shall be perfect in praising God, when we come to that city, when we are made equal to the Angels of God, when no bodily craving in any part assails us, when no hunger or thirst interrupts us, no heat wearies, no cold freezes, no fever pulls down, no death endeth. For that most perfect praise let us practise ourselves, by praising here in good works.

3. Wherefore, when he had said, Praise the Lord, for a Psalm is good, he says, let praises be pleasant to our God. How will praise be pleasant to our God? If He be praised by our good lives. Hear that then praise will be pleasant to Him. In another place it is said, Praise is not seemly in the mouth of a sinner. If then in the mouth of a sinner praise is not seemly, neither is it pleasant, for that only is pleasant which is seemly. Wilt thou then that thy praise be pleasant to thy God? Be not out of tune with thy good song by ill behaviour. Let praise be pleasant to our God. What did he mean? Ye who praise, live aright: He regardeth more how ye live, than how ye speak. Surely thou desirest to have peace with Him Whom thou praisest: how dost thou seek peace with Him, when thou art at discord with thyself? How, thou wilt say, am I at discord with myself? One thing thy tongue soundeth, another thy life discloseth. Let praise be pleasant to our God. For praise may be pleasant to a man, when he heareth one praising with neat

and clever sentiments, and with a sweet voice; but let praise be pleasant to our God, Whose ears are open not to the mouth, but to the heart; not to the tongue, but to the life of him that praiseth.

4. Who is our God, that praise should be pleasant to Him? He maketh Himself sweet to us, He commendeth Himself to us; thanks to His condescension. For He deigneth to commend Himself to us, not as though we could supply ought to Him, but rather may receive much from Him. How then doth God commend Himself to us? But God commendeth His love to us. How doth He commend it? Hearken: let the Apostle himself speak, that we may compare him with the Psalm: God commendeth, saith he, His love to us. How doth He commend it? In that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. What then hath He in store for them that praise, Who thus commendeth Himself to them that are sinners? Since then the Apostle hath said, that God so commended His love to us, as that Christ died for the ungodly, not that they should remain ungodly, but that by the death of the Righteous they should be healed of their unrighteousness; what hearest thou here after he had said, let praise be pleasant to our God? Let us see whether it be the commendation which the Apostle speaketh of, that Christ died for the sinners and ungodly: the Lord Who buildeth up Jerusalem, and gathereth the dispersions of Israel. Behold the Lord Who buildeth up Jerusalem, and gathereth the dispersions of her people. For the people of Jerusalem are the people of Israel. It is Jerusalem eternal in the heavens, whereof the Angels are citizens also. What then is Israel there? If thou considerest the man, the grandson of Abraham, who was called also Jacob, how understand we the Angels to be Israel? If we examine the meaning of the name, since Jacob too had his name changed, and was called Israel, greater then is the name Israel: and would that we too may follow, and be Israel. For what is the meaning of Israel? ‘Seeing God.’ All the citizens then of that city, through seeing God, rejoice in that great and wide and heavenly city; they gaze upon God Himself. But we are wanderers from that city, driven out by sin, that we should not remain there; weighed down by mortality, that we should not return thither. God looked back on our wandering, and He Who buildeth up Jerusalem, restored the part that had fallen. How restored He the part that had fallen? Gathering the dispersions of Israel. A certain part fell, and became wanderers; this wandering part

God in His mercy saw, and sought them that sought Him not. How sought He them? Whom sent He to our captive estate? He sent a Redeemer, according to what the Apostle saith, God commendeth His love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. He sent then to our captive estate His Son as a Redeemer. Take with Thee, said He, a bag, bear therein the price of the captives. For He put on Him our mortal flesh, and therein was the Blood, by the shedding of Which we were to be redeemed. With that Blood He gathered the dispersions of Israel. And if He gathered them that before were dispersed, how must we strive that they be gathered who now are dispersed? If the dispersed have been gathered, that in the Hand of the Builder they might be fashioned into the building, how should they be gathered who through disquiet have fallen from the Hand of the Builder? The Lord Who buildeth up Jerusalem. Behold Whom we praise; behold to Whom we owe praise all our life long. The Lord Who buildeth up Jerusalem, and gathereth the dispersions of Israel.

5. How doth He gather? What doeth He in order to gather? Who healeth the bruised in heart. Behold the way in which the dispersions of Israel are gathered, by the healing of the bruised in heart. They who are not of a bruised heart, are not healed. What is to bruise the heart? Let it be known, brethren, let it be done, that ye may be able to be healed. For it is told in many other places of Scripture; especially in the famous place, the Psalmist, singing as it were with our voice, said, for if Thou hadst desired a sacrifice, verily I would have given it. He said to God, if Thou hadst desired a sacrifice, verily I would have given it, but Thou wilt not be delighted with burnt-offerings. What then? shall we remain without offering any sacrifice? Hear what He desireth that thou shouldest offer. He goeth on and saith, the sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit, a bruised and contrite heart God will not despise. He healeth then the bruised in heart, for He draweth nigh unto them to heal them; as is said in another place, the Lord is nigh unto them who have bruised their heart. Who are they that have bruised their heart? The humble. Who are they that have not bruised their heart? The proud. The bruised heart shall be healed, the puffed up heart shall be dashed down. For for this purpose perhaps is it dashed down, that being bruised it may be healed. Let not our heart then, brethren, desire to be set upright, before it be upright. It is ill for that to be uplifted which is not first corrected.

6. Who healeth the bruised in heart, and bindeth up their bruises. He healeth, saith he, the bruised in heart: He healeth then the humbled in heart, He healeth them who confess, He healeth them that punish themselves, who exercise a strict judgment upon themselves, that they may be able to feel His mercy. Such He healeth; but their perfect healing will take place when this mortal life is passed, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality: when there shall be nothing to tempt us through the sinfulness of the flesh: not only nothing for us to consent to, but not even any thing to be suggested by the flesh. For now, my brethren, how many unlawful delights assail the mind? And although we consent to them not, so that our members are servants to righteousness, not to iniquity, yet even to be pleased by such things, even though thou consent not, is as yet short of perfect soundness. Thou shalt then be healed, thou, man of a bruised heart, shalt be healed. Blush not, bruise thy heart; such are they whom God healeth. But thou wilt say, What must I do now? For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive under the law of sin. What must thou do now? Bruise thy heart, confess; go on, say what followeth, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? For to say this, O wretched man that I am, is at once to bruise the heart. Let him hope for happiness, who confesseth unhappiness. Say then, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? that it may be said to thee in answer, The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. But how shall the grace of God, whereof we have now received the earnest, set us free? Hear the Apostle again; the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. If then the Spirit of Him Who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead dwell in you, He Who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit, Which dwelleth in you. This then is the earnest which our spirit hath received, that we begin through faith to serve God, and through faith to be called righteous. For the just liveth by faith. But whatever in you still fighteth and resisteth, is of the mortality of the flesh, and this shall be healed. For He shall quicken, saith the Apostle, your mortal bodies by His Spirit, Which dwelleth in you. For this He gave the earnest, that He will fulfil what He hath promised. What then now in this life, when as yet we are confessors,

not yet possessors, what in this life is to be done? How shall it be healed? He healeth the bruised in heart: but perfect soundness will not be till the time we mentioned. What then now? He bindeth up their bruises. He, Who healeth the bruised in heart, whose perfect soundness will be in the resurrection of the just, now bindeth up their bruises.

7. What are the means whereby He bindeth up their bruises? Just as physicians bind up fractures. For sometimes, (observe this, beloved; it is well known to those who have observed it, or have heard it from physicians,) sometimes when limbs are sound, but are crooked and distorted, physicians break them in order to set them straight, and make a new wound, because the soundness which was distorted was amiss. Just so then Scripture saith, The ways of the Lord are straight, but the crooked-hearted shall stumble in them. Who is the crooked-hearted? The twisted-hearted: he that hath a twisted heart. He thinketh that all things which God hath said are twisted; he thinketh that all which God hath done is crooked; and all the judgments of God displease him, especially those whereby he himself is chastised; and he sitteth, and argueth how evilly God doeth, because He doeth not according to his will. It is not enough for the distorted heart not to set itself straight after God’s pattern: it wisheth also to distort God after its own pattern. What then saith God from above? Thou art twisted, I am straight. If thou wast straight, thou wouldest see that I am straight. Just as if thou wast to lay on an even floor a crooked piece of timber, it would not rest in its place, it would totter in every direction, it would be swayed in every direction, which yet is not caused by the unevenness of the ground, but by the crookedness of the timber; so Scripture saith, How good is God to Israel, to the right of heart. Well then, how is the crooked heart straightened? It is both crooked and hard; being then both crooked and hard, let it be broken, let it be bruised, that it may be set straight. Thou canst not set thine own heart straight: do thou break it, let Him set it straight. How dost thou break it? how dost thou bruise it? By confessing and punishing thy sins. What else doth beating the breast mean? Unless perhaps we think that our bones have sinned, when we beat our breasts. Nay, we mean that we bruise our heart, that it may be set straight by God.

8. He healeth then them that are bruised in heart, that have a bruised heart: and soundness of heart will then be perfected, when the restoration of the body also which is promised shall be fulfilled. Now in the mean while, what doeth the physician? He bindeth up thy bruises, that thou mayest arrive at most complete soundness, until that which has been broken and bound up may be firmly knit. What are these means whereby He bindeth? The sacraments of this present life. The means whereby He bindeth up our bruises to heal them, are the sacraments of this present life, whereby in the mean time we obtain our comfort: and all the words we speak to you, words which sound and pass away, all that is done in the Church in this present time, are the means whereby He bindeth up our bruises. For just as, when the limb has become perfectly sound, the physician taketh off the bandage; so in our own city Jerusalem, when we shall have been made equal to the Angels, think ye that we shall receive there, what we have received here? Will it be needful then that the Gospel be read to us, that our faith may abide? or that hands be laid upon us by any Bishop? All these are means of binding up fractures; when we have attained perfect soundness, they will be taken off; but we should never attain it, if they were not bound up. He healeth then the bruised in heart, and bindeth up their bruises.

9. Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names. What great matter is it for God to tell the number of the stars! Men even have endeavoured to do this; whether they have been able to achieve it, is their concern; they would not however attempt it, did they not think that they should achieve it. Let us leave alone what they can do, and how far they have attained; for God I think it no great matter to count all the stars. Or doth He perhaps go over the number, lest He should forget it? Is it any great thing for God to number the stars, by Whom the very hairs of your head are numbered? It is plain, my brethren, that God willeth that we should understand somewhat by what He saith, Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names. The stars are certain lights in the Church comforting our night, all of whom the Apostle saith, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, saith he, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding the Word of life. These stars God counteth; all who shall reign with Him, all who are to be gathered into the Body of His only-begotten Son, He hath

counted, and still counteth them. Whoso is unworthy, is not even counted. Many too have believed, or rather may, with a kind of shadowy appearance of faith, have attached themselves to His people: yet He knoweth what He counteth, what He winnoweth away. For so great is the height of the Gospel, that it hath come to pass as was said, I have declared, and have spoken: they are multiplied above number: there are then among the people certain supernumeraries, so to speak. What do I mean by supernumeraries? More than will be there. Within these walls are more than will be in the kingdom of God, in the heavenly Jerusalem; these are above the number. Let each one of you consider whether he shineth in darkness, whether he refuseth to be led astray by the dark iniquity of the world; if he be not led astray, nor conquered, he will be, as it were, a star, which God already numbereth.

10. And calling them all by their names, he saith. Herein is our whole reward. We have certain names with God; that God may know our names, this we ought to wish, for this to act, for this to busy ourselves, as far as we are able; not to rejoice in other things, not even in certain spiritual gifts. Consider, beloved; there are many gifts in the Church, as the Apostle saith; to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another faith, by the same Spirit; to another working of cures; to another discerning of spirits, that is, to discover between good and bad spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another prophecy. How great, how many gifts hath he mentioned! Many who have used such gifts amiss, shall hear in the end, I know you not. And what will they say in the end who are to hear, I know you not? Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name, and in Thy Name cast out devils, and in Thy Name done many wondrous works? All this in Thy Name. And what will He say to them? I never knew you; depart from Me, ye who work iniquity. What is it then to be already a light in the sky, comforting the night and not overshadowing the night? Yet, saith he, I shew unto you a more excellent way. If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. What a gift is it to speak with the tongues of men and of angels! Yet, if I have not charity, saith he, I am as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I know all mysteries, and all knowledge, saith he, although I have all prophecy, and all faith, so that I could remove

mountains, (how great gifts are these!) and have not charity, I am nothing. How glorious a gift is it to be a martyr, and to give away all one’s goods! Yet, though I give all my goods, saith he, to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Whoso then hath not charity, though for a time he have these gifts, yet they shall be taken from him. What he hath shall be taken from him, because a certain other thing he hath not. This certain thing he hath not, whereby the other may be preserved, and himself not perish. What is that which the Lord saith, he that hath, to him shall be given; but whoso hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath? He then who hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath. He hath grace to possess, but he hath not love to use; since then he hath not this, even that which he hath shall be taken from him. Therefore, that the disciples, whom He willed to make stars in heaven, walking by the more excellent way, might have charity, He, Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names, when the disciples returned from their mission exulting, and saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us in Thy Name—then He, I say, Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names, knowing that many would say, have we not in Thy Name cast out devils? to whom He should say, I know you not, because He counted them not among the number of the stars, nor called them by their names—said, In this rejoice not, that the devils are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names.

11. Great is our Lord. The Psalmist is filled with joy, he hath poured out his words wonderfully: yet somewhat he was unable to speak, and how availed he to think on it? Great is the Lord, and great is His power, and of His understanding is no numbering. He Who numbereth the multitude of the stars, Himself cannot be numbered. Great is our Lord, and great is His power, and of His understanding is no numbering. Who can expound this? who can worthily even imagine what is meant by, and of His understanding is no number? And would that He may infuse Himself into you, and where we fail, in that He is mighty, He may Himself enlighten your minds, that ye may know what is the meaning of, of His understanding is no number. For ye see, brethren, of the sand is there any number? To us there is not, to God

there is; by Whom the hairs of our head are numbered, by Him the sand also is numbered. Whatsoever then that is infinite this world containeth, though it be infinite to man, yet is not to God: too little is it to say, to God: even by the angels it is numbered. Of His understanding there is no number. His understanding surpasses all calculators; it cannot be counted by us. Numbers themselves who numbereth? Whatever is numbered, is numbered by numbers. If whatever is numbered, is numbered by numbers, of numbers there can be no number; numbers cannot by any means be numbered. What then is there with God? wherewith made He all things, and where made He all things, to Whom it is said, Thou hast arrayed all things in measure, number, and weight? Or who can number, or measure, or weigh, measure and number and weight themselves, wherein God hath ordered all things? Therefore, of His understanding is no number. Let human voices be hushed, human thoughts still: let them not stretch themselves out to incomprehensible things, as though they could comprehend them, but as though they were to partake of them, for partakers we shall be. We shall not be this which we do contain, nor shall we contain the whole; but we shall be partakers: for of Jerusalem, whose dispersions He gathereth, somewhat great is said: Jerusalem is built as a city, whose partaking is in the same. What meaneth he by the same, save that which cannot be changed? All other created things may be this way or that, but He Who created cannot be this way or that. He then is the same, for to Him is said, Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail. If then He is the same, and can in no degree be changed, by partaking of His divine nature, we too shall be immortal for ever. And this earnest is given us of the Son of God, as I have already said to you, holy brethren, that before we became partakers of His immortal nature, He should first become partaker of our mortal nature. But as He became mortal, not of His own substance, but of ours, so do we become immortal, not of our own substance, but of His. Partakers then we shall be: let none doubt it: Scripture saith it. And of what shall we be partakers, as though these were parts in God, as though God were divided into parts? Who then can explain how many become partakers of one single substance? Require not then that which I think ye see cannot fitly be said: but return to the healing of the Saviour, bruise your heart; let the darkness of your heart be crushed, obstinacy of soul bruised; let it be accused in evil, be born again in good. He will guide it, He will bind it up where it is broken, He will make it perfectly sound; and then those things will not be impossible with us, which now are impossible. For it is good that he confess weakness, who desireth to attain to the divine nature. Of His understanding is no number.

12. What therefore thou shouldest do in this difficulty of understanding, he sheweth thee, when he goeth on to say, The Lord taketh up the gentle. For example; thou understandest not, thou failest to understand, canst not attain: honour God's Scripture, honour God's Word, though it be not plain: in reverence wait for understanding. Be not wanton to accuse either the obscurity or seeming contradiction of Scripture. There is nothing in it contradictory: somewhat there is which is obscure, not in order that it may be denied thee, but that it may exercise him that shall afterward receive it. When then it is obscure, that is the Physician's doing, that thou mayest knock. He willed that thou shouldest be exercised in knocking; He willed it, that He might open to thee when thou knockest. By knocking thou shalt be exercised; exercised, thou shalt be enlarged; enlarged, thou shalt contain what is given. Be not then indignant for that it is shut; be mild, be gentle. Kick not against what is dark, nor say, It were better said, if it were said thus. For how canst thou thus say, or judge how it is expedient it be said? It is said as it is expedient it be said. Let not the sick man seek to amend his remedies: the Physician knoweth how to temper them: believe Him Who careth for thee. Therefore what cometh next? The Lord taketh up the gentle. Resist not then against what God shutteth up: be gentle, that He may take thee up. But if thou resistest, hear what followeth; but humbleth the sinners even to the ground. Many kinds of sinners are there. He humbleth the sinners even to the ground. What sinners, save the opposite to the gentle? In fact, by what he hath said, The Lord taketh up the gentle, but humbleth the sinners even to the ground, he intended a certain sort of sinners to be understood, from the gentleness mentioned first. By sinners then in this place, we understand the fierce, and those who are not gentle. Wherefore doth He humble them even to the earth? They carp at objects of understanding, they shall perceive only things earthly.

13. This did He to men, who chose to ridicule the Law before they knew it, because they were not gentle. Understand me, beloved. There arose a

certain most accursed sect, the Manichees, who ridiculed the Scriptures when they had received and read them; they chose to find fault with what they understood not, and by attacking and finding fault with what they understood not, they ensnared many. But they who chose to do this have been humbled even to the earth. They were not permitted to understand heavenly things: they savoured earthly things. All that thou hearest in their fables is nought but blasphemy and certain devices of bodily forms: for when they would understand God, they attained to the thought of this visible light, but could not advance beyond it, and they made such fields of light in the kingdom of God, as they saw our sun to be, looking on it as a sort of product of that light. For all this which is reached by means of the earth of the flesh, is earth in God's eyes. For we have that whereby we see, hear, smell, taste, touch: our flesh by means of those messengers, so to speak, which we call senses, perceives only corporeal things: but things of the intellect and spirit, are taken in by the mind. Because then they ridiculed the obscurity of the Scriptures, which for this reason were shut, that they might be exercised in knocking, not that the Scriptures should be refused to babes, they were humbled even to the earth, so that they could not any longer take in any thing save what is perceived by earth. And what mean I by earth? I mean the flesh. For the flesh is earth, and is made of earth. Whatsoever thou takest in by the eyes belongeth to earth: whatever by the ear, whatever by the smell, whatever by the taste, whatever by the touch, pertaineth to the earth, for by earth it is taken in. They therefore were not able to understand His understanding of which there is no end, for of His understanding is no end. Because they found fault with the Scriptures, which healthfully conceal understanding under certain mysteries, that the little ones may be exercised; and by this very finding fault being made ungentle, which is the opposite to gentle, they were humbled even to the earth, that they should not be able to perceive God Who is incorporeal, and that whatever thoughts they had of God, should be only corporeal thoughts.

14. God then humbleth sinners, even to the earth. What then ought we to do, if we would not be humbled even to the earth? For it is a great thing to advance to things of the understanding, it is a great thing to advance to things spiritual, it is a great thing for the heart to advance so far as to know that there is somewhat which is neither extended through space, nor varied

in time. For what is the appearance of wisdom? who imagineth it? Is it long? is it square? is it round? is it now here, and now there? One man thinketh of wisdom in the east, another thinketh of it in the west; if they think of it aright, set as they are in such utterly different places, to both it is entirely present. What is this? who can take it in? Who can take in this substance, this divine and unchangeable nature? Be not in haste; thou wilt be able to take it in. Begin to the Lord in confession. Begin with this, if thou wouldest arrive at a clear understanding of the truth. If thou wilt be brought from the road of faith to the profession of the reality, begin in confession. First accuse thyself: accuse thyself, praise God. Call on Him, Whom as yet thou knowest not, to come and be known; not to come to thee Himself, but to lead thee to Him. For how can He come thither, whence He never departeth? For this is the very perfection of wisdom; it is every where, yet it is far from the wicked. It is, I say, every where; yet it is far from the evil who are every where. From whom, I ask you, is that far off which is every where? How think ye, save because they lie in their unlikeness, driving out in themselves the likeness of God? Having become unlike, they have withdrawn: when refashioned, let them return. Whence, saith he, shall we be refashioned? when shall we be refashioned? Begin to the Lord in confession. What after confession? Let good works follow. Sing unto our God upon the harp. What is, Upon the harp? As I have already explained, just like the Psalm upon the psaltery, so also is the harp: not with voice only, but with works. Sing unto our God upon the harp.

15. Behold, ye confess, ye work works of mercy; sing unto our God. What God? Who covereth the heaven with clouds. What is, Who covereth the heaven with clouds? Who hideth Scripture under figures and sacraments. He Who humbleth sinners even to the earth, He Who taketh up the gentle, covereth the heaven with clouds. Who then can see the heaven, which is covered with clouds? Fear not: hear what followeth. Who covereth the heaven with clouds, Who prepareth rain for the earth. Who covereth the heaven with clouds: now thou art alarmed, because thou canst not see the heaven: when it hath rained thou shalt gather fruit, and shalt see clear sky. He covereth the heaven with clouds, Who prepareth rain for the earth: perhaps our God hath done this. For had we not the obscurity of Scripture as an occasion, we should not say to you those things wherein ye rejoice.

This then perhaps is the rain whereat ye rejoice. It would not be possible for it to be expressed to you by our tongue, were it not that God covereth with clouds of figures the heaven of the Scriptures. For this purpose then doth He cover the heaven with clouds, that He may prepare rain for the earth. For this purpose willed He that the words of the Prophets should be obscure, that the servants of God might afterwards have that by interpreting which they might flow over the ears and hearts of men, that they might receive from the clouds of God the fatness of spiritual joy. Who covereth the heaven with clouds, Who prepareth rain for the earth.

16. Who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the service of men. Behold the fruit of the rain. Who maketh, saith he, grass to grow upon the mountains. Doth it not also grow upon the low ground? Yes, but it is a great thing that it groweth on the mountains. By mountains he meaneth the high ones of the world: by mountains understand in this place, those who are endowed with some great dignity. And it is not wonderful that a certain widow cast two mites into the treasury; that the earth brought forth grass over the low ground: the mountain also brought forth even Zaccheus the chief of the publicans. This was more wonderful, that the mountains brought forth grass. For the more men are exalted, the more grasping are they; and the greater they are in this world, the more do they love their riches. And so the man went away sorrowful, who asked of the Lord counsel about eternal life, and called Him Good Master, saying, What shall I do that I may have eternal life? And the Lord said to Him, Keep the commandments. Which? The commandments of the Law, said He. All these have I kept from my youth. One thing, said He, thou lackest. Wilt thou be perfect? Go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me. What said the Lord? Behold, thou art a mountain; receive rain, give forth grass. For what is it that thou wilt give? Is it not grass? For all that is given to the Church for the needs of God’s servants by the rich, what is it but grass? For they are carnal things, which appear but for a time: but it is not any thing carnal which is gained by them. Hear what thou buyest with these worthless things. For thus saith the Apostle, shewing that these things are grass: if we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things? Hear also that carnal things are grass. All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof is as

the flower of grass. He then went away sorrowful: and the Lord said, How hard is it for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven! This then is great, that He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains. And how maketh He grass to grow upon the mountains, if that rich man, when he had heard that he ought to give to the poor, went away sorrowful? How did He afterwards answer the Apostles when they were saddened? The things which are difficult with men, are easy with God. He then maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, to Whom all things are easy. For nothing could be more barren than the hard mountains. He raineth, Who maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the service of men. What service? Listen to Paul himself. And ourselves, saith he, your servants for Jesus Christ's sake. He who said, If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things? yet said, that he was a servant. For we are your servants, brethren. Let none of us speak of himself, as though he were greater than you. We shall be greater if we are more humble. But whosoever will be great among you, (it is the Lord's saying,) shall be your servant. Therefore, He maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the service of men. Paul the Apostle, indeed, living by his own labour, refused even to receive the grass of the mountains; he chose to want; nevertheless, the mountains gave grass. Because he chose not to receive, ought the mountains therefore not to give, and so to remain barren? Fruit is due to the rain, food is due to the servant, as the Lord saith, Eat such things as they give you: and that they should not think that they gave ought of their own, He added, for the labourer is worthy of his hire.

17. Therefore, brethren, since it has been given to me to say somewhat to you upon this opportunity, specially since we who speak to you seek no such things from you, and therefore speak the more freely: (though even if we did seek, we should be seeking your profit, and not your riches, but your righteousness;) yet I warn you in few words, since we have already said much, and our discourse must at length come to an end; if ye would not be barren, repay the rain by fruitfulness, lest hereafter your barrenness be condemned; for the Lord threateneth the barren and thorn-bearing land with fire, even as He prepared His granary, for the fruitful: take heed to exact of yourselves; be your own exactors. Christ silently exacteth; and louder is His Voice though He be silent, in that He is not silent in the Gospel. For He is

not truly silent, since He saith, Make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that they too may receive you into everlasting habitations. He is not silent; hear His Voice. For none can exact of you: unless perhaps there is need of exacting, that they who serve you in the Gospel, ask of you. If it come to this, that they have to ask, take heed lest what ye ask of God, ye ask in vain. Be then your own exactors, lest they who serve you in the Gospel, I do not say be compelled to ask of you, for perhaps they ask not even when compelled, but by their silence accuse you. Wherefore it is written, Blessed is he who understandeth concerning the poor and needy. When he saith, who understandeth concerning the poor and needy, he waiteth not for him to ask. Understand concerning him. One needy man seeketh thee, another needy man thou oughtest to seek. Both are said, my brethren: just now has been read, Give to every one that asketh of thee; and in another place Scripture saith, Let alms sweat in thy hand, till thou findest a righteous man to whom to give it. One there is who seeketh thee, another thou oughtest to seek. Leave not indeed him who seeketh thee empty, for, give to every one that asketh of thee; yet still there is another whom thou oughtest to seek; let alms sweat in thine hand, till thou findest a righteous man to whom to give it. Ye will never do this, unless ye have somewhat set aside from your substance, each what pleaseth him according to the needs of his family, as a sort of debt to be paid to the treasury. If Christ have not a state of His own, neither hath He a treasury. For know ye what ‘fiscus’ means? ‘Fiscus’ is a bag, and from the same source come also the words ‘fiscella,’ and ‘fiscina.’ Think not that fiscus is a kind of dragon, because men are alarmed when they hear of the collector of the fiscus: the ‘fiscus’ is the public purse. The Lord had one here on earth when He had the bag: and the bag was entrusted to Judas. The Lord endured Judas, who was both a traitor and a thief, in him shewing to all the world His long-suffering; yet they who contributed, contributed to the Lord’s treasury. Unless perchance ye think that the Lord went and sought, or was in need when Angels served Him, and He fed so many thousands with five loaves. Wherefore then willed He to want, save to shew an example to the mountains to bring forth grass, that they should not repay the rain with barrenness. Cut off then and prune off some fixed sum either from thy yearly profits or thy daily gains, else thou seemest as it were to give of thy capital, and thy hand must needs hesitate, when thou puttest it forth to that which thou hast not vowed. Cut off some part of thy income; a tenth if thou choosest, though that is but little. For it is said that the Pharisees gave a tenth; I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And what saith the Lord? Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. He whose righteousness thou oughtest to exceed, giveth a tenth: thou givest not even a thousandth. How wilt thou surpass him whom thou matchest not? Who covereth the heaven with clouds, Who prepareth rain for the earth; Who maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the service of men.

18. And giveth unto the cattle their food. These are the cattle he meaneth, even God's flocks. God defraudeth not His flock of their food through men, for whose service He maketh the grass to grow. Whence the Apostle saith, Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Who giveth unto the cattle their food, and to the young of the ravens that call upon Him. Shall we perchance think this, that the ravens call upon God to give them their food? Think not that the unreasoning creature calls upon God: no creature knows how to call upon God, save the reasonable alone. Consider it as spoken in a figure, lest thou think, as some evil men say, that the souls of men migrate into cattle, dogs, swine, ravens. Give this no place in your hearts or in your faith. The soul of man is made after the image of God: He will not give His image to dog or swine. What is then, And to the young of the ravens that call upon Him? Who are the young of the ravens? The Israelites used to say that they alone were righteous, because to them the Law had been given: all other men of every nation they used to call sinners. And in truth all nations were given up to sin, to idolatry, to the worship of stones and stocks: but did they continue so? Although the ravens themselves, our fathers, did not, yet we, the young of the ravens, do call upon God. He giveth to the cattle their food, and to the young of the ravens who call upon Him. They are the young of the ravens, to whom Peter saith, Forasmuch as ye were not redeemed with corruptible silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers. For the young of the ravens, who seemed to worship the images of their forefathers, have advanced, and turned to God. And now thou hearest the young of the ravens calling upon the one God. What then? Sayest thou to the young of

the ravens, ‘hast thou left thy father?’ Plainly I have, saith he; for he is a raven who calls not upon God, I, the young of the raven, do call upon God. And to the young of the ravens who call upon Him.

19. In the power of an horse He will not take pleasure. The power of an horse is pride. For the horse seemeth adapted as it were to bear a man aloft, that he may be more uplifted as he goes. And in truth he has a neck which typifieth a sort of pride. Let not men exalt themselves upon their worth, let them not think themselves uplifted by their distinctions; let them beware lest they be thrown by an untamed horse. For see what is said in another Psalm, Some in chariots and some in horses, but we will exult in the Name of the Lord our God. What therefore happeneth to them? See what followeth, They have been bound and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright. In the power of an horse He will not take pleasure: nor in the tabernacle of a man will He delight. In the tabernacle, saith he, of a man. For the tabernacle of the Lord is the Holy Church spread throughout the whole world. Heretics, separating themselves from the Church’s tabernacles, have set up tabernacles for themselves; in the tabernacle of a man God will not delight. But observe the young of the raven, saying, I have chosen to be vast away in the house of the Lord, rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners. For if perchance it be the lot of any, who is good and pious, who confesseth his own weakness, who is the young of a raven that calleth on God, not to enjoy worldly distinction, he goeth not out of the Church, he setteth not up for himself a tent outside the Church, wherein God will not delight. But what saith he? I have chosen to be cast away in the house of God, rather than to dwell in the tents of sinners. For in the tabernacle of a man will He not delight.

20. But what addeth he? The Lord will delight in them that fear Him, and in them that hope in His mercy. The Lord delighteth in them that fear Him. But is the Lord feared in the same way as a robber? For a robber is feared, and a wild beast is feared, and an unjust and powerful man is much feared. The Lord will delight in them that fear Him. Fear Him, how? And in them that hope in His mercy. Behold, Judas, who betrayed our Lord, feared, but he did not hope in His mercy. For afterward he repented of having betrayed the Lord, and he said, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent

blood. It is well indeed that thou hast feared, but only if thou trustedst in His mercy, Whom thou hast feared. He in despair went and hanged himself. In such wise then fear the Lord, that thou trust in His mercy. If thou fearest a robber, thou hopest for help from another, not from him whom thou fearest: thou askest aid from him whom thou fearest not, against him whom thou fearest. If thou fearest God in this wise, and fearest Him because thou art a sinner, from whom wilt thou get aid against God? Whither wilt thou go? What wilt thou do? Wilt thou flee from Him? flee to Him. Wilt thou flee from His wrath? flee to His ruth. And thou wilt make Him ruthful, if thou hope in His mercy, and so avoid sin for the future, as to pray to Him for past sins, that they may be forgiven thee by the Lord, to Whom belongeth honour, and the kingdom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever. Amen.

PSALM 147 PART II

Exposition

Sermon to the people, wherein he argueth against the games and shows, and also against the Donatists.

1. Ye remember, beloved, that we put off till to-day the discussion of the Psalm which we have just sung. For it is the very Psalm which was read on the Lord's Day, and which we had undertaken to handle. But at that time we were moved by the Gospel which was read, and, through the greatness of our fear, and for your greater profit, we dwelt upon the Lord's commending to us the last day, and how He willed that we should with care and watching look out for His coming, frightening us by an example, that He may not condemn us in the judgment, saying, that the coming of the Son of Man should be as it was in the days of Noe: they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until Noe entered into the Ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. In our anxiety then, and through great fear which shook us, (for who, if he believes, would not fear?) we dwelt, so far as we could, on this, speaking at length in our discourse, how you and all of us should act and live, so that we may be able not only to await that day without dread, but even to long for it. For, if we love Christ, surely we ought to long for His coming. For it is a contradiction, and cannot, I think, be true, to fear the coming of Him Whom thou lovest; to pray, Thy kingdom come, and to fear lest thou be heard. And whence is this fear of the Judge's coming? Is He unjust? is He spiteful? is He envious? lastly, doth He wait to hear thy cause from another, so that perhaps he whom thou hast instructed, either may cheat thee by making but a sham defence, or, through deficiency of eloquence and ability, may be unable to prove in words thy goodness and innocence? It is none of these. Who is it then that is to come? wherefore dost thou not rejoice? Who is coming to judge thee, save He, Who came to be judged for thee? Thou needest not fear the accuser, of whom He Himself said, Now is the prince of this world cast out. Thou needest not fear the weakness of thy advocate, for

He is now thy Advocate, Who then will be thy Judge. He will be there, and thou, and thy case: the statement of thy case will be the testimony of thy conscience. Whosoever then thou art that fearest thy Judge that is to be, amend at once thy conscience that is now. Is it too little for thee, that He will not require what is past? No space of time will then be left, when He shall judge: now how great a space is left while He enjoineth! Then it will no longer be possible to amend: now, who hindereth thee? While we were earnestly commending this to you on the Lord’s Day, because this, I might almost say this alone, is really needful to be spoken, a considerable space of time passed, and we were compelled to defer to this day the Psalm which we had undertaken to handle. Now it is before us: let us give heed to it, or rather to God, Who in His mercy has deigned to dispense to us these discourses in His Spirit, as He Himself knows to be expedient for our infirmities. For doth ever a sick man dare to give counsel to his Physician?

2. While it was being read, ye all of you, I imagine, or many at all events, observed that it containeth several verses, for the opening of which we must needs knock: specially where it saith, Who giveth snow like wool, Who scattereth mist like ashes: Who sendeth forth His crystal like morsels of bread: Who can stand before His cold? For if any, when he has heard this, taketh it literally, he has indeed thought of works of God: for who giveth snow, save God? who scattereth mist, save God? who hardeneth crystal, save He? and each of these has a fitting similitude set over against it: for wool is not unlike snow, nor ashes unlike mist, nor morsels of bread to the cleanness and whiteness of white crystal. For crystal is in appearance like glass, but it is white. Now, with regard to this crystal, it is told by those who know, (and therefore we ought not to doubt it, for Scripture, which is most worthy of belief, giveth testimony thereto,) it is told, I say, that crystal, being made of snow, which has hardened through many years and never melted, becomes so solid, that it cannot easily be melted. Summer at its coming easily melteth the snow of the preceding winter, for it hath not yet antiquity besides to increase its hardness. But when many snows for many years have fallen upon one another, and their abundance has become too great for the power of the summer to master, (I mean not one summer, but many, and especially in these parts, that is, in the north, where even in summer the sun is not found extremely hot,) then this abiding and lasting

hardness creates this which is called crystal. Observe, beloved. What then is crystal? It is snow hardened by frost for many years, so that it cannot easily be melted either by sun or fire. I have explained this at somewhat greater length, because many are ignorant of it, and they who happen to know it ought not to consider a statement of what they know burdensome, seeing it is brought forward not for their sake, but for the sake of those who know it not. When then ye heard the Reader sounding out these words, I doubt not that different thoughts presented themselves to you; that some said, and said truly, Great are the works of the Lord, whereof but a small portion, and that an earthly one, and known to almost all, has been here mentioned, how God snows, how He scattereth mist, how He maketh the crystal solid: others said to themselves, Thinkest thou that all this is set down without reason in Scripture, or that this means nothing more than it sounds? Is not somewhat suggested to us by the snow and the wool, by the mist and ashes, by the crystal and bread? But why hath Scripture willed to speak thus, by certain darknesses, so to speak, of similitudes? how much better for it to speak more openly? why have I so much as to seek or hesitate what these words mean? why am I at fault when I hear them? why when I have heard a Psalm do I generally go away never the wiser? This is it, which I said a little above, ‘Suffer thyself to be cured: thus art thou to be healed.’ Very proud and presumptuous is that sick man, who dares to advise his physician, even though he be but a man. Shall the sick man dare to give advice to the physician? When man is sick, and God is curing him, it is a great beginning of reverence and soundness, before thou knowest wherefore a thing has been said, to believe that it was right for it to be said in the way in which it has been said. For this reverence will make thee capable of seeking what is said, of finding when thou hast sought, of rejoicing when thou hast found. Let us have then this sympathy of your prayers with our Lord God; may He deign, if not for our sakes yet for yours, to give unto us what here lieth hidden. Look on it then now as though we had promised you a day of some heavenly show and exhibition, and, having read these verses and not yet expounded them, have brought before you some of our Exhibitor’s dresses wrapped up. Verily it is for this cause that they are brought forth folded up, that ye may await their being unfolded: but ye are preparing not only to gaze on them, but to be clothed with them.

3. We said on the Lord’s Day, if ye, beloved, who were present remember, that the Gospel which detained us so long that we had to defer the exposition of the Psalm, yet harmonized well with the Psalm. This we then said, but were not able to prove, because we deferred discussing the Psalm. To-day then we ought also to set forth this harmony. In that Gospel we were alarmed concerning the last day. That alarm produces safety: for through being alarmed we take precautions, by taking precautions we shall be safe. For just as unseasonable security driveth into alarms, so well-regulated anxiety produceth security. And for this cause doth God alarm us, that we do not so love this present life, so frail, so fleeting, so transitory, as though there were no other: for if there be no other, let us love this present one. If there is no other life, they are more happy than we, who to-day have watched in the amphitheatre. For what saith the Apostle? If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. There is then another life. Let each ask Christ, that is, his own faith. But faith is asleep. Rightly art thou tossed, for Christ is asleep in the ship. For Jesus slept in the ship, and the ship was tossed by many waves and storms. The heart then is tossed, when Christ sleepeth. Christ ever waketh; what then is meant by Christ is asleep? Thy faith is asleep. Why art thou still tossed with the storm of doubt? Awaken Christ, awaken thy faith, behold with the eye of faith the future life, for the sake of which thou hast believed, for the sake of which thou art signed with His mark, Who for this cause lived here on earth, that He might shew thee how despicable is this life which thou didst love, and how much to be hoped for that wherein thou didst not believe. If then thou awake faith, and turn its eyes upon the last things, and upon the future life wherein we shall rejoice, after the Lord’s second coming, after the conclusion of the Judgment, after the kingdom of heaven has been delivered to the saints; if thou think upon this life, and the restful business of this life, of which we have often spoken, beloved, there our business will not be tossed about, our restful business, full of nought but sweetness, interrupted by no annoyances, worn by no weariness, troubled by no cloud. What will then be our business? To praise God: to love and praise, to praise in love, to love in praises. Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, for ever and ever they will be praising Thee. Wherefore, save because for ever and ever they will love Thee? And wherefore this, save because for ever and ever they will love Thee? What a show will that be, when they see God! Men see one

who fights with wild beasts, and are gladdened: woe to them if they amend not themselves. For they who see him that fights with wild beasts, and are gladdened, shall see the Saviour, and be saddened. What more wretched than they to whom the Saviour shall not be for salvation! No wonder then that they who delight in a man fighting, are not saved by a God freeing. But we, brethren, if we remember that we are among His members, if we long and persevere, shall see and be glad. That will be a city, all whose citizens shall be cleansed, wherein no seditious or turbulent one shall be mingled; the enemy who now grudges our reaching our country, there cannot lay snare for any, for he is not even permitted to be there. For if he is now excluded from the hearts of believers, how shall he then be excluded from the city of the living? What will it be, brethren, what will it be, to be in that city, of which even to speak is so great a joy! For this future life we ought to prepare our hearts; whoever prepares his heart for it, despises this life entirely; his despising it makes him to await without anxiety that day, by the awaiting which the Lord frightened him.

4. Since then this Psalm speaks and sings to us about that future life, while the Gospel alarmed us about the present, the Psalm maketh us to love the future less, the Gospel to fear the present. Not that the language of the New Testament is silent about future delight; nay, much more is it set forth in it, wherein what is to be understood is not brought forth, as it were, under a veil, but there it is seen open, that here it may be understood though obscure. Seeing then that the Gospel said to us, Watch for the coming of the last day, the day of the coming of the Son of Man, for to their ruin will it find those, who now are secure, because they are perversely secure; for they are secure in the pleasures of the world, whereas they ought to be secure in having tamed the desires of the world; already surely the Apostle hath prepared us for that life, in words which I quoted then also: for the rest, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that buy, as though they bought not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that use this world, as though they used it not; for the fashion of this world passeth away. I would have you without carefulness. He that setteth all his happiness in eating and drinking, in marrying, buying, selling, in using this world, such an one too is without

carefulness; but, since he is outside-the ark, woe to him from the deluge. But he who, whether he eateth or drinketh, or whatsoever he doeth, doeth all to the glory of God; who, if he have any sorrow about matters of this world, so weepeth as within in hope to rejoice; if he have any joy in matters of this world, so rejoiceth as within in spirit to fear; who giveth himself neither to prosperity to corrupt, nor to adversity to crush, (and this is to weep as though he wept not, and to rejoice as though he rejoiced not;) he who, if he have a wife, sympathiseth with her weakness, and payeth to her her due, rather than exacteth his own; or, if he marrieth on account of his own weakness, doeth it rather in sorrow that he could not remain without a wife, than in joy because he has one; he who selleth because he knoweth, that, even if it remained, it could not make him happy; he who knoweth that what he buyeth is but fleeting, and on all that he hath, though it be abundant and overflowing, presumeth not, and of what he hath sheweth mercy to him that hath not, that he too may receive what he hath not from Him Who hath all things;—he who is such as this awaiteth in safety the last day, because he is not outside the ark; already is he reckoned among the undecaying timbers whereof the ark is built. Let him not then fear the Lord's coming, but hope and long for it. For to him He will come, not to inflict punishment, but to end his troubles. And this is accomplished by longing for that city. What the Gospel then warned us to do, is fulfilled by longing for that city, whereof the Psalm singeth: so doth the Gospel accord with this Psalm.

5. Now let us hear what city it is that the Psalm singeth of. Let us hear, and let us sing: our joy, when we hear, is a song to our God. For we sing not only when with voice and lips we sound forth a song; there is an inward song too, for there is One Whose Ears are within. We sing with the voice, to arouse ourselves; we sing with the heart, to please Him. The Psalm is called 'a Psalm of Haggai and Zacharias.' Haggai and Zacharias were prophets, and they were prophets during the captivity of that Jerusalem, which bore on earth the shadow of a certain city in heaven. Being then in the captivity of that city in Babylon, these prophets prophesied the restoration of Jerusalem; they prophesied that the people should be freed from captivity, and that a new city should arise by the restoration of the old. We know what this captivity is, if we truly know our own state as wanderers. For in this world, in these present tribulations of the world, in the manifold crowd of

offences, we, in a manner, are groaning in captivity; but we shall be lifted up: our new city is foretold to us, destined to be equal to the old. For after their prophesying too, the event happened visibly, so that the whole was unfolded, which was needed to fulfil the foreshadowing. Jerusalem was restored after seventy years of captivity. Thus, by these seventy years, does Jeremiah mark out by the number seven the whole course of time: for these days of ours, as ye know, advance in sevens, they go and return. After seventy years then, when Jeremiah promised that the city Jerusalem should be restored, it came to pass that therein too was set forth an image of things to come: it was set forth to us, that after this whole course of time, which is signified by the number seven, that city of ours will be in eternity, in one day. For in that dwelling time rolls not on, for the dweller passeth not away. The prophets, seeing this in spirit, saw the heavenly, spake of the earthly. But they said of the latter, what might guide to the former: and all the things which were done in time, in bodily movements, in acts of men, were signs and fore-announcements of things to come.

6. Let us now hear that city sung of, and lift up ourselves to it. For the Spirit of God commendeth it much to us, shedding into us the love of it, that we sigh unto it, and groan in our wanderings, and long to reach it. Let us love it: the very love is walking. Behold, let us love it from the hallowed mouth, from the mouth prophetic speaking by the Spirit of God: Praise in unison, O Jerusalem, thy God. Abiding yet in captivity, they behold those flocks, or rather, the one flock of all its citizens, gathered from all sides into that city; they see the joy of the mass, now after threshings and winnowings placed in the garner, fearing nothing, suffering no toil nor trouble; and, as yet abiding here, in the midst of the threshing they send forward their joy of hope, and pant for it, joining as it were their hearts to the Angels of God, and to that people which shall abide with them in joy for ever. Praise in unison, O Jerusalem, thy God. For what wilt thou then do, O Jerusalem? Surely toil and groaning will pass away. What wilt thou do? wilt thou plough, or sow, or plant vines, or make voyages, or trade? What wilt thou do? Will it still be thy duty to be engaged in the works thou now doest, good though they are, and spring from mercy? Consider thy numbers, consider on all sides thy company: see whether any hungers, for thee to give bread to; see whether any thirsts, for thee to give a cup of cold water to; see whether any is a

stranger, for thee to take in; see whether any is sick, for thee to visit; see whether any is at strife, for thee to reconcile him; see whether any is dying, for thee to bury him. What then wilt thou do? Praise in unison, O Jerusalem, thy God. Behold, this is thy business. As is wont to be said in inscriptions, ‘Use it and be happy.’ Praise in unison, O Jerusalem, thy God.

7. Be ye Jerusalem; remember of whom it is said, Lord, in Thy city their image Thou shalt bring to nought. These are they who now rejoice in such pomps; among them are they who have not come hither to-day because there is a show. To whom is it a gift? to whom is it a loss? or why is it a gift? why is it a loss? For not they only who exhibit such shows are smitten with loss, but with much greater loss are they smitten who delight in gazing on them. The former have their chest drained of its gold, the latter have their breast robbed of the riches of righteousness. Most of the exhibitors of shows have to mourn for selling their estates; how ought the sinners to mourn, for losing their souls! Was it then for this that the Lord cried out on the Lord’s Day, ‘Watch ye,’ that to-day men should watch in this way. I beseech you, ye citizens of Jerusalem, I beseech you by the peace of Jerusalem, by the Redeemer, the Builder, the Ruler of Jerusalem, that ye address your prayers to God for them. May they see, may they feel, that they are trifling; and, intent as they are on the sights which please them, may at length look on themselves, and be displeased. For in many we rejoice that this has already been done: and once we too sat there and were mad: and how many think we now sit there, who shall yet be, not only Christians, but also Bishops! From what is past, we conjecture what is to be: from what has already been done, we announce beforehand what God will do. Let your prayers be wakeful, ye groan not for nothing. Certainly they who have already escaped, praying for those who are still in danger, because they too having been among those in danger, are heard; and God shall drag His people out of the captivity of Babylon; by all means He shall redeem and deliver them, and the number of the saints who bear the image of God shall be perfected. They shall not be there, whose image in His city God shall spurn and bring to nought, because they too in their city, that is in Babylon, have brought His image to nought. There shall be the people praising the Lord, whom now the Spirit of prophecy foreseeth, and bids us exult in hope, and long for the reality. Praise in unison thy God, O

Jerusalem: praise thy God, O Sion. Praise in unison, because thou consistest of many: praise, because thou hast been made one. We being many, saith the Apostle, are one in Christ. As then we are many, we praise in unison; as we are one, we praise. The same are many and one, because He in Whom they are one is ever One.

8. Wherefore, saith this Jerusalem, do I praise in unison the Lord, and, as Sion, praise my God? Jerusalem is the same as Sion. For different reasons has it the two names. Jerusalem meaneth ‘visions of peace;’ Sion meaneth ‘watching.’ See whether these words do not sound like sights; that the Gentiles may not think that they have sights and we have none. Sometimes after the theatre or amphitheatre breaks up, when the crowd of lost ones begins to be vomited forth from that den, sometimes, retaining in their minds images of their vain amusements, and feeding their memory with things not only useless but even hurtful, rejoicing in them as if they were sweet, while they are really deadly; they see often, it may be, the servants of God pass by, they recognise them by their garb or head-dress, or they know them by sight, and they say to one another, or inwardly, ‘Wretched people, how much they lose!’ Brethren, let us return their good will (for they do mean it well) with prayers to the Lord. They wish us well; but he that loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul. If he hateth his own soul, how shall he love my soul? Yet with a perverse, and empty, and vain good will, if indeed it may be called good will, they grieve that we lose what they love: let us pray that they lose not what we love. Behold of what character that Jerusalem is to be which he exhorteth to praise, or rather foreseeth will praise. For the praises of that city, when we shall see and love and praise, will not need to be urged on and stirred up by the voice of prophecy; but the Prophets now say this, to drink in as far as while they remain in this flesh they can, the future joys of the blessed, and then giving them forth into our ears, to arouse in us love of that city. Let us burn with longing, let us not be slothful in spirit.

9. But see of what character that Jerusalem is to be, which is to praise God, and how it is to praise; in a sort of perfection of bliss. Praise in unison, saith he, O Jerusalem, the Lord; praise thy God, O Sion. And, as though it said, how shall I be safe to praise? he saith, for He hath made strong the bars of

thy gates. Observe, brethren. He saith, He hath made strong the bars of thy gates. The making bars strong is not for open gates, but shut ones, wherefore most manuscripts read, He hath made strong the bolts of thy gates. Observe, beloved. He biddeth Jerusalem when closed in to praise the Lord. We praise in unison now, we praise now; but it is amid offences. Many where we wish not, enter in: many though we wish it not, go out: therefore offences are frequent. And because iniquity hath abounded, saith the Truth, the love of many waxeth cold: because men come in whom we cannot discern, because men go out whom we cannot retain. Wherefore is this? Because not yet is there perfection, not yet is there the bliss that shall be. Wherefore is this? Because as yet it is the threshing-floor, not yet the garner. What therefore will be then, save no fear that aught of this kind will happen? For praise in unison, O Jerusalem, the Lord; praise thy God, O Sion: for He hath made strong the bars of thy gates. He hath made strong. He said not only, He hath set, but, He hath made strong the bars of thy gates. Let none go out, let none come in. Let none go out, we rejoice: let none come in, we fear. Nay, fear not this: when thou hast entered it will be said: only be thou in the number of virgins, who carried their oil with them.

10. For those virgins signify souls. For there were not really five, but among those five are thousands. For in the number five are understood thousands, not only of women but of men: for either sex is called woman, because they are the Church: and either sex, that is, the Church, is called a virgin. I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. Few have virginity in the flesh: all ought to have in heart. Virginity of the flesh is a body unsullied; virginity in heart is a faith uncorrupted. The whole Church therefore is called ‘a Virgin,’ and, in the masculine gender, ‘the people of God,’ and, ‘one people,’ and ‘a single people,’ and ‘one Church,’ and ‘one dove:’ and in this virginity are thousands of saints. The five virgins therefore signify all souls that are to enter into the kingdom of God, not without reason expressed by the number five, for the senses of the body known to all are five. For by five doors entereth every thing through the body into the soul: either by the eye entereth what thou lookest after amiss, or by the ears, or by the smell, or by the taste, or by the touch. Whosoever hath admitted nothing that corrupteth by these five gates, is reckoned among the five virgins. Corruption is

admitted through unlawful desires: but what is lawful and what not, the books of Scripture fully tell. Thou must then be among these five virgins: so shalt thou not fear that which is said, ‘Let none enter:’ for this is said, and shall be fulfilled; but it will be when thou hast entered; none shall shut the door against thee, but when thou hast entered, the gates of Jerusalem shall be shut, and the bars of its gates be made strong. For if thou choosest either not to be a virgin in heart, or, though a virgin, among the foolish virgins, thou shalt remain outside, and knock in vain.

11. Who are the foolish virgins? They also are five: who, but they who have indeed continence of the flesh, so as to avoid the corruptions which come from all the senses, which I just enumerated? They avoid, so to speak, the corruptions which come from all sides; yet they bear not their good in their consciences before the eyes of God, but desire to please men therewith, and follow the judgment of others. They hunt after the good opinions of the multitude; they are of little value to themselves, while they desire to be dear to those who see them: their own conscience sufficeth them not. Rightly do they carry no oil with them. For oil is the state of glory itself, on account of its brightness and splendour. But what saith the Apostle? Behold the wise virgins carrying oil with them: but let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have glory in himself alone, and not in another. These then are the wise virgins. But the foolish light indeed their lamps, that is, their works seem indeed to shine; but they shall fail and be extinguished, because they are not fed with oil from within. And while the Bridegroom tarrieth, they all sleep: for both sorts of men fall asleep in death, both the foolish and the wise; while the Lord delayeth His coming, they sink into this bodily, visible death, which all Christians know that Scripture describes by sleep: as the Apostle said of them that were sick, For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. By sleep, he meaneth, die. But, lo, the Bridegroom shall come, and all shall rise, but not all shall enter. The works of the foolish virgins shall fail, because they have not the oil of conscience: nor shall they find from whom to buy, what their flatterers used to sell to them. For they are mocking, not grudging, who say to them, Go and buy for yourselves. For the foolish had begged of the wise, and had said to them, Give us oil, for our lamps are gone out. What said the wise? Lest perhaps there be not enough for us and you, go rather to them that sell, and buy for

yourselves. This was in fact reminding them, ‘What do they now profit you, from whom ye were wont to buy flattery?’ And while they were going, Scripture saith, the others went in, and the door was shut. While they are going in heart, while they are thinking on these things, while they, putting off from them their former purpose, are recalling back their past deeds, they, as it were, are going to them that sell: and they find not others to aid them, they find not then to praise them those by whom they were wont to be praised, and to be roused, as they thought, to good works, not by the strength of a good conscience, but by the incitement of another’s tongue.

12. Those words too, lest perchance there be not enough for us, are said with great humbleness of thought. For the oil which we bear in our consciences is our judgment of our own character, and it is difficult for a man to judge perfectly concerning himself. My brethren, however much a man advance, however much he reach forth unto those things which are before, and forget those things which are behind, if he once say to himself, ‘It is well,’ there cometh forth a rule from the storehouse of God; it examineth him accurately, and who shall boast that he hath a pure heart, who shall boast that he is clean from sin? But what saith Scripture, Judgment without mercy to him who hath shewed no mercy. However much progress thou makest, thou must hope in mercy. For if justice without mercy be brought forth, in any one it will find what it may condemn. And what Scripture comforteth us? That which exhorteth us to shew mercy, that we be altogether frequent in giving what we have beyond our needs. For we have many superfluities, if we keep nothing but what is necessary; for if we seek empty vanities, nothing is enough. My brethren, seek what is enough for God’s work, not what is sufficient for your greediness. Your greediness is no work of God. Your self, your body, your soul, this is all God’s work. Enquire what is enough for them, and thou shalt see how little it is. Two pieces of money were enough for the widow to shew mercy with: two pieces of money were enough to buy the Kingdom of God. What is enough for the giver of shows to clothe them that fight with wild beasts so often? See that not only is it little which is enough for yourselves, but neither doth God Himself require much from thee. Find out how much He hath given thee, and take of that what is enough: all other things which remain as superfluities are the necessaries of others. The superfluities of the rich are

the necessaries of the poor. Thou possessest what belongs to others, when thou possessest more than thou needest.

13. If then thou doest deeds of mercy of this kind, and specially that which costeth thee nothing, namely, forgive as we forgive, (wherein thou spendest nought but charity, which groweth in the spending,) if thou doest, I say, and art fervent in these good works of mercy, (which good works themselves will be needless then, because then there will be no one miserable, to whom mercy may be shewn,) thou wilt await in safety the judgment, in safety not so much on account of thy righteousness, as on account of the mercy of God, because thou too hast first shewed mercy. For judgment without mercy to him that hath shewed no mercy: and mercy rejoiceth against judgment. Think not, brethren, that then He is not just when He sheweth us no mercy, or that He departeth from the standard of His justice. Both when He condemneth, He is just, and when He sheweth mercy, He is just. For what so just as to repay mercy to one who sheweth it first? What so just, as that in what measure ye mete, it be measured to you again? Give to thy brother in need. What brother? To Christ. If then because in giving to thy brother, thou givest to Christ, and in Christ to God, Who is over all, blessed for ever; God hath willed to need at thy hand, and dost thou hold thy hand back? Certainly thou stretchest out thine hand, and askest of God: hear then the Scripture; let not thine hand be stretched out to receive, and shut when thou shouldest give. God willeth that somewhat be spent upon Him, of that which He hath given. For what givest thou, which He gave not? For what hast thou, which thou hast not received? or rather, not to say to God, dost thou give aught to any one of what is thine own? Of His thou givest Who biddeth thee give. Prefer to spend rather than to seize. If then thou doest this, and in true humility sayest of that oil, test haply there be not enough for us, then thou enterest in, and the door is shut. Hear the Apostle saying so: to me it is a very small thing to be judged of you. For how can ye judge my conscience? How can ye examine with what mind I do what I do? How far can men judge of their neighbour? Surely a man can judge better about himself: but better can God judge about a man, than the man about himself. If then thou shalt have been such as this, thou shalt enter, thou shalt be among the five virgins; the other foolish ones shall be shut out. For this thou hast in the Gospel. The door shall be shut, and they shall stand and cry,

Open unto us, and it shall not be opened: for He hath made strong the bars of thy gates: He hath made strong, saith he, the bars of thy gates: now thou art safe: in safety praise: praise without end. Firmly are thy gates shut: no friend goeth out: no enemy cometh in. He hath made strong the bars of thy gates.

14. He hath blessed thy children within thee. They roam not without, they wander not; within they rejoice, within they praise, within they are blest: within they no longer are in travail, for now they give not birth to any. They are sons, they are holy. These holy sons, now praising and rejoicing, their mother, love, has already travailed with and given birth to; they are shut within, because love has gathered them. Hear love travailing with them: for the Apostle Paul, filled with love, having not only a father's but a mother's heart toward his sons, saith, My children, of whom I travail in birth again. When Paul travailed in birth with them, it was love that travailed in birth; when love travailed in birth with them, it was the Spirit of God that travailed: for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, Which is given unto us. Let Him then gather whom He has travailed in birth with, and brought forth. Now the sons are within, they are safe. They have flown from the nest of fear, they have flown to the heavenly places, they have flown to everlasting abodes: they fear no longer any thing temporal.

15. He hath blessed thy children within thee. Who? He Who hath set peace as thy borders. How ye all exult! Love peace, my brethren. Greatly are we delighted, when the love of peace crieth from your hearts. How greatly doth it delight you! I had said nothing: I had explained nothing: I but read the verse, and ye shouted. What was it that shouted in you? The love of peace. What have I shewn to your eyes? Wherefore shout ye, if ye love not? Wherefore love ye, if ye see not? But peace is invisible. What eye is there that hath seen her, so as to love her? Yet would ye not shout, if ye loved not. These are the shows which God exhibiteth of things invisible. With how great beauty hath the perception of peace smitten your hearts! Why should I go on to speak of peace, or of the praises of peace? Your feelings have anticipated all my words: I cannot attain to it: I am unable: I am too weak. Let us all defer the praises of peace, till we come to the country of peace.

There we shall praise it more fully, for we shall enjoy it more fully. If thus we love it when it is but begun in us, how shall we praise it when it is perfected? Behold, this I say, O beloved sons, O children of the kingdom, O citizens of Jerusalem, in Jerusalem is the vision of peace: and all who love peace are blest in her, and they enter in, when the doors are being shut, and the bars made strong. This, which when but named ye so love and esteem, this follow after, this long for: this love in your home, in your business, in your wives, in your sons, in your slaves, in your friends, in your enemies.

16. This is the peace which heretics have not. What doeth peace, while still in the uncertainties of this present region, in this pilgrimage of our mortal nature? wherein none is manifest to another, none can see the heart of another? What doeth peace? It judgeth not about things uncertain; it establisheth not things unknown: it is more ready to believe well of a man than to suspect ill. It grieveth not, as having made a grievous error, when it thinketh well even of a bad man; it doth grieve, as having made a deadly error, when it hath happened to think evil of a good man. ‘I know not what he is; what loss is it, if I believe that he is good. If it be uncertain, thou mayest be cautious, lest perchance it be true; yet thou mayest not condemn, as though it were true.’ Thus doth peace bid thee. Seek peace, she saith, and ensue it. What doth heresy bid? It condemneth those whom it knoweth not; it condemneth the whole world: the whole world, it saith, hath perished; there is no Christian left, Africa alone remaineth. Thou hast judged well. From what tribunal dost thou pass sentence on the whole world? In what court hath the world stood before thee? I do not desire men to believe me, but that they believe not thee either: let Christ be believed, let the Spirit of God in the prophets be believed, let the law of Moses be believed. What said Moses of these times which were to come? To Abraham it was said, in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed. Dost thou doubt what is meant by ‘the seed of Abraham?’ When the Apostle hath spoken, I think thou wilt not doubt; or if thou doubtest about the Apostle too, wherefore peace, peace, when there is no peace? What saith the Apostle? To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. Lo, hundreds of years before it was said to Abraham, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. What was said hundreds of years before, and believed by one man, that we now

see fulfilled. Here we read it, here we see it, and dost thou come athwart it and refuse it? What wilt thou say? Believe not. Believe not whom? The Spirit of God? God speaking to Abraham? And whom am I to believe? Thee? I say not this, thou wilt say. What then dost thou say to me? This man and that have handed it down. Dost thou quote this from the Gospel, from the Apostle, from the Prophets? Examine all the Scriptures: read me this from what I believe; for thee I believe not. From whence wilt thou read? This, my father, saith he, told me; this, my grandfather; this, my brother; this, my bishop. Yes; but this God said to Abraham, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. One man heareth this, and believeth, and it happeneth in many cases after many ages. When it is said, it is believed; when it is fulfilled, is it doubted? This then Moses said; let the Prophets speak also. Behold the barter of our purchasing. Christ hangeth on the wood: behold the Price at which He bought, and so shalt thou see what He bought. He is about to buy somewhat: what that somewhat is as yet thou knowest not. Behold, behold the Price, and thou shalt see the thing. His own Blood He shed; with His own Blood He bought; with the Blood of the immaculate Lamb He bought; with the Blood of the only-begotten Son of God He bought. What was bought with the Blood of the only-begotten Son of God? Look still what the Price was. The Prophet said long before it took place, They pierced My Hands and My Feet, they counted all My Bones. I behold, O Christ, a mighty Price; let me see what Thou hast purchased. All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord. In one and the same Psalm I see the Purchaser, and the Price, and the Purchase. The Purchaser, is Christ; the Price, His Blood; the Purchase, the world. Let us hear the very words of prophecy contradicting heretical questioners. Behold the Purchase of my Lord. Wilt thou that I read it in the Psalm? All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord, and all the countries of the Gentiles shall worship before Him. Behold Him too contending, behold Him defending the right: for the Kingdom is His, and He shall rule over the Gentiles. Yes, He Who bought, even Christ, not he who apostatised, Donatus. They shall worship. Rightly shall all the countries of the Gentiles worship before Him. Wherefore rightly? Because the Kingdom is the Lord’s, and He shall rule over the Gentiles. So spake Moses, so spake the Prophets, and thousands of other things have they said too. Who can count the testimonies to the

Church scattered throughout the whole world? Who can count them? there are not as many heresies against the Church, as there are testimonies of the Law for the Church. What page soundeth not thus? what verse speaketh not this? All cry out for the Lord's unity, because He hath made the borders of Jerusalem peace. Dost thou, O heretic, bark against this? Therefore is it rightly said in reference to that city, as it is written in the Apocalypse, without are dogs. Thou barkest against this. Where hast thou passed judgment on the whole world, as I said at the beginning? on what tribunal? Why, on the arrogance of thine own heart. A lofty tribunal, but one that shall fall. Thus spake Moses, thus spake the Prophets, and yet they believe not, who would be thought Christians.

17. A certain rich man was tormented in hell, and longed for a drop of water from the finger of the poor man who had lain despised before his gate, because he was burned in the flames. And when this was not granted to him, because there shall be judgment without mercy to him that hath shewed no mercy; when, I say, this was not granted to him, he said to Abraham, Father Abraham, I have five brethren; send Lazarus to tell them what I am suffering here, that they come not also into this place of torment. And what said Abraham to him? They have there Moses and the Prophets. And he said, My father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. Then said Abraham, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe though one went unto them from the dead. Of whom said he, they have there Moses and the Prophets? Surely of those who were yet alive, who had yet abundant time of amendment, who had not yet come into those regions of torments. They have there, he saith, those whom they may hear, Moses and the Prophets. They believe not these, but if one went unto them from the dead they will believe. If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe though one went unto them from the dead. This is Abraham's statement. Abraham's statement where and whence? From some place on high, and full of rest and happiness, which he who was being tormented in the flame lifted up his eyes and saw; when in his bosom, that is in his secret place, he saw the poor man in happiness and exaltation, thence was that statement made. There God dwelleth, for God dwelleth in His saints. Wherefore the Apostle wisheth and saith, To be dissolved and to be with Christ is far better. So to

the thief it is said, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise. The Lord then, dwelling with Abraham and in Abraham, uttered that statement, They have there Moses and the Prophets; if they hear not them, neither, though one rose from the dead, will they believe him. Ye have here, O ye heretics, Moses and the Prophets; as yet ye are alive, as yet ye can hear, as yet ye can amend, as yet it is allowed you to bridle your violence, to hold the truth: consider with yourselves whether it be right to listen to Moses and the Prophets, who have given so great proofs of their credibility, when we see the affairs of men running in the course which they foretold. Why do ye still hesitate to believe Moses and the Prophets? Why do ye hesitate to listen? Do ye perchance seek one rising from the dead, whether He too can tell you about His Church? This is what the rich man in hell sought; he was blamed because he sought this; Moses and the Prophets ought to have been enough for his brethren. For this cause did he ask in vain, that ye now, being warned by his example, might not ask in vain and too late, and be tormented like him. Hear Moses and the Prophets. What said Moses? In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. What said the Prophets? All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord. Wilt thou still say to me, ‘Let one rise from the dead; I believe not, unless one come from thence and tell me?’ O Lord, thanks to Thy mercy: Thou didst will to die, that one might rise from the dead; and that one, not any body, but the Truth, Who rose from the dead. He Who could have spoken the truth concerning the place of the dead, though He went not thither, yet on account of what foolish and wicked men say, lo, He died, lo, He rose from the dead. What sayest thou, O heretic, what sayest thou? Now let me hear thee; all thy excuses are at an end; though thou wast to speak the words of the rich man in hell, Christ hath risen from the dead: deignest thou to listen even to Him? Behold, what thou alive longedst for, like the rich man when dead: He is risen from the grave: it is not thy father nor thy grandfather that have risen: it is not they, who have discredited some with the name of ‘traditores.’ But suppose they have not discredited them, but have spoken the truth: wilt thou know how little it is to me? Let us hear at the same time what He said, Who hath risen from the grave. Why should I delay longer? Let us hear, let the Gospel now be opened, let what was done be read as if it were being done: let things which have been done be set before our eyes, that we may avoid what are to come. Behold, Christ rising from the dead, shewed Himself to His disciples. This was His bridal: He is the Bridegroom; the Church, His Spouse. Behold the Bridegroom, Who was said to be dead, destroyed, at an end; behold, He hath risen whole as before; behold, He is shewn to the eyes of His disciples; behold, He is offered to the handling of their hands; behold, they touched the scars, which were despaired of as wounds. He manifested Himself for their eyes to see, for their hands to handle; they think Him a spirit, for they despaired of His safety. He encourageth them, He strengtheneth them in the faith; Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. They touch, they rejoice, they tremble: and while they yet trembled for joy: thus thou hast it written. Things which are exceedingly joyful, though they are sure, yet are they not believed. A certain doubt, as though a man were slow to believe, hides the feelings of him who has what he sought. A man must needs rejoice the more, when what he despaired of has come to him. So to season and increase their joy, He willed not to be at once known. He held the sight of His disciples, specially of those two whom He found conversing by the way, already in despair, and saying, But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel. This they had thought, but now thought no longer. Hope was no longer with them, yet Christ was with them: but He Who gave them back Himself, gave them back hope too. Afterwards then, after that they had recognised Him in the breaking of bread, when He shewed Himself to the other disciples, and they thought that He was a spirit, He said, Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have. And while they yet trembled for joy, He saith unto them, Have ye here any meat? He took, He blessed, He ate, He gave to them. The truth of His Body was set forth, all suspicion of deceit was removed. What then? Knew ye not that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me? And because they believed Moses and the Prophets, (for that was true which Abraham said, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe though one rose from the dead:) because, I say, they believed Moses and the Prophets, and were not of the number of those whom Abraham found fault with, they heard what the Lord said, Knew ye not that all things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me? Behold them who believed Moses and the Prophets, see how on their testimony they believe

Him Who rose from the dead. Then opened He their understanding that they should understand the Scriptures; and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day.

18. Here thou hast the Bridegroom of the Church. And about Him Moses was not silent, the Prophets were not silent, that Christ should rise from the dead on the third day; that He should suffer, and then rise. The Bridegroom is described to us, that we may make no mistake. But certain persons come forward, and, because we are not wrong in the Bridegroom, they themselves too seem to believe the same as we do about the Bridegroom, that they may draw us away from the members of the Bridegroom; they say to us, ‘Yes, He is the Bridegroom, Whom ye believe, and we believe Him too, but the Bride is not the Church, whom ye hold to be.’ What then is? ‘The party of Donatus.’ And this what thou sayest: dost thou say this, or the Bridegroom? Dost thou say it, or God by Moses? Behold, through Moses I hold the Church: it is said by Moses, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. Dost thou say it, or the Spirit of God by the Prophets? Behold, through the Prophets I hold the Church: it is said by the Prophet, All the borders of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned to the Lord. Behold, already I hold the testimony of the Law and the testimony of the Prophets: let us hear moreover Him Who rose from the dead. He sheweth Himself as the Bridegroom: we hold Him. He confirmed this by proof, by exhibiting testimonies. For this Moses and the Prophets said, that it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again the third day. Now then since we both hold the Bridegroom from these words, and I think that thou now art beginning with me to believe both these words of Moses and the Prophets, let us believe Him also Who rose from the dead. Let Him go on, and say, ‘O Lord, I see now Christ the Bridegroom: it is done; let none separate me from the members of Thy Bride, and so Thou be not to me the Head, if I be not among her members. Tell me somewhat about the Church too, for I no longer doubt about her Bridegroom.’ Hear about the Church too: He goeth on and saith, that in His Name should be preached repentance and remission of sins. Nothing could be truer: that in His Name should be preached repentance and remission of sins. But where? For some say, lo here, others say, lo there. And what saith He Himself? Believe them not, for there shall

arise false Christs and false Prophets, and shall say, lo here, and, lo there. For they say not of the Head Himself, lo here, and, lo there; for it is well known that Christ is in heaven; but of the Church, where Christ is, Who saith, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. But the Lord saith, Believe them not. He who saith, lo here, and lo there, pointeth to parts: I have bought the whole. Let the Gospel tell me this: let Him Himself tell this from the Gospel; for Thou hast risen from the dead, that they may believe Thee, who believe Moses and the Prophets: do Thou tell me this. I hear, It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. What is it, O heretic? Certainly, when I was quoting Moses and the Prophets, thou didst wait for Him Who should rise from the dead: lo, He hath risen; lo, He hath spoken; as truly is there no doubt of the Church of Christ, and the Spouse of Christ, as there was none of the Body of Christ, when shewn to the eyes and handled by the hands of the disciples. Lo, He Who rose from the dead sheweth both: He sheweth the Head, He sheweth the members: He sheweth the Bridegroom, He sheweth the Bride: either believe both with me, or else thou believest what thou dost to thy condemnation. For why believest thou that He rose from the dead, that He rose in the same Body? ‘On good grounds: because He shewed the scars of His wounds: because, as He was crucified and buried, so was He restored and proved.’ Thou believest quite right. Now hear Him in Whom thou believest, speaking: That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name. Where? Throughout the broad earth. If I chose to say this, now struggling against heretics, now fighting, now having a contest with them on so important a question, I should not say it against present heretics as strongly as He said what He did say against future ones. What wouldest thou have more? Remission of sins is preached in Christ’s Name. Where? Throughout all nations. Whence? Beginning at Jerusalem. Communicate with this Church. Wherefore do we contend? For this Church began from the earthly Jerusalem, that from thence it may rejoice unto God in the other, the heavenly Jerusalem. From this it beginneth, in that it endeth. In that the Church will be entire, from this it took the beginning of its faith.

19. Read the Acts of the Apostles, and see whether I lie, how there the disciples were gathered together, when the Holy Ghost came; that that which the Lord said may be proved to thee, beginning from Jerusalem; how they on whom the Spirit came, spake in the tongues of all men. Wherefore wilt thou not speak in the tongues of all men? Lo, there were heard the sounds of all tongues. Wherefore doth not he, to whom the Holy Ghost is given, now speak in the tongues of all men? For this was then the token of the Holy Ghost coming upon men, that they spake in the tongues of all men. What wilt thou say now, O heretic? that the Holy Ghost is not given? I say not where it is given; but is it not given? If it is not given, what is it that ye do, preaching, baptizing, blessing? What is it that ye do? These are empty celebrations. He is then given. If He is given, wherefore do not they to whom He is given speak in the tongues of all men? Hath the gift of God failed, or is the fruit thereof less? The tares grew, but the wheat grew also. Let both grow together till the time of the harvest. He said not, ‘Let the tares grow, let the wheat decrease;’ both grew. Wherefore doth not the Holy Ghost now manifest Himself in the tongues of all men? Yea rather, He doth manifest Himself in all tongues: for then the Church was not spread throughout the world, so that the members of Christ should speak in all tongues. Then was fulfilled in one what was foretold in all. Now the whole Body of Christ speaketh in the tongues of all, and in whatsoever it speaketh not, it will speak. For the Church shall increase till it filleth every tongue. That which ye have abandoned, how great hath it grown! Advance with us whithersoever it hath approached, that with us ye may reach places whither it hath not yet approached. I dare to say to thee, I speak in the tongues of all men: I am in the Body of Christ, in the Church of Christ: if the Body of Christ now speaketh in the tongues of all men, I also am in all tongues: mine is the Greek, mine the Syrian, mine the Hebrew, mine the tongues of all nations, because I am in the unity of all nations.

20. So then, brethren, the Church began from Jerusalem, and spread through all nations. What is more clear than this testimony of the Law, the Prophets, and of the Lord Himself? The voices of the Apostles sound every where, giving testimony of our hope in the unity of the Body of Christ. Rejoice over the wheat, tolerate the tares, groan in the threshing, sigh for the garner. The time will come when we shall rejoice, when the bars of the

gates of Jerusalem are made strong. Let him enter, who is to enter. He who shall enter there manifested, here entereth not disguised. But he who entereth here disguised, is really without. He is without, and knows it not: the fan will prove it, the bars will prove it. He who now is truly and truthfully within, there will be finally within: he who now is within by enduring, there will be within in rejoicing. For the borders of Jerusalem are peace; for he saith, He hath set peace for thy borders. Now we long for peace, which here we have but in hope. For as yet in ourselves what sort of peace is there? The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. Where is full peace even in one man? When there shall be full peace in one man, then shall there be full peace in all the citizens of Jerusalem. When will there be full peace? When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality; then will be full peace, then will be firm peace: then nothing contendeth against the soul in man, not itself against itself, being wounded in one part; not frailty of flesh, not want of body, not hunger, not thirst, not cold, not weariness, not any need, no provocation of strife, certainly not the anxious care at once to avoid and to love one's enemy. All these things, brethren, contend against us, not yet is there full and perfect peace. What ye cried out awhile ago at the very mention of peace, ye cried from longing: your cry was from thirst, not from fulness; for there will be perfect righteousness where will be perfect peace. Now we hunger and thirst after righteousness. Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. How shall they be filled? When we have arrived at peace. Therefore when he had said, Who hath set peace for thy borders, because there is fulness and no want, he added at once, and filleth thee with the fat of wheat.

21. Brethren, since this peace whereof we speak is not yet entirely in us, that is, entire in each one of us, it delighteth perhaps your spirits to go on yet to listen: but if there be nothing in the body which resists and rebels, let us finish the Psalm. I never find you weary, yet I fear, God knoweth, lest I be a burden to you, or to some of the brethren: and I see how zealously many of you demand of me this toil and effort, which I believe will not be unfruitful in the Lord. I rejoice that ye find such pleasure in the truth of the Word of God, that your good zeal in what is good and concerning what is good, surpasses the zeal of the madmen who are in the amphitheatre. Would

they still be at their show, if they had to stand so long? Therefore, brethren, let us hear the rest, since so ye will. May the Lord be with us, may He be with our strength and our understandings. Who hath set peace for thy borders, he saith to the Jerusalem that is to be, and satisfieth thee with the fat of wheat. Hunger and thirst after righteousness pass away, plenty succeedeth. What will then be the fat of wheat, save that Bread which came down from heaven to us! In our true country how will He satisfy us, Who in our pilgrimage hath thus fed us!

22. Now he is about to speak of this our pilgrimage, whereby we come to that Jerusalem, where we shall praise in unison the Lord; where we shall praise the Lord our God, ourselves Jerusalem, ourselves Sion; when the bars of our gates shall be made strong. For He Who then will satisfy us with the fat of wheat, what doeth He in this our pilgrimage? Who sendeth forth His Word to the earth. Behold, on earth we toil, weary, fainting, sluggish, cold: when should we be raised up to the fat of wheat that satisfieth, did not He send His Word to the earth, whereby we were weighed down, to the earth, whereby we were hindered from returning? He sent His Word, He deserted us not even in the wilderness, He rained manna from heaven. Who sendeth forth His Word to the earth; and to earth His Word came. How? or what is His Word? Even unto swiftness His Word runneth. He said not, ‘His Word is swift,’ but, His Word runneth even unto swiftness. Let us understand, my brethren: He could not have chosen a better word. He who is hot grows hot by heat, he who is cold grows cold by cold, he who is swift becometh swift by swiftness. What is hotter than heat itself, whereby whatever is hot groweth hot? what is colder than cold itself, whereby whatever is cold groweth cold? What then is swifter than swiftness itself, whereby whatever runneth swiftly is made swift? Many things may be called swift, some more, some less; and in that degree is each thing swift, in which it is partaker of swiftness. This thing is in a greater degree partaker of swiftness, therefore it is swifter: this thing is in a less degree partaker of swiftness, therefore it is less swift. Than swiftness itself then, what is swifter? To what degree then doth it run? Even to swiftness. Increase as much as you will the swiftness of the Word, and say, It is as swift as this or that, as birds, as the winds, as the Angels; is any of these as great as swiftness itself, even unto swiftness? What is swiftness itself, brethren? It is

every where; it is not in part. This belongeth to the Word of God, not to be in part, to be every where by Himself the Word, whereby He is the Power of God and the Wisdom of God, before He had taken flesh upon Him. If we think of God in the Form of God, the Word equal to the Father, this is the Wisdom of God, of Which is said, It reacheth from one end to the other mightily. What mighty speed! It reacheth from one end to the other mightily. But perhaps it reacheth without being moveable. If without being moveable it filleth any space like some mass of stone, it is said to reach from one end to the other of the same space, yet not by motion. What say we then? Hath then that Word no motion, and is that Wisdom senseless? Where is then that which is said of the Spirit of Wisdom? After much else, it is called quick, full of motion, plain, undefiled. Thus then the Wisdom of God is evidently endowed with motion. If then it be endowed with motion, when it toucheth this, doth it not also touch that? Where then is swiftness? Swiftness maketh it to be every where always, yet no where to be imprisoned and detained. But these things are beyond our thoughts: we are too sluggish for them. Who can think on these things? And in truth, brethren, I have spoken as I could, (if indeed I could, if indeed I understood,) and ye have understood as ye were able. But what saith the Apostle? Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. What meaneth he here? That however often we have understood, we have not understood Him as He is. Wherefore is this? Because the corruptible body presseth down the soul. Therefore on earth are we cold, for swiftness is hot; and all that is hot is swift, all that is cold, slow. We are slow, therefore we are cold. But Wisdom runneth even unto swiftness. Therefore it is exceeding hot, and there is nothing that can hide itself from the heat thereof.

23. We then are burdened by the sluggishness of this cold body, and the bonds of this earthly and corruptible life; have we no hope of receiving the Word, Which runneth even unto swiftness? or hath He abandoned us, though by the body we are depressed to the lowest depths? Did not He predestinate us, before we were born in this mortal and sluggish body? He then, Who predestinated us, gave snow to the earth, even ourselves. For now let us come to those somewhat obscure verses of the Psalm, let those entanglements begin to be unrolled: since the Word of God findeth you the

more eager, the more it is uttered to you by us. Behold, we are sluggish on this earth, and are as it were frozen here. And just as happens to the flakes of snow, for they freeze above, then fall down; so as love groweth cold, human nature falleth down to this earth, and involved in a sluggish body becometh like snow. But in that snow are predestined sons of God. For, He giveth snow like wool. What is, like wool? It meaneth, of the snow which He hath given, of these, who are as yet slow in spirit and cold, whom He hath predestinated, He is about to make somewhat. For wool is the material of a garment: when we see wool, we look on it as a sort of preparation for a garment. Therefore since He hath predestinated these, who at present are cold and creep on earth, and as yet glow not with the spirit of love, (for as yet He speaketh of predestination,) God hath given these as a sort of wool: He is about to make of them a garment. Rightly did the raiment of Christ shine on the mountain, like snow. The raiment of Christ did shine like snow, as though of that snow a garment had already been made: of which wool, that is, of the snow which He gave like wool, they being as yet predestined, were sluggish: but wait, see what followeth. Since He gave them as wool, a garment is made of them. For as the Church is called the Body of Christ, so is the Church also called the garment of Christ: hence cometh that which is said by the Apostle, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle. Let Him then present unto Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle; let Him make Himself a garment of that wool, which He had predestinated in the snow. While men are yet unbelieving, and cold, and sluggish, let Him make a garment of this wool. That it may be washed from spots, let it be cleansed by faith: that it may have no wrinkle, let it be stretched out upon the cross. Who giveth snow like wool.

24. Now if they are predestined, they are to be called. For whom He predestined, them He also called. Now how are they called from the sickness of the body, to become sound? How are they called? Hear the Gospel: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. That snow then beginneth at once in predestination to acknowledge its sluggishness, to accuse its sins; it beginneth, being called, to come to repentance. Rightly then is it said. Who giveth snow like wool, on account of the completion of the garment that is to be; and also on account of the

calling to repentance, He scattereth mist like ashes. He scattereth, saith the Psalmist, mist like ashes. Who? He Who giveth snow like wool. For whom He predestined, He calleth to repentance; for whom He predestined, them He also called. But ashes are connected with repentance. Hear Him calling to repentance, when He upbraided certain cities, saying, Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which have been done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they had long ago repented in dust and ashes. Therefore, He scattereth mist like ashes. What is, He scattereth mist like ashes? When a man is called to learn about God, and it is said to him, ‘Receive the Truth;’ he beginneth to wish to receive the Truth, but is not able; he seeth that He is under a sort of darkness, which before he saw not. For this purpose then is that mist, that thou mayest know that thou knowest nothing, and that thou mayest know what thou oughtest to know, and mayest see that thou art too weak to know what ought to be known. For if while in this mist thou presumest that thou knowest, thou shalt hear from the Apostle, He who thinketh he knoweth any thing, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. Therefore as yet thou hast not comprehended, as yet thou art under a mist. But He hath not abandoned thee, Who lit up for thee the lamp of His Flesh. Wander not in the mist, follow in faith. But forasmuch as thou endeavourest to see and art not able, repent of thy sins, for mist is scattered like ashes. Repent thee now of having been obstinate against God, repent of having followed thine own evil ways. Thou hast come into this state where it is difficult for thee to see the vision of bliss, and the mist will be healthful to thee, which God scattereth like ashes. Thou thyself art as yet a mist, but like ashes. For they that are penitent, as yet roll themselves in ashes, my brethren, testifying, as it were, that they are like it, saying unto God, ‘I am ashes.’ For a certain Scripture saith, I have despised myself, and wasted away, I have reckoned myself earth and ashes. This is the humility of the penitent. When Abraham speaketh to his God, and wisheth the burning of Sodom to be disclosed to him, he saith, I am but earth and ashes. How hath this humility ever been found in great and holy men! He scattereth their mist like ashes. Wherefore? Because whom He predestinated, them He also called, Who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

25. Who sendeth His crystal like morsels of bread. We need not spend our toil again in saying what crystal is. We have already said it, and I do not think that ye, beloved, have forgotten it. What is then, He sendeth His crystal like morsels of bread? Just as that snow is His, because it is of the predestinated; just as that mist is His, because they are called to repentance, who are predestinated to salvation, so the crystal is in a manner His. What is crystal? It is very hard, it is very tightly congealed; it cannot, like snow, be easily melted. Snow, hardened by many years' duration, and by the succession of ages, is called crystal, and this He sendeth like morsels of bread. What meaneth this? They were too hard, no longer fit to be compared to snow, but to crystal; but they too are predestinated and called, and some of them even so as to feed others, to be useful to others also. And what need is there to enumerate many, whom we happen to know, this one and that one? Every one when he thinks can recall to mind how hardened and obstinate some of those whom he knows have been, how they have struggled against the truth; yet now they preach the truth, they have been made morsels of bread. Who is that one Bread? We being many, saith the Apostle, are one Body in Christ; he saith also, we being many are one Bread and one Body. If then the whole Body of Christ is one Bread, the members of Christ are morsels of Bread. Of some that are hard He maketh members of Himself, and useful for feeding others. Why go we through many instances? Let us look on the well-known Apostle Paul. Nothing is better known to us than he, nothing sweeter, nothing in all Scripture more familiar. And if there have been, who from being as hard as he was have been made Bread, let his example set before us recall all, that the meaning may be unfolded of, He sendeth His crystal like morsels of bread. Behold, the Apostle Paul was a crystal, hard, resisting the truth, crying out against the Gospel, hardening himself, as it were, against the sun. How hard was he, profiting in the law, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, a teacher of the law. He heard not Moses and the Prophets preaching Christ. Great hardness this. True, the Gentiles had not heard the Prophets, had not heard Moses; they were cold, but they were not crystal. He who believed words that preached Christ, but believed not Christ when He came, he was exceeding hardened. Since then he was crystal, he appeared clear and white, but he was hard and very cold. How was he bright and white? An Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee. Behold the brightness of crystal.

Now hear the hardness of crystal. As touching zeal, persecuting the Church of Christ. Among the stoners of the holy martyr Stephen, was he, hard, perhaps harder than all. For he kept the raiment of all who were stoning, so that he stoned by the hands of all.

26. Thus then we see the snow, the mist, the crystal: it is good that He blow and thaw them. For if He blow not, if He Himself thaw not the hardness of this ice, in the face of His cold who shall stand? In the face of His cold: whose? God's. Whence is His cold? Behold, He abandoneth a sinner, behold, He calleth him not; behold, He openeth not his perception; behold, He poureth not in grace; let the man thaw himself, if he can, from the ice of folly. He cannot. Wherefore can he not? In the face of His cold who shall stand? Behold him then growing harder, and saying, I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and enslaving me to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Behold, I am growing cold, behold, I am growing hard, what heat shall thaw me that I may run? Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? In the face of His cold who shall stand? And who shall free himself, if God abandon him? Who is it that freeth? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Hear here also the grace of God: Who sendeth forth His crystal like morsels of bread; who shall stand in the face of His cold? Are we then to despair? God forbid. For it goeth on, He shall send out His Word, and melt them. Let not then the snow despair, nor the mist, nor the crystal. For of the snow, as of wool, a garment is being made. That mist findeth safety in repentance: for, whom He predestinated, them He also called. But even though they be the very hardest among the predestinated, though they have been for a long time hardening, and are become crystal, they will not be hard to the mercy of God. He shall send out His Word, and melt them. What is melt? Understand not melt in an ill sense: it meaneth, He shall liquify He shall thaw them. For they are hard through pride. Rightly is pride called also dulness: for whatever is dull, is also cold. It is an every day saying of men when they are chilled, 'I was dulled.' Pride then is dulness. He shall send out His Word, and melt them. And, in truth, heaps of snow, when they are heated, melt in humility. Just then as cold heapeth up snow into mountains, as it were, so doth pride lift up fools. He shall send out His Word, and melt

them. Behold that crystal Saul, after the slaughter and stoning of Stephen, came dull with a kind of hardness against Christ, and asked letters of the high priest that he might every where inform against the Christians, breathing out slaughters. Hard he is and cold against the fire of God. But hard and cold though he was, behold, He Who shall send out His Word, and melt them, called from heaven with heat, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? By that one word, all that great hardness of crystal was melted. He shall send out then His Word, and melt them. Despair not of the crystal, much less of the snow, or of the mist. Despair not even of the crystal. Hear a saying of the crystal. Who before was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious. But wherefore doth God melt the crystal? That the snow despair not of itself. For he saith, For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them that hereafter should believe on Him unto eternal life. God then calleth unto the Gentiles, ‘Be melted, O crystal; come, ye snows.’ He shall send forth His Word, and melt them. His Spirit shall blow, and the waters shall flow. Lo, the crystal and the snows are melted, they turn into water, let them that thirst, come and drink. Saul, hard as crystal, persecuted Stephen unto death; Paul, now in the living water, calleth the Gentiles to the Fount. His Spirit shall blow, and the waters shall flow: the fervent spirit; whence it is said in another Psalm, Turn our captivity, O Lord, as a torrent in the south wind. For captive Jerusalem had, as it were, frozen in Babylon: the south wind blows, the chill of captivity is dissolved, the warmth of love runneth to God. His Spirit shall blow, and the waters shall flow. He shall become in them a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.

27. Announcing His Word unto Jacob, His Righteousnesses and Judgments unto Israel. What Righteousnesses, what Judgments? Because whatever mankind had suffered here before, when it was snow and mist and crystal, it suffered for the deserts of its pride and uplifting against God. Let us go back to the origin of our fall, and see that most truly is it sung in the Psalm, Before I was troubled I went wrong. But he who says, Before I was troubled I went wrong, saith also, It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me, that I may learn Thy Righteousnesses. These righteousnesses Jacob learnt from God, Who made him to wrestle with an Angel, under the guise of which Angel God Himself wrestled with him. He held Him, he exerted

violence to hold Him, he prevailed to hold Him: He caused Himself to be held, in mercy, not in weakness. Jacob therefore wrestled, and prevailed: he held Him, and when he seemed to have conquered Him, asked to be blessed of Him. How did he understand with Whom he had wrestled, Whom he had held? Wherefore did he wrestle violently, and hold Him? Because the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Wherefore then did he wrestle? Because it is with toil. Wherefore do we with difficulty hold, what we so easily lose? Lest, easily getting back what we have lost, we learn to lose that which we hold. Let man have toil to hold: he will hold firmly, what he has only held after toil. These His judgments therefore God manifested to Jacob and Israel. I will speak yet more openly: I mean, that even the righteous, while here, endure toils, dangers, annoyances, sufferings, for their deserts, by the righteous judgment of God. For He alone can say that He suffered here without cause: (though in this way He did not suffer without cause, in that He suffered for us: Who alone can say, I paid them then the things which I took not: Who alone could say, Behold, the prince of this world cometh, and shall find nothing in Me. And as though it were said to Him, ‘Why then dost Thou suffer?’ He goeth on and saith, But that all men may know that I do the will of My Father, arise, let us go hence. All others, who suffer for their own deserts by the judgment of God, and according to righteousness, let them not lay claim to suffering innocently as Christ did. Hear the Apostle Peter. It is time that judgment begin at the house of God. Exhorting the martyrs and witnesses of God to endure with perfect patience all the threats of the raging world, he saith to them, It is time that judgment begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Announcing His word unto Jacob, His righteousnesses and judgment to Israel.

28. He hath not done so to the whole race. Let none deceive you: it is not announced to any nation, this judgment of God; namely, how the righteous and the unrighteous suffer, how all suffer for their deserts, how the righteous themselves are freed by the grace of God, not in their own merits. This is not announced to the whole race, but only to Jacob, only to Israel. What then do we, if He hath not announced it to the whole race, but only to

Jacob, only to Israel? Where will we be? In Jacob. He hath not manifested His judgments to them. To whom? To all nations. How then are the snows called, when the crystal is melted? How are the nations called, now Paul is justified? How, save to be in Jacob? The wild olive is cut off from its stock, to be grafted into the olive: now they belong to the olive, no longer ought they to be called nations, but one nation in Christ, the nation of Jacob, the nation of Israel. Wherefore the nation of Jacob, and the nation of Israel? Because Jacob is the son of Isaac, Isaac of Abraham. But to Abraham what was said? In thy seed shall all nations be blessed. This was also said to Isaac and to Jacob. Wherefore we belong to Jacob, because we belong to Isaac, and to Abraham. For the seed of Abraham, as not I or any common man, but the Apostle himself, explaineth it, is Christ: he himself saith, He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. If we be one seed, we are one Jacob, one Israel, yea all nations are one man in Christ. That then belongeth to all nations, which He hath revealed to Jacob, to Israel: and they only are to be reckoned among the other nations, who, refusing to believe in Christ, refuse to leave the wild olive, and be grafted into the olive. They will remain among the wild trees, barren branches and bitter. Let Jacob rejoice. What is Jacob? The supplanter: because Jacob supplanted his brother. For blindness in part is happened unto Israel, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in. Of Jacob is made Israel. What is Israel? Now let us all listen, all who are Israel, whether ye who are here among the members of Christ, or those who are without yet not without, and throughout all nations every where without, every where within; let Israel himself hear, who of Jacob was made Israel. What is Israel? 'Seeing God.' Where shall he see God? In peace. What peace? The peace of Jerusalem; for, saith he, He hath set peace for thy borders. There shall we praise: there shall we all be one, in One, unto One: for then, though many, we shall not be scattered.

PSALM 148

Exposition

Sermon to the People.

1. The subject of our meditation in this present life should be the praises of God; for the everlasting exaltation of our life hereafter will be the praise of God, and none can become fit for the life hereafter, who hath not practised himself for it now. So then now we praise God, but we pray to Him too. Our praise is marked by joy, our prayer by groans. For somewhat is promised to us, which as yet we have not: and so, because He Who hath promised is true, we rejoice in hope; but, because as yet we have not, we groan in longing. It is good for us to persevere in longing, till what is promised come, and so groaning pass away, praise alone succeed. On account of these two seasons, one, that which now is in the temptations and tribulations of this life, the other, that which is to be hereafter in everlasting rest and exultation; we have established also the celebration of two seasons, that before Easter and that after Easter. That which is before Easter signifieth tribulation, in which we now are; that which we are now keeping after Easter, signifieth the bliss in which we shall hereafter be. The celebration then which we keep before Easter is what we do now: by that which we keep after Easter we signify what as yet we have not. Therefore we employ that time in fastings and prayer, this present time we spend in praises, and relax our fast. This is the Halleluia which we sing, which, as you know, meaneth in Latin, Praise ye the Lord. Therefore that period is before the Lord’s Resurrection, this, after His Resurrection: by which time is signified the future hope which as yet we have not: for what we represent after the Lord’s Resurrection, we shall have after our own. For in our Head both are figured, both are set forth. The Baptism of the Lord setteth forth to us this present life of trial, for in it we must toil, be harassed, and, at last, die; but the Resurrection and Glorification of the Lord setteth forth to us the life which we are to have hereafter, when He shall come to recompense due rewards, evil to the evil, good to the good. And now indeed all the evil men

sing with us, Halleluia; but, if they persevere in their wickedness, they may utter with their lips the song of our life hereafter; but the life itself, which will then be in the reality which now is typified, they cannot obtain, because they would not practise it before it came, and lay hold on what was to come.

2. Now then, brethren, we exhort you that ye praise God; this is what we all say to one another, when we say, Halleluia. ‘Praise the Lord,’ thou sayest to thy neighbour, he to thee: when all are exhorting each other, all are doing what they exhort others to do. But praise with your whole selves: that is, let not your tongue and voice alone praise God, but your conscience also, your life, your deeds. For now, when we are gathered together in the Church, we praise: when we go forth each to his own business, we seem to cease to praise God. Let a man not cease to live well, and then he ever praiseth God. Then dost thou cease to praise God, when thou turnest aside from righteousness and from all that pleaseth Him. For, if thou never turn aside from a good life, though thy tongue be silent, yet thy life crieth out, and the ears of God are open to thy heart. For just as our ears are open to our voices, so God’s ears are open to our thoughts. But it is impossible for a man’s acts to be evil, whose thoughts are good. For acts issue from thought: nor can a man do any thing or move his limbs to do aught, unless the bidding of his thought precede: just as in all things which ye see done throughout the provinces, whatsoever the Emperor biddeth goeth forth from the inner part of his palace throughout the whole Roman Empire. How great commotion is caused at one bidding by the Emperor as he sits in his palace! He but moveth his lips, when he speaketh: the whole province is moved, when what he speaketh is being executed. So in each single man too, the Emperor is within, his seat is in the heart. If he be good and biddeth good things, good things are done: if he be bad and biddeth evil things, evil things are done. When Christ sitteth there, what can He bid, but what is good? When the devil is the occupant, what can he bid, but evil? But God hath willed that it should be in thy choice for whom thou wilt prepare room, for God, or for the devil: when thou hast prepared it, he who is occupant will also rule. Therefore, brethren, attend not only to the sound; when ye praise God, praise with your whole selves: let your voice, your life, your deeds, all sing. And if there be still groaning, tribulation, temptation, hope that they will all pass away, and then the day will come when ye will praise

without failure. This present Psalm is clear, and we may run over it quickly. For it arrayeth all creation to praise God, and as it were exhorteth it to praise, as though it had found it holding its peace.

3. Praise ye the Lord from heaven. As though he had found things in heaven holding their peace in the praise of the Lord, he exhorteth them to arise and praise. Never have things in heaven held their peace in the praises of their Creator, never have things on earth ceased to praise God. But it is manifest that there are certain things which have breath to praise God in that disposition wherein God pleaseth them. For no one praiseth ought, save what pleaseth him. And there are other things which have not breath of life and understanding to praise God, but yet, because they also are good, and duly arranged in their proper order, and form part of the beauty of the universe, which God created, though they themselves with voice and heart praise not God, yet when they are considered by those who have understanding, God is praised in them; and, as God is praised in them, they themselves too in a manner praise God. For instance, in heaven all things praise God, which have the breath of life, and a pure intelligence to contemplate and love Him without disgust or weariness. But on earth men praise God by their understanding whereby they discern good and evil, by their understanding whereby they know the creature and the Creator, because they can think of these things, because God has given them a mind to discern them, to love, and to praise. This man can do; but surely beasts have not this sort of understanding: if they had, God would not say to us, Be ye not like unto horse and mule, which have no understanding. When He exhorteth us not to be like beasts, which have no understanding, He sheweth us that to man He hath assigned an understanding whereby to praise God. And the trees surely have not so much as the life whereby they may have senses, like the beasts. For though the beasts have not the inner sense of reason, and an understanding, and a discerning mind, which man has, to praise God withal, yet they have an outward and visible life, as we all know, whereby they seek food, take what is for their good, reject what is harmful; they have senses whereby to discern corporeal things, sight to distinguish colour, hearing to distinguish sounds, smell to distinguish odours, taste to distinguish flavours; they naturally move towards what pleases, away from what annoys them. This we understand and see before

our eyes. They have not reason to understand with, but they have the breath of a living body, and a visible life: the trees have not even this; yet all of them praise God. Wherefore do they praise God? Because when we see them, and think upon the Creator Who made them, they cause to arise within us praise to God; and, since through consideration of them God is praised, all things praise God. He begins then with heaven: all things praise, and yet he says, Praise ye. Wherefore doth he say, Praise ye, when they are praising? Because he delighteth in their praising, and therefore it pleaseth him to add, as it were, his own encouragement. Just as, when you come to men who are doing any good work with pleasure in their vineyard or in their harvest field, or in some other matter of husbandry, you are pleased at what they are doing, and say, ‘work on,’ ‘go on:’ not that they may begin to work, when thou sayest this, but, because you are pleased at finding them working, you add your approbation and encouragement. For by saying, ‘work on,’ and encouraging those who are working, you, so to speak, work with them in wish. In this sort of encouragement then the Psalmist, filled with the Holy Ghost, saith this.

4. And it is a Psalm of Haggai and Zachariah: so the title runneth. These two Prophets prophesied at the time when the people was kept captive in Babylon, and foretold the coming end of the captivity, that the city of Jerusalem which had been destroyed in war, should be restored. They set forth to us then in a mystery the life to come, wherein we shall praise God, when the captivity of this present life is at an end, when shall be restored that mighty city Jerusalem, in wandering from whence we sigh, prisoners as yet under the burden and weight of this mortal body: wherefore as yet we groan in our pilgrimage, but we shall exult when we reach our country. But he, who groaneth not as a pilgrim, shall not rejoice as a citizen, because there is no longing in him. Those holy Prophets then gave great comfort to the people, who were then captives according to the flesh, that is, who were placed in Babylon under strange sovereigns. For they shewed in prophecy, that a time should come when they should be freed from their captivity, and Jerusalem should be restored. But all these things were done in a figure, they contain their own truth; they were figured in what happened of old, they are set forth really present among us. Now then what saith the Apostle? While we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord. As

yet we are not in our country: when shall we be? When we shall triumph for victory over our enemy the devil; when death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is thy strife? where, O death, is thy sting? When then shall there be no more strife of death, which now there is, and maketh us groan at the failure and changeableness of things, at the frailness of man's flesh? Daily temptations strive with us, daily delights: even though we consent not, yet we suffer annoyance, and strive: and great is the peril, lest he who striveth be conquered: and even if by not consenting we conquer, yet we suffer annoyance in resisting delights. The enemy ceaseth not, dieth not, save in the resurrection of the dead. But let us hope, let us trust: Haggai and Zacharias lift us up, they sing our coming liberation. If they sang to that people, and it hath been fulfilled, shall what is sung to the Christian people not be fulfilled? Be not troubled: only take heed how ye act in this pilgrimage of life. Let not love of Babylon please you, lest ye forget your city Jerusalem. Though your body is yet detained in Babylon, let your heart be sent forward to Jerusalem. Let then the whole creation praise the Lord: for there we shall do what here we practise beforehand.

5. Praise ye the Lord from heaven: praise Him in the high places. First he saith, from heaven, then from earth; for it is God that is praised, Who made heaven and earth. All in heaven is calm and peaceful; there is ever joy, no death, no sickness, no vexation; there the blessed ever praise God; but we are still below: yet, when we think how God is praised there, let us have our heart there, and let us not hear to no purpose, 'Lift up your hearts.' Let us lift up our heart above, that it become not corrupted on earth: for we take pleasure in what the Angels do there. We do it now in hope: hereafter we shall in reality, when we have come thither. Praise Him then in the high places.

6. Praise Him, all ye angels of His, praise Him, all His powers. Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all ye stars and light. Praise Him, ye heaven of heavens, and waters that are above the heavens. Let them praise the Name of the Lord. When can he unfold all in his enumeration? Yet he hath in a manner touched upon them all summarily, and included all things in heaven praising their Creator.

7. And as though it were said to him, ‘Why do they praise Him? what hath He conferred on them, that they should praise Him?’ he goeth on, for He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created. No wonder if the works praise the Worker, no wonder if the things that are made praise the Maker, no wonder if creation praise its Creator. In this Christ also is mentioned, though we seem not to have heard His Name. Who is Christ? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. By what were they made? By the Word? How doth he shew in this Psalm, that all things were made by the Word? He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created. No one speaketh, no one commandeth, save by word.

8. He hath established them for the age, and for age upon age. All things in heaven, all things above, all powers and angels, a certain city on high, good, holy, blessed; from whence because we are wanderers, we are wretched; whither because we are to return, we are blessed in hope; whither when we shall have returned, we shall be blessed indeed; He hath established them for the age, and for age upon age: He hath given them a law which shall not pass away. What sort of command, think ye, have things in heaven and the holy angels received? What sort of command hath God given them? What, but that they praise Him? Blessed are they whose business is to praise God! They plough not, they sow not, they grind not, they cook not; for these are works of necessity, and there is no necessity there. They steal not, they plunder not, they commit no adultery; for these are works of iniquity, and there is no iniquity there. They break not bread for the hungry, they clothe not the naked, they take not in the stranger, they visit not the sick, they set not at one the contentious, they bury not the dead; for these are works of mercy, and there there is no misery, for mercy to be shewn to. O blessed they! Think we that we too shall be like this? Ah! let us sigh, let us groan in sighing. And what are we, that we should be there? mortal, outcast, abject, earth and ashes! But He, Who hath promised, is almighty. If we regard ourselves, what are we? if we regard Him, He is God. He is almighty. Cannot He make of a man an angel, who made man out of nothing? Or doth God count man of little value, for whom He willed that His only-begotten

Son should die? Let us observe the proof of His love. These are the pledges which we have received of the promise of God: we have already the Death of Christ, we have already the Blood of Christ. Who is it that did die? The Only-begotten. For whom did He die? Would that it were for the good, would that it were for the righteous. But what? Christ, saith the Apostle, died for the ungodly. He Who gave to the ungodly His Death, what reserveth He for the righteous but His Life? Let then frail man lift himself up, let him not despair, let him not dash himself down, let him not turn away, let him not say, ‘I shall not be one.’ He Who hath promised is God; and He came to promise; He appeared unto men, He came to take upon Him our death, to promise us His Life. He came to the region where we were strangers, here to receive all that aboundeth here, disgrace, scourges, buffettings, spitting in the face, insults, a crown of thorns, the hanging on the tree, the cross, death. These things abound in our region, these He came to barter for. What gave He here, what received He? He gave exhortation, He gave teaching, He gave remission of sins: He received insults, death, the cross. He brought to us, from the region where He was, good things; He endured, in the region where we were, evil things. Yet hath He provided to us that we shall be in the place from whence He came, and saith, Father, I will that where I am, there they may be with Me also. So great is the love that hath gone before. For where we were, He hath been with us; where He is, we shall be with Him. What hath God promised thee, O mortal? That thou shalt live for ever. Dost not thou believe? Believe it, believe it. For greater is what He hath done already, than what He hath promised. What hath He done? He hath died for thee. What hath He promised? That thou shalt live with Him. More incredible is it, that the Immortal should die, than that the mortal should live for ever. Already we have what is the more incredible. If God died for man, shall not man live with God? Shall not the mortal live for ever, for whom He, Who liveth for ever, died? But how did God die? and by what means did He die? and can God die? He took of thee that, whereby He might die for thee. Nought could die, save flesh: nought could die, save a mortal body: He put on Him that wherein He might die for thee; He will put on thee that wherein thou shalt live with Him. Where did He clothe himself with death? In the womb of His Virgin Mother. Where will He clothe thee with life? In His equality with the Father. He chose for Himself here a chaste chamber, where the Bridegroom might be wedded to the Bride. He was the Word made flesh, that He might become the Head of the Church. For the Word Himself is not part of the Church: but, that He might become the Head of the Church, He took upon Him flesh. Somewhat of us is already above, that which He took here, where He died, where He was crucified. Already a sort of first-fruits of thee are gone before, and doubtest thou that thou wilt follow?

9. Let him then turn himself to things on earth too, since he hath already spoken the praises of things in heaven. Praise ye the Lord from the earth. For wherewith began he before? Praise ye the Lord from heaven: and he went through things in heaven: now hear of things on earth. Dragons and all abysses. Abysses are depths of water: all the seas, and this atmosphere of clouds, pertain to the abyss. Where there are clouds, where there are storms, where there is rain, lightning, thunder, hail, snow, and all that God willeth should be done above the earth, by this moist and misty atmosphere, all this he hath mentioned under the name of earth, because it is very changeable and mortal; unless ye think that it raineth from above the stars. All these things happen here, close to the earth. Sometimes even men are on the tops of mountains, and see the clouds beneath them, and often it raineth: and all commotions which arise from the disturbance of the atmosphere, those who watch carefully see that they happen here, in this lower part of the universe. Therefore the devil was condemned to these regions of darkness, that is, to this air, as to a prison, when he fell with his Angels from the force of the Angels above; for the Apostle saith this of him, According to the prince of the power of this air, who now worketh in the children of disobedience. And another Apostle saith, For if God spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to the prisons of lower darkness, and delivered them to be kept for punishment at the judgment; calling this region the lower, because it is the lower part of creation. For think not what the devil received, but what he lost. Thou seest then what kind all these things are, changeable, troublous, fearful, corruptible: yet they have their place, they have their rank, they too in their degree fill up the beauty of the universe, and so they praise the Lord. He turns then to them, as though He would exhort them too, or us, that by considering them we may praise the Lord: (for thus is it that they praise God, when the consideration of them begetteth praise of God;) he beginneth to say, Praise the Lord from earth, ye dragons and all

abysses. Dragons live about the water, come out from caverns, fly through the air; the air is set in motion by them: dragons are a huge kind of living creatures, greater there are not upon the earth. Therefore with them he beginneth, Dragons and all abysses. There are caves of hidden waters, whence springs and streams come forth: some come forth to flow over the earth, some flow secretly beneath; and all this kind, all this damp nature of waters, together with the sea and this lower air, are called abyss, or abysses, where dragons live and praise God. What? Think we that the dragons form choirs, and praise God? Far from it. But do ye, when ye consider the dragons, regard the Maker of the dragon, the Creator of the dragon: then, when ye admire the dragons, and say, ‘Great is the Lord Who made these,’ then the dragons praise God by your voices. Dragons and all abysses.

10. Fire, hail, snow, ice, wind of storms, which do His word. Wherefore added he here, which do His word? Many foolish men, unable to contemplate and discern creation, in its several places and rank, performing its movements at the nod and commandment of God, think that God doth indeed rule all things above, but things below He despiseth, casteth aside, abandoneth, so that He neither careth for them, nor guideth, nor ruleth them; but that they are ruled by chance, how they can, as they can: and they are influenced by what they say sometimes to one another, (but let them not say it to thee, that is, do not thou by listening consent when they say these things: for they are blasphemers, and accursed in the sight of God:) for instance; ‘If it were God that gave rain, would He rain into the sea? What sort of Providence,’ they say, ‘is this? Getulia is thirsty, and it rains into the sea.’ They think that they handle the matter cleverly: one should say to them, ‘Getulia does at all events thirst, thou dost not even thirst.’ For good were it for thee to say to God, My soul is as a land without water to Thee: as is openly said in another place, My soul hath thirsted for Thee, in how many ways for Thee my flesh also. And the Lord saith in the Gospel, Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. For he that thus argueth is already satisfied; he thinketh himself learned, he is not willing to learn, therefore he thirsteth not. For if he thirsted, he would be willing to learn, and he would find that every thing happeneth upon earth by God’s Providence, and he would wonder at the arrangement of even the limbs of a flea. Attend, beloved. Who hath

arranged the limbs of a flea and a gnat, that they should have their proper order, life, motion? Consider one little creature, even the very smallest, whatever thou wilt. If thou considerest the order of its limbs, and the animation of life whereby it moveth; how doth it shun death, love life, seek pleasures, avoid pain, exert divers senses, vigorously use movements suitable to itself! Who gave its sting to the gnat, for it to suck blood with? How narrow is the pipe whereby it sucketh! Who arranged all this? who made all this? Thou art amazed at the smallest things; praise Him that is great. Hold then this, my brethren, let none shake you from your faith or from sound doctrine. He Who made the Angel in heaven, the Same also made the worm upon earth: the Angel in heaven to dwell in heaven, the worm upon earth to abide on earth. He made not the Angel to creep in the mud, nor the worm to move in heaven. He hath assigned dwellers to their different abodes; incorruption He assigned to incorruptible abodes, corruptible things to corruptible abodes. Observe the whole, praise the whole. He then Who ordered the limbs of the worm, doth He not govern the clouds? And wherefore raineth He into the sea? As though there are not in the sea things which are nourished by rain; as though He made not fishes therein, as though He made not living creatures therein. Observe how the fishes run to sweet water. And wherefore, saith he, doth He give rain to the fishes, and sometimes giveth not rain to me? That thou mayest consider that thou art in a desert region, and in a pilgrimage of life; that so this present life may grow bitter to thee, that thou mayest long for the life to come: or else that thou mayest be scourged, punished, amended. And how well doth He assign their properties to regions. Behold, since we have spoken of Getulia, He raineth here nearly every year, and giveth corn every year; here the corn cannot be kept, it soon rotteth, because it is given every year; there, because it is given seldom, both much is given, and it can be kept for long. But dost thou perchance think that God there deserteth man, or that they do not there after their own manner of rejoicing both praise and glorify God? Take a Getulian from his country, and set him amid our pleasant trees; he will wish to flee away, and return to his bare Getulia. To all places then, regions, seasons, God hath assigned and arranged what fits them. And it were a long task to go through a more accurate enumeration of all these matters. Who could unfold it? Yet they who have eyes see many things therein: when seen, they please; pleasing, they are praised; not they really, but He Who made them; thus shall all things praise God.

11. It was in thought of this that the spirit of the Prophet, after he had said, Fire, hail, snow, ice, wind of storm, added, because all these seem to some foolish persons to be all confusion, and, as it were, moved hither and thither by chance, the words, which do His word. Think not then that these things are moved by chance, which in every motion of theirs obey God. Whither God willeth, thither the fire spreads, thither the cloud hurries, whether it carry in it rain, or snow, or hail. And wherefore doth the lightning sometimes strike the mountain, yet strikes not the robber? I will say what I can, according to the capacity of my mind, so much as God deigneth to give me: greater men may know greater things, and understand more, and may God give to you to be wiser than my words, only let it be with moderation, without pride. I then, in my measure, can give a reason why it strikes the mountain and strikes not the robber; because perhaps He yet seeketh the robber's conversion, and therefore is the mountain which feareth not smitten, that the man who feareth may be changed. Thou also sometimes, when maintaining discipline, smitest the ground to terrify a child. Sometimes too He smiteth a man, whom He will. But thou sayest to me, Behold, He smiteth the more innocent, and passeth over the more guilty. Wonder not; death, whencesoever it come, is good to the good man. And whence dost thou know what punishment is reserved in secret for that more guilty man, if he be unwilling to be converted? Would not they rather be scorched by lightning, to whom it shall be said in the end, Depart into everlasting fire? The needful thing is, that thou be guileless. Why so? Is it an evil thing to die by shipwreck, and a good thing to die by fever? Whether he die in this way or in that, ask what sort of man he is who dieth; ask whither he will go after death, not how he is to depart from life. We shall depart from hence by whatever may befall us. By what deaths were the martyrs thought worthy to die? Was it by fevers? How is it that many wish to be set free by fever? Some perished by a single blow of the sword, some by fire, some by wild beasts. Wild beasts devoured the bodies of the martyrs, yet feared they not that their bodies would perish. For God will bring back from all quarters the bodies of the saints, God by Whom the very hairs of our head are numbered. When He willed too, He delivered the

Three Children from the fire. Did He therefore desert the Maccabees in the fire? The former He openly set free, the latter He secretly crowned. God then knoweth what He doeth. Do thou fear, and be good. For whatsoever way He will that thou depart hence, let Him find thee ready. For here thou art a sojourner, not a possessor of the house. For the house is let to thee, this house is let to thee, not given: loth though thou be, thou must depart from it: neither hast thou received it on such terms, as that thou hast any fixed time. What said thy Lord? ‘Whensoever I will, whensoever I shall say, Depart, be thou ready. I drive thee from thy lodging, but I will give thee a home: thou art a sojourner on earth, thou shalt be possessor in heaven.’

12. Whatever then happeneth here contrary to our wish, thou wilt know that it happeneth not, save by the will of God, by His providence, by His ordering, by His nod, by His laws: and if we understand not why any thing is done, let us grant to His providence that it is not done without reason: so shall we not be blasphemers. For when we begin to argue concerning the works of God, ‘why is this?’ ‘why is that?’ and, ‘He ought not to have done this,’ ‘He did this ill;’ where is the praise of God? Thou hast lost thy Halleluia. Regard all things in such wise as to please God and praise the Creator. For if thou wert to happen to enter the workshop of a smith, thou wouldest not dare to find fault with his bellows, his anvils, his hammers. But take an ignorant man, who knows not for what purpose each thing is, and he findeth fault with all. But if he have not the skill of the workman, and have but the reasoning power of a man, what saith he to himself? Not without reason are the bellows placed here: the workman knoweth wherefore, though I know not. In the shop he dareth not to find fault with the smith, yet in the universe he dareth to find fault with God. Therefore just as fire, hail, snow, ice, wind of storms, which do His word, so all things in nature, which seem to foolish persons to be made at random, simply do His word, because they are not made save by His command.

13. Then he mentioneth, that they may praise the Lord, mountains and hills, fruitful trees and all cedars: beasts and all cattle, creeping things, and winged fowls. Then he goeth to men; kings of the earth and all people, princes and all judges of the earth; young men and maidens, old men and

young, let them praise the Name of the Lord. Ended is the praise from heaven, ended is the praise from earth.

14. For His Name only is exalted. Let no man seek to exalt his own name. Wilt thou be exalted? Subject thyself to Him Who cannot be humbled. His Name only is exalted.

15. His confession is in earth and heaven. What is, His confession is in earth and heaven? Is it the confession wherewith He confesseth? No, but that whereby all things confess Him, all things cry aloud: the beauty of all things is in a manner their voice, whereby they praise God. The heaven crieth out to God, ‘Thou madest me, not I myself.’ Earth crieth out, ‘Thou createdst me, not I myself.’ How do they cry out? When thou regardest them, and findest this out, they cry out by thy voice, they cry out by thy regard. His confession is in earth and heaven. Regard the heavens, it is beautiful: observe the earth, it is beautiful: both together are very beautiful. He made them, He ruleth them, by His nod they are swayed, He ordereth their seasons, He reneweth their movements, by Himself He reneweth them. All these things then praise Him, whether in stillness or in motion, whether from earth below or from heaven above, whether in their old state or in their renewal. When thou seest all these things, and rejoicest, and art lifted up to the Maker, and gazest on His invisible things understood by the things which are made, His confession is in earth and heaven: that is, thou confessest to Him from things on earth, thou confessest to Him from things in heaven. And since He made all things, and nought is better than He, whatsoever He made is less than He, and whatsoever in these things pleaseth thee, is less than He. Let not then what He hath made so please thee, as to withdraw thee from Him Who made: if thou lovest what He made, love much more Him Who made. If the things which He hath made are beautiful, how much more beautiful is He Who made them: His confession is in earth and heaven.

16. And He shall exalt the horn of His people. Behold what Haggai and Zachariah prophesied. Now the horn of His people is humble in afflictions, in tribulations, in temptations, in beating of the breast; when will He exalt the horn of His people? When the Lord hath come, and our Sun is risen, not the sun which is seen with the eye, and riseth upon the good and the evil,

but That Whereof is said, To you that fear God, the Sun of Righteousness shall rise, and healing in His wings; and of Whom the proud and wicked shall hereafter say, The light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us. This shall be our summer. Now during the winter weather the fruits appear not on the stock; thou observest, so to say, dead trees during the winter. He who cannot see truly, thinketh the vine dead; perhaps there is one near it, which is really dead; both are alike during winter; the one is alive, the other is dead, but both the life and death are hidden: summer advanceth; then the life of the one shineth brightly, the death of the other is manifested: the splendour of leaves, the abundance of fruit, cometh forth, the vine is clothed in outward appearance from what it hath in its stock. Therefore, brethren, now we are the same as other men: just as they are born, eat, drink, are clothed, pass their life, so also do the saints. Sometimes the very truth deceiveth men, and they say, ‘Lo, he hath begun to be a Christian: hath he lost his headache?’ or, ‘because he is a Christian, what gaineth he from me?’ O dead vine, thou observest near thee a vine that is bare indeed in winter, yet not dead. Summer will come, the Lord will come, our Splendour, that was hidden in the stock, and then He shall exalt the horn of His people, after the captivity wherein we live in this mortal life. Wherefore the Apostle saith, Judge nothing before the time, till the Lord come, Who shall bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and then shall every one have praise of God. But thou sayest unto me, Where is my stock? where is my fruit? If thou believest, thou knowest where thy root is. For it is there, where thy faith is, where thy hope and charity are. Hear the Apostle; For ye are dead. In the winter they seemed to be dead; hear that they are alive: and your life is hid with Christ in God. There is where thou hast thy root. When then shalt thou be adorned with splendour? when shalt thou be made abundant with fruit? Hear how he goeth on: When Christ, Who is your Life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. And He shall exalt the horn of His people.

17. An hymn to all His Saints. Know ye what an hymn is? It is a song with praise of God. If thou praisest God and singest not, thou utterest no hymn: if thou singest and praisest not God, thou utterest no hymn: if thou praisest ought else, which pertaineth not to the praise of God, although thou singest and praisest, thou utterest no hymn. An hymn then containeth these three

things, song, and praise, and that of God. Praise then of God in song is called an hymn. What then meaneth, An hymn to all His Saints? Let His Saints receive an hymn: let His Saints utter an hymn: for this is what they are to receive in the end, an everlasting hymn. Therefore in another place a Psalm saith, The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me, and there is the way wherein I will shew him My salvation. And again, Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, they will praise Thee for ever and ever. This is the meaning of, An hymn to all His Saints. Who are His Saints? To the sons of Israel, to the people that draweth nigh unto Him. Let none say, I am not a son of Israel. Think not that the Jews are sons of Israel, and that we are not sons of Israel: I dare to say to you, brethren, that they are not sons, and we are. I will tell you why: because greater is he that is born after the Spirit, than he that is born after the flesh. Whose son was Israel? Abraham's: for Isaac was Abraham's son, and Israel Isaac's. And how did Abraham please God? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Whosoever imitateth Abraham is a son of Abraham: whosoever hath degenerated from the faith of Abraham, hath lost the stock of Abraham. The Jews have degenerated, and have lost the stock; we have imitated, and have found it. I will shew that they have lost it: what saith the Lord to them when they say, we are the sons of Abraham? They dared to boast themselves, to hold up their head on the nobility of their righteous descent: and what saith the Lord to them? If ye were sons of Abraham, ye would do the deeds of Abraham. If then they lost the being sons of Abraham, we have found the being sons of Abraham. We, that is, by believing have found, what they by not believing have lost. For Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness: and Christ is the seed of Abraham, and we are in Christ; and of Israel is the people, of which people was Mary, of which Mary was Christ, in Which Christ we are: therefore we are sons of Israel. And what hath he added, in order to distinguish us? To the sons of Israel, to the people that draweth nigh unto Him. Observe the Jews: if they draw nigh, they are they. 'And perhaps they do draw nigh,' saith some one to me: they also daily sing their Psalm, they sing hymns to God. Hear ye not what the Prophet said unto them? This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. If their heart is far, yet our heart is most nigh, because we believe, because we hope, because we love, because we are joined to Christ, because we have been made His members. Are the members far from the head? If they were afar they would be severed: He would not say, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the aye. If they were severed, He would not cry from heaven, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? If He were not in us, He would not say, I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat. Then when they said to Him, When saw we Thee an hungered? He answered, Forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me. Behold the people, behold Israel that draweth nigh: they draw nigh now in hope; hereafter they shall in reality.

PSALM 149

Exposition

Sermon to the People.

1. Let us praise the Lord both in voice, and in understanding, and in good works; and, as this Psalm exhorteth, let us sing unto Him a new song. For thus it beginneth: Sing ye to the Lord a new song. The old man hath an old song, the new man a new song. The Old Testament is an old song, the New Testament a new song. In the Old Testament are temporal and earthly promises. Whoso loveth earthly things singeth an old song: let him that desireth to sing a new song, love the things of eternity. Love itself is new and eternal; therefore is it ever new, because it never groweth old. For if thou consider well, this is old. How then is it new? Is it so, my brethren, that everlasting life is but lately born? Christ Himself is everlasting life, and as touching His Godhead, He is not lately born; for, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the Same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made. If the things which were made by Him are old, what is He by Whom they were made? What, but everlasting, and coeternal with the Father? But we have sunk into sin; we have reached old age. For those are our words in the Psalm, I have grown old among all mine enemies. Man grew old by sin; he is renewed by grace. All then who are renewed in Christ, that they may begin to appertain unto everlasting life, sing a new song.

2. And this song is of peace, this song is of charity. Whoso severeth himself from the union of the saints, singeth not a new song; for he hath followed old strife, not new charity. In new charity what is there? Peace, the bond of an holy society, a spiritual union, a building of living stones. Where is this? Not in one place, but throughout the whole world. This is said in another Psalm, Sing unto the Lord a new song, sing unto the Lord all the earth. From this is understood, that he who singeth not with the whole earth,

singeth an old song, whatever words proceed out of his mouth. For why should I care to hear what he saith, when I know what he thinketh? Sayest thou, canst thou see what he thinketh? Yes, his deeds declare it. For the eye penetrateth not into the conscience. I observe what he doeth, and therein I understand what he thinketh. For neither if any one, for instance, taketh another in the act of theft, or homicide, or adultery, doth he see his thoughts in his heart, but in his deeds? There are some things which lie hid within; but there are many also which come forth into works, and are manifest even to men. Although then they who severed themselves from the bond of the love of Christ, and the society of the holy Church, were inwardly in themselves evil, yet none knew it, save God. The time came: He severed them, and so made manifest to men what God alone had known before. For the fruit is not shewn, save in deeds. Wherefore it is said, by their fruits ye shall know them. For the Lord said it to some who clothe themselves in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves: lest human frailty should perhaps be unable to distinguish the wolf under the sheep’s skin, He saith, By their fruits ye shall know them. We seek the fruits of love, we find the thorns of dissension. By their fruits ye shall know them. Their song then is an old one, let us sing a new song. We have already said, brethren, that all the earth singeth a new song. He who singeth not with the whole earth a new song, let him sing what he will, let his tongue sound forth Halleluia, let him utter it all day and all night, my ears are not so much bent to hear the voice of the singer, but I seek the deeds of the actor. For I ask, and say, ‘What is it that thou singest?’ He answereth, ‘Halleluia.’ What is, ‘Halleluia?’ ‘Praise ye the Lord.’ Come, let us praise the Lord together. If thou praisest the Lord, and I praise the Lord, why are we at variance? Charity praiseth the Lord, discord blasphemeth the Lord.

3. And now would ye know where ye may sing a new song? See how and where all that he is about to mention in this Psalm is done, whether it be in any one part of the world; so shall ye more fully understand to whom the new song appertaineth. That then is clear which I have quoted from another Psalm, Sing ye to the Lord a new song: and to shew that in this new song is the fruit of charity and unity, he added, Sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Let none sever himself, let none disunite himself: thou art wheat, bear with the chaff till the winnowing. Dost thou wish to be put forth from the floor?

wheat though thou be, yet if thou wert outside the floor, the fowls of the air would find thee, and gather thee up. Nay more; in the very fact that thou departest and fliest, thou shewest that thou art chaff; so, because thou wast light, the wind came, and thou wast carried away from under the feet of the oxen. But they who are wheat bear the threshing, rejoice because they are wheat, groan amid the chaff, await Him as Winnower Whom they know to be Redeemer. Sing ye unto the Lord a new song: His praise is in the Church of the saints. This is the Church of the saints, the Church of the wheat scattered throughout the whole world, sown throughout the Lord's field, that is, this world, as the Lord Himself explained, when He said of the sower, A man sowed good seed in his field, and the enemy came and sowed tares over it; and the owner's servants said, Didst not thou sow good seed in the field? whence are these tares here? He answered, An enemy hath done this. They desired to gather up the tares, but he restrained them, saying, Let both grow till the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but store up the wheat in my garner. Afterwards His Disciples asked Him, saying, Expound unto us the parable of the tares. And He expoundeth it all to them, that no man may attribute to his own wisdom what he hath understood therein, but to the Lord of heaven Who expoundeth it. Let none say, 'He hath expounded it according to His will.' If the Lord expounded the parable of the prophets, when He by them spake what they said, who would dare to say that He ought not to expound it as He does: much more, when He Himself expounded what He Himself set forth, who shall dare to contradict a manifest truth? Our Lord then, expounding this parable, saith, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man; the good seed are the children of the kingdom: (that is, the Church of the saints:) the tares are the children of the wicked one: the field is the world. See then, my brethren, that the good seed is sown throughout the world, and throughout the world the tares are sown also. It is not, is it, in one part wheat, in another tares? The field of the Lord is the world, not Africa. It is not with the Lord's field, as it is without these fields of ours, where Getulia bears sixty or an hundred fold, Numidia only ten fold: every where fruit is borne to Him, both an hundred fold, and sixty fold, and thirty fold: only do thou choose what thou wilt be, if thou thinkest to belong to the Lord's Cross. The Church then of the saints is the Catholic Church. The Church of the saints is not the Church of heretics. The Church of the saints is that which God first prefigured before it was seen, and then set forth that it might be seen. The Church of the saints was heretofore in writings, now it is in nations: the Church of the saints was heretofore only read of, now it is both read of and seen. When it was only read of, it was believed; now it is seen, and is spoken against. His praise is in the Church of the saints.

4. Let Israel rejoice in Him Who made him. What is, Israel? ‘Seeing God:’ for this is the meaning of the name Israel. He who seeth God, rejoiceth in Him by Whom he was made. What is it then, brethren? we have said that we belong to the Church of the saints: do we already see God? and how are we Israel, if we see not? There is one kind of sight belonging to this present time; there will be another belonging to the time hereafter: the sight which now is, is by faith; the sight which is to be will be in reality. If we believe, we see; if we love, we see: see what? God. Ask John: God is love; let us bless His holy Name, and rejoice in God by rejoicing in love. Whoso hath love, why send we him afar to see God? Let him regard his own conscience, and there he seeth God. If love dwelleth not there, neither doth God; but if love dwell there, so doth God. Perchance he wisheth to see Him seated in heaven; let him have love, and so He dwelleth in him, as He doth in heaven. Let us then be Israel, and let us rejoice in Him that made us. Let Israel rejoice in Him Who made him. In Him Who made him let him rejoice, not in Arius, not in Donatus, not in Cæcilian, not in Proculian, not in Augustin. In Him Who made him let him rejoice. We, my brethren, commend not ourselves to you: we commend God to you, for we commend you to God. How do we commend God to you? For you to love Him for your own good, not for His good; for if ye do not love Him, it is to your own hurt, not to His. For God will not the less possess His Godhead, because man hath not love towards Him. Thou increasest through God, not He through thee: and yet so greatly did He love us first before we loved Him, that He sent His only-begotten Son to die for us. He Who made us, became one of us. How made He us? All things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made. How became He one of us? The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. This then is He in Whom we ought to rejoice. Let no man claim to himself what belongs to Him: from Him is the joy, which maketh us happy. Let Israel rejoice in Him Who made him.

5. And let the sons of Sion exult in their King. The sons of the Church are Israel. For Sion indeed was one city, which fell: amid its ruins certain saints dwelt after the flesh: but the true Sion, the true Jerusalem, (for Sion and Jerusalem are one,) is eternal in the heavens, and is our mother. She it is that hath given us birth, she is the Church of the saints, she hath nourished us, she, who is in part a pilgrim, in part abiding in the heavens. In the part which abideth in heaven is the bliss of angels, in the part which wandereth in this world is the hope of the righteous. Of the former is said, Glory to God in the highest; of the latter, and on earth peace to men of good will. Let those then who, being in this life, groan, and long for their country, run by love, not by bodily feet; let them seek not ships but wings, let them lay hold on the two wings of love. What are the two wings of love? The love of God, and of our neighbour. For now we are pilgrims, we sigh, we groan. There has come to us a letter from our country: we read it to you.

6. Let Israel rejoice in Him Who made him, and the sons of Sion exult in their King. He means the same by Him Who made him, and by their King. Israel that I have spoken of is the same as the sons of Sion, Him Who made him, the same as their King. The Son of God, Who made us, was made one of us: and He rules us as our King, because He is our Creator, Who made us. But He by Whom we were made is the same as He by Whom we are ruled, and we are Christians because He is Christ. He is called Christ from Chrism, that is, Anointing. Kings and Priests used to be anointed: He was anointed as both King and Priest. As King, He fought for us, as Priest He offered Himself for us. When he fought for us, He seemed indeed to be conquered, but in reality He conquered: for He was crucified, and by His cross, whereon He was nailed, He slew the devil, and thereby is He our King. But whereby is He our Priest? Because He offered Himself for us. Give to the Priest somewhat to offer. What could man find which he could give as a clean victim? What victim? what clean thing can a sinner offer? O unrighteous, O sinful man, whatever thou offerest is unclean, and somewhat that is clean must be offered for thee. Seek what thou hast in thee to offer, nought wilt thou find. Seek what thou hast beyond thyself to offer: He delighteth not in rams, nor in goats, nor in bulls. All things are His, even though thou offer them not. Offer then to Him a clean sacrifice. But thou art a sinner, thou art ungodly, thou hast a defiled conscience. Thou wilt

perchance be able to offer somewhat clean, when thou hast been cleansed; but that thou mayest be cleansed, somewhat must be offered for thee. What then wilt thou offer for thyself that thou mayest be cleansed? When thou hast been cleansed, thou wilt be able to offer what is clean. Let then the Priest that is clean offer Himself, and cleanse thee. This is what Christ did. He found in man nothing clean for Him to offer for man: He offered Himself as a clean Victim. Happy Victim, true Victim, spotless Offering. He offered not then what we gave Him; yea rather, He offered what He took of us, and offered it clean. For of us He took flesh, and this He offered. But where took He it? In the womb of the Virgin Mary, that He might offer it clean for us unclean. He is our King, He is our Priest, in Him let us rejoice.

7. Let them praise His Name in chorus. What meaneth chorus? Many know what a chorus is: nay, as we are speaking in a town, almost all know. A chorus is the union of singers. If we sing in chorus, let us sing in concord. If any one’s voice is out of harmony in a chorus of singers, it offendeth the ear, and throweth the chorus into confusion. If the voice of one echoing discordantly troubleth the harmony of them who sing, how doth the discord of heresy throw into confusion the harmony of them who praise. The whole world is now the chorus of Christ. The chorus of Christ soundeth harmoniously from east to west. Let us see whether the chorus of Christ extend as widely as this. From the rising of the sun unto the setting, praise ye the Name of the Lord. Let them praise His Name in chorus.

8. Let them sing a psalm unto Him with timbrel and psaltery. Wherefore taketh he to him the timbrel and psaltery? That not the voice alone may praise, but the works too. When timbrel and psaltery are taken, the hands harmonise with the voice. So too do thou, whensoever thou singest ‘Halleluia,’ deal forth thy bread to the hungry, clothe the naked, take in the stranger: then doth not only thy voice sound, but thy hand soundeth in harmony with it, for thy deeds agree with thy words. Thou hast taken to thee an instrument, and thy fingers agree with thy tongue. Nor must we keep back the mystical meaning of the timbrel and psaltery. On the timbrel leather is stretched, on the psaltery gut is stretched; on either instrument the flesh is crucified. How well did he sing a psalm on timbrel and psaltery, who said, the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world? This

psaltery or timbrel He wishes thee to take up, Who loveth a new song, Who teacheth thee, saying to thee, Whosoever willeth to be My disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. Let him not set down his psaltery, let him not set down his timbrel, let him stretch himself out on the wood, and be dried from the lust of the flesh. The more the strings are stretched, the more sharply do they sound. The Apostle Paul then, in order that his psaltery might sound sharply, what said he? Forgetting those things which are behind, and stretching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling. He stretched himself: Christ touched him; and the sweetness of truth sounded. Let them sing a psalm unto Him upon timbrel and psaltery.

9. For the Lord hath dealt kindly among His people. What dealing so kindly, as to die for the ungodly? What dealing so kindly, as with righteous Blood to blot out the handwriting against the sinner? What dealing so kindly, as to say, ‘I regard not what ye were, be ye now what ye were not? The Lord hath dealt kindly among His people, by forgiving them their sins, by promising them everlasting life. He dealeth kindly in converting him that was turned away, in aiding him that is fighting, in crowning the conqueror. The Lord hath dealt kindly with His people, and the meek He shall lift up in salvation. For the proud too are lifted up, but not in salvation: the meek are lifted in salvation, the proud in death: that is, the proud lift up themselves, and God humbleth them: the meek humble themselves, and God lifteth them up. And He shall lift up the meek in salvation.

10. The saints shall exult in glory. I would say somewhat important: listen very heedfully about the glory of the saints. For there is no one who loveth not glory. But the glory of fools, popular glory as it is called, hath snares to deceive, so that a man, influenced by the praises of vain men, shall be willing to live in such fashion as to be spoken of by men, whosoever they be, in whatsoever way. Hence it is that men, rendered mad, and puffed up with pride, empty within, without swollen, are willing ever to ruin their fortunes by bestowing them on stage-players, actors, men who fight with wild beasts, charioteers. What sums they give, what sums they spend! They lavish the powers not only of their patrimony, but of their minds too. They scorn the poor, because the people shouteth not that the poor should be

given to, but the people do shout that the fighter with wild beasts be given to. When then no shout is raised to them, they refuse to spend; when madmen shout to them, they are mad too: nay, all are mad, both performer, and spectator, and the giver. This mad glory is blamed by the Lord, is offensive in the eyes of the Almighty. And yet, my brethren, Christ thus reproacheth His people, and saith, ‘I have not received at your hands as much as they who fight with wild beasts: and in giving to them, ye gave of what was mine; but I was naked, and ye clothed Me not. Then say they, When saw we Thee naked, and clothed Thee not? And He saith, Forasmuch as ye have not done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have not done it unto Me. But thou choosest to clothe him, who pleaseth thee, whereas Christ displeaseth thee. Thou choosest to clothe the fighter with wild beasts, who may be beaten, and make thee blush: Christ is never conquered; He hath conquered the devil, He hath conquered for thee, and to thee, and in thee; such a conqueror as this thou choosest not to clothe. Wherefore? Because there is less shouting, less madness about it. They then who delight in such glory, have an empty conscience. Just as they drain their chests, to send garments as presents, so do they empty their conscience, so as to have nothing precious therein.

11. But the saints who exult in glory, no need is there for us to say how they exult: just hear the verse of the Psalm which followeth: The saints shall exult in glory, they shall rejoice in their beds: not in theatres, or amphitheatres, or circuses, or follies, or market places, but in their beds. What is, in their beds? In their hearts. Hear the Apostle Paul exulting in his bed: For this is our glory, the testimony of our conscience. On the other hand, there is reason to fear lest any be pleasing to himself, and so seem to be proud, and boast of his conscience. For every one ought to exult with fear, for that wherein he exulteth is God’s gift, not his own desert. For there be many that please themselves, and think themselves righteous; and there is another passage which goeth against them, which saith, Who shall boast that he hath a clean heart, and that he is pure from sin? There is then, so to speak, a limit to glorying in our conscience, namely, to know that thy faith is sincere, thy hope sure, thy love without dissimulation. But since there are still many things which may offend the eyes of God, praise God Who hath given what thou hast; so shall He perfect what He hath given. Wherefore

when He had said, they shall rejoice in their beds, lest they should seem as it were self-satisfied, he added at once, the exultations of God are in their mouths. In such wise shall they rejoice in their beds, as not to attribute to themselves that they are good, but praise Him from Whom they have what they are, by Whom they are called to attain to what they are not, and from Whom they hope for perfection, to Whom they give thanks, because He hath begun. The exultations of God are in their mouths. Now behold the saints, behold their glory, behold throughout the whole world, behold that the exultations of God are in their mouths.

11. And swords sharpened on both sides in their hands. That is called a sword (framea) which is commonly called ‘spata.’ For there are swords sharpened only on one side, which are called ‘machæræ.’ But these ‘frameæ’ are also called ‘romphææ’ and ‘spatæ.’ This sort of weapon contains a great mystical meaning, in that it is sharp on both sides. These swords are sharpened on both sides in their hands. By swords sharpened on both sides, we understand the Word of the Lord: it is one sword, but therefore are they called many, because there are many mouths and many tongues of the saints. The Word of the Lord then is a two-edged sword. How is it two-edged? It speaks of things temporal, it speaks also of things eternal. In both cases it proveth what it saith, and him whom it strikes, it severeth from the world. Is not this the sword whereof the Lord said, I am not come to send peace upon earth, but a sword? Observe how He came to divide, how He came to sever. He divideth the saints, He divideth the ungodly, He severeth from thee that which hindereth thee. The son willeth to serve God, the father willeth not: the sword cometh, the Word of God cometh, and severeth the son from the father. The daughter willeth, the mother willeth not; by the sword they are divided from one another. The daughter-in-law willeth, the mother-in-law willeth not; let the sword sharpened on both sides come, let it bring the promise of the present and future life, comfort in this life, enjoyment in eternity. Behold the sword sharpened on both sides promising things both temporal and eternal. Wherein hath it deceived us? Was there not a time when the Church of God was not spread throughout the whole world? Lo, now it is. Before, it was read of, not seen: now, as it is read of, so also is it seen. Whatsoever is promised to us in this world belongeth to one side of the sword: whatever is

promised for everlasting, belongeth to the other side. Thou hast hope for the future, comfort for the present; be not thou drawn back from Him Who would draw thee to Him; be it father, mother, sister, wife, friend, let him not draw thee back: so shall the sword sharpened on both sides profit thee. To thy profit doth it sever thee, to thy harm dost thou bind thyself to them. Our Lord then came bearing the sword sharpened on both sides, promising things of eternity, fulfilling those of this life. For therefore also are they called two Testaments. What then were the swords sharpened on both sides in their hands? Have the two Testaments to do with the swords sharpened on both sides? The Old Testament containeth temporal promises, the New, eternal. In both is found the Word of God, as a sword twice sharpened. Wherefore then is it in their hands, not in their tongues? And swords, it saith, sharpened on both sides in their hands. By in their hands, he meaneth in power. They received then the Word of God in power, to speak where they would, to whom they would, neither to fear power, nor to despise poverty. For they had in their hands a sword; where they would they brandished it, handled it, smote with it: and all this was in the power of the preachers. For if the Word be not in their hands, (lest perhaps some one should say, ‘How is the Word a sword sharpened on both sides, and yet in their hands?’) if the Word, I say, be not in their hands, why is it written, The Word of the Lord was put in the hand of the Prophet Haggai? Surely, brethren, God set not His Word in His fingers. What is meant by, was put in his hand? It was put into his power to preach the Word of the Lord. Lastly, we can understand these hands in another way also. For they who spake had the Word of God in their tongues, they who wrote, in their hands. And swords sharpened on both sides in their hands.

12. Now, brethren, ye see the saints armed: observe the slaughter, observe their glorious battles. For if there be a commander, there must be soldiers; if soldiers, an enemy; if a warfare, a victory. What have these done who had in their hands swords sharpened on both sides? To do vengeance on the nations. See whether vengeance have not been done on the nations. Daily is it done: we do it ourselves by speaking. Observe how the nations of Babylon are slain. She is repaid twofold: for so is it written of her, repay her double for what she hath done. How is she repaid double? The saints wage war, they draw their swords twice sharpened; thence come defeats,

slaughters, severances: how is she repaid double? When she had power to persecute the Christians, she slew the flesh indeed, but she crushed not God: now she is repaid double, for the Pagans are extinguished and the idols are broken. How, thou wilt say, are the Pagans slain? How, save when they become Christians? I seek a Pagan: I find him not, he is a Christian: the Pagan then is dead. For if they be not slain, how came it to be said to Peter, slay and eat? Whence was Saul the persecutor slain, and Paul the preacher raised up? I seek Saul the persecutor, and I find him not: he is slain. Wherewith? With the sword twice sharpened. But because he was slain in himself and quickened again in Christ, therefore he is bold to say, so then it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me. As was done to him, so has been done through him. For when made a preacher, he also had put into his hand the sword twice sharpened, to do vengeance on the nations. And lest thou shouldest think that men are really smitten with the sword, blood really shed, wounds made in the flesh, he goeth on and explaineth, upbraidings among the peoples. What is upbraidings? Reproof. Let the sword twice sharpened go forth from you, delay not: God hath given it to you according to your measure. ‘What kind of man art thou, who worshippest idols?’ Say to thy friend, if yet thou hast one left to whom to say it, ‘What kind of man art thou, who hast abandoned Him by Whom thou wast made, and worshippest what He made? Better is the Workman, than that which He worketh; if thou blushest to worship the Workman, blushest thou not to worship what the Workman hath wrought?’ When he beginneth to blush, when he beginneth to feel compunction, thou hast made a wound with thy sword, it hath reached the heart, he is about to die, that he may live. Swords twice sharpened are in their hands, to do vengeance on the nations, reproofs among the peoples.

13. That they may bind their kings in fetters, and their nobles in bonds of iron. To execute upon them the judgment written. We have easily explained how by the sword they fall that they may rise, are severed that they may be gathered, wounded that they may be made whole, die that they may live: but what shall we do now? how are we to explain, to bind their kings in fetters? The kings of the Gentiles are to be bound in fetters, and their nobles in fetters, and that of iron. Give me your attention, that ye may recognise what ye already know. For these verses which we are beginning to explain

are obscure, but what I am about to say upon them is not new. It is already known to you: ye have need now not to learn, but to remember. For for this purpose God willed to set down some of His verses obscurely, not that any thing new should be dug out of them, but that what was already well known, might be made new by being obscurely set forth. We know that kings have been made Christians; we know that the nobles of the Gentiles have been made Christians. They are being made so at this day, they have been, they shall be; the swords twice sharpened are not idle in the hands of the saints. How then do we understand their being bound in fetters and chains of iron? Ye know, beloved and learned brethren, (learned I call you, for ye have been nourished in the Church, and are accustomed to hear God's Word read,) that God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong, and the foolish things of the world hath God chosen to confound the wise, and things which are not, just as things which are, that the things which are may be brought to nought. For thus saith the Apostle: For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, and the weak things of the world, to confound the strong, and the ignoble and mean things hath God chosen, and things which are not, like as things which are, that the things which are may be brought to nought. Christ, Who is God, came to benefit all, but He chose to benefit the emperor by means of the fisherman, not the fisherman by means of the emperor: and He chose those things which were of no weight in the world. Them He filled with His Spirit, to them He gave swords twice sharpened. He commanded them 'to spread the Gospel, and to go throughout the whole world.' The world roared, the lion lifted himself up against the Lamb, but the Lamb was found stronger than the lion. The lion was conquered in his rage, the Lamb conquered in His suffering. The hearts of men were turned to fear Christ; kings and nobles began to be moved by miracles, to be troubled at the fulfilment of prophecy, to see the whole race of mankind hurrying together to one Name. And what should they do? Many chose to become ignoble, they gave up their house, they distributed their goods to the poor, they hastened on to perfection. For to such an one when imperfect it is said by the Lord, If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me, and thou shall have treasure in heaven. Many of the nobles did this, but they ceased to be nobles of the Gentiles, they chose rather to be poor in this world, noble in Christ. But many retain their former nobility, retain their royal powers, and yet are Christians. These are, as it were, in fetters and in bonds of iron. How so? they received fetters, to keep them from going to things unlawful, the fetters of wisdom, the fetters of the Word of God.

14. Wherefore then are they bonds of iron and not bonds of gold? They are iron so long as they fear: let them love, and they shall be golden. Observe, beloved, what I say. Ye have heard just now the Apostle John, There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. This is the bond of iron. And yet unless a man begin through fear to worship God, he will not attain to love. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The beginning then is bonds of iron, the end a collar of gold. For it is said of wisdom, a collar of gold around thy neck. She would not put on thee a collar of gold, unless first she had bound thee in bonds of iron. Thou beginnest with fear, thou attainest at last to wisdom. How many are there, who are unwilling to do evil because they fear hell, because they fear torment. As yet they love not righteousness. If they were promised impunity, and it were said to them, ‘Do what ye will without fear, ye shall not be punished for it,’ they would let loose their lust, to run on into all that is most vile. And especially so, my brethren, specially kings and nobles, to whom it is not easily said, What hast thou done? For the poor man, though he fear not God, yet because he hath no strength, nought to rely on, lest when he proceed to act he be hurried to punishment, ceaseth through fear of man, though not of God. But the powerful of the world, kings and nobles, if they fear not God, what shall they fear? But the Word is preached to them, and they are smitten with the sword twice sharpened. It is said to them, that there is One Who setteth some on His right hand, others on His left, that He may say to those who are on the left, Go ye into everlasting fire, that is prepared for the devil and his angels. As yet they love not righteousness, but they fear punishment, and fearing punishment, they have already received fetters, and are being disciplined in bonds of iron. There cometh to us a man powerful in this world, his wife offendeth him, and perhaps he hath desired another man’s wife who is more beautiful, or another woman who is richer, he wisheth to put away the one he hath, yet he doeth it not. He heareth the words of the servant of God, he heareth the

Prophet, he heareth the Apostle, and he doeth it not; he is told by one in whose hands is a sword twice sharpened, ‘Thou shalt not do it: it is not lawful for thee: God alloweth thee not to put away thy wife, save for the cause of fornication. He heareth this, he feareth, and doeth it not. His slippery feet were already beginning to slide; they are held with fetters; he hath bonds of iron, he feareth God. It is said to him, ‘God will condemn thee if thou doest it: He is a Judge above all, He heareth the groanings of thy wife; thou wilt be held guilty in His sight.’ On one side lust allureth, on the other fear deterreth. He would go on to consent to an evil desire, were it not that bonds of iron held him back. Now further, if he were to say, ‘I desire now to be continent, I would have no wife,’ this is impossible. What if thou wishest, and she be unwilling? Should she by thy continence be made to commit fornication? If she marry another while thou art alive, she shall be an adulteress. God willeth not to purchase such a gain by such a loss. Pay that which is due: though thou exactest not what is thy due, yet pay. God will reckon it unto thee for perfect sanctification, if thou exactest not what she owes to thee, and yet payest what is due to her. Thou fearest; thou doest it not; thy bonds are shaken. Hear that thou art bound with bonds of iron: Art thou bound unto a wife, seek not to be freed. It is a hard bond, it is of iron. For when the Lord saith this, He sheweth that it is a bond of iron. Listen, young men; the bonds are of iron, seek not to set your feet within them; if ye do, ye shall be bound more tightly with fetters. Such fetters the hands of the Bishop make strong for you. Do not men who are thus fettered fly to the Church, and are here loosed? Men do fly hither, desiring to be rid of their wives: here they are more tightly bound: no man looseth these fetters. What God joined together, let not man put asunder. But these bonds are hard. Who but knows it? This hardness the Apostles grieved at, and said, If this be the case with a wife, it is not good to marry. If the bonds be of iron, it is not good to set our feet within them. And the Lord said, All men cannot receive this saying, but let him that can receive it, receive it. Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be freed, for thou art bound with bonds of iron. Art thou free from a wife, seek not a wife; bind not thyself with bonds of iron.

15. To do in them the judgment that is written. This is the judgment which the saints do throughout all nations. Wherefore written? Because these

things were before written, and now are fulfilled. Behold now they are being done: erst they were read, and were not done. And he hath concluded thus, this glory have all His saints. Throughout the whole world, throughout entire nations, this the saints do, thus are they glorified, thus do they exalt God with their mouths, thus do they rejoice in their beds, thus do they exult in their glory, thus are they lifted up in salvation, thus do they sing a new song, thus in heart and voice and life they say Halleluia. Amen.

PSALM 150

Exposition

1. Although the arrangement of the Psalms, which seems to me to contain the secret of a mighty mystery, hath not yet been revealed unto me, yet, by the fact that they in all amount to one hundred and fifty, they suggest somewhat even to us, who have not as yet pierced with the eye of our mind the depth of their entire arrangement, whereon we may without being over bold, so far as God giveth, be able to speak. Firstly, the number fifteen, whereof it is a multiple; (for one hundred and fifty is of the same value in the order of tens, as fifteen is in the order of units, for it is made up of fifteen times ten; and the same is the value of one thousand five hundred in the order of hundreds, for it is fifteen times one hundred; and of fifteen thousand in the order of thousands, for it is fifteen times one thousand;) this number fifteen, I say, signifieth the agreement of the two Testaments. For in the former is observed the Sabbath, which signifieth rest; in the latter the Lord’s Day, which signifieth resurrection. The Sabbath is the seventh day, but the Lord’s Day, coming after the seventh, must needs be the eighth, and is also to be reckoned the first. For it is called the first day of the week, and so from it are reckoned the second, third, fourth, and so on to the seventh day of the week, which is the Sabbath. But from Lord’s Day to Lord’s Day is eight days, wherein is declared the revelation of the New Testament, which in the Old was as it were veiled under earthly promises. Further, seven and eight make fifteen. Of the same number too are the Psalms which are called ‘of the steps,’ because that was the number of the steps of the Temple. Further too, the number fifty in itself also containeth a great mystery. For it consisteth of a week of weeks, with the addition of one as an eighth to complete the number of fifty. For seven times seven make forty-nine, whereto one is added to make fifty. And this number fifty is of so great meaning, that it was after the completion of that number of days from the Lord’s Resurrection, that, on the fiftieth day exactly, the Holy Spirit came upon those who were gathered together in Christ. And this Holy Spirit is in Scripture especially spoken of by the number seven, whether in Isaiah

or in the Apocalypse, where the seven Spirits of God are most directly mentioned, on account of the sevenfold operation of one and the self-same Spirit. And this sevenfold operation is thus mentioned in Isaiah: The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of strength, the Spirit of knowledge and of goodness, the Spirit of the fear of the Lord. By this should be understood the fear of the Lord, which is clean, and endureth for ever. But perfect love casteth out slavish fear, and maketh us free, so that we do no servile works, which are forbidden on the Sabbath: and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Which is given us. Hence also the Holy Spirit is spoken of under the number seven. But this period of fifty the Lord divided into forty and ten: for on the fortieth day after His Resurrection He ascended into heaven, and then after ten days were completed He sent the Holy Spirit: under the number forty setting forth to us the period of temporal sojourn in this world. For the number four prevaileth in forty; and the world and the year have each four parts; and by the addition of the number ten, as a sort of reward added for the fulfilment of the law in good works, eternity itself is figured. The number one hundred and fifty containeth this fifty three times, as though it were multiplied by the Trinity. Wherefore for this reason too we make out that this number of the Psalm is not unsuitable. For in the number of the fishes too which were caught in the nets which were let down after the Resurrection, by the adding of three to one hundred and fifty, we seem to have a kind of suggestion given us, into how many parts that number ought to be divided, namely, that it should contain three fifties. Though there is another account too of that number of fishes, one much more deep and pleasing, namely, that we arrive at that same number, by setting down seventeen in a column, and adding all the numbers from one to seventeen together. But in the number ten is signified the Law, in seven, Grace; for nought fulfilleth the Law save love spread abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, Who is set forth under the number seven.

2. Now in that some have believed that the Psalms are divided into five books, they have been led by the fact, that so often at the end of Psalms are the words, so be it, so be it. But when I endeavoured to make out the principle of this division, I was not able; for neither are the five parts equal

one to another, neither in quantity of contents, nor yet even in number of Psalms, so as for each to contain thirty. And if each book end with, so be it, so be it, we may reasonably ask, why the fifth and last book hath not the same conclusion. We however, following the authority of canonical Scripture, where it is said, For it is written in the book of Psalms, know that there is but one book of Psalms. And I see indeed how this can be true, and yet the other be true also, without contravening it. For it may be that there was some custom in Hebrew literature, whereby that is called one book which yet consists of more than one, just as of many churches one church consisteth, and of many heavens one heaven, (for he passed not over any of the heavens, who said, My help is in the Name of the Lord, Who hath made heaven and earth: and, again, although Scripture saith, And God called the firmament heaven, and bade the waters to be above the firmament, that is, above the heaven, yet the same Scripture is not wrong when it saith, And let the waters that are above the heavens praise the Name of the Lord, in not saying, above heaven,) and one land of many lands. For it is our every-day habit to say, ‘the globe of the earth,’ and ‘the globe of the lands.’ And when it is said, it is written in the book of Psalms, though the customary way of speaking is such that he seem to have wished to suggest that there is but one book, yet to this it may be answered, that the words mean ‘in a book of the Psalms,’ that is, ‘in any one of those five books.’ And this is in common language so unprecedented, or at least so rare, that we are only convinced that the twelve Prophets make one book, because we read in like manner, As it is written in the book of the Prophets. There are some too who call all the canonical Scriptures together one book, because they agree in a very wondrous and divine unity; and they say, that this is why it is said, In the head of the book it is written of Me, that I should do Thy Will; that so it may be understood that it was by the Son that the Father made the world, Whose creation is the beginning of Scripture in the book of Genesis, or rather because it seems to be prophecy, not relating things done, but foreannouncing things to come, (for He saith not, that I have done, but, that I may do, or, that I should do, Thy Will,) this passage should be referred to that which is written in the first part of the same book, they twain shall be in one flesh; which the Apostle saith is a great mystery, in Christ and the Church. However, this book of the Psalms may be understood to be meant, when it is said, In the head of the book it is written of Me, that I should do

Thy Will: for it goeth on, My God, I am willing, and Thy Law is within My Heart. For the very first Psalm, which stands in the head of this book, is understood to be a prophecy of Him; Blessed is the Man that hath not gone away in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, and hath not sat in the seat of pestilence: but in the Law of the Lord is His Will, and in His Law will He exercise Himself day and night: so that this is what is meant by, My God, I am willing, and Thy Law is in the midst of My Heart: but that which comes next, I have declared the good tidings of Thy Righteousness in the great congregation, is more suitably referred to the other passage, they shall be twain in one flesh.

3. Whichever then of these is understood by the words, in the head of the book, this book of the Psalms, in its parts of fifty Psalms each, if it be questioned by these very divisions of fifties, gives an answer important and very worthy of consideration. For it seems to me not without significance, that the fiftieth is of penitence, the hundredth of mercy and judgment, the hundred and fiftieth of the praise of God in His saints. For thus do we advance to an everlasting life of happiness, first by condemning our own sins, then by living aright, that, having condemned our ill life, and lived a good life, we may attain to everlasting life. For God, according to the purpose of His hidden righteousness and goodness, whom He predestined, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. Our predestination is not wrought in ourselves, but in secret with Him, in His foreknowledge. But the three which remain are wrought in us, calling, justifying, glorifying. We are called by the preaching of repentance; for thus began the Lord to preach the Gospel, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. We are justified in the calling of mercy and fear of judgment; hence it is said, Save me, O God, in Thy Name, and judge me in Thy strength. He feareth not judgment, who hath previously attained salvation. Being called, we renounce the devil by repentance, that we may not continue under his yoke: being justified, we are healed by mercy, that we may not fear judgment: being glorified, we pass into everlasting life, where we praise God without end. Hereto, I think, belongeth what the Lord saith, Behold, I cast out devils, and work cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected. And this He also shewed in the three days of His passion, His sleeping, His awakening. For

He was crucified, buried, rose again. On the cross He triumphed over principalities and powers, in the tomb He rested, in His resurrection He exulted. Penitence crucifieth, righteousness soothed, life eternal glorifieth. The voice of penitence is, Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great mercy, and according to the multitude of Thy compassions do away mine iniquity: penitence offereth to God as a sacrifice a broken spirit, a contrite and humbled heart. The voice of the righteousness of Christ in His elect is this; I will sing unto Thee, O Lord, of mercy and judgment; I will sing, and understand in the undefiled way, when Thou shalt come unto me. For by mercy we are aided to do righteousness, that we may come without fear to judgment, where are destroyed out of the city of the Lord all who work iniquity. The verse wherewith this Psalm concludeth is the voice of life everlasting.

4. Praise the Lord in His saints, that is, in those whom He hath glorified: praise Him in the firmament of His power. Praise Him in His deeds of strength; or, as others have explained it, in His deeds of power: praise Him according to the multitude of His greatness. All these His saints are; as the Apostle saith, But we may be the righteousness of God in Him. If then they be the righteousness of God, which He hath wrought in them, why are they not also the strength of Christ which He hath wrought in them, that they should rise again from the dead? For in Christ’s resurrection, strength is especially set forth to us, for in His Passion was weakness, as the Apostle saith, though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God: and in another place, to know Him, and the power of His resurrection. And well doth it say, the firmament of His power. For it is the firmament of His power that He dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over Him. Why should not they also be called the works of God’s strength, which He hath done in them: yea rather, they themselves are the works of His strength; just as it is said, We are the righteousness of God in Him. For what more powerful than that He should reign for ever, with all His enemies put under His feet? Why should not they also be the multitude of His greatness? not that whereby He is great, but whereby He hath made them great, many as they are, that is, thousands of thousands. Just as righteousness too is understood in two ways, that whereby He is righteous, and that which He worketh in us, so as to make us His righteousness.

5. These same saints are signified by all the musical instruments in succession, to praise God in. For what the Psalmist began with, saying, Praise the Lord in His saints, that he carrieth out, signifying in various ways these same saints of His.

6. Praise Him in the sound of the trumpet: on account of the surpassing clearness of note of their praise. Praise Him in the psaltery and harp. The psaltery praiseth God from things above, the harp praiseth God from things below; I mean, from things in heaven, and things in earth, as He Who made heaven and earth. We have already in another Psalm, explained that the psaltery hath that board, whereon the series of strings rests that it may give a better sound, above, whereas the harp has it below.

7. Praise Him in the timbrel and choir. The timbrel praiseth God when the flesh is now changed, so that there is in it no weakness of earthly corruption. For the timbrel is made of leather dried and strengthened. The choir praiseth God when society made peaceful praiseth Him. Praise Him on the strings and organ. Both psaltery and harp, which have been mentioned above, have strings. But organ is a general name for all instruments of music, although usage has now obtained that those are specially called organ which are inflated with bellows: but I do not think that this kind is meant here. For since organ is a Greek word, applied generally, as I have said, to all musical instruments, this instrument, to which bellows are applied, is called by the Greeks by another name: but it being called organ is rather a Latin and conversational usage. When then he saith, on the strings and organ, he seemeth to me to have intended to signify some instrument which hath strings. For it is not psalteries and harps only that have strings: but, because in the psaltery and harp, on account of the sound from things below and things above, somewhat has been found which can be understood after this distinction, he hath suggested to us to seek some other meaning in the strings themselves: for they too are flesh, but flesh now set free from corruption. And to those, it may be, he added the organ, to signify that they sound not each separately, but sound together in most harmonious diversity, just as they are arranged in a musical instrument. For even then the saints of God will have their differences, accordant, not discordant, that is, agreeing, not disagreeing, just as sweetest

harmony arises from sounds differing indeed, but not opposed to one another: for one star differeth from another star in glory: so also is the resurrection of the dead.

8. Praise Him on the well-sounding cymbals, praise Him on cymbals of jubilation. Cymbals touch one another in order to sound, and therefore are by some compared to our lips. But I think it better to understand that God is in a manner praised on the cymbal, when each is honoured by his neighbour, not by himself, and then honouring one another, they give praise to God. But lest any should understand such cymbals as sound without life, therefore I think he added, on cymbals of jubilation. For jubilation, that is, unspeakable praise, proceedeth not, save from life. Nor do I think that I should pass over what musicians say, that there are three kinds of sounds, by voice, by breath, by striking: by voice, uttered by throat and windpipe, when man singeth without any instrument; by breath, as by pipe, or any thing of that sort: by striking, as by harp, or any thing of that kind. None then of these kinds is omitted here: for there is voice in the choir, breath in the trumpet, striking in the harp, representing mind, spirit, body, but by similitudes, not in the proper sense of the words. When then he proposed, Praise God in His saints, to whom said he this, save to themselves? And in whom are they to praise God, save in themselves? For ye, saith he, are His saints; ye are His strength, but that which He wrought in you; ye are His mighty works, and the multitude of His greatness, which He hath wrought and set forth in you. Ye are trumpet, psaltery, harp, timbrel, choir, strings, and organ, cymbals of jubilation sounding well, because sounding in harmony. All these are ye: let nought that is vile, nought that is transitory, nought that is ludicrous, be here thought of. And since to savour of the flesh is death, let every spirit praise the Lord.

PRAYER OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Which he was wont to use after his Sermons and Lectures.

Turn we to the Lord God, the Father Almighty, and with pure hearts offer to Him, so far as our meanness can, great and true thanks, with all our hearts praying His exceeding kindness, that of His good pleasure He would deign to hear our prayers, that by His Power He would drive out the enemy from our deeds and thoughts, that He would increase our faith, guide our understandings, give us spiritual thoughts, and lead us to His bliss, through Jesus Christ His Son our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Him, in the Unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

LECTURES OR TRACTATES ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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LECTURES OR TRACTATES ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN

TRACTATE I

CHAPTER I. 1–5

1. When I give heed to what we have just read from the apostolic lesson, that “the natural man perceiveth not the things which are of the Spirit of God,” and consider that in the present assembly, my beloved, there must of necessity be among you many natural men, who know only according to the flesh, and cannot yet raise themselves to spiritual understanding, I am in great difficulty how, as the Lord shall grant, I may be able to express, or in my small measure to explain, what has been read from the Gospel, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;” for this the natural man does not perceive. What then, brethren? Shall we be silent for this cause? Why then is it read, if we are to be silent regarding it? Or why is it heard, if it be not explained? And why is it explained, if it be not understood? And so, on the other hand, since I do not doubt that there are among your number some who can not only receive it when explained, but even understand it before it is explained, I shall not defraud those who are able to receive it, from fear of my words being wasted on the ears of those who are not able to receive it. Finally, there will be present with us the compassion of God, so that perchance there may be enough for all, and each receive what he is able, while he who speaks says what he is able. For to speak of the matter as it is, who is able? I venture to say, my brethren, perhaps not John himself spoke of the matter as it is, but even he only as he was able; for it was man that spoke of God, inspired indeed by God, but still man. Because he was inspired he said something; if he had not been inspired, he would have said nothing; but because a man inspired, he spoke not the whole, but what a man could he spoke.

2. For this John, dearly beloved brethren, was one of those mountains concerning which it is written: “Let the mountains receive peace for thy

people, and the hills righteousness.” The mountains are lofty souls, the hills little souls. But for this reason do the mountains receive peace, that the hills may be able to receive righteousness. What is the righteousness which the hills receive? Faith, for “the just doth live by faith.” The smaller souls, however, would not receive faith unless the greater souls, which are called mountains, were illuminated by Wisdom herself, that they may be able to transmit to the little ones what the little ones can receive; and the hills live by faith, because the mountains receive peace. By the mountains themselves it was said to the Church, “Peace be with you;” and the mountains themselves in proclaiming peace to the Church did not divide themselves against Him from whom they received peace, that truly, not feignedly, they might proclaim peace.

3. For there are other mountains which cause shipwreck, on which, if any one drive his ship, she is dashed to pieces. For it is easy, when land is seen by men in peril, to make a venture as it were to reach it; but sometimes land is seen on a mountain, and rocks lie hid under the mountain; and when any one makes for the mountain, he falls on the rocks, and finds there not rest, but wrecking. So there have been certain mountains, and great have they appeared among men, and they have created heresies and schisms, and have divided the Church of God; but those who divided the Church of God were not those mountains concerning which it is said, “Let the mountains receive peace for thy people.” For in what manner have they received peace who have severed unity?

4. But those who received peace to proclaim it to the people have made Wisdom herself an object of contemplation, so far as human hearts could lay hold on that which “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has ascended into the heart of man.” If it has not ascended into the heart of man, how has it ascended into the heart of John? Was not John a man? Or perhaps neither into John’s heart did it ascend, but John’s heart ascended into it? For that which ascends into the heart of man is from beneath, to man; but that to which the heart of man ascends is above, from man. Even so brethren, can it be said that, if it ascended into the heart of John (if in any way it can be said), it ascended into his heart in so far as he was not man. What means “was not man”? In so far as he had begun to be an angel. For

all saints are angels, since they are messengers of God. Therefore to carnal and natural men, who are not able to perceive the things that are of God, what says the apostle? “For whereas ye say, I am of Paul, I of Apollos, are ye not men?” What did he wish to make them whom he upbraided because they were men? Do you wish to know what he wished to make them? Hear in the Psalms: “I have said, ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High.” To this, then, God calls us, that we be not men. But then will it be for the better that we be not men, if first we recognize the fact that we are men, that is, to the end that we may rise to that height from humility; lest, when we think that we are something when we are nothing, we not only do not receive what we are not, but even lose what we are.

5. Accordingly, brethren, of these mountains was John also, who said, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” This mountain had received peace; he was contemplating the divinity of the Word. Of what sort was this mountain? How lofty? He had risen above all peaks of the earth, he had risen above all plains of the sky, he had risen above all heights of the stars, he had risen above all choirs and legions of the angels. For unless he rose above all those things which were created, he would not arrive at Him by whom all things were made. You cannot imagine what he rose above, unless you see at what he arrived. Dost thou inquire concerning heaven and earth? They were made. Dost thou inquire concerning the things that are in heaven and earth? Surely much more were they made. Dost thou inquire concerning spiritual beings, concerning angels, archangels, thrones, dominions, powers, principalities? These also were made. For when the Psalm enumerated all these things, it finished thus: “He spoke, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created.” If “He spoke and they were made,” it was by the Word that they were made; but if it was by the Word they were made, the heart of John could not reach to that which he says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” unless he had risen above all things that were made by the Word. What a mountain this! How holy! How high among those mountains that received peace for the people of God, that the hills might receive righteousness!

6. Consider, then, brethren, if perchance John is not one of those mountains concerning whom we sang a little while ago, “I have lifted up mine eyes to the mountains, from whence shall come my help.” Therefore, my brethren, if you would understand, lift up your eyes to this mountain, that is, raise yourselves up to the evangelist, rise to his meaning. But, because though these mountains receive peace he cannot be in peace who places his hope in man, do not so raise your eyes to the mountain as to think that your hope should be placed in man; and so say, “I have lifted up mine eyes to the mountains, from whence shall come my help,” that you immediately add, “My help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.” Therefore let us lift our eyes to the mountains, from whence shall come our help; and yet it is not in the mountains themselves that our hope should be placed, for the mountains receive what they may minister to us; therefore, from whence the mountains also receive there should our hope be placed. When we lift our eyes to the Scriptures, since it was through men the Scriptures were ministered, we are lifting our eyes to the mountains, from whence shall come our help; but still, since they were men who wrote the Scriptures, they did not shine of themselves, but “He was the true light, who lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” A mountain also was that John the Baptist, who said, “I am not the Christ,” lest any one, placing his hope in the mountain, should fall from Him who illuminates the mountain. He also confessed, saying, “Since of His fullness have all we received.” So thou oughtest to say, “I have lifted up mine eyes to the mountains, from whence shall come my help,” so as not to ascribe to the mountains the help that comes to thee; but continue and say, “My help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.”

7. Therefore, brethren, may this be the result of my admonition, that you understand that in raising your hearts to the Scriptures (when the gospel was sounding forth, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” and the rest that was read), you were lifting your eyes to the mountains. For unless the mountains said these things, you would not find out how to think of them at all. Therefore from the mountains came your help, that you even heard of these things; but you cannot yet understand what you have heard. Call for help from the Lord, who made heaven and earth; for the mountains were enabled only so to

speak as not of themselves to illuminate, because they themselves are also illuminated by hearing. Thence John, who said these things, received them—he who lay on the Lord’s breast, and from the Lord’s breast drank in what he might give us to drink. But he gave us words to drink. Thou oughtest then to receive understanding from the source from which he drank who gave thee to drink; so that thou mayest lift up thine eyes to the mountains from whence shall come thine aid, so that from thence thou mayest receive, as it were, the cup, that is, the word, given thee to drink; and yet, since thy help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth, thou mayest fill thy breast from the source from which he filled his; whence thou saidst, “My help is from the Lord, who made heaven and earth:” let him, then, fill who can. Brethren, this is what I have said: Let each one lift up his heart in the manner that seems fitting, and receive what is spoken. But perhaps you will say that I am more present to you than God. Far be such a thought from you! He is much more present to you; for I appear to your eyes, He presides over your consciences. Give me then your ears, Him your hearts, that you may fill both. Behold, your eyes, and those your bodily senses, you lift up to us; and yet not to us, for we are not of those mountains, but to the gospel itself, to the evangelist himself: your hearts, however, to the Lord to be filled. Moreover, let each one so lift up as to see what he lifts up, and whither. What do I mean by saying, “what he lifts up, and whither?” Let him see to it what sort of a heart he lifts up, because it is to the Lord he lifts it up, lest, encumbered by a load of fleshly pleasure, it fall ere ever it is raised. But does each one see that he bears a burden of flesh? Let him strive by continence to purify that which he may lift up to God. For “Blessed are the pure in heart, because they shall see God.”

8. But let us see what advantage it is that these words have sounded, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” We also uttered words when we spoke. Was it such a word that was with God? Did not those words which we uttered sound and pass away? Did God’s Word, then, sound and come to an end? If so, how were all things made by it, and without it was nothing made? how is that which it created ruled by it, if it sounded and passed away? What sort of a word, then, is that which is both uttered and passes not away? Give ear, my beloved, it is a great matter. By everyday talk, words here become despicable to us,

because through their sounding and passing away they are despised, and seem nothing but words. But there is a word in the man himself which remains within; for the sound proceeds from the mouth. There is a word which is spoken in a truly spiritual manner, that which you understand from the sound, not the sound itself. Mark, I speak a word when I say “God.” How short the word which I have spoken—four letters and two syllables! Is this all that God is, four letters and two syllables? Or is that which is signified as costly as the word is paltry? What took place in thy heart when thou heardest “God”? What took place in my heart when I said “God”? A certain great and perfect substance was in our thoughts, transcending every changeable creature of flesh or of soul. And if I say to thee, “Is God changeable or unchangeable?” thou wilt answer immediately, “Far be it from me either to believe or imagine that God is changeable: God is unchangeable.” Thy soul, though small, though perhaps still carnal, could not answer me otherwise than that God is unchangeable: but every creature is changeable; how then wert thou able to enter, by a glance of thy spirit, into that which is above the creature, so as confidently to answer me, “God is unchangeable”? What, then, is that in thy heart, when thou thinkest of a certain substance, living, eternal, all-powerful, infinite, everywhere present, everywhere whole, nowhere shut in? When thou thinkest of these qualities, this is the word concerning God in thy heart. But is this that sound which consists of four letters and two syllables? Therefore, whatever things are spoken and pass away are sounds, are letters, are syllables. His word which sounds passes away; but that which the sound signified, and was in the speaker as he thought of it, and in the hearer as he understood it, that remains while the sounds pass away.

9. Turn thy attention to that word. Thou canst have a word in thy heart, as it were a design born in thy mind, so that thy mind brings forth the design; and the design is, so to speak, the offspring of thy mind, the child of thy heart. For first thy heart brings forth a design to construct some fabric, to set up something great on the earth; already the design is conceived, and the work is not yet finished: thou seest what thou wilt make; but another does not admire, until thou hast made and constructed the pile, and brought that fabric into shape and to completion; then men regard the admirable fabric, and admire the design of the architect; they are astonished at what they see,

and are pleased with what they do not see: who is there who can see a design? If, then, on account of some great building a human design receives praise, do you wish to see what a design of God is the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, the Word of God? Mark this fabric of the world. View what was made by the Word, and then thou wilt understand what is the nature of the world. Mark these two bodies of the world, the heavens and the earth. Who will unfold in words the beauty of the heavens? Who will unfold in words the fruitfulness of the earth? Who will worthily extol the changes of the seasons? Who will worthily extol the power of seeds? You see what things I do not mention, lest in giving a long list I should perhaps tell of less than you can call up to your own minds. From this fabric, then, judge the nature of the Word by which it was made: and not it alone; for all these things are seen, because they have to do with the bodily sense. By that Word angels also were made; by that Word archangels were made, powers, thrones, dominions, principalities; by that Word were made all things. Hence, judge what a Word this is.

10. Perhaps some one now answers me, “Who so conceives this Word?” Do not then imagine, as it were, some paltry thing when thou hearest “the Word,” nor suppose it to be words such as thou hearest them every day—”he spoke such words,” “such words he uttered,” “such words you tell me;” for by constant repetition the term word has become, so to speak, worthless. And when thou hearest, “In the beginning was the Word,” lest thou shouldest imagine something worthless, such as thou hast been accustomed to think of when thou wert wont to listen to human words, hearken to what thou must think of: “The Word was God.”

11. Now some unbelieving Arian may come forth and say that “the Word of God was made.” How can it be that the Word of God was made, when God by the Word made all things? If the Word of God was itself also made, by what other Word was it made? But if thou sayest that there is a Word of the Word, I say, that by which it was made is itself the only Son of God. But if thou dost not say there is a Word of the Word, allow that that was not made by which all things were made. For that by which all things were made could not be made by itself. Believe the evangelist then. For he might have said, “In the beginning God made the Word:” even as Moses said, “In the

beginning God made the heavens and the earth;" and enumerates all things thus: "God said, Let it be made, and it was made." If "said," who said? God. And what was made? Some creature. Between the speaking of God and the making of the creature, what was there by which it was made but the Word? For God said, "Let it be made, and it was made." This Word is unchangeable; although changeable things are made by it, the Word itself is unchangeable.

12. Do not then believe that that was made by which were made all things, lest thou be not new-made by the Word, which makes all things new. For already hast thou been made by the Word, but it behoves thee to be new-made by the Word. If, however, thy belief about the Word be wrong, thou wilt not be able to be new-made by the Word. And although creation by the Word has happened to thee, so that thou hast been made by Him, thou art unmade by thyself: if by thyself thou art unmade, let Him who made thee make thee new: if by thyself thou hast been made worse, let Him who created thee re-create thee. But how can He re-create thee by the Word, if thou holdest a wrong opinion about the Word? The evangelist says, "In the beginning was the Word;" and thou sayest, "In the beginning the Word was made." He says, "All things were made by Him;" and thou sayest that the Word Himself was made. The evangelist might have said, "In the beginning the Word was made:" but what does he say? "In the beginning was the Word." If He was, He was not made; that all things might be made by it, and without Him nothing be made. If, then, "in the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;" if thou canst not imagine what it is, wait till thou art grown. That is strong meat: receive thou milk that thou mayest be nourished, and be able to receive strong meat.

13. Give good heed to what follows, brethren, "All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made," so as not to imagine that "nothing" is something. For many, wrongly understanding "without Him was nothing made," are wont to fancy that "nothing" is something. Sin, indeed, was not made by Him; and it is plain that sin is nothing, and men become nothing when they sin. An idol also was not made by the Word;—it has indeed a sort of human form, but man himself was made by the Word;—for the form of man in an idol was not made by the Word, and it is

written, “We know that an idol is nothing.” Therefore these things were not made by the Word; but whatever was made in the natural manner, whatever belongs to the creature, everything that is fixed in the sky, that shines from above, that flies under the heavens, and that moves in universal nature, every creature whatsoever: I will speak more plainly, brethren, that you may understand me; I will say, from an angel even to a worm. What more excellent than an angel among created things? what lower than a worm? He who made the angel made the worm also; but the angel is fit for heaven, the worm for earth. He who created also arranged. If He had placed the worm in heaven, thou mightest have found fault; if He had willed that angels should spring from decaying flesh, thou mightest have found fault: and yet God almost does this, and He is not to be found fault with. For all men born of flesh, what are they but worms? and of these worms God makes angels. For if the Lord Himself says, “But I am a worm and no man,” who will hesitate to say what is written also in Job, “How much more is man rottenness, and the son of man a worm?” First he said, “Man is rottenness;” and afterwards, “The son of man a worm:” because a worm springs from rottenness, therefore “man is rottenness,” and “the son of man a worm.” Behold what for thy sake He was willing to become, who “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God!” Why did He for thy sake become this? That thou mightest suck, who wert not able to chew. Wholly in this sense, then, brethren, understand “All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.” For every creature, great and small, was made by Him: by Him were made things above and things beneath; spiritual and corporeal, by Him were they made. For no form, no structure, no agreement of parts, no substance whatever that can have weight, number, measure, exists but by that Word, and by that Creator Word, to whom it is said, “Thou hast ordered all things in measure, and in number, and in weight.”

14. Therefore, let no one deceive you, when perchance you suffer annoyance from flies. For some have been mocked by the devil, and taken with flies. As fowlers are accustomed to put flies in their traps to deceive hungry birds, so these have been deceived with flies by the devil. Some one or other was suffering annoyance from flies; a Manichaean found him in his trouble, and when he said that he could not bear flies, and hated them

exceedingly, immediately the Manichaean said, “Who made them?” And since he was suffering from annoyance, and hated them, he dared not say, “God made them,” though he was a Catholic. The other immediately added, “If God did not make them, who made them?” “Truly,” replied the Catholic, “I believe the devil made them.” And the other immediately said, “If the devil made the fly, as I see you allow, because you understand the matter well, who made the bee, which is a little larger than the fly?” The Catholic dared not say that God made the bee and not the fly, for the case was much the same. From the bee he led him to the locust; from the locust to the lizard; from the lizard to the bird; from the bird to the sheep; from the sheep to the cow; from that to the elephant, and at last to man; and persuaded a man that man was not made by God. Thus the miserable man, being troubled with the flies, became himself a fly, and the property of the devil. In fact, Beelzebub, they say, means “Prince of flies;” and of these it is written, “Dying flies deprive the ointment of its sweetness.”

15. What then, brethren? why have I said these things? Shut the ears of your hearts against the wiles of the enemy. Understand that God made all things, and arranged them in their orders. Why, then, do we suffer many evils from a creature that God made? Because we have offended God? Do angels suffer these things? Perhaps we, too, in that life of theirs, would have no such thing to fear. For thy punishment, accuse thy sin, not the Judge. For, on account of our pride, God appointed that tiny and contemptible creature to torment us; so that, since man has become proud and has boasted himself against God, and, though mortal, has oppressed mortals, and, though man, has not acknowledged his fellowman,—since he has lifted himself up, he may be brought low by gnats. Why art thou inflated with human pride? Some one has censured thee, and thou art swollen with rage. Drive off the gnats, that thou mayest sleep: understand who thou art. For, that you may know, brethren, it was for the taming of our pride these things were created to be troublesome to us, God could have humbled Pharaoh’s proud people by bears, by lions, by serpents; He sent flies and frogs upon them, that their pride might be subdued by the meanest creatures.

16. “All things,” then, brethren, “all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.” But how were all things made by Him? “That,

which was made, in Him is life.” It can also be read thus: “That, which was made in Him, is life;” and if we so read it, everything is life. For what is there that was not made in Him? For He is the Wisdom of God, and it is said in the Psalm, “In Wisdom hast Thou made all things.” If, then, Christ is the Wisdom of God, and the Psalm says, “In Wisdom hast Thou made all things:” as all things were made by Him, so all things were made in Him. If, then, all things were made in Him, dearly beloved brethren, and that, which was made in Him, is life, both the earth is life and wood is life. We do indeed say wood is life, but in the sense of the wood of the cross, whence we have received life. A stone, then, is life. It is not seemly so to understand the passage, as the same most vile sect of the Manichaeans creep stealthily on us again, and say that a stone has life, that a wall has a soul, and a cord has a soul, and wool, and clothing. For so they are accustomed to talk in their raving; and when they have been driven back and refuted, they in some sort bring forward Scripture, saying, “Why is it said, That, which was made in Him, is life’?” For if all things were made in Him, all things are life. Be not carried away by them; read thus “That which was made;” here make a short pause, and then go on, “in Him is life.” What is the meaning of this? The earth was made, but the very earth that was made is not life; but there exists spiritually in the Wisdom itself a certain reason by which the earth was made: this is life.

17. As far as I can, I shall explain my meaning to you, beloved. A carpenter makes a box. First he has the box in design; for if he had it not in design, how could he produce it by workmanship? But the box in theory is not the very box as it appears to the eyes. It exists invisibly in design, it will be visible in the work. Behold, it is made in the work; has it ceased to exist in design? The one is made in the work, and the other remains which exists in design; for that box may rot, and another be fashioned according to that which exists in design. Give heed, then, to the box as it is in design, and the box as it is in fact. The actual box is not life, the box in design is life; because the soul of the artificer, where all these things are before they are brought forth, is living. So, dearly beloved brethren, because the Wisdom of God, by which all things have been made, contains everything according to design before it is made, therefore those things which are made through this design itself are not forthwith life, but whatever has been made is life in

Him. You see the earth, there is an earth in design; you see the sky, there is a sky in design; you see the sun and the moon, these also exist in design: but externally they are bodies, in design they are life. Understand, if in any way you are able, for a great matter has been spoken. If I am not great by whom it is spoken, or through whom it is spoken, still it is from a great authority. For these things are not spoken by me who am small; He is not small to whom I refer in saying these things. Let each one take in what he can, and to what extent he can; and he who is not able to take in any of it, let him nourish his heart, that he may become able. How is he to nourish it? Let him nourish it with milk, that he may come to strong meat. Let him not leave Christ born through the flesh till he arrive at Christ born of the Father alone, the God-Word with God, through whom all things were made; for that is life, which in Him is the light of men.

18. For this follows: “and the life was the light of men;” and from this very life are men illuminated. Cattle are not illuminated, because cattle have not rational minds capable of seeing wisdom. But man was made in the image of God, and has a rational mind, by which he can perceive wisdom. That life, then, by which all things were made, is itself the light; yet not the light of every animal, but of men. Wherefore a little after he says, “That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” By that light John the Baptist was illuminated; by the same light also was John the Evangelist himself illuminated. He was filled with that light who said, “I am not the Christ; but He cometh after me, whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose.” By that light he had been illuminated who said, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Therefore that life is the light of men.

19. But perhaps the slow hearts of some of you cannot yet receive that light, because they are burdened by their sins, so that they cannot see. Let them not on that account think that the light is in any way absent, because they are not able to see it; for they themselves are darkness on account of their sins. “And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” Accordingly, brethren, as in the case of a blind man placed in the sun, the sun is present to him, but he is absent from the sun. So every foolish man, every unjust man, every irreligious man, is blind in heart. Wisdom is

present; but it is present to a blind man, and is absent from his eyes; not because it is absent from him, but because he is absent from it. What then is he to do? Let him become pure, that he may be able to see God. Just as if a man could not see because his eyes were dirty and sore with dust, rheum, or smoke, the physician would say to him: “Cleanse from your eye whatever bad thing is in it, so that you may be able to see the light of your eyes.” Dust, rheum, and smoke are sins and iniquities: remove then all these things, and you will see the wisdom that is present; for God is that wisdom, and it has been said, “Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.”

TRACTATE II

CHAPTER I. 6–14

It is fitting, brethren, that as far as possible we should treat of the text of Holy Scripture, and especially of the Holy Gospel, without omitting any portion, that both we ourselves may derive nourishment according to our capacity, and may minister to you from that source from which we have been nourished. Last Lord’s day, we remember, we treated of the first section; that is, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was nothing made. That which was made, in Him is life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” So far, I believe, had I advanced in the treatment of the passage: let all who were present recall what was then said; and those of you who were not present, believe me and those who chose to be present. Now therefore,—because we cannot always be repeating everything, out of justice to those who desire to hear what follows, and because repetition of the former thought is a burden to them and deprives them of what succeeds,—let those who were absent on the former occasion refrain from demanding repetition, but, together with those who were here, listen to the present exposition.

2. It goes on, “There was a man sent from God whose name was John.” Truly, brethren beloved, those things which were said before, were said regarding the ineffable divinity of Christ, and almost ineffably. For who shall comprehend “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with

God”? And do not allow the name word to appear mean to you, through the habit of daily words, for it is added, “and the Word was God.” This Word is He of whom yesterday we spoke much; and I trust that God was present, and that even from only thus much speaking something reached your hearts. “In the beginning was the Word.” He is the same, and is in the same manner; as He is, so He is always; He cannot be changed; that is, He is. This His name He spoke to His servant Moses: “I am that I am; and He that is hath sent me.” Who then shall comprehend this when you see that all mortal things are variable; when you see that not only do bodies vary as to their qualities, by being born, by increasing, by becoming less, by dying, but that even souls themselves through the effect of divers volitions are distended and divided; when you see that men can obtain wisdom if they apply themselves to its light and heat, and also lose wisdom if they remove themselves from it through some evil influence? When, therefore, you see that all those things are variable, what is that which is, unless that which transcends all things which are so that they are not? Who then can receive this? Or who, in what manner soever he may have applied the strength of his mind to touch that which is, can reach to that which he may in any way have touched with his mind? It is as if one were to see his native land at a distance, and the sea intervening; he sees whither he would go, but he has not the means of going. So we desire to arrive at that our stability where that which is, is, because this alone always is as it is: the sea of this world interrupts our course, even although already we see whither we go; for many do not even see whither they go. That there might be a way by which we could go, He has come from Him to whom we wished to go. And what has He done? He has appointed a tree by which we may cross the sea. For no one is able to cross the sea of this world, unless borne by the cross of Christ. Even he who is of weak eyesight sometimes embraces this cross; and he who does not see from afar whither he goes, let him not depart from it, and it will carry him over.

3. Therefore, my brethren, I would desire to have impressed this upon your hearts: if you wish to live in a pious and Christian manner, cling to Christ according to that which He became for us, that you may arrive at Him according to that which is, and according to that which was. He approached, that for us He might become this; because He became that for us, on which

the weak may be borne, and cross the sea of this world and reach their native country; where there will be no need of a ship, for no sea is crossed. It is better then not to see with the mind that which is, and yet not to depart from the cross of Christ, than to see it with the mind, and despise the cross of Christ. It is good beyond this, and best of all, if it be possible, that we both see whither we ought to go, and hold fast that which carries us as we go. This they were able to do, the great minds of the mountains, who have been called mountains, whom the light of divine justice pre-eminently illuminates; they were able to do this, and saw that which is. For John seeing said, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” They saw this, and in order that they might arrive at that which they saw from afar, they did not depart from the cross of Christ, and did not despise Christ’s lowliness. But little ones who cannot understand this, who do not depart from the cross and passion and resurrection of Christ, are conducted in that same ship to that which they do not see, in which they also arrive who do see.

4. But truly there have been some philosophers of this world who have sought for the Creator by means of the creature; for He can be found by means of the creature, as the apostle plainly says, “For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and glory; so they are without excuse.” And it follows, “Because that, when they knew God;” he did not say, Because they did not know, but “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” How darkened? It follows, when he says more plainly: “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” They saw whither they must come; but ungrateful to Him who afforded them what they saw, they wished to ascribe to themselves what they saw; and having become proud, they lost what they saw, and were turned from it to idols and images, and to the worship of demons, to adore the creature and to despise the Creator. But these having been blinded did those things, and became proud, that they might be blinded: when they were proud they said that they were wise. Those, therefore, concerning whom he said, “Who, when they had known God,” saw this which John says, that by the Word of God all things were made.

For these things are also found in the books of the philosophers: and that God has an only-begotten Son, by whom are all things. They were able to see that which is, but they saw it from afar: they were unwilling to hold the lowliness of Christ, in which ship they might have arrived in safety at that which they were able to see from afar and the cross of Christ appeared vile to them. The sea has to be crossed, and dost thou despise the wood? Oh, proud wisdom! thou laughest to scorn the crucified Christ; it is He whom thou dost see from afar: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God." But wherefore was He crucified? Because the wood of His humiliation was needful to thee. For thou hadst become swollen with pride, and hadst been cast out far from that fatherland; and by the waves of this world has the way been intercepted, and there is no means of passing to the fatherland unless borne by the wood. Ungrateful one! thou laughest Him to scorn who has come to thee that thou mayest return: He has become the way, and that through the sea: thence He walked in the sea to show that there is a way in the sea. But thou who art not able in any way thyself to walk in the sea, be carried in a ship, be carried by the wood: believe in the crucified One, and thou shalt arrive thither. On account of thee He was crucified, to teach thee humility; and because if He should come as God, He would not be recognized. For if He should come as God, He would not come to those who were not able to see God. For not according to His Godhead does He either come or depart; since He is everywhere present, and is contained in no place. But, according to what did He come? He appeared as a man.

5. Therefore, because He was so man, that the God lay hid in Him, there was sent before Him a great man, by whose testimony He might be found to be more than man. And who is this? "He was a man." And how could that man speak the truth concerning God? "He was sent by God." What was he called? "Whose name was John." Wherefore did he come? "He came for a witness, that he might bear witness concerning the light, that all might believe through him." What sort of man was he who was to bear witness concerning the light? Something great was that John, vast merit, great grace, great loftiness! Admire, by all means, admire; but as it were a mountain. But a mountain is in darkness unless it be clothed with light. Therefore only admire John that you may hear what follows, "He was not

that light;” lest if, when thou thinkest the mountain to be the light, thou make shipwreck on the mountain, and find not consolation. But what oughtest thou to admire? The mountain as a mountain. But lift thyself up to Him who illuminates the mountain, which for this end was elevated that it might be the first to receive the rays, and make them known to your eyes. Therefore, “he was not that light.”

6. Wherefore then did he come? “But that he might bear witness concerning the light.” Why so? “That all might believe through him.” And concerning what light was he to bear witness? “That was the true light.” Wherefore is it added true? Because an enlightened man is also called a light; but the true light is that which enlightens. For even our eyes are called lights; and nevertheless, unless either during the night a lamp is lighted, or during the day the sun goes forth, these lights are open in vain. Thus, therefore, John was a light, but not the true light; because, if not enlightened, he would have been darkness; but, by enlightenment, he became a light. For unless he had been enlightened he would have been darkness, as all those once impious men, to whom, as believers, the apostle said, “Ye were sometimes darkness.” But now, because they had believed, what?—”but now are ye light,” he says, “in the Lord.” Unless he had added “in the Lord,” we should not have understood. “Light,” he says, “in the Lord:” darkness you were not in the Lord. “For ye were sometimes darkness,” where he did not add in the Lord. Therefore, darkness in you, light in the Lord. And thus “he was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of the light.”

7. But where is that light? “He was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” If every man that cometh, then also John. The true light, therefore, enlightened him by whom He desired Himself to be pointed out. Understand, beloved, for He came to infirm minds, to wounded hearts, to the gaze of dim-eyed souls. For this purpose had He come. And whence was the soul able to see that which perfectly is? Even as it commonly happens, that by means of some illuminated body, the sun, which we cannot see with the eyes, is known to have arisen. Because even those who have wounded eyes are able to see a wall illuminated and enlightened by the sun, or a mountain, or a tree, or anything of that sort; and, by means of another body illuminated, that arising is shown to those

who are not as yet able to gaze on it. Thus, therefore all those to whom Christ came were not fit to see Him: upon John He shed the beams of His light; and by means of him confessing himself to have been irradiated and enlightened, not claiming to be one who irradiates and enlightens, He is known who enlightens, He is known who illuminates, He is known who fills. And who is it? “He who lighteth every man,” he says, “who cometh into the world.” For if man had not receded from that light, he would not have required to be illuminated; but for this reason has he to be illuminated here, because he departed from that light by which man might always have been illuminated.

8. What then? If He came hither, where was He? “He was in this world.” He was both here and came hither; He was here according to His divinity, and He came hither according to the flesh; because when He was here according to His divinity, He could not be seen by the foolish, by the blind, and the wicked. These wicked men are the darkness concerning which it was said, “The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” Behold, both here He is now, and here He was, and here He is always; and He never departs, departs no-whither. There is need that thou have some means whereby thou mayest see that which never departs from thee; there is need that thou depart not from Him who departs no-whither; there is need that thou desert not, and thou shalt not be deserted. Do not fall, and His sun will not set to thee. If thou fallest, His sun setteth upon thee; but if thou standest, He is present with thee. But thou hast not stood: remember how thou hast fallen, how he who fell before thee cast thee down. For he cast thee down, not by violence, not by assault, but by thine own will. For hadst thou not consented unto evil, thou wouldest have stood, thou wouldest have remained enlightened. But now, because thou hast already fallen, and hast become wounded in heart,—the organ by which that light can be seen,—He came to thee such as thou mightest see; and He in such fashion manifested Himself as man, that He sought testimony from man. From man God seeks testimony, and God has man as a witness;—God has man as a witness, but on account of man: so infirm are we. By a lamp we seek the day; because John himself was called a lamp, the Lord saying, “He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light: but I have greater witness than John.”

9. Therefore He showed that for the sake of men He desired to have Himself revealed by a lamp to the faith of those who believed, that by means of the same lamp His enemies might be confounded. There were enemies who tempted Him, and said, “Tell us by what authority doest thou these things?” “I also,” saith He, “will ask you one question; answer me. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they were troubled, and said among themselves, If we shall say, From heaven, he will say unto us, Why did ye not believe him?” (Because he had borne testimony to Christ, and had said, I am not the Christ, but He. “But if we shall say, Of men, we fear the people, lest they should stone us: for they held John as a prophet.” Afraid of stoning, but fearing more to confess the truth, they answered a lie to the Truth; and “wickedness imposed a lie upon itself.” For they said, “We know not.” And the Lord, because they shut the door against themselves, by professing ignorance of what they knew, did not open to them, because they did not knock. For it is said, “Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” Not only did these not knock that it might be opened to them; but, by denying that they knew, they barred that door against themselves. And the Lord says to them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.” And they were confounded by means of John; and in them were the words fulfilled, “I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame.”

10. “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him.” Think not that He was in the world as the earth is in the world, as the sky is in the world, as the sun is in the world, the moon and the stars, trees, cattle, and men. He was not thus in the world. But in what manner then? As the Artificer governing what He had made. For He did not make it as a carpenter makes a chest. The chest which he makes is outside the carpenter, and so it is put in another place, while being made; and although the workman is nigh, he sits in another place, and is external to that which he fashions. But God, infused into the world, fashions it; being everywhere present He fashions, and withdraweth not Himself elsewhere, nor doth He, as it were, handle from without, the matter which He fashions. By the presence of His majesty He maketh what He maketh; His presence governs what He made. Therefore was He in the world as the Maker of the world; for, “The world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.”

11. What meaneth “the world was made by Him”? The heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things which are therein, are called the world. Again, in another signification, those who love the world are called the world. “The world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.” Did not the heavens know their Creator, or did the angels not know their Creator, or did the stars not know their Creator, whom the demons confess? All things from all sides gave testimony. But who did not know? Those who, for their love of the world, are called the world. By loving we dwell with the heart; but because of their loving the world they deserved to be called after the name of that in which they dwelt. In the same manner as we say, This house is bad, or this house is good, we do not in calling the one bad or the other good accuse or praise the walls; but by a bad house we mean a house with bad inhabitants, and by a good house, a house with good inhabitants. In like manner we call those the world who by loving it, inhabit the world. Who are they? Those who love the world; for they dwell with their hearts in the world. For those who do not love the world in the flesh, indeed, sojourn in the world, but in their hearts they dwell in heaven, as the apostle says, “Our conversation is in heaven.” Therefore “the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.”

12. “He came unto His own,”—because all these things were made by Him,—”and His own received Him not.” Who are they? The men whom He made. The Jews whom He at the first made to be above all nations. Because other nations worshipped idols and served demons; but that people was born of the seed of Abraham, and in an eminent sense His own, because kindred through that flesh which He deigned to assume. “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” Did they not receive Him at all? did no one receive Him? Was there no one saved? For no one shall be saved unless he who shall have received the coming Christ.

13. But John adds: “As many as received Him.” What did He afford to them? Great benevolence! Great mercy! He was born the only Son of God, and was unwilling to remain alone. Many men, when they have not sons, in advanced age adopt a son, and thus obtain by an exercise of will what nature has denied to them: this men do. But if any one have an only son, he rejoices the more in him; because he alone will possess everything, and he

will not have any one to divide with him the inheritance, so that he should be poorer. Not so God: that same only Son whom He had begotten, and by whom He created all things, He sent into this world that He might not be alone, but might have adopted brethren. For we were not born of God in the manner in which the Only-begotten was born of Him, but were adopted by His grace. For He, the Only-begotten, came to loose the sins in which we were entangled, and whose burden hindered our adoption: those whom He wished to make brethren to Himself, He Himself loosed, and made joint-heirs. For so saith the apostle, “But if a son, then an heir through God.” And again, “Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” He did not fear to have joint-heirs, because His heritage does not become narrow if many are possessors. Those very persons, He being possessor, become His inheritance, and He in turn becomes their inheritance. Hear in what manner they become His inheritance: “The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance.” Hear in what manner He becomes their inheritance. He says in the Psalms: “The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup.” Let us possess Him, and let Him possess us: let Him possess us as Lord; let us possess Him as salvation, let us possess Him as light. What then did He give to them who received Him? “To them He gave power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on His name;” that they may cling to the wood and cross the sea.

14. And how are they born? Because they become sons of God and brethren of Christ, they are certainly born. For if they are not born, how can they be sons? But the sons of men are born of flesh and blood, and of the will of man, and of the embrace of wedlock. But in what manner are they born? “Who not of bloods,” as if of male and female. Bloods is not Latin; but because it is plural in Greek, the interpreter preferred so to express it, and to speak bad Latin according to the grammarian that he might make the matter plain to the understanding of the weak among his hearers. For if he had said blood in the singular number, he would not have explained what he desired; for men are born of the bloods of male and female. Let us say so, then, and not fear the ferule of grammarians, so long as we reach the solid and certain truth. He who understands it and blames it, is thankless for his having understood. “Not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of

man.” The apostle puts flesh for woman; because, when she was made of his rib, Adam said, “This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh.” And the apostle saith, “He that loveth his wife loveth himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh.” Flesh, then, is put for woman, in the same manner that spirit is sometimes put for husband. Wherefore? Because the one rules, the other is ruled; the one ought to command, the other to serve. For where the flesh commands and the spirit serves, the house is turned the wrong way. What can be worse than a house where the woman has the mastery over the man? But that house is rightly ordered where the man commands and the woman obeys. In like manner that man is rightly ordered where the spirit commands and the flesh serves.

15. These, then, “were born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” But that men might be born of God, God was first born of them. For Christ is God, and Christ was born of men. It was only a mother, indeed, that He sought upon earth; because He had already a Father in heaven: He by whom we were to be created was born of God, and He by whom we were to be re-created was born of a woman. Marvel not, then, O man, that thou art made a son by grace, that thou art born of God according to His Word. The Word Himself first chose to be born of man, that thou mightest be born of God unto salvation, and say to thyself, Not without reason did God wish to be born of man, but because He counted me of some importance, that He might make me immortal, and for me be born as a mortal man. When, therefore, he had said, “born of God,” lest we should, as it were, be filled with amazement and trembling at such grace, at grace so great as to exceed belief that men are born of God, as if assuring thee, he says, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” Why, then, dost thou marvel that men are born of God? Consider God Himself born of men: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.”

16. But because “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” by His very nativity he made an eye-salve to cleanse the eyes of our heart, and to enable us to see His majesty by means of His humility. Therefore “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us:” He healed our eyes; and what follows? “And we beheld His glory.” His glory can no one see unless healed by the humility of His flesh. Wherefore were we not able to see?

Consider, then, dearly beloved, and see what I say. There had dashed into man’s eye, as it were, dust, earth; it had wounded the eye, and it could not see the light: that wounded eye is anointed; by earth it was wounded, and earth is applied to it for healing. For all eye-salves and medicines are derived from the earth alone. By dust thou wert blinded, and by dust thou art healed: flesh, then, had wounded thee, flesh heals thee. The soul had become carnal by consenting to the affections of the flesh; thus had the eye of the heart been blinded. “The Word was made flesh:” that Physician made for thee an eye-salve. And as He thus came by flesh to extinguish the vices of the flesh, and by death to slay death; therefore did this take place in thee, that, as “the Word became flesh,” thou mayest be able to say, “And we beheld His glory.” What sort of glory? Such as He became as Son of man? That was His humility, not His glory. But to what is the sight of man brought when cured by means of flesh? “We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Of grace and truth we shall speak more fully in another place in this same Gospel, if the Lord vouchsafe us opportunity. Let these things suffice for the present, and be ye edified in Christ: be ye comforted in faith, and watch in good works, and see that ye do not depart from the wood by which ye may cross the sea.

TRACTATE III

CHAPTER I. 15–18

We undertook, in the name of the Lord, and promised to you, beloved, to treat of that grace and truth of God, full of which the only-begotten Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, appeared to the saints, and to show how, as a matter belonging to the New Testament, it is to be distinguished from the Old Testament. Give, then, your attention that what I receive in my measure from God you in your measure may receive and hear the same. For it will only remain if, when the seed is scattered in your hearts, the birds take it not away, nor thorns choke it, nor heat scorch it, and there descend upon it the rain of daily exhortations and your own good thoughts, by which that is done in the heart which in the field is done by means of harrows, so that the clod is broken, and the seed covered and enabled to germinate: that you bear fruit at which the husbandman may be glad and rejoice. But if, in return for good seed and good rain, you bring forth not fruit but thorns, the seed will not be blamed, nor will the rain be in fault; but for thorns due fire is prepared.

2. I do not think that I need spend much time in endeavoring to persuade you that we are Christian men; and if Christians, by virtue of the name, belonging to Christ. Upon the forehead we bear His sign; and we do not blush because of it, if we also bear it in the heart. His sign is His humility. By a star the Magi knew Him; and this sign was given by the Lord, and it was heavenly and beautiful. He did not desire that a star should be His sign on the forehead of the faithful, but His cross. By it humbled, by it also glorified; by it He raised the humble, even by that to which He, when humbled, descended. We belong, then, to the gospel, we belong to the New Testament. “The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” We ask the apostle, and he says to us, since we are not under the law but under grace. “He sent therefore His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” Behold, for this end Christ came, that He might redeem those who were under the law; that now we may not be under the law, but under grace. Who, then, gave the law? He gave the law who gave likewise grace; but the law He sent by a servant, with grace He Himself came down. And in what manner were men made under the law? By not fulfilling the law. For he who fulfills the law is not under the law, but with the law; but he who is under the law is not raised up, but pressed down by the law. All men, therefore, being placed under the law, are by the law made guilty; and for this purpose it is over their head, that it may show sins, not take them away. The law then commands, the Giver of the law showeth pity in that which the law commands. Men, endeavoring by their own strength to fulfill that which the law commands, fell by their own rash and headstrong presumption; and not with the law, but under the law, became guilty: and since by their own strength they were unable to fulfill the law, and were become guilty under the law, they implored the aid of the Deliverer; and the guilt which the law brought caused sickness to the proud. The sickness of the proud became the confession of the humble. Now the sick confess that they are sick; let the physician come to heal the sick.

3. Who is the Physician? Our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is our Lord Jesus Christ? He who was seen even by those by whom He was crucified. He who was seized, buffeted, scourged, spit upon, crowned with thorns, suspended upon the cross, died, pierced by the spear, taken down from the cross, laid in the sepulchre. That same Jesus Christ our Lord, that same Jesus exactly, He is the complete Physician of our wounds. That crucified One at whom insults were cast, and while He hung on the cross His persecutors wagging the head, and saying, "If he be the Son of God, let him come down from the cross,"—He, and no other, is our complete Physician. Wherefore, then, did He not show to his deriders that He was the Son of God; so that if He allowed Himself to be lifted up upon the cross, at least when they said, "If he be the Son of God, let him come down from the cross," He should then come down, and show to them that He was the very Son of God whom they had dared to deride? He would not. Wherefore would He not? Was it because He could not? Manifestly He could. For which is greater, to descend from the cross or to rise from the sepulchre? But He bore with His insulters; for the cross was taken not as a proof of power, but as an example of patience. There He cured thy wounds, where He long bore His own; there He healed thee of death eternal, where He vouchsafed to die the temporal death. And did He die, or in Him did death die? What a death was that, which slew death!

4. Is it, however, our Lord Jesus Christ Himself—His whole self—who was seen, and held, and crucified? Is the whole very self that? It is the same, but not the whole, that which the Jews saw; this is not the whole Christ. And what is? "In the beginning was the Word." In what beginning? "And the Word was with God." And what word? "And the Word was God." Was then perhaps this Word made by God? No. For "the same was in the beginning with God." What then? Are the other things which God made not like unto the Word? No: because "all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made." In what manner were all things made by Him? Because "that which was made in Him was life;" and before it was made there was life. That which was made is not life; but in the art, that is, in the wisdom of God, before it was made, it was life. That which was made passes away; that which is in wisdom cannot pass away. There was life, therefore, in that which was made. And what sort of life, since the soul also

is the life of the body? Our body has its own life; and when it has lost it, the death of the body ensues. Was then the life such as this? No; but “the life was the light of men.” Was it the light of cattle? For this light is the light of men and of cattle. There is a certain light of men: let us see how far men differ from the cattle, and then we shall understand what is the light of men. Thou dost not differ from the cattle except in intellect; do not glory in anything besides. Dost thou presume upon thy strength? By the wild beasts thou art surpassed. Upon thy swiftness dost thou presume? By the flies thou art surpassed. Upon thy beauty dost thou presume? How great beauty is there in the feathers of a peacock! Wherein then art thou better? In the image of God. Where is the image of God? In the mind, in the intellect. If then thou art in this respect better than the cattle, that thou hast a mind by which thou mayest understand what the cattle cannot understand; and therein a man, because better than the cattle; the light of men is the light of minds. The light of minds is above minds and surpasses all minds. This was that life by which all things were made.

5. Where was it? Was it here? was it with the Father, and was it not here? or, what is more true, was it both with the Father and here also? If then it was here, wherefore was it not seen? Because “the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” Oh men, be not darkness, be not unbelieving, unjust, unrighteous, rapacious, avaricious lovers of this world: for these are the darkness. The light is not absent, but you are absent from the light. A blind man in the sunshine has the sun present to him, but is himself absent from the sun. Be ye not then darkness. For this is perhaps the grace regarding which we are about to speak, that now we be no more darkness, and that the apostle may say to us, “We were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord.” Because then the light of men was not seen, that is, the light of minds, there was a necessity that a man should give testimony regarding the light, who was not in darkness, but who was already enlightened; and nevertheless, because enlightened, not the light itself, “but that He might bear witness of the light.” For “he was not that light.” And what was the light? “That was the true light which enlightened every man that cometh into the world.” And where was that light? “In this world it was.” And how was it “in this world?” As the light of the sun, of the moon, and of lamps, was that light thus in the world? No. Because “the

world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not;” that is to say, “the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” For the world is darkness; because the lovers of the world are the world. For did not the creature acknowledge its Creator? The heavens gave testimony by a star; the sea gave testimony, and bore its Lord when He walked upon it; the winds gave testimony, and were quiet at His bidding; the earth gave testimony, and trembled when He was crucified. If all these gave testimony, in what sense did the world not know Him, unless that the world signifies the lovers of the world, those who with their hearts dwell in the world? And the world is evil, because the inhabitants of the world are evil; just as a house is evil, not because of its walls, but because of its inhabitants.

6. “He came unto His own;” that is to say, He came to that which belonged to Himself; “and His own received Him not.” What, then, is the hope, unless that “as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God”? If they become sons, they are born; if born, how are they born? Not of flesh, “nor of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God are they born.” Let them rejoice, therefore, that they are born of God; let them believe that they are born of God; let them receive the proof that they are born of God: “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.” If the Word was not ashamed to be born of man, are men ashamed to be born of God? And because He did this, He cured us; and because He cured us, we see. For this, “that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” became a medicine unto us, so that as by earth we were made blind, by earth we might be healed; and having been healed, might behold what? “And we beheld,” he says, “His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

7. “John beareth witness of Him, and crieth, saying, This was He of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is made before me.” He came after me, and He preceded me. What is it, “He is made before me”? He preceded me. Not was made before I was made, but was preferred before me, this is “He was made before me.” Wherefore was He made before thee, when He came after thee? “Because He was before me.” Before thee, O John! what great thing to be before thee! It is well that thou dost bear witness to Him; let us, however, hear Himself saying, “Even before Abraham, I am.” But Abraham

also was born in the midst of the human race: there were many before him, many after him. Listen to the voice of the Father to the Son: “Before Lucifer I have begotten Thee.” He who was begotten before Lucifer Himself illuminates all. A certain one was named Lucifer, who fell; for he was an angel and became a devil; and concerning him the Scripture said, “Lucifer, who did arise in the morning, fell.” And why was he Lucifer? Because, being enlightened, he gave forth light. But for what reason did he become dark! Because he abode not in the truth. Therefore He was before Lucifer, before every one that is enlightened; since before every one that is enlightened, of necessity He must be by whom all are enlightened who can be enlightened.

8. Therefore this follows: “And of His fullness have all we received.” What have ye received? “And grace for grace.” For so run the words of the Gospel, as we find by a comparison of the Greek copies. He does not say, And of His fullness have all we received grace for grace; but thus He says: “And of His fullness have all we received, and grace for grace,”—that is, have we received; so that He would wish us to understand that we have received from His fullness something unexpressed, and something besides, grace for grace. For we received of His fullness grace in the first instance; and again we received grace, grace for grace. What grace did we, in the first instance, receive? Faith: walking in faith, we walk in grace. How have we merited this? by what previous merits of ours? Let not each one flatter himself, but let him return into his own conscience, seek out the secret places of his own thoughts, recall the series of his deeds; let him not consider what he is if now he is something, but what he was that he might be something: he will find that he was not worthy of anything save punishment. If, then, thou wast worthy of punishment, and He came not to punish sins, but to forgive sins, grace was given to thee, and not reward rendered. Wherefore is it called grace? Because it is bestowed gratuitously. For thou didst not, by previous merits, purchase that which thou didst receive. This first grace, then, the sinner received, that his sins were forgiven. What did he deserve? Let him interrogate justice, he finds punishment; let him interrogate mercy, he finds grace. But God promised this also through the prophets; therefore, when He came to give what He

had promised, He not only gave grace, but also truth. How was truth exhibited? Because that was done which had been promised.

9. What, then, is “grace for grace”? By faith we render God favorable to us; and inasmuch as we were not worthy to have our sins forgiven, and because we, who were unworthy, received so great a benefit, it is called grace. What is grace? That which is freely given. What is “freely given”? Given, not paid. If it was due, wages were given, not grace bestowed; but if it was reply due, thou wast good; but if, as is true, thou wast evil, but didst believe on Him who justifieth the ungodly (What is, Who justifieth the ungodly? Of the ungodly maketh pious), consider what did by right hang over thee by the law, and what thou hast obtained by grace. But having obtained that grace of faith, thou shalt be just by faith (for the just lives by faith); and thou shalt obtain favor of God by living by faith. And having obtained favor from God by living by faith, thou shalt receive immortality as a reward, and life eternal. And that is grace. For because of what merit dost thou receive life eternal? Because of grace. For if faith is grace, life eternal is, as it were, the wages of faith: God, indeed, appears to bestow eternal life as if it were due (To whom due? To the faithful, because he had merited it by faith); but because faith itself is grace, life eternal also is grace for grace.

10. Listen to the Apostle Paul acknowledging grace, and afterwards desiring the payment of a debt. What acknowledgment of grace is there in Paul? “Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained,” saith he, “mercy.” He said that he who obtained it was unworthy; that he had, however, obtained it, not through his own merits, but through the mercy of God. Listen to him now demanding the payment of a debt, who had first received unmerited grace: “For,” saith he, “I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.” Now he demands a debt, he exacts what is due. For consider the following words: “Which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall render unto me in that day.” That he might in the former instance receive grace, he stood in need of a merciful Father; for the reward of grace, of a just judge. Will He who did not condemn the ungodly man condemn the faithful man? And yet, if thou dost rightly consider, it

was He who first gave thee faith, whereby thou didst obtain favor; for not of thine own didst thou so obtain favor that anything should be due to thee. Wherefore, then, in afterwards bestowing the reward of immortality, He crowns His own gifts, not thy merits. Therefore, brethren, “we all of His fullness have received;” of the fullness of His mercy, of the abundance of His goodness have we received. What? The remission of sins that we might be justified by faith. And what besides? “And grace for grace;” that is, for this grace by which we live by faith we shall receive another grace. What, then, is it except grace? For if I shall say that this also is due, I attribute something to myself as if to me it were due. But God crowns in us the gifts of His own mercy; but on condition that we walk with perseverance in that grace which in the first instance we received

11. “For the law was given by Moses;” which law held the guilty. For what saith the apostle? “The law entered that the offense might abound.” It was a benefit to the proud that the offense abounded, for they gave much to themselves, and, as it were, attributed much to their own strength; and they were unable to fulfill righteousness without the aid of Him who had commanded it. God, desirous to subdue their pride, gave the law, as if saying: Behold, fulfill, and do not think that there is One wanting to command. One to command is not wanting, but one to fulfill.

12. If, then, there is one wanting to fulfill, whence does he not fulfill? Because born with the heritage of sin and death. Born of Adam, he drew with him that which was there conceived. The first man fell, and all who were born of him from him derived the concupiscence of the flesh. It was needful that another man should be born who derived no concupiscence. A man and a man: a man to death and a man to life. Thus saith the apostle: “Since, indeed, by man death, by man also the resurrection of the dead.” By which man death, and by which man the resurrection of the dead? Do not make haste: he goes on to say, “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.” Who belong to Adam? All who are born of Adam. Who to Christ? All who were born through Christ. Wherefore all in sin? Because no one was born except through Adam. But that they were born of Adam was of necessity, arising from damnation; to be born through Christ is of will and grace. Men are not compelled to be born through Christ: not

because they wished were they born of Adam. All, however, who are of Adam are sinners with sin: all who are through Christ are justified, and just not in themselves, but in Him. For in themselves, if thou shouldest ask, they belong to Adam: in Him, if thou shouldest ask, they belong to Christ. Wherefore? Because He, the Head, our Lord Jesus Christ, did not come with the heritage of sin; but He came nevertheless with mortal flesh.

13. Death was the punishment of sins; in the Lord was the gift of mercy, not the punishment of sin. For the Lord had nothing on account of which He should justly die. He Himself says, "Behold, the prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in me." Wherefore then dost Thou die? "But that all may know that I do the will of my Father, arise, let us go hence." He had not in Himself any reason why He should die, and He died: thou hast such a reason, and dost thou refuse to die? Do not refuse to bear with an equal mind thy desert, when He did not refuse to suffer, to deliver thee from eternal death. A man and a man; but the one nothing but man, the other God-man. The one a man of sin, the other of righteousness. Thou didst die in Adam, rise in Christ; for both are due to thee. Now thou hast believed in Christ, render nevertheless that which thou owest through Adam. But the chain of sin shall not hold thee eternally; because the temporal death of thy Lord slew thine eternal death. The same is grace, my brethren, the same is truth, because promised and manifested.

14. This grace was not in the Old Testament, because the law threatened, did not bring aid; commanded, did not heal; made manifest, but did not take away our feebleness: but it prepared the way for that Physician who was to come with grace and truth; as a physician who, about to come to any one to cure him, might first send his servant that he might find the sick man bound. He was not sound; he did not wish to be made sound and lest he should be made sound, he boasted that he was so. The law was sent, it bound him; he finds himself accused, now, he exclaims against the bandage. The Lord comes, cures with somewhat bitter and sharp medicines: for He says to the sick, Bear; He says, Endure; He says, Love not the world, have patience, let the fire of continence cure thee, let thy wounds endure the sword of persecutions. Wert thou greatly terrified although bound? He, free and unbound, drank what He gave to thee; He first suffered that He might

console thee, saying, as it were, that which thou fearest to suffer for thyself, I first suffer for thee. This is grace, and great grace. Who can praise it in a worthy manner?

15. I speak, my brethren, regarding the humility of Christ. Who can speak regarding the majesty of Christ, and the divinity of Christ? In explaining and speaking of the humility of Christ, to do so in any fashion we find ourselves not sufficient, indeed wholly insufficient: we commend Him entire to your thoughts, we do not endeavor to fill Him up to your hearing. Consider the humility of Christ. But who, thou sayest, may explain it to us, unless thou declare it? Let Him declare it within. Better does He declare it who dwelleth within, than he who crieth without. Let Himself show to you the grace of His humility, who has begun to dwell in your hearts. But now, if in explaining and setting forth His humility we are deficient, who can speak of His majesty? If "the Word made flesh" disturbs us, who shall explain "In the beginning was the Word"? Keep hold then, brethren, upon the entireness of Christ.

16. "The law was given by Moses: grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." By a servant was the law given, and made men guilty: by an Emperor was pardon given, and delivered the guilty. "The law was given by Moses." Let not the servant attribute to himself more than was done through him. Chosen to a great ministry as one faithful in his house, but yet a servant, he is able to act according to the law, but cannot release from the guilt of the law. "The law," then, "was given by Moses: grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

17. And lest, perhaps, any one should say, And did not grace and truth come through Moses, who saw God, immediately he adds, "No one hath seen God at any time." And how did God become known to Moses? Because the Lord revealed Himself to His servant. What Lord? The same Christ, who sent the law beforehand by His servant, that He might Himself come with grace and truth. "For no one hath seen God at any time." And whence did He appear to that servant as far as he was able to receive Him? But "the Only-begotten," he says, "who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him." What signifieth "in the bosom of the Father?" In the secret of the Father. For God has not a bosom, as we have, in our garments, nor is

He to be thought of sitting, as we do, nor is He girt with a girdle so as to have a bosom; but because our bosom is within, the secret of the Father is called the bosom of the Father. And He who knew the Father, being in the secret of the Father, He declared Him. “For no man hath seen God at any time.” He then came and narrated whatever He saw. What did Moses see? Moses saw a cloud, he saw an angel, he saw a fire. All that is the creature: it bore the type of its Lord, but did not manifest the presence of the Lord Himself. For thou hast it plainly stated in the law: “And Moses spake with the Lord face to face, as a friend with his friend.” Following the same scripture, thou findest Moses saying: “If I have found grace in Thy sight, show me Thyself plainly, that I may see Thee.” And it is little that he said this: he received the reply, “Thou canst not see my face.” An angel then spake with Moses, my brethren, bearing the type of the Lord; and all those things which were done by the angel promised that future grace and truth. Those who examine the law well know this; and when we have opportunity to speak somewhat of this matter also, we shall not fail to speak to you, beloved brethren, as far as the Lord may reveal to us.

18. But know this, that all those things which were seen in bodily form were not that substance of God. For we saw those things with the eyes of the flesh: how is the substance of God seen? Interrogate the Gospel: “Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.” There have been men who, deceived by the vanity of their hearts, have said, The Father is invisible, but the Son is visible. How visible? If on account of His flesh, because He took flesh, the matter is manifest. For of those who saw the flesh of Christ, some believed, some crucified; and those who believed doubted when He was crucified; and unless they had touched the flesh after the resurrection, their faith would not have been recalled. If, then, on account of His flesh the Son was visible, that we also grant, and it is the Catholic faith; but if before He took flesh, as they say, that is, before He became incarnate, they are greatly deluded, and grievously err. For those visible and bodily appearances took place though the creature, in which a type might be exhibited: not in any fashion was the substance itself shown and made manifest. Give heed, beloved brethren, to this easy proof. The wisdom of God cannot be beheld by the eyes. Brethren, if Christ is the

Wisdom of God and the Power of God; if Christ is the Word of God, and if the word of man is not seen with the eyes, can the Word of God be so seen?

19. Expel, therefore, from your hearts carnal thoughts, that you may be really under grace, that you may belong to the New Testament. Therefore is life eternal promised in the New Testament. Read the Old Testament, and see that the same things were enjoined upon a people yet carnal as upon us. For to worship one God is also enjoined upon us. “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain” is also enjoined upon us, which is the second commandment. “Observe the Sabbath-day” is enjoined on us more than on them, because it is commanded to be spiritually observed. For the Jews observe the Sabbath in a servile manner, using it for luxuriousness and drunkenness. How much better would their women be employed in spinning wool than in dancing on that day in the balconies? God forbid, brethren, that we should call that an observance of the Sabbath. The Christian observes the Sabbath spiritually, abstaining from servile work. For what is it to abstain from servile work? From sin. And how do we prove it? Ask the Lord. “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” Therefore is the spiritual observance of the Sabbath enjoined upon us. Now all those commandments are more enjoined on us, and are to be observed: “Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Honor thy father and thy mother. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s goods. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife.” Are not all these things enjoined upon us also? But ask what is the reward, and thou wilt find it there said: “That thine enemies may be driven forth before thy face, and that you may receive the land which God promised to your fathers.” Because they were not able to comprehend invisible things, they were held by the visible. Wherefore held? Lest they should perish altogether, and slip into idol-worship. For they did this, my brethren, as we read, forgetful of the great miracles which God performed before their eyes. The sea was divided; a way was made in the midst of the waves; their enemies following, were covered by the same waves through which they passed: and yet when Moses, the man of God, had departed from their sight, they asked for an idol, and said, “Make us gods to go before us; for this man has deserted us.” Their whole hope was placed in man, not in God. Behold, the man is dead: was God dead who had rescued them from the

land of Egypt? And when they had made to themselves the image of a calf, they offered it adoration, and said, “These be thy gods, O Israel, which delivered thee out of the land of Egypt.” How soon forgetful of such manifest grace! By what means could such a people be held except by carnal promises?

20. The same things are commanded in the Decalogue as we are commanded to observe; but the same promises are not made as to us. What is promised to us? Life eternal. “And this is life eternal, that they know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” The knowledge of God is promised: that is, grace for grace. Brethren, we now believe, we do not see; for faith the reward will be to see what we believe. The prophets knew this, but it was concealed before He came. For a certain lover sighing, says in the Psalms: “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after.” And dost thou ask what he seeks? For perhaps he seeks a land flowing with milk and honey carnally, although this is to be spiritually sought and desired; or perhaps the subjection of his enemies, or the death of foes, or the power and riches of this world. For he glows with love, and sighs greatly, and burns and pants. Let us see what he desires: “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after.” What is it that he doth seek after? “That I may dwell,” saith he, “in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.” And suppose that thou dwellest in the house of the Lord, from what source will thy joy there be derived? “That I may behold,” saith he, “the beauty of the Lord.”

21. My brethren, wherefore do you cry out, wherefore do you exult, wherefore do you love, unless that a spark of this love is there? What do you desire? I ask you. Can it be seen with the eyes? Can it be touched? Is it some fairness which delights the eyes? Are not the martyrs vehemently beloved; and when we commemorate them do we not burn with love? What is it that we love in them, brethren? Limbs torn by wild beasts? What is more revolting if thou askest the eyes of the flesh? what more fair if thou askest the eyes of the heart? How appears in your eyes a very fair young man who is a thief? How shocked are your eyes! Are the eyes of the flesh shocked? If you interrogate them, nothing is more shapely and better formed than that body; the symmetry of the limbs and the beauty of the

color attract the eyes; and yet, when thou hearest that he is a thief, your mind recoils from the man. Thou beholdest on the other hand a bent old man, leaning upon a staff, scarcely moving himself, ploughed all over with wrinkles. Thou hearest that he is just: thou lovest and embracest him. Such are the rewards promised to us, my brethren: love such, sigh after such a kingdom, desire such a country, if you wish to arrive at that with which our Lord came, that is, at grace and truth. But if you covet bodily rewards from God, thou art still under the law, and therefore thou shalt not fulfill the law. For when thou seest those temporal things granted to those who offend God, thy steps falter, and thou sayest to thyself: Behold, I worship God, daily I run to church, my knees are worn with prayers, and yet I am constantly sick: there are men who commit murders, who are guilty of robberies, and yet they exult and have abundance; it is well with them. Was it such things that thou soughtest from God? Surely thou didst belong to grace. If, therefore, God gave to thee grace, because He gave freely, love freely. Do not for the sake of reward love God; let Him be the reward. Let thy soul say, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, that I may behold the beauty of the Lord.” Do not fear that thine enjoyment will fail through satiety: such will be that enjoyment of beauty that it will ever be present to thee, and thou shalt never be satisfied; indeed thou shalt be always satisfied, and yet never satisfied. For if I shall say that thou shalt not be satisfied, it will mean famine; and if I shall say thou shalt be satisfied, I fear satiety: where neither satiety nor famine are, I know not what to say; but God has that which He can manifest to those who know not how to express it, yet believe that they shall receive.

TRACTATE IV

CHAPTER I. 19–33

You have very often heard, holy brethren, and you know well, that John the Baptist, in proportion as he was greater than those born of women, and was more humble in his acknowledgment of the Lord, obtained the grace of being the friend of the Bridegroom; zealous for the Bridegroom, not for himself; not seeking his own honor, but that of his Judge, whom as a herald he preceded. Therefore, to the prophets who went before, it was granted to predict concerning Christ; but to this man, to point Him out with the finger. For as Christ was unknown by those who did not believe the prophets before He came, He remained unknown to them even when present. For He had come humbly and concealed from the first; the more concealed in proportion as He was more humble: but the people, despising in their pride the humility of God, crucified their Saviour, and made Him their condemner.

2. But will not He who at first came con cealed, because humble, come again manifested, because exalted? You have just listened to the Psalm: “God shall come manifestly, and our God shall not keep silence.” He was silent that He might be judged, He will not be silent when He begins to judge. It would not have been said, “He will come manifestly,” unless at first He had come concealed; nor would it have been said, “He shall not keep silence,” unless He had first kept silence. How was He silent? Interrogate Isaiah: “He was brought as a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearer was dumb, so He opened not His mouth.” “But He shall come manifestly, and shall not keep silence.” In what manner “manifestly”? “A fire shall go before Him, and round about Him a strong tempest.” That tempest has to carry away all the chaff from the floor, which is now being threshed; and the fire has to burn what the tempest carries away. But now He is silent; silent in judgment, but not silent in precept. For if Christ is silent, what is the purpose of these Gospels? what the purpose of the voices of the apostles, what of the canticles of the Psalms, what of the declarations of the prophets? In all these Christ is not silent. But now He is silent in not taking vengeance: He is not silent in not giving warning. But He will come in glory to take vengeance, and will manifest Himself even to all who do not believe on Him. But now, because when present He was concealed, it behoved that He should be despised. For unless He had been despised, He would not have been crucified; if He had not been crucified, He would not have shed His blood—the price by which He redeemed us. But that He might give a price for us, He was crucified; that He might be crucified, He was despised; that He might be despised, He appeared in humility.

3. Yet because He appeared as it were in the night, in a mortal body, He lighted for Himself a lamp by which He might be seen. That lamp was John, concerning whom you lately heard many things: and the present passage of the evangelist contains the words of John; in the first place, and it is the chief point, his confession that he was not the Christ. But so great was the excellence of John, that men might have believed him to be the Christ: and in this he gave a proof of his humility, that he said he was not when he might have been believed to have been the Christ; therefore, “This is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites to him from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?” But they would not have sent unless they had been moved by the excellence of his authority who ventured to baptize. “And he confessed, and denied not.” What did he confess? “And he confessed, I am not the Christ.”

4. “And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias?” For they knew that Elias was to precede Christ. For to no Jew was the name of Christ unknown. They did not think that he was the Christ; but they did not think that Christ would not come at all. When they were hoping that He would come, they were offended at Him when He was present, and stumbled at Him as on a low stone. For He was as yet a small stone, already indeed cut out of the mountain without hands; as saith Daniel the prophet, that he saw a stone cut out of the mountain without hands. But what follows? “And that stone,” saith he “grew and became a great mountain and filled the whole face of the earth.” Mark then, my beloved brethren, what I say: Christ, before the Jews, was already cut out from the mountain. The prophet wishes that by the mountain should be understood the Jewish kingdom. But the kingdom of the Jews had not filled the whole face of the earth. The stone was cut out from thence, because from thence was the Lord born on His advent among men. And wherefore without hands? Because without the cooperation of man did the Virgin bear Christ. Now then was that stone cut out without hands before the eyes of the Jews; but it was humble. Not without reason; because not yet had that stone increased and filled the whole earth: that He showed in His kingdom, which is the Church, with which He has filled the whole face of the earth. Because then it had not yet increased, they stumbled at Him as at a stone: and that happened in them which is written, “Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but

on whomsoever that stone shall fall, it will grind them to powder.” At first they fell upon Him lowly: as the lofty One He shall come upon them; but that He may grind them to powder when He comes in His exaltation, He first broke them in His lowliness. They stumbled at Him, and were broken; they were not ground, but broken: He will come exalted and will grind them. But the Jews were to be pardoned because they stumbled at a stone which had not yet increased. What sort of persons are those who stumble at the mountain itself? Already you know who they are of whom I speak. Those who deny the Church diffused through the whole world, do not stumble at the lowly stone, but at the mountain itself: because this the stone became as it grew. The blind Jews did not see the lowly stone: but how great blindness not to see the mountain!

5. They saw Him then lowly, and did not know Him. He was pointed out to them by a lamp. For in the first place he, than whom no greater had arisen of those born of women, said, “I am not the Christ.” It was said to him, “Art thou Elias? He answered, I am not.” For Christ sends Elias before Him: and he said, “I am not,” and occasioned a question for us. For it is to be feared lest men, insufficiently understanding, think that John contradicted what Christ said. For in a certain place, when the Lord Jesus Christ said certain things in the Gospel regarding Himself, His disciples answered Him: “How then say the scribes,” that is, those skilled in the law, “that Elias must first come?” And the Lord said, “Elias is already come, and they have done unto him what they listed;” and, if you wish to know, John the Baptist is he. The Lord Jesus Christ said, “Elias is already come, and John the Baptist” is he; but John, being interrogated, confessed that he was not Elias, in the same manner that he confessed that he was not Christ. And as his confession that he was not Christ was true, so was his confession that he was not Elias. How then shall we compare the words of the herald with the words of the Judge? Away with the thought that the herald speaks falsehood; for that which he speaks he hears from the Judge. Wherefore then did he say, “I am not Elias;” and the Lord, “He is Elias”? Because the Lord Jesus Christ wished in him to prefigure His own advent, and to say that John was in the spirit of Elias. And what John was to the first advent, that will Elias be to the second advent. As there are two advents of the Judge, so are there two heralds. The Judge indeed was the same, but the heralds two, but not two

judges. It was needful that in the first instance the Judge should come to be judged. He sent before Him His first herald; He called him Elias, because Elias will be in the second advent what John was in the first.

6. For mark, beloved brethren, how true it is what I say. When John was conceived, or rather when he was born, the Holy Spirit prophesied that this would be fulfilled in him: “And he shall be,” he said, “the forerunner of the Highest, in the spirit and power of Elias.” What signifieth “in the spirit and power of Elias”? In the same Holy Spirit in the room of Elias. Wherefore in room of Elias? Because what Elias will be to the second, that John was to the first advent. Rightly therefore, speaking literally, did John reply. For the Lord spoke figuratively, “Elias, the same is John:” but he, as I have said, spoke literally when he said, “I am not Elias.” Neither did John speak falsely, nor did the Lord speak falsely; neither was the word of the herald nor of the Judge false, if only thou understand. But who shall understand? He who shall have imitated the lowliness of the herald, and shall have acknowledged the loftiness of the Judge. For nothing was more lowly than the herald. My brethren, in nothing had John greater merit than in this humility, inasmuch as when he was able to deceive men, and to be thought Christ, and to have been received in the place of Christ (for so great were his grace and his excellency), nevertheless he openly confessed and said, “I am not the Christ.” “Art thou Elias?” If he had said I am Elias, it would have been as if Christ were already coming in His second advent to judge, not in His first to be judged. As if saying, Elias is yet to come, “I am not,” said he, “Elias.” But give heed to the lowly One before whom John came, that you may not feel the lofty One before whom Elias came. For thus also did the Lord complete the saying: “John the Baptist is he which is to come.” He came as a figure of that in which Elias is to come in his own person. Then Elias will in his own proper person be Elias, now in similitude he was John. Now John in his own proper person is John, in similitude Elias. The two heralds gave to each other their similitudes, and kept their own proper persons; but the Judge is one Lord, whether preceded by this herald or by that.

7. “And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he said, No. And they said unto him, Art thou a prophet? and he answered, No! They said

therefore unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He saith, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness.” That said Isaiah. This prophecy was fulfilled in John, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness.” Crying what? “Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight the paths of our God.” Would it not have seemed to you that a herald would have cried, “Go away, make room.” Instead of the herald’s cry “Go away,” John says “Come.” The herald makes men stand back from the judge; to the Judge John calls. Yes, indeed, John calls men to the lowly One, that they may not experience what He will be as the exalted Judge. “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah.” He did not say, I am John, I am Elias, I am a prophet. But what did he say? This I am called, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way for the Lord: I am the prophecy itself.”

8. “And they which were sent were of the Pharisees,” that is, of the chief men among the Jews; “and they asked him and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, nor a prophet?” As if it seemed to them audacity to baptize, as if they meant to inquire, in what character baptizest thou? We ask whether thou art the Christ; thou sayest that thou art not. We ask whether thou perchance art His precursor, for we know that before the advent of Christ, Elias will come; thou answerest that thou art not. We ask, if perchance thou art some herald come long before, that is, a prophet, and hast received that power, and thou sayest that thou art not a prophet. And John was not a prophet; he was greater than a prophet. The Lord gave such testimony concerning him: “What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?” Of course implying that he was not shaken by the wind; because John was not such an one as is moved by the wind; for he who is moved by the wind is blown upon by every seductive blast. “But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment?” For John was clothed in rough garments; that is, his tunic was of camel’s hair. “Behold, they who are clothed in soft raiment are in kings’ houses.” You did not then go out to see a man clothed in soft raiment. “But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, one greater than a prophet is here;” for the prophets prophesied of Christ a long time before, John pointed Him out as present.

9. “Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, nor a prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water; but there standeth One among you whom ye know not.” For, very truly, He was not seen, being humble, and therefore was the lamp lighted. Observe how John gives place, who might have been accounted other than he was. “He it is who cometh after me, who is made before me” (that is, as we have already said, is “preferred before me”), whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose.” How greatly did he humble himself! And therefore he was greatly lifted up; for he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Hence, holy brethren, you ought to note that if John so humbled himself as to say, “I am not worthy to unloose His shoe-latchet,” what need they have to be humbled who say, “We baptize; what we give is ours, and what is ours is holy.” He said, Not I, but He; they say, We. John is not worthy to unloose His shoe’s latchet; and if he had said he was worthy, how humble would he still have been! And if he had said he was worthy, and had spoken thus, “He came after me who is made before me, the latchet of whose shoe I am only worthy to unloose,” he would have greatly humbled himself. But when he says that he is not worthy even to do this, truly was he full of the Holy Spirit, who in such fashion as a servant acknowledged his Lord, and merited to be made a friend instead of a servant.

10. “These things were done in Bethany, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day John saw Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world!” Let no one so arrogate to himself as to say that he taketh away the sin of the world. Give heed now to the proud men at whom John pointed the finger. The heretics were not yet born, but already were they pointed out; against them he then cried from the river, against whom he now cries from the Gospel. Jesus comes, and what says he? “Behold the Lamb of God!” If to be innocent is to be a lamb, then John was a lamb, for was not he innocent? But who is innocent? To what extent innocent? All come from that branch and shoot, concerning which David sings, even with groanings, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Alone, then, was He, the Lamb who came, not so. For He was not conceived in iniquity, because not conceived of mortality; nor did His mother conceive Him in sin, whom the Virgin conceived, whom the Virgin brought forth;

because by faith she conceived, and by faith received Him. Therefore, “Behold the Lamb of God.” He is not a branch derived from Adam: flesh only did he derive from Adam, Adam’s sin He did not assume. He who took not upon Him sin from our lump, He it is who taketh away our sin. “Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!”

11. You know that certain men say sometimes, We take away sin from men, we who are holy; for if he be not holy who baptizeth, how taketh he away the sin of another, when he is a man himself full of sin? In opposition to these disputations, let us not speak our own words, let us read what John says: “Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world!” Let there not be presumptuous confidence of men upon men: let not the sparrow flee to the mountains, but let it trust in the Lord; and if it lift its eyes to the mountains, from whence cometh aid to it, let it understand that its aid is from the Lord who made heaven and earth. So great is the excellence of John, that to him it is said, “Art thou the Christ?” He says, No. Art thou Elias? He says, No. Art thou a prophet? He says, No. Wherefore then dost thou baptize? “Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I spake, After me cometh a Man who was made before me; for He was before me.” “Cometh after me,” because He was born later; “was made before me,” because preferred before me; “He was before me,” because, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

12. “And I knew Him not,” he said; “but that He might be made manifest to Israel, therefore came I baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon Him, the same is He who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.” Give heed for a little, beloved. When did John learn Christ? For he was sent to baptize with water. They asked, Wherefore? That He might be made manifest to Israel, he said. Of what profit was the baptism of John? My brethren, if it had profited in any respect, it would have remained now, and men would have been baptized with the baptism of John, and thus have come to the baptism of

Christ. But what saith he? “That He might be made manifest to Israel,”—that is, to Israel itself, to the people Israel, so that Christ might be made manifest to it,—therefore he came baptizing with water. John received the ministry of baptism, that by the water of repentance he might prepare the way for the Lord, not being himself the Lord; but where the Lord was known, it was superfluous to prepare for Him the way, for to those who knew Him He became Himself the way; therefore the baptism of John did not last long. But how was the Lord pointed out? Lowly, that John might so receive a baptism in which the Lord Himself should be baptized.

13. And was it needful for the Lord to be baptized? I instantly reply to any one who asks this question: Was it needful for the Lord to be born? Was it needful for the Lord to be crucified? Was it needful for the Lord to die? Was it needful for the Lord to be buried? If He undertook for us so great humiliation, might He not also receive baptism? And what profit was there that he received the baptism of a servant? That thou mightest not disdain to receive the baptism of the Lord. Give heed, beloved brethren. Certain catechumens were to arise in the Church of higher grace. It sometimes comes to pass that you see a catechumen who practises continence, bids farewell to the world, renounces all his possessions, distributing them to the poor; and although but a catechumen, instructed in the saving doctrine better, perhaps, than many of the faithful. It is to be feared regarding such an one that he may say to himself about holy baptism, whereby sins are remitted, What more shall I receive? Behold, I am better than this faithful man, and this,—having in his mind those among the faithful who are either married, or who are perhaps ignorant, or who keep possession of their property, while he has given his to the poor,—and considering himself better than those who have been already baptized, he deigns not to come to baptism, saying, Am I to receive what this man has, and this thinking of persons whom he despises, and, as it were, considers it an indignity to receive that which inferiors have received, because he appears to himself to be already better than they; and, nevertheless, all his sins are upon him, and without coming to saving baptism, wherein all sins are remitted, he cannot, with all his excellence, enter into the kingdom of heaven. But the Lord, in order to invite such excellence to his baptism, that sins might be remitted, Himself came to the baptism of His servant; and although He had no sin to

be remitted, nor was there anything in Him that needed to be washed, He received baptism from a servant; and by so doing, addressed Himself to the son carrying himself proudly, and exalting himself, and disdaining, perhaps, to receive along with the ignorant that from which salvation comes to him, and said to him: How dost thou extend thyself? How dost thou exalt thyself? How great is thy excellence? How great is thy grace? Can it be greater than mine? If I come to the servant, dost thou disdain to come to the Lord? If I have received the baptism of the servant, dost thou disdain to be baptized by the Lord?

14. But that you may know, my brethren, that not from a necessity of any chain of sin did the Lord come to this John, as the other evangelists say when the Lord came to him to be baptized, John himself said, “Comest Thou to me? I have need to be baptized of Thee.” What did He reply to him? “Suffer it to be so now: let all righteousness be fulfilled?” What meaneth this, “let all righteousness be fulfilled”? I came to die for men, have I not to be baptized for men? What meaneth “let all righteousness be fulfilled”? Let all humility be fulfilled. What then? Was not He to accept baptism from a good servant who accepted suffering at the hands of evil servants? Give heed then. The Lord being baptized, if John for this end baptized, that by means of his baptism the Lord might manifest His humility, should no one else have been baptized with the baptism of John? But many were baptized with the baptism of John. When the Lord was baptized with the baptism of John, the baptism of John ceased. John was forthwith cast into prison. Afterwards we do not find that any one is baptized with that baptism. If, then, John came baptizing for this end, that the humility of the Lord might be made manifest to us, in order that we might not disdain to receive from the Lord that which the Lord had received from a servant, should John have baptized the Lord alone? But if John had baptized the Lord alone, some would have thought that the baptism of John was more holy than that of Christ: as if Christ alone had been found worthy to be baptized with the baptism of John, but the human race with that of Christ. Give heed, beloved brethren. With the baptism of Christ we have been baptized, and not only we, but the whole world, and this will continue to the end. Which of us can in any respect be compared with Christ, whose shoe’s latchet John declared himself unworthy to unloose? If, then, the

Christ, a man of such excellence, a man who is God, had been alone baptized with the baptism of John, what were men likely to say? What a baptism was that of John! His was a great baptism, an ineffable sacrament; behold, Christ alone deserved to be baptized with the baptism of John. And thus the baptism of the servant would appear greater than the baptism of the Lord. Others were also baptized with the baptism of John, that the baptism of John might not appear better than the baptism of Christ; but baptized also was the Lord, that through the Lord receiving the baptism of the servant, other servants might not disdain to receive the baptism of the Lord: for this end, then, was John sent.

15. But did he know Christ, or did he not know Him? If he did not know Him, wherefore did He say, when Christ came to the river, “I have need to be baptized of Thee”? that is to say, I know who Thou art. If, then, he already knew Him, assuredly he knew Him when he saw the dove descending. It is evident that the dove did not descend upon the Lord until after He went up out of the water of baptism. “The Lord having been baptized, went up out of the water, and the heavens were opened, and he saw a dove descending on Him.” If, then, the dove descended after the baptism, and if, before the Lord was baptized, John said to Him, “Comest Thou to me? I have need to be baptized of Thee;” that is to say, before he knew Him to whom he said, “Comest Thou to me? I have need to be baptized of Thee;”—how then said he, “And I knew Him not: but He who sent me to baptize with water, the same said to me, Upon whom thou seest the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding upon Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost?” It is not an insignificant question, my brethren. If you have seen the question, you have seen not a little; it remains that the Lord give the solution of it. This, however, I say, if you have seen the question, it is no small matter. Behold, John is placed before your eyes, standing beside the river. Behold John the Baptist. Behold, the Lord comes, as yet to be baptized, not yet baptized. Hear the voice of John, “Comest Thou to me? I have need to be baptized of Thee.” Behold, already he knew the Lord, by whom He wishes to be baptized. The Lord, having been baptized, goes up out of the water; the heavens are opened, the Spirit descends; then John knows Him. If then for the first time he knew Him, why did he say before, “I have need to be baptized of Thee”? But if he did

not then recognize Him for the first time, because he knew Him already, what is the meaning of what he said, “I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon Him, as a dove, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost”?

16. My brethren, this question if solved today would oppress you, I do not doubt, for already have I spoken many words. But know that the question is of such a character that alone it is able to extinguish the party of Donatus. I have said thus much, my beloved, in order to gain your attention, as is my wont; and also in order that you may pray for us, that the Lord may grant to us to speak what is suitable, and that you may be found worthy to receive what is suitable. In the meantime, be pleased to defer the question for to-day. But in the meantime, I say this briefly, until I give a fuller solution: Inquire peacefully, without quarreling, without contention, without altercations, without enmities; both seek by yourselves, and inquire of others, and say, “This question our bishop proposed to us to-day, and he will resolve it at a future time, if the Lord will.” But whether it be resolved or not, reckon that I have propounded what appears to me of importance; for it does seem of considerable importance. John says, “I have need to be baptized of Thee,” as if he knew Christ. For if he did not know Him by whom he wished to be baptized, he spoke rashly when he said, “I have need to be baptized of Thee.” Therefore he knew Him. If he knew Him, what is the meaning of the saying, “I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon Him, as a dove, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost”? What shall we say? That we do not know when the dove came? Lest perchance they take refuge in this, let the other evangelists be read, who have spoken of this matter more plainly, and we find most evidently that the dove then descended when the Lord came up out of the water. Upon Him baptized the heavens opened, and He saw the Spirit descending. If it was when He was already baptized that John knew Him, how saith he to Him, coming to baptism, “I have need to be baptized of Thee”? Ponder this in the meantime with yourselves, confer upon it, treat of it, one with another. The Lord our God grant that before you hear it from me, the explanation may be revealed to some of you first. Nevertheless,

brethren, know this, that by means of the solution of this question, the allegation of the party of Donatus, if they have any sense of shame, will be silenced, and their mouths will be shut regarding the grace of baptism, a matter about which they raise mists to confuse the uninstructed, and spread nets for flying birds.

TRACTATE V

CHAPTER I. 33

We have arrived, as the Lord hath willed it, to the day of our promise. He will grant this also, that we may arrive at the fulfillment of the promise. For then those things which we say, if they are useful to us and to you, are from Him; but those things which proceed from man are false, as our Lord Jesus Christ Himself has said, “He that speaketh a lie speaketh of his own.” No one has anything of his own except falsehood and sin. But if man has any truth and justice, it is from that fountain after which we ought to thirst in this desert, so that being, as it were, bedewed by some drops from it, and comforted in the meantime in this pilgrimage, we may not fail by the way, but reach His rest and satisfying fullness. If then “he that speaketh a lie speaketh of his own,” he who speaketh the truth speaketh of God. John is true, Christ is the Truth; John is true, but every true man is true from the Truth. If, then, John is true, and a man cannot be true except from the Truth, from whom was he true, unless from Him who said, “I am the truth”? The Truth, then, could not speak contrary to the true man, or the true man contrary to the Truth. The Truth sent the true man, and he was true because sent by the Truth. If it was the Truth that sent John, then it was Christ that sent him. But that which Christ does with the Father, the Father does; and what the Father does with Christ, Christ does. The Father does nothing apart from the Son, nor the Son anything apart from the Father: inseparable love, inseparable unity: inseparable majesty, inseparable power, according to these words which He Himself propounded, “I and my Father are one.” Who then sent John? If we say the Father, we speak truly; if we say the Son, we speak truly; but to speak more plainly, we say the Father and the Son. But whom the Father and the Son sent, one God sent; because the Son said, “I and the Father are one.” How, then, did he not know Him by whom he was sent? For he said, “I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me.” I interrogate John: “Who sent thee to baptize with water? what did He say to thee?” “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding upon Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” Is it this, O John, that He said to thee who sent thee? It is manifest that it was this; who, then, sent thee? Perhaps the Father. True God is the Father, and the Truth is God the Son: if the Father without the Son sent thee, God without the Truth sent thee; but if thou art true, because thou dost speak the truth, and dost speak of the Truth, the Father did not send thee without the Son, but the Father and the Son together sent thee. If, then, the Son sent thee with the Father, how didst thou not know Him by whom thou wast sent? He whom thou hadst seen in the Truth, Himself sent thee that He might be recognized in the flesh, and said, “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding upon Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.”

2. Did John hear this that he might know Him whom he had not known, or that he might more fully know Him whom he had already known? For if he had been entirely ignorant of Him, he would not have said to Him when He came to the river to be baptized, “I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?” He knew Him therefore. But when did the dove descend? When the Lord had been baptized, and was ascending from the water. But if He who sent Him said, “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding upon Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost,” and he knew Him not, but when the dove descended he learned to know Him, and the time at which the dove descended was when the Lord was going up from the water; but John had known the Lord, when the Lord came to him to the water: it is made plain to us that John after a manner knew, and after a manner did not at first know the Lord. And unless we understand it so, he was a liar. How was he true acknowledging the Lord and saying, “Comest Thou to me to be baptized,” and, “I have need to be baptized of Thee”? Is he true when he said this? And how is he again true when he saith, “I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding upon Him, the same is He who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost”? The Lord was made known by a dove, not to him who knew Him not, but to him who in a manner knew Him, and in a

manner knew Him not. It is for us to discover what, in Him, John did not know, and learned by the dove.

3. Why was John sent baptizing? Already, I recollect, I have explained that to you, beloved, according to my ability. For if the baptism of John was necessary for our salvation, it ought even now to be used. For we cannot think that men are not saved now, or that more are not saved now, or that there was one salvation then, another now. If Christ has been changed, the salvation has also been changed; if salvation is in Christ, and Christ Himself is the same, there is the same salvation to us. But why was John sent baptizing? Because it behoved Christ to be baptized. Wherefore did it behove Christ to be baptized? Wherefore did it behove Christ to be born? Wherefore did it behove Christ to be crucified? For if He had come to point out the way of humility, and to make Himself the way of humility; in all things had humility to be fulfilled by Him. He deigned from this to give authority to His own baptism, that His servants might know with what alacrity they ought to run to the baptism of the Lord, when He Himself did not refuse to receive the baptism of a servant. This favor was bestowed upon John that it should be called his baptism.

4. Give heed to this, exercise your discrimination, and know it, beloved. The baptism which John received is called the baptism of John: alone he received such a gift. No one of the just before him and no one after him so received a baptism that it should be called his baptism. He received it indeed, for of himself he could do nothing: for if any one speaketh of his own, he speaketh of his own a lie. And whence did he receive it except from the Lord Jesus Christ? From Him he received power to baptize whom he afterwards baptized. Do not marvel; for Christ acted in the same manner in respect to John as in respect to His mother. For concerning Christ it was said, “All things were made by Him.” If all things were made by him, Mary also was made by Him, of whom Christ was afterwards born. Give heed, beloved; in the same manner that He did create Mary, and was created by Mary, so did He give the baptism of John, and was baptized by John.

5. For this purpose therefore did He receive baptism from John, in order that, receiving what was inferior from an inferior, He might exhort inferiors to receive that which was superior. But wherefore was not He alone

baptized by John, if John, by whom Christ was baptized, was sent for this end, to prepare a way for the Lord, that is, for Christ Himself? This we have already explained, but we recur to it, because it is necessary for the present question. If our Lord Jesus Christ had been alone baptized with the baptism of John;—hold fast what we say; let not the world have such power as to efface from your hearts what the Spirit of God has written there; let not the thorns of care have such power as to choke the seed which is being sown in you: for why are we compelled to repeat the same things, but because we are not sure of the memory of your hearts?—and if then the Lord alone had been baptized with the baptism of John, there would be persons who would so reckon it, that the baptism of John was greater than is the baptism of Christ. For they would say, that baptism is so much the greater, that Christ alone deserved to be baptized with it. Therefore, that an example of humility might be given us by the Lord, that the salvation of baptism might be obtained by us, Christ accepted what for Him was not necessary, but on our account was necessary. And again, lest that which Christ received from John should be preferred to the baptism of Christ, others also were permitted to be baptized by John. But for those who were baptized by John that baptism did not suffice: for they were baptized with the baptism of Christ; because the baptism of John was not the baptism of Christ. Those who receive the baptism of Christ do not seek the baptism of John; those who received the baptism of John sought the baptism of Christ. Therefore was the baptism of John sufficient for Christ. How should it not be sufficient, when not even it was necessary? For to Him was no baptism necessary; but in order to exhort us to receive His baptism, He received the baptism of His servant. And lest the baptism of the servant should be preferred to the baptism of the Lord, other fellow-servants were baptized with the baptism of the servant. But it behoved those fellow-servants who were baptized with that baptism to be likewise baptized with the baptism of the Lord: but those who were baptized with the baptism of the Lord do not require the baptism of the fellow-servant.

6. Since, then, John had accepted a baptism which may be properly called the baptism of John, but the Lord Jesus Christ would not give His baptism to any, not that no one should be baptized with the baptism of the Lord, but that the Lord Himself should always baptize: that was done, that the Lord

should baptize by means of servants; that is to say, those whom the servants of the Lord were to baptize, the Lord baptized, not they. For it is one thing to baptize in the capacity of a servant, another thing to baptize with power. For baptism derives its character from Him through whose power it is given; not from him through whose ministry it is given. As was John, so was his baptism: the righteous baptism of a righteous man; but of a man who had received from the Lord that grace, and so great grace, that he was worthy to be the forerunner of the Judge, and to point Him out with the finger, and to fulfill the saying of that prophecy: “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way for the Lord.” As was the Lord, such was His baptism: the baptism of the Lord, then, was divine, because the Lord was God.

7. But the Lord Jesus Christ could, if He wished, have given power to one of His servants to give a baptism of his own, as it were, in His stead, and have transferred from Himself the power of baptizing, and assigned it to one of His servants, and have given the same power to the baptism transferred to the servant as it had when bestowed by the Lord. This He would not do, in order that the hope of the baptized might be in him by whom they acknowledged themselves to have been baptized. He would not, therefore, that the servant should place his hope in the servant. And therefore the apostle exclaimed, when he saw men wishing to place their hope in himself, “Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” Paul then baptized as a servant, not as the power itself; but the Lord baptized as the power. Give heed. He was both able to give this power to His servants, and unwilling. For if He had given this power to His servants—that is to say, that what belonged to the Lord should be theirs—there would have been as many baptisms as servants; so that, as we speak of the baptism of John, we should also have spoken of the baptism of Peter, the baptism of Paul, the baptism of James, the baptism of Thomas, of Matthew, of Bartholomew: for we spoke of that baptism as that of John. But perhaps some one objects, and says, Prove to us that that baptism was called the baptism of John. I will prove it from the very words of the Truth Himself, when He asked the Jews, “The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?” Therefore, lest as many baptisms should be spoken of as there are servants who received power from the Lord to

baptize, the Lord kept to Himself the power of baptizing, and gave to His servants the ministry. The servant says that he baptizes; he says so rightly, as the apostle says, “And I baptized also the household of Stephanas;” but as a servant. Therefore, if even he be bad, and he happen to have the ministration of baptism, and if men do not know him, but God knows him, God, who has kept the power to Himself, permits baptism to be administered through him.

8. But this John did not know in the Lord. That He was the Lord he knew, and that he ought to be baptized by Him he knew; and he confessed that He was the Truth, and that he, the true man, was sent by the Truth: this he knew. But what was in Him which he knew not? That he was about to retain to Himself the power of His baptism, and was not to transmit or transfer it to any servant; but that, whether a good servant baptized in a ministerial manner, or whether an evil servant baptized, the person baptized should not know that he was baptized, unless by Him who kept to Himself the power of baptizing. And that you may know, brethren, what John did not know in Him, he learned it by means of the dove: for he knew the Lord; but that He was to retain to Himself the power of baptizing, and not to give it to any servant, he did not yet know. Regarding this he said, “I knew Him not.” And that you may know that he there learnt this, give heed to what follows: “But He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding upon Him, the same is He.” What same is He? The Lord? But he already knew the Lord. Suppose, then, that John had said thus far, “I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me—” We ask, what He said? It follows: “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding upon Him.” I do not say what follows. In the meantime give heed: “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding upon Him, the same is He.” But what same is He? What did He who sent me mean to teach me by means of a dove? That He was Himself the Lord. Already I knew by whom I was sent; already I knew Him to whom I said, “Comest Thou to me to be baptized? I have need to be baptized of Thee.” So far, then, did I know the Lord, that I wished to be baptized by Him, not that He should be baptized by me; and then He said to me, “Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all

righteousness.” I came to suffer; do I not come to be baptized? “Let all righteousness be fulfilled,” says my God to me. Let all righteousness be fulfilled; let me teach entire humility. I know that there will be proud ones in my future people; I know that some men then will be eminent in some grace, so that when they see ordinary persons baptized, they, because they consider themselves better, whether in continence, or in alms-giving, or in doctrine, will perhaps not deign to receive what has been received by their inferiors. It was needful that I should heal them, so that they should not disdain to come to the baptism of the Lord, because I came to the baptism of the servant.

9. Already, then, John knew this, and he knew the Lord. What then did the dove teach? What did He desire to teach by means of the dove—that is, by means of the Holy Spirit thus coming to teach who had sent him to whom He said, “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding upon Him, the same is He”? Who is this He? The Lord? I know. But didst thou already know this, that the same Lord having the power to baptize, was not to give that power to any servant, but to retain it to Himself, so that all who were baptized by the ministration of the servant, should not impute their baptism to the servant, but to the Lord? Didst thou already know this? I did not know this: so what did He say to me? “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding upon Him, the same is He who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” He does not say, “He is the Lord;” He does not say, “He is the Christ;” He does not say, “He is God;” He does not say, “He is Jesus;” He does not say, “He is the One who was born of the Virgin Mary, after thee, before thee.” This He does not say, for this John did already know. But what did he not know? That this great authority of baptism the Lord Himself was to have, and to retain to Himself, whether present in the earth or absent in body in the heaven, and present in majesty; lest Paul should say, my baptism; lest Peter should say, my baptism. Therefore see, give heed to the words of the apostles. None of the apostles said, my baptism. Although there was one gospel of all, yet thou findest that they said, my gospel: thou dost not find that they say, my baptism.

10. This, then, my brethren, John learned. What John learned by means of the dove let us also learn. For the dove did not teach John without teaching the Church, the Church to which it was said, “My dove is one.” Let the dove teach the dove; let the dove know what John learned by the dove. The Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove. But this which John learned in the dove, wherefore did he learn it in the dove? For it behoved him to learn, and perhaps it did not so much behove him to learn as to learn by the dove. What shall I say, my brethren, concerning the dove? or when will faculty of tongue or heart suffice to speak as I wish? And perchance, my wish falls short of my duty in speaking; even if I were able to speak as I wish, how much less am I able to speak as I ought? I could wish to hear one better than myself speak this, rather than speak of it to you.

11. John learns to know Him whom he knew; but he learns in Him with regard to what he did not know; with regard to what he did know, he does not learn. And what did he know? The Lord. What did he not know? That the power of the Lord’s baptism was not to pass from the Lord to any man, but that the ministration of it plainly would do so; the power from the Lord to no one, the ministration both to good and bad. Let not the dove shrink from the ministration of the bad, but have regard to the power of the Lord. What injury does a bad servant do to you where the Lord is good? What impediment can the malicious herald put in your way if the judge is well-disposed? John learned by means of the dove this. What is it that he learned? Let him repeat it himself. “The same said unto me,” saith he, “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding on Him, this is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” Let not those seducers deceive thee, O dove, who say, We baptize. Acknowledge, dove, what the dove has taught: “This is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” By means of the dove we are taught that this is He; and dost thou think that thou art baptized by his authority by whose ministration thou art baptized? If thou thinkest this, thou art not as yet in the body of the dove; and if thou art not in the body of the dove, it is not to be wondered at that thou hast not simplicity; for by means of the dove, simplicity is chiefly designated.

12. Wherefore, my brethren, by the simplicity of the dove did John learn that “This is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost,” unless to show that these are not doves who have scattered the Church? Hawks they were, and kites. The dove does not tear. And thou seest that they hold us up to hatred, for the persecutions, as they call them, which they have suffered. Bodily persecutions, indeed, if they are to be so called, they have suffered, since these were the scourges of the Lord, plainly administering temporal correction, lest He should have to condemn them eternally, if they did not acknowledge it and amend themselves. They truly persecute the Church who persecute by means of deceit; they strike the heart more heavily who strike with the sword of the tongue; they shed blood more bitterly who, as far as they can, slay Christ in man. They seem to be in fear, as it were, of the judgment of the authorities. What does the authority do to thee if thou art good? but if thou art evil, fear the authority; “For he beareth not the sword in vain,” saith the apostle. Draw not the sword wherewith thou dost strike Christ. Christian, what dost thou persecute in a Christian? What did the Emperor persecute in thee? He persecuted the flesh; thou in a Christian persecutest the Spirit. Thou dost not slay the flesh. And, nevertheless, they do not spare the flesh; as many as they were able, they slew with the sword; they spared neither their own nor strangers. This is known to all. The authority is hated because it is legitimate; he acts in a hated manner who acts according to the law; he acts without incurring hatred who acts contrary to the laws. Give heed, each one of you, my brethren, to what the Christian possesses. His humanity he has in common with many, his Christianity distinguishes him from many, and his Christianity belongs to him more strictly than his humanity. For, as a Christian, he is renewed after the image of God, by whom man was made after the image of God; but as a man he might be bad, he might be a pagan, he might be an idolater. This thou dost persecute in the Christian, which is his better part; for this by which he lives thou wishest to take away from him. For he lives tempo rally according to the spirit of life, by which his body is animated, but he lives for eternity according to the baptism which he received from the Lord; thou wishest to take this away from him which he received from the Lord, this thou wishest to take away from him by which he lives. Robbers, with regard to those whom they wish to despoil, have the purpose to enrich themselves and to deprive their victims of all that they have; but thou takest from him,

and with thee there will not be anything more, for there does not accrue more to thee because thou takest from him. But, truly, they do the same as those who take away the natural life: they take it away from another, and yet they themselves have not two lives.

13. What, then, dost thou wish to take away? What displeases thee in the man whom thou wishest to rebaptize? Thou art not able to give what he already has, but thou makest him deny what he has. What greater cruelty did the pagan persecutor of the Church commit? Swords were stretched out against the martyrs, wild beasts were let loose, fires were applied: for what purpose these things? In order that the sufferer might be induced to say, I am not a Christian. What dost thou teach him whom thou wishest to rebaptize, unless that he first say, I am not a Christian? For the same purpose for which the persecutor put forth the flame, thou puttest forth the tongue; thou dost by seducing what he did not do by slaying. And what is it thou dost give, and to whom art thou to give it? If he tells thee the truth, and does not lie, seduced by thee, he will say, I have. Thou askest, Hast thou baptism? I have, he says. As long as he says, I have, thou sayest, I will not give. And do not give, for that which thou wishest to give cannot cleave to me; because what I received cannot be taken away from me. But wait, nevertheless; let me see what thou wouldest teach me. Say, he said, in the first place, I have not. But this I have; if I shall say, I have not, I lie; for what I have I have. Thou hast not, he says. Teach me that I have it not. An evil man gave it to thee. If Christ is evil, an evil man did give it to me. Christ, he says, is not evil; but Christ did not give it to thee. Who then gave it to me? Reply, I know that I received it from Christ. He who gave it to thee, he says, was not Christ, but some traditor. I shall see to it who was the minister; I shall see who was the herald. Concerning the official, I do not dispute; I give heed to the Judge: and, perchance, in thy objection to the official, thou speakest falsely. But I decline to discuss it; let the Lord of both decide the cause of His own official. If, perhaps, I were to ask for proof, thou couldst give none; indeed, thou liest; it has been proved that thou wert not able to give proof. But I do not place my case on this, lest from my zealous defense of innocent men thou infer that I have placed my hope even on innocent men. Let the men be what they may, I received from Christ, I was baptized by Christ. No, he says; not Christ, but that bishop

baptized thee, and that bishop communicates to them. By Christ I have been baptized, I know. How dost thou know? The dove taught me, which John saw. O evil kite, thou mayest not tear me from the bowels of the dove. I am numbered among the members of the dove, because what the dove taught, this I know. Thou sayest to me, This man or that baptized thee: by means of the dove it is said to me and to thee, "This is He which baptizeth." Which shall I believe, the kite or the dove?

14. Tell me certainly, that thou mayest be confounded by that lamp by which also were the former enemies confounded, who were like to thee, the Pharisees, who, when they questioned the Lord by what authority He did those things: "I also," said He, "will ask you this question, Tell me, the baptism of John, whence is it? from heaven, or of men?" And they, who were preparing to spread their wiles, were entangled by the question, and began to debate with themselves, and say, "If we shall answer, It is from heaven, He will say unto us, Wherefore did ye not believe him?" For John had said of the Lord, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!" Why then do you inquire by what authority I act? O wolves, what I do, I do by the authority of the Lamb. But that you may know the Lamb, why do you not believe John, who said, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world"? They, then, knowing what John had said regarding the Lord, said among themselves, "If we shall say that John's baptism is from heaven, He will say unto us, Wherefore then did ye not believe him? If we shall say, It is of men, the people will stone us; for they hold John as a prophet." Hence, they feared men; hence, they were confounded to confess the truth. Darkness replied with darkness; but they were overcome by the light. For what did they reply? "We know not;" regarding that which they knew, they said, "We know not." And the Lord said, "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." And the first enemies were confounded. How? By the lamp. Who was the lamp? John. Can we prove that he was the lamp? We can prove it; for the Lord says: "He was a burning and a shining lamp." Can we prove also that the enemies were confounded by him? Listen to the psalm: "I have prepared," he says, "a lamp for my Christ. His enemies I will clothe with shame."

15. As yet, in the darkness of this life, we walk by the lamp of faith: let us hold also to the lamp John, and let us confound by him the enemies of Christ; indeed, let Christ Himself confound His own enemies by His own lamp. Let us put the question which the Lord put to the Jews, let us ask and say, “The baptism of John, whence is it? from heaven, or of men?” What will they say? Mark, if they are not as enemies confounded by the lamp. What will they say? If they shall say, Of men, even their own will stone them; but if they shall say, From heaven, let us say to them, Wherefore, then, did ye not believe him? They perhaps say, We believe him. Wherefore, then, do you say that you baptize, when John says, “This is He which baptizeth”? But it behoveth, they say, the ministers of so great a Judge who baptize, to be righteous. And I also say, and all say, that it behoveth the ministers of so great a Judge to be righteous; let the ministers, by all means, be righteous if they will; but if they will not be righteous who sit in the seat of Moses, my Master made me safe, of whom His Spirit said, “This is He which baptizeth.” How did He make me safe? “The scribes and the Pharisees,” He says, “sit in Moses’ seat: what they say, do; but what they do, that do not ye: for they say, and do not.” If the minister is righteous, I reckon him with Paul, I reckon him with Peter; with those I reckon righteous ministers: because, in truth, righteous ministers seek not their own glory; for they are ministers, they do not wish to be thought judges, they abhor that one should place his hope on them; therefore, I reckon the righteous minister with Paul. For what does Paul say? “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. Neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth; but God who giveth the increase.” But he who is a proud minister is reckoned with the devil; but the gift of Christ is not contaminated, which flows through him pure, which passes through him liquid, and comes to the fertile earth. Suppose that he is stony, that he cannot from water rear fruit; even through the stony channel the water passes, the water passes to the garden beds; in the stony channel it causes nothing to grow, but nevertheless it brings much fruit to the gardens. For the spiritual virtue of the sacrament is like the light: both by those who are to be enlightened is it received pure, and if it passes through the impure it is not stained. Let the ministers be by all means righteous, and seek not their own glory, but His glory whose ministers they are; let them not say, The baptism is mine; for it is not theirs. Let them give heed unto John.

Behold, John was full of the Holy Spirit; and he had his baptism from heaven, not from men; but how long had he it? He said himself, “Prepare ye the way for the Lord.” But when the Lord was known, Himself became the way; there was no longer need for the baptism of John to prepare the way for the Lord.

16. What, however, are they accustomed to say against us? “Behold, after John, baptism was given.” For before that question was properly treated in the Catholic Church, many erred in it, both great and good men; but because they were members of the dove, they did not cut themselves off, and in their case that happened which the apostle said, “If in any thing ye are otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.” Whence those who separated themselves became unteachable. What then are they wont to say? Behold, after John baptism was given; after heretical baptism is it not to be given? because certain who had the baptism of John were commanded by Paul to be baptized, for they had not the baptism of Christ. Why then, say they, dost thou exaggerate the merit of John, and, as it were, underrate the misery of heretics? I also grant to you that the heretics are wicked; but the heretics gave the baptism of Christ, which baptism John did not give.

17. I go back to John, and say, “This is he which baptizeth.” For John is better than a heretic, just as John is better than a drunkard, as John is better than a murderer. If we ought to baptize after the worse because the apostles baptized after the better, whosoever among them were baptized by a drunkard,—I do not say by a murderer, I do not say by the satellite of some wicked man, I do not say by the robber of other men’s goods, I do not say by the oppressor of orphans, or a separater of married persons; I speak of none of these; I speak of what happens every year, of what happens every day; I speak of what all are called to, even in this city, when it is said to them, Let us play the part of the irrational, let us have pleasure, and on such a day as this of the calends of January we ought not to fast: these are the things I speak of, these trifling everyday proceedings;—when one is baptized by a drunkard, who is better? John or the drunkard? Reply, if thou canst, that the drunkard is better than John! This thou wilt never venture to do. Do you then, as a sober man, baptize after thy drunkard. For if the apostles baptized after John, how much more ought the sober to baptize

after the drunkard? Or dost thou say, the drunkard is in unity with me? Was not John then, the friend of the Bridegroom, in unity with the Bridegroom?

18. But I say to thee thyself, whoever thou art, Art thou better than John? Thou wilt not venture to say: I am better than John. Then let thine own baptize after thee if they are better. For if baptism was administered after John, blush that baptism is not administered after thee. Thou wilt say, But I have and teach the baptism of Christ. Acknowledge, then, now the Judge, and do not be a proud herald. Thou givest the baptism of Christ, therefore baptism is not administered after thee: after John it was administered, because he gave not the baptism of Christ, but his own; for he had in such manner received it that it was his own. Thou art then not better than John: but the baptism given through thee is better than that of John; for the one is Christ's, but the other is that of John. And that which was given by Paul, and that which was given by Peter, is Christ's; and if baptism was given by Judas it was Christ's. Judas gave baptism and after Judas baptism was not repeated; John gave baptism, and baptism was repeated after John: because if baptism was given by Judas, it was the baptism of Christ; but that which was given by John, was John's baptism. We prefer not Judas to John; but the baptism of Christ, even when given by the hand of Judas, we prefer to the baptism of John, rightly given even by the hand of John. For it was said of the Lord before He suffered, that He baptized more than John; then it was added: "Howbeit, Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples." He, and not He: He by power, they by ministry; they performed the service of baptizing, the power of baptizing remained in Christ. His disciples, then, baptized, and Judas was still among his disciples: and were those, then, whom Judas baptized not again baptized; and those whom John baptized were they again baptized? Plainly there was a repetition, but not a repetition of the same baptism. For those whom John baptized, John baptized; those whom Judas baptized, Christ baptized. In like manner, then, they whom a drunkard baptized, those whom a murderer baptized, those whom an adulterer baptized, if it was the baptism of Christ, were baptized by Christ. I do not fear the adulterer, the drunkard, or the murderer, because I give heed unto the dove, through whom it is said to me, "This is He which baptizeth."

19. But, my brethren, it is madness to say that—I will not say Judas—but that any man was better than he of whom it was said, that “Among those that are born of women, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist.” No servant then is preferred to him; but the baptism of the Lord, even when given through an evil servant, is preferred to the baptism even of a servant who was a friend. Listen to the sort of persons whom the Apostle Paul mentions, false brethren, preaching the word of God through envy, and what he says of them: “And I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.” They proclaimed Christ, through envy indeed, but still they proclaimed Christ. Consider not the why, but the whom: through envy is Christ preached to thee. Behold Christ, avoid envy. Do not imitate the evil preacher, but imitate the Good One who is preached to thee. Christ then was preached by some out of envy. And what is envy? A shocking evil. By this evil was the devil cast down; this malignant pest it was which cast him down; and certain preachers of Christ were possessed by it, whom, nevertheless, the apostle permitted to preach. Wherefore? Because they preached Christ. But he who envies, hates; and he who hates, what is said concerning him? Listen to the Apostle John: “He who hateth his brother is a murderer.” Behold, after John baptism was given, after a murderer baptism was not given; because John gave his own baptism, the murderer gave the baptism of Christ. That sacrament is so sacred that not even the ministration of a murderer pollutes it.

20. I do not reject John, but rather I believe John. In what do I believe John? In that which he learned through the dove? What did he learn through the dove? “This is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” Now therefore, brethren, hold this fast and impress it upon your hearts; for if I would more fully explain to-day, Wherefore through the dove? time fails. For I have, I think, to some extent made plain to you, holy brethren, that a matter which had to be learned was instilled into John by means of the dove, a matter with regard to Christ which John did not know, although he already knew Christ; but why it behoved this matter to be pointed out by means of the dove, I would say, were it possible to say it briefly: but because it would take long to say, and I am unwilling to burden you, since I have been helped by your prayers to perform my promise; with the renewed help of your pious attention and good wishes, it will likewise become clear

to you, wherefore John with regard to that matter which he learned regarding the Lord, namely, that it is “He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost,” and that to none of His servants had he transferred the power of baptizing—why this it became him not to learn except through the dove.

TRACTATE VI

CHAPTER I. 32, 33

1. I Confess to you, holy brethren, I was afraid the cold would have made you cold in assembling yourselves together; but since you prove by this, your crowded assembly, that you are fervent in spirit, I doubt not that you have also prayed for me, that I may pay you what I owe. For I promised you in the name of Christ that, as the shortness of the time prevented us from expounding it before, I would to-day discuss why God was pleased to manifest the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove. That this may be explained, this day has dawned on us; and I perceive that from eagerness to hear, and pious devotion, you have come together in greater number than usual. May God, by our mouth, fulfill your expectation. For your coming together is of your love; but love of what? If of us, even that is well; for we desire to be loved by you, but not in ourselves. Because we love you in Christ, do you love us in Christ in return, and let our love mutually sigh towards God; for the note of the dove is a sighing or moaning.

2. Now if the dove’s note is a moaning, as we all know it to be, and doves moan in love, hear what the apostle says, and wonder not that the Holy Ghost willed to be manifested in the form of a dove: “For what we should pray for as we ought,” says he, “we know not; but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” What then, my brethren? shall we say this, that the Spirit groans where He has perfect and eternal blessedness with the Father and the Son? For the Holy Spirit is God, even as the Son of God is God, and the Father God. I have said “God” thrice, but not three Gods; for indeed it is God thrice rather than three Gods; because the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one God: this you know full well. It is not then in Himself with Himself in that Trinity, in that blessedness, in that His eternal substance, that the Holy Spirit groans; but in us He groans because He makes us to groan. Nor is it a little matter that the

Holy Spirit teaches us to groan, for He gives us to know that we are sojourners in a foreign land, and He teaches us to sigh after our native country; and through that very longing do we groan. He with whom it is well in this world, or rather he who thinks it is well with him, who exults in the joy of carnal things, in the abundance of things temporal, in an empty felicity, has the cry of the raven; for the raven's cry is full of clamor, not of groaning. But he who knows that he is in the pressure of this mortal life, a pilgrim "absent from the Lord," that he does not yet possess that perpetual blessedness which is promised to us, but that he has it in hope, and will have it in reality when the Lord shall come openly in glory who came before in humility concealed; he, I say, who knows this doth groan. And so long as it is for this he groans, he does well to groan; it was the Spirit that taught him to groan, he learnt it from the dove. Many indeed groan by reason of earthly misery. They are shattered, it may be, by losses, or weighed down by bodily ailment, or shut up in prisons, or bound with chains, or tossed about on the waves of the sea, or hedged in by the ensnaring devices of their enemies. Therefore do they groan, but not with the moaning of the dove, not with love of God, not in the Spirit. Accordingly, when such are delivered from these same afflictions, they exult with loud voices, whereby it is made manifest that they are ravens, not doves. It was with good reason that a raven was sent forth from the ark, and returned not again; a dove was sent forth, and it returned. These two birds Noah sent forth. He had there the raven, and also the dove. That ark contained both kinds; and if the ark was a figure of the Church, you see indeed that in the present deluge of the world, the Church must of necessity contain both kinds, as well the raven as the dove. Who are the ravens? They who seek their own. Who are the doves? They who seek the things that are Christ's.

3. Therefore, when He sent the Holy Spirit He manifested Him visibly in two ways—by a dove and by fire: by a dove upon the Lord when He was baptized, by fire upon the disciples when they were gathered together. For when the Lord had ascended into heaven after His resurrection, having spent forty days with His disciples, and the day of Pentecost being fully come, He sent unto them the Holy Spirit as He had promised. Accordingly the Spirit coming at that time filled the place, and there was first a sound

from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, and “there appeared unto them,” it says, “cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they began to speak with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Here we have seen a dove descending upon the Lord; there, cloven tongues upon the assembled disciples: in the former, simplicity is shown; in the latter, fervency. Now there are who are said to be simple, who are only indolent; they are called simple, but they are only slow. Not such was Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost: he was simple, because he injured no one; he was fervent, because he reproved the ungodly. For he held not his peace before the Jews. His are those burning words: “Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised of heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit.” Mighty impetuosity; but it is the dove without gall raging. For that you know that he was fierce without gall, see how, upon hearing these words, they who were the ravens immediately took up stones and rushed together upon this dove. They begin to stone Stephen; and he who a little before stormed and glowed with ardor of spirit,—who had, as it were, made an onset on his enemies, and like one full of violence had attacked them in such fiery and burning words as you have heard, “Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears,” that any one who heard those words might fancy that Stephen, if he were allowed, would have them consumed at once,—but when the stones thrown from their hands reached him, with fixed knee he saith, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.” He held fast to the unity of the dove. For his Master, upon whom the dove descended, had done the same thing before him; who, while hanging on the cross, said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Wherefore by the dove it is shown that they who are sanctified by the Spirit should be without guile; and that their simplicity should not continue cold is shown us by the fire. Nor let it trouble you that the tongues were divided; for tongues are diverse, therefore the appearance was that of cloven tongues. “Cloven tongues,” it saith, “as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.” There is a diversity of tongues, but the diversity of tongues does not imply schisms. Be not afraid of separation in the cloven tongues; in the dove recognize unity.

4. Hence in this manner it behoved the Holy Spirit to be manifested when coming upon the Lord, that every one might understand that if he has the

Holy Spirit he ought to be simple as the dove, to have true peace with his brethren, that peace which the kisses of doves signify. Ravens have their kisses too; but in the case of the ravens it is a false peace, in that of the dove a true peace. Not every one, therefore, who says, “Peace be with you,” is to be listened to as if he were a dove. How then are the kisses of ravens distinguished from those of doves? Ravens kiss, but they tear; the nature of doves is innocent of tearing. Where consequently there is tearing, there is not true peace in the kisses. They have true peace who have not torn the Church. Ravens feed upon carrion, it is not so with the dove; it lives on the fruits of the earth, its food is innocent. This, brethren, is really worthy of admiration in the dove. Sparrows are very small birds, but yet they kill flies at least. The dove does nothing of this sort, for it does not feed on what is dead. They who have torn the Church feed on the dead. God is mighty; let us pray that they who are devoured by them, and perceive it not, may come to life again. Many acknowledge that they do come to life again, for at their coming we daily express joy with them in the name of Christ. Be ye simple, but only in such wise that ye be fervent, and let your fervor be in your tongues. Hold not your peace, speak with glowing tongues, set those that are cold on fire.

5. For why, my brethren? Who does not see what they do not? And no wonder; for they who are unwilling to return from that are just like the raven that was sent forth from the ark. For who does not see what they see not? They are unthankful even to the Holy Spirit Himself. See, the dove descended upon the Lord, upon the Lord when baptized: and thereupon was manifested that holy and real Trinity, which to us is one God. For the Lord went up out of the water, as we read in the Gospel: “And, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit descending like a dove, and it abode upon Him: and immediately a voice followed, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” The Trinity most manifestly appears: the Father in the voice, the Son in the man, the Spirit in the dove. In this Trinity let us see, as we do see, whereunto the apostles were sent forth, and what it is wonderful those men do not see. Not indeed that they really do not see, but that they really shut their eyes to that which strikes them in the very face: that whereunto the disciples were sent forth in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by Him of whom it is said, “This is

He that baptizeth:” it was said, in fact, to His ministers, by Him who has retained this authority to Himself.

6. Now this it was in Him that John saw, and came to know which he did not know. Not that he did not know Him to be the Son of God, or that he did not know Him to be the Lord, or not know Him to be the Christ; or that he did not know this too, that it was He who should baptize with water and with the Holy Ghost. This he did know; but that he should do this so as to retain the authority to Himself and transfer it to none of His ministers, this is what he learnt in the dove. For by this authority, which Christ has retained to Himself alone, and conferred upon none of His ministers, though He has deigned to baptize by His ministers; by this authority, I say, stands the unity of the Church, which is figured in the dove, concerning which it is said, “My dove is one, the only one of her mother.” For if, as I have already said, my brethren, the authority were transferred by the Lord to His minister, there would be as many baptisms as ministers, and the unity of baptism would no longer exist.

7. Mark, brethren; before our Lord Jesus Christ came to His baptism (for it was after the baptism that the dove descended, whereby John recognized something that was peculiar to Him, since he was told, “Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending like a dove, and remaining on Him, the same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost”), John knew that He it was that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost; but that it should be with this peculiarity, that the authority should not pass from Him to another, notwithstanding He confers it, this is what he learnt there. And whence do we prove that John did already know that the Lord was to baptize with the Holy Ghost; so that what he must be understood to have learned by the dove is, that the Lord was to baptize with the Holy Ghost in such wise that the authority should not pass from Him to any other man? Whence do we prove this? The dove descended after the Lord was baptized; but before the Lord came to be baptized by John in the Jordan, we have said that John knew Him, on the evidence of those words, in which he says, “Comest Thou to me to be baptized? I have need to be baptized of Thee.” Well, he did know Him to be the Lord, knew Him to be the Son of God; how do we prove that he knew already that the same was He who should baptize with the Holy Ghost?

Before He came to the river, whilst many people were running together to John to be baptized, he says to them, “I indeed baptize you with water; but He that cometh after me is greater than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose; the same shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” Already he knew this also. What then did he learn from the dove, that he may not afterwards be found a liar (which God forbid we should think), if it be not this, that there was to be a certain peculiarity in Christ, such that, although many ministers, be they righteous or unrighteous, should baptize, the virtue of baptism would be attributed to Him alone on whom the dove descended, and of whom it was said, “This is He that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost”? Peter may baptize, but this is He that baptizeth; Paul may baptize, yet this is He that baptizeth; Judas may baptize, still this is He that baptizeth.

8. For if the sanctity of baptism be according to the diversity of merits in them that administer it, then as merits are diverse there will be diverse baptisms; and the recipient will imagine that what he receives is so much the better, the better he appears to be from whom he received it. The saints themselves—understand brethren, they that belong to the dove, that have their part in that city of Jerusalem, the good themselves in the Church, of whom the apostle says, “The Lord know eth them that are His”—are endued with different graces, and do not all possess like merits. Some are more holy than others, some are better than others. Therefore if one receive baptism from him, for example, who is a righteous saint, another from another who is of inferior merit with God, of inferior degree, of inferior continence, of inferior life, how notwithstanding is that which they receive one, equal and like, if it be not because, “This is He that baptizeth”? Just, then, as when the good and the better administer baptism, one man does not receive a good thing, another a better; but, notwithstanding that the ministers were one good the other better, they receive what is one and equal, not a better in the one case and a worse in the other; so, too, when a bad man administers baptism, through the ignorance or forbearance of the Church (for bad men either are not known as such, or are borne with; the chaff is tolerated until the floor be fully purged at the last), that which is given is one, not unlike because the ministers are unlike, but like and equal because “This is He that baptizeth.”

9. Therefore, beloved, let us see what those men desire not to see; not what they may not see, but what they grieve to see, as though it were shut against them. Whither were the disciples sent to baptize as ministers, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost? Whither were they sent? “Go,” said He, “baptize the nations.” You have heard, brethren, how that inheritance comes, “Ask of me, and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the utmost bounds of the earth for Thy possessions.” You have heard how that “from Sion went forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” For it was there the disciples were told, “Go, baptize the nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” We became attentive when we heard, “Go, baptize the nations.” In whose name? “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” This is one God; for it says not in the “names” of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, but “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Where thou hearest one name, there is one God; just as it was said of Abraham’s seed, and the Apostle Paul expounds it, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed; he said not, In seeds, as in many, but as in one, and in thy seed which is Christ.” Wherefore, just as the apostle wished to show thee that, because in that place it is not said “in seeds,” Christ is one; so here too, when it is said, “in the name,” not in the names, even as these, “in seed,” not in seeds, is it proved that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one God.

10. But lo, say the disciples to the Lord, we are told in what name we are to baptize; Thou hast made us ministers, and hast said to us, “Go, baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Whither shall we go? Whither? Have you not heard? To Mine inheritance. You ask, Whither shall we go? To that which I bought with my blood. Whither then? To the nations, saith He. I fancied that He said, Go, baptize the Africans in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Thanks be to God, the Lord has solved the question the dove has taught us. Thanks be to God, it was to the nations the apostles were sent; if to the nations, then to all tongues. The Holy Spirit signified this, being divided in the tongues, united in the dove. Here the tongues are divided, there the dove unites them. The tongues of the nations agreed, perhaps that of Africa alone disagreed. What can be more evident, my brethren? In the dove the unity, in the tongues the

community of the nations. For once the tongues became discordant through pride, and then of one became many tongues. For after the flood certain proud men, as if endeavoring to fortify themselves against God, as if aught were high for God, or aught could give security to pride, raised a tower, apparently that they might not be destroyed by a flood, should there come one thereafter. For they had heard and considered that all iniquity was swept away by a flood; to abstain from iniquity they would not; they sought the height of a tower as a defense against a flood; they built a lofty tower. "God saw their pride, and frustrated their purpose by causing that they should not understand one another's speech, and thus tongues became diverse through pride." If pride caused diversities of tongues, Christ's humility has united these diversities in one. The Church is now bringing together what that tower had sundered. Of one tongue there were made many; marvel not: this was the doing of pride. Of many tongues there is made one; marvel not: this was the doing of charity. For although the sounds of tongues are various, in the heart one God is invoked, one peace preserved. How then should the Holy Spirit have been manifested when signifying a unity, if not by the dove, so that it might be said to the Church brought into a state of peace, "My dove is one"? How ought humility to have been represented but by an innocent, sorrowing bird; not by a proud, exulting bird like the raven?

11. But perhaps they will say: Well, as it is a dove, and the dove is one, baptism there cannot be apart from the one dove. Therefore if the dove is with thee, or if thou be thyself a dove, do thou give me, when I come to thee, that which I have not. You know that this is what they say; but you will presently see that it is not of the voice of the dove, but of the clamor of the raven. For attend a little, beloved, and fear their devices; nay, beware of them, and listen to the words of gainsayers only to reject them, not to swallow them and take them into your bowels. Do therein what the Lord did when they offered Him the bitter draught, "He tasted, and spat it out;" so also you hear and cast away. What indeed say they? Let us see. Lo, says he, "Thou art the dove." O Catholic Church, it is to thee it is said, "My dove is one, the only one of her mother," to thee certainly is it said. Stop, do not question me; prove first whether to me it was said; if it was said to me, I would hear it at once. "To thee," saith he, "it was said." I answer, in the voice of the Catholic Church, "To me." And this answer, brethren, sounding

forth from my mouth alone, has sounded, as I believe, also from your hearts, and we all affirmed together, yea, to the Catholic Church was it said, “One is my dove, the only one of her mother.” Apart from this dove, says he further, there is no baptism: I was baptized apart from this dove, consequently have not baptism; if I have not baptism, why dost thou not give it me when I come to thee?

12. I also will put questions; let us meanwhile lay aside the inquiry as to whom this was said, “My dove is one, the only one of her mother;”—as yet we are inquiring;—it was said either to me or to thee; let us postpone the question as to whom it was said. This is what I ask, if the dove is simple, innocent, without gall, peaceful in its kisses, not fierce with its talons, I ask whether the covetous, the rapacious, the crafty, the sottish, the infamous, belong to the members of this dove? Are they members of this dove? Far be the thought, says he. And who would really say this, brethren? To speak of nothing else, if I mention the rapacious alone, members of the hawk they may be, not members of the dove. Kites seize and plunder, so do hawks, so do ravens; doves do not plunder nor tear, consequently they who snatch and rob are not members of the dove. Was there not even one rapacious person among you? Why abides the baptism, which in this case the hawk, not the dove, has given? Why do you not among yourselves baptize after robbers, after adulterers, after drunkards? Why not baptize after the avaricious among yourselves? Are these all members of the dove? You so dishonor your dove that you make those that have the nature of the vulture her members. What, then, brethren, what say we? There are the bad and the good in the Catholic Church, but with them the bad only. But perhaps I say this with a hostile feeling: let this too be afterwards examined. They do say, certainly, that among them are the good and the bad; for, should they assert that they have only the good, let their own credit it, and I subscribe. With us, let them say, there are none but holy, righteous, chaste, sober men; no adulterers, no usurers, no deceivers, no false swearers, no wine-bibbers;—let them say this, for I heed not their tongues, I touch their hearts. But since they are well known to us, and to you, and to their own, just as you are known both to yourselves in the Catholic Church and to them, neither let us find fault with them, nor let them flatter themselves. We confess that in the Church there are good and bad, yet as the grain and the chaff. Sometimes he

who is baptized by the grain is chaff, and he who is baptized by the chaff is grain. Otherwise, if his baptism who is baptized by the grain stands good, and his who is baptized by the chaff not, then it is not true, “This is He that baptizeth.” But if it is true “This is He that baptizeth,” then what is given by the chaff stands good, and he baptizeth in like manner as the dove. For the bad man (who administers baptism) is not the dove, nor belongs to the members of the dove, nor can he possibly be affirmed to be so, either with us in the Catholic Church or with them, if they assert that their Church is the dove. What then are we to understand, brethren? Since it is evident, and known to all, and they must admit, though it be against their will, that when with them bad men give baptism, it is not given after those bad men; and with us, too, when the bad give baptism, it is not given after them. The dove does not baptize after the raven; why then would the raven baptize after the dove?

13. Consider, beloved, why also was there a something pointed out by means of the dove, as that the dove—namely, the Holy Spirit in the shape of a dove—came to the Lord on being baptized, and rested upon Him, whilst by the coming of the dove John learned this, that there dwelt in the Lord a power peculiarly His own to baptize? Because it was by this power peculiar to Himself, as I have said, the peace of the Church was made secure. And yet it may be that one may have baptism apart from the dove; but that baptism apart from the dove should do him good, is impossible. Consider, beloved, and understand what I say, for by this deception they mislead such of our brethren as are dull and cold. Let us be more simple and more fervent. See, say they, have I received, or have I not? I answer, Thou hast received. Well, if I have received, there is nothing which thou canst give me; I am safe, even on thine own evidence. For I affirm that I have received, and thou, too, dost confess that I have received: I am safe by the confession of both: what then dost thou promise me? Why wouldst thou make me a Catholic, when thou wouldst not give me anything further, seeing thou confessest that I have already received that which thou affirmest thyself to possess? But when I say, Come to me, I say that thou dost not possess, who yet confessest that I do. Why dost thou say, Come to me?

14. The dove teaches us. From the head of the Lord she answers, and says, Thou hast baptism, but the charity with which I groan thou hast not. How is this, says he, I have baptism, and have not charity? Have I the sacraments, and not charity? Do not shout: show me how can he who divides unity have charity? I, saith he, have baptism. Thou hast; but that baptism, without charity, profits thee nothing; because without charity thou art nothing. The baptism itself, even in him who is nothing, is not nothing. Baptism, indeed, is something, aye, something great, for His sake, of whom it is said, “This is He that baptizeth.” But lest thou shouldst fancy that that which is great can profit thee aught, if thou be not in unity, it was after He was baptized that the dove descended, as if intimating, If thou hast baptism, be in the dove, lest what thou hast profit thee not. Come, then, to the dove, we say; not that thou mayest begin to have what thou hadst not before, but that what thou didst have may begin to profit thee. For thou didst have baptism to destruction without; if thou shalt have it within, it begins to profit thee to salvation.

15. For not only was baptism not profitable to thee, and not also hurtful. Even holy things may be hurtful. In the good, indeed, holy things are to salvation; in the evil, to judgment. For we certainly know, brethren, what we receive, and what we receive is at any rate holy, and no one says that it is not: and what says the apostle? “But he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself.” He does not say that the thing itself is bad, but that the evil man, by receiving it amiss, receives the good thing which he does receive to judgment. Was that morsel which the Lord delivered to Judas evil? God forbid. The physician would not give poison; it was health the physician gave; but by unworthily receiving it, he who received it not being at peace, received it unto destruction. So likewise also he who is baptized. I have (baptism), says he, for myself. Thou hast it, I admit. Give good heed to what thou hast; by that very thing which thou hast thou wilt be condemned. Wherefore? Because thou hast what belongs to the dove apart from the dove. If thou hast what is the dove’s in the dove, thou art safe. Suppose thyself a soldier: if thou hast thy general’s mark within the lines, thou servest in safety; but if thou hast it out of bounds, not only that mark will not be of advantage to thee for service, but thou wilt even be punished as a deserter. Come, then, come, and do not say, I have

already, I have enough. Come; the dove is calling thee, calling thee by her sighing. My brethren, to you I say, call by groaning, not by quarreling; call by praying, by invitation, by fasting; let them by your charity understand that you pity them. I doubt not, my brethren, that if they see your sorrow they will be astonished, and will come to life again. Come, then, come; be not afraid; be afraid if thou do not come; nay, be not afraid, rather bewail thyself. Come, thou wilt rejoice if thou wilt come; thou wilt indeed groan in the tribulations of thy pilgrimage, but thou wilt rejoice in hope. Come where the dove is, to whom it was said, “My dove is one, the only one of her mother.” Seest thou not the one dove upon the head of Christ, seest thou not the tongues throughout the whole world? It is the same Spirit by the dove and by the tongues: if by the dove the same Spirit, and by the tongues the same Spirit, then was the Holy Spirit given to the whole world, from which Spirit thou hast cut thyself off, that thou mightest clamor with the raven, not that thou mightest sigh with the dove. Come, then.

16. But thou art anxious, it may be, and sayest, I was baptized without; I fear lest therefore I am guilty, in that I was baptized without. Already thou beginnest to know what thou hast to bewail. Thou sayest truly that thou art guilty, not because of thy re ceiving, but because of thy receiving without. Keep then what thou hast received; amend thy receiving it without. Thou hast received what is the dove’s apart from the dove. Here are two things said to thee: Thou hast received, and, Apart from the dove thou hast received. In that thou hast received, I approve; that thou hast received without, I disapprove. Keep then what thou hast received, it is not changed, but recognized: it is the mark of my king, I will not profane it. I will correct the deserter, not change the mark.

17. Boast not of thy baptism because I call it a real baptism. Behold, I say that it is so; the whole Catholic Church says that it is so; the dove regards it, and acknowledges it, and groans because thou hast it without; she sees therein what she may acknowledge, sees also what she may correct. It is a real baptism, come. Thou boastest that it is real, and yet wilt thou not come? What then of the wicked, who do not belong to the dove? Saith the dove to thee, Even the wicked, among whom I groan, who belong not to my members, and it must needs be that I groan among them, have not they that

which thou boastest of having? Have not many drunkards baptism? Have not many covetous? Have not many idolaters, and, what is worse, who are such by stealth? Do not the pagans resort, or at least did resort, publicly to idols? And now Christians secretly seek out diviners and consult astrologers. And yet these have baptism; but the dove groans among ravens. Why then dost thou boast in the having it? This that thou hast, the wicked man also has. Have thou humility, charity, peace; have thou the good thing which as yet thou hast not, so that the good thing which thou hast may profit thee.

18. For what thou hast, even Simon Magus had: the Acts of the Apostles are witness, that canonical book which has to be read in the Church every year. You know that every year, in the season following the Lord’s Passion, that book is read, wherein it is written, how the apostle was converted, and from a persecutor became a preacher; also, how on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was sent in cloven tongues as of fire. There we read that in Samaria many believed through the preaching of Philip: and he is understood to have been either one of the apostles or one of the deacons; for we read there that seven deacons were ordained, among whom is the name of Philip. Well, then, through the preaching of Philip the Samaritans believed; Samaria began to abound in believers. This Simon Magus was there. By his magical arts he had so befooled the people, that they fancied him to be the power of God. Impressed, however, by the signs which were done by Philip, he also believed; but in what manner he believed, the events that followed afterwards proved. And Simon also was baptized. The apostles, who were at Jerusalem, heard this. Peter and John were sent to those in Samaria; they found many baptized; and as none of them had as yet received the Holy Ghost,—in like manner as He at that time descended, so as that they on whom the Holy Spirit came should speak with tongues, for a manifest token that the nations would believe,—they laid their hands on them, praying for them, and they received the Holy Ghost. This Simon—who was not a dove but a raven in the Church, because he sought his own things, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s; whence he loved the power which was in the Christians more than the righteousness—Simon, I say, saw that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the hands of the apostles (not that it was given by them, but given in answer to their prayers), and he

said to them, “How much money will ye that I give you, so that by the laying on of my hands also, the Holy Ghost may be given? And Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou thoughtest that the gift of God was to be bought with money.” To whom said he, “Thy money perish with thee”? Undoubtedly to one that was baptized. Baptism he had already; but he did not cleave to the bowels of the dove. Understand that he did not; attend to the very words of the Apostle Peter, for he goes on, “Thou hast no part nor lot in this faith: for I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness.” The dove has no gall; Simon had, and for that reason he was separated from the bowels of the dove. What did baptism profit him? Do not therefore boast of thy baptism, as if that were of itself enough for thy salvation. Be not angry, put away thy gall, come to the dove. Here that will profit thee, which without not only did not profit thee, but even was prejudicial to thee.

19. Neither say, I will not come, because I was baptized without. So, begin to have charity, begin to have fruit, let there be fruit found in thee, and the dove will send thee within. We find this in Scripture. The ark was made of incorruptible wood. The incorruptible timbers are the saints, the faithful that belong to Christ. For as in the temple the living stones of which it is built are said to be faithful men, so likewise the incorruptible timbers are they who persevere in the faith. In that same ark, then, the timbers were incorruptible. Now the ark is the Church, it is there the dove baptizeth; for the ark was borne on the water, the incorruptible timbers were baptized within. We find that certain timbers were baptized without, such as all the trees that were in the world. Nevertheless the water was the same, not another sort; all had come from heaven, or from abysses of the fountains. It was the same water in which the incorruptible timbers which were in the ark were baptized, and in which the timbers that were without were baptized. The dove was sent forth, and at first found no rest for its feet; it returned to the ark, for all was full of water, and it preferred to return rather than be rebaptized. But the raven was sent out before the water was dried up. Rebaptized, it desired not to return, and died in those waters. May God avert from us that raven’s death. For why did not the raven return, unless because it was taken off by the waters? But on the other hand, the dove not finding rest for its feet, whilst the water was crying to it on every side,

“Come, come, dip thyself here;” just as these heretics cry, “Come, come, here thou hast it;” the dove, finding no rest for its feet, returned to the ark. And Noah sent it out a second time, just as the ark sends you out to speak to them; and what did the dove afterwards? Because there were timbers without that were baptized, it brought back to the ark an olive branch. That branch had both leaves and fruit. Let there not be in thee words only, nor leaves only; let there be fruit, and thou returnest to the ark, not of thyself, the dove calls thee back. Groan ye without, that ye may call them back within.

20. Moreover, as to this fruit of the olive, if the matter be examined, you will find what it was. The fruit of the olive signifies charity. How do we prove this? Just as oil is kept down by no liquid, but bursting through all, bounds up and overtops them; so likewise charity cannot be pressed to the bottom, but must of necessity show itself at the top. Therefore the apostle says of it, “Yet show I unto you a more excellent way.” Since we have said of oil that it overtops other liquids, in case it should not be of charity, the apostle said, “I show you a more excellent way,” let us hear what follows. “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” Go now, Donatus, and cry, “I am eloquent;” go now, and cry, “I am learned.” How far eloquent? How far learned? Hast thou spoken with the tongues of angels? Yet though thou wert to speak with the tongues of angels, not having charity, I should hear only sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. I want solidity; let me find fruit among the leaves; let there be not words merely, let them have the olive, let them return to the ark.

21. But I have the sacrament, thou wilt say. Thou sayest the truth; the sacrament is divine; thou hast baptism, and that I confess. But what says the apostle? “If I should know all mysteries, and have prophecy and all faith, so that I could remove mountains;” in case thou shouldest say this, “I believe; enough for me.” But what says James? “The devils believe and tremble.” Faith is mighty, but without charity it profits nothing. The devils confessed Christ. Accordingly it was from believing, but not from loving, they said, “What have we to do with Thee?” They had faith, but not charity; hence they were devils. Boast not of faith; so far thou art on a level with the

devils. Say not to Christ, What have I to do with Thee? For Christ’s unity speaks to thee. Come, learn peace, return to the bowels of the dove. Thou hast been baptized without; have fruit, and thou returnest to the ark.

22. But sayest thou, “Why do you seek us if we are bad men?” That you may be good. The reason why we seek you is, because you are bad; for if you were not bad, we should have found you, and would not be seeking you. He who is good is already found; he who is bad is still sought after. Consequently, we are seeking you; return ye to the ark. “But I have baptism already.” “Though I should know all mysteries, and have prophecy and all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not charity, I am nothing.” Let me see fruit there; let me see the olive there, and thou art called back to the ark.

23. But what sayest thou? “Behold, we suffer many evils.” Would that ye suffered these for Christ, not for your own honor! Hear what follows: They, indeed, boast sometimes, because they do many alms, give to the poor; because they suffer afflictions: but it is for Donatus, not for Christ. Consider how thou sufferest; for if thou sufferest for Donatus, it is for a proud man: thou art not in the dove if thou art suffering for Donatus. Donatus was not the friend of the Bridegroom; for had he been, he would have sought the glory of the Bridegroom, not his own. See the friend of the Bridegroom saying, “This is He that baptizeth.” He, for whom thou art suffering, was not the friend of the Bridegroom. Thou hast not the wedding garment; and if thou art come to the feast, thou wilt be put out of doors; nay, thou hast been cast out of doors already, and for that reason thou art wretched: return at length, and do not boast. Hear what the apostle says: “Though I should distribute all my goods to the poor, and give my body to be burnt, but have not charity.” See what thou dost not have. “Though,” he saith, “I should give my body to be burnt;” and that, too, for the name of Christ; but since there are many who do this boastfully, not with charity, therefore, “Though I should give my body to be burnt, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” It was by charity those martyrs, who suffered in time of persecution, did this; but these men do it of their vanity and pride; for in the absence of a persecutor, they throw themselves headlong into destruction. Come, then, that thou mayest have charity. “But we have our martyrs.”

What martyrs? They are not doves; hence they attempted to fly, and fell over the rock.

24. You see then, my brethren, that all things cry against them, all the divine pages, all prophecy, the whole gospel, all the apostolic letters, every sigh of the dove, and yet they awake not, they do not yet rouse from their sleep. But if we are the dove, let us groan, let us persevere, let us hope; God's compassion will be with you, that the fire of the Holy Spirit may glow in your simplicity; and they will come. There must be no despairing; pray, preach, love; the Lord is able to the utmost. Already they begin to be sensible of their shame; many have become sensible of it, and blushed; Christ will aid, that the rest also may become sensible of it. However, my brethren, at least let the chaff alone remain there; let all the grain be gathered together; let whatever has borne fruit among them return to the ark by the dove.

25. Failing everywhere else, what do they now allege against us, not finding what to say? They have taken away our houses, they have taken away our estates. They bring forward wills. "See, Gaius Seius made a grant of an estate to the church over which Faustinus presided." Of what church was Faustinus bishop? What is the church? To the church over which Faustinus presided, said he. But Faustinus presided not over a church, but over a sect. The dove, however, is the Church. Why cry out? We have not devoured houses; let the dove have them. Let inquiry be made who the dove is, and let her have them. For you know, my brethren, that those houses of theirs are not Augustin's; and if you know it not, and imagine that I delight in the possession of them, God knows, yea, knows my judgment respecting those estates, and even what I suffer in that matter; He knows my groaning, since He has deigned to impart to me somewhat of the dove. Behold, there are those estates; by what right dost thou assert thy claim to them? By divine right, or by human? Let them answer: Divine right we have in the Scriptures, human right in the laws of kings. By what right does every man possess what he possesses? Is it not by human right? For by divine right, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." The poor and the rich God made of one clay; the same earth supports alike the poor and the rich. By human right, however, one says, This estate is mine, this house is mine,

this servant is mine. By human right, therefore, is by right of the emperors. Why so? Because God has distributed to mankind these very human rights through the emperors and kings of this world. Do you wish us to read the laws of the emperors, and to act by the estates according to these laws? If you will have your possession by human right, let us recite the laws of the emperors; let us see whether they would have the heretics possess anything. But what is the emperor to me? thou sayest. It is by right from him that thou possessest the land. Or take away rights created by emperors, and then who will dare say, That estate is mine, or that slave is mine, or this house is mine? If, however, in order to their possessing these things, men have received rights derived from kings, will ye that we read the laws, that you may be glad in having even a single garden, and impute it to nothing but the clemency of the dove that you are permitted to remain in possession even there? For there are to be read well known laws, in which the emperors have directed that those who, being outside the communion of the Catholic Church, usurp to themselves the name of Christians, and are not willing in peace to worship the Author of peace, may not dare to possess anything in the name of the Church.

26. But what have we to do with the emperor? But I have already said that we are treating of human right. And yet the apostle would have us obey kings, would have us honor kings, and said, “Honor the king.” Do not say, What have I to do with the king? as in that case, what have you to do with the possession? It is by the rights derived from kings that possessions are enjoyed. Thou hast said, What have I to do with the king? Say not then that the possessions are thine; because it is to those same human rights, by which men enjoy their possessions, thou hast referred them. But it is with divine right I have to do, saith he. Well, let us read the Gospel; let us see how far extends the Catholic Church of Christ, upon whom the dove came, which taught, “This is He that baptizeth.” In what way, then, can he possess by divine right, who says, “I baptize;” whilst the dove says, “This is He that baptizeth;” whilst the Scripture says, “My dove is one, the only one of her mother”? Why have you torn the dove?—nay, rather, have torn your own bowels, for while you are yourselves torn to pieces, the dove continues entire. Therefore, my brethren, if, driven from every point, they have nothing to say, I will tell them what to do; let them come to the Catholic

Church, and together with us, they will have not only the earth, but Him also who made heaven and earth.

TRACTATE VII

CHAPTER I. 34–51

1. We rejoice at your numbers, for you have come together with readiness and in greater numbers than we could have hoped. This it is that delights and consoles us in all the labors and dangers of this life, your love towards God, and pious zeal, and assured hope, and fervor of spirit. You heard when the psalm was read, "that the needy and poor man cries to God in this world." For it is the voice, as you have often heard, and ought to remember, not of one man, and yet of one man; not of one, because the faithful are many—many grains groaning amid the chaff diffused throughout the whole world—but of one, because all are members of Christ, and thus one body. This people, then, poor and needy, does not know to rejoice with the world: its grief is within, and its joy is within, where no one sees but He who listens to him who groans, and crowns him who hopes. The rejoicing of the world is vanity. With great expectation is it hoped for and it cannot, when it comes, be held fast. For this day which is a day of rejoicing in this city to the lost, to-morrow will, of course, cease to be; nor will they themselves be the same tomorrow that they are to-day. And all things pass away, fly away, and vanish like smoke; and woe to those who love such things! For every soul follows what it loves. "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of the Lord abideth forever." Behold what thou must love if thou dost desire to abide for ever. But thou hadst this to reply: How can I apprehend the word of God? "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

2. Wherefore, beloved, let it belong to our neediness and poverty to grieve for those who seem to themselves to abound. For their joy is as that of madmen. But as a madman rejoices for the most part in his madness, and laughs, and grieves over him who is in his senses, so let us, beloved, if we have received the medicine coming from heaven, because we all were madmen, as if made whole, because those things which we did love we do not love,—let us, I say, groan unto God for those who are yet in madness,

for He is able to save them also. And there is need that they should look upon themselves and be displeased with themselves: to behold they desire, and to behold themselves they have not known. For if they for a little turn their eyes upon themselves, they see their own confusion. But until this take place, let our pursuits be different, let the recreations of our souls be different; our grief avails more than their joy. As far as regards the number of the brethren, it is difficult to conceive that any one of the men should have been carried away by that celebration; but as regards the number of the sisters, it grieves us, and this is a greater cause for grief, that they do not rather repair to the Church, whom if not fear, modesty at all events ought to deter from the public scene. May He see to this who sees it; and may His mercy be present to heal all. Let us who have come together feed upon the feast of God, and let our joy be His word. For He has invited us to His gospel, and He is our food, than whom nothing is sweeter, if only a man have a healthy palate in his heart.

3. But I imagine, beloved brethren, that you remember that this Gospel is read in order in suitable portions; and I think that it has not escaped you what has lately been treated of, specially the recent matters concerning John and the dove. Concerning John, namely, what new thing he learned concerning the Lord by means of the dove, although he had already known the Lord. And this was discovered by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, that John indeed already knew the Lord, but that the Lord Himself was to baptize, that the power of baptizing He would not transfer from Himself to any one, this he learned by means of the dove, because it was said to him, “On whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending as a dove, and abiding upon Him, this is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” What is “This is He”? Not another, although by means of another. But why by means of a dove? Many things were said, and I am not able, nor is there need that I should go over all;—principally, however, to denote peace, because also the trees which were baptized outside, because the dove found in them fruit, it brought to the ark, as you remember the dove sent out by Noah from the ark, which floated on the flood and was washed by baptism, was not submerged. When, then, it was sent forth, it brought an olive branch; but it had not leaves alone, it had also fruit. This, then, we ought to wish for our brethren who are baptized outside, that they may have fruit; the dove will

not permit them to remain outside, but bring them back to the ark. For the whole of fruit is charity, without which a man is nothing, whatever else he have. And this, which is most fully said by the apostle, we have mentioned and recounted. For he says, “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal; and though I should have all knowledge, and know all mysteries, and have all prophecy, and should have all faith” (but in what sense did he say all faith?), “so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I should distribute all my goods to the poor, and though I should give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” But in no manner are they able to say that they have charity who divide unity. These things were said: let us see what follows.

4. John bare record because he saw. What record did he bear? “That this is the Son of God.” It behoved, then, that He should baptize who is God’s only Son, not His adopted son. Adopted sons are the ministers of the only Son: the only Son has power; the adopted, the ministry. In the case that a minister baptizes who does not belong to the number of sons, because he lives evilly and acts evilly, what is our consolation? “This is He which baptizeth.”

5. “The next day, John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!” Assuredly, in a special sense, the Lamb; for the disciples were also called lambs: “Behold, I send you as lambs in the midst of wolves.” They were also called light: “Ye are the light of the world;” but in another sense is He called so, concerning whom it was said, “That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” In like manner was He called the dove in a special sense, alone without stain, without sin; not one whose sins have been washed away, but One who never had stain. For what? Because John said concerning the Lord, “Behold the Lamb of God,” was not John himself a lamb? Was he not a holy man? Was he not the friend of the Bridegroom? Wherefore, with a special meaning, said John of Him, “This is the Lamb of God;” because solely by the blood of this Lamb alone could men be redeemed.

6. My brethren, if we acknowledge our price, that it is the blood of the Lamb, who are they who this day celebrate the festival of the blood of I know not what woman, and how ungrateful are they! The gold was snatched, they say, from the ear of a woman, and the blood ran, and the gold was placed on a pair of scales or on a balance, and the advantage was much on the side of the blood. If the blood of a woman was sufficiently weighty to outweigh the gold, what power to outweigh the world has the blood of the Lamb by whom the world was made? And, indeed, that spirit, I know not who, was pacified by the blood that he should depress the weight. Impure spirits knew that Jesus Christ would come, they had heard of His coming from the angels, they had heard of it from the prophets, and they expected it. For if they were not expecting it, why did they exclaim, “What have we to do with Thee? art Thou come before the time to destroy us? We know who Thou art; the Holy One of God.” They expected that He would come, but they were ignorant of the time. But what have you heard in the psalm regarding Jerusalem? “For Thy servants have taken pleasure in her stones, and will pity the dust thereof. Thou shall arise,” says he, “and have mercy upon Zion: for the time is come that Thou wilt have mercy upon her.” When the time came for God to have mercy, the Lamb came. What sort of a Lamb whom wolves fear? What sort of a Lamb is it who, when slain, slew a lion? For the devil is called a lion, going about and roaring, seeking whom he may devour. By the blood of the Lamb the lion was vanquished. Behold the spectacles of Christians. And what is more: they with the eyes of the flesh behold vanity, we with the eyes of the heart behold truth. Do not think, brethren, that our Lord God has dismissed us without spectacles; for if there are no spectacles, why have ye come together to-day? Behold, what we have said you saw, and you exclaimed; you would not have exclaimed if you had not seen. And this is a great thing to see in the whole world, the lion vanquished by the blood of the Lamb: members of Christ delivered from the teeth of the lions, and joined to the body of Christ. Therefore some spirit or other contrived the counterfeit that His image should be bought for blood, because he knew that the human race was at some time to be redeemed by the precious blood. For evil spirits counterfeit certain shadows of honor to themselves, that they may deceive those who follow Christ. So much so, my brethren, that those who seduce by means of amulets, by incantations, by the devices of the enemy, mingle

the name of Christ with their incantations: because they are not now able to seduce Christians, so as to give them poison they add some honey, that by means of the sweet the bitter may be concealed, and be drunk to ruin. So much so, that I know that the priest of that Pilleatus was sometimes in the habit of saying, Pilleatus himself also is a Christian. Why so, brethren, unless that they were not able otherwise to seduce Christians?

7. Do not, then, seek Christ elsewhere than where Christ wished Himself to be preached to you; and as He wished Himself to be preached to you, in that fashion hold Him fast, in that manner write Him on your heart. It is a wall against all the assaults, and against all the snares of the enemy. Do not fear, he does not tempt unless he has been permitted; it is certain that he does nothing unless permitted or sent. He is sent as an evil angel by a power holding him in control: he is permitted when he asks anything; and this, brethren, does not take place unless that the just may be tried, the unjust punished. Why, then, dost thou fear? Walk in the Lord thy God; be thou assured, what He does not wish thee to suffer thou dost not suffer; what He permits thee to suffer is the scourge of one correcting, not the punishment of one condemning. We are being educated for an eternal inheritance, and do we spurn to be scourged? My brethren, if a boy were to refuse the punishment of cuffs or stripes from his father, would he not be called proud, incorrigible, ungrateful towards paternal discipline? And for what does an earthly father educate his son? That he may not lose the temporal things which he has acquired for him, which he has collected for him, which he does not wish him to lose, which he who leaves them cannot retain eternally. He does not teach a son with whom he is to possess, but one who is to possess after him. My brethren, if a father teaches a son who is to succeed him, and teaches him also that he will have to pass through all these things, in same way as he who is admonishing him is destined to pass through them, how do you wish that He educate us, our Father to whom we are not to succeed, but to whom we are to approach, and with whom we are to abide eternally in an inheritance which does not decay nor die, and which no storms can desolate? He is Himself both the inheritance and the Father. Shall we possess Him, and ought we not to undergo training? Let us hear the instruction of the Father. When our head aches, let us not have recourse to the superstitious intercessor, to the diviners and remedies of vanity. My

brethren, shall I not mourn over you? Daily do I find these things; and what shall I do? Not yet have I persuaded Christians that their hope ought to be placed in God. Behold, if one dies to whom one of these remedies has been given (and how many have died with remedies, and how many have lived without them!), with what confidence does the spirit go forth to God? He has lost the sign of Christ, and has received the sign of the devil. Perhaps he may say that he has not lost the sign of Christ. Thou canst have, then, the sign of Christ along with the sign of the devil. Christ does not desire community of ownership, but He desires to possess alone what He has purchased. He has bought at so great a price that He may possess alone: thou makest Him the partner of that devil to whom thou didst sell thyself by thy sin. "Woe to the double-hearted," to those who in their hearts give part to God and part to the devil. God, being angry that the devil has part there, departs, and the devil will possess the whole. Not in vain, therefore, says the apostle, "Neither give place to the devil." Let us know the Lamb, then, brethren; let us know our price.

8. "John stood, and two of his disciples." Behold two of John's disciples: since John, the friend of the Bridegroom, was such as he was, he sought not his own glory, but bore witness to the truth. Did he wish that his disciples should remain with him and not follow the Lord? Rather he himself showed hisdisciples whom they should follow. For they accounted of him as though he were the lamb; and he said, "Why do you give heed to me? I am not the lamb; behold the Lamb of God," of whom also he had already said, Behold the Lamb of God. And what benefit does the Lamb of God confer upon us? "Behold," he says, "who taketh away the sin of the world." The two who were with John followed Him when they heard this.

9. Let us see what follows: "Behold the Lamb of God." This John said, and the two disciples heard him speak, and followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned and saw them following, and saith unto them, "What seek ye?" And they said, "Rabbi (that is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest Thou?" They did not follow Him in such manner as that they should cleave to Him; for it is plain when they clave unto Him, for He called them from the ship. For one of the two was Andrew, as you have just heard, and Andrew was the brother of Peter; and we know from the Gospel that the

Lord called Peter and Andrew from the ship, saying, “Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men.” And from that time they clave unto Him, so as not to go away. On the present occasion these two followed Him, not as those who were not again to leave Him, but to see where He dwelt, and to fulfill the Scripture: “Let thy foot wear out the threshold of His doors; arise to come to Him continually, and be instructed in His precepts.” He showed them where He dwelt: they came and remained with Him. What a blessed day they spent, what a blessed night! Who can make known to us those things which they heard from the Lord? Let us also build in our heart, and make a house into which He may come and teach us, and have converse with us.

10. “What seek ye?” They said unto Him, “Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest Thou? He says to them, Come and see. And they came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day: and it was about the tenth hour.” Do we think that it did in no wise pertain to the evangelist to tell us what hour it was? Is it possible that he wished us to give heed to nothing in that, to inquire after nothing? It was the tenth hour. That number signifies the law, because the law was given in ten commandments. But the time had come for the law to be fulfilled by love, because it could not be fulfilled by the Jews by fear. Hence the Lord says, “I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill.” Suitably, then, at the tenth hour did these two follow Him, at the testimony of the friend of the Bridegroom, and that He at the tenth hour heard “Rabbi (which is interpreted, Master).” If at the tenth hour the Lord heard Rabbi, and the tenth number pertains to the law, the master of the law is no other than the giver of the law. Let no one say that one gave the law, and that another teaches the law: for the same teaches it who gave it; He is the Master of His own law, and teaches it. And mercy is in His tongue, therefore mercifully teacheth He the law, as it is said regarding wisdom, “The law and mercy doth she carry in her tongue.” Do not fear that thou art not able to fulfill the law, flee to mercy. If thou canst not fulfill the law, make use of that covenant, make use of the bond, make use of the prayers which the heavenly One, skilled in the law, has ordained and composed for you.

11. For those who have a cause, and wish to supplicate the emperor, seek for some one skilled in the law, and trained in the schools, to compose their petition for them; lest perchance, if they ask in an unbecoming manner, they not only do not obtain what they seek, but get punishment instead of a benefit. When, therefore, the apostles sought to petition, and could not find how to approach the Emperor God, they said unto Christ, “Lord, teach us to pray;” that is to say, “O thou who art our skilled One in the law, our Assessor, yea, the Concessor of God, compose for us prayers.” And the Lord taught them from the book of the celestial law, taught them how to pray; and in that which He taught, He laid down a certain condition: “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” If thou seekest not according to the law, thou becomest guilty. Dost thou not tremble before the Emperor, having become guilty? Offer the sacrifice of humility, offer the sacrifice of mercy; pray, saying, Forgive me, for I also forgive. But if thou sayest, do. For what wilt thou do? whither wilt thou go if thou hast lied in thy prayers? Not as it is said in the forum, thou shalt lose the benefit of the rescript; but thou shall not obtain a rescript. For it is the law of the forum that he who shall have lied in his petition shall derive no benefit from that which he has obtained. But this among men, because a man can be deceived: the emperor might have been deceived, when thou didst address to him thy petition; for thou saidest what thou wouldest, and he to whom thou didst speak knew not whether it was true or false; he sent thee away to thy adversary to be confuted if possible, so that if before the judge thou shouldest be convicted of falsehood (because he was not able not to grant the rescript, not knowing whether thou hadst lied), thou shouldest lose the benefit of the rescript, in the place to which thou hadst taken it. But God, who knows whether thou liest or speakest the truth, does not cause thee to lose in the judgment the benefit, but does not permit thee to obtain it, because thou hast dared to lie to the Truth.

12. What, then, wilt thou do? Tell me. To fulfill the law in every part, so as to offend in nothing, is difficult: the condition of guilt is therefore certain; wilt thou refuse to use the remedy? Behold, my brethren, what a remedy the Lord hath provided for the sicknesses of the soul! What then? When thy head aches, we praise thee if thou placest the gospel at thy head, instead of having recourse to an amulet. For so far has human weakness proceeded,

and so lamentable is the estate of those who have recourse to amulets, that we rejoice when we see a man who is upon his bed, and tossed about with fevers and pains, placing his hope on nothing else than that the gospel lies at his head; not because it is done for this purpose, but because the gospel is preferred to amulets. If, then, it is placed at the head to allay the pain of the head, is it not placed at the heart to heal it from sin? Let it be done then. Let what be done? Let it be placed at the heart, let the heart be healed. It is well,—well that thou shouldest have no further care regarding the safety of the body, than to ask it from God. If He knows that it will do thee good, He will give it thee; if He give it not to thee, it would not have profited thee to have it. How many are sick in bed, and for that reason are innocent! for if they were to recover, they would go forth to commit acts of wickedness. To how many is health an injury! The robber who goes forth to the narrow path to slay a man, how much better for him would it have been to have been sick! And he who rises by night to dig through his neighbor's wall, how much better for him to be tossed by fever! If he were ill, he would have been comparatively innocent; being well, he is guilty of wickedness. It is known, then, to God what is expedient for us: let us make this only our endeavor, that our hearts be whole from sins; and when it happens that we are scourged in the body, let us pray to Him for relief. The Apostle Paul besought Him that He would take away the thorn in his flesh, and He would not. Was he disturbed? Was he filled with sadness, and did he speak of himself as deserted? Rather did he say that he was not deserted, because that was not taken away which he desired to be taken away, to the end that infirmity might be cured. For this he found in the voice of the Physician, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Whence knowest thou, then, that God does not wish to heal thee? As yet it is expedient for thee to be scourged. Whence knowest thou how diseased that is which the physician cuts, using his knife on the diseased parts? Does he not know the measure, what he is to do, and how far he is to do it? Does the shrieking of him he cuts restrain the hands of the physician cutting according to his art? The one cries, the other cuts. Is he cruel who does not listen to the man crying out, or is he not rather merciful in following the wound, that he may heal the sick man? These things have I said, my brethren, in order that no one seek any other aid than that of God, when we happen to be under the reproof of God. See that ye perish not; see that ye do not depart from the Lamb, and be devoured by the lion.

13. We have declared, then, why it was at the tenth hour. Let us see what follows: “One of the two which heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. He findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.” Messias, in Hebrew; Christ, in Greek; in Latin, Anointed. Chrisma is anointing in Greek; Christ, therefore, is the Anointed. He is peculiarly anointed, pre-eminently anointed; wherewith all Christians are anointed, He is pre-eminently anointed. Hear how He speaks in the psalm: “Wherefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.” For all the holy ones are His fellows, but He in a peculiar sense is the Holy of Holies, peculiarly anointed, peculiarly Christ.

14. “And he brought him to Jesus; and when Jesus beheld him, He said, Thou art Simon the son of Joannes: thou shall be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, Peter.” It is not a great thing that the Lord said whose son Peter was. What is great to the Lord? He knew all the names of His own saints, whom He predestinated before the foundation of the world; and dost thou wonder that He said to one man, Thou art the son of this man, and thou shall be called this or that? Is it a great matter that He changed his name, and converted it from Simon to Peter? Peter is from petra, a rock, but the petra [rock]; is the Church; in the name of Peter, then, was the Church figured. And who is safe, unless he who builds upon the rock? And what saith the Lord Himself? “He that heareth these my words, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man building his house upon a rock” (he doth not yield to temptation). “The rain descended, the floods came, the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth my words, and doeth them not” (now let each one of us fear and beware), “I will liken him to a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand: the rain descended, the floods came, the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.” What profit is it to enter the Church for him who builds upon the sand? For, by hearing and not doing, he builds indeed, but on the sand. For if he hears nothing, he builds nothing; but if he hears, he builds. But we ask, Where? For if he

hears and does, he builds upon the rock; if he hears and does not, he builds upon the sand. There are two kinds of builders, those building upon the rock, and those building upon the sand. What, then, are those who do not hear? Are they safe? Does He say that they are safe because they do not build? They are naked beneath the rains, before the winds, before the floods; when these come, they carry away those persons before they overthrow the houses. It is then the only security, both to build, and to build upon the rock. If thou wilt hear and do not, thou buildest; but thou buildest a ruin: and when temptation comes it overthrows the house, and carries away thee with the ruin. But if thou dost not hear, thou art naked; thou thyself art dragged away by those temptations. Hear, then, and do; it is the only remedy. How many, perchance, on this day, by hearing and not doing, are hurried away on the stream of this festival! For, through hearing and not doing, the flood cometh, this annual festival; the torrent is filled, it will pass away and become dry, but woe to him whom it shall carry away! Know this, then, beloved, that unless a man hears and does, he builds not upon the rock, and he does not belong to that great name which the Lord so commended. For He has called thy attention. For if Simon had been called Peter before, thou wouldest not have so clearly seen the mystery of the rock, and thou wouldest have thought that he was called so by chance, not by the providence of God; therefore God willed that he should be called first something else, that by the very change of name the reality of the sacrament might be commended to our notice.

15. “And the day following He would go forth into Galilee, and finding Philip, He saith unto him, Follow me. Now he was of the city of Andrew and Peter. And Philip findeth Nathanael” (Philip who had been already called by the Lord); “and he said unto him, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus, the son of Joseph.” He was called the son of that man to whom His mother had been espoused. For that He was conceived and born while she was still a virgin, all Christians know well from the Gospel. This Philip said to Nathanael, and he added the place, “from Nazareth.” And Nathanael said unto him, “From Nazareth something good can come.” What is the meaning, brethren? Not as some read, for it is likewise wont to be read, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” For the words of Philip follow, who says, “Come and see.” But

the words of Philip can suitably follow both readings, whether you read it thus, as confirming, “From Nazareth something good can come,” to which Philip replies, “Come and see;” or whether as doubting, and making the whole a question, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Come and see.” Since then, whether read in this manner or in that, the words following are not incompatible, it is for us to inquire which of the two interpretations we shall adopt.

16. What sort of a man this Nathanael was, we prove by the words which follow. Hear what sort of a man he was; the Lord Himself bears testimony. Great is the Lord, known by the testimony of John; blessed Nathanael, known by the testimony of the truth. Because the Lord, although He had not been commended by the testimony of John, Himself to Himself bore testimony, because the truth is sufficient for its own testimony. But because men were not able to receive the truth, they sought the truth by means of a lamp, and therefore John was sent to show them the Lord. Hear the Lord bearing testimony to Nathanael: “Nathanael said unto him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip says to him, Come and see. And Jesus sees Nathanael coming to Him, and says concerning him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” Great testimony! Not of Andrew, nor of Peter, nor of Philip was that said which was said of Nathanael, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.”

17. What do we then, brethren? Ought this man to be the first among the apostles? Not only is Nathanael not found as first among the apostles, but he is neither the middle nor the last among the twelve, although the Son of God bore such testimony to him, saying, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” Is the reason asked for? In so far as the Lord intimates, we find a probable reason. For we ought to understand that Nathanael was learned and skilled in the law and for that reason was the Lord unwilling to place him among His disciples, because He chose unlearned persons, that He might by them confound the world. Listen to the apostle speaking these things: “For ye see,” saith he, “your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things that are despised, hath

God chosen, yea, and things which are not, as though they were things that are, to bring to nought things that are." If a learned man had been chosen, perhaps he would have said that he was chosen for the reason that his learning made him worthy of choice. Our Lord Jesus Christ, wishing to break the necks of the proud, did not seek the orator by means of the fisherman, but by the fisherman He gained the emperor. Great was Cyprian as an orator, but before him was Peter the fisherman, by means of whom not only the orator, but also the emperor, should believe. No noble was chosen in the first place, no learned man, because God chose the weak things of the world that He might confound the strong. This man, then, was great and without guile, and for this reason only was not chosen, lest the Lord should seem to any to have chosen the learned. And from this same learning in the law, it came that when he heard "from Nazareth,"—for he had searched the Scripture, and knew that the Saviour was to be expected thence, what the other scribes and Pharisees had difficulty in knowing,—this man, then, very learned in the law, when he heard Philip saying, "We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph;"—this man, who knew the Scriptures excellently well, when he heard the name "Nazareth," was filled with hope, and said, "From Nazareth something good can come."

18. Let us now see the rest concerning this man. "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." What is "in whom is no guile?" Perhaps he had no sin? Perhaps he was not sick? Perhaps he did not need a physician? God forbid. No one is born here in such fashion as not to need that Physician. What, then, is the meaning of the words, "in whom is no guile"? Let us search a little more intently—it will appear presently—in the name of the Lord. The Lord says dolus [guile]; and every one who understands Latin knows that dolus is when one thing is done and another feigned. Give heed, beloved. Dolus (guile) is not dolor (pain). I say this because many brethren, not well skilled in Latin, so speak as to say, Dolus torments him, using it for dolor. Dolus is fraud, it is deceit. When a man conceals one thing in his heart, and speaks another, it is guile, and he has, as it were, two hearts; he has, as it were, one recess of his heart where he sees the truth, and another recess where he conceives falsehood. And that you may know that this is guile, it is said in the Psalms, "Lips of guile." What are "lips of

guile"? It follows, "In a heart and in a heart have they spoken evil." What is "in a heart and in a heart," unless in a double heart? If, then, guile was not in Nathanael, the Physician judged him to be curable, not whole. A whole man is one thing, a curable another, an incurable a third: he who is sick, but not hopelessly sick, is called curable; he who is sick hopelessly, incurable; but he who is already whole does not need a physician. The Physician, then, who had come to cure, saw that he was curable, because there was no guile in him. How was guile not in him, if he is a sinner? He confesses that he is a sinner. For if he is a sinner, and says that he is a just man, there is guile in his mouth. Therefore in Nathanael He praised the confession of sin, He did not judge that he was not a sinner.

19. Wherefore, when the Pharisees, who seemed righteous to themselves, blamed the Lord, because, as physician, he mixed with the sick, and when they said, "Behold with whom he eats, with publicans and sinners," the Physician replied to the madmen, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." That is to say, because you call yourselves righteous when you are sinners, because you judge yourselves to be whole when you are languishing, you put away from you the medicine, and do not hold fast health. Hence that Pharisee who had asked the Lord to dinner, was whole in his own eyes; but that sick woman rushed into the house to which she had not been invited, and, made impudent by the desire of health, approached not the head of the Lord, nor the hands, but the feet; washed them with tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them, anointed them with ointment,—made peace, sinner as she was, with the footprints of the Lord. The Pharisee who sat at meat there, as though whole himself, blamed the Physician, and said within himself, "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known what woman touched his feet." He suspected that He knew not, because He did not repulse her to prevent His being touched with unclean hands; but He did know, He permitted Himself to be touched, that the touch itself might heal. The Lord, seeing the heart of the Pharisee, put forth a parable: "There was a certain creditor, which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred denars, and the other fifty; and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Which of them loved him most?" He answered, "I suppose, Lord, he to whom he forgave most." And turning to

the woman, He said unto Simon, “Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head: thou gavest me no kiss; she hath not ceased to kiss my feet: thou gavest me no oil; she hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore, I say unto thee, to her are forgiven many sins, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.” That is to say, thou art more sick, but thou thinkest thyself whole; thou thinkest that little is forgiven thee when thou owest more. Well did she, because guile was not in her, deserve medicine. What means, guile was not in her? She confessed her sins. This He also praises in Nathanael, that guile was not in him; for many Pharisees who abounded in sins said that they were righteous, and brought guile with them, which made it impossible for them to be healed.

20. Jesus then saw this man in whom was no guile, and said, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” Nathanael saith unto Him, “Whence knowest Thou me?” Jesus answered and said, “Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig (that is, under the fig-tree), I saw thee.” Nathanael answered and said unto Him, “Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel.” Some great thing Nathanael may have understood in the saying, “When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee, before that Philip called thee;” for his words, “Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel,” were not dissimilar to those of Peter so long afterwards, when the Lord said unto him, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” And there He named the rock, and praised the strength of the Church’s support in this faith. Here already Nathanael says, “Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel.” Wherefore? Because it was said to him, “Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.”

21. We must inquire whether this fig-tree signifies anything. Listen, my brethren. We find the fig-tree cursed because it had leaves only, and not fruit. In the beginning of the human race, when Adam and Eve had sinned, they made themselves girdles of fig leaves. Fig leaves then signify sins. Nathanael then was under the fig-tree, as it were under the shadow of death.

The Lord saw him, he concerning whom it was said, “They that sat under the shadow of death, unto them hath light arisen.” What then was said to Nathanael? Thou sayest to me, O Nathanael, “Whence knowest thou me?” Even now thou speakest to me, because Philip called thee. He whom an apostle had already called, He perceived to belong to His Church. O thou Church, O thou Israel, in whom is no guile! if thou art the people, Israel, in whom is no guile, thou hast even now known Christ by His apostles, as Nathanael knew Christ by Philip. But His compassion beheld thee before thou knewest Him, when thou wert lying under sin. For did we first seek Christ, and not He seek us? Did we come sick to the Physician, and not the Physician to the sick? Was not that sheep lost, and did not the shepherd, leaving the ninety and nine in the wilderness, seek and find it, and joyfully carry it back on his shoulders? Was not that piece of money lost, and the woman lighted the lamp, and searched in the whole house until she found it? And when she had found it, “Rejoice with me,” she said to her neighbors, “for I have found the piece of money which I lost.” In like manner were we lost as the sheep, lost as the piece of money; and our Shepherd found the sheep, but sought the sheep; the woman found the piece of money, but sought the piece of money. What is the woman? The flesh of Christ. What is the lamp? “I have prepared a lamp for my Christ.” Therefore were we sought that we might be found; having been found, we speak. Let us not be proud, for before we were found we were lost, if we had not been sought. Let them then not say to us whom we love, and whom we desire to gain to the peace of the Catholic Church, “What do you wish with us? Why seek you us if we are sinners?” We seek you for this reason that you perish not: we seek you because we were sought; we wish to find you because we have been found.

22. When, then, Nathanael had said “Whence knowest Thou me?” the Lord said to him, “Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.” O thou Israel without guile, whosoever thou art; O people living by faith, before I called thee by my apostles, when thou wast under the shadow of death, and thou sawest not me, I saw thee. The Lord then says to him, “Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, thou believest: thou shalt see a greater thing than these.” What is this, thou shalt see a greater thing than these? And He saith unto him, “Verily, verily, I say

unto you, ye shall see heaven open, and angels ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” Brethren, this is something greater than “under the fig-tree I saw thee.” For it is more that the Lord justified us when called than that He saw us lying under the shadow of death. For what profit would it have been to us if we had remained where He saw us? Should we not be lying there? What is this greater thing? When have we seen angels ascending and descending upon the Son of man?

23. Already on a former occasion I have spoken of these ascending and descending angels; but lest you should have forgotten, I shall speak of the latter briefly by way of recalling it to your recollection. I should use more words if I were introducing, not recalling the subject. Jacob saw a ladder in a dream; and on a ladder he saw angels ascending and descending: and he anointed the stone which he had placed at his head. You have heard that the Messias is Christ; you have heard that Christ is the Anointed. For Jacob did not place the stone, the anointed stone, that he might come and adore it: otherwise that would have been idolatry, not a pointing out of Christ. What was done was a pointing out of Christ, so far as it behoved such a pointing out to be made, and it was Christ that was pointed out. A stone was anointed, but not for an idol. A stone anointed; why a stone? “Behold, I lay in Zion a stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded.” Why anointed? Because Christus comes from chrisma. But what saw he then on the ladder? Ascending and descending angels. So it is the Church, brethren: the angels of God are good preachers, preaching Christ; this is the meaning of, “they ascend and descend upon the Son of man.” How do they ascend, and how do they descend? In one case we have an example; listen to the Apostle Paul. What we find in him, let us believe regarding the other preachers of the truth. Behold Paul ascending: “I know a man in Christ fourteen years ago was caught up into the third heaven (whether in the body, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth), and that he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” You have heard him ascending, hear him descending: “I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal; as babes in Christ I have fed you with milk, not with meat.” Behold he descended who had ascended. Ask whether he ascended to the third heaven. Ask whether he descended to give milk to babes. Hear that he descended: “I became a

babe in the midst of you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.” For we see both nurses and mothers descend to babes, and although they be able to speak Latin, they shorten the words, shake their tongues in a certain manner, in order to frame childish endearments from a methodical language; because if they speak according to rule, the infant does not understand nor profit. And if there be a father well skilled in speaking, and such an orator that the forum resounds with his eloquence, and the judgment-seats shake, if he have a little son, on his return home he puts aside the forensic eloquence to which he had ascended, and in child’s language descends to his little one. Hear in one place the apostle himself ascending and descending in the same sentence: “For whether,” says he,”we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause.” What is “we are beside ourselves”? That we see those things which it is not lawful for a man to speak. What is “we are sober for your cause? Have I judged myself to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified?” If the Lord Himself ascended and descended, it is evident that His preachers ascend by imitation, descend by preaching.

24. And if we have detained you somewhat longer than is our wont, the design was that the dangerous hours might pass: we imagine that those people have now brought their vanity to a close. But let us, brethren, having fed upon the feasts of salvation, do what remains, that we may in a religious manner fill up the Lord’s day with spiritual joys, and compare the joys of verity with the joys of vanity; and if we are horrified, let us grieve; if we grieve, let us pray; if we pray, may we be heard; if we are heard, we gain them also.

TRACTATE VIII

CHAPTER II. 1–4

1. The miracle indeed of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby He made the water into wine, is not marvellous to those who know that it was God’s doing. For He who made wine on that day at the marriage feast, in those six water-pots, which He commanded to be filled with water, the self-same does this every year in vines. For even as that which the servants put into the water-pots was turned into wine by the doing of the Lord, so in like manner also is

what the clouds pour forth changed into wine by the doing of the same Lord. But we do not wonder at the latter, because it happens every year: it has lost its marvellousness by its constant recurrence. And yet it suggests a greater consideration than that which was done in the water-pots. For who is there that considers the works of God, whereby this whole world is governed and regulated, who is not amazed and overwhelmed with miracles? If he considers the vigorous power of a single grain of any seed whatever, it is a mighty thing, it inspires him with awe. But since men, intent on a different matter, have lost the consideration of the works of God, by which they should daily praise Him as the Creator, God has, as it were, reserved to Himself the doing of certain extraordinary actions, that, by striking them with wonder, He might rouse men as from sleep to worship Him. A dead man has risen again; men marvel: so many are born daily, and none marvels. If we reflect more considerately, it is a matter of greater wonder for one to be who was not before, than for one who was to come to life again. Yet the same God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, doeth by His word all these things; and it is He who created that governs also. The former miracles He did by His Word, God with Himself; the latter miracles He did by the same Word incarnate, and for us made man. As we wonder at the things which were done by the man Jesus, so let us wonder at the things which where done by Jesus God. By Jesus God were made heaven, and earth, and the sea, all the garniture of heaven, the abounding riches of the earth, and the fruitfulness of the sea;—all these things which lie within the reach of our eyes were made by Jesus God. And we look at these things, and if His own spirit is in us they in such manner please us, that we praise Him that contrived them; not in such manner that turning ourselves to the works we turn away from the Maker, and, in a manner, turning our face to the things made and our backs to Him that made them.

2. And these things indeed we see; they lie before our eyes. But what of those we do not see, as angels, virtues, powers, dominions, and every inhabitant of this fabric which is above the heavens, and beyond the reach of our eyes? Yet angels, too, when necessary, often showed themselves to men. Has not God made all these too by His Word, that is, by His only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ? What of the human soul itself, which is not seen, and yet by its works shown in the flesh excites great admiration in those that

duly reflect on them,—by whom was it made, unless by God? And through whom was it made, unless through the Son of God? Not to speak as yet of the soul of man: the soul of any brute whatever, see how it regulates the huge body, puts forth the senses, the eyes to see, the ears to hear, the nostrils to smell, the taste to discern flavors—the members, in short, to execute their respective functions! Is it the body, not the soul, namely the inhabitant of the body, that doeth these things? The soul is not apparent to the eyes, nevertheless it excites admiration by these its actions. Direct now thy consideration to the soul of man, on which God has bestowed understanding to know its Creator, to discern and distinguish between good and evil, that is, between right and wrong: see how many things it does through the body! Observe this whole world arranged in the same human commonwealth, with what administrations, with what orderly degrees of authority, with what conditions of citizenship, with what laws, manners, arts! The whole of this is brought about by the soul, and yet this power of the soul is not visible. When withdrawn from the body, the latter is a mere carcase: first, it in a manner preserves it from rottenness. For all flesh is corruptible, and falls off into putridity unless preserved by the soul as by a kind of seasoning. But the human soul has this quality in common with the soul of the brute; those qualities rather are to be admired which I have stated, such as belong to the mind and intellect, wherein also it is renewed after the image of its Creator, after whose image man was formed. What will this power of the soul be when this body shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality? If such is its power, acting through corruptible flesh, what shall be its power through a spiritual body, after the resurrection of the dead? Yet this soul, as I have said, of admirable nature and substance, is a thing invisible, intellectual; this soul also was made by God Jesus, for He is the Word of God. “All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.”

3. When we see, therefore, such deeds wrought by Jesus God, why should we wonder at water being turned into wine by the man Jesus? For He was not made man in such manner that He lost His being God. Man was added to Him, God not lost to Him. This miracle was wrought by the same who made all those things. Let us not therefore wonder that God did it, but love Him because He did it in our midst, and for the purpose of our restoration.

For He gives us certain intimations by the very circumstances of the case. I suppose that it was not without cause He came to the marriage. The miracle apart, there lies something mysterious and sacramental in the very fact. Let us knock, that He may open to us, and fill us with the invisible wine: for we were water, and He made us wine, made us wise; for He gave us the wisdom of His faith, whilst before we were foolish. And it appertains, it may be, to this wisdom, together with the honor of God, and with the praise of His majesty, and with the charity of His most powerful mercy, to understand what was done in this miracle.

4. The Lord, on being invited, came to the marriage. What wonder if He came to that house to a marriage, having come into this world to a marriage? For, indeed, if He came not to a marriage, He has not here a bride. But what says the apostle? “I have espoused you to one husband, to present you a chaste virgin to Christ.” Why does he fear lest the virginity of Christ’s bride should be corrupted by the subtilty of the devil? “I fear,” saith he, “lest as the serpent beguiled Eve by his subtilty, so also your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and chastity which is in Christ.” Thus has He here a bride whom He has redeemed by His blood, and to whom He has given the Holy Spirit as a pledge. He has freed her from the bondage of the devil: He died for her sins, and is risen again for her justification. Who will make such offerings to his bride? Men may offer to a bride every sort of earthly ornament,—gold, silver, precious stones, houses, slaves, estates, farms,—but will any give his own blood? For if one should give his own blood to his bride, he would not live to take her for his wife. But the Lord, dying without fear, gave His own blood for her, whom rising again He was to have, whom He had already united to Himself in the Virgin’s womb. For the Word was the Bridegroom, and human flesh the bride; and both one, the Son of God, the same also being Son of man. The womb of the Virgin Mary, in which He became head of the Church, was His bridal chamber: thence He came forth, as a bridegroom from his chamber, as the Scripture foretold, “And rejoiced as a giant to run his way.” From His chamber He came forth as a bridegroom; and being invited, came to the marriage.

5. It is because of an indubitable mystery that He appears not to acknowledge His mother, from whom as the Bridegroom He came forth, when He says to her, “Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.” What is this? Did He come to the marriage for the purpose of teaching men to treat their mothers with contempt? Surely he to whose marriage He had come was taking a wife with the view of having children, and surely he wished to be honored by those children he would beget: had Jesus then come to the marriage in order to dishonor His mother, when marriages are celebrated and wives married with the view of having children, whom God commands to honor their parents? Beyond all doubt, brethren, there is some mystery lurking here. It is really a matter of such importance that some,—of whom the apostle, as we have mentioned before, has forewarned us to be on our guard, saying, “I fear, lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve by his subtilty, so also your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and chastity which is in Christ,”—taking away from the credibility of the gospel, and asserting that Jesus was not born of the Virgin Mary, used to endeavor to draw from this place an argument in support of their error, so far as to say, How could she be His mother, to whom He said, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” Wherefore we must answer them, and show them why the Lord said this, lest in their insanity they appear to themselves to have discovered something contrary to wholesome belief, whereby the chastity of the virgin bride may be corrupted, that is, whereby the faith of the Church may be injured. For in very deed, brethren, their faith is corrupted who prefer a lie to the truth. For these men, who appear to honor Christ in such wise as to deny that He had flesh, do nothing short of proclaiming Him a liar. Now they who build up a lie in men, what do they but drive the truth out of them? They let in the devil, they drive Christ out; they let in an adulterer, shut out the bridegroom, being evidently paranymphs, or rather, the panderers of the serpent. For it is for this object they speak, that the serpent may possess, and Christ be shut out. How doth the serpent possess? When a lie possesses. When falsehood possesses, then the serpent possesses; when truth possesses, then Christ possesses. For Himself has said, “I am the truth;” but of that other He said, “He stood not in the truth, because the truth is not him.” And Christ is the truth in such wise that thou shouldst receive the whole to be true in Him. The true Word, God equal with the Father, true soul, true flesh, true man, true God, true

nativity, true passion, true death, true resurrection. If thou say that any of these is false, rottenness enters, the worms of falsehood are bred of the poison of the serpent, and nothing sound will remain.

6. What, then, is this, saith one, which the Lord saith, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” Perhaps the Lord shows us in the sequel why He said this: “Mine hour,” saith He, “is not yet come.” For thus is how He saith, “Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.” And we must seek to know why this was said. But first let us therefrom withstand the heretics. What says the old serpent, of old the hissing instiller of poison? What saith he? That Jesus had not a woman for His mother. Whence provest thou that? From this, saith he, because Jesus said, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” Who has related this, that we should believe that Jesus said it? Who has related it? None other than John the evangelist. But the same John the evangelist said, “And the mother of Jesus was there.” For this is how he has told us: “The next day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. And having been invited to the marriage, Jesus had come thither with His disciples.” We have here two sayings uttered by the evangelist. “The mother of Jesus was there,” said the evangelist; and it is the same evangelist that has told us what Jesus said to His mother. And see, brethren, how he has told us that Jesus answered His mother, having said first, “His mother said unto Him,” in order that you may keep the virginity of your heart secure against the tongue of the serpent. Here we are told in the same Gospel, the record of the same evangelist, “The mother of Jesus was there,” and “His mother said unto Him.” Who related this? John the evangelist. And what said Jesus in answer to His mother? “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” Who relates this? The very same Evangelist John. O most faithful and truth-speaking evangelist, thou tellest me that Jesus said, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” why hast thou added His mother, whom He does not acknowledge? For thou hast said that “the mother of Jesus was there,” and that “His mother said unto Him;” why didst thou not rather say, Mary was there, and Mary said unto Him. Thou tellest as these two facts, “His mother said unto Him,” and “Jesus answered her, Woman, why have I to do with thee?” Why doest thou this, if it be not because both are true? Now, those men are willing to believe the evangelist in the one case, when he tells us that Jesus

said to His mother, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” and yet they will not believe him in the other, when he says, “The mother of Jesus was there,” and “His mother said unto Him.” But who is he that resisteth the serpent and holds fast the truth, whose virginity of heart is not corrupted by the subtilty of the devil? He who believes both to be true, namely, that the mother of Jesus was there, and that Jesus made that answer to His mother. But if he does not as yet understand in what manner Jesus said, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” let him meanwhile believe that He said it, and said it, moreover, to His mother. Let him first have the piety to believe, and he will then have fruit in understanding.

7. I ask you, O faithful Christians, Was the mother of Jesus there? Answer ye, She was. Whence know you? Answer, The Gospel says it. What answer made Jesus to His mother? Answer ye, “Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.” And whence know you this? Answer, The Gospel says it. Let no man corrupt this your faith, if you desire to preserve a chaste virginity for the Bridegroom. But if it be asked of you, why He made this answer to His mother, let him declare who understands; but he who does not as yet understand, let him most firmly believe that Jesus made this answer, and made it moreover to His mother. By this piety he will learn to understand also why Jesus answered thus, if by praying he knock at the door of truth, and do not approach it with wrangling. Only this much, while he fancies himself to know, or is ashamed because he does not know, why Jesus answered thus, let him beware lest he be constrained to believe either that the evangelist lied when he said, “The mother of Jesus was there,” or that Jesus Himself suffered for our sins by a counterfeit death and for our justification showed counterfeit scars; and that He spoke falsely in saying, “If ye continue in my word, ye are my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” For if He had a false mother, false flesh, false death, false wounds in His death, false scars in His resurrection, then it will not be the truth, but rather falsehood, that shall make free those that believe on Him. Nay, on the contrary, let falsehood yield to truth, and let all be confounded who would have themselves be accounted truth-speaking, because they endeavor to prove Christ a deceiver, and will not have it said to them, We do not believe you because you lie, when they affirm that truth itself has lied. Nevertheless, if we ask them,

Whence know you that Christ said, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” they answer that they believe the Gospel. Then why do they not believe the Gospel when it says, “The mother of Jesus was there,” and, “His mother said unto Him”? Or if the Gospel lies here, how are we to believe it there, that Jesus said this, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” Why do not those miserable men rather faithfully believe that the Lord did so answer, not to a stranger, but to His mother; and also piously seek to know why He did so answer? There is a great difference between him who says, I would know why Christ made this answer to His mother, and him who says, I know that it was not to His mother that Christ made this answer. It is one thing to be willing to understand what is shut up, another thing to be unwilling to believe what is open. He who says, I would know why Christ thus made answer to His mother, wishes the Gospel, in which he believes, opened up to him; but he who says, I know that it was not to His mother that Christ made this answer, accuses of falsehood the very Gospel, wherein he believed that Christ did so answer.

8. Now then, if it seem good, brethren, those men being repulsed, and ever wandering in their own blindness, unless in humility they be healed, let us inquire why our Lord answered His mother in such a manner. He was in an extraordinary manner begotten of the Father without a mother, born of a mother without a father; without a mother He was God, without a father He was man; without a mother before all time, without a father in the end of times. What He said was said in answer to His mother, for “the mother of Jesus was there,” and “His mother said unto Him.” All this the Gospel says. It is there we learn that “the mother of Jesus was there,” just where we learn that He said unto her, “Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.” Let us believe the whole; and what we do not yet understand, let us search out. And first take care, lest perhaps, as the Manichaeans found occasion for their falsehood, because the Lord said, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” the astrologers in like manner may find occasion for their deception, in that He said, “Mine hour is not yet come.” If it was in the sense of the astrologers He said this, we have committed a sacrilege in burning their books. But if we have acted rightly, as was done in the times of the apostles, it was not according to their notion that the Lord said, “Mine hour is not yet come.” For, say those vain-talkers

and deceived seducers, thou seest that Christ was under fate, as He says, “Mine hour is not yet come.” To whom then must we make answer first—to the heretics or to the astrologers? For both come of the serpent, and desire to corrupt the Church’s virginity of heart, which she holds in undefiled faith. Let us first reply to those whom we proposed, to whom, indeed, we have already replied in great measure. But lest they should think that we have not what to say of the words which the Lord uttered in answer to His mother, we prepare you further against them; for I suppose what has already been said is sufficient for their refutation.

9. Why, then, said the Son to the mother, “Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come?” Our Lord Jesus Christ was both God and man. According as He was God, He had not a mother; according as He was man, He had. She was the mother, then, of His flesh, of His humanity, of the weakness which for our sakes He took upon Him. But the miracle which He was about to do, He was about to do according to His divine nature, not according to His weakness; according to that wherein He was God not according to that wherein He was born weak. But the weakness of God is stronger than men. His mother then demanded a miracle of Him; but He, about to perform divine works, so far did not recognize a human womb; saying in effect, “That in me which works a miracle was not born of thee, thou gavest not birth to my divine nature; but because my weakness was born of thee, I will recognize thee at the time when that same weakness shall hang upon the cross.” This, indeed, is the meaning of “Mine hour is not yet come.” For then it was that He recognized, who, in truth, always did know. He knew His mother in predestination, even before He was born of her; even before, as God, He created her of whom, as man, He was to be created, He knew her as His mother: but at a certain hour in a mystery He did not recognize her; and at a certain hour which had not yet come, again in a mystery, He does recognize her. For then did He recognize her, when that to which she gave birth was a-dying. That by which Mary was made did not die, but that which was made of Mary; not the eternity of the divine nature, but the weakness of the flesh, was dying. He made that answer therefore, making a distinction in the faith of believers, between the who; and the how, He came. For while He was God and the Lord of heaven and earth, He came by a mother who was a woman. In that He was Lord of the

world, Lord of heaven and earth, He was, of course, the Lord of Mary also; but in that wherein it is said, “Made of a woman, made under the law,” He was Mary’s son. The same both the Lord of Mary and the son of Mary; the same both the Creator of Mary and created from Mary. Marvel not that He was both son and Lord. For just as He is called the son of Mary, so likewise is He called the son of David; and son of David because son of Mary. Hear the apostle openly declaring, “Who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.” Hear Him also declared the Lord of David; let David himself declare this: “The Lord said to my Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand.” And this passage Jesus Himself brought forward to the Jews, and refuted them from it. How then was He both David’s son and David’s Lord? David’s son according to the flesh, David’s Lord according to His divinity; so also Mary’s son after the flesh, and Mary’s Lord after His majesty. Now as she was not the mother of His divine nature, whilst it was by His divinity the miracle she asked for would be wrought, therefore He answered her, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” But think not that I deny thee to be my mother: “Mine hour is not yet come;” for in that hour I will acknowledge thee, when the weakness of which thou art the mother comes to hang on the cross. Let us prove the truth of this. When the Lord suffered, the same evangelist tells us, who knew the mother of the Lord, and who has given us to know about her in this marriage feast,—the same, I say, tells us, “There was there near the cross the mother of Jesus; and Jesus saith to His mother, Woman, behold thy son! and to the disciple, Behold thy mother!” He commends His mother to the care of the disciple; commends His mother, as about to die before her, and to rise again before her death. The man commends her a human being to man’s care. This humanity had Mary given birth to. That hour had now come, the hour of which He had then said, “Mine hour is not yet come.”

10. In my opinion, brethren, we have answered the heretics. Let us now answer the astrologers. And how do they attempt to prove that Jesus was under fate? Because, say they, Himself said, “Mine hour is not yet come.” Therefore we believe Him; and if He had said, “I have no hour,” He would have excluded the astrologers: but behold, say they, He said, “Mine hour is not yet come.” If then He had said, “I have no hour,” the astrologers would have been shut out, and would have no ground for their slander; but now

that He said, “Mine hour is not yet come,” how can we contradict His own words? ’Tis wonderful that the astrologers, by believing Christ’s words, endeavor to convince Christians that Christ lived under an hour of fate. Well, let them believe Christ when He saith, “I have power to lay down my life and to take it up again: no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself, and I take it again.” Is this power then under fate? Let them show us a man who has it in his power when to die, how long to live: this they can never do. Let them, therefore, believe God when He says, “I have power to lay down my life, and to take it up again;” and let them inquire why it was said, “Mine hour is not yet come;” and let them not because of these words, be imposing fate on the Maker of heaven, the Creator and Ruler of the stars. For even if fate were from the stars, the Maker of the stars could not be subject to their destiny. Moreover, not only Christ had not what thou callest fate, but not even hast thou, or I, or he there, or any human being whatsoever.

11. Nevertheless, being deceived, they deceive others, and propound fallacies to men. They lay snares to catch men, and that, too, in the open streets. They who spread nets to catch wild beasts even do it in woods and desert places: how miserably vain are men, for catching whom the net is spread in the forum! When men sell themselves to men, they receive money; but these give money in order to sell themselves to vanities. For they go in to an astrologer to buy themselves masters, such as the astrologer is pleased to give them: be it Saturn, Jupiter, Mercury, or any other named profanity. The man went in free, that having given his money he might come out a slave. Nay, rather, had he been free he would not have gone in; but he entered whither his master Error and his mistress Avarice dragged him. Whence also the truth says, “Every one that doeth sin is the slave of sin.”

12. Why then did He say, “Mine hour is not yet come?” Rather because, having it in His power when to die, He did not yet see it fit to use that power. Just as we, brethren, say, for example, “Now is the appointed hour for us to go out to celebrate the sacraments.” If we go out before it is necessary, do we not act perversely and absurdly? And because we act only at the proper time, do we therefore in this action regard fate when we so

express ourselves? What means then, “Mine hour is not yet come?” When I know that it is the fitting time for me to suffer, when my suffering will be profitable, then I will willingly suffer. That hour is not yet: that thou mayest preserve both, this, “Mine hour is not yet come;” and that, “I have power to lay down my life, and power to take it again.” He had come, then, having it in His power when to die. And surely it would not have been right were He to die before He had chosen disciples. Had he been a man who had not his hour in his own power, he might have died before he had chosen disciples; and if haply he had died when his disciples were now chosen and instructed, it would be something conferred on him, not his own doing. But, on the contrary, He who had come having in His power when to go, when to return, how far to advance, and for whom the regions of the grave were open, not only when dying but when rising again; He, I say, in order to show us His Church’s hope of immortality, showed in the head what it behoved the members to expect. For He who has risen again in the head will also rise again in all His members. The hour then had not yet come, the fit time was not yet. Disciples had to be called, the kingdom of heaven to be proclaimed, the Lord’s divinity to be shown forth in miracles, and His humanity in His very sympathy with mortal men. For He who hungered because He was man, fed so many thousands with five loaves because He was God; He who slept because He was man, commanded the winds and the waves because He was God. All these things had first to be set forth, that the evangelists might have whereof to write, that there might be what should be preached to the Church. But when He had done as much as He judged to be sufficient, then His hour came, not of necessity, but of will,—not of condition, but of power.

13. What then, brethren? Because we have replied to these and those, shall we say nothing as to what the water-pots signify? what the water turned into wine? what the master of the feast? what the bridegroom? what in mystery the mother of Jesus? what the marriage itself? We must speak of all these, but we must not burden you. I would have preached to you in Christ’s name yesterday also, when the usual sermon was due to you, my beloved, but I was hindered by certain necessities. If you please then, holy brethren, let us defer until to-morrow what pertains to the hidden meaning of this translation, and not burden both your and our own weakness. There are

many of you, perhaps, who have to-day come together on account of the solemnity of the day, not to hear the sermon. Let those who come to-morrow come to hear, so that we may not defraud those who are eager to learn, nor burden those who are fastidious.

TRACTATE IX

CHAPTER II. 1–11

1. May the Lord our God be present, that He may grant us to render you what we promised. For yesterday, if you remember, holy brethren, when the shortness of the time prevented us from completing the sermon we had begun, we put off until to-day the unfolding, by God's assistance, of those things which are mystically put in hidden meanings in this fact of the Gospel lesson. We need not, therefore, now stay any longer to commend the miracle of God. For He is the same God who, throughout the whole creation, worketh miracles every day, which become lightly esteemed by men, not because of the ease with which they are wrought, but by reason of their constant recurrence. Those uncommon works, however, which were done by the same Lord—that is, by the Word for us made flesh—occasioned greater astonishment to men, not because they are greater than those which He daily performs in the creation, but because these which happen every day are accomplished as it were in the course of nature; but the others appear exhibited to the eyes of men, wrought by the efficacy of a power, as it were, immediately present. We said, as you remember, one dead man rose again, people were amazed, whilst no man wonders at the birth every day of those who were not in being. In like manner, who does not wonder at water turned into wine, although God is doing this every year in vines? But since all the works which the Lord Jesus did, serve not only to rouse our hearts by their miraculous character, but also to edify our hearts in the doctrine of faith, it behoves us thoroughly to examine into the meaning and significance of those works. For the consideration of the meaning of all these things we deferred, as you remember, till today.

2. The Lord, in that He came to the marriage to which He was invited, wished, apart from the mystical signification, to assure us that marriage was His own institution. For there were to be those of whom the apostle spoke,

“forbidding to marry,” and asserting that marriage was an evil, and of the devil’s institution: notwithstanding the same Lord declares in the Gospel, on being asked whether it be lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cause, that it is not lawful save for the cause of fornication. In His answer, if you remember, He said, “What God hath joined together let not man put asunder.” And they that are well instructed in the catholic faith know that God instituted marriage; and as the union of man and wife is from God, so divorce is from the devil. But in the case of fornication it is lawful for a man to put away his wife, because she first chose to be no longer wife in not preserving conjugal fidelity to her husband. Nor are those women who vow virginity to God, although they hold a higher place of honor and sanctity in the Church, without marriage. For they too, together with the whole Church, attain to a marriage, a marriage in which Christ is the Bridegroom. And for this cause, therefore, did the Lord, on being invited, come to the marriage, to confirm conjugal chastity, and to show forth the sacrament of marriage. For the bridegroom in that marriage, to whom it was said, “Thou hast kept the good wine until now,” represented the person of the Lord. For the good wine—namely, the gospel—Christ has kept until now.

3. For now let us begin to uncover the hidden meanings of the mysteries, so far as He in whose name we made you the promise may enable us. In the ancient times there was prophecy, and no times were left without the dispensation of prophecy. But the prophecy, since Christ was not understood therein, was water. For in water wine is in some manner latent. The apostle tells us what we are to understand by this water: “Even unto this day,” saith he, “whilst Moses is read, that same veil is upon their heart; that it is not unveiled because it is done away in Christ. And when thou shalt have passed over,” saith he, “to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.” By the veil he means the covering over of prophecy, so that it was not understood. When thou hast passed over to the Lord, the veil is taken away; so likewise is tastelessness taken away when thou hast passed over to the Lord; and what was water now becomes wine to thee. Read all the prophetic books; and if Christ be not understood therein, what canst thou find so insipid and silly? Understand Christ in them, and what thou readest not only has a taste, but even inebriates thee; transporting the mind from the

body, so that forgetting the things that are past, thou reachest forth to the things that are before.

4. Wherefore, prophecy from ancient times, even from the time when the series of human births began to run onwards, was not silent concerning Christ; but the import of the prophecy was concealed therein, for as yet it was water. Whence do we prove that in all former times, until the age in which the Lord came, prophecy did not fail concerning Him? From the Lord's own saying. For when He had risen from the dead, He found His disciples doubting concerning Himself whom they had followed. For they saw that He was dead, and they had no hope that He would rise again; all their hope was gone. On what ground was the thief, after receiving praise, deemed worthy to be that same day in Paradise? Because when bound on the cross he confessed Christ, while the disciples doubted concerning Him. Well, He found them wavering, and in a manner reproving themselves because they had looked for redemption in Him. Yet they sorrowed for Him as cut off without fault, for they knew Him to be innocent. And this is what the disciples themselves said, after His resurrection, when He had found certain of them in the way, sorrowful, "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And He said unto them, What things? And they said, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deeds and words before God and all the people: how our priests and rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and bound Him to the cross. But we trusted that it was He who should have redeemed Israel; and to-day is now the third day since these things were done." After one of the two whom He found in the way going to a neighboring village had spoken these and other words, Jesus answered and said, "O irrational, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered all these things. and to enter into His glory? And beginning from Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." And likewise, in another place, when He would even have His disciples touch Him with their hands, that they might believe that He had risen in the body, He saith, "These are the words which I have spoken unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the

Psalms, concerning me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, that Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

5. When these words of the Gospel are understood, and they are certainly clear, all the mysteries which are latent in this miracle of the Lord will be laid open. Observe what He says, that it behoved the things to be fulfilled in Christ that were written of Him. Where were they written? "In the law," saith He, "and in the prophets, and in the Psalms." He omitted no part of the Old Scriptures. These were water; and hence the disciples were called irrational by the Lord, because as yet they tasted to them as water, not as wine. And how did He make of the water wine? When He opened their understanding, and expounded to them the Scriptures, beginning from Moses, through all the prophets; with which being now inebriated, they said, "Did not our hearts burn within us in the way, when He opened to us the Scriptures?" For they understood Christ in those books in which they knew Him not before. Thus our Lord Jesus Christ changed the water into wine, and that has now taste which before had not, that now inebriates which before did not. For if He had commanded the water to be poured out of the water-pots, and so Himself had put in the wine from the secret repositories of the creature, whence He made bread when He satisfied so many thousands; for five loaves were not in themselves sufficient to satisfy five thousand men, nor even to fill twelve baskets, but the omnipotence of the Lord was, as it were, a fountain of bread; so likewise He might, on the water being poured out, have poured in wine: but had He done this, He would appear to have rejected the Old Scriptures. When, however, He turns the water itself into wine, He shows us that the Old Scripture also is from Himself, for at His own command were the water-pots filled. It is from the Lord, indeed, that the Old Scripture also is; but it has no taste unless Christ is understood therein.

6. But observe what Himself saith, "The things which were written in the law, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me." And we know that the law extends from the time of which we have record, that is, from

the beginning of the world: “In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth.” Thence down to the time in which we are now living are six ages, this being the sixth, as you have often heard and know. The first age is reckoned from Adam to Noah; the second, from Noah to Abraham; and, as Matthew the evangelist duly follows and distinguishes, the third, from Abraham to David; the fourth, from David to the carrying away into Babylon; the fifth, from the carrying away into Babylon to John the Baptist; the sixth, from John the Baptist to the end of the world. Moreover, God made man after His own image on the sixth day, because in this sixth age is manifested the renewing of our mind through the gospel, after the image of Him who created us; and the water is turned into wine, that we may taste of Christ, now manifested in the law and the prophets. Hence “there were there six water-pots,” which He bade be filled with water. Now the six water-pots signify the six ages, which were not without prophecy. And those six periods, divided and separated as it were by joints, would be as empty vessels unless they were filled by Christ. Why did I say, the periods which would run fruitlessly on, unless the Lord Jesus were preached in them? Prophecies are fulfilled, the water-pots are full; but that the water may be turned into wine, Christ must be understood in that whole prophecy.

7. But what means this: “They contained two or three metretae apiece”? This phrase certainly conveys to us a mysterious meaning. For by “metretae” he means certain measures, as if he should say jars, flasks, or something of that sort. Metreta is the name of a measure, and takes its name from the word “measure.” For metron is the Greek word for measure, whence the word “metretae” is derived. “They contained,” then, “two or three metretae apiece.” What are we to say, brethren? If He had simply said “three apiece,” our mind would at once have run to the mystery of the Trinity. And, perhaps, we ought not at once to reject this application of the meaning, because He said, “two or three apiece;” for when the Father and Son are named, the Holy Spirit must necessarily be understood. For the Holy Spirit is not that of the Father only, nor of the Son only, but the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. For it is written,” If any man love the world, the Spirit of the Father is not in him.” And again, “Whoso hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of His.” The same, then, is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. Therefore, the Father and the Son being named, the Holy

Spirit also is understood, because He is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. And when there is mention of the Father and Son, “two metretae,” as it were, are mentioned; but since the Holy Spirit is understood in them, “three metretae.” That is the reason why it is not said, “Some containing two metretae apiece, others three apiece;” but the same six water-pots contained “two or three metretae apiece.” It is as if he had said, When I say two apiece, I would have the Spirit of the Father and of the Son to be understood together with them; and when I say three apiece, I declare the same Trinity more plainly.

8. Wherefore, whoso names the Father and the Son ought thereby to understand the mutual love of the Father and Son, which is the Holy Spirit. And perhaps the Scriptures on being examined (I do not say that I am able to show you this to-day, or as if another proof cannot be found),—nevertheless, the Scriptures, perhaps, on being searched, do show us that the Holy Spirit is charity. And do not count charity a thing cheap. How, indeed, can it be cheap, when all things that are said to be not cheap are called dear (chara)? Therefore, if what is not cheap is dear, what is dearer than dearness itself (charitas)? The apostle so commends charity to us that he says, “I show unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I know all mysteries and all knowledge, and have prophecy and all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I distribute all my goods to the poor, and give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” How great, then, is charity, which, if wanting, in vain have we all things else; if present, rightly have we all things! Yet the Apostle Paul, setting forth the praise of charity with copiousness and fullness, has said less of it than did the Apostle John in brief, whose Gospel this is. For he has not hesitated to say, “God is love.” It is also written, “Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given us.” Who, then, can name the Father and the Son without thereby understanding the love of the Father and Son? Which when one begins to have, he will have the Holy Spirit; which if one has not, he will not have the Holy Spirit. And just as thy body, if it be without spirit, namely thy soul, is dead; so likewise thy soul, if it be without the Holy Spirit, that is, without charity, will be

reckoned dead. Therefore “The water-pots contained two metretae apiece,” because the Father and the Son are proclaimed in the prophecy of all the periods; but the Holy Spirit is there also, and therefore it is added, “or three apiece.” “I and the Father,” saith He, “are one.” But far be it from us to suppose that where we are told, “I and the Father are one,” the Holy Spirit is not there. Yet since he named the Father and the Son, let the water-pots contain “two metretae apiece;” but attend to this, “or three apiece.” “Go, baptize the nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” So, therefore, when it says “two apiece,” the Trinity is not expressed but understood; but when it says, “or three,” the Trinity is expressed also.

9. But there is also another meaning that must not be passed over, and which I will declare: let every man choose which he likes best. We keep not back what is suggested to us. For it is the Lord’s table, and the minister ought not to defraud the guests, especially when they hunger as you now do, so that your longing is manifest. Prophecy, which is dispensed from the ancient times, has for its object the salvation of all nations. True, Moses was sent to the people of Israel alone, and to that people alone was the law given by him; and the prophets, too, were of that people, and the very distribution of times was marked out according to the same people; whence also the water-pots are said to be “according to the purification of the Jews:” nevertheless, that the prophecy was proclaimed to all other nations also is manifest, forasmuch as Christ was concealed in him in whom all nations are blessed, as it was promised to Abraham by the Lord, saying, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” But this was not as yet understood, for as yet the water was not turned into wine. The prophecy therefore was dispensed to all nations. But that this may appear more agreeably, let us, so far as our time permits, mention certain facts respecting the several ages, as represented respectively by the water-pots.

10. In the very beginning, Adam and Eve were the parents of all nations, not of the Jews only; and whatever was represented in Adam concerning Christ, undoubtedly concerned all nations, whose salvation is in Christ. What better can I say of the water of the first water-pot than what the apostle says of Adam and Eve? For no man will say that I misunderstand

the meaning when I produce, not my own, but the apostle’s. How great a mystery, then, concerning Christ does that of which the apostle makes mention contain, when he says, “And the two shall be in one flesh: this is a great mystery!” And lest any man should understand that greatness of mystery to exist in the case of the individual men that have wives, he says, “But I speak concerning Christ and the Church.” What great mystery is this, “the two shall be one flesh?” While Scripture, in the Book of Genesis, was speaking of Adam and Eve, it came to these words, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they two shall be one flesh.” Now, if Christ cleave to the Church, so that the two should be one flesh, in what manner did He leave His Father and His mother? He left His Father in this sense, that when He was in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking to Him the form of a servant. In this sense He left His Father, not that He forsook or departed from His Father, but that He did not appear unto men in that form in which He was equal with the Father. But how did He leave His mother? By leaving the synagogue of the Jews, of which, after the flesh, He was born, and by cleaving to the Church which He has gathered out of all nations. Thus the first water-pot then held a prophecy of Christ; but so long as these things of which I speak were not preached among the peoples, the prophecy was water, it was not yet changed into wine. And since the Lord has enlightened us through the apostle, to show us what we were in search of, by this one sentence, “The two shall be one flesh; a great mystery concerning Christ and the Church;” we are now permitted to seek Christ everywhere, and to drink wine from all the water-pots. Adam sleeps, that Eve may be formed; Christ dies, that the Church may be formed. When Adam sleeps, Eve is formed from his side; when Christ is dead, the spear pierces His side, that the mysteries may flow forth whereby the Church is formed. Is it not evident to every man that in those things then done, things to come were foreshadowed, since the apostle says that Adam himself was the figure of Him that was to come? “Who is,” saith he, “the figure of Him that was to come.” All was mystically prefigured. For, in reality, God could have taken the rib from Adam when he was awake, and formed the woman. Or was it, haply, necessary for him to sleep lest he should feel pain in his side when the rib was taken away? Who is there that sleeps so soundly that his bones may be torn from him without his awaking? Or was it because it was God that tore it out, that the man did not feel it? Well, He who could take it from him without pain when he was asleep, could do it also when he was awake. But, without doubt, the first water-pot was being filled, there was a dispensation of the prophecy of that time concerning this which was to be.

11. Christ was represented also in Noah and in that ark of the whole world. For why were all kinds of animals shut in, in the ark but to signify all nations? For God could again create every kind of animals. When as yet they were not, did He not say, “Let the earth bring forth,” and the earth brought forth? From the same source He could make anew, whence He then made; by a word He made, by a word He could make again: were it not that He was setting before us a mystery, and filling up the second water-pot of prophetical dispensation, that the world might by the wood be delivered in a figure; because the life of the world was to be nailed on wood.

12. Now, in the third water-pot, to Abraham, as I have mentioned before, it was said, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” And who does not see whose figure Abraham’s only son was, he who bore the wood for the sacrifice of himself, to that place whither he was being led to be offered up? For the Lord bore his own cross, as the Gospel tells us. This will be enough to say concerning the third water-pot.

13. But as to David, why do I say that his prophecy extends to all nations, when we have just heard the psalm (and it is difficult to mention a psalm in which the same is not sounded forth)? But certainly, as I have said, we have been just singing, “Arise, O God, judge the earth; for Thou shalt inherit among all nations.” And this is why the Donatists are as men cast forth from the marriage: just as the man who had not a wedding garment was invited, and came, but was cast forth from the number of the guests because he had not the garment to the glory of the bridegroom; for he who seeks his own glory, not Christ’s, has not the wedding garment: for they refuse to agree with him who was the friend of the Bridegroom, and says, “This is He that baptizeth.” And deservedly was that which he was not made, by way of rebuke, an objection to him who had not the wedding garment, “Friend, how art thou come hither?” And just as he was speechless, so also are these. For what can tongue-clatter avail when the heart is mute? For they know

that inwardly, and with their own selves, they have not anything to say. Within, they are mute; without, they make a din. But whether they will or no, they hear this sung even among themselves, “Arise, O God, judge the earth; for Thou shalt inherit among the nations:” and by not communicating with all nations, what do they but acknowledge themselves to be disinherited?

14. Now what I said, brethren, that prophecy extends to all nations (for I wish to show you another meaning in the expression, “Containing two or three metretae apiece”),—that prophecy, I say, extends to all nations, is pointed out, as we have just now reminded you, in Adam, “who is the figure of Him that was to come.” Who does not know that from him all nations are sprung; and that in the four letters of his name the four quarters of the globe, by their Greek appellations, are indicated? For if the east, west, north, and south are expressed in Greek even as Holy Scripture mentions them in various places, the initial letters of the words, thou wilt find, make the word Adam: for in Greek the four quarters of the world are called Anatole, Dysis, Arktos, Mesembria. If thou write these four words, one under the other, like four verses, the capital letters form the word Adam. The same is represented in Noah, by reason of the ark, in which were all animals, significant of all nations: the same in Abraham, to whom it was said more clearly, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed:” the same in David, from whose psalms, to omit other expressions, we have just been singing, “Arise, O God, judge the earth; for Thou shalt inherit among all nations.” Now to what God is it said “Arise,” but to Him who slept? “Arise, O God, judge the earth.” As if it were said, Thou hast been asleep, having been judged by the earth; arise, to judge the earth. And whither does that prophecy extend, “For Thou shalt inherit among all nations”?

15. Moreover, in the fifth age, in the fifth water-pot as it were, Daniel saw a stone that had been cut from a mountain without hands, and had broken all the kingdoms of the earth; and he saw the stone grow and become a great mountain, so as to fill the whole face of the earth. What can be plainer, my brethren? The stone is cut from a mountain: the same is the stone which the builders rejected, and is become the head of the corner. From what mountain is it cut, if not from the kingdom of the Jews, of which our Lord

Jesus Christ was born according to the flesh? And it is cut without hands, without human exertion; because Christ sprung from a virgin, without a husband's embrace. The mountain from which it was cut had not filled the whole face of the earth; for the kingdom of the Jews did not possess all nations. But, on the other hand, the kingdom of Christ we see occupying the whole world.

16. To the sixth age belongs John the Baptist, than whom none greater has arisen among those born of women; of whom it was said, that he was "greater than a prophet." And how did John show that Christ was sent to all nations? When the Jews came to him to be baptized, that they might not pride themselves on the name of Abraham, he said to them, "O generation of vipers, who has proclaimed to you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance;" that is, be humble; for he was speaking to proud people. But whereof were they proud? Of their descent according to the flesh, not of the fruit of imitating their father Abraham. What said he to them? "Say not, We have Abraham for our father: for God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham." Meaning by stones all nations, not on account of their durable strength, as in the case of that stone which the builders rejected, but on account of their stupidity and their foolish insensibility, because they had become like the things which they were accustomed to worship: for they worshipped senseless images, themselves equally senseless. "They that make them are like them, and so are all they that trust in them." Accordingly, when men begin to worship God, what do they hear said to them? "That ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven; who maketh His sun to rise on the good and on the evil, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Wherefore, if a man becomes like that which he worships, what is meant by "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham"? Let us ask ourselves and we shall see that it is a fact. For of those nations are we come, but we should not have come of them had not God of the stones raised up children unto Abraham. We are made children of Abraham by imitating his faith, not by being born of his flesh. For just as they by their degeneracy have been disinherited, so have we by imitating been adopted. Therefore, brethren, this prophecy also of the sixth water-pot extended to all nations; and hence it was said concerning all, "containing two or three metretae apiece."

17. But how do we show that all nations belong to the “two or three metretae apiece”? It was a matter of reckoning, in some measure, that he should say the same water-pots contained “two apiece,” which he had said contained “three apiece;” evidently in order to intimate to us a mystery therein. How are there “two metretae apiece”? Circumcision and uncircumcision. Scripture mentions these two classes of people, and leaves out no kind of men, when it says, “Circumcision and uncircumcision;” in these two appellations thou hast all nations: they are the two metretae apiece. In these two walls, meeting from different quarters, “Christ became the corner-stone, in order to make peace in Himself.” Let us show also the “three metretae apiece” in the case of these same all nations. Noah had three sons, through whom the human race was restored. Hence the Lord says, “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.” What is this woman, but the flesh of the Lord? What is the leaven, but the gospel? What the three measures, but all nations, on account of the three sons of Noah? Therefore the “six water-pots containing two or three metretae apiece” are six periods of time, containing the prophecy relating to all nations, whether as represented in two sorts of men, namely, Jews and Greeks, as the apostle often mentions them; or in three sorts, on account of the three sons of Noah. For the prophecy was represented as reaching unto all nations. And because of that reaching it is called a measure, even as the apostle says, “We have received a measure for reaching unto you.” For in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, he says, “A measure for reaching unto you.”

TRACTATE X

CHAPTER II. 12–21

1. In the psalm you have heard the groaning of the poor, whose members endure tribulations over the whole earth, even unto the end of the world. Make it your chief business, my brethren, to be among and of these members: for all tribulation is to pass away. “Woe to them that rejoice!” “Blessed,” says the Truth, “are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” God has become man: what shall man be, for whom God is become man? Let this hope comfort us in every tribulation and temptation of this life. For the enemy does not cease to persecute; and when he does

not openly rage, he plots in secret. How does he plot? “And for wrath, they worked deceitfully.” Thence is he called a lion and a dragon. But what is said to Christ? “Thou shall tread on the lion and the dragon.” Lion, for open rage; dragon, for hidden treachery. The dragon cast Adam out of Paradise; as a lion, the same persecuted the Church, as Peter says: “For your adversary, the devil, goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” Let it not seem to you as if the devil had lost his ferocity. When he blandly flatters, then is he the more vigilantly to be guarded against. But amid all these treacherous devices and temptations of his, what shall we do but that which we have heard in the psalm: “And I, when they were troublesome to me, clothed me in sackcloth, and humbled my soul in fasting.” There is one that heareth prayer, hesitate not to pray; but He that heareth abideth within. You need not direct your eyes towards some mountain; you need not raise your face to the stars, or to the sun, or to the moon; nor must you suppose that you are heard when you pray beside the sea: rather detest such prayers. Only cleanse the chamber of thy heart; wheresoever thou art, wherever thou prayest, He that hears is within, within in the secret place, which the psalmist calls his bosom, when he says, “And my prayer shall be turned in my own bosom.” He that heareth thee is not beyond thee; thou hast not to travel far, nor to lift thyself up, so as to reach Him as it were with thy hands. Rather, if thou lift thyself up, thou shalt fall; if thou humble thyself, He will draw near thee. Our Lord God is here, the Word of God, the Word made flesh, the Son of the Father, the Son of God, the Son of man; the lofty One to make us, the humble to make us anew, walking among men, bearing the human, concealing the divine.

2. “He went down,” as the evangelist says, “to Capernaum, He, and His mother, and His brethren, and His disciples; and they continued there not many days.” Behold He has a mother, and brethren, and disciples: whence He has a mother, thence brethren. For our Scripture is wont to call them brethren, not only that are sprung from the same man and woman, or from the same mother, or from the same father, though by different mothers; or, in truth, that are of the same degree as cousins by the father’s or mother’s side: not these alone is our Scripture wont to call brethren. The Scripture must be understood as it speaks. It has its own language; one who does not know this language is perplexed and says, Whence had the Lord brethren?

For surely Mary did not give birth a second time? Far from it! With her begins the dignity of virgins. She could be a mother, but a woman known of man she could not be. She is spoken of as mulier [which usually signifies a wife], but only in reference to her sex, not as implying loss of virgin purity: and this follows from the language of Scripture itself. For Eve, too, immediately she was formed from the side of her husband, and as yet not known of her husband, is, as you know, called mulier: “And he made her a woman [mulier].” Then, whence the brethren? The kinsmen of Mary, of whatever degree, are the brethren of the Lord. How do we prove this? From Scripture itself. Lot is called “Abraham’s brother;” he was his brother’s son. Read, and thou wilt find that Abraham was Lot’s uncle on the father’s side, and yet they are called brethren. Why, but because they were kinsmen? Laban the Syrian was Jacob’s uncle by the mother’s side, for he was the brother of Rebecca, Isaac’s wife and Jacob’s mother. Read the Scripture, and thou wilt find that uncle and sister’s son are called brothers. When thou hast known this rule, thou wilt find that all the blood relations of Mary are the brethren of Christ.

3. But rather were those disciples brethren; for even those kinsmen would not be brethren were they not disciples: and to no advantage brethren, if they did not recognize their brother as their master. For in a certain place, when He was informed that His mother and His brethren were standing without, at the time He was speaking to His disciples, He said: “Who is my mother? or who are my brethren? And stretching out His hand over His disciples, He said, These are my brethren;” and, “Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, the same is my mother, and brother, and sister.” Therefore also Mary, because she did the will of the Father. What the Lord magnified in her was, that she did the will of the Father, not that flesh gave birth to flesh. Give good heed, beloved. Moreover, when the Lord was regarded with admiration by the multitude, while doing signs and wonders, and showing forth what lay concealed under the flesh, certain admiring souls said: “Happy is the womb that bare Thee: and He said, Yea, rather, happy are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” That is to say, even my mother, whom ye have called happy, is happy in that she keeps the word of God: not because in her the Word was made flesh and dwelt in us; but because she keeps that same word of God by which she was made, and

which in her was made flesh. Let not men rejoice in temporal offspring, but let them exult if in spirit they are joined to God. We have spoken these things on account of that which the evangelist says, that He dwelt in Capernaum a few days, with His mother, and His brethren, and His disciples.

4. What follows upon this? “And the Jews’ passover was at hand; and He went up to Jerusalem.” The narrator relates another matter, as it came to his recollection. “And He found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting: and when He had made, as it were, a scourge of small cords, He drove them all out of the temple; the oxen likewise, and the sheep; and poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables; and said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; and make not my Father’s house a house of merchandise.” What have we heard, brethren? See, that temple was still a figure, and yet the Lord cast out of it all that sought their own, all who had come to market. And what did they sell there? Things which people needed in the sacrifices of that time. For you know, beloved, that sacrifices were given to that people, in consideration of the carnal mind and stony heart yet in them, to keep them from falling away to idols: and they offered there for sacrifices oxen, sheep, and doves: you know this, for you have read it. It was not a great sin, then, if they sold in the temple that which was bought for the purpose of offering in the temple: and yet He cast them out thence. If, while they were selling what was lawful and not against justice (for it is not unlawful to sell what it is honorable to buy), He nevertheless drove those men out, and suffered not the house of prayer to be made a house of merchandise; how, if He found drunkards there, what would the Lord do? If the house of God ought not to be made a house of trading, ought it to be made a house of drinking? But when we say this, they gnash upon us with their teeth; but the psalm which you have heard comforts us: “They gnashed upon me with their teeth.” Yet we know how we may be cured, although the strokes of the lash are multiplied on Christ, for His word is made to bear the scourge: “The scourges,” saith He, “were gathered together against me, and they knew not.” He was scourged by the scourges of the Jews; He is now scourged by the blasphemies of false Christians: they multiply scourges for their Lord, and know it not. Let us, so far as He aids us, do as the psalmist

did: “But as for me, when they were troublesome to me, I put on sackcloth, and humbled my soul with fasting.”

5. Yet we say, brethren (for He did not spare those men: He who was to be scourged by them first scourged them), that He gave us a certain sign, in that He made a scourge of small cords, and with it lashed the unruly, who were making merchandise of God’s temple. For indeed every man twists for himself a rope by his sins: “Woe to them who draw sins as a long rope?” Who makes a long rope? He who adds sin to sin. How are sins added to sins? When the sins which have been committed are covered over by other sins. One has committed a theft: that he may not be found out to have committed it, he seeks the astrologer. It were enough to have committed theft: why wilt thou add sin to sin? Behold two sins committed. When thou art forbidden to go to the astrologer, thou revilest the bishop: behold three sins. When thou hearest it said of thee, Cast him forth from the Church; thou sayest, I will betake me to the party of Donatus: behold thou addest a fourth sin. The rope is growing; be thou afraid of the rope. It is good for thee to be corrected here, when thou art scourged with it; that it may not be said of thee at the last, “Bind ye his hands and feet, and cast him forth into outer darkness.” For, “With the cords of his own sins is every one bound.” The former of these is the saying of the Lord, the latter that of another Scripture; but yet both are the sayings of the Lord. With their own sins are men bound and cast into outer darkness.

6. However, to seek the mystery of the deed in the figure, who are they that sell oxen? Who are they that sell sheep and doves? They are they who seek their own in the Church, not the things which are Christ’s. They account all a matter of sale, while they will not be redeemed: they have no wish to be bought, and yet they wish to sell. Yes; good indeed is it for them that they may be redeemed by the blood of Christ, that they may come to the peace of Christ. Now, what does it profit to acquire in this world any temporal and transitory thing whatsoever, be it money, or pleasure of the palate, or honor that consists in the praise of men? Are they not all wind and smoke? Do they not all pass by and flee away? Are they not all as a river rushing headlong into the sea? And woe to him who shall fall into it, for he shall be swept into the sea. Therefore ought we to curb all our affections from such

desires. My brethren, they that seek such things are they that sell. For that Simon too, wished to buy the Holy Ghost, just because he meant to sell the Holy Ghost; and he thought the apostles to be just such traders as they whom the Lord cast out of the temple with a scourge. For such an one he was himself, and desired to buy what he might sell: he was of those who sell doves. Now it was in a dove that the Holy Ghost appeared. Who, then, are they, brethren, that sell doves, but they who say, “We give the Holy Ghost”? But why do they say this, and at what price do they sell? At the price of honor to themselves. They receive as the price, temporal seats of honor, that they may be seen to be sellers of doves. Let them beware of the scourge of small cords. The dove is not for sale: it is given freely; for grace, or favor, it is called. Therefore, my brethren, just as you see them that sell, common chapmen, each cries up what he sells: how many stalls they have set up! Primianus has a stall at Carthage, Maximianus has another, Rogatus has another in Mauritania, they have another in Numidia, this party and that, which it is not in our power now to name. Accordingly, one goes round to buy the dove, and everyone at his own stall cries up what he sells. Let the heart of such an one turn away from every seller; let him come where he receives freely. Aye, brethren, and they do not blush, that, by these bitter and malicious dissensions of theirs, they have made of themselves so many parties, while they assume to be what they are not, while they are lifted up, thinking themselves to be something when they are nothing. But what is fulfilled in them, since that they will not be corrected, but that which you have heard in the psalm: “They were rent asunder, and felt no remorse”?

7. Well, who sell oxen? They who have dispensed to us the Holy Scriptures are understood to mean the oxen. The apostles were oxen, the prophets were oxen. Whence the apostle says: “Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith He it for our sakes? Yea, for our sakes He saith it: that he who ploweth should plow in hope; and he that thresheth, in hope of partaking.” Those oxen, then, have left to us the narration of the Scriptures. For it was not of their own that they dispensed, because they sought the glory of the Lord. Now, what have ye heard in that psalm? “And let them say continually, The Lord be magnified, they that wish the peace of His servant.” God’s servant, God’s people, God’s Church. Let them who wish the peace of that Church

magnify the Lord, not the servant: “and let them say continually, The Lord be magnified.” Who, let say? “Them who wish the peace of His servant.” The voice of that people, of that servant, is clearly that voice which you have heard in lamentations in the psalm, and were moved at hearing, because you are of that people. What was sung by one, re-echoed from the hearts of all. Happy they who recognized themselves in those voices as in a mirror. Who, then, are they that wish the peace of His servant, the peace of His people, the peace of the one whom He calls His “only one,” and whom He wishes to be delivered from the lion: “Deliver mine only one from the power of the dog?” They who say always, “The Lord be magnified.” Those oxen, then, magnified the Lord, not themselves. See this ox magnifying his Lord, because “the ox knoweth his owner;” observe that ox in fear lest men desert the ox’s owner and rely on the ox: how he dreads them that are willing to put their confidence in him: “Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” Of what I gave, I was not the giver: freely ye have received; the dove came down from heaven. “I have planted,” saith he, “Apollo, watered; but God gave the increase: neither he that planteth is anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.” “And let them say always, The Lord be magnified, they that wish the peace of His servant.”

8. These men, however, deceive the people by the very Scriptures, that they may receive honors and praises at their hand, and that men may not turn to the truth. But in that they deceive, by the very Scriptures, the people of whom they seek honors, they do in fact sell oxen: they sell sheep too; that is, the common people themselves. And to whom do they sell them, but to the devil? For if the Church be Christ’s sole and only one, who is it that carries off whatever is cut away from it, but that lion that roars and goes about, “seeking whom he may devour?” Woe to them that are cut off from the Church! As for her, she will remain entire. “For the Lord knoweth them that are His.” These, however, so far as they can, sell oxen and sheep, they sell doves too: let them guard against the scourge of their own sins. But when they suffer some such things for these their iniquities, let them acknowledge that the Lord has made a scourge of small cords, and is admonishing them to change themselves and be no longer traffickers: for if

they will not change, they shall at the end hear it said, “Bind ye these men’s hands and feet, and cast them forth into outer darkness.”

9. “Then the disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up:” because by this zeal of God’s house, the Lord cast these men out of the temple. Brethren, let every Christian among the members of Christ be eaten up with zeal of God’s house. Who is eaten up with zeal of God’s house? He who exerts himself to have all that he may happen to see wrong there corrected, desires it to be mended, does not rest idle: who if he cannot mend it, endures it, laments it. The grain is not shaken out on the threshing-floor that it may enter the barn when the chaff shall have been separated. If thou art a grain, be not shaken out from the floor before the putting into the granary; lest thou be picked up by the birds before thou be gathered into the granary. For the birds of heaven, the powers of the air, are waiting to snatch up something off the threshing-floor, and they can snatch up only what has been shaken out of it. Therefore, let the zeal of God’s house eat thee up: let the zeal of God’s house eat up every Christian, zeal of that house of God of which he is a member. For thy own house is not more important than that wherein thou hast everlasting rest. Thou goest into thine own house for temporal rest, thou enterest God’s house for everlasting rest. If, then, thou busiest thyself to see that nothing wrong be done in thine own house, is it fit that thou suffer, so far as thou canst help, if thou shouldst chance to see aught wrong in the house of God, where salvation is set before thee, and rest without end? For example, seest thou a brother rushing to the theatre? Stop him, warn him, make him sorry, if the zeal of God’s house doth eat thee up. Seest thou others running and desiring to get drunk, and that, too, in holy places, which is not decent to be done in any place? Stop those whom thou canst, restrain whom thou canst, frighten whom thou canst, allure gently whom thou canst: do not, however, rest silent. Is it a friend? Let him be admonished gently. Is it a wife? Let her be bridled with the utmost rigor. Is it a maid-servant? Let her be curbed even with blows. Do whatever thou canst for the part thou bearest; and so thou fulfillest, “The zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up.” But if thou wilt be cold, languid, having regard only to thyself, and as if thyself were enough to thee, and saying in thy heart, What have I to do with looking after other men’s sins? Enough for me is the care of my own soul: this let

me keep undefiled for God;—come, does there not recur to thy mind the case of that servant who hid his talent and would not lay it out? Was he accused because he lost it, and not because he kept it without profit? So hear ye then, my brethren, that ye may not rest idle. I am about to give you counsel: may He who is within give it; for though it be through me, it is He that gives it. You know what to do, each one of you, in his own house, with his friend, his tenant, his client, with greater, with less: as God grants an entrance, as He opens a door for His word, do not cease to win for Christ; because you were won by Christ.

10. "The Jews said unto Him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?" And the Lord answered, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and dost thou say, In three days I will rear it up?" Flesh they were, fleshly things they minded; but He was speaking spiritually. But who could understand of what temple He spoke? But yet we have not far to seek; He has discovered it to us through the evangelist, he has told us of what temple He said it. "But He spake," saith the evangelist, "of the temple of His body." And it is manifest that, being slain, the Lord did rise again after three days. This is known to us all now: and if from the Jews it is concealed, it is because they stand without; yet to us it is open, because we know in whom we believe. The destroying and rearing again of that temple, we are about to celebrate in its yearly solemnity: for which we exhort you to prepare yourselves, such of you as are catechumens that you may receive grace; even now is the time, even now let that be purposed which may then come to the birth. Now, that thing we know.

11. But perhaps this is demanded of us, whether the fact that the temple was forty and six years in building may not have in it some mystery. There are, indeed, many things that may be said of this matter; but what may briefly be said, and easily understood, that we say meanwhile. Brethren, we have said yesterday, if I mistake not, that Adam was one man, and is yet the whole human race. For thus we said, if you remember. He was broken, as it were, in pieces; and, being scattered, is now being gathered together, and, as it were, conjoined into one by a spiritual fellowship and concord. And "the poor that groan," as one man, is that same Adam, but in Christ he is being

renewed: because an Adam is come without sin, to destroy the sin of Adam in His own flesh, and that Adam might renew to himself the image of God. Of Adam then is Christ's flesh: of Adam the temple which the Jews destroyed, and the Lord raised up in three days. For He raised His own flesh: see, that He was thus God equal with the Father. My brethren, the apostle says, "Who raised Him from the dead." Of whom says he this? Of the Father. "He became," saith he, "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore also God raised Him from the dead, and gave Him a name which is above every name." He who was raised and exalted is the Lord. Who raised Him? The Father, to whom He said in the psalms, "Raise me up and I will requite them." Hence, the Father raised Him up. Did He not raise Himself? And doeth the Father anything without the Word? What doeth the Father without His only One? For, hear that He also was God. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Did He say, Destroy the temple, which in three days the Father will raise up? But as when the Father raiseth, the Son also raiseth; so when the Son raiseth, the Father also raiseth: because the Son has said, "I and the Father are one."

12. Now, what does the number Forty-six mean? Meanwhile, how Adam extends over the whole globe, you have already heard explained yesterday, by the four Greek letters of four Greek words. For if thou write the four words, one under the other, that is, the names of the four quarters of the world, of east, west, north, and south, which is the whole globe,—whence the Lord says that He will gather His elect from the four winds when He shall come to judgment;—if, I say, you take these four Greek words,—anatole, which is east; dusis, which is west; archtos, which is north; mesembria, which is south; Anatole, Dysis, Arctos, Mesembria,—the first letters of the words make Adam. How, then, do we find there, too, the number forty-six? Because Christ's flesh was of Adam. The Greeks compute numbers by letters. What we make the letter A, they in their tongue put Alpha, a, and Alpha, a, is called one. And where in numbers they write Beta, b, which is their b, it is called in numbers two. Where they write Gamma, g, it is called in their numbers three. Where they write Delta, d, it is called in their numbers four; and so by means of all the letters they have numbers. The letter we call M, and they call My, m, signifies forty; for they say My, m, tessarachonta. Now look at the number which these letters

make, and you will find in it that the temple was built in forty-six years. For the word Adam has Alpha, a, which is one: it has Delta, d, which is four; there are five for thee: it has Alpha, a, again, which is one; there are six for thee: it has also My, m, which is forty; there hast thou forty-six. These things, my brethren, were said by our elders before us, and that number forty-six was found by them in letters. And because our Lord Jesus Christ took of Adam a body, not of Adam derived sin; took of him a corporeal temple, not iniquity which must be driven from the temple: and that the Jews crucified that very flesh which He derived from Adam (for Mary was of Adam, and the Lord's flesh was of Mary); and that, further, He was in three days to raise that same flesh which they were about to slay on the cross: they destroyed the temple which was forty-six years in building, and that temple He raised up in three days.

13. We bless the Lord our God, who gathered us together to spiritual joy. Let us be ever in humility of heart, and let our joy be with Him. Let us not be elated with any prosperity of this world, but know that our happiness is not until these things shall have passed way. Now, my brethren, let our joy be in hope: let none rejoice as in a present thing, lest he stick fast in the way. Let joy be wholly of hope to come, desire be wholly of eternal life. Let all sighings breathe after Christ. Let that fairest one alone, who loved the foul to make them fair, be all our desire; after Him alone let us run, for Him alone pant and sigh; "and let them say always, The Lord be magnified, that wish the peace of His servant."

TRACTATE XI

CHAPTER II. 23–25; III. 1–5

1. Opportunely has the Lord procured for us that this passage should occur in its order to day: for I suppose you have observed, beloved, that we have undertaken to consider and explain the Gospel according to John in due course. Opportunely then it occurs, that to-day you should hear from the Gospel, that, "Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he shall not see the kingdom of God." For it is time that we exhort you, who are still catechumens, who have believed in Christ in such wise, that you are still bearing your sins. And none shall see the kingdom of heaven while

burdened with sins; for none shall reign with Christ, but he to whom they have been forgiven: but forgiven they cannot be, but to him who is born again of water and of the Holy Spirit. But let us observe all the words what they imply, that here the sluggish may find with what earnestness they must haste to put off their burden. For were they bearing some heavy load, either of stone, or of wood, or even of some gain; if they were carrying corn, or wine, or money, they would run to put off their loads: they are carrying a burden of sins, and yet are sluggish to run. You must run to put off this burden; it weighs you down, it drowns you.

2. Behold, you have heard that when our Lord Jesus Christ "was in Jerusalem at the Passover, on the feast day, many believed in His name, seeing the signs which He did." "Many believed in His name;" and what follows? "But Jesus did not trust Himself to them." Now what does this mean, "They believed," or trusted, "in His name;" and yet "Jesus did not trust Himself to them;"? Was it, perhaps, that they had not believed on Him, but were feigning to have believed, and that therefore Jesus did not trust Himself to them? But the evangelist would not have said, "Many believed in His name," if he were not giving a true testimony to them. A great thing, then, it is, and a wonderful thing: men believe on Christ, and Christ trusts not Himself to men. Especially is it wonderful, since, being the Son of God, He of course suffered willingly. If He were not willing, He would never have suffered, since, had He not willed it, He had not been born; and if He had willed this only, merely to be born and not to die, He might have done even whatever He willed, because He is the almighty Son of the almighty Father. Let us prove it by facts. For when they wished to hold Him, He departed from them. The Gospel says, "And when they would have cast Him headlong from the top of the mountain, He departed from them unhurt." And when they came to lay hold of Him, after He was sold by Judas the traitor, who imagined that he had it in his power to deliver up his Master and Lord, there also the Lord showed that He suffered of His own will, not of necessity. For when the Jews desired to lay hold of Him, He said to them, "Whom seek ye? But they said, Jesus of Nazareth. And said He, I am He. On hearing this saying, they went backward, and fell to the ground." In this, that in answering them He threw them to the ground, He showed His power; that in His being taken by them He might show His

will. It was of compassion, then, that He suffered. For “He was delivered up for our sins, and rose again for our justification.” Hear His own words: “I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again: no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself, that I may take it again.” Since, therefore, He had such power, since He declared it by words, showed it by deeds, what then does it mean that Jesus did not trust Himself to them, as if they would do Him some harm against His will, or would do something to Him against His will, especially seeing that they had already believed in His name? Moreover, of the same persons the evangelist says, “They believed in His name,” of whom he says, “But Jesus did not trust Himself to them.” Why? “Because He knew all men, and needed not that any should bear witness of man: for Himself knew what was in man.” The artificer knew what was in His own work better than the work knew what was in itself. The Creator of man knew what was in man, which the created man himself knew not. Do we not prove this of Peter, that he knew not what was in himself, when he said, “With Thee, even to death”? Hear that the Lord knew what was in man: “Thou with me even to death? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.” The man, then, knew not what was in himself; but the Creator of the man knew what was in the man. Nevertheless, many believed in His name, and yet Jesus did not trust Himself to them. What can we say, brethren? Perhaps the circumstances that follow will indicate to us what the mystery of these words is. That men had believed in Him is manifest, is true; none doubts it, the Gospel says it, the truth-speaking evangelist testifies to it. Again, that Jesus trusted not Himself to them is also manifest, and no Christian doubts it; for the Gospel says this also, and the same truth-speaking evangelist testifies to it. Why, then, is it that they believed in His name, and yet Jesus did not trust Himself to them? Let us see what follows.

3. “And there was a man of the Pharisees, Nicodemus by name, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Him by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi (you already know that Master is called Rabbi), we know that Thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these signs which Thou doest, except God be with him.” This Nicodemus, then, was of those who had believed in His name, as they saw the signs and prodigies which He did. For this is what he said above: “Now, when He was in Jerusalem at the passover on

the feast-day, many believed in His name.” Why did they believe? He goes on to say, “Seeing His signs which He did.” And what says he of Nicodemus? “There was a ruler of the Jews, Nicodemus by name the same came to Him by night, and says to Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God.” Therefore this man also had believed in His name. And why had he believed? He goes on, “For no man can do these signs which Thou doest, except God be with him.” If, therefore, Nicodemus was of those who had believed in His name, let us now consider, in the case of this Nicodemus, why Jesus did not trust Himself to them. “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Therefore to them who have been born again doth Jesus trust Himself. Behold, those men had believed on Him, and yet Jesus trusted not Himself to them. Such are all catechumens: already they believe in the name of Christ, but Jesus does not trust Himself to them. Give good heed, my beloved, and understand. If we say to a catechumen, Dost thou believe on Christ, he answers, I believe, and signs himself; already he bears the cross of Christ on his forehead, and is not ashamed of the cross of his Lord. Behold, he has believed in His name. Let us ask him, Dost thou eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink the blood of the Son of man? He knows not what we say, because Jesus has not trusted Himself to him.

4. Therefore, since Nicodemus was of that number, he came to the Lord, but came by night; and this perhaps pertains to the matter. Came to the Lord, and came by night; came to the Light, and came in the darkness. But what do they that are born again of water and of the Spirit hear from the apostle? “Ye were once darkness, but now light in the Lord; walk as children of light;” and again, “But we who are of the day, let us be sober.” Therefore they who are born again were of the night, and are of the day; were darkness, and are light. Now Jesus trusts Himself to them, and they come to Jesus, not by night, like Nicodemus; not in darkness do they seek the day. For such now also profess: Jesus has come near to them, has made salvation in them; for He said, “Except a man eat my flesh, and drink my blood, he shall not have life in him.” And as the catechumens have the sign of the cross on their forehead, they are already of the great house; but from servants let them become sons. For they are something who already belong

to the great house. But when did the people Israel eat the manna? After they had passed the Red Sea. And as to what the Red Sea signifies, hear the apostle: “Moreover, brethren, I would not have you ignorant, that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea.” To what purpose passed they through the sea? As if thou wert asking of him, he goes on to say, “And all were baptized by Moses in the cloud and in the sea.” Now, if the figure of the sea had such efficacy, how great will be the efficacy of the true form of baptism! If what was done in a figure brought the people, after they had crossed over, to the manna, what will Christ impart, in the verity of His baptism, to His own people, brought over through Himself? By His baptism He brings over them that believe; all their sins, the enemies as it were that pursue them, being slain, as all the Egyptians perished in that sea. Whither does He bring over, my brethren? Whither does Jesus bring over by baptism, of which Moses then showed the figure, when he brought them through the sea? Whither? To the manna. What is the manna? “I am,” saith He, “the living bread, which came down from heaven.” The faithful receive the manna, having now been brought through the Red Sea? Why Red Sea? Besides sea, why also “red”? That “Red Sea” signified the baptism of Christ. How is the baptism of Christ red, but as consecrated by Christ’s blood? Whither, then, does He lead those that believe and are baptized? To the manna. Behold, “manna,” I say: what the Jews, that people Israel, received, is well known, well known what God had rained on them from heaven; and yet catechumens know not what Christians receive. Let them blush, then, for their ignorance; let them pass through the Red Sea, let them eat the manna, that as they have believed in the name of Jesus, so likewise Jesus may trust Himself to them.

5. Therefore mark, my brethren, what answer this man who came to Jesus by night makes. Although he came to Jesus, yet because he came by night, he still speaks from the darkness of his own flesh. He understands not what he hears from the Lord, understands not what he hears from the Light, “which lighteth every man that cometh into this world.” Already hath the Lord said to him, “Except a man be born again, he shall not see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born again when he is old?” The Spirit speaks to him, and he thinks of the flesh. He thinks of his own flesh, because as yet he thinks not of Christ’s flesh. For

when the Lord Jesus had said, “Except a man eat my flesh, and drink my blood, he shall not have life in him,” some who followed Him were offended, and said among themselves, “This is a hard saying; who can hear it?” For they fancied that, in saying this, Jesus meant that they would be able to cook Him, after being cut up like a lamb, and eat Him: horrified at His words, they went back, and no more followed Him. Thus speaks the evangelist: “And the Lord Himself remained with the twelve; and they said to Him, Lo, those have left Thee. And He said, Will ye also go away?”—wishing to show them that He was necessary to them, not they necessary to Christ. Let no man fancy that he frightens Christ, when he tells Him that he is a Christian; as if Christ will be more blessed if thou be a Christian. It is a good thing for thee to be a Christian; but if thou be not, it will not be ill for Christ. Hear the voice of the psalm, “I said to the Lord, Thou art my God, since Thou hast no need of my goods.” For that reason, “Thou art my God, since of my goods Thou hast no need.” If thou be without God, thou wilt be less; if thou be with God, God will not be greater. Not from thee will He be greater, but thou without Him wilt be less. Grow, therefore, in Him; do not withdraw thyself, that He may, as it were, diminish. Thou wilt be renewed if thou come to Him, wilt suffer loss if thou depart from Him. He remains entire when thou comest to Him, remains entire even when thou fallest away. When, therefore, He had said to His disciples, “Will ye also go away?” Peter, that Rock, answered with the voice of all, “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” Pleasantly savored the Lord’s flesh in his mouth. The Lord, however, expounded to them, and said, “It is the Spirit that quickeneth.” After He had said, “Except a man eat my flesh, and drink my blood, he shall not have life in him,” lest they should understand it carnally, He said, “It is the Spirit that quickeneth, but the flesh profiteth nothing: the words which I have spoken unto you are spirit and life.”

6. This Nicodemus, who had come to Jesus by night, did not savor of this spirit and this life. Saith Jesus to him, “Except a man be born again, he shall not see the kingdom of God.” And he, savoring of his own flesh, while as yet he savored not of the flesh of Christ in his mouth, saith, “How can a man be born a second time, when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?” This man knew but one birth, that from

Adam and Eve; that which is from God and the Church he knew not yet: he knew only those parents that bring forth to death, knew not yet the parents that bring forth to life; he knew but the parents that bring forth successors, knew not yet the ever-living parents that bring forth those that shall abide.

Whilst there are two births, then, he understood only one. One is of the earth, the other of heaven; one of the flesh, the other of the Spirit; one of mortality, the other of eternity; one of male and female, the other of God and the Church. But these two are each single; there can be no repeating the one or the other. Rightly did Nicodemus understand the birth of the flesh; so understand thou also the birth of the Spirit, as Nicodemus understood the birth of the flesh. What did Nicodemus understand? “Can a man enter a second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?” Thus, whosoever shall tell thee to be spiritually born a second time, answer in the words of Nicodemus, “Can a man enter a second time into his mother’s womb, and be born?” I am already born of Adam, Adam cannot beget me a second time. I am already born of Christ, Christ cannot beget me again. As there is no repeating from the womb, so neither from baptism.

7. He that is born of the Catholic Church, is born, as it were, of Sarah, of the free woman; he that is born of heresy is, as it were, born of the bond woman, but of Abraham’s seed. Consider, beloved, how great a mystery. God testifies, saying, “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Were there not other patriarchs? Before these, was there not holy Noah, who alone of the whole human race, with all his house, was worthy to be delivered from the flood,—he in whom, and in his sons, the Church was prefigured? Borne by wood, they escaped the flood. Then afterwards great men whom we know, whom Holy Scriptures commends, Moses faithful in all his house. And yet those three are named, just as if they alone deserved well of him: “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: this is my name for ever.” Sublime mystery! It is the Lord that is able to open both our mouth and your hearts, that we may speak as He has deigned to reveal, and that you may receive even as it is expedient for you.

8. The patriarchs, then, are these three, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You know that the sons of Jacob were twelve, and thence the people Israel; for

Jacob himself is Israel, and the people Israel in twelve tribes pertaining to the twelve sons of Israel. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob three fathers, and one people. The fathers three, as it were in the beginning of the people; three fathers in whom the people was figured: and the former people itself the present people. For in the Jewish people was figured the Christian people. There a figure, here the truth; there a shadow, here the body: as the apostle says, "Now these things happened to them in a figure." It is the apostle's voice: "They were written," saith he, "for our sakes, upon whom the end of the ages is come." Let your mind now recur to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In the case of these three, we find that free women bear children, and that bond women bear children: we find there offspring of free women, we find there also offspring of bond women. The bond woman signifies nothing good: "Cast out the bond woman," saith he, "and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free." The apostle recounts this; and he says that in those two sons of Abraham was a figure of the two Testaments, the Old and the New. To the Old Testament belong the lovers of temporal things, the lovers of the world: to the New Testament belong the lovers of eternal life. Hence, that Jerusalem on earth was the shadow of the heavenly Jerusalem, the mother of us all, which is in heaven; and these are the apostle's words. And of that city from which we are absent on our sojourn, you know much, you have now heard much. But we find a wonderful thing in these births, in these fruits of the womb, in these generations of free and bond women: namely, four sorts of men; in which four sorts is completed the figure of the future Christian people, so that what was said in the case of those three patriarchs is not surprising, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." For in the case of all Christians, observe, brethren, either good men are born of evil men, or evil men of good; or good men of good, or evil men of evil: more than these four sorts you cannot find. These things I will again repeat: Give heed, keep them, excite your hearts, be not dull; take in, lest ye be taken, how of all Christians there are four sorts. Either of the good are born good, or of the evil, are born evil; or of the good are born evil, or of the evil good. I think it is plain. Of the good, good; if they who baptize are good, and also they who are baptized rightly believe, and are rightly numbered among the members of Christ. Of the evil, evil; if they who baptize are evil, and they who are baptized approach God with a double heart, and do not observe the morals which they hear urged in the Church, so as not to be chaff, but grain, there. How many such there are, you know, beloved. Of the evil, good; sometimes an adulterer baptizes, and he that is baptized is justified. Of the good, evil; sometimes they who baptize are holy, they who are baptized do not desire to keep the way of God.

9. I suppose, brethren, that this is known in the Church, and that what we are saying is manifest by daily examples; but let us consider these things in the case of our fathers before us, how they also had these four kinds. Of the good, good; Ananias baptized Paul. How of the evil, evil? The apostle declares that there were certain preachers of the gospel, who, he says, did not use to preach the gospel with a pure motive, whom, however, he tolerates in the Christian society, saying, "What then, notwithstanding every way, whether by occasion or in truth, Christ is preached, and in this I rejoice." Was he therefore malevolent, and did he rejoice in another's evil? No, but rejoiced because through evil men the truth was preached, and by the mouths of evil men Christ was preached. If these men baptized any persons like themselves, evil men baptized evil men: if they baptized such as the Lord admonishes, when He says, "Whatsoever they bid you, do; but do not ye after their works," they were evil men that were baptizing good. Good men baptized evil men, as Simon the sorcerer was baptized by Philip, a holy man. Therefore these four sorts, my brethren, are known. See, I repeat them again, hold them, count them, think upon them; guard against what is evil; keep what is good. Good men are born of good, when holy men are baptized by holy; evil men are born of evil, when both they that baptize and they that are baptized live unrighteously and ungodly; good men are born of evil, when they are evil that baptize, and they good that are baptized; evil men are born of good, when they are good that baptize, and they evil that are baptized.

10. How do we find this in these three names, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? We hold the bond women among the evil, and the free women among the good. Free women bear the good; Sarah bare Isaac: bond women bear the evil; Hagar bare Ishmael. We have in the case of Abraham alone the two sorts, both when the good are of the good, and also when the evil are of the evil. But where have we evil of

good figured? Rebecca, Isaac’s wife, was a free woman: read, She bare twins; one was good, the other evil. Thou hast the Scripture openly declaring by the voice of God, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” Rebecca bare those two, Jacob and Esau: one of them is chosen, the other is reprobated; one succeeds to the inheritance, the other is disinherited. God does not make His people of Esau, but makes it of Jacob. The seed is one, those conceived are dissimilar: the womb is one, those born of it are diverse. Was not the free woman that bare Jacob, the same free woman that bare Esau? They strove in the mother’s womb; and when they strove there, it was said to Rebecca, “Two peoples are in thy womb.” Two men, two peoples; a good people, and a bad people: but yet they strive in one womb. How many evil men there are in the Church! And one womb carries them until they are separated in the end: and the good cry out against the evil, and the evil in turn cry out against the good, and both strive together in the bowels of one mother. Will they be always together? There is a going forth to the light in the end; the birth which is here figured in a mystery is declared; and it will then appear that “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”

11. Accordingly we have now found, brethren, of the good, good—of the free woman, Isaac; and of the evil, evil—of the bond woman, Ishmael; and of the good, evil—of Rebecca, Esau: where shall we find of the evil, good? There remains Jacob, that the completion of these four sorts may be concluded in the three patriarchs. Jacob had for wives free women, he had also bond women: the free bear children, as do also the bond, and thus come the twelve sons of Israel. If you count them all, of whom they were born, they were not all of the free women, nor all of the bond women; but yet they were all of one seed. What, then, my brethren? Did not they who were born of the bond women possess the land of promise together with their brethren? We have there found good sons of Jacob born of bond women, and good sons of Jacob born of free women. Their birth of the wombs of bond women was nothing against them, when they knew their seed in the father, and consequently they held the kingdom with their brethren. Therefore, as in the case of Jacob’s sons, that they were born of bond women did not hinder their holding the kingdom, and receiving the land of promise on an equality with their brothers; their birth of bond

women did not hinder them, but the father's seed prevailed: so, whoever are baptized by evil men, appear as if born of bond women; nevertheless, because they are of the seed of the Word of God, which is figured in Jacob, let them not be cast down, they shall possess the inheritance with their brethren. Therefore, let him who is born of the good seed be without fear; only let him not imitate the bond woman, if he is born of a bond woman. Do not thou imitate the evil, proud, bond woman. For how came the sons of Jacob, that were born of bond women, to possess the land of promise with their brethren, whilst Ishmael, born of a bond woman, was cast out from the inheritance? How, but because he was proud, they were humble? He proudly reared his neck, and wished to seduce his brother while he was playing with him.

12. A great mystery is there. They were playing together, Ishmael and Isaac: Sarah sees them playing, and says to Abraham, "Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac." And when Abraham was sorrowful, the Lord confirmed to him the saying of his wife. Now here is evidently a mystery, that the event was somehow pregnant with something future. She sees them playing, and says, "Cast out the bond woman and her son." What is this, brethren? For what evil had Ishmael done to the boy Isaac, in playing with him? That playing was a mocking; that playing signified deception. Now attend, beloved, to this great mystery. The apostle calls it persecution; that playing, that play, he calls persecution: for he says, "But as then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, so also now;" that is, they that are born after the flesh persecute them that are born after the Spirit. Who are born after the flesh? Lovers of the world, lovers of this life. Who are born after the Spirit? Lovers of the kingdom of heaven, lovers of Christ, men that long for eternal life, that worship God freely. They play, and the apostle calls it persecution. For after he said these words, "And as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, so also now;" the apostle went on, and showed of what persecution, he was speaking: "But what says the Scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac." We search where the Scripture says this, to see whether any persecution on Ishmael's part against Isaac preceded this; and we find that

this was said by Sarah when she saw the boys playing together. The playing which Scripture says that Sarah saw, the apostle calls persecution. Hence, they who seduce you by playing, persecute you the more. “Come,” say they, “Come, be baptized here, here is true baptism for thee.” Do not play, there is one true baptism; that other is play: thou wilt be seduced, and that will be a grievous persecution to thee. It were better for thee to make Ishmael a present of the kingdom; but Ishmael will not have it, for he means to play. Keep thou thy father’s inheritance, and hear this: “Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac.”

13. These men, too, dare to say that they are wont to suffer persecution from catholic kings, or from catholic princes. What persecution do they bear? Affliction of body: yet if at times they have suffered, and how they suffered, let themselves know, and settle it with their consciences; still they suffered only affliction of body: the persecution which they cause is more grievous. Beware when Ishmael wishes to play with Isaac, when he fawns on thee, when he offers another baptism: answer him, I have baptism already. For if this baptism is true, he who would give thee another would be mocking thee. Beware of the persecution of the soul. For though the party of Donatus has at times suffered somewhat at the hands of catholic princes, it was a bodily suffering, not the suffering of spiritual deception. Hear and see in the very facts of Old Testament history all the signs and indications of things to come. Sarah is found to have afflicted her maid Hagar: Sarah is free. After her maid began to be proud, Sarah complained to Abraham, and said, “Cast out the bond woman;” she has lifted her neck against me. His wife complains of Abraham, as if it were his doing. But Abraham, who was not bound to the maid by lust, but by the duty of begetting children, inasmuch as Sarah had given her to him to have offspring by her, says to her: “Behold, she is thy handmaid; do unto her as thou wilt.” And Sarah grievously afflicted her, and she fled from her face. See, the free woman afflicted the bond woman, and the apostle does not call that a persecution; the slave plays with his master, and he calls it persecution: this afflicting is not called persecution; that playing is. How does it appear to you, brethren? Do you not understand what is signified? Thus, then, when God wills to stir up powers against heretics, against

schismatics, against those that scatter the Church, that blow on Christ as if they abhorred Him, that blaspheme baptism, let them not wonder; because God stirs them up, that Hagar may be beaten by Sarah. Let Hagar know herself, and yield her neck: for when, after being humiliated, she departed from her mistress, an angel met her, and said to her, “What is the matter with thee, Hagar, Sarah’s handmaid?” When she complained of her mistress, what did she hear from the angel? “Return to thy mistress.” It is for this that she is afflicted, that she may return; and would that she may return, for her offspring, just like the sons of Jacob, will obtain the inheritance with their brethren.

14. But they wonder that Christian powers are roused against detestable scatterers of the Church. Should they not be moved, then? How otherwise should they give an account of their rule to God? Observe, beloved, what I say, that it concerns Christian kings of this world to wish their mother the Church, of which they have been spiritually born, to have peace in their times. We read Daniel’s visions and prophetical histories. The three children praised the Lord in the fire: King Nebuchadnezzar wondered at the children praising God, and at the fire around them doing them no harm: and whilst he wondered, what did King Nebuchadnezzar say, he who was neither a Jew nor circumcised, who had set up his own image and compelled all men to adore it; but, impressed by the praises of the three children when he saw the majesty of God present in the fire what said he? “And I will publish a decree to all tribes and tongues in the whole earth.” What sort of decree? “Whosoever shall speak blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut off, and their houses shall be made a ruin.” See how an alien king acts with raging indignation that the God of Israel might not be blasphemed, because He was able to deliver the three children from the fire: and yet they would not have Christian kings to act with severity when Christ is contemptuously rejected, by whom not three children, but the whole world, with these very kings, is delivered from the fire of hell! For those three children, my brethren, were delivered from temporal fire. Is He not the same God who was the God of the Maccabees and the God of the three children? The latter He delivered from the fire; the former did in body perish in the torments of fire, but in mind they remained steadfast in the ordinances of the law. The latter were openly delivered, the former were

crowned in secret. It is a greater thing to be delivered from the flame of hell than from the furnace of a human power. If, then, Nebuchadnezzar praised and extolled and gave glory to God because He delivered three children from the fire, and gave such glory as to send forth a decree throughout his kingdom, “Whosoever shall speak blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut off, and their houses shall be brought to ruin,” how should not these kings be moved, who observe, not three children delivered from the flame, but their very selves delivered from hell, when they see Christ, by whom they have been delivered, contemptuously spurned in Christians, when they hear it said to a Christian, “Say that thou art not a Christian”? Men are willing to do such deeds, but they do not wish to suffer, at all events, such punishments.

15. For see what they do and what they suffer. They slay souls, they suffer in body: they cause everlasting deaths, and yet they complain that they themselves suffer temporal deaths. And yet what deaths do they suffer? They allege to us some martyrs of theirs in persecution. See, Marculus was hurled headlong from a rock; see, Donatus of Bagaia was thrown into a well. When have the Roman authorities decreed such punishments as casting men down rocks? But what do those of our party reply? What was done I know not; what however do ours tell? That they flung themselves headlong and cast the infamy of it upon the authorities. Let us call to mind the custom of the Roman authorities, and see to whom we are to give credit. Our men declare that those men cast themselves down headlong. If they are not the very disciples of those men, who now cast themselves down precipices, while no man persecutes them, let us not credit the allegation of our men: what wonder if those men did what these are wont to do? The Roman authorities never did employ such punishments: for had they not the power to put them to death openly? But those men, while they wished to be honored when dead, found not a death to make them more famous. In short, whatever the fact was, I do not know. And even if thou hast suffered corporal affliction, O party of Donatus, at the hand of the Catholic Church, as an Hagar thou hast suf fered it at the hand of Sarah; “return to thy mistress.” A point which it was indeed necessary to discuss has detained us somewhat too long to be at all able to expound the whole text of the Gospel Lesson. Let this suffice you in the meantime, beloved brethren, lest, by

speaking of other matters, what has been spoken might be shut out from your hearts. Hold fast these things, declare such things; and while yourselves are inflamed, go your way thither, and set on fire them that are cold.

TRACTATE XII

CHAPTER III. 6–21

1. We observe, beloved, that the intimation with which we yesterday excited your attention has brought you together with more alacrity, and in greater number than usual; but meanwhile let us, if you please, pay our debt of a discourse on the Gospel Lesson, which comes in due course. You shall then hear, beloved, as well what we have already effected concerning the peace of the Church, and what we hope yet further to accomplish. For the present, then, let the whole attention of your hearts be given to the gospel; let none be thinking of anything else. For if he who attends to it wholly apprehends with difficulty, must not he who divides himself by diverse thoughts let go what he has received? Moreover, you remember, beloved, that on the last Lord’s day, as the Lord deigned to help us, we discoursed of spiritual regeneration. That lesson we have caused to be read to you again, so that what was then left unspoken, we may now, by the aid of your prayers in the name of Christ, fulfill.

2. Spiritual regeneration is one, just as the generation of the flesh is one. And Nicodemus said the truth when he said to the Lord that a man cannot, when he is old, return again into his mother’s womb and be born. He indeed said that a man cannot do this when he is old, as if he could do it even were he an infant. But be he fresh from the womb, or now in years, he cannot possibly return again into the mother’s bowels and be born. But just as for the birth of the flesh, the bowels of woman avail to bring forth the child only once, so for the spiritual birth the bowels of the Church avail that a man be baptized only once. Therefore, in case one should say, “Well, but this man was born in heresy, and this in schism:” all that was cut away, if you remember what was debated to you about our three fathers, of whom God willed to be called the God, not that they were thus alone but because in them alone the figure of the future people was made up in its

completeness. For we find one born of a bond woman disinherited, one born of a free woman made heir: again, we find one born of a free woman disinherited, one born of a bond woman made heir. Ishmael, born of a bond woman, disinherited; Isaac, born of a free woman, made heir: Esau, born of a free woman, disinherited; the sons of Jacob, born of bond women, made heirs. Thus, in these three fathers the figure of the whole future people is seen: and not without reason God saith, “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: this,” saith He, “is my name for ever.” Rather let us remember what was promised to Abraham himself: for this was promised to Isaac, and also to Jacob. What do we find? “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” At that time the one man believed what as yet he saw not: men now see, and are blinded. What was promised to the one man is fulfilled in the nations; and they who will not see what is already fulfilled, are separating themselves from the communion of the nations. But what avails it them that they will not see? See they do, whether they will or no; the open truth strikes against their closed eyes.

3. It was in answer to Nicodemus, who was of them that had believed on Jesus, that it was said, And Jesus did not trust Himself to them. To certain men, indeed, He did not trust Himself, though they had already believed on Him. Thus it is written, “Many believed in His name, seeing the signs which He did. But Jesus did not trust Himself to them. For He needed not that any should testify of man; for Himself knew what was in man.” Behold, they already believed on Jesus, and yet Jesus did not trust Himself to them. Why? because they were not yet born again of water and of the Spirit. From this have we ex horted and do exhort our brethren the catechumens. For if you ask them, they have already believed in Jesus; but because they have not yet received His flesh and blood, Jesus has not yet trusted Himself to them. What must they do that Jesus may trust Himself to them? They must be born again of water and of the Spirit; the Church that is in travail with them must bring them forth. They have been conceived; they must be brought forth to the light: they have breasts to be nourished at; let them not fear lest, being born, they may be smothered; let them not depart from the mother’s breasts.

4. No man can return into his mother’s bowels and be born again. But some one is born of a bond woman? Well, did they who were born of bond women at the former time, return into the wombs of the free to be born anew? The seed of Abraham was in Ishmael also; but that Abraham might have a son of the bond maid, it was at the advice of his wife. The child was of the husband’s seed, not of the womb, but at the sole pleasure of the wife. Was his birth of a bond woman the reason why he was disinherited? Then, if he was disinherited because he was the son of a bond woman, no sons of bond women would be admitted to the inheritance. The sons of Jacob were admitted to the inheritance; but Ishmael was put out of it, not because born of a bond woman, but because he was proud to his mother, proud to his mother’s son; for his mother was Sarah rather than Hagar. The one gave her womb, the other’s will was added: Abraham would not have done what Sarah willed not: therefore was he Sarah’s son rather. But because he was proud to his brother, proud in playing, that is, in mocking him; what said Sarah? “Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac.” It was not, therefore, the bowels of the bond woman that caused his rejection, but the slave’s neck. For the free-born is a slave if he is proud, and, what is worse, the slave of a bad mistress, of pride itself. Thus, my brethren, answer the man, that a man cannot be born a second time; answer fearlessly, that a man cannot be born a second time. Whatever is done a second time is mockery, whatever is done a second time is play. It is Ishmael playing, let him be cast out. For Sarah observed them playing, saith the Scripture, and said to Abraham, “Cast out the bond woman and her son.” The playing of the boys displeased Sarah. She saw something strange in their play. Do not they who have sons like to see them playing? She saw and disapproved it. Something or other she saw in their play; she saw mockery in it, observed the pride of the slave; she was displeased with it, and she cast him out. The children of bond women, when wicked, are cast out; and the child of the free woman, when an Esau, is cast out. Let none, therefore, presume on his birth of good parents; let none presume on his being baptized by holy men. Let him that is baptized by holy men still beware lest he be not a Jacob, but an Esau. This would I say then, brethren, it is better to be baptized by men that seek their own and love the world, which is what the name of bond woman imports, and to be spiritually seeking the inheritance of Christ, so as to be

as it were a son of Jacob by a bond woman, than to be baptized by holy men and to become proud, so as to be an Esau to be cast out, though born of a free woman. Hold ye this fast, brethren. We are not coaxing you, let none of your hope be in us; we flatter neither ourselves nor you; every man bears his own burden. It is our duty to speak, that we be not judged unhappily: yours to hear, and that with the heart, lest what we give be required of you; nay, that when it is required, it may be found a gain, not a loss.

5. The Lord says to Nicodemus, and explains to him: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Thou, says He, understandest a carnal generation, when thou sayest, Can a man return into his mother’s bowels? The birth for the kingdom of God must be of water and of the Spirit. If one is born to the temporal inheritance of a human father, be he born of the bowels of a carnal mother; if one is born to the everlasting inheritance of God as his Father, be he born of the bowels of the Church. A father, as one that will die, begets a son by his wife to succeed him; but God begets of the Church sons, not to succeed Him, but to abide with Himself. And He goes on: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” We are born spiritually then, and spirit we are born by the word and sacrament. The Spirit is present that we may be born; the Spirit is invisibly present whereof thou art born, for thou too must be invisibly born. For He goes on to say: “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest its voice, but knowest not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth.” None sees the Spirit; and how do we hear the Spirit’s voice? There sounds a psalm, it is the Spirit’s voice; the gospel sounds, it is the Spirit’s voice; the divine word sounds, it is the Spirit’s voice. “Thou hearest its voice, and knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.” But if thou art born of the Spirit, thou too shall be so, that one who is not born of the Spirit knows not, as for thee, whence thou comest, or whither thou goest. For He said, as He went on, “So is also every one that is born of the Spirit.”

6. “Nicodemus answered and said unto Him, How can these things be?” And, in fact, in the carnal sense, he knew not how. In him occurred what the Lord had said; the Spirit’s voice he heard, but knew not whence it came,

and whither it was going. “Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?” Oh, brethren! what? do we think that the Lord meant to taunt scornfully this master of the Jews? The Lord knew what He was doing; He wished the man to be born of the Spirit. No man is born of the Spirit if he be not humble, for humility itself makes us to be born of the Spirit; “for the Lord is nigh to them that are of broken heart.” The man was puffed up with his mastership, and it appeared of some importance to himself that he was a teacher of the Jews. Jesus pulled down his pride, that he might be born of the Spirit: He taunted him as an unlearned man; not that the Lord wished to appear his superior. What comparison can there be, God compared to man, truth to falsehood? Christ greater than Nicodemus! Ought this to be said, can it be said, is it to be thought? If it were said, “Christ is greater than angels,” it were ridiculous: for incomparably greater than every creature is He by whom every creature was made. But yet He rallies the man on his pride: “Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?” As if He said, Behold, thou knowest nothing, thou art a proud chief; be thou born of the Spirit: for if thou be born of the Spirit, thou wilt keep the ways of God, so as to follow Christ’s humility. So, indeed, is He high above all angels, that, “being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant, being made into the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man: He humbled Himself, being made obedient unto death” (and lest any kind of death should please thee), “even the death of the cross.” He hung on the cross, and they scoffed at Him. He could have come down from the cross; but He deferred, that He might rise again from the tomb. He, the Lord, bore with proud slaves; the physician with the sick. If He did this, how ought they to act whom it behoves to be born of the Spirit!—if He did this, He who is the true Master in heaven, not of men only, but also of angels. For if the angels are learned, they are so by the Word of God. If they are learned by the Word of God, ask of what they are learned; and you shall find, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The neck of man is done away with, only the hard and stiff neck, that it may be gentle to bear the yoke of Christ, of which it is said, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

7. And He goes on, “If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not; how shall ye believe, if I tell you heavenly things?” What earthly things did He tell, brethren? “Except a man be born again;” is that an earthly thing? “The Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest its voice, and knowest not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth;” is that earthly? For if He spoke it of the wind, as some have understood it, when they were asked what earthly thing the Lord meant, when He said, “If I told you earthly things, and ye believe not; how shall ye believe, if I tell you heavenly things?”—when, I say, it was asked of certain men what “earthly thing” the Lord meant, being in difficulty, they said, What He said, “The Spirit bloweth where it listeth,” and “its voice thou hearest, and knowest not whence it cometh, or whither it goeth,” He said concerning the wind. Now what did He name earthly? He was speaking of the spiritual birth; and going on, saith, “So is every one that is born of the Spirit.” Then, brethren, which of us does not see, for example, the south wind going from south to north, or another wind coming from east to west? How, then, know we not whence it cometh and whither it goeth? What earthly thing, then, did He tell, which men did not believe? Was it that which He had said about raising the temple again? Surely, for He had received His body of the earth, and that earth taken of the earthly body He was preparing to raise up. They did not believe Him as about to raise up earth. “If I told you earthly things,” saith He, “and ye believe not; how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?” That is, if ye believe not that I can raise up the temple cast down by you, how shall ye believe that men can be regenerated by the Spirit?

8. And He goes on: “And no man hath ascended into heaven, but He that came down from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven.” Behold, He was here, and was also in heaven; was here in His flesh, in heaven by His divinity; yea, everywhere by His divinity. Born of a mother, not quitting the Father. Two nativities of Christ are understood: one divine, the other human: one, that by which we were to be made; the other, that by which we were to be made anew: both marvellous; that without mother, this without father. But because He had taken a body of Adam,—for Mary was of Adam,—and was about to raise that same body again, it was an earthly thing He had said in saying, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” But this was a heavenly thing, when He said, “Except a man be

born again of water and of the Spirit, he shall not see the kingdom of God.” Come then, brethren! God has willed to be the Son of man; and willed men to be sons of God. He came down for our sakes; let us ascend for His sake. For He alone descended and ascended, He who saith, “No man hath ascended into heaven, but He who came down from heaven.” Are they not therefore to ascend into heaven whom He makes sons of God? Certainly they are: this is the promise to us, “They shall be equal to the angels of God.” Then how is it that no man ascends, but He that descended? Because one only descended, only one ascends. What of the rest? What are we to understand, but that they shall be His members, that one may ascend? Therefore it follows that “no man hath ascended into heaven, but He who came down from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven.” Dost thou marvel that He was both here and in heaven? Such He made His disciples. Hear the Apostle Paul saying, “But our conversation is in heaven.” If the Apostle Paul, a man, walked in the flesh on earth, and yet had his conversation in heaven, was the God of heaven and earth not able to be both in heaven and on earth?

9. Therefore, if none but He descended and ascended, what hope is there for the rest? The hope for the rest is this, that He came down in order that in Him and with Him they might be one, who should ascend through Him. “He saith not, And to seeds,” saith the apostle, “as in many; but as in one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” And to believers he saith, “And ye are Christ’s; and if Christ’s, then are Abraham’s seed.” What he said to be one, that he said that we all are. Hence, in the Psalms, many sometimes sing, to show that one is made of many; sometimes one sings, to show what is made of many. Therefore was it only one that was healed in the pool; and whoever else went down into it was not healed. Now this one shows forth the oneness of the Church. Woe to them who hate unity, and make to themselves parties among men! Let them hear him who wished to make them one, in one, for one: let them hear him who says, Be not ye making many: “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. But neither he that planteth is anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.” ^They were saying, “I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas.” And he says, “Is Christ divided?” Be ye in one, be one thing, be one person: “No man hath ascended into heaven, but He who came down

from heaven.” Lo! we wish to be thine, they said to Paul. And he said to them, I will not that ye be Paul’s, but be ye His whose is Paul together with you.

10. For He came down and died, and by that death delivered us from death: being slain by death, He slew death. And you know, brethren, that this death entered into the world through the devil’s envy. “God made not death,” saith the Scripture, “nor delights He in the destruction of the living; but He created all things to be.” But what saith it here? “But by the devil’s envy, death entered into the whole world.” To the death offered for our entertainment by the devil, man would not come by constraint; for the devil had not the power of forcing, but only cunning to persuade. Hadst thou not consented, the devil had brought in nothing: thy own consenting, O man, led thee to death. Of the mortal are mortals born; from immortals we are become mortals. From Adam all men are mortal; but Jesus the Son of God, the Word of God, by which all things were made, the only Son equal with the Father, was made mortal: “for the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.”

11. He endured death, then; but death He hanged on the cross, and mortal men are delivered from death. The Lord calls to mind a great matter, which was done in a figure with them of old: “And as Moses,” saith He, “lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up; that every one who believeth on Him may not perish, but have everlasting life.” A great mystery is here, as they who read know. Again, let them hear, as well they who have not read as they who have forgotten what perhaps they had heard or read. The people Israel were fallen helplessly in the wilderness by the bite of serpents; they suffered a great calamity by many deaths: for it was the stroke of God correcting and scourging them that He might instruct them. In this was shown a great mystery, the figure of a thing to come: the Lord Himself testifies in this passage, so that no man can give another interpretation than that which the truth indicates concerning itself. Now Moses was ordered by the Lord to make a brazen serpent, and to raise it on a pole in the wilderness, and to admonish the people Israel, that, when any had been bitten by a serpent, he should look to that serpent raised up on the pole. This was done: men were bitten; they looked and were healed. What

are the biting serpents? Sins, from the mortality of the flesh. What is the serpent lifted up? The Lord's death on the cross. For as death came by the serpent, it was figured by the image of a serpent. The serpent's bite was deadly, the Lord's death is life-giving. A serpent is gazed on that the serpent may have no power. What is this? A death is gazed on, that death may have no power. But whose death? The death of life: if it may be said, the death of life; ay, for it may be said, but said wonderfully. But should it not be spoken, seeing it was a thing to be done? Shall I hesitate to utter that which the Lord has deigned to do for me? Is not Christ the life? And yet Christ hung on the cross. Is not Christ life? And yet Christ was dead. But in Christ's death, death died. Life dead slew death; the fullness of life swallowed up death; death was absorbed in the body of Christ. So also shall we say in the resurrection, when now triumphant we shall sing, "Where, O death, is thy contest? Where, O death, is thy sting?" Meanwhile brethren, that we may be healed from sin, let us now gaze on Christ crucified; for "as Moses," saith He, "lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth on Him may not perish, but have everlasting life." Just as they who looked on that serpent perished not by the serpent's bites, so they who look in faith on Christ's death are healed from the bites of sins. But those were healed from death to temporal life; whilst here He saith, "that they may have everlasting life." Now there is this difference between the figurative image and the real thing: the figure procured temporal life; the reality, of which that was the figure, procures eternal life.

12. "For God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world through Him may be saved." So far, then, as it lies in the physician, He is come to heal the sick. He that will not observe the orders of the physician destroys himself. He is come a Saviour to the world: why is he called the Saviour of the world, but that He is come to save the world, not to judge the world? Thou wilt not be saved by Him; thou shalt be judged of thyself. And why do I say, "shall be judged"? See what He says: "He that believeth on Him is not judged, but he that believeth not." What dost thou expect He is going to say, but "is judged"? "Already," saith He, "has been judged." The judgment has not yet appeared, but already it has taken place. For the Lord knoweth them that are His: He knows who are

persevering for the crown, and who for the flame; knows the wheat on His threshing-floor, and knows the chaff; knows the good corn, and knows the tares. He that believeth not is already judged. Why judged? “Because he has not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.”

13. “And this is the judgment, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” My brethren, whose works does the Lord find to be good? The works of none: He finds the works of all evil. How is it, then, that some have done the truth, and are come to the light? For this is what follows: “But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” In what way have some done a good work to come to the light, namely, to Christ? And how have some loved darkness? For if He finds all men sinners, and healeth all of sin, and that serpent in which the Lord’s death was figured healed them that were bitten, and on account of the serpent’s bite the serpent was set up, namely, the Lord’s death on account of mortal men, whom He finds unrighteous; how are we to understand that “this is the judgment, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil”? How is this? Whose works, in fact, are good? Hast Thou not come to justify the ungodly? “But they loved,” saith He, “darkness rather than light.” There He laid the emphasis: for many loved their sins; many confessed their sins; and he who confesses his sins, and accuses them, doth now work with God. God accuses thy sins: and if thou also accusest, thou art united to God. There are, as it were, two things, man and sinner. That thou art called man, is God’s doing; that thou art called sinner, is man’s own doing. Blot out what thou hast done, that God may save what He has done. It behoves thee to hate thine own work in thee, and to love the work of God in thee. And when thy own deeds will begin to displease thee, from that time thy good works begin, as thou findest fault with thy evil works. The confession of evil works is the beginning of good works. Thou doest the truth, and comest to the light. How is it thou doest the truth? Thou dost not caress, nor soothe, nor flatter thyself; nor say, “I am righteous,” whilst thou art unrighteous: thus, thou beginnest to do the truth. Thou comest to the light, that thy works may be made manifest that they are wrought in God; for thy sin, the very thing that has given thee displeasure, would not have displeased thee, if

God did not shine into thee, and His truth show it thee. But he that loves his sins, even after being admonished, hates the light admonishing him, and flees from it, that his works which he loves may not be proved to be evil. But he that doeth truth accuses his evil works in himself, spares not himself, forgives not himself, that God may forgive him: for that which he desires God to forgive, he himself acknowledges, and he comes to the light; to which he is thankful for showing him what he should hate in himself. He says to God, “Turn away Thy face from my sins:” yet with what countenance says it, unless he adds, “For I acknowledge mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me?” Be that before thyself which thou desirest not to be before God. But if thou wilt put thy sin behind thee, God will thrust it back before thine eyes; and this He will do at a time when there will be no more fruit of repentance.

14. Run, my brethren, lest the darkness lay hold of you. Awake to your salvation, awake while there is time; let none be kept back from the temple of God, none kept back from the work of the Lord, none called away from continual prayer, none be defrauded of wonted devotion. Awake, then, while it is day: the day shines, Christ is the day. He is ready to forgive sins, but to them that acknowledge them; ready to punish the self-defenders, who boast that they are righteous, and think themselves to be something when they are nothing. But he that walks in His love and mercy, even being free from those great and deadly sins, such crimes as murder, theft, adultery; still, because of those which seem to be minute sins, of tongue, or of thought, or of intemperance in things permitted, he doeth the truth in confession, and cometh to the light in good works: since many minute sins, if they be neglected, kill. Minute are the drops that swell the rivers; minute are the grains of sand; but if much sand is put together, the heap presses and crushes. Bilge-water neglected in the hold does the same thing as a rushing wave. Gradually it leaks in through the hold; and by long leaking in and no pumping out, it sinks the ship. Now what is this pumping out, but by good works, by sighing, fasting, giving, forgiving, so to effect that sins may not overwhelm us? The path of this life, however, is troublesome, full of temptations: in prosperity, let it not lift us up; in adversity, let it not crush us. He who gave the happiness of this world gave it for thy comfort, not for thy ruin. Again, He who scourgeth thee in this life, doeth it for thy

improvement, not for thy condemnation. Bear the Father that corrects thee for thy training, lest thou feel the judge in punishing thee. These things we tell you every day, and they must be often said, because they are good and wholesome.

TRACTATE XIII

CHAPTER III. 22–29

1. The course of reading from the Gospel of John, as those of you who are concerned for your own progress may remember, so proceeds in regular order, that the passage which has now been read comes before us for exposition to-day. You remember that we have expounded it, in the preceding discourses, from the very beginning of the Gospel, as far as the lesson of to-day. And though perhaps you have forgotten much of it, at least it remains in your memory that we have done our part in it. What you have heard from it about the baptism of John, even though you retain not all, yet I believe you have heard that which you may retain. Also, what was said as to why the Holy Spirit appeared in the shape of a dove; and how that most knotty question was solved, namely, what was that something in the Lord which John did not know, and which he learned by means of the dove, whilst already John knew Him, since, as Jesus came to be baptized, he said to Him, “I ought to be baptized by Thee, and comest Thou to me?” when the Lord answered him, “Suffer it now, that all righteousness may be fulfilled.”

2. Now, therefore, the order of our reading obliges us to return to that same John. The same is he who was prophesied of by Isaiah, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye a way for the Lord, make His paths straight.” Such testimony gave he to his Lord and (for the Lord deemed him worthy) his friend. And the Lord, even his friend, did also Himself bear witness to John. For concerning John He said, “Among them that are born of women, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist.” But as He put Himself before John, in that wherein He was greater, He was God. “But he that is less,” saith He, “in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” Less in age; greater in power, in deity, in majesty, in brightness: even as “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was

God.” In the preceding passages, however, John had given testimony to the Lord, in such wise that he did indeed call Him Son of God, but said not that He was God, nor yet denied it: he was silent as to His being God, not denied that He was God; but yet he was not altogether silent as to His being God, for perhaps we find this in the lesson of to-day. He had called Him Son of God; but men, too, have been called sons of God. He had declared Him to be of such excellence, that he was not himself worthy to loose the latchet of His shoe. Now this greatness gives us much to understand: whose shoe-latchet he was not worthy to loose, he than whom none greater had arisen among them that are born of women. He was more, indeed, than all men and angels. For we find an angel forbidding a man to fall at his feet. For example, when in the Apocalypse an angel was showing certain things to John, the writer of this Gospel, John, terrified at the greatness of the vision, fell down at the angel’s feet. But said the angel, “Rise; see thou do it not: worship God, for I am thy fellow-servant, and the brethren’s.” An angel, then, forbade a man to fall down at his feet. Is it not manifest that He must be above all angels, for whom a man, such that a greater than he has not risen among them that are born of women, declares himself to be not worthy to loose the latchet of His shoe?

3. John, however, may say something more evidently, that our Lord Jesus Christ is God. We may find this in the present passage, that it is perhaps of Him we have been singing, “The Lord reigned over all the earth;” against which they are deaf who imagine that He reigns only in Africa. But let them not suppose that it is not of Christ it is spoken when it is said, “God reigned over all the earth.” For who else is our King, but our Lord Jesus Christ? It is He that is our King. And what have you heard in the same psalm, in the verse just sung? “Sing praises to our God, sing praises: sing praises to our King, sing praises.” Whom he called God, the same he called our King: “Sing praises to our God, sing praises: sing praises to our King, sing ye praises with understanding.” And that thou shouldest not understand Him to whom thou singest praises to reign in one part, he says, “For God is King of all the earth.” And how is He King of all the earth, who appeared in one part of the earth, in Jerusalem, in Judea, walking among men, born, sucking the breast, growing, eating, drinking, waking, sleeping, sitting at a well, wearied; laid hold of, scourged, spat upon, crowned with thorns, hanged on

a tree, wounded with a spear, dead, buried? How then King of all the earth? What was seen locally was flesh, to carnal eyes only flesh was visible; the immortal majesty was concealed in mortal flesh. And with what eyes shall we be able to behold the immortal majesty, after penetrating through the structure of the flesh? There is another eye, there is an inner eye. Tobias, for example, was not without eyes, when, blind in his bodily eyes, he was giving precepts of life to his son. The son was holding the father's hand, that the father might walk with his feet, whilst the father was giving the son counsel to walk in the way of righteousness. Here I see eyes, and there I understand eyes. And better are the eyes of him that gives counsel of life, than his who holds the hand. Such eyes Jesus also required when He said to Philip, "Am I so long time with you, and ye have not known me?" Such eyes He required when He said, "Philip, he that seeth me, seeth the Father." These are the eyes of the understanding, these are the eyes of the mind. It is for that reason that the psalm, when it had said, "For God is King of all the earth," immediately added, "Sing ye praises with understanding." For in that I say, "Sing ye praises to our God," I say that God is our King. But yet our King you have seen among men, as man; you have seen Him suffering, crucified, dead: there was in that flesh something concealed, which you might have seen with eyes of flesh. What was there concealed? "Sing ye praises with understanding." Do not seek to see with the eyes what is beheld by the mind. "Sing praises" with the tongue, for He is among you as flesh; but because "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us," render the sound to the flesh, render to God the gaze of the mind. "Sing ye praises with understanding," and you see that the "Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

4. Now let John also declare his witness: "After these things came Jesus and His disciples into the land of Judea; and there He tarried with them, and baptized." Being baptized, He baptized. Not with that baptism with which He was baptized did He baptize. The Lord, being baptized by a servant, gives baptism, showing the path of humility and leading to the baptism of the Lord, that is, His own baptism, by giving an example of humility, in not Himself refusing baptism from a servant. And in the baptism by a servant, a way was prepared for the Lord; the Lord also being baptized, made Himself a way for them that come to Him. Let us hear Himself: "I am the way, the

truth, and the life.” If thou seekest truth, keep the way, for the way and the truth are the same. The way that thou art going is the same as the whither thou art going: thou art not going by a way as one thing, to an object as another thing; not coming to Christ by something else as a way, thou comest to Christ by Christ. How by Christ to Christ? By Christ the man, to Christ God; by the Word made flesh, to the Word which in the beginning was God with God; from that which man ate, to that which angels daily eat. For so it is written, “He gave them bread of heaven: man ate the bread of angels.” What is the bread of angels? “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” How has man eaten the bread of angels? “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.”

5. But though we have said that angels eat, do not fancy, brethren, that this is done with teeth. For if you think so, God, of whom the angels eat, is as it were torn in pieces. Who tears righteousness in pieces? But still, some one asks me, And who is it that can eat righteousness? Well, how is it said, “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled”? The food which thou eatest carnally perishes, in order to refresh thee; to repair thy waste it is consumed: eat righteousness; and while thou art refreshed, it continues entire. Just as by seeing this corporeal light, these eyes of ours are refreshed, and yet it is a corporeal thing that is seen by corporeal eyes. Many there have been, when too long in darkness, whose eyesight is weakened by fasting, as it were, from light. The eyes, deprived of their food (for they feed on light), become wearied by fasting, and weakened, so that they cannot bear to see the light by which they are refreshed; and if the light is too long absent, they are quenched, and the very sense of sight dies as it were in them. What then? Does the light become less, because so many eyes are daily fed by it? Thy eyes are refreshed, and the light remains entire. As God was able to show this in the case of corporeal light to corporeal eyes, does He not show that other light to clean hearts as unwearied, continuing entire, and in no respect failing? What light? “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.” Let us see if this is light. “For with Thee is the fountain of light, and in Thy light shall we see light.” On earth, fountain is one thing, light another. When thirsting, thou seekest a fountain, and to get to the fountain thou seekest light; and if it is not day, thou lightest a lamp to get to the fountain.

That fountain is the very light: to the thirsting a fountain, to the blind a light. Let the eyes be opened to see the light, let the lips of the heart be opened to drink of the fountain; that which thou drinkest, thou seest, thou hearest. God becomes all to thee; for He is to thee the whole of these things which thou lovest. If thou regardest things visible, neither is God bread, nor is God water, nor is God this light, nor is He garment nor house. For all these are things visible, and single separate things. What bread is, water is not; and what a garment is, a house is not; and what these things are, God is not, for they are visible things. God is all this to thee: if thou hungerest, He is bread to thee; if thou thirstest, He is water to thee; if thou art in darkness, He is light to thee: for He remains incorruptible. If thou art naked, He is a garment of immortality to thee, when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. All things can be said of God, and nothing is worthily said of God. Nothing is wider than this poverty of expression. Thou seekest a fitting name for Him, thou canst not find it; thou seekest to speak of Him in any way soever, thou findest that He is all. What likeness have the lamb and the lion? Both is said of Christ. “Behold the Lamb of God!” How a lion? “The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed.”

6. Let us hear John: “Jesus baptized.” We said that Jesus baptized. How Jesus? How the Lord? How the Son of God? How the Word? Well, but the Word was made flesh. “And John also was baptizing in AEnon, near to Salim.” A certain lake, “AEnon.” How do we know it was a lake? “Because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into prison.” If you remember (see, I say it again), I told you why John baptized: because the Lord must needs be baptized. And why must the Lord be baptized? Because many there would be to despise baptism, that they might appear to be endowed with greater grace than they saw other believers endowed with. For example, a catechumen, now living continently, might despise a married person, and say of himself that he was better than the other believer. That catechumen might possibly say in his heart, “What need have I to receive baptism, to have just what that other man has, than whom I am already better?” Therefore, lest that neck of pride should hurl to destruction certain men much elated with the merits of their own righteousness, the Lord was willing to be baptized by a servant, as if

addressing His chief sons: “Why do you extol yourselves? Why lift yourselves up because you have, one prudence, another learning, another chastity, another the courage of patience? Can you possibly have as much as I who gave you these? And yet I was baptized by a servant, you disdain to be baptized by the Lord.” This is the sense of “to fulfill all righteousness.”

7. But some one will say, “It were enough, then, that John baptized only the Lord; what need was there for others to be baptized by John?” Now we have said this too, that if John had baptized only the Lord, men would not be without this thought, that John had a better baptism than the Lord had. They would say, in fact, “So great was the baptism of John, that Christ alone was worthy to be baptized therewith.” Therefore, to show that the baptism which the Lord was to give was better than that of John,—that the one might be understood as that of a servant, the other as that of the Lord,—the Lord was baptized to give an example of humility; but He was not the only one baptized by John, lest John’s baptism should appear to be better than the baptism of the Lord. To this end, however, our Lord Jesus Christ showed the way, as you have heard, brethren, lest any man, arrogating to himself that he has abundance of some particular grace, should disdain to be baptized with the baptism of the Lord. For whatever the catechumen’s proficiency, he still carries the load of his iniquity: it is not forgiven him until he shall have come to baptism. Just as the people Israel were not rid of the Egyptians until they had come to the Red Sea, so no man is rid of the pressure of sins until he has come to the font of baptism.

8. “Then there arose a question on the part of John’s disciples with the Jews about purifying.” John baptized, Christ baptized. John’s disciples were moved; there was a running after Christ, people were coming to John. Those who came to John, he sent to Jesus to be baptized; but they who were baptized by Christ were not sent to John. John’s disciples were alarmed, and began to dispute with the Jews, as usually happens. Understand the Jews to have declared that Christ was greater, and that to His baptism people ought to have recourse. John’s disciples, not yet understanding this, defended John’s baptism. They came to John himself, that he might solve the question. Understand, beloved. And here we are given to see the use of humility, and, when people were erring in the subject of dispute, are shown

whether John desired to glory in himself. Now probably he said, “You say the truth, you contend rightly; mine is the better baptism, I baptized Christ Himself.” John could say this after Christ was baptized. If he wished to exalt himself, what an opportunity he had to do so! But he knew better before whom to humble himself: to Him whom he knew to have come after himself by birth, he willingly yielded precedence by confessing Him. He understood his own salvation to be in Christ. He had already said above, “We all have received out of His fullness;” and this is to confess Him to be God. For how can all men receive of His fullness, if He be not God? For if He is man in such wise that He is not God, then Himself also receives of the fullness of God, and so is not God. But if all men receive of His fullness, He is the fountain, they are drinkers. They that drink of a fountain, both thirst and drink. The fountain never thirsts; it has never need of itself. Men need a fountain. With thirsty stomachs and parched lips they run to the fountain to be refreshed. The fountain flows to refresh, so does the Lord Jesus.

9. Let us see, then, what answer John gives: “They came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him:” that is, What sayest thou? Ought they not to be hindered, that they may rather come to thee? “He answered and said, A man cannot receive anything, except it be given him from heaven.” Of whom, think you, had John said this? Of himself. “As a man, I received,” saith he, “from heaven.” Note, my beloved: “A man cannot receive anything, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ.” As much as to say, “Why do ye deceive yourselves? See how you have put this question before me. What have you said to me? Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness.’ Then you know what sort of witness I bare to Him. Am I now to say that He is not the same whom I declared Him to be? And because I received somewhat from heaven, in order to be something, do you wish me to be empty of it, so as to speak against the truth? A man cannot receive anything, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said I am not the Christ.’“ Thou art not the Christ; but what if thou art greater than He since thou didst baptize Him? “I am sent:” I am the herald, He is the Judge.

10. But hear a far stronger, a far more expressive testimony. See ye what it is we are treating of; see ye that to love any person in place of Christ is adultery. Why do I say this? Let us attend to the voice of John. People could be mistaken in him, could think him to be the person he was not. He rejects the false honor, in order to hold the truth complete. See what he declares Christ to be; what does he say himself is? “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom.” Be chaste, love the bridegroom. But what art thou, who sayest to us, “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom? But the friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice.” The Lord our God will help me in proportion to the tumult of my heart, for it is full of sadness, to utter the grief I feel; but I beseech you by Christ Himself to imagine in thought what it will not be possible for me to utter; for I know that my grief cannot be expressed with befitting impressiveness. Now I see many adulterers who desire to get possession of the bride, purchased at so great a price, loved while deformed that she might be made fair, having been purchased and delivered and adorned by such an one; and those adulterers strive with their words to be loved instead of the bridegroom. Of that One it is said, “This is He that baptizeth.” Who is he that goes forth from us and says, “I am he that baptizeth”? Who is he that goes forth from us and says, “That is holy which I give”? Who is he that goes hence and says, “It is good for thee to be born of me”? Let us hear the friend of the bridegroom, not the adulterers against the bridegroom; let us hear one jealous, but not for himself.

11. Brethen, return in thought to your own homes. I speak of carnal, I speak of earthly things; I speak after the manner of men, for the infirmity of your flesh. Many of you have, many of you wish to have, many, though you wish not to have, still have had wives; many who do not at all wish to have wives, are born of the wives of your fathers. This is a feeling that touches every heart. There is no man so alien from mankind in human affairs as not to feel what I say. Suppose that a man, having set out on a journey, had commended his bride to the care of his friend: “See, I pray thee, thou art my dear friend; see to it, lest in my absence some other may perchance be loved in my stead.” Then what sort of a person must he be, who, while the guardian of the bride or wife of his friend, does indeed endeavor that none other be loved, but if he wishes himself to be loved instead of his friend,

and desires to enjoy her who was committed to his care, how detestable must he appear to all mankind! Let him see her gazing out of the window, or joking with some one somewhat too heedlessly, he forbids her as one who is jealous. I see him jealous, but let me see for whom he is jealous; whether for his absent friend or for his present self. Think that our Lord Jesus Christ has done this. He has committed His bride to the care of His friend; He has set out on a journey to a far country to receive a kingdom, as He says Himself in the Gospel, but yet is present in His majesty. Let the friend who has gone beyond the sea be deceived; and if he is deceived, woe to him who deceives! Why do men attempt to deceive God,—God who looks at the hearts of all, and searches the secrets of all? But some heretic shows himself, and says, "'Tis I that give, 'tis I that sanctify, 'tis I that justify; go not thou to that other sect." He does well indeed to be jealous, but see for whom. "Go not thou to idols," saith he,—he is rightly jealous; "nor to diviners,"—still rightly jealous. Let us see for whom he is jealous: "What I give is holy, because it is I that give it; he is baptized whom I baptize; he whom I baptize not is not baptized." Hear thou the friend of the bridegroom, learn to be jealous for thy friend; hear His voice who is "He that baptizeth." Why desire to arrogate to thyself what is not thine? Is he so very absent who has left here his bride? Knowest thou not, that He who rose from the dead is sitting at the right hand of the Father? If the Jews despised Him hanging on the tree, dost thou despise Him sitting in heaven? Be assured, beloved, that I suffer great grief of this matter; but, as I have said, I leave the rest to your thoughts. I cannot utter it if I speak the whole day. If I bewail it the whole day, I do not enough. I cannot utter it, if I should have, as the prophet says, "a fountain of tears;" and were I changed into tears, and to become all tears, were I turned into tongues, and to become all tongues, it were not enough.

12. Let us return and see what this John saith: "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom;" she is not my bride. And dost thou not rejoice in the marriage? Yea, saith he, I do rejoice: "But the friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the voice of the bridegroom." Not because of mine own voice, saith he, do I rejoice, but because of the Bridegroom's voice. I am in the place of hearer; He, of speaker: I am as one that must be enlightened, He is the light; I am as the

ear, He is the word. Therefore the friend of the Bridegroom standeth and heareth Him. Why standeth? Because he falls not. How falls not? Because he is humble. See him standing on solid ground; “I am not worthy to loose the latchet of His shoe.” Thou doest well to be humble; deservedly thou dost not fall; deservedly thou standest, and hearest Him, and rejoicest greatly for the Bridegroom’s voice. So also the apostle is the Bridegroom’s friend; he too is jealous, not for himself, but for the Bridegroom. Hear his voice when he is jealous: “I am jealous over you,” said he, “with the jealousy of God:” not with my own, nor for myself, but with the jealousy of God. Why? How? Over whom art thou jealous, and for whom? “For I have espoused you to one husband, to present a chaste virgin to Christ.” Why dost thou fear, then? Why art thou jealous? “I fear,” saith he, “lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve by his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the chastity which is in Christ.” The whole Church is called a virgin. You see that the members of the Church are divers, that they are endowed with and do rejoice in divers gifts: some men wedded, some women wedded; some are widowers who seek no more to have wives, some are widows who seek no more to have husbands; some men preserve continence from their youth, some women have vowed their virginity to God: divers are the gifts, but all these are one virgin. Where is this virginity, for it is not in the body. It belongs to few women; and if virginity can be said of men, to few men in the Church belongs a holy integrity even of body; yet one such is a more honorable member. Other members, however, preserve virginity, not in body, but all in mind. What is the virginity of the mind? Entire faith, firm hope, sincere charity. This is the virginity which he, who, was jealous for the Bridegroom, feared might be corrupted by the serpent. For, just as the bodily member is marred in a certain part, so the seduction of the tongue defiles the virginity of the heart. Let her who does not desire without cause to keep virginity of body, see to it that she be not corrupted in mind.

13. What shall I say, then, brethren? Even the heretics have virgins, and there are many virgins among heretics. Let us see whether they love the Bridegroom, so that this virginity may be guarded. For whom is it guarded? “For Christ.” Let us see if it be for Christ, and not for Donatus: let us see for whom this virginity is preserved: you can easily prove. Behold, I show you

the Bridegroom, for He shows Himself. John bears witness to Him: “This is He that baptizeth.” O thou virgin, if for this Bridegroom thou preservest thy virginity, why runnest thou to him who says, “I am he that baptizeth,” while the friend of the Bridegroom tells thee, “This is He that baptizeth”? Again, thy Bridegroom possesseth the whole world; why, then, shouldst thou be defiled with a part of it? Who is the Bridegroom? “For God is King of all the earth.” This thy Bridegroom possesses the whole, because He purchased the whole. See at what price He purchased it, that thou mayest understand what He has purchased. What price has He given? He gave His blood. Where gave He, where shed He, His blood? In His passion. Is it not to thy Bridegroom thou singest, or feignest to sing, when the whole world was purchased: “They pierced my hands and my feet, they counted all my bones: but they themselves considered me, they looked upon me, they divided my garments among them, and upon my vesture they cast lots”? Thou art the bride, acknowledge thy Bridegroom’s vesture. Upon what vesture was the lot cast? Ask the Gospel; see to whom thou art espoused, see from whom thou receivest pledges. Ask the Gospel; see what it tells thee in the suffering of the Lord. “There was a coat” there: let us see what kind; “woven from the top throughout.” What does the coat woven from the top signify, but charity? What does this coat signify, but unity? Consider this coat, which not even the persecutors of Christ divided. For it saith, “They said among themselves, Let us not divide it, but let us cast lots upon it.” Behold that of which the psalm spoke! Christ’s persecutors did not rend His garment; Christians divide the Church.

14. But what shall I say, brethren? Let us see plainly what He purchased. For there He bought, where He paid the price. Paid it for how much? If He paid it only for Africa, let us be Donatists, and not be called Donatists, but Christians; since Christ bought only Africa: although even here are other than Donatists. But He has not been silent of what He bought in this transaction. He has made up the account: thanks be to God, He has not tricked us. Need there is for that bride to hear, and then to understand to whom she has vowed her virginity. There, in that psalm where it says, “They pierced my hands and my feet, they counted all my bones;” wherein the Lord’s passion is most openly declared;—the psalm which is read every year on the last week, in the hearing of the whole people, at the approach of

Christ’s passion; and this psalm is read both among them and us;—there, I say, note, brethren, what He has bought: let the bill of merchandise be read: hear ye what He bought: “All the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight: for the kingdom is His, and He shall rule the nations.” Behold what it is He has bought! Behold! “For God, the King of all the earth,” is thy Bridegroom. Why, then, wouldst thou have one so rich reduced to rags? Acknowledge Him: He bought the whole; yet thou sayest, “Thou hast a part of it here.” Oh, would that thou wert well-pleasing to thy Spouse; would that thou who speakest wert not defiled, and, what is worse, defiled in heart, not in body! Thou lovest a man instead of Christ; lovest one that says, “’Tis I that baptize;” not hearing the friend of the Bridegroom when he says, “This is He that baptizeth;” not hearing him when he says, “He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom.” I have not the bride, said he; but what am I? “But the friend of the Bridegroom, who standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly, because of the Bridegroom’s voice.”

15. Evidently, then, my brethren, it profits those men nothing to keep virginity, to have continence, to give alms. All those doings which are praised in the Church profit them nothing; because they rend unity, namely, that “coat” of charity. What do they? Many among them are eloquent; great tongues, streams of tongues. Do they speak like angels? Let them hear the friend of the Bridegroom, jealous for the Bridegroom, not for himself: “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.”

16. But what say they? “We have baptism.” Thou hast, but not thine. It is one thing to have, another to own. Baptism thou hast, for thou hast received to be baptized, received as one enlightened, provided thou be not darkened of thyself; and when thou givest, thou givest as a minister, not as owner; as a herald proclaiming, not as a judge. The judge speaks through the herald, and nevertheless it is not written in the registers, “The herald said,” but, “The judge said.” Therefore see if what thou givest is thine by authority. But if thou hast received, confess with the friend of the Bridegroom, “A man cannot receive anything, except it be given him from heaven.” Confess with the friend of the Bridegroom, “He that hath the bride is the

Bridegroom; but the friend of the Bridegroom standeth and heareth Him.” But O, would thou didst stand and hear Him, and not fall, to hear thyself! For by hearing Him, thou wouldst stand and hear; for thou wilt speak, and thy head is puffed with pride. I, saith the Church, if I am the bride, if I have received pledges, if I have been redeemed at the price of that blood, do hear the voice of the Bridegroom; and I do hear the voice of the Bridegroom’s friend too, if he give glory to my Bridegroom, not to himself. Let the friend speak: “He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom; but the friend of the Bridegroom standeth and heareth Him, and rejoices greatly because of the voice of the Bridegroom.” Behold, thou hast sacraments; and I grant that thou hast. Thou hast the form, but thou art a branch cut off from the vine; thou hast a form, I want the root. There is no fruit of the form, except where there is a root; but where is the root but in charity? Hear the form of the cut-off branches; let Paul speak: “Though I know all mysteries,” saith he, “and have all prophecy, and all faith” (and how great a faith!), “so as to remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.”

17. Let no man tell you fables, then. “Pontius wrought a miracle; and Donatus prayed, and God answered him from heaven.” In the first place, either they are deceived, or they deceive. In the last place, grant that he removes mountains: “And have not charity,” saith the apostle, “I am nothing.” Let us see whether he has charity. I would believe that he had, if he had not divided unity. For against those whom I may call marvel-workers, my God has put me on my guard, saying, “In the last times there shall arise false prophets, doing signs and wonders, to lead into error, if it were possible, even the elect: Lo, I have foretold it to you.” Therefore the Bridegroom has cautioned us, that we ought not to be deceived even by miracles. Sometimes, indeed, a deserter frightens a plain countryman; but whether he is of the camp, and whether he is the better of that character with which he is marked, is what he who would not be frightened or seduced attends to. Let us then, my brethren, hold unity: without unity, even he who works miracles is nothing. The people Israel was in unity, and yet wrought no miracles: Pharaoh’s magicians were out of unity, and yet they wrought the like works as Moses.” The people Israel, as I have said, wrought no miracles. Who were saved with God—they who did, or they who did not, work miracles? The Apostle Peter raised a dead person: Simon

Magus did many things: there were there certain Christians who were not able to do either what Peter did or what Simon did; and wherein did they rejoice? In this, that their names were written in heaven. For this is what our Lord Jesus Christ said to the disciples on their return, because of the faith of the Gentiles. The disciples, in truth, themselves said, boasting, “Behold, Lord, in Thy name even the devils are subject to us.” Rightly indeed they confessed, they brought the honor to the name of Christ; and yet what does He say to them? “Do not ye glory in this, that the devils are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” Peter cast out devils. Some old widow, some lay person or other, having charity, and holding the integrity of faith, forsooth does not do this. Peter is the eye in the body, that man is the finger, yet is he in the same body in which Peter is; and if the finger has less power than the eye, yet it is not cut off from the body. Better is it to be a finger and to be in the body, than to be an eye and to be plucked out of the body.

18. Therefore, my brethren, let no man deceive you, let no man seduce you: love the peace of Christ, who was crucified for you, whilst He was God. Paul says, “Neither he that planteth is anything, neither he that watereth, but God who giveth the increase.” And does any of us say that he is something? If we say that we are something, and give not the glory to Him, we are adulterers; we desire ourselves to be loved, not the Bridegroom. Love ye Christ, and us in Him, in whom also you are beloved by us. Let the members love one another, but live all under the Head. With grief indeed, my brethren, I have been obliged to speak much, and yet I have said little: I have not been able to finish the passage; God will help us to finish it in due season. I did not wish to burden your hearts further; I wish them to be free for sighs and prayers in behalf of those who are still deaf and do not understand.

TRACTATE XIV

CHAPTER III. 29–36

1. This lesson from the holy Gospel shows us the excellency of our Lord Jesus Christ’s divinity, and the humility of the man who earned the title of the Bridegroom’s friend; that we may distinguish between the man who is

man, and the Man who is God. For the Man who is God is our Lord Jesus Christ, God before all ages, Man in the age of our world: God of the Father, man of the Virgin, yet one and the same Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Son of God, God and man. But John, a man of distinguished grace, was sent before Him, a man enlightened by Him who is the Light. For of John it is said, “He was not the Light, but that he should bear witness of the Light.” He may himself be called a light indeed, and rightly so; but an enlightened, not an enlightening light. The light that enlightens, and that which is enlightened, are different things: for even our eyes are called lights (lumina), and yet when we open them in the dark, they do not see. But the light that enlightens is a light both from itself and for itself, and does not need another light for its shining; but all the rest need it, that they may shine.

2. Accordingly John confessed Him: as you have heard that when Jesus was making many disciples, and they reported to John as if to excite him to jealousy,—for they told the matter as if moved by envy, “Lo, he is making more disciples than thou,”—John confessed what he was, and thereby merited to belong to Him, because he dared not affirm himself to be that which Jesus is. Now this is what John said: “A man cannot receive anything, except it be given him from heaven.” Therefore Christ gives, man receives. “Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom; but the friend of the Bridegroom, who standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom’s voice.” Not of himself did he give himself joy. He that will have joy of himself shall be sad; but he that will have his joy of God will ever rejoice, because God is everlasting. Dost thou desire to have everlasting joy? Cleave to Him who is everlasting. Such an one John declared himself to be. “Because of the Bridegroom’s voice, the friend of the Bridegroom rejoiceth,” not because of his own voice, and “standeth and heareth.” Therefore, if he falls, he heareth Him not: for of a certain one who fell it is said, “And he stood not in the truth;” this is said of the devil. It behoves the Bridegroom’s friend, then, “to stand and to hear.” What is it to stand? It is to abide in His grace, which he received. And he hears a voice at which he rejoices. Such was John: he knew whereof he rejoiced; he did not arrogate to himself to be what he was not; he knew himself as one

enlightened, not the enlightener. “But that was the true Light,” saith the evangelist, “that lighteneth every man coming into this world.” If “every man,” then also John himself; for he too is of men. Moreover, although none hath arisen among them that are born of women greater than John, yet he was himself one of those that are born of women. Is he to be compared with Him who, because He willed it, was born by a singular and extraordinary birth? For both generations of the Lord are unexampled, both the divine and the human: by the divine He has no mother; by the human, no father. Therefore John was but one of the rest: of greater grace, however, so that of those born of women none arose greater than he; so great a testimony he gave to our Lord Jesus Christ as to call Him the Bridegroom, and himself the Bridegroom’s friend, not worthy however to loose the latchet of the Bridegroom’s shoe. You have already heard much on this point, beloved: let us look to what follows; for it is somewhat hard to understand. But as John himself says, that “no man can receive anything, except it be given him from heaven,” whatever we shall not have understood, let us ask Him who gives from heaven: for we are men, and cannot receive anything, except He, who is not man, give it us.

3. Now this is what follows: and John says, “This my joy therefore is fulfilled.” What is his joy? To rejoice at the Bridegroom’s voice. It is fulfilled in me, I have my grace; more I do not assume to myself, lest also I lose what I have received. What is this joy? “With joy rejoiceth for the Bridegroom’s voice.” A man may understand, then, that he ought not to rejoice of his own wisdom, but of the wisdom which he has received from God. Let him ask nothing more, and he loses not what he found. For many, in that they affirmed themselves to be wise, became fools. The apostle convicts them, and says of them, “Because that which is known of God is manifest to them; for God has showed it unto them.” Hear ye what he says of certain unthankful, ungodly men: “For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are seen, being understood by the things that are made, His eternal power likewise, and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” Why without excuse? “Because, knowing God” (he said not, “because they knew Him not”), “they glorified Him not as God, nor were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened: professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” If they had

known God, they had known at the same time that God, and none other, had made them wise; and they would not then attribute to themselves that which they did not have from themselves, but to Him from whom they had received it. But by their unthankfulness they became fools. Therefore, what God gave freely, He took from the unthankful. John would not be this; he would be thankful: he confessed to have received, and declared that he rejoiced for the Bridegroom's voice, saying, "Therefore this my joy is fulfilled."

4. "He must increase, but I must decrease." What is this? He must be exalted, but I must be humbled. How is Jesus to increase? How is God to increase? The perfect does not increase. God neither increases nor decreases. For if He increases, He is not perfect; if He decreases, he is not God. And how can Jesus increase, being God? If to man's estate, since He deigned to be man and was a child; and, though the Word of God, lay an infant in a manger; and, though His mother's Creator, yet sucked the milk of infancy of her: then Jesus having grown in age of the flesh, that perhaps is the reason why it is said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." But why in this? As regards the flesh, John and Jesus were of the same age, there being six months between them: they had grown up together; and if our Lord Jesus Christ had willed to be here longer before His death, and that John should be here with Him, then, as they had grown up together, so would they have grown old together: in what way, then, "He must increase but I must decrease"? Above all, our Lord Jesus Christ being now thirty years old, does a man who is already thirty years old still grow? From that same age, men begin to go downward, and to decline to graver age, thence to old age. Again, even had they both been lads, he would not have said, "He must increase," but, We must increase together. But now each is thirty years of age. The interval of six months makes no difference in age; the difference is discovered by reading rather than by the look of the persons.

5. What means, then, "He must increase, but I must decrease"? This is a great mystery! Before the Lord Jesus came, men were glorying of themselves; He came a man, to lessen man's glory, and to increase the glory of God. Now He came without sin, and found all men in sin. If thus He came to put away sin, God may freely give, man may confess. For man's

confession is man’s lowliness: God’s pity is God’s loftiness. Therefore, since He came to forgive man his sins, let man acknowledge his own lowliness and let God show His pity. “He must increase, but I must decrease:” that is, He must give, but I must receive; He must be glorified, but I must confess. Let man know his own condition, and confess to God; and hear the apostle as he says to a proud, elated man, bent on extolling himself: “What hast thou that thou didst not receive? And if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou didst not receive it?” Then let man understand that he has received; and when he would call that his own which is not his, let him decrease: for it is good for him that God be glorified in him. Let him decrease in himself, that he may be increased in God. These testimonies and this truth, Christ and John signified by their deaths. For John was lessened by the Head: Christ was exalted on the cross; so that even there it appeared what this is, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” Again, Christ was born when the days were just beginning to lengthen; John was born when they began to shorten. Thus their very creation and deaths testify to the words of John, when he says, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” May the glory of God then increase in us, and our own glory decrease, that even ours may increase in God! For this is what the apostle says, this is what Holy Scripture says: “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” Wilt thou glory in thyself? Thou wilt grow; but grow worse in thy evil. For whoso grows worse is justly decreased. Let God, then, who is ever perfect, grow, and grow in thee. For the more thou understandest God, and apprehendest Him, He seems to be growing in thee; but in Himself He grows not, being ever perfect. Thou didst understand a little yesterday; thou understandest more to-day, wilt understand much more to-morrow: the very light of God increases in thee: as if thus God increases, who remains ever perfect. It is as if one’s eyes were being cured of former blindness, and he began to see a little glimmer of light, and the next day he saw more, and the third day still more: to him the light would seem to grow; yet the light is perfect, whether he see it or not. Thus it is also with the inner man: he makes progress indeed in God, and God seems to be increasing in him; yet man himself is decreasing, that he may fall from his own glory, and rise into the glory of God.

6. What we have just heard, appears now distinctly and clearly. “He that cometh from above, is above all.” See what he says of Christ. What of himself? “He that is of the earth, is of earth, and speaketh of the earth. He that cometh from above is above all”—this is Christ; and “he that is of the earth, is of earth, and speaketh of the earth”—this is John. And is this the whole: John is of the earth, and speaks of the earth? Is the whole testimony that he bears of Christ a speaking of the earth? Are they not voices of God that are heard from John, when he bears witness of Christ? Then how does he speak of the earth? He said this of man. So far as relates to man in himself, he is of earth, and speaks of the earth; and when he speaks some divine things, he is enlightened by God. For, were he not enlightened, he would be earth speaking of earth. God’s grace is apart by itself, the nature of man apart by itself. Do but examine the nature of man: man is born and grows, he learns the customs of men. What does he know but earth, of earth? He speaks the things of men, knows the things of men, minds the things of men; carnal, he judges carnally, conjectures carnally: lo! it is man all over. Let the grace of God come, and enlighten his darkness, as it saith, “Thou wilt lighten my candle, O Lord; my God, enlighten my darkness;” let it take the mind of man, and turn it to its own light; immediately he begins to say, as the apostle says, “Yet not I, but the grace of God that is with me;” and, “Now I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” That is to say, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” Thus John: as regards John, he is of the earth, and speaks of the earth; whatever that is divine thou hast heard from John, is of Him that enlightens, not of him that receives.

7. “He that cometh from heaven is above all; and what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth: and no man receiveth His testimony.” Cometh from heaven, is above all, our Lord Jesus Christ; of whom it was said above, “No man hath ascended into heaven, but He that came down from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven.” And He is above all; “and what He hath seen and heard, that He speaks.” Moreover, He hath a Father, being Himself the Son of God; He hath a Father, and He also hears of the Father. And what is that which He hears of the Father? Who can unfold this? When can my tongue, when can my heart be sufficient, either the heart to understand, or the tongue to utter, what that is which the Son hath heard from the Father? May it be the Son has heard the Word of the Father? Nay,

the Son is the Word of the Father. You see how all human effort is here wearied out; you see how all guessing of our heart, all straining of our darkened mind, here fails. I hear the Scripture saying that the Son speaks that which He heareth from the Father; and again, I hear the Scripture saying that the Son is Himself the Word of the Father: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The words that we speak are fleeting and transient: as soon as thy word has sounded from thy mouth, it passeth away; it makes its noise, and passes away into silence. Canst thou follow thy sound, and hold it to make it stand? Thy thought, however, remains, and of that thought that remains thou utterest many words that pass away. What say we, brethren? When God spake, did He give out a voice, or sounds, or syllables? If He did, in what tongue spake He? In Hebrew, or in Greek, or in Latin? Tongues are necessary where there is a distinction of nations. But there none can say that God spake in this tongue, or in that. Observe thy own heart. When thou conceivest a word which thou mayest utter,—For I will say, if I can, what we may note in ourselves, not whereby we may comprehend that,—well, when thou conceivest a word to utter, thou meanest to utter a thing, and the very conception of the thing is already a word in thy heart: it has not yet come forth, but it is already born in the heart, and is waiting to come forth. But thou considerest the person to whom it is to come forth, with whom thou art to speak: if he is a Latin, thou seekest a Latin expression; if a Greek, thou thinkest of Greek words; if a Punic, thou considerest whether thou knowest the Punic language: for the diversity of hearers thou hast recourse to divers tongues to utter the word conceived; but the conception itself was bound by no tongue in particular. Whilst therefore God, when speaking, required not a language, nor took up any kind of speech, how was He heard by the Son, seeing that God’s speaking is the Son Himself? As, in fact, thou hast in thy heart the word that thou speakest, and as it is with thee, and is none other than the spiritual conception itself (for just as thy soul is spirit, so also the word which thou hast conceived is spirit; for it has not yet received sound to be divided by syllables, but remains in the conception of thy heart, and in the mirror of the mind); so God gave out His Word, that is, begat the Son. And thou, indeed, begettest the word even in thy heart according to time; God without time begat the Son by whom He created all times. Whilst, therefore, the Son is the Word of God, and the Son spoke to us not His own word, but the word of the Father, He willed to speak Himself to us when He was speaking the word of the Father. This it is that John said, as was fit and necessary; and we have expounded according to our ability. He whose heart has not yet attained to a proper perception of so great a matter, has whither to turn himself, has where to knock, has from whom to ask, from whom to seek, of whom to receive.

8. “He that cometh from heaven is above all; and what He hath seen and heard, that testifieth He; and His testimony no man receiveth.” If no man, to what purpose came He? He means, no man of a certain class. There are some people prepared for the wrath of God, to be damned with the devil; of these, none receiveth the testimony of Christ. For if none at all, not any man, received, what could these words mean, “But he that received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true”? Not certainly, then, no man, if thou sayest thyself, “He that received His testimony has set to his seal that God is true.” Perhaps John, on being questioned, would answer and say, I know what I have said, in saying no man. There are, in fact, people born to God’s wrath, and thereunto foreknown. For God knows who they are that will and that will not believe; He knows who they are that shall persevere in that in which they have believed, and who that shall fall away; and all that shall be for eternal life are numbered by God; and He knows already the people set apart. And if He knows this, and has given to the prophets by His Spirit to know it, He gave this also to John. Now John was observing, not with his eye,—for as regards himself he is earth, and speaketh of earth,—but with that grace of the Spirit which he received of God, he saw a certain people, ungodly, unbelieving. Contemplating that people in its unbelief, he says, “His testimony, who came from heaven, no man receiveth.” No man of whom? Of them who shall be on the left hand, of them to whom it shall be said, “Go into the everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels.” Who are they that do receive it? They who shall be at the right hand, they to whom it shall be said, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom which is prepared for you from the beginning of the world.” He observes, then, in the Spirit a dividing, but in the human race a mingling together; and that which is not yet separated locally, he separated in the understanding, in the view of the heart; and he saw two peoples, one of believers, one of unbelievers. Fixing

his thought on the unbelievers, he says, “He that cometh from heaven is above all; and what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth and no man receiveth His testimony.” He then turned his thought from the left hand, and looked at the right, and proceeded to say, “He that received His testimony has set to his seal that God is true.” What means “has set to his seal that God is true,” if it be not that man is a liar, and God is true? For no human being can speak any truth, unless he be enlightened by Him who cannot lie. God, then, is true; but Christ is God. Wouldest thou prove this? Receive His testimony and thou findest it. For “he that hath received His testimony has set to his seal that God is true.” Who is true? The same who came from heaven, and is above all, is God, and true. But if thou dost not yet understand Him to be God, thou hast not yet received His testimony: receive it, and thou puttest thy seal to it; confidently thou understandest, definitely thou acknowledgest, that God is true.

9. “For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God.” Himself is the true God, and God sent Him: God sent God. Join both, one God, true God sent by God. Ask concerning them singly, He is God; ask concerning them both, they are God. Not individually God, and both Gods; but each individual God, and both God. For so great is the charity of the Holy Spirit there, so great the peace of unity, that when thou questionest about them individually, the answer to thee is, God; when thou askest concerning the Trinity, thou gettest for answer, God. For if the spirit of man, when it cleaves to God, is one spirit, as the apostle openly declares, “He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit;” how much more is the equal Son, joined to the Father, together with Him one God! Hear another testimony. You know how many believed, when they sold all they had and laid it at the apostles’ feet, that it might be distributed to each according to his need; and what saith the Scripture of that gathering of the saints? “They had one soul and one heart in the Lord.” If charity made one soul of so many souls, and one heart of so many hearts, how great must be the charity between the Father and the Son! Surely it must be greater than that between those men who had one heart. If, then, the heart of many brethren was one by charity, if the soul of many brethren was one by charity, wouldst thou say that God the Father and God the Son are two? If they are two Gods, there is not the highest charity between them. For if charity is here so great as to make thy soul and

thy friend’s soul one soul, how can it be then that the Father and the Son is not one God? Far be unfeigned faith from this thought. In short, how excellent that charity is, understand hence: the souls of many men are many, and if they love one another, it is one soul; still, in the case of men, they may be called many souls, because the union is not so strong. But there it is right for thee to say one God; two or three Gods it is not right for thee to say. From this, the supreme and surpassing excellency of charity is shown thee to be such, that a greater cannot be.

10. “For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God.” This, of course, he said of Christ, to distinguish himself from Christ. What then? Did not God send John himself? Did he not say himself, “I am sent before Him”? and, “He that sent me to baptize with water”? And is it not of John that it is said, “Behold, I send my messenger before Thee, and he shall prepare Thy way”? Does he not himself speak the words of God, he of whom it is said that he is more than a prophet? Then, if God sent him too, and he speaks the words of God, how do we understand him to have distinctly said of Christ, “He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God”? But see what he adds: “For God giveth not the Spirit by measure.” What is this, “For God giveth not the Spirit by measure”? We find that God does give the Spirit by measure. Hear the apostle when he says, “According to the measure of the gift of Christ.” To men He gives by measure, to the only Son He gives not by measure. How does He give to men by measure? “To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of wisdom according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another kinds of tongues; to another the gift of healing. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gift of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?” This man has one gift, that man another; and what that man has, this has not: there is a measure, a certain division of gifts. To men, therefore, it is given by measure, and concord among them makes one body. As the hand receives one kind of gift to work, the eye another to see, the ear another to hear, the foot another to walk; nevertheless the soul that does all is one, in the hand to work, in the foot to walk, in the ear to hear, in the eye to see; so are also the gifts of

believers diverse, distributed to them as to members, to each according to his proper measure. But Christ, who gives, receives not by measure.

11. Now hear further what follows: because He had said of the Son, “For God giveth not the Spirit by measure: the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand,” He added, “hath given all things into His hands,” that thou mightest know also here with what distinction it is said, “The Father loveth the Son.” And why? Does the Father not love John? And yet He has not given all things into his hand. Does the Father not love Paul? And yet He has not given all things into his hand. “The Father loveth the Son:” but as father loveth, not as master loveth a servant; as the Only Son, not as an adopted son. And so “hath given all things into His hand.” What means “all things”? That the Son should be such as the Father is. To equality with Himself He begat Him in whom it was no robbery to be in the form of God, equal to God. “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand.” Therefore, having deigned to send us the Son, let us not imagine that it is something less than the Father that is sent to us. The Father, in sending the Son, sent His other self.

12. But the disciples, still thinking that the Father is something greater than the Son, seeing only the flesh, and not understanding His divinity, said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us.” As much as to say, “We know Thee already, and bless Thee that we know Thee: for we thank Thee that Thou hast shown Thyself to us. But as yet we know not the Father: therefore our heart is inflamed, and occupied with a certain holy longing of seeing Thy Father who sent Thee. Show us Him, and we shall desire nothing more of Thee: for it sufficeth us when He has been shown, than whom none can be greater.” A good longing, a good desire; but small intelligence. Now the Lord Jesus Himself, regarding them as small men seeking great things, and Himself great among the small, and yet small among the small, says to Philip, one of the disciples, who had said this: “Am I so long time with you, and ye have not known me, Philip?” Here Philip might have answered, Thee we have known, but did we say to Thee, Show us Thyself? We have known Thee, but it is the Father we seek to know. He immediately adds, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also.” If, then, One equal with the Father has been sent, let us not estimate

Him from the weakness of the flesh, but think of the majesty clothed in flesh, but not weighed down by the flesh. For, remaining God with the Father, He was made man among men, that, through Him who was made man, thou mightest become such as to receive God. For man could not receive God. Man could see man; God he could not apprehend. Why could he not apprehend God? Because he had not the eye of the heart, by which to apprehend Him. There was something within disordered, something without sound: man had the eyes of the body sound, but the eyes of the heart sick. He was made man to the eye of the body; so that, believing on Him who could be seen in bodily form, thou mightst be healed for seeing Him whom thou wast not able to see spiritually. “Am I so long time with you, and ye know me not, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also.” Why did they not see Him? Lo, they did see Him, and yet saw not the Father: they saw the flesh, but the majesty was concealed. What the disciples who loved Him saw, saw also the Jews who crucified Him. Inwardly, then, was He all; and in such manner inwardly in the flesh, that He remained with the Father when He came to the flesh.

13. Carnal thought does not apprehend what I say: let it defer understanding, and begin by faith; let it hear what follows: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” He has not said, The wrath of God cometh to him; but, “The wrath of God abideth on him.” All that are born mortals have the wrath of God with them. What wrath of God? That wrath which Adam first received. For if the first man sinned, and heard the sentence, “Thou shalt die the death,” he became mortal, and we began to be born mortal; and we have been born with the wrath of God. From this stock came the Son, not having sin, and He was clothed with flesh and mortality. If He partook with us of the wrath of God, are we slow to partake with Him the grace of God? He, then, that will not believe the Son, on the same “the wrath of God abideth.” What wrath of God? That of which the apostle says, “We also were by nature the children of wrath, even as the rest.” All are therefore children of wrath, because coming of the curse of death. Believe on Christ, for thee made mortal, that thou mayest receive Him, the immortal; and when thou shalt have received His immortality, thou shalt no longer be mortal. He lived, thou wast dead; He died that thou

shouldst live. He has brought us the grace of God, and has taken away the wrath of God. God has conquered death, lest death should conquer man.

TRACTATE XV

CHAPTER IV. 1–42

1. It is nothing new to your ears, beloved, that the Evangelist John, like an eagle, takes a loftier flight, and soars above the dark mist of earth, to gaze with steadier eyes upon the light of truth. From his Gospel much has already been treated of and discussed through our ministry, with the Lord’s help; and the passage which has been read to-day follows in due order. What I am about to say, with the Lord’s permission, many of you will hear in such wise that you will be reviewing what you know, rather than learning what you know not. Yet, for all that, your attention ought not to be slack, because it is not an acquiring, but a reviewing, of knowledge. This has been read, and we have in our hands to discourse upon this passage—that which the Lord Jesus spoke with the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well. The things spoken there are great mysteries, and the similitudes of great things; feeding the hungry, and refreshing the weary soul.

2. Now when the Lord knew this, “when He had heard that the Pharisees had learned that He was making more disciples than John, and baptized more (though Jesus baptized not, but His disciples), He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.” We must not discourse of this too long, lest, by dwelling on what is manifest, we shall lack the time to investigate and lay open what is obscure. Certainly, if the Lord saw that the fact of their coming to know that He made more disciples, and baptized more, would so avail to salvation to the Pharisees in following Him, as to become themselves His disciples, and to desire to be baptized by Him; rather would He not have left Judea, but would have remained there for their sakes. But because He knew their knowledge of the fact, and at the same time knew their envy, and that they learned this, not to follow, but to persecute him, He departed thence. He could, indeed, even when present, cause that He should not be taken of them, if He would not; He had it in His power not to be put to death, if He would not, since He had the power not to be born, if He would not. But because, in everything that He did as man, He was showing

an example to them who were to believe on Him (that any one servant of God sinneth not if he retire into another place, when he sees, it may be, the rage of his persecutors, or of them that seek to bring his soul into evil; but if a servant of God did this he might appear to commit sin, had not the Lord led the way in doing it), that good Master did this to teach us, not because He feared it.

3. It may perhaps surprise you why it is said, that “Jesus baptized more than John;” and after this was said, it is subjoined, “although Jesus baptized not, but His disciples.” What then? Was the statement made false, and then corrected by this addition? Or, are both true, viz. that Jesus both did and also did not baptize? He did in fact baptize, because it was He that cleansed; and He did not baptize, because it was not He that touched. The disciples supplied the ministry of the body; He afforded the aid of His majesty. Now, when could He cease from baptizing, so long as He ceased not from cleansing? Of Him it is said by the same John, in the person of the Baptist, who saith, “This is He that baptizeth.” Jesus, therefore, is still baptizing; and so long as we continue to be baptized, Jesus baptizeth. Let a man come without fear to the minister below; for he has a Master above.

4. But it may be one saith, Christ does indeed baptize, but in spirit, not in body. As if, indeed, it were by the gift of another than He that any is imbued even with the sacrament of corporal and visible baptism. Wouldest thou know that it is He that baptizeth, not only with the Spirit, but also with water? Hear the apostle: “Even as Christ,” saith he, “loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, purifying it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” Purifying it. How? “With the washing of water by the Word.” What is the baptism of Christ? The washing of water by the Word. Take away the water, it is no baptism; take away the Word, it is no baptism.

5. This much, then, on the preliminary circumstances, by occasion of which He came to a conversation with that woman, let us look at the matters that remain; matters full of mysteries and pregnant with sacraments. “And He must needs pass through Samaria. He cometh then to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground which Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob’s fountain was there.” It was a well; but every well

is a fountain, yet not every fountain a well. For where the water flows from the earth, and offers itself for use to them that draw it, it is called a fountain; but if accessible, and on the surface, it is called only a fountain: if, however, it be deep and far down, it is called a well, but in such wise as not to lose the name of fountain.

6. “Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well. It was about the sixth hour.” Now begin the mysteries. For it is not without a purpose that Jesus is weary; not indeed without a purpose that the strength of God is weary; not without a purpose that He is weary, by whom the wearied are refreshed; not without a purpose is He weary, by whose absence we are wearied, by whose presence we are strengthened. Nevertheless Jesus is weary, and weary with His journey; and He sits down, and that, too, near a well; and it is at the sixth hour that, being wearied, He sits down. All these things hint something, are intended to intimate something, they make us eager, and encourage us to knock. May Himself open to us and to you; He who has deigned to exhort us, so as to say, “Knock, and it shall be opened to you.” It was for thee that Jesus was wearied with His journey. We find Jesus to be strength, and we find Jesus to be weak: we find a strong and a weak Jesus: strong, because “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the same was in the beginning with God.” Wouldest thou see how this Son of God is strong? “All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made:” and without labor, too, were they made. Then what can be stronger than He, by whom all things were made without labor? Wouldest thou know Him weak? “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” The strength of Christ created thee, the weakness of Christ created thee anew. The strength of Christ caused that to be which was not: the weakness of Christ caused that what was should not perish. He fashioned us by His strength, He sought us by His weakness.

7. As weak, then, He nourishes the weak, as a hen her chickens; for He likened Him self to a hen: “How often,” He saith to Jerusalem, “would I have gathered thy children under my wings, as a hen her chickens; but thou wouldest not!” And you see, brethren, how a hen becomes weak with her chickens. No other bird, when it is a mother, is recognized at once to be so. We see all kinds of sparrows building their nests before our eyes; we see

swallows, storks, doves, every day building their nests; but we do not know them to be parents, except when we see them on their nests. But the hen is so enfeebled over her brood, that even if the chickens are not following her, if thou see not the young ones, yet thou knowest her at once to be a mother. With her wings drooping, her feathers ruffled, her note hoarse, in all her limbs she becomes so sunken and abject, that, as I have said, even though thou seest not her young, yet thou perceivest her to be a mother. In such manner was Jesus weak, wearied with His journey. His journey is the flesh assumed for us. For how can He, who is present everywhere, have a journey, He who is nowhere absent? Whither does He go, or whence, but that He could not come to us, except He had assumed the form of visible flesh? Therefore, as He deigned to come to us in such manner, that He appeared in the form of a servant by the flesh assumed, that same assumption of flesh is His journey. Thus, "wearied with His journey," what else is it but wearied in the flesh? Jesus was weak in the flesh: but do not thou become weak; but in His weakness be strong, because what is "the weakness of God is stronger than men."

8. Under this image of things, Adam, who was the figure of Him that was to be, afforded us a great indication of this mystery; rather, God afforded it in him. For he was deemed worthy to receive a wife while he slept, and that wife was made for him of his own rib: since from Christ, sleeping on the cross, was the Church to come,—from His side, namely, as He slept; for it was from His side, pierced with the spear, as He hung on the cross, that the sacraments of the Church flowed forth. But why have I chosen to say this, brethren? Because it is the weakness of Christ that makes us strong. A remarkable figure of this went before in the case of Adam. God could have taken flesh from the man to make of it a woman, and it seems that this might have been the more suitable. For it was the weaker sex that was being made, and weakness ought to have been made of flesh rather than of bone; for the bones are the stronger parts in the flesh. He took not flesh to make of it a woman; but took a bone, and of the bone was the woman shaped, and flesh was filled in into the place of the bone. He could have restored bone for bone; He could have taken, not a rib, but flesh, for the making of the woman. What, then, did this signify? Woman was made, as it were, strong,

from the rib; Adam was made, as it were, weak, from the flesh. It is Christ and the Church; His weakness is our strength.

9. But why at the sixth hour? Because at the sixth age of the world. In the Gospel, count up as an hour each, the first age from Adam to Noah; the second, from Noah to Abraham; the third, from Abraham to David; the fourth, from David to the removing to Babylon; the fifth, from the removing to Babylon to the baptism of John: thence is the sixth being enacted. Why dost thou marvel? Jesus came, and, by humbling Himself, came to a well. He came wearied, because He carried weak flesh. At the sixth hour, because in the sixth age of the world. To a well, because to the depth of this our habitation. For which reason it is said in the psalm: “From the depth have I cried unto Thee, O Lord.” He sat, as I said, because He was humbled.

10. “And there came a woman.” Figure of the Church not yet justified, but now about to be justified: for this is the subject of the discourse. She comes ignorant, she finds Him, and there is a dealing with her. Let us see what, and wherefore. “There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water.” The Samaritans did not belong to the nation of the Jews: they were foreigners, though they inhabited neighboring lands. It would take a long time to relate the origin of the Samaritans; that we may not be detained by long discourse of this, and leave necessary matters unsaid, suffice to say, then, that we regard the Samaritans as aliens. And, lest you should think that I have said this with more boldness than truth, hear the Lord Jesus Himself, what He said of that Samaritan, one of the ten lepers whom He had cleansed, who alone returned to give thanks: “Were there not ten cleansed? And where are the nine? There was not another to give glory to God, save this stranger.” It is pertinent to the image of the reality, that this woman, who bore the type of the Church, comes of strangers: for the Church was to come of the Gentiles, an alien from the race of the Jews. In that woman, then, let us hear ourselves, and in her acknowledge ourselves, and in her give thanks to God for ourselves. For she was the figure, not the reality; for she both first showed forth the figure and became the reality. For she believed on Him who, of her, set the figure before us. “She cometh, then, to draw water.”

Had simply come to draw water, as people are wont to do, be they men or women.

11. "Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. For His disciples were gone away into the city to buy meat. Then saith the Samaritan woman unto Him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." You see that they were aliens: indeed, the Jews would not use their vessels. And as the woman brought with her a vessel with which to draw the water, it made her wonder that a Jew sought drink of her,—a thing which the Jews were not accustomed to do. But He who was asking drink was thirsting for the faith of the woman herself.

12. At length, hear who it is that asketh drink: "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest, it may be, have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." He asks to drink, and promises to give drink. He longs as one about to receive; He abounds as one about to satisfy. "If thou knewest," saith He, "the gift of God." The gift of God is the Holy Spirit. But as yet He speaks to the woman guardedly, and enters into her heart by degrees. It may be He is now teaching her. For what can be sweeter and kinder than that exhortation? "If thou knewest the gift of God," etc.: thus far He keeps her in suspense. That is commonly called living water which issues from a spring: that which is collected from rain in pools and cisterns is not called living water. And it may have flowed from a spring; yet if it should stand collected in some place, not admitting to it that from which it flowed, but, with the course interrupted, separated, as it were, from the channel of the fountain, it is not called "living water:" but that is called living water which is taken as it flows. Such water there was in that fountain. Why, then, did He promise to give that which He was asking?

13. The woman, however, being in suspense, saith to Him, "Lord, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." See how she understood the living water, simply the water which was in that fountain. "Thou wouldst give me living water, and I carry that with which to draw, and thou dost not. The living water is here; how art thou to give it me?" Understanding another thing, and taking it carnally, she does in a manner knock, that the

Master may open up that which is closed. She was knocking in ignorance, not with earnest purpose; she is still an object of pity, not yet of instruction.

14. The Lord speaks somewhat more clearly of that living water. Now the woman had said, “Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself, his children, and his cattle?” Thou canst not give me of the living water of this well, because thou hast nothing to draw with: perhaps thou promisest another fountain? Canst thou be better than our father, who dug this well, and used it himself, and his? Let the Lord, then, declare what He called living water. “Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but he that drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall not thirst forever; but the water which I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water, springing up into everlasting life.” The Lord has spoken more openly: “It shall become in him a fountain of water, springing up into everlasting life. He that drinketh of this water shall not thirst forever.” What more evident than that it was not visible, but invisible water, that He was promising? What more evident than that He was speaking, not in a carnal, but in a spiritual sense?

15. Still, however, the woman has her mind on the flesh: she is delighted with the thought of thirsting no more, and fancies that this was promised to her by the Lord after a carnal sense; which it will be indeed, but in the resurrection of the dead. She desired this now. God had indeed granted once to His servant Elias, that during forty days he neither hungered nor thirsted. Could not He give this always, seeing He had power to give it during forty days? She, however, sighed for it, desiring to have no want, no toil. To be always coming to that fountain, to be burdened with a weight with which to supply her want, and, when that which she had drawn is spent, to be obliged to return again: this was a daily toil to her; because that want of hers was to be relieved, not extinguished. Such a gift as Jesus promised delighted her; she asks Him to give her living water.

16. Nevertheless, let us not overlook the fact that it is something spiritual that the Lord was promising. What means, “Whoso shall drink of this water shall thirst again?” It is true as to this water; it is true as to what the water signified. Since the water in the well is the pleasure of the world in its dark

depth: from this men draw it with the vessel of lusts. Stooping forward, they let down the lust to reach the pleasure fetched from the depth of the well, and enjoy the pleasure and the preceding lust let down to fetch it. For he who has not despatched his lust in advance cannot get to the pleasure. Consider lust, then, as the vessel; and pleasure as the water from the depth of the well: when one has got at the pleasure of this world, it is meat to him, it is drink, it is a bath, a show, an amour; can it be that he will not thirst again? Therefore, “Whoso shall drink of this water,” saith He, “will thirst again;” but if he shall receive water of me, “he shall never thirst.” “We shall be satisfied,” it saith, “with the good things of Thy house.” Of what water, then, is He to give, but of that of which it is said, “With Thee is the fountain of life”? For how shall they thirst, who “shall be drunk with the fatness of Thy house”?

17. What He was promising them was a certain feeding and abundant fullness of the Holy Spirit: but the woman did not yet understand; and not understanding, how did she answer? “The woman saith unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.” Want forced her to labor, and her weakness was pleading against the toil. Would that she heard the invitation, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you!” This is, in fact, what Jesus was saying to her, that she might no longer labor: but she did not yet understand.

18. At length, wishing her to understand, “Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.” What means this, “Call thy husband”? Was it through her husband that He wished to give her that water? Or, because she did not understand, did He wish to teach her through her husband? Perhaps it was as the apostle says concerning women, “If they wish to learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home.” But this the apostle says of that where there is no Jesus present to teach. It is said, in short, to women whom the apostle was forbidding to speak in the Church. But when the Lord Himself was at hand, and in person speaking to her, what need was there that He should speak to her by her husband? Was it through her husband that he spoke to Mary, while sitting at His feet and receiving His word; while Martha, wholly occupied with much serving, murmured at the happiness of her sister? Wherefore, my brethren, let us hear and understand

what it is that the Lord says to the woman, “Call thy husband.” For it may be that He is saying also to our soul, “Call thy husband.” Let us inquire also concerning the soul’s husband. Why, is not Jesus Himself already the soul’s real husband? Let the understanding be present, since what we are about to say can hardly be apprehended but by attentive hearers: therefore let the understanding be present to apprehend, and perhaps that same understanding will be found to be the husband of the soul.

19. Now Jesus, seeing that the woman did not understand, and willing her to understand, says to her, “Call thy husband.” “For the reason why thou knowest not what I say is, because thy understanding is not present: I am speaking after the Spirit, and thou art hearing after the flesh. The things which I speak relate neither to the pleasure of the ears, nor to the eyes, nor to the smell, nor to the taste, nor to the touch; by the mind alone are they received, by the understanding alone are they drawn up: that understanding is not with thee, how canst thou apprehend what I am saying? Call thy husband,’ bring thy understanding forward. What is it for thee to have a soul? It is not much, for a beast has a soul. Wherein art thou better than the beast? In having understanding, which the beast has not.” Then what is “Call thy husband”? “Thou dost not apprehend me, thou dost not understand me: I am speaking to thee of the gift of God, and thy thought is of the flesh; thou wishest not to thirst in a carnal sense, I am addressing myself to the spirit: thy understanding is absent. Call thy husband.’ Be not as the horse and mule, which have no understanding.” Therefore, my brethren, to have a soul, and not to have understanding, that is, not to use it, not to live according to it, is a beast’s life. For we have somewhat in common with the beasts, that by which we live in the flesh, but it must be ruled by the understanding. For the motions of the soul, which moves after the flesh, and longs to run unrestrainedly loose after carnal delights, are ruled over by the understanding. Which is to be called the husband?—that which rules, or that which is ruled? Without doubt, when the life is well ordered the understanding rules the soul, for itself belongs to the soul. For the understanding is not something other than the soul, but a thing of the soul: as the eye is not something other than the flesh, but a thing of the flesh. But whilst the eye is a thing of the flesh, yet it alone enjoys the light; and the other fleshy members may be steeped in light, but they cannot feel

the light: the eye alone is both bathed in it, and enjoys it. Thus in our soul there is a something called the understanding. This something of the soul, which is called understanding and mind, is enlightened by the higher light. Now that higher light, by which the human mind is enlightened, is God; for “that was the true light which enlighteneth every man coming into this world.” Such a light was Christ, such a light was speaking with the woman: yet she was not present with the understanding, to have it enlightened with that light; not merely to have it shed upon it, but to enjoy it. Therefore the Lord said, “Call thy husband,” as if He were to say, I wish to enlighten, and yet there is not here whom I may enlighten: bring hither the understanding through which thou mayest be taught, by which thou mayest be ruled. Thus, put the soul without the understanding for the woman; and having the understanding as having the husband. But this husband does not rule the wife well, except when he is ruled by a higher. “For the head of the woman is the man, but the head of the man is Christ.” The head of the man was talking with the woman, and the man was not present. And so the Lord, as if He said, Bring hither thy head, that he may receive his head, says, “Call thy husband, and come hither;” that is, Be here, be present: for thou art as absent, while thou understandest not the voice of the Truth here present; be thou present here, but not alone; be thou here with thy husband.

20. And, the husband being not yet called, still she does not understand, still she minds the flesh; for the man is absent: “I have not,” saith she, “a husband.” And the Lord proceeds and utters mysteries. Thou mayest understand that woman really to have had at that time no husband; she was living with some man, not a lawful husband, rather a paramour than a husband. And the Lord said to her, “Thou hast well said, I have not a husband.” How then didst Thou say, “Call thy husband”? Now hear how the Lord knew well that she had not a husband. “He says to her,” etc. In case the woman might suppose that the Lord had said, “Thou hast well said, I have not a husband,” just because He had learned this fact of her, and not because he knew it by His own divinity, hear something which thou hast not said: “For thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband; this thou hast said truly.”

21. Once more He urges us to investigate the matter somewhat more exactly concerning these five husbands. Many have in fact understood, not indeed absurdly, nor so far improbably, the five husbands of this woman to mean the five books of Moses. For the Samaritans' made use of these books, and were under the same law: for it was from it they had circumcision. But since we are hemmed in by what follows, "And he whom thou now hast is not thy husband," it appears to me that we can more easily take the five senses of the body to be the five former husbands of the soul. For when one is born, before he can make use of the mind and reason, he is ruled only by the senses of the flesh. In a little child, the soul seeks for or shuns what is heard, and seen, and smells, and tastes, and is perceived by the touch. It seeks for whatever soothes, and shuns whatever offends, those five senses. At first, the soul lives according to these five senses, as five husbands; because it is ruled by them. But why are they called husbands? Because they are lawful and right: made indeed by God, and are the gifts of God to the soul. The soul is still weak while ruled by these five husbands, and living under these five husbands; but when she comes to years of exercising reason, if she is taken in hand by the noble discipline and teaching of wisdom, these five men are succeeded in their rule by no other than the true and lawful husband, and one better than they, who both rules better and rules for eternity, who cultivates and instructs her for eternity. For the five senses rule us, not for eternity, but for those temporal things that are to be sought or shunned. But when the understanding, imbued by wisdom, begins to rule the soul, it knows now not only how to avoid a pit, and to walk on even ground—a thing which the eyes show to the soul even in its weakness; nor merely to be charmed with musical voices, and to repel harsh sounds; nor to delight in agreeable scents, and to refuse offensive smells; nor to be captivated by sweetness, and displeased with bitterness; nor to be soothed with what is soft, and hurt with what is rough. For all these things are necessary to the soul in its weakness. Then what rule is made use of by that understanding? Not one to discern between black and white, but between just and unjust, between good and evil, between the profitable and the unprofitable, between chastity and impurity, that it may love the one and avoid the other; between charity and hatred, to be in the one, not to be in the other.

22. This husband had not yet succeeded to those five husbands in that woman. And where he does not succeed, error sways. For when the soul has begun to be capable of reason, it is ruled either by the wise mind or by error: but yet error does not rule but destroys. Wherefore, after these five senses was that woman still wandering, and error was tossing her to and fro. And this error was not a lawful husband, but a paramour: for that reason the Lord saith to her, “Thou hast well said, I have not a husband. For thou hast had five husbands.” The five senses of the flesh ruled thee at first; thou art come to the age of using reason, and yet thou art not come to wisdom, but art fallen into error. Therefore, after those five husbands, “this whom thou now hast is not thy husband.” And if not a husband, what was he but a paramour? And so, “Call,” not the paramour, but “thy husband,” that thou mayest receive me with the understanding, and not by error have some false notion of me. For the woman was still in error, as she was thinking of that water; whilst the Lord was now speaking of the Holy Ghost. Why was she erring, but because she had a paramour, not a husband? Put away, therefore, that paramour who corrupts thee, and “go, call thy husband.” Call, and come that thou mayest understand me.

23. “The woman saith unto Him, Sir, I see that thou art a prophet.” The husband begins to come, he is not yet fully come. She accounted the Lord a prophet, and a prophet indeed He was; for it was of Himself He said, that “a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country.” Again, of Him it was said to Moses, “A Prophet will I raise up to them of their brethren, like unto thee.” Like, namely, as to the form of the flesh, but not in the eminence of His majesty. Accordingly we find the Lord Jesus called a Prophet. Hence this woman is now not far wrong. “I see,” she saith, “that thou art a prophet.” She begins to call the husband, and to shut out the paramour; she begins to ask about a matter that is wont to disquiet her. For there was a contention between the Samaritans and the Jews, because the Jews worshipped God in the temple built by Solomon; but the Samaritans, being situated at a distance from it, did not worship there. For this reason the Jews, because they worshipped God in the temple, boasted themselves to be better than the Samaritans. “For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans:” because the latter said to them, How is it you boast and account yourselves to be better than we, just because you have a temple

which we have not? Did our fathers, who were pleasing to God, worship in that temple? Was it not in this mountain where we are they worshipped? We then do better, say they, who pray to God in this mountain, where our fathers prayed. Both peoples contended in ignorance, because they had not the husband: they were inflated against each other, on the one side in behalf of the temple, on the other in behalf of the mountain.

24. What, however, does the Lord teach the woman now, as one whose husband has begun to be present? "The woman saith unto Him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me." For the Church will come, as it is said in the Song of Songs, "will come, and will pass over from the beginning of faith." She will come in order to pass through; and pass through she cannot, except from the beginning of faith. Rightly she now hears, the husband being present: "Woman, believe me." For there is that in thee now which can believe, since thy husband is present. Thou hast begun to be present with the understanding when thou calledst me a prophet. Woman, believe me; for if ye believe not, ye will not understand. Therefore, "Woman, believe me, for the hour will come when ye shall neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we worship what we know; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour will come." When? "And now is." Well, what hour? "When the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth," not in this mountain, not in the temple, but in spirit and in truth. "For the Father seeketh such to worship Him." Why does the Father seek such to worship Him, not on a mountain, not in the temple, but in spirit and in truth? "God is Spirit." If God were body, it were right that He should be worshipped on a mountain, for a mountain is corporeal; it were right He should be worshipped in the temple, for a temple is corporeal. "God is Spirit; and they that worship Him, must worship in spirit and in truth."

25. We have heard, and it is manifest; we had gone out of doors, and we are sent inward. Would I could find, thou didst say, some high and lonely mountain! For I think that, because God is on high, He hears me the rather from a high place. Because thou art on a mountain, dost thou imagine

thyself near to God, and that He will quickly hear thee, as if calling to Him from the nearest place? He dwells on high, but regards the lowly. “The Lord is near.” To whom? To the high, perhaps? “To them who are contrite of heart.” ’Tis a wonderful thing: He dwelleth on high, and yet is near to the lowly; “He hath regard to lowly things, but lofty things He knoweth from afar;” He seeth the proud afar off, and He is the less near to them the higher they appear to themselves to be. Didst thou seek a mountain, then? Come down, that thou mayest come near Him. But wouldest thou ascend? Ascend, but do not seek a mountain. “The ascents,” it saith, “are in his heart, in the valley of weeping.” The valley is humility. Therefore do all within. Even if perhaps thou seekest some lofty place, some holy place, make thyself a temple for God within time. “For the temple of God is holy, which temple are ye.” Wouldest thou pray in a temple? Pray in thyself. But be thou first a temple of God, for He in His temple heareth him that prays.

26. “The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. We worship that which we know: ye worship ye know not what; for salvation is of the Jews.” A great thing has He attributed to the Jews; but do not understand Him to mean those spurious Jews. Understand that wall to which another is joined, that they may be joined together, resting on the corner-stone, which is Christ. For there is one wall from the Jews, another from the Gentiles; these walls are far apart, only until they are united in the Corner. Now the aliens were strangers and foreigners from the covenants of God. According to this, it is said, “We worship what we know.” It is said, indeed, in the person of the Jews, but not of all Jews, not of reprobate Jews, but of such as were the apostles, as were the prophets, as were all those saints who sold all their goods, and laid the price of their goods at the apostles’ feet. “For God hath not rejected His people which He foreknew.”

27. The woman heard this, and proceeded. She had already called Him a prophet; she observes that He with whom she was speaking uttered such things as still more pertained to the prophet; and what answer did she make? See: “The woman saith unto Him, I know that Messias will come, who is called Christ: when He then is come, He will show us all things.” What is this? Just now she saith, The Jews are contending for the temple,

and we for this mountain: when He has come, He will despise the mountain, and overthrow the temple; He will teach us all things, that we may know how to worship in spirit and in truth. She knew who could teach her, but she did not yet know Him that was now teaching her. But now she was worthy to receive the manifestation of Him. Now Messias is Anointed: Anointed, in Greek, is Christ; in Hebrew, Messias; whence also, in Punic, Messe means Anoint. For the Hebrew, Punic and Syriac are cognate and neighboring languages.

28. Then, "The woman saith unto Him, I know that Messias will come, who is called Christ: when He then is come, He will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak with thee am He." She called her husband; he is made the head of the woman, and Christ is made the head of the man. Now is the woman constituted in faith, and ruled, as about to live rightly. After she heard this, "I that speak with thee am He," what further could she say, when the Lord Jesus willed to manifest Himself to the woman, to whom He had said, "Believe me?"

29. "And immediately came His disciples, and marvelled that He talked with the woman." That He was seeking her that was lost, He who came to seek that which was lost: they marvelled at this. They marvelled at a good thing, they were not suspecting an evil thing. "Yet no man said, What seekest Thou, or why talkest Thou with her?"

30. "The woman then left her water-pot." Having heard, "I that speak with thee am He," and having received Christ the Lord into her heart, what could she do but now leave her water-pot, and run to preach the gospel? She cast out lust, and hastened to proclaim the truth. Let them who would preach the gospel learn; let them throw away their water-pot at the well. You remember what I said before of the water-pot: it was a vessel with which the water was drawn, called hydria, from its Greek name, because water is hydor in Greek; just as if it were called aquarium, from the Latin. She threw away her water-pot then, which was no longer of use, but a burden to her, such was her avidity to be satisfied with that water. Throwing her burden away, to make known Christ, "she ran to the city, and says to those men, Come, and see a man that told me all things that ever I did." Step by step,

lest those men should get angry and indignant, and should persecute her. “Is this Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came to Him.”

31. “And in the meanwhile His disciples besought Him, saying, Master, eat.” For they had gone to buy meat, and had returned. “But He said, I have meat to eat which ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought Him aught to eat?” What wonder if that woman did not understand about the water? See; the disciples do not yet understand the meat. But He heard their thoughts, and now as a master instructs them, not in a round-about way, as He did the woman while He still sought her husband, but openly at once: “My meat,” saith He, “is to do the will of Him that sent me.” Therefore, in the case of that woman, it was even His drink to do the will of Him that sent Him. That was the reason why He said, “I thirst, give me to drink;” namely, to work faith in her, and to drink of her faith, and to transplant her into His own body, for His body is the Church. Therefore He saith, “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me.”

32. “Say ye not, that there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?” He was aglow for the work, and was arranging to send forth laborers. You count four months to the harvest; I show you another harvest, white and ready. Behold, I say unto you, “Lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are already white for the harvest.” Therefore He is going to send forth the reapers. “For in this is the saying true, that one reapeth, another soweth: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. I have sent you to reap that on which ye have not labored: others have labored, and ye are entered into their labor.” What then? He sent reapers; sent He not the sowers? Whither the reapers? Where others labored already. For where labor had already been bestowed, surely there had been sowing; and what had been sown had now become ripe, and required the sickle and the threshing. Whither, then, were the reapers to be sent? Where the prophets had already preached before; for they were the sowers. For had they not been the sowers, whence had this come to the woman, “I know that Messias will come”? That woman was now ripened fruit, and the harvest fields were white, and sought the sickle. “I sent you,” then. Whither? “To reap what ye have not sown: others sowed, and ye are entered into their labors.” Who

labored? Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Read their labors; in all their labors there is a prophecy of Christ, and for that reason they were sowers. Moses, and all the other patriarchs, and all the prophets, how much they suffered in that cold season when they sowed! Therefore was the harvest now ready in Judea. Justly was the corn there said to be as it were ripe, when so many thousands of men brought the price of their goods, and, laying them at the apostles' feet, having eased their shoulders of this worldly baggage, began to follow the Lord Christ. Verily the harvest was ripe. What was made of it? Of that harvest a few grains were thrown out, and sowed the whole world; and another harvest is rising which is to be reaped in the end of the world. Of that harvest it is said, "They that sow in tears shall reap with joy." But to that harvest not apostles, but angels, shall be sent forth. "The reapers," saith He, "are the angels." That harvest, then, is growing among tares, and is awaiting to be purged in the end of the world. But that harvest to which the disciples were sent first, where the prophets labored, was already ripe. But yet, brethren, observe what was said: "may rejoice together, both he that soweth and he that reapeth." They had dissimilar labors in time, but the rejoicing they shall enjoy alike equally; they shall receive for their wages together eternal life.

33. "And many Samaritans of that city believed on Him, because of the saying of the woman, who testified, He told me all that ever I did. And when the Samaritans came to Him, they besought Him that He would tarry with them; and He tarried there two days. And many more believed because of His word; and said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy words; for we have heard Him ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world." This also must be slightly noticed, for the lesson is come to an end. The woman first announced Him, and the Samaritans believed her testimony; and they besought Him to stay with them, and He stayed there two days, and many more believed. And when they had believed, they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy word; but we are come to know Him ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world:" first by report, then by His presence. So it is to-day with them that are without, and are not yet Christians. Christ is made known to them by Christian friends; and just upon the report of that woman, that is, the Church, they come to Christ, they believe through this

report. He stays with them two days, that is, gives them two precepts of charity; and many more believe, and more firmly believe, on Him, because He is in truth the Saviour of the world.

TRACTATE XVI

CHAPTER IV. 43–54

1. The Gospel Lesson of to-day follows that of yesterday, and this is the subject of our discourse. In this passage the meaning, indeed, is not difficult of investigation, but worthy of preaching, worthy of admiration and praise. Accordingly, in reciting this passage of the Gospel, we must commend it to your attention, rather than laboriously expound it.

Now Jesus, after His stay of two days in Samaria, "departed into Galilee," where He was brought up. And the evangelist, as he goes on, says, "For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet hath no honor in his own country." It was not because He had no honor in Samaria that Jesus departed thence after two days; for Samaria was not His own country, but Galilee. Whilst, therefore, He left Samaria so quickly, and came to Galilee, where He had been brought up, how does He testify that "a prophet hath no honor in his own country"? Rather does it seem that He might have testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country, had He disdained to go into Galilee, and had stayed in Samaria.

2. Now mark well, beloved, while the Lord suggests and bestows what I may speak, that here is intimated to us no slight mystery. You know the question before us; seek ye out the solution of it. But, to make the solution desirable, let us repeat the theme. The point that troubles us is, why the evangelist said, "For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet hath no honor in his own country." Urged by this, we go back to the preceding words, to discover the evangelist's intention in saying this; and we find him relating, in the preceding words of the narrative, that after two days Jesus departed from Samaria into Galilee. Was it for this, then, thou saidst, O evangelist, that Jesus testified that a prophet hath no honor in his own country, just because He left Samaria after two days, and made haste to come to Galilee? On the contrary, I should have thought it more likely, that if Jesus had no

honor in His own country, He should not have hastened to it, and left Samaria. But if I am not mistaken, or rather, because it is true, and I am not mistaken; for the evangelist saw what he was saying better than I can see it, saw the truth better than I do, he who drank it in from the Lord’s bosom: for the evangelist is the same John who, among all the disciples, reclined on the Lord’s breast, and whom the Lord, owing love to all, yet loved above the rest. Is it he, then, that should be mistaken, and I right in my opinion? Rather, if I am piously-minded, let me obediently hear what he said, that I may be worthy of thinking as he thought.

3. Hear then, dearly beloved, what I think in this matter, without prejudice to your own judgment, if you have formed a better. For we have all one Master, and we are fellow-disciples in one school. This, then, is my opinion, and see whether my opinion is not true, or near the truth. In Samaria He spent two days, and the Samaritans believed on Him; many were the days He spent in Galilee, and yet the Galileans did not believe on Him. Look back to the passage, or recall in memory the lesson and the discourse of yesterday. He came into Samaria, where at first He had been preached by that woman with whom He had spoken great mysteries at Jacob’s well. After they had seen and heard Him, the Samaritans believed on Him because of the woman’s word, and believed more firmly because of His own word, even many more believed: thus it is written. After passing two days there (in which number of days is mystically indicated the number of the two precepts on which hang the whole law and the prophets, as you remember we intimated to you yesterday), He goes into Galilee, and comes to the city Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine. And there, when He turned the water into wine, as John himself writes, His disciples believed on Him; but, of course, the house was full with a crowd of guests. So great a miracle was wrought, and yet only His disciples believed on Him. He has now returned to this city of Galilee. “And, behold, a certain ruler, whose son was sick, came to Him, and began to beseech Him to go down” to that city or house, “and heal his son; for he was at the point of death.” Did he who besought not believe? What dost thou expect to hear from me? Ask the Lord what He thought of him. Having been besought, this is what He answered: “Except ye see signs and wonders, ye believe not.” He shows us a man lukewarm, or cold in faith, or of no faith at all; but

eager to try by the healing of his son what manner of person Christ was, who He was, what He could do. The words of the suppliant, indeed, we have heard: we have not seen the heart of the doubter; but He who both heard the words and saw the heart has told us this. In short, the evangelist himself, by the testimony of his narrative, shows us that the man who desired the Lord to come to his house to heal his son, had not yet believed. For after he had been informed that his son was whole, and found that he had been made whole at that hour in which the Lord had said, “Go thy way, thy son liveth;” then he saith, “And himself believed, and all his house.” Now, if the reason why he believed, and all his house, was that he was told that his son was whole, and found the hour they told him agreed with the hour of Christ’s foretelling it, it follows that when he was making the request he did not yet believe. The Samaritans had waited for no sign, they believed simply His word; but His own fellow-citizens deserved to hear this said to them, “Except ye see signs and wonders, ye believe not;” and even there, notwithstanding so great a miracle was wrought, there did not believe but “himself and his house.” At His discourse alone many of the Samaritans believed; at that miracle, in the place where it was wrought, only that house believed. What is it, then, brethren, that the Lord doth show us here? Galilee of Judea was then the Lord’s own country, because He was brought up in it. But now that the circumstance portends something,—for it is not without cause that “prodigies” are so called, but because they portend or presage something: for the word “prodigy” is so termed as if it were porrodicium, quod porro dicat, what betokens something to come, and portends something future,—now all those circumstances portended something, predicted something; let us just now assume the country of our Lord Jesus Christ after the flesh (for He had no country on earth, except after the flesh which He took on earth); let us, I say, assume the Lord’s own country to mean the people of the Jews. Lo, in His own country He hath no honor. Observe at this moment the multitudes of the Jews; observe that nation now scattered over the whole world, and plucked up by the roots; observe the broken branches, cut off, scattered, withered, which being broken off, the wild olive has deserved to be grafted in; look at the multitude of the Jews: what do they say to us even now? “He whom you worship and adore was our brother.” And we reply, “A prophet hath no honor in his own country.” In short, those Jews saw the Lord as He walked on the earth and worked miracles; they saw Him giving sight to the blind, opening the ears of the deaf, loosing the tongues of the dumb, bracing up the limbs of the paralytics, walking on the sea, commanding the winds and waves, raising the dead: they saw Him working such great signs, and after all that scarcely a few believed. I am speaking to God's people; so many of us have believed, what signs have we seen? It is thus, therefore, that what occurred at that time betokened what is now going on. The Jews were, or rather are, like the Galileans; we, like those Samaritans. We have heard the gospel, have given it our consent, have believed on Christ through the gospel; we have seen no signs, none do we demand.

4. For, though one of the chosen and holy twelve, yet he was an Israelite, of the Lord's nation, that Thomas who desired to put his fingers into the places of the wounds. The Lord censured him just as He did this ruler. To the ruler He said, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye believe not;" and to Thomas He said, "Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed." He had come to the Galileans after the Samaritans, who had believed His word, before whom He wrought no miracles, whom He without anxiety quickly left, strong in faith, because by the presence of His divinity He had not left them. Now, then, when the Lord said to Thomas, "Come, reach hither thy hand, and be not faithless, but believing;" and he, having touched the places of the wounds, exclaimed, and said, "My Lord, and my God;" he is chided, and has it said to him, "Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed." Why, but "because a prophet has no honor in his own country?" But since this Prophet has honor among strangers, what follows? "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." We are the persons here foretold; and that which the Lord by anticipation praised, He has deigned to fulfill even in us. They saw Him, who crucified Him, and touched Him with their hands, and thus a few believed; we have not seen nor handled Him, we have heard and believed. May it be our lot, that the blessedness which He has promised may be made good in us: both here, because we have been preferred to His own country; and in the world to come, because we have been grafted in instead of the branches that were broken off!

5. For He showed that He would break off these branches, and ingraft this wild olive, when moved by the faith of the centurion, who said to Him, "I

am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my child shall be healed: for I also am a man put under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. Jesus turned to those who followed Him, and said, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith in Israel." Why not found so great faith in Israel? "Because a prophet has no honor in his own country." Could not the Lord have said to that centurion, what He said to this ruler, "Go, thy child liveth?" See the distinction: this ruler desired the Lord to come down to his house; that centurion declared himself to be unworthy. To the one it was said, "I will come and heal him;" to the other, "Go, thy son liveth." To the one He promised His presence; the other He healed by His word. The ruler sought His presence by force; the centurion declared himself unworthy of His presence. Here is a ceding to loftiness; there, a conceding to humility. As if He said to the ruler, "Go, thy son liveth;" do not weary me. "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye believe not;" thou desirest my presence in thy house, I am able to command by a word; do not wish to believe in virtue of signs: the centurion, an alien, believed me able to work by a word, and believed before I did it; you, "except ye see signs and wonders, believe not." Therefore, if it be so, let them be broken off as proud branches, and let the humble wild olive be grafted; nevertheless let the root remain, while those are cut off and these received in their place. Where does the root remain? In the patriarchs. For the people Israel is Christ's own country, since it is of them that He came according to the flesh; but the root of this tree is Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the holy patriarchs. And where are they? In rest with God, in great honor; so that it was into Abraham's bosom that the poor man, on being promoted, was raised after his departure from the body, and in Abraham's bosom was he seen from afar off by the proud rich man. Wherefore the root remains, the root is praised; but the proud branches deserved to be cut off, and to wither away; and by their cutting off, the humble wild olive has found a place.

6. Hear now how the natural branches are cut off, how the wild olive is grafted in, by means of the centurion himself, whom I have thought proper to mention for the sake of comparison with this ruler. "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith in Israel; therefore I say unto you, that

many shall come from the east and from the west.” How widely the wild olive took possession of the earth! This world was a bitter forest; but because of the humility, because of this “I am not worthy—many shall come from the east and from the west.” And grant that they come, what shall become of them? For if they come, they are cut off from the forest; where are they to be ingrafted, that they may not wither? “And shall sit down,” saith He, “with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.” At what banquet, in case thou dost not invite to ever living, but to much drinking? Where, “shall sit down? In the kingdom of heaven.” And how will it be with them who came of the stock of Abraham? What will become of the branches with which the tree was full? What but to be cut off, that these may be grafted in? Show us that they shall be cut off: “But the children of the kingdom shall go into outer darkness.”

7. Therefore let the Prophet have honor among us, because He had no honor in His own country. He had no honor in His country, wherein He was formed; let Him have honor in the country which He has formed. For in that country was He, the Maker of all, made as to the form of a servant. For that city in which He was made, that Zion, that nation of the Jews He Himself made when He was with the Father as the Word of God: for “all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.” Of that man we have to-day heard it said: “One Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” The Psalms also foretold, saying, “My mother is Sion, shall a man say.” A certain man, the Mediator man between God and men, says, “My mother Sion.” Why says, “My mother is Sion”? Because from it He took flesh, from it was the Virgin Mary, of whose womb He took upon Him the form of a servant; in which He deigned to appear most humble. “My mother is Sion,” saith a man; and this man, who says, “My mother is Sion,” was made in her, became man in her. For He was God before her, and became man in her. He who was made man in her, “Himself did found her; the Most High was made man in her most low.” Because “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” “He Himself, the Most High, founded her.” Now, because He founded this country, here let Him have honor. The country in which He was born rejected Him; let that country receive Him which He regenerated.

TRACTATE XVII

CHAPTER IV. 1–18

1. It ought not to be a matter of wonder that a miracle was wrought by God; the wonder would be if man had wrought it. Rather ought we to rejoice than wonder that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was made man, than that He performed divine works among men. It is of greater importance to our salvation what He was made for men, than what He did among men: it is more important that He healed the faults of souls, than that He healed the weaknesses of mortal bodies. But as the soul knew not Him by whom it was to be healed, and had eyes in the flesh whereby to see corporeal deeds, but had not yet sound eyes in the heart with which to recognise Him as God concealed in the flesh, He wrought what the soul was able to see, in order to heal that by which it was not able to see.

He entered a place where lay a great multitude of sick folk—of blind, lame, withered; and being the physician both of souls and bodies, and having come to heal all the souls of them that should believe, of those sick folk He chose one for healing, thereby to signify unity. If in doing this we regard Him with a commonplace mind, with the mere human understanding and wit, as regards power it was not a great matter that He performed; and also as regards goodness He performed too little. There lay so many there, and yet only one was healed, whilst He could by a word have raised them all up. What, then, must we understand but that the power and the goodness was doing what souls might, by His deeds, understand for their everlasting salvation, than what bodies might gain for temporal health? For that which is the real health of bodies, and which is looked for from the Lord, will be at the end, in the resurrection of the dead. What shall live then shall no more die; what shall be healed shall no more be sick; what shall be satisfied shall no more hunger and thirst; what shall be made new shall not grow old. But at this time, however, the eyes of the blind, that were opened by those acts of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, were again closed in death; and limbs of the paralytics that received strength were loosened again in death; and whatever was for a time made whole in mortal limbs came to nought in the end: but the soul that believed passed to eternal life. Accordingly, to the soul that should believe, whose sins He had come to forgive, to the healing of whose ailments He had humbled Himself, He gave a significant proof by the healing of this impotent man. Of the profound mystery of this thing and this proof, so far as the Lord deigns to grant us, while you are attentive and aiding our weakness by prayer, I will speak as I shall have ability. And whatever I am not able to do, that will be supplied to you by Him by whose help I do what I can.

2. Of this pool, which was surrounded with five porches, in which lay a great multitude of sick folk, I remember that I have very often treated; and most of you will with me recollect what I am about to say, rather than gain the knowledge of it for the first time. But it is by no means unprofitable to go back upon matters already known, that both they who know not may be instructed, and they who do know may be confirmed. Therefore, as being already known, these things must be touched upon briefly, not leisurely inculcated. That pool and that water seem to me to have signified the Jewish people. For that peoples are signified under the name of waters the Apocalypse of John clearly indicates to us, where, after he had been shown many waters, and he had asked what they were, was answered that they were peoples. That water, then—namely, that people—was shut in by the five books of Moses, as by five porches. But those books brought forth the sick, not healed them. For the law convicted, not acquitted sinners. Accordingly the letter, without grace, made men guilty, whom on confessing grace delivered. For this is what the apostle saith: “For if a law had been given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” Why, then, was the law given? He goes on to say, “But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” What more evident? Have not these words expounded to us both the five porches, and also the multitude of sick folk? The five porches are the law. Why did not the five porches heal the sick folk? Because, “if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” Why, then, did the porches contain those whom they did not heal? Because “the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”

3. What was done, then, that they who could not be healed in the porches might be healed in that water after being troubled? For on a sudden the water was seen troubled, and that by which it was troubled was not seen. Thou mayest believe that this was wont to be done by angelic virtue, yet not without some mystery being implied. After the water was troubled, the one who was able cast himself in, and he alone was healed: whoever went in after that one, did so in vain. What, then, is meant by this, unless it be that there came one, even Christ, to the Jewish people; and by doing great things, by teaching profitable things, troubled sinners, troubled the water by His presence, and roused it towards His own death? But He was hidden that troubled. For had they known Him, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. Wherefore, to go down into the troubled water means to believe in the Lord's death. There only one was healed, signifying unity: whoever came thereafter was not healed, because whoever shall be outside unity cannot be healed.

4. Now let us see what He intended to signify in the case of that one whom He Himself, keeping the mystery of unity, as I said before, deigned to heal out of so many sick folk. He found in the number of this man's years the number, so to speak, of infirmity: "He was thirty and eight years in infirmity." How this number refers more to weakness than to health must be somewhat more carefully expounded. I wish you to be attentive; the Lord will aid us, so that I may fitly speak, and that you may sufficiently hear. The number forty is commended to our attention as one consecrated by a kind of perfection. This, I suppose, is well known to you, beloved. The Holy Scriptures very often testify to the fact. Fasting was consecrated by this number, as you are well aware. For Moses fasted forty days, and Elias as many; and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ did Himself fulfill this number of fasting. By Moses is signified the law; by Elias, the prophets; by the Lord, the gospel. It was for this reason that these three appeared on that mountain, where He showed Himself to His disciples in the brightness of His countenance and vesture. For He appeared in the middle, between Moses and Elias, as the gospel had witness from the law and the prophets. Whether, therefore, in the law, or in the prophets, or in the gospel, the number forty is commended to our attention in the case of fasting. Now fasting, in its large and general sense, is to abstain from the iniquities and

unlawful pleasures of the world, which is perfect fasting: “That, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we may live temperately, and righteously, and godly in this present world.” What reward does the apostle join to this fast? He goes on to say: “Looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of the blessed God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” In this world, then, we celebrate, as it were, the forty days’ abstinence, when we live aright, and abstain from iniquities and from unlawful pleasures. But because this abstinence shall not be without reward, we look for “that blessed hope, and the revelation of the glory of the great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ.” In that hope, when the reality of the hope shall have come to pass, we shall receive our wages, a penny (denarius). For the same is the wages given to the workers laboring in the vineyard, as I presume you remember; for we are not to repeat everything, as if to persons wholly ignorant and inexperienced. A denarius, then, which takes its name from the number ten, is given, and this joined with the forty makes up fifty; whence it is that before Easter we keep the Quadragesima with labor, but after Easter we keep the Quinquagesima with joy, as having received our wages. Now to this, as if to the wholesome labor of a good work, which belongs to the number forty, there is added the denarius of rest and happiness, that it may be made the number fifty.

5. The Lord Jesus Himself showed this also far more openly, when He companied on earth with His disciples during forty days after His resurrection; and having on the fortieth day ascended into heaven, did at the end of ten days send the wages, the Holy Ghost. These were done in signs, and by a kind of signs were the very realities anticipated. By significant tokens are we fed, that we may be able to come to the enduring realities. We are workmen, and are still laboring in the vineyard: when the day is ended and the work finished, the wages will be paid. But what workman can hold out to the receiving of the wages, unless he be fed while he labors? Even thou thyself wilt not give thy workman only wages; wilt thou not also bestow on him that where with he may repair his strength in his labor? Surely thou feedest him to whom thou art to give wages. In like manner also doth the Lord, in those significant tokens of the Scriptures, feed us while we labor. For if that joy in understanding holy mysteries be

withdrawn from us, we faint in labor, and there will be none to come to the reward.

6. How, then, is work perfected in the number forty? The reason, it may be, is, because the law was given in ten precepts, and was to be preached throughout the whole world: which whole world, we are to mark, is made up of four quarters, east and west, south and north, whence the number ten, multiplied by four, comes to forty. Or, it may be, because the law is fulfilled by the gospel, which has four books: for in the gospel it is said, "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it." Whether, then, it be for this reason or for that, or for some other more probable, which is hid from us, but not from more learned men; certain it is, however, that in the number forty a certain perfection in good works is signified, which good works are most of all practised by a kind of abstinence from unlawful lusts of the world, that is, by fasting in the general sense.

Hear also the apostle when he says, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Whence the love? By the grace of God, by the Holy Spirit. For we could not have it from ourselves, as if making it for ourselves. It is the gift of God, and a great gift it is: for, saith he, "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given to us." Wherefore love completes the law, and most truly it is said, "Love is the perfecting of the law." Let us inquire as to this love, in what manner the Lord doth commend it to our consideration. Remember what I laid down: I want to explain the number thirty-eight of the years of that impotent man, why that number thirty-eight is one of weakness rather than of health. Now, as I was saying, love fulfills the law. The number forty belongs to the perfecting of the law in all works; but in love two precepts are committed to our keeping. Keep before your eyes, I beseech you, and fix in your memory, what I say; be ye not despisers of the word, that your soul may not become a trodden path, where the seed cast cannot sprout, "and the fowls of the air will come and gather it up." Apprehend it, and lay it up in your hearts. The precepts of love, given to us by the Lord, are two: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;" and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." With good reason did the widow cast "two mites," all her substance, into the offerings of God: with good reason did the host take “two” pieces of money, for the poor man that was wounded by the robbers, for his making whole: with good reason did Jesus spent two days with the Samaritans, to establish them in love. Thus, whilst a certain good thing is generally signified by this number two, most especially is love in its twofold character set forth to us thereby. If, therefore, the number forty possesses the perfecting of the law, and the law is fulfilled only in the twin precepts of love, why dost thou wonder that he was weak and sick, who was short of forty by two?

7. Therefore let us now see the sacred mystery whereby this impotent man is healed by the Lord. The Lord Himself came, the Teacher of love, full of love, “shortening,” as it was predicted of Him, “the word upon the earth,” and showed that the law and the prophets hang on two precepts of love. Upon these hung Moses with his number forty, upon these Elias with his; and the Lord brought in this number in His testimony. This impotent man is healed by the Lord in person; but before healing him, what does He say to him? “Wilt thou be made whole?” The man answered that he had not a man to put him into the pool. Truly he had need of a “man” to his healing, but that “man” one who is also God. “For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” He came, then, the Man who was needed: why should the healing be delayed? “Arise,” saith He; “take up thy bed, and walk.” He said three things: “Arise, Take up thy bed, and Walk.” But that “Arise” was not a command to do a work, but the operation of healing. And the man, on being made whole, received two commands: “Take up thy bed, and Walk.” I ask you, why was it not enough to say, “Walk?” Or, at any rate, why was it not enough to say, “Arise”? For when the man had arisen whole, he would not have remained in the place. Would it not be for the purpose of going away that he would have arisen? My impression is, that He who found the man lacking two things, gave him these two precepts: for, by ordering him to do two things, it is as if He filled up that which was lacking.

8. How, then, do we find the two precepts of love indicated in these two commands of the Lord? “Take up thy bed,” saith He, “and walk.” What the two precepts are, my brethren, recollect with me. For they ought to be

thoroughly familiar to you, and not merely to come into your mind when they are recited by us, but they ought never to be blotted out from your hearts. Let it ever be your supreme thought, that you must love God and your neighbor: “God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.” These must always be pondered, meditated, retained, practised, and fulfilled. The love of God comes first in the order of enjoying; but in the order of doing, the love of our neighbor comes first. For He who commanded thee this love in two precepts did not charge thee to love thy neighbor first, and then God, but first God, afterwards thy neighbor. Thou however, as thou dost not yet see God dost earn to see Him by loving thy neighbor; by loving thy neighbor thou purgest thine eye for seeing God, as John evidently says, “If thou lovest not thy brother whom thou seest, how canst thou love God, whom thou dost not see?” See, thou art told, “Love God.” If thou say to me, “Show me Him, that I may love Him;” what shall I answer, but what the same John saith: “No man hath seen God at any time”? And, that you may not suppose yourself to be wholly estranged from seeing God, he saith, “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God.” Therefore love thy neighbor; look at the source of thy love of thy neighbor; there thou wilt see, as thou mayest, God. Begin, then, to love thy neighbor. “Break thy bread to the hungry, and bring into thy house him that is needy without shelter; if thou seest the naked, clothe him; and despise not those of the household of thy seed.” And in doing this, what wilt thou get in consequence? “Then shall thy light break forth as the morning light.” Thy light is thy God, a “morning light” to thee, because He shall come to thee after the night of this world: for He neither rises nor sets, because He is ever abiding. He will be a morning light to thee on thy return, He who had set for thee on thy falling away from Him. Therefore, in this “Take up thy bed,” He seems to me to have said, Love thy neighbor.

9. But why the love of our neighbor is set forth by the taking up of the bed, is still shut up, and, as I suppose, needs to be expounded: unless, perhaps, it offend us that our neighbor should be indicated by means of a bed, a stolid, senseless thing. Let not my neighbor be angry if he be set forth to us by a thing without soul and without feeling. The Lord Himself, even our Saviour Jesus Christ, is called the corner-stone, to build up two in Himself. He is

called also a rock, from which water flowed forth: “And that rock was Christ.” What wonder, then, if Christ is called rock, that neighbor is called wood? Yet not any kind of wood whatever; as neither that was any kind of rock soever, but one from which water flowed to the thirsty; nor any kind soever of stone, but a corner-stone, which in itself coupled two walls coming from different directions. So neither mayest thou take thy neighbor to be wood of any kind soever, but a bed. Then what is there in a bed, pray? What, but that the impotent man was borne on it; but, when made whole, he carries the bed? What does the apostle say? “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so shall ye fulfill the law of Christ.” Now the law of Christ is love, and love is not fulfilled except we bear one another’s burdens. “Forbearing,” saith he, “one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” When thou wast weak thy neighbor bore thee: thou art made whole, bear thy neighbor. So wilt thou fill up, O man, that which was lacking to thee. “Take up thy bed, then.” But when thou hast taken it up, stay not in the place; “walk.” By loving thy neighbor, by caring for thy neighbor, dost thou perform thy going. Whither goest thy way, but to the Lord God, whom we ought to love with the whole heart, and with the whole soul, and with the whole mind? For we are not yet come to the Lord, but we have our neighbor with us. Bear him, then, when thou walkest, that thou mayest come to Him with whom thou desirest to abide. Therefore, “take up thy bed, and walk.”

10. The man did this, and the Jews were offended. For they saw a man carrying his bed on the Sabbath-day, and they did not blame the Lord for healing him on the Sabbath, that He should be able to answer them, that if any of them had a beast fallen into a well, he would surely draw it out on the Sabbath-day, and save his beast; and so, now they did not object to Him that a man was made whole on the Sabbath-day, but that the man was carrying his bed. But if the healing was not to be deferred, should a work also have been commanded? “It is not lawful for thee,” say they, to do what thou art doing, “to take up thy bed.” And he, in defence, put the author of his healing before his censors, saying, “He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.” Should I not take injunction from him from whom I received healing? And they said, “Who is the man that said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?”

11. “But he that was made whole knew not who it was” that had said this to him. “For Jesus,” when He had done this, and given him this order, “turned away from him in the crowd.” See how this also is fulfilled. We bear our neighbor, and walk towards God; but Him, to whom we are walking, we do not yet see: for that reason also, that man did not yet know Jesus. The mystery herein intimated to us is, that we believe on Him whom we do not yet see; and that He may not be seen, He turns aside in the crowd. It is difficult in a crowd to see Christ: a certain solitude is necessary for our mind; it is by a certain solitude of contemplation that God is seen. A crowd has noise; this seeing requires secrecy. “Take up thy bed”—being thyself borne, bear thy neighbor; “and walk,” that thou mayest come to the goal. Do not seek Christ in a crowd: He is not as one of a crowd; He excels all crowd. That great fish first ascended from the sea, and He sits in heaven making intercession for us: as the great high priest He entered alone into that within the veil; the crowd stands without. Do thou walk, bearing thy neighbor: if thou hast learned to bear, thou, who wast wont to be borne. In a word, even now as yet thou knowest not Jesus, not yet seest Jesus: what follows thereafter? Since that man desisted not from taking up his bed and walking, “Jesus seeth him afterwards in the temple.” He did not see Jesus in the crowd, he saw Him in the temple. The Lord Jesus, indeed, saw him both in the crowd and in the temple; but the impotent man does not know Jesus in the crowd, but he knows Him in the temple. The man came then to the Lord: saw Him in the temple, saw Him in a consecrated, saw Him in a holy place. And what does the Lord say to him? “Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest some worse thing befall thee.”

12. The man, then, after he saw Jesus, and knew Him to be the author of his healing, was not slothful in preaching Him whom he had seen: “He departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus that had made him whole.” He brought them word, and they were mad against him; he preached his own salvation, they sought not their own salvation.

13. The Jews persecuted the Lord Jesus because He did these things on the Sabbath-day. Let us hear what answer the Lord now made to the Jews. I have told you how He is wont to answer concerning the healing of men on the Sabbath-day, that they used not on the Sabbath-day to slight their cattle,

either in delivering or in feeding them. What does He answer concerning the carrying of the bed? A manifest corporal work was done before the eyes of the Jews; not a healing of the body, but a bodily work, which appeared not so necessary as the healing. Let the Lord, then, openly declare that the sacrament of the Sabbath, even the sign of keeping one day, was given to the Jews for a time, but that the fulfillment of the sacrament had come in Himself. “My Father,” saith He, “worketh hitherto, and I work.” He sent a great commotion among them: the water is troubled by the coming of the Lord, but yet He that troubles is not seen. Yet one great sick one is to be healed by the troubled water, the whole world by the death of the Lord.

14. Let us see, then, the answer made by the Truth: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” Is it false, then, which the Scripture has said, that “God rested from all His works on the seventh day”? And does the Lord Jesus speak contrary to this Scripture ministered by Moses, whilst He Himself says to the Jews, “If ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for He wrote of me”? See, then, whether Moses did not mean it to be significant of something that “God rested on the seventh day.” For God had not become wearied in doing the work of His own creation, and needed rest as a man. How can He have been wearied, who made by a word? Yet is both that true, that “God rested from His works on the seventh day;” and this also is true that Jesus saith, “My Father worketh hitherto.” But who can unfold it in words, man to men, weak to weak, unlearned to them that seek to learn; and if he chance to understand somewhat, unable to bring it forth and unfold it to men, who with difficulty, it may be, receive it, even if what is received can possibly be unfolded? Who, I say, my brethren, can unfold in words how God both works while at rest, and rests while working? I pray you to put this matter off while you are advancing on the way; for this seeing requires the temple of God, requires the holy place. Bear your neighbor, and walk. Ye shall see Him in that place where ye shall not require the words of men.

15. Perhaps we can more appropriately say this, that in the saying, “God rested on the seventh day,” he signified by a great mystery the Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ Himself, who spoke and said, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” For the Lord Jesus is, of course, God. For He is the

Word of God, and you have heard that “in the begin ning was the Word;” and not any word whatsoever, but “the Word was God, and all things were made by Him.” He was perhaps signified as about to rest on the seventh day from all His works. For, read the Gospel, and see what great works Jesus wrought. He wrought our salvation on the cross, that all things foretold by the prophets might be fulfilled in Him. He was crowned with thorns; He hung on the tree; said, “I thirst,” received vinegar on a sponge, that it might be fulfilled which was said, “And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” And when all His works were completed, on the sixth day of the week, He bowed His head and gave up the ghost, and on the Sabbath-day He rested in the tomb from all His works. Therefore it is as if He said to the Jews, “Why do ye expect that I should not work on the Sabbath? The Sabbath-day was ordained for you for a sign of me. You observe the works of God: I was there when they were made, by me were they all made; I know them. My Father worketh hitherto.’ The Father made the light, but He spoke that there should be light; if He spoke, it was by His Word He made it: His Word I was, I am; by me was the world made in those works, by me the world is ruled in these works. My Father worked when He made the world, and hitherto now worketh while He rules the world: therefore by me He made when He made, and by me He rules while He rules.” This He said, but to whom? To men deaf, blind, lame, impotent, not acknowledging the physician, and as if in a frenzy they had lost their wits, wishing to slay Him.

16. Further, what said the evangelist as he went on? “Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father;” not in any ordinary manner, but how? “Making Himself equal with God.” For we all say to God, “Our Father which art in heaven;” we read also that the Jews said, “Seeing Thou art our Father.” Therefore it was not for this they were angry, because He said that God was His Father, but because He said it in quite another way than men do. Behold, the Jews understand what the Arians do not understand. The Arians, in fact, say that the Son is not equal with the Father, and hence it is that the heresy was driven from the Church. Lo, the very blind, the very slayers of Christ, still understood the words of Christ. They did not understand Him to be Christ, nor did they understand Him to be the Son of God: but they did nevertheless understand that in these words such a Son of

God was intimated to them as should be equal with God. Who He was they knew not; still they did acknowledge such a One to be declared, in that “He said God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.” Was He not therefore equal with God? He did not make Himself equal, but the Father begat Him equal. Were He to make Himself equal, He would fall by robbery. For he who wished to make himself equal with God, whilst he was not so, fell, and of an angel became a devil, and administered to man that cup of pride by which himself was cast down. For this fallen said to man, envying his standing, “Taste, and ye shall be as gods;” that is, seize to yourselves by usurpation that which ye are not made, for I also have been cast down by robbery. He did not put forth this, but this is what he persuaded to. Christ, however, was begotten equal to the Father, not made; begotten of the substance of the Father. Whence the apostle thus declares Him: “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” What means “thought it not robbery”? He usurped not equality with God, but was in that equality in which He was begotten. And how were we to come to the equal God? “He emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant.” But He emptied Himself not by losing what He was, but by taking to Him what He was not. The Jews, despising this form of a servant, could not understand the Lord Christ equal to the Father, although they had not the least doubt that He affirmed this of Himself, and therefore were they enraged: and yet He still bore with them, and sought the healing of them, while they raged against Him.

TRACTATE XVIII

CHAPTER V. 19

1. John the evangelist, among his fellows and companions the other evangelists, received this special and peculiar gift from the Lord (on whose breast he reclined at the feast, hereby to signify that he was drinking deeper secrets from His inmost heart), to utter those things concerning the Son of God which may perhaps rouse the attentive minds of the little ones, but cannot fill them, as yet not capable of receiving them; while to minds, of somewhat larger growth, and coming to a certain age of inner manhood, he gives in these words something whereby they may both be exercised and fed. You have heard it when it was read, and you remember how this

discourse arose. For yesterday it was read, that “therefore the Jews sought to kill Jesus, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.” This that displeased the Jews, pleased the Father. This, without doubt, pleases them too that honor the Son as they honor the Father; for if it does not please them, they will not be pleasing. For God will not be greater because it pleases thee, but thou wilt be less if it displeases thee. Now against this calumny of theirs, coming either of ignorance or of malice, the Lord speaks not at all what they can understand, but that whereby they may be agitated and troubled, and, on being troubled, it may be, seek the Physician. And He uttered what should be written, that it might afterwards be read even by us. Now we have seen what happened in the hearts of the Jews when they heard these words; what happens in ourselves when we hear them, let us more fully consider. For heresies, and certain tenets of perversity, ensnaring souls and hurling them into the deep, have not sprung up except when good Scriptures are not rightly understood, and when that in them which is not rightly understood is rashly and boldly asserted. And so, dearly beloved, ought we very cautiously to hear those things for the understanding of which we are but little ones, and that, too, with pious heart and with trembling, as it is written, holding this rule of soundness, that we rejoice as in food in that which we have been able to understand, according to the faith with which we are imbued; and what we have not yet been able to understand, that we lay aside doubting, and defer the understanding of it for a time; that is, even if we do not yet know what it is, that still we doubt not in the least that it is good and true. And as for me, brethren, you must consider who I am that undertake to speak to you, and what I have undertaken: for I have taken upon me to treat of things divine, being a man; of spiritual things, being carnal; of things eternal, being a mortal. Also from me, dearly beloved, far be vain presumption, if my conversation would be sound in the house of God, “which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.” In proportion to my measure I take what I put before you: where it is opened, I see with you; where it is shut, I knock with you.

2. Now the Jews were moved and indignant: justly, indeed, because a man dared to make himself equal with God; but unjustly in this, because in the man they understood not the God. They saw the flesh, the God they knew

not; they observed the habitation, of the inhabitant they were ignorant. That flesh was a temple, within it dwelt God. It was not the flesh that Jesus made equal to the Father, it was not the form of a servant that He compared to the Lord; not that which He became for us, but that which He was when He made us. For who Christ is (I speak to Catholics) you know, because you have rightly believed; not Word only, nor flesh only, but the Word was made flesh to dwell among us. I recite again concerning the Word what you know: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God:" here is equality with the Father. But "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Than this flesh the Father is greater. Thus the Father is both equal and greater; equal to the Word, greater than the flesh; equal to Him by whom He made us, greater than He who was made for us. By this sound catholic rule, which you ought particularly to know, which you who know it hold fast, from which your faith ought not in any case to slip, which is to be wrested from your heart by no arguments of men, let us measure the things we do understand; and the things which, it may be, we do not understand, let us defer, to be hereafter measured by this rule, when we shall be competent to do this. We know Him, then, as equal to the Father, the Son of God, because we know Him in the beginning as God the Word. Why, then, sought the Jews to slay Him? "Because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God:" seeing the flesh, not seeing the Word. Let Him therefore speak against them, the Word through the flesh; let Him, the dweller within, speak for through His dwelling-place, that whoso can, shall know who He is that dwells within.

3. What saith He then to them? "Then answered Jesus, and said unto them," being indignant because He made Himself equal with God, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son cannot do anything of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing." What the Jews answered to these words is not written: and perhaps they said nothing. Certain, however, who wish to be esteemed Christians, are not silent, but from these words somehow conceive certain opinions in contradiction to us, which are not to be despised, both for their and for our sakes. The Arian heretics, namely, while they assert that the Son, who took upon Himself flesh, is less than the Father, not by the flesh, but before taking flesh, and not of the same substance as the Father, take a

handle of misrepresentation from these words, and reply to us: “You see that the Lord Jesus, observing the Jews to be moved with indignation at his making himself equal to God the Father, subjoined such words as these, to show that he was not equal with God. For the Jews,” say they, “were provoked against Christ, because he made him self equal with God; and Christ, wishing to cure them of this impression, and to show them that the Son is not equal to the Father, that is, to God, saith this, as if he said, Why are ye angry? Why are ye indignant? I am not equal to God, since the Son cannot do anything of himself, except what he seeth the Father doing.’ Now,” say they, “he who cannot do anything of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing,’ is surely less, not equal.”

4. In this distorted and depraved rule of his own heart, let the heretic hear us, not as yet chiding, but still as it were inquiring, and let him explain to us what he thinks. For, I suppose, whoever thou art (for we may regard him as here present in person), thou dost hold with us, that “in the beginning was the Word.” I do hold it, saith he. And that “the Word was with God”? This too, saith he, I hold. Proceed then, and hold the stronger saying that follows, that “the Word was God.” Even this, says he, I hold: but yet, this, God the greater; that, God the less. Now this somehow smells of the pagan: I thought I was speaking with a Christian. If there is God the greater, and God the less, then we worship two Gods, not one God. Why, saith he; dost not thou, too, affirm two Gods, equal the one to the other? This I do not assert: for I understand this equality as implying therein also undivided love; and if undivided love, then perfect unity. For if the love that God put in men doth make of many hearts of men one heart, and doth make many souls of men into one soul, as it is written of them that believed and mutually loved one another, in the Acts of the Apostles, “They had one soul and one heart toward God:” if, therefore, my soul and thy soul become one soul, when we think the same thing and love one another, how much more must God the Father and God the Son be one God in the fountain of love!

5. But to these words, by which thy heart is disturbed, bend thy thought, and reflect with me on that which we were seeking out concerning the Word. We already hold that “the Word was God:” I join to this another thing, that, having said, “This was in the beginning with God,” the

evangelist immediately subjoined, “All things were made by Him.” Now will I urge thee by questioning, now will I move thee against thyself, and sue thee against thyself: only keep this in memory concerning the Word, that “the Word was God, and all things were made by Him.” Hear now the words by which thou wast moved to assert that the Son is less, forsooth, because He said, “The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing.” Just so, saith he. Explain to me this a little: This is, I presume, how thou thinkest: that the Father doeth certain things, and the Son observes how the Father doeth, that He may also Himself be able to do those things which He seeth the Father doing. Thou hast set up two artisans, as it were: the Father and the Son just like master and learner, like as artisan fathers are wont to teach their sons their craft. Behold, I come down to thy carnal sense: for the moment I think as thou doest: let us see if this our conception finds an issue in harmony with the things which we have just now alike spoken and alike hold regarding the Word, that “the Word was God,” and that “all things were made by Him.” Suppose, then, the Father, as an artisan, doing certain works, and the Son as a learner, who “cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing:” He keenly watches, in a manner, the Father’s hands, that, as He seeth Him fashioning aught, so He may Himself in like manner fashion something similar by His own works. But the Father here doeth all those things that He doeth, and wishes the Son to give heed to Him, and to do the like also Himself; by whom doeth the Father? Come! now is the time for thee to stand to thy former opinion, which thou didst recite with me, and didst hold with me; that “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and all things were made by Him.” But thou, after holding with me, that all things were made by the Word, dost again, with thy carnal wit and childish fancy, imagine with thyself God making something, and the Word giving heed; so that when God has made, the Word also may make the like. Now, what does God make without the Word? For if He doeth aught, then were not all things made by the Word; thou hast given up the position which thou didst hold. But if all things were made by the Word, correct what thou didst understand amiss. The Father made, and made only by the Word: in what way does the Word give heed to see the Father making without the Word, what the Word may do in like manner? Whatever the Father hath made, He made it by the Word; else is it false that “all things were made by Him." But it is true that "all things were made by Him." Perhaps this did not seem enough for thee? Well, "and without Him was nothing made."

6. Withdraw, then, from this wisdom of the flesh, and let us inquire in what manner it is said, "The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing." Let us inquire, if we are worthy to apprehend. For I confess it is a great thing, and altogether difficult; to see the Father doing through the Son: not the Father and the Son doing each His particular works, but the Father doing every work whatsoever by the Son; so that not any works are done by the Father without the Son, or by the Son without the Father, because "all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made." These truths being most firmly established in the foundation of faith, what now is the nature of this "seeing"? Thou seekest, as I suppose, to know the Son doing: seek first to know the Son seeing. For what, in fact, saith He? "The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing." Note what He said, "but what He seeth the Father doing." The seeing comes first, the doing follows: He seeth in order to do. As for thee, why seekest thou at present to know how He doeth, whilst thou understandest not as yet how He seeth? Why runnest thou to that which comes later, leaving that which comes first? He declares Himself as seeing and doing, not doing and seeing; because "He cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing." Wilt thou that I explain to thee how He doeth? Do thou explain to me how He seeth. If thou canst not explain this, neither can I that. If thou art not yet competent to understand this, neither am I to understand that. Wherefore let each of us seek, each knock, that each may merit to receive. Why dost thou, as if thou wert learned, unjustly blame me who am unlearned? I in respect of the doing, thou in respect of the seeing, being both unlearned, let us inquire of the Master, not childishly wrangle in His school. We have already, however, learned together that "all things were made by Him." Therefore it is manifest that it is not a different kind of works that the Father doeth, that, seeing them, the Son may do other works like them; but the very same doeth the Father by the Son, because all things were made by the Word. Now, as to how God doeth, who knows? How made He, I will not say the world, but thine own eye, in thy carnal attachment to which thou comparest

visible things with invisible? For thou conceivest of God such things as thou art wont to see with these eyes. But if God might be seen with these eyes, He would not have said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Accordingly, thou hast an eye of the body to see an artificer, but thou hast not yet the eye of the heart to see God: hence, what thou art wont to see in an artificer, thou wouldest transfer to God. Leave earthly things on the earth; set thy heart on high.

7. What then, beloved, are we going to explain that which we have asked, how the Word seeth, how the Father is seen by the Word, what the seeing of the Word is? I am not so bold, so rash, as to promise to explain this, for myself or for you: however I estimate your measure, still I know my own. Therefore, if you please, not to delay it longer, let us run over the passage, and see how carnal hearts are troubled by the words of the Lord; to this end troubled, that they may not continue in that which they hold. Let this be wrested from them, as some toy is wrested from children, with which they amuse themselves to their hurt, that, as persons of larger growth, they may have more profitable things planted in them, and may be able to make progress, instead of crawling on the earth. Arise, seek, sigh, pant with desire, and knock at what is shut. But if we do not yet desire, not yet earnestly seek, not yet sigh, we shall only be throwing pearls to all indiscriminately, or finding pearls ourselves, regardless of what kind. Wherefore, beloved, I would move a longing desire in your heart. Good character leads to right understanding: the kind of life leads to another kind of life. One kind of life is earthly, another is heavenly: there is a life of beasts, another of men, and another of angels. The life of beasts is excited with earthly pleasures, seeks earthly pleasures alone, and grovels after them with immoderate desire: the life of angels is alone heavenly; the life of men is midway between that of angels and of beasts. If man lives after the flesh, he is on a level with the beasts; if he lives after the Spirit, he joins in the fellowship of angels. When thou livest after the Spirit, examine even in the angelic life whether thou be small or well-grown. For if thou art still a little one, the angels say to thee, “Grow: we feed on bread; thou art nourished with milk, with the milk of faith that thou mayest come to the meat of sight.” But if there be still a longing for filthy pleasures, if the thoughts be still of deceit, if lies are not avoided, if perjuries be heaped on lies, shall a

heart so foul dare to say, “Explain to me how the Word sees;” even if I be able to do so, even if I myself now see? And further, though not perhaps of this character myself, and I am nevertheless far from this vision, how must that man be weighed down with earthly desires, who is not yet rapt with this desire from above! There is a wide difference between loathing and desiring; and again, between desiring and enjoying. If thou livest as do the beasts, thou loathest: the angels have full enjoyment. If, on the other hand, thou livest not as the beast, thou hast no longer loathing: something thou desirest, and dost not receive: thou hast, by the very desire, begun the life of the angels. May it grow in thee, and be perfected in thee; and mayest thou receive this, not of me, but of Him who made both me and thee!

8. Yet the Lord also has not left us to chance, since, in that He said, “The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing,” He meant us to understand that the Father doeth, not some works which the Son may see, and the Son doeth other works after He has seen the Father doing; but that both the Father and Son do the very same works. For He goes on to say, “For what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son in like manner.” Not after the Father hath done works, doeth the Son other works in like manner; but, “whatever He doeth, these also the Son doeth in like manner.” If these the Son doeth which the Father doeth, then it is by the Son that the Father doeth: if by the Son the Father doeth what He doeth, then the Father doeth not some, the Son others; but the works of the Father and of the Son are the same works. And how doeth the Son also the same? Both “the same,” and “in like manner.” In case you should think them the same, but in a different manner, the “same,” saith He, and “in like manner.” And how could they be the same and not in like manner? Take an example, which I presume is not too big for you: when we write letters they are first formed by our heart, then by our hand. Certainly: why otherwise have you all agreed, but because you perceived it to be so? It is as I have said, it is manifest to us all. The letters are made first by our heart, then by our body; the hand serves, the heart commands; both the heart and the hand make the same letters. Dost think the heart doeth some letters, the hand some others? The same indeed doeth the hand, but not in like manner: our heart forms them intelligibly, but our hand visibly. See how the same things are made, but not in like manner. Hence it was not enough for the Lord to say, “What

things soever the Father doeth, these also the Son doeth;” He must add, “and in like manner.” For what if thou shouldst understand this just as thou understandest whatever thy heart doeth, this also thy hand doeth, but in a different manner? Here, however, he added, “These also the Son doeth in like manner.” If He both doeth these, and in like manner doeth, then awake; let the Jew be crushed, let the Christian believe, let the heretic be convinced: The Son is equal to the Father.

9. “For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth.” Here is that “showeth.” “Showeth,” as it were, to whom? Of course, as to one that sees. We return to that which we cannot explain, how the Word seeth. Behold, man was made by the Word; but man has eyes, ears, hands, divers members in the body: he is able by the eyes to see, by the ears to hear, by the hands to work; the members are diverse, their offices diverse. One member cannot do the office of another; yet, by reason of the unity of the body, the eye sees both for itself and for the ear, and the ear hears for itself and for the eye. Are we to suppose that something like this holds good in the Word, seeing all things are by Him; and Scripture has said in the psalm, “Understand, ye brutish among the people; and ye fools, at length be wise. He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? And He that formed the eye, shall He not see?” Hence, if the Word is He that formed the eye, for all things are by the Word; if the Word is He that planted the ear, for all things are by the Word: we cannot say the Word doth not hear, the Word doth not see; lest the psalm reprove us, and say, “Fools, at length be wise.” Therefore, if the Word heareth and seeth, if the Son heareth and seeth, are we yet to search for eyes and ears in Him in separate places? Does He by one part hear, by another see; and cannot His ear do what His eye doth; and cannot His eye do what His ear can? Or is He not all sight, all hearing? Perhaps yes; nay, not perhaps, but truly yes; whilst, however, that seeing of His, and that hearing of His, is in a way far other than it is with us. Both to see and to hear exist together in the Word: seeing and hearing are not diverse things in Him; but hearing is sight, and sight is hearing.

10. And we, who see in one way, and hear in another way, how know we this? We return perhaps to ourselves, if we are not the trangressors to whom it is said, “Return, O trangressors, to your heart.” Return to your heart: why

go from yourselves, and perish from yourselves? Why go the ways of solitude? You go astray by wandering: return ye. Whither? To the Lord. ’Tis quickly done: first return to thine own heart; thou hast wandered abroad an exile from thyself; thou knowest not thyself, and yet thou art asking by whom thou wast made! Return, return to thy heart, lift thyself away from the body: thy body is thy place of abode; thy heart perceives even by thy body. But thy body is not what thy heart is; leave even thy body, return to thy heart. In thy body thou didst find eyes in one place, ears in another place: dost thou find this in thy heart? Or hast thou not ears in thy heart? Else of what did the Lord say, “Whoso hath ears to hear, let him hear?” Or hast thou not eyes in thy heart? Else of what saith the apostle, “The eyes of your heart being enlightened?” Return to thy heart; see there what, it may be, thou canst perceive of God, for in it is the image of God. In the inner man dwelleth Christ, in the inner man art thou renewed after the image of God, in His own image recognize its Author. See how all the senses of the body bring intelligence to the heart within of what they have perceived abroad; see how many ministers the one commander within has and what it can do by itself even without these ministers. The eyes report to the heart things black and white; the ears report to the same heart pleasant and harsh sounds; to the same heart the nostrils announce sweet odors and stenches; to the same heart the taste announces things bitter and sweet; to the same heart the touch announces things smooth and rough; and the heart declares to itself things just and unjust. Thy heart sees and hears and judges all other things perceived by the senses; and, what the senses do not aspire to, discerns things just and unjust, things evil and good. Show me the eyes, ears, nostrils, of thy heart. Diverse are the things that are referred to thy heart, yet are there not diverse members there. In thy flesh, thou hearest in one place, seest in another; in thy heart, where thou seest, there thou hearest. If this be the image, how much more mightily He whose the image is! Therefore the Son both heareth and seeth; the Son is both the hearing itself and the seeing: to hear is to Him the same thing as “to be;” and to see is to Him the same thing as “to be.” To see is not the same thing to thee as to be; for if thou lose thy sight, thou canst be; and if thou lose thy hearing, thou canst be.

11. Do we think we have knocked? Is there raised up within us something whereby we may even slightly conjecture whence light may come to us? It is my opinion, brethren, that when we speak of these things, and meditate upon them, we are exercising ourselves. And when we are exercising ourselves, and are as it were bent back again by our own weight to our customary thoughts, we are like weak-eyed persons, when they are brought forth to see the light, if perchance they had no sight at all before, and begin in some sort to recover their sight by the assiduous care of physicians. And when the physician would test the progress of recovery, he tries to show them something which they sought to see, but could not while they were blind: and while the eyesight is now somewhat recovered, they are brought forth to the light; and as they see it, are beaten back in a manner by the very glare; and they answer the physician, as he points out the object, This moment I did see, but now I cannot. What then does the physician? He brings them back to their usual ways, and applies the eye-salve to nourish the longing for seeing that which was seen only for a moment, so that by the very longing he may cure more completely; and if any stinging salves are applied for the recovery of sound ness, let the patient bear it bravely, and, inflamed with love of the light, say to himself, When will it be that with strong eyes I shall see what with sore and weak eyes I could not? He urges the physician, and begs him to heal him. Therefore, brethren, if, it may be, something like this has taken place in your hearts, if somehow you have raised your heart to see the Word, and, beaten back by its light, you have fallen back to your wonted ways; pray the Physician to apply sharp salves, the precepts of righteousness. There is that which thou mayest see, but not that whereby thou canst see. Thou didst not believe me before that there is that which thou mayest see: thou art now, as by the guidance of reason, brought to it: thou hast drawn near, strained thine eyes to see it, throbbed, and shrunk back. Thou knowest for certain that there is what thou mayest see, but that thou art not yet meet to see it. Therefore be healed. What are the eye-salves? Do not lie, do not swear falsely, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not defraud. But thou art used to these, and it is with some pain thou art drawn away from old habits: this is what bites, but yet heals. For I tell thee freely, by fear of myself and of thee, if thou give up the healing, and scorn to become meet to enjoy this light, by weakness of thine eyes, thou wilt love darkness; and by loving darkness, wilt remain in

darkness; and by remaining in darkness, wilt be cast even into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. If the love of light has effected nothing in thee, let the fear of pain effect something.

12. I think I have spoken long enough, and yet I have not concluded the Gospel lesson: if I go on to declare what remains, I shall burden you, and I fear lest even what has been drawn may be lost; therefore let this be enough for you now, beloved. We are debtors, not now, but always as long as we live; because we live for you. However, do you, by good living, comfort this life of ours, so weak, toilsome, and full of peril in this world; do not afflict and wear us out by your evil manners. For if, when offended with your evil life, we flee from you and separate ourselves from you, and no longer come to you, will ye not complain, and say, And if we were sick, ye might care for us; and if we were weak, ye might have visited us? Behold, we do care for you; behold, we do visit you; but let it not be with us as you have heard from the apostle, “I fear lest I have bestowed labor upon you in vain.”

TRACTATE XIX

CHAPTER V. 19–30

In the former discourse, so far as the subject impressed us, and so far as our poverty of understanding attained to, we have spoken by occasion of the words of the Gospel, where it is written: “The Son cannot do anything of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing,”—what it is for the Son—that is, the Word, for the Son is the Word—”to see;” and as all things were made by the Word, how it is to be understood that the Son first sees the Father doing, and then only Himself also doeth the things which He has seen done, seeing that the Father has done nothing except by the Son. For “all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made. We have not, however, delivered to you anything as fully explained, and that because we have not understood anything thus clearly set forth. For, indeed, speech sometimes fails even where the understanding makes way; how much more doth speech suffer defect, where the understanding has nothing perfect! Now, therefore, as the Lord gives us, let us briefly run over the passage, and even to-day complete the due task. Should there perchance remain somewhat of time or of strength, we will reconsider (so far as it may be practicable for us and with you) what it is for the Word “to see” and “to be shown to;” since, in fact, all that is here spoken is such that, if understood according to man’s sense, carnally, the soul full of vain fancies makes for us only certain images of the Father and the Son, just as of two men, the one showing, the other seeing; the one speaking, the other hearing,—all which are idols of the heart. And if now at length idols have been cast down from their own temples, how much more ought they to be cast down from Christian hearts!

2. “The Son,” saith He, “cannot do anything of Himself, but what He sees the Father doing.” This is true: hold this fast, while at the same time ye do not let slip what ye have gotten in the beginning of the Gospel, that “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” and especially that “all things were made by Him.” Join this that ye have now heard to that hearing, and let both agree together in your hearts. Thus, “The Son cannot of Himself do anything, except what He seeth the Father doing,” is yet in such wise that what the Father doeth, He doeth only by the Son, because the Son is His Word: and, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;” also, “All things were made by Him.” For what things soever He doeth, the Son also doeth in like manner; not other things, but these and not in a different, but in like manner.

3. “For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth.” To that which He said above, “except what He seeth the Father doing,” seems to belong this also, “He showeth Him all things that Himself doeth.” But if the Father doth show what He doeth, and the Son cannot do except the Father hath shown, and if the Father cannot show unless He hath done, it will follow that it is not through the Son that the Father doeth all things; moreover, if we hold it fixed and unshaken, that the Father doeth all by the Son, then He shows the Son before He doeth. For if the Father doth show to the Son after He has done, that the Son may do the things shown, which being shown were already done, then doubtless something there is that the Father doeth without the Son. But the Father doeth not anything without the Son, because the Son of God is God’s Word, and all things were

made by Him. It remains, then, that possibly what the Father is about to do, He shows as about to be done, that it may be done by the Son. For if the Son doeth those things which the Father showeth as already done, surely it is not by the Son that the Father hath done the things which He thus showeth. For they could not be shown to the Son unless they were first done, and the Son would not be able to do them unless they were first shown; therefore were they made without the Son. But yet it is a true thing, “All things were made by Him;” therefore they were shown before they were made. But this we said must be put off, and returned to after briefly scanning the passage, if, as we said, some portion of time and of strength should remain to us for a reconsideration of the matters deferred.

4. Attend now to a wider and more difficult question. “And greater works than these,” saith He, “will He show Him, that ye may marvel.” “Greater than these.” Greater than which? The answer readily occurs: than the cures of bodily diseases which ye have just heard: For the whole occasion of this discourse arose about the man who was thirty and eight years in infirmity, and was healed by the word of Christ; and in respect of this cure, the Lord could say, “Greater works than these He will show Him, that ye may marvel.” For there are greater, and the Father will show them to the Son. It is not “hath shown,” as of a thing past, but “will show,” of a thing future; or, is about to show. Again a difficult question arises: Why, then, is there something with the Father that has not yet been shown to the Son? Is there something with the Father that was still hid from the Son when He spoke these words? For surely, if it be “will show,” that is to say, “is about to show,” then He has not yet shown; and He is about to show to the Son at the same time as to these persons, since it follows, “that ye may marvel.” And this is a thing hard to see, how the Eternal Father doth show something, as it were in time, to the coeternal Son, who knoweth all things that are with the Father.

5. But what are the greater works? For perhaps this is easy to understand. “For as the Father,” saith He, “raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.” To raise the dead, then, are greater works than to heal the sick. But “as the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom He will.” Hence, the

Father some, the Son others? But all things are by Him: therefore the Son the same persons as the Father doth; since the Son doeth not other things and in a different manner, but "these" and in "like manner." Thus clearly it must be understood, and thus held. But keep in memory that "the Son quickeneth whom He will." Here, too, know not only the power of the Son, but also the will. Both the Son quickeneth whom He will, and also the Father quickeneth whom He will—the Son the same persons as the Father; and hence the power of the Father and of the Son is the same, and also the will is the same. What follows then? "For the Father judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son, that all men may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father:" this He subjoined, as rendering a reason of the foregoing sentence. A great question comes before us; give it your earnest attention. The Son quickeneth whom He will, the Father quickeneth whom He will; the Son raiseth the dead, just as the Father raiseth the dead. And further, "the Father judgeth not any man." If the dead must be raised in the judgment, how can it be said that the Father raiseth the dead, if He judgeth not any man, since "He hath given all judgment to the Son"? But in that judgment the dead are raised; some rise to life, others to punishment. If the Son doeth all this, but the Father not, inasmuch as "He judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son," it will appear contrary to what has been said, viz., "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom He will." Consequently the Father and the Son raise together; if they raise together, they quicken together: hence they judge together. How, then, is that true, "For the Father judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son"? Meanwhile let the questions now proposed engage your minds; the Lord will cause that, when solved, they will delight you. For so it is, brethren: every question, unless it stirs the mind to reflection, will not give delight when explained. May the Lord Himself then follow with us, in case He may perhaps reveal Himself somewhat in those matters which He foldeth up. For He foldeth up His light with a cloud; and it is difficult to fly like an eagle above every obscure mist with which the whole earth is covered, and to behold the most serene light in the words of the Lord. In case, then, He may perhaps dissipate our darkness with the heat of His rays, and deign to reveal Himself somewhat in the sequel, let us, deferring these questions, look at what follows.

6. “Whoso honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father that sent Him.” This is a truth, and is plain. Since, then, “all judgment hath He given to the Son,” as He said above, “that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father,” what if there be those who honor the Father and honor not the Son? It cannot be, saith He: “Whoso honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father that sent Him.” One cannot therefore say, I honored the Father, because I knew not the Son. If thou didst not yet honor the Son, neither didst thou honor the Father. For what is honoring the Father, unless it be in that He hath a Son? It is one thing when thou art taught to honor God in that He is God; but another thing when thou art taught to honor Him in that He is Father. When thou art taught to honor Him in that He is God, it is as the Creator, as the Almighty, as the Spirit supreme, eternal, invisible, unchangeable, that thou art led to think of Him; but when thou art taught to honor Him in that He is Father, it is the same thing as to honor the Son; because Father cannot be said if there be not a Son, as neither can Son if there be not a Father. But lest, it may be, thou honorest the Father indeed as greater, but the Son as less,—as thou mayest say to me, “I do honor the Father, for I know that He has a Son; nor do I err in the name Father, for I do not understand Father without Son, and yet the Son also I honor as the less,”—the Son Himself sets thee right, and recalls thee, saying, “that all may honor the Son,” not in a lower degree, but “as they honor the Father.” Therefore, “whoso honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father that sent Him.” “I,” sayest thou, “wish to give greater honor to the Father, less to the Son.” Therein thou takest away honor from the Father, wherein thou givest less to the Son. For, being thus minded, it must really seem to thee that the Father either would not or could not beget a Son equal to Himself: if He would not, He lacked the will; if He could not, He lacked the ability. Dost thou not therefore see that, being thus minded, wherein thou wouldst give greater honor to the Father, therein thou art reproachful to the Father? Wherefore, so honor the Son as thou honorest the Father, if thou wouldest honor both the Father and the Son.

7. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whoso heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but is passed,” not is passing now, but is already passed, “from death into life.” And mark this, “Whoso heareth my word, and”—He says not, believeth me,

but—”believeth Him that sent me.” Let him hear the word of the Son, that he may believe the Father. Why heareth Thy word, and yet believeth another? When we hear any one’s word, is it not him that utters the word we believe? is it not to him who speaks we lend our faith? What, then, did He mean, saying, “Whoso heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me,” if it be not this, because “His word is in me”? And what is “heareth my word,” but “heareth me”? So, too, “believeth Him that sent me,” because, believing Him, he believeth His word; but again, believing His word, he believeth me, because I am the Word of the Father. There is therefore peace in the Scriptures, and all things duly disposed, and in no way clashing. Cast away, then, contention from thy heart; understand the harmony of the Scriptures. Dost thou think that the Truth should speak things contrary to itself?

8. “Whoso heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but is passed from death unto life.” You remember what we laid down above, that “as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom He will.” He is beginning already to reveal Himself; and behold, even now, the dead are rising. For “whoso heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and will not come into judgment.” Prove that he has risen again. “But is passed,” saith He “from death unto life.” He that is passed from death unto life, has surely without any doubt risen again. For he could not pass from death to life, unless he were first in death and not in life; but when he will have passed, he will be in life, and not in death. He was therefore dead, and is alive again; he was lost, but is found. Hence a resurrection does take place now, and men pass from a death to a life; from the death of infidelity to the life of faith; from the death of falsehood to the life of truth; from the death of iniquity to the life of righteousness. There is, therefore, that which is a resurrection of the dead.

9. May He open the same more fully, and dawn upon us as He begins to do! “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is.” We did look for a resurrection of the dead in the end, for so we have believed; yea, not we looked, but are manifestly bound to look for it: for it is not a false thing we believe, when we believe that the dead will rise in the end. When

the Lord Jesus, then, was willing to make known to us a resurrection of the dead before the resurrection of the dead, it is not as that of Lazarus, or of the widow's son, or of the ruler of the synagogue's daughter, who were raised to die again (for in their case there was a resurrection of the dead before the resurrection of the dead); but, as He says here, "hath," says He, "eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but is passed from death into life." To what life? To life eternal. Not, then, as the body of Lazarus: for he indeed passed from the death of the tomb to the life of men, but not to life eternal, seeing he was to die again; whereas the dead, that are to rise again at the end of the world, will pass to eternal life. When our Lord Jesus Christ, then, our heavenly Master, the Word of the Father, and the Truth, was willing to represent to us a resurrection of the dead to eternal life before the resurrection of the dead to eternal life, "The hour cometh," saith He. Doubtless thou, imbued with a faith of the resurrection of the flesh, didst look for the hour of the end of the world, which, that thou shouldst not look for here, He added, "and now is." Therefore He saith not this, "The hour cometh," of that last hour, when "at the command and the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet Christ in the air: and so shall we be ever with the Lord." That hour will come, but is not now. But consider what this hour is: "The hour cometh, and now is." What happens in that hour? What, but a resurrection of the dead? And what kind of resurrection? Such that they who rise live for ever. This will be also in the last hour.

10. What then? How do we understand these two resurrections? Do we, it may be, understand that they who rise now will not rise then; that the resurrection of some is now, of some others then? It is not so. For we have risen in this resurrection, if we have rightly believed; and we ourselves, who have already risen, are looking for another resurrection in the end. Moreover, both now are we risen to eternal life, if we perseveringly continue in the same faith; and then, too, we shall rise to eternal life, when we shall be made equal with the angels. But let Himself distinguish and open up what we have made bold to speak; how there happens to be a resurrection before a resurrection, not of different but of the same persons;

nor like that of Lazarus, but into eternal life. He will open it clearly. Hear ye the Master, while dawning upon us, and as our Sun gliding in upon our hearts; not such as the eyes of flesh desire to look upon, but on whom the eyes of the heart fervently long to be opened. To Him, then, let us give ear: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead”—you see that a resurrection is asserted—”shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.” Why hath He added, “they that hear shall live”? Why, could they hear unless they lived? It would have been enough, then, to say, “The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.” We should immediately understand them to be living, since they could not hear unless they lived. No, saith He, not because they live they hear; but by hearing they come to life again: “Shall hear, and they that hear shall live.” What, then, is “shall hear,” but “shall obey”? For, as to the hearing of the ear, not all who hear shall live. Many, indeed, hear and do not believe; by hearing and not believing, they obey not; by not obeying, they live not. And so here, they that “shall hear” are they that “shall obey.” They that obey, then, shall live: let them be sure and certain of it, shall live. Christ, the Word of God, is preached to us; the Son of God, by whom all things were made, who, for the dispensation’s sake, surely took flesh, was born of a virgin, was an infant in the flesh, a young man in the flesh, suffering in the flesh, dying in the flesh, rising again in the flesh, ascending in the flesh, promising a resurrection to the flesh, promising a resurrection to the mind—to the mind before the flesh, to the flesh after the mind. Whoso heareth and obeyeth, shall live; whoso heareth and obeyeth not, that is, heareth and despiseth, heareth and believeth not, shall not live. Why shall not live? Because he heareth not. What is “heareth not”? Obeyeth not. Thus, then, “they that hear shall live.”

11. Turn your thoughts now to what we said had to be deferred, that it may now, if possible, be opened. Concerning this very resurrection He immediately subjoined, “For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” What means that, “The Father hath life in Himself”? Not elsewhere hath He life but in Himself. His living, in fact, is in Him, not from elsewhere, nor derived from another. He does not, as it were, borrow life, nor, as it were, become a partaker of life, of a life which is not what Himself is: but “hath life in Himself,” so that the very

life is to Him His very self. If I should be able yet further in some small measure to speak from this matter, by proposing examples for informing your understanding, will depend on God’s help and the piety of your attention. God lives, and the soul also lives; but the life of God is unchangeable, the life of the soul is changeable. In God is neither increase nor decrease; but He is the same always in Himself, is ever as He is: not in one way now, in another way hereafter, in some other way before. But the life of the soul is exceedingly various: it lived foolish, it lives wise; it lived unrighteous, it lives righteous; now remembers, now forgets; now learns, now cannot learn; now loses what it had learned, now apprehends what it had lost. The life of the soul is changeable. And when the soul lives in unrighteousness, that is its death; when again it becomes righteous, it becomes partaker of another life, which is not what itself is, inasmuch as by rising up to God, and cleaving to God, of Him it is justified. For it is said, “To him that believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” By forsaking God, it becomes unrighteous; by coming to Him, it is made righteous. Does it not seem to thee as it were something cold, which, when brought near the fire, grows warm; when removed from the fire, grows cold? A something dark, which, brought near the light, grows bright; when removed from the light, grows dark? Something such is the soul: God is not any such thing. Moreover, man may say that he has light now in his eyes. Let thine eyes say then, if they can, as by a voice of their own, “We have light in ourselves.” I answer: Not correctly do you say that you have light in yourselves: you have light, but in the heavens; you have light, but in the moon, in candles, if it happen to be night, not in yourselves: for, being shut, you lose what you perceive when open. Not in yourselves have you light; keep the light if you can when the sun is set: ’tis night, enjoy the light of night; keep the light when the candle is withdrawn; but since you remain in darkness when the candle is withdrawn, you have not light in yourselves. Consequently, to have light in oneself is not to need light from another. Behold, whoso understands wherein He shows that the Son is equal with the Father, when He saith, “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son also to have life in Himself;” that there may be only this difference between the Father and the Son, that the Father hath life in Himself, which none gave Him, whilst the Son hath life in Himself which the Father gave.

12. But here also arises a cloud that must be scattered. Let us not lose heart, let us strive in earnest. Here are pastures of the mind; let us not disdain them, that we may live. Behold, sayest thou, thyself confessest that the Father hath given life to the Son, that He may have life in Himself, even as the Father hath life in Himself; that the Father not lacking, the Son may not lack; that as the Father is life, so the Son may be life; and both united one life, not two lives; because God is one, not two Gods; and this same is to be life. How, then, is the Father said to have given life to the Son? Not so as if the Son had been without life before, and received life from the Father that He might live; for if it were so, He would not have life in Himself. Behold, I was speaking of the soul. The soul exists; though it be not wise, though it be not righteous, though it be not godly, it is soul. It is one thing for it to be soul, but another thing to be wise, to be righteous, to be godly. Something there is, then, in which it is not yet wise, not yet righteous, not yet godly. Nevertheless it is not therefore nothing, it is not therefore non-life; for it shows itself to be alive by certain of its own actions, although it does not show itself to be wise, godly, or righteous. For if it were not living it would not move the body, would not command the feet to walk, the hands to work, the eyes to look, the ears to hear; would not open the mouth for speaking, nor move the tongue to distinction of speech. So, then, by these operations it shows itself to have life, and to be something which is better than the body. But does it in any wise show itself by these operations to be wise, godly, or righteous? Do not the foolish, the wicked, the unrighteous walk, work, see, hear, speak? But when the soul rises to something which itself is not, which is above itself, and from which its being is, then it gets wisdom, righteousness, holiness, which so long as it was without, it was dead, and did not have the life by which itself should live, but only that by which the body was quickened. For that in the soul by which the body is quickened is one thing, that by which the soul itself is quickened is another. Better, certainly, than the body is the soul, but better than the soul itself is God. The soul, even if it be foolish, ungodly, unrighteous, is the life of the body. But since its own life is God, just as it supplies vigor, comeliness, activity, the functions of the limbs to the body, while it exists in the body; so, in like manner, while God, its life, is in the soul, He supplies to it wisdom, godliness, righteousness, charity. Accordingly, what the soul supplies to the body, and what God supplies to the soul, are of a different kind: the soul

quickens and is quickened. It quickens while dead, even if itself is not quickened. But when the word comes, and is poured into the hearers, and they not only hear, but are made obedient, the soul rises from its death to its life—that is, from unrighteousness, from folly, from ungodliness, to its God, who is to it wisdom, righteousness, light. Let it rise to Him, and be enlightened by Him. "Come near," saith he, "to Him." And what shall we have? "And be enlightened." If, therefore, by "coming to" ye are enlightened, and by "departing from" ye become darkened, your light was not in yourselves, but in your God. Come to Him that ye may rise again: if ye depart from Him, ye shall die. If by coming to Him ye live, and by departing from Him ye die, your life was not in yourselves. For the same is your life which is your light. "Because with Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light we shall see light."

13. Not, then, in like manner as the soul is one thing before it is enlightened, and becomes a better thing when it is enlightened, by participation of a better; not so, I say, was the Word of God, the Son of God, something else before He received life, that He should have life by participation; but He has life in Himself, and is consequently Himself the very life. What is it, then, that He saith, "hath given to the Son to have life in Himself"? I would say it briefly, He begot the Son. For it is not that He existed without life, and received life, but He is life by being begotten. The Father is life not by being begotten; the Son is life by being begotten. The Father is of no father; the Son is of God the Father. The Father in His being is of none, but in that He is Father, 'tis because of the Son. But the Son also, in that He is Son, 'tis because of the Father: in His being, He is of the Father. This He said, therefore: "hath given life to the Son, that He might have it in Himself." Just as if He were to say, "The Father, who is life in Himself, begot the Son, who should be life in Himself." Indeed, He would have this dedit (hath given) to be understood for the same thing as genuit (hath begotten). It is like as if we said to a person, "God hath given thee being." To whom? If to some one already existing, then He gave him not being, because he who could receive existed before it was given him. When, therefore, thou hearest it said, "He gave thee being," thou wast not in being to receive, but thou didst receive, that thou shouldst be by coming into existence. The builder gave to this house that it should be. But what did

he give to it? He gave it to be a house. To what did he give? To this house. Gave it what? To be a house. How could he give to a house that it should be a house? For if the house was, to what did he give to be a house, when the house existed already? What, then, does that mean, “gave it to be a house”? It means, he brought to pass that it should be a house. Well, then, what gave He to the Son? Gave Him to be the Son, begot Him to be life—that is, “gave Him to have life in Himself” that He should be the life not needing life, that He may not be understood as having life by participation. For if He had life by par ticipation, He might, by losing, be without life. Do not take, nor think, nor believe this to be possible respecting the Son. Wherefore the Father continues the life, the Son continues the life: the Father, life in Himself, not from the Son; the Son, life in Himself, but from the Father. Begotten of the Father, that He might live in Himself; but the Father, not begotten, life in Himself. Nor did He beget the Son less than Himself to become equal by growth. For surely He by whom, being perfect, the times were created, was not assisted by time towards His own perfection. Before all time, He is co-eternal with the Father. For the Father has never been without the Son; but the Father is eternal, therefore also the Son co-eternal. Soul, what of thee? Thou wast dead, didst lose life; hear then the Father through the Son. Arise, take to thee life, that in Him who has life in Himself thou mayest receive the life which is not in thee. He that giveth thee life, then, is the Father and the Son; and the first resurrection is accomplished when thou risest to partake of the life which thou art not thyself, and by partaking art made living. Rise from thy death to thy life, which is thy God, and pass from death to eternal life. For the Father hath eternal life in Himself; and unless He had begotten such a Son as had life in Himself, it could not be that as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son should quicken whom He will.

14. But what of that resurrection of the body? For these who hear and live, whence live, except by hearing? For “the friend of the Bridegroom standeth and heareth Him, and rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom’s voice:” not because of his own voice; that is to say, they hear and live by partaking, not by coming into being; and all that hear live, because all that obey live. Tell us something, O Lord, also of the resurrection of the flesh; for there have been those who denied it, asserting that this is the only resurrection

which is wrought by faith. Of which resurrection the Lord has just now made mention, and inflamed our desire, because “the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall live.” It is not some of those who hear shall live, and others shall die; but “all that hear shall live,” because all that obey shall live. Behold, we see a resurrection of the mind; let us not therefore let go our faith of the resurrection of the flesh. And unless Thou, O Lord Jesus, declare to us this, whom shall we oppose to those who assert the contrary? For truly all sects that have undertaken to engraft any religion upon men have allowed this resurrection of minds; otherwise, it might be said to them, If the soul rise not, why speakest thou to me? What meanest thou to do in me? If thou dost not make of the worse a better, why speakest thou? If thou dost not make a righteous of the unrighteous, why speakest thou? But if thou dost make righteous of the unrighteous, godly of the ungodly, wise of the foolish, thou confessest that my soul doth rise again, if I comply with thee and believe. So, then, all those that have founded any sect, even of false religion, while they wished to be believed, could not but admit this resurrection of minds: all have agreed concerning this; but many have denied the resurrection of the flesh, and affirmed that the resurrection had taken place already in faith. Such the apostle resisteth, saying, “Of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection hath taken place already, and overthrow the faith of some.” They said that the resurrection had taken place already, but in such manner that another was not to be expected; and they blamed people who were looking for a resurrection of the flesh, just as if the resurrection which was promised were already accomplished in the act of believing, namely, in the mind. The apostle censures these. Why does he censure them? Did they not affirm what the Lord spoke just now: “The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live”? But, saith Jesus to thee, it is of the life of minds that I am hitherto speaking: I am not yet speaking of the life of bodies; but I speak of the life of that which is the life of bodies, that is, of the life of souls, in which the life of bodies exists. For I know that there are bodies lying in the tombs; I know also that your bodies will lie in the tombs. I am not speaking of that resurrection, but I speak of this; in this, rise ye again, lest ye rise to punishment in that. But that ye may know that I speak also of that, what do I add? “For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” This life which the Father is, which the Son is, to what does it pertain? To the soul or to the body? It is not surely the body that is sensible of that life of wisdom, but the rational mind. For not every soul hath capacity to apprehend wisdom. A brute beast, in fact, has a soul, but the soul of the brute beast cannot apprehend wisdom. It is the human soul, then, that can perceive this life which the Father hath in Himself, and hath given to the Son to have in Himself; because that is “the true light which enlighteneth,” not every soul, but “every man coming into this world.” When, therefore, I speak to the mind itself, let it hear, that is, let it obey and live.

15. Wherefore, keep not silent, O Lord, concerning the resurrection of the flesh; lest men believe it not, and we continue reasoners, not preachers. But “as the Father hath life in Himself, even so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” Let them that hear, understand; let them believe that they may understand; let them obey that they may live. And that they may not suppose that the resurrection is finished here, let them hear this further: “and hath given Him authority to execute judgment also.” Who hath given? The Father. To whom hath He given? To the Son; namely, to whom He gave to have life in Himself, to the same hath He given authority to execute judgment. “Because He is the Son of man.” For this is the Christ, both Son of God and Son of man. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. This was in the beginning with God.” Behold, how He hath given Him to have life in Himself! But because “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” was made man of the Virgin Mary, He is the Son of man. What, therefore, hath He received as Son of man? Authority to execute judgment. What judgment? That in the end of the world. Then also there will be a resurrection, but a resurrection of bodies. So, then, God raiseth up souls by Christ, the Son of God; bodies He raiseth up by the same Christ, the Son of man. “Hath given Him authority.” He should not have this authority did He not receive it; and He should be a man without authority. But the same who is Son of God is also Son of man. For by adhering to the unity of person, the Son of man with the Son of God is made one person, and the Son of God is the same person which the Son of man is. But what characteristic it has, and wherefore, must be distinguished. The Son of man has soul and body. The Son of God, which is

the Word of God, has man, as the soul has body. And just as soul having body does not make two persons, but one man; so the Word, having man, maketh not two persons, but one Christ. What is man? A rational soul, having a body. What is Christ? The Word of God, having man. I see of what things I speak, who I the speaker am, and to whom I am speaking.

16. Now hear concerning the resurrection of bodies, not me, but the Lord about to speak, on account of those who have risen again by a resurrection from death, by cleaving to life. To what life? To a life which knows not death. Why knows not death? Because it knows not mutability. Why knows not mutability? Because it is life in itself. “And hath given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man.” What judgment, what kind of judgment? “Marvel not at this” which I have said,—gave Him authority to execute judgment,—”for the hour is coming.” He does not adds “and now is:” therefore He means to make known to us a certain hour in the end of the world. The hour is now that the dead rise, the hour will be in the end of the world that the dead rise: but that they rise now in the mind, then in the flesh; that they rise now in the mind by the Word of God, the Son of God; then in the flesh by the Word of God made flesh, the Son of man. For it will not be the Father Himself that will come to judgment, notwithstanding the Father doth not withdraw Himself from the Son. How, then, is it that the Father Himself will not come? In that He will not be seen in the judgment. “They shall look on Him whom they pierced.” That form which stood before the judge, will be Judge: that form will judge which was judged; for it was judged unjustly, it will judge justly. There will come the form of a servant, and that same will be apparent. For how could the form of God be made apparent to the just and to the unjust? If the judgment were to be only among the just, then the form of God might appear as to the just. But because the judgment is to be of the just and of the unjust, and that it is not permitted to the wicked to see God,—for “blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,”—such a Judge will appear as may be seen by those whom He is about to crown, and by those whom He is about to condemn. Hence the form of a servant will be seen, the form of God will be hid. The Son of God will be hid in the servant, and the Son of man will be manifest, because to Him “hath He given authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man.” And because He alone will appear in the form of a

servant, but the Father not, since He has not taken upon Him the form of a servant; for that reason He saith above: “The Father judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son.” Rightly then had it been deferred, that the propounder might Himself be the interpreter. For before it was hidden; now, as I think, it is already manifest, that “He gave Him authority to execute judgment,” that “the Father judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son:” because the judgment is to be by that form which the Father hath not. And what kind of judgment? “Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming:” not that which now is, for the souls to rise; but that which is to be, for the bodies to rise.

17. Let Him declare this more distinctly, that the heretical denier of the resurrection of the body may not find a pretext for sophistical cavil, although the meaning already shines out clearly. When it was said above, “The hour is coming,” He added, “and now is;” but just now, “The hour is coming,” He has not added, “and now is.” Let Him, however, by the open truth, burst asunder all handles, all loops and pegs of sophistical attack, all the nooses of ensnaring objections. “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves.” What more evident? what more distinct? Bodies are in the graves; souls are not in the graves, either of just or of unjust. The soul of the just man was in the bosom of Abraham; the unjust man’s soul was in hell, tormented: neither the one nor the other was in the grave. Above, when He saith, “The hour is coming, and now is,” I beseech you give earnest heed. Ye know, brethren, that we get the bread of the belly with toil; with how much greater toil the bread of the mind! With labor you stand and hear, but with greater we stand and speak. If we labor for your sake, you ought to labor with us for your own sake. Above, then, when He said, “The hour is coming,” and added, “and now is,” what did He subjoin? “When the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” He did not say, “All the dead shall hear, and they that hear shall live;” for He meant the unrighteous to be understood. And is it so, that all the unrighteous obey the gospel? The apostle says openly, “But not all obey the gospel.” But they that hear shall live, because all that obey the gospel shall pass to eternal life by faith: yet all do not obey; and this is now. But certainly, in the end, “All that are in the graves,” both the just and the unjust, “shall hear His voice, and come forth.” How is it He would not

say, “and shall live”? All, indeed, will come forth, but all will not live. For in that which He said above, “And they that hear shall live,” He meant it to be understood that there is in that very hearing and obeying an eternal and blessed life, which not all that shall come forth from the graves will have. Here, then, both in the mention of graves, and by the expression of a “coming forth” from the graves, we openly understand a resurrection of bodies.

18. “All shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.” And where is judgment, if all shall hear and all shall come forth? It is as if all were confusion; I see no distinguishing. Certainly Thou hast received authority to judge, because Thou art the Son of man: behold, Thou wilt be present in the judgment; the bodies will rise again; but tell us something of the judgment itself, that is, of the separation of the evil and the good. Hear this further, then: “They that have done good into the resurrection of life; they that have done evil into the resurrection of judgment.” When above He spoke of a resurrection of minds and souls, did He make any distinction? No, for all “that hear shall live;” because by hearing, viz. by obeying, shall they live. But certainly not all will go to eternal life by rising and coming forth from the graves,—only they that have done well; and they that have done ill, to judgment. For here He has put judgment for punishment. There will also be a separation, not such as there is now. For now we are separated, not by place, but by character, affections, desires, faith, hope, charity. Now we live together with the unjust, though the life of all is not the same: in secret we are distinguished, in secret we are separated; as grain on the floor, not as grain in the granary. On the floor, grain is both separated and mixed: separated, because severed from the chaff; mixed, because not yet winnowed. Then there will be an open separation; a distinguishing of life just as of the character, a separation as there is in wisdom, so also will there be in bodies. They that have done well will go to live with the angels of God; they that have done evil, to be tormented with the devil and his angels. And the form of a servant will pass away. For to this end He had manifested Himself, that He might execute judgment. After the judgment, He shall go hence, will lead with Him the body of which He is the head, and deliver up the kingdom of God. Then will openly be seen that form of God which could not be seen by the wicked, to whose vision the form of a servant must

be shown. He says also in another place on this wise: “These shall go away into everlasting burning” (speaking of certain on the left), “but the just into life eternal;” of which life He says in another place: “And this is eternal life, that they may know Thee the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” Then will He be there manifested, “who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Then He will manifest Himself, as He has promised to manifest Himself to them that love Him. For “he that loveth me,” saith He, “keepeth my commandments; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” He was present in person with those to whom He was speaking: but they saw the form of a servant, they did not see the form of God. They were being led on His own beast to His dwelling to be healed; but now being healed, they will see, because, saith He, “I will manifest myself to him.” How is He shown equal to the Father? When He says to Philip, “He that seeth me seeth my Father also.”

19. “I cannot of myself do anything: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just.” Else we might have said to Him, “Thou wilt judge, and the Father will not judge, for all judgment hath He given to the Son;’ it is not, therefore, according to the Father that Thou wilt judge.” Hence He added, “I cannot of myself do anything: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.” Undoubtedly the Son quickeneth whom He will. He seeketh not His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. Not my own, my proper will; not mine, not the Son of man’s; not mine to resist God. For men do their own will, not God’s, when they do what they list, not what God commands; but when they do what they list, so as yet to follow God’s will, they do not their own will, notwithstanding they do what they list to do. Do what thou art bidden willingly, and thus shall thou both do what thou willest, and also not do thine own will, but His that biddeth.

20. What then? “As I hear, I judge.” The Son “heareth,” and the Father “showeth” to Him, and the Son seeth the Father doing. But we had deferred these matters, in order to handle them, so far as might lie in our abilities, with somewhat greater plainness and fullness, should time and strength remain to us after finishing the perusal of the passage. If I say that I am able

to speak yet further, you perhaps are not able to go on hearing. Again, perhaps, in your eagerness to hear, you say, “We are able.” Better, then, that I should confess my weakness, that, being already fatigued, I am not able to speak longer, than that, when you are already satiated, I should continue to pour into you what you cannot well digest. Then, as to this promise, which I deferred until today, should there be an opportunity, hold me, with the Lord’s help, your debtor until to-morrow.

TRACTATE XX

CHAPTER V. 19

1. The words of our Lord Jesus Christ, especially those recorded by the Evangelist John,—who not without cause leaned on the Lord’s bosom, that he might drink in the secrets of that higher wisdom, and by evangelizing give forth again what by loving he had drunk in,—are so secret and profound of understanding, that they trouble all who are perverse of heart, and exercise all who are in heart upright. Wherefore, beloved, give heed to these few words that have been read. Let us see if in any wise we can, by His own gift and help who has willed His words to be recited to us, which at that time were heard and committed to writing that they might now be read, what He means in what ye have now heard Him say: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing: for what things soever the Father doeth, these same the Son also doeth in like manner.”

2. Now you need to be reminded whence this discourse arose, by reason of what precedes this passage, where the Lord had cured a certain man among those who were lying in the five porches of that pool of Solomon, and to whom He had said, “Take up thy bed, and go unto thy house.” But this He had done on the Sabbath; and hence the Jews, being troubled, were falsely accusing Him as a destroyer and transgressor of the law. He then said to them, “My Father worketh even until now, and I work.” For they, taking the observance of the Sabbath in a carnal sense, fancied that God had, as it were, slept after the labor of framing the world even to this day; and that therefore He had sanctified that day, from which He began to rest as from labor. Now, to our fathers of old there was ordained a sacrament of the

Sabbath, which we Christians observe spiritually, in abstaining from every servile work, that is, from every sin (for the Lord saith, “Every one that committeth sin is the servant of sin”), and in having rest in our heart, that is, spiritual tranquillity. And although in this life we strive after this rest, yet not until we have departed this life shall we attain to that perfect rest. But the reason why God is said to have rested is, that He made no creature after all was finished. Moreover, the Scripture called it rest, to admonish us that after good works we shall rest. For thus we have it written in Genesis, “And God made all things very good, and God rested on the seventh day,” in order that thou, O man, considering that God Himself is said to have rested after good works, shouldest not expect rest for thyself, until after thou hast wrought good works; and even as God after He made man in His own image and likeness, and in him finished all His works very good, rested on the seventh day, so mayest thou also not expect rest to thyself, except thou return to that likeness in which thou wast made, which likeness thou hast lost by sinning. For, in reality, God cannot be said to have toiled, who “said, and they were done.” Who is there that, after such facility of work, desires to rest as if after labor? If He commanded and some one resisted Him, if He commanded and it was not done, and labored that it might be done, then justly He should be said to have rested after labor. But when in that same book of Genesis we read, “God said, Let there be light, and there was light; God said, Let there be a firmament, and the firmament was made, and all the rest were made immediately at His word: to which also the psalm testifies, saying, “He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created,”—how could He require rest after the world was made, as if to enjoy leisure after toil, He who in commanding never toiled? Consequently these sayings are mystical, and are laid down in this wise that we may be looking for rest after this life, provided we have done good works. Accordingly, the Lord, restraining the impudence and refuting the error of the Jews, and showing them that they did not think rightly of God, says to them, when they were offended at His working men’s healing on the Sabbath, “My Father worketh until now, and I work:” do not therefore suppose that my Father so rested on the Sabbath, that thenceforth He doth not work; but even as He now worketh, so I also work. But as the Father without toil, so too the Son without toil. God “said, and they were done;”

Christ said to the impotent man, “Take up thy bed, and go unto thy house,” and it was done.

3. But the catholic faith has it, that the works of the Father and of the Son are not separable. This is what I wish, if possible, to speak to you, beloved; but, according to those words of the Lord, “he that is able to receive it, let him receive it.” But he that is not able to receive it, let him not charge it on me, but on his own dullness; and let him turn to Him that opens the heart, that He may pour in what He freely giveth. And, lastly, if any one may not have understood, because I have not declared it as I ought to have declared it, let him excuse the weakness of man, and supplicate the divine goodness. For we have within a Master, Christ. Whatever ye are not able to receive through your ear and my mouth, turn ye in your heart to Him who both teacheth me what to speak, and distributeth to you in what measure He deigns. He who knows what to give, and to whom to give, will help him that seeketh, and open to him that knocketh. And if so be that He give not, let no one call himself forsaken. For it may be that He delays to give something, but He leaves none hungry. If, indeed, He give not at the hour, He is exercising the seeker, He is not scorning the suitor. Look ye, then, and give heed to what I wish to say, even if I should not be able to say it. The catholic faith, confirmed by the Spirit of God in His saints, has this against all heretical perverseness, that the works of the Father and of the Son are inseparable. What is this that I have said? As the Father and the Son are inseparable, so also the works of the Father and of the Son are inseparable. How are the Father and the Son inseparable, since Himself said, “I and the Father are one?” Because the Father and the Son are not two Gods, but one God, the Word and He whose the Word is, One and the Only One, Father and Son bound together by charity, One God, and the Spirit of Charity also one, so that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is made the Trinity. Therefore, not only of the Father and Son, but also of the Holy Spirit; as there is equality and inseparability of persons, so also the works are inseparable. I will tell you yet more plainly what is meant by “the works are inseparable.” The catholic faith does not say that God the Father made something, and the Son made some other thing; but what the Father made, that also the Son made, that also the Holy Spirit made. For all things were made by the Word; when “He spoke and they were done,” it is by the Word they were done, by Christ

they were done. For “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: all things were made by Him.” If all things were made by Him, “God said, Let there be light, and there was light; in the Word He made, by the Word He made.

4. Behold, then, we have now heard the Gospel, where He answered the Jews who were indignant “that He not only broke the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.” For so it is written in the foregoing paragraph. When, therefore, the Son of God, the Truth, made answer to their erring indignation, saith He, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing;” as if He said, “Why are ye offended because I have said that God is my Father, and that I make myself equal with God? I am equal in that wise that He begat me; I am equal in that wise that He is not from me, but I from Him.” For this is implied in these words: “The Son cannot do anything of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing.” That is, whatever the Son hath to do, the doing it He hath of the Father. Why of the Father hath He the doing it? Because of the Father He hath it that He is Son. Why hath He it of the Father to be Son? Because of the Father He hath it that He is able, of the Father that He is. For, to the Son, both to be able and to be is the self-same thing. It is not so with man. Raise your hearts by all means from a comparison of human weakness, that lies far beneath; and should any of us perhaps reach to the secret, and, while awe-struck by the brilliance as it were of a great light, should discern somewhat, and not remain wholly ignorant; yet let him not imagine that he understands the whole, lest he should become proud, and lose what knowledge he has gotten. With man, to be and to be able are different things. For sometimes the man is, and yet cannot what he wills; sometimes, again, the man is in such wise, that he can what he wills; therefore his being and his being able are different things. For if man’s esse and posse were the same thing, then he could when he would. But with God it is not so, that His substance to be is one thing, and His power to be able another thing; but whatever is His, and whatever He is, is consubstantial with Him, because He is God: it is not so that in one way He is, in another way is able; He has the esse and the posse together, because He has to will and to do together. Since, then, the power of the Son is of the Father, therefore also the substance of the Son is

of the Father; and since the substance of the Son is of the Father, therefore the power of the Son is of the Father. In the Son, power and substance are not different: the power is the self-same that the substance is; the substance to be, the power to be able. Accordingly, because the Son is of the Father, He said, "The Son cannot of Himself do anything." Because He is not Son from Himself, therefore He is not able from Himself.

5. He appears to have made Himself as it were less, when He said, "The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing." Hereupon heretical vanity lifts the neck; theirs, indeed, who say that the Son is less than the Father, of less authority, of less majesty, of less possibility, not understanding the mystery of Christ's words. But attend, beloved, and see how they are confounded in their carnal intellect by the words of Christ. And this is what I said a little before, that the word of God troubles all perverse hearts, just as it exercises pious hearts, especially that spoken by the Evangelist John. For they are deep words that are spoken by him, not random words, nor such as may be easily understood. So, a heretic, if he happen to hear these words, immediately rises and says to us, "Lo, the Son is less than the Father; hear the words of the Son, who says, The Son cannot do anything of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing.'" Wait; as it is written, "Be meek to hear the word, that thou mayest understand." Well, suppose that because I assert the power and majesty of the Father and of the Son to be equal, I was disconcerted at hearing these words, "The Son cannot do anything of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing." Well, I, being disconcerted at these words, will ask thee, who seemest to thyself to have instantly understood them, a question. We know in the Gospel that the Son walked upon the sea; when saw He the Father walk upon the sea? Here now he is disconcerted. Lay aside, then, thy understanding of the words, and let us examine them together. What do we then? We have heard the words of the Lord: "The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing." The Son walked upon the sea, the Father never walked upon the sea. Yet certainly "the Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing."

6. Return then with me to what I was saying, in case it is so to be understood that we may both escape from the question. For I see how I,

according to the catholic faith, may escape without tripping or stumbling; whilst thou, on the other hand, shut in on every side, art seeking a way of escape. See by what way thou hast entered. Perhaps thou hast not understood this that I said, See by what way thou hast entered: hear Himself saying, “I am the door.” Not without cause, then, art thou seeking how thou mayest get out; and this only thou findest, that thou hast not entered by the door, but fell in over the wall. Therefore raise thyself up from thy fall how thou canst, and enter by the door, that thou mayest go in without stumbling, and go out without straying. Come by Christ, not bringing forward of thy own heart what thou mayest say; but what He shows, that speak. Behold how the catholic faith gets clear of this question. The Son walked upon the sea, planted the feet of flesh on the waves: the flesh walked, and the divinity directed. But when the flesh was walking and the divinity directing, was the Father absent? If absent, how doth the Son Himself say, “but the Father abiding in me, Himself doeth the works?” If the Father, abiding in the Son, Himself doeth His works, then that walking upon the sea was made by the Father, and through the Son. Accordingly, that walking is an inseparable work of Father and Son. I see both acting in it. Neither the Father forsook the Son, nor the Son left the Father. Thus, whatever the Son doeth, He doeth not without the Father; because whatever the Father doeth, He doeth not without the Son.

7. We have got clear of this question. Mark ye that rightly we say the works of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit are inseparable. But as thou understandest it, lo, God made the light, and the Son saw the Father making light, according to thy carnal understanding, who wilt have it that He is less, because He said, “The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing.” God the Father made light; what other light did the Son make? God the Father made the firmament, the heaven between waters and waters; and the Son saw Him, according to thy dull and sluggish understanding. Well, since the Son saw the Father making the firmament, and also said, “The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing,” then show me the other firmament made by the Son. Hast thou lost the foundation? But they that are “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone,” are brought into a state of peace in Christ; nor do they strive and wander in

heresy. Therefore we understand that the light was made by God the Father, but through the Son; that the firmament was made by God the Father, but through the Son. For “all things were made through Him, and without Him was nothing made.” Cast out thine understanding, which ought not to be called understanding, but evidently foolishness. God the Father made the world; what other world did the Son make? Show me the Son’s world. Whose is this world in which we are? Tell us, by whom made? If thou sayest, “By the Son, not by the Father,” then thou hast erred from the Father; if thou sayest, “By the Father, not by the Son,” the Gospel answers thee thus, “And the world was made by (through) Him, and the world knew Him not.” Acknowledge Him, then, by whom the world was made, and be not among those who knew not Him that made the world.

8. Wherefore the works of the Father and of the Son are inseparable. Moreover, this, “The Son cannot do anything of Himself,” would mean the same thing as if He were to say, “The Son is not from Himself.” For if He is a Son, He was begotten; if begotten, He is from Him of whom He is begotten. Nevertheless, the Father begat Him equal to Himself. Nor was aught wanting to Him that begat; He who begat a co-eternal required not time to beget: who produced the Word of Himself, required not a mother to beget by; the Father begetting did not precede the Son in age, so that He should beget a Son younger than Himself. But perhaps some one may say, that after many ages God begat a Son in His old age. Even as the Father is without age, so the Son is without growth; neither has the one grown old nor the other increased, but equal begat equal, eternal begat eternal. How, says some one, has eternal begat eternal? As a temporary flame generates a temporary light. The generating flame is coeval with the light which it generates: the generating flame does not precede in time the generated light; but from the moment the flame begins, from that moment the light begins. Show me flame without light, and I show thee God the Father without Son. Accordingly, “the Son cannot do anything of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing,” implies, that for the Son to see and to be begotten of the Father, is the same thing. His seeing and His substance are not different; nor are His power and substance different. All that He is, He is of the Father; all that He can is of the Father; because what He can and what He is is one thing, and all of the Father.

9. Moreover, He goes on in His own words, and troubles those that understand the matter amiss, in order to recall the erring to a right apprehension of it. After He had said, “The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing;” lest a carnal understanding of the matter should by chance creep in and turn the mind aside, and a man should imagine as it were two mechanics, one a master, the other a learner, attentively observing the master while making, say a chest, so that, as the master made the chest, the learner should make another chest according to the appearance which he looked upon while the master wrought; lest, I say, the carnal mind should frame to itself any such twofold notion in the case of the divine unity, going on, He saith, “For what things soever the Father doeth, these same also the Son doeth in like manner.” It is not, the Father doeth some, the Son others like them, but the same in like manner. For He saith not, What things soever the Father doeth, the Son also doeth others the like; but saith He, “What things soever the Father doeth, these same also the Son doeth in like manner.” What things the Father doeth, these also the Son doeth: the Father made the world, the Son made the world, the Holy Ghost made the world. If three Gods, then three worlds; if one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, then one world was made by the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Ghost. Consequently the Son doeth those things which also the Father doeth, and doeth not in a different manner; He both doeth these, and doeth them in like manner.

10. After He had said, “these doeth,” why did He add, “in like manner doeth”? Lest another distorted understanding or error should spring up in the mind. Thou seest, for instance, a man’s work: in man there is mind and body; the mind rules the body, but there is a great difference between body and mind: the body is visible, the mind is invisible: there is a great difference between the power and virtue of the mind and that of any kind of body whatever, be it even a heavenly body. Still the mind rules its own body, and the body doeth; and what the mind appears to do, this the body doeth also. Thus the body appears to do this same thing that the mind doeth, but not “in like manner.” How doeth this same, but not in like manner? The mind frames a word in itself; it commands the tongue, and the tongue produces the word which the mind framed: the mind made, and the tongue made; the lord of the body made, and the servant made; but that the servant

might make, it received of its lord what to make, and made while the lord commanded. The same thing was made by both, but was it in like manner? How not in like manner? says some one. See, the word that my mind formed, remains in me; that which my tongue made, passed through the smitten air, and is not. When thou hast said a word in thy mind, and uttered it by thy tongue, return to thy mind, and see that the word which thou hast made is there still. Has it remained on thy tongue, just as it has in thy mind? What was uttered by the tongue, the tongue made by sounding, the mind made by thinking; but what the tongue uttered has passed away, what the mind thought remains. Therefore the body made that which the mind made, but not in like manner. For the mind, indeed, made that which the mind may hold, but the tongue made what sounds and strikes the ear through the air. Dost thou chase the syllables, and cause them to remain? Well, not in such manner the Father and the Son; but "these same doeth," and "in like manner doeth." If God made heaven that remains, this heaven that remains the Son made. If God the Father made man that is mortal, the same man that is mortal the Son made. What things soever the Father made that endure, these things that endure made also the Son, because in like manner He made; and what things soever the Father made that are temporal, these same things that are temporal made also the Son, because He made not only the same, but also in like manner made. For the Father made by the Son, since by the Word the Father made all things.

11. Seek in the Father and Son a separation, thou findest none; no, not if thou hast mounted high; no, not even if thou hast reached something above thy mind. For if thou turnest about among the things which thy wandering mind makes for itself, thou talkest with thine own imaginations, not with the Word of God; thine own imaginations deceive thee. Mount also beyond the body, and understand the mind; mount also beyond the mind, and understand God. Thou reachest not unto God, unless thou hast passed beyond the mind; how much less thou reachest unto God, if thou hast tarried in the flesh! They who think of the flesh, how far are they from understanding what God is!—since they would not be there even if they knew the mind. Man recedes far from God when his thoughts are of the flesh; and there is a great difference between flesh and mind, yet a greater between mind and God. If thou art occupied with the mind, thou art in the

midway: if thou directest thy attention beneath, there is the body; if above, there is God. Lift thyself up from the body, pass beyond even thyself. For observe what said the psalm, and thou art admonished how God must be thought of: “My tears,” it saith, “were made to me my bread day and night, when it was said to me daily, Where is thy God?” As the pagans may say, “Behold our gods, where is your God?” They indeed show us what is seen; we worship what is not seen. And to whom can we show? To a man who has not sight with which to see? For anyhow, if they see their gods with their eyes, we too have other eyes with which to see our God: for “blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Therefore, when he had said that he was troubled, when it was daily said to him, “Where is thy God?” “these things I remembered,” saith he, “because it is daily said to me, Where is thy God?” And as if wishing to lay hold of his God, “These things,” saith he, “I remembered, and poured out my soul above me.” Therefore, that I might reach unto my God, of whom it was said to me, “Where is thy God? I poured out my soul,” not over my flesh, but “above me;” I transcended myself, that I might reach unto Him: for He is above me who made me; none reaches to Him but he that passes beyond himself.

12. Consider the body: it is mortal, earthy, weak, corruptible; away with it. Yes, perhaps thou sayest, but the body is temporal. Think then of other bodies, the heavenly; they are greater, better, more magnificent. Look at them, moreover, attentively. They roll from east to west, they stand not; they are seen with the eyes, not only by man, but even by the beast of the field. Pass beyond them too. And how, sayest thou, pass beyond the heavenly bodies, seeing that I walk on the earth? Not in the flesh dost thou pass beyond them, but in the mind. Away with them too: though they shine ever so much, they are bodies; though they glitter from heaven, they are bodies. Come, now that perhaps thou thinkest thou hast not whither to go, after considering all these. And whither am I to go, sayest thou, beyond the heavenly bodies; and what am I to pass beyond with the mind? Hast thou considered all these? I have, sayest thou. By what means hast thou considered them? Let the being that considers appear in person. The being that considers all these, that discriminates, distinguishes, and in a manner weighs them in the balance of wisdom, is really the mind. Doubtless, then, better is the mind with which thou hast contemplated all these things, than

these things which thou hast contemplated. This mind, then, is a spirit, not a body. Pass beyond it too. And that thou mayest see whither thou art to pass beyond, compare that mind itself, in the first place, with the flesh. Heaven forbid that thou shouldest deign so to compare it! Compare it with the brightness of the sun, of the moon, and of the stars; the brightness of the mind is greater. Observe, first, the swiftness of the mind; see whether the scintillation of the thinking mind be not more impetuous than the brilliance of the shining sun. With the mind thou seest the sun rising. How slow is its motion compared with thy mind! What the sun is about to do, thou canst think in a trice. It is about to come from the east to the west; to-morrow rises from another quarter. Where thy thought has done this, the sun still lags behind, and thou hast traversed the whole journey. A great thing, therefore, is the mind. But how do I say is? Pass beyond it also. For the mind, notwithstanding it be better than every kind of body, is itself changeable. Now it knows, now knows not; now forgets, now remembers; now wills, now wills not; now errs, now is right. Pass therefore beyond all changeableness; not only beyond all that is seen, but also beyond all that changes. For thou hast passed beyond the flesh which is seen; beyond heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, which are seen. Pass, too, beyond all that changes. For when thou hadst done with those things that are seen, and hadst come to thy mind, there thou didst find the changeableness of thy mind. Is God at all changeable? Pass then, beyond even thy mind. Pour out thy soul “above thee,” that thou mayest reach unto God, of whom it is said to thee, “Where is thy God?”

13. Do not imagine that thou art to do something beyond a man’s ability. The Evangelist John himself did this. He soared beyond the flesh, beyond the earth which he trod, beyond the seas which he looked upon, beyond the air in which the fowls fly, beyond the sun, the moon, the stars, beyond all the spirits unseen, beyond his own mind, by the very reason of his rational soul. Soaring beyond all these, pouring out his soul above him, whither did he arrive? What did he see? “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.” If, therefore, thou seest no separation in the light, why seekest thou a separation in the work? See God, see His Word inhering to the Word speaking, that the speaker speaks not by syllables, but this his speaking is a shining out in the brightness of wisdom. What is said of the

Wisdom itself? “It is the radiance of eternal light.” Observe the radiance of the sun. The sun is in the heaven, and spreads out its brightness over all lands and over all seas, and it is simply a corporal light.

If, indeed, thou canst separate the brightness from the sun, then separate the Word from the Father. I am speaking of the sun. One small, slender flame of a lamp, which can be extinguished by one breath, spreads its light over all that lies near it: thou seest the light generated by the flame spread out; thou seest its emission, but not a separation. Understand, then, beloved brethren, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are inseparably united in themselves; that this Trinity is one God; that all the works of the one God are the works of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. All the rest which follows, and which refers to the discourse of our Lord Jesus Christ, now that a discourse is due to you to-morrow also, be present that ye may hear.

TRACTATE XXI

CHAPTER V. 20–23

1. Yesterday, so far as the Lord vouchsafed to bestow, we discussed with what ability we could, and discerned according to our capacity, how the works of the Father and of the Son are inseparable; and how the Father doeth not some, the Son others, but that the Father doeth all things through the Son, as through His Word, of which it is written, “All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.” Let us to-day look at the words that follow. And of the same Lord let us pray for mercy, and hope that, if He deem it meet, we may understand what is true; but if we should not be able to do this, that we may not go into what is false. For it is better not to know than to go astray; but to know is better than not to know. Therefore, before all things, we ought to strive to know. Should we be able, to God be thanks; but should we not be able meanwhile to arrive at the truth, let us not go to falsehood. For we are bound to consider well what we are, and what we are treating of. We are men bearing flesh, walking in this life; and though now begotten again of the seed of the Word of God, yet in Christ renewed in such manner that we are not yet wholly rid of Adam. For truly our mortal and corruptible part that weighs down the soul shows itself

to be, and manifestly is, of Adam; but what in us is spiritual, and raises up the soul, is of God's gift and of His mercy, who has sent His only Son to partake our death with us, and to lead us to His own immortality. The Son we have for our Master, that we may not sin; and for our defender, if we have sinned and have confessed, and been converted; an intercessor for us, if we have desired any good of God; and the bestower of it with the Father, because Father and Son is one God. But He was speaking these things as man to men: God concealed, the man manifest, that He might make them gods that are manifest men; and the Son of God made Son of man, that He might make the sons of men sons of God. By what skill of His wisdom He doeth this, we perceive in His own words. For as a little one He speaks to little ones, but Himself little in such wise that He is also great, and we little, but in Him great. He speaks, in deed as one cherishing and nourishing children at the breast that grow by loving.

2. He had said, "The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing." We, however, understood it not that the Father doeth something separately, which when the Son seeth, Himself also doeth something of the same kind, after seeing His Father's work; but when He said, "The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing," we understood it that the Son is wholly of the Father—that His whole substance and His whole power are of the Father that begat Him. But just now, when He had said that He doeth in like manner these things which the Father doeth, that we may not understand it to mean that the Father doeth some, the Son others, but that the Son with like power doeth the very same which the Father doeth, whilst the Father doeth through the Son, He went on, and said what we have heard read to-day: "For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth." Again mortal thought is disturbed. The Father showeth to the Son what things Himself doeth; therefore, saith some one, the Father doeth separately, that the Son may be able to see what He doeth. Again, there occur to human thought, as it were, two artificers—as, for instance, a carpenter teaching his son his own art, and showing him whatever he doeth, that the son also may be able to do it. "Showeth Him," saith He, "all things that Himself doeth." Is it therefore so, that whilst He doeth, the Son doeth not, that He may be able to see the Father do? Yet, certainly, "all things were made by Him, and

without Him was nothing made.” Hence we see how the Father showeth the Son what He doeth, since the Father doeth nothing but what He doeth through the Son. What hath the Father made? He made the world. Hath He shown the world, when made, to the Son in such wise, that the Son also should make something like it? Then let us see the world which the Son made. Nevertheless, both “all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made,” and also “the world was made by Him.” If the world was made by Him, and all things were made by Him, and the Father doeth nothing save by the Son, where doth the Father show to the Son what He doeth, if it be not in the Son Himself, through whom He doeth? In what place can the work of the Father be shown to the Son, as though He were doing and sitting outside, and the Son attentively watching the Father’s hand how it maketh? Where is that inseparable Trinity? Where the Word, of which it is said that the same is “the power and the wisdom of God”? Where that which the Scripture saith of the same wisdom: “For it is the brightness of the eternal light?” Where what was said of it again: “It powerfully reaches from the end even to the end, and ordereth all things sweetly”? Whatever the Father doeth, He doeth through the Son: through His wisdom and his power He doeth; not from without doth He show to the Son what He may see, but in the Son Himself He showeth Him what He doeth.

3. What seeth the Father, or rather, what doth the Son see in the Father, that Himself also may do? Perhaps I may be able to speak it, but show me the man who can comprehend it; or perhaps I may be able to think and not speak it; or perhaps I may not be able even to think it. For that divinity excels us, as God excels men, as the immortal excels a mortal, as the eternal excels the temporal. May He inspire and endow us, and out of that fountain of life deign to bedew and to drop somewhat on our thirst, that we may not be parched in this wilderness! Let us say to Him, Lord, to whom we have learnt to say Father. We make bold to say this, because Himself willed it; if only we so live that He may not say to us, “If I am a Father, where is mine honor? if I am Lord, where is my fear?” Let us then say to Him, “Our Father.” To whom do we say, “Our Father”? To the Father of Christ. He, then, who says “Our Father” to the Father of Christ, says to Christ, what else but “Our Brother”? Not, however, as He is the Father of Christ is He in

like manner our Father; for Christ never so conjoined us as to make no distinction between Him and us. For He is the Son equal to the Father, the eternal Son with the Father, and co-eternal with the Father; but we became sons through the Son, adopted through the Only-begotten. Hence was it never heard from the mouth of our Lord Jesus Christ, when speaking to His disciples, that He said of the supreme God His Father, “Our Father;” but He said either “My Father” or “Your Father.” But He said not “Our Father;” so much so, that in a certain place He used these two expressions: “I go to my God,” saith He, “and to your God.” Why did He not say, “Our God”? Further, He said, “My Father, and your Father;” He said not, “Our Father.” He so joins as to distinguish, distinguishes so as not to disjoin. He wills us to be one in Him, but the Father and Himself one.

4. How much soever then we may understand, and how much soever we may see, we shall not see as the Son seeth, even when we shall be made equal with the angels. For we are something even when we do not see; but what are we when we do not see, other than persons not seeing? And that we may see, we turn to Him whom we may see, and there is formed in us a seeing which was not before, although we were in being. For a man is when not seeing; and the same, when he doth see, is called a man seeing. For him, then, to see is not the same thing as to be a man; for if it were, he would not be man when not seeing. But since he is man when not seeing, and seeks to see what he sees not, he is one who seeks, and who turns to see; and when he has well turned and has seen, he becomes a man seeing, who was before a man not seeing. Consequently, to see is to him a thing that comes and goes; it comes to him when he turns to, and leaves him when he turns away. Is it thus with the Son? Far be it from us to think so. It was never so that He was Son, not seeing, and afterwards was made to see; but to see the Father is to Him the same thing as to be Son. For we, by turning away to sin, lose enlightenment; and by turning to God we receive enlightenment. For the light by which we are enlightened is one thing; we who are enlightened, another thing. But the light itself, by which we are enlightened, neither turns away from itself, nor loses its lucidity, because as light it exists. The Father, then, showeth a thing which He doeth to the Son, in such wise that the Son seeth all things in the Father, and is all things in the Father. For by seeing He was begotten; and by being begotten He seeth. Not, however, that

at any time He was not begotten, and afterwards was begotten; nor that at any time He saw not, and afterwards saw. But in what consists His seeing, in the same consists His being, in the same His being begotten, in the same His continuing, in the same His unchanging, in the same His abiding without beginning and without end. Let us not therefore take it in a carnal sense that the Father sitteth and doeth a work, and showeth it to the Son; and the Son seeth the work that the Father doeth, and doeth another work in another place, or out of other materials. For "all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made." The Son is the Word of the Father. The Father said nothing which He did not say in the Son. For by speaking in the Son what He was about to do through the Son, He begat the Son through whom He made all things.

5. "And greater works than these will He show Him, that ye may marvel." Here again we are embarrassed. And who is there that may worthily investigate this so great a secret? But now, in that He has deigned to speak to us, Himself opens it. For He would not speak what He would not have us understand; and as He has deigned to speak, without doubt He has excited attention: for does He forsake any whom He has roused to give attentive hearing? We have said that it is not in a temporal sense that the Son knoweth,—that the knowledge of the Son is not one thing, and the Son Himself another; nor one thing His seeing, Himself another; but that the seeing itself is the Son, and the knowledge as well as the wisdom of the Father is the Son; and that that wisdom and seeing is eternal and co-eternal with Him from whom it is; that it is not something that varies by time, nor something produced that was not in being, nor something that vanishes away which did exist. What is it, then, that time does in this case, that He should say, "Greater works than these He will show Him"? "He will show," that is, "He is about to show." Hath shown is a different thing from will show: hath shown, we say of an act past; will show, of an act future. What shall we do here, then, brethren? Behold, He whom we had declared to be co-eternal with the Father, in whom nothing is varied by time, in whom is no moving through spaces either of moments or of places, of whom we had declared that He abides ever with the Father seeing, seeing the Father, and by seeing existing; He, I say, here again mentioning times to us, saith, "He will show Him greater works than these." Is He then about to show

something to the Son, which the Son doth not as yet know? What, then, do we make of it? How do we understand this? Behold, our Lord Jesus Christ was above, is beneath. When was He above? When He said, “What things soever the Father doeth, these same also the Son doeth in like manner.” Whence know we that He is now beneath? Hence: “Greater works than these He will show Him.” O Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, Word of God, by which all things were made, what is the Father about to show Thee, that as yet Thou knowest not? What of the Father is hid from Thee? What in the Father is hid from Thee, from whom the Father is not hid? What greater works is He about to show Thee? Or greater than what works are they which He is to show Thee? For when He said, “Greater than these,” we ought first to understand the works than which are they greater.

6. Let us again call to mind whence this discourse started. It was when that man who was thirty-eight years in infirmity was healed, and Jesus commanded him, now made whole, to take up his bed and to go to his house. For this cause, indeed, the Jews with whom He was speaking were enraged. He spoke in words, as to the meaning He was silent; hinted in some measure at the meaning to those who understood, and hid the matter from them that were wroth. For this cause, I say, the Jews, being enraged because the Lord did this on the Sabbath, gave occasion to this discourse. Therefore let us not hear these things in such wise as if we had forgotten what was said above, but let us look back to that impotent man languishing for thirty-eight years suddenly made whole, while the Jews marvelled and were wroth. They sought darkness from the Sabbath more than light from the miracle. Speaking then to these, while they are indignant, He saith, “Greater works than these will He show Him.” “Greater than these:” than which? What ye have seen, that a man, whose infirmity had lasted thirty-eight years, was made whole; greater than these the Father is about to show to the Son. What are greater works? He goes on, saying, “For as the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom He will.” Clearly these are greater. Very much greater is it that a dead man should rise, than that a sick man should recover: these are greater. But when is the Father about to show these to the Son? Does the Son not know them? And He who was speaking, did He not know how to raise the dead? Had He yet to learn how to raise the dead to life—He, I say, by whom all things

were made? He who caused that we should live, when we were not in being, had He yet to learn how we might be raised to life again? What, then, do His words mean?

7. But now He condescends to us, and He who a little before was speaking as God, now begins to speak as man. Notwithstanding, the same is man who is God, for God was made man; but was made what He was not, without losing what He was. The man therefore was added to the God, that He might be man who was God, but not that He should now henceforth be man and not be God. Let us then hear Him also as our brother whom we did hear as our Maker. Our Maker, because the Word in the beginning; our Brother, because born of the Virgin Mary: Maker, before Abraham, before Adam, before earth, before heaven, before all things corporeal and spiritual; but Brother, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the Israelitish virgin. If therefore we know Him who speaks to us as both God and man, let us understand the words of God and of man; for sometimes He speaks to us such things as are applicable to the majesty, sometimes such as are applicable to the humility. For the selfsame is high who was made low, that He might make us high who are low. What, then, saith He? “The Father will show” to me “greater than these, that ye may marvel.” To us, therefore, He is about to show, not to Him. And since it is to us that the Father is to show, for that reason He said, “that ye may marvel.” He has, in fact, explained what He meant in saying, “The Father will show” to me. Why did He not say, The Father will show to you; but, He will show to the Son? Because also we are members of the Son; and like as what we the members learn, He Himself in a manner learns in His members. How doth He learn in us? As He suffers in us. Whence may we prove that He suffers in us? From that voice out of heaven, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” Is it not Himself that will sit as Judge in the end of the world, and, setting the just on the right, and the wicked on the left, will say, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom; for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat”? And when they shall answer, “Lord, when saw we Thee hungry?” He will say to them, “Since ye gave to one of the least of mine, ye gave to me.” Let us at this time question Him, and let us say to Him, Lord, when wilt Thou be a learner, seeing Thou teachest all things? Immediately, indeed, He makes answer to us in our faith, When one of the least of mine doth learn, I learn.

8. Let us rejoice, then, and give thanks that we are made not only Christians, but Christ. Do ye understand, brethren, and apprehend the grace of God upon us? Marvel, be glad, we are made Christ. For if He is the head, we are the members: the whole man is He and we. This is what the Apostle Paul saith: “That we be no longer babes, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.” But above he had said, “Until we all come together into the unity of faith, and to the knowledge of the Son of God, to the perfect man, to the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ.” The fullness of Christ, then, is head and members. Head and members, what is that? Christ and the Church. We should indeed be arrogating this to ourselves proudly, if He did not Himself deign to promise it, who saith by the same apostle, “But ye are the body of Christ, and members.”

9. Whenever, then, the Father showeth to Christ’s members, He showeth to Christ. A certain great but yet real miracle happens. There is a showing to Christ of what Christ knew, and it is shown to Christ through Christ. A marvelous and great thing it is, but the Scripture so saith. Shall we contradict the divine declarations? Shall we not rather understand them, and of His own gift render thanks to Him who freely bestowed it on us? What is this that I said, “is shown to Christ through Christ”? Is shown to the members through the head. Lo, look at this in thyself. Suppose that with thine eyes shut thou wouldest take up something, thy hand knows not whither to go; and yet thy hand is at any rate thy member, for it is not separated from thy body. Open thine eyes, now the hand sees whither it may go; while the head showed, the member followed. If, then, there could be found in thyself something such, that thy body showed to thy body, and that through thy body something was shown to thy body, then do not marvel that it is said there is shown to Christ through Christ. For the head shows that the members may see, and the head teaches that the members may learn; nevertheless one man, head and members. He willed not to separate Himself, but deigned to attach Himself to us. Far was He from us, yea, very far. What so far apart as the creature and the Creator? What so far apart as God and man? What so far as justice and iniquity? What so far as eternity and mortality? Behold, so far from us was the Word in the beginning, God with God, by whom all things were made. How, then, was He made near,

that He might be what we are, and we in Him? “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt in (among) us.”

10. This, then, He is about to show us; this He showed to His disciples, who saw Him in the flesh. What is this? “As the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom He will.” Is it that the Father some, the Son others? Surely all things were made by Him. What do we say, my brethren? Christ raised Lazarus; what dead man did the Father raise, that Christ might see how to raise Lazarus? When Christ raised Lazarus, did not the Father raise him? or was it the doing of the Son alone, without the Father? Read ye the passage itself, and see that He invokes the Father that Lazarus may rise again. As a man, He calls on the Father; as God, He doeth with the Father. Therefore also Lazarus, who rose again, was raised both by the Father and by the Son, in the gift and grace of the Holy Spirit; and that wonderful work the Trinity performed. Let us not, therefore, understand this, “As the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom He will,” in such wise as to suppose that some are raised and quickened by the Father, others by the Son; but that the Son raiseth and quickeneth the very same whom the Father raiseth and quickeneth; because “all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.” And to show that He has, though given by the Father, equal power, therefore He saith, “So also the Son quickeneth whom He will,” that He might therein show His will; and lest any should say, “The Father raiseth the dead by the Son, but the Father as being powerful, and as having power, the Son as by another’s power, as a servant does something, as an angel,” He indicated His power when He saith, “So also the Son quickeneth whom He will.” It is not so that the Father willeth other than the Son; but as the Father and the Son have one substance, so also one will.

11. And who are these dead whom the Father and the Son quicken? Are they the same of whom we have spoken—Lazarus, or that widow’s son, or the ruler of the synagogue’s daughter? For we know that these were raised by Christ the Lord. It is some other thing that He means to signify to us,—namely, the resurrection of the dead, which we all look for; not that resurrection which certain have had, that the rest might believe. For Lazarus rose to die again; we shall rise again to live for ever. Is it the Father that

effects such a resurrection, or the Son? Nay verily, the Father in the Son. Consequently the Son, and the Father in the Son. Whence do we prove that He speaks of this resurrection? When He had said, “As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom He will.” Lest we should understand here that resurrection which He performs for a miracle, not for eternal life, He proceeded, saying, “For the Father judgeth not any man, but all judgment hath He given to the Son.” What is this? He was speaking of the resurrection of the dead, that “as the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom He will;” and immediately thereupon added as a reason, concerning the judgment, saying, “for the Father judgeth not any man, but all judgment hath He given to the Son.” Why said He this, but to indicate that He had spoken of that resurrection of the dead which will take place in the judgment?

12. “For,” saith He, “the Father judgeth no man, but all judgment hath He given to the Son.” A little before we were thinking that the Father doeth something which the Son doeth not, when He said, “The Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth;” as though the Father were doing, and the Son were seeing. In this way there was creeping in upon our mind a carnal conception, as if the Father did what the Son did not; but that the Son was looking on while the Father showed what He was doing. Then, as the Father was doing what the Son did not, just now we see the Son doing what the Father doeth not. How He turns us about, and keeps our mind busy! He leads us hither and thither, will not allow us to remain in one place of the flesh, that by changing He may exercise us, by exercising He may cleanse us, by cleansing He may render us capable of receiving, and may fill us when made capable. What have these words to do with us? What was He speaking? What is He speaking? A little before, He said that the Father showeth to the Son whatever He doeth. I did see, as it were, the Father doing, the Son waiting to see; presently again, I see the Son doing, the Father idle: “For the Father judgeth not any man, but all judgment hath He given to the Son.” When, therefore, the Son is about to judge, will the Father be idle, and not judge? What is this? What am I to understand? What dost Thou say, O Lord? Thou art God the Word, I am a man. Dost Thou say that “the Father judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son”? I read in another place that Thou sayest, “I judge not any man; there

is one who seeketh and judgeth." Of whom sayest Thou, "There is one who seeketh and judgeth," unless it be of the Father? He maketh inquisition for thy wrongs, and judgeth for them. How is it to be understood here that "the Father judgeth not any man, but all judgment hath He given to the Son"? Let us ask Peter; let us hear him speaking in his epistle: "Christ suffered for us," saith he, "leaving us an example that we should follow His steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered wrong, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." How is it true that "the Father judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son"? We are here in perplexity, and being perplexed let us exert ourselves, that by exertion we may be purified. Let us endeavor as best we may, by His own gift, to penetrate the deep secrets of these words. It may be that we are acting rashly, in that we wish to discuss and to scrutinize the words of God. Yet why were they spoken, but to be known? Why did they sound forth, but to be heard? Why were they heard, but to be understood? Let Him greatly strengthen us, then, and bestow somewhat on us so far as He may deem worthy; and if we do not yet penetrate to the fountain, let us drink of the brook. Behold, John himself has flowed forth to us like a brook, conveyed to us the word from on high. He brought it low, and in a manner levelled it, that we may not dread the lofty One, but may draw nigh to Him that is low.

13. By all means there is a sense, a true and strong sense, if somehow we can grasp it, in which "the Father judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son." For this is said because none will appear to men in the judgment but the Son. The Father will be hidden, the Son will be manifest. In what will the Son be manifest? In the form in which He ascended. For in the form of God He was hidden with the Father; in the form of a servant, manifest to men. Not therefore "the Father judgeth any man, but all judgment hath He given to the Son:" only the manifest judgment, in which manifest judgment the Son will judge, since the same will appear to them that are to be judged. The Scripture shows us more clearly that it is the Son that will appear. On the fortieth day after His resurrection He ascended into heaven, while His disciples were looking on; and they hear the angelic voice: "Men of Galilee," saith it, "why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same that is taken up from you into heaven,

shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him going into heaven.” In what manner did they see Him go? In the flesh, which they touched, which they handled, the wounds even of which they proved by touching; in that body in which He went in and out with them for forty days, manifesting Himself to them in truth, not in falsity; not a phantom, or shadow, or ghost, but, as Himself said, not deceiving them, “Handle and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” That body is now indeed worthy of a heavenly habitation, not being subject to death, nor mutable by the lapse of ages. It is not as it had grown to that age from infancy, so from the age of manhood declines to old age: He remains as He ascended, to come to those to whom He willed His word to be preached before He comes. Thus will He come in human form, and this form the wicked will see; both they on the right shall see it, and they that are separated to the left shall see it: as it is written, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced.” If they shall look on Him whom they pierced, they shall look on that same body which they struck through with the spear; for a spear does not pierce the Word. This body, therefore, will the wicked be able to look on which they were able to wound. God hidden in the body they will not see: after the judgment He will be seen by those who will be on the right hand. This, then, is what He means when He saith, “The Father judgeth not any man, but all judgment hath He given to the Son,”—that the Son will come to judgment manifest, apparent to men in human body; saying to those on the right, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom;” and to those on the left, “Go into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels.”

14. Behold, that form of man will be seen by the godly and by the wicked, by the just and the unjust, by the believers and unbelievers, by those that rejoice and by those that mourn, by them that trusted and by them that are confounded: lo, seen it will be. When that form shall have appeared in the judgment, and the judgment shall have been finished, where it is said that the Father judgeth not any, but hath given all judgment to the Son, for this reason, that the Son will appear in the judgment in that form which He took from us. What shall be after this? When shall be seen the form of God, which all the faithful are thirsting to see? When shall be seen that Word which was in the beginning, God with God, by which all things were made? When shall be seen that form of God, of which the apostle saith, “Being in

the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God"? For great is that form, in which, moreover, the quality of the Father and Son is recognized; ineffable, incomprehensible, most of all to little ones. When shall this form be seen? Behold, on the right are the just, on the left are the unjust; all alike see the man, they see the Son of man, they see Him who was pierced, Him who was crucified they see: they see Him that was made low, Him who was born of the Virgin, the Lamb of the tribe of Judah they see. But when will they see the Word, God with God? He will be the very same even then, but the form of a servant will appear. The form of a servant will be shown to servants: the form of God will be reserved for sons. Wherefore let the servants be made sons: let them who are on the right hand go into the eternal inheritance promised of old, which the martyrs, though not seeing, believed, for the promise of which they poured out their blood without hesitation; let them go thither and see there. When shall they go thither? Let the Lord Himself say: "So those shall go into everlasting burning, but the righteous into life eternal."

15. Behold, He has named eternal life. Has He told us that we shall there see and know the Father and Son? What if we shall live for ever, yet not see that Father and Son? Hear, in another place, where He has named eternal life, and expressed what eternal life is: "Be not afraid; I do not deceive thee; not without cause have I promised to them that love me, saying, He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will show myself to him.'" Let us answer the Lord, and say, What great thing is this, O Lord our God? What great thing is it? Wilt Thou show Thyself to us? What, then, didst Thou not show Thyself to the Jews also? Did not they see Thee who crucified Thee? But Thou wilt show Thyself in the judgment, when we shall stand at Thy right hand; will not also they who will stand on Thy left see Thee? What is it that Thou wilt show Thyself to us? Do we, indeed, not see Thee now when Thou art speaking? He makes answer: I will show myself in the form of God; just now you see the form of a servant. I will not deceive thee, O faithful man; believe that thou shall see. Thou lovest, and yet thou dost not see: shall not love itself lead thee to see? Love, persevere in loving; I will not disappoint thy love, saith He, I who have purified thy heart. For why have I purified thy heart, but to the end that God

may be seen by thee? For “blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” “But this,” saith the servant, as if disputing with the Lord, “Thou didst not express, when Thou didst say, The righteous shall go into life eternal;’ Thou didst not say, They shall go to see me in the form of God, and to see the Father, with whom I am equal.” Observe what He said elsewhere: “This is life eternal, that they may know Thee the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”

16. And immediately, then, after the judgment mentioned, all which the Father, not judging any man, hath given to the Son, what shall be? What follows? “That all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.” The Jews honor the Father, despise the Son. For the Son was seen as a servant, the Father was honored as God. But the Son will appear equal with the Father, that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. This we have, therefore, now in faith. Let not the Jew say, “I honor the Father; what have I to do with the Son?” Let him be answered, “He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father. Thou liest every way; thou blasphemest the Son, and dost wrong to the Father. For the Father sent the Son, and thou despisest Him whom the Father sent. How canst thou honor the sender, who blasphemest the sent?”

17. Behold, says some one, the Son has been sent; and the Father is greater, because He sent. Withdraw from the flesh; the old man suggests oldness in time. Let the ancient, the perpetual, the eternal, to thee the new, call off thy understanding from time to this. Is the Son less because He is said to have been sent? I hear of a sending, not a separation. But yet, saith he, among men we see that he who sends is greater than he who is sent. Be it so; but human affairs deceive a man; divine things purge him. Do not regard things human, in which the sender appears greater, the sent less; notwithstanding, things human themselves bear testimony against thee. Just as, for example, if a man wishes to ask a woman to wife, and, not being able to do this in person, sends a friend to ask for him. And there are many cases in which the greater is chosen to be sent by the less. Why, then, wouldst thou now raise a captious objection, because the one has sent, the other is sent? The sun sends out a ray, but does not separate it; the moon sends out her sheen, but does not separate it; a lamp sheds light, but does not separate it: I see there a

sending forth, not a separation. For if thou seekest examples from human things, O heretical vanity, although, as I have said, even human things in some instances refute thee, and convict of error; yet consider how different it is in the case of things human, from which you wish to deduce examples for things divine. A man that sends remains himself behind, while only the man that is sent goes forward. Does the man who sends go with him whom he sends? Yet the Father, who sent the Son, has not departed from the Son. Hear the Lord Himself saying, “Behold, the hour is coming, when every one shall depart to his own, and ye will leave me alone; but I am not alone, because the Father is with me.” How has He, with whom He came, sent Him? How has He, from whom He has not departed, sent Him? In another place He said, “The Father abiding in me doeth the works.” Behold, the Father is in Him, works in Him. The Father sending has not departed from the Son sent, because the sent and the sender are one.

TRACTATE XXII

CHAPTER V. 24–30

Upon the discourses delivered yesterday and the day before, follows the Gospel lesson of to-day, which we must endeavor to expound in due course, not indeed proportionably to its importance, but according to our ability: both because you take in, not according to the bountifulness of the gushing fountain, but according to your moderate capacity; and we too speak into your ears, not so much as the fountain gives forth, but so much as we are able to take in we convey into your minds,—the matter itself working more fruitfully in your hearts than we in your ears. For a great matter is treated of, not by great masters, nay, rather by very small; but He who, being great, for our sakes became small, gives us hope and confidence. For if we were not encouraged by Him, and invited to understand Him; if He abandoned us as contemptible, since we were not able to partake His divinity if He did not partake our mortality and come to us to speak His gospel to us; if He had not willed to partake with us what in us is abject and most small,—then we might think that He who took on Himself our smallness, had not been willing to bestow on us His own greatness. This I have said lest any should blame us as over-bold in handling these matters, or despair of himself that he should be able to understand, by God’s gift, what the Son of God has deigned to speak to him. Therefore what He has deigned to speak to us, we ought to believe that He meant us to understand. But if we do not understand, He, being asked, gives understanding, who gave His Word unasked.

2. Lo, what these secrets of His words are, consider well. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whoso heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath eternal life.” Surely we are all striving after eternal life: and He saith, “Whoso heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life.” Then, would He have us hear His word, and yet would He not have us understand it? Since, if in hearing and believing is eternal life, much more in understanding. But the action of piety is faith, the fruit of faith understanding, that we may come to eternal life, when there will be no reading of Gospel to us; but after all pages of reading and the voice of reader and preacher have been removed out of the way, He, who has at this time dispensed to us the gospel, will Himself appear to all that are His, now present with Him with purged heart and in an immortal body never more to die, cleansing and enlightening them, now living and seeing how that “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.” Therefore let us consider at this time who we are, and ponder whom we hear. Christ is God, and He is speaking with men. He would have them to apprehend Him, let Him make them capable; He would have them see Him, let Him open their eyes. It is not, however, without cause that He speaks to us, but because that is true which He promises to us.

3. “Whoso heareth my words,” saith He, “and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life.” Where, when do we come from death to life, that we come not into judgment? In this life there is a passing from death to life; in this life, which is not yet life, there is a passing hence from death unto life. What is that passing? “Whoso heareth my words,” He said, “and believeth Him that sent me.” Observing these, thou believest and passest. And does a man pass while standing? Evidently; for in body he stands, in mind he passes. Where was he, whence he should pass, and whither does he pass? He passes from death to life. Look at a man standing, in whom all that is here said may happen. He stands, he hears, perhaps he did not believe, by hearing he

believes: a little before he did not believe, just now he believes; he has made a passage, as it were, from the region of unbelief to the region of faith, by motion of the heart, not of the body, by a motion into the better; because they who again abandon faith move into the worse. Behold, in this life, which, just as I have said, is not yet life, there is a passing from death to life, so that there may not be a coming into judgment. But why did I say that it is not yet life? If this were life, the Lord would not have said to a certain man, "If thou wilt come into life, keep the commandments." For He saith not to him, If thou wilt come into eternal life; He did not add eternal, but said only life. Therefore this life is not to be named life, because it is not a true life. What is true life, but that which is eternal life? Hear the apostle speaking to Timothy, when he says, "Charge them that are rich in this world, not to be high-minded, nor to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy; let them do good, be rich in good works, ready to distribute, to communicate." Why does he say this? Hear what follows: "Let them lay up in store for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold of the true life." If they ought to lay up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, in order to lay hold of the true life, surely this in which they were is a false life. For why shouldest thou desire to lay hold of the true, if thou hast the true already? Is the true to be laid hold of? There must then be a departing from the false. And by what way must be the departing? Whither? Hear, believe; and thou makest the passage from death into life, and comest not into judgment.

4. What is this, "and thou comest not into judgment"? And who will be better than the Apostle Paul, who saith, "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may there receive what he has done in the body, whether it be good or evil"? Paul saith, "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ;" and darest thou promise to thyself that thou shalt not come into judgment? Be it far from me, sayest thou, that I should dare promise this to myself. But I believe Him that doth promise. The Saviour speaks, the Truth promises, Himself said to me, "Whoso heareth my words, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and makes a passage from death unto life, and shall not come into judgment." I then have heard the words of my Lord, and I have believed; so now, when I

was an unbeliever, I became a believer; even as He warned me, I passed from death to life, I come not into judgment; not by my presumption, but by His promise. Does Paul, however, speak contrary to Christ, the servant against his Lord, the disciple against his Master, the man against God; so that, when the Lord saith, “Whoso heareth and believeth, passeth from death to life,” the apostle should say, “We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ”? Otherwise, if he comes not into judgment who appears before the judgment-seat, I know not how to understand it.

5. The Lord our God then reveals it, and by His Scriptures puts us in mind how it may be understood when judgment is spoken of. I exhort you, therefore, to give attention. Sometimes judgment means punishment, sometimes it means discrimination. According to that mode of speech in which judgment means discrimination, “we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ that” a man “may there receive what things he has done in the body, whether it be good or ill.” For this same is a discrimination, to distribute good things to the good, evil things to the evil. For if judgment were always to be taken in a bad sense, the psalm would not say, “Judge me, O God.” Perhaps some one is surprised when he hears one say, “Judge me, O God.” For man is wont to say, “Forgive me, O God;” “Spare me, O God.” Who is it that says, “Judge me, O God”? Sometimes in the psalm this very verse even is placed in the pause, to be given out by the reader and responded by the people. Does it not perhaps strike some man’s heart so much that he is afraid to sing and to say to God, “Judge me, O God”? And yet the people sing it with confidence, and do not imagine that they wish an evil thing in that which they have learned from the divine word; even if they do not well understand it, they believe that what they sing is something good. And yet even the psalm itself has not left a man without an insight into the meaning of it. For, going on, it shows in the words that follow what kind of judgment it spoke of; that it is not one of condemnation, but of discrimination. For saith it, “Judge me, O God.” What means “Judge me, O God, and discern my cause from an unholy nation”? According to this judgment of discerning, then, “we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.” But again, according to the judgment of condemnation, “Whoso heareth my words,” saith He, “and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and shall not come into judgment, but makes

a passage from death to life.” What is “shall not come into judgment?” Shall not come into condemnation. Let us prove from the Scriptures that judgment is put where punishment is understood; although also in this very passage, a little further on, you will hear the same term judgment put for nothing else than for condemnation and punishment. Yet the apostle says in a certain place, writing to those who abused the body, what the faithful among you know; and because they abused it, they were chastised by the scourge of the Lord. For he says to them, “Many among you are weak and sickly, and deeply sleep.” For many therefore even died. And he went on: “For if we judged ourselves, we should not be judged by the Lord;” that is, if we reproved ourselves, we should not be reproved by the Lord. “But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.” There are therefore those who are judged here according to punishment, that they may be spared there; there are those who are spared here, that they may be the more abundantly tormented there; and there are those to whom the very punishments are meted out without the scourge of punishment, if they be not corrected by the scourge of God; that, since here they have despised the Father that scourgeth, they may there feel the Judge that punisheth. Therefore there is a judgment into which God, that is, the Son of God, will in the end send the devil and his angels, and all the unbelieving and ungodly with him. To this judgment, he who, now believing, passes from death unto life, shall not come.

6. For, lest thou shouldest think that by believing thou art not to die according to the flesh, or lest, understanding it carnally, thou shouldest say to thyself, “My Lord has said to me, Whoso heareth my words, and believeth Him that sent me, is passed from death to life: I then have believed, I am not to die;” be assured that thou shalt pay that penalty, death, which thou owest by the punishment of Adam. For he, in whom we all then were, received this sentence, “Thou shalt surely die;” nor can the divine sentence be made void. But after thou hast paid the death of the old man, thou shalt be received into the eternal life of the new man, and shalt pass from death to life. Mean while, make the transition of life now. What is thy life? Faith: “The just doth live by faith.” The unbelievers, what of them? They are dead. Among such dead was he, in the body, of whom the Lord says, “Let the dead bury their dead.” So, then, even in this life there are

dead, and there are living; all live in a sense. Who are dead? They who have not believed. Who are living? They who have believed. What is said to the dead by the apostle? “Arise, thou that sleepest.” But, quoth an objector, he said sleep, not death. Hear what follows: “Arise, thou that sleepest, and come forth from the dead.” And as if the sleeper said, Whither shall I go? “And Christ shall give thee light.” Christ having enlightened thee, now believing, immediately thou makest a passage from death to life: abide in that to which thou hast passed, and thou shalt not come into judgment.

7. Himself explains that already, and goes on, “Verily, verily, I say unto you.” In case, because He said “is passed from death to life,” we should understand this of the future resurrection, and willing to show that he who believes is passed, and that to pass from death to life is to pass from unbelief to faith, from injustice to justice, from pride to humility, from hatred to charity, He saith now, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh, and now is.” What more evident? “And now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” We have already spoken of these dead. What think we, my brethren? Are there no dead in this crowd that hear me? They who believe and act according to the true faith do live, and are not dead. But they who either do not believe, or believe as the devils believe, trembling, and living wickedly, confessing the Son of God, and without charity, must rather be esteemed dead. This hour, however, is still passing. For the hour of which the Lord spoke will not be an hour of the twelve hours of a day. From the time when He spoke even to the present, and even to the end of the world, the same one hour is passing; of which hour John saith in his epistle, “Little children, it is the last hour.” Therefore, is now. Whoso is alive, let him live; whoso was dead, let him live; let him hear the voice of the Son of God, who lay dead; let him arise and live. The Lord cried out at the sepulchre of Lazarus, and he that was four days dead arose. He who stank in the grave came forth into the air. He was buried, a stone was laid over him: the voice of the Saviour burst asunder the hardness of the stone; and thy heart is so hard, that Divine Voice does not yet break it! Rise in thy heart; go forth from thy tomb. For thou wast lying dead in thy heart as in a tomb, and pressed down by the weight of evil habit as by a stone. Rise, and go forth. What is Rise, and go forth? Believe and confess. For he that has believed has risen; he that

confesses is gone forth. Why said we that he who confesses is gone forth? Because he was hid before confessing; but when he does confess, he goes forth from darkness to light. And after he has confessed, what is said to the servants? What was said beside the corpse of Lazarus? “Loose him, and let him go.” How? As it was said to His servants the apostles, “What things ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.”

8. “The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.” From what source shall they live? From life. From what life? From Christ. How do we prove that the source is Christ the life? “I am,” saith He, “the way, the truth, and the life.” Dost thou wish to walk? “I am the way.” Dost thou wish not to be deceived? “I am the truth.” Wouldest thou not die? “I am the life.” This saith thy Saviour to thee: There is not whither thou mayest go but to me; there is not whereby thou mayest go but by me. Therefore this hour is going on now, this act is clearly taking place, and does not at all cease. Men who were dead, rise; they pass over to life; at the voice of the Son of God they live; from Him they live, while persevering in the faith of Him. For the Son hath life, whence He has it that they that believe shall live.

9. And how hath He? Even as the Father hath. Hear Himself saying, “For as the Father hath life in Himself, so also hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” Brethren, I shall speak as I shall be able. For these are those words that perplex the puny understanding. Why has He added, “in Himself”? It would suffice to say, “For as the Father hath life, so also hath He given to the Son to have life.” He added, “in Himself:” for the Father “hath life in Himself,” and the Son hath life in Himself. He meant us to understand something in that which He saith, “in Himself.” And here a secret matter is shut up in this word; let there be knocking, that there may be an opening. O Lord, what is this that Thou hast said? Wherefore hast Thou added, “in Himself”? For did not Paul the apostle, whom Thou madest to live, have life? He had, said He. As for men that were dead to be made alive, and at Thy word to pass unto life by believing; when they shall have passed, will they not have life in Thee? They shall have life; for I said also a little before, “Whoso heareth my words, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life.” Therefore those that believe in Thee have life; and

Thou hast not said, “in themselves.” But when Thou speakest of the Father, “even as the Father hath life in Himself;” again, when Thou speakest of Thyself, Thou saidst, “So also hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” Even as He hath, so gave He to have. Where hath He? “In Himself.” Where gave He to have? “In Himself.” Where hath Paul life? Not in himself, but in Christ. Where hast thou, believer? Not in thyself, but in Christ. Let us see whether the apostle says this: “Now I live; but not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Our life, as ours, that is, of our own personal will, will be only evil, sinful, unrighteous; but the life in us that is good is from God, not from ourselves; it is given to us by God, not by ourselves. But Christ hath life in Himself, as the Father hath, because He is the Word of God. With Him, it is not the case that He liveth now ill, now well; but as for man, he liveth now ill, now well. He who was living ill, was in his own life; he who is living well, is passed to the life of Christ. Thou art made a partaker of life; thou wast not that which thou hast received, but wast one who received: but it is not so with the Son of God as if at first He was without life, and then received life. For if thus He received life, He would not have it in Himself. For, indeed, what is in Himself? That He should Himself be the very life.

10. I may perhaps declare that matter more plainly still. One lights a candle: that candle, for example, so far as regards the little flame which shines there—that fire has light in itself; but thine eyes, which lay idle and saw nothing, in the absence of the candle, now have light also, but not in themselves. Further, if they turn away from the candle, they are made dark; if they turn to it, they are illumined. But certainly that fire shines so long as it exists: if thou wouldst take the light from it, thou dost also at the same time extinguish it; for without the light it cannot remain. But Christ is light inextinguishable and co-eternal with the Father, always bright, always shining, always burning: for if He were not burning, would it be said in the psalm, “Nor is there any that can hide himself from his heat?” But thou wast cold in thy sin; thou turnest that thou mayest become warm; if thou wilt turn away, thou wilt become cold. In thy sin thou wast dark; thou turnest in order to be enlightened; if thou turnest away, thou wilt become dark. Therefore, because in thyself thou wast darkness, when thou shalt be enlightened, thou wilt be light, though in the light. For saith the apostle, “Ye

were once darkness, but now light in the Lord.” When he had said, “but now light,” he added, “in the Lord.” Therefore in thyself darkness, “light in the Lord.” In what way “light”? Because by participation of that light thou art light. But if thou wilt depart from the light by which thou art enlightened, thou returnest to thy darkness. Not so Christ, not so the Word of God. But how not? “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given also to the Son to have life in Himself;” so that He lives, not by participation, but unchangeably, and is altogether Himself life. “So hath He given also to the Son to have life.” Even as He hath, so has He given. What is the difference? For the one gave, the other received. Was He already in being when He received? Are we to understand that Christ was at any time in being without light, when Himself is the wisdom of the Father, of which it is said, “It is the brightness of the eternal light?” Therefore what is said, “gave to the Son,” is such as if it were said, “begat the Son;” for by begetting He gave. As He gave Him to be, so He gave Him to be life, so also gave Him to be life in Himself. What is that, to be life in Himself? Not to need life from elsewhere, but to be Himself the plenitude of life, out of which others believing should have life while they lived. “Hath given Him,” then, “to have life in Himself.” Hath given as to whom? As to His own Word, as to Him who “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.”

11. Afterwards, because He was made man, what gave He to Him? “And hath given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man.” In that He is the Son of God, “As the Father hath life in Himself, so also hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;” in that He is the Son of man, “He hath given Him authority of executing judgment.” This is what I ex plained to you yesterday, my beloved, that in the judgment man will be seen, but God will not be seen; but after the judgment, God will be seen by those who have prevailed in the judgment, but by the wicked He will not be seen. Since, therefore, the man will be seen in the judgment in that form in which He will so come as He ascended, for that reason He had said above, “The Father judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son.” He repeats the same thing also in this place, when He says, “And hath given Him authority of executing judgment, because He is the Son of man.” As if thou wert to say, “hath given Him authority of executing judgment.” In

what way? When He had not that authority of executing judgment? Since "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;" since "all things were made by Him," did He not already have authority of executing judgment? Yes, but according to this, I say, "He gave Him authority of executing judgment, because He is the Son of man:" according to this, He received authority of judging "because He is the Son of man." For in that He is the Son of God, He always had this authority. He that was crucified, received; He who was in death, is in life: the Word of God never was in death, but is always in life.

12. Now, therefore, as to a resurrection, perhaps some one of us was saying: Behold, we have risen; he who hears Christ, and believes, and is passed from death to life, also will not come into judgment. The hour cometh, and now is, that whoso heareth the voice of the Son of God shall live: he was dead, he has heard; behold, he doth rise. What is this that is said, that there is to be a resurrection afterwards? Spare thyself, do not hasten the sentence, lest thou hurry after it. There is, indeed, this resurrection which comes to pass now; unbelievers were dead, the unrighteous were dead; the righteous live, they pass from the death of unbelief to the life of faith. But do not thence believe that there will not be a resurrection afterwards of the body; believe that there will be a resurrection of the body also. For hear what follows after the declaration of this resurrection which is by faith, lest any should think this to be the only resurrection, or fall into that desperation and error of men who perverted the thoughts of others, "saying that the resurrection is past already," of whom the apostle saith, "and they overthrow the faith of some." For I believe that they were saying to them such words as these: "Behold, when the Lord saith, And he that believeth in me is passed from death unto life;" the resurrection has already taken place in believing men, who were before unbelievers: how can a second resurrection be meant?" Thanks to our Lord God, He supports the wavering, directs the perplexed, confirms the doubting. Hear what follows, now that thou hast not whereof to make to thyself the darkness of death. If thou hast believed, believe the whole. What whole, sayest thou, am I to believe? Hear what He saith: "Marvel not at this," namely, that He gave to the Son authority of making judgment. I say, in the end of the world, saith He. How in the end? "Do not marvel at this; for the hour cometh." Here He has not

said, “and now is.” In reference to that resurrection of faith, what did He say? “The hour cometh, and now is.” In reference to that resurrection which He intimates there will be of dead bodies, He said, “The hour cometh;” He has not said, “and now is,” because it is to come in the end of the world.

13. And whence, sayest thou, dost thou prove to me that He spoke about the resurrection itself? If thou hear patiently, thou wilt presently prove it to thyself. Let us go on then: “Marvel not at this; for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the graves.” What more evident than this resurrection? A while ago, He had not said, “they that are in the graves,” but, “The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.” He has not said, some shall live, others shall be damned; because all who believe shall live. But what does He say concerning the graves? “All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.” He said not, “shall hear and live.” For if they have lived wickedly, and lay in the graves, they shall rise to death, not to life. Let us see, then, who shall come forth. Although, a little before, the dead by hearing and believing did live, there was no distinction there made: it was not said, The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and when they shall have heard, some shall live, and some shall be damned; but, “all that hear shall live:” because they that believe shall live, they that have charity shall live, and none of them shall die. But concerning the graves, “They shall hear His voice, and come forth: they that have done well, to the resurrection of life; they that have done ill, to the resurrection of judgment.” This is the judgment, that punishment of which He had said a while before, “Whoso believeth in me is passed from death to life,” and shall not come into judgment.

14. “I cannot of myself do anything; as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just.” If as Thou hearest Thou judgest, of whom dost Thou hear? If of the Father, yet surely “the Father judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son.” When dost Thou, being in a manner the Father’s herald, declare what Thou hearest? I speak what I hear, because what the Father is, that I am: for, indeed, speaking is my function; because I am the Father’s Word. For this Christ says to thee. Thereupon, of thine. What is “As I hear I judge,” but “As I am”? For in what manner does Christ hear? Let us inquire, brethren, I beg of you. Does Christ hear of the Father? How

doth the Father speak to Him? Undoubtedly, if He speaks to Him, He uses words to Him; for every one who says something to any one, says it by a word. How doth the Father speak to the Son, seeing that the Son is the Father's Word? Whatever the Father says to us, He says it by His Word: the Word of the Father is the Son; by what other word, then, doth He speak to the Word Himself? God is one, has one Word, contains all things in one Word. What does that mean, then, "As I hear, I judge?" Just as I am of the Father, so I judge. Therefore "my judgment is just." If Thou doest nothing of Thyself, O Lord Jesus, as carnal men think; if Thou doest nothing of Thyself, how didst Thou say a while before, "So also the Son quickeneth whom He will"? Just now Thou sayest, Of myself I do nothing. But what does the Son declare, but that He is of the Father? He that is of the Father is not of Himself. If the Son were of Himself, He would not be the Son: He is of the Father. That the Father is, is not of the Son; that the Son is, is of the Father. Equal to the Father; but yet the Son of the Father, not the Father of the Son.

15. "Because I seek not my own will, but the will of Him that sent me." The Only Son saith, "I seek not my own will," and yet men desire to do their own will! To such a degree does He who is equal to the Father humble Himself; and to such a degree does He extol Himself, who lies in the lowest depth, and cannot rise except a hand is reached to Him! Let us then do the will of the Father, the will of the Son, the will of the Holy Ghost; because of this Trinity there is one will, one power, one majesty. Yet for that reason saith the Son, "I came not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me;" because Christ is not of Himself, but of the Father. But what He had that He might appear as a man, He assumed of the creature which He himself formed.

TRACTATE XXIII

CHAPTER V. 19–40

1. In a certain place in the Gospel, the Lord says that the prudent hearer of His word ought to be like a man who, wishing to build a house, digs deeply until he comes to the foundation of stability on the rock, and there establishes in security what he builds against the violence of the flood; so

that, when the flood comes, it may be rather beaten back by the strength of the building. than bring ruin on that house by the force of its pressure. Let us regard the Scripture of God to be, as it were, the field where we wish to build something. Let us not be slothful, nor be content with the surface; let us dig deeply until we come to the rock: “And that rock was Christ.”

2. The passage read to-day has spoken to us of the witness of the Lord, that He does not hold the witness of men necessary, but has a greater witness than men; and He has told us what this witness is: “The works,” saith He, “which I do bear witness of me.” Then He added, “And the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.” The very works also which He doeth, He says that He has received from the Father. The works, therefore, bear witness, the Father bears witness. Has John borne no witness? He did clearly bear witness, but as a lamp; not to satisfy friends, but to confound enemies: for it had been predicted long before by the person of the Father, “I have prepared a lamp for mine Anointed: I will clothe His enemies with confusion; but upon Him shall flourish my sanctification.” Be it that thou wert left in the dark in the night-time, thou didst direct thy attention to the lamp, thou didst admire the lamp, and didst exult at its light. But that lamp says that there is a sun, in which thou oughtest to exult; and though it burns in the night, it bids thee to be looking out for the day. Therefore it is not the case that there was no need of that man’s testimony. For wherefore was he sent, if there was no need of him? But, on the contrary, lest man should stay at the lamp, and think the light of the lamp to be sufficient for him, therefore the Lord neither says that this lamp had been superfluous, nor yet doth He say that thou oughtest to stay at the lamp. The Scripture of God utters another testimony: there undoubtedly God hath borne witness to His Son, and in that Scripture the Jews had placed their hope,—namely, in the law of God, given by Moses His servant. “Search the Scripture,” saith He, “in which ye think ye have eternal life: the same bears witness of me; and ye will not come to me that ye may have life.” Why do ye think that in the Scripture ye have eternal life? Ask itself to whom does it bear witness, and understand what is eternal life. And because for the sake of Moses they were willing to reject Christ, as an adversary to the ordinances and precepts of Moses, He convicts those same men as by another lamp.

3. For, indeed, all men are lamps, since they can be both lighted and extinguished. Moreover, when the lamps are wise, they shine and glow with the Spirit; yet also, if they did burn and are put out, they even stink. The servants of God remain good lamps by the oil of His mercy, not by their own strength. The free grace of God, truly, is the oil of the lamps. “For I have labored more than they all,” saith a certain lamp; and lest he should seem to burn by his own strength, he added, “But not I, but the grace of God that was with me.” All prophecy, therefore, before the coming of the Lord, is a lamp. Of this lamp the Apostle Peter says: “We have a more sure word of prophecy, to which ye do well giving heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.” Accordingly the prophets are lamps, and all prophecy one great lamp. What of the apostles? Are not they, too, lamps? They are, clearly. He alone is not a lamp. For He is not lighted and put out; because “even as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” The apostles also, I say, are lamps; and they give thanks because they were both lighted by the light of truth, and are burning with the spirit of charity, and supplied with the oil of God’s grace. If they were not lamps, the Lord would not say to them, “Ye are the light of the world.” For after He said, “Ye are the light of the world,” He shows that they should not think themselves such a light as that of which it is said, “That was the true light, that enlighteneth every man coming into this world.” But this was said of the Lord at that time when He was distinguished from John (the Baptist). Of John the Baptist, indeed, it had been said, “He was not the light, but that he might bear witness of the light.” And lest thou shouldst say, How was he not the light, of whom Christ says that “he was a lamp”?—I answer, In comparison of the other light, he was not light. For “that was the true light that enlighteneth every man coming into this world.” Accordingly, when He said also to the disciples, “Ye are the light of the world,” lest they should imagine that anything was attributed to them which was to be understood of Christ alone, and thus the lamps should be extinguished by the wind of pride, when He had said, “Ye are the light of the world,” He immediately subjoined, “A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid; neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but an a candlestick, that it may shine on all that are in the house.” But what if He did not call the apostles the candle, but the lighters of the candle, which they were to put on a candlestick? Hear

that He called themselves the candle. “So let your light shine,” saith He, “before men, that they, seeing your good works, may glorify,” not you, but “your Father who is in heaven.”

4. Wherefore both Moses bore witness to Christ, and John bore witness to Christ, and all the other prophets and apostles bore witness to Christ. Before all these testimonies He places the testimony of His own works. Because through those men too, it was God and none other that bore witness to His Son. But yet in another way God bears testimony to His Son. God reveals His Son through the Son Himself, He reveals Himself through the Son. To Him, if a man shall have been able to reach, he shall need no lamps; and by truly digging deep, he will carry down his building to the rock.

5. The lesson of to-day, brethren, is easy; but on account of what was due yesterday (for I know what I have delayed, not withdrawn, and the Lord has deigned to allow me even to-day to speak to you), recall to mind what you ought to demand, if perhaps, while preserving piety and wholesome humility, we may in some measure stretch out ourselves, not against God, but towards Him, and lift up our soul, pouring it out above us, like the Psalmist, to whom it was said, “Where is thy God?” “On these things,” saith he, “I meditated, and poured out my soul above me.” Therefore let us lift up our soul to God, not against God; for this also is said, “To Thee, O Lord, I have lifted up my soul.” And let us lift it up with His own assistance, for it is heavy. And from what cause is it heavy? Because the body which is corrupt weighs down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle depresses the mind while meditating on many things. Let us try, then, whether we may not be able to withdraw our mind from many things in order to concentrate it on one, and to raise it to one (which indeed we cannot do, as I have said, unless He assist us who wills our souls to be raised to Himself). And so we may apprehend in some measure how the Word of God, the only begotten of the Father, the co-eternal and equal with the Father, doeth not anything except what He seeth the Father doing, whilst yet the Father Himself doeth not anything but through the Son, who seeth Him doing. Since the Lord Jesus, as it seems to me,—willing here to make known some great matter to those that give attention to it, and to pour into those that are capable of receiving, and to rouse, on the other hand, the

incapable to assiduity, in order that, while not yet understanding, they may by right living be made capable,—has intimated to us that the human soul and rational mind which is in man, not in the beast, is invigorated, enlightened, and made happy in no other way than by the very substance of God: that the soul itself gets somewhat by and of the body, and yet holds the body subject to it, while the senses of the body can be soothed and delighted by things bodily, and that because of this kind of fellowship of soul and body in this life, and in this mutual embrace of theirs, the soul is delighted when the bodily senses are soothed, and saddened when they are offended; while yet the happiness by which the soul itself is made happy cannot be realized but by a participation of that ever-living, unchangeable life, of that eternal substance, which is God: that as the soul, which is inferior to God, causes the body, which is inferior to itself, to live, so that alone which is superior to the soul can cause that same soul to live happily. For the soul is higher than the body, and higher than the soul is God. It bestows something on its inferior, while there is something bestowed on itself by the superior. Let it serve its Lord, that it may not be trampled on by its own servant. This, brethren, is the Christian religion, which is preached through the whole world, while its enemies are dismayed; who, where they are conquered, murmur, and fiercely rage against it where they prevail. This is the Christian religion, that one God be worshipped, not many gods, because only one God can make the soul happy. It is made happy by participation of God. Not by participation of a holy soul does the feeble soul become happy, nor by participation of an angel does the holy soul become happy; but if the feeble soul seeks to be happy, let it seek that by which the holy soul is made happy. For thou art made happy, not of an angel, but the angel as well as thou of the same source.

6. These things being premised and firmly established,—that the rational soul is made happy only by God, that the body is enlivened only by the soul, and that the soul is a something intermediate between God and the body,—direct your thoughts to, and recollect with me, not the passage read to-day, of which we have spoken enough, but that of yesterday, which we have been turning over and handling these three days, and, to the best of our abilities, digging into until we should come to the rock. The Word Christ, Christ the Word of God with God, Christ the Word and the Word God,

Christ and God and Word one God. To this press on; O soul, despising, or even transcending all things else, to this press on. There is nothing more powerful than this creature, which is called the rational mind, nothing more sublime: whatever is above this, is but the Creator. But I was saying that Christ is the Word, and Christ is the Word of God, and Christ the Word is God; but Christ is not only the Word, since "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us:" therefore Christ is both Word and flesh. For when "He was in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God." And what of us in our low estate, who, feeble and crawling on the ground, were not able to reach unto God, were we to be abandoned? God forbid. "He emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant;" not, therefore, by losing the form of God. He became man who was God, by receiving what He was not, not by losing what He was: so God became man. There thou hast something for thy weakness, something for thy perfection. Let Christ raise thee by that which is man, lead thee by that which is God-man, and guide thee through to that which is God. And the whole preaching and dispensation by Christ is this, brethren, and there is not another, that souls may be raised again, and that bodies also may be raised again. For each of the two was dead; the body by weakness, the soul by iniquity. Because each was dead, each may rise again. What each? Soul and body. By what, then, can the soul rise again but by Christ God? By what the body, but by the man Christ? For there was also in Christ a human soul, a whole soul; not merely the irrational part of the soul, but also the rational, which is called mind. For there have been certain heretics, and they have been driven out of the Church, who fancied that the body of Christ did not have in it a rational mind, but, as it were, the animal life of a beast; since, without the rational mind, life is only animal life. But because they were driven out, and driven out by the truth, accept thou the whole Christ, Word, rational mind, and flesh. This is the whole Christ. Let thy soul rise again from iniquity by that which is God, thy body from corruption by that which is man. There, most beloved, hear ye what, so far as it appears to me, is the great profundity of this passage; and see how Christ here speaks to the effect, that the only reason why He came is, in order that souls may have a resurrection from iniquity, and bodies from corruption. I have already said by what our souls are raised, by the very substance of God; by what our bodies are raised, by the human dispensation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son cannot of Himself do anything, but what He seeth the Father doing; for what things soever He has done, these also the Son doeth in like manner.” Yes, the heaven, the earth, the sea; the things that are in heaven, on the earth, and in the sea; the visible and invisible, the animals on the land, the plants in the fields, the creatures that swim in the waters, that fly in the air, that shine in heaven; besides all these, angels, virtues, thrones, dominations, principalities, powers; “all were made by Him.” Did God make all these, and show them when made to the Son, that He also should make another world full of all these? Certainly not. But, on the contrary, what does He say? “For what things soever He has made, these,” not others, but “these also the Son doeth,” not differently, “but in like manner.” “For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things which Himself doeth.” The Father showeth to the Son that souls may be raised, for souls are raised up by the Father and the Son; nor can souls live except God be their life. If souls, then, cannot live unless God be their life, just as themselves are the life of bodies; what the Father shows to the Son, that is, what He doeth, He doeth through the Son. For it is not by doing that He shows to the Son, but by showing He doeth through the Son. For the Son sees the Father showing before anything is done; and from the Father’s showing and the Son’s vision, is done what is done by the Father through the Son. So are souls raised up, if they can see that conjunction of unity, the Father showing, the Son seeing, and the creature made by the Father’s showing and the Son’s seeing; and that thing made by the Father’s showing and the Son’s seeing, which is neither the Father nor the Son, but beneath the Father and the Son, whatever is made by the Father through the Son. Who sees this?

8. Behold, again we humble ourselves to carnal notions, and descend to you, if indeed we had at any time ascended somewhat from you. Thou wishest to show something to thy son, that he may do what thou doest; thou art about to do, and thus to show the thing. Therefore, what thou art about to do, in order to show it to thy son, thou doest not surely by thy son; but thou alone doest that thing which, when done, he may see, and do another

such thing in like manner. This is not the case there; why goest thou on to thy own similitude, and blottest out the similitude of God within thee? There, the case is wholly otherwise. Find a case in which thou showest to thy son what thou doest before thou doest it; so that, after thou hast shown it, it will be by the son thou doest. Perhaps something like this now occurs to thee: Lo, sayest thou, I think to make a house, and I wish it to be built by my son: before I build it myself, I point out to my son what I mean to do: both he doeth, and I too by him to whom I pointed out my wish. Thou hast retreated, indeed, from the former similitude, but still thou liest in great dissimilitude. For, lo, before thou canst make the house, thou dost inform thy son, and point out to him what thou meanest to do; that, upon thy showing before thou makest, he may make what thou hast shown, and so thou mayest make by him: but thou wilt speak words to thy son, words will have to pass between thee and him; between the person showing and the person seeing, between speaker and hearer, flies articulate sound, which is not what thou art, nor what he is. That sound, indeed, which goes out of thy mouth, and by the concussion of the air touches thy son's ear, and filling the sense of hearing, conveys thy thought to his heart; that sound, I say, is not thyself, nor thy son. A sign is given from thy mind to thy son's mind, but that sign not either thy mind or thy son's mind, but something else. Is it thus that we think the Father has spoken to the Son? Were there words between the Father and the Word? Then how is it? Or, whatever the Father would say to the Son, if He would say it by a word, the Son Himself is the Word of the Father, would He speak by a word to the Word? Or, since the Son is the great Word, had smaller words to pass between the Father and Son? Was it so, that some sound, as it were a temporal, fleeting creature, had to issue from the mouth of the Father, and strike upon the ear of the Son? Has God a body, that this should proceed, as it were, from His lips? And has the Word the ears of a body, into which sound may come? Lay aside all notions of corporeal forms, regard simplicity, if thou art single-minded. But how wilt thou be single-minded? If thou wilt not entangle thyself with the world, but disentangle thyself from the world. For by disentangling thyself, thou wilt be single-minded. And see, if thou canst, what I say; or if thou canst not, believe what thou dost not see. Thou speakest to thy son; thou speakest by a word: neither art thou, nor is thy son, the word that sounds.

9. I have, sayest thou, another method of showing; for so well instructed is my son, that he hears without my speaking, but I show him by a nod what to do. Lo, show him by a nod what thou wilt, yet certainly the mind holds within itself that which it would show. By what dost thou give this nod? With the body,—namely, with the lips, the look, the brows, the eyes, the hands. All these are not what thy mind is: these, too, are media; there was something understood by these signs which are not what thy mind is, not what the mind of thy son is; but all this which thou doest by the body is beneath thy mind, and beneath the mind of thy son: nor can thy son know thy mind, unless thou give him signs by the body. What, then, do I say? This is not the case there; there all is simplicity. The Father shows to the Son what He is doing, and by showing begets the Son. I see what I have said; but because I see also to whom I have said it, may such understanding be some time or other formed in you as to grasp it. If ye are not able now to comprehend what God is, comprehend at least what God is not: you will have made much progress, if you think of God as being not something other than He is. God is not a body, not the earth, not the heaven, not the moon, or sun, or stars—not these corporeal things. For if not heavenly things, how much less is He earthly things! Put all body out of the question. Further, hear another thing: God is not a mutable spirit. For I confess,—and it must be confessed, for it is the Gospel that speaks it,—”God is a Spirit.” But pass beyond all mutable spirit, beyond all spirit that now knows, now knows not; that now remembers, now forgets; that wills what before it willed not, that wills not what before it willed; either that suffers these mutabilities now or may suffer them: pass beyond all these. Thou findest not any mutability in God; nor aught that may have been one way before, and is otherwise now. For where thou findest alternation, there a kind of death has taken place: since, for a thing not to be what it was, is a death. The soul is said to be immortal; so indeed it is, because it ever lives, and there is in it a certain continuous life, but yet a mutable life. According to the mutability of this life, it may be said to be mortal; because if it lived wisely, and then becomes foolish, it dies for the worse; if it lived foolishly, and becomes wise, it dies for the better. For the Scripture teaches us that there is a death for the worse, and that there is a death for the better. In any case, they had died for the worse, of whom it said, “Let the dead bury their dead;” and, “Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give

thee light;" and from this passage before us, "When the dead shall hear, and they that hear shall live." For the worse they had died; therefore do they come to life again. By coming to life they die for the better, because by coming to life again they will not be what they were; but for that to be, which was not, is death. But perhaps it is not called death if it is for the better? The apostle has called that death: "But if ye be dead with Christ from the elements of this world, why do ye judge concerning this world as if ye were still living?" And again, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." He wishes us to die that we may live, because we have lived to die. Whatever therefore dies, both from better to worse, and from worse to better, is not God; because neither can supreme goodness proceed to better, nor true eternity to worse. For true eternity is, where is nothing of time. But was there now this, now that? Immediately time is admitted, it is not eternal. For that ye may know that God is not thus, as the soul is,—certainly the soul is immortal,—what, however, saith the apostle of God, "Who alone hath immortality," unless that he openly says this, He alone hath unchangeableness, because He alone hath true eternity? Therefore no mutability is there.

10. Recognize in thyself something which I wish to say within, in thyself; not within as if in thy body, for in a sense one may say, "in thyself." For there is in thee health, thy age whatever it be, but this in regard to the body. In thee is thy hand and thy foot; but there is one thing in thee, within; another thing in thee as in thy garment. But leave outside thy garment and thyself, descend into thyself, go to thy secret place, thy mind, and there see, if thou canst, what I wish to say. For if thou art far from thyself, how canst thou come near to God? I was speaking of God, and thou believedst that thou wouldst understand. I am speaking of the soul, I am speaking of thyself: understand this, there I will try thee. For I do not travel very far for examples, when I mean to give thee some similitude to thy God from thy own mind; because surely not in the body, but in that same mind, was man made after the image of God. Let us seek God in His own similitude; let us recognize the Creator in His own image. There within, if we can, let us find this that we speak of,—how the Father shows to the Son, and how the Son sees what the Father shows, before anything is made by the Father through the Son. But when I shall have spoken, and thou hast understood, thou must

not think that spoken of to be something just such as our example, that thou mayest therein keep piety, which I wish to be kept by thee, and earnestly admonish thee to keep: that is, if thou art not able to comprehend what God is, do not think it a small matter for thee to know what He is not.

11. Behold, in thy mind, I see some two things, thy memory and thy thought, which is, as it were, the seeing faculty and the vision of thy soul. Thou seest something, and perceivest it by the eyes, and thou committest it to the care of the memory. There, within, is that which thou hast committed to thy memory, laid up in secret as in a storehouse, as in a treasury, as in a kind of secret chamber and inner cabinet. Thou thinkest of something else, thy attention is elsewhere; what thou didst see is in thy memory, but not seen by thee, because thy thought is bent on another thing. I prove this at once. I speak to you who know; I mention by name Carthage; all who know it have instantly seen Carthage within the mind. Are there as many Carthages as there are minds of you? You have all seen it by means of this name, by means of these syllables known to you, rushing forth from my mouth: your ears were touched; the sense of the soul was touched through the body, and the mind bent back from another object to this word, and saw Carthage. Was Carthage made there and then? It was there already, but latent in the memory. Why was latent there? Because thy mind was engaged on another matter; but when thy thought turned back to that which was in the memory, thence it was shaped, and became a kind of vision of the mind. Before, there was not a vision, but there was memory; the vision was made by the turning back of thought to memory. Thy memory, then, showed Carthage to thy thought; and that which was in it before thou didst direct thy mind to the memory, it exhibited to the attention of thy thought when turned upon it. Behold, a showing is effected by the memory, and a vision is produced in thought; and no words passed between, no sign was given from the body: thou didst neither nod, nor write, nor utter a sound; and yet thought saw what the memory showed. But both that which showed, and that to which it showed, are of the same substance. But yet, that thy memory might have Carthage in it, the image was drawn in through the eyes, for thou didst see what thou didst store up in thy memory. So hast thou seen the tree which thou rememberest; so the mountain, the river; so the face of a friend, of an enemy, of father, mother, brother, sister, son,

neighbor; so of letters written in a book, of the book itself; so of this church: all these thou didst see, and didst commit to thy memory after they were seen; and didst, as it were, lay up there what thou mightst by thinking see at will, even when they should be absent from these eyes of the body. Thou sawest Carthage when thou wast at Carthage; thy soul received the image by the eyes; this image was laid up in thy memory; and thou, the person who wast present at Carthage, didst keep something within thee which thou mightst be able to see with thyself, even when thou shouldst not be there. All these things thou didst receive from without. What the Father shows to the Son, He does not receive from without: all comes to pass within, because there would be no creature at all without, unless the Father had made it by the Son. Every creature was made by God; before it was made it was not in being. It was not therefore seen, after being made and retained in memory, that the Father might show it to the Son, as the memory might show to thought; but, on the contrary, the Father showed it to be made, the Son saw it to be made; and the Father made it by showing, because He made it by the Son seeing. And therefore we ought not to be surprised that it is said, “But what He seeth the Father doing,” not showing. For by this it is intimated that, with the Father, to do and to show is the same thing; that hence we may understand that He doeth all things by the Son seeing. Neither is that showing, nor that seeing, temporal. Forasmuch as all times are made by the Son, they could not certainly be shown to Him at any point of time to be made. But the Father’s showing begets the Son’s seeing, just in the same manner as the Father begets the Son. For the showing produces the seeing, not the seeing the showing. And if we were able to look into this matter more purely and perfectly, perhaps we should find that the Father is not one thing, His showing another; nor the Son one thing, His seeing another. But if we have hardly apprehended this,—if we have hardly been able to explain how the memory exhibits to the thought what it has received from without,—how much less can we take in or explain how God the Father shows to the Son, what He has not from elsewhere, or that which is not other than Himself! We are only little ones: I tell you what God is not, do not show you what God is. What shall we do, then, that we may apprehend what He is? Can ye do this by or through me? I say this to the little ones, both to you and to myself; there is by whom we can: we have just now sung, just now heard, “Cast thy care upon the Lord, and He will nourish thee.” The reason why thou art not able, O man, is because thou art a little one; being a little one, thou must be nourished; being nourished, thou wilt become full-grown; and what as a little one thou couldst not, thou shalt see when full-grown; but that thou mayest be nourished, “cast thy care upon the Lord, and He will nourish thee.”

12. Therefore let us now briefly run over what remains, and do you see how the Lord makes known to us the things which I have been here commending to your attention. “The Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things which Himself doeth.” Himself raiseth up souls, but by the Son, that the souls raised up may enjoy the substance of God, that is, of the Father and of the Son. “And greater works than these He will show Him.” Greater than which? Than healings of bodies. We have treated of this already, and must not linger upon it now. Greater is the resurrection of the body unto eternity than this healing of the body, wrought in that impotent man, to last only for a time. “And greater works than these He will show Him, that ye may marvel.” “Will show,” as if the act were temporal, therefore as to a man made in time, since God the Word is not made, He by whom all times were made. But Christ was made man in time. We know in what consulship the Virgin Mary brought forth Christ, conceived of the Holy Ghost. Wherefore He, by whom as God the times were made, was made man in time. Hence, just as in time, “He will show Him greater works,” that is, the resurrection of bodies, “that ye may marvel” at the resurrection of bodies wrought by the Son.

13. He then returns to that resurrection of souls: “For as the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom He will;” but this according to the Spirit. The Father quickeneth, the Son quickeneth; the Father whom He will, the Son whom He will; but the Father quickeneth the same as the Son, because all things were made by Him. “For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom He will.” This is said of the resurrection of souls; but what of the resurrection of bodies? He returns, and says: “For the Father judgeth not any man, but all judgment hath He given to the Son.” The resurrection of souls is effected by the eternal and unchangeable substance of the Father and Son. But the resurrection of bodies is effected by the dispensation of the

Son’s humanity, which dispensation is temporal, not co-eternal with the Father. Therefore, when He mentioned judgment, in which there should be a resurrection of bodies, He saith, “For the Father judgeth not any man, but all judgment hath He given to the Son;” but concerning the resurrection of souls, He saith, “Even as the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom He will.” That, then, the Father and the Son together. But this concerning the resurrection of bodies: “The Father judgeth not any man, but hath given all judgment to the Son; that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.” This is referred to the resurrection of souls. “That all may honor the Son.” How? “Even as they honor the Father.” For the Son works the resurrection of souls in the same manner as the Father doth; the Son quickeneth just as the Father doth. Therefore, in the resurrection of souls, “let all honor the Son as they honor the Father.” But what of the honoring on account of the resurrection of the body? “Whoso honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father that sent Him.” He said not even as, but honoreth and honoreth. For the man Christ is honored, but not even as God the Father. Why? Because, with respect to this, He said, “The Father is greater than I.” And when is the Son honored even as the Father is honored? When “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God; and all things were made by Him.” And hence, in this second honoring, what saith He? “Whoso honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father that sent Him.” The Son was not sent, but because He was made man.

14. “Verily, verily, I say unto you.” Again He returns to the resurrection of souls, that by continual repetition we may apprehend His meaning; because we could not keep up with His discourse hastening on as on wings. Lo, the Word of God lingers with us; lo, it doth, as it were, dwell with our infirmities. He returns again to the mention of the resurrection of souls. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whoso heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life;” but hath it as from the Father. “For whoso heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life” from the Father, by believing the Father that sent the Son. “And shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death to life.” But from the Father, whom he believes, is he quickened. What, dost Thou not quicken? See that the Son also “quickeneth whom He will.” “Verily, verily, I say unto you, That the

hour cometh when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” Here He did not say, they shall believe Him that sent me, and therefore shall live; but by hearing the voice of the Son of God, “they that hear,” that is, they that obey the Son of God, “shall live.” Therefore, both from the Father shall they live, when they will believe the Father; and from the Son shall they live, when they will hear the voice of the Son of God. Why shall they live both from the Father and from the Son? “For even as the Father hath life in Himself, so also hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.”

15. He has finished speaking of the resurrection of souls; it remains to speak more evidently of the resurrection of bodies. “And hath given Him authority also to execute judgment:” not only to raise up souls by faith and wisdom, but also to execute judgment. But why this? “Because He is the Son of man.” Therefore the Father doeth something through the Son of man, which He doeth not from His own substance, to which the Son is equal: as, for instance, that He should be born, crucified, dead, and have a resurrection; for not any of these is contingent to the Father. In the same manner also the raising again of bodies. For the raising to life of souls the Father effects from His own substance, by the substance of the Son, in which the Son is equal to Him; because souls are made partakers of that unchangeable light, but not bodies; but the raising again of bodies, the Father effects through the Son of man. For “He hath given Him authority also to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man;” according to that which He said above, “For the Father judgeth not any man.” And to show that He said this of the resurrection of bodies, He goes on: “Marvel not at this, for the hour cometh:” not, and now is; but, “the hour cometh, in which all that are in the graves (this ye have already heard sufficiently explained yesterday) shall hear His voice, and come forth.” Where? Into judgment: “They that have done well, into the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, into the resurrection of judgment.” And dost Thou do this alone, because the Father hath given all judgment to the Son, and judgeth not any man? I, saith He, do it. But how doest Thou it? “I cannot of myself do anything; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just.” When He was treating of the resurrection of souls, He did not say, I hear; but, I see. For I hear refers to the command of the Father as giving order. Therefore, now as

a man, just as He than whom the Father is greater; as from the form of a servant, not from the form of God, “As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just.” Whence is the man’s judgment a just one? My brethren, mark well: “Because I seek not my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.”

TRACTATE XXIV

CHAPTER VI. 1–14

1. The miracles performed by our Lord Jesus Christ are indeed divine works, and incite the human mind to rise to the apprehension of God from the things that are seen. But inasmuch as He is not such a substance as may be seen with the eyes, and His miracles in the government of the whole world and the administration of the universal creation are, by their familiar constancy, slightly regarded, so that almost no man deigns to consider the wonderful and stupendous works of God, exhibited in every grain of seed; He has, agreeably to His mercy, reserved to Himself certain works, beyond the usual course and order of nature, which He should perform on fit occasion, that they, by whom His daily works are lightly esteemed, might be struck with astonishment at beholding, not indeed greater, but uncommon works. For certainly the government of the whole world is a greater miracle than the satisfying of five thousand men with five loaves; and yet no man wonders at the former; but the latter men wonder at, not because it is greater, but because it is rare. For who even now feeds the whole world, but He who creates the cornfield from a few grains? He therefore created as God creates. For, whence He multiplies the produce of the fields from a few grains, from the same source He multiplied in His hands the five loaves. The power, indeed, was in the hands of Christ; but those five loaves were as seeds, not indeed committed to the earth, but multiplied by Him who made the earth. In this miracle, then, there is that brought near to the senses, whereby the mind should be roused to attention, there is exhibited to the eyes, whereon the understanding should be exercised, that we might admire the invisible God through His visible works; and being raised to faith and purged by faith, we might desire to behold Him even invisibly, whom invisible we came to know by the things that are visible.

2. Yet it is not enough to observe these things in the miracles of Christ. Let us interrogate the miracles themselves, what they tell us about Christ: for they have a tongue of their own, if they can be understood. For since Christ is Himself the Word of God, even the act of the Word is a word to us. Therefore as to this miracle, since we have heard how great it is, let us also search how profound it is; let us not only be delighted with its surface, but let us also seek to know its depth. This miracle, which we admire on the outside, has something within. We have seen, we have looked at something great, something glorious, and altogether divine, which could be performed only by God: we have praised the doer for the deed. But just as, if we were to inspect a beautiful writing somewhere, it would not suffice for us to praise the hand of the writer, because he formed the letters even, equal and elegant, if we did not also read the information he conveyed to us by those letters; so, he who merely inspects this deed may be delighted with its beauty to admire the doer: but he who understands does, as it were, read it. For a picture is looked at in a different way from that in which a writing is looked at. When thou hast seen a picture, to have seen and praised it is the whole thing; when thou seest a writing, this is not the whole, since thou art reminded also to read it. Moreover, when thou seest a writing, if it chance that thou canst not read, thou sayest, “What do we think that to be which is here written?” Thou askest what it is, when already thou seest it to be something. He of whom thou seekest to be informed what it is that thou hast seen, will show thee another thing. He has other eyes than thou hast. Do you not alike see the form of the letters? But yet you do not alike understand the signs. Well, thou seest and praisest; but he sees, praises, reads and understands. Therefore, since we have seen and praised, let us also read and understand.

3. The Lord on the mount: much rather let us understand that the Lord on the mount is the Word on high. Accordingly, what was done on the mount does not, as it were, lie low, nor is to be cursorily passed by, but must be looked up to. He saw the multitude, knew them to be hungering, mercifully fed them: not only in virtue of His goodness, but also of His power. For what would mere goodness avail, where there was not bread with which to feed the hungry crowd? Did not power attend upon goodness, that crowd had remained fasting and hungry. In short, the disciples also, who were with

the Lord, and hungry, themselves wished to feed the multitudes, that they might not remain empty, but had not wherewithal to feed them. The Lord asked, whence they might buy bread to feed the multitude. And the Scripture saith: “But this He said, proving him;” namely, the disciple Philip of whom He had asked; “for Himself knew what He would do.” Of what advantage then was it to prove him, unless to show the disciple’s ignorance? And, perhaps, in showing the disciple’s ignorance He signified something more. This will appear, then, when the sacrament of the five loaves itself will begin to speak to us, and to intimate its meaning: for there we shall see why the Lord in this act wished to exhibit the disciple’s ignorance, by asking what He Himself knew. For we sometimes ask what we do not know, that, being willing to hear, we may learn; sometimes we ask what we do know, wishing to learn whether he whom we ask also knows. The Lord knew both the one and the other; knew both what He asked, for He knew what Himself would do; and He also knew in like manner that Philip knew not this. Why then did He ask, but to show Philip’s ignorance? And why He did this, we shall, as I have said, understand afterwards.

4. Andrew saith: “There is a lad here, who has five loaves and two fishes, but what are these for so many?” When Philip, on being asked, had said that two hundred pennyworth of bread would not suffice to refresh that so great a multitude, there was there a certain lad, carrying five barley loaves and two fishes. “And Jesus saith, Make the men sit down. Now there was there much grass: and they sat down about five thousand men. And the Lord Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks;” He commanded, the loaves were broken, and put before the men that were set down. It was no longer five loaves, but what He had added thereto, who had created that which was increased. “And of the fishes as much as sufficed.” It was not enough that the multitude had been satisfied, there remained also fragments; and these were ordered to be gathered up, that they should not be lost: “And they filled twelve baskets with the fragments.”

5. To run over it briefly: by the five loaves are understood the five books of Moses; and rightly are they not wheaten but barley loaves, because they belong to the Old Testament. And you know that barley is so formed that we get at its pith with difficulty; for the pith is covered in a coating of husk,

and the husk itself tenacious and closely adhering, so as to be stripped off with labor. Such is the letter of the Old Testament, invested in a covering of carnal sacraments: but yet, if we get at its pith, it feeds and satisfies us. A certain lad, then, brought five loaves and two fishes. If we inquire who this lad was, perhaps it was the people Israel, which, in a childish sense, carried, not ate. For the things which they carried were a burden while shut up, but when opened afforded nourishment. And as for the two fishes, they appear to us to signify those two sublime persons, in the Old Testament, of priest and of ruler, who were anointed for the sanctifying and governing of the people. And at length Himself in the mystery came, who was signified by those persons: He at length came who was pointed out by the pith of the barley, but concealed by its husk. He came, sustaining in His one person the two characters of priest and ruler: of priest by offering Himself to God as a victim for us; of ruler, because by Him we are governed. And the things that were carried closed are now opened up. Thanks be to Him. He has fulfilled by Himself what was promised in the Old Testament. And He bade the loaves to be broken; in the breaking they are multiplied. Nothing is more true. For when those five books of Moses are expounded, how many books have they made by being broken up, as it were; that is, by being opened and laid out? But because in that barley the ignorance of the first people was veiled, of whom it is said, “Whilst Moses is read, the veil is upon their hearts;” for the veil was not yet removed, because Christ had not yet come; not yet was the veil of the temple rent, while Christ is hanging on the cross: because, I say, the ignorance of the people was in the law, therefore that proving by the Lord made the ignorance of the disciple manifest.

6. Wherefore nothing is without meaning; everything is significant, but requires one that understands: for even this number of the people fed, signified the people that were under the law. For why were there five thousand, but because they were under the law, which is unfolded in the five books of Moses? Why were the sick laid at those five porches, but not healed? He, however, there cured the impotent man, who here fed multitudes with five loaves. Moreover, they sat down upon the grass; therefore understood carnally, and rested in the carnal. “For all flesh is grass.” And what were those fragments, but things which the people were not able to eat? We understand them to be certain matters of more hidden

meaning, which the multitude are not able to take in. What remains then, but that those matters of more hidden meaning, which the multitude cannot take in, be entrusted to men who are fit to teach others also, just as were the apostles? Why were twelve baskets filled? This was done both marvellously, because a great thing was done; and it was done profitably, because a spiritual thing was done. They who at the time saw it, marvelled; but we, hearing of it, do not marvel. For it was done that they might see it, but it was written that we might hear it. What the eyes were able to do in their case, that faith does in our case. We perceive, namely, with the mind, what we could not with the eyes: and we are preferred before them, because of us it is said, “Blessed are they who see not, and yet believe.” And I add that, perhaps, we have understood what that crowd did not understand. And we have been fed in reality, in that we have been able to get at the pith of the barley.

7. Lastly, what did those men who saw this miracle think? “The men,” saith he, “when they had seen the sign which He had done, said, This is indeed a prophet.” Perhaps they still thought Christ to be a prophet for this reason, namely, that they were sitting on the grass. But He was the Lord of the prophets, the fulfiller of the prophets, the sanctifier of the prophets, but yet a prophet also: for it was said to Moses, “I will raise up for them a prophet like unto thee.” Like, according to the flesh, but not according to the majesty. And that this promise of the Lord is to be understood concerning Christ Himself, is clearly expounded and read in the Acts of the Apostles. And the Lord says of Himself, “A prophet is not without honor, except in his own country.” The Lord is a prophet, and the Lord is God’s Word, and no prophet prophesies without the Word of God: the Word of God is with the prophets, and the Word of God is a prophet. The former times obtained prophets inspired and filled by the Word of God: we have obtained the very Word of God for our prophet. But Christ is in such manner a prophet, the Lord of prophets, as Christ is an angel, the Lord of angels. For He is also called the Angel of great counsel. Nevertheless, what says the prophet elsewhere that not an ambassador, nor an angel, but Himself coming will save them; that is, He will not send an ambassador to save them, nor an angel, but Himself will come. Who will come? The Angel himself? Certainly not by an angel will He save them, except that He is so an angel,

as also Lord of angels. For angels signify messengers. If Christ brought no message, He would not be called an angel: if Christ prophesied nothing, He would not be called a prophet. He has exhorted us to faith and to laying hold of eternal life; He has proclaimed something present, foretold something future because He proclaimed the present, thence He was an angel or messenger; because He foretold the future, thence He was a prophet; and that, as the Word of God He was made flesh, thence He was Lord of angels and of prophets.

TRACTATE XXV

CHAPTER VI. 15–44

1. Following upon yesterday’s lesson from the Gospel is that of to-day, upon which this day’s discourse is due to you. When that miracle was wrought, in which Jesus fed the five thousand with five loaves, and the multitudes marveled and said that He was a great prophet that came into the world, then follows this: “When Jesus therefore knew that they came to seize Him, and to make Him king, He escaped again unto the mountain alone.” It is therefore given to be understood that the Lord, when He sat on the mountain with His disciples, and saw the multitudes coming to Him, had descended from the mountain, and fed the multitudes on its lower parts. For how can it be that He should escape thither again, if He had not before descended from the mountain? There is something meant by the Lord’s descending from on high to feed the multitudes. He fed them, and ascended.

2. But why did He ascend after He knew that they wished to seize Him and make Him a king? How then; was He not a king, that He was afraid to be made a king? He was certainly not such a king as would be made by men, but such as would bestow a kingdom on men. May it not be that Jesus, whose deeds are words, does here, too, signify some thing to us? Therefore in this, that they wished to seize Him and make Him a king, and that for this He escapes to the mountain alone, is this action in His case silent; does it speak nothing, does it mean nothing? Or was this seizing of Him perhaps an intention to anticipate the time of His kingdom? For He had come now, not to reign immediately, as He is to reign in the sense in which we pray, Thy kingdom come. He ever reigns, indeed, with the Father, in that He is the

Son of God, the Word of God, the Word by which all things were made. But the prophets foretold His kingdom according to that wherein He is Christ made man, and has made His faithful ones Christians. There will consequently be a kingdom of Christians, which at present is being gathered together, being prepared and purchased by the blood of Christ. His kingdom will at length be made manifest, when the glory of His saints shall be revealed, after the judgment is executed by Him, which judgment He Himself has said above is that which the Son of man shall execute. Of which kingdom also the apostle has said: “When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.” In reference to which also Himself says: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom which is prepared for you from the beginning of the world.” But the disciples and the multitudes that believed on Him thought that He had thus come immediately to reign; hence, they wished to seize Him and to make Him a king; they wished to anticipate the time which He hid with Himself, to make it known in due time, and in due time to declare it in the end of the world.

3. That ye may know that they wished to make Him a king,—that is, to anticipate, and at once to have manifest the kingdom of Christ, whom it behoved first to be judged and then to judge,—when He was crucified, and they who hoped in Him had lost hope of His resurrection, having risen from the dead, He found two of them despairingly conversing together, and, with groaning, talking with one another of what had been done; and appearing to them as a stranger, while their eyes were held that He should not be recognized by them, He mixed with them as they held discourse: but they, narrating to Him the matter of their conversation, said that He was a prophet, mighty in deeds and in words, that had been slain by the chief priests; “And we,” say they, “did hope that it was He that should have redeemed Israel.” Rightly you hoped: a true thing you hoped for: in Him is the redemption of Israel. But why are ye in haste? Ye wish to seize it. The following, too, shows us that this was their feeling, that, when the disciples inquired of Him concerning the end, they said to Him, “Wilt Thou at this time be made manifest, and when will be the kingdom of Israel?” For they longed for it now, they wished it now; that is, they wished to seize Him, and to make Him king. But saith He to the disciples (for He had yet to ascend

alone), “It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father hath put in His own power: but ye shall receive virtue from on high, the Holy Spirit coming upon you, and ye shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the ends of the earth.” You wish that I should manifest the kingdom now; let me first gather what I may manifest; you love elevation, and you shall obtain elevation, but follow me through humility. Thus it was also foretold of Him, “And the gathering of the peoples will surround Thee, and for this cause return Thou on high;” that is, that the gatherings of the peoples may surround Thee, that Thou mayest gather many together, return Thou on high. Thus He did; He fed men, and ascended.

4. But why is it said, He escaped? For He could not be held against His will, nor seized against His will, since He could not be recognized against His will. But that you may know that this was done mystically, not of necessity, but of express purpose, you will presently see in the following: that He appeared to the same multitudes that sought Him, said many things in speaking with them, and discoursed much about the bread of heaven; when discoursing about bread, was He not with the same people from whom He had escaped lest He should be held of them? Then, could He not have so acted at that time that He should not be seized by them, just as afterwards when He was speaking with them? Something, therefore, was meant by His escaping. What means, He escaped? His loftiness could not be understood. For of anything which thou hast not understood thou sayest, “It has escaped me.” Wherefore, “He escaped again unto the mountain alone,—the first-begotten from the dead, ascending above all heavens, and interceding for us.”

5. Meanwhile, He, the one great High Priest being above (He who has entered into that within the veil, the people standing without; for Him that priest under the old law, who did this once a year, did signify): He then being above, what were the disciples enduring in the ship? For that ship prefigured the Church while He is on high. For if we do not, in the first place, understand this thing which that ship suffered respecting the Church, those incidents were not significant, but simply transient; but if we see the real meaning of those signs expressed in the Church, it is manifest that the

actions of Christ are a kind of speeches. “But when it was late, saith he, His disciples went down to the sea; and when they had entered into a ship, they came over the sea to Capernaum.” He declared that as finished quickly, which was done afterwards,—”They came over the sea to Capernaum.” He returns to explain how they came; that they passed over by sailing across the lake. And whilst they were sailing to that place to which He has already said they had come, He explains by recapitulation what befell them. “It was now dark, and Jesus had not come to them.” Rightly he said “dark,” for the light had not come to them. “It was now dark, and Jesus had not come to them.” As the end of the world approaches, errors increase, terrors multiply, iniquity increases, infidelity increases; the light, in short, which, by the Evangelist John himself, is fully and clearly shown to be charity, so much so that he says, “Whoso hateth his brother is in darkness;” that light, I say, is very often extinguished; this darkness of enmity between brethren increases, daily increases, and Jesus is not yet come. How does it appear to increase? “Because iniquity will abound, and the love of many will begin to wax cold.” Darkness increases, and Jesus is not yet come. Darkness increasing, love waxing cold, iniquity abounding,—these are the waves that agitate the ship; the storms and the winds are the clamors of revilers. Thence love waxes cold; thence the waves do swell, and the ship is tossed.

6. “And a great wind blowing, the sea rose.” Darkness was increasing, discernment was diminishing, iniquity was growing. “When, therefore, they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty furlongs.” Meanwhile they struggled onward, kept advancing; nor did those winds and storms, and waves and darkness effect either that the ship should not make way, or that it should break in pieces and founder; but amid all these evils it went on. For, notwithstanding iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold, and the waves do swell, the darkness grows and the wind rages, yet the ship is moving forward; “for he that perseveres to the end, the same shall be saved.” Nor is that number of furlongs to be lightly regarded. For it cannot really be that nothing is meant, when it is said that, “when they had rowed twenty-five or thirty furlongs, Jesus came to them.” It were enough to say, “twenty-five,” so likewise “thirty;” especially as it was an estimate, not an assertion of the narrator. Could the truth be aught endangered by a mere estimate, if he had said nearly thirty furlongs, or nearly twenty-five

furlongs? But from twenty-five he made thirty. Let us examine the number twenty-five. Of what does it consist? of what is it made up? Of the quinary, or number five. That number five pertains to the law. The same are the five books of Moses, the same are those five porches containing the sick folk, the same are the five loaves feeding the five thousand men. Accordingly the number twenty-five signifies the law, because five by five—that is, five times five—make twenty-five, or the number five squared. But this law lacked perfection before the gospel came. Moreover, perfection is comprised in the number six. Therefore in six days God finished, or perfected, the world, and the same five are multiplied by six, that the law may be completed by the gospel, that six times five become thirty. To them that fulfill the law, therefore, Jesus comes. And how does He come? Walking upon the waves, keeping all the swellings of the world under His feet, pressing down all its heights. Thus it goes on, so long as time endures, so long as the ages roll. Tribulations increase, calamities increase, sorrows increase, all these swell and mount up: Jesus passeth on treading upon the waves.

7. And yet so great are the tribulations, that even they who have trusted in Jesus, and who strive to persevere unto the end, greatly fear lest they fail; while Christ is treading the waves, and trampling down the world's ambitions and heights, the Christian is sorely afraid. Were not these things foretold him? Justly "they were afraid," too, at seeing Jesus walking on the waves; like as Christians, though having hope in the world to come, are frequently disquieted at the crash of human affairs, when they see the loftiness of this world trampled down. They open the Gospel, they open the Scriptures, and they find all these things there foretold; that this is the Lord's doing. He tramples down the heights of the world, that He may be glorified by the humble. Concerning whose loftiness it is foretold: "Thou shalt destroy strongest cities," and "the spears of the enemy have come to an end, and Thou hast destroyed cities." Why then are ye afraid, O Christians? Christ speaks: "It is I; be not afraid." Why are ye alarmed at these things? Why are ye afraid? I have foretold these things, I do them, they must necessarily be done. "It is I; be not afraid. Therefore they would receive Him into the ship." Recognizing Him and rejoicing, they are freed from their fears. "And immediately the ship was at the land to which they

went.” There is an end made at the land; from the watery to the solid, from the agitated to the firm, from the way to the goal.

8. “On the next day the multitude that stood on the other side of the sea,” whence the disciples had come, “saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto His disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with His disciples into the boat, but that His disciples were gone away alone; but there came other boats from Tiberias, nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, giving thanks to the Lord: when, therefore, the multitudes saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum seeking Jesus.” Yet they got some knowledge of so great a miracle. For they saw that the disciples had gone into the ship alone, and that there was not another ship there. But there came boats also from near to that place where they did eat bread; in these the multitudes followed Him. He had not then embarked with His disciples, and there was not another ship there. How, then, was Jesus on a sudden beyond the sea, unless that He walked upon the sea to show a miracle?

9. “And when the multitudes had found Him.” Behold, He presents Himself to the people from whom He had escaped into the mountain, afraid that He should be taken of them by force. In every way He proves to us and gives us to know that all these things are said in a mystery, and done in a great sacrament (or mystery) to signify something important. Behold, that is He who had escaped the crowds unto the mountain; is He not speaking with the same crowds? Let them hold Him now; let them now make Him a king. “And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said unto Him, Rabbi, when camest Thou hither?”

10. After the sacrament of the miracle, He introduces discourse, that, if possible, they who have been fed may be further fed, that He may with discourse fill their minds, whose bellies He filled with the loaves, provided they take in. And if they do not, let that be taken up which they do not receive, that the fragments may not be lost. Wherefore let Him speak, and let us hear. “Jesus answered and said Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the signs, but because ye have eaten of my loaves.” Ye seek me for the sake of the flesh not for the sake of the spirit. How many seek Jesus for no other object but that He may bestow on them a temporal

benefit! One has a business on hand, he seeks the intercession of the clergy; another is oppressed by one more powerful than himself, he flies to the church. Another desires intervention in his behalf with one with whom he has little influence. One in this way, one in that, the church is daily filled with such people. Jesus is scarcely sought after for Jesus’ sake. “Ye seek me, not because ye have seen the signs, but because ye have eaten of my loaves. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life.” Ye seek me for something else, seek me for my own sake. For He insinuates the truth, that Himself is that meat: this shines out clearly in the sequel. “Which the Son of man will give you.” Thou didst expect, I believe, again to eat bread, again to sit down, again to be gorged. But He had said, “Not the meat which perisheth, but that which endureth unto eternal life,” in the same manner as it was said to that Samaritan woman: “If thou knewest who it is that asketh of thee drink, thou wouldest perhaps have asked of Him, and He would give thee living water.” When she said, “Whence hast thou, since thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep?” He answered the Samaritan woman: “If thou knewest who it is that asketh of thee drink, thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would give thee water, whereof whoso drinketh shall thirst no more; for whoso drinketh of this water shall thirst again.” And she was glad and would receive, as if no more to suffer thirst of body, being wearied with the labor of drawing water. And so, during a conversation of this kind, He comes to spiritual drink. Entirely in this manner also here.

11. Therefore “this meat, not that which perisheth, but that which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed.” Do not take this Son of man as you take other sons of men, of whom it is said, “And the sons of men will trust in the protection of Thy wings.” This Son of man is separated by a certain grace of the spirit; Son of man according to the flesh, taken out from the number of men: He is the Son of man. This Son of man is also the Son of God; this man is even God. In another place, when questioning His disciples, He saith: “Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And they answered, Some John, some Elias, some Jeremias, or one of the prophets. And He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” He declared Himself Son of man, Peter declared

Him the Son of the living God. Most fitly did He mention that which in mercy He had manifested Himself to be; most fitly did the other mention that which He continues to be in glory. The Word of God commends to our attention His own humility: the man acknowledged the glory of his Lord. And indeed, brethren, I think that this is just. He humbled Himself for us, let us glorify Him. For not for Himself is He Son of man, but for us. Therefore was He Son of man in that way, when "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." For to that end "God the Father sealed Him." What is to seal, but to put some particular mark? To seal is to impress some mark which cannot be confounded with the rest. To seal is to put a mark on a thing. When thou puttest a mark on anything, thou doest so lest it might be confused with other things, and thou shouldst not be able to recognize it. "The Father," then, "hath sealed Him." What is that, "hath sealed"? Bestowed on Him something peculiar, which puts Him out of comparison with all other men. For that reason it is said of Him, "God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." What is it then to seal, but to have Him excepted? This is the import of "above Thy fellows." And so, do not, saith He, despise me because I am the Son of man, but seek from me, "not the meat that perisheth, but that which endureth to eternal life." For I am the Son of man in such manner as not to be one of you: I am Son of man in such manner that God the Father sealed me. What does that mean, He "sealed me"? Gave me something peculiarly my own, that I should not be confounded with mankind, but that mankind should be delivered by me.

12. "They said therefore unto Him, What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" For He had said to them, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life." "What shall we do?" they ask; by observing what, shall we be able to fulfill this precept? "Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He has sent." This is then to eat the meat, not that which perisheth, but that which endureth unto eternal life. To what purpose dost thou make ready teeth and stomach? Believe, and thou hast eaten already. Faith is indeed distinguished from works, even as the apostle says, "that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law:" there are works which appear good, without faith in Christ; but they are not good,

because they are not referred to that end in which works are good; “for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” For that reason, He willeth not to distinguish faith from work, but declared faith itself to be work. For it is that same faith that worketh by love. Nor did He say, This is your work; but, “This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He has sent;” so that he who glories, may glory in the Lord. And because He invited them to faith, they, on the other hand, were still asking for signs by which they might believe. See if the Jews do not ask for signs. “They said therefore unto Him, What sign doest thou, that we may see and believe thee? what dost thou work?” Was it a trifle that they were fed with five loaves? They knew this indeed, but they preferred manna from heaven to this food. But the Lord Jesus declared Himself to be such an one, that He was superior to Moses. For Moses dared not say of himself that ge gave, “not the meat which perisheth, but that which endureth to eternal life.” Jesus promised something greater than Moses gave. By Moses indeed was promised a kingdom, and a land flowing with milk and honey, temporal peace, abundance of children, health of body, and all other things, temporal goods indeed, yet in figure spiritual; because in the Old Testament they were promised to the old man. They considered therefore the things promised by Moses, and they considered the things promised by Christ. The former promised a full belly on the earth, but of the meat which perisheth; the latter promised, “not the meat which perisheth, but that which endureth unto eternal life.” They gave attention to Him that promised the more, but just as if they did not yet see Him do greater things. They considered therefore what sort of works Moses had done, and they wished yet some greater works to be done by Him who promised them such great things. What, say they, doest thou, that we may believe thee? And that thou mayest know that they compared those former miracles with this and so judged these miracles which Jesus did as being less; “Our fathers,” say they, “did eat manna in the wilderness.” But what is manna? Perhaps ye despise it. “As it is written, He gave them manna to eat.” By Moses our fathers received bread from heaven, and Moses did not say to them, “Labor for the meat which perisheth not.” Thou promisest “meat which perisheth not, but which endureth to eternal life;” and yet thou workest not such works as Moses did. He gave, not barley loaves, but manna from heaven.

13. “Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, not Moses gave you bread from heaven, but my Father gave you bread from heaven. For the true bread is He that cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world.” The true bread then is He that giveth life to the world; and the same is the meat of which I have spoken a little before,—”Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life.” Therefore, both that manna signified this meat, and all those signs were signs of me. Ye have longed for signs of me; do ye despise Him that was signified? Not Moses then gave bread from heaven: God gives bread. But what bread? Manna, perhaps? No, but the bread which manna signified, namely, the Lord Jesus Himself. My Father giveth you the true bread. “For the bread of God is He that cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world. Then said they unto Him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.” Like that Samaritan woman, to whom it was said, “Whoso drinketh of this water shall never thirst.” She, immediately understanding it in reference to the body, and wishing to be rid of want, said, “Give me, O Lord, of this water;” in the same manner also these said, “O Lord, give us this bread;” which may refresh us, and yet not fail.

14. “And Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” “He that cometh to me;” this is the same thing as “He that believeth on me;” and “shall never hunger” is to be understood to mean the same thing as “shall never thirst.” For by both is signified that eternal sufficiency in which there is no want. You desire bread from heaven; you have it before you, and yet you do not eat. “But I said unto you, that ye also have seen me, and ye believed not.” But I have not on that account lost my people. “For hath your unbelief made the faith of God of none effect?” For, see thou what follows: “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will not cast out of doors.” What kind of within is that, whence there is no going out of doors? Noble interior, sweet retreat! O secret dwelling without weariness, without the bitterness of evil thoughts, without the solicitings of temptations and the interruptions of griefs! Is it not that secret dwelling whither shall enter that well-deserving servant, to whom the Lord will say, “Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord?”

15. “And him that will come to me, I will not cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me.” Is it for that reason that Thou wilt not cast out him that shall come unto Thee, because Thou hast descended from heaven, not to do Thine own will, but the will of Him that sent Thee? Great mystery! I beseech you, let us knock together; something may come forth to us which may feed us, according to that which has delighted us. That great and sweet secret dwelling-place: “He that will come to me.” Give heed, give heed, and weigh the matter: “He that will come unto me, I will not cast out.” Why? “Because I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.” Is it then the very reason why Thou castest not out him that cometh unto Thee, that Thou camest down from heaven, not to do Thy own will, but the will of Him that sent Thee? The very reason. Why do we ask whether it be the same? The same it is; Himself says it. For it would not be right in us to suspect Him to mean other than He says, “Whoso will come to me, I will not cast out.” And, as if thou askedst, wherefore? He answered, “Because I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.” I am afraid that the reason why the soul went forth away from God is, that it was proud; nay, I do not doubt it. For it is written, “Pride is the beginning of all sin; and the beginning of man’s pride is a falling away from God.” It is written, it is firm and sure, it is true. And hence what is said of proud mortal man, clad in the tattered rags of the flesh, weighed down with the weight of a corruptible body, and withal extolling himself, and forgetting with what skin-coat he is clothed,—what, I ask, saith the Scripture to him? “Why is dust and ashes proud?” Why proud! Let the Scripture tell why. “Because in his life he put forth his inmost parts.” What is “put forth,” but “threw afar off”? This is to go forth away. For to enter within, is to long after the inmost parts; to put forth the inmost parts, is to go forth away. The proud man puts forth the inmost parts, the humble man earnestly desires the inmost parts. If we are cast out by pride, let us return by humility.

16. Pride is the source of all diseases, because pride is the source of all sins. When a physician removes a disorder from the body, if he merely cures the malady produced by some particular cause, but not the cause itself, he seems to heal the patient for a time, but while the cause remains, the disease will repeat itself. For example, to speak of this more expressly, some humor

in the body produces a scurf or sores; there follows a high fever, and not a little pain; certain remedies are applied to repress the scurf, and to allay that heat of the sore; the remedies are applied, and they do good; thou seest the man who was full of sores and scurf healed; but because that humor was not expelled, it returns again to ulcers. The physician, perceiving this, purges away the humor, removes the cause, and there will be no more sores. Whence doth iniquity abound? From pride. Cure pride and there will be no more iniquity. Consequently, that the cause of all diseases might be cured, namely, pride, the Son of God came down and was made low. Why art thou proud, O man? God, for thee, became low. Thou wouldst perhaps be ashamed to imitate a lowly man; at any rate, imitate the lowly God. The Son of God came in the character of a man and was made low. Thou art taught to become humble, not of a man to become a brute. He, being God, became man; do thou, O man, recognize that thou art man. Thy whole humility is to know thyself. Therefore because God teaches humility, He said, “I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.” For this is the commendation of humility. Whereas pride doeth its own will, humility doeth the will of God. Therefore, “Whoso cometh to me, I will not cast him out.” Why? “Because I came not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.” I came humble, I came to teach humility, I came a master of humility: he that cometh to me is made one body with me; he that cometh to me becomes humble; he who adhereth to me will be humble, because he doeth not his own will, but the will of God; and therefore he shall not be cast out, for when he was proud he was cast out.

17. See those inner things commended to us in the psalm: “But the sons of men will put their trust in the covering of Thy wings.” See what it is to enter within; see what it is to flee for refuge to His protection; see what it is to run even under the Father’s lash, for He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. “But the sons of men shall put their trust under the cover of Thy wings.” What is within? “They shall be filled with the plenteousness of Thy house,” when Thou shalt have sent them within, entering into the joy of their Lord; “they shall be filled with the plenteousness of Thy house; and Thou shalt give them to drink of the stream of Thy pleasure. For with Thee is the fountain of life.” Not away without Thee, but within with Thee, is the fountain of life. “And in Thy light we shall see light. Show Thy mercy upon

them that know Thee, and Thy righteousness to them that are of upright heart.” They who follow the will of their Lord, not seeking their own, but the things of the Lord Jesus Christ, they are the upright in heart, their feet shall not be moved. For “God is good to Israel, to the upright in heart. But, as for me, says he, my feet were almost moved.” Why? “Because I was jealous at sinners, looking at the peace of sinners.” To whom is God good then, unless to the upright in heart? For God was displeasing to me when my heart was crooked. Why displeasing? Because He gave happiness to the wicked, and therefore my feet tottered, as if I had served God in vain. For this reason, then, my feet were almost moved, because I was not upright of heart. What then is upright in heart? Following the will of God. One man is prosperous, another man toils; the one lives wickedly and yet is prosperous, the other lives rightly and is distressed. Let not him that lives rightly and is in distress be angry; he has within what the prosperous man has not: let him therefore not be saddened, nor vex himself, nor faint. That prosperous man has gold in his own chest; this other has God in his conscience. Compare now gold and God, chest and conscience. The former has that which perishes, and has it where it will perish; the latter has God, who cannot perish, and has Him there whence He cannot be taken away: only if he is upright in heart; for then He enters within and goeth not out. For that reason, what said he? “For with Thee is the fountain of life:” not with us. We must therefore enter within, that we may live; we must not be, as it were, content to perish, nor willing to be satisfied of our own, to be dried up, but we must put our mouth to the very fountain, where the water fails not. Because Adam wished to live by his own counsel, he, too, fell through him who had fallen before through pride, who invited him to drink of the cup of his own pride. Wherefore, because “with Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light we shall see light,” let us drink within, let us see within. Why was there a going out thence? Hear why: “Let not the foot of pride come to me.” Therefore he, to whom the foot of pride came, went out. Show that therefore he went out. “And let not the hands of sinners move me;” because of the foot of pride. Why sayest thou this? “They are fallen, all they that work iniquity.” Where are they fallen? In their very pride. “They were driven out, and they could not stand.” If, then, pride drove them out who were not able to stand, humility sends them in who can stand for ever. For this reason, moreover, he who said, “The bones that were brought low shall rejoice," said before, "Thou shalt give joy and gladness to my hearing." What does he mean by, "to my hearing"? By hearing Thee I am happy; because of Thy voice I am happy; by drinking within I am happy. Therefore do I not fall; therefore "the bones that were brought low will rejoice;" therefore "the friend of the Bridegroom standeth and heareth Him;" therefore he stands, because he hears. He drinks of the fountain within, therefore he stands. They who willed not to drink of the fountain within, "there are they fallen: they were driven, they were not able to stand."

18. Thus, the teacher of humility came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. Let us come to Him, enter in unto Him, be ingrafted into Him, that we may not be doing our own will, but the will of God: and He will not cast us out, because we are His members, because He willed to be our head by teaching us humility. Finally, hear Himself discoursing: "Come unto me, ye who labor and are heavy laden: take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart:" and when ye have learned this, "ye shall find rest for your souls," from which ye cannot be cast out; "because I am come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me;" I teach humility; none but the humble can come unto me. Only pride casteth out; how can he go out who keeps humility and falls not away from the truth? So much as could be said about the hidden sense has now been said, brethren: this sense is hidden enough, and I know not whether I have drawn out and shaped in suitable words for you, why it is that He casteth not out him that cometh unto Him; because He came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him.

19. "And this," saith He, "is the will of the Father that sent, that of all that He hath given me I should lose nothing." He that keeps humility was given to Him; the same He receives: he that keeps not humility is far from the Master of humility. "That of all which He hath given me, I should lose nothing." "So it is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish." Of the proud, there may perish; but of the little ones, none perisheth; because, "if ye will not become as this little one, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Of all that the Father hath given me, I should lose nothing, but I will raise it up again on the last day." See how

here He delineates that twofold resurrection. “He that cometh unto me” immediately rises again, being made humble in my members; but I will raise him up again on the last day also according to the flesh. “For this is the will of my Father that sent me, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day.” He said above, “Whoso heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me:” but now, “Whoso seeth the Son, and believeth on Him.” He has not said, seeth the Son, and believeth on the Father; for to believe on the Son is the same thing as to believe on the Father. Because, “even as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given also to the Son to have life in Himself. That every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have eternal life:” by believing and by passing unto life, just as by that first resurrection. And, because that is not the only resurrection, He saith, “And I will raise him up at the last day.”

TRACTATE XXVI

CHAPTER VI. 41–59

1. When our Lord Jesus Christ, as we have heard in the Gospel when it was read, had said that He was Himself the bread which came down from heaven, the Jews murmured and said, “Is not Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?” These Jews were far off from the bread of heaven, and knew not how to hunger after it. They had the jaws of their heart languid; with open ears they were deaf, they saw and stood blind. This bread, indeed, requires the hunger of the inner man: and hence He saith in another place, “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.” But the Apostle Paul says that Christ is for us righteousness. And, consequently, he that hungers after this bread, hungers after righteousness,—that righteousness however which cometh down from heaven, the righteousness that God gives, not that which man works for himself. For if man were not making a righteousness for himself, the same apostle would not have said of the Jews: “For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and wishing to establish their own righteousness, they are not subject to the righteousness of God.” Of such were these who understood not the bread that cometh down from heaven; because being

satisfied with their own righteousness, they hungered not after the righteousness of God. What is this, God’s righteousness and man’s righteousness? God’s righteousness here means, not that wherein God is righteous, but that which God bestows on man, that man may be righteous through God. But again, what was the righteousness of those Jews? A righteousness wrought of their own strength on which they presumed, and so declared themselves as if they were fulfillers of the law by their own virtue. But no man fulfills the law but he whom grace assists, that is, whom the bread that cometh down from heaven assists. “For the fulfilling of the law,” as the apostle says in brief, “is charity.” Charity, that is, love, not of money, but of God; love, not of earth nor of heaven, but of Him who made Heaven and earth. Whence can man have that love? Let us hear the same: “The love of God,” saith he, “is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.” Wherefore, the Lord, about to give the Holy Spirit, said that Himself was the bread that came down from heaven, exhorting us to believe on Him. For to believe on Him is to eat the living bread. He that believes eats; he is sated invisibly, because invisibly is he born again. A babe within, a new man within. Where he is made new, there he is satisfied with food.

2. What then did the Lord answer to such murmurers? “Murmur not among yourselves.” As if He said, I know why ye are not hungry, and do not understand nor seek after this bread. “Murmur not among yourselves: no man can come unto me, except the Father that sent me draw him.” Noble excellence of grace! No man comes unless drawn. There is whom He draws, and there is whom He draws not; why He draws one and draws not another, do not desire to judge, if thou desirest not to err. Accept it at once and then understand; thou art not yet drawn? Pray that thou mayest be drawn. What do we say here, brethren? If we are “drawn” to Christ, it follows that we believe against our will; so then is force applied, not the will moved. A man can come to Church unwillingly, can approach the altar unwillingly, partake of the sacrament unwillingly: but he cannot believe unless he is willing. If we believed with the body, men might be made to believe against their will. But believing is not a thing done with the body. Hear the apostle: “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” And what follows? “And with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

That confession springs from the root of the heart. Sometimes thou hearest a man confessing, and knowest not whether he believes. But thou oughtest not to call him one confessing, if thou shouldest judge him to be one not believing. For to confess is this, to utter the thing that thou hast in thy heart: if thou hast one thing in thy heart, and another thing on thy tongue, thou art speaking, not confessing. Since, then, with the heart man believeth on Christ, which no man assuredly does against his will, and since he that is drawn seems to be as if forced against his will, how are we to solve this question, “No man cometh unto me, except the Father that sent me draw him”?

3. If he is drawn, saith some one, he comes unwillingly. If he comes unwillingly, then he believes not; but if he believes not, neither does he come. For we do not run to Christ on foot, but by believing; nor is it by a motion of the body, but by the inclination of the heart that we draw nigh to Him. This is why that woman who touched the hem of His garment touched Him more than did the crowd that pressed Him. Therefore the Lord said, “Who touched me?” And the disciples wondering said, “The multitude throng Thee, and press Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched me?” And He repeated it, “Somebody hath touched me.” That woman touched, the multitude pressed. What is “touched,” except “believed”? Whence also He said to that woman that wished to throw herself at His feet after His resurrection: “‘Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to the Father.” Thou thinkest me to be that alone which thou seest; “touch me not.” What is this? Thou supposest that I am that alone which I appear to thee: do not thus believe; that is, “touch me not for I am not yet ascended to the Father.” To thee I am not ascended, for thence I never departed. She touched Him not while He stood on the earth; how then could she touch Him while ascending to the Father? Thus, however, thus He willed Himself to be touched; thus He is touched by those by whom He is profitably touched, ascending to the Father, abiding with the Father, equal to the Father.

4. Thence also He says here, if thou turn thy attention to it, “No man cometh to me except he whom the Father shall draw.” Do not think that thou art drawn against thy will. The mind is drawn also by love. Nor ought we to be afraid, lest perchance we be censured in regard to this evangelic

word of the Holy Scriptures by men who weigh words, but are far removed from things, most of all from divine things; and lest it be said to us, “How can I believe with the will if I am drawn?” I say it is not enough to be drawn by the will; thou art drawn even by delight. What is it to be drawn by delight? “Delight thyself in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thy heart.” There is a pleasure of the heart to which that bread of heaven is sweet. Moreover, if it was right in the poet to say, “Every man is drawn by his own pleasure,”—not necessity, but pleasure; not obligation, but delight,—how much more boldly ought we to say that a man is drawn to Christ when he delights in the truth, when he delights in blessedness, delights in righteousness, delights in everlasting life, all which Christ is? Or is it the case that, while the senses of the body have their pleasures, the mind is left without pleasures of its own? If the mind has no pleasures of its own, how is it said, “The sons of men shall trust under the cover of Thy wings: they shall be well satisfied with the fullness of Thy house; and Thou shalt give them drink from the river of Thy pleasure. For with Thee is the fountain of life; and in Thy light shall we see light”? Give me a man that loves, and he feels what I say. Give me one that longs, one that hungers, one that is travelling in this wilderness, and thirsting and panting after the fountain of his eternal home; give such, and he knows what I say. But if I speak to the cold and indifferent, he knows not what I say. Such were those who murmured among themselves. “He whom the Father shall draw,” saith He, “cometh unto me.”

5. But what is this, “Whom the Father shall draw,” when Christ Himself draws? Why did He say, “Whom the Father shall draw”? If we must be drawn, let us be drawn by Him to whom one who loves says, “We will run after the odor of Thine ointment.” But let us, brethren, turn our minds to, and, as far as we can, apprehend how He would have us understand it. The Father draws to the Son those who believe on the Son, because they consider that God is His Father. For God begat the Son equal to Himself, so that he who ponders, and in his faith feels and muses that He on whom he has believed is equal to the Father, this same is drawn of the Father to the Son. Arius believed the Son to be creature: the Father drew not him; for he that believes not the Son to be equal to the Father, considers not the Father. What sayest thou, Arius? What, O heretic, dost thou speak? What is Christ?

Not very God, saith he, but one whom very God has made. The Father has not drawn thee, for thou hast not understood the Father, whose Son thou deniest: it is not the Son Himself but something else that thou art thinking of. Thou art neither drawn by the Father nor drawn to the Son; for the Son is very different from what thou sayest. Photius said, "Christ is only a man, he is not also God." The Father hath not drawn him who thus believes. One whom the Father has drawn says: "Thou art Christ, Son of the living God." Not as a prophet, not as John, not as some great and just man, but as the only, the equal, "Thou art Christ, Son of the living God." See that he was drawn, and drawn by the Father. "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonas: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven." This revealing is itself the drawing. Thou holdest out a green twig to a sheep, and thou drawest it. Nuts are shown to a child, and he is attracted; he is drawn by what he runs to, drawn by loving it, drawn without hurt to the body, drawn by a cord of the heart. If, then, these things, which among earthly delights and pleasures are shown to them that love them, draw them, since it is true that "every man is drawn by his own pleasure," does not Christ, revealed by the Father, draw? For what does the soul more strongly desire than the truth? For what ought it to have a greedy appetite, with which to wish that there may be within a healthy palate for judging the things that are true, unless it be to eat and drink wisdom, righteousness, truth, eternity?

6. But where will this be? There better, there more truly, there more fully. For here we can more easily hunger than be satisfied, especially if we have good hope: for "Blessed," saith He, "are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness," that is here; "for they shall be filled," that is there. Therefore when He had said, "No man cometh unto me except the Father that sent me draw him," what did He subjoin? "And I will raise him up in the last day." I render unto him what he loves, what he hopes for: he will see what, not as yet by seeing, he has believed; he shall eat that which he hungers after; he shall be filled with that which he thirsts after. Where? In the resurrection of the dead; for "I will raise him up on the last day."

7. For it is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught of God." Why have I said this, O Jews? The Father has not taught you; how can ye

know me? For all the men of that kingdom shall be taught of God, not learn from men. And though they do learn from men, yet what they understand is given them within, flashes within, is revealed within. What do men that proclaim tidings from without? What am I doing even now while I speak? I am pouring a clatter of words into your ears. What is that that I say or that I speak, unless He that is within reveal it? Without is the planter of the tree, within is the tree's Creator. He that planteth and He that watereth work from without: this is what we do. But "neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." That is, "they shall be all taught of God." All who? "Every one who has heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me." See how the Father draws: He delights by teaching, not by imposing a necessity. Behold how He draws: "They shall be all taught of God." This is God's drawing. "Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." This is God's drawing.

8. What then, brethren? If every man who has heard and learned of the Father, the same cometh unto Christ, has Christ taught nothing here? What shall we say to this, that men who have not seen the Father as their teacher have seen the Son? The Son spake, but the Father taught. I, being a man, whom do I teach? Whom, brethren, but him who has heard my word? If I, being a man, do teach him who hears my word, the Father also teacheth him who hears His word. And if the Father teacheth him that hears His word, ask what Christ is, and thou wilt find the word of the Father. "In the beginning was the Word." Not in the beginning God made the Word, just as "in the beginning God made the heaven and the earth." Behold how that He is not a creature. Learn to be drawn to the Son by the Father: that the Father may teach thee, hear His Word. What Word of Him, sayest thou, do I hear? "In the beginning was the Word" (it is not "was made," but "was"), "and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." How can men abiding in the flesh hear such a Word? "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

9. He Himself explains this also, and shows us His meaning when He said, "He that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me." He forthwith subjoined what we were able to conceive: "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he who is of God, he hath seen the Father." What is that which He saith? I have seen the Father, you have not seen the Father;

and yet ye come not unto me unless ye are drawn by the Father. And what is it for you to be drawn by the Father but to learn of the Father? What is to learn of the Father but to hear of the Father? What is to hear of the Father but to hear the Word of the Father—that is, to hear me? In case, therefore, when I say to you, "Every man that hath heard and learned of the Father," you should say within yourselves, But we have never seen the Father, how could we learn of the Father? hear from myself: "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He who is of God, He hath seen the Father." I know the Father, I am from Him; but in that manner in which the Word is from Him where the Word is, not that which sounds and passes away, but that which remains with the speaker and attracts the hearer.

10. Let what follows admonish us: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath eternal life." He willed to reveal Himself, what He was: He might have said in brief, He that believeth on me hath me. For Christ is Himself true God and eternal life. Therefore, he that believeth on me, saith He, goeth into me; and he that goeth into me, hath me. But what is the meaning of "to have me"? To have eternal life. Eternal life took death upon itself; eternal life willed to die; but of thee, not of itself; of thee it received that whereby it may die in thy behalf. Of men, indeed, He took flesh, but yet not in the manner of men. For having His Father in heaven, He chose a mother on earth; both there begotten without mother, and here born without father. Accordingly, life took upon itself death, that life might slay death. "For he that believeth on me," saith He, "hath eternal life:" not what is open, but what is hid. For eternal life is the Word, that "in the beginning was with God, and the Word was God, and the life was the light of men." The same eternal life gave eternal life also to the flesh which it assumed. He came to die; but on the third day He rose again. Between the Word taking flesh and the flesh rising again, death which came between was consumed.

11. "I am," saith He, "the bread of life." And what was the source of their pride? "Your fathers," saith He, "did eat manha in the wilderness, and are dead." What is it whereof ye are proud? "They ate manna, and are dead." Why they ate and are dead? Because they believed that which they saw; what they saw not, they did not understand. Therefore were they "your"

fathers, because you are like them. For so far, my brethren, as relates to this visible corporeal death, do not we too die who eat the bread that cometh down from heaven? They died just as we shall die, so far, as I said, as relates to the visible and carnal death of this body. But so far as relates to that death, concerning which the Lord warns us by fear, and in which their fathers died: Moses ate manna, Aaron ate manna, Phinehas ate manna, and many ate manna, who were pleasing to the Lord, and they are not dead. Why? Because they understood the visible food spiritually, hungered spiritually, tasted spiritually, that they might be filled spiritually. For even we at this day receive visible food: but the sacrament is one thing, the virtue of the sacrament another. How many do receive at the altar and die, and die indeed by receiving? Whence the apostle saith, “Eateth and drinketh judgment to himself.” For it was not the mouthful given by the Lord that was the poison to Judas. And yet he took it; and when he took it, the enemy entered into him: not because he received an evil thing, but because he being evil received a good thing in an evil way. See ye then, brethren, that ye eat the heavenly bread in a spiritual sense; bring innocence to the altar. Though your sins are daily, at least let them not be deadly. Before ye approach the altar, consider well what ye are to say: “Forgive us our debts, even as we forgive our debtors.” Thou forgivest, it shall be forgiven thee: approach in peace, it is bread, not poison. But see whether thou forgivest; for if thou dost not forgive, thou liest, and liest to Him whom thou canst not deceive. Thou canst lie to God, but thou canst not deceive God. He knows what thou doest. He sees thee within, examines thee within, inspects within, judges within, and within He either condemns or crowns. But the fathers of these Jews were evil fathers of evil sons, unbelieving fathers of unbelieving sons, murmuring fathers of murmurers. For in no other thing is that people said to have offended the Lord more than in murmuring against God. And for that reason, the Lord, willing to show those men to be the children of such murmurers, thus begins His address to them: “Why murmur ye among yourselves,” ye murmurers, children of murmurers? Your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; not because manna was an evil thing, but because they ate it in an evil manner.

12. “This is the bread which cometh down from heaven.” Manna signified this bread; God’s altar signified this bread. Those were sacraments. In the

signs they were diverse; in the thing which was signified they were alike. Hear the apostle: “For I would not that ye should be ignorant, brethren,” saith he, “that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat.” Of course, the same spiritual meat; for corporally it was another: since they ate manna, we eat another thing; but the spiritual was the same as that which we eat. But “our” fathers, not the fathers of those Jews; those to whom we are like, not those to whom they were like. Moreover he adds: “And did all drink the same spiritual drink.” They one kind of drink, we another, but only in the visible form, which, however, signified the same thing in its spiritual virtue. For how was it that they drank the “same drink”? “They drank,” saith he “of the spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.” Thence the bread, thence the drink. The rock was Christ in sign; the real Christ is in the Word and in flesh. And how did they drink? The rock was smitten twice with a rod; the double smiting signified the two wooden beams of the cross. “This, then, is the bread that cometh down from heaven, that if any man eat thereof, he shall not die.” But this is what belongs to the virtue of the sacrament, not to the visible sacrament; he that eateth within, not without; who eateth in his heart, not who presses with his teeth.

13. “I am the living bread, which came down from heaven.” For that reason “living,” because I came down from heaven. The manna also came down from heaven; but the manna was only a shadow, this is the truth. “If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world.” When did flesh comprehend this flesh which He called bread? That is called flesh which flesh does not comprehend, and for that reason all the more flesh does not comprehend it, that it is called flesh. For they were terrified at this: they said it was too much for them; they thought it impossible. “Is my flesh,” saith He, “for the life of the world.” Believers know the body of Christ, if they neglect not to be the body of Christ. Let them become the body of Christ, if they wish to live by the Spirit of Christ. None lives by the Spirit of Christ but the body of Christ. Understand, my brethren, what I mean to say. Thou art a man; thou hast both a spirit and a body. I call that a spirit which is called the soul; that whereby it consists that thou art a man, for thou consistest of soul and

body. And so thou hast an invisible spirit and a visible body. Tell me which lives of the other: does thy spirit live of thy body, or thy body of thy spirit? Every man that lives can answer; and he that cannot answer this, I know not whether he lives: what doth every man that lives answer? My body, of course, lives by my spirit. Wouldst thou then also live by the Spirit of Christ. Be in the body of Christ. For surely my body does not live by thy spirit. My body lives by my spirit, and thy body by thy spirit. The body of Christ cannot live but by the Spirit of Christ. It is for this that the Apostle Paul, expounding this bread, says: "One bread," saith he, "we being many are one body." O mystery of piety! O sign of unity! O bond of charity! He that would live has where to live, has whence to live. Let him draw near, let him believe; let him be embodied, that he may be made to live. Let him not shrink from the compact of members; let him not be a rotten member that deserves to be cut off; let him not be a deformed member whereof to be ashamed; let him be a fair, fit, and sound member; let him cleave to the body, live for God by God: now let him labor on earth, that hereafter he may reign in heaven.

14. The Jews, therefore, strove among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" They strove, and that among themselves, since they understood not, neither wished to take the bread of concord: "for they who eat such bread do not strive with one another; for we being many are one bread, one body." And by this bread, "God makes people of one sort to dwell in a house."

15. But that which they ask, while striving among themselves, namely, how the Lord can give His flesh to be eaten, they do not immediately hear: but further it is said to them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye will have no life in you." How, indeed, it may be eaten, and what may be the mode of eating this bread, ye are ignorant of; nevertheless, "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye will not have life in you." He spoke these words, not certainly to corpses, but to living men. Whereupon, lest they, understanding it to mean this life, should strive about this thing also, He going on added, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life." Wherefore, he that eateth not this bread, nor drinketh this

blood, hath not this life; for men can have temporal life without that, but they can noways have eternal life. He then that eateth not His flesh, nor drinketh His blood, hath no life in him; and he that eateth His flesh, and drinketh His blood, hath life. This epithet, eternal, which He used, answers to both. It is not so in the case of that food which we take for the purpose of sustaining this temporal life. For he who will not take it shall not live, nor yet shall he who will take it live. For very many, even who have taken it, die; it may be by old age, or by disease, or by some other casualty. But in this food and drink, that is, in the body and blood of the Lord, it is not so. For both he that doth not take it hath no life, and he that doth take it hath life, and that indeed eternal life. And thus He would have this meat and drink to be understood as meaning the fellowship of His own body and members, which is the holy Church in his predestinated, and called, and justified, and glorified saints and believers. Of these, the first is already effected, namely, predestination; the second and third, that is, the vocation and justification, have taken place, are taking place, and will take place; but the fourth, namely, the glorifying, is at present in hope; but a thing future in realization. The sacrament of this thing, namely, of the unity of the body and blood of Christ, is prepared on the Lord's table in some places daily, in some places at certain intervals of days, and from the Lord's table it is taken, by some to life, by some to destruction: but the thing itself, of which it is the sacrament, is for every man to life, for no man to destruction, whosoever shall have been a partaker thereof.

16. But lest they should suppose that eternal life was promised in this meat and drink in such manner that they who should take it should not even now die in the body, He condescended to meet this thought; for when He had said, "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life," He forthwith subjoined, "and I will raise him up on the last day." That meanwhile, according to the Spirit, he may have eternal life in that rest into which the spirits of the saints are received; but as to the body, he shall not be defrauded of its eternal life, but, on the contrary, he shall have it in the resurrection of the dead at the last day.

17. "For my flesh," saith He, "is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." For whilst by meat and drink men seek to attain to this, neither to

hunger nor thirst, there is nothing that truly affords this, except this meat and drink, which doth render them by whom it is taken immortal and incorruptible; that is, the very fellowship of the saints, where will be peace and unity, full and perfect. Therefore, indeed, it is, even as men of God understood this before us, that our Lord Jesus Christ has pointed our minds to His body and blood in those things, which from being many are reduced to some one thing. For a unity is formed by many grains forming together; and another unity is effected by the clustering together of many berries.

18. In a word, He now explains how that which He speaks of comes to pass, and what it is to eat His body and to drink His blood. “He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.” This it is, therefore, for a man to eat that meat and to drink that drink, to dwell in Christ, and to have Christ dwelling in him. Consequently, he that dwelleth not in Christ, and in whom Christ dwelleth not, doubtless neither eateth His flesh [spiritually] nor drinketh His blood [although he may press the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ carnally and visibly with his teeth], but rather doth he eat and drink the sacrament of so great a thing to his own judgment, because he, being unclean, has presumed to come to the sacraments of Christ, which no man taketh worthily except he that is pure: of such it is said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

19. “As the living Father hath sent me,” saith He, “and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” He says not: As I eat the Father, and live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same shall live by me. For the Son, who was begotten equal, does not become better by participation of the Father; just as we are made better by participation of the Son, through the unity of His body and blood, which thing that eating and drinking signifies. We live then by Him, by eating Him; that is, by receiving Himself as the eternal life, which we did not have from ourselves. Himself, however, lives by the Father, being sent by Him, because “He emptied Himself, being made obedient even unto the death of the cross.” For if we take this declaration, “I live by the Father,” according to that which He says in another place, “The Father is greater than I;” just as we, too, live by Him who is greater than we; this results from His being sent. The sending is in fact the emptying of Himself, and His taking upon Him the form of a

servant: and this is rightly understood, while also the Son’s equality of nature with the Father is preserved. For the Father is greater than the Son as man, but He has the Son as God equal,—whilst the same is both God and man, Son of God and Son of man, one Christ Jesus. To this effect, if these words are rightly understood, He spoke thus: “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me:” just as if He were to say, My emptying of myself (in that He sent me) effected that I should live by the Father; that is, should refer my life to Him as the greater; but that any should live by me is effected by that participation in which he eats me. Therefore, I being humbled, do live by the Father, man being raised up, liveth by me. But if it was said, “I live by the Father,” so as to mean, that He is of the Father, not the Father of Him, it was said without detriment to His equality. And yet further, by saying, “And he that eateth me, even he shall live by me,” He did not signify that His own equality was the same as our equality, but He thereby showed the grace of the Mediator.

20. “This is the bread that cometh down from heaven;” that by eating it we may live, since we cannot have eternal life from ourselves. “Not,” saith He, “as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth this bread shall live forever.” That those fathers are dead, He would have to be understood as meaning, that they do not live forever. For even they who eat Christ shall certainly die temporally; but they live forever, because Christ is eternal life.

TRACTATE XXVII

CHAPTER VI. 60–72

1. We have just heard out of the Gospel the words of the Lord which follow the former discourse. From these a discourse is due to your ears and minds, and it is not unseasonable to-day; for it is concerning the body of the Lord which He said that He gave to be eaten for eternal life. And He explained the mode of this bestowal and gift of His, in what manner He gave His flesh to eat, saying, “He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.” The proof that a man has eaten and drank is this, if he abides and is abode in, if he dwells and is dwelt in, if he adheres so as not to be deserted. This, then, He has taught us, and admonished us in mystical

words that we may be in His body, in His members under Himself as head, eating His flesh, not abandoning our unity with Him. But most of those who were present, by not understanding Him, were offended; for in hearing these things, they thought only of flesh, that which themselves were. But the apostle says, and says what is true, “To be carnally-minded is death.” The Lord gives us His flesh to eat, and yet to understand it according to the flesh is death; while yet He says of His flesh, that therein is eternal life. Therefore we ought not to understand the flesh carnally. As in these words that follow:

2. “Many therefore,” not of His enemies, but “of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it?” If His disciples accounted this saying hard, what must His enemies have thought? And yet so it behoved that to be said which should not be understood by all. The secret of God ought to make men eagerly attentive, not hostile. But these men quickly departed from Him, while the Lord said such things: they did not believe Him to be saying something great, and covering some grace by these words; they understood just according to their wishes, and in the manner of men, that Jesus was able, or was determined upon this, namely, to distribute the flesh with which the Word was clothed, piecemeal, as it were, to those that believe on Him. “This,” say they, “is a hard saying; who can hear it?”

3. “But Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples murmured at it,”—for they so said these things with themselves that they might not be heard by Him: but He who knew them in themselves, hearing within Himself,—answered and said, “This offends you;” because I said, I give you my flesh to eat, and my blood to drink, this forsooth offends you. “Then what if ye shall see the Son of man ascending where He was before?” What is this? Did He hereby solve the question that perplexed them? Did He hereby uncover the source of their offense? He did clearly, if only they understood. For they supposed that He was going to deal out His body to them; but He said that He was to ascend into heaven, of course, whole: “When ye shall see the Son of man ascending where He was before;” certainly then, at least, you will see that not in the manner you suppose does He dispense His

body; certainly then, at least, you will understand that His grace is not consumed by tooth-biting.

4. And He said, “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.” Before we expound this, as the Lord grants us, that other must not be negligently passed over, where He says, “Then what if ye shall see the Son of man ascending where He was before?” For Christ is the Son of man, of the Virgin Mary. Therefore Son of man He began to be here on earth, where He took flesh from the earth. For which cause it was said prophetically, “Truth is sprung from the earth.” Then what does He mean when He says, “When ye shall see the Son of man ascending where He was before”? For there had been no question if He had spoken thus: “If ye shall see the Son of God ascending where He was before.” But since He said, “The Son of man ascending where He was before,” surely the Son of man was not in heaven before the time when He began to have a being on earth? Here, indeed, He said, “where He was before,” just as if He were not there at this time when He spoke these words. But in another place He says, “No man has ascended into heaven but He that came down from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven.” He said not “was,” but, saith He, “the Son of man who is in heaven.” He was speaking on earth, and He declared Himself to be in heaven. And yet He did not speak thus: “No man hath ascended into heaven but He that came down from heaven,” the Son of God, “who is in heaven.” Whither tends it, but to make us understand that which even in the former discourse I commended to your minds, my beloved, that Christ, both God and man, is one person, not two persons, lest our faith be not a trinity, but a quaternity? Christ, therefore, is one; the Word, soul and flesh, one Christ; the Son of God and Son of man, one Christ; Son of God always, Son of man in time, yet one Christ in regard to unity of person. In heaven He was when He spoke on earth. He was Son of man in heaven in that manner in which He was Son of God on earth; Son of God on earth in the flesh which He took, Son of man in heaven in the unity of person.

5. What is it, then, that He adds? “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.” Let us say to Him (for He permits us, not contradicting Him, but desiring to know), O Lord, good Master, in what way does the flesh profit nothing, whilst Thou hast said, “Except a man eat my flesh, and

drink my blood, he shall not have life in him?” Or does life profit nothing? And why are we what we are, but that we may have eternal life, which Thou dost promise by Thy flesh? Then what means “the flesh profiteth nothing”? It profiteth nothing, but only in the manner in which they understood it. They indeed understood the flesh, just as when cut to pieces in a carcass, or sold in the shambles; not as when it is quickened by the Spirit. Wherefore it is said that “the flesh profiteth nothing,” in the same manner as it is said that “knowledge puffeth up.” Then, ought we at once to hate knowledge? Far from it! And what means “Knowledge puffeth up”? Knowledge alone, without charity. Therefore he added, “but charity edifieth.” Therefore add thou to knowledge charity, and knowledge will be profitable, not by itself, but through charity. So also here, “the flesh profiteth nothing,” only when alone. Let the Spirit be added to the flesh, as charity is added to knowledge, and it profiteth very much. For if the flesh profited nothing, the Word would not be made flesh to dwell among us. If through the flesh Christ has greatly profited us, does the flesh profit nothing? But it is by the flesh that the Spirit has done somewhat for our salvation. Flesh was a vessel; consider what it held, not what it was. The apostles were sent forth; did their flesh profit us nothing? If the apostles’ flesh profited us, could it be that the Lord’s flesh should have profited us nothing? For how should the sound of the Word come to us except by the voice of the flesh? Whence should writing come to us? All these are operations of the flesh, but only when the spirit moves it, as if it were its organ. Therefore “it is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing,” as they understood the flesh, but not so do I give my flesh to be eaten.

6. Hence “the words,” saith He, “which I have spoken to you are Spirit and life.” For we have said, brethren, that this is what the Lord had taught us by the eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood, that we should abide in Him and He in us. But we abide in Him when we are His members, and He abides in us when we are His temple. But that we may be His members, unity joins us together. And what but love can effect that unity should join us together? And the love of God, whence is it? Ask the apostle: “The love of God,” saith he, “is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us.” Therefore “it is the Spirit that quickeneth,” for it is the Spirit

that makes living members. Nor does the Spirit make any members to be living except such as it finds in the body, which also the Spirit itself quickens. For the Spirit which is in thee, O man, by which it consists that thou art a man, does it quicken a member which it finds separated from thy flesh? I call thy soul thy spirit. Thy soul quickeneth only the members which are in thy flesh; if thou takest one away, it is no longer quickened by thy soul, because it is not joined to the unity of thy body. These things are said to make us love unity and fear separation. For there is nothing that a Christian ought to dread so much as to be separated from Christ's body. For if he is separated from Christ's body, he is not a member of Christ; if he is not a member of Christ, he is not quickened by the Spirit of Christ. "But if any man," saith the apostle, "have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." "It is the Spirit," then, "that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." What means "are spirit and life"? They are to be understood spiritually. Hast thou understood spiritually? "They are spirit and life." Hast thou understood carnally? So also "are they spirit and life," but are not so to thee.

7. "But," saith He, "there are some among you that believe not." He said not, There are some among you that understand not; but He told the cause why they understand not. "There are some among you that believe not," and therefore they understand not, because they believe not. For the prophet has said, "If ye believe not, ye shall not understand." We are united by faith, quickened by understanding. Let us first adhere to Him through faith, that there may be that which may be quickened by understanding. For he who adheres not resists; he that resists believes not. And how can he that resists be quickened? He is an adversary to the ray of light by which he should be penetrated: he turns not away his eye, but shuts his mind. "There are," then, "some who believe not." Let them believe and open, let them open and be illumined. "For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed, and who should betray Him." For Judas also was there. Some indeed, were offended; but he remained to watch his opportunity, not to understand. And because he remained for that purpose, the Lord kept not silence concerning him. He described him not by name, but neither was He silent about him; that all might fear though only one should perish. But after He spoke, and distinguished those that believe from those that believe not,

He clearly showed the cause why they believed not. “Therefore I said unto you,” saith He, “that no man can come unto me except it were given to him of my Father.” Hence to believe is also given to us; for certainly to believe is something. And if it is something great, rejoice that thou hast believed, yet be not lifted up; for “What hast thou that thou didst not receive?”

8. “From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him.” Went back, but after Satan, not after Christ. For our Lord Christ once addressed Peter as Satan, rather because he wished to precede his Lord, and to give counsel that He should not die, He who had come to die, that we might not die for ever; and He says to him, “Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.” He did not drive him back to go after Satan, and so called him Satan; but He made him go behind Himself, that by walking after his Lord he should not be a Satan. But these went back in the same manner as the apostle says of certain women: “For some are turned back after Satan.” They walked not further with Him. Behold, cut off from the body, for perhaps they were not in the body, they have lost life. They must be reckoned among the unbelieving, notwithstanding they were called disciples. Not a few, but “many went back.” This happened, it may be, for our consolation. For sometimes it happens that a man may declare the truth, and that what he says may not be understood, and so they that hear it are offended and go away. Now the man regrets that he had spoken that truth, and he says to himself, “I ought not to have spoken so, I ought not to have said this.” Behold; it happened to the Lord: He spoke, and lost many; He remained with few. But yet He was not troubled, because He knew from the beginning who they were that believed and that believed not. If it happen to us, we are sorely perplexed. Let us find comfort in the Lord, and yet let us speak words with prudence.

9. And now addressing the few that remained: “Then said Jesus to the twelve” (namely, those twelve who remained), “Will ye also,” said He, “go away?” Not even Judas departed. But it was already manifest to the Lord why he remained: to us he was made manifest afterwards. Peter answered in behalf of all, one for many, unity for the collective whole: “Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go?” Thou drivest us from

Thee; give us Thy other self. “To whom shall we go?” If we abandon Thee, to whom shall we go? “Thou hast the words of eternal life.” See how Peter, by the gift of God and the renewal of the Holy Spirit, understood Him. How other than because he believed? “Thou hast the words of eternal life.” For Thou hast eternal life in the ministration of Thy body and blood. “And we have believed and have known.” Not have known and believed, but “believed and known.” For we believed in order to know; for if we wanted to know first, and then to believe, we should not be able either to know or to believe. What have we believed and known? “That Thou art Christ, the Son of God;” that is, that Thou art that very eternal life, and that Thou givest in Thy flesh and blood only that which Thou art.

10. Then said the Lord Jesus: “Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” Therefore, should He have said, “I have chosen eleven:” or is a devil also chosen, and among the elect? Persons are wont to be called “elect” by way of praise: or was man elected because some great good was done by him, without his will and knowledge? This belongs peculiarly to God; the contrary is characteristic of the wicked. For as wicked men make a bad use of the good works of God; so, on the contrary, God makes a good use of the evil works of wicked men. How good it is that the members of the body are, as they can be disposed only by God, their author and framer! Nevertheless what evil use doth wantonness make of the eyes? What ill use doth falsehood make of the tongue? Does not the false witness first both slay his own soul with his tongue, and then, after he has destroyed himself, endeavor to injure another? He makes an ill use of the tongue, but the tongue is not therefore an evil thing; the tongue is God’s work, but iniquity makes an ill use of that good work of God. How do they use their feet who run into crimes? How do murderers employ their hands? And what ill use do wicked men make of those good creatures of God that lie outside of them? With gold they corrupt judgment and oppress the innocent. Bad men make a bad use of the very light; for by evil living they employ even the very light with which they see into the service of their villanies. A bad man, when going to do a bad deed, wishes the light to shine for him, lest he stumble; he who has already stumbled and fallen within; that which he is afraid of in his body has already befallen him in his heart. Hence, to avoid the tediousness of running through them separately, a bad man makes a bad

use of all the good creatures of God: a good man, on the contrary, makes a good use of the evil deeds of wicked men. And what is so good as the one God? Since, indeed, the Lord Himself said, “There is none good, but the one God.” By how much He is better, then, by so much the better use He makes of our evil deeds. What worse than Judas? Among all that adhered to the Master, among the twelve, to him was committed the common purse; to him was allotted the dispensing for the poor. Unthankful for so great a favor, so great an honor, he took the money, and lost righteousness: being dead, he betrayed life: Him whom he followed as a disciple, he persecuted as an enemy. All this evil was Judas’s; but the Lord employed his evil for good. He endured to be betrayed, to redeem us. Behold, Judas’s evil was turned to good. How many martyrs has Satan persecuted! If Satan left off persecuting, we should not to-day be celebrating the very glorious crown of Saint Laurence. If then God employs the evil works of the devil himself for good, what the bad man effects, by making a bad use, is to hurt himself, not to contradict the goodness of God. The Master makes use of that man. And if He knew not how to make use of him, the Master contriver would not have permitted him to be. Therefore, He saith, “One of you is a devil,” whilst I have chosen you twelve. This saying, “I have chosen you twelve,” may be understood in this way, that twelve is a sacred number. For the honor of that number was not taken away because one was lost, for another was chosen into the place of the one that perished. The number remained a sacred number, a number containing twelve: because they were to make known the Trinity throughout the whole world, that is, throughout the four quarters of the world. That is the reason of the three times four. Judas, then only cut himself off, not profaned the number twelve: he abandoned his Teacher, for God appointed a successor to take his place.

11. All this that the Lord spoke concerning His flesh and blood;—and in the grace of that distribution He promised us eternal life, and that He meant those that eat His flesh and drink His blood to be understood, from the fact of their abiding in Him and He in them; and that they understood not who believed not; and that they were offended through their understanding spiritual things in a carnal sense; and that, while these were offended and perished, the Lord was present for the consolation of the disciples who remained, for proving whom He asked, “Will ye also go away?” that the

reply of their steadfastness might be known to us, for He knew that they remained with Him;—let all this, then, avail us to this end, most beloved, that we eat not the flesh and blood of Christ merely in the sacrament, as many evil men do, but that we eat and drink to the participation of the Spirit, that we abide as members in the Lord's body, to be quickened by His Spirit, and that we be not offended, even if many do now with us eat and drink the sacraments in a temporal manner, who shall in the end have eternal torments. For at present Christ's body is as it were mixed on the threshing-floor: "But the Lord knoweth them that are His." If thou knowest what thou threshest, that the substance is there hidden, that the threshing has not consumed what the winnowing has purged; certain are we, brethren, that all of us who are in the Lord's body, and abide in Him, that He also may abide in us, have of necessity to live among evil men in this world even unto the end. I do not say among those evil men who blaspheme Christ; for there are now few found who blaspheme with the tongue, but many who do so by their life. Among those, then, we must necessarily live even unto the end.

12. But what is this that He saith: "He that abideth in me, and I in him"? What, but that which the martyrs heard: "He that persevereth unto the end, the same shall be saved"? How did Saint Laurence, whose feast we celebrate to-day, abide in Him? He abode even to temptation, abode even to tyrannical questioning, abode even to bitterest threatening, abode even to destruction;—that were a trifle, abode even to savage torture. For he was not put to death quickly, but tormented in the fire: he was allowed to live a long time; nay, not allowed to live a long time, but forced to die a slow, lingering death. Then, in that lingering death, in those torments, because he had well eaten and well drunk, as one who had feasted on that meat, as one intoxicated with that cup, he felt not the torments. For He was there who said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." For the flesh indeed was burning, but the Spirit was quickening the soul. He shrunk not back, and he mounted into the kingdom. But the holy martyr Xystus, whose day we celebrated five days ago, had said to him, "Mourn not, my son;" for Xystus was a bishop, he was a deacon. "Mourn not," said he; "thou shall follow me after three days." He said three days, meaning the interval between the day of Saint Xystus's suffering and that of Saint Laurence's suffering, which falls

on to-day. Three days is the interval. What comfort! He says not, “Mourn not, my son; the persecution will cease, and thou wilt be safe;” but, “do not mourn: whither I precede thou shalt follow; nor shall thy pursuit be deferred: three days will be the interval, and thou shalt be with me.” He accepted the oracle, vanquished the devil, and attained to the triumph.

TRACTATE XXVIII

CHAPTER VII. 1–13

1. In this chapter of the Gospel, brethren, our Lord Jesus Christ has most especially commended Himself to our faith in respect of His humanity. For indeed He always keeps in view, both in His words and deeds, that He should be believed to be God and man: God who made us, man who sought us; with the Father, always God; with us, man in time. For He would not have sought man whom He had made if Himself had not become that which He had made. But remember this, and do not let it slip from your hearts, that Christ became man in such manner that He ceased not to be God. While remaining God, He who made man took manhood. While, therefore, as man He concealed Himself, He must not be thought to have lost His power, but only to have offered an example to our infirmity. For He was detained when He willed to be, and He was put to death when he willed to be. But since there were to be His members, that is, His faithful ones, who would not have that power which He, our God, had; by His being hid, by His con cealing Himself as if He would not be put to death, He indicated that His members would do this, in which members He Himself in fact was. For Christ is not simply in the head and not in the body, but Christ whole is in the head and body. What, therefore, His members are, that He is; but what He is, it does not necessarily follow that His members are. For if His members were not Himself, He would not have said, “Saul, why persecutest thou me?” For Saul was not persecuting Himself on earth, but His members, namely, His believers. He would not, however, say, my saints, my servants, or, in short, my brethren, which is more honorable; but, me, that is, my members, whose head I am.

2. With these preliminary remarks, I think that we shall not have to labor much for the meaning in this chapter; for that is often betokened in the head

which was to be in the body. “After these things,” saith he, “Jesus walked in Galilee: for He would not walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him.” This is what I have said; He offered an example to our infirmity. He had not lost power, but He was comforting our weakness. For it would happen, as I have said, that some believer in Him would retreat into concealment, lest he should be found by the persecutors; and lest the concealment should be objected to him as a crime, that occurred first in the head, which should afterwards be confirmed in the member. For it is said, “He would not walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him,” just as if Christ were not able both to walk among the Jews, and not be killed by them. For He manifested this power when He willed; for when they would lay hold of Him, as He was now about to suffer, “He said to them, Whom seek ye? They answered, Jesus. Then, said He, I am He,” not concealing, but manifesting Himself. That manifestation, however, they did not withstand, but “going backwards, they fell to the ground.” And yet, because He had come to suffer, they rose up, laid hold of Him, led Him away to the judge, and slew Him. But what was it they did? That which a certain scripture says: “The earth was delivered into the hands of the ungodly.” The flesh was given into the power of the Jews; and this that thereby the bag, as it were, might be rent asunder, whence our purchase-price might run out.

3. “Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand.” What the feast of tabernacles is, they who read the Scriptures know. They used on the holy day to make tabernacles, in likeness of the tabernacles in which they dwelt while they sojourned in the wilderness, after being led out of Egypt. This was a holy day, a great solemnity. The Jews were celebrating this, as being mindful of the Lord’s benefits—they who were about to kill the Lord. On this holy day, then (for there were several holy days; but it was called a holy day with the Jews, though it was not one day, but several), “His brethren” spoke to the Lord Christ. Understand the phrase, “His brethren,” as you know it must be taken, for it is not a new thing you hear. The blood relations of the Virgin Mary used to be called the Lord’s brethren. For it was of the usage of Scripture to call blood relations and all other near kindred by the term brethren, which is foreign to our usage, and not within our manner of speech. For who would call an uncle or a sister’s son “brother”? Yet the Scripture calls relatives of this kind “brothers.” For

Abraham and Lot are called brothers, while Abraham was Lot’s uncle. Laban and Jacob are called brothers, while Laban was Jacob’s uncle. When, therefore, you hear of the Lord’s brethren, consider them the blood relations of Mary, who did not a second time bear children. For, as in the sepulchre, where the Lord’s body was laid, neither before nor after did any dead lie; so, likewise, Mary’s womb, neither before nor after conceived anything mortal.

4. We have said who the brethren were, let us hear what they said: “Pass over hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see thy work which thou doest.” The Lord’s works were not hid from the disciples, but to these men they were not apparent. They might have Christ for a kinsman, but through that very relationship they disdained to believe on Him. It is told us in the Gospel; for we dare not hold this as a mere opinion, you have just now heard it. They go on advising Him: “For no man doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly: if thou do these things, show thyself to the world.” And directly after it says: “For neither did His brethren believe in Him.” Why did they not believe in Him? Because they sought human glory. For as to what His brethren appear to advise Him, they consult for His glory. Thou doest marvellous works, make thyself known; that is, appear to all, that thou mayest be praised by all. The flesh spoke to the flesh; but the flesh without God, to the flesh with God. It was the wisdom of the flesh speak ing to the Word which became flesh and dwelt among us.

5. What did the Lord answer to these things? Then saith Jesus to them: “My time is not yet come; but your time is always ready.” What is this? Had not Christ’s time yet come? Why then was Christ come, if His time had not yet come? Have we not heard the apostle say, “But when the fullness of time came, God sent His Son”? If, therefore, He was sent in the fullness of time, He was sent when He ought to be sent, He came when it behoved that He should come. What means then, “My time is not yet come”? Understand, brethren, with what intention they spoke, when they appeared to advise Him as their brother. They were giving Him counsel to pursue glory; as advising in a worldly manner and with an earthly disposition, that He should not be unknown to fame, nor hide Himself in obscurity. This is what the Lord says

in answer to those who were giving Him counsel of glory, “My time is not yet come;”—the time of my glory is not yet come. See how profound it is: they were advising Him as to glory; but He would have loftiness preceded by humility, and willed to prepare the way to elevation itself through humility. For those disciples, too, were of course seeking glory who wished to sit, one at His right hand and the other at His left: they thought only of the goal, and saw not by what way it must be reached; the Lord recalled them to the way, that they might come to their fatherland in due order. For the fatherland is on high, the way thither lies low. That land is the life of Christ, the way is Christ’s death; that land is the habitation of Christ, the way is Christ’s suffering. He that refuses the way, why seeks he the fatherland? In a word, to these also, while seeking elevation, He gave this answer: “Can ye drink the cup which I am about to drink?” Behold the way by which you must come to that height which you desire. The cup He made mention of was indeed that of His humility and suffering.

6. Therefore also here: “My time is not yet come; but your time,” that is the glory of the world, “is always ready.” This is the time of which Christ, that is the body of Christ, speaks in prophecy: “When I shall have received the fit time, I will judge righteously.” For at present it is not the time of judging, but of tolerating the wicked. Therefore, let the body of Christ bear at present, and tolerate the wickedness of evil livers. Let it, however, have righteousness now, for by righteousness it shall come to judgment. And what saith the Holy Scripture in the psalm to the members,—namely, that tolerate the wickedness of this world? “The Lord will not cast off His people.” For, in fact, His people labors among the unworthy, among the unrighteous, among blasphemers, among murmurers, detractors, persecutors, and, if they are allowed, destroyers. Yes, it labors; but “the Lord will not cast off His people, and He will not forsake His inheritance until justice is turned into judgment.” “Until the justice,” which is now in His saints, “be turned into judgment;” when that shall be fulfilled which was said to them, “Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” The apostle had righteousness, but not yet that judgment of which he says, “Know ye not that we shall judge angels?” Be it now, therefore, the time for living rightly; the time for judging them that have lived ill shall be hereafter. “Until righteousness,” saith he, “is turned into

judgment.” The time of judgment will be that of which the Lord has here said, “My time is not yet come.” For there will be a time of glory, when He who came in humility will come in loftiness; He who came to be judged will come to judge; He who came to be slain by the dead will come to judge the quick and the dead. “God,” saith the psalm, “will come manifest, our God, and He will not be silent.” What is “shall come manifest”? Because He came concealed. Then He will not be silent; for when He came concealed, “He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer, He opened not His mouth.” He shall come, and shall not keep silence. “I was silent,” saith He, “shall I always be silent?”

7. But what is necessary at the present time for those who have righteousness? That which is read in that psalm: “Until righteousness is turned into judgment, and they that have it are upright of heart.” You ask, perhaps, who are the upright in heart? We find in Scripture those to be upright in heart who bear the evils of the world, and do not accuse God. See, brethren, an uncommon thing is that which I speak of. For I know not how it is that, when any evil befalls a man, he runs to accuse God, when he ought to accuse himself. When thou gettest any good, thou praisest thyself; when thou sufferest any evil, thou accusest God. This is then the crooked heart, not the upright. When thou art cured of this distorting and perversity, what thou didst use to do will be turned into the contrary. For what didst thou use to do before? Thou didst praise thyself in the good things of God, and didst accuse God in thine own evil things; with thy heart converted and made right, thou wilt praise God in His good things, and accuse thyself in thy own evil things. These are the upright in heart. In short, that man, who was not yet right in heart when the success of the wicked and the distress of the good grieved him, says, when he is corrected: “How good is the God of Israel to the upright in heart! But as for me,” when I was not right in heart, “my feet were almost gone; my steps had well-nigh slipped.” Why? “Because I was envious at sinners, beholding the peace of sinners.” I saw, saith he, the wicked prosperous, and I was displeased at God; for I did wish that God should not permit the wicked to be happy. Let man understand: God never does permit this; but a bad man is thought to be happy, for this reason, because men are ignorant of what happiness is. Let us then be right in heart: the time of our glory is not yet come. Let it be told to the lovers of

this world, such as the brethren of the Lord were, “your time is always ready;” our time “is not yet come.” For let us, too, dare to say this. And since we are the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, since we are His members, since we joyfully acknowledge our head, let us say it without hesitation; since, for our sakes, He deigned also Himself to say this. And when the lovers of this world revile us, let us say to them, “Your time is always ready; our time is not yet come.” For the apostle has said to us, “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” When will our time come? “When Christ,” saith he, “your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.”

8. What said He further? “The world cannot hate you.” What is this, but, The world cannot hate its lovers, the false witnesses? For you call the things that are evil, good; and the things that are good, evil. “But me it hateth, because I bear witness concerning it, that its works are evil. Go ye up to this feast.” What means “to this”? Where ye seek human glory. What means “to this”? Where ye wish to prolong carnal joys, not to meditate on eternal joys. “I go not up to this feast, because my time is not yet full come.” On this feast-day you seek human glory; but my time, that is, the time of my glory, is not yet come. That will be my feast-day, not running before and passing over these days, but remaining for ever; that will be festivity, joy without end, eternity without a blot, serenity without a cloud. “When He had said these words unto them, He abode still in Galilee. But when His brethren were gone up, then went He also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.” Therefore “not to this feast-day,” because His desire was not for temporal glory, but to teach something to profit, to correct men, to admonish them of an eternal feast-day, to turn away their love from this world, and to turn it to God. But what means this, “He went up as it were in secret to the feast”? This action of the Lord also is not without meaning. It appears to me that, even from this circumstance that He went up as it were in secret, He had intended to signify something; for the things that follow will show that He thus went up on the middle of the feast, that is, when those days were half over, to teach even openly. But he said, “As it were in secret,” meaning, not to show Himself to men. It is not without meaning that Christ went up “as it were in secret” to that feast, because He Himself lay hid in that feast-day. What I have said as yet is also under cover of

secrecy. Let it be manifested then, let the veil be lifted, and let that which was secret appear.

9. All things that were spoken to the ancient people Israel in the manifold Scripture of the holy law, what things they did, whether in sacrifices, or in priestly offices, or in feast-days, and, in a word, in what things soever they worshipped God, what things soever were spoken to and given them in precept, were shadows of things to come. Of what things to come? Things which find their fulfillment in Christ. Whence the apostle says, “For all the promises of God are in Him yea;” that is, they are fulfilled in Him. Again he says in another place, “All happened to them in a figure; but they were written for our sakes, upon whom the end of the ages is come.” And he said elsewhere, “For Christ is the end of the law;” likewise in another place, “Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of a new moon, or of Sabbath-days, which is a shadow of things to come.” If, therefore, all these things were shadows of things to come, also the feast of tabernacles was a shadow of things to come. Let us examine, then, of what thing to come was this feast-day a shadow. I have explained what this feast of tabernacles was: it was a celebration of taber nacles, because the people, after their deliverance from Egypt, while directing their course through the wilderness to the land of promise, dwelt in tents. Let us observe what it is, and we shall be that thing; we, I say, who are members of Christ, if such we are; but we are, He having made us worthy, not we having earned it for ourselves. Let us then consider ourselves, brethren: we have been led out of Egypt, where we were slaves to the devil as to Pharaoh; where we applied ourselves to works of clay, engaged in earthly desires, and where we toiled exceedingly. And to us, while laboring, as it were, at the bricks, Christ cried aloud, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden.” Thence we were led out by baptism as through the Red Sea,—red because consecrated by the blood of Christ. All our enemies that pursued us being dead, that is, all our sins being blotted out, we have been brought over to the other side. At the present time, then, before we come to the land of promise, namely, the eternal kingdom, we are in the wilderness in tabernacles. They who acknowledge these things are in tabernacles; for it was to be that some would acknowledge this. For that man, who understands that he is a sojourner in this world, is in tabernacles. That man

understands that he is travelling in a foreign country, when he sees himself sighing for his native land. But whilst the body of Christ is in tabernacles, Christ is in tabernacles; but at that time He was so, not evidently but secretly. For as yet the shadow obscured the light; when the light came, the shadow was removed. Christ was in secret: He was in the feast of tabernacles, but there hidden. At the present time, when these things are already made manifest, we acknowledge that we are journeying in the wilderness: for if we know it, we are in the wilderness. What is it to be in the wilderness? In the desert waste. Why in the desert waste? Because in this world, where we thirst in a way in which is no water. But yet, let us thirst that we may be filled. For, “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” And our thirst is quenched from the rock in the wilderness: for “the Rock was Christ,” and it was smitten with a rod that the water might flow. But that it might flow, the rock was smitten twice: because there are two beams of the cross. All these things, then, which were done in a figure, are made manifest to us. And it is not without meaning that it was said of the Lord, “He went up to the feast-day, but not openly, but as it were in secret.” For Himself in secret was the thing prefigured, because Christ was hid in that same festal-day; for that very festal-day signified Christ’s members that were to sojourn in a foreign land.

10. “Then the Jews sought Him on the feast-day:” before He went up. For His brethren went up before Him, and He went not up then when they supposed and wished: that this too might be fulfilled which He said, “Not to this, that is, the first or second day, to which you wish me to go. But He went up afterwards, as the Gospel tells us, “on the middle of the feast;’ that is, when as many days of that feast had passed as there remained. For they celebrated that same festival, so far we can understand, on several successive days.

11. “They said, therefore, Where is he? And there was much murmuring among the people concerning Him.” Whence the murmuring? Of strife. What was the strife? “Some said, He is a good man; but others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.” We must understand this of all His servants: this is said now of them. For whoever becomes eminent in some spiritual

grace, of him some will assuredly say, “He is a good man;” others, “Nay; but he deceiveth the people.” Whence is this? “Because our life is hid with Christ in God.” On this account people may say during the winter, This tree is dead; for example, a fig tree, pear tree, or some kind of fruit tree, it is like a withered tree, and so long as it is winter it does not appear whether it is so or not. But the summer proves, the judgment proves. Our summer is the appearing of Christ: “God shall come manifest, our God, and He will not be silent;” “fire shall go before Him:” that fire “shall burn up His enemies:” that fire shall lay hold of the withered trees. For then shall the dry trees be apparent, when it shall be said to them, “I was hungry, and ye gave me not to eat;” but on the other side, namely, on the right, will be seen abundance of fruit, and magnificence of leaves; the green will be eternity. To those, then, as withered trees, it shall be said, “Go into everlasting fire. For behold,” it saith, “the axe is laid to the root of the trees: every tree, therefore, that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be cut down, and cast into the fire.” Let them then say of thee, if thou art growing in Christ, let men say of thee, “He deceiveth the people.” This is said of Christ Himself; it is said of the whole body of Christ. Think of the body of Christ still in the world, think of it still on the threshing-floor; see how it is blasphemed by the chaff. The chaff and the grain are, indeed, threshed together; but the chaff is consumed, the corn is purged. What was said of the Lord then, avails for consolation, whenever it will be said of any Christian.

12. “Howbeit no man spake openly of Him for fear of the Jews.” But who were they that did not speak of Him for fear of the Jews? Undoubtedly they who said, “He is a good man:” not they who said, “He deceiveth the people.” As for them who said “He deceiveth the people,” their din was heard like the noise of dry leaves. “He deceiveth the people,” they sounded more and more loudly: “He is a good man,” they whispered more and more constrainedly. But now, brethren, notwithstanding that glory of Christ which is to make us immortal is not yet come, yet now, I say, His Church so increases, He has deigned to spread it abroad through the whole world, that it is now only whispered. “He deceiveth the people;” and more and more loudly it sounds forth, “He is a good man.”

TRACTATE XXIX

CHAPTER VII. 14–18

1. What follows of the Gospel and was read to-day, we must next in order look at, and speak from it as the Lord may grant us. Yesterday it was read thus far, that although they had not seen the Lord Jesus in the temple on the feast-day, yet they were speaking about Him: “And some said, He is a good man: but others said, Nay; but he seduceth the people.” For this was said for the comfort of those who, afterwards preaching God’s word, were to be seducers, and yet true men. For if to seduce is to deceive, neither was Christ a seducer, nor His apostles, nor ought any Christian to be such; but if to seduce (to lead aside) is by persuading to lead one from something to something else, we ought to inquire into the whence and the whither: if from evil to good, the seducer is a good man; if from good to evil, the seducer is a bad man. In that sense, then, in which men are seduced from evil to good, would that all of us both were called, and actually were seducers!

2. Then afterwards the Lord went up to the feast, “about the middle of the feast, and taught.” “And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” He who was in secret taught, He was speaking openly and was not restrained. For that hiding of Himself was for the sake of example; this showing Himself openly was an intimation of His power. But as He taught, “the Jews marvelled;” all indeed, so far as I think, marvelled, but all were not converted. And why this wondering? Because all knew where He was born, where He had been brought up; they had never seen Him learning letters, but they heard Him disputing about the law, bringing forward testimonies of the law, which none could bring forward unless he had read, and none could read unless he had learned letters: and therefore they marvelled. But their marvelling was made an occasion to the Master of insinuating the truth more deeply into their minds. By reason, indeed of their wondering and words, the Lord said something profound, and worthy of being more diligently looked into and discussed. On account of which I would urge you, my beloved, to earnestness, not only in hearing for yourselves, but also in praying for us.

3. How then did the Lord answer those that were marvelling how He knew letters which He had not learned? “My doctrine,” saith He, “is not mine, but His that sent me.” This is the first profundity. For He seems as if in a few words He had spoken contraries. For He says not, This doctrine is not mine; but, “My doctrine is not mine.” If not Thine, how Thine? If Thine, how not Thine? For Thou sayest both: both, “my doctrines;” and, “not mine.” For if He had said, This doctrine is not mine, there would have been no question. But now, brethren, in the first place, consider well the question, and so in due order expect the solution. For he who sees not the question proposed, how can he understand what is expounded? The subject of inquiry, then, is that which He says, “My, not mine” this appears to be contrary; how “my,” how “not mine”? If we carefully look at what the holy evangelist himself says in the beginning of his Gospel, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;” thence hangs the solution of this question. What then is the doctrine of the Father, but the Father’s Word? Therefore, Christ Himself is the doctrine of the Father, if He is the Word of the Father. But since the Word cannot be of none, but of some one, He said both “His doctrine,” namely, Himself, and also, “not His own,” because He is the Word of the Father. For what is so much “Thine” as Thyself? And what so much not Thine as Thyself, if that Thou art is of another?

4. The Word then is God; and it is also the Word of a stable, unchangeable doctrine, not such as can be sounded by syllables and fleeting, but abiding with the Father, to which abiding doctrine let us be converted, being admonished by the transitory sounds of the voice. For that which is transitory does not so admonish us as to call us to transitory things. We are admonished to love God. All this that I have said were syllables; they smote through the air to reach your sense of hearing, and by sounding passed away: that, however, which I advise you ought not so to pass away, because He whom I exhort you to love passes not away; and when you, exhorted in transient syllables, shall have been converted, you shall not pass away, but shall abide with Him who is abiding. There is therefore in the doctrine this great matter, this deep and eternal thing which is permanent: whither all things that pass away in time call us, when they mean well and are not falsely put forward. For, in fact, all the signs which we produce by sounds

do signify something which is not sound. For God is not the two short syllables “Deus,” and it is not the two short syllables that we worship, and it is not the two short syllables that we adore, nor is it to the two short syllables that we desire to come—two syllables which almost cease to sound before they have begun to sound; nor in sounding them is there room for the second until the first has passed away. There remains, then, something great which is called “God,” although the sound does not remain when we say the word “God.” Thus direct your thoughts to the doctrine of Christ, and ye shall arrive at the Word of God; and when you have arrived at the Word of God, consider this, “The Word was God,” and you will see that it was said truly, “my doctrine:” consider also whose the Word is, and you will see that it was rightly said, “is not mine.”

5. Therefore, to speak briefly, beloved, it seems to me that the Lord Jesus Christ said, “My doctrine is not mine,” meaning the same thing as if He said, “I am not from myself.” For although we say and believe that the Son is equal to the Father, and that there is not any diversity of nature and substance in them, that there has not intervened any interval of time between Him that begets and Him that is begotten, nevertheless we say these things, while keeping and guarding this, that the one is the Father, the other the Son. But Father He is not if He have not a Son, and Son He is not if He have not a Father: but yet the Son is God from the Father; and the Father is God, but not from the Son. The Father of the Son, not God from the Son: but the other is Son of the Father, and God from the Father. For the Lord Christ is called Light from Light. The Light then which is not from Light, and the equal Light which is not from Light, are together one Light not two Lights.

6. If we have understood this, thanks be to God; but if any has not sufficiently understood, man has done as far as he could: as for the rest, let him see whence he may hope to understand. As laborers outside, we can plant and water; but it is of God to give the increase. “My doctrine,” saith He, “is not mine, but His that sent me.” Let him who says he has not yet understood hear counsel. For since it was a great and profound matter that had been spoken, the Lord Christ Himself did certainly see that all would not understand this so profound a matter, and He gave counsel in the sequel.

Dost thou wish to understand? Believe. For God has said by the prophet: “Except ye believe, ye shall not understand.” To the same purpose what the Lord here also added as He went on—”If any man is willing to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself.” What is the meaning of this, “If any man be willing to do His will”? But I had said, if any man believe; and I gave this counsel: If thou hast not understood, said I, believe. For understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore do not seek to understand in order to believe, but believe that thou mayest understand; since, “except ye believe, ye shall not understand.” Therefore when I would counsel the obedience of believing toward the possibility of understanding, and say that our Lord Jesus Christ has added this very thing in the following sentence, we find Him to have said, “If any man be willing to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine.” What is “he shall know”? It is the same thing as “he shall understand.” But what is “If any man be willing to do His will”? It is the same thing as to believe. All men indeed perceive that “shall know” is the same thing as “shall understand:” but that the saying, “If any man be willing to do His will,” refers to believing, all do not perceive; to perceive this more accurately, we need the Lord Himself for expounder, to show us whether the doing of the Father’s will does in reality refer to believing. But who does not know that this is to do the will of God, to work the work of God; that is, to work that work which is pleasing to Him? But the Lord Himself says openly in another place: “This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He has sent.” “That ye believe on Him,” not, that ye believe Him. But if ye believe on Him, ye believe Him; yet he that believes Him does not necessarily believe on Him. For even the devils believed Him, but they did not believe on Him. Again, moreover, of His apostles we can say, we believe Paul; but not, we believe on Paul: we believe Peter; but not, we believe on Peter. For, “to him that believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted unto him for righteousness.” What then is “to believe on Him”? By believing to love Him, by believing to esteem highly, by believing to go into Him and to be incorporated in His members. It is faith itself then that God exacts from us: and He finds not that which He exacts, unless He has bestowed what He may find. What faith, but that which the apostle has most amply defined in another place, saying, “Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love?” Not any faith of what kind soever, but “faith that worketh by love:” let this faith be in thee, and thou shall understand concerning the doctrine. What indeed shall thou understand? That “this doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me;” that is, thou shall understand that Christ the Son of God, who is the doctrine of the Father, is not from Himself, but is the Son of the Father.

7. This sentence overthrows the Sabellian heresy. The Sabellians have dared to affirm that the Son is the very same as He who is also the Father: that the names are two, but the reality one. If the names were two and reality one, it would not be said, “My doctrine is not mine.” Anyhow, if Thy doctrine is not Thine, O Lord, whose is it, unless there be another whose it is? The Sabellians understand not what Thou saidst; for they see not the trinity, but follow the error of their own heart. Let us worshippers of the trinity and unity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and one God, understand concerning Christ’s doctrine, how it is not His. And He said that He spoke not from Himself for this reason, because Christ is the Son of the Father, and the Father is the Father of Christ; and the Son is from God the Father, God, but God the Father is God not from God the Son.

8. “He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: This will be he who is called Antichrist,’ exalting himself,” as the apostle says, “above all that is called God, and that is worshipped.” The Lord, declaring that this same it is that will seek his own glory, not the glory of the Father, says to the Jews: “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye have not received me; another will come in his own name, him ye will receive.” He intimated that they would receive Antichrist, who will seek the glory of his own name, puffed up, not solid; and therefore not stable, but assuredly ruinous. But our Lord Jesus Christ has shown us a great example of humility: for doubtless He is equal with the Father, for “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;” yea, doubtless, He Himself said, and most truly said, “Am I so long time with you, and ye have not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” Yea, doubtless, Himself said, and most truly said, “I and the Father are one.” If, therefore, He is one with the Father, equal to the Father, God from God, God with God, coeternal, immortal, alike unchangeable, alike without time, alike Creator and

disposer of times; and yet because He came in time, and took the form of a servant, and in condition was found as a man, He seeks the glory of the Father, not His own; what oughtest thou to do, O man, who, when thou doest anything good, seekest thy own glory; but when thou doest anything ill, dost meditate calumny against God? Consider thyself: thou art a creature, acknowledge thy Creator: thou art a servant, despise not thy Lord: thou art adopted, not for thy own merits; seek His glory from whom thou hast this grace, that thou art a man adopted; His, whose glory He sought who is from Him, the Only-begotten. “But He that seeketh His glory that sent Him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.” In Antichrist, however, there is unrighteousness, and he is not true; because he will seek his own glory, not His by whom he was sent: for, indeed, he was not sent, but only permitted to come. Let us all, therefore, that belong to the body of Christ, seek not our own glory, that we be not led into the snares of Antichrist. But if Christ sought His glory that sent Him, how much more ought we to seek the glory of Him who made us?

TRACTATE XXX

CHAPTER VII. 19–24

1. The passage of the holy Gospel of which we have before discoursed to you, beloved, is followed by that of to-day, which has just now been read. Both the disciples and the Jews heard the Lord speaking; both men of truth and liars heard the Truth speaking; both friends and enemies heard Charity speaking; both good men and bad men heard the Good speaking. They heard, but He discerned; He saw and foresaw whom His discourse profited and would profit. Among those who were then, He saw; among us who were to be, He foresaw. Let us therefore hear the Gospel, just as if we were listening to the Lord Himself present: nor let us say, O happy they who were able to see Him! because there were many of them who saw, and also killed Him; and there are many among us who have not seen Him, and yet have believed. For the precious truth that sounded forth from the mouth of the Lord was both written for our sakes, and preserved for our sakes, and recited for our sakes, and will be recited also for the sake of our prosperity, even until the end of the world. The Lord is above; but the Lord, the Truth, is also here. For the body of the Lord, in which He rose again from the

dead, can be only in one place; but His truth is everywhere diffused. Let us then hear the Lord, and let us also speak that which He shall have granted to us concerning His own words.

2. “Did not Moses,” saith He, “give you the law, and yet none of you doeth the law? Why do ye seek to kill me?” For ye seek to kill me just for this reason, that none of you doeth the law; for if ye did do the law, ye would recognize Christ in its very letters, and ye would not kill Him when present with you. And they answered: “The crowd answered Him;” answered as a tumultuous crowd, things not pertaining to order, but to confusion; in a word, the crowd was disturbed. See what answer it made: “Thou hast a devil: who seeks to kill thee?” As if it were not worse to say, “Thou hast a devil,” than to kill Him. To Him, indeed, was it said, that He had a devil, who was casting out devils. What else can a turbulent disorderly crowd say? What else can filth stirred up do but stink? The crowd was disturbed; by what? By the truth. For the eyes that have not soundness cannot endure the brightness of the light.

3. But the Lord, manifestly not disturbed, but calm in His truth, rendered not evil for evil nor railing for railing; although, if He were to say to these men, You have a devil, He would certainly be saying what was true. For they would not have said such things to the Truth, unless the falsehood of the devil had instigated them. What then did He answer? Let us calmly hear, and drink in the serene word: “I have done one work, and ye all marvel.” As if He said, What if ye were to see all my works? For they were His works which they saw in the world, and yet they saw not Him who made them all: He did one thing, and they were disturbed because he made a man whole on the Sabbath-day. As if, indeed, when any sick man recovered his health on the Sabbath-day, it had been any other that made such a man whole than He who offended them, because He made one man whole on the Sabbath-day. For who else has made others whole than He who is health itself,—He who gives even to the beasts that health which He gave to this man? For it was bodily health. The health of the flesh is repaired, and the flesh dies; and when it is repaired, death is only put off, not taken away. However, even that same health, brethren, is from the Lord, through whomsoever it may be given: by whose care and ministry soever it may be imparted, it is given by

Him from whom all health is, to whom it is said in the psalm, “O Lord, Thou wilt save men and beasts; as Thou hast multiplied Thy mercy, O God.” For because Thou art God Thy multiplied mercy reaches even to the safety of human flesh, reaches even to the safety of dumb animals; but Thou who givest health of flesh common to men and beasts, is there no health which Thou reservest for men? There is certainly another which is not only not common to men and beasts, but to men themselves is not common to good and bad. In a word, when he had there spoken of this health which men and cattle receive in common, because of that health which men, but only the good, ought to hope for, he added as he went on: “But the sons of men shall put their trust under the cover of Thy wings. They shall be fully satisfied with the fatness of Thy house; and Thou shalt give them drink from the torrent of Thy pleasure. For with Thee is the fountain of life; and in Thy light shall they see light.” This is the health which belongs to good men, those whom he called “sons of men;” whilst he had said above, “O Lord, Thou shall save men and beasts.” How then? Were not those men sons of men, that after he had said men, he should go on and say, But the sons of men: as if men and sons of men meant different things? Yet I do not believe that the Holy Spirit had said this without some indication of distinction. The term men refers to the first Adam, sons of men to Christ. Perhaps, indeed, men relate to the first man; but sons of men relate to the Son of man.

4. “I have done one work, and ye all marvel.” And immediately He subjoined: “Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision.” It was well done that ye received circumcision from Moses. “Not that it is of Moses, but of the fathers;” since it was Abraham that first received circumcision from the Lord. “And ye circumcise on the Sabbath-day.” Moses has convicted you: ye have received in the law to circumcise on the eighth day; ye have received in the law to cease from labor on the seventh day; if the eighth day from the child’s birth fall on the seventh day of the week, what will ye do? Will ye abstain from work to keep the Sabbath, or will ye circumcise to fulfill the sacrament of the eighth day? But I know, saith He, what ye do. “Ye circumcise a man.” Why? Because circumcision relates to what is a kind of seal of salvation, and men ought not to abstain from the work of salvation on the Sabbath-day. Therefore be ye not “angry with me, because

I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath-day.” “If,” saith He, “a man on the Sabbath-day receiveth circumcision that the law should not be broken” (for it was something saving that was ordained by Moses in that ordinance of circumcision), why are ye angry at me for working a healing on the Sabbath-day?

5. Perhaps, indeed, that circumcision pointed to the Lord Himself, at whom they were indignant, because He worked cures and healing. For circumcision was commanded to be applied on the eighth day: and what is circumcision but the spoiling of the flesh? This circumcision, then, signified the removal of carnal lusts from the heart. Therefore not without cause was it given, and ordered to be made in that member; since by that member the creature of mortal kind is procreated. By one man came death, just as by one man the resurrection of the dead; and by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin. Therefore every man is born with a foreskin, because every man is born with the vice of propagation; and God cleanses not, either from the vice with which we are born, or from the vices which we add thereto by ill living, except by the stony knife, the Lord Christ. For Christ was the Rock. Now they used to circumcise with stone knives, and by the name of rock they prefigured Christ; and yet when He was present with them they did not acknowledge Him, but besides, they sought to kill Him. But why on the eighth day, unless because after the seventh day of the week the Lord rose again on the Lord’s day? Therefore Christ’s resurrection, which happened on the third day indeed of His passion, but on the eighth day in the days of the week, that same resurrection it is that doth circumcise us. Hear of those that were circumcised with the real stone, while the apostle admonishes them: “If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting on the right hand of God; set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” He speaks to the circumcised: Christ has risen; He has taken away from you carnal desires, evil lusts, the superfluity with which you were born, and that far worse which you had added thereto by ill living; being circumcised by the Rock, why do you still set your affections on the earth? And finally, for that “Moses gave you the law, and ye circumcise a man on the Sabbath-day,” understand that by this is signified the good work which I have done, in that I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath-day; because he

was cured that he might be whole in body, and also he believed that he might be whole in soul.

6. “Judge not according to personal appearance, but judge righteous judgment.” What is this? Just now, you who by the law of Moses circumcise on the Sabbath-day are not angry with Moses; and because I made a man whole on the Sabbath-day you are angry with me. You judge by the person; give heed to the truth. I do not prefer myself to Moses, says the Lord, who was also the Lord of Moses. So consider us as you would two men, as both men; judge between us, but judge a true judgment; do not condemn him by honoring me, but honor me by understanding him. For this He said to them in another place: “If ye believed Moses ye would certainly believe me also, for he wrote of me.” But in this place He willed not to say this, Himself and Moses being as it were placed before these men for judgment. Because of Moses’ law you circumcise, even when it happens to be the Sabbath-day, and will ye not that I should show the beneficence of healing during the Sabbath? For the Lord of circumcision and the Lord of the Sabbath is the same who is the Author of health; and they are servile works that ye are forbidden to do on the Sabbath; if ye really understand what servile works are, ye sin not. For he that committeth sin is the servant of sin. Is it a servile work to heal a man on the Sabbath-day? Ye do eat and drink (to infer somewhat from the admonition of our Lord Jesus Christ, and from His words); at any rate, why do ye eat and drink on the Sabbath, but because that what ye do pertains to health? By this ye show that the works of health are not in any wise to be omitted on the Sabbath. Therefore “do not judge by person, but judge righteous judgment.” Consider me as ye would a man; consider Moses as a man: if ye will judge according to the truth, ye will condemn neither Moses nor me; and when ye know the truth ye will know me, because I am the Truth.

7. It requires great labor in this world, brethren to get clear of the vice which the Lord has noted in this place, so as not to judge by appearance, but to keep right judgment. The Lord, indeed, admonished the Jews, but He warned us also; them He convicted, us He instructed; them He reproved, us He encouraged. Let us not imagine that this was not said to us, simply because we were not there at that time. It was written, it is read; when it

was recited we heard it; but we heard it as said to the Jews; let us not place ourselves behind ourselves and watch Him reproving enemies, while we ourselves do that which the truth may reprove in us. The Jews indeed judged by appearance, but for that reason they belong not to the New Testament, they have not the kingdom of heaven in Christ, nor are joined to the society of the holy angels; they sought earthly things of the Lord; for a land of promise, victory over enemies, fruitfulness of child-bearing, increase of children, abundance of fruit,—all which things were indeed promised to them by God, the True and the Good, promised to them, however, as unto carnal men,—all these things made for them the Old Testament. What is the Old Testament? The inheritance, as it were, belonging to the old man. We have been renewed, have been made a new man, because He who is the new man has come. What is so new as to be born of a virgin? Therefore, because there was not in Him what instruction might renew, because He had no sin, there was given Him a new origin of birth. In Him a new birth, in us a new man. What is a new man? A man renewed from oldness. Renewed unto what? Unto desiring heavenly things, unto longing for things eternal, unto earnestly seeking the country which is above and fears no foe, where we do not lose a friend nor fear an enemy; where we live with good affection, without any want; where no longer any advances, because none fails; where no man is born, because no man dies; where there is no hungering nor thirsting; where immortality is fullness, and truth our aliment. Having these promises, and pertaining to the New Testament, and being made heirs of a new inheritance, and co-heirs of the Lord Himself, we have a far different hope from theirs: let us not judge by appearance, but hold right judgment.

8. Who is he that judges not according to the person? He that loves equally. Equal love causes that persons be not accepted. It is not when we honor men in diverse measure according to their degrees that we ought to fear lest we are accepting persons. For where we judge between two, and at times between relations, sometimes it happens that judgment has to be made between father and son; the father complains of a bad son, or the son complains of a harsh father; we regard the honor which is due to the father from the son; we do not make the son equal to the father in honor, but we give him preference if he has a good cause: let us regard the son on an

equality with the father in the truth, and thus shall we bestow the honor due, so that equity destroy not merit. Thus we profit by the words of the Lord, and that we may profit, we are assisted by His grace.

TRACTATE XXXI

CHAPTER VII. 25–36

1. You remember, beloved, in the former discourses,—for it was both read in the Gospel and also discussed by us according to our ability,—how that the Lord Jesus went up to the feast-day, as it were in secret, not because He feared lest He should be laid hold of,—He who had the power not to be laid hold of,—but to signify that even in that very feast which was celebrated by the Jews He Himself was hidden, and that the mystery of the feast was His own. In the passage read to-day then, that which was supposed to be timidity appeared as power; for He spoke openly on the feast-day, so that the crowds marvelled, and said that which we have heard when the passage was read: “Is not this he whom they sought to kill? And, lo, he speaketh openly, and they say nothing. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the Christ?” They who knew with what fierceness He was sought after, wondered by what power He was kept from being taken. Then, not fully understanding His power, they fancied it was the knowledge of the rulers, that these rulers knew Him to be the very Christ, and that for this reason they spared Him whom they had with so much eagerness sought out to be put to death.

2. Then those same persons who had said, “Did the rulers know that this is the Christ?” proposed a question among themselves, by which it appeared to them that He was not the Christ; for they said in addition, “But we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.” As to how this opinion among the Jews arose, that “when Christ comes, no man knoweth whence He is” (for it did not arise without reason), if we consider the Scriptures, we find, brethren, that the Holy Scriptures have declared of Christ that “He shall be called a Nazarene.” Therefore they foretold whence He is. Again, if we seek the place of His nativity, as that whence He is by birth, neither was this hidden from the Jews, because of the Scriptures which had foretold these things. For when the Magi, on the

appearing of a star, sought Him out to worship Him, they came to Herod and told him what they sought and what they meant: and he, having called together those who had knowledge of the law, inquired of them where Christ should be born: they told him, “In Bethlehem of Judah,” and also brought forward the prophetic testimony. If, therefore, the prophets had foretold both the place where the origin of His flesh was, and the place where His mother would bring Him forth, whence did spring that opinion among the Jews which we have just heard, but from this, that the Scriptures had proclaimed beforehand, and had foretold both? In respect of His being man, the Scriptures foretold whence He should be; in respect of His being God, this was hidden from the ungodly, and it required godly men to discover it. Moreover, they said this, “When Christ comes, no man knoweth whence He is,” because that which was spoken by Isaiah produced this opinion in them, viz. “And His generation, who shall tell?” In short, the Lord Himself made answer to both, that they both did, and also did not know whence He was; that He might testify to the holy prophecy which before was predicted of Him, both as to the humanity of infirmity and also as to the divinity of majesty.

3. Hear, therefore, the word of the Lord, brethren; see how He confirmed to them both what they said, “We know this man whence he is,” and also what they said, “When Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is. Then cried Christ in the temple, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but He that sent me is true, whom ye know not.” That is to say, ye both know me, and ye know me not; ye both know whence I am, and ye know not whence I am. Ye know whence I am: Jesus of Nazareth, whose parents also ye knew. For in this case, the birth of the Virgin alone was hidden, to whom, however, her husband was witness; for the same was able faithfully to declare this, who was also able as a husband to be jealous. Therefore, this birth of the Virgin excepted, they knew all that in Jesus pertains to man: His face was known, His country was known, His family was known; where He was born was to be known by inquiry. Rightly then did He say, “Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am,” according to the flesh and form of man which He bore; but according to His divinity, “And I am not come of myself, but He that sent me is true, whom ye know not;” but yet that ye may know Him, believe on Him whom He has sent,

and ye will know Him. For, “No man has seen God at any time, except the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him:” and, “None knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.”

4. Lastly, when He had said, “But He that sent me is true, whom ye know not,” in order to show them whence they might know that which they did not know, He subjoined, “I know Him.” Therefore seek from me to know Him. But why is it that I know Him? “Because I am from Him, and He sent me.” Gloriously has He shown both. “I am from Him,” said He; because the Son is from the Father, and whatever the Son is, He is of Him whose Son He is. Hence we say that the Lord Jesus is God of God: we do not say that the Father is God of God, but simply God: and we say that the Lord Jesus is Light of Light; we do not say that the Father is Light of Light, but simply Light. Accordingly, to this belongs that which He said “I am from Him.” But as to my being seen of you in the flesh, “He sent me.” When thou hearest “He sent me,” do not understand a difference of nature to be meant, but the authority of Him that begets.

5. “Then they sought to take Him: but no man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come;” that is, because He was not willing. For what is this. “His hour was not yet come”? The Lord was not born under fate. This is not to be believed concerning thee, much less concerning Him by whom thou wast made. If thy hour is His good will, what is His hour but His good will? He meant not therefore an hour in which He should be forced to die, but that in which He would deign to be put to death. But He was awaiting the time in which He should die, for He awaited also the time in which He should be born. The apostle, speaking of this time, says, “But when the fullness of time came, God sent His Son.” For this cause many say, Why did not Christ come before? To whom we must make answer, Because the fullness of time had not yet come, while He by whom the times were made sets their bounds; for He knew when He ought to come. In the first place, it was necessary that He should be foretold through a long series of times and years; for it was not something insignificant that was to come: He who was to be ever held, had to be for a long time foretold. The greater the judge that was coming, the longer the train of heralds that preceded him.

In short, when the fullness of time came, He also came who was to deliver us from time. For being delivered from time, we shall come to that eternity where there is no time: there it is not said, When shall the hour come, for the day is everlasting, a day which is neither preceded by a yesterday, nor cut off by a morrow. But in this world days roll on, some are passing away, others come; none abides; and the moments in which we are speaking drive out one another in turn, nor stands the first syllable for the second to sound. Since we began to speak we are somewhat older, and without doubt I am just now older than I was in the morning; thus, nothing stands, nothing remains fixed in time. Therefore ought we to love Him by whom the times were made, that we may be delivered from time and be fixed in eternity, where there is no more changeableness of times. Great, therefore, is the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, in that for our sakes He was made in time, by whom the times were made; that He was made among all things, by whom all things were made; that He became what He made. For He was made what He had made; for He was made man who had made man, lest what He had made should perish. According to this dispensation, the hour of His birth had now come, and He was born; but not yet had come the hour of His suffering, therefore not yet had He suffered.

6. In short, that ye may know that the words refer, not to the necessity of His dying, but to His power,—I speak this for the sake of some who, when they hear “His hour was not yet come,” are determined on believing in fate, and their hearts become infatuated;—that ye may know, then, that it was His power of dying, recollect the passion, look at Him crucified. While hanging on the tree, He said, “I thirst.” They, having heard this, offered to Him on the cross vinegar by a sponge on a reed. He received it, and said, “It is finished;” and, bowing His head, gave up the ghost. You see His power of dying, that He waited for this—until all things should be fulfilled that had been foretold concerning Him—to take place before His death. For the prophet had said, “They gave me gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” He waited for all these things to be fulfilled: after they were completed, He said, “It is finished;” and He departed by power, because He came not by necessity. Hence some wondered more at this His power to die than at His ability to work miracles. For they came to the cross to take the bodies down from the tree, for the Sabbath was

drawing near, and the thieves were found still living. The punishment of the cross was so much the harder because it tortured men so long, and all that were crucified were killed by a lingering death. But the thieves, that they might not remain on the tree, were forced to die by having their legs broken, that they might be taken down thence. The Lord, however, was found to be already dead, and the men marvelled; and they who despised Him when living, so wondered at Him when dead, that some of them said, “Truly this was the Son of God.” Whence also that, brethren, where He says to those that seek Him, “I am He;” and they, going backward, all fell to the ground? Consequently there was in Him supreme power. Nor was He forced to die at an hour; but He waited the hour on which His will might fittingly be done, not that on which necessity might be fulfilled against His will.

7. “But many of the people believed on Him.” The Lord made whole the humble and the poor. The rulers were mad, and therefore they not only did not acknowledge the Physician, but even were eager to slay Him. There was a certain crowd of people which quickly saw its own sickness, and without delay recognized His remedy. See what that very crowd, moved by His miracles, said: “When Christ cometh will He do more signs than these?” Surely, unless there will be two Christs, this is the Christ. Consequently, in saying these things, they believed on Him.

8. But those rulers, having heard the assurance of the multitude, and that murmuring noise of the people in which Christ was being glorified, “sent officers to take Him.” To take whom? Him not yet willing to be taken. Because then they could not take Him while He would not, they were sent to hear Him teaching. Teaching what? “Then said Jesus, Yet a little while I am with you.” What ye wish to do now ye will do, but not just now; because I am not just now willing. Why am I now as yet unwilling? Because “yet a little while I am with you; and then I go unto Him that sent me.” I must complete my dispensation, and in this manner come to my suffering.

9. “Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.” Here He has already foretold His resurrection; for they would not acknowledge Him when present, and afterwards they sought Him

when they saw the multitude already believing on Him. For great signs were wrought, even when the Lord was risen again and ascended into heaven. Then mighty deeds were done by His disciples, but He wrought by them as He wrought by Himself: since, indeed, He had said to them, “Without me ye can do nothing.” When that lame man who sat at the gate rose up at Peter’s voice, and walked on his feet, so that men marvelled, Peter spoke to them to this effect, that it was not by his own power that he did this, but in the virtue of Him whom they slew. Many pricked in the heart said, “What shall we do?” For they saw themselves bound by an immense crime of impiety, since they slew Him whom they ought to have revered and worshipped; and this crime they thought inexpiable. A great wickedness indeed it was, the thought of which might make them despair; yet it did not behove them to despair, for whom the Lord, as He hung on the cross, deigned to pray. For He had said, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” He saw some who were His own among many who were aliens; for these He sought pardon, from whom at the time He was still receiving injury. He regarded not that He was being put to death by them, but only that He was dying for them. It was a great thing that was forgiven them, it was a great thing that was done by them and for them, so that no man should despair of the forgiveness of his sin when they who slew Christ obtained pardon. Christ died for us, but surely He was not put to death by us? But those men indeed saw Christ dying by their own villany; and yet they believed on Christ pardoning their villanies. Until they drank the blood they had shed, they despaired of their own salvation. Therefore said He this: “Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, ye cannot come;” because they were to seek Him after the resurrection, being pricked in their heart with remorse. Nor did He say “where I will be,” but “where I am.” For Christ was always in that place whither He was about to return; for He came in such manner that He did not depart from that place. Hence He says in another place, “No man has ascended into heaven, but He who came down from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven.” He said not, who was in heaven. He spoke on the earth, and declared that He was at the same time in heaven. He came in such wise that He departed not thence; and He so returned as not to abandon us. What do ye marvel at? This is God’s doing. For man, as regards his body, is in a place, and departs from a place; and when he comes to another place, he will not be in that place whence he came: but God fills all things, and is all everywhere; He is not held in places according to space. Nevertheless the Lord Christ was, as regards His visible flesh, on the earth: as regards His invisible majesty, He was in heaven and on earth; and therefore He says, “Where I am, thither ye cannot come.” Nor did He say, “Ye shall not be able.” but “ye are not able to come;” for at that time they were such as were not able. And that ye may know that this was not said to cause despair, He said something of the same kind also to His disciples: “Whither I go ye cannot come.” Yet while praying in their behalf, He said, “Father, I will that where I am they also may be with me.” And, finally, this He expounded to Peter, and says to him, “Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me hereafter.”

10. “Then said the Jews,” not to Him, but “to themselves, Whither will this man go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersion among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?” For they knew not what they said; but, it being His will, they prophesied. The Lord was indeed about to go to the Gentiles, not by His bodily presence, but still with His feet. What were His feet? Those which Saul desired to trample upon by persecution, when the Head cried out to him, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” What is this saying that He said, “Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?” Wherefore the Lord said this they knew not, and yet they did predict something that was to be without knowing it. For this is what the Lord said that they knew not the place, if place however it must be called, which is the bosom of the Father, from which Christ never departed; nor were they competent to conceive where Christ was, whence Christ never withdrew, whither He was to return, where He was all the while dwelling. How was it possible for the human heart to conceive this, least of all to explain it with the tongue? This, then, they in no wise understood; and yet by occasion of this they foretold our salvation, that the Lord would go to the dispersion of the Gentiles, and would fulfill that which they read but did not understand. “A people whom I have not known served me, and by the hearing of the ear obeyed me.” They before whose eyes He was, heard Him not; those heard Him in whose ears He was sounded.

11. For of that Church of the Gentiles which was to come, the woman that had the issue of blood was a type: she touched and was not seen; she was not known and yet was healed. It was in reality a figure what the Lord asked: “Who touched me?” As if not knowing, He healed her as unknown: so has He done also to the Gentiles. We did not get to know Him in the flesh, yet we have been made worthy to eat His flesh, and to be members in His flesh. In what way? Because He sent to us. Whom? His heralds, His disciples, His servants, His redeemed whom He created, but whom He redeemed, His brethren also. I have said but little of all that they are: His own members, Himself; for He sent to us His own members, and He made us His members. Nevertheless, Christ has not been among us with the bodily form which the Jews saw and despised; because this also was said concerning Him, even as the apostle says: “Now I say that Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.” He owed it to have come to those by whose fathers and to whose fathers He was promised. For this reason He says also Himself: “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But what says the apostle in the following words? “And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.” What, moreover, saith the Lord Himself? “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold.” He who had said, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” how has He other sheep to which He was not sent, except that He intimated that He was not sent to show His bodily presence but to the Jews only, who saw and killed Him? And yet many of them, both before and afterwards, believed. The first harvest was winnowed from the cross, that there might be a seed whence another harvest might spring up. But at this present time, when roused by the fame of the gospel, and by its goodly odor, His faithful ones among all nations believe, He shall be the expectation of the Gentiles, when He shall come who has already come; when He shall be seen by all, He who was then not seen by some, by some was seen; when He shall come to judge who came to be judged; when He shall come to distinguish who came not to be distinguish ed. For Christ was not discerned by the ungodly, but was condemned with the ungodly; for it was said concerning Him, “He was accounted among the wicked.” The robber escaped, Christ was condemned. He who was loaded with criminal accusations received pardon; He who has released from their crimes all who confess Him, was condemned.

Nevertheless even the cross itself, if thou considerest it well, was a judgment-seat; for the Judge being set up in the middle, one thief who believed was delivered, the other who reviled was condemned. Already He signified what He is to do with the quick and the dead: some He will set on His right hand and others on His left. That thief was like those that shall be on the left hand, the other like those that shall be on the right. He was undergoing judgment, and He threatened judgment.

TRACTATE XXXII

CHAPTER VII. 37–39

1. Among the dissensions and doubtings of the Jews concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, among other things which He said, by which some were confounded, others taught: “On the last day of that feast” (for it was then that these things were done) which is called the feast of tabernacles; that is, the building of tents, of which feast you remember, my beloved, that we have already discoursed, the Lord Jesus Christ calls, not by speaking in any way soever, but by crying aloud, that whoso thirsts may come to Him. If we thirst, let us come; and not by our feet, but by our affections; let us come, not by removing from our place, but by loving. Although, according to the inner man, he that loves does also move from a place. But it is one thing to move with the body, another thing to move with the heart: he migrates with the body who changes his place by a motion of the body; he migrates with the heart who changes his affection by a motion of the heart. If thou lovest one thing, and didst love another thing before, thou art not now where thou wast.

2. Accordingly, the Lord cries aloud to us: for, “He stood and cried out, if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” We are not obliged to delay to inquire what this meant, since the evangelist has explained it. For why the Lord said, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink;” and, “He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water;” the evangelist has subsequently explained, saying: “But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive. For the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet

glorified.” There is therefore an inner thirst and an inner belly, because there is an inner man. And that inner man is indeed invisible, but the outer man is visible; but yet better is the inner than the outer. And this which is not seen is the more loved; for it is certain that the inner man is loved more than the outer. How is this certain? Let every man prove it in himself. For although they who live ill may surrender their minds to the body, yet they do wish to live, and to live is the property of the mind only; and they who rule, manifest themselves more than those things that are ruled. Now it is minds that rule, bodies are ruled. Every man rejoices in pleasure, and receives pleasure by the body: but separate the mind from it, and nothing remains in the body to rejoice; and if there is joy of the body, it is the mind that rejoices. If it has joy of its dwelling, ought it not to have joy of itself? And if the mind has whereof it may have delight outside itself, does it remain without delights within? It is quite certain that a man loves his soul more than his body. But further, a man loves the soul even in another man more than the body. What is it that is loved in a friend, where the love is the purer and more sincere? What in the friend is loved—the mind, or the body? If fidelity is loved, the mind is loved; if benevolence is loved, the mind is the seat of benevolence: if this is what thou lovest in another, that he too loves thee, it is the mind thou lovest, because it is not the flesh, but the mind that loves. For therefore thou lovest, because he loves thee: ask why he loves thee, and then see what it is thou lovest. Consequently, it is more loved, and yet is not seen.

3. I would say something further, by which it may more clearly appear to you, beloved, how much the mind is loved, and how it is preferred to the body. Those wanton lovers even, who delight in beauty of bodies, and are charmed by shapeliness of limbs, love the more when they are loved. For when a man loves, and finds that he is regarded with hatred, he feels more anger than liking. Why does he feel anger rather than liking? Because the love that he bestows is not given him in return. If, therefore, even the lovers of bodies desire to be loved in return, and this delights them more when they are loved, what shall we say of the lovers of minds? And if the lovers of minds are great, what shall we say of the lovers of God who makes minds beautiful? For as the mind gives grace to the body, so it is God that gives grace to the mind. For it is only the mind that causes that in the body

by which it is loved; when the mind has left it, it is a corpse at which thou hast a horror; and how much soever thou mayest have loved its beautiful limbs, thou makest haste to bury it. Hence, the ornament of the body is the mind; the ornament of the mind is God.

4. The Lord, therefore, cries aloud to us to come and drink, if we thirst within; and He says that when we have drunk, rivers of living water shall flow from our belly. The belly of the inner man is the conscience of the heart. Having drunk that water then, the conscience being purged begins to live; and drinking in, it will have a fountain, will be itself a fountain. What is the fountain, and what the river that flows from the belly of the inner man? Benevolence, whereby a man will consult the interest of his neighbor. For if he imagines that what he drinks ought to be only for his own satisfying, there is no flowing of living water from his belly; but if he is quick to consult for the good of his neighbor, then he becomes not dry, because there is a flowing. We will now see what it is that they drink who believe in the Lord; because we surely are Christians, and if we believe, we drink. And it is every man's duty to know in himself whether or not he drinks, and whether he lives by what he drinks; for the fountain does not forsake us if we forsake not the fountain.

5. The evangelist explained, as I have said, whereof the Lord had cried out, to what kind of drink He had invited, what He had procured for them that drink, saying, "But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." What spirit does He speak of, if not the Holy Spirit? For every man has in himself a spirit of his own, of which I spoke when I was commending to you the consideration of the mind. For every man's mind is his own spirit: of which the Apostle Paul says, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of the man which is in himself?" And then he added, "So also the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." None knows the things that are ours but our own spirit. I indeed do not know what are thy thoughts, nor dost thou know what are mine; for those things which we think within are our own, peculiar to ourselves; and his own spirit is the witness of every man's thoughts. "So also the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." We with our spirit, God with

His: so, however, that God with His Spirit knows also what goes on within us; but we are not able, without His own Spirit, to know what takes place in God. God, however, knows in us even what we know not in ourselves. For Peter did not know his own weakness, when he heard from the Lord that he would deny Him thrice: the sick man was ignorant of his own condition; the Physician knew him to be sick. There are then certain things which God knows in us, while we ourselves know them not. So far, however, as belongs to men, no man knows a man as he does himself: another does not know what is going on within him, but his own spirit knows it. But on receiving the Spirit of God, we learn also what takes place in God: not the whole, for we have not received the whole. We know many things from the pledge; for we have received a pledge, and the fullness of this pledge shall be given hereafter. Meanwhile, let the pledge console us in our pilgrimage here; because he who has condescended to bind himself to us by a pledge, is prepared to give us much. If such is the token, what must that be of which it is the token?

6. But what is meant by this which he says, “For the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified?” He is understood to say this in a sense that is evident. For the meaning is not that the Spirit of God, which was with God, was not in being; but was not yet in them who had believed on Jesus. For thus the Lord Jesus disposed not to give them the Spirit of which we speak, until after His resurrection; and this not without a cause. And perhaps if we inquire, He will favor us to find; and if we knock, He will open for us to enter. Piety knocks, not the hand, though the hand also knocks, if it cease not from works of mercy. What then is the cause why the Lord Jesus Christ determined not to give the Holy Spirit until He should be glorified? which thing before we speak of as we may be able, we must first inquire, lest that should trouble any one, in what manner the Spirit was not yet in holy men, whilst we read in the Gospel concerning the Lord Himself newly born, that Simeon by the Holy Spirit recognized Him; that Anna the widow, a prophetess, also recognized Him; that John, who baptized Him, recognized Him; that Zacharias, being filled with the Holy Ghost, said many things; that Mary herself received the Holy Ghost to conceive the Lord. We have therefore many preceding evidences of the Holy Spirit before the Lord was glorified by the resurrection of His flesh. Nor was it

another spirit that the prophets also had, who proclaimed beforehand the coming of Christ. But still, there was to be a certain manner of this giving, which had not at all appeared before. For nowhere do we read before this, that men being gathered together had, by receiving the Holy Ghost, spoken in the tongues of all nations. But after His resurrection, when He first appeared to His disciples, He said to them: “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” Of this giving then it is said, “The Spirit was not given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. And He breathed upon their faces,” He who with His breath enlivened the first man, and raised him up from the clay, by which breath He gave a soul to the limbs; signifying that He was the same who breathed upon their faces, that they might rise out of the mire and renounce their miry works. Then, after His resurrection, which the evangelist calls His glorifying, did the Lord first give the Holy Ghost to His disciples. Then having tarried with them forty days, as the book of the Acts of the Apostles shows, while they were seeing Him and companying with Him, He ascended into heaven in their sight. There at the end of ten days, on the day of Pentecost, He sent the Holy Ghost from above. Which having received, they, who had been gathered together in one place, as I have said, being filled withal, spoke in the tongues of all nations.

7. How then, brethren, because he that is baptized in Christ, and believes on Him, does not speak now in the tongues of all nations, are we not to believe that he has received the Holy Ghost? God forbid that our heart should be tempted by this faithlessness. Certain we are that every man receives: but only as much as the vessel of faith that he shall bring to the fountain can contain, so much does He fill of it. Since, therefore, the Holy Ghost is even now received by men, some one may say, Why is it that no man speaks in the tongues of all nations? Because the Church itself now speaks in the tongues of all nations. Before, the Church was in one nation, where it spoke in the tongues of all. By speaking then in the tongues of all, it signified what was to come to pass; that by growing among the nations, it would speak in the tongues of all. Whoso is not in this Church, does not now receive the Holy Ghost. For, being cut off and divided from the unity of the members, which unity speaks in the tongues of all, let him declare for himself; he has it not. For if he has it, let him give the sign which was given then. What do we mean by saying, Let him give the sign which was then

given? Let him speak in all tongues. He answers me: How then, dost thou speak in all tongues? Clearly I do; for every tongue is mine, namely, of the body of which I am a member. The Church, spread among the nations, speaks in all tongues; the Church is the body of Christ, in this body thou art a member: therefore, since thou art a member of that body which speaks with all tongues, believe that thou too speakest with all tongues. For the unity of the members is of one mind by charity; and that unity speaks as one man then spoke.

8. Consequently, we too receive the Holy Ghost if we love the Church, if we are joined together by charity, if we rejoice in the Catholic name and faith. Let us believe, brethren; as much as every man loves the Church of Christ, so much has he the Holy Ghost. For the Spirit is given, as the apostle saith, "to manifestation." To what manifestation? Just as the same apostle saith, "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge after the same Spirit, to another faith in the same Spirit, to another the gift of healing in one Spirit, to another the working of miracles in the same Spirit." For there are many gifts given to manifestation, but thou, it may be, hast nothing of all those I have said. If thou lovest, it is not nothing that thou hast: if thou lovest unity, whoever has aught in that unity has it also for thee. Take away envy, and what I have is thine too. The envious temper puts men apart, soundness of mind unites them. In the body, the eye alone sees; but is it for itself alone that the eye sees? It sees both for the hand and the foot, and for all the other members. If a blow be coming against the foot, the eye does not turn away from it, so as not to take precaution. Again, in the body, the hand alone works, but is it for itself alone the hand works? For the eye also it works: for if a coming blow comes, not against the hand, but only against the face, does the hand say, I will not move, because it is not coming to me? So the foot by walking serves all the members: all the other members are silent, and the tongue speaks for all. We have therefore the Holy Spirit if we love the Church; but we love the Church if we stand firm in its union and charity. For the apostle himself, after he had said that diverse gifts were bestowed on diverse men, just as the offices of the several members, saith, "Yet I show you a still more pre-eminent way;" and begins to speak of charity. This he put before tongues of men and angels, before miracles of faith, before knowledge and

prophecy, before even that great work of mercy by which a man distributes to the poor all that he possesses; and, lastly, put it before even the martyrdom of the body: before all these so great things he put charity. Have it, and thou shalt have all: for without it, whatever thou canst have will profit nothing. But that thou mayest know that the charity of which we are speaking refers to the Holy Spirit (for the question now in hand in the Gospel is concerning the Holy Spirit), hear the apostle when he says, “The charity of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us.”

9. Why then was it the will of the Lord, seeing that the Spirit’s benefits in us are the greatest, because by Him the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, to give us that Spirit after His resurrection? Why did He signify by this? In order that in our resurrection our love may be inflamed, and may part from the love of the world to run wholly towards God. For here we are born and die: let us not love this world; let us migrate hence by love; by love let us dwell above, by that love by which we love God. In this sojourn of our life let us meditate on nothing else, but that here we shall not always be, and that by good living we shall prepare a place for ourselves there, whence we shall never migrate. For our Lord Jesus Christ, after that He is risen again, “now dieth no more;” “death,” as the apostle says, “shall no more have dominion over Him.” Behold what we must love. If we live, if we believe on Him who is risen again, He will give us, not that which men love here who love not God, or love the more the less they love Him, but love this the less the more they love Him; but let us see what He has promised us. Not earthly and temporal riches, not honors and power in this world; for you see all these things given to wicked men, that they may not be highly prized by the good. Not, in short, bodily health itself, though it is He that gives that also, but that, as you see, He gives even to the beasts. Not long life; for what, indeed, is long that will some day have an end? It is not length of days that He has promised to His believers, as if that were a great thing, or decrepit old age, which all wish for before it comes, and all murmur at when it does come. Not beauty of person, which either bodily disease or that same old age which is desired drives away. One wishes to be beautiful, and also to live to be old: these two desires cannot agree together; if thou shalt be old, thou wilt not be beautiful; when old age comes, beauty

will flee away; the vigor of beauty and the groaning of old age cannot dwell together in one body. All these things, then, are not what He promised us when He said, “He that believeth in me, let him come and drink, and out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” He has promised us eternal life, where we shall have no fear, where we shall not be troubled, whence we shall have no migration, where we shall not die; where there is neither bewailing a predecessor deceased, nor a hoping for a successor. Accordingly, because such is what He has promised to us that love Him, and glow with the charity of the Holy Spirit, therefore He would not give us that same Spirit until He should be glorified, so that He might show in His body the life which we have not now, but which we hope for in the resurrection.

TRACTATE XXXIII

CHAPTER VII. 40–53; VIII. 1–11

1. You remember, my beloved, that in the last discourse, by occasion of the passage of the Gospel read, we spoke to you concerning the Holy Spirit. When the Lord had invited those that believe on Him to this drinking, speaking among those who meditated to lay hold of Him, and sought to kill Him, and were not able, because it was not His will: well, when He had spoken these things, there arose a dissension among the multitude concerning Him; some thinking that He was the very Christ, others saying that Christ shall not arise from Galilee. But they who had been sent to take Him returned clear of the crime and full of admiration. For they even gave witness to His divine doctrine, when those by whom they had been sent asked, “Why have ye not brought him?” They answered that they had never heard a man so speak: “For not any man so speaks.” But He spake thus, because He was God and man. But the Pharisees, repelling their testimony, said to them: “Are ye also deceived?” We see, indeed, that you also have been charmed by his discourses. “Hath any one of the rulers or the Pharisees believed on him? But this multitude who know not the law are cursed.” They who knew not the law believed on Him who had sent the law; and those men who were teaching the law despised Him, that it might be fulfilled which the Lord Himself had said, “I am come that they who see not may see, and they that see may be made blind.” For the Pharisees, the

teachers of the law, were made blind, and the people that knew not the law, and yet believed on the author of the law, were enlightened.

2. “Nicodemus,” however, “one of the Pharisees, who had come to the Lord by night,”—not indeed as being himself unbelieving, but timid; for therefore he came by night to the light, because he wished to be enlightened and feared to be known;—Nicodemus, I say, answered the Jews, “Doth our law judge a man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?” For they perversely wished to condemn before they examined. Nicodemus indeed knew, or rather believed, that if only they were willing to give Him a patient hearing, they would perhaps become like those who were sent to take Him, but preferred to believe. They answered, from the prejudice of their heart, what they had answered to those officers, “Art thou also a Galilean?” That is, one seduced as it were by the Galilean. For the Lord was said to be a Galilean, because His parents were from the city of Nazareth. I have said “His parents” in regard to Mary, not as regards the seed of man; for on earth He sought but a mother, He had already a Father on high. For His nativity on both sides was marvellous: divine without mother, human without father. What, then, said those would-be doctors of the law to Nicodemus? “Search the Scriptures, and see that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.” Yet the Lord of the prophets arose thence. “They returned,” saith the evangelist, “every man to his own house.”

3. “Thence Jesus went unto the mount;” namely, to mount “Olivet,”—unto the fruitful mount, unto the mount of ointment, unto the mount of chrism. For where, indeed, but on mount Olivet did it become the Christ to teach? For the name of Christ is from chrism; chrisma in the Greek, is called in Latin unctio, an anointing. And He has anointed us for this reason, because He has made us wrestlers against the devil. “And early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came unto Him; and He sat down and taught them.” And He was not taken, for He did not yet deign to suffer.

4. And now observe wherein the Lord’s gentleness was tempted by His enemies. “And the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman just taken in adultery: and they set her in the midst, and said to Him, Master, this woman has just been taken in adultery. Now Moses in the law

commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? But this they said, tempting Him, that they might accuse Him.” Why accuse Him? Had they detected Himself in any misdeed; or was that woman said to have been concerned with Him in any manner? What, then, is the meaning of “tempting Him, that they might accuse Him”? We understand, brethren, that a wonderful gentleness shone out pre-eminently in the Lord. They observed that He was very meek, very gentle: for of Him it had been previously foretold, “Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O most Mighty; in Thy splendor and beauty urge on, march on prosperously, and reign, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness.” Accordingly, as a teacher, He brought truth; as a deliverer, He brought gentleness; as a protector, He brought righteousness. That He was to reign on account of these things, the prophet had by the Holy Spirit foretold. When He spoke His truth was acknowledged; when He was not provoked to anger against His enemies, His meekness was praised. Whilst, therefore, in respect of these two,—namely, His truth and meekness,—His enemies were tormented with malice and envy; in respect of the third,—namely, righteousness,—they laid a stumbling-block for Him. In what way? Because the law had commanded the adulterers to be stoned, and surely the law could not command what was unjust: if any man should say other than the law had commanded, he would be detected as unjust. Therefore they said among themselves, “He is accounted true, he appears to be gentle; an accusation must be sought against him in respect of righteousness. Let us bring before him a woman taken in adultery; let us say to him what is ordered in the law concerning such: if he shall approve her being stoned, he will not show his gentleness; if he consent to let her go, he will not keep righteousness. But, say they, that he may not lose the reputation of gentleness, for which he is become an object of love to the people, without doubt he will say that she must be let go. Hence we find an opportunity of accusing him, and we charge him as being a transgressor of the law: saying to him, Thou art an enemy to the law; thou answerest against Moses, nay, against Him who gave the law through Moses; thou art worthy of death: thou too must be stoned with this woman.” By these words and sentiments they might possibly be able to inflame envy against Him, to urge accusation, and cause His condemnation to be eagerly demanded. But this against whom? It was perversity against rectitude, falsehood against the truth, the corrupt heart against the upright heart, folly against wisdom. When did such men prepare snares, into which they did not first thrust their own heads? Behold, the Lord in answering them will both keep righteousness, and will not depart from gentleness. He was not taken for whom the snare was laid, but rather they were taken who laid it, because they believed not on Him who could pull them out of the net.

5. What answer, then, did the Lord Jesus make? How answered the Truth? How answered Wisdom? How answered that Righteousness against which a false accusation was ready? He did not say, Let her not be stoned; lest He should seem to speak against the law. But God forbid that He should say, Let her be stoned: for He came not to lose what He had found, but to seek what was lost. What then did He answer? See you how full it is of righteousness, how full of meekness and truth! “He that is without sin of you,” saith He, “let him first cast a stone at her.” O answer of Wisdom! How He sent them unto themselves! For without they stood to accuse and censure, themselves they examined not inwardly: they saw the adulteress, they looked not into themselves. Transgressors of the law, they wished the law to be fulfilled, and this by heedlessly accusing; not really fulfilling it, as if condemning adulteries by chastity. You have heard, O Jews, you have heard, O Pharisees, you have heard, O teachers of the law, the guardian of the law, but have not yet understood Him as the Lawgiver. What else does He signify to you when He writes with His finger on the ground? For the law was written with the finger of God; but written on stone because of the hard-hearted. The Lord now wrote on the ground, because He was seeking fruit. You have heard then, Let the law be fulfilled, let the adulteress be stoned. But is it by punishing her that the law is to be fulfilled by those that ought to be punished? Let each of you consider himself, let him enter into himself, ascend the judgment-seat of his own mind, place himself at the bar of his own conscience, oblige himself to confess. For he knows what he is: for “no man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of man which is in him.” Each looking carefully into himself, finds himself a sinner. Yes, indeed. Hence, either let this woman go, or together with her receive ye the penalty of the law. Had He said, Let not the adulteress be stoned, He would be proved unjust: had He said, Let her be stoned, He would not appear gentle: let Him say what it became Him to say, both the gentle and the just,

“Whoso is without sin of you, let him first cast a stone at her.” This is the voice of Justice: Let her, the sinner, be punished, but not by sinners: let the law be fulfilled, but not by the transgressors of the law. This certainly is the voice of justice: by which justice, those men pierced through as if by a dart, looking into themselves and finding themselves guilty, “one after another all withdrew.” The two were left alone, the wretched woman and Mercy. But the Lord, having struck them through with that dart of justice, deigned not to heed their fall, but, turning away His look from them, “again He wrote with His finger on the ground.”

6. But when that woman was left alone, and all they were gone out, He raised His eyes to the woman. We have heard the voice of justice, let us also hear the voice of clemency. For I suppose that woman was the more terrified when she had heard it said by the Lord, “He that is without sin of you, let him first cast a stone at her.” But they, turning their thought to themselves, and by that very withdrawal having confessed concerning themselves, had left the woman with her great sin to Him who was without sin. And because she had heard this, “He that is without sin. let him first cast a stone at her,” she expected to be punished by Him in whom sin could not be found. But He, who had driven back her adversaries with the tongue of justice, raising the eyes of clemency towards her, asked her, “Hath no man condemned thee?” She answered, “No man, Lord.” And He said, “Neither do I condemn thee;” by whom, perhaps, thou didst fear to be condemned, because in me thou hast not found sin. “Neither will I condemn thee.” What is this, O Lord? Dost Thou therefore favor sins? Not so, evidently. Mark what follows: “Go, henceforth sin no more.” Therefore the Lord did also condemn, but condemned sins, not man. For if He were a patron of sin, He would say, Neither will I condemn thee; go, live as thou wilt: be secure in my deliverance; how much soever thou wilt sin, I will deliver thee from all punishment even of hell, and from the tormentors of the infernal world. He said not this.

7. Let them take heed, then, who love His gentleness in the Lord, and let them fear His truth. For “The Lord is sweet and right.” Thou lovest Him in that He is sweet; fear Him in that He is right. As the meek, He said, “I held my peace;” but as the just, He said, “Shall I always be silent?” “The Lord is

merciful and pitiful.” So He is, certainly. Add yet further, “Long-suffering;” add yet further, “And very pitiful:” but fear what comes last, “And true.” For those whom He now bears with as sinners, He will judge as despisers. “Or despisest thou the riches of His long-suffering and gentleness; not knowing that the forbearance of God leadeth thee to repentance? But thou, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up for thyself wrath against the day of wrath and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds.” The Lord is gentle, the Lord is long-suffering, the Lord is pitiful; but the Lord is also just, the Lord is also true. He bestows on thee space for correction; but thou lovest the delay of judgment more than the amendment of thy ways. Hast thou been a bad man yesterday? To-day be a good man. Hast thou gone on in thy wickedness to-day? At any rate change to-morrow. Thou art always expecting, and from the mercy of God makest exceeding great promises to thyself. As if He, who has promised thee pardon through repentance, promised thee also a longer life. How knowest thou what to-morrow may bring forth? Rightly thou sayest in thy heart: When I shall have corrected my ways, God will put all my sins away. We cannot deny that God has promised pardon to those that have amended their ways and are converted. For in what prophet thou readest to me that God has promised pardon to him that amends, thou dost not read to me that God has promised thee a long life.

8. From both, then, men are in danger; both from hoping and despairing, from contrary things, from contrary affections. Who is deceived by hoping? He who says, God is good, God is merciful, let me do what I please, what I like; let me give loose reins to my lusts, let me gratify the desires of my soul. Why this? Because God is merciful, God is good, God is kind. These men are in danger by hope. And those are in danger from despair, who, having fallen into grievous sins, fancying that they can no more be pardoned upon repentance, and believing that they are without doubt doomed to damnation, do say with themselves, We are already destined to be damned, why not do what we please with the disposition of gladiators destined to the sword. This is the reason that desperate men are dangerous: for, having no longer aught to fear, they are to be feared exceedingly. Despair kills these; hope, those. The mind is tossed to and fro between hope

and despair. Thou hast to fear lest hope slay thee; and, when thou hopest much from mercy, lest thou fall into judgment: again, thou hast to fear lest despair slay thee, and, when thou thinkest that the grievous sins which thou hast committed cannot be forgiven thee, thou dost not repent, and thou incurrest the sentence of Wisdom, which says, “I also will laugh at your perdition.” How then does the Lord treat those who are in danger from both these maladies? To those who are in danger from hope, He says, “Be not slow to be converted to the Lord, neither put it off from day to day; for suddenly His anger will come, and in the time of vengeance, will utterly destroy thee.” To those who are in danger from despair, what does He say? “In what day soever the wicked man shall be converted, I will forget all his iniquities.” Accordingly, for the sake of those who are in danger by despair, He has offered us a refuge of pardon; and because of those who are in danger by hope, and are deluded by delays, He has made the day of death uncertain. Thou knowest not when thy last day may come. Art thou ungrateful because thou hast to-day on which thou mayest be improved? Thus therefore said He to the woman, “Neither will I condemn thee;” but, being made secure concerning the past, beware of the future. “Neither will I condemn thee:” I have blotted out what thou hast done; keep what I have commanded thee, that thou mayest find what I have promised.

TRACTATE XXXIV

CHAPTER VIII. 12

1. What we have just heard and attentively received, as the holy Gospel was being read, I doubt not that all of us have also endeavored to understand, and that each of us according to his measure apprehended what he could of so great a matter as that which has been read; and while the bread of the word is laid out, no one can complain that he has tasted nothing. But again I doubt not that there is scarcely any who has understood the whole. Nevertheless, even should there be any who may sufficiently understand the words of our Lord Jesus Christ now read out of the Gospel, let him bear with our ministry, whilst, if possible, with His assistance, we may, by treating thereof, cause that either all or many may understand that which a few are joyful of having understood for themselves.

2. I think that what the Lord says, “I am the light of the world, “is clear to those that have eyes, by which they are made partakers of this light: but they who have not eyes except in the flesh alone, wonder at what is said by the Lord Jesus Christ, “I am the light of the world.” And perhaps there may not be wanting some one too who says with himself: Whether perhaps the Lord Christ is that sun which by its rising and setting causes the day? For there have not been wanting heretics who thought this. The Manichaeans have supposed that the Lord Christ is that sun which is visible to carnal eyes, exposed and public to be seen, not only by men, but by the beasts. But the right faith of the Catholic Church rejects such a fiction, and perceives it to be a devilish doctrine: not only by believing acknowledges it to be such, but in the case of whom it can, proves it even by reasoning. Let us therefore reject this kind of error, which the Holy Church has anathematized from the beginning. Let us not suppose that the Lord Jesus Christ is this sun which we see rising from the east, setting in the west; to whose course succeeds night, whose rays are obscured by a cloud, which removes from place to place by a set motion: the Lord Christ is not such a thing as this. The Lord Christ is not the sun that was made, but He by whom the sun was made. For “all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.”

3. There is therefore a Light which made this light of the sun: let us love this Light, let us long to understand it, let us thirst for the same; that, with itself for our guide, we may at length come to it, and that we may so live in it that we may never die. This is indeed that Light of which prophecy long ago going before thus sang in the psalm: “O Lord, Thou shalt save men and beasts; even as Thy mercy is multiplied, O God.” These are the words of the holy psalm: mark ye what the ancient discourse of holy men of God did premise concerning such a light. “Men,” saith it, “and beasts Thou shalt save, O Lord; even as Thy mercy is multiplied, O God.” For since Thou art God, and hast manifold mercy, the same multiplicity of Thy mercy reaches not only to men whom Thou hast created in Thine own image, but even to the beasts which Thou hast made subservient to men. For He who gives salvation to man, the same gives salvation also to the beast. Do not blush to think this of the Lord thy God: nay, rather believe this and trust it, and see thou think not otherwise. He that saves thee, the same saves thy horse and thy sheep; to come to the very least, also thy hen: “Salvation is of the

Lord,” and God saves these. Thou art uneasy, thou questionest. I wonder why thou doubtest. Shall He disdain to save who deigned to create? Of the Lord is the saving of angels, of men, and of beasts: “Salvation is of the Lord.” Just as no man is from himself, so no man is saved by himself. Therefore most truly and right well doth the psalm say, “O Lord, Thou shall save men and beasts.” Why? “Even as thy mercy is multiplied, O God.” For Thou art God, Thou hast created, Thou savest: Thou gavest being, Thou givest to be in health.

4. Since, therefore, as the mercy of God is multiplied, men and beasts are saved by Him, have not men something else which God as Creator bestows on them, which He bestows not on the beasts? Is there no distinction between the living creature made after the image of God, and the living creature made subject to the image of God? Clearly there is: beyond that salvation common to us with the dumb animals, there is what God bestows on us, but not on them. What is this? Follow on in the same psalm: “But the sons of men shall hope under the covert of Thy wings.” Having now a salvation in common with their cattle, “the sons of men shall hope under the covert of Thy wings.” They have one salvation in fact, another in hope. This salvation which is at present is common to men and cattle; but there is another which men hope for; and which they who hope for receive, they who despair of receive not. For it saith, “The sons of men shall hope under covert of Thy wings.” And they that perseveringly hope are protected by Thee, lest they be cast down from their hope by the devil: “Under covert of Thy wings they shall hope.” If they shall hope, what shall they hope for, but for what the cattle shall not have? “They shall be fully drunk with the fatness of Thy house; and from the torrent of Thy pleasure Thou shalt give them drink.” What sort of wine is that with which it is laudable to be drunk? What sort of wine is that which disturbs not the mind, but directs it? What sort of wine is that which makes perpetually sane, and makes not insane by drinking? “They shall be fully drunk.” How? “With the fatness of Thy house; and from the torrent of Thy pleasure Thou shalt give them drink.” How so? “Because with Thee is the fountain of life.” The very fountain of life walked on the earth, the same who said, “Whoso thirsts, let him come unto me.” Behold the fountain! But we begin to speak about the light, and to handle the question laid down from the Gospel concerning the light. For

we read how the Lord said, “I am the light of the world.” Thence arose a question, lest any one, carnally understanding this, should fancy this light to mean the sun: we came thence to the psalm, which having considered, we found meanwhile that the Lord is the fountain of life. Drink and live. “With Thee,” it saith, “is the fountain of life;” therefore, “under the shadow of Thy wings the sons of men hope,” seeking to be full drunk with this fountain. But we were speaking of the Light. Follow on, then; for the prophet, having said, “With Thee is the fountain of life,” went on to add, “In Thy light shall we see light,”—God of God, Light of Light. By this Light the sun’s light was made; and the Light which made the sun, under which He also made us, was made under the sun for our sake. That Light which made the sun, was made, I say, under the sun for our sake. Do not despise the cloud of the flesh; with that cloud it is covered, not to be obscured, but to be moderated.

5. That unfailing Light, the Light of wisdom, speaking through the cloud of the flesh, says to men, “I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” How He has withdrawn thee from the eyes of the flesh, and recalled thee to the eyes of the heart! For it is not enough to say, “Whoso followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have light;” He added too, “of life;” even as it was there said, “For with Thee is the fountain of life.” See thus, my brethren, how the words of the Lord agree with the truth of that psalm: both there, the light is put with the fountain of life, and by the Lord it is said, “light of life.” But for bodily use, light and fountain are different things: our mouths seek a fountain, our eyes light; when we thirst we seek a fountain, when we are in darkness we seek light; and if we chance to thirst in the night, we kindle a light to come to a fountain. Not so with God: light and fountain are the same thing: He who shines for thee that thou mayest see, the same flows for thee that thou mayest drink.

6. You see, then, my brethren, you see, if you see inwardly, what kind of light this is, of which the Lord says, “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness.” Follow the sun, and let us see if thou wilt not walk in darkness. Behold, by rising it comes forth to thee; it goes by its course towards the west. Perhaps thy journey is towards the east: unless thou goest in a contrary direction to that in which it travels, thou wilt certainly err by

following it, and instead of east wilt get to the west. If thou follow it by land, thou wilt go wrong; if the mariner follow it by sea, he will go wrong. Finally, it seems to thee, suppose, that thou must follow the sun, and thou also travellest thyself towards the west, whither it also travels; let us see after it has set if thou wilt not walk in darkness. See how, although thou art not willing to desert it, yet it will desert thee, to finish the day by necessity of its service. But our Lord Jesus Christ, even when He was not manifest to all through the cloud of His flesh, was yet at the same time holding all things by the power of His wisdom. Thy God is whole everywhere: if thou fall not off from Him, He will never fall away from thee.

7. Accordingly, “He that followeth me,” saith He, “shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” What He has promised, He put in a word of the future tense; for He says not has, but “shall have the light of life.” Yet He does not say, He that shall follow me; but, he that does follow me. What it is our duty to do, He put in the present tense; but what He has promised to them that do it, He has indicated by a word of the future tense. “He that followeth, shall have.” That followeth now, shall have hereafter: followeth now by faith, shall have hereafter by sight. For, “whilst we are in the body,” saith the apostle, “we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by faith, not by sight.” When shall we walk by sight? When we shall have the light of life, when we shall have come to that vision, when this night shall have passed away. Of that day, indeed, which is to arise, it is said, “In the morning I will stand near thee, and contemplate thee.” What means “in the morning”? When the night of this world is over, when the terrors of temptations are over, when that lion which goeth about roaring in the night, seeking whom it may devour, is vanquished. “In the morning I will stand near thee, and contemplate.” Now what do we think, brethren, to be our duty for the present time, but what is again said in the psalm, “Every night through will I wash my couch; I will moisten my bed with my tears”? Every night through, saith he, I will weep; I will burn with desire for the light. The Lord sees my desire: for another psalm says to Him, “All my desire is before Thee; and my groaning is not hid from Thee.” Dost thou desire gold? Thou canst be seen; for, while seeking gold, thou wilt be manifest to men. Dost thou desire corn? Thou askest one that has it; whom also thou informest, while seeking to get at that which thou desirest. Dost thou desire

God? Who sees, but God? From whom, then, dost thou seek God, as thou seekest bread, water, gold, silver, corn? From whom dost thou seek God, except from God? He is sought from Himself who has promised Himself. Let the soul extend her desire, and with more capacious bosom seek to comprehend that which “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man.” Desire it we can, long for it we can, pant after it we can; but worthily conceive it, worthily unfold it in words, we cannot.

8. Wherefore, my brethren, since the Lord says briefly, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life;” in these words He has commanded one thing, promised another; let us do what He has commanded, that we may not with shameless face demand what He has promised; that He may not say to us in His judgment, Hast thou done what I commanded, that thou shouldest expect what I promised? What hast Thou commanded, then, O Lord our God? He says to thee, That thou shouldest follow me. Thou hast sought counsel of life? Of what life, but of that of which it is said, “With Thee is the fountain of life”? A certain man heard it said to him,” Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” He followed not, but went away sorrowful; he sought the “good Master,” went to Him as a teacher, and despised His teaching; he went away sorrowful, tied and bound by his lusts; he went away sorrowful, having a great load of avarice on his shoulders. He toiled and fretted; and yet he thought that He, who was willing to rid him of his load, was not to be followed but forsaken. But after the Lord has, by the gospel, cried aloud, “Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart,” how many, on hearing the gospel, have done what that rich man, on hearing from His own mouth, did not do? Therefore, let us do it now, let us follow the Lord; let us loose the fetters by which we are hindered from following Him. And who is sufficient to loose such bonds, unless He help, to whom it is said, “Thou hast burst asunder my bonds”? Of whom another psalm says, “The Lord looseth them that are in bonds; the Lord raiseth up them that are crushed and oppressed.”

9. And what do they follow, who have been loosed and raised up, but the Light from which they hear, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness”? For the Lord gives light to the blind. Therefore we, brethren, having the eye-salve of faith, are now enlightened. For His spittle did before mingle with the earth, by which the eyes of him who was born blind were anointed. We, too, have been born blind of Adam, and have need of Him to enlighten us. He mixed spittle with clay: “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” He mixed spittle with earth; hence it was predicted, “Truth has sprung from the earth;” and He said Himself, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” When we shall see face to face, we shall have the full fruition of the truth; for this also is promised to us. For who would dare hope for what God had not deigned either to promise or to give? We shall see face to face. The apostle says, “Now I know in part, now through a glass darkly; but then, face to face.” And the Apostle John says in his epistle, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it has not yet appeared what we shall be: we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him even as He is.” This is a great promise; if thou lovest, follow. I do love, sayest thou, but by what way am I to follow? If the Lord thy God had said to thee, “I am the truth and the life,” in desiring truth and longing for life, thou mightest truly ask the way by which thou mightest come to these, and mightest say to thyself: A great thing is the truth, a great thing is the life, were there only the means whereby my soul might come thereto! Dost thou ask by what way? Hear Him say at the first, “I am the way.” Before He said whither, He premised by what way: “I am,” saith He, “the way.” The way whither? “And the truth and the life.” First, He told thee the way to come; then, whither to come. I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life. Remaining with the Father, the truth and life; putting on flesh, He became the way. It is not said to thee, Labor in finding a way to come to the truth and life; this is not said to thee. Sluggard, arise: the way itself has come to thee, and roused thee from thy sleep; if, however, it has roused thee, up and walk. Perhaps thou art trying to walk, and art not able, because thy feet ache. How come thy feet to ache? Have they been running over rough places at the bidding of avarice? But the word of God has healed even the lame. Behold, thou sayest, I have my feet sound, but the way itself I see not. He has also enlightened the blind.

10. All this by faith, so long as we are absent from the Lord, dwelling in the body; but when we shall have traversed the way, and have reached the home itself, what shall be more joyful than we? What shall be more blessed than we? Because nothing more at peace than we; for there will be no rebelling against a man. But now, brethren, it is difficult for us to be without strife. We have indeed been called to concord, we are commanded to have peace among ourselves; to this we must give our endeavor, and strain with all our might, that we may come at last to the most perfect peace; but at present we are at strife, very often with those whose good we are seeking. There is one who goes astray, thou wishest to lead him to the way; he resists, thou strivest with him: the pagan resists thee, thou disputest against the errors of idols and devils; a heretic resists, thou disputest against other doctrines of devils; a bad catholic is not willing to live aright, thou rebukest even thy brother within; he dwells with thee in the house, and seeks the paths of ruin; thou art inflamed with eager passion to put him right, that thou mayest render to the Lord a good account of both concerning him. How many necessities of strife there are on every side! Very often one is overcome with weariness, and says to himself, “What have I to do with bearing with gainsayers, bearing with those who render evil for good? I wish to benefit them, they are willing to perish; I wear out my life in strife; I have no peace; besides, I make enemies of those whom I ought to have as friends, if they regarded the good will of him that seeks their good: what business is it of mine to endure this? Let me return to myself, I will be kept to myself, I will call upon my God. Do return to thyself, thou findest strife there. If thou hast begun to follow God, thou findest strife there. What strife, sayest thou, do I find? “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.” Behold thou art thyself, thou art alone, thou art with thyself; behold, thou art bearing with no other person, but yet thou seest another law in thy members warring against the law of thy mind, and taking thee captive in the law of sin, which is in thy members. Cry aloud, then, and cry to God, that He may give thee peace from the inner strife: “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Because, “He that followeth me,” saith He, “shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” All strife ended, immortality shall follow; for “the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed.” And what peace will this be? “This corruptible must put on incorruption,

and this mortal must put on immortality.” To which that we may come (for it will then be in reality), let us now follow in hope Him who said, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

TRACTATE XXXV

CHAPTER VIII. 13, 14

1. You who were present yesterday, bear in mind that we were a long while discoursing of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, where He says, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life;” and if we wished to go on discoursing of that light, we might still speak a long time; for it would be impossible for us to expound the matter in brief. Therefore, my brethren, let us follow Christ, the light of the world, that we may not be walking in darkness. We must fear the darkness,—not the darkness of the eyes, but that of the moral character; and even if it be the darkness of the eyes, it is not of the outer, but of the inner eyes, of those by which we discern, not between white and black, but between right and wrong.

2. When our Lord Jesus Christ had spoken these things, the Jews answered, “Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.” Before our Lord Jesus Christ came, He lighted and sent many prophetic lamps before Him. Of these was also John Baptist, to whom the great Light itself, which is the Lord Christ, gave a testimony such as was given to no other man; for He said, “Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist.” Yet this man, than whom none was greater among those born of women, said of the Lord Jesus Christ, “I indeed baptize you in water; but He that is coming is mightier than I, whose shoe I am not worthy to loose.” See how the lamps submits itself to the Day. The Lord Himself bears witness that the same John was indeed a lamp: “He was,” saith He, “a burning and a shining lamp; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.” But when the Jews said to the Lord, “Tell us by what authority thou doest these things,” He, knowing that they regarded John the Baptist as a great one, and that the same whom they regarded as a great one had borne witness to them concerning the Lord, answered them, “I also will ask you

one thing; tell me, the baptism of John, whence is it? from heaven, or from men?” Thrown into confusion, they considered among themselves that, if they said, “From men,” they might be stoned by the people, who believed John to be a prophet; if they said, “From heaven,” He might answer them, “He whom ye confess to have been a prophet from heaven bore testimony to me, and ye have heard from him by what authority I do these things.” They saw, then, that whichever of these two answers they made, they would fall into the snare, and they said, “We do not know.” And the Lord answered them, “Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.” “I tell you not what I know, because you will not confess what you know.” Most justly, certainly, were they repulsed, and they departed in confusion; and that was fulfilled which God the Father says by the prophet in the psalm, “I have prepared a lamp for my Christ” (the lamp was John); “His enemies I will clothe with confusion.”

3. The Lord Jesus Christ, then, had the witness of prophets sent before Him, of the heralds that preceded the judge: He had witness from John; but He was Himself the greater witness which He bore to Himself. But those men with their feeble eyes sought lamps, because they were not able to bear the day; for that same Apostle John, whose Gospel we have in our hands, says in the beginning of his Gospel, concerning John the Baptist: “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but was sent to bear witness of the light. That was the true light, that lighteth every man coming into the world.” If “every man,” therefore also lighteth John. Whence also the same John says, “We all have received out of His fullness.” Wherefore discern ye these things, that your minds may profit in the faith of Christ, that ye be not always babes seeking the breasts and shrinking from solid food. You ought to be nourished and to be weaned by our holy mother the Church of Christ, and to come to more solid food by the mind, not by the belly. This discern ye then, that the light which enlighteneth is one thing, another that which is enlightened. For also our eyes are called lights; and every man thus swears, touching his eyes, by these lights of his: “So may my lights live.” This is a customary oath. Let these lights, if lights they are, be opened, and shine for thee in thy closed chamber, when the light is not there; they certainly cannot. Therefore, as

these which we have in our face, and call lights, when they are both healthy and open, need the help of light from without,—which being removed or not brought in, though they are sound and are open, yet they do not see,—so our mind, which is the eye of the soul, unless it be irradiated by the light of truth, and wondrously shone upon by Him who enlightens and is not enlightened, will not be able to come to wisdom nor to righteousness. For to live righteously is for us the way itself. But how can he on whom the light does not shine but stumble in the way? And hence, in such a way, we have need of seeing, in such a way it is a great thing to see. Now Tobias had the eyes in his face closed, and the son gave his hand to the father; and yet the father, by his instruction, pointed out the way to the son.

4. The Jews then answered, “Thou bearest witness of thyself; thy witness is not true.” Let us see what they hear; let us also hear, yet not as they did: they despising, we believing; they wishing to slay Christ, we desiring to live through Christ. Let this difference distinguish our ears and minds from theirs, and let us hear what the Lord answers to the Jews. “Jesus answered and said to them, Though I bear witness of myself, my witness is true; because I know whence I came and whither I go.” The light shows both other things and also itself. Thou lightest a lamp, for instance, to look for thy coat, and the burning lamp affords thee light to find thy coat; dost thou light the lamp to see itself when it burns? A burning lamp is indeed capable at the same time of exposing to view other things which the darkness covered, and also of showing itself to thine eyes. So also the Lord Christ distinguished between His faithful ones and His Jewish enemies, as between light and darkness: as between those whom He illuminated with the ray of faith, and those on whose closed eyes He shed His light. So, too, the sun shines on the face of the sighted and of the blind; both alike standing and facing the sun are shone upon in the flesh, but both are not enlightened in the eyesight. The one sees, the other sees not: the sun is present to both, but one is absent from the present sun. So likewise the Wisdom of God, the Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is everywhere present, because the truth is everywhere, wisdom is everywhere. One man in the east understands justice, another man in the west understands justice; is justice which the one understands a different thing from that which the other understands? In body they are far apart, and yet they have the eyes of

their minds on one object. The justice which I, placed here, see, if justice it is, is the same which the just man, separated from me in the flesh by ever so many days' journey, also sees, and is united to me in the light of that justice. Therefore the light bears witness to itself; it opens the sound eyes and is its own witness, that it may be known as the light. But how about the unbelievers? Is it not present to them? It is present also to them, but they have not eyes of the heart with which to see it. Hear the sentence fetched from the Gospel itself concerning them: "And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." Hence the Lord saith, and saith truly, "Though I bear witness of myself, my witness is true; because I know whence I came and whither I go." He meant us to understand the Father here: the Son gave glory to the Father. Himself the equal glorifies Him by whom He was sent. How ought man to glorify Him by whom he was created!

5. "I know whence I came and whither I go." He who speaks to you in person has what He has not left, and yet He came; for by coming He departed not thence, nor has He forsaken us by returning thither. Why marvel ye? It is God: this cannot be done by man; it cannot be done even by the sun. When it goes to the west it leaves the east, and until it returns to the east, when about to rise, it is not in the east; but our Lord Jesus Christ both comes and is there, both returns and is here. Hear the evangelist himself speaking in another place, and, if thou canst, understand it; if not, believe it: "God," saith he, "no man hath ever seen, but the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." He said not was in the bosom of the Father, as if by coming He had quitted the Father's bosom. Here He was speaking, and yet He declared that He was there; and when about to depart hence, what said He? "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

6. The witness of the light then is true, whether it be manifesting itself or other things; for without light thou canst not see light, and without light thou canst not see any other thing whatever that is not light. If light is capable of showing other things which are not lights, is it not capable of showing itself? Does not that discover itself, without which other things cannot be made manifest? A prophet spoke a truth; but whence had he it,

unless he drew it from the fountain of truth? John spoke a truth; but whence he spoke it, ask himself: “We all,” saith he, “have received of His fullness.” Therefore our Lord Jesus Christ is worthy to bear witness to Himself. But in any case, my brethren, let us who are in the night of this world hear also prophecy with earnest attention: for now our Lord willed to come in humility to our weakness and the deep night-darkness of our hearts: He came as a man to be despised and to be honored, He came to be denied and to be confessed; to be despised and to be denied by the Jews, to be honored and confessed by us: to be judged and to judge; to be judged unjustly, to judge righteously. Such then He came that He behoved to have a lamp to bear witness to Him. For what need was there that John should, as a lamp, bear witness to the day, if the day itself could be looked upon by our weakness? But we could not look upon it: He became weak for the weak; by infirmity He healed infirmity; by mortal flesh He took away the death of the flesh; of His own body He made a salve for our eyes. Since, therefore, the Lord is come, and since we are still in the night of the world, it behoves us to hear also prophecies.

7. For it is from prophecy that we convince gainsaying pagans. Who is Christ? says the pagan. To whom we reply, He whom the prophets foretold. What prophets? asks he. We quote Isaiah, Daniel, Jeremiah, and other holy prophets: we tell him that they came long before Christ, by what length of time they preceded His coming. We make this reply then: Prophets came before Him, and they foretold His coming. One of them answers: What prophets? We quote for him those which are daily read to us. And, said he, Who are these prophets? We answer: Those who also foretold the things which we see come to pass. And he urges: You have forged these for yourselves, you have seen them come to pass, and have written them in what books you pleased, as if their coming had been predicted. Here in opposition to pagan enemies the witness of other enemies offers itself. We produce books written by the Jews, and reply: Doubtless both you and they are enemies of our faith. Hence are they scattered among the nations, that we may convince one class of enemies by another. Let the book of Isaiah be produced by the Jews, and let us see if it is not there we read, “He was led as a sheep to be slaughtered, and as a lamb before his shearer was dumb, so He opened not His mouth. In humility His judgment was taken away; by

His bruises we are healed: all we as sheep went astray, and He was delivered up for our sins.” Behold one lamp. Let another be produced, let the psalm be opened, and thence, too, let the foretold suffering of Christ be quoted: “They pierced my hands and my feet, they counted all my bones: but they considered me and gazed upon me, they parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture they cast the lot. My praise is with Thee; in the great assembly will I confess to Thee. All the ends of the earth shall be reminded, and be converted to the Lord: all countries of the nations shall worship in His sight; for the kingdom is the Lord’s, and He shall have dominion over the nations.” Let one enemy blush, for it is another enemy that gives me the book. But lo, out of the book produced by the one enemy, I have vanquished the other: nor let that same who produced me the book be left; let him produce that by which himself also may be vanquished. I read another prophet, and I find the Lord speaking to the Jews: “I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord, nor will I accept sacrifice at your hands: for from the rising of the sun even to his going down, a pure sacrifice is offered to my name.” Thou dost not come, O Jew, to a pure sacrifice; I prove thee impure.

8. Behold, even lamps bear witness to the day, because of our weakness, for we cannot bear and look at the brightness of the day. In comparison, indeed, with unbelievers, we Christians are even now light; as the apostle says, “For ye were once darkness, but now light in the Lord: walk as children of light:” and he says elsewhere, “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast away the works of darkness, and put on us the armor of light; let us walk honestly as in the day.” Yet that even the day in which we now are is still night, in comparison with the light of that to which we are to come, listen to the Apostle Peter: he says that a voice came to the Lord Christ from the excellent glory, “Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. This voice,” said he, “which came from heaven, we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount.” But because we were not there, and have not then heard this voice from heaven, the same Peter says to us, “And we have a more sure word of prophecy.” You have not heard the voice come from heaven, but you have a more sure word of prophecy. For the Lord Jesus Christ, foreseeing that there would be certain wicked men who would calumniate His miracles, by attributing them to magical arts,

sent prophets before Him. For, supposing He was a magician, and by magical arts caused that He should be worshipped after His death, was He then a magician before He was born? Hear the prophets, O man dead, and breeding the worms of calumny, hear the prophets: I read, hear them who came before the Lord. “We have,” saith the Apostle Peter, “a more sure word of prophecy, to which ye do well to give heed, as to a lamp in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.”

9. When, therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ shall come, and, as the Apostle Paul also says, will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the thoughts of the heart, that every man may have praise from God; then, in presence of such a day, lamps will not be needed: no prophet shall then be read to us, no book of an apostle shall be opened; we shall not require the witness of John, we shall not need the Gospel itself. Accordingly all Scriptures shall be taken out of the way,—which, in the night of this world, were as lamps kindled for us that we might not remain in darkness,—when all these are taken away, that they may not shine as if we needed them, and the men of God, by whom these were ministered to us, shall themselves, together with us, behold that true and clear light. Well, what shall we see after these aids have been removed? Wherewith shall our mind be fed? Wherewith shall our gaze be delighted? Whence shall arise that joy which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor hath gone up into the heart of man? What shall we see? I beseech you, love with me, by believing run with me: let us long for our home above, let us pant for our home above, let us feel that we are strangers here. What shall we see then? Let the Gospel now tell us: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Thou shalt come to the fountain from which a little dew has already besprinkled thee: thou shalt see that very light, from which a ray was sent aslant and through many windings into thy dark heart, in its purity, for the seeing and bearing of which thou art being purified. John himself says, and this I cited yesterday: “Beloved, we are the sons of God; and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be: we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him even as He is.” I feel that your affections are being lifted up with me to the things that are above: but the body, which is corrupt, weighs down the soul; and, the earthly habitation depresses the mind while meditating many things. I

am about to lay aside this book, and you too are going to depart, every man to his own house. It has been good for us to have been in the common light, good to have been glad therein, good to have rejoiced therein; but when we part from one another, let us not depart from Him.

TRACTATE XXXVI

CHAPTER VIII. 15–18

1. In the four Gospels, or rather in the four books of the one Gospel, Saint John the apostle, not undeservedly in respect of his spiritual understanding compared to the eagle, has elevated his preaching higher and far more sublimely than the other three; and in this elevating of it he would have our hearts likewise lifted up. For the other three evangelists walked with the Lord on earth as with a man; concerning His divinity they have said but little; but this evangelist, as if he disdained to walk on earth, just as in the very opening of his discourse he thundered on us, soared not only above the earth and above the whole compass of air and sky, but even above the whole army of angels and the whole order of invisible powers, and reached to Him by whom all things were made; saying, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. This was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.” To this so great sublimity of his beginning all the rest of his preaching well agrees; and he has spoken concerning the divinity of the Lord as none other has spoken. What he had drank in, the same he gave forth. For it is not without reason that it is recorded of him in this very Gospel, that at supper he reclined on the Lord’s bosom. From that breast then he drank in secret; but what he drank in secret he gave forth openly, that there may come to all nations not only the incarnation of the Son of God, and His passion and resurrection, but also what He was before His incarnation, the only Son of the Father, the Word of the Father, coeternal with Him that begat, equal with Him by whom He was sent; but yet in that very sending made less, that the Father might be greater.

2. Whatever, then, you have heard stated in lowly manner concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, think of that economy by which He assumed flesh; but whatever you hear, or read, stated in the Gospel concerning Him that is

sublime and high above all creatures, and divine, and equal and coeternal with the Father, be sure that this which you read appertains to the form of God, not to the form of the servant. For if you hold this rule, you who can understand it (inasmuch as you are not all able to understand it, but you are all bound to trust it),—if, I say, you hold this rule, as men walking in the light, you will fight against the calumnies of heretical darkness without fear. For there have not been wanting those who, in reading the Gospel, followed only those testimonies that concern the humility of Christ, and have been deaf to those which have declared His divinity; deaf for this reason, that they may be full of evil words. There have likewise been some, who, giving heed only to those which speak of the excellency of the Lord, even though they have read of His mercy in becoming man for our sakes, have not believed the testimonies, but accounted them false and invented by men; contending that our Lord Jesus Christ was only God, not also man. Some in this way, some in that: both in error. But the catholic faith, holding from both the truths which each holds and preaching the truth which each believes, has both understood that Christ is God and also believed Him to be man: for each is written and each is true. Shouldst thou assert that Christ is only God, thou deniest the medicine whereby thou wast healed: shouldst thou assert that Christ is only man, thou deniest the power whereby thou wast created. Hold therefore both. O faithful soul and catholic heart, hold both, believe both, faithfully confess both. Christ is both God and also man. How is Christ God? Equal with the Father, one with the Father. How is Christ man? Born of a virgin, taking upon Himself mortality from man, but not taking iniquity.

3. These Jews then saw the man; they neither perceived nor believed Him to be God: and you have already heard how, among all the rest, they said to Him, “Thou bearest witness of thyself; thy witness is not true.” You have also heard what He said in reply, as it was read to you yesterday, and according to our ability discussed. To-day have been read these words of His, “Ye judge after the flesh.” Therefore it is, saith He, that you say to me, “Thou bearest witness of thyself; thy witness is not true,” because you judge after the flesh, because you perceive not God; the man you see, and by persecuting the man, you offend God hidden in Him. “Ye,” then, “judge after the flesh.” Because I bear witness of myself, I therefore appear to you

arrogant. For every man, when he wishes to bear commendatory witness of himself, seems arrogant and proud. Hence it is written, “Let not thy own mouth praise thee, but let thy neighbor’s” mouth praise thee. But this was said to man. For we are weak, and we speak to the weak. We can speak the truth, but we can also lie; although we are bound to speak the truth, still we have it in our power to lie when we will. But far be it from us to think that the darkness of falsehood could be found in the splendor of the divine light. He spoke as the light, spoke as the truth; but the light was shining in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not: therefore they judged after the flesh. “Ye,” saith He, “judge after the flesh.”

4. “I judge not any man.” Does not the Lord Jesus Christ, then, judge any man? Is He not the same of whom we confess that He rose again on the third day, ascended into heaven, there sits at the right hand of the Father, and thence shall come to judge the quick and the dead? Is not this our faith of which the apostle says, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation?” When, therefore, we confess these things, do we contradict the Lord? We say that He shall come a judge of the quick and the dead, whilst He says Himself, “I judge not any man.” This question may be solved in two ways: Either that we may understand this expression, “I judge not any man,” to mean, I judge not any man now; in accordance with what He says in another place, “I am not come to judge the world, but to save the world;” not denying His judgment here, but deferring it. Or, otherwise, surely that when He said, “Ye judge after the flesh,” He subjoined, “I judge not any man,” in such manner that thou shouldst understand “after the flesh” to complete the sense. Therefore let no scruple of doubt remain in our heart against the faith which we hold and declare concerning Christ as judge. Christ is come, but first to save, then to judge: to adjudge to punishment those who would not be saved; to bring them to life who, by believing, did not reject salvation. Accordingly, the first dispensation of our Lord Jesus Christ is medicinal, not judicial; for if He had come to judge first, He would have found none on whom He might bestow the rewards of righteousness. Because, therefore, He saw that all were sinners, and that none was exempt from the death of sin, His mercy had first to be craved, and afterwards His judgment must be executed; for of Him the psalm had sung, “Mercy and judgment will I sing to Thee, O

Lord.” Now, He says not “judgment and mercy,” for if judgment had been first, there would be no mercy; but it is mercy first, then judgment. What is the mercy first? The Creator of man deigned to become man; was made what He had made, that the creature He had made might not perish. What can be added to this mercy? And yet He has added thereto. It was not enough for Him to be made man, He added to this that He was rejected of men; it was not enough to be rejected, He was dishonored; it was not enough to be dishonored, He was put to death; but even this was not enough, it was by the death of the cross. For when the apostle was commending to us His obedience even unto death, it was not enough for him to say, “He became obedient unto death;” for it was not unto death of any kind whatever: but he added, “even the death of the cross.” Among all kinds of death, there was nothing worse than that death. In short, that wherein one is racked by the most intense pains is called cruciatus, which takes its name from crux, a cross. For the crucified, hanging on the tree, nailed to the wood, were killed by a slow lingering death. To be crucified was not merely to be put to death; for the victim lived long on the cross, not because longer life was chosen, but because death itself was stretched out that the pain might not be too quickly ended. He willed to die for us, yet it is not enough to say this; He deigned to be crucified, became obedient even to the death of the cross. He who was about to take away all death, chose the lowest and worst kind of death: He slew death by the worst of deaths. To the Jews who understood not, it was indeed the worst of deaths, but it was chosen by the Lord. For He was to have that very cross as His sign; that very cross, a trophy, as it were, over the vanquished devil, He was to put on the brow of believers, so that the apostle said, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.” Nothing was then more intolerable in the flesh, nothing is now more glorious on the brow. What does He reserve for His faithful one, when He has put such honor on the instrument of His own torture? Now is the cross no longer used among the Romans in the punishment of criminals, for where the cross of the Lord came to be honored, it was thought that even a guilty man would be honored if he should be crucified. Hence, He who came for this cause judged no man: He suffered also the wicked. He suffered unjust judgment, that He might execute righteous judgment. But it was of His mercy that He endured unjust judgment. In short, He became so low as to come to the cross; yea, laid aside His power, but published His mercy. Wherein did He lay aside His power? In that He would not come down from the cross, though He had the power to rise again from the sepulchre. Wherein did He publish His mercy? In that, when hanging on the cross, He said, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Whether, then, it be that He said, “I judge not any man,” because He had come not to judge the world, but to save the world; or, that, as I have mentioned, when He had said, “Ye judge after the flesh,” He added, “I judge not any man,” for us to understand that Christ judgeth not after the flesh, like as He was judged by men.

5. But that you may know that Christ is judge even now, hear what follows: “And if I judge, my judgment is true.” Behold, thou hast Him as thy judge, but acknowledge Him as thy Saviour, lest thou feel the judge. But why has He said that His judgment is true? “Because,” saith He, “I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.” I have said to you, brethren, that this holy Evangelist John soars exceedingly high: it is with difficulty that he is comprehended. But we need to remind you, beloved, of the deeper mystery of this soaring. Both in the prophet Ezekiel, and in the Apocalypse of this very John whose Gospel this is, there is mentioned a fourfold living creature, having four characteristic faces; that of a man, of an ox, of a lion, and of an eagle. Those who have handled the mysteries of Holy Scripture before us have, for the most part, understood by this living creature, or rather, these four living creatures, the four evangelists. They have understood the lion as put for king, because he appears to be, in a manner, the king of beasts on account of his strength and terrible valor. This character is assigned to Matthew, because in the generations of the Lord he followed the royal line, showing how the Lord was, along the royal line, of the seed of David. But Luke, because he begins with the priesthood of Zacharias, mentioning the father of John the Baptist, is designated the ox; for the ox was an important victim in the sacrifice of the priests. To Mark is deservedly assigned the man Christ, because neither has he said anything of the royal authority, nor did he begin with the priestly function, but only set out with the man Christ. All these have departed but little from the things of earth, that is, from those things which our Lord Jesus Christ performed on earth; of His divinity they have said very little, like men walking with Him

on the earth. There remains the eagle; this is John, the preacher of sublime truths, and a contemplator with steady gaze of the inner and eternal light. It is said, indeed, that the young eagles are tested by the parent birds in this way: the young one is suspended from the talons of the male parent and directly exposed to the rays of the sun; if it looks steadily at the sun, it is recognized as a true brood; if its eye quivers, it is allowed to drop off, as a spurious brood. Now, therefore, consider how sublime are the things he ought to speak who is compared to the eagle; and yet even we, who creep on the earth, weak and hardly of any account among men, venture to handle and to expound these things; and imagine that we can either apprehend when we meditate them, or be apprehended when we speak.

6. Why have I said this? For perhaps after these words one may justly say to me: Lay aside the book then. Why dost thou take in hand what exceeds thy measure? Why trust thy tongue to it? To this I reply: Many heretics abound; and God has permitted them to abound to this end, that we may not be always nourished with milk and remain in senseless infancy. For inasmuch as they have not understood how the divinity of Christ is set forth to our acceptance, they have concluded according to their will: and by not discerning aright, they have brought in most troublesome questions upon catholic believers; and the hearts of believers began to be disturbed and to waver. Then immediately it became a necessity for spiritual men, who had not only read in the Gospel anything respecting the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, but had also understood it, to bring forth the armor of Christ against the armor of the devil, and with all their might to fight in most open conflict for the divinity of Christ against false and deceitful teachers; lest, while they were silent, others might perish. For whoever have thought either that our Lord Jesus Christ is of another substance than the Father is, or that there is only Christ, so that the same is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; whoever also have chosen to think that He was only man, not God made man, or God in such wise as to be mutable in His Godhead, or God in such wise as not to be man; these have made shipwreck from the faith, and have been cast forth from the harbor of the Church, lest by their inquietude they might wreck the ships in their company. Which thing obliged that even we, though least and as regards ourselves wholly unworthy, but in regard of His mercy set in some account among His stewards, should speak to you what

either you may understand and rejoice with me, or, if you cannot yet understand, by believing it you may remain secure in the harbor.

7. I will accordingly speak; let him who can, understand; and let him who cannot understand, believe: yet will I speak what the Lord saith, “Ye judge after the flesh; I judge not any man,” either now, or after the flesh. “But even, if I judge, my judgment is true.” Why is Thy judgment true? “Because I am not alone,” saith He, “but I and the Father that sent me.” What then, O Lord Jesus? If Thou wert alone would Thy judgment be false: and is it because Thou art not alone, but Thou and the Father that sent Thee, that Thou judgest truly? How shall I answer? Let Himself answer: He saith, “My judgment is true.” Why? “Because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.” If He is with Thee, how has He sent Thee? And has He sent Thee, and yet is He also with Thee? Is it so that having been sent, Thou hast not departed from Him? And didst Thou come to us, and yet abode there? How is this to be believed? how apprehended? To these two questions I answer: Thou sayest rightly, how is it to be apprehended; how believed, thou sayest not rightly. Rather, for that reason is it right to believe it, because it is not immediately to be apprehended; for if it were a thing to be immediately apprehended, there would be no need to believe it, because it would be seen. It is because thou dost not apprehend that thou believest; but by believing thou art made capable of apprehending. For if thou dost not believe, thou wilt never apprehend, since thou wilt remain less capable. Let faith then purify thee, that understanding may fill thee. “My judgment is true,” saith He, “because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.” Therefore, O Lord our God, Jesus Christ, Thy sending is Thy incarnation. So I see, so I understand: in short, so I believe, in case it may smack of arrogance to say, so I understand. Doubtless the Lord Jesus Christ is even here; rather, was here as to His flesh, is here now as to His Godhead: He was both with the Father and had not left the Father. Hence, in that He is said to have been sent and to have come to us, His incarnation is set forth to us, for the Father did not take flesh.

8. For there are certain heretics called Sabellians, who are also called Patripassians, who affirm that it was the Father Himself that had suffered. Do not thou so affirm, O Catholic; for if thou wilt be a Patripassian, thou

wilt not be sane. Understand, then, that the incarnation of the Son is termed the sending of the Son; and do not believe that the Father was incarnate, but do not yet believe that He departed from the incarnate Son. The Son carried flesh, the Father was with the Son. If the Father was in heaven, the Son on earth, how was the Father with the Son? Because both Father and Son were everywhere: for God is not in such manner in heaven as not to be on earth. Hear him who would flee from the judgment of God, and found not a way to flee by: "Whither shall I go," saith he, "from Thy Spirit; and whither shall I flee from Thy face? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there." The question was about the earth; hear what follows: "If I descend unto hell, Thou art there." If, then, He is said to be present even in hell, what in the universe remains where He is not present? For the voice of God with the prophet is, "I fill heaven and earth." Hence He is everywhere, who is confined by no place. Turn not thou away from Him, and He is with thee. If thou wouldst come to Him, be not slow to love; for it is not with feet but with affections thou runnest. Thou comest while remaining in one place, if thou believest and lovest. Wherefore He is everywhere; and if everywhere, how not also with the Son? Is it so that He is not with the Son, while, if thou believest, He is even with thee?

9. How, then, is His judgment true, but because the Son is true? For this He said: "And if I judge, my judgment is true; because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." Just as if He had said, "My judgment is true," because I am the Son of God. How dost Thou prove that Thou art the Son of God? "Because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." Blush, Sabellian; thou hearest the Son, thou hearest the Father. Father is Father, Son is Son. He said not, I am the Father, and I the same am the Son; but He saith, "I am not alone." Why art Thou not alone? Because the Father is with me. "I am, and the Father that sent me;" thou hearest, "I am, and He that sent me." Lest thou lose sight of the person, distinguish the persons. Distinguish by understanding, do not separate by faithlessness; lest again, fleeing as it were Charybdis, thou rush upon Scylla. For the whirlpool of the impiety of the Sabellians was swallowing thee, to say that the Father is the same who is Son: just now thou hast learned, "I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me." Thou dost acknowledge that the Father is Father, and that the Son is Son; thou dost rightly acknowledge: but do not say the

Father is greater, the Son is less; do not say, the Father is gold, the Son is silver. There is one substance, one Godhead, one co-eternity, perfect equality, no unlikeness. For if thou only believe that Christ is another, not the same person that the Father is, but yet imagine that in respect of His nature He is somewhat different from the Father, thou hast indeed escaped Charybdis, but thou hast been wrecked on the rocks of Scylla. Steer the middle course, avoid each of the two perilous sides. Father is Father, Son is Son. Thou sayest now, Father is Father, Son is Son: thou hast fortunately escaped the danger of the absorbing whirl; why wouldst thou go unto the other side to say, the Father is this, the Son that? The Son is another person than the Father is, this thou sayest rightly; but that He is different in nature, thou sayest not rightly. Certainly the Son is another person, because He is not the same who is Father and the Father is another person, because He is not the same who is Son: nevertheless, they are not different in nature, but the selfsame is both Father and Son. What means the self-same? God is one. Thou hast heard, “Because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me:” hear how thou mayest believe Father and Son; hear the Son Himself, “I and the Father are one.” He said not, I am the Father; or, I and the Father is one person; but when He says, “I and the Father are one,” hear both, both the one, unum, and the are, sumus, and thou shalt be delivered both from Charybdis and from Scylla. In these two words, in that He said one, He delivers thee from Arius; in that He said are, He delivers thee from Sabellius. If one, therefore not diverse; if are, therefore both Father and Son. For He would not say are of one person; but, on the other hand, He would not say one of diverse. Hence the reason why He says, “my judgment is true,” is, that thou mayest hear it briefly, because I am the Son of God. But I would have thee in such wise believe that I am the Son of God, that thou mayest understand that the Father is with me: I am not Son in such manner as to have left Him; I am not in such manner here that I should not be with Him; nor is He in such manner there as not to be with me: I have taken to me the form of a servant, yet have I not lost the form of God; therefore He saith, “I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.”

10. He had spoken of judgment; He means to speak of testimony. “In your law,” saith He, “it is written that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of

me.” He expounded the law to them also, if they were not unthankful. For it is a great question, my brethren, and to me it certainly appears to have been ordained in a mystery, where God said, “In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall stand.” Is truth sought by two witnesses? Clearly it is; so is the custom of mankind: but yet it may be that even two witnesses lie. The chaste Susanna was pressed by two false witnesses: were they not therefore false because they were two? Do we speak of two or of three? A whole people lied against Christ. If, then, a people, consisting of a great multitude of men, was found a false witness, how is it to be understood that “in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall stand,” unless it be that in this manner the Trinity is mysteriously set forth to us, in which is perpetual stability of truth? Dost thou wish to have a good cause? Have two or three witnesses,—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In short, when Susanna, the chaste woman and faithful wife, was pressed by two false witnesses, the Trinity supported her in her conscience and in secret: that Trinity raised up from secrecy one witness, Daniel, and convicted the two. Therefore, because it is written in your law that the witness of two men is true, receive our witness, lest ye feel our judgment. “For I,” saith He, “judge not any man; but I bear witness of myself:” I defer judgment, I defer not the witness.

11. Let us, brethren, choose for ourselves God as our judge, God as our witness, against the tongues of men, against the weak suspicions of mankind. For He who is the judge disdains not to be witness, nor is He advanced in honor when He becomes judge; since He who is witness will also Himself be judge. In what way is He witness? Because He asks not another to learn from Him who thou art. In what way is He judge? Because He has the power of killing and making alive, of condemning and acquitting, of casting down into hell and of raising up into heaven, of joining to the devil and of crowning with the angels. Since, therefore, He has this power, He is judge. Now, because He requires not another witness that He may know thee; and that He who will hereafter judge thee is now seeing thee, there is no means whereby thou canst deceive Him when He begins to judge. For there is no furnishing thyself with false witnesses who can circumvent that judge when He shall begin to judge thee. This is what God says to thee: When thou despisedst, I did see it; and when thou

believedst not, I did not frustrate my sentence. I delayed it, not removed it. Thou wouldst not hear what I enjoined, thou shalt feel what I foretold. But if thou hearest what I enjoined, thou shalt not feel the evils which I have foretold, but thou shalt enjoy the good things which I have promised.

12. Let it not by any means surprise any one that He says, “My judgment is true; because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me;” whilst He has said in another place, “The Father judgeth not any man, but all judgment hath He given to the Son.” We have already discoursed on these same words of the evangelist, and we remind you now that this was not said because the Father will not be with the Son when He comes to judge, but because the Son alone will be apparent to the good and the bad in the judgment, in that form in which He suffered, and rose again, and ascended into heaven. For at that moment, indeed, as they were beholding Him ascending, the angelic voice sounded in the ears of His disciples, “So shall He come in like manner as ye have seen Him going into heaven;” that is, in the form of man in which He was judged, will He judge, in order that also that prophetic utterance may be fulfilled, “They shall look upon Him whom they pierced.” But when the righteous go into eternal life, we shall see Him as He is; that will not be the judgment of the living and the dead, but only the reward of the living.

13. Likewise, let it not surprise you that He says, “In your law it is written that the testimony of two men is true,” that any man should hence suppose that this was not also the law of God, because it is not said, In the law of God: let him know that, when it is said thus, In your law, it is just as if He said, “In the law which was given to you;” given by whom, except by God? Just as we say, “Our daily bread;” and yet we say, “Give us this day.”

TRACTATE XXXVII

CHAPTER VIII. 19, 20

1. What in the holy Gospel is spoken briefly ought not briefly to be expounded, so that what is read may be understood. The words of the Lord are few, but great; to be valued not by number, but by weight: not to be despised because they are few, but to be sought because they are great. You

who were present yesterday have heard, as we discoursed according to our ability from that which the Lord said, “Ye judge after the flesh: I judge not any man. But yet if I judge, my judgment is true; because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. It is written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.” Yesterday, as I have said, from these words a discourse was delivered to your ears and to your minds. When the Lord had spoken these words, they who heard, “Ye judge after the flesh,” manifested the truth of what they had heard. For they answered the Lord, as He spoke of God His Father, and said to Him, “Where is thy Father?” The Father of Christ they understood carnally, because they judged the words of Christ after the flesh. But He who spoke was openly flesh, but secretly the Word: man visible, God hidden. They saw the covering, and despised the wearer: they despised because they knew not; knew not, because they saw not; saw not, because they were blind; they were blind, because they believed not.

2. Let us see, then, what answer the Lord made to this. “Where,” say they, “is thy Father?” For we have heard thee say, “I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me:” we see thee alone, we do not see thy Father with thee; how sayest thou that thou art not alone, but that thou art with thy Father? Else show us that thy Father is with thee. And the Lord answered them: Do ye know me, that I should show you the Father? This is indeed what follows; this is what He answered in His own words, the exposition of which we have already premised. For see what He said, “Ye neither know me nor my Father: if ye knew me, ye would perhaps know my Father also.” Ye say then, “Where is thy Father?” As if already ye knew me; as if what you see were all that I am. Therefore because ye know not me, I do not show you my Father. Ye suppose me, in fact, to be a man; hence ye seek a man for my father, because “ye judge after the flesh.” But because, according to what you see, I am one thing, and another thing according to what you see not, and that I as hidden from you speak of my Father as hidden, it is requisite that you should first know me, and then ye know my Father also.

3. “For if ye knew me, ye would perhaps know my Father also.” He who knows all things is not in doubt when He says perhaps, but rebuking. Now see how this very word perhaps, which seems to be a word of doubting, may be spoken chidingly. Yea, a word expressive of doubt it is when used by man, for man doubts because he knows not; but when a word of doubting is spoken by God, from whom surely nothing is hid, it is unbelief that is reproved by that doubting, not the Godhead merely expressing an opinion. For men sometimes chidingly express doubt concerning things which they hold certain; that is, use a word of doubting, while in their heart they doubt not: just as thou wouldst say to thy slave, if thou wert angry with him, “Thou despisest me; but consider, perhaps I am thy master.” Hence also the apostle, speaking to some who despised him, says: “And I think that I also have the Spirit of God.” When he says, “I think,” he seems to doubt; but he is rebuking, not doubting. And in another place the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, rebuking the future unbelief of mankind, saith: “When the Son of man cometh, will He, thinkest thou, find faith on the earth?”

4. You now, as I think, understand how the word perhaps is used here, in case any weigher of words and poiser of syllables, as if to show his knowledge of Latin, finds fault with a word which the Word of God spoke; and by blaming the Word of God, remain not eloquent, but mute. For who is there that speaks as doth the Word which was in the beginning with God? Do not consider these words as we use them, and from these wish to measure that Word which is God. Thou hearest the Word indeed, and despisest it; hear God and fear Him: “In the beginning was the Word.” Thou referrest to the usage of thy conversation, and sayest within thyself, What is a word? What mighty thing is a word? It sounds and passes away; after beating the air, it strikes the ear and is no more. Hear further: “The Word was with God;” remained, did not by sounding pass away. Perhaps thou still despisest it: “The Word was God.” With thyself, O man, a word in thy heart is a different thing from sound; but the word that is with thee, in order to pass to me, requires sound for a vehicle as it were. It takes to itself sound, mounts it as a vehicle, runs through the air, comes to me and yet does not leave thee. But the sound, in order to come to me, left thee and yet did not stay with me. Now has the word that was in thy heart also passed away with the passing sound? Thou didst speak thy thought; and, that the thought

which was hid with thee might come to me, thou didst sound syllables; the sound of the syllables conveyed thy thought to my ear; through my ear thy thought descended into my heart, the intermediate sound flew away: but that word which took to itself sound was with thee before thou didst sound it, and is with me, because thou didst sound it, without quitting thee. Consider this, thou nice weigher of sounds, whoever thou be. Thou despisest the Word of God, thou who comprehendest not the word of man.

5. He, then, by whom all things were made knows all things, and yet He rebukes by doubting: "If ye knew me ye would perhaps know my Father also." He rebukes unbelievers. He spoke a like sentence to the disciples, but there is not a word of doubting in it, because there was no occasion to rebuke unbelief. For this, "If ye knew me, ye would perhaps know my Father also," which He said to the Jews, He said also to the disciples, when Philip asked, or rather, demanded of Him, saying, "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us:" just as if he said, We already know Thee even ourselves; Thou hast been apparent to us; we have seen Thee; Thou hast deigned to choose us; we have followed Thee, have seen Thy marvels, heard Thy words of Salvation, have taken Thy precepts upon us, we hope in Thy promises: Thou hast deigned to confer much upon us by Thy very presence: but still, while we know Thee, and we do not yet know the Father, we are inflamed with desire to see Him whom we do not yet know; and thus, be cause we know Thee, but it is not enough until we know the Father, show us the Father and it sufficeth us. And the Lord, that they might understand that they knew not what they thought they did already know, said, "Am I so long time with you, and ye know me not, Philip? he who hath seen me hath seen the Father." Has this sentence a word of doubting in it? Did He say, He that hath seen me hath perhaps seen the Father? Why not? Because it was a believer that listened to Him, not a persecutor of the faith: hence did the Lord not rebuke, but teach. "Whoso hath seen me hath seen the Father also:" and here, "If ye knew me, ye would know my Father also," let us remove the word which indicates the unbelief of the hearers, and it is the same sentence.

6. Yesterday we commended it to your consideration, beloved, and said that the sentences of the Evangelist John, in which he narrates to us what he

learned from the Lord, had not required to be discussed, were that possible, except the inventions of heretics had compelled us. Yesterday, then, we briefly intimated to you, beloved, that there are heretics who are called Patripassians, or Sabellians after their founder: these say that the same is the Father who is the Son; the names different, but the person one. When He wills, say they, He is Father; when He wills, He is Son: still He is one. There are likewise other heretics who are called Arians. They indeed confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is the only Son of the Father; the one, Father of the Son; the other, Son of the Father; that He who is Father is not Son, nor He who is Son is Father; they confess that the Son was begotten, but deny His equality. We, namely, the catholic faith, coming from the doctrine of the apostles planted in us, received by a line of succession, to be transmitted sound to posterity,—the catholic faith, I say, has, between both those parties, that is, between both errors, held the truth. In the error of the Sabellians, He is only one; the Father and Son is the same person: in the error of the Arians, the Father and the Son are indeed different persons; but the Son is not only a different person, but different in nature. Thou midway between these, what sayest thou? Thou hast shut out the Sabellian, shut out the Arian also. The Father is Father, the Son is Son; another person, not another in nature; for, “I and the Father are one,” which, so far as I could, I pressed on your thoughts yesterday. When he hears that word, we are, let the Sabellian go away confounded; when he hears the word one, let the Arian go away confounded. Let the catholic steer the bark of his faith between both, since in both he must be on his guard against shipwreck. Say thou, then, what the Gospel saith, “I and the Father are one.” Not different in nature, because one; not one person, because are.

7. A little before He said, “My judgment is true; because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me:” as if He said, The reason why my judgment is true is, because I am the Son of God, because I speak the truth, because I am truth itself. Those men, understanding Him carnally, said, “Where is thy Father?” Now hear, O Arian: “Ye neither know me, nor my Father;” because, “If ye knew me, ye would know my Father also.” What doth this mean, except “I and the Father are one”? When thou seest some person like some other,—give heed, beloved, it is a common remark; let not that appear to you difficult which you see to be customary,—when, I say, thou seest

some person like another, and thou knowest the person to whom he is like, thou sayest in wonder, “How like this person is to that!” Thou wouldst not say this unless there were two. Here one who does not know the person to whom thou sayest the other is like remarks, “Is he so like him?” And thou answerest him: What, dost thou not know that person? Saith he, “No, I do not.” Immediately thou, in order to make known to him the person whom he does not know by means of the person whom he observes before him, answerest, saying, Having seen this man, thou hast seen the other. Thou didst not, surely, assert that they are one person in saying this, or that they are not two; but made such answer because of the likeness: “If thou knowest the one, thou knowest the other; for they are very like, and there is no difference whatever between them.” Hence also the Lord saith, “If ye knew me, ye would know my Father also;” not that the Son is the Father but like the Father. Let the Arian blush. Thanks be to the Lord that even the Arian is separate from the Sabellian error, and is not a Patripassian: he does not affirm that the Father assumed flesh and came to men, that the Father suffered, rose again, and somehow ascended to Himself; this he does not affirm; he acknowledges with me the Father to be Father, the Son to be Son. But, O brother, thou hast escaped that shipwreck, why go to the other? Father is Father, Son is Son; why dost thou affirm that the Son is unlike, that He is different, another substance? If He were unlike, would He say to His disciples, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father”? Would He say to the Jews, “If ye knew me, ye would know my Father also”? How would this be true, unless that other was also true, “I and the Father are one”?

8. “These words spake Jesus in the treasury, speaking in the temple:” great boldness, without fear. For He could not suffer if He did not will it, since He were not born if He did not will it. What follows then? “And no man laid hold of Him, because His hour was not yet come.” Some, again, when they hear this, believe that the Lord Christ was subject to fate, and say: Behold, Christ is held by fate! O, if thy heart were not fatuous, thou wouldst not believe in fate. If fate, as some understand it, is derived from fando, that is from speaking, how can the Word of God be held by fate, whilst all things that are made are in the Word itself? For God has not ordained anything which He did not know beforehand; that which was made was in His Word. The world was made; both was made and was there. How both

was made and was there? Because the house which the builder rears, was previously in his art; and there, a better house, without age, without decay: however, to show forth his art, he makes a house; and so, in a manner, a house comes forth from a house; and if the house should fall, the art remains. So were all things that are made with the Word of God; because God made all things in wisdom, and all that He made were known to Him: for He did not learn because He made, but made because He knew. To us they are known, because they are made: to Him, if they had not been known, they would not have been made. Therefore the Word went before. And what was before the Word? Nothing at all. For were there anything before it, it would not have been said, "In the beginning was the Word;" but, In the beginning was the Word made. In short, what says Moses concerning the world? "In the beginning God made the heavens and the earth." Made what was not: well, if He made what was not, what was there before? "In the beginning was the Word." And whence came heaven and earth? "All things were made by Him." Dost thou then put Christ under fate? Where are the fates? In heaven, sayest thou, in the order and changes of the stars. How then can fate rule Him by whom the heavens and the stars were made; whilst thy own will, if thou thinkest rightly, transcends even the stars? Or, because thou knowest that Christ's flesh was under heaven, is that the reason why thou thinkest that Christ's power was put under the heavens?

9. Hear, thou fool: "His hour was not yet come;" not the hour in which He should be forced to die, but that in which He would deign to be put to death. For Himself knew when He should die: He considered all things that were foretold of Him, and awaited all to be finished that was foretold to be before His suffering; that when all should be fulfilled, then should come His suffering in set order, not by fatal necessity. In short, hear that you may prove. Among the rest that was prophesied of Him, it is also written: "They gave me gall for meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." How this happened, we know from the Gospel. First, they gave Him gall; He received it, tasted it, and spat it out. Thereafter, as He hung on the cross, that all that was foretold might be fulfilled, He said, "I thirst." They took a sponge filled with vinegar, bound it to a reed, and put it to His mouth; He received it, and said, "It is finished." What did that mean? All things which

were prophesied before my death are completed, then what do I here any longer? In a word, when He said “It is finished, He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.” Did the thieves, who were nailed beside Him, expire when they would? They were held by the bonds of flesh, for they were not the creators of the flesh; fixed by nails, they were a long time tormented, because they had not lordship over their weakness. The Lord, however, when He would, took flesh in a virgin’s womb: came forth to men when He would; lived among men so long as He would; and when He would He quitted the flesh. This is the part of power, not of necessity. This hour, then, He awaited; not the fated, but the fitting and voluntary hour; that all might first be fulfilled which behoved to be fulfilled before His decease. How could he have been under necessity of fate, when He said in another place, “I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again: no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself and take it again?” He showed this power when the Jews sought Him. “Whom seek ye?” saith He. “Jesus,” said they. And He answered, “I am He.” When they heard this voice, “they went back and fell to the ground.”

10. Says one, If he had this power, why, when the Jews insulted him on the cross and said, “If he be the Son of God let him come down from the cross,” did He not come down, to show them His power by coming down? Because He was teaching us patience, therefore He deferred the demonstration of His power. For if He came down, moved as it were at their words, He would be thought to have been overcome by the sting of their insults. He did not come down; there He remained fixed, to depart when He would. For what great matter was it for Him to descend from the cross, when He could rise again from the sepulchre? Let us, then, to whom this is ministered, understand that the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, then concealed, will be made manifest in the judgment, of which it is said, “God will come manifest; our God, and He will not be silent.” Why is it said, “will come manifest”? Because He, our God,—namely, Christ,—came hidden, will come manifest. “And will not be silent:” why this “will not be silent”? Because at first He did keep silence. When? When He was judged; that this, too, might be fulfilled which the prophet had foretold: “As a sheep He was led to the slaughter, and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.” He would not have suffered did He not will to

suffer: did He not suffer, that blood had not been shed; if that blood were not shed, the world would not be redeemed. Therefore let us give thanks to the power of His divinity, and to the compassion of His infirmity; both concerning the hidden power which the Jews did not recognize, whence it is now said to them, “Ye neither know me nor my Father,” and also concerning the flesh assumed, which the Jews did not recognize, and yet knew His lineage: whence He said to them elsewhere, “Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am.” Let us know both in Christ, both wherein He is equal to the Father and wherein the Father is greater than He. That is the Word, this is the flesh; that is God, this is man; but yet Christ is one, God and man.

TRACTATE XXXVIII

CHAPTER VIII. 21–25

1. The lesson of the holy Gospel which preceded to-day’s had concluded thus: that “the Lord spake, teaching in the treasury,” what it pleased Him, and what you have heard; “and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour was not yet come.” Accordingly, on the Lord’s day we made our subject of discourse what He Himself thought fit to give us. We indicated to your Charity why it was said, “His hour was not yet come,” lest any in their impiety should have the effrontery to suspect Christ as laid under some fatal necessity. For the hour was not yet come when by His own appointment, in accordance with what was predicted regarding Him, He should not be forced to die unwillingly, but be ready to be slain.

2. But of His own passion itself, which lay not in any necessity He was under, but in His own power, all that He said in His discourse to the Jews was, “I go away.” For to Christ the Lord’s death was His proceeding to the place whence He had come, and from which He had never departed. “I go away,” said He, “and ye shall seek me,” not from any longing for me, but in hatred. For after His removal from human sight, He was sought for both by those who hated Him and those who loved Him; by the former in a spirit of persecution, by the latter with the desire of having Him. In the Psalms the Lord Himself says by the prophet, “A place of refuge hath failed me, and there is none that seeketh after my life;” and again He says in another place

in the Psalms, “Let them be confounded and ashamed who seek after my life.” He blamed the former for not seeking, He condemned the latter because they did. For it is wrong not to seek the life of Christ, that is, in the way the disciples sought it; and it is wrong to seek the life of Christ, that is, in the way the Jews sought it: for the former sought to possess it, these latter to destroy it. Accordingly, because these men sought it thus in a wrong way, with a perverted heart, what next did He add? “Ye shall seek me, and”—not to let you suppose that ye will seek me for good—”ye shall die in your sin.” This comes of seeking Christ wrongly, to die in one’s sin; this of hating Him, through whom alone salvation could be found. For, while men whose hope is in God ought not to render evil even for evil, these men were rendering evil for good. The Lord therefore announced to them beforehand, and in His foreknowledge uttered the sentence, that they should die in their sin. And then He adds, “Whither I go, ye cannot come.” He said the same to the disciples also in another place; and yet He said not to them, “Ye shall die in your sin.” But what did He say? The same as to these men: “Whither I go, ye cannot come.” He did not take away hope, but foretold delay. For at the time when the Lord spake this to the disciples, they were not able to come whither He was going, yet were they to come afterwards; but these men never, to whom in His foreknowledge He said, “Ye shall die in your sin.”

3. But on hearing these words, as is usual with those whose thoughts are carnal, who judge after the flesh, and hear and apprehend everything in a carnal way, they said, “Will he kill himself because he said, Whither I go ye cannot come.” Foolish words, and overflowing with stupidity! For why could they not go whither He would have proceeded had He killed Himself? Were not they themselves to die? What, then, means, “Will he kill himself because he said, Whither I go ye cannot come?” If He spake of man’s death, what man is there that does not die? Therefore, by “whither I go” He meant, not the going to death, but whither He was going Himself after death. Such, then, was their answer, because they did not understand.

4. And what said the Lord to those who savored of the earth? “And He said unto them, Ye are from beneath.” For this cause ye savor of the earth, because ye lick dust like serpents. Ye eat earth! What does it mean? Ye feed

on earthly things, ye delight in earthly things, ye gape after earthly things, ye have no heart for what is above. “Ye are from beneath: I am from above. Ye are of this world: I am not of this world.” For how could He be of the world, by whom the world was made? All that are of the world come after the world, because the world preceded; and so man is of the world. But Christ was first, and then the world; and since Christ was before the world, before Christ there was nothing: because “In the beginning was the Word; all things were made by Him.” He, therefore, was of that which is above. But of what that is above? Of the air? Perish the thought! there the birds wing their flight. Of the sky that we see? Again I say, Perish the thought! it is there that the stars and sun and moon revolve. Of the angels? Neither is this to be understood: by Him who made all things were the angels also made. Of what, then, above is Christ? Of the Father Himself. Nothing is above that God who begat the Word equal with Himself, co-eternal with Himself, only-begotten, timeless, that by Him time’s own foundations should be laid. Understand, then, Christ as from above, so as in thy thought to get beyond everything that is made,—the whole creation together, every material body, every created spirit, everything in any way subject to change: rise above all, as John rose, in order to reach this: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

5. Therefore said He, “I am from above. Ye are of this world: I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins.” He has explained to us, brethren, what He wished to be understood by “ye are of this world.” He said therefore in fact, “Ye are of this world,” because they were sinners, because they were unrighteous, because they were unbelieving, because they savored of the earthly. For what is your opinion as regards the holy apostles? What difference was there between the Jews and the apostles? As great as between darkness and light, as between faith and unbelief, as between piety and impiety, as between hope and despair, as between love and avarice: surely the difference was great. What then, because there was such a difference, were the apostles not of the world? If thy thoughts turn to the manner of their birth, and whence they came, inasmuch as all of them had come from Adam, they were of this world. But what said the Lord Himself to them? “I have chosen you out of the world.” Those, then, who were of the world, became not of the world, and began to

belong to Him by whom the world was made. But these men continued to be of the world, to whom it was said, “Ye shall die in your sins.”

6. Let none then, brethren, say, I am not of this world. Whoever thou art as a man, thou art of this world; but He who made the world came to thee, and delivered thee from this world. If the world delights thee, thou wishest always to be unclean (immundus); but if this world no longer delight thee, thou art already clean (mundus). And yet, if through some infirmity the world still delight thee, let Him who cleanseth (mundat) dwell in thee, and thou too shalt be clean. But if thou art once clean, thou wilt not continue in the world; neither wilt thou hear what was heard by the Jews, “Ye shall die in your sins.” For we are all born with sin; we have all in living added to that wherein we were born, and have since become more of the world than when we were born of our parents. And where should we be, had He not come, who was wholly free from sin, to expiate all sin? And so, because in Him the Jews believed not, they deservedly heard [the sentence], “Ye shall die in your sins;” for in no way could ye, who were born with sin, be without sin; and yet, said He, if ye believe in me, although it is still true that ye were born with sin, yet in your sin ye shall not die. The whole misery, then, of the Jews was just this, not to have sin, but to die in their sins. From this it is that every Christian ought to seek to escape; because of this we have recourse to baptism; on this account do those whose lives are in danger from sickness or any other cause become anxious for help; for this also is the sucking child carried by his mother with pious hands to the church, that he may not go out into the world without baptism, and die in the sin wherein he was born. Most wretched surely the condition and miserable the lot of these men, who heard from those truth-speaking lips, “Ye shall die in your sins!”

7. But He explains whence this should befall them: “For if ye believe not that I am [He], ye shall die in your sins.” I believe, brethren, that among the multitude who listened to the Lord, there were those also who should yet believe. But against all, as it were, had that most severe sentence gone forth, “Ye shall die in your sin;” and thereby even from those who should yet believe had hope been withdrawn: the others were roused to fury, they to fear; yea, to more than fear, they were brought now to despair. But He

revived their hope; for He added, “If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins.” Therefore if ye do believe that I am, ye shall not die in your sins. Hope was restored to the desponding, the sleeping were aroused, their hearts got a fresh awakening; and thereafter very many believed, as the Gospel itself attests in the sequel. For members of Christ were there, who had not yet become attached to the body of Christ; and among that people by whom He was crucified, by whom He was hanged on a tree, by whom when hanging He was mocked, by whom He was wounded with the spear, by whom gall and vinegar were given Him to drink, were the members of Christ, for whose sake He said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And what will a convert not be forgiven, if the shedding of Christ’s blood is forgiven? What murderer need despair, if he was restored to hope by whom even Christ was slain? After this many believed; they were presented with Christ’s blood as a gift, that they might drink it for their salvation, rather than be held guilty of shedding it. Who can despair? And if the thief was saved on the cross,—a murderer shortly before, a little afterwards accused, convicted, condemned, hanged, delivered,—wonder not. The place of his conviction was that of his condemnation; while that of his conversion was the place also of his deliverance. Among this people, then, to whom the Lord was speaking, were those who should yet die in their sin: there were those also who should yet believe on Him who spake, and find deliverance from all their sin.

8. But look at this which is said by Christ the Lord: “If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins.” What is this, “If ye believe not that I am?” “I am” what? There is nothing added; and because He added nothing, He left much to be inferred. For He was expected to say what He was, and yet He said it not. What was He expected to say? Perhaps, “If ye believe not that I am” Christ; “if ye believe not that I am” the Son of God; “if ye believe not that I am” the Word of the Father; “if ye believe not that I am” the founder of the world; “if ye believe not that I am” the former and re-former, the creator and re-creator, the maker and re-maker of man;—”if ye believe not that I am” this, “ye shall die in your sins.” There is much implied in His only saying “I am;” for so also had God said to Moses, “I am who am.” Who can adequately express what that am means? God by His angel sent His servant Moses to deliver His people out of Egypt (you have read and

know what you now hear; but I recall it to your minds); He sent him trembling, self-excusing, but obedient. And while thus excusing himself, he said to God, whom he understood to be speaking in the person of the angel: If the people say to me, And who is the God that hath sent thee? what shall I say to them? And the Lord answered him, “I am who am;” and added, “Thou shalt say to the children of Israel, He who is hath sent me to you.” There also He says not, I am God; or, I am the framer of the world; or, I am the creator of all things; or, I am the multiplier of the very people to be delivered: but only this, “I am who am;” and, “Thou shall say to the children of Israel, He who is.” He added not, Who is your God, who is the God of your fathers; but said only this: “He who is hath sent me to you.” Perhaps it was too much even for Moses himself, as it is too much for us also, and much more so for us, to understand the meaning of such words, “I am who am;” and, “He who is hath sent me to you.” And supposing that Moses comprehended it, when would those to whom he was sent comprehend it? The Lord therefore put aside what man could not comprehend, and added what he could; for He said also besides, “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” This thou canst comprehend; for “I am who am,” what mind can comprehend?

9. What then of us? Shall we venture to say anything on such words, “I am who am;” or rather on this, that you have heard the Lord saying, “If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins”? Shall I venture with these feeble and scarcely existing powers of mine to discuss the meaning of that which Christ the Lord hath said, “If ye believe not that I am”? I shall venture to ask the Lord Himself. Listen to me as one asking rather than discussing, inquiring rather than assuming, learning rather than teaching, and fail not yourselves also to be asking with me or through me. The Lord Himself, who is everywhere, is also at hand. Let Him hear the feeling that prompts to ask, and grant the fruit of understanding. For in what words, even were it so that I comprehend something, can I convey to your hearts what I comprehend? What voice is adequate? what eloquence sufficient? what powers of intelligence? what faculty of utterance?

10. I shall speak, then, to our Lord Jesus Christ; I shall speak and may He be pleased to hear me. I believe He is present, I am fully assured of it; for

He Himself has said, “Lo, I am with you even to the end of the world.” O Lord our God, what is that which Thou saidst, “If ye believe not that I am”? For what is there that belongs not to the things Thou hast made? Does not heaven so belong? Does not the earth? Does not everything in earth and heaven? Does not man himself to whom Thou speakest? Does not the angel whom Thou sendest? If all these are things made by Thee, what is that existence Thou hast retained as something exclusively Thine own, which Thou hast given to none besides, that Thou mightest be such Thyself alone? For how do I hear “I am who am,” as if there were none besides? and how do I hear “If ye believe not that I am”? For had they no existence who heard Him? Yea, though they were sinners, they were men. What then can I do? What that existence is, let Him tell my heart, let Him tell, let Him declare it within; let the inner man hear, the mind apprehend this true existence; for such existence is always unvarying in character. For a thing, anything whatever (I have begun as it were to dispute, and have left off inquiring. Perhaps I wish to speak what I have heard. May He grant enlargement to my hearing, and to yours, while I speak);—for anything, whatever in short be its excellence, if it is changeable, does not truly exist; for there is no true existence wherever non-existence has also a place. For whatever can be changed, so far as changed, it is not that which was: if it is no longer what it was, a kind of death has therein taken place; something that was there has been eliminated, and exists no more. Blackness has died out in the silvery locks of the patriarch, comeliness in the body of the careworn and crooked old man, strength in the body of the languishing, the [previous] standing posture in the body of one walking, walking in the body of one standing, walking and standing in the body of one reclining, speech in the tongue of the silent;—whatever changes, and is what it was not, I see there a kind of life in that which is, and death in that which was. In fine, when we say of one deceased, Where is that person? we are answered, He was. O Truth, it is thou [alone] that truly art! For in all actions and movements of ours, yea, in every activity of the creature, I find two times, the past and the future. I seek for the present, nothing stands still: what I have said is no longer present; what I am going to say is not yet come: what I have done is no longer present; what I am going to do is not yet come: the life I have lived is no longer present; the life I have still to live is not yet come. Past and future I find in every creature-movement: in truth, which is abiding, past and future I find not, but the present alone, and that unchangeably, which has no place in the creature. Sift the mutations of things, thou wilt find was and will be: think on God, thou wilt find the is, where was and will be cannot exist. To be so then thyself, rise beyond the boundaries of time. But who can transcend the powers of his being? May He raise us thither who said to the Father, “I will that they also be with me where I am.” And so, in making this promise, that we should not die in our sins, the Lord Jesus Christ, I think, said nothing else by these words, “If ye believe not that I am;” yea, by these words I think He meant nothing else than this, “If ye believe not that I am” God, “ye shall die in your sins.” Well, God be thanked that He said, “If ye believe not,” and did not say, If ye comprehend not. For who can comprehend this? Or is it so, since I have ventured to speak and you have seemed to understand, that you have indeed comprehended somewhat of a subject so unspeakable? If then thou comprehendest not, faith sets thee free. Therefore also the Lord said not, If ye comprehend not that I am; but said what they were capable of attaining, “If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins.”

11. And savoring as these men always did of the earth, and ever hearing and answering according to the flesh, what did they say to Him? “Who art thou?” For when thou saidst, “If ye believe not that I am,” thou didst not tell us what thou wert. Who art thou, that we may believe? He answered “The Beginning.” Here is the existence that [always] is. The beginning cannot be changed: the beginning is self-abiding and all-originating; that is, the beginning, to which it has been said, “But thou Thyself art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.” “The beginning,” He said, “for so I also speak to you.” Believe me [to be] the beginning, that ye may not die in your sins. For just as if by saying, “Who art thou?” they had said nothing else than this, What shall we believe thee to be? He replied, “The beginning;” that is, Believe me [to be] the “beginning.” For in the Greek expression we discern what we cannot in the Latin. For in Greek the word “beginning” (principium, arche), is of the feminine gender, just as with us “law” (lex) is of the feminine gender, while it is of the masculine (nomos) with them; or as “wisdom” (sapientia, sophia) is of the feminine gender with both. It is the custom of speech, therefore, in different languages to vary the gender of words, because in things themselves there is no place for the distinction of

sex. For wisdom is not really female, since Christ is the Wisdom of God, and Christ is termed of the masculine gender, wisdom of the feminine. When then the Jews said, “Who art thou?” He, who knew that there were some there who should yet believe, and therefore had said, Who art thou? that so they might come to know what they ought to believe regarding Him, replied, “The beginning:” not as if He said, I am the beginning; but as if He said, Believe me [to be] the beginning. Which, as I said, is quite evident in the Greek language, where beginning (arche) is of the feminine gender. Just as if He had wished to say that He was the Truth, and to their question, “Who art thou?” had answered, Veritatem [the Truth]; when to the words, “Who art thou?” He evidently ought to have replied, Veritas [the Truth]; that is, I am the Truth. But His answer had a deeper meaning, when He saw that they had put the question, “Who art thou?” in such a way as to mean, Having heard from thee, “If ye believe not that I am,” what shall we believe thee to be? To this He replied, “The beginning:” as if He said, Believe me to be the beginning. And He added “for [as such] I also speak to you;” that is, having humbled myself on your account, I have condescended to such words. For if the beginning as it is in itself had remained so with the Father, as not to receive the form of a servant and speak as man with men; how could they have believed in Him, since their weak hearts could not have heard the Word intelligently without some voice that would appeal to their senses? Therefore, said He, believe me to be the beginning; for, that you may believe, I not only am, but also speak to you. But on this subject I have still much to say to you; may it therefore please your Charity that we reserve what remains, and by His gracious aid deliver it tomorrow.

TRACTATE XXXIX

CHAPTER VIII. 26, 27

1. The words of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He had addressed to the Jews, so regulating His discourse that the blind saw not, and believers’ eyes were opened, are these, which have been read to-day from the holy Gospel: “Then said the Jews, Who art thou?” Because the Lord had said before, “If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins.” To this accordingly they rejoined, “Who art thou?” as if seeking to know on whom they ought to believe, so as not to die in their sin. He replied to those who asked Him:

“Who art thou?” by saying, “The beginning, for [so] also I speak to you.” If the Lord has called Himself the beginning, it may be inquired whether the Father also is the beginning. For if the Son who has a Father is the beginning, how much more easily must God the Father be understood as the beginning, who has indeed the Son whose Father He is, but has no one from whom He Himself proceedeth? For the Son is the Son of the Father, and the Father certainly is the Father of the Son; but the Son is called God of God,—the Son is called Light of Light; the Father is called Light, but not, of Light,—the Father is called God, but not, of God. If, then, God of God, Light of Light, is the beginning, how much more easily may we understand as such that Light, from whom the Light [cometh], and God, of whom is God? It seems, therefore, absurd, dearly beloved, to call the Son the beginning, and not to call the Father the beginning also.

2. But what shall we do? Are there, then, two beginnings? Let us beware of saying so. What then, if both the Father is the beginning and the Son the beginning, how are there not two beginnings? In the same way that we call the Father God, and the Son God, and yet say not that there are two Gods; and yet He who is the Father is not the Son, He who is the Son is not the Father; and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, is neither the Father nor the Son. Although, then, as Catholic ears have been taught in the bosom of mother Church, neither He who is the Father is the Son, nor He who is the Son is the Father, nor is the Holy Spirit, of the Father and of the Son, either the Son or the Father, yet we say not that there are three Gods; although, if we are asked of each apart, we must, of whichever we are questioned, confess that He is God.

3. But all this seems absurd to those who drag up familiar things to a level with things little known, visible things with invisible, and compare the creature to the Creator. For unbelievers sometimes question us and say: Whom you call the Father, do you call him God? We answer, God. Whom you call the Son, do you call him God? We answer, God. Whom you call the Holy Spirit, do you call him God? We answer, God. Then, say they, are the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit three Gods? We answer, No. They are confounded, because they are not enlightened; they have their heart shut up, because they want the key of faith. Let us then, brethren, by

an antecedent faith that heals the eye of our heart, receive without obscurity what we understand,—and what we understand not, believe without hesitation; let us not quit the foundation of faith in order to reach the summit of perfection. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God: and yet He is not the Father who is the Son, nor He the Son who is the Father, and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Father and the Son, is neither the Father nor the Son. The Trinity is one God. The Trinity is one eternity, one power, one majesty;—three, [but not three] Gods. Let not the reviler answer me: "Three what, then? For," he adds, "if there are three, you must say, three what?" I reply: The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. "See," he says, "you have named three; but express what the three are?" Nay, count them yourself; for I make out three when I say, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. For the Father is God as respects Himself, but [He is] the Father as respects the Son; the Son is God as respects Himself, but He is the Son as regards the Father.

4. What I say you may gather from daily analogies. So it is with one man and another, if the one be a father, the other his son. He is man as regards himself, but a father as regards his son; and the son man as respects himself, but a son as respects his father. For father is a name given relatively, and so with son; but these are two men. And certainly God the Father is Father in a relative sense, that is, in relation to the Son; and God the Son is Son relatively, that is, in relation to the Father; but not as the former are two men are these two Gods. Why is it not so here? Because that belongs to one sphere and this to another; for this is divine. There is here something ineffable which cannot be explained in words, that there should both be, and not be, number. For see if there appear not a kind of number, Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost—the Trinity. If three, three what? Here number fails. And so God neither keeps apart from number, nor is comprehended by number. Because there are three, there is a kind of number. If you ask three what, number ceases. Hence it is said, "Great is our Lord, and great His power; and of His understanding there is no number." When you have begun to reflect, you begin to number; when you have numbered, you cannot tell what you have numbered. The Father is Father, the Son is Son, the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit. What are these three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? Are They not three Gods? No. Are They not three

Almighties? No. Not three Creators of the world? No. Is the Father then almighty? Manifestly almighty. And is the Son then not almighty? Clearly the Son is also almighty. And is the Holy Spirit then not almighty? He, too, is almighty. Are there then three Almighties? No; only one Almighty. Only in Their relation to each other do They suggest number, not in Their essential existence. For though God the Father is, as respects Himself, God along with the Son and the Holy Spirit, there are not three Gods; and, though as respects Himself He is omnipotent, as well as the Son and the Holy Spirit, there are not three omnipotents; for in truth He is the Father not in respect to Himself, but to the Son; nor is the Son so in respect to Himself, but to the Father; nor is the Spirit so as regards Himself, in as far as He is called the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. I have no name to give the three, save the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, one God, one Almighty. And so one beginning.

5. Take an illustration from the Holy Scriptures, whereby you may in some measure comprehend what I am saying. After our Lord Jesus Christ rose again, and was pleased to ascend into heaven, at the end of ten days He sent from thence the Holy Spirit, by whom those who were present in that one chamber were filled, and began to speak in the languages of all nations. The Lord’s murderers, terrified by the miracle, were pricked to the heart and sorrowed; sorrowing, were changed; and being changed, believed. There were added to the Lord’s body, that is, to the number of believers, three thousand people. And so also by the working of another miracle there were added other five thousand. A considerable community was created, in which all, receiving the Holy Spirit, by whom spiritual love was kindled, were by their very love and fervor of spirit welded into one, and began in the very unity of fellowship to sell all that they had, and to lay the price at the apostles’ feet, that distribution might be made to every one as each had need. And the Scripture says this of them, that “they were of one soul and one heart toward God.” Give heed then, brethren, and from this acknowledge the mystery of the Trinity, how it is we say, There is both the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and yet there is one God. See! there were so many thousands of these, and yet there was one heart; there were so many thousands, and one soul. But where? In God. How much more so God Himself? Do I err at all in word when I call two men two

souls, or three men three souls, or many men many souls? Surely I speak correctly. Let them approach God, and one soul belongs to all. If by approaching God many souls by love become one soul, and many hearts one heart, what of the very fountain of love in the Father and Son? Is it not still more so here that the Trinity is one God? For thence, of that Holy Spirit, does love come to us, as the apostle says: “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.” If then the love of God, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us, makes many souls one soul, and many hearts one heart, how much rather are the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, one God, one light, and one beginning?

6. Let us hear, then, the Beginning who speaks to us: “I have,” said He, “many things to say of you and to judge.” You remember that He said, “I do not judge any one.” See, now He says, “I have many things to say of you and to judge.” But, “I do not judge” is one thing: “I have to judge” is another; for He had come to save the world, not to judge the world. In saying, “I have many things to say of you and to judge,” He speaks of the future judgment. For therefore did He ascend, that He may come to judge the living and the dead. No one will judge more justly than He who was unjustly judged. “Many things,” said He, “have I to say of you and to judge; but He that sent me is true.” See how the Son, His equal, gives glory to the Father. For He sets us an example, and says as it were in our hearts: O believer, if thou hearest my gospel, the Lord thy God saith to thee, when I, in the beginning God the Word with God, equal with the Father, coeternal with Him that begat, give glory to Him whose Son I am, how canst thou be proud before Him, whose servant thou art?

7. “I have many things,” He said, “to say of you and to judge: but He that sent me is true;” as if He had said, Therefore I judge the truth, because, as the Son of the True One, I am the truth. The Father true, the Son the truth,—which do we account the greater? Let us reflect, if we can, which is the greater, the True One or the Truth. Take some other instances. Is a pious man, or piety, the more comprehensive? Surely piety itself; for the pious is derived from piety, not piety from the pious. For piety may still exist, though he who was pious became impious. He has lost his piety, but has

taken nothing from piety itself. What also of comely and comeliness? Comeliness is more than comely; for comeliness gives existence to the comely, not the comely to comeliness. And so of chaste and chastity. Chastity is clearly something more than chaste. For if chastity had no existence, one would have no ground to be chaste; but though one may refuse to be chaste, chastity remains entire. If then the term piety implies more than the term pious, comeliness more than comely, chastity than chaste, shall we say that the Truth is more than the True One? If we say so, we shall begin to say that the Son is greater than the Father. For the Lord Himself says most distinctly, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” Therefore, if the Son is the truth, what is the Father but what the Truth Himself says, “He that sent me is true”? The Son is the truth, the Father true. I inquire which is the greater, but find equality. For the true Father is true not because He contained a part of that truth, but because He begat it entire.

8. I see I must speak more plainly. And, not to detain you long, let me treat only of this point to-day. When I have finished what, with God’s help, I wish to say, my discourse shall close. I have said this, then, to enlist your attention. Every soul, as being a thing, is mutable; and although a great creature, yet a creature; though superior to the body, yet made. Every soul, then, since it is changeable—that is, sometimes believes, sometimes disbelieves; at one time wishes, at another time refuses; at one time is adulterous, at another chaste; now good, and again wicked,—is changeable. But God is that which is, and so has retained as His own peculiar name, “I am who am.” Such also is the Son, when He says, “If ye believe not that I am;” and thereto pertains also, “Who art thou? The Beginning” (ver. 25). God therefore is unchangeable, the soul changeable. When the soul receives from God the elements of its goodness it becomes good by participation, just as by participation thine eye seeth. For it sees not when the light is withdrawn, while so long as it shares in the light it sees. Since then by participation the soul is made good, if it changes and becomes bad, the goodness remains that made it good. For there is a goodness of which it partook when good; and when it has turned to evil, that goodness continues entire. If the soul fall away and become evil, there is no lessening of goodness; if it return and become good, that goodness is not enlarged. Thine

eye participates in this light, and thou seest. Is it shut? Then thou hast not diminished the light. Is it open? Thou hast not increased the light. By this illustration, brethren, understand that if the soul is pious, there is piety with God, of which the soul is partaker; if the soul is chaste, there is chastity with God, of which it partakes; if it is good, there is goodness with God, of which it partakes; if it is true, there is truth with God, of which the soul is partaker. Whereof if the soul is no partaker, every man is false; and if every man may be false, no man is true of himself. But the true Father is true of Himself, for He begat the Truth. It is one thing to say, That man is true, for he has taken in the truth: it is another, God is true, for He begat the Truth. See then how God is true,—not by participating in, but by generating the Truth. I see you have understood me, and am glad. Let this suffice you to-day. The rest, according as He gives it, we shall expound when the Lord pleases.

TRACTATE XL

CHAPTER VIII. 28–32

1. Of the holy Gospel according to John, which you see in our hand, your Charity has already heard much, whereon by God's grace we have discoursed according to our ability, pressing on your notice that this evangelist, specially, has chosen to speak of the Lord's divinity, wherein He is equal with the Father and the only Son of God; and on that account he has been compared to the eagle, because no other bird is understood to take a loftier flight. Accordingly, to what follows in order, as the Lord enables us to treat of it, listen with all your attention.

2. We have spoken to you on the preceding passage, suggesting how the Father may be understood as True, and the Son as the Truth. But when the Lord Jesus said, "He that sent me is true," the Jews understood not that He spake to them of the Father. And He said to them, as you have just heard in the reading, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am, and [that] I do nothing of myself; but as the Father hath taught me, I speak these things." What means this? For it looks as if all He said was, that they would know who He was after His passion. Without doubt, therefore, He saw that some there, whom He Himself knew, whom with the

rest of His saints He Himself in His foreknowledge had chosen before the foundation of the world, would believe after His passion. These are the very persons whom we are constantly commending, and with much entreaty setting forth for your imitation. For on the sending down of the Holy Spirit after the Lord's passion, and resurrection, and ascension, when miracles were being done in the name of Him whom, as if dead, the persecuting Jews had despised, they were pricked in their hearts; and they who in their rage slew Him were changed and believed; and they who in their rage shed His blood, now in the spirit of faith drank it; to wit, those three thousand, and those five thousand Jews whom now He saw there, when He said, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am [He]." It was as if He had said, I let your recognition lie over till I have completed my passion: in your own order ye shall know who I am. Not that all who heard Him were only then to believe, that is, after the Lord's passion; for a little after it is said, "As He spake these words, many believed on Him;" and the Son of man was not yet lifted up. But the lifting up He is speaking of is that of His passion, not of His glorification; of the cross, not of heaven; for He was exalted there also when He hung on the tree. But that exaltation was His humiliation; for then He became obedient even to the death of the cross. This required to be accomplished by the hands of those who should afterwards believe, and to whom He says, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am [He]." And why so, but that no one might despair, however guilty his conscience, when he saw those forgiven their homicide who had slain the Christ?

3. The Lord then, recognizing such in that crowd, said, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am [He]." You know already what "I am" signifies; and we must not be continually repeating, lest so great a subject beget distaste. Recall that, "I am who am," and "He who is hath sent me," and you will recognize the meaning of the words, "Then shall ye know that I am." But both the Father is, and the Holy Spirit is. To the same is belongs the whole Trinity. But because the Lord spake as the Son, in order that, when He says, "Then shall ye know that I am," there might be no chance of entrance for the error of the Sabellians, that is, of the Patripassians,—an error which I have charged you not to hold, but to beware of,—the error, I mean, of those who have said, The Father and Son

are one and the same; two names, but one reality;—to guard them against that error, when the Lord said, “Then shall ye know that I am,” that He might not be understood as Himself the Father, He immediately added, “And I do nothing of myself; but as my Father taught me, I speak these things.” Already was the Sabellian beginning to rejoice over the discovery of a ground for his error; but immediately on showing himself as it were in the shade, he was confounded by the light of the following sentence. Thou thoughtest that He was the Father, because He said, “I am.” Hear now that He is the Son: “And I do nothing of myself.” What means this, “I do nothing of myself”? Of myself I am not. For the Son is God, of the Father; but the Father is God, yet not of the Son. The Son is God of God, and the Father is God, but not of God. The Son is light of light; and the Father is light, but not of light. The Son is, but there is [One] of whom He is; and the Father is, but there is none of whom He is.

4. Let not then, my brethren, His further words, “As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things,” be the occasion of any carnal thought stealing into your minds. For human weakness cannot think, but as it is accustomed to act and to hear. Do not then set before your eyes as it were two men, one the father, the other the son, and the father speaking to the son; as any one of you may do, when you say something to your son, admonishing and instructing him how to speak, to charge his memory with what you have told him, and, having done so, to express it in words, to enunciate distinctly, and convey to the ears of others what he has apprehended with his own. Think not thus, lest you be fabricating idols in your heart. The human shape, the outlines of human limbs, the form of human flesh, the outward senses, stature and motions of the body, the functions of the tongue, the distinctions of sounds,—think not of such as existing in that Trinity, save as they pertain to the servant-form, which the only-begotten Son assumed, when the Word was made flesh to dwell among us. Thereof I forbid thee not, human weakness, to think according to thy knowledge: nay, rather I require thee. If the faith that is in thee be true, think of Christ as such; but as such of the Virgin Mary, not of God the Father. He was an infant, He grew as a man, He walked as a man, He hungered, He thirsted as a man, He slept as a man; at last He suffered as a man, hung on the tree, was slain and buried as a man. In the same form He rose again; in the same, before the

eyes of His disciples, He ascended into heaven; in the same will He yet come to judgment. For angel lips have declared in the Gospel, “He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.” When then you think of the servant-form in Christ, think of a human likeness, if you have faith; but when you think, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” away with all human fashioning from your heart. Banish from your thoughts everything bounded by corporeal limits, included in local measurement, or spread out in a mass, how great soever its size. Perish utterly such a figment from your heart. Think, if you can, on the beauty of wisdom, picture to yourself the beauty of righteousness. Has that a shape? a size? a color? It has none of these, and yet it is; for if it were not, it would neither be loved nor worthy of praise, nor be cherished in our heart and life as an object of honor and affection. But men here become wise; and whence would they so, had wisdom no existence? And further, O man, if thou canst not see thine own wisdom with the eyes of the flesh, nor think of it by the same mental imagery as thou canst of bodily things, wilt thou dare to thrust the shape of a human body on the wisdom of God?

5. What shall we say then, brethren? How spake the Father to the Son, seeing that the Son says, “As the Father taught me, I speak these things”? Did He speak to Him? When the Father taught the Son, did He use words, as you do when you teach your son? How could He use words to the Word! What words, many in number, could be used to the one Word? Did the Word of the Father approach His ears to the Father’s mouth? Such things are carnal: banish them from your hearts. For this I say, if only you have understood my words, I certainly have spoken and my words have sounded, and by their sound have reached your ears, and through your sense of hearing have carried their meaning to your mind, if so be you have understood. Suppose that some person of Latin speech has heard, but has only heard without understanding, what I have said. As regards the noise issuing from my mouth, he who has understood not has been a sharer therein just like yourselves. He has heard that sound; the same syllables have smote on his ears, but they have produced no effect on his mind. Why? Because he understood not. But if you have understood, whence comes your understanding? My words have sounded in the ear: have I kindled any

light in the heart? Without doubt, if what I have said is true, and this truth you have not only heard, but also understood, two things have there been wrought (distinguish between them), hearing and intelligence. Hearing has been wrought by me, but by whom has understanding? I have spoken to the ear, that you might hear; who has spoken to your heart for understanding? Doubtless some one has also said something to your heart, that not only the noise of words might strike your ear, but something also of the truth might descend into your heart. Some one has spoken also to your heart, but you do not see him. If, brethren, you have understood, your heart also has been spoken to. Intelligence is the gift of God. And who, if you have understood, has spoken so in your heart, but He to whom the Psalm says, “Give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments?” For example, the bishop has spoken. What has he said, some one asks. You repeat what he has spoken, and add, He has said the truth. Then another, who has not understood, says, What has he said, or what is it you are praising? Both have heard me; I have spoken to both; but to one of them God has spoken. If we may compare small things with great (for what are we to Him?), something, I know not what, of an incorporeal and spiritual kind God works in us, which is neither sound to strike the ear, nor color to be discerned by the eyes, nor smell to enter the nostrils, nor taste to be judged of by the mouth, nor anything hard or soft to be sensible to the touch; yet something there is which it is easy to feel,—impossible to explain. If then God, as I was saying, speaks in our hearts without sound, how speaks He to His Son? Thus then, brethren, think thus as much as you can, if, as I have said, we may in some measure compare small things with great: think thus. In an incorporeal way the Father spoke to the Son, because in an incorporeal way the Father begot the Son. Nor did He so teach Him as if He had begotten Him untaught; but to have taught Him is the same as to have begotten Him full of knowledge; and this, “The Father hath taught me,” is the same as, The Father hath begotten me already knowing. For if, as few understand, the nature of the Truth is simple, to be is to the Son the same as to know. From Him therefore He has knowledge, from whom He has being. Not that from Him He had first being, and afterwards knowledge; but as in begetting He gave Him to be, so in begetting He gave Him to know; for, as was said, to the simple nature of the Truth, being is not one thing and knowing another, but one and the same.

6. Thus then He spoke to the Jews, and added, “And He that sent me is with me.” He had already said this also before, but of this important point He is constantly reminding them,—”He sent me,” and “He is with me.” If then, O Lord, He is with Thee, not so much hath the One been sent by the other, but ye Both have come. And yet, while Both are together, One was sent, the Other was the sender; for incarnation is a sending, and the incarnation itself belongs only to the Son and not to the Father. The Father therefore sent the Son, but did not withdraw from the Son. For it was not that the Father was absent from the place to which He sent the Son. For where is not the Maker of all things? Where is He not, who said, “I fill heaven and earth”? But perhaps the Father is everywhere, and the Son not so? Listen to the evangelist: “He was in this world, and the world was made by Him.” Therefore said He, “He that sent me,” by whose power as Father I am incarnate, “is with me,—hath not left me.” Why hath He not left me? “He hath not left me,” He says, “alone; for I do always those things that please Him.” That equality exists always; not from a certain beginning, and then onwards; but without beginning, without end. For Divine generation has no beginning in time, since time itself was created by the Only-begotten.

7. “As He spake these words, many believed on Him.” Would that, while I speak also, many, who before this were otherwise disposed, understood and believed on Him! For perhaps there are some Arians in this large assembly. I dare not suspect that there are any Sabellians, who say that the Father Himself is one with the Son, seeing that heresy is too old, and has been gradually eviscerated. But that of the Arians seems still to have some movement about it, like that of a putrefying carcase, or certainly, at the most, like a man at the last gasp; and from this some still require deliverance, just as from that other many were delivered. This province, indeed, did not use to have such; but ever since the arrival of many foreigners, some of these have also found their way to our neighborhood. See then, while the Lord spoke these words, many Jews believed on Him. May I see also that, while I am speaking, Arians are believing, not on me, but with me!

8. “Then said the Lord to those Jews who believed on Him, If ye continue in my word.” “Continue,” I say, for you are now initiated and have begun to

be there. “If ye continue,” that is, in the faith which is now begun in you who believe, to what will you attain? See the nature of the beginning, and whither it leads. You have loved the foundation, give heed to the summit, and out of this low condition seek that other elevation. For faith has humility, but knowledge and immortality and eternity possess not lowliness, but loftiness; that is, upraising, all-sufficiency, eternal stability, full freedom from hostile assault, from fear of failure. That which has its beginning in faith is great, but is despised. In a building also the foundation is usually of little account with the unskilled. A large trench is made, and stones are thrown in every way and everywhere. No embellishment, no beauty are apparent there; just as also in the root of a tree there is no appearance of beauty. And yet all that delights you in the tree has sprung from the root. You look at the root and feel no delight: you look at the tree and admire it. Foolish man! what you admire has grown out of that which gave you no delight. The faith of believers seems a thing of little value,—you have no scales to weigh it. Hear then to what it attains, and see its greatness: as the Lord Himself says in another place, “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed.” What is there of less account than that, yet what is there pervaded with greater energy? What more minute, yet what more fervidly expansive? And so “ye” also, He says, “if ye continue in my word,” wherein ye have believed, to what will ye be brought? “ye shall be my disciples indeed.” And what does that benefit us? “and ye shall know the truth.”

9. What, brethren, does He promise believers? “And ye shall know the truth.” Why so? Had they not come to such knowledge when the Lord was speaking? If they had not, how did they believe? They believed, not because they knew, but that they might come to know. For we believe in order that we may know, we do not know in order that we may believe. For what we shall yet know, neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered the heart of man. For what is faith, but believing what you see not? Faith then is to believe what you see not; truth, to see what you have believed, as He Himself saith in a certain place. The Lord then walked on earth, first of all, for the creation of faith. He was man, He was made in a low condition. He was seen by all, but not by all was He known. By many was He rejected, by the multitude was He slain, by few was He mourned; and yet even by those who mourned Him, His true being was still

unrecognized. All this is the beginning as it were of faith's lineaments and future up-building. As the Lord, referring thereto, saith in a certain place, "He that loveth me keepeth my commandments; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." They certainly already saw the person to whom they were listening; and yet to them, if they loved Him, does He give it as a promise that they should see Him. So also here, "Ye shall know the truth." How so? Is that not the truth which Thou hast been speaking? The truth it is, but as yet it is only believed, not beheld. If you abide in that which is believed, you shall attain to that which is seen. Hence John himself, the holy evangelist, says in his epistle, "Dearly beloved, we are the sons of God; but it is not yet apparent what we shall be." We are so already, and something we shall be. What more shall we be than we are? Listen: "It is not yet apparent what we shall be: [but] we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." How? "For we shall see Him as He is." A great promise, but the reward of faith. You seek the reward; then let the work precede. If you believe, ask for the reward of faith; but if you believe not, with what face can you seek the reward of faith? "If" then "ye continue in my word, ye shall be my disciples indeed," that ye may behold the very truth as it is, not through sounding words, but in dazzling light, wherewith He shall satisfy us: as we read in the psalm, "The light of Thy countenance is impressed upon us." We are God's money: we have wandered away as coin from the treasury. The impression that was stamped upon us has been rubbed out by our wandering. He has come to refashion, for He it was that fashioned us at first; and He is Himself asking for His money, as Caesar for his. Therefore He says, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's:" ^to Caesar his money, to God yourselves. And then shall the truth be reproduced in us.

10. What shall I say to your Charity? Oh that our hearts were in some measure aspiring after that ineffable glory! Oh that we were passing our pilgrimage in sighs, and loving not the world, and continually pushing onwards with pious minds to Him who hath called us! Longing is the very bosom of the heart. We shall attain, if with all our power we give way to our longing. Such in our behalf is the object of the divine Scriptures, of the assembling of the people, of the celebration of the sacra ments, of holy

baptism, of singing God’s praise, and of this our own exposition,—that this longing may not only be implanted and germinate, but also expand to such a measure of capacity as to be fit to take in what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man. But love with me. He who loves God is not much in love with money. And I have but touched on this infirmity, not venturing to say, He loves not money at all, but, He loves not money much; as if money were to be loved, but not in a great degree. Oh, were we loving God worthily, we should have no love at all for money! Money then will be thy means of pilgrimage, not the stimulant of lust; something to use for necessity, not to joy over as a means of delight. Love God, if He has wrought in thee somewhat of that which thou hearest and praisest. Use the world: let not the world hold thee captive. Thou art passing on the journey thou hast begun; thou hast come, again to depart, not to abide. Thou art passing on thy journey, and this life is but a wayside inn. Use money as the traveller at an inn uses table, cup, pitcher, and couch, with the purpose not of remaining, but of leaving them behind. If such you would be, you, who can stir up your hearts and hear me; if such you would be, you will attain to His promises. It is not too much for your strength, for mighty is the hand of Him who hath called you. He hath called you. Call upon Him, say to Him, Thou hast called us, we call upon Thee; see, we have heard Thee calling us, hear us calling upon Thee: lead us whither Thou hast promised; perfect what Thou hast begun; forsake not Thine own gifts; leave not Thine own field; let Thy tender shoots yet be gathered into Thy barn. Temptations abound in the world, but greater is He who made the world. Temptations abound, but he fails not whose hope reposes in Him in whom there is no deficiency.

11. I have been exhorting you, brethren, to this in such words, because the freedom of which our Lord Jesus Christ speaks belongs not to this present time. Look at what He added: “Ye shall be my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.” What means that—”shall set you free”? It shall make you freemen. In a word, the carnal, and fleshly-minded Jews—not those who had believed, but those in the crowd who believed not—thought that an injury was done them, because He said to them, “The truth shall make you free.” They were indignant at being designated as slaves. And slaves truly they were; and He explains to them

what slavery it is, and what is that future freedom which is promised by Himself. But of this liberty and of that slavery it were too long to speak to-day.

TRACTATE XLI

CHAPTER VIII. 31–36

1. Of what follows of the previous lesson, and has been read publicly to us to-day from the holy Gospel, I then deferred speaking, because I had already said much, and of that liberty into which the grace of the Saviour calleth us it was needful to treat in no cursory or negligent way. Of this, by the Lord’s help, we purpose speaking to you to-day. For those to whom the Lord Jesus Christ was speaking were Jews, in a large measure indeed His enemies, but also in some measure already become, and yet to be, His friends; for some He saw there, as we have already said, who should yet believe after His passion. Looking to these, He had said, “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am [He].” There also were those who, when He so spake, straightway believed. To them He spake what we have heard to-day: “Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed on Him, If ye continue in my word, ye shall be my disciples indeed.” By continuing ye shall be so; for as now ye are believers, by so continuing ye shall be beholders. Hence there follows, “And ye shall know the truth.” The truth is unchangeable. The truth is bread, which refreshes our minds and fails not; changes the eater, and is not itself changed into the eater. The truth itself is the Word of God, God with God, the only-begotten Son. This Truth was for our sake clothed with flesh, that He might be born of the Virgin Mary, and the prophecy fulfilled, “Truth has sprung from the earth.” This Truth then, when speaking to the Jews, lay hid in the flesh. But He lay hid not in order to be denied, but to be deferred [in His manifestation]; to be deferred, in order to suffer in the flesh; and to suffer in the flesh, in order that flesh might be redeemed from sin. And so our Lord Jesus Christ, standing full in sight as regards the infirmity of flesh, but hid as regards the majesty of Godhead, said to those who had believed on Him, when He so spake, “If ye continue in my word, ye shall be my disciples indeed.” For he that endureth to the end shall be saved. “And ye shall know the truth,” which now is hid from you, and speaks to you. “And the truth

shall free you.” This word, liberabit [shall free], the Lord hath taken from libertas [freedom]. For liberat [frees, delivers] is properly nothing else but liberum facit [makes free]. As salvat [he saves] is nothing else but salvum facit [he makes safe]; as he heals is nothing else but he makes whole; he enriches is nothing else but he makes rich; so liberat [he frees] is nothing else but liberum facit [he makes free]. This is clearer in the Greek word. For in Latin usage we commonly say that a man is delivered (liberari), in regard not to liberty, but only to safety, just as one is said to be delivered from some infirmity. So is it said customarily, but not properly. But the Lord made such use of this word in saying, “And the truth shall make you free (liberabit),” that in the Greek tongue no one could doubt that He spake of freedom.

2. In short, the Jews also so understood and “answered Him;” not those who had already believed, but those in that crowd who were not yet believers. “They answered Him, We are Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be free?” But the Lord had not said, “Ye shall be free,” but, “The truth shall make you free.” That word, however, they, because, as I have said, it is clearly so in the Greek, understood as pointing only to freedom, and puffed themselves up as Abraham’s seed, and said, “We are Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be free?” O inflated skin! such is not magnanimity, but windy swelling. For even as regards freedom in this life, how was that the truth when you said, “We were never in bondage to any man”? Was not Joseph sold? Were not the holy prophets led into captivity? And again, did not that very nation, when making bricks in Egypt, also serve hard rulers, not only in gold and silver, but also in clay? If you were never in bondage to any man, ungrateful people, why is it that God is continually reminding you that He delivered you from the house of bondage? Or mean you, perchance, that your fathers were in bondage, but you who speak were never in bondage to any man? How then were you now paying tribute to the Romans, out of which also you formed a trap for the Truth Himself, as if to ensnare Him, when you said, “Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar?” in order that, had He said, It is lawful, you might fasten on Him as one ill-disposed to the liberty of Abraham’s seed; and if He said, It is not lawful, you might slander Him before the kings of the earth, as

forbidding the payment of tribute to such? Deservedly were you defeated on producing the money, and compelled yourselves to concur in your own capture. For there it was told you, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s,” after your own reply, that the money-piece bore the image of Caesar. For as Caesar looks for his own image on the coin, so God looks for His in man. Thus, then, did He answer the Jews. I am moved, brethren, by the hollow pride of men, because even of that very freedom of theirs, which they understood carnally, they lied when they said, “We were never in bondage to any man.”

3. But to the Lord’s own answer, let us give better and more earnest heed, lest we ourselves be also found bondmen. For “Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that every one who committeth sin is the servant of sin.” He is the servant—would that it were of man, and not of sin! Who will not tremble at such words? The Lord our God grant us, that is, both you and me, that I may speak in fitting terms of this freedom to be sought, and of that bondage to be avoided. “Amen, amen [verily, verily], I say unto you.” The Truth speaks: and in what sense does the Lord our God claim it as His to say, “Amen, amen, I say unto you”? His charge is weighty in so announcing it. In some sort, if lawful to be said, His form of swearing is, “Amen, amen, I say unto you.” Amen in a way may be interpreted, [It is] true [truly, verily]; and yet it is not interpreted, though it might have been said, What is true [verily] I say unto you. Neither the Greek translator nor the Latin has dared to do so; for this word Amen is neither Greek nor Latin, but Hebrew. So it has remained without interpretation, to possess honor as the covering of something hidden; not in order to be disowned, but that it might not, as a thing laid bare to the eye, fall into disrepute. And yet it is not once, but twice uttered by the Lord, “Amen, amen, I say unto you.” And now learn from the very doubling, how much was implied in the charge before us.

4. What, then, is the charge given? Verily, verily, I say unto you, saith the Truth who surely, though He had not said, Verily, I say, could not possibly lie. Yet [thereby] He impresses, inculcates His charge, arouses in a way the sleeping, makes them attentive, and would not be contemned. What does He say? “Verily, verily, I say unto you, that every one who committeth sin is

the servant of sin.” Miserable slavery! Men frequently, when they suffer under wicked masters, demand to get themselves sold, not seeking to be without a master, but at all events to change him. What can the servant of sin do? To whom can he make his demand? To whom apply for redress? Of whom require himself to be sold? And then at times a man’s slave, worn out by the commands of an unfeeling master, finds rest in flight. Whither can the servant of sin flee? Himself he carries with him wherever he flees. An evil conscience flees not from itself; it has no place to go to; it follows itself. Yea, he cannot withdraw from himself, for the sin he commits is within. He has committed sin to obtain some bodily pleasure. The pleasure passes away; the sin remains. What delighted is gone; the sting has remained behind. Evil bondage! Sometimes men flee to the Church, and we generally permit them, uninstructed as they are—men, wishing to be rid of their master, who are unwilling to be rid of their sins. But sometimes also those subjected to an unlawful and wicked yoke flee for refuge to the Church; for, though free-born men, they are retained in bondage: and an appeal is made to the bishop. And unless he care to put forth every effort to save free-birth from oppression, he is accounted unmerciful. Let us all flee to Christ, and appeal against sin to God as our deliverer. Let us seek to get ourselves sold, that we may be redeemed by His blood. For the Lord says, “Ye were sold for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money.” Without price, that is, of your own; because of mine. So saith the Lord; for He Himself has paid the price, not in money, but His own blood. Otherwise we had remained both bondmen and indigent.

5. From this bondage, then, we are set free by the Lord alone. He who had it not, Himself delivers us from it; for He alone came without sin in the flesh. For the little ones whom you see carried in their mothers’ hands cannot yet walk, and are already in fetters; for they have received from Adam what they are loosened from by Christ. To them also, when baptized, pertains that grace which is promised by the Lord; for He only can deliver from sin who came without sin, and was made a sacrifice for sin. For you heard when the apostle was read: “We are ambassadors,” he says, “for Christ, as though God were exhorting you by us; we beseech you in Christ’s stead,”—that is, as if Christ were beseeching you, and for what?—”to be reconciled unto God.” If the apostle exhorts and beseeches us to be reconciled unto God,

then were we enemies to God. For no one is reconciled unless from a state of enmity. And we have become enemies not by nature, but by sin. From the same source are we the servants of sin, that we are the enemies of God. God has no enemies in a state of freedom. They must be slaves; and slaves will they remain unless delivered by Him to whom they wished by their sins to be enemies. Therefore, says be, “We beseech you in Christ’s stead to be reconciled unto God.” But how are we reconciled, save by the removal of that which separates between us and Himself? For He says by the prophet, “He hath not made the ear heavy that it should not hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God.” And so, then, we are not reconciled, unless that which is in the midst is taken away, and something else is put in its place. For there is a separating medium, and, on the other hand, there is a reconciling Mediator. The separating medium is sin, the reconciling Mediator is the Lord Jesus Christ: “For there is one God and Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” To take then away the separating wall, which is sin, that Mediator has come, and the priest has Himself become the sacrifice. And because He was made a sacrifice for sin, offering Himself as a whole burnt-offering on the cross of His passion, the apostle, after saying, “We beseech you in Christ’s stead to be reconciled unto God,”—as if we had said, How shall we be able to be reconciled?—goes on to say, “He hath made Him,” that is, Christ Himself, “who knew no sin, [to be] sin for us, that we may be the righteousness of God in Him,” “Him,” he says, Christ Himself our God, “who knew no sin.” For He came in the flesh, that is, in the likeness of sinful flesh, but not in sinful flesh, because He had no sin at all; and therefore became a true sacrifice for sin, because He Himself had no sin.

6. But perhaps, through some special perception of my own, I have said that sin is a sacrifice for sin. Let those who have read it be free to acknowledge it; let not those who have not read it be backward; let them not, I say, be backward to read, that they may be truthful in judging. For when God gave commandment about the offering of sacrifices for sin, in which sacrifices there was no expiation of sins, but the shadow of things to come, the self-same sacrifices, the self-same offerings, the self-same victims, the self-same animals, which were brought forward to be slain for sins, and in whose blood that [true] blood was prefigured, are themselves called sins by the

law; and that to such an extent that in certain passages it is written in these terms, that the priests, when about to sacrifice, were to lay their hands on the head of the sin, that is, on the head of the victim about to be sacrificed for sin. Such sin, then, that is, such a sacrifice for sin, was our Lord Jesus Christ made, “who knew no sin.”

7. With efficacious merit does He deliver from this bondage of sin, who saith in the psalms: “I am become as a man without help, free among the dead.” For He only was free, because He had no sin. For He Himself says in the Gospel, “Behold, the prince of this world cometh,” meaning the devil about to come in the persons of the persecuting Jews;—”behold,” He says, “he cometh, and shall find nothing in me.” Not as he found some measure of sin in those whom he also slew as righteous; in me he shall find nothing. And just as if He were asked, If he shall find nothing in Thee, wherefore will he slay Thee? He further said, “But that all may know that I do the will of my Father, rise and let us go hence.” I do not, He says, pay the penalty of death as a necessity of my sinfulness; but in the death I die, I do the will of my Father. And in this, I am doing rather than enduring it; for, were I unwilling, I should not have had the suffering to endure. You have Him saying in another place, “I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again.” Here surely is one “free among the dead.”

8. Since, then, every one that committeth sin is the servant of sin, listen to what is our hope of liberty. “And the servant,” He says, “abideth not in the house for ever.” The church is the house, the servant is the sinner. Many sinners enter the church. Accordingly He has not said, “The servant” is not in the house, but “abideth not in the house for ever.” If, then, there shall be no servant there, who will be there? For “when” as the Scripture speaketh, “the righteous king sitteth on the throne, who will boast of having a clean heart? or who will boast that he is pure from his sin?” He has greatly alarmed us, my brethren, by saying, “The servant abideth not in the house for ever.” But He further adds, “But the Son abideth ever.” Will Christ, then, be alone in His house? Will no people remain at His side? Whose head will He be, if there shall be no body? Or is the Son all this, both the head and the body? For it is not without cause that He has inspired both terror and hope: terror, in order that we should not love sin; and hope, that we

should not be distrustful of the remission of sin. “Every one,” He says, “that committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever.” What hope, then, have we, who are not without sin? Listen to thy hope: “The Son abideth for ever. If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed.” Our hope is this, brethren, to be made free by the free One; and that, in setting us free, He may make us His servants. For we were the servants of lust; but being set free, we are made the servants of love. This also the apostle says: “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” Let not then the Christian say, I am free; I have been called unto liberty: I was a slave, but have been redeemed, and by my very redemption have been made free, I shall do what I please: no one may balk me of my will, if I am free. But if thou committest sin with such a will, thou art the servant of sin. Do not then abuse your liberty for freedom in sinning, but use it for the purpose of sinning not. For only if thy will is pious, will it be free. Thou wilt be free, if thou art a servant still,—free from sin, the servant of righteous ness: as the apostle says, “When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” Let us be striving after the latter, and be doing the other.

9. The first stage of liberty is to be free from crimes. Give heed, my brethren, give heed, that I may not by any means mislead your understanding as to the nature of that liberty at present, and what it will be. Sift any one soever of the highest integrity in this life, and however worthy he may already be of the name of upright, yet is he not without sin. Listen to Saint John himself, the author of the Gospel before us, when he says in his epistle, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” He alone could say this who was “free among the dead:” of Him only could it be said, who knew no sin. It could be said only of Him, for He also “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” He alone could say, “Behold, the prince of this world cometh, and shall find nothing in me.” Sift any one else, who is accounted righteous, yet is he not in all respects without sin; not even such as was Job, to whom the Lord bore such testimony, that the devil was filled with envy, and demanded that he

should be tempted, and was himself defeated in the temptation, to the end that Job might be proved. And he was proved for this reason, not that the certainty of his carrying off the conqueror’s wreath was unknown to God, but that he might become known as an object of imitation to others. And what says Job himself? “For who is clean? not even the infant whose life is but a day’s span upon the earth.” But it is plain that many are called righteous without opposition, because the term is understood as meaning, free from crime; for in human affairs there is no just ground of complaint attaching to those who are free from criminal conduct. But crime is grievous sin, deserving in the highest measure to be denounced and condemned. Not, however, that God condemns certain sins, and justifies and praises certain others. He approves of none. He hates them all. As the physician dislikes the ailment of the ailing, and works by his healing measures to get the ailment removed and the ailing relieved; so God by his grace worketh in us, that sin may be consumed, and man made free. But when, you will be saying, is it consumed? If it is lessened, why is it not consumed? That is growing less in the life of those who are advancing onwards, which is consumed in the life of those who have attained to perfection.

10. The first stage of liberty, then, is to be free from crimes [sinful conduct]. And so the Apostle Paul, when he determined on the ordination of either elders or deacons, or whoever was to be ordained to the superintendence of the Church, says not, If any one is without sin; for had he said so, every one would be rejected as unfit, none would be ordained: but he says, “If any one is without crime” [E.V. blame], such as, murder, adultery, any uncleanness of fornication, theft, fraud, sacrilege, and others of that sort. When a man has begun to be free from these (and every Christian man ought to be so), he begins to raise his head to liberty; but that is liberty begun, not completed. Why, says some one, is it not completed liberty? Because, “I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind;” “for what I would,” he says, “that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.” “The flesh,” he says, “lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; so that ye do not the things that ye would.” In part liberty, in part bondage: not yet entire, not yet pure, not yet full liberty, because not yet eternity. For we have still infirmity in part, in part we have attained to liberty. Whatever has been our

sin, was previously wiped out in baptism. But because all our iniquity has been blotted out, has there remained no infirmity? If there had not, we should be living here without sin. Yet who would venture to say so, but the proud, but the man unworthy of the Deliverer's mercy, but he who wishes to be self-deceived, and who is destitute of the truth? Hence, from the fact that some infirmity remains, I venture to say that, in what measure we serve God, we are free; in what measure we serve the law of sin, we are still in bondage. Hence says the apostle, what we began to say, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." Here then it is, wherein we are free, wherein we delight in the law of God; for liberty has joy. For as long as it is from fear that thou doest what is right, God is no delight to thee. Find thy delight in Him, and thou art free. Fear not punishment, but love righteousness. Art thou not yet able to love righteousness? Fear even punishment, that thou mayest attain to the love of righteousness.

11. In the measure then spoken of above, he felt himself to be already free, and there fore said, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." I delight in the law, I delight in its requirements, I delight in righteousness itself. "But I see another law in my members"—this infirmity which remains—"warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." On this side he feels his captivity, where righteousness has not been perfected; for where he delights in the law of God, he is not the captive but the friend of the law; and therefore free, because a friend. What then is to be done with that which so remains? What, but to look to Him who has said, "If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed"? Indeed he also who thus spake so looked to Him: "O wretched man that I am," he says, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Therefore "if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." And then he concluded thus: "So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." I myself, he says; for there are not two of us contrary to each other, coming from different origins; but "with the mind I myself serve the law of God, and with the flesh the law of sin," so long as languor struggles against salvation.

12. But if with the flesh thou servest the law of sin, do as the apostle himself says: “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof: neither yield ye your members as weapons of unrighteousness unto sin.” He says not, Let it not be; but, “Let it not reign.” So long as sin must be in thy members, let its reigning power at least be taken away, let not its demands be obeyed. Does anger rise? Yield not up thy tongue to anger for the purpose of evil-speaking; yield not up thy hand or foot to anger for the purpose of striking. That irrational anger would not rise, were there no sin in the members. But take away its ruling power; let it have no weapons wherewith to fight against thee. Then also it will learn not to rise, when it begins to find the lack of weapons. “Yield not your members as weapons of unrighteousness unto sin,” else will ye be entirely captive, and there will be no room to say, “With the mind I serve the law of God.” For if the mind keep possession of the weapons, the members are not roused to the service of raging sin. Let the inward ruler keep possession of the citadel, because it stands there under a greater ruler, and is certain of assistance. Let it bridle anger; let it restrain evil desire. There is within something that needs bridling, that needs restraining, that needs to be kept in command. And what did that righteous man wish, who with the mind was serving the law of God, but that there should be a complete deliverance from that which needed to be bridled? And this ought every one to be striving after who is aiming at perfection, that lust itself also, no longer receiving the obedience of the members, may every day be lessened in the advancing pilgrim. “To will,” he says, “is present with me; but not so, how to perfect that which is good.” Has he said, To do good is not present with me? Had he said so, hope would be wanting. He does not say, To do is not present with me, but, “To perfect is not present with me.” For what is the perfecting of good, but the elimination and end of evil? And what is the elimination of evil, but what the law says, “Thou shalt not lust [covet]”? To lust not at all is the perfecting of good, because it is the eliminating of evil. This he said, “To perfect that which is good is not present with me,” because his doing could not get the length of setting him free from lust. He labored only to bridle lust, to refuse consent to lust, and not to yield his members to its service. “To perfect,” then, he says, “that which is good is not present with me.” I cannot fulfill the commandment, “Thou shalt not lust.” What then is needed? To fulfill this: “Go not after thy lusts.” Do this

meanwhile so long as unlawful lusts are present in thy flesh; “Go not after thy lusts.” Abide in the service of God, in the liberty of Christ. With the mind serve the law of thy God. Yield not thyself to thy lusts. By following them, thou addest to their strength. By giving them strength, how canst thou conquer, when on thine own strength thou art nourishing enemies against thyself?

13. What then is that full and perfect liberty in the Lord Jesus, who said, “If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed;” and when shall it be a full and perfect liberty? When enmities are no more; when “death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed.” “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.—And when this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy struggle?” What is this, “O death, where is thy struggle”? “The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh,” but only when the flesh of sin was in vigor. “O death, where is [now] thy struggle?” Now shall we live, no more shall we die, in Him who died for us and rose again: “that they,” he says, “who live, should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again.” Let us be praying, as those who are wounded, for the physician; let us be carried into the inn to be healed. For it is He who promises salvation, who pitied the man left half-alive on the road by robbers. He poured in oil and wine, He healed the wounds, He put him on his beast, He took him to the inn, He commended him to the innkeeper’s care. To what innkeeper? Perhaps to him who said, “We are ambassadors for Christ.” He gave also two pence to pay for the healing of the wounded man. And perhaps these are the two commandments, on which hang all the law and the prophets. Therefore, brethren, is the Church also, wherein the wounded is healed meanwhile, the traveller’s inn; but above the Church itself, lies the possessor’s inheritance.

TRACTATE XLII

CHAPTER VIII. 37–47

1. Our Lord, in the form of a servant, yet not a servant, but even in servant-form the Lord (for that form of flesh was indeed servant-like; but though He

was “in the likeness of sinful flesh,” yet was He not sinful flesh) promised freedom to those who believed in Him. But the Jews, as if proudly glorying in their own freedom, refused with indignation to be made free, when they were the servants of sin. And therefore they said that they were free, because Abraham’s seed. What answer, then, the Lord gave them to this, we have heard in the reading of this day’s lesson. “I know,” He said, “that ye are Abraham’s children; but ye seek to kill me, because my word taketh no hold in you.” I recognize you, He says; “Ye are the children of Abraham, but ye seek to kill me.” I recognize the fleshly origin, not the believing heart. “Ye are the children of Abraham,” but after the flesh. Therefore He says, “Ye seek to kill me, because my word taketh no hold in you.” If my word were taken, it would take hold: if ye were taken, ye would be enclosed like fishes within the meshes of faith. What then means that—”taketh no hold in you”? It taketh not hold of your heart, because not received by your heart. For so is the word of God, and so it ought to be to believers, as a hook to the fish: it takes when it is taken. No injury is done to those who are taken; since they are taken for salvation, and not for destruction. Hence the Lord says to His disciples: “Come after me, and I shall make you fishers of men.” But such were not these; and yet they were the children of Abraham,—children of a man of God, unrighteous themselves. For they inherited the fleshly genus, but were become degenerate, by not imitating the faith of him whose children they were.

2. You have heard, indeed, the Lord saying, “I know that ye are Abraham’s children.” Hear what He says afterwards: “I speak that which I have seen with my Father; and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.” He had already said, “I know that ye are Abraham’s children.” What is it, then, that they do? What He told them: “Ye seek to kill me.” This they never saw with Abraham. But the Lord wishes God the Father to be understood when He says, “I speak that which I have seen with my Father.” I have seen the truth: I speak the truth, because I am the Truth. For if the Lord speaks the truth which He has seen with the Father, He has seen Himself—He speaks Himself; because He Himself is the Truth of the Father, which He saw with the Father. For He is the Word—the Word which was with God. The evil, then, which these men do, and which the Lord chides and reprehends, where have they seen it? With their father. When we come to hear in what

follows the still clearer statement who is their father, then shall we understand what kind of things they saw with such a father; for as yet He names not their father. A little above He referred to Abraham, but in regard to their fleshly origin, not their similarity of life. He is about to speak of that other father of theirs, who neither begat them nor created them to be men. But still they were his children in as far as they were evil, not in as far as they were men; in what they imitated him, and not as created by him.

3. "They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father;" as if, What hast thou to say against Abraham? or, If thou canst, dare to find fault with Abraham. Not that the Lord dared not find fault with Abraham; but Abraham was not one to be found fault with by the Lord, but rather approved. But these men seemed to challenge Him to say some evil of Abraham, and so to have some occasion for doing what they purposed. "Abraham is our father."

4. Let us hear how the Lord answered them, praising Abraham to their condemnation. "Jesus saith unto them, If ye are Abraham's children, do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham." See, he was praised, they were condemned. Abraham was no manslayer. I say not, He implies, I am Abraham's Lord; though did I say it, I would say the truth. For He said in another place, "Before Abraham was, I am" (ver. 58); and then they sought to stone Him. He said not so. But meanwhile, as you see me, as you look upon me, as alone you think of me, I am a man. Wherefore, then, wish you to kill a man who is telling you what he has heard of God, but because you are not the children of Abraham? And yet He said above, "I know that ye are Abraham's children." He does not deny their origin, but condemns their deeds. Their flesh was from him, but not their life.

5. But we, dearly beloved, do we come of Abraham's race, or was Abraham in any sense our father according to the flesh? The flesh of the Jews draws its origin from his flesh, not so the flesh of Christians. We have come of other nations, and yet, by imitating him, we have become the children of Abraham. Listen to the apostle: "To Abraham and to his seed were the promises made. He saith not," he adds, "And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye

Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." We then have become Abraham's seed by the grace of God. It was not of Abraham's flesh that God made any co-heirs with him. He disinherited the former, He adopted the latter; and from that olive tree whose root is in the patriarchs, He cut off the proud natural branches, and engrafted the lowly wild olive. And so, when the Jews came to John to be baptized, he broke out upon them, and addressed them, "O generation of vipers." Very greatly indeed did they boast of the loftiness of their origin, but he called them a generation of vipers,—not even of human beings, but of vipers. He saw the form of men, but detected the poison. Yet they had come to be changed, because at all events to be baptized; and he said to them, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." If ye bring not forth fruits meet for repentance, flatter not yourselves about such a lineage. God is able to condemn you, without defrauding Abraham of children. For He has a way to raise up children to Abraham. Those who imitate his faith shall be made his children. "God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Such are we. In our parents we were stones, when we worshipped stones for our god. Of such stones God has created a family to Abraham.

6. Why, then, does this empty and vain bragging exalt itself? Let them cease boasting that they are the children of Abraham. They have heard what they ought to have heard: "If ye are the children of Abraham," prove it by your deeds, not by words. "Ye seek to kill me, a man;"—I say not, meanwhile, the Son of God; I say not God; I say not the Word, for the Word dies not. I say merely this that you see; for only what you see can you kill, and whom you see not can you offend. "This," then, "did not Abraham." "Ye do the works of your father." And as yet He says not who is that father of theirs.

7. And now what answer did they give Him? For they began somewhat to realize that the Lord was not speaking of carnal generation, but of their manner of life. And because it is the custom of the Scriptures, which they read, to call it, in a spiritual sense, fornication, when the soul is, as it were, prostituted by subjection to many false gods, they made this reply: "Then

said they to Him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God." Abraham has now lost his importance. For they were repulsed as they ought to have been by the truth-speaking mouth; because such was Abraham, whose deeds they failed to imitate, and yet gloried in his lineage. And they altered their reply, saying, I believe, with themselves, As often as we name Abraham, he goes on to say to us, Why do ye not imitate him in whose lineage ye glory? Such a man, so holy, just, and guileless, we cannot imitate. Let us call God our Father, and see what he will say to us.

8. Has falsehood indeed found something to say, and should not truth find its fitting reply? Let us hear what they say: let us hear what they hear. "We have one Father," they say, "even God. Then said Jesus unto them, If God were your Father, ye would [doubtless] love me; for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but He sent me." Ye call God Father; recognize me, then, as at least a brother. At the same time He gave a stimulus to the hearts of the intelligent, by touching on that which He has a habit of saying, "I came not of myself: He sent me. I proceeded forth and came from God." Remember what we are wont to say: From Him He came; and from whom He came, with Him He came. The sending of Christ, therefore, is His incarnation. But as respects the proceeding forth of the Word from God, it is an eternal procession. Time holds not Him by whom time was created. Let no one be saying in his heart, Before the Word was, how did God exist? Never say, Before the Word of God was. God was never without the Word, because the Word is abiding, not transient; God, not a sound; by whom the heaven and earth were made, and which passed not away with those things that were made upon the earth. From Him, then, He proceeded forth as God, the equal, the only Son, the Word of the Father; and came to us, for the Word was made flesh that He might dwell among us. His coming indicates His humanity; His abiding, His divinity. It is His Godhead towards which, His humanity whereby, we make progress. Had He not become that whereby we might advance, we should never attain to Him who abideth ever.

9. "Why," He says, "do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word." And so they could not understand, because they could not hear. And whence could they not hear, but just because they

refused to be set right by believing? And why so? “Ye are of your father the devil.” How long do ye keep speaking of a father? How often will ye change your fathers,—at one time Abraham, at another God? Hear from the Son of God whose children ye be: “Ye are of your father the devil.”

10. Here, now, we must beware of the heresy of the Manicheans, which affirms that there is a certain principle of evil, and a certain family of darkness with its princes, which had the presumption to fight against God; but that God, not to let His kingdom be subdued by the hostile family, despatched against them, as it were, His own offspring, princes of His own [kingdom of] light; and so subdued that race from which the devil derives his origin. From thence, also, they say our flesh derives its origin, and accordingly think the Lord said, “Ye are of your father the devil,” because they were evil, as it were, by nature, deriving their origin from the opposing family of darkness. So they err, so their eyes are blinded, so they make themselves the family of darkness, by believing a falsehood against Him who created them. For every nature is good; but man’s nature has been corrupted by an evil will. What God made cannot be evil, if man were not [a cause of] evil to himself. But surely the Creator is Creator, and the creature a creature [a thing created]. The creature cannot be put on a level with the Creator. Distinguish between Him who made, and that which He made. The bench cannot be put on a level with the mechanic, nor the pillar with its builder; and yet the mechanic, though he made the bench, did not himself create the wood. But the Lord our God, in His omnipotence and by the Word, made what He made. He had no materials out of which to make all that He made, and yet He made it. For they were made because He willed it, they were made because He said it; but the things made cannot be compared with the Maker. If thou seekest a proper subject of comparison, turn thy mind to the only-begotten Son. How, then, were the Jews the children of the devil? By imitation, not by birth. Listen to the usual language of the Holy Scriptures. The prophet says to those very Jews, “Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite.” The Amorites were not a nation that gave origin to the Jews. The Hittites also were themselves of a nation altogether different from the race of the Jews. But because the Amorites and Hittites were impious, and the Jews imitated their impieties, they found parents for themselves, not of whom they were born, but in

whose damnation they should share, because following their customs. But perhaps you inquire, Whence is the devil himself? From the same source certainly as the other angels. But the other angels continued in their obedience. He, by disobedience and pride, fell as an angel, and became a devil.

11. But listen now to what the Lord says: “Ye,” said He, “are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.” This is how ye are his children, because such are your lusts, not because ye are born of him. What are his lusts? “He was a murderer from the beginning.” This it is that explains, “the lusts of your father ye will do.” “Ye seek to kill me, a man that telleth you the truth.” He, too, had ill-will to man, and slew man. For the devil, in his ill-will to man, assuming the guise of a serpent, spoke to the woman, and from the woman instilled his poison into the man. They died by listening to the devil, whom they would not have listened to had they but listened to the Lord; for man, having his place between Him who created and him who was fallen, ought to have obeyed the Creator, not the deceiver. Therefore “he was a murderer from the beginning.” Look at the kind of murder, brethren. The devil is called a murderer not as armed with a sword, or girded with steel. He came to man, sowed his evil suggestions, and slew him. Think not, then, that thou art not a murderer when thou persuadest thy brother to evil. If thou persuadest thy brother to evil, thou slayest him. And to let thee know that thou slayest him, listen to the psalm: “The sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.” Ye, then, “will do the lusts of your father;” and so ye go madly after the flesh, because ye cannot go after the spirit. “He was a murderer from the beginning;” at least in the case of the first of mankind. From the very time that murder [manslaughter] could possibly be committed, he was a murderer [manslayer]. Only from the time that man was made could manslaughter be committed. For man could not be slain unless man was previously made. Therefore, “he was a murderer from the beginning.” And whence a murderer? “And he stood [abode] not in the truth.” Therefore he was in the truth, and fell by not standing in it. And why “stood he not in the truth”? “Because the truth is not in him;” not as in Christ. In such a way is the truth [in Him], that Christ Himself is the Truth. If, then, he had stood in the truth, he would have stood in Christ; but “he abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.”

12. “When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” What is this? You have heard the words of the Gospel: you have received them with attention. Here now, I repeat them, that you may clearly understand the subject of your thoughts. The Lord said those things of the devil which ought to have been said of the devil by the Lord. That “he was a murderer from the beginning” is true, for he slew the first man; “and he abode not in the truth,” for he lapsed from the truth. “When he speaketh a lie,” to wit, the devil himself, “he speaketh of his own;” for he is a liar, and its [his] father.” From these words some have thought that the devil has a father, and have inquired who was the father of the devil. Indeed this detestable error of the Manicheans has found means down to this present time wherewith to deceive the simple. For they are wont to say, Suppose that the devil was an angel, and fell; and with him sin began as you say; but, Who was his father? We, on the contrary, reply, Who of us ever said that the devil had a father? And they, on the other hand, rejoin, The Lord saith, and the Gospel declares, speaking of the devil, “He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and his father.”

13. Hear and understand. I shall not send thee far away [for the meaning]; understand it from the words themselves. The Lord called the devil the father of falsehood. What is this? Hear what it is, only revolve the words themselves, and understand. It is not every one who tells a lie that is the father of his lie. For if thou hast got a lie from another, and uttered it, thou indeed hast lied in giving utterance to the lie; but thou art not the father of that lie, because thou hast got it from another. But the devil was a liar of himself. He begat his own falsehood; he heard it from no one. As God the Father begat as His Son the Truth, so the devil, having fallen, begat falsehood as his son. Hearing this, recall now and reflect upon the words of the Lord. Ye catholic minds, consider what ye have heard; attend to what He says. “He”—who? The devil—”was a murderer from the beginning.” We admit it,—he slew Adam. “And he abode not in the truth.” We admit it, for he lapsed from the truth. “Because there is no truth in him.” True: by falling away from the truth he has lost its possession. “When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” He is both a

liar, and the father of lies. For thou, it may be, art a liar, because thou utterest a lie; but thou art not its father. For if thou hast got what thou sayest from the devil, and hast believed the devil, thou art a liar, but not the father of the lie. But he, because he got not elsewhere the lie wherewith in serpent-form he slew man as if by poison, is the father of lies just as God is Father of truth. Withdraw, then, from the father of lies: make haste to the Father of truth; embrace the truth, that you may enter into liberty.

14. Those Jews, then, spake what they saw with their father. And what was that but falsehood? But the Lord saw with His Father what He should speak; and what was that, but Himself? What, but the Word of the Father? What, but the truth of the Father, eternal itself, and co-eternal with the Father? He, then, "was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him; when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar,"—and not only a liar, but also "the father of it;" that is, of the very lie that he speaks he is the father, for he himself begat his lie. "And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convicteth me of sin," as I convict both you and your father? "If I say the truth, why do ye not believe me," but just because ye are the children of the devil?

15. "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." Here, again, it is not of their nature as men, but of their depravity, that you are to think. In this way they are of God, and yet not of God. By nature they are of God, in depravity they are not of God. Give heed, I pray you. In the gospel you have the remedy against the poisonous and impious errors of the heretics. For of these words also the Manicheans are accustomed to say, See, here there are two natures,—the one good and the other bad; the Lord says it. What says the Lord? "Ye therefore hear me not, because ye are not of God." This is what the Lord says. What then, he rejoins, dost thou say to that? Hear what I say. They are both of God, and not of God. By nature they are of God: by depravity they are not of God; for the good nature which is of God sinned voluntarily by believing the persuasive words of the devil, and was corrupted; and so it is seeking a physician, because no longer in health. That is what I say. But thou thinkest it impossible that they should be of God, and yet not of God.

Hear why it is not impossible. They are of God, and yet not of God, in the same way as they are the children of Abraham, and yet not the children of Abraham. Here you have it. It is not as you say. Hearken to the Lord Himself; it is He that said to them, “I know that ye are the children of Abraham.” Could there be any lie with the Lord? Surely not. Then is it true what the Lord said? It is true. Then it is true that they were the children of Abraham? It is true. But listen to Himself denying it. He who said, “Ye are the children of Abraham,” Himself denied that they were the children of Abraham. “If ye are Abraham’s children, do the deeds of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that telleth you the truth, which I have heard from God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the works of your father,” that is, of the devil. How, then, were they both Abraham’s children, and yet not his children? Both states He showed in them. They were both Abraham’s children in their carnal origin, and not his children in the sin of following the persuasion of the devil. So, also, apply it to our Lord and God, that they were both of Him, and not of Him. How were they of Him? Because He it was that created the man of whom they were born. How were they of Him? Because He is the Architect of nature,—Himself the Creator of flesh and spirit. How, then, were they not of Him? Because they had made themselves depraved. They were no longer of Him, because, imitating the devil, they had become the children of the devil.

16. Therefore came the Lord God to man as a sinner. Thou hast heard the two names, both man and sinner. As man, he is of God; as a sinner, he is not of God. Let the moral evil in man be distinguished from his nature. Let that nature be owned, to the praise of the Creator; let the evil be acknowledged, that the physician may be called in to its cure. When the Lord then said, “He that is of God heareth the words of God: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.” He did not distinguish the value of different natures, or find, beyond their own soul and body, any nature in men which had not been vitiated by sin; but foreknowing those who should yet believe, them He called of God, because yet to be born again of God by the adoption of regeneration. To these apply the words “He that is of God heareth the words of God.” But that which follows, “Ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God,” was said to those who were not only corrupted by sin (for this evil was common to all), but also foreknown as those who

would not believe with the faith that alone could deliver them from the bondage of sin. On this account He foreknew that those to whom He so spake would continue in that which they derived from the devil, that is, in their sins, and would die in the impiety in which they resembled him; and would not come to the regeneration wherein they would be the children of God, that is, be born of the God by whom they were created as men. In accordance with this predestinating purpose did the Lord speak; and not that He had found any man amongst them who either by regeneration was already of God, or by nature was no longer of God.

TRACTATE XLIII

CHAPTER VIII. 48–59

1. In that lesson of the holy Gospel which has been read to-day, from power we learn patience. For what are we as servants to the Lord, as sinners to the Just One, as creatures to the Creator? Howbeit, just as in what we are evil, we are so of ourselves; so in whatever respects we are good, we are so of Him, and through Him. And nothing does man so seek as he does power. He has great power in the Lord Christ; but let him first imitate His patience, that he may attain to power. Who of us would listen with patience if it were said to him, “Thou hast a devil”? as was said to Him, who was not only bringing men to salvation, but also subjecting devils to His authority.

2. For when the Jews had said, “Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?” of these two charges cast at Him, He denied the one, but not the other. For He answered and said, “I have not a devil.” He did not say, I am not a Samaritan; and yet the two charges had been made. Although He returned not cursing with cursing, although He met not slander with slander, yet was it proper for Him to deny the one charge and not to deny the other. And not without a purpose, brethren. For Samaritan means keeper. He knew that He was our keeper. For “He that keepeth Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth;” and, “Except the Lord keep the city, they wake in vain who keep it.” He then is our Keeper who is our Creator. For did it belong to Him to redeem us, and would it not be His to preserve us? Finally, that you may know more fully the hidden reason why He ought not to have denied that He was a Samaritan, call to mind that well-known

parable, where a certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who wounded him severely, and left him half dead on the road. A priest came along and took no notice of him. A Levite came up, and he also passed on his way. A certain Samaritan came up—He who is our Keeper. He went up to the wounded man. He exercised mercy, and did a neighbor’s part to one whom He did not account an alien. To this, then, He only replied that He had not a devil, but not that He was not a Samaritan.

3. And then after such an insult, this was all that He said of His own glory: “But I honor,” said He, “my Father, and ye dishonor me.” That is, I honor not myself, that ye may not think me arrogant. I have One to honor; and did ye recognize me, just as I honor the Father, so would ye also honor me. I do what I ought; ye do not what ye ought.

4. “And I,” said He, “seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.” Whom does He wish to be understood but the Father? How, then, does He say in another place, “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son,” while here He says, “I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth”? If, then, the Father judgeth, how is it that He judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son?

5. In order to solve this point, attend. It may be solved by [quoting] a similar mode of speaking. Thou hast it written, “God tempteth not any man;” and again thou hast it written, “The Lord your God tempteth you, to know whether you love Him.” Just the point in dispute, you see. For how does God tempt not any man, and how does the Lord your God tempt you, to know whether ye love Him? It is also written, “There is no fear in love but perfect love casteth out fear;” and in another place it is written, “The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever.” Here also is the point in dispute. For how does perfect love cast out fear, if the fear of the Lord, which is clean, endureth for ever?

6. We are to understand, then, that there are two kinds of temptation: one, that deceives; the other, that proves. As regards that which deceives, God tempteth not any man; as regards that which proves, the Lord your God tempteth you, that He may know whether ye love Him. But here again, also,

there arises another question, how He tempteth that He may know, from whom, prior to the temptation, nothing can be hid. It is not that God is ignorant; but it is said, that He may know, that is, that He may make you to know. Such modes of speaking are found both in our ordinary conversation, and in writers of eloquence. Let me say a word on our style of conversation. We speak of a blind ditch, not because it has lost its eyes, but because by lying hid it makes us blind to its existence. One speaks of "bitter lupins," that is, "sour;" not that they themselves are bitter, but because they occasion bitterness to those who taste them. And so there are also expressions of this sort in Scripture. Those who take the trouble to attain a knowledge of such points have no trouble in solving them. And so "the Lord your God tempts you, that He may know." What is this, "that He may know"? That He may make you to know "if you love Him." Job was unknown to himself, but he was not unknown to God. He led the tempter into [Job], and brought him to a knowledge of himself.

7. What then of the two fears? There is a servile fear, and there is a clean [chaste] fear: there is the fear of suffering punishment, there is another fear of losing righteousness. That fear of suffering punishment is slavish. What great thing is it to fear punishment? The vilest slave and the cruelest robber do so. It is no great thing to fear punishment, but great it is to love righteousness. Has he, then, who loves righteousness no fear? Certainly he has; not of incurring of punishment, but of losing righteousness. My brethren, assure yourselves of it, and draw your inference from that which you love. Some one of you is fond of money. Can I find any one, think you, who is not so? Yet from this very thing which he loves he may understand my meaning. He is afraid of loss: why is he so? Because he loves money. In the same measure that he loves money, is he afraid of losing it. So, then, some one is found to be a lover of righteousness, who at heart is much more afraid of its loss, who dreads more being stripped of his righteousness, than thou of thy money. This is the fear that is clean—this [the fear] that endureth for ever. It is not this that love makes away with, or casteth out, but rather embraces it, and keeps it with it, and possesses it as a companion. For we come to the Lord that we may see Him face to face. And there it is this pure fear that preserves us; for such a fear as that does not disturb, but

reassure. The adulterous woman fears the coming of her husband, and the chaste one fears her husband's departure.

8. Therefore, as, according to one kind of temptation, "God tempteth not any man;" but according to another, "The Lord your God tempteth you;" and according to one kind of fear, "there is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear;" but according to another, "the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever;"—so also, in this passage, according to one kind of judgment, "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;" and according to another, "I," said He, "seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth."

9. This point may also be solved from the word itself. Thou hast penal judgment spoken of in the Gospel: "He that believeth not is judged already;" and in another place, "The hour is coming, when those who are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." You see how He has put judgment for condemnation and punishment. And yet if judgment were always to be taken for condemnation, should we ever have heard in the psalm, "Judge me, O God"? In the former place, judgment is used in the sense of inflicting pain; here, it is used in the sense of discernment. How so? Just because so expounded by him who says, "Judge me, O God." For read, and see what follows. What is this "Judge me, O God," but just what he adds, "and discern my cause against an unholy nation"? Because then it was said, "Judge me, O God, and discern [the true merits of] my cause against an unholy nation;" similarly now said the Lord Christ, "I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth." How is there "one that seeketh and judgeth"? There is the Father, who discerns and distinguishes between my glory and yours. For ye glory in the spirit of this present world. Not so do I who say to the Father, "Father, glorify Thou me with that glory which I had with Thee before the world was." What is "that glory"? One altogether different from human inflation. Thus doth the Father judge. And so to "judge" is to "discern." And what does He discern? The glory of His Son from the glory of mere men; for to that end is it said, "God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." For not because

He became man is He now to be compared with us. We, as men, are sinful, He is sinless; we, as men, inherit from Adam both death and delinquency, He received from the Virgin mortal flesh, but no iniquity. In fine, neither because we wish it are we born, nor as long as we wish it do we live, nor in the way that we wish it do we die: but He, before He was born, chose of whom He should be born; at His birth He brought about the adoration of the Magi; He grew as an infant, and showed Himself God by His miracles, and surpassed man in His weakness. Lastly, He chose also the manner of His death, that is, to be hung on the cross, and to fasten the cross itself on the foreheads of believers, so that the Christian may say, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." On the very cross, when He pleased, He made His body be taken down, and departed; in the very sepulchre, as long as it pleased Him, He lay; and, when He pleased, He arose as from a bed. So, then, brethren, in respect to His very form as a servant (for who can speak of that other form as it ought to be spoken of, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"?)—in respect, I say, to His very form as a servant, the difference is great between the glory of Christ and the glory of other men. Of that glory He spoke, when the devil-possessed heard Him say, "I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth."

10. But what sayest Thou, O Lord, of Thyself? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." Ye say, "Thou hast a devil." I call you to life: keep my word and ye shall not die. They heard, "He shall never see death who keepeth my word," and were angry, because already dead in that death from which they might have escaped. "Then said the Jews, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death." See how Scripture speaks: "He shall not see," that is, "taste of death." "He shall see death—he shall taste of death." Who seeth? Who tasteth? What eyes has a man to see with when he dies? When death at its coming shuts up those very eyes from seeing aught, how is it said, "he shall not see death"? With what palate, also, and with what jaws can death be tasted, that its savor may be discovered? When it taketh every sense away, what will remain in the palate? But here, "he will see," and "he will taste," are used for that which is really the case, he will know by experience.

11. Thus spake the Lord (it is scarcely sufficient to say), as one dying to dying men; for “to the Lord also belong the issues from death,” as saith the psalm. Seeing, then, He was both speaking to those destined to die, and speaking as one appointed to death Himself, what mean His words, “He who keepeth my saying shall never see death;” save that the Lord saw another death, from which He was come to deliver us—the second death, death eternal, the death of hell, the death of damnation with the devil and his angels? This is real death; for that other is only a removal. What is that other death? The leaving of the body—the laying down of a heavy burden; provided another burden be not carried away, to drag the man headlong to hell. Of that real death then did the Lord say, “He who keepeth my saying shall never see death.”

12. Let us not be frightened at that other death, but let us fear this one. But, what is very grievous, many, through a perverse fear of that other, have fallen into this. It has been said to some, Adore idols; for if you do it not, you shall be put to death: or, as Nebuchadnezzar said, If you do not, you shall be thrown into the furnace of flaming fire. Many feared and adored. Shrinking from death, they died. Through fear of the death which cannot be escaped, they fell into that which they might happily have escaped, had they not, unhappily, been afraid of that which is inevitable. As a man, thou art born—art destined to die. Whither wilt thou go to escape death? What wilt thou do to escape it? That thy Lord might comfort thee in thy necessary subjection to death, of His own good pleasure He condescended to die. When thou seest the Christ lying dead, art thou reluctant to die? Die then thou must; thou hast no means of escape. Be it today, be it tomorrow; it is to be—the debt must be paid. What, then, does a man gain by fearing, fleeing, hiding himself from discovery by his enemy? Does he get exemption from death? No, but that he may die a little later. He gets not security against his debt, but asks a respite. Put it off as long as you please, the thing so delayed will come at last. Let us fear that death which the three men feared when they said to the king, “God is able to deliver us even from that flame; and if not,” etc. There was there the fear of that death which the Lord now threatens, when they said, But also if He be not willing openly to deliver us, He can crown us with victory in secret. Whence also the Lord, when on the eve of appointing martyrs and becoming the head-martyr Himself, said, “Be

not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.” How “have they no more that they can do”? What if, after having slain one, they threw his body to be mangled by wild beasts, and torn to pieces by birds? Cruelty seems still to have something it can do. But to whom is it done? He has departed. The body is there, but without feeling. The tenement lies on the ground, the tenant is gone. And so “after that they have no more that they can do;” for they can do nothing to that which is without sensation. “But fear Him who hath power to destroy both body and soul, in hell fire.” Here is the death that He spake of when He said, “He that keepeth my saying shall never see death.” Let us keep then, brethren, His own word in faith, as those who are yet to attain to sight, when the liberty we receive has reached its fullness.

13. But those men, indignant, yet dead, and predestinated to death eternal, answered with insults, and said, “Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets.” But not in that death which the Lord meant to be understood was either Abraham dead or the prophets. For these were dead, and yet they live: those others were alive, and yet they had died. For, replying in a certain place to the Sadducees, when they stirred the question of the resurrection, the Lord Himself speaks thus: “But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read how the Lord said to Moses from the bush, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” If, then, they live, let us labor so to live, that after death we may be able to live with them. “Whom makest thou thyself,” they add, that thou sayest, “he shall never see death who keepeth my saying,” when thou knowest that both Abraham is dead and the prophets?

14. “Jesus answered, If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing: it is my Father that glorifieth me.” He said this on account of their saying, “Whom makest thou thyself?” For He refers His glory to the Father, of whom it is that He is God. From this expression also the Arians sometimes revile our faith, and say, See, the Father is greater; for at all events He glorifies the Son. Heretic, hast thou not read of the Son Himself also saying that He glorifies His Father? If both He glorifieth the Son, and the Son glorifieth the Father, lay aside thy stubbornness, acknowledge the equality, correct thy perversity.

15. “It is,” then, said He, “my Father that glorifieth me; of whom ye say, that He is your God: and ye have not known Him.” See, my brethren, how He shows that God Himself is the Father of the Christ, who was announced also to the Jews. I say so for this reason, that now again there are certain heretics who say that the God revealed in the Old Testament is not the Father of Christ, but some prince or other, I know not what, of evil angels. There are Manicheans who say so; there are Marcionites who say so. There are also, perhaps, other heretics, whom it is either unnecessary to mention, or all of whom I cannot at present recall; yet there have not been wanting those who said this. Attend, then, that you may have something also to affirm against such. Christ the Lord calleth Him His Father whom they called their God, and did not know; for had they known [that God] Himself they would have received His Son. “But I,” said He, “know Him.” To those judging after the flesh He might have seemed from such words to be self-assuming, because He said, “I know Him.” But see what follows: “If I should say that I know Him not, I shall be a liar like unto you.” Let not, then, self-assumption be so guarded against as to cause the relinquishment of truth. “But I know Him, and keep His saying.” The saying of the Father He was speaking as Son; and He Himself was the Word of the Father, that was speaking to men.

16. “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw, and was glad.” Abraham’s seed, Abraham’s Creator, bears a great testimony to Abraham. “Abraham rejoiced,” He says, “to see my day.” He did not fear, but “rejoiced to see it.” For in him there was the love that casteth out fear. He says not, rejoiced because he saw; but “rejoiced that he might see.” Believing, at all events, he rejoiced in hope to see with the understanding. “And he saw.” And what more could the Lord Jesus Christ say, or what more ought He to have said? “And he saw,” He says, “and was glad.” Who can unfold this joy, my brethren? If those rejoiced whose bodily eyes were opened by the Lord, what joy was his who saw with the eyes of his soul the light ineffable, the abiding Word, the brilliance that dazzles the minds of the pious, the unfailing Wisdom, God abiding with the Father, and at some time come in the flesh and yet not to withdraw from the bosom of the Father? All this did Abraham see. For in saying “my day,” it may be uncertain of what He spake; whether the day of the Lord in time, when He should come the

flesh, or that day of the Lord which knows not a dawn, and knows no decline. But for my part I doubt not that father Abraham knew it all. And where shall I find it out? Ought the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ to satisfy us? Let us suppose that we cannot find it out, for perhaps it is difficult to say in what sense it is clear that Abraham "rejoiced to see the day" of Christ, "and saw it, and was glad." And though we find it not, can the Truth have lied? Let us believe the Truth, and cherish no doubt of Abraham's merited rewards. Yet listen to one passage that occurs to me meanwhile. When father Abraham sent his servant to seek a wife for his son Isaac, he bound him by this oath, to fulfill faithfully what he was commanded, and know also for himself what to do. For it was a great matter that was in hand when marriage was sought for Abraham's seed. But that the servant might apprehend what Abraham knew, that it was not offspring after the flesh he desired, nor anything of a carnal kind concerning his race that was referred to, he said to the servant whom he sent, "Put thy hand under my thigh, and swear by the God of heaven." What connection has the God of heaven with Abraham's thigh? Already you understand the mystery: by thigh is meant race. And what was that swearing, but the signifying that of Abraham's race would the God of heaven come in the flesh? Fools find fault with Abraham because he said, Put thy hand under my thigh. Those who find fault with Christ's flesh find fault with Abraham's conduct. But let us, brethren, if we acknowledge the flesh of Christ as worthy of veneration, despise not that thigh, but receive it as spoken of prophetically. For a prophet also was Abraham. Whose prophet? Of his own seed, and of his Lord. To his own seed he pointed in saying, "Put thy hand under my thigh." To his Lord he pointed in adding, "and swear by the God of heaven."

17. The angry Jews replied, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" And the Lord: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was made, I am." Weigh the words, and get a knowledge of the mystery. "Before Abraham was made." Understand, that "was made" refers to human formation; but "am" to the Divine essence. "He was made," because Abraham was a creature. He did not say, Before Abraham was, I was; but, "Before Abraham was made," who was not made save by me, "I am." Nor did He say this, Before Abraham was made I was made; for "In

the beginning God created the heaven and the earth;” and “in the beginning was the Word.” “Before Abraham was made, I am.” Recognize the Creator—distinguish the creature. He who spake was made the seed of Abraham; and that Abraham might be made, He Himself was before Abraham.

18. Hence, as if by the most open of all insults thrown at Abraham, they were now excited to greater bitterness. Of a certainty it seemed to them that Christ the Lord had uttered blasphemy in saying, “Before Abraham was made, I am.” “Therefore took they up stones to cast at Him.” To what could so great hardness have recourse, save to its like? “But Jesus” [acts] as man, as one in the form of a servant, as lowly, as about to suffer, about to die, about to redeem us with His blood; not as He who is—not as the Word in the beginning, and the Word with God. For when they took up stones to cast at Him, what great thing were it had they been instantly swallowed up in the gaping earth, and found the inhabitants of hell in place of stones? It were not a great thing to God; but better was it that patience should be commended than power exerted. Therefore “He hid Himself” from them, that He might not be stoned. As man, He fled from the stones; but woe to those from whose stony hearts God has fled?

TRACTATE XLIV

CHAPTER IX

1. We have just read the long lesson of the man born blind, whom the Lord Jesus restored to the light; but were we to attempt handling the whole of it, and considering, according to our ability, each passage in a way proportionate to its worth, the day would be insufficient. Wherefore I ask and warn your Charity not to require any words of ours on those passages whose meaning is manifest; for it would be too protracted to linger at each. I proceed, therefore, to set forth briefly the mystery of this blind man’s enlightenment. All, certainly, that was done by our Lord Jesus Christ, both works and words, are worthy of our astonishment and admiration: His works, because they are facts; His words, because they are signs. If we reflect, then, on what is signified by the deed here done, that blind man is the human race; for this blindness had place in the first man, through sin, from whom we all draw our origin, not only in respect of death, but also of

unrighteousness. For if unbelief is blindness, and faith enlightenment, whom did Christ find a believer at His coming? seeing that the apostle, belonging himself to the family of the prophets, says: “And we also in times past were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” If “children of wrath,” then children of vengeance, children of punishment, children of hell. For how is it “by nature,” save that through the first man sinning moral evil rooted itself in us as a nature? If evil has so taken root within us, every man is born mentally blind. For if he sees, he has no need of a guide. If he does need one to guide and enlighten him, then is he blind from his birth.

2. The Lord came: what did He do? He set forth a great mystery. “He spat on the ground,” He made clay of His spittle; for the Word was made flesh. “And He anointed the eyes of the blind man.” The anointing had taken place, and yet he saw not. He sent him to the pool which is called Siloam. But it was the evangelist’s concern to call our attention to the name of this pool; and he adds, “Which is interpreted, Sent.” You understand now who it is that was sent; for had He not been sent, none of us would have been set free from iniquity. Accordingly he washed his eyes in that pool which is interpreted, Sent—he was baptized in Christ. If, therefore, when He baptized him in a manner in Himself, He then enlightened him; when He anointed Him, perhaps He made him a catechumen. In many different ways indeed may the profound meaning of such a sacramental act be set forth and handled; but let this suffice your Charity. You have heard a great mystery. Ask a man, Are you a Christian? His answer to you is, I am not, if he is a pagan or a Jew. But if he says, I am; you inquire again of him, Are you a catechumen or a believer? If he reply, A catechumen; he has been anointed, but not yet washed. But how anointed? Inquire, and he will answer you. Inquire of him in whom he believes. In that very respect in which he is a catechumen he says, In Christ. See, I am speaking in a way both to the faithful and to catechumens. What have I said of the spittle and the clay? That the Word was made flesh. This even catechumens hear; but that to which they have been anointed is not all they need; let them hasten to the font if they are in search of enlightenment.

3. And now, because of certain points in the lesson before us, let us run over the words of the Lord, and of the whole lesson itself rather than make them

a theme of discourse. “As He passed out, He saw a man who was blind;” blind, not from any cause whatever, but “from his birth.” “And His disciples asked Him, Rabbi.” You know that “Rabbi” is Master. They called Him Master, because they desired to learn. The question, at all events, they proposed to the Lord as a master, “Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents,” that he was born blind. What is this that He has said? If no man is sinless, were the parents of this blind man without sin? Was he himself either born without original sin, or had he committed none in the course of his lifetime? Because his eyes were closed, had his lusts lost their wakefulness? How many evils are done by the blind? From what evil does an evil mind abstain, even though the eyes are closed? He could not see, but he knew how to think, and perchance to lust after something which his blindness hindered him from attaining, and so still in his heart to be judged by the searcher of hearts. If, then, both his parents had sin, and the man himself had sin, wherefore said the Lord, “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents,” but only in respect to the point on which he was questioned, “that he was born blind”? For his parents had sin; but not by reason of the sin itself did it come about that he was born blind. If, then, it was not through the parents’ sin that he was born blind, why was he born blind? Listen to the Master as He teaches. He seeks one who believes, to give him understanding. He Himself tells us the reason why that man was born blind: “Neither hath this man sinned,” He says, “nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.”

4. And then, what follows? “I must work the works of Him that sent me.” See, here is that sent one [Siloam], wherein the blind man washed his face. And see what He said: “I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day.” Recall to thy mind the way in which He gives universal glory to Him of whom He is: for that One has the Son who is of Him; He Himself has no One of whom He is. But wherefore, Lord, saidst Thou, “While it is day”? Hearken why He did so. “The night cometh when no man can work.” Not even Thou, Lord. Will that night have such power that not even Thou, whose work the night is, wilt be able to work therein? For I think, Lord Jesus, nay I do not think, but believe and hold it sure, that Thou wast there when God said, “Let there be light, and there was light.” For if He made it

by the Word, He made it by Thee: and therefore it is said, “All things were made by Him; and without Him was nothing made.” “God divided between the light and the darkness: the light He called Day, and the darkness He called Night.”

5. What is that night wherein, when it comes, no one shall be able to work? Hear what the day is, and then thou wilt understand what the night is. But how shall we hear what the day is? Let Himself tell us: “As long as I am in this world, I am the light of the world.” See, He Himself is the day. Let the blind man wash his eyes in the day, that he may behold the day. “As long,” He says, “as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” Then will it be night of a kind unknown to me, when Christ will no longer be there; and so no one will be able to work. An inquiry remains, my brethren; patiently listen to me as I inquire. With you I inquire: With you shall I find Him to whom my inquiry is addressed. We are agreed; for it is expressly and definitely stated that the Lord proclaimed Himself in this place as the day, that is, the light of the world. “As long,” He says, “as I am in this world, I am the light of the world.” Therefore He Himself works. But how long is He in this world? Are we to think, brethren, that He was here then, and is here no longer? If we think so, then already, after the Lord’s ascension, did that fearful night begin, when no one can work. If that night began after the Lord’s ascension, how was it that the apostles wrought so much? Was that the night when the Holy Spirit came, and, filling all who were in one place, gave them the power of speaking in the tongues of every nation? Was it night when that lame man was made whole at the word of Peter, or rather, at the word of the Lord dwelling in Peter? Was it night when, as the disciples were passing by, the sick were laid in couches, that they might be touched at least by their shadow as they passed? Yet, when the Lord was here, there was no one made whole by His shadow as He passed; but He Himself had said to the disciples, “Greater things than these shall ye do.” Yes, the Lord had said, “Greater things than these shall ye do;” but let not flesh and blood exalt itself: let such hear Him also saying, “Without me ye can do nothing.”

6. What then? What shall we say of that night? When will it be, when no one shall be able to work? It will be that night of the wicked, that night of those to whom it shall be said in the end, “Depart into everlasting fire,

prepared for the devil and his angels.” But it is here called night, not flame, nor fire. Hearken, then, why it is also night. Of a certain servant He says, “Bind ye him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness.” Let man, then, work while he liveth, that he may not be overtaken by that night when no man can work. It is now that faith is working by love; and if now we are working, then this is the day—Christ is here. Hear His promise, and think Him not absent. It is Himself who hath said, “Lo, I am with you.” How long? Let there be no anxiety in us who are alive; were it possible, with this very word we might place in perfect security the generations still to come. “Lo,” He says,” I am with you always, even to the end of the world.” That day, which is completed by the circuit of yonder sun, has but few hours; the day of Christ’s presence extends even to the end of the world. But after the resurrection of the living and the dead, when He shall say to those placed at His right hand, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom;” and to those at His left, “Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;” then shall be the night when no man can work, but only get back what he has wrought before. There is a time for working, another for receiving; for the Lord shall render to every one according to his works. While thou livest, be doing, if thou art to be doing at all; for then shall come that appalling night, to envelope the wicked in its folds. But even now every unbeliever, when he dies, is received within that night: there is no work to be done there. In that night was the rich man burning, and asking a drop of water from the beggar’s finger; he mourned, agonized, confessed, but no relief was vouchsafed. He even endeavored to do good; for he said to Abraham, “Father Abraham, send Lazarus to my brethren, that he may tell them what is being done here, lest they also come into this place of torment.” Unhappy man! when thou wert living, then was the time for working: now thou art already in the night, in which no man can work.

7. “When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He spread the clay upon his eyes, and said unto him, Go and wash in the pool of Siloam (which is, by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.” As these words are clear, we may pass them over.

8. “The neighbors therefore, and those who saw him previously, for he was a beggar, said, Is not this he who sat and begged? Some said, It is he: others, No; but he is like him.” The opening of his eyes had altered his countenance. “He said, I am he.” His voice utters its gratitude, that it might not be condemned as ungrateful. “Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? He answered, The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and saw.” See, he is become the herald of grace; see, he preaches the gospel; endowed with sight, he becomes a confessor. That blind man makes confession, and the heart of the wicked was troubled; for they had not in their heart what he had now in his countenance. “They said to him, Where is he who hath opened thine eyes? He said, I know not.” In these words the man’s own soul was like that of one only as yet anointed, but not yet seeing. Let us so put it, brethren, as if he had that anointing in his soul. He preaches, and knows not the Being whom he preaches.

9. “They brought to the Pharisees him who had been blind. And it was the Sabbath when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked how he had received his sight. And he said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. Therefore said some of the Pharisees;” not all, but some; for some were already anointed. What then said those who neither saw nor were anointed? “This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath.” He it was rather who kept it, who was without sin. For this is the spiritual Sabbath, to have no sin. In fact, brethren, it is of this that God admonishes us, when He commends the Sabbath to our notice: “Thou shalt do no servile work.” These are God’s words when commending the Sabbath, “Thou shalt do no servile work.” Now ask the former lessons, what is meant by servile work; and listen to the Lord: “Every one that committeth sin is the servant of sin.” But these men, neither seeing, as I said, nor anointed, kept the Sabbath carnally, and profaned it spiritually. “Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?” These were the anointed ones. “And there was a division among them.” The day had divided between the light and the darkness. “They say then unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him who hath opened thine eyes?” What is thy feeling about him? what is thine opinion? what is

thy judgment? They sought how to revile the man, that he might be cast out of the synagogue, but be found by Christ. But he steadfastly expressed what he felt. For he said, “That he is a prophet.” As yet, indeed, anointed only in heart, he does not thus far confess the Son of God, and yet he speaks not untruthfully. For the Lord saith of Himself, “A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country.”

10. “Therefore the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, till they called the parents of him that received his sight;” that is, who had been blind, and had come to the possession of sight. “And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? His parents answered them, and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: but how he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not. And they said, Ask himself; he is of age, let him speak of himself.” He is indeed our son, and we might justly be compelled to answer for him as an infant, because then he could not speak for himself: from of old he has had power of speech, only now he sees: we have been acquainted with him as blind from his birth, we know him as having speech from of old, only now do we see him endowed with sight: ask himself, that you may be instructed; why seek to calumniate us? “These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had conspired already, that if any man did confess that He was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.” It was no longer a bad thing to be put out of the synagogue. They cast out, but Christ received. “Therefore said his parents, He is of age, ask himself.”

11. “Then again called they the man who had been blind, and said unto him, Give God the glory.” What is that, “Give God the glory”? Deny what thou hast received. Such conduct is manifestly not to give God the glory, but rather to blaspheme Him. “Give God,” they say, “the glory: we know that this man is a sinner. Then said he, If he is a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. Then said they to him, What did he to thee, how opened he thine eyes?” And he, indignant now at the hardness of the Jews, and as one brought from a state of blindness to sight, unable to endure the blind, “answered them, I have told you already, and ye have heard: wherefore would ye hear it again? Will ye also become his

disciples?” What means, “Will ye also,” but that I am one already? “Will ye also be so?” Now I see, but see not askance.

12. “They cursed him, and said, Thou art his disciple.” Such a malediction be upon us, and upon our children! For a malediction it is, if thou layest open their heart, not if thou ponderest the words. “But we are Moses’ disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.” Would ye had known that “God spake to Moses!” ye would have also known that God preached by Moses. For ye have the Lord saying, “Had ye believed Moses, ye would have also believed me; for he wrote of me.” Is it thus ye follow the servant, and turn your back against the Lord? But not even the servant do ye follow; for by him ye would be guided to the Lord.

13. “The man answered and said unto them, Herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man is a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth.” He speaks still as one only anointed. For God heareth even sinners. For if God heard not sinners, in vain would the publican, casting his eyes on the ground, and smiting on his breast, have said, “Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.” And that confession merited justification, as this blind man enlightenment. “Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.” With frankness, constancy, and truthfulness [he spoke]. For these things that were done by the Lord, by whom were they done but by God? Or when would such things be done by disciples, were not the Lord dwelling in them?

14. “They answered and said unto him, Thou wast wholly born in sins.” What means this “wholly”? Even to blindness of the eyes. But He who has opened his eyes, also saves him wholly: He will grant a resurrection at His right hand, who gave enlight enment to his countenance. “Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.” They had made him their master; many questions had they asked for their own instruction, and they ungratefully cast forth their teacher.

15. But, as I have already said before, brethren, when they expel, the Lord receiveth; for the rather that he was expelled, was he made a Christian. “Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” Now He washes the face of his heart. “He answered and said,” as one still only anointed, “Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee.” The One is He that is sent; the other is one washing his face in Siloam, which is interpreted, Sent. And now at last, with the face of his heart washed, and a conscience purified, acknowledging Him not only as the son of man, which he had believed before, but now as the Son of God, who had assumed our flesh, “he said, Lord, I believe.” It is but little to say, “I believe:” wouldst thou also see what he believes Him? “He fell down and worshipped Him.”

16. “And Jesus said to him.” Now is He, the day, discerning between the light and the darkness. “For judgment am I come into this world; that they who see not might see, and they who see might be made blind.” What is this, Lord? A weighty subject of inquiry hast Thou laid on the weary; but revive our strength that we may be able to understand what Thou hast said. Thou art come “that they who see not may see:” rightly so, for Thou art the light: rightly so, for Thou art the day: rightly so, for Thou deliverest from darkness: this every soul accepts, every one understands. What is this that follows, “And those who see may be made blind?” Shall then, because Thou art come, those be made blind who saw? Hear what follows, and perhaps thou wilt understand.

17. By these words, then, were “some of the Pharisees” disturbed, “and said unto Him, Are we blind also?” Hear now what it is that moved them, “And they who see may be made blind.” “Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin;” while blindness itself is sin. “If ye were blind,” that is, if ye considered yourselves blind, if ye called yourselves blind, ye also would have recourse to the physician: “if” then in this way “ye were blind, ye should have no sin;” for I am come to take away sin. “But now ye say, We see; [therefore] your sin remaineth.” Wherefore? Because by saying, “We see:” ye seek not the physician, ye remain in your blindness. This, then, is that which a little above we did not understand, when He said, “I

am come, that they who see not may see;” for what means this, “that they who see not may see”? They who acknowledge that they do not see, and seek the physician, that they may receive sight. And “they who see may be made blind:” what means this, “they who see may be made blind”? That they who think they see, and seek not the physician, may abide in their blindness. Such discerning therefore of one from another He called judgment, when He said, “For judgment I am come into this world,” whereby He distinguishes the cause of those who believe and make confession from the proud, who think they see, and are therefore the more grievously blinded: just as the sinner, making confession, and seeking the physician, said to Him, “Judge me, O God, and discern my cause against the unholy nation,”—namely, those who say, “We see,” and their sin remaineth. But it was not that judgment He now brought into the world, whereby in the end of the world He shall judge the living and the dead. For in respect to this He had said, “I judge no man;” seeing that He came the first time, “not to judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”

TRACTATE XLV

CHAPTER X. 1–10

1. Our Lord’s discourse to the Jews began in connection with the man who was born blind and was restored to sight. Your Charity therefore ought to know and be advised that today’s lesson is interwoven with that one. For when the Lord had said, “For judgment I am come into this world; that they who see not might see, and they who see might be made blind,”—which, on the occasion of its reading, we expounded according to our ability,—some of the Pharisees said, “Are we blind also?” To whom He replied, “If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; [therefore] your sin remaineth.” To these words He added what we have been hearing today when the lesson was read.

2. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.” For they declared that they were not blind; yet could they see only by being the sheep of Christ. Whence claimed they possession of the light,

who were acting as thieves against the day? Because, then, of their vain and proud and incurable arrogance, did the Lord Jesus subjoin these words, wherein He has given us also salutary lessons, if we lay them to heart. For there are many who, according to a custom of this life, are called good people,—good men, good women, innocent, and observers as it were of what is commanded in the law; paying respect to their parents, abstaining from adultery, doing no murder, committing no theft, giving no false witness against any one, and observing all else that the law requires—yet are not Christians; and for the most part ask boastfully, like these men, "Are we blind also?" But just because all these things that they do, and know not to what end they should have reference, they do to no purpose, the Lord has set forth in today's lesson the similitude of His own flock, and of the door that leads into the sheepfold. Pagans may say, then, We live well. If they enter not by the door, what good will that do them, whereof they boast? For to this end ought good living to benefit every one, that it may be given him to live for ever: for to whomsoever eternal life is not given, of what benefit is the living well? For they ought not to be spoken of as even living well, who either from blindness know not the end of a right life, or in their pride despise it. But no one has the true and certain hope of living always, unless he know the life, that it is Christ; and enter by the gate into the sheepfold.

3. Such, accordingly, for the most part seek to persuade men to live well, and yet not to be Christians. By another way they wish to climb up, to steal and to kill, not as the shepherd, to preserve and to save. And thus there have been certain philosophers, holding many subtle discussions about the virtues and the vices, dividing, defining, drawing out to their close the most acute processes of reasoning, filling books, brandishing their wisdom with rattling jaws; who would even dare to say to people, Follow us, keep to our sect, if you would live happily. But they had not entered by the door: they wished to destroy, to slay, and to murder.

4. What shall I say of such? Look, the Pharisees themselves were in the habit of reading, and in what they read, their voices re-echoed the Christ, they hoped He would come, and recognized Him not when present; they boasted, even they, of being amongst those who saw, that is, among the wise, and they disowned the Christ, and entered not in by the door.

Therefore would such also, if they chanced to seduce any, seduce them to be slaughtered and murdered, not to be brought into liberty. Let us leave these also to themselves, and look at those who glory in the name of Christ Himself, and see whether even they perchance are entering in by the door.

5. For there are countless numbers who not only boast that they see, but would have it appear that they are enlightened by Christ; yet are they heretics. Have even they somehow entered by the gate? Surely not. Sabellius says, He who is the Son is Himself the Father; but if the Son, then is there no Father. He enters not by the door, who asserts that the Son is the Father. Arius says, The Father is one thing, the Son is another thing. He would say rightly if he said, Another person; but not another thing. For when he says, Another thing, he contradicts Him who says in his hearing, “I and my Father are One.” Neither does he therefore enter by the door; for he preaches a Christ such as he fabricates for himself, not such as the truth declares Him. Thou hast the name, thou hast not the reality. Christ is the name of something; keep hold of the thing itself, if thou wouldst benefit by the name. Another, I know not from whence, says with Photinus, Christ is mere man; He is not God. He enters not in by the door, for Christ is both man and God. But why need I make many references, and enumerate the many vanities of heretics? Keep hold of this, that Christ’s sheepfold is the Catholic Church. Whoever would enter the sheepfold, let him enter by the door, let him preach the true Christ. Not only let him preach the true Christ, but seek Christ’s glory, not his own; for many, by seeking their own glory, have scattered Christ’s sheep, instead of gathering them. For Christ the Lord is a low gateway: he who enters by this gateway must humble himself, that he may be able to enter with head unharmed. But he that humbleth not, but exalteth himself, wishes to climb over the wall; and he that climbeth over the wall, is exalted only to fall.

6. Thus far, however, the Lord Jesus speaks in covert language; not as yet is He understood. He names the door, He names the sheepfold, He names the sheep: all this He sets forth, but does not yet explain. Let us read on then, for He is coming to those words, wherein He may think proper to give us some explanation of what He has said; from the explanation of which He will perhaps enable us to understand also what He has not explained. For

He gives us what is plain, for food; what is obscure, for exercise. “He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way.” Woe to the wretch, for he is sure to fall! Let him then be humble, let him enter by the door: let him walk on the level ground, and he shall not stumble. “The same,” He says, “is a thief and a robber.” The sheep of another he desires to call his own sheep,—his own, that is, as carried off by stealth, for the purpose, not of saving, but of slaying them. Therefore is he a thief, because what is another’s he calls his own; a robber, because what he has stolen he also kills. “But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep: to him the porter openeth.” Concerning this porter we shall make inquiry, when we have heard of the Lord Himself what is the door and who is the shepherd. “And the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name.” For He has their names written in the book of life. “He calleth his own sheep by name.” Hence, says the apostle, “The Lord knoweth them that are His.” “And he leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger do they not follow, but do flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.” These are veiled words, full of topics of inquiry, pregnant with sacramental signs. Let us follow then, and listen to the Master as He makes some opening into these obscurities; and perhaps by the opening He makes, He will cause us to enter.

7. “This parable spake Jesus unto them; but they understood not what He spake unto them.” Nor we also, perhaps. What, then, is the difference between them and us, before even we can understand these words? This, that we on our part knock, that it may be opened unto us; while they, by disowning Christ, refused to enter for salvation, and preferred remaining outside to be destroyed. In as far, then, as we listen to these words with a pious mind, in as far as, before we understand them, we believe them to be true and divine, we stand at a great distance from these men. For when two persons are listening to the words of the gospel, the one impious, the other pious, and some of these are such as neither perhaps understands, the one says, It has said nothing; the other says, It has said the truth, and what it has said is good, but we do not understand it. This latter, because he believes, now knocks, that he may be worthy to have it opened up to him, if he

continue knocking; but the other still hears the words, “If ye believe not, ye shall not understand.” Why do I draw your attention to this? Even for this reason, that when I have explained as I can these obscure words, or, because of their great abstruseness, I have either myself failed to arrive at an understanding of them, or wanted the faculty of explaining what I do understand, or every one has been so dull as not to follow me, even when I give the explanation, yet should he not despair of himself; but continue in faith, walk on in the way, and hear the apostle saying, “And if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk therein.”

8. Let us begin, then, with hearing His exposition of what we have heard Him propounding. “Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.” See, He has opened the very door which was shut in His former description. He Himself is the door. We have come to know it; let us enter, or rejoice that we are already within. “All that ever came are thieves and robbers.” What is this, Lord, “All that ever came”? How so hast Thou not come? But understand; I said, “All that ever came,” meaning, of course, exclusive of myself. Let us recollect then. Before His coming came the prophets: were they thieves and robbers? God forbid. They did not come apart from Him, for they came with Him. When about to come, He sent heralds, but retained possession of the hearts of His messengers. Do you wish to know that they came with Him, who is Himself ever existent? Certainly He assumed human flesh at the time appointed. But what means that “ever”? “In the beginning was the Word.” With Him, therefore, came those who came with the word of God. “I am,” said He, “the way, and the truth, and the life.” If He is the truth, with Him came those who were truthful. As many, therefore, as were apart from Him, were “thieves and robbers,” that is, had come to steal and to destroy.

9. “But the sheep did not hear them.” This is a more important point, “the sheep did not hear them.” Before the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, when He came in humility in the flesh, righteous men preceded, believing in the same way in Him who was to come, as we believe in Him who has come. Times vary, but not faith. For verbs themselves also vary with the tense, when they are variously declined. He is to come, has one sound; He has

come, has another: there is a change in the sound between He is to come, and He has come: yet the same faith unites both,—both those who believed that He would come, and those who have believed that He is come. At different times, indeed, but by the one doorway of faith, that is, by Christ, do we see that both have entered. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin, that He came in the flesh, suffered, rose again, ascended into heaven: all this, just as you hear verbs of the past tense, we believe to be already fulfilled. In that faith a partnership is also held with us by those fathers who believed that He would be born of the Virgin, would suffer, would rise again, would ascend into heaven; for to such the apostle pointed when he said, "But we having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." The prophet said, "I believed, therefore have I spoken:" the apostle says, "We also believe, and therefore speak." But to let you know that their faith is one, listen to him saying, "Having the same spirit of faith, we also believe." So also in another place, "For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea: and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink." The Red Sea signifies baptism; Moses, their leader through the Red Sea, signifies Christ; the people, who passed through, signify believers; the death of the Egyptians signifies the abolition of sins. Under different signs there is the same faith. It is with different signs as with different words [verbs]; for verbs change their sounds through the tenses, and verbs are indeed nothing else than signs. For they are words because of what they signify: take away the meaning from a word, and it becomes a senseless sound. All, therefore, have become signs. Was not the same faith theirs by whom these signs were employed, and by whom were foretold in prophecy the very things which we believe? Certainly it was: but they believed that they were yet to come, and we, that they have come. In like manner does he also say, "They all drank the same spiritual drink;" "the same spiritual," for it was not the same material [drink]. For what was it they drank? "For they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ." See, then, how that while the faith remained, the signs were varied. There the rock was Christ; to us that is Christ which is placed on the altar of God. And they, as a great sacramental sign of the same Christ, drank the water flowing from the rock: what we drink is known to believers. If one’s thoughts turn to the visible form, the thing is different; if to the meaning that addresses the understanding, they drank the same spiritual drink. As many, then, at that time as believed, whether Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob, or Moses, or the other patriarchs or prophets who foretold of Christ, were sheep, and heard Christ. His voice, and not another’s, did they hear. The Judge was present in the person of the Crier. For even when the judge speaks through the crier, the clerk does not make it, The crier said; but the judge said. But others there are whom the sheep did not hear, in whom Christ’s voice had no place,—wanderers, uttering falsehoods, prating inanities, fabricating vanities, misleading the miserable.

10. Why is it, then, that I have said, This is a more important point? What is there about it obscure and difficult to understand? Listen, I beseech you. See, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself came and preached. Much more surely was that the Shepherd’s voice which was uttered by the very mouth of the Shepherd. For if the Shepherd’s voice came through the prophets, how much more did the Shepherd’s own tongue give utterance to the Shepherd’s voice? Yet all did not hear Him. But what are we to think? Those who did hear, were they sheep? Lo? Judas heard, and was a wolf: he followed, but, clad in sheep-skin, he was laying snares for the Shepherd. Some, again, of those who crucified Christ did not hear, and yet were sheep; for such He saw in the crowd when He said, “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am He.” Now, how is this question to be solved? They that are not sheep do hear, and they that are sheep do not hear. Some, who are wolves, follow the Shepherd’s voice; and some, that are sheep, contradict it. Last of all, the sheep slay the Shepherd. The point is solved; for some one in reply says, But when they did not hear, as yet they were not sheep, they were then wolves: the voice, when it was heard, changed them, and out of wolves transformed them into sheep; and so, when they became sheep, they heard, and found the Shepherd, and followed Him. They built their hopes on the Shepherd’s promises, because they obeyed His precepts.

11. That question has been solved in a way, and perhaps satisfies every one. But I bare still a subject of concern, and what concerns me I shall impart to you, that, in some sort inquiring together, I may through His revelation be

found worthy with you to attain the solution. Hear, then, what it is that moves me. By the Prophet Ezekiel the Lord rebukes the shepherds, and among other things says of the sheep, “The wandering sheep have ye not recalled.” He both declares it a wanderer, and calls it a sheep. If, while wandering, it was a sheep, whose voice was it hearing to lead it astray? For doubtless it would not be straying were it hearing the shepherd’s voice: but it strayed just because it heard another’s voice; it heard the voice of the thief and the robber. Surely the sheep do not hear the voice of robbers. “Those that came,” He said,—and we are to understand, apart from me,—that is, “those that came apart from me are thieves and robbers, and the sheep did not hear them.” Lord, if the sheep did not hear them, how can the sheep wander? If the sheep hear only Thee, and Thou art the truth, whoever heareth the truth cannot certainly fall into error. But they err, and are called sheep. For if, in the very midst of their wandering, they were not called sheep, it would not be said by Ezekiel, “The wandering sheep have ye not recalled.” How is it at the same time a wanderer and a sheep? Has it heard the voice of another? Surely “the sheep did not hear them.” Accordingly many are just now being gathered into Christ’s fold, and from being heretics are becoming catholics. They are rescued from the thieves, and restored to the shepherds: and sometimes they murmur, and become wearied of Him that calls them back, and have no true knowledge of him that would murder them; nevertheless also, when, after a struggle, those have come who are sheep, they recognize the Shepherd’s voice, and are glad they have come, and are ashamed of their wandering. When, then, they were glorying in that state of error as in the truth, and were certainly not hearing the Shepherd’s voice, but were following another, were they sheep, or were they not? If they were sheep, how can it be the case that the sheep do not listen to aliens? If they were not sheep, wherefore the rebuke addressed to those to whom it is said, “The wandering sheep have ye not recalled”? In the case also of those already become catholic Christians, and believers of good promise, evils sometimes occur: they are seduced into error, and after their error are restored. When they were thus seduced, and were rebaptized, or after the companionship of the Lord’s fold were turned back again into their former error, were they sheep, or were they not? Certainly they were catholics. If they were faithful catholics, they were sheep. If they were sheep, how was it that they could listen to the voice of a stranger when the Lord saith, “The sheep did not hear them”?

12. You hear, brethren, the great importance of the question. I say then, “The Lord knoweth them that are His.” ^He knoweth those who were foreknown, He knoweth those who were predestinated; because it is said of Him, “For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. If God be for us, who can be against us?” Add to this: “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how hath He not with Him also freely given us all things?” But what “us”? Those who are foreknown, predestinated, justified, glorified; regarding whom there follows, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” Therefore “the Lord knoweth them that are His;” they are the sheep. Such sometimes do not know themselves, but the Shepherd knoweth them, according to this predestination, this foreknowledge of God, according to the election of the sheep before the foundation of the world: for so saith also the apostle, “According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.” According, then, to this divine foreknowledge and predestination, how many sheep are outside, how many wolves within! and how many sheep are inside, how many wolves without! How many are now living in wantonness who will yet be chaste! how many are blaspheming Christ who will yet believe in Him! how many are giving themselves to drunkenness who will yet be sober! how many are preying on other people property who will yet freely give of their own! Nevertheless at present they are hearing the voice of another, they are following strangers. In like manner, how many are praising within who will yet blaspheme; are chaste who will yet be fornicators; are sober who will wallow hereafter in drink; are standing who will by and by fall! These are not the sheep. (For we speak of those who were predestinated,—of those whom the Lord knoweth that they are His.) And yet these, so long as they keep right, listen to the voice of Christ. Yea, these hear, the others do not; and yet, according to predestination, these are not sheep, while the others are.

13. There remains still the question, which I now think may meanwhile thus be solved. There is a voice of some kind,—there is, I say, a certain kind of voice of the Shepherd, in respect of which the sheep hear not strangers, and in respect of which those who are not sheep do not hear Christ. What a word is this! “He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.” No one of His own is indifferent to such a voice, a stranger does not hear it: for this reason also does He announce it to the former, that he may abide perseveringly with Himself to the end; but by one who is wanting in such persevering continuance with Him, such a word remains unheard. One has come to Christ, and has heard word after word of one kind and another, all of them true, all of them salutary; and among all the rest is also this utterance, “He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.” He who has heard this is one of the sheep. But there was, perhaps, some one listening to it, who treated it with dislike, with coldness, and heard it as that of a stranger. If he was predestinated, he strayed for the time, but he was not lost for ever: he returns to hear what he has neglected, to do what he has heard. For if he is one of those who are predestinated, then both his very wandering and his future conversion have been foreknown by God: if he has strayed away, he will return to hear that voice of the Shepherd, and to follow Him who saith, “He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.” A good voice, brethren, it is; true and shepherd-like, the very voice of salvation in the tabernacles of the righteous. For it is easy to hear Christ, easy to praise the gospel, easy to applaud the preacher: but to endure unto the end, is peculiar to the sheep who hear the Shepherd’s voice. A temptation befalls thee, endure thou to the end, for the temptation will not endure to the end. And what is that end to which thou shalt endure? Even till thou reachest the end of thy pathway. For as long as thou hearest not Christ, He is thine adversary in the pathway, that is, in this mortal life. And what doth He say? “Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him.” Thou hast heard, hast believed, hast agreed. If thou hast been at enmity, agree. If thou hast got the opportunity of coming to an agreement, keep not up the quarrel longer. For thou knowest not when thy way will be ended, and it is known to Him. If thou art a sheep, and if thou endurest to the end, thou shalt be saved: and therefore it is that His own despise not that voice, and strangers hear it not. According to my ability, as He gave me the power, I have either explained to you or gone over with you

a subject of great profundity. If any have failed fully to understand, let him retain his piety, and the truth will be revealed: and let not those who have understood vaunt themselves as swifter at the expense of the slower, lest in their vaunting they turn out of the track, and the slower more easily attain the goal. But let all of us be guided by Him to whom we say, “Lead me, O Lord, in Thy way, and I will walk in Thy truth.”

14. By this, then, which the Lord hath explained, that He Himself is the door, let us find entrance to what He has set forth, but not explained. And indeed who it is that is the Shepherd, although He hath not told us in the lesson we have read to-day, yet in that which follows He very plainly tells us: “I am the good Shepherd.” And although He had not said so, whom else but Himself ought we to have understood in those words where He saith, “He that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep. To Him the porter openeth: and the sheep hear His voice: and He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice”? For who else calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them hence unto eternal life, but He who knoweth the names of those that are fore-ordained? Hence He said to His disciples, “Rejoice that your names are written in heaven;” for from this it is that He calleth them by name. And who else putteth them forth, save He who putteth away their sins, that, freed from their grievous fetters, they may be able to follow Him? And who hath gone before them to the place whither they are to follow Him, but He who, rising from the dead, dieth no more; and death shall have no more dominion over Him; and who, when He was manifest here in the flesh, said, “Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am”? Hence it is that He saith, “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” In this He clearly shows that not only the Shepherd, but the sheep also enter in by the door.

15. But what is this, “He shall go in and out, and find pasture”? To enter indeed into the Church by Christ the door, is eminently good; but to go out of the Church, as this same John the evangelist saith in his epistle, “They went out from us, but they were not of us,” is certainly otherwise than good. Such a going out could not then be commended by the good Shepherd,

when He said, “And he shall go in and out, and find pasture.” There is therefore not only some sort of entrance, but some outgoing also that is good, by the good door, which is Christ. But what is that praiseworthy and blessed outgoing? I might say, indeed, that we enter when we engage in some inward exercise of thought; and go out, when we take to some active work without: and since, as the apostle saith, Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith, to enter by Christ is to give ourselves to thought in accordance with that faith; but to go out by Christ is, in accordance also with that same faith, to take to outside works, that is to say, in the presence of others. Hence, also, we read in a psalm, “Man goeth forth to his work;” and the Lord Himself saith, “Let your works shine before men.” But I am better pleased that the Truth Himself, like a good Shepherd, and therefore a good Teacher, hath in a certain measure reminded us how we ought to understand His words, “He shall go in and out, and find pasture,” when He added in the sequel, “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” For He seems to me to have meant, That they may have life in coming in, and have it more abundantly at their departure. For no one can pass out by the door—that is, by Christ—to that eternal life which shall be open to the sight, unless by the same door—that is, by the same Christ—he has entered His church, which is His fold, to the temporal life, which is lived in faith. Therefore, He saith, “I am come that they may have life,” that is, faith, which worketh by love; by which faith they enter the fold that they may live, for the just liveth by faith: ^”and that they may have it more abundantly,” who, enduring unto the end, pass out by this same door, that is, by the faith of Christ; for as true believers they die, and will have life more abundantly when they come whither the Shepherd hath preceded them, where they shall die no more. Although, therefore, there is no want of pasture even here in the fold,—for we may understand the words “and shall find pasture” as referring to both, that is, both to their going in and their going out,—yet there only will they find the true pasture. where they shall be filled who hunger and thirst after righteousness,—such pasture as was found by him to whom it was said, “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” But how He Himself is the door, and Himself the Shepherd, so that He also may in a certain respect be understood as going in and out by Himself, and who is the porter, it would be too long to inquire to-day, and, according to the grace given us by Himself, to unfold in the way of dissertation.

TRACTATE XLVI

CHAPTER X. 11–13

1. The Lord Jesus is speaking to His sheep—to those already so, and to those yet to become such—who were then present; for in the place where they were, there were those who were already His sheep, as well as those who were afterwards to become so: and He likewise shows to those then present and those to come, both to them and to us, and to as many also after us as shall yet be His sheep, who it is that had been sent to them. All, therefore, hear the voice of their Shepherd saying, “I am the good Shepherd.” He would not add “good,” were there not bad shepherds. But the bad shepherds are those who are thieves and robbers, or certainly hirelings at the best. For we ought to examine into, to distinguish, and to know, all the characters whom He has here depicted. The Lord has already unfolded two points, which He had previously set forth in a kind of covert form: we already know that He is Himself the door, and we know that He is Himself the Shepherd. Who the thieves and robbers are, was made clear in yesterday’s lesson; and to-day we have heard of the hireling, as we have heard also of the wolf. Yesterday the porter was also introduced by name. Among the good, therefore, are the door, the doorkeeper, the shepherd, and the sheep: among the bad, the thieves and robbers, the hirelings, and the wolf.

2. We understand the Lord Christ as the door, and also as the Shepherd; but who is to be understood as the doorkeeper? For the former two, He has Himself explained: the doorkeeper He has left us to search out for ourselves. And what doth He say of the doorkeeper? “To him,” He saith, “the porter [doorkeeper] openeth.” To whom doth he open? To the Shepherd. What doth he open to the Shepherd? The door. And who is also the door? The Shepherd Himself. Now, if Christ the Lord had not Himself explained, had not Himself said, “I am the Shepherd,” and “I am the door,” would any of us have ventured to say that Christ is Himself both the Shepherd and the door? For had He said, “I am the Shepherd,” and had not

said, “I am the door,” we should be setting ourselves to inquire what was the door, and perhaps, mistaken in our views, be still standing before the door. His grace and mercy have revealed to us the Shepherd, by His calling Himself so; have revealed to us also the door, when declared Himself such; but He hath left us to search out the doorkeeper for ourselves. Whom, then, are we to call the doorkeeper? Whomsoever we fix upon, we must take care not to think of him as greater than the door itself; for in men’s houses the doorkeeper is greater than the door. The doorkeeper is placed before the door, not the door before the doorkeeper; because the porter keepeth the door, not the door the porter. I dare not say that any one is greater than the door, for I have heard already what is the door: that is no longer unknown to me, I am not left to my own conjecture, and I have not got much room for mere human guess work: God hath said it, the Truth hath said it, and we cannot change what the Unchangeable hath uttered.

3. In respect, then, of the profound nature of this question, I shall tell you what I think: let each one make the choice that pleases him, but let him think of it reverently; as it is written, “Think of the Lord with goodness, and in simplicity of heart seek Him.” Perhaps we ought to understand the Lord Himself as the doorkeeper: for the shepherd and the door are in human respects as much different from each other as the doorkeeper and the door; and yet the Lord has called Himself both the Shepherd and the door. Why, then, may we not understand Him also as the doorkeeper? For if we look at His personal qualities, the Lord Christ is neither a shepherd, in the way we are accustomed to know and to see shepherds; nor is He a door, for no artisan made Him: but if, because of some point of similarity, He is both the door and the Shepherd, I venture to say, He is also a sheep. True, the sheep is under the shepherd; yet He is both the Shepherd and a sheep. Where is He the Shepherd? Look, here thou hast it; read the Gospel: “I am the good Shepherd.” Where is He a sheep? Ask the prophet: “He was led as a sheep to the slaughter.” Ask the friend of the bridegroom: “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.” Moreover, I am going to say something of a still more wonderful kind, in accordance with these points of similarity. For both the lamb, and the sheep, and the shepherd are friendly with one another, but from the lions as their foes the sheep are protected by their shepherds: and yet of Christ, who is both sheep and Shepherd, we have

it said, “The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed.” All this, brethren, understand in connection with points of similarity, not with personal qualities. It is a common thing to see the shepherds sitting on a rock, and there guarding the cattle committed to their care. Surely the shepherd is better than the rock that he sits upon; and yet Christ is both the Shepherd and the rock. All this by way of comparison. But if thou askest me for His peculiar personal quality: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” If thou askest me for the personal quality peculiarly His own: The only Son, from everlasting to everlasting begotten of the Father, the equal of Him that begat, the Maker of all things, unchangeable with the Father, unchanged by the assuming of human form, man by incarnation, the Son of man, and the Son of God. All this that I have said is not figure, but reality.

4. Therefore, let us not, brethren, be disturbed in understanding Him, in harmony with certain resemblances, as Himself the door, and also the doorkeeper. For what is the door? The way of entrance. Who is the doorkeeper? He who opens it. Who, then, is He that opens Himself, but He who unveils Himself to sight? See, when the Lord spoke at first of the door, we did not understand: so long as we did not understand, it was shut: He who opened it is Himself the doorkeeper. There is no need, then, of seeking any other meaning, no need; but perhaps there is the desire. If there is so, quit not the path, go not outside of the Trinity. If thou art in quest of some other impersonation of the doorkeeper, bethink thee of the Holy Spirit; for the Holy Spirit will not think it unmeet to be the doorkeeper, when the Son has thought it meet to be Himself the door. Look at the doorkeeper as perhaps the Holy Spirit: about Him the Lord saith to His disciples, “He shall guide you into all truth.” What is the door? Christ. What is Christ? The Truth. Who, then, openeth the door, but He who guideth into all truth?

5. But what are we to say of the hireling? He is not mentioned here among the good. “The good Shepherd,” He says, “giveth His life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the Shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.” The hireling does not here bear a good character, and yet in some respects is useful; nor would he be called

an hireling, did he not receive hire from his employer. Who then is this hireling, that is both blameworthy and needful? And here, brethren, let the Lord Himself give us light, that we may know who the hirelings are, and be not hirelings ourselves. Who then is the hireling? There are some in office in the church, of whom the Apostle Paul saith, “Who seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ’s.” What means that, “Who seek their own”? Who do not love Christ freely, who do not seek after God for His own sake; who are pursuing after temporal advantages, gaping for gain, coveting honors from men. When such things are loved by an overseer, and for such things God is served, whoever such an one may be, he is an hireling who cannot count himself among the children. For of such also the Lord saith: “Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward.” ^Listen to what the Apostle Paul says of St. Timothy: “But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your circumstances; for I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for you. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.” The shepherd mourned in the midst of hirelings. He sought some one who sincerely loved the flock of Christ, and round about him, amongst those who were with him at that time, he found not one. Not that there was no one then in the Church of Christ but the Apostle Paul and Timothy, who had a brother’s concern for the flock; but it so happened at the time of his sending Timothy, that he had none else of his sons about him; only hirelings were with him, “who sought their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.” And yet he himself, with a brother’s anxiety for the flock, preferred sending his son, and remaining himself amongst hirelings. Hirelings are also found among ourselves, but the Lord alone distinguisheth them. He that searcheth the heart, distinguisheth them; and yet sometimes we know them ourselves. For it was not without a purpose that the Lord Himself said also of the wolves: “By their fruits ye shall know them.” Temptations put many to the question, and then their thoughts are made manifest; but many remain undiscovered. The Lord’s fold must have as overseers, both those who are children and those who are hirelings. But the overseers, who are sons, are the shepherds. If they are shepherds, how is there but one Shepherd, save that all of them are members of the one Shepherd, to whom the sheep belong? For they are also members of Himself as the one sheep; because “as a sheep he was led to the slaughter.”

6. But give heed to the fact that even the hirelings are needful. For many indeed in the Church are following after earthly profit, and yet preach Christ, and through them is heard the voice of Christ; and the sheep follow, not the hireling, but the Shepherd's voice speaking through the hireling. Hearken to the hirelings as pointed out by the Lord Himself: "The scribes," He saith, "and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: do what they say; but do not what they do." What else said He but, Listen to the Shepherd's voice speaking through the hirelings? For sitting in Moses' seat, they teach the law of God; therefore God teacheth by them. But if they wish to teach their own things, hear them not, do them not. For certainly such seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's; but no hireling has dared to say to Christ's people, Seek your own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. For his own evil conduct he does not preach from the seat of Christ: he does injury by the evil that he does, not by the good that he says. Pluck the grapes, beware of the thorn. It is well I see that you have understood; but for the sake of those that are slower, I shall repeat these words with greater plainness. How said I, Pluck the bunch of grapes, beware of the thorn; when the Lord saith, "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles"? That is quite true: and yet what I said is also true, Pluck the bunch of grapes, beware of the thorn. For sometimes the grape-cluster, springing from the root of the vine, finds its support in a common hedge; its branch, grows, becomes embedded among thorns, and the thorn bears other fruit than its own. For the thorn has not been produced from the vine, but has become the resting-place of its runner. Make thine inquiries only at the roots. Seek for the thorn-root, thou wilt find it apart from the vine: seek the origin of the grape, and from the root of the vine it will be found to have sprung. And so, Moses' seat was the vine; the morals of the Pharisees were the thorns. Sound doctrine cometh through the wicked, as the vine-branch in a hedge, a bunch of grapes among thorns. Gather carefully, so as in seeking the fruit not to tear thine hand; and while thou art to hear one speaking what is good, imitate him not when doing what is evil. "What they tell you, do,"—gather the grapes; "but what they do, do not,"—beware of the thorns. Even through hirelings listen to the voice of the Shepherd, but be not hirelings yourselves, seeing ye are members of the Shepherd. Yea, Paul himself, the holy apostle who said, "I have no one who hath a brother's concern about you; for all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's," draws a

distinction in another place between hirelings and sons; and see what he saith: “Some preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will: some of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel; but some also preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds.” These were hirelings who disliked the Apostle Paul. And why such dislike, but just because they were seeking after temporal things? But mark what he adds: “What then, notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached: and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.” Christ is the truth: let the truth be preached in pretense by hirelings, let it be preached in truth by the children: the children are waiting patiently for the eternal inheritance of the Father, the hirelings are longing for, and in a hurry to get, the temporal pay of their employer. For my part let me be shorn of the human glory, which I see such an object of envy to hirelings: and yet by the tongues both of hirelings and of children let the divine glory of Christ be published abroad, seeing that, “whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached.”

7. We have seen who the hireling is also. Who, but the devil, is the wolf? And what was said of the hireling? “When he seeth the wolf coming, he fleeth: but the sheep are not his own, and he careth not for the sheep.” Was the Apostle Paul such an one? Certainly not. Was Peter such an one? Far from it. Was such the character of the other apostles, save Judas, the son of perdition? Surely not. Were they shepherds then? Certainly they were. And how is there one Shepherd? I have already said they were shepherds, because members of the Shepherd. In that head they rejoiced, under that head they were in harmony together, with one spirit they lived in the bond of one body; and therefore belonged all of them to the one Shepherd. If, then, they were shepherds, and not hirelings, wherefore fled they when suffering persecution? Explain it to us, O Lord. In an epistle, I have seen Paul fleeing: he was let down by the wall in a basket, to escape the hands of his persecutor. Had he, then, no care of the sheep, whom he thus abandoned at the approach of the wolf? Clearly he had, but he commended them by his prayers to the Shepherd who was sitting in heaven; and for their advantage he preserved himself by flight, as he says in a certain place, “To abide in the flesh is needful for you.” For all had heard from the Shepherd Himself, “If they persecute you in one city, flee ye into another.” May the Lord be

pleased to explain to us this point! Lord, Thou saidst to those whom Thou didst certainly wish to be faithful shepherds, and whom Thou didst form into Thine own members, “If they persecute you, flee.” Doest Thou, then, injustice to them, when Thou blamest the hirelings who flee when they see the wolf coming! We ask Thee to tell us what meaning lies hid in the depths of the question. Let us knock, and the keeper of the door, which is Christ, will be here to reveal Himself.

8. Who is the hireling that seeth the wolf coming, and fleeth? He that seeketh his own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s. He is one that does not venture plainly to rebuke an offender. Look, some one or other has sinned—grievously sinned; he ought to be rebuked, to be excommunicated: but once excommunicated, he will turn into an enemy, hatch plots, and do all the injury he can. At present, he who seeketh his own, not the things that are Jesus Christ’s, in order not to lose what he follows after, the advantages of human friendship, and incur the annoyances of human enmity, keeps quiet and does not administer rebuke. See, the wolf has caught a sheep by the throat; the devil has enticed a believer into adultery: thou holdest thy peace—thou utterest no reproof. O hireling, thou hast seen the wolf coming and hast fled! Perhaps he answers and says: See, I am here; I have not fled. Thou hast fled, because thou hast been silent; thou hast been silent, because thou hast been afraid. The flight of the mind is fear. Thou stoodest with thy body, thou fleddest in thy spirit, which was not the conduct of him who said, “Though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit.” For how did he flee in spirit, who, though absent in the flesh, yet in his letters reproved the fornicators? Our affections are the motions of our minds. Joy is expansion of the mind; sorrow, contraction of the mind; desire, a forward movement of the mind; and fear, the flight of the mind. For thou art expanded in mind when thou art glad; contracted in mind when thou art in trouble; thou movest forward in mind when thou hast an earnest desire; and thou fleest in mind when thou art afraid. This, then, is how the hireling is said to flee at the sight of the wolf. Why? “Because he careth not for the sheep.” Why “careth he not for the sheep”? “Because he is an hireling.” What is that, “he is an hireling”? He seeketh a temporal reward, and shall not dwell in the house for ever. There are still some things here to be inquired about and discussed with you, but it is not prudent to burden you.

For we are ministering the Lord’s food to our fellow-servants; we feed as sheep in the Lord’s pastures, and are fed together. And just as we must not withhold what is needful, so our weak hearts are not to be overcharged with the abundance of provisions. Let it not then annoy your Charity that I do not take up to-day all that I think is still here to be discussed; but the same lesson will, in the Lord’s name, be read over to us again on the preaching days, and be, with His help, more carefully considered.

TRACTATE XLVII

CHAPTER X. 14–21

1. Those of you who hear the word of our God, not only with willingness, but also with attention, doubtless remember our promise. Indeed the same gospel lesson has also been read to-day which was read last Lord’s day; because, having lingered over certain closely related topics, we could not discuss all that we owed to your powers of understanding. Accordingly, what has been already said and discoursed about we do not inquire into to day, lest by continual repetitions we should be prevented from reaching what has still to be spoken. You know now in the Lord’s name who is the good Shepherd, and in what way good shepherds are His members, and therefore the Shepherd is one. You know who is the hireling we have to bear with; who the wolf, and the thieves, and the robbers we have to beware of; who are the sheep, and what is the door whereby both sheep and shepherd enter: how we are to understand the doorkeeper. You know also that every one who entereth not by the door is a thief and a robber, and cometh not but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. All these sayings have, as I think, been sufficiently handled. To-day we ought to tell you, as far as the Lord enables us (for Jesus Christ our Saviour hath Himself told us that He is both the Shepherd and the door, and that the good Shepherd entereth in by the door), how it is that He entereth in by Himself. For if no one is a good shepherd but he that entereth by the door, and He Himself is preeminently the good Shepherd, and also Himself the door, I can understand it only in this way, that He entereth in by Himself to His sheep, and calleth them to follow Him, and they, going in and out, find pasture, which is to say, eternal life.

2. I proceed, then, without more delay. When I seek to get into you, that is, into your heart, I preach Christ: were I preaching something else, I should be trying to climb up some other way. Christ, therefore, is my gate to you: by Christ I get entrance, not to your houses, but to your hearts. It is by Christ I enter: it is Christ in me that you have been willingly hearing. And why is it you have thus willingly hearkened to Christ in me? Because you are the sheep of Christ, purchased with the blood of Christ. You acknowledge your own price, which is not paid by me, but is preached by my instrumentality. He, and only He, was the buyer, who shed precious blood—the precious blood of Him who was without sin. Yet made He precious also the blood of His own, for whom He paid the price of blood: for had He not made the blood of His own precious, it would not have been said, “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” So also when He saith, “The good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep,” He is not the only one who has done such a deed; and yet if those who have done so are His members, He only Himself was the doer of it. For He was able to do so without them, but whence had they the power apart from Him, who Himself had said, “Without me ye can do nothing”? But from the same source we can show what others also have done, for the apostle John himself, who preached the very gospel you have been hearing, has said in his epistle, “Just as Christ laid down His life for us, so ought we also to lay down our lives for the brethren.” “We ought,” he says: He made us debtors who first set the example. To the same effect it is written in a certain place, “If thou sittest down to sup at a ruler’s table, make wise observation of what is set before thee; and put to thy hand, knowing that it will be thy duty to make similar provision in turn.” You know what is meant by the ruler’s table: you there find the body and blood of Christ; let him who comes to such a table be ready with similar provision. And what is such similar provision? As He laid down His life for us, so ought we also, for the edification of others, and the maintenance of the faith, to lay down our lives for the brethren. To the same effect He said to Peter, whom He wished to make a good shepherd, not in Peter’s own person, but as a member of His body: “Peter, lovest thou me? Feed my sheep.” This He did once, again, and a third time, to the disciple’s sorrow. And when the Lord had questioned him as often as He judged it needful, that he who had thrice denied might thrice confess Him, and had a third time given him the charge to feed His

sheep, He said to him, “When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shall be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.” And the evangelist has explained the Lord’s meaning: “But this spake He, signifying by what death he should glorify God.” “Feed my sheep” applies, then, to this, that thou shouldst lay down thy life for my sheep.

3. And now when He saith, “As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father,” who can be ignorant of His meaning? For He knoweth the Father by Himself, and we by Him. That He hath knowledge by Himself, we know already: that we also have knowledge by Him, we have like wise learned, for this also we have learned of Him. For He Himself hath said: “No one hath seen God at any time; but the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.” And so by Him do we also get this knowledge, to whom He hath declared Him. In another place also He saith: “No one knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any one the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.” As He then knoweth the Father by Himself, and we know the Father by Him; so into the sheepfold He entereth by Himself, and we by Him. We were saying that by Christ we have a door of entrance to you; and why? Because we preach Christ. We preach Christ; and therefore we enter in by the door. But Christ preacheth Christ, for He preacheth Himself; and so the Shepherd entereth in by Himself. When the light shows the other things that are seen in the light, does it need some other means of being made visible itself? The light, then, exhibits both other things and itself. Whatever we understand, we understand with the intellect: and how, save by the intellect, do we understand the intellect itself? But does one in the same way with the bodily eye see both other things and [the eye] itself? For though men see with their eyes, yet their own eyes they see not. The eye of the flesh sees other things, itself it cannot [see]: but the intellect understands itself as well other things. In the same way as the intellect seeth itself, so also doth Christ preach Himself. If He preacheth Himself, and by preaching entereth into thee, He entereth into thee by Himself. And He is the door to the Father, for there is no way of approach to the Father but by Him. “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” Many things

are expressed by a word: all that I have just said, I have said, of course, by means of words. If I were wishing to speak also of a word itself, how could I do so but by the use of the word? And thus both many things are expressed by a word, which are not the same as the word, and the word itself can only be expressed by means of the word. By the Lord's help we have been copious in illustration. Remember, then, how the Lord Jesus Christ is both the door and the Shepherd: the door, in presenting Himself to view; the Shepherd, in entering in by Himself. And indeed, brethren, because He is the Shepherd, He hath given to His members to be so likewise. For both Peter, and Paul, and the other apostles were, as all good bishops are, shepherds. But none of us calleth himself the door. This—the way of entrance for the sheep—He has retained as exclusively belonging to Himself. In short, Paul discharged the office of a good shepherd when he preached Christ, because he entered by the door. But when the undisciplined sheep began to create schisms, and to set up other doors before them, not of entrance to their joint assembly, but for falling away into divisions, saying, some of them, "I am of Paul;" others, "I am of Cephas;" others, "I of Apollos;" others, "I of Christ:" terrified for those who said, "I am of Paul,"—as if calling out to the sheep, Wretched ones, whither are you going? I am not the door,—he said, "Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" But those who said, "I am of Christ," had found the door.

4. But of the one sheepfold and of the one Shepherd, you are now indeed being constantly reminded; for we have commended much the one sheepfold, preaching unity, that all the sheep should enter by Christ, and none of them should follow Donatus. Nevertheless, for what particular reason this was said by the Lord, is sufficiently apparent. For He was speaking among the Jews, and had been specially sent to the Jews, not for the sake of that class who were bound up in their inhuman hatred and persistently abiding in darkness, but for the sake of some in the nation whom He calls His sheep: of whom He saith, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He knew them even amid the crowd of His raging foes, and foresaw them in the peace of believing. What, then, does He mean by saying, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," but that He exhibited His bodily presence only to the people of

Israel? He did not proceed Himself to the Gentiles, but sent: to the people of Israel He both sent and came in person, that those who proved despisers should receive the greater judgment, because favored also with the sight of His actual presence. The Lord Himself was there: there He chose a mother: there He wished to be conceived, to be born, to shed His blood: there are His footprints, now objects of adoration where last He stood, and whence He ascended to heaven: but to the Gentiles He only sent.

5. But perhaps some one thinks that, as He Himself came not to us, but sent, we have not heard His own voice, but only the voice of those whom He sent. Far from it: let such a thought be banished from your hearts; for He Himself was in those whom He sent. Listen to Paul himself whom He sent; for Paul was specially sent as an apostle to the Gentiles; and it is Paul who, terrifying them not with himself but with Him saith, "Do ye wish to receive a proof of Him who speaketh in me, that is, of Christ?" Listen also to the Lord Himself. "And other sheep I have," that is, among the Gentiles, "which are not of this fold," that is, of the people of Israel: "them also must I bring." Therefore, even when it is by the instrumentality of His servants, it is He and not another that bringeth them. Listen further: "They shall hear my voice." See here also, it is He Himself who speaks by His servants, and it is His voice that is heard in those whom He sends. "That there may be one fold, and one shepherd." Of these two flocks, as of two walls, is the corner-stone formed. And thus is He both door and the corner-stone: all by way of comparison, none of them literally.

6. For I have said so before, and earnestly pressed it on your notice, and those who comprehend it are wise, yea, those who are wise do comprehend it; and yet let those who are not yet intellectually enlightened, keep hold by faith of what they cannot as yet understand. Christ is many things metaphorically, which strictly speaking He is not. Metaphorically Christ is both a rock, and a door, and a corner-stone, and a shepherd, and a lamb, and a lion. How numerous are such similitudes, and as many more as would take too long to enumerate! But if you select the strict significations of things as you are accustomed to see them, then He is neither a rock, for He is not hard and senseless; nor a door, for no artisan made Him; nor a corner-stone, for He was not constructed by a builder; nor a shepherd, for He is no

keeper of four-footed animals; nor a lion, as it ranks among the beasts of the forest; nor a lamb, as it belongs to the flock. All such, then, are by way of comparison. But what is He properly? “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God [God was the Word].” And what, as He appeared in human nature? “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us [in us].”

7. Hear also what follows. “Therefore doth my Father love me,” He saith, “because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.” What is this that He says? “Therefore doth my Father love me:” because I die, that I may rise again. For the “I” is uttered with special emphasis: “Because I lay down,” He saith, “I lay down my life,” “I lay down.” What is that “I lay down”? I lay it down. Let the Jews no longer boast: they might rage, but they could have no power: let them rage as they can; if I were unwilling to lay down my life, what would all their raging effect? By one answer of His they were prostrated in the dust: when they were asked, “Whom seek ye?” they said, “Jesus;” and on His saying to them, “I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground.” Those who thus fell to the ground at one word of Christ when about to die, what will they do at the sound of His voice when coming to judgment? “I, I,” I say, “lay down my life, that I may take it again.” Let not the Jews boast, as if they had prevailed; He Himself laid down His life. “I laid me down [to sleep],” He says [elsewhere]. You know the psalm: “I laid me down and slept; and I awaked [rose up], for the Lord sustaineth me.” What of that—”I lay down”? Because it was my pleasure, I did so. What does “I lay down” mean? I died. Was it not a lying down to sleep on His part, who, when He pleased, rose from the tomb as He would from a bed? But He loves to give glory to the Father, that He may stir us up to glorify our Creator. For in adding, “I arose, for the Lord sustaineth me;” think you there was here a kind of failing in His power, so that, while He had it in His own power to die, He had it not in His power to rise again? So, indeed, the words seem to imply when not more closely considered. “I lay down to sleep;” that is, I did so, because I pleased. “And I arose:” why? “Because the Lord sustaineth [will sustain] me.” What then? wouldst Thou not have power to rise of Thyself? If Thou hadst not the power, Thou wouldst not have said, “I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again.” But, as showing that not only did the Father raise the Son,

but the Son also raised Himself, hear how, in another passage in the Gospel, He saith, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” And the evangelist adds: “But this He spake of the temple of His body.” For only that which died was restored to life. The Word is not mortal, His soul is not mortal. If even thine dieth not, could the Lord’s be subject to death?

8. How can I know, thou wilt say, that mine dieth not? Slay it not thyself, and it cannot die. How, thou asketh, can I slay my soul? To say nothing meanwhile of other sins, “The mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul.” How, thou sayest, can I be sure that it dieth not? Listen to the Lord Himself giving security to His servant: “Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.” But what in the plainest terms does He say? “Fear Him who hath power to slay both soul and body in hell.” Here you have the fact that it dieth, and that it doth not die. What is its dying? What is dying to thy flesh? Dying, to thy flesh, is the losing of its life: dying to thy soul, is the losing of its life. The life of thy flesh is thy soul: the life of thy soul is thy God. As the flesh dies in losing the soul, which is its life, so the soul dieth in losing God, who is its life. Of a certainty, then, the soul is immortal. Manifestly immortal, for it liveth even when dead. For what the apostle said of the luxurious widow, may also be said of the soul if it has lost its God, “she is dead while she liveth.”

9. How, then, does the Lord lay down His life [soul]? Let us, brethren, inquire into this a little more carefully. The time is not so pressing as is usual on the Lord’s day: we have leisure, and theirs will be the profit who have assembled to-day also to wait on the Word of God. “I lay down my life,” He says. Who lays down? What lays He down? What is Christ? The Word and man. Not man as being flesh alone: but as man consists of flesh and soul, so, in Christ there is a complete humanity. For He would not have assumed the baser part, and left the better behind, seeing that the soul of man is certainly superior to the body. Since, then, there is entire manhood in Christ, what is Christ? The Word, I repeat, and man. What is the Word and man? The Word, soul, and flesh. Keep hold of that, for there has been no lack of heretics on this point also, expelled as they were some time ago from the catholic truth, but still persisting, like thieves and robbers who enter not by the door, to lay their snares around the fold. These heretics are

termed Apollinarians, and have ventured to assert dogmatically that Christ is only the word and flesh, and contend that He did not assume a human soul. And yet some of them could not deny that there was a soul in Christ. See their intolerable absurdity and madness. They would have Him to possess an irrational soul, but deny Him a rational one. They allowed Him a mere animal, they deprived Him of a human, soul. But they took away Christ's reason by losing their own. Let it be otherwise with us, who have been nourished and established in the catholic faith. Accordingly, on this occasion I would remind your Charity, that, as in former lectures, we have given you sufficient instruction against the Sabellians and Arians,—the Sabellians, who say, The Father is the same as the Son—the Arians, who say, The Father is one being, the Son is another, as if the Father and Son were not of the same substance—and also, provided you remember as you ought, against the Photinian heretics, who have asserted that Christ was mere man, and destitute of Godhead: and against the Manicheans, who maintain that He was God only without any true humanity: we may, on this occasion, in speaking about the soul, give you some instruction also in opposition to the Apollinarians, who say that our Lord Jesus Christ had no human soul, that is, a rational intelligent soul,—that soul, I mean, by which, as men, we differ from the brutes.

10. In what sense, then, did our Lord say here, "I have power to lay down my soul [life]"? Who lays down his soul, and takes it again? Is it as being the Word that Christ does so? Or is it the human soul He possesses that lays down and resumes its own existence? Or is it His fleshly nature that lays down its life and takes it again? Let us sift each of the three questions I have suggested, and choose that which conforms to the standard of truth. For if we say that the Word of God laid down His soul, and took it again, we should have to fear the entrance of a wicked thought, and have it said to us: Then there was a time when that soul was separated from the Word, and a time, after His assumption of that soul, when He was without a soul. I see, indeed, that the Word was once without a human soul, but only so, when "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." But from the time that the Word was made flesh, to dwell amongst us, and manhood was assumed by the Word, that is, our whole nature, soul and flesh, what more could His passion and death do than separate the body

from the soul? It separated not the soul from the Word. For if the Lord died, yea, because He died (for He did so for us on the cross), doubtless His flesh breathed out that which was its life: for a short time the soul forsook the flesh, although destined by its own return to raise the flesh again to life. But I cannot say that the soul was separated from the Word. He said to the soul of the thief, “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” He forsook not the believing soul of the robber, and did He abandon His own? Surely not; but when the Lord took that of the other into His keeping, He certainly retained His own in indissoluble union. If, on the other hand, we say that the soul laid down and reassumed itself, we fall into the greatest absurdity; for what was not separated from the Word, was inseparable from itself.

11. Let us turn, then, to what is true and easily understood. Take the case of any man, who does not consist of the word and soul and flesh, but only of soul and flesh; and let us inquire how any such man lays down his life. Can no ordinary man do so? Thou mayest say to me: No man has power to lay down his life [soul], and to take it again. But were not a man able to lay down his life, the Apostle John would not say, “As Christ laid down his life for us, even so ought we also to lay down our lives for the brethren.” Therefore may we also (if only we are filled with His courage, for without Him we can do nothing) lay down our lives for the brethren. When some holy martyr has laid down his life for the brethren, who laid it down, and what laid he down? If we understand this, we shall perceive in what sense it was said by Christ, “I have power to lay down my life.” Art thou prepared, O man, to die for Christ? I am prepared, he replies. Let me repeat the question in other words. Art thou prepared to lay down thy life for Christ? And to these words he makes me the same reply, I am prepared, as he had, when I said, Art thou prepared to die? To lay down one’s life [soul], is, then, the same as to die. But in whose behalf is the sacrifice in this case? For all men, when they die, lay down their life; but it is not all who lay it down for Christ. And no one has power to resume what he has laid down. But Christ both laid it down for us, and did so when it pleased Him; and when it pleased Him, He took it again. To lay down one’s soul then, is to die. As also the Apostle Peter said to the Lord: “I will lay down my life [soul] for Thy sake;” that is, I will die for Thy sake. View it, then, as referable to the flesh: the flesh layeth down its life, and the flesh taketh it

again; not, indeed, the flesh by its own power, but by the power of Him that inhabiteth it. The flesh, then, layeth down its life in expiring. Look at the Lord Himself on the cross: He said, “I thirst:” those who were present dipped a sponge in vinegar, fastened it to a reed, and applied it to His mouth; then, having received it, He said, “It is finished;” meaning, All is fulfilled which had been prophesied regarding me as, prior to my death, still in the future. And because He had the power, when He pleased, to lay down His life, after He had said, “It is finished,” what adds the evangelist? “And He bowed His head, and gave up the spirit.” This is to lay down the soul [life]. Only let your Charity attend to this. “He bowed His head, and gave up the spirit.” Who gave up what gave He up? He gave up the spirit; His flesh gave it up. What means, the flesh gave it up? The flesh sent it forth, breathed it out. For so, in becoming separated from the spirit, we are said to expire. Just as getting outside the paternal soil is to be expatriated, turning aside from the track is to deviate; so to become separated from the spirit is to expire; and that spirit is the soul [life]. Accordingly, when the soul quits the flesh, and the flesh remains without the soul, then is a man said to lay down his soul [his human life]. When did Christ lay down His life? When it pleased the Word. For sovereign authority resided in the Word; and therein lay the power to determine when the flesh should lay down its life, and when it should take it again.

12. If, then, the flesh laid down its life, how did Christ lay down His life? For the flesh is not Christ. Certainly in this way, that Christ is both flesh, and soul, and the Word; and yet these three things are not three Christs, but one. Ask thine own human nature, and from thyself ascend to what is above thee, and which, if not yet able to be understood, can at least be believed. For in the same way that one man is soul and body, is one Christ both the Word and man. Consider what I have said, and understand. The soul and body are two things, but one man: the Word and man are two things, but one Christ. Apply, then, the subject to any man. Where is now the Apostle Paul? If one answer, At rest with Christ, he speaks truly. And likewise, should one reply, In the sepulchre at Rome, he is equally right. The one answer I get refers to his soul, the other to his flesh. And yet we do not say that there are two Apostle Pauls, one who rests in Christ, another who was laid in the sepulchre; although we may say that the Apostle Paul liveth in

Christ, and that the same apostle lieth dead in the tomb. Some one dieth, and we say, He was a good man, and faithful; he is in peace with the Lord: and then immediately, Let us attend his obsequies, and lay him in the sepulchre. Thou art about to bury one whom thou hadst just declared to be in peace with God; for the latter regards the soul which blooms eternally, and the other the body, which is laid down in corruption. But while the partnership of the flesh and soul has received the name of man, the same name is now applied to either of them, singly and by itself.

13. Let no one, then, be perplexed, when he hears that the Lord has said, “I lay down my life, and I take it again.” The flesh layeth it down, but by the power of the Word: the flesh taketh it again, but by the same power. Even His own name, the Lord Christ, was applied to His flesh alone. How can you prove it? says some one. We believe of a certainty not only in God the Father, but also in Jesus Christ His Son, our only Lord: and this that I have just said contains the whole, in Jesus Christ His Son, our only Lord. Understand that the whole is here: the Word, and soul, and flesh. At all events thou confessest what is also held by the same faith, that thou believest in that Christ who was crucified and buried. Ergo, thou deniest not that Christ was buried; and yet it was the burial only of His flesh. For had the soul been there, He would not have been dead: but if it was a true death, and its resurrection real, it was previously without life in the tomb; and yet it was Christ that was buried. And so the flesh apart from the soul was also Christ, for it was only the flesh that was buried. Learn the same likewise in the words of an apostle. “Let this mind,” he says, “be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Who, save Christ Jesus, as respects His nature as the Word, is God with God? But look at what follows: “But emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant; being made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man.” And who is this, but the same Christ Jesus Himself? But here we have now all the parts, both the Word in that form of God which assumed the form of a servant, and the soul and the flesh in that form of a servant which was assumed by the form of God. “He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death.” Now in His death, it was His flesh only that was slain by the Jews. For if He said to His disciples, “Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul,”

how could they do more in His own case than kill the body? And yet in the slaying of His flesh, it was Christ that was slain. Accordingly, when the flesh laid down its life, Christ laid it down; and when the flesh, in order to its resurrection, assumed its life, Christ assumed it. Nevertheless this was done, not by the power of the flesh, but of Him who assumed both soul and flesh, that in them these very things might receive fulfillment.

14. “This commandment,” He says, “have I received of my Father.” The Word received not the commandment in word, but in the only begotten Word of the Father every commandment resides. But when the Son is said to receive of the Father what He possesses essentially in Himself, as it is said, “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself,” while the Son is Himself the life, there is no lessening of His authority, but the setting forth of His generation. For the Father added not after-gifts as to a son whose state was imperfect at birth, but on Him whom He begat in absolute perfection He bestowed all gifts in begetting. In this manner He gave Him equality with Himself, and yet begat Him not in a state of inequality. But while the Lord thus spake, for the light was shining in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not, “there was a dissension again created among the Jews for these sayings, and many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad: why hear ye him?” This was the thickest darkness. Others said, “These are not the words of him that hath a devil; can a devil open the eyes of the blind?” The eyes of such were now begun to be opened.

TRACTATE XLVIII

CHAPTER X. 22–42

1. As I have already charged you, beloved, you ought steadfastly to bear in mind that Saint John the evangelist would not have us be always nourished with milk, but fed with solid food. Still, whoever is hardly able as yet to partake of the solid food of God’s word, let him find nourishment in the milk of faith; and the word which he cannot understand, let him not hesitate to believe. For faith is the deserving: understanding, the reward. In the very labor of intent application the eye of our mind struggles to get rid of the foul films of human mists, and be cleared up to the word of God. Labor,

then, will not be declined if love is present; for you know that he who loves his labor is insensible to its pain. For no labor is grievous to those who love it. If cupidity on the part of the avaricious endures so great toils, what in our case will not love endure?

2. Listen to the Gospel: “And it was at Jerusalem the Encoenia.” Encoenia was the festival of the dedication of the temple. For in Greek kainos means new; and whenever there was some new dedication, it was called Encoenia. And now this word is come into common use; if one puts on a new coat, he is said “encoeniare” (to renovate, or to hold an encoenia). For the Jews celebrated in a solemn manner the day on which the temple was dedicated; and it was the very feast day when the Lord spake what has just been read.

3. “It was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon’s porch. Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost thou keep our mind in suspense? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.” They were not desiring the truth, but preparing a calumny. “It was winter,” and they were chill; because they were slow to approach that divine fire. For to approach is to believe: he who believes, approaches; who denies, retires. The soul is not moved by the feet, but by the affections. They had become icy cold to the sweetness of loving Him, and they burned with the desire of doing Him an injury. They were far away, while there beside Him. It was not with them a nearer approach in believing, but the pressure of persecution. They sought to hear the Lord saying, I am Christ; and probably enough they only thought of the Christ in a human way. The prophets preached Christ; but the Godhead of Christ asserted in the prophets and in the gospel itself is not perceived even by heretics; and how much less by Jews, so long as the vail is upon their heart? In short, in a certain place, the Lord Jesus, knowing that their views of the Christ were cast in a human mould, not in the Divine, taking His stand on the human ground, and not on that where along with the assumption of humanity He also continued Divine, He said to them, “What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?” Following their own opinion, they replied, “Of David.” For so they had read, and this only they retained; because while they read of His divinity, they did not understand it. But the Lord, to pin them down to some inquiry touching the divinity of Him whose apparent weakness they despised,

answered them: “How, then, doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand, till I put Thine enemies under Thy feet? If David, then, in spirit call Him Lord, how is He his son?” He did not deny, but questioned. Let no one think, on hearing this, that the Lord Jesus denied that He was the Son of David. Had Christ the Lord given any such denial, He would not have enlightened the blind who so addressed Him. For as He was passing by one day, two blind men, who were sitting by the wayside, cried out, “Have mercy upon us, thou Son of David.” And on hearing these words He had mercy on them. He stood still, healed, enlightened them; for He owned the name. The Apostle Paul also says, “Who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;” and in his Epistle to Timothy, “Remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, [He that is] of the seed of David, according to my gospel.” For the Virgin Mary drew her origin, and hence our Lord also, from the seed of David.

4. The Jews made this inquiry of Christ, chiefly in order that, should He say, I am Christ, they might, in accordance with the only sense they attached to such a name, that He was of the seed of David, calumniate Him with aiming at the kingly power. There is more than this in His answer to them: they wished to calumniate Him with claiming to be the Son of David. He replied that He was the Son of God. And how? Listen: “Jesus answered them, I tell you, and ye believe not: the works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me: but ye believe not; because ye are not of my sheep.” Ye have already learned above (in Lecture XLV.) who the sheep are: be ye sheep. They are sheep through believing, sheep in following the Shepherd, sheep in not despising their Redeemer, sheep in entering by the door, sheep in going out and finding pasture, sheep in the enjoyment of eternal life. What did He mean, then, in saying to them, “Ye are not of my sheep”? That He saw them predestined to everlasting destruction, not won to eternal life by the price of His own blood.

5. “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life.” This is the pasture. If you recollect, He had said before, “And he shall go in and out, and find pasture.” We have entered by believing—we go out at death. But as we have entered by the door of faith, so, as believers, we quit the body; for it is in going out by that same

door that we are able to find pasture. The good pasture is called eternal life; there no blade withereth—all is green and flourishing. There is a plant commonly said to be ever-living; there only is it found to live. “I will give,” He says, “unto them,” unto my sheep, “eternal life.” Ye are on the search for calumnies, just because your only thoughts are of the life that is present.

6. “And they shall never perish:” you may hear the undertone, as if He had said to them, Ye shall perish for ever, because ye are not of my sheep. “No one shall pluck them out of my hand.” Give still greater heed to this: “That which my Father gave me is greater than all.” What can the wolf do? What can the thief and the robber? They destroy none but those predestined to destruction. But of those sheep of which the apostle says, “The Lord knoweth them that are His;” and “Whom He did foreknow, them He also did predestinate; and whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified;”—there is none of such sheep as these that the wolf seizes, or the thief steals, or the robber slays. He, who knows what He gave for them, is sure of their number. And it is this that He says: “No one shall pluck them out of my hand;” and in reference also to the Father, “That which my Father gave me is greater than all.” What did the Father give to the Son that was greater than all? To be His own only-begotten Son. What, then, means “gave”? Was He to whom He gave previously existent, or gave He in the act of begetting? For if He previously existed to whom He gave the gift of Sonship, there was a time when He was, and was not the Son. Far be it from us to suppose that the Lord Christ ever was, and yet was not the Son. Of us such a thing may be said: there was a time when we were the sons of men, but were not the sons of God. For we are made the sons of God by grace, but He by nature, for such was He born. And yet not so, as that one may say, He did not exist till He was born; for He, who was coeternal with the Father, was never unborn. Let him who is wise understand: and whoever understands not, let him believe and be nourished, and he will come to understanding. The Word of God was always with the Father, and always the Word; and because the Word, therefore the Son. So then, always the Son, and always equal. For it is not by growth but by birth that He is equal, who was always born, the Son of the Father, God of God, coeternal of the Eternal. But the Father is not God of the Son: the Son is God of the Father;

therefore in begetting the Son, the Father “gave” Him to be God, in begetting He gave Him to be coeternal with Himself, in begetting He gave Him to be His equal. This is that which is greater than all. How is the Son the life, and the possessor of life? What He has, He is: as for thee, thou art one thing, thou hast another. For example, thou hast wisdom, but art thou wisdom itself? In short, because thou thyself art not that which thou hast, shouldst thou lose what thou hast, thou returnest to the state of no longer having it: and sometimes thou re-acquirest, sometimes thou losest. As our eye has no light inherently in itself, it opens, and admits it; it shuts, and loses it. It is not thus that the Son of God is God—not thus that He is the Word of the Father; and not thus is He the Word, that passes away with the sound, but that which abides in its birth. In such a way hath He wisdom that He is Himself wisdom, and maketh men wise: and life, that He is Himself the life, and maketh others alive. This is that which is greater than all. The evangelist John himself looked to heaven and earth when wishing to speak of the Son of God; he looked, and rose above them all. He thought on the thousands of angelic armies above the heavens; he thought, and, like the eagle soaring beyond the clouds, his mind overpassed the whole creation: he rose beyond all that was great, and arrived at that which was greater than all; and said, “In the beginning was the Word.” But because He, of whom is the Word, is not of the Word, and the Word is of Him, whose Word He is; therefore He says, “That which the Father gave me,” namely, to be His Word, His only-begotten Son, the brightness of His light, “is greater than all.” Therefore, “No one,” He says, “plucketh my sheep out of my hand. No one can pluck them out of my Father’s hand.”

7. “Out of my hand,” and “out of my Father’s hand.” What is this, “No one plucketh them out of my hand,” and “No one plucketh them out of my Father’s hand”? Have the Father and Son one hand, or is the Son Himself, shall we say, the hand of His Father? If by hand we are to understand power, the power of Father and Son is one; for their Godhead is one. But if we mean hand in the way spoken of by the prophet, “And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?” the Father’s hand is the Son Himself, which is not to be so understood as if God had the human form, and, as it were, bodily members: but that all things were made by Him. For men also are in the habit of calling other men their hands, by whom they get done what they

wish. And sometimes also the very work done by a man's hand is called his hand; as one is said to recognize his hand when he recognizes what he has written. Since, then, there are many ways of speaking of the hand of a man, who literally has a hand among the members of his body; how much rather must there be more than one way of understanding it, when we read of the hand of God, who has no bodily form? And in this way it is better here, by the hand of the Father and Son, to understand the power of the Father and the Son; lest, in taking here the hand of the Father as spoken of the Son, some carnal thought also about the Son Himself should set us looking for the Son as somehow to be similarly regarded as the hand of Christ. Therefore, "no one plucketh them out of my Father's hand;" that is, no one plucketh them from me.

8. But that there may be no more room for hesitation, hear what follows: "I and my Father are one." Up to this point the Jews were able to bear Him; they heard, "I and my Father are one," and they bore it no longer; and hardened in their own way, they had recourse to stones. "They took up stones to stone Him." The Lord, because He suffered not what He was unwilling to suffer, and only suffered what He was pleased to suffer, still addresses them while desiring to stone Him. "The Jews took up stones to stone Him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? And they answered, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." Such was their reply to His words, "I and my Father are one." You see here that the Jews understood what the Arians understand not. For they were angry on this account, that they felt it could not be said, "I and my Father are one," save where there was equality of the Father and the Son.

9. But see what answer the Lord gave to their dull apprehension. He saw that they could not bear the brilliance of the truth, and He tempered it with words. "Is it not written in your law," that is, as given to you, "that I said, Ye are gods?" And the Lord called all the Scriptures generally, the law: although elsewhere He speaks more definitely of the law, distinguishing it from the prophets; as it is said, "The law and the prophets were until John;" and "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Sometimes, however, He divided the same Scriptures into three parts, as where He saith, “All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me.” But now He includes the psalms also under the name of the law, where it is written, “I said, Ye are gods. If He calleth them gods, to whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken: say ye of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?” If the word of God came to men, that they might be called gods, how can the very Word of God, who is with God, be otherwise than God? If by the word of God men become gods, if by fellowship they become gods, can He by whom they have fellowship not be God? If lights which are lit are gods, is the light which enlighteneth not God? If through being warmed in a way by saving fire they are constituted gods, is He who gives them the warmth other than God? Thou approachest the light and art enlightened, and numbered among the sons of God; if thou withdrawest from the light, thou fallest into obscurity, and art accounted in darkness; but that light approacheth not, because it never recedeth from itself. If, then, the word of God maketh you gods, how can the Word of God be otherwise than God? Therefore did the Father sanctify His Son, and send Him into the world. Perhaps some one may be saying: If the Father sanctified Him, was there then a time when He was not sanctified? He sanctified in the same way as He begat Him. For in the act of begetting He gave Him the power to be holy, because He begat Him in holiness. For if that which is sanctified was unholy before, how can we say to God the Father, “Hallowed be Thy name”?

10. “If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye will not believe me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in Him.” The Son says not, “the Father is in me, and I in Him,” as men can say it. For if we think well, we are in God; and if we live well, God is in us: believers, by participating in His grace, and being illuminated by Himself, are in Him, and He in us. But not so is it with the only-begotten Son: He is in the Father, and the Father in Him; as one who is equal is in him whose equal he is. In short, we can sometimes say, We are in God, and God is in us; but can we say, I and God are one? Thou art in God, because God contains thee; God is in thee, because thou

art become the temple of God: but because thou art in God, and God is in thee, canst thou say, He that seeth me seeth God; as the Only-begotten said, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also;” and “I and the Father are one”? Recognize the prerogative of the Lord, and the privilege of the servant. The prerogative of the Lord is equality with the Father: the privilege of the servant is fellowship with the Saviour.

11. “Therefore they sought to apprehend Him.” Would they had apprehended by faith and understanding, not in wrath and murder! For now, my brethren, when I speak thus, it is the weak one wishing to apprehend what is strong, the small what is great, the fragile what is solid; and it is we ourselves—both you who are of the same matter as I am, and I myself who speak to you—who all wish to apprehend Christ. And what is it to apprehend Him? [If] thou hast understood, thou hast apprehended. But not as did the Jews: thou hast apprehended in order to possess, they wished to apprehend in order to make away with Him. And because this was the kind of apprehension they desired, what did He do to them? “He escaped out of their hands.” They failed to apprehend Him, because they lacked the hand of faith. The Word was made flesh; but it was no great task to the Word to rescue His own flesh from fleshy hands. To apprehend the Word in the mind, is the right apprehension of Christ.

12. “And He went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized; and there He abode. And many resorted unto Him, and said, John, indeed, did no miracle.” You remember what was said of John, that he was a light, and bore witness to the day. Why, then, say these among themselves, “John did no miracle”? John, they say, signalized himself by no miracle; he did not put devils to flight, he drove away no fever, he enlightened not the blind, he raised not the dead, he fed not so many thousand men with five or seven loaves, he walked not upon the sea, he commanded not the winds and the waves. None of these things did John, and in all he said he bore witness to this man. By lamp-light we may advance to the day. “John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.” Here are those who apprehended in a different way from the Jews. The Jews wished to apprehend one who was departing from

them, these apprehended one who remained with them. In a word, what is it that follows? “And many believed on Him.”

TRACTATE XLIX

CHAPTER XI. 1–54

1. Among all the miracles wrought by our Lord Jesus Christ, the resurrection of Lazarus holds a foremost place in preaching. But if we consider attentively who did it, our duty is to rejoice rather than to wonder. A man was raised up by Him who made man: for He is the only One of the Father, by whom, as you know, all things were made. And if all things were made by Him, what wonder is it that one was raised by Him, when so many are daily brought into the world by His power? It is a greater deed to create men than to raise them again from the dead. Yet He deigned both to create and to raise again; to create all, to resuscitate some. For though the Lord Jesus did many such acts, yet all of them are not recorded; just as this same St. John the evangelist himself testifies, that Christ the Lord both said and did many things that are not recorded; but such were chosen for record as seemed to suffice for the salvation of believers. Thou hast just heard that the Lord Jesus raised a dead man to life; and that is sufficient to let thee know that, were He so pleased, He might raise all the dead to life. And, indeed this very work has He reserved in His own hands till the end of the world. For while you have heard that by a great miracle He raised one from the tomb who had been dead four days, “the hour is coming,” as He Himself saith, “in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.” He raised one who was putrid, and yet in that putrid carcase there was still the form of limbs; but at the last day He will by a word reconstitute ashes into human flesh. But it was needful then to do only some such deeds, that we, receiving them as tokens of His power, may put our trust in Him, and be preparing for that resurrection which shall be to life and not to judgment. So, indeed, He saith, “The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

2. We have, however, read in the Gospel of three dead persons who were raised to life by the Lord, and, let us hope, to some good purpose. For surely the Lord’s deeds are not merely deeds, but signs. And if they are signs, besides their wonderful character, they have some real significance: and to find out this in regard to such deeds is a somewhat harder task than to read or hear of them. We were listening with wonder, as at the sight of some mighty miracle enacted before our eyes, in the reading of the Gospel, how Lazarus was restored to life. If we turn our thoughts to the still more wonderful works of Christ, every one that believeth riseth again: if we all consider, and understand that more horrifying kind of death, every one who sinneth dies. But every man is afraid of the death of the flesh; few, of the death of the soul. In regard to the death of the flesh, which must certainly come some time, all are on their guard against its approach: this is the source of all their labor. Man, destined to die, labors to avert his dying; and yet man, destined to live for ever, labors not to cease from sinning. And when he labors to avoid dying, he labors to no purpose, for its only result will be to put off death for a while, not to escape it; but if he refrain from sinning, his toil will cease, and he shall live for ever. Oh that we could arouse men, and be ourselves aroused along with them, to be as great lovers of the life that abideth, as men are of that which passeth away! What will a man not do who is placed under the peril of death? When the sword was overhanging their heads, men have given up every means of living they had in reserve. Who is there that has not made an immediate surrender of all, to escape being slain? And, after all, he has perhaps been slain. Who is there that, to save his life, has not been willing at once to lose his means of living, and prefer a life of beggary to a speedy death? Who has had it said to him, Be off to sea if you would escape with your life, and has delayed to do so? Who has had it said to him, Set to work if you would preserve your life, and has continued a sluggard? It is but little that God requires of us, that we may live for ever: and we neglect to obey Him. God says not to thee, Lose all you have, that you may live a little time oppressed with toil; but, Give to the poor of what you have, that you may live always exempt from labor. The lovers of this temporal life, which is theirs, neither when, nor as long as they wish, are our accusers; and we accuse not ourselves in turn, so sluggish are we, so lukewarm about obtaining eternal life, which will be ours if we

wish it, and will be imperishable when we have it; but this death which we fear, notwithstanding all our reluctance, will yet be ours in possession.

3. If, then, the Lord in the greatness of His grace and mercy raiseth our souls to life, that we may not die for ever, we may well understand that those three dead persons whom He raised in the body, have some figurative significance of that resurrection of the soul which is effected by faith: He raised up the ruler of the synagogue's daughter, while still lying in the house; He raised up the widow's young son, while being carried outside the gates of the city; and He raised up Lazarus, when four days in the grave. Let each one give heed to his own soul: in sinning he dies: sin is the death of the soul. But sometimes sin is committed only in thought. Thou hast felt delight in what is evil, thou hast assented to its commission, thou hast sinned; that assent has slain thee: but the death is internal, because the evil thought had not yet ripened into action. The Lord intimated that He would raise such a soul to life, in raising that girl, who had not yet been carried forth to the burial, but was lying dead in the house, as if sin still lay concealed. But if thou hast not only harbored a feeling of delight in evil, but hast also done the evil thing, thou hast, so to speak, carried the dead outside the gate: thou art already without, and being carried to the tomb. Yet such an one also the Lord raised to life. and restored to his widowed mother. If thou hast sinned, repent, and the Lord will raise thee up, and restore thee to thy mother Church. The third example of death is Lazarus. A grievous kind of death it is, and is distinguished as a habit of wickedness. For it is one thing to fall into sin, another to form the habit of sinning. He who falls into sin, and straightway submits to correction, will be speedily restored to life; for he is not yet entangled in the habit, he is not yet laid in the tomb. But he who has become habituated to sin, is buried, and has it properly said of him, "he stinketh;" for his character, like some horrible smell, begins to be of the worst repute. Such are all who are habituated to crime, abandoned in morals. Thou sayest to such an one, Do not so. But when wilt thou be listened to by one on whom the earth is thus heaped, who is breeding corruption, and pressed down with the weight of habit? And yet the power of Christ was not unequal to the task of restoring such an one to life. We know, we have seen, we see every day men changing the very worst of habits, and adopting a better manner of life than that of those who blamed

them. Thou detestedst such a man: look at the sister of Lazarus herself (if, indeed, it was she who anointed the Lord's feet with ointment, and wiped with her hair what she had washed with her tears), who had a better resurrection than her brother; she was delivered from the mighty burden of a sinful character. For she was a notorious sinner; and had it said of her, "Her many sins are forgiven her, for she has loved much." We see many such, we know many: let none despair, but let none presume in himself. Both the one and the other are sinful. Let thine unwillingness to despair take such a turn as to lead thee to make choice of Him in whom alone thou mayest well presume.

4. So then the Lord also raised Lazarus to life. You have heard what type of character he represents; in other words, what is meant by the resurrection of Lazarus. Let us now, therefore, read over the passage; and as there is much in this lesson clear already, we shall not go into any detailed exposition, so as to take up more thoroughly the necessary points. "Now a certain man was sick, [named] Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and Martha, his sisters." In the previous lesson you remember that the Lord escaped from the hands of those who sought to stone Him, and went away beyond Jordan, where John baptized. When the Lord therefore had taken up His abode there, Lazarus fell sick in Bethany, which was a town lying close to Jerusalem.

5. "But Mary was she who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore his sisters sent unto Him, saying." We now understand whither it was they sent, namely, where the Lord was; for He was away, as you know, beyond the Jordan. They sent messengers to the Lord to tell Him that their brother was ill. He delayed to heal, that He might be able to raise to life. But what was the message sent by his sisters? "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." They did not say, Come; for the intimation was all that was needed for one who loved. They did not venture to say, Come and heal him: they ventured not to say, Command there, and it shall be done here. And why not so with them, if on these very grounds the centurion's faith was commended? For he said, "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." No such

words said these women, but only, “Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick.” It is enough that Thou knowest; for Thou art not one that loveth and forsaketh. But says some one, How could a sinner be represented by Lazarus, and be so loved by the Lord? Let him listen to Him, when He says, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” For had not God loved sinners, He would not have come down from heaven to earth.

6. “But when Jesus heard [that], He said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified.” Such a glorifying of Himself did not add to His dignity, but benefited us. Hence He says, “is not unto death,” because even that death itself was not unto death, but rather unto the working of a miracle whereby men might be led to faith in Christ, and so escape the real death. And mark how the Lord, as it were indirectly, called Himself God, for the sake of some who deny that the Son is God. For there are heretics who make such a denial, that the Son of God is God. Let them hearken here: “This sickness,” He says, “is not unto death, but for the glory of God.” For what glory? For the glory of what God? Hear what follows: “That the Son of God may be glorified.” “This sickness,” therefore, He says, “is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God maybe glorified thereby.” By what? By that sickness.

7. “Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus.” The one sick, the others sad, all of them beloved: but He who loved them was both the Saviour of the sick, nay more, the Raiser of the dead and the Comforter of the sad. “When He heard therefore that he was sick, He abode then two days still in the same place.” They sent Him word: He abode where He was: and the time ran on till four days were completed. And not in vain, were it only that perhaps, nay that certainly, even the very number of days has some sacramental significance. “Then after that He saith again to His disciples, Let us go into Judea:” where He had been all but stoned, and from which He had apparently departed for the very purpose to escape being stoned. For as man He departed; but returned as if in forgetfulness of all infirmity, to show His power. “Let us go,” He said, “into Judea.”

8. And now see how the disciples were terrified at His words. “The disciples say unto Him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone Thee, and goest Thou thither again? Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the

day? "What means such an answer? They said to Him, "The Jews of late sought to stone Thee, and goest Thou thither again" to be stoned? And the Lord, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? if any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world: but if he walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." He spoke indeed of the day, but to our understanding as if it were still the night. Let us call upon the Day to chase away the night, and illuminate our hearts with the light. For what did the Lord mean? As far as I can judge, and as the height and depth of His meaning breaks into light, He wished to argue down their doubting and unbelief. For they wished by their counsel to keep the Lord from death, who had come to die, to save themselves from death. In a similar way also, in another passage, St. Peter, who loved the Lord, but did not yet fully understand the reason of His coming, was afraid of His dying, and so displeased the Life, to wit, the Lord Himself; for when He was intimating to the disciples what He was about to suffer at Jerusalem at the hands of the Jews, Peter made reply among the rest, and said, "Far be it from Thee, Lord; pity Thyself: this shall not be unto Thee." And at once the Lord replied, "Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." And yet a little before, in confessing the Son of God, he had merited commendation: for he heard the words, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." To whom He had said, "Blessed art thou," He now says, "Get thee behind me, Satan;" because it was not of himself that he was blessed. But of what then? "For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." See, this is how thou art blessed, not from anything that is thine own, but from that which is mine. Not that I am the Father, but that all things which the Father hath are mine. But if his blessedness came from the Lord's own working, from whose [working] came he to be Satan? He there tells us: for He assigned the reason of such blessedness, when He said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven:" that is the cause of thy blessedness. But that I said, "Get thee behind me, Satan, hear also its cause. For thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Let no one then flatter himself: in that which is natural to himself he is Satan, in that which is of God he is blessed. For all that is of his own, whence comes it, but from his sin? Put away the sin, which is thine own. Righteousness, He saith, belongeth unto me. For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Accordingly, when men wished to give counsel to God, disciples to their Master, servants to their Lord, patients to their Physician, He reproved them by saying, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not.” Follow me, if ye would not stumble: give not counsel to me, from whom you ought to receive it. To what, then, refer the words, “Are there not twelve hours in the day”? Just that to point Himself out as the day, He made choice of twelve disciples. If I am the day, He says, and you the hours, is it for the hours to give counsel to the day? The day is followed by the hours, not the hours by the day. If these, then, were the hours, what in such a reckoning was Judas? Was he also among the twelve hours? If he was an hour, he had light; and if he had light, how was the Day betrayed by him to death? But the Lord, in so speaking, foresaw, not Judas himself, but his successor. For Judas, when he fell, was succeeded by Matthias, and the duodenary number preserved. It was not, then, without a purpose that the Lord made choice of twelve disciples, but to indicate that He Himself is the spiritual Day. Let the hours then attend upon the Day, let them preach the Day, be made known and illuminated by the Day, and by the preaching of the hours may the world believe in the Day. And so in a summary way it was just this that He said: Follow me, if ye would not stumble.

9. “And after that He saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.” It was true what He said. To his sisters he was dead, to the Lord he was asleep. He was dead to men, who could not raise him again; but the Lord aroused him with as great ease from the tomb as one arouseth a sleeper from his bed. Hence it was in reference to His own power that He spoke of him as sleeping: for others also, who are dead, are frequently spoken of in Scripture as sleeping; as when the apostle says, “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope.” Therefore he also spoke of them as sleeping, because foretelling their resurrection. And so, all the dead are sleeping, both good and bad. But just as, in the case of those who sleep and waken day by day, there is a great difference as to what they severally see in their sleep: some experience pleasant dreams; others, dreams so frightful that the waking are afraid to fall asleep for fear

of their recurrence: so every individual sleeps and wakens in circumstances peculiar to himself. And there is a difference as to the kind of custody one may be placed in, who is afterwards to be taken before the judge. For the kind of custody in which men are placed depends on the merits of the case: some are required to be guarded by lictors, an office humane and mild, and becoming a citizen; others are given up to subordinates; some, again, are sent to prison: and in the prison itself all are not thrust together into its lowest dungeons, but dealt with in proportion to the merits and superior gravity of the charges. As, then, there are different kinds of custody among those engaged in official life, so there are different kinds of custody for the dead, and differing merits in those who rise again. The beggar was taken into custody, so was the rich man: but the one into Abraham's bosom; the other, where he thirsted, and found not a drop of water.

10. Therefore, to make this the occasion of instructing your Charity, all souls have, when they quit this world, their different receptions. The good have joy; the evil, torments. But when the resurrection takes place, both the joy of the good will be fuller and the torments of the wicked heavier, when they shall be tormented in the body. The holy patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and good believers, have been received into peace; but all of them have still in the end to receive the fulfillment of the divine promises; for they have been promised also the resurrection of the flesh, the destruction of death, and eternal life with the angels. This we have all to receive together; for the rest, which is given immediately after death, every one, if worthy of it, receives when he dies. The patriarchs first received it—think only from what they rest; the prophets afterwards; more recently the apostles; still more lately the holy martyrs, and day by day the good and faithful. Thus some have now been in that rest for long, some not so long; others for fewer years, and others whose entrance therein is still less than recent. But when they shall wake from this sleep, they shall all together receive the fulfillment of the promise.

11. "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said His disciples"—according to their understanding they replied—"Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well." For the sleep of the sick is usually a sign of returning health. "Howbeit Jesus spake of his death, but

they thought that He spake of the taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly,"—for He said somewhat obscurely, "He sleepeth;"—therefore He said plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe." I even know that he is dead, and I was not there: for he had been reported not as dead, but sick. But what could remain hid from Him who had created it, and into whose hands the soul of the dying man had departed? This is why He said, "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe;" that they might now begin to wonder that the Lord could assert his death, which He had neither seen nor heard of. For here we ought specially to bear in mind that as yet the disciples themselves, who already believed in Him, had their faith built up by miracles: not that a faith, utterly wanting till then, might begin to exist; but that what had previously come into being might be increased; although He made use of such an expression as if only then they would begin to believe. For He said not, "I am glad for your sakes," that your faith may be increased or confirmed; but, "that ye may believe;" which is to be understood as meaning, that your faith may be fuller and more vigorous.

12. "Nevertheless, let us go unto him. Then said Thomas, who is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with Him. Therefore Jesus came, and found that he had [lain] in the grave four days already." Much might be said of the four days, according to the wont of the obscure passages of Scripture, which bear as many senses as there is diversity of those who understand them. Let us express also our opinion of what is meant by one four days dead. For as in the former case of the blind man we understand in a way the human race, so in the case of this dead man many perhaps are also to be understood; for one thing may be signified by different figures. When a man is born, he is born already in a state of death; for he inherits sin from Adam. Hence the apostle says: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so that passed upon all men, wherein all have sinned." Here you have one day of death because man inherits it from the seed stock of death. Thereafter he grows, and begins to approach the years of reason that he may know the law of nature, which every one has had implanted in his heart: What thou wouldst not have done to thyself, do not to another. Is this learned from the pages of a book, and

not in a measure legible in our very nature? Hast thou any desire to be robbed? Certainly not. See here, then, the law in thy heart: What thou art unwilling to suffer, be unwilling to do. This law also is transgressed by men; and here, then, we have the second day of death. The law was also divinely given through Moses, the servant of God; and therein it is said, “Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not bear false witness; honor thy father and mother; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s property; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife.” Here you have the written law, and it also is despised: this is the third day of death. What remains? The gospel also comes, the kingdom of heaven is preached, Christ is everywhere published; He threatens hell, He promises eternal life; and that also is despised. Men transgress the gospel; and this is the fourth day of death. Now he deservedly stinketh. But is mercy to be denied to such? God forbid; for to raise such also from the dead, the Lord thinks it not unfitting to come.

13. “And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him; but Mary sat [still] in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee.” She did not say, But even now I ask Thee to raise my brother to life again. For how could she know if such a resurrection would be of benefit to her brother? She only said, I know that Thou canst, and whatsoever Thou art pleased, Thou doest: for Thy doing it is dependent on Thine own judgment, not on my presumption. “But even now I know that, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee.”

14. “Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.” This was ambiguous. For He said not, Even now I will raise thy brother; but, “Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection, at the last day.” Of that resurrection I am sure, but uncertain about this. “Jesus saith unto her, I am the resurrection.” Thou sayest, My brother shall rise again at the last day: true; but by Him, through whom he shall rise then, can he rise even now, for “I,” He says, “am the resurrection and the life.” Give ear, brethren, give ear to what He says.

Certainly the universal expectation of the bystanders was that Lazarus, one who had been dead four days, would live again; let us hear, and rise again. How many are there in this audience who are crushed down under the weighty mass of some sinful habit! Perhaps some are hearing me to whom it may be said, “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess;” and they say, We cannot. Some others, it may be, are hearing me, who are unclean, and stained with lusts and crimes, and to whom it is said, Refrain from such conduct, that ye perish not; and they reply, We cannot give up our habits. O Lord, raise them again. “I am,” He says, “the resurrection and the life.” The resurrection because the life.

15. “He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” What meaneth this? “He that believeth in me, though he were dead,” just as Lazarus is dead, “yet shall he live;” for He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Such was the answer He gave the Jews concerning their fathers, long ago dead, that is, concerning Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob: I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto Him.” Believe then, and though thou wert dead, yet shalt thou live: but if thou believest not, even while thou livest thou art dead. Let us prove this likewise, that if thou believest not, though thou livest thou art dead. To one who was delaying to follow Him, and saying, “Let me first go and bury my father,” the Lord said, “Let the dead bury their dead; but come thou and follow me.” There was there a dead man requiring to be buried, there were there also dead men to bury the dead: the one was dead in the flesh, the others in soul. And how comes death on the soul? When faith is wanting. How comes death on the body? When the soul is wanting. Therefore thy soul’s soul is faith. “He that believeth in me,” says Christ, though he were dead in the flesh, yet shall he live in the spirit; till the flesh also rise again, never more to die. This is “he that believeth in me,” though he die, “yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth” in the flesh, “and believeth in me,” though he shall die in time on account of the death of the flesh, “shall never die,” because of the life of the spirit, and the immortality of the resurrection. Such is the meaning of the words, “And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, I have believed that

Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, who hast come into the world.” When I believed this, I believed that Thou art the resurrection, that Thou art the life: I believed that he that believeth in Thee, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Thee, shall never die.

16. “And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister silently, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.” It is worthy of notice the way in which the whispering of her voice was denominated silence. For how could she be silent, when she said, “The Master is come, and calleth for thee”? It is also to be noticed why it is that the evangelist has not said where, or when, or how the Lord called for Mary; namely, that in order to preserve the brevity of the narrative, it may rather be understood from the words of Martha.

17. “As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto Him. For Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was still in that place where Martha met Him. The Jews, then, who were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave, to weep there.” What cause had the evangelist to tell us this? To show us what it was that occasioned the numerous concourse of people to be there when Lazarus was raised to life. For the Jews, thinking that her reason for hastening away was to seek in weeping the solace of her grief, followed her; that the great miracle of one rising again who had been four days dead, might have the presence of many witnesses.

18. “Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping, who were with her, He groaned in the spirit, and troubled Himself, and said, Where have ye laid him?” Something there is, did we but know it, that He has suggested to us by groaning in the spirit, and troubling Himself. For who could trouble Him, save He Himself? Therefore, my brethren, first give heed here to the power that did so, and then look for the meaning. Thou art troubled against thy will; Christ was troubled because He willed. Jesus hungered, it is true, but because He willed; Jesus slept, it is true, but because He willed; He was sorrowful, it is true, but because He

willed; He died, it is true, but because He willed: in His own power it lay to be thus and thus affected or not. For the Word assumed soul and flesh, fitting on Himself our whole human nature in the oneness of His person. For the soul of the apostle was illuminated by the Word; so was the soul of Peter, the soul of Paul, of the other apostles, and the holy prophets,—the souls of all were illuminated by the Word; but of none was it said, “The Word was made flesh;” of none was it said,” I and the Father are one.” The soul and flesh of Christ is one person with the Word of God, one Christ. And by this [Word] wherein resided the supreme power, was infirmity made use of at the beck of His will; and in this way “He troubled Himself.”

19. I have spoken of the power: look now to the meaning. It is a great criminal that is signified by that four days’ death and burial. Why is it, then, that Christ troubleth Himself, but to intimate to thee how thou oughtest to be troubled, when weighed down and crushed by so great a mass of iniquity? For here thou hast been looking to thyself, been seeing thine own guilt, been reckoning for thyself: I have done this, and God has spared me; I have committed this, and He hath borne with me; I have heard the gospel, and despised it; I have been baptized, and returned again to the same course: what am I doing? whither am I going? how shall I escape? When thou speakest thus, Christ is already groaning; for thy faith is groaning. In the voice of one who groaneth thus, there comes to light the hope of his rising again. If such faith is within, there is Christ groaning; for if there is faith in us, Christ is in us. For what else says the apostle: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.” Therefore thy faith in Christ is Christ Himself in thy heart. This is why He slept in the ship; and why, when His disciples were in danger and already on the verge of shipwreck, they came to Him and awoke Him. Christ arose, laid His commands on the winds and waves, and there ensued a great calm. So also with thee; the winds enter thy heart, that is, where thou sailest, where thou passest along this life as a stormy and dangerous sea; the winds enter, the billows rise and toss thy vessel. What are the winds? Thou hast received some insult, and art wroth: that insult is the wind; that anger, the waves. Thou art in danger, thou preparest to reply, to render cursing for cursing, and thy vessel is already nigh to shipwreck. Awake the Christ who is sleeping. For thou art in commotion, and making ready to render evil for evil, because Christ is

sleeping in thy vessel. For the sleep of Christ in thy heart is the forgetfulness of faith. But if thou arousest Christ, that is, recallest thy faith, what dost thou hear said to thee by Christ, when now awake in thy heart? I [He says] have heard it said to me, “Thou hast a devil,” and I have prayed for them. The Lord hears and suffers; the servant hears and is angry! But thou wishest to be avenged. Why so? I am already avenged. When thy faith so speaks to thee, command is exercised, as it were, over the winds and waves, and there is a great calm. As, then, to awaken Christ in the vessel is just to awaken faith; so in the heart of one who is pressed down by a great mass and habit of sin, in the heart of the man who has been a transgressor even of the holy gospel and a despiser of eternal punishment, let Christ groan, let such a man betake himself to self-accusation. Hear still more: Christ wept; let man bemoan himself. For why did Christ weep, but to teach man to weep? Wherefore did He groan and trouble Himself, but to intimate that the faith of one who has just cause to be displeased with himself ought to be in a sense groaning over the accusation of wicked works, to the end that the habit of sinning may give way to the vehemence of penitential sorrow?

20. “And He said, Where have ye laid him?” Thou knewest that he was dead, and art Thou ignorant of the place of his burial? The meaning here is, that a man thus lost becomes, as it were, unknown to God. I have not ventured to say, Is unknown—for what is unknown to Him? but, As it were unknown. And how do we prove this? Listen to the Lord, who will yet say in the judgment, “I know you not: depart from me.” What does that mean, “I know you not”? I see you not in that light of mine—in that righteousness which I know. So here, also, as if knowing nothing of such a sinner, He said, “Where have ye laid him?” Similar in character was God’s voice in Paradise after man had sinned: “Adam, where art thou?” “They say unto Him, Lord, come and see.” What means this “see”? Have pity. For the Lord sees when He pities. Hence it is said to Him, “Look upon my humility [affliction] and my pain, and forgive all my sins.”

21. “Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how He loved him!” “Loved him,” what does that mean? “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” “But some of them said, Could not this man, who opened the

eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not die?” But He, who would do nought to hinder his dying, had something greater in view in raising him from the dead.

22. “Jesus therefore again groaning in Himself, cometh to the tomb.” May His groaning have thee also for its object, if thou wouldst re-enter into life! Every man who lies in that dire moral condition has it said to him, “He cometh to the tomb.” “It was a cave, and a stone had been laid upon it.” Dead under that stone, guilty under the law. For you know that the law, which was given to the Jews, was inscribed on stone. And all the guilty are under the law: the right-living are in harmony with the law. The law is not laid on a righteous man. What mean then the words, “Take ye away the stone”? Preach grace. For the Apostle Paul calleth himself a minister of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit; “for the letter,” he says, “killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” The letter that killeth is like the stone that crusheth. “Take ye away,” He saith, “the stone.” Take away the weight of the law; preach grace. “For if there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteousness should be by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” Therefore “take ye away the stone.”

23. “Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been [dead] four days. Jesus saith unto her, Have I not said unto thee, that, if thou believest, thou shalt see the glory of God?” What does He mean by this, “thou shalt see the glory of God”? That He can raise to life even one who is putrid and hath been four days [dead]. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; and, “Where sin abounded, grace also did superabound.”

24. “Then they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up His eyes, and said, Father, I thank Thee, that Thou hast heard me. And I knew that Thou hearest me always: but because of the people that stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent me. And when He had thus spoken, He cried with a loud voice.” He groaned, He wept, He cried with a loud voice. With what difficulty does one rise who lies crushed under the heavy burden of a habit of sinning! And yet he does rise: he is quickened by hidden grace within; and after that loud voice he riseth. For what followed?

“He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And immediately he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with bandages; and his face was bound about with a napkin.” Dost thou wonder how he came forth with his feet bound, and wonderest not at this, that after four days’ interment he rose from the dead? In both events it was the power of the Lord that operated, and not the strength of the dead. He came forth, and yet still was bound. Still in his burial shroud, he has already come outside the tomb. What does it mean? While thou despisest [Christ], thou liest in the arms of death; and if thy contempt reacheth the lengths I have mentioned, thou art buried as well: but when thou makest confession, thou comest forth. For what is this coming forth, but the open acknowledgment thou makest of thy state, in quitting, as it were, the old refuges of darkness? But the confession thou makest is effected by God, when He crieth with a loud voice, or in other words, calleth thee in abounding grace. Accordingly, when the dead man had come forth, still bound; confessing, yet guilty still; that his sins also might be taken away, the Lord said to His servants: “Loose him, and let him go.” What does He mean by such words? What soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

25. “Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on Him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.” All of the Jews who had come to Mary did not believe, but many of them did. “But some of them,” whether of the Jews who had come, or of those who had believed, “went away to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done:” whether in the way of conveying intelligence, in order that they also might believe, or rather in the spirit of treachery, to arouse their anger. But whoever were the parties, and whatever their motive, intelligence of these events was carried to the Pharisees.

26. “Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we?” But they did not say, Let us believe. For these abandoned men were more occupied in considering what evil they could do to effect His ruin, than in consulting for their own preservation: and yet they were afraid, and took counsel of a kind together. For “they said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles: if we let him thus alone, all men will believe

on him; and the Romans shall come, and take away both our place and nation.” They were afraid of losing their temporal possessions, and thought not of life eternal; and so they lost both. For the Romans, after our Lord’s passion and entrance into glory, took from them both their place and nation, when they took the one by storm and transported the other: and now that also pursues them, which is said elsewhere, “But the children of the kingdom shall go into outer darkness.” But this was what they feared, that if all believed on Christ, there would be none remaining to defend the city of God and the temple against the Romans; just because they had a feeling that Christ’s teaching was directed against the temple itself and their own paternal laws.

27. “And one of them, [named] Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied.” We are here taught that the Spirit of prophecy used the agency even of wicked men to foretell what was future; which, however, the evangelist attributes to the divine sacramental fact that he was pontiff, which is to say, the high priest. It may, however, be a question in what way he is called the high priest of that year, seeing that God appointed one person to be high priest, who was to be succeeded only at his death by another. But we are to understand that ambitious schemes and contentions among the Jews led to the appointment afterwards of more than one, and to their annual turn of service. For it is said also of Zacharias: “And it came to pass that, while he executed the priest’s office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest’s office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.” From which it is evident that there were more than one, and that each had his turn: for it was lawful for the high priest alone to place the incense on the altar. And perhaps also there were several in actual service in the same year, who were succeeded next year by several others, and that it fell by lot to one of them to burn incense. What was it, then, that Caiaphas prophesied? “That Jesus should die for the nation; and not for the nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.” This is added by the evangelist; for Caiaphas prophesied only of the Jewish nation,

in which there were sheep of whom the Lord Himself had said, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But the evangelist knew that there were other sheep, which were not of this fold, but which had also to be brought, that there might be one fold and one shepherd. But this was said in the way of predestination; for those who were still unbelieving were as yet neither His sheep nor the children of God.

28. “Then, from that day forth, they took counsel together for to put Him to death. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with His disciples.” Not that there was any failure in His power, by which, had He only wished, He might have continued His intercourse with the Jews, and received no injury at their hands; but in His human weakness He furnished His disciples with an example of living, by which He might make it manifest that it was no sin in His believing ones, who are His members, to withdraw from the presence of their persecutors, and escape the fury of the wicked by concealment, rather than inflame it by showing themselves openly.

TRACTATE L

CHAPTER XI. 55–57; XII

1. Yesterday’s lesson in the holy Gospel, on which we spake as the Lord enabled us, is followed by to-day’s, on which we purpose to speak in the same spirit of dependence. Some passages in the Scriptures are so clear as to require a hearer rather than an expounder: over such we need not tarry, that we may have sufficient time for those which necessarily demand a fuller consideration.

2. “And the Jews’ passover was nigh at hand.” The Jews wished to have that feast-day crimsoned with the blood of the Lord. On it that Lamb was slain, who hath consecrated it as a feast-day for us by His own blood. There was a plot among the Jews about slaying Jesus: and He, who had come from heaven to suffer, wished to draw near to the place of His suffering, because the hour of His passion was at hand. Therefore “many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to sanctify themselves.”

The Jews did so in accordance with the command of the Lord delivered by holy Moses in the law, that on the feast-day of the passover all should assemble from every part of the land, and be sanctified in celebrating the services of the day. But that celebration was a shadow of the future. And why a shadow? It was a prophetic intimation of the Christ to come, a prophecy of Him who on that day was to suffer for us: that so the shadow might vanish and the light come; that the sign might pass away, and the truth be retained. The Jews therefore held the passover in a shadowy form, but we in the light. For what need was there that the Lord should command them to slay a sheep on the very day of the feast, save only because of Him it was prophesied, "He is led as a sheep to the slaughter"? The door-posts of the Jews were sealed with the blood of the slaughtered animal: with the blood of Christ are our foreheads sealed. And that sealing—for it had a real significance—was said to keep away the destroyer from the houses that were sealed: Christ's seal drives away the destroyer from us, if we receive the Saviour into our hearts. But why have I said this? Because many have their door-posts sealed while there is no inmate abiding within: they find it easy to have Christ's seal in the forehead, and yet at heart refuse admission to His word. Therefore, brethren, I have said, and I repeat it, Christ's seal driveth from us the destroyer, if only we have Christ as an inmate of our hearts. I have stated these things, lest any one's thoughts should be turning on the meaning of these festivals of the Jews. The Lord therefore came as it were to the victim's place, that the true passover might be ours, when we celebrated His passion as the real offering of the lamb.

3. "Then sought they for Jesus:" but with evil intent. For happy are they who seek for Jesus in a way that is good. They sought for Him, with the intent that neither they nor we should have Him more: but in departing from them, He has been received by us. Some who seek Him are blamed, others who do so are commended; for it is the spirit animating the seeker that finds either praise or condemnation. Thence you have it also in the psalms, "Let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my soul:" such are those who sought with evil purpose. But in another place he says, "Refuge hath failed me, and there is no one that seeketh after my soul." Those who sought, and those who did not, are blamed alike. Therefore let us seek for Christ, that He may be ours, that we may keep Him, and not that we may

slay Him; for these men sought to get hold of Him, but only for the purpose of speedily getting quit of Him for ever. “Therefore they sought for Him, and spake among themselves: What think ye, that He will not come to the feast?”

4. “Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where He were, he should show it, that they might take Him.” Let us for our parts show the Jews where Christ is. Would, indeed, that all the seed of those who had given commandment to have it shown them where Christ was, would but hear and apprehend! Let them come to the church and hear where Christ is, and take Him. They may hear it from us, they may hear it from the gospel. He was slain by their forefathers, He was buried, He rose again, He was recognized by the disciples, He ascended before their eyes into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and He who was judged is yet to come as Judge of all: let them hear, and hold fast. Do they reply, How shall I take hold of the absent? how shall I stretch up my hand into heaven, and take hold of one who is sitting there? Stretch up thy faith, and thou hast got hold. Thy forefathers held by the flesh, hold thou with the heart; for the absent Christ is also present. But for His presence, we ourselves were unable to hold Him. But since His word is true, “Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world,” He is away, and He is here; He has returned, and will not forsake us; for He has carried His body into heaven, but His majesty He has never withdrawn from the world.

5. “Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom Jesus raised from the dead. And there they made Him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that reclined at the table.” To prevent people thinking that the man had become a phantom, because he had risen from the dead, he was one of those who reclined at table; he was living, speaking, feasting: the truth was made manifest, and the unbelief of the Jews was confounded. The Lord, therefore, reclined at table with Lazarus and the others; and they were waited on by Martha, one of the sisters of Lazarus.

6. But “Mary,” the other sister of Lazarus, “took a pound of ointment of pure nard, very precious, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet

with her hair; and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.” Such was the incident, let us look into the mystery it imported. Whatever soul of you wishes to be truly faithful, anoint like Mary the feet of the Lord with precious ointment. That ointment was righteousness, and therefore it was [exactly] a pound weight: but it was ointment of pure nard [nardi pistici], very precious. From his calling it “pistici,” we ought to infer that there was some locality from which it derived its preciousness: but this does not exhaust its meaning, and it harmonizes well with a sacramental symbol. The root of the word [“pure”] in the Greek is by us called “faith.” Thou wert seeking to work righteousness: the just shall live by faith. Anoint the feet of Jesus: follow by a good life the Lord’s footsteps. Wipe them with thy hair: what thou hast of superfluity, give to the poor, and thou hast wiped the feet of the Lord; for the hair seems to be the superfluous part of the body. Thou hast something to spare of thy abundance: it is superfluous to thee, but necessary for the feet of the Lord. Perhaps on this earth the Lord’s feet are still in need. For of whom but of His members is He yet to say in the end, “Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of mine, ye did it unto me”? Ye spent what was superfluous for yourselves, but ye have done what was grateful to my feet.

7. “And the house was filled with the odor.” The world is filled with the fame of a good character: for a good character is as a pleasant odor. Those who live wickedly and bear the name of Christians, do injury to Christ: of such it is said, that through them “the name of the Lord is blasphemed.” If through such God’s name is blasphemed, through the good the name of the Lord is honored. Listen to the apostle, when he says, “We are a sweet savor of Christ in every place.” As it is said also in the Song of Songs, “Thy name is as ointment poured forth.” Attend again to the apostle: “We are a sweet savor,” he says, “of Christ in every place, both in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savor of life unto life, to the other the savor of death unto death: and who is sufficient for these things?” The lesson of the holy Gospel before us affords us the opportunity of so speaking of that savor, that we on our part may give worthy utterance, and you diligent heed, to what is thus expressed by the apostle himself, “And who is sufficient for these things?” But have we any reason to infer from these words that we are qualified to attempt speaking on such a subject, or

you to hear? We, indeed, are not so; but He is sufficient, who is pleased to speak by us what it may be for your profit to hear. The apostle, you see, is, as he calls himself, “a sweet savor:” but that sweet savor is “to some the savor of life unto life, and to others the savor of death unto death;” and yet all the while “a sweet savor” in itself. For he does not say, does he, To some we are a sweet savor unto life, to others an evil savor unto death? He called himself a sweet savor, not an evil; and represented himself as the same sweet savor, to some unto life, to others unto death. Happy they who find life in this sweet savor! but what misery can be greater than theirs, to whom the sweet savor is the messenger of death?

8. And who is it, says some one, that is thus slain by the sweet savor? It is to this the apostle alludes in the words, “And who is sufficient for these things?” In what wonderful ways God brings it about that the good savor is fraught both with life to the good, and with death to the wicked; how it is so, so far as the Lord is pleased to inspire my thoughts (for it may still conceal a deeper meaning beyond my power to penetrate),—yet so far, I say, as my power of penetration has reached, you ought not to have the information withheld. The integrity of the Apostle Paul’s life and conduct, his preaching of righteousness in word and exhibition of it in works, his wondrous power as a teacher and his fidelity as a steward, were everywhere noised abroad: he was loved by some, and envied by others. For he himself tells us in a certain place of some, that they preached Christ not sincerely, but of envy; “thinking,” he says, “to add affliction to my bonds.” But what does he add? “Whether in pretence or in truth, let Christ be preached.” They preach who love me, they preach who hate me; in that good savor the former live, in it the others die: and yet by the preaching of both let the name of Christ be proclaimed, with this excellent savor let the world be filled. Hast thou been loving one whose conduct evidenced his goodness then in this good savor thou hast lived. Hast thou been envying such a one? then in this same savor thou hast died. But hast thou, pray, in thus choosing to die, converted this savor into an evil one? Turn from thine envious feelings, and the good savor will cease to slay thee.

9. And now, lastly, listen to what we have here, how this ointment was to some a sweet savor unto life, and to others a sweet savor unto death. When

the pious Mary had rendered this grateful service to the Lord, straightway one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was yet to betray Him, said, “Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?” Alas for thee, wretched man! the sweet savor hath slain thee. For the cause that led him so to speak is disclosed by the holy evangelist. But we, too, might have supposed, had not the real state of his mind been revealed in the Gospel, that the care of the poor might have induced him so to speak. Not so. What then? Hearken to a true witness: “This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the money bag, and bare what was put therein.” Did he bear it about, or bear it away? For the common service he bore it, as a thief he bore it away.

10. Look now, and learn that this Judas did not become perverted only at the time when he yielded to the bribery of the Jews and betrayed his Lord. For not a few, inattentive to the Gospel, suppose that Judas only perished when he accepted money from the Jews to betray the Lord. It was not then that he perished, but he was already a thief, and a reprobate, when following the Lord; for it was with his body and not with his heart that he followed. He made up the apostolic number of twelve, but had no part in the apostolic blessedness: he had been made the twelfth in semblance, and on his departure, and the succession of another, the apostolic reality was completed, and the entireness of the number conserved. What lesson then, my brethren, did our Lord Jesus Christ wish to impress on His Church, when it pleased Him to have one castaway among the twelve, but this, that we should bear with the wicked, and refrain from dividing the body of Christ? Here you have Judas among the saints,—that Judas, mark you! who was a thief, yea—do not overlook it—not a thief of any ordinary type, but a thief and a sacrilegist: a robber of money bags, but of such as were the Lord’s; of money bags, but of such as were sacred. If there is a distinction made in the public courts between such crimes as ordinary theft and peculation,—for by peculation we mean the theft of public property; and private theft is not visited with the same sentence as public,—how much more severe ought to be the sentence on the sacrilegious thief, who has dared to steal, not from places of any ordinary kind, but to steal from the Church? He who thieves from the Church, stands side by side with the castaway Judas. Such was this man Judas, and yet he went in and out with

the eleven holy disciples. With them he came even to the table of the Lord: he was permitted to have intercourse with them, but he could not contaminate them. Of one bread did both Peter and Judas partake, and yet what communion had the believer with the infidel? Peter's partaking was unto life, but that of Judas unto death. For that good bread was just like the sweet savor. For as the sweet savor, so also does the good bread give life to the good, and bring death to the wicked. "For he that eateth unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself:" "judgment to himself," not to thee. If, then, it is judgment to himself, not to thee, bear as one that is good with him that is evil, that thou mayest attain unto the rewards of the good, and be not hurled into the punishment of the wicked.

11. Lay to heart our Lord's example while living with man upon earth. Why had He a money bag, who was ministered unto by angels, save to intimate that His Church was destined thereafter to have her repository for money? Why gave He admission to a thief, save to teach His Church patiently to bear with thieves? But he who had formed the habit of abstracting money from the bag, did not hesitate for money received to sell the Lord Himself. But let us see what answer our Lord gave to such words. See, brethren: He does not say to him, Thou speakest so on account of thy thievishness. He knew him to be a thief, yet did not betray him, but rather endured him, and showed us an example of patience in tolerating the wicked in the Church. "Then said Jesus to him: Let her keep it against the day of my burial." He announced that His own death was at hand.

12. But what follows? "For the poor ye have always with you, but me ye will not have always." We can certainly understand, "the poor ye have always;" what He has thus said is true. When were the poor wanting in the Church? "But me ye will not have always;" what does He mean by this? How are we to understand, "Me ye will not have always"? Don't be alarmed: it was addressed to Judas. Why, then, did He not say, thou wilt have, but, ye will have? Because Judas is not here a unit. One wicked man represents the whole body of the wicked; in the same way as Peter, the whole body of the good, yea, the body of the Church, but in respect to the good. For if in Peter's case there were no sacramental symbol of the Church, the Lord would not have said to him, "I will give unto thee the keys

of the kingdom of heaven: whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." If this was said only to Peter, it gives no ground of action to the Church. But if such is the case also in the Church, that what is bound on earth is bound in heaven, and what is loosed on earth is loosed in heaven,—for when the Church excommunicates, the excommunicated person is bound in heaven; when one is reconciled by the Church, the person so reconciled is loosed in heaven:—if such, then, is the case in the Church, Peter, in receiving the keys, represented the holy Church. If, then, in the person of Peter were represented the good in the Church, and in Judas' person were represented the bad in the Church, then to these latter was it said, "But me ye will not have always." But what means the "not always;" and what, the "always"? If thou art good, if thou belongest to the body represented by Peter, thou hast Christ both now and hereafter: now by faith, by sign, by the sacrament of baptism, by the bread and wine of the altar. Thou hast Christ now, but thou wilt have Him always; for when thou hast gone hence, thou wilt come to Him who said to the robber, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." But if thou livest wickedly, thou mayest seem to have Christ now, because thou enterest the Church, signest thyself with the sign of Christ, art baptized with the baptism of Christ, minglest thyself with the members of Christ, and approachest His altar: now thou hast Christ, but by living wickedly thou wilt not have Him always.

13. It may be also understood in this way: "The poor ye will have always with you, but me ye will not have always." The good may take it also as addressed to themselves, but not so as to be any source of anxiety; for He was speaking of His bodily presence. For in respect of His majesty, His providence, His ineffable and invisible grace, His own words are fulfilled, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." But in respect of the flesh He assumed as the Word, in respect of that which He was as the son of the Virgin, of that wherein He was seized by the Jews, nailed to the tree, let down from the cross, enveloped in a shroud, laid in the sepulchre, and manifested in His resurrection, "ye will not have Him always." And why? Because in respect of His bodily presence He associated for forty days with His disciples, and then, having brought them forth for the purpose of beholding and not of following Him, He ascended into heaven, and is no

longer here. He is there, indeed, sitting at the right hand of the Father; and He is here also, having never withdrawn the presence of His glory. In other words, in respect of His divine presence we always have Christ; in respect of His presence in the flesh it was rightly said to the disciples, “Me ye will not have always.” In this respect the Church enjoyed His presence only for a few days: now it possesses Him by faith, without seeing Him with the eyes. In whichever way, then, it was said, “But me ye will not have always,” it can no longer, I suppose, after this twofold solution, remain as a subject of doubt.

14. Let us listen to the other few points that remain: “Much people of the Jews therefore knew that He was there: and they came not for Jesus’ sake only, but that they might see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead.” They were drawn by curiosity, not by charity: they came and saw. Hearken to the strange scheming of human vanity. Having seen Lazarus as one raised from the dead,—for the fame of such a miracle of the Lord’s had been accompanied everywhere with so much evidence of its genuineness, and it had been so openly performed, that they could neither conceal nor deny what had been done,—only think of the plan they hit upon. “But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.” O foolish consultation and blinded rage! Could not Christ the Lord, who was able to raise the dead, raise also the slain? When you were preparing a violent death for Lazarus, were you at the same time denuding the Lord of His power? If you think a dead man one thing, a murdered man another, look you only to this, that the Lord made both, and raised Lazarus to life when dead, and Himself when slain.

TRACTATE LI

CHAPTER XII. 12–26

1. After our Lord’s raising of one to life, who had been four days dead, to the utter amazement of the Jews, some of whom believed on seeing it, and others perished in their envy, because of that sweet savor which is unto life to some, and to others unto death; after He had sat down to meat with Lazarus—the one who had been dead and raised to life—reclining also at

table, and after the pouring on His feet of the ointment which had filled the house with its odor; and after the Jews also had shown their own spiritual abandonment in conceiving the useless cruelty and the monstrously foolish and insane guilt of slaying Lazarus;—of all which we have spoken as we could, by the grace of the Lord, in previous discourses: let your Charity now notice how abundant before our Lord's passion was the fruit that appeared of His preaching, and how large was the flock of lost sheep of the house of Israel which had heard the Shepherd's voice.

2. For the Gospel, the reading of which you have just been listening to, says: "On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Him, and cried, Hosanna: blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord as the King of Israel." The branches of palm trees are laudatory emblems, significant of victory, because the Lord was about to overcome death by dying, and by the trophy of His cross to triumph over the devil, the prince of death. The exclamation used by the worshipping people is Hosanna, indicating, as some who know the Hebrew language affirm, rather a state of mind than having any positive significance; just as in our own tongue we have what are called interjections, as when in our grief we say, Alas! or in our joy, Ha! or in our admiration, O how fine! where O! expresses only the feeling of the admirer. Of the same class must we believe this word to be, as it has failed to find an interpretation both in Greek and Latin, like that other, "Whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca." For this also is allowed to be an interjection, expressive of angry feelings.

3. But when it is said, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, [as] the King of Israel," by "in the name of the Lord" we are rather to understand "in the name of God the Father," although it might also be understood as in His own name, inasmuch as He is also Himself the Lord. As we find Scripture also saying in another place, "The Lord rained [upon Sodom fire] from the Lord." But His own words are a better guide to our understanding, when He saith, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: another will come in his own name, and him ye will receive." For the true teacher of humility is Christ, who humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. But He does

not lose His divinity in teaching us humility; in the one He is the Father's equal, in the other He is assimilated to us. By that which made Him the equal of the Father, He called us into existence; and by that in which He is like unto us, He redeemed us from ruin.

4. These, then, were the words of praise addressed to Jesus by the multitude, "Hosanna: blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel." What a cross of mental suffering must the Jewish rulers have endured when they heard so great a multitude proclaiming Christ as their King! But what honor was it to the Lord to be King of Israel? What great thing was it to the King of eternity to become the King of men? For Christ's kingship over Israel was not for the purpose of exacting tribute, of putting swords into His soldiers' hands, of subduing His enemies by open warfare; but He was King of Israel in exercising kingly authority over their inward natures, in consulting for their eternal interests, in bringing into His heavenly kingdom those whose faith, and hope, and love were centred in Himself. Accordingly, for the Son of God, the Father's equal, the Word by whom all things were made, in His good pleasure to be King of Israel, was an act of condescension and not of promotion; a token of compassion, and not any increase of power. For He who was called on earth the King of the Jews, is in the heavens the Lord of angels.

5. "And Jesus, when He had found a young ass, sat thereon." Here the account is briefly given: for how it all happened may be found at full length in the other evangelists. But there is appended to the circumstance itself a testimony from the prophets, to make it evident that He in whom was fulfilled all they read in Scripture, was entirely misunderstood by the evil-minded rulers of the Jews. Jesus, then, "found a young ass, and sat thereon; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt." Among that people, then, was the daughter of Zion to be found; for Zion is the same as Jerusalem. Among that very people, I say, reprobate and blind as they were, was the daughter of Zion, to whom it was said, "Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt." This daughter of Zion, who was thus divinely addressed, was amongst those sheep that were hearing the Shepherd's voice, and in that multitude which was celebrating the Lord's coming with such religious

zeal, and accompanying Him in such warlike array. To her was it said, “Fear not:” acknowledge Him whom thou art now extolling, and give not way to fear when He comes to suffering; for by the shedding of His blood is thy guilt to be blotted out, and thy life restored. But by the ass’s colt, on which no man had ever sat (for so it is found recorded in the other evangelists), we are to understand the Gentile nations which had not received the law of the Lord; by the ass, on the other hand (for both animals were brought to the Lord), that people of His which came of the nation of Israel, and was already so far subdued as to recognize its Master’s crib.

6. “These things understood not His disciples at the first; but when Jesus was glorified,” that is, when He had manifested the power of His resurrection, “then remembered they that these things were written of Him, and they had done these things unto Him,” that is, they did nothing else but what had been written concerning Him. In short, mentally comparing with the contents of Scripture what was accomplished both prior to and in the course of our Lord’s passion, they found this also therein, that it was in accordance with the utterance of the prophets that He sat on an ass’s colt.

7. “The people, therefore, that was with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb, and raised him from the dead, bare record. For this cause the crowd also met Him, for that they heard that He had done this miracle. The Pharisees, therefore, said among themselves: Perceive ye that we prevail nothing? Behold, the whole world is gone after Him.” Mob set mob in motion. “But why art thou, blinded mob that thou art, filled with envy because the world has gone after its Maker?”

8. “And there were certain Gentiles among them that had come up to worship at the feast: the same came therefore to Philip, who was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.” Let us hearken to the Lord’s reply. See how the Jews wish to kill Him, the Gentiles to see Him; and yet those, too, were of the Jews who cried, “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel.” Here, then, were they of the circumcision and they of the uncircumcision, like two house walls running from different directions and meeting together with the kiss of peace, in the one faith of Christ. Let us listen, then, to the

voice of the Cornerstone: “And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified.” Perhaps some one supposes here that He spake of Himself as glorified, because the Gentiles wished to see Him. Such is not the case. But He saw the Gentiles themselves in all nations coming to the faith after His own passion and resurrection, because, as the apostle says, “Blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles should be come in.” Taking occasion, therefore, from those Gentiles who desired to see Him, He announces the future fullness of the Gentile nations, and promises the near approach of the hour when He should be glorified Himself, and when, on its consummation in heaven, the Gentile nations should be brought to the faith. To this it is that the prediction pointed, “Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and Thy glory above all the earth.” Such is the fullness of the Gentiles, of which the apostle saith, “Blindness in part is happened to Israel, till the fullness of the Gentiles come in.”

9. But the height of His glorification had to be preceded by the depth of His passion. Accordingly, He went on to add, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” But He spake of Himself. He Himself was the grain that had to die, and be multiplied; to suffer death through the unbelief of the Jews, and to be multiplied in the faith of many nations.

10. And now, by way of exhortation to follow in the path of His own passion, He adds, “He that loveth his life shall lose it,” which may be understood in two ways: “He that loveth shall lose,” that is, If thou lovest, be ready to lose; if thou wouldst possess life in Christ, be not afraid of death for Christ. Or otherwise, “He that loveth his life shall lose it.” Do not love for fear of losing; love it not here, lest thou lose it in eternity. But what I have said last seems better to correspond with the meaning of the Gospel, for there follow the words, “And he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.” So that when it is said in the previous clause, “He that loveth,” there is to be understood in this world, he it is that shall lose it. “But he that hateth,” that is, in this world, is he that shall keep it unto life eternal. Surely a profound and strange declaration as to the measure of a man’s love for his own life that leads to its destruction, and of his hatred to

it that secures its preservation! If in a sinful way thou lovest it, then dost thou really hate it; if in a way accordant with what is good thou hast hated it, then hast thou really loved it. Happy they who have so hated their life while keeping it, that their love shall not cause them to lose it. But beware of harboring the notion that thou mayest court self-destruction by any such understanding of thy duty to hate thy life in this world. For on such grounds it is that certain wrong-minded and perverted people, who, with regard to themselves, are murderers of a specially cruel and impious character, commit themselves to the flames, suffocate themselves in water, dash themselves against a precipice, and perish. This was no teaching of Christ's, who, on the other hand, met the devil's suggestion of a precipice with the answer, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." To Peter also He said, signifying by what death he should glorify God, "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not;"—where He made it sufficiently plain that it is not by himself but by another that one must be slain who follows in the footsteps of Christ. And so, when one's case has reached the crisis that this condition is placed before him, either that he must act contrary to the divine commandment or quit this life, and that a man is compelled to choose one or other of the two by the persecutor who is threatening him with death, in such circumstances let him prefer dying in the love of God to living under His anger, in such circumstances let him hate his life in this world that he may keep it unto life eternal.

11. "If any man serve me, let him follow me." What is that, "let him follow me," but just, let him imitate me? "Because Christ suffered for us," says the Apostle Peter, "leaving us an example that we should follow His steps." Here you have the meaning of the words, "If any man serve me, let him follow me." But with what result? what wages? what reward? "And where I am," He says, "there shall also my servant be." Let Him be freely loved, that so the reward of the service done Him may be to be with Him. For where will one be well apart from Him, or when will one come to feel himself in an evil case in company with Him? Hear it still more plainly: "If any man serve me, him will my Father honor." And what will be the honor but to be with His Son? For of what He said before, "Where I am, there

shall also my servant be," we may understand Him as giving the explanation, when He says here, "him will my Father honor." For what greater honor can await an adopted son than to be with the Only-begotten; not, indeed, as raised to the level of His Godhead, but made a partaker of His eternity?

12. But it becomes us rather to inquire what is to be understood by this serving of Christ to which there is attached so great a reward. For if we have taken up the idea that the serving of Christ is the preparation of what is needful for the body, or the cooking and serving up of food, or the mixing of drink and handing the cup to one at the supper table; this, indeed, was done to Him by those who had the privilege of His bodily presence, as in the case of Martha and Mary, when Lazarus also was one of those who sat at the table. But in that sort of way Christ was served also by the reprobate Judas; for it was he also who had the money bag; and although he had the exceeding wickedness to steal of its contents, yet it was he also who provided what was needful for the meal. And so also, when our Lord said to him, "What thou doest, do quickly," there were some who thought that He only gave him orders to make some needful preparations for the feast-day, or to give something to the poor. In no sense, therefore, was it of this class of servants that the Lord said, "Where I am, there shall also my servant be," and "If any man serve me, him will my Father honor;" for we see that Judas, who served in this way, became an object of reprobation rather than of honor. Why, then, go elsewhere to find out what this serving of Christ implies, and not rather see its disclosure in the words themselves? for when He said, "If any man serve me, let him follow me," He wished it to be understood just as if He had said, If any man doth not follow me, he serveth me not. And those, therefore, are the servants of Jesus Christ, who seek not their own things, but the things that are Jesus Christ's. For "let him follow me" is just this: Let him walk in my ways, and not in his own; as it is written elsewhere, "He that saith he abideth in Christ, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." For he ought, if supplying food to the hungry, to do it in the way of mercy and not of boasting, seeking therein nothing else but the doing of good, and not letting his left hand know what his right hand doeth; in other words, that all thought of self-seeking should be utterly estranged from a work of charity. He that serveth in this way serveth Christ,

and will have it rightly said to him, “Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of those who are mine, ye did it unto me.” And thus doing not only those acts of mercy that pertain to the body, but every good work, for the sake of Christ (for then will all be good, because “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth”), he is Christ’s servant even to that work of special love, which is to lay down his life for the brethren, for that were to lay it down also for Christ. For this also will He say hereafter in behalf of His members: Inasmuch as ye did it for these, ye have done it for me. And certainly it was in reference to such a work that He was also pleased to make and to style Himself a servant, when He says, “Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto [served], but to minister [serve], and to lay down His life for many.” Every one, therefore, is the servant of Christ in the same way as Christ also is a servant. And he that serveth Christ in this way will be honored by His Father with the signal honor of being with His Son, and having nothing wanting to his happiness for ever.

13. Accordingly, brethren, when you hear the Lord saying, “Where I am, there shall also my servant be,” do not think merely of good bishops and clergymen. But be yourselves also in your own way serving Christ, by good lives, by giving alms, by preaching His name and doctrine as you can; and every father of a family also, be acknowledging in this name the affection he owes as a parent to his family. For Christ’s sake, and for the sake of life eternal, let him be warning, and teaching, and exhorting, and correcting all his household; let him show kindliness, and exercise discipline; and so in his own house he will be filling an ecclesiastical and kind of episcopal office, and serving Christ, that he may be with Him for ever. For even that noblest service of suffering has been rendered by many of your class; for many who were neither bishops nor clergy, but young men and virgins, those advanced in years with those who were not, many married persons both male and female, many fathers and mothers of families, have served Christ even to the laying down of their lives in martyrdom for His sake, and have been honored by the Father in receiving crowns of exceeding glory.

TRACTATE LII

CHAPTER XII. 27–36

1. After the Lord Jesus Christ, in the words of yesterday’s lesson, had exhorted His servants to follow Him, and had predicted His own passion in this way, that unless a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit; and also had stirred up those who wished to follow Him to the kingdom of heaven, to hate their life in this world if their thought was to keep it unto life eternal,—He again toned down His own feelings to our infirmity and says, where our lesson to-day commenced, “Now is my soul troubled.” Whence, Lord, was Thy soul troubled? He had, indeed, said a little before, “He that hateth his life [soul] in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.” Dost thou then love thy life in this world, and is thy soul troubled as the hour approacheth when thou shalt leave this world? Who would dare affirm this of the soul [life] of the Lord? We rather it was whom He transferred unto Himself; He took us into His own person as our Head, and assumed the feelings of His members; and so it was not by any others He was troubled, but, as was said of Him when He raised Lazarus, “He was troubled in Himself.” For it behoved the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, just as He has lifted us up to the heights of heaven, to descend with us also into the lowest depths of suffering.

2. I hear Him saying a little before, “The hour cometh that the Son of man should be glorified: if a corn of wheat die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” I hear this also, “He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.” Nor am I permitted merely to admire, but commanded to imitate, and so, by the words that follow, “If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be,” I am all on fire to despise the world, and in my sight the whole of this life, however lengthened, becomes only a vapor; in comparison with my love for eternal things, all that is temporal has lost its value with me. And now, again, it is my Lord Himself, who by such words has suddenly transported me from the weakness that was mine to the strength that was His, that I hear saying, “Now is my soul troubled.” What does it mean? How biddest Thou my soul follow Thee if I behold Thine own troubled? How shall I endure what is felt to be heavy by strength so great? What is the kind of foundation I can seek if the Rock is giving way? But methinks I hear in my own thoughts the Lord giving me an answer, saying, Thou shalt follow me the better, because

it is to aid thy power of endurance that I thus interpose. Thou hast heard, as addressed to thyself, the voice of my fortitude; hear in me the voice of thy infirmity: I supply strength for thy running, and I check not thy hastening, but I transfer to myself thy causes for trembling, and I pave the way for thy marching along. O Lord our Mediator, God above us, man for us, I own Thy mercy! For because Thou, who art so great, art troubled through the good will of Thy love, Thou preservest, by the richness of Thy comfort, the many in Thy body who are troubled by the continual experience of their own weakness, from perishing utterly in their despair.

3. In a word, let the man who would follow learn the road by which he must travel. Perhaps an hour of terrible trial has come, and the choice is set before thee either to do iniquity or endure suffering; the weak soul is troubled, on whose behalf the invincible soul [of Jesus] was voluntarily troubled; set then the will of God before thine own. For notice what is immediately subjoined by thy Creator and thy Master, by Him who made thee, and became Himself for thy teaching that which He made; for He who made man was made man, but He remained still the unchangeable God, and transplanted manhood into a better condition. Listen, then, to what He adds to the words, “Now is my soul troubled.” “And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name.” He has taught thee here what to think of, what to say, on whom to call, in whom to hope, and whose will, as sure and divine, to prefer to thine own, which is human and weak. Imagine Him not, therefore, as losing aught of His own exalted position in wishing thee to rise up out of the depths of thy ruin. For He thought it meet also to be tempted by the devil, by whom otherwise He would never have been tempted, just as, had He not been willing, He would never have suffered; and the answers He gave to the devil are such as thou also oughtest to use in times of temptation. And He, indeed, was tempted, but not endangered, that He might show thee, when in danger through temptation, how to answer the tempter, so as not to be carried away by the temptation, but to escape its danger. But when He here said, “Now is my soul troubled;” and also when He says, “My soul is sorrowful, even unto death;” and “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;” He assumed the infirmity of man, to teach him, when thereby saddened and troubled, to say what follows:

“Nevertheless, Father, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” For thus it is that man is turned from the human to the divine, when the will of God is preferred to his own. But to what do the words “Glorify Thy name” refer, but to His own passion and resurrection? For what else can it mean, but that the Father should thus glorify the Son, who in like manner glorifieth His own name in the similar sufferings of His servants? Hence it is recorded of Peter, that for this cause He said concerning him, “Another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not,” because He intended to signify “by what death he should glorify God.” Therefore in him, too, did God glorify His name, because thus also does He glorify Christ in His members.

4. “Then came there a voice from heaven, [saying], I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” “I have both glorified it,” before I created the world, “and I will glorify it again,” when He shall rise from the dead and ascend into heaven. It may also be otherwise understood. “I have both glorified it,”—when He was born of the Virgin, when He exercised miraculous powers; when the Magi, guided by a star in the heavens, bowed in adoration before Him; when He was recognized by saints filled with the Holy Spirit; when He was openly proclaimed by the descent of the Spirit in the form of a dove, and pointed out by the voice that sounded from heaven; when He was transfigured on the mount; when He wrought many miracles, cured and cleansed multitudes, fed so vast a number with a very few loaves, commanded the winds and the waves, and raised the dead;—”and I will glorify it again;” when He shall rise from the dead; when death shall have no longer dominion over Him; and when He shall be exalted over the heavens as God, and His glory over all the earth.

5. “The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to Him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.” He thereby showed that the voice made no intimation to Him of what He already knew, but to those who needed the information. And just as that voice was uttered by God, not on His account, but on that of others, so His soul was troubled, not on His own account, but voluntarily for the sake of others.

6. Look at what follows: “Now,” He says, “is the judgment of the world.” What, then, are we to expect at the end of time? But the judgment that is

looked for in the end will be the judging of the living and the dead, the awarding of eternal rewards and punishment. Of what sort, then, is the judgment now? I have already, in former lessons, as far as I could, put you in mind, beloved, that there is a judgment spoken of, not of condemnation, but of discrimination; as it is written, “Judge me, O God, and plead [discern, discriminate] my cause against an unholy nation.” And many are the judgments of God; as it is said in the psalm, “Thy judgments are a great deep.” And the apostle also says, “O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments!” To such judgments does that spoken of here by the Lord also belong, “Now is the judgment of this world;” while that judgment in the end is reserved, when the living and the dead shall at last be judged. The devil, therefore, had possession of the human race, and held them by the written bond of their sins as criminals amenable to punishment; he ruled in the hearts of unbelievers, and, deceiving and enslaving them, seduced them to forsake the Creator and give worship to the creature; but by faith in Christ, which was confirmed by His death and resurrection, and, by His blood, which was shed for the remission of sins, thousands of believers are delivered from the dominion of the devil, are united to the body of Christ, and under this great head are made by His one Spirit to spring up into new life as His faithful members. This it was that He called the judgment, this righteous separation, this expulsion of the devil from His own redeemed.

7. Attend, in short, to His own words. For just as if we had been inquiring what He meant by saying, “Now is the judgment of the world,” He proceeded to explain it when He says, “Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.” What we have thus heard was the kind of judgment He meant. Not that one, therefore, which is yet to come in the end, when the living and dead shall be judged, some of them set apart on His right hand, and the others on His left; but that judgment by which “the prince of this world shall be cast out.” In what sense, then, was he within, and whither did He mean that he was to be cast out? Was it this: That he was in the world. and was cast forth beyond its boundaries? For had He been speaking of that judgment which is yet to come in the end, some one’s thoughts might have turned to that eternal fire into which the devil is to be cast with his angels, and all who belong to him;—that is, not naturally, but through moral

delinquency; not because he created or begat them, but because he persuaded and kept hold of them: some one, therefore, might have thought that that eternal fire was outside the world, and that this was the meaning of the words, “he shall be cast out.” But as He says, “Now is the judgment of this world,” and in explanation of His meaning, adds, “Now shall the prince of this world be cast out,” we are thereby to understand what is now being done, and not what is to be, so long afterwards, at the last day. The Lord, therefore, foretold what He knew, that after His own passion and glorification, many nations throughout the whole world, in whose hearts the devil was an inmate, would become believers, and the devil, when thus renounced by faith, is cast out.

8. But some one says, Was he then not cast out of the hearts of the patriarchs and prophets, and the righteous of olden time? Certainly he was. How, then, is it said, “Now he shall be cast out”? How else can we think of it, but that what was then done in the case of a very few individuals, was now foretold as speedily to take place in many and mighty nations? Just as also that other saying, “For the Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified,” may suggest a similar inquiry, and find a similar solution. For it was not without the Holy Spirit that the prophets predicted the events of the future; nor was it so that the aged Simeon and the widowed Anna knew by the Holy Spirit the infant Lord; and that Zacharias and Elisabeth uttered by the Holy Spirit so many predictions concerning Him, when He was not yet born, but only conceived. But “the Spirit was not yet given;” that is, with that abundance of spiritual grace which enabled those assembled together to speak in every language, and thus announce beforehand in the language of every nation the Church of the future: and so by this spiritual grace it was that nations were gathered into congregations, sins were pardoned far and wide, and thousands of thousands were reconciled unto God.

9. But then, says some one, since the devil is thus cast out of the hearts of believers, does he now tempt none of the faithful? Nay, verily, he does not cease to tempt. But it is one thing to reign within, another to assail from without; for in like manner the best fortified city is sometimes attacked by an enemy without being taken. And if some of his arrows are discharged,

and reach us, the apostle reminds us how to render them harmless, when he speaks of the breastplate and the shield of faith. And if he sometimes wounds us, we have the remedy at hand. For as the combatants are told, “These things I write unto you, that ye sin not:” so those who are wounded have the sequel to listen to, “And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins.” And what do we pray for when we say, “Forgive us our debts,” but for the healing of our wounds? And what else do we ask, when we say, “Lead us not into temptation,” but that he who thus lies in wait for us, or assails us from without, may fail on every side to effect an entrance, and be unable to overcome us either by fraud or force? Nevertheless, whatever engines of war he may erect against us, so long as he has no more a place in the heart that faith inhabits, he is cast out. But “except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” Presume not, therefore, about yourselves, if you would not have the devil, who has once been cast out, to be recalled within.

10. On the other hand, let us be far from supposing that the devil is called in any such way the prince of the world, as that we should believe him possessed of power to rule over the heaven and the earth. The world is so spoken of in respect of wicked men, who have overspread the whole earth; just as a house is spoken of in respect to its inhabitants, and we accordingly say, It is a good house, or a bad house; not as finding fault with, or approving of, the erection of walls and roofs, but the morals either of the good or the bad within it. In a similar way, therefore, it is said, “The prince of this world;” that is, the prince of all the wicked who inhabit this world. The world is also spoken of in respect to the good, who in like manner have overspread the whole earth; and hence the apostle says, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” These are they out of whose hearts the prince of this world is ejected.

11. Accordingly, after saying, “Now shall the prince of this world be cast out,” He added, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things after me.” And what “all” is that, but those out of which the other is ejected? But He did not say, All men, but “all things;” for all men have not faith. And, therefore, He did not allude to the totality of men, but to the

creature in its personal integrity, that is, to spirit, and soul, and body; or all that which makes us the intelligent, living, visible, and palpable beings we are. For He who said, “Not a hair of your head shall perish,” is He who draweth all things after Him. Or if by “all things” it is men that are to be understood, we can speak of all things that are foreordained to salvation: of all which He declared, when previously speaking of His sheep, that not one of them would be lost. And of a certainty all classes of men, both of every language and every age, and all grades of rank, and all diversities of talents, and all the professions of lawful and useful arts, and all else that can be named in accordance with the innumerable differences by which men, save in sin alone, are mutually separated, from the highest to the lowest, and from the king to the beggar, “all,” He says, “will I draw after me;” that He may be their head, and they His members. But this will be, He adds, “if I be lifted up from the earth,” that is, when I am lifted up; for He has no doubt of the future accomplishment of that which He came to fulfill. He here alludes to what He said before: “But if the corn of wheat die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” For what else did He signify by His lifting up, than His suffering on the cross, an explanation which the evangelist himself has not omitted; for he has appended the words, “And this He said signifying what death He should die.”

12. “The people answered Him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest Thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? And who is this Son of man?” It had stuck to their memory that the Lord was constantly calling Himself the Son of man. For, in the passage before us, He does not say, If the Son of man be lifted up from the earth; but had called Himself so before, in the lesson which was read and expounded yesterday, when those Gentiles were announced who desired to see Him: “The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified” (ver. 23). Retaining this, therefore, in their minds, and understanding what He now said, “When I am lifted up from the earth,” of the death of the cross, they inquired of Him, and said, “We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest Thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?” For if it is Christ, He, they say, abideth for ever; and if He abideth for ever, how shall He be lifted up from the earth, that is, how shall He die through the suffering of the cross? For they understood Him to

have spoken of what they themselves were meditating to do. And so He did not dissipate for them the obscurity of such words by imparting wisdom, but by stimulating their conscience.

13. “Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little light is in you.” And by this it is you understand that Christ abideth for ever. “Walk, then, while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.” Walk, draw near, come to the full understanding that Christ shall both die and shall live for ever; that He shall shed His blood to redeem us, and ascend on high to carry His redeemed along with Him. But darkness will come upon you, if your belief in Christ’s eternity is of such a kind as to refuse to admit in His case the humiliation of death. “And he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.” So may he stumble on that stone of stumbling and rock of offence which the Lord Himself became to the blinded Jews: just as to those who believed, the stone which the builders despised was made the head of the corner. Hence, they thought Christ unworthy of their belief; because in their impiety they treated His dying with contempt, they ridiculed the idea of His being slain: and yet it was the very death of the grain of corn that was to lead to its own multiplication, and the lifting up of one who was drawing all things after Him. “While ye have the light,” He adds, “believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.” While you have possession of some truth that you have heard, believe in the truth, that you may be born again in the truth.

14. “These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them.” Not from those who had begun to believe and to love Him, nor from those who had come to meet Him with branches of palm trees and songs of praise; but from those who saw and hated Him, for they saw Him not, but only stumbled on that stone in their blindness. But when Jesus hid Himself from those who desired to slay Him (as you need from forgetfulness to be often reminded), He had regard to our human weakness, but derogated not in aught from His own authority.

TRACTATE LIII

CHAPTER XII. 37–43

1. When our Lord Christ, foretelling His own passion, and the fruitfulness of His death in being lifted up on the cross, said that He would draw all [things] after Him; and when the Jews, understanding that He spake of His death, put to Him the question how He could speak of death as awaiting Him, when they heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever; He exhorted them, while still they had in them the little light, which had so taught them that Christ was eternal, to walk, to make themselves acquainted with the whole subject, lest they should be overtaken with darkness. And, when He had said this, He hid Himself from them. With these points you have been made acquainted in former Lord’s day lessons and discourses.

2. The evangelist thereafter brings forward what has formed the brief subject of to-day’s reading, and says, “But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him: that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?” Where he makes it sufficiently plain that the Son of God is Himself the arm of the Lord; not that the person of God the Father is determined by the shape of human flesh, and that the Son is attached to Him as a member of His body; but because all things were made by Him, and therefore He is designated the arm of the Lord. For as it is with thine arm that thou workest, so the Word of God is styled His arm; because by the Word He elaborated the world. For why does a man, in order to do some work, stretch forth his arm, but because the doing of it does not straightway follow his word? And if he was endowed with such pre-eminent power that what he said was done without any movement of his body, then would his word be his arm. But the Lord Jesus, the only-begotten Son of God the Father, as He is no mere member of the Father’s body, so is He no mere thinkable, and audible, and transitory word; for, as all things were made by Him, He was the word of God.

3. When, therefore, we hear that the Son of God is the arm of God the Father, let no carnal custom raise its distracting din in our ears; but as far as His grace enables us, let us think of that power and wisdom of God by which all things were made. Surely such an arm as that is neither held out by stretching, nor drawn in by contracting it. For He is not one and the same

with the Father, but He and the Father are one; and as equal with the Father, He is in all respects complete, as well as the Father: so that no room is left open for the abominable error of those who assert that the Father alone exists, but according to the difference of causes is Himself sometimes called the Son, sometimes the Holy Spirit; and so also from these words may venture to say, See you perceive that the Father alone exists, if the Son is His arm: for a man and his arm are not two persons, but one. Not understanding nor considering how words are transferred from one thing to another, on account of some mutual likeness, even in our daily forms of speech about things the most familiar and visible; and how much the more must it be so, in order that things ineffable may find some sort of expression in our speech, things which, as they really exist, cannot be expressed in words at all? For even one man styles another his arm, by whom he is accustomed to transact his business: and if he is deprived of him, he says in his grief, I have lost my arm; and to him who has taken him away, he says, You have deprived me of my arm. Let them understand, then, the sense in which the Son is termed the arm of the Father, as that by which the Father hath executed all His works; that they may not, by failing to understand this, and continuing in the darkness of their error, resemble those Jews of whom it was said, “And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

4. And here we meet with the second question, to treat of which, indeed, in any adequate manner, to investigate all its mysterious windings, and throw them open to the light in a befitting way, I think within the scope neither of my own powers, nor of the shortness of the time, nor of your capacity. Yet, as we cannot allow ourselves so far to disappoint your expectations as to pass on to other topics without saying something on this, take what we shall be able to offer you: and wherein we fail to satisfy your expectations, ask the increase of Him who appointed us to plant and to water; for, as the apostle saith, “Neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.” There are some, then, who mutter among themselves, and sometimes speak out when they can, and even break forth into turbulent debate, saying: What did the Jews do, or what fault was it of theirs, if it was a necessity “that the saying of Isaiah the prophet should be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?” To whom our answer is, that the

Lord, in His foreknowledge of the future, foretold by the prophet the unbelief of the Jews; He foretold it, but did not cause it. For God does not compel any one to sin simply because He knows already the future sins of men. For He foreknew sins that were theirs, not His own; sins that were referable to no one else, but to their own selves. Accordingly, if what He foreknew as theirs is not really theirs, then had He no true foreknowledge: but as His foreknowledge is infallible, it is doubtless no one else, but they themselves, whose sinfulness God foreknew, that are the sinners. The Jews, therefore, committed sin, with no compulsion to do so on His part, to whom sin is an object of displeasure; but He foretold their committing of it, because nothing is concealed from His knowledge. And accordingly, had they wished to do good instead of evil, they would not have been hindered; but in this which they were to do they were foreseen of Him who knows what every man will do, and what He is yet to render unto such an one according to his work.

5. But the words of the Gospel also, that follow, are still more pressing, and start a question of more profound import: for He goes on to say, “Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.” For it is said to us: If they could not believe, what sin is it in man not to do what he cannot do and if they sinned in not believing, then they had the power to believe, and did not use it. If, then, they had the power, how says the Gospel, “Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart;” so that (which is of grave import) to God Himself is referred the cause of their not believing, inasmuch as it is He who “hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart”? For what is thus testified to in the prophetical Scriptures, is at least not spoken of the devil, but of God. For were we to suppose it said of the devil, that he “hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart;” we have to undertake the task of being able to show what blame was theirs in not believing, of whom it is said, “they could not believe.” And then, what reply shall we give touching another testimony of this very prophet, which the Apostle Paul has adopted, when he says: “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were

blinded, according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of remorse, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day”?

6. Such, as you have just heard, brethren, is the question that comes before us, and you can perceive how profound it is; but we shall give what answer we can. “They could not believe,” because that Isaiah the prophet foretold it; and the prophet foretold it because God foreknew that such would be the case. But if I am asked why they could not, I reply at once, because they would not; for certainly their depraved will was foreseen by God, and foretold through the prophet by Him from whom nothing that is future can be hid. But the prophet, sayest thou, assigns another cause than that of their will. What cause does the prophet assign? That “God hath given them the spirit of remorse, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear; and hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart.” This also, I reply, their will deserved. For God thus blinds and hardens, simply by letting alone and withdrawing His aid: and God can do this by a judgment that is hidden, although not by one that is unrighteous. This is a doctrine which the piety of the God-fearing ought to preserve unshaken and inviolable in all its integrity: even as the apostle, when treating of the same intricate question, says, “What shall we say then? is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.” If, then, we must be far from thinking that there is unrighteousness with God, this only can it be, that, when He giveth His aid, He acteth mercifully; and, when He withholdeth it, He acteth righteously: for in all He doeth, He acteth not rashly, but in accordance with judgment. And still further, if the judgments of the saints are righteous, how much more those of the sanctifying and justifying God? They are therefore righteous, although hidden. Accordingly, when questions of this sort come before us, why one is dealt with in such a way, and another in such another way; why this one is blinded by being forsaken of God, and that one is enlightened by the divine aid vouchsafed to him: let us not take upon ourselves to pass judgment on the judgment of so mighty a judge, but tremblingly exclaim with the apostle, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” As it is also said in the psalm, “Thy judgments are as a great deep.”

7. Let not then, brethren, the expectations of your Charity drive me to attempt the task of penetrating into such a deep, of sounding such an abyss, of searching into what is unsearchable. I own my own little measure of ability, and I think I have some perception of yours also, as equally small. This is too high for my stature, and too strong for my strength; and for yours also, I think. Let us, therefore, listen together to the admonition and to the words of Scripture: “Seek not out the things that are too high for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength.” Not that such things are forbidden us, since the divine Master saith, “There is nothing hid that shall not be revealed:” but if we walk up to the measure of our present attainments, then, as the apostle tells us, not only what we know not and ought to know, but also if we are minded to know anything else, God will reveal even this unto us. But if we have reached the pathway of faith, let us keep to it with all constancy: let it be our guide to the chamber of the King, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. For it was in no spirit of grudging that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself acted towards those great and specially chosen disciples of His, when He said, “I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” We must be walking, making progress, and growing, that our hearts may become fit to receive the things which we cannot receive at present. And if the last day shall find us sufficiently advanced, we shall then learn what here we were unable to know.

8. If, however, any one considers himself able, and has confidence enough, to give a clearer and better exposition of the question before us, God forbid that I should not be still more ready to learn than to teach. Only let no one dare to defend the freedom of the will in any such way as to attempt depriving us of the prayer that says, “Lead us not into temptation;” and, on the other hand, let no one deny the freedom of the will, and so venture to find an excuse for sin. But let us give heed to the Lord, both in commanding and in offering His aid; in both telling us our duty, and assisting us to discharge it. For some He hath let be lifted up to pride through an overweening trust in their own wills, while others He hath let fall into carelessness through a contrary excess of distrust. The former say: Why do we ask God not to let us be overcome by temptation, when it is all in our own power? The latter say: Why should we try to live well, when the power

to do so is in the hands of God? O Lord, O Father, who art in heaven, lead us not into any of these temptations; but “deliver us from evil!” Listen to the Lord, when He says, “I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not;” that we may never think of our faith as so lying in our free will that it has no need of the divine assistance. Let us listen also to the evangelist, when he says, “He hath given them power to become the sons of God;” that we may not imagine it as altogether beyond our own power that we believe: but in both let us acknowledge His beneficent acting. For, on the one side, we have to give Him thanks that the power is bestowed; and on the other, to pray that our own little strength may not utterly fail. It is this very faith that worketh by love, according to the measure thereof that the Lord hath given to every man; that he that glorieth may glory, not in himself, but in the Lord.

9. It is no wonder, then, that they could not believe, when such was their pride of will, that, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, they wished to establish their own: as the apostle says of them, “They have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” For it was not by faith, but as it were by works, that they were puffed up; and blinded by this very self-elation, they stumbled against the stone of stumbling. And so it is said, “they could not,” by which we are to understand that they would not; in the same way as it was said of the Lord our God, “If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself.” It is said of the Omnipotent, “He cannot.” And so, just as it is a commendation of the divine will that the Lord “cannot deny Himself,” that they “could not believe” is a fault chargeable on the will of man.

10. And, look you! so also say I, that those who have such lofty ideas of themselves as to suppose that so much must be attributed to the powers of their own will, that they deny their need of the divine assistance in order to a righteous life, cannot believe on Christ. For the mere syllables of Christ’s name, and the Christian sacraments, are of no profit, where faith in Christ is itself resisted. For faith in Christ is to believe in Him that justifieth the ungodly; to believe in the Mediator, without whose interposition we cannot be reconciled unto God; to believe in the Saviour, who came to seek and to save that which was lost; to believe in Him who said, “Without me ye can

do nothing.” Because, then, being ignorant of that righteousness of God that justifieth the ungodly, he wishes to set up his own to satisfy the minds of the proud, such a man cannot believe on Christ. And so, those Jews “could not believe:” not that men cannot be changed for the better; but so long as their ideas run in such a direction, they cannot believe. Hence they are blinded and hardened; for, denying the need of divine assistance, they are not assisted. God foreknew this regarding these Jews who were blinded and hardened, and the prophet by His Spirit foretold it.

11. But when he added, “And they should be converted, and I should heal them,” is there a “not” to be understood, that is, they should not be converted, connecting it with the clause before, where it is said, “that they should not see with their eyes and understand with their heart;” for here also it is certainly meant, “and should not understand”? For conversion itself is likewise a gift of His grace, as when it is said to Him, “Turn us, O God of Hosts.” Or may it be that we are to understand this also as actually taking place through the merciful experience of the divine method of healing, [namely this,] that, being of proud and perverse wills, and wishing to establish their own righteousness, they were left alone for the very purpose of being blinded; and thus blinded in order that they might stumble on the stone of stumbling, and have their faces filled with shame; and so, being thus humbled, might seek the name of the Lord, and no longer a righteousness of their own, that inflated their pride, but the righteousness of God, that justifieth the ungodly? For this very way turned out to the good of many of them, who were afterwards filled with remorse for wickedness, and believed on Christ; and on whose behalf He Himself had put up the prayer, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And it is of that ignorance of theirs also that the apostle says, “I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge:” for he then goes on also to add, “For they, being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”

12. “These things said Isaiah, when he saw His glory, and spake of Him.” What Isaiah saw, and how it refers to Christ the Lord, are to be read and learned in his book. For he saw Him, not as He is, but in some symbolical

way to suit the form that the vision of the prophet had itself to assume. For Moses likewise saw Him, and yet we find him saying to Him whom he saw, “If I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thyself, that I may clearly see Thee;” for he saw Him not as He is. But the time when this shall yet be our experience, that same Saint John the Evangelist tells us in his Epistle: “Dearly beloved, [now] are we the sons of God; and it hath not yet become manifest what we shall be: because we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” He might have said “for we shall see Him,” without adding “as He is;” but because he knew that He was seen of some of the fathers and prophets, but not as He is, therefore after saying “we shall see Him,” he added “as He is.” And be not deceived, brethren, by any of those who assert that the Father is invisible, and the Son visible. This assertion is made by those who think that the latter is a creature, and whose understanding runs not in harmony with the words, “I and my Father one.” Accordingly, as respects the form of God wherein He is equal with the Father, the Son also is invisible: but, in order to be seen of men, He assumed the form of a servant, and being made in the likeness of men, became visible to man. He showed Himself, therefore, even before His incarnation, to the eyes of men, as it pleased Him, in the creature-form at His command, but not as He is. Let us be purifying our hearts by faith, that we may be prepared for that ineffable and, so to speak, invisible vision. For “blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.”

13. “Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on Him; but, because of the Pharisees, they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.” See how the evangelist marked and disapproved of some, who yet, he said, believed on Him: who, if ever they did advance though this gateway of faith, would thereby also overcome that love of human glory which had been overcome by the apostle, when he said, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” For to this end also did the Lord Himself, when derided by the madness of human pride and impiety, fix His cross on the foreheads of those who believed on Him, on that which is in a manner the abode of modesty, that faith may learn not to blush at His name, and love the glory of God more than the glory of men.

TRACTATE LIV

CHAPTER XII. 44–50

1. Whilst our Lord Jesus Christ was speaking among the Jews, and giving so many miraculous signs, some believed who were foreordained to eternal life, and whom He also called His sheep; but some did not believe, and could not believe, because that, by the mysterious yet not unrighteous judgment of God, they had been blinded and hardened, because forsaken of Him who resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. But of those who believed, there were some whose confession went so far, that they took branches of palm trees, and met Him as He approached, turning in their joy that very confession into a service of praise: while there were others, belonging to the chief rulers, who had not the boldness to confess their faith, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; and whom the evangelist has branded with the words, that “they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God “(ver. 43). Of those also who did not believe, there were some who would afterwards believe, and whom He foresaw, when He said, “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye acknowledge that I am He:” but there were some who would remain in the same unbelief, and be imitated by the Jewish nation of the present day, which, being shortly afterwards crushed in war, according to the prophetic testimony which was written concerning Christ, has since been scattered almost through the whole world.

2. While matters were in this state, and His own passion was now at hand, “Jesus cried, and said,” as our lesson to-day commences, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me; and he that seeth me, seeth Him that sent me.” He had already said in a certain place, “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me.” Where we understood that He called His doctrine just what He is Himself, the Word of the Father; and in saying, “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me,” implied this, that He was not of Himself, but had His being from another. For He was God of God, the Son of the Father: but the Father is not God of God, but God, the Father of the Son. And now when He says, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me,” how else are we to understand it, but that He appeared as man to men, while He remained

invisible as God? And that none might think that He was no more than what they saw of Him, He indicated His wish to be believed on, as equal in character and rank with the Father, when He said, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me,” that is, merely on what he seeth of me, “but on Him that sent me,” that is, on the Father. But he that believeth on the Father, must believe that He is the Father; and he that believeth on Him as the Father, must believe that He has a Son; and in this way, he that believeth on the Father, must believe on the Son. But let no one believe about the only-begotten Son just what they believe about those who are called the sons of God by grace and not by nature, as the evangelist says, “He gave them power to become the sons of God,” and according to what the Lord Himself also mentioned, as declared in the law, “I said, Ye are gods; and all of you children of the Most High:” because He said, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me,” to show that the whole extent of our faith in Christ should not be limited by His manhood. He therefore, He saith, believeth on me, who doth not believe on me merely according to what he seeth of me, but on Him that sent me: so that, believing thus on the Father, he may believe that He has a Son co-equal with Himself, and then attain to a true faith in me. For if one should think that He has sons only according to grace, who are certainly no more than His creatures, and not the Word, but those made by the Word, and that He has no Son co-equal and co-eternal with Himself, ever born, alike incommutable, in nothing dissimilar and inferior, then he believes not on the Father who sent Him, for the Father who sent Him is no such conception as this.

3. And, accordingly, after saying, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me,” that it might not be thought that He would have the Father so understood, as if He were the Father only of many sons regenerated by grace, and not of the only-begotten Word, His own co-equal, He immediately added, “And he that seeth me, seeth Him that sent me.” Does He say here, He that seeth me, seeth not me, but Him that sent me, as He had said, “He that believeth me, believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me”? For He uttered the former of these words, that He might not be believed on merely as He then appeared, that is, as the Son of man; and the latter, that He might be believed on as the equal of the Father. He that believeth on me, believeth not merely on what He sees of me, but believeth

on Him that sent me. Or, when he believeth on the Father, who begat me, His own co-equal, let him believe on me, not as he seeth me, but as [he believeth] on Him that sent me; for so far does the truth, that there is no distance between Him and me, reach, that He who seeth me, seeth Him that sent me. Certainly, Christ the Lord Himself sent His apostles, as their name implies: for as those who in Greek are called angeli are in Latin called nuntii [messengers], so the Greek apostoli [apostles] becomes the Latin missi [persons sent]. But never would any of the apostles have dared to say, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me;” for in no sense whatever would he say, “He that believeth on me.” We believe an apostle, but we do not believe on him; for it is not an apostle that justifieth the ungodly. But to him that believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. An apostle might say, He that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me; or, He that heareth me, heareth Him that sent me; for the Lord tells them so Himself: “He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me.” For the master is honored in the servant, and the father in the son: but then the father is as it were in the son, and the master as it were in the servant. But the only-begotten Son could rightly say, “Believe on God, and believe on me;” as also what He saith here, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me.” He did not turn away the faith of the believer from Himself, but only would not have the believer continue in the form of a servant: because every one who believeth in the Father that sent Him, straightway believeth on the Son, without whom he knoweth that the Father hath no existence as such, and thus reacheth in his faith to the belief of His equality with the Father, in conformity with the words that follow, “And he that seeth me, seeth Him that sent me.”

4. Attend to what follows: “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.” He said in a certain place to His disciples, “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; that it may give light to all that are in the house: so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven:” but He did not say to them, Ye are come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on you

should not abide in darkness. Such a statement, I maintain, can nowhere be met with. All the saints, therefore, are lights, but they are illuminated by Him through faith; and every one that becomes separated from Him will be enveloped in darkness. But that Light, which enlightens them, cannot become separated from itself; for it is altogether beyond the reach of change. We believe, then, the light that has thus been lit, as the prophet or apostle: but we believe him for this end, that we may not believe on that which is itself enlightened, but, with him, on that Light which has given him light; so that we, too, may be enlightened, not by him, but, along with him, by the same Light as he. And when He saith, "That whosoever believeth on me may not abide in darkness," He makes it sufficiently manifest that all have been found by Him in a state of darkness: but that they may not abide in the darkness wherein they have been found, they ought to believe on that Light which hath come into the world, for thereby was the world created.

5. "And if any man," He says, "hear my words, and keep them not, I judge him not." Remember what I know you have heard in former lessons; and if any of you have forgotten, recall it: and those of you who were absent then, but are present now, hear how it is that the Son saith, "I judge him not," while in another place He says, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;" namely, that thereby we are to understand, It is not now that I judge him. And why not now? Listen to the sequel: "For I am not come," He says, "to judge the world, but to save the world;" that is, to bring the world into a state of salvation. Now, therefore, is the season of mercy, afterwards will be the time for judgment: for He says, "I will sing to Thee, O Lord, of mercy and judgment."

6. But see also what He says of that future judgment in the end: "He that despiseth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." He says not, He that despiseth me, and receiveth not my words, I judge him not at the last day; for had He said so, I do not see how it could have been else than contradictory of that other statement, when He says, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." But when He said, "He that despiseth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one to

judge him," and, for the information of those who were waiting to hear who that one was, went on to add, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day," He made it sufficiently manifest that He Himself would then be the judge. For it was of Himself He spake, Himself He announced, and Himself He set forth as the gate whereby He entered as the Shepherd to His sheep. In one way, therefore, will those be judged who have never heard that word, in another way those who have heard and despised. "For as many as have sinned without law," says the apostle, "shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law."

7. "For I have not," He says, "spoken of myself." He says that He has not spoken of Himself, because He is not of Himself. Of this we have frequently discoursed already; so that now, without any more instruction, we have simply to remind you of it as a truth with which you are familiar. "But the Father who sent me, He gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak." We would not stay to elaborate this, did we know that we were now speaking with those with whom we have spoken on former occasions, and of these, not with all, but such only whose memories have retained what they heard: but because there are perhaps some now present who did not hear, and some in a similar condition who have forgotten what they heard, on their account let those who remember what they have heard bear with our delay. How giveth the Father a commandment to His only Son? With what words doth He speak to the Word, seeing that the Son Himself is the only-begotten Word? Could it be by an angel, seeing that by Him the angels were created? Was it by means of a cloud, which, when it gave forth its sound to the Son, gave it not on His account, as He Himself also tells us elsewhere, but for the sake of others who were needing to hear it (ver. 29)? Could it be by any sound issuing from the lips, where bodily form was wanting, and where there is no such local distance separating the Son from the Father as to admit of any intervening air, to give effect, by its percussion, to the voice, and render it audible? Let us put away all such unworthy notions of that incorporeal and ineffable subsistence. The only Son is the Word and the Wisdom of the Father, and therein are all the commandments of the Father. For there was no time that the Son knew not the Father's commandment, so as to make it

necessary for Him to possess in course of time what He possessed not before. For what He has received from the Father, He received in being born, and was given it in being begotten. For the life He is, and life He certainly received in being born, while yet there was no antecedent time when life was wanting to His personal existence. For, on the one hand, the Father has life, and is what He has: and yet He received it not, because He is not of any one. But the Son received life as the Father's gift, of whom He is: and so He Himself is what He has; for He has life, and is the life. Listen to Himself when He says, "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." Could He give it to one who was in being, and yet hitherto was destitute thereof? On the contrary, in the very begetting it was given by Him who begat the life, and so life begat the life. And to show that He begat the life equal, and not inferior to Himself, it was said, "As He hath life in Himself, so hath He also given to the Son to have life in Himself." He gave life; for in begetting the life, what was it He gave Him, save to be the life? And as His nativity is itself eternal, there never was a time without that Son who is the life, and never was there a time when the Son Himself was without the life; and as His nativity is eternal, so He, who was thus born, is eternal life. And so the Father gave not to the Son a commandment which He had not already; but, as I said, in the Wisdom of the Father, that is, in the word of the Father, are laid up all the Father's commandments. And yet the commandment is said to have been given Him, because He, to whom it is thus given, is not of Himself: and to give that to the Son which He never was without, is the same in meaning as to beget that Son who never was without existence.

8. There follow the words: "And I know that His commandment is life everlasting." If, then, the Son Himself is eternal life, and the Father's commandment the same, what else is expressed than this, I am the Father's commandment? And in like manner, in what He proceeds to say, "Whatsoever I speak, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak," let us not be taking the "said unto me" as if the Father used words in speaking to the only Word, or that the Word of God needed words from God. The Father spake to the Son in the same way as He gave life to the Son; not that He knew not the one, or had not the other, but just because He was the Son. What, then, do the words mean, "Even as He said unto me, so I speak;" but

just, I speak the truth? So the former said as the Truthful One what the latter thus spake as the Truth. The Truthful begat the Truth. What, then, could He now say to the Truth? For the Truth had no imperfection to be supplied by additional truth. He spake, therefore, to the Truth, because He begat the Truth. And in like manner the Truth Himself speaks what has been said to Him; but only to those who have understanding, and who are taught by Him as the God-begotten Truth. But that men might believe what they had not yet capacity to understand, words that were audible issued from His human lips; sounds passing rapidly away broke on the ear, and speedily completed the little term of their duration: but the truths themselves, of which the sounds are but signs, passed, as it were, into the memory of those who heard them, and have come down to us also by means of written characters as signs addressed to the eye. But it is not thus that the Truth speaks; He speaks inwardly to the souls of the intelligent; He needs no sound to instruct, but floods the mind with the light of understanding. And he, then, who in that light is able to behold the eternity of His birth, himself hears in the same way the Truth speaking, as He heard the Father telling Him what He should speak. He has awakened in us a great longing for that sweet experience of His presence within; but it is by daily growth that we acquire it; it is by walking that we grow, and it is by forward efforts we walk, so as to be able at last to attain it.

TRACTATE LV

CHAPTER XIII. 1–5

1. The Lord’s Supper, as set forth in John, must, with His assistance, be unfolded in a becoming number of Lectures, and explained with all the ability He is pleased to grant us. “Now, before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end.” Pascha (passover) is not, as some think, a Greek noun, but a Hebrew: and yet there occurs in this noun a very suitable kind of accordance in the two languages. For inasmuch as the Greek word paschein means to suffer, therefore pascha has been supposed to mean suffering, as if the noun derived its name from His passion: but in its own language, that is, in Hebrew, pascha means passover; because the pascha

was then celebrated for the first time by God’s people, when, in their flight from Egypt, they passed over the Red Sea. And now that prophetic emblem is fulfilled in truth, when Christ is led as a sheep to the slaughter, that by His blood sprinkled on our doorposts, that is, by the sign of His cross marked on our foreheads, we may be delivered from the perdition awaiting this world, as Israel from the bondage and destruction of the Egyptians; and a most salutary transit we make when we pass over from the devil to Christ, and from this unstable world to His well-established kingdom. And therefore surely do we pass over to the ever-abiding God, that we may not pass away with this passing world. The apostle, in extolling God for such grace bestowed upon us, says: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.” This name, then, of pascha, which, as I have said, is in Latin called transitus (pass over), is interpreted, as it were, for us by the blessed evangelist, when he says, “Before the feast of pascha, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should pass out of this world to the Father.” Here you see we have both pascha and pass-over. Whence, and whither does He pass? Namely, “out of this world to the Father.” The hope was thus given to the members in their Head, that they doubtless would yet follow Him who was “passing” before. And what, then, of unbelievers, who stand altogether apart from this Head and His members? Do not they also pass away, seeing that they abide not here always? They also do plainly pass away: but it is one thing to pass from the world, and another to pass away with it; one thing to pass to the Father, another to pass to the enemy. For the Egyptians also passed over [the sea]; but they did not pass through the sea to the kingdom, but in the sea to destruction.

2. “When Jesus knew,” then, “that His hour was come that He should pass out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end.” In order, doubtless, that they also, through that love of His, might pass from this world where they now were, to their Head who had passed hence before them. For what mean these words, “to the end,” but just to Christ? “For Christ is the end of the law,” says the apostle, “for righteousness to every one that believeth.” The end that consummates, not that consumes; the end whereto we attain, not wherein we perish. Exactly thus are we to understand the passage, “Christ

our passover is sacrificed.” He is our end; into Him do we pass. For I see that these gospel words may also be taken in a kind of human sense, that Christ loved His own even unto death, so that this may be the meaning of “He loved them unto the end.” This meaning is human, not divine: for it was not merely up to this point that we were loved by Him, who loveth us always and endlessly. God forbid that He, whose death could not end, should have ended His love at death. Even after death that proud and ungodly rich man loved his five brethren; and is Christ to be thought of as loving us only till death? God forbid, beloved. He would have come in vain with a love for us that lasted till death, if that love had ended there. But perhaps the words, “He loved them unto the end,” may have to be understood in this way, That He so loved them as to die for them. For this He testified when He said, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” We have certainly no objection that “He loved them unto the end” should be so understood, that is, it was His very love that carried Him on to death.

3. “And the supper,” he says, “having taken place, and the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him, [Jesus] knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He has come from God, and is going to God; He riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.” We are not to understand by the supper having taken place, as if it were already finished and over; for it was still going on when the Lord rose and washed His disciples’ feet. For He afterwards sat down again, and gave the morsel [sop] to His betrayer, implying certainly that the supper was not yet over, or, in other words, that there was still bread on the table. Therefore, by supper having taken place, is meant that it was now ready, and laid out on the table for the use of the guests.

4. But when he says, “The devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him;” if one inquires, what was put into Judas’ heart, it was doubtless this, “to betray Him.” Such a putting [into the heart] is a spiritual suggestion: and entereth not by the ear, but through the

thoughts; and thereby not in a way that is corporal, but spiritual. For what we call spiritual is not always to be understood in a commendatory way. The apostle knew of certain spiritual things [powers], of wickedness in heavenly places, against which he testifies that we have to maintain a struggle; and there would not be spiritual wickednesses, were there not also wicked spirits. For it is from a spiritual being that spiritual things get their name. But how such things are done, as that devilish suggestions should be introduced, and so mingle with human thoughts that a man accounts them his own, how can he know? Nor can we doubt that good suggestions are likewise made by a good spirit in the same unobservable and spiritual way; but it is matter of concern to which of these the human mind yields assent, either as deservedly left without, or graciously aided by, the divine assistance. The determination, therefore, had now been come to in Judas' heart by the instigation of the devil, that the disciple should betray the Master, whom he had not learned to know as his God. In such a state had he now come to their social meal, a spy on the Shepherd, a plotter against the Redeemer, a seller of the Saviour; as such was he now come, was he now seen and endured, and thought himself undiscovered: for he was deceived about Him whom he wished to deceive. But He, who had already scanned the inward state of that very heart, was knowingly making use of one who knew it not.

5. "[Jesus] knowing that the Father has given all things into His hands." And therefore also the traitor himself: for if He had him not in His hands, He certainly could not use him as He wished. Accordingly, the traitor had been already betrayed to Him whom he sought to betray; and he carried out his evil purpose in betraying Him in such a way, that good he knew not of was the issue in regard to Him who was betrayed. For the Lord knew what He was doing for His friends, and patiently made use of His enemies: and thus had the Father given all things into His hands, both the evil for present use, and the good for the final issue. "Knowing also that He has come from God, and is going to God:" neither quitting God when He came from Him, nor us when He returned.

6. Knowing, then, these things, "He riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth

water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded.” We ought, dearly beloved, carefully to mark the meaning of the evangelist; because that, when about to speak of the pre-eminent humility of the Lord, it was his desire first to commend His majesty. It is in reference to this that he says, “Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He has come from God, and is going to God.” It is He, therefore, into whose hands the Father had given all things, who now washes, not the disciples’ hands, but their feet: and it was just while knowing that He had come from God, and was proceeding to God, that He discharged the office of a servant, not of God the Lord, but of man. And this also is referred to by the prefatory notice he has been pleased to make of His betrayer, who was now come as such, and was not unknown to Him; that the greatness of His humility should be still further enhanced by the fact that He did not esteem it beneath His dignity to wash also the feet of one whose hands He already foresaw to be steeped in wickedness.

7. But why should we wonder that He rose from supper, and laid aside His garments, who, being in the form of God, made Himself of no reputation? And why should we wonder, if He girded Himself with a towel, who took upon Him the form of a servant, and was found in the likeness of a man? Why wonder, if He poured water into a basin wherewith to wash His disciples’ feet, who poured His blood upon the earth to wash away the filth of their sins? Why wonder, if with the towel wherewith He was girded He wiped the feet He had washed, who with the very flesh that clothed Him laid a firm pathway for the footsteps of His evangelists? In order, indeed, to gird Himself with the towel, He laid aside the garments He wore; but when He emptied Himself [of His divine glory] in order to assume the form of a servant, He laid not down what He had, but assumed that which He had not before. When about to be crucified, He was indeed stripped of His garments, and when dead was wrapped in linen clothes: and all that suffering of His is our purification. When, therefore, about to suffer the last extremities [of humiliation,] He here illustrated beforehand its friendly compliances; not only to those for whom He was about to endure death, but to him also who had resolved on betraying Him to death. Because so great is the beneficence of human humility, that even the Divine Majesty was

pleased to commend it by His own example; for proud man would have perished eternally, had he not been found by the lowly God. For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. And as he was lost by imitating the pride of the deceiver, let him now, when found, imitate the Redeemer's humility.

TRACTATE LVI

CHAPTER XIII. 6–10

1. When the Lord was washing the disciples' feet, "He cometh to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto Him, Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?" For who would not be filled with fear at having his feet washed by the Son of God? Although, therefore, it was a piece of the greatest audacity for the servant to contradict his Lord, the creature his God; yet Peter preferred doing this to the suffering of his feet to be washed by his Lord and God. Nor ought we to think that Peter was one amongst others who so expressed their fear and refusal, seeing that others before him had suffered it to be done to themselves with cheerfulness and equanimity. For it is easier so to understand the words of the Gospel, because that, after saying, "He began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded," it is then added, "Then cometh He to Simon Peter," as if He had already washed the feet of some, and after them had now come to the first of them all. For who can fail to know that the most blessed Peter was the first of the apostles? But we are not so to understand it, that it was after some others that He came to him; but that He began with him. When, therefore, He began to wash the disciples' feet, He came to him with whom He began, namely, to Peter; and then Peter took fright at what any one of them might have been frightened, and said, "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?" What is implied in this "Thou"? and what in "my"? These are subjects for thought rather than for speech; lest perchance any adequate conception the soul may have formed of such words may fail of explanation in the utterance.

2. But "Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." And not even yet, terrified as he was by the sublimity of the Lord's action, does he allow it to be done, while ignorant of

its purpose; but is unwilling to see, unable to endure, that Christ should thus humble Himself to his very feet. “Thou shalt never,” he says, “wash my feet.” What is this “never” [in aeternum]? I will never endure, never suffer, never permit it: that is, a thing is not done “in aeternum” which is never done. Then the Saviour, to terrify His reluctant patient with the danger of his own salvation, says, “If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with me.” He speaks in this way, “If I wash thee not,” when He was referring only to his feet; just as it is customary to say, You are trampling on me, when it is only the foot that is trampled on. And now the other, in a perturbation of love and fear, and more frightened at the thought that Christ should be withheld from him, than even to see Him humbled at his feet, exclaims, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.” Since this, indeed, is Thy threat, that my bodily members must be washed by Thee, not only do I no longer withhold the lowest, but I lay the foremost also at Thy disposal. Deny me not having a part with Thee, and I deny Thee not any part of my body to be washed.

3. “Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.” Some one perhaps may be aroused at this, and say: Nay, but if he is every whit clean, what need has He even to wash his feet? But the Lord knew what He was saying, even though our weakness reach not into His secret purposes. Nevertheless, so far as He is pleased to instruct and teach us out of His law, up to the little measure of my apprehension, I would also, with His help, make some answer bearing on the depths of this question: and, first of all, I shall have no difficulty in showing that there is no self-contradiction in the manner of expression. For who may not say, as here, with the greatest propriety, He is all clean, except his feet?—although he would speak with greater elegance were he to say, He is all clean, save his feet; which is equivalent in meaning. Thus, then, doth the Lord say, “He needeth not save to wash his feet, but is all clean.” All, that is, except, or save his feet, which he still needs to wash.

4. But what is this? what does it mean? and what is there in it we need to examine? The Lord says, The Truth declares that even he who has been washed has need still to wash his feet. What, my brethren, what think you of it, save that in holy baptism a man has all of him washed, not all save his

feet, but every whit; and yet, while thereafter living in this human state, he cannot fail to tread on the ground with his feet. And thus our human feelings themselves, which are inseparable from our mortal life on earth, are like feet wherewith we are brought into sensible contact with human affairs; and are so in such a way, that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. And every day, therefore, is He who intercedeth for us, washing our feet: and that we, too have daily need to be washing our feet, that is ordering aright the path of our spiritual footsteps, we acknowledge even in the Lord's prayer, when we say, "Forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors." For "if," as it is written, "we confess our sins," then verily is He, who washed His disciples' feet, "faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," that is, even to our feet wherewith we walk on the earth.

5. Accordingly the Church, which Christ cleanseth with the washing of water in the word, is without spot and wrinkle, not only in the case of those who are taken away immediately after the washing of regeneration from the contagious influence of this life, and tread not the earth so as to make necessary the washing of their feet, but in those also who have experienced such mercy from the Lord as to be enabled to quit this present life even with feet that have been washed. But although the Church be also clean in respect of those who tarry on earth, because they live righteously; yet have they need to be washing their feet, because they assuredly are not without sin. For this cause is it said in the Song of Songs, "I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" For one so speaks when he is constrained to come to Christ, and in coming has to bring his feet into contact with the ground. But again, there is another question that arises. Is not Christ above? hath He not ascended into heaven, and sitteth He not at the Father's right hand? Does not the apostle expressly declare, "If ye, then, be risen with Christ, set your thoughts on those things which are above, where Christ is sitting on the right hand of God. Seek the things which are above, not things which are on earth?" How is it, then, that to get to Christ we are compelled to tread the earth, since rather our hearts ought to be turned upwards toward the Lord, that we may be enabled to dwell in His presence? You see, brethren, the shortness of the time to-day curtails our consideration of this question. And if you perhaps fail in some measure to do so, yet I for my

part see how much clearing up it requires. And therefore I beg of you to suffer it rather to be adjourned, than to be treated now in too negligent and restricted a manner; and your expectations will not be defrauded, but only deferred. For the Lord who thus makes us your debtors, will be present to enable us also to pay our debts.

TRACTATE LVII

CHAPTER XIII. 6–10 (CONTINUED), AND SONG OF SOL. V. 2, 3

In what way the Church should fear to defile her feet, while proceeding on her way to Christ.

1. I Have not been unmindful of my debt, and acknowledge that the time of payment has now come. May He give me wherewith to pay, as He gave me cause to incur the debt. For He has given me the love, of which it is said, “Owe no man anything, but to love one another.” May He give also the word, which I feel myself owing to those I love. I put off your expectations till now for this reason, that I might explain as I could how it is we come to Christ along the ground, when we are commanded rather to seek the things which are above, not the things which are upon the earth. For Christ is sitting above, at the right hand of the Father: but He is assuredly here also; and for that reason said also to Saul, as he was raging on the earth, “Why persecutest thou me?” But the topic on which we were speaking, and which led to our entering on this inquiry, was our Lord’s washing His disciples’ feet, after the disciples themselves had already been washed, and needed not, save to wash their feet. And we there saw it to be understood that a man is indeed wholly washed in baptism; but while thereafter he liveth in this present world, and with the feet of his human passions treadeth on this earth, that is, in his life-intercourse with others, he contracts enough to call forth the prayer, “Forgive us our debts.” And thus from these also is he cleansed by Him who washed His disciples’ feet, and ceaseth not to make intercession for us. And here occurred the words of the Church in the Song of Songs, when she saith, “I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?” when she wished to go and open to that Being, fairer in form than the sons of men, who had come to her and knocked, and asked her to open to Him. This gave rise to a question, which we were unwilling to compress into the

narrow limits of the time, and therefore deferred till now, in what sense the Church, when on her way to Christ, may be afraid of defiling her feet, which she had washed in the baptism of Christ.

2. For thus she speaks: “I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh at the gate.” And then He also says: “Open to me, my sister, my nearest, my dove, my perfect one; for my head is filled with dew, and my hair with the drops of the night.” And she replies: “I have put off my dress; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?” O wonderful sacramental symbol! O lofty mystery! Does she, then, fear to defile her feet in coming to Him who washed the feet of His disciples? Her fear is genuine; for it is along the earth she has to come to Him, who is still on earth, because refusing to leave His own who are stationed here. Is it not He that saith, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world”? Is it not He that saith, “Ye shall see the heavens opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man”? If they ascend to Him because He is above, how do they descend to Him, but because He is also here? Therefore saith the Church: “I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?” She says so even in the case of those who, purified from all dross, can say: “I desire to depart, and to be with Christ; nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.” She says it in those who preach Christ, and open to Him the door, that He may dwell by faith in the hearts of men. In such she says it, when they deliberate whether to undertake such a ministry, for which they do not consider themselves qualified, so as to discharge it blamelessly, and so as not, after preaching to others, themselves to become castaways. For it is safer to hear than to preach the truth: for in the hearing, humility is preserved; but when it is preached, it is scarcely possible for any man to hinder the entrance of some small measure of boasting, whereby the feet at least are defiled.

3. Therefore, as the Apostle James saith, “Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak.” As it is also said by another man of God, “Thou wilt make me to hear joy and gladness; and the bones Thou hast humbled will rejoice.” This is what I said: When the truth is heard, humility is preserved. And another says: “But the friend of the bridegroom standeth and heareth him, and rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice.” Let us

rejoice in the hearing that comes from the noiseless speaking of the truth within us. For although, when the sound is outwardly uttered, as by one that readeth; or proclaimeth, or preacheth, or disputeth, or commandeth, or comforteth, or exhorteth, or even by one that sings or accompanies his voice on an instrument, those who do so may fear to defile their feet, when they aim at pleasing men with the secretly active desire of human applause. Yet the one who hears such with a willing and pious mind, has no room for self-gratulation in the labors of others; and with no self-inflation, but with the joy of humility, rejoices because of the Master’s words of truth. Accordingly, in those who hear with willingness and humility, and spend a tranquil life in sweet and wholesome studies, the holy Church will take delight, and may say, “I sleep, and my heart waketh.” And what is this, “I sleep, and my heart waketh,” but just I sit down quietly to listen? My leisure is not laid out in nourishing slothfulness, but in acquiring wisdom. “I sleep, and my heart waketh.” I am still, and see that Thou art the Lord: for “the wisdom of the scribe cometh by opportunity of leisure; and he that hath little business shall become wise.” “I sleep, and my heart waketh:” I rest from troublesome business, and my mind turns its attention to divine concerns (or communications).

4. But while the Church finds delightful repose in those who thus sweetly and humbly sit at her feet, here is one who knocks, and says: “What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops.” It is His voice, then, that knocks at the gate, and says: “Open to me, my sister, my neighbor, my dove, my perfect one; for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.” As if He had said, Thou art at leisure, and the door is closed against me: thou art caring for the leisure of the few, and through abounding iniquity the love of many is waxing cold. The night He speaks of is iniquity: but His dew and drops are those who wax cold and fall away, and make the head of Christ to wax cold, that is, the love of God to fail. For the head of Christ is God. But they are borne on His locks, that is, their presence is tolerated in the visible sacraments; while their senses never take hold of the internal realities. He knocks, therefore, to shake off this quiet from His inactive saints, and cries, “Open to me,” thou who, through my blood, art become “my sister;” through my drawing nigh, “my neighbor;” through my

Spirit, “my dove;” through my word which thou hast fully learned in thy leisure, “my perfect one:” open to me, go and preach me to others. For how shall I get in to those who have shut their door against me, without some one to open? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

5. Hence it happens that those who love to devote their leisure to good studies, and shrink from encountering the troubles of toilsome labors, as feeling themselves unsuited to undertake and discharge such services with credit, would prefer, were it possible, to have the holy apostles and ancient preachers of the truth again raised up against that abounding of iniquity which hath so reduced the warmth of Christian love. But in regard to those who have already left the body, and put off the garment of the flesh (for they are not utterly parted), the Church replies, “I have put off my dress; how shall I put it on?” That dress shall, indeed, yet be recovered; and in the persons of those who have meanwhile laid it aside, shall the Church again put on the garment of flesh: only not now, when the cold are needing to be warmed; but then, when the dead shall rise again. Realizing, then, her present difficulty through the scarcity of preachers, and remembering those members of her own who were so sound in word and holy in character, but are now disunited from their bodies, the Church says in her sorrow, “I have put off my dress; how shall I put it on?” How can those members of mine, who had such surpassing power, through their preaching, to open the door to Christ, now return to the bodies which they have laid aside?

6. And then, turning again to those who preach, and gather in and govern the congregations of His people, and so open as they can to Christ, but are afraid, amid the difficulties of such work, of falling into sin, she says, “I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?” For whosoever offendeth not in word, the same is a perfect man. And who, then, is perfect? Who is there that offendeth not amid such an abounding of iniquity, and such a freezing of charity? “I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?” At times I read and hear: “My brethren, be not many masters, seeing that ye shall receive the greater condemnation: for in many things we offend all.” “I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?” But see, I rise and open. Christ, wash them. “Forgive us our debts,” because our love is not altogether extinguished: for “we also forgive our debtors.” When we listen

to Thee, the bones which have been humbled rejoice with Thee in the heavenly places. But when we preach Thee, we have to tread the ground in order to open to Thee: and then, if we are blameworthy, we are troubled; if we are commended, we become inflated. Wash our feet, that were formerly cleansed, but have again been defiled in our walking through the earth to open unto Thee. Let this be enough today, beloved. But in whatever we have happened to offend, by saying otherwise than we ought, or have been unduly elated by your commendations, entreat that our feet may be washed, and may your prayers find acceptance with God.

TRACTATE LVIII

CHAPTER XIII. 10–15

1. We have already, beloved, as the Lord was pleased to enable us, expounded to you those words of the Gospel, where the Lord, in washing His disciples' feet, says, "He that is once washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." Let us now look at what follows. "And ye," He says, "are clean, but not all." And to remove the need of inquiry on our part, the evangelist has himself explained its meaning, by adding: "For He knew who it was that should betray Him; therefore said He, Ye are not all clean." Can anything be clearer? Let us therefore pass to what follows.

2. "So, after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?" Now it is that the blessed Peter gets that promise fulfilled: for he had been put off when, in the midst of his trembling and asserting, "Thou shalt never wash my feet," he received the answer, "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter" (vers. 7, 8). Here, then, is that very hereafter; it is now time to tell what was a little ago deferred. Accordingly, the Lord, mindful of His foregoing promise to make him understand an act of His so unexpected, so wonderful, so frightening, and, but for His own still more terrifying rejoinder, impossible to be permitted, that the Master not only of themselves, but of angels, and the Lord not only of them, but of all things, should wash the feet of His own disciples and servants: having then promised to let him know the meaning of so important an act, when He

said, “Thou shalt know afterwards,” begins now to show them what it was that He did.

3. “Ye call me,” He says, “Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.” “Ye say well,” for ye only say the truth; I am indeed what ye say. There is a precept laid on man: “Let not thine own mouth praise thee, but the mouth of thy neighbor.” For self-pleasing is a perilous thing for one who has to be on his guard against falling into pride. But He who is over all things, however much He commend Himself, cannot exalt Himself above His actual dignity: nor can God be rightly termed arrogant. For it is to our advantage to know Him, not to His; nor can any one know Him, unless that self-knowing One make Himself known. If He, then, by abstaining from self-commendation, wish, as it were, to avoid arrogance, He will deny us the power of knowing Him. And no one surely would blame Him for calling Himself Master, even though believing Him to be nothing more than a man; seeing He only makes profession of what even men themselves in the various arts profess to such an extent, without any charge of arrogance, that they are termed professors. But to call Himself also the Lord of His disciples,—of men who, in an earthly sense, were themselves also free-born,—who would tolerate it in a man? But it is God that speaks. Here no elation is possible to loftiness so great, no lie to the truth: the profit is ours to be the subjects of such loftiness, the servants of the truth. That He calls Himself Lord is no imperfection on His side, but a benefit on ours. The words of a certain profane author are commended, when he says, “All arrogance is hateful, and specially disagreeable is that of talent and eloquence;” and yet, when the same person was speaking of his own eloquence, he said, “I would call it perfect, were I to pronounce judgment; nor, in truth, would I greatly fear the charge of arrogance.” If, then, that most eloquent man had in truth no fear of being charged with arrogance, how can the truth itself have such a fear? Let Him call Himself Lord who is the Lord, let Him say what is true who is the Truth; so that I may not fail to learn that which is profitable, by His being silent about that which is. The most blessed Paul—certainly not himself the only-begotten Son of God, but the servant and apostle of that Son; not the Truth, but a partaker of the truth—declares with freedom and consistency, “And though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I say the truth.” For it would not be in himself, but in the truth, which is

superior to himself, that he was glorying both humbly and truly: for it is he also who has given the charge, that he that glorieth should glory in the Lord. Could thus the lover of wisdom have no fear of being chargeable with foolishness, though he desired to glory, and would wisdom itself, in its glorying, have any fear of such a charge? He had no fear of arrogance who said, “My soul shall make her boast in the Lord;” and could the power of the Lord have any such fear in commending itself, in which His servant’s soul is making her boast? “Ye call me,” He says, “Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.” Therefore ye say well, that I am so: for if I were not what ye say, ye would be wrong to say so, even with the purpose of praising me. How, then, could the Truth deny what the disciples of the Truth affirm? How could that which was said by the learners be denied by the very Truth that gave them their learning? How can the fountain deny what the drinker asserts? how can the light hide what the beholder declares?

4. “If I, then,” He says, “your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” This, blessed Peter, is what thou didst not know when thou wert not allowing it to be done. This is what He promised to let thee know afterwards, when thy Master and thy Lord terrified thee into submission, and washed thy feet. We have learned, brethren, humility from the Highest; let us, as humble, do to one another what He, the Highest, did in His humility. Great is the commendation we have here of humility: and brethren do this to one another in turn, even in the visible act itself, when they treat one another with hospitality; for the practice of such humility is generally prevalent, and finds expression in the very deed that makes it discernible. And hence the apostle, when he would commend the well-deserving widow, says, “If she is hospitable, if she has washed the saints’ feet.” And wherever such is not the practice among the saints, what they do not with the hand they do in heart, if they are of the number of those who are addressed in the hymn of the three blessed men, “O ye holy and humble of heart, bless ye the Lord.” But it is far better, and beyond all dispute more accordant with the truth, that it should also be done with the hands; nor should the Christian think it beneath him to do what was done by Christ. For when the body is bent at a brother’s feet, the

feeling of such humility is either awakened in the heart itself, or is strengthened if already present.

5. But apart from this moral understanding of the passage, we remember that the way in which we commended to your attention the grandeur of this act of the Lord’s, was that, in washing the feet of disciples who were already washed and clean, the Lord instituted a sign, to the end that, on account of the human feelings that occupy us on earth, however far we may have advanced in our apprehension of righteousness, we might know that we are not exempt from sin; which He thereafter washes away by interceding for us, when we pray the Father, who is in heaven, to forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. What connection, then, can such an understanding of the passage have with that which He afterwards gave Himself, when He explained the reason of His act in the words, “If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you”? Can we say that even a brother may cleanse a brother from the contracted stain of wrongdoing? Yea, verily, we know that of this also we were admonished in the profound significance of this work of the Lord’s, that we should confess our faults one to another, and pray for one another, even as Christ also maketh intercession for us. Let us listen to the Apostle James, who states this precept with the greatest clearness when he says, “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another.” For of this also the Lord gave us the example. For if He who neither has, nor had, nor will have any sin, prays for our sins, how much more ought we to pray for one another’s in turn! And if He forgives us, whom we have nothing to forgive; how much more ought we, who are unable to live here without sin, to forgive one another! For what else does the Lord apparently intimate in the profound significance of this sacramental sign, when He says, “For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you;” but what the apostle declares in the plainest terms, “Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye”? Let us therefore forgive one another his faults, and pray for one another’s faults, and thus in a manner be washing one another’s feet. It is our part, by His grace, to be supplying the service of love and humility: it is His to hear us, and to cleanse us from all the pollution of our sins through

Christ, and in Christ; so that what we forgive even to others, that is, loose on earth, may be loosed in heaven.

TRACTATE LIX

CHAPTER XIII. 16–20

1. We have just heard in the holy Gospel the Lord speaking, and saying, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord, nor the apostle [he that is sent] greater than he that sent him: if ye know these things, blessed shall ye be if ye do them.” He said this, therefore, because He had washed the disciples’ feet, as the Master of humility both by word and example. But we shall be able, with His help, to handle what is in need of more elaborate handling, if we linger not at what is perfectly clear. Accordingly, after uttering these words, the Lord added, “I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but, that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, shall lift up his heel upon me.” And what is this, but that he shall trample upon me? We know of whom He speaks: it is Judas, that betrayer of His, who is referred to. He had not therefore chosen the person whom, by these words, He setteth utterly apart from His chosen ones. When I say then, He continues, “Blessed shall ye be if ye do them, I speak not of you all:” there is one among you who will not be blessed, and who will not do these things. “I know whom I have chosen.” Whom, but those who shall be blessed in the doing of what has been commanded and shown as needful to be done, by Him who alone can make them blessed? The traitor Judas, He says, is not one of those that have been chosen. What, then, is meant by what He says in another place, “Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” Was it that he also was chosen for some purpose, for which he was really necessary; although not for the blessedness of which He has just been saying, “Blessed shall ye be if ye do these things”? He speaketh not so of them all; for He knows whom He has chosen to be associated with Himself in blessedness. Of such he is not one, who ate His bread in order that he might lift up his heel upon Him. The bread they ate was the Lord Himself; he ate the Lord’s bread in enmity to the Lord: they ate life, and he punishment. “For he that eateth unworthily,” says the apostle, “eateth judgment unto himself.” “From this time,” Christ adds, “I tell you before it come; that when it is come to pass, ye may

believe that I am He:” that is, I am He of whom the Scripture that preceded has just said, “He that eateth bread with me, shall lift up his heel upon me.”

2. He then proceeds to say: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me.” Did He mean us to understand that there is as little distance between one sent by Him, and Himself, as there is between Himself and God the Father? If we take it in this way, I know not what measurements of distance (which may God forbid!) we shall be adopting, in the Arian fashion. For they, when they hear or read these words of the Gospel, have immediate recourse to their dogmatic measurements, whereby they ascend not to life, but fall headlong into death. For they straightway say: The Son’s messenger stands at the same relative distance from the Son, as expressed in the words, “He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me,” as that in which the Son Himself stands from the Father, when He said, “He that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me.” But if thou sayest so, thou forgettest, heretic, thy measurements. For if, because of these words of the Lord, thou puttest the Son at as great a distance from the Father as the messenger [apostle] from the Son, where dost thou purpose to place the Holy Spirit? Has it escaped thee, that ye are wont to place Him after the Son? He will therefore come in between the messenger and the Son; and much greater, then, will be the distance between the Son and His messenger, than between the Father and His Son. Or perhaps, to preserve that distinction between the Son and His messenger, and between the Father and His Son, at their equality of distance, will the Holy Spirit be equal to the Son? But as little will ye allow this. And where, then, do ye think of placing Him, if ye place the Son as far beneath the Father, as ye place the messenger beneath the Son? Restrain, therefore, your foolhardy presumption; and do not be seeking to find in these words the same distance between the Son and His messenger as between the Father and His Son. But listen rather to the Son Himself, when He says, “I and my Father are one.” For there the Truth hath left you no shadow of distance between the Begetter and the Only-begotten; there Christ Himself hath erased your measurements, and the rock hath broken your staircase to pieces.

3. But now that the heretical slander has been disposed of, in what sense are we to understand these words of the Lord: “He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me”? For if we were inclined to understand the words, “He that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me,” as expressing the oneness in nature of the Father and the Son; the sequence from the similar arrangement of words in the other clause, “He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me,” would be the unity in nature of the Son and His messenger. And there might, indeed, be no impropriety in so understanding it, seeing that a twofold substance belongeth to the strong man, who hath rejoiced to run the race; for the Word was made flesh, that is, God became man. And accordingly He might be supposed to have said, “He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me,” with reference to His human nature; “and he that receiveth me” as God, “receiveth Him that sent me.” But in so speaking, He was not commending the unity of nature, but the authority of the Sender in Him who is sent. Let every one, therefore, so receive Him that is sent, that in His person he may give heed to Him who sent Him. If, then, thou lookest for Christ in Peter, thou wilt find the disciple’s instructor; and if thou lookest for the Father in the Son, thou wilt find the Begetter of the Only-begotten: and so in Him who is sent, thou art not mistaken in receiving the Sender. What follows in the Gospel cannot be compressed within the shortness of the time remaining. And therefore, dearly beloved, let what has been said, if thought sufficient, be received in a healthful way, as pasture for the holy sheep; and if it is somewhat scanty, let it be ruminated over with ardent desire for more.

TRACTATE LX

CHAPTER XIII. 21

1. It is no light question, brethren, that meets us in the Gospel of the blessed John, when he says: “When Jesus had thus said, He was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.” Was it for this reason that Jesus was troubled, not in flesh, but in spirit, that He was now about to say, “One of you shall betray me”? Did this occur then for the first time to His mind, or was it at that moment suddenly revealed to Him for the first time, and so troubled Him by the

startling novelty of so great a calamity? Was it not a little before that He was using these words, “He that eateth bread with me will lift up his heel against me”? And had He not also, previously to that, said, “And ye are clean, but not all”? where the evangelist added, “For He knew who should betray Him:” to whom also on a still earlier occasion He had pointed in the words, “Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” Why is it, then, that He “was now troubled in spirit,” when “He testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me”? Was it because now He had so to mark him out, that he should no longer remain concealed among the rest, but be separated from the others, that therefore “He was troubled in spirit”? Or was it because now the traitor himself was on the eve of departing to bring those Jews to whom he was to betray the Lord, that He was troubled by the imminency of His passion, the closeness of the danger, and the swooping hand of the traitor, whose resolution was foreknown? For some such cause it certainly was that Jesus “was troubled in spirit,” as when He said, “Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour.” And accordingly, just as then His soul was troubled as the hour of His passion approached; so now also, as Judas was on the point of going and coming, and the atrocious villainy of the traitor neared its accomplishment, “He was troubled in spirit.”

2. He was troubled, then, who had power to lay down His life, and had power to take it again. That mighty power is troubled, the firmness of the rock is disturbed: or is it rather our infirmity that is troubled in Him? Assuredly so: let servants believe nothing unworthy of their Lord, but recognize their own membership in their Head. He who died for us, was also Himself troubled in our place. He, therefore, who died in power, was troubled in the midst of His power: He who shall yet transform the body of our humility into similarity of form with the body of His glory, hath also transferred into Himself the feeling of our infirmity, and sympathizeth with us in the feelings of His own soul. Accordingly, when it is the great, the brave, the sure, the invincible One that is troubled, let us have no fear for Him, as if He were capable of failing: He is not perishing, but in search of us [who are]. Us, I say; it is us exclusively whom He is thus seeking, that in His trouble we may behold ourselves, and so, when trouble reaches us, may

not fall into despair and perish. By His trouble, who could not be troubled save with His own consent, He comforts such as are troubled unwillingly.

3. Away with the reasons of philosophers, who assert that a wise man is not affected by mental perturbations. God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world; and the Lord knoweth the thoughts of men, that they are vain. It is plain that the mind of the Christian may be troubled, not by misery, but by pity: he may fear lest men should be lost to Christ; he may sorrow when one is being lost; he may have ardent desire to gain men to Christ; he may be filled with joy when such is being done; he may have fear of falling away himself from Christ; he may sorrow over his own estrangement from Christ; he may be earnestly desirous of reigning with Christ, and he may be rejoicing in the hope that such fellowship with Christ will yet be his lot. These are certainly four of what they call perturbations—fear and sorrow, love and gladness. And Christian minds may have sufficient cause to feel them, and evidence their dissent from the error of Stoic philosophers, and all resembling them: who indeed, just as they esteem truth to be vanity, regard also insensibility as soundness; not knowing that a man's mind, like the limbs of his body, is only the more hopelessly diseased when it has lost even the feeling of pain.

4. But says some one: Ought the mind of the Christian to be troubled even at the prospect of death? For what comes of those words of the apostle, that he had a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, if the object of his desire can thus trouble him when it comes? Our answer to this would be easy, indeed, in the case of those who also term gladness itself a perturbation [of the mind]. For what if the trouble he thus feels arises entirely from his rejoicing at the prospect of death? But such a feeling, they say, ought to be termed gladness, and not rejoicing. And what is that, but just to alter the name, while the feeling experienced is the same? But let us for our part confine our attention to the Sacred Scriptures, and with the Lord's help seek rather such a solution of this question as will be in harmony with them; and then, seeing it is written, "When He had thus said, He was troubled in spirit," we will not say that it was joy that disturbed Him; lest His own words should convince us of the contrary when He says, "My soul is sorrowful, even unto death." It is some such feeling that is here also to be

understood, when, as His betrayer was now on the very point of departing alone, and straightway returning along with his associates, “Jesus was troubled in spirit.”

5. Strong-minded, indeed, are those Christians, if such there are, who experience no trouble at all in the prospect of death; but for all that, are they stronger-minded than Christ? Who would have the madness to say so? And what else, then, does His being troubled signify, but that, by voluntarily assuming the likeness of their weakness, He comforted the weak members in His own body, that is, in His Church; to the end that, if any of His own are still troubled at the approach of death, they may fix their gaze upon Him, and so be kept from thinking themselves castaways on this account, and being swallowed up in the more grievous death of despair? And how great, then, must be that good which we ought to expect and hope for in the participation of His divine nature, whose very perturbation tranquillizes us, and whose infirmity confirms us? Whether, therefore, on this occasion it was by His pity for Judas himself thus rushing into ruin, or by the near approach of His own death, that He was troubled, yet there is no possibility of doubting that it was not through any infirmity of mind, but in the fullness of power, that He was troubled, and so no despair of salvation need arise in our minds, when we are troubled, not in the possession of power, but in the midst of our weakness. He certainly bore the infirmity of the flesh,—an infirmity which was swallowed up in His resurrection. But He who was not only man, but God also, surpassed by an ineffable distance the whole human race in fortitude of mind. He was not, then, troubled by any outward plessure of man, but troubled Himself; which was very plainly declared of Him when He raised Lazarus from the dead: for it is there written that He troubled Himself, that it may be so understood even where the text does not so express it, and yet declares that He was troubled. For having by His power assumed our full humanity, by that very power He awoke in Himself our human feelings whenever He judged it becoming.

TRACTATE LXI

CHAPTER XIII. 21–26

1. This short section of the Gospel, brethren, we have in this lesson brought forward for exposition, as thinking that we ought also to say something of the Lord's betrayer, as now plainly enough disclosed by the dipping and holding out to him of the piece of bread. Of that indeed which precedes, (namely), that Jesus, when about to point him out, was troubled in spirit, we have treated in our last discourse; but what I perhaps omitted to mention there, the Lord, by His own perturbation of spirit, thought proper to indicate this also, that it is necessary to bear with false brethren, and those tares that are among the wheat in the Lord's field until harvest-time, because that when we are compelled by urgent reasons to separate some of them even before the harvest, it cannot be done without disturbance to the Church. Such disturbance to His saints in the future, through schismatics and heretics, the Lord in a way foretold and prefigured in Himself, when, at the moment of that wicked man Judas' departure, and of his thereby bringing to an end, in a very open and decided way, his past intermingling with the wheat, in which he had long been tolerated, He was troubled, not in body, but in spirit. For it is not spitefulness, but charity, that troubles His spiritual members in scandals of this kind; lest perchance, in separating some of the tares, any of the wheat should also be uprooted therewith.

2. "Jesus," therefore, "was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said: Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." "One of you," in number, not in merit; in appearance, not in reality; in bodily commingling, not by any spiritual tie; a companion by fleshly juxtaposition, not in any unity of the heart; and therefore not one who is of you, but one who is to go forth from you. For how else can this "one of you" be true, of which the Lord so testified, and said, if that is true which the writer of this very Gospel says in his Epistle, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us"? Judas, therefore was not of them; for, had he been of them, he would have continued with them. What, then, do the words "One of you shall betray me" mean, but that one is going out from you who shall betray me? Just as he also, who said, "If they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us," had said before, "They went out from us." And thus it is true in both senses, "of us," and "not of us;" in one respect "of us," and in another "not of us;" "of us" in respect to sacramental communion, but "not

of us” in respect to the criminal conduct that belongs exclusively to themselves.

3. “Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom He spake.” For while they were imbued with a reverential love to their Master, they were none the less affected by human infirmity in their feelings towards each other. Each one’s own conscience was known to himself; but as he was ignorant of his neighbor’s, each one’s self-assurance was such that each was uncertain of all the others, and all the others were uncertain of that one.

4. “Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom, one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.” What he meant by saying “in His bosom,” he tells us a little further on, where he says, “on the breast of Jesus.” It was that very John whose Gospel is before us, as he afterwards expressly declares. For it was a custom with those who have supplied us with the sacred writings, that when any of them was relating the divine history, and came to something affecting himself, he spoke as if it were about another; and gave himself a place in the line of his narrative becoming one who was the recorder of public events, and not as one who made himself the subject of his preaching. Saint Matthew acted also in this way, when, in coming in the course of his narrative to himself, he says, “He saw a publican named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom, and saith unto him, Follow me.” He does not say, He saw me, and said to me. So also acted the blessed Moses, writing all the history about himself as if it concerned another, and saying, “The Lord said unto Moses.” Less habitually was this done by the Apostle Paul, not however in any history which undertakes to explain the course of public events, but in his own epistles. At all events, he speaks thus of himself: “I knew a man in Christ fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up into the third heaven.” And so, when the blessed evangelist also says here, not, I was leaning on Jesus’ bosom, but, “There was leaning one of the disciples,” let us recognize a custom of our author’s, rather than fall into any wonder on the subject. For what loss is there to the truth, when the facts themselves are told us, and all boastfulness of language is in a measure avoided? For thus at least did he relate that which most signally pertained to his praise.

5. But what mean the words, “whom Jesus loved”? As if He did not love the others, of whom this same John has said above, “He loved them to the end” (ver. 1); and as the Lord Himself, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” And who could enumerate all the testimonies of the sacred pages, in which the Lord Jesus is exhibited as the lover, not only of this one, or of those who were then around Him, but of such also as were to be His members in the distant future, and of His universal Church? But there is some truth, doubtless, underlying these words, and having reference to the bosom on which the narrator was leaning. For what else can be in dicated by the bosom but some hidden truth? But there is another more suitable passage, where the Lord may enable us to say something about this secret that may prove sufficient.

6. “Simon Peter therefore beckons, and says to him.” The expression is noteworthy, as indicating that something was said not by any sound of words, but by merely beckoning with the head. “He beckons, and says;” that is, his beckoning is his speech. For if one is said to speak in his thoughts, as Scripture saith, “They said [reasoned] with themselves;” how much more may he do so by beckoning, which expresses outwardly by some sort of signs what had previously been conceived within! What, then, did his beckoning mean? What else but that which follows? “Who is it of whom He speaks?” Such was the language of Peter’s beckoning; for it was by no vocal sounds, but by bodily gestures, that he spake. “He then, having leaned back on Jesus’ breast,”—surely the very bosom of His breast this, the secret place of wisdom!—”saith unto Him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a piece of bread, when I have dipped it. And when He had dipped the bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the bread, Satan entered into him.” The traitor was disclosed, the coverts of darkness were revealed. What he got was good, but to his own hurt he received it, because, evil himself, in an evil spirit he received what was good. But we have much to say about that dipped bread which was presented to the false-hearted disciple, and about that which follows; and for these we shall require more time than remains to us now at the close of this discourse.

TRACTATE LXII

CHAPTER XIII. 26–31

1. I Know, dearly beloved, that some may be moved, as the godly to inquire into the meaning of, and the ungodly to find fault with, the statement, that it was after the Lord had given the bread, that had been dipped, to His betrayer that Satan entered into him. For so it is written: “And when He had dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the Son of Simon. And after the bread, then entered Satan into him.” For they say, Was this the worth of Christ’s bread, given from Christ’s own table, that after it Satan should enter into His disciple? And the answer we give them is, that thereby we are taught rather how much we need to beware of receiving what is good in a sinful spirit. For the point of special importance is, not the thing that is received, but the person that receives it; and not the character of the thing that is given, but of him to whom it is given. For even good things are hurtful, and evil things are beneficial, according to the character of the recipients. “Sin,” says the apostle, “that it might appear sin, wrought death to me by that which is good.” Thus, you see, evil is brought about by the good, so long as that which is good is wrongly received. It is he also that says: “Lest I should be exalted unduly through the greatness of my revelations, there was given to me a thorn in my flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me. For which thing I besought the Lord thrice, that He would take it away from me; and He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for strength is made perfect in weakness.” And here, you see, good was brought about by that which was evil, when the evil was received in a good spirit. Why, then, do we wonder if Christ’s bread was given to Judas, that thereby he should be made over to the devil; when we see, on the other hand, that Paul was visited by a messenger of the devil, that by such an instrumentality he might be perfected in Christ? In this way, both the good was injurious to the evil man, and the evil was beneficial to the good. Bear in mind the meaning of the Scripture, “Whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” And when the apostle said this, he was dealing with those who were taking the body of the Lord, like any other food, in an undiscerning and careless spirit. If, then, he is thus taken to task who does not discern, that is, does not distinguish from the other kinds of food, the body of the

Lord, what condemnation must be his, who in the guise of a friend comes as an enemy to His table! If negligence in the guest is thus visited with blame, what must be the punishment that will fall on the man that sells the very person who has invited him to his table! And why was the bread given to the traitor, but as an evidence of the grace he had treated with ingratitude?

2. It was after this bread, then, that Satan entered into the Lord's betrayer, that, as now given over to his power, he might take full possession of one into whom before this he had only entered in order to lead him into error. For we are not to suppose that he was not in him when he went to the Jews and bargained about the price of betraying the Lord; for the evangelist Luke very plainly attests this when he says: "Then entered Satan into Judas, who was surnamed Iscariot, being one of the twelve; and he went his way, and communed with the chief priests." Here, you see, it is shown that Satan had already entered into Judas. His first entrance, therefore, was when he implanted in his heart the thought of betraying Christ; for in such a spirit had he already come to the supper. But now, after the bread, he entered into him, no longer to tempt one who belonged to another, but to take possession of him as his own.

3. But it was not then, as some thoughtless readers suppose, that Judas received the body of Christ. For we are to understand that the Lord had already dispensed to all of them the sacrament of His body and blood, when Judas also was present, as very clearly related by Saint Luke; and it was after this that we come to the moment when, in accordance with John's account, the Lord made a full disclosure of His betrayer by dipping and holding out to him the morsel of bread, and intimating perhaps by the dipping of the bread the false pretensions of the other. For the dipping of a thing does not always imply its washing; but some things are dipped in order to be dyed. But if a good meaning is to be here attached to the dipping, his ingratitude for that good was deservedly followed by damnation.

4. But still, possessed as Judas now was, not by the Lord, but by the devil, and now that the bread had entered the belly, and an enemy the soul of this man of ingratitude: still, I say, there was this enormous wickedness, already conceived in his heart, waiting to be wrought out to its full issue, for which

the damnable desire had always preceded. Accordingly, when the Lord, the living Bread, had given this bread to the dead, and in giving it had revealed the betrayer of the Bread, He said, “What thou doest, do quickly.” He did not command the crime, but foretold evil to Judas, and good to us. For what could be worse for Judas, or what could be better for us, than the delivering up of Christ,—a deed done by him to his own destruction, but done, apart from him, in our behalf? “What thou doest, do quickly.” Oh that word of One whose wish was to be ready rather than to be angry! That word! expressing not so much the punishment of the traitor as the reward awaiting the Redeemer! For He said, “What thou doest, do quickly,” not as wrathfully looking to the destruction of the trust-betrayer, but in His own haste to accomplish the salvation of the faithful; for He was delivered for our offences, and He loved the Church, and gave Himself for it. And as the apostle also says of himself: “Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” Had not, then, Christ given Himself, no one could have given Him up. What is there in Judas’ conduct but sin? For in delivering up Christ he had no thought of our salvation, for which Christ was really delivered, but thought only of his money gain, and found the loss of his soul. He got the wages he wished, but had also given him, against his wish, the wages he merited. Judas delivered up Christ, Christ delivered Himself up: the former transacted the business of his own selling of his Master, the latter the business of our redemption. “What thou doest, do quickly,” not because thou hast the power in thyself, but because He wills it who has all the power.

5. “Now no one of those at the table knew for what intent He spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the money-bag, that Jesus said unto him, Buy those things which we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.” The Lord, therefore, had also a money-box, where He kept the offerings of believers, and distributed to the necessities of His own, and to others who were in need. It was then that the custom of having church-money was first introduced, so that thereby we might understand that His precept about taking no thought for the morrow was not a command that no money should be kept by His saints, but that God should not be served for any such end, and that the doing of what is right should not be held in abeyance through the fear of

want. For the apostle also has this foresight for the future, when he says: “If any believer hath widows, let him give them enough, that the church may not be burdened, that it may have enough for them that are widows indeed.”

6. “He then, having received the morsel of bread, went immediately out: and it was night.” And he that went out was himself the night. “Therefore when” the night “was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified.” The day therefore uttered speech unto the day, that is, Christ did so to His faithful disciples, that they might hear and love Him as His followers; and the night showed knowledge unto the night, that is, Judas did so to the unbelieving Jews, that they might come as His persecutors, and make Him their prisoner. But now, in considering these words of the Lord, which were addressed to the godly, before His arrest by the ungodly, special attention on the part of the hearer is required; and therefore it will be more becoming in the preacher, instead of hurriedly considering them now, to defer them till a future occasion.

TRACTATE LXIII

CHAPTER XIII. 31–32

1. Let us give our mind’s best attention, and, with the Lord’s help, seek after God. The language of the divine hymn is: “Seek God and your soul shall live.” Let us search for that which needs to be discovered, and into that which has been discovered. He whom we need to discover is concealed, in order to be sought after; and when found, is infinite, in order still to be the object of our search. Hence it is elsewhere said, “Seek His face evermore.” For He satisfies the seeker to the utmost of his capacity; and makes the finder still more capable, that he may seek to be filled anew, according to the growth of his ability to receive. Therefore it was not said, “Seek His face evermore,” in the same sense as of certain others, who are “always learning, and never coming to a knowledge of the truth;” but rather as the preacher saith, “When a man hath finished, then he beginneth;” till we reach that life where we shall be so filled, that our natures shall attain their utmost capacity, because we shall have arrived at perfection, and no longer be aiming at more. For then all that can satisfy us will be revealed to our eyes. But here let us always be seeking, and let our reward in finding put no

end to our searching. For we do not say that it will not be so always, because it is only so here; but that here we must always be seeking, lest at any time we should imagine that here we can ever cease from seeking. For those of whom it is said that they are “always learning, and never coming to a knowledge of the truth,” are here indeed always learning; but when they depart this life they will no longer be learning, but receiving the reward of their error. For the words, “always learning, and never coming to a knowledge of the truth,” mean, as it were, always walking, and never getting into the road. Let us, on the other hand, be walking always in the way, till we reach the end to which it leads; let us nowhere tarry in it till we reach the proper place of abode: and so we shall both persevere in our seeking, and be making some attainments in our finding, and, thus seeking and finding, be passing on to that which remains, till the very end of all seeking shall be reached in that world where perfection shall admit of no further effort at advancement. Let these prefatory remarks, dearly beloved, make your Charity attentive to this discourse of our Lord’s, which He addressed to the disciples before His passion: for it is profound in it self; and where, in particular, the preacher purposes to expend much labor, the hearer ought not to be remiss in attention.

2. What is it, then, that the Lord says, after that Judas went out, to do quickly what he purposed doing, namely, betraying the Lord? What says the day when the night had gone out? What says the Redeemer when the seller had departed? “Now,” He says, “is the Son of man glorified.” Why “now”? It was not, was it, merely that His betrayer was gone out, and that those were at hand who were to seize and slay Him? Is it thus that He “is now glorified,” to wit, that His deeper humiliation is approaching; that over Him are impending both bonds, and judgment, and condemnation, and mocking, and crucifixion, and death? Is this glorification, or rather humiliation? Even when He was working miracles, does not this very John say of Him, “The Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified”? Even then, therefore, when He was raising the dead, He was not yet glorified; and is He glorified now, when drawing near in His own person unto death? He was not yet glorified when acting as God, and is He glorified in going to suffer as man? It would be strange if it were this that God, the great Master, signified and taught in such words. We must ascend higher to unveil the

words of the Highest, who reveals Himself somewhat that we may find Him, and anon hides Himself that we may seek Him, and so press on step by step, as it were, from discoveries already made to those that still await us. I get here a sight of something that prefigures a great reality. Judas went out, and Jesus is glorified; the son of perdition went out, and the Son of man is glorified. He it was that had gone out, on whose account it had been said to them all, “And ye are clean, but not all” (ver. 10). When, therefore, the unclean one departed, all that remained were clean, and continued with their Cleanser. Something like this will it be when this world shall have been conquered by Christ, and shall have passed away, and there shall be no one that is unclean remaining among His people; when, the tares having been separated from the wheat, the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The Lord, foreseeing such a future as this, and in testimony that such was signified now in the separation of the tares, as it were, by the departure of Judas, and the remaining behind of the wheat in the persons of the holy apostles, said, “Now is the Son of man glorified:” as if He had said, See, so will it be in that day of my glorification yet to come, when none of the wicked shall be present, and none of the good shall be wanting. His words, however, are not expressed in this way: Now is prefigured the glorification of the Son of man; but expressly, “Now is the Son of man glorified:” just as it was not said, The Rock signified Christ; but, “That Rock was Christ.” Nor is it said, The good seed signified the children of the kingdom, or, The tares signified the children of the wicked one; but what is said is, “The good seed, these are the children of the kingdom; and the tares, the children of the wicked one.” According, then, to the usage of Scripture language, which speaks of the signs as if they were the things signified, the Lord makes use of the words, “Now is the Son of man glorified;” indicating that in the completed separation of that arch sinner from their company, and in the remaining around Him of His saints, we have the foreshadowing of His glorification, when the wicked shall be finally separated, and He shall dwell with His saints through eternity.

3. But after saying, “Now is the Son of man glorified,” He added, “and God is glorified in Him.” For this is itself the glorifying of the Son of man, that God should be glorified in Him. For if He is not glorified in Himself, but God in Him, then it is He whom God glorifies in Himself. And just as if to

give them this explanation, He furthers adds: “If God is glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself.” That is, “If God is glorified in Him,” because He came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him; “and God shall glorify Him in Himself,” in such wise that the human nature, in which He is the Son of man, and which was so assumed by the eternal Word, should also be endowed with an eternal immortality. “And,” He says, “He shall straightway glorify Him;” predicting, to wit, by such an asseveration, His own resurrection in the immediate future, and not, as it were, ours in the end of the world. For it is this very glorification of which the evangelist had previously said, as I mentioned a little ago, that on this account the Spirit was not yet in their case given in that new way, in which He was yet to be given after the resurrection to those who believed, because that Jesus was not yet glorified: that is, mortality was not yet clothed with immortality, and temporal weakness transformed into eternal strength. This glorification may also be indicated in the words, “Now is the Son of man glorified;” so that the word “now” may be supposed to refer, not to His impending passion, but to His closely succeeding resurrection, as if what was now so near at hand had actually been accomplished. Let this suffice your affection to-day; we shall take up, when the Lord permits us, the words that follow.

TRACTATE LXIV

CHAPTER XIII. 31–32

1. It becomes us, dearly beloved, to keep in view the orderly connection of our Lord’s words. For after having previously said, but subsequently to Judas’ departure, and his separation from even the outward communion of the saints, “Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him;”—whether He said so as pointing to His future kingdom, when the wicked shall be separated from the good, or that His resurrection was then to take place, that is, was not to be delayed, like ours, till the end of the world;—and having then added, “If God is glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him,” whereby without any ambiguity He testified to the immediate fulfillment of His own resurrection; He proceeded to say, “Little children, yet a little while I am with you.” To keep them, therefore, from thinking that God was to glorify

Him in such a way that He would never again be joined with them in earthly intercourse, He said, “Yet a little while I am with you:” as if He had said, Straightway indeed I shall be glorified in my resurrection; and yet I am not straightway to ascend into heaven, but “yet a little while I am with you.” For, as we find it written in the Acts of the Apostles, He spent forty days with them after His resurrection, going in and out, and eating and drinking: not indeed that He had any experience of hunger and thirst, but even by such evidences confirmed the reality of His flesh, which no longer needed, but still possessed the power, to eat and to drink. Was it, then, these forty days He had in view when He said, “Yet a little while I am with you,” or something else? For it may also be understood in this way: “Yet a little while I am with you;” still, like you, I also am in this state of fleshly infirmity, that is, till He should die and rise again: for after He rose again He was with them, as has been said, for forty days in the full manifestation of His bodily presence; but He was no longer with them in the fellowship of human infirmity.

2. There is also another form of His divine presence unknown to mortal senses, of which He likewise says, “Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.” This, at least, is not the same as “yet a little while I am with you;” for it is not a little while until the end of the world. Or if even this is so (for time flies, and a thousand years are in God’s sight as one day, or as a watch in the night,) yet we cannot believe that He intended any such meaning on this occasion, especially as He went on to say, “Ye shall seek me, and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come.” That is to say, after this little while that I am with you, “ye shall seek me, and whither I go, ye cannot come.” Is it after the end of the world that, whither He goes, they will not be able to come? And where, then, is the place of which He is going to say a little after in this same discourse, “Father, I will that they also be with me where I am”? It was not then of that presence of His with His own which He is maintaining with them till the end of the world that He now spake, when He said, “Yet a little while I am with you;” but either of that state of mortal infirmity in which He dwelt with them till His passion, or of that bodily presence which He was to maintain with them up till His ascension. Whichever of these any one prefers, he can do so without being at variance with the faith.

3. That no one, however, may deem that sense inconsistent with the true one, in which we say that the Lord may have meant the communion of mortal flesh which He held with the disciples till His passion, when He said, “Yet a little while I am with you;” let those words also of His after His resurrection, as found in another evangelist, be taken into consideration, when He said, “These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you:” as if then He was no longer with them, even at the very time that they were standing by, seeing, touching, and talking with Him. What does He mean, then, by saying, “while I was yet with you,” but, while I was yet in that state of mortal flesh wherein ye still remain? For then, indeed, He had been raised again in the same flesh; but He was no longer associated with them in the same mortality. And accordingly, as on that occasion, when now clothed in fleshly immortality, He said with truth, “while I was yet with you,” to which we can attach no other meaning than, while I was yet with you in fleshly mortality; so here also, without any absurdity, we may understand His words, “Yet a little while I am with you,” as if He had said, Yet a little while I am mortal like yourselves. Let us look, then, at the words that follow.

4. “Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so say I to you now.” That is, ye cannot come now. But when He said so to the Jews, He did not add the “now.” The former, therefore, were not able at that time to come where He was going, but they were so afterwards; because He says so a little afterwards in the plainest terms to the Apostle Peter. For, on the latter inquiring, “Lord, whither goest Thou?” He replied to him, “Whither I go thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards” (ver. 36). But what it means is not to be carelessly passed over. For whither was it that the disciples could not then follow the Lord, but were able afterwards? If we say, to death, what time can be discovered when any one of the sons of men will find it impossible to die; since such, in this perishable body, is the lot of man, that therein life is not a whit easier than death? They were not, therefore, at that time less able to follow the Lord to death, but they were less able to follow Him to the life which is deathless. For thither it was the Lord was going, that, rising from the dead, He should die no more, and death should no more have dominion over Him. For as the Lord was about to die for righteousness’ sake, how could they

have followed Him now, who were as yet unripe for the ordeal of martyrdom? Or, with the Lord about to enter the fleshly immortality, how could they have followed Him now, when, even though ready to die, they would have no resurrection till the end of the world? Or, on the point of going, as the Lord was, to the bosom of the Father, and that without any forsaking of them, just as He had never quitted that bosom in coming to them, how could they have followed Him now, since no one can enter on that state of felicity but he that is made perfect in love? And to show them, therefore, how it is that they may attain the fitness to proceed, where He was going before them, He says, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another" (ver. 34). These are the steps whereby Christ must be followed; but any fuller discourse thereon must be put off till another opportunity.

TRACTATE LXV

CHAPTER XIII. 34, 35

1. The Lord Jesus declares that He is giving His disciples a new commandment, that they should love one another. "A new commandment," He says, "I give unto you, that ye love one another." But was not this already commanded in the ancient law of God, where it is written, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"? Why, then, is it called a new one by the Lord, when it is proved to be so old? Is it on this account a new commandment, because He hath divested us of the old, and clothed us with the new man? For it is not indeed every kind of love that renews him that listens to it, or rather yields it obedience, but that love regarding which the Lord, in order to distinguish it from all carnal affection, added, "as I have loved you." For husbands and wives love one another, and parents and children, and all other human relationships that bind men together: to say nothing of the blame-worthy and damnable love which is mutually felt by adulterers and adulteresses, by fornicators and prostitutes, and all others who are knit together by no human relationship, but by the mischievous depravity of human life. Christ, therefore, hath given us a new commandment, that we should love one another, as He also hath loved us. This is the love that renews us, making us new men, heirs of the New Testament, singers of the new song. It was this love, brethren beloved, that

renewed also those of olden time, who were then the righteous, the patriarchs and prophets, as it did afterwards the blessed apostles: it is it, too, that is now renewing the nations, and from among the universal race of man, which overspreads the whole world, is making and gathering together a new people, the body of the newly-married spouse of the only-begotten Son of God, of whom it is said in the Song of Songs, “Who is she that ascendeth, made white?” Made white indeed, because renewed; and how, but by the new commandment? Because of this, the members thereof have a mutual interest in one another; and if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; and one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. For this they hear and observe, “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another:” not as those love one another who are corrupters, nor as men love one another in a human way; but they love one another as those who are God’s, and all of them sons of the Highest, and brethren, therefore, of His only Son, with that mutual love wherewith He loved them, when about to lead them on to the goal where all sufficiency should be theirs, and where their every desire should be satisfied with good things. For then there will be nothing wanting they can desire, when God will be all in all. An end like that has no end. No one dieth there, where no one arriveth save he that dieth to this world, not that universal kind of death whereby the body is bereft of the soul; but the death of the elect, through which, even while still remaining in this mortal flesh, the heart is set on the things which are above. Of such a death it is that the apostle said, “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” And perhaps to this, also, do the words refer, “Love is strong as death.” For by this love it is brought about, that, while still held in the present corruptible body, we die to this world, and our life is hid with Christ in God; yea, that love itself is our death to the world, and our life with God. For if that is death when the soul quits the body, how can it be other than death when our love quits the world? Such love, therefore, is strong as death. And what is stronger than that which bindeth the world?

2. Think not then, my brethren, that when the Lord says, “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another,” there is any overlooking of that greater commandment, which requires us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind; for along with this seeming oversight, the words “that ye love one

another” appear also as if they had no reference to that second commandment, which says, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” For “on these two commandments,” He says, “hang all the law and the prophets.” But both commandments may be found in each of these by those who have good understanding. For, on the one hand, he that loveth God cannot despise His commandment to love his neighbor; and on the other, he who in a holy and spiritual way loveth his neighbor, what doth he love in him but God? That is the love, distinguished from all mundane love, which the Lord specially characterized, when He added, “as I have loved you.” For what was it but God that He loved in us? Not because we had Him, but in order that we might have Him; and that He may lead us on, as I said a little ago, where God is all in all. It is in this way, also, that the physician is properly said to love the sick; and what is it he loves in them but their health, which at all events he desires to recall; not their sickness, which he comes to remove? Let us, then, also so love one another, that, as far as possible, we may by the solicitude of our love be winning one another to have God within us. And this love is bestowed on us by Him who said, “As I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” For this very end, therefore, did He love us, that we also should love one another; bestowing this on us by His own love to us, that we should be bound to one another in mutual love, and, united together as members by so pleasant a bond, should be the body of so mighty a Head.

3. “By this,” He adds, “Shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another:” as if He said, Other gifts of mine are possessed in common with you by those who are not mine,—not only nature, life, perception, reason, and that safety which is equally the privilege of men and beasts; but also languages, sacraments, prophecy, knowledge, faith, the bestowing of their goods upon the poor, and the giving of their body to the flames: but because destitute of charity, they only tinkle like cymbals; they are nothing, and by nothing are they profited. It is not, then, by such gifts of mine, however good, which may be alike possessed by those who are not my disciples, but “by this it is that all men shall know that ye are my disciples, that ye have love one to another.” O thou spouse of Christ, fair amongst women! O thou who ascendest in whiteness, leaning upon thy Beloved! for by His light thou art made dazzling to whiteness, by His

assistance thou art preserved from falling. How well becoming thee are the words in that Song of Songs, which is, as it were, thy bridal chant, “That there is love in thy delights”! This it is that suffers not thy soul to perish with the ungodly; it is this that judges thy cause, and is strong as death, and is present in thy delights. How wonderful is the character of that death, which was all but swallowed up in penal sufferings, had it not been over and above absorbed in delights! But here this discourse must now be closed; for we must make a new commencement in dealing with the words that follow.

TRACTATE LXVI

CHAPTER XIII. 36–38

1. While the Lord Jesus was commending to the disciples that holy love wherewith they should love one another, “Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, whither goest Thou?” So, at all events, said the disciple to his Master, the servant to his Lord, as one who was prepared to follow. Just as for the same reason the Lord, who read in his mind the purpose of such a question, made him this reply: “Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now;” as if He said, In reference to the object of thy asking, thou canst not now. He does not say, Thou canst not; but “Thou canst not now.” He intimated delay, without depriving of hope; and that same hope, which He took not away, but rather bestowed, in His next words He confirmed, by proceeding to say, “Thou shalt follow me afterwards.” Why such haste, Peter? The Rock (petra) has not yet solidified thee by His Spirit. Be not lifted up with presumption, “Thou canst not now;” be not cast now into despair, “Thou shalt follow afterwards.” But what does he say to this? “Why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake.” He saw what was the kind of desire in his mind; but what the measure of his strength, he saw not. The weak man boasted of his willingness, but the Physician had an eye on the state of his health; the one promised, the Other foreknew: the ignorant was bold; He that foreknew all, condescended to teach. How much had Peter taken upon himself, by looking only at what he wished, and having no knowledge of what he was able! How much had he taken upon himself, that, when the Lord had come to lay down His life for His friends, and so for him also, he should have the assurance to offer to do the same for

the Lord; and while as yet Christ’s life was not laid down for himself, he should promise to lay down his own life for Christ! “Jesus” therefore “answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake?” Wilt thou do for me what I have not yet done for thee? “Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake?” Canst thou go before, who art unable to follow? Why dost thou presume so far? what dost thou think of thyself? what dost thou imagine thyself to be? Hear what thou art: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.” See, that is how thou wilt speedily become manifest to thyself, who art now talking so loftily, and knowest not that thou art but a child. Thou promisest me thy death, and thou wilt deny me thy life. Thou, who now thinkest thyself able to die for me, learn to live first for thyself; for in fearing the death of thy flesh, thou wilt occasion the death of thy soul. Just as much as it is life to confess Christ, it is death to deny Him.

2. Or was it that the Apostle Peter, as some with a perverse kind of favor strive to excuse him, did not deny Christ, because, when questioned by the maid, he replied that he did not know the man, as the other evangelists more expressly affirm? As if, indeed, he that denies the man Christ does not deny Christ; and so denies Him in respect of what He became on our account, that the nature He had given us might not be lost. Whoever, therefore, acknowledges Christ as God, and disowns Him as man, Christ died not for him; for as man it was that Christ died. He who disowns Christ as man, finds no reconciliation to God by the Mediator. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. He that denies Christ as man is not justified: for as by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; so also by the obedience of one man shall many be made righteous. He that denies Christ as man, shall not rise again into the resurrection of life; for by man is death, and by man is also the resurrection of the dead: for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. And by what means is He the Head of the Church, but by His manhood, because the Word was made flesh, that is, God, the Only-begotten of God the Father, became man. And how then can one be in the body of Christ who denies the man Christ? Or how can one be a member who disowns the Head? But why linger over a multitude of reasons when the Lord Himself undoes all the windings of human argumentation? For He says not, The

cock shall not crow till thou hast denied the man; or, as He was wont to speak in His more familiar condescension with men, The cock shall not crow till thou hast thrice denied the Son of man; but He says, “till thou hast denied me thrice.” What is that “me,” but just what He was, and what was He but Christ? Whatever of Him, therefore, he denied, he denied Himself, he denied the Christ, he denied the Lord his God. For Thomas also, his fellow-disciple, when he exclaimed, “My Lord and my God,” did not handle the Word, but only His flesh; and laid not his inquisitive hands on the incorporeal nature of God, but on His human body. And so he touched the man, and yet recognized his God. If, then, what the latter touched, Peter denied; what the latter invoked, Peter offended. “The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice.” Although thou say, “I know not the man;” although thou say, “Man, I know not what thou sayest;” although thou say, “I am not one of His disciples;” thou wilt be denying me. If, which it were sinful to doubt, Christ so spake, and foretold the truth, then doubtless Peter denied Christ. Let us not accuse Christ in defending Peter. Let infirmity acknowledge its sin; for there is no falsehood in the Truth. When Peter’s infirmity acknowledged its sin, his acknowledgment was full; and the greatness of the evil he had committed in denying Christ, he showed by his tears. He himself reproves his defenders, and for their conviction, brings his tears forward as witnesses. Nor have we, on our part, in so speaking, any delight in accusing the first of the apostles; but in looking on him, we ought to take home the lesson to ourselves, that no man should place his confidence in human strength. For what else had our Teacher and Saviour in view, but to show us, by making the first of the apostles himself an example, that no one ought in any way to presume of himself? And that, therefore, really took place in Peter’s soul, for which he gave cause in his body. And yet he did not go before in the Lord’s behalf, as he rashly presumed, but did so otherwise than he reckoned. For before the death and resurrection of the Lord, he both died when he denied, and returned to life when he wept; but he died, because he himself had been proud in his presumption, and he lived again, because that Other had looked on him with kindness.

TRACTATE LXVII

CHAPTER XIV. 1–3

1. Our special attention, brethren, must be earnestly turned to God, in order that we may be able to obtain some intelligent apprehension of the words of the holy Gospel, which have just been ringing in our ears. For the Lord Jesus saith: “Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God, and believe [or, believe also] in me.” That they might not as men be afraid of death, and so be troubled, He comforts them by affirming Himself also to be God. “Believe,” He says, “in God, believe also in me.” For it follows as a consequence, that if ye believe in God, ye ought to believe also in me: which were no consequence if Christ were not God. “Believe in God, and believe in” Him, who, by nature and not by robbery, is equal with God; for He emptied Himself; not, however, by losing the form of God, but by taking the form of a servant. You are afraid of death as regards this servant form, “let not your heart be troubled,” the form of God will raise it again.

2. But why have we this that follows, “In my Father’s house are many mansions,” but that they were also in fear about themselves? And therein they might have heard the words, “Let not your heart be troubled.” For, was there any of them that could be free from fear, when Peter, the most confident and forward of them all, was told, “The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice”? Considering themselves, therefore, beginning with Peter, as destined to perish, they had cause to be troubled: but when they now hear, “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you,” they are revived from their trouble, made certain and confident that after all the perils of temptations they shall dwell with Christ in the presence of God. For, albeit one is stronger than another, one wiser than another, one more righteous than another, “in the Father’s house there are many mansions;” none of them shall remain outside that house, where every one, according to his deserts, is to receive a mansion. All alike have that penny, which the householder orders to be given to all that have wrought in the vineyard, making no distinction therein between those who have labored less and those who have labored more: by which penny, of course, is signified eternal life, whereto no one any longer lives to a different length than

others, since in eternity life has no diversity in its measure. But the many mansions point to the different grades of merit in that one eternal life. For there is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory; and so also the resurrection of the dead. The saints, like the stars in the sky, obtain in the kingdom different mansions of diverse degrees of brightness; but on account of that one penny no one is cut off from the kingdom; and God will be all in all in such a way, that, as God is love, love will bring it about that what is possessed by each will be common to all. For in this way every one really possesses it, when he loves to see in another what he has not himself. There will not, therefore, be any envying amid this diversity of brightness, since in all of them will be reigning the unity of love.

3. Every Christian heart, therefore, must utterly reject the idea of those who imagine that there are many mansions spoken of, because there will be some place outside the kingdom of heaven, which shall be the abode of those blessed innocents who have departed this life without baptism, because without it they cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Faith like this is not faith, inasmuch as it is not the true and catholic faith. Are you not so foolish and blinded with carnal imaginations as to be worthy of reprobation, if you should thus separate the mansion, I say not of Peter and Paul, or any of the apostles, but even of any baptized infant from the kingdom of heaven; do you not think yourselves deserving of reprobation in thus putting a separation between these and the house of God the Father? For the Lord’s words are not, In the whole world, or, In all creation, or, In everlasting life and blessedness, there are many mansions; but He says, “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” Is not that the house where we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens? Is not that the house whereof we sing to the Lord, “Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they shall praise Thee for ever and ever”? Will you then venture to separate from the kingdom of heaven the house, not of every baptized brother, but of God the Father Himself, to whom all we who are brethren say, “Our Father, who art in heaven,” or divide it in such a way as to make some of its mansions inside, and some outside, the kingdom of heaven? Far, far be it from those who desire to dwell in the kingdom of heaven, to be willing to dwell in such folly with you: far be it, I

say, that since every house of sons that are reigning can be nowhere else but in the kingdom, any part of the royal house itself should be outside the kingdom.

4. “And if I go,” He says, “and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.” O Lord Jesus, how goest Thou to prepare a place, if there are already many mansions in Thy Father’s house, where Thy people shall dwell with Thyself? Or if Thou receivest them unto Thyself, how wilt Thou come again, who never withdrawest Thy presence? Such subjects as these, beloved, were we to attempt to explain them with such brevity as seems within the proper bounds of our discourse to-day, would certainly suffer in clearness from compression, and the very brevity would become itself a second obscurity; we shall therefore defer this debt, which the bounty of our Family-head will enable us to repay at a more suitable opportunity.

Tractate LXVIII.

on the same passage.

1. We acknowledge, beloved brethren, that we are owing you, and ought now to repay, what was left over for consideration, how we can understand that there is no real mutual contrariety between these two statements, namely, that after saying, “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you, that I go to prepare a place for you;”—where He makes it clear enough that He said so to them for the very reason that there are many mansions there already, and there is no need of preparing any;—the Lord again says: “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” How is it that He goes and prepares a place, if there are many mansions already? If there were not such, He would have said, “I go to prepare.” Or if the place has still to be prepared, would He not then also properly have said, “I go to prepare”? Are these mansions in existence already, and yet needing still to be prepared? For if they were not in existence, He would have said, “I go to prepare.” And yet, because their present state of existence is such as still to stand in need of preparation, He

does not go to prepare them in the same sense as they already exist; but if He go and prepare them as they shall be hereafter, He will come again and receive His own to Himself: that where He is, there they may be also. How then are there mansions in the Father's house, and these not different ones but the same, which already exist in a sense in which they can admit of no preparation, and yet do not exist, inasmuch as they are still to be prepared? How are we to think of this, but in the same way as the prophet, who also declares of God, that He has [already] made that which is yet to be. For he says not, Who will make what is yet to be, but, "Who has made what is yet to be." Therefore He has both made such things and is yet to make them. For they have not been made at all if He has not made them; nor will they ever be if He make them not Himself. He has made them therefore in the way of fore-ordaining them; He has yet to make them in the way of actual elaboration. Just as the Gospel plainly intimates when He chose His disciples, that is to say, at the time of His calling them; and yet the apostle says, "He chose us before the foundation of the world," to wit, by predestination, not by actual calling. "And whom He did predestinate, them He also called;" He hath chosen by predestination before the foundation of the world, He chooses by calling before its close. And so also has He prepared those mansions, and is still preparing them and He who has already made the things which are yet to be, is now preparing, not different ones, but the very mansions He has already prepared: what He has prepared in predestination, He is preparing by actual working. Already, therefore, they are, as respects predestination; if it were not so, He would have said, I will go and prepare, that is, I will predestinate. But because they are not yet in a state of practical preparedness, He says, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself."

2. But He is in a certain sense preparing the dwellings by preparing for them the dwellers. As, for instance, when He said, "In my Father's house are many dwellings," what else can we suppose the house of God to mean but the temple of God? And what that is, ask the apostle, and he will reply, "For the temple of God is holy, which [temple] ye are." This is also the kingdom of God, which the Son is yet to deliver up to the Father; and hence the same apostle says, "Christ, the beginning, and then they that are Christ's in His presence; then [cometh] the end, when He shall have delivered up the

kingdom to God, even the Father;” that is, those whom He has redeemed by His blood, He shall then have delivered up to stand before His Father’s face. This is that kingdom of heaven whereof it is said, “The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man who sowed good seed in his field. But the good seed are the children of the kingdom;” and although now they are mingled with tares, at the end the King Himself shall send forth His angels, “and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” The kingdom will shine forth in the kingdom when [those that are] the kingdom shall have reached the kingdom; just as we now pray when we say, “Thy kingdom come.” Even now, therefore, already is the kingdom called, but only as yet being called together. For if it were not now called, it could not be then said, “They shall gather out of His kingdom everything that offends.” But the realm is not yet reigning. Accordingly it is already so far the kingdom, that when all offences shall have been gathered out of it, it shall then attain to sovereignty, so as to possess not merely the name of a kingdom, but also the power of government. For it is to this kingdom, standing then at the right hand, that it shall be said in the end, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom;” that is, ye who were the kingdom, but without the power to rule, come and reign; that what you formerly were only in hope, you may now have the power to be in reality. This house of God, therefore, this temple of God, this kingdom of God and kingdom of heaven, is as yet in the process of building, of construction, of preparation, of assembling. In it there will be mansions, even as the Lord is now preparing them; in it there are such already, even as the Lord has already ordained them.

3. But why is it that He went away to make such preparation, when, as it is certainly we ourselves that are the subjects in need of preparation, His doing so will be hindered by leaving us behind? I explain it, Lord, as I can: it was surely this Thou didst signify by the preparation of those mansions, that the just ought to live by faith. For he who is sojourning at a distance from the Lord has need to be living by faith, because by this we are prepared for beholding His countenance. For “blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;” and “He purifieth their hearts by faith.” The former we find in the Gospel, the latter in the Acts of the Apostles. But the faith by

which those who are yet to see God have their hearts purified, while sojourning at a distance here, believeth what it doth not see; for if there is sight, there is no longer faith. Merit is accumulating now to the believer, and then the reward is paid into the hand of the beholder. Let the Lord then go and prepare us a place; let Him go, that He may not be seen; and let Him remain concealed, that faith may be exercised. For then is the place preparing, if it is by faith we are living. Let the believing in that place be desired, that the place desired may itself be possessed; the longing of love is the preparation of the mansion. Prepare thus, Lord, what Thou art preparing; for Thou art preparing us for Thyself, and Thyself for us, inasmuch as Thou art preparing a place both for Thyself in us, and for us in Thee. For Thou hast said, "Abide in me, and I in you." As far as each one has been a partaker of Thee, some less, some more, such will be the diversity of rewards in proportion to the diversity of merits; such will be the multitude of mansions to suit the inequalities among their inmates; but all of them, none the less, eternally living, and endlessly blessed. Why is it that Thou goest away? Why is it Thou comest again? If I understand Thee aright, Thou withdrawest not Thyself either from the place Thou goest from, or from the place Thou comest from: Thou goest away by becoming invisible, Thou comest by again becoming manifest to our eyes. But unless Thou remainest to direct us how we may still be advancing in goodness of life, how will the place be prepared where we shall be able to dwell in the fullness of joy? Let what we have said suffice on the words which have been read from the Gospel as far as "I will come again, and receive you to myself." But the meaning of what follows, "That where I am, there ye may be also; and whither I go ye know, and the way ye know," we shall be in a better condition—after the question put by the disciple, that follows, and which we also may be putting, as it were, through him—for hearing, and more suitably situated for making the subject of our discourse.

TRACTATE LXIX

CHAPTER XIV. 4–6

1. We have now the opportunity, dearly, beloved, as far as we can, of understanding the earlier words of the Lord from the later, and His previous statements by those that follow, in what you have heard was His answer to

the question of the Apostle Thomas. For when the Lord was speaking above of the mansions, of which He both said that they already were in His Father’s house, and that He was going to prepare them; where we understood that those mansions already existed in predestination, and are also being prepared through the purifying by faith of the hearts of those who are hereafter to inhabit them, seeing that they themselves are the very house of God; and what else is it to dwell in God’s house than to be in the number of His people, since His people are at the same time in God, and God in them? To make this preparation the Lord departed, that by believing in Him, though no longer visible, the mansion, whose outward form is always hid in the future, may now by faith be prepared: for this reason, therefore, He had said, “And if I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.” In reply to this, “Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest: and how can we know the way?” Both of these the Lord had said that they knew; both of them this other declares that he does not know, to wit, the place to which, and the way whereby, He is going. But he does not know that he is speaking falsely; they knew, therefore, and did not know that they knew. He will convince them that they already know what they imagine themselves still to be ignorant of. “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” What, brethren, does He mean? See, we have just heard the disciple asking, and the Master instructing, and we do not yet, even after His voice has sounded in our ears, apprehend the thought that lies hid in His words. But what is it we cannot apprehend? Could His apostles, with whom He was talking, have said to Him, We do not know Thee? Accordingly, if they knew Him, and He Himself is the way, they knew the way; if they knew Him who is Himself the truth, they knew the truth; if they knew Him who is also the life, they knew the life. Thus, you see, they were convinced that they knew what they knew not that they knew.

2. What is it, then, that we also have not apprehended in this discourse? What else, think you, brethren, but just that He said, “And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know”? And here we have discovered that they knew the way, because they knew Him who is the way: the way is that by which we go; but is the way the place also to which we go? And yet each of these

He said that they knew, both whither He was going, and the way. There was need, therefore, for His saying, “I am the way,” in order to show those who knew Him that they knew the way, which they thought themselves ignorant of; but what need was there for His saying, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life,” when, after knowing the way by which He went, they had still to learn whither He was going, but just because it was to the truth and to the life He was going? By Himself, therefore, He was going to Himself. And whither go we, but to Him, and by what way go we, but by Him? He, therefore, went to Himself by Himself, and we by Him to Him; yea, likewise both He and we go thus to the Father. For He says also in another place of Himself, “I go to the Father;” and here on our account He says, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me.” And in this way, He goeth by Himself both to Himself and to the Father, and we by Him both to Him and to the Father. Who can apprehend such things save he who has spiritual discernment? and how much is it that even he can apprehend, although thus spiritually discerning? Brethren, how can you desire me to explain such things to you? Only reflect how lofty they are. You see what I am, I see what you are; in all of us the body, which is corrupted, burdens the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things. Do we think we can say, “To Thee have I lifted up my soul, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens”? But burdened as we are with so great a weight, under which we groan, how shall I lift up my soul unless He lift it with me who laid His own down for me? I shall speak then as I can, and let each of you who is able receive it. As He gives, I speak; as He gives, the receiver receiveth; and as He giveth, there is faith for him who cannot yet receive with understanding. For, saith the prophet, “If ye will not believe, ye shall not understand.”

3. Tell me, O my Lord, what to say to Thy servants, my fellow-servants. The Apostle Thomas had Thee before him in order to ask Thee questions, and yet could not understand Thee unless he had Thee within him; I ask Thee because I know that Thou art over me; and I ask, seeking, as far as I can, to let my soul diffuse itself in that same region over me where I may listen to Thee, who usest no external sound to convey Thy teaching. Tell me, I pray, how it is that Thou goest to Thyself. Didst Thou formerly leave Thyself to come to us, especially as Thou camest not of Thyself, but the

Father sent Thee? I know, indeed, that Thou didst empty Thyself; but in taking the form of a servant, it was neither that Thou didst lay down the form of God as something to return to, or that Thou lost it as something to be recovered; and yet Thou didst come, and didst place Thyself not only before the carnal eyes, but even in the very hands of men. And how otherwise save in Thy flesh? By means of this Thou didst come, yet abiding where Thou wast; by this means Thou didst return, without leaving the place to which Thou hadst come. If, then, by such means Thou didst come and return, by such means doubtless Thou art not only the way for us to come unto Thee, but wast the way also for Thyself to come and to return. For when Thou didst return to the life, which Thou art Thyself, then of a truth that same flesh of Thine Thou didst bring from death unto life. The Word of God, indeed, is one thing, and man another; but the Word was made flesh, or became man. And so the person of the Word is not different from that of the man, seeing that Christ is both in one person; and in this way, just as when His flesh died. Christ died, and when His flesh was buried, Christ was buried (for thus with the heart we believe unto righteousness, and thus with the mouth do we make confession unto salvation); so when the flesh came from death unto life, Christ came to life. And because Christ is the Word of God, He is also the life. And thus in a wonderful and ineffable manner He, who never laid down or lost Himself, came to Himself. But God, as was said, had come through the flesh to men, the truth to liars; for God is true, and every man a liar. When, therefore, He withdrew His flesh from amongst men, and carried it up there where no liar is found, He also Himself—for the Word was made flesh—returned by Himself, that is, by His flesh, to the truth, which is none other but Himself. And this truth, we cannot doubt, although found amongst liars, He preserved even in death; for Christ was once dead, but never false.

4. Take an example, very different in character and wholly inadequate, yet in some little measure helpful to the understanding of God, from things that are in peculiarly intimate subjection to God. See here in my own case, while as far as pertains to my mind I am just the same as yourselves, if I keep silence I am so to myself; but if I speak to you something suited to your understanding, in a certain sense I go forth to you without leaving myself, but at the same time approach you and yet quit not the place from which I

proceed. But when I cease speaking, I return in a kind of way to myself, and in a kind of way I remain with you, if you retain what you have heard in the discourse I am delivering. And if the mere image that God made is capable of this, what may not God, the very image of God, not made by, but born of God; whose body, wherein He came forth to us and returned from us, has not ceased to be, like the sound of my voice, but abides there, where it shall die no more, and death shall have no more dominion over it? Much more, perhaps, might and ought to have been said on these words of the Gospel; but your souls ought not to be burdened with spiritual food, however pleasant, especially as the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

TRACTATE LXX

CHAPTER XIV. 7–10

1. The words of the holy Gospel, brethren, are rightly understood only if they are found to be in harmony with those that precede; for the premises ought to agree with the conclusion, when it is the Truth that speaks. The Lord had said before, “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also:” and then had added, “And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know;” and showed that all He said was that they knew Himself. What, therefore, the meaning was of His going to Himself by Himself,—for He also lets the disciples see that it is by Him that they are to come to Him,—we have already told you, as we could, in our last discourse. When He says, therefore, “That where I am, there ye may be also,” where else were they to be but in Himself? In this way is He also in Himself, and they, therefore, are just where He is, that is, in Himself. Accordingly, He Himself is that eternal life which is yet to be ours, when He has received us unto Himself; and as He is that life eternal, so is it in Him, that where He is there shall we be also, that is to say, in Himself. “For as the Father hath life in Himself,” and certainly that life which He has is in no wise different from what He is Himself as its possessor, “so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself,” inasmuch as He is the very life which He hath in Himself. But shall we then actually be what He is, (namely), the life, when we shall have begun our existence in that life, that is, in Himself? Certainly not, for He, by His very existence as the life, hath life, and is Himself what He hath; and

as the life, is in Him, so is He in Himself: but we are not that life, but partakers of His life, and shall be there in such wise as to be wholly incapable of being in ourselves what He is, but so as, while ourselves not the life, to have Him as our life, who has Himself the life on this very account that He Himself is the life. In short, He both exists unchangeably in Himself and inseparably in the Father. But we, when wishing to exist in ourselves, were thrown into inward trouble regarding ourselves, as is expressed in the words, “My soul is cast down within me:” and changing from bad to worse, cannot even remain as we were. But when by Him we come unto the Father, according to His own words, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me,” and abide in Him, no one shall be able to separate us either from the Father or from Him.

2. Connecting, therefore, His previous words with those that follow, He proceeded to say, “If ye had known me, ye should certainly have known my Father also.” This conforms to His previous words, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me.” And then He adds: “And from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him.” But Philip, one of the apostles, not understanding what he had just heard, said, “Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.” And the Lord replied to him, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet have ye not known me, Philip? he that seeth me, seeth also the Father.” Here you see He complains that He had been so long time with them, and yet He was not known. But had He not Himself said, “And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know;” and on their saying that they knew it not, had convinced them that they did know, by adding the words: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life”? How, then, says He now, “Have I been so long time with you, and have ye not known me?” when, in fact, they knew both whither He went and the way, on no other grounds save that they really knew Himself? But this difficulty is easily solved by saying that some of them knew Him, and others did not, and that Philip was one of those who did not know Him; so that, when He said, “And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know,” He is understood as having spoken to those that knew, and not to Philip, who has it said to him, “Have I been so long time with you, and have ye not known me, Philip?” To such, then, as already knew the Son, was it now also said of the Father, “And from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him:” for such words were used

because of the all-sided likeness subsisting between the Father and the Son; so that, because they knew the Son, they might henceforth be said to know the Father. Already, therefore, they knew the Son, if not all of them, those at least to whom it is said, “And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know;” for He is Himself the way. But they knew not the Father, and so have also to hear, “If ye have known me, ye have known my Father also;” that is, through me ye have known Him also. For I am one, and He another. But that they might not think Him unlike, He adds, “And from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him.” For they saw His perfectly resembling Son, but needed to have the truth impressed on them, that exactly such as was the Son whom they saw, was the Father also whom they did not see. And to this points what is afterwards said to Philip, “He that seeth me, seeth also the Father.” Not that He Himself was Father and Son, which is a notion of the Sabellians, who are also called Patripassians, condemned by the Catholic faith; but that Father and Son are so alike, that he who knoweth one knoweth both. For we are accustomed to speak in this way of two who closely resemble each other, to those who are in the habit of seeing one of them, and wish to know what like the other is, so that we say, In seeing the one, you have seen the other. In this way, then, is it said “He that seeth me, seeth also the Father.” Not, certainly, that He who is the Son is also the Father, but that the Son in no respect disagrees with the likeness of the Father. For had not the Father and Son been two persons, it would not have been said, “If ye have known me, ye have known my Father also.” Such is certainly the case for “no one,” He says, “cometh unto the Father but by me: if ye have known me, ye have known my Father also;” because it is I, who am the only way to the Father, that will lead you to Him, that He also may Himself become known to you. But as I am in all respects His perfect image, “from henceforth ye know Him” in knowing me; “and have seen Him,” if you have seen me with the spiritual eyesight of the soul.

3. Why, then, Philip, dost thou say, “Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us? Have I been so long time with you, and yet have ye not known me, Philip? He that seeth me, seeth the Father also.” If it interests thee much to see this, believe at least what thou seest not. For “how,” He says, “sayest thou, Show us the Father?” If thou hast seen me, who am His perfect likeness, thou hast seen Him to whom I am like. And if thou canst not directly see this,

“believest thou not,” at least, “that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?” But Philip might say here, “I see Thee indeed, and believe Thy full likeness to the Father; but is one to be reproved and rebuked because, when he sees one who bears a likeness to another, he wishes to see that other to whom he is like? I know, indeed, the image, but as yet I know only the one without the other; it is not enough for me, unless I know that other whose likeness he bears. Show us, therefore, the Father, and it sufficeth us.” But the Master really reproved the disciple because He saw into the heart of his questioner. For it was with the idea, as if the Father were somehow better than the Son, that Philip had the desire to know the Father: and so he did not even know the Son, because believing that He was inferior to another. It was to correct such a notion that it was said, “He that seeth me, seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, Show us the Father?” I see the meaning of thy words: it is not the original likeness thou seekest to see, but it is that other thou thinkest the superior. “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?” Why desirest thou to dis cover some distance between those who are thus alike? why cravest thou the separate knowledge of those who cannot be separated? What, after this, He says not only to Philip, but to all of them together, must not now be thrust into a corner, in order that, by His help, it may be the more carefully expounded.

TRACTATE LXXI

CHAPTER XIV. 10–14

1. Give close attention, and try to understand, beloved; for while it is we who speak it is He Himself who never withdraweth His presence from us who is our Teacher. The Lord saith, what you have just heard read, “The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.” Even His words, then, are works? Clearly so. For surely he that edifies a neighbor by what he says, works a good work. But what mean the words, “I speak not of myself,” but, I who speak am not of myself? Hence He attributes what He does to Him, of whom He, that doeth them, is. For the Father is not God [as born, etc.] of any one else, while the Son is God, as equal, indeed, to the Father, but [as born] of God the Father. Therefore the former is God, but not of God; and the Light, but not of light: whereas the latter is God of God, Light of Light.

2. For in connection with these two clauses,—the one where it is said, “I speak not of myself;” and the other, which runs, “but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works,”—we are opposed by two different classes of heretics, who, by each of them holding only to one clause, run off, not in one, but opposite directions, and wander far from the pathway of truth. For instance, the Arians say, See here, the Son is not equal to the Father, He speaketh not of Himself. The Sabellians, or Patripassians, on the other hand, say, See, He who is the Father is also the Son; for what else is this, “The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works,” but I that do them dwell in myself? You make contrary assertions, and that not only in the sense that any one thing is false, that is, contrary to truth, but in this also, when two things that are both false contradict one another. In your wanderings you have taken opposite directions; midway between the two is the path you have left. You are a far longer distance apart from each other than from the very way you have both forsaken. Come hither, you from the one side, and you from the other: pass not across, the one to the other, but come from both sides to us, and make this the place of your mutual meeting. Ye Sabellians, acknowledge the Being you overlook; Arians, set Him whom you subordinate in His place of equality, and you will both be walking with us in the pathway of truth. For you have grounds on both sides that make mutual admonition a duty. Listen, Sabellian: so far is the Son from being the same as the Father, and so truly is He another, that the Arian maintains His inferiority to the Father. Listen, Arian: so truly is the Son equal to the Father, that the Sabellian declares Him to be identical with the Father. Do thou restore the personality thou hast abstracted, and thou, the full dignity thou hast lowered, and both of you stand together on the same ground as ourselves: because the one of you [who has been an Arian], for the conviction of the Sabellian, never lets out of sight the personality of Him who is distinct from the Father, and the other [who has been a Sabellian] takes care, for the conviction of the Arian, of not impairing the dignity of Him who is equal with the Father. For to both of you He cries, “I and my Father are one.” When He says “one,” let the Arians listen; when He says, “we are,” let the Sabellians give heed, and no longer continue in the folly of denying, the one, His equality [with the Father], the other, His distinct personality. If, then, in saying, “The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself,” He is thereby accounted of a power so inferior, that

what He doeth is not what He Himself willeth; listen to what He also said, "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." And so likewise, if in saying, "The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works," He is on that account not to be regarded as distinct in person from the Father, let us listen to His other words, "What things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise;" and He will be understood as speaking not of one person twice over, but of two who are one. But just because their mutual equality is such as not to interfere with their distinct personality, therefore He speaketh not of Himself, because He is not of Himself; and the Father also, that dwelleth in Him, Himself doeth the works, because He, by whom and with whom He doeth them, is not, save of [the Father] Himself. And then He goes on to say, "Believe ye not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? Or else believe me for the very works' sake." Formerly it was Philip only who was reproved, but now, it is shown that he was not the only one there that needed reproof. "For the very works' sake," He says, "believe ye that I am in the Father, and the Father in me:" for had we been separated, we should have been unable to do any kind of work inseparably.

3. But what is this that follows? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." And so He promised that He Himself would also do those greater works. Let not the servant exalt himself above his Lord, or the disciple above his Master. He says that they will do greater works than He doeth Himself; but it is all by His doing such in or by them, and not as if they did them of themselves. Hence the song that is addressed to Him, "I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength." But what, then, are those greater works? Was it that their very shadow, as they themselves passed by, healed the sick? For it is a mightier thing for a shadow, than for the hem of a garment, to possess the power of healing. The one work was done by Christ Himself, the other by them; and yet it was He that did both. Nevertheless, when He so spake, He was commending the efficacious power of His own words: for it was in this sense He had said, "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that

dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.” What works was He then referring to, but the words He was speaking? They were hearing and believing, and their faith was the fruit of those very words: howbeit, when the disciples preached the gospel, it was not small numbers like themselves, but nations also that believed; and such, doubtless, are greater works. And yet He said not, Greater works than these shall ye do, to lead us to suppose that it was only the apostles who would do so; for He added, “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do.” Is the case then so, that he that believeth on Christ doeth the same works as Christ, or even greater than He did? Points like these are not to be treated in a cursory way, nor ought they to be hurriedly disposed of; and, therefore, as our present discourse must be brought to a close, we are obliged to defer their further consideration.

Tractate LXXII.

on the same passage.

1. It is no easy matter to comprehend what is meant by, or in what sense we are to receive, these words of the Lord, “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also:” and then, to this great difficulty in the way of our understanding, He has added another still more difficult, “And greater things than these shall he do.” What are we to make of it? We have not found one who did such works as Christ did; and are we likely to find one who will do even greater? But we remarked in our last discourse, that it was a greater deed to heal the sick by the passing of their shadow, as was done by the disciples, than as the Lord Himself did by the touch of the hem of His garment; and that more believed on the apostles than on the Lord Himself, when preaching with His own lips; so that we might suppose works like these to be understood as greater: not that the disciple was to be greater than his Master, or the servant than his Lord, or the adopted son than the Only-begotten, or man than God, but that by them He Himself would condescend to do these greater works, while telling them in another passage, “Without me ye can do nothing.” While He Himself, on the other hand, to say nothing of His other works, which are numberless, made them without any aid from themselves, and without them made this world; and because He Himself thought meet to become man, without them He made

also Himself. But what have they [made or done] without Him, save sin? And last of all, He straightway also withdrew from the subject all that could cause us agitation; for after saying, “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do;” He immediately went on to add, “Because I go unto the Father; and whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do.” He who had said, “He will do,” afterwards said, “I will do;” as if He had said, Let not this appear to you impossible; for he that believeth on me can never become greater than I am, but it is I who shall then be doing greater things than now; greater things by him that believeth on me, than by myself apart from him; yet it is I myself apart from him, and I myself by him [that will do the works]: and as it is apart from him, it is not he that will do them; and as, on the other hand, it is by him, although not by his own self, it is he also that will do them. And besides, to do greater things by one than apart from one, is not a sign of deficiency, but of condescension. For what can servants render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards them? And sometimes He hath condescended to number this also amongst His other benefits towards them, namely, to do greater works by them than apart from them. Did not that rich man go away sad from His presence, when seeking counsel about eternal life? He heard, and cast it away: and yet in after days the counsel that fell on his ears was followed, not by one, but by many, when the good Master was speaking by the disciples; He was an object of contempt to the rich man, when warned by Himself directly, and of love to those whom by means of poor men He transformed from rich into poor. Here, then, you see, He did greater works when preached by believers, than when speaking Himself to hearers.

2. But there is still something to excite thought in His doing such greater works by the apostles; for He said not, as if merely with reference to them, The works that I do shall ye do also; and greater works than these shall ye do: but wishing to be understood as speaking of all that belonged to His family, said, “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do.” If, then, he that believeth shall do such works, he that shall do them not is certainly no believer: just as “He that loveth me, keepeth my commandments,” implies, of course, that he who keepeth them not, loveth not. In another place, also, He says, “He that

heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who buildeth his house upon a rock;” and he, therefore, who is unlike this wise man, without doubt either heareth these sayings and doeth them not, or faileth even to hear them. “He that believeth in me,” He says, “though he die, yet shall he live;” and he, therefore, that shall not live, is certainly no believer now. In a similar way, also, it is said here, “He that believeth in me shall do [such works]:” he is, therefore, no believer who shall not do so. What have we here, then, brethren? Is it that one is not to be reckoned among believers in Christ, who shall not do greater works than Christ? It were hard, unreasonable, intolerable, to suppose so; that is, unless it be rightly understood. Let us listen, then, to the apostle, when he says, “To him that believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” This is the work in which we may be doing the works of Christ, for even our very believing in Christ is the work of Christ. It is this He worketh in us, not certainly without us. Hear now, then, and understand, “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also:” I do them first, and he shall do them afterwards; for I do such works that he may do them also. And what are the works, but the making of a righteous man out of an ungodly one?

3. “And greater works than these shall he do.” Than what, pray? Shall we say that one is doing greater works than all that Christ did who is working out his own salvation with fear and trembling? A work which Christ is certainly working in him, but not without him; and one which I might, without hesitation, call greater than the heavens and the earth, and all in both within the compass of our vision. For both heaven and earth shall pass away, but the salvation and justification of those predestinated thereto, that is, of those whom He foreknoweth, shall continue forever. In the former there is only the working of God, but in the latter there is also His image. But there are also in the heavens, thrones, governments, principalities, powers, archangels, and angels, which are all of them the work of Christ; and is it, then, greater works also than these that he doeth, who, with Christ working in him, is a co-worker in his own eternal salvation and justification? I dare not call for any hurried decision on such a point: let him who can, understand, and let him who can, judge whether it is a greater work to create righteous beings than to make righteous the ungodly. For at

least, if there is equal power employed in both, there is greater mercy in the latter. For “this is the great mystery of godliness which was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” But when He said, “Greater works than these shall he do,” there is no necessity requiring us to suppose that all of Christ’s works are to be understood. For He spake, perhaps, only of these He was now doing; and the work He was doing at that time was uttering the words of faith, and of such works specially had He spoken just before when He said, “The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.” His words, accordingly, were His works. And it is assuredly something less to preach the words of righteousness, which He did apart from us, than to justify the ungodly, which He does in such a way in us that we also are doing it ourselves. It remains for us to inquire how the words are to be understood, “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will do it.” Because of the many things His believing ones ask, and receive not, there is no small question claiming our attention; but as this discourse must now be concluded, we must allow at least a little delay for its consideration and discussion.

Tractate LXXIII.

again on the same passage.

1. The Lord, by His promise, gave those whose hopes were resting on Himself a special ground of confidence, when He said, “For I go to the Father; and whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will do it.” His proceeding, therefore, to the Father, was not with any view of abandoning the needy, but of hearing and answering their petitions. But what is to be made of the words, “Whatsoever ye shall ask,” when we behold His faithful ones so often asking and not receiving? Is it, shall we say, for no other reason but that they ask amiss? For the Apostle James made this a ground of reproach when he said, “Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” What one, therefore, wishes to receive, in order to turn to an improper use, God in His mercy rather refuses to bestow. Nay, more, if a man asks what would, if answered, only tend to his injury, there is surely greater cause to fear, lest what God could not

withhold with kindness, He should give in His anger. Do we not see how the Israelites got to their own hurt what their guilty lusting craved? For while it was raining manna on them from heaven, they desired to have flesh to eat. They disdained what they had, and shamelessly sought what they had not: as if it were not better for them to have asked not to have their unbecoming desires gratified with the food that was wanting, but to have their own dislike removed, and be made themselves to receive aright the food that was provided. For when evil becomes our delight, and what is good the reverse, we ought to be entreating God rather to win us back to the love of the good, than to grant us the evil. Not that it is wrong to eat flesh, for the apostle, speaking of this very thing, says, “Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused which is received with thanksgiving; but because, as he also says, “It is evil for that man who eateth with offense;” and if so, with offense to man, how much more so if to God, to whom it was no light offense, on the part of the Israelites, to reject what wisdom was supplying, and ask for that which lust was craving: although they would not actually make the request, but murmured because it was wanting. But to let us know that the wrong lies not with any creature of God, but with obstinate disobedience and inordinate desire, it was not in swine’s flesh that the first man found death, but in an apple; and it was not for a fowl, but for a dish of pottage, that Esau lost his birthright.

2. How, then, are we to understand “Whatsoever ye shall ask, I will do it,” if there are some things which the faithful ask, and which God, even purposely on their behalf, leaves undone? Or ought we to suppose that the words were addressed only to the apostles? Surely not. For what He has got the length of now saying is in the very line of what He had said before: “He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do;” which was the subject of our previous discourse. And that no one might attribute such power to himself, but rather to make it manifest that even these greater works were done by Himself, He proceeded to say, “For I go to the Father; and whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will do it.” Was it the apostles only that believed on Him? When, therefore, He said, “He that believeth on me,” He spake to those, among whom we also by His grace are included, who by no means receive everything that we ask. And if we turn our thoughts even to the most blessed apostles, we find

that he who labored more than they all, yet not he, but the grace of God that was with him, besought the Lord thrice that the messenger of Satan might depart from him, and received not what he had asked. What shall we say, beloved? Are we to suppose that the promise here made, “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will do it,” was not fulfilled by Him even to the apostles? And to whom, then, will ever His promise be fulfilled, if therein He has deceived His own apostles?

3. Wake up, then, believer, and give careful heed to what is stated here, “in my name:” for in these words He does not say, “whatsoever ye shall ask” in any way; but, “in my name.” How, then, is He called, who promised so great a blessing? Christ Jesus, of course: Christ means King, and Jesus means Saviour! for certainly it is not any one who is a king that will save us, but only the Saviour-King; and therefore, whatsoever we ask that is adverse to the interests of salvation, we do not ask in the name of the Saviour. And yet He is the Saviour, not only when He does what we ask, but also when He refuses to do so; since by not doing what He sees to be contrary to our salvation, He manifests Himself the more fully as our Saviour. For the physician knows which of his patient’s requests will be favorable, and which will be adverse, to his safety; and therefore yields not to his wishes when asking what is prejudicial, that he may effect his recovery. Accordingly, when we wish Him to do whatsoever we ask, let it not be in any way, but in His name, that is, in the name of the Saviour, that we present our petition. Let us not, then, ask aught that is contrary to our own salvation; for if He do that, He does it not as the Saviour, which is the name He bears to His faithful disciples. For He who condescends to be the Saviour of the faithful, is also a Judge to condemn the ungodly. Whatsoever, therefore, any one that believeth on Him shall ask in that name which He bears to those who believe on Him, He will do it; for He will do it as the Saviour. But if one that believeth on Him asketh something through ignorance that is injurious to his salvation, he asketh it not in the name of the Saviour; for His Saviour He will no longer be if He do aught to impede his salvation. And hence, in such a case, in not doing what He is entreated to do, His way is kept the clearer for doing what His name imports. And on that account, not only as the Saviour, but also as the good Master, He taught us, in the very prayer He gave us, what we should ask, in order that,

whatsoever we shall ask, He may do it; and that we, too, might thereby understand that we cannot be asking in the Master’s name anything that is inconsistent with the rule of His own instructions.

4. There are some things, indeed, which, although really asked in His name, that is, in harmony with His character as both Saviour and Master, He doeth not at the time we ask them, and yet He faileth not to do them. For when we pray that the kingdom of God may come, it does not imply that He is not doing what we ask, because we do not begin at once to reign with Him in the everlasting kingdom: for what we ask is delayed, but not denied. Nevertheless, let us not fail in pray ing, for in so doing we are as those that sow the seed; and in due season we shall reap. And even when we are asking aright, let us ask Him at the same time not to do what we ask amiss; for there is reference to this also in the Lord’s Prayer, when we say, “Lead us not into temptation.” For surely the temptation is no slight one if thine own request be hostile to thy cause. But we must not listen with indifference to the statement that the Lord (to prevent any from thinking that what He promised to do to those that asked, He would do without the Father, after saying, “Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will do it”) immediately added, “That the Father may be glorified in the Son: if ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.” In no respect, therefore, does the Son act without the Father, since He so acts for the very purpose that in Him the Father may be glorified. The Father, therefore, acts in the Son, that the Son may be glorified in the Father: and the Son acts in the Father, that the Father may be glorified in the Son; for the Father and the Son are one.

TRACTATE LXXIV

CHAPTER XIV. 15–17

1. We have heard, brethren, while the Gospel was read, the Lord saying: “If ye love me, keep my commandments: and I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter [Paraclete], that He may abide with you for ever; [even] the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye shall know Him; for He shall dwell with you, and shall be in you.” There are many points which might form the subject of inquiry in these few words of the Lord; but it were too

much for us either to search into all that is here for the searching, or to find out all that we here search for. Nevertheless, as far as the Lord is pleased to grant us the power, and in proportion to our capacity and yours, attend to what we ought to say and you to hear, and receive, beloved, what we on our part are able to give, and apply to Him for that wherein we fail. It is the Spirit, the Comforter, that Christ has promised to His apostles; but let us notice the way in which He gave the promise. "If ye love me," He says, "keep my commandments: and I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever: [even] the Spirit of truth." We have here, at all events, the Holy Spirit in the Trinity, whom the catholic faith acknowledges to be consubstantial and co-eternal with Father and Son: He it is of whom the apostle says, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who is given unto us." How, then, doth the Lord say, "If ye love me, keep my commandments: and I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter;" when He saith so of the Holy Spirit, without [having] whom we can neither love God nor keep His commandments? How can we love so as to receive Him, without whom we cannot love at all? or how shall we keep the commandments so as to receive Him, without whom we have no power to keep them? Or can it be that the love wherewith we love Christ has a prior place within us, so that, by thus loving Christ and keeping His commandments, we become worthy of receiving the Holy Spirit, in order that the love, not of Christ, which had already preceded, but of God the Father, may be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who is given unto us? Such a thought is altogether wrong. For he who believes that he loveth the Son, and loveth not the Father, certainly loveth not the Son, but some figment of his own imagination. And besides, this is the apostolic declaration, "No one saith, Lord Jesus, but in the Holy Spirit:" and who is it that calleth Him Lord Jesus but he that loveth Him, if he so call Him in the way the apostle intended to be understood? For many call Him so with their lips, but deny Him in their hearts and works; just as He saith of such, "For they profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him." If it is by works He is denied, it is doubtless also by works that His name is truly invoked. "No one," therefore, "saith, Lord Jesus," in mind, in word, in deed, with the heart, the lips, the labor of the hands,—no one saith, Lord Jesus, but in the Holy Spirit; and no one calls Him so but he that loveth. And accordingly the apostles were already calling Him Lord Jesus: and if they called Him so, in no way that implied a feigned utterance, with the mouth confessing, in heart and works denying Him; if they called Him so in all truthfulness of soul, there can be no doubt they loved. And how, then, did they love, but in the Holy Spirit? And yet they are commanded to love Him and keep His commandments, previous and in order to their receiving the Holy Spirit: and yet, without having that Spirit, they certainly could not love Him and keep His commandments.

2. We are therefore to understand that he who loves has already the Holy Spirit, and by what he has becomes worthy of a fuller possession, that by having the more he may love the more. Already, therefore, had the disciples that Holy Spirit whom the Lord promised, for without Him they could not call Him Lord; but they had Him not as yet in the way promised by the Lord. Accordingly they both had, and had Him not, inasmuch as they had Him not as yet to the same extent as He was afterwards to be possessed. They had Him, therefore, in a more limited sense: He was yet to be given them in an ampler measure. They had Him in a hidden way, they were yet to receive Him in a way that was manifest; for this present possession had also a bearing on that fuller gift of the Holy Spirit, that they might come to a conscious knowledge of what they had. It is in speaking of this gift that the apostle says: “Now we have received, not the spirit of this world, but the spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.” For that same manifest bestowal of the Holy Spirit the Lord made, not once, but on two separate occasions. For close on the back of His resurrection from the dead He breathed on them and said, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit.” And because He then gave [the Spirit], did He on that account fail in afterwards sending Him according to His promise? Or was it not the very same Spirit who was both then breathed upon them by Himself, and afterwards sent by Him from heaven? And so, why that same giving on His part which took place publicly, also took place twice, is another question: for it may be that this twofold bestowal of His in a public way took place because of the two Commandments of love, that is, to our neighbor and to God, in order that love might be impressively intimated as pertaining to the Holy Spirit. And if any other reason is to be sought for, we cannot at present allow our discourse to be improperly prolonged by such an inquiry:

provided, however, it be admitted that, without the Holy Spirit, we can neither love Christ nor keep His commandments; while the less experience we have of His presence, the less also can we do so; and the fuller our experience, so much the greater our ability. Accordingly, the promise is no vain one, either to him who has not [the Holy Spirit], or to him who has. For it is made to him who has not, in order that he may have; and to him who has, that he may have more abundantly. For were it not that He was possessed by some in smaller measure than by others, St. Elisha would not have said to St. Elijah, "Let the spirit that is in thee be in a twofold measure in me."

3. But when John the Baptist said, "For God giveth not the Spirit by measure," he was speaking exclusively of the Son of God, who received not the Spirit by measure; for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead. And no more is it independently of the grace of the Holy Spirit that the Mediator between God and men is the man Christ Jesus: for with His own lips He tells us that the prophetical utterance had been fulfilled in Himself: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because He hath anointed me, and hath sent me to preach the gospel to the poor." For His being the Only-begotten, the equal of the Father, is not of grace, but of nature; but the assumption of human nature into the personal unity of the Only-begotten is not of nature, but of grace, as the Gospel acknowledges itself when it says, "And the child grew, and waxed strong, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was in Him." But to others He is given by measure,—a measure ever enlarging until each has received his full complement up to the limits of his own perfection. As we are also reminded by the apostle, "Not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, but to think soberly; according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." Nor is it the Spirit Himself that is divided, but the gifts bestowed by the Spirit: for there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

4. But when He says, "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete," He intimates that He Himself is also a paraclete. For paraclete is in Latin called advocatus (advocate); and it is said of Christ, "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But He said that the world could not receive the Holy Spirit, in much the same sense as it is also

said, “The minding of the flesh is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can be;” just as if we were to say, Unrighteousness cannot be righteous. For in speaking in this passage of the world, He refers to those who love the world; and such a love is not of the Father. And thus the love of this world, which gives us enough to do to weaken and destroy its power within us, is in direct opposition to the love of God, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us. “The world,” therefore, “cannot receive Him, cause it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him.” For worldly love possesseth not those invisible eyes, whereby, save in an invisible way, the Holy Spirit cannot be seen.

5. “But ye,” He adds, “shall know Him; for He shall dwell with you, and be in you.” He will be in them, that He may dwell with them; He will not dwell with them to the end that He may be in them: for the being anywhere is prior to the dwelling there. But to prevent us from imagining that His words, “He shall dwell with you,” were spoken in the same sense as that in which a guest usually dwells with a man in a visible way, He explained what “He shall dwell with you” meant, when He added the words, “He shall be in you.” He is seen, therefore, in an invisible way: nor can we have any knowledge of Him unless He be in us. For it is in a similar way that we come to see our conscience within us: for we see the face of another, but we cannot see our own; but it is our own conscience we see, not another’s. And yet conscience is never anywhere but within us: but the Holy Spirit can be also apart from us, since He is given that He may also be in us. But we cannot see and know Him in the only way in which He may be seen and known, unless He be in us.

TRACTATE LXXV

CHAPTER XIV. 18–21

1. After the promise of the Holy Spirit, lest any should suppose that the Lord was to give Him, as it were, in place of Himself, in any such way as that He Himself would not likewise be with them, He added the words: “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” Orphani [Greek] are pupilli [parent-less children] in Latin. The one is the Greek, the other the Latin name of the same thing: for in the psalm where we read, “Thou art the

helper of the fatherless” [in the Latin version, pupillo], the Greek has orphano. Accordingly, although it was not the Son of God that adopted sons to His Father, or willed that we should have by grace that same Father, who is His Father by nature, yet in a sense it is paternal feelings toward us that He Himself displays, when He declares, “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” In the same way He calls us also the children of the bridegroom, when He says, “The time will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall the children of the bridegroom fast.” And who is the bridegroom, but Christ the Lord?

2. He then goes on to say, “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more.” How so? the world saw Him then; for under the name of the world are to be understood those of whom He spake above, when saying of the Holy Spirit, “Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him.” He was plainly visible to the carnal eyes of the world, while manifest in the flesh; but it saw not the Word that lay hid in the flesh: it saw the man, but it saw not God: it saw the covering, but not the Being within. But as, after the resurrection, even His very flesh, which He exhibited both to the sight and to the handling of His own, He refused to exhibit to others, we may in this way perhaps understand the meaning of the words, “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye shall see me: because I live, ye shall live also.”

3. What is meant by the words, “Because I live, ye shall live also”? Why did He speak in the present tense of His own living, and in the future of theirs, but just by way of promise that the life also of the resurrection-body, as it preceded in His own case, would certainly follow in theirs? And as His own resurrection was in the immediate future, He put the word in the present tense to signify its speedy approach: but of theirs, as delayed till the end of the world, He said not, ye live; but, “ye shall live.” With elegance and brevity, therefore, by means of two words, one of them in the present tense and the other in the future, He gave the promise of two resurrections, to wit, His own in the immediate future, and ours as yet to come in the end of the world. “Because I live,” He says, “ye shall live also:” because He liveth, therefore shall we live also. For as by man is death, by man also is the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall

all be made alive. As it is only through the former that every one is liable to death, it is only through Christ that any one can attain unto life. Because we did not live, we are dead; because He lived, we shall live also. We were dead to Him, when we lived to ourselves; but, because He died in our behalf, He liveth both for Himself and for us. For, because He liveth, we shall live also. For while we were able of ourselves to attain unto death, it is not of ourselves also that life can come into our possession.

4. “In that day,” He says, “ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” In what day, but in that whereof He said, “Ye shall live also”? For then will it be that we can see what we believe. For even now is He in us, and we in Him: this we believe now, but then shall we also know it; although what we know even now by faith, we shall know then by actual vision. For as long as we are in the body, as it now is, to wit, corruptible, and encumbering to the soul, we live at a distance from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight. Then accordingly it will be by sight, for we shall see Him as He is. For if Christ were not even now in us, the apostle would not say, “And if Christ be in you, the body is dead indeed because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.” But that we are also in Him even then, He makes sufficiently clear, when He says, “I am the vine, ye are the branches.” Accordingly in that day, when we shall be living the life, whereby death shall be swallowed up, we shall know that He is in the Father, and we in Him, and He in us; for then shall be completed that very state which is already in the present begun by Him, that He should be in us, and we in Him.

5. “He that hath my commmandments,” He adds, “and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.” He that hath [them] in his memory, and keepeth them in his life; who hath them orally, and keepeth them morally; who hath them in the ear, and keepeth them in deed; or who hath them in deed, and keepeth them by perseverance;—”he it is,” He says, “that loveth me.” By works is love made manifest as no fruitless application of a name. “And he that loveth me,” He says, “shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” But what is this, “I will love”? Is it as if He were then only to love, and loveth not at present? Surely not. For how could the Father love us apart from the Son, or the Son apart from the Father?

Working as They do inseparably, how can They love apart? But He said, “I will love him,” in reference to that which follows, “and I will manifest myself to him.” “I will love, and will manifest;” that is, I will love to the very extent of manifesting. For this has been the present aim of His love, that we may believe, and keep hold of the commandment of faith; but then His love will have this for its object, that we may see, and get that very sight as the reward of our faith: for we also love now, by believing in that which we shall see hereafter; but then shall we love in the sight of that which now we believe.

TRACTATE LXXVI

CHAPTER XIV. 22–24

1. While the disciples thus question, and Jesus their Master replies to them, we also, as it were, are learning along with them, when we either read or listen to the holy Gospel. Accordingly, because the Lord had said, “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye shall see me,” Judas—not indeed His betrayer, who was surnamed Iscariot, but he whose epistle is read among the canonical Scriptures—asked Him of this very matter: “Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?” Let us, too, be as it were questioning disciples with them, and listen to our common Master. For Judas the holy, not the impure, the follower, but not the persecutor of the Lord, has inquired the reason why Jesus was to manifest Himself to His own, and not to the world; why it was that yet a little while, and the world should not see Him, but they should see Him.

2. “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings.” Here we have set forth the reason why He is to manifest Himself to His own, and not to that other class whom He distinguishes by the name of the world; and such is the reason also why the one loveth Him, and the other loveth Him not. It is the very reason, whereof it is declared in the sacred psalm, “Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an unholy nation.” For such as love are chosen, because they love: but those who have not love, though they

speak with the tongues of men and angels, are become a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal; and though they had the gift of prophecy, and knew all mysteries and all knowledge, and had all faith so that they could remove mountains, they are nothing; and though they distributed all their substance, and gave their body to be burnt, it profiteth them nothing. The saints are distinguished from the world by that love which maketh the one-minded to dwell [together] in a house. In this house Father and Son make their abode, and impart that very love to those whom They shall also honor at last with this promised self manifestation; of which the disciple questioned his Master, that not only those who then listened might learn it from His own lips, but we also from his Gospel. For he had made inquiry about the manifestation of Christ, and heard [in reply] about His loving and abiding. There is therefore a kind of inward manifestation of God, which is entirely unknown to the ungodly, who receive no manifestation of God the Father and the Holy Spirit: of the Son, indeed, there might have been such, but only in the flesh; and that, too, neither of the same kind as the other, nor able under any form to remain with them, save only for a little while; and even that, for judgment, not for rejoicing; for punishment, not for reward.

3. We have now, therefore, to understand, so far as He is pleased to unfold it, the meaning of the words, “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye shall see me.” It is true, indeed, that after a little while He was to withdraw even His body, in which the ungodly also were able to see Him, from their sight; for none of them saw Him after His resurrection. But since it was declared on the testimony of angels, “He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven;” and our faith stands to this, that He will come in the same body to judge the living and the dead; there can be no doubt that He will then be seen by the world, meaning by the name, those who are aliens from His kingdom. And, on this account, it is far better to understand Him as having intended to refer at once to that epoch, when He said, “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more,” when in the end of the world He shall be taken away from the sight of the damned, that for the future He may be seen only of those with whom, as those that love Him, the Father and Himself are making their abode. But He said, “a little while,” because that which appears tedious to men is very

brief in the sight of God: for of this same “little while” our evangelist, John, himself says, “Little children, it is the last time.”

4. But further, lest any should imagine that the Father and Son only, without the Holy Spirit, make their abode with those that love Them, let him recall what was said above of the Holy Spirit, “Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye shall know Him; for He shall dwell with you, and shall be in you” (ver. 17). Here you see that, along with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit also taketh up His abode in the saints; that is to say, within them, as God in His temple. The triune God, Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, come to us while we are coming to Them: They come with help, we come with obedience; They come to enlighten, we to behold; They come to fill, we to contain: that our vision of Them may not be external, but inward; and Their abiding in us may not be transitory, but eternal. The Son doth not manifest Himself in such a way as this to the world: for the world is spoken of in the passage before us as those, of whom He immediately adds, “He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings.” These are such as never see the Father and the Holy Spirit: and see the Son for a little while, not to their attainment of bliss, but to their condemnation; and even Him, not in the form of God, wherein He is equally invisible with the Father and the Holy Spirit, but in human form, in which it was His will to be an object of contempt in suffering, but of terror in judging the world.

5. But when He added, “And the saying which ye have heard is not mine, but the Father’s who sent me,” let us not be filled with wonder or fear: He is not inferior to the Father, and yet He is not, save of the Father: He is not unequal in Himself, but He is not of Himself. For it was no false word He uttered when He said, “He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings.” He called them, you see, His own sayings; does He, then, contradict Himself when He said again, “And the saying which ye have heard is not mine”? And, perhaps, it was on account of some intended distinction that, when He said His own, He used “sayings” in the plural; but when He said that “the saying,” that is, the Word, was not His own, but the Father’s, He wished it to be understood of Himself. For in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. For as the Word, He is

certainly not His own, but the Father's: just as He is not His own image, but the Father's; and is not Himself His own Son, but the Father's. Rightly, therefore, does He attribute whatever He does, as equal, to the Author of all, of whom He has this very prerogative, that He is in all respects His equal.

TRACTATE LXXVII

CHAPTER XIV. 25–27

1. In the preceding lesson of the holy Gospel, which is followed by the one that has just been read, the Lord Jesus had said that He and the Father would come to those who loved Them, and make Their abode with them. But He had also already said above of the Holy Spirit, "But ye shall know Him; for He shall dwell with you, and shall be in you" (ver. 17): by which we understood that the divine Trinity dwelleth together in the saints as in His own temple. But now He saith, "These things have I spoken unto you while [still] dwelling with you." That dwelling, therefore, which He promised in the future, is of one kind; and this, which He declares to be present, is of another. The one is spiritual, and is realized inwardly by the mind; the other is corporal, and is exhibited outwardly to the eye and the ear. The one brings eternal blessedness to those who have been delivered, the other pays its visits in time to those who await deliverance. As regards the one, the Lord never withdraws from those who love Him; as regards the other, He comes and goes. "These things, He says, "have I spoken unto you, while [still] dwelling with you;" that is, in His bodily presence, wherein He was visibly conversing with them.

2. "But the Comfort," He adds, "[which is] the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Is it, then, that the Son speaks, and the Holy Spirit teaches, so that we merely get hold of the words that are uttered by the Son, and then understand them by the teaching of the Spirit as if the Son could speak without the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit teach without the Son: or is it not rather that the Son also teacheth and the Spirit speaketh, and, when it is God that speaketh and teacheth anything, that the Trinity itself is speaking and teaching? And just because it is a Trinity, its persons required to be introduced individually, so

that we might hear it in its distinct personality, and understand its inseparable nature. Listen to the Father speaking in the passage where thou readest, “The Lord said unto me, Thou art my Son:” listen to Him also teaching, in that where thou readest, “Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.” The Son, on the other hand, thou hast just heard speaking; for He saith of Himself, “Whatsoever I have said unto you:” and if thou wouldst also know Him as a Teacher, bethink thyself of the Master, when He saith, “One is your Master, even Christ.” Furthermore, of the Holy Spirit, whom thou hast just been told of as a Teacher in the words, “He shall teach you all things,” listen to Him also speaking, where thou readest in the Acts of the Apostles, that the Holy Spirit said to the blessed Peter, “Go with them, for I have sent them.” The whole Trinity, therefore, both speaketh and teacheth: but were it not also brought before us in its individual personality, it would certainly altogether surpass the power of human weakness to comprehend it. For as it is altogether inseparable in itself, it could never be known as the Trinity, were it always spoken of inseparably; for when we speak of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we certainly do not pronounce them simultaneously, and yet in themselves they cannot be else than simultaneous. But when He added, “He will bring to your remembrance,” we ought also to understand that we are commanded not to forget that these pre-eminently salutary admonitions are part of that grace which the Holy Spirit brings to our remembrance.

3. “Peace,” He said, “I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.” It is here we read in the prophet, “Peace upon peace:” peace He leaves with us when going away, His own peace He will give us when He cometh in the end. Peace He leaveth with us in this world, His own peace He will give us in the world to come. His own peace He leaveth with us, and abiding therein we conquer the enemy. His own peace He will give us when, with no more enemies to fight, we shall reign as kings. Peace He leaveth with us, that here also we may love one another: His own peace will He give us, where we shall be beyond the possibility of dissension. Peace He leaveth with us, that we may not judge one another of what is secret to each, while here on earth: His own peace will He give us, when He “will make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God.” And

yet in Him and from Him it is that we have peace, whether that which He leaveth with us when going to the Father, or that which He will give us when we ourselves are brought by Him to the Father. And what is it He leaveth with us, when ascending from us, save His own presence, which He never withdraweth? For He Himself is our peace who hath made both one. It is He, therefore, that becomes our peace, both when we believe that He is, and when we see Him as He is. For if, so long as we are in this corruptible body that burdens the soul, and are walking by faith, not by sight, He forsaketh not those who are sojourning at a distance from Himself; how much more, when we have attained to that sight, shall He fill us with Himself?

4. But why is it that, when He said, “Peace I leave with you,” He did not add, “my;” but when He said, “I give unto you,” He there made use of it? Is “my” to be understood even where it is not expressed, on the ground that what is expressed once may have a reference to both? Or may it not be that here also we have some underlying truth that has to be asked and sought for, and opened up to those who knock thereat? For what, if by His own peace He meant such to be understood as that which He possesses Himself? whereas the peace, which He leaves us in this world, may more properly be termed our peace than His. For He, who is altogether without sin, has no elements of discord in Himself; while the peace we possess, meanwhile, is such that in the midst of it we have still to be saying, “Forgive us our debts.” A certain kind of peace, accordingly, we do possess, inasmuch as we delight in the law of God after the inward man: but it is not a full peace, for we see another law in our members warring against the law of our mind. In the same way we have peace in our relations with one another, just because, in mutually loving, we have a mutual confidence in one another: but no more is such a peace as that complete, for we see not the thoughts of one another’s hearts; and we have severally better or worse opinions in certain respects of one another than is warranted by the reality. And so that peace, although left us by Him, is our peace: for were it not from Him, we should not be possessing it, such as it is; but such is not the peace He has Himself. And if we keep what we received to the end, then such as He has shall we have, when we shall have no elements of discord of our own, and we shall have no secrets hid from one another in our hearts. But I am not

ignorant that these words of the Lord may be taken so as to seem only a repetition of the same idea, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you:” so that after saying “peace,” He only repeated it in saying “my peace;” and what He had meant in saying “I leave with you,” He simply repeated in saying “I give unto you.” Let each one understand it as he pleases; but it is my delight, as I believe it is yours also, my beloved brethren, to keep such hold of that peace here, where our hearts are making common cause against the adversary, that we may be ever longing for the peace which there will be no adversary to disturb.

5. But when the Lord proceeded to say, “Not as the world giveth, give I unto you,” what else does He mean but, Not as those give who love the world, give I unto you? For their aim in giving themselves peace is that, exempt from the annoyance of lawsuits and wars, they may find enjoyment, not in God, but in the friendship of the world; and although they give the righteous peace, in ceasing to persecute them, there can be no true peace where there is no real harmony, because their hearts are at variance. For as one is called a consort who unites his lot (sortem) with another, so may he be termed concordant whose heart has entered into a similar union. Let us, therefore, beloved, with whom Christ leaveth peace, and to whom He giveth His own peace, not after the world’s way, but in a way worthy of Him by whom the world was made, that we should be of one heart with Himself, having our hearts run into one, that this one heart, set on that which is above, may escape the corruption of the earth.

TRACTATE LXXVIII

CHAPTER XIV. 27, 28

1. We have just heard, brethren, these words of the Lord, which He addressed to His disciples: “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come unto you: if ye loved me, ye would surely rejoice, because I go unto the Father; for the Father is greater than I.” Their hearts might have become filled with trouble and fear, simply because of His going away from them, even though intending to return; lest, possibly, in the very interval of the shepherd’s absence, the wolf should make an onset on the flock. But as God, He

abandoned not those from whom He departed as man: and Christ Himself is at once both man and God. And so He both went away in respect of His visible humanity, and remained as regards His Godhead: He went away as regards the nature which is subject to local limitations, and remained in respect of that which is ubiquitous. Why, then, should their heart be troubled and afraid, when His quitting their eyesight was of such a kind as to leave unaltered His presence in their heart? Although even God, who has no local bounds to His presence, may depart from the hearts of those who turn away from Him, not with their feet, but their moral character; just as He comes to such as turn to Him, not with their faces, but in faith, and approach Him in the spirit, and not in the flesh. But that they might understand that it was only in respect of His human nature that He said, “I go and come to you,” He went on to say, “If ye loved me, ye would surely rejoice, because I go unto the Father; for the Father is greater than I.” And so, then, in that very respect wherein the Son is not equal to the Father, in that was He to go to the Father, just as from Him is He hereafter to come to judge the quick and the dead: while in so far as the Only-begotten is equal to Him that begat, He never withdraws from the Father; but with Him is everywhere perfectly equal in that Godhead which knows of no local limitations. For “being as He was in the form of God,” as the apostle says, “He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” For how could that nature be robbery, which was His, not by usurpation, but by birth? “But He emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant;” and so, not losing the former, but assuming the latter, and emptying Himself in that very respect wherein He stood forth before us here in a humbler state than that wherein He still remained with the Father. For there was the accession of a servant-form, with no recession of the divine: in the assumption of the one there was no consumption of the other. In reference to the one He says, “The Father is greater than I;” but because of the other, “I and my Father are one.”

2. Let the Arian attend to this, and find healing in his attention; that wrangling may not lead to vanity, or, what is worse, to insanity. For it is the servant-form which is that wherein the Son of God is less, not only than the Father, but also than the Holy Spirit; and more than that, less also than Himself, for He Himself, in the form of God, is greater than Himself. For

the man Christ does not cease to be called the Son of God, a name which was thought worthy of being applied even to His flesh alone as it lay in the tomb. And what else than this do we confess, when we declare that we believe in the only-begotten Son of God, who, under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, and buried? And what of Him was buried, save the flesh without the spirit? And so in believing in the Son of God, who was buried, we surely affix the name, Son of God, even to His flesh, which alone was laid in the grave. Christ Himself, therefore, the Son of God, equal with the Father because in the form of God, inasmuch as He emptied Himself, without losing the form of God, but assuming that of a servant, is greater even than Himself; because the unlost form of God is greater than the assumed form of a servant. And what, then, is there to wonder at, or what is there out of place, if, in reference to this servant-form, the Son of God says, "The Father is greater than I;" and in speaking of the form of God, the self-same Son of God declares, "I and my Father are one"? For one they are, inasmuch as "The Word was God;" and greater is the Father, inasmuch as "the Word was made flesh." Let me add what cannot be gainsaid by Arians and Eunomians: in respect of this servant-form, Christ as a child was inferior also to His own parents, when, according to Scripture, "He was subject" as an infant to His seniors. Why, then, heretic, seeing that Christ is both God and man, when He speaketh as man, dost thou calumniate God? He in His own person commends our human nature; dost thou dare in Him to asperse the divine? Unbelieving and ungrateful as thou art, wilt thou degrade Him who made thee, just for the very reason that He is declaring what He became because of thee? For equal as He is with the Father, the Son, by whom man was made, became man, in order to be less than the Father: and had He not done so, what would have become of man?

3. May our Lord and Master bring home clearly to our minds the words, "If ye loved me, ye would surely rejoice, because I go unto the Father; for the Father is greater than I." Let us, along with the disciples, listen to the Teacher's words, and not, with strangers, give heed to the wiles of the deceiver. Let us acknowledge the twofold substance of Christ; to wit, the divine, in which he is equal with the Father, and the human, in respect to which the Father is greater. And yet at the same time both are not two, for Christ is one; and God is not a quaternity, but a Trinity. For as the rational

soul and the body form but one man, so Christ, while both God and man, is one; and thus Christ is God, a rational soul, and a body. In all of these we confess Him to be Christ, we confess Him in each. Who, then, is He that made the world? Christ Jesus, but in the form of God. Who is it that was crucified under Pontius Pilate? Christ Jesus, but in the form of a servant. And so of the several parts whereof He consists as man. Who is He who was not left in hell? Christ Jesus, but only in respect of His soul. Who was to rise on the third day, after being laid in the tomb? Christ Jesus, but solely in reference to His flesh. In reference, then, to each of these, He is likewise called Christ. And yet all of them are not two, or three, but one Christ. On this account, therefore, did He say, "If ye loved me, ye would surely rejoice, because I go unto the Father;" for human nature is worthy of congratulation, in being so assumed by the only-begotten Word as to be constituted immortal in heaven, and, earthy in its nature, to be so sublimated and exalted, that, as incorruptible dust, it might take its seat at the right hand of the Father. In such a sense it is that He said He would go to the Father. For in very truth He went unto Him, who was always with Him. But His going unto Him and departing from us were neither more nor less than His transforming and immortalizing that which He had taken upon Him from us in its mortal condition, and exalting that to heaven, by means of which He lived on earth in man's behalf. And who would not draw rejoicing from such a source, who has such love to Christ that he can at once congratulate his own nature as already immortal in Christ, and cherish the hope that he himself will yet become so through Christ?

TRACTATE LXXIX

CHAPTER XIV. 29–31

1. Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, had said unto His disciples, "If ye loved me, ye would surely rejoice, because I go unto the Father; for the Father is greater than I." And that He so spake in His servant-form, and not in that of God, wherein He is equal with the Father, is well known to faith as it resides in the minds of the pious, not as it is feigned by the scornful and senseless. And then He added, "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." What can He mean by this, when the fact rather is, that a man ought, before it comes to

pass, to believe that which demands his belief? For it forms the very encomium of faith when that which is believed is not seen. For what greatness is there in believing what is seen, as in those words of the same Lord, when, in reproving a disciple, He said, “Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; blessed are they that see not, and yet believe.” And I hardly know whether any one can be said to believe what he sees; for this same faith is thus defined in the epistle addressed to the Hebrews: “Now faith is the substance of those that hope, the assurance of things not seen.” Accordingly, if faith is in things that are believed, and that, too, in things which are not seen, what mean these words of the Lord, “And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe”? Ought He not rather to have said, And now I have told you before it come to pass, that ye may believe what, when it is come to pass, ye shall see? For even he who was told, “Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed,” did not believe only what he saw; but he saw one thing, and believed another: for he saw Him as man, and believed Him to be God. He perceived and touched the living flesh, which he had seen in the act of dying, and he believed in the Deity infolded in that flesh. And so he believed with the mind what he did not see, by the help of that which was apparent to his bodily senses. But though we may be said to believe what we see, just as every one says that he believes his own eyes, yet that is not to be mistaken for the faith which is built up by God in our souls; but from things that are seen, we are brought to believe in those which are invisible. Wherefore, beloved, in the passage before us, when our Lord says, “And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe;” by the words, “when it is come to pass,” He certainly means, that they would yet see Him after His death, alive, and ascending to His Father; at the sight of which they should then be compelled to believe that He was indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God, seeing He could do such a thing, even after predicting it, and also could predict it before He did it: and this they should then believe, not with a new, but with an augmented faith; or at least [with a faith] that had been impaired by His death, and was now repaired by His resurrection. For it was not that they had not previously also believed Him to be the Son of God, but when His own predictions were actually fulfilled in Him, that faith, which was still weak at the time of His here speaking to them, and at the time of His death almost ceased to exist, sprang up again into new life and increased vigor.

2. But what says He next? “Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh;” and who is that, but the devil? “And hath nothing in me;” that is to say, no sin at all. For by such words He points to the devil, as the prince, not of His creatures, but of sinners, whom He here designates by the name of this world. And as often as the name of the world is used in a bad sense, He is pointing only to the lovers of such a world; of whom it is elsewhere recorded, “Whosoever will be a friend of this world, becomes the enemy of God.” Far be it from us, then, so to understand the devil as prince of the world, as if he wielded the government of the whole world, that is, of heaven and earth, and all that is in them; of which sort of world it was said, when we were lecturing on Christ the Word, “And the world was made by Him.” The whole world therefore, from the highest heavens to the lowest earth, is subject to the Creator, not to the deserter; to the Redeemer, not to the destroyer; to the Deliverer, not to the enslaver; to the Teacher, not to the deceiver. And in what sense the devil is to be understood as the prince of the world, is still more clearly unfolded by the Apostle Paul, who, after saying, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood,” that is, against men, went on to say, “but against principalities and powers, and the world-rulers of this darkness.” For in the very next word he has explained what he meant by “world,” when he added, “of this darkness;” so that no one, by the name of the world, should understand the whole creation, of which in no sense are fallen angels the rulers. “Of this darkness,” he says, that is, of the lovers of this world: of whom, nevertheless, there were some elected, not from any deserving of their own, but by the grace of God, to whom he says, “Ye were sometimes darkness; but now are ye light in the Lord.” For all have been under the rulers of this darkness, that is, [under the rulers] of wicked men, or darkness, as it were, in subjection to darkness: but “thanks be to God, who hath delivered us,” says the same apostle, “from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.” And in Him the prince of this world, that is, of this darkness, had nothing; for neither did He come with sin as God, nor had His flesh any hereditary taint of sin in its procreation by the Virgin. And, as if it were said to Him, Why, then, dost Thou die, if Thou

hast no sin to merit the punishment of death? He immediately added, “But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do: arise, let us go hence.” For He was sitting at table with those who were similarly occupied. But “let us go,” He said, and whither, but to the place where He, who had nothing in Him deserving of death, was to be delivered up to death? But He had the Father’s commandment to die, as the very One of whom it had been foretold, “Then I paid for that which I took not away;” and so appointed to pay death to the full, while owing it nothing, and to redeem us from the death that was our due. For Adam had seized on sin as a prey, when, deceived, he presumptuously stretched forth his hand to the tree, and attempted to invade the incommunicable name of that Godhead which was disallowed him, and with which the Son of God was endowed by nature, and not by robbery.

TRACTATE LXXX

CHAPTER XV. 1–3

1. This passage of the Gospel, brethren, where the Lord calls Himself the vine, and His disciples the branches, declares in so many words that the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, is the head of the Church, and that we are His members. For as the vine and its branches are of one nature, therefore, His own nature as God being different from ours, He became man, that in Him human nature might be the vine, and we who also are men might become branches thereof. What mean, then, the words, “I am the true vine”? Was it to the literal vine, from which that metaphor was drawn, that He intended to point them by the addition of “true”? For it is by similitude, and not by any personal propriety, that He is thus called a vine; just as He is also termed a sheep, a lamb, a lion, a rock, a corner-stone, and other names of a like kind, which are themselves rather the true ones, from which these are drawn as similitudes, not as realities. But when He says, “I am the true vine,” it is to distinguish Himself, doubtless, from that [vine] to which the words are addressed: “How art thou turned into sourness, as a strange vine?” For how could that be a true vine which was expected to bring forth grapes and brought forth thorns?

2. “I am,” He says, “the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away; and every one that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” Are, then, the husbandman and the vine one? Christ is the vine in the same sense as when He said, “The Father is greater than I;” but in that sense wherein He said, “I and my Father are one,” He is also the husbandman. And yet not such a one as those, whose whole service is confined to external labor; but such, that He also supplies the increase from within. “For neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.” But Christ is certainly God, for the Word was God; and so He and the Father are one: and if the Word was made flesh,—that which He was not before,—He nevertheless still remains what He was. And still more, after saying of the Father, as of the husbandman, that He taketh away the fruitless branches, and pruneth the fruitful, that they may bring forth more fruit, He straightway points to Himself as also the purger of the branches, when He says, “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.” Here, you see, He is also the pruner of the branches—a work which belongs to the husbandman, and not to the vine; and more than that, He maketh the branches His workmen. For although they give not the increase, they afford some help; but not of themselves: “For without me,” He says, “ye can do nothing.” And listen, also, to their own confession: “What, then, is Apollos, and what is Paul? but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man. I have planted, Apollos watered.” And this, too, “as the Lord gave to every man;” and so not of themselves. In that, however, which follows, “but God gave the increase,” He works not by them, but by Himself; for work like that exceeds the lowly capacity of man, transcends the lofty powers of angels, and rests solely and entirely in the hands of the Triune Husbandman. “Now ye are clean,” that is, clean, and yet still further to be cleansed. For, had they not been clean, they could not have borne fruit; and yet every one that beareth fruit is purged by the husbandman, that he may bring forth more fruit. He bears fruit because he is clean; and to bear more, he is cleansed still further. For who in this life is so clean as not to be in need of still further and further cleansing? seeing that, “if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;”

to cleanse in very deed the clean, that is, the fruitful, that they may be so much the more fruitful, as they have been made the cleaner.

3. “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Why does He not say, Ye are clean through the baptism wherewith ye have been washed, but “through the word which I have spoken unto you,” save only that in the water also it is the word that cleanseth? Take away the word, and the water is neither more nor less than water. The word is added to the element, and there results the Sacrament, as if itself also a kind of visible word. For He had said also to the same effect, when washing the disciples’ feet, “He that is washed needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.” And whence has water so great an efficacy, as in touching the body to cleanse the soul, save by the operation of the word; and that not because it is uttered, but because it is believed? For even in the word itself the passing sound is one thing, the abiding efficacy another. “This is the word of faith which we preach,” says the apostle, “that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Accordingly, we read in the Acts of the Apostles, “Purifying their hearts by faith;” and, says the blessed Peter in his epistle, “Even as baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience.” “This is the word of faith which we preach,” whereby baptism, doubtless, is also consecrated, in order to its possession of the power to cleanse. For Christ, who is the vine with us, and the husbandman with the Father, “loved the Church, and gave Himself for it.” And then read the apostle, and see what he adds: “That He might sanctify it, cleansing it with the washing of water by the word.” The cleansing, therefore, would on no account be attributed to the fleeting and perishable element, were it not for that which is added, “by the word.” This word of faith possesses such virtue in the Church of God, that through the medium of him who in faith presents, and blesses, and sprinkles it, He cleanseth even the tiny infant, although itself unable as yet with the heart to believe unto righteousness, and to make confession with the mouth unto salvation. All this is done by means of the word, whereof the Lord saith, “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.”

TRACTATE LXXXI

CHAPTER XV. 4–7

1. Jesus called Himself the vine, and His disciples the branches, and His Father the husbandman; whereon we have already discoursed as we were able. But in the present passage, while still speaking of Himself as the vine, and of His branches, or, in other words, of the disciples, He said, “Abide in me, and I in you.” They are not in Him in the same kind of way that He is in them. And yet both ways tend to their advantage, and not to His. For the relation of the branches to the vine is such that they contribute nothing to the vine, but from it derive their own means of life; while that of the vine to the branches is such that it supplies their vital nourishment, and receives nothing from them. And so their having Christ abiding in them, and abiding themselves in Christ, are in both respects advantageous, not to Christ, but to the disciples. For when the branch is cut off, another may spring up from the living root; but that which is cut off cannot live apart from the root.

2. And then He proceeds to say: “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” A great encomium on grace, my brethren,—one that will instruct the souls of the humble, and stop the mouths of the proud. Let those now answer it, if they dare, who, ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. Let the self-complacent answer it, who think they have no need of God for the performance of good works. Fight they not against such a truth, those men of corrupt mind, reprobate concerning the faith, whose reply is only full of impious talk, when they say: It is of God that we have our existence as men, but it is of ourselves that we are righteous? What is it you say, you who deceive yourselves, and, instead of establishing freewill, cast it headlong down from the heights of its self-elevation through the empty regions of presumption into the depths of an ocean grave? Why, your assertion that man of himself worketh righteousness, that is the height of your self-elation. But the Truth contradicts you, and declares, “The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine.” Away with you now over your giddy precipices, and, without a spot whereon to take your stand, vapor away at your windy talk. These are the empty regions of your

presumption. But look well at what is tracking your steps, and, if you have any sense remaining, let your hair stand on end. For whoever imagines that he is bearing fruit of himself is not in the vine, and he that is not in the vine is not in Christ, and he that is not in Christ is not a Christian. Such are the ocean depths into which you have plunged.

3. Ponder again and again what the Truth has still further to say: “I am the vine,” He adds, “ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.” For just to keep any from supposing that the branch can bear at least some little fruit of itself, after saying, “the same bringeth forth much fruit,” His next words are not, Without me ye can do but little, but “ye can do nothing.” Whether then it be little or much, without Him it is impracticable; for without Him nothing can be done. For although, when the branch beareth little fruit, the husbandman purgeth it that it may bring forth more; yet if it abide not in the vine, and draw its life from the root, it can bear no fruit whatever of itself. And although Christ would not have been the vine had He not been man, yet He could not have supplied such grace to the branches had He not also been God. And just because such grace is so essential to life, that even death itself ceases to be at the disposal of free-will, He adds, “If any one abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and wither; and they shall gather him, and cast him into the fire, and he is burned.” The wood of the vine, therefore, is in the same proportion the more contemptible if it abide not in the vine, as it is glorious while so abiding; in fine, as the Lord likewise says of them in the prophet Ezekiel, when cut off, they are of no use for any purpose of the husbandman, and can be applied to no labor of the mechanic. The branch is suitable only for one of two things, either the vine or the fire: if it is not in the vine, its place will be in the fire; and that it may escape the latter, may it have its place in the vine.

4. “If ye abide in me,” He says, “and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” For abiding thus in Christ, is there aught they can wish but what will be agreeable to Christ? So abiding in the Saviour, can they wish anything that is inconsistent with salvation? Some things, indeed, we wish because we are in Christ, and other things we desire because still in this world. For at times, in connection with this our

present abode, we are inwardly prompted to ask what we know not it would be inexpedient for us to receive. But God forbid that such should be given us if we abide in Christ, who, when we ask, only does what will be for our advantage. Abiding, therefore, ourselves in Him, when His words abide in us we shall ask what we will, and it shall be done unto us. For if we ask, and the doing follows not, what we ask is not connected with our abiding in Him, nor with His words which abide in us, but with that craving and infirmity of the flesh which are not in Him, and have not His words abiding in them. For to His words, at all events, belongs that prayer which He taught, and in which we say, “Our Father, who art in heaven.” Let us only not fall away from the words and meaning of this prayer in our petitions, and whatever we ask, it shall be done unto us. For then only may His words be said to abide in us, when we do what He has commanded us, and love what He has promised. But when His words abide only in the memory, and have no place in the life, the branch is not to be accounted as in the vine, because it draws not its life from the root. It is to this distinction that the word of Scripture has respect, “and to those that remember His commandments to do them.” For many retain them in their memory only to treat them with contempt, or even to mock at and assail them. It is not in such as have only some kind of contact, but no connection, that the words of Christ abide; and to them, therefore, they will not be a blessing, but a testimony against them; and because they are present in them without abiding in them, they are held fast by them for the very purpose of being judged according to them at last.

TRACTATE LXXXII

CHAPTER XV. 8–10

1. The Saviour, in thus speaking to the disciples, commends still more and more the grace whereby we are saved, when He says, “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear very much fruit, and be made my disciples.” Whether we say glorified, or made bright, both are the rendering given us of one Greek verb, namely doxazein (doxazein). For what is doxa (doxa) in Greek, is in Latin glory. I have thought it worth while to mention this, because the apostle says, “If Abraham was justified by works, he hath glory, but not before God.” For this is the glory before God, whereby God, and not man,

is glorified, when he is justified, not by works, but by faith, so that even his doing well is imparted to him by God; just as the branch, as I have stated above, cannot bear fruit of itself. For if herein God the Father is glorified, that we bear much fruit, and be made the disciples of Christ, let us not credit our own glory therewith, as if we had it of ourselves. For of Him is such a grace, and accordingly therein the glory is not ours, but His. Hence also, in another passage, after saying, “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works;” to keep them from the thought that such good works were of themselves, He immediately added, “and may glorify your Father who is in heaven.” For herein is the Father glorified, that we bear much fruit, and be made the disciples of Christ. And by whom are we so made, but by Him whose mercy hath forestalled us? For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.

2. “As the Father hath loved me,” He says, “so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.” Here, then, you see, is the source of our good works. For whence should we have them, were it not that faith worketh by love? And how should we love, were it not that we were first loved? With striking clearness is this declared by the same evangelist in his epistle: “We love God because He first loved us.” But when He says, “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you,” He indicates no such equality between our nature and His as there is between Himself and the Father, but the grace whereby the Mediator between God and men is the man Christ Jesus. For He is pointed out as Mediator when He says, “The Father—me, and I—you.” For the Father, indeed, also loveth us, but in Him; for herein is the Father glorified, that we bear fruit in the vine, that is, in the Son, and so be made His disciples.

3. “Continue ye,” He says, “in my love.” How shall we continue? Listen to what follows: “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.” Love brings about the keeping of His commandments; but does the keeping of His commandments bring about love? Who can doubt that it is love which precedes? For he has no true ground for keeping the commandments who is destitute of love. And so, in saying, “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love,” He shows not the source from which love springs, but the means whereby it is manifested. As if He said, Think not

that ye abide in my love if ye keep not my commandments; for it is only if ye have kept them that ye shall abide. In other words, it will thus be made apparent that ye shall abide in my love if ye keep my commandments. So that no one need deceive himself by saying that he loveth Him, if he keepeth not His commandments. For we love Him just in the same measure as we keep His commandments; and the less we keep them, the less we love. And although, when He saith, "Continue ye in my love," it is not apparent what love He spake of; whether the love we bear to Him, or that which He bears to us: yet it is seen at once in the previous clause. For He had there said, "So have I loved you;" and to these words He immediately adds, "Continue ye in my love:" accordingly, it is that love which He bears to us. What, then, do the words mean, "Continue ye in my love," but just, continue ye in my grace? And what do these mean, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love," but, hereby shall ye know that ye shall abide in the love which I bear to you, if ye keep my commandments? It is not, then, for the purpose of awakening His love to us that we first keep His commandments; but this, that unless He loves us, we cannot keep His commandments. This is a grace which lies all disclosed to the humble, but is hid from the proud.

4. But what are we to make of that which follows: "Even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love"? Here also He certainly intended us to understand that fatherly love wherewith He was loved of the Father. For this was what He has just said, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you;" and then to these He added the words, "Continue ye in my love;" in that, doubtless, wherewith I have loved you. Accordingly, when He says also of the Father, "I abide in His love," we are to understand it of that love which was borne Him by the Father. But then, in this case also, is that love which the Father bears to the Son referable to the same grace as that wherewith we are loved of the Son: seeing that we on our part are sons, not by nature, but by grace; while the Only-begotten is so by nature and not by grace? Or is this even in the Son Himself to be referred to His condition as man? Certainly so. For in saying, "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you," He pointed to the grace that was His as Mediator. For Christ Jesus is the Mediator between God and men, not in respect to His Godhead, but in respect to His manhood. And certainly it is

in reference to this His human nature that we read, “And Jesus increased in wisdom and age, and in favor [grace] with God and men.” In harmony, therefore, with this, we may rightly say that while human nature belongs not to the nature of God, yet such human nature does by grace belong to the person of the only-begotten Son of God; and that by grace so great, that there is none greater, yea, none that even approaches equality. For there were no merits that preceded that assumption of humanity, but all His merits began with that very assumption. The Son, therefore, abideth in the love wherewith the Father hath loved Him, and so hath kept His commandments. For what are we to think of Him even as man, but that God is His lifter up? for the Word was God, the Only-begotten, co-eternal with Him that begat; but that He might be given to us as Mediator, by grace ineffable, the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

TRACTATE LXXXIII

CHAPTER XV. 11, 12

1. You have just heard, beloved, the Lord saying to His disciples, “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might be in you, and that your joy might be full.” And what else is Christ’s joy in us, save that He is pleased to rejoice over us? And what is this joy of ours which He says is to be made full, but our having fellowship with Him? On this account He had said to the blessed Peter, “If I wash thee not, thou shall have no part with me.” His joy, therefore, in us is the grace He hath bestowed upon us: and that is also our joy. But over it He rejoiced even from eternity, when He chose us before the foundation of the world. Nor can we rightly say that His joy was not full; for God’s joy was never at any time imperfect. But that joy of His was not in us: for we, in whom it could be, had as yet no existence; and even when our existence commenced, it began not to be in Him. But in Him it always was, who in the infallible truth of His own foreknowledge rejoiced that we should yet be His own. Accordingly, He had a joy over us that was already full, when He rejoiced in foreknowing and foreordaining us: and as little could there be any fear intermingling in that joy of His, lest there should be any possible failure in what He foreknew would be done by Himself. Nor, when He began to do what He foreknew that He would do, was there any increase to His joy as the expression of His blessedness;

otherwise His making of us must have added to His blessedness. Be such a supposition, brethren, far from our thoughts; for the blessedness of God was neither less without us, nor became greater because of us. His joy, therefore, over our salvation, which was always in Him, when He foreknew and foreordained us, began to be in us when He called us; and this joy we properly call our own, as by it we, too, shall yet be blessed: but this joy, as it is ours, increases and advances, and presses onward perseveringly to its own completion. Accordingly, it has its beginning in the faith of the regenerate, and its completion in the reward when they rise again. Such is my opinion of the purport of the words, “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might be in you, and that your joy might be made full:” that mine “might be in you;” that yours “might be made full.” For mine was always full, even before ye were called, when ye were foreknown as those whom I was afterwards to call; but it finds its place in you also, when ye are transformed into that which I have foreknown regarding you. And “that yours may be full:” for ye shall be blessed, what ye are not as yet; just as ye are now created, who had no existence before.

2. “This,” He says, “is my injunction, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.” Whether we call it injunction or commandment, both are the rendering of the same Greek word, entole (entole). But He had already made this same announcement on a former occasion, when, as ye ought to remember, I repounded it to you to the best of my ability. For this is what He says there, “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” And so the repetition of this commandment is its commendation: only that there He said, “A new commandment I give unto you;” and here, “This is my commandment:” there, as if there had been no such commandment before; and here, as if He had no other commandment to give them. But there it is spoken of as “new,” to keep us from persevering in our old courses; here, it is called “mine,” to keep us from treating it with contempt.

3. But when He said in this way here, “This is my commandment,” as if there were none else, what are we to think, my brethren? Is, then, the commandment about that love wherewith we love one another, His only one? Is there not also another that is still greater,—that we should love

God? Or has God in very truth given us such a charge about love alone, that we have no need of searching for others? There are three things at least that the apostle commends when he says, “But now abide faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” And although in charity, that is, in love, are comprehended the two commandments; yet it is here declared to be the greatest only, and not the sole one. Accordingly, what a host of commandments are given us about faith, what a multitude about hope! who is there that could collect them together, or suffice to number them? But let us ponder the words of the same apostle: “Love is the fullness of the law.” And so, where there is love, what can be wanting? and where it is not, what is there that can possibly be profitable? The devil believes, but does not love: no one loveth who doth not believe. One may, indeed, hope for pardon who does not love, but he hopes in vain; but no one can despair who loves. Therefore, where there is love, there of necessity will there be faith and hope; and where there is the love of our neighbor, there also of necessity will be the love of God. For he that loveth not God, how loveth he his neighbour as himself, seeing that he loveth not even himself? Such an one is both impious and iniquitous; and he that loveth iniquity, manifestly loveth not, but hateth his own soul. Let us, therefore, be holding fast to this precept of the Lord, to love one another; and then all else that is commanded we shall do, for all else we have contained in this. But this love is distinguished from that which men bear to one another as such; for in order to mark the distinction, it is added, “as I have loved you.” And wherefore is it that Christ loveth us, but that we may be fitted to reign with Christ? With this aim, therefore, let us also be loving one another, that we may manifest the difference of our love from that of others, who have no such motive in loving one another, because the love itself is wanting. But those whose mutual love has the possession of God Himself for its object, will truly love one another; and, therefore, even for the very purpose of loving one another, they love God. There is no such love as this in all men; for few have this motive for their love one to another, that God may be all in all.

TRACTATE LXXXIV

CHAPTER XV. 13

1. The Lord, beloved brethren, hath defined that fullness of love which we ought to bear to one another, when He said: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Inasmuch, then, as He had said before, “This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you;” and appended to these words what you have just been hearing, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;” there follows from this as a consequence, what this same Evangelist John says in his epistle, “That as Christ laid down His life for us, even so we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren;” loving one another in truth, as He hath loved us, who laid down His life for us. Such also is doubtless the meaning of what we read in the Proverbs of Solomon: “If thou sittest down to supper at the table of a ruler, consider wisely what is set before thee; and so put to thy hand, knowing that thou art bound to make similar preparations.” For what is the table of the ruler, but that from which we take the body and blood of Him who laid down His life for us? And what is it to sit thereat, but to approach in humility? And what is it to consider intelligently what is set before thee, but worthily to reflect on the magnitude of the favor? And what is it, so to put to thy hand, as knowing that thou art bound to make similar preparations, but as I have already said, that, as Christ laid down His life for us, so we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren? For as the Apostle Peter also says, “Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps.” This is to make similar preparations. This it was that the blessed martyrs did in their burning love; and if we celebrate their memories in no mere empty form, and, in the banquet whereat they themselves were filled to the full, approach the table of the Lord, we must, as they did, be also ourselves making similar preparations. For on these very grounds we do not commemorate them at that table in the same way, as we do others who now rest in peace, as that we should also pray for them, but rather that they should do so for us, that we may cleave to their footsteps; because they have actually attained that fullness of love, than which, our Lord hath told us, there cannot be a greater. For such tokens of love they exhibited for their brethren, as they themselves had equally received at the table of the Lord.

2. But let us not be supposed to have so spoken as if on such grounds we might possibly arrive at an equality with Christ the Lord, if for His sake we

have undergone witness-bearing even unto blood. He had power to lay down His life, and to take it again; but we have no power to live as long as we wish; and die we must, however unwilling: He, by dying, straightway slew death in Himself; we, by His death, are delivered from death: His flesh saw no corruption; ours, after corruption, shall in the end of the world be clothed by Him with incorruption: He had no need of us, in order to work out our salvation; we, without Him, can do nothing: He gave Himself as the vine, to us the branches; we, apart from Him, can have no life. Lastly, although brethren die for brethren, yet no martyr's blood is ever shed for the remission of the sins of brethren, as was the case in what He did for us; and in this respect He bestowed not on us aught for imitation, but something for congratulation. In as far, then, as the martyrs have shed their blood for the brethren, so far have they exhibited such tokens of love as they themselves perceived at the table of the Lord. (One might imitate Him in dying, but no one could, in redeeming.) In all else, then, that I have said, although it is out of my power to mention everything, the martyr of Christ is far inferior to Christ Himself. But if any one shall set himself in comparison, I say, not with the power, but with the innocence of Christ, and (I would not say) in thinking that he is healing the sins of others, but at least that he has no sins of his own, even so far is his avidity overstepping the requirements of the method of salvation; it is a matter of considerable moment for him, only he attains not his desire. And well it is that he is admonished in that passage of the Proverbs, which immediately goes on to say, "But if thy greed is too great, be not desirous of his dainties; for it is better that thou take nothing thereof, than that thou shouldst take more than is befitting. For such things," it is added, "have a life of deceit," that is, of hypocrisy. For in asserting his own sinlessness, he cannot prove, but only pretend, that he is righteous. And so it is said, "For such have a deceiving life." There is only One who could at once have human flesh and be free from sin. Appropriately are we commanded that which follows; and such a word and proverb is well adapted to human weakness, when it is said, "Lay not thyself out, seeing thou art poor, against him that is rich." For the rich man is Christ, who was never obnoxious to punishment either through hereditary or personal debt and is righteous Himself, and justifies others. Lay not thyself out against Him, thou who art so poor, that thou art manifestly to the eyes of all the daily beggar that thou art in thy prayer for the remission of sins. "But keep thyself,” he says, “from thine own counsel” [“cease from thine own wisdom”—E.V.]. From what, but from this delusive presumption? For He, indeed, inasmuch as He is not only man but also God, can never be chargeable with evil. “For if thou turn thine eye upon Him, He will nowhere be visible.” “Thine eye,” that is, the human eye, wherewith thou distinguishest that which is human; “if thou turn it upon Him, He will nowhere be visible,” because He cannot be seen with such organs of sight as are thine. “For He will provide Himself wings like an eagle’s, and will depart to the house of His overseer,” from which, at all events, He came to us, and found us not such as He Himself was who came. Let us therefore love one another, even as Christ hath loved us, and given Himself for us. “For greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” And let us be imitating Him in such a spirit of reverential obedience, that we shall never have the boldness to presume on a comparison between Him and ourselves.

TRACTATE LXXXV

CHAPTER XV. 14, 15

1. When the Lord Jesus had commended the love which He manifested toward us in dying for us, and had said, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends,” He added, “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” What great condescension! when one cannot even be a good servant unless he do his lord’s commandments; the very means, which only prove men to be good servants, He wished to be those whereby His friends should be known. But the condescension, as I have termed it, is this, that the Lord condescends to call those His friends whom He knows to be His servants. For, to let us know that it is the duty of servants to yield obedience to their master’s commands, He actually in another place reproaches those who are servants, by saying, “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?” Accordingly, when ye say Lord, prove what you say by doing my commandments. Is it not to the obedient servant that He is yet one day to say, “Well done, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy

of thy Lord”? One, therefore, who is a good servant, can be both servant and friend.

2. But let us mark what follows. “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth.” How, then are we to understand the good servant to be both servant and friend, when He says, “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth”? He introduces the name of friend in such a way as to withdraw that of servant; not as if to include both in the one term, but in order that the one should succeed to the place vacated by the other. What does it mean? Is it this, that even in doing the Lord’s commandments we shall not be servants? Or this, that then we shall cease to be servants, when we have been good servants? And yet who can contradict the Truth, when He says, “Henceforth I call you not servants?” and shows why He said so: “For the servant,” He adds, “knoweth not what his lord doeth.” Is it that a good and tried servant is not likewise entrusted by his master with his secrets? What does He mean, then, by saying, “The servant knoweth not what his lord doeth”? Be it that “he knoweth not what he doeth,” is he ignorant also of what he commands? For if he were so, how can he serve? Or how is he a servant who does no service? And yet the Lord speaks thus: “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants.” Truly a marvellous statement! Seeing we cannot serve the Lord but by doing His commandments, how is it that in doing so we shall cease to be servants? If I be not a servant in doing His commandments, and yet cannot be in His service unless I so do, then, in my very service, I am no longer a servant.

3. Let us, brethren, let us understand, and may the Lord enable us to understand, and enable us also to do what we understand. And if we know this, we know of a truth what the Lord doeth; for it is only the Lord that so enables us, and by such means only do we attain to His friendship. For just as there are two kinds of fear, which produce two classes of fearers; so there are two kinds of service, which produce two classes of servants. There is a fear, which perfect love casteth out; and there is another fear, which is clean, and endureth for ever. The fear that lies not in love, the apostle pointed to when he said, “For ye have not received the spirit of service again to fear.” But he referred to the clean fear when he said, “Be not high-

minded, but fear.” In that fear which love casteth out, there has also to be cast out the service along with it: for both were joined together by the apostle, that is, the service and the fear, when he said, “For ye have not received the spirit of service again to fear.” And it was the servant connected with this kind of service that the Lord also had in His eye when He said, “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth.” Certainly not the servant characterized by the clean fear, to whom it is said, “Well done, thou good servant: enter thou into the joy of thy lord;” but the servant who is characterized by the fear which love casteth out, of whom He elsewhere saith, “The servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever.” Since, therefore, He hath given us power to become the sons of God, let us not be servants, but sons: that, in some wonderful and indescribable but real way, we may as servants have the power not to be servants; servants, indeed, with that clean fear which distinguishes the servant that enters into the joy of his lord, but not servants with the fear that has to be cast out, and which marketh him that abideth not in the house for ever. But let us bear in mind that it is the Lord that enableth us to serve so as not to be servants. And this it is that is unknown to the servant, who knoweth not what his Lord doeth; and who, when he doeth any good thing, is lifted up as if he did it himself, and not his Lord; and so, glories not in the Lord, but in himself, thereby deceiving himself, because glorying, as if he had not received. But let us, beloved, in order that we may be the friends of the Lord, know what our Lord doeth. For it is He who makes us not only men, but also righteous, and not we ourselves. And who but He is the doer, in leading us to such a knowledge? For “we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” Whatever good there is, is freely given by Him. And so because this also is good, by Him who graciously imparteth all good is this gift of knowing likewise bestowed; that, in respect of all good things whatever, he that glorieth may glory in the Lord. But the words that follow, “But I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you,” are so profound, that we must by no means compress them within the limits of the present discourse, but leave them over till another.

TRACTATE LXXXVI

CHAPTER XV. 15, 16

1. It is a worthy subject of inquiry how these words of the Lord are to be understood, “But I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.” For who is there that dare affirm or believe that any man knoweth all things that the only-begotten Son hath heard of the Father; when there is no one that can comprehend even how He heareth any word of the Father, being as He is Himself the only Word of the Father? Nay more, is it not the case that a little afterwards, in this same discourse, which He delivered to the disciples between the Supper and His passion, He said, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now”? How, then, are we to understand that He made known unto the disciples all that He had heard of the Father, when there are many things that He saith not, just because He knows that they cannot bear them now? Doubtless what He is yet to do He says that He has done as the same Being who hath made those things which are yet to be. For as He says by the prophet, “They pierced my hands and my feet,” and not, They will yet pierce; but speaking as it were of the past, and yet predicting what was still in the future: so also in the passage before us He declares that He has made known to the disciples all, that He knows He will yet make known in that fullness of knowledge, whereof the apostle says, “But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” For in the same place he adds: “Now I know in part, but then shall I know, even as also I am known; and now through a glass in a riddle, but then face to face.” For the same apostle also says that we have been saved by the washing of regeneration, and yet declares in another place, “We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is no hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” To a similar purpose it is also said by his fellow-apostle Peter, “In whom, though now seeing Him not, ye believe; and in whom, when ye see Him, ye shall rejoice with a joy unspeakable and glorious: receiving the reward of faith, even the salvation of your souls.” If, then, it is now the season of faith, and faith’s reward is the salvation of our souls; who, in that faith which worketh by love, can doubt that the day must come to an end, and at its close the reward be received; not only the

redemption of our body, whereof the Apostle Paul speaketh, but also the salvation of our souls, as we are told by the Apostle Peter? For the felicity springing from both is at this present time, and in the existing state of mortality, a matter rather of hope than of actual possession. But this it concerns us to remember, that our outward man, to wit the body, is still decaying; but the inward, that is, the soul, is being renewed day by day. Accordingly, while we are waiting for the immortality of the flesh and salvation of our souls in the future, yet with the pledge we have received, it may be said that we are saved already; so that knowledge of all things which the Only-begotten hath heard of the Father we are to regard as a matter of hope still lying in the future, although declared by Christ as something He had already imparted.

2. “Ye have not chosen me,” He says, “but I have chosen you.” Grace such as that is ineffable. For what were we so long as Christ had not yet chosen us, and we were therefore still destitute of love? For he who hath chosen Him, how can he love Him? Were we, think you, in that condition which is sung of in the psalm: “I had rather be an abject in the house of the Lord, than dwell in the tents of wickedness”? Certainly not. What were we then, but sinful and lost? We had not yet come to believe on Him, in order to lead to His choosing us; for if it were those who already believed that He chose, then was He chosen Himself, prior to His choosing. But how could He say, “Ye have not chosen me,” save only because His mercy anticipated us? Here surely is at fault the vain reasoning of those who defend the foreknowledge of God in opposition to His grace, and with this view declare that we were chosen before the foundation of the world, because God foreknew that we should be good, but not that He Himself would make us good. So says not He, who declares, “Ye have not chosen me.” For had He chosen us on the ground that He foreknew that we should be good, then would He also have foreknown that we would not be the first to make choice of Him. For in no other way could we possibly be good: unless, forsooth, one could be called good who has never made good his choice. What was it then that He chose in those who were not good? For they were not chosen because of their goodness, inasmuch as they could not be good without being chosen. Otherwise grace is no more grace, if we maintain the priority of merit. Such, certainly, is the election of grace, whereof the

apostle says: “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant saved according to the election of grace.” To which he adds: “And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace.” Listen, thou ungrateful one, listen: “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” Not that thou mayest say, I am chosen because I already believed. For if thou wert believing in Him, then hadst thou already chosen Him. But listen: “Ye have not chosen me.” Not that thou mayest say, Before I believed I was already doing good works, and therefore was I chosen. For what good work can be prior to faith, when the apostle says, “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin”? What, then, are we to say on hearing such words, “Ye have not chosen me,” but that we were evil, and were chosen in order that we might be good through the grace of Him who chose us? For it is not by grace, if merit preceded: but it is of grace: and therefore that grace did not find, but effected the merit.

3. See then, beloved, how it is that He chooseth not the good, but maketh those whom He has chosen good. “I have chosen you,” He saith, “and appointed you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and [that] your fruit should remain.” And is not that the fruit, whereof He had already said, “Without me ye can do nothing”? He hath chosen therefore, and appointed that we should go and bring forth fruit; and no fruit, accordingly, had we to induce His choice of us. “That ye should go,” He said, “and bring forth fruit.” We go to bring forth, and He Himself is the way wherein we go, and wherein He hath appointed us to go. And so His mercy hath anticipated us in all. “And that your fruit,” He saith, “should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you.” Accordingly let love remain; for He Himself is our fruit. And this love lies at present in longing desire, not yet in fullness of enjoyment; and whatsoever with that longing desire we shall ask in the name of the only-begotten Son, the Father giveth us. But what is not expedient for our salvation to receive, let us not imagine that we ask that in the Saviour’s name: but we ask in the name of the Saviour only that which really belongs to the way of salvation.

TRACTATE LXXXVII

CHAPTER XV. 17–19

1. In the Gospel lesson which precedes this one, the Lord had said: “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and [that] your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you.” On these words you remember that we have already discoursed, as the Lord enabled us. But here, that is, in the succeeding lesson which you have heard read, He says: “These things I command you, that ye love one another.” And thereby we are to understand that this is our fruit, of which He had said, “I have chosen you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and [that] your fruit should remain.” And what He subjoined, “That whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, He may give it you,” He will certainly give us if we love one another; seeing that this very thing He has also given us, in choosing us when we had no fruit, because we had chosen Him not; and appointing us that we should bring forth fruit,—that is, that we should love one another,—a fruit that we cannot have apart from Him, just as the branches can do nothing apart from the vine. Our fruit, therefore, is charity, which the apostle explains to be, “Out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.” So love we one another, and so love we God. For it would be with no true love that we loved one another, if we loved not God. For every one loves his neighbor as himself if he loves God; and if he loves not God, he loves not himself. For on these two commandments of love hang all the law and the prophets: this is our fruit. And it is in reference, therefore, to such fruit that He gives us commandment when He says, “These things I command you, that ye love one another.” In the same way also the Apostle Paul, when wishing to commend the fruit of the Spirit in opposition to the deeds of the flesh, posited this as his principle, saying, “The fruit of the Spirit is love;” and then, as if springing from and bound up in this principle, he wove the others together, which are “joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” For who can truly rejoice who loves not good as the source of his joy? Who can have true peace, if he have it not with one whom he truly loves? Who can be long-enduring through persevering continuance in good, save through fervent love? Who can be kind, if he love not the person he is aiding? Who can be good, if he is not made so by loving? Who can be sound in the faith, without that faith which worketh by love? Whose meekness can be beneficial in character, if not regulated by

love? And who will abstain from that which is debasing, if he love not that which dignifies? Appropriately, therefore, does the good Master so frequently commend love, as the only thing needing to be commended, without which all other good things can be of no avail, and which cannot be possessed without bringing with it those other good things that make a man truly good.

2. But alongside of this love we ought also patiently to endure the hatred of the world. For it must of necessity hate those whom it perceives recoiling from that which is loved by itself. But the Lord supplies us with special consolation from His own case, when, after saying, “These things I command you, that ye love one another,” He added, “If the world hate you, know that it hated me before [it hated] you.” Why then should the member exalt itself above the head? Thou refusest to be in the body if thou art unwilling to endure the hatred of the world along with the Head. “If ye were of the world,” He says, “the world would love its own.” He says this, of course, of the whole Church, which, by itself, He frequently also calls by the name of the world: as when it is said, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” And this also: “The Son of man came not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” And John says in his epistle: “We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also [for those] of the whole world.” The whole world then is the Church, and yet the whole world hateth the Church. The world therefore hateth the world, the hostile that which is reconciled, the condemned that which is saved, the polluted that which is cleansed.

3. But that world which God is in Christ reconciling unto Himself, which is saved by Christ, and has all its sins freely pardoned by Christ, has been chosen out of the world that is hostile, condemned, and defiled. For out of that mass, which has all perished in Adam, are formed the vessels of mercy, whereof that world of reconciliation is composed, that is hated by the world which belongeth to the vessels of wrath that are formed out of the same mass and fitted to destruction. Finally, after saying, “If ye were of the world, the world would love its own,” He immediately added, “But because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore

the world hateth you.” And so these men were themselves also of that world, and, that they might no longer be of it, were chosen out of it, through no merit of their own, for no good works of theirs had preceded; and not by nature, which through free-will had become totally corrupted at its source: but gratuitously, that is, of actual grace. For He who chose the world out of the world, effected for Himself, instead of finding, what He should choose: for “there is a remnant saved according to the election of grace. And if by grace,” he adds, “then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.”

4. But if we are asked about the love which is borne to itself by that world of perdition which hateth the world of redemption; we reply, it loveth itself, of course, with a false love, and not with a true. And hence, it loves itself falsely, and hates itself truly. For he that loveth wickedness, hateth his own soul. And yet it is said to love itself, inasmuch as it loves the wickedness that makes it wicked; and, on the other hand, it is said to hate itself, inasmuch as it loves that which causes it injury. It hates, therefore, the true nature that is in it, and loves the vice: it hates what it is, as made by the goodness of God, and loves what has been wrought in it by free-will. And hence also, if we rightly understand it, we are at once forbidden and commanded to love it: thus, we are forbidden, when it is said to us, “Love not the world;” and we are commanded, when it is said to us, “Love your enemies.” These constitute the world that hateth us. And therefore we are forbidden to love in it that which it loves in itself; and we are enjoined to love in it what it hates in itself, namely, the workmanship of God, and the various consolations of His goodness. For we are forbidden to love the vice that is in it, and enjoined to love the nature, while it loves the vice in itself, and hates the nature: so that we may both love and hate it in a right manner, whereas it loves and hates itself perversely.

TRACTATE LXXXVIII

CHAPTER XV. 20, 21

1. The Lord, in exhorting His servants to endure with patience the hatred of the world, proposes to them no greater and better example than His own; seeing that, as the Apostle Peter says, “Christ suffered for us, leaving us an

example, that we should follow His steps.” And if we really do so, we do it by His assistance, who said, “Without me ye can do nothing.” But further, to those to whom He had already said, “If the world hate you, know that it hated me before [it hated] you,” He now also says in the word you have just been hearing, when the Gospel was read, “Remember my word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord: if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.” Now in saying, “The servant is not greater than his lord,” does He not clearly indicate how He would have us understand what He had said above, “Henceforth I call you not servants”? For, you see, He calleth them servants. For what else can the words imply, “The servant is not greater than his lord: if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you”? It is clear, therefore, that when it is said, “Henceforth I call you not servants,” He is to be understood as speaking of that servant who abideth not in the house for ever, but is characterized by the fear which love casteth out; whereas, when it is here said, “The servant is not greater than his lord: if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you,” that servant is meant who is distinguished by the clean fear which endureth for ever. For this is the servant who is yet to hear, “Well done, thou good servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

2. “But all these things,” He says, “will they do unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not Him that sent me.” And what are “all these things” that “they will do,” but what He has just said, namely, that they will hate and persecute you, and despise your word? For if they kept not their word, and yet neither hated nor persecuted them; or if they even hated, but did not persecute them: it would not be all these things that they did. But “all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake,”—what else is that but to say, they will hate me in you, they will persecute me in you; and your word, just because it is mine, they will not keep? For “all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake:” not for yours, but mine. So much the more miserable, therefore, are those who do such things on account of that name, as those are blessed who suffer such things in its behalf: as He Himself elsewhere saith, “Blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness’ sake.” For that is on my account, or “for my name’s sake:” because, as we are taught by the apostle, “He is made of God

unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and santification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” For the wicked do such things to the wicked, but not for righteousness’ sake; and therefore both are alike miserable, those who do, and those who suffer them. The good also do such things to the wicked: where, although the former do so for righteousness’ sake, yet the latter suffer them not on the same behalf.

3. But some one says, If, when the wicked persecute the good for the name of Christ, the good suffer for righteousness’ sake, then surely it is for righteousness’ sake that the wicked do so to them; and if such is the case, then also, when the good persecute the wicked for righteousness’ sake, it is for righteousness’ sake likewise that the wicked suffer. For if the wicked can assail the good with persecution for the name of Christ, why cannot the wicked suffer persecution at the hands of the good on the same account; and what is that, but for righteousness’ sake? For if the good act not so on the same account as that on which the wicked suffer, because the good do so for righteousness’ sake, while the wicked suffer for unrighteousness, so then neither can the wicked act so on the same account as that for which the good suffer, because the wicked do so by unrighteousness, while the good suffer for righteousness’ sake. And how then will that be true, “All these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake,” when the former do it not for the name of Christ, that is, for righteousness’ sake, but because of their own iniquity? Such a question is solved in this way, if only we understand the words, “All these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake,” as referring entirely to the righteous, as if it had been said, All these things will ye suffer at their hands for my name’s sake, so that the words, “they will do unto you,” are equivalent to these, Ye will suffer at their hands. But if “for my name’s sake” is to be taken as if He had said, For my name’s sake which they hate in you, so also may the other be taken for that righteousness’ sake which they hate in you; and in this way the good, when they institute persecution against the wicked, may be rightly said to do so both for righteousness’ sake, in their love for which they persecute the wicked, and for that wickedness’ sake which they hate in the wicked themselves; and so also the wicked may be said to suffer both for the

iniquity that is punished in their persons, and for the righteousness which is exercised in their punishment.

4. It may also be inquired, if the wicked also persecute the wicked, just as ungodly princes and judges, while they were the persecutors of the godly, certainly also punished murderers and adulterers, and all classes of evil-doers whom they ascertained to be acting contrary to the public laws, how are we to understand the words of the Lord, “If ye were of the world, the world would love its own”? (ver. 19.) For those whom it punisheth cannot be loved by the world, which, we see, generally punisheth the classes of crimes mentioned above, save only that the world is both in those who punish such crimes, and in those that love them. Therefore that world, which is to be understood as existing in the wicked and ungodly, both hateth its own in respect of that section of men in whose case it inflicts injury on the criminal, and loveth its own in respect of that other section in whose case it shows favor to its own partners in criminality. Hence, “All these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake,” is said either in reference to that for the sake of which ye suffer, or to that on account of which they themselves so deal with you, because that which is in you they both hate and persecute. And He added, “Because they know not Him that sent me.” This is to be understood as spoken of that knowledge of which it is also elsewhere recorded, “But to know Thee is perfect intelligence.” For those who with such a knowledge know the Father, by whom Christ was sent, can in no wise persecute those whom Christ is gathering; for they also themselves are being gathered by Christ along with the others.

TRACTATE LXXXIX

CHAPTER XV. 22, 23

1. The Lord had said above to His disciples, “If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not Him that sent me.” And if we inquire of whom He so spake, we find that He was led on to these words from what He had said before, “If the world hate you, know ye that it hated me before [it hated] you;” and now in adding, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they

had not had sin," He more expressly pointed to the Jews. Of them, therefore, He also uttered the words that precede, for so does the context itself imply. For it is of the same parties that He said, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin;" of whom He also said, "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also; but all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not Him that sent me;" for it is to these words that He also subjoins the following: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin." The Jews, therefore, persecuted Christ, as the Gospel very clearly indicates, and Christ spake to the Jews, not to other nations; and it is they, therefore, that He meant to be understood by the world, that hateth Christ and His disciples; and, indeed, not those alone, but even these latter were shown by Him to belong to the same world. What, then, does He mean by the words, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin"? Was it that the Jews were without sin before Christ came to them in the flesh? Who, though he were the greatest fool, would say so? But it is some great sin, and not every sin, that He would have to be understood, as it were, under the general designation. For this is the sin wherein all sins are included; and whosoever is free from it, has all his sins forgiven him: and this it is, that they believed not on Christ, who came for the very purpose of enlisting their faith. From this sin, had He not come, they would certainly have been free. His advent has become as much fraught with destruction to unbelievers, as it is with salvation to those that believe; for He, the Head and Prince of the apostles, has Himself, as it were, become what they declared of themselves, "to some, indeed, the savour of life unto life; and to some the savor of death unto death."

2. But when He went on to say, "But now they have no excuse for their sin," some may be moved to inquire whether those to whom Christ neither came nor spake, have an excuse for their sin. For if they have not, why is it said here that these had none, on the very ground that He did come and speak to them? And if they have, have they it to the extent of thereby being barred from punishment, or of receiving it in a milder degree? To these inquiries, with the Lord's help and to the best of my capacity, I reply, that such have an excuse, not for every one of their sins, but for this sin of not

believing on Christ, inasmuch as He came not and spake not to them. But it is not in the number of such that those are to be included, to whom He came in the persons of His disciples, and to whom He spake by them, as He also does at present; for by His Church He has come, and by His Church He speaks to the Gentiles. For to this are to be referred the words that He spake, “He that receiveth you, receiveth me;” and, “He that despiseth you, despiseth me.” “Or would ye,” says the Apostle Paul, “have a proof of Him that speaketh in me, namely Christ.”

3. It remains for us to inquire, whether those who, prior to the coming of Christ in His Church to the Gentiles and to their hearing of His Gospel, have been, or are now being, overtaken by the close of this life, can have such an excuse? Evidently they can, but not on that account can they escape damnation. “For as many as have sinned without the law, shall also perish without the law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law.” And these words of the apostle, inasmuch as his saying, “they shall perish,” has a more terrible sound than when he says, “they shall be judged,” seem to show that such an excuse can not only avail them nothing, but even becomes an additional aggravation. For those that excuse themselves because they did not hear, “shall perish without the law.”

4. But it is also a worthy subject of inquiry, whether those who met the words they heard with contempt, and even with opposition, and that not merely by contradicting them, but also by persecuting in their hatred those from whom they heard them, are to be reckoned among those in regard to whom the words, “they shall be judged by the law,” convey somewhat of a milder sound. But if it is one thing to perish without the law, and another to be judged by the law; and the former is the heavier, the latter the lighter punishment: such, without a doubt, are not to have their place assigned in that lighter measure of punishment; for, so far from sinning in the law, they utterly refused to accept the law of Christ, and, as far as in them lay, would have had it altogether annihilated. But those that sin in the law, are such as are in the law, that is, who accept it, and confess that it is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good; but fail through infirmity in fulfilling what they cannot doubt is most righteously enjoined therein. These are they in regard to whose fate there may perhaps be some

distinction made from the perdition of those who are without the law: and yet if the apostle’s words, “they shall be judged by the law,” are to be understood as meaning, they shall not perish, what a wonder if it were so! For his discourse was not about infidels and believers to lead him to say so, but about Gentiles and Jews, both of whom, certainly, if they find not salvation in that Saviour who came to seek that which was lost, shall doubtless become the prey of perdition; although it may be said that some shall perish in a more terrible, others in a more mitigated sense; in other words, that some shall suffer a heavier, and others a lighter penalty in their perdition. For he is rightly said to perish as regards God, whoever is separated by punishment from that blessedness which He bestows on His saints, and the diversity of punishments is as great as the diversity of sins; but the mode thereof is accounted too deep by divine wisdom for human guessing to scrutinize or express. At all events, those to whom Christ came, and to whom He spake, have not, for their great sin of unbelief, any such excuse as may enable them to say, We saw not, we heard not: whether it be that such an excuse would not be sustained by Him whose judg ments are unsearchable, or whether it would, and that, if not for their entire deliverance from damnation, at least for its partial alleviation.

5. “He that hateth me,” He says, “hateth my Father also.” Here it may be said to us, Who can hate one whom he knows not? And certainly before saying, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin,” He had said to His disciples, “These things will they do unto you, because they know not Him that sent me.” How, then, do they both know not, and hate? For if the notion they have formed of Him is not that which He is in Himself, but some unknown conjecture of their own, then certainly it is not Himself they are found to hate, but that figment which they devise or rather suspect in their error. And yet, were it not that men could hate that which they know not, the Truth would not have asserted both, namely, that they both know not, and hate His Father. But such a possibility, if by the Lord’s help we are able to show it, cannot be demonstrated at present, as this discourse must now be brought to a close.

TRACTATE XC

CHAPTER XV. 23

1. The Lord says, as you have just been hearing, “He that hateth me, hateth my Father also:” and yet He had said a little before, “These things will they do unto you, because they know not Him that sent me.” A question therefore arises that cannot be overlooked, how they can hate one whom they know not? For if it is not God as He really is, but something else, I know not what, that they suspect or believe Him to be, and hate this; then assuredly it is not God Himself that they hate, but the thing they conceive in their own erroneous suspicion or baseless credulity; and if they think of Him as He really is, how can they be said to know Him not? It may be the case, indeed, with regard to men, that we frequently love those whom we have never seen; and in this way it can, on the other hand, be none the less impossible that we should hate those whom we have never seen. The report, for instance, whether good or bad, about some preacher, leads us not improperly to love or to hate the unknown. But if the report is truthful, how can one, of whom we have got such true accounts, be spoken of as unknown? Is it because we have not seen his face? And yet, though he himself does not see it, he can be known to no one better than to himself. The knowledge of any one, therefore, is not conveyed to us in his bodily countenance, but only lies open to our apprehension when his life and character are revealed. Otherwise no one would be able to know himself, because unable to see his own face. But surely he knows himself more certainly than he is known to others, inasmuch as by inward inspection he can the more certainly see what he is conscious of, what he desires, what he is living for; and it is when these are likewise laid open to us, that he becomes truly known to ourselves. And as these, accordingly, are commonly brought to us regarding the absent, or even the dead, either by hearsay or correspondence, it thus comes about that people whom we have never seen by face (and yet of whom we are not entirely ignorant), we frequently either hate or love.

2. But in such cases our credulity is frequently at fault; for sometimes even history, and still more ordinary report, turns out to be false. Yet, it ought to be our concern, in order not to be misled by an injurious opinion, seeing we cannot search into the consciences of men, to have a true and certain sentiment about things themselves. I mean, that in regard to this or that man, if we know not whether he is immodest or modest, we should at all

events hate immodesty and love modesty: and if in regard to some one or other we know not whether he is unjust or just, we should at any rate love justice and abhor injustice; not such things as we erroneously fancy to ourselves, but such as we believingly perceive according to God's truth, the one to be desired, the other to be shunned; so that, when in regard to things themselves we do desire what ought to be desired, and utterly avoid what ought to be avoided, we may find pardon for the mistaken feelings which we at times, yea, at all times, entertain regarding the actual state of others which is hidden from our eyes. For this, I think, has to do with human temptation, without which we cannot pass through this life, so that the apostle said, "No temptation should befall you but such as is common to man." For what is so common to man as inability to inspect the heart of man; and therefore, instead of scrutinizing its inmost recesses, to suspect for the most part something very different from what is going on therein? And although in these dark regions of human realities, that is, of other people's inward thoughts, we cannot clear up our suspicions, because we are only men, yet we ought to restrain our judgments, that is, all definite and fixed opinions, and not judge anything before the time, until the Lord come, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God. When, therefore, we are falling into no error in regard to the thing itself, so that there is an accordance with right in our reprobation of vice and approbation of virtue; surely, if a mistake is committed in connection with individuals, a temptation so characteristic of man is within the scope of forgiveness.

3. But amid all these darknesses of human hearts, it happens as a thing much to be wondered at and mourned over, that one, whom we account unjust, and who nevertheless is just, and in whom, without knowing it, we love justice, we sometimes avoid, and turn away from, and hinder from approaching us, and refuse to have life and living in common with him; and, if necessity compel the infliction of discipline, whether to save others from harm or bring the person himself back to rectitude, we even pursue him with a salutary harshness; and so afflict a good man as if he were wicked, and one whom unknowingly we love. This takes place if one, for example's sake, who is modest is believed by us to be the opposite. For, beyond doubt, if I love a modest person, he is himself the very object that I

love; and therefore I love the man himself, and know it not. And if I hate an immodest person, it is on that account, not him that I hate: for he is not the thing that I hate; and yet to that object of my love, with whom my heart makes continual abode in the love of modesty, I am ignorantly doing an injury, erring as I do, not in the distinction I make between virtue and vice, but in the thick darkness of the human heart. Accordingly, as it may so happen that a good man may unknowingly hate a good man, or rather loves him without knowing it (for the man himself he loves in loving that which is good; for what the other is, is the very thing that he loves); and without knowing it, hates not the man himself, but that which he supposes him to be: so may it also be the case that an unjust man hates a just man, and, while he opines that he loves one who is unjust like himself, unknowingly loves the just man; and yet so long as he believes him to be unjust, he loves not the man himself, but that which he imagines him to be. And as it is with another man, so is it also with God. For, to conclude, had the Jews been asked if they loved God, what other answer would they have given but that they did love Him, and that not with any intentional falsehood, but because erroneously fancying that they did so? For how could they love the Father of the truth, who were filled with hatred to the truth itself? For they do not wish their own conduct to be condemned, and it is the truth's task to condemn such conduct; and thus they hated the truth as much as they hated their own punishment, which the truth awards to such. But they know not that to be the truth which lays its condemnation on such as they: therefore they hate that which they know not; and hating it, they certainly cannot but also hate Him of whom it is born. And in this way, because they know not the truth, by whose judgment they are condemned, as that which is born of God the Father; of a surety also they both know not, and hate [the Father] Himself. Miserable men! who, because wishing to be wicked, deny that to be the truth whereby the wicked are condemned. For they refuse to own that to be what it is, when they ought themselves to refuse to be what they are; in order that, while it remains the same, they may be changed, lest by its judgment they fall into condemnation.

TRACTATE XCI

CHAPTER XV. 24, 25

1. The Lord had said, “He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.” For of a certainty he that hateth the truth must also hate Him of whom the truth is born; on which subject we have already spoken, as we were granted ability. And then He added the words on which we have now to discourse: “If I had not done among [in] them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin.” To wit, that great sin whereof He also says before, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin.” Their sin was that of not believing on Him who thus spake and wrought. For they were not without sin before He so spake to them and did such works among them; but this sin of theirs, in not believing on Him, is thus specially mentioned because really inclusive in itself of all sins besides. For had they been clear of this one, and believed on Him, all else would also have been forgiven.

2. But what is meant when, after saying, “If I had not done among them works,” He immediately added, “which none other man did”? Of a certainty, among all the works of Christ, none seem to be greater than the raising of the dead; and yet we know that the same was done by the prophets of olden time. For Elias did so; and Elisha also, both when alive in the flesh, and when he lay buried in his sepulchre. For when certain men, who were carrying a dead person, had fled thither for refuge from an onset of their enemies, and had laid him down therein, he instantly came again to life. And yet there were some works that Christ did which none other man did: as, when He fed the five thousand men with five loaves, and the four thousand with seven; when He walked on the waters, and gave Peter power to do the same; when He changed the water into wine; when He opened the eyes of a man that was born blind, and many besides, which it would take long to mention. But we are answered, that others also have done works which even He did not, and which no other man has done. For who else save Moses smote the Egyptians with so many and mighty plagues, as when He led the people through the parted waters of the sea, when he obtained manna for them from heaven in their hunger, and water from the rock in their thirst? Who else save Joshua the son of Nun divided the stream of the Jordan for the people to pass over, and by the utterance of a prayer to God bridled and stopped the revolving sun? Who save Samson ever quenched his thirst with water flowing forth from the jawbone of a dead ass? Who save Elias was carried aloft in a chariot of fire? Who save Elisha, as I have

just mentioned, after his own body was buried, restored the dead body of another to life? Who else besides Daniel lived unhurt amid the jaws of famishing lions, that were shut up with him? And who else save the three men Ananias, Azariah, and Mishael, ever walked about unharmed in flames that blazed and did not burn?

3. I pass by other examples, as these I consider to be sufficient to show that some of the saints have done wonderful works, which none other man did. But we read of no one whatever of the ancients who cured with such power so many bodily defects, and bad states of the health, and troubles of mortals. For, to say nothing of those individual cases which He healed, as they occurred, by the word of command, the Evangelist Mark says in a certain place: “And at even, when the sun had set, they brought unto Him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And He healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils.” And Matthew, in giving us the same account, has also added the prophetic testimony, when he says: “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sickness.” In another passage also it is said by Mark: “And whithersoever He entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought Him that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment: and as many as touched Him were made whole.” None other man did such things in them. For so are we to understand the words in them, not among them, or in their presence; but directly in them, because He healed them. For He wished them to understand the works as those which not only occasioned admiration, but conferred also manifest healing, and were benefits which they ought surely to have requited with love, and not with hatred. He transcends, indeed, the miracles of all besides, in being born of a virgin, and in possessing alone the power, both in His conception and birth, to preserve inviolate the integrity of His mother: but that was done neither before their eyes nor in them. For the knowledge of the truth of such a miracle was reached by the apostles, not through any onlooking that they had in common with others, but in the course of their separate discipleship. Moreover, the fact that on the third day He restored Himself to life from the very tomb, in the flesh wherein He had been slain, and, never thereafter to

die, with it ascended into heaven, even surpasses all else that He did: but just as little was this done either in the Jews or before their eyes; nor had it yet been done, when He said, “If I had not done among them the works which none other man did.”

4. The works, then, are doubtless those miracles of healing in connection with their bodily complaints which He exhibited to such an extent as no one before had furnished amongst them: for these they saw, and it is in reproaching them therewith that He proceeds to say, “But now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father: but [this cometh to pass] that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause [gratuitously].” He calls it, their law, not as invented by them, but given to them: just as we say, “Our daily bread;” which, nevertheless, we ask of God in conjoining the words “Give us.” But one hates gratuitously who neither seeks advantage from the hatred nor avoids inconvenience: so do the wicked hate the Lord; and so also is He loved by the righteous, that is to say, gratuitously [gratis, freely,] inasmuch as they expect no other gifts beyond Himself, for He Himself will be all in all. But whoever would be disposed to look for something more profound in the words of Christ, “If I had not done among them the works which none other man did” (for although such were done by the Father, or the Holy Spirit, yet no one else did them, for the whole Trinity is one and the same in substance), he will find that it was He who did it even when some man of God did something similar. For in Himself He can do everything by Himself; but without Him no one can do anything. For Christ with the Father and the Holy Spirit are not three Gods, but one God, of whom it is written, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.” No one else, therefore, really himself did the works which He did amongst them; for any one else who did any such works, did them only through His doing. But He Himself did them without any doing on their part.

TRACTATE XCII

CHAPTER XV. 26, 27

1. The Lord Jesus, in the discourse which He addressed to His disciples after the supper, when Himself in immediate proximity to His passion, and, as it were, on the eve of departure, and of depriving them of His bodily presence while continuing His spiritual presence to all His disciples till the very end of the world, exhorted them to endure the persecutions of the wicked, whom He distinguished by the name of the world: and from which He also told them that He had chosen the disciples themselves, that they might know it was by the grace of God they were what they were, and by their own vices they had been what they had been. And then His own persecutors and theirs He clearly signified to be the Jews, that it might be perfectly apparent that they also were included in the appellation of that damnable world that persecuteth the saints. And when He had said of them that they knew not Him that sent Him, and yet hated both the Son and the Father, that is, both Him who was sent and Him who sent Him,—of all which we have already treated in previous discourses,—He reached the place where it is said, “This cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.” And then He added, as if by way of consequence, the words whereon we have undertaken at present to discourse: “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of me: and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.” But what connection has this with what He had just said, “But now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father: but that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause”? Was it that the Comforter, when He came, even the Spirit of truth, convicted those, who thus saw and hated, by a still clearer testimony? Yea, verily, some even of those who saw, and still hated, He did convert, by this manifestation of Himself, to the faith that worketh by love. To make this view of the passage intelligible, we recall to your mind that so it actually befell. For when on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit fell upon an assembly of one hundred and twenty men, among whom were all the apostles; and when they, filled therewith were speaking in the language of every nation; a goodly number of those who had hated, amazed at the magnitude of the miracle (especially when they perceived in Peter’s address so great and divine a testimony borne in behalf of Christ, as that He, who was slain by them and accounted

amongst the dead, was proved to have risen again, and to be now alive), were pricked in their hearts and converted; and so became aware of the beneficent character of that precious blood which had been so impiously and cruelly shed, because themselves redeemed by the very blood which they had shed. For the blood of Christ was shed so efficaciously for the remission of all sins, that it could wipe out even the very sin of shedding it. With this therefore in His eye, the Lord said, “They hated me without a cause: but when the Comforter is come, He shall bear witness of me;” saying, as it were, They hated me, and slew me when I stood visibly before their eyes; but such shall be the testimony borne in my behalf by the Comforter, that He will bring them to believe in me when I am no longer visible to their sight.

2. “And ye also,” He says, “shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.” The Holy Spirit shall bear witness, and so also shall ye. For, just because ye have been with me from the beginning, ye can preach what ye know; which ye cannot do at present, because the fullness of that Spirit is not yet present within you. “He therefore shall testify of me, and ye also shall bear witness:” for the love of God shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Spirit, who shall be given unto you, will give you the confidence needful for such witness-bearing. And that certainly was still wanting to Peter, when, terrified by the question of a lady’s maid, he could give no true testimony; but, contrary to his own promise, was driven by the greatness of his fear thrice to deny Him. But there is no such fear in love, for perfect love casteth out fear. In fine, before the Lord’s passion, his slavish fear was questioned by a bond-woman; but after the Lord’s resurrection, his free love by the very Lord of freedom: and so on the one occasion he was troubled, on the other tranquillized; there he denied the One he had loved, here he loved the One he had denied. But still even then that very love was weak and straitened, till strengthened and expanded by the Holy Spirit. And then that Spirit, pervading him thus with the fullness of richer grace, kindled his hitherto frigid heart to such a witness-bearing for Christ, and unlocked those lips that in their previous tremor had suppressed the truth, that, when all on whom the Holy Spirit had descended were speaking in the tongues of all nations to the crowds of Jews collected around, he alone broke forth before the others in the promptitude of his

testimony in behalf of the Christ, and confounded His murderers with the account of His resurrection. And if any one would enjoy the pleasure of gazing on a sight so charming in its holiness, let him read the Acts of the Apostles: and there let him be filled with amazement at the preaching of the blessed Peter, over whose denial of his Master he had just been mourning; there let him behold that tongue, itself translated from diffidence to confidence, from bondage to liberty, converting to the confession of Christ the tongues of so many of His enemies, not one of which he could bear when lapsing himself into denial. And what shall I say more? In him there shone forth such an effulgence of grace, and such a fullness of the Holy Spirit, and such a weight of most precious truth poured from the lips of the preacher, that he transformed that vast multitude of Jews who were the adversaries and murderers of Christ into men that were ready to die for His name, at whose hands he himself was formerly afraid to die with his Master. All this did that Holy Spirit when sent, who had previously only been promised. And it was these great and marvellous gifts of His own that the Lord foresaw, when He said, “They have both seen and hated both me and my Father: that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me: and ye also shall bear witness.” For He, in bearing witness Himself, and inspiring such witnesses with invincible courage, divested Christ’s friends of their fear, and transformed into love the hatred of His enemies.

TRACTATE XCIII

CHAPTER XVI. 1–4

1. In the words preceding this chapter of the Gospel, the Lord strengthened His disciples to endure the hatred of their enemies, and prepared them also by His own example to become the more courageous in imitating Him: adding the promise, that the Holy Spirit should come to bear witness of Him, and also that they themselves could become His witnesses, through the effectual working of His Spirit in their hearts. For such is His meaning when He saith, “He shall bear witness of me, and ye also shall bear witness.” That is to say, because He shall bear witness, ye also shall bear

witness: He in your hearts, you in your voices; He by inspiration, you by utterance: that the words might be fulfilled, “Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth.” For it would have been to little purpose to have exhorted them by His example, had He not also filled them with His Spirit. Just as we see that the Apostle Peter, after having heard His words, when He said, “The servant is not greater than his lord: if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you;” and seen that already fulfilled in Him, wherein, had example been sufficient, he ought to have imitated the patient endurance of his Lord, yet succumbed and fell into denial, as utterly unable to bear what He saw his Master enduring. But when he really received the gift of the Holy Spirit, he preached Him whom he had denied; and whom he had been afraid to confess, he had no fear now in openly proclaiming. Already, indeed, had he been sufficiently taught by example to know what was proper to be done; but not yet was he inspired with the power to do what he knew: he had got instruction to stand, but not the strength to keep him from falling. But after this was supplied by the Holy Spirit, he preached Christ even to the death, whom, in his fear of death, he had previously denied. And so the Lord in this succeeding chapter, on which we have now to address you, saith, “These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.” As it is sung in the psalm, “Great peace have they who love Thy law, and nothing shall offend them.” Properly enough, therefore, with the promise of the Holy Spirit, by whose operation in their hearts they should be made His witnesses, He added, “These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.” For when the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us, they have great peace who love God’s law, so that nothing may offend them.

2. And then He expressly declares what they were to suffer: “They shall put you out of the synagogues.” But what harm was it for the apostles to be expelled from the Jewish synagogues, as if they were not to separate themselves therefrom, although no one expelled them? Doubtless He meant to announce with reprobation, that the Jews would refuse to receive Christ, from whom they as certainly would refuse to withdraw; and so it would come to pass that the latter, who could not exist without Him, would also be cast out along with Him by those who would not have Him as their place of abode. For certainly, as there was no other people of God than that seed of

Abraham, they would, had they only acknowledged and received Christ, have remained as the natural branches in the olive tree; nor would the churches of Christ have been different from the synagogues of the Jews, for they would have been one and the same, had they also desired to abide in Him. But having refused, what remained but that, continuing themselves out of Christ, they put out of the synagogues those who would not abandon Christ? For having received the Holy Spirit, and so become His witnesses, they would certainly not belong to the class of whom it is said: “Many of the chief rulers of the Jews believed on Him; but for fear of the Jews they dared not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.” And so they believed on Him, but not in the way He wished them to believe when He said: “How can ye believe, who expect honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?” It is, therefore, with those disciples who so believe in Him, that, filled with the Holy Spirit, or, in other words, with the gift of divine grace, they no longer belong to those who, “ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God;” nor to those of whom it is said, “They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God:” that the prophecy harmonizes, which finds its fulfillment in their own case: “They shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance: and in Thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted: for Thou art the glory of their strength.” Rightly enough is it said to such, “They shall cast you out of the synagogues;” that is, they who “have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge;” because, “ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own,” they expel those who are exalted, not in their own righteousness, but in God’s, and have no cause to be ashamed at being expelled by men, since He is the glory of their strength.

3. Finally, to what He had thus told them, He added the words: “But the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service: and these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.” That is to say, they have not known the Father, nor His Son, to whom they think they will be doing service in slaying you. Words which the Lord added in the way of consolation to His own, who

should be driven out of the Jewish synagogues. For it is in thus announcing beforehand what evils they would have to endure for their testimony in His behalf, that He said, “They will put you out of the synagogues.” Nor does He say, And the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. What then? “But the hour cometh:” just in the way He would have spoken, were He foretelling them of something good that would follow such evils. What, then, does He mean by the words, “They will put you out of the synagogues: but the hour cometh”? As if He would have gone on to say this: They, indeed, will scatter you, but I will gather you; or, They shall, indeed, scatter you, but the hour of your joy cometh. What, then, has the word which He uses, “but the hour cometh,” to do here, as if He were going on to promise them comfort after their tribulation, when apparently He ought rather to have said, in the form of continuous narration, And the hour cometh? But He said not, And it cometh, although predicting the approach of one tribulation after another, instead of comfort after tribulation. Could it have been that such a separation from the synagogues would so discompose them, that they would prefer to die, rather than remain in this life apart from the Jewish assemblies? Far surely would those be from such discomposure, who were seeking, not the praise of men, but of God. What, then, of the words, “They will put you out of the synagogues: but the hour cometh;” when apparently He ought rather to have said, And the hour cometh, “that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service”? For it is not even said, But the hour cometh that they shall kill you, as if implying that their comfort for such a separation would be found in the death that would befall them; but “The hour cometh,” He says, “that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.” On the whole, I do not think He wished to convey any further meaning than that they might understand and rejoice that they themselves would gain so many to Christ, by being driven out of the Jewish congregations, that it would be found insufficient to expel them, and they would not suffer them to live for fear of all being converted by their preaching to the name of Christ, and so turned away from the observance of Judaism, as if it were the very truth of God. For so ought we to understand the reference of His words to the Jews, when He said of them, “They will put you out of the synagogues.” For the witnesses, in other words, the martyrs of Christ, were likewise slain by the Gentiles: they, however, thought not that it was to the true God, but to their own false deities, that they were doing service when they so acted. But every Jew that slew the preachers of Christ reckoned that he was doing God serv ice; believing as he did that all who were converted to Christ were deserting the God of Israel. For it was also by the same reasoning that they were incited to the murder of Christ Himself: because their own words on this subject have also been put on record. “Ye perceive that the whole world is gone after him: “If we let him live, the Romans will come, and take away both our place and nation.” And those of Caiaphas: “It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.” And accordingly in this address He sought by His own example to stimulate His disciples, to whom He had just been saying, “If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you;” that as in slaying Him they thought they had done God a service, so also would it be in reference to them.

4. Such, then, is the meaning of these words: “They will put you out of the synagogues;” but have no fear of solitude: inasmuch as, when separated from their assembly, you will assemble so many in my name, that they, in very fear lest the temple, that was with them, and all the sacraments of the old law, should be deserted, will slay you: actually, in thus shedding your blood, full of the notion that they are doing God service. An illustration surely of the apostle’s words, “They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge;” when they imagine that they are doing God service in slaying His servants. Appalling mistake! Is it thus thou wouldst please God by striking down the God-pleaser; and is the living temple of God by thy blows laid level with the ground, that God’s temple of stone may not be deserted? Accursed blindness! But it is in part that it has happened to Israel, that the fullness of the Gentiles might come in: in part, I say, and not totally, has it happened. For not all, but only some of the branches have been broken off, that the wild olive might be ingrafted. For just at the time when the disciples of Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, were speaking in the tongues of all nations, and performing many divine miracles, and scattering divine utterances on every side, Christ, even though slain, was so beloved, that His disciples, when expelled from the congregations of the Jews, gathered into a congregation of their own a vast multitude of those very Jews, and had no fear of being left to solitude. Whereupon, accordingly, the

others, reprobate and blind, being inflamed with wrath, and having a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, and believing that they were doing God service, put them to death. But He, who was slain for them, gathered those together; just as He had also, before He was slain, instructed them in what was to happen, lest their minds, left ignorant and unprepared, should be cast into trouble by evils, however transient, that were unexpected and unprovided for; but rather by knowing of them beforehand, and sustaining them with patience, might be led onward to everlasting blessing. For that such was the cause of His making these announcements to them beforehand, is shown also by His words that followed: “But these things have I told you, that, when their time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them.” Their hour was an hour of darkness, a midnight hour. But the Lord commanded His loving-kindness in the daytime, and made them sing of it in the night: when the Jewish night threw no confusion of darkness into the day of the Christians, separated as it was from themselves; and when that which could slay the flesh had no power to darken their faith.

TRACTATE XCIV

CHAPTER XVI. 4–7

1. When the Lord Jesus had foretold His disciples the persecutions they would have to suffer after His departure, He went on to say: “And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you; but now I go my way to Him that sent me.” And here the first thing we have to look at is, whether He had not previously foretold them of the sufferings that were to come. And the three other evangelists make it sufficiently clear that He had uttered such predictions prior to the approach of the supper: which was over, according to John, when He spake, and added, “And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.” Are we, then, to settle such a question in this way, that they, too, tell us that He was near His passion when He said these things? Then it was not when He was with them at the beginning that He so spake, for He was on the very eve of departing, and proceeding to the Father: and so also, even according to these evangelists, it is strictly true what is here said, “And these things I said not unto you at the beginning.” But what are we to do with the credibility of the Gospel according to Matthew, who relates that such

announcements were made to them by the Lord, not only when He was on the eve of sitting down with His disciples to the passover supper, but also at the beginning, when the twelve apostles are for the first time expressed by name, and sent forth on the work of God? What, then, is the meaning of what He says here, “And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you;” but that what He says here of the Holy Spirit who was to come to them, and to bear witness, when they should have such ills to endure, this He said not unto them at the beginning, because He was with themselves?

2. The Comforter then, or Advocate (for both form the interpretation of the Greek word, paraclete), had become necessary on Christ’s departure: and therefore He had not spoken of Him at the beginning, when He was with them, because His own presence was their comfort; but on the eve of His own departure it behoved Him to speak of His coming, by whom it would be brought about that with love shed abroad in their hearts they would preach the word of God with all boldness; and with Him inwardly bearing witness with them of Christ, they also should bear witness, and feel it to be no cause of stumbling when their Jewish enemies put them out of the synagogues, and slew them, with the thought that they were doing God service; because the charity beareth all things, which was to be shed abroad in their hearts by the gift of the Holy Spirit. In this, therefore, is the whole meaning to be found, that He was to make them His martyrs, that is, His witnesses through the Holy Spirit; so that by His effectual working within them, they would endure the hardships of all kinds of persecution, and, set aglow at that divine fire, lose none of their warmth in the love of preaching. “These things,” therefore, He says, “have I told you, that, when their time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them” (ver. 4). These things, I say, I have told you, not merely because ye shall have to endure such things, but because, when the Comforter is come, He shall bear witness of me, that ye may not keep them back through fear, and by whom ye yourselves shall also be enabled to bear witness. “And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you,” and I myself was your comfort through my bodily presence exhibited to your human senses, and which, as infants, ye were able to comprehend.

3. “But now I go my way to Him that sent me; and none of you,” He says, “asketh me, Whither goest Thou?” He means that His departure would be such that none would ask Him of that which they should see taking place in broad daylight before their eyes: for previously to this they had asked Him whither He was going, and had been answered that He was going whither they themselves could not then come. Now, however, He promises that He will go away in such a manner that none of them shall ask Him whither He goes. For a cloud received Him when He ascended up from their side; and of His going into heaven they made no verbal inquiry, but had ocular evidence.

4. “But because I have said these things unto you,” He adds, “sorrow hath filled your heart.” He saw, indeed, what effect these words of His were producing in their hearts; for having not yet within them the spiritual consolation, which they were afterwards to have by the Holy Spirit, what they still saw objectively in Christ they were afraid of losing; and because they could have no doubt they were about to lose Him whose announcements were always true, their human feelings were saddened, because their carnal view of Him was to be left a blank. But He knew what was most expedient for them, because that inward sight, wherewith the Holy Spirit was yet to comfort them, was undoubtedly superior; not by bringing a human body into the bodies of those who saw, but by infusing Himself into the hearts of those who believed. And then He adds, “Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away. For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you:” as if He had said, It is expedient for you that this form of a servant be taken away from you; as the Word made indeed flesh I dwell among you; but I would not that ye should continue to love me carnally, and, content with such milk, desire to remain infants always. “It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.” If I withdraw not the tender nutriment wherewith I have nourished you, ye will acquire no keen relish of solid food; if ye adhere in a carnal way to the flesh, ye will not have room for the Spirit. For what is this, “If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you”? Was it that He could not send Him while located here Himself? Who would venture to say so? Neither was it,

that where He was, thence the Other had withdrawn, or that He had so come from the Father as that He did not still abide with the Father. And still further, how could He, even when having His own abode on earth, be unable to send Him, who we know came and remained upon Him at His baptism; yea, more, from whom we know that He was never separable? What does it mean, then, “If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you;” but that ye cannot receive the Spirit so long as ye continue to know Christ after the flesh? Hence one who had already been made a partaker of the Spirit says, “Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we [Him] no more.” For now even the very flesh of Christ he did not know in a carnal way, when brought to a spiritual knowledge of the Word that had been made flesh. And such, doubtless, did the good Master wish to intimate, when He said, “If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.”

5. But with Christ’s bodily departure, both the Father and the Son, as well as the Holy Spirit, were spiritually present with them. For had Christ departed from them in such a sense that it would be in His place, and not along with Him, that the Holy Spirit would be present in them, what becomes of His promise when He said, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world;” and, I and the Father “will come unto him, and will make Our abode with him;” seeing that He also promised that He would send the Holy Spirit in such a way that He would be with them for ever? In this way it was, on the other hand, that seeing they were yet out of their present carnal or animal condition to become spiritual, with undoubted certainty also were they yet to have in a more comprehensive way both the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. But in no one are we to believe that the Father is present without the Son and the Holy Spirit, or the Father and the Son without the Holy Spirit, or the Son without the Father and the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit without the Father and the Son, or the Father and the Holy Spirit without the Son; but wherever any one of Them is, there also is the Trinity, one God. But here the Trinity had to be suggested in such a way that, although there was no diversity of essence, yet the personal distinction of each one separately should be presented to notice; where

those who have a right understanding can never imagine a separation of natures.

6. But that which follows, “And when He is come, He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, indeed, because they believe not on me; but of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye shall see me no more; and of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged” (vers. 8–11); as if it were sin simply not to believe on Christ; and as if it were very righteousness not to see Christ; and as if that were the very judgment, that the prince of this world, that is, the devil, is judged: all this is very obscure, and cannot be included in the present discourse, lest brevity only increase the obscurity; but must rather be deferred till another occasion for such explanation as the Lord may enable us to give.

TRACTATE XCV

CHAPTER XVI. 8–11

1. The Lord, when promising that He would send the Holy Spirit, said, “When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” What does it mean? Is it that the Lord Jesus Christ did not reprove the world of sin, when He said, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin”? And that no one may take it to his head to say that this applied properly to the Jews, and not to the world, did He not say in another place, “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own”? Did He not reprove it of righteousness, when He said, “O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee”? And did He not reprove it of judgment when He declared that He would say to those on the left hand, “Depart ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels”? And many other passages are to be found in the holy evangel, where Christ reproveth the world of these things. Why is it, then, He attributeth this to the Holy Spirit, as if it were His proper prerogative? Is it that, because Christ spake only among the nation of the Jews, He does not appear to have reproved the world, inasmuch as one may be understood to be reproved who actually hears the reprover; while the Holy Spirit, who was in His disciples when scattered throughout the whole world, is to be understood as having reproved not one nation, but the world?

For mark what He said to them when about to ascend into heaven: “It is not for you to know the times or the moments, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive the power of the Holy Spirit, that cometh upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Surely this is to reprove the world. But would any one venture to say that the Holy Spirit reproveth the world through the disciples of Christ, and that Christ Himself doth not, when the apostle exclaims, “Would ye receive a proof of Him that speaketh in me, namely Christ?” And so those, surely, whom the Holy Spirit reproveth, Christ reproveth likewise. But in my opinion, because there was to be shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit that love which casteth out the fear, that might have hindered them from venturing to reprove the world which bristled with persecutions, therefore it was that He said, “He shall reprove the world:” as if He would have said, He shall shed abroad love in your hearts, and, having your fear thereby expelled, ye shall have freedom to reprove. We have frequently said, however, that the operations of the Trinity are inseparable; but the Persons needed to be set forth one by one, that not only without separating Them, but also without confounding Them together, we may have a right understanding both of Their Unity and Trinity.

2. He next explains what He has said “of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” “Of sin indeed,” He says, “because they have believed not on me.” For this sin, as if it were the only one, He has put before the others; because with the continuance of this one, all others are retained, and in the removal of this, the others are remitted. “But of righteousness,” He adds, “because I go to the Father, and ye shall see me no more.” And here we have to consider in the first place, if any one is rightly reproved of sin, how he may also be rightly reproved of righteousness. For if a sinner ought to be reproved just because he is a sinner, will any one imagine that a righteous man is also to be reproved because he is righteous? Surely not. For if at any time a righteous man also is reproved, he is rightly reproved on this account, that, according to Scripture, “There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.” And accordingly, when a righteous man is reproved, he is reproved of sin, and not of righteousness. Since in that divine utterance also, where we read, “Be not made righteous over-much,”

there is notice taken, not of the righteousness of the wise man, but of the pride of the presumptuous. The man, therefore, that becomes “righteous over-much,” by that very excess becomes unrighteous. For he makes himself righteous over-much who says that he has no sin, or who imagines that he is made righteous, not by the grace of God, but by the sufficiency of his own will: nor is he righteous through living righteously, but is rather self-inflated with the imagination of being what he is not. By what means, then, is the world to be reproved of righteousness, if not by the righteousness of believers? Accordingly, it is convinced of sin, because it believeth not on Christ; and it is convinced of the righteousness of those who do believe. For the very comparison with believers is itself a reproving of unbelievers. And this the exposition itself sufficiently indicates. For in wishing to open up what He has said, He adds, “Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye shall see me no more.” He does not say, And they shall see me no more; that is, those of whom He had said, “because they have believed not on me.” Of them He spake, when expounding what He denominated sin, in the words, “because they have believed not on me;” but when expounding what He called righteousness, whereof the world is convicted, He turned to those to whom He was speaking, and said, “because I go to the Father, and ye shall see me no more.” Wherefore it is of its own sins, but of others’ righteousness, that the world is convicted, just as darkness is reproved by the light: “For all things,” says the apostle, “that are reproved, are made manifest by the light.” For the magnitude of the evil chargeable on those who do not believe, may be made apparent not only by itself, but also by the goodness of those who do believe. And since the cry of unbelievers usually is, How can we believe what we do not see? so the righteousness of unbelievers just required this very definition, “Because I go to the Father, and ye shall see me no more.” For blessed are they who see not, and yet do believe. For of those also who saw Christ, the faith in Him that met with commendation was not that they believed what they saw, namely, the Son of man; but that they believed what they did not see, namely, the Son of God. But after His servant-form was itself also withdrawn from their view, then in every respect was the word truly fulfilled, “The just liveth by faith.” For “faith,” according to the definition in the Epistle to the Hebrews, “is the confidence of those that hope, the conviction of things that are not seen.”

3. But how are we to understand, “Ye shall see me no more”? For He saith not, I go to the Father, and ye shall not see me, so as to be understood as referring to the interval of time when He would not be seen, whether short or long, but at all events terminable; but in saying, “Ye shall see me no more,” as if a truth announced beforehand that they would never see Christ in all time coming. Is this the righteousness we speak of, never to see Christ, and yet to believe on Him; seeing that the faith whereby the just liveth is commended on the very ground of believing that the Christ whom it seeth not meanwhile, it shall see some day? Once more, in reference to this righteousness, are we to say that the Apostle Paul was not righteous when confessing that He had seen Christ after His ascension into heaven, which was undoubtedly the time of which He had already said, “Ye shall see me no more”? Was Stephen, that hero of surpassing renown, not righteous in the spirit of this righteousness, who, when they were stoning him, exclaimed, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God”? What, then, is meant by “I go to the Father, and ye shall see me no more,” but just this, As I am while with you now? For at that time He was still mortal in the likeness of sinful flesh. He could suffer hunger and thirst, be wearied, and sleep; and this Christ, that is, Christ in such a condition, they were no more to see after He had passed from this world to the Father; and such, also, is the righteousness of faith, whereof the apostle says, “Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more.” This, then, He says, will be your righteousness whereof the world shall be reproved, “because I go to the Father, and ye shall see me no more:” seeing that ye shall believe in me as in one whom ye shall not see; and when ye shall see me as I shall be then, ye shall not see me as I am while with you meanwhile; ye shall not see me in my humility, but in my exaltation; nor in my mortality, but in my eternity; nor at the bar, but on the throne of judgment: and by this faith of yours, in other words, your righteousness, the Holy Spirit will reprove an unbelieving world.

4. He will also reprove it “of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.” Who is this, save he of whom He saith in another place, “Behold, the prince of the world cometh, and shall find nothing in me;” that is, nothing within his jurisdiction, nothing belonging to him; in fact, no sin at

all? For thereby is the devil the prince of the world. For it is not of the heavens and of the earth, and of all that is in them, that the devil is prince, in the sense in which the world is to be understood, when it is said, “And the world was made by Him;” but the devil is prince of that world, whereof in the same passage He immediately afterwards subjoins the words, “And the world knew Him not;” that is, unbelieving men, wherewith the world through its utmost extent is filled: among whom the believing world groaneth, which He, who made the world, chose out of the world; and of whom He saith Himself, “The Son of man came not to judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” He is the judge by whom the world is condemned, the helper whereby the world is saved: for just as a tree is full of foliage and fruit, or a field of chaff and wheat, so is the world full of believers and unbelievers. Therefore the prince of this world, that is, the prince of the darkness thereof, or of unbelievers, out of whose hands that world is rescued, to which it is said, “Ye were at one time darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord:” the prince of this world, of whom He elsewhere saith, “Now is the prince of this world cast out,” is assuredly judged, inas much as he is irrevocably destined to the judgment of everlasting fire. And so of this judgment, by which the prince of the world is judged, is the world reproved by the Holy Spirit; for it is judged along with its prince, whom it imitates in its own pride and impiety. “For if God,” in the words of the Apostle Peter, “spared not the angels that sinned, but thrust them into prisons of infernal darkness, and gave them up to be reserved for punishment in the judgment,” how is the world otherwise than reproved of this judgment by the Holy Spirit, when it is in the Holy Spirit that the apostle so speaketh? Let men, therefore, believe in Christ, that they be not convicted of the sin of their own unbelief, whereby all sins are retained: let them make their way into the number of believers, that they be not convicted of the righteousness of those, whom, as justified, they fail to imitate: let them beware of that future judgment, that they be not judged with the prince of the world, whom, judged as he is, they continue to imitate. For the unbending pride of mortals can have no thought of being spared itself, as it is thus called to think with terror of the punishment that overtook the pride of angels.

TRACTATE XCVI

CHAPTER XVI. 12, 13

1. In this portion of the holy Gospel, where the Lord says to His disciples, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now,” there meets us first this subject of needful inquiry, how it was that He said a little before, “All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you,” and yet says here, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” But how it was that He spake of what He had not yet done as if it were done, just as the prophet testifies that God has made those things which are still to come, when He says, “Who hath made those things which are still to come,” we have already explained as well as we could when dealing with those words themselves. Now, however, you are perhaps wishing to know what those things were which the apostles were then unable to bear. But which of us would venture to assert his own present capacity for what they wanted the ability to receive? And on this account you are neither to expect me to tell you things which perhaps I could not comprehend myself were they told me by another; nor would you be able to bear them, even were I talented enough to let you hear of things that are above your comprehension. It may be, indeed, that some among you are fit enough already to comprehend things which are still beyond the grasp of others; and if not all about which the divine Master said, “I have yet many things to say unto you,” yet perhaps some of them: but what they were which He Himself thus omitted to tell them, it would be rash to have even the wish to presume to say. For at that time the apostles were not yet fitted even to die for Christ, when He said to them, “Ye cannot follow me now,” and when the very foremost of them, Peter, who had presumptuously declared that he was already able, met with a different experience from what he anticipated: and yet afterwards a countless number both of men and women, boys and girls, youths and maidens, old and young, were crowned with martyrdom; and the sheep were found able for that which, when the Lord spake these words, the shepherds were still unable to bear. Ought, then, those sheep to have been asked, in that extremity of trial, when required to contend for the truth even unto death, and to shed their blood for the name or doctrine of Christ;—ought they, I say, to have been asked, Which of you would venture to account himself ready for martyrdom, for

which Peter was still unfitted, even when taught face to face by the Lord Himself? In the same way, therefore, one may say that Christian people, even when desiring to hear, ought not to be told what those things are of which the Lord then said, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” If the apostles were still unable, much more so are ye: although it may be that many now can bear what Peter then could not, in the same way as many are able to be crowned with martyrdom which at that time was still beyond the power of Peter, more especially that now the Holy Spirit has been sent, as He was not then, of whom He went on immediately to add the words, “Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will teach you all truth,” thereby showing of a certainty that they could not bear what He had still to say, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon them.

2. Well, then, let us grant that it is so, that many can now bear those things when the Holy Spirit has been sent, which could not then, prior to His coming, be borne by the disciples: do we on that account know what it is that He would not say, as we should know it were we reading or hearing it as uttered by Himself? For it is one thing to know whether we or you could bear it; but quite another to know what it is, whether able to be borne or not. But when He Himself was silent about such things, which of us could say, It is this or that? Or if he venture to say it, how will he prove it? For who could manifest such vanity or recklessness as when saying what he pleased to whom he pleased, even though true, to affirm without any divine authority that it was the very thing which the Lord on that occasion refused to utter? Which of us could do such a thing without incurring the severest charge of rashness,—a thing which gets no countenance from prophetic or apostolic authority? For surely if we had read any such thing in the books confirmed by canonical authority, which were written after our Lord’s ascension, it would not have been enough to have read such a statement, had we not also read in the same place that this was actually one of those things which the Lord was then unwilling to tell His disciples, because they were unable to bear them. As if, for example, I were to say that the words which we read at the opening of this Gospel, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God:” and those which follow, because they were

written afterwards, and yet without any mention of their being uttered by the Lord Jesus when He was here in the flesh, but were written by one of His apostles, to whom they were revealed by His Spirit, were some of those which the Lord would not then utter, because the disciples were unable to bear them; who would listen to me in making so rash a statement? But if in the same passage where we read the one we were also to read the other, who would not give due credence to such an apostle?

3. But it seems to me also very absurd to say that the disciples could not then have borne what we find recorded, about things invisible and of profoundest import, in the apostolic epistles, which were written in after days, and of which there is no mention that the Lord uttered them when His visible presence was with them. For why could they not bear then what is now read in their books, and borne by every one, even though not understood? Some things there are, indeed, in the Holy Scriptures which unbelieving men both have no understanding of when they read or hear them, and cannot bear when they are read or heard: as the pagans, that the world was made by Him who was crucified; as the Jews, that He could be the Son of God, who broke up their mode of observing the Sabbath; as the Sabellians, that the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit are a Trinity; as the Arians, that the Son is equal to the Father, and the Holy Spirit to the Father and Son; as the Photinians, that Christ is not only man like ourselves, but God also, equal to God the Father; as the Manicheans, that Christ Jesus, by whom we must be saved, condescended to be born in the flesh and of the flesh of man: and all others of divers perverse sects, who can by no means bear whatever is found in the Holy Scriptures and in the Catholic faith that stands out in opposition to their errors, just as we cannot bear their sacrilegious vaporings and mendacious insanities. For what else is it not to be able to bear, but not to retain in our minds with calmness and composure? But what of all that has been written since our Lord’s ascension with canonical truth and authority, is it not read and heard with equanimity by every believer, and catechumen also, before in his baptism he receive the Holy Spirit, even although it is not yet understood as it ought to be? How then, could not the disciples bear any of those things which were written after the Lord’s ascension, even though the Holy Spirit was not yet sent to them, when now they are all borne by catechumens prior to their reception

of the Holy Spirit? For although the sacramental privileges of believers are not exhibited to them, it does not therefore happen that they cannot bear them; but in order that they may be all the more ardently desired by them, they are honorably concealed from their view.

4. Wherefore, beloved, you need not expect to hear from us what the Lord then refrained from telling His disciples, because they were still unable to bear them: but rather seek to grow in the love that is shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto you; that, fervent in spirit, and loving spiritual things, you may be able, not by any sign apparent to your bodily eyes, or any sound striking on your bodily ears, but by the inward eyesight and hearing, to become acquainted with that spiritual light and that spiritual word which carnal men are unable to bear. For that cannot be loved which is altogether unknown. But when what is known, in however small a measure, is also loved, by the self-same love one is led on to a better and fuller knowledge. If, then, you grow in the love which the Holy Spirit spreads abroad in your hearts, "He will teach you all truth;" or, as other codices have it, "He will guide you in all truth:" as it is said, "Lead me in Thy way, O Lord, and I will walk in Thy truth." So shall the result be, that not from outward teachers will you learn those things which the Lord at that time declined to utter, but be all taught of God; so that the very things which you have learned and believed by means of lessons and sermons supplied from without regarding the nature of God, as incorporeal, and unconfined by limits, and yet not rolled out as a mass of matter through infinite space, but everywhere whole and perfect and infinite, without the gleaming of colors, without the tracing of bodily outlines, without any markings of letters or succession of syllables,—your minds themselves may have the power to perceive. Well, now, I have just said something which is perhaps of that same character, and yet you have received it; and you have not only been able to bear it, but have also listened to it with pleasure. But were that inward Teacher, who, while still speaking in an external way to the disciples, said, "I have still many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now," wishing to speak inwardly to us of what I have said of the incorporeal nature of God in the same way as He speaks to the angels, who always behold the face of the Father, we should still be unable to bear them. Accordingly, when He says, "He will teach you all truth," or "will guide

you into all truth," I do not think the fulfillment is possible in any one's mind in this present life (for who is there, while living in this corruptible and soul-oppressing body, that can know all truth, when even the apostle says, "We know in part"?), but because it is effected by the Holy Spirit, of whom we have now received the earnest, that we shall attain also to the actual fullness of knowledge: whereof it is said by the same apostle, "But then face to face;" and, "Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known;" not as a thing which he knows fully in this life, but which, as a thing that would still be future on to the attainment of that perfection, the Lord promised us through the love of the Spirit, when He said, "He will teach you all truth," or "will guide you unto all truth."

5. As these things are so, beloved, I warn you in the love of Christ to beware of impure seducers and sects of obscene filthiness, whereof the apostle says, "But it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret:" lest, when they begin to teach their horrible impurities, which no human ear whatever can bear, they declare them to be the very things whereof the Lord said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now;" and assert that it is the Holy Spirit's agency that makes such impure and detestable things possible to be borne. The evil things which no human modesty whatever can endure are of one kind, and of quite another are the good things which man's little understanding is unable to bear: the former are wrought in unchaste bodies, the latter are beyond the reach of all bodies; the one is perpetrated in the filthiness of the flesh, the other is scarcely perceivable by the pure mind. "Be ye therefore renewed in the spirit of your mind," and "understand what is the will of God, which is good, and acceptable, and perfect;" that, "rooted and grounded in love, ye may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the length, and breadth, and height, and depth, even to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God." For in such a way will the Holy Spirit teach you all truth, when He shall shed abroad that love ever more and more largely in your hearts.

TRACTATE XCVII

CHAPTER XVI. 12, 13 (CONTINUED)

1. The Holy Spirit, whom the Lord promised to send to His disciples, to teach them all the truth which, at the time He was speaking to them, they were unable to bear: of the which Holy Spirit, as the apostle says, we have now received “the earnest,” an expression whereby we are to understand that His fullness is reserved for us till another life: that Holy Spirit, therefore, teacheth believers also in the present life, as far as they can severally apprehend what is spiritual; and enkindles a growing desire in their breasts, according as each one makes progress in that love, which will lead him both to love what he knows already, and to long after what still remains to be known: so that those very things which he has some notion of at present, he may know that he is still ignorant of, as they are yet to be known in that life which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man hath perceived. But were the inner Master wishing at present to say those things in such a way of knowing, that is, to unfold and make them patent to our mind, our human weakness would be unable to bear them. Whereof you remember, beloved, that I have already spoken, when we were occupied with the words of the holy Gospel, where the Lord says, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” Not that in these words of the Lord we should be suspecting an over-fastidious concealment of no one knows what secrets, which might be uttered by the Teacher, but could not be borne by the learner, but those very things which in connection with religious doctrine we read and write, hear and speak of, as within the knowledge of such and such persons, were Christ willing to utter to us in the self-same way as He speaks of them to the holy angels, in His own Person as the only-begotten Word of the Father, and co-eternal with Him, where are the human beings that could bear them, even were they already spiritual, as the apostles still were not when the Lord so spoke to them, and as they afterwards became when the Holy Spirit descended? For, of course, whatever may be known of the creature, is less than the Creator Himself, who is the supreme and true and unchangeable God. And yet who keeps silence about Him? Where is His name not found in the mouths of readers, disputants, inquirers, respondents, adorers, singers, all sorts of haranguers, and lastly even of blasphemers themselves? And although no one keeps silence about Him, who is there that apprehends Him as He is to be understood, although He is never out of the mouths and the hearing of men? Who is there, whose keenness of mind can even get near Him? Who

is there that would have known Him as the Trinity, had not He Himself desired so to become known? And what man is there that now holds his tongue about that Trinity; and yet what man is there that has any such idea of it as the angels? The very things, therefore, that are incessantly being uttered off-hand and openly about the eternity, the truth, the holiness of God, are understood well by some, and badly by others: nay rather, are understood by some, and not understood at all by others. For he that understands in a bad way, does not understand at all. And in the case even of those by whom they are understood in a right sense, by some they are perceived with less, by others with greater mental vividness, and by none on earth are apprehended as they are by the angels. In the very mind, therefore, that is to say, in the inner man, there is a kind of growth, not only in order to the transition from milk to solid food, but also to the taking of food itself in still larger and larger measure. But such growth is not in the way of a space-covering mass of matter, but in that of an illuminated understanding; because that food is itself the light of the understanding. In order, then, to your growth and apprehension of God, and in order that your apprehension may keep full pace with your ever-advancing growth, you ought to be addressing your prayer, and turning your hope, not to the teacher whose voice only reaches your ears, that is, who plants and waters only by outside labor, but to Him who giveth the increase.

2. Accordingly, as I have admonished you in my last sermon, take heed, those of you specially who are still children and have need of a milk diet, of turning a curious ear to men, who have found occasion for self-deception and the deceiving of others in the words of the Lord, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now,” in order to the discovery of that which is unknown, while you still have minds that are incompetent to discriminate between the true and the false; and most especially on account of the obscene lewdnesses which Satan has instilled, by God’s permission, into unstable and carnal souls, for this end, that His judgments may everywhere be objects of terror, and that pure discipline may best manifest its sweetness in contrast with the impurities of wickedness; and that honor may be given to Him, and fear and modesty of demeanor assumed by every one, who has either been kept from falling into such evils by His kingly power, or been raised out of them by His uplifting

hand. Beware, with fear and prayer, of rushing into that mystery of Solomon’s, where “the woman that is foolish and brazen-faced, and become destitute of bread,” invites the passers-by with the words, “Come and make a pleasant feast on hidden bread, and the sweetness of stolen waters.” For the woman thus spoken of is the vanity of the impious, who, utterly senseless as they are, fancy that they know something, just as was said of that woman, that she had “become destitute of bread;” who, though destitute of a single loaf, promises loaves; in other words, though ignorant of the truth, she promises the knowledge of the truth. But it is bread of a hidden character she promises, and which she declares is partaken of with pleasure, as well as the sweetness of stolen waters; in order that what is publicly forbidden to be uttered or believed in the Church, may be listened to and acted upon with willingness and relish. For by such secrecy profane teachers give a kind of seasoning to their poisons for the curious, that thereby they may imagine that they learn something great, because counted worthy of holding a secret, and may imbibe the more sweetly the folly which they regard as wisdom, the hearing of which, as a thing prohibited, they are represented as stealing.

3. Hence the system of magical arts commends its nefarious rites to those who are deceived, or ready to be so, by a sacrilegious curiosity. Hence, also, those unlawful divinations by the inspection of the entrails of slain animals, or of the cries and flights of birds, or of multiform demoniacal signs, are distilled by converse with abandoned wretches into the ears of persons who are on the brink of destruction. And it is because of these unlawful and punishable secrets that the woman mentioned above is styled not merely “foolish,” but also “audacious.” But such things are alien not only to the reality, but to the very name of our religion. And what shall we say of this foolish and brazen-faced woman seasoning, as she does, so many wicked heresies, and serving up so many detestable fables with Christian forms of expression? Would that they were only such as are found in theatres, whether as the subjects of song or dancing, or turned into ridicule by a mimicking buffoonery; and not, some of them, such as makes us grieve at the foolishness, while wondering at the audacity that could have contrived them, against God! And yet all these utterly senseless heretics, who wish to be styled Christians, attempt to color the audacities of their devices, which

are perfectly ahorrent to every human feeling, with the chance presented to them of that gospel sentence uttered by the Lord, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now:” as if these were the very things which the apostles could not then bear, and as if the Holy Spirit had taught them what the unclean spirit, with all the length he can carry his audacity, blushes to teach and to preach in broad daylight.

4. It is such whom the apostle foresaw through the Holy Spirit, when he said: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” For that mentioning of secrecy and theft, whereof it is said, “Partake with pleasure of hidden bread and the sweetness of stolen waters,” creates an itching in those who listen with ears that are lusting after spiritual fornication, just as by a kind of itching also of desire in the flesh the soundness of chastity is corrupted. Hear, therefore, how the apostle foresaw such things, and gave salutary admonition about avoiding them, when he said, “Shun profane novelties of words; for they increase unto much ungodliness, and their speech insinuates itself as doth a cancer.” He did not say novelties of words merely; but added, “profane.” For there are also novelties of words in perfect harmony with religious doctrine, as is told us in Scripture of the very name of Christians, when it began to be used. For it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians after the Lord’s ascension, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles: and certain houses were afterwards called by the new names of hospices and monasteries; but the things themselves existed prior to their names, and are confirmed by religious truth, which also forms their defense against the wicked. In opposition also to the impiety of Arian heretics, they coined the new term, Patris Homousios; but there was nothing new signified by such a name; for what is called Homousios is just this: “I and my Father are one,” to wit, of one and the same substance. For if every novelty were profane, as little should we have it said by the Lord, “A new commandment I give unto you;” nor would the Testament be called New, nor the new song be sung throughout the whole earth. But there is profanity in the novelties of words, when it is said by “the foolish and audacious woman, Come and enjoy the tasting of hidden bread, and the sweetness of stolen waters.” From such

enticing words of false science the apostle also gives his prohibitory warning, in the passage where he says, “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane novelties of expression, and oppositions of science falsely so called; which some professing, have erred concerning the faith.” For there is nothing that these men so love as to profess science, and to deride as utter silliness faith in those verities which the young are enjoined to believe.

5. But some one will say, Have spiritual men nothing in the matter of doctrine, which they are to say nothing about to the carnal, but to speak out upon to the spiritual? If I shall answer, They have not, I shall be immediately met with the words of the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians: “I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. As unto babes in Christ I have given you milk to drink, and not meat to eat: for hitherto ye were not able; neither yet now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal;” and with these, “We speak wisdom among them that are perfect;” and with these also, “Comparing spiritual things with spiritual: but the natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him.” The meaning of all this, in order that these words of the apostle may no longer lead to the hankering after secrets through the profane novelties of verbiage, and that what ought always to be shunned by the spirit and body of the chaste may not be asserted as only unable to be borne by the carnal, we shall, with the Lord’s permission, make the subject of dissertation in another discourse, so that for the time we may bring the present to a close.

TRACTATE XCVIII

CHAPTER XVI. 12, 13 (CONTINUED)

1. From the words of our Lord, where He says, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now,” there arose a difficult question, which I recollect to have put off, that it might be handled afterwards at greater leisure, because my last discourse had reached its proper limits, and required to be brought to a close. And now, accordingly, as we have time to redeem our promise, let us take up its discussion as the Lord Himself shall grant us ability, who put it into our heart to make the proposal. And the

question is this: Whether spiritual men have aught in doctrine which they should withhold from the carnal, but declare to the spiritual. For if we shall say, They have not, we shall meet with the reply, What, then, is to be made of the words of the apostle in writing to the Corinthians: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. As unto babes in Christ, I have given you milk to drink, and not meat to eat: for hitherto ye were not able; neither yet now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal?" But if we say, They have, we have cause to fear and take heed, lest under such a pretext detestable doctrines be taught in secret, and under the name of spiritual, as things which cannot be understood by the carnal, may seem not only capable of being whitewashed by plausible excuses, but deserving also to be lauded in preaching.

2. In the first place, then, your Charity ought to know that it is Christ Himself as crucified, wherewith the apostle says that he has fed those who are babes as with milk; but His flesh itself, in which was witnessed His real death, that is, both His real wounds when transfixed and His blood when pierced, does not present itself to the minds of the carnal in the same manner as to that of the spiritual, and so to the former it is milk, and to the latter it is meat; for if they do not hear more than others, they understand better. For the mind has not equal powers of perception even for that which is equally received by both in faith. And so it happens that the preaching of Christ crucified, by the apostle, was at once to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles foolishness; and to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, the power of God, and the wisdom of God;" but to the carnal, as babes who held it only as a matter of faith, and to the spiritual, as those of greater capacity, who perceived it as a matter of understanding; to the former, therefore, as a milk-draught, to the latter as solid food: not that the former knew it in one way out in the world at large, and the latter in another way in their secret chambers; but that what both heard in the same measure when it was publicly spoken, each apprehended in his own measure. For inasmuch as Christ was crucified for the very purpose of shedding His blood for the remission of sins, and of divine grace being thereby commended in the passion of His Only-begotten, that no one should glory in man, what understanding had they of Christ crucified who were still saying, "I am of Paul"? Was it such as Paul himself had, who could say,

“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ”? In regard, therefore, even to Christ crucified, he himself found food in proportion to his own capacity, and nourished them with milk in accordance with their infirmity. And still further, knowing that what he wrote to the Corinthians might doubtless be understood in one way by those who were still babes, and differently by those of greater capacity, he said, “If any one among you is a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandment of the Lord; but if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” Assuredly he would have the knowledge of the spiritual to be substantial, wherever not only faith had found a suitable abode, but a certain power of understanding was possessed; and whereby such believed those very things which as spiritual they likewise acknowledged. But “let him be ignorant,” he says, who “is ignorant;” because it was not yet revealed to him to know that which he believes. When this takes place in a man’s mind, he is said to be known of God; for it is God who endows him with this power of understanding, as it is elsewhere said, “But now, knowing God, or rather, being known of God.” For it was not then that God first knew those who were foreknown and chosen before the foundation of the world; but then it was that He made them to know Himself.

3. Having ascertained this, therefore, at the outset, that the very things, which are equally heard by the spiritual and the carnal, are received by each according to the slender measure of his own capacity,—by some as babes, by others as those of riper years,—by one as milk nourishment, by another as solid food,—there seems no necessity for any matters of doctrine being retained in silence as secrets, and concealed from infant believers, as things to be spoken of apart to those who are older, or possessed of a riper understanding; and let us regard it as needful to act thus, just because of the words of the apostle, “I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal.” For even this very statement of his, that he knew nothing among them but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, he could not speak unto them as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal; because even that they were not able to receive as spiritual. But all who were spiritual among them received with spiritual understanding the very same truths which the others only heard as carnal; and in this way may we understand the words, “I could not

speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal," as if he said, What I did speak, ye could not receive as spiritual, but as carnal. For "the natural man"—that is, the man whose wisdom is of a mere human kind, and is called natural [literally, soulish] from the soul, and carnal from the flesh, because the complete man consists of soul and flesh—"perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God;" that is, the measure of grace bestowed on believers by the cross of Christ, and thinks that all that is effected by that cross is to provide us with an example for our imitation in contending even to death for the truth. For if men of this type, who have no desire to be aught else than men, knew how it is that Christ crucified is "made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord," they would doubtless no longer glory in man, nor say in a carnal spirit, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas;" but in a spiritual way, "I am of Christ."

4. But the question is still further raised by what we read in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "When now for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again to be taught which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk hath no experience in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are perfect, even those who by habit have their senses exercised to distinguish good from evil." For here we see, as if clearly defined, what he calls the strong meat of the perfect; and which is the same as that which he writes to the Corinthans, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect." But who it was that he wished in this passage to be understood as perfect, he proceeded to indicate in the words, "Even those who by habit have their senses exercised to distinguish good from evil." Those, therefore, who, through a weak and undisciplined mind, are destitute of this power, will certainly, unless enabled by what may be called the milk of faith to believe both the invisible things which they see not, and the comprehensible things which they do not yet comprehend, be easily seduced by the promise of science to vain and sacrilegious fables: so as to think both of good and evil only under corporeal forms, and to have no idea of God Himself save as some sort of body, and be able only to view evil as a substance; while there is rather a

kind of falling away from the immutable Substance in the case of all mutable substances, which were made out of nothing by the immutable and supreme substance itself, which is God. And assuredly whoever not only believes, but also through the exercised inner senses of his mind understands, and perceives, and knows this, there is no longer cause for fear that he will be seduced by those who, while accounting evil to be a substance uncreated by God, make God Himself a mutable substance, as is done by the Manicheans, or any other pests, if such there be, that fall into similar folly.

5. But to those who are still babes in mind, and who as carnal, the apostle says, require to be nourished with milk, all discoursing on such a subject, wherein we deal not only with the believing, but also with the understanding and the knowing of what is spoken, must be burdensome, as being still unable to perceive such things, and be more fitted to oppress than to feed them. Whence it comes to pass that the spiritual, while not altogether silent on such subjects to the carnal, because of the Catholic faith which is to be preached to all, yet do not so handle them as, in their wish to simplify them to understandings that are still deficient in capacity, to bring their discourse on the truth into disrepute, rather than the truth that is in their discourse within the perceptions of their hearers. Accordingly in his Epistle to the Colossians he says: “And though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and that which is lacking in your faith in Christ.” And in that to the Thessalonians: “Night and day,” he says, “praying more abundantly, that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.” Here we are, of course, to understand those who were under such primary catechetical instruction, as implied their nourishment with milk and not with strong meat; of the former of which there is mention made in the Epistle to the Hebrews of an abundant supply for such as nevertheless he would now have had to be feeding on solid food. Accordingly he says: “Therefore leaving the word of the beginning of Christ, let us have regard to the completion; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of the baptismal font, and of the laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.” This is the copious supply of milk, without which even they cannot live, who have

already indeed their reason sufficiently in use to enable them to believe, but who cannot distinguish good from evil, so as to be not only a matter of faith, but also of understanding (which belongs to the department of solid food). But when he includes doctrine also in his description of the milk, it is that which has been delivered to us in the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer.

6. But let us be far from supposing that there is any contrariety between this milk and the food of spiritual things that has to be received by the sound understanding, and which was wanting to the Colossians and Thessalonians, and had still to be supplied. For the supply of the deficiency implies no disapproval of that which existed. For even in the very food that we take, so far is there from being any contrariety between milk and solid food, that the latter itself becomes milk, in order to make it suitable to babes, whom it reaches through the medium of the mother’s or the nurse’s body; so did also mother Wisdom herself, who is solid food in the lofty sphere of angels, condescend in a manner to become milk for babes, when the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. But the man Christ Himself, who in His true flesh, true cross, true death, and true resurrection is called the pure milk of babes, is, when rightly understood by the spiritual, found to be the Lord of angels. Accordingly, babes are not to be so fed with milk as always to remain without understanding the Godhead of Christ; nor are they to be so withdrawn from milk as to turn their backs on His manhood. And the same thing may also be stated in another way in this manner: they are neither so to be fed with milk as never to understand Christ as Creator, nor so to be withdrawn from milk as ever to turn their backs on Christ as Mediator. In this respect, indeed, the similitude of maternal milk and solid food scarcely harmonizes with the reality as thus stated, but rather that of a foundation: for when the child is weaned, so as to be withdrawn from the nourishment of infancy, he never looks again amongst solid food for the breasts which he sucked; but Christ crucified is both milk to sucklings and meat to the more advanced. And the similitude of a foundation is on this account the more suitable, because, for the completion of the structure, the building is added without the foundation being withdrawn.

7. And since this is the case, do you, whoever you be, who are doubtless many of you still babes in Christ, be making advances towards the solid

food of the mind, not of the belly. Grow in the ability to distinguish good from evil, and cleave more and more to the Mediator, who delivers you from evil; which does not admit of a local separation from you, but rather of being healed within you. But whoever shall say to you, Believe not Christ to be truly man, or that the body of any man or animal whatever was created by the true God, or that the Old Testament was given by the true God, and anything else of the same sort, for such things as these were not told you previously, when your nourishment was milk, because your heart was still unfit for the apprehension of the truth: such an one provides you not with meat, but with poison. For therefore it was that the blessed apostle, in addressing those who appeared to him already perfect, even after calling himself imperfect, said, “Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.” And that they might not rush into the hands of seducers, whose desire would be to turn them away from the faith by promising them the knowledge of the truth, and suppose such to be the meaning of the apostle’s words, “God shall reveal even this unto you,” he forthwith added, “Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule.” If, then, thou hast come to some understanding of what is not at variance with the rule of the Catholic faith, whereto thou hast attained as the way that is guiding thee to thy fatherland; and hast so understood it as to feel it a duty to dismiss all doubts whatever on the subject: add to the building, but do not abandon the foundation. And surely of such a character ought to be any teaching given by elders to those who are babes, as not to involve the assertion that Christ the Lord of all, and the prophets and apostles, who are much farther advanced in age than themselves, had in any respect spoken falsely. And not only ought you to avoid the babbling seducers of the mind, who prate away at their fables and falsehoods, and in such vanities make the promise, forsooth, of profound science contrary to the rule of faith, which we have accepted as Catholic; but avoid those also as a still more insidious pest than the others, who discuss truthfully enough the immutability of the divine nature, or the incorporeal creature, or the Creator, and fully prove what they affirm by the most conclusive documents and reasonings, and yet attempt to turn you away from the one Mediator between God and men. For such are those of whom the apostle says, “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God.” For what advantage is it to have a true understanding of the immutable Good to one who has no hold of Him by whom there is deliverance from evil? And let not the admonition of the most blessed apostle by any means lose its place in your hearts: “If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” He does not say, More than ye have received; but, “Other than ye have received.” For had he said the former, he would be prejudging himself, inasmuch as he desired to come to the Thessalonians to supply what was lacking in their faith. But one who supplies, adds to what was deficient, without taking away what existed: while he that transgresses the rule of faith, is not progressing in the way, but turning aside from it.

8. Accordingly, when the Lord says, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now,” He means that what they were still ignorant of had afterwards to be supplied to them, and not that what they had already learned was to be subverted. And He, indeed, as I have already shown in a former discourse, could so speak, because the very things which He had taught them, had He wished to unfold them to them in the same way as they are conceived in regard to Him by the angels, their still remaining human weakness would be unable to bear. But any spiritual man may teach another man what he knows, provided the Holy Spirit grant him an enlarged capacity for profiting, wherein also the teacher himself may get some further increase, in order that both may be taught of God. Although even among the spiritual themselves there are some, doubtless, who are of greater capacity and in a better condition than others; so that one of them attained even to things of which it is not lawful for a man to speak. Taking advantage of which, there have been some vain individuals, who, with a presumption that betrays the grossest folly, have forged a Revelation of Paul, crammed with all manner of fables, which has been rejected by the orthodox Church; affirming it to be that whereof he had said that he was caught up into the third heavens, and there heard unspeakable words “which it is not lawful for a man to utter.” Nevertheless, the audacity of such might be tolerable, had he said that he heard words which it is not as yet lawful for a man to utter; but when he said, “which it is not lawful for a man to utter,” who are they that dare to utter them with such impudence and non-success? But with these words I shall now bring this discourse to a close; whereby I

would have you to be wise indeed in that which is good, but untainted by that which is evil.

TRACTATE XCIX

CHAPTER XVI. 13

1. What is this that the Lord said of the Holy Spirit, when promising that He would come and teach His disciples all truth, or guide them into all truth: “For He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak”? For this is similar to what He said of Himself, “I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge.” But when expounding that, we said that it might be taken as referring to His human nature; so that He seemed as the Son to announce beforehand that His own obedience, whereby He became obedient even unto the death of the cross, would have its place also in the judgment, when He shall judge the quick and the dead; for He shall do so for the very reason that He is the Son of man. Wherefore He said, “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;” for in the judgment He will appear, not in the form of God, wherein He is equal to the Father, and cannot be seen by the wicked, but in the form of man, in which He was made even a little lower than the angels; although then He will come in glory, and not in His original humility, yet in a way that will be conspicuous both to the good and to the bad. Hence He says further: “And He hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.” In these words of His own it is made clear that it is not that form that will be presented in the judgment, wherein He was when He thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but that which He assumed when He made Himself of no reputation. For He emptied Himself in assuming the form of a servant; in which, also, for the purpose of executing judgment, He seems to have commended His obedience, when He said, “I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge.” For Adam, by whose disobedience, as that of one man, many were made sinners, did not judge as he heard; for he prevaricated what he heard, and of his own self did the evil that he did; for he did not the will of God, but his own: while this latter, by whose obedience, as that also of one man, many are made righteous, was not only obedient even unto the death of the cross, in respect of which He was judged as alive from the dead; but promised also

that He would be showing obedience in the very judgment itself, wherein He is yet to act as judge of the quick and the dead, when He said, “I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge.” But when it is said of the Holy Spirit, “For He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak,” shall we dare to harbor the notion that it was so said in reference to any human nature of His, or the assumption of any creature-form? For it was the Son alone in the Trinity who assumed the form of a servant, a form which in His case was fitted into the unity of His person, or, in other words, that the one person, Jesus Christ, should be the Son of God and the Son of man; and so that we should be kept from preaching a quaternity instead of the Trinity, which God forbid that we should do. And it is on account of this one personality as consisting of two substances, the divine and the human, that He sometimes speaks in accordance with that wherein He is God, as when He says, “I and my Father are one;” and sometimes in accordance with His manhood, as in the words, “For the Father is greater than I;” in accordance with which also we have understood those words of His that are at present under discussion, “I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge.” But in reference to the person of the Holy Spirit, a considerable difficulty arises how we are to understand the words, “For He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak;” since in it there exists not one substance of Godhead and another of humanity, or of any other creature whatsoever.

2. For the fact that the Holy Spirit appeared in bodily form, as a dove, was a sight begun and ended at the time: just as also, when He descended upon the disciples, there were seen upon them cloven tongues as of fire, which also sat upon every one of them. Any one, therefore, who says that the dove was connected with the Holy Spirit in the unity of His person, as that it and Godhead (for the Holy Spirit is God) should go to constitute the one person of the Holy Spirit, is compelled also to affirm the same thing of that fire; and so may understand that he ought to assert neither. For those things in regard to the substance of God, which needed at any time to be represented in some outward way, and so exhibited themselves to men’s bodily senses, and then passed away, were formed for the moment by divine power from the subservient creation, and not from the dominant nature itself; which, ever abiding the same, excites into action whatever it pleases; and, itself

unchangeable, changes all things else at its pleasure. In the same way also did that voice from the cloud actually strike upon the bodily ears, and on that bodily sense which is called the hearing; and yet in no way are we to believe that the Word of God, which is the only-begotten Son, is defined, because He is called the Word, by syllables and sounds: for when a sermon is in course of delivery, all the sounds cannot be pronounced simultaneously; but the various individual sounds come, as it were, in their own order to the birth, and succeed those which are dying away, so that all that we have to say is completed only by the last syllable. Very different from this, surely, is the way in which the Father speaketh to the Son, that is to say, God to God, His Word. But this, so far as it can be understood by man, is a matter for the understanding of those who are fitted for the reception of solid food, and not of milk. Since, therefore, the Holy Spirit became not man by any assumption of humanity, and became not an angel by any assumption of angelic nature, and as little entered into the creature-state by the assumption of any creature-form whatever, how, in regard to Him, are we to understand those words of our Lord, “For He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak”? A difficult question; yea, too difficult. May the Spirit Himself be present, that, at least up to the measure of our power of thinking on such a subject, we may be able to express our thoughts, and that these, according to the little measure of my ability, may find entrance into your understanding.

3. You ought, then, to be informed in the first place, and, those of you who can, to understand, and the others, who cannot as yet understand, to believe, that in that substantial essence, which is God, the senses are not, as if through some material structure of a body, distributed in their appropriate places; as, in the mortal flesh of all animals there is in one place sight, in another hearing, in another taste, in another smelling, and over the whole the sense of touch. Far be it from us to believe so in the case of that incorporeal and immutable nature. In it, therefore, hearing and seeing are one and the same thing. In this way smelling also is said to exist in God; as the apostle says, “As Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.” And taste may be included, in accordance with which God hateth the bitter in temper, and spueth out of His mouth those who are lukewarm, and neither cold nor

hot: and Christ our God saith, “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me.” There is also that divine sense of touch, in accordance with which the spouse saith of the bridegroom: “His left hand is under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me.” But these are not in God’s case in different parts of the body. For when He is said to know, all are included: both seeing, and hearing, and smelling, and tasting, and touching; without any alteration of His substance, and without the existence of any material element which is greater in one place and smaller in another: and when there are any such thoughts of God in those even who are old in years, they are the thoughts only of a childish mind.

4. Nor need you wonder that the ineffable knowledge of God, whereby He is cognizant of all things, is, because of the various modes of human speech designated by the names of all those bodily senses; since even our own mind, in other words, the inner man,—to which, while itself exercising its knowing faculty in one uniform way, the different subjects of its knowledge are communicated by those five messengers, as it were, of the body, when it understands, chooses, and loves the unchangeable truth,—is said both to see the light, whereof it is said, “That was the true light;” and to hear the word, whereof it is said, “In the beginning was the Word;” and to be susceptible of smell, of which it is said, “We will run after the smell of thy ointments;” and to drink of the fountain, whereof it is said, “With Thee is the fountain of life;” and to enjoy the sense of touch, when it is said, “But it is good for me to cleave unto God;” in all of which it is not different things, but the one intelligence, that is expressed by the names of so many senses. When, therefore, it is said of the Holy Spirit, “For He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak,” so much the more is a simple nature, which is simple [uncompounded] in the truest sense, to be either understood or believed, which in its extent and sublimity far surpasses the nature of our minds. For there is mutability in our mind, which comes by learning to the perception of what it was previously ignorant of, and loses by unlearning what it formerly knew; and is deceived by what has a similarity to truth, so as to approve of the false in place of the true, and is hindered by its own obscurity as by a kind of darkness from arriving at the truth. And so that substance is not in the truest sense simple, to which being is not identical with knowing; for it can exist without the

possession of knowledge. But it cannot be so with that divine substance, for it is what it has. And on this account it has not knowledge in any such way as that the knowledge whereby it knows should be to it one thing, and the essence whereby it exists another; but both are one. Nor ought that to be called both, which is simply one. “As the Father hath life in Himself,” and He Himself is not something different from the life that is in Him; “so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself,” that is, hath begotten the Son, that He also should Himself be the life. Accordingly we ought to accept what is said of the Holy Spirit, “For he shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak,” in such a way as to understand thereby that He is not of Himself. Because it is the Father only who is not of another. For the Son is born of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father; but the Father is neither born of, nor proceedeth from, another. And yet surely there should not on that account occur to human thought any idea of disparity in the supreme Trinity; for both the Son is equal to Him of whom He is born, and the Holy Spirit to Him from whom He proceedeth. But what difference there is in such a case between proceeding and being born, would be too lengthy to make the subject of inquiry and dissertation, and would make our definition liable to the charge of rashness, even after we had discussed it; for such a thing is of the utmost difficulty, both for the mind to comprehend in any adequate way, and even were it so that the mind has attained to any such comprehension, for the tongue to explain, however able the one that presides as a teacher, or he that is present as a hearer. Accordingly, “He shall not speak of Himself;” because He is not of Himself. “But whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak:” He shall hear of Him from whom He proceedeth. To Him hearing is knowing; but knowing is being, as has been discussed above. Because, then, He is not of Himself, but of Him from whom He proceedeth, and of whom He has essence, of Him He has knowledge; from Him, therefore, He has hearing, which is nothing else than knowledge.

5. And be not disturbed by the fact that the verb is put in the future tense. For it is not said, whatsoever He hath heard, or, whatsoever He heareth; but, “whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak.” For such hearing is everlasting, because the knowing is everlasting. But in the case of what is eternal, without beginning and without end, in whatever tense the verb is

put, whether in the past, or present, or future, there is no falsehood thereby implied. For although to that immutable and ineffable nature, there is no proper application of Was and Will be, but only Is: for that nature alone is in truth, because incapable of change; and to it therefore was it exclusively suited to say, “I Am That I Am,” and “Thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, He Who Is hath sent me unto you:” yet on account of the changeableness of the times amid which our mortal and changeable life is spent, there is nothing false in our saying, both it was, and will be, and is. It was in past, it is in present, it will be in future ages. It was, because it never was wanting; it will be, because it will never be wanting; it is, because it always is. For it has not, like one who no longer survives, died with the past; nor, like one who abideth not, is it gliding away with the present; nor, as one who had no previous existence, will it rise up with the future. Accordingly, as our human manner of speaking varies with the revolutions of time, He, who through all times was not, is not, and will not by any possibility be found wanting, may correctly bespoken of in any tense whatever of a verb. The Holy Spirit, therefore, is always hearing, because He always knows: ergo, He both knew, and knows, and will know; and in the same way He both heard, and hears, and will hear; for, as we have already said, to Him hearing is one with knowing, and knowing with Him is one with being. From Him, therefore, He heard, and hears, and will hear, of whom He is; and of Him He is, from whom He proceeds.

6. Some one may here inquire whether the Holy Spirit proceedeth also from the Son. For the Son is Son of the Father alone, and the Father is Father of the Son alone; but the Holy Spirit is not the Spirit of one of them, but of both. You have the Lord Himself saying, “For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you;” and you have the apostle, “God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts.” Are there, then, two, the one of the Father, the other of the Son? Certainly not. For there is “one body,” he said, when referring to the Church; and presently added, “and one Spirit.” And mark how he there makes up the Trinity. “As ye are called,” he says, “in one hope of your calling.” “One Lord,” where he certainly meant Christ to be understood; but it remained that he should also name the Father: and accordingly there follows, “One faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” And

since, then, just as there is one Father, and one Lord, namely, the Son, so also there is one Spirit; He is doubtless of both: especially as Christ Jesus Himself saith, “The Spirit of your Father that dwelleth in you;” and the apostle declares, “God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts.” You have the same apostle saying in another place, “But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you,” where he certainly intended the Spirit of the Father to be understood; of whom, however, he says in another place, “But if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” And many other testimonies there are, which plainly show that He, who in the Trinity is styled the Holy Spirit, is the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son.

7. And for no other reason, I suppose, is He called in a peculiar way the Spirit; since though asked concerning each person in His turn, we cannot but admit that the Father and the Son are each of them a Spirit; for God is a Spirit, that is, God is not carnal, but spiritual. By the name, therefore, which they each also hold in common, it was requisite that He should be distinctly called, who is not the one nor the other of them, but in whom what is common to both becomes apparent. Why, then, should we not believe that the Holy Spirit proceedeth also from the Son, seeing that He is likewise the Spirit of the Son? For did He not so proceed, He could not, when showing Himself to His disciples after the resurrection, have breathed upon them, and said, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit.” For what else was signified by such a breathing upon them, but that from Him also the Holy Spirit proceedeth? And of the same character also are His words regarding the woman that suffered from the bloody flux: “Some one hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.” For that the Holy Spirit is also designated by the name of virtue, is both clear from the passage where the angel, in reply to Mary’s question, “How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” said, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power [virtue] of the highest shall overshadow thee;” and our Lord Himself when giving His disciples the promise of the Spirit, said, “But tarry ye in the city, until ye be endued with power [virtue] from on high;” and on another occasion, “Ye shall receive the power [virtue] of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me.” It is of this virtue that we are to believe, that the evangelist says, “Virtue went out of Him, and healed them all.”

8. If, then, the Holy Spirit proceedeth both from the Father and from the Son, why said the Son, “He proceedeth from the Father”? Why, do you think, but just because it is to Him He is wont to attribute even that which is His own, of whom He Himself also is? Hence we have Him saying, “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me.” If, therefore, in such a passage we are to understand that as His doctrine, which nevertheless He declared not to be His own, but the Father’s, how much more in that other passage are we to understand the Holy Spirit as proceeding from Himself, where His words, “He proceedeth from the Father,” were uttered so as not to imply, He proceedeth not from me? But from Him, of whom the Son has it that He is God (for He is God of God), He certainly has it that from Him also the Holy Spirit proceedeth: and in this way the Holy Spirit has it of the Father Himself, that He should also proceed from the Son, even as He proceedeth from the Father.

9. In connection with this, we come also to some understanding of the further point, that is, so far as it can be understood by such beings as ourselves, why the Holy Spirit is not said to be born, but to proceed: since, if He also were called by the name of Son, He could not avoid being called the Son of both, which is utterly absurd. For no one is a son of two, unless of a father and mother. But it would be utterly abhorrent to entertain the suspicion of any such intervention between God the Father and God the Son. For not even a son of human parents proceedeth at the same time from father and from mother: but at the time that he proceedeth from the father into the mother, it is not then that he proceedeth from the mother; and when he cometh forth from the mother into the light of day, it is not then that he proceedeth from the father. But the Holy Spirit proceedeth not from the Father into the Son, and then proceedeth from the Son to the work of the creature’s sanctification; but He proceedeth at the same time from both: although this the Father hath given unto the Son, that He should proceed from Him also, even as He proceedeth from Himself. And as little can we say that the Holy Spirit is not the life, seeing that the Father is the life, and the Son is the life. And in the same way as the Father, who hath life in Himself, hath given to the Son also to have life in Himself; so hath He also given that life should proceed from Him, even as it also proceedeth from Himself. But we come now to the words of our Lord that follow, when He

saith: “And He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore, said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.” But as the present discourse has already been protracted to some length, they must be left over for another.

TRACTATE C

CHAPTER XVI. 13–15 (CONTINUED)

1. When our Lord gave the promise of the coming of His Holy Spirit, He said, “He shall teach you all truth,” or, as we read in some copies, “He shall guide you into all truth. For He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak.” On these Gospel words we have already discoursed as the Lord enabled us; and now give your attention to those that follow. “And He will show you,” He said, “things to come.” Over this, which is perfectly plain, there is no need to linger; for it contains no question that demands from us any regular exposition. But the words that He proceeds to add, “He shall make me clearly known; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you,” are not to be carelessly passed over. For by the words, “He shall make me clearly known,” we may understand, that by shedding abroad [God’s] love in the hearts of believers, and making them spiritual, He showed them how it was that the Son was equal to the Father, whom previously they had only known according to the flesh, and as men themselves had thought of Him only as man. Or at least that, filled themselves through that very love with boldness, and divested of all fear, they might proclaim Christ unto men; and so His fame be spread abroad through the whole world. So that He said, “He shall make me clearly known,” as if meaning, He shall free you from fear, and endow you with a love that will so inflame your zeal in preaching me, that you will send forth the odor, and commend the honor of, my glory throughout the world. For what they were to do in the Holy Spirit, He said that the Spirit Himself would also do, as is implied in the words, “For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.” The Greek word, indeed, which is doxasei, has been rendered by the Latin interpreters in their respective translations, clarificabit (“shall make clearly known”) by one, and glorificabit (“shall glorify”) by another: for the idea expressed in Greek

by the one term doxa, from which is derived the verb doxasei, may be interpreted both by claritas (brightness) and gloria (glory). For by glory every one becomes bright, and glorious by brightness; and hence what is signified by both words, is one and the same thing. And, as the most famous writers of the Latin tongue in olden time have defined it, glory is the generally diffused and accepted fame of any one accompanied with praise. But when this happened in the world in regard to Christ, we are not to suppose that it was the bestowing of any great thing on Christ, but on the world. For to praise what is good is not of benefit to that which receives, but to those who give the commendation.

2. But there is also a false glory, when the praise given is the result of a mistake, whether in regard to things or to persons, or to both. For men are mistaken in regard to things, when they think that to be good which is evil; and in regard to persons, when they think one to be good who is evil; and in regard to both, when what is actually a vice is esteemed a virtue; and when he who is praised for something is destitute of what he is supposed to have, whether he be good or evil. To credit vain-glorious persons with the things they profess, is surely a huge vice, and not a virtue; and yet you know how common is the laudatory fame of such; for, as Scripture says, “The sinner is praised in the desires of his soul, and he who practises iniquity is blessed.” Here those who praise are not mistaken in the persons, but in the things; for that is evil which they believe to be good. But those who are morally corrupted with the evil of prodigality are undoubtedly such as those who praise them do not simply suspect, but perceive them to be. But further, if one feign himself a just man, and be not so, but, as regards all that he seems to do in a praiseworthy way in the sight of men, does it not for God’s sake, that is, for the sake of true righteousness, but makes glory from men the only glory he seeks and hankers after; while those with whom his extolled fame is generally accepted think of him only as living in a praiseworthy way for God’s sake,—they are not mistaken in the thing, but are deceived in the person. For that which they believe to be good, is good; but the person whom they believe to be good, is the reverse. But if, for example, skill in magical arts be esteemed good, and any one, so long as he is believed to have delivered his country by those same arts whereof all the while he is utterly ignorant, attain amongst the irreligious to that generally accepted

renown which is defined as glory, those who so praise err in both respects; to wit, both in the thing, for they esteem that good which is evil; and in the person, for he is not at all what they suppose him. But when, in regard to any one who is righteous by God's grace and for God's sake, in other words, truly righteous, there is on account of that very righteousness a generally accepted fame of a laudatory kind, then the glory is indeed a true one; and yet we are not to suppose that thereby the righteous man is made blessed, but rather those who praise him are to be congratulated, because they judge rightly, and love the righteous. And how much more, then, did Christ the Lord, by His own glory, benefit, not Himself, but those whom He also benefited by His death?

3. But that is not a true glory which He has among heretics, with whom, nevertheless, He appears to have a generally accepted fame accompanied with praise. Such is no true glory, because in both respects they are mistaken, for they both think that to be good which is not good, and they suppose Christ to be what Christ is not. For to say that the only-begotten Son is not equal to Him that begat, is not good: to say that the only-begotten Son of God is man only, and not God, is not good: to say that the flesh of the Truth is not true flesh, is not good. Of the three doctrines which I have stated, the first is held by the Arians, the second by the Photinians, and the third by the Manicheans. But inasmuch as there is nothing in any of them that is good, and Christ has nothing to do with them, in both respects they are in the wrong; and they attach no true glory to Christ, although there may appear to be amongst them a generally accepted fame regarding Christ of a laudatory character. And accordingly all heretics together, whom it would be too tedious to enumerate, who have not right views regarding Christ, err on this account, that their views are untrue regarding both good things and evil. The pagans, also, of whom great numbers are lauders of Christ, are themselves also mistaken in both respects, saying, as they do, not in accordance with the truth of God, but rather with their own conjectures, that He was a magician. For they reproach Christians as being destitute of skill; but Christ they laud as a magician, and so betray what it is that they love: Christ indeed they do not love, since what they love is that which Christ never was. And thus, then, in both respects they are in error, for it is wicked to be a magician; and as Christ was good, He was not a magician.

Wherefore, as we have nothing to say in this place of those who malign and blaspheme Christ,—for it is of His glory we speak, wherewith He was glorified in the world,—it was only in the holy Catholic Church that the Holy Spirit glorified Him with His true glory. For elsewhere, that is, either among heretics or certain pagans, the glory He has in the world cannot be a true one, even where there is a generally accepted fame of Him accompanied with praise. His true glory, therefore, in the Catholic Church is celebrated in these words by the prophet: "Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; and Thy glory above all the earth." Accordingly, that after His exaltation the Holy Spirit was to come, and to glorify Him, the sacred psalm, and the Only-begotten Himself, promised as an event of the future, which we see accomplished.

4. But when He says, "He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you," listen thereto with Catholic ears, and receive it with Catholic minds. For not surely on that account, as certain heretics have imagined, is the Holy Spirit inferior to the Son; as if the Son received from the Father, and the Holy Spirit from the Son, in reference to certain gradations of natures. Far be it from us to believe this, or to say it, and from Christian hearts to think it. In fine, He Himself straightway solved the question, and explained why He said so. "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore, said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." What would you more? The Holy Spirit thus receives of the Father, of whom the Son receives; for in this Trinity the Son is born of the Father, and from the Father the Holy Spirit proceedeth. He, however, who is born of none, and proceedeth from none, is the Father alone. But in what sense it is that the only-begotten Son said, "All things that the Father hath are mine" (for it certainly was not in the same sense as when it was said to that son, who was not only begotten, but the elder of two, "Thou art ever with me; and all that I have is thine)," will have our careful consideration, if the Lord so will, in connection with the passage where the Only-begotten saith to the Father, "And all mine are Thine, and Thine are mine;" so that our present discourse may be here brought to a close, as the words that follow require a different opening for their discussion.

TRACTATE CI

CHAPTER XVI. 16–23

1. These words of the Lord, when He says, “A little while, and ye shall no more see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me; because I go to the Father,” were so obscure to the disciples, before what He thus says was actually fulfilled, that they inquired among themselves what it was that He said, and had to confess themselves utterly ignorant. For the Gospel proceeds, “Then said some of His disciples among themselves, What is this that He saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me; and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that He saith, A little while? we know not what He saith.” This is what moved them, that He said, “A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me.” For in what precedes, because He had not said, “A little while,” but only, “I go to the Father and ye shall see me no more,” He appeared to them to have spoken, as it were, quite plainly, and they had no inquiry among themselves, regarding it. But now, what was then obscure to them, and was shortly afterwards revealed, is already perfectly manifest to us: for after a little while He suffered, and they saw Him not; again, after a little while He rose, and they saw Him. But how the words are to be taken that He used, “Ye shall no more see me,” inasmuch as by the word “more” He wished it to be understood that they would not see Him afterwards, we have explained at the passage where He said, The Holy Spirit “shall convince of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye shall see me no more;” meaning thereby, that they would never afterwards see Christ in His present state of subjection to death.

2. “Now Jesus knew,” as the evangelist proceeds to say, “that they were desirous to ask Him, and said unto them, Ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me. Verily verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy:” which may be understood in this way, that the disciples were thrown into sorrow over the death of the Lord, and straightway were filled with joy at His resurrection; but the world, whereby

are signified the enemies that slew Christ, were, of course, in a state of rapture over the murder of Christ, at the very time when the disciples were filled with sorrow. For by the name of the world the wickedness of this world may be understood; in other words, those who are the friends of this world. As the Apostle James says in his epistle, “Whosoever will be a friend of this world, is become the enemy of God;” for the effect of that enmity to God was, that not even His Only-begotten was spared.

3. And then He goes on to say, “A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” Nor does the metaphor here employed seem difficult to understand; for its key is at hand in the exposition given by Himself of its meaning. For the pangs of parturition are compared to sorrow, and the birth itself to joy; which is usually all the greater when it is not a girl but a boy that is born. But when He said, “Your joy no man taketh from you,” for their joy was Jesus Himself, there is implied what was said by the apostle, “Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; and death shall have no more dominion over Him.”

4. Hitherto in this section of the Gospel, whereon we are discoursing to-day, the tenor of everything has been, I may say, of easy understanding: a much closer attention is needful in connection with the words that follow. For what does He mean by the words, “And in that day ye shall ask me nothing”? The verb to ask, used here, means not only to beg of, but also to question; and the Greek Gospel, of which this is a translation, has a word that may also be understood in both senses, so that by it the ambiguity is not removed; and even though it were so, every difficulty would not thereby disappear. For we read that the Lord Christ, after He rose again, was both questioned and petitioned. He was asked by the disciples, on the eve of His ascension into heaven, when He would be manifested, and when the kingdom of Israel would come; and even when already in heaven, He was petitioned [asked] by St. Stephen to receive his spirit. And who dare either think or say that Christ ought not to be asked, sitting as He does in heaven,

and yet was asked while He abode on earth? or that He ought not to be asked in His state of immortality, although it was men’s duty to ask Him while still in His state of subjection to death? Nay, beloved, let us ask Him to untie with His own hands the knot of our present inquiry, by so shining into our hearts that we may perceive what He saith.

5. For I think that His words, “But I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you,” are not to be referred to the time of His resurrection, and when He showed them His flesh to be looked at and handled; but rather to that of which He had already said, “He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” For He had already risen, He had already shown Himself to them in the flesh, and He was already sitting at the right hand of the Father, when that same Apostle John, whose Gospel this is, says in his epistle, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” That vision belongs not to this life, but to the future; and is not temporal, but eternal. “And this is life eternal,” in the words of Him who is that life, “that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” Of this vision and knowledge the apostle says, “Now we see through a glass, in a riddle; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” At present the Church is in travail with the longing for this fruit of all her labor, but then she shall bring to the birth in its actual contemplation; now she travails in birth with groaning, then shall she bring forth in joy; now she travails in birth through her prayers, then shall she bring forth in her praises. Thus, too, is it a male child; since to such fruit in the contemplation are all the duties of her present conduct to be referred. For He alone is free; because He is desired on His own account, and not in reference to aught besides. Such conduct is in His service; for whatever is done in a good spirit has a reference to Him, because it is done on His behalf; while He, on the other hand, is got and held in possession on His own account, and not on that of aught besides. And there, accordingly, we find the only end that is satisfying to ourselves. He will therefore be eternal; for no end can satisfy us, save that which is found in Him who is endless. With this was Philip inspired, when he said, “Show us the Father, and it

sufficeth us.” And in that showing the Son gave promise also of His own presence, when He said, “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?” Of that, therefore, which alone sufficeth us, we are very appropriately informed, “Your joy no man taketh from you.”

6. On this point, also, in reference to what has been said above, I think we may get a still better understanding of the words, “A little while, and ye shall no more see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me.” For the whole of that space over which the present dispensation extends, is but a little while; and hence this same evangelist says in his epistle, “It is the last hour.” For in this sense also He added, “Because I go to the Father,” which is to be referred to the preceding clause, where He saith, “A little while, and ye shall no more see me;” and not to the subsequent, where He saith, “And again a little while, and ye shall see me.” For by His going to the Father, He was to bring it about that they should not see Him. And on this account, therefore, His words did not mean that He was about to die, and to be withdrawn from their view till His resurrection; but that He was about to go to the Father, which He did after His resurrection, and when, after holding intercourse with them for forty days, He ascended into heaven. He therefore addressed the words, “A little while, and ye shall no more see me,” to those who saw Him at the time in bodily form; because He was about to go to the Father, and never thereafter to be seen in that mortal state wherein they now beheld Him when so addressing them. But the words that He added, “And again a little while, and ye shall see me,” He gave as a promise to the Church universal: just as to it, also, He gave the other promise, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.” The Lord is not slack concerning His promise: a little while, and we shall see Him, where we shall have no more any requests to make, any questions to put; for nothing shall remain to be desired, nothing lie hid to be inquired about. This little while appears long to us, because it is still in continuance; when it is over, we shall then feel what a little while it was. Let not, then, our joy be like that of the world, whereof it is said, “But the world shall rejoice;” and yet let not our sorrow in travailing in birth with such a desire be unmingled with joy; but, as the apostle says, be “rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation;” for even the woman in travail, to whom we are compared, has herself more joy over the offspring that is soon to be, than sorrow over her

present pains. But let us here close our present discourse, for the words that follow contain a very trying question, and must not be unduly curtailed, so that they may, if the Lord will, obtain a more befitting explanation.

TRACTATE CII

CHAPTER XVI. 23–28

1. We have now to consider these words of the Lord, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, If ye shall ask anything of the Father in my name, He will give it you.” It has already been said in the earlier portions of this discourse of our Lord’s, on account of those who ask some things of the Father in Christ’s name and receive them not, that there is nothing asked of the Father in the Saviour’s name that is asked in contrariety to the method of salvation. For it is not the sound of the letters and syllables, but what the sound itself imports, and what is rightly and truly to be understood by that sound, that He is to be regarded as declaring, when He says, “in my name.” Hence, he who has such ideas of Christ as ought not to be entertained of the only Son of God, asketh not in His name, even though he may not abstain from the mention of Christ in so many letters and syllables; since it is only in His name he asketh, of whom he is thinking when he asketh. But he who has such ideas of Him as ought to be entertained, asketh in His name, and receiveth what he asketh, if he asketh nothing that is contrary to his own everlasting salvation. And he receiveth it when he ought to receive it. For some things are not refused, but are delayed till they can be given at a suitable time. In this way, surely, we are to understand His words, “He will give you,” so that thereby we may know that those benefits are signified which are properly applicable to those who ask. For all the saints are heard effectively in their own behalf, but are not so heard in behalf of all besides, whether friends or enemies, or any others: for it is not said in a general kind of way, “He will give;” but, “He will give you.”

2. “Hitherto,” He says, “ye have not asked anything in my name. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” This that He calls a full joy is certainly no carnal joy, but a spiritual one; and when it shall be so great as to be no longer capable of any additions to it, it will then doubtless be full. Whatever, then, is asked as belonging to the attainment of this joy, is to be

asked in the name of Christ, if we understand the grace of God, and if we are truly in quest of a blessed life. But if aught different from this is asked, there is nothing asked: not that the thing itself is nothing at all, but that in comparison with what is so great, anything else that is coveted is virtually nothing. For, of course, the man is not actually nothing, of whom the apostle says, “He who thinketh himself to be something, when he is nothing.” But surely in comparison with the spiritual man, who knows that by the grace of God he is what he is, he who makes vain assumptions is nothing. In this way, then, may the words also be rightly understood, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, if ye shall ask anything of the Father in my name, He will give [it] you;” that by the words, “if anything,” should not be understood anything whatever, but anything that is not really nothing in connection with the life of blessedness. And what follows, “Hitherto ye have not asked anything in my name,” may be understood in two ways: either, that ye have not asked in my name, because a name that ye have not known as it is yet to be known; or, ye have not asked anything, since in comparison with that which ye ought to have asked, what ye have asked is to be accounted as nothing. In order, then, that, they may ask in His name, not that which is nothing, but a full joy (since anything different from this that they ask is virtually nothing), He addresses to them the exhortation, “Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full;” that is, ask this in my name, that your joy may be full, and ye shall receive. For His saints, who persevere in asking such a good thing as this, will in no wise be defrauded by the mercy of God.

3. “These things,” said He, “have I spoken to you in proverbs: but the hour cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of my Father.” I might be disposed to say that this hour, whereof He speaketh, must be understood as that future period when we shall see openly, as the blessed Paul says, “face to face;” that what He says, “These things have I spoken to you in proverbs,” is one with what has been said by the same apostle, “Now we see through a glass, in a riddle:” and “I will show you,” because the Father shall be seen through the instrumentality of the Son, is akin to what He says elsewhere, “Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and [he] to whom the Son shall be pleased to reveal Him.” But such a sense seems to be interfered with by

that which follows: “At that day ye shall ask in my name.” For in that future world, when we have reached the kingdom where we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, what shall we then have to ask, when our desire shall be satisfied with good things? As it is also said in another psalm: “I shall be satisfied when Thy glory shall be revealed.” For petition has to do with some kind of want, which can have no place there where such abundance shall reign.

4. It remains, therefore, for us, so far as my capacity to apprehend it goes, to understand Jesus as having promised that He would cause His disciples, from being carnal and natural, to become spiritual, although not yet such as we shall be, when a spiritual body shall also be ours; but such as was he who said, “We speak wisdom among them that are perfect;” and, “I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal;” and, “We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” And thus the natural man, perceiving not the things of the Spirit of God, hears in such a way whatever is told him of the nature of God, that he can conceive of nothing else but some bodily form, however spacious or immense, however lustrous and magnificent, yet still a body: and therefore he holds as proverbs all that is said of the incorporeal and immutable substance of wisdom; not that he accounts them as proverbs, but that his thoughts follow the same direction as those who habitually listen to proverbs without understanding them. But when the spiritual man begins to discern all things, and he himself is discerned by no man, he perceives, even though in this life it still be through a glass and in part, not by any bodily sense, and not by any imaginative conception which catches at or devises the likenesses of all sorts of bodies, but by the clearest understanding of the mind, that God is not material, but spiritual: in such a way does the Son show us openly of the Father, that He, who thus shows, is also Himself seen to be of the same substance. And then it is that those who ask, ask in His name; for in the sound of that name they understand nothing else than what the reality is that is called by that name, and harbor not, in vanity or infirmity of mind, the

fiction of the Father being in one place, and the Son in another, standing before the Father and making request in our behalf, with the material substances of both occupying each its own place, and the Word pleading verbally for us with Him whose Word He is, while a definite space interposes between the mouth of the speaker and the ears of the hearer; and other such absurdities which those who are natural, and at the same time carnal, fabricate for themselves in their hearts. For any such thing, suggested by the experience of bodily habits, as occurs to spiritual men when thinking of God, they deny and reject, and drive away, like troublesome insects, from the eyes of their mind; and resign themselves to the purity of that light by whose testimony and judgment they prove these bodily images that thrust themselves on their inward vision to be altogether false. These are able to a certain extent to think of our Lord Jesus Christ, in respect of His manhood, as addressing the Father on our behalf; but in respect to His Godhead, as hearing [and answering] us along with the Father. And this I am of opinion that He indicated, when He said, "And I say not that I will pray the Father for you." But the intuitive perception of this, how it is that the Son asketh not the Father, but that Father and Son alike listen to those who ask, is a height that can be reached only by the spiritual eye of the mind.

5. "For the Father Himself," He says, "loveth you, because ye have loved me." Is it the case, then, that He loveth, because we love; or rather, that we love, because He loveth? Let this same evangelist give us the answer out of his own epistle: "We love Him," he says, "because He first loved us." This, then, was the efficient cause of our loving, that we were loved. And certainly to love God is the gift of God. He it was that gave the grace to love Him, who loved while still unloved. Even when displeasing Him we were loved, that there might be that in us whereby we should become pleasing in His sight. For we could not love the Son unless we loved the Father also. The Father loveth us, because we love the Son; seeing it is of the Father and Son we have received [the power] to love both the Father and the Son: for love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Spirit of both, by which Spirit we love both the Father and the Son, and whom we love along with the Father and the Son. God, therefore, it was that wrought this religious love of ours whereby we worship God; and He saw that it is good,

and on that account He Himself loved that which He had made. But He would not have wrought in us something He could love, were it not that He loved ourselves before He wrought it.

6. “And ye have believed,” He adds, “that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and go to the Father.” Clearly we have believed. For surely it ought not to be accounted a thing incredible because of this, that in coming to the world He came forth in such a sense from the Father that He did not leave the Father behind; and that, on leaving the world, He goes to the Father in such a sense that He does not actually forsake the world. For He came forth from the Father because He is of the Father; and He came into the world, in showing to the world His bodily form, which He had received of the Virgin. He left the world by a bodily withdrawal, He proceeded to the Father by His ascension as man, but He forsook not the world in the ruling activity of His presence.

TRACTATE CIII

CHAPTER XVI. 29–33

1. The inward state of Christ’s disciples, when before His passion He talked with them as with children of great things, but in such a way as befitted the great things to be spoken to children, because, having not yet received the Holy Spirit, as they did after His resurrection, either by His own breathing upon them, or by descent from above, they had a mental capacity for the human rather than the divine,—is everywhere declared through the Gospel by numerous testimonies; and of a piece therewith, is what they said in the lesson before us. For, says the evangelist, “His disciples say unto Him: Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and utterest no proverb. Now we are sure that Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee: by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God.” The Lord Himself had said shortly before, “These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: the hour cometh, when I shall no more speak to you in proverbs.” How, then, say they, “Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and utterest no proverb”? Was the hour, indeed, already come, when He had promised that He would no more speak unto them in proverbs? Certainly that such an hour had not yet come,

is shown by the continuation of His words, which run in this way: "These things," said He, have I spoken unto you in proverbs: the hour cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of my Father. At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and have come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father" (vers. 25–28). Seeing that throughout all these words He is still promising that hour when He shall no more speak in proverbs, but shall show them openly of the Father; the hour, when He says that they will ask in His name, and that He will not pray the Father for them, on the ground that the Father Himself loveth them, and that they also have loved Christ, and have believed that He came forth from the Father, and was come into the world, and was again about to leave the world and go to the Father: when thus that hour is still the subject of promise when He was to speak without proverbs, why say they, "Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and utterest no proverb;" but just because those things, which He knows to be proverbs to those who have no understanding, they are still so far from understanding, that they do not even understand that they do not understand them? For they were babes, and had as yet no spiritual discernment of what they heard regarding things that had to do not with the body, but with the spirit.

2. And still further admonishing them of their age as still small and infirm in regard to the inner man, "Jesus answered them: Do ye now believe? Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." He had said shortly before, "I leave the world, and go to the Father;" now He says, "The Father is with me." Who goes to him who is with him? This is a word to him that understandeth, a proverb to him that understandeth not: and yet in such way that what at present is unintelligible to babes, is in some sort sucked in; and even though it yield them not solid food, which they cannot as yet receive, it denies them not at least a milky diet. It was from this diet that they drew the knowledge that He knew all things, and needed not that any one should ask Him: and, indeed, why they said this, is a topic worthy of inquiry. For one would think

they ought rather to have said, Thou needest not to ask any one; not, “That any one should ask Thee.” They had just said, We are sure that Thou knowest all things:” and surely He that knoweth all things is accustomed rather to be questioned by those who do not know, that in reply to their questions they may hear what they wish from Him who knoweth all things; and not to be Himself the questioner, as if wishing to know something, when He knoweth all things. What, then, are we to understand by this, that, when apparently they ought to have said to Him, whom they knew to be omniscient, Thou needest not to ask any man, they considered it more befitting to say, “Thou needest not that any man should ask Thee”? Yea, is it not the case that we read of both being done; to wit, that the Lord both asked, and was asked questions? But this latter is speedily answered: for this was needful not for Him, but for those rather whom He questioned, or by whom He was questioned. For He never questioned any for the purpose of learning anything from them, but for the purpose rather of teaching them. And for those who put questions to Him, as desirous of learning something of Him, it was assuredly needful to be made acquainted with some things by Him who knew everything. And doubtless on the same account also it was that He needed not that any man should ask Him. As it is the case that we, when questioned by those who wish to get some information from us, discover by their very questionings what it is that they wish to know, we therefore need to be questioned by those whom we wish to teach, in order that we may be acquainted with their inquiries that call for an answer: but He, who knew all things, had no need even of that, and as little need had He of discovering by their questions what it was that any one desired to know of Him, for before a question was put, He knew the intention of him who was to put it. But He suffered Himself to be questioned on this account, that He might show to those who were then present, or to those who should either hear the things that were to be spoken or read them when written, what was the character of those by whom He was questioned; and in this way we might come to know both the frauds that were powerless to impose upon Him, and the ways of approach that would turn to our profit in His sight. But to foresee the thoughts of men, and thus to have no need that any one should ask Him, was no great matter for God, but great enough for the babes, who said to Him, “By this we believe that Thou camest forth from God.” A much greater thing it was, for the understanding of which He wished to have their minds expanded and enlarged, that, on their saying, and saying truly, “Thou camest forth from God,” He replied, “The Father is with me;” in order that they should not think that the Son had come forth from the Father in any sense that would lead them to suppose that He had also withdrawn from His presence.

3. And then, in bringing to a close this weighty and protracted discourse, He said, “These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” The beginning of such tribulation was to be found in that whereof, in order to show that they were infants, to whom, as still wanting in intelligence, and mistaking one thing for another, all the great and divine things He had said were little better than proverbs, He had previously said, “Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own.” Such, I say, was the beginning of the tribulation, but not in the same measure of their perseverance. For in adding, “and ye shall leave me alone,” He did not mean that they would be of such a character in the subsequent tribulation, which they should have to endure in the world after His ascension, as thus to desert Him; but that in Him they should have peace by still abiding in Him. But on the occasion of His apprehension, not only did they outwardly abandon His bodily presence, but they mentally abandoned their faith. And to this it is that His words have reference, “Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, that ye shall be scattered to your own, and shall leave me:” as if He had said, You will then be so confounded as to leave behind you even what you now believe. For they fell into such despair and such a death, so to speak, of their old faith, as was apparent in the case of Cleophas, who, after His resurrection, unaware that he was speaking with Himself, and narrating what had befallen Him, said, “We trusted that it had been He who should have redeemed Israel.” That was the way in which they then left Him, abandoning even the very faith wherewith they had formerly believed in Him. But in that tribulation, which they encountered after His glorification and they themselves had received the Holy Spirit, they did not leave Him: and though they fled from city to city, from Himself they did not flee; but in order that, while having tribulation in the world, they might have peace in Him, instead of being fugitives from Him, it was rather

Himself that they made their refuge. For in receiving the Holy Spirit, there was wrought in them the very state described to them now in the words, “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” They were of good cheer, and they conquered. But in whom, save in Him? For He had not overcome the world, were it still to overcome His members. Hence said the apostle, “Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory;” and immediately added, “through our Lord Jesus Christ:” through Him who had said to His own, “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

TRACTATE CIV

CHAPTER XVII. 1

1. Before these words, which we are now, with the Lord’s help, to make the subject of discourse, Jesus had said, “These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace;” which we are to consider as referring, not to the later words uttered by Him immediately before, but to all that He had addressed to them, whether from the time that He began to account them disciples, or at least from the time after supper when He commenced this admirable and lengthened discourse. He gave them, indeed, such a reason for speaking to them, that either all He ever spake to them may with the utmost propriety be referred to that end, or those especially, as His last words, which He now spake when on the eve of dying for them, after that he who was to betray Him had quitted their company. For He gave this as the cause of His discourse, that in Him they might have peace, just as it is wholly on this account that we are Christians. For this peace will have no temporal end, but will itself be the end of every pious intention and action that are ours at present. For its sake we are endowed with His sacraments, for its sake we are instructed by His works and sayings, for its sake we have received the earnest of the Spirit, for its sake we believe and hope in Him, and according to His gracious giving are enkindled with His love: by this peace we are comforted in all our distresses, by it we are delivered from them all: for its sake we endure with fortitude every tribulation, that in it we may reign in happiness without any tribulation. Fitly therewith did He bring His words to a close, which were proverbs to the disciples, who as yet had little understanding, but would afterwards understand them, when He had given them the Holy Spirit of promise, of whom He had said before: “These

things have I spoken unto you being yet present with you. But the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” Such, doubtless, was to be the hour, wherein He promised that He would no more speak unto them in proverbs, but show them openly of the Father. For these same words of His, when revealed by the Holy Spirit, were no more to be proverbs to those who had understanding. For when the Holy Spirit was speaking in their hearts, there was not to be silence on the part of the only-begotten Son, who had said that in that hour He would show them plainly of the Father, which, of course, would no longer be a proverb to them when now endowed with understanding. But even this also, how it is that both the Son of God and the Holy Spirit speak at once in the hearts of their spiritual ones, yea the Trinity itself, which is ever inseparably at work, is a word to those who have, but a proverb to those who are without, understanding.

2. When, therefore, He had told them on what account He had spoken all things, namely, that in Him they might have peace while having distress in the world, and had exhorted them to be of good cheer, because He had overcome the world; having thus finished His discourse to them, He then directed His words to the Father, and began to pray. For so the evangelist proceeds to say: “These things spake Jesus, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son.” The Lord, the Only-begotten and coeternal with the Father, could in the form of a servant and out of the form of a servant, if such were needful, pray in silence; but in this other way He wished to show Himself as one who prayed to the Father, that He might remember that He was still our Teacher. Accordingly, the prayer which He offered for us, He made also known to us; seeing that it is not only the delivering of discourses to them by so great a Master, but also the praying for them to the Father, that is a means of edification to disciples. And if so to those who were present to hear what was said, it is certainly so also to us who were to have the reading of it when written. Wherefore in saying this, “Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son,” He showed that all time, and every occasion when He did anything or suffered anything to be done, were arranged by Him who was subject to no time: since those things, which were individually future in point of time, have their efficient causes

in the wisdom of God, wherein there are no distinctions of time. Let it not, then, be supposed that this hour came through any urgency of fate, but rather by the divine appointment. It was no necessary law of the heavenly bodies that tied to its time the passion of Christ; for we may well shrink from the thought that the stars should compel their own Maker to die. It was not the time, therefore, that drove Christ to His death, but Christ who selected the time to die: who also fixed the time, when He was born of the Virgin, with the Father, of whom He was born independently of time. And in accordance with this true and salutary doctrine, the Apostle Paul also says, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son;" and God declares by the prophet, "In an acceptable time have I heard Thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee;" and yet again the apostle, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." He then may say, "Father, the hour is come," who has arranged every hour with the Father: saying, as it were, "Father, the hour," which we fixed together for the sake of men and of my glorification among them, "is come, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee."

3. The glorification of the Son by the Father is understood by some to consist in this, that He spared Him not, but delivered Him up for us all. But if we say that He was glorified by His passion, how much more was He so by His resurrection! For in His passion our attention is directed more to His humility than to His glory, in accordance with the testimony of the apostle, who says, "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross:" and then he goes on to say of His glorification, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father." This is the glorification of our Lord Jesus Christ, that took its commencement from His resurrection. His humility accordingly begins in the apostle's discourse with the passage where he says, "He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant;" and reaches "even to the death of the cross." But His glory begins with the clause where he says, "Wherefore God also hath exalted Him;" and reaches on to the words, "is in the glory of God the Father." For even the noun

itself, if the language of the Greek codices be examined, from which the apostolic epistles have been translated into Latin, which in the latter is read, glory, is in the former read, doxa: whence we have the verb derived in Greek for the purpose of saying here, doxason (glorify), which the Latin translator renders by “clarifica” (make illustrious), although he might as well have said “glorifica” (glorify), which is the same in meaning. And for the same reason, in the apostle’s epistle where we find “gloria,” “claritas” might have been used; for by so doing, the meaning would have been equally preserved. But not to depart from the sound of the words, just as “clarificatio” (the making lustrous) is derived from “claritas” (lustre), so is “glorificatio” (the making glorious) from “gloria” (glory). In order, then, that the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, might be made lustrous or glorious by His resurrection, He was first humbled by suffering; for had He not died, He would not have risen from the dead. Humility is the earning of glory; glory, the reward of humility. This, however, was done in the form of a servant; but He was always in the form of God, and always shall His glory continue: yea, it was not in the past as if it were no more so in the present, nor shall it be, as if it did not yet exist; but without beginning and without end, His glory is everlasting. Accordingly, when He says, “Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son,” it is to be understood as if He said, The hour is come for sowing the seed-corn of humility, delay not the fruit of my glory. But what is the meaning of the words that follow: “That Thy Son may glorify Thee”? Was it that God the Father likewise endured the humiliation of the body or of suffering, out of which He must needs be raised to glory? If not, how then was the Son to glorify Him, whose eternal glory could neither appear diminished through human form, nor be enlarged in the divine? But I will not confine such a question within the present discourse, or draw the latter out to greater length by such a discussion.

TRACTATE CV

CHAPTER XVII. 1–5

1. That the Son was glorified by the Father in His form of a servant, which the Father raised from the dead and set at His own right hand, is indicated by the event itself, and is nowhere doubted by the Christian. But as He not

only said, “Father, glorify Thy Son,” but likewise added, “that Thy Son may glorify Thee,” it is worthy of inquiry how it was that the Son glorified the Father, seeing that the eternal glory of the Father neither suffered diminution in any human form, nor could be increased in respect of its own divine perfection. In itself, indeed, the glory of the Father could neither be diminished nor enlarged; but without any doubt it was less among men when God was known only in Judea: and as yet children praised not the name of the Lord from the rising of the sun to its going down. But inasmuch as this was effected by the gospel of Christ, to wit, that the Father became known through the Son to the Gentiles, assuredly the Son also glorified the Father. Had the Son, however, only died, and not risen again, He would without doubt have neither been glorified by the Father, nor have glorified the Father; but now having been glorified through His resurrection by the Father, He glorifies the Father by the preaching of His resurrection. For this is disclosed by the very order of the words: “Glorify,” He says, “Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee;” saying, as it were, Raise me up again, that by me Thou mayest become known to all the world.

2. And then expanding still further how it was that the Father should be glorified by the Son, He says: “As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to all that Thou hast given Him.” By all flesh, He meant every man, signifying the whole by a part; as, on the other hand, the whole man is signified by the superior part, when the apostle says, “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.” For what else did He mean by “every soul,” save every man? And this, therefore, that power over all flesh was given to Christ by the Father, is to be understood in respect of His humanity; for in respect of His Godhead all things were made by Himself, and in Him were created all things in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible. “As,” then, He says, “Thou hast given Him power over all flesh,” so may Thy Son glorify Thee, in other words, make Thee known to all flesh whom Thou hast given Him. For Thou hast so given, “that He should give eternal life to all that Thou hast given Him.”

3. “And this,” He adds, “is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” The proper order of the words is, “That they may know Thee and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast

sent, as the only true God.” Consequently, therefore, the Holy Spirit is also understood, because He is the Spirit of the Father and Son, as the substantial and consubstantial love of both. For the Father and Son are not two Gods, nor are the Father and Son and Holy Spirit three Gods; but the Trinity itself is the one only true God. And yet the Father is not the same as the Son, nor the Son the same as the Father, nor the Holy Spirit the same as the Father and the Son; for the Father and Son and Holy Spirit are three [persons], yet the Trinity itself is one God. If, then, the Son glorifies Thee in the same manner “as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh,” and hast so given, “that He should give eternal life to all that Thou hast given Him,” and “this is life eternal, that they may know Thee;” in this way, therefore, the Son glorifies Thee, that He makes Thee known to all whom Thou hast given Him. Accordingly, if the knowledge of God is eternal life, we are making the greater advances to life, in proportion as we are enlarging our growth in such a knowledge. And we shall not die in the life eternal; for then, when there shall be no death, the knowledge of God shall be perfected. Then will be effected the full effulgence of God, because then the completed glory, as expressed in Greek by doxa. For from it we have the word doxason, that is used here, and which some Latins have interpreted by “clarifica” (make effulgent), and some by “glorifica” (glorify). But by the ancients, glory, from which men are styled glorious, is thus defined: Glory is the widely-spread fame of any one accompanied with praise. But if a man is praised when the fame regarding him is believed, how will God be praised when He Himself shall be seen? Hence it is said in Scripture, “Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be praising Thee for ever and ever.” There will God’s praise continue without end, where there shall be the full knowledge of God; and because the full knowledge, therefore also the complete effulgence or glorification.

4. But God is first of all glorified here, while He is being made known to men by word of mouth, and preached through the faith of believers. Wherefore, He says, “I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.” He does not say, Thou orderedst; but, “Thou gavest:” where the evident grace of it is commended to notice. For what has the human nature even in the Only-begotten, that it has not received? Did it not receive this, that it should do no evil, but all good

things, when it was assumed into the unity of His person by the Word, by whom all things were made? But how has He finished the work which was committed unto Him to do, when there still remains the trial of the passion wherein He especially furnished His martyrs with the example they were to follow, whereof, says the apostle Peter, “Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps:” but just that He says He has finished, what He knew with perfect certainty that He would finish? Just as long before, in prophecy, He used words in the past tense, when what He said was to take place very many years afterwards: “They pierced,” He says, “my hands and my feet, they counted all my bones;” He says not, They will pierce, and, They will count. And in this very Gospel He says, “All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you;” to whom He afterward declares, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” For He, who has predestinated all that is to be by sure and unchangeable causes, has done whatever He is to do: as it was also declared of Him by the prophet, “Who hath made the things that are to be.”

5. In a way similar, also, to this, He proceeds to say: “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.” For He had said above, “Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee:” in which arrangement of the words He had shown that the Father was first to be glorified by the Son, in order that the Son might glorify the Father. But now He said, “I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do; and now glorify Thou me;” as if He Himself had been the first to glorify the Father, by whom He then demands to be glorified. We are therefore to understand that He used both words above in accordance with that which was future, and in the order in which they were future, “Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee:” but that He now used the word in the past tense of that which was still future, when He said, “I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.” And then, when He said, “And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self,” as if He were afterwards to be glorified by the Father, whom He Himself had first glorified; what did He intimate but that, when He said above, “I have glorified Thee on the earth,” He had so spoken as if

He had done what He was still to do; but that here He demanded of the Father to do that whereby the Son should yet do so; in other words, that the Father should glorify the Son, by means of which glorification of the Son, the Son also was yet to glorify the Father? In fine, if, in connection with that which was still future, we put the verb also in the future tense, where He has used the past in place of the future tense, there will remain no obscurity in the sentence: as if He had said, “I will glorify Thee on the earth: I will finish the work which Thou hast given me to do; and now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self.” In this way it is as plain as when He says, “Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee:” and this is indeed the whole sentence, save that here we are told also the manner of that same glorification, which there was left unnoticed; as if the former were explained by the latter to those whose hearts it was able to stir, how it was that the Father should glorify the Son, and most of all how the Son also should glorify the Father. For in saying that the Father was glorified by Himself on the earth, but He Himself by the Father with the Father’s very self, He showed them assuredly the manner of both glorifications. For He Himself glorified the Father on earth by preaching Him to the nations; but the Father glorified Him with His own self in setting Him at His own right hand. But on that very account, when He says afterward in reference to the glorifying of the Father, “I have glorified Thee,” He preferred putting the verb in the past tense, in order to show that it was already done in the act of predestination, and what was with perfect certainty yet to take place was to be accounted as already done; namely, that the Son, having been glorified by the Father with the Father, would also glorify the Father on the earth.

6. But this predestination He still more clearly disclosed in respect of His own glorification, wherewith He was glorified by the Father, when He added, “With the glory which I had, before the world was, with Thee.” The proper order of the words is, “which I had with Thee before the world was.” To this apply His words, “And now glorify Thou me;” that is to say, as then, so also now: as then, by predestination; so also now, by consummation: do Thou in the world what had already been done with Thee before the world: do in its own time what Thou hast determined before all times. This, some have imagined, should be so understood as if the human nature, which was assumed by the Word, were converted into the Word, and the man were

changed into God; yea, were we reflecting with some care on the opinions they have advanced, as if the humanity were lost in the Godhead. For no one would go the length of saying that out of such a transmutation of the humanity the Word of God is either doubled or increased, so that either what was one should now be two, or what was less should now be greater. Accordingly, if with His human nature changed and converted into the Word, the Word of God will still be as great as He was, and what He was, where is the humanity, if it is not lost?

7. But to this opinion, which I certainly do not see to be conformable to the truth, there is nothing to urge us, if, when the Son says, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was," we understand the predestination of the glory of His human nature, as thereafter, from being mortal, to become immortal with the Father: and that this had already been done by predestination before the world was, as also in its own time it was done in the world. For if the apostle has said of us, "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world," why should it be thought incongruous with the truth, if the Father glorified our Head at the same time as He chose us in Him to be His members? For we were chosen in the same way as He was glorified; inasmuch as before the world was, neither we nor the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, were yet in existence. But He who, in as far as He is His Word, of His own self "made even those things which are yet to come," and "calleth those things which are not as though they were," certainly, in respect of His manhood as Mediator between God and men, was Himself glorified on our behalf by God the Father before the foundation of the world, if it be so that we also were then chosen in Him. For what saith the apostle? "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren: and whom He did predestinate, them He also called."

8. But perhaps we shall have some fear in saying that He was predestinated, because the apostle seems to have said so only in reference to our being

made conformable to His image. As if, indeed, any one, faithfully considering the rule of faith, were to deny that the Son of God was predestinated, who yet cannot deny that He was man. For it is rightly said that He was not predestinated in respect of His being the Word of God, God with God. For how could He be predestinated, seeing He already was what He was, without beginning and without ending, everlasting? But that, which as yet was not, had to be predestinated, in order that it might come to pass in its time, even as it was predestinated so to come before all times. Accordingly, whoever denies predestination of the Son of God, denies that He was also Himself the Son of man. But, on account of those who are disputatious, let us also on this subject listen to the apostle in the exordium of his epistles. For both in the first of his epistles, which is that to the Romans, and in the beginning of the epistle itself, we read: "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called [to be] an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was made for Him of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was predestinated the Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." In respect, then, of this predestination also, He was gloried before the world was, in order that His glory might be, by the resurrection from the dead, with the Father, at whose right hand He sitteth. Accordingly, when He saw that the time of this, His predestinated glorification, was now come, in order that what had already been done in predestination might also be done now in actual accomplishment, He said in His prayer, "And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was:" as if He had said, The glory which I had with Thee, that is, that glory which I had with Thee in Thy predestination, it is time that I should have with Thee also in sitting at Thy right hand. But as the discussion of this question has already kept us long, what follows must be taken into consideration in another discourse.

TRACTATE CVI

CHAPTER XVII. 6–8

1. In this discourse we purpose speaking, as He gives us grace, on these words of the Lord which run thus: "I have manifested Thy name unto the

men whom Thou gavest me out of the world.” If He said this only of those disciples with whom He had supped, and to whom, before beginning His prayer, He had said so much, it can have nothing to do with that clarification, or, as others have translated it, glorification, whereof He was previously speaking, and whereby the Son clarifies or glorifies the Father. For what great glory, or what like glory, was it to become known to twelve, or rather eleven mortal creatures? But if, in saying, “I have manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest me out of the world,” He wished all to be understood, even those who were still to believe on Him, as belonging to His great Church which was yet to be made up of all nations, and of which it is said in the psalm, “I will confess to Thee in the great Church [congregation];” it is plainly that glorification wherewith the Son glorifies the Father, when He makes His name known to all nations and to so many generations of men. And what He says here, “I have manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest me out of the world,” is similar to what He had said a little before, “I have glorified Thee upon the earth,” (ver. 4); putting both here and there the past for the future, as One who knew that it was predestinated to be done, and therefore saying that He had done what He had still to do, though without any uncertainty, in the future.

2. But what follows makes it more credible that His words, “I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou gavest me out of the world,” were spoken by Him of those who were already His disciples, and not of all who were yet to believe on Him. For after these words, He added: “Thine they were, and Thou gavest them me; and they have kept Thy word. Now they have known that all things, whatsoever Thou hast given me, are of Thee: for I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send me.” Although all these words also might have been said of all believers still to come, when that which was now a matter of hope had been turned into fact, inasmuch as they were words that still pointed to the future; yet we are impelled the more to understand Him as uttering them only of those who were at that time His disciples, by what He says shortly afterwards: “While I was with them, I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled”

(ver. 12); meaning Judas, who betrayed Him, for He was the only one of the apostolic twelve that perished. And then He adds, “And now come I to Thee,” from which it is manifest that it was of His own bodily presence that He said, “While I was with them, I kept them,” as if already that presence were no longer with them. For in this way He wished to intimate His own ascension as in the immediate future, when He said, “And now come I to Thee:” going, that is, to the Father’s right hand; whence He is hereafter to come to judge the quick and the dead in the self-same bodily presence, according to the rule of faith and sound doctrine: for in His spiritual presence He was still, of course, to be with them after His ascension, and with the whole of His Church in this world even to the end of time. We cannot, therefore, rightly understand of whom He said, “While I was with them, I kept them,” save as those only who believed on Him, whom He had already begun to keep by His bodily presence, but was now to leave without it, in order that He might keep them with the Father by His spiritual presence. Thereafter, indeed, He also unites with them the rest of His disciples, when He says, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for those also who shall believe on me through their word.” Where He shows still more clearly that He was not speaking before of all who belonged to Him, in the passage where He saith, “I have manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest me,” but of those only who were listening to Him when He so spake.

3. From the very outset, therefore, of His prayer, when “He lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee,” on to what He said a little afterwards, “And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was,” He wished all His disciples to be understood, to whom He makes the Father known, and thereby glorifies Him. For after saying, “That Thy Son may glorify Thee,” He straightway showed how that was to be done, by adding, “As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him: and this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” For the Father cannot be glorified through any knowledge attained by men, unless He also be known by whom He is glorified, that is to say, by whom He is made known to the

nations of the world. The glorification of the Father is not that which was displayed in connection with the apostles only, but that which is displayed in all men, of whom as His members Christ is the head. For the words cannot be understood as applied to the apostles only, "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him;" but to all, assuredly, on whom, as believing on Him, eternal life is bestowed.

4. Accordingly, let us now see what He says about those disciples of His who were then listening to Him. "I have manifested," He says, "Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest me." Did they not, then, know the name of God when they were Jews? And what of that which we read, "God is known in Judah; His name is great in Israel"? Therefore, "I have manifested Thy name unto these men whom Thou gavest me out of the world," and who are now hearing my words: not that name of Thine whereby Thou art called God, but that whereby Thou art called my Father: a name that could not be manifested without the manifestation of the Son Himself. For this name of God, by which He is called, could not but be known in some way to the whole creation, and so to every nation, before they believed in Christ. For such is the energy of true Godhead, that it cannot be altogether and utterly hidden from any rational creature, so long as it makes use of its reason. For, with the exception of a few in whom nature has become outrageously depraved, the whole race of man acknowledges God as the maker of this world. In respect, therefore, of His being the maker of this world that is visible in heaven and earth around us, God was known unto all nations even before they were indoctrinated into the faith of Christ. But in this respect, that He was not, without grievous wrong being done to Himself, to be worshipped alongside of false gods, God was known in Judah alone. But in respect of His being the Father of this Christ, by whom He taketh away the sin of the world, this name of His, previously kept secret from all, He now made manifest to those whom the Father Himself had given Him out of the world. But how had He done so, if the hour were not yet come, of which He had formerly said that the hour would come, "when I shall no more speak unto you proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of my Father"? Can it be supposed that the proverbs themselves contained such a plain anouncement? Why, then, is it said, "I will declare to

you openly," but just because that "in proverbs" is not "openly"? But when it is no longer concealed in proverbs, but uttered in plain words, then without a doubt it is spoken openly. How, then, had He manifested what He had not as yet openly declared? It must be understood, therefore, in this way, that the past tense is put for the future, like those other words, "All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you:" as something He had not yet done, but spoke of as if He had, because His doing of it He knew to be infallibly pre-determined.

5. But what are we to make of the words, "Whom Thou gavest me out of the world"? For it is said of them that they were not of the world. But this they attained to by regeneration, and not by generation. And what, also, of that which follows, "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them me"? Was there a time when they belonged to the Father, and not to His only-begotten Son; and had the Father once on a time anything apart from the Son? Surely not. Nevertheless, there was a time when God the Son had something, which that same Son as man possessed not; for He had not yet become man of an earthly mother, when He possessed all things in common with the Father. Wherefore in saying, "Thine they were," there is thereby no self-disruption made by God the Son, apart from whom there was nothing ever possessed by the Father; but it is His custom to attribute all the power He possesses to Him, of whom He Himself is, who has the power. For of whom He has it that He is, of Him He has it that He is able; and both together He always had, for He never had being without having ability. Accordingly, what ever the Father could [do], always side by side with Him could the Son; since He, who never had being without having ability, was never without the Father, as the Father never was without Him. And thus, as the Father is eternally omnipotent, so is the Son co-eternally omnipotent; and if all-powerful, certainly all-possessing. For such rather, if we would speak exactly, is the word by which we translate what is called by the Greeks pantokrator which our writers would not interpret by the term omnipotent, seeing that pantokrator is all-possessing, were it not that they felt it to be equivalent in meaning. What, then, could the eternal all-possessing ever have, that the co-eternal all-possessing had not likewise? In saying, therefore, "And Thou gavest them me," He intimated that it was as man He had received this power to have them; seeing that He, who was always

omnipotent, was not always man. Accordingly, while He seems rather to have attributed it to the Father, that He received them from Him, since all that is, is of Him, of whom He is; yet He also gave them to Himself, that is, Christ, God with the Father, gave men to the manhood of Christ, which had not its being with the Father. Finally, He who says in this place, "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them me," had already said in a previous passage to the same disciples, "I have chosen you out of the world." Here, then, let every carnal thought be crushed and annihilated. The Son says that the men were given Him by the Father out of the world, to whom He says elsewhere, "I have chosen you out of the world." Those whom God the Son chose along with the Father out of the world, the very same Son as man received out of the world from the Father; for the Father had not given them to the Son had He not chosen them. And in this way, as the Son did not thereby set the Father aside, when He said, "I have chosen you out of the world," seeing that they were simultaneously chosen by the Father also: as little did He thereby exclude Himself, when He said, "Thine they were," for they were equally also the property of the Son. But now that same Son as man received those who belonged not to Himself, because He also as God received a servant-form which was not originally His own.

6. He proceeds to say, "And they have kept Thy word: now they have known that all things, whatsoever Thou hast given me, are of Thee;" that is, they have known that I am of Thee. For the Father gave all things at the very time when He begat Him who was to have all things. "For I have given unto them," He says, "the words which Thou gavest me; and they have received them;" that is, they have understood and kept hold of them. For the word is received when it is perceived by the mind. "And they have known truly," He adds, "that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send me." In this last clause we must also supply "truly;" for when He said, "They have known truly," He intended its explanation by adding, "and they have believed." That, therefore, "they have believed truly" which "they have known truly;" just as "I came out from Thee" is the same as "Thou didst send me." When, therefore, He said, "They have known truly," lest any might suppose that such a knowledge was already acquired by sight, and not by faith, He subjoined the explanation, "And they have believed," so that we should supply "truly," and understand the saying,

“They have known truly,” as equivalent to “They have believed truly:” not in the way which He intimated shortly before, when He said, “Do ye now believe? The hour cometh, and is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone.” But “they have believed truly,” that is, in the way it ought to be believed, without constraint, with firmness, constancy, and fortitude: no longer now to go to their own, and leave Christ alone. As yet, indeed, the disciples were not of the character He here describes in words of the past tense, as if they were so already, but as thereby declaring beforehand what sort they were yet to be, namely, when they had received the Holy Spirit, who, according to the promise, should teach them all things. For how was it, before they received the Spirit, that they kept that word of His which He spake regarding them, as if they had done so, when the chief of them thrice denied Him, after hearing from His lips the future fate of the man who denied Him before men? He had given them, therefore, as He said, the words which the Father gave Him; but when at length they received them spiritually, not in an outward way with their ears, but inwardly in their hearts, then they truly received them, for then they truly knew them; and they truly knew them, because they truly believed.

7. But what human language will suffice to explain how the Father gave those words to the Son? The question, of course, will appear easier if we suppose Him to have received such words in His capacity as the Son of man. And yet, although thus born of the Virgin, who will undertake to relate when and how it was that He learned them, since even that very generation which He had of the Virgin who will venture to declare? But if our idea be that He received these words of the Father in His capacity as begotten of, and co-eternal with, the Father, let us then exclude all such thoughts of time as if He existed previous to His possessing them, and so received the possession of that which He had not before; for whatever God the Father gave to God the Son, He gave in the act of begetting. For the Father gave those things to the Son without which He could not be the Son, in the same manner as He gave Him being itself. For how otherwise would He give any words to the Word, wherein in an ineffable way He hath spoken all things? But now, in reference to what follows, you must defer your expectations till another discourse.

TRACTATE CVII

CHAPTER XVII. 9–13

1. When the Lord was speaking to the Father of those whom He already had as disciples, He said this also among other things: “I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given me.” By the world, He now wishes to be understood those who live according to the lust of the word, and stand not in the gracious lot of such as were to be chosen by Him out of the world. Accordingly it is not for the world, but for those whom the Father hath given Him, that He expresses Himself as praying: for by the very fact of their having already been given Him by the Father, they have ceased to belong to that world for which He refrains from praying.

2. And then He adds, “For they are Thine.” For the Father did not lose those whom He gave, in the act of giving them to the Son; since the Son still goes on to say, “And all mine are Thine, and Thine are mine.” Where it is sufficiently apparent how it is that all that belongs to the Father belongs also to the Son; in this way, namely, that He Himself is also God, and, of the Father born, is the Father’s equal: and not as was said to one of the two sons, to wit, the elder, “Thou art ever with me; and all that I have is thine.” For that was said of all those creatures which are inferior to the holy rational creature, and are certainly subordinate to the Church; wherein its universal character is understood as including those two sons, the elder and the younger, along with all the holy angels, whose equals we shall be in the kingdom of Christ and of God: but here it was said, “And all mine are Thine, and Thine are mine,” with this meaning, that even the rational creature is itself included, which is subject only to God, so that all beneath it are also subject to Him. As it then belongs to God the Father, it would not at the same time be the Son’s likewise, were He not equal to the Father: for to it He was referring when He said, “I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given me: for they are Thine, and all mine are Thine, and Thine are mine.” Nor is it morally admissible that the saints, of whom He so spake, should belong to any save to Him by whom they were created and sanctified: and for the same reason, everything also that is theirs must of necessity be His also to whom they themselves belong. Accordingly, since they belong both to the Father and to the Son, they demonstrate the equality

of those to whom they equally belong. But when He says, speaking of the Holy Ghost, “All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you,” He referred to those things which concern the actual deity of the Father, and in which He is equal to Him, in having all that He has. And no more was it of the creature, which is subject to the Father and the Son, that the Holy Spirit was to receive that whereof He said, “He shall receive of mine;” but most certainly of the Father, from whom the Spirit proceedeth, and of whom also the Son is born.

3. He proceeds: “And I am glorified in them.” He now speaks of His glorification as already accomplished, although it was still future; while a little before He was demanding of the Father its accomplishment. But whether this be the same glorification, whereof He had said, “And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was,” is certainly a point worthy of examination. For if “with Thee,” how can it be “in them”? Is it when this very knowledge is imparted to them, and, through them, to all who believe them as His witnesses? In such a way we may clearly understand Christ as having said of the apostles, that He was glorified in them; for in saying that it was already accomplished, He showed that it was already foreordained, and only wished what was future to be regarded as certain.

4. “And now,” He adds, “I am no more in the world, and these are in the world.” If your thoughts turn to the very hour in which He was speaking, both were still in the world; to wit, He Himself, and those of whom He was so speaking: for it is not in respect of the tendency of heart and life that we can or ought to understand it, so that they should be described as still in the world, on the ground that they still savored of the earthly; and that He was no longer in the world, because divine in the disposition of His mind. For there is one word used here, which makes any such understanding altogether inadmissible; because He does not say, And I am not in the world; but, “I am no more in the world:” thereby showing that He Himself had been in the world, but was no more so. And are we then at liberty to believe that He at one time savored of the worldly, and, delivered at length from such a mistake, no longer retained the old disposition? Who would

venture to shut himself up in so profane a meaning. It remains, therefore, that in the same sense in which He Himself also was previously in the world, He declared that He was no longer in the world, that is to say, in His bodily presence; in other words, showing thereby that His own absence from the world was now in the immediate future, and theirs later, when He said that He was no longer here, and that they were so, although both He and they were still present. For He thus spake, as a man in harmony with men, in accordance with the prevailing custom of human speech. Do we not say every day, he is no longer here, of one who is on the very point of departure? And such in particular is the way we are wont to speak of those who are at the point of death. And besides all else, the Lord Himself, as if foreseeing the thoughts that might possibly be excited in those who were afterwards to read these words, added, “And I come to Thee:” explaining thereby in some measure why He said, “I am no more in the world.”

5. Accordingly He commends to the Father’s care those whom He was about to leave by His bodily absence, saying: “Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me.” That is to say, as man He prays to God in behalf of His disciples, whom He has received from God. But attend to what follows: “That they may be one,” He says, “even as we.” He does not say, That they may be one with us, or, that they and we may be one, as we are one; but He says, “That they may be one, even as we:” meaning, of course, that in their nature they may be one, even as we are one in ours, which certainly would not be spoken with truth, unless in this respect, that He, as God, is of the same nature as the Father also, in accordance with what He has said elsewhere, “I and the Father are one;” and not with what He also is as man, for in this respect He said, “The Father is greater than I.” But since one and the same person is God and man, we are to understand the manhood in respect of His asking; but the Godhead, in as far as He Himself, and He whom He asks, are one. But there is still a passage in what follows, where we must have a more careful discussion of this subject.

6. But here He proceeds: “While I was with them, I kept them in Thy name.” Since I am coming, He says, to Thee, keep them in Thy name, in which I myself have kept them while I was with them. In the Father’s name,

the Son as man kept His disciples, when placed side by side with them in human presence; but the Father also, in the name of the Son, kept those whom He heard and answered when praying in the name of the Son. For to them had it also been said by the Son Himself: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you.” But we are not to take this in any such carnal way, as that the Father and Son keep us in turn, with an alternation in the guardianship of both in guarding us, as if one succeeded when the other departed; for we are guarded all at once by the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, who is the one true and blessed God. But Scripture does not exalt us save by descending to us: as the Word, by becoming flesh, came down to lift us up, and fell not so as to remain Himself in the depths. If we have known Him who thus descendeth, let us rise with Him who lifteth us up; and let us understand, when He speaks thus, that He is marking a distinction in the persons, without making any separation of the natures. While, therefore, the Son in bodily presence was keeping His disciples, the Father was not waiting the Son’s departure in order to succeed to the guardianship, but both were keeping them by Their spiritual power; and when the Son withdrew from them His bodily presence, He retained along with the Father the spiritual guardianship. For when the Son also as man assumed the office of their guardian, He did not withdraw them from the Father’s guardianship; and when the Father gave them to the guardianship of the Son, in the very giving He acted not apart from Him to whom He gave them, but gave them to the Son as man, yet not apart from that same Son Himself as God.

7. The Son therefore goes on to say: “Those that Thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.” The betrayer of Christ was called the son of perdition, as foreordained to perdition, according to the Scripture, where it is specially prophesied of him in the 109th Psalm.

8. “And now,” He says, “come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.” See! He says that He speaketh in the world, when He had said only a little before, “I am no more in the world:” the reason of which we have there explained, or rather have shown that He Himself explained it. Accordingly, on the one hand, as

He had not yet departed, He was still here; and because He was on the very point of departure, in a kind of way He was no more here. But what this joy is whereof He says, “That they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves,” has already been elucidated above, where He says, “That they may be one, even as we are.” This joy of His that is bestowed on them by Him, was to be fulfilled, He says, in them; and for that very end declared that He had spoken in the world. This is that peace and blessedness in the world to come, for the attaining of which we must live temperately, and righteously, and godly in the present.

TRACTATE CVIII

CHAPTER XVII. 14–19

1. While the Lord is still speaking to the Father, and praying for His disciples, He says: “I have given them Thy saying; and the world hath hated them.” That hatred they had not yet experienced in those sufferings of their own, which afterwards overtook them; but He speaks thus in His usual way, foretelling the future in words of the past tense. And then, subjoining the reason of their being hated by the world, He says, “Because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” This was conferred on them by regeneration; for by generation they were of the world, as He had already said to them, “I have chosen you out of the world.” It was therefore a gracious privilege bestowed upon them, that they, like Himself, should not be of the world, through the deliverance which He was giving them from the world. He, however, was never of the world; for even in respect of His servant-form He was born of that Holy Spirit of whom they were born again. For if on that account they were no more of the world, because born again of the Holy Spirit; on the same account He was never of the world, because born of the Holy Spirit.

2. “I pray not,” He adds, “that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” For they still accounted it necessary to be in the world, although they were no longer of it. Then He repeats the same statement: “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth.” For so are they kept from the evil, as He had previously prayed that they might be. But it may be inquired how

they were no more of the world, if they were not yet sanctified in the truth; or, if they already were, why He requests that they should be so. Is it not because even those who are sanctified still continue to make progress in the same sanctification, and grow in holiness; and do not so without the aid of God’s grace, but by His sanctifying of their progress, even as He sanctified their outset? And hence the apostle likewise says: “He who hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” The heirs therefore of the New Testament are sanctified in that truth which was adumbrated in the purifications of the Old Testament; and when they are sanctified in the truth, they are in other words sanctified in Christ, who said in truth, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” As also when He said, “The truth shall make you free,” in explanation of His words, He added soon after, “If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed;” in order to show that what He had previously called the truth, He a minute afterwards denominates the Son. And what else did He mean by the words before us, “Sanctify them in the truth,” but, Sanctify them in me?

3. Finally, He proceeds, and doing so fails not to suggest the same with increasing clearness: “Thy speech (sermo) is truth.” What else did He mean than “I am the truth”? For the Greek Gospel has logos, which is also the word that is found in the passage where it is said, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” And that Word at least we know to be the only begotten Son of God, which “was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” Hence also there might have been put here as it actually has been put in certain copies, “Thy Word is truth;” just as in some copies that other passage is written, “In the beginning was the speech.” But in the Greek without any variation it is logos in both cases. The Father therefore sanctifies in the truth, that is, in His own Word, in His Only begotten, His own heirs and His (the Son’s) co-heirs.

4. But now He still goes on to speak of the apostles, for He proceeds to add, “As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.” Whom did He so send but His apostles? For even the very name of apostles, which is a Greek word, signifies in Latin nothing more than, those that are sent. God, therefore, sent His Son, not in sinful flesh, but in the

likeness of sinful flesh; and His Son sent those who, born themselves in sinful flesh, were sanctified by Him from the defilement of sin.

5. But since, on the ground that the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, has become Head of the Church, they are His members; therefore He says in the words that follow, “And for their sakes I sanctify myself.” For what means He by the words, “And for their sakes I sanctify myself,” but I sanctify them in myself, since they also are [part of] myself? For those of whom He so speaks are, as I have said, His members; and the head and body are one Christ, as the apostle teaches when he says of the seed of Abraham, “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed,” after having said before, “He saith not, And to seeds, as in many, but as in one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” If, then, the seed of Abraham is Christ, what else is declared to those to whom he says, “Then are ye Abraham’s seed,” but then are ye Christ? Of the same character is what this very apostle said in another place: “Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh.” He said not, of my afflictions, but “of Christ’s;” for he was a member of Christ, and in his persecutions, such as it behoved Christ to suffer in the whole of His body, he also was filling up his own share of His afflictions. And to be assured of the certainty of this in the present passage, give heed to what follows. For after saying, “And for their sakes I sanctify myself,” to let us understand that He thereby meant that He would sanctify them in Himself, He immediately added, “That they also may be sanctified in the truth.” And what else is this but in me, in accordance with the fact that the truth is that Word in the beginning which is God? In whom also the Son of man was Himself sanctified from the beginning of His creation, when the Word was made flesh, for the Word and the man became one person. Then accordingly He sanctified Himself in Himself, that is, Himself the man in Himself the Word; for the Word and the man is one Christ, who sanctifies the manhood in the Word. But in behalf of His members He says, “And for their sakes I,”—that is, that the benefit may be also theirs, for they too are [included in the] I, just as it benefited me in myself, because I am man apart from them—”I sanctify myself,” that is, I sanctify them as if it were my own self in me, since in me they also are I. “That they also may be sanctified in the truth.” For what else mean the words “they also,” but [“they”] in the same

way as I; “in the truth,” and that “truth” am I? After this He now begins to speak not only of the apostles, but also of the rest of His members, which we shall treat of, as grace may be granted us, in another discourse.

TRACTATE CIX

CHAPTER XVII. 20

1. The Lord Jesus, in the now close proximity of His passion, after praying for His disciples, whom He also named apostles, with whom He had partaken of that last supper from which His betrayer had taken his departure on being revealed by the sop of bread, and with whom, after the latter’s departure, and before beginning His prayer in their behalf, He had already spoken at length, conjoined all others also who were yet to believe on Him, and said to the Father, “Neither pray I for these alone,” that is, for the disciples who were with Him at the time, “but for them also,” He adds, “who shall believe on me through their word.” Whereby He wished all His own to be understood: not only such as were then in the flesh, but those also who were yet to come. For all that have since believed on Him have doubtless believed, and shall yet believe till He come, through the word of the apostles; for to themselves He had said, “And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning;” and by them was the gospel ministered even before it was written, and every one assuredly who believeth on Christ believeth the gospel. Accordingly, those who He says should believe on Him through their word, are not to be understood as referring only to such as heard the apostles themselves while they lived in the flesh; but others also after their decease, and we, too, born long afterwards, have believed on Christ through their word. For they that were then with Him preached to the others what they had heard from Him; and so their word, that we too might believe, has found its way to us, and wherever His Church exists, and shall yet reach down to posterity, whoever and wherever they be who shall hereafter believe on Him.

2. In this prayer, therefore, Jesus may seem to have omitted praying for some of His own, unless we carefully examine His words in the prayer itself. For if He prayed first for those, as we have already shown, who were then with Him, and afterwards for those also who should believe on Him

through their word, it may be said that He prayed not for those who were neither with Him when He so spake, nor afterwards believed through their word, but had done so at some previous time either of themselves, or in some other supposable manner. For was Nathanael with Him at that time? Was Joseph of Arimathea, who begged His body from Pilate, and of whom this same evangelist John testifies that he was already His disciple? Were His mother, Mary, and other women who, we know from the Gospel, had been prior to that time His disciples? Were those with Him then, of whom this evangelist John frequently says, “Many believed on Him”? For whence came the multitude of those who, with branches of trees, partly preceded and partly followed Him as He sat on the ass, saying, “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord;” and along with them the children of whom He Himself declared that the prophecy had been uttered, “Out of the mouth of babes and of sucklings Thou hast perfected praise”? Whence the five hundred brethren, to all of whom at once He would not have appeared after His resurrection had they not previously believed on Him? Whence that hundred and nine who, with the eleven, were a hundred and twenty, when, being assembled together after His ascension, they waited and received the promise of the Holy Spirit? Whence came all these, save from those of Whom it was said, “Many believed on Him”? For them, therefore, the Saviour did not at this time pray, seeing it was for those He prayed who were then with Him, and for others not who had already, but who were yet to believe on Him through their word. But these were certainly not with Him on that occasion, and had already believed on Him at some previous period. I say nothing of the aged Simeon, who believed on Him when an infant; of Anna the prophetess; of Zachariah and Elisabeth, who prophesied of Him before He was born of the Virgin; of their son John, His forerunner, the friend of the Bridegroom, who both recognized Him in the Holy Spirit, and preached Him in His absence, and pointed Him out when He was present to the recognition of others;—I say nothing of these, as it might be replied that He ought not to have prayed for such when dead, who had gone hence with their great merits, and having met with a welcome reception were now at rest; for a similar answer is also given in connection with the righteous of olden time. For which of them could have been saved from the damnation awaiting the whole mass of perdition, which has been caused by one man, had he not believed, through the revelation of the Spirit, in the one

Mediator between God and men as yet to come in the flesh? But behoved He to pray for the apostles, and not to pray for so many who were still alive, but were not then with Him, and had already at some previous period been brought to the faith? Who is there that would say so?

3. We are therefore to understand that their faith in Him was not yet such as He wished it to be, inasmuch as even Peter himself, to whom, on making the confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," He had borne so excellent a testimony, was disposed rather to hinder Him from dying than to believe in His resurrection when dead, and hence was called immediately thereafter by the same of Satan. Those, accordingly, are found to be the greater in faith who were long since deceased, and yet, through the revelation of the Spirit, had no manner of doubt that Christ would rise again, than those who, after attaining to the belief that He should redeem Israel, at the sight of His death lost all the hope they previously possessed regarding Him. The best thing for us, therefore, to believe is, that after His resurrection, when the Holy Spirit was bestowed, and the apostles taught and confirmed, and from its outset constituted teachers in the Church, others, through their word, attained the proper faith in Christ, or, in other words, that they then got firm hold of the faith of His resurrection. And in this way also, that all those who seemed to have already believed on Him really belonged to the number of those for whom He prayed, when He said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word."

4. But we have still in reserve for the further solution of this question the blessed apostle, and that robber who was a villain in wickedness, but a believer on the cross. For the Apostle Paul tells us that he was made an apostle not of men, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ: and speaking of his own gospel, he says, "For I neither received it of man, neither did I learn it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." How then was he among those of whom it is said, "They shall believe on me through their word"? On the other hand, the robber believed at the very time when in the case of the teachers themselves such faith as they previously possessed had utterly failed. Not even he, therefore, believed on Christ through their word, and yet his faith was such that he confessed that He whom he saw nailed to the

cross would not only rise again, but would also reign, when he said, “Remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.”

5. Accordingly it remains that if we are to believe that the Lord Jesus, in this prayer, prayed for all of His own who either then were or should thereafter be in this life, which is a state of trial upon earth, we must so understand the expression, “through their word,” as to believe that it here signified the word of faith itself which they preached in the world, and that it was called their word because it was primarily and principally preached by them. For it was already in the course of being preached by them in the earth when Paul received that same word of theirs by the revelation of Jesus Christ. Whence also it came about that he compared the Gospel with them, lest by any means he had run, or should run, in vain; and they gave him their right hand because in him also they found, although not given him by them, their own word which they were already preaching, and in which they were now established. And in regard to this word of the resurrection of Christ, it is said by the same apostle, “Whether it were I, or they, so we preach, and so ye believed;” and again, “This is the word of faith,” he says, “which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” And in the Acts of the Apostles we read that in Christ, God hath marked out [the ground of] faith unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead. Accordingly, this word of faith, because principally and primarily preached by the apostles who adhered to Him, was called their word. Not, however, on that account does it cease to be the word of God because it is called their word; for the same apostle says that the Thessalonians received it from him “not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God.” “Of God,” for the very reason that it was freely given by God; but called “their word,” because primarily and principally committed to them by God to be preached. In the same way also the thief mentioned above had in the matter of his own faith their word, which was called theirs precisely because the preaching of it primarily and principally pertained to the office they filled. And once more, when murmuring arose among the Grecian widows in reference to the serving of the tables, previous to the time when Paul was brought to the faith of Christ, the reply given by the apostles, who before then had adhered to the Lord, was: “It is

not good that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.” Then it was that they provided for the ordination of deacons, that they themselves might not be drawn aside from the duty of preaching the word. Hence that was properly enough called their word which is the word of faith, whereby all, from whatever quarter they had heard it, believed on Christ, or, as yet to hear it, should thereafter believe. In this prayer, therefore, all whom He redeemed, whether then alive or thereafter to live in the flesh, were prayed for by our Redeemer when, praying for the apostles who were then with Him, He also conjoined those who were yet to believe on Him through their word. But what, after such conjunction, He then proceeds to say, must be reserved for discussion in another discourse.

TRACTATE CX

CHAPTER XVII. 21–23

1. After the Lord Jesus had prayed for His disciples whom He had with Him at the time, and had conjoined with them others who were also His own, by saying, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word,” as if we were inquiring what or wherefore He prayed for them, He straightway subjoined, “That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, [art] in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.” And a little above, while still praying for the disciples alone who were then with Him, He said, “Holy Father, keep in Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are” (ver. 11). It is the same thing, therefore, that He now also prayed for in our behalf, as He did at that time in theirs, namely, that all—to wit, both we and they—may be one. And here we must take particular notice that the Lord did not say that we all may be one, but, “that they all may be one; as Thou Father, in me, and I in Thee” (where is to be understood are one, as is more clearly expressed afterwards); because He had also said before of the disciples who were with Him, “That they may be one, as we are.” The Father, therefore, is in the Son, and the Son in the Father, in such a way as to be one, because they are of one substance; but while we may indeed be in them, we cannot be one with them; for they and we are not of one substance, in as far as the Son is God along with the Father. But in as far as He is man, He is of the same substance as we are. But at present He wished rather to call attention

to that other statement which He made use of in another place, “I and the Father are one,” where He intimated that His own nature was the same with that of the Father. And accordingly, though the Father and Son, or even the Holy Spirit, are in us, we must not suppose that they are of one nature with ourselves. And hence they are in us, or we are in them, in this sense, that they are one in their own nature, and we are one in ours. For they are in us, as God in His temple; but we are in them, as the creature in its Creator.

2. But then after saying, “That they also may be one in us,” He added, “That the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.” What does He mean by this? Is it that the world will then be brought to the faith, when we shall all be one in the Father and Son? Is not such a state the everlasting peace, and the reward of faith, rather than faith itself? For we shall be one not in order to our believing, but because we have believed. But although in this life, because of the common faith itself, all who believe in one are one according to the words of the apostle, “For ye are all one in Christ Jesus;” even thus we are one, not in order to our believing, but because we do believe. What, then, is meant by the words, “That they all may be one, that the world may believe”? This, doubtless, that the “all” are themselves the believing world. For those who shall be one are not of one class, and the world that is thereafter to believe on this very ground that these shall be one, of another; since it is perfectly certain that He says, “That they all may be one,” of those of whom He had said before, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for those also who shall believe on me through their word,” immediately adding as He does, “That they all may be one.” And this “all,” what is it but the world; not certainly that which is hostile, but that which is believing? For you see here that He who had said, “I pray not for the world,” now prayeth for the world that it may believe. For there is a world whereof it is written, “That we might not be condemned with this world.” For that world He prayeth not, for He is fully aware to what it is predestinated. And there is a world whereof it is written, “For the Son of man came not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved;” and hence the apostle also says, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” For this world it is that He prayeth, in saying, “That the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.” For through this faith the world is reconciled unto God when it believes in the Christ whom God

has sent. How, then, are we to understand Him when He says, “That they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me,” but just in this way, that He did not assign the cause of the world believing to the fact that those others are one, as if it believed on the ground that it saw them to be one; for the world itself here consisteth of all who by their own believing become one; but in His prayer He said, “That the world may believe,” just as in His prayer He also said, “That they all may be one;” and still further in the same prayer, “That they also may be one in us.” For the words, “they all may be one,” are equivalent to “the world may believe,” since it is by believing that they become one, perfectly one; that is, those who, although one by nature, had ceased to be so by their mutual dissensions. In fine, if the verb which He uses, “I pray,” be understood in the third clause, or rather, to make the whole fuller, be everywhere supplied, the explanation of this sentence will be all the clearer: I pray “that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, in me, and I in Thee;” I pray “that they also may be one in us;” I pray “that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.” And, mark, He added the words “in us” in order that we may know that our being made one in that love of unchanging faithfulness is to be attributed to the grace of God, and not to ourselves: just as the apostle, after saying, “For ye were at one time darkness, but now are ye light,” that none might attribute the doing of this to themselves, added, “in the Lord.”

3. Furthermore, our Saviour in thus praying to the Father showed Himself to be man; while He now also shows that He Himself, as being God along with the Father, doeth that which He prayeth for, when He says, “And the glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them.” And what was that glory but immortality, which human nature was henceforth to receive in Him? For not even He Himself had as yet received it, but in His own customary way, on account of the absolute fixedness of predestination, He intimates what is future in verbs of the past tense, because being now on the point of being glorified, or in other words, raised up again by the Father, He Himself is going to raise us up to the same glory in the end. What we have here is similar to what He says elsewhere, “As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.” And “whom,” but just the same as the Father? “For what things soever the Father doeth,” not other things, but “these also doeth the Son,” not in a

different way, but “in like manner.” And in this way He also raised up even His own self. For to this effect he said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again.” Accordingly the glory of immortality, which He says had been given Him by the Father, He must be also understood as having bestowed upon Himself, although He does not say it. For on this very account He more frequently says that the Father alone doeth, what He Himself also doeth along with the Father, that everything whatever He may attribute to Him of whom He is. But sometimes also He is silent about the Father, and says that He Himself doeth what He only doeth along with the Father: that we may thereby understand that the Son is not to be separated from the working of the Father, when He is silent about Himself, and ascribes some work or other to the Father; as, on the other hand, the Father is not separated from the working of the Son, when the Son is said, without any mention being made of [the Father] Himself, to be doing some work in which nevertheless both are equally engaged. When, therefore, in some work of the Father, the Son says nothing of His own working, He commends humility, that He may become the source of sounder health to us; but when, in turn, in the case of some work of His own, He says nothing of the working of the Father, He commends His own equality, that we may not suppose Him to be inferior. In this way, then, and in this passage, He neither estranges Himself from the Father’s working, although He has said, “The glory which Thou gavest me;” for He also gave it to Himself: nor does He estrange the Father from His own working, although saying, “I have given to them;” for the Father also gave it to them. For the works not only of the Father and the Son, but also of the Holy Spirit, are inseparable. But just as, because of His praying the Father in behalf of all His people, it was His own pleasure that this should be done, “that they all may be one;” so also on the ground of His own beneficence, as expressed in the words, “The glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them,” the doing of that was none the less His pleasure; for He immediately added, “That they may be one, as we also are one.”

4. And then He added: “I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.” Here He briefly intimated Himself as the Mediator between God and men. Nor was this said in any such way as if the Father were not in us, or we were not in the Father; since He had also said in another place,

“We will come unto him, and make our abode with him;” and a little before in this present passage He had not said, “I in them and Thou in me,” as He said now; or, They in me, and I in Thee; but, “Thou in me, and I in Thee, and they in us.” Accordingly, when He now says, “I in them, and Thou in me,” the words take this form in reference to the person of the Mediator, like that other expression used by the apostle, “Ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” But in adding, “That they may be made perfect in one,” He showed that the reconciliation, which is effected by the Mediator, is carried to the very length of bringing us to the enjoyment of that perfect blessedness, which is thenceforth incapable of further addition. Hence the words that follow, “That the world may know that Thou hast sent me,” are not, I think, to be taken as if He had again said, “That the world may believe;” for sometimes, to know, is also used in the same sense as to believe, as it is in the words He uttered some time before: “And they have known truly that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send me.” He expressed the same thing by the later words, “they have believed,” as He had done by the earlier, “they have known.” But inasmuch as He here speaks of the consummation, the knowledge must be taken for such, as it shall then be by sight, and not, as it now is, by faith. For an order seems to have been preserved in reference to what He said a little before, “that the world may believe;” while here it is, “that the world may know.” For although He said there, “that they all may be one,” and “may be one in us,” yet He did not say, “they may be made perfect in one,” and so subjoined the words, “that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me;” but here He said, “That they may be made perfect in one,” and then added, not, “that the world may believe,” but, “that the world may know that Thou hast sent me.” For so long as we believe what we do not see, we are not yet made perfect, as we shall be when we have merited the sight of that which we believe. Most correctly, therefore, did He say in that previous place, “That the world may believe,” and here “That the world may know;” yet both there and here, “that Thou hast sent me;” that we may know, so far as belongs to the inseparable love of the Father and the Son, that at present we only believe what we are on the way, by believing, to know. And had He said, That they may know that Thou hast sent me, it would be just of the same force as what He actually does say, “that the world may know.” For they are the world that abideth not in enmity, as doth the world that is foreordained to damnation; but one that out of an enemy has been transformed into a friend, and on whose account “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.” Therefore said He, “I in them, and Thou in me;” as if He had said, I in those to whom Thou hast sent me; and Thou in me, reconciling the world unto Thyself through me.

5. In close relation to these come also His further words: “And Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me.” That is to say, in the Son the Father loveth us, because in Him He hath chosen us before the foundation of the world. For He who loveth the Only-begotten, certainly loveth also His members which, through His in strumentality, He engrafted into Him by adoption. But we are not on this account equal to the only-begotten Son, by whom we have been created and re-created, that it is said, “Thou hast loved them as [Thou hast] also [loved] me.” For one does not always intimate equality when he says, As this, so also that other; but sometimes only, Because this is, so also is the other; or, That the one is, in order that the other may be also. For who could say that the apostles were sent by Christ into the world in exactly the same way as He Himself was sent by the Father? For, to say nothing of other differences, which it would be tedious to mention, they at all events were sent when they were already men; but He was sent in order that He might be man; and yet He said above, “As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world;” as if He had said, Because Thou hast sent me, I have sent them. So also in the passage before us He says, “Thou hast loved them, as Thou hast loved me;” which is nothing else than this, Thou hast loved them because that Thou hast also loved me. For He could not but love the members of the Son, seeing that He loveth the Son Himself; nor is there any other reason for loving His members, save that He loveth Himself. But He loveth the Son as regards His Godhead, because He begat Him equal with Himself; He loveth Him also in regard to what He is as man, because the Only-begotten Word was Himself made flesh, and on account of the Word is the flesh of the Word dear to Him; but He loveth us, inasmuch as we are the members of Him whom He loveth; and in order that we might be so, He loved us on this account before we existed.

6. The love, therefore, wherewith God loveth, is incomprehensible and immutable. For it was not from the time that we were reconciled unto Him by the blood of His Son that He began to love us; but He did so before the foundation of the world, that we also might be His sons along with His Only-begotten, before as yet we had any existence of our own. Let not the fact, then, of our having been reconciled unto God through the death of His Son be so listened to or so understood, as if the Son reconciled us to Him in this respect, that He now began to love those whom He formerly hated, in the same way as enemy is reconciled to enemy, so that thereafter they become friends, and mutual love takes the place of their mutual hatred; but we were reconciled unto Him who already loved us, but with whom we were at enmity because of our sin. Whether I say the truth on this, let the apostle testify, when he says: “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” He, therefore, had love toward us even when we were practising enmity against Him and working iniquity; and yet to Him it is said with perfect truth, “Thou hatest, O Lord, all workers of iniquity.” Accordingly, in a wonderful and divine manner, even when He hated us, He loved us; for He hated us, in so far as we were not what He Himself had made; and because our own iniquity had not in every part consumed His work, He knew at once both how, in each of us, to hate what we had done, and to love what He had done. And this, indeed, may be understood in the case of all regarding Him to whom it is truly said, “Thou hatest nothing that Thou hast made.” For He would never have wished anything that He hated to exist, nor would aught that the Omnipotent had not wished exist at all, were it not that in what He hated there was also something that He loved. For He justly hateth and reprobateth vice as utterly repugnant to the principle of His procedure, yet He loveth even in the persons of the vitiated what is susceptible either of His own beneficence through healing, or of His judgment by condemnation. In this way God at the same time hateth nothing of what He has made; for as the Creator of natures, and not of vices, it was not He who made the evil that He hateth; and of these same evils, all is good that He really doeth, either by mercifully healing them, or by judicially regulating them. Seeing, then, that He hateth nothing that He hath made, who can worthily describe how much He loveth the members of His Only-begotten, and how much more the Only-begotten Himself, in whom are hid all things visible and

invisible, which were ordained in their various classes, and which He loves in fullest harmony with such ordination? For the members of His Only-begotten He is leading on by the liberality of His grace to an equality with the holy angels; while the Only-begotten Himself, being Lord of all, is doubtless Lord of angels, being by nature, as God, the equal not of angels, but rather of the Father Himself; while through grace, in respect of which He is man, how can He otherwise than surpass all angelic excellence, seeing that in Him human flesh and the Word constitute but one personality?

7. Nevertheless there are not wanting some who place us likewise before the angels; because, they say, Christ died for us and not for angels. But what else is such a notion than the desire to glory over our very impiety? For “Christ,” as the apostle says, “in due time died for the ungodly.” Where it is not any desert of ours, but the mercy of God, that is commended. For what can be the character of the man who wishes himself to be lauded, because he has become so abominably diseased through his own wickedness, that he can only be healed by the death of his physician? That surely is not the glory of our deserts, but the medicine of our diseases. Or do we prefer ourselves to the angels on this account, that, while there are angels also who have sinned, there has been no such labor expended on their healing? As if something that was at least small in amount had been undertaken for them, and what was greater for us. But had even such been the case, it might still be a subject of inquiry whether it was so because we had once stood in a position of superior excellence, or because we were now lying in a more desperate condition. But knowing as we do that the Creator of all good has imparted no grace for the reparation of angelic evils, why do we not rather draw the inference that their fault was judged all the more damnable, that the nature of those who committed it was of a loftier sublimity? For to the same extent as they less than we ought to have fallen into sin, were they superior in nature to us. But now in offending against the Creator they became all the more detestably ungrateful for His beneficence, that they were created capable of exercising the greater beneficence; nor was it enough for them to become deserters from Him, but they must also become our deceivers. This, therefore, is the great goodness of which we are to be made the subjects by Him, who hath loved us even as He hath loved Christ,

that, for His sake, whose members He wished us to be, we may be equal to the holy angels, to whom we were created with an inferiority of nature, and have by our sin fallen into such greater depths of unworthiness, as to make it incumbent that we should be in some sort their associates.

TRACTATE CXI

CHAPTER XVII. 24–26

1. The Lord Jesus raises up His people to a great hope, than which there could not possibly be a greater. Listen and rejoice in hope, that, since the present is not a life to be loved, but to be tolerated, you may have the power of patient endurance amid all its tribulation. Listen, I say, and weigh well to what it is that our hopes are exalted. Christ Jesus saith, The Son of God, the Only-begotten, who is co-eternal and equal with the Father, saith: He, who for our sakes became man, but became not, like every man besides, a liar, saith: the Way, the Life, the Truth saith: He who overcame the world, saith of those for whom He overcame it: listen, believe, hope, desire what He saith: “Father,” He says, “I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am.” Who are these who He says were given Him by the Father? Are they not those of whom He says in another place, “No man cometh unto me, unless the Father, who hath sent me, draw him”? We already know if we have made any beneficial progress in this Gospel, how it is that the things which He says the Father doeth, He Himself doeth likewise along with the Father. They are those, therefore, whom He has received from the Father, whom He Himself has also chosen out of the world, and chosen that they may be no more of the world, even as He also is not of the world; and yet that they also may be a world that believeth and knoweth that Christ has been sent by God the Father that the world might be delivered from the world, and so, as a world that was to be reconciled unto God, might not be condemned with the world that lieth in enmity. For so He says in the beginning of this prayer: “Thou hast given Him power over all flesh,” that is, over every man, “that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.” Here He makes it clear that He has indeed received power over all men, that, as the future Judge of quick and dead, He may deliver whom He pleases, and condemn whom He pleases; but that these were given Him that to all of them He should give eternal life.

For so He says: “That He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.” Accordingly they were not given Him that from them He should withhold eternal life; although over them also the power has been given Him, inasmuch as He has received it over all flesh, in other words, over every man. In this way the world that has been reconciled will be delivered from the hostile world, when He putteth into exercise His power over it, to send it away into death eternal; but the other He maketh His own that He may give it everlasting life. Accordingly, to every one, without fail, of His own sheep the Good Shepherd, as to every one of His members the great Head, hath promised this reward, that where He is, there also we shall be with Him; nor can that be otherwise which the omnipotent Son declared to be His will to the omnipotent Father. For there also is the Holy Spirit, equally eternal, equally God, the one Spirit of the two, the substance of the will of both. For the words that we read of Him as uttering on the eve of His passion, “Yet not, Father, as I will, but as Thou wilt,” as if the Father has or had one will, and the Son another, are the echo of our infirmity, however faith-pervaded, which our Head transfigured in His own person, when He likewise bare our iniquities. But that the will of the Father and the Son is one, of both of whom also there is but one Spirit, by including whom we come to the knowledge of the Trinity, let piety believe, even though our infirmity meanwhile permitteth us not to understand.

2. But as we have already, in a way proportionate to the brevity of our discourse, spoken of the objects of the promise, and of its own stability; let us now look at this one point, as far as we are able, what it is that He was pleased to promise when He said, “I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am.” As far as pertains to the creaturehood wherein He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, not even He Himself was yet where He would afterwards be: but He could say in this way, “where I am,” to let us understand that He was soon to ascend into heaven, so that He spake of Himself as being already there, where He was presently to be. He could do so also in the same way as He had said on a former occasion, when speaking to Nicodemus, “No man ascendeth into heaven, save He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven.” For there also He did not say, Will be, but “is,” because of the oneness of person, wherein God is at once man, and man God. He

promised, therefore, that we should be in heaven; for thither the servant-form, which He received of the Virgin, has been elevated, and set at the right hand of the Father. Because of the same blessed hope the apostle also says: “But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; by whose grace we are saved; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” And so accordingly we may understand the Lord to have said, “That where I am, there they may be also.” He, indeed, said of Himself that He was there already; but of us He merely declared that He wished us to be there with Him, without any indication that we were there already. But what the Lord said that He wished to be done, the apostle spake of as already accomplished. For he said not, He will yet raise us up, and make us sit in heavenly places; but, “hath raised us up, and made us sit in heavenly places:” for it is not without good grounds, but in believing assurance, that he reckons as already done what he is certain will yet be done. But if it is in respect of the form of God, wherein He is equal to the Father, that we would be inclined to understand His words, “I will that they also be with me, where I am,” let our mind get quit of every thought of material images: whatever the soul has had presented to it, that is endowed with length, or breadth, or thickness, tinted by the light with any sort of bodily hue, or diffused through local space of any kind, whether finite or infinite, let it, as far as possible, turn away from all such notions the glance of its contemplation on the inward bent of its thoughts. And let us not be making inquiries as to where the Son, the Father’s co-equal, is, since no one has yet found out where He is not. But if any one would inquire, let him inquire rather how he may be with Him; not everywhere as He is, but wherever He may be. For when He said to the man that was expiating his crimes on the tree, and making confession unto salvation, “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise,” in respect to His human nature His own soul was on that very day to be in hell, His flesh in the sepulchre; but as respected His Godhead He was certainly also in paradise. And therefore the soul of the thief, absolved from his by-gone crimes, and already in the blessed enjoyment of His grace, although it could not be everywhere as He was, yet could on that very day be also with Him in paradise, from which He, who is always everywhere, had not withdrawn. On this account, doubtless, it was not enough for Him to say, “I will that they also be where I am;” but He added, “with me.” For to be with Him is the chief good. For even the miserable can be where He is, since wheresoever any are, there is He also; but the blessed only are with Him, because it is only of Him that they can be blessed. Was it not truly said to God, “If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there; and if I go down into hell, Thou art present?” or is not Christ after all that Wisdom of God which “penetrateth everywhere because of its purity”? But the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not. And similarly, to take a kind of illustration from what is visible, although greatly unlike, as the blind man, even though he be where the light is, is yet not himself with the light, but is really absent from that which is present; so the unbeliever and profane, or even the believer and pious, because not yet competent to gaze on the light of wisdom, although he cannot be anywhere that Christ is not there likewise, yet is not himself with Christ, I mean in actual sight. For we cannot doubt that the true believer is with Christ by faith; because in reference to this He saith, “He that is not with me is against me.” But when He said to God the Father, “I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am,” He spake exclusively of that sight wherein we shall see Him as He is.

3. Let no one disturb the clearness of the meaning by any cloudy contradiction; but let what follows furnish its testimony to the words that precede. For after saying, “I will that they also be with me where I am,” He went on immediately to add, “That they may behold my glory, which Thou gavest me: for Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” “That they may behold,” He said; not, that they may believe. This is faith’s wages, not faith itself. For if faith has been correctly defined in the Epistle to the Hebrews as “the assurance [conviction] of things that are not seen,” why may not the wages of faith be defined, the beholding of things which were hoped for in faith? For when we shall see the glory which the Father hath given the Son, even though we may understand what is spoken of in this passage, not as that [glory] which the Father gave His co-equal Son in begetting Him, but as that which He gave Him, when become the Son of man, after the death of the cross;—when, I say, we shall see that glory of the Son, then of a certainty shall take place the judgment of the quick and the dead, and then shall the wicked be taken away that he may not behold

the glory of the Lord; and what [glory], save that of His Godhead? For blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God: and because the wicked are not pure in heart, therefore they shall not see. Then shall they go away into everlasting punishment; for so shall the wicked be taken away, that he may not behold the glory of the Lord: but the righteous shall go into life eternal. And what is life eternal? “That they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent” (ver. 3): not, indeed, as those knew Him, who although impure in heart, yet were able to see Him as He sat in judgment in His glorified servant-form; but as He is yet to be known by the pure in heart, as the only true God, the Son along with the Father and Holy Spirit, because the Trinity itself is the only true God. If, then, it is in reference to His Godhead as the Son of God, equal and co-eternal with the Father, that we take the words, “I will that they also be with me where I am,” we shall be with Christ in the Father; but He in His own way, we in ours, wherever we may be in body. For if localities are to be understood, and such as contain incorporeal beings, and everything has a place where it is, the eternal place of Christ where He always is, is the Father Himself, and the place of the Father is the Son; for “I,” He said, “am in the Father, and the Father in me;” and in this prayer, “As Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee:” and they are our place, because there follows, “That they also may be one in us:” and we are God’s place, inasmuch as we are His temple; even as He, who died for us and liveth for us, also prayeth for us, that we may be one in them; because “His [dwelling] place was made in peace, and His habitation in Zion,” which we are. But who is qualified to think on such places or what is in them, apart from the idea of space-defined capacities and material masses? Yet no little progress is made, if at least, when any such idea presents itself to the eye of the mind, it is denied, rejected, and reprobated: and a certain kind of light is, as far as possible, thought of, in which such things are perceived as deserving only to be denied, rejected, and reprobated; and the certainty of that light is known and loved, so that from thence an upward movement is begun in us, and an effort made to reach into places farther within: and when the mind through its own infirmity and still inferior purity has failed to penetrate them it is driven back again, not without the sighings of love and the tears of ardent longing, and continues to bear in patience until it is purified by faith, and prepared by the holiness of the inward life to be able to take up its abode therein.

4. How, then, shall we not be with Christ where He is, when we shall be with Him in the Father in whom He is? On this, also, the apostle is not without something to say to us, although we are not yet in possession of the reality, but only cherishing the hope. For he says, “If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God: set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye have died,” he adds, “and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Here, you see, our life is meanwhile in faith and hope with Christ, where He is; because it is with Christ in God. That, you see, is as if already accomplished for which He prayed, when He said, “I will that they also be with me where I am;” but now only by faith. And when will it be accomplished by actual sight? “When Christ,” he says, “[who is] your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” Then shall we appear as that which we then shall be; for it shall then be apparent that it was not without good grounds that we believed and hoped we should become so, before it actually took place. He will do this, to whom the Son, after saying, “That they may behold my glory, which Thou gavest me,” immediately added, “For Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” For in Him He loved us also before the foundation of the world, and then foreordained what He was to do in the end of the world.

5. “O righteous Father,” He saith, “the world hath not known Thee.” Just because Thou art righteous it hath not known Thee. It is as that world which has been predestined to condemnation really deserved, that it hath not known Him; while the world which He hath reconciled unto Himself through Christ hath known Him not of merit, but by grace. For what else is the knowing of Him, but eternal life which, while He undoubtedly withheld it from the condemned world, He bestowed on the reconciled. On that very account, therefore, the world hath not known Thee, because Thou art righteous, and hast rendered unto it according to its deserts, that it should not know Thee: while on the same account the reconciled world hath known Thee, because Thou art merciful, and, not for any merit of its own, but by grace, hast supplied it with the needed help to know Thee. And then there follows, “But I have known Thee.” He is the Fountain of grace, who is by nature God, and, by grace ineffable, man also of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin: and then on His own behalf, because the grace of God is through

Jesus Christ our Lord, He adds, “And these have known that Thou hast sent me.” Such is the reconciled world. But it is because Thou hast sent me that they have known: by grace, therefore, have they known.

6. “And I have made known to them,” He says, “Thy name, and will make it known.” I have made it known by faith, I will make it known by sight: I have made it known to those whose present sojourn in a strange land has its appointed end, I will make it known to those whose reign as kings shall be endless. “That the love,” He adds, “wherewith [literally, which] Thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. (The form of speech is unusual, “the love, which Thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them;” for the common way of speaking is, the love wherewith thou hast loved me. Here, of course, it is a translation from the Greek: but there are similar forms also in Latin; as we say, He served a faithful service, He served as a soldier a strenuous soldier-service; when apparently we ought to have said, He served with a faithful service, he served as a soldier with a strenuous soldier-service. But such as the form of expression is, “the love which Thou hast loved me;” one similar to it is also used by the apostle, “I have fought a good fight;” he does not say, in a good fight, which would be the more usual and perhaps correcter form of expression.) But how else is the love wherewith the Father loved the Son in us also, but because we are His members and are loved in Him, since He is loved in the totality of His person, as both Head and members? Therefore He added, “and I in them;” as if saying, Since I am also in them. For in one sense He is in us as in His temple; but in another, because we are also Himself, seeing that, in accordance with His becoming man, that He might be our Head, we are His body. The Saviour’s prayer is finished, His passion begins; let us, therefore, also finish the present discourse, that we may treat of His passion, as He granteth us grace, in others to follow.

TRACTATE CXII

CHAPTER XVIII. 1–12

1. When the grand and lengthened discourse was concluded which the Lord delivered after supper, and on the eve of shedding His blood for us, to the disciples who were then with Him, and had added the prayer addressed to

His Father, the evangelist John began thereafter the narrative of His passion in these words: “When Jesus had so spoken, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples. And Judas also, who betrayed Him, knew the place; for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with His disciples.” What he here relates of the Lord entering the garden with His disciples did not take place immediately after He had brought the prayer to a close, of which he says, “When Jesus had spoken these words:” but certain other incidents were interposed, which are passed over by the present evangelist and found in the others; just as in this one are found many things on which the others are similarly silent in their own narratives. But any one who desires to know how they all agree together, and the truth which is advanced by one is never contradicted by another, may seek for what he wants, not in these present discourses, but in other elaborate treatises; but he will master the subject not by standing and listening, but rather by sitting down and reading, or by giving his closest attention and thought to one who does so. Yet let him believe before he know, whether he be able also to come to such a knowledge in this life, or find it impossible through some existing entanglements, that there is nothing written by any one evangelist, as far as regards those who have been received by the Church into canonical authority, that can be contrary to his own or another’s equally veracious narrative. At present, therefore, let us look at the narrative of the blessed John, which we have undertaken to expound, without any comparison with the others, and without lingering over anything in it that is already sufficiently clear; so that where it is needful to do so, we may the better answer the demand. Let us, therefore, not take His words, “When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples,” as if it were immediately after the utterance of these words that He entered the garden; but let the clause, “When Jesus had spoken these words,” bear this meaning, that we are not to suppose Him entering the garden before He had brought these words to a close.

2. “Judas also,” he says, “who betrayed Him, knew the place; for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with His disciples.” There, accordingly, the wolf, clad in a sheep’s skin, and tolerated among the sheep by the profound counsel of

the Father of the family, learned where he might opportunely scatter the slender flock, and lay his coveted snares for the Shepherd. “Judas then,” he adds, “having received a cohort, and officers from the chief men and the Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons.” It was a cohort, not of Jews, but of soldiers. We are therefore to understand it as having been received from the governor, as if for the purpose of securing the person of a criminal, and by preserving the forms of legal power, to deter any from venturing to resist his captors: although at the same time so great a band had been assembled, and came armed in such a way as either to terrify or even attack any one who should dare to make a stand in Christ’s defense. For only in so far was His power concealed and prominence given to His weakness, that these very measures were deemed necessary by His enemies to be taken against Him, for whose hurt nothing would have sufficed but what was pleasing to Himself; in His own goodness making a good use of the wicked, and doing what was good in regard to the wicked, that He might transform the evil into the good, and distinguish between the good and the evil.

3. “Jesus, therefore,” as the evangelist proceeds to say, “knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth and saith unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am [He]. And Judas also, who betrayed Him, stood with them. As soon then as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground.” Where now were the military cohort, and the servants of the chief men and the Pharisees? where the terror and protection of weapons? His own single voice uttering the words, “I am [He],” without any weapon, smote, repelled, prostrated that great crowd, with all the ferocity of their hatred and terror of their arms. For God lay hid in that human flesh; and eternal day was so obscured in those human limbs, that with lanterns and torches He was sought for to be slain by the darkness. “I am [He],” He says; and He casteth the wicked to the ground. What will He do when He cometh as judge, who did this when giving Himself up to be judged? What will be His power when He cometh to reign, who had this power when He came to die? And now everywhere through the gospel Christ is still saying, “I am [He];” and the Jews are looking for antichrist, that they may go backward and fall to the ground, as those who have abandoned what is heavenly, and

are hankering after the earthly. It was for the very purpose of apprehending Jesus that His persecutors accompanied the traitor: they found the One they were seeking, for they heard, “I am [He].” Why, then, did they not seize Him, but went backward and fell, but just because so He pleased, who could do whatever He pleased? But had He never permitted them to apprehend Him, they would certainly not have done what they came to do, but no more would He be doing what He came to do. They, verily, in their mad rage, sought for Him to put Him to death; but He, too, in giving Himself to death, was seeking for us. Accordingly, having thus shown His power to those who had the will, but not the power, to hold Him; let them now hold Him that He may work His own will with those who know it not.

4. “Then asked He them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am [He]. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: that the saying might be fulfilled which He spake, That of those whom Thou hast given me I have lost none.” “If ye seek me,” He says, “let these go their way.” He sees His enemies, and they do what He bids them: they let those go their way, whom He would not have perish. But were they not afterwards to die? How then, if they died now, should He lose them, were it not that as yet they did not believe in Him, as all believe who perish not?

5. “Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. And the servant’s name was Malchus.” This is the only evangelist who has given us the very name of this servant, as Luke is the only one who tells us that the Lord touched his ear and healed him. The interpretation of Malchus is, one who is destined to reign. What, then, is signified by the ear that was cut off in the Lord’s behalf, and healed by the Lord, but the renewed hearing that has been pruned of its oldness, that it may henceforth be in the newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter? Who can doubt that he, who had such a thing done for him by Christ, was yet destined to reign with Christ? And his being found as a servant, pertains also to that oldness that gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. But when healing came, liberty also was shadowed forth. Peter’s deed, however, was disapproved of by the Lord, and He prevented Him from proceeding further by the words: “Put up thy sword into the sheath:

the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” For in such a deed that disciple only sought to defend his Master, without any thought of what it was intended to signify. And he had therefore to be exhorted to the exercise of patience, and the event itself to be recorded as an exercise of understanding. But when He says that the cup of suffering was given Him by the Father, we have precisely the same truth as that which was uttered by the apostle: “If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all.” But the originator of this cup is also one with Him who drank it; and hence the same apostle likewise says, “Christ loved us, and gave Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God of a sweet-smelling savor.”

6. “Then the cohort, and the tribune, and the officers of the Jews, took Jesus, and bound Him.” They took Him to whom they had never found access: for He continued the day, while they remained as darkness; neither had they given heed to the words, “Come unto Him, and be enlightened.” For had they so approached Him, they would have taken Him, not with their hands for the purpose of murder, but with their hearts for the purpose of a welcome reception. Now, however, when they laid hold of Him in this way, their distance from Him was vastly in creased: and they bound Him by whom they themselves ought rather to have been loosed. And perhaps there were those among them who then fastened their fetters on Christ, and yet were afterwards delivered by Him, and could say, “Thou hast loosed my bonds.” Let this be enough for to-day; we shall deal, God willing, with what follows in another discourse.

TRACTATE CXIII

CHAPTER XVIII. 13–27

1. After that His persecutors had, through the treason of Judas, taken and bound the Lord, who loved us, and gave Himself for us, and whom the Father spared not, but gave Him up for us all: that we may understand that there was no praise due to Judas for the usefulness of his treachery, but damnation for the willfulness of his wickedness: “They led Him,” as John the evangelist tells us, “to Annas first.” Nor does he withhold the reason for so doing: “For he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was the high priest

that same year. Now Caiaphas was he," he says, "who gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people." And properly enough Matthew, when wishing to say the same in fewer words, tells us that He was led to Caiaphas; for He was also taken in the first place to Annas, simply because he was his father-in-law; and where we have only to understand that such was the very thing that Caiaphas wished to be done.

2. "But Jesus was followed," he says, "by Simon Peter, and another disciple." Who that other disciple is, we cannot affirm with confidence, because it is left unnoticed here. But it is in this way that John usually refers to himself, with the addition, "whom Jesus loved." Perhaps, therefore, it is he also in the present case; but whoever it is, let us look at what follows. "And that disciple," he says, "was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest; but Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, who was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not." Lo, the pillar of greatest strength has at a single breath of air trembled to its foundations. Where is now all that boldness of the promiser, and his overweening confidence in himself beforehand? What now of those words, when he said, "Why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake." Is this the way to follow the Master, to deny his own discipleship? is it thus that one's life is laid down for the Lord, when one is frightened at a maid-servant's voice, lest it should compel us to the sacrifice? But what wonder, if God foretold what was true, and man presumptuously imagined what was false? Assuredly in this denial of the Apostle Peter, which had now entered on its first stage, we ought to take notice that not only is Christ denied by one who says that He is not Christ, but by him also who, while really a Christian, himself denies that he is so. For the Lord said not to Peter, Thou shalt deny that thou art my disciple; but, "Thou shalt deny me." Him, therefore, he denied, when he denied that he was His disciple. And what else did such a form of denial imply, but that of his own Christianity? For although the disciples of Christ were not yet called by such a name,—because it was after His ascension, in Antioch, first that the disciples began to be called Christians,—yet the thing itself, that afterwards assumed such a name, already existed, those who

were afterwards called Christians were already disciples; and this common name, like the common faith, they transmitted to their posterity. He, therefore, who denied that he was Christ's disciple, denied the reality of the thing, of which the being called a Christian was only the name. How many afterwards, not to speak of old men and women, whose satiated feelings as regards the present life might more easily enable them to brave death for the confession of Christ; and not merely the youth of both sexes, when of an age at which the exercise of fortitude seems to be fairly required; but even boys and girls could do—even as an innumerable company of holy martyrs with brave hearts and by a violent death entered the kingdom of heaven—what at that moment he was unable to do, who received the keys of that kingdom. It is here we see why it was said, "Let these go their way," when He, who hath redeemed us by His own blood, gave Himself for us; that the saying which He spake might be fulfilled, "Of those whom Thou hast given me I have lost none." For assuredly, had Peter gone hence after denying the Christ, what else would have awaited him but destruction?

3. "And the servants and officers stood beside the fire of burning coals, for it was cold, and warmed themselves." Though it was not winter, it was cold: which is sometimes wont to be the case even at the vernal equinox. "And Peter was standing with them, and warming himself. The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I always taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither all the Jews resort, and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask those who heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said." A question occurs that ought not to be passed over, how it is that the Lord Jesus said, "I spake openly to the world;" and in particular that which He afterwards added, "In secret have I said nothing." Did He not, even in that latest discourse which He delivered to the disciples after supper, say to them, "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs; but the hour cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of my Father?" If, then, He spake not openly even to the more intimate company of His disciples, but gave the promise of a time when He would speak openly, how was it that He spake openly to the world? And still further, as is also testified on the authority of the other evangelists, to those who were truly His own, in comparison with

others who were not His disciples, He certainly spake with much greater plainness when He was alone with them at a distance from the multitudes; for then He unfolded to them the parables, which He had uttered in obscure terms to others. What then is the meaning of the words, “In secret have I said nothing”? It is in this way we are to understand His saying, “I spake openly to the world;” as if He had said, There were many that heard me. And that word “openly” was in a certain sense openly and in another sense not openly. It was openly, because many heard Him; and again it was not openly, because they did not understand Him. And even what He spake to His disciples apart, He certainly spake not in secret. For who speaketh in secret, that speaketh before so many persons; as it is written, “At the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established:” especially if that be spoken to a few which he wisheth to become known to many through them; as the Lord Himself said to the few whom He had as yet, “What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops”? And accordingly the very thing that seemed to be spoken by Himself in secret, was in a certain sense not spoken in secret; for it was not so spoken to remain unuttered by those to whom it was spoken; but rather so in order to be preached in every possible direction. A thing therefore may be uttered at once openly, and not openly; or at the same time in secret, and yet not in secret, as it is said, “That seeing, they may see, and not see.” For how “may they see,” save only because it is openly, and not in secret; and again, how is it that the same parties “may not see,” save that it is not openly, but in secret? Howbeit the very things which they had heard without understanding, were such as could not with justice or truth be turned into a criminal charge against Him: and as often as they tried by their questions to find something whereof to accuse Him, He gave them such replies as utterly discomfited all their plots, and left no ground for the calumnies they devised. Therefore He said, “Why askest thou me? ask those who heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.”

4. “And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers who stood by gave Jesus a blow with his open hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?” What could be truer, meeker, juster, than such

an answer? For it is His [reply], from whom the prophetic voice had issued before, “Make for thy goal (literally, take aim), and advance prosperously and reign, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness.” If we con sider who it was that received the blow, might we not well feel the wish that he who struck it were either consumed by fire from heaven, or swallowed up by the gaping earth, or seized and carried off by devils, or visited with some other or still heavier punishment of this kind? For what one of all these could not He, who made the world, have commanded by His power, had He not wished rather to teach us the patience that overcometh the world? Some one will say here, Why did He not do what He Himself commanded? for to one that smote Him, He ought not to have answered thus, but to have turned to him the other cheek. Nay, more than this, did He not answer truthfully, and meekly, and righteously, and at the same time not only prepare His other cheek to him who was yet again to smite it, but His whole body to be nailed to the tree? And hereby He rather showed, what needed to be shown, namely, that those great precepts of His are to be fulfilled not by bodily ostentation, but by the preparation of the heart. For it is possible that even an angry man may visibly hold out his other cheek. How much better, then, is it for one who is inwardly pacified to make a truthful answer, and with tranquil mind hold himself ready for the endurance of heavier sufferings to come? Happy is he who, in all that he suffers unjustly for righteousness’ sake, can say with truth, “My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready;” for this it is that gives cause for that which follows: “I will sing and I give praise;” which Paul and Barnabas could do even in the cruellest of bonds.

5. But let us return to what follows in the Gospel narrative. “And Annas sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.” To him, according to Matthew’s account, He was led at the outset, because he was the high priest that year. For both the pontiffs are to be understood as in the habit of acting year by year alternately, that is, as chief priests; and these were at that time Annas and Caiaphas, as recorded by the evangelist Luke, when telling of the time when John, the Lord’s forerunner, began to preach the kingdom of heaven and to gather disciples. For he speaks thus: “Under the high priests Annas and Caiaphas, the word of the Lord came upon John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness,” etc. Accordingly these two pontiffs fulfilled

their years in turn: and it was the year of Caiaphas when Christ suffered. And so, according to Matthew, when He was apprehended, He was taken to him; but first, according to John, they came with Him to Annas; not because he was his colleague, but his father-in-law. And we must suppose that it was by Caiaphas' wish that it was so done; or that their houses were so situated, that Annas could not properly be overlooked by them as they passed on their way.

6. But the evangelist, after saying that Annas sent Him bound unto Caiaphas, returns to the place of his narrative, where he had left Peter, in order to explain what had taken place in Annas' house in regard to his threefold denial. "But Peter was standing," he says, "and warming himself." He thus repeats what he had already stated before; and then adds what follows. "They said therefore unto him, Art thou also one of his disciples? He denied, and said, I am not." He had already denied once; this is the second time. And then, that the third denial might also be fulfilled, "one of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did I not see thee in the garden with him? Peter then denied again, and immediately the cock crew." Behold, the prediction of the Physician is fulfilled, the presumption of the sick man is brought to the light. For there is no performance of what the latter had asserted, "I will lay down my life for Thy sake;" but a performance of what the former had predicted, "Thou shalt thrice deny me." But with the completion of Peter's threefold denial, let the present discourse be also now completed, that hereafter we may make a fresh start with the consideration of what was done respecting the Lord before Pontius Pilate the governor.

TRACTATE CXIV

CHAPTER XVIII. 28–32

1. Let us now consider, so far as indicated by the evangelist John, what was done with, or in regard to, our Lord Jesus Christ, when brought before Pontius Pilate the governor. For he returns to the place of his narrative where he had left it, to explain the denial of Peter. He had already, you know, said, "And Annas sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest:" and having returned from where he had dismissed Peter as he was warming

himself at the fire in the hall, after completing the whole of his denial, which was thrice repeated, he says, “Then they bring Jesus unto Caiaphas into the hall of judgment (pretorium);” for he had said that He was sent to Caiaphas by his colleague and father-in-law Annas. But if to Caiaphas, why into the hall of judgment? Nothing else is thereby meant to be understood than the place where Pilate the governor dwelt. And therefore, either for some urgent reason Caiaphas had proceeded from the house of Annas, where both had met to give Jesus a hearing, to the governor’s pretorium, and had left the hearing of Jesus to his father-in-law; or Pilate had made his pretorium in the house of Caiaphas, which was so large as to contain separate apartments for its own master, and the like for the judge.

2. “And it was morning; and they themselves,” that is, those who brought Jesus, “went not into the judgment hall,” to wit, into that part of the house which Pilate occupied, supposing it to be Caiaphas’ house. And then in explanation of the reason why they went not into the judgment hall, he says, “lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.” For it was the commencement of the days of unleavened bread: on which they accounted it defilement to enter the abode of one of another nation. Impious blindness! Would they, forsooth, be defiled by a stranger’s abode, and not be defiled by their own wickedness? They were afraid of being defiled by the pretorium of a foreign judge, and had no fear of defilement from the blood of an innocent brother: not to say more than this meanwhile, which was enough to fix guilt on the conscience of the wicked. For the additional fact, that it was the Lord who was led to death by their impiety, and the giver of life that was on the way to be slain, may be charged, not to their conscience, but to their ignorance.

3. “Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.” Let the question be put to, and the answer come from, those who had been delivered from foul spirits, from the sickly who had been healed, the lepers who had been cleansed, the deaf who were hearing, the dumb who were speaking, the blind who were seeing, the dead who were raised to life, and, above all, the foolish who were become wise, whether Jesus were a

malefactor. But these things were said by those of whom He Himself had already foretold by the prophet, “They rewarded me evil for good.”

4. “Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.” What is this that their insane cruelty saith? Did not they put Him to death, whom they were here presenting for the very purpose? Or does the cross, forsooth, fail to kill? Such is the folly of those who do not pursue, but persecute wisdom. What then mean the words, “It is not lawful for us to put any man to death”? If He is a malefactor, why is it not lawful? Did not the law command them not to spare malefactors, especially (as they accounted Him to be) those who seduced them from their God? We are, however, to understand that they said that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death, on account of the sanctity of the festal day, which they had just begun to celebrate, and on account of which they were afraid of being defiled even by entering the pretorium. Had you become so hardened, false Israelites? Were you by your excessive malice so lost to all sense, as to imagine that you were unpolluted by the blood of the innocent, because you gave it up to be shed by another? Was even Pilate himself going to slay Him with his own hands, when made over by you into his power for the very purpose? If you did not wish Him to be slain; if you did not lay snares for Him; if you did not get Him to be betrayed to you for money; if you did not lay hands upon Him, and bind Him, and bring Him there; if you did not with your own hands present Him, and with your voices demand Him to be slain,—then boast that He was not put to death by you. But if in addition to all these former deeds of yours, you also cried out, “Crucify, crucify [him];” then hear what it is against you that the prophet proclaims: “The sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.” These, look you, are the spears, the arrows, the sword, wherewith you slew the righteous, when you said that it was not lawful for you to put any man to death. Hence it is also that when for the purpose of apprehending Jesus the chief priests did not themselves come, but sent; yet the evangelist Luke says in the same passage of his narrative, “Then said Jesus unto those who were come to him, [namely] the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and elders, Be ye come out, as against a thief,” etc? As therefore the chief priests went not in their own persons, but by those whom they had sent, to

apprehend Jesus, what else was that but coming themselves in the authority of their own order and so all, who cried out with impious voices for the crucifixion of Christ, slew Him, not, indeed, directly with their own hands, but personally through him who was impelled to such a crime by their clamor.

5. But when the evangelist John adds, “That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spake, signifying what death He should die:” if we would understand such words as referring to the death of the cross, as if the Jews had said, “It is not lawful for us to put any man to death,” for this reason that it was one thing to be put to death, and another to be crucified: I do not see how such can be understood as a consequence, seeing that this was their answer to the words that Pilate had just addressed to them, “Take ye him, and judge him according to your law.” If it were so, could they not then have taken Him, and crucified Him themselves, had they desired by any such form of punishment to avoid the putting of Him to death? But who is there that may not see the absurdity of allowing those to crucify any one, who were not allowed to put any one to death? Nay more, did not the Lord Himself call that same death of His, that is, the death of the cross, a putting to death, as we read in Mark, where he says, “Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles: and they shall mock Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall put Him to death, and the third day He shall rise again”? There is no doubt, therefore, that in so speaking the Lord signified what death He should die: not that He here meant the death of the cross to be understood, but that the Jews were to deliver Him up to the Gentiles, or, in other words, to the Romans. For Pilate was a Roman, and had been sent by the Romans into Judea as governor. That, then, this saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, namely, that, being delivered up to them, He should be put to death by the Gentiles, as Jesus had foretold would happen; therefore when Pilate, who was the Roman judge, wished to hand Him back to the Jews, that they might judge Him according to their law, they refused to receive Him, saying, “It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.” And so the saying of Jesus was fulfilled, which He foretold concerning His death, that, being delivered up by the Jews, He should be put to death by the

Gentiles: whose crime was less than that of the Jews, who sought by this method to make themselves appear averse to His being put to death, to the end that, not their innocence, but their madness might be made manifest.

TRACTATE CXV

CHAPTER XVIII. 33–40

1. What Pilate said to Christ, or what He replied to Pilate, has to be considered and handled in the present discourse. For after the words had been addressed to the Jews, “Take ye him, and judge him according to your law,” and the Jews had replied, “It is not lawful for us to put any man to death, Pilate entered again into the judgment hall, and called Jesus, and said unto Him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus answered, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?” The Lord indeed knew both what He Himself asked, and what reply the other was to give; but yet He wished it to be spoken, not for the sake of information to Himself, but that what He wished us to know might be recorded in Scripture. “Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.” This is what the good Master wished us to know; but first there had to be shown us the vain notion that men had regarding His kingdom, whether Gentiles or Jews, from whom Pilate had heard it; as if He ought to have been punished with death on the ground of aspiring to an unlawful kingdom; or as those in the possession of royal power usually manifest their ill-will to such as are yet to attain it, as if, for example, precautions were to be used lest His kingdom should prove adverse either to the Romans or to the Jews. But the Lord was able to reply to the first question of the governor, when he asked Him, “Art thou the King of the Jews?” with the words, “My kingdom is not of this world,” etc.; but by questioning him in turn, whether he said this thing of himself, or heard it from others, He wished by his answer to show that He had been charged with this as a crime before him by the Jews: laying open to us the thoughts of men, which were all known to Himself, that they are but vain; and now, after Pilate’s answer, giving them, both Jews and Gentiles, all the more

reasonable and fitting a reply, “My kingdom is not of this world.” But had He made an immediate answer to Pilate’s question, His reply would have appeared to refer to the Gentiles only, without including the Jews, as entertaining such an opinion regarding Him. But now when Pilate replied, “Am I a Jew? Thine own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee to me;” he removed from himself the suspicion of being possibly supposed to have spoken of his own accord, in saying that Jesus was the king of the Jews, by showing that such a statement had been communicated to him by the Jews. And then by saying, “What hast thou done?” he made it sufficiently clear that this was charged against Him as a crime: as if he had said, If thou deniest such kingly claims, what hast thou done to cause thy being delivered unto me? As if there would be no ground for wonder that one should be delivered up to a judge for punishment, who proclaimed himself a king; but if no such assertion were made, it became needful to inquire of Him, what else, if anything, He had done, that He should thus deserve to be delivered unto the judge.

2. Hear then, ye Jews and Gentiles; hear, O circumcision; hear, O uncircumcision; hear, all ye kingdoms of the earth: I interfere not with your government in this world, “My kingdom is not of this world.” Cherish ye not the utterly vain terror that threw Herod the elder into consternation when the birth of Christ was announced, and led him to the murder of so many infants in the hope of including Christ in the fatal number, made more cruel by his fear than by his anger: “My kingdom,” He said, “is not of this world.” What would you more? Come to the kingdom that is not of this world; come, believing, and fall not into the madness of anger through fear. He says, indeed, prophetically of God the Father, “Yet have I been appointed king by Him upon His holy hill of Zion;” but that hill of Zion is not of this world. For what is His kingdom, save those who believe in Him, to whom He says, “Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world”? And yet He wished them to be in the world: on that very account saying of them to the Father, “I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” Hence also He says not here, “My kingdom is not” in this world; but, “is not of this world.” And when He proved this by saying, “If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the

Jews," He saith not, "But now is my kingdom not" here, but, "is not from hence." For His kingdom is here until the end of the world, having tares intermingled therewith until the harvest; for the harvest is the end of the world, when the reapers, that is to say, the angels, shall come and gather out of His kingdom everything that offendeth; which certainly would not be done, were it not that His kingdom is here. But still it is not from hence; for it only sojourns as a stranger in the world: because He says to His kingdom, "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." They were therefore of the world, so long as they were not His kingdom, but belonged to the prince of this world. Of the world therefore are all mankind, created indeed by the true God, but generated from Adam as a vitiated and condemned stock; and there are made into a kingdom no longer of the world, all from thence that have been regenerated in Christ. For so did God rescue us from the power of darkness, and translate us into the kingdom of the Son of His love: and of this kingdom it is that He saith, "My kingdom is not of this world;" or, "My kingdom is not from hence."

3. "Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king." Not that He was afraid to confess Himself a king, but "Thou sayest" has been so balanced that He neither denies Himself to be a king (for He is a king whose kingdom is not of this world), nor does He confess that He is such a king as to warrant the supposition that His kingdom is of this world. For as this was the very idea in Pilate's mind when he said, "Art thou a king then?" so the answer he got was, "Thou sayest that I am a king." For it was said, "Thou sayest," as if it had been said, Carnal thyself, thou sayest it carnally.

4. Thereafter He adds, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."** Whence it is evident that He here referred to His own temporal nativity, when by becoming incarnate He came into the world, and not to that which had no beginning, whereby He was God through whom the Father created the world. For this, then, that is, on this account, He declared that He was born, and to this end He came into the world, to wit, by being born of the Virgin, that He might bear witness unto the truth. But because all men have not faith, He still further said, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

He heareth, that is to say, with the ears of the inward man, or, in other words, He obeyeth my voice, which is equivalent to saying, He believeth me. When Christ, therefore, beareth witness unto the truth, He beareth witness, of course, unto Himself; for from His own lips are the words, “I am the truth;” as He said also in another place, “I bear witness of myself.” But when He said, “Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice,” He commendeth the grace whereby He calleth according to His own purpose. Of which purpose the apostle says, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are called according to the purpose of God,” to wit, the purpose of Him that calleth, not of those who are called; which is put still more clearly in another place in this way, “Labor together in the gospel according to the power of God, who saveth us and calleth us with His holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace.” For if our thoughts turn to the nature wherein we have been created, inasmuch as we were all created by the Truth, who is there that is not of the truth? But it is not all to whom it is given of the truth to hear, that is, to obey the truth, and to believe in the truth; while in no case certainly is there any preceding of merit, lest grace should cease to be grace. For had He said, Every one that heareth my voice is of the truth, then it would be supposed that he was declared to be of the truth because he conforms to the truth; it is not this, however, that He says, but, “Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” And in this way he is not of the truth simply because he heareth His voice; but only on this account he heareth, because he is of the truth, that is, because this is a gift bestowed on him of the truth. And what else is this, but that by Christ’s gracious bestowal he believeth on Christ?

5. “Pilate said unto Him, What is truth?” Nor did he wait to hear the answer; but “when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and said unto them, I find in him no fault. But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?” I believe when Pilate said, “What is truth?” there immediately occurred to his mind the custom of the Jews, according to which he was wont to release unto them one at the passover; and therefore he did not wait to hear Jesus’ answer to his question, What is truth? to avoid delay on recollecting the custom whereby He might be

released unto them during the passover—a thing which it is clear he greatly desired. It could not, however, be torn from his heart that Jesus was the King of the Jews, but was fixed there, as in the superscription, by the truth itself, whereof he had just inquired what it was. “But on hearing this, they all cried again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.” We blame you not, O Jews, for liberating the guilty during the passover, but for slaying the innocent; and yet unless that were done, the true passover would not take place. But a shadow of the truth was retained by the erring Jews, and by a marvellous dispensation of divine wisdom the truth of that same shadow was fulfilled by deluded men; because in order that the true passover might be kept, Christ was led as a sheep to the sacrificial slaughter. Hence there follows the account of the injurious treatment received by Christ at the hands of Pilate and his cohort; but this must be taken up in another discourse.

TRACTATE CXVI

CHAPTER XIX. 1–16

1. On the Jews crying out that they did not wish Jesus to be released unto them at the passover, but Barabbas the robber; not the Saviour, but the murderer; not the Giver of life, but the destroyer,—”then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him.” We must believe that Pilate acted thus for no other reason than that the Jews, glutted with the injuries done to Him, might consider themselves satisfied, and desist from madly pursuing Him even unto death. With a similar intention was it that, as governor, he also permitted his cohort to do what follows, or even perhaps ordered them, although the evangelist is silent on the subject. For he tells us what the soldiers did thereafter, but not that Pilate ordered it. “And the soldiers,” he says, “platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and they clothed Him with a purple robe. And they came to Him and said, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote Him with their hands.” Thus were fulfilled the very things which Christ had foretold of Himself; thus were the martyrs moulded for the endurance of all that their persecutors should be pleased to inflict; thus, by concealing for a time the terror of His power, He commended to us the prior imitation of His patience; thus the kingdom which was not of this world overcame that proud world, not by the ferocity of fighting, but by the

humility of suffering; and thus the grain of corn that was yet to be multiplied was sown amid the horrors of shame, that it might come to fruition amid the wonders of glory.

2. “Pilate went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And he saith unto them, Behold the man!” Hence it is apparent that these things were done by the soldiers not without Pilate’s knowledge, whether it was that he ordered them or only permitted them, namely, for the reason we have stated above, that His enemies might all the more willingly drink in the sight of such derisive treatment, and cease to thirst further for His blood. Jesus goes forth to them wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, not resplendent in kingly power, but laden with reproach; and the words are addressed to them, Behold the man! If you hate your king, spare him now when you see him sunk so low; he has been scourged, crowned with thorns, clothed with the garments of derision, jeered at with the bitterest insults, struck with the open hand; his ignominy is at the boiling point, let your ill-will sink to zero. But there is no such cooling on the part of the latter, but rather a further increase of heat and vehemence.

3. “When the chief priests, therefore, and attendants saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them Take ye him and crucify him; for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by the law he ought to die because he made himself the Son of God.” Behold another and still greater ground of hatred. The former, indeed, seemed but a small matter, as that shown towards the usurpation, by an unlawful act of daring, of the royal power; and yet of neither did Jesus falsely claim possession, but each of them is truly His as both the only-begotten Son of God, and by Him appointed King upon His holy hill of Zion; and both might He now have shown to be His, were it not that in proportion to the greatness of His power, He preferred to manifest the corresponding greatness of His patience.

4. “When Pilate, therefore, heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and entered again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.” It is found, in comparing the narratives of

all the evangelists, that this silence on the part of our Lord Jesus Christ took place more than once, both before the chief priests and before Herod, to whom, as Luke intimates, Pilate had sent Him for a hearing, and before Pilate himself; so that it was not in vain that the prophecy regarding Him had preceded, “As the lamb before its shearer was dumb, so He opened not His mouth,” especially on those occasions when He answered not His questioners. For although He frequently replied to questions addressed to Him, yet because of those in regard to which He declined making any reply, the metaphor of the lamb is supplied, in order that in His silence He might be accounted not as guilty, but innocent. When, therefore, He was passing through the process of judgment, wherever He opened not His mouth it was in the character of a lamb that He did so; that is, not as one with an evil conscience who was convicted of his sins, but as one who in His meekness was sacrificed for the sins of others.

5. “Then saith Pilate unto Him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered: Thou wouldest have no power against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.” Here, you see, He replied; and yet wherever He replied not, it is not as one who is criminal or cunning, but as a lamb; that is, in simplicity and innocence He opened not His mouth. Accordingly, where He made no answer, He was silent as a sheep; where He answered, He taught as the Shepherd. Let us therefore set ourselves to learn what He said, what He taught also by the apostle, that “there is no power but of God;” and that he is a greater sinner who maliciously delivereth up to the power the innocent to be slain, than the power itself, if it slay him through fear of another power that is greater still. Of such a sort, indeed, was the power which God had given to Pilate, that he should also be under the power of Caesar. Wherefore “thou wouldest have,” He says, “no power against me,” that is, even the little measure thou really hast, “except” this very measure, whatever its amount, “were given thee from above.” But knowing as I do its amount, for it is not so great as to render thee altogether independent, “therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.” He, indeed, delivered me to thy power at the bidding of envy, whilst thou art to exercise thy power upon me through the impulse of fear. And yet not even through

the impulse of fear ought one man to slay another, especially the innocent; nevertheless to do so by an officious zeal is a much greater evil than under the constraint of fear. And therefore the truth-speaking Teacher saith not, “He that delivered me to thee,” he only hath sin, as if the other had none; but He saith, “hath the greater sin,” letting him understand that he himself was not exempt from blame. For that of the latter is not reduced to nothing because the other is greater.

6. “Hence Pilate sought to release Him.” What is to be understood by the word here used, “hence,” as if he had not been seeking to do so before? Read what precedes, and thou wilt find that he had already for some time been seeking to release Jesus. By the original word, therefore, we are to understand, on this account, that is, for this reason, that he might not contract sin by slaying an innocent man who had been delivered into his hands, even though his sin would be less than that of the Jews, who delivered Him to him to be put to death. “From thence,” therefore, that is, for this reason, that he might not commit such a sin, “he sought” not now for the first time, but from the beginning, “to release Him.”

7. “But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar’s friend: whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Caesar.” They thought to inspire Pilate with greater fear by terrifying him about Caesar, in order that he might put Christ to death, than formerly when they said, “We have the law, and by the law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.” It was not their law, indeed, that impelled him through fear to the deed of murder, but rather it was his fear of the Son of God that held him back from the crime. But now he could not set Caesar, who was the author of his own power, at nought, in the same way as the law of another nation.

8. As yet, however, the evangelist proceeds to say: “But when Pilate heard these sayings, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down before the tribunal, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour.” The question, at what hour the Lord was crucified, because of the testimony supplied by another evangelist, who says, “And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him,” we shall consider as we can, if the Lord please, when we are come to

the passage itself where His crucifixion is recorded. When Pilate, therefore, had sat down before the tribunal, “he saith unto the Jews, Behold your king! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate said unto them, Shall I crucify your king?” As yet he tries to overcome the terror with which they had inspired him about Caesar, by seeking to break them from their purpose on the ground of the ignominy it brought on themselves, with the words, “Shall I crucify your king?” when he failed to soften them on the ground of the ignominy done to Christ; but by and by he is overcome by fear.

9. For “the chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified.” For he would have every appearance of acting against Caesar if, on their declaration that they had no king but Caesar, he were wishing to impose on them another king by releasing without punishment one whom for these very attempts they had delivered unto him to be put to death. “Therefore he delivered Him unto them to be crucified.” But was it, then, anything different that he had previously desired when he said, “Take ye him, and crucify him;” or even earlier still, “Take ye him, and judge him according to your law?” And why did they show so great reluctance, when they said, “It is not lawful for us to put any man to death,” and were in every way urgent to have Him slain not by themselves, but by the governor, and therefore refused to receive Him for the purpose of putting Him to death, if now for the same purpose they actually do receive Him? Or if such be not the case, why was it said, “Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified?” Or is it of any importance? Plainly it is. For it was not said, “Then delivered he Him therefore unto them” that they might crucify Him, but “that He might be crucified,” that is, that He might be crucified by the judicial sentence and power of the governor. But it is for this reason that the evangelist has said that He was delivered to them, that he might show that they were implicated in the crime from which they tried to hold themselves aloof; for Pilate would have done no such thing, save to implement what he perceived to be their fixed desire. The words, however, that follow, “And they took Jesus, and led Him away,” may now refer to the soldiers, the attendants of the governor. For it is more clearly stated afterwards, “When the soldiers therefore had crucified Him,” although the evangelist properly does so even

when he attributes the whole to the Jews, for they it was that received what they had with the utmost greediness demanded, and they it was that did all that they compelled to be done. But the events that follow must be made the subject of consideration in another discourse.

TRACTATE CXVII

CHAPTER XIX. 17–22

1. On Pilate's judgment and condemnation before the tribunal, they took the Lord Jesus Christ, about the sixth hour, and led Him away. "And He, bearing His cross, went forth into the place that is called Calvary, but in Hebrew, Golgotha; where they crucified Him." What else, then, is the meaning of the evangelist Mark saying, "And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him," but this, that the Lord was crucified at the third hour by the tongues of the Jews, at the sixth hour by the hands of the soldiers? That we may understand that the fifth hour was now completed, and there was some beginning made of the sixth, when Pilate took his seat before the tribunal, which is expressed by John as "about the sixth hour;" and when He was led forth, and nailed to the tree with the two robbers, and the events recorded were enacted beside His cross, the completion of the sixth hour was fully reached, being the hour from which, on to the ninth, the sun was obscured, and the darkness took place, we have it jointly attested on the authority of the three evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. But as the Jews attempted to transfer the crime of slaying Christ from themselves to the Romans, that is to say, to Pilate and his soldiers, therefore Mark suppresses the hour at which Christ was crucified by the soldiers, and which then began to enter upon the sixth, and remembers rather to give an express place to the third hour, at which they are understood to have cried out before Pilate, "Crucify, crucify him" (verse 6), that it not only may be seen that the former crucified Jesus, namely, the soldiers who hung Him on the tree at the sixth hour, but the Jews also, who at the third hour cried out to have Him crucified.

2. There is also another solution of this question, that we should not here understand the sixth hour of the day, because John says not, And it was about the sixth hour of the day, or about the sixth hour, but says, "And it was the parasceve of the passover, about the sixth hour" (ver. 14). And

parasceve is in Latin praeparatio (preparation); but the Jews are fonder of using the Greek words in observances of this sort, even those of them who speak Latin rather than Greek. It was therefore the preparation of the passover. But “our passover, Christ,” as the apostle says, “has been sacrificed;” and if we reckon the preparation of this passover from the ninth hour of the night (for then the chief priests seem to have given their verdict for the sacrifice of the Lord, when they said, “He is guilty of death,” and when the hearing of His case was still proceeding in the high priest’s house: whence there is a kind of harmony in understanding that therewith began the preparation of the true passover, whose shadow was the passover of the Jews, that is, of the sacrificing of Christ, when the priests gave their sentence that He was to be sacrificed), certainly from that hour of the night, which is conjectured to have been then the ninth, on to the third hour of the day, when the evangelist Mark testifies that Christ was crucified, there are six hours, three of the night, and three of the day. Hence in the case of this parasceve of the passover, that is, the preparation of the sacrifice of Christ, which began with the ninth hour of the night, it was about the sixth hour; that is to say, the fifth hour was completed, and the sixth had already begun to run, when Pilate ascended the tribunal: for that same preparation, which had begun with the ninth hour of the night, still continued till the sacrifice of Christ, which was the event in course of preparation, was completed, which took place at the third hour, according to Mark, not of the preparation, but of the day; while it was also the sixth hour, not of the day, but of the preparation, by reckoning, of course, six hours from the ninth hour of the night to the third of the day. Of these two solutions of this difficult question let each choose the one that pleases him. But one will judge better what to choose who reads the very elaborate discussions on “The Harmony of the Evangelists.” And if other solutions of it can also be found, the stability of gospel truth will have a more cumulative defense against the calumnies of unbelieving and profane vanity. And now, after these brief discussions, let us return to the narrative of the evangelist John.

3. “And they took Jesus,” he says, “and led Him away; and He, bearing His cross, went forth unto the place that is called Calvary, in the Hebrew, Golgotha; where they crucified Him.” Jesus, therefore, went to the place where He was to be crucified, bearing His cross. A grand spectacle! but if it

be impiety that is the onlooker, a grand laughing-stock; if piety, a grand mystery: if impiety be the onlooker, a grand demonstration of ignominy; if piety, a grand bulwark of faith: if it is impiety that looketh on, it laughs at the King bearing, in place of His kingly rod, the tree of His punishment; if it is piety, it sees the King bearing the tree for His own crucifixion, which He was yet to affix even on the foreheads of kings, exposed to the contemptuous glances of the impious in connection with that wherein the hearts of saints were thereafter to glory. For to Paul, who was yet to say, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," He was commending that same cross of His by carrying it on His own shoulders, and bearing the candelabrum of that light that was yet to burn, and not to be placed under a bushel. "Bearing," therefore, "His cross, He went forth into the place that is called Calvary, in the Hebrew, Golgotha; where they crucified Him, and two others with Him on either side one, and Jesus in the midst." These two, as we have learned in the narrative of the other evangelists, were thieves with whom He was crucified, and between whom He was fixed, whereof the prophecy sent before had declared, "And He was numbered among the transgressors."

4. "And Pilate wrote a title also, and put it on the cross, and the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, The King of the Jews." For these three languages were conspicuous in that place beyond all others: the Hebrew on account of the Jews, who gloried in the law of God; the Greek, because of the wise men among the Gentiles; and the Latin, on account of the Romans, who at that very time were exercising sovereign power over many and almost all countries.

5. "Then said the chief priests of the Jews unto Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written." Oh the ineffable power of the working of God, even in the hearts of the ignorant! Was there not some hidden voice that sounded through Pilate's inner man with a kind, if one may so say, of loud-toned silence, the words that had been prophesied so long before in the very letter of the Psalms, "Corrupt not the inscription of the title"? Here, then,

you see, he corrupted it not; what he has written he has written. But the high priests, who wished it to be corrupted, what did they say? “Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.” What is it, madmen, that you say? Why do you oppose the doing of that which you are utterly unable to alter? Will it by any such means become the less true that Jesus said, “I am King of the Jews”? If that cannot be tampered with which Pilate has written, can that be tampered with which the truth has uttered? But is Christ king only of the Jews, or of the Gentiles also? Yes, of the Gentiles also. For when He said in prophecy, “I am set king by Him upon His holy hill of Zion, declaring the decree of the Lord,” that no one might say, because of the hill of Zion, that He was set king over the Jews alone, He immediately added, “The Lord said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.” Whence He Himself, speaking now with His own lips among the Jews, said, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one flock and one Shepherd.” Why then would we have some great mystery to be understood in this superscription, wherein it was written, “King of the Jews,” if Christ is king also of the Gentiles? For this reason, because it was the wild olive tree that was made partaker of the fatness of the olive tree, and not the olive tree that was made partaker of the bitterness of the wild olive tree. For inasmuch as the title, “King of the Jews,” was truthfully written regarding Christ, who are they that are to be understood as the Jews but the seed of Abraham, the children of the promise, who are also the children of God? For “they,” saith the apostle, “who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” And the Gentiles were those to whom he said, “But if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Christ therefore is king of the Jews, but of those who are Jews by the circumcision of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God; who belong to the Jerusalem that is free, our eternal mother in heaven, the spiritual Sarah, who casteth out the bond maid and her children from the house of liberty. And therefore what Pilate wrote he wrote, because what the Lord said He said.

TRACTATE CXVIII

CHAPTER XIX. 23, 24

1. The things that were done beside the Lord’s cross, when at length He was now crucified, we would take up, in dependence on His help, in the present discourse. “Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Him, took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also His coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.” It was done as the Jews wished; not that it was they themselves, but the soldiers who obeyed Pilate, who himself acted as judge, that crucified Jesus: and yet if we reflect on their wills, their plots, their endeavors, their delivering up, and, lastly, on their extorting clamors, it was the Jews certainly, more than any else, who crucified Jesus.

2. But we must not speak in a mere cursory way of the partition and dividing by lot of His garments. For although all the four evangelists make mention thereof, yet the others do so more briefly than John: and their notice of it is obscure, while his is in the plainest manner possible. For Matthew says, “And after they crucified Him, they parted His garments, casting lots.” Mark: “And they crucified Him, and parted His garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.” Luke: “And they parted His raiment, and cast lots.” But John has told us also how many parts they made of His garments, namely, four, that they might take one part apiece. From which it is apparent that there were four soldiers, who obeyed the governor’s orders in crucifying Him. For he plainly says: “Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Him, took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and likewise the coat,” where there is understood, they took: so that the meaning is, they took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and they took also His coat. And he so spake, that we might see that there was no lot cast on His other garments; but His coat, which they took along with the others, they did not similarly divide. For in regard to it he proceeds to explain, “Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.” And then telling us why

they cast lots on it, he says, “They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be.” Hence it is clear that in the case of the other garments they had equal parts, so that there was no need to cast lots: but that as regards this one, they could not have had a part each without rending it, and thereby possessing themselves only of useless fragments of it; to prevent which, they preferred letting it come to one of them by lot. The account given by this evangelist is also in harmony with the testimony of prophecy, which he likewise immediately subjoins, saying, “That the scripture might be fulfilled which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.” For He says not, they cast lots, but “they parted:” nor does He say, casting lots they parted; but while making no mention whatever of the lot in regard to the rest of the garments, He afterwards said, “and for my vesture they did cast lots,” in reference solely to the coat that remained. On which I shall speak as He Himself enables me, after I have first refuted the calumny, which may possibly arise, as if the evangelists disagreed with one another, by showing that the words of none of the others are inconsistent with the narrative of John.

3. For Matthew, in saying, “They parted His garments, casting lots,” wished it to be understood, that in the whole affair of parting the garments, the coat was also included, on which they cast lots; for in course of parting all the garments, of which it also was one, on it alone they cast lots. To the same purpose also are the words of Luke: “Parting His garments, they cast lots;” for in the process of parting they came to the coat whereon the lot was cast, that the entire parting of His garments among them might be completed. And what difference is there whether it is said, “Parting they cast lots,” according to Luke; or, “They parted, casting the lot,” according to Matthew: unless it be that Luke, in saying “lots,” used the plural for the singular number,—a form of speech that is not unusual in the Holy Scriptures, although some copies are found to have “lot,” and not “lots”? Mark, therefore, is the only one who seems to have introduced any kind of difficulty; for in saying, “Casting the lot upon them, what every man should take,” his words seem to imply, as if the lot was cast on all the garments, and not on the coat alone. But here also brevity is the cause of the obscurity; for the words, “Casting the lot upon them,” are as if it were said,

Casting the lot when they were in the process of division; which was also the case. For the partition of all His garments would not have been complete, had it not been declared by lot which of them also should get possession of the coat, so as thereby to bring any contention on the part of the dividers to an end, or rather prevent any such from arising. In saying, therefore, “What every man should take,” so far as that has to do with the lot, we must not take it as referring to all the garments that were divided; for the lot was cast, who should take the coat: whereof having omitted to describe the particular form, and how, in the equal division that was made of the parts, it remained by itself, in order, without being rent, to be awarded by lot, he therefore made use of the expression, “what every man should take,” in other words, who it was that should take it: as if the whole were thus expressed, They parted His garments, casting the lot upon them, who should take the coat, which had remained over in addition to their equal shares of the rest.

4. Some one, perhaps, may inquire what is signified by the division that was made of His garments into so many parts, and of the casting of lots for the coat. The raiment of the Lord Jesus Christ parted into four, symbolized His quadripartite Church, as spread abroad over the whole world, which consists of four quarters, and equally, that is to say, harmoniously, distributed over all these quarters. On which account He elsewhere says, that He will send His angels to gather His elect from the four winds: and what is that, but from the four quarters of the world, east, west, north, and south? But the coat, on which lots were cast, signifies the unity of all the parts, which is contained in the bond of charity. And when the apostle is about to speak of charity, he says, “I show you a more excellent way;” and in another place, “To know also the love of Christ, which far excelleth knowledge;” and still further elsewhere, “And above all these things charity which is the bond of perfectness.” If, then, charity both has a more excellent way, and far excelleth knowledge, and is enjoined above all things, it is with great propriety that the garment, by which it is signified, is represented as woven from the top. And it was without seam, that its sewing might never be separated; and came into the possession of one man, because He gathereth all into one. Just as in the case of the apostles, who formed the exact number of twelve, in other words, were divisible into four parts of

three each, when the question was put to all of them, Peter was the only one that answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;” and to whom it was said, “I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven,” as if he alone received the power of binding and loosing: seeing, then, that one so spake in behalf of all, and received the latter along with all, as if personifying the unity itself; therefore one stands for all, because there is unity in all. Whence, also, after here saying, “woven from the top,” he added, “throughout.” And this also, if referred to its meaning, implies that no one is excluded from a share thereof, who is discovered to belong to the whole: from which whole, as the Greek language indicates, the Church derives her name of Catholic. And by the casting of lots, what else is commended but the grace of God? For in this way in the person of one it reached to all, since the lot satisfied them all, because the grace of God also in its unity reacheth unto all; and when the lot is cast, the award is decided, not by the merits of each individual, but by the secret judgment of God.

5. And yet let no one say that such things had no good signification because they were done by the bad, that is to say, not by those who followed Christ, but by those who perse cuted Him. For what could we have to say of the cross itself, which every one knows was in like manner made and fastened to Christ by enemies and sinners? And yet it is to it we may rightly understand the words of the apostle to be applicable, “what is the breadth, and the length, and the height, and the depth.” For its breadth lies in the transverse beam, on which the hands of the Crucified are extended; and signifies good works in all the breadth of love: its length extends from the transverse beam to the ground, and is that whereto the back and feet are affixed; and signifies perseverance through the whole length of time to the end: its height is in the summit, which rises upwards above the transverse beam; and signifies the supernal goal, to which all works have reference, since all things that are done well and perseveringly, in respect of their breadth and length, are to be done also with due regard to the exalted character of the divine rewards: its depth is found in the part that is fixed into the ground; for there it is both concealed and invisible, and yet from thence spring up all those parts that are outstanding and evident to the senses; just as all that is good in us proceeds from the depths of the grace of God, which is beyond the reach of human comprehension and judgment.

But even though the cross of Christ signified no more than what was said by the apostle, “And they who are Jesus Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts,” how great a good it is! And yet it does not this, unless the good spirit be lusting against the flesh, seeing that it was the opposing, or, in other words, the evil spirit that constructed the cross of Christ. And lastly, as every one knows, what else is the sign of Christ but the cross of Christ? For unless that sign be applied, whether it be to the foreheads of believers, or to the very water out of which they are regenerated, or to the oil with which they receive the anointing chrism, or to the sacrifice that nourishes them, none of them is properly administered. How then can it be that no good is signified by that which is done by the wicked, when by the cross of Christ, which the wicked made, every good thing is sealed to us in the celebration of His sacraments? But here we stop; and what follows we shall consider at another time in the course of dissertation, as God shall grant us assistance.

TRACTATE CXIX

CHAPTER XIX. 24–30

1. The Lord being now crucified, and the parting of His garments having also been completed by the casting of the lot, let us look at what the evangelist John thereafter relates. “And these things,” he says, “the soldiers did. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary [the wife] of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home.” This, without a doubt, was the hour whereof Jesus, when about to turn the water into wine, had said to His mother, “Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.” This hour, therefore, He had foretold, which at that time had not yet arrived, when it should be His to acknowledge her at the point of death, and with reference to which He had been born as a mortal man. At that time, therefore, when about to engage in divine acts, He repelled, as one unknown, her who was the mother, not of His divinity, but of His [human] infirmity; but now, when in the midst of human sufferings, He commended with human affection [the

mother] by whom He had become man. For then, He who had created Mary became known in His power; but now, that which Mary had brought forth was hanging on the cross.

2. A passage, therefore, of a moral character is here inserted. The good Teacher does what He thereby reminds us ought to be done, and by His own example instructed His disciples that care for their parents ought to be a matter of concern to pious children: as if that tree to which the members of the dying One were affixed were the very chair of office from which the Master was imparting instruction. From this wholesome doctrine it was that the Apostle Paul had learned what he taught in turn, when he said, “But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” And what are so much home concerns to any one, as parents to children, or children to parents? Of this most wholesome precept, therefore, the very Master of the saints set the example from Himself, when, not as God for the hand-maid whom He had created and governed, but as a man for the mother, of whom He had been created, and whom He was now leaving behind, He provided in some measure another son in place of Himself. And why He did so, He indicates in the words that follow: for the evangelist says, “And from that hour the disciple took her unto his own,” speaking of himself. In this way, indeed, he usually refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved: who certainly loved them all, but him beyond the others, and with a closer familiarity, so that He even made him lean upon His bosom at supper; in order, I believe, in this way to commend the more highly the divine excellence of this very gospel, which He was thereafter to preach through his instrumentality.

3. But what was this “his own,” unto which John took the mother of the Lord? For he was not outside the circle of those who said unto Him, “Lo, we have left all, and followed Thee.” No, but on that same occasion he had also heard the words, Every one that hath forsaken these things for my sake, shall receive an hundred times as much in this world. That disciple, therefore, had an hundredfold more than he had cast away, whereunto to receive the mother of Him who had graciously bestowed it all. But it was in that society that the blessed John had received an hundredfold, where no one called anything his own, but they had all things in common; even as it

is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. For the apostles were as if having nothing, and yet possessing all things. How was it, then, that the disciple and servant received unto his own the mother of his Lord and Master, where no one called anything his own? Or, seeing we read a little further on in the same book, “For as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of them, and laid them down at the apostles’ feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need,” are we not to understand that such distribution was made to this disciple of what was needful, that there was also added to it the portion of the blessed Mary, as if she were his mother; and ought we not the rather so to take the words, “From that hour the disciple took her unto his own,” that everything necessary for her was entrusted to his care? He received her, therefore, not unto his own lands, for he had none of his own; but to his own dutiful services, the discharge of which, by a special dispensation, was entrusted to himself.

4. He then adds: “After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and fixed it upon hyssop, and put it to His mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.” Who has the power of so adjusting what he does, as this Man had of arranging all that He suffered? But this Man was the Mediator between God and men; the Man of whom we read in prophecy, He is man also, and who shall acknowledge Him? for the men who did such things acknowledged not this Man as God. For He who was manifest as man, was hid as God: He who was manifest suffered all these things, and He Himself also, who was hid, arranged them all. He saw, therefore, that all was accomplished that required to be done before He received the vinegar, and gave up the ghost; and that this also might be accomplished which the scripture had foretold, “And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink,” He said, “I thirst:” as if it were, One thing still you have failed to do, give me what you are. For the Jews were themselves the vinegar, degenerated as they were from the wine of the patriarchs and prophets; and filled like a full vessel with the wickedness of this world, with hearts like a sponge, deceitful in the formation of its cavernous and tortuous recesses. But the

hyssop, whereon they placed the sponge filled with vinegar, being a lowly herb, and purging the heart, we fitly take for the humility of Christ Himself; which they thus enclosed, and imagined they had completely ensnared. Hence we have it said in the psalm, “Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed.” For it is by Christ’s humility that we are cleansed; because, had He not humbled Himself, and became obedient unto the death of the cross, His blood certainly would not have been shed for the remission of sins, or, in other words, for our cleansing.

5. Nor need we be disturbed with the question, how the sponge could be applied to His mouth when He was lifted up from the earth on the cross. For as we read in the other evangelists, what is omitted by this one, it was fixed on a reed, so that such drink as was contained in the sponge might be raised to the highest part of the cross. By the reed, however, the scripture was signified, which was fulfilled by this very act. For as a tongue is called either Greek or Latin, or any other, significant of the sound, which is uttered by the tongue; so the reed may give its name to the letter which is written with a reed. We most usually, however, call those tongues that express the sounds of the human voice: while in calling scripture a reed, the very rareness of the thing only enhances the mystical nature of that which it symbolizes. A wicked people did such things, a compassionate Christ suffered them. They who did them, knew not what they did; but He who suffered, not only knew what was done, and why it was so, but also wrought what was good through those who were doing what was evil.

6. “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished.” What, but all that prophecy had foretold so long before? And then, because nothing now remained that still required to be done before He died, as if He, who had power to lay down His life and to take it up again, had at length completed all for whose completion He was waiting, “He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.” Who can thus sleep when he pleases, as Jesus died when He pleased? Who is there that thus puts off his garment when he pleases, as He put off His flesh at His pleasure? Who is there that thus departs when he pleases, as He departed this life at His pleasure? How great the power, to be hoped for or dreaded, that must be His as judge, if such was the power He exhibited as a dying man!

TRACTATE CXX

CHAPTER XIX. 31–42, AND XX. 1–9

1. After that the Lord Jesus had accomplished all that He foreknew required accomplishment before His death, and had, when it pleased Himself, given up the ghost, what followed thereafter, as related by the evangelist, let us now consider. “The Jews therefore,” he says, “because it was the preparation (parasceve), that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath-day (for that Sabbath-day was an high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.” Not that their legs might be taken away, but the persons themselves whose legs were broken for the purpose of effecting their death, and permitting them to be detached from the tree, lest their continuing to hang on the crosses should defile the great festal day by the horrible spectacle of their day-long torments.

2. “Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear laid open His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.” A suggestive word was made use of by the evangelist, in not saying pierced, or wounded His side, or anything else, but “opened;” that thereby, in a sense, the gate of life might be thrown open, from whence have flowed forth the sacraments of the Church, without which there is no entrance to the life which is the true life. That blood was shed for the remission of sins; that water it is that makes up the health-giving cup, and supplies at once the laver of baptism and water for drinking. This was announced beforehand, when Noah was commanded to make a door in the side of the ark, whereby the animals might enter which were not destined to perish in the flood, and by which the Church was prefigured. Because of this, the first woman was formed from the side of the man when asleep, and was called Life, and the mother of all living. Truly it pointed to a great good, prior to the great evil of the transgression (in the guise of one thus lying asleep). This second Adam bowed His head and fell asleep on the cross, that a spouse might be formed for Him from that which flowed from the sleeper’s side. O death,

whereby the dead are raised anew to life! What can be purer than such blood? What more health-giving than such a wound?

3. “And he that saw it,” he says, “bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye also might believe.” He said not, That ye also might know, but “that ye might believe;” for he knoweth who hath seen, that he who hath not seen might believe his testimony. And believing belongs more to the nature of faith than seeing. For what else is meant by believing than giving to faith a suitable reception? “For these things were done,” he adds, “that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of Him ye shall not break. And again, another scripture saith, They shall look on Him whom they pierced.” He has furnished two testimonies from the Scriptures for each of the things which he has recorded as having been done. For to the words, “But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs,” belongeth the testimony, “A bone of Him ye shall not break:” an injunction which was laid upon those who were commanded to celebrate the passover by the sacrifice of a sheep in the old law, which went before as a shadow of the passion of Christ. Whence “our passover has been offered, even Christ,” of whom the prophet Isaiah also had predicted, “He shall be led as a lamb to the slaughter.” In like manner to the words which he subjoined, “But one of the soldiers laid open His side with a spear,” belongeth the other testimony, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced;” where Christ is promised in the very flesh wherein He was afterwards to come to be crucified.

4. “And after this, Joseph of Arimathea (being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews) besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night at first, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.” We are not to explain the meaning by saying, “first bringing a mixture of myrrh,” but by attaching the word “first” to the preceding clause. For Nicodemus had at first come to Jesus by night, as recorded by this same John in the earlier portions of his Gospel. By the statement given us here, therefore, we are to understand that Nicodemus came to Jesus, not then only, but then for the first time; and that he was a regular comer afterwards,

in order by hearing to become a disciple; which is certified, nowadays at least, to almost all nations in the revelation of the body of the most blessed Stephen. “Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.” The evangelist, I think, was not without a purpose in so framing his words, “as the manner of the Jews is to bury;” for in this way, unless I am mistaken, he has admonished us that, in duties of this kind, which are observed to the dead, the customs of every nation ought to be preserved.

5. “Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.” As in the womb of the Virgin Mary no one was conceived before Him, and no one after Him, so in this sepulchre there was no one buried before Him, and no one after Him. “There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews’ preparation; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.” He would have us to understand that the burial was hurried, lest the evening should overtake them; when it was no longer permitted to do any such thing, because of the preparation, which the Jews among us are more in the habit of calling in Latin, coena pura (the pure meal).

6. “And on the first of the week came Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and saw the stone taken away from the sepulchre.” The first of the week is what Christian practice now calls the Lord’s day, because of the resurrection of the Lord. “She ran, therefore, and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him.” Some of the Greek codices have, “They have taken my Lord,” which may likely enough have been said by the stronger than ordinary affection of love and handmaid relationship; but we have not found it in the several codices to which we have had access.

7. “Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and that other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.” The repetition here is worthy of notice and of commendation for the way in which a return is made to what had previously been omitted, and yet is added just as if it followed in due order. For after having already said, “they came to the sepulchre,” he goes

back to tell us how they came, and says, “so they ran both together,” etc. Where he shows that, by outrunning his companion, there came first to the sepulchre that other disciple, by whom he means himself, while he relates all as if speaking of another.

8. “And he stooping down,” he says, “saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and saw the linen clothes lying, and the napkin, which had been about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but folded up in one place by itself.” Do we suppose these things have no meaning? I can suppose no such thing. But we hasten on to other points, on which we are compelled to linger by the need there is for investigation, or some other kind of obscurity. For in such things as are self-manifest, the inquiry into the meaning even of individual details is, indeed, a subject of holy delight, but only for those who have leisure, which is not the case with us.

9. “Then went in also that other disciple who had come first to the sepulchre.” He came first, and entered last. This also of a certainty is not without a meaning, but I am without the leisure needful for its explanation. “And he saw, and believed.” Here some, by not giving due attention, suppose that John believed that Jesus had risen again; but there is no indication of this from the words that follow. For what does he mean by immediately adding, “For as yet they knew not the scripture, that He must rise again from the dead”? He could not then have believed that He had risen again, when he did not know that it behoved Him to rise again. What then did he see? what was it that he believed? What but this, that he saw the sepulchre empty, and believed what the woman had said, that He had been taken away from the tomb? “For as yet they knew not the scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.” Thus also when they heard of it from the Lord Himself, although it was uttered in the plainest terms, yet from their custom of hearing Him speaking by parables, they did not understand, and believed that something else was His meaning. But we shall put off what follows till another discourse.

TRACTATE CXXI

CHAPTER XX. 10–29

1. Mary Magdalene had brought the news to His disciples, Peter and John, that the Lord was taken away from the sepulchre; and they, when they came thither, found only the linen clothes wherewith the body had been shrouded; and what else could they believe but what she had told them, and what she had herself also believed? “Then the disciples went away again unto their own” (home); that is to say, where they were dwelling, and from which they had run to the sepulchre. “But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping.” For while the men returned, the weaker sex was fastened to the place by a stronger affection. And the eyes, which had sought the Lord and had not found Him, had now nothing else to do but weep, deeper in their sorrow that He had been taken away from the sepulchre than that He had been slain on the tree; seeing that in the case even of such a Master, when His living presence was withdrawn from their eyes, His remembrance also had ceased to remain. Such grief, therefore, now kept the woman at the sepulchre. “And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre.” Why she did so I know not. For she was not ignorant that He whom she sought was no longer there, since she had herself also carried word to the disciples that He had been taken from thence; while they, too, had come to the sepulchre, and had sought the Lord’s body, not merely by looking, but also by entering, and had not found it. What then does it mean, that, as she wept, she stooped down, and looked again into the sepulchre? Was it that her grief was so excessive that she hardly thought she could believe either their eyes or her own? Or was it rather by some divine impulse that her mind led her to look within? For look she did, “and saw two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.” Why is it that one was sitting at the head, and the other at the feet? Was it, since those who in Greek are called angels are in Latin nuntii [in English, news-bearers], that in this way they signified that the gospel of Christ was to be preached from head to foot, from the beginning even to the end? “They say to her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.” The angels forbade her tears: for by such a position what else did they announce, but that which in some way or other was a future joy? For they put the question, “Why weepest thou?” as if they had said, Weep not. But she, supposing they had put the question from ignorance, unfolded the cause of her tears. “Because,” she said, “they have

taken away my Lord:” calling her Lord’s inanimate body her Lord, meaning a part for the whole; just as all of us acknowledge that Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, our Lord, who of course is at once both the Word and soul and flesh, was nevertheless crucified and buried, while it was only His flesh that was laid in the sepulchre. “And I know not,” she added, “where they have laid Him.” This was the greater cause of sorrow, because she knew not where to go to mitigate her grief. But the hour had now come when the joy, in some measure announced by the angels, who forbade her tears, was to succeed the weeping.

2. Lastly, “when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, If thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.” Let no one speak ill of the woman because she called the gardener, Sir (domine), and Jesus, Master. For there she was asking, here she was recognizing; there she was showing respect to a person of whom she was asking a favor, here she was recalling the Teacher of whom she was learning to discern things human and divine. She called one lord (sir), whose handmaid she was not, in order by him to get at the Lord to whom she belonged. In one sense, therefore, she used the word Lord when she said, “They have taken away my Lord; and in another, when she said, Sir (lord), if thou hast borne Him hence.” For the prophet also called those lords who were mere men, but in a different sense from Him of whom it is written, “The Lord is His name.” But how was it that this woman, who had already turned herself back to see Jesus, when she supposed Him to be the gardener, and was actually talking with Him, is said to have again turned herself, in order to say unto Him “Rabboni,” but just because, when she then turned herself in body, she supposed Him to be what He was not, while now, when turned in heart, she recognized Him to be what He was.

3. “Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God.” There are points in these

words which we must examine with brevity indeed, but with somewhat more than ordinary attention. For Jesus was giving a lesson in faith to the woman, who had recognized Him as her Master, and called Him so in her reply; and this gardener was sowing in her heart, as in His own garden, the grain of mustard seed. What then is meant by "Touch me not"? And just as if the reason of such a prohibition would be sought, He added, "for I am not yet ascended to my Father." What does this mean? If, while standing on earth, He is not to be touched, how could He be touched by men when sitting in heaven? For certainly, before He ascended, He presented Himself to the touch of the disciples, when He said, as testified by the evangelist Luke, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have;" or when He said to Thomas the disciple, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and put forth thy hand, and thrust it into my side." And who could be so absurd as to affirm that He was willing indeed to be touched by the disciples before He ascended to the Father, but refused it in the case of women till after His ascension? But no one, even had any the will, was to be allowed to run into such folly. For we read that women also, after His resurrection and before His ascension to the Father, touched Jesus, among whom was Mary Magdalene herself; for it is related by Matthew that Jesus met them, and said, "All hail. And they approached, and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him." This was passed over by John, but declared as the truth by Matthew. It remains, therefore, that some sacred mystery must lie concealed in these words; and whether we discover it or utterly fail to do so, yet we ought to be in no doubt as to its actual existence. Accordingly, either the words, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father," had this meaning, that by this woman the Church of the Gentiles was symbolized, which did not believe on Christ till He had actually ascended to the Father, or that in this way Christ wished Himself to be believed on; in other words, to be touched spiritually, that He and the Father are one. For He has in a manner ascended to the Father, to the inward perception of him who has made such progress in the knowledge of Christ that he acknowledges Him as equal with the Father: in any other way He is not rightly touched, that is to say, in any other way He is not rightly believed on. But Mary might have still so believed as to account Him unequal with the Father, and this certainly is forbidden her by the words, "Touch me not;" that is, Believe not thus on me according to thy present notions; let not your thoughts stretch outwards to what I have been made in thy behalf, without passing beyond to that whereby thou hast thyself been made. For how could it be otherwise than carnally that she still believed on Him whom she was weeping over as a man? “For I am not yet ascended,” He says, “to my Father:” there shalt thou touch me, when thou believest me to be God, in no wise unequal with the Father. “But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father.” He saith not, Our Father: in one sense, therefore, is He mine, in another sense, yours; by nature mine, by grace yours. “And my God, and your God.” Nor did He say here, Our God: here, therefore, also is He in one sense mine, in another sense yours: my God; under whom I also am as man; your God, between whom and you I am mediator.

4. “Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples, I have seen the Lord, and He hath spoken these things unto me. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side.” For nails had pierced His hands, a spear had laid open His side: and there the marks of the wounds are preserved for healing the hearts of the doubting. But the shutting of doors presented no obstacle to the matter of His body, wherein Godhead resided. He indeed could enter without their being opened, by whose birth the virginity of His mother remained inviolate, “Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said He unto them again, Peace be unto you.” Reiteration is confirmation; for He Himself gives by the prophet a promised peace upon peace. “As the Father hath sent me,” He adds, “even so send I you.” We know the Son to be equal to the Father; but here we recognize the words of the Mediator. For He exhibits Himself as occupying a middle position when He says, He me, and I you. “And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” By breathing on them He signified that the Holy Spirit was the Spirit, not of the Father alone, but likewise His own. “Whose soever sins,” He continues, “ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever ye retain, they are retained.” The Church’s love, which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, discharges the sins of all who are partakers with itself, but retains the sins of

those who have no participation therein. Therefore it is, that after saying “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,” He straightway added this regarding the remission and retention of sins.

5. “But Thomas, one of the twelve, who is called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe. And after eight days, again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.” He saw and touched the man, and acknowledged the God whom he neither saw nor touched; but by the means of what he saw and touched, he now put far away from him every doubt, and believed the other. “Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed.” He saith not, Thou hast touched me, but, “Thou hast seen me,” because sight is a kind of general sense. For sight is also habitually named in connec tion with the other four senses: as when we say, Listen, and see how well it sounds; smell it, and see how well it smells; taste it, and see how well it savors; touch it, and see how hot it is. Everywhere has the word, See, made itself heard, although sight, properly speaking, is allowed to belong only to the eyes. Hence here also the Lord Himself says, “Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands:” and what else does He mean but, Touch and see? And yet he had no eyes in his finger. Whether therefore it was by looking, or also by touching, “Because thou hast seen me,” He says, “thou hast believed.” Although it may be affirmed that the disciple dared not so to touch, when He offered Himself for the purpose; for it is not written, And Thomas touched Him. But whether it was by gazing only, or also by touching that he saw and believed, what follows rather proclaims and commends the faith of the Gentiles: “Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” He made use of words in the past tense, as One who, in His predestinating purpose, knew what was future, as if it had already taken place. But the present discourse

must be kept from the charge of prolixity: the Lord will give us the opportunity to discourse at another time on the topics that remain.

TRACTATE CXXII

CHAPTER XX. 30–31, AND XXI. 1–11

1. After telling us of the incident in connection with which the disciple Thomas had offered to his touch the places of the wounds in Christ’s body, and saw what he would not believe, and believed, the evangelist John interposes these words, and says: “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life through His name.” This paragraph indicates, as it were, the end of the book; but there is afterwards related how the Lord manifested Himself at the sea of Tiberias, and in the draught of fishes made special reference to the mystery of the Church, as regards its future character, in the final resurrection of the dead. I think, therefore, it is fitted to give special prominence thereto, that there has been thus interposed, as it were, an end of the book, and that there should be also a kind of preface to the narrative that was to follow, in order in some measure to give it a position of greater eminence. The narrative itself begins in this way: “After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise showed He (Himself). There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of His disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee.”

2. The inquiry is usually made in connection with this fishing of the disciples, why Peter and the sons of Zebedee returned to what they were before being called by the Lord; for they were fishers when He said to them, “Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.” And they put such reality into their following of Him then, that they left all in order to cleave to Him as their Master: so much so, that when the rich man went away from Him in sorrow, because of His saying to him, “Go sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come

follow me," Peter said unto Him, "Lo, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee." Why is it then that now, by the abandonment as it were of their apostleship, they become what they were, and seek again what they had forsaken, as if forgetful of the words they had once listened to, "No man, putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven"? Had they done so when Jesus was lying in the grave, before He rose from the dead,—which of course they could not have done, as the day whereon He was crucified kept them all in closest attention till His burial, which took place before evening; while the next day was the Sabbath, when it was unlawful for those who observed the ancestral custom to work at all; and on the third day the Lord rose again, and re called them to the hope which they had not yet begun to entertain regarding Him;—yet had they then done so, we might suppose it had been done under the influence of that despair which had taken possession of their minds. But now, after His restoration to them alive from the tomb, after the most evident truth of His revivified flesh offered to their eyes and hands, not only to be seen, but also to be touched and handled; after inspecting the very marks of the wounds, even to the confession of the Apostle Thomas, who had previously declared that he would not otherwise believe; after the reception by His breathing on them of the Holy Spirit, and after the words poured from His lips into their ears, "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever ye retain, they are retained:" they suddenly become again what they had been, fishers, not of men, but of fishes.

3. We have therefore to give those who are disturbed by this the answer, that they were not prohibited from seeking necessary sustenance by their manual craft, when lawful in itself, and warranted so long as they preserved their apostleship intact, if at any time they had no other means of gaining a livelihood. Unless any one have the boldness to imagine or to affirm, that the Apostle Paul attained not to the perfection of those who left all and followed Christ, seeing that, in order not to become a burden to any of those to whom he preached the gospel, he worked with his own hands for his support: wherein we find rather the fulfillment of his own words, "I labored more abundantly than they all;" and to which he added, "yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me:" to make it manifest that this also was to be

imputed to the grace of God, that both with mind and body he was able to labor so much more abundantly than they all, that he neither ceased from preaching the gospel, nor drew, like them, his present support out of the gospel; while he was sowing it much more widely and fruitfully through multitudes of nations where the name of Christ had never previously been proclaimed. Whereby he showed that living, that is, deriving their subsistence, by the gospel, was not imposed on the apostles as a necessity, but conferred on them as a power. And of this power the same apostle makes mention when he says: “If we have sown to you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things? If others are partakers of this power among you, are not we rather? But,” he adds, “we have not used this power.” And a little afterwards he says: “They who serve the altar are partakers with the altar: even so hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel; but I have used none of these things.” It is clear enough, therefore, that it was not enjoined on the apostles, but put in their power, not to find their living otherwise than by the gospel, and of those to whom by preaching the gospel they sowed spiritual things, to reap their carnal things; that is, to take their bodily support, and, as the soldiers of Christ, to receive the wages due to them, as from the inhabitants of provinces subject to Christ. Hence that same illustrious soldier had said a little before, in reference to this matter, “Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?” Which he nevertheless did himself; for he labored more abundantly than they all. If, then, the blessed Paul—that he might not use with them the power which he certainly possessed along with the other preachers of the gospel, but went a warfare at his own charges, that the Gentiles, who were utterly averse to the name of Christ, might not take offense at his teaching, as something offered them for a money equivalent,—in a way very different from that in which he had been educated, learned an altogether new art, that while the teacher supports himself with his own hands, none of his hearers might be burdened; how much rather did the blessed Peter, who had beforetimes been a fisherman, do what he was already acquainted with, if at that present time he found no other means of gaining a livelihood?

4. But some one will reply, And why did he not find them, when the Lord had promised, saying, “Seek first the kingdom and righteousness of God,

and all these things shall be added unto you”? Precisely also in this very way did the Lord fulfill His promise. For who else placed there the fishes that were to be caught, but He, who, we are bound to believe, threw them into the penury that compelled them to go a fishing, for no other reason than that He wished to show them the miracle He had prepared, that so He might both feed the preachers of His gospel, and at the same time enhance that gospel itself, by the great mystery which He was about to impress on their minds by the number of the fishes? And on this subject we also ought now to be telling you what He Himself has set before us.

5. “Simon Peter,” therefore, “saith, I go a fishing.” Those who were with him “say unto him, We also go with thee. And they went forth, and entered into a ship; and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered Him, No. He saith unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his coat unto him, for he was naked, and did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in a little ship (for they were not far from the land, but as it were two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fishes. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals laid, and a fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.”

6. This is a great mystery in the great Gospel of John; and to commend it the more forcibly to our attention, the last chapter has been made its place of record. Accordingly, inasmuch as there were seven disciples taking part in that fishing, Peter, and Thomas, and Nathaneal, and the two sons of Zebedee, and two others whose names are withheld, they point, by their septenary number, to the end of time. For there is a revolution of all time in seven days. To this also pertains the statement, that when the morning was come, Jesus stood on the shore; for the shore likewise is the limit of the sea,

and signifies therefore the end of the world. The same end of the world is shown also by the act of Peter, in drawing the net to land, that is, to the shore. Which the Lord has Himself elucidated, when in a certain other place He drew His similitude from a fishing net let down into the sea: “And they drew it,” He said, “to the shore.” And in explanation of what that shore was, He added, “So will it be in the end of the world.”

7. That, however, is a parable in word, not one embodied in outward action; and just as in the passage before us the Lord indicated by an outward action the kind of character the Church would have in the end of the world, so in the same way, by that other fishing, He indicated its present character. In doing the one at the commencement of His preaching and this latter after His resurrection, He showed thereby in the former case that the capture of fishes signified the good and bad presently existing in the Church; but in the latter, the good only, whom it will contain everlastingly, when the resurrection of the dead shall have been completed in the end of this world. Furthermore, on that previous occasion Jesus stood not, as here, on the shore, when He gave orders for the taking of the fish, but “entered into one of the ships, which was Simon’s, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land; and He sat down therein, and taught the crowds. And when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.” There also they put the fishes that were caught into the ship, and did not, as here, draw the net to the shore. By these signs, and any others that may be found, on the former occasion the Church was prefigured as it exists in this world, and on the other, as it shall be in the end of the world: the one accordingly took place before, and the other subsequently to the resurrection of the Lord; because there we were signified by Christ as called, and here as raised from the dead. On that occasion the nets are not let down on the right side, that the good alone might not be signified, nor on the left, lest the application should be limited to the bad; but without any reference to either side, He says, “Let down your nets for a draught,” that we may understand the good and bad as mingled together: while on this He says, “Cast the net on the right side of the ship,” to signify those who stood on the right hand, the good alone. There the net was broken on account of the schisms that were meant to be signified; but here, as then there will be no more schisms in that supreme

peace of the saints, the evangelist was entitled to say, “And for all they were so great,” that is, so large, “yet was not the net broken;” as if with reference to the previous time when it was broken, and a commendation of the good that was here in comparison with the evil that preceded. There the multitude of fishes caught was so great, that the two vessels were filled and began to sink, that is, were weighed down to the point of sinking; for they did not actually sink, but were in extreme jeopardy. For whence exist in the Church the great evils under which we groan, save from the impossibility of withstanding the enormous multitude that, almost to the entire subversion of discipline, gain an entrance, with their morals so utterly at variance with the pathway of the saints? Here, however, they cast the net on the right side, “and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.” What is meant by the words, “Now they were not able to draw it,” but this, that those who belong to the resurrection of life, that is to say, to the right hand, and depart this life within the nets of the Christian name, will be made manifest only on the shore, in other words, when they shall rise from the dead at the end of the world? Accordingly, they were not able to draw the nets so as to discharge into the vessel the fishes they had caught, as was done with all of those wherewith the net was broken, and the boats laden to sinking. But the Church possesses those right-hand ones after the close of this life in the sleep of peace, lying hid as it were in the deep, till the net reach the shore whither it is being drawn, as it were two hundred cubits. And as on that first occasion it was done by two vessels, with reference to the circumcision and the uncircumcision; so in this place, by the two hundred cubits, I am of opinion that there is symbolized, with reference to the elect of both classes, the circumcision and the uncircumcision, as it were two separate hundreds; because the number that passes to the right hand is represented summarily by hundreds. And last of all, in that former fishing the number of fishes is not expressed, as if the words were there acted on that were uttered by the prophet, “I have declared and spoken; they are multiplied beyond number:” while here there are none beyond calculation, but the definite number of a hundred and fifty and three; and of the reason of this number we must now, with the Lord’s help, give some account.

8. For if we determine on the number that should indicate the law, what else can it be but ten? For we have absolute certainty that the Decalogue of the law, that is, those ten well-known precepts, were first written by the finger of God on two tables of stone. But the law, when it is not aided by grace, maketh transgressors, and is only in the letter, on account of which the apostle specially declared, “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” Let the spirit then be added to the letter, lest the letter kill him whom the spirit maketh not alive, and let us work out the precepts of the law, not in our own strength, but by the grace of the Saviour. But when grace is added to the law, that is, the spirit to the letter, there is, in a kind of way, added to ten the number of seven. For this number, namely seven, is testified by the documents of holy writ given us for perusal, to signify the Holy Spirit. For example, sanctity or sanctification properly pertains to the Holy Spirit, whence, as the Father is a spirit, and the Son a spirit, because God is a spirit, so the Father is holy and the Son holy, yet the Spirit of both is called peculiarly by the name of the Holy Spirit. Where, then, was there the first distinct mention of sanctification in the law but on the seventh day? For God sanctified not the first day, when He made the light; nor the second, when He made the firmament; nor the third, when He separated the sea from the land, and the land brought forth grass and timber; nor the fourth, wherein the stars were created; nor the fifth, wherein were created the animals that live in the waters or fly in the air; nor the sixth, when the terrestrial living soul and man himself were created; but He sanctified the seventh day, wherein He rested from all His works. The Holy Spirit, therefore, is aptly represented by the septenary number. The prophet Isaiah likewise says, “The Spirit of God shall rest on Him;” and thereafter calls our attention to that Spirit in His septenary work or grace, by saying, “The spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and piety; and He shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of God.” And what of the Revelation? Are they not there called the seven Spirits of God, while there is only one and the same Spirit dividing to every one severally as He will? But the septenary operation of the one Spirit was so called by the Spirit Himself, whose own presence in the writer led to their being spoken of as the seven Spirits. Accordingly, when to the number of ten, representing the law, we add the Holy Spirit as represented by seven, we have seventeen; and when this number is used for the adding together of

every several number it contains, from 1 up to itself, the sum amounts to one hundred and fifty-three. For if you add 2 to 1, you have 3 of course; if to these you add 3 and 4, the whole makes 10; and then if you add all the numbers that follow up to 17, the whole amounts to the foresaid number; that is, if to 10, which you had reached by adding all together from 1 to 4, you add 5, you have 15; to these add 6, and the result is 21; then add 7, and you have 28; to this add 8, and 9, and 10, and you get 55; to this add 11 and 12, and 13, and you have 91; and to this again add 14, 15, and 16, and it comes to 136; and then add to this the remaining number of which we have been speaking, namely, 17, and it will make up the number of fishes. But it is not on that account merely a hundred and fifty-three saints that are meant as hereafter to rise from the dead unto life eternal, but thousands of saints who have shared in the grace of the Spirit, by which grace harmony is established with the law of God, as with an adversary; so that through the life-giving Spirit the letter no longer kills, but what is commanded by the letter is fulfilled by the help of the Spirit, and if there is any deficiency it is pardoned. All therefore who are sharers in such grace are symbolized by this number, that is, are symbolically represented. This number has, besides, three times over, the number of fifty, and three in addition, with reference to the mystery of the Trinity; while, again, the number of fifty is made up by multiplying 7 by 7, with the addition of 1, for 7 times 7 make 49. And the 1 is added to show that there is one who is expressed by seven on account of His sevenfold operation; and we know that it was on the fiftieth day after our Lord's ascension that the Holy Spirit was sent, for whom the disciples were commanded to wait according to the promise.

9. It was not, then, without a purpose that these fishes were described as so many in number, and so large in size, that is, as both an hundred and fifty-three, and large. For so it is written, "And He drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three." For when the Lord said, "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill," because about to give the Spirit, through whom the law might be fulfilled, and to add thereby, as it were, seven to ten; after interposing a few other words He proceeded, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the

kingdom of heaven. The latter, therefore, may possibly belong to the number of great fishes. But he that is the least, who undoes in deed what he teaches in word, may be in such a church as is signified by that first capture of fishes, which contains both good and bad, for it also is called the kingdom of heaven, as He says, “The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of ever kind;” where He wishes the good as well as the bad to be understood, and of whom He declares that they are yet to be separated on the shore, to wit, at the end of the world. And lastly, to show that those least ones are reprobates who teach by word of mouth the good which they undo by their evil lives, and that they will not be even the least, as it were, in the life that is eternal, but will have no place there at all; after saying, “He shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven,” He immediately added, “For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed [the righteousness] of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Such, doubtless—these scribes and Pharisees—are those who sit in Moses’ seat, and of whom He says, “Do ye what they say, but do not what they do; for they say, and do not.” They teach in sermons what they undo by their morals. It therefore follows that he who is least in the kingdom of heaven, as the Church now exists, shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, as the Church shall be hereafter; for by teaching what he himself is in the habit of breaking, he can have no place in the company of those who do what they teach, and therefore will not be in the number of great fishes, seeing it is he “who shall do and teach that shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” And because he will be great here, therefore shall he be there, where he that is least shall not be. Yea, so great will they certainly be there, that he who is less there is greater than the greatest here. And yet those who are great here, that is, who do the good that they teach in that kingdom of heaven into which the net gathereth good and bad, shall be greater still in that eternal state of the heavenly kingdom,—those, I mean, who are indicated by the fishes here as belonging to the right hand and to the resurrection of life. We have still to discourse, as God shall grant us ability, on the meal that the Lord took with those seven disciples, and on the words He spake after the meal, as well as on the close of the Gospel itself; but these are topics that cannot be included in the present lecture.

TRACTATE CXXIII

CHAPTER XXI. 12–19

1. With this third manifestation of Himself by the Lord to His disciples after His resurrection, the Gospel of the blessed Apostle John is brought to a close, of which we have already lectured through the earlier part as we were able, on to the place where it is related that an hundred and fifty-three fishes were taken by the disciples to whom He showed Himself, and for all they were so large, yet were not the nets broken. What follows we have now to take into consideration, and to discuss as the Lord enables us, and as the various points may appear to demand. When the fishing was over, “Jesus saith unto them, Come [and] dine. And none of those who sat down dared to ask Him, Who art Thou? knowing that it was the Lord.” If, then, they knew, what need was there to ask? and if there was no need, wherefore is it said, “they dared not,” as if there were need, but, from some fear or other, they dared not? The meaning here, therefore, is: so great was the evidence of the truth that Jesus Himself had appeared to these disciples, that not one of them dared not merely to deny, but even to doubt it; for had any of them doubted it, he ought certainly to have asked. In this sense, therefore, it was said, “No one dared to ask Him, Who art Thou?” as if it were, No one dared to doubt that it was He Himself.

2. “And Jesus cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.” We are likewise told here, you see, on what they dined; and of this dinner we also will say something that is sweet and salutary, if we, too, are made by Him to partake of the food. It is related above that these disciples, when they came to the land, “saw a fire of coals laid, and a fish laid thereon, and bread.” Here we are not to understand that the bread also was laid upon the coals, but only to supply, They saw. And if we repeat this verb in the place where it ought to be supplied, the whole may read thus: They saw coals laid, and fish laid thereon, and they saw bread. Or rather in this way: They saw coals laid, and fish laid thereon; they saw also bread. At the Lord’s command they likewise brought of the fishes which they themselves had caught; and although their doing so might not be actually stated by the historian, yet there has been no silence in regard to the Lord’s command. For He says, “Bring of the fishes which ye have now caught.”

And when we have such certainty that He gave the order, will any suppose that they failed to obey it? Of this, therefore, the Lord prepared the dinner for these His seven disciples, namely, of the fish which they had seen laid upon the coals, with an addition thereto from those which they had caught, and of the bread which we are told with equal distinctness that they had seen. The fish roasted is Christ having suffered; He Himself also is the bread that cometh down from heaven. With Him is incorporated the Church, in order to the participation in everlasting blessedness. For this reason is it said, “Bring of the fish which ye have now caught,” that all of us who cherish this hope may know that we ourselves, through that septenary number of disciples whereby our universal community may in this passage be understood as symbolized, partake in this great sacrament, and are associated in the same blessedness. This is the Lord’s dinner with His own disciples, and herewith John, although having much besides that he might say of Christ, brings his Gospel, with profound thought and an eye to important lessons, to a close. For here the Church, such as it will be hereafter among the good alone, is signified by the draught of an hundred and fifty-three fishes; and to those who so believe, and hope, and love, there is demonstrated by this dinner their participation in such super-eminent blessedness.

3. “This was now,” he says, “the third time that Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after that He was risen from the dead.” And this we are to refer not to the manifestations themselves, but to the days (that is to say, taking the first day when He rose again, and the [second] eight days after, when the disciple Thomas saw and believed, and [the third] on this day when He so acted in connection with the fishes, although how many days afterwards it was that He did so we are not told); for on that first day He was seen more than once, as is shown by the collated testimonies of all the evangelists: but, as we have said, it is in accordance with the days that His manifestations are to be calculated, making this the third; for that [manifestation] is to be reckoned the first, and all one and the same, as included in one day, however often and to however many He showed Himself on the day of His resurrection; the second eight days afterwards, and this the third, and thereafter as often as He pleased on to the fortieth

day, when He ascended into heaven, although all of them have not been recorded in Scripture.

4. “So when they had dined, He saith to Simon Peter, Simon, [son] of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again, Simon, [son] of John, lovest thou me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto Him, Feed my lambs. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, [son] of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wilt not. And this spake He, signifying by what death he should glorify God.” Such was the end reached by that denier and lover; elated by his presumption, prostrated by his denial, cleansed by his weeping, approved by his confession, crowned by his suffering, this was the end he reached, to die with a perfected love for the name of Him with whom, by a perverted forwardness, he had promised to die. He would do, when strengthened by His resurrection, what in his weakness he promised prematurely. For the needful order was that Christ should first die for Peter’s salvation, and then that Peter should die for the preaching of Christ. The boldness thus begun by human temerity was an utter inversion of the order that had been instituted by the Truth. Peter thought to lay down his life for Christ, the one to be delivered in behalf of the Deliverer, seeing that Christ had come to lay down His life for all His own, including Peter also, which, you see, was now done. Now and henceforth a true, because graciously bestowed, strength of heart may be assumed for incurring death itself for the name of the Lord, and not a false one presumptuously usurped through an erroneous estimate of ourselves. Now there is no need that we should any more fear the passage out of the present life, because in the Lord’s resurrection we have a foregoing illustration of the life to come. Now thou hast cause, Peter, to be no longer afraid of death, because He liveth whom thou didst mourn when dead, and whom in thy carnal love thou didst try to hinder from dying in our behalf.

Thou didst dare to step in before the Leader, and thou didst tremble before His persecutor: now that the price has been paid for thee, it is thy duty to follow the Buyer, and follow Him even to the death of the cross. Thou hast heard the words of Him whom thou hast already proved to be truthful; He Himself hath foretold thy suffering, who formerly foretold thy denial.

5. But first the Lord asks what He knew, and that not once, but a second and a third time, whether Peter loved Him; and just as often He has the same answer, that He is loved, while just as often He gives Peter the same charge to feed His sheep. To the threefold denial there is now appended a threefold confession, that his tongue may not yield a feebler service to love than to fear, and imminent death may not appear to have elicited more from the lips than present life. Let it be the office of love to feed the Lord's flock, if it was the signal of fear to deny the Shepherd. Those who have this purpose in feeding the flock of Christ, that they may have them as their own, and not as Christ's, are convicted of loving themselves, and not Christ, from the desire either of boasting, or wielding power, or acquiring gain, and not from the love of obeying, serving, and pleasing God. Against such, therefore, there stands as a wakeful sentinel this thrice inculcated utterance of Christ, of whom the apostle complains that they seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's. For what else mean the words, "Lovest thou me? Feed my sheep," than if it were said, If thou lovest me, think not of feeding thyself, but feed my sheep as mine, and not as thine own; seek my glory in them, and not thine own; my dominion, and not thine; my gain, and not thine; lest thou be found in the fellowship of those who belong to the perilous times, lovers of their own selves, and all else that is joined on to this beginning of evils? For the apostle, after saying, "For men shall be lovers of their own selves," proceeded to add, "Lovers of money, boastful, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, wicked, irreligious, without affection, false accusers, incontinent, implacable, with out kindness, traitors, heady, blinded; lovers of pleasures more than of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." All these evils flow from that as their fountain which he stated first, "lovers of their own selves." With great propriety, therefore, is Peter addressed, "Lovest thou me?" and found replying, "I love Thee:" and the command applied to him, "Feed my lambs," and this a second and a third time. We have it also

demonstrated here that love and liking are one and the same thing; for the Lord also in the last question said not Diligis me? but, Amas me? Let us, then, love not ourselves, but Him; and in feeding His sheep, let us be seeking the things which are His, not the things which are our own. For in some inexplicable way, I know not what, every one that loveth himself, and not God, loveth not himself; and whoever loveth God, and not himself, he it is that loveth himself. For he that cannot live by himself will certainly die by loving himself; he therefore loveth not himself who loves himself to his own loss of life. But when He is loved by whom life is preserved, a man by not loving himself only loveth the more, when it is for this reason that he loveth not himself [namely] that he may love Him by whom he lives. Let not those, then, who feed Christ's sheep be "lovers of their own selves," lest they feed them as if they were their own, and not His, and wish to make their own gain of them, as "lovers of money;" or to domineer over them, as "boastful;" or to glory in the honors which they receive at their hands, as "proud;" or to go the length even of originating heresies, as "blasphemers;" and not to give place to the holy fathers, as those who are "disobedient to parents;" and to render evil for good to those who wish to correct them, because unwilling to let them perish, as "unthankful;" to slay their own souls and those of others, as "wicked;" to outrage the motherly bowels of the Church, as "irreligious;" to have no sympathy with the weak, as those who are "without affection;" to attempt to traduce the character of the saints, as "false accusers;" to give loose reins to the basest lusts, as "incontinent;" to make lawsuits their practice, as "implacable;" to know nothing of loving service, as those who are "without kindness;" to make known to the enemies of the godly what they are well aware ought to be kept secret, as "traitors;" to disturb human modesty by shameless discussions, as "heady;" to understand neither what they say nor whereof they affirm, as "blinded;" and to prefer carnal delights to spiritual joys, as those who are "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." For these and such like vices, whether all of them meet in a single individual, or whether some dominate in one and others in another, spring up in some form or another from this one root, when men are "lovers of their own selves." A vice which is specially to be guarded against by those who feed Christ's sheep, lest they be seeking their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's, and be turning those to the use of their own lusts for whom the blood of

Christ was shed. Whose love ought, in one who feedeth His sheep, to grow up unto so great a spiritual fervor as to overcome even the natural fear of death, that makes us unwilling to die even when we wish to live with Christ. For the Apostle Paul also says that he had a desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, and yet he groans, being burdened, and wishes not to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life. And so to His present lover the Lord said, “When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. For this He said to him, signifying by what death he should glorify God.” “Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands,” He said; in other words, thou shalt be crucified. But that thou mayest come to this, “another shall gird thee, and carry thee,” not whither thou wouldest, but “whither thou wouldest not.” He told him first what would happen, and then how it should come to pass. For it was not after being crucified, but when actually about to be crucified, that he was carried whither he would not; for after being crucified he went his way, not whither he would not, but rather whither he would. And though when set free from the body he wished to be with Christ, yet, were it only possible, he had a desire for eternal life apart from the grievousness of death, to which grievous experience he was unwillingly carried, but from it [when all was over] he was willingly carried away; unwillingly he came to it, but willingly he conquered it, and left this feeling of infirmity behind that makes every one unwilling to die,—a feeling so permanently natural, that even old age itself was unable to set the blessed Peter free from its influence, even as it was said unto him, “When thou shalt be old,” thou shall be led “whither thou wouldest not.” For our consolation the Saviour Himself transfigured also the same feeling in His own person when He said, “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;” and He certainly had come to die without having any necessity, but only the willingness to die, with power to lay down His life, and with power to take it again. But however great be the grievousness of death, it ought to be overcome by the power of that love which is felt to Him who, being our life, was willing to endure even death in our behalf. For if there were no grievousness, even of the smallest kind, in death, the glory of the martyrs would not be so great. But if the good Shepherd, who laid down His own life for His sheep, has raised up so many martyrs for Himself out of the very sheep, how much more ought those to contend to death for the truth, and even to blood against sin, who are entrusted by Him with the feeding, that is, with the teaching and governing of these very sheep? And on this account, along with the preceding example of His own passion, who can fail to see that the shepherds ought all the more to set themselves closely to imitate the Shepherd, if He was so imitated even by many of the sheep under whom, as the one Shepherd and in the one flock, the shepherds themselves are likewise sheep? For He made all those His sheep for [all of] whom He died, because He Himself also became a sheep that He might suffer for all.

TRACTATE CXXIV

CHAPTER XXI. 19–25

1. It is no unimportant question why the Lord, when He manifested Himself for the third time to the disciples, said unto the Apostle Peter, "Follow me;" but of the Apostle John, "Thus I wish him to remain till I come, what is that to thee?" To the discussion or solution of this question, according as the Lord shall grant us ability we devote the last discourse of this work. When the Lord, then, had announced beforehand to Peter by what death he was to glorify God, "He saith unto him, Follow me. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; who also leaned on His breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that shall betray Thee? Peter, therefore, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what [of] this man? Jesus saith unto him, Thus do I wish him to remain till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple dieth not: yet Jesus said not unto him, He dieth not; but, Thus do I wish him to remain till I come, what is that to thee?" You see the great extent in this Gospel of a question which, by its depth, must exercise in no ordinary way the mind of the inquirer. For why is it said to Peter, "Follow me," and not to the others who were likewise present? Surely the disciples followed Him also as their Master. But if it is to be understood only in reference to his suffering, was Peter the only one that suffered for the truth of Christianity? Was there not present there amongst those seven, another son of Zebedee, the brother of John, who, after His ascension, is plainly recorded to have been slain by Herod? But some one may say that, as James was not crucified, it was properly enough said to Peter, "Follow

me,” inasmuch as he underwent not only death, but, like Christ, even the death of the cross. Be it so, if no other explanation can be found that is more satisfactory. Why, then, was it said of John, “Thus do I wish him to remain till I come, what is that to thee?” and the words repeated, “Follow thou me,” as if that other, therefore, were not to follow, seeing He wished him to remain till He comes. Who can readily believe that anything else was meant than what the brethren who lived at the time believed, namely, that that disciple was not to die, but to abide in this life till Jesus came? But John himself removed such an idea, by giving a flat contradiction to the report that the Lord had said so. For why should he add, “Jesus saith not, He dieth not,” save to prevent what was false from taking hold of the hearts of men?

2. But let any one who so listeth still refuse his assent, and declare that what John asserts is true enough, that the Lord said not that that disciple dieth not, and yet that this is the meaning of such words as He is here recorded to have used; and further assert that the Apostle John is still living, and maintain that he is sleeping rather than lying dead in his tomb at Ephesus. Let him employ as an argument the current report that there the earth is in sensible commotion, and presents a kind of heaving appearance, and assert whether it be steadfastly or obstinately that this is occasioned by his breathing. For we cannot fail to have some who so believe, if there is no want of those also who affirm that Moses is alive; because it is written that his sepulchre could not be found, and that he appeared with the Lord on the mountain along with Elias, of whom we read that he did not die, but was translated. As if Moses’ body could not have been hid somewhere in such a way as that its position should altogether escape discovery by men, and be raised up therefrom by divine power at the time when Elias and he were seen with Christ just as at the time of Christ’s passion many bodies of the saints arose, and after His resurrection appeared, according to Scripture, to many in the holy city. But still, as I began to say, if some deny the death of Moses, whom Scripture itself, in the very passage where we read that his sepulchre could nowhere be found, explicitly declares to have died; how much more may occasion be taken from these words where the Lord says, “Thus do I wish him to stay till I come,” to believe that John is sleeping, but still alive, beneath the ground? Of whom we have also the tradition (which

is found in certain apocryphal scriptures), that he was present, in good health, when he ordered a sepulchre to be made for him; and that, when it was dug and prepared with all possible care, he laid himself down there as in a bed, and became immediately defunct: yet as those think who so understand these words of the Lord, not really defunct, but only lying like one in such a condition; and, while accounted dead, was actually buried when asleep, and that he will so remain till the coming of Christ, making known meanwhile the fact of his life by the bubbling up of the dust, which is believed to be forced by the breath of the sleeper to ascend from the depths to the surface of the grave. I think it quite superfluous to contend with such an opinion. For those may see for themselves who know the locality whether the ground there does or suffers what is said regarding it, because, in truth, we too have heard of it from those who are not altogether unreliable witnesses.

3. Meanwhile let us yield to the opinion, which we are unable to refute by any certain evidence, lest we stir up still another question that may be put to us, Why the very ground should seem in a kind of way to live and breathe upon the interred corpse? But can so great a question as the one before us be settled on such grounds as these, if by a great miracle, such as can be wrought by the Almighty, the living body lies so long asleep beneath the ground, till the coming of the end of the world? Nay, rather, does there not arise a wider and more difficult one, why Jesus bestowed on the disciple, whom He loved beyond the others to such an extent that he was counted worthy to recline on His breast, the gift of a protracted sleep in the body, when He delivered the blessed Peter, by the eminent glory of martyrdom, from the burden of the body itself, and vouchsafed to him what the Apostle Paul said that he desired, and committed to writing, namely, “to be let loose, and to be with Christ”? But if, what is rather to be believed, Saint John declared that the Lord said not, “He dieth not,” for the very purpose that no such meaning might be attached to the words which He used; and his body lieth in its sepulchre lifeless like those of others deceased; it remains, if that really takes place which report has spread abroad regarding the soil, which grows up anew, though continually carried away, that it is either so done for the purpose of commending the preciousness of his death, seeing it wants the commendation of martyrdom (for he suffered not death at a persecutor’s

hand for the faith of Christ), or on some other account that is concealed from our knowledge. Still there remains the question, why the Lord said of one who was destined to die, “Thus I wish him to remain till I come.”

4. And who, besides, would not be disposed, in the case of these two apostles, Peter and John, to make this further inquiry, why the Lord loved John better, when He Himself was better loved by Peter? For wherever John has something to say of himself, in order that the reference may be understood without any mention of his name, he adds this, that Jesus loved him, as if he were the only one so loved, that he might be distinguished by this mark from the others, who were all of them certainly loved by Christ: and what else, when he so spake, did he wish to be understood but that he himself was more abundantly loved? and far be it that he should utter a falsehood. And what greater proof could Jesus have given of His own greater love to him than that this man, who was only a partner with the rest of his fellow-disciples in the great salvation, should be the only one that leaned on the breast of the Saviour Himself? And further, that the Apostle Peter loved Christ more than the others, may be adduced from many documentary evidences; but to go no further after others, it is plainly enough apparent in the lesson almost immediately preceding the present, in connection with that third manifestation of the Lord, when He put to him the question, “Lovest thou me more than these?” He knew it, of course, and yet asked, in order that we also, who read the Gospel, might know Peter’s love to Christ, both from the questions of the One and the answers of the other. But when Peter only replied, “I love Thee,” without adding, “more than these,” his answer contained all that he knew of himself. For he could not know how much He was loved by any other, not being able to look into that other’s heart. But by saying in the earliest of his answers, “Yea, Lord, Thou knowest,” he stated in clear enough terms, that it was with perfect knowledge of all that the Lord asked what He asked. The Lord therefore knew, not only that Peter loved Him, but also that he loved Him more than the others. And yet if we propose to ourselves, in the way of inquiry, which of the two is the better, he that loveth Christ more or he that loveth Him less, who will hesitate to answer, he is the better that loveth Him more? If, on the other hand, we propose this question, which of the two is the better, he that is loved less or he that is loved more by Christ, without any doubt

we shall reply that he is the better who is loved the more by Christ. In the comparison therefore which I drew first, Peter is superior to John; but in the latter, John is preferred to Peter. Accordingly, we have a third to propose in this form: Which of the two disciples is the better, he that loveth Christ less than his fellow-disciple [does], and is loved more than his fellow-disciple by Christ? or he who is loved less than his fellow-disciple by Christ, while he, more than his fellow-disciple, loveth Christ? Here it is that the answer plainly halts, and the question grows in magnitude. As far, however, as my own wisdom goes, I might easily reply, that he is the better who loveth Christ the more, but he the happier who is loved the more by Christ; if only I could thoroughly see how to defend the justice of our Deliverer in loving him the less by whom He is loved the more, and him the more by whom He is loved the less.

5. I shall therefore, in the manifested mercy of Him whose justice is hidden, set about the discussion, in order to the solution of a question of such importance, in accordance with the strength which He may graciously bestow: for hitherto it has only been proposed, not expounded. Let this, then, be the commencement of its exposition, namely, that we bear in mind that in this corruptible body, which burdens the soul, we live a miserable life. But we who are now redeemed by the Mediator, and have received the earnest of the Holy Spirit, have a blessed life in prospect, although we possess it not as yet in reality. But a hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. And it is in the evils that every one suffers, not in the good things that he enjoys, that he has need of patience. The present life, therefore, whereof it is written, “Is not the life of man a term of trial upon earth?” in which we are daily crying to the Lord, “Deliver us from evil,” a man is compelled to endure, even when his sins are forgiven him, although it was the first sin that caused his falling into such misery. For the penalty is more protracted than the fault; lest the fault should be accounted small, were the penalty to end with itself. On this account it is also, either for the demonstration of our debt of misery, or for the amendment of our passing life, or for the exercise of the necessary patience, that man is kept through time in the penalty, even when he is no longer held by his sin as liable to everlasting damnation. This is the truly

lamentable but unblameable condition of the present evil days we pass in this mortal state, even while in it we look with loving eyes to the days that are good. For it comes from the righteous anger of God, whereof the Scriptures say, “Man, that is born of woman, is of few days and full of anger:” for the anger of God is not like that of man, the disturbance of an excited man, but the calm fixing of righteous punishment. In this anger of His, God restraineth not, as it is written, His tender mercies; but, besides other consolations to the miserable, which He ceaseth not to bestow on mankind, in the fullness of time, when He knew that such had to be done, He sent His only-begotten Son, by whom He created all things, that He might become man while remaining God, and so be the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus: that those who believe in Him, being absolved by the laver of regeneration from the guilt of all their sins,—to wit, both of the original sin they have inherited by generation, and to meet which, in particular, regeneration was instituted, and of all others contracted by evil conduct,—might be delivered from perpetual condemnation, and live in faith and hope and love while sojourning in this world, and be walking onward to His visible presence amid its toilsome and perilous temptations on the one hand, but the consolations of God, both bodily and spiritual, on the other, ever keeping to the way which Christ has become to them. And because, even while walking in Him, they are not exempt from sins, which creep in through the infirmities of this life, He has given them the salutary remedies of alms whereby their prayers might be aided when He taught them to say, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” So does the Church act in blessed hope through this troublous life; and this Church symbolized in its generality, was personified in the Apostle Peter, on account of the primacy of his apostleship. For, as regards his proper personality, he was by nature one man, by grace one Christian, by still more abounding grace one, and yet also, the first apostle; but when it was said to him, “I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven,” he represented the universal Church, which in this world is shaken by divers temptations, that come upon it like torrents of rain, floods and tempests, and falleth not, because it is founded upon a rock (petra), from which Peter received his name. For petra (rock) is not derived from Peter, but Peter from petra; just as Christ is not called so from the Christian, but the Christian from Christ. For on this very account the Lord said, “On this rock will I build my Church,” because Peter had said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” On this rock, therefore, He said, which thou hast confessed, I will build my Church. For the Rock (Petra) was Christ; and on this foundation was Peter himself also built. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. The Church, therefore, which is founded in Christ received from Him the keys of the kingdom of heaven in the person of Peter, that is to say, the power of binding and loosing sins. For what the Church is essentially in Christ, such representatively is Peter in the rock (petra); and in this representation Christ is to be understood as the Rock, Peter as the Church. This Church, accordingly, which Peter represented, so long as it lives amidst evil, by loving and following Christ is delivered from evil. But its following is the closer in those who contend even unto death for the truth. But to the universality [of the Church] is it said, “Follow me,” even as it was for the same universality that Christ suffered: of whom this same Peter saith, “Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow His footsteps.” This, then, you see is why it was said to him, “Follow me.” But there is another, an immortal life, that is not in the midst of evil: there we shall see face to face what is seen here through a glass and in a riddle, even when much progress is made in the beholding of the truth. There are two states of life, therefore, preached and commended to herself from heaven, that are known to the Church, whereof the one is in faith, the other in sight; one in the temporal sojourn in a foreign land, the other in the eternity of the [heavenly] abode; one in labor, the other in repose; one on the way, the other in the fatherland; one in active work, the other in the wages of contemplation; one declines from evil and makes for good, the other has no evil to decline from, and has great good to enjoy; the one fights with a foe, the other reigns without a foe; the one is brave in the midst of adversities, the other has no experience of adversity; the one is bridling its carnal lusts, the other has full scope for spiritual delights; the one is anxious with the care of conquering, the other secure in the peace of victory; the one is helped in temptations, the other, free from all temptations, rejoices in the Helper Himself; the one is occupied in relieving the indigent, the other is there, where no indigence is found; the one pardons the sins of others, that its own may be pardoned to itself, the other neither has anything to pardon nor does aught for which pardon has to be asked; the one is scourged with evils that it may not be elated with good things, the other is free from all evil by such a fullness of grace that, without any temptation to pride, it may cleave to that which is supremely good; the one discerneth both good and evil, the other has only that which is good presented to view: therefore the one is good, but miserable as yet; the other, better and blessed. This one was signified by the Apostle Peter, that other by John. The whole of the one is passed here to the end of this world, and there finds its termination, the other is deferred for its completion till after the end of this world, but has no end in the world to come. Hence it is said to the latter, "Follow me;" but of the former, "Thus I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me." For what means this last? So far as my wisdom goes, so far as I comprehend, what is it but this, Follow thou me by imitating me in the endurance of temporal evils; let him remain till I come to restore everlasting good? And this may be expressed more clearly in this way: Let perfected action, informed by the example of my passion, follow me; but let contemplation only begun remain [so] till I come, to be perfected when I come. For the godly plenitude of patience, reaching forward even unto death, followeth Christ; but the fullness of knowledge tarrieth till Christ come, to be manifested then. For here the evils of this world are endured in the land of the dying, while there shall be seen the good things of the Lord in the land of the living. For in saying, "I wish him to tarry till I come," we are not to understand Him as meaning to remain on, or abide permanently, but to wait; seeing that what is signified by him shall certainly not be fulfilled now, but when Christ is come. But what is signified by him to whom it was said, "Follow thou me," unless it be done now, will never attain to the expected end. And in this life of activity, the more we love Christ the more easily are we delivered from evil. But He loveth us less as we now are, and therefore delivers from it, that we may not be always such as we are. There, however, He loveth us more; for we shall not have aught about us to displease Him, or aught that He will have to separate us from: nor is it for aught else that He loveth us here but that He may heal and translate us from everything He loveth not. Here, therefore, [He loveth us] less, where He would not have us remain; there in larger measure, whither He would have us to be passing, and out of that wherein He would not that we should perish. Let Peter therefore love Him, that we may obtain deliverance from our present mortality; let John be loved by Him, that we may be preserved in the immortality to come.

6. But by this line of argument we have shown why Christ loved John more than Peter, not why Peter loved Christ more than John. For if Christ loveth us more in the world to come, where we shall live unendingly with Him, than in the present, from which we are in the course of being rescued, that we may be always in the other, it does not follow on that account that we shall love Him less when better ourselves; since we can in no possible way be better ourselves, save by loving Him more. Why was it, then, that John loved Him less than Peter, if he signified that life, wherein He must be more abundantly loved, but because on that very account it was said, "I will that he tarry," that is wait, "till I come;" for we have not yet the love itself, which will then be greater far, but are expecting that future, that we may have it when He shall come? Just as in his own epistle the same apostle declares, "It has not yet appeared what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Then accordingly shall we love the more that which we shall see. But the Lord Himself, in His predestinating knowledge, loveth more that future life of ours that is yet to come, such as He knows it will be hereafter in us, in order that by so loving us He may draw us onward to its possession. Wherefore, as all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth, we know our present misery, because we feel it; and therefore we love more the mercy of the Lord, which we wish to be exhibited in our deliverance from misery, and we ask and experience it daily, especially in the remission of sins: this it is that was signified by Peter, as loving more, but less beloved; because Christ loveth us less in our misery than in our blessedness. But the contemplation of the truth, such as it then shall be, we love less, because as yet we neither know nor possess it: this was signified by John as loving less, and therefore waiting both for that state itself, and for the perfecting in us of that love to Him, to which He is entitled, till the Lord come; but loved the more, because that it is, which is symbolized by him, that maketh him blessed.

7. Let no one, however, separate these distinguished apostles. In that which was signified by Peter, they were both alike; and in that which was signified

by John, they will both be alike hereafter. In their representative character, the one was following, the other tarrying; but in their personal faith they were both of them enduring the present evils of the misery here, both of them expecting the future good things of the blessedness to come. And such is the case, not with them alone, but with the holy universal Church, the spouse of Christ, who has still to be rescued from the present trials, and to be preserved in the future happiness. And these two states of life were symbolized by Peter and John, the one by the one, the other by the other; but in this life they both of them walked for a time by faith, and the other they shall both of them enjoy eternally by sight. For the whole body of the saints, therefore, inseparably belonging to the body of Christ, and for their safe pilotage through the present tempestuous life, did Peter, the first of the apostles, receive the keys of the kingdom of heaven for the binding and loosing of sins; and for the same congregation of saints, in reference to the perfect repose in the bosom of that mysterious life to come did the evangelist John recline on the breast of Christ. For it is not the former alone but the whole Church, that bindeth and looseth sins; nor did the latter alone drink at the fountain of the Lord’s breast, to emit again in preaching, of the Word in the beginning, God with God, and those other sublime truths regarding the divinity of Christ, and the Trinity and Unity of the whole Godhead. which are to be yet beheld in that kingdom face to face, but meanwhile till the Lord’s coming are only to be seen in a mirror and in a riddle; but the Lord has Himself diffused this very gospel through the whole world, that every one of His own may drink thereat according to his own individual capacity. There are some who have entertained the idea—and those, too, who are no contemptible handlers of sacred eloquence—that the Apostle John was more loved by Christ on the ground that he never married a wife, and lived in perfect chastity from early boyhood. There is, indeed, no distinct evidence of this in the canonical Scriptures: nevertheless it is an idea that contributes not a little to the suitableness of the opinion expressed above, namely, that that life was signified by him, where there will be no marriage.

8. “This is the disciple who testifieth of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also,” he adds, “many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written

every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.” We are not to suppose that in regard to local space the world would be unable to contain them; for how could they be written in it if it could not bear them when written? but perhaps it is that they could not be comprehended by the capacity of the readers: although, while our faith in certain things themselves remains unharmed, the words we use about them may not unfrequently appear to exceed belief. This will not take place when anything that was obscure or dubious is in course of exposition by the setting forth of its ground and reason, but only when that which is clear of itself is either magnified or extenuated, without any real departure from the pathway of the truth to be intimated; for the words may outrun the thing itself that is indicated only in such a way, that the will of him that speaketh, but without any intention to deceive, may be apparent, so that, knowing how far he will be believed, he, orally, either diminishes or magnifies his subject beyond the limit to which credit will be given. This mode of speaking is called by the Greek name hyperbole, by the masters not only of Greek, but also of Latin literature. And this mode is found not only here, but in several other parts also of the divine literature: as, “They set their mouths against the heavens;” and, “The top of the hair of such as go on in their trespasses;” and many others of the same kind, which are no more wanting in the sacred Scriptures than other tropes or modes of speaking. Of these I might give a more elaborate discussion, were it not that, as the evangelist here terminates his Gospel, I am also compelled to bring my discourse to a close.

LETTERS OF ST. AUGUSTIN

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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TRANSLATED BY THE REV. J. G. CUNNINGHAM, M.A.

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LETTER I

(A.D. 386.)

To Hermogenianus Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. I Would not presume, even in playful discussion, to attack the philosophers of the Academy; for when could the authority of such eminent men fail to move me, did I not believe their views to be widely different from those commonly ascribed to them? Instead of confuting them, which is beyond my power, I have rather imitated them to the best of my ability. For it seems to me to have been suitable enough to the times in which they flourished, that whatever issued pure from the fountainhead of Platonic philosophy should be rather conducted into dark and thorny thickets for the refreshment of a very few men, than left to flow in open meadow-land, where it would be impossible to keep it clear and pure from the inroads of the vulgar herd. I use the word herd advisedly; for what is more brutish than the opinion that the soul is material? For defence against the men who held this, it appears to me that such an art and method of concealing the truth was wisely contrived by the new Academy. But in this age of ours, when we see none who are philosophers,—for I do not consider those who merely wear the cloak of a philosopher to be worthy of that venerable name,—it seems to me that men (those, at least, whom the teaching of the Academicians has, through the subtlety of the terms in which it was expressed, deterred from attempting to understand its actual meaning) should be brought back to the hope of discovering the truth, lest that which was then for the time useful in eradicating obstinate error, should begin now to hinder the casting in of the seeds of true knowledge.

2. In that age the studies of contending schools of philosophers were pursued with such ardour, that the one thing to be feared was the possibility of error being approved. For every one who had been driven by the arguments of the sceptical philosophers from a position which he had

supposed to be impregnable, set himself to seek some other in its stead, with a perseverance and caution corresponding to the greater industry which was characteristic of the men of that time, and the strength of the persuasion then prevailing, that truth, though deep and hard to be deciphered, does lie hidden in the nature of things and of the human mind. Now, however, such is the indisposition to strenuous exertion, and the indifference to the liberal arts, that so soon as it is noised abroad that, in the opinion of the most acute philosophers, truth is unattainable, men send their minds to sleep, and cover them up for ever. For they presume not, forsooth, to imagine themselves to be so superior in discernment to those great men, that they shall find out what, during his singularly long life, Carneades, with all his diligence, talents, and leisure, besides his extensive and varied learning, failed to discover. And if, contending somewhat against indolence, they rouse themselves so far as to read those books in which it is, as it were, proved that the perception of truth is denied to man, they relapse into lethargy so profound, that not even by the heavenly trumpet can they be aroused.

3. Wherefore, although I accept with the greatest pleasure your candid estimate of my brief treatise, and esteem you so much as to rely not less on the sagacity of your judgment than on the sincerity of your friendship, I beg you to give more particular attention to one point, and to write me again concerning it,—namely, whether you approve of that which, in the end of the third book, I have given as my opinion, in a tone perhaps of hesitation rather than of certainty, but in statements, as I think, more likely to be found useful than to be rejected as incredible. But whatever be the value of those treatises [the books against the Academicians], what I most rejoice in is, not that I have vanquished the Academicians, as you express it (using the language rather of friendly partiality than of truth), but that I have broken and cast away from me the odious bonds by which I was kept back from the nourishing breasts of philosophy, through despair of attaining that truth which is the food of the soul.

LETTER II

(A.D. 386.)

To Zenobius Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. We are, I suppose, both agreed in maintaining that all things with which our bodily senses acquaint us are incapable of abiding unchanged for a single moment, but, on the contrary, are moving and in perpetual transition, and have no present reality, that is, to use the language of Latin philosophy, do not exist. Accordingly, the true and divine philosophy admonishes us to check and subdue the love of these things as most dangerous and disastrous, in order that the mind, even while using this body, may be wholly occupied and warmly interested in those things which are ever the same, and which owe their attractive power to no transient charm. Although this is all true, and although my mind, without the aid of the senses, sees you as you really are, and as an object which may be loved without disquietude, nevertheless I must own that when you are absent in body, and separated by distance, the pleasure of meeting and seeing you is one which I miss, and which, therefore, while it is attainable, I earnestly covet. This my infirmity (for such it must be) is one which, if I know you aright, you are well pleased to find in me; and though you wish every good thing for your best and most loved friends, you rather fear than desire that they should be cured of this infirmity. If, however, your soul has attained to such strength that you are able both to discern this snare, and to smile at those who are caught therein, truly you are great, and different from what I am. For my part, as long as I regret the absence of any one from me, so long do I wish him to regret my absence. At the same time, I watch and strive to set my love as little as possible on anything which can be separated from me against my will. Regarding this as my duty, I remind you, in the meantime, whatever be your frame of mind, that the discussion which I have begun with you must be finished, if we care for each other. For I can by no means consent to its being finished with Alypius, even if he wished it. But he does not wish this; for he is not the man to join with me now in endeavouring, by as many letters as we could send, to detain you with us, when you decline this, under the pressure of some necessity to us unknown.

LETTER III

(A.D. 387.)

To Nebridius Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. Whether I am to regard it as the effect of what I may call your flattering language, or whether the thing be really so, is a point which I am unable to decide. For the impression was sudden, and I am not yet resolved how far it deserves to be believed. You wonder what this can be. What do you think? You have almost made me believe, not indeed that I am happy—for that is the heritage of the wise alone—but that I am at least in a sense happy: as we apply the designation man to beings who deserve the name only in a sense if compared with Plato's ideal man, or speak of things which we see as round or square, although they differ widely from the perfect figure which is discerned by the mind of a few. I read your letter beside my lamp after supper: immediately after which I lay down, but not at once to sleep; for on my bed I meditated long, and talked thus with myself—Augustin addressing and answering Augustin: "Is it not true, as Nebridius affirms, that I am happy?" "Absolutely true it cannot be, for that I am still far from wise he himself would not deny." "But may not a happy life be the lot even of those who are not wise?" "That is scarcely possible; because, in that case, lack of wisdom would be a small misfortune, and not, as it actually is, the one and only source of unhappiness." "How, then, did Nebridius come to esteem me happy? Was it that, after reading these little books of mine, he ventured to pronounce me wise? Surely the vehemence of joy could not make him so rash, especially seeing that he is a man to whose judgment I well know so much weight is to be attached. I have it now: he wrote what he thought would be most gratifying to me, because he had been gratified by what I had written in those treatises; and he wrote in a joyful mood, without accurately weighing the sentiments entrusted to his joyous pen. What, then, would he have said if he had read my Soliloquies? He would have rejoiced with much more exultation, and yet could find no loftier name to bestow on me than this which he has already given in calling me happy. All at once, then, he has lavished on me the highest possible name, and has not reserved a single word to add to my praises, if at any time he were made by me more joyful than he is now. See what joy does."

2. But where is that truly happy life? where? ay, where? Oh! if it were attained, one would spurn the atomic theory of Epicurus. Oh! if it were

attained, one would know that there is nothing here below but the visible world. Oh! if it were attained, one would know that in the rotation of a globe on its axis, the motion of points near the poles is less rapid than of those which lie half way between them,—and other such like things which we likewise know. But now, how or in what sense can I be called happy, who know not why the world is such in size as it is, when the proportions of the figures according to which it is framed do in no way hinder its being enlarged to any extent desired? Or how might it not be said to me—nay, might we not be compelled to admit that matter is infinitely divisible; so that, starting from any given base (so to speak), a definite number of corpuscles must rise to a definite and ascertainable quantity? Wherefore, seeing that we do not admit that any particle is so small as to be insusceptible of further diminution, what compels us to admit that any assemblage of parts is so great that it cannot possibly be increased? Is there perchance some important truth in what I once suggested confidentially to Alypius, that since number, as cognisable by the understanding, is susceptible of infinite augmentation, but not of infinite diminution, because we cannot reduce it lower than to the units, number, as cognisable by the senses (and this, of course, just means quantity of material parts or bodies), is on the contrary susceptible of infinite diminution, but has a limit to its augmentation? This may perhaps be the reason why philosophers justly pronounce riches to be found in the things about which the understanding is exercised, and poverty in those things with which the senses have to do. For what is poorer than to be susceptible of endless diminution? and what more truly rich than to increase as much as you will, to go whither you will, to return when you will and as far as you will, and to have as the object of your love that which is large and cannot be made less? For whoever understands these numbers loves nothing so much as the unit; and no wonder, seeing that it is through it that all the other numbers can be loved by him. But to return: Why is the world the size that it is, seeing that it might have been greater or less? I do not know: its dimensions are what they are, and I can go no further. Again: Why is the world in the place it now occupies rather than in another? Here, too, it is better not to put the question; for whatever the answer might be, other questions would still remain. This one thing greatly perplexed me, that bodies could be infinitely subdivided. To this perhaps an answer has been given, by setting over against it the converse property of abstract number [viz. its susceptibility of infinite multiplication].

3. But stay: let us see what is that indefinable object which is suggested to the mind. This world with which our senses acquaint us is surely the image of some world which the understanding apprehends. Now it is a strange phenomenon which we observe in the images which mirrors reflect to us,—that however great the mirrors be, they do not make the images larger than the objects placed before them, be they ever so small; but in small mirrors, such as the pupil of the eye, although a large surface be placed over against them, a very small image is formed, proportioned to the size of the mirror. Therefore if the mirrors be reduced in size, the images reflected in them are also reduced; but it is not possible for the images to be enlarged by enlarging the mirrors. Surely there is in this something which might reward further investigation; but meanwhile, I must sleep. Moreover, if I seem to Nebridius to be happy, it is not because I seek, but because perchance I have found something. What, then, is that something? Is it that chain of reasoning which I am wont so to caress as if it were my sole treasure, and in which perhaps I take too much delight?

4. “Of what parts do we consist?” “Of soul and body.” “Which of these is the nobler?” “Doubtless the soul.” “What do men praise in the body?” “Nothing that I see but comeliness.” “And what is comeliness of body?” “Harmony of parts in the form, together with a certain agreeableness of colour.” “Is this comeliness better where it is true or where it is illusive?” “Unquestionably it is better where it is true.” “And where is it found true? In the soul.” “The soul, therefore, is to be loved more than the body; but in what part of the soul does this truth reside?” “In the mind and understanding.” “With what has the understanding to contend?” “With the senses.” “Must we then resist the senses with all our might?” “Certainly.” “What, then, if the things with which the senses acquaint us give us pleasure?” “We must prevent them from doing so.” “How?” “By acquiring the habit of doing without them, and desiring better things.” “But if the soul die, what then?” “Why, then truth dies, or intelligence is not truth, or intelligence is not a part of the soul, or that which has some part immortal is liable to die: conclusions all of which I demonstrated long ago in my

Soliloquies to be absurd because impossible; and I am firmly persuaded that this is the case, but somehow through the influence of custom in the experience of evils we are terrified, and hesitate. But even granting, finally, that the soul dies, which I do not see to be in any way possible, it remains nevertheless true that a happy life does not consist in the evanescent joy which sensible objects can yield: this I have pondered deliberately, and proved.”

Perhaps it is on account of reasonings such as these that I have been judged by my own Nebridius to be, if not absolutely happy, at least in a sense happy. Let me also judge myself to be happy: for what do I lose thereby, or why should I grudge to think well of my own estate? Thus I talked with myself, then prayed according to my custom, and fell asleep.

5. These things I have thought good to write to you. For it gratifies me that you should thank me when I write freely to you whatever crosses my mind; and to whom can I more willingly write nonsense than to one whom I cannot displease? But if it depends upon fortune whether one man love another or not, look to it, I pray you, how can I be justly called happy when I am so elated with joy by fortune’s favours, and avowedly desire that my store of such good things may be largely increased? For those who are most truly wise, and whom alone it is right to pronounce happy, have maintained that fortune’s favours ought not to be the objects of either fear or desire.

Now here I used the word “cupi:” will you tell me whether it should be “cupi” or “cupiri?” And I am glad this has come in the way, for I wish you to instruct me in the inflexion of this verb “cupio,” since, when I compare similar verbs with it, my uncertainty as to the proper inflexion increases. For “cupio” is like “fugio,” “sapio,” “jacio,” “capio;” but whether the infinitive mood is “fugiri” or “fugi,” “sapiri” or “sapi,” I do not know. I might regard “jaci” and “capi” as parallel instances answering my question as to the others, were I not afraid lest some grammarian should “catch” and “throw” me like a ball in sport wherever he pleased, by reminding me that the form of the supines “jactum” and “captum” is different from that found in the other verbs “fugitum,” “cupitum” and “sapitum.” As to these three words, moreover, I am likewise ignorant whether the penultimate is to be pronounced long and with circumflex accent, or without accent and short. I would like to provoke you to write a reasonably long letter. I beg you to let me have what it will take some time to read. For it is far beyond my power to express the pleasure which I find in reading what you write.

LETTER IV

(A.D. 387.)

To Nebridius Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. It is very wonderful how completely I was taken by surprise, when, on searching to discover which of your letters still remained unanswered, I found only one which held me as your debtor,—that, namely, in which you request me to tell you how far in this my leisure, which you suppose to be great, and which you desire to share with me, I am making progress in learning to discriminate those things in nature with which the senses are conversant, from those about which the understanding is employed. But I suppose it is not unknown to you, that if one becomes more and more fully imbued with false opinions, the more fully and intimately one exercises himself in them, the corresponding effect is still more easily produced in the mind by contact with truth. Nevertheless my progress, like our physical development, is so gradual, that it is difficult to define its steps distinctly, just as though there is a very great difference between a boy and a young man, no one, if daily questioned from his boyhood onward, could at any one date say that now he was no more a boy, but a young man.

2. I would not have you, however, so to apply this illustration as to suppose that, in the vigour of a more powerful understanding, I have arrived as it were at the beginning of the soul’s manhood. For I am yet but a boy, though perhaps, as we say, a promising boy, rather than a good-for-nothing. For although the eyes of my mind are for the most part perturbed and oppressed by the distractions produced by blows inflicted through things sensible, they are revived and raised up again by that brief process of reasoning: “The mind and intelligence are superior to the eyes and the common faculty of sight; which could not be the case unless the things which we perceive by intelligence were more real than the things which we perceive by the faculty of sight.” I pray you to help me in examining whether any valid

objection can be brought against this reasoning. By it, meanwhile, I find myself restored and refreshed; and when, after calling upon God for help, I begin to rise to Him, and to those things which are in the highest sense real, I am at times satisfied with such a grasp and enjoyment of the things which eternally abide, that I sometimes wonder at my requiring any such reasoning as I have above given to persuade me of the reality of those things which in my soul are as truly present to me as I am to myself.

Please look over your letters yourself, for I own that you will be in this matter at greater pains than I, in order to make sure that I am not perchance unwittingly still owing an answer to any of them: for I can hardly believe that I have so soon got from under the burden of debts which I used to reckon as so numerous; albeit, at the same time, I cannot doubt that you have had some letters from me to which I have as yet received no reply.

LETTER V

(A.D. 388.)

To Augustin Nebridius Sends Greeting.

Is it true, my beloved Augustin, that you are spending your strength and patience on the affairs of your fellow-citizens (in Thagaste), and that the leisure from distractions which you so earnestly desired is still withheld from you? Who, I would like to know, are the men who thus take advantage of your good nature, and trespass on your time? I believe that they do not know what you love most and long for. Have you no friend at hand to tell them what your heart is set upon? Will neither Romanianus nor Lucinianus do this? Let them hear me at all events. I will proclaim aloud; I will protest that God is the supreme object of your love, and that your heart’s desire is to be His servant, and to cleave to Him. Fain would I persuade you to come to my home in the country, and rest here; I shall not be afraid of being denounced as a robber by those countrymen of yours, whom you love only too well, and by whom you are too warmly loved in return.

LETTER VI

(A.D. 389.)

To Augustin Nebridius Sends Greeting.

1. Your letters I have great pleasure in keeping as carefully as my own eyes. For they are great, not indeed in length, but in the greatness of the subjects discussed in them, and in the great ability with which the truth in regard to these subjects is demonstrated. They shall bring to my ear the voice of Christ, and the teaching of Plato and of Plotinus. To me, therefore, they shall ever be pleasant to hear, because of their eloquent style; easy to read, because of their brevity; and profitable to understand, because of the wisdom which they contain. Be at pains, therefore, to teach me everything which, to your judgment, commends itself as holy or good. As to this letter in particular, answer it when you are ready to discuss a subtle problem in regard to memory, and the images presented by the imagination. My opinion is, that although there can be such images independently of memory, there is no exercise of memory independently of such images. You will say, What, then, takes place when memory is exercised in recalling an act of understanding or of thought? I answer this objection by saying, that such acts can be recalled by memory for this reason, that in the supposed act of understanding or of thought we gave birth to something conditioned by space or by time, which is of such a nature that it can be reproduced by the imagination: for either we connected the use of words with the exercise of the understanding and with the thoughts, and words are conditioned by time, and thus fall within the domain of the senses or of the imaginative faculty; or if we did not join words with the mental act, our intellect at all events experienced in the act of thinking something which was of such a nature as could produce in the mind that which, by the aid of the imaginative faculty, memory could recall. These things I have stated, as usual, without much consideration, and in a somewhat confused manner: do you examine them, and, rejecting what is false, acquaint me by letter with what you hold as the truth on this subject.

2. Listen also to this question: Why, I should like to know, do we not affirm that the phantasy [imaginative faculty] derives all its images from itself, rather than say that it receives these from the senses? For it is possible that, as the intellectual faculty of the soul is indebted to the senses, not for the objects upon which the intellect is exercised, but rather for the admonition

arousing it to see these objects, in the same manner the imaginative faculty may be indebted to the senses, not for the images which are the objects upon which it is exercised, but rather for the admonition arousing it to contemplate these images. And perhaps it is in this way that we are to explain the fact that the imagination perceives some objects which the senses never perceived, whereby it is shown that it has all its images within itself, and from itself. You will answer me what you think of this question also.

LETTER VII

(A.D. 389.)

To Nebridius Augustin Sends Greeting.

Chap. I

Memory may be exercised independently of such images as are presented by the imagination

1. I shall dispense with a formal preface, and to the subject on which you have for some time wished to hear my opinion I shall address myself at once; and this I do the more willingly, because the statement must take some time.

It seems to you that there can be no exercise of memory without images, or the apprehension of some objects presented by the imagination, which you have been pleased to call “phantasiae.” For my part, I entertain a different opinion. In the first place, we must observe that the things which we remember are not always things which are passing away, but are for the most part things which are permanent. Wherefore, seeing that the function of memory is to retain hold of what belongs to time past, it is certain that it embraces on the one hand things which leave us, and on the other hand things from which we go away. When, for example, I remember my father, the object which memory recalls is one which has left me, and is now no more; but when I remember Carthage, the object is in this case one which still exists, and which I have left. In both cases, however, memory retains what belongs to past time. For I remember that man and this city, not by seeing them now, but by having seen them in the past.

2. You perhaps ask me at this point, Why bring forward these facts? And you may do this the more readily, because you observe that in both the examples quoted the object remembered can come to my memory in no other way than by the apprehension of such an image as you affirm to be always necessary. For my purpose it suffices meanwhile to have proved in this way that memory can be spoken of as embracing also those things which have not yet passed away: and now mark attentively how this supports my opinion. Some men raise a groundless objection to that most famous theory invented by Socrates, according to which the things that we learn are not introduced to our minds as new, but brought back to memory by a process of recollection; supporting their objection by affirming that memory has to do only with things which have passed away, whereas, as Plato himself has taught, those things which we learn by the exercise of the understanding are permanent, and being imperishable, cannot be numbered among things which have passed away: the mistake into which they have fallen arising obviously from this, that they do not consider that it is only the mental act of apprehension by which we have discerned these things which belongs to the past; and that it is because we have, in the stream of mental activity, left these behind, and begun in a variety of ways to attend to other things, that we require to return to them by an effort of recollection, that is, by memory. If, therefore, passing over other examples, we fix our thoughts upon eternity itself as something which is for ever permanent, and consider, on the one hand, that it does not require any image fashioned by the imagination as the vehicle by which it may be introduced into the mind; and, on the other hand, that it could never enter the mind otherwise than by our remembering it,—we shall see that, in regard to some things at least, there can be an exercise of memory without any image of the thing remembered being presented by the imagination.

Chap. II

The mind is destitute of images presented by the imagination, so long as it has not been informed by the senses of external things

3. In the second place, as to your opinion that it is possible for the mind to form to itself images of material things independently of the services of the bodily senses, this is refuted by the following argument:—If the mind is able, before it uses the body as its instrument in perceiving material objects, to form to itself the images of these; and if, as no sane man can doubt, the mind received more reliable and correct impressions before it was involved in the illusions which the senses produce, it follows that we must attribute greater value to the impressions of men asleep than of men awake, and of men insane than of those who are free from such mental disorder: for they are, in these states of mind, impressed by the same kind of images as impressed them before they were indebted for information to these most deceptive messengers, the senses; and thus, either the sun which they see must be more real than the sun which is seen by men in their sound judgment and in their waking hours, or that which is an illusion must be better than what is real. But if these conclusions, my dear Nebridius, are, as they obviously are, wholly absurd, it is demonstrated that the image of which you speak is nothing else than a blow inflicted by the senses, the function of which in connection with these images is not, as you write, the mere suggestion or admonition occasioning their formation by the mind within itself, but the actual bringing in to the mind, or, to speak more definitely, impressing upon it of the illusions to which through the senses we are subject. The difficulty which you feel as to the question how it comes to pass that we can conceive in thought, faces and forms which we have never seen, is one which proves the acuteness of your mind. I shall therefore do what may extend this letter beyond the usual length; not, however, beyond the length which you will approve, for I believe that the greater the fulness with which I write to you, the more welcome shall my letter be.

4. I perceive that all those images which you as well as many others call phantasiae, may be most conveniently and accurately divided into three classes, according as they originate with the senses, or the imagination, or the faculty of reason. Examples of the first class are when the mind forms within itself and presents to me the image of your face, or of Carthage, or of our departed friend Verecundus, or of any other thing at present or formerly existing, which I have myself seen and perceived. Under the second class

come all things which we imagine to have been, or to be so and so: e.g. when, for the sake of illustration in discourse, we ourselves suppose things which have no existence, but which are not prejudicial to truth; or when we call up to our own minds a lively conception of the things described while we read history, or hear, or compose, or refuse to believe fabulous narrations. Thus, according to my own fancy, and as it may occur to my own mind, I picture to myself the appearance of AEneas, or of Medea with her team of winged dragons, or of Chremes, or Parmeno. To this class belong also those things which have been brought forward as true, either by wise men wrapping up some truth in the folds of such inventions, or by foolish men building up various kinds of superstition; e.g. the Phlegethon of Tortures, and the five caves of the nation of darkness, and the North Pole supporting the heavens, and a thousand other prodigies of poets and of heretics. Moreover, we often say, when carrying on a discussion, "Suppose that three worlds, such as the one which we inhabit, were placed one above another;" or, "Suppose the earth to be enclosed within a four-sided figure," and so on: for all such things we picture to ourselves, and imagine according to the mood and direction of our thoughts. As for the third class of images, it has to do chiefly with numbers and measure; which are found partly in the nature of things, as when the figure of the entire world is discovered, and an image consequent upon this discovery is formed in the mind of one thinking upon it; and partly in sciences, as in geometrical figures and musical harmonies, and in the infinite variety of numerals: which, although they are, as I think, true in themselves as objects of the understanding, are nevertheless the causes of illusive exercises of the imagination, the misleading tendency of which reason itself can only with difficulty withstand; although it is not easy to preserve even the science of reasoning free from this evil, since in our logical divisions and conclusions we form to ourselves, so to speak, calculi or counters to facilitate the process of reasoning.

5. In this whole forest of images, I believe that you do not think that those of the first class belong to the mind previous to the time when they find access through the senses. On this we need not argue any further. As to the other two classes a question might reasonably be raised, were it not manifest that the mind is less liable to illusions when it has not yet been

subjected to the deceptive influence of the senses, and of things sensible; and yet who can doubt that these images are much more unreal than those with which the senses acquaint us? For the things which we suppose, or believe, or picture to ourselves, are in every point wholly unreal; and the things which we perceive by sight and the other senses, are, as you see, far more near to the truth than these products of imagination. As to the third class, whatever extension of body in space I figure to myself in my mind by means of an image of this class, although it seems as if a process of thought had produced this image by scientific reasonings which did not admit of error, nevertheless I prove it to be deceptive, these same reasonings serving in turn to detect its falsity. Thus it is wholly impossible for me to believe [as, accepting your opinion, I must believe] that the soul, while not yet using the bodily senses, and not yet rudely assaulted through these fallacious instruments by that which is mortal and fleeting, lay under such ignominious subjection to illusions.

Chap. III

Objection answered

6. “Whence then comes our capacity of conceiving in thought things which we have never seen?” What, think you, can be the cause of this, but a certain faculty of diminution and addition which is innate in the mind, and which it cannot but carry with it whithersoever it turns (a faculty which may be observed especially in relation to numbers)? By the exercise of this faculty, if the image of a crow, for example, which is very familiar to the eye, be set before the eye of the mind, as it were, it may be brought, by the taking away of some features and the addition of others, to almost any image such as never was seen by the eye. By this faculty also it comes to pass, that when men’s minds habitually ponder such things, figures of this kind force their way as it were unbidden into their thoughts. Therefore it is possible for the mind, by taking away, as has been said, some things from objects which the senses have brought within its knowledge, and by adding some things, to produce in the exercise of imagination that which, as a whole, was never within the observation of any of the senses; but the parts of it had all been within such observation, though found in a variety of different things: e.g., when we were boys, born and brought up in an inland

district, we could already form some idea of the sea, after we had seen water even in a small cup; but the flavour of strawberries and of cherries could in no wise enter our conceptions before we tasted these fruits in Italy. Hence it is also, that those who have been born blind know not what to answer when they are asked about light and colours. For those who have never perceived coloured objects by the senses are not capable of having the images of such objects in the mind.

7. And let it not appear to you strange, that though the mind is present in and intermingled with all those images which in the nature of things are figured or can be pictured by us, these are not evolved by the mind from within itself before it has received them through the senses from without. For we also find that, along with anger, joy, and other such emotions, we produce changes in our bodily aspect and complexion, before our thinking faculty even conceives that we have the power of producing such images [or indications of our feeling]. These follow upon the experience of the emotion in those wonderful ways (especially deserving your attentive consideration), which consist in the repeated action and reaction of hidden numbers in the soul, without the intervention of any image of illusive material things. Whence I would have you understand—perceiving as you do that so many movements of the mind go on wholly independently of the images in question—that of all the movements of the mind by which it may conceivably attain to the knowledge of bodies, every other is more likely than the process of creating forms of sensible things by unaided thought, because I do not think that it is capable of any such conceptions before it uses the body and the senses.

Wherefore, my well beloved and most amiable brother, by the friendship which unites us, and by our faith in the divine law itself, I would warn you never to link yourself in friendship with those shadows of the realm of darkness, and to break off without delay whatever friendship may have been begun between you and them. That resistance to the sway of the bodily senses which it is our most sacred duty to practise, is wholly abandoned if we treat with fondness and flattery the blows and wounds which the senses inflict upon us.

LETTER VIII

(A.D. 389.)

To Augustin Nebridius Sends Greeting.

1. As I am in haste to come to the subject of my letter, I dispense with any preface or introduction. When at any time it pleases higher (by which I mean heavenly) powers to reveal anything to us by dreams in our sleep, how is this done, my dear Augustin, or what is the method which they use? What, I say, is their method, i.e. by what art or magic, by what agency or enchantments, do they accomplish this? Do they by their thoughts influence our minds, so that we also have the same images presented in our thoughts? Do they bring before us, and exhibit as actually done in their own body or in their own imagination, the things which we dream? But if they actually do these things in their own body, it follows that, in order to our seeing what they thus do, we must be endowed with other bodily eyes beholding what passes within while we sleep. If, however, they are not assisted by their bodies in producing the effects in question, but frame such things in their own imaginative faculty, and thus impress our imaginations, thereby giving visible form to what we dream; why is it, I ask, that I cannot compel your imagination to reproduce those dreams which I have myself first formed by my imagination? I have undoubtedly the faculty of imagination, and it is capable of presenting to my own mind the picture of whatever I please; and yet I do not thereby cause any dream in you, although I see that even our bodies have the power of originating dreams in us. For by means of the bond of sympathy uniting it to the soul, the body compels us in strange ways to repeat or reproduce by imagination anything which it has once experienced. Thus often in sleep, if we are thirsty, we dream that we drink; and if we are hungry, we seem to ourselves to be eating; and many other instances there are in which, by some mode of exchange, so to speak, things are transferred through the imagination from the body to the soul.

Be not surprised at the want of elegance and subtlety with which these questions are here stated to you; consider the obscurity in which the subject is involved, and the inexperience of the writer; be it yours to do your utmost to supply his deficiencies.

LETTER IX

(A.D. 389.)

To Nebridius Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. Although you know my mind well, you are perhaps not aware how much I long to enjoy your society. This great blessing, however, God will some day bestow on me. I have read your letter, so genuine in its utterances, in which you complain of your being in solitude, and, as it were, forsaken by your friends, in whose society you found the sweetest charm of life. But what else can I suggest to you than that which I am persuaded is already your exercise? Commune with your own soul, and raise it up, as far as you are able, unto God. For in Him you hold us also by a firmer bond, not by means of bodily images, which we must meanwhile be content to use in remembering each other, but by means of that faculty of thought through which we realize the fact of our separation from each other.

2. In considering your letters, in answering all of which I have certainly had to answer questions of no small difficulty and importance, I was not a little stunned by the one in which you ask me by what means certain thoughts and dreams are put into our minds by higher powers or by superhuman agents. The question is a great one, and, as your own prudence must convince you, would require, in order to its being satisfactorily answered, not a mere letter, but a full oral discussion or a whole treatise. I shall try, however, knowing as I do your talents, to throw out a few germs of thought which may shed light on this question, in order that you may either complete the exhaustive treatment of the subject by your own efforts, or at least not despair of the possibility of this important matter being investigated with satisfactory results.

3. It is my opinion that every movement of the mind affects in some degree the body. We know that this is patent even to our senses, dull and sluggish though they are, when the movements of the mind are somewhat vehement, as when we are angry, or sad, or joyful. Whence we may conjecture that, in like manner, when thought is busy, although no bodily effect of the mental act is discernible by us, there may be some such effect discernible by beings of aerial or etherial essence whose perceptive faculty is in the highest

degree acute,—so much so, that, in comparison with it, our faculties are scarcely worthy to be called perceptive. Therefore these footprints of its motion, so to speak, which the mind impresses on the body, may perchance not only remain, but remain as it were with the force of a habit; and it may be that, when these are secretly stirred and played upon, they bear thoughts and dreams into our minds, according to the pleasure of the person moving or touching them: and this is done with marvellous facility. For if, as is manifest, the attainments of our earth-born and sluggish bodies in the department of exercise, e.g. in the playing of musical instruments, dancing on the tight-rope, etc., are almost incredible, it is by no means unreasonable to suppose that beings which act with the powers of an aerial or etherial body upon our bodies, and are by the constitution of their natures able to pass unhindered through these bodies, should be capable of much greater quickness in moving whatever they wish, while we, though not perceiving what they do, are nevertheless affected by the results of their activity. We have a somewhat parallel instance in the fact that we do not perceive how it is that superfluity of bile impels us to more frequent outbursts of passionate feeling; and yet it does produce this effect, while this superfluity of bile is itself an effect of our yielding to such passionate feelings.

4. If, however, you hesitate to accept this example as a parallel one, when it is thus cursorily stated by me, turn it over in your thoughts as fully as you can. The mind, if it be continually obstructed by some difficulty in the way of doing and accomplishing what it desires, is thereby made continually angry. For anger, so far as I can judge of its nature, seems to me to be a tumultuous eagerness to take out of the way those things which restrict our freedom of action. Hence it is that usually we vent our anger not only on men, but on such a thing, for example, as the pen with which we write, bruising or breaking it in our passion; and so does the gambler with his dice, the artist with his pencil, and every man with the instrument which he may be using, if he thinks that he is in some way thwarted by it. Now medical men themselves tell us that by these frequent fits of anger bile is increased. But, on the other hand, when the bile is increased, we are easily, and almost without any provocation whatever, made angry. Thus the effect which the mind has by its movement produced upon the body, is capable in its turn of moving the mind again.

5. These things might be treated at very great length, and our knowledge of the subject might be brought to greater certainty and fulness by a large induction from relevant facts. But take along with this letter the one which I sent you lately concerning images and memory, and study it somewhat more carefully; for it was manifest to me, from your reply, that it had not been fully understood. When, to the statements now before you, you add the portion of that letter in which I spoke of a certain natural faculty whereby the mind does in thought add to or take from any object as it pleases, you will see that it is possible for us both in dreams and in waking thoughts to conceive the images of bodily forms which we have never seen.

LETTER X

(A.D. 389.)

To Nebridius Augustin Sends Greeting,

1. No question of yours ever kept me so disturbed while reflecting upon it, as the remark which I read in your last letter, in which you chide me for being indifferent as to making arrangements by which it may be possible for us to live together. A grave charge, and one which, were it not unfounded, would be most perilous. But since satisfactory reasons seem to prove that we can live as we would wish to do better here than at Carthage, or even in the country, I am wholly at a loss, my dear Nebridius, what to do with you. Shall such a conveyance as may best suit your state of health be sent from us to you? Our friend Lucinianus informs me that you can be carried without injury in a palanquin. But I consider, on the other hand, how your mother, who could not bear your absence from her when you were in health, will be much less able to bear it when you are ill. Shall I myself then come to you? This I cannot do, for there are some here who cannot accompany me, and whom I would think it a crime for me to leave. For you already can pass your time agreeably when left to the resources of our own mind; but in their case the object of present efforts is that they may attain to this. Shall I go and come frequently, and so be now with you, now with them? But this is neither to live together, nor to live as we would wish to do. For the journey is not a short one, but so great at least that the attempt to perform it frequently would prevent our gaining the wished-for leisure. To this is

added the bodily weakness through which, as you know, I cannot accomplish what I wish, unless I cease wholly to wish what is beyond my strength.

2. To occupy one’s thoughts throughout life with journeyings which you cannot perform tranquilly and easily, is not the part of a man whose thoughts are engaged with that last journey which is called death, and which alone, as you understand, really deserves serious consideration. God has indeed granted to some few men whom He has ordained to bear rule over churches, the capacity of not only awaiting calmly, but even desiring eagerly, that last journey, while at the same time they can meet without disquietude the toils of those other journeyings; but I do not believe that either to those who are urged to accept such duties through desire for worldly honour, or to those who, although occupying a private station, covet a busy life, so great a boon is given as that amid bustle and agitating meetings, and journeyings hither and thither, they should acquire that familiarity with death which we seek: for both of these classes had it in their power to seek edification in retirement. Or if this be not true, I am, I shall not say the most foolish of all men, but at least the most indolent, since I find it impossible, without the aid of such an interval of relief from care and toil, to taste and relish that only real good. Believe me, there is need of much withdrawal of oneself from the tumult of the things which are passing away, in order that there may be formed in man, not through insensibility, not through presumption, not through vainglory, not through superstitious blindness, the ability to say, “I fear nought.” By this means also is attained that enduring joy with which no pleasurable excitement found elsewhere is in any degree to be compared.

3. But if such a life does not fall to the lot of man, how is it that calmness of spirit is our occasional experience? Wherefore is this experience more frequent, in proportion to the devotion with which any one in his inmost soul worships God? Why does this tranquillity for the most part abide with one in the business of life, when he goes forth to its duties from that sanctuary? Why are there times in which, speaking, we do not fear death, and, silent, even desire it? I say to you—for I would not say it to every one—to you whose visits to the upper world I know well, Will you, who have

often felt how sweetly the soul lives when it dies to all mere bodily affections, deny that it is possible for the whole life of man to become at length so exempt from fear, that he may be justly called wise? Or will you venture to affirm that this state of mind, on which reason leans has ever been your lot, except when you were shut up to commune with your own heart? Since these things are so, you see that it remains only for you to share with me the labour of devising how we may arrange to live together. You know much better than I do what is to be done in regard to your mother, whom your brother Victor, of course, does not leave alone. I will write no more, lest I turn your mind away from considering this proposal.

LETTER XI

(A.D. 389.)

To Nebridius Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. When the question, which has long been brought before me by you with something even of friendly chiding, as to the way in which we might live together, was seriously disturbing my mind, and I had resolved to write to you, and to beg an answer from you bearing exclusively on this subject, and to employ my pen on no other theme pertaining to our studies, in order that the discussion of this matter between us might be brought to an end, the very short and indisputable conclusion stated in your letter lately received at once delivered me from all further solicitude; your statement being to the effect that on this matter there ought to be no further deliberation, because as soon as it is in my power to come to you, or in your power to come to me, we shall feel alike constrained to improve the opportunity. My mind being thus, as I have said, at rest, I looked over all your letters, that I might see what yet remained unanswered. In these I have found so many questions, that even if they were easily solved, they would by their mere number more than exhaust the time and talents of any man. But they are so difficult, that if the answering of even one of them were laid upon me, I would not hesitate to confess myself heavily burdened. The design of this introductory statement is to make you desist for a little from asking new questions until I am free from debt, and that you confine yourself in your answer to the statement of your opinion of my replies. At the same time, I

know that it is to my own loss that I postpone for even a little while the participation of your divine thoughts.

2. Hear, therefore, the view which I hold concerning the mystery of the Incarnation which the religion wherein we have been instructed commends to our faith and knowledge as having been accomplished in order to our salvation; which question I have chosen to discuss in preference to all the rest, although it is not the most easily answered. For those questions which are proposed by you concerning this world do not appear to me to have a sufficiently direct reference to the obtaining of a happy life; and whatever pleasure they yield when investigated, there is reason to fear lest they take up time which ought to be devoted to better things. With regard, then, to the subject which I have at this time undertaken, first of all I am surprised that you were perplexed by the question why not the Father, but the Son, is said to have become incarnate, and yet were not also perplexed by the same question in regard to the Holy Spirit. For the union of Persons in the Trinity is in the Catholic faith set forth and believed, and by a few holy and blessed ones understood, to be so inseparable, that whatever is done by the Trinity must be regarded as being done by the Father, and by the Son, and by the Holy Spirit together; and that nothing is done by the Father which is, not also done by the Son and by the Holy Spirit; and nothing done by the Holy Spirit which is not also done by the Father and by the Son; and nothing done by the Son which is not also done by the Father and by the Holy Spirit. From which it seems to follow as a consequence, that the whole Trinity assumed human nature; for if the Son did so, but the Father and the Spirit did not, there is something in which they act separately. Why, then, in our mysteries and sacred symbols, is the Incarnation ascribed only to the Son? This is a very great question, so difficult, and on a subject so vast, that it is impossible either to give a sufficiently clear statement, or to support it by satisfactory proofs. I venture, however, since I am writing to you, to indicate rather than explain what my sentiments are, in order that you, from your talents and our intimacy, through which you thoroughly know me, may for yourself fill up the outline.

3. There is no nature, Nebridius—and, indeed, there is no substance—which does not contain in itself and exhibit these three things: first, that it

is; next, that it is this or that; and third, that as far as possible it remains as it is. The first of these three presents the original cause of nature from which all things exist; the second presents the form according to which all things are fashioned and formed in a particular way; the third presents a certain permanence, so to speak, in which all things are. Now, if it be possible that a thing can be, and yet not be this or that, and not remain in its own generic form; or that a thing can be this or that, and yet not be, and not remain in its own generic form, so far as it is possible for it to do so; or that a thing can remain in its own generic form according to the force belonging to it, and yet not be, and not be this or that,—then it is also possible that in that Trinity one Person can do something in which the others have no part. But if you see that whatever is must forthwith be this or that, and must remain so far as possible in its own generic form, you see also that these Three do nothing in which all have not a part. I see that as yet I have only treated a portion of this question, which makes its solution difficult. But I wished to open up briefly to you—if, indeed, I have succeeded in this—how great in the system of Catholic truth is the doctrine of the inseparability of the Persons of the Trinity, and how difficult to be understood.

4. Hear now how that which disquiets your mind may disquiet it no more. The mode of existence (Species—the second of the three above named) which is properly ascribed to the Son, has to do with training, and with a certain art, if I may use that word in regard to such things, and with the exercise of intellect, by which the mind itself is moulded in its thoughts upon things. Therefore, since by that assumption of human nature the work accomplished was the effective presentation to us of a certain training in the right way of living, and exemplification of that which is commanded, under the majesty and perspicuousness of certain sentences, it is not without reason that all this is ascribed to the Son. For in many things which I leave your own reflection and prudence to suggest, although the constituent elements be many, some one nevertheless stands out above the rest, and therefore not unreasonably claims a right of possession, as it were, of the whole for itself: as, e.g., in the three kinds of questions above mentioned, although the question raised be whether a thing is or not, this involves necessarily also both what it is (this or that), for of course it cannot be at all unless it be something, and whether it ought to be approved of or

disapproved of, for whatever is is a fit subject for some opinion as to its quality; in like manner, when the question raised is what a thing is, this necessarily involves both that it is, and that its quality may be tried by some standard; and in the same way, when the question raised is what is the quality of a thing, this necessarily involves that that thing is, and is something, since all things are inseparably joined to themselves;—nevertheless, the question in each of the above cases takes its name not from all the three, but from the special point towards which the inquirer directed his attention. Now there is a certain training necessary for men, by which they might be instructed and formed after some model. We cannot say, however, regarding that which is accomplished in men by this training, either that it does not exist, or that it is not a thing to be desired [i.e. we cannot say what it is, without involving an affirmation both of its existence and of its quality]; but we seek first to know what it is, for in knowing this we know that by which we may infer that it is something, and in which we may remain. Therefore the first thing necessary was, that a certain rule and pattern of training be plainly exhibited; and this was done by the divinely appointed method of the Incarnation, which is properly to be ascribed to the Son, in order that from it should follow both our knowledge, through the Son, of the Father Himself, i.e. of the one first principle whence all things have their being, and a certain inward and ineffable charm and sweetness of remaining in that knowledge, and of despising all mortal things,—a gift and work which is properly ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Wherefore, although in all things the Divine Persons act perfectly in common, and without possibility of separation, nevertheless their operations behoved to be exhibited in such a way as to be distinguished from each other, on account of the weakness which is in us, who have fallen from unity into variety. For no one ever succeeds in raising another to the height on which he himself stands, unless he stoop somewhat towards the level which that other occupies.

You have here a letter which may not indeed put an end to your disquietude in regard to this doctrine, but which may set your own thoughts to work upon a kind of solid foundation; so that, with the talents which I well know you to possess, you may follow, and, by the piety in which especially we must be stedfast, may apprehend that which still remains to be discovered.

LETTER XII

(A.D. 389.)

Omitted, as only a fragment of the text of the letter is preserved.

LETTER XIII

(A.D. 389.)

To Nebridius Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. I do not feel pleasure in writing of the subjects which I was wont to discuss; I am not at liberty to write of new themes. I see that the one would not suit you, and that for the other I have no leisure. For, since I left you, neither opportunity nor leisure has been given me for taking up and revolving the things which we are accustomed to investigate together. The winter nights are indeed too long, and they are not entirely spent in sleep by me; but when I have leisure, other subjects [than those which we used to discuss] present themselves as having a prior claim on my consideration. What, then, am I to do? Am I to be to you as one dumb, who cannot speak, or as one silent, who will not speak? Neither of these things is desired, either by you or by me. Come, then, and bear what the end of the night succeeded in eliciting from me during the time in which it was devoted to following out the subject of this letter.

2. You cannot but remember that a question often agitated between us, and which kept us agitated, breathless, and excited, was one concerning a body or kind of body, which belongs perpetually to the soul, and which, as you recollect, is called by some its vehicle. It is manifest that this thing, if it moves from place to place, is not cognisable by the understanding. But whatever is not cognisable by the understanding cannot be understood. It is not, however, utterly impossible to form an opinion approximating to the truth concerning a thing which is outside the province of the intellect, if it lies within the province of the senses. But when a thing is beyond the province of the intellect and of the senses, the speculations to which it gives rise are too baseless and trifling; and the thing of which we treat now is of this nature, if indeed it exists. Why, then, I ask, do we not finally dismiss

this unimportant question, and with prayer to God raise ourselves to the supreme serenity of the Highest existing nature?

3. Perhaps you may here reply: “Although bodies cannot be perceived by the understanding, we can perceive with the understanding many things concerning material objects; e.g. we know that matter exists. For who will deny this, or affirm that in this we have to do with the probable rather than the true? Thus, though matter itself lies among things probable, it is a most indisputable truth that something like it exists in nature. Matter itself is therefore pronounced to be an object cognisable by the senses; but the assertion of its existence is pronounced to be a truth cognisable by the intellect, for it cannot be perceived otherwise. And so this unknown body, about which we inquire, upon which the soul depends for its power to move from place to place, may possibly be cognisable by senses more powerful than we possess, though not by ours; and at all events, the question whether it exists is one which may be solved by our understandings.”

4. If you intend to say this, let me remind you that the mental act we call understanding is done by us in two ways: either by the mind and reason within itself, as when we understand that the intellect itself exists; or by occasion of suggestion from the senses, as in the case above mentioned, when we understand that matter exists. In the first of these two kinds of acts we understand through ourselves, i.e. by asking instruction of God concerning that which is within us; but in the second we understand by asking instruction of God regarding that of which intimation is given to us by the body and the senses. If these things be found true, no one can by his understanding discover whether that body of which you speak exists or not, but the person to whom his senses have given some intimation concerning it. If there be any living creature to which the senses give such intimation, since we at least see plainly that we are not among the number, I regard the conclusion established which I began to state a little ago, that the question [about the vehicle of the soul] is one which does not concern us. I wish you would consider this over and over again, and take care to let me know the product of your consideration.

LETTER XIV

(A.D. 389.)

To Nebridius Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. I have preferred to reply to your last letter, not because I undervalued your earlier questions, or enjoyed them less, but because in answering you I undertake a greater task than you think. For although you enjoined me to send you a superlatively long letter, I have not so much leisure as you imagine, and as you know I have always wished to have, and do still wish. Ask not why it is so: for I could more easily enumerate the things by which I am hindered, than explain why I am hindered by them.

2. You ask why it is that you and I, though separate individuals, do many things which are the same, but the sun does not the same as the other heavenly bodies. Of this thing I must attempt to explain the cause. Now, if you and I do the same things, the sun also does many things which the other heavenly bodies do: if in some things it does not the same as the others, this is equally true of you and me. I walk, and you walk; it is moved, and they are moved: I keep awake, and you keep awake; it shines, and they shine: I discuss, and you discuss; it goes its round, and they go their rounds. And yet there is no fitness of comparison between mental acts and things visible. If, however, as is reasonable, you compare mind with mind, the heavenly bodies, if they have any mind, must be regarded as even more uniform than men in their thoughts or contemplations, or whatever term may more conveniently express such activity in them. Moreover, as to the movements of the body, you will find, if you reflect on this with your wonted attention, that it is impossible for precisely the same thing to be done by two persons. When we walk together, do you think that we both necessarily do the same thing? Far be such thought from one of your wisdom! For the one of us who walks on the side towards the north, must either, in taking the same step as the other, get in advance of him, or walk more slowly than he does. Neither of these things is perceptible by the senses; but you, if I am not mistaken, look to what we know by the understanding rather than to what we learn by the senses. If, however, we move from the pole towards the south, joined and clinging to each other as closely as possible, and treading on a sheet of marble or even ivory smooth and level, a perfect identity is as unattainable

in our motions as in the throbbings of our pulses, or in our figures and faces. Put us aside, and place in our stead the sons of Glaucus, and you gain nothing by this substitution: for even in these twins so perfectly resembling each other, the necessity for the motions of each being peculiarly his own, is as great as the necessity for their birth as separate individuals.

3. You will perhaps say: “The difference in this case is one which only reason can discover; but the difference between the sun and the other heavenly bodies is to the senses also patent.” If you insist upon my looking to their difference in magnitude, you know how many things may be said as to the distances by which they are removed from us, and into how great uncertainty that which you speak of as obvious may thus be brought back. I may, however, concede that the actual size corresponds with the apparent size of the heavenly bodies, for I myself believe this; and I ask you to show me any one whose senses were incapable of remarking the prodigious stature of Naevius, exceeding by a foot that of the tallest man. By the way, I think you have been just too eager to discover some man to match him; and when you did not succeed in the search, have resolved to make me stretch out my letter so as to rival his dimensions. If therefore even on earth such variety in size may be seen, I think that it need not surprise us to find the like in the heavens. If, however, the thing which moves your surprise is that the light of no other heavenly body than the sun fills the day, who, I ask you, has ever been manifested to men so great as that Man whom God took into union with Himself, in another way entirely than He has taken all other holy and wise men who ever lived? for if you compare Him with other men who were wise, He is separated from them by superiority greater far than that which the sun has above the other heavenly bodies. This comparison let me charge you by all means attentively to study; for it is not impossible that to your singularly gifted mind I may have suggested, by this cursory remark, the solution of a question which you once proposed to me concerning the humanity of Christ.

4. You also ask me whether that highest Truth and highest Wisdom and Form (or Archetype) of things, by whom all things were made, and whom our creeds confess to be the only-begotten Son of God, contains the idea of mankind in general, or also of each individual of our race. A great question.

My opinion is, that in the creation of man there was in Him the idea only of man generally, and not of you or me as individuals; but that in the cycle of time the idea of each individual, with all the varieties distinguishing men from each other, lives in that pure Truth. This I grant is very obscure; yet I know not by what kind of illustration light may be shed upon it, unless perhaps we betake ourselves to those sciences which lie wholly within our minds. In geometry, the idea of an angle is one thing, the idea of a square is another. As often, therefore, as I please to describe an angle, the idea of the angle, and that alone, is present to my mind; but I can never describe a square unless I fix my attention upon the idea of four angles at the same time. In like manner, every man, considered as an individual man, has been made according to one idea proper to himself; but in the making of a nation, although the idea according to which it is made be also one, it is the idea not of one, but of many men collectively. If, therefore, Nebridius is a part of this universe, as he is, and the whole universe is made up of parts, the God who made the universe could not but have in His plan the idea of all the parts. Wherefore, since there is in this idea of a very great number of men, it does not belong to man himself as such; although, on the other hand, all the individuals are in wonderful ways reduced to one. But you will consider this at your convenience. I beg you meanwhile to be content with what I have written, although I have already outdone Naevius himself.

LETTER XV

(A.D. 390.)

To Romanianus Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. This letter indicates a scarcity of paper, but not so as to testify that parchment is plentiful here. My ivory tablets I used in the letter which I sent to your uncle. You will more readily excuse this scrap of parchment, because what I wrote to him could not be delayed, and I thought that not to write to you for want of better material would be most absurd. But if any tablets of mine are with you, I request you to send them to meet a case of this kind. I have written something, as the Lord has deigned to enable me, concerning the Catholic religion, which before my coming I wish to send to you, if my paper does not fail me in the meantime. For you will receive

with indulgence any kind of writing from the office of the brethren who are with me. As to the manuscripts of which you speak, I have entirely forgotten them, except the books de Oratore; but I could not have written anything better than that you should take such of them as you please, and I am still of the same mind; for at this distance I know not what else I can do in the matter.

2. It gave me very great pleasure that in your last letter you desired to make me a sharer of your joy at home; but

“Wouldst thou have me forget how soon the deep,

So tranquil now, may wear another face,

And rouse these slumbering waves?”

Yet I know you would not have me forget this, nor are you yourself unmindful of it. Wherefore, if some leisure is granted you for more profound meditation, improve this divine blessing. For when these things fall to our lot, we should not only congratulate ourselves, but show our gratitude to those to whom we owe them; for if in the stewardship of temporal blessings we act in a manner that is just and kind, and with the moderation and sobriety of spirit which befits the transient nature of these possessions,—if they are held by us without laying hold on us, are multiplied without entangling us, and serve us without bringing us into bondage, such conduct entitles us to the recompense of eternal blessings. For by Him who is the Truth it was said: “If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who will give you that which is your own?” Let us therefore disengage ourselves from care about the passing things of time; let us seek the blessings that are imperishable and sure; let us soar above our worldly possessions. The bee does not the less need its wings when it has gathered an abundant store; for if it sink in the honey it dies.

LETTER XVI

(A.D. 390)

From Maximus of Madaura to Augustin.

1. Desiring to be frequently made glad by communications from you, and by the stimulus of your reasoning with which in a most pleasant way, and without violation of good feeling, you recently attacked me, I have not forborne from replying to you in the same spirit, lest you should call my silence an acknowledgment of being in the wrong. But I beg you to give these sentences an indulgent kindly hearing, if you judge them to give evidence of the feebleness of old age.

Grecian mythology tells us, but without sufficient warrant for our believing the statement, that Mount Olympus is the dwelling-place of the gods. But we actually see the market-place of our town occupied by a crowd of beneficient deities; and we approve of this. Who could ever be so frantic and infatuated as to deny that there is one supreme God, without beginning, without natural offspring, who is, as it were, the great and mighty Father of all? The powers of this Deity, diffused throughout the universe which He has made, we worship under many names, as we are all ignorant of His true name, the name God being common to all kinds of religious belief. Thus it comes, that while in diverse supplications we approach separately, as it were, certain parts of the Divine Being, we are seen in reality to be the worshippers of Him in whom all these parts are one.

2. Such is the greatness of your delusion in another matter, that I cannot conceal the impatience with which I regard it. For who can bear to find Mygdo honoured above that Jupiter who hurls the thunderbolt; or Sanae above Juno, Minerva, Venus, and Vesta; or the arch-martyr Namphanio (oh horror!) above all the immortal gods together? Among the immortals, Lucitas also is looked up to with no less religious reverence, and others in an endless list (having names abhorred both by gods and by men), who, when they met the ignominious end which their character and conduct had deserved, put the crowning act upon their criminal career by affecting to die nobly in a good cause, though conscious of the infamous deeds for which they were condemned. The tombs of these men (it is a folly almost beneath our notice) are visited by crowds of simpletons, who forsake our temples and despise the memory of their ancestors, so that the prediction of the indignant bard is notably fulfilled: “Rome shall, in the temples of the gods, swear by the shades of men.” To me it almost seems at this time as if a

second campaign of Actium had begun, in which Egyptian monsters, doomed soon to perish, dare to brandish their weapons against the gods of the Romans.

3. But, O man of great wisdom, I beseech you, lay aside and reject for a little while the vigour of your eloquence, which has made you everywhere renowned; lay down also the arguments of Chrysippus, which you are accustomed to use in debate; leave for a brief season your logic, which aims in the forthputting of its energies to leave nothing certain to any one; and show me plainly and actually who is that God whom you Christians claim as belonging specially to you, and pretend to see present among you in secret places. For it is in open day, before the eyes and ears of all men, that we worship our gods with pious supplications, and propitiate them by acceptable sacrifices; and we take pains that these things be seen and approved by all.

4. Being, however, infirm and old, I withdraw myself from further prosecution of this contest, and willingly consent to the opinion of the rhetorician of Mantua, “Each one is drawn by that which pleases himself best.”

After this, O excellent man, who hast turned aside from my faith, I have no doubt that this letter will be stolen by some thief, and destroyed by fire or otherwise. Should this happen, the paper will be lost, but not my letter, of which I will always retain a copy, accessible to all religious persons. May you be preserved by the gods, through whom we all, who are mortals on the surface of this earth, with apparent discord but real harmony, revere and worship Him who is the common Father of the gods and of all mortals.

LETTER XVII

(A.D. 390.)

To Maximus of Madaura.

1. Are we engaged in serious debate with each other, or is it your desire that we merely amuse ourselves? For, from the language of your letter, I am at a loss to know whether it is due to the weakness of your cause, or through the

courteousness of your manners, that you have preferred to show yourself more witty than weighty in argument. For, in the first place, a comparison was drawn by you between Mount Olympus and your market-place, the reason for which I cannot divine, unless it was in order to remind me that on the said mountain Jupiter pitched his camp when he was at war with his father, as we are taught by history, which your religionists call sacred; and that in the said market-place Mars is represented in two images, the one unarmed, the other armed, and that a statue of a man placed over against these restrains with three extended fingers the fury of their demonship from the injuries which he would willingly inflict on the citizens. Could I then ever believe that by mentioning that market-place you intended to revive my recollection of such divinities, unless you wished that we should pursue the discussion in a jocular spirit rather than in earnest? But in regard to the sentence in which you said that such gods as these are members, so to speak, of the one great God, I admonish you by all means, since you vouchsafe such an opinion, to abstain very carefully from profane jestings of this kind. For if you speak of the One God, concerning whom learned and unlearned are, as the ancients have said, agreed, do you affirm that those whose savage fury—or, if you prefer it, whose power—the image of a dead man keeps in check are members of Him? I might say more on this point, and your own judgment may show you how wide a door for the refutation of your views is here thrown open. But I restrain myself, lest I should be thought by you to act more as a rhetorician than as one earnestly defending truth.

2. As to your collecting of certain Carthaginian names of deceased persons, by which you think reproach may be cast, in what seems to you a witty manner, against our religion, I do not know whether I ought to answer this taunt, or to pass it by in silence. For if to your good sense these things appear as trifling as they really are, I have not time to spare for such pleasantry. If, however, they seem to you important, I am surprised that it did not occur to you, who are apt to be disturbed by absurdly-sounding names, that your religionists have among their priests Eucaddires, and among their deities, Abaddires. I do not suppose that these were absent from your mind when you were writing, but that, with your courtesy and genial humour, you wished for the unbending of our minds, to recall to our

recollection what ludicrous things are in your superstition. For surely, considering that you are an African, and that we are both settled in Africa, you could not have so forgotten yourself when writing to Africans as to think that Punic names were a fit theme for censure. For if we interpret the signification of these words, what else does Namphanio mean than “man of the good foot,” i.e. whose coming brings with it some good fortune, as we are wont to say of one whose coming to us has been followed by some prosperous event, that he came with a lucky foot? And if the Punic language is rejected by you, you virtually deny what has been admitted by most learned men, that many things have been wisely preserved from oblivion in books written in the Punic tongue. Nay, you ought even to be ashamed of having been born in the country in which the cradle of this language is still warm, i.e. in which this language was originally, and until very recently, the language of the people. If, however, it is not reasonable to take offence at the mere sound of names, and you admit that I have given correctly the meaning of the one in question, you have reason for being dissatisfied with your friend Virgil, who gives to your god Hercules an invitation to the sacred rites celebrated by Evander in his honour, in these terms, “Come to us, and to these rites in thine honour, with auspicious foot.” He wishes him to come “with auspicious foot;” that is to say, he wishes Hercules to come as a Namphanio, the name about which you are pleased to make much mirth at our expense. But if you have a penchant for ridicule, you have among yourselves ample material for witticisms—the god Stercutius, the goddess Cloacina, the Bald Venus, the gods Fear and Pallor, and the goddess Fever, and others of the same kind without number, to whom the ancient Roman idolaters erected temples, and judged it right to offer worship; which if you neglect, you are neglecting Roman gods, thereby making it manifest that you are not thoroughly versed in the sacred rites of Rome; and yet you despise and pour contempt on Punic names, as if you were a devotee at the altars of Roman deities.

3. In truth however, I believe that perhaps you do not value these sacred rites any more than we do, but only take from them some unaccountable pleasure in your time of passing through this world: for you have no hesitation about taking refuge under Virgil’s wing, and defending yourself with a line of his:

“Each one is drawn by that which pleases himself best.”

If, then, the authority of Maro pleases you, as you indicate that it does, you will be pleased with such lines as these: “First Saturn came from lofty Olympus, fleeing before the arms of Jupiter, an exile bereft of his realms,”—and other such statements, by which he aims at making it understood that Saturn and your other gods like him were men. For he had read much history, confirmed by ancient authority, which Cicero also had read, who makes the same statement in his dialogues, in terms more explicit than we would venture to insist upon, and labours to bring it to the knowledge of men so far as the times in which he lived permitted.

4. As to your statement, that your religious services are to be preferred to ours because you worship the gods in public, but we use more retired places of meeting, let me first ask you how you could have forgotten your Bacchus, whom you consider it right to exhibit only to the eyes of the few who are initiated. You, however, think that, in making mention of the public celebration of your sacred rites, you intended only to make sure that we would place before our eyes the spectacle presented by your magistrates and the chief men of the city when intoxicated and raging along your streets; in which solemnity, if you are possessed by a god, you surely see of what nature he must be who deprives men of their reason. If, however, this madness is only feigned, what say you to this keeping of things hidden in a service which you boast of as public, or what good purpose is served by so base an imposition? Moreover, why do you not foretell future events in your songs, if you are endowed with the prophetic gift? or why do you rob the bystanders, if you are in your sound mind?

5. Since, then, you have recalled to our remembrance by your letter these and other things which I think it better to pass over meanwhile, why may not we make sport of your gods, which, as every one who knows your mind, and has read your letters, is well aware, are made sport of abundantly by yourself? Therefore, if you wish us to discuss these subjects in a way becoming your years and wisdom, and, in fact, as may be justly required of us, in connection with our purpose, by our dearest friends, seek some topic worthy of being debated between us; and be careful to say on behalf of your gods such things as may prevent us from supposing that you are

intentionally betraying your own cause, when we find you rather bringing to our remembrance things which may be said against them than alleging anything in their defence. In conclusion, however, lest this should be unknown to you, and you might thus be brought unwittingly into jestings which are profane, let me assure you that by the Christian Catholics (by whom a church has been set up in your own town also) no deceased person is worshipped, and that nothing, in short, which has been made and fashioned by God is worshipped as a divine power. This worship is rendered by them only to God Himself, who framed and fashioned all things.

These things shall be more fully treated of, with the help of the one true God, whenever I learn that you are disposed to discuss them seriously.

LETTER XVIII

(A.D. 390.)

To Coelestinus Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. Oh how I wish that I could continually say one thing to you! It is this: Let us shake off the burden of unprofitable cares, and bear only those which are useful. For I do not know whether anything like complete exemption from care is to be hoped for in this world. I wrote to you, but have received no reply. I sent you as many of my books against the Manichaeans as I could send in a finished and revised condition, and as yet nothing has been communicated to me as to the impression they have made on your judgment and feelings. It is now a fitting opportunity for me to ask them back, and for you to return them. I beg you therefore not to lose time in sending them, along with a letter from yourself, by which I eagerly long to know what you are doing with them, or with what further help you think that you require still to be furnished in order to assail that error with success.

2. As I know you well, I ask you to accept and ponder the following brief sentences on a great theme. There is a nature which is susceptible of change with respect to both place and time, namely, the corporeal. There is another nature which is in no way susceptible of change with respect to place, but only with respect to time, namely, the spiritual. And there is a third Nature

which can be changed neither in respect to place nor in respect to time: that is, God. Those natures of which I have said that they are mutable in some respect are called creatures; the Nature which is immutable is called Creator. Seeing, however, that we affirm the existence of anything only in so far as it continues and is one (in consequence of which, unity is the condition essential to beauty in every form), you cannot fail to distinguish, in this classification of natures, which exists in the highest possible manner; and which occupies the lowest place, yet is within the range of existence; and which occupies the middle place, greater than the lowest, but coming short of the highest. That highest is essential blessedness; the lowest, that which cannot be either blessed or wretched; and the intermediate nature lives in wretchedness when it stoops towards that which is lowest, and in blessedness when it turns towards that which is highest. He who believes in Christ does not sink his affections in that which is lowest, is not proudly self-sufficient in that which is intermediate, and thus he is qualified for union and fellowship with that which is highest; and this is the sum of the active life to which we are commanded, admonished, and by holy zeal impelled to aspire.

LETTER XIX

(A.D. 390.)

To Gaius Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. Words cannot express the pleasure with which the recollection of you filled my heart after I parted with you, and has often filled my heart since then. For I remember that, notwithstanding the amazing ardour which pervaded your inquiries after truth, the bounds of proper moderation in debate were never transgressed by you. I shall not easily find any one who is more eager in putting questions, and at the same time more patient in hearing answers, than you approved yourself. Gladly therefore would I spend much time in converse with you; for the time thus spent, however much it might be, would not seem long. But what avails it to discuss the hindrances on account of which it is difficult for us to enjoy such converse? Enough that it is exceedingly difficult. Perhaps at some future period it may be made very easy; may God grant this! Meanwhile it is otherwise. I have

given to the brother by whom I have sent this letter the charge of submitting all my writings to your eminent wisdom and charity, that they may be read by you. For nothing written by me will find in you a reluctant reader; for I know the goodwill which you cherish towards me. Let me say, however, that if, on reading these things, you approve of them, and perceive them to be true, you must not consider them to be mine otherwise than as given to me; and you are at liberty to turn to that same source whence proceeds also the power given you to appreciate their truth. For no one discerns the truth of that which he reads from anything which is in the mere manuscript, or in the writer, but rather by something within himself, if the light of truth, shining with a clearness beyond what is men’s common lot, and very far removed from the darkening influence of the body, has penetrated his own mind. If, however, you discover some things which are false and deserve to be rejected, I would have you know that these things have fallen as dew from the mists of human frailty, and these you are to reckon as truly mine. I would exhort you to persevere in seeking the truth, were it not that I seem to see the mouth of your heart already opened wide to drink it in. I would also exhort you to cling with manly tenacity to the truth which you have learned, were it not that you already manifest in the clearest manner that you possess strength of mind and fixedness of purpose. For all that lives within you has, in the short time of our fellowship, revealed itself to me, almost as if the bodily veil had been rent asunder. And surely the merciful providence of our God can in no wise permit a man so good and so remarkably gifted as you are to be an alien from the flock of Christ.

LETTER XX

(A.D. 390.)

To Antoninus Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. As letters are due to you by two of us, a part of our debt is repaid with very abundant usury when you see one of the two in person; and since by his voice you, as it were, hear my own, I might have refrained from writing, had I not been called to do it by the urgent request of the very person whose journey to you seemed to me to make this unnecessary. Accordingly I now hold converse with you even more satisfactorily than if I were personally

with you, because you both read my letter, and you listen to the words of one in whose heart you know that I dwell. I have with great joy studied and pondered the letter sent by your Holiness, because it exhibits both your Christian spirit unsullied by the guile of an evil age, and your heart full of kindly feeling towards myself.

2. I congratulate you, and I give thanks to our God and Lord, because of the hope and faith and love which are in you; and I thank you, in Him, for thinking so well of me as to believe me to be a faithful servant of God, and for the love which with guileless heart you cherish towards that which you commend in me; although, indeed, there is occasion rather for congratulation than for thanks in acknowledging your goodwill in this thing. For it is profitable for yourself that you should love for its own sake that goodness which he of course loves who loves another because he believes him to be good, whether that other be or be not what he is supposed to be. One error only is to be carefully avoided in this matter, that we do not think otherwise than truth demands, not of the individual, but of that which is true goodness in man. But, my brother well beloved, seeing that you are not in any degree mistaken either in believing or in knowing that the great good for men is to serve God cheerfully and purely, when you love any man because you believe him to share this good, you reap the reward, even though the man be not what you suppose him to be. Wherefore it is fitting that you should on this account be congratulated; but the person whom you love is to be congratulated, not because of his being for that reason loved, but because of his being truly (if it is the case) such an one as the person who for this reason loves him esteems him to be. As to our real character, therefore, and as to the progress we may have made in the divine life, this is seen by Him whose judgment, both as to that which is good in man, and as to each man’s personal character, cannot err. For your obtaining the reward of blessedness so far as this matter is concerned, it is sufficient that you embrace me with your whole heart because you believe me to be such a servant of God as I ought to be. To you, however, I also render many thanks for this, that you encourage me wonderfully to aspire after such excellence, by your praising me as if I had already attained it. Many more thanks still shall be yours, if you not only claim an interest in

my prayers, but also cease not to pray for me. For intercession on behalf of a brother is more acceptable to God when it is offered as a sacrifice of love.

3. I greet very kindly your little son, and I pray that he may grow up in the way of obedience to the salutary requirements of God’s law. I desire and pray, moreover, that the one true faith and worship, which alone is catholic, may prosper and increase in your house; and if you think any labour on my part necessary for the promotion of this end, do not scruple to claim my service, relying upon Him who is our common Lord, and upon the law of love which we must obey. This especially would I recommend to your pious discretion, that by reading the word of God, and by serious conversation with your partner, you should either plant the seed or foster the growth in her heart of an intelligent fear of God. For it is scarcely possible that any one who is concerned for the soul’s welfare, and is therefore without prejudice resolved to know the will of the Lord, should fail, when enjoying the guidance of a good instructor, to discern the difference which exists between every form of schism and the one Catholic Church.

LETTER XXI

(A.D. 391.)

To My Lord Bishop Valerius, Most Blessed and Venerable, My Father Most Warmly Cherished with True Love in the Sight of the Lord, Augustin, Presbyter, Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Before all things I ask your pious wisdom to take into consideration that, on the one hand, if the duties of the office of a bishop, or presbyter, or deacon, be discharged in a perfunctory and time-serving manner, no work can be in this life more easy, agreeable, and likely to secure the favour of men, especially in our day, but none at the same time more miserable, deplorable, and worthy of condemnation in the sight of God; and, on the other hand, that if in the office of bishop, or presbyter, or deacon, the orders of the Captain of our salvation be observed, there is no work in this life more difficult, toilsome, and hazardous, especially in our day, but none at the same time more blessed in the sight of God. But what the proper mode of discharging these duties is, I did not learn either in boyhood or in the

earlier years of manhood; and at the time when I was beginning to learn it, I was constrained as a just correction for my sins (for I know not what else to think) to accept the second place at the helm, when as yet I knew not how to handle an oar.

2. But I think that it was the purpose of my Lord hereby to rebuke me, because I presumed, as if entitled by superior knowledge and excellence, to reprove the faults of many sailors before I had learned by experience the nature of their work. Therefore, after I had been sent in among them to share their labours, then I began to feel the rashness of my censures; although even before that time I judged this office to be beset with many dangers. And hence the tears which some of my brethren perceived me shedding in the city at the time of my ordination, and because of which they did their utmost with the best intentions to console me, but with words which, through their not knowing the causes of my sorrow, did not reach my case at all. But my experience has made me realize these things much more both in degree and in measure than I had done in merely thinking of them: not that I have now seen any new waves or storms of which I had not previous knowledge by observation, or report, or reading, or meditation; but because I had not known my own skill or strength for avoiding or encountering them, and had estimated it to be of some value instead of none. The Lord, however, laughed at me, and was pleased to show me by actual experience what I am.

3. But if He has done this not in judgment, but in mercy, as I confidently hope even now, when I have learned my infirmity, my duty is to study with diligence all the remedies which the Scriptures contain for such a case as mine, and to make it my business by prayer and reading to secure that my soul be endued with the health and vigour necessary for labours so responsible. This I have not yet done, because I have not had time; for I was ordained at the very time when I was thinking of having, along with others, a season of freedom from all other occupation, that we might acquaint ourselves with the divine Scriptures, and was intending to make such arrangements as would secure unbroken leisure for this great work. Moreover, it is true that I did not at any earlier period know how great was my unfitness for the arduous work which now disquiets and crushes my

spirit. But if I have by experience learned what is necessary for a man who ministers to a people in the divine sacraments and word, only to find myself prevented from now obtaining what I have learned that I do not possess, do you bid me perish, father Valerius? Where is your charity? Do you indeed love me? Do you indeed love the Church to which you have appointed me, thus unqualified, to minister? I am well assured that you love both; but you think me qualified, whilst I know myself better; and yet I would not have come to know myself if I had not learned by experience.

4. Perhaps your Holiness replies: I wish to know what is lacking to fit you for your office. The things which I lack are so many, that I could more easily enumerate the things which I have than those which I desire to have. I may venture to say that I know and unreservedly believe the doctrines pertaining to our salvation. But my difficulty is in the question how I am to use this truth in ministering to the salvation of others, seeking what is profitable not for myself alone, but for many, that they may be saved. And perhaps there may be, nay, beyond all question there are, written in the sacred books, counsels by the knowledge and acceptance of which the man of God may so discharge his duties to the Church in the things of God, or at least so keep a conscience void of offence in the midst of ungodly men, whether living or dying, as to secure that that life for which alone humble and meek Christian hearts sigh is not lost. But how can this be done, except, as the Lord Himself tells us, by asking, seeking, knocking, that is, by praying, reading, and weeping? For this I have by the brethren made the request, which in this petition I now renew, that a short time, say till Easter, be granted me by your unfeigned and venerable charity.

5. For what shall I answer to the Lord my Judge? Shall I say, “I was not able to acquire the things of which I stood in need, because I was engrossed wholly with the affairs of the Church”? What if He thus reply: “Thou wicked servant, if property belonging to the Church (in the collection of the fruits of which great labour is expended) were suffering loss under some oppressor, and it was in thy power to do something in defence of her rights at the bar of an earthly judge, wouldst thou not, leaving the field which I have watered with my blood, go to plead the cause with the consent of all, and even with the urgent commands of some? And if the decision given

were against the Church, wouldst thou not, in prosecuting an appeal, go across the sea; and would no complaint be heard summoning thee home from an absence of a year or more, because thy object was to prevent another from taking possession of land required not for the souls, but for the bodies of the poor, whose hunger might nevertheless be satisfied in a way much easier and more acceptable to me by my living trees, if these were cultivated with care? Wherefore, then, dost thou allege that thou hadst not time to learn how to cultivate my field?” Tell me, I beseech you, what could I reply? Are you perchance willing that I should say, “The aged Valerius is to blame; for, believing me to be instructed in all things necessary, he declined, with a determination proportioned to his love for me, to give me permission to learn what I had not acquired?”

6. Consider all these things, aged Valerius; consider them, I beseech you, by the goodness and severity of Christ, by His mercy and judgment, by Him who has inspired you with such love for me that I dare not displease you, even when the advantage of my soul is at stake. You, moreover, appeal to God and to Christ to bear witness to me concerning your innocence and charity, and the sincere love which you bear to me, just as if all these were not things about which I may myself willingly take my oath. I therefore appeal to the love and affection which you have thus avouched. Have pity on me, and grant me, for the purpose for which I have asked it, the time which I have asked; and help me with your prayers, that my desire may not be in vain, and that my absence may not be without fruit to the Church of Christ, and to the profit of my brethren and fellow-servants. I know that the Lord will not despise your love interceding for me, especially in such a cause as this; and accepting it as a sacrifice of sweet savour, He will restore me to you, perhaps, within a period shorter than I have craved, thoroughly furnished for His service by the profitable counsels of His written word.

LETTER XXII

(A.D. 392.)

To Bishop Aurelius, Augustin, Presbyter, Sends Greeting.

Chap. I

1. When, after long hesitation, I knew not how to frame a suitable reply to the letter of your Holiness (for all attempts to express my feelings were baffled by the strength of affectionate emotions which, rising spontaneously, were by the reading of your letter much more vehemently inflamed), I cast myself at last upon God, that He might, according to my strength, so work in me that I might address to you such an answer as should be suitable to the zeal for the Lord and the care of His Church which we have in common, and in accordance with your dignity and the respect which is due to you from me. And, first of all, as to your belief that you are aided by my prayers, I not only do not decline this assurance, but I do even willingly accept it. For thus, though not through my prayers, assuredly in yours, our Lord will hear me. As to your most benignant approval of the conduct of brother Alypius in remaining in connection with us, to be an example to the brethren who desire to withdraw themselves from this world's cares, I thank you more warmly than words can declare. May the Lord recompense this to your own soul! The whole company, therefore, of brethren which has begun to grow up together beside me, is bound to you by gratitude for this great favour; in bestowing which, you, being far separated from us only by distance on the surface of the earth, have consulted our interest as one in spirit very near to us. Wherefore, to the utmost of our power we give ourselves to prayer that the Lord may be pleased to uphold along with you the flock which has been committed to you, and may never anywhere forsake you, but be present as your help in all times of need, showing in His dealings with His Church, through your discharge of priestly functions, such mercy as spiritual men with tears and groanings implore Him to manifest.

2. Know, therefore, most blessed lord, venerable for the superlative fulness of your charity, that I do not despair, but rather cherish lively hope that, by means of that authority which you wield, and which, as we trust, has been committed to your spirit, not to your flesh alone, our Lord and God may be able, through the respect due to councils and to yourself, to bring healing to the many carnal blemishes and disorders which the African Church is suffering in the conduct of many, and is bewailing in the sorrow of a few of her members. For whereas the apostle had in one passage briefly set forth as fit to be hated and avoided three classes of vices, from which there springs

an innumerable crop of vicious courses, only one of these—that, namely, which he has placed second—is very strictly punished by the Church; but the other two, viz. the first and third, appear to be tolerable in the estimation of men, and so it may gradually come to pass that they shall even cease to be regarded as vices. The words of the chosen vessel are these: “Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

3. Of these three, then, chambering and wantonness are regarded as crimes so great, that any one stained with these sins is deemed unworthy not merely of holding office in the Church, but also of participation in the sacraments; and rightly so. But why restrict such censure to this form of sin alone? For rioting and drunkenness are so tolerated and allowed by public opinion, that even in services designed to honour the memory of the blessed martyrs, and this not only on the annual festivals (which itself must be regarded as deplorable by every one who looks with a spiritual eye upon these things), but every day, they are openly practised. Were this corrupt practice objectionable only because of its being disgraceful, and not on the ground of impiety, we might consider it as a scandal to be tolerated with such amount of forbearance as is within our power. And yet, even in that case, what are we to make of the fact that, when the same apostle had given a long list of vices, among which he mentioned drunkenness, he concluded with the warning that we should not even eat bread with those who are guilty of such things? But let us, if it must be so, bear with these things in the luxury and disorder of families, and of those convivial meetings which are held within the walls of private houses; and let us take the body of Christ in communion with those with whom we are forbidden to eat even the bread which sustains our bodies; but at least let this outrageous insult be kept far away from the tombs of the sainted dead, from the scenes of sacramental privilege, and from the houses of prayer. For who may venture to forbid in private life excesses which, when they are practised by crowds in holy places, are called an honouring of the martyrs?

4. If Africa were the first country in which an attempt were made to put down these things, her example would deserve to be esteemed worthy of

imitation by all other countries; but when, both throughout the greater part of Italy and in all or almost all the churches beyond the sea, these practices either, as in some places, never existed, or, as in other places where they did exist, have been, whether they were recent or of long standing, rooted out and put down by the diligence and the censures of bishops who were holy men, entertaining true views concerning the life to come;—when this, I say, is the case, do we hesitate as to the possibility of removing this monstrous defect in our morals, after an example has been set before us in so many lands? Moreover, we have as our bishop a man belonging to those parts, for which we give thanks earnestly to God; although he is a man of such moderation and gentleness, in fine, of such prudence and zeal in the Lord, that even had he been a native of Africa, the persuasion would have been wrought in him by the Scriptures, that a remedy must be applied to the wound which this loose and disorderly custom has inflicted. But so wide and deep is the plague caused by this wickedness, that, in my opinion, it cannot be completely cured without interposition of a council's authority. If, however, a beginning is to be made by one church, it seems to me, that as it would be presumptuous for any other church to attempt to change what the Church of Carthage still maintained, so would it also be the height of effrontery for any other to wish to persevere in a course which the Church of Carthage had condemned. And for such a reform in Carthage, what better bishop could be desired than the prelate who, while he was a deacon, solemnly denounced these practices?

5. But that over which you then sorrowed you ought now to suppress, not harshly, but as it is written, “in the spirit of meekness.” Pardon my boldness, for your letter revealing to me your true brotherly love gives me such confidence, that I am encouraged to speak as freely to you as I would to myself. These offences are taken out of the way, at least in my judgment, by other methods than harshness, severity, and an imperious mode of dealing,—namely, rather by teaching than by commanding, rather by advice than by denunciation. Thus at least we must deal with the multitude; in regard to the sins of a few, exemplary severity must be used. And if we do employ threats, let this be done sorrowfully, supporting our threatenings of coming judgment by the texts of Scripture, so that the fear which men feel through our words may be not of us in our own authority, but of God

Himself. Thus an impression shall be made in the first place upon those who are spiritual, or who are nearest to that state of mind; and then by means of the most gentle, but at the same time most importunate exhortations, the opposition of the rest of the multitude shall be broken down.

6. Since, however, these drunken revels and luxurious feasts in the cemeteries are wont to be regarded by the ignorant and carnal multitude as not only an honour to the martyrs, but also a solace to the dead, it appears to me that they might be more easily dissuaded from such scandalous and unworthy practices in these places, if, besides showing that they are forbidden by Scripture, we take care, in regard to the offerings for the spirits of those who sleep, which indeed we are bound to believe to be of some use, that they be not sumptuous beyond what is becoming respect for the memory of the departed, and that they be distributed without ostentation, and cheerfully to all who ask a share of them; also that they be not sold, but that if any one desires to offer any money as a religious act, it be given on the spot to the poor. Thus the appearance of neglecting the memory of their deceased friends, which might cause them no small sorrow of heart, shall be avoided, and that which is a pious and honourable act of religious service shall be celebrated as it should be in the Church. This may suffice meanwhile in regard to rioting and drunkenness.

Chap. II

7. As to “strife and deceit,” what right have I to speak, seeing that these vices prevail more seriously among our own order than among our congregations? Let me, however, say that the source of these evils is pride, and a desire for the praises of men, which also frequently produces hypocrisy. This is successfully resisted only by him who is penetrated with love and fear of God, through the multiplied declarations of the divine books; provided, however, that such a man exhibit in himself a pattern both of patience and of humility, by assuming as his due less praise and honour than is offered to him: at the same time neither accepting all nor refusing all that is rendered to him by those who honour him; and as to the portion which he does accept, receiving it not for his own sake, seeing that he ought to live wholly in the sight of God and to despise human applause, but for

the sake of those whose welfare he cannot promote if by too great self-abasement he lose his place in their esteem. For to this pertains that word, “Let no man despise thy youth;” while he who said this says also in another place, “If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”

8. It is a great matter not to exult in the honours and praises which come from men, but to reject all vain pomp; and, if some of this be necessary, to make whatever is thus retained contribute to the benefit and salvation of those who confer the honour. For it has not been said in vain, “God will break the bones of those who seek to please men.” For what could be feebler, what more destitute of the firmness and strength which the bones here spoken of figuratively represent, than the man who is prostrated by the tongue of slanderers, although he knows that the things spoken against him are false? The pain arising from this thing would in no wise rend the bowels of his soul, if its bones had not been broken by the love of praise. I take for granted your strength of mind: therefore it is to myself that I say those things which I am now stating to you. Nevertheless you are willing, I believe, to consider along with me how important and how difficult these things are. For the man who has not declared war against this enemy has no idea of its power; for if it be comparatively easy to dispense with praise so long as it is denied to him, it is difficult to forbear from being captivated with praise when it is offered. And yet the hanging of our minds upon God ought to be so great, that we would at once correct those with whom we may take that liberty, when we are by them undeservedly praised, so as to prevent them from either thinking us to possess what is not in us, or regarding that as ours which belongs to God, or commending us for things which, though we have them, and perhaps have them in abundance, are nevertheless in their nature not worthy of commendation, such as are all those good things which we have in common with the lower animals or with wicked men. If, however, we are deservedly praised on account of what God has given us, let us congratulate those to whom what is really good yields pleasure; but let us not congratulate ourselves on the fact of our pleasing men, but on the fact of our being (if it is the case) such in the sight of God as we are in their esteem, and because praise is given not to us, but to God, who is the giver of all things which are truly and justly praised. These things are daily repeated to me by myself, or rather by Him from

whom proceed all profitable instructions, whether they are found in the reading of the divine word or are suggested from within to the mind; and yet, although strenuously contending with my adversary, I often receive wounds from him when I am unable to put away from myself the fascinating power of the praise which is offered to me.

9. These things I have written, in order that, if they are not now necessary for your Holiness (your own thoughts suggesting to you other and more useful considerations of this kind, or your Holiness being above the need of such remedies), my disorders at least may be known to you, and you may know that which may move you to deign to plead with God for me as my infirmity demands: and I beseech you, by the humanity of Him who hath commanded us to bear each other's burdens, that you offer such intercession most importunately on my behalf. There are many things in regard to my life and conversation, of which I will not write, which I would confess with tears if we were so situated that nothing was required but my mouth and your ears as the means of communication between my heart and your heart. If, however, the aged Saturninus, venerated by us and beloved by all here with unreserved and unfeigned affection, whose brotherly love and devotion to you I observed when I was with you,—if he, I say, is pleased to visit us so soon as he finds it convenient, whatever converse we may be able to enjoy with that holy and spiritually-minded man shall be esteemed by us very little, if at all, different from personal conference with your Excellency. With entreaties too earnest for words to express their urgency, I beg you to condescend to join us in asking and obtaining from him this favour. For the people of Hippo fear much, and far more than they ought, to let me go to so great a distance from them, and will on no account trust me by myself so far as to permit me to see the field given by your care and generosity to the brethren, of which, before your letter came, we had heard through our brother and fellow-servant Parthenius, from whom we have also learned many other things which we longed to know. The Lord will accomplish the fulfilment of all the other things which we still desiderate.

LETTER XXIII

(A.D. 392.)

To Maximin, My Well-Beloved Lord and Brother, Worthy of Honour, Augustin, Presbyter of the Catholic Church, Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Before entering on the subject on which I have resolved to write to your Grace, I shall briefly state my reasons for the terms used in the title of this letter, lest these should surprise either yourself or any other person. I have written “to my lord,” because it is written: “Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” Seeing, therefore, that in this duty of writing to you I am actually by love serving you, I do only what is reasonable in calling you “my lord,” for the sake of that one true Lord who gave us this command. Again, as to my having written “well-beloved,” God knoweth that I not only love you, but love you as I love myself; for I am well aware that I desire for you the very blessings which I am fain to make my own. As to my adding the words “worthy of honour,” I did not mean, by adding this, to say that I honour your episcopal office, for to me you are not a bishop; and this I trust you will take as spoken with no intention to give offence, but from the conviction that in our mouth Yea should be Yea, and Nay, Nay: for neither you nor any one who knows us can fail to know that you are not my bishop, and, I am not your presbyter. “Worthy of honour” I therefore willingly call you on this ground, that I know you to be a man; and I know that man was made in the image and likeness of God, and is placed in honour by the very order and law of nature, if by understanding the things which he ought to understand he retain his honour. For it is written, “Man being placed in honour did not understand: he is compared to the brutes devoid of reason, and is made like unto them.” Why then may I not address you as worthy of honour, inasmuch as you are a man, especially since I dare not despair of your repentance and salvation so long as you are in this life? Moreover, as to my calling you “brother,” you are well acquainted with the precept divinely given to us, according to which we are to say, “Ye are our brethren,” even to those who deny that they are our brethren; and this has much to do with the reason which has made me resolve to write to you, my brother. Now that the reason for my making such an introduction to my letter has been given, I bespeak your calm attention to what follows.

2. When I was in your district, and was with all my power expressing my abhorrence of the sad and deplorable custom followed by men who, though they boast of the name of Christians, do not hesitate to rebaptize Christians, there were not wanting some who said in praise of you, that you do not conform to this custom. I confess that at first I did not believe them; but afterwards, considering that it was possible for the fear of God to take possession of a human soul exercised in meditation upon the life to come, in such a way as to restrain a man from most manifest wickedness, I believed their statement, rejoicing that by holding such a resolution you showed yourself averse to complete alienation from the Catholic Church. I was even on the outlook for an opportunity of conversing with you, in order that, if it were possible, the small difference which still remained between us might be taken away, when, behold, a few days ago it was reported to me that you had rebaptized a deacon of ours belonging to Mutugenna! I was deeply grieved both for his melancholy fall and for your sin, my brother, which surprised and disappointed me. For I know what the Catholic Church is. The nations are Christ's inheritance, and the ends of the earth are His possession. You also know what the Catholic Church is; or if you do not know it, apply your attention to discern it, for it may be very easily known by those who are willing to be taught. Therefore, to rebaptize even a heretic who has received in baptism the seal of holiness which the practice of the Christian Church has transmitted to us, is unquestionably a sin; but to rebaptize a Catholic is one of the worst of crimes. As I did not, however, believe the report, because I still retained my favourable impression of you, I went in person to Mutugenna. The miserable man himself I did not succeed in finding, but I learned from his parents that he had been made one of your deacons. Nevertheless I still think so favourably of you, that I will not believe that he has been rebaptized.

3. Wherefore, my beloved brother, I beseech you, by the divine and human natures of our Lord Jesus Christ, have the kindness to reply to this letter, telling me what has been done, and so to write as knowing that I intend to read your letter aloud to our brethren in the church. This I have written, lest, by afterwards doing that which you did not expect me to do, I should give offence to your Charity, and give you occasion for making a just complaint against me to our common friends. What can reasonably prevent you from

answering this letter I do not see. For if you do rebaptize, you have nothing to apprehend from your colleagues when you write that you are doing that which they would command you to do even if you were unwilling; and if you, moreover, defend this by the best arguments known to you, as a thing which ought to be done, your colleagues, so far from being displeased on this account, will praise you. But if you do not rebaptize, hold fast your Christian liberty, my brother Maximin; hold it fast, I implore you: fixing your eye on Christ, fear not the censure, tremble not before the power of any man. Fleeting is the honour of this world, and fleeting are all the objects to which earthly ambition aspires. Neither thrones ascended by flights of steps, nor canopied pulpits, nor processions and chantings of crowds of consecrated virgins, shall be admitted as available for the defence of those who have now these honours, when at the judgment-seat of Christ conscience shall begin to lift its accusing voice, and He who is the Judge of the consciences of men shall pronounce the final sentence. What is here esteemed an honour shall then be a burden: what uplifts men here, shall weigh heavily on them in that day. Those things which meanwhile are done for the Church's welfare as tokens of respect to us, shall then be vindicated, it may be, by a conscience void of offence; but they will avail nothing as a screen for a guilty conscience.

4. If, then, it be indeed the case that, under the promptings of a devout and pious mind, you abstain from dispensing a second baptism, and rather accept the baptism of the Catholic Church as the act of the one true Mother, who to all nations both offers a welcome to her bosom, that they may be regenerated, and gives a mother's nourishment to them when they are regenerated, and as the token of admission into Christ's one possession, which reaches to the ends of the earth; if, I say, you indeed do this, why do you not break forth into a joyful and independent confession of your sentiments? Why do you hide under a bushel the lamp which might so profitably shine? Why do you not rend and cast from you the old sordid livery of your craven-hearted bondage, and go forth clad in the panoply of Christian boldness, saying, "I know but one baptism consecrated and sealed with the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost: this sacrament, wherever I find it, I am bound to acknowledge and approve; I do not destroy what I discern to be my Lord's; I do not treat with dishonour the

banner of my King"? Even the men who parted the raiment of Christ among them did not rudely rend in pieces the seamless robe; and they were men who had not then any faith in Christ's resurrection; nay, they were witnessing His death. If, then, persecutors forbore from rending the vesture of Christ when He was hanging upon the cross, why should Christians destroy the sacrament of His institution now when He is sitting in heaven upon His throne? Had I been a Jew in the time of that ancient people, when there was nothing better that I could be, I would undoubtedly have received circumcision. That "seal of the righteousness which is by faith" was of so great importance in that dispensation before it was abrogated by the Lord's coming, that the angel would have strangled the infant-child of Moses, had not the child's mother, seizing a stone, circumcised the child, and by this sacrament averted impending death. This sacrament also arrested the waters of the Jordan, and made them flow back towards their source. This sacrament the Lord Himself received in infancy, although He abrogated it when He was crucified. For these signs of spiritual blessings were not condemned, but gave place to others which were more suitable to the later dispensation. For as circumcision was abolished by the first coming of the Lord, so baptism shall be abolished by His second coming. For as now, since the liberty of faith has come, and the yoke of bondage has been removed, no Christian receives circumcision in the flesh; so then, when the just are reigning with the Lord, and the wicked have been condemned, no one shall be baptized, but the reality which both ordinances prefigure—namely, circumcision of the heart and cleansing of the conscience—shall be eternally abiding. If, therefore, I had been a Jew in the time of the former dispensation, and there had come to me a Samaritan who was willing to become a Jew, abandoning the error which the Lord Himself condemned when He said, "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews;"—if, I say, a Samaritan whom Samaritans had circumcised had expressed his willingness to become a Jew, there would have been no scope for the boldness which would have insisted on the repetition of the rite; and instead of this, we would have been compelled to approve of that which God had commanded, although it had been done by heretics. But if, in the flesh of a circumcised man, I could not find place for the repetition of the circumcision, because there is but one member which is circumcised, much less is place found in the one heart of man for the repetition of the baptism of Christ. Ye, therefore, who wish to baptize twice, must seek as subjects of such double baptism men who have double hearts.

5. Publish frankly, therefore, that you are doing what is right, if it be the case that you do not rebaptize; and write me to that effect, not only without fear, but with joy. Let no Councils of your party deter you, my brother, from this step: for if this displease them, they are not worthy to have you among them; but if it please them, we trust that there shall soon be peace between you and us, through the mercy of our Lord, who never forsakes those who fear to displease Him, and who labour to do what is acceptable in His sight; and let not our honours—a dangerous burden, of which an account must yet be given—be a hindrance, making it unhappily impossible for our people who believe in Christ, and who share with one another in daily bread at home, to sit down at the same table of Christ. Do we not grievously lament that husband and wife do in most cases, when marriage makes them one flesh, vow mutual fidelity in the name of Christ, and yet rend asunder Christ's own body by belonging to separate communions? If, by your moderate measures and wisdom, and by your exercise of that love which we all owe to Him who shed His blood for us, this schism, which is such a grievous scandal, causing Satan to triumph and many souls to perish, be taken out of the way in these parts, who can adequately express how illustrious is the reward which the Lord prepares for you, in that from you should proceed an example which, if imitated, as it may so easily be, would bring health to all His other members, which throughout the whole of Africa are lying now miserably exhausted? How much I fear lest, since you cannot see my heart, I appear to you to speak rather in irony than in the sincerity of love! But what more can I do than present my words before your eye, and my heart before God?

6. Let us put away from between us those vain objections which are wont to be thrown at each other by the ignorant on either side. Do not on your part cast up to me the persecutions of Macarius. I, on mine, will not reproach you with the excesses of the Circumcelliones. If you are not to blame for the latter, neither am I for the former; they pertain not to us. The Lord's floor is not yet purged—it cannot be without chaff; be it ours to pray, and to do what in us lies that we may be good grain. I could not pass over in

silence the rebaptizing of our deacon; for I know how much harm my silence might do to myself. For I do not propose to spend my time in the empty enjoyment of ecclesiastical dignity; but I propose to act as mindful of this, that to the one Chief Shepherd I must give account of the sheep committed unto me. If you would rather that I should not thus write to you, you must, my brother, excuse me on the ground of my fears; for I do fear greatly, lest, if I were silent and concealed my sentiments, others might be rebaptized by you. I have resolved, therefore, with such strength and opportunity as the Lord may grant, so to manage this discussion, that by our peaceful conferences, all who belong to our communion may know how far apart from heresy and schism is the position of the Catholic Church, and with what care they should guard against the destruction which awaits the tares and the branches cut off from the Lord's vine. If you willingly accede to such conference with me, by consenting to the public reading of the letters of both, I shall unspeakably rejoice. If this proposal is displeasing to you, what can I do, my brother, but read our letters, even without your consent, to the Catholic congregation, with a view to its instruction? But if you do not condescend to write me a reply, I am resolved at least to read my own letter, that, when your misgivings as to your procedure are known, others may be ashamed to be rebaptized.

7. I shall not, however, do this in the presence of the soldiery, lest any of you should think that I wish to act in a violent way, rather than as the interests of peace demand; but only after their departure, that all who hear me may understand, that I do not propose to compel men to embrace the communion of any party, but desire the truth to be made known to persons who, in their search for it, are free from disquieting apprehensions. On our side there shall be no appeal to men's fear of the civil power; on your side, let there be no intimidation by a mob of Circumcelliones. Let us attend to the real matter in debate, and let our arguments appeal to reason and to the authoritative teaching of the Divine Scriptures, dispassionately and calmly, so far as we are able; let us ask, seek, and knock, that we may receive and find, and that to us the door may be opened, and thereby may be achieved, by God's blessing on our united efforts and prayers, the first towards the entire removal from our district of that impiety which is such a disgrace to Africa. If you do not believe that I am willing to postpone the discussion

until after the soldiery have left, you may delay your answer until they have gone; and if, while they are still here, I should wish to read my own letter to the people, the production of the letter will of itself convict me of breaking my word. May the Lord in His mercy prevent me from acting in a way so contrary to morality, and to the good resolutions with which, by laying His yoke on me, He has been pleased to inspire me!

8. My bishop would perhaps have preferred to send a letter himself to your Grace, if he had been here; or my letter would have been written, if not by his order, at least with his sanction. But in his absence, seeing that the rebaptizing of this deacon is said to have occurred recently, I have not by delay allowed the feelings caused by the action to cool down, being moved by the promptings of the keenest anguish on account of what I regard as really the death of a brother. This my grief the compensating joy of reconciliation between us and you may perhaps be appointed to heal, through the help of the mercy and providence of our Lord. May the Lord our God grant thee a calm and conciliatory spirit, my dearly beloved lord and brother!

LETTER XXIV

This letter, written in 394 to Alypius by Paulinus, owes its place in the collection of Augustin's letters to the notice of the treatises written by Augustin against the Manichaeans, and its connection with the following letter addressed by Paulinus to Augustin himself. It is obviously one of those which, in making a selection of letters, may be safely omitted.

LETTER XXV

(A.D. 394.)

To Augustin, Our Lord and Brother Beloved and Venerable, from Paulinus and Therasia, Sinners.

1. The love of Christ which constrains us, and which unites us, though separated by distance, in the bond of a common faith, has itself emboldened me to dismiss my fear and address a letter to you; and it has given you a place in my inmost heart by means of your writings—so full of the stores of

learning, so sweet with celestial honey, the medicine and the nourishment of my soul. These I at present have in five books, which, through the kindness of our blessed and venerable Bishop Alypius, I received, not only as a means of my own instruction, but for the use of the Church in many towns. These books I am now reading: in them I take great delight: in them I find food, not that which perisheth, but that which imparts the substance of eternal life through our faith, whereby we are in our Lord Jesus Christ made members of His body; for the writings and examples of the faithful do greatly strengthen that faith which, not looking at things seen, longs after things not seen with that love which accepts implicitly all things which are according to the truth of the omnipotent God. O true salt of the earth, by which our hearts are preserved from being corrupted by the errors of the world! O light worthy of your place on the candlestick of the Church, diffusing widely in the Catholic towns the brightness of a flame fed by the oil of the seven-branched lamp of the upper sanctuary, you also disperse even the thick mists of heresy, and rescue the light of truth from the confusion of darkness by the beams of your luminous demonstrations.

2. You see, my brother beloved, esteemed, and welcomed in Christ our Lord, with what intimacy I claim to know you, with what amazement I admire and with what love I embrace you, seeing that I enjoy daily converse with you by the medium of your writings, and am fed by the breath of your mouth. For your mouth I may justly call a pipe conveying living water, and a channel from the eternal fountain; for Christ has become in you a fountain of “living water springing up into eternal life.” Through desire for this my soul thirsted within me, and my parched ground longed to be flooded with the fulness of your river. Since, therefore, you have armed me completely by this your Pentateuch against the Manichaeans, if you have prepared any treatises in defence of the Catholic faith against other enemies (for our enemy, with his thousand pernicious stratagems, must be defeated by weapons as various as the artifices by which he assails us), I beg you to bring these forth from your armoury for me, and not refuse to furnish me with the “armour of righteousness.” For I am oppressed even now in my work with a heavy burden, being, as a sinner, a veteran in the ranks of sinners, but an untrained recruit in the service of the King eternal. The wisdom of this world I have unhappily hitherto regarded with

admiration, and, devoting myself to literature which I now see to be unprofitable, and wisdom which I now reject, I was in the sight of God foolish and dumb. When I had become old in the fellowship of my enemies, and had laboured in vain in my thoughts, I lifted mine eyes to the mountains, looking up to the precepts of the law and to the gifts of grace, whence my help came from the Lord, who, not requiting me according to mine iniquity, enlightened my blindness, loosed my bonds, humbled me who had been sinfully exalted, in order that He might exalt me when graciously humbled.

3. Therefore I follow, with halting pace indeed as yet, the great examples of the just, if I may through your prayers apprehend that for which I have been apprehended by the compassion of God. Guide, therefore, this infant creeping on the ground, and by your steps teach him to walk. For I would not have you judge of me by the age which began with my natural birth, but by that which began with my spiritual new birth. For as to the natural life, my age is that which the cripple, healed by the apostles by the power of their word at the gate Beautiful, had attained. But with respect to the birth of my soul, mine is as yet the age of those infants who, being sacrificed by the death-blows which were aimed at Christ, preceded with blood worthy of such honour the offering of the Lamb, and were the harbingers of the passion of the Lord. Therefore, as I am but a babe in the word of God, and as to spiritual age a sucking child, satisfy my vehement desire by nourishing me with your words, the breasts of faith, and wisdom, and love. If you consider only the office which we both hold, you are my brother; but if you consider the ripeness of your understanding and other powers, you are, though my junior in years, a father to me; because the possession of a venerable wisdom has promoted you, though young, to a maturity of worth, and to the honour which belongs to those who are old. Foster and strengthen me, then, for I am, as I have said, but a child in the sacred Scriptures and in spiritual studies; and seeing that, after long contendings and frequent shipwreck, I have but little skill, and am even now with difficulty rising above the waves of this world, do you, who have already found firm footing on the shore, receive me into the safe refuge of your bosom, that, if it please you, we may together sail towards the harbour of salvation. Meanwhile, in my efforts to escape from the dangers of this life

and the abyss of sin, support me by your prayers, as by a plank, that from this world I may escape as one does from a shipwreck, leaving all behind.

4. I have therefore been at pains to rid myself of all baggage and garments which might impede my progress, in order that, obedient to the command and sustained by the help of Christ, I may swim, unhindered by any clothing for the flesh or care for the morrow, across the sea of this present life, which, swelling with waves and echoing with the barking of our sins, like the dogs of Scylla, separates between us and God. I do not boast that I have accomplished this: even if I might so boast, I would glory only in the Lord, whose it is to accomplish what it is our part to desire; but my soul is in earnest that the judgments of the Lord be her chief desire. You can judge how far he is on the way to efficiently performing the will of God, who is desirous that he may desire to perform it. Nevertheless, so far as in me lies, I have loved the beauty of His sanctuary, and, if left to myself, would have chosen to occupy the lowest place in the Lord's house. But to Him who was pleased to separate me from my mother's womb, and to draw me away from the friendship of flesh and blood to His grace, it has seemed good to raise me from the earth and from the gulf of misery, though destitute of all merit, and to take me from the mire and from the dunghill, to set me among the princes of His people, and appoint my place in the same rank with yourself; so that, although you excel me in worth, I should be associated with you as your equal in office.

5. It is not therefore by my own presumption, but in accordance with the pleasure and appointment of the Lord, that I appropriate the honour of which I own myself unworthy, claiming for myself the bond of brotherhood with you; for I am persuaded, from the holiness of your character, that you are taught by the truth "not to mind high things, but to condescend to men of low estate." Therefore I hope that you will readily and kindly accept the assurance of the love which in humility we bear to you, and which, I trust, you have already received through the most blessed priest Alypius, whom (with his permission) we call our father. For he doubtless has himself given you an example of loving us both while we are yet strangers, and above our desert; for he has found it possible, in the spirit of far-reaching and self-diffusing genuine love, to behold us by affection, and to come in contact

with us by writing, even when we were unknown to him, and severed by a wide interval both of land and sea. He has presented us with the first proofs of his affection to us, and evidences of your love, in the above-mentioned gift of books. And as he was greatly concerned that we should be constrained to ardent love for you, when known to us, not by his testimony alone, but more fully by the eloquence and the faith seen in your own writings; so do we believe that he has taken care, with equal zeal, to bring you to imitate his example in cherishing a very warm love towards us in return. O brother in Christ, beloved, venerable, and ardently longed for, we desire that the grace of God, as it is with you, may abide for ever. We salute, with the utmost affection of cordial brotherhood, your whole household, and every one who is in the Lord a companion and imitator of your holiness. We beg you to bless, in accepting it, one loaf which we have sent to your Charity, in token of our oneness of heart with you.

LETTER XXVI

(A.D. 395.)

To Licentius from Augustin.

1. I have with difficulty found an opportunity for writing to you: who would believe it? Yet Licentius must take my word for it. I do not wish you to search curiously for the causes and reasons of this; for though they could be given, your confidence in me acquits me of obligation to furnish them. Moreover, I received your letters by messengers who were not available for the carrying back of my reply. And as to the thing which you asked me to ask, I attended to it by letter as far as it seemed to me right to bring it forward; but with what result you may have seen. If I have not yet succeeded, I will press the matter more earnestly, either when the result comes to my knowledge, or when you yourself remind me of it. Thus far I have spoken to you of the things in which we hear the sound of the chains of this life. I pass from them. Receive now in a few words the utterance of my heart’s anxieties concerning your hope for eternity, and the question how a way may be opened for you to God.

2. I fear, my dear Licentius, that you, while repeatedly rejecting and dreading the restraints of wisdom, as if these were bonds, are becoming firmly and fatally in bondage to mortal things. For wisdom, though at first it restrains men, and subdues them by some labours in the way of discipline, gives them presently true freedom, and enriches them, when free, with the possession and enjoyment of itself; and though at first it educates them by the help of temporary restraints, it folds them afterwards in its eternal embrace, the sweetest and strongest of all conceivable bonds. I admit, indeed, that these initial restraints are somewhat hard to bear; but the ultimate restraints of wisdom I cannot call grievous, because they are most sweet; nor can I call them easy, because they are most firm: in short, they possess a quality which cannot be described, but which can be the object of faith, and hope, and love. The bonds of this world, on the other hand, have a real harshness and a delusive charm, certain pain and uncertain pleasure, hard toil and troubled rest, an experience full of misery, and a hope devoid of happiness. And are you submitting neck and hands and feet to these chains, desiring to be burdened with honours of this kind, reckoning your labours to be in vain if they are not thus rewarded, and spontaneously aspiring to become fixed in that to which neither persuasion nor force ought to have induced you to go? Perhaps you answer, in the words of the slave in Terence,

“So ho, you are pouring out wise words here.”

Receive my words, then, that I may pour them out without wasting them. But if I sing, while you prefer to dance to another tune, even thus I do not regret my effort to give advice; for the exercise of singing yields pleasure even when the song fails to stir to responsive motion the person for whom it is sung with loving care. There were in your letters some verbal mistakes which attracted my attention, but I judge it trifling to discuss these when solicitude about your actions and your whole life disturbs me.

3. If your verses were marred by defective arrangement, or violated the laws of prosody, or grated on the ears of the hearer by imperfect rhythm, you would doubtless be ashamed, and you would lose no time, you would take no rest, until you arranged, corrected, remodelled, and balanced your composition, devoting any amount of earnest study and toil to the

acquisition and practice of the art of versification: but when you yourself are marred by disorderly living, when you violate the laws of God, when your life accords neither with the honourable desires of friends on your behalf, nor with the light given by your own learning, do you think this is a trifle to be cast out of sight and out of mind? As if, forsooth, you thought yourself of less value than the sound of your own voice, and esteemed it a smaller matter to displease God by ill-ordered life, than to provoke the censure of grammarians by ill-ordered syllables.

4. You write thus: "Oh that the morning light of other days could with its gladdening chariot bring back to me bright hours that are gone, which we spent together in the heart of Italy and among the high mountains, when proving the generous leisure and pure privileges which belong to the good! Neither stern winter with its frozen snow, nor the rude blasts of Zephyrs and raging of Boreas, could deter me from following your footsteps with eager tread. You have only to express your wish."

Woe be to me if I do not express this wish, nay, if I do not compel and command, or beseech and implore you to follow me. If, however, your ear is shut against my voice, let it be open to your own voice, and give heed to your own poem: listen to yourself, O friend, most unyielding, unreasonable, and unimpressible. What care I for your tongue of gold, while your heart is of iron? How shall I, not in verses, but in lamentations, sufficiently bewail these verses of yours, in which I discover what a soul, what a mind that is which I am not permitted to seize and present as an offering to our God? You are waiting for me to express the wish that you should become good, and enjoy rest and happiness: as if any day could shine more pleasantly on me than that in which I shall enjoy in God your gifted mind, or as if you did not know how I hunger and thirst for you, or as if you did not in this poem itself confess this. Return to the mind in which you wrote these things; say to me now again, "You have only to express your wish." Here then is my wish, if my expression of it be enough to move you to comply: Give yourself to me—give yourself to my Lord, who is the Lord of us both and who has endowed you with your faculties: for what am I but through Him your servant, and under Him your fellow-servant?

5. Nay, has not He given expression to His will? Hear the gospel: it declares, “Jesus stood and cried.” “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: so shall ye find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” If these words are not heard, or are heard only with the ear, do you, Licentius, expect Augustin to issue his command to his fellow-servant, and not rather complain that the will of his Lord is despised, when He orders, nay invites, and as it were entreats all who labour to seek rest in Him? But to your strong and proud neck, forsooth, the yoke of the world seems easier than the yoke of Christ; yet consider, in regard to the yoke which He imposes, by whom and with what recompense it is imposed. Go to Campania, learn in the case of Paulinus, that eminent and holy servant of God, how great worldly honours he shook off, without hesitation, from neck truly noble because humble, in order that he might place it, as he has done, beneath the yoke of Christ; and now, with his mind at rest, he meekly rejoices in Him as the guide of his way. Go, learn with what wealth of mind he offers to Him the sacrifice of praise, rendering unto Him all the good which he has received from Him, lest, by failing to store all that he has in Him from whom he received it, he should lose it all.

6. Why are you so excited? why so wavering? why do you turn your ear away from us, and lend it to the imaginations of fatal pleasures? They are false, they perish, and they lead to perdition. They are false, Licentius. “May the truth,” as you desire, “be made plain to us by demonstration, may it flow more clear than Eridanus.” The truth alone declares what is true: Christ is the truth; let us come to Him that we may be released from labour. That He may heal us, let us take His yoke upon us, and learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart, and we shall find rest unto our souls: for His yoke is easy, and His burden is light. The devil desires to wear you as an ornament. Now, if you found in the earth a golden chalice, you would give it to the Church of God. But you have received from God talents that are spiritually valuable as gold; and do you devote these to the service of your lusts, and surrender yourself to Satan? Do it not, I entreat you. May you at some time perceive with what a sad and sorrowful heart I have written these

things; and I pray you, have pity on me if you have ceased to be precious in your own eyes.

LETTER XXVII

(A.D. 395.)

To My Lord, Holy and Venerable, and Worthy of Highest Praise in Christ, My Brother Paulinus, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. O excellent man and excellent brother, there was a time when you were unknown to my mind; and I charge my mind to bear patiently your being still unknown to my eyes, but it almost—nay, altogether—refuses to obey. Does it indeed bear this patiently? If so, why then does a longing for your presence rack my inmost soul? For if I were suffering bodily infirmities, and these did not interrupt the serenity of my mind, I might be justly said to bear them patiently; but when I cannot bear with equanimity the privation of not seeing you, it would be intolerable were I to call my state of mind patience. Nevertheless, it would perhaps be still more intolerable if I were to be found patient while absent from you, seeing that you are such an one as you are. It is well, therefore, that I am unsatisfied under a privation which is such that, if I were satisfied under it, every one would justly be dissatisfied with me. What has befallen me is strange, yet true: I grieve because I do not see you, and my grief itself comforts me; for I neither admire nor covet a fortitude easily consoled under the absence of good men such as you are. For do we not long for the heavenly Jerusalem? and the more impatiently we long for it, do we not the more patiently submit to all things for its sake? Who can so withhold himself from joy in seeing you, as to feel no pain when you are no longer seen? I at least can do neither; and seeing that if I could, it could only be by trampling on right and natural feeling, I rejoice that I cannot, and in this rejoicing I find some consolation. It is therefore not the removal, but the contemplation, of this sorrow that consoles me. Blame me not, I beseech you, with that devout seriousness of spirit which so eminently distinguishes you; say not that I do wrong to grieve because of my not yet knowing you, when you have disclosed to my sight your mind, which is the inner man. For if, when sojourning in any place, or in the city to which you belong, I had come to know you as my

brother and friend, and as one so eminent as a Christian, so noble as a man, how could you think that it would be no disappointment to me if I were not permitted to know your dwelling? How, then, can I but mourn because I have not yet seen your face and form, the dwelling-place of that mind which I have come to know as if it were my own?

2. For I have read your letter, which flows with milk and honey, which exhibits the simplicity of heart wherewith, under the guidance of piety, you seek the Lord, and which brings glory and honour to Him. The brethren have read it also, and find unwearied and ineffable satisfaction in those abundant and excellent gifts with which God has endowed you. As many as have read it carry it away with them, because, while they read, it carries them away. Words cannot express how sweet is the savour of Christ which your letter breathes. How strong is the wish to be more fully acquainted with you which that letter awakens by presenting you to our sight! for it at once permits us to discern and prompts us to desire you. For the more effectually that it makes us in a certain sense realize your presence, the more does it render us impatient under your absence. All love you as seen therein, and wish to be loved by you. Praise and thanksgiving are offered to God, by whose grace you are what you are. In your letter, Christ is awakened that He may be pleased to calm the winds and the waves for you, directing your steps towards His perfect stedfastness. In it the reader beholds a wife who does not bring her husband to effeminacy, but by union to him is brought herself to share the strength of his nature; and unto her in you, as completely one with you, and bound to you by spiritual ties which owe their strength to their purity, we desire to return our salutations with the respect due to your Holiness. In it, the cedars of Lebanon, levelled to the ground, and fashioned by the skilful craft of love into the form of the Ark, cleave the waves of this world, fearless of decay. In it, glory is scorned that it may be secured, and the world given up that it may be gained. In it, the little ones, yea, the mightier sons of Babylon, the sins of turbulence and pride, are dashed against the rock.

3. These and other such most delightful and hallowed spectacles are presented to the readers of your letter,—that letter which exhibits a true faith, a good hope, a pure love. How it breathes to us your thirst, your

longing and fainting for the courts of the Lord! With what holy love it is inspired! How it overflows with the abundant treasure of a true heart! What thanksgivings it renders to God! What blessings it procures from Him! Is it elegance or fervour, light or life-giving power, which shines most in your letter? For how can it at once soothe us and animate us? how can it combine fertilizing rains with the brightness of a cloudless sky? How is this? I ask; or how shall I repay you, except by giving myself to be wholly yours in Him whose you wholly are? If this be little, it is at least all I have to give. But you have made me think it not little, by your deigning to honour me in that letter with such praises, that when I requite you by giving myself to you, I would be chargeable if I counted the gift a small one, with refusing to believe your testimony. I am ashamed, indeed, to believe so much good spoken of myself, but I am yet more unwilling to refuse to believe you. I have one way of escape from the dilemma: I shall not credit your estimate of my character, because I do not recognise myself in the portrait you have drawn; but I shall believe myself to be beloved by you, because I perceive and feel this beyond all doubt. Thus I shall be found neither rash in judging of myself, nor ungrateful for your esteem. Moreover, when I offer myself to you, it is not a small offering; for I offer one whom you very warmly love, and one who, though he is not what you suppose him to be, is nevertheless one for whom you are praying that he may become such. And your prayers I now beg the more earnestly, lest, thinking me to be already what I am not, you should be less solicitous for the supply of that which I lack.

4. The bearer of this letter to your Excellency and most eminent Charity is one of my dearest friends, and most intimately known to me from early years. His name is mentioned in the treatise De Religione, which your Holiness, as you indicate in your letter, has read with very great pleasure, doubtless because it was made more acceptable to you by the recommendation of so good a man as he who sent it to you. I would not wish you, however, to give credence to the statements which, perchance, one who is so intimately my friend may have made in praise of me. For I have often observed, that, without intending to say what was untrue, he was, by the bias of friendship, mistaken in his opinion concerning me, and that he thought me to be already possessed of many things, for the gift of which my heart earnestly waited on the Lord. And if he did such things in

my presence, who may not conjecture that out of the fulness of his heart he may utter many things more excellent than true concerning me when absent? He will submit to your esteemed attention, and review all my treatises; for I am not aware of having written anything, either addressed to those who are beyond the pale of the Church, or to the brethren, which is not in his possession. But when you are reading these, my holy Paulinus, let not those things which Truth has spoken by my weak instrumentality, so carry you away as to prevent your carefully observing what I myself have spoken, lest, while you drink in with eagerness the things good and true which have been given to me as a servant, you should forget to pray for the pardon of my errors and mistakes. For in all that shall, if observed, justly displease you, I myself am seen; but in all which in my books is justly approved by you, through the gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed on you, He is to be loved, He is to be praised, with whom is the fountain of life, and in whose light we shall see light, not darkly as we do here, but face to face. When, in reading over my writings, I discover in them anything which is due to the working of the old leaven in me, I blame myself for it with true sorrow; but if anything which I have spoken is, by God's gift, from the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, I rejoice therein with trembling. For what have we that we have not received? Yet it may be said, his portion is better whom God has endowed with larger and more numerous gifts, than his on whom smaller and fewer have been conferred. True; but, on the other hand, it is better to have a small gift, and to render to Him due thanks for it, than, having a large gift, to wish to claim the merit of it as our own. Pray for me, my brother, that I may make such acknowledgments sincerely, and that my heart may not be at variance with my tongue. Pray, I beseech you, that, not coveting praise to myself, but rendering praise to the Lord, I may worship Him; and I shall be safe from mine enemies.

5. There is yet another thing which may move you to love more warmly the brother who bears my letter; for he is a kinsman of the venerable and truly blessed bishop Alypius, whom you love with your whole heart, and justly: for whoever thinks highly of that man, thinks highly of the great mercy and wonderful gifts which God has bestowed on him. Accordingly, when he had read your request, desiring him to write for you a sketch of his history, and, while willing to do it because of your kindness, was yet unwilling to do it

because of his humility, I, seeing him unable to decide between the respective claims of love and humility, transferred the burden from his shoulders to my own, for he enjoined me by letter to do so. I shall therefore, with God’s help, soon place in your heart Alypius just as he is: for this I chiefly feared, that he would be afraid to declare all that God has conferred on him, lest (since what he writes would be read by others besides you) he should seem to any who are less competent to discriminate to be commending not God’s goodness bestowed on men, but his own merits; and that thus you, who know what construction to put on such statements, would, through his regard for the infirmity of others, be deprived of that which to you as a brother ought to be imparted. This I would have done already, and you would already be reading my description of him, had not my brother suddenly resolved to set out earlier than we expected. For him I bespeak a welcome from your heart and from your lips as kindly as if your acquaintance with him was not beginning now, but of as long standing as my own. For if he does not shrink from laying himself open to your heart, he will be in great measure, if not completely, healed by your lips; for I desire him to be often made to hear the words of those who cherish for their friends a higher love than that which is of this world.

6. Even if Romanianus had not been going to visit your Charity, I had resolved to recommend to you by letter his son [Licentius], dear to me as my own (whose name you will find also in some of my books), in order that he may be encouraged, exhorted, and instructed, not so much by the sound of your voice, as by the example of your spiritual strength. I desire earnestly, that while his life is yet in the green blade, the tares may be turned into wheat, and he may believe those who know by experience the dangers to which he is eager to expose himself. From the poem of my young friend, and my letter to him, your most benevolent and considerate wisdom may perceive my grief, fear, and care on his account. I am not without hope that, by the Lord’s favour, I may through your means be set free from such disquietude regarding him.

As you are now about to read much that I have written, your love will be much more gratefully esteemed by me, if, moved by compassion, and judging impartially, you correct and reprove whatever displeases you. For you are not one whose oil anointing my head would make me afraid.

The brethren, not those only who dwell with us, and those who, dwelling elsewhere, serve God in the same way as we do, but almost all who are in Christ our warm friends, send you salutations, along with the expression of their veneration and affectionate longing for you as a brother, as a saint, and as a man. I dare not ask; but if you have any leisure from ecclesiastical duties, you may see for what favour all Africa, with myself, is thirsting.

LETTER XXVIII

(A.D. 394 OR 395.)

To Jerome, His Most Beloved Lord, and Brother and Fellow-Presbyter, Worthy of Being Honoured and Embraced with the Sincerest Affectionate Devotion, Augustin Sends Greeting.

Chap. I

1. Never was the face of any one more familiar to another, than the peaceful, happy, and truly noble diligence of your studies in the Lord has become to me. For although I long greatly to be acquainted with you, I feel that already my knowledge of you is deficient in respect of nothing but a very small part of you,—namely, your personal appearance; and even as to this, I cannot deny that since my most blessed brother Alypius (now invested with the office of bishop, of which he was then truly worthy) has seen you, and has on his return been seen by me, it has been almost completely imprinted on my mind by his report of you; nay, I may say that before his return, when he saw you there, I was seeing you myself with his eyes. For any one who knows us may say of him and me, that in body only, and not in mind, we are two, so great is the union of heart, so firm the intimate friendship subsisting between us; though in merit we are not alike, for his is far above mine. Seeing, therefore, that you love me, both of old through the communion of spirit by which we are knit to each other, and more recently through what you know of me from the mouth of my friend, I feel that it is not presumptuous in me (as it would be in one wholly unknown to you) to recommend to your brotherly esteem the brother

Profuturus, in whom we trust that the happy omen of his name (Good-speed) may be fulfilled through our efforts furthered after this by your aid; although, perhaps, it may be presumptuous on this ground, that he is so great a man, that it would be much more fitting that I should be commended to you by him, than he by me. I ought perhaps to write no more, if I were willing to content myself with the style of a formal letter of introduction; but my mind overflows into conference with you, concerning the studies with which we are occupied in Christ Jesus our Lord, who is pleased to furnish us largely through your love with many benefits, and some helps by the way, in the path which He has pointed out to His followers.

Chap. II

2. We therefore, and with us all that are devoted to study in the African churches, beseech you not to refuse to devote care and labour to the translation of the books of those who have written in the Greek language most able commentaries on our Scriptures. You may thus put us also in possession of these men, and especially of that one whose name you seem to have singular pleasure in sounding forth in your writings [Origen]. But I beseech you not to devote your labour to the work of translating into Latin the sacred canonical books, unless you follow the method in which you have translated Job, viz. with the addition of notes, to let it be seen plainly what differences there are between this version of yours and that of the LXX., whose authority is worthy of highest esteem. For my own part, I cannot sufficiently express my wonder that anything should at this date be found in the Hebrew Mss. which escaped so many translators perfectly acquainted with the language. I say nothing of the LXX., regarding whose harmony in mind and spirit, surpassing that which is found in even one man, I dare not in any way pronounce a decided opinion, except that in my judgment, beyond question, very high authority must in this work of translation be conceded to them. I am more perplexed by those translators who, though enjoying the advantage of labouring after the LXX. had completed their work, and although well acquainted, as it is reported, with the force of Hebrew words and phrases, and with Hebrew syntax, have not only failed to agree among themselves, but have left many things which, even after so long a time, still remain to be discovered and brought to light.

Now these things were either obscure or plain: if they were obscure, it is believed that you are as likely to have been mistaken as the others; if they were plain, it is not believed that they [the LXX.] could possibly have been mistaken. Having stated the grounds of my perplexity, I appeal to your kindness to give me an answer regarding this matter.

Chap. III

3. I have been reading also some writings, ascribed to you, on the Epistles of the Apostle Paul. In reading your exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians, that passage came to my hand in which the Apostle Peter is called back from a course of dangerous dissimulation. To find there the defence of falsehood undertaken, whether by you, a man of such weight, or by any author (if it is the writing of another), causes me, I must confess, great sorrow, until at least those things which decide my opinion in the matter are refuted, if indeed they admit of refutation. For it seems to me that most disastrous consequences must follow upon our believing that anything false is found in the sacred books: that is to say, that the men by whom the Scripture has been given to us, and committed to writing, did put down in these books anything false. It is one question whether it may be at any time the duty of a good man to deceive; but it is another question whether it can have been the duty of a writer of Holy Scripture to deceive: nay, it is not another question—it is no question at all. For if you once admit into such a high sanctuary of authority one false statement as made in the way of duty, there will not be left a single sentence of those books which, if appearing to any one difficult in practice or hard to believe, may not by the same fatal rule be explained away, as a statement in which, intentionally, and under a sense of duty, the author declared what was not true.

4. For if the Apostle Paul did not speak the truth when, finding fault with the Apostle Peter, he said: “If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?”—if, indeed, Peter seemed to him to be doing what was right, and if, notwithstanding, he, in order to soothe troublesome opponents, both said and wrote that Peter did what was wrong;—if we say thus, what then shall be our answer when perverse men such as he himself prophetically described arise, forbidding marriage, if they defend

themselves by saying that, in all which the same apostle wrote in confirmation of the lawfulness of marriage, he was, on account of men who, through love for their wives, might become troublesome opponents, declaring what was false,—saying these things, forsooth, not because he believed them, but because their opposition might thus be averted? It is unnecessary to quote many parallel examples. For even things which pertain to the praises of God might be represented as piously intended falsehoods, written in order that love for Him might be enkindled in men who were slow of heart; and thus nowhere in the sacred books shall the authority of pure truth stand sure. Do we not observe the great care with which the same apostle commends the truth to us, when he says: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain: yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ; whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." If any one said to him, "Why are you so shocked by this falsehood, when the thing which you have said, even if it were false, tends very greatly to the glory of God?" would he not, abhorring the madness of such a man, with every word and sign which could express his feelings, open clearly the secret depths of his own heart, protesting that to speak well of a falsehood uttered on behalf of God, was a crime not less, perhaps even greater, than to speak ill of the truth concerning Him? We must therefore be careful to secure, in order to our knowledge of the divine Scriptures, the guidance only of such a man as is imbued with a high reverence for the sacred books, and a profound persuasion of their truth, preventing him from flattering himself in any part of them with the hypothesis of a statement being made not because it was true, but because it was expedient, and making him rather pass by what he does not understand, than set up his own feelings above that truth. For, truly, when he pronounces anything to be untrue, he demands that he be believed in preference, and endeavours to shake our confidence in the authority of the divine Scriptures.

5. For my part, I would devote all the strength which the Lord grants me, to show that every one of those texts which are wont to be quoted in defence of the expediency of falsehood ought to be otherwise understood, in order that everywhere the sure truth of these passages themselves may be consistently maintained. For as statements adduced in evidence must not be

false, neither ought they to favour falsehood. This, however, I leave to your own judgment. For if you apply more thorough attention to the passage, perhaps you will see it much more readily than I have done. To this more careful study that piety will move you, by which you discern that the authority of the divine Scriptures becomes unsettled (so that every one may believe what he wishes, and reject what he does not wish) if this be once admitted, that the men by whom these things have been delivered unto us, could in their writings state some things which were not true, from considerations of duty; unless, perchance, you propose to furnish us with certain rules by which we may know when a falsehood might or might not become a duty. If this can be done, I beg you to set forth these rules with reasonings which may be neither equivocal nor precarious; and I beseech you by our Lord, in whom Truth was incarnate, not to consider me burdensome or presumptuous in making this request. For a mistake of mine which is in the interest of truth cannot deserve great blame, if indeed it deserves blame at all, when it is possible for you to use truth in the interest of falsehood without doing wrong.

Chap. IV

6. Of many other things I would wish to discourse with your most ingenuous heart, and to take counsel with you concerning Christian studies; but this desire could not be satisfied within the limits of any letter. I may do this more fully by means of the brother bearing this letter, whom I rejoice in sending to share and profit by your sweet and useful conversation. Nevertheless, although I do not reckon myself superior in any respect to him, even he may take less from you than I would desire; and he will excuse my saying so, for I confess myself to have more room for receiving from you than he has. I see his mind to be already more fully stored, in which unquestionably he excels me. Therefore, when he returns, as I trust he may happily do by God’s blessing, and when I become a sharer in all with which his heart has been richly furnished by you, there will still be a consciousness of void unsatisfied in me, and a longing for personal fellowship with you. Hence of the two I shall be the poorer, and he the richer, then as now. This brother carries with him some of my writings, which if you condescend to read, I implore you to review them with candid

and brotherly strictness. For the words of Scripture, “The righteous shall correct me in compassion, and reprove me; but the oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head,” I understand to mean that he is the truer friend who by his censure heals me, than the one who by flattery anoints my head. I find the greatest difficulty in exercising a right judgment when I read over what I have written, being either too cautious or too rash. For I sometimes see my own faults, but I prefer to hear them reproved by those who are better able to judge than I am; lest after I have, perhaps justly, charged myself with error, I begin again to flatter myself, and think that my censure has arisen from an undue mistrust of my own judgment.

LETTER XXIX

(A.D. 395.)

A Letter from the Presbyter of the District of Hippo to Alypius the Bishop of Thagaste, Concerning the Anniversary of the Birth of Leontius, Formerly Bishop of Hippo.

1. In the absence of brother Macharius, I have not been able to write anything definite concerning a matter about which I could not feel otherwise than anxious: it is said, however, that he will soon return, and whatever can be with God’s help done in the matter shall be done. Although also our brethren, citizens of your town, who were with us, might sufficiently assure you of our solicitude on their behalf when they returned, nevertheless the thing which the Lord has granted to me is one worthy to be the subject of that epistolary intercourse which ministers so much to the comfort of us both; it is, moreover, a thing in the obtaining of which I believe that I have been greatly assisted by your own solicitude regarding it, seeing that it could not but constrain you to intercession on our behalf.

2. Therefore let me not fail to relate to your Charity what has taken place; so that, as you joined us in pouring out prayers for this mercy before it was obtained, you may now join us in rendering thanks for it after it has been received. When I was informed after your departure that some were becoming openly violent, and declaring that they could not submit to the prohibition (intimated while you were here) of that feast which they call

Laetitia, vainly attempting to disguise their revels under a fair name, it happened most opportunely for me, by the hidden fore-ordination of the Almighty God, that on the fourth holy day that

Chapter of the Gospel fell to be expounded in ordinary course, in which the words occur: “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine.” I discoursed therefore concerning dogs and swine in such a way as to compel those who clamour with obstinate barking against the divine precepts, and who are given up to the abominations of carnal pleasures, to blush for shame; and followed it up by saying, that they might plainly see how criminal it was to do, under the name of religion, within the walls of the church, that which, if it were practised by them in their own houses, would make it necessary for them to be debarred from that which is holy, and from the privileges which are the pearls of the Church

3. Although these words were well received, nevertheless, as few had attended the meeting, all had not been done which so great an emergency required. When, however, this discourse was, according to the ability and zeal of each, made known abroad by those who had heard it, it found many opponents. But when the morning of Quadragesima came round, and a great multitude had assembled at the hour of exposition of Scripture, that passage in the Gospel was read in which our Lord said, concerning those sellers who were driven out of the temple, and the tables of the money-changers which He had overthrown, that the house of His Father had been made a den of thieves instead of a house of prayer. After awakening their attention by bringing forward the subject of immoderate indulgence in wine, I myself also read this chapter, and added to it an argument to prove with how much greater anger and vehemence our Lord would cast forth drunken revels, which are everywhere disgraceful, from that temple from which He thus drove out merchandise lawful elsewhere, especially when the things sold were those required for the sacrifices appointed in that dispensation; and I asked them whether they regarded a place occupied by men selling what was necessary, or one used by men drinking to excess, as bearing the greater resemblance to a den of thieves.

4. Moreover, as passages of Scripture which I had prepared were held ready to be put into my hands, I went on to say that the Jewish nation, with all its lack of spirituality in religion, never held feasts, even temperate feasts, much less feasts disgraced by intemperance, in their temple, in which at that time the body and blood of the Lord were not yet offered, and that in history they are not found to have been excited by wine on any public occasion bearing the name of worship, except when they held a feast before the idol which they had made. While I said these things I took the manuscript from the attendant, and read that whole passage. Reminding them of the words of the apostle, who says, in order to distinguish Christians from the obdurate Jews, that they are his epistle written, not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart, I asked further, with the deepest sorrow, how it was that, although Moses the servant of God broke both the tables of stone because of these rulers of Israel, I could not break the hearts of those who, though men of the New Testament dispensation, were desiring in their celebration of saints' days to repeat often the public perpetration of excesses of which the people of the Old Testament economy were guilty only once, and that in an act of idolatry.

5. Having then given back the manuscript of Exodus, I proceeded to enlarge, so far as my time permitted, on the crime of drunkenness, and took up the writings of the Apostle Paul, and showed among what sins it is classed by him, reading the text, "If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one (ye ought) not even to eat;" pathetically reminding them how great is our danger in eating with those who are guilty of intemperance even in their own houses. I read also what is added, a little further on, in the same epistle: "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." After reading these, I charged them to consider how believers could hear these words, "but ye are washed," if they still tolerated in their own hearts—that is, in God's inner temple—the abominations of such lusts as these against which the kingdom

of heaven is shut. Then I went on to that passage: “When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s supper: for in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in, or despise ye the church of God?” After reading which, I more especially begged them to remark that not even innocent and temperate feasts were permitted in the church: for the apostle said not, “Have ye not houses of your own in which to be drunken?”—as if it was drunkenness alone which was unlawful in the church; but, “Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?”—things lawful in themselves, but not lawful in the church, inasmuch as men have their own houses in which they may be recruited by necessary food: whereas now, by the corruption of the times and the relaxation of morals, we have been brought so low, that, no longer insisting upon sobriety in the houses of men, all that we venture to demand is, that the realm of tolerated excess be restricted to their own homes.

6. I reminded them also of a passage in the Gospel which I had expounded the day before, in which it is said of the false prophets: “Ye shall know them by their fruits.” I also bade them remember that in that place our works are signified by the word fruits. Then I asked among what kind of fruits drunkenness was named, and read that passage in the Epistle to the Galatians: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murder, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” After these words, I asked how, when God has commanded that Christians be known by their fruits, we could be known as Christians by this fruit of drunkenness? I added also, that we must read what follows there: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” And I pled with them to consider how shameful and lamentable it would be, if, not content with living at home in the practice of these works of the flesh, they even wished by them, forsooth, to honour the church, and to fill the whole area of so large a place of worship, if they were permitted, with crowds of revellers and drunkards: and yet would not present to God those fruits of the

Spirit which, by the authority of Scripture, and by my groans, they were called to yield, and by the offering of which they would most suitably celebrate the saints' days.

7. This being finished, I returned the manuscript; and being asked to speak, I set before their eyes with all my might, as the danger itself constrained me, and as the Lord was pleased to give strength, the danger shared by them who were committed to my care, and by me, who must give account to the Chief Shepherd, and implored them by His humiliation, by the unparalleled insults, the buffetings and spitting on the face which He endured, by His pierced hands and crown of thorns, and by His cross and blood, to have pity on me at least, if they were displeased with themselves, and to consider the inexpressible love cherished towards me by the aged and venerable Valerius, who had not scrupled to assign to me for their sakes the perilous burden of expounding to them the word of truth, and had often told them that in my coming here his prayers were answered; not rejoicing, surely, that I had come to share or to behold the death of our hearers, but rejoicing that I had come to share his labours for the eternal life. In conclusion, I told them that I was resolved to trust in Him who cannot lie, and who has given us a promise by the mouth of the prophet, saying of our Lord Jesus Christ, "If His children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from Him." I declared, therefore, that I put my trust in Him, that if they despised the weighty words which had now been read and spoken to them, He would visit them with the rod and with stripes, and not leave them to be condemned with the world. In this appeal I put forth all the power in thought and utterance which, in an emergency so great and hazardous, our Saviour and Ruler was pleased to supply. I did not move them to weep by first weeping myself; but while these things were being spoken, I own that, moved by the tears which they began to shed, I myself could not refrain from following their example. And when we had thus wept together, I concluded my sermon with full persuasion that they would be restrained by it from the abuses denounced.

8. Next morning, however, when the day dawned, which so many were accustomed to devote to excess in eating and drinking, I received notice that some, even of those who were present when I preached, had not yet desisted from complaint, and that so great was the power of detestable custom with them, that, using no other argument, they asked, “Wherefore is this now prohibited? Were they not Christians who in former times did not interfere with this practice?” On hearing this, I knew not what more powerful means for influencing them I could devise; but resolved, in the event of their judging it proper to persevere, that after reading in Ezekiel’s prophecy that the watchman has delivered his own soul if he has given warning, even though the persons warned refuse to give heed to him, I would shake my garments and depart. But then the Lord showed me that He leaves us not alone, and taught me how He encourages us to trust Him; for before the time at which I had to ascend the pulpit, the very persons of whose complaint against interference with long-established custom I had heard came to me. Receiving them kindly, I by a few words brought them round to a right opinion; and when it came to the time for my discourse, having laid aside the lecture which I had prepared as now unnecessary, I said a few things concerning the question mentioned above, “Wherefore now prohibit this custom?” saying that to those who might propose it the briefest and best answer would be this: “Let us now at last put down what ought to have been earlier prohibited.”

9. Lest, however, any slight should seem to be put by us on those who, before our time, either tolerated or did not dare to put down such manifest excesses of an undisciplined multitude, I explained to them the circumstances out of which this custom seems to have necessarily risen in the Church,—namely, that when, in the peace which came after such numerous and violent persecutions, crowds of heathen who wished to assume the Christian religion were kept back, because, having been accustomed to celebrate the feasts connected with their worship of idols in revelling and drunkenness, they could not easily refrain from pleasures so hurtful and so habitual, it had seemed good to our ancestors, making for the time a concession to this infirmity, to permit them to celebrate, instead of the festivals which they renounced, other feasts in honour of the holy martyrs, which were observed, not as before with a profane design, but with

similar self-indulgence. I added that now upon them, as persons bound together in the name of Christ, and submissive to the yoke of His august authority, the wholesome restraints of sobriety were laid—restraints with which the honour and fear due to Him who appointed them should move them to comply—and that therefore the time had now come in which all who did not dare to cast off the Christian profession should begin to walk according to Christ's will; and being now confirmed Christians, should reject those concessions to infirmity which were made only for a time in order to their becoming such.

10. I then exhorted them to imitate the example of the churches beyond the sea, in some of which these practices had never been tolerated, while in others they had been already put down by the people complying with the counsel of good ecclesiastical rulers; and as the examples of daily excess in the use of wine in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter were brought forward in defence of the practice, I said in the first place, that I had heard that these excesses had been often forbidden, but because the place was at a distance from the bishop's control, and because in such a city the multitude of carnally-minded persons was great, the foreigners especially, of whom there is a constant influx, clinging to that practice with an obstinacy proportioned to their ignorance, the suppression of so great an evil had not yet been possible. If, however, I continued, we would honour the Apostle Peter, we ought to hear his words, and look much more to the epistles by which his mind is made known to us, than to the place of worship, by which it is not made known; and immediately taking the manuscript, I read his own words: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh arm yourselves likewise with the same mind for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries." After this, when I saw that all were with one consent turning to a right mind, and renouncing the custom against which I had protested, I exhorted them to assemble at noon for the reading of God's word and singing of psalms; stating that we had resolved thus to celebrate the festival in a way much more accordant with purity and piety; and that,

by the number of worshippers who should assemble for this purpose, it would plainly appear who were guided by reason, and who were the slaves of appetite. With these words the discourse concluded.

11. In the afternoon a greater number assembled than in the forenoon, and there was reading and praise alternately up to the hour at which I went out in company with the bishop; and after our coming two psalms were read. Then the old man [Valerius] constrained me by his express command to say something to the people; from which I would rather have been excused, as I was longing for the close of the anxieties of the day. I delivered a short discourse in order to express our gratitude to God. And as we heard the noise of the feasting, which was going on as usual in the church of the heretics, who still prolonged their revelry while we were so differently engaged, I remarked that the beauty of day is enhanced by contrast with the night, and that when anything black is near, the purity of white is the more pleasing; and that, in like manner, our meeting for a spiritual feast might perhaps have been somewhat less sweet to us, but for the contrast of the carnal excesses in which the others indulged; and I exhorted them to desire eagerly such feasts as we then enjoyed, if they had tasted the goodness of the Lord. At the same time, I said that those may well be afraid who seek anything which shall one day be destroyed as the chief object of their desire, seeing that every one shares the portion of that which he worships; a warning expressly given by the apostle to such, when he says of them their "god is their belly," inasmuch as he has elsewhere said, "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them." I added that it is our duty to seek that which is imperishable, which, far removed from carnal affections, is obtained through sanctification of the spirit; and when those things which the Lord was pleased to suggest to me had been spoken on this subject as the occasion required, the daily evening exercises of worship were performed; and when with the bishop I retired from the church, the brethren said a hymn there, a considerable multitude remaining in the church, and engaging in praise even till daylight failed.

12. I have thus related as concisely as I could that which I am sure you longed to hear. Pray that God may be pleased to protect our efforts from giving offence or provoking odium in any way. In the tranquil prosperity

which you enjoy we do with lively warmth of affection participate in no small measure, when tidings so frequently reach us of the gifts possessed by the highly spiritual church of Thagaste. The ship bringing our brethren has not yet arrived. At Hasna, where our brother Argentius is presbyter, the Circumcelliones, entering our church, demolished the altar. The case is now in process of trial; and we earnestly ask your prayers that it may be decided in a peaceful way and as becomes the Catholic Church, so as to silence the tongues of turbulent heretics. I have sent a letter to the Asiarch.

Brethren most blessed, may ye persevere in the Lord, and remember us. Amen.

LETTER XXX

(A.D. 396.)

This letter of Paulinus was written before receiving a reply to his former letter, No. 27, p. 248.

To Augustin, Our Lord and Holy and Beloved Brother, Paulinus and Therasia, Sinners, Send Greeting.

1. My beloved brother in Christ the Lord, having through your holy and pious works come to know you without your knowledge, and to see you though absent long ago, my mind embraced you with unreserved affection, and I hastened to secure the gratification of hearing you through familiar brotherly exchange of letters. I believe also that by the Lord's hand and favour my letter has reached you; but as the youth whom, before winter, we had sent to salute you and others equally loved in God's name, has not returned, we could no longer either put off what we feel to be our duty, or restrain the vehemence of our desire to hear from you. If, then, my former letter has been found worthy to reach you, this is the second; if, however, it was not so fortunate as to come to your hand, accept this as the first.

2. But, my brother, judging all things as a spiritual man, do not estimate our love to you by the duty which we render, or the frequency of our letters. For the Lord, who everywhere, as one and the same, worketh His love in His own, is witness that, from the time when, by the kindness of the venerable

bishops Aurelius and Alypius, we came to know you through your writings against the Manichaeans, love for you has taken such a place in us, that we seemed not so much to be acquiring a new friendship as reviving an old affection. Now at length we address you in writing; and though we are novices in expressing, we are not novices in feeling love to you; and by communion of the spirit, which is the inner man, we are as it were acquainted with you. Nor is it strange that though distant we are near, though unknown we are well known to each other; for we are members of one body, having one Head, enjoying the effusion of the same grace, living by the same bread, walking in the same way, and dwelling in the same home. In short, in all that makes up our being,—in the whole faith and hope by which we stand in the present life, or labour for that which is to come,—we are both in the spirit and in the body of Christ so united, that if we fell from this union we would cease to be.

3. How small a thing, therefore, is that which our bodily separation denies to us!—for it is nothing more than one of those fruits that gratify the eyes, which are occupied only with the things of time. And yet, perhaps, we should not number this pleasure which in the body we enjoy among the blessings which are only in time the portion of spiritual men, to whose bodies the resurrection will impart immortality; as we, though in ourselves unworthy, are bold to expect, through the merit of Christ and the mercy of God the Father. Wherefore I pray that the grace of God by our Lord Jesus Christ may grant unto us this favour too, that we may yet see your face. Not only would this bring great gratification to our desires; but by it illumination would be brought to our minds, and our poverty would be enriched by your abundance. This indeed you may grant to us even while we are absent from you, especially on the present occasion, through our sons Romanus and Agilis, beloved and most dear to us in the Lord (whom as our second selves we commend to you), when they return to us in the Lord’s name, after fulfilling the labour of love in which they are engaged; in which work we beg that they may especially enjoy the goodwill of your Charity. For you know what high rewards the Most High promises to the brother who gives his brother help. If you are pleased to impart to me any gift of the grace that has been bestowed on you, you may safely do it through them; for, believe me, they are of one heart and of one mind with us

in the Lord. May the grace of God always abide as it is with you, O brother beloved, venerable, most dear, and longed for in Christ the Lord! Salute on our behalf all the saints in Christ who are with you, for doubtless such attach themselves to your fellowship; commend us to them all, that they may, along with yourself, remember us in prayer.

Second Division

Letters Which Were Written by Augustin After His Becoming Bishop of Hippo, and Before the Conference Held with the Donatists at Carthage, and the Discovery of the Heresy of Pelagius in Africa (a.d. 396–410).

LETTER XXXI

(A.D. 396.)

To Brother Paulinus and to Sister Therasia, Most Beloved and Sincere, Truly Most Blessed and Most Eminent for the Very Abundant Grace of God Bestowed on Them Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Although in my longing to be without delay near you in one sense, while still remote in another, I wished much that what I wrote in answer to your former letter (if, indeed, any letter of mine deserves to be called an answer to yours) should go with all possible expedition to your Grace, my delay has brought me the advantage of a second letter from you. The Lord is good, who often withholds what we desire, that He may add to it what we would prefer. For it is one pleasure to me that you will write me on receiving my letter, and it is another that, through not receiving it at once, you have written now. The joy which I have felt in reading this letter would have been lost to me if my letter to your Holiness had been quickly conveyed to you, as I intended and earnestly desired. But now, to have this letter, and to expect a reply to my own, multiplies my satisfaction. The blame of the delay cannot be laid to my charge; and the Lord, in His more abundant kindness, has done that which He judged to be more conducive to my happiness.

2. We welcomed with great gladness in the Lord the holy brothers Romanus and Agilis, who were, so to speak, an additional letter from you, capable of hearing and answering our voices, whereby most agreeably your presence was in part enjoyed by us, although only to make us long the more eagerly to see you. It would be at all times and in every way impossible for you to

give, and unreasonable for us to ask, as much information from you concerning yourself by letter as we received from them by word of mouth. There was manifest also in them (what no paper could convey) such delight in telling us of you, that by their very countenance and eyes while they spoke, we could with unspeakable joy read you written on their hearts. Moreover, a sheet of paper, of whatever kind it be, and however excellent the things written upon it may be, enjoys no benefit itself from what it contains, though it may be unfolded with great benefit to others; but, in reading this letter of yours—namely, the minds of these brethren—when conversing with them, we found that the blessedness of those upon whom you had written was manifestly proportioned to the fulness with which they had been written upon by you. In order, therefore, to attain to the same blessedness, we transcribed in our own hearts what was written in theirs, by most eager questioning as to everything concerning you.

3. Notwithstanding all this, it is with deep regret that we consent to their so soon leaving us, even to return to you. For observe, I beseech you, the conflicting emotions by which we are agitated. Our obligation to let them go without delay was increased according to the vehemence of their desire to obey you; but the greater the vehemence of this desire in them, the more completely did they set you forth as almost present with us, because they let us see how tender your affections are. Therefore our reluctance to let them go increased with our sense of the reasonableness of their urgency to be permitted to go. Oh insupportable trial, were it not that by such partings we are not, after all, separated from each other,—were it not that we are “members of one body, having one Head, enjoying the effusion of the same grace, living by the same bread, walking in the same way, and dwelling in the same home!” You recognise these words, I suppose, as quoted from your own letter; and why should not I also use them? Why should they be yours any more than mine, seeing that, inasmuch as they are true, they proceed from communion with the same head? And in so far as they contain something that has been specially given to you, I have so loved them the more on that account, that they have taken possession of the way leading through my breast, and would suffer no words to pass from my heart to my tongue until they went first, with the priority which is due to them as yours. My brother and sister, holy and beloved in God, members of the same body

with us, who could doubt that we are animated by one spirit, except those who are strangers to that affection by which we are bound to each other?

4. Yet I am curious to know whether you bear with more patience and ease than I do this bodily separation. If it be so, I do not, I confess, take any pleasure in your fortitude in this respect, unless perhaps because of its reasonableness, seeing that I confess myself much less worthy of your affectionate longing than you are of mine. At all events, if I found in myself a power of bearing your absence patiently, this would displease me, because it would make me relax my efforts to see you; and what could be more absurd than to be made indolent by power of endurance? But I beg to acquaint your Charity with the ecclesiastical duties by which I am kept at home, inasmuch as the blessed father Valerius (who with me salutes you, and thirsts for you with a vehemence of which you will hear from our brethren), not content with having me as his presbyter, has insisted upon adding the greater burden of sharing the episcopate with him. This office I was afraid to decline, being persuaded, through the love of Valerius and the importunity of the people, that it was the Lord's will, and being precluded from excusing myself on other grounds by some precedents of similar appointments. The yoke of Christ, it is true, is in itself easy, and His burden light; yet, through my perversity and infirmity, I may find the yoke vexatious and the burden heavy in some degree; and I cannot tell how much more easy and light my yoke and burden would become if I were comforted by a visit from you, who live, as I am informed, more disengaged and free from such cares. I therefore feel warranted in asking, nay, demanding and imploring you to condescend to come over into Africa, which is more oppressed with thirst for men such as you are than even by the well-known aridity of her soil.

5. God knoweth that I long for your visiting this country, not merely to gratify my own desire, nor merely on account of those who through me, or by public report, have heard of your pious resolution; I long for it for the sake of others also who either have not heard, or, hearing, have not believed the fame of your piety, but who might be constrained to love excellence of which they could then be no longer in ignorance or doubt. For although the perseverance and purity of your compassionate benevolence is good, more

is required of you; namely, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may behold your good works, and may glorify your Father which is in heaven.” The fishermen of Galilee found pleasure not only in leaving their ships and their nets at the Lord’s command, but also in declaring that they had left all and followed Him. And truly he despises all who despises not only all that he was able, but also all that he was desirous to possess. What may have been desired is seen only by the eyes of God; what was actually possessed is seen also by the eyes of men. Moreover, when things trivial and earthly are loved by us, we are somehow more firmly wedded to what we have than to what we desire to have. For whence was it that he who sought from the Lord counsel as to the way of eternal life, went away sorrowful upon hearing that, if he would be perfect, he must sell all, and distribute to the poor, and have treasure in heaven, unless because, as the Gospel tells us, he had great possessions? For it is one thing to forbear from appropriating what is wanting to us; it is another thing to rend away that which has become a part of ourselves: the former action is like declining food, the latter is like cutting off a limb. How great and how full of wonder is the joy with which Christian charity beholds in our day a sacrifice cheerfully made in obedience to the Gospel of Christ, which that rich man grieved and refused to make at the bidding of Christ Himself!

6. Although language fails to express that which my heart has conceived and labours to utter, nevertheless, since you perceive with your discernment and piety that the glory of this is not yours, that is to say, not of man, but the glory of the Lord in you (for you yourselves are most carefully on your guard against your Adversary, and most devoutly strive to be found as learners of Christ, meek and lowly in heart; and, indeed, it were better with humility to retain than with pride to renounce this world’s wealth);—since, I say, you are aware that the glory here is not yours, but the Lord’s, you see how weak and inadequate are the things which I have spoken. For I have been speaking of the praises of Christ, a theme transcending the tongue of angels. We long to see this glory of Christ brought near to the eyes of our people; that in you, united in the bonds of wedlock, there may be given to both sexes an example of the way in which pride must be trodden under foot, and perfection hopefully pursued. I know not any way in which you could give greater proof of your benevolence, than in resolving to be not

less willing to permit your worth to be seen, than you are zealous to acquire and retain it.

7. I recommend to your kindness and charity this boy Vetustinus, whose case might draw forth the sympathy even of those who are not religious: the causes of his affliction and of his leaving his country you will hear from his own lips. As to his pious resolution—his promise, namely, to devote himself to the service of God—it will be more decisively known after some time has elapsed, when his strength has been confirmed, and his present fear is removed. Perceiving the warmth of your love for me, and encouraged thereby to believe that you will not grudge the labour of reading what I have written, I send to your Holiness and Charity three books: would that the size of the volumes were an index of the completeness of the discussion of so great a subject; for the question of free-will is handled in them! I know that these books, or at least some of them, are not in the possession of our brother Romanianus; but almost everything which I have been able for the benefit of any readers to write is, as I have intimated, accessible to your perusal through him, because of your love to me, although I did not charge him to carry them to you. For he already had them all, and was carrying them with him: moreover, it was by him that my answer to your first letter was sent. I suppose that your Holiness has already discovered, by that spiritual sagacity which the Lord has given you, how much that man bears in his soul of what is good, and how far he still comes short through infirmity. In the letter sent through him you have, as I trust, read with what anxiety I commended himself and his son to your sympathy and love, as well as how close is the bond by which they are united to me. May the Lord build them up by your means! This must be asked from Him rather than from you, for I know how much it is already your desire.

8. I have heard from the brethren that you are writing a treatise against the Pagans: if we have any claim on your heart, send it at once to us to read. For your heart is such an oracle of divine truth, that we expect from it answers which shall satisfactorily and clearly decide the most prolix debates. I understand that your Holiness has the books of the most blessed father Ambrose, of which I long greatly to see those which, with much care and at great length, he has written against some most ignorant and

pretentious men, who affirm that our Lord was instructed by the writings of Plato.

9. Our most blessed brother Severus, formerly of our community, now president of the church in Milevis, and well known by the brethren in that city, joins me in respectful salutation to your Holiness. The brethren also who are with me serving the Lord salute you as warmly as they long to see you: they long for you as much as they love you; and they love you as your eminent goodness merits. The loaf which we send you will become more rich as a blessing through the love with which your kindness receives it. May the Lord keep you for ever from this generation, my brother and sister most beloved and sincere, truly benevolent, and most eminently endowed with abundant grace from the Lord.

LETTER XXXII

This letter from Paulinus to Romanianus and Licentius expresses the satisfaction with which he heard of the promotion of Augustin to the episcopate, and conveys both in prose and in verse excellent counsels to Licentius: it is one which in this selection may without loss be omitted.

LETTER XXXIII

(A.D. 396.)

To Proculeianus, My Lord, Honourable and Most Beloved, Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. The titles prefixed to this letter I need not defend or explain at any length to you, though they may give offence to the vain prejudices of ignorant men. For I rightly address you as lord, seeing that we are both seeking to deliver each other from error, although to some it may seem uncertain which of us is in error before the matter has been fully debated; and therefore we are mutually serving one another, if we sincerely labour that we may both be delivered from the perversity of discord. That I labour to do this with a sincere heart, and with the fear and trembling of Christian humility, is not perhaps to most men manifest, but is seen by Him to whom all hearts are open. What I without hesitation esteem honourable in you,

you readily perceive. For I do not esteem worthy of any honour the error of schism, from which I desire to have all men delivered, so far as is within my power; but yourself I do not for a moment hesitate to regard as worthy of honour, chiefly because you are knit to me in the bonds of a common humanity, and because there are conspicuous in you some indications of a more gentle disposition, by which I am encouraged to hope that you may readily embrace the truth when it has been demonstrated to you. As for my love to you, I owe not less than He commanded who so loved us as to bear the shame of the cross for our sakes.

2. Be not, however, surprised that I have so long forborne from addressing your Benevolence; for I did not think that your views were such as were with great joy declared to me by brother Evodius, whose testimony I cannot but believe. For he tells me that, when you met accidentally at the same house, and conversation began between you concerning our hope, that is to say, the inheritance of Christ, you were kindly pleased to say that you were willing to have a conference with me in the presence of good men. I am truly glad that you have condescended to make this proposal: and I can in no wise forego so important an opportunity, given by your kindness, of using whatever strength the Lord may be pleased to give me in considering and debating with you what has been the cause, or source, or reason of a division so lamentable and deplorable in that Church of Christ to which He said: “Peace I give you, my peace I leave unto you.

3. I heard from the brother aforesaid that you had complained of his having said something in answer to you in an insulting manner; but, I pray you, do not regard it as an insult, for I am sure it did not proceed from an overbearing spirit, as I know my brother well. But if, in disputing in defence of his own faith and the Church’s love, he spoke perchance with a degree of warmth something which you regarded as wounding your dignity, that deserves to be called, not contumacy, but boldness. For he desired to debate and discuss the question, not to be merely submitting to you and flattering you. For such flattery is the oil of the sinner, with which the prophet does not desire to have his head anointed; for he saith: “The righteous shall correct me in compassion, and rebuke me; but the oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head.” For he prefers to be corrected by the stern

compassion of the righteous, rather than to be commended with the soothing oil of flattery. Hence also the saying of the prophet: “They who pronounce you happy cause you to err.” Therefore also it is commonly and justly said of a man whom false compliments have made proud, “his head has grown;” for it has been increased by the oil of the sinner, that is, not of one correcting with stern truth, but of one commending with smooth flattery. Do not, however, suppose me to mean by this, that I wish it to be understood that you have been corrected by brother Evodius, as by a righteous man; for I fear lest you should think that anything is spoken by me also in an insulting manner, against which I desire to the utmost of my power to be on guard. But He is righteous who hath said, “I am the truth. When, therefore, any true word has been uttered, though it may be somewhat rudely, by the mouth of any man, we are corrected not by the speaker, who may perhaps be not less a sinner than ourselves, but by the truth itself, that is to say, by Christ who is righteous, lest the unction of smooth but pernicious flattery, which is the oil of the sinner, should anoint our head. Although, therefore, brother Evodius, through undue excitement in defending the communion to which he belongs, may have said something too vehemently through strong feeling, you ought to excuse him on the ground of his age, and of the importance of the matter in his estimation.

4. I beseech you, however, to remember what you have been pleased to promise; namely, to investigate amicably with me a matter of so great importance, and so closely pertaining to the common salvation, in the presence of such spectators as you may choose (provided only that our words are not uttered so as to be lost, but are taken down with the pen; so that we may conduct the discussion in a more calm and orderly manner, and anything spoken by us which escapes the memory may be recalled by reading the notes taken). Or, if you prefer it, we may discuss the matter without the interference of any third party, by means of letters or conference and reading, wherever you please, lest perchance some hearers, unwisely zealous, should be more concerned with the expectation of a conflict between us, than the thought of our mutual profit by the discussion. Let the people, however, be afterwards informed through us of the debate, when it is concluded; or, if you prefer to have the matter discussed by letters exchanged, let these letters be read to the two congregations, in order that

they may yet come to be no longer divided, but one. In fact, I willingly accede to whatever terms you wish, or prescribe, or prefer. And as to the sentiments of my most blessed and venerable father Valerius, who is at present from home, I undertake with fullest confidence that he will hear of this with great joy; for I know how much he loves peace, and how free he is from being influenced by any paltry regard for vain parade of dignity.

5. I ask you, what have we to do with the dissensions of a past generation? Let it suffice that the wounds which the bitterness of proud men inflicted on our members have remained until now; for we have, through the lapse of time, ceased to feel the pain to remove which the physician's help is usually sought. You see how great and miserable is the calamity by which the peace of Christian homes and families is broken. Husbands and wives, agreeing together at the family hearth, are divided at the altar of Christ. By Him they pledge themselves to be at peace between themselves, yet in Him they cannot be at peace. Children have the same home, but not the same house of God, with their own parents. They desire to be secure of the earthly inheritance of those with whom they wrangle concerning the inheritance of Christ. Servants and masters divide their common Lord, who took on Him the form of a servant that He might deliver all from bondage. Your party honours us, and our party honours you. Your members appeal to us by our episcopal insignia, and our members show the same respect to you. We receive the words of all, we desire to give offence to none. Why then, finding cause of offence in none besides, do we find it in Christ, whose members we rend asunder? When we may be serviceable to men that are desirous of terminating through our help disputes concerning secular affairs, they address us as saints and servants of God, in order that they may have their questions as to property disposed of by us: let us at length, unsolicited, take up a matter which concerns both our own salvation and theirs. It is not about gold or silver, or land, or cattle, matters concerning which we are daily saluted with lowly respect, in order that we may bring disputes to a peaceful termination,—but it is concerning our Head Himself that this dissension, so unworthy and pernicious, exists between us. However low they bow their heads who salute us in the hope that we may make them agree together in regard to the things of this world, our Head stooped from heaven even to the cross, and yet we do not agree together in Him.

6. I beg and beseech you, if there be in you that brotherly feeling for which some give you credit, let your goodness be approved sincere, and not feigned with a view to passing honours, by this, that your bowels of compassion be moved, so that you consent to have this matter discussed; joining with me in persevering prayer, and in peaceful discussion of every point. Let not the respect paid by the unhappy people to our dignities be found, in the judgment of God, aggravating our condemnation; rather let them be recalled along with us, through our unfeigned love, from errors and dissensions, and guided into the ways of truth and peace.

My lord, honourable and most beloved, I pray that you may be blessed in the sight of God.

LETTER XXXIV

(A.D. 396.)

To Eusebius, My Excellent Lord and Brother, Worthy of Affection and Esteem, Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. God, to whom the secrets of the heart of man are open, knoweth that it is because of my love for Christian peace that I am so deeply moved by the profane deeds of those who basely and impiously persevere in dissenting from it. He knoweth also that this feeling of mine is one tending towards peace, and that my desire is, not that any one should against his will be coerced into the Catholic communion, but that to all who are in error the truth may be openly declared, and being by God's help clearly exhibited through my ministry, may so commend itself as to make them embrace and follow it.

2. Passing many other things unnoticed, what could be more worthy of detestation than what has just happened? A young man is reproved by his bishop for frequently beating his mother like a madman, and not restraining his impious hands from wounding her who bore him, even on those days on which the sternness of law shows mercy to the most guilty criminals. He then threatens his mother that he would pass to the party of the Donatists, and that he would kill her whom he is accustomed to beat with incredible ferocity. He utters these threats, then passes over to the Donatists, and is

rebaptized while filled with wicked rage, and is arrayed in white vestments while he is burning to shed his mother’s blood. He is placed in a prominent and conspicuous position within the railing in the church; and to the eyes of sorrowful and indignant beholders, he who is purposing matricide is exhibited as a regenerate man.

3. I appeal to you, as a man of most mature judgment, can these things find favour in your eyes? I do not believe this of you: I know your wisdom. A mother is wounded by her son in the members of that body which bore and nursed the ungrateful wretch; and when the Church, his spiritual mother, interferes, she too is wounded in those sacraments by which, to the same ungrateful son, she ministered life and nourishment. Do you not seem to hear the young man gnashing his teeth in rage for a parent’s blood, and saying, “What shall I do to the Church which forbids my wounding my mother? I have found out what to do: let the Church herself be wounded by such blows as she can suffer; let that be done in me which may cause her members pain. Let me go to those who know how to despise the grace with which she gave me spiritual birth, and to mar the form which in her womb I received. Let me vex both my natural and my spiritual mother with cruel tortures: let the one who was the second to give me birth be the first to give me burial; for her sorrow let me seek spiritual death, and for the other’s death let me prolong my natural life.” Oh, Eusebius! I appeal to you as an honourable man, what else may we expect than that now he shall feel himself, as a Donatist, so armed as to have no fear in assailing that unhappy woman, decrepit with age and helpless in her widowhood, from wounding whom he was restrained while he remained a Catholic? For what else had he purposed in his passionate heart when he said to his mother, “I will pass over to the party of Donatus, and I will drink your blood?” Behold, arrayed in white vestments, but with conscience crimson with blood, he has fulfilled his threat in part; the other part remains, viz. that he drink his mother’s blood. If, therefore, these things find favour in your eyes, let him be urged by those who are now his clergy and his sanctifiers to fulfil within eight days the remaining portion of his vow.

4. The Lord’s right hand indeed is strong, so that He may keep back this man’s rage from that unhappy and desolate widow, and, by means known

unto His own wisdom, may deter him from his impious design; but could I do otherwise than utter my feelings when my heart was pierced with such grief? Shall they do such things, and am I to be commanded to hold my peace? When He commands me by the mouth of the apostle saying that those who teach what they ought not must be rebuked by the bishop, shall I be silent through dread of their displeasure? The Lord deliver me from such folly! As to my desire for having such an impious crime recorded in our public registers, it was desired by me chiefly for this end, that no one who may hear me bewailing these proceedings, especially in other towns where it may be expedient for me to do so, may think that I am inventing a falsehood, and the rather, because in Hippo itself it is already affirmed that Proculeianus did not issue the order which was in the official report ascribed to him.

5. In what more temperate way could we dispose of this important matter than through the mediation of such a man as you, invested with most illustrious rank, and possessing calmness as well as great prudence and goodwill? I beg, therefore, as I have already done by our brethren, good and honourable men, whom I sent to your Excellency, that you will condescend to inquire whether it is the case that the presbyter Victor did not receive from his bishop the order which the public official records reported; or whether, since Victor himself has said otherwise, they have in their records laid a thing falsely to his charge, though they belong to the same communion with him. Or, if he consents to our calmly discussing the whole question of our differences, in order that the error which is already manifest may become yet more so, I willingly embrace the opportunity. For I have heard that he proposed that without popular tumult, in the presence only of ten esteemed and honourable men from each party, we should investigate what is the truth in this matter according to the Scriptures. As to another proposal which some have reported to me as made by him, that I should rather go to Constantina, because in that town his party was more numerous; or that I should go to Milevis, because there, as they say, they are soon to hold a council;—these things are absurd, for my special charge does not extend beyond the Church of Hippo. The whole importance of this question to me, in the first place, is as it affects Proculeianus and myself; and if, perchance, he thinks himself not a match for me, let him implore the

aid of any one whom he pleases as his colleague in the debate. For in other towns we interfere with the affairs of the Church only so far as is permitted or enjoined by our brethren bearing the same priestly office with us, the bishops of these towns.

6. And yet I cannot comprehend what there is in me, a novice, that should make him, who calls himself a bishop of so many years' standing, unwilling and afraid to enter into discussion with me. If it be my acquaintance with liberal studies, which perhaps he did not pursue at all, or at least not so much as I have done, what has this to do with the question in debate, which is to be decided by the Holy Scriptures or by ecclesiastical or public documents, with which he has for so many years been conversant, that he ought to be more skilled in them than I am? Once more, I have here my brother and colleague Samsucius, bishop of the Church of Turris, who has not learned any of those branches of culture of which he is said to be afraid: let him attend in my place, and let the debate be between them. I will ask him, and, as I trust in the name of Christ, he will readily consent to take my place in this matter; and the Lord will, I trust, give aid to him when contending for the truth: for although unpolished in language, he is well instructed in the true faith. There is therefore no reason for his referring me to others whom I do not know, instead of letting us settle between ourselves that which concerns ourselves. However, as I have said, I will not decline meeting them if he himself asks their assistance.

LETTER XXXV

(A.D. 396.)

(Another letter to Eusebius on the same subject.)

To Eusebius, My Excellent Lord and Brother, Worthy of Affection and Esteem, Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. I did not impose upon you, by importunate exhortation or entreaty in spite of your reluctance, the duty, as you call it, of arbitrating between bishops. Even if I had desired to move you to this, I might perhaps have easily shown how competent you are to judge between us in a cause so clear and simple; nay, I might show how you are already doing this,

inasmuch as you, who are afraid of the office of judge, do not hesitate to pronounce sentence in favour of one of the parties before you have heard both. But of this, as I have said, I do not meanwhile say anything. For I had asked nothing else from your honourable good-nature,—and I beseech you to be pleased to remark it in this letter, if you did not in the former,—than that you should ask Proculeianus whether he himself said to his presbyter Victor that which the public registers have by official report ascribed to him, or whether those who were sent have written in the public registers not what they heard from Victor, but a falsehood; and further, what his opinion is as to our discussing the whole question between us. I think that he is not constituted judge between parties, who is only requested by the one to put a question to the other, and condescend to write what reply he has received. This also I now again ask you not to refuse to do, because, as I know by experiment, he does not wish to receive a letter from me, otherwise I would not employ your Excellency's mediation. Since, therefore, he does not wish this, what could I do less likely to give offence, than to apply through you, so good a man and such a friend of his, for an answer concerning a matter about which the burden of my responsibility forbids me to hold my peace? Moreover, you say (because the son's beating of his mother is disapproved by your sound judgment), "If Proculeianus had known this, he would have debarred that man from communion with his party." I answer in a sentence, "He knows it now, let him now debar him."

2. Let me mention another thing. A man who was formerly a subdeacon of the church at Spana, Primus by name, when, having been forbidden such intercourse with nuns as contravened the laws of the Church, he treated with contempt the established and wise regulations, was deprived of his clerical office,—this man also, being provoked by the divinely warranted discipline, went over to the other party, and was by them rebaptized. Two nuns also, who were settled in the same lands of the Catholic Church with him, either taken by him to the other party, or following him, were likewise rebaptized: and now, among bands of Circumcelliones and troops of homeless women, who have declined matrimony that they may avoid restraint, he proudly boasts himself in excesses of detestable revelry, rejoicing that he now has without hindrance the utmost freedom in that misconduct from which in the Catholic Church he was restrained. Perhaps

Proculeianus knows nothing about this case either. Let it therefore through you, as a man of grave and dispassionate spirit, be made known to him; and let him order that man to be dismissed from his communion, who has chosen it for no other reason than that he had, on account of insubordination and dissolute habits, forfeited his clerical office in the Catholic Church.

3. For my own part, if it please the Lord, I purpose to adhere to this rule, that whoever, after being deposed among them by a sentence of discipline, shall express a desire to pass over into the Catholic Church, must be received on condition of submitting to give the same proofs of penitence as those which, perhaps, they would have constrained him to give if he had remained among them. But consider, I beseech you, how worthy of abhorrence is their procedure in regard to those whom we check by ecclesiastical censures for unholy living, persuading them first to come to a second baptism, in order to their being qualified for which they declare themselves to be pagans (and how much blood of martyrs has been poured out rather than that such a declaration should proceed from the mouth of a Christian!); and thereafter, as if renewed and sanctified, but in truth more hardened in sin, to defy with the impiety of new madness, under the guise of new grace, that discipline to which they could not submit. If, however, I am wrong in attempting to obtain the correction of these abuses through your benevolent interposition, let no one find fault with my causing them to be made known to Proculeianus by the public registers,—a means of notification which in this Roman city cannot, I believe, be refused to me. For, since the Lord commands us to speak and proclaim the truth, and in teaching to rebuke what is wrong, and to labour in season and out of season, as I can prove by the words of the Lord and of the apostles, let no man think that I am to be persuaded to be silent concerning these things. If they meditate any bold measures of violence or outrage, the Lord, who has subdued under His yoke all earthly kingdoms in the bosom of His Church spread abroad through the whole world, will not fail to defend her from wrong.

4. The daughter of one of the cultivators of the property of the Church here, who had been one of our catechumens, had been, against the will of her parents, drawn away by the other party, and after being baptized among

them, had assumed the profession of a nun. Now her father wished to compel her by severe treatment to return to the Catholic Church; but I was unwilling that this woman, whose mind was so perverted, should be received by us unless with her own will, and choosing, in the free exercise of judgment, that which is better: and when the countryman began to attempt to compel his daughter by blows to submit to his authority, I immediately forbade his using any such means. Notwithstanding, after all, when I was passing through the Spanian district, a presbyter of Proculeianus, standing in a field belonging to an excellent Catholic woman, shouted after me with a most insolent voice that I was a Traditor and a persecutor; and he hurled the same reproach against that woman, belonging to our communion, on whose property he was standing. But when I heard his words, I not only refrained from pursuing the quarrel, but also held back the numerous company which surrounded me. Yet if I say, Let us inquire and ascertain who are or have been indeed Traditors and persecutors, they reply, "We will not debate, but we will rebaptize. Leave us to prey upon your flocks with crafty cruelty, like wolves; and if you are good shepherds, bear it in silence." For what else has Proculeianus commanded but this, if indeed the order is justly ascribed to him: "If thou art a Christian," said he, "leave this to the judgment of God; whatever we do, hold thou thy peace." The same presbyter, moreover, dared to utter a threat against a countryman who is overseer of one of the farms belonging to the Church.

5. I pray you to inform Proculeianus of all these things. Let him repress the madness of his clergy, which, honoured Eusebius, I have felt constrained to report to you. Be pleased to write to me, not your own opinion concerning them all, lest you should think that the responsibility of a judge is laid upon you by me, but the answer which they give to my questions. May the mercy of God preserve you from harm, my excellent lord and brother, most worthy of affection and esteem.

LETTER XXXVI

(A.D. 396.)

To My Brother and Fellow-Presbyter Casulanus, Most Beloved and Longed For, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. I know not how it was that I did not reply to your first letter; but I know that my neglect was not owing to want of esteem for you. For I take pleasure in your studies, and even in the words in which you express your thoughts; and it is my desire as well as advice that you make great attainments in your early years in the word of God, for the edification of the Church. Having now received a second letter from you, in which you plead for an answer on the most just and amiable ground of that brotherly love in which we are one, I have resolved no longer to postpone the gratification of the desire expressed by your love; and although in the midst of most engrossing business, I address myself to discharge the debt due to you.

2. As to the question on which you wish my opinion, “whether it is lawful to fast on the seventh day of the week,” I answer, that if it were wholly unlawful, neither Moses nor Elijah, nor our Lord Himself, would have fasted for forty successive days. But by the same argument it is proved that even on the Lord’s day fasting is not unlawful. And yet, if any one were to think that the Lord’s day should be appointed a day of fasting, in the same way as the seventh day is observed by some, such a man would be regarded, and not unjustly, as bringing a great cause of offence into the Church. For in those things concerning which the divine Scriptures have laid down no definite rule, the custom of the people of God, or the practices instituted by their fathers, are to be held as the law of the Church. If we choose to fall into a debate about these things, and to denounce one party merely because their custom differs from that of others, the consequence must be an endless contention, in which the utmost care is necessary lest the storm of conflict overcast with clouds the calmness of brotherly love, while strength is spent in mere controversy which cannot adduce on either side any decisive testimonies of truth. This danger the author has not been careful to avoid, whose prolix dissertation you deemed worth sending to me with your former letter, that I might answer his arguments.

Chap. II

3. I have not at my disposal sufficient leisure to enter on the refutation of his opinions one by one: my time is demanded by other and more important

work. But if you devote a little more carefully to this treatise of an anonymous Roman author, the talents which by your letters you prove yourself to possess, and which I greatly love in you as God's gift, you will see that he has not hesitated to wound by his most injurious language almost the whole Church of Christ, from the rising of the sun to its going down. Nay, I may say not almost, but absolutely, the whole Church. For he is found to have not even spared the Roman Christians, whose custom he seems to himself to defend; but he is not aware how the force of his invectives recoils upon them, for it has escaped his observation. For when arguments to prove the obligation to fast on the seventh day of the week fail him, he enters on a vehement blustering protest against the excesses of banquets and drunken revelries, and the worst licence of intoxication, as if there were no medium between fasting and rioting. Now if this be admitted, what good can fasting on Saturday do to the Romans? since on the other days on which they do not fast they must be presumed, according to his reasoning, to be gluttonous, and given to excess in wine. If, therefore, there is any difference between loading the heart with surfeiting and drunkenness, which is always sinful, and relaxing the strictness of fasting, with due regard to self-restraint and temperance on the other, which is done on the Lord's day without censure from any Christian,—if, I say, there is a difference between these two things, let him first mark the distinction between the repasts of saints and the excessive eating and drinking of those whose god is their belly, lest he charge the Romans themselves with belonging to the latter class on the days on which they do not fast; and then let him inquire, not whether it is lawful to indulge in drunkenness on the seventh day of the week, which is not lawful on the Lord's day, but whether it is incumbent on us to fast on the seventh day of the week, which we are not wont to do on the Lord's day.

4. This question I would wish to see him investigate, and resolve in such a manner as would not involve him in the guilt of openly speaking against the whole Church diffused throughout the world, with the exception of the Roman Christians, and hitherto a few of the Western communities. Is it, I ask, to be endured among the entire Eastern Christian communities, and many of those in the West, that this man should say of so many and so eminent servants of Christ, who on the seventh day of the week refresh

themselves soberly and moderately with food, that they “are in the flesh, and cannot please God;” and that of them it is written, “Let the wicked depart from me, I will not know their way;” and that they make their belly their god, that they prefer Jewish rites to those of the Church, and are sons of the bondwoman; that they are governed not by the righteous law of God, but by their own good pleasure, consulting their own appetites instead of submitting to salutary restraint; also that they are carnal, and savour of death, and other such charges, which if he had uttered against even one servant of God, who would listen to him, who would not be bound to turn away from him? But now, when he assails with such reproachful and abusive language the Church bearing fruit and increasing throughout the whole world, and in almost all places observing no fast on the seventh day of the week, I warn him, whoever he is, to beware. For in wishing to conceal from me his name, you plainly showed your unwillingness that I should judge him.

Chap. III

5. “The Son of man,” he says, “is Lord of the Sabbath, and in that day it is by all means lawful to do good rather than do evil.” If, therefore, we do evil when we break our fast, there is no Lord’s day upon which we live as we should. As to his admission that the apostles did eat upon the seventh day of the week, and his remark upon this, that the time for their fasting had not then come, because of the Lord’s own words, “The days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall the children of the Bridegroom fast;” since there is “a time to rejoice, and a time to mourn,” he ought first to have observed, that our Lord was speaking there of fasting in general, but not of fasting upon the seventh day. Again, when he says that by fasting grief is signified, and that by food joy is represented, why does he not reflect what it was which God designed to signify by that which is written, “that He rested on the seventh day from all His works,”—namely, that joy, and not sorrow, was set forth in that rest? Unless, perchance, he intends to affirm that in God’s resting and hallowing of the Sabbath, joy was signified to the Jews, but grief to the Christians. But God did not lay down a rule concerning fasting or eating on the seventh day of the week, either at the time of His hallowing that day because in it He

rested from His works, or afterwards, when He gave precepts to the Hebrew nation concerning the observance of that day. The only thing enjoined on man there is, that he abstain from doing work himself, or requiring it from his servants. And the people of the former dispensation, accepting this rest as a shadow of things to come, obeyed the command by such abstinence from work as we now see practised by the Jews; not, as some suppose, through their being carnal, and misunderstanding what the Christians rightly understand. Nor do we understand this law better than the prophets, who, at the time when this was still binding, observed such rest on the Sabbath as the Jews believe ought to be observed to this day. Hence also it was that God commanded them to stone to death a man who had gathered sticks on the Sabbath; but we nowhere read of any one being stoned, or deemed worthy of any punishment whatever, for either fasting or eating on the Sabbath. Which of the two is more in keeping with rest, and which with toil, let our author himself decide, who has regarded joy as the portion of those who eat, and sorrow as the portion of those who fast, or at least has understood that these things were so regarded by the Lord, when, giving answer concerning fasting, He said: “Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn as long as the Bridegroom is with them?”

6. Moreover, as to his assertion, that the reason of the apostles eating on the seventh day (a thing forbidden by the tradition of the elders) was, that the time for their fasting on that day had not come; I ask, if the time had not then come for the abolition of the Jewish rest from work on that day? Did not the tradition of the elders prohibit fasting on the one hand, and enjoin rest on the other? and.yet the disciples of Christ, of whom we read that they did eat on the Sabbath, did on the same day pluck the ears of corn, which was not then lawful, because forbidden by the tradition of the elders. Let him therefore consider whether it might not with more reason be said in reply to him, that the Lord desired to have these two things, the plucking of the ears of corn and the taking of food, done in the same day by His disciples, for this reason, that the former action might confute those who would prohibit all work on the seventh day, and the latter action confute those who would enjoin fasting on the seventh day; since by the former action He taught that the rest from labour was now, through the change in the dispensation, an act of superstition; and by the latter He intimated His

will, that under both dispensations the matter of fasting or not was left to every man’s choice. I do not say this by way of argument in support of my view, but only to show how, in answer to him, things much more forcible than what he has spoken might be advanced.

Chap. IV

7. “How shall we,” says our author, “escape sharing the condemnation of the Pharisee, if we fast twice in the week?” As if the Pharisee had been condemned for fasting twice in the week, and not for proudly vaunting himself above the publican. He might as well say that those also are condemned with that Pharisee, who give a tenth of all their possessions to the poor, for he boasted of this among his other works; whereas I would that it were done by many Christians, instead of a very small number, as we find. Or let him say, that whosoever is not an unjust man, or adulterer, or extortioner, must be condemned with that Pharisee, because he boasted that he was none of these; but the man who could think thus is, beyond question, beside himself. Moreover, if these things which the Pharisee mentioned as found in him, being admitted by all to be good in themselves, are not to be retained with the haughty boastfulness which was manifest in him, but are to be retained with the lowly piety which was not in him; by the same rule, to fast twice in the week is in a man such as the Pharisee unprofitable, but is in one who has humility and faith a religious service. Moreover, after all, the Scripture does not say that the Pharisee was condemned, but only that the publican was “justified rather than the other.”

8. Again, when our author insists upon interpreting, in connection with this matter, the words of the Lord, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,” and thinks that we cannot fulfil this precept unless we fast oftener than twice in the week, let him mark well that there are seven days in the week. If, then, from these any one subtract two, not fasting on the seventh day nor on the Lord’s day, there remain five days in which he may surpass the Pharisee, who fasts but twice in the week. For I think that if any man fast three times in the week, he already surpasses the Pharisee who fasted but twice. And if a fast is observed four times, or even so often as five times, passing over only the seventh day and the Lord’s day without

fasting,—a practice observed by many through their whole lifetime, especially by those who are settled in monasteries,—by this not the Pharisee alone is surpassed in the labour of fasting, but that Christian also whose custom is to fast on the fourth, and sixth, and seventh days, as the Roman community does to a large extent. And yet your nameless metropolitan disputant calls such an one carnal, even though for five successive days of the week, excepting the seventh and the Lord's day, he so fast as to withhold all refection from the body; as if, forsooth, food and drink on other days had nothing to do with the flesh, and condemns him as making a god of his belly, as if it was only the seventh day's repast which entered into the belly.

. . . .

We have no compunction in passing over about eight columns here of this letter, in which Augustin exposes, with a tedious minuteness and with a waste of rhetoric, other feeble and irrelevant puerilities of the Roman author whose work Casulanus had submitted to his review. Instead of accompanying him into the shallow places into which he was drawn while pursuing such an insignificant foe, let us resume the translation at the point at which Augustin gives his own opinion regarding the question whether it is binding on Christians to fast on Saturday.

Chap. XI

25. As to the succeeding paragraphs with which he concludes his treatise, they are, like some other things in it which I have not thought worthy of notice, even more irrelevant to a discussion of the question whether we should fast or eat on the seventh day of the week. But I leave it to yourself, especially if you have found any help from what I have already said, to observe and dispose of these. Having now to the best of my ability, and as I think sufficiently, replied to the reasonings of this author, if I be asked what is my own opinion in this matter, I answer, after carefully pondering the question, that in the Gospels and Epistles, and the entire collection of books for our instruction called the New Testament, I see that fasting is enjoined. But I do not discover any rule definitely laid down by the Lord or by the apostles as to days on which we ought or ought not to fast. And by this I am

persuaded that exemption from fasting on the seventh day is more suitable, not indeed to obtain, but to foreshadow, that eternal rest in which the true Sabbath is realized, and which is obtained only by faith, and by that righteousness whereby the daughter of the King is all glorious within.

26. In this question, however, of fasting or not fasting on the seventh day, nothing appears to me more safe and conducive to peace than the apostle’s rule: “Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not, and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth:” “for neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse;” our fellowship with those among whom we live, and along with whom we live in God, being preserved undisturbed by these things. For as it is true that, in the words of the apostles, “it is evil for that man who eateth with offence,” it is equally true that it is evil for that man who fasteth with offence. Let us not therefore be like those who, seeing John the Baptist neither eating nor drinking, said, “He hath a devil;” but let us equally avoid imitating those who said, when they saw Christ eating and drinking, “Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.” After mentioning these sayings, the Lord subjoined a most important truth in the words, “But Wisdom is justified of her children;” and if you ask who these are, read what is written, “The sons of Wisdom are the congregation of the righteous:” they are they who, when they eat, do not despise others who do not eat; and when they eat not, do not judge those who eat, but who do despise and judge those who, with offence, either eat or abstain from eating.

Chap. XII

27. As to the seventh day of the week there is less difficulty in acting on the rule above quoted, because both the Roman Church and some other churches, though few, near to it or remote from it, observe a fast on that day; but to fast on the Lord’s day is a great offence, especially since the rise of that detestable heresy of the Manichaeans, so manifestly and grievously contradicting the Catholic faith and the divine Scriptures: for the Manichaeans have prescribed to their followers the obligation of fasting upon that day; whence it has resulted that the fast upon the Lord’s day is regarded with the greater abhorrence. Unless, perchance, some one be able to continue an unbroken fast for more than a week, so as to approach as

nearly as may be to the fast of forty days, as we have known some do; and we have even been assured by brethren most worthy of credit, that one person did attain to the full period of forty days. For as, in the time of the Old Testament fathers, Moses and Elijah did not do anything against liberty of eating on the seventh day of the week, when they fasted forty days; so the man who has been able to go beyond seven days in fasting has not chosen the Lord’s day as a day of fasting, but has only come upon it in course among the days for which, so far as he might be able, he had vowed to prolong his fast. If, however, a continuous fast is to be concluded within a week, there is no day upon which it may more suitably be concluded than the Lord’s day; but if the body is not refreshed until more than a week has elapsed, the Lord’s day is not in that case selected as a day of fasting, but is found occurring within the number of days for which it had seemed good to the person to make a vow.

28. Be not moved by that which the Priscillianists (a sect very like the Manichaeans) are wont to quote as an argument from the Acts of the Apostles, concerning what was done by the Apostle Paul in Troas. The passage is as follows: “Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.” Afterwards, when he had come down from the supper chamber where they had been gathered together, that he might restore the young man who, overpowered with sleep, had fallen from the window and was taken up dead, the Scripture states further concerning the apostle: “When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.” Far be it from us to accept this as affirming that the apostles were accustomed to fast habitually on the Lord’s day. For the day now known as the Lord’s day was then called the first day of the week, as is more plainly seen in the Gospels; for the day of the Lord’s resurrection is called by Matthew mia sabbaton, and by the other three evangelists he mia (ton) sabbaton, and it is well ascertained that the same is the day which is now called the Lord’s day. Either, therefore, it was after the close of the seventh day that they had assembled,—namely, in the beginning of the night which followed, and which belonged to the Lord’s day, or the first day of the week,—and in this case the apostle, before proceeding to break bread

with them, as is done in the sacrament of the body of Christ, continued his discourse until midnight, and also, after celebrating the sacrament, continued still speaking again to those who were assembled, being much pressed for time in order that he might set out at dawn upon the Lord's day; or if it was on the first day of the week, at an hour before sunset on the Lord's day, that they had assembled, the words of the text, "Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow," themselves expressly state the reason for his prolonging his discourse,—namely, that he was about to leave them, and wished to give them ample instruction. The passage does not therefore prove that they habitually fasted on the Lord's day, but only that it did not seem meet to the apostle to interrupt, for the sake of taking refreshment, an important discourse, which was listened to with the ardour of most lively interest by persons whom he was about to leave, and whom, on account of his many other journeyings, he visited but seldom, and perhaps on no other occasion than this, especially because, as subsequent events prove, he was then leaving them without expectation of seeing them again in this life. Nay, by this instance, it is rather proved that such fasting on the Lord's day was not customary, because the writer of the history, in order to prevent this being thought, has taken care to state the reason why the discourse was so prolonged, that we might know that in an emergency dinner is not to stand in the way of more important work. But indeed the example of these most eager listeners goes further; for by them all bodily refreshment, not dinner only, but supper also, was disregarded when thirsting vehemently, not for water, but for the word of truth; and considering that the fountain was about to be removed from them, they drank in with unabated desire whatever flowed from the apostle's lips.

29. In that age, however, although fasting upon the Lord's day was not usually practised, it was not so great an offence to the Church when, in any similar emergency to that in which Paul was at Troas, men did not attend to the refreshment of the body throughout the whole of the Lord's day until midnight, or even until the dawn of the following morning. But now, since heretics, and especially these most impious Manichaeans, have begun not to observe an occasional fast upon the Lord's day, when constrained by circumstances, but to prescribe such fasting as a duty binding by sacred and solemn institution, and this practice of theirs has become well known to

Christian communities; even were such an emergency arising as that which the apostle experienced, I verily think that what he then did should not now be done, lest the harm done by the offence given should be greater than the good received from the words spoken. Whatever necessity may arise, or good reason, compelling a Christian to fast on the Lord’s day,—as we find, e.g., in the Acts of the Apostles, that in peril of shipwreck they fasted on board of the ship in which the apostle was for fourteen days successively, within which the Lord’s day came round twice,—we ought to have no hesitation in believing that the Lord’s day is not to be placed among the days of voluntary fasting, except in the case of one vowing to fast continuously for a period longer than a week.

Chap. XIII

30. The reason why the Church prefers to appoint the fourth and sixth days of the week for fasting, is found by considering the gospel narrative. There we find that on the fourth day of the week the Jews took counsel to put the Lord to death. One day having intervened,—on the evening of which, at the close, namely, of the day which we call the fifth day of the week, the Lord ate the passover with His disciples,—He was thereafter betrayed on the night which belonged to the sixth day of the week, the day (as is everywhere known) of His passion. This day, beginning with the evening, was the first day of unleavened bread. The evangelist Matthew, however, says that the fifth day of the week was the first of unleavened bread, because in the evening following it the paschal supper was to be observed, at which they began to eat the unleavened bread, and the lamb offered in sacrifice. From which it is inferred that it was upon the fourth day of the week that the Lord said, “You know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified;” and for this reason that day has been regarded as one suitable for fasting, because, as the evangelist immediately adds: “Then assembled together the chief priests and the scribes and the elders of the people unto the palace of the high priest, who is called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty and kill Him.” After the intermission of one day,—the day, namely, of which the evangelist writes: “Now, on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto Him, Where wilt

Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the passover? “—the Lord suffered on the sixth day of the week, as is admitted by all: wherefore the sixth day also is rightly reckoned a day for fasting, as fasting is symbolical of humiliation; whence it is said, “I humbled my soul with fasting.”

31. The next day is the Jewish Sabbath, on which day Christ’s body rested in the grave, as in the original fashioning of the world God rested on that day from all His works. Hence originated that variety in the robe of His bride which we are now considering: some, especially the Eastern communities, preferring to take food on that day, that their action might be emblematic of the divine rest; others, namely the Church of Rome, and some churches in the West, preferring to fast on that day because of the humiliation of the Lord in death. Once in the year, namely at Easter, all Christians observe the seventh day of the week by fasting, in memory of the mourning with which the disciples, as men bereaved, lamented the death of the Lord (and this is done with the utmost devoutness by those who take food on the seventh day throughout the rest of the year); thus providing a symbolical representation of both events,—of the disciples’ sorrow on one seventh day in the year, and of the blessing of repose on all the others. There are two things which make the happiness of the just and the end of all their misery to be confidently expected, viz. death and the resurrection of the dead. In death is that rest of which the prophet speaks: “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.” In resurrection blessedness is consummated in the whole man, both body and soul. Hence it came to be thought that both of these things [death and resurrection] should be symbolized, not by the hardship of fasting, but rather by the cheerfulness of refreshment with food, excepting only the Easter Saturday, on which, as I have said, it had been resolved to commemorate by a more protracted fast the mourning of the disciples, as one of the events to be had in remembrance.

Chap. XIV

32. Since, therefore (as I have said above), we do not find in the Gospels or in the apostolical writings, belonging properly to the revelation of the New Testament, that any law was laid down as to fasts to be observed on

particular days; and since this is consequently one of many things, difficult to enumerate, which make up a variety in the robe of the King's daughter, that is to say, of the Church,—I will tell you the answer given to my questions on this subject by the venerable Ambrose Bishop of Milan, by whom I was baptized. When my mother was with me in that city, I, as being only a catechumen, felt no concern about these questions; but it was to her a question causing anxiety, whether she ought, after the custom of our own town, to fast on the Saturday, or, after the custom of the Church of Milan, not to fast. To deliver her from perplexity, I put the question to the man of God whom I have just named. He answered, "What else can I recommend to others than what I do myself?" When I thought that by this he intended simply to prescribe to us that we should take food on Saturdays—for I knew this to be his own practice—he, following me, added these words: "When I am here I do not fast on Saturday; but when I am at Rome I do: whatever church you may come to, conform to its custom, if you would avoid either receiving or giving offence." This reply I reported to my mother, and it satisfied her, so that she scrupled not to comply with it; and I have myself followed the same rule. Since, however, it happens, especially in Africa, that one church, or the churches within the same district, may have some members who fast and others who do not fast on the seventh day, it seems to me best to adopt in each congregation the custom of those to whom authority in its government has been committed. Wherefore, if you are quite willing to follow my advice, especially because in regard to this matter I have spoken at greater length than was necessary, do not in this resist your own bishop, but follow his practice without scruple or debate.

LETTER XXXVII

(A.D. 397.)

To Simplicianus, My Lord Most Blessed, and My Father Most Worthy of Being Cherished with Respect and Sincere Affection, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I received the letter which your Holiness kindly sent,—a letter full of occasions of much joy to me, because assuring me that you remember me, that you love me as you used to do, and that you take great pleasure in

every one of the gifts which the Lord has in His compassion been pleased to bestow on me. In reading that letter, I have eagerly welcomed the fatherly affection which flows from your benignant heart towards me: and this I have not found for the first time, as something short-lived and new, but long ago proved and well known, my lord, most blessed, and most worthy of being cherished with respect and sincere love.

2. Whence comes so great a recompense for the literary labour given by me to the writing of a few books as this, that your Excellency should condescend to read them? Is it not that the Lord, to whom my soul is devoted, has purposed thus to comfort me under my anxieties, and to lighten the fear with which in such labour I cannot but be exercised, lest, notwithstanding the evenness of the plain of truth, I stumble through want either of knowledge or of caution? For when what I write meets your approval, I know by whom it is approved, for I know who dwells in you; and the Giver and Dispenser of all spiritual gifts designs by your approbation to confirm my obedience to Him. For whatever in these writings of mine merits your approbation is from God, who has by me as His instrument said, “Let it be done,” and it was done; and in your approval God has pronounced that what was done is “good.”

3. As for the questions which you have condescended to command me to resolve, even if through the dulness of my mind I did not understand them, I might through the assistance of your merits find an answer to them. This only I ask, that on account of my weakness you intercede with God for me, and that whatever writings of mine come into your sacred hands, whether on the topics to which you have in a manner so kind and fatherly directed my attention, or on any others, you will not only take pains to read them, but also accept the charge of reviewing and correcting them; for I acknowledge the mistakes which I myself have made, as readily as the gifts which God has bestowed on me.

LETTER XXXVIII

(A.D. 397.)

To His Brother Profuturus Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. As for my spirit, I am well, through the Lord’s good pleasure, and the strength which He condescends to impart; but as for my body, I am confined to bed. I can neither walk, nor stand, nor sit, because of the pain and swelling of a boil or tumour. But even in such a case, since this is the will of the Lord, what else can I say than that I am well? For if we do not wish that which He is pleased to do, we ought rather to take blame to ourselves than to think that He could err in anything which He either does or suffers to be done. All this you know well; but what shall I more willingly say to you than the things which I say to myself, seeing that you are to me a second self? I commend therefore both my days and my nights to your pious intercessions. Pray for me, that I may not waste my days through want of self-control, and that I may bear my nights with patience: pray that, though I walk in the midst of the shadow of death, the Lord may so be with me that I shall fear no evil.

2. You have heard, doubtless, of the death of the aged Megalius, for it is now twenty-four days since he put off this mortal body. I wish to know, if possible, whether you have seen, as you proposed, his successor in the primacy. We are not delivered from offences, but it is equally true that we are not deprived of our refuge; our griefs do not cease, but our consolations are equally abiding. And well do you know, my excellent brother, how, in the midst of such offences, we must watch lest hatred of any one gain a hold upon the heart, and so not only hinder us from praying to God with the door of our chamber closed, but also shut the door against God Himself; for hatred of another insidiously creeps upon us, while no one who is angry considers his anger to be unjust. For anger habitually cherished against any one becomes hatred, since the sweetness which is mingled with what appears to be righteous anger makes us detain it longer than we ought in the vessel, until the whole is soured, and the vessel itself is spoiled. Wherefore it is much better for us to forbear from anger, even when one has given us just occasion for it, than, beginning with what seems just anger against any one, to fall, through this occult tendency of passion, into hating him. We are wont to say that, in entertaining strangers, it is much better to bear the inconvenience of receiving a bad man than to run the risk of having a good man shut out, through our caution lest any bad man be admitted; but in the passions of the soul the opposite rule holds true. For it is incomparably

more for our soul’s welfare to shut the recesses of the heart against anger, even when it knocks with a just claim for admission, than to admit that which it will be most difficult to expel, and which will rapidly grow from a mere sapling to a strong tree. Anger dares to increase with boldness more suddenly than men suppose, for it does not blush in the dark, when the sun has gone down upon it. You will understand with how great care and anxiety I write these things, if you consider the things which lately on a certain journey you said to me.

3. I salute my brother Severus, and those who are with him. I would perhaps write to them also, if the limited time before the departure of the bearer permitted me. I beseech you also to assist me in persuading our brother Victor (to whom I desire through your Holiness to express my thanks for his informing me of his setting out to Constantina) not to refuse to return by way of Calama, on account of a business known to him, in which I have to bear a very heavy burden in the importunate urgency of the elder Nectarius concerning it; he gave me his promise to this effect. Farewell!

LETTER XXXIX

(A.D. 397.)

To My Lord Augustin, a Father Truly Holy and Most Blessed, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ.

Chap. I

1. Last year I sent by the hand of our brother, the subdeacon Asterius, a letter conveying to your Excellency a salutation due to you, and readily rendered by me; and I think that my letter was delivered to you. I now write again, by my holy brother the deacon Praesidius, begging you in the first place not to forget me, and in the second place to receive the bearer of this letter, whom I commend to you with the request that you recognise him as one very near and dear to me, and that you encourage and help him in whatever way his circumstances may demand; not that he is in need of anything (for Christ has amply endowed him), but that he is most eagerly desiring the friendship of good men, and thinks that in securing this he

obtains the most valuable blessing. His design in travelling to the West you may learn from his own lips.

Chap. II

2. As for us, established here in our monastery, we feel the shock of waves on every side, and are burdened with the cares of our lot as pilgrims. But we believe in Him who hath said, “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world,” and are confident that by His grace and guidance we shall prevail against our adversary the devil.

I beseech you to give my respectful salutation to the holy and venerable brother, our father Alypius. The brethren who, with me, devote themselves to serve the Lord in this monastery, salute you warmly. May Christ our Almighty God guard you from harm, and keep you mindful of me, my lord and father truly holy and venerable.

LETTER XL

(A.D. 397.)

To My Lord Much Beloved, and Brother Worthy of Being Honoured and Embraced with the Most Sincere Devotion of Charity, My Fellow-Presbyter Jerome, Augustin Sends Greeting.

Chap. I

1. I thank you that, instead of a mere formal salutation, you wrote me a letter, though it was much shorter than I would desire to have from you; since nothing that comes from you is tedious, however much time it may demand. Wherefore, although I am beset with great anxieties about the affairs of others, and that, too, in regard to secular matters, I would find it difficult to pardon the brevity of your letter, were it not that I consider that it was written in reply to a yet shorter letter of my own. Address yourself, therefore, I entreat you, to that exchange of letters by which we may have fellowship, and may not permit the distance which separates us to keep us wholly apart from each other; though we are in the Lord bound together by the unity of the Spirit, even when our pens rest and we are silent. The books

in which you have laboured to bring treasures from the Lord’s storehouse give me almost a complete knowledge of you. For if I may not say, “I know you,” because I have not seen your face, it may with equal truth be said that you do not know yourself, for you cannot see your own face. If, however, it is this alone which constitutes your acquaintance with yourself, that you know your own mind, we also have no small knowledge of it through your writings, in studying which we bless God that to yourself, to us, to all who read your works, He has given you as you are.

Chap. II

2. It is not long since, among other things, a certain book of yours came into my hands, the name of which I do not yet know, for the manuscript itself had not the title written, as is customary, on the first page. The brother with whom it was found said that its title is Epitaphium,—a name which we might believe you to have approved, if we found in the work a notice of the lives or writings of those only who are deceased. Inasmuch, however, as mention is there made of the works of some who were at the time when it was written, or are even now, alive, we wonder why you either gave this title to it, or permitted others to believe that you had done so. The book itself has our complete approval as a useful work.

Chap. III

3. In your exposition of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians I have found one thing which causes me much concern. For if it be the case that statements untrue in themselves, but made, as it were, out of a sense of duty in the interest of religion, have been admitted into the Holy Scriptures, what authority will be left to them? If this be conceded, what sentence can be produced from these Scriptures, by the weight of which the wicked obstinacy of error can be broken down? For as soon as you have produced it, if it be disliked by him who contends with you, he will reply that, in the passage alleged, the writer was uttering a falsehood under the pressure of some honourable sense of duty. And where will any one find this way of escape impossible, if it be possible for men to say and believe that, after introducing his narrative with these words, “The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not,” the apostle lied when he said of Peter

and Barnabas, “I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel “? For if they did walk uprightly, Paul wrote what was false; and if he wrote what was false here, when did he say what was true? Shall he be supposed to say what is true when his teaching corresponds with the predilection of his reader, and shall everything which runs counter to the impressions of the reader be reckoned a falsehood uttered by him under a sense of duty? It will be impossible to prevent men from finding reasons for thinking that he not only might have uttered a falsehood, but was bound to do so, if we admit this canon of interpretation. There is no need for many words in pursuing this argument, especially in writing to you, for whose wisdom and prudence enough has already been said. I would by no means be so arrogant as to attempt to enrich by my small coppers your mind, which by the divine gift is golden; and none is more able than yourself to revise and correct that work to which I have referred.

Chap. IV

4. You do not require me to teach you in what sense the apostle says, “To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews,” and other such things in the same passage, which are to be ascribed to the compassion of pitying love, not the artifices of intentional deceit. For he that ministers to the sick becomes as if he were sick himself; not, indeed, falsely pretending to be under the fever, but considering, with the mind of one truly sympathizing, what he would wish done for himself if he were in the sick man’s place. Paul was indeed a Jew; and when he had become a Christian, he had not abandoned those Jewish sacraments which that people had received in the right way, and for a certain appointed time. Therefore, even although he was an apostle of Christ, he took part in observing these; but with this view, that he might show that they were in no wise hurtful to those who, even after they had believed in Christ, desired to retain the ceremonies which by the law they had learned from their fathers; provided only that they did not build on these their hope of salvation, since the salvation which was foreshadowed in these has now been brought in by the Lord Jesus. For the same reason, he judged that these ceremonies should by no means be made binding on the Gentile converts, because, by imposing a heavy and

superfluous burden, they might turn aside from the faith those who were unaccustomed to them.

5. The thing, therefore, which he rebuked in Peter was not his observing the customs handed down from his fathers—which Peter, if he wished, might do without being chargeable with deceit or inconsistency, for, though now superfluous, these customs were not hurtful to one who had been accustomed to them—but his compelling the Gentiles to observe Jewish ceremonies, which he could not do otherwise than by so acting in regard to them as if their observance was, even after the Lord's coming, still necessary to salvation, against which truth protested through the apostolic office of Paul. Nor was the Apostle Peter ignorant of this, but he did it through fear of those who were of the circumcision. Manifestly, therefore, Peter was truly corrected, and Paul has given a true narrative of the event, unless, by the admission of a falsehood here, the authority of the Holy Scriptures given for the faith of all coming generations is to be made wholly uncertain and wavering. For it is neither possible nor suitable to state within the compass of a letter how great and how unutterably evil must be the consequences of such a concession. It might, however, be shown seasonably, and with less hazard, if we were conversing together.

6. Paul had forsaken everything peculiar to the Jews that was evil, especially this: "That, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they had not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." In this, moreover, he differed from them: that after the passion and resurrection of Christ, in whom had been given and made manifest the mystery of grace, according to the order of Melchizedek, they still considered it binding on them to celebrate, not out of mere reverence for old customs, but as necessary to salvation, the sacraments of the old economy, which were indeed at one time necessary, else had it been unprofitable and vain for the Maccabees to suffer martyrdom, as they did, for their adherence to them. Lastly, in this also Paul differed from the Jews: that they persecuted the Christian preachers of grace as enemies of the law. These and all similar errors and sins he declares that he "counted but loss and dung that he might win Christ;" but he does not, in so saying, disparage the ceremonies of the Jewish law, if only they were

observed after the custom of their fathers, in the way in which he himself observed them, without regarding them as necessary to salvation, and not in the way in which the Jews affirmed that they must be observed, nor in the exercise of deceptive dissimulation such as he had rebuked in Peter. For if Paul observed these sacraments in order, by pretending to be a Jew, to gain the Jews, why did he not also take part with the Gentiles in heathen sacrifices, when to them that were without law he became as without law, that he might gain them also? The explanation is found in this, that he took part in the Jewish sacrifices, as being himself by birth a Jew; and that when he said all this which I have quoted, he meant, not that he pretended to be what he was not, but that he felt with true compassion that he must bring such help to them as would be needful for himself if he were involved in their error. Herein he exercised not the subtlety of a deceiver, but the sympathy of a compassionate deliverer. In the same passage the apostle has stated the principle more generally: “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some,”—the latter clause of which guides us to understand the former as meaning that he showed himself one who pitied the weakness of another as much as if it had been his own. For when he said, “Who is weak, and I am not weak?” he did not wish it to be supposed that he pretended to suffer the infirmity of another, but rather that he showed it by sympathy.

7. Wherefore I beseech you, apply to the correction and emendation of that book a frank and truly Christian severity, and chant what the Greeks call palinodia. For incomparably more lovely than the Grecian Helen is Christian truth: In her defence, our martyrs have fought against Sodom with more courage than the heroes of Greece displayed against Troy for Helen’s sake. I do not say this in order that you may recover the faculty of spiritual sight,—far be it from me to say that you have lost it!—but that, having eyes both clear and quick in discernment, you may turn them towards that from which, in unaccountable dissimulation, you have turned them away, refusing to see the calamitous consequences which would follow on our once admitting that a writer of the divine books could in any part of his work honourably and piously utter a falsehood.

Chap. V

8. I had written some time ago a letter to you on this subject, which was not delivered to you, because the bearer to whom it was entrusted did not finish his journey to you. From it I may quote a thought which occurred to me while I was dictating it, and which I ought not to omit in this letter, in order that, if your opinion is still different from mine, and is better, you may readily forgive the anxiety which has moved me to write. It is this: If your opinion is different, and is according to truth (for only in that case can it be better than mine), you will grant that "a mistake of mine, which is in the interest of truth, cannot deserve great blame, if indeed it deserves blame at all, when it is possible for you to use truth in the interest of falsehood without doing wrong."

9. As to the reply which you were pleased to give me concerning Origen, I did not need to be told that we should, not only in ecclesiastical writers, but in all others, approve and commend what we find right and true, but reject and condemn what we find false and mischievous. What I craved from your wisdom and learning (and I still crave it), was that you should acquaint us definitely with the points in which that remarkable man is proved to have departed from the belief of the truth. Moreover, in that book in which you have mentioned all the ecclesiastical writers whom you could remember, and their works, it would, I think, be a more convenient arrangement if, after naming those whom you know to be heretics (since you have chosen not to pass them without notice), you would add in what respect their doctrine is to be avoided. Some of these heretics also you have omitted, and I would fain know on what grounds. If, however, perchance it has been from a desire not to enlarge that volume unduly that you refrained from adding to a notice of heretics, the statement of the things in which the Catholic Church has authoritatively condemned them, I beg you not to grudge bestowing on this subject, to which with humility and brotherly love I direct your attention, a portion of that literary labour by which already, by the grace of the Lord our God, you have in no small measure stimulated and assisted the saints in the study of the Latin tongue, and publish in one small book (if your other occupations permit you) a digest of the perverse dogmas of all the heretics who up to this time have, through arrogance, or ignorance, or self-will, attempted to subvert the simplicity of the Christian faith; a work most necessary for the information of those who are

prevented, either by lack of leisure or by their not knowing the Greek language, from reading and understanding so many things. I would urge my request at greater length, were it not that this is commonly a sign of misgivings as to the benevolence of the party from whom a favour is sought. Meanwhile I cordially recommend to your goodwill in Christ our brother Paulus, to whose high standing in these regions I bear before God willing testimony.

LETTER XLI

(A.D. 397.)

To Father Aurelius, Our Lord Most Blessed and Worthy of Veneration, Our Brother Most Sincerely Beloved, and Our Partner in the Sacerdotal Office, Alypius and Augustin Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. “Our mouth is filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing,” by your letter informing us that, by the help of that God whose inspiration guided you, you have carried into effect your pious purpose concerning all our brethren in orders, and especially concerning the regular delivering of a sermon to the people in your presence by the presbyters, through whose tongues thus engaged your love sounds louder in the hearts than their voice does in the ears of men. Thanks be unto God! Is there anything better for us to have in our heart, or utter with our lips, or record with our pen, than this? Thanks be unto God! No other phrase is more easily spoken, and nothing more pleasant in sound, profound in significance, and profitable in practice, than this. Thanks be unto God, who has endowed you with a heart so true to the interests of your sons, and who has brought to light what you had latent in the inner soul, beyond the reach of human eye, giving you not only the will to do good, but the means of realizing your desires. So be it, certainly so be it! let these works shine before men, that they may see them, and rejoice and glorify your Father in heaven. In such things delight yourself in the Lord; and may your prayers for these presbyters be graciously heard on their behalf by Him whose voice you do not consider it beneath you to hear when He speaks by them! May they go on, and walk, yea, run in the way of the Lord! May the small and the great be blessed together, being made glad by those who say unto them, “Let us go into the house of the Lord!” Let the

stronger lead; let the weaker imitate their example, being followers of them, as they are of Christ. May we all be as ants pursuing eagerly the path of holy industry, as bees labouring amidst the fragrance of holy duty; and may fruit be brought forth in patience by the saving grace of stedfastness unto the end! May the Lord “not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but with the temptation may He make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it”!

2. Pray for us: we value your prayers as worthy to be heard, since you go to God with so great an offering of unfeigned love, and of praise brought to Him by your works. Pray that in us also these works may shine, for He to whom you pray knows with what fulness of joy we behold them shining in you. Such are our desires; such are the abounding comforts which in the multitude of our thoughts within us delight our souls. It is so now because such is the promise of God; and as He hath promised, so shall it be in the time to come. We beseech you, by Him who hath blessed you, and has by you bestowed this blessing on the people whom you serve, to order any of the presbyters’ sermons which you please to be transcribed, and after revisal sent to us. For I on my part am not neglecting what you required of me; and as I have written often before, I am still longing to know what you think of Tychonius’ seven Rules or Keys.

We warmly commend to you our brother Hilarinus, leading physician and magistrate of Hippo. As to our brother Romanus, we know how actively you are exerting yourself on his behalf, and that we need ask nothing but that God may prosper your endeavours.

LETTER XLII

(A.D. 397.)

To Paulinus and Therasia, My Brother and Sister in Christ, Worthy of Respect and Praise, Most Eminent for Piety, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Could this have been hoped or expected by us, that now by our brother Severus we should have to claim the answer which your love has not yet written to us, so long and so impatiently desiring your reply? Why have we been doomed through two summers (and these in the parched land of Africa) to bear this thirst? What more can I say? O generous man, who art daily giving away what is your own, be just, and pay what is a debt to us. Perhaps the reason of your long delay is your desire to finish and transmit to me that book against heathen worship, in writing which I had heard that you were engaged, and for which I had expressed a very earnest desire. O that you might by so rich a feast satisfy the hunger which has been sharpened by fasting (so far as your pen was concerned) for more than a year! but if this be not yet prepared, our complaints will not cease unless meanwhile you prevent us from being famished before that is finished. Salute our brethren, especially Romanus and Agilis. From this place all who are with me salute you, and they would be less provoked by your delay in writing if they loved you less than they do.

LETTER XLIII

(A.D. 397.)

To Glorius, Eleusius, the Two Felixes, Grammaticus, and All Others to Whom This May Be Acceptable, My Lords Most Beloved and Worthy of Praise, Augustin Sends Greeting.

Chap. I

1. The Apostle Paul hath said: “A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself.” But though the doctrine which men hold be false and perverse, if they do not maintain it with passionate obstinacy, especially when they have not devised it by the rashness of their own presumption, but have accepted it from parents who had been misguided and had fallen into error, and if they are with anxiety seeking the truth, and are prepared to be set right when they have found it, such men are not to be counted heretics. Were it not that I believe you to be such, perhaps I would not write to you. And yet even in the case of a heretic, however puffed up with odious conceit, and insane through the obstinacy of his wicked resistance to truth, although we warn others to avoid him, so that he may not deceive the weak and inexperienced, we do not refuse to strive by

every means in our power for his correction. On this ground I wrote even to some of the chief of the Donatists, not indeed letters of communion, which on account of their perversity they have long ceased to receive from the undivided Catholic Church which is spread throughout the world, but letters of a private kind, such as we may send even to pagans. These letters, however, though they have sometimes read them, they have not been willing, or perhaps it is more probable, have not been able, to answer. In these cases, it seems to me that I have discharged the obligation laid on me by that love which the Holy Spirit teaches us to render, not only to our own, but to all, saying by the apostle: “The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men.” In another place we are warned that those who are of a different opinion from us must be corrected with meekness, “if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

2. I have said these things by way of preface, lest any one should think, because you are not of our communion, that I have been influenced by forwardness rather than consideration in sending this letter, and in desiring thus to confer with you regarding the welfare of the soul; though I believe that, if I were writing to you about an affair of property, or the settlement of some dispute about money, no one would find fault with me. So precious is this world in the esteem of men, and so small is the value which they set upon themselves! This letter, therefore, shall be a witness in my vindication at the bar of God, who knows the spirit in which I write, and who has said: “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the sons of God.”

Chap. II

3. I beg you, therefore, to call to mind that, when I was in your town, and was discussing with you a little concerning the communion of Christian unity, certain Acts were brought forward by you, from which a statement was read aloud that about seventy bishops condemned Caecilianus, formerly our Bishop of Carthage, along with his colleagues, and those by whom he was ordained. In the same Acts was given a full account of the case of Felix of Aptunga, as one singularly odious and criminal. When all these had been read, I answered that it was not to be wondered at if the men

who then caused that schism, and who did not scruple to tamper with Acts, thought that it was right to condemn those against whom they had been instigated by envious and wicked men, although the sentence was passed without deliberation, in the absence of the parties condemned, and without acquainting them with the matter laid to their charge. I added that we have other ecclesiastical Acts, according to which Secundus of Tigisis, who was for the time Primate of Numidia, left those who, being there present, confessed themselves traditors to the judgment of God, and permitted them to remain in the episcopal sees which they then occupied; and I stated that the names of these men are in the list of those who condemned Caecilianus, and that this Secundus himself was president of the Council in which he secured the condemnation of those who, being absent, were accused as traditors, by the votes of those whom he pardoned when, being present, they confessed the same crime.

4. I then said that some time after the ordination of Majorinus, whom they with impious wickedness set up against Caecilianus, raising one altar against another, and rending with infatuated contentiousness the unity of Christ, they applied to Constantine, who was then emperor, to appoint bishops to act as judges and arbiters concerning the questions which, having arisen in Africa, disturbed the peace of the Church. This having been done, Caecilianus and those who had sailed from Africa to accuse him being present, and the case tried by Melchiades, who was then Bishop of Rome, along with the assessors whom at the request of the Donatists the Emperor had sent, nothing could be proved against Caecilianus; and thus, while he was confirmed in his episcopal see, Donatus, who was present as his opponent, was condemned. After all this, when they all still persevered in the obstinacy of their most sinful schism, the Emperor being appealed to, took pains to have the matter again more carefully examined and settled at Arles. They, however, declining an ecclesiastical decision, appealed to Constantine himself to hear their cause. When this trial came on, both parties being present, Caecilianus was pronounced innocent, and they retired vanquished; but they still persisted in the same perversity. At the same time the case of Felix of Aptunga was not forgotten, and he too was acquitted of the crimes laid to his charge, after an investigation by the proconsul at the order of the same prince.

5. Since, however, I was only saying these things, not reading from the record, I seemed to you to be doing less than my earnestness had led you to expect. Perceiving this, I sent at once for that which I had promised to read. While I went on to visit the Church at Gelizi, intending to return thence to you, all these Acts were brought to you before two days had passed, and were read to you, as you know, so far as time permitted, in one day. We read first how Secundus of Tigisis did not dare to depose his colleagues in office who confessed themselves to be traditors; but afterwards, by the help of these very men, dared to condemn, without their confessing the crime, and in their absence, Caecilianus and others who were his colleagues. And we next read the proconsular Acts in which Felix was, after a most thorough investigation, proved innocent. These, as you will remember, were read in the forenoon. In the afternoon I read to you their petition to Constantine, and the ecclesiastical record of the proceedings in Rome of the judges whom he appointed, by which the Donatists were condemned, and Caecilianus confirmed in his episcopal dignity. In conclusion, I read the letters of the Emperor Constantine, in which the evidence of all these things was established beyond all possibility of dispute.

Chap. III

6. What more do you ask, sirs? what more do you ask? The matter in question here is not your gold and silver; it is not your land, nor property, nor bodily health that is at stake. I appeal to your souls concerning their obtaining eternal life, and escaping eternal death. At length awake! I am not handling an obscure question, nor searching into some hidden mystery, for the investigation of which capacity is found in no human intellect, or at least in only a few: the thing is clear as day. Is anything more obvious? could anything be more quickly seen? I affirm that parties innocent and absent were condemned by a Council, very numerous indeed, but hasty in their decisions. I prove this by the proconsular Acts, in which that man was wholly cleared from the charge of being a traditor, whom the Acts of the Council which your party brought forward proclaimed as most specially guilty. I affirm further, that the sentence against those who were said to be traditors was passed by men who had confessed themselves guilty of that very crime. I prove this by the ecclesiastical Acts in which the names of

those men are set forth, to whom Secundus of Tigisis, professing a desire to preserve peace, granted pardon of a crime which he knew them to have committed, and by whose help he afterwards, notwithstanding the destruction of peace, passed sentence upon others of whose crime he had no evidence; whereby he made it manifest that in the former decision he had been moved, not by a regard for peace, but by fear for himself. For Purpurius, Bishop of Limata, had alleged against him that he himself, when he had been put in custody by a curator and his soldiers, in order to compel him to give up the Scriptures, was let go, doubtless not without paying a price, in either giving up something, or ordering others to do so for him. He, fearing that this suspicion might be easily enough confirmed, having obtained the advice of Secundus the younger, his own kinsman, and having consulted all his colleagues in the episcopal office, remitted crimes which required no proof to be judged by God, and in so doing appeared to be protecting the peace of the Church: which was false, for he was only protecting himself.

7. For if, in truth, regard for peace had any place in his heart, he would not afterwards at Carthage have joined those traditors whom he had left to the judgment of God when they were present, and confessed their fault, in passing sentence for the same crime upon others who were absent, and against whom no one had proved the charge. He was bound, moreover, to be the more afraid on that occasion of disturbing the peace, inasmuch as Carthage was a great and famous city, from which any evil originating there might extend, as from the head of the body, throughout all Africa. Carthage was also near to the countries beyond the sea, and distinguished by illustrious renown, so that it had a bishop of more than ordinary influence, who could afford to disregard even a number of enemies conspiring against him, because he saw himself united by letters of communion both to the Roman Church, in which the supremacy of an apostolic chair has always flourished, and to all other lands from which Africa itself received the gospel, and was prepared to defend himself before these Churches if his adversaries attempted to cause an alienation of them from him. Seeing, therefore, that Caecilianus declined to come before his colleagues, whom he perceived or suspected (or, as they affirm, pretended to suspect) to be biassed by his enemies against the real merits of his case, it was all the

more the duty of Secundus, if he wished to be the guardian of true peace, to prevent the condemnation in their absence of those who had wholly declined to compear at their bar. For it was not a matter concerning presbyters or deacons or clergy of inferior order, but concerning colleagues who might refer their case wholly to the judgment of other bishops, especially of apostolical churches, in which the sentence passed against them in their absence would have no weight, since they had not deserted their tribunal after having compeared before it, but had always declined compearance because of the suspicions which they entertained.

8. This consideration ought to have weighed much with Secundus, who was at that time Primate, if his desire, as president of the Council, was to promote peace; for he might perhaps have quieted or restrained the mouths of those who were raging against men who were absent, if he had spoken thus: "Ye see, brethren, how after so great havoc of persecution peace has been given to us, through God's mercy, by the princes of this world; surely we, being Christians and bishops, ought not to break up the Christian unity which even pagan enemies have ceased to assail. Either, therefore, let us leave to God, as Judge, all those cases which the calamity of a most troublous time has brought upon the Church; or if there be some among you who have such certain knowledge of the guilt of other parties, that they are able to bring against them a definite indictment, and prove it if they plead not guilty, and who also shrink from having communion with such persons, let them hasten to our brethren and peers, the bishops of the churches beyond the sea, and present to them in the first place a complaint concerning the conduct and contumacy of the accused, as having through consciousness of guilt declined the jurisdiction of their peers in Africa, so that by these foreign bishops they may be summoned to compear and answer before them regarding the things laid to their charge. If they disobey this summons, their criminality and obduracy will become known to those other bishops; and by a synodical letter sent in their name to all parts of the world throughout which the Church of Christ is now extended, the parties accused will be excluded from communion with all churches, in order to prevent the springing up of error in the see of the Church at Carthage. When that has been done, and these men have been separated from the whole Church, we shall without fear ordain another bishop over the community in

Carthage; whereas, if now another bishop be ordained by us, communion will most probably be withheld from him by the Church beyond the sea, because they will not recognise the validity of the deposition of the bishop, whose ordination was everywhere acknowledged, and with whom letters of communion had been exchanged; and thus, through our undue eagerness to pronounce without deliberation a final sentence, the great scandal of schism within the Church, when it has rest from without, may arise, and we may be found presuming to set up another altar, not against Caecilianus, but against the universal Church, which, uninformed of our procedure, would still hold communion with him."

9. If any one had been disposed to reject sound and equitable counsels such as these, what could he have done? or how could he have procured the condemnation of any one of his absent peers, when he could not have any decisions with the authority of the Council, seeing that the Primate was opposed to him? And if such a serious revolt against the authority of the Primate himself arose, that some were resolved to condemn at once those whose case he desired to postpone, how much better would it have been for him to separate himself by dissent from such quarrelsome and factious men, than from the communion of the whole world! But because there were no charges which could be proved at the bar of foreign bishops against Caecilianus and those who took part in his ordination, those who condemned them were not willing to delay passing sentence; and when they had pronounced it, were not at any pains to intimate to the Church beyond the sea the names of those in Africa with whom, as condemned traditors, she should avoid communion. For if they had attempted this, Caecilianus and the others would have defended themselves, and would have vindicated their innocence against their false accusers by a most thorough trial before the ecclesiastical tribunal of bishops beyond the sea.

10. Our belief concerning that perverse and unjust Council is, that it was composed chiefly of traditors whom Secundus of Tigisis had pardoned on their confession of guilt; and who, when a rumour had gone abroad that some had been guilty of delivering up the sacred books, sought to turn aside suspicion from themselves by bringing a calumny upon others, and to escape the detection of their crime, through surrounding themselves with a

cloud of lying rumours, when men throughout all Africa, believing their bishops, said what was false concerning innocent men, that they had been condemned at Carthage as traditors. Whence you perceive, my beloved friends, how that which some of your party affirmed to be improbable could indeed happen, viz. that the very men who had confessed their own guilt as traditors, and had obtained the remission of their case to the divine tribunal, afterwards took part in judging and condemning others who, not being present to defend themselves, were accused of the same crime. For their own guilt made them more eagerly embrace an opportunity by which they might overwhelm others with a groundless accusation, and by thus finding occupation for the tongues of men, which screen their own misdeeds from investigation. Moreover, if it were inconceivable that a man should condemn in another the wrong which he had himself done, the Apostle Paul would not have had occasion to say: “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.” This is exactly what these men did, so that the words of the apostle may be fully and appropriately applied to them.

11. Secundus, therefore, was not acting in the interests of peace and unity when he remitted to the divine tribunal the crimes which these men confessed: for, if so, he would have been much more careful to prevent a schism at Carthage, when there were none present to whom he might be constrained to grant pardon of a crime which they confessed; when, on the contrary, all that the preservation of peace demanded was a refusal to condemn those who were absent. They would have acted unjustly to these innocent men, had they even resolved to pardon them, when they were not proved guilty, and had not confessed the guilt, but were actually not present at all. For the guilt of a man is established beyond question when he accepts a pardon. How much more outrageous and blind were they who thought that they had power to condemn for crimes which, as unknown, they could not even have forgiven! In the former case, crimes that were known were remitted to the divine arbitration, lest others should be inquired into; in the latter case, crimes that were not known were made ground of condemnation, that those which were known might be concealed. But it will be said, the crime of Caecilianus and the others was known. Even if I were

to admit this, the fact of their absence ought to have protected them from such a sentence. For they were not chargeable with deserting a tribunal before which they had never stood; nor was the Church so exclusively represented in these African bishops, that in refusing to appear before them they could be supposed to decline all ecclesiastical jurisdiction. For there remained thousands of bishops in countries beyond the sea, before whom it was manifest that those who seemed to distrust their peers in Africa and Numidia could be tried. Have you forgotten what Scripture commands: “Blame no one before you have examined him; and when you have examined him, let your correction be just”? If, then, the Holy Spirit has forbidden us to blame or correct any one before we have questioned him, how much greater is the crime of not merely blaming or correcting, but actually condemning men who, being absent, could not be examined as to the charges brought against them!

12. Moreover, as to the assertion of these judges, that though the parties accused were absent, having not fled from trial, but always avowed their distrust of that faction, and declined to appear before them, the crimes for which they condemned them were well known; I ask, my brethren, how did they know them? You reply, We cannot tell, since the evidence is not stated in the public Acts. But I will tell you how they knew them. Observe carefully the case of Felix of Aptunga, and first read how much more vehement they were against him; for they had just the same grounds for their knowledge in the case of the others as in his, who was afterwards proved most completely innocent by a thorough and severe investigation. How much greater the justice and safety and readiness with which we are warranted in believing the innocence of the others whose indictment was less serious, and their condemnation less severe, seeing that the man against whom they raged much more furiously has been proved innocent!

Chap. IV

13. Some one may perhaps make an objection which, though it was disapproved by you when it was brought forward, I must not pass over, for it has been made by others, viz.: It was not meet that a bishop should be acquitted by trial before a proconsul: as if the bishop had himself procured this trial, and it had not been done by order of the Emperor, to whose care

this matter, as one concerning which he was responsible to God, especially belonged. For they themselves had constituted the Emperor the arbiter and judge in this question regarding the surrender of the sacred books, and regarding the schism, by their sending petitions to him, and afterwards appealing to him; and nevertheless they refuse to acquiesce in his decision. If, therefore, he is to be blamed whom the magistrate absolved, though he had not himself applied to that tribunal, how much more worthy of blame are those who desired an earthly king to be the judge of their cause! For if it be not wrong to appeal to the Emperor, it is not wrong to be tried by the Emperor, and consequently not wrong to be tried by him to whom the Emperor refers the case. One of your friends was anxious to make out a ground of complaint on the fact that, in the case of the bishop Felix, one witness was suspended on the rack, and another tortured with pincers. But was it in the power of Felix to prevent the prosecution of the inquiry with diligence, and even severity, when the case regarding which the advocate was labouring to discover the truth was his own? For what else would such a resistance to investigation have been construed to signify, than a confession of his crime? And yet this proconsul, surrounded with the awe-inspiring voices of heralds, and the blood-stained hands of executioners at his service, would not have condemned one of his peers in absence, who declined to come before his tribunal, if there was any other place where his cause could be disposed of. Or if he had in such circumstances pronounced sentence, he would himself assuredly have suffered the due and just award prescribed by civil law.

Chap. V

14. If, however, you repudiate the Acts of a proconsul, submit yourselves to the Acts of the Church. These have all been read over to you in their order. Perhaps you will say that Melchiades, bishop of the Roman Church, along with the other bishops beyond the sea who acted as his colleagues, had no right to usurp the place of judge in a matter which had been already settled by seventy African bishops, over whom the bishop of Tigisis as Primate presided. But what will you say if he in fact did not usurp this place? For the Emperor, being appealed to, sent bishops to sit with him as judges, with authority to decide the whole matter in the way which seemed to them just.

This we prove, both by the petitions of the Donatists and the words of the Emperor himself, both of which were, as you remember, read to you, and are now accessible to be studied or transcribed by you. Read and ponder all these. See with what scrupulous care for the preservation or restoration of peace and unity everything was discussed; how the legal standing of the accusers was inquired into, and what defects were proved in this matter against some of them; and how it was clearly proved by the testimony of those present that they had nothing to say against Caecilianus, but wished to transfer the whole matter to the people belonging to the party of Majorinus, that is, to the seditious multitude who were opposed to the peace of the Church, in order, forsooth, that Caecilianus might be accused by that crowd which they believed to be powerful enough to bend aside to their views the minds of the judges by mere turbulent clamour, without any documentary evidence or examination as to the truth; unless it was likely that true accusations should be brought against Caecilianus by a multitude infuriated and infatuated by the cup of error and wickedness, in a place where seventy bishops had with insane precipitancy condemned, in their absence, men who were their peers, and who were innocent, as was proved in the case of Felix of Aptunga. They wished to have Caecilianus accused by a mob such as that to which they had given way themselves, when they pronounced sentence upon parties who were absent, and who had not been examined. But assuredly they had not come to judges who could be persuaded to such madness.

15. Your own prudence may enable you to remark here both the obstinacy of these men, and the wisdom of the judges, who to the last persisted in refusing to admit accusations against Caecilianus from the populace who were of the faction of Majorinus, who had no legal standing in the case. You will also remark how they were required to bring forward the men who had come with them from Africa as accusers or witnesses, or in some other connection with the case, and how it was said that they had been present, but had been withdrawn by Donatus. The said Donatus promised that he would produce them, and this promise he made repeatedly; yet, after all, declined to appear again in presence of that tribunal before which he had already confessed so much, that it seemed as if by his refusal to return he desired only to avoid being present to hear himself condemned; but the

things for which he was to be condemned had been proved against him in his own presence, and after examination. Besides this, a libel bringing charges against Caecilianus was handed in by some parties. How the inquiry was thereupon opened anew, what persons brought up the libel, and how nothing after all could be proved against Caecilianus, I need not state, seeing that you have heard it all, and can read it as often as you please.

16. As to the fact that there were seventy bishops in the Council [which condemned Caecilianus], you remember what was said in the way of pleading against him the venerable authority of so great a number. Nevertheless these most venerable men resolved to keep their judgment unembarrassed by endless questions of hopeless intricacy, and did not care to inquire either what was the number of those bishops, or whence they had been collected, when they saw them to be blinded with such reckless presumption as to pronounce rash sentence upon their peers in their absence, and without having examined them. And yet what a decision was finally pronounced by the blessed Melchiades himself; how equitable, how complete, how prudent, and how fitted to make peace! For he did not presume to depose from his own rank those peers against whom nothing had been proved; and, laying blame chiefly upon Donatus, whom he had found the cause of the whole disturbance, he gave to all the others restoration if they chose to accept it, and was prepared to send letters of communion even to those who were known to have been ordained by Majorinus; so that wherever there were two bishops, through this dissension doubling their number, he decided that the one who was prior in the date of ordination should be confirmed in his see, and a new congregation found for the other. O excellent man! O son of Christian peace, father of the Christian people! Compare now this handful, with that multitude of bishops, not counting, but weighing them: on the one side you have moderation and circumspection; on the other, precipitancy and blindness. On the one side, clemency has not wronged justice, nor has justice been at variance with clemency; on the other side, fear was hiding itself under passion, and passion was goaded to excess by fear. In the one case, they assembled to clear the innocent from false accusations by discovering where the guilt really lay; in the other, they had met to screen the guilty from true accusations by bringing false charges against the innocent.

17. Could Caecilianus leave himself to be tried and judged by these men, when he had such others before whom, if his case were argued, he could most easily prove his innocence? He could not have left himself in their hands even had he been a stranger recently ordained over the Church at Carthage, and consequently not aware of the power in perverting the minds of men, either worthless or unwise, which was then possessed by a certain Lucilla, a very wealthy woman, whom he had offended when he was a deacon, by rebuking her in the exercise of church discipline; for this evil influence was also at work to bring about that iniquitous transaction. For in that Council, in which men absent and innocent were condemned by persons who had confessed themselves to be traditors, there were a few who wished, by defaming others, to hide their own crimes, that men, led astray by unfounded rumours, might be turned aside from inquiring into the truth. The number of those who were especially interested in this was not great, although the preponderating authority was on their side; because they had with them Secundus himself, who, yielding to fear, had pardoned them. But the rest are said to have been bribed and instigated specially against Caecilianus by the money of Lucilla. There are Acts in the possession of Zenophilus, a man of consular rank, according to which one Nundinarius, a deacon who had been (as we learn from the same Acts) deposed by Sylvanus, bishop of Cirta, having failed in an attempt to recommend himself to that party by the letters of other bishops, in the heat of passion revealed many secrets, and brought them forward in open court; amongst which we read this on the record, that the rearing of rival altars in the Church of Carthage, the chief city of Africa, was due to the bishops being bribed by the money of Lucilla. I am aware that I did not read these Acts to you, but you remember that there was not time. Besides these influences, there was also some bitterness arising from mortified pride, because they had not themselves ordained Caecilianus bishop of Carthage.

18. When Caecilianus knew that these men had assembled, not as impartial judges, but hostile and perverted through all these things, was it possible that either he should consent, or the people over whom he presided should allow him, to leave the church and go into a private dwelling, where he was not to be tried fairly by his peers, but to be slain by a small faction, urged

on by a woman’s spite, especially when he saw that his case might have an unbiassed and equitable hearing before the Church beyond the sea, which was uninfluenced by private enmities on either side in the dispute? If his adversaries declined pleading before that tribunal, they would thereby cut themselves off from that communion with the whole world which innocence enjoys. And if they attempted there to bring a charge against him, then he would compear for himself, and defend his innocence against all their plots, as you have learned that he afterwards did, when they, already guilty of schism, and stained with the atrocious crime of having actually reared their rival altar, applied—but too late—for the decision of the Church beyond the sea. For this they would have done at first, if their cause had been supported by truth; but their policy was to come to the trial after false rumours had gained strength by lapse of time, and public report of old standing, so to speak, had prejudged the case; or, which seems more likely, having first condemned Caecilianus as they pleased, they relied for safety upon their number, and did not dare to open the discussion of so bad a case before other judges, by whom, as they were not influenced by bribery, the truth might be discovered.

Chap. VII

19. But when they actually found that the communion of the whole world with Caecilianus continued as before, and that letters of communion from churches beyond the sea were sent to him, and not to the man whom they had flagitiously ordained, they became ashamed of being always silent; for it might be objected to them: Why did they suffer the Church in so many countries to go on in ignorance, communicating with men that were condemned; and especially why did they cut themselves off from communion with the whole world, against which they had no charge to make, by their bearing in silence the exclusion from that communion of the bishop whom they had ordained in Carthage? They chose, therefore, as it is reported, to bring their dispute with Caecilianus before the foreign churches, in order to secure one of two things, either of which they were prepared to accept: if, on the one hand, by any amount of craft, they succeeded in making good the false accusation, they would abundantly satisfy their lust of revenge; if, however, they failed, they might remain as

stubborn as before, but would now have, as it were, some excuse for it, in alleging that they had suffered at the hands of an unjust tribunal,—the common outcry of all worthless litigants, though they have been defeated by the clearest light of truth,—as if it might not have been said, and most justly said, to them: “Well, let us suppose that those bishops who decided the case at Rome were not good judges; there still remained a plenary Council of the universal Church, in which these judges themselves might be put on their defence; so that, if they were convicted of mistake, their decisions might be reversed.” Whether they have done this or not, let them prove: for we easily prove that it was not done, by the fact that the whole world does not communicate with them; or if it was done, they were defeated there also, of which their state of separation from the Church is a proof.

20. What they actually did afterwards, however, is sufficiently shown in the letter of the Emperor. For it was not before other bishops, but at the bar of the Emperor, that they dared to bring the charge of wrong judgment against ecclesiastical judges of so high authority as the bishops by whose sentence the innocence of Caecilianus and their own guilt had been declared. He granted them the second trial at Aries, before other bishops; not because this was due to them, but only as a concession to their stubbornness, and from a desire by all means to restrain so great effrontery. For this Christian Emperor did not presume so to grant their unruly and groundless complaints as to make himself the judge of the decision pronounced by the bishops who had sat at Rome; but he appointed, as I have said, other bishops, from whom, however, they preferred again to appeal to the Emperor himself; and you have heard the terms in which he disapproved of this. Would that even then they had desisted from their most insane contentions, and had yielded at last to the truth, as he yielded to them when (intending afterwards to apologize for this course to the reverend prelates) he consented to try their case after the bishops, on condition that, if they did not submit to his decision, for which they had themselves appealed, they should thenceforward be silent! For he ordered that both parties should meet him at Rome to argue the case. When Caecilianus, for some reason, failed to compear there, he, at their request, ordered all to follow him to Milan. Then some of their party began to withdraw, perhaps offended that Constantine

did not follow their example, and condemn Caecilianus in his absence at once and summarily. When the prudent Emperor was aware of this, he compelled the rest to come to Milan in charge of his guards. Caecilianus having come thither, he brought him forward in person, as he has written; and having examined the matter with the diligence, caution, and prudence which his letters on the subject indicate, he pronounced Caecilianus perfectly innocent, and them most criminal.

Chap. VIII

21. And to this day they administer baptism outside of the communion of the Church, and, if they can, they rebaptize the members of the Church: they offer sacrifice in discord and schism, and salute in the name of peace communities which they pronounce beyond the bounds of the peace of salvation. The unity of Christ is rent asunder, the heritage of Christ is reproached, the baptism of Christ is treated with contempt; and they refuse to have these errors corrected by constituted human authorities, applying penalties of a temporal kind in order to prevent them from being doomed to eternal punishment for such sacrilege. We blame them for the rage which has driven them to schism, the madness which makes them rebaptize, and for the sin of separation from the heritage of Christ, which has been spread abroad through all lands. In using manuscripts which are in their hands as well as in ours, we mention churches, the names of which are now read by them also, but with which they have now no communion; and when these are pronounced in their conventicles, they say to the reader, “Peace be with thee;” and yet they have no peace with those to whom these letters were written. They, on the other hand, blame us for crimes of men now dead, making charges which either are false, or, if true, do not concern us; not perceiving that in the things which we lay to their charge they are all involved, but in the things which they lay to our charge the blame is due to the chaff or the tares in the Lord’s harvest, and the crime does not belong to the good grain; not considering, moreover, that within our unity those only have fellowship with the wicked who take pleasure in their being such, whereas those who are displeased with their wickedness yet cannot correct them,—as they do not presume to root out the tares before the harvest, lest they root out the wheat also,—have fellowship with them, not in their

deeds, but in the altar of Christ; so that not only do they avoid being defiled by them, but they deserve commendation and praise according to the word of God, because, in order to prevent the name of Christ from being reproached by odious schisms, they tolerate in the interest of unity that which in the interest of righteousness they hate.

22. If they have ears, let them hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. For in the Apocalypse of John we read: “Unto the angel of the Church of Ephesus write: These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for My name’s sake hast tolerated them, and hast not fainted.” Now, if He wished this to be understood as addressed to a celestial angel, and not to those invested with authority in the Church, He would not go on to say: “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.” This could not be said to the heavenly angels, who retain their love unchanged, as the only beings of their order that have departed and fallen from their love are the devil and his angels. The first love here alluded to is that which was proved in their tolerating for Christ’s name’s sake the false apostles. To this He commands them to return, and to do “their first works.” Now we are reproached with the crimes of bad men, not done by us, but by others; and some of them, moreover, not known to us. Nevertheless, even if they were actually committed, and that under our own eyes, and we bore with them for the sake of unity, letting the tares alone on account of the wheat, whosoever with open heart receives the Holy Scriptures would pronounce us not only free from blame, but worthy of no small praise.

23. Aaron bears with the multitude demanding, fashioning, and worshipping an idol. Moses bears with thousands murmuring against God, and so often offending His holy name. David bears with Saul his persecutor, even when forsaking the things that are above by his wicked life, and

following after the things that are beneath by magical arts, avenges his death, and calls him the Lord’s anointed, because of the venerable right by which he had been consecrated. Samuel bears with the reprobate sons of Eli, and his own perverse sons, whom the people refused to tolerate, and were therefore rebuked by the warning and punished by the severity of God. Lastly, he bears with the nation itself, though proud and despising God. Isaiah bears with those against whom he hurls so many merited denunciations. Jeremiah bears with those at whose hands he suffers so many things. Zechariah bears with the scribes and Pharisees, as to whose character in those days Scripture informs us. I know that I have omitted many examples: let those who are willing and able read the divine records for themselves: they will find that all the holy servants and friends of God have always had to bear with some among their own people, with whom, nevertheless, they partook in the sacraments of that dispensation, and in so doing not only were not defiled by them, but were to be commended for their tolerant spirit, “endeavouring to keep,” as the apostle says, “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Let them also observe what has occurred since the Lord’s coming, in which time we would find many more examples of this toleration in all parts of the world, if they could all be written down and authenticated: but attend to those which are on record. The Lord Himself bears with Judas, a devil, a thief, His own betrayer; He permits him, along with the innocent disciples, to receive that which believers know as our ransom. The apostles bear with false apostles; and in the midst of men who sought their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ, Paul, not seeking his own, but the things of Christ, lives in the practice of a most noble toleration. In fine, as I mentioned a little while ago, the person presiding under the title of Angel over a Church, is commended, because, though he hated those that were evil, he yet bore with them for the Lord’s name’s sake, even when they were tried and discovered.

24. In conclusion, let them ask themselves: Do they not bear with the murders and devastations by fire which are perpetrated by the Circumcelliones, who treat with honour the dead bodies of those who cast themselves down from dangerous heights? Do they not bear with the misery which has made all Africa groan for years beneath the incredible outrages of one man, Optatus [bishop of Thamugada]? I forbear from specifying the

tyrannical acts of violence and public depredations in districts, towns, and properties throughout Africa; for it is better to leave you to speak of these to each other, whether in whispers or openly, as you please. For wherever you turn your eyes, you will find the things of which I speak, or, more correctly, refrain from speaking. Nor do we on this ground accuse those whom, when they do such things, you love. What we dislike in that party is not their bearing with those who are wicked, but their intolerable wickedness in the matter of schism, of raising altar against altar, and of separation from the heritage of Christ now spread, as was so long ago promised, throughout the world. We behold with grief and lamentation peace broken, unity rent asunder, baptism administered a second time, and contempt poured on the sacraments, which are holy even when ministered and received by the wicked. If they regard these things as trifles, let them observe those examples by which it has been proved how they are esteemed by God. The men who made an idol perished by a common death, being slain with the sword: but when the men endeavoured to make a schism in Israel, the leaders were swallowed up by the opening earth, and the crowd of their accomplices was consumed by fire. In the difference between the punishments, the different degrees of demerit may be discerned.

Chap. IX

25. These, then, are the facts: In time of persecution, the sacred books are surrendered to the persecutors. Those who were guilty of this surrender confess it, and are remitted to the divine tribunal; those who were innocent are not examined, but condemned at once by rash men. The integrity of that one who, of all the men thus condemned in their absence, was the most vehemently accused, is afterwards vindicated before unimpeachable judges. From the decision of bishops an appeal is made to the Emperor; the Emperor is chosen judge; and the sentence of the Emperor, when pronounced, is set at naught. What was then done you have read; what is now being done you have before your eyes. If, after all that you have read, you are still in doubt, be convinced by what you see. By all means let us give up arguing from ancient manuscripts, public archives, or the acts of courts, civil or ecclesiastical. We have a greater book—the world itself. In it I read the accomplishment of that of which I read the promise in the Book

of God: “The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee: ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.” He that has not communion with this inheritance may know himself to be disinherited, whatever books he may plead to the contrary. He that assails this inheritance is plainly enough declared to be an outcast from the family of God. The question is raised as to the parties guilty of surrendering the divine books in which that inheritance is promised. Let him be believed to have delivered the testament to the flames, who is resisting the intentions of the testator. O faction of Donatus, what has the Corinthian Church done against you? In speaking of this one Church, I wish to be understood as asking the same question in regard to all similar churches remote from you. What have these churches done against you, which could not know even what you had done, or the names of the men whom you branded with condemnation? Or is it so, that because Caecilianus gave offence to Lucilla in Africa, the light of Christ is lost to the whole world?

26. Let them at last become sensible of what they have done; for in the lapse of years, by a just retribution, their work has recoiled upon themselves. Ask by what woman’s instigation Maximianus (said to be a kinsman of Donatus) withdrew himself from the communion of Primianus, and how, having gathered a faction of bishops, he pronounced sentence against Primianus in his absence, and had himself ordained as a rival bishop in his place,—precisely as Majorinus, under the influence of Lucilla, assembled a faction of bishops, and, having condemned Caecilianus in his absence, was ordained bishop in opposition to him. Do you admit, as I suppose you do, that when Primianus was delivered by the other bishops of his communion in Africa from the sentence pronounced by the faction of Maximianus, this decision was valid and sufficient? And will you refuse to admit the same in the case of Caecilianus, when he was released by the bishops of the same one Church beyond the sea from the sentence pronounced by the faction of Majorinus? Pray, my brethren, what great thing do I ask of you? What difficulty is there in comprehending what I bring before you? The African Church, if it be compared with the churches in other parts of the world, is very different from them, and is left far behind both in numbers and in influence; and even if it had retained its unity, is far

smaller when compared with the universal Church in other nations, than was the faction of Maximianus when compared with that of Primianus. I ask, however, only this—and I believe it to be just—that you give no more weight to the Council of Secundus of Tigisis, which Lucilla stirred up against Caecilianus when absent, and against an apostolic see and the whole world in communion with Caecilianus, than you give to the Council of Maximianus, which in like manner some other woman stirred up against Primianus when absent, and against the rest of the multitude throughout Africa which was in communion with him. What case could be more transparent? what demand more just?

27. You see and know all these things, and you groan over them; and yet God at the same time sees that nothing compels you to remain in such fatal and impious schism, if you would but subdue the lust of the flesh in order to win the spiritual kingdom; and in order to escape from eternal punishment, have courage to forfeit the friendship of men, whose favour will not avail at the bar of God. Go now, and take counsel together: find what you can say in reply to that which I have written. If you bring forward manuscripts on your side, we do the same; if your party say that our documents are not to be trusted, let them not take it amiss if we retort the charge. No one can erase from heaven the divine decree, no one can efface from earth the Church of God. His decree has promised the whole world, and the Church has filled it; and it includes both bad and good. On earth it loses none but the bad, and into heaven it admits none but the good.

In writing this discourse, God is my witness with what sincere love to peace and to you I have taken and used that which He has given. It shall be to you a means of correction if you be willing, and a testimony against you whether you will or not.

LETTER XLIV

(A.D. 398.)

To My Lords Most Beloved, and Brethren Worthy of All Praise, Eleusius, Glorius, and the Two Felixes, Augustin Sends Greeting.

Chap. I

1. In passing through Tubursi on my way to the church at Cirta, though pressed for time, I visited Fortunius, your bishop there, and found him to be, in truth, just such a man as you were wont most kindly to lead me to expect. When I sent him notice of your conversation with me concerning him, and expressed a desire to see him, he did not decline the visit. I therefore went to him, because I thought it due to his age that I should go to him, instead of insisting upon his first coming to me. I went, therefore, accompanied by a considerable number of persons, who, as it happened, were at that time beside me. When, however, we had taken our seats in his house, the thing becoming known, a considerable addition was made to the crowd assembled; but in that whole multitude there appeared to me to be very few who desired the matter to be discussed in a sound and profitable manner, or with the deliberation and solemnity which so great a question demands. All the others had come rather in the mood of playgoers, expecting a scene in our debates, than in Christian seriousness of spirit, seeking instruction in regard to salvation. Accordingly they could neither favour us with silence when we spoke, nor speak with care, or even with due regard to decorum and order,—excepting, as I have said, those few persons about whose pious and sincere interest in the matter there was no doubt. Everything was therefore thrown into confusion by the noise of men speaking loudly, and each according to the unchecked impulse of his own feelings; and though both Fortunius and I used entreaty and remonstrance, we utterly failed in persuading them to listen silently to what was spoken.

2. The discussion of the question was opened notwithstanding, and for some hours we persevered, speeches being delivered by each side in turn, so far as was permitted by an occasional respite from the voices of the noisy onlookers. In the beginning of the debate, perceiving that things which had been spoken were liable to be forgotten by myself, or by those about whose salvation I was deeply concerned; being desirous also that our debate should be managed with caution and self-restraint, and that both you and other brethren who were absent might be able to learn from a record what passed in the discussion, I demanded that our words should be taken down by reporters. This was for a long time resisted, either by Fortunius or by those on his side. At length, however, he agreed to it; but the reporters who were present, and were able to do the work thoroughly, declined, for some

reason unknown to me, to take notes. I urged them, that at least the brethren who accompanied me, though not so expert in the work, should take notes, and promised that I would leave the tablets on which the notes were taken in the hands of the other party. This was agreed to. Some words of mine were first taken down, and some statements on the other side were dictated and recorded. After that, the reporters, not being able to endure the disorderly interruptions vociferated by the opposing party, and the increased vehemence with which under this pressure our side maintained the debate, gave up their task. This, however, did not close the discussion, many things being still said by each as he obtained an opportunity. This discussion of the whole question, or at least so much of all that was said as I can remember, I have resolved, my beloved friends, that you shall not lose; and you may read this letter to Fortunius, that he may either confirm my statements as true, or himself inform you, without hesitation, of anything which his more accurate recollection suggests.

Chap. II

3. He was pleased to begin with commending my manner of life, which he said he had come to know through your statements (in which I am sure there was more kindness than truth), adding that he had remarked to you that I might have done well all the things which you had told him of me, if I had done them within the Church. I thereupon asked him what was the Church within which it was the duty of a man so to live; whether it was that one which, as Sacred Scripture had long foretold, was spread over the whole world, or that one which a small section of Africans, or a small part of Africa, contained. To this he at first attempted to reply, that his communion was in all parts of the earth. I asked him whether he was able to issue letters of communion, which we call regular, to places which I might select; and I affirmed, what was obvious to all, that in this way the question might be most simply settled. In the event of his agreeing to this, my intention was that we should send such letters to those churches which we both knew, on the authority of the apostles, to have been already founded in their time.

4. As the falsity of his statement, however, was apparent, a hasty retreat from it was made in a cloud of confused words, in the midst of which he

quoted the Lord’s words: “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.” When I said that these words of the Lord might also be applied by us to them, he went on to magnify the persecution which he affirmed that his party had often suffered; intending thereby to prove that his party were Christians because they endured persecution. When I was preparing, as he went on with this, to answer him from the Gospel, he himself anticipated me in bringing forward the passage in which the Lord says: “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Thanking him for the apt quotation, I immediately added that this behoved therefore to be inquired into, whether they had indeed suffered persecution for righteousness’ sake. In following up this inquiry I wished this to be ascertained, though indeed it was patent to all, whether the persecutions under Macarius fell upon them while they were within the unity of the Church, or after they had been severed from it by schism; so that those who wished to see whether they had suffered persecution for righteousness’ sake might turn rather to the prior question, whether they had done rightly in cutting themselves off from the unity of the whole world. For if they were found in this to have done wrong, it was manifest that they suffered persecution for unrighteousness’ sake rather than for righteousness’ sake, and could not therefore be numbered among those of whom it is said, “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake.” Thereupon mention was made of the surrender of the sacred books, a matter about which much more has been spoken than has ever been proved true. On our side it was said in reply, that their leaders rather than ours had been traditors; but that if they would not believe the documents with which we supported this charge, we could not be compelled to accept those which they brought forward.

Chap. III

5. Having therefore laid aside that question as one on which there was a doubt, I asked how they could justify their separation of themselves from all other Christians who had done them no wrong, who throughout the world preserved the order of succession, and were established in the most ancient churches, but had no knowledge whatever as to who were traditors in

Africa; and who assuredly could not hold communion with others than those whom they had heard of as occupying the episcopal sees. He answered that the foreign churches had done them no wrong, up to the time when they had consented to the death of those who, as he had said, had suffered in the Macarian persecution. Here I might have said that it was impossible for the innocence of the foreign churches to be affected by the offence given in the time of Macarius, seeing that it could not be proved that he had done with their sanction what he did. I preferred, however, to save time by asking whether, supposing that the foreign churches had, through the cruelties of Macarius, lost their innocence from the time in which they were said to have approved of these, it could even be proved that up to that time the Donatists had remained in unity with the Eastern churches and other parts of the world.

6. Thereupon he produced a certain volume, by which he wished to show that a Council at Sardica had sent a letter to African bishops who belonged to the party of Donatus. When this was read aloud, I heard the name Donatus among the bishops to whom the writing had been sent. I therefore insisted upon being told whether this was the Donatus from whom their faction takes its name; as it was possible that they had written to some bishop named Donatus belonging to another section [heresy], especially since in these names no mention had been made of Africa. How then, I asked, could it be proved that we must believe the Donatus here named to be the Donatist bishop, when it could not even be proved that this letter had been specially directed to bishops in Africa? For although Donatus is a common African name, there is nothing improbable in the supposition, that either some one in other countries should be found bearing an African name, or that a native of Africa should be made a bishop there. We found, moreover, no day or name of consul given in the letter, from which any certain light might have been furnished by comparison of dates. I had indeed once heard that the Arians, when they had separated from the Catholic communion, had endeavoured to ally the Donatists in Africa with themselves; and my brother Alypius recalled this to me at the time in a whisper. Having then taken up the volume itself, and glancing over the decrees of the said Council, I read that Athanasius, Catholic bishop of Alexandria, who was so conspicuous as a debater in the keen controversies

with the Arians, and Julius, bishop of the Roman Church, also a Catholic, had been condemned by that Council of Sardica; from which we were sure that it was a Council of Arians, against which heretics these Catholic bishops had contended with singular fervour. I therefore wished to take up and carry with me the volume, in order to give more pains to find out the date of the Council. He refused it, however, saying that I could get it there if I wished to study anything in it. I asked also that he would allow me to mark the volume; for I feared, I confess, lest, if perchance necessity arose for my asking to consult it, another should be substituted in its room. This also he refused.

Chap. IV

7. Thereafter he began to insist upon my answering categorically this question: Whether I thought the persecutor or the persecuted to be in the right? To which I answered, that the question was not fairly stated: it might be that both were in the wrong, or that the persecution might be made by the one who was the more righteous of the two parties; and therefore it was not always right to infer that one is on the better side because he suffers persecution, although that is almost always the case. When I perceived that he still laid great stress upon this, wishing to have the justice of the cause of his party acknowledged as beyond dispute because they had suffered persecution, I asked him whether he believed Ambrose, bishop of the Church of Milan, to be a righteous man and a Christian? He was compelled to deny expressly that that man was a Christian and a righteous man; for if he had admitted this, I would at once have objected to him that he esteemed it necessary for him to be rebaptized. When, therefore, he was compelled to pronounce concerning Ambrose that he was not a Christian nor a righteous man, I related the persecution which he endured when his church was surrounded with soldiers. I also asked whether Maximianus, who had made a schism from their party at Carthage, was in his view a righteous man and a Christian. He could not but deny this. I therefore reminded him that he had endured such persecution that his church had been razed to the foundations. By these instances I laboured to persuade him, if possible, to give up affirming that the suffering of persecution is the most infallible mark of Christian righteousness.

8. He also related that, in the infancy of their schism, his predecessors, being anxious to devise some way of hushing up the fault of Caecilianus, lest a schism should take place, had appointed over the people belonging to his communion in Carthage an interim bishop before Majorinus was ordained in opposition to Caecilianus. He alleged that this interim bishop was murdered in his own meeting house by our party. This, I confess, I had never heard before, though so many charges brought by them against us have been refuted and disproved, while by us greater and more numerous crimes have been alleged against them. After having narrated this story, he began again to insist on my answering whether in this case I thought the murderer or the victim the more righteous man; as if he had already proved that the event had taken place as he had stated. I therefore said that we must first ascertain the truth of the story, for we ought not to believe without examination all that is said: and that even were it true, it was possible either that both were equally bad, or that one who was bad had caused the death of another yet worse than himself. For, in truth, it is possible that his guilt is more heinous who rebaptizes the whole man than his who kills the body only.

9. After this there was no occasion for the question which he afterwards put to me. He affirmed that even a bad man should not be killed by Christians and righteous men; as if we called those who in the Catholic Church do such things righteous men: a statement, moreover, which it is more easy for them to affirm than to prove to us, so long as they themselves, with few exceptions, bishops, presbyters, and clergy of all kinds, go on gathering mobs of most infatuated men, and causing, wherever they are able, so many violent massacres, and devastations to the injury not of Catholics only, but sometimes even of their own partisans. In spite of these facts, Fortunius, affecting ignorance of the most villanous doings, which were better known by him than by me, insisted upon my giving an example of a righteous man putting even a bad man to death. This was, of course, not relevant to the matter in hand; for I conceded that wherever such crimes were committed by men having the name of Christians, they were not the actions of good men. Nevertheless, in order to show him what was the true question before us, I answered by inquiring whether Elijah seemed to him to be a righteous man; to which he could not but assent. Thereupon I reminded him how

many false prophets Elijah slew with his own hand. He saw plainly herein, as indeed he could not but see, that such things were then lawful to righteous men. For they did these things as prophets guided by the Spirit and sanctioned by the authority of God, who knows infallibly to whom it may be even a benefit to be put to death. He therefore required me to show him one who, being a righteous man, had in the New Testament times put any one, even a criminal and impious man, to death.

Chap. V

10. I then returned to the argument used in my former letter, in which I laboured to show that it was not right either for us to reproach them with atrocities of which some of their party had been guilty, or for them to reproach us if any such deeds were found by them to have been done on our side. For I granted that no example could be produced from the New Testament of a righteous man putting any one to death; but I insisted that by the example of our Lord Himself, it could be proved that the wicked had been tolerated by the innocent. For His own betrayer, who had already received the price of His blood, He suffered to remain undistinguished from the innocent who were with Him, even up to that last kiss of peace. He did not conceal from the disciples the fact that in the midst of them was one capable of such a crime; and, nevertheless, He administered to them all alike, without excluding the traitor, the first sacrament of His body and blood. When almost all felt the force of this argument, Fortunius attempted to meet it by saying, that before the Lord's Passion that communion with a wicked man did no harm to the apostles, because they had not as yet the baptism of Christ, but the baptism of John only. When he said this, I asked him to explain how it was written that Jesus baptized more disciples than John, though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples, that is to say, baptized by means of His disciples? How could they give what they had not received (a question often used by the Donatists themselves)? Did Christ baptize with the baptism of John? I was prepared to ask many other questions in connection with this opinion of Fortunius; such as—how John himself was interrogated as to the Lord's baptizing, and replied that He had the bride, and was the Bridegroom? Was it, then, lawful for the Bridegroom to baptize with the baptism of him who was but a friend or servant? Again,

how could they receive the Eucharist if not previously baptized? or how could the Lord in that case have said in reply to Peter, who was willing to be wholly washed by Him, “He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit”? For perfect cleansing is by the baptism, not of John, but of the Lord, if the person receiving it be worthy; if, however, he be unworthy, the sacraments abide in him, not to his salvation, but to his perdition. When I was about to put these questions, Fortunius himself saw that he ought not to have mooted the subject of the baptism of the disciples of the Lord.

11. From this we passed to something else, many on both sides discoursing to the best of their ability. Among other things it was alleged that our party was still intending to persecute them; and he [Fortunius] said that he would like to see how I would act in the event of such persecution, whether I would consent to such cruelty, or withhold from it all countenance. I said that God saw my heart, which was unseen by them; also that they had hitherto had no ground for apprehending such persecution, which if it did take place would be the work of bad men, who were, however, not so bad as some of their own party; but that it was not incumbent on us to withdraw ourselves from communion with the Catholic Church on the ground of anything done against our will, and even in spite of our opposition (if we had an opportunity of testifying against it), seeing that we had learned that toleration for the sake of peace which the apostle prescribes in the words: “Forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” I affirmed that they had not preserved this peace and forbearance, when they had caused a schism, within which, moreover, the more moderate among them now tolerated more serious evils, lest that which was already a fragment should be broken again, although they did not, in order to preserve unity, consent to exercise forbearance in smaller things. I also said that in the ancient economy the peace of unity and forbearance had not been so fully declared and commended as it is now by the example of the Lord and the charity of the New Testament; and yet prophets and holy men were wont to protest against the sins of the people, without endeavouring to separate themselves from the unity of the Jewish people, and from communion in partaking along with them of the sacraments then appointed.

12. After that, mention was made, I know not in what connection, of Genethlius of blessed memory, the predecessor of Aurelius in the see of Carthage, because he had suppressed some edict granted against the Donatists, and had not suffered it to be carried into effect. They were all praising and commending him with the utmost kindness. I interrupted their commendatory speeches with the remark that, for all this, if Genethlius himself had fallen into their hands, it would have been declared necessary to baptize him a second time. (We were by this time all standing, as the time of our going away was at hand.) On this the old man said plainly, that a rule had now been made, according to which every believer who went over from us to them must be baptized; but he said this with the most manifest reluctance and sincere regret. When he himself most frankly bewailed many of the evil deeds of his party, making evident, as was further proved by the testimony of the whole community, how far he was from sharing in such transactions, and told us what he was wont to say in mild expostulation to those of his own party; when also I had quoted the words of Ezekiel—”As the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth it shall die”—it which it is written that the son’s fault is not to be reckoned to his father, nor the father’s fault reckoned to his son, it was agreed by all that in such discussions the excesses of bad men ought not to be brought forward by either party against the other. There remained, therefore, only the question as to schism. I therefore exhorted him again and again that he should with tranquil and undisturbed mind join me in an effort to bring to a satisfactory end, by diligent research, the examination of so important a matter. When he kindly replied that I myself sought this with a single eye, but that others who were on my side were averse to such examination of the truth, I left him with this promise, that I would bring to him more of my colleagues, ten at least, who desire this question to be sifted with the same good-will and calmness and pious care which I saw that he had discovered and now commended in myself. He gave me a similar promise regarding a like number of his colleagues.

Chap. VI

13. Wherefore I exhort you, and by the blood of the Lord implore you, to put him in mind of his promise, and to insist urgently that what has been

begun, and is now, as you see, nearly finished, may be concluded. For, in my opinion, you will have difficulty in finding among your bishops another whose judgment and feelings are so sound as we have seen that old man's to be. The next day he came to me himself, and we began to discuss the matter again. I could not, however, remain long with him, as the ordination of a bishop required my departing from the place. I had already sent a messenger to the chief man of the Coelicolae, of whom I had heard that he had introduced a new baptism among them, and had by this impiety led many astray, intending, so far as my limited time permitted, to confer with him. Fortunius, when he learned that he was coming, perceiving that I was to be otherwise engaged, and having himself some other duty calling him from home, bade me a kind and friendly farewell.

14. It seems to me that if we would avoid the attendance of a noisy crowd, rather hindering than helping the debate, and if we wish to complete by the Lord's help so great a work begun in a spirit of unfeigned good-will and peace, we ought to meet in some small village in which neither party has a church, and which is inhabited by persons belonging to both churches, such as Titia. Let this or any other such place be agreed upon in the region of Tubursi or of Thagaste, and let us take care to have the canonical books at hand for reference. Let any other documents be brought thither which either party may judge useful; and laying all other things aside, uninterrupted, if it please God, by other cares, devoting our time for as many days as we can to this one work, and each imploring in private the Lord's guidance, we may, by the help of Him to whom Christian peace is most sweet, bring to a happy termination the inquiry which has been in such a good spirit opened. Do not fail to write in reply what you or Fortunius think of this.

LETTER XLV

A short letter to Paulinus and Therasia repeating the request made in Letter XLII., and again complaining of the long silence of his friend.

LETTER XLVI

(A.D. 398.)

A letter propounding several cases of conscience.

To My Beloved and Venerable Father the Bishop Augustin, Publicola Sends Greeting.

It is written: “Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.” I have therefore judged it right to “seek the law at the mouth of the priest” in regard to a certain case which I shall state in this letter, desiring at the same time to be instructed in regard to several other matters. I have distinguished the several questions by stating each in a separate paragraph, and I beg you kindly to give an answer to each in order.

I. In the country of the Arzuges it is customary, as I have heard, for the barbarians to take an oath, swearing by their false gods, in the presence of the decurion stationed on the frontier or of the tribune, when they have come under engagement to carry baggage to any part, or to protect the crops from depredation; and when the decurion certifies in writing that this oath has been taken, the owners or farmers of land employ them as watchmen of their crops; or travellers who have occasion to pass through their country hire them, as if assured of their now being trustworthy. Now a doubt has arisen in my mind whether the landowner who thus employs a barbarian, of whose fidelity he is persuaded in consequence of such an oath, does not make himself and the crops committed to that man’s charge to share the defilement of that sinful oath; and so also with the traveller who may employ his services. I should mention, however, that in both cases the barbarian is rewarded for his services with money. Nevertheless in both transactions there comes in, besides the pecuniary remuneration, this oath before the decurion or tribune involving mortal sin. I am concerned as to whether this sin does not defile either him who accepts the oath of the barbarian, or at least the things which are committed to the barbarian’s keeping. For whatever other terms be in the arrangement, even such as the payment of gold, and giving of hostages in security, nevertheless this sinful oath has been a real part of the transaction. Be pleased to resolve my doubts definitely and positively. For if your answer indicate that you are in doubt yourself, I may fall into greater perplexity than before.

II. I have also heard that my own land-stewards receive from the barbarians hired to protect the crops an oath in which they appeal to their false gods. Does not this oath so defile these crops, that if a Christian uses them or takes the money realized by their sale, he is himself defiled? Do answer this.

III. Again, I have heard from one person that no oath was taken by the barbarian in making agreement with my steward, but another has said to me that such an oath was taken. Suppose now that the latter statement were false, tell me if I am bound to forbear from using these crops, or the money obtained for them, merely because I have heard the statement made, according to the scriptural rule: “If any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not, for his sake that showed it.” Is this case parallel to the case of meat offered to idols; and if it is, what am I to do with the crops, or with the price of them?

IV. In this case ought I to examine both him who said that no oath was taken before my steward, and the other who said that the oath was taken, and bring witnesses to prove which of the two spoke truly, leaving the crops or their price untouched so long as there is uncertainty in the matter?

V. If the barbarian who swears this sinful oath were to require of the steward or of the tribune stationed on the frontier, that he, being a Christian, should give him assurance of his faithfulness to his part of the engagement about watching the crops, by the same oath which he himself has taken, involving mortal sin, does the oath pollute only that Christian man? Does it not also pollute the things regarding which he took the oath? Or if a pagan who has authority on the frontier thus give to a barbarian this oath in token of acting faithfully to him, does he not involve in the defilement of his own sin those in whose interest he swears? If I send a man to the Arzuges, is it lawful for him to take from a barbarian that sinful oath? Is not the Christian who takes such an oath from him also defiled by his sin?

VI. Is it lawful for a Christian to use wheat or beans from the threshing-floor, wine or oil from the press, if, with his knowledge, some part of what has been taken thence was offered in sacrifice to a false god?

VII. May a Christian use for any purpose wood which he knows to have been taken from one of their idols’ groves?

VIII. If a Christian buy in the market meat which has not been offered to idols, and have in his mind conflicting doubts as to whether it has been offered to idols or not, but eventually adopt the opinion that it was not, does he sin if he partake of this meat?

IX. If a man does an action good in itself, about which he has some misgivings as to whether it is good or bad, can it be reckoned as a sin to him if he does it believing it to be good, although formerly he may have thought it bad?

X. If any one has falsely said that some meat has been offered to idols, and afterwards confess that it was a falsehood, and this confession is believed, may a Christian use the meat regarding which he heard that statement, or sell it, and use the price obtained?

XI. If a Christian on a journey, overpowered by want, having fasted for one, two, or several days, so that he can no longer endure the privation, should by chance, when in the last extremity of hunger, and when he sees death close at hand, find food placed in an idol’s temple, where there is no man near him, and no other food to be found; whether should he die or partake of that food?

XII. If a Christian is on the point of being killed by a barbarian or a Roman, ought he to kill the aggressor to save his own life? or ought he even, without killing the assailant, to drive him back and fight with him, seeing it has been said, “Resist not evil”?

XIII. May a Christian put a wall for defence against an enemy round his property? and if some use that wall as a place from which to fight and kill the enemy, is the Christian the cause of the homicide?

XIV. May a Christian drink at a fountain or well into which anything from a sacrifice has been cast? May he drink from a well found in a deserted temple? If there be in a temple where an idol is worshipped a well or fountain which nothing has defiled, may he draw water thence, and drink of it?

XV. May a Christian use baths in places in which sacrifice is offered to images? May he use baths which are used by pagans on a feastday, either while they are there or after they have left?

XVI. May a Christian use the same sedanchair as has been used by pagans coming down from their idols on a feastday, if in that chair they have performed any part of their idolatrous service, and the Christian is aware of this?

XVII. If a Christian, being the guest of another, has forborne from using meat set before him, concerning which it was said to him that it had been offered in sacrifice, but afterwards by some accident finds the same meat for sale and buys it, or has it presented to him at another man's table, and then eat of it, without knowing that it is the same, is he guilty of sin?

XVIII. May a Christian buy and use vegetables or fruit which he knows to have been brought from the garden of a temple or of the priests of an idol? That you may not be put to trouble in searching the Scriptures concerning the oath of which I have spoken and the idols, I resolved to set before you those texts which, by the Lord's help, I have found; but if you have found anything better or more to the purpose in Scripture, be so good as let me know. For example, when Laban said to Jacob, "The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor judge betwixt us," Scripture does not declare which god is meant. Again, when Abimelech came to Isaac, and he and those who were with him sware to Isaac, we are not told what kind of oath it was. As to the idols, Gideon was commanded by the Lord to make a whole burnt-offering of the bullock which he killed. And in the book of Joshua the son of Nun, it is said of Jericho that all the silver, and gold, and brass should be brought into the treasures of the Lord, and the things found in the accursed city were called sacred. Also we read in Deuteronomy: "Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it."

May the Lord preserve thee. I salute thee. Pray for me.

LETTER XLVII

(A.D. 398.)

To the Honourable Publicola, My Much Beloved Son, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Your perplexities have, since I learned them by your letter, become mine also, not because all those things by which you tell me that you are disturbed, disturb my mind: but I have been much perplexed, I confess, by the question how your perplexities were to be removed; especially since you require me to give a conclusive answer, lest you should fall into greater doubts than you had before you applied to me to have them resolved. For I see that I cannot give this, since, though I may write things which appear to me most certain, if I do not convince you, you must be beyond question more at a loss than before; and though it is in my power to use arguments which weigh with myself, I may fail of convincing another by these. However, lest I should refuse the small service which your love claims, I have resolved after some consideration to write in reply.

2. One of your doubts is as to using the services of a man who has guaranteed his fidelity by swearing by his false gods. In this matter I beg you to consider whether, in the event of a man failing to keep his word after having pledged himself by such an oath, you would not regard him as guilty of a twofold sin. For if he kept the engagement which he had confirmed by this oath, he would be pronounced guilty in this only, that he swore by such deities; but no one would justly blame him for keeping his engagement. But in the case supposed, seeing that he both swore by those whom he should not worship, and did, notwithstanding his promise, what he should not have done, he was guilty of two sins: whence it is obvious that in using, not for an evil work, but for some good and lawful end, the service of a man whose fidelity is known to have been confirmed by an oath in the name of false gods, one participates, not in the sin of swearing by the false gods, but in the good faith with which he keeps his promise. The faith which I here speak of as kept is not that on account of which those who are baptized in Christ are called faithful: that is entirely different and far removed from the faith desiderated in regard to the arrangements and compacts of men. Nevertheless it is, beyond all doubt, worse to swear falsely by the true God than to swear truly by the false gods; for the greater the holiness of that by which we swear, the greater is the sin of perjury. It is therefore a different question whether he is not guilty who requires another to pledge himself by taking an oath in the name of his gods, seeing that he worships false gods. In answering this question, we may accept as decisive those examples

which you yourself quoted of Laban and of Abimelech (if Abimelech did swear by his gods, as Laban swore by the god of Nahor). This is, as I have said, another question, and one which would perchance perplex me, were it not for those examples of Isaac and Jacob, to which, for aught I know, others might be added. It may be that some scruple might yet be suggested by the precept in the New Testament, “Swear not at all;” words which were in my opinion spoken, not because it is a sin to swear a true oath, but because it is a heinous sin to forswear oneself: from which crime our Lord would have us keep at a great distance, when He charged us not to swear at all. I know, however, that our opinion is different: wherefore it should not be discussed at present; let us rather treat of that about which you have thought of asking my advice. On the same ground on which you forbear from swearing yourself, you may, if such be your opinion, regard it as forbidden to exact an oath from another, although it is expressly said, Swear not; but I do not remember reading anywhere in Holy Scripture that we are not to take another’s oath. The question whether we ought to take advantage of the concord which is established between other parties by their exchange of oaths is entirely different. If we answer this in the negative, I know not whether we could find any place on earth in which we could live. For not only on the frontier, but throughout all the provinces, the security of peace rests on the oaths of barbarians. And from this it would follow, that not only the crops which are guarded by men who have sworn fidelity in the name of their false gods, but all things which enjoy the protection secured by the peace which a similar oath has ratified, are defiled. If this be admitted by you to be a complete absurdity, dismiss with it your doubts on the cases which you named.

3. Again, if from the threshing-floor or wine-press of a Christian anything be taken, with his knowledge, to be offered to false gods, he is guilty in permitting this to be done, if it be in his power to prevent it. If he finds that it has been done, or has not the power to prevent it, he uses without scruple the rest of the grain or wine, as uncontaminated, just as we use fountains from which we know that water has been taken to be used in idol-worship. The same principle decides the question about baths. For we have no scruple about inhaling the air into which we know that the smoke from all the altars and incense of idolaters ascends. From which it is manifest, that

the thing forbidden is our devoting anything to the honour of the false gods, or appearing to do this by so acting as to encourage in such worship those who do not know our mind, although in our heart we despise their idols. And when temples, idols, groves, etc., are thrown down by permission from the authorities, although our taking part in this work is a clear proof of our not honouring, but rather abhorring, these things, we must nevertheless forbear from appropriating any of them to our own personal and private use; so that it may be manifest that in overthrowing these we are influenced, not by greed, but by piety. When, however, the spoils of these places are applied to the benefit of the community or devoted to the service of God, they are dealt with in the same manner as the men themselves when they are turned from impiety and sacrilege to the true religion. We understand this to be the will of God from the examples quoted by yourself: the grove of the false gods from which He commanded wood to be taken [by Gideon] for the burnt-offering; and Jericho, of which all the gold, silver, and brass was to be brought into the Lord's treasury. Hence also the precept in Deuteronomy: "Thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God. Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou become a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing." From which it appears plainly, that either the appropriation of such spoils to their own private use was absolutely forbidden, or they were forbidden to carry anything of that kind into their own houses with the intention of giving to it honour; for then this would be an abomination and accursed in the sight of God; whereas the honour impiously given to such idols is, by their public destruction, utterly abolished.

4. As to meats offered to idols, I assure you we have no duty beyond observing what the apostle taught concerning them. Study, therefore, his words on the subject, which, if they were obscure to you, I would explain as well as I could. He does not sin who, unwittingly, afterwards partakes of food which he formerly refused because it had been offered to an idol. A kitchen-herb, or any other fruit of the ground, belongs to Him who created it; for "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," and "every creature of God is good." But if that which the earth has borne is consecrated or

offered to an idol, then we must reckon it among the things offered to idols. We must beware lest, in pronouncing that we ought not to eat the fruits of a garden belonging to an idol-temple, we be involved in the inference that it was wrong for the apostle to take food in Athens, since that city belonged to Minerva, and was consecrated to her as the guardian deity. The same answer I would give as to the well or fountain enclosed in a temple, though my scruples would be somewhat more awakened if some part of the sacrifices be thrown into the said well or fountain. But the case is, as I have said before, exactly parallel to our using of the air which receives the smoke of these sacrifices; or, if this be thought to make a difference, that the sacrifice, the smoke whereof mingles with the air, is not offered to the air itself, but to some idol or false god, whereas sometimes offerings are cast into the water with the intention of sacrificing to the waters themselves, it is enough to say that the same principle would preclude us from using the light of the sun, because wicked men continually worship that luminary wherever they are tolerated in doing so. Sacrifices are offered to the winds, which we nevertheless use for our convenience, although they seem, as it were, to inhale and swallow greedily the smoke of these sacrifices. If any one be in doubt regarding meat, whether it has been offered to an idol or not, and the fact be that it has not, when he eats that meat under the impression that it has not been offered to an idol, he by no means does wrong; because neither in fact, nor now in his judgment, is it food offered to an idol, although he formerly thought it was. For surely it is lawful to correct false impressions by others that are true. But if any one believes that to be good which is evil, and acts accordingly, he sins in entertaining that belief; and these are all sins of ignorance, in which one thinks that to be right which it is wrong for him to do.

5. As to killing others in order to defend one’s own life, I do not approve of this, unless one happen to be a soldier or public functionary acting, not for himself, but in defence of others or of the city in which he resides, if he act according to the commission lawfully given him, and in the manner becoming his office. When, however, men are prevented, by being alarmed, from doing wrong, it may be said that a real service is done to themselves. The precept, “Resist not evil,” was given to prevent us from taking pleasure in revenge, in which the mind is gratified by the sufferings of others, but not

to make us neglect the duty of restraining men from sin. From this it follows that one is not guilty of homicide, because he has put up a wall round his estate, if any one is killed by the wall falling upon him when he is throwing it down. For a Christian is not guilty of homicide though his ox may gore or his horse kick a man, so that he dies. On such a principle, the oxen of a Christian should have no horns, and his horses no hoofs, and his dogs no teeth. On such a principle, when the Apostle Paul took care to inform the chief captain that an ambush was laid for him by certain desperadoes, and received in consequence an armed escort, if the villains who plotted his death had thrown themselves on the weapons of the soldiers, Paul would have had to acknowledge the shedding of their blood as a crime with which he was chargeable. God forbid that we should be blamed for accidents which, without our desire, happen to others through things done by us or found in our possession, which are in themselves good and lawful. In that event, we ought to have no iron implements for the house or the field, lest some one should by them lose his own life or take another’s; no tree or rope on our premises, lest some one hang himself; no window in our house, lest some one throw himself down from it. But why mention more in a list which must be interminable? For what good and lawful thing is there in use among men which may not become chargeable with being an instrument of destruction?

6. I have now only to notice (unless I am mistaken) the case which you mentioned of a Christian on a journey overcome by the extremity of hunger; whether, if he could find nothing to eat but meat placed in an idol’s temple, and there was no man near to relieve him, it would be better for him to die of starvation than to take that food for his nourishment? Since in this question it is not assumed that the food thus found was offered to the idol (for it might have been left by mistake or designedly by persons who, on a journey, had turned aside there to take refreshment; or it might have been put there for some other purpose), I answer briefly thus: Either it is certain that this food was offered to the idol, or it is certain that it was not, or neither of these things is known. If it is certain, it is better to reject it with Christian fortitude. In either of the other alternatives, it may be used for his necessity without any conscientious scruple.

LETTER XLVIII

(A.D. 398.)

To My Lord Eudoxius, My Brother and Fellow-Presbyter, Beloved and Longed For, and to the Brethren Who are with Him, Augustin and the Brethren Who are Here Send Greeting.

1. When we reflect upon the undisturbed rest which you enjoy in Christ, we also, although engaged in labours manifold and arduous, find rest with you, beloved. We are one body under one Head, so that you share our toils, and we share your repose: for "if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it." Therefore we earnestly exhort and beseech you, by the deep humility and most compassionate majesty of Christ, to be mindful of us in your holy intercessions; for we believe you to be more lively and undistracted in prayer than we can be, whose prayers are often marred and weakened by the darkness and confusion arising from secular occupations: not that we have these on our own account, but we can scarcely breathe for the pressure of such duties imposed upon us by men compelling us, so to speak, to go with them one mile, with whom we are commanded by our Lord to go farther than they ask. We believe, nevertheless, that He before whom the sighing of the prisoner comes will look on us persevering in the ministry in which He was pleased to put us, with promise of reward, and, by the assistance of your prayers, will set us free from all distress.

2. We exhort you in the Lord, brethren, to be stedfast in your purpose, and persevere to the end; and if the Church, your Mother, calls you to active service, guard against accepting it, on the one hand, with too eager elation of spirit, or declining it, on the other, under the solicitations of indolence; and obey God with a lowly heart, submitting yourselves in meekness to Him who governs you, who will guide the meek in judgment, and will teach them His way. Do not prefer your own ease to the claims of the Church; for if no good men were willing to minister to her in her bringing forth of her spiritual children, the beginning of your own spiritual life would have been impossible. As men must keep the way carefully in walking between fire and water, so as to be neither burned nor drowned, so must we order our steps between the pinnacle of pride and the whirlpool of indolence; as it is

written, “declining neither to the right hand nor to the left.” For some, while guarding too anxiously against being lifted up and raised, as it were, to the dangerous heights on the right hand, have fallen and been engulphed in the depths on the left. Again, others, while turning too eagerly from the danger on the left hand of being immersed in the torpid effeminacy of inaction, are, on the other hand, so destroyed and consumed by the extravagance of self-conceit, that they vanish into ashes and smoke. See then, beloved, that in your love of ease you restrain yourselves from all mere earthly delight, and remember that there is no place where the fowler who fears lest we fly back to God may not lay snares for us; let us account him whose captives we once were to be the sworn enemy of all good men; let us never consider ourselves in possession of perfect peace until iniquity shall have ceased, and “judgment shall have returned unto righteousness.”

3. Moreover, when you are exerting yourselves with energy and fervour, whatever you do, whether labouring diligently in prayer, fasting, or almsgiving, or distributing to the poor, or forgiving injuries, “as God also for Christ’s sake hath forgiven us,” or subduing evil habits, and chastening the body and bringing it into subjection, or bearing tribulation, and especially bearing with one another in love (for what can he bear who is not patient with his brother?), or guarding against the craft and wiles of the tempter, and by the shield of faith averting and extinguishing his fiery darts, or “singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts,” or with voices in harmony with your hearts;—whatever you do, I say, “do all to the glory of God,” who “worketh all in all,” and be so “fervent in Spirit” that your “soul may make her boast in the Lord.” Such is the course of those who walk in the “straight way,” whose “eyes are ever upon the Lord, for He shall pluck their feet out of the net.” Such a course is neither interrupted by business, nor benumbed by leisure, neither boisterous nor languid, neither presumptuous nor desponding, neither reckless nor supine. “These things do, and the God of peace shall be with you.”

4. Let your charity prevent you from accounting me forward in wishing to address you by letter. I remind you of these things, not because I think you come short in them, but because I thought that I would be much commended unto God by you, if, in doing your duty to Him, you do it with

a remembrance of my exhortation. For good report, even before the coming of the brethren Eustasius and Andreas from you, had brought to us, as they did, the good savour of Christ, which is yielded by your holy conversation. Of these, Eustasius has gone before us to that land of rest, on the shore of which beat no rude waves such as those which encompass your island home, and in which he does not regret Caprera, for the homely raiment with which it furnished him he wears no more.

LETTER XLIX

This letter, written to Honoratus, a Donatist bishop, contains nothing on the Donatist schism which is not already found in Letters XLIII. and XLIV., or supplied in Letter LIII.

LETTER L

(A.D. 399.)

To the Magistrates and Leading Men, or Elders, of the Colony of Suffectum, Bishop Augustin Sends Greeting.

Earth reels and heaven trembles at the report of the enormous crime and unprecedented cruelty which has made your streets and temples run red with blood, and ring with the shouts of murderers. You have buried the laws of Rome in a dishonoured grave, and trampled in scorn the reverence due to equitable enactments. The authority of emperors you neither respect nor fear. In your city there has been shed the innocent blood of sixty of our brethren; and whoever approved himself most active in the massacre, was rewarded with your applause, and with a high place in your Council. Come now, let us arrive at the chief pretext for this outrage. If you say that Hercules belonged to you, by all means we will make good your loss: we have metals at hand, and there is no lack of stone; nay, we have several varieties of marble, and a host of artisans. Fear not, your god is in the hands of his makers, and shall be with all diligence hewn out and polished and ornamented. We will give in addition some red ochre, to make him blush in such a way as may well harmonize with your devotions. Or if you say that the Hercules must be of your own making, we will raise a subscription in pennies, and buy a god from a workman of your own for you. Only do you at the same time make restitution to us; and as your god Hercules is given back to you, let the lives of the many men whom your violence has destroyed be given back to us.

LETTER LI

(A.D. 399 OR 400.)

An invitation to Crispinus, Donatist bishop at Calama, to discuss the whole question of the Donatist schism.

(No salutation at the beginning of the letter.)

1. I have adopted this plan in regard to the heading of this letter, because your party are offended by the humility which I have shown in the salutations prefixed to others. I might be supposed to have done it as an insult to you, were it not that I trust that you will do the same in your reply to me. Why should I say much regarding your promise at Carthage, and my urgency to have it fulfilled? Let the manner in which we then acted to each other be forgotten with the past, lest it should obstruct future conference. Now, unless I am mistaken, there is, by the Lord's help, no obstacle in the way: we are both in Numidia, and located at no great distance from each other. I have heard it said that you are still willing to examine, in debate with me, the question which separates us from communion with each other. See how promptly all ambiguities may be cleared away: send me an answer to this letter if you please, and perhaps that may be enough, not only for us, but for those also who desire to hear us; or if it is not, let us exchange letters again and again until the discussion is exhausted. For what greater benefit could be secured to us by the comparative nearness of the towns which we inhabit? I have resolved to debate with you in no other way than by letters, in order both to prevent anything that is said from escaping from our memory, and to secure that others interested in the question, but unable to be present at a debate, may not forfeit the instruction. You are accustomed, not with any intention of falsehood, but by mistake, to reproach us with charges such as may suit your purpose, concerning past transactions, which we repudiate as untrue. Therefore, if you please, let us weigh the question in the light of the present, and let the past alone. You are doubtless aware

that in the Jewish dispensation the sin of idolatry was committed by the people, and once the book of the prophet of God was burned by a defiant king; the punishment of the sin of schism would not have been more severe than that with which these two were visited, had not the guilt of it been greater. You remember, of course, how the earth opening swallowed up alive the leaders of a schism, and fire from heaven breaking forth destroyed their accomplices. Neither the making and worshipping of an idol, nor the burning of the Holy Book, was deemed worthy of such punishment.

2. You are wont to reproach us with a crime, not proved against us, indeed, though proved beyond question against some of your own party,—the crime, namely, of yielding up, through fear of persecution, the Scriptures to be burned. Let me ask, therefore, why you have received back men whom you condemned for the crime of schism by the “unerring voice of your plenary Council” (I quote from the record), and replaced them in the same episcopal sees as they were in at the time when you passed sentence against them? I refer to Felicianus of Musti and Praetextatus of Assuri. These were not, as you would have the ignorant believe, included among those to whom your Council appointed and intimated a certain time, after the lapse of which, if they had not returned to your communion, the sentence would become final; but they were included among the others whom you condemned, without delay, on the day on which you gave to some, as I have said, a respite. I can prove this, if you deny it. Your own Council is witness. We have also the proconsular Acts, in which you have not once, but often, affirmed this. Provide, therefore, some other line of defence if you can, lest, denying what I can prove, you cause loss of time. If, then, Felicianus and Praetextatus were innocent, why were they thus condemned? If they were guilty, why were they thus restored? If you prove them to have been innocent, can you object to our believing that it was possible for innocent men, falsely charged with being traditors, to be condemned by a much smaller number of your predecessors, if it is found possible for innocent men, falsely charged with being schismatics, to be condemned by three hundred and ten of their successors, whose decision is magniloquently described as proceeding from “the unerring voice of a plenary Council”? If, however, you prove them to have been justly condemned, what can you plead in defence of their being restored to office in the same episcopal sees,

unless, magnifying the importance and benefit of peace, you maintain that even such things as these should be tolerated in order to preserve unbroken the bond of unity? Would to God that you would urge this plea, not with the lips only, but with the whole heart! You could not fail then to perceive that no calumnies whatever could justify the breaking up of the peace of Christ throughout the world, if it is lawful in Africa for men, once condemned for impious schism, to be restored to the same office which they held, rather than break up the peace of Donatus and his party.

3. Again, you are wont to reproach us with persecuting you by the help of the civil power. In regard to this, I do not draw an argument either from the demerit involved in the enormity of so great an impiety, nor from the Christian meekness moderating the severity of our measures. I take up this position: if this be a crime, why have you harshly persecuted the Maximianists by the help of judges appointed by those emperors whose spiritual birth by the gospel was due to our Church? Why have you driven them, by the din of controversy, the authority of edicts, and the violence of soldiery, from those buildings for worship which they possessed, and in which they were when they seceded from you? The wrongs endured by them in that struggle in every place are attested by the existing traces of events so recent. Documents declare the orders given. The deeds done are notorious throughout regions in which also the sacred memory of your leader Optatus is mentioned with honour.

4. Again, you are wont to say that we have not the baptism of Christ, and that beyond your communion it is not to be found. On this I would enter into a more lengthened argument; but in dealing with you this is not necessary, seeing that, along with Felicianus and Praetextatus, you admitted also the baptism of the Maximianists as valid. For all whom these bishops baptized so long as they were in communion with Maximianus, while you were doing your utmost in a protracted contest in the civil courts to expel these very men [Felicianus and Praetextatus] from their churches, as the Acts testify,—all those, I say, whom they baptized during that time, they now have in fellowship with them and with you; and though these were baptized by them when excommunicated and in the guilt of schism, not only in cases of extremity through dangerous sickness, but also at the Easter

services, in the large number of churches belonging to their cities, and in these important cities themselves,—in the case of none of them has the rite of baptism been repeated. And I wish you could prove that those whom Felicianus and Praetextatus had baptized, as it were, in vain, when they were excommunicated and in the guilt of schism, were satisfactorily baptized again by them when they were restored. For if the renewal of baptism was necessary for the people, the renewal of ordination was not less necessary for the bishops. For they had forfeited their episcopal office by leaving you, if they could not baptize beyond your communion; because, if they had not forfeited their episcopal office by leaving you, they could still baptize. But if they had forfeited their episcopal office, they should have received ordination when they returned, so that what they had lost might be restored. Let not this, however, alarm you. As it is certain that they returned with the same standing as bishops with which they had gone forth from you, so is it also certain that they brought back with themselves to your communion, without any repetition of their baptism, all those whom they had baptized in the schism of Maximianus.

5. How can we weep enough when we see the baptism of the Maximianists acknowledged by you, and the baptism of the Church universal despised? Whether it was with or without hearing their defence, whether it was justly or unjustly, that you condemned Felicianus and Praetextatus, I do not ask; but tell me what bishop of the Corinthian Church ever defended himself at your bar, or received sentence from you? or what bishop of the Galatians has done so, or of the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Thessalonians, or of any of the other cities included in the promise: “All the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee”? Yet you accept the baptism of the former, while that of the latter is despised; whereas baptism belongs neither to the one nor to the other, but to Him of whom it was said: “This same is He that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” I do not, however, dwell on this in the meantime: take notice of the things which are beside us—behold what might make an impression even on the blind! Where do we find the baptism which you acknowledge? With those, forsooth, whom you have condemned, but not with those who were never even tried at your bar!—with those who were denounced by name, and cast forth from you for the crime of schism, but not with those who, unknown to you, and dwelling in

remote lands, never were accused or condemned by you!—with those who are but a fraction of the inhabitants of a fragment of Africa, but not with those from whose country the gospel first came to Africa! Why should I add to your burden? Let me have an answer to these things. Look to the charge made by your Council against the Maximianists as guilty of impious schism: look to the persecutions by the civil courts to which you appealed against them: look to the fact that you restored some of them without re-ordination, and accepted their baptism as valid: and answer, if you can, whether it is in your power to hide, even from the ignorant, the question why you have separated yourselves from the whole world, in a schism much more heinous than that which you boast of having condemned in the Maximianists? May the peace of Christ triumph in your heart! Then all shall be well.

LETTER LII

This letter to his kinsman Severinus, exhorting him to withdraw from the Donatists, contains no new argument.

LETTER LIII

(A.D. 400.)

To Generosus, Our Most Loved and Honourable Brother, Fortunatus, Alypius, and Augustin Send Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. Since you were pleased to acquaint us with the letter sent to you by a Donatist presbyter, although, with the spirit of a true Catholic, you regarded it with contempt, nevertheless, to aid you in seeking his welfare if his folly be not incurable, we beg you to forward to him the following reply. He wrote that an angel had enjoined him to declare to you the episcopal succession of the Christianity of your town; to you, forsooth, who hold the Christianity not of your own town only, nor of Africa only, but of the whole world, the Christianity which has been published, and is now published to all nations. This proves that they think it a small matter that they themselves are not ashamed of being cut off, and are taking no measures, while they

may, to be engrafted anew; they are not content unless they do their utmost to cut others off, and bring them to share their own fate, as withered branches fit for the flames. Wherefore, even if you had yourself been visited by that angel whom he affirms to have appeared to him,—a statement which we regard as a cunning fiction; and if the angel had said to you the very words which he, on the warrant of the alleged command, repeated to you,—even in that case it would have been your duty to remember the words of the apostle: “Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” For to you it was proclaimed by the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that His “gospel shall be preached unto all nations, and then shall the end come.” To you it has moreover been proclaimed by the writings of the prophets and of the apostles, that the promises were given to Abraham and to his seed, which is Christ, when God said unto him: “In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed.” Having then such promises, if an angel from heaven were to say to thee, “Let go the Christianity of the whole earth, and cling to the faction of Donatus, the episcopal succession of which is set forth in a letter of their bishop in your town,” he ought to be accursed in your estimation; because he would be endeavouring to cut you off from the whole Church, and thrust you into a small party, and make you forfeit your interest in the promises of God.

2. For if the lineal succession of bishops is to be taken into account, with how much more certainty and benefit to the Church do we reckon back till we reach Peter himself, to whom, as bearing in a figure the whole Church, the Lord said: “Upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!” The successor of Peter was Linus, and his successors in unbroken continuity were these:—Clement, Anacletus, Evaristus, Alexander, Sixtus, Telesphorus, Iginus, Anicetus, Pius, Soter, Eleutherius, Victor, Zephirinus, Calixtus, Urbanus, Pontianus, Antherus, Fabianus, Cornelius, Lucius, Stephanus, Xystus, Dionysius, Felix, Eutychianus, Gaius, Marcellinus, Marcellus, Eusebius, Miltiades, Sylvester, Marcus, Julius, Liberius, Damasus, and Siricius, whose successor is the present Bishop Anastasius. In this order of succession no Donatist bishop is found. But, reversing the natural course of things, the Donatists sent to Rome from Africa an ordained bishop, who, putting himself at the head of a

few Africans in the great metropolis, gave some notoriety to the name of “mountain men,” or Cutzupits, by which they were known.

3. Now, even although some traditor had in the course of these centuries, through inadvertence, obtained a place in that order of bishops, reaching from Peter himself to Anastasius, who now occupies that see,—this fact would do no harm to the Church and to Christians having no share in the guilt of another; for the Lord, providing against such a case, says, concerning officers in the Church who are wicked: “All whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.” Thus the stability of the hope of the faithful is secured, inasmuch as being fixed, not in man, but in the Lord, it never can be swept away by the raging of impious schism; whereas they themselves are swept away who read in the Holy Scriptures the names of churches to which the apostles wrote, and in which they have no bishop. For what could more clearly prove their perversity and their folly, than their saying to their clergy, when they read these letters, “Peace be with thee,” at the very time that they are themselves disjoined from the peace of those churches to which the letters were originally written?

Chap. II

4. Lest, however, he should congratulate himself too much on the succession of bishops in Constantina, your own city, read to him the records of proceedings before Munatius Felix, the resident Flamen [heathen priest], who was governor of your city in the consulship of Diocletian for the eighth time, and Maximian for the seventh, on the eleventh day before the calends of June. By these records it is proved that the bishop Paulus was a traditor; the fact being that Sylvanus was then one of his sub-deacons, and, along with him, produced and surrendered certain things belonging to the Lord’s house, which had been most carefully concealed, namely a box and a lamp of silver, upon seeing which a certain Victor is reported to have said, “You would have been put to death if you had not found these.” Your Donatist priest makes great account of this Sylvanus, this clearly convicted traditor, in the letter which he writes you, mentioning him as then ordained to the office of bishop by the Primate Secundus of Tigisis. Let them keep their proud tongues silent, let them admit the charges which may truly be brought

against themselves, and not utter foolish calumnies against others. Read to him also, if he permits it, the ecclesiastical records of the proceedings of this same Secundus of Tigisis in the house of Urbanus Donatus, in which he remitted to God, as judge, men who confessed themselves to have been traditors—Donatus of Masculi, Marinns of Aquae Tibilitanae, Donatus of Calama, with whom as his colleagues, though they were confessed traditors, he ordained their bishop Sylvanus, of whose guilt in the same matter I have given the history above. Read to him also the proceedings before Zenophilus, a man of consular rank, in the course of which a certain deacon of theirs, Nundinarius, being angry with Sylvanus for having excommunicated him, brought all these facts into court, proving them incontestably by authentic documents, and the questioning of witnesses, and the reading of public records and many letters.

5. There are many other things which you might read in his hearing, if he is disposed not to dispute angrily, but to listen prudently, such as: the petition of the Donatists to Constantine, begging him to send from Gaul bishops who should settle this controversy which divided the African bishops; the Acts recording what took place in Rome, when the case was taken up and decided by the bishops whom he sent thither: also you might read in other letters how the Emperor aforesaid states that they had made a complaint to him against the decision of their peers—the bishops, namely, whom he had sent to Rome; how he appointed other bishops to try the case over again at Arles; how they appealed from that tribunal also to the Emperor again; how at last he himself investigated the matter; and how he most emphatically declares that they were vanquished by the innocence of Caecilianus. Let him listen to these things if he be willing, and he will be silent and desist from plotting against the truth.

Chap. III

6. We rely, however, not so much on these documents as on the Holy Scriptures, wherein a dominion extending to the ends of the earth among all nations is promised as the heritage of Christ, separated from which by their sinful schism they reproach us with the crimes which belong to the chaff in the Lord’s threshing-floor, which must be permitted to remain mixed with the good grain until the end come, until the whole be winnowed in the final

judgment. From which it is manifest that, whether these charges be true or false, they do not belong to the Lord's wheat, which must grow until the end of the world throughout the whole field, i.e. the whole earth; as we know, not by the testimony of a false angel such as confirmed your correspondent in his error, but from the words of the Lord in the Gospel. And because these unhappy Donatists have brought the reproach of many false and empty accusations against Christians who were blameless, but who are throughout the world mingled with the chaff or tares, i.e. with Christians unworthy of the name, therefore God has, in righteous retribution, appointed that they should, by their universal Council, condemn as schismatics the Maximianists, because they had condemned Primianus, and baptized while not in communion with Primianus, and rebaptized those whom he had baptized, and then after a short interval should, under the coercion of Optatus the minion of Gildo, reinstate in the honours of their office two of these, the bishops Felicianus of Musti and Praetextatus of Assuri, and acknowledge the baptism of all whom they, while under sentence and excommunicated, had baptized. If, therefore, they are not defiled by communion with the men thus restored again to their office,—men whom with their own mouth they had condemned as wicked and impious, and whom they compared to those first heretics whom the earth swallowed up alive,—let them at last awake and consider how great is their blindness and folly in pronouncing the whole world defiled by unknown crimes of Africans, and the heritage of Christ (which according to the promise has been shown unto all nations) destroyed through the sins of these Africans by the maintenance of communion with them; while they refuse to acknowledge themselves to be destroyed and defiled by communicating with men whose crimes they had both known and condemned.

7. Wherefore, since the Apostle Paul says in another place, that even Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, and that therefore it is not strange that his servants should assume the guise of ministers of righteousness: if your correspondent did indeed see an angel teaching him error, and desiring to separate Christians from the Catholic unity, he has met with an angel of Satan transforming himself into an angel of light. If, however, he has lied to you, and has seen no such vision, he is himself a servant of Satan, assuming

the guise of a minister of righteousness. And yet, if he be not incorrigibly obstinate and perverse, he may, by considering all the things now stated, be delivered both from misleading others, and from being himself misled. For, embracing the opportunity which you have given, we have met him without any rancour, remembering in regard to him the words of the apostle: “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” If, therefore, we have said anything severe, let him know that it arises not from the bitterness of controversy, but from love vehemently desiring his return to the right path. May you live safe in Christ, most beloved and honourable brother!

LETTER LIV

(A.D. 400.)

Styled also Book I. of Replies to Questions of Januarius.

To His Beloved Son Januarius, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. In regard to the questions which you have asked me, I would like to have known what your own answers would have been; for thus I might have made my reply in fewer words, and might most easily confirm or correct your opinions, by approving or amending the answers which you had given. This I would have greatly preferred. But desiring to answer you at once, I think it better to write a long letter than incur loss of time. I desire you therefore, in the first place, to hold fast this as the fundamental principle in the present discussion, that our Lord Jesus Christ has appointed to us a “light yoke” and an “easy burden,” as He declares in the Gospel: in accordance with which He has bound His people under the new dispensation together in fellowship by sacraments, which are in number very few, in observance most easy, and in significance most excellent, as baptism solemnized in the name of the Trinity, the communion of His body and blood, and such other things as are prescribed in the canonical

Scriptures, with the exception of those enactments which were a yoke of bondage to God's ancient people, suited to their state of heart and to the times of the prophets, and which are found in the five books of Moses. As to those other things which we hold on the authority, not of Scripture, but of tradition, and which are observed throughout the whole world, it may be understood that they are held as approved and instituted either by the apostles themselves, or by plenary Councils, whose authority in the Church is most useful, e.g. the annual commemoration, by special solemnities, of the Lord's passion, resurrection, and ascension, and of the descent of the Holy Spirit from heaven, and whatever else is in like manner observed by the whole Church wherever it has been established.

Chap. II

2. There are other things, however, which are different in different places and countries: e.g., some fast on Saturday, others do not; some partake daily of the body and blood of Christ, others receive it on stated days: in some places no day passes without the sacrifice being offered; in others it is only on Saturday and the Lord's day, or it may be only on the Lord's day. In regard to these and all other variable observances which may be met anywhere, one is at liberty to comply with them or not as he chooses; and there is no better rule for the wise and serious Christian in this matter, than to conform to the practice which he finds prevailing in the Church to which it may be his lot to come. For such a custom, if it is clearly not contrary to the faith nor to sound morality, is to be held as a thing indifferent, and ought to be observed for the sake of fellowship with those among whom we live.

3. I think you may have heard me relate before, what I will nevertheless now mention. When my mother followed me to Milan, she found the Church there not fasting on Saturday. She began to be troubled, and to hesitate as to what she should do; upon which I, though not taking a personal interest then in such things, applied on her behalf to Ambrose, of most blessed memory, for his advice. He answered that he could not teach me anything but what he himself practised, because if he knew any better rule, he would observe it himself. When I supposed that he intended, on the ground of his authority alone, and without supporting it by any argument, to recommend us to give up fasting on Saturday, he followed me, and said:

“When I visit Rome, I fast on Saturday; when I am here, I do not fast. On the same principle, do you observe the custom prevailing in whatever Church you come to, if you desire neither to give offence by your conduct, nor to find cause of offence in another’s.” When I reported this to my mother, she accepted it gladly; and for myself, after frequently reconsidering his decision, I have always esteemed it as if I had received it by an oracle from heaven. For often have I perceived, with extreme sorrow, many disquietudes caused to weak brethren by the contentious pertinacity or superstitious vacillation of some who, in matters of this kind, which do not admit of final decision by the authority of Holy Scripture, or by the tradition of the universal Church or by their manifest good influence on manners raise questions, it may be, from some crotchet of their own, or from attachment to the custom followed in one’s own country, or from preference for that which one has seen abroad, supposing that wisdom is increased in proportion to the distance to which men travel from home, and agitate these questions with such keenness, that they think all is wrong except what they do themselves.

Chap. III

4. Some one may say, “The Eucharist ought not to be taken every day.” You ask, “On what grounds?” He answers, “Because, in order that a man may approach worthily to so great a sacrament, he ought to choose those days upon which he lives in more special purity and self-restraint; for whosoever eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself.’“ Another answers, “Certainly; if the wound inflicted by sin and the violence of the soul’s distemper be such that the use of these remedies must be put off for a time, every man in this case should be, by the authority of the bishop, forbidden to approach the altar, and appointed to do penance, and should be afterwards restored to privileges by the same authority; for this would be partaking unworthily, if one should partake of it at a time when he ought to be doing penance, and it is not a matter to be left to one’s own judgment to withdraw himself from the communion of the Church, or restore himself, as he pleases. If, however, his sins are not so great as to bring him justly under sentence of excommunication, he ought not to withdraw himself from the daily use of the Lord’s body for the healing of

his soul.” Perhaps a third party interposes with a more just decision of the question, reminding them that the principal thing is to remain united in the peace of Christ, and that each should be free to do what, according to his belief, he conscientiously regards as his duty. For neither of them lightly esteems the body and blood of the Lord; on the contrary, both are contending who shall most highly honour the sacrament fraught with blessing. There was no controversy between those two mentioned in the Gospel, Zacchaeus and the Centurion; nor did either of them think himself better than the other, though, whereas the former received the Lord joyfully into his house, the latter said, “I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof,”—both honouring the Saviour, though in ways diverse and, as it were, mutually opposed; both miserable through sin, and both obtaining the mercy they required. We may further borrow an illustration here, from the fact that the manna given to the ancient people of God tasted in each man’s mouth as he desired that it might. It is the same with this world-subduing sacrament in the heart of each Christian. For he that dares not take it every day, and he who dares not omit it any day, are both alike moved by a desire to do it honour. That sacred food will not submit to be despised, as the manna could not be loathed with impunity. Hence the apostle says that it was unworthily partaken of by those who did not distinguish between this and all other meats, by yielding to it the special veneration which was due; for to the words quoted already, “eateth and drinketh judgment to himself,” he has added these, “not discerning the Lord’s body;” and this is apparent from the whole of that passage in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, if it be carefully studied.

Chap. IV

5. Suppose some foreigner visit a place in which during Lent it is customary to abstain from the use of the bath, and to continue fasting on Thursday. “I will not fast today,” he says. The reason being asked, he says, “Such is not the custom in my own country.” Is not he, by such conduct, attempting to assert the superiority of his custom over theirs? For he cannot quote a decisive passage on the subject from the Book of God; nor can he prove his opinion to be right by the unanimous voice of the universal Church, wherever spread abroad; nor can he demonstrate that they act contrary to

the faith, and he according to it, or that they are doing what is prejudicial to sound morality, and he is defending its interests. Those men injure their own tranquillity and peace by quarrelling on an unnecessary question. I would rather recommend that, in matters of this kind, each man should, when sojourning in a country in which he finds a custom different from his own consent to do as others do. If, on the other hand, a Christian, when travelling abroad in some region where the people of God are more numerous, and more easily assembled together, and more zealous in religion, has seen, e.g., the sacrifice twice offered, both morning and evening, on the Thursday of the last week in Lent, and therefore, on his coming back to his own country, where it is offered only at the close of the day, protests against this as wrong and unlawful, because he has himself seen another custom in another land, this would show a childish weakness of judgment against which we should guard ourselves, and which we must bear with in others, but correct in all who are under our influence.

Chap. V

6. Observe now to which of these three classes the first question in your letter is to be referred. You ask, “What ought to be done on the Thursday of the last week of Lent? Ought we to offer the sacrifice in the morning, and again after supper, on account of the words in the Gospel, Likewise also . . . after supper’? Or ought we to fast and offer the sacrifice only after supper? Or ought we to fast until the offering has been made, and then take supper as we are accustomed to do?” I answer, therefore, that if the authority of Scripture has decided which of these methods is right, there is no room for doubting that we should do according to that which is written; and our discussion must be occupied with a question, not of duty, but of interpretation as to the meaning of the divine institution. In like manner, if the universal Church follows any one of these methods, there is no room for doubt as to our duty; for it would be the height of arrogant madness to discuss whether or not we should comply with it. But the question which you propose is not decided either by Scripture or by universal practice. It must therefore be referred to the third class—as pertaining, namely, to things which are different in different places and countries. Let every man, therefore, conform himself to the usage prevailing in the Church to which

he may come. For none of these methods is contrary to the Christian faith or the interests of morality, as favoured by the adoption of one custom more than the other. If this were the case, that either the faith or sound morality were at stake, it would be necessary either to change what was done amiss, or to appoint the doing of what had been neglected. But mere change of custom, even though it may be of advantage in some respects, unsettles men by reason of the novelty: therefore, if it brings no advantage, it does much harm by unprofitably disturbing the Church.

7. Let me add, that it would be a mistake to suppose that the custom prevalent in many places, of offering the sacrifice on that day after partaking of food, is to be traced to the words, “Likewise after supper,” etc. For the Lord might give the name of supper to what they had received, in already partaking of His body, so that it was after this that they partook of the cup: as the apostle says in another place, “When ye come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s Supper,” giving to the receiving of the Eucharist to that extent (i.e. the eating of the bread) the name of the Lord’s Supper.

Chap. VI

As to the question whether upon that day it is right to partake of food before either offering or partaking of the Eucharist, these words in the Gospel might go far to decide our minds, “As they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it;” taken in connection with the words in the preceding context, “When the even was come, He sat down with the twelve: and as they did eat, He said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray Me.” For it was after that that He instituted the sacrament; and it is clear that when the disciples first received the body and blood of the Lord, they had not been fasting.

8. Must we therefore censure the universal Church because the sacrament is everywhere partaken of by persons fasting? Nay, verily, for from that time it pleased the Holy Spirit to appoint, for the honour of so great a sacrament, that the body of the Lord should take the precedence of all other food entering the mouth of a Christian; and it is for this reason that the custom referred to is universally observed. For the fact that the Lord instituted the

sacrament after other food had been partaken of, does not prove that brethren should come together to partake of that sacrament after having dined or supped, or imitate those whom the apostle reproved and corrected for not distinguishing between the Lord’s Supper and an ordinary meal. The Saviour, indeed, in order to commend the depth of that mystery more affectingly to His disciples, was pleased to impress it on their hearts and memories by making its institution His last act before going from them to His Passion. And therefore He did not prescribe the order in which it was to be observed, reserving this to be done by the apostles, through whom He intended to arrange all things pertaining to the Churches. Had He appointed that the sacrament should be always partaken of after other food, I believe that no one would have departed from that practice. But when the apostle, speaking of this sacrament, says, “Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another: and if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation,” he immediately adds, “and the rest will I set in order when I come.” Whence we are given to understand that, since it was too much for him to prescribe completely in an epistle the method observed by the universal Church throughout the world, it was one of the things set in order by him in person, for we find its observance uniform amid all the variety of other customs.

Chap. VII

9. There are, indeed, some to whom it has seemed right (and their view is not unreasonable), that it is lawful for the body and blood of the Lord to be offered and received after other food has been partaken of, on one fixed day of the year, the day on which the Lord instituted the Supper, in order to give special solemnity to the service on that anniversary. I think that, in this case, it would be more seemly to have it celebrated at such an hour as would leave it in the power of any who have fasted to attend the service before the repast which is customary at the ninth hour. Wherefore we neither compel nor do we dare to forbid any one to break his fast before the Lord’s Supper on that day. I believe, however, that the real ground upon which this custom rests is, that many, nay, almost all, are accustomed in most places to use the bath on that day. And because some continue to fast, it is offered in the morning, for those who take food, because they cannot bear fasting and the

use of the bath at the same time; and in the evening, for those who have fasted all day.

10. If you ask me whence originated the custom of using the bath on that day, nothing occurs to me, when I think of it, as more likely than that it was to avoid the offence to decency which must have been given at the baptismal font, if the bodies of those to whom that rite was to be administered were not washed on some preceding day from the uncleanness consequent upon their strict abstinence from ablutions during Lent; and that this particular day was chosen for the purpose because of its being the anniversary of the institution of the Supper. And this being granted to those who were about to receive baptism, many others desired to join them in the luxury of a bath, and in relaxation of their fast.

Having discussed these questions to the best of my ability, I exhort you to observe, in so far as you may be able, what I have laid down, as becomes a wise and peace-loving son of the Church. The remainder of your questions I purpose, if the Lord will, to answer at another time.

LETTER LV

(A.D. 400.)

Or Book II. of Replies to Questions of Januarius.

Chap. I

1. Having read the letter in which you have put me in mind of my obligation to give answers to the remainder of those questions which you submitted to me a long time ago, I cannot bear to defer any longer the gratification of that desire for instruction which it gives me so much pleasure and comfort to see in you; and although encompassed by an accumulation of engagements, I have given the first place to the work of supplying you with the answers desired. I will make no further comment on the contents of your letter, lest my doing so should prevent me from paying at length what I owe.

2. You ask, “Wherefore does the anniversary on which we celebrate the Passion of the Lord not fall, like the day which tradition has handed down

as the day of His birth, on the same day every year?” and you add, “If the reason of this is connected with the week and the month, what have we to do with the day of the week or the state of the moon in this solemnity?” The first thing which you must know and remember here is, that the observance of the Lord’s natal day is not sacramental, but only commemorative of His birth, and that therefore no more was in this case necessary, than that the return of the day on which the event took place should be marked by an annual religious festival. The celebration of an event becomes sacramental in its nature, only when the commemoration of the event is so ordered that it is understood to be significant of something which is to be received with reverence as sacred. Therefore we observe Easter in such a manner as not only to recall the facts of the death and resurrection of Christ to remembrance, but also to find a place for all the other things which, in connection with these events, give evidence as to the import of the sacrament. For since, as the apostle wrote, “He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification,” a certain transition from death to life has been consecrated in that Passion and Resurrection of the Lord. For the word Pascha itself is not, as is commonly thought, a Greek word: those who are acquainted with both languages affirm it to be a Hebrew word. It is not derived, therefore, from the Passion, because of the Greek word paschein, signifying to suffer, but it takes its name from the transition, of which I have spoken, from death to life; the meaning of the Hebrew word Pascha being, as those who are acquainted with it assure us, a passing over or transition. To this the Lord Himself designed to allude, when He said,” He that believeth in Me is passed from death to life.” And the same evangelist who records that saying is to be understood as desiring to give emphatic testimony to this, when, speaking of the Lord as about to celebrate with His disciples the passover, at which He instituted the sacramental supper, he says, “When Jesus knew that His hour was come, that He should depart from this world unto the Father.” This passing over from this mortal life to the other, the immortal life, that is, from death to life, is set forth in the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord.

Chap. II

3. This passing from death to life is meanwhile wrought in us by faith, which we have for the pardon of our sins and the hope of eternal life, when we love God and our neighbour; “for faith worketh by love,” and “the just shall live by his faith;” “and hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” According to this faith and hope and love, by which we have begun to be “under grace,” we are already dead together with Christ, and buried together with Him by baptism into death; as the apostle hath said, “Our old man is crucified with Him;” and we have risen with Him, for “He hath raised us up together, and made us sit with Him in heavenly places.” Whence also he gives this exhortation: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” In the next words, “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory,” he plainly gives us to understand that our passing in this present time from death to life by faith is accomplished in the hope of that future final resurrection and glory, when “this corruptible,” that is, this flesh in which we now groan, “shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.” For now, indeed, we have by faith “the first-fruits of the Spirit;” but still we “groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body: for we are saved by hope.” While we are in this hope, “the body indeed is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.” Now mark what follows: “But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” The whole Church, therefore, while here in the conditions of pilgrimage and mortality, expects that to be accomplished in her at the end of the world which has been shown first in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is “the first-begotten from the dead,” seeing that the body of which He is the Head is none other than the Church.

Chap. III

4. Some, indeed, studying the words so frequently used by the apostle, about our being dead with Christ and raised together with Him, and

misunderstanding the sense in which they are used, have thought that the resurrection is already past, and that no other is to be hoped for at the end of time: “Of whom,” he says, “are Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.” The same apostle who thus reproves and testifies against them, teaches nevertheless that we are risen with Christ. How is the apparent contradiction to be removed, unless he means that this is accomplished in us by faith and hope and love, according to the first-fruits of the Spirit? But because “hope which is seen is not hope,” and therefore “if we hope for that we see not, we do with patience wait for it,” it is beyond question that there remains, as still future, the redemption of the body, in longing for which we “groan within ourselves.” Hence also that saying, “Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation.”

5. This renewal, therefore, of our life is a kind of transition from death to life which is made first by faith, so that we rejoice in hope and are patient in tribulation, while still “our outward man perisheth, but the inward man is renewed day by day.” It is because of this beginning of a new life, because of the new man which we are commanded to put on, putting off the old man, “purging out the old leaven, that we may be a new lump, because Christ our passover is sacrificed for us;” it is, I say, because of this newness of life in us, that the first of the months of the year has been appointed as the season of this solemnity. This very name is given to it, the month Abib, or beginning of months. Again, the resurrection of the Lord was upon the third day, because with it the third epoch of the world began. The first Epoch was before the Law, the second under the Law, the third under Grace, in which there is now the manifestation of the mystery, which was formerly hidden under dark prophetic sayings. This is accordingly signified also in the part of the month appointed for the celebration; for, since the number seven is usually employed in Scripture as a mystical number, indicating perfection of some kind, the day of the celebration of Easter is within the third week of the month, namely, between the fourteenth and the twenty-first day.

Chap. IV

6. There is in this another mystery, and you are not to be distressed if perhaps it be not so readily perceived by you, because of your being less versed in such studies; nor are you to think me any better than you, because I learned these things in early years: for the Lord saith, “Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord.” Some men who give attention to such studies, have investigated many things concerning the numbers and motions of the heavenly bodies. And those who have done this most ably have found that the waxing and waning of the moon are due to the turning of its globe, and not to any such actual addition to or diminution of its substance as is supposed by the foolish Manichaeans, who say that as a ship is filled, so the moon is filled with a fugitive portion of the Divine Being, which they, with impious heart and lips, do not hesitate to believe and to declare to have become mingled with the rulers of darkness, and contaminated with their pollution. And they account for the waxing of the moon by saying that it takes place when that lost portion of the Deity, being purified from contamination by great labours, escaping from the whole world, and from all foul abominations, is restored to the Deity, who mourns till it returns; that by this the moon is filled up till the middle of the month, and that in the latter half of the month this is poured back into the sun as into another ship. Amid these execrable blasphemies, they have never succeeded in devising any way of explaining why the moon in the beginning or end of its brightness shines with its light in the shape of a horn, or why it begins at the middle of the month to wane, and does not go on full until it pour back its increase into the sun.

7. Those, however, to whom I refer have inquired into these things with trustworthy calculations, so that they can not only state the reason of eclipses, both solar and lunar, but also predict their occurrence long before they take place, and are able to determine by mathematical computation the precise intervals at which these must happen, and to state the results in treatises, by reading and understanding which any others may foretell as well as they the coming of these eclipses, and find their prediction verified by the event. Such men,—and they deserve censure, as Holy Scripture teaches, because “though they had wisdom enough to measure the periods of this world, they did not much more easily come,” as by humble piety they might have done, “to the knowledge of its Lord,”—such men, I say,

have inferred from the horns of the moon, which both in waxing and in waning are turned from the sun, either that the moon is illuminated by the sun, and that the farther it recedes from the sun the more fully does it lie exposed to its rays on the side which is visible from the earth; but that the more it approaches the sun, after the middle of the month, on the other half of its orbit, it becomes more fully illuminated on the upper part, and less and less open to receive the sun's rays on the side which is turned to the earth, and seems to us accordingly to decrease: or, that if the moon has light in itself, it has this light in the hemisphere on one side only, which side it gradually turns more to the earth as it recedes from the sun, until it is fully displayed, thereby exhibiting an apparent increase, not by the addition of what was deficient, but by disclosing what was already there; and that, in like manner, going towards the sun, the moon again gradually turns from our view that which had been disclosed, and so appears to decrease. Whichever of these two theories be correct, this at least is plain, and is easily discovered by any careful observer, that the moon does not to our eyes increase except when it is receding from the sun, nor decrease except when returning towards the sun.

Chap. V

8. Now mark what is said in Proverbs: “The wise man is fixed like the sun; but the fool changes like the moon.” And who is the wise that has no changes, but that Sun of Righteousness of whom it is said, “The Sun of righteousness has risen upon me,” and of which the wicked shall say, when mourning in the day of judgment that it has not risen upon them, “The light of righteousness hath not shone upon us, and the sun hath not risen upon us”? For that sun which is visible to the eye of sense, God makes to rise upon the evil and the good alike, as He sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust; but apt similitudes are often borrowed from things visible to explain things invisible. Again, who is the “fool” who “changes like the moon,” if not Adam, in whom all have sinned? For the soul of man, receding from the Sun of righteousness, that is to say, from the internal contemplation of unchangeable truth, turns all its strength towards external things, and becomes more and more darkened in its deeper and nobler powers; but when the soul begins to return to that unchangeable wisdom, the more it

draws near to it with pious desire, the more does the outward man perish, but the inward man is renewed day by day, and all that light of the soul which was inclining to things that are beneath is turned to the things that are above, and is thus withdrawn from the things of earth; so that it dies more and more to this world, and its life is hid with Christ in God.

9. It is therefore for the worse that the soul is changed when it moves in the direction of external things, and throws aside that which pertains to the inner life; and to the earth, i.e. to those who mind earthly things, the soul looks better in such a case, for by them the wicked is commended for his heart’s desire, and the unrighteous is blessed. But it is for the better that the soul is changed, when it gradually turns away its aims and ambition from earthly things, which appear important in this world, and directs them to things nobler and unseen; and to the earth, i.e. to men who mind earthly things, the soul in such a case seems worse. Hence those wicked men who at last shall in vain repent of their sins, will say this among other things: “These are the men whom once we derided and reproached; we in our folly esteemed their way of life to be madness.” Now the Holy Spirit, drawing a comparison from things visible to things invisible, from things corporeal to spiritual mysteries, has been pleased to appoint that the feast symbolical of the passing from the old life to the new, which is signified by the name Pascha, should be observed between the 14th and 21st days of the month,—after the 14th, in order that a twofold illustration of spiritual realities might be gained, both with respect to the third epoch of the world, which is the reason of its occurrence in the third week, as I have already said, and with respect to the turning of the soul from external to internal things,—a change corresponding to the change in the moon when on the wane; not later than the 21st, because of the number 7 itself, which is often used to represent the notion of the universe, and is also applied to the Church on the ground of her likeness to the universe.

Chap. VI

10. For this reason the Apostle John writes in the Apocalypse to seven churches. The Church, moreover, while it remains under the conditions of our mortal life in the flesh, is, on account of her liability to change, spoken of Scripture by the name of the moon; e.g., “They have made ready their

arrows in the quiver, that they may, while the moon is obscured, wound those who are upright in heart.” For before that comes to pass of which the apostle says, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory,” the Church seems in the time of her pilgrimage obscured, groaning under many iniquities; and at such a time, the snares of those who deceive and lead astray are to be feared, and these are intended by the word “arrows” in this passage. Again, we have another instance in Psalm lxxxix., where, because of the faithful witnesses which she everywhere brings forth on the side of truth, the Church is called “the moon, a faithful witness in heaven.” And when the Psalmist sang of the Lord’s kingdom, he said, “In His days shall be righteousness and abundance of peace, until the moon be destroyed;” i.e. abundance of peace shall increase so greatly, until He shall at length take away all the changeableness incidental to this mortal condition. Then shall death, the last enemy, be destroyed; and whatever obstacle to the perfection of our peace is due to the infirmity of our flesh shall be utterly consumed when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality. We have another instance in this, that the walls of the town named Jericho—which in the Hebrew tongue is said to signify “moon”—fell when they had been compassed for the seventh time by the ark of the covenant borne round the city. For what else is conveyed by the promise of the coming of the heavenly kingdom, which was symbolized in the carrying of the ark round Jericho, than that all the strongholds of this mortal life, i.e. every hope pertaining to this world which resists the hope of the world to come, must be destroyed, with the soul’s free consent, by the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit. Therefore it was, that when the ark was going round, those walls fell, not by violent assault, but of themselves. There are, besides these, other passages in Scripture which, speaking of the moon, impress upon us under that figure the condition of the Church while here, amid cares and labours, she is a pilgrim under the lot of mortality, and far from that Jerusalem of which the holy angels are the citizens.

11. These foolish men who refuse to be changed for the better have no reason, however, to imagine that worship is due to those heavenly luminaries because a similitude is occasionally borrowed from them for the representation of divine mysteries; for such are borrowed from every

created thing. Nor is there any reason for our incurring the sentence of condemnation which is pronounced by the apostle on some who worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. We do not adore sheep or cattle, although Christ is called both a Lamb, and by the prophet a young bullock; nor any beast of prey, though He is called the Lion of the tribe of Judah; nor a stone, although Christ is called a Rock; nor Mount Zion, though in it there was a type of the Church. And, in like manner, we do not adore the sun or the moon, although, in order to convey instruction in holy mysteries, figures of sacred things are borrowed from these celestial works of the Creator, as they are also from many of the things which He hath made on earth.

Chap. VII

12. We are therefore bound to denounce with abhorrence and contempt the ravings of the astrologers, who, when we find fault with the empty inventions by which they cast other men down into the delusions where into they themselves have fallen, imagine that they answer well when they say, “Why, then, do you regulate the time of the observance of Easter by calculation of the positions of the sun and moon?”—as if that with which we find fault was the arrangements of the heavenly bodies, or the succession of the seasons, which are appointed by God in His infinite power and goodness, and not their perversity in abusing, for the support of the most absurd opinions, those things which God has ordered in perfect wisdom. If the astrologer may on this ground forbid us from drawing comparisons from the heavenly bodies for the mystical representation of sacramental realities, then the augurs may with equal reason prevent the use of these words of Scripture, “Be harmless as doves;” and the snake-charmers may forbid that other exhortation, “Be wise as serpents;” while the play-actors may interfere with our mentioning the harp in the book of Psalms. Let them therefore say, if they please, that, because similitudes for the exhibition of the mysteries of God’s word are taken from the things which I have named, we are chargeable either with consulting the omens given by the flight of birds, or with concocting the poisons of the charmer, or with taking pleasure in the excesses of the theatre,—a statement which would be the clime of absurdity.

13. We do not forecast the issues of our enterprises by studying the sun and moon, and the times of the year or of the month, lest in the most trying emergencies of life, we, being dashed against the rocks of a wretched bondage, shall make shipwreck of our freedom of will; but with the most pious devoutness of spirit, we accept similitudes adapted to the illustration of holy things, which these heavenly bodies furnish, just as from all other works of creation, the winds, the sea, the land, birds, fishes, cattle, trees, men, etc., we borrow in our discourses manifold figures; and in the celebration of sacraments, the very few things which the comparative liberty of the Christian dispensation has prescribed, such as water, bread, wine, and oil. Under the bondage, however, of the ancient dispensation many rites were prescribed, which are made known to us only for our instruction as to their meaning. We do not now observe years, and months, and seasons, lest the words of the apostle apply to us, “I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.” For he blames those who say, “I will not set out to-day, because it is an unlucky day, or because the moon is so and so;” or, “I will go to-day, that things may prosper with me, because the position of the stars is this or that; I will do no business this month, because a particular star rules it;” or, “I will do business, because another star has succeeded in its place; I will not plant a vineyard this year, because it is leap year.” No man of ordinary sense would, however, suppose that those men deserve reproof for studying the seasons, who say, e.g., “I will not set out to-day, because a storm has begun;” or, “I will not put to sea, because the winter is not yet past;” or, “It is time to sow my seed, for the earth has been saturated with the showers of autumn;” and so on, in regard to any other natural effects of the motion and moisture of the atmosphere which have been observed in connection with that consummately ordered revolution of the heavenly bodies concerning which it was said when they were made, “Let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years.” And in like manner, whensoever illustrative symbols are borrowed, for the declaration of spiritual mysteries, from created things, not only from the heaven and its orbs, but also from meaner creatures, this is done to give to the doctrine of salvation an eloquence adapted to raise the affections of those who receive it from things seen, corporeal and temporal, to things unseen, spiritual and eternal.

Chap. VIII

14. None of us gives any consideration to the circumstance that, at the time at which we observe Easter, the sun is in the Ram, as they call a certain region of the heavenly bodies, in which the sun is, in fact, found at the beginning of the months; but whether they, choose to call that part of the heavens the Ram or anything else, we have learned this from the Sacred Scriptures, that God made all the heavenly bodies, and appointed their places as it pleased Him; and whatever the parts may be into which astronomers divide the regions set apart and ordained for the different constellations, and whatever the names by which they distinguish them, the place occupied by the sun in the first month is that in which the celebration of this sacrament behoved to find that luminary, because of the illustration of a holy mystery in the renovation of life, of which I have already spoken sufficiently. If, however, the name of Ram could be given to that portion of the heavenly bodies because of some correspondence between their form and the name, the word of God would not hesitate to borrow from anything of this kind an illustration of a holy mystery, as it has done not only from other celestial bodies, but also from terrestrial things, e.g. from Orion and the Pleiades, Mount Zion, Mount Sinai, and the rivers of which the names are given, Gihon, Pison, Tigris, Euphrates, and particularly from the river Jordan, which is so often named in the sacred mysteries.

15. But who can fail to perceive how great is the difference between useful observations of the heavenly bodies in connection with the weather, such as farmers or sailors make; or in order to mark the part of the world in which they are, and the course which they should follow, such as are made by pilots of ships or men going through the trackless sandy deserts of southern Africa; or in order to present some useful doctrine under a figure borrowed from some facts concerning heavenly bodies;—and the vain hallucinations of men who observe the heavens not to know the weather, or their course, or to make scientific calculations, or to find illustrations of spiritual things, but merely to pry into the future and learn now what fate has decreed?

Chap. IX

16. Let us now direct our minds to observe the reason why, in the celebration of Easter, care is taken to appoint the day so that Saturday precedes it: for this is peculiar to the Christian religion. The Jews keep the Passover from the 14th to the 21st of the first month, on whatever day that week begins. But since at the Passover at which the Lord suffered, it was the case that the Jewish Sabbath came in between His death and His resurrection, our fathers have judged it right to add this specialty to their celebration of Easter, both that our feast might be distinguished from the Jewish Passover, and that succeeding generations might retain in their annual commemoration of His Passion that which we must believe to have been done for some good reason, by Him who is before the times, by whom also the times have been made, and who came in the fulness of the times, and who when He said, Mine hour is not yet come, had the power of laying down His life and taking it again, and was therefore waiting for an hour not fixed by blind fate, but suitable to the holy mystery which He had resolved to commend to our observation.

17. That which we here hold in faith and hope, and to which by love we labour to come, is, as I have said above, a certain holy and perpetual rest from the whole burden of every kind of care; and from this life unto that rest we make a transition which our Lord Jesus Christ condescended to exemplify and consecrate in His Passion. This rest, however, is not a slothful inaction, but a certain ineffable tranquillity caused by work in which there is no painful effort. For the repose on which one enters at the end of the toils of this life is of such a nature as consists with lively joy in the active exercises of the better life. Forasmuch, however, as this activity is exercised in praising God without bodily toil or mental anxiety, the transition to that activity is not made through a repose which is to be followed by labour, i.e. a repose which, at the point where activity begins, ceases to be repose: for in these exercises there is no return to toil and care; but that which constitutes rest—namely, exemption from weariness in work and from uncertainty in thought—is always found in them. Now, since through rest we get back to that original life which the soul lost by sin, the emblem of this rest is the seventh day of the week. But that original life itself which is restored to those who return from their wanderings, and receive in token of welcome the robe which they had at first, is represented

by the first day of the week, which we call the Lord’s day. If, in reading Genesis, you search the record of the seven days, you will find that there was no evening of the seventh day, which signified that the rest of which it was a type was eternal. The life originally bestowed was not eternal, because man sinned; but the final rest, of which the seventh day was an emblem, is eternal, and hence the eighth day also will have eternal blessedness, because that rest, being eternal, is taken up by the eighth day, not destroyed by it; for if it were thus destroyed, it would not be eternal. Accordingly the eighth day, which is the first day of the week, represents to us that original life, not taken away, but made eternal.

Chap. X

18. Nevertheless the seventh day was appointed to the Jewish nation as a day to be observed by rest of the body, that it might be a type of sanctification to which men attain through rest in the Holy Spirit. We do not read of sanctification in the history given in Genesis of all the earlier days: of the Sabbath alone it is said that “God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it.” Now the souls of men, whether good or bad, love rest, but how to attain to that which they love is to the greater part unknown: and that which bodies seek for their weight, is precisely what souls seek for their love, namely, a resting-place. For as, according to its specific gravity, a body descends or rises until it reaches a place where it can rest,—oil, for example, falling if poured into the air, but rising if poured into water,—so the soul of man struggles towards the things which it loves, in order that, by reaching them, it may rest. There are indeed many things which please the soul through the body, but its rest in these is not eternal, nor even long continued; and therefore they rather debase the soul and weigh it down, so as to be a drag upon that pure imponderability by which it tends towards higher things. When the soul finds pleasure from itself, it is not yet seeking delight in that which is unchangeable; and therefore it is still proud, because it is giving to itself the highest place, whereas God is higher. In such sin the soul is not left unpunished, for “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.” When, however, the soul delights in God, there it finds the true, sure, and eternal rest, which in all other objects was sought in vain.

Therefore the admonition is given in the book of Psalms, “Delight thyself in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”

19. Because, therefore, “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us,” sanctification was associated with the seventh day, the day in which rest was enjoined. But inasmuch as we neither are able to do any good work, except as helped by the gift of God, as the apostle says, “For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure,” nor will be able to rest, after all the good works which engage us in this life, except as sanctified and perfected by the same gift to eternity; for this reason it is said of God Himself, that when He had made all things “very good,” He rested “on the seventh day from all His works which He had made.” For He, in so doing, presented a type of that future rest which He purposed to bestow on us men after our good works are done. For as in our good works He is said to work in us, by whose gift we are enabled to work what is good, so in our rest He is said to rest by whose gift we rest.

Chap. XI

20. This, moreover, is the reason why the law of the Sabbath is placed third among the three commandments of the Decalogue which declare our duty to God (for the other seven relate to our neighbour, that is, to man; the whole law hanging on these two commandments). The first commandment, in which we are forbidden to worship any likeness of God made by human contrivance, we are to understand as referring to the Father: this prohibition being made, not because God has no image, but because no image of Him but that One which is the same with Himself, ought to be worshipped; and this One not in His stead, but along with Him. Then, because a creature is mutable, and therefore it is said, “The whole creation is subject to vanity,” since the nature of the whole is manifested also in any part of it, lest any one should think that the Son of God, the Word by whom all things were made, is a creature, the second commandment is, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.” And because God sanctified the seventh day, on which He rested, the Holy Spirit—in whom is given to us that rest which we love everywhere, but find only in loving God, when “His love is shed abroad in us, by the Holy Ghost given unto us”—is presented to our

minds in the third commandment, which was written concerning the observance of the Sabbath, not to make us suppose that we attain to rest in this present life, but that all our labours in what is good may point towards nothing else than that eternal rest. For I would specially charge you to remember the passage quoted above: “We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope.”

21. For the feeding and fanning of that ardent love by which, under a law like that of gravitation, we are borne upwards or inwards to rest, the presentation of truth by emblems has a great power: for, thus presented, things move and kindle our affection much more than if they were set forth in bald statements, not clothed with sacramental symbols. Why this should be, it is hard to say; but it is the fact that anything which we are taught by allegory or emblem affects and pleases us more, and is more highly esteemed by us, than it would be if most clearly stated in plain terms. I believe that the emotions are less easily kindled while the soul is wholly involved in earthly things; but if it be brought to those corporeal things which are emblems of spiritual things, and then taken from these to the spiritual realities which they represent, it gathers strength by the mere act of passing from the one to the other, and, like the flame of a lighted torch, is made by the motion to burn more brightly, and is carried away to rest by a more intensely glowing love.

Chap. XII

22. It is also for this reason, that of all the ten commandments, that which related to the Sabbath was the only one in which the thing commanded was typical; the bodily rest enjoined being a type which we have received as a means of our instruction, but not as a duty binding also upon us. For while in the Sabbath a figure is presented of the spiritual rest, of which it is said in the Psalm, “Be still, and know that I am God,” and unto which men are invited by the Lord Himself in the words, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: so shall ye find rest unto your souls;” as to all the things enjoined in the other commandments, we are to yield to them an obedience in which there is nothing typical. For we have been taught literally not to worship idols; and the precepts

enjoining us not to take God’s name in vain, to honour our father and mother, not to commit adultery, or kill, or steal, or bear false witness, or covet our neighbour’s wife, or covet anything that is our neighbour’s, are all devoid of typical or mystical meaning, and are to be literally observed. But we are not commanded to observe the day of the Sabbath literally, in resting from bodily labour, as it is observed by the Jews; and even their observance of the rest as prescribed is to be deemed worthy of contempt, except as signifying another, namely, spiritual rest. From this we may reasonably conclude, that all those things which are figuratively set forth in Scripture, are powerful in stimulating that love by which we tend towards rest; since the only figurative or typical precept in the Decalogue is the one in which that rest is commended to us, which is desired everywhere, but is found sure and sacred in God alone.

Chap. XIII

23. The Lord’s day, however, has been made known not to the Jews, but to Christians, by the resurrection of the Lord, and from Him it began to have the festive character which is proper to it. For the souls of the pious dead are, indeed, in a state of repose before the resurrection of the body, but they are not engaged in the same active exercises as shall engage the strength of their bodies when restored. Now, of this condition of active exercise the eighth day (which is also the first of the week) is a type, because it does not put an end to that repose, but glorifies it. For with the reunion of the body no hindrance of the soul’s rest returns, because in the restored body there is no corruption: for “this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” Wherefore, although the sacramental import of the 8th number, as signifying the resurrection, was by no means concealed from the holy men of old who were filled with the spirit of prophecy (for in the title of Psalms [vi. and xii.] we find the words “for the eighth,” and infants were circumcised on the eighth day; and in Ecclesiastes it is said, with allusion to the two covenants, “Give a portion to seven, and also to eight”); nevertheless before the resurrection of the Lord, it was reserved and hidden, and the Sabbath alone was appointed to be observed, because before that event there was indeed the repose of the dead (of which the Sabbath rest was a type), but there was not any instance of the

resurrection of one who, rising from the dead, was no more to die, and over whom death should no longer have dominion; this being done in order that, from the time when such a resurrection did take place in the Lord's own body (the Head of the Church being the first to experience that which His body, the Church, expects at the end of time), the day upon which He rose, the eighth day namely (which is the same with the first of the week), should begin to be observed as the Lord's day. The same reason enables us to understand why, in regard to the day of keeping the passover, on which the Jews were commanded to kill and eat a lamb, which was most clearly a foreshadowing of the Lord's Passion, there was no injunction given to them that they should take the day of the week into account, waiting until the Sabbath was past, and making the beginning of the third week of the moon coincide with the beginning of the third week of the first month; the reason being, that the Lord might rather in His own Passion declare the significance of that day, as He had come also to declare the mystery of the day now known as the Lord's day, the eighth namely, which is also the first of the week.

Chap. XIV

24. Consider now with attention these three most sacred days, the days signalized by the Lord's crucifixion, rest in the grave, and resurrection. Of these three, that of which the cross is the symbol is the business of our present life: those things which are symbolized by His rest in the grave and His resurrection we hold by faith and hope. For now the command is given to each man, "Take up thy cross, and follow me." But the flesh is crucified, when our members which are upon the earth are mortified, such as fornication, uncleanness, luxury, avarice, etc., of which the apostle says in another passage: "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Hence also he says of himself: "The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." And again: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." The period during which our labours tend to the weakening and destruction of the body of sin, during which the outward man is perishing, that the inward man may be renewed day by day,—that is the period of the cross.

25. These are, it is true, good works, having rest for their recompense, but they are meanwhile laborious and painful: therefore we are told to be “rejoicing in hope,” that while we contemplate the future rest, we may labour with cheerfulness in present toil. Of this cheerfulness the breadth of the cross in the transverse beam to which the hands were nailed is an emblem: for the hands we understand to be symbolical of working, and the breadth to be symbolical of cheerfulness in him who works, for sadness straitens the spirit. In the height of the cross, against which the head is placed, we have an emblem of the expectation of recompense from the sublime justice of God, “who will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life.” Therefore the length of the cross, along which the whole body is extended, is an emblem of that patient continuance in the will of God, on account of which those who are patient are said to be long-suffering. The depth also, i.e. the part which is fixed in the ground, represents the occult nature of the holy mystery. For you remember, I suppose, the words of the apostle, which in this description of the cross I aim at expounding: “That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height.”

Those things which we do not yet see or possess, but hold in faith and hope, are the things represented in the events by which the second and third of the three memorable days above mentioned were signalized [viz. the Lord’s rest in the grave, and His resurrection]. But the things which keep us occupied in this present life, while we are held fast in the fear of God by the commandments, as by nails driven through the flesh (as it is written, “Make my flesh fast with nails by fear of Thee”), are to be reckoned among things necessary, not among those which are for their own sakes to be desired and coveted. Hence Paul says that he desired, as something far better, to depart and to be with Christ: “nevertheless,” he adds, “to remain in the flesh is expedient for you”—necessary for your welfare. This departing and being with Christ is the beginning of the rest which is not interrupted, but glorified by the resurrection; and this rest is now enjoyed by faith, “for the just shall live by faith.” “Know ye not,” saith the same apostle, “that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism unto death.” How? By faith. For this is not actually completed in us so long as we are still “groaning within ourselves, and waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body: for we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”

26. Remember how often I repeat this to you, that we are not to think that we ought to be made happy and free from all difficulties in this present life, and are therefore at liberty to murmur profanely against God when we are straitened in the things of this world, as if He were not performing what He promised. He hath indeed promised the things which are necessary for this life, but the consolations which mitigate the misery of our present lot are very different from the joys of those who are perfect in blessedness. “In the multitude of my thoughts within me,” saith the believer, “Thy comforts, O Lord, delight my soul.” Let us not therefore murmur because of difficulties; let us not lose that breadth of cheerfulness, of which it is written, “Rejoicing in hope,” because this follows,—”patient in tribulation.” The new life, therefore, is meanwhile begun in faith, and maintained by hope: for it shall only then be perfect when this mortal shall be swallowed up in life, and death swallowed up in victory; when the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed; when we shall be changed, and made like the angels: for “we shall all rise again, but we shall not all be changed.” Again, the Lord saith, “They shall be equal unto the angels.” We now are apprehended by Him in fear by faith: then we shall apprehend Him in love by sight. For “whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by faith, not by sight.” Hence the apostle himself, who says, “I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus,” confesses frankly that he has not attained to it. “Brethren,” he says, “I count not myself to have apprehended.” Since, however, our hope is sure, because of the truth of the promise, when he said elsewhere, “Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death,” he adds these words, “that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” We walk, therefore, in actual labour, but in hope of rest, in the flesh of the old life, but in faith of the new. For he says again: “The body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of

righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

27. Both the authority of the Divine Scriptures and the consent of the whole Church spread throughout the world have combined to ordain the annual commemoration of these things at Easter, by observances which are, as you now see, full of spiritual significance. From the Old Testament Scriptures we are not taught as to the precise day of holding Easter, beyond the limitation to the period between the 14th and 21st days of the first month; but because we know from the Gospel beyond doubt which days of the week were signalized in succession by the Lord’s crucifixion, His resting in the grave, and His resurrection, the observance of these days has been enjoined in addition by Councils of the Fathers, and the whole Christian world has arrived unanimously at the persuasion that this is the proper mode of observing Easter.

Chap. XV

28. The Fast of Forty Days has its warrant both in the Old Testament, from the fasting of Moses and of Elijah, and in the Gospel from the fact that our Lord fasted the same number of days; proving thereby that the Gospel is not at variance with the Law and the Prophets. For the Law and the Prophets are represented in the persons of Moses and Elijah respectively; between whom also He appeared in glory on the Mount, that what the apostle says of Him, that He is “witnessed unto both by the Law and the Prophets,” might be made more clearly manifest. Now, in what part of the year could the observance of the Fast of Forty Days be more appropriately placed, than in that which immediately precedes and borders on the time of the Lord’s Passion? For by it is signified this life of toil, the chief work in which is to exercise self-control, in abstaining from the world’s friendship, which never ceases deceitfully caressing us, and scattering profusely around us its bewitching allurements. As to the reason why this life of toil and self-control is symbolized by the number 40, it seems to me that the number ten (in which is the perfection of our blessedness, as in the number eight, because it returns to the unit) has a like place in this number [as the unit has in giving its significance to eight]; and therefore I regard the number forty

as a fit symbol for this life, because in it the creature (of which the symbolical number is seven) cleaves to the Creator, in whom is revealed that unity of the Trinity which is to be published while time lasts throughout this whole world,—a world swept by four winds, constituted of four elements, and experiencing the changes of four seasons in the year. Now four times ten [seven added to three] are forty; but the number forty reckoned in along with [one of] its parts adds the number ten, [as seven reckoned in along with one of its parts adds the unit,] and the total is fifty,—the symbol, as it were, of the reward of the toil and self-control. For it is not without reason that the Lord Himself continued for forty days on this earth and in this life in fellowship with His disciples after His resurrection, and, when He ascended into heaven, sent the promised Holy Spirit, after an interval of ten days more, when the day of Pentecost was fully come. This fiftieth day, moreover, has wrapped up in it another holy mystery: for 7 times 7 days are 49. And when we return to the beginning of another seven, and add the eighth, which is also the first day of the week, we have the 50 days complete; which period of fifty days we celebrate after the Lord's resurrection, as representing not toil, but rest and gladness. For this reason we do not fast in them; and in praying we stand upright, which is an emblem of resurrection. Hence, also, every Lord's day during the fifty days, this usage is observed at the altar, and the Alleluia is sung, which signifies that our future exercise shall consist wholly in praising God, as it is written: "Blessed are they who dwell in Thy house, O Lord: they will be still (i.e. eternally) praising Thee."

Chap. XVI

29. The fiftieth day is also commended to us in Scripture; and not only in the Gospel, by the fact that on that day the Holy Spirit descended, but also in the books of the Old Testament. For in them we learn, that after the Jews observed the first passover with the slaying of the lamb as appointed, 50 days intervened between that day and the day on which upon Mount Sinai there was given to Moses the Law written with the finger of God; and this "finger of God" is in the Gospels most plainly declared to signify the Holy Spirit: for where one evangelist quotes our Lord's words thus, "I with the finger of God cast out devils," another quotes them thus, "I cast out devils

by the Spirit of God.” Who would not prefer the joy which these divine mysteries impart, when the light of healing truth beams from them on the soul to all the kingdoms of this world, even though these were held in perfect prosperity and peace? May we not say, that as the two seraphim answer each other in singing the praise of the Most High, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts,” so the Old Testament and the New, in perfect harmony, give forth their testimony to sacred truth? The lamb is slain, the passover is celebrated, and after 50 days the Law is given, which inspires fear, written by the finger of God. Christ is slain, being led as a lamb to the slaughter as Isaiah testifies; the true Passover is celebrated; and after 50 days is given the Holy Spirit, who is the finger of God, and whose fruit is love, and who is therefore opposed to men who seek their own, and consequently bear a grievous yoke and heavy burden, and find no rest for their souls; for love “seeketh not her own.” Therefore there is no rest in the unloving spirit of heretics, whom the apostle declares guilty of conduct like that of the magicians of Pharaoh, saying, “Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest to all men, as theirs also was.” For because through this corruptness of mind they were utterly disquieted, they failed at the third miracle, confessing that the Spirit of God which was in Moses was opposed to them: for in owning their failure, they said, “This is the finger of God.” The Holy Spirit, who shows Himself reconciled and gracious to the meek and lowly in heart, and gives them rest, shows Himself an inexorable adversary to the proud and haughty, and vexes them with disquiet. Of this disquiet those despicable insects were a figure, under which Pharaoh’s magicians owned themselves foiled, saying, “This is the finger of God.”

30. Read the book of Exodus, and observe the number of days between the first passover and the giving of the Law. God speaks to Moses in the desert of Sinai on the first day of the third month. Mark, then, this as one day of the month, and then observe what (among other things) the Lord said on that day: “Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes, and be ready against the third day; for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.” The Law was accordingly given on the third day of the month. Now

reckon the days between the 14th day of the first month, the day of the passover, and the 3d day of the third month, and you have 17 days of the first month, 30 of the second, and 3 of the third—50 in all. The Law in the Ark of the Testimony represents holiness in the Lord's body, by whose resurrection is promised to us the future rest; for our receiving of which, love is breathed into us by the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit had not then been given, for Jesus had not yet been glorified. Hence that prophetic song, "Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest, Thou and the ark of Thy strength" [holiness, LXX.]. Where there is rest, there is holiness. Wherefore we have now received a pledge of it, that we may love and desire it. For to the rest belonging to the other life, whereunto we are brought by that transition from this life of which the passover is a symbol, all are now invited in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Chap. XVII

31. Hence also, in the number of the large fishes which our Lord after His resurrection, showing this new life, commanded to be taken on the right side of the ship, there is found the number 50 three times multiplied, with the addition of three more [the symbol of the Trinity] to make the holy mystery more apparent; and the disciples' nets were not broken, because in that new life there shall be no schism caused by the disquiet of heretics. Then [in this new life] man, made perfect and at rest, purified in body and in soul by the pure words of God, which are like silver purged from its dross, seven times refined, shall receive his reward, the denarius; so that with that reward the numbers 10 and 7 meet in him. For in this number there is found, as in other numbers representing a combination of symbols, a wonderful mystery. Nor is it without good reason that the seventeenth Psalm is the only one which is given complete in the book of Kings, because it signifies that kingdom in which we shall have no enemy. For its title is, "A Psalm of David, in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul." For of whom is David the type, but of Him who, according to the flesh, was born of the seed of David? He in His Church, that is, in His body, still endures the malice of enemies. Therefore the words which from heaven fell upon the ear of that persecutor whom Jesus slew by His voice, and whom He transformed into a

part of His body (as the food which we use becomes a part of ourselves), were these, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” And when shall this His body be finally delivered from enemies? Is it not when the last enemy, Death, shall be destroyed? It is to that time that the number of the 153 fishes pertains. For if the number 17 itself be the side of an arithmetical triangle, formed by placing above each other rows of units, increasing in number from 1 to 17, the whole sum of these units is 153: since 1 and 2 make 3; 3 and 3, 6; 6 and 4, 10; 10 and 5, 15; 15 and 6, 21; and so on: continue this up to 17, the total is 153.

32. The celebration of Easter and Pentecost is therefore most firmly based on Scripture. As to the observance of the forty days before Easter, this has been confirmed by the practice of the Church; as also the separation of the eight days of the neophytes, in such order that the eighth of these coincides with the first. The custom of singing the Alleluia on those 50 days only in the Church is not universal; for in other places it is sung also at various other times, but on these days it is sung everywhere. Whether the custom of standing at prayer on these days and on all the Lord’s days, is everywhere observed or not, I do not know; nevertheless, I have told you what guides the Church in this usage, and it is in my opinion sufficiently obvious.

Chap. XVIII

33. As to the feet-washing, since the Lord recommended this because of its being an example of that humility which He came to teach, as He Himself afterwards explained, the question has arisen at what time it is best, by literal performance of this work, to give public instruction in the important duty which it illustrates, and this time [of Lent] was suggested in order that the lesson taught by it might make a deeper and more serious impression. Many, however, have not accepted this as a custom, lest it should be thought to belong to the ordinance of baptism; and some have not hesitated to deny it any place among our ceremonies. Some, however, in order to connect its observance with the more sacred associations of this solemn season, and at the same time to prevent its being confounded with baptism in any way, have selected for this ceremony either the eighth day itself, or that on which the third eighth day occurs, because of the great significance of the number three in many holy mysteries.

34. I am surprised at your expressing a desire that I should write anything in regard to those ceremonies which are found different in different countries, because there is no necessity for my doing this; and, moreover, one most excellent rule must be observed in regard to these customs, when they do not in any way oppose either true doctrine or sound morality, but contain some incentives to the better life, viz., that wherever we see them observed, or know them to be established, we should not only refrain from finding fault with them, but even recommend them by our approval and imitation, unless restrained by fear of doing greater harm than good by this course, through the infirmity of others. We are not, however, to be restrained by this, if more good is to be expected from our consenting with those who are zealous for the ceremony, than loss to be feared from our displeasing those who protest against it. In such a case we ought by all means to adopt it, especially if it be something in defence of which Scripture can be alleged: as in the singing of hymns and psalms, for which we have on record both the example and the precepts of the Lord and of His apostles. In this religious exercise, so useful for inducing a devotional frame of mind and inflaming the strength of love to God, there is diversity of usage, and in Africa the members of the Church are rather too indifferent in regard to it; on which account the Donstists reproach us with our grave chanting of the divine songs of the prophets in our churches, while they inflame their passions in their revels by the singing of psalms of human composition, which rouse them like the stirring notes of the trumpet on the battle-field. But when brethren are assembled in the church, why should not the time be devoted to singing of sacred songs, excepting of course while reading or preaching is going on, or while the presiding minister prays aloud, or the united prayer of the congregation is led by the deacon’s voice? At the other intervals not thus occupied, I do not see what could be a more excellent, useful, and holy exercise for a Christian congregation.

Chap. XIX

35. I cannot, however, sanction with my approbation those ceremonies which are departures from the custom of the Church, and are instituted on the pretext of being symbolical of some holy mystery; although, for the sake of avoiding offence to the piety of some and the pugnacity of others, I

do not venture to condemn severely many things of this kind. But this I deplore, and have too much occasion to do so, that comparatively little attention is paid to many of the most wholesome rites which Scripture has enjoined; and that so many false notions everywhere prevail, that more severe rebuke would be administered to a man who should touch the ground with his feet bare during the octaves (before his baptism), than to one who drowned his intellect in drunkenness. My opinion therefore is, that wherever it is possible, all those things should be abolished without hesitation, which neither have warrant in Holy Scripture, nor are found to have been appointed by councils of bishops, nor are confirmed by the practice of the universal Church, but are so infinitely various, according to the different customs of different places, that it is with difficulty, if at all, that the reasons which guided men in appointing them can be discovered. For even although nothing be found, perhaps, in which they are against the true faith; yet the Christian religion, which God in His mercy made free, appointing to her sacraments very few in number, and very easily observed, is by these burdensome ceremonies so oppressed, that the condition of the Jewish Church itself is preferable: for although they have not known the time of their freedom, they are subjected to burdens imposed by the law of God, not by the vain conceits of men. The Church of God, however, being meanwhile so constituted as to enclose much chaff and many tares, bears with many things; yet if anything be contrary to faith or to holy life, she does not approve of it either by silence or by practice.

Chap. XX

36. Accordingly, that which you wrote as to certain brethren abstaining from the use of animal food, on the ground of its being ceremonially unclean, is most clearly contrary to the faith and to sound doctrine. If I were to enter on anything like a full discussion of this matter, it might be thought by some that there was some obscurity in the precepts of the apostle in this matter whereas he, among many other things which he said on this subject, expressed his abhorrence of this opinion of the heretics in these words: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” Again, in another place, he says, concerning these things: “Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.” Read the rest for yourself, and read these passages to others—to as many as you can—in order that, seeing that they have been called to liberty, they may not make void the grace of God toward them; only let them not use their liberty for an occasion to serve the flesh: let them not refuse to practise the purpose of curbing carnal appetite, abstinence from some kinds of food, on the pretext that it is unlawful to do so under the promptings of superstition or unbelief.

37. As to those who read futurity by taking at random a text from the pages of the Gospels, although it is better that they should do this than go to consult spirits of divination, nevertheless it is, in my opinion, a censurable practice to try to turn to secular affairs and the vanity of this life those divine oracles which were intended to teach us concerning the higher life.

Chap. XXI

38. If you do not consider that I have now written enough in answer to your questions, you must have little knowledge of my capacities or of my engagements. For so far am I from being, as you have thought, acquainted with everything, that I read nothing in your letter with more sadness than this statement, both because it is most manifestly untrue, and because I am surprised that you should not be aware, that not only are many things unknown to me in countless other departments, but that even in the Scriptures themselves the things which I do not know are many more than the things which I know. But I cherish a hope in the name of Christ, which is not without its reward, because I have not only believed the testimony of my God that “on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets;” but I have myself proved it, and daily prove it, by experience. For there is no holy mystery, and no difficult passage of the word of God, in which, when it is opened up to me, I do not find these same

commandments: for “the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned;” and “love is the fulfilling of the law.”

39. I beseech you therefore also, my dearly beloved, whether studying these or other writings, so to read and so to learn as to bear in mind what hath been most truly said, “Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth;” but charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. Let knowledge therefore be used as a kind of scaffolding by which may be erected the building of charity, which shall endure for ever when knowledge faileth. Knowledge, if applied as a means to charity, is most useful; but apart from this high end, it has been proved not only superfluous, but even pernicious. I know, however, how holy meditation keeps you safe under the shadow of the wings of our God. These things I have stated, though briefly, because I know that this same charity of yours, which “vaunteth not itself,” will prompt you to lend and read this letter to many.

LETTERS LVI. AND LVII

(A.D. 400)

Are addressed to Celer, exhorting him to forsake the Donatist schismatics. They may be omitted, being brief, and containing no new argument.

LETTER LVIII

(A.D. 401.)

To My Noble and Worthy Lord Pammachius, My Son, Dearly Beloved in the Bowels of Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. The good works which spring from the grace of Christ in you have given you a claim to be esteemed by us His members, and have made you as truly known and as much beloved by us as you could be. For even were I daily seeing your face, this could add nothing to the completeness of the acquaintance with you which I now have, when in the shining light of one of your actions I have seen your inner being, fair with the loveliness of peace, and beaming with the brightness of truth. Seeing this has made me know you, and knowing you has made me love you; and therefore, in

addressing you, I write to one who, notwithstanding our distance from each other, has become known to me, and is my beloved friend. The bond which binds us together is indeed of earlier date, and we were living united under One Head: for had you not been rooted in His love, the Catholic unity would not have been so dear to you, and you would not have dealt as you have done with your African tenants settled in the midst of the consular province of Numidia, the very country in which the folly of the Donatists began, addressing them in such terms, and encouraging them with such enthusiasm, as to persuade them with unhesitating devotion to choose that course which they believed that a man of your character and position would not adopt on other grounds than truth ascertained and acknowledged, and to submit themselves, though so remote from you, to the same Head; so that along with yourself they are reckoned for ever as members of Him by whose command they are for the time dependent upon you.

2. Embracing you, therefore, as known to me by this transaction, I am moved by joyful feelings to congratulate you in Christ Jesus our Lord, and to send you this letter as a proof of my heart's love towards you; for I cannot do more. I beseech you, however, not to measure the amount of my love by this letter; but by means of this letter, when you have read it, pass on by the unseen inner passage which thought opens up into my heart, and see what is there felt towards you. For to the eye of love that sanctuary of love shall be unveiled which we shut against the disquieting trifles of this world when there we worship God; and there you will see the ecstasy of my joy in your good work, an ecstasy which I cannot describe with tongue or pen, glowing and burning in the offering of praise to Him by whose inspiration you were made willing, and by whose help you were made able to serve Him in this way. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!”

3. Oh how we desire in Africa to see such work as this by which you have gladdened us done by many, who are, like yourself, senators in the State, and sons of the holy Church! It is, however, hazardous to give them this exhortation: they may refuse to follow it, and the enemies of the Church will take advantage of this to deceive the weak, as if they had gained a victory over us in the minds of those who disregarded our counsel. But it is safe for me to express gratitude to you; for you have already done that by

which, in the emancipation of those who were weak, the enemies of the Church are confounded. I have therefore thought it sufficient to ask you to read this letter with friendly boldness to any to whom you can do so on the ground of their Christian profession. For thus learning what you have achieved, they will believe that that, about which as an impossibility they are now indifferent, can be done in Africa. As to the snares which these heretics contrive in the perversity of their hearts, I have resolved not to speak of them in this letter, because I have been only amused at their imagining that they could gain any advantage over your mind, which Christ holds as His possession. You will hear them, however, from my brethren, whom I earnestly commend to your Excellency: they fear lest you should disdain some things which to you might seem unnecessary in connection with the great and unlooked for salvation of those men over whom, in consequence of your work, their Catholic Mother rejoices.

LETTER LIX

(A.D. 401.)

To My Most Blessed Lord and Venerable Father Victorinus, My Brother in the Priesthood, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Your summons to the Council reached me on the fifth day before the Ides of November, in the evening, and found me very much indisposed, so that I could not possibly attend. However, I submit to your pious and wise judgment whether certain perplexities which the summons occasioned were due to my own ignorance or to sufficient grounds. I read in that summons that it was written also to the districts of Mauritania, which, as we know, have their own primates. Now, if these provinces were to be represented in a Council held in Numidia, it was by all means proper that the names of some of the more eminent bishops who are in Mauritania should be attached to the circular letter; and not finding this, I have been greatly surprised. Moreover, to the bishops of Numidia it has been addressed in such a confused and careless manner, that my own name I find in the third place, although I know my proper order to be much further down in the roll of bishops. This wrongs others, and grieves me. Moreover, our venerable father and colleague, Xantippus of Tagosa, says that the primacy belongs to

him, and by very many he is regarded as the primate, and he issues such letters as you have sent. Even supposing that this be a mistake, which your Holiness can easily discover and correct, certainly his name should not have been omitted in the summons which you have issued. If his name had been placed in the middle of the list, and not in the first line, I would have wondered much; how much greater, then, is my surprise, when I find in it no mention whatever made of him who, above all others, behoved to be present in the Council, that by the bishops of all the Numidian churches this question of the order of the primacy might be debated before any other!

2. For these reasons, I might even hesitate to come to the Council, lest the summons in which so many flagrant mistakes are found should be a forgery; even were I not hindered both by the shortness of the notice, and manifold other important engagements standing in the way. I therefore beg you, most blessed prelate, to excuse me, and to be pleased to give attention, in the first instance, to bring about between your Holiness and the aged Xantippus a cordial mutual understanding as to the question which of you ought to summon the Council; or at least, as I think would be still better, let both of you, without prejudging the claim of either, conjointly call together our colleagues, especially those who have been nearly as long in the episcopate as yourselves, who may easily discover and decide which of you has truth on his side, that this question may be settled first among a few of you; and then, when the mistake has been rectified, let the younger bishops be gathered together, who, having no others whom it would be either possible or right for them to accept as witnesses in this matter but yourselves, are meanwhile at a loss to know to which of you the preference is to be given.

I have sent this letter sealed with a ring which represents a man’s profile.

LETTER LX

(A.D. 401.)

To Father Aurelius, My Lord Most Blessed, and Revered with Most Justly Merited Respect, My Brother in the Priesthood, Most Sincerely Beloved, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I have received no letter from your Holiness since we parted; but I have now read a letter of your Grace concerning Donatus and his brother, and I have long hesitated as to the reply which I ought to give. After frequently reconsidering what is in such a case conducive to the welfare of those whom we serve in Christ, and seek to nourish in Him, nothing has occurred to me which would alter my opinion that it is not right to give occasion for God's servants to think that promotion to a better position is more readily given to those who have become worse. Such a rule would make monks less careful of falling, and a most grievous wrong would be done to the order of clergy, if those who have deserted their duty as monks be chosen to serve as clergy, seeing that our custom is to select for that office only the more tried and superior men of those who continue faithful to their calling as monks; unless, perchance, the common people are to be taught to joke at our expense, saying "a bad monk makes a good clerk," as they are wont to say that "a poor flute-player makes a good singer." It would be an intolerable calamity if we were to encourage the monks to such fatal pride, and were to consent to brand with so grievous disgrace the clerical order to which we ourselves belong: seeing that sometimes even a good monk is scarcely qualified to be a good clerk; for though he be proficient in self-denial, he may lack the necessary instruction, or be disqualified by some personal defect.

2. I believe, however, that your Holiness understood these monks to have left the monastery with my consent, in order that they might rather be useful to the people of their own district; but this was not the case: of their own accord they departed, of their own accord they deserted us, notwithstanding my resisting, from a regard to their welfare, to the utmost of my power. As to Donatus, seeing that he has obtained ordination before we could arrive at any decision in the Council as to his case, do as your wisdom may guide you; it may be that his proud obstinacy has been subdued. But as to his brother, who was the chief cause of Donatus leaving the monastery, I know not what to write, since you know what I think of him. I do not presume to oppose what may seem best to one of your wisdom, rank, and piety; and I hope with all my heart that you will do whatever you judge most profitable for the members of the Church.

LETTER LXI

(A.D. 401.)

To His well-Beloved and honourable Brother Theodorus, Bishop Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I have resolved to commit to writing in this letter what I said when you and I were conversing together as to the terms on which we would welcome clergy of the party of Donatus desiring to become Catholics, in order that, if any one asked you what are our sentiments and practice in regard to this, you might exhibit these by producing what I have written with my own hand. Be assured, therefore, that we detest nothing in the Donatist clergy but that which renders them schismatics and heretics, namely, their dissent from the unity and truth of the Catholic Church, in their not remaining in peace with the people of God, which is spread abroad throughout the world, and in their refusing to recognise the baptism of Christ in those who have received it. This their grievous error, therefore, we reject; but the good name of God which they bear, and His sacrament which they have received, we acknowledge in them, and embrace it with reverence and love. But for this very reason we grieve over their wandering, and long to gain them for God by the love of Christ, that they may have within the peace of the Church that holy sacrament for their salvation, which they meanwhile have beyond the pale of the Church for their destruction. If, therefore, there be taken away from between us the evil things which proceed from men, and if the good which comes from God and belongs to both parties in common be duly honoured, there will ensue such brotherly concord, such amiable peace, that the love of Christ shall gain the victory in men's hearts over the temptation of the devil.

2. When, therefore, any come to us from the party of Donatus, we do not welcome the evil which belongs to them, viz. their error and schism: these, the only obstacles to our concord, are removed from between us, and we embrace our brethren, standing with them, as the apostle says, in "the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace," and acknowledging in them the good things which are divine, as their holy baptism, the blessing conferred by ordination, their profession of self-denial, their vow of celibacy, their faith in the Trinity, and such like; all which things were indeed theirs before, but

“profited them nothing, because they had not charity.” For what truth is there in the profession of Christian charity by him who does not embrace Christian unity? When, therefore, they come to the Catholic Church, they gain thereby not what they already possessed, but something which they had not before,—namely, that those things which they possessed begin then to be profitable to them. For in the Catholic Church they obtain the root of charity in the bond of peace and in the fellowship of unity: so that all the sacraments of truth which they hold serve not to condemn, but to deliver them. The branches ought not to boast that their wood is the wood of the vine, not of the thorn; for if they do not live by union to the root, they shall, notwithstanding their outward appearance, be cast into the fire. But of some branches which were broken off the apostle says that “God is able to graft them in again.” Wherefore, beloved brother, if you see any one of the Donatist party in doubt as to the place into which they shall be welcomed by us, show them this writing in my own hand, which is familiar to you, and let them have it to read if they desire it; for “I call God for a record upon my soul,” that I will welcome them on such terms as that they shall retain not only the baptism of Christ which they have received, but also the honour due to their vow of holiness and to their self-denying virtue.

LETTER LXII

(A.D. 401)

Alypius, Augustin, and Samsucius, and the Brethren Who are with Them, Send Greeting in the Lord to Severus, Their Lord Most Blessed, and with All Reverence Most Beloved, Their Brother in Truth, and Partner in the Priestly Office, and to All the Brethren Who are with Him.

1. When we came to Subsana, and inquired into the things which had been done there in our absence and against our will, we found some things exactly as we had heard reported, and some things otherwise, but all things calling for lamentation and forbearance; and we endeavoured, in so far as the Lord gave His help, to put them right by reproof, admonition, and prayer. What distressed us most, since your departure from the place, was that the brethren who went thence to you were allowed to go without a guide, which we beg you to excuse, as having taken place not from malice,

but from an excessive caution. For, believing as they did that these men were sent by our son Timotheus in order to move you to be displeased with us, and being anxious to reserve the whole matter untouched until we should come (when they hoped to see you along with us), they thought that the departure of these men would be prevented if they were not furnished with a guide. That they did wrong in thus attempting to detain the brethren we admit,—nay, who could doubt it? Hence also arose the story which was told to Fossor, that Timotheus had already gone to you with these same brethren. This was wholly false, but the statement was not made by the presbyter; and that Carcedonius our brother was wholly unaware of all these things, was most clearly proved to us by all the ways in which such things are susceptible of proof.

2. But why spend more time on these circumstances! Our son Timotheus, being greatly disturbed because he found himself, altogether in spite of his own wish, in such unlooked for perplexity, informed us that, when you were urging him to serve God at Subsana, he broke forth vehemently, and swore that he would never on any account leave you. And when we questioned him as to his present wish, he replied that by this oath he was precluded from going to the place which we had previously wished him to occupy, even though his mind were set at rest by the evidence given as to his freedom from restraint. When we showed him that he would not be guilty of violating his oath if a bar was put in the way of his being with you, not by him, but by you, in order to avoid a scandal; seeing that he could by his oath bind only his own will, not yours, and he admitted that you had not bound yourself reciprocally by your oath; at last he said, as it became a servant of God and a son of the Church to say, that he would without hesitation agree to whatever should seem good to us, along with your Holiness, to appoint concerning him. We therefore ask, and by the love of Christ implore you, in the exercise of your sagacity, to remember all that we spoke to each other in this matter, and to make us glad by your reply to this letter. For “we that are strong” (if, indeed, amid so great and perilous temptations, we may presume to claim this title) are bound, as the apostle says, to “bear the infirmities of the weak.” Our brother Timotheus has not written to your Holiness, because your venerable brother has reported to all

you. May you be joyful in the Lord, and remember us, our lord most blessed, and with all reverence most beloved, our brother in sincerity.

LETTER LXIII

(A.D. 401.)

To Severus, My lord Most Blessed and Venerable, a Brother Worthy of Being Embraced with Unfeigned Love, and Partner in the Priestly Office, and to the Brethren that are With Him, Augustin and the Brethren with Him Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. If I frankly say all that this case compels me to say, you may perhaps ask me where is my concern for the preservation of charity but if I may not thus say all that the case demands, may I not ask you where is the liberty conceded to friendship? Hesitating between these two alternatives, I have chosen to write so much as may justify me without accusing you. You wrote that you were surprised that we, notwithstanding our great grief at what was done, acquiesced in it, when it might have been remedied by our correction; as if when things wrongly done have been afterwards, so far as possible, corrected, they are no longer to be deplored; and more particularly, as if it were absurd for us to acquiesce in that which, though wrongly done, it is impossible for us to undo. Wherefore, my brother, sincerely esteemed as such, your surprise may cease. For Timotheus was ordained a subdeacon at Subsana against my advice and desire, at the time when the decision of his case was still pending as the subject of deliberation and conference between us. Behold me still grieving over this, although he has now returned to you; and we do not regret that in our consenting to his return we obeyed your will.

2. May it please you to hear how, by rebuke, admonition, and prayer, we had, even before he went away from this place, corrected the wrong which had been done, lest it should appear to you that up to that time nothing had been corrected by us because he had not returned to you. By rebuke, addressing ourselves first to Timotheus himself, because he did not obey you, but went away to your Holiness without consulting our brother Carcedonius, to which act of his the origin of this affliction is to be traced;

and afterwards censuring the presbyter (Carcedonius) and Verinus, through whom we found that the ordination of Timotheus had been managed. When all of these admitted, under our rebuke, that in all the things alleged they had done wrong and begged forgiveness, we would have acted with undue haughtiness if we had refused to believe that they were sufficiently corrected. For they could not make that to be not done which had been done; and we by our rebuke were not expecting or desiring to do more than bring them to acknowledge their faults, and grieve over them. By admonition: first, in warning all never to dare again to do such things, lest they should incur God's wrath; and then especially charging Timotheus, who said that he was bound only by his oath to go to your Grace, that if your Holiness, considering all that we had spoken together on the matter, should, as we hoped might be the case, decide not to have him with you, out of regard for the weak for whom Christ died, who might be offended, and for the discipline of the Church, which it is perilous to disregard, seeing that he had begun to be a reader in this diocese,—he should then, being free from the bond of his oath, devote himself with undisturbed mind to the service of God, to whom we are to give an account of all our actions. By such admonitions as we were able to give, we had also persuaded our brother Carcedonius to submit with perfect resignation to whatever might be seen to be necessary in regard to him for the preservation of the discipline of the Church. By prayer, moreover, we had laboured to correct ourselves, commending both the guidance and the issues of our counsels to the mercy of God, and seeking that if any sinful anger had wounded us, we might be cured by taking refuge under His healing right hand. Behold how much we had corrected by rebuke, admonition, and prayer!

3. And now, considering the bond of charity, that we may not be possessed by Satan,—for we are not ignorant of his devices,—what else ought we to have done than obey your wish, seeing that you thought that what had been done could be remedied in no other way than by our giving back to your authority him in whose person you complained that wrong had been done to you. Even our brother Carcedonius himself consented to this, not indeed without much distress of spirit, on account of which I entreat you to pray for him, but eventually without opposition, believing that he submitted to Christ in submitting to you. Nay, even when I still thought it might be our

duty to consider whether I should not write a second letter to you, my brother, while Timotheus still remained here, he himself, with filial reverence, feared to displease you, and cut my deliberations short by not only consenting, but even urging, that Timotheus should be restored to you.

4. I therefore, brother Severus, leave my case to be decided by you. For I am sure that Christ dwells in your heart, and by Him I beseech you to ask counsel from Him, submitting your mind to His direction regarding the question whether, when a man had begun to be a Reader in the Church confided to my care, having read, not once only, but a second and a third time, at Subsana, and in company with the presbyter of the Church of Subsana had done the same also at Turres and Ciza and Verbalis, it is either possible or right that he be pronounced to have never been a Reader. And as we have, in obedience to God, corrected that which was afterwards done contrary to our will, do you also, in obedience to Him, correct in like manner that which was formerly, through your not knowing the facts of the case, wrongly done. For I have no fear of your failing to perceive what a door is opened for breaking down the discipline of the Church, if, when a clergyman of any church has sworn to one of another church that he will not leave him, that other encourage him to remain with him, alleging that he does so that he may not be the occasion of the breaking of an oath; seeing that he who forbids this, and declines to allow the other to remain with him (because that other could by his vow bind only his own conscience), unquestionably preserves the order which is necessary to peace in a way which none can justly censure.

LETTER LXIV

(A.D. 401.)

To My Lord Quintianus, My Most Beloved Brother and Fellow-Presbyter, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. We do not disdain to look upon bodies which are defective in beauty, especially seeing that our souls themselves are not yet so beautiful as we hope that they shall be when He who is of ineffable beauty shall have appeared, in whom, though now we see Him not, we believe; for then “we

shall be like Him,” when “we shall see Him as He is.” If you receive my counsel in a kindly and brotherly spirit, I exhort you to think thus of your soul, as we do of our own, and not presumptuously imagine that it is already perfect in beauty; but, as the apostle enjoins, “rejoice in hope,” and obey the precept which he annexes to this, when he says, “Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation:” “for we are saved by hope,” as he says again; “but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Let not this patience be wanting in thee, but with a good conscience “wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.”

2. It is, of course, obvious that if you come to us while debarred from communion with the venerable bishop Aurelius, you cannot be admitted to communion with us; but we would act towards you with that same charity which we are assured shall guide his conduct. Your coming to us, however, should not on this account be embarrassing to us, because the duty of submission to this, out of regard to the discipline of the Church, ought to be felt by yourself, especially if you have the approval of your own conscience, which is known to yourself and to God. For if Aurelius has deferred the examination of your case, he has done this not from dislike to you, but from the pressure of other engagements; and if you knew his circumstances as well as you know your own, the delay would cause you neither surprise nor sorrow. That it is the same with myself, I entreat you to believe on my word, as you are equally unable to know how I am occupied. But there are other bishops older than I am, and both in authority more worthy and in place more convenient, by whose help you may more easily expedite the affairs now pending in the Church committed to your charge. I have not, however, failed to make mention of your distress, and of the complaint in your letter to my venerable brother and colleague the aged Aurelius, whom I esteem with the respect due to his worth; I took care to acquaint him with your innocence of the things laid to your charge, by sending him a copy of your letter. It was not until a day, or at the most two, before Christmas, that I received the letter in which you informed me of his intention to visit the Church at Badesile, by which you fear lest the people be disturbed and influenced against you. I do not therefore presume to

address by letter your people; for I could write a reply to any who had written to me, but how could I put myself forward unasked to write to a people not committed to my care?

3. Nevertheless, what I now say to you, who alone have written to me, may, through you, reach others who should hear it. I charge you then, in the first place, not to bring the Church into reproach by reading in the public assemblies those writings which the Canon of the Church has not acknowledged; for by these, heretics, and especially the Manichaeans (of whom I hear that some are lurking, not without encouragement, in your district), are accustomed to subvert the minds of the inexperienced. I am amazed that a man of your wisdom should admonish me to forbid the reception into the monastery of those who have come from you to us, in order that a decree of the Council may be obeyed, and at the same time should forget another decree of the same Council, declaring what are the canonical Scriptures which ought to be read to the people. Read again the proceedings of the Council, and commit them to memory: you will there find that the Canon which you refer to as prohibiting the indiscriminate reception of applicants for admission to a monastery, was not framed in regard to laymen, but applies to the clergy alone. It is true there is no mention of monasteries in the canon; but it is laid down in general, that no one may receive a clergyman belonging to another diocese [except in such a way as upholds the discipline of the Church]. Moreover, it has been enacted in a recent Council, that any who desert a monastery, or are expelled from one, shall not be elsewhere admitted either to clerical office or to the charge of a monastery. If, therefore, you are in any measure disturbed regarding Privatio, let me inform you that he has not yet been received by us into the monastery; but that I have submitted his case to the aged Aurelius, and will act according to his decision. For it seems strange to me, if a man can be reckoned a Reader who has read only once in public, and on that occasion read writings which are not canonical. If for this reason he is regarded as an ecclesiastical reader, it follows that the writing which he read must be esteemed as sanctioned by the Church. But if the writing be not sanctioned by the Church as canonical, it follows that, although a man may have read it to a congregation, he is not thereby made an ecclesiastical reader, [but is, as

before, a layman]. Nevertheless I must, in regard to the young man in question, abide by the decision of the arbiter whom I have named.

4. As to the people of Vigesile, who are to us as well as to you beloved in the bowels of Christ, if they have refused to accept a bishop who has been deposed by a plenary Council in Africa, they act wisely, and cannot be compelled to yield, nor ought to be. And whoever shall attempt to compel them by violence to receive him, will show plainly what is his character, and will make men well understand what his real character was at an earlier time, when he would have had them believe no evil of him. For no one more effectually discovers the worthlessness of his cause, than the man who, employing the secular power, or any other kind of violent means, endeavours by agitating and complaining to recover the ecclesiastical rank which he has forfeited. For his desire is not to yield to Christ service which He claims, but to usurp over Christians an authority which they disown. Brethren, be cautious; great is the craft of the devil, but Christ is the wisdom of God.

LETTER LXV

(A.D. 402.)

To the Aged Xantippus, My Lord Most Blessed and Worthy of Veneration, and My Father and Colleague in the Priestly Office, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Saluting your Excellency with the respect due to your worth, and earnestly seeking an interest in your prayers, I beg to submit to the consideration of your wisdom the case of a certain Abundantius, ordained a presbyter in the domain of Strabonia, belonging to my diocese. He had begun to be unfavourably reported of, through his not walking in the way which becomes the servants of God; and I being on this account alarmed, though not believing the rumours without examination, was made more watchful of his conduct, and devoted some pains to obtain, if possible, indisputable evidences of the evil courses with which he was charged. The first thing which I ascertained was, that he had embezzled the money of a countryman, entrusted to him for religious purposes, and could give no

satisfactory account of his stewardship. The next thing proved against him, and admitted by his own confession, was, that on Christmas day, on which the fast was observed by the Church of Gippe as by all the other Churches, after taking leave of his colleague the presbyter of Gippe, as if going to his own church about 11 A.M., he remained, without having any ecclesiastic in his company, in the same parish, and dined, supped, and spent the night in the house of a woman of ill fame. It happened that lodging in the same place was one of our clergy of Hippo, who had gone thither; and as the facts were known beyond dispute to this witness, Abundantius could not deny the charge. As to the things which he did deny, I left them to the divine tribunal, passing sentence upon him only in regard to those things which he had not been permitted to conceal. I was afraid to leave him in charge of a Church, especially of one placed as his was, in the very midst of rabid and barking heretics. And when he begged me to give him a letter with a statement of his case to the presbyter of the parish of Armema, in the district of Bulla, from which he had come to us, so as to prevent any exaggerated suspicion there of his character, and in order that he might there live, if possible, a more consistent life, having no duties as a presbyter, I was moved by compassion to do as he desired. At the same time, it was very specially incumbent on me to submit to your wisdom these facts, lest any deception should be practised upon you.

2. I pronounced sentence in his case one hundred days before Easter Sunday, which falls this year on the 7th of April. I have taken care to acquaint you with the date, because of the decree of Council, which I also did not conceal from him, but explained to him the law of the Church, that if he thought anything could be done to reverse my decision, unless he began proceedings with this view within a year, no one would, after the lapse of that time, listen to his pleading. For my own part, my lord most blessed, and father worthy of all veneration, I assure you that if I did not think that these instances of vicious conversation in an ecclesiastic, especially when accompanied with an evil reputation, deserved to be visited with the punishment appointed by the Council, I would be compelled now to attempt to sift things which cannot be known, and either to condemn the accused upon doubtful evidence, or acquit him for want of proof. When a presbyter, upon a day of fasting which was observed as such also in the

place in which he was, having taken leave of his colleague in the ministry in that place, and being unattended by any ecclesiastic, ventured to tarry in the house of a woman of ill fame, and to dine and sup and spend the night there, it seemed to me, whatever others might think, that he behoved to be deposed from his office, as I durst not commit to his charge a Church of God. If it should so happen that a different opinion be held by the ecclesiastical judges to whom he may appeal, seeing that it has been decreed by the Council that the decision of six bishops be final in the case of a presbyter, let who will commit to him a Church within his jurisdiction, I confess, for my own part, that I fear to entrust any congregation whatever to persons like him, especially when nothing in the way of general good character can be alleged as a reason for excusing these delinquencies; lest, if he were to break forth into some more ruinous wickedness, I should be compelled with sorrow to blame myself for the harm done by his crime.

LETTER LXVI

(A.D. 402.)

Addressed, Without Salutation, to Crispinus, the Donatist Bishop of Calama.

1. You ought to have been influenced by the fear of God; but since, in your work of rebaptizing the Mappalians, you have chosen to take advantage of the fear with which as man you could inspire them, let me ask you what hinders the order of the sovereign from being carried out in the province, when the order of the governor of the province has been so fully enforced in a village? If you compare the persons concerned, you are but a vassal in possession; he is the Emperor. If you compare the positions of both, you are in a property, he is on a throne; if you compare the causes maintained by both, his aim is to heal division, and yours is to rend unity in twain. But we do not bid you stand in awe of man: though we might take steps to compel you to pay, according to the imperial decree, ten pounds of gold as the penalty of your outrage. Perhaps you might be unable to pay the fine imposed upon those who rebaptize members of the Church, having been involved in so much expense in buying people whom you might compel to submit to the rite. But, as I have said, we do not bid you be afraid of man:

rather let Christ fill you with fear. I should like to know what answer you could give Him, if He said to you: “Crispinus, was it a great price which you paid in order to buy the fear of the Mappalian peasantry; and does My death, the price paid by Me to purchase the love of all nations, seem little in your eyes? Was the money which was counted out from your purse in acquiring these serfs in order to their being rebaptized, a more costly sacrifice than the blood which flowed from My side in redeeming the nations in order to their being baptized?” I know that, if you would listen to Christ, you might hear many more such appeals, and might, even by the possession which you have obtained, be warned how impious are the things which you have spoken against Christ. For if you think that your title to hold what you have bought with money is sure by human law, how much more sure, by divine law, is Christ’s title to that which He hath bought with His own blood! And it is true that He of whom it is written, “He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth,” shall hold with invincible might all which He has purchased; but how can you expect with any assurance to retain that which you think you have made your own by purchase in Africa, when you affirm that Christ has lost the whole world, and been left with Africa alone as His portion?

2. But why multiply words? If these Mappalians have passed of their own free will into your communion, let them hear both you and me on the question which divides us,—the words of each of us being written down, and translated into the Punic tongue after having been attested by our signatures; and then, all pressure through fear of their superior being removed, let these vassals choose what they please. For by the things which we shall say it will be made manifest whether they remain in error under coercion, or hold what they believe to be truth with their own consent. They either understand these matters, or they do not: if they do not, how could you dare to transfer them in their ignorance to your communion? and if they do, let them, as I have said, hear both sides, and act freely for themselves. If there be any communities that have passed over from you to us, which you believe to have yielded to the pressure of their superiors, let the same be done in their case; let them hear both sides, and choose for themselves. Now, if you reject this proposal, who can fail to be convinced that your reliance is not upon the force of truth? But you ought to beware of the wrath

of God both here and hereafter. I adjure you by Christ to give a reply to what I have written.

LETTER LXVII

(A.D. 402.)

To My Lord Most Beloved and Longed For, My Honoured Brother in Christ, and Fellow-Presbyter, Jerome, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. I have heard that my letter has come to your hand. I have not yet received a reply, but I do not on this account question your affection; doubtless something has hitherto prevented you. Wherefore I know and avow that my prayer should be, that God would put it in your power to forward your reply, for He has already given you power to prepare it, seeing that you can do so with the utmost ease if you feel disposed.

Chap. II

2. I have hesitated whether to give credence or not to a certain report which has reached me; but I felt that I ought not to hesitate as to writing a few lines to you regarding the matter. To be brief, I have heard that some brethren have told your Charity that I have written a book against you and have sent it to Rome. Be assured that this is false: I call God to witness that I have not done this. But if perchance there be some things in some of my writings in which I am found to have been of a different opinion from you, I think you ought to know, or if it cannot be certainly known, at least to believe, that such things have been written not with a view of contradicting you, but only of stating my own views. In saying this, however, let me assure you that not only am I most ready to hear in a brotherly spirit the objections which you may entertain to anything in my writings which has displeased you, but I entreat, nay implore you, to acquaint me with them; and thus I shall be made glad either by the correction of my mistake, or at least by the expression of your goodwill.

3. Oh that it were in my power, by our living near each other, if not under the same roof, to enjoy frequent and sweet conference with you in the Lord! Since, however, this is not granted, I beg you to take pains that this one way in which we can be together in the Lord be kept up; nay more, improved and perfected. Do not refuse to write me in return, however seldom.

Greet with my respects our holy brother Paulinianus, and all the brethren who with you, and because of you, rejoice in the Lord. May you, remembering us, be heard by the Lord in regard to all your holy desires, my lord most beloved and longed for, my honoured brother in Christ.

LETTER LXVIII

(A.D. 402.)

To Augustin, My Lord, Truly Holy and Most Blessed Father, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ.

1. When my kinsman, our holy son Asterius, subdeacon, was just on the point of beginning his journey, the letter of your Grace arrived, in which you clear yourself of the charge of having sent to Rome a book written against your humble servant. I had not heard that charge; but by our brother Sysinnius, deacon, copies of a letter addressed by some one apparently to me have come hither. In the said letter I am exhorted to sing the palinodia, confessing mistake in regard to a paragraph of the apostle’s writing, and to imitate Stesichorus, who, vacillating between disparagement and praises of Helen, recovered, by praising her, the eyesight which he had forfeited by speaking against her. Although the style and the method of argument appeared to be yours, I must frankly confess to your Excellency that I did not think it right to assume without examination the authenticity of a letter of which I had only seen copies, lest perchance, if offended by my reply, you should with justice complain that it was my duty first to have made sure that you were the author, and only after that was ascertained, to address you in reply. Another reason for my delay was the protracted illness of the pious and venerable Paula. For, while occupied long in attending upon her in severe illness, I had almost forgotten your letter, or more correctly, the letter written in your name, remembering the verse, “Like music in the day

of mourning is an unseasonable discourse.” Therefore, if it is your letter, write me frankly that it is so, or send me a more accurate copy, in order that without any passionate rancour we may devote ourselves to discuss scriptural truth; and I may either correct my own mistake, or show that another has without good reason found fault with me.

2. Far be it from me to presume to attack anything which your Grace has written. For it is enough for me to prove my own views without controverting what others hold. But it is well known to one of your wisdom, that every one is satisfied with his own opinion, and that it is puerile self-sufficiency to seek, as young men have of old been wont to do, to gain glory to one’s own name by assailing men who have become renowned. I am not so foolish as to think myself insulted by the fact that you give an explanation different from mine; since you, on the other hand, are not wronged by my views being contrary to those which you maintain. But that is the kind of reproof by which friends may truly benefit each other, when each, not seeing his own bag of faults, observes, as Persius has it, the wallet borne by the other. Let me say further, love one who loves you, and do not because you are young challenge a veteran in the field of Scripture. I have had my time, and have run my course to the utmost of my strength. It is but fair that I should rest, while you in your turn run and accomplish great distances; at the same time (with your leave, and without intending any disrespect), lest it should seem that to quote from the poets is a thing which you alone can do, let me remind you of the encounter between Dares and Entellus, and of the proverb, “The tired ox treads with a firmer step.” With sorrow I have dictated these words. Would that I could receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning!

3. With his usual effrontery, Calphurnius, surnamed Lanarius, has sent me his execrable writings, which I understand that he has been at pains to disseminate in Africa also. To these I have replied in past, and shortly; and I have sent you a copy of my treatise, intending by the first opportunity to send you a larger work, when I have leisure to prepare it. In this treatise I have been careful not to offend Christian feeling in any, but only to confute the lies and hallucinations arising from his ignorance and madness.

Remember me, holy and venerable father. See how sincerely I love thee, in that I am unwilling, even when challenged, to reply, and refuse to believe you to be the author of that which in another I would sharply rebuke. Our brother Communis sends his respectful salutation.

LETTER LXIX

(A.D. 402.)

To Their Justly Beloved Lord Castorius, Their Truly Welcomed and Worthily Honoured Son, Alypius and Augustin Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. An attempt was made by the enemy of Christians to cause, by occasion of our very dear and sweet son your brother, the agitation of a most dangerous scandal within the Catholic Church, which as a mother welcomed you to her affectionate embrace when you fled from a disinherited and separated fragment into the heritage of Christ; the desire of that enemy being evidently to becloud with unseemly melancholy the calm beauty of joy which was imparted to us by the blessing of your conversion. But the Lord our God, who is compassionate and merciful, who comforteth them that are cast down, nourishing the infants, and cherishing the infirm, permitted him to gain in some measure success in this design, only to make us rejoice more over the prevention of the calamity than we grieved over the danger. For it is a far more magnanimous thing to have resigned the onerous responsibilities of the bishop’s dignity in order to save the Church from danger, than to have accepted these in order to have a share in her government. He truly proves that he was worthy of holding that office, had the interests of peace permitted him to do so, who does not insist upon retaining it when he cannot do so without endangering the peace of the Church. It has accordingly pleased God to show, by means of your brother, our beloved son Maximianus, unto the enemies of His Church, that there are within her those who seek not their own things, but the things of Jesus Christ. For in laying down that ministry of stewardship of the mysteries of God, he was not deserting his duty under the pressure of some worldly desire, but acting under the impulse of a pious love of peace, lest, on account of the honour conferred upon him, there should arise among the members of Christ an unseemly and dangerous, perhaps even fatal,

dissension. For could anything have been more infatuated and worthy of utter reprobation, than to forsake schismatics because of the peace of the Catholic Church, and then to trouble that same Catholic peace by the question of one's own rank and preferment? On the other hand, could anything be more praiseworthy, and more in accordance with Christian charity, than that, after having forsaken the frenzied pride of the Donatists, he should, in the manner of his cleaving to the heritage of Christ, give such a signal proof of humility under the power of love for the unity of the Church? As for him, therefore, we rejoice indeed that he has been proved of such stability that the storm of this temptation has not cast down what divine truth had built in his heart; and therefore we desire and pray the Lord to grant that, by his life and conversation in the future, he may make it more and more manifest how well he would have discharged the responsibilities of that office which he would have accepted if that had been his duty. May that eternal peace which is promised to the Church be given in recompense to him, who discerned that the things which were not compatible with the peace of the Church were not expedient for him!

2. As for you, our dear son, in whom we have great joy, since you are not restrained from accepting the office of bishop by any such considerations as have guided your brother in declining it, it becomes one of your disposition to devote to Christ that which is in you by His own gift. Your talents, prudence, eloquence, gravity, self-control, and everything else which adorns your conversation, are the gifts of God. To what service can they be more fittingly devoted than to His by whom they were bestowed, in order that they may be preserved, increased, perfected, and rewarded by Him? Let them not be devoted to the service of this world, lest with it they pass away and perish. We know that, in dealing with you, it is not necessary to insist much on your reflecting, as you may so easily do, upon the hopes of vain men, their insatiable desires, and the uncertainty of life. Away, therefore, with every expectation of deceptive and earthly felicity which your mind had grasped: labour in the vineyard of God, where the fruit is sure, where so many promises have already received so large measure of fulfilment, that it would be the height of madness to despair as to those which remain. We beseech you by the divinity and humanity of Christ, and by the peace of that heavenly city where we receive eternal rest after labouring for the time of

our pilgrimage, to take the place as the bishop of the Church of Vagina which your brother has resigned, not under ignominious deposition, but by magnanimous concession. Let that people for whom we expect the richest increase of blessings through your mind and tongue, endowed and adorned by the gifts of God,—let that people, we say, perceive through you, that in what your brother has done, he was consulting not his own indolence, but their peace.

We have given orders that this letter be not read to you until those to whom you are necessary hold you in actual possession. For we hold you in the bond of spiritual love, because to us also you are very necessary as a colleague. Our reason for not coming in person to you, you shall afterwards learn.

LETTER LXX

(A.D. 402.)

This letter is addressed by Alypius and Augustin to Naucelio, a person through whom they had discussed the question of the Donatist schism with Clarentius, an aged Donatist bishop (probably the same with the Numidian bishop of Tabraca, who took part in the Conference at Carthage in 411 a.d.). The ground traversed in the letter is the same as in pages 296 and 297, in Letter LI., regarding the inconsistencies of the Donatists in the case of Felicianus of Musti. We therefore leave it untranslated.

LETTER LXXI

(A.D. 403.)

To My Venerable Lord Jerome, My Esteemed and Holy Brother and Fellow-Presbyter, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. Never since I began to write to you, and to long for your writing in return, have I met with a better opportunity for our exchanging communications than now, when my letter is to be carried to you by a most faithful servant and minister of God, who is also a very dear friend of mine,

namely, our son Cyprian, deacon. Through him I expect to receive a letter from you with all the certainty which is in a matter of this kind possible. For the son whom I have named will not be found wanting in respect of zeal in asking, or persuasive influence in obtaining a reply from you; nor will he fail in diligently keeping, promptly bearing, and faithfully delivering the same. I only pray that if I be in any way worthy of this, the Lord may give His help and favour to your heart and to my desire, so that no higher will may hinder that which your brotherly goodwill inclines you to do.

2. As I have sent you two letters already to which I have received no reply, I have resolved to send you at this time copies of both of them, for I suppose that they never reached you. If they did reach you, and your replies have failed, as may be the case, to reach me, send me a second time the same as you sent before, if you have copies of them preserved: if you have not, dictate again what I may read, and do not refuse to send to these former letters the answer for which I have been waiting so long. My first letter to you, which I had prepared while I was a presbyter, was to be delivered to you by a brother of ours, Profuturus, who afterwards became my colleague in the episcopate, and has since then departed from this life; but he could not then bear it to you in person, because at the very time when he intended to begin his journey, he was prevented by his ordination to the weighty office of bishop, and shortly afterwards he died. This letter I have resolved also to send at this time, that you may know how long I have cherished a burning desire for conversation with you, and with what reluctance I submit to the remote separation which prevents my mind from having access to yours through our bodily senses, my brother, most amiable and honoured among the members of the Lord.

Chap. II

3. In this letter I have further to say, that I have since heard that you have translated Job out of the original Hebrew, although in your own translation of the same prophet from the Greek tongue we had already a version of that book. In that earlier version you marked with asterisks the words found in the Hebrew but wanting in the Greek, and with obelisks the words found in the Greek but wanting in the Hebrew; and this was done with such astonishing exactness, that in some places we have every word

distinguished by a separate asterisk, as a sign that these words are in the Hebrew, but not in the Greek. Now, however, in this more recent version from the Hebrew, there is not the same scrupulous fidelity as to the words; and it perplexes any thoughtful reader to understand either what was the reason for marking the asterisks in the former version with so much care that they indicate the absence from the Greek version of even the smallest grammatical particles which have not been rendered from the Hebrew, or what is the reason for so much less care having been taken in this recent version from the Hebrew to secure that these same particles be found in their own places. I would have put down here an extract or two in illustration of this criticism; but at present I have not access to the Ms. of the translation from the Hebrew. Since, however, your quick discernment anticipates and goes beyond not only what I have said, but also what I meant to say, you already understand, I think, enough to be able, by giving the reason for the plan which you have adopted, to explain what perplexes me.

4. For my part, I would much rather that you would furnish us with a translation of the Greek version of the canonical Scriptures known as the work of the Seventy translators. For if your translation begins to be more generally read in many churches, it will be a grievous thing that, in the reading of Scripture, differences must arise between the Latin Churches and the Greek Churches, especially seeing that the discrepancy is easily condemned in a Latin version by the production of the original in Greek, which is a language very widely known; whereas, if any one has been disturbed by the occurrence of something to which he was not accustomed in the translation taken from the Hebrew, and alleges that the new translation is wrong, it will be found difficult, if not impossible, to get at the Hebrew documents by which the version to which exception is taken may be defended. And when they are obtained, who will submit to have so many Latin and Greek authorities pronounced to be in the wrong? Besides all this, Jews, if consulted as to the meaning of the Hebrew text, may give a different opinion from yours: in which case it will seem as if your presence were indispensable, as being the only one who could refute their view; and it would be a miracle if one could be found capable of acting as arbiter between you and them.

Chap. III

5. A certain bishop, one of our brethren, having introduced in the church over which he presides the reading of your version, came upon a word in the book of the prophet Jonah, of which you have given a very different rendering from that which had been of old familiar to the senses and memory of all the worshippers, and had been chanted for so many generations in the church. Thereupon arose such a tumult in the congregation, especially among the Greeks, correcting what had been read, and denouncing the translation as false, that the bishop was compelled to ask the testimony of the Jewish residents (it was in the town of Oea). These, whether from ignorance or from spite, answered that the words in the Hebrew Mss. were correctly rendered in the Greek version, and in the Latin one taken from it. What further need I say? The man was compelled to correct your version in that passage as if it had been falsely translated, as he desired not to be left without a congregation,—a calamity which he narrowly escaped. From this case we also are led to think that you may be occasionally mistaken. You will also observe how great must have been the difficulty if this had occurred in those writings which cannot be explained by comparing the testimony of languages now in use.

Chap. IV

6. At the same time, we are in no small measure thankful to God for the work in which you have translated the Gospels from the original Greek, because in almost every passage we have found nothing to object to, when we compared it with the Greek Scriptures. By this work, any disputant who supports an old false translation is either convinced or confuted with the utmost ease by the production and collation of Mss. And if, as indeed very rarely happens, something be found to which exception may be taken, who would be so unreasonable as not to excuse it readily in a work so useful that it cannot be too highly praised? I wish you would have the kindness to open up to me what you think to be the reason of the frequent discrepancies between the text supported by the Hebrew codices and the Greek Septuagint version. For the latter has no mean authority, seeing that it has obtained so wide circulation, and was the one which the apostles used, as is not only proved by looking to the text itself, but has also been, as I remember,

affirmed by yourself. You would therefore confer upon us a much greater boon if you gave an exact Latin translation of the Greek Septuagint version: for the variations found in the different codices of the Latin text are intolerably numerous; and it is so justly open to suspicion as possibly different from what is to be found in the Greek, that one has no confidence in either quoting it or proving anything by its help.

I thought that this letter was to be a short one, but it has somehow been as pleasant to me to go on with it as if I were talking with you. I conclude with entreating you by the Lord kindly to send me a full reply, and thus give me, so far as is in your power, the pleasure of your presence.

LETTER LXXII

(A.D. 404.)

To Augustin, My Lord Truly Holy, and Most Blessed Father, Jerome Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. You are sending me letter upon letter, and often urging me to answer a certain letter of yours, a copy of which, without your signature, had reached me through our brother Sysinnius, deacon, as I have already written, which letter you tell me that you entrusted first to our brother Profuturus, and afterwards to some one else; but that Profuturus was prevented from finishing his intended journey, and having been ordained a bishop, was removed by sudden death; and the second messenger, whose name you do not give, was afraid of the perils of the sea, and gave up the voyage which he had intended. These things being so, I am at a loss to express my surprise that the same letter is reported to be in the possession of most of the Christians in Rome, and throughout Italy, and has come to every one but myself, to whom alone it was ostensibly sent. I wonder at this all the more, because the brother Sysinnius aforesaid tells me that he found it among the rest of your published works, not in Africa, not in your possession, but in an island of the Adriatic some five years ago.

2. True friendship can harbour no suspicion; a friend must speak to his friend as freely as to his second self. Some of my acquaintances, vessels of Christ, of whom there is a very large number in Jerusalem and in the holy places, suggested to me that this had not been done by you in a guileless spirit, but through desire for praise and celebrity, and eclat in the eyes of the people, intending to become famous at my expense; that many might know that you challenged me, and I feared to meet you; that you had written as a man of learning, and I had by silence confessed my ignorance, and had at last found one who knew how to stop my garrulous tongue. I, however, let me say it frankly, refused at first to answer your Excellency, because I did not believe that the letter, or as I may call it (using a proverbial expression), the honeyed sword, was sent from you. Moreover, I was cautious lest I should seem to answer uncourteously a bishop of my own communion, and to censure anything in the letter of one who censured me, especially as I judged some of its statements to be tainted with heresy. Lastly, I was afraid lest you should have reason to remonstrate with me, saying, “What! had you seen the letter to be mine,—had you discovered in the signature attached to it the autograph of a hand well known to you, when you so carelessly wounded the feelings of your friend, and reproached me with that which the malice of another had conceived?”

Chap. II

3. Wherefore, as I have already written, either send me the identical letter in question subscribed with your own hand, or desist from annoying an old man, who seeks retirement in his monastic cell. If you wish to exercise or display your learning, choose as your antagonists, young, eloquent, and illustrious men, of whom it is said that many are found in Rome, who may be neither unable nor afraid to meet you, and to enter the lists with a bishop in debates concerning the Sacred Scriptures. As for me, a soldier once, but a retired veteran now, it becomes me rather to applaud the victories won by you and others, than with my worn-out body to take part in the conflict; beware lest, if you persist in demanding a reply, I call to mind the history of the way in which Quintus Maximus by his patience defeated Hannibal, who was, in the pride of youth, confident of success.

“Omnia fert aetas, animum quoque. Saepe ego longos

Cantando puerum memini me condere soles;

Nunc oblita mihi tot carmina: vox quoque Moerin

Jam fugit ipsa.”

Or rather, to quote an instance from Scripture: Barzillai of Gilead, when he declined in favour of his youthful son the kindnesses of King David and all the charms of his court, taught us that old age ought neither to desire these things, nor to accept them when offered.

4. As to your calling God to witness that you had not written a book against me, and of course had not sent to Rome what you had never written, adding that, if perchance some things were found in your works in which a different opinion from mine was advanced, no wrong had thereby been done to me, because you had, without any intention of offending me, written only what you believed to be right; I beg you to hear me with patience. You never wrote a book against me: how then has there been brought to me a copy, written by another hand, of a treatise containing a rebuke administered to me by you? How comes Italy to possess a treatise of yours which you did not write? Nay, how can you reasonably ask me to reply to that which you solemnly assure me was never written by you? Nor am I so foolish as to think that I am insulted by you, if in anything your opinion differs from mine. But if, challenging me as it were to single combat, you take exception to my views, and demand a reason for what I have written, and insist upon my correcting what you judge to be an error, and call upon me to recant it in a humble palinodi’a, and speak of your curing me of blindness; in this I maintain that friendship is wounded, and the laws of brotherly union are set at nought. Let not the world see us quarrelling like children, and giving material for angry contention between those who may become our respective supporters or adversaries. I write what I have now written, because I desire to cherish towards you pure and Christian love, and not to hide in my heart anything which does not agree with the utterance of my lips. For it does not become me, who have spent my life from youth until now, sharing the arduous labours of pious brethren in an obscure monastery, to presume to write anything against a bishop of my own communion, especially against one whom I had begun to love

before I knew him, who also sought my friendship before I sought his, and whom I rejoiced to see rising as a successor to myself in the careful study of the Scriptures. Wherefore either disown that book, if you are not its author, and give over urging me to reply to that which you never wrote; or if the book is yours, admit it frankly; so that if I write anything in self-defence, the responsibility may lie on you who gave, not on me who am forced to accept, the challenge.

Chap. III

5. You say also, that if there be anything in your writings which has displeased me, and which I would wish to correct, you are ready to receive my criticism as a brother; and you not only assure me that you would rejoice in such proof of my goodwill toward you, but you earnestly ask me to do this. I tell you again, without reserve, what I feel: you are challenging an old man, disturbing the peace of one who asks only to be allowed to be silent, and you seem to desire to display your learning. It is not for one of my years to give the impression of enviously disparaging one whom I ought rather to encourage by approbation. And if the ingenuity of perverse men finds something which they may plausibly censure in the writings even of evangelists and prophets, are you amazed if, in your books, especially in your exposition of passages in Scripture which are exceedingly difficult of interpretation, some things be found which are not perfectly correct? This I say, however, not because I can at this time pronounce anything in your works to merit censure. For, in the first place, I have never read them with attention; and in the second place, we have not beside us a supply of copies of what you have written, excepting the books of Soliloquies and Commentaries on some of the Psalms; which, if I were disposed to criticise them, I could prove to be at variance, I shall not say with my own opinion, for I am nobody, but with the interpretations of the older Greek commentators.

Farewell, my very dear friend, my son in years, my father in ecclesiastical dignity; and to this I most particularly request your attention, that henceforth you make sure that I be the first to receive whatever you may write to me.

LETTER LXXIII

(A.D. 404.)

To Jerome, My Venerable and Most Esteemed Brother and Fellow-Presbyter Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. Although I suppose that, before this reaches you, you have received through our son the deacon Cyprian, a servant of God, the letter which I sent by him, from which you would be apprised with certainty that I wrote the letter of which you mentioned that a copy had been brought to you; in consequence of which I suppose that I have begun already, like the rash Dares, to be beaten and belaboured by the missiles and the merciless fists of a second Entellus in the reply which you have written; nevertheless I answer in the meantime the letter which you have deigned to send me by our holy son Asterius, in which I have found many proofs of your most kind goodwill to me, and at the same time some signs of your having in some measure felt agrieved by me. In reading it, therefore, I was no sooner soothed by one sentence than I was buffeted in another; my wonder being especially called forth by this, that after alleging, as your reason for not rashly accepting as authentic the letter from me of which you had a copy, the fact that, offended by your reply, I might justly remonstrate with you, because you ought first to have ascertained that it was mine before answering it, you go on to command me to acknowledge the letter frankly if it is mine, or send a more reliable copy of it, in order that we may, without any bitterness of feeling, address ourselves to the discussion of scriptural doctrine. For how can we engage in such discussion without bitterness of feeling, if you have made up your mind to offend me? or, if your mind is not made up to this, what reason could I have had, when you did not offend me, for justly complaining as having been offended by you, that you ought first to have made sure that the letter was mine, and only then to have replied, that is to say, only then to have offended me? For if there had been nothing to offend me in your reply, I could have had no just ground of complaint. Accordingly, when you write such a reply to that letter as must offend me, what hope is left of our engaging without any bitterness in the

discussion of scriptural doctrine? Far be it from me to take offence if you are willing and able to prove, by incontrovertible argument, that you have apprehended more correctly than I have the meaning of that passage in Paul's Epistle [to the Galatians], or of any other text in Holy Scripture: nay, more, far be it from me to count it aught else than gain to myself, and cause of thankfulness to you, if in anything I am either informed by your teaching or set right by your correction.

2. But, my very dear brother, you could not think that I could be offended by your reply, had you not thought that you were offended by what I had written. For I could never have entertained concerning you the idea that you had not felt yourself offended by me if you so framed your reply as to offend me in return. If, on the other hand, I have been supposed by you to be capable of such preposterous folly as to take offence when you had not written in such a way as to give me occasion, you have in this already wronged me, that you have entertained such an opinion of me. But surely you who are so cautious, that although you recognised my style in the letter of which you had a copy, you refused to believe its authenticity, would not without consideration believe me to be so different from what your experience has proved me to be. For if you had good reason for seeing that I might justly complain had you hastily concluded that a letter not written by me was mine, how much more reasonably may I complain if you form, without consideration, such an estimate of myself as is contradicted by your own experience! You would not therefore go so far astray in your judgment as to believe, when you had written nothing by which I could be offended, that I would nevertheless be so foolish as to be capable of being offended by such a reply.

Chap. II

3. There can therefore be no doubt that you were prepared to reply in such a way as would offend me, if you had only indisputable evidence that the letter was mine. Accordingly, since I do not believe that you would think it right to offend me unless you had just cause, it remains for me to confess, as I now do, my fault as having been the first to offend by writing that letter which I cannot deny to be mine. Why should I strive to swim against the current, and not rather ask pardon? I therefore entreat you by the mercy of

Christ to forgive me wherein I have injured you, and not to render evil for evil by injuring me in return. For it will be an injury to me if you pass over in silence anything which you find wrong in either word or action of mine. If, indeed, you rebuke in me that which merits no rebuke, you do wrong to yourself, not to me; for far be it from one of your life and holy vows to rebuke merely from a desire to give offence, using the tongue of malice to condemn in me that which by the truth-revealing light of reason you know to deserve no blame. Therefore either rebuke kindly him whom, though he is free from fault, you think to merit rebuke; or with a father's kindness soothe him whom you cannot bring to agree with you. For it is possible that your opinion may be at variance with the truth, while notwithstanding your actions are in harmony with Christian charity: for I also shall most thankfully receive your rebuke as a most friendly action, even though the thing censured be capable of defence, and therefore ought not to have been censured; or else I shall acknowledge both your kindness and my fault, and shall be found, so far as the Lord enables me, grateful for the one, and corrected in regard to the other.

4. Why, then, shall I fear your words, hard, perhaps, like the boxing-gloves of Entellus, but certainly fitted to do me good? The blows of Entellus were intended not to heal, but to harm, and therefore his antagonist was conquered, not cured. But I, if I receive your correction calmly as a necessary medicine, shall not be pained by it. If, however, through weakness, either common to human nature or peculiar to myself, I cannot help feeling some pain from rebuke, even when I am justly reproved, it is far better to have a tumour in one's head cured, though the lance cause pain, than to escape the pain by letting the disease go on. This was clearly seen by him who said that, for the most part, our enemies who expose our faults are more useful than friends who are afraid to reprove us. For the former, in their angry recriminations, sometimes charge us with what we indeed require to correct; but the latter, through fear of destroying the sweetness of friendship, show less boldness on behalf of right than they ought. Since, therefore, you are, to quote your own comparison, an ox worn out, perhaps, as to your bodily strength by reason of years, but unimpaired in mental vigour, and toiling still assiduously and with profit in the Lord's threshing-floor; here am I, and in whatever I have spoken amiss, tread firmly on me:

the weight of your venerable age should not be grievous to me, if the chaff of my fault be so bruised under foot as to be separated from me.

5. Let me further say, that it is with the utmost affectionate yearning that I read or recollect the words at the end of your letter, “Would that I could receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning.” For my part, I say,—Would that we were even dwelling in parts of the earth less widely separated; so that if we could not meet for converse, we might at least have a more frequent exchange of letters. For as it is, so great is the distance by which we are prevented from any kind of access to each other through the eye and ear, that I remember writing to your Holiness regarding these words in the Epistle to the Galatians when I was young; and behold I am now advanced in age, and have not yet received a reply, and a copy of my letter has reached you by some strange accident earlier than the letter itself, about the transmission of which I took no small pains. For the man to whom I entrusted it neither delivered it to you nor returned it to me. So great in my esteem is the value of those of your writings which we have been able to procure, that I should prefer to all other studies the privilege, if it were attainable by me, of sitting by your side and learning from you. Since I cannot do this myself, I propose to send to you one of my sons in the Lord, that he may for my benefit be instructed by you, in the event of my receiving from you a favourable reply in regard to the matter. For I have not now, and I can never hope to have, such knowledge of the Divine Scriptures as I see you possess. Whatever abilities I may have for such study, I devote entirely to the instruction of the people whom God has entrusted to me; and I am wholly precluded by my ecclesiastical occupations from having leisure for any further prosecution of my studies than is necessary for my duty in public teaching.

Chap. III

6. I am not acquainted with the writings speaking injuriously of you, which you tell me have come into Africa. I have, however, received the reply to these which you have been pleased to send. After reading it, let me say frankly, I have been exceedingly grieved that the mischief of such painful discord has arisen between persons once so loving and intimate, and formerly united by the bond of a friendship which was well known in

almost all the Churches. In that treatise of yours, any one may see how you are keeping yourself under restraint, and holding back the stinging keenness of your indignation, lest you should render railing for railing. If, however, even in reading this reply of yours, I fainted with grief and shuddered with fear, what would be the effect produced in me by the things which he has written against you, if they should come into my possession! “Woe unto the world because of offences!” Behold the complete fulfilment of which He who is Truth foretold: “Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” For what trusting hearts can now pour themselves forth with any assurance of their confidence being reciprocated? Into whose breast may confiding love now throw itself without reserve? In short, where is the friend who may not be feared as possibly a future enemy, if the breach that we deplore could arise between Jerome and Rufinus? Oh, sad and pitiable is our portion! Who can rely upon the affection of his friends because of what he knows them to be now, when he has no foreknowledge of what they shall afterwards become? But why should I reckon it cause for sorrow, that one man is thus ignorant of what another may become, when no man knows even what he himself is afterwards to be? The utmost that he knows, and that he knows but imperfectly, is his present condition; of what he shall hereafter become he has no knowledge.

7. Do the holy and blessed angels possess not only this knowledge of their actual character, but also a foreknowledge of what they shall afterward become? If they do, I cannot see how it was possible for Satan ever to have been happy, even while he was still a good angel, knowing, as in this case he must have known, his future transgression and eternal punishment. I would wish to hear what you think as to this question, if indeed it be one which it would be profitable for us to be able to answer. But mark here what I suffer from the lands and seas which keep us, so far as the body is concerned, distant from each other. If I were myself the letter which you are now reading, you might have told me already what I have just asked; but now, when will you write me a reply? when will you get it sent away? when will it come here? when shall I receive it? And yet, would that I were sure that it would come at last, though meanwhile I must summon all the patience which I can command to endure the unwelcome but unavoidable delay! Wherefore I come back to those most delightful words of your letter,

filled with your holy longing, and I in turn appropriate them as my own: “Would that I might receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning,”—if indeed there be any sense in which I could possibly impart instruction to you.

8. When by these words, now mine not less than yours, I am gladdened and refreshed, and when I am comforted not a little by the fact that in both of us a desire for mutual fellowship exists, though meanwhile unsatisfied, it is not long before I am pierced through by darts of keenest sorrow when I consider Rufinus and you, to whom God had granted in fullest measure and for a length of time that which both of us have longed for, so that in most close and endearing fellowship you feasted together on the honey of the Holy Scriptures, and think how between you the blight of such exceeding bitterness has found its way, constraining us to ask when, where, and in whom the same calamity may not be reasonably feared; seeing that it has befallen you at the very time when, unencumbered, having cast away secular burdens, you were following the Lord and were living together in that very land which was trodden by the feet of our Lord, when He said, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you;” being, moreover, men of mature age, whose life was devoted to the study of the word of God. Truly “man’s life on earth is a period of trial.” If I could anywhere meet you both together—which, alas, I cannot hope to do—so strong are my agitation, grief, and fear, that I think I would cast myself at your feet, and there weeping till I could weep no more, would, with all the eloquence of love, appeal first to each of you for his own sake, then to both for each other’s sake, and for the sake of those, especially the weak, “for whom Christ died,” whose salvation is in peril, as they look on you who occupy a place so conspicuous on the stage of time; imploring you not to write and scatter abroad these hard words against each other, which, if at any time you who are now at variance were reconciled, you could not destroy, and which you could not then venture to read lest strife should be kindled anew.

9. But I say to your Charity, that nothing has made me tremble more than your estrangement from Rufinus, when I read in your letter some of the indications of your being displeased with me. I refer not so much to what you say of Entellus and of the wearied ox, in which you appear to me to use

genial pleasantry rather than angry threat, but to that which you have evidently written in earnest, of which I have already spoken perhaps more than was fitting, but not more than my fears compelled me to do,—namely, the words, “lest perchance, being offended, you should have reason to remonstrate with me.” If it be possible for us to examine and discuss anything by which our hearts may be nourished, without any bitterness of discord I entreat you let us address ourselves to this. But if it is not possible for either of us to point out what he may judge to demand correction in the other’s writings, without being suspected of envy and regarded as wounding friendship, let us, having regard to our spiritual life and health, leave such conference alone. Let us content ourselves with smaller attainments in that [knowledge] which puffeth up, if we can thereby preserve unharmed that [charity] which edifieth. I feel that I come far short of that perfection of which it is written, “If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man;” but through God’s mercy I truly believe myself able to ask your forgiveness for that in which I have offended you: and this you ought to make plain to me, that through my hearing you, you may gain your brother. Nor should you make it a reason for leaving me in error, that the distance between us on the earth’s surface makes it impossible for us to meet face to face. As concerns the subjects into which we inquire, if I know, or believe, or think that I have got hold of the truth in a matter in which your opinion is different from mine, I shall by all means endeavour, as the Lord may enable me, to maintain my view without injuring you. And as to any offence which I may give to you, so soon as I perceive your displeasure, I shall unreservedly beg your forgiveness.

10. I think, moreover, that your reason for being displeased with me can only be, that I have either said what I ought not, or have not expressed myself in the manner in which I ought: for I do not wonder that we are less thoroughly known to each other than we are to our most close and intimate friends. Upon the love of such friends I readily cast myself without reservation, especially when chafed and wearied by the scandals of this world; and in their love I rest without any disturbing care: for I perceive that God is there, on whom I confidingly cast myself, and in whom I confidingly rest. Nor in this confidence am I disturbed by any fear of that uncertainty as to the morrow which must be present when we lean upon

human weakness, and which I have in a former paragraph bewailed. For when I perceive that a man is burning with Christian love, and feel that thereby he has been made a faithful friend to me, whatever plans or thoughts of mine I entrust to him I regard as entrusted not to the man, but to Him in whom his character makes it evident that he dwells: for “God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him;” and if he cease to dwell in love, his forsaking it cannot but cause as much pain as his abiding in it caused joy. Nevertheless, in such a case, when one who was an intimate friend has become an enemy, it is better that he should search out what ingenuity may help him to fabricate to our prejudice, than that he should find what anger may provoke him to reveal. This every one most easily secures, not by concealing what he does, but by doing nothing which he would wish to conceal. And this the mercy of God grants to good and pious men: they go out and in among their friends in liberty and without fear, whatever these friends may afterwards become: the sins which may have been committed by others within their knowledge they do not reveal, and they themselves avoid doing what they would fear to see revealed. For when any false charge is fabricated by a slanderer, either it is disbelieved, or, if it is believed, our reputation alone is injured, our spiritual wellbeing is not affected. But when, any sinful action is committed, that action becomes a secret enemy, even though it be not revealed by the thoughtless or malicious talk of one acquainted with our secrets. Wherefore any person of discernment may see in your own example how, by the comfort of a good conscience, you bear what would otherwise be insupportable—the incredible enmity of one who was formerly your most intimate and beloved friend; and how even what he utters against you, even what may to your disadvantage be believed by some, you turn to good account as the armour of righteousness on the left hand, which is not less useful than armour on the right hand in our warfare with the devil. But truly I would rather see him less bitter in his accusations, than see you thus more fully armed by them. This is a great and a lamentable wonder, that you should have passed from such amity to such enmity: it would be a joyful and a much greater event, should you come back from such enmity to the friendship of former days.

LETTER LXXIV

(A.D. 404.)

To My Lord Praesidius, Most Blessed, My Brother and Partner in the Priestly Office, Truly Esteemed, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I write to remind you of the request which I made to you as a sincere friend when you were here, that you would not refuse to send a letter of mine to our holy brother and fellow-presbyter Jerome; in order, moreover, to let your Charity know in what terms you ought to write to him on my behalf. I have sent a copy of my letter to him, and of his to me, by reading which your pious wisdom may easily see both the moderation of tone which I have been careful to preserve, and the vehemence on his part by which I have been not unreasonably filled with fear. If, however, I have written anything which I ought not to have written, or have expressed myself in an unbecoming way, let it not be to him, but to myself, in brotherly love, that you send your opinion of what I have done, in order that, if I am convinced of my fault by your rebuke, I may ask his forgiveness.

LETTER LXXV

(A.D. 404.)

Jerome’s answer to Letters XXVIII., XL., and LXXI.

To Augustin, My Lord Truly Holy, and Most Blessed Father, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ.

Chap. I

1. I have received by Cyprian, deacon, three letters, or rather three little books, at the same time, from your Excellency, containing what you call sundry questions, but what I feel to be animadversions on opinions which I have published, to answer which, if I were disposed to do it, would require a pretty large volume. Nevertheless I shall attempt to reply without exceeding the limits of a moderately long letter, and without causing delay to our brother, now in haste to depart, who only three days before the time fixed for his journey asked earnestly for a letter to take with him, in

consequence of which I am compelled to pour out these sentences, such as they are, almost without premeditation, answering you in a rambling effusion, prepared not in the leisure of deliberate composition, but in the hurry of extemporaneous dictation, which usually produces a discourse that is more the offspring of chance than the parent of instruction; just as unexpected attacks throw into confusion even the bravest soldiers, and they are compelled to take to flight before they can gird on their armour.

2. But our armour is Christ; it is that which the Apostle Paul prescribes when, writing to the Ephesians, he says, "Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day;" and again, "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked: and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Armed with these weapons, King David went forth in his day to battle; and taking from the torrent's bed five smooth rounded stones, he proved that, even amidst all the eddying currents of the world, his feelings were free both from roughness and from defilement; drinking of the brook by the way, and therefore lifted up in spirit, he cut off the head of Goliath, using the proud enemy's own sword as the fittest instrument of death, smiting the profane boaster on the forehead and wounding him in the same place in which Uzziah was smitten with leprosy when he presumed to usurp the priestly office; the same also in which shines the glory that makes the saints rejoice in the Lord, saying, "The light of Thy countenance is sealed upon us, O Lord." Let us therefore also say, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise: awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp; I myself will awake early;" that in us may be fulfilled that word, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it;" and, "The Lord shall give the word with great power to them that publish it." I am well assured that your prayer as well as mine is, that in our contendings the victory may remain with the truth. For you seek Christ's glory, not your own: if you are victorious, I also gain a victory if I discover my error. On the other hand, if I win the day, the gain is yours; for "the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." We read, moreover, in Chronicles,

that the children of Israel went to battle with their minds set upon peace, seeking even amid swords and bloodshed and the prostrate slain a victory not for themselves, but for peace. Let me therefore, if it be the will of Christ, give an answer to all that you have written, and attempt in a short dissertation to solve your numerous questions. I pass by the conciliatory phrases in your courteous salutation: I say nothing of the compliments by which you attempt to take the edge off your censure: let me come at once to the matters in debate.

Chap. II

3. You say that you received from some brother a book of mine, in which I have given a list of ecclesiastical writers, both Greek and Latin, but which had no title; and that when you asked the brother aforesaid (I quote your own statement) why the title-page had no inscription, or what was the name by which the book was known, he answered that it was called "Epitaphium," i.e. "Obituary Notices:" upon which you display your reasoning powers, by remarking that the name Epitaphium would have been properly given to the book if the reader had found in it an account of the lives and writings of deceased authors, but that inasmuch as mention is made of the works of many who were living when the book was written, and are at this day still living, you wonder why I should have given the book a title so inappropriate. I think that it must be obvious to your own common sense, that you might have discovered the title of that book from its contents, without any other help. For you have read both Greek and Latin biographies of eminent men, and you know that they do not give to works of this kind the title Epitaphium, but simply "Illustrious Men," e.g. "Illustrious Generals," or "philosophers, orators, historians, poets," etc., as the case may be. An Epitaphium is a work written concerning the dead; such as I remember having composed long ago after the decease of the presbyter Nepotianus, of blessed memory. The book, therefore, of which you speak ought to be entitled, "Concerning Illustrious Men," or properly, "Concerning Ecclesiastical Writers," although it is said that by many who were not qualified to make any correction of the title, it has been called "Concerning Authors."

4. You ask, in the second place, my reason for saying, in my commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, that Paul could not have rebuked Peter for that which he himself had done, and could not have censured in another the dissimulation of which he was himself confessedly guilty; and you affirm that that rebuke of the apostle was not a manoeuvre of pious policy, but real; and you say that I ought not to teach falsehood, but that all things in Scripture are to be received literally as they stand.

To this I answer, in the first place, that your wisdom ought to have suggested the remembrance of the short preface to my commentaries, saying of my own person, “What then? Am I so foolish and bold as to promise that which he could not accomplish? By no means; but I have rather, as it seems to me, with more reserve and hesitation, because feeling the deficiency of my strength, followed the commentaries of Origen in this matter. For that illustrious man wrote five volumes on the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, and has occupied the tenth volume of his Stromata with a short treatise upon his explanation of the epistle. He also composed several treatises and fragmentary pieces upon it, which, if they even had stood alone, would have sufficed. I pass over my revered instructor Didymus (blind, it is true, but quick-sighted in the discernment of spiritual things), and the bishop of Laodicea, who has recently left the Church, and the early heretic Alexander, as well as Eusebius of Emesa and Theodorus of Heraclea, who have also left some brief disquisitions upon this subject. From these works if I were to extract even a few passages, a work which could not be altogether despised would be produced. Let me therefore frankly say that I have read all these; and storing up in my mind very many things which they contain, I have dictated to my amanuensis sometimes what was borrowed from other writers, sometimes what was my own, without distinctly remembering the method, or the words, or the opinions which belonged to each. I look now to the Lord in His mercy to grant that my want of skill and experience may not cause the things which others have well spoken to be lost, or to fail of finding among foreign readers the acceptance with which they have met in the language in which they were first written. If, therefore, anything in my explanation has seemed to you to demand correction, it would have been seemly for one of your learning to inquire first whether what I had written was found in the Greek writers to whom I have referred; and if they had not advanced the opinion which you censured, you could then with propriety condemn me for what I gave as my own view, especially seeing that I have in the preface openly acknowledged that I had followed the commentaries of Origen, and had dictated sometimes the view of others, sometimes my own, and have written at the end of the

Chapter with which you find fault: “If any one be dissatisfied with the interpretation here given, by which it is shown that neither did Peter sin, nor did Paul rebuke presumptuously a greater than himself, he is bound to show how Paul could consistently blame in another what he himself did.” By which I have made it manifest that I did not adopt finally and irrevocably that which I had read in these Greek authors, but had propounded what I had read, leaving to the reader’s own judgment whether it should be rejected or approved

5. You, however, in order to avoid doing what I had asked, have devised a new argument against the view proposed; maintaining that the Gentiles who had believed in Christ were free from the burden of the ceremonial law, but that the Jewish converts were under the law, and that Paul, as the teacher of the Gentiles, rightly rebuked those who kept the law; whereas Peter, who was the chief of the “circumcision,” was justly rebuked for commanding the Gentile converts to do that which the converts from among the Jews were alone under obligation to observe. If this is your opinion, or rather since it is your opinion, that all from among the Jews who believe are debtors to do the whole law, you ought, as being a bishop of great fame in the whole world, to publish your doctrine, and labour to persuade all other bishops to agree with you. As for me in my humble cell, along with the monks my fellow-sinners, I do not presume to dogmatize in regard to things of great moment; I only confess frankly that I read the writings of the Fathers, and, complying with universal usage, put down in my commentaries a variety of explanations, that each may adopt from the number given the one which pleases him. This method, I think, you have found in your reading, and have approved in connection with both secular literature and the Divine Scriptures.

6. Moreover, as to this explanation which Origen first advanced, and which all the other commentators after him have adopted, they bring forward, chiefly for the purpose of answering, the blasphemies of Porphyry, who accuses Paul of presumption because he dared to reprove Peter and rebuke him to his face, and by reasoning convict him of having done wrong; that is to say, of being in the very fault which he himself, who blamed another for transgressing, had committed. What shall I say also of John, who has long governed the Church of Constantinople, and holding pontifical rank, who has composed a very large book upon this paragraph, and has followed the opinion of Origen and of the old expositors? If, therefore, you censure me as in the wrong, suffer me, I pray you, to be mistaken in company with such men; and when you perceive that I have so many companions in my error, you will require to produce at least one partisan in defence of your truth. So much on the interpretation of one paragraph of the Epistle to the Galatians.

7. Lest, however, I should seem to rest my answer to your reasoning wholly on the number of witnesses who are on my side, and to use the names of illustrious men as a means of escaping from the truth, not daring to meet you in argument, I shall briefly bring forward some examples from the Scriptures.

In the Acts of the Apostles, a voice was heard by Peter, saying unto him, “Rise, Peter, slay and eat,” when all manner of four-footed beasts, and creeping things, and birds of the air, were presented before him; by which saying it is proved that no man is by nature [ceremonially] unclean, but that all men are equally welcome to the gospel of Christ. To which Peter answered, “Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.” And the voice spake unto him again the second time, “What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.” Therefore he went to Caesarea, and having entered the house of Cornelius, “he opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him.” Thereafter “the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word; and they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.” “And the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.” To whom he gave a full explanation of the reasons of his conduct, and concluded with these words: “Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.” Again, when, long after this, Paul and Barnabas had come to Antioch, and “having gathered the Church together, rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles, certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. And when they were come to Jerusalem, there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.” And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, with his wonted readiness, “and said, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that, through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they. Then all the multitude kept silence;” and to his opinion the Apostle James, and all the elders together, gave consent.

8. These quotations should not be tedious to the reader, but useful both to him and to me, as proving that, even before the Apostle Paul, Peter had

come to know that the law was not to be in force after the gospel was given; nay more, that Peter was the prime mover in issuing the decree by which this was affirmed. Moreover, Peter was of so great authority, that Paul has recorded in his epistle: “Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.” In the following context, again, he adds: “Then, fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles;” proving that he had not had confidence in his preaching of the gospel if he had not been confirmed by the consent of Peter and those who were with him. The next words are, “but privately to them that were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.” Why did he this privately rather than in public? Lest offence should be given to the faith of those who from among the Jews had believed, since they thought that the law was still in force, and that they ought to join observance of the law with faith in the Lord as their Saviour. Therefore also, when at that time Peter had come to Antioch (although the Acts of the Apostles do not mention this, but we must believe Paul’s statement), Paul affirms that he “withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For, before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw,” he says, “that they walked not up-rightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” etc. No one can doubt, therefore, that the Apostle Peter was himself the author of that rule with deviation from which he is charged. The cause of that deviation, moreover, is seen to be fear of the Jews. For the Scripture says, that “at first he did eat with the Gentiles, but that when certain had come from James he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.” Now he feared the Jews, to whom he had been appointed apostle, lest by occasion of the Gentiles they should go back from the faith in Christ; imitating the Good Shepherd in his concern lest he should lose the flock committed to him.

9. As I have shown, therefore, that Peter was thoroughly aware of the abrogation of the law of Moses, but was compelled by fear to pretend to observe it, let us now see whether Paul, who accuses another, ever did anything of the same kind himself. We read in the same book: “Paul passed through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him, because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.” O blessed Apostle Paul, who hadst rebuked Peter for dissimulation, because he withdrew himself from the Gentiles through fear of the Jews who came from James, why art thou, notwithstanding thine own doctrine, compelled to circumcise Timothy, the son of a Gentile, nay more, a Gentile himself (for he was not a Jew, having not been circumcised)? Thou wilt answer, “Because of the Jews which are in these quarters?” If, then, thou forgiveth thyself the circumcision of a disciple coming from the Gentiles, forgive Peter also, who has precedence above thee, his doing some things of the same kind through fear of the believing Jews. Again, it is written: “Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea, for he had a vow.” Be it granted that he was compelled through fear of the Jews in the other case to do what he was unwilling to do; wherefore did he let his hair grow in accordance with a vow of his own making, and afterwards, when in Cenchrea, shave his head according to the law, as the Nazarites, who had given themselves by vow to God, were wont to do, according to the law of Moses?

10. But these things are small when compared with what follows. The sacred historian Luke further relates: “And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly;” and the day following, James, and all the elders who were with him, having expressed their approbation of his gospel, said to Paul: “Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the

Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? The multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until an offering should be offered for every one of them." O Paul, here again let me question thee: Why didst thou shave thy head, why didst thou walk barefoot according to Jewish ceremonial law, why didst thou offer sacrifices, why were victims slain for thee according to the law? Thou wilt answer, doubtless, "To avoid giving offence to those of the Jews who had believed." To gain the Jews, thou didst pretend to be a Jew; and James and all the other elders taught thee this dissimulation. But thou didst not succeed in escaping, after all. For when thou wast on the point of being killed in a tumult which had arisen, thou wast rescued by the chief captain of the band, and was sent by him to Caesarea, guarded by a careful escort of soldiers, lest the Jews should kill thee as a dissembler, and a destroyer of the law; and from Caesarea coming to Rome, thou didst, in thine own hired house, preach Christ to both Jews and Gentiles, and thy testimony was sealed under Nero's sword.

11. We have learned, therefore, that through fear of the Jews both Peter and Paul alike pretended that they observed the precepts of the law. How could Paul have the assurance and effrontery to reprove in another what he had done himself? I at least, or, I should rather say, others before me, have given such explanation of the matter as they deemed best, not defending the use of falsehood in the interest of religion, as you charge them with doing, but teaching the honourable exercise of a wise discretion; seeking both to show the wisdom of the apostles, and to restrain the shameless blasphemies of Porphyry, who says that Peter and Paul quarrelled with each other in childish rivalry, and affirms that Paul had been inflamed with envy on account of the excellences of Peter, and had written boastfully of things

which he either had not done, or, if he did them, had done with inexcusable presumption, reproving in another that which he himself had done. They, in answering him, gave the best interpretation of the passage which they could find; what interpretation have you to propound? Surely you must intend to say something better than they have said, since you have rejected the opinion of the ancient commentators.

Chap. IV

12. You say in your letter: “You do not require me to teach you in what sense the apostle says, To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews;’ and other such things in the same passage, which are to be ascribed to the compassion of pitying love, not to the artifices of intentional deceit. For he that ministers to the sick becomes as if he were sick himself, not indeed falsely pretending to be under the fever, but considering with the mind of one truly sympathizing what he would wish done for himself if he were in the sick man’s place. Paul was indeed a Jew; and when he had become a Christian, he had not abandoned those Jewish sacraments which that people had received in the right way, and for a certain appointed time. Therefore, even when he was an apostle of Christ, he took part in observing these, but with this view, that he might show that they were in no wise hurtful to those who, even after they had believed in Christ, desired to retain the ceremonies which by the law they had learned from their fathers; provided only that they did not build on these their hope of salvation, since the salvation which was fore-shadowed in these has now been brought in by the Lord Jesus.” The sum of your whole argument, which you have expanded into a most prolix dissertation, is this, that Peter did not err in supposing that the law was binding on those who from among the Jews had believed, but departed from the right course in this, that he compelled the Gentile converts to conform to Jewish observances. Now, if he compelled them, it was not by use of authority as a teacher, but by the example of his own practice. And Paul, according to your view, did not protest against what Peter had done personally, but asked wherefore Peter would compel those who were from among the Gentiles to conform to Jewish observances.

13. The matter in debate, therefore, or I should rather say your opinion regarding it, is summed up in this: that since the preaching of the gospel of Christ, the believing Jews do well in observing the precepts of the law, i.e. in offering sacrifices as Paul did, in circumcising their children, as Paul did in the case of Timothy, and keeping the Jewish Sabbath, as all the Jews have been accustomed to do. If this be true, we fall into the heresy of Cerinthus and Ebion, who, though believing in Christ, were anathematized by the fathers for this one error, that they mixed up the ceremonies of the law with the gospel of Christ, and professed their faith in that which was new, without letting go what was old. Why do I speak of the Ebionites, who make pretensions to the name of Christian? In our own day there exists a sect among the Jews throughout all the synagogues of the East, which is called the sect of the Minei, and is even now condemned by the Pharisees. The adherents to this sect are known commonly as Nazarenes; they believe in Christ the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary; and they say that He who suffered under Pontius Pilate and rose again, is the same as the one in whom we believe. But while they desire to be both Jews and Christians, they are neither the one nor the other. I therefore beseech you, who think that you are called upon to heal my slight wound, which is no more, so to speak, than a prick or scratch from a needle, to devote your skill in the healing art to this grievous wound, which has been opened by a spear driven home with the impetus of a javelin. For there is surely no proportion between the culpability of him who exhibits the various opinions held by the fathers in a commentary on Scripture, and the guilt of him who reintroduces within the Church a most pestilential heresy. If, however, there is for us no alternative but to receive the Jews into the Church, along with the usages prescribed by their law; if, in short, it shall be declared lawful for them to continue in the Churches of Christ what they have been accustomed to practise in the synagogues of Satan, I will tell you my opinion of the matter: they will not become Christians, but they will make us Jews.

14. For what Christian will submit to hear what is said in your letter? “Paul was indeed a Jew; and when he had become a Christian, he had not abandoned those Jewish sacraments which that people had received in the right way, and for a certain appointed time. Therefore, even when he was an apostle of Christ, he took part in observing these; but with this view, that he

might show that they were in no wise hurtful to those who, even after they had believed in Christ, desired to retain the ceremonies which by the law they had learned from their fathers.” Now I implore you to hear patiently my complaint. Paul, even when he was an apostle of Christ, observed Jewish ceremonies; and you affirm that they are in no wise hurtful to those who wish to retain them as they had received them from their fathers by the law. I, on the contrary, shall maintain, and, though the world were to protest against my view, I may boldly declare that the Jewish ceremonies are to Christians both hurtful and fatal; and that whoever observes them, whether he be Jew or Gentile originally, is cast into the pit of perdition. “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,” that is, to both Jew and Gentile; for if the Jew be excepted, He is not the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Moreover, we read in the Gospel, “The law and the prophets were until John the Baptist.” Also, in another place: “Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.” Again: “Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace; for the law was given Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” Instead of the grace of the law which has passed away, we have received the grace of the gospel which is abiding; and instead of the shadows and types of the old dispensation, the truth has come by Jesus Christ. Jeremiah also prophesied thus in God’s name: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt.” Observe what the prophet says, not to Gentiles, who had not been partakers in any former covenant, but to the Jewish nation. He who has given them the law by Moses, promises in place of it the new covenant of the gospel, that they might no longer live in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit. Paul himself, moreover, in connection with whom the discussion of this question has arisen, delivers such sentiments as these frequently, of which I subjoin only a few, as I desire to be brief: “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” Again: “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” Again: “If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.”

From which it is evident that he has not the Holy Spirit who submits to the law, not, as our fathers affirmed the apostles to have done, feignedly, under the promptings of a wise discretion, but, as you suppose to have been the case, sincerely. As to the quality of these legal precepts, let us learn from God’s own teaching: “I gave them,” He says, “statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live.” I say these things, not that I may, like Manichaeus and Marcion, destroy the law, which I know on the testimony of the apostle to be both holy and spiritual; but because when “faith came,” and the fulness of times, “God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,” and might live no longer under the law as our schoolmaster, but under the Heir, who has now attained to full age, and is Lord.

15. It is further said in your letter: “The thing, therefore, which he rebuked in Peter was not his observing the customs handed down from his fathers, which Peter, if he wished, might do without being chargeable with deceit or inconsistency.” Again I say: Since you are a bishop, a teacher in the Churches of Christ, if you would prove what you assert, receive any Jew who, after having become a Christian, circumcises any son that may be born to him, observes the Jewish Sabbath, abstains from meats which God has created to be used with thanksgiving, and on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month slays a paschal lamb; and when you have done this, or rather, have refused to do it (for I know that you are a Christian, and will not be guilty of a profane action), you will be constrained, whether willingly or unwillingly, to renounce your opinion; and then you will know that it is a more difficult work to reject the opinion of others than to establish your own. Moreover, lest perhaps we should not believe your statement, or, I should rather say, understand it (for it is often the case that a discourse unduly extended is not intelligible, and is less censured by the unskilled in discussion because its weakness is not so easily perceived), you inculcate your opinion by reiterating the statement in these words: “Paul had forsaken everything peculiar to the Jews that was evil, especially this, that being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they had not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.’ In this, moreover, he differed from them, that

after the passion and resurrection of Christ, in whom had been given and made manifest the mystery of grace, according to the order of Melchizedek, they still considered it binding on them to celebrate, not out of mere reverence for old customs, but as necessary to salvation, the sacraments of the old dispensation; which were indeed at one time necessary, else had it been unprofitable and vain for the Maccabees to suffer martyrdom as they did for their adherence to them. Lastly, in this also Paul differed from the Jews, that they persecuted the Christian preachers of grace as enemies of the law. These, and all similar errors and sins, he declares that he counted but loss and dung, that he might win Christ."

16. We have learned from you what evil things peculiar to the Jews Paul had abandoned; let us now learn from your teaching what good things which were Jewish he retained. You will reply: "The ceremonial observances in which they continued to follow the practice of their fathers, in the way in which these were complied with by Paul himself, without believing them to be at all necessary to salvation." I do not fully understand what you mean by the words, "without believing them to be at all necessary to salvation." For if they do not contribute to salvation, why are they observed? And if they must be observed, they by all means contribute to salvation; especially seeing that, because of observing them, some have been made martyrs: for they would not be observed unless they contributed to salvation. For they are not things indifferent—neither good nor bad, as philosophers say. Self-control is good, self-indulgence is bad: between these, and indifferent, as having no moral quality, are such things as walking, blowing one's nose, expectorating phlegm, etc. Such an action is neither good nor bad; for whether you do it or leave it undone, it does not affect your standing as righteous or unrighteous. But the observance of legal ceremonies is not a thing indifferent; it is either good or bad. You say it is good. I affirm it to be bad, and bad not only when done by Gentile converts, but also when done by Jews who have believed. In this passage you fall, if I am not mistaken, into one error while avoiding another. For while you guard yourself against the blasphemies of Porphyry, you become entangled in the snares of Ebion; pronouncing that the law is binding on those who from among the Jews have believed. Perceiving, again, that what you have said is a dangerous doctrine, you attempt to qualify it by words which are

only superfluous: viz., “The law must be observed not from any belief, such as prompted the Jews to keep it, that this is necessary to salvation, and not in any misleading dissimulation such as Paul reproved in Peter.”

17. Peter therefore pretended to keep the law; but this censor of Peter boldly observed the things prescribed by the law. The next words of your letter are these: “For if Paul observed these sacraments in order, by pretending to be a Jew, to gain the Jews, why did he not also take part with the Gentiles in heathen sacrifices, when to them that were without law he became as without law, that he might gain them also? The explanation is found in this, that he took part in the Jewish rites as being himself a Jew; and that when he said all this which I have quoted, he meant not that he pretended to be what he was not, but that he felt with true compassion that he must bring such help to them as would be needful for himself if he were involved in their error. Herein he exercised not the subtlety of a deceiver, but the sympathy of a compassionate deliverer.” A triumphant vindication of Paul! You prove that he did not pretend to share the error of the Jews, but was actually involved in it; and that he refused to imitate Peter in a course of deception, dissembling through fear of the Jews what he really was, but without reserve freely avowed himself to be a Jew. Oh, unheard of compassion of the apostle! In seeking to make the Jews Christians, he himself became a Jew! For he could not have persuaded the luxurious to become temperate if he had not himself become luxurious like them; and could not have brought help, in his compassion, as you say, to the wretched, otherwise than by experiencing in his own person their wretchedness! Truly wretched, and worthy of most compassionate lamentation, are those who, carried away by vehemence of disputation, and by love for the law which has been abolished, have made Christ’s apostle to be a Jew. Nor is there, after all, a great difference between my opinion and yours: for I say that both Peter and Paul, through fear of the believing Jews, practised, or rather pretended to practise, the precepts of the Jewish law; whereas you maintain that they did this out of pity, “not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the sympathy of a compassionate deliverer.” But by both this is equally admitted, that (whether from fear or from pity) they pretended to be what they were not. As to your argument against our view, that he ought to have become to the Gentiles a Gentile, if to the Jews he became a Jew, this

favours our opinion rather than yours: for as he did not actually become a Jew, so he did not actually become a heathen; and as he did not actually become a heathen, so he did not actually become a Jew. His conformity to the Gentiles consisted in this, that he received as Christians the uncircumcised who believed in Christ, and left them free to use without scruple meats which the Jewish law prohibited; but not, as you suppose, in taking part in their worship of idols. For “in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but the keeping of the commandments of God.”

18. I ask you, therefore, and with all urgency press the request, that you forgive me this humble attempt at a discussion of the matter; and wherein I have transgressed, lay the blame upon yourself who compelled me to write in reply, and who made me out to be as blind as Stesichorus. And do not bring the reproach of teaching the practice of lying upon me who am a follower of Christ, who said, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” It is impossible for me, who am a worshipper of the Truth, to bow under the yoke of falsehood. Moreover, refrain from stirring up against me the unlearned crowd who esteem you as their bishop, and regard with the respect due the priestly office the orations which you deliver in the church, but who esteem lightly an old decrepit man like me, courting the retirement of a monastery far from the busy haunts of men; and seek others who may be more fitly instructed or corrected by you. For the sound of your voice can scarcely reach me, who am so far separated from you by sea and land. And if you happen to write me a letter, Italy and Rome are sure to be acquainted with its contents long before it is brought to me, to whom alone it ought to be sent.

Chap. V

19. In another letter you ask why a former translation which I made of some of the canonical books was carefully marked with asterisks and obelisks, whereas I afterwards published a translation without these. You must pardon my saying that you seem to me not to understand the matter: for the former translation is from the Septuagint; and wherever obelisks are placed, they are designed to indicate that the Seventy have said more than is found in the Hebrew. But the asterisks indicate what has been added by Origen

from the version of Theodotion. In that version I was translating from the Greek: but in the later version, translating from the Hebrew itself, I have expressed what I understood it to mean, being careful to preserve rather the exact sense than the order of the words. I am surprised that you do not read the books of the Seventy translators in the genuine form in which they were originally given to the world, but as they have been corrected, or rather corrupted, by Origen, with his obelisks and asterisks; and that you refuse to follow the translation, however feeble, which has been given by a Christian man, especially seeing that Origen borrowed the things which he has added from the edition of a man who, after the passion of Christ, was a Jew and a blasphemer. Do you wish to be a true admirer and partisan of the Seventy translators? Then do not read what you find under the asterisks; rather erase them from the volumes, that you may approve yourself indeed a follower of the ancients. If, however, you do this, you will be compelled to find fault with all the libraries of the Churches; for you will scarcely find more than one Ms. here and there which has not these interpolations.

Chap. VI

20. A few words now as to your remark that I ought not to have given a translation, after this had been already done by the ancients; and the novel syllogism which you use: “The passages of which the Seventy have given an interpretation were either obscure or plain. If they were obscure, it is believed that you are as likely to have been mistaken as the others; if they were plain, it is not believed that the Seventy could have been mistaken.”

All the commentators who have been our predecessors in the Lord in the work of expounding the Scriptures, have expounded either what was obscure or what was plain. If some passages were obscure, how could you, after them, presume to discuss that which they were not able to explain? If the passages were plain, it was a waste of time for you to have undertaken to treat of that which could not possibly have escaped them. This syllogism applies with peculiar force to the book of Psalms, in the interpretation of which Greek commentators have written many volumes: viz. 1st, Origen: 2d, Eusebius of Caesarea; 3d, Theodorus of Heraclea; 4th, Asterius of Scythopolis; 5th, Apollinaris of Laodicea; and, 6th, Didymus of Alexandria. There are said to be minor works on selections from the Psalms, but I speak at present of the whole book. Moreover, among Latin writers the bishops Hilary of Poitiers, and Eusebius of Verceil, have translated Origen and Eusebius of Caesarea, the former of whom has in some things been followed by our own Ambrose. Now, I put it to your wisdom to answer why you, after all the labours of so many and so competent interpreters, differ from them in your exposition of some passages? If the Psalms are obscure, it must be believed that you are as likely to be mistaken as others; if they are plain, it is incredible that these others could have fallen into mistake. In either case, your exposition has been, by your own showing, an unnecessary labour; and on the same principle, no one would ever venture to speak on any subject after others have pronounced their opinion, and no one would be at liberty to write anything regarding that which another has once handled, however important the matter might be.

It is, however, more in keeping with your enlightened judgment, to grant to all others the liberty which you tolerate in yourself for in my attempt to translate into Latin, for the benefit of those who speak the same language with myself, the corrected Greek version of the Scriptures, I have laboured not to supersede what has been long esteemed, but only to bring prominently forward those things which have been either omitted or tampered with by the Jews, in order that Latin readers might know what is found in the original Hebrew. If any one is averse to reading it, none compels him against his will. Let him drink with satisfaction the old wine, and despise my new wine, i.e. the sentences which I have published in explanation of former writers, with the design of making more obvious by my remarks what in them seemed to me to be obscure.

As to the principles which ought to be followed in the interpretation of the Sacred Scriptures, they are stated in the book which I have written, and in all the introductions to the divine books which I have in my edition prefixed to each; and to these I think it sufficient to refer the prudent reader. And since you approve of my labours in revising the translation of the New Testament, as you say,—giving me at the same time this as your reason, that very many are acquainted with the Greek language, and are therefore competent judges of my work,—it would have been but fair to have given me credit for the same fidelity in the Old Testament; for I have not followed my own imagination, but have rendered the divine words as I found them understood by those who speak the Hebrew language. If you have any doubt of this in any passage, ask the Jews what is the meaning of the original.

21. Perhaps you will say, “What if the Jews decline to answer, or choose to impose upon us?” Is it conceivable that the whole multitude of Jews will agree together to be silent if asked about my translation, and that none shall be found that has any knowledge of the Hebrew language? Or will they all imitate those Jews whom you mention as having, in some little town, conspired to injure my reputation? For in your letter you put together the following story:—”A certain bishop, one of our brethren, having introduced in the Church over which he presides the reading of your version, came upon a word in the book of the prophet Jonah, of which you have given a very different rendering from that which had been of old familiar to the senses and memory of all the worshippers, and had been chanted for so many generations in the Church. Thereupon arose such a tumult in the congregation, especially among the Greeks, correcting what had been read, and denouncing the translation as false, that the bishop was compelled to ask the testimony of the Jewish residents (it was in the town of Oea). These, whether from ignorance or from spite, answered that the words in the Hebrew Mss. were correctly rendered in the Greek version, and in the Latin one taken from it. What further need I say? The man was compelled to correct your version in that passage as if it had been falsely translated, as he desired not to be left without a congregation,—a calamity which he narrowly escaped. From this case we also are led to think that you may be occasionally mistaken.”

Chap. VII

22. You tell me that I have given a wrong translation of some word in Jonah, and that a worthy bishop narrowly escaped losing his charge through the clamorous tumult of his people, which was caused by the different rendering of this one word. At the same time, you withhold from me what the word was which I have mistranslated; thus taking away the possibility of my saying anything in my own vindication, lest my reply should be fatal to your objection. Perhaps it is the old dispute about the gourd which has

been revived, after slumbering for many long years since the illustrious man, who in that day combined in his own person the ancestral honours of the Cornelii and of Asinius Pollio, brought against me the charge of giving in my translation the word “ivy” instead of “gourd.” I have already given a sufficient answer to this in my commentary on Jonah. At present, I deem it enough to say that in that passage, where the Septuagint has “gourd,” and Aquila and the others have rendered the word “ivy” (kissos), the Hebrew Ms. has “ciceion,” which is in the Syriac tongue, as now spoken, “ciceia.” It is a kind of shrub having large leaves like a vine, and when planted it quickly springs up to the size of a small tree, standing upright by its own stem, without requiring any support of canes or poles, as both gourds and ivy do. If, therefore, in translating word for word, I had put the word “ciceia,” no one would know what it meant; if I had used the word “gourd,” I would have said what is not found in the Hebrew. I therefore put down “ivy,” that I might not differ from all other translators. But if your Jews said, either through malice or ignorance, as you yourself suggest, that the word is in the Hebrew text which is found in the Greek and Latin versions, it is evident that they were either unacquainted with Hebrew, or have been pleased to say what was not true, in order to make sport of the gourd-planters.

In closing this letter, I beseech you to have some consideration for a soldier who is now old and has long retired from active service, and not to force him to take the field and again expose his life to the chances of war. Do you, who are young, and who have been appointed to the conspicuous seat of pontifical dignity, give yourself to teaching the people, and enrich Rome with new stores from fertile Africa. I am contented to make but little noise in an obscure corner of a monastery, with one to hear me or read to me.

LETTER LXXVI

(A.D. 402.)

1. Hear, O Donatists, what the Catholic Church says to you: “O ye sons of men, how long will ye be slow of heart? why will ye love vanity, and follow after lies?” Why have you severed yourselves, by the heinous impiety of schism, from the unity of the whole world? You give heed to the falsehoods

concerning the surrendering of the divine books to persecutors, which men who are either deceiving you, or are themselves deceived, utter in order that you may die in a state of heretical separation: and you do not give heed to what these divine books themselves proclaim, in order that you may live in the peace of the Catholic Church. Wherefore do you lend an open ear to the words of men who tell you things which they have never been able to prove, and are deaf to the voice of God speaking thus: “The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession”? “To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed,’ which is Christ.” And the promise to which the apostle refers is this: “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” Therefore lift up the eyes of your souls, and see how in the whole world all nations are blessed in Abraham’s seed. Abraham, in his day, believed what was not yet seen; but you who see it refuse to believe what has been fulfilled. The Lord’s death was the ransom of the world; He paid the price for the whole world; and you do not dwell in concord with the whole world, as would be for your advantage, but stand apart and strive contentiously to destroy the whole world, to your own loss. Hear now what is said in the Psalm concerning this ransom: “They pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.” Wherefore will you be guilty of dividing the garments of the Lord, and not hold in common with the whole world that coat of charity, woven from above throughout, which even His executioners did not rend? In the same Psalm we read that the whole world holds this, for he says: “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee; for the kingdom is the Lord’s, and He is the Governor among the nations.” Open the ears of your soul, and hear: “The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof; out of Zion, the perfection of beauty.” If you do not wish to understand this, hear the gospel from the Lord’s own lips, how He said: “All things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Him; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” The words in the Psalm, “the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof,” correspond to these in the Gospel, “among all nations;” and as He said in the Psalm, “from Zion, the perfection of beauty,” He has said in the Gospel, “beginning at Jerusalem.”

2. Your imagination that you are separating yourselves, before the time of the harvest, from the tares which are mixed with the wheat, proves that you are only tares. For if you were wheat, you would bear with the tares, and not separate yourselves from that which is growing in Christ’s field. Of the tares, indeed, it has been said, “Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold;” but of the wheat it is said, “He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” What grounds have you for believing that the tares have increased and filled the world, and that the wheat has decreased, and is found now in Africa alone? You claim to be Christians, and you disclaim the authority of Christ. He said, “Let both grow together till the harvest;” He said not, “Let the wheat decrease, and let the tares multiply.” He said, “The field is the world;” He said not, “The field is Africa.” He said, “The harvest is the end of the world;” He said not, “The harvest is the time of Donatus.” He said, “The reapers are the angels;” He said not, “The reapers are the captains of the Circumcelliones.” But you, by charging the good wheat with being tares, have proved yourselves to be tares; and what is worse, you have prematurely separated yourselves from the wheat. For some of your predecessors, in whose impious schism you obstinately remain, delivered up to persecutors the sacred Mss. and the vessels of the Church (as may be seen in municipal records); others of them passed over the fault which these men confessed, and remained in communion with them; and both parties having come together to Carthage as an infatuated faction, condemned others without a hearing, on the charge of that fault which they had agreed, so far as they themselves were concerned, to forgive, and then set up a bishop against the ordained bishop, and erected an altar against the altar already recognised. Afterwards they sent to the Emperor Constantine a letter begging that bishops of churches beyond the sea should be appointed to arbitrate between the bishops of Africa. When the judges whom they sought were granted, and at Rome had given their decision, they refused to submit to it, and complained to the Emperor or against the bishops as having judged unrighteously. From the

sentence of another bench of bishops sent to Arles to try the case, they appealed to the Emperor himself. When he had heard them, and they had been proved guilty of calumny, they still persisted in their wickedness. Awake to the interest of your salvation! love peace, and return to unity! Whensoever you desire it, we are ready to recite in detail the events to which we have referred.

3. He is the associate of wicked men who consents to the deeds of wicked men; not he who suffers the tares to grow in the Lord's field unto the harvest, or the chaff to remain until the final winnowing time. If you hate those who do evil, shake yourselves free from the crime of schism. If you really feared to associate with the wicked, you would not for so many years have permitted Optatus to remain among you when he was living in the most flagrant sin. And as you now give him the name of martyr, you must, if you are consistent, give him for whom he died the name of Christ. Finally, wherein has the Christian world offended you, from which you have insanely and wickedly cut yourselves off? and what claim upon your esteem have those followers of Maximianus, whom you have received back with honour after they had been condemned by you, and violently cast forth by warrant of the civil authorities from their churches? Wherein has the peace of Christ offended you, that you resist it by separating yourselves from those whom you calumniate? and wherein has the peace of Donatus earned your favour, that to promote it you receive back those whom you condemned? Felicianus of Musti is now one of you. We have read concerning him, that he was formerly condemned by your council, and afterwards accused by you at the bar of the proconsul, and in the town of Musti was attacked as is stated in the municipal records.

4. If the surrendering of the sacred books to destruction is a crime which, in the case of the king who burned the book of Jeremiah, God punished with death as a prisoner of war, how much greater is the guilt of schism! For those authors of schism to whom you have compared the followers of Maximianus, the earth opening, swallowed up alive. Why, then, do you object against us the charge of surrendering the sacred books which you do not prove, and at the same time both condemn and welcome back those among yourselves who are schismatics? If you are proved to be in the right

by the fact that you have suffered persecution from the Emperor, a still stronger claim than yours must be that of the followers of Maximianus, whom you have yourselves persecuted by the help of judges sent to you by Catholic emperors. If you alone have baptism, what weight do you attach to the baptism administered by followers of Maximianus in the case of those whom Felicianus baptized while he was under your sentence of condemnation, who came along with him when he was afterwards restored by you? Let your bishops answer these questions to your laity at least, if they will not debate with us; and do you, as you value your salvation, consider what kind of doctrine that must be about which they refuse to enter into discussion with us. If the wolves have prudence enough to keep out of the way of the shepherds, why have the flock so lost their prudence, that they go into the dens of the wolves?

LETTER LXXVII

(A.D. 404.)

To Felix and Hilarinus, My Lords most Beloved, and Brethren Worthy of All Honour, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I do not wonder to see the minds of believers disturbed by Satan, whom resist, continuing in the hope which rests on the promises of God, who cannot lie, who has not only condescended to promise in eternity rewards to us who believe and hope in Him, and who persevere in love unto the end, but has also foretold that in time offences by which our faith must be tried and proved shall not be wanting; for He said, “Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold;” but He added immediately, “and he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved.” Why, therefore, should it seem strange that men bring calumnies against the servants of God, and being unable to turn them aside from an upright life, endeavour to blacken their reputation, seeing that they do not cease uttering blasphemies daily against God, the Lord of these servants, if they are displeased by anything in which the execution of His righteous and secret counsel is contrary to their desire? Wherefore I appeal to your wisdom, my lords most beloved, and brethren worthy of all honour, and exhort you to exercise your minds in the way which best becomes Christians, setting over against the

empty calumnies and groundless suspicions of men the written word of God, which has foretold that these things should come, and has warned us to meet them with fortitude.

2. Let me therefore say in a few words to your Charity, that the presbyter Boniface has not been discovered by me to be guilty of any crime, and that I have never believed, and do not yet believe, any charge brought against him. How, then, could I order his name to be deleted from the roll of presbyters, when filled with alarm by that word of our Lord in the gospel: “With what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged”? For, seeing that the dispute which has arisen between him and Spes has by their consent been submitted to divine arbitration in a way which, if you desire it, can be made known to you, who am I, that I should presume to anticipate the divine award by deleting or passing over his name? As a bishop, I ought not rashly to suspect him; and as being only a man, I cannot decide infallibly concerning things which are hidden from me. Even in secular matters, when an appeal has been made to a higher authority, all procedure is sisted while the case awaits the decision from which there is no appeal; because if anything were changed while the matter is depending on his arbitration, this would be an insult to the higher tribunal. And how great the distance between even the highest human authority and the divine!

May the mercy of the Lord our God never forsake you, my lords most beloved, and brethren worthy of all honour.

LETTER LXXVIII

(A.D. 404.)

To My Most Beloved Brethren, the Clergy, Elders, and People of the Church of Hippo, Whom I Serve in the Love of Christ, I, Augustin, Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. Would that you, giving earnest heed to the word of God, did not require counsel of mine to support you under whatsoever offences may arise! Would that your comfort rather came from Him by whom we also are comforted; who has foretold not only the good things which He designs to give to those who are holy and faithful, but also the evil things in which this

world is to abound; and has caused these to be written, in order that we may expect the blessings which are to follow the end of this world with a certainty not less complete than that which attends our present experience of the evils which had been predicted as coming before the end of the world! Wherefore also the apostle says, “Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” And wherefore did our Lord Himself judge it necessary not only to say, “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father” which shall come to pass after the end of the world, but also to exclaim, “Woe unto the world because of offences!” if not to prevent us from flattering ourselves with the idea that we can reach the mansions of eternal felicity, unless we have overcome the temptation to yield when exercised by the afflictions of time? Why was it necessary for Him to say, “Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold,” if not in order that those of whom He spoke in the next sentence, “but he that shall endure to the end shall be saved,” might, when they saw love waxing cold through abounding iniquity, be saved from being put to confusion, or filled with fear, or crushed with grief about such things, as if they were strange and unlooked for, and might rather, through witnessing the events which had been predicted as appointed to occur before the end, be assisted in patiently enduring unto the end, so as to obtain after the end the reward of reigning in peace in that life which has no end?

2. Wherefore, beloved, in regard to that scandal by which some are troubled concerning the presbyter Boniface, I do not say to you that you are not to be grieved for it; for in men who do not grieve for such things the love of Christ is not, whereas those who take pleasure in such things are filled with the malice of the devil. Not, however, that anything has come to our knowledge which deserves censure in the presbyter aforesaid, but that two in our house are so situated that one of them must be regarded as beyond all doubt wicked; and though the conscience of the other be not defiled, his good name is forfeited in the eyes of some, and suspected by others. Grieve for these things, for they are to be lamented; but do not so grieve as to let your love grow cold, and yourselves be indifferent to holy living. Let it rather burn the more vehemently in the exercise of prayer to God, that if

your presbyter is guiltless (which I am the more inclined to believe, because, when he had discovered the immoral and vile proposal of the other, he would neither consent to it nor conceal it), a divine decision may speedily restore him to the exercise of his official duties with his innocence vindicated; and that if, on the other hand, knowing himself to be guilty, which I dare not suspect, he has deliberately tried to destroy the good name of another when he could not corrupt his morals, as he charges his accuser with having done, God may not permit him to hide his wickedness, so that the thing which men cannot discover may be revealed by the judgment of God, to the conviction of the one or of the other.

3. For when this case had long disquieted me, and I could find no way of convicting either of the two as guilty, although I rather inclined to believe the presbyter innocent, I had at first resolved to leave both in the hand of God, without deciding the case, until something should be done by the one of whom I had suspicion, giving just and unquestionable reasons for his expulsion from our house. But when he was labouring most earnestly to obtain promotion to the rank of the clergy, either on the spot from myself, or elsewhere through letter of recommendation from me, and I could on no account be induced either to lay hands in the act of ordination upon one of whom I thought so ill, or to consent to introduce him through commendation of mine to any brother for the same purpose, he began to act more violently demanding that if he was not to be promoted to clerical orders, Boniface should not be permitted to retain his status as a presbyter. This demand having been made, when I perceived that Boniface was unwilling that, through doubts as to his holiness of life, offence should be given to any who were weak and inclined to suspect him, and that he was ready to suffer the loss of his honour among men rather than vainly persist even to the disquieting of the Church in a contention the very nature of which made it impossible for him to prove his innocence (of which he was conscious) to the satisfaction of those who did not know him, or were in doubt or prone to suspicion in regard to him, I fixed upon the following as a means of discovering the truth. Both pledged themselves in a solemn compact to go to a holy place, where the more awe-inspiring works of God might much more readily make manifest the evil of which either of them was conscious, and compel the guilty to confess, either by judgment or

through fear of judgment. God is everywhere, it is true, and He that made all things is not contained or confined to dwell in any place; and He is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth by His true worshippers, in order that, as He heareth in secret, He may also in secret justify and reward. But in regard to the answers to prayer which are visible to men, who can search out His reasons for appointing some places rather than others to be the scene of miraculous interpositions? To many the holiness of the place in which the body of the blessed Felix is buried is well known, and to this place I desired them to repair; because from it we may receive more easily and more reliably a written account of whatever may be discovered in either of them by divine interposition. For I myself knew how, at Milan, at the tomb of the saints, where demons are brought in a most marvellous and awful manner to confess their deeds, a thief who had come thither intending to deceive by perjuring himself, was compelled to own his theft, and to restore what he had taken away; and is not Africa also full of the bodies of holy martyrs? Yet we do not know of such things being done in any place here. Even as the gift of healing and the gift of discerning of spirits are not given to all saints, as the apostle declares; so it is not at all the tombs of the saints that it has pleased Him who divideth to each severally as He will, to cause such miracles to be wrought.

4. Wherefore, although I had purposed not to let this most heavy burden on my heart come to your knowledge, lest I should disquiet you by a painful but useless vexation, it has pleased God to make it known to you, perhaps for this reason, that you may along with me devote yourselves to prayer, beseeching Him to condescend to reveal that which He knoweth, but which we cannot know in this matter. For I did not presume to suppress or erase from the roll of his colleagues the name of this presbyter, lest I should seem to insult the Divine Majesty, upon whose arbitration the case now depends, if I were to forestall His decision by any premature decision of mine: for even in secular affairs, when a perplexing case is referred to a higher authority, the inferior judges do not presume to make any change while the reference is pending. Moreover, it was decreed in a Council of bishops that no clergyman who has not yet been proved guilty be suspended from communion, unless he fail to present himself for the examination of the charges against him. Boniface, however, humbly agreed to forego his claim

to a letter of commendation, by the use of which on his journey he might have secured the recognition of his rank, preferring that both should stand on a footing of equality in a place where both were alike unknown. And now if you prefer that his name should not be read that we "may cut off occasion," as the apostle says, from those that desire occasion to justify their unwillingness to come to the Church, this omission of his name shall be not our deed, but theirs on whose account it may be done. For what does it harm any man, that men through ignorance refuse to have his name read from that tablet, so long as a guilty conscience does not blot his name out of the Book of Life?

5. Wherefore, my brethren who fear God, remember what the Apostle Peter says: Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." When he cannot devour a man through seducing him into iniquity, he attempts to injure his good name, that if it be possible, he may give way under the reproaches of men and the calumnies of slandering tongues, and may thus fall into his jaws. If, however, he be unable even to sully the good name of one who is innocent, he tries to persuade him to cherish unkindly suspicions of his brother, and judge him harshly, and so become entangled, and be an easy prey. And who is able to know or to tell all his snares and wiles? Nevertheless, in reference to those three, which belong more especially to the case before us; in the first place, lest you should be turned aside to wickedness through following bad examples, God gives you by the apostle these warnings: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion, hath light with darkness?" and in another place: "Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners: awake to righteousness, and sin not." Secondly, that ye may not give way under the tongues of slanderers, He saith by the prophet, "Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law: fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but My righteousness shall be for ever." And thirdly, lest you should be undone through groundless and malevolent suspicions concerning any servants of God, remember that word of the apostle, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will

bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God;” and this also, “The things which are revealed belong to you, but the secret things belong unto the Lord your God.”

6. It is indeed manifest that such things do not take place in the Church without great sorrow on the part of saints and believers; but let Him be our Comforter who hath foretold all these events, and has warned us not to become cold in love through abounding iniquity, to endure to the end that we may be saved. For, as far as I am concerned, if there be in me a spark of the love of Christ, who among you is weak, and I am not weak? who among you is offended, and I burn not? Do not therefore add to my distresses, by your yielding either by groundless suspicions or by occasion of other men’s sins. Do not, I beseech you, lest I say of you, “They have added to the pain of my wounds.” For it is much more easy to bear the reproach of those who take open pleasure in these our pains, of whom it was foretold in regard to Christ Himself, “They that sit in the gate speak against Me, and I was the song of the drunkards,” for whom also we have been taught to pray, and to seek their welfare. For why do they sit at the gate, and what do they watch for, if it be not for this, that so soon as any bishop or clergyman or monk or nun has fallen, they may have ground for believing, and boasting, and maintaining that all are the same as the one that has fallen, but that all cannot be convicted and unmasked? Yet these very men do not straightway cast forth their wives, or bring accusation against their mothers, if some married woman has been discovered to be an adulteress. But the moment that any crime is either falsely alleged or actually proved against any one who makes a profession of piety, these men are incessant and unwearied in their efforts to make this charge be believed against all religious men. Those men, therefore, who eagerly find what is sweet to their malicious tongues in the things which grieve us, we may compare to those dogs (if, indeed, they are to be understood as increasing his misery) which licked the sores of the beggar who lay before the rich man’s gate, and endured with patience every hardship and indignity until he should come to rest in Abraham’s bosom.

7. Do not add to my sorrows, O ye who have some hope toward God. Let not the wounds which these lick be multiplied by you, for whom we are in jeopardy every hour, having fightings without and fears within, and perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, perils by the heathen, and perils by false brethren. I know that you are grieved, but is your grief more poignant than mine? I know that you are disquieted, and I fear lest by the tongues of slanderers some weak one for whom Christ died should perish. Let not my grief be increased by you, for it is not through my fault that this grief was made yours. For I used the utmost precautions to secure, if it were possible, both that the steps necessary for the prevention of this evil should not be neglected, and that it should not be brought to your knowledge, since this could only cause unavailing vexation to the strong, and dangerous disquietude to the weak, among you. But may He who hath permitted you to be tempted by knowing this, give you strength to bear the trial, and “teach you out of His law, and give you rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked.”

8. I hear that some of you are more cast down with sorrow by this event, than by the fall of the two deacons who had joined us from the Donatist party, as if they had brought reproach upon the discipline of Proculeianus; whereas this checks your boasting about me, that under my discipline no such inconsistency among the clergy had taken place. Let me frankly say to you, whoever you are that have done this, you have not done well. Behold, God hath taught you, “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord;” and ye ought to bring no reproach against heretics but this, that they are not Catholics. Be not like these heretics, who, because they have nothing to plead in defence of their schism, attempt nothing beyond heaping up charges against the men from whom they are separated, and most falsely boast that in these we have an unenviable pre-eminence, in order that since they can neither impugn nor darken the truth of the Divine Scripture, from which the Church of Christ spread abroad everywhere receives its testimony, they may bring into disfavour the men by whom it is preached, against whom they are capable of affirming anything—whatever comes into their mind. “But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him.” For He Himself has guarded His believing people from undue disquietude concerning wickedness, even in

stewards of the divine mysteries, as doing evil which was their own, but speaking good which was His. “All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.” Pray by all means for me, lest perchance “when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway;” but when you glory, glory not in me, but in the Lord. For however watchful the discipline of my house may be, I am but a man, and I live among men; and I do not presume to pretend that my house is better than the ark of Noah, in which among eight persons one was found a castaway; or better than the house of Abraham, regarding which it was said, “Cast out the bondwoman and her son;” or better than the house of Isaac, regarding whose twin sons it was said, “I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau;” or better than the house of Jacob himself, in which Reuben defiled his father’s bed; or better than the house of David, in which one son wrought folly with his sister, and another rebelled against a father of such holy clemency; or better than the band of companions of Paul the apostle, who nevertheless would not have said, as above quoted, “Without are fightings, and within are fears,” if he had dwelt with none but good men; nor would have said, in speaking of the holiness and fidelity of Timothy, “I have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state; for all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s;” or better than the band of the disciples of the Lord Christ Himself, in which eleven good men bore with Judas, who was a thief and a traitor; or, finally, better than heaven itself, from which the angels fell.

9. I frankly avow to your Charity, before the Lord our God, whom I have taken, since the time when I began to serve Him, as a witness upon my soul, that as I have hardly found any men better than those who have done well in monasteries, so I have not found any men worse than monks who have fallen; whence I suppose that to them applies the word written in the Apocalypse, “He that is righteous, let him be still more righteous; and he that is filthy, let him be still more filthy.” Wherefore, if we be grieved by some foul blemishes, we are comforted by a much larger proportion of examples of an opposite kind. Let not, therefore, the dregs which offend your eyes cause you to hate the oil-presses whence the Lord’s storehouses are supplied to their profit with a more brightly illuminating oil.

May the mercy of our Lord keep you in His peace, safe from all the snares of the enemy, my dearly beloved brethren.

LETTER LXXIX

(A.D. 404.)

A short and stern challenge to some Manichaean teacher who had succeeded Fortunatus (supposed to be Felix).

Your attempts at evasion are to no purpose: your real character is patent even a long way off. My brethren have reported to me their conversation with you. You say that you do not fear death; it is well: but you ought to fear that death which you are bringing upon yourself by your blasphemous assertions concerning God. As to your understanding that the visible death which all men know is a separation between soul and body, this is a truth which demands no great grasp of intellect. But as to the statement which you annex to this, that death is a separation between good and evil, do you not see that, if the soul be good and the body be evil, he who joined them together, is not good? But you affirm that the good God has joined them together; from which it follows that He is either evil, or swayed by fear of one who is evil. Yet you boast of your having no fear of man, when at the same time you conceive God to be such that, through fear of Darkness, He would join together good and evil. Be not uplifted, as your writing shows you to be, by supposing that I magnify you, by my resolving to check the out-flowing of your poison, lest its insidious and pestilential power should do harm: for the apostle does not magnify those whom he calls “dogs,” saying to the Philippians, “Beware of dogs;” nor does he magnify those of whom he says that their word doth eat as a canker. Therefore, in the name of Christ, I demand of you to answer, if you are able, the question which baffled your predecessor Fortunatus. For he went from the scene of our discussion declaring that he would not return, unless, after conferring with his party, he found something by which he could answer the arguments used by our brethren. And if you are not prepared to do this, begone from this place, and do not pervert the right ways of the Lord, ensnaring and infecting with your poison the minds of the weak, lest, by the Lord’s right hand helping me, you be put to confusion in a way which you did not expect.

LETTER LXXX

(A.D. 404.)

A letter to Paulinus, asking him to explain more fully how we may know what is the will of God and rule of our duty in the ordinary course of providence. This letter may be omitted as merely propounding a question, and containing nothing specially noticeable.

LETTER LXXXI

(A.D. 405.)

To Augustin, My Lord Truly Holy, and Most Blessed Father, Jerome Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Having anxiously inquired of our holy brother Firmus regarding your state, I was glad to hear that you are well. I expected him to bring, or, I should rather say, I insisted upon his giving me, a letter from you; upon which he told me that he had set out from Africa without communicating to you his intention. I therefore send to you my respectful salutations through this brother, who clings to you with a singular warmth of affection; and at the same time, in regard to my last letter, I beg you to forgive the modesty which made it impossible for me to refuse you, when you had so long required me to write you in reply. That letter, moreover, was not an answer from me to you, but a confronting of my arguments with yours. And if it was a fault in me to send a reply (I beseech you hear me patiently), the fault of him who insisted upon it was still greater. But let us be done with such quarrelling; let there be sincere brotherliness between us; and henceforth let us exchange letters, not of controversy, but of mutual charity. The holy brethren who with me serve the Lord send you cordial salutations. Salute from us the holy brethren who with you bear Christ's easy yoke; especially I beseech you to convey my respectful salutation to the holy father Alypius, worthy of all esteem. May Christ, our almighty God, preserve you safe, and not unmindful of me, my lord truly holy, and most blessed father. If you have read my commentary on Jonah, I think you will not recur to the ridiculous gourd-debate. If, moreover, the friend who first assaulted me with his sword has been driven back by my pen, I rely upon your good feeling and equity to lay blame on the one who brought, and not on the one who repelled, the accusation. Let us, if you please, exercise ourselves in the field of Scripture without wounding each other.

LETTER LXXXII

(A.D. 405.)

A Reply to Letters LXXII., LXXV., and LXXXI.

Chap. I

To Jerome, My Lord Beloved and Honoured in the Bowels of Christ, My Holy Brother and Fellow-Presbyter, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Long ago I sent to your Charity a long letter in reply to the one which you remember sending to me by your holy son Asterius, who is now not only my brother, but also my colleague. Whether that reply reached you or not I do not know, unless I am to infer this from the words in your letter brought to me by our most sincere friend Firmus, that if the one who first assaulted you with his sword has been driven back by your pen, you rely upon my good feeling and equity to lay blame on the one who brought, not on the one who repelled, the accusation. From this one indication, though very slight, I infer that you have read my letter. In that letter I expressed indeed my sorrow that so great discord had arisen between you and Rufinus, over the strength of whose former friendship brotherly love was wont to rejoice in all parts to which the fame of it had come; but I did not in this intend to rebuke you, my brother, whom I dare not say that I have found blameable in that matter. I only lamented the sad lot of men in this world, in whose friendships, depending as they do on the continuance of mutual regard, there is no stability, however great that regard may sometimes be. I would rather, however, have been informed by your letter whether you have granted me the pardon which I begged, of which I now desire you to give me more explicit assurance; although the more genial and cheerful tone of your letter seems to signify that I have obtained what I asked in mine, if indeed it was despatched after mine had been read by you, which is, as I have said, not clearly indicated.

2. You ask, or rather you give a command with the confiding boldness of charity, that we should amuse ourselves in the field of Scripture without wounding each other. For my part, I am by all means disposed to exercise myself in earnest much rather than in mere amusement on such themes. If, however, you have chosen this word because of its suggesting easy exercise, let me frankly say that I desire something more from one who has, as you have, great talents under the control of a benignant disposition, together with wisdom enlightened by erudition, and whose application to study, hindered by no other distractions, is year after year impelled by enthusiasm and guided by genius: the Holy Spirit not only giving you all these advantages, but expressly charging you to come with help to those who are engaged in great and difficult investigations; not as if, in studying Scripture, they were amusing themselves on a level plain, but as men punting and toiling up a steep ascent. If, however, perchance, you selected the expression “ludamus” [let us amuse ourselves] because of the genial kindliness which befits discussion between loving friends, whether the matter debated be obvious and easy, or intricate and difficult, I beseech you to teach me how I may succeed in securing this; so that when I am dissatisfied with anything which, not through want of careful attention, but perhaps through my slowness of apprehension, has not been demonstrated to me, if I should, in attempting to make good an opposite opinion, express myself with a measure of unguarded frankness, I may not fall under the suspicion of childish conceit and forwardness, as if I sought to bring my own name into renown by assailing illustrious men; and that if, when something harsh has been demanded by the exigencies of argument, I attempt to make it less hard to bear by stating it in mild and courteous phrases, I may not be pronounced guilty of wielding a “honeyed sword.” The only way which I can see for avoiding both these faults, or the suspicion of either of them, is to consent that when I am thus arguing with a friend more learned than myself, I must approve of everything which he says, and may not, even for the sake of more accurate information, hesitate before accepting his decisions.

3. On such terms we might amuse ourselves without fear of offending each other in the field of Scripture, but I might well wonder if the amusement was not at my expense. For I confess to your Charity that I have learned to

yield this respect and honour only to the canonical books of Scripture: of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error. And if in these writings I am perplexed by anything which appears to me opposed to truth, I do not hesitate to suppose that either the Ms. is faulty, or the translator has not caught the meaning of what was said, or I myself have failed to understand it. As to all other writings, in reading them, however great the superiority of the authors to myself in sanctity and learning, I do not accept their teaching as true on the mere ground of the opinion being held by them; but only because they have succeeded in convincing my judgment of its truth either by means of these canonical writings themselves, or by arguments addressed to my reason. I believe, my brother, that this is your own opinion as well as mine. I do not need to say that I do not suppose you to wish your books to be read like those of prophets or of apostles, concerning which it would be wrong to doubt that they are free from error. Far be such arrogance from that humble piety and just estimate of yourself which I know you to have, and without which assuredly you would not have said, “Would that I could receive your embrace, and that by converse we might aid each other in learning!”

Chap. II

4. Now if, knowing as I do your life and conversation, I do not believe in regard to you that you have spoken anything with an intention of dissimulation and deceit, how much more reasonable is it for me to believe, in regard to the Apostle Paul, that he did not think one thing and affirm another when he wrote of Peter and Barnabas: “When I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as to the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?’“ For whom can I confide in, as assuredly not deceiving me by spoken or written statements, if the apostle deceived his own “children,” for whom he “travailed in birth again until Christ (who is the Truth) were formed in them”? After having previously said to them, “The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not,” could he in writing to these same persons state what was not true, and deceive them by a fraud which was in some way sanctioned by expediency, when he said that he had seen

Peter and Barnabas not walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and that he had withstood Peter to the face because of this, that he was compelling the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews?

5. But you will say it is better to believe that the Apostle Paul wrote what was not true, than to believe that the Apostle Peter did what was not right. On this principle, we must say (which far be it from us to say), that it is better to believe that the gospel history is false, than to believe that Christ was denied by Peter; and better to charge the book of Kings [second book of Samuel] with false statements, than believe that so great a prophet, and one so signally chosen by the Lord God as David was, committed adultery in lusting after and taking away the wife of another, and committed such detestable homicide in procuring the death of her husband. Better far that I should read with certainty and persuasion of its truth the Holy Scripture, placed on the highest (even the heavenly) pinnacle of authority, and should, without questioning the trustworthiness of its statements, learn from it that men have been either commended, or corrected, or condemned, than that, through fear of believing that by men, who, though of most praiseworthy excellence, were no more than men, actions deserving rebuke might sometimes be done, I should admit suspicions affecting the trustworthiness of the whole “oracles of God.”

6. The Manichaeans maintain that the greater part of the Divine Scripture, by which their wicked error is in the most explicit terms confuted, is not worthy of credit, because they cannot pervert its language so as to support their opinions; yet they lay the blame of the alleged mistake not upon the apostles who originally wrote the words, but upon some unknown corrupters of the manuscripts. Forasmuch, however, as they have never succeeded in proving this by more numerous and by earlier manuscripts, or by appealing to the original language from which the Latin translations have been drawn, they retire from the arena of debate, vanquished and confounded by truth which is well known to all. Does not your holy prudence discern how great scope is given to their malice against the truth, if we say not (as they do) that the apostolic writings have been tampered with by others, but that the apostles themselves wrote what they knew to be untrue?

7. You say that it is incredible that Paul should have rebuked in Peter that which Paul himself had done. I am not at present inquiring about what Paul did, but about what he wrote. This is most pertinent to the matter which I have in hand,—namely, the confirmation of the universal and unquestionable truth of the Divine Scriptures, which have been delivered to us for our edification in the faith, not by unknown men, but by the apostles, and have on this account been received as the authoritative canonical standard. For if Peter did on that occasion what he ought to have done, Paul falsely affirmed that he saw him walking not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel. For whoever does what he ought to do, walks uprightly. He therefore is guilty of falsehood who, knowing that another has done what he ought to have done, says that he has not done uprightly. If, then, Paul wrote what was true, it is true that Peter was not then walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel. He was therefore doing what he ought not to have done; and if Paul had himself already done something of the same kind, I would prefer to believe that, having been himself corrected, he could not omit the correction of his brother apostle, than to believe that he put down any false statement in his epistle; and if in any epistle of Paul this would be strange, how much more in the one in the preface of which he says, “The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not”!

8. For my part, I believe that Peter so acted on this occasion as to compel the Gentiles to live as Jews: because I read that Paul wrote this, and I do not believe that he lied. And therefore Peter was not acting uprightly. For it was contrary to the truth of the gospel, that those who believed in Christ should think that without those ancient ceremonies they could not be saved. This was the position maintained at Antioch by those of the circumcision who had believed; against whom Paul protested constantly and vehemently. As to Paul’s circumcising of Timothy, performing a vow at Cenchrea, and undertaking on the suggestion of James at Jerusalem to share the performance of the appointed rites with some who had made a vow, it is manifest that Paul’s design in these things was not to give to others the impression that he thought that by these observances salvation is given under the Christian dispensation, but to prevent men from believing that he condemned as no better than heathen idolatrous worship, those rites which

God had appointed in the former dispensation as suitable to it, and as shadows of things to come. For this is what James said to him, that the report had gone abroad concerning him that he taught men “to forsake Moses.” This would be by all means wrong for those who believe in Christ, to forsake him who prophesied of Christ, as if they detested and condemned the teaching of him of whom Christ said, “Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me; for he wrote of Me.”

9. For mark, I beseech you, the words of James: “Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which have believed, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication.” It is, in my opinion, very clear that the reason why James gave this advice was, that the falsity of what they had heard concerning him might be known to those Jews, who, though they had believed in Christ, were jealous for the honour of the law, and would not have it thought that the institutions which had been given by Moses to their fathers were condemned by the doctrine of Christ as if they were profane, and had not been originally given by divine authority. For the men who had brought this reproach against Paul were not those who understood the right spirit in which observance of these ceremonies should be practised under the Christian dispensation by believing Jews,—namely, as a way of declaring the divine authority of these rites, and their holy use in the prophetic dispensation, and not as a means of obtaining salvation, which was to them already revealed in Christ and ministered by baptism. On the contrary, the men who had spread abroad this report against the apostle were those who

would have these rites observed, as if without their observance there could be no salvation to those who believed the gospel. For these false teachers had found him to be a most zealous preacher of free grace, and a most decided opponent of their views, teaching as he did that men are not justified by these things, but by the grace of Jesus Christ, which these ceremonies of the law were appointed to foreshadow. This party, therefore, endeavouring to raise odium and persecution against him, charged him with being an enemy of the law and of the divine institutions; and there was no more fitting way in which he could turn aside the odium caused by this false accusation, than by himself celebrating those rites which he was supposed to condemn as profane, and thus showing that, on the one hand, the Jews were not to be debarred from them as if they were unlawful, and on the other hand, that the Gentiles were not to be compelled to observe them as if they were necessary.

10. For if he did in truth condemn these things in the way in which he was reported to have done, and undertook to perform these rites in order that he might, by dissembling, disguise his real sentiments, James would not have said to him, “and all shall know,” but, “all shall think that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee are nothing;” especially seeing that in Jerusalem itself the apostles had already decreed that no one should compel the Gentiles to adopt Jewish ceremonies, but had not decreed that no one should then prevent the Jews from living according to their customs, although upon them also Christian doctrine imposed no such obligation. Wherefore, if it was after the apostle’s decree that Peter’s dissimulation at Antioch took place, whereby he was compelling the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews, which he himself was not compelled to do, although he was not forbidden to use Jewish rites in order to declare the honour of the oracles of God which were committed to the Jews;—if this, I say, were the case, was it strange that Paul should exhort him to declare freely that decree which he remembered to have framed in conjunction with the other apostles at Jerusalem?

11. If, however, as I am more inclined to think, Peter did this before the meeting of that council at Jerusalem, in that case also it is not strange that Paul wished him not to conceal timidly, but to declare boldly, a rule of

practice in regard to which he already knew that they were both of the same mind; whether he was aware of this from having conferred with him as to the gospel which both preached, or from having heard that, at the calling of the centurion Cornelius, Peter had been divinely instructed in regard to this matter, or from having seen him eating with Gentile converts before those whom he feared to offend had come to Antioch. For we do not deny that Peter was already of the same opinion in regard to this question as Paul himself was. Paul, therefore, was not teaching Peter what was the truth concerning that matter, but was reproving his dissimulation as a thing by which the Gentiles were compelled to act as Jews did; for no other reason than this, that the tendency of all such dissembling was to convey or confirm the impression that they taught the truth who held that believers could not be saved without circumcision and other ceremonies, which were shadows of things to come.

12. For this reason also he circumcised Timothy, lest to the Jews, and especially to his relations by the mother’s side, it should seem that the Gentiles who had believed in Christ abhorred circumcision as they abhorred the worship of idols; whereas the former was appointed by God, and the latter invented by Satan. Again, he did not circumcise Titus, lest he should give occasion to those who said that believers could not be saved without circumcision, and who, in order to deceive the Gentiles, openly declared that this was the view held by Paul. This is plainly enough intimated by himself, when he says: “But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: and that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” Here we see plainly what he perceived them to be eagerly watching for, and why it was that he did not do in the case of Titus as he had done in the case of Timothy, and as he might otherwise have done in the exercise of that liberty, by which he had shown that these observances were neither to be demanded as necessary to salvation, nor denounced as unlawful.

13. You say, however, that in this discussion we must beware of affirming, with the philosophers, that some of the actions of men lie in a region between right and wrong, and are to be reckoned, accordingly, neither among good actions nor among the opposite; and it is urged in your argument that the observance of legal ceremonies cannot be a thing indifferent, but either good or bad; so that if I affirm it to be good, I acknowledge that we also are bound to observe these ceremonies; but if I affirm it to be bad, I am bound to believe that the apostles observed them not sincerely, but in a way of dissimulation. I, for my part, would not be so much afraid of defending the apostles by the authority of philosophers, since these teach some measure of truth in their dissertations, as of pleading on their behalf the practice of advocates at the bar, in sometimes serving their clients’ interests at the expense of truth. If, as is stated in your exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians, this practice of barristers may be in your opinion with propriety quoted as resembling and justifying dissimulation on the part of Peter and Paul, why should I fear to allege to you the authority of philosophers whose teaching we account worthless, not because everything which they say is false, but because they are in most things mistaken, and wherein they are found affirming truth, are notwithstanding strangers to the grace of Christ, who is the Truth?

14. But why may I not say regarding these institutions of the old economy, that they are neither good nor bad: not good, since men are not by them justified, they having been only shadows predicting the grace by which we are justified; and not bad, since they were divinely appointed as suitable both to the time and to the people? Why may I not say this, when I am supported by that saying of the prophet, that God gave unto His people “statutes that were not good”? For we have in this perhaps the reason of his not calling them “bad,” but calling them “not good,” i.e. not such that either by them men could be made good, or that without them men could not possibly become good. I would esteem it a favour to be informed by your Sincerity, whether any saint, coming from the East to Rome, would be guilty of dissimulation if he fasted on the seventh day of each week, excepting the Saturday before Easter. For if we say that it is wrong to fast on the seventh day, we shall condemn not only the Church of Rome, but also many other churches, both neighbouring and more remote, in which the

same custom continues to be observed. If, on the other hand, we pronounce it wrong not to fast on the seventh day, how great is our presumption in censuring so many churches in the East, and by far the greater part of the Christian world! Or do you prefer to say of this practice, that it is a thing indifferent in itself, but commendable in him who conforms with it, not as a dissembler, but from a seemly desire for the fellowship and deference for the feelings of others? No precept, however, concerning this practice is given to Christians in the canonical books. How much more, then, may I shrink from pronouncing that to be bad which I cannot deny to be of divine institution!—this fact being admitted by me in the exercise of the same faith by which I know that not through these observances, but by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, I am justified.

15. I maintain, therefore, that circumcision, and other things of this kind, were, by means of what is called the Old Testament, given to the Jews with divine authority, as signs of future things which were to be fulfilled in Christ; and that now, when these things have been fulfilled, the laws concerning these rights remained only to be read by Christians in order to their understanding the prophecies which had been given before, but not to be of necessity practised by them, as if the coming of that revelation of faith which they prefigured was still future. Although, however, these rites were not to be imposed upon the Gentiles, the compliance with them, to which the Jews had been accustomed, was not to be prohibited in such a way as to give the impression that it was worthy of abhorrence and condemnation. Therefore slowly, and by degrees, all this observance of these types was to vanish away through the power of the sound preaching of the truth of the grace of Christ, to which alone believers would be taught to ascribe their justification and salvation, and not to those types and shadows of things which till then had been future, but which were now newly come and present, as at the time of the calling of those Jews whom the personal coming of our Lord and the apostolic times had found accustomed to the observance of these ceremonial institutions. The toleration, for the time, of their continuing to observe these was enough to declare their excellence as things which, though they were to be given up, were not, like the worship of idols, worthy of abhorrence; but they were not to be imposed upon others, lest they should be thought necessary, either as means or as conditions of

salvation. This was the opinion of those heretics who, while anxious to be both Jews and Christians, could not be either the one or the other. Against this opinion you have most benevolently condescended to warn me, although I never entertained it. This also was the opinion with which, through fear, Peter fell into the fault of pretending to yield concurrence, though in reality he did not agree with it; for which reason Paul wrote most truly of him, that he saw him not walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and most truly said of him that he was compelling the Gentiles to live as did the Jews. Paul did not impose this burden on the Gentiles through his sincerely complying, when it was needful, with these ceremonies, with the design of proving that they were not to be utterly condemned (as idol-worship ought to be); for he nevertheless constantly preached that not by these things, but by the grace revealed to faith, believers obtain salvation, lest he should lead any one to take up these Jewish observances as necessary to salvation. Thus, therefore, I believe that the Apostle Paul did all these things honestly, and without dissimulation; and yet if any one now leave Judaism and become a Christian, I neither compel nor permit him to imitate Paul's example, and go on with the sincere observance of Jewish rites, any more than you, who think that Paul dissembled when he practised these rites, would compel or permit such an one to follow the apostle in that dissimulation.

16. Shall I also sum up "the matter in debate, or rather your opinion concerning it" (to quote your own expression)? It seems to me to be this: that after the gospel of Christ has been published, the Jews who believe do rightly if they offer sacrifices as Paul did, if they circumcise their children as Paul circumcised Timothy, and if they observe the "seventh day of the week, as the Jews have always done, provided only that they do all this as dissemblers and deceivers." If this is your doctrine, we are now precipitated, not into the heresy of Ebion, or of those who are commonly called Nazarenes, or any other known heresy, but into some new error, which is all the more pernicious because it originates not in mistake, but in deliberate and designed endeavour to deceive. If, in order to clear yourself from the charge of entertaining such sentiments, you answer that the apostles were to be commended for dissimulation in these instances, their purpose being to avoid giving offence to the many weak Jewish believers

who did not yet understand that these things were to be rejected, but that now, when the doctrine of Christ's grace has been firmly established throughout so many nations, and when, by the reading of the Law and the Prophets throughout all the churches of Christ, it is well known that these are not read for our observance, but for our instruction, any man who should propose to feign compliance with these rites would be regarded as a madman. What objection can there be to my affirming that the Apostle Paul, and other sound and faithful Christians, were bound sincerely to declare the worth of these old observances by occasionally honouring them, lest it should be thought that these institutions, originally full of prophetic significance, and cherished sacredly by their most pious forefathers, were to be abhorred by their posterity as profane inventions of the devil? For now, when the faith had come, which, previously foreshadowed by these ceremonies, was revealed after the death and resurrection of the Lord, they became, so far as their office was concerned, defunct. But just as it is seemly that the bodies of the deceased be carried honourably to the grave by their kindred, so was it fitting that these rites should be removed in a manner worthy of their origin and history, and this not with pretence of respect, but as a religious duty, instead of being forsaken at once, or cast forth to be torn in pieces by the reproaches of their enemies, as by the teeth of dogs. To carry the illustration further, if now any Christian (though he may have been converted from Judaism) were proposing to imitate the apostles in the observance of these ceremonies, like one who disturbs the ashes of those who rest, he would be not piously performing his part in the obsequies, but impiously violating the sepulchre.

17. I acknowledge that in the statement contained in my letter, to the effect that the reason why Paul undertook (although he was an apostle of Christ) to perform certain rites, was that he might show that these ceremonies were not pernicious to those who desired to continue that which they had received by the Law from their fathers, I have not explicitly enough qualified the statement, by adding that this was the case only in that time in which the grace of faith was at first revealed; for at that time this was not pernicious. These observances were to be given up by all Christians step by step, as time advanced; not all at once, lest, if this were done, men should not perceive the difference between what God by Moses appointed to His

ancient people, and the rites which the unclean spirit taught men to practise in the temples of heathen deities. I grant, therefore, that in this your censure is justifiable, and my omission deserved rebuke. Nevertheless, long before the time of my receiving your letter, when I wrote a treatise against Faustus the Manichaean, I did not omit to insert the qualifying clause which I have just stated, in a short exposition which I gave of the same passage, as you may see for yourself if you kindly condescend to read that treatise; or you may be satisfied in any other way that you please by the bearer of this letter, that I had long ago published this restriction of the general affirmation. And I now, as speaking in the sight of God, beseech you by the law of charity to believe me when I say with my whole heart, that it never was my opinion that in our time, Jews who become Christians were either required or at liberty to observe in any manner, or from any motive whatever, the ceremonies of the ancient dispensation; although I have always held, in regard to the Apostle Paul, the opinion which you call in question, from the time that I became acquainted with his writings. Nor can these two things appear incompatible to you; for you do not think it is the duty of any one in our day to feign compliance with these Jewish observances, although you believe that the apostles did this.

18. Accordingly, as you in opposing me affirm, and, to quote your own words, "though the world were to protest against it, boldly declare that the Jewish ceremonies are to Christians both hurtful and fatal, and that whoever observes them, whether he was originally Jew or Gentile, is on his way to the pit of perdition," I entirely indorse that statement, and add to it, "Whoever observes these ceremonies, whether he was originally Jew or Gentile, is on his way to the pit of perdition, not only if he is sincerely observing them, but also if he is observing them with dissimulation." What more do you ask? But as you draw a distinction between the dissimulation which you hold to have been practised by the apostles, and the rule of conduct befitting the present time, I do the same between the course which Paul, as I think, sincerely followed in all these examples then, and the matter of observing in our day these Jewish ceremonies, although it were done, as by him, without any dissimulation, since it was then to be approved, but is now to be abhorred. Thus, although we read that "the law and the prophets were until John," and that "therefore the Jews sought the

more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God,” and that “we have received grace for grace for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ;” and although it was promised by Jeremiah that God would make a new covenant with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant which He made with their fathers; nevertheless I do not think that the Circumcision of our Lord by His parents was an act of dissimulation. If any one object that He did not forbid this because He was but an infant, I go on to say that I do not think that it was with intention to deceive that He said to the leper, “Offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded for a testimony unto them,”—thereby adding His own precept to the authority of the law of Moses regarding that ceremonial usage. Nor was there dissimulation in His going up to the feast, as there was also no desire to be seen of men; for He went up, not openly, but secretly.

19. But the words of the apostle himself may be quoted against me: “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” It follows from this that he deceived Timothy, and made Christ profit him nothing, for he circumcised Timothy. Do you answer that this circumcision did Timothy no harm, because it was done with an intention to deceive? I reply that the apostle has not made any such exception. He does not say, If ye be circumcised without dissimulation, any more than, If ye be circumcised with dissimulation. He says unreservedly, “If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” As, therefore, you insist upon finding room for your interpretation, by proposing to supply the words, “unless it be done as an act of dissimulation,” I make no unreasonable demand in asking you to permit me to understand the words, “if ye be circumcised,” to be in that passage addressed to those who demanded circumcision, for this reason, that they thought it impossible for them to be otherwise saved by Christ. Whoever was then circumcised because of such persuasion and desire, and with this design, Christ assuredly profited him nothing, as the apostle elsewhere expressly affirms, “If righteousness come by the law, Christ is dead in vain. The same is affirmed in words which you have quoted: “Christ is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you is justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” His rebuke, therefore, was addressed to those who believed that they were to be

justified by the law,—not to those who, knowing well the design with which the legal ceremonies were instituted as foreshadowing truth, and the time for which they were destined to be in force, observed them in order to honour Him who appointed them at first. Wherefore also he says elsewhere, “If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law,”—a passage from which you infer, that evidently “he has not the Holy Spirit who submits to the Law, not, as our fathers affirmed the apostles to have done, feignedly under the promptings of a wise discretion, but”—as I suppose to have been the case—”sincerely.”

20. It seems to me important to ascertain precisely what is that submission to the law which the apostle here condemns; for I do not think that he speaks here of circumcision merely, or of the sacrifices then offered by our fathers, but now not offered by Christians, and other observances of the same nature. I rather hold that he includes also that precept of the law, “Thou shalt not covet,” which we confess that Christians are unquestionably bound to obey, and which we find most fully proclaimed by the light which the Gospel has shed upon it. “The law,” he says, “is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good;” and then adds, “Was, then, that which is good made death unto me? God forbid.” “But sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death in me by that which is good; that sin, by the commandment, might become exceeding sinful.” As he says here, “that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful,” so elsewhere, “The law entered that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” Again, in another place, after affirming, when speaking of the dispensation of grace, that grace alone justifies, he asks, “Wherefore then serveth the law?” and answers immediately, “It was added because of transgressions, until the Seed should come to whom the promises were made.” The persons, therefore, whose submission to the law the apostle here pronounces to be the cause of their own condemnation, are those whom the law brings in guilty, as not fulfilling its requirements, and who, not understanding the efficacy of free grace, rely with self-satisfied presumption on their own strength to enable them to keep the law of God; for “love is the fulfilling of the law.” Now “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts,” not by our own power, but “by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.” The satisfactory discussion of this, however, would require

too long a digression, if not a separate volume. If, then, that precept of the law, “Thou shalt not covet,” holds under it as guilty the man whose human weakness is not assisted by the grace of God, and instead of acquitting the sinner, condemns him as a transgressor, how much more was it impossible for those ordinances which were merely typical, circumcision and the rest, which were destined to be abolished when the revelation of grace became more widely known, to be the means of justifying any man! Nevertheless they were not on this ground to be immediately shunned with abhorrence, like the diabolical impieties of heathenism, from the first beginning of the revelation of the grace which had been by these shadows prefigured; but to be for a little while tolerated, especially among those who joined the Christian Church from that nation to whom these ordinances had been given. When, however, they had been, as it were, honourably buried, they were thenceforward to be finally abandoned by all Christians.

21. Now, as to the words which you use, “non dispensative, ut nostri voluere majores,”—”not in a way justifiable by expediency, the ground on which our fathers were disposed to explain the conduct of the apostles,”—pray what do these words mean? Surely nothing else than that which I call “officiosum mendacium,” the liberty granted by expediency being equivalent to a call of duty to utter a falsehood with pious intention. I at least can see no other explanation, unless, of course, the mere addition of the words “permitted by expediency” be enough to make a lie cease to be a lie; and if this be absurd, why do you not openly say that a lie spoken in the way of duty is to be defended? Perhaps the name offends you, because the word “officium” is not common in ecclesiastical books; but this did not deter our Ambrose from its use, for he has chosen the title “De Officiis” for some of his books that are full of useful rules. Do you mean to say, that whoever utters a lie from a sense of duty is to be blamed, and whoever does the same on the ground of expediency is to be approved? I beseech you, consider that the man who thinks this may lie whenever he thinks fit, because this involves the whole important question whether to say what is false be at any time the duty of a good man, especially of a Christian man, to whom it has been said, “Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay, lest ye fall into condemnation,” and who believes the Psalmist’s word, “Thou wilt destroy all them that speak lies.”

22. This, however, is, as I have said, another and a weighty question; I leave him who is of this opinion to judge for himself the circumstances in which he is at liberty to utter a lie: provided, however, that it be most assuredly believed and maintained that this way of lying is far removed from the authors who were employed to write holy writings, especially the canonical Scriptures; lest those who are the stewards of Christ, of whom it is said, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful," should seem to have proved their fidelity by learning as an important lesson to speak what is false when this is expedient for the truth's sake, although the word fidelity itself, in the Latin tongue, is said to signify originally a real correspondence between what is said and what is done. Now, where that which is spoken is actually done, there is assuredly no room for falsehood. Paul therefore, as a "faithful steward" doubtless is to be regarded as approving his fidelity in his writings; for he was a steward of truth, not of falsehood. Therefore he wrote the truth when he wrote that he had seen Peter walking not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and that he had withstood him to the face because he was compelling the Gentiles to live as the Jews did. And Peter himself received, with the holy and loving humility which became him, the rebuke which Paul, in the interests of truth, and with the boldness of love, administered. Therein Peter left to those that came after him an example, that, if at any time they deviated from the right path, they should not think it beneath them to accept correction from those who were their juniors,—an example more rare, and requiring greater piety, than that which Paul's conduct on the same occasion left us, that those who are younger should have courage even to withstand their seniors if the defence of evangelical truth required it, yet in such a way as to preserve unbroken brotherly love. For while it is better for one to succeed in perfectly keeping the right path, it is a thing much more worthy of admiration and praise to receive admonition meekly, than to admonish a transgressor boldly. On that occasion, therefore, Paul was to be praised for upright courage, Peter was to be praised for holy humility; and so far as my judgment enables me to form an opinion, this ought rather to have been asserted in answer to the calumnies of Porphyry, than further occasion given to him for finding fault, by putting it in his power to bring against Christians this much more damaging accusation, that either in writing their letters or in complying with the ordinances of God they practised deceit.

23. You call upon me to bring forward the name of even one whose opinion I have followed in this matter, and at the same time you have quoted the names of many who have held before you the opinion which you defend. You also say that if I censure you for an error in this, you beg to be allowed to remain in error in company with such great men. I have not read their writings; but although they are only six or seven in all, you have yourself impugned the authority of four of them. For as to the Laodicean author, whose name you do not give, you say that he has lately forsaken the Church; Alexander you describe as a heretic of old standing; and as to Origen and Didymus, I read in some of your more recent works, censure passed on their opinions, and that in no measured terms, nor in regard to insignificant questions, although formerly you gave Origen marvellous praise. I suppose, therefore, that you would not even yourself be contented to be in error with these men; although the language which I refer to is equivalent to an assertion that in this matter they have not erred. For who is there that would consent to be knowingly mistaken, with whatever company he might share his errors? Three of the seven therefore alone remain, Eusebius of Emesa, Theodorus of Heraclea, and John, whom you afterwards mention, who formerly presided as pontiff over the Church of Constantinople.

24. However, if you inquire or recall to memory the opinion of our Ambrose, and also of our Cyprian, on the point in question, you will perhaps find that I also have not been without some whose footsteps I follow in that which I have maintained. At the same time, as I have said already, it is to the canonical Scriptures alone that I am bound to yield such implicit subjection as to follow their teaching, without admitting the slightest suspicion that in them any mistake or any statement intended to mislead could find a place. Wherefore, when I look round for a third name that I may oppose three on my side to your three, I might indeed easily find one, I believe, if my reading had been extensive; but one occurs to me whose name is as good as all these others, nay, of greater authority—I mean the Apostle Paul himself. To him I betake myself; to himself I appeal from the verdict of all those commentators on his writings who advance an opinion different from mine. I interrogate him, and demand from himself to

know whether he wrote what was true, or under some plea of expediency wrote what he knew to be false, when he wrote that he saw Peter not walking uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, and withstood him to his face because by that dissimulation he was compelling the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews. And I hear him in reply proclaiming with a solemn oath in an earlier part of the epistle, where he began this narration, “The things that I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.”

25. Let those who think otherwise, however great their names, excuse my differing from them. The testimony of so great an apostle using, in his own writings, an oath as a confirmation of their truth, is of more weight with me than the opinion of any man, however learned, who is discussing the writings of another. Nor am I afraid lest men should say that, in vindicating Paul from the charge of pretending to conform to the errors of Jewish prejudice, I affirm him to have actually so conformed. For as, on the one hand, he was not guilty of pretending conformity to error when, with the liberty of an apostle, such as was suitable to that period of transition, he did, by practising those ancient holy ordinances, when it was necessary to declare their original excellence as appointed not by the wiles of Satan to deceive men, but by the wisdom of God for the purpose of typically foretelling things to come; so, on the other hand, he was not guilty of real conformity to the errors of Judaism, seeing that he not only knew, but also preached constantly and vehemently, that those were in error who thought that these ceremonies were to be imposed upon the Gentile converts, or were necessary to the justification of any who believed.

26. Moreover, as to my saying that to the Jews he became as a Jew, and to the Gentiles as a Gentile, not with the subtlety of intentional deceit, but with the compassion of pitying love, it seems to me that you have not sufficiently considered my meaning in the words; or rather, perhaps, I have not succeeded in making it plain. For I did not mean by this that I supposed him to have practised in either case a feigned conformity; but I said it because his conformity was sincere, not less in the things in which he became to the Jews as a Jew, than in those in which he became to the Gentiles as a Gentile,—a parallel which you yourself suggested, and by which I thankfully acknowledge that you have materially assisted my argument. For

when I had in my letter asked you to explain how it could be supposed that Paul’s becoming to the Jews as a Jew involved the supposition that he must have acted deceitfully in conforming to the Jewish observances, seeing that no such deceptive conformity to heathen customs was involved in his becoming as a Gentile to the Gentiles; your answer was, that his becoming to the Gentiles as a Gentile meant no more than his receiving the uncircumcised, and permitting the free use of those meats which were pronounced unclean by Jewish law. If, then, when I ask whether in this also he practised dissimulation, such an idea is repudiated as palpably most absurd and false: it is an obvious inference, that in his performing those things in which he became as a Jew to the Jews, he was using a wise liberty, not yielding to a degrading compulsion, nor doing what would be still more unworthy of him, viz. stooping from integrity to fraud out of a regard to expediency.

27. For to believers, and to those who know the truth, as the apostle testifies (unless here too, perhaps, he is deceiving his readers), “every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.” Therefore to Paul himself, not only as a man, but as a steward eminently faithful, not only as knowing, but also as a teacher of the truth, every creature of God which is used for food was not feignedly but truly good. If, then, to the Gentiles he became as a Gentile, by holding and teaching the truth concerning meats and circumcision although he feigned no conformity to the rites and ceremonies of the Gentiles, why say that it was impossible for him to become as a Jew to the Jews, unless he practised dissimulation in performing the rites of their religion? Why did he maintain the true faithfulness of a steward towards the wild olive branch that was engrafted, and yet hold up a strange veil of dissimulation, on the plea of expediency, before those who were the natural and original branches of the olive tree? Why was it that, in becoming as a Gentile to the Gentiles, his teaching and his conduct are in harmony with his real sentiments; but that, in becoming as a Jew to the Jews, he shuts up one thing in his heart, and declares something wholly different in his words, deeds, and writings? But far be it from us to entertain such thoughts of him. To both Jews and Gentiles he owed “charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned;” and therefore he became all things to all men, that he might

gain all, not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the love of one filled with compassion; that is to say, not by pretending himself to do all the evil things which other men did, but by using the utmost pains to minister with all compassion the remedies required by the evils under which other men laboured, as if their case had been his own.

28. When, therefore, he did not refuse to practise some of these Old Testament observances, he was not led by his compassion for Jews to feign this conformity, but unquestionably was acting sincerely; and by this course of action declaring his respect for those things which in the former dispensation had been for a time enjoined by God, he distinguished between them and the impious rites of heathenism. At that time, moreover, not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the love of one moved by compassion, he became to the Jews as a Jew, when, seeing them to be in error, which either made them unwilling to believe in Christ, or made them think that by these old sacrifices and ceremonial observances they could be cleansed from sin and made partakers of salvation, he desired so to deliver them from that error as if he saw not them, but himself, entangled in it; thus truly loving his neighbour as himself, and doing to others as he would have others do to him if he required their help,—a duty to the statement of which our Lord added these words, “This is the law and the prophets.”

29. This compassionate affection Paul recommends in the same Epistle to the Galatians, saying: “If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” See whether he has not said, “Make thyself as he is, that thou mayest gain him.” Not, indeed, that one should commit or pretend to have committed the same fault as the one who has been overtaken, but that in the fault of that other he should consider what might happen to himself, and so compassionately render assistance to that other, as he would wish that other to do to him if the case were his; that is, not with the subtlety of a deceiver, but with the love of one filled with compassion. Thus, whatever the error or fault in which Jew or Gentile or any man was found by Paul, to all men he became all things,—not by feigning what was not true, but by feeling, because the case might have

been his own, the compassion of one who put himself in the other's place,—that he might gain all.

Chap. IV

30. I beseech you to look, if you please, for a little into your own heart,—I mean, into your own heart as it stands affected towards myself,—and recall, or if you have it in writing beside you, read again, your own words in that letter (only too brief) which you sent to me by Cyprian our brother, now my colleague. Read with what sincere brotherly and loving earnestness you have added to a serious complaint of what I had done to you these words: "In this friendship is wounded, and the laws of brotherly union are set at nought. Let not the world see us quarrelling like children, and giving material for angry contention between those who may become our respective supporters or adversaries." These words I perceive to be spoken by you from the heart, and from a heart kindly seeking to give me good advice. Then you add, what would have been obvious to me even without your stating it: "I write what I have now written, because I desire to cherish towards you pure and Christian love, and not to hide in my heart anything which does not agree with the utterance of my lips." O pious man, beloved by me, as God who seeth my soul is witness, with a true heart I believe your statement; and just as I do not question the sincerity of the profession which you have thus made in a letter to me, so do I by all means believe the Apostle Paul when he makes the very same profession in his letter, addressed not to any one individual, but to Jews and Greeks, and all those Gentiles who were his children in the gospel, for whose spiritual birth he travailed, and after them to so many thousands of believers in Christ, for whose sake that letter has been preserved. I believe, I say, that he did not "hide in his heart anything which did not agree with the utterance of his lips."

31. You have indeed yourself done towards me this very thing,—becoming to me as I am,—"not with the subtlety of deception, but with the love of compassion," when you thought that it behoved you to take as much pains to prevent me from being left in a mistake, in which you believed me to be, as you would have wished another to take for your deliverance if the case had been your own. Wherefore, gratefully acknowledging this evidence of

your goodwill towards me, I also claim that you also be not displeased with me, if, when anything in your treatises disquieted me, I acquainted you with my distress, desiring the same course to be followed by all towards me as I have followed towards you, that whatever they think worthy of censure in my writings, they would neither flatter me with deceitful commendation nor blame me before others for that of which they are silent towards myself; thereby, as it seems to me, more seriously “wounding friendship and setting at nought the laws of brotherly union.” For I would hesitate to give the name of Christian to those friendships in which the common proverb, “Flattery makes friends, and truth makes enemies,” is of more authority than the scriptural proverb, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.”

32. Wherefore let us rather do our utmost to set before our beloved friends, who most cordially wish us well in our labours, such an example that they may know that it is possible for the most intimate friends to differ so much in opinion, that the views of the one may be contradicted by the other without any diminution of their mutual affection, and without hatred being kindled by that truth which is due to genuine friendship, whether the contradiction be in itself in accordance with truth, or at least, whatever its intrinsic value is, be spoken from a sincere heart by one who is resolved not “to hide in his heart anything which does not agree with the utterance of his lips.” Let therefore our brethren, your friends, of whom you bear testimony that they are vessels of Christ, believe me when I say that it was wholly against my will that my letter came into the hands of many others before it reached your own, and that my heart is filled with no small sorrow for this mistake. How it happened would take long to tell, and this is now, if I am not mistaken, unnecessary; since, if my word is to be taken at all in regard to this, it suffices for me to say that it was not done by me with the sinister intention which is supposed by some, and that it was not by my wish, or arrangement, or consent, or design that this has taken place. If they do not believe this, which I affirm in the sight of God, I can do no more to satisfy them. Far be it, however, from me to believe that they made this suggestion to your Holiness with the malicious desire to kindle enmity between you and me, from which may God in His mercy defend us! Doubtless, without any intention of doing me wrong, they readily suspected me, as a man, to be

capable of failings common to human nature. For it is right for me to believe this concerning them, if they be vessels of Christ appointed not to dishonour, but to honour, and made meet by God for every good work in His great house. If, however, this my solemn protestation come to their knowledge, and they still persist in the same opinion of my conduct, you will yourself see that in this they will do wrong.

33. As to my having written that I had never sent to Rome a book against you, I wrote this because, in the first place, I did not regard the name "book" as applicable to my letter, and therefore was under the impression that you had heard of something else entirely different from it; in the second place, I had not sent the letter in question to Rome, but to you; and in the third place, I did not consider it to be against you, because I knew that I had been prompted by the sincerity of friendship, which should give liberty for the exchange of suggestions and corrections between us. Leaving out of sight for a little while your friends of whom I have spoken, I implore yourself, by the grace whereby we have been redeemed, not to suppose that I have been guilty of artful flattery in anything which I have said in my letters concerning the good gifts which have been by the Lord's goodness bestowed on you. If, however, I have in anything wronged you, forgive me. As to that incident in the life of some forgotten bard, which, with perhaps more pedantry than good taste, I quoted from classic literature, I beg you not to carry the application of it to yourself further than my words warranted for I immediately added: "I do not say this in order that you may recover the faculty of spiritual sight—far be it from me to say that you have lost it!—but that, having eyes both clear and quick in discernment, you may turn them to this matter." I thought a reference to that incident suitable exclusively in connection with the palinodia, in which we ought all to imitate Stesichorus if we have written anything which it becomes our duty to correct in a writing of later date, and not at all in connection with the blindness of Stesichorus, which I neither ascribed to your mind, nor feared as likely to befall you. And again, I beseech you to correct boldly whatever you see needful to censure in my writings. For although, so far as the titles of honour which prevail in the Church are concerned, a bishop's rank is above that of a presbyter, nevertheless in many things Augustin is in

inferior to Jerome; albeit correction is not to be refused nor despised, even when it comes from one who in all respects may be an inferior.

Chap. V

34. As to your translation, you have now convinced me of the benefits to be secured by your proposal to translate the Scriptures from the original Hebrew, in order that you may bring to light those things which have been either omitted or perverted by the Jews. But I beg you to be so good as state by what Jews this has been done, whether by those who before the Lord’s advent translated the Old Testament—and if so, by what one or more of them—or by the Jews of later times, who may be supposed to have mutilated or corrupted the Greek Mss., in order to prevent themselves from being unable to answer the evidence given by these concerning the Christian faith. I cannot find any reason which should have prompted the earlier Jewish translators to such unfaithfulness. I beg of you, moreover, to send us your translation of the Septuagint, which I did not know that you had published. I am also longing to read that book of yours which you named De optimo genere interpretandi, and to know from it how to adjust the balance between the product of the translator’s acquaintance with the original language, and the conjectures of those who are able commentators on the Scripture, who, notwithstanding their common loyalty to the one true faith, must often bring forward various opinions on account of the obscurity of many passages; although this difference of interpretation by no means involves departure from the unity of the faith; just as one commentator may himself give, in harmony with the faith which he holds, two different interpretations of the same passage, because the obscurity of the passage makes both equally admissible.

35. I desire, moreover, your translation of the Septuagint, in order that we may be delivered, so far as is possible, from the consequences of the notable incompetency of those who, whether qualified or not, have attempted a Latin translation; and in order that those who think that I look with jealousy on your useful labours, may at length, if it be possible, perceive that my only reason for objecting to the public reading of your translation from the Hebrew in our churches was, lest, bringing forward anything which was, as it were, new and opposed to the authority of the

Septuagint version, we should trouble by serious cause of offence the flocks of Christ, whose ears and hearts have become accustomed to listen to that version to which the seal of approbation was given by the apostles themselves. Wherefore, as to that shrub in the book of Jonah, if in the Hebrew it is neither “gourd” nor “ivy,” but something else which stands erect, supported by its own stem without other props, I would prefer to call it “gourd” in all our Latin versions; for I do not think that the Seventy would have rendered it thus at random, had they not known that the plant was something like a gourd.

36. I think I have now given a sufficient answer (perhaps more than sufficient) to your three letters; of which I received two by Cyprian, and one by Firmus. In replying, send whatever you think likely to be of use in instructing me and others. And I shall take more care, as the Lord may help me, that any letter which I may write to you shall reach yourself before it falls into the hand of any other, by whom its contents may be published abroad; for I confess that I would not like any letter of yours to me to meet with the fate of which you justly complain as having befallen my letter to you. Let us, however, resolve to maintain between ourselves the liberty as well as the love of friends; so that in the letters which we exchange, neither of us shall be restrained from frankly stating to the other whatever seems to him open to correction, provided always that this be done in the spirit which does not, as inconsistent with brotherly love, displease God. If, however, you do not think that this can be done between us without endangering that brotherly love, let us not do it: for the love which I should like to see maintained between us is assuredly the greater love which would make this mutual freedom possible; but the smaller measure of it is better than none at all.

LETTER LXXXIII

(A.D. 405.)

To My Lord Alypius Most Blessed, My Brother and Colleague, Beloved and Longed for With Sincere Veneration, and to the Brethren that are with Him, Augustin and the Brethren with Him Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. The sorrow of the members of the Church at Thiave prevents my heart from having any rest until I hear that they have been brought again to be of the same mind towards you as they formerly were; which must be accomplished without delay. For if the apostle was concerned about one individual, “lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow,” adding in the same context the words, “lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his devices,” how much more does it become us to act with caution, lest we cause similar grief to a whole flock, and especially one composed of persons who have lately been reconciled to the Catholic Church, and whom I can upon no account forsake! As, however, the short time at our disposal did not permit us so to take counsel together as to arrive at a mature and satisfactory decision, may it please your Holiness to accept in this letter the finding which commended itself most to me when I had long reflected upon the matter since we parted; and if you approve of it, let the enclosed letter, which I have written to them in the name of both of us, be sent to them without delay.

2. You proposed that they should have the one half [of the property left by Honoratus], and that the other half should be made up to them by me from such resources as might be at my disposal. I think, however, that if the whole property had been taken from them, men might reasonably have said that we had taken the great pains in this matter which we have done, for the sake of justice, not for pecuniary advantage. But when we concede to them one half, and in that way settle with them by a compromise, it will be manifest that our anxiety has been only about the money; and you see what harm must follow from this. For, on the one hand, we shall be regarded by them as having taken away one half of a property to which we had no claim; and, on the other hand, they will be regarded by us as dishonourably and unjustly consenting to accept aid from one half of a property of which the whole belonged to the poor. For your remark, “We must beware lest, in our efforts to obtain a right adjustment of a difficult question, we cause more serious wounds,” applies with no less force if the half be conceded to them. For those whose turning from the world to monastic life we desire to secure, will, for the sake of this half of their private estates, be disposed to find some excuse for putting off the sale of these, in order that their case may be dealt with according to this precedent. Moreover, would it not be

strange, if, in a question like this, where much may be said on both sides, a whole community should, through our not avoiding the appearance of evil, be offended by the impression that their bishops, whom they hold in high esteem, are smitten with sordid avarice?

3. For when any one is turned to adopt the life of a monk, if he is adopting it with a true heart, he does not think of that which I have just mentioned, especially if he be admonished of the sinfulness of such conduct. But if he be a deceiver, and is seeking "his own things, not the things which are Jesus Christ's," he has not charity; and without this, what does it profit him, "though he bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and though he give his body to be burned"? Moreover, as we agreed when conversing together, this may be henceforth avoided, and an arrangement made with each individual who is disposed to enter a monastery, if he cannot be admitted to the society of the brethren before he has relieved himself of all these encumbrances, and comes as one at leisure from all business, because the property which belonged to him has ceased to be his. But there is no other way in which this spiritual death of weak brethren, and grievous obstacle to the salvation of those for whose reconciliation with the Catholic Church we so earnestly labour, can be avoided, than by our giving them most clearly to understand that we are by no means anxious about money in such cases as this. And this they cannot be made to understand, unless we leave to their use the estate which they always supposed to belong to their late presbyter; because, even if it was not his, they ought to have known this from the beginning.

4. It seems to me, therefore, that in matters of this kind, the rule which ought to hold is, that whatever belonged, according to the ordinary civil laws regarding property, to him who is an ordained clergyman in any place, belongs after his death to the Church over which he was ordained. Now, by civil law, the property in question belonged to the presbyter Honoratus; so that not only on account of his being ordained elsewhere, but even had he remained in the monastery of Thagaste, if he had died without having either sold his estate or handed it over by express deed of gift to any one, the right of succession to it would belong only to his heirs: as brother AEmilianus inherited those thirty shillings left by the brother Privatus. This, therefore,

behoved to be considered and provided for in time; but if no provision was made for it, we must, in the disposal of the estate, comply with the laws which have been appointed to regulate in civil society the holding or not holding of property; that we may, so far as is in our power, abstain not only from the reality, but also from all appearance of evil, and preserve that good name which is so necessary to our office as stewards. How truly this procedure has the appearance of evil, I beseech your wisdom to observe. For having heard of their sorrow, which we ourselves witnessed at Thiave, fearing lest, as frequently happens, I should myself be mistaken through partiality for my own opinion, I stated the facts of the case to our brother and colleague Samsucius, without telling him at the time my present view of the matter, but rather stating the view taken up by both of us when we were resisting their demands. He was exceedingly shocked, and wondered that we had entertained such a view; being moved by nothing else but the ugly appearance of the transaction, as one wholly unworthy not only of us, but of any man.

5. Wherefore I implore you to subscribe and transmit without delay the letter which I have written to them in name of both of us. And even if, perchance, you discern the other course to be a just one in the matter, let not these brethren who are weak be compelled to learn now what I myself cannot understand; rather let this word of the Lord be remembered in dealing with them: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” For He Himself, out of condescension to such weakness, said on another occasion (it was in reference to the payment of tribute), “Then are the children free; notwithstanding lest we offend them,” etc.; and sent Peter to pay the didrachmae which were then exacted. For He knew another law according to which he was not bound to make any such payment; but He made the payment which was imposed upon Him by that law according to which, as I have said, succession to the estate of Honoratus behoved to be regulated, if he died before either giving away or selling his property. Nay, even in regard to the law of the Church, Paul showed forbearance towards the weak, and did not insist upon his receiving the money due to him, although fully persuaded in his conscience that he might with perfect justice insist upon it; waiving his claim, however, only because he thereby avoided a suspicion of his motives which would mar the

sweet savour of Christ among them, and abstained from the appearance of evil in a region in which he knew that this was his duty, and probably even before he had known by experience the sorrow which it would occasion. Let us now, though we are somewhat behind-hand, and have been admonished by experience, correct that which we ought to have foreseen.

6. I remember that you proposed when we parted that the brethren at Thagaste should hold me responsible to make up the half of the sum claimed; let me say in conclusion, that as I fear everything which may make my attempt unsuccessful, if you clearly perceive that proposal to be a just one, I do not refuse to comply with it on this condition, however, that I am to pay the amount only when I have it in my power, i.e. when something so considerable falls to our monastery at Hippo that this can be done without unduly straitening us,—the amount remaining after the subtraction of so large a sum being still such as to provide for our monastery here an equal share in proportion to the number of resident brethren.

LETTER LXXXIV

(A.D. 405.)

To My Lord Novatus, Most Blessed, My Brother and Partner in the Priestly Office, Esteemed and Longed For, and to the Brethren Who are with Him, Augustin and the Brethren with Him Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. I myself feel how hard-hearted I must appear to you, and I can scarcely excuse to myself my conduct in not consenting to send to your Holiness my son the deacon Lucillus, your own brother. But when your own time comes to surrender to the claims of Churches in remote places some of those whom you have educated, and who are most dear and sweet to you, then, and not till then, will you know the pangs of longing which pierce me through and through for some who, once united to me in the strongest and most pleasing intimacy, are no more beside me. Let me submit to your thoughts the case of one who is far away. However strong be the bond of kindred between brothers, it does not surpass the bond by which my brother Severus and I are united to each other, and yet you know how rarely I have the happiness of seeing him. And this has been caused neither by his wish

nor by mine, but because of our giving to the claims of our mother the Church precedency above the claims of this present world, out of regard to that coming eternity in which we shall dwell together and part no more. How much more reasonable, therefore, is it for you to submit for the sake of the Church's welfare to the absence of that brother, with whom you have not shared the food which the Lord our Shepherd provides for nearly so long a period as I did with my most amiable fellow-townsman Severus, who now only with an effort and at long intervals converses with me by means of brief letters,—letters, moreover, which are for the most part burdened with the cares and affairs of other men, instead of bearing to me any reminiscence of those green pastures in which we were wont to lie down under Christ's loving care!

5. You will perhaps reply, "What then? May not my brother be of service to the Church here also? Is it for any other end than usefulness to the Church that I desire to have him with me?" Truly, if his being beside you seemed to me to be as important for the gathering in or ruling of the Lord's flock as his presence here is for these ends, every one might justly blame me for being not merely hard-hearted, but unjust. But since he is conversant with the Punic language, through want of which the preaching of the gospel is greatly hindered in these parts, whereas the use of that language is general with you, do you think that we would be doing our duty in consulting for the welfare of the Lord's flocks, if we were to send this talent to a place where it is not specially needful, and remove it from this region, where we thirst for it with such parched spirits? Forgive me, therefore, when I do, not only against your will, but also against my own feeling, what the care of the burden imposed upon me compels me to do. The Lord, to whom you have given your heart, will grant you such aid in your labours that you shall be recompensed for this kindness; for we acknowledge that you have with a good grace rather than of necessity conceded the deacon Lucillus to the burning thirst of the regions in which our lot is cast. For you will do me no small favour if you do not burden me with any further request upon this subject, lest I should have occasion to appear anything more than somewhat hard-hearted to you, whom I revere for your holy benignity of disposition.

LETTER LXXXV

(A.D. 405.)

To My Lord Paulus, Most Beloved, My Brother and Colleague in the Priesthood, Whose Highest Welfare is Sought by All My Prayers, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. You would not call me so inexorable if you did not think me also a dissembler. For what else do you believe concerning my spirit, if I am to judge by what you have written, than that I cherish towards you dislike and antipathy which merit blame and detestation; as if in a matter about which, there could be but one opinion I was not careful lest, while warning others, I myself should deserve reproof, or were wishing to cast the mote out of your eye while retaining and fostering the beam in my own? It is by no means as you suppose. Behold! I repeat this, and call God to witness, that if you were only to desire for yourself what I desire on your behalf, you would now be living in Christ free from all disquietude, and would make the whole Church rejoice in glory brought by you to His name. Observe, I pray you, that I have addressed you not only as my brother, but also as my colleague. For it cannot be that any bishop whatsoever of the Catholic Church should cease to be my colleague, so long as he has not been condemned by any ecclesiastical tribunal. As to my refusing to hold communion with you, the only reason for this is that I cannot flatter you. For inasmuch as I have begotten you in Christ, I am under very special obligation to render to you the salutary severity of love in faithful admonition and reproof. It is true that I rejoice in the numbers who have been, by God's blessing on your work, gathered into the Catholic Church; but this does not make me less bound to weep that a greater number are being by you scattered from the Church. For you have so wounded the Church of Hippo, that unless the Lord make you disengage yourself from all secular cares and burdens, and recall you to the manner of living and deportment which become the true bishop, the wound may soon be beyond remedy.

2. Seeing, however, that you continue to involve yourself more and more deeply in these affairs, and have, notwithstanding your vow of renunciation, entangled yourself again with the things which you had solemnly laid aside,

—a step which could not be justified even by the laws of ordinary human affairs; seeing also that you are reported to be living in a style of extravagance which cannot be maintained by the slender income of your church,—why do you insist upon communion with me, while you refuse to hear my rebuke of your faults? Is it that men whose complaints I cannot bear, may justly blame me for whatever you do? You are, moreover, mistaken in suspecting that those who find fault with you are persons who have always been against you even in your earlier life. It is not so: and you have no reason to be surprised that many things escape your observation. But even were this the case, it is your duty to secure that they find nothing in your conduct which they might reasonably blame, and for which they might bring reproach against the Church. Perhaps you think that my reason for saying these things is, that I have not accepted what you urged in your defence. Nay, rather my reason is, that if I were to say nothing regarding these things, I would be guilty of that for which I could urge nothing in my defence before God. I know your abilities; but even a man of dull mind is kept from disquietude if he sets his affections on heavenly things, whereas a man of acute mind has this gift in vain if he set his affections on earthly things. The office of a bishop is not designed to enable one to spend a life of vanity. The Lord God, who has closed against you all the ways by which you were disposed to make Him minister to your gain, in order that He may guide you, if you but understand Him, into that way, with a view to the pursuit of which that holy responsibility was laid upon you, will Himself teach you what I now say.

LETTER LXXXVI

(A.D. 405.)

To My Noble Lord Caecilianus, My Son Truly and Justly Honourable and Esteemed in the Love of Christ, Augustin, Bishop, Sends Greeting in the Lord.

The renown of your administration and the fame of your virtues, as well as the praiseworthy zeal and faithful sincerity of your Christian piety,—gifts of God which make you rejoice in Him from whom they came, and from whom you hope to receive yet greater things,—have moved me to acquaint your Excellency by this letter with the cares which agitate my mind. As our joy is great that throughout the rest of Africa you have taken measures with remarkable success on behalf of Catholic unity, our sorrow is proportionately great because the district of Hippo and the neighbouring regions on the borders of Numidia have not enjoyed the benefit of the vigour with which as a magistrate you have enforced your proclamation, my noble lord, and my son truly and justly honourable and esteemed in the love of Christ. Lest this should be regarded rather as due to the neglect of duty by me who bear the burden of the episcopal office at Hippo, I have considered myself bound to mention it to your Excellency. If you condescend to acquaint yourself with the extremities to which the effrontery of the heretics has proceeded in the region of Hippo, as you may do by questioning my brethren and colleagues, who are able to furnish your Excellency with information, or the presbyter whom I have sent with this letter, I am sure you will so deal with this tumour of impious presumption, that it shall be healed by warning rather than painfully removed afterwards by punishment.

LETTER LXXXVII

(A.D. 405.)

To His Brother Emeritus, Beloved and Longed For, Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. I know that it is not on the possession of good talents and a liberal education that the salvation of the soul depends; but when I hear of any one who is thus endowed holding a different view from that which truth imperatively insists upon on a point which admits of very easy examination, the more I wonder at such a man, the more I burn with desire to make his acquaintance, and to converse with him; or if that be impossible, I long to bring his mind and mine into contact by exchanging letters, which wing their flight even between places far apart. As I have heard that you are such a man as I have spoken of, I grieve that you should be severed and shut out from the Catholic Church, which is spread abroad throughout the whole world, as was foretold by the Holy Spirit. What your reason for this separation is I do not know. For it is not disputed that the party of Donatus

is wholly unknown to a great part of the Roman world, not to speak of the barbarian nations (to whom also the apostle said that he was a debtor) whose communion in the Christian faith is joined with ours, and that in fact they do not even know at all when or upon what account the dissension began. Now, unless you admit these Christians to be innocent of those crimes with which you charge the Christians of Africa, you must confess that all of you are defiled by participation in the wicked actions of all worthless characters, so long as they succeed (to put the matter mildly) in escaping detection among you. For you do occasionally expel a member from your communion, in which case his expulsion takes place only after he has committed the crime for which he merited expulsion. Is there not some intervening time during which he escapes detection before he is discovered, convicted, and condemned by you? I ask, therefore, whether he involved you in his defilement so long as he was not discovered by you? You answer, “By no means.” If, then, he were not to be discovered at all, he would in that case never involve you in his defilement; for it sometimes happens that the crimes committed by men come to light only after their death, yet this does not bring guilt upon those Christians who communicated with them while they were alive. Why, then, have you severed yourselves by so rash and profane schism from the communion of innumerable Eastern Churches, in which all that you truly or falsely affirm to have been done in Africa has been and still is utterly unknown?

2. For it is quite another question whether or not there be truth in the assertions made by you. These assertions we disprove by documents much more worthy of credit than those which you bring forward, and we further find in your own documents more abundant proof of those positions which you assail. But this is, as I have said, another question altogether, to be taken up and discussed when necessary. Meanwhile, let your mind give special attention to this: that no one can be involved in the guilt of unknown crimes committed by persons unknown to him. Whence it is manifest that you have been guilty of impious schism in separating yourselves from the communion of the whole world, to which the things charged, whether truly or falsely, by you against some men in Africa, have been and still are wholly unknown; although this also should not be forgotten, that even when known and discovered, bad men do not harm the good who are in a Church,

if either the power of restraining them from communion be wanting, or the interests of the Church's peace forbid this to be done. For who were those who, according to the prophet Ezekiel, obtained the reward of being marked before the destruction of the wicked, and of escaping unhurt when they were destroyed, but those who sighed and cried for the sins and iniquities of the people of God which were done in the midst of them? Now who sighs and cries for that which is unknown to him? On the same principle, the Apostle Paul bears with false brethren. For it is not of persons unknown to him that he says, "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's;" yet these persons he shows plainly to have been beside him. And to what class do the men belong who have chosen rather to burn incense to idols or surrender the divine books than to suffer death, if not to those who "seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ"?

3. I omit many proofs which I might give from Scripture, that I may not make this letter longer than is needful; and I leave many more things to be considered by yourself in the light of your own learning. But I beseech you mark this, which is quite enough to decide the whole question: If so many transgressors in the one nation, which was then the Church of God, did not make those who were associated with them to be guilty like themselves; if that multitude of false brethren did not make the Apostle Paul, who was a member of the same Church with them, a seeker not of the things of Jesus Christ, but of his own,—it is manifest that a man is not made wicked by the wickedness of any one with whom he goes to the altar of Christ, even though he be not unknown to him, provided only that he do not encourage him in his wickedness, but by a good conscience disallowing his conduct keep himself apart from him. It is therefore obvious that, to be art and part with a thief, one must either help him in the theft, or receive with approbation what he has stolen. This I say in order to remove out of the way endless and unnecessary questions concerning the conduct of men, which are wholly irrelevant when advanced against our position.

4. If, however, you do not agree with what I have said, you involve the whole of your party in the reproach of being such men as Optatus was, while, notwithstanding your knowledge of his crimes, he was tolerated in communion with you; and far be it from me to say this of such a man as

Emeritus, and of others of like integrity among you, who are, I am sure, wholly averse to such deeds as disgraced him. For we do not lay any charge against you but the one of schism, which by your obstinate persistence in it you have now made heresy. How great this crime is in the judgment of God Himself, you may see by reading what without doubt you have read ere now. You will find that Dathan and Abiram were swallowed up by an opening of the earth beneath them, and that all the others who had conspired with them were devoured by fire breaking forth in the midst of them. As a warning to men to shun this crime, the Lord God signalized its commission with this immediate punishment, that He might show what He reserves for the final recompense of persons guilty of a similar transgression, whom His great forbearance spares for a time. We do not, indeed, find fault with the reasons by which you excuse your tolerating Optatus among you. We do not blame you, because at the time when he was denounced for his furious conduct in the mad abuse of power, when he was impeached by the groans of all Africa,—groans in which you also shared, if you are what good report declares you to be,—a report which, God knows, I most willingly believe,—you forbore from excommunicating him, lest he should under such sentence draw away many with him, and rend your communion asunder with the frenzy of schism. But this is the thing which is itself an indictment against you at the bar of God, O brother Emeritus, that although you saw that the division of the party of Donators was so great an evil, that it was thought better that Optatus should be tolerated in your communion than that division should be introduced among you, you nevertheless perpetuate the evil which was wrought in the division of the Church of Christ by your forefathers.

5. Here perhaps you will be disposed, under the exigencies of debate, to attempt to defend Optatus. Do not so, I beseech you; do not so, my brother: it would not become you; and if it would perchance be seemly for any one to do it (though, in fact, nothing is seemly which is wrong), it assuredly would be unseemly for Emeritus to defend Optatus. Perhaps you reply that it would as little become you to accuse him. Granted, by all means. Take, then, the course which lies between defending and accusing him. Say, “Every man shall bear his own burden;” “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant?” If, then, notwithstanding the testimony of all Africa,—nay

more, of all regions to which the name of Gildo was carried, for Optatus was not less notorious than he,—you have not dared to pronounce judgment concerning Optatus, lest you should rashly decide in regard to one unknown to you, is it, I ask, either possible or right for us, proceeding solely on your testimony, to pronounce sentence rashly upon persons whom we do not know? Is it not enough that you should charge them with things of which you have no certain knowledge, without our pronouncing them guilty of things of which we know as little as yourselves? For even though Optatus were in peril through the falsehood of detractors, you defend not him, but yourself, when you say, "I do not know what his character was." How much more obvious, then, is it that the Eastern world knows nothing of the character of those Africans with whom, though much less known to you than Optatus, you find fault! Yet you are disjoined by scandalous schism from Churches in the East, the names of which you have and you read in the sacred books. If your most famous and most scandalously notorious Bishop of Thamugada was at that very time not known to his colleague, I shall not say in Caesarea, but in Sitifa, so close at hand, how was it possible for the Churches of Corinth, Ephesus, Colosse, Philippi, Thessalonica, Antioch, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and others which were founded in Christ by the apostles, to know the case of these African traditors, whoever they were; or how was it consistent with justice that they should be condemned by you for not knowing it? Yet with these Churches you hold no communion. You say they are not Christian, and you labour to rebaptize their members. What need I say? What complaint, what protest is necessary here? If I am addressing a right-hearted man, I know that with you I share the keenness of the indignation which I feel. For you doubtless see at once what I might say if I would.

6. Perhaps, however, your forefathers formed of themselves a council, and placed the whole Christian world except themselves under sentence of excommunication. Have you come so to judge of things, as to affirm that the council of the followers of Maximianus who were cut off from you, as you were cut off from the Church, was of no authority against you, because their number was small compared with yours; and yet claim for your council an authority against the nations, which are the inheritance of Christ, and the ends of the earth, which are His possession? I wonder if the man

who does not blush at such pretensions has any blood in his body. Write me, I beseech you, in reply to this letter; for I have heard from some, on whom I could not but rely, that you would write me an answer if I were to address a letter to you. Some time ago, moreover, I sent you a letter; but I do not know whether you received it or answered it, and perhaps your reply did not reach me. Now, however, I beg you not to refuse to answer this letter, and state what you think. But do not occupy yourself with other questions than the one which I have stated, for this is the leading point of a well-ordered discussion of the origin of the schism.

7. The civil powers defend their conduct in persecuting schismatics by the rule which the apostle laid down: “Whoso resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” The whole question therefore is, whether schism be not an evil work, or whether you have not caused schism, so that your resistance of the powers that be is in a good cause and not in an evil work, whereby you would bring judgment on yourselves. Wherefore with infinite wisdom the Lord not merely said, “Blessed are they who are persecuted,” but added, “for righteousness’ sake.” I desire therefore to know from you, in the light of what I have said above, whether it be a work of righteousness to originate and perpetuate your state of separation from the Church. I desire also to know whether it be not rather a work of unrighteousness to condemn unheard the whole Christian world, either because it has not heard what you have heard, or because no proof has been furnished to it of charges which were rashly believed, or without sufficient evidence advanced by you, and to propose on this ground to baptize a second time the members of so many churches founded by the preaching and labours either of the Lord Himself while He was on earth, or of His apostles; and all this on the assumption that it is excusable for you either not to know the wickedness of your African colleagues who are living beside you, and are using the same sacraments with you, or even to tolerate their misdeeds when known, lest the party of

Donatus should be divided, but that it is inexcusable for them, though they reside in most remote regions, to be ignorant of what you either know, or believe, or have heard, or imagine, concerning men in Africa. How great is the perversity of those who cling to their own unrighteousness, and yet find fault with the severity of the civil powers!

8. You answer, perhaps, that Christians ought not to persecute even the wicked. Be it so; let us admit that they ought not: but is it lawful to lay this objection in the way of the powers which are ordained for this very purpose? Shall we erase the apostle’s words? Or do your Mss. not contain the words which I mentioned a little while ago? But you will say that we ought not to communicate with such persons. What then? Did you withdraw, some time ago, from communion with the deputy Flavianus, on the ground of his putting to death, in his administration of the laws, those whom he found guilty? Again, you will say that the Roman emperors are incited against you by us. Nay, rather blame yourselves for this, seeing that, as was long ago foretold in the promise concerning Christ, “Yea, all kings shall fall down before him,” they are now members of the Church; and you have dared to wound the Church by schism, and still presume to insist upon rebaptizing her members. Our brethren indeed demand help from the powers which are ordained, not to persecute you, but to protect themselves against the lawless acts of violence perpetrated by individuals of your party, which you yourselves, who refrain from such things, bewail and deplore; just as, before the Roman Empire became Christian, the Apostle Paul took measures to secure that the protection of armed Roman soldiers should be granted him against the Jews who had conspired to kill him. But these emperors, whatever the occasion of their becoming acquainted with the crime of your schism might be, frame against you such decrees as their zeal and their office demand. For they bear not the sword in vain; they are the ministers of God to execute wrath upon those that do evil. Finally, if some of our party transgress the bounds of Christian moderation in this matter, it displeases us; nevertheless, we do not on their account forsake the Catholic Church because we are unable to separate the wheat from the chaff before the final winnowing, especially since you yourselves have not forsaken the Donatist party on account of Optatus, when you had not courage to excommunicate him for his crimes.

9. You say, however, “Why seek to have us joined to you, if we be thus stained with guilt?” I reply: Because you still live, and may, if you are willing, be restored. For when you join yourselves to us, i.e. to the Church of God, the heritage of Christ, who has the ends of the earth as his possession, you are restored so that you live in vital union with the Root. For the apostle says of the branches which were broken off: “God is able to graft them in again.” We exhort you to change, in so far as concerns your dissent from the Church; although, as to the sacraments which you had, we admit that they are holy, since they are the same in all. Wherefore we desire to see you changed from your obstinacy, that is, in order that you who have been cut off may be vitally united to the Root again. For the sacraments which you have not changed are approved by us as you have them; else, in our attempting to correct your sin, we should do impious wrong to those mysteries of Christ which have not been deprived of their worth by your unworthiness. For even Saul did not, with all his sins, destroy the efficacy of the anointing which he received; to which anointing David, that pious servant of God, showed so great respect. We therefore do not insist upon rebaptizing you, because we only wish to restore to you connection with the Root: the form of the branch which has been cut off we accept with approval, if it has not been changed; but the branch, however perfect in its form, cannot bear fruit, except it be united to the root. As to the persecution, so gentle and tempered with clemency, which you say you suffer at the hands of our party, while unquestionably your own party inflict greater harm in a lawless and irregular way upon us,—this is one question: the question concerning baptism is wholly distinct from it; in regard to it, we inquire not where it is, but where it profits. For wherever it is, it is the same; but it cannot be said of him who receives it, that wherever he is, he is the same. We therefore detest the impiety of which men as individuals are guilty in a state of schism; but we venerate everywhere the baptism of Christ. If deserters carry with them the imperial standards, these standards are welcomed back again as they were, if they have remained unharmed, when the deserters are either punished with a severe sentence, or, in the exercise of clemency, restored. If, in regard to this, any more particular inquiry is to be made, that is, as I have said another question; for in these things, the practice of the Church of God is the rule of our practice.

10. The question between us, however, is, whether your Church or ours is the Church of God. To resolve this, we must begin with the original inquiry, why you became schismatics. If you do not write me an answer, I believe that before the bar of God I shall be easily vindicated as having done my duty in this matter; because I have sent a letter in the interests of peace to a man of whom I have heard that, excepting only his adherence to schismatics, he is a good and well-educated man. Be it yours to consider how you shall answer Him whose forbearance now demands your praise, and His judgment shall in the end demand your fears. If, however, you write a reply to me with as much care as you see me to have bestowed upon this, I believe that, by the mercy of God, the error which now keeps us apart shall perish before the love of peace and the logic of truth. Observe that I have said nothing about the followers of Rogatus, who call you Firmiani, as you call us Macariani. Nor have I spoken of your bishop of Rucata (or Rusicada), who is said to have made an agreement with Firmus, promising, on condition of the safety of all his adherents, that the gates should be opened to him, and the Catholics given up to slaughter and pillage. Many other such things I pass unnoticed. Do you therefore in like manner desist from the commonplaces of rhetorical exaggeration concerning actions of men which you have either heard of or known; for you see how I am silent concerning deeds of your party, in order to confine the debate to the question upon which the whole matter hinges, namely, the origin of the schism.

My brother, beloved and longed for, may the Lord our God breathe into you thoughts tending towards reconciliation.

LETTER LXXXVIII

(A.D. 406.)

To Januarius, the Catholic Clergy of the District of Hippo Send the Following.

1. Your clergy and your Circumcelliones are venting against us their rage in a persecution of a new kind, and of unparalleled atrocity. Were we to render evil for evil, we should be transgressing the law of Christ. But now, when

all that has been done, both on your side and on ours, is impartially considered, it is found that we are suffering what is written, “They rewarded me evil for good;” and (in another Psalm), “My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.” For, seeing that you have arrived at so great age, we suppose you to know perfectly well that the party of Donatus, which at first was called at Carthage the party of Majorinus, did of their own accord accuse Caecilianus, then bishop of Carthage, before the famous Emperor Constantine. Lest, however, you should have forgotten this, venerable sir, or should pretend not to know, or perhaps (which we scarcely think possible) may never have known it, we insert here a copy of the narrative of Anulinus, then proconsul, to whom the party of Majorinus appealed, requesting that by him as proconsul a statement of the charges which they brought against Caecilianus should be sent to the Emperor aforesaid:—

2. To Constantine Augustus, from Anulinus, a man of consular rank, proconsul of Africa, these:

The welcome and adored celestial writing sent by your Majesty to Caecilianus, and those over whom he presides, who are called clergy, have been, by the care of your Majesty’s most humble servant, engrossed in his Records; and he has exhorted these parties that, heartily agreeing among themselves, since they are seen to be exempted from all other burdens by your Majesty’s clemency, they should, preserving Catholic unity, devote themselves to their duties with the reverence due to the sanctity of law and to divine things. After a few days, however, there arose some persons to whom a crowd of people joined themselves, who thought that proceedings should be taken against Caecilianus, and presented to me a sealed packet wrapped in leather, and a small document without seal, and earnestly besought me to transmit them to your Majesty’s sacred and venerable court, which your Majesty’s most humble servant has taken care to do, Caecilianus continuing meanwhile as he was. The Acts pertaining to the case are subjoined, in order that your Majesty may be able to arrive at a decision concerning the whole matter. The documents sent are two: the one in a leathern envelope, with this title, “A document of the Catholic Church containing charges against Caecilianus, and furnished by the party of Majorinus;” the other attached without a seal to the same leathern envelope.

Given on the 17th day before the Calends of May, in the third consulship of our lord Constantine Augustus [i.e. April 15, a.d. 313].

3. After this report had been sent to him, the Emperor summoned the parties before a tribunal of bishops to be constituted at Rome. The ecclesiastical records show how the case was there argued and decided, and Caecilianus pronounced innocent. Surely now, after the peacemaking decision of the tribunal of bishops, all the pertinacity of strife and bitterness should have given way. Your forefathers, however, appealed again to the Emperor, and complained that the decision was not just, and that their case had not been fully heard. Accordingly, he appointed a second tribunal of bishops to meet in Aries, a town of Gaul, where, after sentence had been pronounced against your worthless and diabolical schism, many of your party returned to a good understanding with Caecilianus; some, however, who were most obstinate and contentious, appealed to the Emperor again. Afterwards, when, yielding to their importunity, he personally interposed in this dispute, which belonged properly to the bishops to decide, having heard the case, he gave sentence against your party, and was the first to pass a law that the properties of your congregations should be confiscated; of all which things we could insert the documentary evidence here, if it were not for making the letter too long. We must, however, by no means omit the investigation and decision in open court of the case of Felix of Aptunga, whom, in the Council of Carthage, under Secundus of Tigisis, primate, your fathers affirmed to be the original cause of all these evils. For the Emperor aforesaid, in a letter of which we annex a copy, bears witness that in this trial your party were before him as accusers and most strenuous prosecutors:—

4. The Emperors Flavius Constantinus, Maximus Caesar, and Valerius Licinius Caesar, to Probianus, proconsul of Africa:

Your predecessor AElianus, who acted as substitute for Verus, the superintendent of the prefects, when that most excellent magistrate was by severe illness laid aside in that part of Africa which is under our sway, considered it, and most justly, to be his duty, amongst other things, to bring again under his investigation and decision the matter of Caecilianus, or rather the odium which seems to have been stirred up against that bishop of the Catholic Church. Wherefore, having ordered the compearance of Superius, centurion, Caecilianus, magistrate of Aptunga, and Saturninus, the ex-president of police, and his successor in the office, Calibius the younger, and Solon, an official belonging to Aptunga, he heard the testimony of these witnesses; the result of which was, that whereas objection had been taken to Caecilianus on the ground of his ordination to the office of bishop by Felix, against whom it seemed that the charge of surrendering and burning the sacred books had been made, the innocence of Felix in this matter was clearly established. Moreover, when Maximus affirmed that Ingentius, a decurion of the town of Ziqua, had forged a letter of the ex-magistrate Caecilianus, we found, on examining the Acts which were before us, that this same Ingentius had been put on the rack for that offence, and that the infliction of torture on him was not, as alleged, on the ground of his affirming that he was a decurion of Ziqua. Wherefore we desire you to send under a suitable guard to the court of Augustus Constantine the said Ingentius, that in the presence and hearing of those who are now pleading in this case, and who day after day persist in their complaints, it may be made manifest and fully known that they labour in vain to excite odium against the bishop Caecilianus, and to clamour violently against him. This, we hope, will bring the people to desist, as they should do, from such contentions, and to devote themselves with becoming reverence to their religious duties, undistracted by dissension among themselves.

5. Since you see, therefore, that these things are so, why do you provoke odium against us on the ground of the imperial decrees which are in force against you, when you have yourselves done all this before we followed your example? If emperors ought not to use their authority in such cases, if care of these matters lies beyond the province of Christian emperors, who urged your forefathers to remit the case of Caecilianus, by the proconsul, to the Emperor, and a second time to bring before the Emperor accusations against a bishop whom you had somehow condemned in absence, and on his acquittal to invent and bring before the same Emperor other calumnies

against Felix, by whom the bishop aforesaid had been ordained? And now, what other law is in force against your party than that decision of the elder Constantine, to which your forefathers of their own choice appealed, which they extorted from him by their importunate complaints, and which they preferred to the decision of an episcopal tribunal? If you are dissatisfied with the decrees of emperors, who were the first to compel the emperors to set these in array against you? For you have no more reason for crying out against the Catholic Church because of the decrees of emperors against you, than those men would have had for crying out against Daniel, who, after his deliverance, were thrown in to be devoured by the same lions by which they first sought to have him destroyed; as it is written: "The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion." These slanderous enemies insisted that Daniel should be thrown into the den of lions: his innocence prevailed over their malice; he was taken from the den unharmed and they, being cast into it, perished. In like manner, your forefathers cast Caecilianus and his companions to be destroyed by the king's wrath; and when, by their innocence, they were delivered from this, you yourselves now suffer from these kings what your party wished them to suffer; as it is written: "Whoso diggeth a pit for his neighbour, shall himself fall therein."

6. You have therefore no ground for complaint against us: nay more, the clemency of the Catholic Church would have led us to desist from even enforcing these decrees of the emperors, had not your clergy and Circumcelliones, disturbing our peace, and destroying us by their most monstrous crimes and furious deeds of violence, compelled us to have these decrees revived and put in force again. For before these more recent edicts of which you complain had come into Africa, these desperadoes laid ambush for our bishops on their journeys, abused our clergy with savage blows, and assaulted our laity in the same most cruel manner, and set fire to their habitations. A certain presbyter who had of his own free choice preferred the unity of our Church, was for so doing dragged out of his own house, cruelly beaten without form of law, rolled over and over in a miry pond, covered with a matting of rushes, and exhibited as an object of pity to some and of ridicule to others, while his persecutors gloried in their crime; after which they carried him away where they pleased, and reluctantly set him at liberty after twelve days. When Proculeianus was challenged by our

bishop concerning this outrage, at a meeting of the municipal courts, he at first endeavoured to evade inquiry into the matter by pretending that he knew nothing of it; and when the demand was immediately repeated, he publicly declared that he would say nothing more on the subject. And the perpetrators of that outrage are at this day among your presbyters, continuing moreover to keep us in terror, and to persecute us to the utmost of their power.

7. Our bishop, however, did not complain to the emperors of the wrongs and persecution which the Catholic Church in our district suffered in those days. But when a Council had been convened, it was agreed that you should be invited to meet our party peaceably, in order that, if it were possible, you [i.e. the bishops on both sides, for the letter is written by the clergy of Hippo] might have a conference, and the error being taken out of the way, brotherly love might rejoice in the bond of peace between us. You may learn from your own records the answer which Proculeianus made at first on that occasion, that you would call a Council together, and would there see what you ought to answer; and how afterwards, when he was again publicly reminded of his promise, he stated, as the Acts bear witness, that he refused to have any conference with a view to peace. After this, when the notorious atrocities of your clergy and Circumcelliones continued, a case was brought to trial; and Crispinus being condemned as a heretic, although he was through the forbearance of the Catholics exempted from the fine which the imperial edict imposed on heretics of ten pounds of gold, nevertheless thought himself warranted in appealing to the emperors. As to the answer which was made to that appeal, was it not extorted by the preceding wickedness of your party and by his own appeal? And yet, even after that answer was given, he was permitted to escape the infliction of that fine, through the intercession of our bishops with the Emperor on his behalf. From that Council, however, our bishops sent deputies to the court, who obtained a decree that not all your bishops and clergy should be held liable to this fine of ten pounds of gold, which the decree had imposed on all heretics, but only those in whose districts the Catholic Church suffered violence at the hands of your party. But by the time that the deputation came to Rome, the wounds of the Catholic bishop of Bagae, who had just then been dreadfully injured, had moved the Emperor to send such edicts as

were actually sent. When these edicts came to Africa, seeing especially that strong pressure had begun to be brought upon you, not to any evil thing, but for your good, what should you have done but invited our bishops to meet you, as they had invited yours to meet them, that by a conference the truth might be brought to light?

8. Not only, however, have you failed to do this, but your party go on inflicting yet greater injuries upon us. Not contented with beating us with bludgeons and killing some with the sword, they even, with incredible ingenuity in crime, throw lime mixed with acid [? vitriol] into our people's eyes to blind them. For pillaging our houses, moreover, they have fashioned huge and formidable implements, armed with which they wander here and there, breathing out threats of slaughter, rapine, burning of houses and blinding of our eyes; by which things we have been constrained in the first instance to complain to you, venerable sir, begging you to consider how, under these so-called terrible laws of Catholic emperors, many, nay all of you, who say that you are the victims of persecution, are settled in peace in the possessions which were your own, or which you have taken from others, while we suffer such unheard-of wrongs at the hands of your party. You say that you are persecuted, while we are killed with clubs and swords by your armed men. You say that you are persecuted, while our houses are pillaged by your armed robbers. You say that you are persecuted, while many of us have our eyesight destroyed by the lime and acid with which your men are armed for the purpose. Moreover, if their course of crime brings some of them to death, they make out that these deaths are justly the occasion of odium against us, and of glory to them. They take no blame to themselves for the harm which they do to us, and they lay upon us the blame of the harm which they bring upon themselves. They live as robbers, they die as Circumcelliones, they are honoured as martyrs! Nay, I do injustice to robbers in this comparison; for we have never heard of robbers destroying the eyesight of those whom they have plundered: they indeed take away those whom they kill from the light, but they do not take away the light from those whom they leave in life.

9. On the other hand, if at any time we get men of your party into our power, we keep them unharmed, showing great love towards them; and we

tell them everything by which the error which has severed brother from brother is refuted. We do as the Lord Himself commanded us, in the words of the prophet Isaiah: “Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His word; say, Ye are our brethren, to those who hate you, and who cast you out, that the name of the Lord may be glorified, and that He may appear to them with joy; but let them be put to shame.” And thus some of them we persuade, through their considering the evidences of the truth and the beauty of peace, not to be baptized anew for this sign of allegiance to our king they have already received (though they were as deserters), but to accept that faith, and love of the Holy Spirit, and union to the body of Christ, which formerly they had not. For it is written, “Purifying their hearts by faith;” and again, “Charity covereth a multitude of sins.” If, however, either through too great obduracy, or through shame making them unable to bear the taunts of those with whom they were accustomed to join so frequently in falsely reproaching us and contriving evil against us, or perhaps more through fear lest they should come to share along with us such injuries as they were formerly wont to inflict on us,—if, I say, from any of these causes, they refuse to be reconciled to the unity of Christ, they are allowed to depart, as they were detained, without suffering any harm. We also exhort our laity as far as we can to detain them without doing them any harm, and bring them to us for admonition and instruction. Some of them obey us and do this, if it is in their power: others deal with them as they would with robbers, because they actually suffer from them such things as robbers are wont to do. Some of them strike their assailants in protecting their own bodies from their blows: while others apprehend them and bring them to the magistrates; and though we intercede on their behalf, they do not let them off, because they are very much afraid of their savage outrages. Yet all the while, these men, though persisting in the practices of robbers, claim to be honoured as martyrs when they receive the due reward of their deeds!

10. Accordingly our desire, which we lay before you, venerable sir, by this letter and by the brethren whom we have sent, is as follows. In the first place, if it be possible, let a peaceable conference be held with our bishops, so that an end may be put to the error itself, not to the men who embrace it, and men corrected rather than punished; and as you formerly despised their

proposals for agreement, let them now proceed from your side. How much better for you to have such a conference between your bishops and ours, the proceedings of which may be written down and sent with signature of the parties to the Emperor, than to confer with the civil magistrates, who cannot do otherwise than administer the laws which have been passed against you! For your colleagues who sailed from this country said that they had come to have their case heard by the prefects. They also named our holy father the Catholic bishop Valentinus, who was then at court, saying that they wished to be heard along with him. This the judge could not concede, as he was guided in his judicial functions by the laws which were passed against you: the bishop, moreover, had not come on this footing, or with any such instructions from his colleagues. How much better qualified therefore will the Emperor himself be to decide regarding your case, when the report of that conference has been read before him, seeing that he is not bound by these laws, and has power to enact other laws instead of them; although it may be said to be a case upon which final decision was pronounced long ago! Yet, in wishing this conference with you, we seek not to have a second final decision, but to have it made known as already settled to those who meanwhile are not aware that it is so. If your bishops be willing to do this, what do you thereby lose? Do you not rather gain, inasmuch as your willingness for such conference will become known, and the reproach, hitherto deserved, that you distrust your own cause will be taken away? Do you, perchance, suppose that such conference would be unlawful? Surely you are aware that Christ our Lord spoke even to the devil concerning the law, and that by the Apostle Paul debates were held not only with Jews, but even with heathen philosophers of the sect of the Stoics and of the Epicureans. Is it, perchance, that the laws of the Emperor do not permit you to meet our bishops? If so, assemble together in the meantime your bishops in the region of Hippo, in which we are suffering such wrongs from men of your party. For how much more legitimate and open is the way of access to us for the writings which you might send to us, than for the arms with which they assail us!

11. Finally, we beg you to send back such writings by our brethren whom we have sent to you. If, however, you will not do this, at least hear us as well as those of your own party, at whose hands we suffer such wrongs.

Show us the truth for which you allege that you suffer persecution, at the time when we are suffering so great cruelties from your side. For if you convict us of being in error, perhaps you will concede to us an exemption from being rebaptized by you, because we were baptized by persons whom you have not condemned; and you granted this exemption to those whom Felicianus of Musti, and Praetextatus of Assuri, had baptized during the long period in which you were attempting to cast them out of their churches by legal interdicts, because they were in communion with Maximianus, along with whom they were condemned explicitly and by name in the Council of Bagae. All which things we can prove by the judicial and municipal transactions, in which you brought forward the decisions of this same Council of yours, when you wished to show the judges that the persons whom you were expelling from your ecclesiastical buildings were persons by schism separated from you. Nevertheless, you who have by schism severed yourselves from the seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth are blessed, refuse to be expelled from our ecclesiastical buildings, when the decree to this effect proceeds not from judges such as you employed in dealing with schismatics from your sect, but from the kings of the earth themselves, who worship Christ as the prophecy had foretold, and from whose bar you retired vanquished when you brought accusation against Caecilianus.

12. If, however, you will neither instruct us nor listen to us, come yourselves, or send into the district of Hippo some of your party, with some of us as their guides, that they may see your army equipped with their weapons; nay, more fully equipped than ever army was before, for no soldier when fighting against barbarians was ever known to add to his other weapons lime and acid to destroy the eyes of his enemies. If you refuse this also, we beg you at least to write to them to desist now from these things, and refrain from murdering, plundering, and blinding our people. We will not say, condemn them; for it is for yourselves to see how no contamination is brought to you by the toleration within your communion of those whom we prove to be robbers, while contamination is brought to us by our having members against whom you have never been able to prove that they were traditors. If, however, you treat all our remonstrances with contempt, we shall never regret that we desired to act in a peaceful and orderly way. The

Lord will so plead for His Church, that you, on the other hand, shall regret that you despised our humble attempt at conciliation.

LETTER LXXXIX

(A.D. 406.)

To Festus, My Lord Well Beloved, My Son Honourable and Worthy of Esteem, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. If, on behalf of error and inexcusable dissension, and falsehoods which have been in every way possible disproved, men are so presumptuous as to persevere in boldly assailing and threatening the Catholic Church, which seeks their salvation, how much more is it reasonable and right for those who maintain the truth of Christian peace and unity,—truth which commends itself even to those who profess to deny it or attempt to resist it,—to labour constantly and with energy, not only in the defence of those who are already Catholics, but also for the correction of those who are not yet within the Church! For if obstinacy aims at the possession and exercise of indomitable strength, how great should be the strength of constancy which devotes persevering and unwearied labours to a cause which it knows to be both pleasing to God, and beyond all question necessarily approved by the judgment of wise men!

2. Could there, moreover, be anything more lamentable as an instance of perversity, than for men not only to refuse to be humbled by the correction of their wickedness, but even to claim commendation for their conduct, as is done by the Donatists, when they boast that they are the victims of persecution; either through incredible blindness not knowing, or through inexcusable passion pretending not to know, that men are made martyrs not by the amount of their suffering, but by the cause in which they suffer? This I would say even were I opposing men who were only involved in the darkness of error, and suffering penalties on that account most truly merited, and who had not dared to assault any one with insane violence. But what shall I say against those whose fatal obstinacy is such that it is checked only by fear of losses, and is taught only by exile how universal (as had been foretold) is the diffusion of the Church, which they prefer to attack

rather then to acknowledge? And if the things which they suffer under this most gentle discipline be compared with those things which they in reckless fury perpetrate, who does not see to which party the name of persecutors more truly belongs? Nay, even though wicked sons abstain from violence, they do, by their abandoned way of life, inflict upon their affectionate parents a much more serious wrong than their father and mother inflict upon them, when, with a sternness proportioned to the strength of their love, they endeavour without dissimulation to compel them to live uprightly.

3. There exist the strongest evidences in public documents, which you can read if you please, or rather, which I beseech and exhort you to read, by which it is proved that their predecessors, who originally separated themselves from the peace of the Church, did of their own accord dare to bring accusation against Caecilianus before the Emperor by means of Anulinus, who was proconsul at that time. Had they gained the day in that trial, what else would Caecilianus have suffered at the hands of the Emperor than that which, when they were defeated, he awarded to them? But truly, if they having accused him had prevailed, and Caecilianus and his colleagues had been expelled from their sees, or, through persisting in their conspiracy, had exposed themselves to severer punishments (for the imperial censure could not pass unpunished the resistance of persons who had been defeated in the civil courts), they would then have published as worthy of all praise the Emperor’s wise measures and anxious care for the good of the Church. But now, because they have themselves lost their case, being wholly unable to prove the charges which they advanced, if they suffer anything for their iniquity, they call it persecution; and not only set no bounds to their wicked violence, but also claim to be honoured as martyrs: as if the Catholic Christian emperors were following in their measures against their most obstinate wickedness any other precedent than the decision of Constantine, to whom they of their own accord appealed as the accusers of Caecilianus, and whose authority they so esteemed above that of all the bishops beyond the sea, that to him rather than to them they referred this ecclesiastical dispute. To him, again, they protested against the first judgment given against them by the bishops whom he had appointed to examine the case in Rome, and to him also they appealed against the second judgment given by

the bishops at Arles: yet when at last they were defeated by his own decision, they remained unchanged in their perversity. I think that even the devil himself would not have had the assurance to persist in such a cause, if he had been so often overthrown by the authority of the judge to whom he had of his own will chosen to appeal.

4. It may be said, however, that these are human tribunals, and that they might have been cajoled, misguided, or bribed. Why, then, is the Christian world libelled and branded with the crime laid to the charge of some who are said to have surrendered to persecutors the sacred books? For surely it was neither possible for the Christian world, nor incumbent upon it, to do otherwise than believe the judges whom the plaintiffs had chosen, rather than the plaintiffs against whom these judges pronounced judgments. These judges are responsible to God for their opinion, whether just or unjust; but what has the Church, diffused throughout the world, done that it should be deemed necessary for her to be rebaptized by the Donatists upon no other ground than because, in a case in which she was not able to decide as to the truth, she has thought herself called upon to believe those who were in a position to judge it rightly, rather than those who, though defeated in the civil courts, refused to yield? O weighty indictment against all the nations to which God promised that they should be blessed in the seed of Abraham, and has now made His promise good! When they with one voice demand, Why do you wish to rebaptize us? the answer given is, Because you do not know what men in Africa were guilty of surrendering the sacred books; and being thus ignorant, accepted the testimony of the judges who decided the case as more worthy of credit than that of those by whom the accusation was brought. No man deserves to be blamed for the crime of another; what, then, has the whole world to do with the sin which some one in Africa may have committed? No man deserves to be blamed for a crime about which he knows nothing; and how could the whole world possibly know the crime in this case, whether the judges or the party condemned were guilty? Ye who have understanding, judge what I say. Here is the justice of heretics: the party of Donatus condemns the whole world unheard, because the whole world does not condemn a crime unknown. But for the world, truly, it suffices to have the promises of God, and to see fulfilled in itself what prophets predicted so long ago, and to recognise the Church by means of

the same Scriptures by which Christ her King is recognised. For as in them are foretold concerning Christ the things which we read in gospel history to have been fulfilled in Him, so also in them have been foretold concerning the Church the things which we now behold fulfilled in the world.

5. Possibly some thinking people might be disturbed by what they are accustomed to say regarding baptism, viz. that it is the true baptism of Christ only when it is administered by a righteous man, were it not that on this subject the Christian world holds what is most manifestly evangelical truth as taught in the words of John: “He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” Wherefore the Church calmly declines to place her hope in man, lest she fall under the curse pronounced in Scripture, “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man,” but places her hope in Christ, who so took upon Him the form of a servant as not to lose the form of God, of whom it is said, “The same is He which baptizeth.” Therefore, whoever the man be, and whatever office he bear who administers the ordinance, it is not he who baptizes,—that is the work of Him upon whom the dove descended. So great is the absurdity in which the Donatists are involved in consequence of these foolish opinions, that they can find no escape from it. For when they admit the validity and reality of baptism when one of their sect baptizes who is a guilty man, but whose guilt is concealed, we ask them, Who baptizes in this case? and they can only answer, God; for they cannot affirm that a man guilty of sin (say of adultery) can sanctify any one. If, then, when baptism is administered by a man known to be righteous, he sanctifies the person baptized; but when it is administered by a wicked man, whose wickedness is hidden, it is not he, but God, who sanctifies. Those who are baptized ought to wish to be baptized rather by men who are secretly bad than by men manifestly good, for God sanctifies much more effectually than any righteous man can do. If it be palpably absurd that one about to be baptized ought to wish to be baptized by a hypocritical adulterer rather than by a man of known chastity, it follows plainly, that whoever be the minister that dispenses the rite, the baptism is valid, because He Himself baptizes upon whom the dove descended.

6. Notwithstanding the impression which truth so obvious should produce on the ears and hearts of men, such is the whirlpool of evil custom by which some have been engulfed, that rather than yield, they will resist both authority and argument of every kind. Their resistance is of two kinds—either with active rage or with passive immobility. What remedies, then, must the Church apply when seeking with a mother's anxiety the salvation of them all, and distracted by the frenzy of some and the lethargy of others? Is it right, is it possible, for her to despise or give up any means which may promote their recovery? She must necessarily be esteemed burdensome by both, just because she is the enemy of neither. For men in frenzy do not like to be bound, and men in lethargy do not like to be stirred up; nevertheless the diligence of charity perseveres in restraining the one and stimulating the other, out of love to both. Both are provoked, but both are loved; both, while they continue under their infirmity, resent the treatment as vexatious; both express their thankfulness for it when they are cured.

7. Moreover, whereas they think and boast that we receive them into the Church just as they were, it is not so. We receive them completely changed, because they do not begin to be Catholics until they have ceased to be heretics. For their sacraments, which we have in common with them, are not the objects of dislike to us, because they are not human, but Divine. That which must be taken from them is the error, which is their own, and which they have wickedly imbibed; not the sacraments, which they have received like ourselves, and which they bear and have,—to their own condemnation, indeed, because they use them so unworthily; nevertheless, they truly have them. Wherefore, when their error is forsaken, and the perversity of schism corrected in them, they pass over from heresy into the peace of the Church, which they formerly did not possess, and without which all that they did possess was only doing them harm. If, however, in thus passing over they are not sincere, this is a matter not for us, but for God, to judge. And yet, some who were suspected of insincerity because they had passed over to us through fear, have been found in some subsequent temptations so faithful as to surpass others who had been originally Catholics. Therefore let it not be said that nothing is accomplished when strong measures are employed. For when the entrenchments of stubborn custom are stormed by fear of human authority,

this is not all that is done, because at the same time faith is strengthened, and the understanding convinced, by authority and arguments which are Divine.

8. These things being so, be it known to your Grace that your men in the region of Hippo are still Donatists, and that your letter has had no influence upon them. The reason why it failed to move them I need not write; but send some one, either a servant or a friend of your own, whose fidelity you can entrust with the commission, and let him come not to them in the first place, but to us without their knowledge; and when he has carefully consulted with us as to what is best to be done, let him do it with the Lord's help. For in these measures we are acting not only for their welfare, but also on behalf of our own men who have become Catholics, to whom the vicinity of these Donatists is so dangerous, that it cannot be looked upon by us as a small matter.

I could have written much more briefly; but I wished you to have a letter from me, by which you might not only be yourself informed of the reason of my solicitude, but also be provided with an answer to any one who might dissuade you from earnestly devoting your energies to the correction of the people who belong to you, and might speak against us for wishing you to do this. If in this I have done what was unnecessary, because you had yourself either learned or thought out these principles, or if I have been burdensome to you by inflicting so long a letter upon one so engrossed with public affairs, I beg you to forgive me. I only entreat you not to despise what I have brought before you and requested at your hands. May the mercy of God be your safeguard!

LETTER XC

(A.D. 408.)

To My Noble Lord and Brother, Worthy of All Esteem, Bishop Augustin, Nectarius Sends Greeting.

I do not dwell upon the strength of the love men bear to their native land, for you know it. It is the only emotion which has a stronger claim than love of kindred. If there were any limit or time beyond which it would be lawful for right-hearted men to withdraw themselves from its control, I have by this time well earned exemption from the burdens which it imposes. But since love and gratitude towards our country gain strength every day, and the nearer one comes to the end of life, the more ardent is his desire to leave his country in a safe and prosperous condition, I rejoice, in beginning this letter, that I am addressing myself to a man who is versed in all kinds of learning, and therefore able to enter into my feelings.

There are many things in the colony of Calama which justly bind my love to it. I was born here, and I have (in the opinion of others) rendered great services to this community. Now, my lord most excellent and worthy of all esteem, this town has fallen disastrously by a grievous misdemeanour on the part of her citizens, which must be punished with very great severity, if we are dealt with according to the rigour of the civil law. But a bishop is guided by another law. His duty is to promote the welfare of men, to interest himself in any case only with a view to the benefit of the parties, and to obtain for other men the pardon of their sins at the hand of the Almighty God. Wherefore I beseech you with all possible urgency to secure that, if the matter is to be made the subject of a prosecution, the guiltless be protected, and a distinction drawn between the innocent and those who did the wrong. This, which, as you see, is a demand in accordance with your own natural sentiments, I pray you to grant. An assessment to compensate for the losses caused by the tumult can be easily levied. We only deprecate the severity of revenge. May you live in the more full enjoyment of the Divine favour, my noble lord, and brother worthy of all esteem.

LETTER XCI

(A.D. 408.)

To My Noble Lord and Justly Honoured Brother Nectarius, Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. I do not wonder that, though your limbs are chilled by age, your heart still glows with patriotic fire. I admire this, and, instead of grieving, I rejoice to learn that you not only remember, but by your life and practice illustrate, the maxim that there is no limit either in measure or in time to the

claims which their country has upon the care and service of right-hearted men. Wherefore we long to have you enrolled in the service of a higher and nobler country, through holy love, to which (up to the measure of our capacity) we are sustained amid the perils and toils which we meet with among those whose welfare we seek in urging them to make that country their own. Oh that we had you such a citizen of that country, that you would think that there ought to be no limit either in measure or in time to your efforts for the good of that small portion of her citizens who are on this earth pilgrims! This would be a better loyalty, because you would be responding to the claims of a better country; and if you resolved that in your time on earth your labours for her welfare should have no end, you would in her eternal peace be recompensed with joy that shall have no end.

2. But till this be done,—and it is not beyond hope that you should be able to gain, or should even now be most wisely considering that you ought to gain, that country to which your father has gone before you,—till this be done, I say, you must excuse us if, for the sake of that country which we desire never to leave, we cause some distress to that country which you desire to leave in the full bloom of honour and prosperity. As to the flowers which thus bloom in your country, if we were discussing this subject with one of your wisdom, we have no doubt that you would be easily convinced, or rather, would yourself readily perceive, in what way a commonwealth should flourish. The foremost of your poets has sung of certain flowers of Italy; but in your own country we have been taught by experience, not how it has blossomed with heroes, so much as how it has gleamed with weapons of war: nay, I ought to write how it has burned rather than how it has gleamed; and instead of the weapons of war, I should write the fires of incendiaries. If so great a crime were to remain unpunished, without any rebuke such as the miscreants have deserved, do you think that you would leave your country in the full bloom of honour and prosperity? O blooming flowers, yielding not fruit, but thorns! Consider now whether you would prefer to see your country flourish by the piety of its inhabitants, or by their escaping the punishment of their crimes; by the correction of their manners, or by outrages to which impunity emboldens them. Compare these things, I say, and judge whether or not you love your country more than we do;

whether its prosperity and honour are more truly and earnestly sought by you or by us.

3. Consider for a little those books, De Republica, from which you imbibed that sentiment of a most loyal citizen, that there is no limit either in measure or in time to the claims which their country has upon the care and service of right-hearted men. Consider them, I beseech you, and observe how great are the praises there bestowed upon frugality, self-control, conjugal fidelity, and those chaste, honourable, and upright manners, the prevalence of which in any city entitles it to be spoken of as flourishing. Now the Churches which are multiplying throughout the world are, as it were, sacred seminaries of public instruction, in which this sound morality is inculcated and learned, and in which, above all, men are taught the worship due to the true and faithful God, who not only commands men to attempt, but also gives grace to perform, all those things by which the soul of man is furnished and fitted for fellowship with God, and for dwelling in the eternal heavenly kingdom. For this reason He hath both foretold and commanded the casting down of the images of the many false gods which are in the world. For nothing so effectually renders men depraved in practice, and unfit to be good members of society, as the imitation of such deities as are described and extolled in pagan writings.

4. In fact, those most learned men (whose beau ideal of a republic or commonwealth in this world was, by the way, rather investigated or described by them in private discussions, than established and realized by them in public measures) were accustomed to set forth as models for the education of youth the examples of men whom they esteemed eminent and praiseworthy, rather than the example given by their gods. And there is no question that the young man in Terence, who, beholding a picture upon the wall in which was portrayed the licentious conduct of the king of the gods, fanned the flame of the passion which mastered him, by the encouragement which such high authority gave to wickedness, would not have fallen into the desire, nor have plunged into the commission, of such a shameful deed if he had chosen to imitate Cato instead of Jupiter; but how could he make such a choice, when he was compelled in the temples to worship Jupiter rather than Cato? Perhaps it may be said that we should not bring forward

from a comedy arguments to put to shame the wantonness and the impious superstition of profane men. But read or recall to mind how wisely it is argued in the books above referred to, that the style and the plots of comedies would never be approved by the public voice if they did not harmonize with the manners of those who approved them; wherefore, by the authority of men most illustrious and eminent in the commonwealth to which they belonged, and engaged in debating as to the conditions of a perfect commonwealth, our position is established, that the most degraded of men may be made yet worse if they imitate their gods,—gods, of course, which are not true, but false and invented.

5. You will perhaps reply, that all those things which were written long ago concerning the life and manners of the gods are to be far otherwise than literally understood and interpreted by the wise. Nay, we have heard within the last few days that such wholesome interpretations are now read to the people when assembled in the temples. Tell me, is the human race so blind to truth as not to perceive things so plain and palpable as these? When, by the art of painters, founders, hammermen, sculptors, authors, players, singers, and dancers, Jupiter is in so many places exhibited in flagrant acts of lewdness, how important it was that in his own Capitol at least his worshippers might have read a decree from himself prohibiting such crimes! If, through the absence of such prohibition, these monsters, in which shame and profanity culminate, are regarded with enthusiasm by the people, worshipped in their temples, and laughed at in their theatres; if, in order to provide sacrifices for them, even the poor must be despoiled of their flocks; if, in order to provide actors who shall by gesture and dance represent their infamous achievements, the rich squander their estates, can it be said of the communities in which these things are done, that they flourish? The flowers with which they bloom owe their birth not to a fertile soil, nor to a wealthy and bounteous virtue; for them a worthy parent is found in that goddess Flora, whose dramatic games are celebrated with a profligacy so utterly dissolute and shameless, that any one may infer from them what kind of demon that must be which cannot be appeased unless—not birds, nor quadrupeds, nor even human life—but (oh, greater villany!) human modesty and virtue, perish as sacrifices on her altars.

6. These things I have said, because of your having written that the nearer you come to the end of life, the greater is your desire to leave your country in a safe and flourishing condition. Away with all these vanities and follies, and let men be converted to the true worship of God, and to chaste and pious manners: then will you see your country flourishing, not in the vain opinion of fools, but in the sound judgment of the wise; when your fatherland here on earth shall have become a portion of that Fatherland into which we are born not by the flesh, but by faith, and in which all the holy and faithful servants of God shall bloom in the eternal summer, when their labours in the winter of time are done. We are therefore resolved, neither on the one hand to lay aside Christian gentleness, nor on the other to leave in your city that which would be a most pernicious example for all others to follow. For success in this dealing we trust to the help of God, if His indignation against the evil-doers be not so great as to make Him withhold His blessing. For certainly both the gentleness which we desire to maintain, and the discipline which we shall endeavour without passion to administer, may be hindered, if God in His hidden counsels order it otherwise, and either appoint that this so great wickedness be punished with a more severe chastisement, or in yet greater displeasure leave the sin without punishment in this world, its guilty authors being neither reproved nor reformed.

7. You have, in the exercise of your judgment, laid down the principles by which a bishop should be influenced; and after saying that your town has fallen disastrously by a grievous misdemeanour on the part of your citizens, which must be punished with great severity if they are dealt with according to the rigour of the civil law, you add: “But a bishop is guided by another law; his duty is to promote the welfare of men, to interest himself in any case only with a view to the benefit of the parties, and to obtain for other men the pardon of their sins at the hand of the Almighty God.” This we by all means labour to secure, that no one be visited with undue severity of punishment, either by us or by any other who is influenced by our interposition; and we seek to promote the true welfare of men, which consists in the blessedness of well-doing, not in the assurance of impunity in evil-doing. We do also seek earnestly, not for ourselves alone, but on behalf of others, the pardon of sin: but this we cannot obtain, except for those who have been turned by correction from the practice of sin. You add,

moreover: “I beseech you with all possible urgency to secure that if the matter is to be made the subject of a prosecution, the guiltless be protected, and a distinction drawn between the innocent and those who did the wrong.”

8. Listen to a brief account of what was done, and let the distinction between innocent and guilty be drawn by yourself. In defiance of the most recent laws, certain impious rites were celebrated on the Pagan feast-day, the calends of June, no one interfering to forbid them, and with such unbounded effrontery that a most insolent multitude passed along the street in which the church is situated, and went on dancing in front of the building,—an outrage which was never committed even in the time of Julian. When the clergy endeavoured to stop this most illegal and insulting procedure, the church was assailed with stones. About eight days after that, when the bishop had called the attention of the authorities to the well-known laws on the subject, and they were preparing to carry out that which the law prescribed, the church was a second time assailed with stones. When, on the following day, our people wished to make such complaint as they deemed necessary in open court, in order to make these villains afraid, their rights as citizens were denied them. On the same day there was a storm of hailstones, that they might be made afraid, if not by men, at least by the divine power, thus requiting them for their showers of stones against the church; but as soon as this was over they renewed the attack for the third time with stones, and at last endeavoured to destroy both the buildings and the men in them by fire: one servant of God who lost his way and met them they killed on the spot, all the rest escaping or concealing themselves as they best could; while the bishop hid himself in some crevice into which he forced himself with difficulty, and in which he lay folded double while he heard the voices of the ruffians seeking him to kill him, and expressing their mortification that through his escaping them their principal design in this grievous outrage had been frustrated. These things went on from about the tenth hour until the night was far advanced. No attempt at resistance or rescue was made by those whose authority might have had influence on the mob. The only one who interfered was a stranger, through whose exertions a number of the servants of God were delivered from the hands of those who were trying to kill them, and a great deal of property was recovered

from the plunderers by force: whereby it was shown how easily these riotous proceedings might have been either prevented wholly or arrested, if the citizens, and especially the leading men, had forbidden them, either from the first or after they had begun.

9. Accordingly you cannot in that community draw a distinction between innocent and guilty persons, for all are guilty; but perhaps you may distinguish degrees of guilt. Those are in a comparatively small fault, who, being kept back by fear, especially by fear of offending those whom they knew to have leading influence in the community and to be hostile to the Church, did not dare to render assistance to the Christians; but all are guilty who consented to these outrages, though they neither perpetrated them nor instigated others to the crime: more guilty are those who perpetrated the wrong, and most guilty are those who instigated them to it. Let us, however, suppose that the instigation of others to these crimes is a matter of suspicion rather than of certain knowledge, and let us not investigate those things which can be found out in no other way than by subjecting witnesses to torture. Let us also forgive those who through fear thought it better for them to plead secretly with God for the bishop and His other servants, than openly to displease the powerful enemies of the Church. What reason can you give for holding that those who remain should be subjected to no correction and restraint? Do you really think that a case of such cruel rage should be held up to the world as passing unpunished? We do not desire to gratify our anger by vindictive retribution for the past, but we are concerned to make provision in a truly merciful spirit for the future. Now, wicked men have something in respect to which they may be punished, and that by Christians, in a merciful way, and so as to promote their own profit and well-being. For they have these three things: the life and health of the body, the means of supporting that life, and the means and opportunities of living a wicked life. Let the two former remain untouched in the possession of those who repent of their crime: this we desire, and this we spare no pains to secure. But as to the third, upon it God will, if it please Him, inflict punishment in His great compassion, dealing with it as a decaying or diseased part, which must be removed with the pruning-knife. If, however, He be pleased either to go beyond this, or not to permit the punishment to go so far, the reason for this higher and doubtless more righteous counsel

remains with Him: our duty is to devote pains and use our influence according to the light which is granted to us, beseeching His approval of our endeavours to do that which shall be most for the good of all, and praying Him not to permit us to do anything which He who knoweth all things much better than we do sees to be inexpedient both for ourselves and for His Church.

10. When I went recently to Calama, that under so grievous sorrow I might either comfort the downcast or soothe the indignant among our people, I used all my influence with the Christians to persuade them to do what I judged to be their duty at that time. I then at their own request admitted to an audience the Pagans also, the source and cause of all this mischief, in order that I might admonish them what they should do if they were wise, not only for the removal of present anxiety, but also for the obtaining of everlasting salvation. They listened to many things which I said, and they preferred many requests to me; but far be it from me to be such a servant as to find pleasure in being petitioned by those who do not humble themselves before my Lord to ask from Him. With your quick intelligence, you will readily perceive that our aim must be, while preserving Christian gentleness and moderation, to act so that we may either make others afraid of imitating their perversity, or have cause to desire others to imitate their profiling by correction. As for the loss sustained, this is either borne by the Christians or remedied by the help of their brethren. What concerns us is the gaining of souls, which even at the risk of life we are impatient to secure; and our desire is, that in your district we may have larger success, and that in other districts we may not be hindered by the influence of your example. May God in His mercy grant to us to rejoice in your salvation!

LETTER XCII

(A.D. 408.)

To the Noble and Justly Distinguished Lady Italica, a Daughter Worthy of Honour in the Love of Christ, Bishop Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I have learned, not only by your letter, but also by the statements of the person who brought it to me, that you earnestly solicit a letter from me,

believing that you may derive from it very great consolation. What you may gain from my letter it is for yourself to judge; I at least felt that I should neither refuse nor delay compliance with your request. May your own faith and hope comfort you, and that love which is shed abroad in the hearts of the pious by the Holy Ghost, whereof we have now a portion as an earnest of the whole, in order that we may learn to desire its consummate fulness. For you ought not to consider yourself desolate while you have Christ dwelling in your heart by faith; nor ought you to sorrow as those heathens who have no hope, seeing that in regard to those friends, who are not lost, but only called earlier than ourselves to the country whither we shall follow them, we have hope, resting on a most sure promise, that from this life we shall pass into that other life, in which they shall be to us more beloved as they shall be better known, and in which our pleasure in loving them shall not be alloyed by any fear of separation.

2. Your late husband, by whose decease you are now a widow, was truly well known to you, but better known to himself than to you. And how could this be, when you saw his face, which he himself did not see, if it were not that the inner knowledge which we have of ourselves is more certain, since no man “knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in man”? but when the Lord cometh, “who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts,” then shall nothing in any one be concealed from his neighbour; nor shall there be anything which any one might reveal to his friends, but keep hidden from strangers, for no stranger shall be there. What tongue can describe the nature and the greatness of that light by which all those things which are now in the hearts of men concealed shall be made manifest? who can with our weak faculties even approach it? Truly that Light is God Himself, for “God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all;” but He is the Light of purified minds, not of these bodily eyes. And the mind shall then be, what meanwhile it is not, able to see that light.

3. But this the bodily eye neither now is, nor shall then be, able to see. For everything which can be seen by the bodily eye must be in some place, nor can be everywhere in its totality, but with a smaller part of itself occupies a smaller space, and with a larger part a larger space. It is not so with God,

who is invisible and incorruptible, “who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see.” For He cannot be seen by men through the bodily organ by which men see corporeal things. For if He were inaccessible to the minds also of the saints, it would not be said, “They looked unto Him, and were lightened” [translated by Aug., “Draw near unto Him, and be enlightened”]; and if He was invisible to the minds of the saints, it would not be said, “We shall see Him as He is:” for consider the whole context there in that Epistle of John: “Beloved,” he says, “now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” We shall therefore see Him according to the measure in which we shall be like Him; because now the measure in which we do not see Him is according to the measure of our unlikeness to Him. We shall therefore see Him by means of that in which we shall be like Him. But who would be so infatuated as to assert that we either are or shall be in our bodies like unto God? The likeness spoken of is therefore in the inner man, “which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.” And we shall become the more like unto Him, the more we advance in knowledge of Him and in love; because “though our outward man perish, our inward man is renewed day by day,” yet so as that, however far one may have become advanced in this life, he is far short of that perfection of likeness which is fitted for seeing God, as the apostle says, “face to face.” If by these words we were to understand the bodily face, it would follow that God has a face such as ours, and that between our face and His there must be a space intervening when we shall see Him face to face. And if a space intervene, this presupposes a limitation and a definite conformation of members and other things, absurd to utter, and impious even to think of, by which most empty delusions the natural man, which “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God,” is deceived.

4. For some of those who talk thus foolishly affirm, as I am informed, that we see God now by our minds, but shall then see Him by our bodies; yea, they even say that the wicked shall in the same manner see Him. Observe how far they have gone from bad to worse, when, unpunished for their foolish speaking, they talk at random, unrestrained by either fear or shame. They used to say at first, that Christ endowed only His own flesh with this

faculty of seeing God with the bodily eye; then they added to this, that all the saints shall see God in the same way when they have received their bodies again in the resurrection; and now they have granted that the same thing is possible to the wicked also. Well, let them grant what gifts they please, and to whom they please: for who may say anything against men giving away that which is their own? for he that speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own. Be it yours, however, in common with all who hold sound doctrine, not to presume to take in this way from your own any of these errors; but when you read, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,” learn from it that the impious shall not see Him: for the impious are neither blessed nor pure in heart. Moreover, when you read, “Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face,” learn from this that we shall then see Him face to face by the same means by which we now see Him through a glass darkly. In both cases alike, the vision of God belongs to the inner man, whether when we walk in this pilgrimage still by faith, in which it uses the glass and the ainigma, or when, in the country which is our home, we shall perceive by sight, which vision the words “face to face” denote.

5. Let the flesh raving with carnal imaginations hear these words: “God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” If this be the manner of worshipping Him, how much more of seeing Him! For who durst affirm that the Divine essence is seen in a corporal manner, when He has not permitted it to be worshipped in a corporal manner? They think, however, that they are very acute in saying and in pressing as a question for us to answer: Was Christ able to endow His flesh so as that He could with His eyes see the Father, or was He not? If we reply that He was not, they publish abroad that we have denied the omnipotence of God; if, on the other hand, we grant that He was able, they affirm that their argument is established by our reply. How much more excusable is the folly of those who maintain that the flesh shall be changed into the Divine substance, and shall be what God Himself is, in order that thus they may endow with fitness for seeing God that which is meanwhile removed by so great diversity of nature from likeness to Him! Yet I believe they reject from their creed, perhaps also refuse to hear, this error. Nevertheless, if they were in like manner pressed with the question above quoted, as to whether God can

or cannot do this [viz. change our flesh into the Divine substance], which alternative will they choose? Will they limit His power by answering that He cannot; or if they concede that He can, will they by this concession grant that it shall be done? Let them get out of the dilemma which they have proposed to others as above, in the same way by which they get out of this dilemma proposed to others by them. Moreover, why do they contend that this gift is to be attributed only to the eyes, and not to all the other senses of Christ? Shall God then be a sound, that He may be perceived by the ear? and an exhalation, that He may be discerned by the sense of smell? and a liquid of some kind, that He may be also imbibed? and a solid body, that He may be also touched? No, they say. What then? we reply; can God be this, or can He not? If they say He cannot, why do they derogate from the omnipotence of God? If they say He can, but is not willing, why do they show favour to the eyes alone, and grudge the same honour to the other senses of Christ? Do they carry their folly just as far as they please? How much better is our course, who do not prescribe limits to their folly, but would fain prevent them from entering into it at all!

6. Many things may be brought forward for the confutation of that madness. Meanwhile, however, if at any time they assail your ears, read this letter to the supporters of such error, and do not count it too great a labour to write back to me as well as you can what they say in reply. Let me add that our hearts are purified by faith, because the vision of God is promised to us as the reward of faith. Now, if this vision of God were to be through the bodily eyes, in vain are the souls of saints exercised for receiving it; nay, rather, a soul which cherishes such sentiments is not exercised in itself, but is wholly in the flesh. For where will it dwell more resolutely and fixedly than in that by means of which it expects that it shall see God? How great an evil this would be I rather leave to your own intelligence to observe, than labour to prove by a long argument.

May your heart dwell always under the Lord’s keeping, noble and justly distinguished lady, and daughter worthy of honour in the love of Christ! Salute from me, with the respect due to your worth, your sons, who are along with yourself honourable, and to me dearly beloved in the Lord.

LETTER XCIII

(A.D. 408.)

To Vincentius, My Brother Dearly Beloved, Augustin Sends Greeting.

Chap. I

1. I have received a letter which I believe to be from you to me: at least I have not thought this incredible, for the person who brought it is one whom I know to be a Catholic Christian, and who, I think, would not dare to impose upon me. But even though the letter may perchance not be from you, I have considered it necessary to write a reply to the author, whoever he may be. You know me now to be more desirous of rest, and earnest in seeking it, than when you knew me in my earlier years at Carthage, in the lifetime of your immediate predecessor Rogatus. But we are precluded from this rest by the Donatists, the repression and correction of whom, by the powers which are ordained of God, appears to me to be labour not in vain. For we already rejoice in the correction of many who hold and defend the Catholic unity with such sincerity, and are so glad to have been delivered from their former error, that we admire them with great thankfulness and pleasure. Yet these same persons, under some indescribable bondage of custom, would in no way have thought of being changed to a better condition, had they not, under the shock of this alarm, directed their minds earnestly to the study of the truth; fearing lest, if without profit, and in vain, they suffered hard things at the hands of men, for the sake not of righteousness, but of their own obstinacy and presumption, they should afterwards receive nothing else at the hand of God than the punishment due to wicked men who despised the admonition which He so gently gave and His paternal correction; and being by such reflection made teachable, they found not in mischievous or frivolous human fables, but in the promises of the divine books, that universal Church which they saw extending according to the promise throughout all nations: just as, on the testimony of prophecy in the same Scriptures, they believed without hesitation that Christ is exalted above the heavens, though He is not seen by them in His glory. Was it my duty to be displeased at the salvation of these men, and to call back my colleagues from a fatherly diligence of this kind, the result of

which has been, that we see many blaming their former blindness? For they see that they were blind who believed Christ to have been exalted above the heavens although they saw Him not, and yet denied that His glory is spread over all the earth although they saw it; whereas the prophet has with so great plainness included both in one sentence, “Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and Thy glory above all the earth.”

2. Wherefore, if we were so to overlook and forbear with those cruel enemies who seriously disturb our peace and quietness by manifold and grievous forms of violence and treachery, as that nothing at all should be contrived and done by us with a view to alarm and correct them, truly we would be rendering evil for evil. For if any one saw his enemy running headlong to destroy himself when he had become delirious through a dangerous fever, would he not in that case be much more truly rendering evil for evil if he permitted him to run on thus, than if he took measures to have him seized and bound? And yet he would at that moment appear to the other to be most vexatious, and most like an enemy, when, in truth, he had proved himself most useful and most compassionate; although, doubtless, when health was recovered, would he express to him his gratitude with a warmth proportioned to the measure in which he had felt his refusal to indulge him in his time of phrenzy. Oh, if I could but show you how many we have even from the Circumcelliones, who are now approved Catholics, and condemn their former life, and the wretched delusion under which they believed that they were doing in behalf of the Church of God whatever they did under the promptings of a restless temerity, who nevertheless would not have been brought to this soundness of judgment had they not been, as persons beside themselves, bound with the cords of those laws which are distasteful to you! As to another form of most serious distemper,—that, namely, of those who had not, indeed, a boldness leading to acts of violence, but were pressed down by a kind of inveterate sluggishness of mind, and would say to us: “What you affirm is true, nothing can be said against it; but it is hard for us to leave off what we have received, by tradition from our fathers,”—why should not such persons be shaken up in a beneficial way by a law bringing upon them inconvenience in worldly things, in order that they might rise from their lethargic sleep, and awake to the salvation which is to be found in the unity of the Church? How many of

them, now rejoicing with us, speak bitterly of the weight with which their ruinous course formerly oppressed them, and confess that it was our duty to inflict annoyance upon them, in order to prevent them from perishing under the disease of lethargic habit, as under a fatal sleep!

3. You will say that to some these remedies are of no service. Is the art of healing, therefore, to be abandoned, because the malady of some is incurable? You look only to the case of those who are so obdurate that they refuse even such correction. Of such it is written, “In vain have I smitten your children: they received no correction:” and yet I suppose that those of whom the prophet speaks were smitten in love, not from hatred. But you ought to consider also the very large number over whose salvation we rejoice. For if they were only made afraid, and not instructed, this might appear to be a kind of inexcusable tyranny. Again, if they were instructed only, and not made afraid, they would be with more difficulty persuaded to embrace the way of salvation, having become hardened through the inveteracy of custom: whereas many whom we know well, when arguments had been brought before them, and the truth made apparent by testimonies from the word of God, answered us that they desired to pass into the communion of the Catholic Church, but were in fear of the violence of worthless men, whose enmity they would incur; which violence they ought indeed by all means to despise when it was to be borne for righteousness’ sake, and for the sake of eternal life. Nevertheless the weakness of such men ought not to be regarded as hopeless, but to be supported until they gain more strength. Nor may we forget what the Lord Himself said to Peter when he was yet weak: “Thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shall follow Me afterwards.” When, however, wholesome instruction is added to means of inspiring salutary fear, so that not only the light of truth may dispel the darkness of error, but the force of fear may at the same time break the bonds of evil custom, we are made glad, as I have said, by the salvation of many, who with us bless God, and render thanks to Him, because by the fulfilment of His covenant, in which He promised that the kings of the earth should serve Christ, He has thus cured the diseased and restored health to the weak.

Chap. II

4. Not every one who is indulgent is a friend; nor is every one an enemy who smites. Better are the wounds of a friend than the proffered kisses of an enemy. It is better with severity to love, than with gentleness to deceive. More good is done by taking away food from one who is hungry, if, through freedom from care as to his food, he is forgetful of righteousness, than by providing bread for one who is hungry, in order that, being thereby bribed, he may consent to unrighteousness. He who binds the man who is in a phrenzy, and he who stirs up the man who is in a lethargy, are alike vexatious to both, and are in both cases alike prompted by love for the patient. Who can love us more than God does? And yet He not only give us sweet instruction, but also quickens us by salutary fear, and this unceasingly. Often adding to the soothing remedies by which He comforts men the sharp medicine of tribulation, He afflicts with famine even the pious and devout patriarchs, disquiets a rebellious people by more severe chastisements, and refuses, though thrice besought, to take away the thorn in the flesh of the apostle, that He may make His strength perfect in weakness. Let us by all means love even our enemies, for this is right, and God commands us so to do, in order that we may be the children of our Father who is in heaven, "who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." But as we praise these His gifts, lets us in like manner ponder His correction of those whom He loves.

5. You are of opinion that no one should be compelled to follow righteousness; and yet you read that the householder said to his servants, "Whomsoever ye shall find, compel them to come in." You also read how he who was at first Saul, and afterwards Paul, was compelled, by the great violence with which Christ coerced him, to know and to embrace the truth; for you cannot but think that the light which your eyes enjoy is more precious to men than money or any other possession. This light, lost suddenly by him when he was cast to the ground by the heavenly voice, he did not recover until he became a member of the Holy Church. You are also of opinion that no coercion is to be used with any man in order to his deliverance from the fatal consequences of error; and yet you see that, in examples which cannot be disputed, this is done by God, who loves us with more real regard for our profit than any other can; and you hear Christ

saying, “No man can come to me except the Father draw him,” which is done in the hearts of all those who, through fear of the wrath of God, betake themselves to Him. You know also that sometimes the thief scatters food before the flock that he may lead them astray, and sometimes the shepherd brings wandering sheep back to the flock with his rod.

6. Did not Sarah, when she had the power, choose rather to afflict the insolent bondwoman? And truly she did not cruelly hate her whom she had formerly by an act of her own kindness made a mother; but she put a wholesome restraint upon her pride. Moreover, as you well know, these two women, Sarah and Hagar, and their two sons Isaac and Ishmael, are figures representing spiritual and carnal persons. And although we read that the bondwoman and her son suffered great hardships from Sarah, nevertheless the Apostle Paul says that Isaac suffered persecution from Ishmael: “But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now;” whence those who have understanding may perceive that it is rather the Catholic Church which suffers persecution through the pride and impiety of those carnal men whom it endeavours to correct by afflictions and terrors of a temporal kind. Whatever therefore the true and rightful Mother does, even when something severe and bitter is felt by her children at her hands, she is not rendering evil for evil, but is applying the benefit of discipline to counteract the evil of sin, not with the hatred which seeks to harm, but with the love which seeks to heal. When good and bad do the same actions and suffer the same afflictions, they are to be distinguished not by what they do or suffer, but by the causes of each: e.g. Pharaoh oppressed the people of God by hard bondage; Moses afflicted the same people by severe correction when they were guilty of impiety: their actions were alike; but they were not alike in the motive of regard to the people’s welfare,—the one being inflated by the lust of power, the other inflamed by love. Jezebel slew prophets, Elijah slew false prophets; I suppose that the desert of the actors and of the sufferers respectively in the two cases was wholly diverse.

7. Look also to the New Testament times, in which the essential gentleness of love was to be not only kept in the heart, but also manifested openly: in these the sword of Peter is called back into its sheath by Christ, and we are

taught that it ought not to be taken from its sheath even in Christ's defence. We read, however, not only that the Jews beat the Apostle Paul, but also that the Greeks beat Sosthenes, a Jew, on account of the Apostle Paul. Does not the similarity of the events apparently join both; and, at the same time, does not the dissimilarity of the causes make a real difference? Again, God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all. Of the Son also it is said, "who loved me, and gave Himself for me;" and it is also said of Judas that Satan entered into him that he might betray Christ. Seeing, therefore, that the Father delivered up His Son, and Christ delivered up His own body, and Judas delivered up his Master, wherefore is God holy and man guilty in this delivering up of Christ, unless that in the one action which both did, the reason for which they did it was not the same? Three crosses stood in one place: on one was the thief who was to be saved; on the second, the thief who was to be condemned; on the third, between them, was Christ, who was about to save the one thief and condemn the other. What could be more similar than these crosses? what more unlike than the persons who were suspended on them? Paul was given up to be imprisoned and bound, but Satan is unquestionably worse than any gaoler: yet to him Paul himself gave up one man for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. And what say we to this? Behold, both deliver a man to bondage; but he that is cruel consigns his prisoner to one less severe, while he that is compassionate consigns his to one who is more cruel. Let us learn, my brother, in actions which are similar to distinguish the intentions of the agents; and let us not, shutting our eyes, deal in groundless reproaches, and accuse those who seek men's welfare as if they did them wrong. In like manner, when the same apostle says that he had delivered certain persons unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme, did he render to these men evil for evil, or did he not rather esteem it a good work to correct evil men by means of the evil one?

8. If to suffer persecution were in all cases a praiseworthy thing, it would have sufficed for the Lord to say, "Blessed are they which are persecuted," without adding "for righteousness' sake." Moreover, if to inflict persecution were in all cases blameworthy, it would not have been written in the sacred books, "Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I persecute [cut off, E.V.]." In some cases, therefore, both he that suffers persecution is in

the wrong, and he that inflicts it is in the right. But the truth is, that always both the bad have persecuted the good, and the good have persecuted the bad: the former doing harm by their unrighteousness, the latter seeking to do good by the administration of discipline; the former with cruelty, the latter with moderation; the former impelled by lust, the latter under the constraint of love. For he whose aim is to kill is not careful how he wounds, but he whose aim is to cure is cautious with his lancet; for the one seeks to destroy what is sound, the other that which is decaying. The wicked put prophets to death; prophets also put the wicked to death. The Jews scourged Christ; Christ also scourged the Jews. The apostles were given up by men to the civil powers; the apostles themselves gave men up to the power of Satan. In all these cases, what is important to attend to but this: who were on the side of truth, and who on the side of iniquity; who acted from a desire to injure, and who from a desire to correct what was amiss?

Chap. III

9. You say that no example is found in the writings of evangelists and apostles, of any petition presented on behalf of the Church to the kings of the earth against her enemies. Who denies this? None such is found. But at that time the prophecy, “Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth: serve the Lord with fear,” was not yet fulfilled. Up to that time the words which we find at the beginning of the same Psalm were receiving their fulfilment, “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Anointed.” Truly, if past events recorded in the prophetic books were figures of the future, there was given under King Nebuchadnezzar a figure both of the time which the Church had under the apostles, and of that which she has now. In the age of the apostles and martyrs, that was fulfilled which was prefigured when the aforesaid king compelled pious and just men to bow down to his image, and cast into the flames all who refused. Now, however, is fulfilled that which was prefigured soon after in the same king, when, being converted to the worship of the true God, he made a decree throughout his empire, that whosoever should speak against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, should suffer the penalty which their crime deserved. The earlier

time of that king represented the former age of emperors who did not believe in Christ, at whose hands the Christians suffered because of the wicked; but the later time of that king represented the age of the successors to the imperial throne, now believing in Christ, at whose hands the wicked suffer because of the Christians.

10. It is manifest, however, that moderate severity, or rather clemency, is carefully observed towards those who, under the Christian name, have been led astray by perverse men, in the measures used to prevent them who are Christ's sheep from wandering, and to bring them back to the flock, when by punishments, such as exile and fines, they are admonished to consider what they suffer, and wherefore, and are taught to prefer the Scriptures which they read to human legends and calumnies. For which of us, yea, which of you, does not speak well of the laws issued by the emperors against heathen sacrifices? In these, assuredly, a penalty much more severe has been appointed, for the punishment of that impiety is death. But in repressing and restraining you, the thing aimed at has been rather that you should be admonished to depart from evil, than that you should be punished for a crime. For perhaps what the apostle said of the Jews may be said of you: "bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge: for, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." For what else than your own righteousness are you desiring to establish, when you say that none are justified but those who may have had the opportunity of being baptized by you? In regard to this statement made by the apostle concerning the Jews, you differ from those to whom it originally applied in this, that you have the Christian sacraments, of which they are still destitute. But in regard to the words, "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness," and "they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge," you are exactly like them, excepting only those among you who know what is the truth, and who in the wilfulness of their perversity continue to fight against truth which is perfectly well known to them. The impiety of these men is perhaps even a greater sin than idolatry. Since, however, they cannot be easily convicted of this (for it is a sin which lies concealed in the mind), you are all alike restrained with a comparatively

gentle severity, as being not so far alienated from us. And this I may say, both concerning all heretics without distinction, who, while retaining the Christian sacraments, are dissenters from the truth and unity of Christ, and concerning all Donatists without exception.

11. But as for you, who are not only, in common with these last, styled Donatists, from Donatus, but also specially named Rogatists, from Rogatus, you indeed seem to be more gentle in disposition, because you do not rage up and down with bands of these savage Circumcelliones: but no wild beast is said to be gentle if, because of its not having teeth and claws, it wounds no one. You say that you have no wish to be cruel: I think that power, not will is wanting to you. For you are in number so few, that even if you desire it, you dare not move against the multitudes which are opposed to you. Let us suppose, however, that you do not wish to do that which you have not strength to do; let us suppose that the gospel rule, “If any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also,” is so understood and obeyed by you that resistance to those who persecute you is unlawful, whether they have right or wrong on their side. Rogatus, the founder of your sect, either did not hold this view, or was guilty of inconsistency; for he fought with the keenest determination in a lawsuit about certain things which, according to your statement, belonged to you. If to him it had been said, Which of the apostles ever defended his property in a matter concerning faith by appeal to the civil courts? as you have put the question in your letter, “Which of the apostles ever invaded the property of other men in a matter concerning faith?” he could not find any example of this in the Divine writings; but he might perhaps have found some true defence if he had not separated himself from the true Church, and then audaciously claimed to hold in the name of the true Church the disputed possession.

Chap. IV

12. As to the obtaining or putting in force of edicts of the powers of this world against schismatics and heretics, those from whom you separated yourselves were very active in this matter, both against you, so far as we have heard, and against the followers of Maximianus, as we prove by the indisputable evidence of their own Records; but you had not yet separated

yourselves from them at the time when in their petition they said to the Emperor Julian that “nothing but righteousness found a place with him,”—a man whom all the while they knew to be an apostate, and whom they saw to be so given over to idolatry, that they must either admit idolatry to be righteousness, or be unable to deny that they had wickedly lied when they said that nothing but righteousness had a place with him with whom they saw that idolatry had so large a place. Grant, however, that that was a mistake in the use of words, what say you as to the deed itself? If not even that which is just is to be sought by appeal to an emperor, why was that which was by you supposed to be just sought from Julian?

13. Do you reply that it is lawful to petition the Emperor in order to recover what is one’s own, but not lawful to accuse another in order that he may be coerced by the Emperor? I may remark, in passing, that in even petitioning for the recovery of what is one’s own, the ground covered by apostolic example is abandoned, because no apostle is found to have ever done this. But apart from this, when your predecessors brought before the Emperor Constantine, by means of the proconsul Anulinus, their accusations against Caecilianus, who was then bishop of Carthage, with whom as a guilty person they refused to have communion, they were not endeavouring to recover something of their own which they had lost, but were by calumnies assailing one who was, as we think, and as the issue of the judicial proceedings showed, an innocent man; and what more heinous crime could have been perpetrated by them than this? If, however, as you erroneously suppose, they did in his case deliver up to the judgment of the civil powers a man who was indeed guilty, why do you object to our doing that which your own party first presumed to do, and for doing which we would not find fault with them, if they had done it not with an envious desire to do harm, but with the intention of reproving and correcting what was wrong. But we have no hesitation in finding fault with you, who think that we are criminal in bringing any complaint before a Christian emperor against the enemies of our communion, seeing that a document given by your predecessors to Anulinus the proconsul, to be forwarded by him to the Emperor Constantine, bore this superscription: “Libellus Ecclesiae Catholicae, criminum Caeciliani, traditus a parte Majorini.” We find fault, moreover, with them more particularly, because when they had of their own accord

gone to the Emperor with accusations against Caecilianus, which they ought by all means to have in the first place proved before those who were his colleagues beyond the sea, and when the Emperor, acting in a much more orderly way than they had done, referred to bishops the decision of this case pertaining to bishops which had been brought before him, they, even when defeated by a decision against them, would not come to peace with their brethren. Instead of this, they next accused at the bar of the temporal sovereign, not Caecilianus only, but also the bishops who had been appointed judges; and finally, from a second episcopal tribunal they appealed to the Emperor again. Nor did they consider it their duty to yield either to truth or to peace when he himself inquired into the case and gave his decision.

14. Now what else could Constantine have decreed against Caecilianus and his friends, if they had been defeated when your predecessors accused them, than the things decreed against the very men who, having of their own accord brought the accusations, and having failed to prove what they alleged, refused even when defeated to acquiesce in the truth? The Emperor, as you know, in that case decreed for the first time that the property of those who were convicted of schism and obstinately resisted the unity of the Church should be confiscated. If, however, the issue had been that your predecessors who brought the accusations had gained their case, and the Emperor had made some such decree against the communion to which Caecilianus belonged, you would have wished the emperors to be called the friends of the Church's interests, and the guardians of her peace and unity. But when such things are decreed by emperors against the parties who, having of their own accord brought forward accusations, were unable to substantiate them, and who, when a welcome back to the bosom of peace was offered to them on condition of their amendment, refused the terms, an outcry is raised that this is an unworthy wrong, and it is maintained that no one ought to be coerced to unity, and that evil should not be requited for evil to any one. What else is this than what one of yourselves wrote: "What we wish is holy"? And in view of these things, it was not a great or difficult thing for you to reflect and discover how the decree and sentence of Constantine, which was published against you on the occasion of your predecessors so frequently bringing before the Emperor charges which they

could not make good, should be in force against you; and how all succeeding emperors, especially those who are Catholic Christians, necessarily act according to it as often as the exigencies of your obstinacy make it necessary for them to take any measures in regard to you.

15. It was an easy thing for you to have reflected on these things, and perhaps some time to have said to yourselves: Seeing that Caecilianus either was innocent, or at least could not be proved guilty, what sin has the Christian Church spread so far and wide through the world committed in this matter? On what ground could it be unlawful for the Christian world to remain ignorant of that which even those who made it matter of accusation against others could not prove? Why should those whom Christ has sown in His field, that is, in this world, and has commanded to grow alongside of the tares until the harvest,—those many thousands of believers in all nations, whose multitude the Lord compared to the stars of heaven and the sand of the sea, to whom He promised of old, and has now given, the blessing in the seed of Abraham,—why, I ask, should the name of Christians be denied to all these, because, forsooth, in regard to this case, in the discussion of which they took no part, they preferred to believe the judges, who under grave responsibility gave their decision, rather than the plaintiffs, against whom the decision was given? Surely no man’s crime can stain with guilt another who does not know of its commission. How could the faithful, scattered throughout the world, be cognisant of the crime of surrendering the sacred books as committed by men, whose guilt their accusers, even if they knew it, were at least unable to prove? Unquestionably this one fact of ignorance on their part most easily demonstrates that they had no share in the guilt of this crime. Why then should the innocent be charged with crimes which they never committed, because of their being ignorant of crimes which, justly or unjustly, are laid to the charge of others? What room is left for innocence, if it is criminal for one to be ignorant of the crimes of others? Moreover, if the mere fact of their ignorance proves, as has been said, the innocence of the people in so many nations, how great is the crime of separation from the communion of these innocent people! For the deeds of guilty parties which either cannot be proved to those who are innocent, or cannot be believed by them, bring no stain upon any one, since, even when known, they are borne with in

order to preserve fellowship with those who are innocent. For the good are not to be deserted for the sake of the wicked, but the wicked are to be borne with for the sake of the good; as the prophets bore with those against whom they delivered such testimonies, and did not cease to take part in the sacraments of the Jewish people; as also our Lord bore with guilty Judas, even until he met the end which he deserved, and permitted him to take part in the sacred supper along with the innocent disciples; as the apostles bore with those who preached Christ through envy,—a sin peculiarly satanic; as Cyprian bore with colleagues guilty of avarice, which, after the example of the apostle, he calls idolatry. In fine, whatever was done at that time among these bishops, although perhaps it was known by some of them, is, unless there be respect of persons in judgment, unknown to all: why, then, is not peace loved by all? These thoughts might easily occur to you; perhaps you already entertain them. But it would be better for you to be devoted to earthly possessions, through fear of losing which you might be proved to consent to known truth, than to be devoted to that worthless vainglory which you think you will by such consent forfeit in the estimation of men.

Chap. V

16. You now see therefore, I suppose, that the thing to be considered when any one is coerced, is not the mere fact of the coercion, but the nature of that to which he is coerced, whether it be good or bad: not that any one can be good in spite of his own will, but that, through fear of suffering what he does not desire, he either renounces his hostile prejudices, or is compelled to examine truth of which he had been contentedly ignorant; and under the influence of this fear repudiates the error which he was wont to defend, or seeks the truth of which he formerly knew nothing, and now willingly holds what he formerly rejected. Perhaps it would be utterly useless to assert this in words, if it were not demonstrated by so many examples. We see not a few men here and there, but many cities, once Donatist, now Catholic, vehemently detesting the diabolical schism, and ardently loving the unity of the Church; and these became Catholic under the influence of that fear which is to you so offensive by the laws of emperors, from Constantine, before whom your party of their own accord impeached Caecilianus, down to the emperors of our own time, who most justly decree that the decision of

the judge whom your own party chose, and whom they preferred to a tribunal of bishops, should be maintained in force against you.

17. I have therefore yielded to the evidence afforded by these instances which my colleagues have laid before me. For originally my opinion was, that no one should be coerced into the unity of Christ, that we must act only by words, fight only by arguments, and prevail by force of reason, lest we should have those whom we knew as avowed heretics feigning themselves to be Catholics. But this opinion of mine was overcome not by the words of those who controverted it, but by the conclusive instances to which they could point. For, in the first place, there was set over against my opinion my own town, which, although it was once wholly on the side of Donatus, was brought over to the Catholic unity by fear of the imperial edicts, but which we now see filled with such detestation of your ruinous perversity, that it would scarcely be believed that it had ever been involved in your error. There were so many others which were mentioned to me by name, that, from facts themselves, I was made to own that to this matter the word of Scripture might be understood as applying: “Give opportunity to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser.” For how many were already, as we assuredly know, willing to be Catholics, being moved by the indisputable plainness of truth, but daily putting off their avowal of this through fear of offending their own party! How many were bound, not by truth—for you never pretended to that as yours—but by the heavy chains of inveterate custom, so that in them was fulfilled the divine saying: “A servant (who is hardened) will not be corrected by words; for though he understand, he will not answer”! How many supposed the sect of Donatus to be the true Church, merely because ease had made them too listless, or conceited, or sluggish, to take pains to examine Catholic truth! How many would have entered earlier had not the calumnies of slanderers, who declared that we offered something else than we do upon the altar of God, shut them out! How many, believing that it mattered not to which party a Christian might belong, remained in the schism of Donatus only because they had been born in it, and no one was compelling them to forsake it and pass over into the Catholic Church!

18. To all these classes of persons the dread of those laws in the promulgation of which kings serve the Lord in fear has been so useful, that now some say we were willing for this some time ago; but thanks be to God, who has given us occasion for doing it at once, and has cut off the hesitancy of procrastination! Others say: We already knew this to be true, but we were held prisoners by the force of old custom: thanks be to the Lord, who has broken these bonds asunder, and has brought us into the bond of peace! Others say: We knew not that the truth was here, and we had no wish to learn it; but fear made us become earnest to examine it when we became alarmed, lest, without any gain in things eternal, we should be smitten with loss in temporal things: thanks be to the Lord, who has by the stimulus of fear startled us from our negligence, that now being disquieted we might inquire into those things which, when at ease, we did not care to know! Others say: We were prevented from entering the Church by false reports, which we could not know to be false unless we entered it; and we would not enter unless we were compelled: thanks be to the Lord, who by His scourge took away our timid hesitation, and taught us to find out for ourselves how vain and absurd were the lies which rumour had spread abroad against His Church: by this we are persuaded that there is no truth in the accusations made by the authors of this heresy, since the more serious charges which their followers have invented are without foundation. Others say: We thought, indeed, that it mattered not in what communion we held the faith of Christ; but thanks to the Lord, who has gathered us in from a state of schism, and has taught us that it is fitting that the one God be worshipped in unity.

19. Could I therefore maintain opposition to my colleagues, and by resisting them stand in the way of such conquests of the Lord, and prevent the sheep of Christ which were wandering on your mountains and hills—that is, on the swellings of your pride—from being gathered into the fold of peace, in which there is one flock and one Shepherd? Was it my duty to obstruct these measures, in order, forsooth, that you might not lose what you call your own, and might without fear rob Christ of what is His: that you might frame your testaments according to Roman law, and might by calumnious accusations break the Testament made with the sanction of Divine law to the fathers, in which it was written, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the

earth be blessed”: that you might have freedom in your transactions in the way of buying and selling, and might be emboldened to divide and claim as your own that which Christ bought by giving Himself as its price: that any gift made over by one of you to another might remain unchallenged, and that the gift which the God of gods has bestowed upon His children, called from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, might become invalid: that you might not be sent into exile from the land of your natural birth, and that you might labour to banish Christ from the kingdom bought with His blood, which extends from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth? Nay verily; let the kings of the earth serve Christ by making laws for Him and for His cause. Your predecessors exposed Caecilianus and his companions to be punished by the kings of the earth for crimes with which they were falsely charged: let the lions now be turned to break in pieces the bones of the calumniators, and let no intercession for them be made by Daniel when he has been proved innocent, and set free from the den in which they meet their doom; for he that prepareth a pit for his neighbour shall himself most justly fall into it.

Chap. VI

20. Save yourself therefore, my brother, while you have this present life, from the wrath which is to come on the obstinate and the proud. The formidable power of the authorities of this world, when it assails the truth, gives glorious opportunity of probation to the strong, but puts dangerous temptation before the weak who are righteous; but when it assists the proclamation of the truth, it is the means of profitable admonition to the wise, and of unprofitable vexation to the foolish among those who have gone astray. “For there is no power but of God: whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.” For if the power be on the side of the truth, and correct any one who was in error, he that is put right by the correction has praise from the power. If, on the other hand, the power be unfriendly to the truth, and cruelly persecute any one, he who is crowned victor in this contest receives praise from the power which he resists. But you do not that which is good, so as to avoid being afraid of the

power; unless perchance this is good, to sit and speak against not one brother, but against all your brethren that are found among all nations, to whom the prophets, and Christ, and the apostles bear witness in the words of Scripture, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;” and again, “From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, a pure offering shall be offered unto My name; for My name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord.” Mark this: “saith the Lord;” not saith Donatus, or Rogatus, or Vincentius, or Ambrose, or Augustin, but “saith the Lord;” and again, “All tribes of the earth shall be blessed in Him, and all nations shall call Him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things; and blessed be His glorious name for ever, and the whole earth shall be filled with His glory: so let it be, so let it be.” And you sit at Cartennae, and with a remnant of half a score of Rogatists you say, “Let it not be! Let it not be!”

21. You hear Christ speaking thus in the Gospel: “All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” You read also in the Acts of the Apostles how this gospel began at Jerusalem, where the Holy Spirit first filled those hundred and twenty persons, and went forth thence into Judaea and Samaria, and to all nations, as He had said unto them when He was about to ascend into heaven, “Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth;” for “their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” And you contradict the Divine testimonies so firmly established and so clearly revealed, and attempt to bring about such an absolute confiscation of Christ’s heritage, that although repentance is preached, as He said, in His name to all nations, whosoever may be in any part of the earth moved by that preaching, there is for him no possibility of remission of sins, unless he seek and discover Vincentius of Cartennae, or some one of his nine or ten associates, in their obscurity in the imperial colony of Mauritania. What will the arrogance of insignificant mortals not

dare to do? To what extremities will the presumption of flesh and blood not hurry men? Is this your well-doing, on account of which you are not afraid of the power? You place this grievous stumbling-block in the way of your own mother’s son, for whom Christ died, and who is yet in feeble infancy, not ready to use strong meat, but requiring to be nursed on a mother’s milk; and you quote against me the works of Hilary, in order that you may deny the fact of the Church’s increase among all nations; even unto the end of the world, according to the promise which God, in order to subdue your unbelief, confirmed with an oath! And although you would by all means be most miserable if you stood against this when it was promised, you even now contradict it when the promise is fulfilled.

Chap. VII

22. You, however, through your profound erudition, have discovered something which you think worthy to be alleged as a great objection against the Divine testimonies. For you say, “If we consider the parts comprehended in the whole world, it is a comparatively small portion in which the Christian faith is known:” either refusing to see, or pretending not to know, to how many barbarous nations the gospel has already penetrated, within a space of time so short, that not even Christ’s enemies can doubt that in a little while that shall be accomplished which our Lord foretold, when, answering the question of His disciples concerning the end of the world, He said, “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.” Meanwhile do all you can to proclaim and to maintain, that even though the gospel be published in Persia and India, as indeed it has been for a long time, no one who hears it can be in any degree cleansed from his sins, unless he come to Cartennae, or to the neighbourhood of Cartennae! If you have not expressly said this, it is evidently through fear lest men should laugh at you; and yet when you do say this, do you refuse that men should weep for you?

23. You think that you make a very acute remark when you affirm the name Catholic to mean universal, not in respect to the communion as embracing the whole world, but in respect to the observance of all Divine precepts and of all the sacraments, as if we (even accepting the position that the Church

is called Catholic because it honestly holds the whole truth, of which fragments here and there are found in some heresies) rested upon the testimony of this word's signification, and not upon the promises of God, and so many indisputable testimonies of the truth itself, our demonstration of the existence of the Church of God in all nations. In fact, however, this is the whole which you attempt to make us believe, that the Rogatists alone remain worthy of the name Catholics, on the ground of their observing all the Divine precepts and all the sacraments; and that you are the only persons in whom the Son of man when He cometh shall find faith. You must excuse me for saying we do not believe a word of this. For although, in order to make it possible for that faith to be found in you which the Lord said that He would not find on the earth, you may perhaps presume even to say that you are to be regarded as in heaven, not on earth, we at least have profited by the apostle's warning, wherein he has taught us that even an angel from heaven must be regarded as accursed if he were to preach to us any other gospel than that which we have received. But how can we be sure that we have indisputable testimony to Christ in the Divine Word, if we do not accept as indisputable the testimony of the same Word to the Church? For as, however ingenious the complex subtleties which one may contrive against the simple truth, and however great the mist of artful fallacies with which he may obscure it, any one who shall proclaim that Christ has not suffered, and has not risen from the dead on the third day, must be accursed—because we have learned in the truth of the gospel, "that it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day;"—on the very same grounds must that man be accursed who shall proclaim that the Church is outside of the communion which embraces all nations: for in the next words of the same passage we learn also that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem; and we are bound to hold firmly this rule, "If any preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

Chap. VIII

24. If, moreover, we do not listen to the claims of the entire sect of Donatists when they pretend to be the Church of Christ, seeing that they do not allege in proof of this anything from the Divine Books, how much less,

I ask, are we called upon to listen to the Rogatists, who will not attempt to interpret; in the interest of their party the words of Scripture: “Where Thou feedest, where Thou dost rest in the south”! For if by this the southern part of Africa is to be understood,—the district, namely, which is occupied by Donatists, because it is under a more burning portion of the heavens,—the Maximianists must excel all the rest of your party, as the flame of their schism broke forth in Byzantium and in Tripoli. Let the Arzuges, if they please, dispute this point with them, and contest that to them more properly this text applies; but how shall the imperial province of Mauritania, lying rather to the west than to the south, since it refuses to be called Africa,—how shall it, I say, find in the word “the south” a ground for boasting, I do not say against the world, but against even that sect of Donatus from which the sect of Rogatus, a very small fragment of that other and larger fragment, has been broken off? For what else is it than superlative impudence for one to interpret in his own favour any allegorical statements, unless he has also plain testimonies, by the light of which the obscure meaning of the former may be made manifest.

25. With how much greater force, moreover, may we say to you what we are accustomed to say to all the Donatists: If any can have good grounds (which indeed none can have) for separating themselves from the communion of the whole world, and calling their communion the Church of Christ, because of their having withdrawn warrantably from the communion of all nations,—how do you know that in the Christian society, which is spread so far and wide, there may not have been some in a very remote place, from which the fame of their righteousness could not reach you, who had already, before the date of your separation, separated themselves for some just cause from the communion of the whole world? How could the Church in that case be found in your sect, rather than in those who were separated before you? Thus it comes to pass, that so long as you are ignorant of this, you cannot make with certainty any claim: which is necessarily the portion of all who, in defending the cause of their party, appeal to their own testimony instead of the testimony of God. For you cannot say, If this had happened, it could not have escaped our knowledge; for, not going beyond Africa itself, you cannot tell, when the question is put to you, how many subdivisions of the party of Donatus have occurred: in

connection with which we must especially bear in mind that in your view the smaller the number of those who separate themselves, the greater is the justice of their cause, and this paucity of numbers makes them undoubtedly more likely to remain unnoticed. Hence, also, you are by no means sure that there may not be some righteous persons, few in number, and therefore unknown, dwelling in some place far remote from the south of Africa, who, long before the party of Donatus had withdrawn their righteousness from fellowship with the unrighteousness of all other men, had, in their remote northern region, separated themselves in the same way for some most satisfactory reason, and now are, by a claim superior to yours, the Church of God, as the spiritual Zion which preceded all your sects in the matter of warrantable secession, and who interpret in their favour the words of the Psalm, “Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King,” with much more reason than the party of Donatus interpret in their favour the words, “Where Thou feedest, where Thou dost rest in the south.”

26. You profess, nevertheless, to be afraid lest, when you are compelled by imperial edicts to consent to unity, the name of God be for a longer time blasphemed by the Jews and the heathen: as if the Jews were not aware how their own nation Israel, in the beginning of its history, wished to exterminate by war the two tribes and a half which had received possessions beyond Jordan, when they thought that these had separated themselves from the unity of their nation. As to the Pagans, they may indeed with greater reason reproach us for the laws which Christian emperors have enacted against idolaters; and yet many of these have thereby been, and are now daily, turned from idols to the living and true God. In fact, however, both Jews and Pagans, if they thought the Christians to be as insignificant in number as you are,—who maintain, forsooth, that you alone are Christians,—would not condescend to say anything against us, but would never cease to treat us with ridicule and contempt. Are you not afraid lest the Jews should say to you, “If your handful of men be the Church of Christ, what becomes of the statement of your Apostle Paul, that your Church is described in the words, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; breakforth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband;’ in which he plainly declares the multitude of Christians to surpass that of the Jewish Church?” Will you say

to them, “We are the more righteous because our number is not large;” and do you expect them not to reply, “Whoever you claim to be, you are not those of whom it is said, She that was desolate hath many children,’ if you are reduced to so small a number”?

27. Perhaps you will quote against this the example of that righteous man, who along with his family was alone found worthy of deliverance when the flood came. Do you see then how far you still are from being righteous? Most assuredly we do not affirm you to be righteous on the ground of this instance until your associates be reduced to seven, yourself being the eighth person: provided always, however, that no other has, as I was saying, anticipated the party of Donatus in snatching up that righteousness, by having, in some far distant spot, withdrawn himself along with seven more, under pressure of some good reason, from communion with the whole world, and so saved himself from the flood by which it is overwhelmed. Seeing, therefore, that you do not know whether this may not have been done, and been as entirely unheard of by you as the name of Donatus is unheard of by many nations of Christians in remote countries, you are unable to say with certainty where the Church is to be found. For it must be in that place in which what you have now done may happen to have been at an earlier date done by others, if there could possibly be any just reason for your separating yourselves from the communion of the whole world.

Chap. IX

28. We, however, are certain that no one could ever have been warranted in separating himself from the communion of all nations, because every one of us looks for the marks of the Church not in his own righteousness, but in the Divine Scriptures, and beholds it actually in existence, according to the promises. For it is of the Church that it is said,”As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters;” which could be called on the one hand “thorns” only by reason of the wickedness of their manners, and on the other hand “daughters” by reason of their participation in the same sacraments. Again, it is the Church which saith, “From the end of the earth have I cried unto Thee when my heart was overwhelmed;” and in another Psalm, “Horror hath kept me back from the wicked that forsake Thy law;” and, “I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved.” It is the same which says

to her Spouse: “Tell me where Thou feedest, where Thou dost rest at noon: for why should I be as one veiled beside the flocks of Thy companions?” This is the same as is said in another place: “Make known to me Thy right hand, and those who are in heart taught in wisdom;” in whom, as they shine with light and glow with love, Thou dost rest as in noontide; lest perchance, like one veiled, that is, hidden and unknown, I should run, not to Thy flock, but to the flocks of Thy companions, i.e. of heretics, whom the bride here calls companions, just as He called the thorns “daughters,” because of common participation in the sacraments: of which persons it is elsewhere said: “Thou wast a man, mine equal, my guide, my acquaintance, who didst take sweet food together with me; we walked unto the house of God in company. Let death seize upon them, and let them go down quick into hell,” like Dathan and Abiram, the authors of an impious schism.

29. It is to the Church also that the answer is given immediately after in the passage quoted above: “If thou know not thyself, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flocks, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds’ tents.” Oh, matchless sweetness of the Bridegroom, who thus replied to her question: “If thou knowest not thyself,” He says; as if He said, “Surely the city which is set upon a mountain cannot be hid; and therefore, Thou art not as one veiled, that thou shouldst run to the flocks of my companions.’ For I am the mountain established upon the top of the mountains, unto which all nations shall come. If thou knowest not thyself,’ by the knowledge which thou mayest gain, not in the words of false witnesses, but in the testimonies of My book; if thou knowest not thyself,’ from such testimony as this concerning thee: Lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes: for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not, for thou shall not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shall not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shall not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more: for thy Maker is thine husband, the Lord of hosts is His name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called.’ If thou knowest not thyself,’ O thou fairest among women, from this which hath been said of thee, The King hath greatly desired thy beauty,’ and instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest

make princes upon the earth:’ if, therefore, thou know not thyself,’ go thy way forth: I do not cast thee forth, but go thy way forth,’ that of thee it may be said, They went out from us, but they were not of us.’ Go thy way forth’ by the footsteps of the flocks, not in My footsteps, but in the footsteps of the flocks; and not of the one flock, but of flocks divided and going astray. And feed thy kids,’ not as Peter, to whom it is said, Feed My sheep;’ but, Feed thy kids beside the shepherds’ tents,’ not beside the tent of the Shepherd, where there is one fold and one Shepherd.’“ But the church knows herself, and thereby escapes from that lot which has befallen those who did not know themselves to be in her.

30. The same [Church] is spoken of, when, in regard to the fewness of her numbers as compared with the multitude of the wicked, it is said: “Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” And again, it is of the same Church that it is said with respect to the multitude of her members: “I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore.” For the same Church of holy and good believers is both small if compared with the number of the wicked, which is greater, and large if considered by itself; “for the desolate hath more sons than she which hath an husband,” and “many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God.” God, moreover, presents unto Himself a “numerous people, zealous of good works.” And in the Apocalypse, many thousands “which no man can number,” from every tribe and tongue, are seen clothed in white robes, and with palms of victory. It is the same Church which is occasionally obscured, and, as it were, beclouded by the multitude of offences, when sinners bend the bow that they may shoot under the darkened moon at the upright in heart. But even at such a time the Church shines in those who are most firm in their attachment to her. And if, in the Divine promise above quoted, any distinct application of its two clauses should be made, it is perhaps not without reason that the seed of Abraham was compared both to the “stars of heaven,” and to “the sand which is by the sea-shore:” that by “the stars” may be understood those who, in number fewer, are more fixed and more brilliant; and that by “the sand on the sea-shore” may be understood that great multitude of weak and carnal persons within the Church, who at one time are seen at rest and

free while the weather is calm, but are at another time covered and troubled under the waves of tribulation and temptation.

31. Now, such a troublous time was the time at which Hilary wrote in the passage which you have thought fit artfully to adduce against so many Divine testimonies, as if by it you could prove that the Church has perished from the earth. You may just as well say that the numerous churches of Galatia had no existence at the time when the apostle wrote to them: “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you,” that, “having begun in the Spirit, ye are now made perfect in the flesh?” For thus you would misrepresent that learned man, who (like the apostle) was sternly rebuking the slow of heart and the timid, for whom he was travailing in birth a second time, until Christ should be formed in them. For who does not know that many persons of weak judgment were at that time deluded by ambiguous phrases, so that they thought that the Arians believed the same doctrines as they themselves held; and that others, through fear, had yielded and feigned consent, not walking uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, to whom you would have denied that forgiveness which, when they had been turned from their error, was extended to them? But in refusing such pardon, you prove yourselves wholly ignorant of the word of God. For read what Paul has recorded concerning Peter, and what Cyprian has expressed as his view on the ground of that statement, and do not blame the compassion of the Church, which does not scatter the members of Christ when they are gathered together, but labours to gather His scattered members into one. It is true that those who then stood most resolute, and were able to understand the treacherous phrases used by the heretics, were few in number when compared with the rest; but some of them it is to be remembered were then bravely enduring sentence of banishment, and others were hiding themselves for safety in all parts of the world. And thus the Church, which is increasing throughout all nations, has been preserved as the Lord’s wheat, and shall be preserved unto the end, yea, until all nations, even the barbarous tribes, are within its embrace. For it is the Church which the Son of man has sown as good seed, and of which He has foretold that it should grow among the tares until the harvest. For the field is the world, and the harvest is the end of time.

32. Hilary, therefore, either was rebuking not the wheat, but the tares, in those ten provinces of Asia, or was addressing himself to the wheat, because it was endangered through some unfaithfulness, and spoke as one who thought that the rebuke would be useful in proportion to the vehemence with which it was given. For the canonical Scriptures contain examples of the same manner of rebuke in which what is intended for some is spoken as if it applied to all. Thus the apostle, when he says to the Corinthians, “How say some among you, that there is no resurrection of the dead?” proves clearly that all of them were not such; but he bears witness that those who were such were not outside of their communion, but among them. And shortly after, lest those who were of a different opinion should be led astray by them, he gave this warning: “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.” But when he says, “Whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” he speaks as if it applied to all, and you see how grave a charge he makes. Wherefore, if it were not that we read in the same epistle, “I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift,” we would think that all the Corinthians had been carnal and natural, not perceiving the things of the spirit of God, fond of strife, and full of envy, and “walking as men.” In like manner it is said, on the one hand, “the whole world lieth in wickedness,” because of the tares which are throughout the whole world; and, on the other hand, Christ “is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world,” because of the wheat which is throughout the whole world.

33. The love of many, however, waxes cold because of offences, which abound increasingly the more that, within the communion of the sacraments of Christ, there are gathered to the glory of His name even those who are wicked, and who persist in the obstinacy of error; whose separation, however, as chaff from the wheat, is to be effected only in the final purging of the Lord’s threshing-floor. These do not destroy those who are the Lord’s wheat—few, indeed, when compared with the others, but in themselves a

great multitude; they do not destroy the elect of God, who are to be gathered at the end of the world from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other. For it is from the elect that the cry comes, “Help, Lord! for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men;” and it is of them that the Lord saith, “He that shall endure to the end (when iniquity shall abound), the same shall be saved.” Moreover, that the psalm quoted is the language not of one man, but of many, is shown by the following context: “Thou shalt keep us, O Lord; Thou shalt preserve us from this generation for ever.” On account of this abounding iniquity which the Lord foretold, it is said in another place: “When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?” This doubt expressed by Him who knoweth all things prefigured the doubts which in Him we entertain, when the Church, being often disappointed in many from whom much was expected, but who have proved very different from what they were supposed to be, is so alarmed in regard to her own members, that she is slow to believe good of any one. Nevertheless it would be wrong to cherish doubt that those whose faith He shall find on the earth are growing along with the tares throughout the whole field.

34. Therefore it is the same Church also which within the Lord’s net is swimming along with the bad fishes, but is in heart and in life separated from them, and departs from them, that she may be presented to her Lord a “glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle.” But the actual visible separation she looks for only on the sea-shore, i.e. at the end of the world, —meanwhile correcting as many as she can, and bearing with those whom she cannot correct; but she does not abandon the unity of the good because of the wickedness of those whom she finds incorrigible.

Chap. X

35. Wherefore, my brother, refrain from gathering together against divine testimonies so many, so perspicuous, and so unchallenged, the calumnies which may be found in the writings of bishops either of our communion, as Hilary, or of the undivided Church itself in the age preceding the schism of Donatus, as Cyprian or Agrippinus; because, in the first place, this class of writings must be, so far as authority is concerned, distinguished from the canon of Scripture. For they are not read by us as if a testimony brought

forward from them was such that it would be unlawful to hold any different opinion, for it may be that the opinions which they held were different from those to which truth demands our assent. For we are amongst those who do not reject what has been taught us even by an apostle: “If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you; nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule,”—in that way, namely, which Christ is; of which way the Psalmist thus speaks: “God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us: that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations.”

36. In the next place, if you are charmed by the authority of that bishop and illustrious martyr St. Cyprian, which we indeed regard, as I have said, as quite distinct from the authority of canonical Scripture, why are you not charmed by such things in him as these: that he maintained with loyalty, and defended in debate, the unity of the Church in the world and in all nations; that he censured, as full of self-sufficiency and pride, those who wished to separate themselves as righteous from the Church, holding them up to ridicule for assuming to themselves that which the Lord did not concede even to apostles,—namely, the gathering of the tares before the harvest,—and for attempting to separate the chaff from the wheat, as if to them had been assigned the charge of removing the chaff and cleansing the threshing-floor; that he proved that no man can be stained with guilt by the sins of others, thus sweeping away the only ground alleged by the authors of schism for their separation; that in the very matter in regard to which he was of a different opinion from his colleagues, he did not decree that those who thought otherwise than he did should be condemned or excommunicated; that even in his letter to Jubaianus (which was read for the first time in the Council, the authority of which you are wont to plead in defence of the practice of rebaptizing), although he admits that in time past persons who had been baptized in other communions had been received into the Church without being a second time baptized, on which ground they were regarded by him as having had no baptism, nevertheless he considers the use and benefit of peace within the Church to be so great, that for its sake he holds that these persons (though in his judgment unbaptized) should not be excluded from office in the Church?

37. And by this you will very readily perceive (for I know the acuteness of your mind) that your cause is completely subverted and annihilated. For if, as you suppose, the Church which had been spread abroad throughout the world perished through her admitting sinners to partake in her sacraments (and this is the ground alleged for your separation), it had wholly perished long before,—at the time, namely, when, as Cyprian says, men were admitted into it without baptism,—and thus Cyprian himself had no Church within which to be born; and if so, how much more must this have been the case with one who, like Donatus, the author of your schism, and the father of your sect, belonged to a later age! But if at that time, although persons were being admitted into the Church without baptism, the Church nevertheless remained in being, so as to give birth to Cyprian and afterwards to Donatus, it is manifest that the righteous are not defiled by the sins of other men when they participate with them in the sacraments. And thus you have no excuse by which you can wash away the guilt of the schism whereby you have gone forth from the unity of the Church; and in you is fulfilled that saying of Holy Writ: “There is a generation that esteem themselves right, and have not cleansed themselves from the guilt of their going forth.”

38. The man who, out of regard to the sameness of the sacraments, does not presume to insist on the second administration of baptism even to heretics, is not, by thus avoiding Cyprian’s error, placed on a level with Cyprian in merit, any more than the man who does not insist upon the Gentiles conforming to Jewish ceremonies is thereby placed on a level in merit with the Apostle Peter. In Peter’s case, however, the record not only of his halting, but also of his correction, is contained in the canonical Scriptures; whereas the statement that Cyprian entertained opinions at variance with those approved by the constitution and practice of the Church is found, not in canonical Scripture, but in his own writings, and in those of a Council; and although it is not found in the same records that he corrected that opinion, it is nevertheless by no means an unreasonable supposition that he did correct it, and that this fact may perhaps have been suppressed by those who were too much pleased with the error into which he fell, and were unwilling to lose the patronage of so great a name. At the same time, there are not wanting some who maintain that Cyprian never held the view

ascribed to him, but that this was an unwarrantable forgery passed off by liars under his name. For it was impossible for the integrity and authenticity of the writings of any one bishop, however illustrious, to be secured and preserved as the canonical Scriptures are through translation into so many languages, and through the regular and continuous manner in which the Church has used them in public worship. Even in the face of this, some have been found forging many things under the names of the apostles. It is true, indeed, that they made such attempts in vain, because the text of canonical Scripture was so well attested, and so generally used and known; but this effort of an unholy boldness, which has not forborne to assail writings which are defended by the strength of such notoriety, has proved what it is capable of essaying against writings which are not established upon canonical authority.

39. We, however, do not deny that Cyprian held the views ascribed to him: first, because his style has a certain peculiarity of expression by which it may be recognised; and secondly, because in this case our cause rather than yours is proved victorious, and the pretext alleged for your schism—namely, that you might not be defiled by the sins of other men—is in the most simple manner exploded; since it is manifest from the letters of Cyprian that participation in the sacraments was allowed to sinful men, when those who, in your judgment (and as you will have it, in his judgment also), were unbaptized were as such admitted to the Church, and that nevertheless the Church did not perish, but remained in the dignity belonging to her nature as the Lord’s wheat scattered throughout the world. And, therefore, if in your consternation you thus betake yourselves to Cyprian’s authority as to a harbour of refuge, you see the rock against which your error dashes itself in this course; if, on the other hand, you do not venture to flee thither, you are wrecked without any struggle for escape.

40. Moreover, Cyprian either did not hold at all the opinions which you ascribe to him, or did subsequently correct his mistake by the rule of truth, or covered this blemish, as we may call it, upon his otherwise spotless mind by the abundance of his love, in his most amply defending the unity of the Church growing throughout the whole world, and in his most stedfastly holding the bond of peace; for it is written, “Charity [love] covereth a

multitude of sins.” To this was also added, that in him, as a most fruitful branch, the Father removed by the pruning-knife of suffering whatever may have remained in him requiring correction: “For every branch in me,” saith the Lord, “that beareth fruit He purgeth, that it may bring forth more fruit.” And whence this care of him, if not because, continuing as a branch in the far-spreading vine, he did not forsake the root of unity? “For though he gave his body to be burned, if he had not charity, it would profit him nothing.”

41. Attend now a little while to the letters of Cyprian, that you may see how he proves the man to be inexcusable who desires ostensibly on the ground of his own righteousness to withdraw himself from the unity of the Church (which God promised and has fulfilled in all nations), and that you may more clearly apprehend the truth of the text quoted by me shortly before: “There is a generation that esteem themselves righteous, and have not cleansed themselves from the guilt of their going forth.” In a letter which he wrote to Antonianus he discusses a matter very closely akin to that which we are now debating; but it is better for us to give his very words: “Some of our predecessors,” he says, “in the episcopal office in this province were of opinion that the peace of the Church should not be given to fornicators, and finally closed the door of repentance against those who had been guilty of adultery. They did not, however, withdraw themselves from fellowship with their colleagues in the episcopate; nor did they rend asunder the unity of the Catholic Church, by such harshness and obstinate perseverance in their censure as to separate themselves from the Church because others granted while they themselves refused to adulterers the peace of the Church. The bond of concord remaining unbroken, and the sacrament of the Church continuing undivided, each bishop arranges and orders his own conduct as one who shall give account of his procedure to his Lord.” What say you to that, brother Vincentius? Surely you must see that this great man, this peace-loving bishop and dauntless martyr, made nothing more earnestly his care than to prevent the sundering of the bond of unity. You see him travailing in birth for the souls of men, not only that they might, when conceived, be born in Christ, but also that, when born, they might not perish through their being shaken out of their mother’s bosom.

42. Now give attention, I pray you, further to this thing which he has mentioned in protesting against impious schismatics. If those who granted peace to adulterers, who repented of their sin, shared the guilt of adulterers, were those who did not so act defiled by fellowship with them as colleagues in office? If, again, it was a right thing, as truth asserts and the Church maintains, that peace should be given to adulterers who repented of their sin, those who utterly closed against adulterers the door of reconciliation through repentance were unquestionably guilty of impiety in refusing healing to the members of Christ, in taking away the keys of the Church from those who knocked for admission, and in opposing with heartless cruelty God's most compassionate forbearance, which permitted them to live in order that, repenting, they might be healed by the sacrifice of a contrite spirit and broken heart. Nevertheless this their heartless error and impiety did not defile the others, compassionate and peace-loving men, when these shared with them in the Christian sacraments, and tolerated them within the net of unity, until the time when, brought to the shore, they should be separated from each other; or if this error and impiety of others did defile them, then the Church was already at that time destroyed, and there was no Church to give Cyprian birth. But if, as is beyond question, the Church continued in existence, it is also beyond question that no man in the unity of Christ can be stained by the guilt of the sins of other men if he be not consenting to the deeds of the wicked, and thus defiled by actual participation in their crimes, but only, for the sake of the fellowship of the good, tolerating the wicked, as the chaff which lies until the final purging of the Lord's threshing-floor. These things being so, where is the pretext for your schism? Are ye not an "evil generation, esteeming yourselves righteous, yet not washed from the guilt of your going forth" [from the Church]?

43. If, now, I were disposed to quote anything against you from the writings of Tychonius, a man of your communion, who has written rather in defence of the Church and against you than the reverse, in vain disowning the communion of African Christians as traditors (by which one thing Parmenianus silences him), what else can you say in reply than what Tychonius himself said of you as I have shortly before reminded you: "That which is according to our will is holy"? For this Tychonius—a man, as I

have said, of your communion—writes that a Council was held at Carthage by two hundred and seventy of your bishops; in which Council, after seventy-five days of deliberation, all past decisions on the matter being set aside, a carefully revised resolution was published, to the effect that to those who were guilty of a heinous crime as traditors, the privilege of communion should be granted as to blameless persons, if they refused to be baptized. He says further, that Deuterius of Macriana, a bishop of your party, added to the Church a whole crowd of traditors, without making any distinction between them and others, making the unity of the Church open to these traditors, in accordance with the decree of the Council held by these two hundred and seventy of your bishops, and that after that transaction Donatus continued unbroken his communion with the said Deuterius, and not only with him, but also with all the Mauritanian bishops for forty years, who, according to the statement of Tychonius, admitted the traditors to communion without insisting on their being rebaptized, up to the time of the persecution made by Macarius.

44. You will say, “What has that Tychonius to do with me?” It is true that Tychonius is the man whom Parmenianus checked by his reply, and effectually warned not to write such things; but he did not refute the statements themselves, but, as I have said above, silenced him by this one thing, that while saying such things concerning the Church which is diffused throughout the world, and while admitting that the faults of other men within its unity cannot defile one who is innocent, he nevertheless withdrew himself from the contagion of communion with African Christians because of their being traditors, and was an adherent of the party of Donatus. Parmenianus, indeed, might have said that Tychonius had in all these things spoken falsely; but, as Tychonius himself observes, many were still living at that time by whom these things might be proved to be most unquestionably true and generally known.

45. Of these things, however, I say no more: maintain, if you choose, that Tychonius spoke falsely; I bring you back to Cyprian, the authority which you yourself have quoted. If, according to his writings, every one in the unity of the Church is defiled by the sins of other members, then the Church had utterly perished before Cyprian’s time, and all possibility of Cyprian’s

own existence (as a member of the Church) is taken away. If, however, the very thought of this is impiety, and it be beyond question that the Church continued in being, it follows that no one is defiled by the guilt of the sins of other men within the Catholic unity; and in vain do you, “an evil generation,” maintain that you are righteous, when you are “not washed from the guilt of your going forth.”

Chap. XI

46. You will say, “Why then do you seek us? Why do you receive those whom you call heretics?” Mark how simple and short is my reply. We seek you because you are lost, that we may rejoice over you when found, as over you while lost we grieved. Again we call you heretics; but the name applies to you only up to the time of your being turned to the peace of the Catholic Church, and extricated from the errors by which you have been ensnared. For when you pass over to us, you entirely abandon the position you formerly occupied, so that, as heretics no longer, you pass over to us. You will say, “Then baptize me.” I would, if you were not already baptized, or if you had received the baptism of Donatus, or of Rogatus only, and not of Christ. It is not the Christian sacraments, but the crime of schism, which makes you a heretic. The evil which has proceeded from yourself is not a reason for our denying the good that is permanent in you, but which you possess to your own harm if you have it not in that Church from which proceeds its power to do good. For from the Catholic Church are all the sacraments of the Lord, which you hold and administer in the same way as they were held and administered even before you went forth from her. The fact, however, that you are no longer in that Church from which proceeded the sacraments which you have, does not make it the less true that you still have them. We therefore do not change in you that wherein you are at one with ourselves, for in many things you are at one with us; and of such it is said, “For in many things they were with me:” but we correct those things in which you are not with us, and we wish you to receive those things which you have not where you now are. You are at one with us in baptism, in creed, and in the other sacraments of the Lord. But in the spirit of unity and bond of peace, in a word, in the Catholic Church itself, you are not with us. If you receive these things, the others which you already have will then

not begin to be yours, but begin to be of use to you. We do not therefore, as you think, receive your men of your party as still belonging to you, but in the act of receiving them we incorporate with ourselves those who forsake you that they may be received by us; and in order that they may belong to us, their first step is to renounce their connection with you. Nor do we compel into union with us those who industriously serve an error which we abhor; but our reason for wishing those men to be united to us is, that they may no longer be worthy of our abhorrence.

47. But you will say, “The Apostle Paul baptized after John.” Did he then baptize after a heretic? If you do presume to call that friend of the Bridegroom a heretic, and to say that he was not in the unity of the Church, I beg that you will put this in writing. But if you believe that it would be the height of folly to think or to say so, it remains for your own wisdom to resolve the question why the Apostle Paul baptized after John. For if he baptized after one who was his equal, you ought all to baptize after one another. If after one who was greater than himself, you ought to baptize after Rogatus; if after one who was less than himself, Rogatus ought to have baptized after you those whom you, as a presbyter, had baptized. If, however, the baptism which is now administered is in all cases of equal value to those who receive it, however unequal in merit the persons may be by whom it is administered, because it is the baptism of Christ, not of those who administer the right, I think you must already perceive that Paul administered the baptism of Christ to certain persons because they had received the baptism of John only, and not of Christ; for it is expressly called the baptism of John, as the Divine Scripture bears witness in many passages, and as the Lord Himself calls it, saying: “The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?” But the baptism which Peter administered was the baptism, not of Peter, but of Christ; that which Paul administered was the baptism, not of Paul, but of Christ; that which was administered by those who, in the apostle’s time, preached Christ not sincerely, but of contention, was not their own, but the baptism of Christ; and that which was administered by those who, in Cyprian’s time, either by artful dishonesty obtained their possessions, or by usury, at exorbitant interest, increased them, was not their own baptism, but the baptism of Christ. And because it was of Christ, therefore, although there was very

great disparity in the persons by whom it was administered, it was equally useful to those by whom it was received. For if the excellency of baptism in each case is according to the excellency of the person by whom one is baptized, it was wrong in the apostle to give thanks that he had baptized none of the Corinthians, but Crispus, and Gaius, and the house of Stephanas; for the baptism of the converts in Corinth, if administered by himself, would have been so much more excellent as Paul himself was more excellent than other men. Lastly, when he says, “I have planted, and Apollos watered,” he seems to intimate that he had preached the gospel, and that Apollos had baptized. Is Apollos better than John? Why then did he, who baptized after John, not baptize after Apollos? Surely because, in the one case, the baptism, by whomsoever administered, was the baptism of Christ; and in the other case, by whomsoever administered, it was, although preparing the way for Christ, only the baptism of John.

48. It seems to you an odious thing to say that baptism was given to some after John had baptized them, and yet that baptism is not to be given to men after heretics have baptized them; but it may be said with equal justice to be an odious thing that baptism was given to some after John had baptized them, and yet that baptism is not to be given to men after intemperate persons have baptized them. I name this sin of intemperance rather than others, because those in whom it reigns are not able to hide it: and yet what man, even though he be blind, does not know how many addicted to this vice are to be found everywhere? And yet among the works of the flesh, of which it is said that they who do them shall not inherit the kingdom of God, the apostle places this in an enumeration in which heresies also are specified: “Now the works of the flesh,” he says, “are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Baptism, therefore, although it was administered after John, is not administered after a heretic, on the very same principle according to which, though administered after John; it is not administered after an intemperate man: for both heresies and drunkenness are among the works which exclude those who do them from inheriting the

kingdom of God. Does it not seem to you as if it were a thing intolerably unseemly, that although baptism was repeated after it had been administered by him who, not even moderately drinking wine, but wholly refraining from its use, prepared the way for the kingdom of God, and yet that it should not be repeated after being administered by an intemperate man, who shall not inherit the kingdom of God? What can be said in answer to this, but that the one was the baptism of John, after which the apostle administered the baptism of Christ; and that the other, administered by an intemperate man, was the baptism of Christ? Between John Baptist and an intemperate man there is a great difference, as of opposites; between the baptism of Christ and the baptism of John there is no contrariety, but a great difference. Between the apostle and an intemperate man there is a great difference; but there is none between the baptism of Christ administered by an apostle, and the baptism of Christ administered by an intemperate man. In like manner, between John and a heretic there is a great difference, as of opposites; and between the baptism of John and the baptism of Christ which a heretic administers there is no contrariety, but there is a great difference. But between the baptism of Christ which an apostle administers, and the baptism of Christ which a heretic administers, there is no difference. For the form of the sacrament is acknowledged to be the same even when there is a great difference in point of worth between the men by whom it is administered.

49. But pardon me, for I have made a mistake in wishing to convince you by arguing from the case of an intemperate man administering baptism; for I had forgotten that I am dealing with a Rogatist, not with one bearing the wider name of Donatist. For among your colleagues who are so few, and in the whole number of your clergy, perhaps you cannot find one addicted to this vice. For you are persons who hold that the name Catholic is given to the faith not because communion of those who hold it embraces the whole world, but because they observe the whole of the Divine precepts and the whole of the sacraments; you are the persons in whom alone the Son of man when He cometh shall find faith, when on the earth He shall find no faith, forasmuch as you are not earth and on the earth, but heavenly and dwelling in heaven! Do you not fear, or do you not observe that “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble”? Does not that very passage in the

Gospel startle you, in which the Lord saith, “When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith in the earth?” Immediately thereafter, as if foreseeing that some would proudly arrogate to themselves the possession of this faith, He spake to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, the parable of the two men who went up to the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The words which follow I leave for yourself to consider and to answer. Nevertheless examine more minutely your small sect, to see whether not so much as one who administers baptism is an intemperate man. For so widespread is the havoc wrought among souls by this plague, that I am greatly surprised if it has not reached even your infinitesimal flock, although it is your boast that already, before the coming of Christ, the one good Shepherd, you have separated between the sheep and the goats.

Chap. XII

50. Listen to the testimony which through me is addressed to you by those who are the Lord’s wheat, suffering meanwhile until the final winnowing, among the chaff in the Lord’s threshing-floor, i.e. throughout the whole world, because “God hath called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof,” and throughout the same wide field the “children praise Him.” We disapprove of every one who, taking advantage of this imperial edict, persecutes you, not with loving concern for your correction, but with the malice of an enemy. Moreover, although, since every earthly possession can be rightly retained only on the ground either of divine right, according to which all things belong to the righteous, or of human right, which is in the jurisdiction of the kings of the earth, you are mistaken in calling those things yours which you do not possess as righteous persons, and which you have forfeited by the laws of earthly sovereigns, and plead in vain, “We have laboured to gather them,” seeing that you may read what is written, “The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just;” nevertheless we disapprove of any one who, availing himself of this law which the kings of the earth, doing homage to Christ, have published in order to correct your impiety, covetously seeks to possess himself of your property. Also we disapprove of any one who, on the ground not of justice, but of avarice, seizes and retains the provision pertaining to the poor, or the chapels in

which you meet for worship, which you once occupied in the name of the Church, and which are by all means the rightful property only of that Church which is the true Church of Christ. We disapprove of any one who receives a person that has been expelled by you for some disgraceful action or crime, on the same terms on which those are received who have lived among you chargeable with no other crime beyond the error through which you are separated from us. But these are things which you cannot easily prove; and although you can prove them, we bear with some whom we are unable to correct or even to punish; and we do not quit the Lord's threshing-floor because of the chaff which is there, nor break the Lord's net because of bad fishes enclosed therein, nor desert the Lord's flock because of goats which are to be in the end separated from it, nor go forth from the Lord's house because in it there are vessels destined to dishonour.

Chap. XIII

51. But, my brother, if you forbear seeking the empty honour which comes from men, and despise the reproach of fools, who will be ready to say, "Why do you now destroy what you once laboured to build up?" it seems to me to be beyond doubt that you will now pass over to the Church which I perceive that you acknowledge to be the true Church: the proofs of which sentiment on your part I find at hand. For in the beginning of your letter which I am now answering you have these words: "I knew you, my excellent friend, as a man devoted to peace and uprightness, when you were still far removed from the Christian faith, and were in these earlier days occupied with literary pursuits; but since your conversion at a more recent time to the Christian faith, you give your time and labour, as I am informed by the statements of many persons, to theological controversies." These words are undoubtedly your own, if you were the person who sent me that letter. Seeing, therefore, that you confess that I have been converted to the Christian faith, although I have not been converted to the sect of the Donatists or of the Rogatists, you unquestionably uphold the truth that beyond the pale of Rogatists and Donatists the Christian faith exists. This faith therefore is, as we say, spread abroad throughout all nations, which are according to God's testimony blessed in the seed of Abraham. Why therefore do you still hesitate to adopt what you perceive to be true, unless

it be that you are humbled because at some former time you did not perceive what you now see, or maintained some different view, and so, while ashamed to correct an error, are not ashamed (where shame would be much more reasonable) of remaining wilfully in error?

52. Such conduct the Scripture has not passed over in silence; for we read, “There is a shame which bringeth sin, and there is a shame which is graceful and glorious.” Shame brings sin, when through its influence any one forbears from changing a wicked opinion, lest he be supposed to be fickle, or be held as by his own judgment convicted of having been long in error: such persons descend into the pit alive, that is, conscious of their perdition; whose future doom the death of Dathan and Abiram and Korah, swallowed up by the opening earth, long ago prefigured. But shame is graceful and glorious when one blushes for his own sin, and by repentance is changed to something better, which you are reluctant to do because overpowered by that false and fatal shame, fearing lest by men who know not whereof they affirm, that sentence of the apostle may be quoted against you: “If I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.” If, however, this sentence admitted of application to those who, after being corrected, preach the truth which in their perversity they opposed, it might have been said at first against Paul himself, in regard to whom the churches of Christ glorified God when they heard that he now “preached the faith which once he destroyed.”

53. Do not, however, imagine that one can pass from error to truth, or from any sin, be it great or small, to the correction of his sin, without giving some proof of his repentance. It is, however, an error of intolerable impertinence for men to blame the Church, which is proved by so many Divine testimonies to be the Church of Christ, for dealing in one way with those who forsake her, receiving them back on condition of correcting this fault by some acknowledgment of their repentance, and in another way with those who never were within her pale, and are receiving welcome to her peace for the first time; her method being to humble the former more fully, and to receive the latter upon easier terms, cherishing affection for both, and ministering with a mother’s love to the health of both.

You have here perhaps a longer letter than you desired. It would have been much shorter if in my reply I had been thinking of you alone; but as it is, even though it should be of no use to yourself, I do not think that it can fail to be of use to those who shall take pains to read it in the fear of God, and without respect of persons. Amen.

LETTER XCIV

(A.D. 408.)

A letter to Augustin from Paulinus and Therasia, the substance of which is sufficiently stated in the next letter, which contains the reply of Augustin to his friend's questions concerning the present life, the nature of the bodies of the blessed in the life to come, and the functions of the members of the body after the resurrection.

LETTER XCV

(A.D. 408.)

To Brother Paulinus and Sister Therasia, Most Beloved and Sincere Saints Worthy of Affection and Veneration, Fellow-Disciples with Himself Under the Lord Jesus as Master, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. When brethren most closely united to us, towards whom along with us you are accustomed both to cherish and to express sentiments of regard which we all cordially reciprocate, have frequent occasions of visiting you, this benefit is one by which we are comforted under evil rather than made to rejoice in increase of good. For we strive to the utmost of our power to avoid the causes and emergencies which necessitate their journeys, and yet,—I know not how, unless it be as just retribution,—they cannot be dispensed with: but when they return to us and see us, that word of Scripture is fulfilled in our experience: “In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul.” Accordingly, when you learn from our brother Possidius himself how sad is the occasion which has compelled him to go to Italy, you will know how true the remarks I have made are in regard to the joy which he has in meeting you; and yet, if any of us should cross the sea for the one purpose of enjoying a meeting with

you, what more cogent or worthy reason could be found? This, however, would not be compatible with those obligations by which we are bound to minister to those who are languid through infirmity, and not to withdraw our bodily presence from them, unless their malady, assuming dangerous form, makes such departure imperative. Whether in these things we are receiving chastening or judgment I know not; but this I know, that He is not dealing with us according to our sins, nor requiting us according to our iniquities, who mingles so great comfort with our tribulation, and who, by remedies which fill us with wonder, secures that we shall not love the world, and shall not by it be made to fall away.

2. I asked in a former letter your opinion as to the nature of the future life of the saints; but you have said in your reply that we have still much to study concerning our condition in this present life, and you do well, except in this, that you have expressed your desire to learn from me that of which you are either equally ignorant or equally well-informed with myself, or rather, of which you know much more perhaps than I do; for you have said with perfect truth, that before we meet the dissolution of this mortal body, we must die, in a gospel sense, by a voluntary departure, withdrawing ourselves, not by death, but by deliberate resolution, from the life of this world. This course is a simple one, and is beset with no waves of uncertainty; because we are of opinion that we ought so to live in this mortal life that we may be in some measure fitted for immortality. The whole question, however, which, when discussed and investigated, perplexes men like myself, is this—how we ought to live among or for the welfare of those who have not yet learned to live by dying, not in the dissolution of the body, but by turning themselves with a certain mental resolution away from the attractions of mere natural things. For in most cases, it seems to us that unless we in some small degree conform to them in regard to those very things from which we desire to see them delivered, we shall not succeed in doing them any good. And when we do thus conform, a pleasure in such things steals upon ourselves, so that often we are pleased to speak and to listen to frivolous things, and not only to smile at them, but even to be completely overcome with laughter: thus burdening our souls with feelings which cleave to the dust, or even to the mire of this world, we experience greater difficulty and reluctance in raising ourselves

to God that by dying a gospel-death we may live a gospel-life. And whensoever this state of mind is reached, immediately thereupon will follow the commendation, “Well done! well done!” not from men, for no man perceives in another the mental act by which divine things are apprehended, but in a certain inward silence there sounds I know not whence, “Well done! well done!” Because of this kind of temptation, the great apostle confesses that he was buffeted by the angel. Behold whence it comes that our whole life on earth is a temptation; for man is tempted even in that thing in which he is being conformed so far as he can be to the likeness of the heavenly life.

3. What shall I say as to the infliction or remission of punishment, in cases in which we have no other desire than to forward the spiritual welfare of those in regard to whom we judge that they ought or ought not to be punished? Also, if we consider not only the nature and magnitude of faults, but also what each may be able or unable to bear according to his strength of mind, how deep and dark a question it is to adjust the amount of punishment so as to prevent the person who receives it not only from getting no good, but also from suffering loss thereby! Besides, I know not whether a greater number have been improved or made worse when alarmed under threats of such punishment at the hands of men as is an object of fear. What, then, is the path of duty, seeing that it often happens that if you inflict punishment on one he goes to destruction; whereas, if you leave him unpunished, another is destroyed? I confess that I make mistakes daily in regard to this, and that I know not when and how to observe the rule of Scripture: “Them that sin rebuke before all, that others may fear;” and that other rule, “Tell him his fault between thee and him alone;” and the rule, “Judge nothing before the time;” “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (in which command the Lord has not added the words, “before the time”); and this saying of Scripture, “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth: yea, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand;” by which words he makes it plain that he is speaking of those who are within the Church; yet, on the other hand, he commands them to be judged when he says, “What have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” But when this is

necessary, how much care and fear is occasioned by the question to what extent it should be done, lest that happen which, in his second epistle to them, the apostle is found admonishing these persons to beware of in that very example, saying, “lest, perhaps, such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow;” adding, in order to prevent men from thinking this a thing not calling for anxious care, “lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.” What trembling we feel in all these things, my brother Paulinus, O holy man of God! what trembling, what darkness! May we not think that with reference to these things it was said, “Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me. And I said, Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness.” And yet even in the wilderness perchance he still experienced it; for he adds, “I waited for Him who should deliver me from weakness and from tempest.” Truly, therefore, is the life of man upon the earth a life of temptation.

4. Moreover, as to the oracles of God, is it not true that they are lightly touched rather than grasped and handled by us, seeing that in by far the greater part of them we do not already possess opinions definite and ascertained, but are rather inquiring what our opinion ought to be? And this caution, though attended with abundant disquietude, is much better than the rashness of dogmatic assertion. Also, if a man is not carnally minded (which the apostle says is death), will he not be a great cause of offence to those who are still carnally minded, in many parts of Scripture in the exposition of which to say what you believe is most perilous, and to refrain from saying it is most grievous, and to say something else than what you believe is most pernicious? Nay more, when in the discourses or writings of those who are within the Church we find some things censurable, and do not conceal our disapprobation (supposing such correction to be according to the freedom of brotherly love), how great a sin is committed against us when we are suspected of being actuated in this by envy and not by goodwill! and how much do we sin against others, when we in like manner impute to those who find fault with our opinions a desire rather to wound than to correct us! Verily, there arise usually from this cause bitter enmities even between persons bound to each other by the greatest affection and

intimacy, when, “thinking of men above that which is written, any one is puffed up for one against another;” and while they bite and devour one another, “there is reason to fear lest they be consumed one of another.” Therefore, “Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest.” For whether it be that the dangers by which one is beset seem to him greater than those of which he has no experience, or that my impressions are correct, I cannot help thinking that any amount of weakness and of tempest in the wilderness would be more easily borne than the things which we feel or fear in the busy world.

5. I therefore greatly approve of your saying that we should make the state in which men stand, or rather the course which they run, in this present life, the theme of our discussion. I add as another reason for our giving this subject the preference, that the finding and following of the course itself must come before our finding and possessing that towards which it leads. When, therefore, I asked your views on this, I acted as if, through holding and observing carefully the right rule of this life, we were already free from disquietude concerning its course, although I feel in so many things, and especially in those which I have mentioned, that I toil in the midst of very great dangers. Nevertheless, forasmuch as the cause of all this ignorance and embarrassment appears to me to be that, in the midst of a great variety of manners and of minds having inclinations and infirmities hidden altogether from our sight, we seek the interest of those who are citizens and subjects, not of Rome which is on earth, but of Jerusalem which is in heaven, it seemed to me more agreeable to converse with you about what we shall be, than about what we now are. For although we do not know the blessings which are to be enjoyed yonder, of one thing at least we are assured, and it is not a small thing, that yonder the evils which we experience here shall have no place.

6. Wherefore, as to the ordering of this present life in the way which we must follow in order to the attainment of eternal life, I know that our carnal appetites must be held in check, only so much concession being made to the gratification of the bodily senses as suffices for the support of this life and the active discharge of its duties, and that all the vexations of this life which come upon us in connection with the truth of God, and the eternal welfare

of ourselves or of our neighbours, must be borne with patience and fortitude. I know also that with all the zeal of love we should seek the good of our neighbour, that he may rightly spend the present life so as to obtain life eternal. I know also that we ought to prefer spiritual to carnal, immutable to mutable things, and that all this a man is so much more or less enabled to do, according as he is more or less helped by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But I do not know the reason why one or another is more or less helped or not helped by that grace; this only I know, that God does this with perfect justice, and for reasons which to Himself are known as sufficient. In regard, however, to the things which I have mentioned above, as to the way in which we ought to live amongst men, if anything has become known to you through experience or meditation, I beseech you to give me instruction. And if these things perplex you not less than myself, make them the subject of conference with some judicious spiritual physician, whom you may find either where you reside, or in Rome, when you make your annual visit to the city, and thereafter write to me whatever the Lord may reveal to you through his instructions, or to you and him together when engaged in conversation on the subject.

7. As to the resurrection of the body, and the future offices of its members in the incorruptible and immortal state, since you have, in return for the questions which I put to you, inquired my views on these matters, listen to a brief statement which, if it be not sufficient, may afterwards, with the Lord's help, be amplified by fuller discussion. It is to be held most firmly, as a doctrine in regard to which the testimony of Holy Scripture is true and unmistakable, that these visible and earthly bodies which are now called natural shall, in the resurrection of the faithful and just, be spiritual bodies. At the same time, I do not know how the quality of a spiritual body can be comprehended or stated by us, seeing that it lies beyond the range of our experience. There shall be, assuredly, in such bodies no corruption, and therefore they shall not require the perishable nourishment which is now necessary; yet though unnecessary, it will not be impossible for them at their pleasure to take and actually consume food; otherwise it would not have been taken after His resurrection by the Lord, who has given us such an example of the resurrection of the body, that the apostle argues from it: "If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised." But He, when He appeared

to His disciples, having all His members, and using them according to their functions, also pointed out to them the places where His wounds had been, regarding which I have always supposed that they were the scars, not the wounds themselves, and that they were there, not of necessity, but according to His free exercise of power. He gave at that time the clearest evidence of the ease with which He exercised this power, both by showing Himself in another form to the two disciples, and by His appearing, not as a spirit, but in His true body, to the disciples in the upper chamber, although the doors were shut.

8. From this arises the question as to angels, whether they have bodies adapted to their duties and their swift motions from place to place, or are only spirits? For if we say that they have bodies, we are met by the passage: “He maketh His angels spirits;” and if we say that they have not bodies, a still greater difficulty meets us in explaining how, if they are without bodily form, it is written that they appeared to the bodily senses of men, accepted offers of hospitality, permitted their feet to be washed, and used the meat and drink which was provided for them. For it seems to involve us in less difficulty, if we suppose that the angels are there called spirits in the same manner as men are called souls, e.g. in the statement that so many souls (not signifying that they had not bodies also) went down with Jacob into Egypt, than if we suppose that, without bodily form, all these things were done by angels. Again, a certain definite height is named in the Apocalypse as the stature of an angel, in dimensions which could apply only to bodies, proving that that which appeared to the eyes of men is to be explained, not as an illusion, but as resulting from the power which we have spoken of as easily put forth by spiritual bodies. But whether angels have bodies or not, and whether or not any one be able to show how without bodies they could do all these things, it is nevertheless certain, that in that city of the holy in which those of our race who have been redeemed by Christ shall be united for ever to thousands of angels, voices proceeding from organs of speech shall furnish expression to the thoughts of minds in which nothing is hidden; for in that divine fellowship it will not be possible for any thought in one to remain concealed from another, but there shall be complete harmony and oneness of heart in the praise of God, and this shall find

utterance not only from the spirit, but through the spiritual body as its instrument; this, at least, is what I believe.

9. Meanwhile, if you have already found or can learn from other teachers anything more fully agreeing with the truth than this, I am most eagerly longing to be instructed therein by you. Study carefully, if you please, my letter, in regard to which, as you pled in excuse for your very hurried reply the haste of the deacon who brought it to me, I do not make any complaint, but rather remind you of it, in order that what was then omitted in your answer may now be supplied. Look over it again, and observe what I wished to learn from you, both regarding your opinion concerning Christian retirement as a means to the acquisition and discussion of the truths of Christian wisdom, and regarding that retirement in which I supposed that you had found leisure, but in which it is reported to me that you are engrossed with occupation to an incredible extent.

May you, in whom the holy God has given us great joy and consolation, live mindful of us, and in true felicity. (This sentence is added by another hand.)

LETTER XCVI

(A.D. 408.)

To Olympius, My Lord Greatly Beloved, and My Son Worthy of Honour and Regard As a Member of Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. Whatever your rank may be in connection with the course of this world, I have the greatest confidence in addressing you as my much-loved, true-hearted Christian fellow-servant Olympius. For I know that this name, in your esteem, excels all other glorious and lofty titles. Reports have indeed reached me that you have obtained some promotion in worldly honour, but no information confirming the truth of the rumour had come to me up to the time when this opportunity of writing to you occurred. Since, however, I know that you have learned from the Lord not to mind high things, but to condescend to those who are lightly esteemed by men, whatever the pinnacle to which you may have been raised, we take for granted, my lord greatly beloved, and son worthy of honour and regard as a member of

Christ, that you will still make a letter from me welcome, just as you were wont to do. And as to your worldly prosperity, I do not doubt that you will wisely use it for your eternal gain; so that the greater the influence which you acquire in the commonwealth on this earth, the more will you devote yourself to the interests of the heavenly city to which you owe your birth in Christ, forasmuch as this shall be more abundantly repaid to you in the land of the living, and in the true peace which yields sure and endless joys.

2. I again commend to your kind consideration the petition of my brother and colleague Boniface, in the hope that what could not be done before may be in your power now. He might perhaps, indeed, legally retain, without any further difficulty, that which his predecessor had acquired, though under another name than his own, and which he had begun to possess in name of the church; but we do not wish, since his predecessor was in debt to the public exchequer, to have this burden upon our conscience. For that act of fraud was none the less truly fraud because perpetrated at the expense of the public revenue. The same Paul (the predecessor of Boniface), when he was made bishop, being about to surrender all his effects because of the accumulated burden of arrears due to the public exchequer, having secured payment of a bond by which a certain sum of money was due to him, bought with it, as if for the church, in the name of a family then very powerful, these few fields by the produce of which he might support himself, in order that, in respect to these also, after his old practice, he might escape annoyance at the hands of the collectors of the revenue, although he was paying no tax. Boniface, however, when ordained over the same church, on his death, hesitated to take the fields which he had thus held; and although he might have contented himself with asking from the emperor no more than a remission of the fiscal arrears which his predecessor had incurred on this small property, he preferred to confess without reserve that Paul had bought the property at an auction with money of his own, at a time when he was bankrupt as a debtor to the public revenue, so that now the Church may, if possible, obtain possession of this, not through the secret fraud of her bishop, but by an open act of the Christian emperor’s liberality. And if this be impossible, the servants of God prefer to bear the hardship of want, rather than obtain the supply of

that which they require under reproaches of conscience for dishonourable dealing.

3. I beg you to condescend to give your support to this petition, because he has resolved not to bring forward the decision in his favour which was formerly obtained, lest it should preclude him from the liberty of making a second application; for the answer then given fell short of what he desired. And now, since you are of the same kindly disposition that you formerly were, but possessed of greater influence, I do not despair of this being easily granted by the Lord’s help, in consideration of your claims on the emperor; and if even you were to ask the gift of the property in your own name, and present it to the church of which I have spoken, who would find fault with your request; nay, rather, who would not commend it, as dictated not by personal covetousness, but by Christian piety? May the mercy of the Lord our God shield you, and make you more and more happy in Christ, my lord and son.

LETTER XCVII

(A.D. 408.)

To Olympius, My Excellent and Justly Distinguished Lord, and My Son Worthy of Much Honour in Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Although, when we heard recently of your having obtained merited promotion to the highest rank, we felt persuaded, however uncertain we still were in some degree as to the truth of the report, that towards the Church of which we rejoice to know that you are truly a son, there was no other feeling in your mind than that which you have now made patent to us in your letter, nevertheless, having now read that letter in which you have been pleased of your own accord to send to us, when we were full of backwardness and diffidence, a most gracious exhortation to use our humble efforts in pointing out to you how the Lord, by whose gift you are thus powerful, may from time to time, by means of your pious obedience, bring assistance to His Church, we write to you with the more abundant confidence, my excellent and justly distinguished lord, and my son worthy of much honour in Christ.

2. Many brethren, indeed, holy men who are my colleagues, have, by reason of the troubles of the church here, gone—I might almost say as fugitives—to the emperor's most illustrious court; and these brethren you may have already seen, or may have received from Rome their letters, in connection with their respective occasions of appeal. I have not had it in my power to consult them before writing; nevertheless, I was unwilling to miss the opportunity of sending a letter by the bearer, my brother and fellow-presbyter, who has been compelled, though in mid-winter, to make the best of his way into those parts, under pressing necessity, in order to save the life of a fellow-citizen. I write, therefore, to salute you, and to charge you by the love which you have in Christ Jesus our Lord, to see that your good work be hastened on with the utmost diligence, in order that the enemies of the Church may know that those laws concerning the demolition of idols and the correction of heretics which were sent into Africa while Stilicho yet lived, were framed by the desire of our most pious and faithful emperor; for they either cunningly boast, or unwillingly imagine that this was done without his knowledge, or against his will, and thus they render the minds of the ignorant full of seditious violence, and excite them to dangerous and vehement enmity against us.

3. I do not doubt that, in submitting this in the way of petition or respectful suggestion to the consideration of your Excellency, I act agreeably to the wishes of all my colleagues throughout Africa; and I think that it is your duty to take measures, as could be easily done, on whatever opportunity may first arise, to make it understood by these vain men (whose salvation we seek, although they resist us), that it was to the care, not of Stilicho, but of the son of Theodosius, that those laws which have been sent into Africa for the defence of the Church of Christ owed their promulgation. On account of these things, then, the presbyter whom I have mentioned already, the bearer of this letter, who is from the district of Milevi, was ordered by his bishop, the venerable Severus, who joins me in cordial salutations to you, whose love we esteem most genuine, to pass through Hippo-regius, where I am; because, when we happened to meet together in time of serious tribulation and distress to the Church, we sought an opportunity of writing to your Highness, but found none. I had indeed already sent one letter in regard to the business of our holy brother and colleague Boniface, bishop of

Cataqua; but the heavier calamities destined to cause us greater agitation had not then befallen us, regarding which, and the means whereby something may be done with the best counsel for their prevention or punishment, according to the method of Christ, the bishops who have sailed hence on that errand will be able more conveniently to confer with you, in whose cordial goodwill towards us we rejoice, inasmuch as they are able to report to you something which has been, so far as limited time permitted, the result of careful and united consultation. But as to this other matter, namely, that the province be made to know how the mind of our most gracious and religious emperor stands towards the Church, I recommend, nay, I beg, beseech, and implore you, to take care that no time be lost, but that its accomplishment be hastened, even before you see the bishops who have gone from us, so soon as shall be possible for you, in the exercise of your most eminent vigilance on behalf of the members of Christ who are now in circumstances of the utmost danger; for the Lord has provided no small consolation for us under these trials, seeing that it has pleased Him to put much more now than formerly in your power, although we were already filled with joy by the number and the magnitude of your good offices.

4. We rejoice much in the firm and stedfast faith of some, and these not few in number, who by means of these laws have been converted to the Christian religion, or from schism to Catholic peace, for whose eternal welfare we are glad to run the risk of forfeiting temporal welfare. For on this account especially we now have to endure at the hands of men, exceedingly and obdurately perverse, more grievous assaults of enmity, which some of them, along with us, bear most patiently; but we are in very great fear because of their weakness, until they learn, and are enabled by the help of the Lord’s most compassionate grace, to despise with more abundant strength of spirit the present world and man’s short day. May it please your Highness to deliver the letter of instructions which I have sent to my brethren the bishops when they come, if, as I suppose, they have not yet reached you. For we have such confidence in the unfeigned devotion of your heart, that with the Lord’s help we desire to have you not only giving us your assistance, but also participating in our consultations.

LETTER XCVIII

(A.D. 408.)

To Boniface, His Colleague in the Episcopal Office, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. You ask me to state “whether parents do harm to their baptized infant children, when they attempt to heal them in time of sickness by sacrifices to the false gods of the heathen.” Also, “if they do thereby no harm to their children, how can any advantage come to these children at their baptism, through the faith of parents whose departure from the faith does them no harm?” To which I reply, that in the holy union of the parts of the body of Christ, so great is the virtue of that sacrament, namely, of baptism, which brings salvation, that so soon as he who owed his first birth to others, acting under the impulse of natural instincts, has been made partaker of the second birth by others, acting under the impulse of spiritual desires, he cannot be thenceforward held under the bond of that sin in another to which he does not with his own will consent. “Both the soul of the father is mine,” saith the Lord, “and the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die;” but he does not sin on whose behalf his parents or any other one resort, without his knowledge, to the impiety of worshipping heathen deities. That bond of guilt which was to be cancelled by the grace of this sacrament he derived from Adam, for this reason, that at the time of Adam’s sin he was not yet a soul having a separate life, i.e. another soul regarding which it could be said, “both the soul of the father is mine, and the soul of the son is mine.” Therefore now, when the man has a personal, separate existence, being thereby made distinct from his parents, he is not held responsible for that sin in another which is performed without his consent. In the former case, he derived guilt from another, because, at the time when the guilt which he has derived was incurred, he was one with the person from whom he derived it, and was in him. But one man does not derive guilt from another, when, through the fact that each has a separate life belonging to himself, the word may apply equally to both—”The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”

2. But the possibility of regeneration through the office rendered by the will of another, when the child is presented to receive the sacred rite, is the work

exclusively of the Spirit by whom the child thus presented is regenerated. For it is not written, “Except a man be born again by the will of his parents, or by the faith of those presenting the child, or of those administering the ordinance,” but, “Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit.” By the water, therefore, which holds forth the sacrament of grace in its outward form, and by the Spirit who bestows the benefit of grace in its inward power, cancelling the bond of guilt, and restoring natural goodness [reconcilians bonum naturae], the man deriving his first birth originally from Adam alone, is regenerated in Christ alone. Now the regenerating Spirit is possessed in common both by the parents who present the child, and by the infant that is presented and is born again; wherefore, in virtue of this participation in the same Spirit, the will of those who present the infant is useful to the child. But when the parents sin against the child by presenting him to the false gods of the heathen, and attempting to bring him under impious bonds unto these false gods, there is not such community of souls subsisting between the parents and the child, that the guilt of one party can be common to both alike. For we are not made partakers of guilt along with others through their will, in the same way as we are made partakers of grace along with others through the unity of the Holy Spirit; because the one Holy Spirit can be in two different persons without their knowing in respect to each other that by Him grace is the common possession of both, but the human spirit cannot so belong to two individuals as to make the blame common to both in a case in which one of the two sins, and the other does not sin. Therefore a child, having once received natural birth through his parents, can be made partaker of the second (or spiritual) birth by the Spirit of God, so that the bond of guilt which he inherited from his parents is cancelled; but he that has once received this second birth by the Spirit of God cannot be made again partaker of natural birth through his parents, so that the bond once cancelled should again bind him. And thus, when the grace of Christ has been once received, the child does not lose it otherwise than by his own impiety, if, when he becomes older, he turn out so ill. For by that time he will begin to have sins of his own, which cannot be removed by regeneration, but must be healed by other remedial measures.

3. Nevertheless, persons of more advanced fears, whether they be parents bringing their children, or others bringing any little ones, who attempt to place those who have been baptized under obligation to profane worship of heathen gods, are guilty of spiritual homicide. True, they do not actually kill the children’s souls, but they go as far towards killing them as is in their power. The warning, “Do not kill your little ones,” may be with all propriety addressed to them; for the apostle says, “Quench not the Spirit;” not that He can be quenched, but that those who so act as if they wished to have Him quenched are deservedly spoken of as quenchers of the Spirit. In this sense also may be rightly understood the words which most blessed Cyprian wrote in his letter concerning the lapsed, when, rebuking those who in the time of persecution had sacrificed to idols, he says, “And that nothing might be wanting to fill up the measure of their crime, their infant children, carried in arms, or led thither by the hands of their parents, lost, while yet in their infancy, that which they had received as soon as life began.” They lost it, he meant, so far at least as pertained to the guilt of the crime of those by whom they were compelled to incur the loss: they lost it, that is to say, in the purpose and wish of those who perpetrated on them such a wrong. For had they actually in their own persons lost it, they must have remained under the divine sentence of condemnation without any plea; but if holy Cyprian had been of this opinion, he would not have added in the immediate context a plea in their defence, saying, “Shall not these say, when the judgment-day has come: We have done nothing; we have not of our own accord hastened to participate in profane rites, forsaking the bread and the cup of the Lord; the apostasy of others caused our destruction; we found our parents murderers, for they deprived us of our Mother the Church and of our Father the Lord, so that, through the wrong done by others, we were ensnared, because, while yet young and unable to think for ourselves, we were by the deed of others, and while wholly ignorant of such a crime, made partners in their sin’?” This plea in their defence he would not have subjoined had he not believed it to be perfectly just, and one which would be of service to these infants at the bar of divine judgment. For if it is said by them with truth, “We have done nothing,” then “the soul that sinneth, it shall die;” and in the just dispensation of judgment by God, those shall not be doomed to perish whose souls their parents did, so far at least as concerns their own guilt in the transaction, bring to ruin.

4. As to the incident mentioned in the same letter, that a girl who was left as an infant in charge of her nurse, when her parents had escaped by sudden flight, and was made by that nurse to take part in the profane rites of idolatrous worship, had afterwards in the Church expelled from her mouth, by wonderful motions, the Eucharist when it was given to her, this seems to me to have been caused by divine interposition, in order that persons of riper years might not imagine that in this sin they do no wrong to the children, but rather might understand, by means of a bodily action of obvious significance on the part of those who were unable to speak, that a miraculous warning was given to themselves as to the course which would have been becoming in persons who, after so great a crime, rushed heedlessly to those sacraments from which they ought by all means, in proof of penitence, to have abstained. When Divine Providence does anything of this kind by means of infant children, we must not believe that they are acting under the guidance of knowledge and reason; just as we are not called upon to admire the wisdom of asses, because once God was pleased to rebuke the madness of a prophet by the voice of an ass. If, therefore, a sound exactly like the human voice was uttered by an irrational animal, and this was to be ascribed to a divine miracle, not to faculties belonging to the ass, the Almighty could, in like manner, through the spirit of an infant (in which reason was not absent, but only slumbering undeveloped), make manifest by a motion of its body something to which those who had sinned against both their own souls and their children behoved to give heed. But since a child cannot return to become again a part of the author of his natural life, so as to be one with him and in him, but is a wholly distinct individual, having a body and a soul of his own, “the soul that sinneth, it shall die.”

5. Some, indeed, bring their little ones for baptism, not in the believing expectation that they shall be regenerated unto life eternal by spiritual grace, but because they think that by this as a remedy the children may recover or retain bodily health; but let not this disquiet your mind, because their regeneration is not prevented by the fact that this blessing has no place in the intention of those by whom they are presented for baptism. For by these persons the ministerial actions which are necessary are performed, and the sacramental words are pronounced, without which the infant cannot

be consecrated to God. But the Holy Spirit who dwells in the saints, in those, namely, whom the glowing flame of love has fused together into the one Dove whose wings are covered with silver, accomplishes His work even by the ministry of bond-servants, of persons who are sometimes not only ignorant through simplicity, but even culpably unworthy to be employed by Him. The presentation of the little ones to receive the spiritual grace is the act not so much of those by whose hands they are borne up (although it is theirs also in part, if they themselves are good believers) as of the whole society of saints and believers. For it is proper to regard the infants as presented by all who take pleasure in their baptism, and through whose holy and perfectly-united love they are assisted in receiving the communion of the Holy Spirit. Therefore this is done by the whole mother Church, which is in the saints, because the whole Church is the parent of all the saints, and the whole Church is the parent of each one of them. For if the sacrament of Christian baptism, being always one and the same, is of value even when administered by heretics, and though not in that case sufficing to secure to the baptized person participation in eternal life, does suffice to seal his consecration to God; and if this consecration makes him who, having the mark of the Lord, remains outside of the Lord's flock, guilty as a heretic, but reminds us at the same time that he is to be corrected by sound doctrine, but not to be a second time consecrated by repetition of the ordinance;—if this be the case even in the baptism of heretics, how much more credible is it that within the Catholic Church that which is only straw should be of service in bearing the grain to the floor in which it is to be winnowed, and by means of which it is to be prepared for being added to the heap of good grain!

6. I would, moreover, wish you not to remain under the mistake of supposing that the bond of guilt which is inherited from Adam cannot be cancelled in any other way than by the parents themselves presenting their little ones to receive the grace of Christ; for you write: "As the parents have been the authors of the life which makes them liable to condemnation, the children should receive justification through the same channel, through the faith of the same parents;" whereas you see that many are not presented by parents, but also by any strangers whatever, as sometimes the infant children of slaves are presented by their masters. Sometimes also, when

their parents are deceased, little orphans are baptized, being presented by those who had it in their power to manifest their compassion in this way. Again, sometimes foundlings which heartless parents have exposed in order to their being cared for by any passer-by, are picked up by holy virgins, and are presented for baptism by these persons, who neither have nor desire to have children of their own: and in this you behold precisely what was done in the case mentioned in the Gospel of the man wounded by thieves, and left half dead on the way, regarding whom the Lord asked who was neighbour to him, and received for answer: “He that showed mercy on him.”

7. That which you have placed at the end of your series of questions you have judged to be the most difficult, because of the jealous care with which you are wont to avoid whatever is false. You state it thus: “If I place before you an infant, and ask, Will this child when he grows up be chaste?’ or Will he not be a thief?’ you will reply, I know not.’ If I ask, Is he in his present infantile condition thinking what is good or thinking what is evil?’ you will reply, I know not.’ If, therefore, you do not venture to take the responsibility of making any positive statement concerning either his conduct in after life or his thoughts at the time, what is that which parents do, when, in presenting their children for baptism, they as sureties (or sponsors) answer for the children, and say that they do that which at that age they are incapable even of understanding, or, at least, in regard to which their thoughts (if they can think) are hidden from us? For we ask those by whom the child is presented, Does he believe in God?’ and though at that age the child does not so much as know that there is a God, the sponsors reply, He believes;’ and in like manner answer is returned by them to each of the other questions. Now I am surprised that parents can in these things answer so confidently on the child’s behalf as to say, at the time when they are answering the questions of the persons administering baptism, that the infant is doing what is so remarkable and so excellent; and yet if at the same hour I were to add such questions as, Will the child who is now being baptized be chaste when he grows up? Will he not be a thief?’ probably no one would presume to answer, He will’ or He will not,’ although there is no hesitation in giving the answer that the child believes in God, and turns himself to God.” Thereafter you add this sentence in conclusion: “To these

questions I pray you to condescend to give me a short reply, not silencing me by the traditional authority of custom, but satisfying me by arguments addressed to my reason."

8. While reading this letter of yours over and over again, and pondering its contents so far as my limited time permitted, memory recalled to me my friend Nebridius, who, while he was a most diligent and eager student of difficult problems, especially in the department of Christian doctrine, had an extreme aversion to the giving of a short answer to a great question. If any one insisted upon this, he was exceedingly displeased; and if he was not prevented by respect for the age or rank of the person, he indignantly rebuked such a questioner by stern looks and words; for he considered him unworthy to be investigating matters such as these, who did not know how much both might be said and behoved to be said on a subject of great importance. But I do not lose patience with you, as he was wont to do when one asked a brief reply; for you are, as I am, a bishop engrossed with many cares, and therefore have not leisure for reading any more than I have leisure for writing any prolix communication. He was then a young man, who was not satisfied with short statements on subjects of this kind, and being then himself at leisure, addressed his questions concerning the many topics discussed in our conversations to one who was also at leisure; whereas you, having regard to the circumstances both of yourself the questioner, and of me from whom you demand the reply, insist upon my giving you a short answer to the weighty question which you propound. Well, I shall do my best to satisfy you; the Lord help me to accomplish what you require.

9. You know that in ordinary parlance we often say, when Easter is approaching, "Tomorrow or the day after is the Lord's Passion," although He suffered so many years ago, and His passion was endured once for all time. In like manner, on Easter Sunday, we say, "This day the Lord rose from the dead," although so many years have passed since His resurrection. But no one is so foolish as to accuse us of falsehood when we use these phrases, for this reason, that we give such names to these days on the ground of a likeness between them and the days on which the events referred to actually transpired, the day being called the day of that event,

although it is not the very day on which the event took place, but one corresponding to it by the revolution of the same time of the year, and the event itself being said to take place on that day, because, although it really took place long before, it is on that day sacramentally celebrated. Was not Christ once for all offered up in His own person as a sacrifice? and yet, is He not likewise offered up in the sacrament as a sacrifice, not only in the special solemnities of Easter, but also daily among our congregations; so that the man who, being questioned, answers that He is offered as a sacrifice in that ordinance, declares what is strictly true? For if sacraments had not some points of real resemblance to the things of which they are the sacraments, they would not be sacraments at all. In most cases, moreover, they do in virtue of this likeness bear the names of the realities which they resemble. As, therefore, in a certain manner the sacrament of Christ's body is Christ's body, and the sacrament of Christ's blood is Christ's blood, in the same manner the sacrament of faith is faith. Now believing is nothing else than having faith; and accordingly, when, on behalf of an infant as yet incapable of exercising faith, the answer is given that he believes, this answer means that he has faith because of the sacrament of faith, and in like manner the answer is made that he turns himself to God because of the sacrament of conversion, since the answer itself belongs to the celebration of the sacrament. Thus the apostle says, in regard to this sacrament of Baptism: "We are buried with Christ by baptism into death." He does not say, "We have signified our being buried with Him," but "We have been buried with Him." He has therefore given to the sacrament pertaining to so great a transaction no other name than the word describing the transaction itself.

10. Therefore an infant, although he is not yet a believer in the sense of having that faith which includes the consenting will of those who exercise it, nevertheless becomes a believer through the sacrament of that faith. For as it is answered that he believes, so also he is called a believer, not because he assents to the truth by an act of his own judgment, but because he receives the sacrament of that truth. When, however, he begins to have the discretion of manhood, he will not repeat the sacrament, but understand its meaning, and become conformed to the truth which it contains, with his will also consenting. During the time in which he is by reason of youth

unable to do this, the sacrament will avail for his protection against adverse powers, and will avail so much on his behalf, that if before he arrives at the use of reason he depart from this life, he is delivered by Christian help, namely, by the love of the Church commending him through this sacrament unto God, from that condemnation which by one man entered into the world. He who does not believe this, and thinks that it is impossible, is assuredly an unbeliever, although he may have received the sacrament of faith; and far before him in merit is the infant which, though not yet possessing a faith helped by the understanding, is not obstructing faith by any antagonism of the understanding, and therefore receives with profit the sacrament of faith.

I have answered your questions, as it seems to me, in a manner which, if I were dealing with persons of weaker capacity and disposed to gainsaying, would be inadequate, but which is perhaps more than sufficient to satisfy peaceable and sensible persons. Moreover, I have not urged in my defence the mere fact that the custom is thoroughly established, but have to the best of my ability advanced reasons in support of it as fraught with very abundant blessing.

LETTER XCIX

(A.D. 408 OR BEGINNING OF 409.)

To the Very Devout Italica, an Handmaid of God, Praised Justly and Piously by the Members of Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Up to the time of my writing this reply, I had received three letters from your Grace, of which the first asked urgently a letter from me, the second intimated that what I wrote in answer had reached you, and the third, which conveyed the assurance of your most benevolent solicitude for our interest in the matter of the house belonging to that most illustrious and distinguished young man Julian, which is in immediate contact with the walls of our Church. To this last letter, just now received, I lose no time in promptly replying, because your Excellency’s agent has written to me that he can send my letter without delay to Rome. By his letter we have been greatly distressed, because he has taken pains to acquaint us with the things

which are taking place in the city (Rome) or around its walls, so as to give us reliable information concerning that which we were reluctant to believe on the authority of vague rumours. In the letters which were sent to us previously by our brethren, tidings were given to us of events, vexatious and grievous, it is true, but much less calamitous than those of which we now hear. I am surprised beyond expression that my brethren the holy bishops did not write to me when so favourable an opportunity of sending a letter by your messengers occurred, and that your own letter conveyed to us no information concerning such painful tribulation as has befallen you,—tribulation which, by reason of the tender sympathies of Christian charity, is ours as well as yours. I suppose, however, that you deemed it better not to mention these sorrows, because you considered that this could do no good, or because you did not wish to make us sad by your letter. But in my opinion, it does some good to acquaint us even with such events as these: in the first place, because it is not right to be ready to "rejoice with them that rejoice," but refuse to "weep with them that weep;" and in the second place, because "tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

2. Far be it, therefore, from us to refuse to hear even of the bitter and sorrowful things which befall those who are very dear to us! For in some way which I cannot explain, the pain suffered by one member is mitigated when all the other members suffer with it. And this mitigation is effected not by actual participation in the calamity, but by the solacing power of love; for although only some suffer the actual burden of the affliction, and the others share their suffering through knowing what these have to bear, nevertheless the tribulation is borne in common by them all, seeing that they have in common the same experience, hope, and love, and the same Divine Spirit. Moreover, the Lord provides consolation for us all, inasmuch as He hath both forewarned us of these temporal afflictions, and promised to us after them eternal blessings; and the soldier who desires to receive a crown when the conflict is over, ought not to lose courage while the conflict lasts, since He who is preparing rewards ineffable for those who overcome, does Himself minister strength to them while they are on the field to battle.

3. Let not what I have now written take away your confidence in writing to me, especially since the reason which may be pled for your endeavouring to lessen our fears is one which cannot be condemned. We salute in return your little children, and we desire that they may be spared to you, and may grow up in Christ, since they discern even in their present tender age how dangerous and baneful is the love of this world. God grant that the plants which are small and still flexible may be bent in the right direction in a time in which the great and hardy are being shaken. As to the house of which you speak, what can I say beyond expressing my gratitude for your very kind solicitude? For the house which we can give they do not wish; and the house which they wish we cannot give, for it was not left to the church by my predecessor, as they have been falsely informed, but is one of the ancient properties of the church, and it is attached to the one ancient church in the same way as the house about which this question has been raised is attached to the other.

LETTER C

(A.D. 409.)

To Donatus His Noble and Deservedly Honourable Lord, and Eminently Praiseworthy Son, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I would indeed that the African Church were not placed in such trying circumstances as to need the aid of any earthly power. But since, as the apostle says, “there is no power but of God,” it is unquestionable that, when by you the sincere sons of your Catholic Mother help is given to her, our help is in the name of the Lord, “who made heaven and earth.” For oh, noble and deservedly honourable lord, and eminently praiseworthy son, who does not perceive that in the midst of so great calamities no small consolation has been bestowed upon us by God, in that you, such a man, and so devoted to the name of Christ, have been raised to the dignity of proconsul, so that power allied with your goodwill may restrain the enemies of the Church from their wicked and sacrilegious attempts? In fact, there is only one thing of which we are much afraid in your administration of justice, viz., lest perchance, seeing that every injury done by impious and ungrateful men against the Christian society is a more serious and heinous

crime than if it had been done against others, you should on this ground consider that it ought to be punished with a severity corresponding to the enormity of the crime, and not with the moderation which is suitable to Christian forbearance. We beseech you, in the name of Jesus Christ, not to act in this manner. For we do not seek to revenge ourselves in this world; nor ought the things which we suffer to reduce us to such distress of mind as to leave no room in our memory for the precepts in regard to this which we have received from Him for whose truth and in whose name we suffer; we “love our enemies,” and we “pray for them.” It is not their death, but their deliverance from error, that we seek to accomplish by the help of the terror of judges and of laws, whereby they may be preserved from falling under the penalty of eternal judgment; we do not wish either to see the exercise of discipline towards them neglected, or, on the other hand, to see them subjected to the severer punishments which they deserve. Do you, therefore, check their sins in such a way, that the sinners may be spared to repent of their sins.

2. We beg you, therefore, when you are pronouncing judgment in cases affecting the Church, how wicked soever the injuries may be which you shall ascertain to have been attempted or inflicted on the Church, to forget that you have the power of capital punishment, and not to forget our request. Nor let it appear to you an unimportant matter and beneath your notice, my most beloved and honoured son, that we ask you to spare the lives of the men on whose behalf we ask God to grant them repentance. For even granting that we ought never to deviate from a fixed purpose of overcoming evil with good, let your own wisdom take this also into consideration, that no person beyond those who belong to the Church is at pains to bring before you cases pertaining to her interests. If, therefore, your opinion be, that death must be the punishment of men convicted of these crimes, you will deter us from endeavouring to bring anything of this kind before your tribunal; and this being discovered, they will proceed with more unrestrained boldness to accomplish speedily our destruction, when upon us is imposed and enjoined the necessity of choosing rather to suffer death at their hands, than to bring them to death by accusing them at your bar. Disdain not, I beseech you, to accept this suggestion, petition, and entreaty from me. For I do not think that you are unmindful that I might have great

boldness in addressing you, even were I not a bishop, and even though your rank were much above what you now hold. Meanwhile, let the Donatist heretics learn at once through the edict of your Excellency that the laws passed against their error, which they suppose and boastfully declare to be repealed, are still in force, although even when they know this they may not be able to refrain in the least degree from injuring us. You will, however, most effectively help us to secure the fruit of our labours and dangers, if you take care that the imperial laws for the restraining of their sect, which is full of conceit and of impious pride, be so used that they may not appear either to themselves or to others to be suffering hardship in any form for the sake of truth and righteousness; but suffer them, when this is requested at your hands, to be convinced and instructed by incontrovertible proofs of things which are most certain, in public proceedings in the presence of your Excellency or of inferior judges, in order that those who are arrested by your command may themselves incline their stubborn will to the better part, and may read these things profitably to others of their party. For the pains bestowed are burdensome rather than really useful, when men are only compelled, not persuaded by instruction, to forsake a great evil and lay hold upon a great benefit.

LETTER CI

(A.D. 409.)

To Memor, My Lord Most Blessed, and with All Veneration Most Beloved, My Brother and Colleague Sincerely Longed For, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I ought not to write any letter to your holy Charity, without sending at the same time those books which by the irresistible plea of holy love you have demanded from me, that at least by this act of obedience I might reply to those letters by which you have put on me a high honour indeed, but also a heavy load. Albeit, while I bend because of the load, I am raised up because of your love. For it is not by an ordinary man that I am loved and raised up and made to stand erect, but by a man who is a priest of the Lord, and whom I know to be so accepted before Him, that when you raise to the Lord your good heart, having me in your heart, you raise me with yourself to

Him. I ought, therefore, to have sent at this time those books which I had promised to revise. The reason why I have not sent them is that I have not revised them, and this not because I was unwilling, but because I was unable, having been occupied with many very urgent cares. But it would have shown inexcusable ingratitude and hardness of heart to have permitted the bearer, my holy colleague and brother Possidius, in whom you will find one who is very much the same as myself, either to miss becoming acquainted with you, who love me so much, or to come to know you without any letter from me. For he is one who has been by my labours nourished, not in those studies which men who are the slaves of every kind of passion call liberal, but with the Lord's bread, in so far as this could be supplied to him from my scanty store.

2. For to men who, though they are unjust and impious, imagine that they are well educated in the liberal arts, what else ought we to say than what we read in those writings which truly merit the name of liberal,—"if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." For it is through Him that men come to know, even in those studies which are termed liberal by those who have not been called to this true liberty, anything in them which deserves the name. For they have nothing which is consonant with liberty, except that which in them is consonant with truth; for which reason the Son Himself hath said: "The truth shall make you free." The freedom which is our privilege has therefore nothing in common with the innumerable and impious fables with which the verses of silly poets are full, nor with the fulsome and highly-polished falsehoods of their orators, nor, in fine, with the rambling subtleties of philosophers themselves, who either did not know anything of God, or when they knew God, did not glorify Him as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; so that, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts, and to creeping things, or who, though not wholly or at all devoted to the worship of images, nevertheless worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator. Far be it, therefore, from us to admit that the epithet liberal is justly bestowed on the lying vanities and hallucinations, or empty trifles and conceited errors of those men—unhappy men, who knew not the grace of

God in Christ Jesus our Lord, by which alone we are “delivered from the body of this death,” and who did not even perceive the measure of truth which was in the things which they knew. Their historical works, the writers of which profess to be chiefly concerned to be accurate in narrating events, may perhaps, I grant, contain some things worthy of being known by “free” men, since the narration is true, whether the subject described in it be the good or the evil in human experience. At the same time, I can by no means see how men who were not aided in their knowledge by the Holy Spirit, and who were obliged to gather floating rumours under the limitations of human infirmity, could avoid being misled in regard to very many things; nevertheless, if they have no intention of deceiving, and do not mislead other men otherwise than so far as they have themselves, through human infirmity, fallen into a mistake, there is in such writings an approach to liberty.

3. Forasmuch, however, as the powers belonging to numbers in all kinds of movements are most easily studied as they are presented in sounds, and this study furnishes a way of rising to the higher secrets of truth, by paths gradually ascending, so to speak, in which Wisdom pleasantly reveals herself, and in every step of providence meets those who love her, desired, when I began to have leisure for study, and my mind was not engaged by greater and more important cares, to exercise myself by writing those books which you have requested me to send. I then wrote six books on rhythm alone, and proposed, I may add, to write other six on music, as I at that time expected to have leisure. But from the time that the burden of ecclesiastical cares was laid upon me, all these recreations have passed from my hand so completely, that now, when I cannot but respect your wish and command,—for it is more than a request,—I have difficulty in even finding what I had written. If, however, I had it in my power to send you that treatise, it would occasion regret, not to me that I had obeyed your command, but to you that you had so urgently insisted upon its being sent. For five books of it are all but unintelligible, unless one be at hand who can in reading not only distinguish the part belonging to each of those between whom the discussion is maintained, but also mark by enunciation the time which the syllables should occupy, so that their distinctive measures may be expressed and strike the ear, especially because in some places there occur pauses of

measured length, which of course must escape notice, unless the reader inform the hearer of them by intervals of silence where they occur.

The sixth book, however, which I have found already revised, and in which the product of the other five is contained, I have not delayed to send to your Charity; it may, perhaps, be not wholly unsuited to one of your venerable age. As to the other five books, they seem to me scarcely worthy of being known and read by Julian, our son, and now our colleague, for, as a deacon, he is engaged in the same warfare with ourselves. Of him I dare not say, for it would not be true, that I love him more than I love you; yet this I may say, that I long for him more than for you. It may seem strange, that when I love both equally, I long more ardently for the one than the other; but the cause of the difference is, that I have greater hope of seeing him; for I think that if ordered or sent by you he come to us, he will both be doing what is suitable to one of his years, especially as he is not yet hindered by weightier responsibilities, and he will more speedily bring yourself to me.

I have not stated in this treatise the kinds of metre in which the lines of David's Psalms are composed, because I do not know them. For it was not possible for any one, in translating these from the Hebrew (of which language I know nothing), to preserve the metre at the same time, lest by the exigencies of the measure he should be compelled to depart from accurate translation further than was consistent with the meaning of the sentences. Nevertheless, I believe, on the testimony of those who are acquainted with that language, that they are composed in certain varieties of metre; for that holy man loved sacred music, and has more than any other kindled in me a passion for its study.

May the shadow of the wings of the Most High be for ever the dwelling-place of you all, who with oneness of heart occupy one home, father and mother, bound in the same brotherhood with your sons, being all the children of the one Father. Remember us.

LETTER CII

(A.D. 409.)

To Deogratias, My Brother in All Sincerity, and My Fellow-Presbyter, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. In choosing to refer to me questions which were submitted to yourself for solution, you have not done so, I suppose, from indolence, but because, loving me more than I deserve, you prefer to hear through me even those things which you already know quite well. I would rather, however, that the answers were given by yourself, because the friend who proposed the questions seems to be shy of following advice from me, if I may judge from the fact that he has written no reply to a letter of mine, for what reason he knows best. I suspect this, however, and there is neither ill-will nor absurdity in the suspicion; for you also know very well how much I love him, and how great is my grief that he is not yet a Christian; and it is not unreasonable to think that one whom I see unwilling to answer my letters is not willing to have anything written by me to him. I therefore implore you to comply with a request of mine, seeing that I have been obedient to you, and, notwithstanding most engrossing duties, have feared to disappoint the wish of one so dear to me by declining to comply with your request. What I ask is this, that you do not refuse yourself to give an answer to all his questions, seeing that, as you have told me, he begged this from you; and it is a task to which, even before receiving this letter, you were competent; for when you have read this letter, you will see that scarcely anything has been said by me which you did not already know, or which you could not have come to know though I had been silent. This work of mine, therefore, I beg you to keep for the use of yourself and of all other persons whose desire for instruction you deem it suited to satisfy. But as for the treatise of your own composition which I demand from you, give it to him to whom this treatise is most specially adapted, and not to him only, but also all others who find exceedingly acceptable such statements concerning these things as you are able to make, among whom I number myself. May you live always in Christ, and remember me.

2. Question I. Concerning the resurrection. This question perplexes some, and they ask, Which of two kinds of resurrection corresponds to that which is promised to us? is it that of Christ, or that of Lazarus? They say, “If the former, how can this correspond with the resurrection of those who have

been born by ordinary generations, seeing that He was not thus born? If, on the other hand, the resurrection of Lazarus is said to correspond to ours, here also there seems to be a discrepancy, since the resurrection of Lazarus was accomplished in the case of a body not yet dissolved, but the same body in which he was known by the name of Lazarus; whereas ours is to be rescued after many centuries from the mass in which it has ceased to be distinguishable from other things. Again, if our state after the resurrection is one of blessedness, in which the body shall be exempt from every kind of wound, and from the pain of hunger, what is meant by the statement that Christ took food, and showed his wounds after His resurrection? For if He did it to convince the doubting, when the wounds were not real, He practised on them a deception; whereas, if He showed them what was real, it follows that wounds received by the body shall remain in the state which is to ensue after resurrection."

3. To this I answer, that the resurrection of Christ and not of Lazarus corresponds to that which is promised, because Lazarus was so raised that he died a second time, whereas of Christ it is written: "Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him." The same is promised to those who shall rise at the end of the world, and shall reign for ever with Christ. As to the difference in the manner of Christ's generation and that of other men, this has no bearing upon the nature of His resurrection, just as it had none upon the nature of His death, so as to make it different from ours. His death was not the less real because of His not having been begotten by an earthly father; just as the difference between the mode of the origination of the body of the first man, who was formed immediately from the dust of the earth, and of our bodies, which we derive from our parents, made no such difference as that his death should be of another kind than ours. As, therefore, difference in the mode of birth does not make any difference in the nature of death, neither does it make any difference in the nature of resurrection.

4. But lest the men who doubt this should, with similar scepticism, refuse to accept as true what is written concerning the first man's creation, let them inquire or observe, if they can at least believe this, how numerous are the species of animals which are born from the earth without deriving their life

from parents, but which by ordinary procreation reproduce offspring like themselves, and in which, notwithstanding the different mode of origination, the nature of the parents born from the earth and of the offspring born from them is the same; for they live alike and they die alike, although born in different ways. There is therefore no absurdity in the statement that bodies dissimilar in their origination are alike in their resurrection. But men of this kind, not being competent to discern in what respect any diversity between things affects or does not affect them, so soon as they discover any unlikeness between things in their original formation, contend that in all that follows the same unlikeness must still exist. Such men may as reasonably suppose that oil made from fat should not float on the surface in water as olive oil does, because the origin of the two oils is so different, the one being from the fruit of a tree, the other from the flesh of an animal.

5. Again, as to the alleged difference in regard to the resurrection of Christ's body and of ours, that His was raised on the third day not dissolved by decay and corruption, whereas ours shall be fashioned again after a long time, and out of the mass into which undistinguished they shall have been resolved,—both of these things are impossible for man to do, but to divine power both are most easy. For as the glance of the eye does not come more quickly to objects which are at hand, and more slowly to objects more remote, but darts to either distance with equal swiftness, so, when the resurrection of the dead is accomplished "in the twinkling of an eye," it is as easy for the omnipotence of God and for the ineffable expression of His will to raise again bodies which have by long lapse of time been dissolved, as to raise those which have recently fallen under the stroke of death. These things are to some men incredible because they transcend their experience, although all nature is full of wonders so numerous, that they do not seem to us to be wonderful, and are therefore accounted unworthy of attentive study or investigation, not because our faculties can easily comprehend them, but because we are so accustomed to see them. For myself, and for all who along with me labour to understand the invisible things of God by means of the things which are made, I may say that we are filled not less, perhaps even more, with wonder by the fact, that in one grain of seed, so insignificant, there lies bound up as it were all that we praise in the stately

tree, than by the fact that the bosom of this earth, so vast, shall restore entire and perfect to the future resurrection all those elements of human bodies which it is now receiving when they are dissolved.

6. Again, what contradiction is there between the fact that Christ partook of food after His resurrection, and the doctrine that in the promised resurrection-state there shall be no need of food, when we read that angels also have partaken of food of the same kind and in the same way, not in empty and illusive simulation, but in unquestionable reality; not, however, under the pressure of necessity, but in the free exercise of their power? For water is absorbed in one way by the thirsting earth, in another way by the glowing sunbeams; in the former we see the effect of poverty, in the latter of power. Now the body of that future resurrection-state shall be imperfect in its felicity if it be incapable of taking food; imperfect, also, if, on the other hand, it be dependent on food. I might here enter on a fuller discussion concerning the changes possible in the qualities of bodies, and the dominion which belongs to higher bodies over those which are of inferior nature; but I have resolved to make my reply short, and I write this for mind so endowed that the simple suggestion of the truth is enough for them.

7. Let him who proposed these questions know by all means that Christ did, after His resurrection, show the scars of His wounds, not the wounds themselves, to disciples who doubted; for whose sake, also, it pleased Him to take food and drink more than once, lest they should suppose that His body was not real, but that He was a spirit, appearing to them as a phantom, and not a substantial form. These scars would indeed have been mere illusive appearances if no wounds had gone before; yet even the scars would not have remained if He had willed it otherwise. But it pleased Him to retain them with a definite purpose, namely, that to those whom He was building up in faith unfeigned He might show that one body had not been substituted for another, but that the body which they had seen nailed to the cross had risen again. What reason is there, then, for saying, “If He did this to convince the doubting, He practised a deception”? Suppose that a brave man, who had received many wounds in confronting the enemy when fighting for his country, were to say to a physician of extraordinary skill,

who was able so to heal these wounds as to leave not a scar visible, that he would prefer to be healed in such a way that the traces of the wounds should remain on his body as tokens of the honours he had won, would you, in such a case, say that the physician practised deception, because, though he might by his art make the scars wholly disappear, he did by the same art, for a definite reason, rather cause them to continue as they were? The only ground upon which the scars could be proved to be a deception would be, as I have already said, if no wounds had been healed in the places where they were seen.

8. Question II. Concerning the epoch of the Christian religion, they have advanced, moreover, some other things, which they might call a selection of the more weighty arguments of Porphyry against the Christians: "If Christ," they say, "declares Himself to be the Way of salvation, the Grace and the Truth, and affirms that in Him alone, and only to souls believing in Him, is the way of return to God, what has become of men who lived in the many centuries before Christ came? To pass over the time," he adds, "which preceded the founding of the kingdom of Latium, let us take the beginning of that power as if it were the beginning of the human race. In Latium itself gods were worshipped before Alba was built; in Alba, also, religious rites and forms of worship in the temples were maintained. Rome itself was for a period of not less duration, even for a long succession of centuries, unacquainted with Christian doctrine. What, then, has become of such an innumerable multitude of souls, who were in no wise blameworthy, seeing that He in whom alone saving faith can be exercised had not yet favoured men with His advent? The whole world, moreover, was not less zealous than Rome itself in the worship practised in the temples of the gods. Why, then," he asks, "did He who is called the Saviour withhold Himself for so many centuries of the world? And let it not be said," he adds, "that provision had been made for the human race by the old Jewish law. It was only after a long time that the Jewish law appeared and flourished within the narrow limits of Syria, and after that, it gradually crept onwards to the coasts of Italy; but this was not earlier than the end of the reign of Caius, or, at the earliest, while he was on the throne. What, then, became of the souls of men in Rome and Latium who lived before the time of the Caesars, and were destitute of the grace of Christ, because He had not then come?"

9. To these statements we answer by requiring those who make them to tell us, in the first place, whether the sacred rites, which we know to have been introduced into the worship of their gods at times which can be ascertained, were or were not profitable to men. If they say that these were of no service for the salvation of men, they unite with us in putting them down, and confess that they were useless. We indeed prove that they were baneful; but it is an important concession that by them it is at least admitted that they were useless. If, on the other hand, they defend these rites, and maintain that they were wise and profitable institutions, what, I ask, has become of those who died before these were instituted? for they were defrauded of the saving and profitable efficacy which these possessed. If, however, it be said that they could be cleansed from guilt equally well in another way, why did not the same way continue in force for their posterity? What use was there for instituting novelties in worship.

10. If, in answer to this, they say that the gods themselves have indeed always existed, and were in all places alike powerful to give liberty to their worshippers, but were pleased to regulate the circumstances of time, place, and manner in which they were to be served, according to the variety found among things temporal and terrestrial, in such a way as they knew to be most suitable to certain ages and countries, why do they urge against the Christian religion this question, which, if it be asked in regard to their own gods, they either cannot themselves answer, or, if they can, must do so in such a way as to answer for our religion not less than their own? For what could they say but that the difference between sacraments which are adapted to different times and places is of no importance, if only that which is worshipped in them all be holy, just as the difference between sounds of words belonging to different languages and adapted to different hearers is of no importance, if only that which is spoken be true; although in this respect there is a difference, that men can, by agreement among themselves, arrange as to the sounds of language by which they may communicate their thoughts to one another, but that those who have discerned what is right have been guided only by the will of God in regard to the sacred rites which were agreeable to the Divine Being. This divine will has never been wanting to the justice and piety of mortals for their salvation; and whatever varieties of worship there may have been in different nations bound

together by one and the same religion, the most important thing to observe was this how far, on the one hand, human infirmity was thereby encouraged to effort, or borne with while, on the other hand, the divine authority was not assailed.

11. Wherefore, since we affirm that Christ is the Word of God, by whom all things were made and is the Son, because He is the Word, not a word uttered and belonging to the past but abides unchangeably with the unchangeable Father, Himself unchangeable, under whose rule the whole universe, spiritual and material, is ordered in the way best adapted to different times and places, and that He has perfect wisdom and knowledge as to what should be done, and when and where everything should be done in the controlling and ordering of the universe,—most certainly, both before He gave being to the Hebrew nation, by which He was pleased, through sacraments suited to the time, to prefigure the manifestation of Himself in His advent, and during the time of the Jewish commonwealth, and, after that, when He manifested Himself in the likeness of mortals to mortal men in the body which He received from the Virgin, and thenceforward even to our day, in which He is fulfilling all which He predicted of old by the prophets, and from this present time on to the end of the world, when He shall separate the holy from the wicked, and give to every man his due recompense,—in all these successive ages He is the same Son of God, co-eternal with the Father, and the unchangeable Wisdom by whom universal nature was called into existence, and by participation in whom every rational soul is made blessed.

12. Therefore, from the beginning of the human race, whosoever believed in Him, and in any way knew Him, and lived in a pious and just manner according to His precepts, was undoubtedly saved by Him, in whatever time and place he may have lived. For as we believe in Him both as dwelling with the Father and as having come in the flesh, so the men of the former ages believed in Him both as dwelling with the Father and as destined to come in the flesh. And the nature of faith is not changed, nor is the salvation made different, in our age, by the fact that, in consequence of the difference between the two epochs, that which was then foretold as future is now proclaimed as past. Moreover, we are not under necessity to suppose

different things and different kinds of salvation to be signified, when the self-same thing is by different sacred words and rites of worship announced in the one case as fulfilled, in the other as future. As to the manner and time, however, in which anything that pertains to the one salvation common to all believers and pious persons is brought to pass, let us ascribe wisdom to God, and for our part exercise submission to His will. Wherefore the true religion, although formerly set forth and practised under other names and with other symbolical rites than it now has, and formerly more obscurely revealed and known to fewer persons than now in the time of clearer light and wider diffusion, is one and the same in both periods.

13. Moreover, we do not raise any objection to their religion on the ground of the difference between the institutions appointed by Numa Pompilius for the worship of the gods by the Romans, and those which were up till that time practised in Rome or in other parts of Italy; nor on the fact that in the age of Pythagoras that system of philosophy became generally adopted which up to that time had no existence, or lay concealed, perhaps, among a very small number whose views were the same, but whose religious practice and worship was different: the question upon which we join issue with them is, whether these gods were true gods, or worthy of worship, and whether that philosophy was fitted to promote the salvation of the souls of men. This is what we insist upon discussing; and in discussing it we pluck up their sophistries by the root. Let them, therefore, desist from bringing against us objections which are of equal force against every sect, and against religion of every name. For since, as they admit, the ages of the world do not roll on under the dominion of chance, but are controlled by divine Providence, what may be fitting and expedient in each successive age transcends the range of human understanding, and is determined by the same wisdom by which Providence cares for the universe.

14. For if they assert that the reason why the doctrine of Pythagoras has not prevailed always and universally is, that Pythagoras was but a man, and had not power to secure this, can they also affirm that in the age and in the countries in which his philosophy flourished, all who had the opportunity of hearing him were found willing to believe and follow him? And therefore it is the more certain that, if Pythagoras had possessed the power of

publishing his doctrines where he pleased and when he pleased, and if he had also possessed along with that power a perfect foreknowledge of events, he would have presented himself only at those places and times in which he foreknew that men would believe his teaching. Wherefore, since they do not object to Christ on the ground of His doctrine not being universally embraced,—for they feel that this would be a futile objection if alleged either against the teaching of philosophers or against the majesty of their own gods,—what answer, I ask, could they make, if, leaving out of view that depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God within which it may be that some other divine purpose lies much more deeply hidden, and without prejudging the other reasons possibly existing, which are fit subjects for patient study by the wise, we confine ourselves, for the sake of brevity in this discussion, to the statement of this one position, that it pleased Christ to appoint the time in which He would appear and the persons among whom His doctrine was to be proclaimed, according to His knowledge of the times and places in which men would believe on Him? For He foreknew, regarding those ages and places in which His gospel has not been preached, that in them the gospel, if preached, would meet with such treatment from all, without exception, as it met with, not indeed from all, but from many, at the time of His personal presence on earth, who would not believe in Him, even though men were raised from the dead by Him; and such as we see it meet with in our day from many who, although the predictions of the prophets concerning Him are so manifestly fulfilled, still refuse to believe, and, misguided by the perverse subtlety of the human heart, rather resist than yield to divine authority, even when this is so clear and manifest, so glorious and so gloriously published abroad. So long as the mind of man is limited in capacity and in strength, it is his duty to yield to divine truth. Why, then, should we wonder if Christ knew that the world was so full of unbelievers in the former ages, that He righteously refused to manifest Himself or to be preached to those of whom He foreknew that they would not believe either His words or His miracles? For it is not incredible that all may have been then such as, to our amazement, so many have been from the time of His advent to the present time, and even now are.

15. And yet, from the beginning of the human race, He never ceased to speak by His prophets, at one time more obscurely, at another time more

plainly, as seemed to divine wisdom best adapted to the time; nor were there ever wanting men who believed in Him, from Adam to Moses, and among the people of Israel itself, which was by a special mysterious appointment a prophetic nation, and among other nations before He came in the flesh. For seeing that in the sacred Hebrew books some are mentioned, even from Abraham's time, not belonging to his natural posterity nor to the people of Israel, and not proselytes added to that people, who were nevertheless partakers of this holy mystery, why may we not believe that in other nations also, here and there, some more were found, although we do not read their names in these authoritative records? Thus the salvation provided by this religion, by which alone, as alone true, true salvation is truly promised, was never wanting to any one who was worthy of it, and he to whom it was wanting was not worthy of it. And from the beginning of the human family, even to the end of time, it is preached, to some for their advantage, to some for their condemnation. Accordingly, those to whom it has not been preached at all are those who were foreknown as persons who would not believe; those to whom, notwithstanding the certainty that they would not believe, the salvation has been proclaimed are set forth as an example of the class of unbelievers; and those to whom, as persons who would believe, the truth is proclaimed are being prepared for the kingdom of heaven and for the society of the holy angels.

16. Question III. Let us now look to the question which comes next in order. "They find fault," he says, "with the sacred ceremonies, the sacrificial victims, the burning of incense, and all the other parts of worship in our temples; and yet the same kind of worship had its origin in antiquity with themselves, or from the God whom they worship, for He is represented by them as having been in need of the first-fruits."

17. This question is obviously founded upon the passage in our Scriptures in which it is written that Cain brought to God a gift from the fruits of the earth, but Abel brought a gift from the firstlings of the flock. Our reply, therefore, is, that from this passage the more suitable inference to be drawn is, how ancient is the ordinance of sacrifice which the infallible and sacred writings declare to be due to no other than to the one true God; not because God needs our offerings, seeing that, in the same Scriptures, it is most

clearly written, “I said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord, for Thou hast no need of my good,” but because, even in the acceptance or rejection or appropriation of these offerings, He considers the advantage of men, and of them alone. For in worshipping God we do good to ourselves, not to Him. When, therefore, He gives an inspired revelation, and teaches how He is to be worshipped, He does this not only from no sense of need on His part, but from a regard to our highest advantage. For all such sacrifices are significant, being symbols of certain things by which we ought to be roused to search or know or recollect the things which they symbolize. To discuss this subject satisfactorily would demand of us something more than the short discourse in which we have resolved to give our reply at this time, more particularly because in other treatises we have spoken of it fully. Those also who have before us expounded the divine oracles, have spoken largely of the symbols of the sacrifices of the Old Testament as shadows and figures of things then future.

18. With all our desire, however, to be brief, this one thing we must by no means omit to remark, that the false gods, that is to say, the demons, which are lying angels, would never have required a temple, priesthood, sacrifice, and the other things connected with these from their worshippers, whom they deceive, had they not known that these things were due to the one true God. When, therefore, these things are presented to God according to His inspiration and teaching, it is true religion; but when they are given to demons in compliance with their impious pride, it is baneful superstition. Accordingly, those who know the Christian Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testaments do not blame the profane rites of Pagans on the mere ground of their building temples, appointing priests, and offering sacrifices, but on the ground of their doing all this for idols and demons. As to idols, indeed, who entertains a doubt as to their being wholly devoid of perception? And yet, when they are placed in these temples and set on high upon thrones of honour, that they may be waited upon by suppliants and worshippers praying and offering sacrifices, even these idols, though devoid both of feeling and of life, do, by the mere image of the members and senses of beings endowed with life, so affect weak minds, that they appear to live and breathe, especially under the added influence of the profound veneration with which the multitude freely renders such costly service.

19. To these morbid and pernicious affections of the mind divine Scripture applies a remedy, by repeating, with the impressiveness of wholesome admonition, a familiar fact, in the words, “Eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not,” etc. For these words, by reason of their being so plain, and commending themselves to all people as true, are the more effective in striking salutary shame into those who, when they present divine worship before such images with religious fear, and look upon their likeness to living beings while they are venerating and worshipping them, and utter petitions, offer sacrifices, and perform vows before them as if present, are so completely overcome, that they do not presume to think of them as devoid of perception. Lest, moreover, these worshippers should think that our Scriptures intend only to declare that such affections of the human heart spring naturally from the worship of idols, it is written in the plainest terms, “All the gods of the nations are devils.” And therefore, also, the teaching of the apostles not only declares, as we read in John, “Little children, keep yourselves from idols,” but also, in the words of Paul, “What say I then? that the idol is anything, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.” From which it may be clearly understood, that what is condemned in heathen superstitions by the true religion is not the mere offering of sacrifices (for the ancient saints offered these to the true God), but the offering of sacrifices to false gods and to impious demons. For as the truth counsels men to seek the fellowship of the holy angels, in like manner impiety turns men aside to the fellowship of the wicked angels, for whose associates everlasting fire is prepared, as the eternal kingdom is prepared for the associates of the holy angels.

20. The heathen find a plea for their profane rites and their idols in the fact that they interpret with ingenuity what is signified by each of them, but the plea is of no avail. For all this interpretation relates to the creature, not to the Creator, to whom alone is due that religious service which is in the Greek language distinguished by the word latreia. Neither do we say that the earth, the seas, the heaven, the sun, the moon, the stars, and any other celestial influences which may be beyond our ken are demons; but since all created things are divided into material and immaterial, the latter of which

we also call spiritual, it is manifest that what is done by us under the power of piety and religion proceeds from the faculty of our souls known as the will, which belongs to the spiritual creation, and is therefore to be preferred to all that is material. Whence it is inferred that sacrifice must not be offered to anything material. There remains, therefore, the spiritual part of creation, which is either pious or impious,—the pious consisting of men and angels who are righteous, and who duly serve God; the impious consisting of wicked men and angels, whom we also call devils. Now, that sacrifice must not be offered to a spiritual creature, though righteous, is obvious from this consideration, that the more pious and submissive to God any creature is, the less does he presume to aspire to that honour which he knows to be due to God alone. How much worse, therefore, is it to sacrifice to devils, that is, to a wicked spiritual creature, which, dwelling in this comparatively dark heaven nearest to earth, as in the prison assigned to him in the air, is doomed to eternal punishment. Wherefore, even when men say that they are offering sacrifices to the higher celestial powers, which are not devils, and imagine that the only difference between us and them is in a name, because they call them gods and we call them angels, the only beings which really present themselves to these men, who are given over to be the sport of manifold deceptions, are the devils who find delight and, in a sense, nourishment in the errors of mankind. For the holy angels do not approve of any sacrifice except what is offered, agreeably to the teaching of true wisdom and true religion, unto the one true God, whom in holy fellowship they serve. Therefore, as impious presumption, whether in men or in angels, commands or covets the rendering to itself of those honours which belong to God, so, on the other hand, pious humility, whether in men or in holy angels, declines these honours when offered, and declares to whom alone they are due, of which most notable examples are conspicuously set forth in our sacred books.

21. In the sacrifices appointed by the divine oracles there has been a diversity of institution corresponding to the age in which they were observed. Some sacrifices were offered before the actual manifestation of that new covenant, the benefits of which are provided by the one true offering of the one Priest, namely, by the shed blood of Christ; and another sacrifice, adapted to this manifestation, and offered in the present age by us

who are called Christians after the name of Him who has been revealed, is set before us not only in the gospels, but also in the prophetic books. For a change, not of the God, who is worshipped, nor of the religion itself, but of sacrifices and of sacraments, would seem to be proclaimed without warrant now, if it had not been foretold in the earlier dispensation. For just as when the same man brings to God in the morning one kind of offering, and in the evening another, according to the time of day, he does not thereby change either his God or his religion, any more than he changes the nature of a salutation who uses one form of salutation in the morning and another in the evening: so, in the complete cycle of the ages, when one kind of offering is known to have been made by the ancient saints, and another is presented by the saints in our time, this only shows that these sacred mysteries are celebrated not according to human presumption, but by divine authority, in the manner best adapted to the times. There is here no change either in the Deity or in the religion.

22. Question IV. Let us, in the next place, consider what he has laid down concerning the proportion between sin and punishment when, misrepresenting the gospel, he says: “Christ threatens eternal punishment to those who do not believe in Him;” and yet He says in another place, “With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” “Here,” he remarks, “is something sufficiently absurd and contradictory; for if He is to award punishment according to measure, and all measure is limited by the end of time, what mean these threats of eternal punishment?”

23. It is difficult to believe that this question has been put in the form of objection by one claiming to be in any sense a philosopher; for he says, “All measure is limited by time,” as if men were accustomed to no other measures than measures of time, such as hours and days and years, or such as are referred to when we say that the time of a short syllable is one-half of that of a long syllable. For I suppose that bushels and firkins, urns and amphorae, are not measures of time. How, then, is all measure limited by time? Do not the heathen themselves affirm that the sun is eternal? And yet they presume to calculate and pronounce on the basis of geometrical measurements what is the proportion between it and the earth. Whether this calculation be within or beyond their power, it is certain, notwithstanding,

that it has a disc of definite dimensions. For if they do ascertain how large it is, they know its dimensions, and if they do not succeed in their investigation, they do not know these; but the fact that men cannot discover them is no proof that they do not exist. It is possible, therefore, for something to be eternal, and nevertheless to have a definite measure of its proportions. In this I have been speaking upon the assumption of their own view as to the eternal duration of the sun, in order that they may be convinced by one of their own tenets, and obliged to admit that something may be eternal and at the same time measurable. And therefore let them not think that the threatening of Christ concerning eternal punishment is not to be believed because of His also saying, “In what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you.”

24. For if He had said, “That which you have measured shall be measured unto you,” even in that case it would not have been necessary to take the clauses as referring to something which was in all respects the same. For we may correctly say, That which you have planted you shall reap, although men plant not fruit but trees, and reap not trees but fruit. We say it, however, with reference to the kind of tree; for a man does not plant a fig-tree, and expect to gather nuts from it. In like manner it might be said, What you have done you shall suffer; not meaning that if one has committed adultery, for example, he shall suffer the same, but that what he has in that crime done to the law, the law shall do unto him, i.e. forasmuch as he has removed from his life the law which prohibits such things, the law shall requite him by removing him from that human life over which it presides. Again, if He had said, “As much as ye shall have measured, so much shall be measured unto you,” even from this statement it would not necessarily follow that we must understand punishments to be in every particular equal to the sins punished. Barley and wheat, for example, are not equal in quality, and yet it might be said, “As much as ye shall have measured, so much shall be measured unto you,” meaning for so much wheat so much barley. Or if the matter in question were pain, it might be said, “As great pain shall be inflicted on you as you have inflicted on others;” this might mean that the pain should be in severity equal, but in time more protracted, and therefore by its continuance greater. For suppose I were to say of two lamps, “The flame of this one was as hot as the flame of the other,” this

would not be false, although, perchance, one of them was earlier extinguished than the other. Wherefore, if things be equally great in one respect, but not in another, the fact that they are not alike in all respects does not invalidate the statement that in one respect, as admitted, they are equally great.

25. Seeing, however, that the words of Christ were these, “In what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you,” and that beyond all question the measure in which anything is measured is one thing, and that which is measured in it is another, it is obviously possible that with the same measure with which men have measured, say, a bushel of wheat, there may be measured to them thousands of bushels, so that with no difference in the measure there may be all that difference in the quantity, not to speak of the difference of quality which might be in the things measured; for it is not only possible that with the same measure with which one has measured barley to others, wheat may be measured to him, but, moreover, with the same measure with which he has measured grain, gold may be measured to him, and of the grain there may have been one bushel, while there may be very many of the gold. Thus, although there is a difference both in kind and quantity, it may be nevertheless truly said in reference to things which are thus unlike: “In the measure in which he measured to others it is measured unto him.”

The reason, moreover, why Christ uttered this saying is sufficiently plain from the immediately preceding context. “Judge not,” He said, “that ye be not judged; for in the judgment in which ye judge ye shall be judged.” Does this mean that if they have judged any one with injustice they shall themselves be unjustly judged? Of course not; for there is no unrighteousness with God. But it is thus expressed, “In the judgment in which ye judge ye shall be judged,” as if it were said, In the will in which ye have dealt kindly with others ye shall be set at liberty, or in the will in which ye have done evil to others ye shall be punished. As if any one, for example, using his eyes for the gratification of base desires, were ordered to be made blind, this would be a just sentence for him to hear, “In those eyes by which thou hast sinned, in them hast thou deserved to be punished.” For every one uses the judgment of his own mind, according as it is good or evil, for doing good or for doing evil. Wherefore it is not unjust that he be judged in that in which he judges, that is to say, that he suffer the penalty in the mind's faculty of judgment when he is made to endure those evils which are the consequences of the sinful judgment of his mind.

26. For while other torments which are prepared to be hereafter inflicted are visible, torments occasioned by the same central cause, namely, a depraved will,—it is also the fact that within the mind itself, in which the appetite of the will is the measure of all human actions, sin is followed immediately by punishment, which is for the most part increased in proportion to the greater blindness of one by whom it is not felt. Therefore when He had said, "With [or rather, as Augustin renders it, In] what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged," He went on to add, "And in what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you." A good man, that is to say, will measure out good actions in his own will, and in the same shall blessedness be measured unto him; and in like manner, a bad man will measure out bad actions in his own will, and in the same shall misery be meted out to him; for in whatsoever any one is good when his will aims at what is good, in the same he is evil when his will aims at what is evil. And therefore it is also in this that he is made to experience bliss or misery, viz. in the feeling experienced by his own will, which is the measure both of all actions and of the recompenses of actions. For we measure actions, whether good or bad, by the quality of the volitions which produce them, not by the length of time which they occupy. Were it otherwise, it would be regarded a greater crime to fell a tree than to kill a man. For the former takes a long time and many strokes, the latter may be done with one blow in a moment of time; and yet, if a man were punished with no more than transportation for life for this great crime committed in a moment, it would be said that he had been treated with more clemency than he deserved, although, in regard to the duration of time, the protracted punishment is not in any way to be compared with the sudden act of murder. Where, then, is anything contradictory in the sentence objected to, if the punishments shall be equally protracted or even alike eternal, but differing in comparative gentleness and severity? The duration is the same; the pain inflicted is different in degree, because that which constitutes the measure of the sins themselves is found not in the length of time which they occupy, but in the will of those who commit them.

27. Certainly the will itself endures the punishment, whether pain be inflicted on the mind or on the body; so that the same thing which is gratified by the sin is smitten by the penalty, and so that he who judgeth without mercy is judged without mercy; for in this sentence also the standard of measure is the same only in this point, that what he did not give to others is denied to him, and therefore the judgment passed on him shall be eternal, although the judgment pronounced by him cannot be eternal. It is therefore in the sinner's own measure that punishments which are eternal are measured out to him, though the sins thus punished were not eternal; for as his wish was to have an eternal enjoyment of sin, so the award which he finds is an eternal endurance of suffering.

The brevity which I study in this reply precludes me from collecting all, or at least as many as I could of the statements contained in our sacred books as to sin and the punishment of sin, and deducing from these one indisputable proposition on the subject; and perhaps, even if I obtained the necessary leisure, I might not possess abilities competent to the task. Nevertheless, I think that in the meantime I have proved that there is no contradiction between the eternity of punishment and the principle that sins shall be recompensed in the same measure in which men have committed them.

28. Question V. The objector who has brought forward these questions from Porphyry has added this one in the next place: Will you have the goodness to instruct me as to whether Solomon said truly or not that God has no Son?

29. The answer is brief: Solomon not only did not say this, but, on the contrary, expressly said that God hath a Son. For in one of his writings Wisdom saith: "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth." And what is Christ but the Wisdom of God? Again, in another place in the book of Proverbs, he says: "God hath taught me wisdom, and I have learned the knowledge of the holy. Who hath ascended up into heaven and descended? who hath gathered the winds in His fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name?" Of the two questions concluding this quotation, the one referred to the Father, namely, "What is His name?"—with allusion to the foregoing words, "God hath

taught me wisdom,”—the other evidently to the Son, since he says, “or what is His Son’s name?”—with allusion to the other statements, which are more properly understood as pertaining to the Son, viz. “Who hath ascended up into heaven and descended?”—a question brought to remembrance by the words of Paul: “He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens;”—”Who hath gathered the winds in His fists?” i.e. the souls of believers in a hidden and secret place, to whom, accordingly, it is said, “Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God;”—”Who hath bound the waters in a garment?” whence it could be said, “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ;”—”Who hath established all the ends of the earth?” the same who said to His disciples, “Ye shall be witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

30. Question VI. The last question proposed is concerning Jonah, and it is put as if it were not from Porphyry, but as being a standing subject of ridicule among the Pagans; for his words are: “In the next place, what are we to believe concerning Jonah, who is said to have been three days in a whale’s belly? The thing is utterly improbable and incredible, that a man swallowed with his clothes on should have existed in the inside of a fish. If, however, the story is figurative, be pleased to explain it. Again, what is meant by the story that a gourd sprang up above the head of Jonah after he was vomited by the fish? What was the cause of this gourd’s growth?” Questions such as these I have seen discussed by Pagans amidst loud laughter, and with great scorn.

31. To this I reply, that either all the miracles wrought by divine power may be treated as incredible, or there is no reason why the story of this miracle should not be believed. The resurrection of Christ Himself upon the third day would not be believed by us, if the Christian faith was afraid to encounter Pagan ridicule. Since, however, our friend did not on this ground ask whether it is to be believed that Lazarus was raised on the fourth day, or that Christ rose on the third day, I am much surprised that he reckoned what was done with Jonah to be incredible; unless, perchance, he thinks it easier for a dead man to be raised in life from his sepulchre, than for a living man to be kept in life in the spacious belly of a sea monster. For without

mentioning the great size of sea monsters which is reported to us by those who have knowledge of them, let me ask how many men could be contained in the belly which was fenced round with those huge ribs which are fixed in a public place in Carthage, and are well known to all men there? Who can be at a loss to conjecture how wide an entrance must have been given by the opening of the mouth which was the gateway of that vast cavern? unless, perchance, as our friend stated it, the clothing of Jonah stood in the way of his being swallowed without injury, as if he had required to squeeze himself through a narrow passage, instead of being, as was the case, thrown headlong through the air, and so caught by the sea monster as to be received into its belly before he was wounded by its teeth. At the same time, the Scripture does not say whether he had his clothes on or not when he was cast down into that cavern, so that it may without contradiction be understood that he made that swift descent unclothed, if perchance it was necessary that his garment should be taken from him, as the shell is taken from an egg, to make him more easily swallowed. For men are as much concerned about the raiment of this prophet as would be reasonable if it were stated that he had crept through a very small window, or had been going into a bath; and yet, even though it were necessary in such circumstances to enter without parting with one's clothes, this would be only inconvenient, not miraculous.

32. But perhaps our objectors find it impossible to believe in regard to this divine miracle that the heated moist air of the belly, whereby food is dissolved, could be so moderated in temperature as to preserve the life of a man. If so, with how much greater force might they pronounce it incredible that the three young men cast into the furnace by the impious king walked unharmed in the midst of the flames! If, therefore, these objectors refuse to believe any narrative of a divine miracle, they must be refuted by another line of argument. For it is incumbent on them in that case not to single out some one to be objected to, and called in question as incredible, but to denounce as incredible all narratives in which miracles of the same kind or more remarkable are recorded. And yet, if this which is written concerning Jonah were said to have been done by Apuleius of Madaura or Apollonius of Tyana, by whom they boast, though unsupported by reliable testimony, that many wonders were performed (albeit even the devils do some works

like those done by the holy angels, not in truth, but in appearance, not by wisdom, but manifestly by subtlety),—if, I say, any such event were narrated in connection with these men to whom they give the flattering name of magicians or philosophers, we should hear from their mouths sounds not of derision, but of triumph. Be it so, then; let them laugh at our Scriptures; let them laugh as much as they can, when they see themselves daily becoming fewer in number, while some are removed by death, and others by their embracing the Christian faith, and when all those things are being fulfilled which were predicted by the prophets who long ago laughed at them, and said that they would fight and bark against the truth in vain, and would gradually come over to our side; and who not only transmitted these statements to us, their descendants, for our learning, but promised that they should be fulfilled in our experience.

33. It is neither unreasonable nor unprofitable to inquire what these miracles signify, so that, after their significance has been explained, men may believe not only that they really occurred, but also that they have been recorded, because of their possessing symbolical meaning. Let him, therefore, who proposes to inquire why the prophet Jonah was three days in the capacious belly of a sea monster, begin by dismissing doubts as to the fact itself; for this did actually occur, and did not occur in vain. For if figures which are expressed in words only, and not in actions, aid our faith, how much more should our faith be helped by figures expressed not only in words, but also in actions! Now men are wont to speak by words; but divine power speaks by actions as well as by words. And as words which are new or somewhat unfamiliar lend brilliancy to a human discourse when they are scattered through it in a moderate and judicious manner, so the eloquence of divine revelation receives, so to speak, additional lustre from actions which are at once marvellous in themselves and skilfully designed to impart spiritual instruction.

34. As to the question, What was prefigured by the sea monster restoring alive on the third day the prophet whom it swallowed? why is this asked of us, when Christ Himself has given the answer, saying, “An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given it but the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three

nights in the whale’s belly, so must the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” ? In regard to the three days in which the Lord Christ was under the power of death, it would take long to explain how they are reckoned to be three whole days, that is, days along with their nights, because of the whole of the first day and of the third day being understood as represented on the part of each; moreover, this has been already stated very often in other discourses. As, therefore, Jonah passed from the ship to the belly of the whale, so Christ passed from the cross to the sepulchre, or into the abyss of death. And as Jonah suffered this for the sake of those who were endangered by the storm, so Christ suffered for the sake of those who are tossed on the waves of this world. And as the command was given at first that the word of God should be preached to the Ninevites by Jonah, but the preaching of Jonah did not come to them until after the whale had vomited him forth, so prophetic teaching was addressed early to the Gentiles, but did not actually come to the Gentiles until after the resurrection of Christ from the grave.

35. In the next place, as to Jonah’s building for himself a booth, and sitting down over against Nineveh, waiting to see what would befall the city, the prophet was here in his own person the symbol of another fact. He prefigured the carnal people of Israel. For he also was grieved at the salvation of the Ninevites, that is, at the redemption and deliverance of the Gentiles, from among whom Christ came to call, not righteous men, but sinners to repentance. Wherefore the shadow of that gourd over his head prefigured the promises of the Old Testament, or rather the privileges already enjoyed in it, in which there was, as the apostle says, “a shadow of things to come,” furnishing, as it were, a refuge from the heat of temporal calamities in the land of promise. Moreover, in that morning-worm, which by its gnawing tooth made the gourd wither away, Christ Himself is again prefigured, forasmuch as, by the publication of the gospel from His mouth, all those things which flourished among the Israelites for a time, or with a shadowy symbolical meaning in that earlier dispensation, are now deprived of their significance, and have withered away. And now that nation, having lost the kingdom, the priesthood, and the sacrifices formerly established in Jerusalem, all which privileges were a shadow of things to come, is burned with grievous heat of tribulation in its condition of dispersion and captivity,

as Jonah was, according to the history, scorched with the heat of the sun, and is overwhelmed with sorrow; and notwithstanding, the salvation of the Gentiles and of the penitent is of more importance in the sight of God than this sorrow of Israel and the “shadow” of which the Jewish nation was so glad.

36. Again, let the Pagans laugh, and let them treat with proud and senseless ridicule Christ the Worm and this interpretation of the prophetic symbol, provided that He gradually and surely, nevertheless, consume them. For concerning all such Isaiah prophesies, when by him God says to us, “Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings: for the moth shall eat them up as a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever.” Let us therefore acknowledge Christ to be the morning-worm, because, moreover, in that psalm which bears the title, “Upon the hind of the morning,” He has been pleased to call Himself by this very name: “I am,” He says, “a worm, and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people.” This reproach is one of those reproaches which we are commanded not to fear in the words of Isaiah, “Fear ye not the reproach of men.” By that Worm, as by a moth, they are being consumed who under the tooth of His gospel are made to wonder daily at the diminution of their numbers, which is caused by desertion from their party. Let us therefore acknowledge this symbol of Christ; and because of the salvation of God, let us bear patiently the reproaches of men. He is a Worm because of the lowliness of the flesh which He assumed—perhaps, also, because of His being born of a virgin; for the worm is generally not begotten, but spontaneously originated in flesh or any vegetable product [sine concubitu nascitur]. He is the morning-worm, because He rose from the grave before the dawn of day. That gourd might, of course, have withered without any worm at its root; and finally, if God regarded the worm as necessary for this work, what need was there to add the epithet morning-worm, if not to secure that He should be recognised as the Worm who in the psalm, “pro susceptione matutina,” sings, “I am a worm, and no man”?

37. What, then, could be more palpable than the fulfilment of this prophecy in the accomplishment of the things foretold? That Worm was indeed despised when He hung upon the cross, as is written in the same psalm: “They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him;” and again, when this was fulfilled which the psalm foretold, “They pierced my hands and my feet. They have told all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture,”—circumstances which are in that ancient book described when future by the prophet with as great plainness as they are now recorded in the gospel history after their occurrence. But if in His humiliation that Worm was despised, is He to be still despised when we behold the accomplishment of those things which are predicted in the latter part of the same psalm: “All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His presence. For the kingdom is the Lord’s; and He shall govern among the nations”? Thus the Ninevites “remembered, and turned unto the Lord.” The salvation granted to the Gentiles on their repentance, which was thus so long before prefigured, Israel then, as represented by Jonah, regarded with grief, as now their nation grieves, bereft of their shadow, and vexed with the heat of their tribulations. Any one is at liberty to open up with a different interpretation, if only it be in harmony with the rule of faith, all the other particulars which are hidden in the symbolical history of the prophet Jonah; but it is obvious that it is not lawful to interpret the three days which he passed in the belly of the whale otherwise than as it has been revealed by the heavenly Master Himself in the gospel, as quoted above.

38. I have answered to the best of my power the questions proposed; but let him who proposed them become now a Christian at once, lest, if he delay until he has finished the discussion of all difficulties connected with the sacred books, he come to the end of this life before he pass from death to life. For it is reasonable that he inquire as to the resurrection of the dead before he is admitted to the Christian sacraments. Perhaps he ought also to be allowed to insist on preliminary discussion of the question proposed concerning Christ—why He came so late in the world’s history, and of a few great questions besides, to which all others are subordinate. But to

think of finishing all such questions as those concerning the words, “In what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you,” and concerning Jonah, before he becomes a Christian, is to betray great unmindfulness of man’s limited capacities, and of the shortness of the life which remains to him. For there are innumerable questions the solution of which is not to be demanded before we believe, lest life be finished by us in unbelief. When, however, the Christian faith has been thoroughly received, these questions behove to be studied with the utmost diligence for the pious satisfaction of the minds of believers. Whatever is discovered by such study ought to be imparted to others without vain self-complacency; if anything still remain hidden, we must bear with patience an imperfection of knowledge which is not prejudicial to salvation.

LETTER CIII

(A.D. 409.)

To My Lord and Brother, Augustin, Rightly and Justly Worthy of Esteem and of All Possible Honour, Nectarius Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. In reading the letter of your Excellency, in which you have overthrown the worship of idols and the ritual of their temples, I seemed to myself to hear the voice of a philosopher, not of such a philosopher as the academician of whom they say, that having neither new doctrine to propound nor earlier statements of his own to defend, he was wont to sit in gloomy corners on the ground absorbed in some deep reverie, with his knees drawn back to his forehead, and his head buried between them, contriving how he might as a detractor assail the discoveries or cavil at the statements by which others had earned renown; nay, the form which rose under the spell of your eloquence and stood before my eyes was rather that of the great statesman Cicero, who, having been crowned with laurels for saving the lives of many of his countrymen, carried the trophies won in his forensic victories into the wondering schools of Greek philosophy, when, as one pausing for breath, he laid down the trumpet of sonorous voice and language which he had blown with blast of just indignation against those who had broken the laws and conspired against the life of the republic, and,

adopting the fashion of the Grecian mantle, unfastened and threw back over his shoulders the toga's ample folds.

2. I therefore listened with pleasure when you urged us to the worship and religion of the only supreme God; and when you counselled us to look to our heavenly fatherland, I received the exhortation with joy. For you were obviously speaking to me not of any city confined by encircling ramparts, nor of that commonwealth on this earth which the writings of philosophers have mentioned and declared to have all mankind as its citizens, but of that City which is inhabited and possessed by the great God, and by the spirits which have earned this recompense from Him, to which, by diverse roads and pathways, all religions aspire,—the City which we are not able in language to describe, but which perhaps we might by thinking apprehend. But while this City ought therefore to be, above all others, desired and loved, I am nevertheless of opinion that we are bound not to prove unfaithful to our own native land,—the land which first imparted to us the enjoyment of the light of day, in which we were nursed and educated, and (to pass to what is specially relevant in this case) the land by rendering services to which men obtain a home prepared for them in heaven after the death of the body; for, in the opinion of the most learned, promotion to that celestial City is granted to those men who have deserved well of the cities which gave them birth, and a higher experience of fellowship with God is the portion of those who are proved to have contributed by their counsels or by their labours to the welfare of their native land.

As to the remark which you were pleased wittily to make regarding our town, that it has been made conspicuous not so much by the achievements of warriors as by the conflagrations of incendiaries, and that it has produced thorns rather than flowers, this is not the severest reproof that might have been given, for we know that flowers are for the most part borne on thorny bushes. For who does not know that even roses grow on briars, and that in the bearded heads of grain the ears are guarded by spikes, and that, in general, pleasant and painful things are found blended together?

3. The last statement in your Excellency's letter was, that neither capital punishment nor bloodshed is demanded in order to compensate for the wrong done to the Church, but that the offenders must be deprived of the

possessions which they most fear to lose. But in my deliberate judgment, though, of course, I may be mistaken, it is a more grievous thing to be deprived of one's property than to be deprived of life. For, as you know, it is an observation frequently recurring in the whole range of literature, that death terminates the experience of all evils, but that a life of indigence only confers upon us an eternity of wretchedness; for it is worse to live miserably than to put an end to our miseries by death. This fact, also, is declared by the whole nature and method of your work, in which you support the poor, minister healing to the diseased, and apply remedies to the bodies of those who are in pain, and, in short, make it your business to prevent the afflicted from feeling the protracted continuance of their sufferings.

Again, as to the degree of demerit in the faults of some as compared with others, it is of no importance what the quality of the fault may seem to be in a case in which forgiveness is craved. For, in the first place, if penitence procures forgiveness and expiates the crime—and surely he is penitent who begs pardon and humbly embraces the feet of the party whom he has offended—and if, moreover, as is the opinion of some philosophers, all faults are alike, pardon ought to be bestowed upon all without distinction. One of our citizens may have spoken somewhat rudely: this was a fault; another may have perpetrated an insult or an injury: this was equally a fault; another may have violently taken what was not his own: this is reckoned a crime; another may have attacked buildings devoted to secular or to sacred purposes: he ought not to be for this crime placed beyond the reach of pardon. Finally, there would be no occasion for pardon if there were no foregoing faults.

4. Having now replied to your letter, not as the letter deserved, but to the best of my ability, such as it is, I beg and implore you (oh that I were in your presence, that you might also see my tears!) to consider again and again who you are, what is your professed character, and what is the business to which your life is devoted. Reflect upon the appearance presented by a town from which men doomed to torture are dragged forth; think of the lamentations of mothers and wives, of sons and of fathers; think of the shame felt by those who may return, set at liberty indeed, but having

undergone the torture; think what sorrow and groaning the sight of their wounds and scars must renew. And when you have pondered all these things, first think of God, and think of your good name among men; or rather think of what friendly charity and the bonds of common humanity require at your hands, and seek to be praised not by punishing but by pardoning the offenders. And such things may indeed be said regarding your treatment of those whom actual guilt condemns on their own confession: to these persons you have, out of regard to your religion, granted pardon; and for this I shall always praise you. But now it is scarcely possible to express the greatness of that cruelty which pursues the innocent, and summons those to stand trial on a capital charge of whom it is certain that they had no share in the crimes alleged. If it so happen that they are acquitted, consider, I beseech you, with what ill-will their acquittal must be regarded by their accusers who of their own accord dismissed the guilty from the bar, but let the innocent go only when they were defeated in their attempts against them.

May the supreme God be your keeper, and preserve you as a bulwark of His religion and an ornament to our country.

LETTER CIV

(A.D. 409.)

To Nectarius, My Noble Lord and Brother, Justly Worthy of All Honour and Esteem, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. I have read the letter which you kindly sent in answer to mine. Your reply comes at a very long interval after the time when I despatched my letter to you. For I had written an answer to you when my holy brother and colleague Possidius was still with us, before he had entered on his voyage; but the letter which you have been pleased to entrust to him for me I received on March 27th, about eight months after I had written to you. The reason why my communication was so late in reaching you, or yours so late in being sent to me, I do not know. Perhaps your prudence has only now dictated the reply which your pride formerly disdained. If this be the

explanation, I wonder what has occasioned the change. Have you perchance heard some report, which is as yet unknown to us, that my brother Possidius had obtained authority for proceedings of greater severity against your citizens, whom—you must excuse me for saying this—he loves in a way more likely to promote their welfare than you do yourself? For your letter shows that you apprehended something of this kind when you charge me to set before my eyes “the appearance presented by a town from which men doomed to torture are dragged forth,” and to “think of the lamentations of mothers and wives, of sons and of fathers; of the shame felt by those who may return, set at liberty indeed, but having undergone the torture; and of the sorrow and groaning which the sight of their wounds and scars must renew.” Far be it from us to demand the infliction, either by ourselves or by any one, of such hardships upon any of our enemies! But, as I have said, if report has brought any such measures of severity to your ears, give us a more clear and particular account of the things reported, that we may know either what to do in order to prevent these things from being done, or what answer we must make in order to disabuse the minds of those who believe the rumour.

2. Examine more carefully my letter, to which you have so reluctantly sent a reply, for I have in it made my views sufficiently plain; but through not remembering, as I suppose, what I had written, you have in your reply made reference to sentiments widely differing from mine, and wholly unlike them. For, as if quoting from memory what I had written, you have inserted in your letter what I never said at all in mine. You say that the concluding sentence of my letter was, “that neither capital punishment nor bloodshed is demanded in order to compensate for the wrong done to the Church, but that the offenders must be deprived of that which they most fear to lose;” and then, in showing how great a calamity this imports, you add and connect with my words that you “deliberately judge—though you may perhaps be mistaken—that it is a more grievous thing to be deprived of one’s possessions than to be deprived of life.” And in order to expound more clearly the kind of possessions to which you refer, you go on to say that. it must be known to me, “as an observation frequently recurring in the whole range of literature, that death terminates the experience of all evils, but that a life of indigence only confers upon us an eternity of

wretchedness.” From which you have drawn the conclusion that it is “worse to live miserably than to put an end to our miseries by death.”

3. Now I for my part do not recollect reading anywhere—either in our [Christian] literature, to which I confess that I was later of applying my mind than I could now wish that I had been, or in your [Pagan] literature, which I studied from my childhood—that “a life of indigence only confers upon us an eternity of wretchedness.” For the poverty of the industrious is never in itself a crime; nay, it is to some extent a means of withdrawing and restraining men from sin. And therefore the circumstance that a man has lived in poverty here is no ground for apprehending that this shall procure for him after this brief life “an eternity of wretchedness;” and in this life which we spend on earth it is utterly impossible for any misery to be eternal, seeing that this life cannot be eternal, nay, is not of long duration even in those who attain to the most advanced old age. In the writings referred to, I for my part have read, not that in this life—as you think, and as you allege that these writings frequently affirm—there can be an eternity of wretchedness, but rather that this life itself which we here enjoy is short. Some, indeed but not all, of your authors have said that death is the end of all evils: that is indeed the opinion of the Epicureans, and of such others as believe the soul to be mortal. But those philosophers whom Cicero designates “consulates” in a certain sense, because he attaches great weight to their authority, are of opinion that when our last hour on earth comes the soul is not annihilated, but removes from its tenement, and continues in existence for a state of blessedness or of misery, according to that which a man’s actions, whether good or bad, claim as their due recompense. This agrees with the teaching of our sacred writings, with which I wish that I were more fully conversant. Death is therefore the end of all evils—but only in the case of those whose life is, pure, religious, upright, and blameless; not in the case of those who, inflamed with passionate desire for the trifles and vanities of time, are proved to be miserable by the utter perversion of their desires, though meanwhile they esteem themselves happy, and are after death compelled not only to accept as their lot, but to realize in their experience far greater miseries.

4. These sentiments, therefore, being frequently expressed both in some of your own authors, whom you deem worthy of greater esteem, and in all our Scriptures, be it yours, O worthy lover of the country which is on earth your fatherland, to dread on behalf of your countrymen a life of luxurious indulgence rather than a life of indigence; or if you fear a life of indigence, warn them that the poverty which is to be more studiously shunned is that of the man who, though surrounded with abundance of worldly possessions, is, through the insatiable eagerness wherewith he covets these, kept always in a state of want, which, to use the words of your own authors, neither plenty nor scarcity can relieve. In the letter, however, to which you reply, I did not say that those of your citizens who are enemies to the Church were to be corrected by being reduced to that extremity of indigence in which the necessaries of life are wanting, and to which succour is brought by that compassion of which you have thought it incumbent on you to point out to me that it is professed by us in the whole plan of those labours wherein we "support the poor, minister healing to the diseased, and apply remedies to the bodies of those who are in pain;" albeit, even such extremity of want as this would be more profitable than abundance of all things, if abused to the gratification of evil passions. But far be it from me to think that those about whom we are treating should be reduced to such destitution by the measures of coercion proposed.

Chap. II

5. Though you did not consider it worth while to read my letter over when it was to be answered, perhaps you have at least so far esteemed it as to preserve it, in order to its being brought to you when you at any time might desire it and call for it; if this be the case, look over it again, and mark carefully my words: you will assuredly find in it one thing to which, in my opinion, you must admit that you have made no reply. For in that letter occur the words which I now quote: "We do not desire to gratify our anger by vindictive retribution for the past, but we are concerned to make provision in a truly merciful spirit for the future. Now wicked men have something in respect to which they may be punished, and that by Christians, in a merciful way, and so as to promote their own profit and well-being. For they have these three things—life and health of the body, the means of

supporting that life, and the means and opportunities of living a wicked life. Let the two former remain untouched in the possession of those who repent of their crime; this we desire, and this we spare no pains to secure. But as to the third, if it please God to deal with it as a decaying or diseased part, which must be removed with the pruning-knife, He will in such punishment prove the greatness of his compassion.” If you had read over these words of mine again, when you were pleased to write your reply, you would have looked upon it rather as an unkind insinuation than as a necessary duty to address to me a petition not only for deliverance from death, but also for exemption from torture, on behalf of those regarding whom I said that we wished to leave unimpaired their possession of bodily life and health. Neither was there any ground for your apprehending our inflicting a life of indigence and of dependence upon others for daily bread on those regarding whom I had said that we desired to secure to them the second of the possessions named above, viz. the means of supporting life. But as to their third possession, viz. the means and opportunities of living wickedly, that is to say—passing over other things—their silver with which they constructed those images of their false gods, in whose protection or adoration or unhallowed worship an attempt was made even to destroy the church of God by fire, and the provision made for relieving the poverty of very pious persons was given up to become the spoil of a wretched mob, and blood was freely shed—why, I ask, does your patriotic heart dread the stroke which shall cut this away, in order to prevent a fatal boldness from being in everything fostered and confirmed by impunity? This I beg you to discuss fully, and to show me in well-considered arguments what wrong there is in this; mark carefully what I say, lest under the form of a petition in regard to what I am saying you appear to bring against us an indirect accusation.

6. Let your countrymen be well reported of for their virtuous manners, not for their superfluous wealth; we do not wish them to be reduced through coercive measures on our account to the plough of Quintius [Cincinnatus], or to the hearth of Fabricius. Yet by such extreme poverty these statesmen of the Roman republic not only did not incur the contempt of their fellow-citizens, but were on that very account peculiarly dear to them, and esteemed the more qualified to administer the resources of their country. We neither desire nor endeavour to reduce the estates of your rich men, so that

in their possession should remain no more than ten pounds of silver, as was the case with Ruffinus, who twice held the consulship, which amount the stern censorship of that time laudably required to be still further reduced as culpably large. So much are we influenced by the prevailing sentiments of a degenerate age in dealing more tenderly with minds that are very feeble, that to Christian clemency the measure which seemed just to the censors of that time appears unduly severe; yet you see how great is the difference between the two cases, the question being in the one, whether the mere fact of possessing ten pounds of silver should be dealt with as a punishable crime, and in the other, whether any one, after committing other very great crimes, should be permitted to retain the sum aforesaid in his possession; we only ask that what in those days was itself a crime be in our days made the punishment of crime. There is, however, one thing which can be done, and ought to be done, in order that, on the one hand, severity may not be pushed even so far as I have mentioned, and that, on the other, men may not, presuming on impunity, run into excess of exultation and rioting, and thus furnish to other unhappy men an example by following which they would become liable to the severest and most unheard of punishments. Let this at least be granted by you, that those who attempt with fire and sword to destroy what are necessaries to us be made afraid of losing those luxuries of which they have a pernicious abundance. Permit us also to confer upon our enemies this benefit, that we prevent them, by their fears about that which it would do them no harm to forfeit, from attempting to that which would bring harm to themselves. For this is to be termed prudent prevention, not punishment of crime; this is not to impose penalties, but to protect men from becoming liable to penalties.

7. When any one uses measures involving the infliction of some pain, in order to prevent an inconsiderate person from incurring the most dreadful punishments by becoming accustomed to crimes which yield him no advantage, he is like one who pulls a boy’s hair in order to prevent him from provoking serpents by clapping his hands at them; in both cases, while the acting of love is vexatious to its object, no member of the body is injured, whereas safety and life are endangered by that from which the person is deterred. We confer a benefit upon others, not in every case in which we do what is requested, but when we do that which is not hurtful to

our petitioners. For in most cases we serve others best by not giving, and would injure them by giving, what they desire. Hence the proverb, “Do not put a sword in a child’s hand.” “Nay,” says Cicero, “refuse it even to your only son. For the more we love any one, the more are we bound to avoid entrusting to him things which are the occasion of very dangerous faults.” He was referring to riches, if I am not mistaken, when he made these observations. Wherefore it is for the most part an advantage to themselves when certain things are removed from persons in whose keeping it is hazardous to leave them, lest they abuse them. When surgeons see that a gangrene must be cut away or cauterized, they often, out of compassion, turn a deaf ear to many cries. If we had been indulgently forgiven by our parents and teachers in our tender years on every occasion on which, being found in a fault, we begged to be let off, which of us would not have grown up intolerable? which of us would have learned any useful thing? Such punishments are administered by wise care, not by wanton cruelty. Do not, I beseech you, in this matter think only how to accomplish that which you are requested by your countrymen to do, but carefully consider the matter in all its bearings. If you overlook the past, which cannot now be undone, consider the future; wisely give heed, not to the desire, but to the real interests of the petitioners who have applied to you. We are convicted of unfaithfulness towards those whom we profess to love, if our only care is lest, by refusing to do what they ask of us, their love towards us be diminished. And what becomes of that virtue which even your own literature commends, in the ruler of his country who studies not so much the wishes as the welfare of his people?

Chap. III

8. You say “it is of no importance what the quality of the fault may be in any case in which forgiveness is craved.” In this you would state the truth if the matter in question were the punishment and not the correction of men. Far be it from a Christian heart to be carried away by the lust of revenge to inflict punishment on any one. Far be it from a Christian, when forgiving any one his fault, to do otherwise than either anticipate or at least promptly answer the petition of him who asks forgiveness; but let his purpose in doing this be, that he may overcome the temptation to hate the man who has

offended him, and to render evil for evil, and to be inflamed with rage prompting him, if not to do an injury, at least to desire to see the infliction of the penalties appointed by law; let it not be that he may relieve himself from considering the offender’s interest, exercising foresight on his behalf, and restraining him from evil actions. For it is possible, on the one hand, that, moved by more vehement hostility, one may neglect the correction of a man whom he hates bitterly, and, on the other hand, that by correction involving the infliction of some pain one may secure the improvement of another whom he dearly loves.

9. I grant that, as you write, “penitence procures forgiveness, and blots out the offence,” but it is that penitence which is practised under the influence of the true religion, and which has regard to the future judgment of God; not that penitence which is for the time professed or pretended before men, not to secure the cleansing of the soul for ever from the fault, but only to deliver from present apprehension of pain the life which is so soon to perish. This is the reason why in the case of some Christians who confessed their fault, and asked forgiveness for having been involved in the guilt of that crime,—either by their not protecting the church when in danger of being burned, or by their appropriating a portion of the property which the miscreants carried off,—we believed that the pain of repentance had borne fruit, and considered it sufficient for their correction, because in their hearts is found that faith by which they could realize what they ought to fear from the judgment of God for their sin. But how can there be any healing virtue in the repentance of those who not only fail to acknowledge, but even persist in mocking and blaspheming Him who is the fountain of forgiveness? At the same time, towards these men we do not cherish any feeling of enmity in our hearts, which are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him whose judgment both in this life and in the life to come we dread, and in whose help we place our hope. But we think that we are even taking measures for the benefit of these men, if, seeing that they do not fear God, we inspire fear in them by doing something whereby their folly is chastened, while their real interests suffer no wrong. We thus prevent that God whom they despise from being more grievously provoked by their greater crimes, to which they would be emboldened by a disastrous assurance of impunity, and we prevent their assurance of impunity from

being set forth with even more mischievous effect as an encouragement to others to imitate their example. In fine, on behalf of those for whom you make intercession to us, we intercede before God, beseeching Him to turn them to Himself, and to teach them the exercise of genuine and salutary repentance, purifying their hearts by faith.

10. Behold, then, how we love those men against whom you suppose us to be full of anger,—loving them, you must permit me to say, with a love more prudent and profitable than you yourself cherish towards them; for we plead on their behalf that they may escape much greater afflictions, and obtain much greater blessings. If you also loved these men, not in the mere earthly affections of men, but with that love which is the heavenly gift of God, and if you were sincere in writing to me that you gave ear with pleasure to me when I was recommending to you the worship and religion of the Supreme God, you would not only wish for your countrymen the blessings which we seek on their behalf, but you would yourself by your example lead them to their possession. Thus would the whole business of your interceding with us be concluded with abundant and most reasonable joy. Thus would your title to that heavenly fatherland, in regard to which you say that you welcomed my counsel that you should fix your eye upon it, be earned by a true and pious exercise of your love for the country which gave you birth, when seeking to make sure to your fellow-citizens, not the vain dream of temporal happiness, nor a most perilous exemption from the due punishment of their faults, but the gracious gift of eternal blessedness.

11. You have here a frank avowal of the thoughts and desires of my heart in this matter. As to what lies concealed in the counsels of God, I confess it is unknown to me; I am but a man; but whatever it be, His counsel stands most sure, and incomparably excels in equity and in wisdom all that can be conceived by the minds of men. With truth is it said in our books, “There are many devices in a man’s heart; but the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.” Wherefore, as to what time may bring forth, as to what may arise to simplify or complicate our procedure, in short, as to what desire may suddenly be awakened by the fear of losing or the hope of retaining present possessions; whether God shall show Himself so displeased by what they have done that they shall be punished with the more weighty and severe

sentence of a disastrous impunity, or shall appoint that they shall be compassionately corrected in the manner which we propose, or shall avert whatever terrible doom was being prepared for them, and convert it into joy by some more stern but more salutary correction, leading to their turning unfeignedly to seek mercy not from men but from Himself,—all this He knoweth; we know not. Why, then, should your Excellency and I be spending toil in vain over this matter before the time? Let us for a little while lay aside a care the hour of which has not yet come, and, if you please, let us occupy ourselves with that which is always pressing. For there is no time at which it is not both suitable and necessary for us to consider in what way we can please God; because for a man to attain completely in this life to such perfection that no sin whatever shall remain in him is either impossible or (if perchance any attain to it) extremely difficult: wherefore without delay we ought to flee at once to the grace of Him to whom we may address with perfect truth the words which were addressed to some illustrious man by a poet, who declared that he had borrowed the lines from a Cumaean oracle, or ode of prophetic inspiration: “With thee as our leader, the obliteration of all remaining traces of our sin shall deliver the earth from perpetual alarm.” For with Him as our leader, all sins are blotted out and forgiven; and by His way we are brought to that heavenly fatherland, the thought of which as a dwelling-place pleased you greatly when I was to the utmost of my power commending it to your affection and desire.

Chap. IV

12. But since you said that all religions by diverse roads and pathways aspire to that one dwelling-place, I fear lest, perchance, while supposing that the way in which you are now found tends thither, you should be somewhat reluctant to embrace the way which alone leads men to heaven. Observing, however, more carefully the word which you used, I think that it is not presumptuous for me to expound its meaning somewhat differently; for you did not say that all religions by diverse roads and pathways reach heaven, or reveal, or find, or enter, or secure that blessed land, but by saying in a phrase deliberately weighed and chosen that all religions aspire to it, you have indicated, not the fruition, but the desire of heaven as common to all religions. You have in these words neither shut out the one religion

which is true, nor admitted other religions which are false; for certainly the way which brings us to the goal aspires thitherward, but not every way which aspires thitherward brings us to the place wherein all who are brought thither are unquestionably blest. Now we all wish, that is, we aspire, to be blest; but we cannot all achieve what we wish, that is, we do not all obtain what we aspire to. That man, therefore, obtains heaven who walks in the way which not only aspires thitherward, but actually brings him thither, separating himself from others who keep to the ways which aspire heavenward without finally reaching heaven. For there would be no wandering if men were content to aspire to nothing, or if the truth which men aspire to were obtained. If, however, in using the expression "diverse ways," you meant me not to understand contrary ways, but different ways, in the sense in which we speak of diverse precepts, which all tend to build up a holy life,—one enjoining chastity, another patience or faith or mercy, and the like,—in roads and pathways which are only in this sense diverse, that country is not only aspired unto but actually found. For in Holy Scripture we read both of ways and of a way,—of ways, e.g. in the words, "I will teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee;" of a way, e.g. in the prayer, "Teach me Thy way, O Lord; I will walk in Thy truth." Those ways and this way are not different; but in one way are comprehended all those of which in another place the Holy Scripture saith, "All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth." The careful study of these ways furnishes theme for a long discourse, and for most delightful meditation; but this I shall defer to another time if it be required.

13. In the meantime, however,—and this, I think, may suffice in the present reply to your Excellency,—seeing that Christ has said, "I am the way," it is in Him that mercy and truth are to be sought: if we seek these in any other way, we must go astray, following a path which aspires to the true goal, but does not lead men thither. For example, if we resolved to follow the way indicated in the maxim which you mentioned, "All sins are alike," would it not lead us into hopeless exile from that fatherland of truth and blessedness? For could anything more absurd and senseless be said, than that the man who has laughed too rudely, and the man who has furiously set his city on fire, should be judged as having committed equal crimes? This opinion, which is not one of many diverse ways leading to the heavenly

dwelling-place, but a perverse way leading inevitably to most fatal error, you have judged it necessary to quote from certain philosophers, not because you concurred in the sentiment, but because it might help your plea for your fellow-citizens—that we might forgive those whose rage set our church in flames on the same terms as we would forgive those who may have assailed us with some insolent reproach.

14. But reconsider with me the reasoning by which you supported your position. You say, “If, as is the opinion of some philosophers, all faults are alike, pardon ought to be bestowed upon all without distinction.” Thereafter, labouring apparently to prove that all faults are alike, you go on to say, “One of our citizens may have spoken somewhat rudely: this was a fault; another may have perpetrated an insult or an injury: this was equally a fault.” This is not teaching truth, but advancing, without any evidence in its support, a perversion of truth. For to your statement, “this was equally a fault,” we at once give direct contradiction. You demand, perhaps, proof; but I reply, What proof have you given of your statement? Are we to hear as evidence your next sentence, “Another may have violently taken away what was not his own: this is reckoned a misdemeanour”? Here you own yourself to be ashamed of the maxim which you quoted; you had not the assurance to say that this was equally a fault, but you say “it is reckoned a misdemeanour.” But the question here is not whether this also is reckoned a misdemeanour, but whether this offence and the others which you mentioned are faults equal in demerit, unless, of course, they are to be pronounced equal because they are both offences; in which case the mouse and the elephant must be pronounced equal because they are both animals, and the fly and the eagle because they both have wings.

15. You go still further, and make this proposition: “Another may have attacked buildings devoted to secular or to sacred purposes: he ought not for this crime to be placed beyond the reach of pardon.” In this sentence you have indeed come to the most flagrant crime of your fellow-citizens, in speaking of injury done to sacred buildings; but even you have not affirmed that this is a crime equal only to the utterance of an insolent word. You have contented yourself with asking, on behalf of those who were guilty of this, that forgiveness which is rightly asked from Christians on the ground of

their overflowing compassion, not on the ground of an alleged equality of all offences. I have already quoted a sentence of Scripture, “All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth.” They shall therefore find mercy if they do not hate truth. This mercy is granted, not as if it were due on the ground of the faults of all being only equal to the fault of those who have uttered rude words, but because the law of Christ claims pardon for those who are penitent, however inhuman and impious their crime may have been. I beg you, esteemed sir, not to propound these paradoxes of the Stoics as rules of conduct for your son Paradoxus, whom we wish to see grow up in piety and in prosperity, to your satisfaction. For what could be worse for himself, yea, what more dangerous for yourself, than that your ingenuous boy should imbibe an error which would make the guilt, I shall not say of parricide, but of insolence to his father, equal only to that of some rude word inconsiderately spoken to a stranger?

16. You are wise, therefore, to insist, when pleading with us for your countrymen on the compassion of Christians, not on the stern doctrines of the Stoical philosophy, which in no wise help, but much rather hinder, the cause which you have undertaken to support. For a merciful disposition, which we must have if it be possible for us to be moved either by your intercession or by their entreaties, is pronounced by the Stoics to be an unworthy weakness, and they expel it utterly from the mind of the wise man, whose perfection, in their opinion, is to be as impassive and inflexible as iron. With more reason, therefore, might it have occurred to you to quote from your own Cicero that sentence in which, praising Caesar, he says, “Of all your virtues, none is more worthy of admiration, none more graceful, than your clemency.” How much more ought this merciful disposition to prevail in the churches which follow Him who said, “I am the way,” and which learn from His word, “All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth”! Fear not, then, that we will try to bring innocent persons to death, when in truth we do not even wish the guilty to experience the punishment which they deserve, being moved by that mercy which, joined with truth, we love in Christ. But the man who, from fear of painfully crossing the will of the guilty, spares and indulges vices which must thereby gather more strength, is less merciful than the man who, lest he should hear his little boy crying, will not take from him a dangerous knife, and is unmoved by fear of the

wounds or death which he may have to bewail as the consequence of his weakness. Reserve, therefore, until the proper time the work of interceding with us for those men, in loving whom (excuse my saying so) you not only do not go beyond us, but are even hitherto refusing to follow our steps; and write rather in your reply what influences you to shun the way which we follow, and in which we beseech you to go along with us towards that fatherland above, in which we rejoice to know that you take great delight.

17. As to those who are by birth your fellow-citizens, you have said indeed that some of them, though not all, were innocent; but, as you must see if you read over again my other letter, you have not made out a defence for them. When, in answer to your remark that you wished to leave your country flourishing, I said that we had felt thorns rather than found flowers in your countrymen, you thought that I wrote in jest. As if, forsooth, in the midst of evils of such magnitude we were in a mood for mirth. Certainly not. While the smoke was ascending from the ruins of our church consumed by fire, were we likely to joke on the subject? Although, indeed, none in your city appeared in my opinion innocent, but those who were absent, or were sufferers, or were destitute both of strength and of authority to prevent the tumult, I nevertheless distinguished in my reply those whose guilt was greater from those who were less to blame, and stated that there was a difference between the cases of those who were moved by fear of offending powerful enemies of the Church, and of those who desired these outrages to be committed; also between those who committed them and those who instigated others to their commission; resolving, however, not to institute inquiry in regard to the instigators, because these, perhaps, could not be ascertained without recourse to the use of tortures, from which we shrink with abhorrence, as utterly inconsistent with our aims. Your friends the Stoics, who hold that all faults are alike, must, however, if they were the judges, pronounce them all equally guilty; and if to this opinion they join that inflexible sternness wherewith they disparage clemency as a vice, their sentence would necessarily be, not that all should be pardoned alike, but that all should be punished alike. Dismiss, therefore, these philosophers altogether from the position of advocates in this case, and rather desire that we may act as Christians, so that, as we desire, we may gain in Christ those whom we forgive, and may not spare them by such indulgence as would be

ruinous to themselves. May God, whose ways are mercy and truth, be pleased to enrich you with true felicity!

LETTER CXI

(NOVEMBER, A.D. 409.)

To Victorianus, His Beloved Lord and Most Longed-for Brother and Fellow-Presbyter, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. My heart has been filled with great sorrow by your letter. You asked me to discuss certain things at great length in my reply; but such calamities as you narrate claim rather many groans and tears than prolix treatises. The whole world, indeed, is afflicted with such portentous misfortunes, that there is scarcely any place where such things as you describe are not being committed and complained of. A short time ago some brethren were massacred by the barbarians even in those deserts of Egypt in which, in order to perfect security, they had chosen places remote from all disturbance as the sites of their monasteries. I suppose, moreover, that the outrages which they have perpetrated in the regions of Italy and Gaul are known to you also; and now similar events begin to be announced to us from many provinces of Spain, which for long seemed exempt from these evils. But why go to a distance for examples? Behold! in our own county of Hippo, which the barbarians have not yet touched, the ravages of the Donatist clergy and Circumcelliones make such havoc in our churches, that perhaps the cruelties of barbarians would be light in comparison. For what barbarian could ever have devised what these have done, viz. casting lime and vinegar into the eyes of our clergymen, besides atrociously beating and wounding every part of their bodies? They also sometimes plunder and burn houses, rob granaries, and pour out oil and wine; and by threatening to do this to all others in the district, they compel many even to be re-baptized. Only yesterday, tidings came to me of forty-eight souls in one place having submitted, under fear of such things, to be rebaptized.

2. These things should make us weep, but not wonder; and we ought to cry unto God that not for our merit, but according to His mercy, He may deliver us from so great evils. For what else was to be expected by the human race,

seeing that these things were so long ago foretold both by the prophets and in the Gospels? We ought not, therefore, to be so inconsistent as to believe these Scriptures when they are read by us, and to complain when they are fulfilled; rather, surely, ought even those who had refused to believe when they read or heard these things in Scripture to become believers now when they behold the word fulfilled; so that under this great pressure, as it were, in the olive-press of the Lord our God, although there be the dregs of unbelieving murmurs and blasphemies, there is also a steady out flowing of pure oil in the confessions and prayers of believers. For unto those men who incessantly reproach the Christian faith, impiously saying that the human race did not suffer such grievous calamities before the Christian doctrine was promulgated throughout the world, it is easy to find a reply in the Lord's own words in the gospel, "That servant which knew not his lord's will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; but the servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." What is there to excite surprise, if, in the Christian dispensation, the world, like that servant, knowing the will of the Lord, and refusing to do it, is beaten with many stripes? These men remark the rapidity with which the gospel is proclaimed: they do not remark the perversity with which by many it is despised. But the meek and pious servants of God, who have to bear a double portion of temporal calamities, since they suffer both at the hands of wicked men and along with them, have also consolations peculiarly their own, and the hope of the world to come; for which reason the apostle says, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall hereafter be revealed in us."

3. Wherefore, my beloved, even when you meet those whose words you say you cannot bear, because they say, "If we have deserved these things for our sins, how comes it that the servants of God are cut off not less than ourselves by the sword of the barbarians, and the handmaids of God are led away into captivity?"—answer them humbly, truly, and piously in such words as these: However carefully we keep the way of righteousness, and yield obedience to our Lord, can we be better than those three men who were cast into the fiery furnace for keeping the law of God? And yet, read what Azarias, one of those three, said, opening his lips in the midst of the

fire: “Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our fathers: Thy name is worthy to be praised and glorified for evermore; for Thou art righteous in all the things that Thou hast done to us; yea, true are all Thy works: Thy ways are right, and all Thy judgments truth. In all the things which Thou hast brought upon us, and upon the holy city of our fathers, even Jerusalem, Thou hast executed true judgment; for according to truth and judgment didst Thou bring all these things upon us because of our sins. For we have sinned and committed iniquity, departing from Thee. In all things have we trespassed, and not obeyed Thy commandments, nor kept them, neither done as Thou hast commanded us, that it might go well with us. Wherefore all that Thou hast brought upon us, and everything that Thou hast done to us, Thou hast done in true judgment. And Thou didst deliver us into the hands of lawless enemies, most hateful forsakers of God, and to an unjust king, and the most wicked in all the world. And now we cannot open our mouths: we are become a shame and reproach to Thy servants, and to them that worship Thee. Yet deliver us not up wholly, for Thy name’s sake, neither disannul Thou Thy covenant; and cause not Thy mercy to depart from us, for Thy beloved Abraham’s sake, for Thy servant Isaac’s sake, and for Thy holy Israel’s sake, to whom Thou hast spoken, and promised that Thou wouldst multiply their seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand that lieth upon the sea-shore. For we, O Lord, are become less than any nation, and be kept under this day in all the world because of our sins.” Here, my brother, thou mayest surely see how men such as they, men of holiness, men of courage in the midst of tribulation,—from which, however, they were delivered, the flame itself fearing to consume them, were not silent about their sins, but confessed them, knowing that because of these sins they were deservedly and justly brought low.

4. Nay, can we be better men than Daniel himself, concerning whom God, speaking to the prince of Tyre, says by the prophet Ezekiel, “Art thou wiser than Daniel?” who also is placed among the three righteous men to whom alone God saith that He would grant deliverance,—pointing, doubtless, in them to three representative righteous men,—declaring that he would deliver only Noah, Daniel, and Job, and that they should save along with themselves neither son nor daughter, but only their own souls? Nevertheless, read also the prayer of Daniel, and see how, when in captivity,

he confesses not only the sins of his people, but his own also, and acknowledges that because of these the justice of God has visited them with the punishment of captivity and with reproach. For it is thus written: “And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: and I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said: O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love Him, and to them that keep His commandments; we have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from Thy precepts and from Thy judgments: neither have we hearkened unto Thy servants the prophets, which spake in Thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither Thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against Thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against Thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against Him; neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord, to walk in His laws which He set before us by His servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed Thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey Thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against them. And He hath confirmed His words which He spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil; for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Thy truth. Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all His works which He doeth; for we obeyed not His voice. And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought Thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten Thee renown as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly. O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness, I beseech Thee, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away from Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain, because, for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now, therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant, and His supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary which is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline Thine ear, and hear; open Thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Thy name; for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousnesses, but for Thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do: defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God; for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name. And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin, and the sin of my people . . ." Observe how he spoke first of his own sins, and then of the sins of his people. And he extols the righteousness of God, and gives praise to God for this, that He visits even His saints with the rod, not unjustly, but because of their sins. If, therefore, this be the language of men who by reason of their eminent sanctity found even encompassing flames and lions harmless, what language would befit men standing on a level so low as we occupy, seeing that, whatever righteousness we may seem to practise, we are very far from being worthy of comparison with them?

5. Lest, however, any one should think that those servants of God, whose death at the hand of barbarians you relate, ought to have been delivered from them in the same manner as the three young men were delivered from the fire, and Daniel from the lions, let such an one know that these miracles were performed in order that the kings by whom they were delivered to these punishments might believe that they worshipped the true God. For in His hidden counsel and mercy God was in this manner making provision for the salvation of these kings. It pleased Him, however, to make no such provision in the case of Antiochus the king, who cruelly put the Maccabees to death; but He punished the heart of the obdurate king with sharper severity through their most glorious sufferings. Yet read what was said by even one of them—the sixth who suffered: "After him they brought also the sixth, who, being ready to die, said, Be not deceived without cause; for we suffer these things for ourselves, having sinned against God: therefore marvellous things are done unto us; but think not thou that takest in hand to strive against God and His law that thou shalt escape unpunished.'" You see

how these also are wise in the exercise of humility and sincerity, confessing that they are chastened because of their sins by the Lord, of whom it is written: “Whom the Lord loveth He correcteth,” and “He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth;” wherefore the Apostle says also, “If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.”

6. These things read faithfully, and proclaim faithfully; and to the utmost of your power beware, and teach others that they must beware, of murmuring against God in these trials and tribulations. You tell me that good, faithful, and holy servants of God have been cut off by the sword of the barbarians. But what matters it whether it is by sickness or by sword that they have been set free from the body? The Lord is careful as to the character with which His servants go from this world—not as to the mere circumstances of their departure, excepting this, that lingering weakness involves more suffering than a sudden death; and yet we read of this same protracted and dreadful weakness as the lot of that Job to whose righteousness God Himself, who cannot be deceived, bears such testimony.

7. Most calamitous, and much to be bewailed, is the captivity of chaste and holy women; but their God is not in the power of their captors, nor does He forsake those captives whom He knows indeed to be His own. For those holy men, the record of whose sufferings and confessions I have quoted from the Holy Scriptures, being held in captivity by enemies who had carried them away, uttered those words, which, preserved in writing, we can read for ourselves, in order to make us understand that servants of God, even when they are in captivity, are not forsaken by their Lord. Nay, more, do we know what wonders of power and grace the almighty and merciful God may please to accomplish by means of these captive women even in the land of the barbarians? Be that as it may, cease not to intercede with groanings on their behalf before God, and to seek, so far as your power and His providence permits you, to do for them whetever can be done, and to give them whatever consolation can be given, as time and opportunity may be granted. A few years ago, a nun, a grand-daughter of Bishop Severus, was carried off by barbarians from the neighbourhood of Sitifa, and was by the marvellous mercy of God restored with great honour to her parents. For

at the very time when the maiden entered the house of her barbarian captors, it became the scene of much distress through the sudden illness of its owners, all the barbarians—three brothers, if I mistake not, or more—being attacked with most dangerous disease. Their mother observed that the maiden was dedicated to God, and believed that by her prayers her sons might be delivered from the danger of death, which was imminent. She begged her to intercede for them, promising that if they were healed she should be restored to her parents. She fasted and prayed, and straightway was heard; for, as the result showed, the event had been appointed that this might take place. They therefore, having recovered health by this unexpected favour from God, regarded her with admiration and respect, and fulfilled the promise which their mother had made.

8. Pray, therefore, to God for them, and beseech Him to enable them to say such things as the holy Azariah, whom we have mentioned, poured forth along with other expressions in his prayer and confession before God. For in the land of their captivity these women are in circumstances similar to those of the three Hebrew youths in that land in which they could not sacrifice to the Lord their God in the manner prescribed: they cannot either bring an oblation to the altar of God, or find a priest by whom their oblation may be presented to God. May God therefore grant them grace to say to Him what Azariah said in the following sentences of his prayer: “Neither is there at this time prince, or prophet, or leader, or burnt-offering, or sacrifice, or oblation, or incense, or place to sacrifice before Thee, and to find mercy: nevertheless, in a contrite heart and humble spirit let us be accepted. Like as in the burnt-offerings of rams and bullocks, and like as in ten thousands of fat lambs, so let our sacrifice be in Thy sight this day. And grant that we may wholly go after Thee; for they shall not be confounded that put their trust in Thee. And now we follow Thee with all our heart: we fear Thee and seek Thy face. Put us not to shame, but deal with us after Thy loving-kindness, and according to the multitude of Thy mercies. Deliver us also according to Thy marvellous works, and give glory to Thy name, O Lord; and let all them that do Thy servants hurt be ashamed: and let them be confounded in all their power and might, and let their strength be broken: and let them know that Thou art Lord, the only God, and glorious over the whole world.”

9. When His servants use these words, and pray fervently to God, He will stand by them, as He has been wont ever to stand by His own, and will either not permit their chaste bodies to suffer any wrong from the lust of their enemies, or if He permit this, He will not lay sin to their charge in the matter. For when the soul is not defiled by any impurity of consent to such wrong, the body also is thereby protected from all participation in the guilt; and in so far as nothing was committed or permitted by lust on the part of her who suffers, the whole blame lies with him who did the wrong, and all the violence done to the sufferer will be regarded not as implying the baseness of wanton compliance, but as a wound blamelessly endured. For such is the worth of unblemished purity in the soul, that while it remains intact, the body also retains its purity unsullied, even although by violence its members may be overpowered.

I beg your Charity to be satisfied with this letter, which is very long considering my other work (although too short to meet your wishes), and is somewhat hurriedly written, because the bearer is in haste to be gone. The Lord will furnish you with much more abundant consolation if you read attentively His holy word.

LETTER CXV

(A.D. 410.)

To Fortunatus, My Colleague in the Priesthood, My Lord Most Blessed, and My Brother Beloved with Profound Esteem, and to the Brethren Who are with Thee, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Your Holiness is well acquainted with Faventius, a tenant on the estate of the Paratian forest. He, apprehending some injury or other at the hands of the owner of that estate, took refuge in the church at Hippo, and was there, as fugitives are wont to do, waiting till he could get the matter settled through my mediation. Becoming every day, as often happens, less and less alarmed, and in fact completely off his guard, as if his adversary had desisted from his enmity, he was, when leaving the house of a friend after supper, suddenly carried off by one Florentinus, an officer of the Count, who used in this act of violence a band of armed men sufficient for the purpose. When this was made known to me, and as yet it was unknown by whose orders or by whose hands he had been carried off, though suspicion naturally fell on the man from whose apprehended injury he had claimed the protection of the Church, I at once communicated with the tribune who is in command of the coast-guard. He sent out soldiers, but no one could be found. But in the morning we learned in what house he had passed the night, and also that he had left it after cock-crowing, with the man who had him in custody. I sent also to the place to which it was reported that he had been removed: there the officer above-named was found, but refused to allow the presbyter whom I had sent to have even a sight of his prisoner. On the following day I sent a letter requesting that he should be allowed the privilege which the Emperor appointed in cases such as his, namely, that persons summoned to appear to be tried should in the municipal court be interrogated whether they desired to spend thirty days under adequate surveillance in the town, in order to arrange their affairs, or find funds for the expense of their trial, my expectation being that within that period of time we might perhaps bring his matters to some amicable settlement. Already, however, he had gone farther under charge of the officer Florentinus; but my fear is, lest perchance, if he be brought before the tribunal of the magistrate, he suffer some injustice. For although the integrity of that judge is widely famed as incorruptible, Faventius has for his adversary a man of very great wealth. To secure that money may not prevail in that court, I beg your Holiness, my beloved lord and venerable brother, to have the kindness to give the accompanying letter to the honourable magistrate, a man very much beloved by us, and to read this letter also to him; for I have not thought it necessary to write twice the same statement of the case. I trust that he will delay the hearing of the case, because I do not know whether the man is innocent or guilty. I trust also that he will not overlook the fact that the laws have been violated in his having been suddenly carried off, without being brought, as was enacted by the Emperor, before the municipal court, in order to his being asked whether he wished to accept the benefit of the delay of thirty days, so that in this way we may get the affair settled between him and his adversary.

LETTER CXVI

(ENCLOSED IN THE FOREGOING LETTER.)

To Generosus, My Noble and Justly Distinguished Lord, My Honoured and Much-Loved Son, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Although the praises and favourable report of your administration and your own illustrious good name always give me the greatest pleasure because of the love which we feel due to your merit and to your benevolence, on no occasion have I hitherto been burdensome to your Excellency as an intercessor requesting any favour from you, my much-loved lord and justly-honoured son. When, however, your Excellency has learned from the letters which I have sent to my venerable brother and colleague, Fortunatus, what has occurred in the town in which I serve the Church of God, your kind heart will at once perceive the necessity under which I have been constrained to trespass by this petition on your time, already fully occupied. I am perfectly assured that, cherishing towards us the feeling which, in the name of Christ, we are fully warranted to expect, you will act in this matter as becomes not only an upright, but also a Christian magistrate.

LETTER CXVII

(A.D. 410.)

From Dioscorus to Augustin.

To you, who esteem the substance, not the style of expression, as important, any formal preamble to this letter would be not only unnecessary, but irksome. Therefore, without further preface, I beg your attention. The aged Alypius had often promised, in answer to my request, that he would, with your help, furnish a reply to a very few brief questions of mine in regard to the Dialogues of Cicero; and as he is said to be at present in Mauritania, I ask and earnestly entreat you to condescend to give, without his assistance, those answers which, even had your brother been present, it would doubtless have fallen to you to furnish. What I require is not money, it is not gold; though, if you possessed these, you would, I am sure, be willing to give them to me for any fit object. This request of mine you can grant without effort, by merely speaking. I might importune you at a greater length, and through many of your dear friends; but I know your disposition, that you do not desire to be solicited, but show kindness readily to all, if only there be nothing improper in the thing requested: and there is absolutely nothing improper in what I ask. Be this, however, as it may, I beg you to do me this kindness, for I am on the point of embarking on a voyage. You know how very painful it is to me to be burdensome to any one, and much more to one of your frank disposition; but God alone knows how irresistible is the pressure of the necessity under which I have made this application. For, taking leave of you, and committing myself to divine protection, I am about to undertake a voyage; and you know the ways of men, how prone they are to censure, and you see how any one will be regarded as illiterate and stupid who, when questions are addressed to him, can return no answer. Therefore, I implore you, answer all my queries without delay. Send me not away downcast. I ask this that so I may see my parents; for on this one errand I have sent Cerdo to you, and I now delay only till he return. My brother Zenobius has been appointed imperial remembrancer, and has sent me a free pass for my journey, with provisions. If I am not worthy of your reply, let at least the fear of my forfeiting these provisions by delay move you to give answers to my little questions. May the most high God spare you long to us in health! Papas salutes your excellency most cordially.

LETTER CXVIII

(A.D. 410.)

Augustin to Dioscorus.

Chap. I

1. You have sent suddenly upon me a countless multitude of questions, by which you must have purposed to blockade me on every side, or rather bury me completely, even if you were under the impression that I was otherwise unoccupied and at leisure; for how could I, even though wholly at leisure, furnish the solution of so many questions to one in such haste as you are, and, in fact, as you write, on the eve of a journey? I would, indeed, be prevented by the mere number of the questions to be resolved, even if their

solution were easy. But they are so perplexingly intricate, and so hard, that even if they were few in number, and engaging me when otherwise wholly at leisure, they would, by the mere time required, exhaust my powers of application, and wear out my strength. I would, however, fain snatch you forcibly away from the midst of those inquiries in which you so much delight, and fix you down among the cares which engage my attention, in order that you may either learn not to be unprofitably curious, or desist from presuming to impose the task of feeding and fostering your curiosity upon men among whose cares one of the greatest is to repress and curb those who are too inquisitive. For if time and pains are devoted to writing anything to you, how much better and more profitably are these employed in endeavours to cut off those vain and treacherous passions (which are to be guarded against with a caution proportioned to the ease with which they impose upon us, by their being disguised and cloaked under the semblance of virtue and the name of liberal studies), rather than in causing them to be, by our service, or rather obsequiousness, so to speak, roused to a more vehement assertion of the despotism under which they so oppress your excellent spirit.

2. For tell me what good purpose is served by the many Dialogues which you have read, if they have in no way helped you towards the discovery and attainment of the end of all your actions? For by your letter you indicate plainly enough what you have proposed to yourself as the end to be attained by all this most ardent study of yours, which is at once useless to yourself and troublesome to me. For when you were in your letter using every means to persuade me to answer the questions which you sent, you wrote these words: “I might importune you at greater length, and through many of your dear friends; but I know your disposition, that you do not desire to be solicited, but show kindness readily to all, if only there be nothing improper in the thing requested: and there is absolutely nothing improper in what I ask. Be this, however, as it may, I beg you to do me this kindness, for I am on the point of embarking on a voyage.” In these words of your letter you are indeed right in your opinion as to myself, that I am desirous of showing kindness to all, if only there be nothing improper in the request made; but it is not my opinion that there is nothing improper in what you ask. For when I consider how a bishop is distracted and overwrought by the cares of his

office clamouring on every side, it does not seem to me proper for him suddenly, as if deaf, to withdraw himself from all these, and devote himself to the work of expounding to a single student some unimportant questions in the Dialogues of Cicero. The impropriety of this you yourself apprehend, although, carried away with zeal in the pursuit of your studies, you will by no means give heed to it. For what other construction can I put on the fact that, after saying that in this matter there is absolutely nothing improper, you have immediately subjoined: “Be this, however, as it may, I beg you to do me this kindness, for I am on the point of embarking on a voyage”? For this intimates that in your view, at least, there is no impropriety in your request, but that whatever impropriety may be in it, you nevertheless ask me to do what you ask, because you are about to go on a voyage. Now what is the force of this supplementary plea—”I am on the point of embarking on a voyage”? Do you mean that, unless you were in these circumstances, I ought not to do you service in which anything improper may be involved? You think, forsooth, that the impropriety can be washed away by salt water. But even were it so, my share at least of the fault would remain unexpiated, because I do not propose undertaking a voyage.

3. You write, further, that I know how very painful it is to you to be burdensome to any one, and you solemnly protest that God alone knows how irresistible is the necessity under which you make the application. When I came to this statement in your letter, I turned my attention eagerly to learn the nature of the necessity; and, behold, you bring it before me in these words: “You know the ways of men, how prone they are to censure, and how any one will be regarded as illiterate and stupid who, when questions are addressed to him, can return no answer.” On reading this sentence, I felt a burning desire to reply to your letter; for, by the morbid weakness of mind which this indicated, you pierced my inmost heart, and forced your way into the midst of my cares, so that I could not refuse to minister to your relief, so far as God might enable me—not by devising a solution of your difficulties, but by breaking the connection between your happiness and the wretched support on which it now insecurely hangs, viz. the opinions of men, and fastening it to a hold which is firm and immovable. Do you not, O Dioscorus, remember an ingenious line of your favourite Persius, in which he not only rebukes your folly, but administers

to your boyish head, if you have only sense to feel it, a deserved correction, restraining your vanity with the words, “To know is nothing in your eyes unless another knows that you know”? You have, as I said before, read so many Dialogues, and devoted your attention to so many discussions of philosophers—tell me which of them has placed the chief end of his actions in the applause of the vulgar, or in the opinion even of good and wise men? But you,—and what should make you the more ashamed,—you, when on the eve of sailing away from Africa, give evidence of your having made signal progress, forsooth, in your studies here, when you affirm that the only reason why you impose the task of expounding Cicero to you upon bishops, who are already oppressed with work and engrossed with matters of a very different nature, is, that you fear that if, when questioned by men prone to censure, you cannot answer, you will be regarded by them as illiterate and stupid. O cause well worthy to occupy the hours which bishops devote to study while other men sleep!

4. You seem to me to be prompted to mental effort night and day by no other motive than ambition to be praised by men for your industry and acquisitions in learning. Although I have ever regarded this as fraught with danger to persons who are striving after the true and the right, I am now, by your case, more convinced of the danger than before. For it is due to no other cause than this same pernicious habit that you have failed to see by what motive we might be induced to grant to you what you asked; for as by a perverted judgment you yourself are urged on to acquire a knowledge of the things about which you put questions, from no other motive than that you may receive praise or escape censure from men, you imagine that we, by a like perversity of judgment, are to be influenced by the considerations alleged in your request. Would that, when we declare to you that by your writing such things concerning yourself we are moved, not to grant your request, but to reprove and correct you, we might be able to effect for you also complete emancipation from the influence of a boon so worthless and deceitful as the applause of men! “It is the manner of men,” you say, “to be prone to censure.” What then? “Any one who can make no reply when questions are addressed to him,” you say, “will be regarded as illiterate and stupid.” Behold, then, I ask you a question not concerning something in the books of Cicero, whose meaning, perchance, his readers may not be able to

find, but concerning your own letter and the meaning of your own words. My question is: Why did you not say, “Any one who can make no reply will be proved to be illiterate and stupid,” but prefer to say, “He will be regarded as illiterate and stupid “? Why, if not for this reason, that you yourself already understand well enough that the person who fails to answer such questions is not in reality, but only in the opinion of some, illiterate and stupid? But I warn you that he who fears to be subjected to the edge of the pruning-hook by the tongues of such men is a sapless log, and is therefore not only regarded as illiterate and stupid, but is actually such, and proved to be so.

5. Perhaps you will say, “But seeing that I am not stupid, and that I am specially earnest in striving not to be stupid, I am reluctant even to be regarded as stupid.” And rightly so; but I ask, What is your motive in this reluctance? For in stating why you did not hesitate to burden us with those questions which you wish to have solved and explained, you said that this was the reason, and that this was the end, and an end so necessary in your estimation that you said it was of overwhelming urgency,—lest, forsooth, if you were posed with these questions and gave no answer, you should be regarded as illiterate and stupid by men prone to censure. Now, I ask, is this [jealousy as to your own reputation] the whole reason why you beg this from us, or is it because of some ulterior object that you are unwilling to be thought illiterate and stupid? If this be the whole reason, you see, as I think, that this one thing [the praise of men] is the end pursued by that vehement zeal of yours, by which, as you admit, a burden is imposed on us. But, from Dioscorus, what can be to us a burden, except that burden which Dioscorus himself unconsciously bears,—a burden which he will begin to feel only when he attempts to rise,—a burden of which I would fain believe that it is not so bound to him as to defy his efforts to shake his shoulders free? And this I say not because these questions engage your studies, but because they are studied by you for such an end. For surely you by this time feel that this end is trivial, unsubstantial, and light as air. It is also apt to produce in the soul what may be likened to a dangerous swelling, beneath which lurk the germs of decay, and by it the eye of the mind becomes suffused, so that it cannot discern the riches of truth. Believe this, my Dioscorus, it is true: so shall I enjoy thee in unfeigned longing for truth, and in that essential dignity

of truth by the shadow of which you are turned aside. If I have failed to convince you of this by the method which I have now used, I know no other that I can use. For you do not see it; nor can you possibly see it so long as you build your joys on the crumbling foundation of human applause.

6. If, however, this be not the end aimed at in these actions and by this zeal of yours, but there is some other ulterior reason for your unwillingness to be regarded as illiterate and stupid, I ask what that reason is. If it be to remove impediments to the acquisition of temporal riches, or the obtaining of a wife, or the grasping of honours, and other things of that kind which are flowing past with a headlong current, and dragging to the bottom those who fall into them, it is assuredly not our duty to help you towards that end, nay, rather we ought to turn you away from it. For we do not so forbid your fixing the aim of your studies in the precarious possession of renown as to make you leave, as it were, the waters of the Mincius and enter the Eridanus, into which, perchance, the Mincius would carry you even without yourself making the change. For when the vanity of human applause has failed to satisfy the soul, because it furnishes for its nourishment nothing real and substantial, this same eager desire compels the mind to go on to something else as more rich and productive; and if, nevertheless, this also belong to the things which pass away with time, it is as when one river leads us into another, so that there can be no rest from our miseries so long as the end aimed at in our discharge of duty is placed in that which is unstable. We desire, therefore, that in some firm and immutable good you should fix the home of your most stedfast efforts, and the perfectly secure resting-place of all your good and honourable activity. Is it, perchance, your intention, if you succeed by the breath of propitious fame, or even by spreading your sails for its fitful gusts, in reaching that earthly happiness of which I have spoken, to make it subservient to the acquisition of the other—the sure and true and satisfying good? But to me it does not seem probable—and truth itself forbids the supposition—that it should be reached either by such a circuitous way when it is at hand, or at such cost when it is freely given.

7. Perhaps you think that we ought to turn the praise of men itself to good account as an instrument for making others accessible to counsels regarding

that which is good and useful; and perhaps you are anxious lest, if men regard you as illiterate and stupid, they think you unworthy to receive their earnest or patient attention, if you were either exhorting any one to do well, or reproving the malice and wickedness of an evil-doer. If, in proposing these questions, you contemplated this righteous and beneficent end, we have certainly been wronged by your not giving the preference to this in your letter as the consideration by which we might be moved either to grant willingly what you asked, or, if declining your request, to do so on the ground of some other cause which might perchance prevent us, but not on the ground of our being ashamed to accept the position of serving or even not resisting the aspirations of your vanity. For, I pray you, consider how much better and more profitable it is for you to receive from us with far more certainty and with less loss of time those principles of truth by which you can for yourself refute all that is false, and by so doing be prevented from cherishing an opinion so false and contemptible as this—that you are learned and intelligent if you have studied with a zeal in which there is more pride than prudence the worn-out errors of many writers of a bygone age. But this opinion I do not suppose you now to hold, for surely I have not in vain spoken so long to Dioscorus things so manifestly true; and from this, as understood, I proceed with my letter.

Chap. II

8. Wherefore, seeing that you do not consider a man illiterate and stupid merely on the ground of ignorance of these things, but only if he be ignorant of the truth itself, and that, consequently, the opinions of any one who has written or may have written on these subjects are either true, and therefore are already held by you, or false, and therefore you may be content not to know them, and need not be consumed with vain solicitude about knowing the variety of the opinions of other men under the fear of otherwise remaining illiterate and stupid,—seeing, I say, that this is the case, let us now, if you please, consider whether, in the event of other men, who are, as you say, prone to censure, finding you ignorant of these things, and therefore regarding you, though falsely, as an illiterate and stupid person, this mistake of theirs ought to have so much weight with you as to make it not unseemly for you to apply to bishops for instruction in these

things. I propose this on the assumption that we now believe you to be seeking this instruction in order that by it you may be helped in recommending the truth to men, and in reclaiming men who, if they supposed you to be illiterate and stupid in regard to those books of Cicero, would regard you as a person from whom they considered it unworthy of them to receive any useful or profitable instruction. Believe me, you are under a mistake.

9. For, in the first place, I do not at all see that, in the countries in which you are so afraid of being esteemed deficient in education and acuteness, there are any persons who will ask you a single question about these matters. Both in this country, to which you came to learn these things, and at Rome, you know by experience how little they are esteemed, and that, in consequence, they are neither taught nor learned; and throughout all Africa, so far are you from being troubled by any such questioner, that you cannot find any one who will be troubled with your questions, and are compelled by the dearth of such persons to send your questions to bishops to be solved by them: as if, indeed, these bishops, although in their youth, under the influence of the same ardour—let me rather say error—which carries you away, they were at pains to learn these things as matters of great moment, permitted them still to remain in memory now that their heads are white with age and they are burdened with the responsibilities of episcopal office; or as if, supposing them to desire to retain these things in memory, greater and graver cares would not in spite of their desire banish them from their hearts; or as if, in the event of some of these things lingering in recollection by the force of long habit, they would not wish rather to bury in utter oblivion what was thus remembered, than to answer senseless questions at a time when, even amidst the comparative leisure enjoyed in the schools and in the lecture-rooms of rhetoricians, they seem to have so lost both voice and vigour that, in order to have instruction imparted concerning them, it is deemed necessary to send from Carthage to Hippo,—a place in which all such things are so unwonted and so wholly foreign, that if, in taking the trouble of writing an answer to your question, I wished to look at any passage to discover the order of thought in the context preceding or following the words requiring exposition, I would be utterly unable to find a manuscript of the works of Cicero. However, these teachers of rhetoric in

Carthage who have failed to satisfy you in this matter are not only not blamed, but, on the contrary, commended by me, if, as I suppose, they have not forgotten that the scene of these contests was wont to be, not the Roman forum, but the Greek gymnasia. But when you have applied your mind to these gymnasia, and have found even them to be in such things bare and cold, the church of the Christians of Hippo occurred to you as a place where you might lay down your cares, because the bishop now occupying that see at one time took fees for instructing boys in these things. But, on the one hand, I do not wish you to be still a boy, and, on the other hand, it is not becoming for me, either for a fee or as a favour, to be dealing now in childish things. This, therefore, being the case—seeing, that is to say, that these two great cities, Rome and Carthage, the living centres of Latin literature, neither try your patience by asking you such questions as you speak of, nor care patiently to listen to you when you propound them, I am amazed in a degree beyond all expression that a young man of your good sense should be afraid lest you should be afflicted with any questioner on these subjects in the cities of Greece and of the East. You are much more likely to hear jackdaws in Africa than this manner of conversation in those lands.

10. Suppose, however, in the next place, that I am wrong, and that perchance some one should arise putting questions like these,—a phenomenon the more unwelcome because in those parts peculiarly absurd, —are you not much more afraid lest far more readily men arise who, being Greeks, and finding you settled in Greece, and acquainted with the Greek language as your mother tongue, may ask you some things in the original works of their philosophers which Cicero may not have put into his treatises? If this happen, what reply will you make? Will you say that you preferred to learn these things from the books of Latin rather than of Greek authors? By such an answer you will, in the first place, put an affront upon Greece; and you know how men of that nation resent this. And in the next place, they being now wounded and angry, how readily will you find what you are too anxious to avoid, that they will count you on the one hand stupid, because you preferred to learn the opinions of the Greek philosophers, or, more properly speaking, some isolated and scattered tenets of their philosophy, in Latin dialogues, rather than to study the complete

and connected system of their opinions in the Greek originals, and, on the other hand, illiterate, because, although ignorant of so many things written in your language, you have unsuccessfully laboured to gather some of them together from writings in a foreign tongue. Or will you perhaps reply that you did not despise the Greek writings on these subjects, but that you devoted your attention first to the study of Latin works, and now, proficient in these, are beginning to inquire after Greek learning? If this does not make you blush, to confess that you, being a Greek, have in your boyhood learned Latin, and are now, like a man of some foreign nation, desirous of studying Greek literature, surely you will not blush to own that in the department of Latin literature you are ignorant of some things, of which you may perceive how many versed in Latin learning are equally ignorant, if you will only consider that, although living in the midst of so many learned men in Carthage, you assure me that it is under the pressure of necessity that you impose this burden on me.

11. Finally, suppose that you, being asked all those questions which you have submitted to me, have been able to answer them all. Behold! you are now spoken of as most learned and most acute; behold! now this insignificant breath of Greek laudation raises you to heaven. Be it yours now to remember your responsibilities and the end for which you coveted these praises, namely, that to men who have been easily won to admire you by these trifles, and who are now hanging most affectionately and eagerly on your lips, you may impart some truly important and wholesome instruction; and I should like to know whether you possess, and can rightly impart to others, that which is truly most important and wholesome. For it is absurd if, after learning many unnecessary things with a view to preparing the ears of men to receive what is necessary, you be found not to possess those necessary things for the reception of which you have by these unnecessary things prepared the way; it is absurd if, while busying yourself with learning things by which you may win men’s attention, you refuse to learn that which may be poured into their minds when their attention is secured. But if you reply that you have already learned this, and say that the truth supremely necessary is Christian doctrine, which I know that you esteem above all other things, placing in it alone your hope of everlasting salvation, then surely this does not demand a knowledge of the Dialogues of

Cicero, and a collection of the beggarly and divided opinions of other men, in order to your persuading men to give it a hearing. Let your character and manner of life command the attention of those who are to receive any such teaching from you. I would not have you open the way for teaching truth by first teaching what must be afterwards unlearned.

12. For if the knowledge of the discordant and mutually contradictory opinions of others is of any service to him who would obtain an entrance for Christian truth in overthrowing the opposition of error, it is useful only in the way of preventing the assailant of the truth from being at liberty to fix his eye solely on the work of controverting your tenets, while carefully hiding his own from view. For the knowledge of the truth is of itself sufficient both to detect and to subvert all errors, even those which may not have been heard before, if only they are brought forward. If, however, in order to secure not only the demolition of open errors, but also the rooting out of those which lurk in darkness, it is necessary for you to be acquainted with the erroneous opinions which others have advanced, let both eye and ear be wakeful, I beseech you,—look well and listen well whether any of our assailants bring forward a single argument from Anaximenes and from Anaxagoras, when, though the Stoic and Epicurean philosophies were more recent and taught largely, even their ashes are not so warm as that a single spark can be struck out from them against the Christian faith. The din which resounds in the battle-field of controversy now comes from innumerable small companies and cliques of sectaries, some of them easily discomfited, others presuming to make bold resistance,—such as the partisans of Donatus, Maximian, and Manichaeus here, or the unruly herds of Arians, Eunomians, Macedonians, and Cataphrygians and other pests which abound in the countries to which you are on your way. If you shrink from the task of acquainting yourself with the errors of all these sects, what occasion have we in defending the Christian religion to inquire after the tenets of Anaximenes, and with idle curiosity to awaken anew controversies which have slept for ages, when already the cavillings and arguments even of some of the heretics who claimed the glory of the Christian name, such as the Marcionites and the Sabellians, and many more, have been put to silence? Nevertheless, if it be necessary, as I have said, to know beforehand some of the opinions which war against the truth, and become thoroughly

conversant with these, it is our duty to give a place in such study to the heretics who call themselves Christians, much rather than to Anaxagoras and Democritus.

Chap. III

13. Again, whoever may put to you the questions which you have propounded to us, let him understand that, under the guidance of deeper erudition and greater wisdom, you are ignorant of things like these. For if Themistocles regarded it as a small matter that he was looked upon as imperfectly educated when he had declined to play on the lyre at a banquet, and at the same time, when, after he had confessed ignorance of this accomplishment, one said, “What, then, do you know?” gave as his reply, “The art of making a small republic great”—are you to hesitate about admitting ignorance in trifles like these, when it is in your power to answer any one who may ask, “What, then, do you know?”—”The secret by which without such knowledge a man may be blessed”? And if you do not yet possess this secret, you act in searching into those other matters with as blind perversity as if, when labouring under some dangerous disease of the body, you eagerly sought after dainties in food and finery in dress, instead of physic and physicians. For this attainment ought not to be put off upon any pretext whatever, and no other knowledge ought, especially in our age, to receive a prior place in your studies. And now see how easily you may have this knowledge if you desire it. He who inquires how he may attain a blessed life is assuredly inquiring after nothing else than this: where is the highest good? in other words, wherein resides man’s supreme good, not according to the perverted and hasty opinions of men, but according to the sure and immovable truth? Now its residence is not found by any one except in the body, or in the mind, or in God, or in two of these, or in the three combined. If, then, you have learned that neither the supreme good nor any part whatever of the supreme good is in the body, the remaining alternatives are, that it is in the mind, or in God, or in both combined. And if now you have also learned that what is true of the body in this respect is equally true of the mind, what now remains but God Himself as the One in whom resides man’s supreme good?—not that there are no other goods, but that good is called the supreme good to which all others are related. For

every one is blessed when he enjoys that for the sake of which he desires to have all other things, seeing that it is loved for its own sake, and not on account of something else. And the supreme good is said to be there because at this point nothing is found towards which the supreme good can go forth, or to which it is related. In it is the resting-place of desire; in it is assured fruition; in it the most tranquil satisfaction of a will morally perfect.

14. Give me a man who sees at once that the body is not the good of the mind, but that the mind is rather the good of the body: with such a man we would, of course, forbear from inquiring whether the highest good of which we speak, or any part of it, is in the body. For that the mind is better than the body is a truth which it would be utter folly to deny. Equally absurd would it be to deny that that which gives a happy life, or any part of a happy life, is better than that which receives the boon. The mind, therefore, does not receive from the body either the supreme good or any part of the supreme good. Men who do not see this have been blinded by that sweetness of carnal pleasures which they do not discern to be a consequence of imperfect health. Now, perfect health of body shall be the consummation of the immortality of the whole man. For God has endowed the soul with a nature so powerful, that from that consummate fulness of joy which is promised to the saints in the end of time, some portion overflows also upon the lower part of our nature, the body,—not the blessedness which is proper to the part which enjoys and understands, but the plenitude of health, that is, the vigour of incorruption. Men who, as I have said, do not see this war with each other in unsatisfactory debates, each maintaining the view which may please his own fancy, but all placing the supreme good of man in the body, and so stir up crowds of disorderly carnal minds, of whom the Epicureans have flourished in pre-eminent estimation with the unlearned multitude.

15. Give me a man who sees at once, moreover, that when the mind is happy, it is happy not by good which belongs to itself, else it would never be unhappy: and with such a man we would, of course, forbear from inquiring whether that highest and, so to speak, bliss-bestowing good, or any part of it, is in the mind. For when the mind is elated with joy in itself, as if in good which belongs to itself, it is proud. But when the mind

perceives itself to be mutable,—a fact which may be learned from this, even though nothing else proved it, that the mind from being foolish may be made wise,—and apprehends that wisdom is unchangeable, it must at the same time apprehend that wisdom is superior to its own nature, and that it finds more abundant and abiding joy in the communications and light of wisdom than in itself. Thus desisting and subsiding from boasting and self-conceit, it strives to cling to God, and to be recruited and reformed by Him who is unchangeable; whom it now understands to be the Author not only of every species of all things with which it comes in contact, either by the bodily senses or by intellectual faculties, but also of even the very capacity of taking form before any form has been taken, since the formless is defined to be that which can receive a form. Therefore it feels its own instability more, just in proportion as it clings less to God, whose being is perfect: it discerns also that the perfection of His being is consummate because He is immutable, and therefore neither gains nor loses, but that in itself every change by which it gains capacity for perfect clinging to God is advantageous, but every change by which it loses is pernicious, and further, that all loss tends towards destruction; and although it is not manifest whether any thing is ultimately destroyed, it is manifest to every one that the loss brings destruction so far that the object no longer is what it was. Whence the mind infers that the one reason why things suffer loss, or are liable to suffer loss, is, that they were made out of nothing; so that their property of being, and of permanence, and the arrangement whereby each finds even according to its imperfections its own place in the complex whole, all depend on the goodness and omnipotence of Him whose being is perfect, and who is the Creator able to make out of nothing not only something, but something great; and that the first sin, i.e. the first voluntary loss, is rejoicing in its own power: for it rejoices in something less than would be the source of its joy if it rejoiced in the power of God, which is unquestionably greater. Not perceiving this, and looking only to the capacities of the human mind, and the great beauty of its achievements in word and deed, some, who would have been ashamed to place man’s supreme good in the body, have, by placing it in the mind, assigned to it unquestionably a lower sphere than that assigned to it by unsophisticated reason. Among Greek philosophers who hold these views, the chief place both in number of adherents and in subtlety of disputation has been held by the Stoics, who have, however, in consequence of their opinion that in nature everything is material, succeeded in turning the mind rather from carnal than material objects.

16. Among those, again, who say that our supreme and only good is to enjoy God, by whom both we ourselves and all things were made, the most eminent have been the Platonists, who not unreasonably judged it to belong to their duty to confute the Stoics and Epicureans—the latter especially, and almost exclusively. The Academic School is identical with the Platonists, as is shown plainly enough by the links of unbroken succession connecting the schools. For if you ask who was the predecessor of Arcesilas, the first who, announcing no doctrine of his own, set himself to the one work of refuting the Stoics and Epicureans, you will find that it was Polemo; ask who preceded Polemo, it was Xenocrates; but Xenocrates was Plato's disciple, and by him appointed his successor in the academy. Wherefore, as to this question concerning the supreme good, if we set aside the representatives of conflicting views, and consider the abstract question, you find at once that two errors confront each other as diametrically opposed—the one declaring the body, and the other declaring the mind to be the seat of the supreme good of men. You find also that truly enlightened reason, by which God is perceived to be our supreme good, is opposed to both of these errors, but does not impart the knowledge of what is true until it has first made men unlearn what is false. If now you consider the question in connection with the advocates of different views, you will find the Epicureans and Stoics most keenly contending with each other, and the Platonists, on the other hand, endeavouring to decide the controversy between them, concealing the truth which they held, and devoting themselves only to prove and overthrow the vain confidence with which the others adhered to error.

17. It was not in the power of the Platonists, however, to be so efficient in supporting the side of reason enlightened by truth, as the others were in supporting their own errors. For from them all there was then withheld that example of divine humility, which, in the fullness of time, was furnished by our Lord Jesus Christ,—that one example before which, even in the mind of the most headstrong and arrogant, all pride bends, breaks, and dies. And therefore the Platonists, not being able by their authority to lead the mass of

mankind, blinded by love of earthly things, into faith in things invisible,—although they saw them moved, especially by the arguments of the Epicureans, not only to drink freely the cup of the pleasures of the body to which they were naturally inclined, but even to plead for these, affirming that they constitute man's highest good; although, moreover, they saw that those who were moved to abstinence from these pleasures by the praise of virtue found it easier to regard pleasure as having its true seat in the soul, whence the good actions, concerning which they were able, in some measure, to form an opinion, proceeded,—at the same time, saw that if they attempted to introduce into the minds of men the notion of something divine and supremely immutable, which cannot be reached by any one of the bodily senses, but is apprehensible only by reason, which, nevertheless, surpasses in its nature the mind itself, and were to teach that this is God, set before the human soul to be enjoyed by it when purged from all stains of human desires, in whom alone every longing after happiness finds rest, and in whom alone we ought to find the consummation of all good,—men would not understand them, and would much more readily award the palm to their antagonists, whether Epicureans or Stoics; the result of which would be a thing most disastrous to the human race, namely, that the doctrine, which is true and profitable, would become sullied by the contempt of the uneducated masses. So much in regard to Ethical questions.

18. As to Physics, if the Platonists taught that the originating cause of all natures is immaterial wisdom, and if, on the other hand, the rival sects of philosophers never got above material things, while the beginning of all things was attributed by some to atoms, by others to the four elements, in which fire was of special power in the construction of all things,—who could fail to see to which opinion a favourable verdict would be given, when the great mass of unthinking men are enthralled by material things, and can in no wise comprehend that an immaterial power could form the universe?

19. The department of dialectic questions remains to be discussed; for, as you are aware, all questions in the pursuit of wisdom are classified under three heads,—Ethics, Physics, and Dialectics. When, therefore, the Epicureans said that the senses are never deceived, and, though the Stoics

admitted that they sometimes are mistaken, both placed in the senses the standard by which truth is to be comprehended, who would listen to the Platonists when both of these sects opposed them? Who would look upon them as entitled to be esteemed men at all, and much less wise men, if, without hesitation or qualification, they affirmed not only that there is something which cannot be discerned by touch, or smell, or taste, or hearing, or sight, and which cannot be conceived of by any image borrowed from the things with which the senses acquaint us, but that this alone truly exists, and is alone capable of being perceived, because it is alone unchangeable and eternal, but is perceived only by reason, the faculty whereby alone truth, in so far as it can be discovered by us, is found?

20. Seeing, therefore, that the Platonists held opinions which they could not impart to men enthralled by the flesh; seeing also that they were not of such authority among the common people as to persuade them to accept what they ought to believe until the mind should be trained to that condition in which these things can be understood,—they chose to hide their own opinions, and to content themselves with arguing against those who, although they affirmed that the discovery of truth is made through the senses of the body, boasted that they had found the truth. And truly, what occasion have we to inquire as to the nature of their teaching? We know that it was not divine, nor invested with any divine authority. But this one fact merits our attention, that whereas Plato is in many ways most clearly proved by Cicero to have placed both the supreme good and the causes of things, and the certainty of the processes of reason, in Wisdom, not human, but divine, whence in some way the light of human wisdom is derived—in Wisdom which is wholly immutable, and in Truth always consistent with itself; and whereas we also learn from Cicero that the followers of Plato laboured to overthrow the philosophers known as Epicureans and Stoics, who placed the supreme good, the causes of things, and the certainty of the processes of reason, in the nature either of body or of mind,—the controversy had continued rolling on with successive centuries, so that even at the commencement of the Christian era, when the faith of things invisible and eternal was with saving power preached by means of visible miracles to men, who could neither see nor imagine anything beyond things material, these same Epicureans and Stoics are found in the Acts of the Apostles to

have opposed themselves to the blessed Apostle Paul, who was beginning to scatter the seeds of that faith among the Gentiles.

21. By which thing it seems to me to be sufficiently proved that the errors of the Gentiles in ethics, physics, and the mode of seeking truth, errors many and manifold, but conspicuously represented in these two schools of philosophy, continued even down to the Christian era, notwithstanding the fact that the learned assailed them most vehemently, and employed both remarkable skill and abundant labour in subverting them. Yet these errors we see in our time to have been already so completely silenced, that now in our schools of rhetoric the question what their opinions were is scarcely ever mentioned; and these controversies have been now so completely eradicated or suppressed in even the Greek gymnasia, notably fond of discussion, that whenever now any school of error lifts up its head against the truth, i.e. against the Church of Christ, it does not venture to leap into the arena except under the shield of the Christian name. Whence it is obvious that the Platonist school of philosophers felt it necessary, having changed those few things in their opinions which Christian teaching condemned, to submit with pious homage to Christ, the only King who is invincible, and to apprehend the Incarnate Word of God, at whose command the truth which they had even feared to publish was immediately believed.

22. To Him, my Dioscorus, I desire you to submit yourself with unreserved piety, and I wish you to prepare for yourself no other way of seizing and holding the truth than that which has been prepared by Him who, as God, saw the weakness of our goings. In that way the first part is humility; the second, humility; the third, humility: and this I would continue to repeat as often as you might ask direction, not that there are no other instructions which may be given, but because, unless humility precede, accompany, and follow every good action which we perform, being at once the object which we keep before our eyes, the support to which we cling, and the monitor by which we are restrained, pride wrests wholly from our hand any good work on which we are congratulating ourselves. All other vices are to be apprehended when we are doing wrong; but pride is to be feared even when we do right actions, lest those things which are done in a praiseworthy

manner be spoiled by the desire for praise itself. Wherefore, as that most illustrious orator, on being asked what seemed to him the first thing to be observed in the art of eloquence, is said to have replied, Delivery; and when he was asked what was the second thing, replied again, Delivery; and when asked what was the third thing, still gave no other reply than this, Delivery; so if you were to ask me, however often you might repeat the question, what are the instructions of the Christian religion, I would be disposed to answer always and only, “Humility,” although, perchance, necessity might constrain me to speak also of other things.

Chap. IV

23. To this most wholesome humility, in which our Lord Jesus Christ is our teacher—having submitted to humiliation that He might instruct us in this—to this humility, I say, the most formidable adversary is a certain kind of most unenlightened knowledge, if I may so call it, in which we congratulate ourselves on knowing what may have been the views of Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, Pythagoras, Democritus, and others of the same kind, imagining that by this we become learned men and scholars, although such attainments are far removed from true learning and erudition. For the man who has learned that God is not extended or diffused through space, either finite or infinite, so as to be greater in one part and less in another, but that He is wholly present everywhere, as the Truth is, of which no one in his senses will affirm that it is partly in one place, partly in another—and the Truth is God Himself—such a man will not be moved by the opinions of any philosopher soever who believes [like Anaximenes] that the infinite air around us is the true God. What matters it to such a man though he be ignorant what bodily form they speak of, since they speak of a form which is bounded on all sides? What matters it to him whether it was only as an Academician, and merely for the purpose of confuting Anaximenes, who had said that God is a material existence,—for air is material,—that Cicero objected that God must have form and beauty? or himself perceived that truth has immaterial form and beauty, by which the mind itself is moulded, and by which we judge all the deeds of the wise man to be beautiful, and therefore affirmed that God must be of the most perfect beauty, not merely for the purpose of confuting an antagonist, but with profound insight into

the fact that nothing is more beautiful than truth itself, which is cognisable by the understanding alone, and is immutable? Moreover, as to the opinion of Anaximenes, who held that the air is generated, and at the same time believed it to be God, it does not in the least move the man who understands that, since the air is certainly not God, there is no likeness between the manner in which the air is generated, that is to say, produced by some cause, and the manner, understood by none except through divine inspiration, in which He was begotten who is the Word of God, God with God. Moreover, who does not see that even in regard to material things he speaks most foolishly in affirming that air is generated, and is at the same time God, while he refuses to give the name of God to that by which the air has been generated,—for it is impossible that it could be generated by no power? Yet once more, his saying that the air is always in motion will have no disturbing influence as proof that the air is God upon the man who knows that all movements of body are of a lower order than movements of the soul, but that even the movements of the soul are infinitely slow compared with His who is supreme and immutable Wisdom.

24. In like manner, if Anaxagoras or any other affirm that the mind is essential truth and wisdom, what call have I to debate with a man about a word? For it is manifest that mind gives being to the order and mode of all things, and that it may be suitably called infinite with respect not to its extension in space, but to its power, the range of which transcends all human thought. Nor [shall I dispute his assertion] that this essential wisdom is formless; for this is a property of material things, that whatever bodies are infinite are also formless. Cicero, however, from his desire to confute such opinions, as I suppose, in contending with adversaries who believed in nothing immaterial, denies that anything can be annexed to that which is infinite, because in things material there must be a boundary at the part to which anything is annexed. Therefore he says that Anaxagoras “did not see that motion joined to sensation and to it” (i.e. linked to it in unbroken connection) “is impossible in the infinite” (that is, in a substance which is infinite), as if treating of material substances, to which nothing can be joined except at their boundaries. Moreover, in the succeeding words—”and that sensation of which the whole system of nature is not sensible when struck is an impossibility”—Cicero speaks as if Anaxagoras had said that

mind—to which he ascribed the power of ordering and fashioning all things—had sensation such as the soul has by means of the body. For it is manifest that the whole soul has sensation when it feels anything by means of the body; for whatever is perceived by sensation is not concealed from the whole soul. Now, Cicero’s design in saying that the whole system of nature must be conscious of every sensation was, that he might, as it were, take from the philosopher that mind which he affirms to be infinite. For how does the whole of nature experience sensation if it be infinite? Bodily sensation begins at some point, and does not pervade the whole of any substance unless it be one in which it can reach an end; but this, of course, cannot be said of that which is infinite. Anaxagoras, however had not said anything about bodily sensation. The word “whole,” moreover, is used differently when we speak of that which is immaterial, because it is understood to be without boundaries in space, so that it may be spoken of as a whole and at the same time as infinite—the former because of its completeness, the latter because of its not being limited by boundaries in space.

25. “Furthermore,” says Cicero, “if he will affirm that the mind itself is, so to speak, some kind of animal, there must be some principle from within from which it receives the name animal,’“—so that mind, according to Anaxagoras, is a kind of body, and has within it an animating principle, because of which it is called “animal.” Observe how he speaks in language which we are accustomed to apply to things corporeal,—animals being in the ordinary sense of the word visible substances,—adapting himself, as I suppose, to the blunted perceptions of those against whom he argues; and yet he has uttered a thing which, if they could awake to perceive it, might suffice to teach them that everything which presents itself to our minds as a living body must be thought of not as itself a soul, but as an animal having a soul. For having said, “There must be something within from which it receives the name animal,” he adds, “But what is deeper within than mind?” The mind, therefore, cannot have any inner soul, by possessing which it is an animal; for it is itself that which is innermost. If, then, it is an animal, let it have some external body in relation to which it may be within; for this is what he means by saying, “It is therefore girt round by an exterior body,” as if Anaxagoras had said that mind cannot be otherwise than as belonging to

some animal. And yet Anaxagoras held the opinion that essential supreme Wisdom is mind, although it is not the peculiar property of any living being, so to speak, since Truth is near to all souls alike that are able to enjoy it. Observe, therefore, how wittily he concludes the argument: “Since this is not the opinion of Anaxagoras” (i.e. seeing that he does not hold that that mind which he calls God is girt about with an external body, through its relation to which it could be an animal), “we must say that mind pure and simple, without the addition of anything” (i.e. of any body) “through which it may exercise sensation, seems to be beyond the range and conceptions of our intelligence.”

26. Nothing is more certain than that this lies beyond the range and conception of the intelligence of Stoics and Epicureans, who cannot think of anything which is not material. But by the word “our” intelligence he means “human” intelligence; and he very properly does not say, “it lies beyond our intelligence,” but “it seems to lie beyond.” For their opinion is, that this lies beyond the understanding of all men, and therefore they think that nothing of the kind can be. But there are some whose intelligence apprehends, in so far as this is given to man, the fact that there is pure and simple Wisdom and Truth, which is the peculiar property of no living being, but which imparts wisdom and truth to all souls alike which are susceptible of its influence. If Anaxagoras perceived the existence of this supreme Wisdom, and apprehended it to be God, and called it Mind, it is not by the mere name of this philosopher—with whom, on account of his place in the remote antiquity of erudition, all raw recruits in literature (to adopt a military phrase) delight to boast an acquaintance—that we are made learned and wise; nor is it even by our having the knowledge through which he knew this truth. For truth ought to be dear to me not merely because it was not unknown to Anaxagoras, but because, even though none of these philosophers had known it, it is the truth.

27. If, therefore, it is unbecoming for us to be elated either by the knowledge of the man who peradventure apprehended the truth, by which knowledge we obtain, as it were, the appearance of learning, or even by the solid possession of the truth itself, whereby we obtain real acquisitions in learning, how much less can the names and tenets of those men who were in

error assist us in Christian learning and in making known things obscure? For if we be men, it would be more fitting that we should grieve on account of the errors into which so many famous men fell, if we happen to hear of them, than that we should studiously investigate them, in order that, among men who are ignorant of them, we may enjoy the gratification of a most contemptible conceit of knowledge. For how much better would it be that I should never have heard the name of Democritus, than that I should now with sorrow ponder the fact that a man was highly esteemed in his own age who thought that the gods were images which emanated from solid bodies, but were not solid themselves; and that these, circling this way and that way by their independent motion, and gliding into the minds of men, make the divine power enter into the region of their thoughts, although, certainly, that body from which the image emanated may be rightly judged to surpass the image in excellence and proportion, as it surpasses it in solidity. Hence his opinion wavered, as they say, and oscillated, so that sometimes he said that the deity was some kind of nature from which images emanate, and which nevertheless can be thought of only by means of those images which he pours forth and sends out, that is, which from that nature (which he considered to be something material and eternal, and on this very account divine) were borne as by a kind of evaporation or continuous emanation, and came and entered into our minds, so that we could form the thought of a god or gods. For these philosophers conceive of no cause of thought in our minds, except when images from those bodies which are the object of our thoughts come and enter into our minds; as if, forsooth, there were not many things, yea, more than we can number, which, without any material form, and yet intelligible, are apprehended by those who know how to apprehend such things. Take as an example essential Wisdom and Truth, of which if they can frame no idea, I wonder why they dispute concerning it at all; if, however, they do frame some idea of it in thought, I wish they would tell me either from what body the image of truth comes into their minds, or of what kind it is.

28. Democritus, however, is said to differ here also in his doctrine on physics from Epicurus; for he holds that there is in the concourse of atoms a certain vital and breathing power, by which power (I believe) he affirms that the images themselves (not all images of all things, but images of the

gods) are endued with divine attributes, and that the first beginnings of the mind are in those universal elements to which he ascribed divinity, and that the images possess life, inasmuch as they are wont either to benefit or to hurt us. Epicurus, however, does not assume anything in the first beginnings of things but atoms, that is, certain corpuscles, so minute that they cannot be divided or perceived either by sight or by touch; and his doctrine is, that by the fortuitous concourse (clashing) of these atoms, existence is given both to innumerable worlds and to living things, and to the souls which animate them, and to the gods whom, in human form, he has located, not in any world, but outside of the worlds, and in the spaces which separate them; and he will not allow of any object of thought beyond things material. But in order to these becoming an object of thought, he says that from those things which he represents as formed of atoms, images more subtle than those which come to our eyes flow down and enter into the mind. For according to him, the cause of our seeing is to be found in certain images so huge that they embrace the whole outer world. But I suppose that you already understand their opinions regarding these images.

29. I wonder that Democritus was not convinced of the error of his philosophy even by this fact, that such huge images coming into our minds, which are so small (if being, as they affirm, material, the soul is confined within the body's dimensions), could not possibly, in the entirety of their size, come into contact with it. For when a small body is brought into contact with a large one, it cannot in any wise be touched at the same moment by all points of the larger. How, then, are these images at the same moment in their whole extent objects of thought, if they become objects of thought only in so far as, coming and entering into the mind, they touch it, seeing that they cannot in their whole extent either find entrance into so small a body or come in contact with so small a mind? Bear in mind, of course, that I am speaking now after their manner; for I do not hold the mind to be such as they affirm. It is true that Epicurus alone can be assailed with this argument, if Democritus holds that the mind is immaterial; but we may ask him in turn why he did not perceive that it is at once unnecessary and impossible for the mind, being immaterial, to think through the approach and contact of material images. Both philosophers alike are

certainly confuted by the facts of vision; for images so great cannot possibly touch in their entirety eyes so small.

30. Moreover, when the question is put to them, how it comes that one image is seen of a body from which images emanate in countless multitudes, their answer is, that just because the images are emanating and passing in such multitudes, the effect produced by their being crowded and massed together is, that out of the many one is seen. The absurdity of this Cicero exposes by saying that their deity cannot be thought of as eternal, for this very reason, that he is thought of through images which are in countless multitudes flowing forth and passing away. And when they say that the forms of the gods are rendered eternal by the innumerable hosts of atoms supplying constant reinforcements, so that other corpuscles immediately take the place of those which depart from the divine substance, and by the same succession prevent the nature of the gods from being dissolved, Cicero replies, “On this ground all things would be eternal as well as the gods,” since there is nothing which has not the same boundless store of atoms by which it may repair its perpetual decays. Again, he asks how their god could be otherwise than afraid of coming to destruction, seeing that he is without a moment’s intermission beaten and shaken by an unceasing incursion of atoms,—beaten, inasmuch as he is struck by atoms rushing upon him, and shaken, inasmuch as he is penetrated by atoms rushing through him. Nay, more; seeing that from himself there emanate continually images (of which we have said enough), what good ground can he have for persuasion of his own immortality?

31. As to all these ravings of the men who entertain such opinions, it is especially deplorable that the mere statement of them does not suffice to secure their rejection without any one controverting them in discussion; instead of which, the minds of men most gifted with acuteness have accepted the task of copiously refuting opinions which, as soon as they were enunciated, ought to have been rejected with contempt even by the slowest intellects. For even granting that there are atoms, and that these strike and shake each other by clashing together as chance may guide them, is it lawful for us to grant also that atoms thus meeting in fortuitous concourse can so make anything as to fashion its distinctive forms,

determine its figure, polish its surface, enliven it with color, or quicken it by imparting to it a spirit?—all which things every one sees to be accomplished in no other way than by the providence of God, if only he loves to see with the mind rather than with the eye alone, and asks this faculty of intelligent perception from the Author of his being. Nay, more; we are not at liberty even to grant the existence of atoms themselves, for, without discussing the subtle theories of the learned as to the divisibility of matter, observe how easily the absurdity of atoms may be proved from their own opinions. For they, as is well known, affirm that there is nothing else in nature but bodies and empty space, and the accidents of these, by which I believe that they mean motion and striking, and the forms which result from these. Let them tell us, then, under which category they reckon the images which they suppose to flow from the more solid bodies, but which, if indeed they are bodies, possess so little solidity that they are not discernible except by their contact with the eyes when we see them, and with the mind when we think of them. For the opinion of these philosophers is, that these images can proceed from the material object and come to the eyes or to the mind, which, nevertheless, they affirm to be material. Now, I ask, do these images flow from atoms themselves? If they do, how can these be atoms from which some bodily particles are in this process separated? If they do not, either something can be the object of thought without such images, which they vehemently deny, or we ask, whence have they acquired a knowledge of atoms, seeing that they can in nowise become objects of thought to us? But I blush to have even thus far refuted these opinions, although they did not blush to hold them. When, however, I consider that they have even dared to defend them, I blush not on their account, but for the race of mankind itself whose ears could tolerate such nonsense.

Chap. V

32. Wherefore, seeing that the minds of men are, through the pollution of sin and the lust of the flesh, so blinded that even these monstrous errors could waste in discussion concerning them the leisure of learned men, will you, Dioscorus, or will any man of an servant mind, hesitate to affirm that in no way could better provision have been made for the pursuit of truth by mankind than that a Man, assumed into ineffable and miraculous union by

the Truth Himself, and being the manifestation of His Person on the earth, should by perfect teaching and divine acts move men to saving faith in that which could not as yet be intellectually apprehended? To the glory of Him who has done this we give our service; and we exhort you to believe immoveably and stedfastly in Him through whom it has come to pass that not a select few, but whole peoples, unable to discern these things by reason, do accept them in faith, until, upheld by instruction in saving truth, they escape from these perplexities into the atmosphere of perfectly pure and simple truth. It becomes us, moreover, to yield submission to His authority all the more unreservedly, when we see that in our day no error dares to lift up itself to rally round it the uninstructed crowd without seeking the shelter of the Christian name, and that of all who, belonging to an earlier age, now remain outside of the Christian name, those alone continue to have in their obscure assemblies a considerable attendance who retain the Scriptures by which, however they may pretend not to see or understand it, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself was prophetically announced. Moreover, those who, though they are not within the Catholic unity and communion, boast of the name of Christians, are compelled to oppose them that believe, and presume to mislead the ignorant by a pretence of appealing to reason, since the Lord came with this remedy above all others, that He enjoined on the nations the duty of faith. But they are compelled, as I have said, to adopt this policy because they feel themselves most miserably overthrown if their authority is compared with the Catholic authority. They attempt, accordingly, to prevail against the firmly-settled authority of the immoveable Church by the name and the promises of a pretended appeal to reason. This kind of effrontery is, we may say, characteristic of all heretics. But He who is the most merciful Lord of faith has both secured the Church in the citadel of authority by most famous oecumenical Councils and the Apostolic sees themselves, and furnished her with the abundant armour of equally invincible reason by means of a few men of pious erudition and unfeigned spirituality. The perfection of method in training disciples is, that those who are weak be encouraged to the utmost to enter the citadel of authority, in order that when they have been safely placed there, the conflict necessary for their defence may be maintained with the most strenuous use of reason.

33. The Platonists, however, who, amidst the errors of false philosophies assailing them at that time on all sides, rather concealed their own doctrine to be searched for than brought it into the light to be vilified, as they had no divine personage to command faith, began to exhibit and unfold the doctrines of Plato after the name of Christ had become widely known to the wondering and troubled kingdoms of this world. Then flourished at Rome the school of Plotinus, which had as scholars many men of great acuteness and ability. But some of them were corrupted by curious inquiries into magic, and others, recognising in the Lord Jesus Christ the impersonation of that essential and immutable Truth and Wisdom which they were endeavouring to reach, passed into His service. Thus the whole supremacy of authority and light of reason for regenerating and reforming the human race has been made to reside in the one saving Name, and in His one Church.

34. I do not at all regret that I have stated these things at great length in this letter, although perhaps you would have preferred that I had taken another course; for the more progress that you make in the truth, the more will you approve what I have written, and you will then approve of my counsel, though now you do not think it helpful to your studies. At the same time, I have, to the best of my ability, given answers to your questions,—to some of them in this letter, and to almost all the rest by brief annotations on the parchments on which you had sent them. If in these answers you think I have done too little, or done something else than you expected, you do not duly consider, my Dioscorus, to whom you addressed your questions. I have passed without reply all the questions concerning the orator and the books of Cicero de Oratore. I would have seemed to myself a contemptible trifler if I had entered on the exposition of these topics. For I might with propriety be questioned on all the other subjects, if any one desired me to handle and expound them, not in connection with the works of Cicero, but by themselves; but in these questions the subjects themselves are not in harmony with my profession now. I would not, however, have done all that I have done in this letter had I not removed from Hippo for a time after the illness under which I laboured when your messenger came to me. Even in these days I have been visited again with interruption of health and with fever, on which account there has been more delay than might otherwise

have been in sending these to you. I earnestly beg you to write and let me know how you receive them.

LETTER CXXII

(A.D. 410.)

FROM JEROME TO AUGUSTIN.

To His Well-Beloved Brethren the Clergy, and to the Whole People [of Hippo], Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. In the first place, I beseech you, my friends, and implore you, for Christ's sake, not to let my bodily absence grieve you. For I suppose you do not imagine that I could by any means be separated in spirit and in unfeigned love from you, although perchance it is even a greater grief to me than to you that my weakness unfits me for bearing all the cares which are laid on me by those members of Christ to whose service both fear of Him and love to them constrain me to devote myself. For you know this, my beloved, that I have never absented myself from you through self-indulgent taking of ease, but only when compelled by such duties as have made it necessary for some of my holy colleagues and brethren to endure, both on the sea and in countries beyond the sea, labours from which I was exempted, not because of reluctance of spirit, but by reason of imperfect bodily health. Wherefore, my dearly-beloved brethren, act so that, as the apostle says, "whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." If any vexation pertaining to time causes you distress, this itself ought the more to remind you how you should occupy your thoughts with that life in which you may live without any burden, escaping not the annoying hardships of this short life, but the dread flames of eternal fire. For if ye strive with so much anxiety, so much earnestness, and so much labour, to save yourselves from falling into some transient sufferings in this world, how solicitous ought you to be to escape everlasting misery! And if the death which puts an end to the labours of time is so feared, how ought we to fear the death which ushers men into eternal pain! And if the short-lived and sordid pleasures of this world are so loved, with how much greater earnestness ought we to seek the pure and infinite joys of the world

to come! Meditating upon these things, be not slothful in good works, that ye may come in due season to reap what you have sown.

2. It has been reported to me that you have forgotten your custom of providing raiment for the poor, to which work of charity I exhorted you when I was present with you; and I now exhort you not to allow yourselves to be overcome and made slothful by the tribulation of this world, which you see now visited with such calamities as were foretold by our Lord and Redeemer, who cannot lie. You ought in present circumstances not to be less diligent in works of charity, but rather to be more abundant in these than you were wont to be. For as men betake themselves in greater haste to a place of greater security when they see in the shaking of their walls the ruin of their house impending, so ought Christians, the more that they perceive, from the increasing frequency of their afflictions, that the destruction of this world is at hand, to be the more prompt and active in transferring to the treasury of heaven the goods which they were proposing to store up on earth, in order that, if any accident common to the lot of men occur, he may rejoice who has escaped from a dwelling doomed to ruin; and if, on the other hand, nothing of this kind happen, he may be exempt from painful solicitude who, die when he may, has committed his possessions to the keeping of the ever-living Lord, to whom he is about to go. Wherefore, my dearly-beloved brethren, let every one of you, according to his ability, of which he himself is the best judge, do with a portion of his substance as ye were wont to do; do it also with a more willing mind than ye were wont; and amid all the vexations of this life bear in your hearts the apostolic exhortation: “The Lord is at hand: be careful for nothing.” Let such things be reported to me concerning you as may make me understand that it is not through my presence with you, but from obedience to the precept of God, who is never absent, that you follow that good practice which for many years while I was with you, and for some time after my departure, you observed.

May the Lord preserve you in peace! And, dearly-beloved brethren, pray for us.

LETTER CXXIII

(A.D. 410.)

There are many who go halting upon both feet, and refuse to bend their heads even when their necks are broken, persisting in adherence to their former errors, even though they have not their former liberty of proclaiming them.

Respectful salutations are sent to you by the holy brethren who are with your humble servant, and especially by your pious and venerable daughters. I beg your Excellency to salute in my name your brethren my lord Alypius and my lord Evodius. Jerusalem is held captive by Nebuchadnezzar, and refuses to listen to the counsels of Jeremiah, preferring to look wistfully towards Egypt, that it may die in Tahpanhes, and perish there in eternal bondage.

Third Division

Letters Which Were Written by Augustin After The Time of The Conference With The Donatists And The Rise of The Pelagian Heresy in Africa; i.e., During The Last Twenty Years of His Life (A.D. 411–430).

LETTER CXXIV

(A.D. 411.)

To Albina, Pinianus, and Melania, Honoured in the Lord, Beloved in Holiness and Longed for in Brotherly Affection, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I Am, whether through present infirmity or by natural temperament, very susceptible of cold; nevertheless, it would not be possible for me to suffer greater heat than I have done throughout this exceptionally dreadful winter, having been kept in a fever by distress because I have been unable, I do not say to hasten, but to fly to you (to visit whom it would have been fitting for me to fly across the seas), after you had been settled so near to me, and had come from so remote a land to see me. It may be, also, that you have supposed the rigorous weather of this winter to be the only cause of my suffering this disappointment; I pray you, beloved, give no place to this thought. For what inconvenience, hardship, or even danger, can these heavy rains bring, which I would not have encountered and endured in order to make my way to you, who are such comforters to us in our great calamities, and who, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, are lights kindled into vehement flame by the Supreme Light, raised aloft by lowliness of spirit, and deriving more glorious lustre from the glory which you have despised? Moreover, I would have enjoyed participation in the spiritual felicity vouchsafed to my earthly birthplace, in that it has been permitted to have you present, of whom when absent its citizens had heard much—so much, indeed, that although giving charitable credence to the report of what you were by nature and had become by grace, they feared, perchance, to repeat it to others, lest it should be disbelieved.

2. I shall therefore tell you the reason why I have not come, and the trials by which I have been kept back from so great a privilege, that I may obtain not only your forgiveness, but also, through your prayers, the mercy of Him who so works in you that ye live to Him. The congregation of Hippo, whom the Lord has ordained me to serve, is in great measure, and almost wholly, of a constitution so infirm, that the pressure of even a comparatively light affliction might seriously endanger its well-being; at present, however, it is smitten with tribulation so overwhelming, that, even were it strong, it could scarcely survive the imposition of the burden. Moreover, when I returned to it recently, I found it offended to a most dangerous degree by my absence; and you, over whose spiritual strength we rejoice in the Lord, can with healthful taste relish and approve the saying of Paul: “Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?” I feel this especially because there are many here who by disparaging us attempt to excite against us the minds of the others by whom we seem to be loved, in order that they may make room in them for the devil. But when those whose salvation is our care are angry with us, their strong determination to take vengeance on us is only an unreasonable desire for bringing death to themselves,—not the death of the body, but of the soul, in which the fact of death discovers itself mysteriously by the odour of corruption before it is possible for our care to foresee and provide against it.

Doubtless you will readily excuse this anxiety on my part, especially because, if you were displeased and wished to punish me, you could perhaps invent no severer pain than what I already suffer in not seeing you at Thagaste. I trust, however, that, assisted by your prayers, I may be permitted when the present hindrance has been removed with all speed to come to you, in whatsoever part of Africa you may be, if this town in which I labour is not worthy (and I do not presume to pronounce it worthy) to be along with us made joyful by your presence.

LETTER CXXV

(A.D. 411.)

To Alypius, My Lord Most Blessed and Brother Beloved with All Reverence, and My Partner in the Priestly Office, and to the Brethren Who are with Him, Augustin and the Brethren Who are with Him Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. We are deeply grieved, and can by no means regard it as a small matter, that the people of Hippo clamorously said so much to the disparagement of your Holiness; but, my good brother, their clamorous utterance of these things is not so great a cause for grief as the fact that we are, without open accusation, deemed guilty of similar things. For when we are believed to be actuated in retaining God’s servants among us, not by love of righteousness, but by love of money, is it not to be desired that persons who believe this concerning us should with their voices avow what is hidden in their hearts, and so obtain, if possible, remedies great in proportion to the disease, rather than silently perish under the venom of these fatal suspicions? Wherefore it ought to be a greater care to us (and for this reason we conferred together before this happened) to provide how men to whom we are commanded to be examples in good works may be convinced that there is no ground for suspicions which they cherish, than to provide how those may be rebuked who in words give definite utterance to their suspicions.

2. Wherefore I am not angry with the pious Albina, nor do I judge her to deserve rebuke; but I think she requires to be cured of such suspicions. It is true that she has not pointed at myself the words to which I refer, but has complained of the people of Hippo, as it were, alleging that their covetousness has been brought to light, and that in desiring to retain among them a man of wealth who was known to despise money, and to give it away freely, they were moved, not by his fitness for the office, but by regard to his ample means; nevertheless, she almost said openly that she had the same suspicion of myself, and not she only, but also her pious son-in-law and daughter, who, on that very day, said the same thing in the apse of the church. In my opinion, it is more necessary that the suspicions of these persons should be removed than that their utterance of them should be rebuked. For where can immunity and rest from such thorns be provided and given to us, if they can sprout forth against us even in the hearts of intimate friends, so pious and so much beloved by us? It is by the ignorant multitude that such things have been thought concerning you, but I am the victim of similar suspicions from those who are the lights of the Church;

you may see, therefore, which of us has the greater cause for grief. It seems to me that both cases call, not for invectives, but for remedial measures; for they are men, and their suspicions are of men, and therefore such things as they suspect, though they may be false, are not incredible. Persons such as these are of course not so foolish as to believe that the people are coveting their money, especially after their experience that the people of Thagaste obtained none of their money, from which it was certain that the people of Hippo would also obtain none. Nay, all the violence of this odium comes against the clergy alone, and especially against the bishops, whose authority is visibly pre-eminent, and who are supposed to use and enjoy as owners and lords the property of the Church. My dear Alypius, let not the weak be encouraged through our example to cherish this pernicious and fatal covetousness. Call to mind what we said to each other before the occurrence of this temptation, which makes the duty all the more urgent. Let us rather by God's help endeavour to have this difficulty removed by friendly conference, and let us not count it sufficient to be guided by our own conscience alone; for this is not one of the cases in which its voice alone is sufficient for our direction. For if we be not unworthy servants of our God, if there live in us a spark of that charity which seeketh not her own, we are bound by all means to provide things honest, not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of men, lest while drinking untroubled waters in our own conscience, we be chargeable with treading with incautious feet, and so making the Lord's flock drink from a turbid stream.

3. For as to the proposal in your letter that we should discuss together the obligation of an oath which has been extorted by force, I beseech you, let not the method of our discussion involve in obscurity things which are perfectly clear. For if inevitable death were threatened in order to compel a servant of God to swear that he would do something forbidden by laws both human and divine, it would be his duty to prefer death to such an oath, lest he should be guilty of a crime in fulfilling his oath. But in this case, in which the determined clamour of the people, and only this, was forcing the man, not to a crime, but to that which if it were done would be lawfully done; when, moreover, there was indeed apprehension lest some reckless men, such as are mixed with a multitude even of good men, should through love of rioting break out into some wicked deeds of violence, if they found

a pretext for disturbance and for plausibly justifiable indignation, but there was no certainty of this fear being realized,—who will affirm that it is lawful to commit a deliberate act of perjury in order to escape from uncertain consequences, involving, I shall not say loss or bodily injury, but even death itself? Regulus had not heard anything from the Holy Scriptures concerning the impiety of perjury, he had never heard of the flying roll of Zechariah, and he confirmed his oath to the Carthaginians, not by the sacraments of Christ, but by the abominations of false gods; and yet in the face of inevitable tortures, and a death of unprecedented horror, he was not moved by fear so as to swear under constraint, but, because he had given his oath, he of his own free will submitted to these, lest he should be guilty of perjury. In that age, also, the Roman censors refused to inscribe in the roll, not of saints inheriting heavenly glory, but of senators received into the curia of Rome, not only men who, through fear of death and of cruel tortures, had chosen rather to commit manifest perjury than to return to merciless enemies, but also one who had believed himself clear of the guilt of perjury, because, after giving his oath, he had under the pretext of alleged necessity violated it by returning; in which we see that those who expelled him from the senate took into consideration, not what he himself had in his mind when he gave his oath, but what those to whom he pledged his word expected from him. Yet they had never read what we sing continually in the Psalm: “He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.” We are wont to speak of these instances of virtue with the highest admiration, although they are found in men who were strangers to the grace and to the name of Christ; and yet do we seriously imagine that the question whether perjury is occasionally lawful is one for an answer to which we should search the divine books, in which, to prevent us from falling into this sin by inconsiderate oaths, this prohibition is written: “Swear not at all”?

4. I by no means dispute the perfect correctness of the maxim, that good faith requires an oath to be kept, not according to the mere words of him who gives it, but according to that which the person giving the oath knows to be the expectation of the person to whom he swears. For it is very difficult to define in words, especially in few words, the promise in regard to which security is exacted from him who gives his oath. They, therefore, are guilty of perjury, who, while adhering to the letter of their promise,

disappoint the known expectation of those to whom their oath was given; and they are not guilty of perjury, who, even though departing from the letter of the promise, fulfil that which was expected of them when they gave their oath. Wherefore, seeing that the people of Hippo desired to have the holy Pinianus, not as a prisoner who had forfeited liberty, but as a much-loved resident in their town, the limits of that which they expected from him, though it could not be adequately embraced in the words of his promise, are nevertheless so obvious that the fact of his being at this moment absent, after giving his oath to remain among them, does not disturb any one who may have heard that he was to leave this place for a definite purpose, and with the intention of returning. Accordingly, he will not be guilty of perjury, nor will he be regarded by them as violating his oath, unless he disappoint their expectation; and he will not disappoint their expectation, unless he either abandon his purpose of residing among them, or at some future time depart from them without intending to return. May God forbid that he should so depart from the holiness and fidelity which he owes to Christ and to the Church! For, not to speak of the dread judgment of God upon perjurers, which you know as well as myself, I am perfectly certain that henceforth we shall have no right to be displeased with any one who may refuse to believe what we attest by an oath, if we are found to think that perjury in such a man as Pinianus is to be not only tolerated without indignation, but actually defended. From this may we be saved by the mercy of Him who delivers from temptation those who put their trust in Him! Let Pinianus, therefore, as you have written in your communication, fulfil the promise by which he bound himself not to depart from Hippo, just as I myself and the other inhabitants of the town do not depart from it, having, of course, full freedom in going and returning at any time; the only difference being, that those who are not bound by any oath to reside here have it also in their power at any time, without being chargeable with perjury, to depart with no purpose of coming back again.

5. As to our clergy and the brethren settled in our monastery, I do not know that it can be proved that they either aided or abetted in the reproaches which were made against you. For when I inquired into this, I was informed that only one from our monastery, a man of Carthage, had taken part in the

clamour of the people; and this was not when they were uttering insults against you, but when they were demanding Pinianus as presbyter.

I have annexed to this letter a copy of the promise given to him, taken from the very paper which he subscribed and corrected under my own inspection.

LETTER CXXVI

(A.D. 411.)

To the Holy Lady and Venerable Handmaid of God Albina, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. As to the sorrow of your spirit, which you describe as inexpressible, it becomes me to assuage rather than to augment its bitterness, endeavouring if possible to remove your suspicions, instead of increasing the agitation of one so venerable and so devoted to God by giving vent to indignation because of that which I have suffered in this matter. Nothing was done to our holy brother, your son-in-law Pinianus, by the people of Hippo which might justly awaken in him the fear of death, although, perchance, he himself had such fears. Indeed, we also were apprehensive lest some of the reckless characters who are often secretly banded together for mischief in a crowd might break out into bold acts of violence, finding occasion for beginning a riot with some plausible pretext for passionate excitement. Nothing of this nature, however, was either spoken of or attempted by any one, as I have since had opportunity to ascertain; but against my brother Alypius the people did clamorously utter many opprobrious and unworthy reproaches, for which great sin I desire that they may obtain pardon in answer to his prayers. For my own part, after their outcries began, when I had told them how I was precluded by promise from ordaining him against his will, adding that, if they obtained him as their presbyter through my breaking my word, they could not retain me as their bishop, I left the multitude, and returned to my own seat. Thereupon, they being made for a little while to pause and waver by my unexpected reply, like a flame driven back for a moment by the wind, began to be much more warmly excited, imagining that possibly a violation of my promise might be extorted from me, or that, in the event of my abiding by my promise, he might be

ordained by another bishop. To all to whom I could address myself, namely, to the more venerable and aged men who had come up to me in the apse, I stated that I could not be moved to break my word, and that in the church committed to my care he could not be ordained by any other bishop except with my consent asked and obtained, in granting which I should be no less guilty of a breach of faith. I said, moreover, that if he were ordained against his own will, the people were only wishing him to depart from us as soon as he was ordained. They did not believe that this was possible. But the crowd having gathered in front of the steps, and persisting in the same determination with terrible and incessant clamour and shouting, made them irresolute and perplexed. At that time unworthy reproaches were loudly uttered against my brother Alypius: at that time, also, more serious consequences were apprehended by us.

2. But although I was much disturbed by so great a commotion among the people, and such trepidation among the office-bearers of the church, I did not say to that mob anything else than that I could not ordain him against his own will; nor after all that had passed was I influenced to do what I had also promised not to do, namely, to advise him in any way to accept the office of presbyter, which had I been able to persuade him to do, his ordination would have been with his consent. I remained faithful to both the promises which I had made,—not only to the one which I had shortly before intimated to the people, but also to the one in regard to which I was bound, so far as men were concerned, by only one witness. I was faithful, I say, not to an oath, but to my bare promise, even in the face of such danger. It is true that the fears of danger were, as we afterwards ascertained, without foundation; but whatever the danger might be, it was shared by us all alike. The fear was also shared by all; and I myself had thoughts of retiring, being alarmed chiefly for the safety of the building in which we were assembled. But there was reason to apprehend that if I were absent some disaster might be more likely to occur, as the people would then be more exasperated by disappointment, and less restrained by reverential sentiments. Again, if I had gone through the dense mob along with Alypius, I had reason to fear lest some one should dare to lay violent hands on him; if, on the other hand, I had gone without him, what would have been the most natural opinion for men to have formed, if any accident had befallen Alypius, and I appeared to

have deserted him in order to hand him over to the power of an infuriated people?

3. In the midst of this excitement and great distress, when, being at our wit’s end, we could not, so to speak, take breath, behold our pious son Pinianus, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, sends to me a servant of God, to tell me that he wished to swear to the people, that if he were ordained against his will he would leave Africa altogether, thinking, I believe, that the people, knowing that of course he could not violate his oath, would not continue their outcry, seeing that by perseverance they could gain nothing, but only drive from among us a man whom we ought at least to retain as a neighbour, if he was to be no more. As it seemed to me, however, that it was to be feared that the vehemence of the people’s grief would be increased by his taking an oath of this kind, I was silent in regard to it; and as he had by the same messenger begged me to come to him, I went without delay. When he had said to me again what he had stated by the messenger, he immediately added to the same oath what he had sent another messenger to intimate to me while I was hastening towards him, namely, that he would consent to reside in Hippo if no one compelled him to accept against his will the burden of the clerical office. On this, being comforted in my perplexities as by a breath of air when in danger of suffocation, I made no reply, but went with quickened pace to my brother Alypius, and told him what Pinianus had said. But he, being careful, I suppose, lest anything should be done with his sanction by which he thought you might be offended, said, “Let no one ask my opinion on this subject.” Having heard this, I hastened to the noisy crowd, and having obtained silence, declared to them what had been promised, along with the proffered guarantee of an oath. The people, however, having no other thought or desire than that he should be their presbyter, did not receive the proposal as I had expected they would, but, after talking in an under-tone among themselves, made the request that to this promise and oath a clause might be added, that if at any time he should be pleased to consent to accept the clerical office, he should do so in no other church than that of Hippo. I reported this to him: without hesitation he agreed to it. I returned to them with his answer; they were filled with joy, and presently demanded the promised oath.

4. I came back to your son-in-law, and found him at a loss as to the words in which his promise, confirmed by oath, could be expressed, because of various kinds of necessity which might emerge and might make it necessary for him to leave Hippo. He stated at the time what he feared, namely, that a hostile incursion of barbarians might occur, to avoid which it would be necessary to leave the place. The holy Melania wished to add also, as a possible reason for departure, the unhealthiness of the climate; but she was kept from this by his reply. I said, however, that he had brought forward an important reason deserving consideration, and one which, if it occurred, would compel the citizens themselves to abandon the place; but that, if this reason were stated to the people, we might justly fear lest they should regard us as prophesying evil, and, on the other hand, if a pretext for withdrawing from the promise were put under the general name of necessity, it might be thought that the necessity was only covering an intention to deceive. It seemed good to him, therefore, that we should test the feeling of the people in regard to this, and we found the result exactly as I had expected. For when the words which he had dictated were read by the deacon, and had been received with approbation, as soon as the clause concerning necessity which might hinder the fulfilment of his promise fell upon their ears, there arose at once a shout of remonstrance, and the promise was rejected; and the tumult began to break out again, the people thinking that these negotiations had no other object than to deceive them. When our pious son saw this, he ordered the clause regarding necessity to be struck out, and the people recovered their cheerfulness once more.

5. I would gladly have excused myself on the ground of fatigue, but he would not go to the people unless I accompanied him; so we went together. He told them that he had himself dictated what they had heard from the deacon, that he had confirmed the promise by an oath, and would do the things promised, after which he forthwith rehearsed all in the words which he had dictated. The response of the people was, “Thanks be unto God!” and they begged that all which was written should be subscribed. We dismissed the catechumens, and he adhibited his signature to the document at once. Then we [Alypius and myself] began to be urged, not by the voices of the crowd, but by faithful men of good report as their representatives, that we also as bishops should subscribe the writing. But when I began to

do this, the pious Melania protested against it. I wondered why she did this so late, as if we could make his promise and oath void by forbearing from appending our names to it; I obeyed, however, and so my signature remained incomplete, and no one thought it necessary to insist further upon our subscription.

6. I have been at pains to communicate to your Holiness, so far as I thought sufficient, what were the feelings, or rather the remarks, of the people on the following day, when they heard that he had left the town. Whoever, therefore, may have told you anything contradicting what I stated, is either intentionally or through his own mistake misleading you. For I am aware that I passed over some things which seemed to me irrelevant, but I know that I said nothing but the truth. It is therefore true that our holy son Pinianus took his oath in my presence and with my permission, but it is not true that he did it in obedience to any command from me. He himself knows this: it is also known to those servants of God whom he sent to me, the first being the pious Barnabas, the second Timasius, by whom also he sent me the promise of his remaining in Hippo. As for the people themselves, moreover, they were urging him by their cries to accept the office of presbyter. They did not ask for his oath, but they did not refuse it when offered, because they hoped that if he remained amongst us, there might be produced in him a willingness to consent to ordination, while they feared lest, if ordained against his will, he should, according to his oath, leave Africa. And therefore they also were actuated in their clamorous procedure by regard to God’s work (for surely the consecration of a presbyter is a work of God); and inasmuch as they did not feel satisfied with his promise of remaining in Hippo, unless it were also promised that, in the event of his at any time accepting the clerical office, he should do it nowhere else than among them, it is perfectly manifest what they hoped for from his dwelling among them, and that they did not abandon their zeal for the work of God.

7. On what ground, then, do you allege that the people did this out of a base desire for money? In the first place, the people who were so clamorous have nothing whatever of this kind to gain; for as the people of Thagaste derive from the gifts which you have bestowed on their church no profit but the joy of seeing your good work, it will be the same in the case of the people

of Hippo, or of any other place in which you have obeyed or may yet obey the law of your Lord concerning the “mammon of unrighteousness.” The people, therefore, in most vehemently insisting upon guiding the procedure of their church in regard to so great a man, did not ask from you a pecuniary advantage, but testified their admiration for your contempt of money. For if in my own case, because they had heard that, despising my patrimony, which consisted of only a few small fields, I had consecrated myself to the liberty of serving God, they loved this disinterestedness, and did not grudge this gift to the church of my birthplace, Thagaste, but, when it had not imposed upon me the clerical office, made me by force, so to speak, their own, how much more ardently might they love in our Pinianus his overcoming and treading under foot with such remarkable decision riches so great and hopes so bright, and a strong natural capacity for enjoying this world! I indeed seem, in the opinion of many, who compare themselves with themselves, to have rather found than forsaken wealth. For my patrimony can scarcely be considered a twentieth part of the ecclesiastical property which I am now supposed to possess as master. But in whatever church, especially in Africa, our Pinianus might be ordained (I do not say a presbyter, but) a bishop, he would be still in deep poverty compared with his former affluence, even if he were using the church’s revenues in the spirit of one lording it over God’s heritage. Christian poverty is much more clearly and certainly loved in the case of one in whom there is no room for suspecting a desire for acquiring an accession to his wealth. It was this admiration which kindled the minds of the people, and roused them to such violence of persevering clamour. Let us therefore not charge them gratuitously with base covetousness, but rather, without imputing unworthy motives, allow them at least to love in others that good thing which they do not themselves possess. For although there may have mixed in the crowd some who are indigent or beggars, who helped to increase the clamour, and were actuated by the hope of some relief to their wants out of your honourable affluence, even this is not, in my opinion, base covetousness.

8. It remains, therefore, that the reproach of disgraceful covetousness must be levelled indirectly at the clergy, and especially at the bishop. For we are supposed to act as lords of the church’s property; we are supposed to enjoy its revenues. In short, whatever money we have received for the church

either is still in our possession or has been spent according to our judgment; and of it we have given nothing to any of the people besides the clergy and the brethren in the monastery, excepting only a very few indigent persons. I do not mean by this to say that the things which were said by you must necessarily have been said specially against us, but that, if said against any others than ourselves, they must have been incredible. What, then, shall we do? If it be not possible to clear ourselves before enemies, by what means may we at least clear ourselves before you? The matter is one pertaining to the soul; it is within us, hidden from the eyes of men, and known to God alone. What, then, remains for us but to call to witness God, to whom it is known? When, therefore, you harbour these suspicions concerning us, you do not command but absolutely compel us to give our oath,—a much more grievous wrong than the commanding of an oath, which you have thought proper in your letter to censure as highly culpable in me; you compel us, I say, not by menacing death to the body, as the people of Hippo were supposed to have done, but by menacing death to our good name, which deserves to be regarded by us as more precious than life itself, for the sake of those weak brethren to whom we endeavour in all circumstances to exhibit ourselves as ensamples in good works.

9. We, however, are not indignant against you who compel us to this oath, as you are indignant against the people of Hippo. For you believe, as men judging of other men, things which, though not actually existing in us, might possibly have existed. Your suspicions we must labour not so much to reprove as to remove; and since our conscience is clear in the sight of God, we must seek to clear our character in your sight. It may be, as Alypius and I said to each other before this trial occurred, that God will grant that not only you, our much-beloved fellow-members of Christ’s body, but even our most implacable enemies, may be thoroughly satisfied that we are not defiled by any love of money in our administration of ecclesiastical affairs. Until this be done (if the Lord, answering our prayer, permit it to be done), hear in the meantime what we are compelled to do, rather than put off for any length of time the healing of your heart. God is my witness that, as for the whole management of those ecclesiastical revenues over which we are supposed to love to exercise lordship, I only bear it as a burden which is imposed on me by love to the brethren and fear

of God: I do not love it; nay, if I could, without unfaithfulness to my office, I would desire to be rid of it. God also is my witness that I believe the sentiments of Alypius to be the same as mine in this matter. Nevertheless, on the one hand, the people, and what is worse, the people of Hippo, have hastily done Alypius great wrong by entertaining another opinion of his character; and on the other hand, you who are saints of God and full of unfeigned compassion have, through believing such things concerning us, thought proper to touch and admonish us while nominally censuring the same people of Hippo, who have no part whatever in the guilt of the alleged covetousness. You have desired unquestionably to correct us, and that without hating us (this be far from you!); wherefore I ought not to be angry with you, but to thank you, because it was not possible for you to have combined modesty and freedom more happily than when, instead of stating your sentiments as an offensive accusation against the bishop, you left them to be discovered by indirect inferences.

10. Let not the fact that I have thought it necessary thus to confirm my statements by oath cause you vexation by making you think that you are treated with harshness. There was no hardness or lack of kindly feeling in the apostle towards those to whom he wrote: “Neither used we at any time flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness.” In the thing which was opened to men’s observation he appealed to their own testimony, but in regard to that which was hidden, to whom could he appeal but to God? If, therefore, fear lest the ignorance of men should make them entertain some such thoughts concerning him was reasonably felt even by Paul, whose labours, as all men knew, were such that except in extreme necessity he never took anything for his own benefit from the communities to which he dispensed the grace of Christ, obtaining in all other cases the necessary provision for his support by working with his own hands, how much more pains must be taken to establish confidence in our disinterestedness by us, who are, both in the merit of holiness and in strength of mind, so far behind him, and who are not only unable to do anything by the work of our hands to support ourselves, but also precluded from this, even if we could work, by an accumulation of duties from which I believe that the apostles were exempt! Let the charge, therefore, of most base covetousness be brought no more in this matter against the Christian

people—that is, the Church of Christ. For it is more tolerable that this charge be alleged against us, on whom the suspicion, though groundless, might fall without being utterly improbable, than on the people, of whom it is certainly known that they could not either cherish the covetous desire or be reasonably suspected of entertaining it.

11. For persons possessing any faith—and how much more the Christian faith!—to be unfaithful to their oath, I do not say by doing something contrary to it, but by hesitating at all as to its fulfilment, is utterly wrong. What my judgment is on this question I have with sufficient fulness declared in the letter which I sent to my brother Alypius. Your Holiness wrote asking me "whether I or the people of Hippo consider any one under obligation to fulfil an oath which has been extorted by violence." But what is your opinion? Do you think that even if death, which in this case was feared without reason, were certainly imminent, a Christian might use the name of his Lord to confirm a lie, and call his God to be witness to a falsehood? For assuredly a Christian, if urged by the menace of instant death to perjure himself by false testimony, ought to fear the loss of honour more than the loss of life. Hostile armies confront each other in the battle-field with mutual menaces of death, about which there can be no uncertainty; and yet, when they pledge themselves to each other by oath, we praise those who are faithful to their engagement, and we justly abhor those who are unfaithful. Now what was the motive leading them to swear to each other, but the fear on both sides of being killed or taken prisoners? And by this promise even such men hold themselves bound, lest they be guilty of sacrilege and perjury if they did not fulfil the oath extorted by the fear of death or captivity, and broke the promise given in such circumstances: they are more afraid of breaking their oath than of taking a man's life. And do we propose to discuss as a debatable question whether an oath must be fulfilled which has been given under fear of harm by servants of God, who are under pre-eminent obligations to holiness, by monks who are running the race towards Christian perfection, by distributing their property according to Christ's command?

12. Tell me, I beseech you, what hardship deserving the name of exile, or transportation, or banishment, is involved in his promise to reside here? I

suppose that the office of presbyter is not exile. Would our Pinianus prefer exile to that office? Far be it from us to find such apology for one who is a saint of God and very dear to us: God forbid, I say, that it should be said of him that he preferred exile to the office of presbyter, and preferred to perjure himself rather than submit to exile. This I would say even if it were true that the oath by which he promised to reside among us had been extorted from him but the fact is that, instead of being extorted in spite of his refusal, it was accepted when he had proffered it himself. It was accepted, moreover, as I have already said, because of the hope, which was encouraged by his remaining here, that he might also consent to comply with our desire that he should accept the clerical office. In fine, whatever opinion may be entertained concerning us or concerning the people of Hippo, the case of those who may have compelled him to take the oath is very different from that of those who may have—I do not say compelled, but at least—counselled him to break the oath. I trust, also, that Pinianus himself will not refuse to consider seriously whether it is worse to swear under the pressure of fear, however great, or, in the absence of all alarm, to commit deliberate perjury.

13. God be thanked that the men of Hippo regard his promise of residence here as kept fully, if only he come with the intention of making this town his home, and in going whithersoever necessity may call him, go with the intention of coming back to us again. For if they were to exact literal fulfilment of the words of the promise, it would be the duty of a servant of God to adhere to every sentence of it rather than forswear himself. But as it would be a crime for them so to bind any one, much more such a man as he is, so they have themselves proved that they had no such unreasonable expectation; for on hearing that he had gone away with the intention of returning, they expressed their satisfaction; and fidelity to an oath requires no more than the performance of what was expected by those to whom it was given. Let me ask, moreover, what is meant by saying that he, in giving the oath with his own lips, mentioned the possibility of necessity preventing his fulfilment of the promise? The truth is, that with his own lips he ordered the qualifying clause to be removed. If he put it in, it would be when he himself spoke to the people; but if he had done so, they assuredly would not have answered, “Thanks be unto God,” but would have renewed the

protestations which they made when it was read with the qualifying clause by the deacon. And what difference does it really make whether this plea of necessity for departing from the promise was or was not inserted? Nothing more than we have stated above was expected from him; but he who disappoints the known expectation of those to whom his oath is given, cannot but be a perjured person.

14. Wherefore, let his promise be fulfilled, and let the hearts of the weak be healed, lest, on the one hand, those who approve of it be taught by such a conspicuous example to imitate an act of perjury, and lest, on the other hand, those who condemn it have just grounds for saying that none of us is worthy to be believed, not only when we make promises, but even when we give our oath. Let us especially guard against giving occasion in this to the tongues of enemies, which are used by the great Enemy as darts wherewith to slay the weak. But God forbid that we should expect from a man like Pinianus anything else than what the fear of God inspires, and the superior excellence of his own piety approves. As for myself, whom you blame for not interfering to forbid his oath, I admit that I could not bring myself to believe that, in circumstances so disorderly and scandalous, I ought rather to allow the church which I serve to be overthrown, than accept the deliverance which was offered to us by such a man.

LETTER CXXX

(A.D. 412.)

To Proba, a Devoted Handmaid of God, Bishop Augustin, a Servant of Christ and of Christ’s Servants, Sends Greeting in the Name of the Lord of Lords.

Chap. I

1. Recollecting your request and my promise, that as soon as time and opportunity should be given by Him to whom we pray, I would write you something on the subject of prayer to God, I feel it my duty now to discharge this debt, and in the love of Christ to minister to the satisfaction of your pious desire. I cannot express in words how greatly I rejoiced because of the request, in which I perceived how great is your solicitude

about this supremely important matter. For what could be more suitably the business of your widowhood than to continue in supplications night and day, according to the apostle’s admonition, “She that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications night and day”? It might, indeed, appear wonderful that solicitude about prayer should occupy your heart and claim the first place in it, when you are, so far as this world is concerned, noble and wealthy, and the mother of such an illustrious family, and, although a widow, not desolate, were it not that you wisely understand that in this world and in this life the soul has no sure portion.

2. Wherefore He who inspired you with this thought is assuredly doing what He promised to His disciples when they were grieved, not for themselves, but for the whole human family, and were despairing of the salvation of any one, after they heard from Him that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. He gave them this marvellous and merciful reply: “The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.” He, therefore, with whom it is possible to make even the rich enter into the kingdom of heaven, inspired you with that devout anxiety which makes you think it necessary to ask my counsel on the question how you ought to pray. For while He was yet on earth, He brought Zaccheus, though rich, into the kingdom of heaven, and, after being glorified in His resurrection and ascension, He made many who were rich to despise this present world, and made them more truly rich by extinguishing their desire for riches through His imparting to them His Holy Spirit. For how could you desire so much to pray to God if you did not trust in Him? And how could you trust in Him if you were fixing your trust in uncertain riches, and neglecting the wholesome exhortation of the apostle: “Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation, that they may lay hold on eternal life”?

Chap. II

3. It becomes you, therefore, out of love to this true life, to account yourself "desolate" in this world, however great the prosperity of your lot may be. For as that is the true life, in comparison with which the present life, which is much loved, is not worthy to be called life, however happy and prolonged it be, so is it also the true consolation promised by the Lord in the words of Isaiah, "I will give him the true consolation, peace upon peace," without which consolation men find themselves, in the midst of every mere earthly solace, rather desolate than comforted. For as for riches and high rank, and all other things in which men who are strangers to true felicity imagine that happiness exists, what comfort do they bring, seeing that it is better to be independent of such things than to enjoy abundance of them, because, when possessed, they occasion, through our fear of losing them, more vexation than was caused by the strength of desire with which their possession was coveted? Men are not made good by possessing these so-called good things, but, if men have become good otherwise, they make these things to be really good by using them well. Therefore true comfort is to be found not in them, but rather in those things in which true life is found. For a man can be made blessed only by the same power by which he is made good.

4. It is true, indeed, that good men are seen to be the sources of no small comfort to others in this world. For if we be harassed by poverty, or saddened by bereavement, or disquieted by bodily pain, or pining in exile, or vexed by any kind of calamity, let good men visit us, men who can not only rejoice with them that rejoice, but also weep with them that weep, and who know how to give profitable counsel, and win us to express our feelings in conversation: the effect is, that rough things become smooth, heavy burdens are lightened, and difficulties vanquished most wonderfully. But this is done in and through them by Him who has made them good by His Spirit. On the other hand, although riches may abound, and no bereavement befal us, and health of body be enjoyed, and we live in our own country in peace and safety, if, at the same time, we have as our neighbours wicked men, among whom there is not one who can be trusted, not one from whom we do not apprehend and experience treachery, deceit, outbursts of anger, dissensions, and snares, in such a case are not all these other things made bitter and vexatious, so that nothing sweet or pleasant is left in them? Whatever, therefore, be our circumstances in this world, there

is nothing truly enjoyable without a friend. But how rarely is one found in this life about whose spirit and behaviour as a true friend there may be perfect confidence! For no one is known to another so intimately as he is known to himself, and yet no one is so well known even to himself that he can be sure as to his own conduct on the morrow; wherefore, although many are known by their fruits, and some gladden their neighhours by their good lives, while others grieve their neighbours by their evil lives, yet the minds of men are so unknown and so unstable, that there is the highest wisdom in the exhortation of the apostle: “Judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God.”

5. In the darkness, then, of this world, in which we are pilgrims absent from the Lord as long as “we walk by faith and not by sight,” the Christian soul ought to feel itself desolate, and continue in prayer, and learn to fix the eye of faith on the word of the divine sacred Scriptures, as “on a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts.” For the ineffable source from which this lamp borrows its light is the Light which shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not—the Light, in order to seeing which our hearts must be purified by faith; for “blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God;” and “we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” Then after death shall come the true life, and after desolation the true consolation, that life shall deliver our “souls from death” that consolation shall deliver our “eyes from tears,” and, as follows in the psalm, our feet shall be delivered from falling; for there shall be no temptation there. Moreover, if there be no temptation, there will be no prayer; for there we shall not be waiting for promised blessings, but contemplating the blessings actually bestowed; wherefore he adds, “I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living,” where we shall then be—not in the wilderness of the dead, where we now are: “For ye are dead,” says the apostle, “and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” For that is the true life on which the rich are exhorted to lay hold by being rich in good works; and in it is the true consolation, for want of which, meanwhile, a widow is “desolate”

indeed, even though she has sons and grandchildren, and conducts her household piously, entreating all dear to her to put their hope in God: and in the midst of all this, she says in her prayer, “My soul thirsteth for Thee; my flesh longeth in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;” and this dying life is nothing else than such a land, however numerous our mortal comforts, however pleasant our companions in the pilgrimage, and however great the abundance of our possessions. You know how uncertain all these things are; and even if they were not uncertain, what would they be in comparison with the felicity which is promised in the life to come!

6. In saying these things to you, who, being a widow, rich and noble, and the mother of an illustrious family, have asked from me a discourse on prayer, my aim has been to make you feel that, even while your family are spared to you, and live as you would desire, you are desolate so long as you have not attained to that life in which is the true and abiding consolation, in which shall be fulfilled what is spoken in prophecy: “We are satisfied in the morning with Thy mercy, we rejoice and are glad all our days; we are made glad according to the days wherein Thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.”

Chap. III

7. Wherefore, until that consolation come, remember, in order to your “continuing in prayers and supplications night and day,” that, however great the temporal prosperity may be which flows around you, you are desolate. For the apostle does not ascribe this gift to every widow, but to her who, being a widow indeed, and desolate, “trusteth in God, and continueth in supplication night and day.” Observe, however, most vigilantly the warning which follows: “But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth;” for a person lives in those things which he loves, which he greatly desires, and in which he believes himself to be blessed. Wherefore, what Scripture has said of riches: “If riches increase, set not your heart upon them,” I say to you concerning pleasures: “If pleasures increase, set not your heart upon them.” Do not, therefore, think highly of yourself because these things are not wanting, but are yours abundantly, flowing, as it were, from a most copious fountain of earthly felicity. By all means look upon your possession of these things with indifference and contempt, and seek nothing from them

beyond health of body. For this is a blessing not to be despised, because of its being necessary to the work of life until "this mortal shall have put on immortality" in other words, the true, perfect, and everlasting health, which is neither reduced by earthly infirmities nor repaired by corruptible gratification, but, enduring with celestial rigour, is animated with a life eternally incorruptible. For the apostle himself says, "Make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof," because we must take care of the flesh, but only in so far as is necessary for health; "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh," as he himself likewise says. Hence, also, he admonished Timothy, who was, as it appears, too severe upon his body, that he should "use a little wine for his stomach's sake, and for his often infirmities."

8. Many holy men and women, using every precaution against those pleasures in which she that liveth, cleaving to them, and dwelling in them as her heart's delight, is dead while she liveth, have cast from them that which is as it were the mother of pleasures, by distributing their wealth among the poor, and so have stored it in the safer keeping of the treasury of heaven. If you are hindered from doing this by some consideration of duty to your family, you know yourself what account you can give to God of your use of riches. For no one knoweth what passeth within a man, "but the spirit of the man which is in him." We ought not to judge anything "before the time until the Lord come who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God." It pertains, therefore, to your care as a widow, to see to it that if pleasures increase you do not set your heart upon them, lest that which ought to rise that it may live, die through contact with their corrupting influence. Reckon yourself to be one of those of whom it is written, "Their hearts shall live for ever."

Chap. IV

9. You have now heard what manner of person you should be if you would pray; hear, in the next place, what you ought to pray for. This is the subject on which you have thought it most necessary to ask my opinion, because you were disturbed by the words of the apostle: "We know not what we should pray for as we ought;" and you became alarmed lest it should do you

more harm to pray otherwise than you ought, than to desist from praying altogether. A short solution of your difficulty may be given thus: “Pray for a happy life.” This all men wish to have; for even those whose lives are worst and most abandoned would by no means live thus, unless they thought that in this way they either were made or might be made truly happy. Now what else ought we to pray for than that which both bad and good desire, but which only the good obtain?

Chap. V

10. You ask, perchance, What is this happy life? On this question the talents and leisure of many philosophers have been wasted, who, nevertheless, failed in their researches after it just in proportion as they failed to honour Him from whom it proceeds, and were unthankful to Him. In the first place, then, consider whether we should accept the opinion of those philosophers who pronounce that man happy who lives according to his own will. Far be it, surely, from us to believe this; for what if a man’s will inclines him to live in wickedness? Is he not proved to be a miserable man in proportion to the facility with which his depraved will is carried out? Even philosophers who were strangers to the worship of God have rejected this sentiment with deserved abhorrence. One of them, a man of the greatest eloquence, says: “Behold, however, others, not philosophers indeed, but men of ready power in disputation, who affirm that all men are happy who live according to their own will. But this is certainly untrue, for to wish that which is unbecoming is itself a most miserable thing; nor is it so miserable a thing to fail in obtaining what you wish as to wish to obtain what you ought not to desire.” What is your opinion? Are not these words, by whomsoever they are spoken, derived from the Truth itself? We may therefore here say what the apostle said of a certain Cretan poet whose sentiment had pleased him: “This witness is true.”

11. He, therefore, is truly happy who has all that he wishes to have, and wishes to have nothing which he ought not to wish. This being understood, let us now observe what things men may without impropriety wish to have. One desires marriage; another, having become a widower, chooses thereafter to live a life of continence; a third chooses to practise continence though he is married. And although of these three conditions one may be

found better than another, we cannot say that any one of the three persons is wishing what he ought not: the same is true of the desire for children as the fruit of marriage, and for life and health to be enjoyed by the children who have been received,—of which desires the latter is one with which widows remaining unmarried are for the most part occupied; for although, refusing a second marriage, they do not now wish to have children, they wish that the children that they have may live in health. From all such care those who preserve their virginity intact are free. Nevertheless, all have some dear to them whose temporal welfare they do without impropriety desire. But when men have obtained this health for themselves, and for those whom they love, are we at liberty to say that they are now happy? They have, it is true, something which it is quite becoming to desire; but if they have not other things which are greater, better, and more full both of utility and beauty, they are still far short of possessing a happy life.

Chap. VI

12. Shall we then say, that in addition to this health of body men may desire for themselves and for those dear to them honour and power? By all means, if they desire these in order that by obtaining them they may promote the interest of those who may be their dependants. If they seek these things not for the sake of the things themselves, but for some good thing which may through this means be accomplished, the wish is a proper one; but if it be merely for the empty gratification of pride, and arrogance, and for a superfluous and pernicious triumph of vanity, the wish is improper. Wherefore, men do nothing wrong in desiring for themselves and for their kindred the competent portion of necessary things, of which the apostle speaks when he says: “Godliness with a competency [contentment in English version] is great gain; for we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out: and having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition; for the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” This competent portion he desires without impropriety who desires it and nothing beyond it; for if his desires

go beyond it, he is not desiring it, and therefore his desire is improper. This was desired, and was prayed for by him who said: “Give me neither poverty nor riches: feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny Thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.” You see assuredly that this competency is desired not for its own sake, but to secure the health of the body, and such provision of house and clothing as is befitting the man’s circumstances, that he may appear as he ought to do among those amongst whom he has to live, so as to retain their respect and discharge the duties of his position.

13. Among all these things, our own welfare and the benefits which friendship bids us ask for others are things to be desired on their own account; but a competency of the necessaries of life is usually sought, if it be sought in the proper way, not on its own account, but for the sake of the two higher benefits. Welfare consists in the possession of life itself, and health and soundness of mind and body. The claims of friendship, moreover, are not to be confined within too narrow range, for it embraces all to whom love and kindly affection are due, although the heart goes out to some of these more freely, to others more cautiously; yea, it even extends to our enemies, for whom also we are commanded to pray. There is accordingly no one in the whole human family to whom kindly affection is not due by reason of the bond of a common humanity, although it may not be due on the ground of reciprocal love;

Chap. VII

But in those by whom we are requited with a holy and pure love, we find great and reasonable pleasure.

For these things, therefore, it becomes us to pray: if we have them, that we may keep them; if we have them not, that we may get them.

14. Is this all? Are these the benefits in which exclusively the happy life is found? Or does truth teach us that something else is to be preferred to them all? We know that both the competency of things necessary, and the well-being of ourselves and of our friends, so long as these concern this present world alone, are to be cast aside as dross in comparison with the obtaining

of eternal life; for although the body may be in health, the mind cannot be regarded as sound which does not prefer eternal to temporal things; yea, the life which we live in time is wasted, if it be not spent in obtaining that by which we may be worthy of eternal life. Therefore all things which are the objects of useful and becoming desire are unquestionably to be viewed with reference to that one life which is lived with God, and is derived from Him. In so doing, we love ourselves if we love God; and we truly love our neighbours as ourselves, according to the second great commandment, if, so far as is in our power, we persuade them to a similar love of God. We love God, therefore, for what He is in Himself, and ourselves and our neighbours for His sake. Even when living thus, let us not think that we are securely established in that happy life, as if there was nothing more for which we should still pray. For how could we be said to live a happy life now, while that which alone is the object of a well-directed life is still wanting to us?

Chap. VIII

15. Why, then, are our desires scattered over many things, and why, through fear of not praying as we ought, do we ask what we should pray for, and not rather say with the Psalmist: “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple”? For in the house of the Lord “all the days of life” are not days distinguished by their successively coming and passing away: the beginning of one day is not the end of another; but they are all alike unending in that place where the life which is made up of them has itself no end. In order to our obtaining this true blessed life, He who is Himself the True Blessed Life has taught us to pray, not with much speaking, as if our being heard depended upon the fluency with which we express ourselves, seeing that we are praying to One who, as the Lord tells us, “knoweth what things we have need of before we ask Him.” Whence it may seem surprising that, although He has forbidden “much speaking,” He who knoweth before we ask Him what things we need has nevertheless given us exhortation to prayer in such words as these: “Men ought always to pray and not to faint;” setting before us the case of a widow, who, desiring to have justice done to her against her adversary, did by her persevering entreaties persuade an unjust judge to listen to her, not

moved by a regard either to justice or to mercy, but overcome by her wearisome importunity; in order that we might be admonished how much more certainly the Lord God, who is merciful and just, gives ear to us praying continually to Him, when this widow, by her unremitting supplication, prevailed over the indifference of an unjust and wicked judge, and how willingly and benignantly He fulfils the good desires of those whom He knows to have forgiven others their trespasses, when this suppliant, though seeking vengeance upon her adversary, obtained her desire. A similar lesson the Lord gives in the parable of the man to whom a friend in his journey had come, and who, having nothing to set before him, desired to borrow from another friend three loaves (in which, perhaps, there is a figure of the Trinity of persons of one substance), and finding him already along with his household asleep, succeeded by very urgent and importunate entreaties in rousing him up, so that he gave him as many as he needed, being moved rather by a wish to avoid further annoyance than by benevolent thoughts: from which the Lord would have us understand that, if even one who was asleep is constrained to give, even in spite of himself, after being disturbed in his sleep by the person who asks of him, how much more kindly will He give who never sleeps, and who rouses us from sleep that we may ask from Him.

16. With the same design He added: “Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask Him?” We have here what corresponds to those three things which the apostle commends: faith is signified by the fish, either on account of the element of water used in baptism, or because it remains unharmed amid the tempestuous waves of this world,—contrasted with which is the serpent, that with poisonous deceit persuaded man to disbelieve God; hope is signified by the egg, because the life of the young bird is not yet in it, but is to be—is not seen, but hoped for, because “hope which is seen is not

hope,”—contrasted with which is the scorpion, for the man who hopes for eternal life forgets the things which are behind, and reaches forth to the things which are before, for to him it is dangerous to look back; but the scorpion is to be guarded against on account of what it has in its tail, namely, a sharp and venomous sting; charity, is signified by bread, for “the greatest of these is charity,” and bread surpasses all other kinds of food in usefulness,—contrasted with which is a stone, because hard hearts refuse to exercise charity. Whether this be the meaning of these symbols, or some other more suitable be found, it is at least certain that He who knoweth how to give good gifts to His children urges us to “ask and seek and knock.”

17. Why this should be done by Him who “before we ask Him knoweth what things we have need of,” might perplex our minds, if we did not understand that the Lord our God requires us to ask not that thereby our wish may be intimated to Him, for to Him it cannot be unknown, but in order that by prayer there may be exercised in us by supplications that desire by which we may receive what He prepares to bestow. His gifts are very great, but we are small and straitened in our capacity of receiving. Wherefore it is said to us: “Be ye enlarged, not bearing the yoke along with unbelievers. For, in proportion to the simplicity of our faith, the firmness of our hope, and the ardour of our desire, will we more largely receive of that which is immensely great; which “eye hath not seen,” for it is not colour; which “the ear hath not heard,” for it is not sound; and which hath not ascended into the heart of man, for the heart of man must ascend to it.

Chap. IX

18. When we cherish uninterrupted desire along with the exercise of faith and hope and charity, we “pray always.” But at certain stated hours and seasons we also use words in prayer to God, that by these signs of things we may admonish ourselves, and may acquaint ourselves with the measure of progress which we have made in this desire, and may more warmly excite ourselves to obtain an increase of its strength. For the effect following upon prayer will be excellent in proportion to the fervour of the desire which precedes its utterance. And therefore, what else is intended by the words of the apostle: “Pray without ceasing,” than, “Desire without intermission, from Him who alone can give it, a happy life, which no life can be but that

which is eternal”? This, therefore, let us desire continually from the Lord our God; and thus let us pray continually. But at certain hours we recall our minds from other cares and business, in which desire itself somehow is cooled down, to the business of prayer, admonishing ourselves by the words of our prayer to fix attention upon that which we desire, lest what had begun to lose heat become altogether cold, and be finally extinguished, if the flame be not more frequently fanned. Whence, also, when the same apostle says, “Let your requests be made known unto God,” this is not to be understood as if thereby they become known to God, who certainly knew them before they were uttered, but in this sense, that they are to be made known to ourselves in the presence of God by patient waiting upon Him, not in the presence of men by ostentatious worship. Or perhaps that they may be made known also to the angels that are in the presence of God, that these beings may in some way present them to God, and consult Him concerning them, and may bring to us, either manifestly or secretly, that which, hearkening to His commandment, they may have learned to be His will, and which must be fulfilled by them according to that which they have there learned to be their duty; for the angel said to Tobias: “Now, therefore, when thou didst pray, and Sara thy daughter-in-law, I did bring the remembrance of your prayers before the Holy One.”

Chap. X

19. Wherefore it is neither wrong nor unprofitable to spend much time in praying, if there be leisure for this without hindering other good and necessary works to which duty calls us, although even in the doing of these, as I have said, we ought by cherishing holy desire to pray without ceasing. For to spend a long time in prayer is not, as some think, the same thing as to pray “with much speaking.” Multiplied words are one thing, long-continued warmth of desire is another. For even of the Lord Himself it is written, that He continued all night in prayer, and that His prayer was more prolonged when He was in an agony; and in this is not an example given to us by Him who is in time an Intercessor such as we need, and who is with the Father eternally the Hearer of prayer?

20. The brethren in Egypt are reported to have very frequent prayers, but these very brief, and, as it were, sudden and ejaculatory, lest the wakeful

and aroused attention which is indispensable in prayer should by protracted exercises vanish or lose its keenness. And in this they themselves show plainly enough, that just as this attention is not to be allowed to become exhausted if it cannot continue long, so it is not to be suddenly suspended if it is sustained. Far be it from us either to use "much speaking" in prayer, or to refrain from prolonged prayer, if fervent attention of the soul continue. To use much speaking in prayer is to employ a superfluity of words in asking a necessary thing; but to prolong prayer is to have the heart throbbing with continued pious emotion towards Him to whom we pray. For in most cases prayer consists more in groaning than in speaking, in tears rather than in words. But He setteth our tears in His sight, and our groaning is not hidden from Him who made all things by the word, and does not need human words.

Chap. XI

21. To us, therefore, words are necessary, that by them we may be assisted in considering and observing what we ask, not as means by which we expect that God is to be either informed or moved to compliance. When, therefore, we say: "Hallowed be Thy name," we admonish ourselves to desire that His name, which is always holy, may be also among men esteemed holy, that is to say, not despised; which is an advantage not to God, but to men. When we say: "Thy kingdom come," which shall certainly come whether we wish it or not, we do by these words stir up our own desires for that kingdom, that it may come to us, and that we may be found worthy to reign in it. When we say: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," we pray for ourselves that He would give us the grace of obedience, that His will may be done by us in the same way as it is done in heavenly places by His angels. When we say: "Give us this day our daily bread," the word "this day" signifies for the present time, in which we ask either for that competency of temporal blessings which I have spoken of before ("bread" being used to designate the whole of those blessings, because of its constituting so important a part of them), or the sacrament of believers, which is in this present time necessary, but necessary in order to obtain the felicity not of the present time, but of eternity. When we say: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," we remind ourselves both

what we should ask, and what we should do in order that we may be worthy to receive what we ask. When we say: “Lead us not into temptation,” we admonish ourselves to seek that we may not, through being deprived of God’s help, be either ensnared to consent or compelled to yield to temptation. When we say: “Deliver us from evil,” we admonish ourselves to consider that we are not yet enjoying that good estate in which we shall experience no evil. And this petition, which stands last in the Lord’s Prayer, is so comprehensive that a Christian, in whatsoever affliction he be placed, may in using it give utterance to his groans and find vent for his tears—may begin with this petition, go on with it, and with it conclude his prayer. For it was necessary that by the use of these words the things which they signify should be kept before our memory.

Chap. XII

22. For whatever other words we may say,—whether the desire of the person praying go before the words, and employ them in order to give definite form to its requests, or come after them, and concentrate attention upon them, that it may increase in fervour,—if we pray rightly, and as becomes our wants, we say nothing but what is already contained in the Lord’s Prayer. And whoever says in prayer anything which cannot find its place in that gospel prayer, is praying in a way which, if it be not unlawful, is at least not spiritual; and I know not how carnal prayers can be lawful, since it becomes those who are born again by the Spirit to pray in no other way than spiritually. For example, when one prays: “Be Thou glorified among all nations as Thou art glorified among us,” and “Let Thy prophets be found faithful,” what else does he ask than, “Hallowed be Thy name”? When one says: “Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved,” what else is he saying than, “Let Thy kingdom come”? When one says: “Order my steps in Thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me,” what else is he saying than, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”? When one says: “Give me neither poverty nor riches,” what else is this than, “Give us this day our daily bread”? When one says: “Lord, remember David, and all his compassion,” or, “O Lord, if I have done this, if there be iniquity in my hands, if I have rewarded evil to them that did evil to me,” what else is this than, “Forgive

us our debts as we forgive our debtors”? When one says: “Take away from me the lusts of the appetite, and let not sensual desire take hold on me,” what else is this than, “Lead us not into temptation”? When one says: “Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God; defend me from them that rise up against me,” what else is this than, “Deliver us from evil”? And if you go over all the words of holy prayers, you will, I believe, find nothing which cannot be comprised and summed up in the petitions of the Lord’s Prayer. Wherefore, in praying, we are free to use different words to any extent, but we must ask the same things; in this we have no choice.

23. These things it is our duty to ask without hesitation for ourselves and for our friends, and for strangers—yea, even for enemies; although in the heart of the person praying, desire for one and for another may arise, differing in nature or in strength according to the more immediate or more remote relationship. But he who says in prayer such words as, “O Lord, multiply my riches;” or, “Give me as much wealth as Thou hast given to this or that man;” or, “Increase my honours, make me eminent for power and fame in this world,” or something else of this sort, and who asks merely from a desire for these things, and not in order through them to benefit men agreeably to God’s will, I do not think that he will find any part of the Lord’s Prayer in connection with which he could fit in these requests. Wherefore let us be ashamed at least to ask these things, if we be not ashamed to desire them. If, however, we are ashamed of even desiring them, but feel ourselves overcome by the desire, how much better would it be to ask to be freed from this plague of desire by Him to whom we say, “Deliver us from evil”!

Chap. XIII

24. You have now, if I am not mistaken, an answer to two questions,—what kind of person you ought to be if you would pray, and what things you should ask in prayer; and the answer has been given not by my teaching, but by His who has condescended to teach us all. A happy life is to be sought after, and this is to be asked from the Lord God. Many different answers have been given by many in discussing wherein true happiness consists; but why should we go to many teachers, or consider many answers to this question? It has been briefly and truly stated in the divine Scriptures,

“Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord.” That we may be numbered among this people, and that we may attain to beholding Him and dwelling for ever with Him, “the end of the commandment is, charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” In the same three, hope has been placed instead of a good conscience. Faith, hope, and charity, therefore, lead unto God the man who prays, i.e. who believes, hopes, and desires, and is guided as to what he should ask from the Lord by studying the Lord’s Prayer. Fasting, and abstinence from gratifying carnal desire in other pleasures without injury to health, and especially frequent almsgiving, are a great assistance in prayer; so that we may be able to say, “In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord, with my hands in the night before Him, and I was not deceived.” For how can God, who is a Spirit, and who cannot be touched, be sought with hands in any other sense than by good works?

Chap. XIV

25. Perhaps you may still ask why the apostle said, “We know not what to pray for as we ought,” for it is wholly incredible that either he or those to whom he wrote were ignorant of the Lord’s Prayer. He could not say this either rashly or falsely; what, then, do we suppose to be his reason for the statement? Is it not that vexations and troubles in this world are for the most part profitable either to heal the swelling of pride, or to prove and exercise patience, for which, after such probation and discipline, a greater reward is reserved, or to punish and eradicate some sins; but we, not knowing what beneficial purpose these may serve, desire to be freed from all tribulation? To this ignorance the apostle showed that even he himself was not a stranger (unless, perhaps, he did it notwithstanding his knowing what to pray for as he ought), when, lest he should be exalted above measure by the greatness of the revelations, there was given unto him a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him; for which thing, not knowing surely what he ought to pray for, he besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him. At length he received the answer of God, declaring why that which so great a man prayed for was denied, and why it was expedient that it should not be done: “My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness.”

26. Accordingly, we know not what to pray for as we ought in regard to tribulations, which may do us good or harm; and yet, because they are hard and painful, and against the natural feelings of our weak nature, we pray, with a desire which is common to mankind, that they may be removed from us. But we ought to exercise such submission to the will of the Lord our God, that if He does not remove those vexations, we do not suppose ourselves to be neglected by Him, but rather, in patient endurance of evil, hope to be made partakers of greater good, for so His strength is perfected in our weakness. God has sometimes in anger granted the request of impatient petitioners, as in mercy He denied it to the apostle. For we read what the Israelites asked, and in what manner they asked and obtained their request; but while their desire was granted, their impatience was severely corrected. Again, He gave them, in answer to their request, a king according to their heart, as it is written, not according to His own heart. He granted also what the devil asked, namely, that His servant, who was to be proved, might be tempted. He granted also the request of unclean spirits, when they besought Him that their legion might be sent into the great herd of swine. These things are written to prevent any one from thinking too highly of himself if he has received an answer when he was urgently asking anything which it would be more advantageous for him not to receive, or to prevent him from being cast down and despairing of the divine compassion towards himself if he be not heard, when, perchance, he is asking something by the obtaining of which he might be more grievously afflicted, or might be by the corrupting influences of prosperity wholly destroyed. In regard to such things, therefore, we know not what to pray for as we ought. Accordingly, if anything is ordered in a way contrary to our prayer, we ought, patiently bearing the disappointment, and in everything giving thanks to God, to entertain no doubt whatever that it was right that the will of God and not our will should be done. For of this the Mediator has given us an example, inasmuch as, after He had said, “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,” transforming the human will which was in Him through His incarnation, He immediately added, “Nevertheless, O Father, not as I will but as Thou wilt.” Wherefore, not without reason are many made righteous by the obedience of One.

27. But whoever desires from the Lord that “one thing,” and seeks after it, asks in certainty and in confidence, and has no fear lest when obtained it be injurious to him, seeing that, without it, anything else which he may have obtained by asking in a right way is of no advantage to him. The thing referred to is the one true and only happy life, in which, immortal and incorruptible in body and spirit, we may contemplate the joy of the Lord for ever. All other things are desired, and are without impropriety prayed for, with a view to this one thing. For whosoever has it shall have all that he wishes, and cannot possibly wish to have anything along with it which would be unbecoming. For in it is the fountain of life, which we must now thirst for in prayer so long as we live in hope, not yet seeing that which we hope for, trusting under the shadow of His wings before whom are all our desires, that we may be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of His house, and made to drink of the river of His pleasures; because with Him is the fountain of life, and in His light we shall see light, when our desire shall be satisfied with good things, and when there shall be nothing beyond to be sought after with groaning, but all things shall be possessed by us with rejoicing. At the same time, because this blessing is nothing else than the “peace which passeth all understanding,” even when we are asking it in our prayers, we know not what to pray for as we ought. For inasmuch as we cannot present it to our minds as it really is, we do not know it, but whatever image of it may be presented to our minds we reject, disown, and condemn; we know it is not what we are seeking, although we do not yet know enough to be able to define what we seek.

Chap. XV

28. There is therefore in us a certain learned ignorance, so to speak—an ignorance which we learn from that Spirit of God who helps our infirmities. For after the apostle said, “If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it,” he added in the same passage, “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is in the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” This is not to be understood as if it meant that the Holy

Spirit of God, who is in the Trinity, God unchangeable, and is one God with the Father and the Son, intercedes for the saints like one who is not a divine person; for it is said, “He maketh intercession for the saints,” because He enables the saints to make intercession, as in another place it is said, “The Lord your God proveth you, that He may know whether ye love Him,” i.e. that He may make you know. He therefore makes the saints intercede with groanings which cannot be uttered, when He inspires them with longings for that great blessing, as yet unknown, for which we patiently wait. For how is that which is desired set forth in language if it be unknown, for if it were utterly unknown it would not be desired; and on the other hand, if it were seen, it would not be desired nor sought for with groanings?

Chap. XVI

29. Considering all these things, and whatever else the Lord shall have made known to you in this matter, which either does not occur to me or would take too much time to state here, strive in prayer to overcome this world: pray in hope, pray in faith, pray in love, pray earnestly and patiently, pray as a widow belonging to Christ. For although prayer is, as He has taught, the duty of all His members, i.e. of all who believe in Him and are united to His body, a more assiduous attention to prayer is found to be specially enjoined in Scripture upon those who are widows. Two women of the name of Anna are honourably named there,—the one, Elkanah’s wife, who was the mother of holy Samuel; the other, the widow who recognised the Most Holy One when He was yet a babe. The former, though married, prayed with sorrow of mind and brokenness of heart because she had no sons; and she obtained Samuel, and dedicated him to the Lord, because she vowed to do so when she prayed for him. It is not easy, however, to find to what petition of the Lord’s Prayer her petition could be referred, unless it be to the last, “Deliver us from evil,” because it was esteemed to be an evil to be married and not to have offspring as the fruit of marriage. Observe, however, what is written concerning the other Anna, the widow: she “departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.” In like manner, the apostle said in words already quoted, “She that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day;” and the Lord, when exhorting

men to pray always and not to faint, made mention of a widow, who, by persevering importunity, persuaded a judge to attend to her cause, though he was an unjust and wicked man, and one who neither feared God nor regarded man. How incumbent it is on widows to go beyond others in devoting time to prayer may be plainly enough seen from the fact that from among them are taken the examples set forth as an exhortation to all to earnestness in prayer.

30. Now what makes this work specially suitable to widows but their bereaved and desolate condition? Whosoever, then, understands that he is in this world bereaved and desolate as long as he is a pilgrim absent from his Lord, is careful to commit his widowhood, so to speak, to his God as his shield in continual and most fervent prayer. Pray, therefore, as a widow of Christ, not yet seeing Him whose help you implore. And though you are very wealthy, pray as a poor person, for you have not yet the true riches of the world to come, in which you have no loss to fear. Though you have sons and grandchildren, and a large household, still pray, as I said already, as one who is desolate, for we have no certainty in regard to all temporal blessings that they shall abide for our consolation even to the end of this present life. If you seek and relish the things that are above, you desire things everlasting and sure; and as long as you do not yet possess them, you ought to regard yourself as desolate, even though all your family are spared to you, and live as you desire. And if you thus act, assuredly your example will be followed by your most devout daughter-in-law, and the other holy widows and virgins that are settled in peace under your care; for the more pious the manner in which you order your house, the more are you bound to persevere fervently in prayer, not engaging yourselves with the affairs of this world further than is demanded in the interests of religion.

31. By all means remember to pray earnestly for me. I would not have you yield such deference to the office fraught with perils which I bear, as to refrain from giving the assistance which I know myself to need. Prayer was made by the household of Christ for Peter and for Paul. I rejoice that you are in His household; and I need, incomparably more than Peter and Paul did, the help of the prayers of the brethren. Emulate each other in prayer with a holy rivalry, with one heart, for you wrestle not against each other,

but against the devil, who is the common enemy of all the saints. “By fasting, by vigils, and all mortification of the body, prayer is greatly helped.” Let each one do what she can; what one cannot herself do, she does by another who can do it, if she loves in another that which personal inability alone hinders her from doing; wherefore let her who can do less not keep back the one who can do more, and let her who can do more not urge unduly her who can do less. For your conscience is responsible to God; to each other owe nothing but mutual love. May the Lord, who is able to do above what we ask or think, give ear to your prayers.

LETTER CXXXI

(A.D. 412.)

To His Most Excellent Daughter, the Noble and Deservedly Illustrious Lady Proba, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

You speak the truth when you say that the soul, having its abode in a corruptible body, is restrained by this measure of contact with the earth, and is somehow so bent and crushed by this burden that its desires and thoughts go more easily downwards to many things than upwards to one. For Holy Scripture says the same: “The corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things.” But our Saviour, who by His healing word raised up the woman in the gospel that had been eighteen years bowed down (whose case was, perchance, a figure of spiritual infirmity), came for this purpose, that Christians might not hear in vain the call, “Lift up your hearts,” and might truly reply, “We lift them up to the Lord.” Looking to this, you do well to regard the evils of this world as easy to bear because of the hope of the world to come. For thus, by being rightly used, these evils become a blessing, because, while they do not increase our desires for this world, they exercise our patience; as to which the apostle says, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God:” all things, he saith—not only, therefore, those which are desired because pleasant, but also those which are shunned because painful; since we receive the former without being carried away by them, and bear the latter without being crushed by them, and in all give thanks, according to the divine command, to Him of whom we say, “I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth,” and, “It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me, that I might learn Thy statutes.” The truth is, most noble lady, that if the calm of this treacherous prosperity were always smiling upon us, the soul of man would never make for the haven of true and certain safety. Wherefore, in returning the respectful salutation due to your Excellency, and expressing my gratitude for your most pious care for my welfare, I ask of the Lord that He may grant to you the rewards of the life to come, and consolation in the present life; and I commend myself to the love and prayers of all of you in whose hearts Christ dwells by faith.

(In another hand.) May the true and faithful God truly comfort your heart and preserve your health, my most excellent daughter and noble lady, deservedly illustrious.

LETTER CXXXII

(A.D. 412.)

To Volusianus, My Noble Lord and Most Justly Distinguished Son, Bishop Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

In my desire for your welfare, both in this world and in Christ, I am perhaps not even surpassed by the prayers of your pious mother. Wherefore, in reciprocating your salutation with the respect due to your worth, I beg to exhort you, as earnestly as I can, not to grudge to devote attention to the study of the Writings which are truly and unquestionably holy. For they are genuine and solid truth, not winning their way to the mind by artificial eloquence, nor giving forth with flattering voice a vain and uncertain sound. They deeply interest the man who is hungering not for words but for things; and they cause great alarm at first in him whom they are to render safe from fear. I exhort you especially to read the writings of the apostles, for from them you will receive a stimulus to acquaint yourself with the prophets, whose testimonies the apostles use. If in your reading or meditation on what you have read any question arises to the solution of which I may appear necessary, write to me, that I may write in reply. For, with the Lord helping me, I may perhaps be more able to serve you in this way than by personally conversing with you on such subjects, partly because, through the difference in our occupations, it does not happen that you have leisure at the same times as I might have it, but especially because of the irrepressible intrusion of those who are for the most part not adapted to such discussions, and take more pleasure in a war of words than in the clear light of knowledge; whereas, whatever is written stands always at the service of the reader when he has leisure, and there can be nothing burdensome in the society of that which is taken up or laid aside at your own pleasure.

LETTER CXXXIII

(A.D. 412.)

To Marcellinus, My Noble Lord, Justly Distinguished, My Son Very Much Beloved, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I have learned that the Circumcelliones and clergy of the Donatist faction belonging to the district of Hippo, whom the guardians of public order had brought to trial for their deeds, have been examined by your Excellency, and that the most of them have confessed their share in the violent death which the presbyter Restitutus suffered at their hands, and in the beating of Innocentius, another Catholic presbyter, as well as in digging out the eye and cutting off the finger of the said Innocentius. This news has plunged me into the deepest anxiety, lest perchance your Excellency should judge them worthy, according to the laws, of punishment not less severe than suffering in their own persons the same injuries as they have inflicted on others. Wherefore I write this letter to implore you by your faith in Christ, and by the mercy of Christ the Lord Himself, by no means to do this or permit it to be done. For although we might silently pass over the execution of criminals who may be regarded as brought up for trial not upon an accusation of ours, but by an indictment presented by those to whose vigilance the preservation of the public peace is entrusted, we do not wish to have the sufferings of the servants of God avenged by the infliction of precisely similar injuries in the way of retaliation. Not, of course, that we object to the removal from these wicked men of the liberty to perpetrate further crimes; but our desire is rather that justice be satisfied without the taking of their lives or the maiming of their bodies in any part, and that, by

such coercive measures as may be in accordance with the laws, they be turned from their insane frenzy to the quietness of men in their sound judgment, or compelled to give up mischievous violence and betake themselves to some useful labour. This is indeed called a penal sentence; but who does not see that when a restraint is put upon the boldness of savage violence, and the remedies fitted to produce repentance are not withdrawn, this discipline should be called a benefit rather than vindictive punishment?

2. Fulfil, Christian judge, the duty of an affectionate father; let your indignation against their crimes be tempered by considerations of humanity; be not provoked by the atrocity of their sinful deeds to gratify the passion of revenge, but rather be moved by the wounds which these deeds have inflicted on their own souls to exercise a desire to heal them. Do not lose now that fatherly care which you maintained when prosecuting the examination, in doing which you extracted the confession of such horrid crimes, not by stretching them on the rack, not by furrowing their flesh with iron claws, not by scorching them with flames, but by beating them with rods, a mode of correction used by schoolmasters, and by parents themselves in chastising children, and often also by bishops in the sentences awarded by them. Do not, therefore, now punish with extreme severity the crimes which you searched out with lenity. The necessity for harshness is greater in the investigation than in the infliction of punishment; for even the gentlest men use diligence and stringency in searching out a hidden crime, that they may find to whom they may show mercy. Wherefore it is generally necessary to use more rigour in making inquisition, so that when the crime has been brought to light, there may be scope for displaying clemency. For all good works love to be set in the light, not in order to obtain glory from men, but, as the Lord saith, “that they seeing your good works may glorify your Father who is in heaven.” And, for the same reason, the apostle was not satisfied with merely exhorting us to practise moderation, but also commands us to make it known: “Let your moderation,” he says, “be known unto all men;” and in another place, “Showing all meekness unto all men.” Hence, also, that most signal forbearance of the holy David, when he mercifully spared his enemy when delivered into his hand, would not have been so conspicuous had not his

power to act otherwise been manifest. Therefore let not the power of executing vengeance inspire you with harshness, seeing that the necessity of examining the criminals did not make you lay aside your clemency. Do not call for the executioner now when the crime has been found out, after having forborne from calling in the tormentor when you were finding it out.

3. In fine, you have been sent hither for the benefit of the Church. I solemnly declare that what I recommend is expedient in the interests of the Catholic Church, or, that I may not seem to pass beyond the boundaries of my own charge, I protest that it is for the good of the Church belonging to the diocese of Hippo. If you do not hearken to me asking this favour as a friend, hearken to me offering this counsel as a bishop; although, indeed, it would not be presumption for me to say—since I am addressing a Christian, and especially in such a case as this—that it becomes you to hearken to me as a bishop commanding with authority, my noble and justly distinguished lord and much-loved son. I am aware that the principal charge of law cases connected with the affairs of the Church has been devolved on your Excellency, but as I believe that this particular case belongs to the very illustrious and honourable proconsul, I have written a letter to him also, which I beg you not to refuse to give to him, or, if necessary, recommend to his attention; and I entreat you both not to resent our intercession, or counsel, or anxiety, as officious. And let not the sufferings of Catholic servants of God, which ought to be useful in the spiritual upbuilding of the weak, be sullied by the retaliation of injuries on those who did them wrong, but rather, tempering the rigour of justice, let it be your care as sons of the Church to commend both your own faith and your Mother's clemency.

May almighty God enrich your Excellency with all good things, my noble and justly distinguished lord and dearly beloved son!

LETTER CXXXV

(A.D. 412.)

To Bishop Augustin, My Lord Truly Holy, and Father Justly Revered, Volusianus Sends Greeting.

1. O man who art a pattern of goodness and uprightness, you ask me to apply to you for instruction in regard to some of the obscure passages which occur in my reading. I accept at your command the favour of this kindness, and willingly offer myself to be taught by you, acknowledging the authority of the ancient proverb, “We are never too old to learn.” With good reason the author of this proverb has not restricted by any limits or end our pursuit of wisdom; for truth, secluded in its original principles, is never so disclosed to those who approach it as to be wholly revealed to their knowledge. It seems to me, therefore, my lord truly holy, and father justly revered, worth while to communicate to you the substance of a conversation which recently took place among us. I was present at a gathering of friends, and a great many opinions were brought forward there, such as the disposition and studies of each suggested. Our discourse was chiefly, however, on the department of rhetoric which treats of proper arrangement. I speak to one familiar with the subject, for you were not long ago a teacher of these things. Upon this followed a discussion regarding “invention” in rhetoric, its nature, what boldness it requires, how great the labour involved in methodical arrangement, what is the charm of metaphors, and the beauty of illustrations, and the power of applying epithets suitable to the character and nature of the subject in hand. Others extolled with partiality the poet’s art. This part also of eloquence is not left unnoticed or unhonoured by you. We may appropriately apply to you that line of the poet: “The ivy is intertwined with the laurels which reward your victory.” We spoke, accordingly, of the embellishments which skilful arrangement adds to a poem, of the beauty of metaphors, and of the sublimity of well-chosen comparisons; then we spoke of smooth and flowing versification, and, if I may use the expression, the harmonious variation of the pauses in the lines. The conversation turned next to a subject with which you are very familiar, namely, that philosophy which you were wont yourself to cherish after the manner of Aristotle and Isocrates. We asked what had been achieved by the philosopher of the Lyceum, by the varied and incessant doubtings of the Academy, by the debater of the Porch, by the discoveries of natural philosophers, by the self-indulgence of the Epicureans; and what had been the result of their boundless zeal in disputation with each other, and how truth was more than ever unknown by them after they assumed that its knowledge was attainable.

2. While our conversation continues on these topics, one of the large company says: “Who among us is so thoroughly acquainted with the wisdom taught by Christianity as to be able to resolve the doubts by which I am entangled, and to give firmness to my hesitating acceptance of its teaching by arguments in which truth or probability may claim my belief?” We are all dumb with amazement. Then, of his own accord, he breaks forth in these words: “I wonder whether the Lord and Ruler of the world did indeed fill the womb of a virgin;—did His mother endure the protracted fatigues of ten months, and, being yet a virgin, in due season bring forth her child, and continue even after that with her virginity intact?” To this he adds other statements: “Within the small body of a crying infant He is concealed whom the universe scarcely can contain; He bears the years of childhood, He grows up, He is established in the rigour of manhood; this Governor is so long an exile from His own dwelling-place, and the care of the whole world is transferred to one body of insignificant dimensions. Moreover, He falls asleep, takes food to support Him, is subject to all the sensations of mortal men. Nor did the proofs of so great majesty shine forth with adequate fulness of evidence; for the casting out of devils, the curing of the sick, and the restoration of the dead to life are, if you consider others who have wrought these wonders, but small works for God to do.” We prevent him from continuing such questions, and the meeting having broken up, we referred the matter to the valuable decision of experience beyond our own, lest, by too rashly intruding into hidden things, the error, innocent thus far, should become blameworthy.

You have heard, O man worthy of all honour, the confession of our ignorance; you perceive what is requested at your hands. Your reputation is interested in our obtaining an answer to these questions. Ignorance may, without harm to religion, be tolerated in other priests; but when we come to Bishop Augustin, whatever we find unknown to him is no part of the Christian system. May the Supreme God protect your venerable Grace, my lord truly holy and justly revered!

LETTER CXXXVI

(A.D. 412.)

To Augustin, My Lord Most Venerable, and Father Singularly Worthy of All Possible Service from Me, I, Marcellinus Send Greeting.

1. The noble Volusianus read to me the letter of your Holiness, and, at my urgent solicitation, he read to many more the sentences which had won my admiration, for, like everything else coming from your pen, they were worthy of admiration. Breathing as it did a humble spirit, and rich in the grace of divine eloquence, it succeeded easily in pleasing the reader. What especially pleased me was your strenuous effort to establish and hold up the steps of one who is somewhat hesitating, by counselling him to form a good resolution. For I have every day some discussion with the same man, so far as my abilities, or rather my lack of talent, may enable me. Moved by the earnest entreaties of his pious mother, I am at pains to visit him frequently, and he is so good as to return my visits from time to time. But on receiving this letter from your venerable Eminence, though he is kept back from firm faith in the true God by the influence of a class of persons who abound in this city, he was so moved, that, as he himself tells me, he was prevented only by the fear of undue prolixity in his letter from unfolding to you every possible difficulty in regard to the Christian faith. Some things, however, he has very earnestly asked you to explain, expressing himself in a polished and accurate style, and with the perspicuity and brilliancy of Roman eloquence, such as you will yourself deem worthy of approbation. The question which he has submitted to you is indeed worn threadbare in controversy, and the craftiness which, from the same quarter, assails with reproaches the Lord’s incarnation is well known. But as I am confident that whatever you write in reply will be of use to a very large number, I would approach you with the request, that even in this question you would condescend to give a thoroughly guarded answer to their false statement that in His works the Lord performed nothing beyond what other men have been able to do. They are accustomed to bring forward their Apollonius and Apuleius, and other men who professed magical arts, whose miracles they maintained to have been greater than the Lord’s.

2. The noble Volusianus aforesaid declared also in the presence of a number, that there were many other things which might not unreasonably be added to the question which he has sent, were it not that, as I have already

stated, brevity had been specially studied by him in his letter. Although, however, he forbore from writing them, he did not pass them over in silence. For he is wont to say that, even if a reasonable account of the Lord’s incarnation were now given to him, it would still be very difficult to give a satisfactory reason why this God, who is affirmed to be the God also of the Old Testament, is pleased with new sacrifices after having rejected the ancient sacrifices. For he alleges that nothing could be corrected but that which is proved to have been previously not rightly done; or that what has once been done rightly ought not to be altered in the very least. That which has been rightly done, he said, cannot be changed without wrong, especially because the variation might bring upon the Deity the reproach of inconstancy. Another objection which he stated was, that the Christian doctrine and preaching were in no way consistent with the duties and rights of citizens; because, to quote an instance frequently alleged, among its precepts we find, “Recompense to no man evil for evil,” and, “Whosoever shall smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also; and whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain;”—all which he affirms to be contrary to the duties and rights of citizens. For who would submit to have anything taken from him by an enemy, or forbear from retaliating the evils of war upon an invader who ravaged a Roman province? The other precepts, as your Eminence understands, are open to similar objections. Volusianus thinks that all these difficulties may be added to the question formerly stated, especially because it is manifest (though he is silent on this point) that very great calamities have befallen the commonwealth under the government of emperors observing, for the most part, the Christian religion.

3. Wherefore, as your Grace condescends along with me to acknowledge, it is important that all these difficulties be met by a full, thorough, and luminous reply (since the welcome answer of your Holiness will doubtless be put into many hands); especially because, while this discussion was going on, a distinguished lord and proprietor in the region of Hippo was present, who ironically said some flattering things concerning your Holiness, and affirmed that he had been by no means satisfied when he inquired into these matters himself.

I, therefore, not unmindful of your promise, but insisting on its fulfilment, beseech you to write, on the questions submitted, treatises which will be of incredible service to the Church, especially at the present time.

LETTER CXXXVII

(A.D. 412.)

To My Most Excellent Son, the Noble and Justly Distinguished Lord Volusianus, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. I have read your letter, containing an abstract of a notable conversation given with praiseworthy conciseness. I feel bound to reply to it, and to forbear from alleging any excuse for delay; for it happens opportunely that I have a short time of leisure from occupation with the affairs of other persons. I have also put off in the meantime dictating to my amanuensis certain things to which I had purposed to devote this leisure, for I think it would be a grievous injustice to delay answering questions which I had myself exhorted the questioner to propound. For which of us who are administering, as we are able, the grace of Christ would wish to see you instructed in Christian doctrine only so far as might suffice to secure to yourself salvation—not salvation in this present life, which, as the word of God is careful to remind us, is but a vapor appearing for a little while and then vanishing away, but that salvation in order to the obtaining and eternal possession of which we are Christians? It seems to us too little that you should receive only so much instruction as suffices to your own deliverance. For your gifted mind, and your singularly able and lucid power of speaking, ought to be of service to all others around you, against whom, whether slowness or perversity be the cause, it is necessary to defend in a competent way the dispensation of such abounding grace, which small minds in their arrogance despise, boasting that they can do very great things, while in fact they can do nothing to cure or even to curb their own vices.

2. You ask: “Whether the Lord and Ruler of the world did indeed fill the womb of a virgin? did His mother endure the protracted fatigues of ten

months, and, being yet a virgin, in due season bring forth her child, and continue even after that with her virginity intact? Was He whom the universe is supposed to be scarcely able to contain concealed within the small body of a crying infant? did He bear the years of childhood, and grow up and become established in the rigour of manhood? Was this Governor so long an exile from His own dwelling-place, and was the care of the whole world transferred to a body of such insignificant dimensions? Did He sleep, did He take food as nourishment, and was He subject to all the sensations of mortal men?" You go on to say that "the proofs of His great majesty do not shine forth with any adequate fulness of evidence; for the casting out of devils, the curing of the sick, and the restoration of the dead are, if we consider others who have performed these wonders, but small works for God to do." This question, you say, was introduced in a certain meeting of friends by one of the company, but that the rest of you prevented him from bringing forward any further questions, and, breaking up the meeting, deferred the consideration of the matter till you should have the benefit of experience beyond your own, lest, by too rashly intruding into hidden things, the error, innocent thus far, should become blame-worthy.

3. Thereupon you appeal to me, and request me to observe what is desired from me after this confession of your ignorance. You add, that my reputation is concerned in your obtaining an answer to these questions, because, though ignorance is tolerated without injury to religion in other priests, when an inquiry is addressed to me, who am a bishop, whatever is not known to me must be no part of the Christian system.

I begin, therefore, by requesting you to lay aside the opinion which you have too easily formed concerning me, and dismiss those sentiments, though they are gratifying evidences of your goodwill, and believe my testimony rather than any other's regarding myself, if you reciprocate my affection. For such is the depth of the Christian Scriptures, that even if I were attempting to study them and nothing else from early boyhood to decrepit old age, with the utmost leisure, the most unwearied zeal, and talents greater than I have, I would be still daily making progress in discovering their treasures; not that there is so great difficulty in coming through them to know the things necessary to salvation, but when any one has accepted these truths with the faith that is indispensable as the foundation of a life of piety and uprightness, so many things which are veiled under manifold shadows of mystery remain to be inquired into by those who are advancing in the study, and so great is the depth of wisdom not only in the words in which these have been expressed, but also in the things themselves, that the experience of the oldest, the ablest, and the most zealous students of Scripture illustrates what Scripture itself has said: “When a man hath done, then he beginneth.”

Chap. II

4. But why say more as to this? I must rather address myself to the question which you propose. In the first place, I wish you to understand that the Christian doctrine does not hold that the Godhead was so blended with the human nature in which He was born of the virgin that He either relinquished or lost the administration of the universe, or transferred it to that body as a small and limited material substance. Such an opinion is held only by men who are incapable of conceiving of anything but material substances—whether more dense, like water and earth, or more subtle, like air and light; but all alike distinguished by this condition, that none of them can be in its entirety everywhere, because, by reason of its many parts, it cannot but have one part here, another there, and however great or small the body may be, it must occupy some place, and so fill it that in its entirety it is in no one part of the space occupied. And hence it is the distinctive property of material bodies that they can be condensed and rarefied, contracted and dilated, crushed into small fragments and enlarged to great masses. The nature of the soul is very far different from that of the body; and how much more different must be the nature of God, who is the Creator of both soul and body! God is not said to fill the world in the same way as water, air, and even light occupy space, so that with a greater or smaller part of Himself He occupies a greater or smaller part of the world. He is able to be everywhere present in the entirety of His being: He cannot be confined in any place: He can come without leaving the place where He was: He can depart without forsaking the place to which He had come.

5. The mind of man wonders at this, and because it cannot comprehend it, refuses, perhaps, to believe it. Let it, however, not go on to wonder

incredulously at the attributes of the Deity without first wondering in like manner at the mysteries within itself; let it, if possible, raise itself for a little above the body, and above those things which it is accustomed to perceive by the bodily organs, and let it contemplate what that is which uses the body as its instrument. Perhaps it cannot do this, for it requires, as one has said, great power of mind to call the mind aside from the senses, and to lead thought away from its wonted track. Let the mind, then, examine the bodily senses in this somewhat unusual manner, and with the utmost attention. There are five distinct bodily senses, which cannot exist either without the body or without the soul; because perception by the senses is possible, on the one hand, only while a man lives, and the body receives life from the soul; and on the other hand, only by the instrumentality of the body vessels and organs, through which we exercise sight, hearing, and the three other senses. Let the reasoning soul concentrate attention upon this subject, and consider the senses of the body not by these senses themselves, but by its own intelligence and reason. A man cannot, of course, perceive by these senses unless he lives; but up to the time when soul and body are separated by death, he lives in the body. How, then, does his soul, which lives nowhere else than in his body, perceive things which are beyond the surface of that body? Are not the stars in heaven very remote from his body? and yet does he not see the sun yonder? and is not seeing an exercise of the bodily senses—nay, is it not the noblest of them all? What, then? Does he live in heaven as well as in his body, because he perceives by one of his senses what is in heaven, and perception by sense cannot be in a place where there is no life of the person perceiving? Or does he perceive even where he is not living—because while he lives only in his own body, his perceptive sense is active also in those places which, outside of his body and remote from it, contain the objects with which he is in contact by sight? Do you see how great a mystery there is even in a sense so open to our observation as that which we call sight? Consider hearing also, and say whether the soul diffuses itself in some way abroad beyond the body. For how do we say, "Some one knocks at the door," unless we exercise the sense of hearing at the place where the knock is sounding? In this case also, therefore, we live beyond the limits of our bodies. Or can we perceive by sense in a place in which we are not living? But we know that sense cannot be in exercise where life is not.

6. The other three senses are exercised through immediate contact with their own organs. Perhaps this may be reasonably disputed in regard to the sense of smell; but there is no controversy as to the senses of taste and touch, that we perceive nowhere else than by contact with our bodily organism the things which we taste and touch. Let these three senses, therefore, be set aside from present consideration. The senses of sight and hearing present to us a wonderful question, requiring us to explain either how the soul can perceive by these senses in a place where it does not live, or how it can live in a place where it is not. For it is not anywhere but in its own body, and yet it perceives by these senses in places beyond that body. For in whatever place the soul sees anything, in that place it is exercising the faculty of perception, because seeing is an act of perception; and in whatever place the soul hears anything, in that place it is exercising the faculty of perception, because hearing is an act of perception. Wherefore the soul is either living in that place where it sees or hears, and consequently is itself in that place, or it exercises perception in a place where it is not living, or it is living in a place and yet at the same moment is not there. All these things are astonishing; not one of them can be stated without seeming absurdity; and we are speaking only of senses which are mortal. What, then, is the soul itself which is beyond the bodily senses, that is to say, which resides in the understanding whereby it considers these mysteries? For it is not by means of the senses that it forms a judgment concerning the senses themselves. And do we suppose that something incredible is told us regarding the omnipotence of God, when it is affirmed that the Word of God, by whom all things were made, did so assume a body from the Virgin, and manifest Himself with mortal senses, as neither to destroy His own immortality, nor to change His eternity, nor to diminish His power, nor to relinquish the government of the world, nor to withdraw from the bosom of the Father, that is, from the secret place where He is with Him and in Him?

7. Understand the nature of the Word of God, by whom all things were made, to be such that you cannot think of any part of the Word as passing, and, from being future, becoming past. He remains as He is, and He is everywhere in His entirety. He comes when He is manifested, and departs when He is concealed. But whether concealed or manifested, He is present with us as light is present to the eyes both of the seeing and of the blind; but

it is felt to be present by the man who sees, and absent by him who is blind. In like manner, the sound of the voice is near alike to the hearing and to the deaf, but it makes its presence known to the former and is hidden from the latter. But what is more wonderful than what happens in connection with the sound of our voices and our words, a thing, for-sooth, which passes away in a moment? For when we speak, there is no place for even the next syllable till after the preceding one has ceased to sound; nevertheless, if one hearer be present, he hears the whole of what we say, and if two hearers be present, both hear the same, and to each of them it is the whole; and if a multitude listen in silence, they do not break up the sounds like loaves of bread, to be distributed among them individually, but all that is uttered is imparted to all and to each in its entirety. Consider this, and say if it is not more incredible that the abiding word of God should not accomplish in the universe what the passing word of man accomplishes in the ears of listeners, namely, that as the word of man is present in its entirety to each and all of the hearers, so the Word of God should be present in the entirety of His being at the same moment everywhere.

8. There is, therefore, no reason to fear in regard to the small body of the Lord in His infancy, lest in it the Godhead should seem to have been straitened. For it is not in vast size but in power that God is great: He has in His providence given to ants and to bees senses superior to those given to asses and camels; He forms the huge proportions of the fig-tree from one of the minutest seeds, although many smaller plants spring from much larger seeds; He also has furnished the small pupil of the eye with the power which, by one glance, sweeps over almost the half of heaven in a moment; He diffuses the whole fivefold system of the nerves over the body from one centre and point in the brain; He dispenses vital motion throughout the whole body from the heart, a member comparatively small; and by these and other similar things, He, who in small things is great, mysteriously produces that which is great from things which are exceedingly little. Such is the greatness of His power that He is conscious of no difficulty in that which is difficult. It was this same power which originated, not from without, but from within, the conception of a child in the Virgin's womb: this same power associated with Himself a human soul, and through it also a human body—in short, the whole human nature to be elevated by its

union with Him—without His being thereby lowered in any degree; justly assuming from it the name of humanity, while amply giving to it the name of Godhead. The body of the infant Jesus was brought forth from the womb of His mother, still a virgin, by the same power which afterwards introduced His body when He was a man through the closed door into the upper chamber. Here, if the reason of the event is sought out, it will no longer be a miracle; if an example of a precisely similar event is demanded, it will no longer be unique. Let us grant that God can do something which we must admit to be beyond our comprehension. In such wonders the whole explanation of the work is the power of Him by whom it is wrought.

Chap. III

9. The fact that He took rest in sleep, and was nourished by food, and experienced all the feelings of humanity, is the evidence to men of the reality of that human nature which He assumed but did not destroy. Behold, this was the fact; and yet some heretics, by a perverted admiration and praise of His power, have refused altogether to acknowledge the reality of His human nature, in which is the guarantee of all that grace by which He saves those who believe in Him, containing deep treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and imparting faith to the minds which He raises to the eternal contemplation of unchangeable truth. What if the Almighty had created the human nature of Christ not by causing Him to be born of a mother, but by some other way, and had presented Him suddenly to the eyes of mankind? What if the Lord had not passed through the stages of progress from infancy to manhood, and had taken neither food nor sleep? Would not this have confirmed the erroneous impression above referred to, and have made it impossible to believe at all that He had taken to Himself true human nature; and, while leaving what was marvellous, would eliminate the element of mercy from His actions? But now He has so appeared as the Mediator between God and men, that, uniting the two natures in one person, He both exalted what was ordinary by what was extraordinary, and tempered what was extraordinary by what was ordinary in Himself.

10. But where in all the varied movements of creation is there any work of God which is not wonderful, were it not that through familiarity these wonders have become small in our esteem? Nay, how many common things

are trodden under foot, which, if examined carefully, awaken our astonishment! Take, for example, the propertries of seeds: who can either comprehend or declare the variety of species, the vitality, vigour, and secret power by which they from within small compass evolve great things? Now the human body and soul which He took to Himself was created without seed by Him who in the natural world created originally seeds from no pre-existent seeds. In the body which thus became His, he who, without any liability to change in Himself, has woven according to His counsel the vicissitudes of all past centuries, became subject to the succession of seasons and the ordinary stages of the life of man. For His body, as it began to exist at a point of time, became developed with the lapse of time. But the Word of God, who was in the beginning, and to whom the ages of time owe their existence, did not bow to time as bringing round the event of His incarnation apart from His consent, but chose the point of time at which He freely took our nature to Himself. The human nature was brought into union with the divine; God did not withdraw from Himself.

11. Some resist upon being furnished with an explanation of the manner in which the Godhead was so united with a human soul and body as to constitute the one person of Christ, when it was necessary that this should be done once in the world's history, with as much boldness as if they were themselves able to furnish an explanation of the manner in which the soul is so united to the body as to constitute the one person of man, an event which is occurring every day. For just as the soul is united to the body in one person so as to constitute man, in the same way God united to man in one person so as to constitute Christ. In the former personality there is a combination of soul and body; in the latter there is a combination of the Godhead and man. Let my reader, however, guard against borrowing his idea of the combination from the properties of material bodies, by which two fluids when combined are so mixed that neither preserves its original character; although even among material bodies there are exceptions, such as light, which sustains no change when combined with the atmosphere. In the person of man, therefore, there is a combination of soul and body; in the person of Christ there is a combination of the Godhead with man; for when the Word of God was united to a soul having a body, He took into union with Himself both the soul and the body. The former event takes place daily

in the beginning of life in individuals of the human race; the latter took place once for the salvation of men. And yet of the two events, the combination of two immaterial substances ought to be more easily believed than a combination in which the one is immaterial and the other material. For if the soul is not mistaken in regard to its own nature, it understands itself to be immaterial. Much more certainly does this attribute belong to the Word of God; and consequently the combination of the Word with the human soul is a combination which ought to be much more credible than that of soul and body. The latter is realized by us in ourselves; the former we are commanded to believe to have been realized in Christ. But if both of them were alike foreign to our experience, and we were enjoined to believe that both had taken place, which of the two would we more readily believe to have occurred? Would we not admit that two immaterial substances could be more easily combined than one immaterial and one material; unless, perhaps, it be unsuitable to use the word combination in connection with these things, because of the difference between their nature and that of material substances, both in themselves and as known to us?

12. Wherefore the Word of God, who is also the Son of God, co-eternal with the Father, the Power and the Wisdom of God, mightily pervading and harmoniously ordering all things, from the highest limit of the intelligent to the lowest limit of the material creation, revealed and concealed, nowhere confined, nowhere divided, nowhere distended, but without dimensions, everywhere present in His entirety,—this Word of God, I say, took to Himself, in a manner entirely different from that in which He is present to other creatures, the soul and body of a man, and made, by the union of Himself therewith, the one person Jesus Christ, Mediator between God and men, in His Deity equal with the Father, in His flesh, i.e. in His human nature, inferior to the Father,—unchangeably immortal in respect of the divine nature, in which He is equal with the Father, and yet changeable and mortal in respect of the infirmity which was His through participation with our nature.

In this Christ there came to men, at the time which He knew to be most fitting, and which He had fixed before the world began, the instruction and the help necessary to the obtaining of eternal salvation. Instruction came by

Him, because those truths which had been, for men's advantage, spoken before that time on earth not only by the holy prophets, all whose words were true, but also by philosophers and even poets and authors in every department of literature (for beyond question they mixed much truth with what was false), might by the actual presentation of His authority in human nature be confirmed as true for the sake of those who could not perceive and distinguish them in the light of essential Truth, which Truth was, even before He assumed human nature, present to all who were capable of receiving truth. Moreover, by the fact of His incarnation, He taught this above all other things for our benefit,—that whereas men longing after the Divine Being supposed, from pride rather than piety, that they must approach Him not directly, but through heavenly powers which they regarded as gods, and through various forbidden rites which were holy but profane,—in which worship devils succeed, through the bond which pride forms between mankind and them in taking the place of holy angels,—now men might understand that the God whom they were regarding as far removed, and whom they approached not directly but through mediating powers, is actually so very near to the pious longings of men after Him, that He has condescended to take a human soul and body into such union with Himself that this complete man is joined to Him in the same way as the body is joined to the soul in man, excepting that whereas both body and soul have a common progressive development, He does not participate in this growth, because it implies mutability, a property which God cannot assume. Again, in this Christ the help necessary to salvation was brought to men, for without the grace of that faith which is from Him, no one can either subdue vicious desires, or be cleansed by pardon from the guilt of any power of sinful desire which he may not have wholly vanquished. As to the effects produced by His instruction, is there now even an imbecile, however weak, or a silly woman, however low, that does not believe in the immortality of the soul and the reality of a life after death? Yet these are truths which, when Pherecydes the Assyrian for the first time maintained them in discussion among the Greeks of old, moved Pythagoras of Samos so deeply by their novelty, as to make him turn from the exercises of the athlete to the studies of the philosopher. But now what Virgil said we all behold: “The balsam of Assyria grows everywhere.” And as to the help given through the grace of Christ, in Him truly are the words of the same poet fulfilled: “With Thee as our leader, the obliteration of all the traces of our sin which remain shall deliver the earth from perpetual alarm.”

Chap. IV

13. “But,” they say, “the proofs of so great majesty did not shine forth with adequate fulness of evidence; for the casting out of devils, the healing of the sick, and the restoration of the dead to life are but small works for God to do, if the others who have wrought similar wonders be borne in mind.” We ourselves admit that the prophets wrought some miracles like those performed by Christ. For among these miracles what is more wonderful than the raising of the dead? Yet both Elijah and Elisha did this. As to the miracles of magicians, and the question whether they also raised the dead, let those pronounce an opinion who strive, not as accusers, but as panegyrists, to prove Apuleius guilty of those charges of practising magical arts from which he himself takes abundant pains to defend his reputation. We read that the magicians of Egypt, the most skilled in these arts, were vanquished by Moses, the servant of God, when they were working wonderfully by impious enchantments, and he, by simply calling upon God in prayer, overthrew all their machinations. But this Moses himself and all the other true prophets prophesied concerning the Lord Christ, and gave to Him great glory; they predicted that He would come not as One merely equal or superior to them in the same power of working miracles, but as One who was truly God the Lord of all, and who became man for the benefit of men. He was pleased to do also some miracles, such as they had done, to prevent the incongruity of His not doing in person such things as He had done by them. Nevertheless, He was to do also some things peculiar to Himself, namely, to be born of a virgin, to rise from the dead, to ascend to heaven. I know not what greater things he can look for who thinks these too little for God to do.

14. For I think that such signs of divine power are demanded by these objectors as were not suitable for Him to do when wearing the nature of men. The Word was in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and by Him all things were made. Now, when the Word became flesh, was it necessary for Him to create another world, that we might believe Him to be the person by whom the world was made? But

within this world it would have been impossible to make another greater than itself, or equal to it. If, however, He were to make a world inferior to that which now exists, this, too, would be considered too small a work to prove His deity. Wherefore, since it was not necessary that He should make a new world, He made new things in the world. For that a man should be born of a virgin, and raised from the dead to eternal life, and exalted above the heavens, is perchance a work involving a greater exertion of power than the creating of a world. Here, probably, objectors may answer that they do not believe that these things took place. What, then, can be done for men who despise smaller evidences as inadequate, and reject greater evidences as incredible? That life has been restored to the dead is believed, because it has been accomplished by others, and is too small a work to prove him who performs it to be God: that a true body was created in a virgin, and being raised from death to eternal life, was taken up to heaven, is not believed, because no one else has done this, and it is what God alone could do. On this principle every man is to accept with equanimity whatever he thinks easy for himself not indeed to do, but to conceive, and is to reject as false and fictitious whatever goes beyond that limit. I beseech you, do not be like these men.

15. These topics are elsewhere more amply discussed, and in fundamental questions of doctrine every intricate point has been opened up by thorough investigation and debate; but faith gives the understanding access to these things, unbelief closes the door. What man might not be moved to faith in the doctrine of Christ by such a remarkable chain of events from the beginning, and by the manner in which the epochs of the world are linked together, so that our faith in regard to present things is assisted by what happened in the past, and the record of earlier and ancient things is attested by later and more recent events? One is chosen from among the Chaldeans, a man endowed with most eminent piety and faith, that to him may be given divine promises, appointed to be fulfilled in the last times of the world, after the lapse of so many centuries; and it is foretold that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. This man, worshipping the one true God, the Creator of the universe, begets in his old age a son, when sterility and advanced years had made his wife give up all expectation of becoming a mother. The descendants of this son become a very numerous tribe, being

increased in Egypt, to which place they had been removed from the East, by Divine Providence multiplying as time went on both the promises given and the works wrought on their behalf. From Egypt they come forth a mighty nation, being brought out with terrible signs and wonders; and the wicked nations of the promised land being driven out from before them, they are brought into it and settled there, and exalted to the position of a kingdom. Thereafter, frequently provoking by prevailing sin and idolatrous impieties the true God, who had bestowed on them so many benefits, and experiencing alternately the chastisements of calamity and the consolations of restored prosperity, the history of the nation is brought down to the incarnation and the manifestation of Christ. Predictions that this Christ, being the Word of God, the Son of God, and God Himself, was to become incarnate, to die, to rise again, to ascend into heaven, to have multitudes of all nations through the power of His name surrendering themselves to Him, and that by Him pardon of sins and eternal salvation would be given to all who believe in Him,—these predictions, I say, have been published by all the promises given to that nation, by all the prophecies, the institution of the priesthood, the sacrifices, the temple, and, in short, by all their sacred mysteries.

16. Accordingly Christ comes: in His birth, life, words, deeds, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, all which the prophets had foretold is fulfilled. He sends the Holy Spirit; fills with this Spirit the believers when they are assembled in one house, and expecting with prayer and ardent desire this promised gift. Being thus filled with the Holy Spirit, they speak immediately in the tongues of all nations, they boldly confute errors, they preach the truth that is most profitable for mankind, they exhort men to repent of their past blameworthy lives, and promise pardon by the free grace of God. Signs and miracles suitable for confirmation follow their preaching of piety and of the true religion. The cruel enmity of unbelief is stirred up against them; they bear predicted trials, they hope for promised blessings, and teach that which they had been commanded to make known. Few in number at first, they become scattered like seed throughout the world; they convert nations with wondrous facility; they grow in number in the midst of enemies; they become increased by persecutions; and, under the severity of hardships, instead of being straitened, they extend their

influence to the utmost boundaries of the earth. From being very ignorant, despised, and few, they become enlightened, distinguished, and numerous, men of illustrious talents and of polished eloquence; they also bring under the yoke of Christ, and attract to the work of preaching the way of holiness and salvation, the marvellous attainments of men remarkable for genius, eloquence, and erudition. Amid alternations of adversity and prosperity, they watchfully practise patience and self-control; and when the world's day is drawing near its close, and the approaching consummation is heralded by the calamities which exhaust its energies, they, seeing in this the fulfilment of prophecy, only expect with increased. confidence the everlasting blessedness of the heavenly city. Moreover, amidst all these changes, the unbelief of the heathen nations continues to rage against the Church of Christ; she gains the victory by patient endurance, and by the maintenance of unshaken faith in the face of the cruelties of her adversaries. The sacrifice of Him in whom the truth, long veiled under mystic promises, is revealed, having been offered, those sacrifices by which it was prefigured are finally abolished by the utter destruction of the Jewish temple. The Jewish nation, itself rejected because of unbelief, being now rooted out from its own land, is dispersed to every region of the world, in order that it may carry everywhere the Holy Scriptures, and that in this way our adversaries themselves may bring before mankind the testimony furnished by the prophecies concerning Christ and His Church, thus precluding the possibility of the supposition that these predictions were forged by us to suit the time; in which prophecies, also, the unbelief of these very Jews is foretold. The temples, images, and impious worship of the heathen divinities are overthrown gradually and in succession, according to the prophetic intimations. Heresies bud forth against the name of Christ, though veiling themselves under His name, as had been foretold, by which the doctrine of the holy religion is tested and developed. All these things are now seen to be accomplished, in exact fulfilment of the predictions which we read in Scripture; and from these important and numerous instances of fulfilled prophecy, the fulfilment of the predictions which remain is confidently expected. Where, then, is the mind, having aspirations after eternity, and moved by the shortness of this present life, which can resist the clearness and perfection of these evidences of the divine origin of our faith?

17. What discourses or writings of philosophers, what laws of any commonwealth in any land or age, are worthy for a moment to be compared with the two commandments on which Christ saith that all the law and the prophets hang: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”? All philosophy is here,—physics, ethics, logic: the first, because in God the Creator are all the causes of all existences in nature; the second, because a good and honest life is not produced in any other way than by loving, in the manner in which they should be loved, the proper objects of our love, namely, God and our neighbour; and the third, because God alone is the Truth and the Light of the rational soul. Here also is security for the welfare and renown of a commonwealth; for no state is perfectly established and preserved otherwise than on the foundation and by the bond of faith and of firm concord, when the highest and truest common good, namely, God, is loved by all, and men love each other in Him without dissimulation, because they love one another for His sake from whom they cannot disguise the real character of their love.

18. Consider, moreover, the style in which Sacred Scripture is composed,—how accessible it is to all men, though its deeper mysteries are penetrable to very few. The plain truths which it contains it declares in the artless language of familiar friendship to the hearts both of the unlearned and of the learned; but even the truths which it veils in symbols it does not set forth in stiff and stately sentences, which a mind somewhat sluggish and uneducated might shrink from approaching, as a poor man shrinks from the presence of the rich; but, by the condescension of its style, it invites all not only to be fed with the truth which is plain, but also to be exercised by the truth which is concealed, having both in its simple and in its obscure portions the same truth. Lest what is easily understood should beget satiety in the reader, the same truth being in another place more obscurely expressed becomes again desired, and, being desired, is somehow invested with a new attractiveness, and thus is received with pleasure into the heart. By these means wayward minds are corrected, weak minds are nourished, and strong minds are filled with pleasure, in such a way as is profitable to all. This doctrine has no enemy but the man who, being in error, is ignorant

of its incomparable usefulness, or, being spiritually diseased, is averse to its healing power.

19. You see what a long letter I have written. If, therefore, anything perplexes you, and you regard it of sufficient importance to be discussed between us, let not yourself be straitened by keeping within the bounds of ordinary letters; for you know as well as any one what long letters the ancients wrote when they were treating of any subject which they were not able briefly to explain. And even if the custom of authors in other departments of literature had been different, the authority of Christian writers, whose example has a worthier claim upon our imitation, might be set before us. Observe, therefore, the length of the apostolic epistles, and of the commentaries written on these divine oracles, and do not hesitate either to ask many questions if you have many difficulties, or to handle more fully the questions which you propound, in order that, in so far as it can be achieved with such abilities as we possess, there may remain no cloud of doubt to obscure the light of truth.

20. For I am aware that your Excellency has to encounter the most determined opposition from certain persons, who think, or would have others think, that Christian doctrine is incompatible with the welfare of the commonwealth, because they wish to see the commonwealth established not by the stedfast practice of virtue, but by granting impunity to vice. But with God the crimes in which many are banded together do not pass unavenged, as is often the case with a king, or any other magistrate who is only a man. Moreover, His mercy and grace, published to men by Christ, who is Himself man, and imparted to man by the same Christ, who is also God and the Son of God, never fail those who live by faith in Him and piously worship Him, in adversity patiently and bravely bearing the trials of this life, in prosperity using with self-control and with compassion for others the good things of this life; destined to receive, for faithfulness in both conditions, an eternal recompense in that divine and heavenly city in which there shall be no longer calamity to be painfully endured, nor inordinate desire to be with laborious care controlled, where our only work shall be to preserve, without any difficulty and with perfect liberty, our love to God and to our neighbour.

May the infinitely compassionate omnipotence of God preserve you in safety and increase your happiness, my noble and distinguished Lord, and my most excellent son. With profound respect, as is due to your worth, I salute your pious and most truly venerable mother, whose prayers on your behalf may God hear! My pious brother and fellow bishop, Possidius, warmly salutes your Grace.

LETTER CXXXVIII

(A.D. 412.)

To Marcellinus, My Noble and Justly Famous Lord, My Son Most Beloved and Longed For, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. In writing to the illustrious and most eloquent Volusianus, whom we both sincerely love, I thought it right to confine myself to answering the questions which he thought proper himself to state; but as to the questions which you have submitted to me in your letter for discussion and solution, as suggested or proposed either by Volusianus himself or by others, it is fitting that such reply to these as I may be able to give should be addressed to you. I shall attempt this, not in the manner in which it would require to be done in a formal treatise, but in the manner which is suitable to the conversational familiarity of a letter, in order that, if you, who know their state of mind by daily discussions, think it expedient, this letter also may be read to your friends. But if this communication be not adapted to them, because of their not being prepared by the piety of faith to give ear to it, let what you consider adapted to them be in the first place prepared between ourselves, and afterwards let what may have been thus prepared be communicated to them. For there are many things from which their minds may in the meantime shrink and recoil, which they may perhaps by and by be persuaded to accept as true, either by the use of more copious and skilful arguments, or by an appeal to authority which, in their opinion, may not without impropriety be resisted.

2. In your letter you state that some are perplexed by the question, “Why this God, who is proved to be the God also of the Old Testament, is pleased

with new sacrifices after having rejected the ancient ones. For they allege that nothing can be corrected but that which is proved to have been previously not rightly done, or that what has once been done rightly ought not to be altered in the very least: that which has been rightly done, they say, cannot be changed without wrong.” I quote these words from your letter. Were I disposed to give a copious reply to this objection, time would fail me long before I had exhausted the instances in which the processes of nature itself and the works of men undergo changes according to the circumstances of the time, while, at the same time, there is nothing mutable in the plan or principle by which these changes are regulated. Of these I may mention a few, that, stimulated by them, your wakeful observation may run, as it were, from them to many more of the same kind. Does not summer follow winter, the temperature gradually increasing in warmth? Do not night and day in turn succeed each other? How often do our own lives experience changes! Boyhood departing, never to return, gives place to youth; manhood, destined itself to continue only for a season, takes in turn the place of youth; and old age, closing the term of manhood, is itself closed by death. All these things are changed, but the plan of Divine Providence which appoints these successive changes is not changed. I suppose, also, that the principles of agriculture are not changed when the farmer appoints a different work to be done in summer from that which he had ordered in winter. He who rises in the morning, after resting by night, is not supposed to have changed the plan of his life. The schoolmaster gives to the adult different tasks from those which he was accustomed to prescribe to the scholar in his boyhoo; his teaching, consistent throughout, changes the instruction when the lesson is changed, without itself being changed.

3. The eminent physician of our own times, Vindicianus, being consulted by an invalid, prescribed for his disease what seemed to him a suitable remedy at that time; health was restored by its use. Some years afterwards, finding himself troubled again with the same disorder, the patient supposed that the same remedy should be applied; but its application made his illness worse. In astonishment, he again returns to the physician, and tells him what had happened; whereupon he, being a man of very quick penetration, answered: “The reason of your having been harmed by this application is, that I did not order it;” upon which all who heard the remark and did not know the

man supposed that he was trusting not in the art of medicine, but in some forbidden supernatural power. When he was afterwards questioned by some who were amazed at his words, he explained what they had not understood, namely, that he would not have prescribed the same remedy to the patient at the age which he had now attained. While, therefore, the principle and methods of art remain unchanged, the change which, in accordance with them, may be made necessary by the difference of times is very great.

4. To say then, that what has once been done rightly must in no respect whatever be changed, is to affirm what is not true. For if the circumstances of time which occasioned anything be changed, true reason in almost all cases demands that what had been in the former circumstances rightly done, be now so altered that, although they say that it is not rightly done if it be changed, truth, on the contrary, protests that it is not rightly done unless it be changed; because, at both times, it will be rightly done if the difference be regulated according to the difference in the times. For just as in the cases of different persons it may happen that, at the same moment, one man may do with impunity what another man may not, because of a difference not in the thing done but in the person who does it, so in the case of one and the same person at different times, that which was duty formerly is not duty now, not because the person is different from his former self, but because the time at which he does it is different.

5. The wide range opened up by this question may be seen by any one who is competent and careful to observe the contrast between the beautiful and the suitable, examples of which are scattered, we may say, throughout the universe. For the beautiful, to which the ugly and deformed is opposed, is estimated and praised according to what it is in itself. But the suitable, to which the incongruous is opposed, depends on something else to which it is bound, and is estimated not according to what it is in itself, but according to that with which it is connected: the contrast, also, between becoming and unbecoming is either the same, or at least regarded as the same. Now apply what we have said to the subject in hand. The divine institution of sacrifice was suitable in the former dispensation, but is not suitable now. For the change suitable to the present age has been enjoined by God, who knows infinitely better than man what is fitting for every age, and who is, whether

He give or add, abolish or curtail, increase or diminish, the unchangeable Governor as He is the unchangeable Creator of mutable things, ordering all events in His providence until the beauty of the completed course of time, the component parts of which are the dispensations adapted to each successive age, shall be finished, like the grand melody of some ineffably wise master of song, and those pass into the eternal immediate contemplation of God who here, though it is a time of faith, not of sight, are acceptably worshipping Him.

6. They are mistaken, moreover, who think that God appoints these ordinances for His own advantage or pleasure; and no wonder that, being thus mistaken, they are perplexed, as if it was from a changing mood that He ordered one thing to be offered to Him in a former age, and something else now. But this is not the case. God enjoins nothing for His own advantage, but for the benefit of those to whom the injunction is given. Therefore He is truly Lord, for He does not need His servants, but His servants stand in need of Him. In those same Old Testament Scriptures, and in the age in which sacrifices were still being offered that are now abrogated, it is said: “I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou dost not need my good things.” Wherefore God did not stand in need of those sacrifices, nor does He ever need anything; but there are certain acts, symbolical of these divine gifts, whereby the soul receives either present grace or eternal glory, in the celebration and practice of which, pious exercises, serviceable not to God but to ourselves, are performed.

7. It would, however, take too long to discuss with adequate fulness the differences between the symbolical actions of former and present times, which, because of their pertaining to divine things, are called sacraments. For as the man is not fickle who does one thing in the morning and another in the evening, one thing this month and another in the next, one thing this year and another next year, so there is no variableness with God, though in the former period of the world’s history He enjoined one kind of offerings, and in the latter period another, therein ordering the symbolical actions pertaining to the blessed doctrine of true religion in harmony with the changes of successive epochs without any change in Himself. For in order to let those whom these things perplex understand that the change was

already in the divine counsel, and that, when the new ordinances were appointed, it was not because the old had suddenly lost the divine approbation through inconstancy in His will, but that this had been already fixed and determined by the wisdom of that God to whom, in reference to much greater changes, these words are spoken in Scripture: Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same,"—it is necessary to convince them that this exchange of the sacraments of the Old Testament for those of the New had been predicted by the voices of the prophets. For thus they will see, if they can see anything, that what is new in time is not new in relation to Him who has appointed the times, and who possesses, without succession of time, all those things which He assigns according to their variety to the several ages. For in the psalm from which I have quoted above the words: "I said unto the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou dost not need my good things," in proof that God does not need our sacrifices, it is added shortly after by the Psalmist in Christ's name: "I will not gather their assemblies of blood;" that is, for the offering of animals from their flocks, for which the Jewish assemblies were wont to be gathered together; and in another place he says: "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goat from thy folds;" and another prophet says: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." There are, besides these, many other testimonies on this subject in which it was foretold that God would do as He has done; but it would take too long to mention them.

8. If it is now established that that which was for one age rightly ordained may be in another age rightly changed,—the alteration indicating a change in the work, not in the plan, of Him who makes the change, the plan being framed by His reasoning faculty, to which, unconditioned by succession in time, those things are simultaneously present which cannot be actually done at the same time because the ages succeed each other,—one might perhaps at this point expect to hear from me the causes of the change in question. You know how long it would take to discuss these fully. The matter may be stated summarily, but sufficiently for a man of shrewd judgment, in these words: It was fitting that Christ's future coming should be foretold by some

sacraments, and that after His coming other sacraments should proclaim this; just as the difference in the facts has compelled us to change the words used by us in speaking of the advent as future or past: to be foretold is one thing, to be proclaimed is another, and to be about to come is one thing, to have come is another.

Chap. II

9. Let us now observe in the second place, what follows in your letter. You have added that they said that the Christian doctrine and preaching were in no way consistent with the duties and rights of citizens, because among its precepts we find: “Recompense to no man evil for evil,” and, “Whosoever shall smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any man take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also; and whosoever will compel thee to go a mile with him, go with him twain,”—all which are affirmed to be contrary to the duties and rights of citizens; for who would submit to have anything taken from him by an enemy, or forbear from retaliating the evils of war upon an invader who ravaged a Roman province? To these and similar statements of persons speaking slightingly, or perhaps I should rather say speaking as inquirers regarding the truth, I might have given a more elaborate answer, were it not that the persons with whom the discussion is carried on are men of liberal education. In addressing such, why should we prolong the debate, and not rather begin by inquiring for ourselves how it was possible that the Republic of Rome was governed and aggrandized from insignificance and poverty to greatness and opulence by men who, when they had suffered wrong, would rather pardon than punish the offender; or how Cicero, addressing Caesar, the greatest statesman of his time, said, in praising his character, that he was wont to forget nothing but the wrongs which were done to him? For in this Cicero spoke either praise or flattery: if he spoke praise, it was because he knew Caesar to be such as he affirmed; if he spoke flattery, he showed that the chief magistrate of a commonwealth ought to do such things as he falsely commended in Caesar. But what is “not rendering evil for evil,” but refraining from the passion of revenge—in other words, choosing, when one has suffered wrong, to pardon rather than to punish the offender, and to forget nothing but the wrongs done to us?

10. When these things are read in their own authors, they are received with loud applause; they are regarded as the record and recommendation of virtues in the practice of which the Republic deserved to hold sway over so many nations, because its citizens preferred to pardon rather than punish those who wronged them. But when the precept, “Render to no man evil for evil,” is read as given by divine authority, and when, from the pulpits in our churches, this wholesome counsel is published in the midst of our congregations, or, as we might say, in places of instruction open to all, of both sexes and of all ages and ranks, our religion is accused as an enemy to the Republic! Yet, were our religion listened to as it deserves, it would establish, consecrate, strengthen, and enlarge the commonwealth in a way beyond all that Romulus, Numa, Brutus, and all the other men of renown in Roman history achieved. For what is a republic but a commonwealth? Therefore its interests are common to all; they are the interests of the State. Now what is a State but a multitude of men bound together by some bond of concord? In one of their own authors we read: “What was a scattered and unsettled multitude had by concord become in a short time a State.” But what exhortations to concord have they ever appointed to be read in their temples? So far from this, they were unhappily compelled to devise how they might worship without giving offence to any of their gods, who were all at such variance among themselves, that, had their worshippers imitated their quarrelling, the State must have fallen to pieces for want of the bond of concord, as it soon afterwards began to do through civil wars, when the morals of the people were changed and corrupted.

11. But who, even though he be a stranger to our religion, is so deaf as not to know how many precepts enjoining concord, not invented by the discussions of men, but written with the authority of God, are continually read in the churches of Christ? For this is the tendency even of those precepts which they are much more willing to debate than to follow: “That to him who smites us on one cheek we should offer the other to be smitten; to him who would take away our coat we should give our cloak also; and that with him who compels us to go one mile we should go twain.” For these things are done only that a wicked man may be overcome by kindness, or rather that the evil which is in the wicked man may be overcome by good, and that the man may be delivered from the evil—not

from any evil that is external and foreign to himself, but from that which is within and is his own, under which he suffers loss more severe and fatal than could be inflicted by the cruelty of any enemy from without. He, therefore, who is overcoming evil by good, submits patiently to the loss of temporal advantages, that he may show how those things, through excessive love of which the other is made wicked, deserve to be despised when compared with faith and righteousness; in order that so the injurious person may learn from him whom he wronged what is the true nature of the things for the sake of which he committed the wrong, and may be won back with sorrow for his sin to that concord, than which nothing is more serviceable to the State, being overcome not by the strength of one passionately resenting, but by the good-nature of one patiently bearing wrong. For then it is rightly done when it seems that it will benefit him for whose sake it is done, by producing in him amendment of his ways and concord with others. At all events, it is to be done with this intention, even though the result may be different from what was expected, and the man, with a view to whose correction and conciliation this healing and salutary medicine, so to speak, was employed, refuses to be corrected and reconciled.

12. Moreover, if we pay attention to the words of the precept, and consider ourselves under bondage to the literal interpretation, the right cheek is not to be presented by us if the left has been smitten. “Whosoever,” it is said, “shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also;” but the left cheek is more liable to be smitten, because it is easier for the right hand of the assailant to smite it than the other. But the words are commonly understood as if our Lord had said: If any one has acted injuriously to thee in respect of the higher possessions which thou hast, offer to him also the inferior possessions, lest, being more concerned about revenge than about forbearance, thou shouldst despise eternal things in comparison with temporal things, whereas temporal things ought to be despised in comparison with eternal things, as the left is in comparison with the right. This has been always the aim of the holy martyrs; for final vengeance is righteously demanded only when there remains no room for amendment, namely, in the last great judgment. But meanwhile we must be on our guard, lest, through desire for revenge, we lose patience itself,—a virtue which is of more value than all which an enemy can, in spite of our

resistance, take away from us. For another evangelist, in recording the same precept, makes no mention of the right cheek, but names merely the one and the other; so that, while the duty may be somewhat more distinctly learned from Matthew's gospel, he simply commends the same exercise of patience. Wherefore a righteous and pious man ought to be prepared to endure with patience injury from those whom he desires to make good, so that the number of good men may be increased, instead of himself being added, by retaliation of injury, to the number of wicked men.

13. In fine, that these precepts pertain rather to the inward disposition of the heart than to the actions which are done in the sight of men, requiring us, in the inmost heart, to cherish patience along with benevolence, but in the outward action to do that which seems most likely to benefit those whose good we ought to seek, is manifest from the fact that our Lord Jesus Himself, our perfect example of patience, when He was smitten on the face, answered: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if not, why smitest thou me?" If we look only to the words, He did not in this obey His own precept, for He did not present the other side of his face to him who had smitten Him but, on the contrary, prevented him who had done the wrong from adding thereto; and yet He had come prepared not only to be smitten on the face, but even to be slain upon the cross for those at whose hands He suffered crucifixion, and for whom, when hanging on the cross, He prayed, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!" In like manner, the Apostle Paul seems to have failed to obey the precept of his Lord and Master, when he, being smitten on the face as He had been, said to the chief priest: "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall, for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" And when it was said by them that stood near, "Revilest thou God's high priest?" he took pains sarcastically to indicate what his words meant, that those of them who were discerning might understand that now the whited wall, i.e. the hypocrisy of the Jewish priesthood, was appointed to be thrown down by the coming of Christ; for He said: "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest, for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people;" although it is perfectly certain that he who had grown up in that nation and had been in that place trained in the law, could not but

know that his judge was the chief priest, and could not, by professing ignorance on this point, impose upon those to whom he was so well known.

14. These precepts concerning patience ought to be always retained in the habitual discipline of the heart, and the benevolence which prevents the recompensing of evil for evil must be always fully cherished in the disposition. At the same time, many things must be done in correcting with a certain benevolent severity, even against their own wishes, men whose welfare rather than their wishes it is our duty to consult and the Christian Scriptures have most unambiguously commended this virtue in a magistrate. For in the correction of a son, even with some sternness, there is assuredly no diminution of a father's love; yet, in the correction, that is done which is received with reluctance and pain by one whom it seems necessary to heal by pain. And on this principle, if the commonwealth observe the precepts of the Christian religion, even its wars themselves will not be carried on without the benevolent design that, after the resisting nations have been conquered, provision may be more easily made for enjoying in peace the mutual bond of piety and justice. For the person from whom is taken away the freedom which he abuses in doing wrong is vanquished with benefit to himself; since nothing is more truly a misfortune than that good fortune of offenders, by which pernicious impunity is maintained, and the evil disposition, like an enemy within the man, is strengthened. But the perverse and froward hearts of men think human affairs are prosperous when men are concerned about magnificent mansions, and indifferent to the ruin of souls; when mighty theatres are built up, and the foundations of virtue are undermined; when the madness of extravagance is highly esteemed, and works of mercy are scorned; when, out of the wealth and affluence of rich men, luxurious provision is made for actors, and the poor are grudged the necessaries of life; when that God who, by the public declarations of His doctrine, protests against public vice, is blasphemed by impious communities, which demand gods of such character that even those theatrical representations which bring disgrace to both body and soul are fitly performed in honour of them. If God permit these things to prevail, He is in that permission showing more grievous displeasure: if He leave these crimes unpunished, such impunity is a more terrible judgment. When, on the other hand, He overthrows the props of vice, and

reduces to poverty those lusts which were nursed by plenty, He afflicts in mercy. And in mercy, also, if such a thing were possible, even wars might be waged by the good, in order that, by bringing under the yoke the unbridled lusts of men, those vices might be abolished which ought, under a just government, to be either extirpated or suppressed.

15. For if the Christian religion condemned wars of every kind, the command given in the gospel to soldiers asking counsel as to salvation would rather be to cast away their arms, and withdraw themselves wholly from military service; whereas the word spoken to such was, “Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages,”—the command to be content with their wages manifestly implying no prohibition to continue in the service. Wherefore, let those who say that the doctrine of Christ is incompatible with the State’s well-being, give us an army composed of soldiers such as the doctrine of Christ requires them to be; let them give us such subjects, such husbands and wives, such parents and children, such masters and servants, such kings, such judges—in fine, even such taxpayers and tax-gatherers, as the Christian religion has taught that men should be, and then let them dare to say that it is adverse to the State’s well-being; yea, rather, let them no longer hesitate to confess that this doctrine, if it were obeyed, would be the salvation of the commonwealth.

Chap. III

16. But what am I to answer to the assertion made that many calamities have befallen the Roman Empire through some Christian emperors? This sweeping accusation is a calumny. For if they would more clearly quote some indisputable facts in support of it from the history of past emperors, I also could mention similar, perhaps even greater calamities in the reigns of other emperors who were not Christians; so that men may understand that these were either faults in the men, not in their religion, or were due not to the emperors themselves, but to others without whom emperors can do nothing. As to the date of the commencement of the downfall of the Roman Republic, there is ample evidence; their own literature speaks plainly as to this. Long before the name of Christ had shone abroad on the earth, this was said of Rome: “O venal city, and doomed to perish speedily, if only it could

find a purchaser!” In his book on the Catilinarian conspiracy, which was before the coming of Christ, the same most illustrious Roman historian declares plainly the time when the army of the Roman people began to be wanton and drunken; to set a high value on statues, paintings, and embossed vases; to take these by violence both from individuals and from the State; to rob temples and pollute everything, sacred and profane. When, therefore, the avarice and grasping violence of the corrupt and abandoned manners of the time spared neither men nor those whom they esteemed as gods, the famous honour and safety of the commonwealth began to decline. What progress the worst vices made from that time forward, and with how great mischief to the interests of mankind the wickedness of the Empire went on, it would take too long to rehearse. Let them hear their own satirist speaking playfully yet truly thus:—

“Once poor, and therefore chaste, in former times

Our matrons were; no luxury found room

In low-roofed houses and bare walls of loam;

Their hands with labour burdened while ’tis light,

A frugal sleep supplied the quiet night;

While, pinched with want, their hunger held them strait,

When Hannibal was hovering at the gate;

But wanton now, and lolling at our ease,

We suffer all the inveterate ills of peace

And wasteful riot, whose destructive charms

Revenge the vanquished world of our victorious arms.

No crime, no lustful postures are unknown,

Since poverty, our guardian-god, is gone.”

Why, then, do you expect me to multiply examples of the evils which were brought in by wickedness uplifted by prosperity, seeing that among themselves, those who observed events with somewhat closer attention discerned that Rome had more reason to regret the departure of its poverty than of its opulence; because in its poverty the integrity of its virtue was secured, but through its opulence, dire corruption, more terrible than any invader, had taken violent possession not of the walls of the city, but of the mind of the State?

17. Thanks be unto the Lord our God, who has sent unto us unprecedented help in resisting these evils. For whither might not men have been carried away by that flood of the appalling wickedness of the human race, whom would it have spared, and in what depths would it not have engulfed its victims, had not the cross of Christ, resting on such a solid rock of authority (so to speak), been planted too high and too strong for the flood to sweep it away? so that by laying hold of its strength we may become stedfast, and not be carried off our feet and overwhelmed in the mighty whirlpool of the evil counsels and evil impulses of this world. For when the empire was sinking in the vile abyss of utterly depraved manners, and of the effete ancient religion, it was signally important that heavenly authority should come to the rescue, persuading men to the practice of voluntary poverty, continence, benevolence, justice, and concord among themselves, as well as true piety towards God, and all the other bright and sterling virtues of life,—not only with a view to the spending of this present life in the most honourable way, nor only with a view to secure the most perfect bond of concord in the earthly commonwealth, but also in order to the obtaining of eternal salvation, and a place in the divine and celestial republic of a people which shall endure for ever—a republic to the citizenship of which faith, hope, and charity admit us; so that, while absent from it on our pilgrimage here, we may patiently tolerate, if we cannot correct, those who desire, by leaving vices unpunished, to give stability to that republic which the early Romans founded and enlarged by their virtues, when, though they had not the true piety towards the true God which could bring them, by a religion of saving power, to the commonwealth which is eternal, they did nevertheless observe a certain integrity of its own kind, which might suffice for founding, enlarging, and preserving an earthly commonwealth. For in the most opulent and illustrious Empire of Rome, God has shown how great is the influence of even civil virtues without true religion, in order that it

might be understood that, when this is added to such virtues, men are made citizens of another commonwealth, of which the king is Truth, the law is Love, and the duration is Eternity.

Chap. IV

18. Who can help feeling that there is something simply ridiculous in their attempt to compare with Christ, or rather to put in a higher place, Apollonius and Apuleius, and others who were most skilful in magical arts? Yet this is to be tolerated with less impatience, because they bring into comparison with Him these men rather than their own gods; for Apollonius was, as we must admit, a much worthier character than that author and perpetrator of innumerable gross acts of immorality whom they call Jupiter. “These legends about our gods,” they reply, “are fables.” Why, then, do they go on praising that luxurious, licentious, and manifestly profane prosperity of the Republic, which invented these infamous crimes of the gods, and not only left them to reach the ears of men as fables, but also exhibited them to the eyes of men in the theatres; in which, more numerous than their deities were the crimes which the gods themselves were well pleased to see openly perpetrated in their honour, whereas they should have punished their worshippers for even tolerating such spectacles? “But,” they reply, “those are not the gods themselves whose worship is celebrated according to the lying invention of such fables.” Who, then, are they who are propitiated by the practising in worship of such abominations? Because, forsooth, Christianity has exposed the perversity and chicanery of those devils, by whose power also magical arts deceive the minds of men, and because it has made this patent to the world, and, having brought out the distinction between the holy angels and these malignant adversaries, has warned men to be on their guard against them, showing them also how this may be done,—it is called an enemy to the Republic, as if, even though temporal prosperity could be secured by their aid, any amount of adversity would not be preferable to the prosperity obtained through such means. And yet it pleased God to prevent men from being perplexed in this matter; for in the age of the comparative darkness of the Old Testament, in which is the covering of the New Testament, He distinguished the first nation which worshiped the true God and despised false gods by such remarkable

prosperity in this world, that any one may perceive from their case that prosperity is not at the disposal of devils, but only of Him whom angels serve and devils fear.

19. Apuleius (of whom I choose rather to speak, because, as our own countryman, he is better known to us Africans), though born in a place of some note, and a man of superior education and great eloquence, never succeeded, with all his magical arts, in reaching, I do not say the supreme power, but even any subordinate office as a magistrate in the Empire. Does it seem probable that he, as a philosopher, voluntarily despised these things, who, being the priest of a province, was so ambitious of greatness that he gave spectacles of gladiatorial combats, provided the dresses worn by those who fought with wild beasts in the circus, and, in order to get a statue of himself erected in the town of Coea, the birthplace of his wife, appealed to law against the opposition made by some of the citizens to the proposal, and then, to prevent this from being forgotten by posterity, published the speech delivered by him on that occasion? So far, therefore, as concerns worldly prosperity, that magician did his utmost in order to success; whence it is manifest that he failed not because he was not wishful, but because he was not able to do more. At the same time we admit that he defended himself with brilliant eloquence against some who imputed to him the crime of practising magical arts; which makes me wonder at his panegyrists, who, in affirming that by these arts he wrought some miracles, attempt to bring evidence contradicting his own defence of himself from the charge. Let them, however, examine whether, indeed, they are bringing true testimony, and he was guilty of pleading what he knew to be false. Those who pursue magical arts only with a view to worldly prosperity or from an accursed curiosity, and those also who, though innocent of such arts, nevertheless praise them with a dangerous admiration, I would exhort to give heed, if they be wise, and to observe how, without any such arts, the position of a shepherd was exchanged for the dignity of the kingly office by David, of whom Scripture has faithfully recorded both the sinful and the meritorious actions, in order that we might know both how to avoid offending God, and how, when He has been offended, His wrath may be appeased.

20. As to those miracles, however, which are performed in order to excite the wonder of men, they do greatly err who compare heathen magicians with the holy prophets, who completely eclipse them by the fame of their great miracles. How much more do they err if they compare them with Christ, of whom the prophets, so incomparably superior to magicians of every name, foretold that He would come both in the human nature, which he took in being born of the Virgin, and in the divine nature, in which He is never separated from the Father!

I see that I have written a very long letter, and yet have not said all concerning Christ which might meet the case either of those who from sluggishness of intellect are unable to comprehend divine things, or of those who, though endowed with acuteness, are kept back from discerning truth through their love of contradiction and the prepossession of their minds in favour of long-cherished error. Howbeit, take note of anything which influences them against our doctrine, and write to me again, so that, if the Lord help us, we may, by letters or by treatises, furnish an answer to all their objections. May you, by the grace and mercy of the Lord, be happy in Him, my noble and justly distinguished lord, my son dearly beloved and longed for!

LETTER CXXXIX

(A.D. 412.)

To Marcellinus, My Lord Justly Distinguished, My Son Very Much Beloved and Longed for, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. The Acts which your Excellency promised to send I am eagerly expecting, and I am longing to have them read as soon as possible in the church at Hippo, and also, if it can be done, in all the churches established within the diocese, that all may hear and become thoroughly familiar with the men who have confessed their crimes, not because the fear of God subdued them to repentance, but because the rigour of their judges broke through the hardness of their most cruel hearts,—some of them confessing to the murder of one presbyter [Restitutus], and the blinding and maiming of another [Innocentius]; others not daring to deny that they might have

known of these outrages, although they say that they disapproved of them, and persisting in the impiety of schism in fellowship with such a multitude of atrocious villains, while deserting the peace of the Catholic Church on the pretext of unwillingness to be polluted by other men's crimes; others declaring that they will not forsake the schismatics, even though the certainty of Catholic truth and the perversity of the Donatists have been demonstrated to them. The work, which it has pleased God to entrust to your diligence, is of great importance. My heart's desire is, that many similar Donatist cases may be tried and decided by you as these have been, and that in this way the crimes and the insane obstinacy of these men may be often brought to light; and that the Acts recording these proceedings may be published, and brought to the knowledge of all men.

As to the statement in your Excellency's letter, that you are uncertain whether you ought to command the said Acts to be published in Theoprepia, my reply is, Let this be done, if a large multitude of hearers can be gathered there; if this be not the case, some other place of more general resort must be provided; it must not, however, be omitted on any account.

2. As to the punishment of these men, I beseech you to make it something less severe than sentence of death, although they have, by their own confession, been guilty of such grievous crimes. I ask this out of a regard both for our own consciences and for the testimony thereby given to Catholic clemency. For this is the special advantage secured to us by their confession, that the Catholic Church has found an opportunity of maintaining and exhibiting forbearance towards her most violent enemies; since in a case where such cruelty was practised, any punishment short of death will be seen by all men to proceed from great leniency. And although such treatment appears to some of our communion, whose minds are agitated by these atrocities, to be less than the crimes deserve, and to have somewhat the aspect of weakness and dereliction of duty, nevertheless, when the feelings, which are wont to be immoderately excited while such events are recent, have subsided after a time, the kindness shown to the guilty will shine with most conspicuous brightness, and men will take much more pleasure in reading these Acts and showing them to others, my lord justly distinguished, and son very much beloved and longed for.

My holy brother and co-bishop Boniface is on the spot, and I have forwarded by the deacon Peregrinus, who travelled along with him, a letter of instructions; accept these as representing me. And whatever may seem in your joint opinion to be for the Church's interest, let it be done with the help of the Lord, who is able in the midst of so great evils graciously to succour you. One of their bishops, Macrobius, is at present going round in all directions, followed by bands of wretched men and women, and has opened for himself the [Donatist] churches which fear, however slight, had moved their owners to close for a time. By the presence, however, of one whom I have commended and again heartily commend to your love, namely, Spondeus, the deputy of the illustrious Celer, their presumption was indeed somewhat checked; but now, since his departure to Carthage, Macrobius has opened the Donatist churches even within his property, and is gathering congregations for worship in them. In his company, moreover, is Donatus, a deacon, rebaptized by them even when he was a tenant of lands belonging to the Church, who was implicated as a ringleader in the outrage [on Innocentius]. When this man is his associate, who can tell what kind of followers may be in his retinue? If the sentence on these men is to be pronounced by the Proconsul, or by both of you together, and if he perchance insist upon inflicting capital punishment, although he is a Christian and, so far as we have had opportunity of observing, not disposed to such severity—if, I say, his determination make it necessary, order those letters of mine, which I deemed it my duty to address to you severally on this subject, to be brought before you while the trial is still going on; for I am accustomed to hear that it is in the power of the judge to mitigate the sentence, and inflict a milder penalty than the law prescribes. If, however, notwithstanding these letters from me, he refuse to grant this request, let him at least allow that the men be remanded for a time; and we will endeavour to obtain this concession from the clemency of the Emperors, so that the sufferings of the martyrs, which ought to shed bright glory on the Church, may not be tarnished by the blood of their enemies; for I know that in the case of the clergy in the valley of Anaunia, who were slain by the Pagans, and are now honoured as martyrs, the Emperor granted readily a petition that the murderers, who had been discovered and imprisoned, might not be visited with a capital punishment.

3. As to the books concerning the baptism of infants, of which I had sent the original manuscript to your Excellency, I have forgotten for what reason I received them again from you; unless, perhaps, it was that, after examining them, I found them faulty, and wished to make some corrections, which, by reason of extraordinary hindrances, I have not yet been able to overtake. I must also confess that the letter intended to be addressed to you and added to these books, and which I had begun to dictate when I was with you, is still unfinished, little having been added to it since that time. If, however, I could set before you a statement of the toil which it is absolutely necessary for me to devote, both by day and by night, to other duties, you would deeply sympathize with me, and would be astonished at the amount of business not admitting of delay which distracts my mind and hinders me from accomplishing those things to which you urge me in entreaties and admonitions, addressed to one most willing to oblige you, and inexpressibly grieved that it is beyond his power; for when I obtain a little leisure from the urgent necessary business of those men, who so press me into their service that I am neither able to escape them nor at liberty to neglect them, there are always subjects to which I must, in dictating to my amanuenses, give the first place, because they are so connected with the present hour as not to admit of being postponed. Of such things one instance was the abridgement of the proceedings at our Conference, a work involving much labour, but necessary, because I saw that no one would attempt the perusal of such a mass of writing; another was a letter to the Donatist laity concerning the said Conference, a document which I have just completed, after labouring at it for several nights; another was the composition of two long letters, one addressed to yourself, my beloved friend, the other to the illustrious Volusianus, which I suppose you both have received; another is a book, with which I am occupied at present, addressed to our friend Honoratus, in regard to five questions proposed by him in a letter to me, and you see that to him I was unquestionably in duty bound to send a prompt reply. For love deals with her sons as a nurse does with children, devoting her attention to them not in the order of the love felt for each, but according to the urgency of each case; she gives a preference to the weaker, because she desires to impart to them such strength as is possessed by the stronger, whom she passes by meanwhile not because of her slighting them, but because her mind is at rest in regard to them. Emergencies of this kind,

compelling me to employ my amanuenses in writing on subjects which prevent me from using their pens in work much more congenial to the ardent desires of my heart, can never fail to occur, because I have difficulty in obtaining even a very little leisure, amidst the accumulation of business into which, in spite of my own inclinations, I am dragged by other men's wishes or necessities; and what I am to do, I really do not know.

4. You have heard the burdens, for my deliverance from which I wish you to join your prayers with mine; but at the same time I do not wish you to desist from admonishing me, as you do, with such importunity and frequency; your words are not without some effect. I commend at the same time to your Excellency a church planted in Numidia, on behalf of which, in its present necessities, my holy brother and co-bishop Delphinus has been sent by my brethren and co-bishops who share the toils and the dangers of their work in that region. I write no more on this matter, because you will hear all from his own lips when he comes to you. All other necessary particulars you will find in the letters of instruction, which are sent by me to the presbyter either now or by the deacon Peregrinus, so that I need not again repeat them.

May your heart be ever strong in Christ, my lord justly distinguished, and son very much beloved and longed for!

I commend to your Excellency our son Ruffinus, the Provost of Cirta.

LETTER CXLIII

(A.D. 412.)

To Marcellinus, My Noble Lord, Justly Distinguished, My Son Very Much Beloved, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Desiring to reply to the letter which I received from you through our holy brother, my co-bishop Boniface, I have sought for it, but have not found it. I have recalled to mind, however, that you asked me in that letter how the magicians of Pharaoh could, after all the water of Egypt had been turned into blood, find any with which to imitate the miracle. There are two ways in which the question is commonly answered: either that it was possible for

water to have been brought from the sea, or, which is more credible, that these plagues were not inflicted on the district in which the children of Israel were; for the clear, express statements to this effect in some parts of that scriptural narrative entitle us to assume this in places where the statement is omitted.

2. In your other letter, brought to me by the presbyter Urbanus, a question is proposed, taken from a passage not in the Divine Scriptures, but in one of my own books, namely, that which I wrote on Free Will. On questions of this kind, however, I do not bestow much labour; because even if the statement objected to does not admit of unanswerable vindication, it is mine only; it is not an utterance of that Author whose words it is impiety to reject, even when, through our misapprehension of their meaning, the interpretation which we put on them deserves to be rejected. I freely confess, accordingly, that I endeavour to be one of those who write because they have made some progress, and who, by means of writing, make further progress. If, therefore, through inadvertence or want of knowledge, anything has been stated by me which may with good reason be condemned, not only by others who are able to discover this, but also by myself (for if I am making progress, I ought, at least after it has been pointed out, to see it), such a mistake is not to be regarded with surprise or grief, but rather forgiven, and made the occasion of congratulating me, not, of course, on having erred, but on having renounced an error. For there is an extravagant perversity in the self-love of the man who desires other men to be in error, that the fact of his having erred may not be discovered. How much better and more profitable is it that in the points in which he has erred others should not err, so that he may be delivered from his error by their advice, or, if he refuse this, may at least have no followers in his error. For, if God permit me, as I desire, to gather together and point out, in a work devoted to this express purpose, all the things which most justly displease me in my books, men will then see how far I am from being a partial judge in my own case.

3. As for you, however, who love me warmly, if, in opposing those by whom, whether through malice or ignorance or superior intelligence, I am censured, you maintain the position that I have nowhere in my writings

made a mistake, you labour in a hopeless enterprise—you have undertaken a bad cause, in which, even if myself were judge, you must be easily worsted; for it is no pleasure to me that my dearest friends should think me to be such as I am not, since assuredly they love not me, but instead of me another under my name, if they love not what I am, but what I am not; for in so far as they know me, or believe what is true concerning me, I am loved by them; but in so far as they ascribe to me what they do not know to be in me, they love another person, such as they suppose me to be. Cicero, the prince of Roman orators, says of some one, "He never uttered a word which he would wish to recall." This commendation, though it seems to be the highest possible, is nevertheless more likely to be true of a consummate fool than of a man perfectly wise; for it is true of idiots, that the more absurd and foolish they are, and the more their opinions diverge from those universally held, the more likely are they to utter no word which they will wish to recall; for to regret an evil, or foolish, or ill-timed word is characteristic of a wise man. If, however, the words quoted are taken in a good sense, as intended to make us believe that some one was such that, by reason of his speaking all things wisely, he never uttered any word which he would wish to recall,—this we are, in accordance with sound piety, to believe rather concerning men of God, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, than concerning the man whom Cicero commends. For my part, so far am I from this excellence, that if I have uttered no word which I would wish to recall, it must be because I resemble more the idiot than the wise man. The man whose writings are most worthy of the highest authority is he who has uttered no word, I do not say which it would be his desire, but which it would be his duty to recall. Let him that has not attained to this occupy the second rank through his humility, since he cannot take the first rank through his wisdom. Since he has been unable, with all his care, to exclude every expression whose use may be justly regretted, let him acknowledge his regret for anything which, as he may now have discovered, ought not to have been said.

4. Since, therefore, the words spoken by me which I would if I could recall, are not, as my very dear friends suppose, few or none, but perhaps even more than my enemies imagine, I am not gratified by such commendation as Cicero's sentence, "He never uttered a word which he would wish to

recall," but I am deeply distressed by the saying of Horace, "The word once uttered cannot be recalled." This is the reason why I keep beside me, longer than you wish or patiently bear, the books which I have written on difficult and important questions on the book of Genesis and the doctrine of the Trinity, hoping that, if it be impossible to avoid having some things which may deservedly be found fault with, the number of these may at least be smaller than it might have been, if, through impatient haste, the works had been published without due deliberation; for you, as your letters indicate (our holy brother and co-bishop Florentius having written me to this effect), are urgent for the publication of these works now, in order that they may be defended in my own lifetime by myself, when, perhaps, they may begin to be assailed in some particulars, either through the cavilling of enemies or the misapprehensions of friends. You say this doubtless because you think there is nothing in them which might with justice be censured, otherwise you would not exhort me to publish the books, but rather to revise them more carefully. But I fix my eye rather on those who are true judges, sternly impartial, between whom and myself I wish, in the first place, to make sure of my ground, so that the only faults coming to be censured by them may be those which it was impossible for me to observe, though using the most diligent scrutiny.

5. Notwithstanding what I have just said, I am prepared to defend the sentence in the third book of my treatise on Free Will, in which, discoursing on the rational substance, I have expressed my opinion in these words: "The soul, appointed to occupy a body inferior in nature to itself after the entrance of sin, governs its own body, not absolutely according to its free will, but only in so far as the laws of the universe permit." I bespeak the particular attention of those who think that I have here fixed and defined, as ascertained concerning the human soul, either that it comes by propagation from the parents, or that it has, through sins committed in a higher celestial life, incurred the penalty of being shut up in a corruptible body. Let them, I say, observe that the words in question have been so carefully weighed by me, that while they hold fast what I regard as certain, namely, that after the sin of the first man, all other men have been born and continue to be born in that sinful flesh, for the healing of which "the likeness of sinful flesh" came in the person of the Lord, they are also so chosen as not to pronounce upon

any one of those four opinions which I have in the sequel expounded and distinguished—not attempting to establish any one of them as preferable to the others, but disposing in the meantime of the matter under discussion, and reserving the consideration of these opinions, so that whichever of them may be true, praise should unhesitatingly be given to God.

6. For whether all souls are derived by propagation from the first, or are in the case of each individual specially created, or being created apart from the body are sent into it, or introduce themselves into it of their own accord, without doubt this creature endowed with reason, namely, the human soul—appointed to occupy an inferior, that is, an earthly body—after the entrance of sin, does not govern its own body absolutely according to its free will. For I did not say, "after his sin," or "after he sinned," but after the entrance of sin, that whatever might afterwards, if possible, be determined by reason as to the question whether the sin was his own or the sin of the first parent of mankind, it might be perceived that in saying that "the soul, appointed, after the entrance of sin, to occupy an inferior body, does not govern its body absolutely according to its own free will," I stated what is true; for "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and in this we groan, being burdened," and "the corruptible body weighs down the soul,"—in short, who can enumerate all the evils arising from the infirmity of the flesh, which shall assuredly cease when "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption," so that "that which is mortal shall be swallowed up of life"? In that future condition, therefore, the soul shall govern its spiritual body with absolute freedom of will; but in the meantime its freedom is not absolute, but conditioned by the laws of the universe, according to which it is fixed, that bodies having experienced birth experience death, and having grown to maturity decline in old age. For the soul of the first man did, before the entrance of sin, govern his body with perfect freedom of will, although that body was not yet spiritual, but animal; but after the entrance of sin, that is, after sin had been committed in that flesh from which sinful flesh was thenceforward to be propagated, the reasonable soul is so appointed to occupy an inferior body, that it does not govern its body with absolute freedom of will. That infant children, even before they have committed any sin of their own, are partakers of sinful flesh, is, in my opinion, proved by their requiring to have it healed in them also, by the application in their

baptism of the remedy provided in Him who came in the likeness of sinful flesh. But even those who do not acquiesce in this view have no just ground for taking offence at the sentence quoted from my book; for it is certain, if I am not mistaken, that even if the infirmity be the consequence not of sin, but of nature, it was at all events only after the entrance of sin that bodies having this infirmity began to be produced; for Adam was not created thus, and he did not beget any offspring before he sinned.

7. Let my critics, therefore, seek other passages to censure, not only in my other more hastily published works, but also in these books of mine on Free Will. For I by no means deny that they may in this search discover opportunities of conferring a benefit on me; for if the books, having passed into so many hands, cannot now be corrected, I myself may, being still alive. Those words, however, so carefully selected by me to avoid committing myself to any one of the four opinions or theories regarding the soul's origin, are liable to censure only from those who think that my hesitation as to any definite view in a matter so obscure is blameworthy; against whom I do not defend myself by saying that I think it right to pronounce no opinion whatever on the subject, seeing that I have no doubt either that the soul is immortal—not in the same sense in which God is immortal, who alone hath immortality, but in a certain way peculiar to itself—or that the soul is a creature and not a part of the substance of the Creator, or as to any other thing which I regard as most certain concerning its nature. But seeing that the obscurity of this most mysterious subject, the origin of the soul, compels me to do as I have done, let them rather stretch out a friendly hand to me, confessing my ignorance, and desiring to know whatever is the truth on the subject; and let them, if they can, teach or demonstrate to me what they may either have learned by the exercise of sound reason, or have believed on indisputably plain testimony of the divine oracles. For if reason be found contradicting the authority of Divine Scriptures, it only deceives by a semblance of truth, however acute it be, for its deductions cannot in that case be true. On the other hand, if, against the most manifest and reliable testimony of reason, anything be set up claiming to have the authority of the Holy Scriptures, he who does this does it through a misapprehension of what he has read, and is setting up against the truth not the real meaning of Scripture, which he has failed to discover, but

an opinion of his own; he alleges not what he has found in the Scriptures, but what he has found in himself as their interpreter.

8. Let me give an example, to which I solicit your earnest attention. In a passage near the end of Ecclesiastes, where the author is speaking of man’s dissolution through death separating the soul from the body, it is written, “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” A statement having the authority on which this one is based is true beyond all dispute, and is not intended to deceive any one; yet if any one wishes to put upon it such an interpretation as may help him in attempting to support the theory of the propagation of souls, according to which all other souls are derived from that one which God gave to the first man, what is there said concerning the body under the name of “dust” (for obviously nothing else than body and soul are to be understood by “dust” and “spirit” in this passage) seems to favour his view; for he may affirm that the soul is said to return to God because of its being derived from the original stock of that soul which God gave to the first man, in the same way as the body is said to return to the dust because of its being derived from the original stock of that body which was made of dust in the first man and therefore may argue that, from what we know perfectly as to the body, we ought to believe what is hidden from our observation as to the soul; for there is no difference of opinion as to the original stock of the body, but there is as to the original stock of the soul. In the text thus brought forward as a proof, statements are made concerning both, as if the manner of the return of each to its original was precisely similar in both,—the body, on the one hand, returning to the earth as it was, for thence was it taken when the first man was formed; the soul, on the other hand, returning to God, for He gave it when He breathed into the nostrils of the man whom He had formed the breath of life, and he became a living soul, so that thenceforward the propagation of each part should go on from the corresponding part in the parent.

9. If, however, the true account of the soul’s origin be, that God gives to each individual man a soul, not propagated from that first soul, but created in some other way, the statement that the “spirit returns to God who gave it,” is equally consistent with this view. The two other opinions regarding

the soul’s origin are, then, the only ones which seem to be excluded by this text. For in the first place, as to the opinion that every man’s soul is made separately within him at the time of his creation, it is supposed that, if this were the case, the soul should have been spoken of as returning, not to God who gave it, but to God who made it; for the word “gave” seems to imply that that which could be given had already a separate existence. The words “returneth to God” are further insisted upon by some, who say, How could it return to a place where it had never been before? Accordingly they maintain that, if the soul is to be believed to have never been with God before, the words should have been “it goes,” or “goes on,” or “goes away,” rather than it “returns” to God. In like manner, as to the opinion that each soul glides of its own accord into its body, it is not easy to explain how this theory is reconcilable with the statement that God gave it. The words of this scriptural passage are consequently somewhat adverse to these two opinions, namely, the one which supposes each soul to be created in its own body, and the one which supposes each soul to introduce itself into its own body spontaneously. But there is no difficulty in showing that the words are consistent with either of the other two opinions, namely, that all souls are derived by propagation from the one first created, or that, having been created and kept in readiness with God, they are given to each body as required.

10. Nevertheless, even if the theory that each soul is created in its own body may not be wholly excluded by this text,—for if its advocates affirm that God is here said to have given the spirit (or the soul) in the same way as He is said to have given us eyes, ears, hands, or other such members, which were not made elsewhere by Him, and kept in store that He might give them, i.e. add and join them to our bodies, but are made by Him in that body to which He is said to have given them,—I do not see what could be said in reply, unless, perchance, the opinion could be refuted, either by other passages of Scripture, or by valid reasoning. In like manner, those who think that each soul flows of its own accord into its body take the words “God gave it” in the sense in which it is said, “He gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts.” Only one word, therefore, remains apparently irreconcilable with the theory that each soul is made in its own body, namely, the word “returneth,” in the expression

"returneth to God;" for in what sense can the soul return to Him with whom it has not formerly been? By this one word alone are the supporters of this one of the four opinions embarrassed. And yet I do not think that this opinion ought to be held as refuted by this one word, for it may be possible to show that in the ordinary style of scriptural language it may be quite correct to use the word "return," as signifying the spirit created by God returns to Him not because of its having been with Him before its union with the body, but because of its having received being from His creative power.

11. I have written these things in order to show that whoever is disposed to maintain and vindicate any one of these four theories of the soul's origin, must bring forward, either from the Scriptures received into ecclesiastical authority, passages which do not admit of any other interpretation,—as the statement that God made man,—or reasonings founded on premises so obviously true that to call them in question would be madness, such as the statement that none but the living are capable of knowledge or of error; for a statement like this does not require the authority of Scripture to prove its truth, as if the common sense of mankind did not of itself announce its truth with such transparent cogency of reason, that whoever contradicts it must be held to be hopelessly mad. If any one is able to produce such arguments in discussing the very obscure question of the soul's origin, let him help me in my ignorance; but if he cannot do this, let him forbear from blaming my hesitation on the question.

12. As to the virginity of the Holy Mary, if what I have written on this subject does not suffice to prove that it was possible, we must refuse to believe every record of anything miraculous having taken place in the body of any. If, however, the objection to believing this miracle is, that it happened only once, ask the friend who is still perplexed by this, whether instances may not be quoted from secular literature of events which were, like this one, unique, and which, nevertheless, are believed, not merely as fables are believed by the simple, but with that faith with which the history of facts is received—ask him, I beseech you, this question. For if he says that nothing of this kind is to be found in these writings, he ought to have

such instances pointed out to him; if he admits this, the question is decided by his admission.

LETTER CXLIV

(A.D. 412.)

To My Honourable and Justly Esteemed Lords, The Inhabitants of Cirta, of All Ranks, Brethren Dearly Beloved and Longed For, Bishop Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. If that which greatly distressed me in your town has now been removed; if the obduracy of hearts which resisted most evident and, as we might call it, notorious truth, has by the force of truth been overcome; if the sweetness of peace is relished, and the love which tends to unity is the occasion no longer of pain to eyes diseased, but of light and vigour to eyes restored to health,—this is God's work, not ours; on no account would I ascribe these results to human efforts, even had such a remarkable conversion of your whole community taken place when I was with you, and in connection with my own preaching and exhortations. The operation and the success are His who, by His servants, calls men's attention outwardly by the signs of things, and Himself teaches men inwardly by the things themselves. The fact, however, that whatever praiseworthy change has been wrought among you is to be ascribed not to us, but to Him who alone doeth wonderful works, is no reason for our being more reluctant to be persuaded to visit you. For we ought to hasten much more readily to see the works of God than our own works, for we ourselves also, if we be of service in any work, owe this not to men but to Him; wherefore the apostle says, "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth: but God that giveth the increase."

2. You allude in your letter to a fact which I also remember from classic literature, that by discoursing on the benefits of temperance, Xenocrates suddenly converted Polemo from a dissipated to a sober life, though this man was not only habitually intemperate, but was actually intoxicated at the time. Now although this was, as you have wisely and truthfully apprehended, a case not of conversion to God, but of emancipation from the thraldom of self-indulgence, I would not ascribe even the amount of

improvement wrought in him to the work of man, but to the work of God. For even in the body, the lowest part of our nature, all excellent things, such as beauty, vigour, health, and so on, are the work of God, to whom nature owes its creation and perfection; how much more certain, therefore, must it be that no other can impart excellent properties to the soul! For what imagination of human folly could be more full of pride and ingratitude than the notion that, although God alone can give comeliness to the body, it belongs to man to give purity to the soul? It is written in the book of Christian Wisdom, "I perceived that no one can have self-restraint unless God give it to him, and that this is a part of true wisdom to know whose gift it is." If, therefore, Polemo, when he exchanged a life of dissipation for a life of sobriety, had so understood whence the gift came, that, renouncing the superstitions of the heathen, he had rendered worship to the Divine Giver, he would then have become not only temperate, but truly wise and savingly religious, which would have secured to him not merely the practice of virtue in this life, but also the possession of immortality in the life to come. How much less, then, should I presume to take to myself the honour of your conversion, or of that of your people which you have now reported to me, which, when I was neither speaking to you nor even present with you, was accomplished unquestionably by divine power in all in whom it has really taken place. This, therefore, know above all things, meditate on this with devout humility. To God, my brethren, to God give thanks. Fear Him, that ye may not go backward: love Him, that ye may go forward.

3. If, however, love of men still keeps some secretly alienated from the flock of Christ, while fear of other men constrains them to a feigned reconciliation, I charge all such to consider that before God the conscience of man has no covering, and that they can neither impose on Him as a Witness, nor escape from Him as a Judge. But if, by reason of anxiety as to their own salvation, anything as to the question of the unity of Christ's flock perplex them, let them make this demand upon themselves,—and it seems to me a most just demand,—that in regard to the Catholic Church, i.e. the Church spread abroad over the whole world, they believe rather the words of Divine Scripture than the calumnies of human tongues. Moreover, with respect to the schism which has arisen among men (who assuredly, whatsoever they may be, do not frustrate the promises of God to Abraham,

“In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed,”—promises believed when brought to their ears as a prophecy, but denied, forsooth, when set before their eyes as an accomplished fact), let them meanwhile ponder this one very brief, but, if I mistake not, unanswerable argument: the question out of which the dispute arose either has or has not been tried before ecclesiastical tribunals beyond the sea; if it has not been tried before these, then no guilt in this matter is chargeable on the whole flock of Christ in the nations beyond the sea, in communion with which we rejoice, and therefore their separation from these guiltless communities is an act of impious schism; if, on the other hand, the question has been tried before the tribunal of these churches, who does not understand and feel, nay, who does not see, that those whose communion is now separated from these churches were the party defeated in the trial? Let them therefore choose to whom they should prefer to give credence, whether to the ecclesiastical judges who decided the question, or to the complaints of the vanquished litigants. Observe wisely how impossible it is for them reasonably to answer this brief and most intelligible dilemma; nevertheless, it were easier to turn Polemo from a life of intemperance, than to drive them out of the madness of inveterate error.

Pardon me, my noble and worthy lords, brethren most dearly beloved and longed for, for writing you a letter more prolix than agreeable, but fitted, as I think, to benefit rather than to flatter you. As to my coming to you, may God fulfil the desire which we both equally cherish! For I cannot express in words, but I am sure you will gladly believe, with what fervour of love I burn to see you.

LETTER CXLV

(A.D. 412 OR 413.)

To Anastasius, My Holy and Beloved Lord and Brother, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. A most satisfactory opportunity of saluting your genuine worth is furnished by our brethren Lupicinus and Concordialis, honourable servants of God, from whom, even without my writing, you might learn all that is

going on among us here. But knowing, as I do, how much you love us in Christ, because of your knowing how warmly your love is reciprocated by us in Him, I was sure that it might have disappointed you if you had seen them, and could not but know that they had come directly from us, and were most intimately united in friendship with us, and yet had received with them no letter from me. Besides this, I am owing you a reply, for I am not aware of having written to you since I received your last letter; so great are the cares by which I am encumbered and distracted, that I know not whether I have written or not before now.

2. We desire eagerly to know how you are, and whether the Lord has given you some rest, so far as in this world He can bestow it; for "if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it;" and so it is almost always our experience, that when, in the midst of our anxieties, we turn our thoughts to some of our brethren placed in a condition of comparative rest, we are in no small measure revived, as if in them we ourselves enjoyed a more peaceful and tranquil life. At the same time, when vexatious cares are multiplied in this uncertain life, they compel us to long for the everlasting rest. For this world is more dangerous to us in pleasant than in painful hours, and is to be guarded against more when it allures us to love it than when it warns and constrains us to despise it. For although "all that is in the world" is "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," nevertheless, even in the case of men who prefer to these the things which are spiritual, unseen, and eternal, the sweetness of earthly things insinuates itself into our affections, and accompanies our steps on the path of duty with its seductive allurements. For the violence with which present things acquire sway over our weakness is exactly proportioned to the superior value by which future things command our love. And oh that those who have learned to observe and bewail this may succeed in overcoming and escaping from this power of terrestrial things! Such victory and emancipation cannot, without God's grace, be achieved by the human will, which is by no means to be called free so long as it is subject to prevailing and enslaving lusts; "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." And the Son of God has Himself said, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

3. The law, therefore, by teaching and commanding what cannot be fulfilled without grace, demonstrates to man his weakness, in order that the weakness thus proved may resort to the Saviour, by whose healing the will may be able to do what in its feebleness it found impossible. So, then, the law brings us to faith, faith obtains the Spirit in fuller measure, the Spirit sheds love abroad in us, and love fulfils the law. For this reason the law is called a "schoolmaster," under whose threatenings and severity "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered." But how shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" Wherefore unto them that believe and call on Him the quickening Spirit is given, lest the letter without the Spirit should kill them. But by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, so that the words of the same apostle, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," are realized. So the law is good to the man who uses it lawfully; and he uses it lawfully who, understanding wherefore it was given, betakes himself, under the pressure of its threatenings, to grace, which sets him free. Whoever unthankfully despises this grace, by which the ungodly are justified, and trusts in his own strength, as if he thereby could fulfil the law, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish his own righteousness, is not submitting himself to the righteousness of God; and thus the law becomes to him not a help to pardon, but the bond fastening his guilt to him. Not that the law is evil, but because sin worketh death in such persons by that which is good. For by occasion of the commandment he sins more grievously who, by the commandment, knows how evil are the sins which he commits.

4. In vain, however, does any one think himself to have gained the victory over sin, if, through nothing but fear of punishment, he refrains from sin; because, although the outward action to which an evil desire prompts him is not performed, the evil desire itself within the man is an enemy unsubdued. And who is found innocent in God's sight who is willing to do the sin which is forbidden if you only remove the punishment which is feared? And consequently, even in the volition itself, he is guilty of sin who wishes to do what is unlawful, but refrains from doing it because it cannot be done with impunity; for, so far as he is concerned, he would prefer that there were no righteousness forbidding and punishing sins. And assuredly, if he would prefer that there should be no righteousness, who can doubt that he

would if he could abolish it altogether? How, then, can that man be called righteous who is such an enemy to righteousness that, if he had the power, he would abolish its authority, that he might not be subject to its threatenings or its penalties? He, then, is an enemy to righteousness who refrains from sin only through fear of punishment; but he will become the friend of righteousness if through love of it he sin not, for then he will be really afraid to sin. For the man who only fears the flames of hell is afraid not of sinning, but of being burned; but the man who hates sin as much as he hates hell is afraid to sin. This is the “fear of the Lord,” which “is pure, enduring for ever.” For the fear of punishment has torment, and is not in love; and love, when it is perfect, casts it out.

5. Moreover, every one hates sin just in proportion as he loves righteousness; which he will be enabled to do not through the law putting him in fear by the letter of its prohibitions, but by the Spirit healing him by grace. Then that is done which the apostle enjoins in the admonition, “I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.” For what is the force of the conjunctions “as” and “even so,” if it be not this: “As no fear compelled you to sin, but the desire for it, and the pleasure taken in sin, even so let not the fear of punishment drive you to a life of righteousness; but let the pleasure found in righteousness and the love you bear to it draw you to practise it”? And even this is, as it seems to me, a righteousness, so to speak, somewhat mature, but not perfect. For he would not have prefaced the admonition with the words, “I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh,” had there not been something else that ought to have been said if they had been by that time able to bear it. For surely more devoted service is due to righteousness than men are wont to yield to sin. For pain of body restrains men, if not from the desire of sin, at least from the commission of sinful actions; and we should not easily find any one who would openly commit a sin procuring to him an impure and unlawful gratification, if it was certain that the penalty of torture would immediately follow the crime. But righteousness ought to be so loved that not even bodily sufferings should hinder us from doing its works, but that, even when we are in the hands of cruel enemies, our good

works should so shine before men that those who are capable of taking pleasure therein may glorify our Father who is in heaven.

6. Hence it comes that that most devoted lover of righteousness exclaims, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Observe how he does not say simply, “Who shall separate us from Christ?” but, indicating that by which we cling to Christ, he says, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” We cling to Christ, then, by love, not by fear of punishment. Again, after having enumerated those things which seem to be sufficiently fierce, but have not sufficient force to effect a separation, he has, in the conclusion, called that the love of God which he had previously spoken of as the love of Christ. And what is this “love of Christ” but love of righteousness? for it is said of Him that He “is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” As, therefore he is superlatively wicked who is not deterred even by the penalty of bodily sufferings from the vile works of sordid pleasure, so is he superlatively righteous who is not restrained even by the fear of bodily sufferings from the holy works of most glorious love.

7. This love of God, which must be maintained by unremitting, devout meditation, “is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us,” so that he who glories in it must glory in the Lord. Forasmuch, therefore, as we feel ourselves to be poor and destitute of that love by which the law is most truly fulfilled, we ought not to expect and demand its riches from our own indigence, but to ask, seek, and knock in prayer, that He with whom is “the fountain of life” “may satisfy us abundantly with the fatness of His house, and make us drink of the river of His pleasures,” so that, watered and revived by its full flood, we may not only escape from being

swallowed up by sorrow, but may even “glory in tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed;”—not that we can do this of ourselves, but “because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us.”

8. It has been a pleasure to me to say, at least by a letter, these things which I could not say when you were present. I write them, not in reference to yourself, for you do not affect high things, but are contented with that which is lowly, but in reference to some who arrogate too much to the human will, imagining that, the law being given, the will is of its own strength sufficient to fulfil that law, though not assisted by any grace imparted by the Holy Spirit, in addition to instruction in the law; and by their reasonings they persuade the wretched and impoverished weakness of man to believe that it is not our duty to pray that we may not enter into temptation. Not that they dare openly to say this; but this is, whether they acknowledge it or not, an inevitable consequence of their doctrine. For wherefore is it said to us, “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation;” and wherefore was it that, when He was teaching us to pray, He prescribed, in accordance with this injunction, the use of the petition “lead us not into temptation,” if this be wholly in the power of the will of man, and does not require the help of divine grace in order to its accomplishment?

Why should I say more? Salute the brethren who are with you, and pray for us, that we may be saved with that salvation of which it is said, “They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” Pray, therefore, for us that we may be righteous,—an attainment wholly beyond a man’s reach, unless he know righteousness and be willing to practise it, but one which is immediately realized when he is perfectly willing; but this full consent of his will can never be in him unless he is healed and assisted by the grace of the Spirit.

LETTER CXLVI

(A.D. 413.)

To Pelagius, My Lord Greatly Beloved, and Brother Greatly Longed For, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

I thank you very much for your consideration in making me glad by a letter from you, and informing me of your welfare. May the Lord recompense you with those blessings by the possession of which you may be good for ever, and may live eternally with Him who is eternal, my lord greatly beloved, and brother greatly longed for. Although I do not acknowledge that anything in me deserves the eulogies which the letter of your Benevolence contains concerning me, nevertheless I cannot but be grateful for the goodwill therein manifested towards one so insignificant, while suggesting at the same time that you should rather pray for me that I may be made by the Lord such as you suppose me already to be.

(In another hand) May you enjoy safety and the Lord's favour, and be mindful of us!

LETTER CXLVIII

(A.D. 413.)

A Letter of Instructions (Commonitorium) to the Holy Brother Fortunatianus.

Chap. I

1. I write this to remind you of the request which I made when I was with you, that you would do me the kindness of visiting our brother, whom we mentioned in conversation, in order to ask him to forgive me, if he has construed as a harsh and unfriendly attack upon himself any statement made by me in a recent letter (which I do not regret having written), affirming that the eyes of this body cannot see God, and never shall see Him. I added immediately the reason why I made this statement, namely, to prevent men from believing that God Himself is corporeal and visible, as occupying a place determined by size and by distance from us (for the eye of this body can see nothing except under these conditions), and to prevent men from understanding the expression "face to face" as if God were limited within the members of a body. Therefore I do not regret having made this

statement, as a protest against our forming such unworthy and profane ideas concerning God as to think that He is not everywhere in His totality, but susceptible of division, and distributed through localities in space; for such are the only objects cognizable through these eyes of ours.

2. But if, while holding no such opinion as this concerning God, but believing Him to be a Spirit, unchangeable, incorporeal, present in His whole Being everywhere, any one thinks that the change on this body of ours (when from being a natural body it shall become a spiritual body) will be so great that in such a body it will be possible for us to see a spiritual substance not susceptible of division according to local distance or dimension, or even confined within the limits of bodily members, but everywhere present in its totality, I wish him to instruct me in this matter, if what he has discovered is true; but if in this opinion he is mistaken, it is far less objectionable to ascribe to the body something that does not belong to it, than to take away from God that which belongs to Him. And even if that opinion be correct, it will not contradict my words in that letter; for I said that the eyes of this body shall not see God, meaning that the eyes of this body of ours can see nothing but bodies which are separated from them by some interval of space, for if there be no interval, even bodies themselves cannot through the eyes be seen by us.

3. Moreover, if our bodies shall be changed into something so different from what they now are as to have eyes by means of which a substance shall be seen which is not diffused through space or confined within limits, having one part in one place, another in another, a smaller in a less space, a greater in a larger, but in its totality spiritually present everywhere,—these bodies shall be something very different from what they are at present, and shall no longer be themselves, and shall be not only freed from mortality, and corruption, and weight, but somehow or other shall be changed into the quality of the mind itself, if they shall be able to see in a manner which shall be then granted to the mind, but which is meanwhile not granted even to the mind itself. For if, when a man's habits are changed, we say he is not the man he was,—if, when our age is changed, we say that the body is not what it was, how much more may we say that the body shall not be the same when it shall have undergone so great a change as not only to have

immortal life, but also to have power to see Him who is invisible? Wherefore, if they shall thus see God, it is not with the eyes of this body that He shall be seen, because in this also it shall not be the same body, since it has been changed to so great an extent in capacity and power; and this opinion is, therefore, not contrary to the words of my letter. If, however, the body shall be changed only to this extent, that whereas now it is mortal, then it shall be immortal, and whereas now it weighs down the soul, then, devoid of weight, it shall be most ready for every motion, but unchanged in the faculty of seeing objects which are discerned by their dimensions and distances, it will still be utterly impossible for it to see a substance that is incorporeal and is in its totality present everywhere. Whether, therefore, the former or the latter supposition be correct, in both cases it remains true that the eyes of this body shall not see God; or if they are to see Him, they shall not be the eyes of this body, since after so great a change they shall be the eyes of a body very different from this.

4. But if this brother is able to propound anything better on this subject, I am ready to learn either from himself or from his instructor. If I were saying this ironically, I would also say that I am prepared to learn concerning God that He has a body having members, and is divisible in different localities in space; which I do not say, because I am not speaking ironically, and I am perfectly certain that God is not in any respect of such a nature; and I wrote that letter to prevent men from believing Him to be such. In that letter, being carried away by my zeal to warn against error, and writing more freely because I did not name the person whose views I assailed, I was too vehement and not sufficiently guarded, and did not consider as I ought to have done the respect which was due by one brother and bishop to the office of another: this I do not defend, but blame; this I condemn rather than excuse, and beg that it may be forgiven. I entreat him to remember our old friendship, and forget my recent offence. Let him do that which he is displeased with me for not having done; let him exhibit in granting pardon the gentleness which I have failed to show in writing that letter. I thus ask, through your kindly mediation, what I had resolved to ask of him in person if I had had an opportunity. I indeed made an effort to obtain an interview with him (a venerable man, worthy of being honoured by us all, writing to request it in my name), but he declined to come, suspecting, I suppose, that,

as very often happens among men, some plot was prepared against him. Of my absolute innocence of such guile, I beg you to do your utmost to assure him, which by seeing him personally you can more easily do. State to him with what deep and genuine grief I conversed with you about my having hurt his feelings. Let him know how far I am from slighting him, how much in him I fear God, and am mindful of our Head in whose body we are brethren. My reason for thinking it better not to go to the place in which he resides was, that we might not make ourselves a laughing-stock to those without the pale of the Church, thereby bringing grief to our friends and shame to ourselves. All this may be satisfactorily arranged through the good offices of your Holiness and Charity; nay, rather, the satisfactory issue is in the hands of Him who, by the faith which is His gift, dwells in your heart, whom I am confident that our brother does not refuse to honour in you, since he knows Christ experimentally as dwelling in himself.

5. I, at all events, do not know what I could do better in this case than ask pardon from the brother who has complained that he was wounded by the harshness of my letter. He will, I hope, do what he knows to be enjoined on him by Him who, speaking through the apostle, says: “Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as God in Christ has forgiven you;” “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us.” Walking in this love, let us inquire with oneness of heart, and, if possible, with yet greater diligence than hitherto, into the nature of the spiritual body which we shall have after our resurrection. “And if in anything we be diversely minded, God shall reveal even this unto us,” if we abide in Him. Now he who dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, for “God is love,”—whether as the fountain of love in its ineffable essence, or as the fountain whence He freely gives it to us by His Spirit. If, then, it can be shown that love can at any time become visible to our bodily eyes, then we grant that possibly God shall be so too; but if love never can become visible, much less can He who is Himself its Fountain or whatever other figurative name more excellent or more appropriate can be employed in speaking of One so great.

Chap. II

6. Some men of great gifts, and very learned in the Holy Scriptures, who have, when an opportunity presented itself, done much by their writings to benefit the Church and promote the instruction of believers, have said that the invisible God is seen in an invisible manner, that is, by that nature which in us also is invisible, namely, a pure mind or heart. The holy Ambrose, when speaking of Christ as the Word, says: “Jesus is seen not by the bodily, but by the spiritual eyes;” and shortly after he adds: “The Jews saw Him not, for their foolish heart was blinded,” showing in this way how Christ is seen. Also, when he was speaking of the Holy Spirit, he introduced the words of the Lord, saying: “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him;” and adds: “With good reason, therefore, did He show Himself in the body, since in the substance of His Godhead He is not seen. We have seen the Spirit, but in a bodily form: let us see the Father also; but since we cannot see Him, let us hear Him.” A little after he says: “Let us hear the Father, then, for the Father is invisible; but the Son also is invisible as regards His Godhead, for no man hath seen God at any time;’ and since the Son is God, He is certainly not seen in that in which He is God.”

7. The holy Jerome also says: “The eye of man cannot see God as He is in His own nature; and this is true not of man only; neither angels, nor thrones, nor powers, nor principalities, nor any name which is named can see God, for no creature can see its Creator.” By these words this very learned man sufficiently shows what his opinion was on this subject in regard not only to the present life, but also to that which is to come. For however much the eyes of our body may be changed for the better, they shall only be made equal to the eyes of the angels. Here, however, Jerome has affirmed that the nature of the Creator is invisible even to the angels, and to every creature without exception in heaven. If, however, a question arise on this point, and a doubt is expressed whether we shall not be superior to the angels, the mind of the Lord Himself is plain from the words which He uses in speaking of those who shall rise again to the kingdom: “They shall be equal unto the angels.” Whence the same holy Jerome thus expresses himself in another passage: “Man, therefore, cannot see the face of God but the angels of the least in the Church do always behold the face of God. And now we

see as in a mirror darkly, in a riddle, but then face to face; when from being men we shall advance to the rank of angels, and shall be able to say with the apostle, We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord;' although no creature can see the face of God, according to the essential properties of His nature, and He is, in these cases, seen by the mind, since He is believed to be invisible."

8. In these words of this man of God there are many things deserving our consideration: first, that in accordance with the very clear declaration of the Lord, he also is of opinion that we shall then see the face of God when we shall have advanced to the rank of angels, that is, shall be made equal to the angels, which doubtless shall be at the resurrection of the dead. Next, he has sufficiently explained by the testimony of the apostle, that the face is to be understood not of the outward but of the inward man, when it is said we shall "see face to face;" for the apostle was speaking of the face of the heart when he used the words quoted in this connection by Jerome: "We, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image." If any one doubt this, let him examine the passage again, and notice of what the apostle was speaking, namely, of the veil, which remains on the heart of every one in reading the Old Testament, until he pass over to Christ, that the veil may be removed. For he there says: "We also, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord,"—which face had not been unveiled in the Jews, of whom he says, "the veil is upon their heart,"—in order to show that the face unveiled in us when the veil is taken away is the face of the heart. In fine, lest any one, looking on these things with too little care and therefore failing to discern their meaning, should believe that God now is or shall hereafter be visible either to angels or to men, when they shall have been made equal to the angels, he has most plainly expressed his opinion by affirming that "no creature can see the face of God according to the essential properties of His nature," and that "He is, in these cases, seen by the mind, since He is believed to be invisible." From these statements he sufficiently showed that when God has been seen by men through the eyes of the body as if He had a body, He has not been seen as to the essential properties of his nature, in which He is seen by the mind, since He is believed to be invisible—invisible, that is to

say, to the bodily perception even of celestial beings, as Jerome had said above, of angels, and powers, and principalities. How much more, then, is He invisible to terrestrial beings!

9. Wherefore, in another place, Jerome says in still plainer terms, it is true not only of the divinity of the Father but equally of that of the Son and of that of the Holy Spirit, forming one nature in the Trinity, that it cannot be seen by the eyes of the flesh, but by the eyes of the mind, of which the Saviour Himself says: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” What could be more clear than this statement? For if he had merely said that it is impossible for the divinity of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit, to be seen by the eyes of the flesh, and had not added the words, “but only by the eyes of the mind,” it might perhaps have been said, that when the body shall have become spiritual it can no longer be called “flesh;” but by adding the words, “but only by the eyes of the mind,” he has excluded the vision of God from every sort of body. Lest, however, any one should suppose that he was speaking only of the present state of being, observe that he has subjoined also a testimony of the Lord, quoted with the design of defining the eyes of the mind of which he had spoken; in which testimony a promise is given not of present, but of future vision: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

10. The very blessed Athanasius, also, Bishop of Alexandria, when contending against the Arians, who affirm that the Father alone is invisible, but suppose the Son and the Holy Spirit to be visible, asserted the equal invisibility of all the Persons of the Trinity, proving it by testimonies from Holy Scripture, and arguing with all his wonted care in controversy, labouring earnestly to convince his opponents that God has never been seen, except through His assuming the form of a creature; and that in His essential Deity God is invisible, that is, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are invisible, except in so far as the Divine Persons can be known by the mind and the spirit. Gregory, also, a holy Eastern bishop, very plainly says that God, by nature invisible, had, on those occasions on which He was seen by the fathers (as by Moses, with whom He talked face to face), made it possible for Himself to be seen by assuming the form of something material and discernible. Our Ambrose says the same: “That the

Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, when visible, are seen under forms assumed by choice, not prescribed by the nature of Deity;” thus clearing the truth of the saying, “No man hath seen God at any time,” which is the word of the Lord Christ Himself, and of that other saying, “Whom no man hath seen, nor can see,” which is the word of the apostle, yea, rather, of Christ by His apostle; as well as vindicating the consistency of those passages of Scripture in which God is related to have been seen, because He is both invisible in the essential nature of His Deity, and able to become visible when He pleases, by assuming such created form as shall seem good to Him.

Chap. III

11. Moreover, if invisibility is a property of the divine nature, as incorruptibility is, that nature shall assuredly not undergo such a change in the future world as to cease to be invisible and become visible; because it shall never be possible for it to cease to be incorruptible and become corruptible, for it is in both attributes alike immutable. The apostle assuredly declared the excellence of the divine nature when he placed these two together, saying, “Now, unto the King of ages, invisible, incorruptible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever.” Wherefore I dare not make such a distinction as to say incorruptible, indeed, for ever and ever, but invisible—not for ever and ever, but only in this world. At the same time, since the testimonies which we are next to quote cannot be false, —”Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,” and, “We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is,”—we cannot deny that the sons of God shall see God; but they shall see Him as invisible things are seen, in the manner in which He who appeared in the flesh, visible to men, promised that He would manifest Himself to men, when, speaking in the presence of the disciples and seen by their eyes, He said: “I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” In what other manner are invisible things seen than by the eyes of the mind, concerning which, as the instruments of our vision of God, I have shortly before quoted the opinion of Jerome?

12. Hence, also, the statement of the Bishop of Milan, whom I have quoted before, who says that even in the resurrection it is not easy for any but those

who have a pure heart to see God, and therefore it is written, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” “How many,” he says, “had He already enumerated as blessed, and yet to them He had not promised the power of seeing God;” and he adds this inference, “If, therefore, the pure in heart shall see God, it is obvious that others shall not see Him;” and to prevent our understanding him to refer to those others of whom the Lord had said, “Blessed are the poor, blessed are the meek,” he immediately subjoined, “For those that are unworthy shall not see God,” intending it to be understood that the unworthy are those who, although they shall rise again, shall not be able to see God, since they shall rise to condemnation, because they refused to purify their hearts through that true faith which “worketh by love.” For this reason he goes on to say, “Whosoever has been unwilling to see God cannot see Him.” Then, since it occurred to him that, in a sense, even all wicked men have a desire to see God, he immediately explains that he used the words, “Whosoever has been unwilling to see God,” because the fact that the wicked do not desire to purify the heart, by which alone God can be seen, shows that they do not desire to see God, and follows up this statement with the words: “God is not seen in space, but in the pure heart; nor is He sought out by the eyes of the body; nor is He defined in form by our faculty of sight; nor grasped by the touch; His voice does not fall on the ear; nor are His goings perceived by the senses.” By these words the blessed Ambrose desired to teach the preparation which men ought to make if they wish to see God, viz. to purify the heart by the faith which worketh by love, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, from whom we have received the earnest by which we are taught to desire that vision.

Chap. IV

13. For as to the members of God which the Scripture frequently mentions, lest any one should suppose that we resemble God as to the form and figure of the body, the same Scripture speaks of God as having also wings, which we certainly have not. As then, when we hear of the “wings” of God, we understand the divine protection, so by the “hands” of God we ought to understand His working,—by His “feet,” His presence,—by His “eyes,” His power of seeing and knowing all things,—by His face, that whereby He reveals Himself to our knowledge; and I believe that any other such

expression used in Scripture is to be spiritually understood. In this opinion I am not singular, nor am I the first who has stated it. It is the opinion of all who by any spiritual interpretation of such language in Scripture resist those who are called Anthropomorphites. Not to occupy too much time by quoting largely from the writings of these men, I introduce here one extract from the pious Jerome, in order that our brother may know that, if anything moves him to maintain an opposite opinion, he is bound to carry on the debate with those who preceded me not less than with myself.

14. In the exposition which that most learned student of Scripture has given of the psalm in which occur the words, “Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? or He that formed the eye, doth He not behold?” he says, among other things: “This passage furnishes a strong argument against those who are Anthropomorphites, and say that God has members such as we have. For example, God is said by them to have eyes, because the eyes of the Lord behold all things:’ in the same, literal manner they take the statements that the hand of the Lord doeth all things, and that Adam heard the sound of the feet of the Lord walking in the garden,’ and thus they ascribe the infirmities of men to the majesty of God. But I affirm that God is all eye, all hand, all foot: all eye, because He sees all things; all hand, because He worketh all things; all foot, because He is everywhere present. See, therefore, what the Psalmist saith: He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, doth He not behold?’ He doth not say: He that planted the ear, has He not an ear? and He that formed the eye, has He not an eye?’ But what does he say? He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, doth He not behold?’ The Psalmist has ascribed to God the powers of seeing and hearing, but has not assigned members to Him.”

15. I have thought it my duty to quote all these passages from the writings of both Latin and Greek authors who, being in the Catholic Church before our time, have written commentaries on the divine oracles, in order that our brother, if he hold any different opinion from theirs, may know that it becomes him, laying aside all bitterness of controversy, and preserving or reviving fully the gentleness of brotherly love, to investigate with diligent

and calm consideration either what he must learn from others, or what others must learn from him. For the reasonings of any men whatsoever, even though they be Catholics, and of high reputation, are not to be treated by us in the same way as the canonical Scriptures are treated. We are at liberty, without doing any violence to the respect which these men deserve, to condemn and reject anything in their writings, if perchance we shall find that they have entertained opinions differing from that which others or we ourselves have, by the divine help, discovered to be the truth. I deal thus with the writings of others, and I wish my intelligent readers to deal thus with mine. In fine, I do by the help of the Lord most stedfastly believe, and, in so far as He enables me, I understand what is taught in all the statements which I have now quoted from the works of the holy and learned Ambrose, Jerome, Athanasius, Gregory, and in any other similar statements in other writers which I have read, but have for the sake of brevity forborne from quoting, namely, that God is not a body, that He has not the members of the human frame, that He is not divisible through space, and that He is unchangeably invisible, and appeared not in His essential nature and substance, but in such visible form as He pleased to those to whom he appeared on the occasions on which Scripture records that He was seen by holy persons with the eyes of the body.

Chap. V

16. As to the spiritual body which we shall have in the resurrection, how great a change for the better it is to undergo,—whether it shall become pure spirit, so that the whole man shall then be a spirit, or shall (as I rather think, but do not yet confidently maintain) become a spiritual body in such a way as to be called spiritual because of a certain ineffable facility in its movements, but at the same time to retain its material substance, which cannot live and feel by itself, but only through the spirit which uses it (for in our present state, in like manner, although the body is spoken of as animated [animal], the nature of the animating principle is different from that of the body), and whether, if the properties of the body then immortal and incorruptible shall remain unchanged, it shall then in some degree aid the spirit to see visible, i.e. material things, as at present we are unable to see anything of that kind except through the eyes of the body, or our spirit

shall then be able, even in its higher state, to know material things without the instrumentality of the body (for God Himself does not know these things through bodily senses), on these and on many other things which may perplex us in the discussion of this subject, I confess that I have not yet read anywhere anything which I would esteem sufficiently established to deserve to be either learned or taught by men.

17. And for this reason, if our brother will bear patiently any degree whatever of hesitation on my part, let us in the meantime, because of that which is written, “We shall see Him as He is,” prepare, so far as with the help of God Himself we are enabled, hearts purified for that vision. Let us at the same time inquire more calmly and carefully concerning the spiritual body, for it may be that God, if He know this to be useful to us, may condescend to show us some definite and clear view on the subject, in accordance with His written word. For if a more careful investigation shall result in the discovery that the change on the body shall be so great that it shall be able to see things that are invisible, such power imparted to the body will not, I think, deprive the mind of the power of seeing, and thus give the outward man a vision of God which is denied to the inward man; as if, in contradiction of the plain words of Scripture, “that God may be all and in all,” God were only beside the man—without him, and not in the man, in his inner being; or as if He, who is everywhere present in his entirety, unlimited in space, is so within man that He can be seen outside only by the outward man, but cannot be seen inside by the inward man. If such opinions are palpably absurd,—for, on the contrary, the saints shall be full of God; they shall not, remaining empty within, be surrounded outside by Him; nor shall they, through being blind within, fail to see Him of whom they are full, and, having eyes only for that which is outside of themselves, behold Him by whom they shall be surrounded,—if, I say, these things are absurd, it remains for us to rest meanwhile certainly assured as to the vision of God by the inward man. But if, by some wondrous change, the body shall be endowed with this power, another new faculty shall be added; the faculty formerly possessed shall not be taken away.

18. It is better, then, that we affirm that concerning which we have no doubt,—that God shall be seen by the inward man, which alone is able, in

our present state, to see that love in commendation of which the apostle says, “God is love;” the inward man, which alone is able to see “peace and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.” For no fleshly eye now sees love, peace, and holiness, and such things; yet all of them are seen, so far as they can be seen, by the eye of the mind, and the purer it is the more clearly it sees; so that we may, without hesitation, believe that we shall see God, whether we succeed or fail in our investigations as to the nature of our future body—although, at the same time, we hold it to be certain that the body shall rise again, immortal and incorruptible, because on this we have the plainest and strongest testimony of Holy Scripture. If, however, our brother affirm now that he has arrived at certain knowledge as to that spiritual body, in regard to which I am only inquiring, he will have just cause to be displeased with me if I shall refuse to listen calmly to his instructions, provided only that he also listen calmly to my questions. Now, however, I entreat you, for Christ’s sake, to obtain his forgiveness for me for that harshness in my letter, by which, as I have learned, he was, not without cause, offended; and may you, by God’s help, cheer my spirit by your answer.

LETTER CL

(A.D. 413.)

To Proba and Juliana, Ladles Most Worthy of Honour, Daughters Justly Famous and Most Distinguished, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

You have filled our heart with a joy singularly pleasant, because of the love we bear to you, and singularly acceptable, because of the promptitude with which the tidings came to us. For while the consecration of the daughter of your house to a life of virginity is being published by most busy fame in all places where you are known, and that is everywhere, you have outstripped its flight by more sure and reliable information in a letter from yourselves, and have made us rejoice in certain knowledge before we had time to be questioning the truth of any report concerning an event so blessed and remarkable. Who can declare in words, or expound with adequate praises, how incomparably greater is the glory and advantage gained by your family in giving to Christ women consecrated to His service, than in giving to the world men called to the honours of the consulship? For if it be a great and noble thing to leave the mark of an honoured name upon the revolving ages of this world, how much greater and nobler is it to rise above it by unsullied chastity both of heart and of body! Let this maiden, therefore, illustrious in her pedigree, yet more illustrious in her piety, find greater joy in obtaining, through espousals to her divine Lord, a pre-eminent glory in heaven, than she could have had in becoming, through espousal to a human consort, the mother of a line of illustrious men. This daughter of the house of Anicius has acted the more magnanimous part, in choosing rather to bring a blessing on that noble family by forbearing from marriage, than to increase the number of its descendants, preferring to be already, in the purity of her body, like unto the angels, rather than to increase by the fruit of her body the number of mortals. For this is a richer and more fruitful condition of blessedness, not to have a pregnant womb, but to develop the soul’s lofty capacities; not to have the breasts flowing with milk, but to have the heart pure as snow; to travail not with the earthly in the pangs of labour, but with the heavenly in persevering prayer. May it be yours, my daughters, most worthy of the honour due to your rank, to enjoy in her that which was lacking to yourselves; may she be stedfast to the end, abiding in the conjugal union that has no end. May many handmaidens follow the example of their mistress; may those who are of humble rank imitate this high-born lady, and may those who possess eminence in this uncertain world aspire to that worthier eminence which humility has given to her. Let the virgins who covet the glory of the Anician family be ambitious rather to emulate its piety; for the former lies beyond their reach, however eagerly they may desire it, but the latter shall be at once in their possession if they seek it with full desire. May the right hand of the Most High protect you, giving you safety and greater happiness, ladies most worthy of honour, and most excellent daughters! In the love of the Lord, and with all becoming respect, we salute the children of your Holiness, and above all the one who is above the rest in holiness. We have received with very great pleasure the gift sent as a souvenir of her taking the veil.

LETTER CLI

(A.D. 413 OR 414.)

To Caecilianus, My Lord Justly Renowned, and Son Most Worthy of the Honour Due by Me to His Rank, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. The remonstrance which you have addressed to me in your letter is gratifying to me in proportion to the love which it manifests. If, therefore, I attempt to clear myself from blame in regard to my silence, the thing which I must attempt is to show that you had no just cause for being displeased with me. But since nothing gives me greater pleasure than that you condescended to take offence at my silence, which I had supposed to be a matter of no moment in the midst of your many cares, I will be pleading against myself if I endeavour thus to clear myself from blame. For if you were wrong in being displeased at me for not writing to you, this must be because of your having such a poor opinion of me that you are absolutely indifferent whether I speak or remain silent. Nay, the displeasure which arises from your being distressed by my silence is not displeasure. I therefore feel not so much grief at my withholding, as joy at your desiring a communication from me. For it is an honour, not a vexation, to me, that I should have a place in the remembrance of an old friend, and a man who is (though you may not say it, yet it is our duty to acknowledge it) of such eminent worth and greatness, holding a position in a foreign country, and burdened with public responsibilities. Pardon me, then, for expressing my gratitude that you did not regard me as a person whose silence it was beneath you to resent. For now I am persuaded, through that benevolence which distinguishes you more even than your high rank, that in the midst of your numerous and important occupations, not of a private nature, but public, involving the interests of all, a letter from me may be esteemed by you not burdensome, but welcome.

2. For when I had received the letter of the holy father Innocentius, venerable for his eminent merits, which was sent to me by the brethren, and which was, by manifest tokens, shown to have been forwarded to me from your Excellency, I formed the opinion that the reason why no letter from you accompanied it was that, being engrossed with more important affairs, you were unwilling to be embarrassed by the trouble of correspondence. For it seemed certainly not unreasonable to expect, that when you condescended to send me the writings of a holy man, I should receive along

with them some writings of your own. I had therefore made up my mind not to trouble you with a letter from me unless it was necessary for the purpose of commending to you some one to whom I could not refuse the service of my intercession, a favour which it is our custom to grant to all,—a custom which, though involving much trouble, is not to be altogether condemned. I accordingly did this recommending to your kindness a friend of mine, from whom I have now received a letter, expressing his thanks, to which I add my own, for your service.

3. If, however, I had formed any unfavourable impression concerning you, especially in regard to the matter of which, though it was not expressly named, a subtle odour, so to speak, pervaded your whole letter, far would it have been from me to write to you any such note in order to ask any favour for myself or another. In that case I would either have been silent, waiting for a time when I would have an opportunity of seeing you personally; or if I considered it my duty to write on the subject, I would have given it the first place in my letter, and would have treated it in such a way as to make it almost impossible for you to show displeasure. For when, notwithstanding remonstrances which, under an anxiety shared by you with us, we addressed to him,—beseeching him vehemently, but in vain, to forbear from piercing our hearts with so great sorrow, and mortally wounding his own conscience by such grievous sin,—he perpetrated his impious, savage, and perfidious crime, I left Carthage immediately and secretly, for this reason, lest the numerous and influential persons who in terror sought refuge from his sword within the church should, imagining that my presence could be of use to them, detain me by their passionate weeping and groaning, so that I would be compelled, in order to secure the preservation of their bodies, to supplicate a favour from one whom it was impossible for me to rebuke in order to the welfare of his soul, with the severity which his crime deserved. As for their personal safety, I knew that the walls of the church sufficed for their protection. But for myself [if I remained to intercede with him on their behalf], it could only be in circumstances painfully embarrassing, for he would not have tolerated my acting towards him as I was bound to do, and I would have been compelled, moreover, to act in a way which would have been unbecoming in me. At the same time, I was truly sorry for the misfortune of my venerable co-bishop, the ruler of such an important

church, who was expected to regard it as his duty, even after this man had been guilty of such infamous treachery, to treat him with submissive deference, in order that the lives of others might be spared. I confess the reason of my departure: it was that I would have been unable to meet with the necessary fortitude so great a calamity.

4. The same considerations which made me then depart would have been the cause of my remaining silent to you, if I believed you to have used your influence with him to avenge such wicked injuries. This is believed in regard to you only by those who do not know how, and how frequently, and in what terms, you expressed your mind to us, when we were with anxious solicitude doing our utmost to secure that, because he was so intimate with you, and you were so constantly visiting him, and so often conversing alone with him, he should all the more carefully guard your good name, and save you from being supposed to have used no endeavour to prevent him from inflicting that mode of death on persons said to be your enemies. This, indeed, is not believed of you by me, nor by my brethren who heard you in conversation, and who saw, both in your words and in every gesture, the evidences of your heart's good-will to those who were put to death. But, I beseech you, forgive those by whom it is believed; for they are men, and in the minds of men there are such lurking places and such depths that, although all suspicious persons deserved to be blamed, they think themselves that they even deserve praise for their prudence. There existed reasons for the conduct imputed to you: we knew that you had suffered very grievous injury from one of those whom he had suddenly ordered to be arrested. His brother, also, in whose person especially he persecuted the Church, was said to have answered you in terms implying as it were some harsh accusation. Both were thought to be looked upon by you with suspicion. When they, after being summoned, had gone away, you still remained in the place, and were engaged, it was said, in conversation of a more private kind than usual with him [Marinas], and then they were suddenly ordered to be detained. Men talked much of your friendship with him as not recent, but of long standing. The closeness of your intimacy, and the frequency of your private conversations with him, confirmed this report. His power was at that time great. The ease with which false accusations could be made against any one was notorious. It was not a difficult thing to

find some person who would upon the promise of his own safety make any statements which he might order to be made. All things at that time made it easy for any man to be brought to death without any examination on the part of him who ordered the execution, if even one witness brought forward what seemed to be an odious and, at the same time, credible accusation.

5. Meanwhile, as it was rumored that the power of the Church might deliver them, we were mocked with false promises, so that not only with the consent, but, as it seemed, at the urgent desire of Marinus, a bishop was sent to the Imperial Court to intercede for them, the promise having been brought to the ear of the bishops that, until some pleading should be heard there on behalf of the prisoners, no examination of their case would be proceeded with. At last, on the day before they were put to death, your Excellency came to us; you gave us encouragement such as you had never before given, that he might grant their lives as a favour to you before your departure [for Rome], because you had solemnly and prudently said to him that all his condescension in admitting you so constantly to familiar and private conversation would bring to you disgrace rather than distinction, and would have the effect, after the death of these men had been a subject of conversation and consultation between you, of making every one say that there could be no doubt what was to be the issue of these conferences. When you informed us that you had said these things to him, you stretched out your hand as you spoke towards the place at which the sacraments of believers are celebrated, and while we listened in amazement, you confirmed the statement that you had used these words with an oath so solemn, that not only then, but even now after the dreadful and unexpected death of the prisoners, it seems to me, recalling to memory your whole demeanour, that it would be an aggravated insult if I were to believe any evil concerning you. You said, moreover, that he was so moved by these words of yours, that he purposed to give the lives of these men to you as a present, in token of friendship, before you set out on your journey.

6. Wherefore, I solemnly assure your Grace, that when on the following day (the day on which the infamous crime thus conceived was consummated) tidings were unexpectedly brought to us that they had been led forth from prison to stand before him as their judge, although we were in some alarm,

nevertheless, after reflecting on what you had said to us on the preceding day, and on the fact that the day following was the anniversary of the blessed Cyprian, I supposed that he had even purposely selected a day on which he might not only grant your request, but also might aspire, by giving sudden joy to the whole Church of Christ, to emulate the virtue of so great a martyr, proving himself truly greater in using clemency in sparing life than in possessing power to inflict death. Such were my thoughts, when lo! a messenger burst into our presence, from whom, before we could ask him how their trial was being conducted, we learned that they had been beheaded. For care had been taken to arrange, as the scene of execution, a place immediately adjoining, not appointed for the punishment of criminals, but used for the recreation of the citizens, on which spot he had ordered some to be executed a few days previously, with the design (as is with good reason believed) of avoiding the odium of applying it to this purpose for the first time in the case of these men, whom he hoped to be able to snatch secretly from the Church interposing on their behalf, by thus not only ordering their immediate execution, but also ordering it to take place on the nearest available spot. He therefore made it sufficiently manifest that he did not fear to cause cruel pain to that Mother whose intervention he feared, namely, to the holy Church, among whose faithful children, baptized in her bosom, we knew that he himself was reckoned. Therefore, after the issue of so great a plot, in which so much care had been used in negotiating with us that we were made, even by you also, though unwittingly, almost free from solicitude, and almost sure of their safety on the preceding day, who, judging of the circumstances in the way in which ordinary men would judge of them, could avoid regarding it as beyond question that by you also words were given to us and life taken from them? Pardon, then, as I have said, those who believe these things against you, although we do not believe them, O excellent man.

7. Far be it, however, from my heart and from my practice, however defective in many things, to intercede with you for any one, or ask a favour from you for any one, if I believed you to be responsible for this monstrous wrong, this villanous cruelty. But I frankly confess to you, that if you continue, even after that event, to be on the same footing of intimate friendship with him as you were formerly, you must excuse my claiming

freedom to be grieved; for by this you would compel us to believe much which we would rather disbelieve. It is, however, fitting that, as I do not believe you guilty of the other things laid by some to your charge, I should not believe this either. This friend of yours has, in the unexpected triumph of sudden accession to power, done violence not less to your reputation than to these men's lives. Nor is it my design in this statement to kindle hatred in your mind; in so doing I would belie my own feelings and profession. But I exhort you to a more faithful exercise of love towards him. For the man who so deals with the wicked as to make them repent of their evil doings, is one who knows how to be angry with them, and yet consult for their good; for as bad companions hinder men's welfare by compliance, so good friends help them by opposition to their evil ways. The same weapon with which, in the proud abuse of power, he took away the lives of others, inflicted a much deeper and more serious wound on his own soul; and if he do not remedy this by repentance, using wisely the long-suffering of God, he will be compelled to find it out and feel it when this life is ended. Often, moreover, God in His wisdom permits the life of good men in this world to be taken from them by the wicked, that He may prevent men from believing that to suffer such things is in their case a calamity. For what harm can result from the death of the body to men who are destined to die some time? Or what do those who fear death accomplish by their care but a short postponement of the time at which they die? All the evil to which mortal men are liable comes not from death but from life; and if in dying they have the soul sustained by Christian grace, death is to them not the night of darkness in which a good life ends, but the dawn in which a better life begins.

8. The life and conversation of the elder of the two brothers appeared indeed more conformed to this world than to Christ, although he also had after his marriage corrected to a great extent the faults of his early irreligious years. It may, nevertheless, have been not otherwise than in mercy that our merciful God appointed him to be the companion of his brother in death. But as to that younger brother, he lived religiously, and was eminent as a Christian both in heart and in practice. The report that he would approve himself such when commissioned to serve the Church came before him to Africa, and this good report followed him still when he had

come. In his conduct, what innocence! in his friendship, what constancy! in his study of Christian truth, what zeal! in his religion, what sincerity! in his domestic life, what purity! in his official duties, what integrity! What patience be showed to enemies, what affability to friends, what humility to the pious, what charity to all men! How great his promptitude in granting, and his bashfulness in asking a favour! How genuine his satisfaction in the good deeds, and his sorrow over the faults of men! What spotless honour, noble grace, and scrupulous piety shone in him! In rendering assistance, how compassionate he was! in forgiving injuries, how generous! in prayer, how confiding! When well informed on any subject, with what modesty he was wont to communicate useful knowledge! when conscious of ignorance, with what diligence did he endeavour by investigation to overcome the disadvantage! How singular was his contempt for the things of time! how ardent his hope and his desires in regard to the blessings that are eternal! He would have relinquished all secular business and girded himself with the insignia of the Christian warfare, had he not been prevented by his having entered into the married state; for he had not begun to desire better things before the time when, being already involved in these bonds, it would have been, notwithstanding their inferiority, an unlawful thing for him to rend them asunder.

9. One day when they were confined in prison together, his brother said to him: “If I suffer these things as the just punishment of my sins, what ill desert has brought you to the same fate, for we know that your life was most strictly and earnestly Christian?” He replied: “Supposing even that your testimony as to my life were true, do you think that God is bestowing a small favour upon me in appointing that my sins be punished in these sufferings, even though they should end in death, instead of being reserved to meet me in the judgment which is to come?” These words might perhaps lead some to suppose that he was conscious of some secret immoralities. I shall therefore mention what it pleased the Lord God to appoint that I should hear from his lips, and know assuredly, to my own great consolation. Being anxious about this very thing, as human nature is liable to fall into such wickedness, I asked him, when I was alone with him after he was confined in prison, if there was no sin for which he ought to seek reconciliation with God by some more severe and special penance. With

characteristic modesty he blushed at the mere mention of my suspicion, groundless though it was, but thanked me most warmly for the warning, and with a grave, modest smile he seized with both hands my right hand, and said: "I swear by the sacraments which are dispensed to me by this hand, that I have neither before nor since my marriage been guilty of immoral self-indulgence."

10. What evil, then, was brought to him by death? Nay, rather, was it not the occasion of the greatest possible good to him, because, in the possession of these gifts, he departed from this life to Christ, in whom alone they are really possessed? I would not mention these things in addressing you if I believed that you would be offended by my praising him. But assuredly, as I do not believe this, neither do I believe that his being put to death was even according to your desire or wish, much less that it was done at your request. You, therefore, with a sincerity proportioned to your innocence in this matter, entertain, doubtless, along with us, the opinion that the man who put him to death inflicted more cruel wrong on his own soul than on the sufferer's body, when, in despite of us, in despite of his own promises, in despite of so many supplications and warnings from you, and finally, in despite of the Church of Christ (and in her of Christ Himself), he consummated his base machinations by putting this man to death. Is the high position of the one worthy to be compared with the lot of the other, prisoner though he was, when the man of power was maddened by anger, while the sufferer in his prison was filled with joy? There is nothing in all the dungeons of this world, nay, not even in hell itself, to surpass the dreadful doom of darkness to which a villian is consigned by remorse of conscience. Even to yourself, what evil did he do? He did not destroy your innocence, although he grievously injured your reputation; which, nevertheless, remains uninjured, both in the estimation of those who know you better than we do, and in our estimation, in whose presence the anxiety which, like us, you felt for the prevention of such a monstrous crime, was expressed with so much visible agitation that we could almost see with our eyes the invisible workings of your heart. Whatever harm, therefore, he has done, he has done to himself alone; he has pierced through his own soul, his own life, his own conscience; in fine, he has by that blind deed of cruelty destroyed even his own good name, a thing which the very worst of men are

usually fain to preserve. For to all good men he is odious in proportion to his efforts to obtain, or his satisfaction in receiving, the approbation of the wicked.

11. Could anything prove more clearly that he was not under the necessity which he pretended—alleging that he did this evil action as a good man who had no alternative—than the fact that the proceeding was disapproved of by the person whose orders he dared to plead as his excuse? The pious deacon by whose hand we send this was himself associated with the bishop whom we had sent to intercede for them; let him, therefore, relate to your Excellency how it seemed good to the Emperor not even to give a formal pardon, lest by this the stigma of a crime should be in some degree attached to them, but a mere notice commanding them to be immediately set at liberty from all further annoyance. By a purely gratuitous act of cruelty, and under no pressure of necessity (although, perchance, there may have been other causes which we suspect, but which it is unnecessary to state in writing), he did outrageously vex the Church,—the Church to whose sheltering bosom his brother once, in fear of death, had fled, to be requited for protecting his life by finding him active in counselling the perpetration of this crime,—the Church in which he himself had once, when under the displeasure of an offended patron, sought an asylum which could not be denied to him. If you love this man, show your detestation of his crime; if you do not wish him to come into everlasting punishment, shrink with horror from his society. You are bound to take measures of this kind, both for your own good name and for his life; for he who loves in this man what God hates, is, in truth, hating not only this man but also his own soul.

12. These things being so, I know your benevolence too well to believe that you were the author of this crime, or an accomplice in its commission, or that with malicious cruelty you deceived us: far be such conduct from your life and conversation! At the same time, I would not wish your friendship to be of such a character as tends to make him, to his own destruction, glory in his crime, and to confirm the suspicions naturally cherished by men concerning you; but rather let it be such as to move him to penitence, and to penitence corresponding in quality and in measure to the remedy demanded for the healing of such dreadful wounds. For the more you are an enemy to

his crimes, the more really will you be a friend to the man himself. It will be interesting to us to learn, by your Excellency’s reply to this letter, where you were on the day on which the crime was committed, how you received the tidings, and what you did thereafter, and what you said to him and heard from him when you next saw him; for I have not been able to hear anything of you in connection with this affair since my sudden departure on the succeeding day.

13. As to the remark in your letter that you are now compelled to believe that I refuse to visit Carthage for fear lest you should be seen there by me, you rather compel me by these words to state explicitly the reasons of my absence. One reason is, that the labour which I am obliged to undergo in that city, and which I could not describe without adding as much again to the length of this letter, is more than I am able now to bear, since, in addition to my infirmities peculiar to myself, which are known to all my more intimate friends, I am burdened with an infirmity common to the human family, namely, the weakness of old age. The other reason is, that, in so far as leisure is granted me from the work imperatively demanded by the Church, which my office specially binds me to serve, I have resolved to devote the time entirely, if the Lord will, to the labour of studies pertaining to ecclesiastical learning; in doing which I think that I may, if it please the mercy of God, be of some service even to future generations.

14. There is, indeed, one thing in you, since you wish to hear the truth, which causes me very great distress: it is that, although qualified by age, as well as by life and character, to do otherwise, you still prefer to be a catechumen; as if it were not possible for believers, by making progress in Christian faith and well-doing, to become so much the more faithful and useful in the administration of public business. For surely the promotion of the welfare of men is the one great end of all your great cares and labours. And, indeed, if this were not to be the issue of your public services, it would be better for you even to sleep both day and night than to sacrifice your rest in order to do work which can contribute nothing to the advantage of your fellow-men. Nor do I entertain the slightest doubt that your Excellency . . .

(Caetera desunt.)

LETTER CLVIII

(A.D. 414.)

To My Lord Augustin, My Brother Partner in the Sacerdotal Office, Most Sincerely Loved, with Profound Respect, and to the Brethren Who are with Him, Evodius and the Brethren Who are with Him Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. I urgently beg you to send the reply due to my last letter. Indeed, I would have preferred first to learn what I then asked, and afterwards to put the questions which I now submit to you. Give me your attention while I relate an event in which you will kindly take an interest, and which has made me impatient to lose no time in acquiring, if possible in this life, the knowledge which I desired. I had a certain youth as a clerk, a son of presbyter Armenus of Melonita, whom, by my humble instrumentality, God rescued when he was becoming already immersed in secular affairs, for he was employed as a shorthand writer by the proconsul's solicitor. He was then, indeed, as boys usually are, prompt and somewhat restless, but as he grew older (for his death occurred in his twenty-second year) a gravity of deportment and circumspect probity of life so adorned him that it is a pleasure to dwell upon his memory. He was, moreover, a clever stenographer, and indefatigable in writing: he had begun also to be earnest in reading, so that he even urged me to do more than my indolence would have chosen, in order to spend hours of the night in reading, for he read aloud to me for a time every night after all was still; and in reading, he would not pass over any sentence unless he understood it, and would go over it a third or even a fourth time, and not leave it until what he wished to know was made clear. I had begun to regard him not as a mere boy and clerk, but as a comparatively intimate and pleasant friend, for his conversation gave me much delight.

2. He desired also to "depart and to be with Christ," a desire which has been fulfilled. For he was ill for sixteen days in his father's house, and by strength of memory he continually repeated portions of Scripture throughout almost the whole time of his illness. But when he was very near to the end of his life, he sang so as to be heard by all, "My soul longeth for and hastens unto the courts of the Lord," after which he sang again, "Thou

hast anointed my head with oil, and beautiful is Thy cup, overpowering my senses with delight!” In these things he was wholly occupied; in the consolation yielded by them he found satisfaction. At the last, when dissolution was just coming upon him, he began to make the sign of the cross on his forehead, and in finishing this his hand was moving down to his mouth, which also he wished to mark with the same sign, but the inward man (which had been truly renewed day by day) had, ere this was done, forsaken the tabernacle of clay. To myself there has been given so great an ecstasy of joy, that I think that after leaving his own body he has entered into my spirit, and is there imparting to me a certain fulness of light from his presence, for I am conscious of a joy beyond all measure through his deliverance and safety—indeed it is ineffable. For I felt no small anxiety on his account, being afraid of the dangers peculiar to his years. For I was at pains to inquire of himself whether perchance he had been defiled by intercourse with woman; he solemnly assured us that he was free from this stain, by which declaration our joy was still more increased. So he died. We honored his memory by suitable obsequies, such as were due to one so excellent, for we continued during three days to praise the Lord with hymns at his grave, and on the third day we offered the sacraments of redemption.

3. Behold, however, two days thereafter, a certain respectable widow from Figentes, an handmaid from God, who said that she had been twelve years in widowhood, saw the following vision in a dream. She saw a certain deacon, who had died four years ago, preparing a palace, with the assistance of servants and handmaids of God (virgins and widows). It was being so much adorned that the place was refulgent with splendor, and appeared to be wholly made of silver. On her inquiring eagerly for whom this palace was being prepared, the deacon aforesaid answered, “For the young man, the son of the presbyter, who was cut off yesterday.” There appeared in the same palace an old man robed in white, who gave orders to two others, also dressed in white, to go, and having raised the body from the grave, to carry it up with them to heaven. And she added, that so soon as the body had been taken up from the grave and carried to heaven, there sprang from the same sepulchre branches of the rose, called from its folded blossoms the virgin rose.

4. I have narrated the event: listen now, if you please, to my question, and teach me what I ask, for the departure of that young man's soul forces such questions from me. While we are in the body, we have an inward faculty of perception which is alert in proportion to the activity of our attention, and is more wakeful and eager the more earnestly attentive we become: and it seems to us probable that even in its highest activity it is retarded by the encumbrance of the body, for who can fully describe all that the mind suffers through the body! In the midst of the perturbation and annoyance which come from the suggestions, temptations, necessities, and varied afflictions of which the body is the cause, the mind does not surrender its strength, it resists and conquers. Sometimes it is defeated; nevertheless, mindful of what is its own nature, it becomes, under the stimulating influence of such labours, more active and more wary, and breaks through the meshes of wickedness, and so makes its way to better things. Your Holiness will kindly understand what I mean to say. Therefore, while we are in this life, we are hindered by such deficiencies, and are nevertheless, as it is written, "more than conquerors through Him that loved us." When we go forth from this body, and escape from every burden, and from sin, with its incessant activity, what are we?

5. In the first place, I ask whether there may not be some kind of body (formed, perchance, of one of the four elements, either air or ether) which does not depart from the incorporeal principle, that is, the substance properly called the soul, when it forsakes this earthly body. For as the soul is in its nature incorporeal, if it be absolutely disembodied by death there is now one soul of all that have left this world. And in that case where would the rich man, who was clothed in purple, and Lazarus, who was full of sores, now be? How, moreover, could they be distinguished according to their respective deserts, so that the one should have suffering and the other have joy, if there were only a single soul made by the combination of all disembodied souls, unless, of course, these things are to be understood in a figurative sense? Be that as it may, there is no question that souls which are held in definite places (as that rich man was in the flame, and that poor man was in Abraham's bosom) are held in bodies. If there are distinct places, there are bodies, and in these bodies the souls reside; and even although the punishments and rewards are experienced in the conscience, the soul which

experiences them is nevertheless in a body. Whatever is the nature of that one soul made up of many souls, it must be possible for it in its unbroken unity to be both grieved and made glad at the same moment, if it is to approve itself to be really a substance consisting of many souls gathered into one. If, however, this soul is called one only in the same way as the incorporeal mind is called one, although it has in it memory, and will, and intellect, and if it be alleged that all these are separate incorporeal causes or powers and have their several distinctive offices and work without one impeding another in any way, I think this might be in some measure answered by saying that it must be also possible for some of the souls to be under punishment and some of the sours to enjoy rewards simultaneously in this one substance consisting of many souls gathered into One.

6. Or if this be not so [that is, if there be no such body remaining still in union with the incorporeal principle after it quits this earthly body], what is there to hinder each soul from having, when separated from the solid body which it here inhabits, another body, so that the soul always animates a body of some kind? or in what body does it pass to any region, if such there be, to which necessity compels it to go? For the angels themselves, if they were not numbered by bodies of some kind which they have, could not be called many, as they are by the Truth Himself when He said in the gospel, “I could pray the Father, and He will presently give me twelve legions of angels.” Again it is certain that Samuel was seen in the body when he was raised at the request of Saul; and as to Moses, whose body was buried, it is plain from the gospel narrative that he came in the body to the Lord on the mountain to which He and His disciples had retired. In the Apocrypha, and in the Mysteries of Moses, a writing which is wholly devoid of authority, it is indeed said that, at the time when he ascended the mount to die, through the power which his body possessed, there was one body which was committed to the earth, and another which was joined to the angel who accompanied him; but I do not feel myself called upon to give to a sentence in apocryphal writings a preference over the definite statements quoted above. We must therefore give attention to this, and search out, by the help either of the authority of revelation or of the light of reason, the matter about which we are inquiring. But it is alleged that the future resurrection of the body is a proof that the soul was after death absolutely without a body.

This is not, however, an unanswerable objection, for the angels, who are like our souls invisible, have at times desired to appear in bodily forms and be seen, and (whatever might be the form of body worthy to be assumed by these spirits) they have appeared, for example, to Abraham and to Tobias. Therefore it is quite possible that the resurrection of the body may, as we assuredly believe, take place, and yet that the soul may be reunited to it without its being found to have been at any moment wholly devoid of some kind of body. Now the body which the soul here occupies consists of the four elements, of which one, namely heat, seems to depart from this body at the same moment as the soul. For there remains after death that which is made of earth, moisture also is not wanting to the body, nor is the element of cold matter gone; heat alone has fled, which perhaps the soul takes along with it if it migrates from place to place. This is all that I say meanwhile concerning the body.

7. It seems to me also, that if the soul while occupying the living body is capable, as I have said, of strenuous mental application, how much more unencumbered, active, vigorous, earnest, resolute, and persevering will it be, how much enlarged in capacity and improved in character, if it has while in this body learned to relish virtue! For after laying aside this body, or rather, after having this cloud swept away, the soul will have come to be free from all disturbing influences, enjoying tranquillity and exempt from temptation, seeing whatever it has longed for, and embracing what it has loved. Then, also, it will be capable of remembering and recognising friends, both those who went before it from this world, and those whom it left here below. Perhaps this may be true. I know not, but I desire to learn. But it would greatly distress me to think that the soul after death passes into a state of torpor, being as it were buried, just as it is during sleep while it is in the body, living only in hope, but having nothing and knowing nothing, especially if in its sleep it be not even stirred by any dreams. This notion causes me very great horror, and seems to indicate that the life of the soul is extinguished at death.

8. This also I would ask: Supposing that the soul be discovered to have such a body as we speak of, does that body lack any of the senses? Of course, if there cannot be imposed upon it any necessity for smelling, tasting, or

touching, as I suppose will be the case, these senses will be wanting; but I hesitate as to the senses of sight and hearing. For are not devils said to hear (not, indeed, in all the persons whom they harass, for in regard to these there is a question), even when they appear in bodies of their own? And as to the faculty of sight, how can they pass from one place to another if they have a body but are void of the power of seeing, so as to guide its motions? Do you think that this is not the case with human souls when they go forth from the body,—that they have still a body of some kind, and are not deprived of some at least of the senses proper to this body? Else how can we explain the fact that very many dead persons have been observed by day, or by persons awake and walking abroad during the night, to pass into houses just as they were wont to do in their lifetime? This I have heard not once, but often; and I have also heard it said that in places in which dead bodies are interred, and especially in churches, there are commotions and prayers which are heard for the most part at a certain time of the night. This I remember hearing from more than one: for a certain holy presbyter was an eye-witness of such an apparition, having observed a multitude of such phantoms issuing from the baptistery in bodies full of light, after which he heard their prayers in the midst of the church itself. All such things are either true, and therefore helpful to the inquiry which we are now making, or are mere fables, in which case the fact of their invention is wonderful; nevertheless I would desire to get some information from the fact that they come and visit men, and are seen otherwise than in dreams.

9. These dreams suggest another question. I do not at this moment concern myself about the mere creations of fancy, which are formed by the emotions of the uneducated. I speak of visitations in sleep, such as the apparition to Joseph in a dream, in the manner experienced in most cases of the kind. In the same manner, therefore, our own friends also who have departed this life before us sometimes come and appear to us in dreams, and speak to us. For I myself remember that Profuturus, and Privatus, and Servilius, holy men who within my recollection were removed by death from our monastery, spoke to me, and that the events of which they spoke came to pass according to their words. Or if it be some other higher spirit that assumes their form and visits our minds, I leave this to the all-seeing eye of Him before whom everything from the highest to the lowest is uncovered.

If, therefore, the Lord be pleased to speak through reason to your Holiness on all these questions, I beg you to be so kind as make me partaker of the knowledge which you have received. There is another thing which I have resolved not to omit mentioning, for perhaps it bears upon the matter now under investigation:

10. This same youth, in connection with whom these questions are brought forward, departed this life after having received what may be called a summons at the time when he was dying. For one who had been a companion of his as a student, and reader, and shorthand writer to my dictation, who had died eight months before, was seen by a person in a dream coming towards him. When he was asked by the person who then distinctly saw him why he had come, he said, “I have come to take this friend away;” and so it proved. For in the house itself, also, there appeared to a certain old man, who was almost awake, a man bearing in his hand a laurel branch on which something was written. Nay, more, when this one was seen, it is further reported that after the death of the young man, his father the presbyter had begun to reside along with the aged Theasius in the monastery, in order to find consolation there, but lo! on the third day after his death, the young man is seen entering the monastery, and is asked by one of the brethren in a dream of some kind whether he knew himself to be dead. He replied that he knew he was. The other asked whether he had been welcomed by God. This also he answered with great expressions of joy. And when questioned as to the reason why he had come, he answered, “I have been sent to summon my father.” The person to whom these things were shown awakes, and relates what had passed. It comes to the ear of Bishop Theasius. He, being alarmed, sharply admonished the person who told him, lest the matter should come, as it might easily do, to the ear of the presbyter himself, and he should be disturbed by such tidings. But why prolong the narration? Within about four days from this visitation he was saying (for he had suffered from a moderate feverishness) that he was now out of danger, and that the physician had given up attending him, having assured him that there was no cause whatever for anxiety; but that very day this presbyter expired after he had lain down on his couch. Nor should I forbear mentioning, that on the same day on which the youth died, he asked his father three times to forgive him anything in which he might have

offended, and every time that he kissed his father he said to him, “Let us give thanks to God, father,” and insisted upon his father saying the words along with him, as if he were exhorting one who was to be his companion in going forth from this world. And in fact only seven days elapsed between the two deaths. What shall we say of things so wonderful? Who shall be a thoroughly reliable teacher as to these mysterious dispensations? To you in the hour of perplexity my agitated heart unburdens itself. The divine appointment of the death of the young man and of his father is beyond all doubt, for two sparrows shall not fall to the ground without the will of our heavenly Father.

11. That the soul cannot exist in absolute separation from a body of some kind is proved in my opinion by the fact that to exist without body belongs to God alone. But I think that the laying aside of so great a burden as the body, in the act of passing from this world, proves that the soul will then be very much more wakeful than it is meanwhile; for then the soul appears, as I think, far more noble when no longer encumbered by so great a hindrance, both in action and in knowledge, and that entire spiritual rest proves it to be free from all causes of disturbance and error, but does not make it languid, and as it were slow, torpid, and embarrassed, inasmuch as it is enough for the soul to enjoy in its fulness the liberty to which it has attained in being freed from the world and the body; for, as you have wisely said, the intellect is satisfied with food, and applies the lips of the spirit to the fountain of life in that condition in which it is happy and blest in the undisputed lordship of its own faculties. For before I quitted the monastery I saw brother Servilius in a dream after his decease, and he said that we were labouring to attain by the exercise of reason to an understanding of truth, whereas he and those who were in the same state as he were always resting in the pure joy of contemplation.

12. I also beg you to explain to me in how many ways the word wisdom is used; as God is wisdom, and a wise mind is wisdom (in which way it is said to be as light); as we read also of the wisdom of Bezaleel, who made the tabernacle or the ointment, and the wisdom of Solomon, or any other wisdom, if there be such, and wherein they differ from each other; and whether the one eternal Wisdom which is with the Father is to be

understood as spoken of in these different degrees, as they are called diverse gifts of the Holy Spirit, who divideth to every one severally according as He will. Or, with the exception of that Wisdom alone which was not created, were these created, and have they a distinct existence of their own? or are they effects, and have they received their name from the definition of their work? I am asking a great many questions. May the Lord grant you grace to discover the truth sought, and wisdom sufficient to commit it to writing, and to communicate it without delay to me. I have written in much ignorance, and in a homely style; but since you think it worth while to know that about which I am inquiring, I beseech you in the name of Christ the Lord to correct me where I am mistaken, and teach me what you know that I am desirous to learn.

LETTER CLIX

(A.D. 415.)

To Evodius, My Lord Most Blessed, My Venerable and Beloved Brother and Partner in the Priestly Office, and to the Brethren Who are with Him, Augustin and the Brethren Who are with Him Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. Our brother Barbarus, the bearer of this letter, is a servant of God, who has now for a long time been settled at Hippo, and has been an eager and diligent hearer of the word of God. He requested from us this letter to your Holiness, whereby we commend him to you in the Lord, and convey to you through him the salutations which it is our duty to offer. To reply to those letters of your Holiness, in which you have interwoven questions of great difficulty, would be a most laborious task, even for men who are at leisure, and who are endowed with much greater ability in discussing and acuteness in apprehending any subject than we possess. One, indeed, of the two letters in which you ask many great questions has gone amissing, I know not how, and though long sought for cannot be found; the other, which has been found, contains a very pleasing account of a servant of God, a good and chaste young man, stating how he departed from this life, and by what testimonies, communicated through visions of the brethren, his merits were, as you state, made known to you. Taking occasion from this young man’s case, you propose and discuss an extremely obscure question concerning

the soul,—whether it is associated when it goes forth from this body with some other kind of body, by means of which it can be carried to or confined in places having material boundaries? The investigation of this question, if indeed it admits of satisfactory investigation by beings such as we are, demands the most diligent care and labour, and therefore a mind absolutely at leisure from such occupations as engross my time. My opinion, however, if you are willing to hear it, summed up in a sentence, is, that I by no means believe that the soul in departing from the body is accompanied by another body of any kind.

2. As to the question how these visions and predictions of future events are produced, let him attempt to explain them who understands by what power we are to account for the great wonders which are wrought in the mind of every man when his thoughts are busy. For we see, and we plainly perceive, that within the mind innumerable images of many objects discernible by the eye or by our other senses are produced,—whether they are produced in regular order or in confusion matters not to us at present: all that we say is, that since such images are beyond all dispute produced, the man who is found able to state by what power and in what way these phenomena of daily and perpetual experience are to be accounted for is the only man who may warrantably venture to conjecture or propound any explanation of these visions, which are of exceedingly rare occurrence. For my part, as I discover more plainly my inability to account for the ordinary facts of our experience, when awake or asleep, throughout the whole course of our lives, the more do I shrink from venturing to explain what is extraordinary. For while I have been dictating this epistle to you, I have been contemplating your person in my mind,—you being, of course, absent all the while, and knowing nothing of my thoughts,—and I have been imagining from my knowledge of what is in you how you will be affected by my words; and I have been unable to apprehend, either by observation or by inquiry, how this process was accomplished in my mind. Of one thing, however, I am certain, that although the mental image was very like something material, it was not produced either by masses of matter or by qualities of matter. Accept this in the meantime from one writing under pressure of other duties, and in haste. In the twelfth of the books which I have written on Genesis this question is discussed with great care, and that

dissertation is enriched with a forest of examples from actual experience or from trustworthy report. How far I have been competent to handle the question, and what I have accomplished in it, you will judge when you have read that work; if indeed the Lord shall be pleased in His kindness to permit me now to publish those books systematically corrected to the best of my ability, and thus to meet the expectation of many brethren, instead of deferring their hope by continuing further the discussion of a subject which has already engaged me for a long time.

3. I will narrate briefly, however, one fact which I commend to your meditation. You know our brother Gennadius, a physician, known to almost every one, and very dear to us, who now lives at Carthage, and was in other years eminent as a medical practitioner at Rome. You know him as a man of religious character and of very great benevolence, actively compassionate and promptly liberal in his care of the poor. Nevertheless, even he, when still a young man, and most zealous in these charitable acts, had sometimes, as he himself told me, doubts as to whether there was any life after death. Forasmuch, therefore, as God would in no wise forsake a man so merciful in his disposition and conduct, there appeared to him in sleep a youth of remarkable appearance and commanding presence, who said to him: “Follow me.” Following him, he came to a city where he began to hear on the right hand sounds of a melody so exquisitely sweet as to surpass anything he had ever heard. When he inquired what it was, his guide said: “It is the hymn of the blessed and the holy.” What he reported himself to have seen on the left hand escapes my remembrance. He awoke; the dream vanished, and he thought of it as only a dream.

4. On a second night, however, the same youth appeared to Gennadius, and asked whether he recognised him, to which he replied that he knew him well, without the slightest uncertainty. Thereupon he asked Gennadius where he had become acquainted with him. There also his memory failed him not as to the proper reply: he narrated the whole vision, and the hymns of the saints which, under his guidance, he had been taken to hear, with all the readiness natural to recollection of some very recent experience. On this the youth inquired whether it was in sleep or when awake that he had seen what he had just narrated. Gennadius answered: “In sleep.” The youth then

said: “You remember it well; it is true that you saw these things in sleep, but I would have you know that even now you are seeing in sleep.” Hearing this, Gennadius was persuaded of its truth, and in his reply declared that he believed it. Then his teacher went on to say: “Where is your body now?” He answered: “In my bed.” “Do you know,” said the youth, “that the eyes in this body of yours are now bound and closed, and at rest, and that with these eyes you are seeing nothing?” He answered: “I know it.” “What, then,” said the youth, “are the eyes with which you see me?” He, unable to discover what to answer to this, was silent. While he hesitated, the youth unfolded to him what he was endeavoring to teach him by these questions, and forthwith said: “As while you are asleep and lying on your bed these eyes of your body are now unemployed and doing nothing, and yet you have eyes with which you behold me, and enjoy this vision, so, after your death, while your bodily eyes shall be wholly inactive, there shall be in you a life by which you shall still live, and a faculty of perception by which you shall still perceive. Beware, therefore, after this of harbouring doubts as to whether the life of man shall continue after death.” This believer says that by this means all doubts as to this matter were removed from him. By whom was he taught this but by the merciful, providential care of God?

5. Some one may say that by this narrative I have not solved but complicated the question. Nevertheless, while it is free to every one to believe or disbelieve these statements, every man has his own consciousness at hand as a teacher by whose help he may apply himself to this most profound question. Every day man wakes, and sleeps, and thinks; let any man, therefore, answer whence proceed these things which, while not material bodies, do nevertheless resemble the forms, properties, and motions of material bodies: let him, I say, answer this if he can. But if he cannot do this, why is he in such haste to pronounce a definite opinion on things which occur very rarely, or are beyond the range of his experience, when he is unable to explain matters of daily and perpetual observation? For my part, although I am wholly unable to explain in words how those semblances of material bodies, without any real body, are produced, I may say that I wish that, with the same certainty with which I know that these things are not produced by the body, I could know by what means those things are perceived which are occasionally seen by the spirit, and are

supposed to be seen by the bodily senses; or by what distinctive marks we may know the visions of men who have been misguided by delusion, or, most commonly, by impiety, since the examples of such visions closely resembling the visions of pious and holy men are so numerous, that if I wished to quote them, time, rather than abundance of examples, would fail me.

May you, through the mercy of the Lord grow in grace, most blessed lord and venerable and beloved brother!

LETTER CLXIII

(A.D. 414.)

To Bishop Augustin, Bishop Evodius Sends Greeting.

Some time ago I sent two questions to your Holiness; the first, which was sent, I think, by Jobinus, a servant in the nunnery, related to God and reason, and the second was in regard to the opinion that the body of the Saviour is capable of seeing the substance of the Deity. I now propound a third question: Does the rational soul which our Saviour assumed along with His body fall under any one of the theories commonly advanced in discussions on the origin of souls (if any theory indeed can be with certainty established on the subject),—or does His soul, though rational, belong not to any of the species under which the souls of living creatures are classified, but to another?

I ask also a fourth question: Who are those spirits in reference to whom the Apostle Peter testifies concerning the Lord in these words: “Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit, in which also He went and preached to the spirits in prison?” giving us to understand that they were in hell, and that Christ descending into hell, preached the gospel to them all, and by grace delivered them all from darkness and punishment, so that from the time of the resurrection of the Lord judgment is expected, hell having then been completely emptied.

What your Holiness believes in this matter I earnestly desire to know.

LETTER CLXIV

(A.D. 414.)

To My Lord Evodius Most Blessed, My Brother and Partner in the Episcopal Office, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. The question which you have proposed to me from the epistle of the Apostle Peter is one which, as I think you are aware, is wont to perplex me most seriously, namely, how the words which you have quoted are to be understood on the supposition that they were spoken concerning hell? I therefore refer this question back to yourself, that if either you yourself be able, or can find any other person who is able to do so, you may remove and terminate my perplexities on the subject. If the Lord grant to me ability to understand the words before you do, and it be in my power to impart what I receive from Him to you, I will not withhold it from a friend so truly loved. In the meantime, I will communicate to you the things in the passage which occasion difficulty to me, that, keeping in view these remarks on the words of the apostle, you may either exercise your own thoughts on them, or consult any one whom you find competent to pronounce an opinion.

2. After having said that “Christ was put to death in the flesh, and quickened in the spirit,” the apostle immediately went on to say: “in which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were unbelieving, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water;” thereafter he added the words: “which baptism also now by a like figure has saved you.” This, therefore, is felt by me to be difficult. If the Lord when He died preached in hell to spirits in prison, why were those who continued unbelieving while the ark was a preparing the only ones counted worthy of this favour, namely, the Lord’s descending into hell? For in the ages between the time of Noah and the passion of Christ, there died many thousands of so many nations whom He might have found in hell. I do not, of course, speak here of those who in that period of time had believed in God, as, e.g. the prophets and patriarchs of Abraham’s line, or, going farther back, Noah himself and his house, who had been saved by

water (excepting perhaps the one son, who afterwards was rejected), and, in addition to these, all others outside of the posterity of Jacob who were believers in God, such as Job, the citizens of Nineveh, and any others, whether mentioned in Scripture or existing unknown to us in the vast human family at any time. I speak only of those many thousands of men who, ignorant of God and devoted to the worship of devils or of idols, had passed out of this life from the time of Noah to the passion of Christ. How was it that Christ, finding these in hell, did not preach to them, but preached only to those who were unbelieving in the days of Noah when the ark was a preparing? Or if he preached to all, why has Peter mentioned only these, and passed over the innumerable multitude of others?

Chap. II

3.—It is established beyond question that the Lord, after He had been put to death in the flesh, "descended into hell;" for it is impossible to gainsay either that utterance of prophecy, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,"—an utterance which Peter himself expounds in the Acts of the Apostles, lest any one should venture to put upon it another interpretation,—or the words of the same apostle, in which he affirms that the Lord "loosed the pains of hell, in which it was not possible for Him to be holden." Who, therefore, except an infidel, will deny that Christ was in hell? As to the difficulty which is found in reconciling the statement that the pains of hell were loosed by Him, with the fact that He had never begun to be in these pains as in bonds, and did not so loose them as if He had broken off chains by which He had been bound, this is easily removed when we understand that they were loosed in the same way as the snares of huntsmen may be loosed to prevent their holding, not because they have taken hold. It may also be understood as teaching us to believe Him to have loosed those pains which could not possibly hold Him, but which were holding those to whom He had resolved to grant deliverance.

4. But who these were it is presumptuous for us to define. For if we say that all who were found there were then delivered without exception, who will not rejoice if we can prove this? Especially will men rejoice for the sake of some who are intimately known to us by their literary labours, whose eloquence and talent we admire,—not only the poets and orators who in

many parts of their writings have held up to contempt and ridicule these same false gods of the nations, and have even occasionally confessed the one true God, although along with the rest they observed superstitious rites, but also those who have uttered the same, not in poetry or rhetoric, but as philosophers: and for the sake of many more of whom we have no literary remains, but in regard to whom we have learned from the writings of these others that their lives were to a certain extent praiseworthy, so that (with the exception of their service of God, in which they erred, worshipping the vanities which had been set up as objects of public worship, and serving the creature rather than the Creator) they may be justly held up as models in all the other virtues of frugality, self-denial, chastity, sobriety, braving of death in their country's defence, and faith kept inviolate not only to fellow-citizens, but also to enemies. All these things, indeed, when they are practised with a view not to the great end of right and true piety, but to the empty pride of human praise and glory, become in a sense worthless and unprofitable; nevertheless, as indications of a certain disposition of mind, they please us so much that we would desire those in whom they exist, either by special preference or along with the others, to be freed from the pains of hell, were not the verdict of human feeling different from that of the justice of the Creator.

5. These things being so, if the Saviour delivered all from that place, and, to quote the terms of the question in your letter, "emptied hell, so that now from that time forward the last judgment was to be expected," the following things occasion not unreasonable perplexity on this subject, and are wont to present themselves to me in the meantime when I think on it. First, by what authoritative statements can this opinion be confirmed? For the words of Scripture, that "the pains of hell were loosed" by the death of Christ, do not establish this, seeing that this statement may be understood as referring to Himself, and meaning that he so far loosed (that is, made ineffectual) the pains of hell that He Himself was not held by them, especially since it is added that it was "impossible for Him to be holden of them." Or if any one [objecting to this interpretation] ask the reason why He chose to descend into hell, where those pains were which could not possibly hold Him who was, as Scripture says, "free among the dead," in whom the prince and captain of death found nothing which deserved punishment, the words that

“the pains of hell were loosed” may be understood as referring not to the case of all, but only of some whom He judged worthy of that deliverance; so that neither is He supposed to have descended thither in vain, without the purpose of bringing benefit to any of those who were there held in prison, nor is it a necessary inference that what divine mercy and justice granted to some must be supposed to have been granted to all.

Chap. III

6. As to the first man, the father of mankind, it is agreed by almost the entire Church that the Lord loosed him from that prison; a tenet which must be believed to have been accepted not without reason,—from whatever source it was handed down to the Church,—although the authority of the canonical Scriptures cannot be brought forward as speaking expressly in its support, though this seems to be the opinion which is more than any other borne out by these words in the book of Wisdom. Some add to this [tradition] that the same favour was bestowed on the holy men of antiquity,—on Abel, Seth, Noah and his house, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the other patriarchs and prophets, they also being loosed from those pains at the time when the Lord descended into hell.

7. But, for my part, I cannot see how Abraham, into whose bosom also the pious beggar in the parable was received, can be understood to have been in these pains; those who are able can perhaps explain this. But I suppose every one must see it to be absurd to imagine that only two, namely, Abraham and Lazarus, were in that bosom of wondrous repose before the Lord descended into hell, and that with reference to these two alone it was said to the rich man, “Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would pass from thence.” Moreover, if there were more than two there, who will dare to say that the patriarchs and prophets were not there, to whose righteousness and piety so signal testimony is borne in the word of God? What benefit was conferred in that case on them by Him who loosed the pains of hell, in which they were not held, I do not yet understand, especially as I have not been able to find anywhere in Scripture the name of hell used in a good sense. And if this use of the term is nowhere found in the divine Scriptures, assuredly the bosom of Abraham, that is, the abode of

a certain secluded rest, is not to be believed to be a part of hell. Nay, from these words themselves of the great Master in which He says that Abraham said, “Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed,” it is, as I think, sufficiently evident that the bosom of that glorious felicity was not any integral part of hell. For what is that great gulf but a chasm completely separating those places between which it not only is, but is fixed? Wherefore, if sacred Scripture had said, without naming hell and its pains, that Christ when He died went to that bosom of Abraham, I wonder if any one would have dared to say that He “descended into hell.”

8. But seeing that plain scriptural testimonies make mention of hell and its pains, no reason can be alleged for believing that He who is the Saviour went thither, except that He might save from its pains; but whether He did save all whom He found held in them, or some whom He judged worthy of that favour, I still ask: that He was, however, in hell, and that He conferred this benefit on persons subjected to these pains, I do not doubt. Wherefore, I have not yet found what benefit He, when He descended into hell, conferred upon those righteous ones who were in Abraham’s bosom, from whom I see that, so far as regarded the beatific presence of His Godhead, He never withdrew Himself; since even on that very day on which He died, He promised that the thief should be with Him in paradise at the time when He was about to descend to loose the pains of hell. Most certainly, therefore, He was, before that time, both in paradise and the bosom of Abraham in His beatific wisdom, and in hell in His condemning power; for since the Godhead is confined by no limits, where is He not present? At the same time, however, so far as regarded the created nature, in assuming which at a certain point of time, He, while continuing to be God, became man—that is to say, so far as regarded His soul, He was in hell: this is plainly declared in these words of Scripture, which were both sent before in prophecy and fully expounded by apostolical interpretation: “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell.”

9. I know that some think that at the death of Christ a resurrection such as is promised to us at the end of the world was granted to the righteous, founding this on the statement in Scripture that, in the earthquake by which at the moment of His death the rocks were rent and the graves were opened,

many bodies of the saints arose and were seen with Him in the Holy City after He rose. Certainly, if these did not fall asleep again, their bodies being a second time laid in the grave, it would be necessary to see in what sense Christ can be understood to be “the first begotten from the dead,” if so many preceded Him in the resurrection. And if it be said, in answer to this, that the statement is made by anticipation, so that the graves indeed are to be supposed to have been opened by that earthquake at the time when Christ was hanging on the cross, but that the bodies of the saints did not rise then, but only after Christ had risen before them,—although on this hypothesis of anticipation in the narrative, the addition of these words would not hinder us from still believing, on the one hand, that Christ was without doubt “the first begotten from the dead,” and on the other, that to these saints permission was given, when He went before them, to rise to an eternal state of incorruption and immortality, there still remains a difficulty, namely, how in that case Peter could have spoken as he did, saying what was without doubt perfectly true, when he affirmed that in the prophecy quoted above the words, that “His flesh should not see corruption,” referred not to David but to Christ, and added concerning David, “He is buried, and his sepulchre is with us to this day,”—a statement which would have had no force as an argument unless the body of David was still undisturbed in the sepulchre; for of course the sepulchre might still have been there even had the saint’s body been raised up immediately after his death, and had thus not seen corruption. But it seems hard that David should not be included in this resurrection of the saints, if eternal life was given to them, since it is so frequently, so clearly, and with such honourable mention of his name, declared that Christ was to be of David’s seed. Moreover, these words in the Epistle to the Hebrews concerning the ancient believers, “God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect,” will be endangered, if these believers have been already established in that incorruptible resurrection-state which is promised to us when we are to be made perfect at the end of the world.

Chap. IV

10. You perceive, therefore, how intricate is the question why Peter chose to mention, as persons to whom, when shut up in prison, the gospel was

preached, those only who were unbelieving in the days of Noah when the ark was a preparing—and also the difficulties which prevent me from pronouncing any definite opinion on the subject. An additional reason for my hesitation is, that after the apostle had said, “Which baptism now by a like figure saves you (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is on the right hand of God, having swallowed up death that we might be made heirs of eternal life; and having gone into heaven, angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject to Him,” he added: “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God;” after which he continues: “For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you; who shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.” After these words he subjoins: “For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit.”

11. Who can be otherwise than perplexed by words so profound as these? He saith, “The gospel was preached to the dead;” and if by the “dead” we understand persons who have departed from the body, I suppose he must mean those described above as “unbelieving in the days of Noah,” or certainly all those whom Christ found in hell. What, then, is meant by the words, “That they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit”? For how can they be judged in the flesh, which if they be in hell they no longer have, and which if they have been loosed from the pains of hell they have not yet resumed? For even if “hell was,” as you put in your question, “emptied,” it is not to be believed that all who were then there have risen again in the flesh, or those who, arising, again appeared with the Lord resumed the flesh for this purpose, that they might be in it judged according to men; but how this could be taken as true in the case of those who were unbelieving in the days of Noah I do not see,

for Scripture does not affirm that they were made to live in the flesh, nor can it be believed that the end for which they were loosed from the pains of hell was that they who were delivered from these might resume their flesh in order to suffer punishment. What, then, is meant by the words, “That they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit?” Can it mean that to those whom Christ found in hell this was granted, that by the gospel they were quickened in the spirit, although at the future resurrection they must be judged in the flesh, that they may pass, through some punishment in the flesh, into the kingdom of God? If this be what is meant, why were only the unbelievers of the time of Noah (and not also all others whom Christ found in hell when He went thither) quickened in spirit by the preaching of the gospel, to be afterwards judged in the flesh with a punishment of limited duration? But if we take this as applying to all, the question still remains why Peter mentioned none but those who were unbelieving in the days of Noah.

12. I find, moreover, a difficulty in the reason alleged by those who attempt to give an explanation of this matter. They say that all those who were found in hell when Christ descended thither had never heard the gospel, and that that place of punishment or imprisonment was emptied of all these, because the gospel was not published to the whole world in their lifetime, and they had sufficient excuse for not believing that which had never been proclaimed to them; but that thenceforth, men despising the gospel when it was in all nations fully published and spread abroad would be inexcusable, and therefore after the prison was then emptied there still remains a just judgment, in which those who are contumacious and unbelieving shall be punished even with eternal fire. Those who hold this opinion do not consider that the same excuse is available for all those who have, even after Christ’s resurrection, departed this life before the gospel came to them. For even after the Lord came back from hell, it was not the case that no one was from that time forward permitted to go to hell without having heard the gospel, seeing that multitudes throughout the world died before the proclamation of its tidings came to them, all of whom are entitled to plead the excuse which is alleged to have been taken away from those of whom it is said, that because they had not before heard the gospel, the Lord when He descended into hell proclaimed it to them.

13. This objection may perhaps be met by saying that those also who since the Lord's resurrection have died or are now dying without the gospel having been proclaimed to them, may have heard it or may now hear it where they are, in hell, so that there they may believe what ought to be believed concerning the truth of Christ, and may also have that pardon and salvation which those to whom Christ preached obtained; for the fact that Christ ascended again from hell is no reason why the report concerning Him should have perished from recollection there, for from this earth also He has gone ascending into heaven, and yet by the publication of His gospel those who believe in Him shall be saved; moreover, He was exalted, and received a name that is above every name, for this end, that in His name every knee should bow, not only of things in heaven and on earth, but also of things under the earth. But if we accept this opinion, according to which we are warranted in supposing that men who did not believe while they were in life can in hell believe in Christ, who can bear the contradictions both of reason and faith which must follow? In the first place, if this were true, we should seem to have no reason for mourning over those who have departed from the body without that grace, and there would be no ground for being solicitous and using urgent exhortation that men would accept the grace of God before they die, lest they should be punished with eternal death. If, again, it be alleged that in hell those only believe to no purpose and in vain who refused to accept here on earth the gospel preached to them, but that believing will profit those who never despised a gospel which they never had it in their power to hear another still more absurd consequence is involved, namely, that forasmuch as all men shall certainly die, and ought to come to hell wholly free from the guilt of having despised the gospel; since otherwise it can be of no use to them to believe it when they come there, the gospel ought not to be preached on earth, a sentiment not less foolish than profane.

Chap. V

14. Wherefore let us most firmly hold that which faith, resting on authority established beyond all question, maintains: "that Christ died according to the Scriptures," and that "He was buried," and that "He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures," and all other things which have been

written concerning Him in records fully demonstrated to be true. Among these doctrines we include the doctrine that He was in hell, and, having loosed the pains of hell, in which it was impossible for Him to be holden, from which also He is with good ground believed to have loosed and delivered whom He would, He took again to Himself that body which He had left on the cross, and which had been laid in the tomb. These things, I say, let us firmly hold; but as to the question propounded by you from the words of the Apostle Peter, since you now perceive the difficulties which I find in it, and since other difficulties may possibly be found if the subject be more carefully studied, let us continue to investigate it, whether by applying our own thoughts to the subject, or by asking the opinion of any one whom it may be becoming and possible to consult.

15. Consider, however, I pray you, whether all that the Apostle Peter says concerning spirits shut up in prison, who were unbelieving in the days of Noah, may not after all have been written without any reference to hell, but rather to those times the typical character of which he has transferred to the present time. For that transaction had been typical of future events, so that those who do not believe the gospel in our age, when the Church is being built up in all nations, may be understood to be like those who did not believe in that age while the ark was a preparing; also, that those who have believed and are saved by baptism may be compared to those who at that time, being in the ark, were saved by water; wherefore he says, “So baptism by a like figure saves you.” Let us therefore interpret the rest of the statements concerning them that believed not so as to harmonise with the analogy of the figure, and refuse to entertain the thought that the gospel was once preached, or is even to this hour being preached in hell in order to make men believe and be delivered from its pains, as if a Church had been established there as well as on earth.

16. Those who have inferred from the words, “He preached to the spirits in prison,” that Peter held the opinion which perplexes you, seem to me to have been drawn to this interpretation by imagining that the term “spirits” could not be applied to designate souls which were at that time still in the bodies of men, and which, being shut up in the darkness of ignorance, were, so to speak, “in prison,”—a prison such as that from which the Psalmist

sought deliverance in the prayer, “Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy name;” which is in another place called the “shadow of death,” from which deliverance was granted, not certainly in hell, but in this world, to those of whom it is written, “They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.” But to the men of Noah’s time the gospel was preached in vain, because they believed not when God’s long suffering waited for them during the many years in which the ark was being built (for the building of the ark was itself in a certain sense a preaching of mercy); even as now men similar to them are unbelieving, who, to use the same figure, are shut up in the darkness of ignorance as in a prison, beholding in vain the Church which is being built up throughout the world, while judgment is impending, as the flood was by which at that time all the unbelieving perished; for the Lord says: “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man; they did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.” But because that transaction was also a type of a future event, that flood was a type both of baptism to believers and of destruction to unbelievers, as in that figure in which, not by a transaction but by words, two things are predicted concerning Christ, when He is represented in Scripture as a stone which was destined to be both to unbelievers a stone of stumbling, and to believers a foundation-stone. Occasionally, however, also in the same figure, whether it be in the form of a typical event or of a parable, two things are used to represent one, as believers were represented both by the timbers of which the ark was built and by the eight souls saved in the ark, and as in the gospel similitude of the sheepfold Christ is both the shepherd and the door.

Chap. VI

17. And let it not be regarded as an objection to the interpretation now given, that the Apostle Peter says that Christ Himself preached to men shut up in prison who were unbelieving in the days of Noah, as if we must consider this interpretation inconsistent with the fact that at that time Christ had not come. For although he had not yet come in the flesh, as He came when afterwards He “showed Himself upon earth, and conversed with men,” nevertheless he certainly came often to this earth, from the beginning

of the human race, whether to rebuke the wicked, as Cain, and before that, Adam and his wife, when they sinned, or to comfort the good, or to admonish both, so that some should to their salvation believe, others should to their condemnation refuse to believe,—coming then not in the flesh but in the spirit, speaking by suitable manifestations of Himself to such persons and in such manner as seemed good to Him. As to this expression, “He came in the spirit,” surely He, as the Son of God, is a Spirit in the essence of His Deity, for that is not corporeal; but what is at any time done by the Son without the Holy Spirit, or without the Father, seeing that all the works of the Trinity are inseparable?

18. The words of Scripture which are under consideration seem to me of themselves to make this sufficiently plain to those who carefully attend to them: “For Christ hath died once for our sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit: in which also He came and preached unto the spirits in prison, who sometime were unbelieving, when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.” The order of the words is now, I suppose, carefully noted by you: “Christ being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit;” in which spirit He came and preached also to those spirits who had once in the days of Noah refused to believe His word; since before He came in the flesh to die for us, which He did once, He often came in the spirit, to whom He would, by visions instructing them as He would, coming to them assuredly in the same spirit in which He was quickened when He was put to death in the flesh in His passion. Now what does His being quickened in the spirit mean if not this, that the same flesh in which alone He had experienced death rose from the dead by the quickening spirit?

Chap. VII

19. For who will dare to say that Jesus was put to death in His soul, i.e. in the spirit which belonged to Him as man, since the only death which the soul can experience is sin, from which He was absolutely free when for us He was put to death in the flesh? For if the souls of all men are derived from that one which the breath of God gave to the first man, by whom “sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men,”

either the soul of Christ is not derived from the same source as other souls, because He had absolutely no sin, either original or personal, on account of which death could be supposed to be merited by Him, since He paid on our behalf that which was not on His own account due by Him, in whom the prince of this world, who had the power of death, found nothing—and there is nothing unreasonable in the supposition that He who created a soul for the first man should create a soul for Himself; or if the soul of Christ be derived from Adam's soul He in assuming it to Himself, cleansed it so that when He came into this world He was born of the Virgin perfectly free from sin either actual or transmitted. If, however, the souls of men are not derived from that one soul, and it is only by the flesh that original sin is transmitted from Adam, the Son of God created a soul for Himself, as He creates souls for all other men, but He united it not to sinful flesh, but to the "likeness of sinful flesh." For He took, indeed, from the Virgin the true substance of flesh; not, however, "sinful flesh," for it was neither begotten nor conceived through carnal concupiscence, but mortal, and capable of change in the successive stages of life, as being like unto sinful flesh in all points, sin excepted.

20. Therefore, whatever be the true theory concerning the origin of souls,—and on this I feel it would be rash for me to pronounce, meanwhile, any opinion beyond utterly rejecting the theory which affirms that each soul is thrust into the body which it inhabits as into a prison, where it expiates some former actions of its own of which I know nothing, it is certain, regarding the soul of Christ, not only that it is, according to the nature of all souls, immortal, but also that it was neither put to death by sin nor punished by condemnation, the only two ways in which death can be understood as experienced by the soul; and therefore it could not be said of Christ that with reference to the soul He was "quickened in the spirit." For He was quickened in that in which He had been put to death; this, therefore, is spoken with reference to His flesh, for His flesh received life again when the soul returned to it, as it also had died when the soul departed. He was therefore said to be "put to death in the flesh," because He experienced death only in the flesh, but "quickened in the spirit," because by the operation of that Spirit in which He was wont to come and preach to whom

He would, that same flesh in which He came to men was quickened and rose from the grave.

21. Wherefore, passing now to the words which we find farther on concerning unbelievers, “Who shall give account to Him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead,” there is no necessity for our understanding the “dead” here to be those who have departed from the body. For it may be that the apostle intended by the word “dead” to denote unbelievers, as being spiritually dead, like those of whom it was said, “Let the dead bury their dead,” and by the word “living” to denote those who believe in Him, having not heard in vain the call, “Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light;” of whom also the Lord said: “The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” On the same principle of interpretation, also, there is nothing compelling us to understand the immediately succeeding words of Peter—”For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit”—as describing what has been done in hell. “For for this cause has the gospel been preached” in this life “to the dead,” that is, to the unbelieving wicked, “that” when they believed “they might be judged according to men in the flesh,”—that is, by means of various afflictions and by the death of the body itself; for which reason the same apostle says in another place: “The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God,”—”but live according to God in the spirit,” since in that same spirit they had been dead while they were held prisoners in the death of unbelief and wickedness.

22. If this exposition of the words of Peter offend any one, or, without offending, at least fail to satisfy any one, let him attempt to interpret them on the supposition that they refer to hell: and if he succeed in solving my difficulties which I have mentioned above, so as to remove the perplexity which they occasion, let him communicate his interpretation to me; and if this were done, the words might possibly have been intended to be understood in both ways, but the view which I have propounded is not thereby shown to be false.

I wrote and sent by the deacon Asellus a letter, which I suppose you have received, giving such answers as I could to the questions which you sent before, excepting the one concerning the vision of God by the bodily senses, on which a larger treatise must be attempted. In your last note, to which this is a reply, you propounded two questions concerning certain words of the Apostle Peter, and concerning the soul of the Lord, both of which I have discussed,—the former more fully, the latter briefly. I beg you not to grudge the trouble of sending me another copy of the letter containing the question whether it is possible for the substance of the Deity to be seen in a bodily form as limited to place; for it has, I know not how, gone amissing here, and though long sought for, has not been found.

LETTER CLXV

(A.D. 410.)

To My Truly Pious Lords Marcellinus and Anapsychia, Sons Worthy of Being Esteemed with All the Love Due to Their Position, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ.

Chap. I

1. At last I have received your joint letter from Africa, and I do not regret the importunity with which, though you were silent, I persevered in sending letters to you, that I might obtain a reply, and learn, not through report from others, but from your own most welcome statement, that you are in health. I have not forgotten the brief query, or rather the very important theological question, which you propounded in regard to the origin of the soul,—does it descend from heaven, as the philosopher Pythagoras and all the Platonists and Origen think? or is it part of the essence of the Deity, as the Stoics, Manichaeus, and the Priscillianists of Spain imagine? or are souls kept in a divine treasure house wherein they were stored of old as some ecclesiastics, foolishly misled, believe? or are they daily created by God and sent into bodies, according to what is written in the gospel, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work”? or are souls really produced, as Tertullian, Apollinaris, and the majority of the Western divines conjecture, by propagation, so that as the body is the offspring of body, the soul is the

offspring of soul, and exists on conditions similar to those regulating the existence of the inferior animals.” I know that I have published my opinion on this question in my brief writings against Ruffinus, in reply to a treatise addressed by him to Anastasius, of holy memory, bishop of the Roman Church, in which, while attempting to impose upon the simplicity of his readers by a slippery and artful, yet withal foolish confession, he exposed to contempt his own faith, or, rather, his own perfidy. These books are, I think, in the possession of your holy kinsman Oceanus, for they were published long ago to meet the calumnies contained in numerous writings of Ruffinus. Be this as it may, you have in Africa that holy man and learned bishop Augustin, who will be able to teach you on this subject viva voce, as the saying is, and expound to you his opinion, or, I should rather say, my own opinion stated in his words.

Chap. II

2. I have long wished to begin the volume of Ezekiel, and fulfil a promise frequently made to studious readers; but at the time when I had just begun to dictate the proposed exposition, my mind was so much agitated by the devastation of the western provinces of the empire, and especially by the sack of Rome itself by the barbarians, that, to use a common proverbial phrase, I scarcely knew my own name; and for a long while I was silent, knowing that it was a time for tears. Moreover when I had, in the course of this year, prepared three books of the Commentary, a sudden furious invasion of the barbarous tribes mentioned by your Virgil as “the widely roaming Barcaei,” and by sacred Scripture in the words concerning Ishmael, “He shall dwell in the presence of his brethren,” swept over the whole of Egypt, Palestine, Phenice, and Syria, carrying all before them with the vehemence of a mighty torrent, so that it was only with the greatest difficulty that we were enabled, by the mercy of Christ, to escape their hands. But if, as a famous orator has said, “Laws are silent amid the clash of arms,” how much more may this be said of scriptural studies, which demand a multitude of books and silence, together with uninterrupted diligence of amanuenses, and especially the enjoyment of tranquillity and leisure by those who dictate! I have accordingly sent two books to my holy daughter Fabiola, of which, if you wish copies, you may borrow them from

her. Through lack of time I have been unable to transcribe others; when you have read these, and have seen the portico, as it were, you may easily conjecture what the house itself is designed to be. But I trust in the mercy of God, who has helped me in the very difficult commencement of the foresaid work, that He will help me also in the predictions concerning the wars of Gog and Magog, which occupy the last division but one of the prophecy, and in the concluding portion itself, describing the building, the details, and the proportions of that most holy and mysterious temple.

Chap. III

3. Our holy brother Oceanus, to whom you desire to be mentioned, is a man of such gifts and character, and so profoundly learned in the law of the Lord, that he may probably give you instruction without any request of mine, and can impart to you on all scriptural questions the opinion which, according to the measure of our joint abilities, we have formed.

May Christ, our almighty God, keep you, my truly pious lords, in safety and prosperity to a good old age!

LETTER CLXVI

(A.D. 415.)

A Treatise on the Origin of the Human Soul, Addressed to Jerome.

Chap. I

1. Unto our God, who hath called us unto His kingdom and glory, I have prayed, and pray now, that what I write to you, holy brother Jerome, asking your opinion in regard to things of which I am ignorant, may by His good pleasure be profitable to us both. For although in addressing you I consult one much older than myself, nevertheless I also am becoming old; but I cannot think that it is at anytime of life too late to learn what we need to know, because, although it is more fitting that old men should be teachers than learners, it is nevertheless more fitting for them to learn than to continue ignorant of that which they should teach to others. I assure you that, amid the many disadvantages which I have to submit to in studying

very difficult questions, there is none which grieves me more than the circumstance of separation from your Charity by a distance so great that I can scarcely send a letter to you, and scarcely receive one from you, even at intervals, not of days nor of months, but of several years; whereas my desire would be, if it were possible, to have you daily beside me, as one with whom I could converse on any theme. Nevertheless, although I have not been able to do all that I wished, I am not the less bound to do all that I can.

2. Behold, a religious young man has come to me, by name Orosius, who is in the bond of Catholic peace a brother, in point of age a son, and in honour a fellow presbyter,—a man, of quick understanding, ready speech, and burning zeal, desiring to be in the Lord’s house a vessel rendering useful service in refuting those false and pernicious doctrines, through which the souls of men in Spain have suffered much more grievous wounds than have been inflicted on their bodies by the sword of barbarians. For from the remote western coast of Spain he has come with eager haste to us, having been prompted to do this by the report that from me he could learn whatever he wished on the subjects on which he desired information. Nor has his coming been altogether in vain. In the first place, he has learned not to believe all that report affirmed of me: in the next place, I have taught him all that I could, and, as for the things in which I could not teach him, I have told him from whom he may learn them, and have exhorted him to go on to you. As he received this counsel or rather injunction of mine with pleasure, and with intention to comply with it, I asked him to visit us on his way home to his own country when he comes from you. On receiving his promise to this effect, I believed that the Lord had granted me an opportunity of writing to you regarding certain things which I wish through you to learn. For I was seeking some one whom I might send to you, and it was not easy to fall in with one qualified both by trustworthiness in performing and by alacrity in undertaking the work, as well as by experience in travelling. Therefore, when I became acquainted with this young man, I could not doubt that he was exactly such a person as I was asking from the Lord.

Chap. II

3. Allow me, therefore, to bring before you a subject which I beseech you not to refuse to open up and discuss with me. Many are perplexed by questions concerning the soul, and I confess that I myself am of this number. I shall in this letter, in the first place, state explicitly the things regarding the soul which I most assuredly believe, and shall, in the next place, bring forward the things regarding which I am still desirous of explanation.

The soul of man is in a sense proper to itself immortal. It is not absolutely immortal, as God is, of whom it is written that He “alone hath immortality,” for Holy Scripture makes mention of deaths to which the soul is liable—as in the saying, “Let the dead bury their dead;” but because when alienated from the life of God it so dies as not wholly to cease from living in its own nature, it is found to be from a certain cause mortal, yet so as to be not without reason called at the same time immortal.

The soul is not a part of God. For if it were, it would be absolutely immutable and incorruptible, in which case it could neither go downward to be worse, nor go onward to be better; nor could it either begin to have anything in itself which it had not before, or cease to have anything which it had within the sphere of its own experience. But how different the actual facts of the case are is a point requiring no evidence from without, it is acknowledged by every one who consults his own consciousness. In vain, moreover, is it pleaded by those who affirm that the soul is a part of God, that the corruption and baseness which we see in the worst of men, and the weakness and blemishes which we see in all men, come to it not from the soul itself, but from the body; for what matters it whence the infirmity originates in that which, if it were indeed immutable, could not, from any quarter whatever, be made infirm? For that which is truly immutable and incorruptible is not liable to mutation or corruption by any influence whatever from without, else the invulnerability which the fable ascribed to the flesh of Achilles would be nothing peculiar to him, but the property of every man, so long as no accident befell him. That which is liable to be changed in any manner, by any cause, or in any part whatever, is therefore not by nature immutable; but it were impiety to think of God as otherwise than truly and supremely immutable: therefore the soul is not a part of God.

4. That the soul is immaterial is a fact of which I avow myself to be fully persuaded, although men of slow understanding are hard to be convinced that it is so. To secure myself, however, from either unnecessarily causing to others or unreasonably bringing upon myself a controversy about an expression, let me say that, since the thing itself is beyond question, it is needless to contend about mere terms. If matter be used as a term denoting everything which in any form has a separate existence, whether it be called an essence, or a substance, or by another name, the soul is material. Again, if you choose to apply the epithet immaterial only to that nature which is supremely immutable and is everywhere present in its entirety, the soul is material, for it is not at all endowed with such qualities. But if matter be used to designate nothing but that which, whether at rest or in motion, has some length, breadth, and height, so that with a greater part of itself it occupies a greater part of space, and with a smaller part a smaller space, and is in every part of it less than the whole, then the soul is not material. For it pervades the whole body which it animates, not by a local distribution of parts, but by a certain vital influence, being at the same moment present in its entirety in all parts of the body, and not less in smaller parts and greater in larger parts, but here with more energy and there with less energy, it is in its entirety present both in the whole body and in every part of it. For even that which the mind perceives in only a part of the body is nevertheless not otherwise perceived than by the whole mind; for when any part of the living flesh is touched by a fine pointed instrument, although the place affected is not only not the whole body, but scarcely discernible in its surface, the contact does not escape the entire mind, and yet the contact is felt not over the whole body, but only at the one point where it takes place. How comes it, then, that what takes place in only a part of the body is immediately known to the whole mind, unless the whole mind is present at that part, and at the same time not deserting all the other parts of the body in order to be present in its entirety at this one? For all the other parts of the body in which no such contact takes place are still living by the soul being present with them. And if a similar contact takes place in the other parts, and the contact occur in both parts simultaneously, it would in both cases alike be known at the same moment, to the whole mind. Now this presence of the mind in all parts of the body at the same moment, so that in every part of the body the whole mind is at the same moment present, would be

impossible if it were distributed over these parts in the same way as we see matter distributed in space, occupying less space with a smaller portion of itself, and greater space with a greater portion. If, therefore, mind is to be called material, it is not material in the same sense as earth, water, air, and ether are material. For all things composed of these elements are larger in larger places, or smaller in smaller places, and none of them is in its entirety present at any part of itself, but the dimensions of the material substances are according to the dimensions of the space occupied. Whence it is perceived that the soul, whether it be termed material or immaterial, has a certain nature of its own, created from a substance superior to the elements of this world,—a substance which cannot be truly conceived of by any representation of the material images perceived by the bodily senses, but which is apprehended by the understanding and discovered to our consciousness by its living energy. These things I am stating, not with the view of teaching you what you already know, but in order that I may declare explicitly what I hold as indisputably certain concerning the soul, lest any one should think, when I come to state the questions to which I desire answers, that I hold none of the doctrines which we have learned from science or from revelation concerning the soul.

5. I am, moreover, fully persuaded that the soul has fallen into sin, not through the fault of God, nor through any necessity either in the divine nature or in its own, but by its own free will; and that it can be delivered from the body of this death neither by the strength of its own will, as if that were in itself sufficient to achieve this, nor by the death of the body itself, but only by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is not one soul in the human family to whose salvation the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, is not absolutely necessary. Every soul, moreover, which may at any age whatsoever depart from this life without the grace of the Mediator and the sacrament of this grace, departs to future punishment, and shall receive again its own body at the last judgment as a partner in punishment. But if the soul after its natural generation, which was derived from Adam, be regenerated in Christ, it belongs to His fellowship, and shall not only have rest after the death of the body, but also receive again its own body as a partner in glory. These are truths concerning the soul which I hold most firmly.

6. Permit me now, therefore, to bring before you the question which I desire to have solved, and do not reject me; so may He not reject you who condescended to be rejected for our sakes!

I ask where can the soul, even of an infant snatched away by death, have contracted the guilt which, unless the grace of Christ has come to the rescue by that sacrament of baptism which is administered even to infants, involves it in condemnation? I know you are not one of those who have begun of late to utter certain new and absurd opinions, alleging that there is no guilt derived from Adam which is removed by baptism in the case of infants. If I knew that you held this view, or, rather, if I did not know that you reject it, I would certainly neither address this question to you, nor think that it ought to be put to you at all. Since, however, we hold on this subject the opinion consonant with the immoveable Catholic faith, which you have yourself expressed when, refuting the absurd sayings of Jovinian, you have quoted this sentence from the book of Job: “In thy sight, no one is clean, not even the infant, whose time of life on earth is a single day,” adding, “for we are held guilty in the similitude of Adam’s transgression,”—an opinion which your book on Jonah’s prophecy declares in a notable and lucid manner, where you affirm that the little children of Nineveh were justly compelled to fast along with the people, because merely of their original sin,—it is not unsuitable that I should address to you the question—where has the soul contracted the guilt from which, even at that age, it must be delivered by the sacrament of Christian grace?

7. Some years ago, when I wrote certain books concerning Free Will, which have gone forth into the hands of many, and are now in the possession of very many readers, after referring to these four opinions as to the manner of the soul’s incarnation,—(1) that all other souls are derived from the one which was given to the first man; (2) that for each individual a new soul is made; (3) that souls already in existence somewhere are sent by divine act into the bodies; or (4) glide into them of their own accord, I thought that it was necessary to treat them in such a way that, whichever of them might be true, the decision should not hinder the object which I had in view when contending with all my might against those who attempt to lay upon God

the blame of a nature endowed with its own principle of evil, namely, the Manichaeans; for at that time I had not heard of the Priscillianists, who utter blasphemies not very dissimilar to these. As to the fifth opinion, namely, that the soul is a part of God,—an opinion which, in order to omit none, you have mentioned along with the rest in your letter to Marcellinus (a man of pious memory and very dear to us in the grace of Christ), who had consulted you on this question,—I did not add it to the others for two reasons, first,—because, in examining this opinion, we discuss not the incarnation of the soul, but its nature; secondly, because this is the view held by those against whom I was arguing, and the main design of my argument was to prove that the blameless and inviolable nature of the Creator has nothing to do with the faults and blemishes of the creature, while they, on their part, maintained that the substance of the good God itself is, in so far as it is led captive, corrupted and oppressed and brought under a necessity of sinning by the substance of evil, to which they ascribe a proper dominion and principalities. Leaving, therefore, out of the question this heretical error, I desire to know which of the other four opinions we ought to choose. For whichever of them may justly claim our preference, far be it from us to assail this article of faith, about which we have no uncertainty, that every soul, even the soul of an infant, requires to be delivered from the binding guilt of sin, and that there is no deliverance except through Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Chap. IV

8. To avoid prolixity, therefore, let me refer to the opinion which you, I believe, entertain, viz. that God even now makes each soul for each individual at the time of birth. To meet the objection to this view which might be taken from the fact that God finished the whole work of creation on the sixth day and rested on the seventh day, you quote the testimony of the words in the gospel, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” This you have written in your letter to Marcellinus, in which letter, moreover, you have most kindly condescended to mention my name, saying that he had me here in Africa, who could more easily explain to him the opinion held by you. But had I been able to do this, he would not have applied for instruction to you, who were so remote from him, though perhaps he did not

write from Africa to you. For I know not when he wrote it; I only know that he knew well my hesitation to embrace any definite view on this subject, for which reason he preferred to write to you without consulting me. Yet, even if he had consulted me, I would rather have encouraged him to write to you, and would have expressed my gratitude for the benefit which might have been conferred on us all, had you not preferred to send a brief note, instead of a full reply, doing this, I suppose, to save yourself from unnecessary expenditure of effort in a place where I, whom you supposed to be thoroughly acquainted with the subject of his inquiries, was at hand. Behold, I am willing that the opinion which you hold should be also mine; but I assure you that as yet I have not embraced it.

9. You have sent to me scholars, to whom you wish me to impart what I have not yet learned myself. Teach me, therefore, what I am to teach them; for many urge me vehemently to be a teacher on this subject, and to them I confess that of this, as well as of many other things, I am ignorant, and perhaps, though they maintain a respectful demeanour in my presence, they say among themselves: “Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?” a rebuke which the Lord gave to one who belonged to the class of men who delighted in being called Rabbi; which was also the reason of his coming by night to the true Teacher, because perchance he, who had been accustomed to teach, blushed to take the learner’s place. But, for my own part, it gives me much more pleasure to hear instruction from another, than to be myself listened to as a teacher. For I remember what He said to those whom, above all men, He had chosen: “But be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ.” Nor was it any other teacher who taught Moses by Jethro, Cornelius by Peter the earlier apostle, and Peter himself by Paul the later apostle; for by whomsoever truth is spoken, it is spoken by the gift of Him who is the Truth. What if the reason of our still being ignorant of these things, and of our having failed to discover them, even after praying, reading, thinking, and reasoning, be this: that full proof may be made not only of the love with which we give instruction to the ignorant, but also of the humility with which we receive instruction from the learned?

10. Teach me, therefore, I beseech you, what I may teach to others; teach me what I ought to hold as my own opinion; and tell me this: if souls are

from day to day made for each individual separately at birth, where, in the case of infant children, is sin committed by these souls, so that they require the remission of sin in the sacrament of Christ, because of sinning in Adam from whom the sinful flesh has been derived? or if they do not sin, how is it compatible with the justice of the Creator, that, because of their being united to mortal members derived from another, they are so brought under the bond of the sin of that other, that unless they be rescued by the Church, perdition overtakes them, although it is not in their own power to secure that they be rescued by the grace of baptism? Where, therefore, is the justice of the condemnation of so many thousands of souls, which in the deaths of infant children leave this world without the benefit of the Christian sacrament, if being newly created they have, not through any preceding sin of their own, but by the will of the Creator, become severally united to the individual bodies to animate which they were created and bestowed by Him, who certainly knew that every one of them was destined, not through any fault of its own, to leave the body without receiving the baptism of Christ? Seeing, therefore, that we may not say concerning God either that He compels them to become sinners, or that He punishes innocent souls and seeing that, on the other hand, it is not lawful for us to deny that nothing else than perdition is the doom of the souls, even of little children, which have departed from the body without the sacrament of Christ, tell me, I implore you, where anything can be found to support the opinion that souls are not all derived from that one soul of the first man, but are each created separately for each individual, as Adam's soul was made for him.

Chap. V

11. As for some other objections which are advanced against this opinion, I think that I could easily dispose of them. For example, some think that they urge a conclusive argument against this opinion when they ask, how God finished all His works an the sixth day and rested on the seventh day, if He is still creating new souls. If we meet them with the quotation from the gospel (given by you in the letter to Marcellinus already mentioned), “My Father worketh hitherto,” they answer that He “worketh” in maintaining those natures which He has created, not in creating new natures; otherwise,

this statement would contradict the words of Scripture in Genesis, where it is most plainly declared that God finished all His works. Moreover, the words of Scripture, that He rested, are unquestionably to be understood of His resting from creating new creatures, not from governing those which He had created; for at that time He made things which previously did not exist, and from making these He rested because He had finished all the creatures which before they existed He saw necessary to be created, so that thenceforward He did not create and make things which previously did not exist, but made and fashioned out of things already existing whatever He did make. Thus the statements, “He rested from His works,” and, “He worketh hitherto,” are both true, for the gospel could not contradict Genesis.

12. When, however, these things are brought forward by persons who advance them as conclusive against the opinion that God now creates new souls as He created the soul of the first man, and who hold either that He forms them from that one soul which existed before He rested from creation, or that He now sends them forth into bodies from some reservoir or storehouse of souls which He then created, it is easy to turn aside their argument by answering, that even in the six days God formed many things out of those natures which He had already created, as, for example, the birds and fishes were formed from the waters, and the trees, the grass, and the animals from the earth, and yet it is undeniable that He was then making things which did not exist before. For there existed previously no bird, no fish, no tree, no animal, and it is clearly understood that He rested from creating those things which previously were not, and were then created, that is to say, He ceased in this sense, that, after that, nothing was made by Him which did not already exist. But if, rejecting the opinions of all who believe either that God sends forth into men souls existing already in some incomprehensible reservoir, or that He makes souls emanate like drops of dew from Himself as particles of His own substance, or that He brings them forth from that one soul of the first man, or that He binds them in the fetters of the bodily members because of sins committed in a prior state of existence, if, I say, rejecting these, we affirm that for each individual He creates separately a new soul when he is born, we do not herein affirm that He makes anything which he had not already made. For He had already

made man after His own image on the sixth day; and this work of His is unquestionably to be understood with reference to the rational soul of man. The same work He still does, not in creating what did not exist, but in multiplying what already existed. Wherefore it is true, on the one hand, that He rested from creating things which previously did not exist, and equally true, on the other hand, that He continues still to work, not only in governing what He has made, but also in making (not anything which did not previously exist, but) a larger number of those creatures which He had already made. Wherefore, either by such an explanation, or by any other which may seem better, we escape from the objection advanced by those who would make the fact that God rested from His works a conclusive argument against our believing that new souls are still being daily created, not from the first soul, but in the same manner as it was made.

13. Again, as for another objection, stated in the question, “Wherefore does He create souls for those whom He knows to be destined to an early death?” we may reply, that by the death of the children the sins of the parents are either reproved or chastised. We may, moreover, with all propriety, leave these things to the disposal of the Lord of all, for we know that he appoints to the succession of events in time, and therefore to the births and deaths of living creatures as included in these, a course which is consummate in beauty and perfect in the arrangement of all its parts; whereas we are not capable of perceiving those things by the perception of which, if it were attainable, we should be soothed with an ineffable, tranquil joy. For not in vain has the prophet, taught by divine inspiration, declared concerning God, “He bringeth forth in measured harmonies the course of time.” For which reason music, the science or capacity of correct harmony, has been given also by the kindness of God to mortals having reasonable souls, with a view to keep them in mind of this great truth. For if a man, when composing a song which is to suit a particular melody, knows how to distribute the length of time allowed to each word so as to make the song flow and pass on in most beautiful adaptation to the ever-changing notes of the melody, how much more shall God, whose wisdom is to be esteemed as infinitely transcending human arts, make infallible provision that not one of the spaces of time alloted to natures that are born and die—spaces which are like the words and syllables of the successive epochs of the course of time

—shall have, in what we may call the sublime psalm of the vicissitudes of this world, a duration either more brief or more protracted than the foreknown and predetermined harmony requires! For when I may speak thus with reference even to the leaves of every tree, and the number of the hairs upon our heads, how much more may I say it regarding the birth and death of men, seeing that every man’s life on earth continues for a time, which is neither longer nor shorter than God knows to be in harmony with the plan according to which He rules the universe.

14. As to the assertion that everything which has begun to exist in time is incapable of immortality, because all things which are born die, and all things which have grown decay through age, and the opinion which they affirm to follow necessarily from this, viz. that the soul of man must owe its immortality to its having been created before time began, this does not disturb my faith; for, passing over other examples, which conclusively dispose of this assertion, I need only refer to the body of Christ, which now “dieth no more; death shall have no more dominion over it.”

15. Moreover, as to your remark in your book against Ruffinus, that some bring forward as against this opinion that souls are created for each individual separately at birth the objection that it seems worthy of God that He should give souls to the offspring of adulterers, and who accordingly attempt to build on this a theory that souls may possibly be incarcerated, as it were, in such bodies, to suffer for the deeds of a life spent in some prior state of being,—this objection does not disturb me, as many things by which it may be answered occur to me when I consider it. The answer which you yourself have given, saying, that in the case of stolen wheat, there is no fault in the grain, but only in him who stole it, and that the earth is not under obligation to refuse to cherish the seed because the sower may have cast it in with a hand defiled by dishonesty, is a most felicitous illustration. But even before I had read it, I felt that to me the objection drawn from the offspring of adulterers caused no serious difficulty when I took a general view of the fact that God brings many good things to light, even out of our evils and our sins. Now, the creation of any living creature compels every one who considers it with piety and wisdom to give to the Creator praise which words cannot express; and if this praise is called forth

by the creation of any living creature whatsoever, how much more is it called forth by the creation of a man! If, therefore, the cause of any act of creative power be sought for, no shorter or better reply can be given than that every creature of God is good. And [so far from such an act being unworthy of God] what is more worthy of Him than that He, being good, should make those good things which, no one else than God alone can make?

Chap. VI

16. These things, and others which I can advance, I am accustomed to state, as well as I can, against those who attempt to overthrow by such objections the opinion that souls are made for each individual, as the first man’s soul was made for him.

But when we come to the penal sufferings of infants, I am embarrassed, believe me, by great difficulties, and am wholly at a loss to find an answer by which they are solved; and I speak here not only of those punishments in the life to come, which are involved in that perdition to which they must be drawn down if they depart from the body without the sacrament of Christian grace, but also of the sufferings which are to our sorrow endured by them before our eyes in this present life, and which are so various, that time rather than examples would fail me if I were to attempt to enumerate them. They are liable to wasting disease, to racking pain, to the agonies of thirst and hunger, to feebleness of limbs, to privation of bodily senses, and to vexing assaults of unclean spirits. Surely it is incumbent on us to show how it is compatible with justice that infants suffer all these things without any evil of their own as the procuring cause. For it would be impious to say, either that these things take place without God’s knowledge, or that He cannot resist those who cause them, or that He unrighteously does these things, or permits them to be done. We are warranted in saying that irrational animals are given by God to serve creatures possessing a higher nature, even though they be wicked, as we see most plainly in the gospel that the swine of the Gadarenes were given to the legion of devils at their request; but could we ever be warranted in saying this of men? Certainly not. Man is, indeed, an animal, but an animal endowed with reason, though mortal. In his members dwells a reasonable soul, which in these severe afflictions is enduring a penalty. Now God is good, God is just, God is omnipotent—none but a madman would doubt that he is so; let the great sufferings, therefore, which infant children experience be accounted for by some reason compatible with justice. When older people suffer such trials, we are accustomed, certainly, to say, either that their worth is being proved, as in Job’s case, or that their wickedness is being punished, as in Herod’s; and from some examples, which it has pleased God to make perfectly clear, men are enabled to conjecture the nature of others which are more obscure; but this is in regard to persons of mature age. Tell me, therefore, what we must answer in regard to infant children; is it true that, although they suffer so great punishments, there are no sins in them deserving to be punished? for, of course, there is not in them at that age any righteousness requiring to be put to the proof.

17. What shall I say, moreover, as to the [difficulty which besets the theory of the creation of each soul separately at the birth of the individual in connection with the] diversity of talent in different souls, and especially the absolute privation of reason in some? This is, indeed, not apparent in the first stages of infancy, but being developed continuously from the beginning of life, it becomes manifest in children, of whom some are so slow and defective in memory that they cannot learn even the letters of the alphabet, and some (commonly called idiots) so imbecile that they differ very little from the beasts of the field. Perhaps I am told, in answer to this, that the bodies are the cause of these imperfections. But surely the opinion which we wish to see vindicated from objection does not require us to affirm that the soul chose for itself the body which so impairs it, and, being deceived in the choice, committed a blunder; or that the soul, when it was compelled, as a necessary consequence of being born, to enter into some body, was hindered from finding another by crowds of souls occupying the other bodies before it came, so that, like a man who takes whatever seat may remain vacant for him in a theatre, the soul was guided in taking possession of the imperfect body not by its choice, but by its circumstances. We, of course, cannot say and ought not to believe such things. Tell us, therefore, what we ought to believe and to say in order to vindicate from this difficulty the theory that for each individual body a new soul is specially created.

18. In my books on Free Will, already referred to, I have said something, not in regard to the variety of capacities in different souls, but, at least, in regard to the pains which infant children suffer in this life. The nature of the opinion which I there expressed, and the reason why it is insufficient for the purposes of our present inquiry, I will now submit to you, and will put into this letter a copy of the passage in the third book to which I refer. It is as follows:—"In connection with the bodily sufferings experienced by the little children who, by reason of their tender age, have no sins—if the souls which animate them did not exist before they were born into the human family—a more grievous and, as it were, compassionate complaint is very commonly made in the remark, What evil have they done that they should suffer these things?' as if there could be a meritorious innocence in any one before the time at which it is possible for him to do anything wrong! Moreover, if God accomplishes, in any measure, the correction of the parents when they are chastised by the sufferings or by the death of the children that are dear to them, is there any reason why these things should not take place, seeing that, after they are passed, they will be, to those who experienced them, as if they had never been, while the persons on whose account they were inflicted will either become better, being moved by the rod of temporal afflictions to choose a better mode of life, or be left without excuse under the punishment awarded at the coming judgment, if, notwithstanding the sorrows of this life, they have refused to turn their desires towards eternal life? Morever, who knows what may be given to the little children by means of whose sufferings the parents have their obdurate hearts subdued, or their faith exercised, or their compassion proved? Who knows what good recompense God may, in the secret of his judgments, reserve for these little ones? For although they have done no righteous action, nevertheless, being free from any transgression of their own, they have suffered these trials. It is certainly not without reason that the Church exalts to the honourable rank of martyrs those children who were slain when Herod sought our Lord Jesus Christ to put Him to death."

19. These things I wrote at that time when I was endeavouring to defend the opinion which is now under discussion. For, as I mentioned shortly before, I was labouring to prove that whichever of these four opinions regarding the

soul’s incarnation may be found true, the substance of the Creator is absolutely free from blame, and is completely removed from all share in our sins. And, therefore, whichever of these opinions might come to be established or demolished by the truth, this had no bearing on the object aimed at in the work which I was then attempting, seeing that whichever opinion might win the victory over all the rest, after they had been examined in a more thorough discussion, this would take place without causing me any disquietude, because my object then was to prove that, even admitting all these opinions, the doctrine maintained by me remained unshaken. But now my object is, by the force of sound reasoning, to select, if possible, one opinion out of the four; and, therefore, when I carefully consider the words now quoted from that book, I do not see that the arguments there used in defending the opinion which we are now discussing are valid and conclusive.

20. For what may be called the chief prop of my defence is in the sentence, “Moreover, who knows what may be given to the little children, by means of whose sufferings the parents have their obdurate hearts subdued, or their faith exercised, or their compassion proved? Who knows what good recompense God may, in the secret of His judgments, reserve for these little ones?” I see that this is not an unwarranted conjecture in the case of infants who, in any way, suffer (though they know it not) for the sake of Christ and in the cause of true religion, and of infants who have already been made partakers of the sacrament of Christ; because, apart from union to the one Mediator, they cannot be delivered from condemnation, and so put in a position in which it is even possible that a recompense could be made to them for the evils which, in diverse afflictions, they have endured in this world. But since the question cannot be fully solved, unless the answer include also the case of those who, without having received the sacrament of Christian fellowship, die in infancy after enduring the most painful sufferings, what recompense can be conceived of in their case, seeing that, besides all that they suffer in this life, perdition awaits them in the life to come? As to the baptism of infants, I have, in the same book, given an answer, not, indeed, fully, but so far as seemed necessary for the work which then occupied me, proving that it profits children, even though they do not know what it is, and have, as yet, no faith of their own; but on the

subject of the perdition of those infants who depart from this life without baptism, I did not think it necessary to say anything then, because the question under discussion was different from that with which we are now engaged.

21. If, however, we pass over and make no account of those sufferings which are of brief continuance, and which, when endured, are not to be repeated, we certainly cannot, in like manner, make no account of the fact that "by one man death came, and by one man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." For, according to this apostolical, divine, and perspicuous declaration, it is sufficiently plain that no one goes to death otherwise than through Adam, and that no one goes to life eternal otherwise than through Christ. For this is the force of all in the two parts of the sentence; as all men, by their first, that is, their natural birth, belong to Adam, even so all men, whoever they be, who come to Christ come to the second, that is, the spiritual birth. For this reason, therefore, the word all is used in both clauses, because as all who die do not die otherwise than in Adam, so all who shall be made alive shall not be made alive otherwise than in Christ. Wherefore whosoever tells us that any man can be made alive in the resurrection of the dead otherwise than in Christ, he is to be detested as a pestilent enemy to the common faith. Likewise, whosoever says that those children who depart out of this life without partaking of that sacrament shall be made alive in Christ, certainly contradicts the apostolic declaration, and condemns the universal Church, in which it is the practice to lose no time and run in haste to administer baptism to infant children, because it is believed, as an indubitable truth, that otherwise they cannot be made alive in Christ. Now he that is not made alive in Christ must necessarily remain under the condemnation, of which the apostle says, that "by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." That infants are born under the guilt of this offence is believed by the whole Church. It is also a doctrine which you have most faithfully set forth, both in your treatise against Jovinian and your exposition of Jonah, as I mentioned above, and, if I am not mistaken, in other parts of your works which I have not read or have at present forgotten. I therefore ask, what is the ground of this condemnation of unbaptized infants? For if new souls are made for men, individually, at their birth, I do

not see, on the one hand, that they could have any sin while yet in infancy, nor do I believe, on the other hand, that God condemns any soul which He sees to have no sin.

Chap. VIII

22. Are we perchance to say, in answer to this, that in the infant the body alone is the cause of sin; but that for each body a new soul is made, and that if this soul live according to the precepts of God, by the help of the grace of Christ, the reward of being made incorruptible may be secured for the body itself, when subdued and kept under the yoke; and that inasmuch as the soul of an infant cannot yet do this, unless it receive the sacrament of Christ, that which could not yet be obtained for the body by the holiness of the soul is obtained for it by the grace of this sacrament; but if the soul of an infant depart without the sacrament, it shall itself dwell in life eternal, from which it could not be separated, as it had no sin, while, however, the body which it occupied shall not rise again in Christ, because the sacrament had not been received before its death?

23. This opinion I have never heard or read anywhere. I have, however, certainly heard and believed the statement which led me to speak thus, namely, “The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life,”—the resurrection, namely, of which it is said that “by one man came the resurrection of the dead,” and in which “all shall be made alive in Christ,”—”and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” Now, what is to be understood regarding infants which, before they could do good or evil, have quitted the body without baptism? Nothing is said here concerning them. But if the bodies of these infants shall not rise again, because they have never done either good or evil, the bodies of the infants that have died after receiving the grace of baptism shall also have no resurrection, because they also were not in this life able to do good or evil. If, however, these are to rise among the saints, i.e. among those who have done good, among whom shall the others rise again but among those who have done evil—unless we are to believe that some human souls shall not receive, either in the resurrection of life, or in the resurrection of damnation, the bodies which they lost in death? This opinion, however, is condemned,

even before it is formally refuted, by its absolute novelty; and besides this, who could bear to think that those who run with their infant children to have them baptized, are prompted to do so by a regard for their bodies, not for their souls? The blessed Cyprian, indeed, said, in order to correct those who thought that an infant should not be baptized before the eighth day, that it was not the body but the soul which behoved to be saved from perdition—in which statement he was not inventing any new doctrine, but preserving the firmly established faith of the Church; and he, along with some of his colleagues in the episcopal office, held that a child may be properly baptized immediately after its birth.

24. Let every man, however, believe anything which commends itself to his own judgment, even though it run counter to some opinion of Cyprian, who may not have seen in the matter what should have been seen. But let no man believe anything which runs counter to the perfectly unambiguous apostolical declaration, that by the offence of one all are brought into condemnation, and that from this condemnation nothing sets men free but the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom alone life is given to all who are made alive. And let no man believe anything which runs counter to the firmly grounded practice of the Church, in which, if the sole reason for hastening the administration of baptism were to save the children, the dead as well as the living would be brought to be baptized.

25. These things being so, it is necessary still to investigate and to make known the reason why, if souls are created new for every individual at his birth, those who die in infancy without the sacrament of Christ are doomed to perdition; for that they are doomed to this if they so depart from the body is testified both by Holy Scripture and by the holy Church. Wherefore, as to that opinion of yours concerning the creation of new souls, if it does not contradict this firmly grounded article of faith, let it be mine also; but if it does, let it be no longer yours.

26. Let it not be said to me that we ought to receive as supporting this opinion the words of Scripture in Zechariah, “He formeth the spirit of man within him,” and in the book of Psalms, “He formeth their hearts severally.” We must seek for the strongest and most indisputable proof, that we may not be compelled to believe that God is a judge who condemns any soul

which has no fault. For to create signifies either as much or, probably, more than to form [fingere]; nevertheless it is written, “Create in me a clean heart, O God,” and yet it cannot be supposed that a soul here expresses a desire to be made before it has begun to exist. Therefore, as it is a soul already existing which is created by being renewed in righteousness, so it is a soul already existing which is formed by the moulding power of doctrine. Nor is your opinion, which I would willingly make my own, supported by that sentence in Ecclesiastes, “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return to God who gave it.” Nay, it rather favours those who think that all souls are derived from one; for they say that, as the dust returns to the earth as it was, and yet the body of which this is said returns not to the man from whom it was derived, but to the earth from which the first man was made, the spirit in like manner, though derived from the spirit of the first man, does not return to him but to the Lord, by whom it was given to our first parent. Since, however, the testimony of this passage in their favour is not so decisive as to make it appear altogether opposed to the opinion which I shall gladly see vindicated, I thought proper to submit these remarks on it to your judgment, to prevent you from endeavouring to deliver me from my perplexities by quoting passages such as these. For although no man’s wishes can make that true which is not true, nevertheless, were this possible, I would wish that this opinion should be true, as I do wish that, if it is true, it should be most clearly and unanswerably vindicated by you.

Chap. IX

27. The same difficulty attends those also who hold that souls already existing elsewhere, and prepared from the beginning of the works of God, are sent by Him into bodies. For to these persons also the same question may be put: If these souls, being without any fault, go obediently to the bodies to which they are sent, why are they subjected to punishment in the case of infants, if they come without being baptized to the end of this life? The same difficulty unquestionably attaches to both opinions. Those who affirm that each soul is, according to the deserts of its actions in an earlier state of being, united to the body alloted to it in this life, imagine that they escape more easily from this difficulty. For they think that to “die in Adam”

means to suffer punishment in that flesh which is derived from Adam, from which condition of guilt the grace of Christ, they say, delivers the young as well as the old. So far, indeed, they teach what is right, and true, and excellent, when they say that the grace of Christ delivers the young as well as the old from the guilt of sins. But that souls sin in another earlier life, and that for their sins in that state of being they are cast down into bodies as prisons, I do not believe: I reject and protest against such an opinion. I do this, in the first place, because they affirm that this is accomplished by means of some incomprehensible revolutions, so that after I know not how many cycles the soul must return again to the same burden of corruptible flesh and to the endurance of punishment,—than which opinion I do not know that anything more horrible could be conceived. In the next place, who is the righteous man gone from the earth about whom we should not (if what they say is true) feel afraid lest, sinning in Abraham's bosom, he should be cast down into the flames which tormented the rich man in the parable? For why may the soul not sin after leaving the body, if it can sin before entering it? Finally, to have sinned in Adam (in regard to which the apostle says that in him all have sinned) is one thing, but it is a wholly different thing to have sinned, I know not where, outside of Adam, and then because of this to be thrust into Adam—that is, into the body, which is derived from Adam, as into a prison-house. As to the other opinion mentioned above, that all souls are derived from one, I will not begin to discuss it unless I am under necessity to do so; and my desire is, that if the opinion which we are now discussing is true, it may be so vindicated by you that there shall be no longer any necessity for examining the other.

28. Although, however, I desire and ask, and with fervent prayers wish and hope, that by you the Lord may remove my ignorance on this subject, if, after all, I am found unworthy to obtain this, I will beg the grace of patience from the Lord our God, in whom we have such faith, that even if there be some things which He does not open to us when we knock, we know it would be wrong to murmur in the least against Him. I remember what He said to the apostles themselves: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Among these things, so far at least as I am concerned, let me still reckon this, and let me guard against being angry that I am deemed unworthy to possess this knowledge, lest by such anger I be

all the more clearly proved to be unworthy. I am equally ignorant of many other things, yea, of more than I could name or even number; and of this I would be more patiently ignorant, were it not that I fear lest some one of these opinions, involving the contradiction of truth which we most assuredly believe, should insinuate itself into the minds of the unwary. Meanwhile, though I do not yet know which of these opinions is to be preferred, this one thing I profess as my deliberate conviction, that the opinion which is true does not conflict with that most firm and well grounded article in the faith of the Church of Christ, that infant children, even when they are newly born, can be delivered from perdition in no other way than through the grace of Christ's name, which He has given in His sacraments.

LETTER CLXVII

(A.D. 415.)

From Augustin to Jerome on James II. 10.

Chap. I

1. My brother Jerome, esteemed worthy to be honoured in Christ by me, when I wrote to you propounding this question concerning the human soul,—if a new soul be now created for each individual at birth, whence do souls contract the bond of guilt which we assuredly believe to be removed by the sacrament of the grace of Christ, when administered even to new-born children?—as the letter on that subject grew to the size of a considerable volume, I was unwilling to impose the burden of any other question at that time; but there is a subject which has a much stronger claim on my attention, as it presses more seriously on my mind. I therefore ask you, and in God's name beseech you, to do something which will, I believe, be of great service to many, namely, to explain to me (or to direct me to any work in which you or any other commentator has already expounded) the sense in which we are to understand these words in the Epistle of James, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." This subject is of such importance that I very greatly regret that I did not write to you in regard to it long ago.

2. For whereas in the question which I thought it necessary to submit to you concerning the soul, our inquiries were engaged with the investigation of a life wholly past and sunk out of sight in oblivion, in this question we study this present life, and how it must be spent if we would attain to eternal life. As an apt illustration of this remark let me quote an entertaining anecdote. A man had fallen into a well where the quantity of water was sufficient to break his fall and save him from death, but not deep enough to cover his mouth and deprive him of speech. Another man approached, and on seeing him cries out in surprise: “How did you fall in here?” He answers: “I beseech you to plan how you can get me out of this, rather than ask how I fell in.” So, since we admit and hold as an article of the Catholic faith, that the soul of even a little infant requires to be delivered out of the guilt of sin, as out of a pit, by the grace of Christ, it is sufficient for the soul of such a one that we know the way in which it is saved, even though we should never know the way in which it came into that wretched condition. But I thought it our duty to inquire into this subject, lest we should incautiously hold any one of those opinions concerning the manner of the soul’s becoming united with the body which might contradict the doctrine that the souls of little children require to be delivered, by denying that they are subject to the bond of guilt. This, then, being very firmly held by us, that the soul of every infant needs to be freed from the guilt of sin, and can be freed in no other way except by the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, if we can ascertain the cause and origin of the evil itself, we are better prepared and equipped for resisting adversaries whose empty talk I call not reasoning but quibbling; if, however, we cannot ascertain the cause, the fact that the origin of this misery is hid from us is no reason for our being slothful in the work which compassion demands from us. In our conflict, however, with those who appear to themselves to know what they do not know, we have an additional strength and safety in not being ignorant of our ignorance on this subject. For there are some things which it is evil not to know; there are other things which cannot be known, or are not necessary to be known, or have no bearing on the life which we seek to obtain; but the question which I now submit to you from the writings of the Apostle James is intimately connected with the course of conduct in which we live, and in which, with a view to life eternal, we endeavour to please God.

3. How, then, I beseech you, are we to understand the words: “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all”? Does this affirm that the person who shall have committed theft, nay, who even shall have said to the rich man, “Sit thou here” and to the poor man, “Stand thou there,” is guilty of homicide, and adultery, and sacrilege? And if he is not so, how can it be said that a person who has offended in one point has become guilty of all? Or are the things which the apostle said concerning the rich man and the poor man not to be reckoned among those things in one of which if any man offend he becomes guilty of all? But we must remember whence that sentence is taken, and what goes before it, and in what connection it occurs. “My brethren,” he says, “have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with respect of persons. For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool; are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him? But ye have despised the poor,”—inasmuch as you have said to the poor man, “Stand thou there,” when you would have said to a man with a gold ring, “Sit thou here in a good place.” And then there follows a passage explaining and enlarging upon that same conclusion: “Do not rich men oppress you by their power, and draw you before the judgment-seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.” See how the apostle calls those transgressors of the law who say to the rich man, “Sit here,” and to the poor, “Stand there.” See how, lest they should think it a trifling sin to transgress the law in this one thing, he goes on to add: “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou do not kill, yet, if thou commit adultery, thou art become a transgressor of the law,” according to that which he had said: “Ye are convinced of the law as transgressors.” Since these things are so, it seems to

follow, unless it can be shown that we are to understand it in some other way, that he who says to the rich man, “Sit here,” and to the poor, “Stand there,” not treating the one with the same respect as the other, is to be judged guilty as an idolater, and a blasphemer, and an adulterer, and a murderer—in short,—not to enumerate all, which would be tedious,—as guilty of all crimes, since, offending in one, he is guilty of all.”

Chap. II

4. But has he who has one virtue all virtues? and has he no virtues who lacks one? If this be true, the sentence of the apostle is thereby confirmed. But what I desire is to have the sentence explained, not confirmed, since of itself it stands more sure in our esteem than all the authority of philosophers could make it. And even if what has just been said concerning virtues and vices were true, it would not follow that therefore all sins are equal. For as to the inseparable co-existence of the virtues, this is a doctrine in regard to which, if I remember rightly, what, indeed, I have almost forgotten (though perhaps I am mistaken), all philosophers who affirm that virtues are essential to the right conduct of life are agreed. The doctrine of the equality of sins, however, the Stoics alone dared to maintain in opposition to the unanimous sentiments of mankind: an absurd tenet, which in writing against Jovinianus (a Stoic in this opinion, but an Epicurean in following after and defending pleasure) you have most clearly refuted from the Holy Scriptures. In that most delightful and noble dissertation you have made it abundantly plain that it has not been the doctrine of our authors, or rather of the Truth Himself, who has spoken through them, that all sins are equal. I shall now do my utmost in endeavouring, with the help of God, to show how it can be that, although the doctrine of philosophers concerning virtues is true, we are nevertheless not compelled to admit the Stoics’ doctrine that all sins are equal. If I succeed, I will look for your approbation, and in whatever respect I come short, I beg you to supply my deficiencies.

5. Those who maintain that he who has one virtue has all, and that he who lacks one lacks all, reason correctly from the fact that prudence cannot be cowardly, nor unjust, nor intemperate; for if it were any of these it would no longer be prudence. Moreover, if it be prudence only when it is brave, and just, and temperate, assuredly wherever it exists it must have the other

virtues along with it. In like manner, also, courage cannot be imprudent, or intemperate, or unjust; temperance must of necessity be prudent, brave, and just; and justice does not exist unless it be prudent, brave, and temperate. Thus, wherever any one of these virtues truly exists, the others likewise exist; and where some are absent, that which may appear in some measure to resemble virtue is not really present.

6. There are, as you know, some vices opposed to virtues by a palpable contrast, as imprudence is the opposite of prudence. But there are some vices opposed to virtues simply because they are vices which, nevertheless, by a deceitful appearance resemble virtues; as, for example, in the relation, not of imprudence, but of craftiness to the said virtue of prudence. I speak here of that craftiness which is wont to be understood and spoken of in connection with the evilly disposed, not in the sense in which the word is usually employed in our Scriptures, where it is often used in a good sense, as, "Be crafty as serpents," and again, to give craftiness to the simple." It is true that among heathen writers one of the most accomplished of Latin authors, speaking of Catiline, has said: "Nor was there lacking on his part craftiness to guard against danger," using "craftiness" (astutia) in a good sense; but the use of the word in this sense is among them very rare, among us very common. So also in regard to the virtues classed under temperance. Extravagance is most manifestly opposite to the virtue of frugality; but that which the common people are wont to call niggardliness is indeed a vice, yet one which, not in its nature, but by a very deceitful similarity of appearance, usurps the name of frugality. In the same manner injustice is by a palpable contrast opposed to justice; but the desire of avenging oneself is wont often to be a counterfeit of justice, but it is a vice. There is an obvious contrariety between courage and cowardice; but hardihood, though differing from courage in nature, deceives us by its resemblance to that virtue. Firmness is a part of virtue; fickleness is a vice far removed from and undoubtedly opposed to it; but obstinacy lays claim to the name of firmness, yet is wholly different, because firmness is a virtue, and obstinacy is a vice.

7. To avoid the necessity of again going over the same ground, let us take one case as an example, from which all others may be understood. Catiline,

as those who have written concerning him had means of knowing, was capable of enduring cold, thirst, hunger, and patient in fastings, cold, and watchings beyond what any one could believe, and thus he appeared, both to himself and to his followers, a man endowed with great courage. But this courage was not prudent, for he chose the evil instead of the good; was not temperate, for his life was disgraced by the lowest dissipation; was not just, for he conspired against his country; and therefore it was not courage, but hardihood usurping the name of courage to deceive fools; for if it had been courage, it would not have been a vice but a virtue, and if it had been a virtue, it would never have been abandoned by the other virtues, its inseparable companions.

8. On this account, when it is asked also concerning vices, whether where one exists all in like manner exist, or where one does not exist none exist, it would be a difficult matter to show this, because two vices are wont to be opposed to one virtue, one that is evidently opposed, and another that bears an apparent likeness. Hence the hardihood of Catiline is the more easily seen not to have been courage, since it had not along with it other virtues; but it may be difficult to convince men that his hardihood was cowardice, since he was in the habit of enduring and patiently submitting to the severest hardships to a degree almost incredible. But perhaps, on examining the matter more closely, this hardihood itself is seen to be cowardice, because he shrunk from the toil of those liberal studies by which true courage is acquired. Nevertheless, as there are rash men who are not guilty of cowardice, and there are cowardly men who are not guilty of rashness, and since in both there is vice, for the truly brave man neither ventures rashly nor fears without reason, we are forced to admit that vices are more numerous than virtues.

9. Accordingly, it happens sometimes that one vice is supplanted by another, as the love of money by the love of praise. Occasionally, one vice quits the field that more may take its place, as in the case of the drunkard, who, after becoming temperate in the use of drink, may come under the power of niggardliness and ambition. It is possible, therefore, that vices may give place to vices, not to virtues, as their successors, and thus they are more numerous. When one virtue, however, has entered, there will

infallibly be (since it brings all the other virtues along with it) a retreat of all vices whatsoever that were in the man; for all vices were not in him, but at one time so many, at another a greater or smaller number might occupy their place.

Chap. III

10. We must inquire more carefully whether these things are so; for the statement that "he who has one virtue has all, and that all virtues are awanting to him who lacks one," is not given by inspiration, but is the view held by many men, ingenious, indeed, and studious, but still men. But I must avow that, in the case—I shall not say of one of those from whose name the word virtue is said to be derived, but even of a woman who is faithful to her husband, and who is so from a regard to the commandments and promises of God, and, first of all, is faithful to Him, I do not know how I could say of her that she is unchaste, or that chastity is no virtue or a trifling one. I should feel the same in regard to a husband who is faithful to his wife; and yet there are many such, none of whom I could affirm to be without any sins, and doubtless the sin which is in them, whatever it be, proceeds from some vice. Whence it follows that though conjugal fidelity in religious men and women is undoubtedly a virtue, for it is neither a nonentity nor a vice, yet it does not bring along with it all virtues, for if all virtues were there, there would be no vice, and if there were no vice, there would be no sin; but where is the man who is altogether without sin? Where, therefore, is the man who is without any vice, that is, fuel or root, as it were, of sin, when he who reclined on the breast of the Lord says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us"? It is not necessary for us to urge this at greater length in writing to you, but I make the statement for the sake of others who perhaps shall read this. For you, indeed, in that same splendid work against Jovinianus, have carefully proved this from the Holy Scriptures; in which work also you have quoted the words, "in many things we all offend," from this very epistle in which occur the words whose meaning we are now investigating. For though it is an apostle of Christ who is speaking, he does not say, "ye offend," but, "we offend;" and although in the passage under consideration he says, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is

guilty of all," in the words just quoted he affirms that we offend not in one thing but in many, and not that some offend but that we all offend.

11. Far be it, however, from any believer to think that so many thousands of the servants of Christ, who, lest they should deceive themselves, and the truth should not be in them, sincerely confess themselves to have sin, are altogether without virtue! For wisdom is a great virtue, and wisdom herself has said to man, "Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom." Far be it from us, then, to say that so many and so great believing and pious men have not the fear of the Lord, which the Greeks call eusebeia, or more literally and fully, theosebeia. And what is the fear of the Lord but His worship? and whence is He truly worshipped except from love? Love, then, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned, is the great and true virtue, because it is "the end of the commandment." Deservedly is love said to be "strong as death," because, like death, it is vanquished by none; or because the measure of love in this life is even unto death, as the Lord says, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;" or, rather, because, as death forcibly separates the soul from the senses of the body, so love separates it from fleshly lusts. Knowledge, when it is of the right kind, is the handmaid to love, for without love "knowledge puffeth up," but where love, by edifying, has filled the heart, there knowledge will find nothing empty which it can puff up. Moreover, Job has shown, what is that useful knowledge by defining it where, after saying, "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom" he adds "and to depart from evil, that is understanding." Why do we not then say that the man who has this virtue has all virtues, since "love is the fulfilling of the law?" Is it not true that, the more love exists in a man the more he is endowed with virtue, and the less love he has the less virtue is in him, for love is itself virtue; and the less virtue there is in a man so much the more vice will there be in him? Therefore, where love is full and perfect, no vice will remain.

12. The Stoics, therefore, appear to me to be mistaken in refusing to admit that a man who is advancing in wisdom has any wisdom at all, and in affirming that he alone has it who has become altogether perfect in wisdom. They do not, indeed, deny that he has made progress, but they say that he is in no degree entitled to be called wise, unless, by emerging, so to speak,

from the depths, he suddenly springs forth into the free air of wisdom. For, as it matters not when a man is drowning whether the depth of water above him be many stadia or only the breadth of a hand or finger, so they say in regard to the progress of those who are advancing towards wisdom, that they are like men rising from the bottom of a whirlpool towards the air, but that unless they by their progress, so escape as to emerge wholly from folly as from an overwhelming flood, they have not virtue and are not wise; but that, when they have so escaped, they immediately have wisdom in perfection, and not a vestige of folly whence any sin could be originated remains.

13. This simile, in which folly is compared to water and wisdom to air, so that the mind emerging, as it were, from the stifling influence of folly breathes suddenly the free air of wisdom, does not appear to me to harmonize sufficiently with the authoritative statement of our Scriptures; a better simile, so far, at least, as illustration of spiritual things can be borrowed from material things, is that which compares vice or folly to darkness, and virtue or wisdom to light. The way to wisdom is therefore not like that of a man rising from the water into the air, in which, in the moment of rising above the surface of the water, he suddenly breathes freely, but, like that of a man proceeding from darkness into light, on whom more light gradually shines as he advances. So long, therefore, as this is not fully accomplished, we speak of the man as of one going from the dark recesses of a vast cavern towards its entrance, who is more and more influenced by the proximity of the light as he comes nearer to the entrance of the cavern; so that whatever light he has proceeds from the light to which he is advancing, and whatever darkness still remains in him proceeds from the darkness out of which he is emerging. Therefore it is true that in the sight of God “shall no man living be justified,” and yet that “the just shall live by his faith.” On the one hand, “the saints are clothed with righteousness,” one more, another less; on the other hand, no one lives here wholly without sin—one sins more, another less, and the best is the man who sins least.

Chap. IV

14. But why have I, as if forgetting to whom I address myself, assumed the tone of a teacher in stating the question regarding which I wish to be

instructed by you? Nevertheless, as I had resolved to submit to your examination my opinion regarding the equality of sins (a subject involving a question closely bearing on the matter on which I was writing), let me now at last bring my statement to a conclusion. Even though it were true that he who has one virtue has all virtues, and that he who lacks one virtue has none, this would not involve the consequence that all sins are equal; for although it is true that where there is no virtue there is nothing right, it by no means follows that among bad actions one cannot be worse than another, or that divergence from that which is right does not admit of degrees. I think, however, that it is more agreeable to truth and consistent with the Holy Scriptures to say, that what is true of the members of the body is true of the different dispositions of the soul (which, though not seen occupying different places, are by their distinctive workings perceived as plainly as the members of the body), namely, that as in the same body one member is more fully shone upon by the light, another is less shone upon, and a third is altogether without light, and remains in the dark under some impervious covering, something similar takes place in regard to the various dispositions of the soul. If this be so, then according to the manner in which every man is shone upon by the light of holy love, he may be said to have one virtue and to lack another virtue, or to have one virtue in larger and another in smaller measure. For in reference to that love which is the fear of God, we may correctly say both that it is greater in one man than in another, and that there is some of it in one man, and none of it in another; we may also correctly say as to an individual that he has greater chastity than patience, and that he has either virtue in a higher degree than he had yesterday, if he is making progress, or that he still lacks self-control, but possesses, at the same time, a large measure of compassion.

15. To sum up generally and briefly the view which, so far as relates to holy living, I entertain concerning virtue,—virtue is the love with which that which ought to be loved is loved. This is in some greater, in others less, and there are men in whom it does not exist at all; but in the absolute fulness which admits of no increase, it exists in no man while living on this earth; so long, however, as it admits of being increased there can be no doubt that, in so far as it is less than it ought to be, the shortcoming proceeds from vice. Because of this vice there is “not a just man upon earth that doeth good and

sinneth not;" because of this vice, "in God's sight shall no man living be justified." On account of this vice, "if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." On account of this also, whatever progress we may have made, we must say, "Forgive us our debts," although all debts in word, deed, and thought were washed away in baptism. He, then, who sees aright, sees whence, and when, and where he must hope for that perfection to which nothing can be added. Moreover, if there had been no commandments, there would have been no means whereby a man might certainly examine himself and see from what things he ought to turn aside, whither he should aspire, and in what things he should find occasion for thanksgiving or for prayer. Great, therefore, is the benefit of commandments, if to free will so much liberty be granted that the grace of God may be more abundantly honoured.

Chap. V

16. If these things be so, how shall a man who shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, be guilty of all? May it not be, that since the fulfilling of the law is that love wherewith we love God and our neighbour, on which commandments of love "hang all the law and the prophets," he is justly held to be guilty of all who violates that on which all hang? Now, no one sins without violating this love; "for this, thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shall do no murder; thou shall not steal; thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." No one, however, loves his neighbour who does not out of his love to God do all in his power to bring his neighbour also, whom he loves as himself, to love God, whom if he does not love, he neither loves himself nor his neighbour. Hence it is true that if a man shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he becomes guilty of all, because he does what is contrary to the love on which hangs the whole law. A man, therefore, becomes guilty of all by doing what is contrary to that on which all hang.

17. Why, then, may not all sins be said to be equal? May not the reason be, that the transgression of the law of love is greater in him who commits a more grievous sin, and is less in him who commits a less grievous sin? And

in the mere fact of his committing any sin whatever, he becomes guilty of all; but in committing a more grievous sin, or in sinning in more respects than one, he becomes more guilty; committing a less grievous sin, or sinning in fewer respects, he becomes less guilty,—his guilt being thus so much the greater the more he has sinned, the less the less he has sinned. Nevertheless, even though it be only in one point that he offend, he is guilty of all, because he violates that love on which all hang. If these things be true, an explanation is by this means found, clearing up that saying of the man of apostolic grace, “In many things we offend all.” For we all offend, but one more grievously, another more slightly, according as each may have committed a more grievous or a less grievous sin; every one being great in the practice of sin in proportion as he is deficient in loving God and his neighbour, and, on the other hand, decreasing in the practice of sin in proportion as he increases in the love of God and of his neighbour. The more, therefore, that a man is deficient in love, the more is he full of sin. And perfection in love is reached when nothing of sinful infirmity remains in us.

18. Nor, indeed, in my opinion, are we to esteem it a trifling sin “to have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons,” if we take the difference between sitting and standing, of which mention is made in the context, to refer to ecclesiastical honours; for who can bear to see a rich man chosen to a place of honour in the Church, while a poor man, of superior qualifications and of greater holiness, is despised? If, however, the apostle speaks there of our daily assemblies, who does not offend in the matter? At the same time, only those really offend here who cherish in their hearts the opinion that a man’s worth is to be estimated according to his wealth; for this seems to be the meaning of the expression, “Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?”

19. The law of liberty, therefore, the law of love, is that of which he says: “If ye fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. And then (after the difficult sentence, “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all,” concerning which I have with sufficient

fulness stated my opinion), making mention of the same law of liberty, he says: “So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.” And as he knew by experience what he had said a little before, “in many things we offend all,” he suggests a sovereign remedy, to be applied, as it were day by day, to those less serious but real wounds which the soul suffers day by day, for he says: “He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy.” For with the same purpose the Lord says: “Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: give, and it shall be given unto you.” After which the apostle says: “But mercy rejoiceth over judgment:” it is not said that mercy prevails over judgment, for it is not an adversary of judgment, but it “rejoiceth” over judgment, because a greater number are gathered in by mercy; but they are those who have shown mercy, for, “Blessed are the merciful, for God shall have mercy on them.”

20. It is, therefore, by all means just that they be forgiven, because they have forgiven others, and that what they need be given to them, because they have given to others. For God uses mercy when He judgeth, and uses judgment when He showeth mercy. Hence the Psalmist says: “I will sing of mercy and of judgment unto Thee, O Lord.” For if any man, thinking himself too righteous to require mercy, presumes, as if he had no reason for anxiety, to wait for judgment without mercy, he provokes that most righteous indignation through fear of which the Psalmist said: “Enter not into judgment with Thy servant.” For this reason the Lord says to a disobedient people: “Wherefore will ye contend with me in judgment? For when the righteous King shall sit upon His throne, who shall boast that he has a pure heart, or who shall boast that he is clean from sin? What hope is there then unless mercy shall “rejoice over” judgment? But this it will do only in the case of those who have showed mercy, saying with sincerity, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” and who have given without murmuring, for “the Lord loveth a cheerful giver.” To conclude, St. James is led to speak thus concerning works of mercy in this passage, in order that he may console those whom the statements immediately foregoing might have greatly alarmed, his purpose being to admonish us how those daily sins from which our life is never free here below may also be expiated by daily remedies; lest any man, becoming guilty of all when he offends in even one point, be brought, by offending in many points (since

“in many things we all offend”), to appear before the bar of the Supreme Judge under the enormous amount of guilt which has accumulated by degrees, and find at that tribunal no mercy, because he showed no mercy to others, instead of rather meriting the forgiveness of his own sins, and the enjoyment of the gifts promised in Scripture, by his extending forgiveness and bounty to others.

21. I have written at great length, which may perhaps have been tedious to you, as you, although approving of the statements now made, do not expect to be addressed as if you were but learning truths which you have been accustomed to teach to others. If, however, there be anything in these statements—not in the style of language in which they are expounded, for I am not much concerned as to mere phrases, but in the substance of the statements—which your erudite judgment condemns, I beseech you to point this out to me in your reply, and do not hesitate to correct my error. For I pity the man who, in view of the unwearied labour and sacred character of your studies, does not on account of them both render to you the honour which you deserve, and give thanks unto our Lord God by whose grace you are what you are. Wherefore, since I ought to be more willing to learn from any teacher the things of which to my disadvantage I am ignorant, than prompt to teach any others what I know, with how much greater reason do I claim the payment of this debt of love from you, by whose learning ecclesiastical literature in the Latin tongue has been, in the Lord’s name, and by His help, advanced to an extent which had been previously unattainable. Especially, however, I ask attention to the sentence: “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and offend in one point, is guilty of all.” If you know any better way, my beloved brother, in which it can be explained, I beseech you by the Lord to favour us by communicating to us your exposition.

LETTER CLXIX

(A.D. 415.)

Bishop Augustin to Bishop Evodius.

Chap. I

1. If acquaintance with the treatises which specially occupy me, and from which I am unwilling to be turned aside to anything else, is so highly valued by your Holiness, let some one be sent to copy them for you. For I have now finished several of those which had been commenced by me this year before Easter, near the beginning of Lent. For, to the three books on the City of God, in opposition to its enemies, the worshippers of demons, I have added two others, and in these five books I think enough has been said to answer those who maintain that the [heathen] gods must be worshipped in order to secure prosperity in this present life, and who are hostile to the Christian name from an idea that that prosperity is hindered by us. In the sequel I must, as I promised in the first book, answer those who think that the worship of their gods is the only way to obtain that life after death with a view to obtain which we are Christians. I have dictated also, in volumes of considerable size, expositions of three Psalms, the 68th, the 72d, and the 78th. Commentaries on the other Psalms—not yet dictated, nor even entered on—are eagerly expected and demanded from me. From these studies I am unwilling to be called away and hindered by any questions thrusting themselves upon me from another quarter; yea, so unwilling, that I do not wish to turn at present even to the books on the Trinity, which I have long had on hand and have not yet completed, because they require a great amount of labour, and I believe that they are of a nature to be understood only by few; on which account they claim my attention less urgently than writings which may, I hope, be useful to very many.

2. For the words, “He that is ignorant shall be ignored,” were not used by the apostle in reference to this subject, as your letter affirms; as if this punishment were to be inflicted on the man who is not able to discern by the exercise of his intellect the ineffable unity of the Trinity, in the same way as the unity of memory, understanding, and will in the soul of man is discerned. The apostle said these words with a wholly different design. Consult the passage and you will see that he was speaking of those things which might be for the edification of the many in faith and holiness, not of those which might with difficulty be comprehended by the few, and by them only in the small degree in which the comprehension of so great a subject is attainable in this life. The positions laid down by him were,—that prophesying was to be preferred to speaking with tongues; that these gifts

should not be exercised in a disorderly manner, as if the spirit of prophecy compelled them to speak even against their will; that women should keep silence in the Church; and that all things should be done decently and in order. While treating of these things he says: “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him know the things which I write to you, for they are the commands of the Lord. If any man be ignorant, he shall be ignored;” intending by these words to restrain and call to order persons who were specially ready to cause disorder in the Church, because they imagined themselves to excel in spiritual gifts, although they were disturbing everything by their presumptions conduct. “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him know,” he says, “the things which I write to you, for they are the commands of the Lord.” If any man thinks himself to be, and in reality is not, a prophet, for he who is a prophet undoubtedly knows and does not need admonition and exhortation, because “he judgeth all things, and is himself judged of no man.” Those persons, therefore, caused confusion and trouble in the Church who thought themselves to be in the Church what they were not. He teaches these to know the commandments of the Lord, for he is not a “God of confusion, but of peace.” But “if any one is ignorant, he shall be ignored,” that is to say, he shall be rejected; for God is not ignorant—so far as mere knowledge is concerned—in regard to the persons to whom He shall one day say, “I know you not,” but their rejection is signified by this expression.

3. Moreover, since the Lord says, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,” and that sight is promised to us as the highest reward at the last, we have no reason to fear lest, if we are now unable to see clearly those things which we believe concerning the nature of God, this defective apprehension should bring us under the sentence, “He that is ignorant shall be ignored.” For when “in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those who believed.” This foolishness of preaching and “foolishness of God which is wiser than man” draws many to salvation, in such a way that not only those who are as yet incapable of perceiving with clear intelligence the nature of God which in faith they hold, but even those who have not yet so learned the nature of their own soul as to distinguish between its incorporeal essence and the body as a whole with the same certainty with which they

perceive that they live, understand, and will, are not on this account shut out from that salvation which that foolishness of preaching bestows on believers.

4. For if Christ died for those only who with clear intelligence can discern these things, our labour in the Church is almost spent in vain. But if, as is the fact, crowds of common people, possessing no great strength of intellect, run to the Physician in the exercise of faith, with the result of being healed by Christ and Him crucified, that “where sin has abounded, grace may much more abound,” it comes in wondrous ways to pass, through the depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God and His unsearchable judgments, that, on the one hand, some who do discern between the material and the spiritual in their own nature, while pluming themselves on this attainment, and despising that foolishness of preaching by which those who believe are saved, wander far from the only path which leads to eternal life; and, on the other hand, because not one perishes for whom Christ died, many glorying in the cross of Christ, and not withdrawing from that same path, attain, notwithstanding their ignorance of those things which some with most profound subtlety investigate, unto that eternity, truth, and love,—that is, unto that enduring, clear, and full felicity,—in which to those who abide, and see, and love, all things are plain.

Chap. II

5. Therefore let us with steadfast piety believe in one God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; let us at the same time believe that the Son is not [the person] who is the Father, and the Father is not [the person] who is the Son, and neither the Father nor the Son is [the person] who is the Spirit of both the Father and the Son. Let it not be supposed that in this Trinity there is any separation in respect of time or place, but that these Three are equal and co-eternal, and absolutely of one nature: and that the creatures have been made, not some by the Father, and some by the Son, and some by the Holy Spirit, but that each and all that have been or are now being created subsist in the Trinity as their Creator; and that no one is saved by the Father without the Son and the Holy Spirit, or by the Son without the Father and the Holy Spirit, or by the Holy Spirit without the Father and the Son, but by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the only one, true, and

truly immortal (that is, absolutely unchangeable) God. At the same time, we believe that many things are stated in Scripture separately concerning each of the Three, in order to teach us that, though they are an inseparable Trinity, yet they are a Trinity. For, just as when their names are pronounced in human language they cannot be named simultaneously, although their existence in inseparable union is at every moment simultaneous, even so in some places of Scripture also, they are by certain created things presented to us distinctively and in mutual relation to each other: for example, [at the baptism of Christ] the Father is heard in the voice which said, “Thou art my Son;” the Son is seen in the human nature which, in being born of the Virgin, He assumed; the Holy Spirit is seen in the bodily form of a dove,—these things presenting the Three to our apprehension separately, indeed, but in no wise separated.

6. To present this in a form which the intellect may apprehend, we borrow an illustration from the Memory, the Understanding, and the Will. For although we can speak of each of these faculties severally in its own order, and at a separate time, we neither exercise nor even mention any one of them without the other two. It must not, however, be supposed, from our using this comparison between these three faculties and the Trinity, that the things compared agree in every particular, for where, in any process of reasoning, can we find an illustration in which the correspondence between the things compared is so exact that it admits of application in every point to that which it is intended to illustrate? In the first place, therefore, the similarity is found to be imperfect in this respect, that whereas memory, understanding, and will are not the soul, but only exist in the soul, the Trinity does not exist in God, but is God. In the Trinity, therefore, there is manifested a singleness [simplicitas] commanding our astonishment, because in this Trinity it is not one thing to exist, and another thing to understand, or do anything else which is attributed to the nature of God; but in the soul it is one thing that it exists, and another thing that it understands, for even when it is not using the understanding it still exists. In the second place, who would dare to say that the Father does not understand by Himself but by the Son, as memory does not understand by itself but by the understanding, or, to speak more correctly, the soul in which these faculties are understands by no other faculty than by the understanding, as it

remembers only by memory, and exercises volition only by the will? The point, therefore, to which the illustration is intended to apply is this,—that, whatever be the manner in which we understand, in regard to these three faculties in the soul, that when the several names by which they are severally represented are uttered, the utterance of each separate name is nevertheless accomplished only in the combined operation of all the three, since it is by an act of memory and of understanding and of will that it is spoken,—it is in the same manner that we understand, in regard to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that no created thing which may at any time be employed to present only one of the Three to our minds is produced otherwise than by the simultaneous, because essentially inseparable, operation of the Trinity; and that, consequently, neither the voice of the Father, nor the body and soul of the Son, nor the dove of the Holy Spirit, was produced in any other way than by the combined operation of the Trinity.

7. Moreover, that sound of a voice was certainly not made indissolubly one with the person of the Father, for so soon as it was uttered it ceased to be. Neither was that form of a dove made indissolubly one with the person of Holy Spirit, for it also, like the bright cloud which covered the Saviour and His three disciples on the mount, or rather like the tongues of flame which once represented the same Holy Spirit, ceased to exist as soon as it had served its purpose as a symbol. But it was otherwise with the body and soul in which the Son of God was manifested: seeing that the deliverance of men was the object for which all these things were done, the human nature in which He appeared was, in a way marvellous and unique, assumed into real union with the person of the Word of God, that is, of the only Son of God, —the Word remaining unchangeably in His own nature, wherein it is not conceivable that there should be composite elements in union with which any mere semblance of a human soul could subsist. We read, indeed, that “the Spirit of wisdom is manifold;” but it is as properly termed simple. Manifold it is, indeed, because there are many things which it possesses; but simple, because it is not a different thing from what it possesses, as the Son is said to have life in Himself, and yet He is Himself that life. The human nature came to the Word; the Word did not come, with susceptibility of change, into the human nature; and therefore, in His union to the human

nature which He has assumed, He is still properly called the Son of God; for which reason the same person is the Son of God immutable and co-eternal with the Father, and the Son of God who was laid in the grave,—the former being true of Him only as the Word, the latter true of Him only as a man.

8. Wherefore it behoves us, in reading any statements made concerning the Son of God, to observe in reference to which of these two natures they are spoken. For by His assumption of the soul and body of a man, no increase was made in the number of Persons: the Trinity remained as before. For just as in every man, with the exception of that one whom alone He assumed into personal union, the soul and body constitute one person, so in Christ the Word and His human soul and body constitute one person. And as the name philosopher, for example, is given to a man certainly with reference only to his soul, and yet it is nothing absurd, but only a most suitable and ordinary use of language, for us to say the philosopher was killed, the philosopher died, the philosopher was buried, although all these events befell him in his body, not in that part of him in which he was a philosopher; in like manner the name of God, or Son of God, or Lord of Glory, or any other such name, is given to Christ as the Word, and it is, nevertheless, correct to say that God was crucified, seeing that there is no question that He suffered this death in his human nature, not in that in which He is the Lord of Glory.

9. As for the sound of the voice, however, and the bodily form of a dove, and the cloven tongues which sat upon each of them, these, like the terrible wonders wrought at Sinai, and like the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, were produced only as symbols, and vanished when this purpose had been served. The thing which we must especially guard against in connection with them is, lest any one should believe that the nature of God—whether of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit—is susceptible of change or transformation. And we must not be disturbed by the fact that the sign sometimes receives the name of the thing signified, as when the Holy Spirit is said to have descended in a bodily form as a dove and abode upon Him; for in like manner the smitten rock is called Christ, because it was a symbol of Christ.

Chap. III

10. I wonder, however, that, although you believe it possible for the sound of the voice which said, “Thou art my Son,” to have been produced through a divine act, without the intermediate agency of a soul, by something the nature of which was corporeal, you nevertheless do not believe that a bodily form and movements exactly resembling those of any real living creature whatsoever could be produced in the same way, namely, through a divine act, without the intermediate agency of a spirit imparting life. For if inanimate matter obeys God without the instrumentality of an animating spirit, so as to emit sounds such as are wont to be emited by animated bodies, in order to bring to the human ear words articulately spoken, why should it not obey Him, so as to present to the human eye the figure and motions of a bird, by the same power of the Creator without the instrumentalist of any animating spirit? The objects of both sight and hearing—the sound which strikes the ear and the appearance which meets the eye, the articulations of the voice and the outlines of the members, every audible and visible motion—are both alike produced from matter contiguous to us; is it, then, granted to the sense of hearing, and not to the sense of sight, to tell us regarding the body which is perceived by this bodily sense, both that it is a true body, and that it is nothing beyond what the bodily sense perceives it to be? For in every living creature the soul is, of course, not perceived by any bodily sense. We do not, therefore, need to inquire how the bodily form of the dove appeared to the eye, just as we do not need to inquire how the voice of a bodily form capable of speech was made to fall upon the ear. For if it was possible to dispense with the intermediate agency of a soul in the case in which a voice, not something like a voice, is said to have been produced, how much more easily was it possible in the case in which it is said that the Spirit descended “like a dove,” a phrase which signifies that a mere bodily form was exhibited to the eye, and does not affirm that a real living creature was seen! In like manner, it is said that on the day of Pentecost, “suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing wind, and there appeared to them cloven tongues like as of fire,” in which something like wind and like fire, i.e. resembling these common and familiar natural phenomena, is said to have been perceived, but it does not seem to be indicated that these common and familiar natural phenomena were actually produced.

11. If, however, more subtle reasoning or more thorough investigation of the matter result in demonstrating that that which is naturally destitute of motion both in time and in space [i.e. matter] cannot be moved otherwise than through the intermediate agency of that which is capable of motion only in time, not in space [i.e. spirit], it will follow from this that all those things must have been done by the instrumentality of a living creature, as things are done by angels, on which subject a more elaborate discussion would be tedious, and is not necessary. To this it must be added, that there are visions which appear to the spirit as plainly as to the senses of the body, not only in sleep or delirium, but also to persons of sound mind in their waking hours,—visions which are due not to the deceitfulness of devils mocking men, but to some spiritual revelation accomplished by means of immaterial forms resembling bodies, and which cannot by any means be distinguished from real objects, unless they are by divine assistance more fully revealed and discriminated by the mind's intelligence, which is done sometimes (but with difficulty) at the time, but for the most part after they have disappeared. This being the case in regard to these visions which, whether their nature be really material, or material only in appearance but really spiritual, seem to manifest themselves to our spirit as if they were perceived by the bodily senses, we ought not, when these things are recorded in sacred Scripture, to conclude hastily to which of these two classes they are to be referred, or whether, if they belong to the former, they are produced by the intermediate agency of a spirit; while, at the same time, as to the invisible and immutable nature of the Creator, that is, of the supreme and ineffable Trinity, we either simply, without any doubt, believe, or, in addition to this, with some degree of intellectual apprehension, understand that it is wholly removed and separated both from the senses of fleshly mortals, and from all susceptibility of being changed either for the worse or for the better, or to anything whatever of a variable nature.

Chap. IV

12. These things I send you in reference to two of your questions,—the one concerning the Trinity, and the other concerning the dove in which the Holy Spirit, not in His own nature, but in a symbolical form, was manifested, as also the Son of God, not in His eternal Sonship (of which the Father said:

“Before the morning star I have begotten Thee”), but in that human nature which He assumed from the Virgin’s womb, was crucified by the Jews: observe that to you who are at leisure I have been able, notwithstanding immense pressure of business, to write so much. I have not, however, deemed it necessary to discuss everything which you have brought forward in your letter; but on these two questions which you wished me to solve, I think I have written as much as is exacted by Christian charity, though I may not have satisfied your vehement desire.

13. Besides the two books added to the first three in the City of God, and the exposition of three psalms, as above mentioned, I have also written a treatise to the holy presbyter Jerome concerning the origin of the soul, asking him, in regard to the opinion which, in writing to Marcellinus of pious memory, he avowed as his own, that a new soul is made for each individual at birth, how this can be maintained without overthrowing that most surely established article of the Church’s faith, according to which we firmly believe that all die in Adam, and are brought down under condemnation unless they be delivered by the grace of Christ, which, by means of His sacrament, works even in infants. I have, moreover, written to the same person to inquire his opinion as to the sense in which the words of James, “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all,” are to be understood. In this letter I have also stated my own opinion: in the other, concerning the origin of the soul, I have only asked what was his opinion, submitting the matter to his judgment, and at the same time discussing it to some extent. I wrote these to Jerome because I did not wish to lose an opportunity of correspondence afforded by a certain very pious and studious young presbyter, Orosius, who, prompted only by burning zeal in regard to the Holy Scriptures, came to us from the remotest part of Spain, namely, from the shore of the ocean, and whom I persuaded to go on from us to Jerome. In answer to certain questions of the same Orosius, as to things which troubled him in reference to the heresy of the Priscillianists, and some opinions of Origen which the Church has not accepted, I have written a treatise of moderate size with as much brevity and clearness as was in my power. I have also written a considerable book against the heresy of Pelagius, being constrained to do this by some brethren whom he had persuaded to adopt his fatal error, denying the grace

of Christ. If you wish to have all these, send some one to copy them all for you. Allow me, however, to be free from distraction in studying and dictating to my clerks those things which, being urgently required by many, claim in my opinion precedence over your questions, which are of interest to very few.

LETTER CLXXII

(A.D. 416.)

To Augustin, My Truly Pious Lord and Father, Worthy of My Utmost Affection and Veneration, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ.

1. That honourable man, my brother, and your Excellency's son, the presbyter Orosius, I have, both on his own account and in obedience to your request, made welcome. But a most trying time has come upon us, in which I have found it better for me to hold my peace than to speak, so that our studies have ceased, lest what Appius calls "the eloquence of dogs" should be provoked into exercise. For this reason I have not been able at the present time to give to those two books dedicated to my name—books of profound erudition, and brilliant with every charm of splendid eloquence—the answer which I would otherwise have given; not that I think anything said in them demands correction, but because I am mindful of the words of the blessed apostle in regard to the variety of men's judgments, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Certainly, whatever can be said on the topics there discussed, and whatever can be drawn by commanding genius from the fountain of sacred Scripture regarding them, has been in these letters stated in your positions, and illustrated by your arguments. But I beg your Reverence to allow me for a little to praise your genius. For in any discussion between us, the object aimed at by both of us is advancement in learning. But our rivals, and especially heretics, if they see different opinions maintained by us, will assail us with the calumny that our differences are due to mutual jealousy. For my part, however, I am resolved to love you, to look up to you, to reverence and admire you, and to defend your opinions as my own. I have also in a dialogue, which I recently published, made allusion to your Blessedness in suitable terms. Be it ours, therefore, rather to rid the Church of that most pernicious heresy which

always feigns repentance, in order that it may have liberty to teach in our churches, and may not be expelled and extinguished, as it would be if it disclosed its real character in the light of day.

2. Your pious and venerable daughters, Eustochium and Paula, continue to walk worthy of their own birth and of your counsels, and they send special salutations to your Blessedness: in which they are joined by the whole brotherhood of those who with us labour to serve the Lord our Saviour. As for the holy presbyter Firmus, we sent him last year to go on business of Eustochium and Paula, first to Ravenna, and afterwards to Africa and Sicily, and we suppose that he is now detained somewhere in Africa. I beseech you to present my respectful salutations to the saints who are associated with you. I have also sent to your care a letter from me to the holy presbyter Firmus; if it reaches you, I beg you to take the trouble of forwarding it to him. May Christ the Lord keep you in safety, and mindful of me, my truly pious lord and most blessed father.

(As a postscript.) We suffer in this province from a grievous scarcity of clerks acquainted with the Latin language; this is the reason why we are not able to comply with your instructions, especially in regard to that version of the Septuagint which is furnished with distinctive asterisks and obelisks; for we have lost, through some one’s dishonesty, the most of the results of our earlier labour.

LETTER CLXXIII

(A.D. 416.)

To Donatus, a Presbyter of the Donatist Party, Augustin, a Bishop of the Catholic Church, Sends Greeting.

1. If you could see the sorrow of my heart and my concern for your salvation, you would perhaps take pity on your own soul, doing that which is pleasing to God, by giving heed to the word which is not ours but His; and would no longer give to His Scripture only a place in your memory, while shutting it out from your heart. You are angry because you are being drawn to salvation, although you have drawn so many of our fellow Christians to destruction. For what did we order beyond this, that you

should be arrested, brought before the authorities, and guarded, in order to prevent you from perishing? As to your having sustained bodily injury, you have yourself to blame for this, as you would not use the horse which was immediately brought to you, and then dashed yourself violently to the ground; for, as you well know, your companion, who was brought along with you, arrived uninjured, not having done any harm to himself as you did.

2. You think, however, that even what we have done to you should not have been done, because, in your opinion, no man should be compelled to that which is good. Mark, therefore, the words of the apostle: “If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work,” and yet, in order to make the office of a bishop be accepted by many men, they are seized against their will, subjected to importunate persuasion, shut up and detained in custody, and made to suffer so many things which they dislike, until a willingness to undertake the good work is found in them. How much more, then, is it fitting that you should be drawn forcibly away from a pernicious error, in which you are enemies to your own souls, and brought to acquaint yourselves with the truth, or to choose it when known, not only in order to your holding in a safe and advantageous way the honour belonging to your office, but also in order to preserve you from perishing miserably! You say that God has given us free will, and that therefore no man should be compelled even to good. Why, then, are those whom I have above referred to compelled to that which is good? Take heed, therefore, to something which you do not wish to consider. The aim towards which a good will compassionately devotes its efforts is to secure that a bad will be rightly directed. For who does not know that a man is not condemned on any other ground than because his bad will deserved it, and that no man is saved who has not a good will? Nevertheless, it does not follow from this that those who are loved should be cruelly left to yield themselves with impunity to their bad will; but in so far as power is given, they ought to be both prevented from evil and compelled to good.

3. For if a bad will ought to be always left to its own freedom, why were the disobedient and murmuring Israelites restrained from evil by such severe chastisements, and compelled to come into the land of promise? If a bad

will ought always to be left to its own freedom, why was Paul not left to the free use of that most perverted will with which he persecuted the Church? Why was he thrown to the ground that he might be blinded, and struck blind that he might be changed, and changed that he might be sent as an apostle, and sent that he might suffer for the truth's sake such wrongs as he had inflicted on others when he was in error? If a bad will ought always to be left to its own freedom, why is a father instructed in Holy Scripture not only to correct an obstinate son by words of rebuke, but also to beat his sides, in order that, being compelled and subdued, he may be guided to good conduct? For which reason Solomon also says: "Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." If a bad will ought always to be left to its own freedom, why are negligent pastors reproved? and why is it said to them, "Ye have not brought back the wandering sheep, ye have not sought the perishing"? You also are sheep belonging to Christ, you bear the Lord's mark in the sacrament which you have received, but you are wandering and perishing. Let us not, therefore, incur your displeasure because we bring back the wandering and seek the perishing; for it is better for us to obey the will of the Lord, who charges us to compel you to return to His fold, than to yield consent to the will of the wandering sheep, so as to leave you to perish. Say not, therefore, what I hear that you are constantly saying, "I wish thus to wander; I wish thus to perish;" for it is better that we should so far as is in our power absolutely refuse to allow you to wander and perish.

4. When you threw yourself the other day into a well, in order to bring death upon yourself, you did so no doubt with your free will. But how cruel the servants of God would have been if they had left you to the fruits of this bad will, and had not delivered you from that death! Who would not have justly blamed them? Who would not have justly denounced them as inhuman? And yet you, with your own free will, threw yourself into the water that you might be drowned. They took you against your will out of the water, that you might not be drowned. You acted according to your own will, but with a view to your destruction; they dealt with you against your will, but in order to your preservation. If, therefore, mere bodily safety behoves to be so guarded that it is the duty of those who love their neighbour to preserve him even against his own will from harm, how much

more is this duty binding in regard to that spiritual health in the loss of which the consequence to be dreaded is eternal death! At the same time let me remark, that in that death which you wished to bring upon yourself you would have died not for time only but for eternity, because even though force had been used to compel you—not to accept salvation, not to enter into the peace of the Church, the unity of Christ's body, the holy indivisible charity, but—to suffer some evil things, it would not have been lawful for you to take away your own life.

5. Consider the divine Scriptures, and examine them to the utmost of your ability, and see whether this was ever done by any one of the just and faithful, though subjected to the most grievous evils by persons who were endeavouring to drive them, not to eternal life, to which you are being compelled by us, but to eternal death. I have heard that you say that the Apostle Paul intimated the lawfulness of suicide, when he said, "Though I give my body to be burned," supposing that because he was there enumerating all the good things which are of no avail without charity, such as the tongues of men and of angels, and all mysteries, and all knowledge, and all prophecy, and the distribution of one's goods to the poor, he intended to include among these good things the act of bringing death upon one-self. But observe carefully and learn in what sense Scripture says that any man may give his body to be burned. Certainly not that any man may throw himself into the fire when he is harassed by a pursuing enemy, but that, when he is compelled to choose between doing wrong and suffering wrong, he should refuse to do wrong rather than to suffer wrong, and so give his body into the power of the executioner, as those three men did who were being compelled to worship the golden image, while he who was compelling them threatened them with the burning fiery furnace if they did not obey. They refused to worship the image: they did not cast themselves into the fire, and yet of them it is written that they "yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God." This is the sense in which the apostle said, "If I give my body to be burned."

6. Mark also what follows:—"If I have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." To that charity you are called; by that charity you are prevented from perishing: and yet you think, forsooth, that to throw yourself headlong to

destruction, by your own act, will profit you in some measure, although, even if you suffered death at the hands of another, while you remain an enemy to charity it would profit you nothing. Nay, more, being in a state of exclusion from the Church, and severed from the body of unity and the bond of charity, you would be punished with eternal misery even though you were burned alive for Christ's name; for this is the apostle's declaration, "Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Bring your mind back, therefore, to rational reflection and sober thought; consider carefully whether it is to error and to impiety that you are being called, and, if you still think so, submit patiently to any hardship for the truth's sake. If, however, the fact rather be that you are living in error and in impiety, and that in the Church to which you are called truth and piety are found, because there is Christian unity and the love (charitas) of the Holy Spirit, why do you labour any longer to be an enemy to yourself?

7. For this end the mercy of the Lord appointed that both we and your bishops met at Carthage in a conference which had repeated meetings, and was largely attended, and reasoned together in the most orderly manner in regard to the grounds of our separation from each other. The proceedings of that conference were written down; our signatures are attached to the record: read it, or allow others to read it to you, and then choose which party you prefer. I have heard that you have said that you could to some extent discuss the statements in that record with us if we would omit these words of your bishops: "No case forecloses the investigation of another case, and no person compromises the position of another person." You wish us to leave out these words, in which, although they knew it not, the truth itself spoke by them. You will say, indeed, that here they made a mistake, and fell through want of consideration into a false opinion. But we affirm that here they said what was true, and we prove this very easily by a reference to yourself. For if in regard to these bishops of your own, chosen by the whole party of Donatus on the understanding that they should act as representatives, and that all the rest should regard whatever they did as acceptable and satisfactory, you nevertheless refuse to allow them to compromise your position by what you think to have been a rash and mistaken utterance on their part, in this refusal you confirm the truth of

their saying: “No case forecloses the investigation of another case, and no person compromises the position of another person.” And at the same time you ought to acknowledge, that if you refuse to allow the conjoint authority of so many of your bishops represented in these seven to compromise Donatus, presbyter in Mutugenna, it is incomparably less reasonable that one person, Caecilianus, even had some evil been found in him, should compromise the position of the whole unity of Christ, the Church, which is not shut up within the one village of Mutugenna, but spread abroad throughout the entire world.

8. But, behold, we do what you have desired; we treat with you as if your bishops had not said: “No case forecloses the investigation of another case, and no person compromises the position of another person.” Discover, if you can, what they ought, rather than this, to have said in reply, when there was alleged against them the case and the person of Primianus, who, notwithstanding his joining the rest of the bishops in passing sentence of condemnation on those who had passed sentence of condemnation upon him, nevertheless received back into their former honours those whom he had condemned and denounced, and chose to acknowledge and accept rather than despise and repudiate the baptism administered by these men while they were “dead” (for of them it was said in the notable decree [of the Council of Bagai], that “the shores were full of dead men”), and by so doing swept away the argument which you are accustomed to rest on a perverse interpretation of the words: “Qui baptizatur a mortuo quid ei prodest lavacrum ejus?” If, therefore, your bishops had not said: “No case forecloses the investigation of another case, and no person compromises the position of another person,” they would have been compelled to plead guilty in the case of Primianus; but, in saying this, they declared the Catholic Church to be, as we mentioned, not guilty in the case of Caecilianus.

9. However, read all the rest and examine it well. Mark whether they have succeeded in proving any charge of evil brought against Caecilianus himself, through whose person they attempted to compromise the position of the Church. Mark whether they have not rather brought forward much that was in his favour, and confirmed the evidence that his case was a good

one, by a number of extracts which, to the prejudice of their own case, they produced and read. Read these or let them be read to you. Consider the whole matter, ponder it carefully, and choose which you should follow: whether you should, in the peace of Christ, in the unity of the Catholic Church, in the love of the brethren, be partaker of our joy, or, in the cause of wicked discord, the Donatist faction and impious schism, continue to suffer the annoyance caused to you by the measures which out of love to you we are compelled to take.

10. I hear that you have remarked and often quote the fact recorded in the gospels, that the seventy disciples went back from the Lord, and that they had been left to their own choice in this wicked and impious desertion, and that to the twelve who alone remained the Lord said, “Will ye also go away?” But you have neglected to remark, that at that time the Church was only beginning to burst into life from the recently planted seed, and that there was not yet fulfilled in her the prophecy: “All kings shall fall down before Him; yea, all nations shall serve Him;” and it is in proportion to the more enlarged accomplishment of this prophecy that the Church wields greater power, so that she may not only invite, but even compel men to embrace what is good. This our Lord intended then to illustrate, for although He had great power, He chose rather to manifest His humility. This also He taught, with sufficient plainness, in the parable of the Feast, in which the master of the house, after He had sent a message to the invited guests, and they had refused to come, said to his servants: “Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.” Mark, now, how it was said in regard to those who came first, “bring them in;” it was not said, “compel them to come in,”—by which was signified the incipient condition of the Church, when it was only growing towards the position in which it would have strength to compel men to come in. Accordingly, because it was right that when the Church had been strengthened, both in power and in extent, men should be compelled to come in to the feast of everlasting salvation, it was afterwards added in the parable, “The servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast

commanded, and yet there is room. And the Lord said unto the servants, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in.” Wherefore, if you were walking peaceably, absent from this feast of everlasting salvation and of the holy unity of the Church, we should find you, as it were, in the “highways;” but since, by multiplied injuries and cruelties, which you perpetrate on our people, you are, as it were, full of thorns and roughness, we find you as it were in the “hedges,” and we compel you to come in. The sheep which is compelled is driven whither it would not wish to go, but after it has entered, it feeds of its own accord in the pastures to which it was brought. Wherefore restrain your perverse and rebellious spirit, that in the true Church of Christ you may find the feast of salvation.

LETTER CLXXX

(A.D. 416.)

To Oceanus, His Deservedly Beloved Lord and Brother, Honoured Among the Members of Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. I received two letters from you at the same time, in one of which you mention a third, and state that you had sent it before the others. This letter I do not remember having received, or, rather, I think I may say the testimony of my memory is, that I did not receive it; but in regard to those which I have received, I return you many thanks for your kindness to me. To these I would have returned an immediate answer, had I not been hurried away by a constant succession of other matters urgently demanding attention. Having now found a moment’s leisure from these, I have chosen rather to send some reply, however imperfect, than continue towards a friend so true and kind a protracted silence, and become more annoying to you by saying nothing than by saying too much.

2. I already knew the opinion of the holy Jerome as to the origin of souls, and had read the words which in your letter you have quoted from his book. The difficulty which perplexes some in regard to this question, “How God can justly bestow souls on the offspring of persons guilty of adultery?” does not embarrass me, seeing that not even their own sins, much less the sins of

their parents, can prove prejudicial to persons of virtuous lives, converted to God, and living in faith and piety. The really difficult question is, if it be true that a new soul created out of nothing is imparted to each child at its birth, how can it be that the innumerable souls of those little ones, in regard to whom God knew with certainty that before attaining the age of reason, and before being able to know or understand what is right or wrong, they were to leave the body without being baptized, are justly given over to eternal death by Him with whom "there is no unrighteousness!" It is unnecessary to say more on this subject, since you know what I intend, or rather what I do not at present intend to say. I think what I have said is enough for a wise man. If, however, you have either read, or heard from the lips of Jerome, or received from the Lord when meditating on this difficult question, anything by which it can be solved, impart it to me, I beseech you, that I may acknowledge myself under yet greater obligation to you.

3. As to the question whether lying is in any case justifiable and expedient, it has appeared to you that it ought to be solved by the example of our Lord's saying, concerning the day and hour of the end of the world, "Neither doth the Son know it." When I read this, I was charmed with it as an effort of your ingenuity; but I am by no means of opinion that a figurative mode of expression can be rightly termed a falsehood. For it is no falsehood to call a day joyous because it renders men joyous, or a lupine harsh because by its bitter flavour it imparts harshness to the countenance of him who tastes it, or to say that God knows something when He makes man know it (an instance quoted by yourself in these words of God to Abraham, "Now I know that thou fearest God"). These are by no means false statements, as you yourself readily see. Accordingly, when the blessed Hilary explained this obscure statement of the Lord, by means of this obscure kind of figurative language, saying that we ought to understand Christ to affirm in these words that He knew not that day with no other meaning than that He, by concealing it, caused others not to know it, he did not by this explanation of the statement apologize for it as an excusable falsehood, but he showed that it was not a falsehood, as is proved by comparing it not only with these common figures of speech, but also with the metaphor, a mode of expression very familiar to all in daily conversation. For who will charge the man who says that harvest fields

wave and children bloom with speaking falsely, because he sees not in these things the waves and the flowers to which these words are literally applied?

4. Moreover, a man of your talent and learning easily perceives how different from these metaphorical expressions is the statement of the apostle, “When I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” Here there is no obscurity of figurative language; these are literal words of a plain statement. Surely, in addressing persons “of whom he travailed in birth till Christ should be formed in them,” and to whom, in solemnly calling God to confirm his words, he said: “The things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not,” the great teacher of the Gentiles affirmed in the words above quoted either what was true or what was false; if he said what was false, which God forbid, you see the consequences which would follow; and Paul’s own assertion of his veracity, together with the example of wondrous humility in the Apostle Peter, may warn you to recoil from such thoughts.

5. But why say more? This question the venerable Father Jerome and I have discussed fully in letters which we exchanged, and in his latest work, published under the name of Critobulus, against Pelagius, he has maintained the same opinion concerning that transaction and the words of the apostle which, in accordance with the views of the blessed Cyprian, I myself have held. In regard to the question as to the origin of souls, I think there is reasonable ground for inquiry, not as to the giving of souls to the offspring of adulterous parents, but as to the condemnation (which God forbid) of those who are innocent. If you have learned anything from a man of such character and eminence as Jerome which might form a satisfactory answer to those in perplexity on this subject, I pray you not to refuse to communicate it to me. In your correspondence, you have approved yourself so learned and so affable that it is a rivilege to hold intercourse with you by letter. I ask you not to delay to send a certain book by the same man of God, which the presbyter Orosius brought and gave to you to copy, in which the resurrection of the body is treated of by him in a manner said to merit distinguished praise. We have not asked it earlier, because we knew that

you had both to copy and to revise it; but for both of these we think we have now given you ample time. Live to God, and be mindful of us.

[For translation of Letter CLXXXV. to Count Boniface, containing an exhaustive history of the Donatist schism, see Anti-Donatist Writings.]

LETTER CLXXXVIII

(A.D. 416.)

To the Lady Juliana, Worthy to Be Honoured in Christ with the Service Due to Her Rank, Our Daughter Deservedly Distinguished, Alypius and Augustin Send Greeting in the Lord.

Chap. I

1. Lady, worthy to be honoured in Christ with the service due to your rank, and daughter deservedly distinguished, it was very pleasant and agreeable to us that your letter reached us when together at Hippo, so that we might send this joint reply to you, to express our joy in hearing of your welfare, and with sincere reciprocation of your love to let you know of our welfare, in which we are sure that you take an affectionate interest. We are well aware that you are not ignorant how great Christian affection we consider due to you, and how much, both before God and among men, we are interested in you. For though we knew you, at first by letter, afterwards by personal intercourse, to be pious and Catholic, that is, true members of the body of Christ, nevertheless, our humble ministry also was of use to you, for when you had received the word of God from us, “you received it,” as says the apostle, “not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God.” Through the grace and mercy of the Saviour, so great was the fruit arising from this ministery of ours in your family, that when preparations for her marriage were already completed, the holy Demetrias preferred the spiritual embrace of that Husband who is fairer than the sons of men, and in espousing themselves to whom virgins retain their virginity, and gain more abundant spiritual fruitfulness. We should not, however, yet have known how this exhortation of ours had been received by the faithful and noble maiden, as we departed shortly before she took on her the vow of chastity, had we not learned from the joyful announcement and reliable testimony of

your letter, that this great gift of God, planted and watered indeed by means of His servants, but owing its increase to Himself, had been granted to us as labourers in His vineyard.

2. Since these things are so, no one may charge us with presuming, if, on the ground of this closer spiritual relation, we manifest our solicitude for your welfare by warning you to avoid opinions opposed to the grace of God. For though the apostle commands us in preaching the word to be "instant in season and out of season," yet we do not reckon you among the number of those to whom a word or a letter from us exhorting you carefully to avoid what is inconsistent with sound doctrine would seem "out of season." Hence it was that you received our admonition in so kindly a manner, that, in the letter to which we are now replying, you say, "I thank you heartily for the pious advice which your Reverence gave me, not to lend an ear to those men who, by their mischievous writings, often corrupt our holy faith."

3. In this letter you go on to say, "But your Reverence knows that I and my household are entirely separated from persons of this description; and all our family follow so strictly the Catholic faith as never at any time to have wandered from it, or fallen into any heresy,—I speak not of the heresy of sects who have erred in a measure hardly admiting of expiation, but of those whose errors seem to be trivial." This statement renders it more and more necessary for us, in writing to you, not to pass over in silence the conduct of those who are attempting to corrupt even those who are sound in the faith. We consider your house to be no insignificant Church of Christ, nor indeed is the error of those men trivial who think that we have of ourselves whatever righteousness, temperance, piety, chastity is in us, on the ground that God has so formed us, that beyond the revelation which He has given He imparts to us no further aid for performing by our own choice those things which by study we have ascertained to be our duty; declaring nature and knowledge to be the grace of God, and the only aid for living righteously and justly. For the possession, indeed, of a will inclined to what is good, whence proceed the life of uprightness and that love which so far excels all other gifts that God Himself is said to be love, and by which alone is fulfilled in us as far as we fulfil them, the divine law and council,—

for the possession, I say, of such a will, they hold that we are not indebted to the aid of God, but affirm that we ourselves of our own will are sufficient for these things. Let it not appear to you a trifling error that men should wish to profess themselves Christians, and yet be unwilling to hear the apostle of Christ, who, having said, “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts,” lest any one should think that he had this love through his own free will, immediately subjoined, “by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us.” Understand, then, how greatly and how fatally that man errs who does not acknowledge that this is the “great gift of the Saviour,” who, when He ascended on high, “led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”

Chap. II

4. How, then, could we so far conceal our true feelings as not to warn you, in whom we feel so deep an interest, to beware of such doctrines, after we had read a certain book addressed to the holy Demetrias? Whether this book has reached you, and who is its author, we are desirous to hear in your answer to this. In this book, were it lawful for such a one to read it, a virgin of Christ would read that her holiness and all her spiritual riches are to spring from no other source than herself, and thus, before she attains to the perfection of blessedness, she would learn,—which may God forbid!—to be ungrateful to God. For the words addressed to her in the said book are these:—”You have here, then, those things on account of which you are deservedly, nay more, more especially to be preferred before others; for your earthly rank and wealth are understood to be derived from your relatives, not from yourself, but your spiritual riches no one can have conferred on you but yourself; for these, then, you are justly to be praised, for these you are deservedly to be preferred to others, for they can exist only from yourself, and in yourself.”

5. You see, doubtless, how dangerous is the doctrine in these words, against which you must be on your guard. For the affirmation, indeed, that these spiritual riches can exist only in yourself, is very well and truly said: that evidently is food; but the affirmation that they cannot exist except from you is unmixed poison. Far be it from any virgin of Christ willingly to listen to statements like these. Every virgin of Christ understands the innate poverty of the human heart, and therefore declines to have it adorned otherwise than

by the gifts of her Spouse. Let her rather listen to the apostle when he says: “I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” And therefore in regard to these spiritual riches let her listen, not to him who says: “No one can confer them on you except yourself, and they cannot exist except from you and in you;” but to him who says: “We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”

6. In regard to that sacred virginal chastity, also, which does not belong to her from herself, but is the gift of God, bestowed, however, on her who is believing and willing, let her hear the same truthful and pious teacher, who when he treats of this subject says: “I would that all men were even as I myself: but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.” Let her hear also Him who is the only Spouse, not only of herself, but of the whole Church, thus speaking of this chastity and purity: “All cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given;” that she may understand that for her possession of this so great and excellent gift, she ought rather to render thanks to our God and Lord, than to listen to the words of any one who says that she possessed it from herself,—words which we may not designate as those of a flatterer seeking to please, lest we seem to judge rashly concerning the hidden thoughts of men, but which are assuredly those of a misguided eulogist. For “every good gift and every perfect gift,” as the Apostle James says, “is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights;” from this source, therefore, cometh this holy virginity, in which you who approve of it, and rejoice in it, have been excelled by your daughter, who, coming after you in birth, has gone before you in conduct; descended from you in lineage, has risen above you in honour; following you in age, has gone beyond you in holiness; in whom also that begins to be yours which could not be in your own person. For she did not contract an earthly marriage, that she might be, not for herself only, but also for you, spiritually enriched, in a higher degree than yourself, since you, even with this addition, are inferior to her, because you contracted the marriage of which she is the offspring. These things are gifts of God, and are yours, indeed, but are not from yourselves; for you have this treasure in

earthly bodies, which are still frail as the vessels of the potter, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of you. And be not surprised because we say that these things are yours, and not from you, for we speak of “daily bread” as ours, but yet add, “give it to us,” lest it should be thought that it was from ourselves.

7. Wherefore obey the precept of Scripture, “Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks;” for you pray in order that you may have constantly and increasingly these gifts, you render thanks because you have them not of yourself. For who separates you from that mass of death and perdition derived from Adam? Is it not He “who came to seek and to save that which was lost?” Was, then, a man, indeed, on hearing the apostle’s question, “Who maketh thee to differ?” to reply, “My own good will, my faith, my righteousness,” and to disregard what immediately follows? “What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?” We are unwilling, then, yea, utterly unwilling, that a consecrated virgin, when she hears or reads these words: “Your spiritual riches no one can have conferred on you; for these you are justly to be praised, for these you are deservedly to be preferred to others, for they can exist only from yourself, and in yourself,” should thus boast of her riches as if she had not received them. Let her say, indeed, “In me are Thy vows, O God, I will render praises unto Thee;” but since they are in her, not from her, let her remember also to say, “Lord, by Thy will Thou hast furnished strength to my beauty,” because, though it be from her, inasmuch as it is the acting of her own will, without which we cannot do what is good, yet we are not to say, as he said, that it is “only from her.” For our own will, unless it be aided by the grace of God, cannot alone be even in name good will, for, says the apostle, “it is God who worketh in us, both to will, and to do according to good will,”—not, as these persons think, merely by revealing knowledge, that we may know what we ought to do, but also by inspiring Christian love, that we may also by choice perform the things which by study we have learned.

8. For doubtless the value of the gift of continence was known to him who said, “I perceived that no man can be continent unless God bestowed the gift.” He not only knew then how great a benefit it was, and how eagerly it

ought to be coveted, but also that, unless God gave it, it could not exist; for wisdom had taught him this for he says, “This also was a point of wisdom, to know whose gift it was; and the knowledge did not suffice him, but he says, “I went to the Lord and made my supplication to Him.” God then aids us in this matter, not only by making us know what is to be done, but also by making us do through love what we already know through learning. No one, therefore, can possess, not only knowledge, but also continence, unless God give it to him. Whence it was that when he had knowledge he prayed that he might have continence, that it might be in him, because he knew that it was not from him; or if on account of the freedom of his will it was in a certain sense from himself, yet it was not from himself alone, because no one can be continent unless God bestow on him the gift. But he whose opinions I am censuring, in speaking of spiritual riches, among which is doubtless that bright and beautiful gift of continence, does not say that they may exist in you, and from yourself, but says that they can exist only from you, and in you, in such a way that, as a virgin of Christ has these things nowhere else than in herself, so it can be believed possible for her to have them from no other source than from herself, and in this way (which may a merciful God avert from her heart!) she shall so boast as if she had not received them!

Chap. III

9. We indeed hold such an opinion concerning the training of this holy virgin, and the Christian humility in which she was nourished and brought up, as to be assured that when she read these words, if she did read, them, she would break out into lamentations, and humbly smite her breast, and perhaps burst into tears, and pray in faith to the Lord to whose service she was dedicated and by whom she was sanctified, pleading with Him that these were not her own words, but another’s, and asking that her faith might not be such as to believe that she had anything whereof to glory in herself and not in the Lord. For her glory is in herself, not in the words of another, as the apostle says: “Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have glory (rejoicing) in himself alone, and not in another.” But God forbid that her glory should be in herself, and not in Him to whom the Psalmist says, “Thou art my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.” For her glory is

then profitably in herself, when God, who is in her, is Himself her glory, from whom she has every good, by which she is good, and shall have all things by which she shall be made better, in as far as she may become better in this life, and by which she shall be made perfect when rendered so by divine grace, not by human praise. “For her soul shall be praised in the Lord,” “who satisfieth her desire with good things,” because He Himself has inspired this desire, that His virgin should not boast of any good, as if she had not received it.

10. Inform us, then, in reply to this letter, whether we have judged truly in supposing these to be your daughter’s sentiments. For we know well that you and all your family are, and have been, worshippers of the indivisible Trinity. But human error insinuates itself in other forms than in erroneous opinions concerning the indivisible Trinity. There are other subjects also, in regard to which men fall into very dangerous errors. As, for example, that of which we have spoken in this letter at greater length, perhaps, than might have sufficed to a person of your stedfast and pure wisdom. And yet we know not to whom, except to God, and therefore to the Trinity, wrong is done by the man who denies that the good that comes from God is from God; which evil may God avert from you, as we believe He does! May God altogether forbid that the book out of which we have thought it our duty to extract some words, that they might be more easily understood, should produce any such impression, we do not say on your mind, or on that of the holy virgin your daughter, but on the mind of the least deserving of your male or female servants.

11. But if you study more carefully even those words in which the writer appears to speak in favour of grace or the aid of God, you will find them so ambiguous that they may have reference either to nature or to knowledge, or to forgiveness of sins. For even in regard to that which they are forced to acknowledge, that we ought to pray that we may not enter into temptation, they may consider that the words mean that we are so far helped to it that, by our praying and knocking, the knowledge of the truth is so revealed to us that we may learn what it is our duty to do, not so far as that our will receives strength, whereby we may do that which we learn to be our duty; and as to their saying that it is by the grace or help of God that the Lord

Christ has been set before us as an example of holy living, they interpret this so as to teach the same doctrine, affirming, namely, that we learn by His example how we ought to live, but denying that we are so aided as to do through love what we know by learning.

12. Find in this book, if you can, anything in which, excepting nature and the freedom of the will (which pertains to the same nature), and the remission of sin and the revealing of doctrine, any such aid of God is acknowledged as that which he acknowledges who said: “When I perceived that no man can be continent unless God bestow the gift, and that this also is a point of wisdom to know whose gift it is, I went to the Lord, and made my supplication to Him.” For he did not desire to receive, in answer to his prayer, the nature in which he was made; nor was he solicitous to obtain the natural freedom of the will with which he was made; nor did he crave the remission of sins, seeing that he prayed rather for continence, that he might not sin; nor did he desire to know what he ought to do, seeing that he already confessed that he knew whose gift this continence was; but he wished to receive from the Spirit of wisdom such strength of will, such ardour of love, as should suffice for fully practising the great virtue of continence. If, therefore, you succeed in finding any such statement in that book, we will heartily thank you if, in your answer, you deign to inform us of it.

13. It is impossible for us to tell how greatly we desire to find in the writings of these men, whose works are read by very many for their pungency and eloquence, the open confession of that grace which the apostle vehemently commends, who says that “God has given to every man the measure of faith,” “without which it is impossible to please God,” “by which the just live,” “which worketh by love,” before which and without which no works of any man are in any respect to be reckoned good, since “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” He affirms that God distributes to every man, and that we receive divine assistance to live piously and justly, not only by the revelation of that knowledge which without charity “puffeth up,” but by our being inspired with that “love which is the fulfilling of the law,” and which so edifies our heart that knowledge does not puff it up. But

hitherto I have failed to find any such statements in the writings of these men.

14. But especially we should wish that these sentiments should be found in that book from which we have quoted the words in which the author, praising a virgin of Christ as if no one except herself could confer on her spiritual riches, and as if these could not exist except from herself, does not wish her to glory in the Lord, but to glory as if she had not received them. In this book, though it contain neither his name nor your own honoured name, he nevertheless mentions that a request had been made to him by the mother of the virgin to write to her. In a certain epistle of his, however, to which he openly attaches his name, and does not conceal the name of the sacred virgin, the same Pelagius says that he had written to her, and endeavours to prove, by appealing to the said work, that he most openly confessed the grace of God, which he is alleged to have passed over in silence, or denied. But we beg you to condescend to inform us, in your reply, whether that be the very book in which he has inserted these words about spiritual riches, and whether it has reached your Holiness.

LETTER CLXXXIX

(A.D. 418.)

To Boniface, My Noble Lord and Justly Distinguished and Honourable Son, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I had already written a reply to your Charity, but while I was waiting for an opportunity of forwarding the letter, my beloved son Faustus arrived here on his way to your Excellency. After he had received the letter which I had intended to be carried by him to your Benevolence, he stated to me that you were very desirous that I should write you something which might build you up unto the eternal salvation of which you have hope in Christ Jesus our Lord. And, although I was busily occupied at the time, he insisted, with an earnestness corresponding to the love which, as you know, he bears to you, that I should do this without delay. To meet his convenience, therefore, as he was in haste to depart, I thought it better to write, though necessarily without much time for reflection, rather than put off the

gratification of your pious desire, my noble lord and justly distinguished and honourable son.

2. All is contained in these brief sentences: “Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength: and love thy neighbour as thyself;” for these are the words in which the Lord, when on earth, gave an epitome of religion, saying in the gospel, “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Daily advance, then, in this love, both by praying and by well-doing, that through the help of Him, who enjoined it on you, and whose gift it is, it may be nourished and increased, until, being perfected, it render you perfect. “For this is the love which,” as the apostle says, “is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.” This is “the fulfilling of the law;” this is the same love by which faith works, of which he says again, “Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith, which worketh by love.”

3. In this love, then, all our holy fathers, patriarchs, prophets, and apostles pleased God. In this all true martyrs contended against the devil even to the shedding of blood, and because in them it neither waxed cold nor failed, they became conquerors. In this all true believers daily make progress, seeking to acquire not an earthly kingdom, but the kingdom of heaven; not a temporal, but an eternal inheritance; not gold and silver, but the incorruptible riches of the angels; not the good things of this life, which are enjoyed with trembling, and which no one can take with him when he dies, but the vision of God, whose grace and power of imparting felicity transcend all beauty of form in bodies not only on earth but also in heaven, transcend all spiritual loveliness in men, however just and holy, transcend all the glory of the angels and powers of the world above, transcend not only all that language can express, but all that thought can imagine concerning Him. And let us not despair of the fulfilment of such a great promise because it is exceeding great, but rather believe that we shall receive it because He who has promised it is exceeding great, as the blessed Apostle John says: “Now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”

4. Do not think that it is impossible for any one to please God while engaged in active military service. Among such persons was the holy David, to whom God gave so great a testimony; among them also were many righteous men of that time; among them was also that centurion who said to the Lord: “I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof, but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed: for I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it;” and concerning whom the Lord said: “Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.” Among them was that Cornelius to whom an angel said: “Cornelius, thine alms are accepted, and thy prayers are heard,” when he directed him to send to the blessed Apostle Peter, and to hear from him what he ought to do, to which apostle he sent a devout soldier, requesting him to come to him. Among them were also the soldiers who, when they had come to be baptized by John,—the sacred forerunner of the Lord, and the friend of the Bridegroom, of whom the Lord says: “Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist,”—and had inquired of him what they should do, received the answer, “Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.” Certainly he did not prohibit them to serve as soldiers when he commanded them to be content with their pay for the service.

5. They occupy indeed a higher place before God who, abandoning all these secular employments, serve Him with the strictest chastity; but “every one,” as the apostle says, “hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.” Some, then, in praying for you, fight against your invisible enemies; you, in fighting for them, contend against the barbarians, their visible enemies. Would that one faith existed in all, for then there would be less weary struggling, and the devil with his angels would be more easily conquered; but since it is necessary in this life that the citizens of the kingdom of heaven should be subjected to temptations among erring and impious men, that they may be exercised, and “tried as gold in the furnace,” we ought not before the appointed time to desire to live with those alone who are holy and righteous, so that, by patience, we may deserve to receive this blessedness in its proper time.

6. Think, then, of this first of all, when you are arming for the battle, that even your bodily strength is a gift of God; for, considering this, you will not employ the gift of God against God. For, when faith is pledged, it is to be kept even with the enemy against whom the war is waged, how much more with the friend for whom the battle is fought! Peace should be the object of your desire; war should be waged only as a necessity, and waged only that God may by it deliver men from the necessity and preserve them in peace. For peace is not sought in order to the kindling of war, but war is waged in order that peace may be obtained. Therefore, even in waging war, cherish the spirit of a peacemaker, that, by conquering those whom you attack, you may lead them back to the advantages of peace; for our Lord says: “Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.” If, however, peace among men be so sweet as procuring temporal safety, how much sweeter is that peace with God which procures for men the eternal felicity of the angels! Let necessity, therefore, and not your will, slay the enemy who fights against you. As violence is used towards him who rebels and resists, so mercy is due to the vanquished or the captive, especially in the case in which future troubling of the peace is not to be feared.

7. Let the manner of your life be adorned by chastity, sobriety, and moderation; for it is exceedingly disgraceful that lust should subdue him whom man finds invincible, and that wine should overpower him whom the sword assails in vain. As to worldly riches, if you do not possess them, let them not be sought after on earth by doing evil; and if you possess them, let them by good works be laid up in heaven. The manly and Christian spirit ought neither to be elated by the accession, nor crushed by the loss of this world’s treasures. Let us rather think of what the Lord says: “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also;” and certainly, when we hear the exhortation to lift up our hearts, it is our duty to give unfeignedly the response which you know that we are accustomed to give.

8. In these things, indeed, I know that you are very careful, and the good report which I hear of you fills me with great delight, and moves me to congratulate you on account of it in the Lord. This letter, therefore, may serve rather as a mirror in which you may see what you are, than as a directory from which to learn what you ought to be: nevertheless, whatever

you may discover, either from this letter or from the Holy Scriptures, to be still wanting to you in regard to a holy life, persevere in urgently seeking it both by effort and by prayer; and for the things which you have, give thanks to God as the Fountain of goodness, whence you have received them; in every good action let the glory be given to God, and humility be exercised by you, for, as it is written, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.” But however much you may advance in the love of God and of your neighbour, and in true piety, do not imagine, as long as you are in this life, that you are without sin, for concerning this we read in Holy Scripture: “Is not the life of man upon earth a life of temptation?” Wherefore, since always, as long as you are in this body, it is necessary for you to say in prayer, as the Lord taught us: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” remember quickly to forgive, if any one shall do you wrong and shall ask pardon from you, that you may be able to pray sincerely, and may prevail in seeking pardon for your own sins.

These things, my beloved friend, I have written to you in haste, as the anxiety of the bearer to depart urged me not to detain him; but I thank God that I have in some measure complied with your pious wish. May the mercy of God ever protect you, my noble lord and justly distinguished son.

LETTER CXCI

(A.D. 418.)

To My Venerable Lord and Pious Brother and Co-Presbyter Sixtus, Worthy of Being Received in the Love of Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Since the arrival of the letter which, in my absence, your Grace forwarded by our holy brother the presbyter Firmus, and which I read on my return to Hippo, but not until after the bearer had departed, the present is my first opportunity of sending to you any reply, and it is with great pleasure that I entrust it to our very dearly beloved son, the acolyte Albinus. Your letter, addressed to Alypius and myself jointly, came at a time when we were not together, and this is the reason why you will now receive a

letter from each of us, instead of one from both, in reply. For the bearer of this letter has just gone, meanwhile, from me to visit my venerable brother and co-bishop Alypius, who will write a reply for himself to your Holiness, and he has carried with him your letter, which I had already perused. As to the great joy with which that letter filled my heart, why should a man attempt to say what it is impossible to express? Indeed, I do not think that you yourself have any adequate idea of the amount of good done by your sending that letter to us; but take our word for it, for as you bear witness to your feelings, so do we bear witness to ours, declaring how profoundly we have been moved by the perfectly transparent soundness of the views declared in that letter. For if, when you sent a very short letter on the same subject to the most blessed aged Aurelius, by the acolyte Leo, we transcribed it with joyful alacrity, and read it with enthusiastic interest to all who were within our reach, as an exposition of your sentiments, both in regard to that most fatal dogma [of Pelagius], and in regard to the grace of God freely given by Him to small and great, to which that dogma is diametrically opposed; how great, think you, is the joy with which we have read this more extended statement in your writing, how great the zeal with which we take care that it be read by all to whom we have been able already or may yet be able to make it known! For what could be read or heard with greater satisfaction than so clear a defence of the grace of God against its enemies, from the mouth of one who was before this proudly claimed by these enemies as a mighty supporter of their cause? Or is there anything for which we ought to give more abundant thanksgivings to God, than that His grace is so ably defended by those to whom it is given, against those to whom it is not given, or by whom, when given, it is not accepted, because in the secret and just judgment of God the disposition to accept it is not given to them?

2. Wherefore, my venerable lord, and holy brother worthy of being received in the love of Christ, although you render a most excellent service when you thus write on this subject to brethren before whom the adversaries are wont to boast themselves of your being their friend, nevertheless, there remains upon you the yet greater duty of seeing not only that those be punished with wholesome severity who dare to prate more openly their declaration of that error, most dangerously hostile to the Christian name, but

also that with pastoral vigilance, on behalf of the weaker and simpler sheep of the Lord, most strenuous precautions be used against those who more covertly, indeed, and timidly, but perseveringly, and in whispers, as it were, teach this error, “creeping into houses,” as the apostle says, and doing with practised impiety all those other things which are mentioned immediately afterwards in that passage. Nor ought those to be overlooked who under the restraint of fear hide their sentiments under the most profound silence, yet have not ceased to cherish the same perverse opinions as before. For some of their party might be known to you before that pestilence was denounced by the most explicit condemnation of the apostolic see, whom you perceive to have now become suddenly silent; nor can it be ascertained whether they have been really cured of it, otherwise than through their not only forbearing from the utterance of these false dogmas, but also defending the truths which are opposed to their former errors with the same zeal as they used to show on the other side. These are, however, to be more gently dealt with; for what need is there for causing further terror to those whom their silence itself proves to be sufficiently terrified already? At the same time, though they should not be frightened, they should be taught; and in my opinion they may more easily, while their fear of severity assists the teacher of the truth, be so taught that by the Lord’s help, after they have learned to understand and love His grace, they may speak out as antagonists of the error which meanwhile they dare not confess.

LETTER CXCII

(A.D. 418.)

To My Venerable Lord and Highly Esteemed and Holy Brother, Caelestine, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I was at a considerable distance from home when the letter of your Holiness addressed to me at Hippo arrived by the hands of the clerk Projectus. When I had returned home, and, having read your letter, felt myself to be owing you a reply, I was still waiting for some means of communicating with you, when, lo! a most desirable opportunity presented itself in the departure of our very dear brother the acolyte Albinus, who leaves us immediately. Rejoicing, therefore, in your health, which is most

earnestly desired by me, I return to your Holiness the salutation which I was owing. But I always owe you love, the only debt which, even when it has been paid, holds him who has paid it a debtor still. For it is given when it is paid, but it is owing even after it has been given, for there is no time at which it ceases to be due. Nor when it is given is it lost, but it is rather multiplied by giving it; for in possessing it, not in parting with it, it is given. And since it cannot be given unless it is possessed, so neither can it be possessed unless it is given; nay, at the very time when it is given by a man it increases in that man, and, according to the number of persons to whom it is given, the amount of it which is gained becomes greater. Moreover, how can that be denied to friends which is due even to enemies? To enemies, however, this debt is paid with caution, whereas to friends it is repaid with confidence. Nevertheless, it uses every effort to secure that it receives back what it gives, even in the case of those to whom it renders good for evil. For we wish to have as a friend the man whom, as an enemy, we truly love, for we do not sincerely love him unless we wish him to be good, which he cannot be until he be delivered from the sin of cherished enmities.

2. Love, therefore, is not paid away in the same manner as money; for, whereas money is diminished, love is increased by paying it away. They differ also in this,—that we give evidence of greater goodwill to the man to whom we may have given money if we do not seek to have it returned; but no one can be a true donor of love unless he lovingly insist on its repayment. For money, when it is received, accrues to him to whom it is given, but forsakes him by whom it is given; love, on the contrary, even when it is not repaid, nevertheless increases with the man who insists on its repayment by the person whom he loves; and not only so, but the person by whom it is returned to him does not begin to possess it till he pays it back again.

Wherefore, my lord and brother, I willingly give to you, and joyfully receive from you, the love which we owe to each other. The love which I receive I still claim, and the love which I give I still owe. For we ought to obey with docility the precept of the One Master, whose disciples we both profess to be, when He says to us by His apostle: “Owe no man anything, but to love one another.”

LETTER CXCV

(A.D. 418.)

To His Holy Lord and Most Blessed Father, Augustin, Jerome Sends Greeting.

At all times I have esteemed your Blessedness with becoming reverence and honour, and have loved the Lord and Saviour dwelling in you. But now we add, if possible, something to that which has already reached a climax, and we heap up what was already full, so that we do not suffer a single hour to pass without the mention of your name, because you have, with the ardour of unshaken faith, stood your ground against opposing storms, and preferred, so far as this was in your power, to be delivered from Sodom, though you should come forth alone, rather than linger behind with those who are doomed to perish. Your wisdom apprehends what I mean to say. Go on and prosper! You are renowned throughout the whole world; Catholics revere and look up to you as the restorer of the ancient faith, and—which is a token of yet more illustrious glory—all heretics abhor you. They persecute me also with equal hatred, seeking by imprecation to take away the life which they cannot reach with the sword. May the mercy of Christ the Lord preserve you in safety and mindful of me, my venerable lord and most blessed father.

LETTER CCI

(A.D. 419.)

The Emperors Honorius Augustus and Theodosius Augustus to Bishop Aurelius Send Greeting.

1. It had been indeed long ago decreed that Pelagius and Celestius, the authors of an execrable heresy, should, as pestilent corruptors of the Catholic truth, be expelled from the city of Rome, lest they should, by their baneful influence, pervert the minds of the ignorant. In this our clemency followed up the judgment of your Holiness, according to which it is beyond all question that they were unanimously condemned after an impartial examination of their opinions. Their obstinate persistence in the offence having, however, made it necessary to issue the decree a second time, we

have enacted further by a recent edict, that if any one, knowing that they are concealing themselves in any part of the provinces, shall delay either to drive them out or to inform on them, he, as an accomplice, shall be liable to the punishment prescribed.

2. To secure, however, the combined efforts of the Christian zeal of all men for the destruction of this preposterous heresy, it will be proper, most dearly beloved father, that the authority of your Holiness be applied to the correction of certain bishops, who either support the evil reasonings of these men by their silent consent, or abstain from assailing them with open opposition. Let your Reverence, then, by suitable writings, cause all bishops to be admonished (as soon as they shall know, by the order of your Holiness, that this order is laid upon them) that whoever shall, through impious obstinacy, neglect to vindicate the purity of their doctrine by subscribing the condemnation of the persons before mentioned, shall, after being punished by the loss of their episcopal office, be cut off by excommunication and banished for life from their sees. For as, by a sincere confession of the truth, we ourselves, in obedience to the Council of Nice, worship God as the Creator of all things, and as the Fountain of our imperial sovereignty, your Holiness will not suffer the members of this odious sect, inventing, to the injury of religion, notions new and strange, to hide in writings privately circulated an error condemned by public authority. For, most beloved and loving father, the guilt of heresy is in no degree less grievous in those who either by dissimulation lend the error their secret support, or by abstaining from denouncing it extend to it a fatal approbation.

(In another hand.) May the Divinity preserve you in safety for many years!

Given at Ravenna, on the 9th day of June, in the Consulship of Monaxius and Plinta.

A letter, in the same terms, was also sent to the holy Bishop Augustin.

LETTER CCII

(A.D. 419.)

To the Bishops Alypius and Augustin, My Lords Truly Holy, and Deservedly Loved and Reverenced, Jerome Sends Greeting in Christ.

Chap. I

1. The holy presbyter Innocentius, who is the bearer of this letter, did not last year take with him a letter from me to your Eminences, as he had no expectation of returning to Africa. We thank God, however, that it so happened, as it afforded you an opportunity of overcoming [evil with good in requiting] our silence by your letter. Every opportunity of writing to you, revered fathers, is most acceptable to me. I call God to witness that, if it were possible, I would take the wings of a dove and fly to be folded in your embrace. Loving you, indeed, as I have always done, from a deep sense of your worth, but now especially because your co-operation and your leadership have succeeded in strangling the heresy of Celestius, a heresy which has so poisoned the hearts of many, that, though they felt they were vanquished and condemned, yet they did not lay aside their venomous sentiments, and, as the only thing that remained in their power, hated us by whom they imagined that they had lost the liberty of teaching heretical doctrines.

Chap. II

2. As to your inquiry whether I have written in opposition to the books of Annianus, this pretended deacon of Celedae, who is amply provided for in order that he may furnish frivolous accounts of the blasphemies of others, know that I received these books, sent in loose sheets by our holy brother, the presbyter Eusebius, not long ago. Since then I have suffered so much through the attacks of disease, and through the falling asleep of your distinguished and holy daughter Eustochium, that I almost thought of passing over these writings with silent contempt. For he flounders from beginning to end in the same mud, and, with the exception of some jingling phrases which are not original, says nothing he had not said before. Nevertheless, I have gained much in the fact, that in attempting to answer my letter he has declared his opinions with less reserve, and has published to all men his blasphemies; for every error which he disowned in the wretched synod of Diospolis he in this treatise openly avows. It is indeed no

great thing to answer his superlatively silly puerilities, but if the Lord spare me, and I have a sufficient staff of amanuenses, I will in a few brief lucubrations answer him, not to refute a defunct heresy, but to silence his ignorance and blasphemy by arguments: and this your Holiness could do better than I, as you would relieve me from the necessity of praising my own works in writing to the heretic. Our holy daughters Albina and Melania, and our son Pinianus, salute you cordially. I give to our holy presbyter Innocentius this short letter to convey to you from the holy place Bethlehem. Your niece Paula piteously entreats you to remember her, and salutes you warmly. May the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve you safe and mindful of me, my lords truly holy, and fathers deservedly loved and reverenced.

LETTER CCIII

(A.D. 420.)

To My Noble Lord and Most Excellent and Loving Son, Largus, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

I received the letter of your Excellency, in which you ask me to write to you. This assuredly you would not have done unless you had esteemed acceptable and pleasant that which you suppose me capable of writing to you. In other words, I assume that, having desired the vanities of this life when you had not tried them, now, after the trial has been made, you despise them, because in them the pleasure is deceitful, the labour fruitless, the anxiety perpetual, the elevation dangerous. Men seek them at first through imprudence, and give them up at last with disappointment and remorse. This is true of all the things which, in the cares of this mortal life, are coveted with more eagerness than wisdom by the uneasy solicitude of the men of the world. But it is wholly otherwise with the hope of the pious: very different is the fruit of their labours, very different the reward of their dangers. Fear and grief, and labour and danger are unavoidable, so long as we live in this world; but the great question is, for what cause, with what expectation, with what aim a man endures these things. When, indeed, I contemplate the lovers of this world, I know not at what time wisdom can most opportunely attempt their moral improvement; for when they have apparent prosperity, they reject disdainfully her salutary admonitions, and regard them as old wives fables; when, again, they are in adversity, they think rather of escaping merely from present suffering than of obtaining the real remedy by which they may be made whole, and may arrive at that place where they shall be altogether exempt from suffering. Occasionally, however, some open their ears and hearts to the truth,—rarely in prosperity, more frequently in adversity. These are indeed the few, for such it is predicted that they shall be. Among these I desire you to be, because I love you truly, my noble lord and most excellent and loving son. Let this counsel be my answer to your letter, because though I am unwilling that you should henceforth suffer such things as you have endured, yet I would grieve still more if you were found to have suffered these things without any change for the better in your life.

LETTER CCVIII

(A.D. 423.)

To the Lady Felicia, His Daughter in the Faith, and Worthy of Honour Among the Members of Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I do not doubt, when I consider both your faith and the weakness or wickedness of others, that your mind has been disturbed, for even a holy apostle, full of compassionate love, confesses a similiar experience, saying, “Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?” Wherefore, as I myself share your pain, and am solicitous for your welfare in Christ, I have thought it my duty to address this letter, partly consolatory, partly hortatory, to your Holiness, because in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, in which all His members are one, you are very closely related to us, being loved as an honourable member in that body, and partaking with us of life in His Holy Spirit.

2. I exhort you, therefore, not to be too much troubled by those offences which for this very reason were foretold as destined to come, that when they came we might remember that they had been foretold, and not be greatly disconcerted by them. For the Lord Himself in His gospel foretold them, saying, “Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be

that offences come; but woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh!" These are the men of whom the apostle said, "They seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's." There are, therefore, some who hold the honourable office of shepherds in order that they may provide for the flock of Christ; others occupy that position that they may enjoy the temporal honours and secular advantages connected with the office. It must needs happen that these two kinds of pastors, some dying, others succeeding them, should continue in the Catholic Church even to the end of time, and the judgment of the Lord. If, then, in the times of the apostles there were men such that Paul, grieved by their conduct, enumerates among his trials, "perils among false brethren," and yet he did not haughtily cast them out, but patiently bore with them, how much more must such arise in our times, since the Lord most plainly says concerning this age which is drawing to a close, "that because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold." The word which follows, however, ought to console and exhort us, for He adds, "He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved."

3. Moreover, as there are good shepherds and bad shepherds, so also in flocks there are good and bad. The good are represented by the name of sheep, but the bad are called goats: they feed, nevertheless, side by side in the same pastures, until the Chief Shepherd, who is called the One Shepherd, shall come and separate them one from another according to His promise, "as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats." On us He has laid the duty of gathering the flock; to Himself He has reserved the work of final separation, because it pertains properly to Him who cannot err. For those presumptuous servants, who have lightly ventured to separate before the time which the Lord has reserved in His own hand, have, instead of separating others, only been separated themselves from Catholic unity; for how could those have a clean flock who have by schism become unclean?

4. In order, therefore, that we may remain in the unity of the faith, and not, stumbling at the offences occasioned by the chaff, desert the threshing-floor of the Lord, but rather remain as wheat till the final winnowing, and by the love which imparts stability to us bear with the beaten straw, our great Shepherd in the gospel admonishes us concerning the good shepherds, that we should not, on account of their good works, place our hope in them, but

glorify our heavenly Father for making them such; and concerning the bad shepherds (whom He designed to point out under the name of Scribes and Pharisees), He reminds us that they teach that which is good though they do that which is evil.

5. Concerning the good shepherds He thus speaks: “Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Concerning the bad shepherds He admonishes the sheep in these words: “The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.” When these are listened to, the sheep of Christ, even through evil teachers, hear His voice, and do not forsake the unity of His flock, because the good which they hear them teach belongs not to the shepherds but to Him, and therefore the sheep are safely fed, since even under bad shepherds they are nourished in the Lord’s pastures. They do not, however, imitate the actions of the bad shepherds, because such actions belong not to the world but to the shepherds themselves. In regard, however, to those whom they see to be good shepherds, they not only hear the good things which they teach, but also imitate the good actions which they perform. Of this number was the apostle, who said: “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” He was a light kindled by the Eternal Light, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and was placed on a candlestick because He gloried in His cross, concerning which he said: “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Moreover, since he sought not his own things, but the things which are Jesus Christ’s, whilst he exhorts to the imitation of his own life those whom he had “begotten through the gospel,” he yet severely reproved those who, by the names of apostles, introduced schisms, and he chides those who said, “I am of Paul; was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?”

6. Hence we understand both that the good shepherds are those who seek not their own, but the things of Jesus Christ, and that the good sheep, though imitating the works of the good shepherds by whose ministry they

have been gathered together, do not place their hope in them, but rather in the Lord, by Whose blood they are redeemed; so that when they may happen to be placed under bad shepherds, preaching Christ's doctrine and doing their own evil works, they will do what they teach, but will not do what they do, and will not, on account of these sons of wickedness, forsake the pastures of the one true Church. For there are both good and bad in the Catholic Church, which, unlike the Donatist sect, is extended and spread abroad, not in Africa only, but through all nations; as the apostle expresses it, "bringing forth fruit, and increasing in the whole world." But those who are separated from the Church, as long as they are opposed to it cannot be good; although an apparently praiseworthy conversation seems to prove some of them to be good, their separation from the Church itself renders them bad, according to the saying of the Lord: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."

7. Therefore, my daughter, worthy of all welcome and honour among the members of Christ, I exhort you to hold faithfully that which the Lord has committed to you, and love with all your heart Him and His Church who suffered you not, by joining yourself with the lost, to lose the recompense of your virginity, or perish with them. For if you should depart out of this world separated from the unity of the body of Christ, it will avail you nothing to have preserved inviolate your virginity. But God, who is rich in mercy, has done in regard to you that which is written in the gospel: when the invited guests excused themselves to the master of the feast, he said to the servants, "Go ye, therefore, into the highways and hedges, and as many as ye shall find compel them to come in." Although, however, you owe sincerest affection to those good servants of His through whose instrumentality you were compelled to come in, yet it is your duty, nevertheless, to place your hope on Him who prepared the banquet, by whom also you have been persuaded to come to eternal and blessed life. Committing to Him your heart, your vow, and your sacred virginity, and your faith, hope, and charity, you will not be moved by offences, which shall abound even to the end; but, by the unshaken strength of piety, shall be safe and shall triumph in the Lord, continuing in the unity of His body even to the end. Let me know, by your answer, with what sentiments you

regard my anxiety for you, to which I have to the best of my ability given expression in this letter. May the grace and mercy of God ever protect you!

LETTER CCIX

(A.D. 423.)

To Caelestine, My Lord Most Blessed, and Holy Father Venerated with All Due Affection, Augustin Sends Greeting in The Lord.

1. First of all I congratulate you that our Lord God has, as we have heard, established you in the illustrious chair which you occupy without any division among His people. In the next place, I lay before your Holiness the state of affairs with us, that not only by your prayers, but with your council and aid you may help us. For I write to you at this time under deep affliction, because, while wishing to benefit certain members of Christ in our neighbourhood, I brought on them a great calamity by my want of prudence and caution.

2. Bordering on the district of Hippo, there is a small town, named Fussala: formerly there was no bishop there, but, along with the contiguous district, it was included in the parish of Hippo. That part of the country had few Catholics; the error of the Donatists held under its miserable influence all the other congregations located in the midst of a large population, so that in the town of Fussala itself there was not one Catholic. In the mercy of God, all these places were brought to attach themselves to the unity of the Church; with how much toil, and how many dangers it would take long to tell,—how the presbyters originally appointed by us to gather these people into the fold were robbed, beaten, maimed, deprived of their eyesight, and even put to death; whose sufferings, however, were not useless and unfruitful, seeing that by them the re-establishment of unity was achieved. But as Fussala is forty miles distant from Hippo, and I saw that in governing its people, and gathering together the remnant, however small, of persons of both sexes, who, not threatening others, but fleeing for their own safety, were scattered here and there, my work would be extended farther than it ought, and that I could not give the attention which I clearly

perceived to be necessary, I arranged that a bishop should be ordained and appointed there.

3. With a view to the carrying out of this, I sought for a person who might be suitable to the locality and people, and at the same time acquainted with the Punic language; and I had in my mind a presbyter fitted for the office. Having applied by letter to the holy senior bishop who was then Primate of Numidia, I obtained his consent to come from a great distance to ordain this presbyter. After his coming, when all our minds were intent on an affair of so great consequence, at the last moment, the person whom I believed to be ready to be ordained disappointed us by absolutely refusing to accept the office. Then I myself, who, as the event showed, ought rather to have postponed than precipitated a matter so perilous, being unwilling that the very venerable and holy old man, who had come with so much fatigue to us, should return home without accomplishing the business for which he had journeyed so far, offered to the people, without their seeking him, a young man, Antonius, who was then with me. He had been from childhood brought up in a monastery by us, but, beyond officiating as a reader, he had no experience of the labours pertaining to the various degrees of rank in the clerical office. The unhappy people, not knowing what was to follow, submissively trusting me, accepted him on my suggestion. What need I say more? The deed was done; he entered on his office as their bishop.

4. What shall I do? I am unwilling to accuse before your venerable Dignity one whom I brought into the fold, and nourished with care; and I am unwilling to forsake those in seeking whose ingathering to the Church I have travailed, amid fears and anxieties; and how to do justice to both I cannot discover. The matter has come to such a painful crisis, that those who, in compliance with my wishes, had, in the belief that they were consulting their own interests, chosen him for their bishop, are now bringing charges against him before me. When the most serious of these, namely, charges of gross immorality, which were brought forward not by those whose bishop he was, but by certain other individuals, were found to be utterly unsupported by evidence, and he seemed to us fully acquitted of the crimes laid most ungenerously to his charge, he was on this account regarded, both by ourselves and by others, with such sympathy that the

things complained of by the people of Fussala and the surrounding district,—such as intolerable tyranny and spoliation, and extortion, and oppression of various kinds,—by no means seemed so grievous that for one, or for all of them taken together, we should deem it necessary to deprive him of the office of bishop; it seemed to us enough to insist that he should restore what might be proved to have been taken away unjustly.

5. In fine, we so mixed clemency with severity in our sentence, that while reserving to him his office of bishop, we did not leave altogether unpunished offences which behoved neither to be repeated again by himself, nor held forth to the imitation of others. We therefore, in correcting him, reserved to the young man the rank of his office unimpaired, but at the same time, as a punishment, we took away his power, appointing that he should not any longer rule over those with whom he had dealt in such a manner that with just resentment they could not submit to his authority, and might perhaps manifest their impatient indignation by breaking forth into some deeds of violence fraught with danger both to themselves and to him. That this was the state of feeling evidently appeared when the bishops dealt with them concerning Antonius, although at present that conspicuous man Celer, of whose powerful interference against him he complained, possesses no power, either in Africa or elsewhere.

6. But why should I detain you with further particulars? I beseech you to assist us in this laborious matter, blessed lord and holy father, venerated for your piety, and revered with due affection; and command all the documents which have been forwarded to be read aloud to you. Observe in what manner Antonius discharged his duties as bishop; how, when debarred from communion until full restitution should be made to the men of Fussala, he submitted to our sentence, and has now set apart a sum out of which to pay what may after inquiry be deemed just for compensation, in order that the privilege of communion might be restored to him; with what crafty reasoning he prevailed on our aged primate, a most venerable man, to believe all his statements, and to recommend him as altogether blameless to the venerable Pope Boniface. But why should I rehearse all the rest, seeing that the venerable old man, aforesaid must have reported the entire matter to your Holiness?

7. In the numerous minutes of procedure in which our judgment regarding him is recorded, I should have feared that we might appear to you to have passed a sentence less severe than we ought to have done, did I not know that you are so prone to mercy that you will deem it your duty to spare not us only, because we spared him, but also the man himself. But what we did, whether in kindness or laxity, he attempts to turn to account, and use as a legal objection to our sentence. He boldly protests: “Either I ought to sit in my own episcopal chair, or ought not to be a bishop at all,” as if he were now sitting in any seat but his own. For, on this very account, those places were set apart and assigned to him in which he had previously been bishop, that he might not be said to be unlawfully translated to another see, contrary to the statutes of the Fathers; or is it to be maintained that one ought to be so rigid an advocate, either for severity or for lenity, as to insist, either that no punishment be inflicted on those who seem not to deserve deposition from the office of bishop, or that the sentence of deposition be pronounced on all who seem to deserve any punishment?

8. There are cases on record, in which the Apostolic See, either pronouncing judgment or confirming the judgment of others, sanctioned decisions by which persons, for certain offences, were neither deposed from their episcopal office nor left altogether unpunished. I shall not bring forward those which occurred at a period very remote from our own time; I shall mention recent instances. Let Priscus, a bishop of the province of Caesarea, protest boldly: “Either the office of primate should be open to me, as to other bishops, or I ought not to remain a bishop.” Let Victor, another bishop of the same province, with whom, when involved in the same sentence as Priscus, no bishop beyond his own diocese holds communion, let him, I say, protest with similar confidence: “Either I ought to have communion everywhere, or I ought not to have it in my own district.” Let Laurentius, a third bishop of the same province, speak, and in the precise words of this man he may exclaim: “Either I ought to sit in the chair to which I have been ordained, or I ought not to be a bishop.” But who can find fault with these judgments, except one who does not consider that, neither on the one hand ought all offences to be left unpunished, nor on the other ought all to be punished in one way.

9. Since, then, the most blessed Pope Boniface, speaking of Bishop Antonius, has in his epistle, with the vigilant caution becoming a pastor, inserted in his judgment the additional clause, “if he has faithfully narrated the facts of the case to us,” receive now the facts of the case, which in his statement to you he passed over in silence, and also the transactions which took place after the letter of that man of blessed memory had been read in Africa, and in the mercy of Christ extend your aid to men imploring it more earnestly than he does from whose turbulence they desire to be freed. For either from himself, or at least from very frequent rumors, threats are held out that the courts of justiciary, and the public authorities, and the violence of the military, are to carry into force the decision of the Apostolic See; the effect of which is that these unhappy men, being now Catholic Christians, dread greater evils from a Catholic bishop than those which, when they were heretics, they dreaded from the laws of Catholic emperors. Do not permit these things to be done, I implore you, by the blood of Christ, by the memory of the Apostle Peter, who has warned those placed over Chistian people against violently “lording it over their brethren.” I commend to the gracious love of your Holiness the Catholics of Fussala, my children in Christ, and also Bishop Antonius, my son in Christ, for I love both, and I commend both to you. I do not blame the people of Fussala for bringing to your ears their just complaint against me for imposing on them a man whom I had not proved, and who was in age at least not yet established, by whom they have been so afflicted; nor do I wish any wrong done to Antonius, whose evil covetousness I oppose with a determination proportioned to my sincere affection for him. Let your compassion be extended to both,—to them, so that they may not suffer evil; to him, so that he may not do evil: to them, so that they may not hate the Catholic Church, if they find no aid in defence against a Catholic bishop extended to them by Catholic bishops, and especially by the Apostolic See itself; to him, on the other hand, so that he may not involve himself in such grievous wickedness as to alienate from Christ those whom against their will he endeavours to make his own.

10. As for myself, I must acknowledge to your Holiness, that in the danger which threatens both, I am so racked with anxiety and grief that I think of retiring from the responsibilities of the episcopal office, and abandoning

myself to demonstrations of sorrow corresponding to the greatness of my error, if I shall see (through the conduct of him in favour of whose election to the bishopric I imprudently gave my vote) the Church of God laid waste, and (which may God forbid) even perish, involving in its destruction the man by whom it was laid waste. Recollecting what the apostle says: “If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.” I will judge myself, that He may spare me who is hereafter to judge the quick and the dead. If, however, you succeed in restoring the members of Christ in that district from their deadly fear and grief, and in comforting my old age by the administration of justice tempered with mercy, He who brings deliverance to us through you in this tribulation, and who has established you in the seat which you occupy, shall recompense unto you good for good, both in this life and in that which is to come.

LETTER CCX

(A.D. 423.)

To the Most Beloved and Most Holy Mother Felicitas, and Brother Rusticus, and to the Sisters Who are with Them, Augustin and Those Who are with Him Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. Good is the Lord, and to every place extends His mercy, which comforts us by your love to us in Him. How much He loves those who believe and hope in Him, and who both love Him and love one another, and what blessings He keeps in store for them hereafter, He proves most remarkably in this, that on the unbelieving, the abandoned, and the perverse, whom He threatens with eternal fire, if they persevere in their evil disposition to the end, He does in this life bestow so many benefits, making “His sun to rise on the evil and on the good,” “on the just and on the unjust,” words in which, for the sake of brevity, some instances are mentioned that many more may be suggested to reflection; for who can reckon up how many gracious benefits the wicked receive in this life from Him whom they despise? Amongst these, this is one of great value, that by the experience of the occasional afflictions, which like a good physician He mingles the pleasures of this life, He admonishes them, if only they will give heed, to flee from the wrath to come, and while they are in the way, that is, in this

life, to agree with the word of God, which they have made an adversary to themselves by their wicked lives. What, then, is not bestowed in mercy on men by the Lord God, since even affliction sent by Him is a blessing? For prosperity is a gift of God when He comforts, adversity a gift of God when He warns; and if He bestows these things, as I have said, even on the wicked, what does He prepare for those who bear with one another? Into this number you rejoice that through His grace you have been gathered, “forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” For there shall not be awanting occasion for your bearing one with another till God shall have so purified you, that, death being “swallowed up in victory,” “God shall be all in all.”

2. We ought never, indeed, to take pleasure in quarrels; but however averse we may be to them, they occasionally either arise from love, or put it to the test. For how difficult is it to find any one willing to be reproved; and where is the wise man of whom it is said, “Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee”? But are we on that account not to reprove and find fault with a brother, to prevent him from going down through false security to death? For it is a common and frequent experience, that when a brother is found fault with he is mortified at the time, and resists and contradicts his friend, but afterwards reconsiders the matter in silence alone with God, where he is not afraid of giving offence to men by submitting to correction, but is afraid of offending God by refusing to be reformed, and thenceforward refrains from doing that for which he has been justly reproved; and in proportion as he hates his sin, he loves the brother whom he feels to have been the enemy of his sin. But if he belong to the number of those of whom it is said, “Reprove not a scorner lest he hate thee,” the quarrel does not arise from love on the part of the reproved, but it exercises and tests the love of the reprover; for he does not return hatred for hatred, but the love which constrains him to find fault endures unmoved, even when he who is found fault with requites it with hatred. But if the reprover renders evil for evil to the man who takes offence at being reproved, he was not worthy to reprove another, but evidently deserves to be himself reproved. Act upon these principles, so that either quarrels may not arise, or, if they do arise, may quickly terminate in peace. Be more earnest to dwell in concord than to vanquish each other in controversy. For as vinegar corrodes a vessel if it

remain long in it, so anger corrodes the heart if it is cherished till the morrow. These things, therefore, observe, and the God of peace shall be with you. Pray also unitedly for us, that we may cheerfully practise the good advices which we give to you.

LETTER CCXI

(A.D. 423.)

In This Letter Augustin Rebukes the Nuns of the Monastery in Which His Sister Had Been Prioress, for Certain Turbulent Manifestations of Dissatisfaction with Her Successor, and Lays Down General Rules for Their Guidance.

1. As severity is ready to punish the faults which it may discover, so charity is reluctant to discover the faults which it must punish. This was the reason of my not acceding to your request for a visit from me, at a time when, if I had come, I must have come not to rejoice in your harmony, but to add more vehemence to your strife. For how could I have treated your behaviour with indifference, or have allowed it to pass unpunished, if so great a tumult had arisen among you in my presence, as that which, when I was absent, assailed my ears with the din of your voices, although my eyes did not witness your disorder? For perhaps your rising against authority would have been even more violent in my presence, since I must have refused the concessions which you demanded,—concessions involving, to your own disadvantage, some most dangerous precedents, subversive of sound discipline; and I must thus have found you such as I did not desire, and must have myself been found by you such as you did not desire.

2. The apostle, writing to the Corinthians, says: “Moreover, I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet to Corinth. Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy.” I also say the same to you; to spare you I have not come to you. I have also spared myself, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow, and have chosen not to see you face to face, but to pour out my heart to God on your behalf, and to plead the cause of your great danger not in words before you, but in tears before God; entreating Him that He may not turn into grief the joy

wherewith I am wont to rejoice in you, and that amid the great offences with which this world everywhere abounds, I may be comforted at times by thinking of your number, your pure affection, your holy conversation, and the abundant grace of God which is given to you, so that you not only have renounced matrimony, but have chosen to dwell with one accord in fellowship under the same roof, that you may have one soul and one heart in God.

3. When I reflect on these good things, these gifts of God in you, my heart, amid the many storms by which it is agitated through evils elsewhere, is wont to find perfect rest. “Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of Him that calleth you.” “A little leaven “—I am unwilling to complete the sentence, for I rather desire, entreat, and exhort that the leaven itself be transformed into something better, lest it change the whole lump for the worse, as it has already almost done. If, therefore, you have begun to put forth again the buddings of a sound discernment as to your duty, pray that you enter not into temptation, nor fall again into strifes, emulations, animosities, divisions, evil speaking, seditions, whisperings. For we have not laboured as we have done in planting and watering the garden of the Lord among you, that we may reap these thorns from you. If, however, your weakness be still disturbed by turbulence, pray that you may be delivered from this temptation. As for the troublers of your peace, if such there be still among you, they shall, unless they amend their conduct, bear their judgment, whoever they be.

4. Consider how evil a thing it is, that at the very time when we rejoice in the return of the Donatists to our unity, we have to lament internal discord within our monastery. Be stedfast in observing your good vows, and you will not desire to change for another the prioress whose care of the monastery has been for so many years unwearied, under whom also you have both increased in numbers and advanced in age, and who has given you the place in her heart which a mother gives to her own children. All of you when you came to the monastery found her there, either discharging satisfactorily the duties of assistant to the late holy prioress, my sister, or, after her own accession to that office, giving you a welcome to the

sisterhood. Under her you spent your noviciate, under her you took the veil, under her your number has been multiplied, and yet you are riotously demanding that she should be replaced by another, whereas, if the proposal to put another in her place had come from us, it would have been seemly for you to have mourned over such a proposal. For she is one whom you know well; to her you came at first, and under her you have for so many years advanced in age and in numbers. No official previously unknown to you has been appointed, excepting the prior; if it be on his account that you seek a change, and if through aversion to him you thus rebel against your mother, why do you not rather petition for his removal? If, however, you recoil from this suggestion, for I know how you reverence and love him in Christ, why do you not all the more for his sake reverence and love her? For the first measures of the recently appointed prior in presiding over you are so hindered by your disorderly behaviour, that he is himself disposed to leave you, rather than be subjected on your account to the dishonour and odium which must arise from the report going abroad, that you would not have sought another prioress unless you had begun to have him as your prior. May God therefore calm and compose your minds: let not the work of the devil prevail in you, but may the peace of Christ gain the victory in your hearts; and do not rush headlong to death, either through vexation of spirit, because what you desire is refused, or through shame, because of having desired what you ought not to have desired, but rather by repentance resume the conscientious discharge of duty; and imitate not the repentance of Judas the traitor, but the tears of Peter the shepherd.

5. The rules which we lay down to be observed by you as persons settled in a monastery are these:—First of all, in order to fulfil the end for which you have been gathered into one community, dwell in the house with oneness of spirit, and let your hearts and minds be one in God. Also call not anything the property of any one, but let all things be common property, and let distribution of food and raiment be made to each of you by the prioress,—not equally to all, because you are not all equally strong, but to every one according to her need. For you read in the Acts of the Apostles: “They had all things common: and distribution was made to every man according as he had need.” Let those who had any worldly goods when they entered the monastery cheerfully desire that these become common property. Let those

who had no worldly goods not ask within the monastery for luxuries which they could not have while they were outside of its walls; nevertheless, let the comforts which the infirmity of any of them may require be given to such, though their poverty before coming in to the monastery may have been such that they could not have procured for themselves the bare necessaries of life; and let them in such case be careful not to reckon it the chief happiness of their present lot that they have found within the monastery food and raiment, such as was elsewhere beyond their reach.

6. Let them, moreover, not hold their heads high because they are associated on terms of equality with persons whom they durst not have approached in the outer world; but let them rather lift their hearts on high, and not seek after earthly possessions, lest, if the rich be made lowly but the poor puffed up with vanity in our monasteries, these institutions become useful only to the rich, and hurtful to the poor. On the other hand, however, let not those who seemed to hold some position in the world regard with contempt their sisters, who in coming into this sacred fellowship have left a condition of poverty; let them be careful to glory rather in the fellowship of their poor sisters, than in the rank of their wealthy parents. And let them not lift themselves up above the rest because of their having, perchance, contributed something from their own resources to the maintenance of the community, lest they find in their riches more occasion for pride, because they divide them with others in a monastery, than they might have found if they had spent them in their own enjoyment in the world. For every other kind of sin finds scope in evil works, so that by it they are done, but pride lurks even in good works, so that by it they are undone; and what avails it to lavish money on the poor, and become poor oneself, if the unhappy soul is rendered more proud by despising riches than it had been by possessing them? Live, then, all of you, in unanimity and concord, and in each other give honour to that God whose temples you have been made.

7. Be regular (instate) in prayers at the appointed hours and times. In the oratory let no one do anything else than the duty for which the place was made, and from which it has received its name; so that if any of you, having leisure, wish to pray at other hours than those appointed, they may not be hindered by others using the place for any other purpose. In the psalms and

hymns used in your prayers to God, let that be pondered in the heart which is uttered by the voice; chant nothing but what you find prescribed to be chanted; whatever is not so prescribed is not to be chanted.

8. Keep the flesh under by fastings and by abstinence from meat and drink, so far as health allows. When any one is not able to fast, let her not, unless she be ill, take any nourishment except at the customary hour of repast. From the time of your coming to table until you rise from it, listen without noise and wrangling to whatever may be in course read to you; let not your mouths alone be exercised in receiving food, let your ears be also occupied in receiving the word of God.

9. If those who are weak in consequence of their early training are treated somewhat differently in regard to food, this ought not to be vexatious or seem unjust to others whom a different training has made more robust. And let them not esteem these weaker ones more favoured than themselves, because they receive a fare somewhat less frugal than their own, but rather congratulate themselves on enjoying a vigour of constitution which the others do not possess. And if to those who have entered the monastery after a more delicate upbringing at home, there be given any food, clothing, couch, or covering which to others who are stronger, and in that respect more favourably circumstanced, is not given, the sisters to whom these indulgences are not given ought to consider how great a descent the others have made from their style of living in the world to that which they now have, although they may not have been able to come altogether down to the severe simplicity of others who have a more hardy constitution. And when those who were originally more wealthy see others receiving—not as mark of higher honour, but out of consideration for infirmity—more largely than they do themselves, they ought not to be disturbed by fear of any such detestable perversion of monastic discipline as this, that the poor are to be trained to luxury in a monastery in which the wealthy are, so far as they can bear it, trained to hardships. For, of course, as those who are ill must take less food, otherwise they would increase their disease, so after illness, those who are convalescent must, in order to their more rapid recovery, be so nursed—even though they may have come from the lowest poverty to the monastery—as if their recent illness had conferred on them the same claim

for special treatment as their former style of living confers upon those who, before entering the monastery, were rich. So soon, however, as they regain their wonted health, let them return to their own happier mode of living, which, as involving fewer wants, is more suitable for those who are servants of God; and let not inclination detain them when they are strong in that amount of ease to which necessity had raised them when they were weak. Let those regard themselves as truly richer who are endowed with greater strength to bear hardships. For it is better to have fewer wants than to have larger resources.

10. Let your apparel be in no wise conspicuous; and aspire to please others by your behaviour rather than by your attire. Let your head-dresses not be so thin as to let the nets below them be seen. Let your hair be worn wholly covered, and let it neither be carelessly dishevelled nor too scrupulously arranged when you go beyond the monastery. When you go anywhere, walk together; when you come to the place to which you were going, stand together. In walking, in standing, in deportment, and in all your movements let nothing be done which might attract the improper desires of any one, but rather let all be in keeping with your sacred character. Though a passing glance be directed towards any man, let your eyes look fixedly at none; for when you are walking you are not forbidden to see men, but you must neither let your desires go out to them, nor wish to be the objects of desire on their part. For it is not only by touch that a woman awakens in any man or cherishes towards him such desire, this may be done by inward feelings and by looks. And say not that you have chaste minds though you may have wanton eyes, for a wanton eye is the index of a wanton heart. And when wanton hearts exchange signals with each other in looks, though the tongue is silent, and are, by the force of sensual passion, pleased by the reciprocation of inflamed desire, their purity of character is gone, though their bodies are not defiled by any act of uncleanness. Nor let her who fixes her eyes upon one of the other sex, and takes pleasure in his eye being fixed on her, imagine that the act is not observed by others; she is seen assuredly by those by whom she supposes herself not to be remarked. But even though she should elude notice, and be seen by no human eye, what shall she do with that Witness above us from whom nothing can be concealed? Is He to be regarded as not seeing because His eye rests on all things with a

long-suffering proportioned to His wisdom? Let every holy woman guard herself from desiring sinfully to please man by cherishing a fear of displeasing God; let her check the desire of sinfully looking upon man by remembering that God's eye is looking upon all things. For in this very matter we are exhorted to cherish fear of God by the words of Scripture:—"He that looks with a fixed eye is an abomination to the Lord." When, therefore, you are together in the church, or in any other place where men also are present, guard your chastity by watching over one another, and God, who dwelleth in you, will thus guard you by means of yourselves.

11. And if you perceive in any one of your number this frowardness of eye, warn her at once, so that the evil which has begun may not go on, but be checked immediately. But if, after this admonition, you see her repeat the offence, or do the same thing on any other subsequent day, whoever may have had the opportunity of seeing this must now report her as one who has been wounded and requires to be healed, but not without pointing her out to another, and perhaps a third sister, so that she may be convicted by the testimony of two or three witnesses, and may be reprimanded with necessary severity. And do not think that in thus informing upon one another you are guilty of malevolence. For the truth rather is, that you are not guiltless if by keeping silence you allow sisters to perish, whom you may correct by giving information of their faults. For if your sister had a wound on her person which she wished to conceal through fear of the surgeon's lance, would it not be cruel if you kept silence about it, and true compassion if you made it known? How much more, then, are you bound to make known her sin, that she may not suffer more fatally from a neglected spiritual wound. But before she is pointed out to others as witnesses by whom she may be convicted if she deny the charge, the offender ought to be brought before the prioress, if after admonition she has refused to be corrected, so that by her being in this way more privately rebuked, the fault which she has committed may not become known to all the others. If, however, she then deny the charge, then others must be employed to observe her conduct after the denial, so that now before the whole sisterhood she may not be accused by one witness, but convicted by two or three. When convicted of the fault, it is her duty to submit to the corrective discipline which may be appointed by the prioress or the prior. If she refuse

to submit to this, and does not go away from you of her own accord, let her be expelled from your society. For this is not done cruelly but mercifully, to protect very many from perishing through infection of the plague with which one has been stricken. Moreover, what I have now said in regard to abstaining from wanton looks should be carefully observed, with due love for the persons and hatred of the sin, in observing, forbidding, reporting, proving, and punishing of all other faults. But if any one among you has gone on into so great sin as to receive secretly from any man letters or gifts of any description, let her be pardoned and prayed for if she confess this of her own accord. If, however, she is found out and is convicted of such conduct, let her be more severely punished, according to the sentence of the prioress, or of the prior, or even of the bishop.

12. Keep your clothes in one place, under the care of one or two, or as many as may be required to shake them so as to keep them from being injured by moths; and as your food is supplied from one storeroom, let your clothes be provided from one wardrobe. And whatever may be brought out to you as wearing apparel suitable for the season, regard it, if possible, as a matter of no importance whether each of you receives the very same article of clothing which she had formerly laid aside, or one receive what another formerly wore, provided only that what is necessary be denied to no one. But if contentions and murmurings are occasioned among you by this, and some one of you complains that she has received some article of dress inferior to that which she formerly wore, and thinks it beneath her to be so clothed as her other sister was, by this prove your own selves, and judge how far deficient you must be in the inner holy dress of the heart, when you quarrel with each other about the clothing of the body. Nevertheless, if your infirmity is indulged by the concession that you are to receive again the identical article which you had laid aside, let whatever you put past be nevertheless, kept in one place, and in charge of the ordinary keepers of the wardrobe; it being, of course, understood that no one is to work in making any article of clothing or for the couch, or any girdle, veil, or head-dress, for her own private comfort, but that all your works be done for the common good of all, with greater zeal and more cheerful perseverance than if you were each working for your individual interest. For the love concerning which it is written, “Charity seeketh not her own,” is to be

understood as that which prefers the common good to personal advantage, not personal advantage to the common good. Therefore the more fully that you give to the common good a preference above your personal and private interests, the more fully will you be sensible of progress in securing that, in regard to all those things which supply wants destined soon to pass away, the charity which abides may hold a conspicuous and influential place. An obvious corollary from these rules is, that when persons of either sex bring to their own daughters in the monastery, or to inmates belonging to them by any other relationship, presents of clothing or of other articles which are to be regarded as necessary, such gifts are not to be received privately, but must be under the control of the prioress, that, being added to the common stock, they may be placed at the service of any inmate to whom they may be necessary. If any one conceal any gift bestowed on her, let sentence be passed on her as guilty of theft.

13. Let your clothes be washed, whether by yourselves or by washerwomen, at such intervals as are approved by the prioress, lest the indulgence of undue solicitude about spotless raiment produce inward stains upon your souls. Let the washing of the body and the use of baths be not constant, but at the usual interval assigned to it, i.e. once in a month. In the case, however, of illness rendering necessary the washing of the person, let it not be unduly delayed; let it be done on the physician’s recommendation without complaint; and even though the patient be reluctant, she must do at the order of the prioress what health demands. If, however, a patient desires the bath, and it happen to be not for her good, her desire must not be yielded to, for sometimes it is supposed to be beneficial because it gives pleasure, although in reality it may be doing harm. Finally, if a handmaid of God suffers from any hidden pain of body, let her statement as to her suffering be believed without hesitation; but if there be any uncertainty whether that which she finds agreeable be really of use in curing her pain, let the physician be consulted. To the baths, or to any place whither it may be necessary to go, let no fewer than three go at any time. Moreover, the sister requiring to go anywhere is not to go with those whom she may choose herself, but with those whom the prioress may order. The care of the sick, and of those who require attention as convalescents, and of those who, without any feverish symptoms, are labouring under debility, ought to be

committed to some one of your number, who shall procure for them from the storeroom what she shall see to be necessary for each. Moreover, let those who have charge, whether in the storeroom, or in the wardrobe, or in the library, render service to their sisters without murmuring. Let manuscripts be applied for at a fixed hour every day, and let none who ask them at other hours receive them. But at whatever time clothes and shoes may be required by one in need of these, let not those in charge of this department delay supplying the want.

14. Quarrels should be unknown among you, or at least, if they arise, they should as quickly as possible be ended, lest anger grow into hatred, and convert "a mote into a beam," and make the soul chargeable with murder. For the saying of Scripture: "He that hateth his brother is a murderer," does not concern men only, but women also are bound by this law through its being enjoined on the other sex, which was prior in the order of creation. Let her, whoever she be, that shall have injured another by taunt or abusive language, or false accusation, remember to remedy the wrong by apology as promptly as possible, and let her who was injured grant forgiveness without further disputation. If the injury has been mutual, the duty of both parties will be mutual forgiveness, because of your prayers, which, as they are more frequent, ought to be all the more sacred in your esteem. But the sister who is prompt in asking another whom she confesses that she has wronged to grant her forgiveness is, though she may be more frequently betrayed by a hasty temper, better than another who, though less irascible, is with more difficulty persuaded to ask forgiveness. Let not her who refuses to forgive her sister expect to receive answers to prayer: as for any sister who never will ask forgiveness, or does not do it from the heart, it is no advantage to such an one to be in a monastery, even though, perchance, she may not be expelled. Wherefore abstain from hard words; but if they have escaped your lips, be not slow to bring words of healing from the same lips by which the wounds were inflicted. When, however, the necessity of discipline compels you to use hard words in restraining the younger inmates, even though you feel that in these you have gone too far, it is not imperative on you to ask their forgiveness, lest while undue humility is observed by you towards those who ought to be subject to you, the authority necessary for governing them be impaired; but pardon must nevertheless be sought from the Lord of

all, who knows with what goodwill you love even those whom you reprove it may be with undue severity. The love which you bear to each other must be not carnal, but spiritual: for those things which are practised by immodest women in shameful frolic and sporting with one another ought not even to be done by those of your sex who are married, or are intending to marry, and much more ought not to be done by widows or chaste virgins dedicated to be hand-maids of Christ by a holy vow.

15. Obey the prioress as a mother, giving her all due honour, that God may not be offended by your forgetting what you owe to her: still more is it incumbent on you to obey the presbyter who has charge of you all. To the prioress most specially belongs the responsibility of seeing that all these rules be observed, and that if any rule has been neglected, the offence be not passed over, but carefully corrected and punished; it being, of course, open to her to refer to the presbyter any matter that goes beyond her province or power. But let her count herself happy not in exercising the power which rules, but in practising the love which serves. In honour in the sight of men let her be raised above you, but in fear in the sight of God let her be as it were beneath your feet. Let her show herself before all a “pattern of good works.” Let her “warn the unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all.” Let her cheerfully observe and cautiously impose rules. And, though both are necessary, let her be more anxious to be loved than to be feared by you; always reflecting that for you she must give account to God. For this reason yield obedience to her out of compassion not for yourselves only but also for her, because, as she occupies a higher position among you, her danger is proportionately greater than your own.

16. The Lord grant that you may yield loving submission to all these rules, as persons enamoured of spiritual beauty, and diffusing a sweet savour of Christ by means of a good conversation, not as bondwomen under the law, but as established in freedom under grace. That you may, however, examine yourselves by this treatise as by a mirror, and may not through forgetfulness neglect anything, let it be read over by you once a week; and in so far as you find yourselves practising the things written here, give thanks for this to God, the Giver of all good; in so far, however, as any of you finds herself to be in some particular defective, let her lament the past and be on her guard

in the time to come, praying both that her debt may be forgiven, and that she may not be led into temptation.

LETTER CCXII

(A.D. 423.)

To Quintilianus, My Lord Most Blessed and Brother and Fellow Bishop Deservedly Venerable, Augustin Sends Greeting.

Venerable father, I commend to you in the love of Christ these honourable servants of God and precious members of Christ, Galla, a widow (who has taken on herself sacred vows), and her daughter Simplicia, a consecrated virgin, who is subject to her mother by reason of her age, but above her by reason of her holiness. We have nourished them as far as we have been able with the word of God; and by this epistle, as if it were with my own hand, I commit them to you, to be comforted and aided in every way which their interest or necessity requires. This duty your Holiness would doubtless have undertaken without any recommendation from me; for if it is our duty on account of the Jerusalem above, of which we are all citizens, and in which they desire to have a place of distinguished holiness, to cherish towards them not only the affection due to fellow-citizens, but even brotherly love, how much stronger is their claim on you, who reside in the same country in this earth in which these ladies, for the love of Christ, renounced the distinctions of this world! I also ask you to condescend to receive with the same love with which I have offered it my official salutation, and to remember me in your prayers. These ladies carry with them relics of the most blessed and glorious martyr Stephen: your Holiness knows how to give due honour to these, as we have done.

LETTER CCXIII

(SEPTEMBER 26TH, A.D. 426.)

Record, Prepared by St. Augustin, of the Proceedings on the Occasion of His Designating Eraclius to Succeed Him in the Episcopal Chair, and to Relieve Him Meanwhile in His Old Age of a Part of His Responsibilities.

In the Church of Peace in the district of Hippo Regius, on the 26th day of September in the year of the twelfth consulship of the most renowned Theodosius, and of the second consulship of Valentinian Augustus:—Bishop Augustin having taken his seat along with his fellow bishops Religianus and Martinianus, there being present Saturninus, Leporius, Barnabas, Fortunatianus, Rusticus, Lazarus, and Eraclius,—presbyters,—while the clergy and a large congregation of laymen stood by,—Bishop Augustin said:—

“The business which I brought before you yesterday, my beloved, as one in connection with which I wished you to attend, as I see you have done in greater numbers than usual, must be at once disposed of. For while your minds are anxiously preoccupied with it, you would scarcely listen to me if I were to speak of any other subject. We all are mortal, and the day which shall be the last of life on earth is to every man at all times uncertain; but in infancy there is hope of entering on boyhood, and so our hope goes on, looking forward from boyhood to youth, from youth to manhood, and from manhood to old age: whether these hopes may be realized or not is uncertain, but there is in each case something which may be hoped for. But old age has no other period of this life to look forward to with expectation: how long old age may in any case be prolonged is uncertain, but it is certain that no other age destined to take its place lies beyond. I came to this town—for such was the will of God—when I was in the prime of life. I was young then, but now I am old. I know that churches are wont to be disturbed after the decease of their bishops by ambitious or contentious parties, and I feel it to be my duty to take measures to prevent this community from suffering, in connection with my decease, that which I have often observed and lamented elsewhere. You are aware, my beloved, that I recently visited the Church of Milevi; for certain brethren, and especially the servants of God there, requested me to come, because some disturbance was apprehended after the death of my brother and fellow bishop Severus, of blessed memory. I went accordingly, and the Lord was in mercy pleased so to help us that they harmoniously accepted as bishop the person designated by their former bishop his lifetime; for when this designation had become known to them, they willingly acquiesced in the choice which he had made. An omission, however, had occurred by which some were dissatisfied; for brother Severus, believing that it might be sufficient for him to mention to the clergy the name of his successor, did not speak of the matter to the people, which gave rise to dissatisfaction in the minds of some. But why should I say more? By the good pleasure of God, the dissatisfaction was removed, joy took its place in the minds of all, and he was ordained as bishop whom Severus had proposed. To obviate all such occasion of complaint in this case, I now intimate to all here my desire, which I believe to be also the will of God: I wish to have for my successor the presbyter Eraclius."

The people shouted, "To God be thanks! To Christ be praise" (this was repeated twenty-three times). "O Christ, hear us; may Augustin live long!" (repeated sixteen times). "We will have thee as our father, thee as our bishop" (repeated eight times).

2. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said:—

"It is unnecessary for me to say anything in praise of Eraclius; I esteem his wisdom and spare his modesty; it is enough that you know him: and I declare that I desire in regard to him what I know you also to desire, and if I had not known it before, I would have had proof of it today. This, therefore, I desire; this I ask from the Lord our God in prayers, the warmth of which is not abated by the chill of age; this I exhort, admonish, and entreat you also to pray for along with me,—that God may confirm that, which He has wrought in us by blending and fusing together the minds of all in the peace of Christ. May He who has sent him to me preserve him! preserve him safe, preserve him blameless, that as he gives me joy while I live, he may fill my place when I die.

"The notaries of the church are, as you observe, recording what I say, and recording what you say; both my address and your acclamations are not allowed to fall to the ground. To speak more plainly, we are making up an ecclesiastical record of this day's proceedings; for I wish them to be in this way confirmed so far as pertains to men."

The people shouted thirty-six times, "To God be thanks! To Christ be praise!" O Christ, hear us; may Augustin live long!" was said thirteen times. "Thee, our father! thee, our bishop!" was said eight times. "He is worthy and just," was said twenty times. "Well deserving, well worthy!" was said five times. "He is worthy and just!" was said six times.

3. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said:—

"It is my wish, as I was just now saying, that my desire and your desire be confirmed, so far as pertains to men, by being placed on an ecclesiastical record; but so far as pertains to the will of the Almighty, let us all pray, as I said before, that God would confirm that which He has wrought in us."

The people shouted, saying sixteen times, "We give thanks for your decision:" then twelve times, "Agreed! Agreed!" and then six times, "Thee, our father! Eraclius, our bishop!"

4. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said:—

"I approve of that of which you also express your approval; but I do not wish that to be done in regard to him which was done in my own case. What was done many of you know; in fact, all of you, excepting only those who at that time were not born, or had not attained to the years of understanding. When my father and bishop, the aged Valerius, of blessed memory, was still living, I was ordained bishop and occupied the episcopal see along with him which I did not know to have been forbidden by the Council of Nice; and he was equally ignorant of the prohibition. I do not wish to have my son here exposed to the same censure as was incurred in my own case."

The people shouted, saying thirteen times, "To God be thanks! To Christ be praise!"

5. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said:—

"He shall be as he now is, a presbyter, meanwhile; but afterwards, at such time as may please God, your bishop. But now I will assuredly begin to do, as the compassion of Christ may enable me, what I have not hitherto done. You know what for several years I would have done, had you permitted me. It was agreed between you and me that no one should intrude on me for five days of each week, that I might discharge the duty in the study of Scripture which my brethren and fathers the co-bishops were pleased to assign to me in the two councils of Numidia and Carthage. The agreement was duly recorded, you gave your consent, you signified it by acclamations. The record of your consent and of your acclamations, was read aloud to you. For a short time the agreement was observed by you; afterwards, it was violated without consideration, and I am not permitted to have leisure for the work which I wish to do: forenoon and afternoon alike, I am involved in the affairs of other people demanding my attention. I now beseech you, and solemnly engage you, for Christ's sake, to suffer me to devolve the burden of this part of my labours on this young man, I mean on Eraclius, the presbyter, whom today I designate in the name of Christ as my successor in the office of bishop."

The people shouted, saying twenty-six times, "We give thanks for your decision."

6. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said:—

"I give thanks before the Lord our God for your love and your goodwill; yes, I give thanks to God for these. Wherefore, henceforth, my brethren, let everything which was wont to be brought by you to me be brought to him. In any case in which he may think my advice necessary, I will not refuse it; far be it from me to withdraw this: nevertheless, let everything be brought to him which used to be brought to me. Let Eraclius himself, if in any case, perchance, he be at a loss as to what should be done, either consult me, or claim an assistant in me, whom he has known as a father. By this arrangement you will, on the one hand, suffer no disadvantage, and I will at length, for the brief space during which God may prolong my life, devote the remainder of my days, be they few or many, not to idleness nor to the indulgence of a love of ease, but, so far as Eraclius kindly gives me leave, to the study of the sacred Scriptures: this also will be of service to him, and through him to you likewise. Let no one therefore grudge me this leisure, for I claim it only in order to do important work.

"I see that I have now transacted with you all the business necessary in the matter for which I called you together. The last thing I have to ask is, that as many of you as are able be pleased to subscribe your names to this record.

At this point I require a response from you. Let me have it: show your assent by some acclamations.”

The people shouted, saying twenty-five times, “Agreed! agreed!” then twenty-eight times, “It is worthy, it is just!” then fourteen times, “Agreed! agreed!” then twenty-five times, “He has long been worthy, he has long been deserving!” then thirteen times, “We give thanks for your decision!” then eighteen times, “O Christ, hear us; preserve Eraclius!”

7. Silence having been obtained, Bishop Augustin said:—

“It is well that we are able to transact around His sacrifice those things which belong to God; and in this hour appointed for our supplications, I especially exhort you, beloved, to suspend all your occupations and business, and pour out before the Lord your petitions for this church, and for me, and for the presbyter Eraclius.”

LETTER CCXVIII

(A.D. 426.)

To Palatinus, My Well-Beloved Lord and Son, Most Tenderly Longed For, Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. Your life of eminent fortitude and fruitfulness towards the Lord our God has brought to us great joy. For “you have made choice of instruction from your youth upwards, that you may still find wisdom even to grey hairs;” for “wisdom is the grey hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age;” which may the Lord, who knoweth how to give good gifts unto His children, give to you asking, seeking, knocking. Although you have many counsellors and many counsels to direct you in the path which leads to eternal glory, and although, above all, you have the grace of Christ, which has so effectually spoken in saving power in your heart, nevertheless we also, as in duty bound by the love which we owe to you, offer to you, in hereby reciprocating your salutation, some words of counsel, designed not to awaken you as one hindered by sloth or sleep, but to stimulate and quicken you in the race which you are already running.

2. You require wisdom, my son, for stedfastness in this race, as it was under the influence of wisdom that you entered on it at first. Let this then be “a part of your wisdom, to know whose gift it is.” “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass: and He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.” “He will make straight thy path, and guide thy steps in peace.” As you despised your prospects of greatness in this world, lest you should glory in the abundance of riches which you had begun to covet after the manner of the children of this world, so now, in taking up the yoke of the Lord and His burden, let not your confidence be in your own strength; so shall “His yoke be easy, and His burden light.” For in the book of Psalms those are alike censured “who trust in their strength,” and “who boast themselves in the multitude of their riches.” Therefore, as formerly you did not seek glory in riches, but most wisely despised that which you had begun to desire, so now be on your guard against insidious temptation to trust in your strength; for you are but man, and “cursed is every one that trusteth in man.” But by all means trust in God with your whole heart, and He will Himself be your strength, wherein you may trust with piety and thankfulness, and to Him you may say with humility and boldness, “I will love thee, O Lord, my strength; because even the love of God, which, when it is perfect, “casteth out fear,” is shed abroad in our hearts, not by our strength, that is, by any human power, but, as the apostle says, “by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.”

3. “Watch, therefore, and pray that you enter not into temptation.” Such prayer is indeed in itself an admonition to you that you need the help of the Lord, and that you ought not to rest upon yourself your hope of living well. For now you pray, not that you may obtain the riches and honours of this present world, or any unsubstantial human possession, but that you may not enter into temptation, a thing which would not be asked in prayer if a man could accomplish it for himself by his own will. Wherefore we would not pray that we may not enter into temptation if our own will sufficed for our protection and yet if the will to avoid temptation were wanting to us, we could not so pray. It may, therefore, be present with us to will, when we have through his own gift been made wise, but we must pray that we may be able to perform that which we have so willed. In the fact that you have

begun to exercise this true wisdom, you have reason to give thanks. “For what have you which you have not received? But if you have received it, beware that you boast not as if you had not received it,” that is, as if you could have had it of yourself. Knowing, however, whence you have received it, ask Him by whose gift it was begun to grant that it may be perfected. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of His good pleasure;” for “the will is prepared by God,” and “the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delighteth in his way.” Holy meditation on these things will preserve you, so that your wisdom shall be piety, that is, that by God’s gift you shall be good, and not ungrateful for the grace of Christ.

4. Your parents, unfeignedly rejoicing with you in the better hope which in the Lord you have begun to cherish, are longing earnestly for your presence. But whether you be absent from us or present with us in the body, we desire to have you with us in the one Spirit by whom love is shed abroad in our hearts, so that, in whatever place our bodies may sojourn, our spirits may be in no degree sundered from each other.

We have most thankfully received the cloaks of goat’s-hair cloth which you sent to us, in which gift you have yourself anticipated me in admonition as to the duty of being often engaged in prayer, and of practising humility in our supplications.

LETTER CCXIX

(A.D. 436.)

To Proculus and Cylinus, Brethren Most Beloved and Honourable, and Partners in the Sacerdotal Office, Augustin, Florentius, and Secundinus Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. When our son Leporius, whom for his obstinacy in error you had justly and fitly rebuked, came to us after he had been expelled by you, we received him as one afflicted for his good, whom we should, if possible, deliver from error and restore to spiritual health. For, as you obeyed in regard to him the apostolic precept, “Warn the unruly,” so it was our part to obey the precept immediately annexed, “Comfort the feeble-minded, and

support the weak.” His error was indeed not unimportant, seeing that he neither approved what is right nor perceived what is true in some things relating to the only-begotten Son of God, of whom it is written that, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” but that when the fulness of time had come, “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;” for he denied that God became man, regarding it as a doctrine from which it must follow necessarily that the divine substance in which He is equal to the Father suffered some unworthy change or corruption, and not seeing that he was thus introducing into the Trinity a fourth person, which is utterly contrary to the sound doctrine of the Creed and of Catholic truth. Since, however, dearly beloved and honourable brethren, he had as a fallible man” been overtaken” in this error, we did our utmost, the Lord helping us, to instruct him “in the spirit of meekness,” especially remembering that when the “chosen vessel “gave this command to which we refer, he added, “Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted,”—lest some, perchance, should so rejoice in the measure of spiritual progress as to imagine that they could no longer be tempted like other men,—and joined with it the salutary and peace-promoting sentence, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.”

2. This restoration of Leporius we could perhaps in nowise have accomplished, had you not previously censured and punished those things in him which required correction. So then the same Lord, our Divine Physician, using His own instruments and servants, has by you wounded him when he was proud, and by us healed him when he was penitent, according to his own saying, “I wound, and I heal.” The same Divine Ruler and Overseer of His own house has by you thrown down what was defective in the building, and has by us replaced with a well-ordered structure what he had removed. The same Divine Husbandman has in His careful diligence by you rooted up what was barren and noxious in His field, and by us planted what is useful and fruitful. Let us not, therefore, ascribe glory to ourselves, but to the mercy of Him in whose hand both we and all our words are. And as we humbly praise the work which you have done as His ministers in the case of our son aforesaid, so do you rejoice with holy joy in the work performed by us. Receive, then, with the love of

fathers and of brethren, him whom we have with merciful severity corrected. For although one part of the work was done by you and another part by us, both parts, being indispensable to our brother's salvation, were done by the same love. The same God was therefore working in both, for "God is love."

3. Wherefore, as he has been welcomed into fellowship by us on the ground of his repentance, let him be welcomed by you on the ground of his letter, to which letter we have thought it right to adhibit our signatures attesting its genuiness. We have not the least doubt that you, in the exercise of Christian love, will not only hear with pleasure of his amendment, but also make it known to those to whom his error was a stumbling-block. For those who came with him to us have also been corrected and restored along with him, as is declared by their signatures, which have been adhibited to the letter in our presence. It remains only that you, being made joyful by the salvation of a brother, condescend to make us joyful in our turn by sending a reply to our communication. Farewell in the Lord, most beloved and honourable brethren; such is our desire on your behalf: remember us.

LETTER CCXX

(A.D. 427.)

To My Lord Boniface, My Son Commended to the Guardianship and Guidance of Divine Mercy, for Present and Eternal Salvation, Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. Never could I have found a more trustworthy man, nor one who could have more ready access to your ear when bearing a letter from me, than this servant and minister of Christ, the deacon Paulus, a man very dear to both of us, whom the Lord has now brought to me in order that I may have the opportunity of addressing you, not in reference to your power and the honour which you hold in this evil world, nor in reference to the preservation of your corruptible and mortal body,—because this also is destined to pass away, and how soon no one can tell,—but in reference to that salvation which has been promised to us by Christ, who was here on earth despised and crucified in order that He might teach us rather to

despise than to desire the good things of this world, and to set our affections and our hope on that world which He has revealed by His resurrection. For He has risen from the dead, and now "dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him."

2. I know that you have no lack of friends, who love you so far as life in this world is concerned, and who in regard to it give you counsels, sometimes useful, sometimes the reverse; for they are men, and therefore, though they use their wisdom to the best of their ability in regard to what is present, they know not what may happen on the morrow. But it is not easy for any one to give you counsel in reference to God, to prevent the perdition of your soul, not because you lack friends who would do this, but because it is difficult for them to find an opportunity of speaking with you on these subjects. For I myself have often longed for this, and never found place or time in which I might deal with you as I ought to deal with a man whom I ardently love in Christ. You know besides in what state you found me at Hippo, when you did me the honor to come to visit me,—how I was scarcely able to speak, being prostrated by bodily weakness. Now, then, my son, hear me when I have this opportunity of addressing you at least by a letter,—a rare opportunity, for it was not in my power to send such communication to you in the midst of your dangers, both because I apprehended danger to the bearer, and because I was afraid lest my letter should reach persons into whose hands I was unwilling that it should fall. Wherefore I beg you to forgive me if you think that I have been more afraid than I should have been; however this may be, I have stated what I feared.

3. Hear me, therefore; nay, rather hear the Lord our God speaking by me, His feeble servant. Call to remembrance what manner of man you were while your former wife, of hallowed memory, still lived, and how under the stroke of her death, while that event was yet recent, the vanity of this world made you recoil from it, and how you earnestly desired to enter the service of God. We know and we can testify what you said as to your state of mind and your desires when you conversed with us at Tubunae. My brother Alypius and I were alone with you. [I beseech you, then, to call to remembrance that conversation], for I do not think that the worldly cares with which you are now engrossed can have such power over you as to

have effaced this wholly from your memory. You were then desirous to abandon all the public business in which you were engaged, and to withdraw into sacred retirement, and live like the servants of God who have embraced a monastic life. And what was it that prevented you from acting according to these desires? Was it not that you were influenced by considering, on our representation of the matter, how much service the work which then occupied you might render to the churches of Christ if you pursued it with this single aim, that they, protected from all disturbance by barbarian hordes, might live "a quiet and peaceable life," as the apostle says, "in all godliness and honesty;" resolving at the same time for your own part to seek no more from this world than would suffice for the support of yourself and those dependent on you, wearing as your girdle the cincture of a perfectly chaste self-restraint, and having underneath the accoutrements of the soldier the surer and stronger defence of spiritual armour.

4. At the very time when we were full of joy that you had formed this resolution, you embarked on a voyage and you married a second wife. Your embarkation was an act of the obedience due, as the apostle has taught us, to the "higher powers;" but you would not have married again had you not, abandoning the continence to which you had devoted yourself, been overcome by concupiscence. When I learned this, I was, I must confess it, dumb with amazement; but, in my sorrow, I was in some degree comforted by hearing that you refused to marry her unless she became a Catholic before the marriage, and yet the heresy of those who refuse to believe in the true Son of God has so prevailed in your house, that by these heretics your daughter was baptized. Now, if the report be true (would to God that it were false!) that even some who were dedicated to God as His handmaids have been by these heretics re-baptized, with what floods of tears ought this great calamity to be bewailed by us! Men are saying, moreover, perhaps it is an unfounded slander,—that one wife does not satisfy your passions, and that you have been defiled by consorting with some other women as concubines.

5. What shall I say regarding these evils—so patent to all, and so great in magnitude as well as number—of which you have been, directly or indirectly, the cause since the time of your being married? You are a Christian, you have a conscience, you fear God; consider, then, for yourself

some things which I prefer to leave unsaid, and you will find for how great evils you ought to do penance; and I believe that it is to afford you an opportunity of doing this in the way in which it ought to be done, that the Lord is now sparing you and delivering you from all dangers. But if you will listen to the counsel of Scripture, I pray you, “make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, and put not off from day to day.” You allege, indeed, that you have good reason for what you have done, and that I cannot be a judge of the sufficiency of that reason, because I cannot hear both sides of the question; but, whatever be your reason, the nature of which it is not necessary at present either to investigate or to discuss, can you, in the presence of God, affirm that you would ever have come into the embarrassments of your present position had you not loved the good things of this world, which, being a servant of God, such as we knew you to be formerly, it was your duty to have utterly despised and esteemed as of no value,—accepting, indeed, what was offered to you, that you might devote it to pious uses, but not so coveting that which was denied to you, or was entrusted to your care, as to be brought on its account into the difficulties of your present position, in which, while good is loved, evil things are perpetrated,—few, indeed, by you, but many because of you, and while things are dreaded which, if hurtful, are so only for a short time, things are done which are really hurtful for eternity?

6. To mention one of these things,—who can help seeing that many persons follow you for the purpose of defending your power or safety, who, although they may be all faithful to you, and no treachery is to be apprehended from any of them, are desirous of obtaining through you certain advantages which they also covet, not with a godly desire, but from worldly motives? And in this way you, whose duty it is to curb and check your own passions, are forced to satisfy those of others. To accomplish this, many things which are displeasing to God must be done; and yet, after all, these passions are not thus satisfied, for they are more easily mortified finally in those who love God, than satisfied even for a time in those who love the world. Therefore the Divine Scripture says: “Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever, as God abideth for ever.” Associated, therefore, as you are with such multitudes of armed men, whose passions must be humoured, and whose cruelty is dreaded, how can the desires of these men who love the world ever be, I do not say satiated, but even partially gratified by you, in your anxiety to prevent still greater widespread evils, unless you do that which God forbids, and in so doing become obnoxious to threatened judgment? So complete has been the havoc wrought in order to indulge their passions, that it would be difficult now to find anything for the plunderer to carry away.

7. But what shall I say of the devastation of Africa at this hour by hordes of African barbarians, to whom no resistance is offered, while you are engrossed with such embarrassments in your own circumstances, and are taking no measures for averting this calamity? Who would ever have believed, who would have feared, after Boniface had become a Count of the Empire and of Africa, and had been placed in command in Africa with so large an army and so great authority, that the same man who formerly, as Tribune, kept all these barbarous tribes in peace, by storming their strongholds, and menacing them with his small band of brave confederates, should now have suffered the barbarians to be so bold, to encroach so far, to destroy and plunder so much, and to turn into deserts such vast regions once densely peopled? Where were any found that did not predict that, as soon as you obtained the authority of Count, the African hordes would be not only checked, but made tributaries to the Roman Empire? And now, how completely the event has disappointed men’s hopes you yourself perceive; in fact, I need say nothing more on this subject, because your own reflection must suggest much more than I can put in words.

8. Perhaps you defend yourself by replying that the blame here ought rather to rest on persons who have injured you, and, instead of justly requiting the services rendered by you in your office, have returned evil for good. These matters I am not able to examine and judge. I beseech you rather to contemplate and inquire into the matter, in which you know that you have to do not with men at all, but with God; living in Christ as a believer, you are bound to fear lest you offend Him. For my attention is more engaged by

higher causes, believing that men ought to ascribe Africa’s great calamities to their own sins. Nevertheless, I would not wish you to belong to the number of those wicked and unjust men whom God uses as instruments in inflicting temporal punishments on whom He pleases; for He who justly employs their malice to inflict temporal judgments on others, reserves eternal punishments for the unjust themselves if they be not reformed. Be it yours to fix your thoughts on God, and to look to Christ, who has conferred on you so great blessings and endured for you so great sufferings. Those who desire to belong to His kingdom, and to live for ever happily with Him and under Him, love even their enemies, do good to them that hate them, and pray for those from whom they suffer persecution; and if, at any time, in the way of discipline they use irksome severity, yet they never lay aside the sincerest love. If these benefits, though earthly and transitory, are conferred on you by the Roman Empire,—for that empire itself is earthly, not heavenly, and cannot bestow what it has not in its power,—if, I say, benefits are conferred on you, return not evil for good; and if evil be inflicted on you, return not evil for evil. Which of these two has happened in your case I am unwilling to discuss, I am unable to judge. I speak to a Christian—return not either evil for good, nor evil for evil.

9. You say to me, perhaps: In circumstances so difficult, what do you wish me to do? If you ask counsel of me in a worldly point of view how your safety in this transitory life may be secured, and the power and wealth belonging to you at present may be preserved or even increased, I know not what to answer you, for any counsel regarding things so uncertain as these must partake of the uncertainty inherent in them. But if you consult me regarding your relation to God and the salvation of your soul, and if you fear the word of truth which says: “What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” I have a plain answer to give. I am prepared with advice to which you may well give heed. But what need is there for my saying anything else than what I have already said. “Love not the world, neither the things, that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.” Here is counsel!

Seize it and act on it. Show that you are a brave man. Vanquish the desires with which the world is loved. Do penance for the evils of your past life, when, vanquished by your passions, you were drawn away by sinful desires. If you receive this counsel, and hold it fast, and act on it, you will both attain to those blessings which are certain, and occupy yourself in the midst of these uncertain things without forfeiting the salvation of your soul.

10. But perhaps you again ask of me how you can do these things, entangled as you are with so great worldly difficulties. Pray earnestly, and say to God, in the words of the Psalm: “Bring Thou me out of my distresses,” for these distresses terminate when the passions in which they originate are vanquished. He who has heard your prayer and ours on your behalf, that you might be delivered from the numerous and great dangers of visible wars in which the body is exposed to the danger of losing the life which sooner or later must end, but in which the soul perishes not unless it be held captive by evil passions,—He, I say, will hear your prayer that you may, in an invisible and spiritual conflict, overcome your inward and invisible enemies, that is to say, your passions themselves, and may so use the world, as not abusing it, so that with its good things you may do good, not become bad through possessing them. Because these things are in themselves good, and are not given to men except by Him who has power over all things in heaven and earth. Lest these gifts of His should be reckoned bad, they are given also to the good; at the same time, lest they should be reckoned great, or the supreme good, they are given also to the bad. Further, these things are taken away from the good for their trial, and from the bad for their punishment.

11. For who is so ignorant, who so foolish, as not to see that the health of this mortal body, and the strength of its corruptible members, and victory over men who are our enemies, and temporal honours and power, and all other mere earthly advantages are given both to the good and to the bad, and are taken away both from the good and from the bad alike? But the salvation of the soul, along with immortality of the body, and the power of righteousness, and victory over hostile passions, and glory, and honour, and everlasting peace, are not given except to the good. Therefore love these things, covet these things, and seek them by every means in your power.

With a view to acquire and retain these things, give alms, pour forth prayers, practise fasting as far as you can without injury to your body. But do not love these earthly goods, how much soever they may abound to you. So use them as to do many good things by them, but not one evil thing for their sake. For all such things will perish; but good works, yea, even those good works which are performed by means of the perishable good things of this world, shall never perish.

12. If you had not now a wife, I would say to you what we said at Tubunae, that you should live in the holy state of continence, and would add that you should now do what we prevented you from doing at that time, namely, withdraw yourself so far as might be possible without prejudice to the public welfare from the labours of military service, and take to yourself the leisure which you then desired for that life in the society of the saints in which the soldiers of Christ fight in silence, not to kill men, but to “wrestle against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness,” that is, the devil and his angels. For the saints gain their victories over enemies whom they cannot see, and yet they gain the victory over these unseen enemies by gaining the victory over things which are the objects of sense. I am, however, prevented from exhorting you to that mode of life by your having a wife, since without her consent it is not lawful for you to live under a vow of continence; because, although you did wrong in marrying again after the declaration which you made at Tubunae, she, being not aware of this became your wife innocently and without restrictions. Would that you could persuade her to agree to a vow of continence, that you might without hindrance render to God what you know to be due to Him! If, however, you cannot make this agreement with her, guard carefully by all means conjugal chastity, and pray to God, who will deliver you out of difficulties, that you may at some future time be able to do what is meanwhile impossible. This, however, does not affect your obligation to love God and not to love the world, to hold the faith stedfastly even in the cares of war, if you must still be engaged in them, and to seek peace; to make the good things of this world serviceable in good works, and not to do what is evil in labouring to obtain these earthly good things,—in all these duties your wife is not, or, if she is, ought not to be, a hindrance to you.

These things I have written, my dearly beloved son, at the bidding of the love with which I love you with regard not to this world, but to God; and because, mindful of the words of Scripture, “Reprove a wise man, and he will love thee; reprove a fool, and he will hate thee more,” I was bound to think of you as certainly not a fool but a wise man.

LETTER CCXXVII

(A.D. 428 OR 429.)

To the Aged Alypius, Augustin Sends Greeting.

Brother Paulus has arrived here safely: he reports that the pains devoted to the business which engaged him have been rewarded with success; the Lord will grant that with these his trouble in that matter may terminate. He salutes you warmly, and tells us tidings concerning Gabinianus which give us joy, namely, that having by God’s mercy obtained a prosperous issue in his case, he is now not only in name a Christian, but in sincerity a very excellent convert to the faith, and was baptized recently at Easter, having both in his heart and on his lips the grace which he received. How much I long for him I can never express; but you know that I love him.

The president of the medical faculty, Dioscorus, has also professed the Christian faith, having obtained grace at the same time. Hear the manner of his conversion, for his stubborn neck and his bold tongue could not be subdued without some miracle. His daughter, the only comfort of his life, was sick, and her sickness became so serious that her life was, according even to her father’s own admission, despaired of. It is reported, and the truth of the report is beyond question, for even before brother Paul’s return the fact was mentioned to me by Count Peregrinus, a most respectable and truly Christian man, who was baptized at the same time with Dioscorus and Gabinianus,—it is reported, I say, that the old man, feeling himself at last constrained to implore the compassion of Christ, bound himself by a vow that he would become a Christian if he saw her restored to health. She recovered, but he perfidiously drew back from fulfilling his vow. Nevertheless the hand of the Lord was still stretched forth, for suddenly he is smitten with blindness, and immediately the cause of this calamity was impressed upon his mind. He confessed his fault aloud, and vowed again that if his sight were given back he would perform what he had vowed. He recovered his sight, fulfilled his vow, and still the hand of God was stretched forth. He had not committed the Creed to memory, or perhaps had refused to commit it, and had excused himself on the plea of inability. God had seen this. Immediately after all the ceremonies of his reception he is seized with paralysis, affecting many, indeed almost all his members, and even his tongue. Then, being warned by a dream, he confesses in writing that it had been told to him that this had happened because he had not repeated the Creed. After that confession the use of all his members was restored to him, except the tongue alone; nevertheless he, being still under this affliction, made manifest by writing that he had, notwithstanding, learned the Creed, and still retained it in his memory; and so that frivolous loquacity which, as you know, blemished his natural kindliness, and made him, when he mocked Christians, exceedingly profane, was altogether destroyed in him. What shall I say, but, “Let us sing a hymn to the Lord, and highly exalt Him for ever! Amen.”

LETTER CCXXVIII

(A.D. 428 OR 429.)

To His Holy Brother and Co-Bishop Honoratus, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. I thought that by sending to your Grace a copy of the letter which I wrote to our brother and co-bishop Quodvultdeus, I had earned exemption from the burden which you have imposed upon me, by asking my advice as to what you ought to do in the midst of the dangers which have befallen us in these times. For although I wrote briefly, I think that I did not pass over anything that was necessary either to be said by me or heard by my questioner in correspondence on the subject: for I said that, on the one hand, those who desire to remove, if they can, to fortified places are not to be forbidden to do so; and, on the other hand, we ought not to break the ties by which the love of Christ has bound us as ministers not to forsake the churches which it is our duty to serve. The words which I used in the letter referred to were: “Therefore, however small may be the congregation of

God’s people among whom we are, if our ministry is so necessary to them that it is a clear duty not to withdraw it from them, it remains for us to say to the Lord, Be Thou to us a God of defence, and a strong fortress.’“

2. But this counsel does not commend itself to you, because, as you say in your letter, it does not become us to endeavour to act in opposition to the precept or example of the Lord, admonishing us that we should flee from one city to another. We remember, indeed, the words of the Lord, “When they persecute you in one city, flee to another;” but who can believe that the Lord wished this to be done in cases in which the flocks which He purchased with His own blood are by the desertion of their pastors left without that necessary ministry which is indispensable to their life? Did Christ do this Himself, when, carried by His parents, He fled into Egypt in His infancy? No; for He had not then gathered churches which we could affirm to have been deserted by Him. Or, when the Apostle Paul was “let down in a basket through a window,” to prevent his enemies from seizing him, and so escaped their hands, was the church in Damascus deprived of the necessary labours of Christ’s servants? Was not all the service that was requisite supplied after his departure by other brethren settled in that city? For the apostle had done this at their request, in order that he might preserve for the Church’s good his life, which the persecutor on that occasion specially sought to destroy. Let those, therefore, who are servants of Christ, His ministers in word and sacrament, do what he has commanded or permitted. When any of them is specially sought for by persecutors, let him by all means flee from one city to another, provided that the Church is not hereby deserted, but that others who are not specially sought after remain to supply spiritual food to their fellow-servants, whom they know to be unable otherwise to maintain spiritual life. When, however, the danger of all, bishops, clergy, and laity, is alike, let not those who depend upon the aid of others be deserted by those on whom they depend. In that case, either let all remove together to fortified places, or let those who must remain be not deserted by those through whom in things pertaining to the Church their necessities must be provided for; and so let them share life in common, or share in common that which the Father of their family appoints them to suffer.

3. But if it shall happen that all suffer, whether some suffer less, and others more, or all suffer equally, it is easy to see who among them are suffering for the sake of others: they are obviously those who, although they might have freed themselves from such evils by flight, have chosen to remain rather than abandon others to whom they are necessary. By such conduct especially is proved the love commended by the Apostle John in the words: “Christ laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” For those who betake themselves to flight, or are prevented from doing so only by circumstances thwarting their design, if they be seized and made to suffer, endure this suffering only for themselves; not for their brethren; but those who are involved in suffering because of their resolving not to abandon others, whose Christian welfare depended on them, are unquestionably “laying down their lives for the brethren.”

4. For this reason, the saying which we have heard attributed to a certain bishop, namely: “If the Lord has commanded us to flee, in those persecutions in which we may reap the fruit of martyrdom, how much more ought we to escape by flight, if we can, from barren sufferings inflicted by the hostile incursions of barbarians!” is a saying true and worthy of acceptation, but applicable only to those who are not confined by the obligations of ecclesiastical office. For the man who, having it in his power to escape from the violence of the enemy, chooses not to flee from it, lest in so doing he should abandon the ministry of Christ, without which men can neither become Christians nor live as such, assuredly finds a greater reward of his love, than the man who, fleeing not for his brethren’s sake but for his own, is seized by persecutors, and, refusing to deny Christ, suffers martyrdom.

5. What, then, shall we say to the position which you thus state in your former epistle:—”I do not see what good we can do to ourselves or to the people by continuing to remain in the churches, except to see before our eyes men slain, women outraged, churches burned, ourselves expiring amid torments applied in order to extort from us what we do not possess”? God is powerful to hear the prayers of His children and to avert those things which they fear; and we ought not, on account of evils that are uncertain, to make up our minds absolutely to the desertion of that ministry, without which the

people must certainly suffer ruin, not in the affairs of this life, but of that other life which ought to be cared for with incomparably greater diligence and solicitude. For if those evils which are apprehended, as possibly visiting the places in which we are, were certain, all those for whose sake it was our duty to remain would take flight before us, and would thus exempt us from the neccessity of remaining; for no one says that ministers are under obligation to remain in any place where none remain to whom their ministry is necessary. In this way some holy bishops fled from Spain when their congregations had, before their flight, been annihilated, the members having either fled, or died by the sword, or perished in the siege of their towns, or gone into captivity: but many more of the bishops of that country remained in the midst of these abounding dangers, because those for whose sakes they remained were still remaining there. And if some have abandoned their flocks, this is what we say ought not to be done, for they were not taught to do so by divine authority, but were, through human infirmity, either deceived by an error or overcome by fear.

6. [We maintain, as one alternative, that they were deceived by an error,] for why do they think that indiscriminate compliance must be given to the precept in which they read of fleeing from one city to another, and not shrink with abhorrence from the character of the “hireling,” who “seeth the wolf coming, and fleeth, because he careth not for the sheep”? Why do they not honour equally both of these true sayings of the Lord, the one in which flight is permitted or enjoined, the other in which it is rebuked and censured, by taking pains so to understand them as to find that they are, as is indeed the case, not opposed to each other? And how is their reconciliation to be found, unless that which I have above proved be borne in mind, that under pressure of persecution we who are ministers of Christ ought to flee from the places in which we are only in one or other of two cases, namely, either that there is no congregation to which we may minister, or that there is a congregation, but that the ministry necessary for it can be supplied by others who have not the same reason for flight as makes it imperative on us? Of which we have one example, as already mentioned, in the Apostle Paul escaping by being let down from the wall in a basket, when he was personally sought by the persecutor, there being others on the spot who had not the same necessity for flight, whose

remaining would prevent the Church from being destitute of the service of ministers. Another example we have in the holy Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, who fled when the Emperor Constantius wished to seize him specially, the Catholic people who remained in Alexandria not being abandoned by the other servants of God. But when the people remain and the servants of God flee, and their service is withdrawn, what is this but the guilty flight of the "hireling" who careth not for the sheep? For the wolf will come,—not man, but the devil, who has very often perverted to apostasy believers to whom the daily ministry of the Lord's body was wanting; and so, not "through thy knowledge," but through thine ignorance, "shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died."

7. As for those, however, who flee not because they are deceived by an error, but because they have been overcome by fear, why do they not rather, by the compassion and help of the Lord bestowed on them, bravely fight against their fear, lest evils incomparably heavier and much more to be dreaded befall them? This victory over fear is won wherever the flame of the love of God, without the smoke of worldliness, burns in the heart. For love says, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" But love is from God. Let us, therefore, beseech Him who requires it of us to bestow it on us, and under its influence let us fear more lest the sheep of Christ should be slaughtered by the sword of spiritual wickedness reaching the heart, than lest they should fall under the sword that can only harm that body in which men are destined at any rate, at some time, and in some way or other, to die. Let us fear more lest the purity of faith should perish through the taint of corruption in the inner man, than lest our women should be subjected by violence to outrage; for if chastity is preserved in the spirit, it is not destroyed by such violence, since it is not destroyed even in the body when there is no base consent of the sufferer to the sin, but only a submission without the consent of the will to that which another does. Let us fear more lest the spark of life in "living stones" be quenched through our absence, than lest the stones and timbers of our earthly buildings be burned in our presence. Let us fear more lest the members of Christ's body should die for want of spiritual food, than lest the members of our own bodies, being overpowered by the violence of enemies, should be racked with torture. Not because these are things which we ought not to avoid

when this is in our power, but because we ought to prefer to suffer them when they cannot be avoided without impiety, unless, perchance, any one be found to maintain that that servant is not guilty of impiety who withdraws the service necessary to piety at the very time when it is peculiarly necessary.

8. Do we forget how, when these dangers have reached their extremity, and there is no possibility of escaping from them by flight, an extraordinary crowd of persons, of both sexes and of all ages, is wont to assemble in the church,—some urgently asking baptism, others reconciliation, others even the doing of penance, and all calling for consolation and strengthening through the administration of sacraments? If the ministers of God be not at their posts at such a time, how great perdition overtakes those who depart from this life either not regenerated or not loosed from their sins! How deep also is the sorrow of their believing kindred, who shall not have these lost ones with them in the blissful rest of eternal life! In fine, how loud are the cries of all, and the indignant imprecations of not a few, because of the want of ordinances and the absence of those who should have dispensed them! See what the fear of temporal calamities may effect, and of how great a multitude of eternal calamities it may be the procuring cause. But if the ministers be at their posts, through the strength which God bestows upon them, all are aided,—some are baptized, others reconciled to the Church. None are defrauded of the communion of the Lord's body; all are consoled, edified, and exhorted to ask of God, who is able to do so, to avert all things which are feared,—prepared for both alternatives, so that "if the cup may not pass" from them, His will may be done who cannot will anything that is evil.

9. Assuredly you now see (what, according to your letter, you did not see before) how great advantage the Christian people may obtain if, in the presence of calamity, the presence of the servants of Christ be not withdrawn from them. You see, also, how much harm is done by their absence, when "they seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's," and are destitute of that charity of which it is said, "it seeketh not her own," and fail to imitate him who said, "I seek not mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved," and who, moreover, would not have fled

from the insidious attacks of the imperial persecutor, had he not wished to save himself for the sake of others to whom he was necessary; on which account he says, “I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.”

10. Here, perhaps, some one may say that the servants of God ought to save their lives by flight when such evils are impending, in order that they may reserve themselves for the benefit of the Church in more peaceful times. This is rightly done by some, when others are not wanting by whom the service of the Church may be supplied, and the work is not deserted by all, as we have stated above that Athanasius did; for the whole Catholic world knows how necessary it was to the Church that he should do so, and how useful was the prolonged life of the man who by his word and loving service defended her against the Arian heretics. But this ought by no means to be done when the danger is common to all; and the thing to be dreaded above all is, lest any one should be supposed to do this not from a desire to secure the welfare of others, but from fear of losing his own life, and should therefore do more harm by the example of deserting the post of duty than all the good that he could do by the preservation of his life for future service. Finally, observe how the holy David acquiesced in the urgent petition of his people, that he should not expose himself to the dangers of battle, and, as it is said in the narrative, “quench the light of Israel,” but was not himself the first to propose it; for had he been so, he would have made many imitate the cowardice which they might have attributed to him, supposing that he had been prompted to this not through regard to the advantage of others, but under the agitation of fear as to his own life.

11. Another question which we must not regard as unworthy of notice is suggested here. For if the interests of the Church are not to be lost sight of, and if these make it necessary that when any great calamity is impending some ministers should flee, in order that they may survive to minister to those whom they may find remaining after the calamity is passed,—the question arises, what is to be done when it appears that, unless some flee, all must perish together? what if the fury of the destroyer were so restricted as to attack none but the ministers of the Church? What shall we reply? Is

the Church to be deprived of the service of her ministers because of fleeing from their work through fear lest she should be more unhappily deprived of their service because of their dying in the midst of their work? Of course, if the laity are exempted from the persecution, it is in their power to shelter and conceal their bishops and clergy in some way, as He shall help them under whose dominion all things are, and who, by His wondrous power, can preserve even one who does not flee from danger. But the reason for our inquiring what is the path of our duty in such circumstances is, that we may not be chargeable with tempting the Lord by expecting divine miraculous interposition on every occasion.

There is, indeed, a difference in the severity of the tempest of calamity when the danger is common to both laity and clergy, as the perils of stormy weather are common to both merchants and sailors on board of the same ship. But far be it from us to esteem this ship of ours so lightly as to admit that it would be right for the crew, and especially for the pilot, to abandon her in the hour of peril, although they might have it in their power to escape by leaping into a small boat, or even swimming ashore. For in the case of those in regard to whom we fear lest through our deserting our work they should perish, the evil which we fear is not temporal death, which is sure to come at one time or other, but eternal death, which may come or may not come, according as we neglect or adopt measures whereby it may be averted. Moreover, when the lives of both laity and clergy are exposed to common danger, what reason have we for thinking that in every place which the enemy may invade all the clergy are likely to be put to death, and not that all the laity shall also die, in which event the clergy, and those to whom they are necessary, would pass from this life at the same time? Or why may we not hope that, as some of the laity are likely to survive, some of the clergy may also be spared, by whom the necessary ordinances may be dispensed to them?

12. Oh that in such circumstances the question debated among the servants of God were which of their number should remain, that the Church might not be left destitute by all fleeing from danger, and which of their number should flee, that the Church might not left destitute by all perishing in the danger. Such a contest will arise among the brethren who are all alike

glowing with love and satisfying the claims of love. And if it were in any case impossible otherwise to terminate the debate, it appears to me that the persons who are to remain and who are to flee should be chosen by lot. For those who say that they, in preference to others, ought to flee, will appear to be chargeable either with cowardice, as persons unwilling to face impending danger, or with arrogance, as esteeming their own lives more necessary to be preserved for the good of the Church than those of other men. Again, perhaps, those who are better will be the first to choose to lay down their lives for the brethren; and so preservation by flight will be given to men whose life is less valuable because their skill in counselling and ruling the Church is less; yet these, if they be pious and wise, will resist the desires of men in regard to whom they see, on the one hand, that it is more important for the Church that they should live, and on the other hand, that they would rather lose their lives than flee from danger. In this case, as it is written, “the lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty;” for, in difficulties of this kind, God judges better than men, whether it please Him to call the better among His servants to the reward of suffering, and to spare the weak, or to make the weak stronger to endure trials, and then to withdraw them from this life, as persons whose lives could not be so serviceable to the Church as the lives of the others who are stronger than they. If such an appeal to the lot be made, it will be, I admit, an unusual proceeding, but if it is done in any case, who will dare to find fault with it? Who but the ignorant or the prejudiced will hesitate to praise with the approbation which it deserves? If, however, the use of the lot is not adopted because there is no precedent for such an appeal, let it by all means be secured that the Church be not, through the flight of any one, left destitute of that ministry which is more especially necessary and due to her in the midst of such great dangers. Let no one hold himself in such esteem because of apparent superiority in any grace as to say that he is more worthy of life than others, and therefore more entitled to seek safety in flight. For whoever thinks this is too self-satisfied, and whoever utters this must make all dissatisfied with him.

13. There are some who think that bishops and clergy may, by not fleeing but remaining in such dangers, cause the people to be misled, because, when they see those who are set over them remaining, this makes them not

flee from danger. It is easy for them, however, to obviate this objection, and the reproach of misleading others, by addressing their congregations, and saying: “Let not the fact that we are not fleeing from this place be the occasion of misleading you, for we remain here not for our own sakes but for yours, that we may continue to minister to you whatever we know to be necessary to your salvation, which is in Christ; therefore, if you choose to flee, you thereby set us also at liberty from the obligations by which we are bound to remain.” This, I think, ought to be said, when it seems to be truly advantageous to remove to places of greater security. If, after such words have been spoken in their hearing, either all or some shall say: “We are at His disposal from whose anger none can escape whithersoever they may go, and whose mercy may be found wherever their lot is cast by those who, whether hindered by known insuperable difficulties, or unwilling to toil after unknown refuges, in which perils may be only changed not finished, prefer not to go away elsewhere,”—most assuredly those who thus resolve to remain ought not to be left destitute of the service of Christian ministers. If, on the other hand after hearing their bishops and clergy speak as above, the people prefer to leave the place, to remain behind them is not now the duty of those who were only remaining for their sakes, because none are left there on whose account it would still be their duty to remain.

14. Whoever, therefore, flees from danger in circumstances in which the Church is not deprived, through his flight, of necessary service, is doing that which the Lord has commanded or permitted. But the minister who flees when the consequence of his flight is the withdrawal from Christ’s flock of that nourishment by which its spiritual life is sustained, is an “hireling who seeth the wolf coming, and fleeth because he careth not for the sheep.”

With love, which I know to be sincere, I have now written what I believe to be true on this question, because you asked my opinion, my dearly beloved brother; but I have not enjoined you to follow my advice, if you can find any better than mine. Be that as it may, we cannot find anything better for us to do in these dangers than continually beseech the Lord our God to have compassion on us. And as to the matter about which I have written, namely, that ministers should not desert the churches of God, some wise and holy men have by the gift of God been enabled both to will and to do this thing, and have not in the least degree faltered in the determined prosecution of their purpose, even though exposed to the attacks of slanderers.

LETTER CCXXIX

(A.D. 429.)

To Darius, His Deservedly Illustrious and Very Powerful Lord and Dear Son Christ, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Your character and rank I have learned from my holy brothers and co-bishops, Urbanus and Novatus. The former of these became acquainted with you near Carthage, in the town of Hilari, and more recently in the town of Sicca; the latter at Sitifis. Through them it has come to pass that I cannot regard you as unknown to me. For though my bodily weakness and the chill of age do not permit me to converse with you personally, it cannot on this account be said that I have not seen you; for the conversation of Urbanus, when he kindly visited me, and the letters of Novatus, so described to me the features, not of your face but of your mind, that I have seen you, and have seen you with all the more pleasure, because I have seen not the outward appearance but the inner man. These features of your character are joyfully seen both by us, and through the mercy of God by yourself also, as in a mirror in the holy Gospel, in which it is written in words uttered by Him who is truth: “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”

2. Those warriors are indeed great and worthy of singular honour, not only for their consummate bravery, but also (which is a higher praise) for their eminent fidelity, by whose labours and dangers, along with the blessing of divine protection and aid, enemies previously unsubdued are conquered, and peace obtained for the State, and the provinces reduced to subjection. But it is a higher glory still to stay war itself with a word, than to slay men with the sword, and to procure or maintain peace by peace, not by war. For those who fight, if they are good men, doubtless seek for peace; nevertheless it is through blood. Your mission, however, is to prevent the shedding of blood. Yours, therefore, is the privilege of averting that

calamity which others are under the necessity of producing. Therefore, my deservedly illustrious and very powerful lord and very dear son in Christ, rejoice in this singularly great and real blessing vouchsafed to you, and enjoy it in God, to whom you owe that you are what you are, and that you undertook the accomplishment of such a work. May God "strengthen that which He hath wrought for us through you." Accept this our salutation, and deign to reply. From the letter of my brother Novatus, I see that he has taken pains that your learned Excellency should become acquainted with me also through my works. If, then, you have read what he has given you, I also shall have become known to your inward perception. As far as I can judge, they will not greatly displease you if you have read them in a loving rather than a critical spirit. It is not much to ask, but it will be a great favour, if for this letter and my works you send us one letter in reply. I salute with due affection the pledge of peace, which through the favour of our Lord and God you have happily received.

LETTER CCXXXI

(A.D. 429.)

To Darius, His Son, and a Member of Christ, Augustin, a Servant of Christ and of the Members of Christ, Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. You requested an answer from me as a proof that I had gladly received your letter. Behold, then, I write again; and yet I cannot express the pleasure I felt, either by this answer or by any other, whether I write briefly or at the utmost length, for neither by few words nor by many is it possible for me to express to you what words can never express. I, indeed, am not eloquent, though ready in speech; but I could by no means allow any man, however eloquent, even though he could see as well into my mind as I do myself, to do that which is beyond my own power, viz. to describe in a letter, however able and however long, the effect which your epistle had on my mind. It remains, then, for me so to express to you what you wished to know, that you may understand as being in my words that which they do not express. What, then, shall I say? That I was delighted with your letter, exceedingly delighted;—the repetition of this word is not a mere repetition, but, as it were, a perpetual affirmation; because it was impossible to be always

saying it, therefore it has been at least once repeated, for in this way perhaps my feelings may be expressed.

2. If some one inquire here what after all delighted me so exceedingly in your letter,—”Was it its eloquence?” I will answer, No; and he, perhaps, will reply, “Was it, then, the praises bestowed on yourself?” but again I will reply, No; and I shall reply thus not because these things are not in that letter, for the eloquence in it is so great that it is very clearly evident that you are naturally endowed with the highest talents, and that you have been most carefully educated; and your letter is undeniably full of my praises. Some one then may say, “Do not these things delight you?” Yes, truly, for “my heart is not,” as the poet says, “of horn, so that I should either not observe these things or observe them without delight. These things do delight; but what have these things to do with that with which I said I was highly delighted? Your eloquence delights me since it is at once genial in sentiment and dignified in expression; and though assuredly I am not delighted with all sorts of praise from all sorts of persons, but only with such praises as you have thought me worthy of, and only coming from those who are such as you are—that is, from persons who, for Christ’s sake, love His servants, I cannot deny that I am delighted with the praises bestowed upon me in your letter.

3. Thoughtful and experienced men will be at no loss as to the opinion which they should form of Themistocles (if I remember the name rightly), who, having refused at a banquet to play on the lyre, a thing which the distinguished and learned men of Greece were accustomed to do, and having been on that account regarded as uneducated, was asked, when he expressed his contempt for that sort of amusement, “What, then, does it delight you to hear?” and is reported to have answered: “My own praises.” Thoughtful and experienced men will readily see with what design and in what sense these words must have been used by him, or must be understood by them, if they are to believe that he uttered them; for he was in the affairs of this world a most remarkable man, as may be illustrated by the answer which he gave when he was further pressed with the question: “What, then, do you know?” “I know,” he replied, “how to make a small republic great.” As to the thirst for praise spoken of by Ennius in the words: “All men

greatly desire to be praised," I am of opinion that it is partly to be approved of, partly guarded against. For as, on the one hand, we should vehemently desire the truth, which is undoubtedly to be eagerly sought after as alone worthy of praise, even though it be not praised: so, on the other hand, we must carefully shun the vanity which readily insinuates itself along with praise from men: and this vanity is present in the mind when either the things which are worthy of praise are not reckoned worth having unless the man be praised for them by his fellow-men, or things on account of possessing which any man wishes to be much praised are deserving either of small praise, or it may be of severe censure. Hence Horace, a more careful observer than Ennius, says: "Is fame your passion? Wisdom's powerful charm if thrice read over shall its power disarm."

4. Thus the poet thought that the malady arising from the love of human praise, which was thoroughly attacked with his satire, was to be charmed away by words of healing power. The great Teacher has accordingly taught us by His apostle, that we ought not to do good with a view to be praised by men, that is, we ought not to make the praises of men the motive for our well-doing; and yet, for the sake of men themselves, He teaches us to seek their approbation. For when good men are praised, the praise does not benefit those on whom it is bestowed, but those who bestowed it. For to the good, so far as they are themselves concerned, it is enough that they are good; but those are to be congratulated whose interest it is to imitate the good when the good are praised by them, since they thus show that the persons whom they sincerely praise are persons whose conduct they appreciate. The apostle says in a certain place, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ;" and the same apostle says in another place, "I please all men in all things," and adds the reason, "Not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved." Behold what he sought in the praise of men, as it is declared in these words: "Finally, my brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." All the other things which I have named

above, he summed up under the name of Virtue, saying, “If there be any virtue;” but the definition which he subjoined, “Whatsoever things are of good report,” he followed up by another suitable word, “If there be any praise.” What the apostle says, then, in the first of these passages, “If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ,” is to be understood as if he said, If the good things which I do were done by me with human praise as my motive, if I were puffed up with the love of praise, I should not be the servant of Christ. The apostle, then, wished to please all men, and rejoiced in pleasing them, not that he might himself be inflated with their praises, but that he being praised might build them up in Christ. Why, then, should it not delight me to be praised by you, since you are too good a man to speak insincerely, and you bestow your praise on things which you love, and which it is profitable and wholesome to love, even though they be not in me? This, moreover, does not benefit you alone, but also me. For if they are not in me, it is good for me that I am put to the blush, and am made to burn with desire to possess them. And in regard to anything in your praise which I recognise as in my possession, I rejoice that I possess it, and that such things are loved by you, and that I am loved for their sake. And in regard to those things which I do not recognise as belonging to me, I not only desire to obtain them, that I may possess them for myself, but also that those who love me sincerely may not always be mistaken in praising me for them.

5. Behold how many things I have said, and still I have not yet spoken of that in your letter which delighted me more than your eloquence, and far more than the praises you bestowed on me. What do you think, O excellent man, that this can be? It is that I have acquired the friendship of so distinguished a man as you are, and that without having even seen you; if, indeed, I ought to speak of one as unseen whose soul I have seen in his own letters, though I have not seen his body. In which letters I rest my opinion concerning you on my own knowledge, and not, as formerly, on the testimony of my brethren. For what your character was I had already heard, but how you stood affected to me I knew not until now. From this, your friendship to me, I doubt not that even the praises bestowed on me, which give me pleasure for a reason about which I have already said enough, will much more abundantly benefit the Church of Christ, since the fact that you possess, and study, and love, and commend my labours in defence of the

gospel against the remnant of impious idolaters, secures for me a wider influence in these writings in proportion to the high position which you occupy; for, illustrious yourself, you insensibly shed a lustre upon them. You, being celebrated, give celebrity to them, and wherever you shall see that the circulation of them might do good, you will not suffer them to remain altogether unknown. If you ask me how I know this, my reply is, that such is the impression concerning you produced on me by reading your letters. Herein you will now see how great delight your letter could impart to me, for if your opinion of me be favourable, you are aware how great delight is given to me by gain to the cause of Christ. Moreover, when you tell me concerning yourself that, although, as you say, you belong to a family which not for one or two generations, but even to remote ancestors, has been known as able to accept the doctrine of Christ, you have nevertheless been aided by my writings against the Gentile rites so to understand these as you never had done before, can I esteem it a small matter how great benefit our writings, commended and circulated by you, may confer upon others, and to how many and how illustrious persons your testimony may bring them, and how easily and profitably through these persons they may reach others? Or, reflecting on this, can the joy diffused in my heart be small or moderate in degree?

6. Since, then, I cannot in words express how great delight I have received from your letter, I have spoken of the reason why it delighted me, and may that which I am unable adequately to utter on this subject I leave to you to conjecture. Accept, then, my son—accept, O excellent man, Christian not by outward profession merely, but by Christian love—accept, I say, the books containing my “Confessions,” which you desired to have. In these behold me, that you may not praise me beyond what I am; in these believe what is said of me, not by others, but by myself; in these contemplate me, and see what I have been in myself, by myself; and if anything in me please you, join me, because of it, in praising Him to whom, and not to myself, I desire praise to be given. For “He hath made us, and not we ourselves;” indeed, we had destroyed ourselves, but He who made us has made us anew. When, however, you find me in these books, pray for me that I may not fail, but be perfected. Pray, my son; pray. I feel what I say; I know what I ask. Let it not seem to you a thing unbecoming, and, as it were, beyond

your merits. You will defraud me of a great help if you do not do so. Let not only you yourself, but all also who by your testimony shall come to love me, pray for me. Tell them that I have entreated this, and if you think highly of us, consider that we command what we have asked; in any case, whether as granting a request or obeying a command, pray for us. Read the Divine Scriptures, and you will find that the apostles themselves, the leaders of Christ's flock, requested this from their sons, or enjoined it on their hearers. I certainly, since you ask it of me, will do this for you as far as I can. He sees this who is the Hearer of prayer, and who saw that I prayed for you before you asked me; but let this proof of love be reciprocated by you. We are placed over you; you are the flock of God. Consider and see that our dangers are greater than yours, and pray for us, for this becomes both us and you, that we may give a good account of you to the Chief Shepherd and Head over us all, and may escape both from the trials of this world and its allurements, which are still more dangerous, except when the peace of this world has the effect for which the apostle has directed us to pray, "That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." For if godliness and honesty be wanting, what is a quiet and peaceful exemption from the evils of the world but an occasion either of inviting men to enter, or assisting men to follow, a course of self-indulgence and perdition? Do you, then, ask for us what we ask for you, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Let us ask this for each other wherever you are and wherever we are, for He whose we are is everywhere present.

7. I have sent you also other books which you did not ask, that I might not rigidly restrict myself to what you asked:—my works on Faith in Things Unseen, on Patience, on Continence, on Providence, and a large work on Faith, Hope, and Charity. If, while you are in Africa, you shall read all these, either send your opinion of them to me, or let it be sent to some place whence it may be sent us by my lord and brother Aurelius, though wherever you shall be we hope to have letters from you; and do you expect letters from us as long as we are able. I most gratefully received the things you sent to me, in which you deigned to aid me both in regard to my bodily health, since you desire me to be free from the hindrance of sickness in devoting my time to God, and in regard to my library, that I may have the

means to procure new books and repair the old. May God recompense you, both in the present life and in that to come, with those favours which He has prepared for such as He has willed you to be. I request you now to salute again for me, as before, the pledge of peace entrusted to you, very dear to both of us.

Fourth Division

[Hitherto the order followed in the arrangement of the letters has been the chronological. It being impossible to ascertain definitely the date of composition of thirty-nine of the letters, these have been placed by the Benedictine editors in the fourth division, and in it they are arranged under two principal divisions, the first embracing some controversial letters, and the second a number of those which were occasioned either by Augustin's interest in the welfare of individuals, or by the claims of official duty.]

LETTER CCXXXII

To the People of Madaura, My Lords Worthy of Praise, and Brethren Most Beloved, Augustin Sends Greeting, in Reply to the Letter Received by the Hands of Brother Florentinus.

1. If, perchance, such a letter as I have received was sent to me by those among you who are Catholic Christians, the only thing at which I am surprised is, that it was sent in the name of the municipality, and not in their own name. If, however, it has pleased all or almost all of your men of rank to send a letter to me, I am surprised at the title "Father" and the "salutation in the Lord" addressed to me by you, of whom I know certainly, and with much regret, that you regard with superstitious veneration those idols against which your temples are more easily shut than your hearts; or, I should rather say, those idols which are not more truly shut up in your temples than in your hearts. Can it be that you are at last, after wise reflection, seriously thinking of that salvation which is in the Lord, in whose name you have chosen to salute me? For if it be not so, I ask you, my lords worthy of all praise, and brethren most beloved, in what have I injured, in what have I offended your benevolence, that you should think it right to treat me with ridicule rather than with respect in the salutation prefixed to your letter?

2. For when I read the words, "To Father Augustin, eternal salvation in the Lord," I was suddenly elated with such fulness of hope, that I believed you

either already converted to the Lord Himself, and to that eternal salvation of which He is the author, or desirous, through our ministry, to be so converted. But when I read the rest of the letter my heart was chilled. I inquired, however, from the bearer of the letter, whether you were already Christians or were desirous to be so. After I learned from his answer that you were in no way changed, I was deeply grieved that you thought it right not only to reject the name of Christ, to whom you already see the whole world submitting, but even to insult His name in my person; for I could not think of any other Lord than Christ the Lord in whom a bishop could be addressed by you as a father, and if there had been any doubt as to the meaning to be attached to your words, it would have been removed by the closing sentence of your letter, where you say plainly, "We desire that, for many years, your lordship may always, in the midst of your clergy, be glad in God and His Christ." After reading and pondering all these things, what could I (or, indeed, could any man) think but that these words were written either as the genuine expression of the mind of the writers, or with an intention to deceive? If you write these things as the genuine expression of your mind, who has barred your way to the truth? Who has strewn it with thorns? What enemy has placed masses of rock across your path? In fine, if you are desiring to come in, who has shut the door of our places of worship against you, so that you are unwilling to enjoy the same salvation with us in the same Lord in whose name you salute us? But if you write these things deceitfully and mockingly, do you, then, in the very act of imposing on me the care of your affairs, presume to insult, with the language of feigned adulation, the name of Him through whom alone I can do anything, instead of honouring Him with the veneration which is due to Him?

3. Be assured, dearest brethren, that it is with inexpressible trembling of heart on your account that I write this letter to you, for I know how much greater in the judgment of God must be your guilt and your doom if I shall have said these things to you in vain. In regard to everything in the history of the human race which our forefathers observed and handed down to us, and not less in regard to everything connected with the seeking and holding of true religion which we now see and put on record for those who come after us, the Divine Scriptures have not been silent; so far from this, all things come to pass exactly according to the predictions of Scripture. You

cannot deny that you see the Jewish people torn from the abodes of their ancestry, dispersed and scattered over almost every country: now, the origin of that people, their gradual increase, their losing of the kingdom, their dispersion through all the world, have happened exactly as foretold. You cannot deny that you see that the word of the Lord, and the law coming forth from that people through Christ, who was miraculously born among their nation, has taken and retained possession of the faith of all nations: now we read of all these announced beforehand as we see them. You cannot deny that you see what we call heresies and schisms, that is, many cut off from the root of the Christian society, which by means of the Apostolic Sees, and the successions of bishops, is spread abroad in an indisputably world-wide diffusion, claiming the name of Christians, and as withering branches boasting of the mere appearance of being derived from the true vine: all this has been foreseen, predicted, and described in Scripture. You cannot deny that you see some temples of the idols fallen into ruin through neglect, others thrown down by violence, others closed, and some applied to other purposes; you see the idols themselves either broken to pieces, or burnt, or shut up, or destroyed, and the same powers of this world, who in defence of idols persecuted Christians, now vanquished and subdued by Christians, who did not fight for the truth but died for it, and directing their attacks and their laws against the very idols in defence of which they put Christians to death, and the highest dignitary of the noblest empire laying aside his crown and kneeling as a suppliant at the tomb of the fisherman Peter.

4. The Divine Scriptures, which have now come into the hands of all, testified long before that all these things would come to pass. We rejoice that all these things have happened, with a faith which is strong in proportion to the discovery thereby made of the greatness of the authority with which they are declared in the sacred Scriptures. Seeing, then, that all these things have come to pass as foretold, are we, I ask, to suppose that the judgment of God, which we read of in the same Scriptures as appointed to separate finally between the believing and the unbelieving, is the only event in regard to which the prophecy is to fail? Yea, certainly, as all these events have come, it shall also come. Nor shall there be a man of our time who shall be able in that day to plead anything in defence of his unbelief. For the

name of Christ is on the lips of every man: it is invoked by the just man in doing justice, by the perjurer in the act of deceiving, by the king to confirm his rule, by the soldier to nerve himself for battle, by the husband to establish his authority, by the wife to confess her submission, by the father to enforce his command, by the son to declare his obedience, by the master in supporting his right to govern, by the slave in performing his duty, by the humble in quickening piety, by the proud in stimulating ambition, by the rich man when he gives, and by the poor when he receives an alms, by the drunkard at his wine-cup, by the beggar at the gate, by the good man in keeping his word, by the wicked man in violating his promises: all frequently use the name of Christ, the Christian with genuine reverence, the Pagan with feigned respect; and they shall undoubtedly give to that same Being whom they invoke an account both of the spirit and of the language in which they repeat His name.

5. There is One invisible, from whom, as the Creator and First Cause, all things seen by us derive their being: He is supreme, eternal, unchangeable, and comprehensible by none save Himself alone. There is One by whom the supreme Majesty utters and reveals Himself, namely, the Word, not inferior to Him by whom it is begotten and uttered, by which Word He who begets it is manifested. There is One who is holiness, the sanctifier of all that becomes holy, who is the inseparable and undivided mutual communion between this unchangeable Word by whom that First Cause is revealed, and that First Cause who reveals Himself by the Word which is His equal. But who is able with perfectly calm and pure mind to contemplate this whole Essence (whom I have endeavoured to describe without giving His name, instead of giving His name without describing Him), and to draw blessedness from that contemplation, and by sinking, as it were, in the rapture of such meditation, to become oblivious of self, and to press on to that the sight of which is beyond our sphere of perception; in other words, to be clothed with immortality, and obtain that eternal salvation which you were pleased to desire on my behalf in your greeting? Who, I say, is able to do this but the man who, confessing his sins, shall have levelled with the dust all the vain risings of pride, and prostrated himself in meekness and humility to receive God as his Teacher?

6. Since, therefore, it is necessary that we be first brought down from vain self-sufficiency to lowliness of spirit, that rising thence we may attain to real exaltation, it was not possible that this spirit could be produced in us by any method at once more glorious and more gentle (subduing our haughtiness by persuasion instead of violence) than that the Word by whom the Father reveals Himself to angels, who is His Power and Wisdom, who could not be discerned by the human heart so long as it was blinded by love for the things which are seen, should condescend to assume our nature, and so to exercise and manifest His personality when incarnate as to make men more afraid of being elated by the pride of man, than of being brought low after the example of God. Therefore the Christ who is preached throughout the whole world is not Christ adorned with an earthly crown, nor Christ rich in earthly treasures, nor Christ illustrious for earthly prosperity, but Christ crucified. This was ridiculed, at first, by whole nations of proud men, and is still ridiculed by a remnant among the nations, but it was the object of faith at first to a few and now to whole nations, because when Christ crucified was preached at that time, notwithstanding the ridicule of the nations, to the few who believed, the lame received power to walk, the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, and the dead were restored to life. Thus, at length, the pride of this world was convinced that, even among the things of this world, there is nothing more powerful than the humility of God, so that beneath the shield of a divine example that humility, which it is most profitable for men to practise, might find defence against the contemptuous assaults of pride.

7. O men of Madaura, my brethren, nay, my fathers, I beseech you to awake at last: this opportunity of writing to you God has given to me. So far as I could, I rendered my service and help in the business of brother Florentinus, by whom, as God willed it, you wrote to me; but the business was of such a nature, that even without my assistance it might have been easily transacted, for almost all the men of his family, who reside at Hippo, know Florentinus, and deeply regret his bereavement. But the letter was sent by you to me, that, having occasion to reply, it might not seem presumptuous on my part, when the opportunity was afforded me by yourselves, to say something concerning Christ to the worshippers of idols. But I beseech you, if you have not taken His name in vain in that epistle, suffer not these things

which I write to you to be in vain; but if in using His name you wished to mock me, fear Him whom the world formerly in its pride scorned as a condemned criminal, and whom the same world now, subjected to His sway, awaits as its Judge. For the desire of my heart for you, expressed as far as in my power by this letter, shall witness against you at the judgment-seat of Him who shall establish for ever those who believe in Him and confound the unbelieving. May the one true God deliver you wholly from the vanity of this world, and turn you to Himself, my lords worthy of all praise and brethren most beloved.

LETTER CCXXXVII

This letter was addressed to Ceretius, a bishop, who had sent to Augustin certain apocryphal writings, on which the Spanish heretical sect called Priscillianists founded some of their doctrines. Ceretius had especially directed his attention to a hymn which they alleged to have been composed by the Lord Jesus Christ, and given by Him to His disciples on that night on which He was betrayed, when they sang an "hymn" before going out to the Mount of Olives. The length of the letter precludes its insertion here, but we believe it will interest many to read the few lines of this otherwise long-forgotten hymn, which Augustin has here preserved. They are as follows:—

"Salvare volo et salvari volo;

Solvere volo et solvi volo;

Ornare volo et ornari volo;

Generari volo;

Cantare volo, saltate cuncti:

Plangere volo, tundite vos omnes:

Lucerna sum tibi, ille qui me vides;

Janua sum tibi, quicunque me pulsas;

Qui vides quod ago, tace opera mea;

Verbo illusi cuncta et non sum illusus in totum."

The reader who ponders these extracts, and remembers the occasion on which the hymn is alleged to have been composed, will agree with us that Augustin employs a very unnecessary fulness of argument in devoting several paragraphs to demolish the claims advanced on its behalf as a revelation more profound and sacred than anything contained in the canonical Scriptures. Augustin also brings against the Priscillianists the charge of justifying perjury when it might be of service in concealing their real opinions, and quotes a line in which, as he had heard from some who once belonged to that sect, the lawfulness of such deceitful conduct was taught:—

“Jura, perjura, secretum prodere noli.”

LETTER CCXLV

To Possidius, My Most Beloved Lord and Venerable Brother and Partner in the Sacerdotal Office, and to the Brethren Who are with Him, Augustin and the Brethren Who are with Him Send Greeting in the Lord.

1. It requires more consideration to decide what to do with those who refuse to obey you, than to discover how to show them that things which they do are unlawful. Meanwhile, however, the letter of your Holiness has come upon me when I am exceedingly pressed with business, and the very hasty departure of the bearer has made it necessary for me to write you in reply, but has not given me time to answer as I ought to have done in regard to the matters on which you have consulted me. Let me say, however, in regard to ornaments of gold and costly dress, that I would not have you come to a precipitate decision in the way of forbidding their use, except in the case of those who, neither being married nor intending to marry, are bound to consider only how they may please God. But those who belong to the world have also to consider how they may in these things please their wives if they be husbands, their husbands if they be wives; with this limitation, that it is not becoming even in married women to uncover their hair, since the apostle commands women to keep their heads covered. As to the use of pigments by women in colouring the face, in order to have a ruddier or a fairer complexion, this is a dishonest artifice, by which I am sure that even their own husbands do not wish to be deceived; and it is only for their own

husbands that women ought to be permitted to adorn themselves, according to the toleration, not the injunction, of Scripture. For the true adorning, especially of Christian men and women, consists not only in the absence of all deceitful painting of the complexion, but in the possession not of magnificent golden ornaments or rich apparel, but of a blameless life.

2. As for the accursed superstition of wearing amulets (among which the earrings worn by men at the top of the ear on one side are to be reckoned), it is practised with the view not of pleasing men, but of doing homage to devils. But who can expect to find in Scripture express prohibition of every form of wicked superstition, seeing that the apostle says generally, “I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils,” and again, “What concord hath Christ with Belial?” unless, perchance, the fact that he named Belial, while he forbade in general terms fellowship with devils, leaves it open for Christians to sacrifice to Neptune, because we nowhere read an express prohibition of the worship of Neptune! Meanwhile, let those unhappy people be admonished that, if they persist in disobedience to salutary precepts, they must at least forbear from defending their impieties, and thereby involving themselves in greater guilt. But why should we argue at all with them if they are afraid to take off their earrings, and are not afraid to receive the body of Christ while wearing the badge of the devil?

As to ordaining a man who was baptized in the Donatist sect, I cannot take the responsibility of recommending you to do this; it is one thing for you to do it if you are left without alternative, it is another thing for me to advise that you should do it.

LETTER CCXLVI

To Lampadius, Augustin Sends Greeting.

1. On the subject of Fate and Fortune, by which, as I perceived when I was with you, and as I now know in a more gratifying and more reliable way by your own letter, your mind is seriously disturbed, I ought to write you a considerable volume; the Lord will enable me to explain it in the manner which He knows to be best fitted to preserve your faith. For it is no small evil that when men embrace perverse opinions they are not only drawn by

the allurement of pleasure to commit sin, but are also turned aside to vindicate their sin rather than seek to have it healed by acknowledging that they have done wrong.

2. Let me, therefore, briefly remind you of one thing bearing on the question which you certainly know, that all laws and all means of discipline, commendations, censures, exhortations, threatenings, rewards, punishments, and all other things by which mankind are managed and ruled, are utterly subverted and overthrown, and found to be absolutely devoid of justice, unless the will is the cause of the sins which a man commits. How much more legitimate and right, therefore, is it for us to reject the absurdities of astrologers [mathematici], than to submit to the alternative necessity of condemning and rejecting the laws proceeding from divine authority, or even the means needful for governing our own families. In this the astrologers themselves ignore their own doctrine as to Fate and Fortune, for when any one of them, after selling to moneyed simpletons his silly prognostications of Fate, calls back his thoughts from the ivory tablets to the management and care of his own house, he reproves his wife, not with words only, but with blows, if he finds her, I do not say jesting rather forwardly, but even looking too much out of the window. Nevertheless, if she were to expostulate in such a case, saying: “Why beat me? beat Venus, rather, if you can, since it is under that planet’s influence that I am compelled to do what you complain of,”—he would certainly apply his energies not to invent some of the absurd jargon by which he cajoles the public, but to inflict some of the just correction by which he maintains his authority at home.

3. When, therefore, any one, upon being reproved, affirms that Fate is the cause of the action, and insists that therefore he is not to be blamed, because he says that under the compulsion of Fate he did the action which is censured, let him come back to apply this to his own case, let him observe this principle in managing his own affairs: let him not chastise a dishonest servant; let him not complain of a disrespectful son; let him not utter threats against a mischievous neighbour. For in doing which of these things would he act justly, if all from whom he suffers such wrong are impelled to commit it by Fate, not by any fault of their own? If, however, from the fight

inherent in himself, and the duty incumbent on him as the head of a family towards all whom for the time he has under his control, he exhorts them to do good, deters them from doing evil, commands them to obey his will, honours those who yield implicit obedience, inflicts punishment on those who set him at naught, gives thanks to those who do him good, and hates those who are ungrateful,—shall I wait to prove the absurdity of the astrologers calculations of Fate, when I find him proclaiming, not by words but by deeds, things so conclusive against his pretensions that he seems to destroy almost with his own hands every hair on the heads of the astrologers?

If your eager desire is not satisfied with these few sentences, and demands a book which will take longer time to read on this subject, you must wait patiently until I get some respite from other duties; and you must pray to God that He may be pleased to allow both leisure and capacity to write, so as to set your mind at rest on this matter. I will, however, do this with more willing readiness, if your Charity does not grudge to remind me of it by frequent letters, and to show me in your reply what you think of this letter.

LETTER CCL

To His Beloved Lord and Venerable Brother and Partner in the Priestly Office, Auxilius, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. Our son Classicianus, a man of rank, has addressed to me a letter complaining bitterly that he has suffered excommunication wrongfully at the hand of your Holiness. His account of the matter is, that he came to the church with a small escort suitable to his official authority, and begged of you that you would not, to the detriment of their own spiritual welfare, extend the privilege of the sanctuary to men who, after violating an oath which they had taken on the Gospel, were seeking in the house of faith itself assistance and protection in their crime of breaking faith; that thereafter the men themselves, reflecting on the sin which they had committed, went forth from the church, not under violent compulsion, but of their own accord; and that because of this transaction your Holiness was so displeased with him, that with the usual forms of ecclesiastical procedure you smote him and all his household with a sentence of excommunication.

On reading this letter from him, being very much troubled, the thoughts of my heart being agitated like the waves of a stormy sea, I felt it impossible to forbear from writing to you, to beg that if you have thoroughly examined your judgment in this matter, and have proved it by irrefragable reasoning or Scripture testimonies, you will have the kindness to teach me also the grounds on which it is just that a son should be anathematized for the sin of his father, or a wife for the sin of her husband, or a servant for the sin of his master, or how it is just that even the child as yet unborn should lie under an anathema, and be debarred, even though death were imminent, from the deliverance provided in the laver of regeneration, if he happen to be born in a family at the time when the whole household is under the ban of excommunication. For this is not one of those judgments merely affecting the body, in which, as we read in Scripture, some despisers of God were slain with all their households, though these had not been sharers in their impiety. In those cases, indeed, as a warning to the survivors, death was inflicted on bodies which, as mortal, were destined at some time to die; but a spiritual judgment, founded on what is written, “That which ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven,”—is binding on souls, concerning which it is said, “As the soul of the father is mine, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth it shall die.”

2. It may be that you have heard that other priests of great reputation have in some cases included the household of a transgressor in the anathema pronounced on him; but these could, perchance, if they were required, give a good reason for so doing. For my own part, although I have been most grievously troubled by the cruel excesses with which some men have vexed the Church, I have never ventured to do as you have done, for this reason, that if any one were to challenge me to justify such an act, I could give no satisfactory reply. But if, perchance, the Lord has revealed to you that it may be justly done, I by no means despise your youth and your inexperience, as having been but recently elevated to high office in the Church. Behold, though far advanced in life, I am ready to learn from one who is but young; and notwithstanding the number of years for which I have been a bishop, I am ready to learn from one who has not yet been a twelvemonth in the same office, if he undertakes to teach me how we can justify our conduct, either before men or before God, if we inflict a spiritual

punishment on innocent souls because of another person's crime, in which they are not involved in the same way as they are involved in the original sin of Adam, in whom "all have sinned." For although the son of Classicianus derived through his father, from our first parent, guilt which behoved to be washed away by the sacred waters of baptism, who hesitates for a moment to say that he is in no way responsible for any sin which his father may have committed, since he was born, without his participation? What shall I say of his wife? What of so many souls in the entire household?—of which if even one, in consequence of the severity which included the whole household in the excommunication, should perish through departing from the body without baptism, the loss thus occasioned would be an incomparably greater calamity than the bodily death of an innumerable multitude, even though they were innocent men, dragged from the courts of the sanctuary and murdered. If, therefore, you are able to give a good reason for this, I trust that you will in your reply communicate it to me, that I also may be able to do the same; but if you cannot, what right have you to do, under the promptings of inconsiderate excitement, an act for which, if you were asked to give a satisfactory reason, you could find none?

3. What I have said hitherto applies to the case even on the supposition that our son Classicianus has done something which might appear to demand most righteously at your hands the punishment of excommunication. But if the letter which he sent to me contained the truth, there was no reason why even he himself (even though his household had been exempted from the stroke) should have been so punished. As to this, however, I do not interfere with your Holiness; I only beseech you to pardon him when he asks forgiveness, if he acknowledges his fault; and if, on the other hand, you, upon reflection, acknowledge that he did nothing wrong, since in fact the right rather lay on his side who earnestly demanded that in the house of faith, faith should be sacredly kept, and that it should not be broken in the place where the sinfulness of such breach of faith is taught from day to day, do, in this event, what a man of, piety ought to do,—that is to say, if to you as a man anything has happened such as was confessed by one who was truly a man of God in the words of the psalm, "Mine eye was discomposed by anger," fail not to cry to the Lord, as he did, "Have pity on me, O Lord,

for I am weak,” so that He may stretch forth His right hand to you, rebuking the storm of your passion, and making your mind calm that you may see and may perform what is just; for, as it is written, “the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.” And think not that, because we are bishops, it is impossible for unjust passionate resentment to gain secretly upon us; let us rather remember that, because we are men, our life in the midst of temptation’s snares is, beset with the greatest possible dangers. Cancel, therefore, the ecclesiastical sentence which, perhaps under the influence of unusual excitement, you have passed; and let the mutual love which, even from the time when you were a catechumen, has united him and you, be restored again; let strife be banished and peace invited to return, lest this man who is your friend be lost to you, and the devil who is your enemy rejoice over you both. Mighty is the mercy of our God; it may be that His compassion shall hear even my prayer, imploring of Him that my sorrow on your account may not be increased, but that rather what I have begun to suffer may be removed; and may your youth, not despising my old age, be encouraged and made full of joy by His grace! Farewell!

[Annexed to this letter is a fragment of a letter written at the same time to Classicianus; it is as follows:—

To restrain those who for the offence of one soul bind a transgressor’s entire household, that is, a large number of souls, under one sentence of excommunication, and especially to prevent any one from departing this life unbaptized in consequence of such an anathema,—also to decide the question whether persons ought not to be driven forth even from a church, who seek a refuge there in order that they may break the faith pledged to sureties, I desire with the Lord’s help to use the necessary measures in our Council, and, if it be necessary, to write to the Apostolic See; that, by a unanimous authoritative decision of all, we may have the course which ought to be followed in these cases determined and established. One thing I say deliberately as an unquestionable truth, that if any believer has been wrongfully excommunicated, the sentence will do harm rather to him who pronounces it than to him who suffers this wrong. For it is by the Holy Spirit dwelling in holy persons that any one is loosed or bound, and He inflicts unmerited punishment upon no one; for by Him the love which worketh not evil is shed abroad in our hearts.]

LETTER CCLIV

To Benenatus, My Most Blessed Lord, My Esteemed and Amiable Brother and Partner in the Priestly Office, and to the Brethren Who are with Him, Augustin and the Brethren Who are with Him Send Greeting in the Lord.

The maiden about whom your Holiness wrote to me is at present disposed to think, that if she were of full age she would refuse every proposal of marriage. She is, however, so young, that even if she were disposed to marriage, she ought not yet to be either given or betrothed to any one. Besides this, my lord Benenatus, brother revered and beloved, it must be remembered that God takes her under guardianship in His Church with the design of protecting her against wicked men; placing her, therefore, under my care not so as that she can be given by me to whomsoever I might choose, but so as that she cannot be taken away against my will by any person who would be an unsuitable partner. The proposal which you have been pleased to mention is one which, if she were disposed and prepared to marry, would not displease me; but whether she will marry any one,—although for my own part, I would much prefer that she carried out what she now talks of,—I do not in the meantime know, for she is at an age in which her declaration that she wishes to be a nun is to be received rather as the flippant utterance of one talking heedlessly, than as the deliberate promise of one making a solemn vow. Moreover, she has an aunt by the mother's side married to our honourable brother Felix, with whom I have conferred in regard to this matter,—for I neither could, nor indeed should have avoided consulting him,—and he has not been reluctant to entertain the proposal, but has, on the contrary, expressed his satisfaction; but he expressed not unreasonably his regret that nothing had been written to him on the subject, although his relationship entitled him to be apprised of it. For, perhaps, the mother of the maiden will also come forward, though in the meantime she does not make herself known, and to a mother's wishes in regard to the giving away of a daughter, nature gives in my opinion the precedence above all others, unless the maiden herself be already old enough to have legitimately a stronger claim to choose for herself what she pleases. I wish your Honour also to understand, that if the final and entire authority in the matter of her marriage were committed to me, and she herself, being of age and willing to marry, were to entrust herself to me under God as my Judge to give her to whomsoever I thought best,—I declare, and I declare the truth, in saying that the proposal which you mention pleases me meanwhile, but because of God being my Judge I cannot pledge myself to reject on her behalf a better offer if it were made; but whether any such proposal shall at any future time be made is wholly uncertain. Your Holiness perceives, therefore, how many important considerations concur to make it impossible for her to be, in the meantime, definitely promised to any one.

LETTER CCLXIII

To the Eminently Religious Lady and Holy Daughter Sapida, Augustin Sends Greeting in the Lord.

1. The gift prepared by the just and pious industry of your own hands, and kindly presented by you to me, I have accepted, lest I should increase the grief of one who needs, as I perceive, much rather to be comforted by me; especially because you expressed yourself as esteeming it no small consolation to you if I would wear this tunic, which you had made for that holy servant of God your brother, since he, having departed from the land of the dying, is raised above the need of the things which perish in the using. I have, therefore, complied with your desire, and whatever be the kind and degree of consolation which you may feel this to yield, I have not refused it to your affection for your brother. The tunic which you sent I have accordingly accepted, and have already begun to wear it before writing this to you. Be therefore of good cheer; but apply yourself, I beseech you, to far better and far greater consolations, in order that the cloud which, through human weakness, gathers darkness closely round your heart, may be dissipated by the words of divine authority; and, at all times, so live that you may live with your brother, since he has so died that he lives still.

2. It is indeed a cause for tears that your brother, who loved you, and who honoured you especially for your pious life, and your profession as a consecrated virgin, is no more before your eyes, as hitherto, going in and

out in the assiduous discharge of his ecclesiastical duties as a deacon of the church of Carthage, and that you shall no more hear from his lips the honourable testimony which, with kindly, pious, and becoming affection, he was wont to render to the holiness of a sister so dear to him. When these things are pondered, and are regretfully desired with all the vehemence of long-cherished affection, the heart is pierced, and, like blood from the pierced heart, tears flow apace. But let your heart rise heavenward, and your eyes will cease to weep. The things over the loss of which you mourn have indeed passed away, for they were in their nature temporary, but their loss does not involve the annihilation of that love with which Timotheus loved [his sister] Sapida, and loves her still: it abides in its own treasury, and is hidden with Christ in God. Does the miser lose his gold when he stores it in a secret place? Does he not then become, so far as lies in his power, more confidently assured that the gold is in his possession when he keeps it in some safer hiding-place, where it is hidden even from his eyes? Earthly covetousness believes that it has found a safer guardianship for its loved treasures when it no longer sees them; and shall heavenly love sorrow as if it had lost for ever that which it has only sent before it to the garner of the upper world? O Sapida, give yourself wholly to your high calling, and set your affections on things above, where, at the right hand of God, Christ sitteth, who condescended for us to die, that we, though we were dead, might live, and to secure that no man should fear death as if it were destined to destroy him, and that no one of those for whom the Life died should after death be mourned for as if he had lost life. Take to yourself these and other similar divine consolations, before which human sorrow may blush and flee away.

3. There is nothing in the sorrow of mortals over their dearly beloved dead which merits displeasure; but the sorrow of believers ought not to be prolonged. If, therefore, you have been grieved till now, let this grief suffice, and sorrow not as do the heathen, “who have no hope.” For when the Apostle Paul said this, he did not prohibit sorrow altogether, but only such sorrow as the heathen manifest who have no hope. For even Martha and Mary, pious sisters, and believers, wept for their brother Lazarus, of whom they knew that he would rise again, though they knew not that he was at that time to be restored to life; and the Lord Himself wept for that

same Lazarus, whom He was going to bring back from death; wherein doubtless He by His example permitted, though He did not by any precept enjoin, the shedding of tears over the graves even of those regarding whom we believe that they shall rise again to the true life. Nor is it without good reason that Scripture saith in the book of Ecclesiasticus: “Let tears fall down over the dead, and begin to lament as if thou hadst suffered great harm thyself;” but adds, a little further on, this counsel, “and then comfort thyself for thy heaviness. For of heaviness cometh death, and the heaviness of the heart breaketh strength.”

4. Your brother, my daughter, is alive as to the soul, is asleep as to the body: “Shall not he who sleeps also rise again from sleep?” God, who has already received his spirit, shall again give back to him his body, which He did not take away to annihilate, but only took aside to restore. There is therefore no reason for protracted sorrow, since there is a much stronger reason for everlasting joy. For even the mortal part of your brother, which has been buried in the earth, shall not be for ever lost to you;—that part in which he was visibly present with you, through which also he addressed you and conversed with you, by which he spoke with a voice not less thoroughly known to your ear than was his countenance when presented to your eyes, so that, wherever the sound of his voice was heard, even though he was not seen, he used to be at once recognised by you. These things are indeed withdrawn so as to be no longer perceived by the senses of the living, that the absence of the dead may make surviving friends mourn for them. But seeing that even the bodies of the dead shall not perish (as not even a hair of the head shall perish), but shall, after being laid aside for a time, be received again never more to be laid aside, but fixed finally in the higher condition of existence into which they shall have been changed, certainly there is more cause for thankfulness in the sure hope for an immeasurable eternity, than for sorrow in the transient experience of a very short span of time. This hope the heathen do not possess, because they know not the Scriptures nor the power of God, who is able to restore what was lost, to quicken what was dead, to renew what has been subjected to corruption, to re-unite things which have been severed from each other, and to preserve thenceforward for evermore what was originally corruptible and shortlived. These things He has promised, who has, by the fulfilment of other promises, given our

faith good ground to believe that these also shall be fulfilled. Let your faith often discourse now to you on these things, because your hope shall not be disappointed, though your love may be now for a season interrupted in its exercise; ponder these things; in them find more solid and abundant consolation. For if the fact that I now wear (because he could not) the garment which you had woven for your brother yields some comfort to you, how much more full and satisfactory the comfort which you should find in considering that he for whom this was prepared, and who then did not require an imperishable garment, shall be clothed with incorruption and immortality!

LETTER CCLXIX

To Nobilius, My Most Blessed and Venerable Brother and Partner in the Priestly Office, Augustin Sends Greeting.

So important is the solemnity at which your brotherly affection invites me to be present, that my heart’s desire would carry my poor body to you, were it not that infirmity renders this impossible. I might have come if it had not been winter; I might have braved the winter if I had been young: for in the latter case the warmth of youth would have borne uncomplainingly the cold of the season; in the former case the warmth of summer would have met with gentleness the chill languor of old age. For the present, my lord most blessed, my holy and venerable partner in the priestly office, I cannot undertake in winter so long a journey, carrying with me as I must the frigid feebleness of very many years. I reciprocate the salutation due to your worth, on behalf of my own welfare I ask an interest in your prayers, and I myself beseech the Lord God to grant that the prosperity of peace may follow the dedication of so great an edifice to His sacred service.

OF HOLY VIRGINITY

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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DE VIRGINITATE.

TRANSLATED BY REV. C. I. CORNISH, M.A., OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

Retr. ii. 23. “After I had written on the Good of Marriage,’ it was expected that I should write on Holy Virginity; and I did not delay to do so: and that it is God’s gift, and how great a gift, and with what humility to be guarded, so far as I was able I set forth in one volume. This book begins,” &c.

1. We lately put forth a book “of the Good of Marriage,” in which also we admonished and admonish the virgins of Christ, not, on account of that greater gift which they have received, to despise, in comparison of themselves, the fathers and mothers of the People of God; and not to think those men, (whom the Apostle sets forth as the olive, that the engrafted wild olive be not proud,) who did service to Christ about to come hereafter, even by the begetting of sons, on this account of less desert, because by divine right continence is preferred to wedded life, and pious virginity to marriage. Forsooth in them were being prepared and brought forth future things, which now we see fulfilled in a marvellous and effectual manner, whose married life also was prophetic: whence, not after the wonted custom of human wishes and joys, but by the very deep counsel of God, in certain of them fruitfulness obtained to be honored, in certain also barrenness to be made fruitful. But at this time, towards them unto whom it is said, “if they contain not, let them be married,” we must use not consolation, but exhortation. But them, unto whom it is said, “Whoso can receive, let him receive,” we must exhort, that they be not alarmed; and alarm that they be not lifted up. Wherefore virginity is not only to be set forth, that it may be loved, but also to be admonished, that it be not puffed up.

2. This we have undertaken in our present discourse: may Christ help us, the Son of a virgin, and the Spouse of virgins, born after the flesh of a virgin womb, and wedded after the Spirit in virgin marriage. Whereas, therefore, the whole Church itself is a virgin espoused unto one Husband Christ, as the Apostle saith, of how great honor are its members worthy, who guard this even in the flesh itself, which the whole Church guards in the faith? which imitates the mother of her husband, and her Lord. For the Church also is both a mother and a virgin. For whose virgin purity consult we for, if she is not a virgin? or whose children address we, if she is not a mother? Mary bare the Head of This Body after the flesh, the Church bears the members of that Body after the Spirit. In both virginity hinders not fruitfulness: in both fruitfulness takes not away virginity. Wherefore, whereas the whole Church is holy both in body and spirit, and yet the whole is not virgin in body but in spirit; how much more holy is it in these members, wherein it is virgin both in body and spirit?

3. It is written in the Gospel, of the mother and brethren of Christ, that is, His kindred after the flesh, that, when word had been brought to Him, and they were standing without, because they could not come to Him by reason of the crowd, He made answer, “Who is My mother? or who are My brethren? and stretching forth His Hand over His disciples, He saith, These are My brethren: and whosoever shall have done the will of My Father, that man is to Me brother, and mother, and sister.” What else teaching us, than to prefer to kindred after the flesh, our descent after the Spirit: and that men are not blessed for this reason, that they are united by nearness of flesh unto just and holy men, but that, by obeying and following, they cleave unto their doctrine and conduct. Therefore Mary is more blessed in receiving the faith of Christ, than in conceiving the flesh of Christ. For to a certain one who said, “Blessed is the womb, which bare Thee,” He Himself made answer, “Yea, rather, blessed are they who hear the Word of God, and keep it.” Lastly, to His brethren, that is, His kindred after the flesh, who believed not in Him, what profit was there in that being of kin? Thus also her nearness as a Mother would have been of no profit to Mary, had she not borne Christ in her heart after a more blessed manner than in her flesh.

4. Her virginity also itself was on this account more pleasing and accepted, in that it was not that Christ being conceived in her, rescued it beforehand from a husband who would violate it, Himself to preserve it; but, before He was conceived, chose it, already dedicated to God, as that from which to be born. This is shown by the words which Mary spake in answer to the Angel announcing to her her conception; “How,” saith she, “shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” Which assuredly she would not say, unless she had before vowed herself unto God as a virgin. But, because the habits of the Israelites as yet refused this, she was espoused to a just man, who would not take from her by violence, but rather guard against violent persons, what she had already vowed. Although, even if she had said this only, “How shall this take place?” and had not added, “seeing I know not a man,” certainly she would not have asked, how, being a female, she should give birth to her promised Son, if she had married with purpose of sexual intercourse. She might have been bidden also to continue a virgin, that in her by fitting miracle the Son of God should receive the form of a servant, but, being to be a pattern to holy virgins, lest it should be thought that she alone needed to be a virgin, who had obtained to conceive a child even without sexual intercourse, she dedicated her virginity to God, when as yet she knew not what she should conceive, in order that the imitation of a heavenly life in an earthly and mortal body should take place of vow, not of command; through love of choosing, not through necessity of doing service. Thus Christ by being born of a virgin, who, before she knew Who was to be born of her, had determined to continue a virgin, chose rather to approve, than to command, holy virginity. And thus, even in the female herself, in whom He took the form of a servant, He willed that virginity should be free.

5. There is, therefore, no reason why the virgins of God be sad, because themselves also cannot, keeping their virginity, be mothers of the flesh. For Him alone could virginity give birth to with fitting propriety, Who in His Birth could have no peer. However, That Birth of the Holy Virgin is the ornament of all holy virgins; and themselves together with Mary are mothers of Christ, if they do the will of His Father. For Mary also is on this account the Mother of Christ in a way more full of praise and blessing, according to His sentence mentioned above. “Whosoever doeth the will of my Father Who is in heaven, that one is to Me brother, and sister, and

mother.” All these degrees of nearness of kin to Himself, He shows forth in a spiritual manner, in the People whom He hath redeemed: as brothers and sisters He hath holy men and holy women, forasmuch as they all are co-heirs in the heavenly inheritance. His mother is the whole Church, because she herself assuredly gives birth to His members, that is, His faithful ones. Also His mother is every pious soul, doing the will of His Father with most fruitful charity, in them of whom it travaileth, until Himself be formed in them. Mary, therefore, doing the will of God, after the flesh, is only the mother of Christ, but after the Spirit she is both His sister and mother.

6. And on this account, that one female, not only in the Spirit, but also in the flesh, is both a mother and a virgin. And a mother indeed in the Spirit, not of our Head, Which is the Saviour Himself, of Whom rather she was born after the Spirit: forasmuch as all, who have believed in Him, among whom is herself also, are rightly called “children of the Bridegroom:” but clearly the mother of His members, which are we: in that she wrought together by charity, that faithful ones should be born in the Church, who are members of That Head: but in the flesh, the mother of the Head Himself. For it behoved that our Head, on account of a notable miracle, should be born after the flesh of a virgin, that He might thereby signify that His members would be born after the Spirit, of the Church a virgin: therefore Mary alone both in Spirit and in flesh is a mother and a virgin: both the mother of Christ, and a virgin of Christ; but the Church, in the Saints who shall possess the kingdom of God, in the Spirit indeed is altogether the mother of Christ, altogether a virgin of Christ: but in the flesh not altogether, but in certain a virgin of Christ, in certain a mother, but not of Christ. Forsooth both faithful women who are married, and virgins dedicated to God, by holy manners, and charity out of a pure heart, and good conscience, and faith unfeigned, because they do the will of the Father, are after a spiritual sense mothers of Christ. But they who in married life give birth to (children) after the flesh, give birth not to Christ, but to Adam, and therefore run, that their offspring having been dyed in His Sacraments, may become members of Christ, forasmuch as they know what they have given birth to.

7. I have said this, lest haply married fruitfulness dare to vie with virgin chastity, and to set forth Mary herself, and to say unto the virgins of God, She had in her flesh two things worthy of honor, virginity and fruitfulness; inasmuch as she both continued a virgin, and bore: this happiness, since we could not both have the whole, we have divided, that ye be virgins, we be mothers: for what is wanting to you in children, let your virginity, that hath been preserved, be a consolation: for us, let the gain of children make up for our lost virginity. This speech of faithful women married, unto holy virgins, would any how be to be endured, if they gave birth to Christians in the flesh; that in this alone, save virginity, the fruitfulness of Mary in the flesh should be more excellent, that she gave birth to the Head Himself of these members, but they to the members of That Head: but now, although by this speech there vie such as on this one account wed and have intercourse with husbands, that they may have sons, and have no other thought of their sons, than to gain them for Christ, and do this so soon as they can: yet are not Christians born of their flesh, but made so afterwards: the Church giving them birth, through this, that in a spiritual manner she is the mother of the members of Christ, of Whom also after a spiritual manner she is the virgin. And unto this holy birth mothers also who have not borne in the flesh Christians, are workers together, that they may become what they know that they could not give birth to in the flesh: yet are they workers together through this, wherein themselves also are virgins and mothers of Christ, that is to say, in “faith which worketh through love.”

8. Therefore no fruitfulness of the flesh can be compared to holy virginity even of the flesh. For neither is itself also honored because it is virginity, but because it hath been dedicated to God, and, although it be kept in the flesh, yet is it kept by religion and devotion of the Spirit. And by this means even virginity of body is spiritual, which continence of piety vows and keeps. For, even as no one makes an immodest use of the body, unless the sin have been before conceived in the spirit, so no one keeps modesty in the body, unless chastity have been before implanted in the spirit. But, further, if modesty of married life, although it be guarded in the flesh, is yet attributed to the soul, not to the flesh, under the rule and guidance of which, the flesh itself hath no intercourse with any beside its own proper estate of marriage; how much more, and with how much greater honor, are we to

reckon among the goods of the soul that continence, whereby the virgin purity of the flesh is vowed, consecrated, and kept, for the Creator Himself of the soul and flesh.

9. Wherefore neither are we to believe that their fruitfulness of the flesh, who at this time seek in marriage nothing else save children, to make over unto Christ, can be set against the loss of virginity. Forsooth, in former times, unto Christ about to come after the flesh, the race itself of the flesh was needful, in a certain large and prophetic nation: but now, when from out every race of men, and from out all nations, members of Christ may be gathered unto the People of God, and City of the kingdom of heaven, whoso can receive sacred virginity, let him receive it; and let her only, who contains not, be married. For what, if any rich woman were to expend much money on this good work, and to buy, from out different nations, slaves to make Christians, will she not provide for the giving birth to members of Christ in a manner more rich, and more numerous, than by any, how great soever, fruitfulness of the womb? And yet she will not therefore dare to compare her money to the offering of holy virginity. But if for the sake of making such as shall be born Christians, fruitfulness of the flesh shall with just reason be set against the loss of chastity, this matter will be more fruitful, if virginity be lost at a great price of money, whereby many more children may be purchased to be made Christians, than could be born from the womb, however fruitful, of a single person. But, if it be extreme folly to say this, let the faithful women that are married possess their own good, of which we have treated, so far as seemed fit, in another volume; and let them more highly honor, even as they are most rightly used to do, in the sacred virgins, their better good, of which we are treating in our present discourse.

10. For not even herein ought such as are married to compare themselves with the deserts of the continent, in that of them virgins are born: for this is not a good of marriage, but of nature: which was so ordered of God, as that of every sexual intercourse whatever of the two sexes of human kind, whether in due order and honest, or base and unlawful, there is born no female save a virgin, yet is none born a sacred virgin: so it is brought to pass that a virgin is born even of fornication, but a sacred virgin not even of marriage.

11. Nor do we ourselves set forth this in virgins, that they are virgins; but that they are virgins dedicated unto God by pious continence. For it is not at a venture that I may say, a married woman seems to me happier than a virgin about to be married: for the one hath what the other as yet desires, especially if she be not yet even the betrothed of any one. The one studies to please one, unto whom she hath been given; the other many, in doubt unto whom she is to be given: by this one thing she guards modesty of thought from the crowd, that she is seeking, not an adulterer, but a husband, in the crowd. Therefore that virgin is with good reason set before a married woman, who neither sets herself forth for the multitude to love, whereas she seeks from out the multitude the love of one; nor, having now found him, orders herself for one, taking thought of the things of the world, "how to please her husband;" but hath so loved "Him of fair beauty above the sons of men," as that, because she could not, even as Mary, conceive Him in her flesh, she hath kept her flesh also virgin for Him conceived in her heart. This kind of virgins no fruitfulness of the body hath given birth to: this is no progeny of flesh and blood. If of these the mother be sought for, it is the Church. None bears sacred virgins save a sacred virgin, she who hath been espoused to be presented chaste unto one Husband, Christ. Of her, not altogether in body, but altogether in spirit virgin, are born holy virgins both in body and in spirit.

12. Let marriages possess their own good, not that they beget sons, but that honestly, that lawfully, that modestly, that in a spirit of fellowship they beget them, and educate them, after they have been begotten, with cooperation, with wholesome teaching, and earnest purpose: in that they keep the faith of the couch one with another; in that they violate not the sacrament of wedlock. All these, however, are offices of human duty: but virginal chastity and freedom through pious continence from all sexual intercourse is the portion of Angels, and a practice, in corruptible flesh, of perpetual incorruption. To this let all fruitfulness of the flesh yield, all chastity of married life; the one is not in (man's) power, the other is not in eternity; free choice hath not fruitfulness of the flesh, heaven hath not chastity of married life. Assuredly they will have something great beyond others in that common immortality, who have something already not of the flesh in the flesh.

13. Whence they are marvellously void of wisdom, who think that the good of this continence is not necessary for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, but for the sake of the present world: in that, forsooth, married persons are strained different ways by earthly cares more and more straitened, from which trouble virgins and continent persons are free: as though on this account only it were better not to be married, that the straits of this present time may be escaped, not that it is of any profit unto a future life. And, that they may not seem to have put forth this vain opinion from out the vanity of their own heart, they take the Apostle to witness, where he saith, “But concerning virgins I have not command of the Lord, but I give counsel, as having obtained mercy from God to be faithful. Therefore I think that this is good on account of the present necessity, because it is good for a man so to be.” Lo, say they, where the Apostle shows “that this is good on account of the present necessity,” not on account of the future eternity. As though the Apostle would have regard for the present necessity, otherwise than as providing and consulting for the future; whereas all his dealing calls not save unto life eternal.

14. It is, therefore, the present necessity that we are to avoid, but yet such as is a hindrance to somewhat of the good things to come; by which necessity the married life is forced to have thought of the things of the world, how to please, the husband the wife or the wife the husband. Not that these separate from the kingdom of God, as there are sins, which are restrained by command, not by counsel, on this account, because it is matter of condemnation not to obey the Lord when He commands: but that, which, within the kingdom of God itself, might be more largely possessed, if there were larger thoughts how they were to please God, will assuredly be less, when as this very thing is less thought of by necessity of marriage. Therefore he says, “Concerning virgins I have not command of the Lord.” For whosoever obeys not a command, is guilty and liable for punishment. Wherefore, because it is not sin to marry a wife or to be married, (but if it were a sin, it would be forbidden by a “Command,”) on this account there is no “Command” of the Lord concerning virgins. But since, after we have shunned or had forgiveness of sins, we must approach eternal life, wherein is a certain or more excellent glory, to be assigned not unto all who shall live for ever, but unto certain there; in order to obtain which it is not enough

to have been set free from sins, unless there be vowed unto Him, Who setteth us free, something, which it is no matter of fault not to have vowed, but matter of praise to have vowed and performed; he saith, “I give counsel, as having obtained mercy from God that I should be faithful.” For neither ought I to grudge faithful counsel, who not by my own merits, but by the mercy of God, am faithful. “I think therefore that this is good, by reason of the present necessity.” This, saith he, on which I have not command of the Lord, but give counsel, that is concerning virgins, I think to be good by reason of the present necessity. For I know what the necessity of the present time, unto which marriages serve, compels, that the things of God be less thought of than is enough for the obtaining that glory, which shall not be of all, although they abide in eternal life and salvation: “For star differeth from star in brightness; so also the Resurrection of the dead. It is,” therefore, “good for a man so to be.”

15. After that the same Apostle adds, and says, “Thou art bound to a wife, seek not loosening: thou art loosed from a wife, seek not a wife.” Of these two, that, which be set first, pertains unto command, against which it is not lawful to do. For it is not lawful to put away a wife, save because of fornication, as the Lord Himself saith in the Gospel. But that, which he added, “Thou art loosed from a wife, seek not a wife,” is a sentence of counsel, not of command; therefore it is lawful to do, but it is better not to do. Lastly, he added straightway, “Both if thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and, if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not.” But, after that former saying of his, “Thou art bound to a wife, seek not loosening,” he added not, did he, “And if thou shalt have loosed, thou hast not sinned?” For he had already said above, “But to these, who are in marriage, I command, not I, but the Lord, that the wife depart not from her husband: but, if she shall have departed, that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled unto her own husband;” for it may come to pass that she depart, not through any fault of her own, but of her husband. Then he saith, “And let not the man put away his wife,” which, nevertheless, he set down of command of the Lord: nor did he then add, And, if he shall have put her away, he sinneth not. For this is a command, not to obey which is sin: not a counsel, which if you shall be unwilling to use, you will obtain less good, not do any ill. On this account, after he had said, “Thou art loosed from a

wife, seek not a wife;” because he was not giving command, in order that there be not evil done, but was giving counsel, in order that there be done what is better: straightway he added, “Both, if thou shall have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and, if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not.”

16. Yet he added, “But such shall have tribulation of the flesh, but I spare you:” in this manner exhorting unto virginity, and continual continence, so as some little to alarm also from marriage, with all modesty, not as from a matter evil and unlawful, but as from one burdensome and troublesome. For it is one thing to incur dishonor of the flesh, and another to have tribulation of the flesh: the one is matter of crime to do, the other of labor to suffer, which for the most part men refuse not even for the most honorable duties. But for the having of marriage, now at this time, wherein there is no service done unto Christ about to come through descent of flesh by the begetting of the family itself, to take upon one to bear that tribulation of the flesh, which the Apostle foretells to such as shall be married, would be extremely foolish, did not incontinent persons fear, lest, through the temptation of Satan, they should fall into damnable sins. But whereas he says that he spares them, who he saith will have tribulation of the flesh, there suggests itself to me in the mean while no sounder interpretation, than that he was unwilling to open, and unfold in words, this self-same tribulation of the flesh which he fore-announced to those who choose marriage, in suspicions of jealousy of married life, in the begetting and nurture of children, in fears and sorrows of childlessness. For how very few, after they have bound themselves with the bonds of marriage, are not drawn and driven to and fro by these feelings? And this we ought not to exaggerate, lest we spare not the very persons, who the Apostle thought were to be spared.

17. Only by this, which I have briefly set down, the reader ought to be set on his guard against those, who, in this that is written, “but such shall have tribulation of the flesh but I spare you,” falsely charge marriage, as indirectly condemned by this sentence; as though he were unwilling to utter the condemnation itself, when he saith, “But I spare you;” so that, forsooth, when he spares them, he spared not his own soul, as saying falsely, “And, if thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin shall have

been married, she sinneth not.” And this, whoso believe or would have believed concerning holy Scripture, they, as it were prepare for themselves a way for liberty of lying, or for defense of their own perverse opinion, in whatever case they hold other sentiments than what sound doctrine demands. For if there shall be alleged any plain statement from the divine books, whereby to refute their errors, this they have at hand as a shield, whereby defending themselves as it were against the truth, they lay themselves bare to be wounded by the devil: to say that the author of the book did not speak the truth in this instance, at one time in order to spare the weak, at another in order to alarm despisers: just as a case shall come to hand, wherein to defend their own perverse opinion: and thus, whilst they had rather defend than amend their own opinions, they essay to break the authority of holy Scripture, whereby alone all proud and hard necks are broken.

18. Wherefore I admonish both men and women who follow after perpetual continence and holy virginity, that they so set their own good before marriage, as that they judge not marriage an evil: and that they understand that it was in no way of deceit, but of plain truth that it was said by the Apostle, “Whoso gives in marriage does well; and whoso gives not in marriage, does better; and, if thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and, if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not;” and a little after, “But she wilt be more blessed, if she shall have continued so, according to my judgment.” And, that the judgment should not be thought human, he adds, “But I think I also have the Spirit of God.” This is the doctrine of the Lord, this of the Apostles, this true, this sound, so to choose greater gifts, as that the lesser be not condemned. The truth of God, in the Scripture of God, is better than virginity of man in the mind or flesh of any. Let what is chaste be so loved, as that what is true be not denied. For what evil thought may they not have even concerning their own flesh, who believe that the tongue of the Apostle, in that very place, wherein he was commending virginity of body, was not virgin from corruption of lying. In the first place, therefore, and chiefly, let such as choose the good of virginity, hold most firmly that the holy Scriptures have in nothing spoken lies; and, thus, that that also is true which is said, “And if thou shall have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and, if a virgin shall have been married,

she sinneth not.” And let them not think that the so great good of virgin chastity is made less, if marriage shall not be an evil. Yea rather, let her hence feel confident, rather, that there is prepared for her a palm of greater glory, who feared not to be condemned, in case she were married, but desired to receive a more honorable crown, in that she was not married. Whoso therefore shall be willing to abide without marriage, let them not flee from marriage as a pitfall of sin; but let them surmount it as a hill of the lesser good, in order that they may rest in the mountain of the greater, continence. It is on this condition, forsooth, that this hill is dwelt on; that one leave it not when he will. For, “a woman is bound, so long as her husband liveth.” However unto widowed continence one ascends from it as from a step: but for the sake of virgin continence, one must either turn aside from it by not consenting to suitors, or overleap it by anticipating suitors.

19. But lest any should think that of two works, the good and the better, the rewards will be equal, on this account it was necessary to treat against those, who have so interpreted that saying of the Apostle, “But I think that this is good by reason of the present necessity,” as to say that virginity is of use not in order to the kingdom of heaven, but in order to this present time: as though in that eternal life, they, who had chosen this better part, would have nothing more than the rest of men. And in this discussion when we came to that saying of the same Apostle, “But such shall have tribulation of the flesh, but I spare you;” we fell in with other disputants, who so far from making marriage equal to perpetual virginity, altogether condemned it. For whereas both are errors, either to equal marriage to holy virginity, or to condemn it: by fleeing from one another to excess, these two errors come into open collision, in that they have been unwilling to hold the mean of truth: whereby, both by sure reason and authority of holy Scriptures, we both discover that marriage is not a sin, and yet equal it not to the good either of virginal or even of widowed chastity. Some forsooth by aiming at virginity, have thought marriage hateful even as adultery: but others, by defending marriage, would have the excellence of perpetual continence to deserve nothing more than married chastity; as though either the good of Susanna be the lowering of Mary: or the greater good of Mary ought to be the condemnation of Susanna.

20. Far be it, therefore, that the Apostle so said, unto such as are married or are about to marry, “But I spare you,” as if he were unwilling to say what punishment is due to the married in another life. Far be it that she, whom Daniel set free from temporal judgment, be cast by Paul into hell! Far be it that her husband’s bed be unto her punishment before the judgment seat of Christ, keeping faith to which she chose, under false charge of adultery, to meet either danger, or death! To what effect that speech, “It is better for me to fall into your hands, than to sin in the sight of God:” if God had been about, not to set her free because she kept married chastity, but to condemn her because she had married? And now so often as married chastity is by truth of holy Scripture justified against such as bring calumnies and charges against marriage, so often is Susanna by the Holy Spirit defended against false witnesses, so often is she set free from a false charge, and with much greater ado. For then against one married woman, now against all; then of hidden and untrue adultery, now of true and open marriage, an accusation is laid. Then one woman, upon what the unjust elders said, now all husbands and wives, upon what the Apostle would not say, are accused. It was, forsooth, your condemnation, say they, that he was silent on, when he said, “But I spare you.” Who (saith) this? Surely he, who had said above; “And, if thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and, if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not.” Why, therefore, wherein he hath been silent through modesty, suspect ye a charge against marriage; and wherein he hath spoken openly, recognize ye not a defense of marriage? What, doth he condemn by his silence them whom he acquitted by his words? Is it not now a milder charge, to charge Susanna, not with marriage, but with adultery itself, than to charge the doctrine of the Apostle with falsehood? What in so great peril could we do, were it not as sure and plain that chaste marriage ought not to be condemned, as it is sure and plain that holy Scripture cannot lie?

21. Here some one will say, What has this to do with holy virginity, or perpetual continence, the setting forth of which was undertaken in this discourse? To whom I make answer in the first place, what I mentioned above, that the glory of that greater good is greater from the fact that, in order to obtain it, the good of married life is surmounted, not the sin of marriage shunned. Otherwise it would be enough for perpetual continence,

not to be specially praised, but only not to be blamed: if it were maintained on this account, because it was a crime to wed. In the next place, because it is not by human judgment, but by authority of Divine Scripture, that men must be exhorted unto so excellent a gift, we must plead not in a common-place manner, or merely by the way, that divine Scripture itself seem not to any one in any matter to have lied. For they discourage rather than exhort holy virgins, who compel them to continue so by passing sentence on marriage. For whence can they feel sure that that is true, which is written, "And he, who gives her not in marriage, does better:" if they think that false, which yet is written close above, "Both he, who gives his virgin, does well?" But, if they shall without all doubt have believed Scripture speaking of the good of marriage, confirmed by the same most true authority of the divine oracle, they will hasten beyond unto their own better part with glowing and confident eagerness. Wherefore we have already spoken enough for the business which we have taken in hand, and, so far as we could, have shown, that neither that saying of the Apostle, "But I think that this is good by reason of the present necessity," is so to be understood, as though in this life holy virgins are better than faithful women married, but are equal in the kingdom of heaven, and in a future life: nor that other, where he saith of such as wed, "But such shall have tribulation of the flesh, but I spare you;" is to be so understood, as though he chose rather to be silent on, than to speak of, the sin and condemnation of marriage. Forsooth two errors, contrary the one to the other, have, through not understanding them, taken hold of each one of these two sentences. For that concerning the present necessity they interpret in their own favor, who contend to equal such as wed to such as wed not: but this, where it is said, "But I spare you," they who presume to condemn such as wed. But we, according to the faith and sound doctrine of holy Scriptures, both say that marriage is no sin, and yet set its good not only below virginal, but also below widowed continence; and say that the present necessity of married persons is an hindrance to their desert, not indeed unto life eternal, but unto an excellent glory and honor, which is reserved for perpetual continence: and that at this time marriage is not expedient save for such as contain not; and that on the tribulation of the flesh, which cometh from the affection of the flesh, without which marriages of incontinent persons cannot be, the Apostle neither wished to be silent, as forewarning what was true, nor to unfold more fully, as sparing man's weakness.

22. And now by plainest witnesses of divine Scriptures, such as according to the small measure of our memory we shall be able to remember, let it more clearly appear, that, not on account of the present life of this world, but on account of that future life which is promised in the kingdom of heaven, we are to choose perpetual continence. But who but must observe this in that which the same Apostle says a little after, "Whoso is without a wife has thought of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord: but whoso is joined in marriage has thought of the things of the world, how to please his wife. And a woman unmarried and a virgin is divided; she that is unmarried is careful about the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit: but she that is married is careful about the things of the world, how to please her husband." Certainly he saith not, hath thought of the things of a state without care in this world, to pass her time without weightier troubles; nor doth he say that a woman unmarried and a virgin is divided, that is, distinguished, and separated from her who is married, for this end, that the unmarried woman be without care in this life, in order to avoid temporal troubles, which the married woman is not free from: but, "She hath thought," saith he, "of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord; and is careful about the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit." Unless to such a degree, perchance, each be foolishly contentious, as to essay to assert, that it is not on account of the kingdom of heaven, but on account of this present world, that we wish to "please the Lord," or that it is on account of this present life, not on account of life eternal, that they are "holy both in body and spirit." To believe this, what else is it, than to be more miserable than all men? For so the Apostle saith, "If in this life only we are hoping in Christ, we are more miserable than all men." What? is he who breaks his bread to the hungry, if he do it only on account of this life, a fool; and shall he be prudent, who chastens his own body even unto continence, whereby he hath no intercourse even in marriage, if it shall profit him nought in the kingdom of heaven?

23. Lastly, let us hear the Lord Himself delivering most plain judgment on this matter. For, upon His speaking after a divine and fearful manner

concerning husband and wife not separating, save on account of fornication, His disciples said to Him, “If the case be such with a wife, it is not good to marry.” To whom He saith, “Not all receive this saying. For there are eunuchs who were so born: but there are others who were made by men: and there are eunuchs, who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven: whoso can receive, let him receive.” What could be said more true, what more clear? Christ saith, the Truth saith, the Power and Wisdom of God saith, that they, who of pious purpose have contained from marrying a wife, make themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven: and against this, human vanity with impious rashness contends, that they, who do so, shun only the present necessity of the troubles of married life, but in the kingdom of heaven have no more than others.

24. But concerning what eunuchs speaketh God by the prophet Isaiah, unto whom He saith that He will give in His house and in His wall a place by name, much better than of sons and daughters, save concerning these, who make themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven? For for these, whose bodily organ is without strength, so that they cannot beget, (such as are the eunuchs of rich men and of kings,) it is surely enough, when they become Christians, and keep the commands of God, yet have this purpose, that, if they could, they would have wives, to be made equal to the rest of the faithful in the house of God, who are married, who bring up in the fear of God a family which they have lawfully and chastely gotten, teaching their sons to set their hope on God; but not to receive a better place than of sons and daughters. For it is not of virtue of the soul, but of necessity of the flesh, that they marry not wives. Let who will contend that the Prophet foretold this of those eunuchs who have suffered mutilation of body; that even also helps the cause which we have undertaken. For God hath not preferred these eunuchs to such as have no place in His house, but assuredly to those who keep the desert of married life in begetting sons. For, when He saith, “I will give unto them a place much better;” He shows that one is also given unto the married, but much inferior. Therefore, to allow that in the house of God there will be the eunuchs after the flesh spoken of above, who were not in the People of Israel: because we see that these also themselves, whereas they become not Jews, yet become Christians: and that the Prophet spake not of them, who through purpose of

continence seeking not marriage, make themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven: is any one so madly opposed to the truth as to believe that eunuchs made so in the flesh have a better place than married persons in the house of God, and to contend that persons being of pious purpose continent, chastening the body even unto contempt of marriage, making themselves eunuchs, not in the body, but in the very root of concupiscence, practising an heavenly and angelic life in an earthly mortal state, are on a level with the deserts of the married; and, being a Christian, to gainsay Christ when He praises those who have made themselves eunuchs, not for the sake of this world, but for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, affirming that this is of use for the present life, not for a future? What else remains for these, save to assert that the kingdom of heaven itself pertains unto this temporal life, wherein we now are? For why should not blind presumption advance even to this madness? And what more full of phrensy than this assertion? For, although at times the Church, even that which is at this time, is called the kingdom of heaven; certainly it is so called for this end, because it is being gathered together for a future and eternal life. Although, therefore, it have the promise of the present, and of a future life, yet in all its good works it looks not to “the things that are seen, but to what are not seen. For what are seen are temporal; but what are not seen, are eternal.”

25. Nor indeed hath the Holy Spirit failed to speak what should be of open and unshaken avail against these men, most shamelessly and madly obstinate, and should repel their assault, as of wild beasts, from His sheep-fold, by defences that may not be stormed. For, after He had said concerning eunuchs, “I will give unto them in My house and in My wall a named place, much better than of sons and daughters;” lest any too carnal should think that there was any thing temporal to be hoped for in these words, straightway He added, “An eternal name I will give unto them, nor shall it ever fail:” as though He should say, Why dost thou draw back, impious blindness? Why dost thou draw back? Why dost thou pour the clouds of thy perverseness over the clear (sky) of truth? Why in so great light of Scriptures dost thou seek after darkness from out which to lay snares? Why dost thou promise temporal advantage only to holy persons exercising continence? “An eternal name I will give unto them:” why,

where persons keep from all sexual intercourse, and also in the very fact that they abstain from these, have thought of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord, do you essay to refer them unto earthly advantage? “An eternal name I will give unto them.” Why contend you that the kingdom of heaven, for the sake of which holy eunuchs have made themselves eunuchs, is to be understood in this life only? “An eternal name I will give unto them.” And if haply in this place you endeavor to take the word itself eternal in the sense of lasting for a long time, I add, I heap up, I tread in, “nor shall it ever fail.” What more seek you? What more say you? This eternal name, whatever it be, unto the eunuchs of God, which assuredly signifies a certain peculiar and excellent glory, shall not be in common with many, although set in the same kingdom, and in the same house. For on this account also, perhaps, it is called a name, that it distinguishes those, to whom it is given, from the rest.

26. What then, say they, is the meaning of that penny, which is given in payment to all alike when the work of the vineyard is ended? whether it be to those who have labored from the first hour, or to those who have labored one hour? What assuredly doth it signify, but something, which all shall have in common, such as is life eternal itself, the kingdom of heaven itself, where shall be all, whom God hath predestinated, called, justified, glorified? “For it behoveth that this corruptible put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality.” This is that penny, wages for all. Yet “star differeth from star in glory; so also the resurrection of the dead.” These are the different merits of the Saints. For, if by that penny the heaven were signified, have not all the stars in common to be in the heaven? And yet, “There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, another of the stars.” If that penny were taken for health of body, have not all the members, when we are well, health in common; and, should this health continue even unto death, is it not in all alike and equally? And yet, “God hath set the members, each one of them, in the body, as He would;” that neither the whole be an eye, nor the whole hearing, nor the whole smelling: and, whatever else there is, it hath its own property, although it have health equally with all. Thus because life eternal itself shall be alike to all, an equal penny was assigned to all; but, because in that life eternal itself the lights of merits shall shine with a distinction, there are “many mansions” in

the house of the Father: and, by this means, in the penny not unlike, one lives not longer than another; but in the many mansions, one is honored with greater brightness than another.

27. Therefore go on, Saints of God, boys and girls, males and females, unmarried men, and women; go on and persevere unto the end. Praise more sweetly the Lord, Whom ye think on more richly: hope more happily in Him, Whom ye serve more instantly: love more ardently Him, whom ye please more attentively. With loins girded, and lamps burning, wait for the Lord, when He cometh from the marriage. Ye shall bring unto the marriage of the Lamb a new song, which ye shall sing on your harps. Not surely such as the whole earth singeth, unto which it is said, "Sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, the whole earth" : but such as no one shall be able to utter but you. For thus there saw you in the Apocalypse a certain one beloved above others by the Lamb, who had been wont to lie on His breast, and who used to drink in, and burst forth, the Word of God above wonders of heaven. He saw you twelve times twelve thousand of holy harpers, of undefiled virginity in body, of inviolate truth in heart; and he wrote of you, that ye follow the Lamb whithersoever He shall go. Where think we that This Lamb goeth, where no one either dares or is able to follow save you? Where think we that He goeth? Into what glades and meadows? Where, I think, the grass are joys; not vain joys of this world, lying madnesses; nor joys such as shall be in the kingdom of God itself, for the rest that are not virgins; but distinct from the portion of joys of all the rest. Joy of the virgins of Christ, of Christ, in Christ, with Christ, after Christ, through Christ, for Christ. The joys peculiar to the virgins of Christ, are not the same as of such as are not virgins, although of Christ. For there are to different persons different joys, but to none such. Go (enter) into these, follow the Lamb, because the Flesh of the Lamb also is assuredly virgin. For this He retained in Himself when grown up, which He took not away from His Mother by His conception and birth. Follow Him, as ye deserve, in virginity of heart and flesh, wheresoever He shall have gone. For what is it to follow, but to imitate? Because "Christ hath suffered for us," leaving us an example, as saith the Apostle Peter, "that we should follow His steps." Him each one follows in that, wherein he imitates Him: not so far forth as He is the only Son of God, by Whom all things were made; but so far forth as, the Son of

Man, He set forth in Himself, what behoved for us to imitate. And many things in Him are set forth for all to imitate: but virginity of the flesh not for all; for they have not what to do in order to be virgins, in whom it hath been already brought to pass that they be not virgins.

28. Therefore let the rest of the faithful, who have lost virginity, follow the Lamb, not whithersoever He shall have gone, but so far as ever they shall have been able. But they are able every where, save when He walks in the grace of virginity. “Blessed are the poor in spirit;” imitate Him, Who, whereas “He was rich, was made poor for your sakes.” “Blessed are the meek;” imitate Him, Who said, “Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.” “Blessed are they that mourn;” imitate Him, Who “wept over” Jerusalem. “Blessed are they, who hunger and thirst after righteousness;” imitate Him, Who said, “My meat is to do the will of Him Who sent Me.” “Blessed are the merciful;” imitate Him, Who came to the help of him who was wounded by robbers, and who lay in the way half-dead and despaired of. “Blessed are the pure in heart;” imitate Him, “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.” “Blessed are the peace-makers;” imitate Him, Who said on behalf of His persecutors, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” “Blessed are they, who suffer persecution for righteousness sake;” imitate Him, Who “suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye follow His steps.” These things, whoso imitate, in these they follow the Lamb. But surely even married persons may go in those steps, although not setting their foot perfectly in the same print, yet walking in the same paths.

29. But, lo, That Lamb goeth by a Virgin road, how shall they go after Him, who have lost what there is no way for them to recover? Do ye, therefore, do ye go after Him, His virgins; do ye thither also go after Him, in that on this one account whithersoever He shall have gone, ye follow Him: for unto any other gift whatsoever of holiness, whereby to follow Him, we can exhort married persons, save this which they have lost beyond power of recovery. Do ye, therefore, follow Him, by holding with perseverance what ye have vowed with ardor. Go when ye can, that the good of virginity perish not from you, unto which ye can do nothing, in order that it may return. The rest of the multitude of the faithful will see you, which cannot unto this

follow the Lamb; it will see you, it will not envy you: and by rejoicing together with you, what it hath not in itself, it will have in you. For that new song also, which is your own, it will not be able to utter; but it will not be unable to hear, and to be delighted with your so excellent good: but ye, who shall both utter and hear, in that what ye shall say, this ye shall hear of yourselves, will exult with greater happiness, and reign with greater joy. But they will have no sorrow on account of your greater joy, to whom this shall be wanting. Forsooth That Lamb, Whom ye shall follow whithersoever He shall have gone, will not desert those who cannot follow Him, where you can. Almighty is the Lamb, of Whom we speak. He both will go before you, and will not depart from them, when God shall be all in all. And they, who shall have less, shall not turn away in dislike from you: for, where there is no envying, difference exists with concord. Take to you, then, have trust, be strong, continue, ye who vow and pay unto the Lord your God vows of perpetual continence, not for the sake of this present world, but for the sake of the kingdom of Heaven.

30. Ye also who have not yet made this vow, who are able to receive it, receive it. Run with perseverance, that ye may obtain. Take ye each his sacrifices, and enter ye into the courts of the Lord, not of necessity, having power over your own will. For not as, “Thou shall not commit adultery, Thou shall not kill,” can it so be said, Thou shalt not wed. The former are demanded, the latter are offered. If the latter are done, they are praised: unless the former are done, they are condemned. In the former the Lord commands us what is due; but in the latter, if ye shall have spent any thing more, on His return He will repay you. Think of (whatever that be) within His wall “a place named, much better than of sons and of daughters.” Think of “an eternal name” there. Who unfolds of what kind that name shall be? Yet, whatever it shall be, it shall be eternal. By believing and hoping and loving this, ye have been able, not to shun marriage, as forbidden, but to fly past it, as allowed.

31. Whence the greatness of this service, unto the undertaking of which we have according to our strength exhorted, the more excellent and divine it is, the more doth it warn our anxiety, to say something not only concerning most glorious chastity, but also concerning safest humility. When then such

as make profession of perpetual chastity, comparing themselves with married persons, shall have discovered, that, according to the Scriptures, the others are below both in work and wages, both in vow and reward, let what is written straightway come into their mind, “By how much thou art great, by so much humble thyself in all things: and thou shalt find favor before God.” The measure of humility for each hath been given from the measure of his greatness itself: unto which pride is full of danger, which layeth the greater wait against persons the greater they be. On this followeth envying, as a daughter in her train; forsooth pride straightway giveth birth to her, nor is she ever without such a daughter and companion. By which two evils, that is, pride and envying, is the devil (a devil). Therefore it is against pride, the mother of envying, that the whole Christian discipline chiefly wars. For this teaches humility, whereby both to gain and to keep charity; of which after that it had been said, “Charity envieth not;” as though we were asking the reason, how it comes to pass that it envieth not, he straightway added, “is not puffed up;” as though he should say, on this account it hath not envying, in that neither hath it pride. Therefore the Teacher of humility, Christ, first “emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, made obedient even unto death, even the death of the Cross.” But His teaching itself, how carefully it suggests humility, and how earnest and instant it is in commanding this, who can easily unfold, and bring together all witnesses for proof of this matter? This let him essay to do, or do, whosoever shall wish to write a separate treatise on humility; but of this present work the end proposed is different, and it hath been undertaken on a matter so great, as that it hath chiefly to guard against pride.

32. Wherefore a few witnesses, which the Lord deigns to suggest to my mind, I proceed to mention, from out the teaching of Christ concerning humility, such as perhaps may be enough for my purpose. His discourse, the first which He delivered to His disciples at greater length, began from this. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.” And these without all controversy we take to be humble. The faith of that Centurion He on this account chiefly praised, and said that He had not found in Israel so great faith, because he believed with so great humility as to say, “I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof.” Whence

also Matthew for no other reason said that he “came” unto Jesus, (whereas Luke most plainly signifies that he came not unto Him himself, but sent his friends,) save that by his most faithful humility he himself came unto Him more than they whom he sent. Whence also is that of the Prophet, “The Lord is very high, and hath respect unto things that are lowly: but what are very high He noteth afar off;” assuredly as not coming unto Him. Whence also He saith to that woman of Canaan, “O woman, great is thy faith; be it done unto thee as thou wilt;” whom above He had called a dog, and had made answer that the bread of the sons was not to be cast to her. And this she taking with humility had said, “Even so, Lord; for the dogs also eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.” And thus what by continual crying she obtained not, by humble confession she earned. Hence also those two are set forth praying in the Temple, the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican, for the sake of those who seem to themselves just and despise the rest of men, and the confession of sins is set before the reckoning up of merits. And assuredly the Pharisee was rendering thanks unto God by reason of those things wherein he was greatly self-satisfied. “I render thanks to Thee,” saith he, “that I am not even as the rest of men, unjust, extortioners, adulterers, even as also this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all things whatsoever I possess. But the Publican was standing afar off, not daring to lift up his eyes to Heaven, but beating his breast, saying, God be merciful unto me a sinner.” But there follows the divine judgment, “Verily I say unto you, the Publican went down from the Temple justified more than that Pharisee.” Then the cause is shown, why this is just; “Forasmuch as he who exalteth himself shall be humbled, and whoso humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Therefore it may come to pass, that each one both shun real evils, and reflect on real goods in himself, and render thanks for these unto “the Father of lights, from Whom cometh down every best gift, and every perfect gift,” and yet be rejected by reason of the sin of haughtiness, if through pride, even in his thought alone, which is before God, he insult other sinners, and specially when confessing their sins in prayer, unto whom is due not upbraiding with arrogance, but pity without despair. What is it that, when His disciples were questioning among themselves, who of them should be greater, He set a little child before their eyes, saying, “Unless ye shall be as this child, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven?” Did He not chiefly commend humility, and set in it the desert of greatness? Or when unto the sons of Zebedee desiring to be at His side in lofty seats He so made answer, as that they should rather think of having to drink the Cup of His Passion, wherein He humbled Himself even unto death, even the death of the Cross, than with proud desire demand to be preferred to the rest; what did He show, save, that He would be a bestower of exaltation upon them, who should first follow Him as a teacher of humility? And now, in that, when about to go forth unto His Passion, He washed the feet of His disciples, and most openly taught them to do for their fellow-disciples and fellow-servants this, which He their Lord and Master had done for them; how greatly did He commend humility? And in order to commend this He chose also that time, wherein they were looking on Him, as immediately about to die, with great longing; assuredly about to retain in their memory this especially, which their Master, Whom they were to imitate, had pointed out to them as the last thing. But He did this at that time, which surely He could have done on other days also before, wherein He had been conversant with them; at which time if it were done, this same would indeed be delivered, but certainly would not be so received.

33. Whereas, then, all Christians have to guard humility, forasmuch as it is from Christ that they are called Christians, Whose Gospel no one considers with care, but that he discovers Him to be a Teacher of humility; specially is it becoming that they be followers and keepers of this virtue, who excel the rest of men in any great good, in order that they may have a great care of that, which I set down in the beginning, “By how much thou art great, by so much humble thyself in all things, and thou shall find grace before God.” Wherefore, because perpetual Continence and specially virginity, is a great good in the Saints of God, they must with all watchfulness beware, that it be not corrupted with pride.

34. Paul the Apostle censures evil unmarried women, curious and prating, and says that this fault comes of idleness. “But at the same time,” saith he, “being idle they learn to go about to houses: but not only idle, but curious also and prating, speaking what they ought not.” Of these he had said above, “But younger widows avoid; for when they have past their time in delights, they wish to wed in Christ; having condemnation, in that they have

made void their first faith:” that is, have not continued in that, which they had vowed at the first. And yet he saith not, they marry, but “they wish to marry.” For many of them are recalled from marrying, not by love of a noble purpose, but by fear of open shame, which also itself comes of pride, whereby persons fear to displease men more than God. These, therefore, who wish to marry, and do not marry on this account, because they cannot with impunity, who would do better to marry than to be burned, that is, than to be laid waste in their very conscience by the hidden flame of lust, who repent of their profession, and who feel their confession irksome; unless they correct and set right their heart, and by the fear of God again overcome their lust, must be accounted among the dead; whether they pass their time in delights, whence the Apostle says, “But she who passes her time in delights, living, is dead;” or whether in labors and fastings, which are useless where there is no correction of the heart, and serve rather for display than amendment. I do not, for my part, impose on such a great regard for humility, in whom pride itself is confounded, and bloodstained by wound of conscience. Nor on such as are drunken, or covetous, or who are lying in any other kind whatever of damnable disease, at the same time that they have profession of bodily continence, and through perverse manners are at variance with their own name, do I impose this great anxiety about pious humility: unless haply in these evils they shall dare even to make a display of themselves, unto whom it is not enough, that the punishments of these are deferred. Nor am I treating of these, in whom there is a certain aim of pleasing, either by more elegant dress than the necessity of so great profession demands, or by remarkable manner of binding the head, whether by bosses of hair swelling forth, or by coverings so yielding, that the fine network below appears: unto these we must give precepts, not as yet concerning humility, but concerning chastity itself, or virgin modesty. Give me one who makes profession of perpetual continence, and who is free from these, and all such faults and spots of conduct; for this one I fear pride, for this so great good I am in alarm from the swelling of arrogance. The more there is in any one on account of which to be self-pleased, the more I fear, lest, by pleasing self, he please not Him, Who “resisteth the proud, but unto the humble giveth grace.”

35. Certainly we are to contemplate in Christ Himself, the chief instruction and pattern of virginal purity. What further precept then concerning humility shall I give to the continent, than what He saith to all, “Learn of Me, in that I am meek and lowly of heart?” when He had made mention above of His greatness, and, wishing to show this very thing, how great He was, and how little He had been made for our sakes, saith, “I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, in that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto little children. Even so, O Father, in that so it hath been pleasing before Thee. All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; and no one knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son shall have willed to reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, in that I am meek and lowly of heart.” He, He, unto Whom the Father hath delivered all things, and Whom no one knoweth but the Father, and Who alone, (and he, unto whom He shall have willed to reveal Him), knoweth the Father, saith not, “Learn of Me” to make the world, or to raise the dead, but, “in that I am meek and lowly of heart.” O saving teaching? O Teacher and Lord of mortals, unto whom death was pledged and passed on in the cup of pride, He would not teach what Himself was not, He would not bid what Himself did not. I see Thee, O good Jesu, with the eyes of faith, which Thou hast opened for me, as in an assembly of the human race, crying out and saying, “Come unto Me, and learn of Me.” What, I beseech Thee, through Whom all things were made, O Son of God, and the Same Who was made among all things, O Son of Man: to learn what of Thee, come we to Thee? “For that I am meek,” saith He, “and lowly of heart.” Is it to this that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden in Thee are brought, that we learn this of Thee as a great thing, that Thou art “meek and lowly of heart?” Is it so great a thing to be little, that it could not at all be learned unless it were brought to pass by Thee, Who art so great? So indeed it is. For by no other way is there found out rest for the soul, save when the unquiet swelling hath been dispersed, whereby it was great unto itself, when it was not sound unto Thee.

36. Let them hear Thee, and let them come to Thee, and let them learn of Thee to be meek and lowly, who seek Thy Mercy and Truth, by living unto

Thee, unto Thee, not unto themselves. Let him hear this, laboring and laden, who is weighed down by his burthen, so as not to dare to lift up his eyes to heaven, that sinner beating his breast, and drawing near from afar. Let him hear, the centurion, not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under his roof. Let him hear, Zaccheus, chief of publicans, restoring fourfold the gains of damnable sins. Let her hear, the woman in the city a sinner, by so much the more full of tears at Thy feet, the more alien she had been from Thy steps. Let them hear, the harlots and publicans, who enter into the kingdom of heaven before the Scribes and Pharisees. Let them hear, every kind of such ones, feastings with whom were cast in Thy teeth as a charge, forsooth, as though by whole persons who sought not a physician, whereas Thou camest not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. All these, when they are converted unto Thee, easily grow meek, and are humbled before Thee, mindful of their own most unrighteous life, and of Thy most indulgent mercy, in that, "where sin hath abounded, grace hath abounded more."

37. But regard the troops of virgins, holy boys and girls: this kind hath been trained up in Thy Church: there for Thee it hath been budding from its mother's breasts; for Thy Name it hath loosed its tongue to speak, Thy Name, as through the milk of its infancy, it hath had poured in and hath sucked, no one of this number can say, "I, who before was a blasphemer, and persecutor, and injurious, but I obtained mercy, in that I did in being ignorant, in unbelief." Yea more, that, which Thou commandedst not, but only didst set forth, for such as would, to seize, saying, "Whoso can receive, let him receive;" they have seized, they have vowed, and, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, not for that Thou threatenedst, but for that Thou exhortedst, they have made themselves eunuchs. To these cry out, let these hear Thee, in that Thou art "meek and lowly of heart." Let these, by how much they are great, by so much humble themselves in all things, that they may find grace before Thee. They are just: but they are not, are they, such as Thou, justifying the ungodly? They are chaste: but them in sins their mothers nurtured in their wombs. They are holy, but Thou art also Holy of Holies. They are virgins, but they are not also born of virgins. They are wholly chaste both in spirit and in flesh: but they are not the Word made flesh. And yet let them learn, not from those unto whom Thou forgivest

sins, but from Thee Thyself, The Lamb of God Who takest away the sins of the world, in that Thou art “meek and lowly of heart.”

38. I send thee not, soul that art religiously chaste, that hast not given the reins to fleshly appetite even so far as to allowed marriage, that hast not indulged thy body about to depart even to the begetting one to succeed thee, that hast sustained aloft thy earthly members, afloat to accustom them to heaven; I send thee not, in order that thou mayest learn humility, unto publicans and sinners, who yet enter into the kingdom of heaven before the proud: I send thee not to these: for they, who have been set free from the gulf of uncleanness, are unworthy that undefiled virginity be sent to them to take pattern from. I send thee unto the King of Heaven, unto Him, by Whom men were created, and Who was created among men for the sake of men; unto Him, Who is fair of beauty above the sons of men, and despised by the sons of men on behalf of the sons of men: unto Him, Who, ruling the immortal angels, disdained not to do service unto mortals. Him, at any rate, not unrighteousness, but charity, made humble; “Charity, which rivalleth not, is not puffed up, seeketh not her own;” forasmuch as “Christ also pleased not Himself, but, as it is written of Him, The reproaches of such as reproached Thee have fallen upon Me.” Go then, come unto Him, and learn, in that He is “meek and lowly of heart.” Thou shall not go unto him, who dared not by reason of the burden of unrighteousness to lift up his eyes to heaven, but unto Him, Who by the weight of charity came down from heaven. Thou shalt not go unto her, who watered with tears the feet of her Lord, seeking forgiveness of heavy sins; but thou shalt go unto Him, Who, granting forgiveness of all sins, washed the feet of His own disciples. I know the dignity of thy virginity; I propose not to thee to imitate the Publican humbly accusing his own faults; but I fear for the Pharisee proudly boasting of his own merits. I say not, Be thou such as she, of whom it was said, “There are forgiven unto her many sins, in that she hath loved much;” but I fear lest, as thinking that thou hast little forgiven to thee, thou love little.

39. I fear, I say, greatly for thee, lest, when thou boastest that thou wilt follow the Lamb wheresoever He shall have gone, thou be unable by reason of swelling pride to follow Him through strait ways. It is good for thee, O

virgin soul, that thus, as thou art a virgin, thus altogether keeping in thy heart that thou hast been born again, keeping in thy flesh that thou hast been born, thou yet conceive of the fear of the Lord, and give birth to the spirit of salvation. “Fear,” indeed, “there is not in charity, but perfect charity,” as it is written, “casteth out fear:” but fear of men, not of God: fear of temporal evils, not of the Divine Judgment at the last. “Be not thou high-minded, but fear.” Love thou the goodness of God; fear thou His severity: neither suffers thee to be proud. For by loving you fear, lest you grievously offend One Who is loved and loves. For what more grievous offense, than that by pride thou displease Him, Who for thy sake hath been displeasing to the proud? And where ought there to be more that “chaste fear abiding for ever and ever,” than in thee, who hast no thought of the things of this world, how to please a wedded partner; but of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord? That other fear is not in charity, but this chaste fear quitteth not charity. If you love not, fear lest you perish; if you love, fear lest you displease. That fear charity casteth out, with this it runneth within. The Apostle Paul also says, “For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but we have received the spirit of adoption of sons, wherein we cry, Abba, Father.” I believe that he speaks of that fear, which had been given in the Old Testament, lest the temporal goods should be lost, which God had promised unto those not yet sons under grace, but as yet slaves under the law. There is also the fear of eternal fire, to serve God in order to avoid which is assuredly not yet of perfect charity. For the desire of the reward is one thing, the fear of punishment another. They are different sayings, “Whither shall I go away from Thy Spirit, and from Thy face whither shall I flee?” and, “One thing I have sought of the Lord, this I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord through all the days of my life, that I may consider the delight of the Lord, that I be protected in His temple:” and, “Turn not away Thy face from me:” and, “My soul longeth and fainteth unto the courts of the Lord.” Those sayings let him have had, who dared not to lift up his eyes to heaven; and she who was watering with tears His feet, in order to obtain pardon for her grievous sins; but these do thou have, who art careful about the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit. With those sayings there companies fear which hath torment, which perfect charity casteth forth; but with these sayings there companies chaste fear of the Lord, that abideth for ever and ever. And to both kinds it must be said, “Be not thou high-minded, but fear;” that man neither of defense of his sins, nor of presumption of righteousness set himself up. For Paul also himself, who saith, “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;” yet, fear being a companion of charity, saith, “With fear and much trembling was I towards you:” and that saying, which I have mentioned, that the engrafted wild olive tree be not proud against the broken branches of the olive tree, himself made use of, saying, “Be not thou high-minded, but fear;” himself admonishing all the members of Christ in general, saith, “With fear and trembling work out your own salvation; for it is God Who worketh in you both to will and to do, according to His good pleasure;” that it seem not to pertain unto the Old Testament what is written, “Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling.”

40. And what members of the holy body, which is the Church, ought more to take care, that upon them the holy Spirit may rest, than such as profess virginal holiness? But how doth He rest, where He findeth not His own place? what else than an humbled heart, to fill, not to leap back from; to raise up, not to weigh down? whereas it hath been most plainly said, “On whom shall rest My Spirit? On him that is humble and quiet, and trembles at My words.” Already thou livest righteously, already thou livest piously, thou livest chastely, holily, with virginal purity; as yet, however, thou livest here, and art thou not humbled at hearing, “What, is not human life upon earth a trial?” Doth it not drive thee back from over-confident arrogance, “Woe unto the world because of offenses?” Dost thou not tremble, lest thou be accounted among the many, whose “love waxeth cold, because that iniquity abounds?” Dost thou not smite thy breast, when thou hearest, “Wherefore, whoso thinketh that he standeth, let him see to it lest he fall?” Amid these divine warnings and human dangers, do we yet find it so hard to persuade holy virgins to humility?

41. Or are we indeed to believe that it is for any other reason, that God suffers to be mixed up with the number of your profession, many, both men and women, about to fall, than that by the fall of these your fear may be increased, whereby to repress pride; which God so hates, as that against this one thing The Highest humbled Himself? Unless haply, in truth, thou shalt

therefore fear less, and be more puffed up, so as to love little Him, Who hath loved thee so much, as to give up Himself for thee, because He hath forgiven thee little, living, forsooth from childhood, religiously, piously, with pious chastity, with inviolate virginity. As though in truth you ought not to love with much greater glow of affection Him, Who, whatsoever things He hath forgiven unto sinners upon their being turned to Him, suffered you not to fall into them. Or indeed that Pharisee, who therefore loved little, because he thought that little was forgiven him, was it for any other reason that he was blinded by this error, than because being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish his own, he had not been made subject unto the righteousness of God? But you, an elect race, and among the elect more elect, virgin choirs that follow the Lamb, even you "by grace have been saved through faith; and this not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God: not of works, lest haply any be elated. For we are His workmanship, created in Jesus Christ in good works, which God hath prepared, that in them we may walk." What therefore, by how much the more ye are adorned by His gifts, shall ye by so much the less love Him? May He Himself turn away so dreadful madness! Wherefore forasmuch as the Truth has spoken the truth, that he, unto whom little is forgiven, loveth little; do ye, in order that ye may love with full glow of affection Him, Whom ye are free to love, being loosened from ties of marriage, account as altogether forgiven unto you, whatever of evil, by His governance, ye have not committed. For "your eyes ever unto the Lord, forasmuch as He shall pluck out of the net your feet," and, "Except the Lord shall have kept the city, in vain hath he watched who keepeth it." And speaking of Continence itself the Apostle says, "But I would that all men were as I myself; but each one hath his own proper gift from God; one in this way, and another in that way." Who therefore bestoweth these gifts? Who distributeth his own proper gifts unto each as He will? Forsooth God, with Whom there is not unrighteousness, and by this means with what equity He makes some in this way, and others in that way, for man to know is either impossible or altogether hard: but that with equity He maketh, it is not lawful to doubt. "What," therefore, "hast thou, which thou hast not received?" And by what perversity dost thou less love Him, of Whom thou hast received more?

42. Wherefore let this be the first thought for the putting on of humility, that God’s virgin think not that it is of herself that she is such, and not rather that this best “gift cometh down from above from the Father of Lights, with Whom is no change nor shadow of motion.” For thus she will not think that little hath been forgiven her, so as for her to love little, and, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and wishing to establish her own, not to be made subject to the righteousness of God. In which fault was that Simon who was surpassed by the woman, unto whom many sins were forgiven, because she loved much. But she will have more cautious and true thoughts, that we are so to account all sins as though forgiven, from which God keeps us that we commit them not. Witnesses are those expressions of pious prayers in holy Scriptures, whereby it is shown, that those very things, which are commanded by God, are not done save by His Gift and help, Who commands. For there is a falsehood in the asking for them, if we could do them without the help of His grace. What is there so generally and chiefly charged, as obedience whereby the Commandments of God are kept? And yet we find this wished for. “Thou,” saith he, “hast charged, that Thy commandments be greatly kept.” Then it follows, “O that my ways were directed to keep Thy righteousnesses: then shall I not be confounded, whilst I look unto all Thy commandments.” That which he had set down above that God had commanded, that he wished might of himself be fulfilled. This is done assuredly, that there be not sin; but, if there hath been sin, the command is that one repent; lest by defense and excuse of sin he perish through pride, who hath done it, whilst he is unwilling that what he hath done perish through repentance. This also is asked of God, so that it may be understood that it is not done, save by His grant from Whom it is asked. “Set,” saith he, “O Lord, a watch to my mouth, and a door of continence around my lips: let not my heart turn away unto evil words, to make excuses in sins, with men that work unrighteousness.” If, therefore, both obedience, whereby we keep His commandments, and repentance whereby we excuse not our sins, are wished for and asked, it is plain that, when it is done, it is by His gift that it is possessed, by His help that it is fulfilled, yet more openly is it said by reason of obedience, “By the Lord the steps of a man are directed, and He shall will His way:” and of repentance the Apostle says, “if haply God may grant unto them repentance.”

43. Concerning continence also itself hath it not been most openly said, “And when I knew that no one can be continent unless God give it, this also itself was a part of wisdom, to know whose gift it was?” But perhaps continence is the gift of God, but wisdom man bestows upon himself, whereby to understand, that that gift is, not his own, but of God. Yea, “The Lord maketh wise the blind:” and, “The testimony of the Lord is faithful, it giveth wisdom unto little ones:” and, “If any one want wisdom, let him ask of God, Who giveth unto all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given to him.” But it becometh virgins to be wise, that their lamps be not extinguished. How “wise,” save “not having high thoughts, but consenting unto the lowly.” For Wisdom Itself hath said unto man, “Lo, piety is wisdom!” If therefore thou hast nothing, which thou hast not received, “Be not high-minded, but fear.” And love not thou little, as though Him by Whom little hath been forgiven to thee; but, rather, love Him much, by Whom much hath been given to thee. For if he loves, unto whom it hath been given not to repay: how much more ought he to love, unto whom it hath been given to possess. For both, whosoever continues chaste from the beginning, is ruled by Him; and whosoever is made chaste instead of unchaste, is corrected by Him; and whosoever is unchaste even unto the end, is abandoned by Him. But this He can do by secret counsel, by unrighteous He cannot: and perhaps it is for this end that it lies hid, that there may be more fear, and less pride.

44. Next let not man, now that he knoweth that by the grace of God he is what he is, fall into another snare of pride, so as by lifting up himself for the very grace of God to despise the rest. By which fault that other Pharisee both gave thanks unto God for the goods which he had, and yet vaunted himself above the Publican confessing his sins. What therefore should a virgin do, what should she think, that she vaunt not herself above those, men or women, who have not this so great gift? For she ought not to feign humility, but to set it forth: for the feigning of humility is greater pride. Wherefore Scripture wishing to show that humility ought to be true, after having said, “By how much thou art great, by so much humble thyself in all things,” added soon after, “And thou shalt find grace before God:” assuredly where one could not humble one’s self deceitfully.

45. Wherefore what shall we say? is there any thought which a virgin of God may truly have, by reason of which she dare not to set herself before a faithful woman, not only a widow, but even married? I say not a reprobate virgin; for who knows not that an obedient woman is to be set before a disobedient virgin? But where both are obedient unto the commands of God, shall she so tremble to prefer holy virginity even to chaste marriage, and continence to wedded life, the fruit an hundred-fold to go before the thirty-fold? Nay, let her not doubt to prefer this thing to that thing; yet let not this or that virgin, obeying and fearing God, dare to set herself before this or that woman, obeying and fearing God; otherwise she will not be humble, and "God resisteth the proud!" What, therefore, shall she have in her thoughts? Forsooth the hidden gifts of God, which nought save the questioning of trial makes known to each, even in himself. For, to pass over the rest, whence doth a virgin know, although careful of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord but that haply, by reason of some weakness of mind unknown to herself, she be not as yet ripe for martyrdom, whereas that woman, whom she rejoiced to set herself before, may already be able to drink the Cup of the Lord's humiliation, which He set before His disciples, to drink first, when enamored of high place? Whence, I say, doth she know but that she herself be not as yet Thecla, that other be already Crispina. Certainly unless there be present trial, there takes place no proof of this gift.

46. But this is so great, that certain understand it to be the fruit an hundred-fold. For the authority of the Church bears a very conspicuous witness, in which it is known to the faithful in what place the Martyrs, in what place the holy nuns deceased, are rehearsed at the Sacraments of the Altar. But what the meaning is of that difference of fruitfulness, let them see to it, who understand these things better than we; whether the virginal life be in fruit an hundred-fold, in sixty-fold the widowed, in thirty-fold the married; or whether the hundred-fold fruitfulness be ascribed unto martyrdom, the sixty-fold unto continence, the thirty-fold unto marriage; or whether virginity, by the addition of martyrdom, fill up the hundred-fold, but when alone be in sixty-fold, but married persons bearing thirty-fold arrive at sixty-fold, in case they shall be martyrs: or whether, what seems to me more probable, forasmuch as the gifts of Divine grace are many, and one is greater and better than another, whence the Apostle says, "But emulate ye

the better gifts;” we are to understand that they are more in number than to allow of being distributed under those different kinds. In the first place, that we set not widowed continence either as bearing no fruit, or set it but level with the desert of married charity, or equal it unto virgin glory; or think that the Crown of Martyrdom, either established in habit of mind, although proof of trial be wanting, or in actual making trial of suffering, be added unto either one of those these chastities, without any increase of fruitfulness. Next, when we set it down that many men and women so keep virginal chastity, as that yet they do not the things which the Lord saith, “If thou willest to be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast, and give unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven: and come, follow me;” and dare not unite themselves to those dwelling together, among whom no one saith that any thing is his own, but all things are unto them common; do we think that there is no addition of fruitfulness unto the virgins of God, when they do this? or that the virgins of God are without any fruit, although they do not this? Therefore there are many gifts, and some brighter and higher than others, each than each. And at times one is fruitful in fewer gifts, but better; another in lower gifts, but more. And in what manner they be either made equal one to another, or distinguished one from another, in receiving eternal honors, who of men would dare to pronounce? whereas yet it is plain both that those differences are many, and that the better are profitable not for the present time, but for eternity. But I judge that the Lord willed to make mention of three differences of fruitfulness, the rest He left to such as understand. For also another Evangelist hath made mention only of the hundred-fold: we are not, therefore, are we, to think that he either rejected, or knew not of, the other two, but rather that he left them to be understood?

47. But, as I had begun to say, whether the fruit an hundred-fold be virginity dedicated to God, or whether we are to understand that interval of fruitfulness in some other way, either such as we have made mention of, or such as we have not made mention of; yet no one, as I suppose, will have dared to prefer virginity to martyrdom, and no one will have doubted that this latter gift is hidden, if trial to test it be wanting. A virgin, therefore, hath a subject for thought, such as may be of profit to her for the keeping of humility, that she violate not that charity, which is above all gifts, without which assuredly whatever other gifts she shall have had, whether few or

many, whether great or small, she is nothing. She hath, I say, a subject for thought, that she be not puffed up, that she rival not; forsooth that she so make profession that the virginal good is much greater and better than the married good, as that yet she know not whether this or that married woman be not already able to suffer for Christ, but herself as yet unable, and she herein spared, that her weakness is not put to the question by trial. “For God,” saith the Apostle, “is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tried above what ye are able but will make with the trial a way out, that ye may be able to bear it.” Perhaps, therefore, those men or women keeping a way of married life praiseworthy in its kind, are already able, against an enemy forcing to unrighteousness, to contend even by tearing in pieces of bowels, and shedding of blood; but these men or women, continent from childhood, and making themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven, still are not as yet able to endure such, either for righteousness, or for chastity itself. For it is one thing, for truth and an holy purpose, not to consent unto one who would persuade and flatter, but another thing not to yield even to one who tortures and strikes. These lie hid in the powers and strength of souls, by trial they are unfolded, by actual essay they come forth. In order, therefore, that each be not puffed up by reason of that, which he sees clearly that he can do, let him humbly consider that he knows not that there is perchance something more excellent which he cannot do, but that some, who neither have nor profess that of which he is lawfully self-conscious, are able to do this, which he himself cannot do. Thus will be kept, not by feigned but by true humility, “In honor preventing one another,” and, “esteeming each the other higher than himself.”

48. What now shall I say concerning the very carefulness and watchfulness against sin? “Who shall boast that he hath a chaste heart? or who shall boast that he is clean from sin?” Holy virginity is indeed inviolate from the mother’s womb; but “no one,” saith he, “is clean in Thy sight, not even the infant whose life is of one day upon the earth.” There is kept also in faith inviolate a certain virginal chastity, whereby the Church is joined as a chaste virgin unto One Husband: but That One Husband hath taught, not only the faithful who are virgin in mind and body, but all Christians altogether, from spiritual even unto carnal, from Apostles even unto the last penitents, as though from the height of heaven even unto the bounds of it, to

pray, and in the prayer itself hath admonished them to say, “And forgive us our debts, even as we also forgive our debtors:” where, by this which we seek, He shews what also we should remember that we are. For neither on behalf of those debts, which for our whole past life we trust have been forgiven unto us in Baptism through His peace, hath He charged us to pray, saying, “And forgive us our debts, even as we also forgive our debtors:” otherwise this were a prayer which Catechumens rather ought to pray up to the time of Baptism; but whereas it is what baptized persons pray, rulers and people, pastors and flocks; it is sufficiently shown that in this life, the whole of which is a trial, no one ought to boast himself as though free from all sins.

49. Wherefore also the virgins of God without blame indeed, “follow the Lamb whithersoever He shall have gone,” both the cleansing of sins being perfected, and virginity being kept, which, were it lost, could not return: but, because that same Apocalypse itself, wherein such unto one such were revealed, in this also praises them, that “in their mouth there was not found a lie:” let them remember in this also to be true, that they dare not say that they have not sin. Forsooth the same John, who saw that, hath said this, “If we shall have said that we have not sin, we deceive our own selves, and the truth is not in us; but if we shall have confessed our faults, He is faithful and just, so as to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. But if we shall have said that we have not sinned, we shall make Him a liar, and His word shall not be in us.” This surely is not said unto these or those, but unto all Christians, wherein virgins also ought to recognize themselves. For thus they shall be without a lie, such as in the Apocalypse they appeared. And by this means so long as there is not as yet perfection in heavenly height, confession in lowliness maketh them without blame.

50. But, again, lest by occasion of this sentence, any one should sin with deadly security, and should allow himself to be carried away, as though his sins were soon by easy confession to be blotted out, he straightway added, “My little children, these things have I written unto you, that ye sin not; and, if one shall have sinned, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and Himself is a propitiation of our sins.” Let no one

therefore depart from sin as though about to return to it, nor bind himself as it were by compact of alliance of this kind with unrighteousness, so as to take delight rather to confess it than to shun it. But, forasmuch as even upon such as are busy and on the watch not to sin, there creep by stealth, in a certain way, from human weakness, sins, however small, however few, yet not none; these same themselves become great and grievous, in case pride shall have added to them increase and weight: but by the Priest, Whom we have in the heavens, if by pious humility they be destroyed, they are with all ease cleansed.

51. But I contend not with those, who assert that a man can in this life live without any sin: I contend not, I gainsay not. For perhaps we take measure of the great from out our own misery, and, comparing ourselves with ourselves, understand not. One thing I know, that those great ones, such as we are not, such as we have not as yet made proof of, by how much they are great, by so much humble themselves in all things, that they may find grace before God. For, let them be how great soever they will, “there is no servant greater than his Lord, nor disciple greater than his master.” And assuredly He is the Lord, Who saith, “All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father;” and He is the Master, Who saith, “Come unto Me, all ye who labor, and learn of Me;” and yet what learn we? “In that I am meek,” saith He, “and lowly of heart.”

52. Here some one will say, This is now not to write of virginity, but of humility. As though truly it were any kind of virginity, and not that which is after God, which we had undertaken to set forth. And this good, by how much I see it to be great, by so much I fear for it, lest it be lost, the thief pride. Therefore there is none that guardeth the virginal good, save God Himself Who gave it: and God is Charity. The Guardian therefore of virginity is Charity: but the place of this Guardian is humility. There forsooth He dwelleth, Who said, that on the lowly and quiet, and that trembleth at His words, His Spirit resteth. What, therefore, have I done foreign from my purpose, if wishing the good, which I have praised, to be more securely guarded, I have taken care also to prepare a place for the Guardian? For I speak with confidence, nor have I any fear lest they be angry with me, whom I admonish with care to fear for themselves together

with me. More easily do follow the Lamb, although not whithersoever He shall have gone, yet so far as they shall have had power, married persons who are humble, than virgins who are proud. For how doth one follow Him, unto Whom one wills not to approach or how doth one approach Him, unto Whom one comes not to learn, “in that I am meek and lowly of heart?” Wherefore those the Lamb leadeth following whithersoever He shall have gone, in whom first Himself shall have found where to lay His Head. For also a certain proud and crafty person had said to Him, “Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou shalt have gone;” to whom He made answer, “Foxes have dens, and fowls of heaven nests: but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His Head.” By the term of foxes He reproved wily craftiness, and by the name of birds puffed-up arrogance, wherein He found not pious humility to rest in. And by this no where at all did he follow the Lord, who had promised that he would follow Him, not unto a certain point of progress, but altogether whithersoever He should have gone.

53. Wherefore this do ye, virgins of God, this do ye: follow ye the Lamb, whithersoever He shall have gone. But first come unto Him, Whom ye are to follow, and learn, in that He is meek and lowly of heart. Come ye in lowly wise unto the Lowly, if ye love: and depart not from Him, lest ye fall. For whoso fears to depart from Him asks and says, “Let there not come to me foot of pride.” Go on in the way of loftiness with the foot of lowliness; Himself lifteth up such as follow in lowly wise, Who thought it not a trouble to come down unto such as lay low. Commit ye His gifts unto Him to keep, “guard ye your strength unto Him.” Whatever of evil through His guardianship ye commit not, account as forgiven unto you by Him: lest, thinking that you have little forgiven unto you, ye love little, and with ruinous boasting despise the publicans beating their breasts. Concealing that strength of yours which hath been tried beware, that ye be not puffed up, because ye have been able to bear something: but concerning that which hath been untried pray, that ye be not tempted above that ye are able to bear. Think that some are superior to you in secret, than whom ye are openly better. When the good things of others, haply unknown to you, are kindly believed by you, your own that are known to you are not lessened by comparison, but strengthened by love: and what haply as yet are wanting, are by so much the more easily given, by how much they are the more

humbly desired. Let such among your number as persevere, afford to you an example: but let such as fall increase your fear. Love the one that ye may imitate it; mourn over the other, that ye be not puffed up. Do not ye establish your own righteousness; submit yourselves unto God Who justifies you. Pardon the sins of others, pray for your own: future sins shun by watching, past sins blot out by confessing.

54. Lo, already ye are such, as that in the rest of your conduct also ye correspond with the virginity which ye have professed and kept. Lo, already not only do ye abstain from murders, devilish sacrifices and abominations, thefts, rapines, frauds, perjuries, drunkennesses, and all luxury and avarice, hatreds, emulations, impieties, cruelties; but even those things, which either are, or are thought, lighter, are not found nor arise among you: not bold face, not wandering eyes, not unbridled tongue, not petulant laugh, not scurrilous jest, not unbecoming mien, not swelling or loose gait; already ye render not evil for evil, nor curse for curse; already, lastly, ye fulfill that measure of love, that ye lay down your lives for your brethren. Lo, already ye are such, because also such ye ought to be. These, being added to virginity, set forth an angelic life unto men, and the ways of heaven unto the earth. But, by how much ye are great, whosoever of you are so great, “by so much humble yourselves in all things, that ye may find grace before God,” that He resist you not as proud, that He humble you not as lifting up yourselves, that He lead you not through straits as being puffed up: although anxiety be unnecessary, that, where Charity glows, humility be not wanting.

55. If, therefore, ye despise marriages of sons of men, from which to beget sons of men, love ye with your whole heart Him, Who is fair of form above the sons of men; ye have leisure; your heart is free from marriage bonds. Gaze on the Beauty of your Lover: think of Him equal to the Father, made subject also to His Mother: ruling even in the heavens, and serving upon the earth: creating all things, created among all things. That very thing, which in Him the proud mock at, gaze on, how fair it is: with inward eyes gaze on the wounds of Him hanging, the scars of Him rising again, the blood of Him dying, the price of him that believes, the gain of Him that redeems. Consider of how great value these are, weigh them in the scales of Charity;

and whatever of love ye had to expend upon your marriages, pay back to Him.

56. It is well that He seeks your beauty within, where He hath given unto you power to become daughters of God: He seeks not of you a fair flesh, but fair conduct, whereby to bridle also the flesh. He is not one unto Whom any one can lie concerning you, and make him rage through jealousy. See with how great security ye love Him, Whom ye fear not to offend by false suspicions. Husband and wife love each other, in that they see each other: and what they see not, that they fear between themselves: nor have they sure delight in what is visible, while in what is concealed they usually suspect what is not. Ye in Him, Whom ye see not with the eyes, and behold by faith, neither have what is real to blame, nor fear lest haply ye offend Him by what is false. If therefore ye should owe great love to husbands, Him, for Whose sake ye would not have husbands, how greatly ought ye to love? Let Him be fixed in your whole heart, Who for you was fixed on the Cross: let Him possess in your soul all that, whatever it be, that ye would not have occupied by marriage. It is not lawful for you to love little Him, for Whose sake ye have not loved even what were lawful. So loving Him Who is meek and lowly of heart, I have no fear for you of pride.

57. Thus, after our small measure, we have spoken enough both of sanctity, whereby ye are properly called “sanctimoniales,” and of humility, whereby whatever great name ye bear is kept. But more worthily let those Three Children, unto whom He, Whom they loved with full glow of heart, afforded refreshing in the fire, admonish you concerning this our little work, much more shortly indeed in number of words, but much more greatly in weight of authority, in the Hymn wherein God is honored by them. For joining humility unto holiness in such as praise God, they have most plainly taught, that each, by how much he make any more holy profession, by so much do beware that he be not deceived by pride. Wherefore do ye also praise Him, Who grants unto you, that in the midst of the flames of this world, although ye be not joined in marriage, yet ye be not burned: and praying also for us, “Bless ye the Lord, ye holy and humble men of heart; utter an hymn, and exalt Him above all forever.”

OF THE WORK
OF MONKS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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DE OPERE MONACHORUM.

TRANSLATED BY REV. H. BROWNE, M.A. OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;
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FROM THE RETRACTATIONS, II. 21.

To write the Book on the Work of Monks, the need which compelled me was this. When at Carthage there had begun to be monasteries, some maintained themselves by their own hands, obeying the Apostle; but others wished so to live on the oblations of the faithful, that doing no work whence they might either have or supply the necessaries of life, they thought and boasted that they did rather fulfill the precept of the Gospel, where the Lord saith, Behold the fowls of heaven, and the lilies of the field, (Matt. vi. 26). Whence also among laics of inferior purpose, but yet fervent in zeal, there had begun to arise tumultuous contests, whereby the Church was troubled, some defending the one, others the other part. Add to this, that some of them who were for not working, wore their hair long. Whence contentions between those who reprehended and those who justified the practice, were, according to their party affections, increased. On these accounts the venerable old Aurelius, Bishop of the Church of the same city, desired me to write somewhat of this matter; and I did so. This Book begins, “Jussioni tuae, sancte frater Aureli.”

This work is placed in the Retractations next after that “On the Good of Marriage” which belongs to the year 401.

1. Thy bidding, holy brother Aurelius, it was meet that I should comply withal, with so much the more devotion, by how much the more it became clear unto me Who, out of thee, did speak that bidding. For our Lord Jesus Christ, dwelling in thine inner part, and inspiring into thee a solicitude of fatherly and brotherly charity, whether our sons and brothers the monks, who neglect to obey blessed Paul the Apostle, when he saith, "If any will not work, neither let him eat," are to have that license permitted unto them; He, assuming unto His work thy will and tongue, hath commanded me out of thee, that I should hereof write somewhat unto thee. May He therefore Himself be present with me also, that I may obey in such sort that from His gift, in the very usefulness of fruitful labor, I may understand that I am indeed obeying Him.

2. First then, it is to be seen, what is said by persons of that profession, who will not work: then, if we shall find that they think not aright, what is meet to be said for their correction? "It is not," say they, "of this corporal work in which either husbandmen or handicraftsmen labor, that the Apostle gave precept, when he said, If any will not work, neither let him eat.'" For he could not be contrary to the Gospel, where the Lord Himself saith, "Therefore I say unto you, be not solicitous for your life, what ye shall eat, neither for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Consider the fowls of heaven, that they sow not, nor reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye rather of more worth than they? But who of you by taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? And concerning raiment, why are ye solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they labor not, neither spin; but I say unto you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of these. But if the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, God so clotheth; how much more you, (O ye) of little faith! Be not therefore solicitous, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clad? for all these things do the Gentiles seek. And your heavenly Father knoweth that ye need all these. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these shall be added unto you. Be not therefore solicitous for the morrow: for the morrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Lo, say they, where the Lord biddeth us be without care

concerning our food and clothing: how then could the Apostle think contrary to the Lord, that he should instruct us that we ought to be in such sort solicitous, what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or wherewithal we shall be clothed, that he should even burden us with the arts, cares, labors of handicraftsmen? Wherefore in that he saith, “If any will not work, neither let him eat;” works spiritual, say they, are what we must understand: of which he saith in another place, “To each one according as the Lord hath given: I have planted, Apollos hath watered; but God gave the increase.” And a little after, “Each one shall receive his reward according to his own labor. We are God’s fellow-workers; God’s husbandry, God’s building are ye: according to the grace which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder I have laid the foundation.” As therefore the Apostle worketh in planting, watering, building, and foundation-laying, in that way whoso will not work, let him not eat. For what profiteth in eating spiritually to be fed with the word of God, if he do not thence work others’ edification? As that slothful servant, what did it profit to receive a talent and to hide it, and not work for the Lord’s gain? Was it that it should be taken from him at last, and himself cast into outer darkness? So, say they, do we also. We read with the brethren, who come to us fatigued from the turmoil of the world, that with us, in the word of God, and in prayers, psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, they may find rest. We speak to them, console, exhort, building up in them whatever unto their life, according to their degree, we perceive to be lacking. Such works if we wrought not, with peril should we receive of the Lord our spiritual sustenance itself. For this is it the Apostle said, “If any one will not work, neither let him eat.” Thus do these men deem themselves to comply with the apostolic and evangelic sentence, when both the Gospel they believe to have given precept concerning the not caring for the corporal and temporal indigence of this life, and the Apostle concerning spiritual work and food to have said, “If any will not work, neither let him eat.”

3. Nor do they attend to this, that if another should say, that the Lord indeed, speaking in parables and in similitudes concerning spiritual food and clothing, did warn that not on these accounts should His servants be solicitous; (as He saith, “When they shall drag you to judgment-seats, take no thought what ye shall speak. For it will be given you in that hour what ye

shall speak: but it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.” For the discourse of spiritual wisdom is that for which He would not that they should take thought, promising that it should be given unto them, nothing solicitous thereof;) but the Apostle now, in manner Apostolical, more openly discoursing and more properly, than figuratively speaking, as is the case with much, indeed well-nigh all, in his Apostolic Epistles, said it properly of corporal work and food, “If any will not work, neither let him eat:” by those would their sentence be rendered doubtful, unless, considering the other words of the Lord, they should find somewhat whereby they might prove it to have been of not caring for corporal food and raiment that He spoke when He said, “Be not solicitous what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed.” As, if they should observe what He saith, “For all these things do the Gentiles seek;” for there He shows that it was of very corporal and temporal things that He spake. So then, were this the only thing that the Apostle has said on this subject, “If any will not work, neither let him eat;” these words might be drawn over to another meaning: but since in many other places of his Epistles, what is his mind on this point, he most openly teaches, they superfluously essay to raise a mist before themselves and others, that what that charity adviseth they may not only refuse to do, but even to understand it themselves, or let it be understood by others; not fearing that which is written, “He would not understand that he might do good.”

4. First then we ought to demonstrate that the blessed Apostle Paul willed the servants of God to work corporal works which should have as their end a great spiritual reward, for this purpose that they should need food and clothing of no man, but with their own hands should procure these for themselves: then, to show that those evangelical precepts from which some cherish not only their sloth but even arrogance, are not contrary to the Apostolical precept and example. Let us see then whence the Apostle came to this, that he should say, “If any will not work, neither let him eat,” and what he thereupon joineth on, that from the very context of this lesson may appear his declared sentence. “We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh unquietly, and not according to the tradition which they have received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to imitate us; for we

were not unquiet among you, neither ate we bread of any man for nought, but in labor and travail night and day working that we might not burden any of you: not for that we have not power, but that we might give ourselves as a pattern to you in which ye should imitate us. For also when we were with you, we gave you this charge, that if any will not work, let him not eat. For we have heard that certain among you walk unquietly, working not at all, but being busy-bodies. Now them that are such we charge and beseech in our Lord Jesus Christ, that with silence they work, and eat their own bread." What can be said to these things, since, that none might thereafter have license to interpret this according to his wish, not according to charity, he by his own example hath taught what by precept he hath enjoined? To him, namely, as to an Apostle, a preacher of the Gospel, a soldier of Christ, a planter of the vineyard, a shepherd of the flock had the Lord appointed that he should live by the Gospel; and yet himself exacted not the pay which was his due, that he might make himself a pattern to them which desired what was not their due; as he saith to the Corinthians, "Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and of its fruit eateth not? Who feedeth a flock, and of the milk of the flock partaketh not?" Therefore, what was due to him, he would not receive, that by his example they might be checked, who, although not so ordained in the Church, did deem the like to be due to themselves. For what is it that he saith, "Neither ate we bread of any man for naught, but in labor and travail night and day working that we might not burden any of you; not for that we have not power, but that we might give ourselves as a pattern to you wherein ye should follow us?" Let them, therefore, hear to whom he hath given this precept, that is, they which have not this power which he had, to wit, that while only spiritually working they should eat bread by corporal labor not earned: and as he says, "We charge and beseech in Christ that with silence they work and eat their own bread," let them not dispute against the most manifest words of the Apostle, because this also pertaineth to that "silence" with which they ought to work and eat their own bread.

5. I would, however, proceed to a more searching and diligent consideration and handling of these words, had I not other places of his Epistles much more manifest, by comparing which, both these are made more clearly manifest, and if these were not in existence, those others would suffice. To

the Corinthians, namely, writing of this same thing, he saith thus, “Am I not free? am I not an Apostle? Have I not seen Christ Jesus our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord? If to others I am not an Apostle, to you assuredly I am. For the seal of mine Apostleship are ye in the Lord. My defense to them which interrogate me is this. Have we not power to eat and to drink? Have we not power to lead about a woman who is a sister, as also the other Apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?” See how first he shows what is lawful to him, and therefore lawful for that he is an Apostle. For with that he began, “Am I not free? am I not an Apostle?” and proves himself to be an Apostle, saying, “Have I not seen Christ Jesus our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord?” Which being proved, he shows that to be lawful to him which was so to the other Apostles; that is, that he should not work with his hands, but live by the Gospel, as the Lord appointed, which in what follows he has most openly demonstrated; for to this end did also faithful women which had earthly substance go with them, and minister unto them of their substance, that they might lack none of those things which pertain to the necessities of this life. Which thing blessed Paul demonstrates to be lawful indeed unto himself, as also the other Apostles did it, but that he had not chosen to use this power he afterwards mentions. This thing some not understanding, have interpreted not “a woman which is a sister,” when he said, “Have we not power to lead about a sister a woman;” but, “a sister a wife.” They were misled by the ambiguity of the Greek word, because both “wife” and “woman” is expressed in Greek by the same word. Though indeed the Apostle has so put this that they ought not to have made this mistake; for that he neither says “a woman” merely, but “a sister woman;” nor “to take” (as in marriage), but “to take about” (as on a journey). Howbeit other interpreters have not been misled by this ambiguity, and they have interpreted “woman” not “wife.”

6. Which thing whoso thinks cannot have been done by the Apostles, that with them women of holy conversation should go about wheresoever they preached the Gospel, that of their substance they might minister to their necessities, let him hear the Gospel, and learn how in this they did after the example of the Lord Himself. Our Lord, namely, according to the wont of His pity, sympathizing with the weak, albeit Angels might minister unto Him, had both a bag in which should be put the money which was bestowed

doubtless by good and believing persons, as necessary for their living, (which bag He gave in charge to Judas, that even thieves, if we could not keep clear of such, we might learn to tolerate in the Church. He, namely, as is written of him, “stole what was put therein:”) and He willed that women should follow Him for the preparing and ministering what was necessary, showing what was due to evangelists and ministers of God as soldiers, from the people of God as the provincials; so that if any should not choose to use that which is due unto him, as Paul the Apostle did not choose, he might bestow the more upon the Church, by not exacting the pay which was due to him, but by earning his daily living of his own labors. For it had been said to the inn-keeper to whom that wounded man was brought, “Whatever thou layest out more, at my coming again I will repay thee.” The Apostle Paul, then, did “lay out more,” in that he, as himself witnesseth, did at his own charges go a warfare. In the Gospel, namely, it is written, “Thereafter also Himself was making a journey through cities and villages preaching and evangelizing of the kingdom of God; and the twelve with Him, and certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary who is called Magdalene, out of whom seven devils had gone forth, and Joanna wife of Chuza Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others, who ministered unto Him of their substance.” This example of the Lord the Apostles did imitate, to receive the meat which was due unto them; of which the same Lord most openly speaketh: “As ye go,” saith He, “preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out devils. Freely have ye received, freely give. Possess not gold nor silver nor money in your purses, neither scrip on your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, neither staff: for the workman is worthy of his meat.” Lo, where the Lord appointeth the very thing which the Apostle doth mention. For to this end He told them not to carry all those things, namely, that where need should be, they might receive them of them unto whom they preached the kingdom of God.

7. But lest any should fancy that this was granted only to the twelve, see also what Luke relateth: “After these things,” saith he, “the Lord chose also other seventy and two, and sent them by two and two before His face into every city and place whither He was about to come. And He said unto them, The harvest indeed is plentiful, but the laborers few: ask ye therefore the

Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His harvest. Go your ways: behold, I send you as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry neither purse nor scrip nor shoes, and salute no man by the way. Into whatsoever house ye shall enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon him: if not, it shall return to you. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as are with them: for the workman is worthy of his hire.” Here it appears that these things were not commanded, but permitted, that whoso should choose to use, might use that which was lawful unto him by the Lord’s appointment; but if any should not choose to use it, he would not do contrary to a thing commanded, but would be yielding up his own right, by demeaning himself more mercifully and laboriously in the Gospel in the which he would not accept even the hire which was his due. Otherwise the Apostle did contrary to a command of the Lord: for, after he had shown it to be lawful unto him, he hath straightway subjoined, “But yet have I not used this power.”

8. But let us return to the order of our discourse, and the whole of the passage itself of the Epistle let us diligently consider. “Have we not,” saith he, “leave to eat and to drink? have we not leave to lead about a woman, a sister?” What leave meant he, but what the Lord gave unto them whom He sent to preach the kingdom of heaven, saying, “Those things which are (given) of them, eat ye; for the workman is worthy of his hire;” and proposing Himself as an example of the same power, to Whom most faithful women did of their means minister such necessaries? But the Apostle Paul hath done more, from his fellow-Apostles alleging a proof of this license permitted of the Lord. For not as finding fault hath he subjoined, “As do also the other Apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas;” but that hence he might show that this which he would not accept was a thing which, that it was lawful for him to accept was proved by the wont of the rest also his fellow-soldiers. “Or I only and Barnabas, have we not power to forbear working?” Lo, he hath taken away all doubt even from the slowest hearts, that they may understand of what working he speaks. For to what end saith he, “Or I only and Barnabas, have we not power to forbear working?” but for that all evangelists and ministers of God’s word had power received of the Lord, not to work with their hands, but to live by

the Gospel, working only spiritual works in preaching of the kingdom of heaven and edifying of the peace of the Church? For no man can say that it is of that very spiritual working that the Apostle said, “Or I only and Barnabas, have we not power to forbear working?” For this power to forbear working all those had: let him say then, who essays to deprave and pervert precepts Apostolical; let him say, if he dares that all evangelists received of the Lord power to forbear preaching the Gospel. But if this is most absurd and mad to say, why will they not understand what is plain to all, that they did indeed receive power not to work, but works bodily, whereby to get a living, because “the workman is worthy of his hire,” as the Gospel speaks. It is not therefore that Paul and Barnabas only had not power to forbear working; but that all alike had this power of which these availed not themselves in “laying out more” upon the Church; so as in those places where they preached the Gospel they judged to be meet for the weak. And for this reason, that he might not seem to have found fault with his fellow-Apostles, he goes on to say: “Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges? Who feedeth a flock, and of the milk of the flock partaketh not? Speak I these things as a man? Saith not the Law the same? For in the law of Moses it is written, Thou shall not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God care for oxen? Or saith he it for our sake altogether? For our sakes truly is it written, because he that plougheth ought to plough in hope, and he that thresheth in hope of partaking of the fruits.” By these words the Apostle Paul sufficiently indicates, that it was no usurping unto themselves of aught beyond their due on the part of his fellow-Apostles, that they wrought not bodily, whence they might have the things which to this life are necessary, but as the Lord ordained, should, living by the Gospel, eat bread gratuitously given of them unto whom they were preaching a gratuitous grace. Their charges, namely, they did like soldiers receive, and of the fruit of the vineyard by them planted, they did, as need was, freely gather; and of the milk of the flock which they fed, they drank; and of the threshing-floor on which they threshed, they took their meat.

9. But he speaks more openly in the rest which he subjoins, and altogether removes all causes of doubting. “If we unto you,” saith he, “have sown spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?” What are the spiritual things which he sowed, but the word and mystery of

the sacrament of the kingdom of heaven? And what the carnal things which he saith he had a right to reap, but these temporal things which are indulged to the life and indigency of the flesh? These however being due to him he declares that he had not sought nor accepted, lest he should cause any impediment to the Gospel of Christ. What work remaineth for us to understand him to have wrought, whereby he should get his living, but bodily work, with his own bodily and visible hands? For if from spiritual work he sought food and clothing, that is, to receive these of them whom he was edifying in the Gospel, he could not, as he does, go on to say, “If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless, we have not used this power, but tolerate all things that we may not cause any hindrance to the Gospel of Christ.” What power doth he say he had not used, but that which he had over them, received of the Lord, the power to reap their carnal things, in order to the sustenance of this life which is lived in the flesh? Of which power were others also partakers, who did not at the first announce the Gospel to them, but came thereafter to their Church preaching the self-same. Therefore, when he had said, “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?” he subjoined, “If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather?” And when he had demonstrated what power they had: “Nevertheless we have not used,” saith he, “this power; but we put up with all things, lest we should cause any impediment to the Gospel of Christ.” Let therefore these persons say in what way from spiritual work the Apostle had carnal food, when himself openly says that he had not used this power. But if from spiritual work he had not carnal food, it remains that from bodily work he had it and thereof saith, “Neither did we eat any man’s bread for nought; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us. All things,” saith he, “we suffer, lest we cause any hindrance to the Gospel of Christ.”

10. And he comes back again, and in all ways, over and over again, enforceth what he hath the right to do, yet doeth not. “Do ye not know,” saith he, “that they which work in the temple, eat of the things which are in the temple? they which serve the altar, have their share with the altar? So hath the Lord ordained for them which preach the Gospel, to live of the

Gospel. But I have used none of these things." What more open than this? what more clear? I fear lest haply, while I discourse wishing to expound this, that become obscure which in itself is bright and clear. For they who understand not these words, or feign not to understand, do much less understand mine, or profess to understand: unless perchance they do therefore quickly understand ours, because it is allowed them to deride them being understood; but concerning the Apostle's words this same is not allowed. For this reason, where they cannot interpret them otherwise according to their own sentence, be it ever so clear and manifest, they answer that it is obscure and uncertain because wrong and perverse they dare not call it. Cries the man of God, "The Lord hath ordained for them which preach the Gospel, of this Gospel to live; but I have used none of these things;" and flesh and blood essayeth to make crooked what is straight; what open, to shut; what serene, to cloud over. "It was," saith it, "spiritual work that he was doing, and thereof did he live." If it be so, of the Gospel did he live: why then doth he say, "The Lord hath ordained for them which preach the Gospel, of the Gospel to live; but I have used none of these things?" Or if this very word, "to live" which is here used, they will needs also interpret in respect of spiritual life, then had the Apostle no hope towards God, in that he did not live by the Gospel, because he hath said, "I have used none of these things." Wherefore, that he should have certain hope of life eternal the Apostle did of the Gospel in any wise spiritually live. What therefore he saith, "But I have used none of these things," doth without doubt make to be understood of this life which is in the flesh, that which he hath said of the Lord's ordaining to them which preach the Gospel, that of the Gospel they should live; that is, this life which hath need of food and clothing, they by the Gospel shall sustain; as above he said of his fellow-apostles; of whom the Lord Himself saith, "The workman is worthy of his meat;" and, "The workman is worthy of his hire." This meat, then, and this hire of the sustenance of this life, due to evangelists, this of them to whom he evangelized the Apostle accepted not, saying a true thing, "I have used none of these things."

11. And he goes on, and adjoins, lest perchance any should imagine that he only therefore received not, because they had not given: "But I have not written these things that they may be so done unto me: good is it for me

rather to die than that any make void my glory.” What glory, unless that which he wished to have with God, while in Christ suffering with the weak? As he is presently about to say most openly; “For if I shall have preached the Gospel, there is not to me any glory: for necessity is laid upon me;” that is, of sustaining this life. “For woe will be to me,” he saith, “if I preach not the Gospel:” that is, to my own will shall I forbear to preach the Gospel, because I shall be tormented with hunger, and shall not have whereof to live. For he goes on, and says; “For if willingly I do this, I have a reward.” By his doing it willingly, he means, if he do it uncompelled by any necessity of supporting this present life; and for this he hath reward, to wit, with God, of glory everlasting. “But if unwilling,” saith he, “a dispensation is entrusted unto me:” that is, if being unwilling, I am by necessity of passing through this present life, compelled to preach the Gospel, “a dispensation is entrusted unto me;” to wit, that by my dispensation as a steward, because Christ, because the truth, is that which I preach, howsoever because of occasion, howsoever seeking mine own, howsoever by necessity of earthly emolument compelled so to do, other men do profit, but I have not that glorious and everlasting reward with God. “What then,” saith he, “shall be my reward?” He saith it as asking a question: therefore the pronunciation must be suspended, until he give the answer. Which the more easily to understand, let, as it were, us put the question to him, “What, then, will be thy reward, O Apostle, when that earthly reward due to good evangelists, not for its sake evangelizing, but yet taking it as the consequence and offered to them by the Lord’s appointment, thou acceptest not? What shall be thy reward then?” See what he replies: “That, preaching the Gospel, I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge;” that is, that the Gospel may not be to believers expensive, lest they account that for this end is the Gospel to be preached to them, that its preachers should seem as it were to sell it. And yet he comes back again and again, that he may show what, by warrant of the Lord, he hath a right unto, yet doeth not: “that I abuse not,” saith he, “my power in the Gospel.”

12. But now, that as bearing with the infirmity of men he did this, let us hear what follows: “For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. To them that are under the law, I became as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the

law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.” Which thing he did, not with craftiness of simulation, but with mercy of compassion with others; that is, not as if to feign himself a Jew, as some have thought, in that he observed at Jerusalem the things prescribed by the old law. For he did this in accordance with his free and openly declared sentence, in which he says, “Is any called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised.” That is, let him not so live, as though he had become uncircumcised, and covered that which he had laid bare: as in another place he saith, “Thy circumcision is become uncircumcision.” It was in accordance then with this his sentence, in which he saith, “Is any called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised;” that he did those things, in which, by persons not understanding and not enough attending, he has been accounted to have feigned. For he was a Jew, and was called being circumcised; therefore he would not become uncircumcised; that is, would not so live as if he had not been circumcised. For this he now had in his power to do. And “under” the law, indeed, he was not as they who servilely wrought it; but yet “in” the law of God and of Christ. For that law was not one, and the law of God another, as accursed Manicheans are wont to say. Otherwise, if when he did those things he is to be accounted to have feigned, then he feigned himself also a pagan, and sacrificed to idols, because he says that he became to those without law, as without law. By whom, doubtless, he would have us to understand no other than Gentiles whom we call Pagans. It is one thing therefore to be under the law, another in the law, another without law. “Under the law,” the carnal Jews; “in the law,” spiritual men, both Jews and Christians; (whence the former kept that custom of their fathers, but did not impose unwonted burdens upon the believing Gentiles; and therefore they also were circumcised;) but “without law,” are the Gentiles which have not yet believed, to whom yet the Apostle testifieth himself to have become like, through sympathy of a merciful heart, not simulation of a changeable exterior; that is, that he might in that way succor carnal Jew or Pagan, in which way himself, if he were that, would have wished to be succored: bearing, to wit, their infirmity, in likeness of compassion, not deceiving in fiction of lying; as he straightway goes on, and says, “I became to the weak as weak, that I might gain the weak.” For it was from this point that he was speaking, in saying all those other things. As then, that he became to the weak as weak, was no lie; so all those other things above rehearsed. For what doth he mean his weakness towards the weak to have been, but that of suffering with them, insomuch that, lest he should appear to be a seller of the Gospel, and by falling into an ill suspicion with ignorant men, should hinder the course of God’s word, he would not accept what by warrant of the Lord was his due? Which if he were willing to accept, he would not in any wise lie, because it was truly due to him; and for that he would not, he did not in any wise lie. For he did not say, it was not due; but he showed it to be due, and that being due he had not used it, and professed that he would not at all use it, in that very thing becoming weak; namely, in that he would not use his power; being, to wit, with so merciful affection endued, that he thought in what way he should wish to be dealt withal, if himself also were made so weak, that possibly, if he should see them by whom the Gospel was preached to him, accepting their charges, he might think it a bringing of wares to market, and hold them in suspicion accordingly.

13. Of this weakness of his, he saith in another place, “We made ourselves small among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.” For in that passage the context indicates this: “For neither at any time,” saith he, “used we flattering words, as ye know, nor an occasion of covetousness; God is witness: nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others when we might have been burdensome to you as the Apostles of Christ: but we made ourselves small among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children.” What therefore he saith to the Corinthians, that he had power of his apostleship, as also the other Apostles, which power he testifieth that he had not used; this also he saith in that place to the Thessalonians, “When we might have been burdensome to you as Christ’s Apostles:” according to that the Lord saith, “The workman is worthy of his hire.” For that of this he speaks, is indicated by that which he above set down, “Neither for occasion of coveteousness, God is witness.” By reason, namely, of this which by right of the Lord’s appointment was due to good evangelists, who not for its sake do evangelize but seek the kingdom of God, so that all these things should be added unto them, others were taking advantage thereof, of whom he also saith, “For they that are such serve not God, but their own belly.”

From whom the Apostle wished so to cut off this occasion, that even what was justly due to him, he would forego. For this himself doth openly show in the second to the Corinthians, speaking of other Churches supplying his necessities. For he had come, as it appears, to so great indigence, that from distant Churches were sent supplies for his necessities, while yet from them among whom he was, he accepted nothing of that kind. “Have I committed a sin, “saith he, “in humbling myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the Gospel of God freely? Other Churches I despoiled, taking wages of them to minister unto you: and when I was present with you and wanted, to no man was I burdensome. For that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied, and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome to you, and will keep myself. It is the truth of Christ in me, that this glory shall not be infringed in me in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. But what I do, I also mean to do, that I may cut off occasion from them which seek occasion, that wherein they glory they may be found as also we.” Of this occasion, therefore, which he here saith that he cuts off, he would have that understood which he saith in the former place, “Neither for occasion of covetousness, God is witness.” And what he here saith, “In humbling myself that ye might be exalted:” this in the first to the same Corinthians, “I became to the weak as weak;” this to the Thessalonians, “I became small among you, as a nurse cherisheth her children.” Now then observe what follows: “So,” saith he, “being affectionately desirous of you, we are minded to impart unto you not alone the Gospel of God, but our own souls also; because ye are become most dear to us. For ye remember, brethren, our labor and toil, night and day working, that we might not burden any of you.” For this he said above, “When we might be burdensome to you, as Christ’s Apostles.” Because, then, the weak were in peril, lest, agitated by false suspicions, they should hate an, as it were, venal Gospel, for this cause, trembling for them as with a father’s and a mother’s bowels of compassion, did he this thing. So too in the Acts of the Apostles he speaks the same thing, when, sending from Miletus to Ephesus, he had called thence the presbyters of the Church, to whom, among much else, “Silver,” saith he, “and gold, or apparel of no man have I coveted; yourselves know, that to my necessities and theirs who were with me these hands have ministered. In all things have I shown you that so laboring it behoveth to help the weak, mindful also of the words of the Lord Jesus, for that He said, More blessed is it rather to give than to receive."

14. Here peradventure some man may say, "If it was bodily work that the Apostle wrought, whereby to sustain this life, what was that same work, and when did he find time for it, both to work and to preach the Gospel?" To whom I answer: Suppose I do not know; nevertheless that he did bodily work, and thereby lived in the flesh, and did not use the power which the Lord had given to the Apostles, that preaching the Gospel he should live by the Gospel, those things above-said do without all doubt bear witness. For it is not either in one place or briefly said, that it should be possible for any most astute arguer with all his tergiversation to traduce and pervert it to another meaning. Since then so great an authority, with so mighty and so frequent blows mauling the gainsayers, doth break in pieces their contrariness, why ask they of me either what sort of work he did, or when he did it? One thing I know, that he neither did steal, nor was a housebreaker or highwayman, nor chariot-driver or hunter or player, nor given to filthy lucre: but innocently and honestly wrought things which are fitted for the uses of men; such as are the works of carpenters, builders, shoemakers, peasants, and such like. For honesty itself reprehends not what their pride doth reprehend, who love to be called, but love not to be, honest. The Apostle then would not disdain either to take in hand any work of peasants, or to be employed in the labor of craftsmen. For he who saith, "Be ye without offense to Jews and to Greeks and to the Church of God," before what men he could possibly stand abashed, I know not. If they shall say, the Jews; the Patriarchs fed cattle: if the Greeks, whom we call also Pagans; they have had philosophers, held in high honor, who were shoemakers: if the Church of God; that just man, elect to the testimony of a conjugal and ever-during virginity, to whom was betrothed the Virgin Mary who bore Christ, was a carpenter. Whatever therefore of these with innocence and without fraud men do work, is good. For the Apostle himself takes precaution of this, that no man through necessity of sustaining life should turn aside to evil works. "Let him that stole," saith he, "steal no more; but rather let him labor good with his hands, that he may have to impart to him

that needeth.” This then is enough to know, that also in the very work of the body the Apostle did work that which is good.

15. But when he might use to work, that is, in what spaces of time, that he might not be hindered from preaching the Gospel, who can make out? Though, truly, that he wrought at hours of both day and night himself hath not left untold. Yet these men truly, who as though very full of business and occupation inquire about the time of working, what do they? Have they from Jerusalem round about even to Illyricum filled the lands with the Gospel? or whatever of barbarian nations hath remained yet to be gone unto, and to be filled of the peace of the Church, have they undertaken? We know them into a certain holy society, most leisurely gathered together. A marvellous thing did the Apostle, that in very deed amid his so great care of all the Churches, both planted and to be planted, to his care and labor appertaining, he did also with his hands work: yet on that account, when he was with the Corinthians, and wanted, was burdensome to no man of those among whom he was, but altogether that which was lacking to him the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied.

16. For he himself also, with an eye to the like necessities of saints, who, although they obey his precepts, “that with silence they work and eat their own bread,” may yet from many causes stand in need of somewhat by way of supplement to the like sustenance, therefore, after he had thus said, teaching and premonishing, “Now them which are such we command and beseech in our Lord Jesus Christ, that with silence they work and eat their own bread;” yet, lest they which had whereof they might supply the needs of the servants of God, should hence take occasion to wax lazy, providing against this he hath straightway added, “But ye, brethren, become not weak in showing beneficence.” And when he was writing to Titus, saying, “Zenas the lawyer and Apollos do thou diligently send forward, that nothing may be wanting to them;” that he might show from what quarter nothing ought to be wanting to them, he straightway subjoined, “But let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary use, that they be not unfruitful.” In the case of Timothy also, whom he calls his own most true son, because he knew him weak of body, (as he shows, in advising him not to drink water, but to use a little wine for his stomach’s sake and his often infirmities,) lest

then haply, because in bodily work he could not labor, he being unwilling to stand in need of daily food at their hands, unto whom he ministered the Gospel, should seek some business in which the stress of his mind would become entangled; (for it is one thing to labor in body, with the mind free, as does a handicraftsman, if he be not fraudulent and avaricious and greedy of his own private gain; but another thing, to occupy the mind itself with cares of collecting money without the body's labor, as do either dealers, or bailiffs, or undertakers, for these with care of the mind conduct their business, not with their hands do work, and in that regard occupy their mind itself with solicitude of getting;) lest then Timothy should fall upon such like ways, because from weakness of body he could not work with his hands, he thus exhorts, admonishes, and comforts him: "Labor," saith he, "as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man, going a warfare for God, entangleth himself with secular business; that he may please Him to whom he hath proved himself. For he that striveth for masteries, is not crowned except he strive lawfully." Hereupon, lest the other should be put to straits, saying, "Dig I cannot, to beg I am ashamed," he adjoined, "The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits:" according to that which he had said to the Corinthians, "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who feedeth a flock, and partaketh not of the milk of the flock?" Thus did he make to be without care a chaste evangelist, not to that end working as an evangelist that he might sell the Gospel, but yet not, having strength to supply unto himself with his own hands the necessities of this life; for that he should understand whatever being necessary for himself he was taking of them whom as provincials he as a soldier was serving, and whom as a vineyard he was culturing, or as a flock was feeding, to be not matter of mendicity, but of power.

17. On account then of these either occupations of the servants of God, or bodily infirmities, which cannot be altogether wanting, not only doth the Apostle permit the needs of saints to be supplied by good believers, but also most wholesomely exhorteth. For, setting apart that power, which he saith himself had not used, which yet that the faithful must serve unto, he enjoins, saying, "Let him that is catechised in the word, communicate unto him that doth catechise him, in all good things:" setting apart, then, this

power, which that the preachers of the word have over them to whom they preach, he often testifieth; speaking, moreover, of the saints who had sold all that they had and distributed the same, and were dwelling at Jerusalem in an holy communion of life, not saying that any thing was their own, to whom all things were in common, and their soul and heart one in the Lord: that these by the Churches of the Gentiles should have what they needed bestowed upon them, he chargeth and exhorteth. Thence is also that to the Romans: “Now therefore I will go unto Jerusalem, to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor of the saints which are at Jerusalem. For it hath pleased them; and their debtors they are. For if in their spiritual things the Gentiles have communicated, they ought also in carnal things to minister unto them.” This is like that which he says to the Corinthians: “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things?” Also to the Corinthians in the second Epistle: “Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality; for to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves; with many prayers beseeching of us the grace and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints: and not as we hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God, insomuch, that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. But as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the exceeding dearness of your love. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be made rich. And herein I give advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be willing a year ago; now therefore perfect it in the doing; that as there is a readiness to will, so of performance also out of that which each hath. For if there be first a ready mind, it is acceptable according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not. Not, namely, that others may have ease, and ye straits; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want: that there may be equality, as it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack. But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus: for indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went forth unto you. And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the Churches; and not that only, but he was also ordained of the Churches as a companion of our travail, with this grace which is administered by us to the glory of the Lord, and our ready mind: avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us. For we provide for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men." In these words appeareth how much the Apostle willed it not only to be the care of the holy congregations to minister necessaries to the holy servants of God, giving counsel in this, because this was profitable more to the persons themselves who did this, than to them towards whom they did it, (for to those another thing was profitable, that is, that they should make of this service of their brethren towards them an holy use, and not with an eye to this serve God, nor take these things but to supply necessity, not to feed laziness:) but likewise his own care the blessed Apostle saith to be so great in this ministration which was now in transmitting through Titus, that a companion of his journey was on this account, he tells us, ordained by the Churches, a man of God well reported of, "whose praise," says he, "is in the Gospel throughout all the Churches." And to this end, he says, was the same ordained to be his companion, that he might avoid men's reprehensions, lest, without witness of saints associated with him in this ministry, he should be thought by weak and impious men to receive for himself and turn aside into his own bosom, what he was receiving for supplying the necessities of the saints, by him to be brought and distributed to the needy.

18. And a little after he saith, "For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you. For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many. Yet have we sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that,

as I said, ye may be ready: lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this substance. Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand this your long promised benediction, that the same might be ready, as benediction, and not as covetousness. But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth in benediction shall reap also in benediction. Every man according as he hath purposed in his heart, not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound in you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: as it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. But He that ministereth seed to the sower will both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the growing fruits of your righteousness; that ye may be enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God: for the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but makes them also to abound by thanksgiving unto God of many, while by the proof of this ministration they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the Gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men; and in the praying for you of them which long after you for the excellent grace of God in you. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.” In what richness of holy gladness must the Apostle have been steeped, while he speaks of the mutual supply of the need of Christ’s soldiers and His other subjects, on the one part of carnal things to those, on the other of spiritual things to these, to exclaim as he does, and as it were in repletion of holy joys to burst out with, “Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift!”

19. As therefore the Apostle, nay rather the Spirit of God possessing and filling and actuating his heart, ceased not to exhort the faithful who had such substance, that nothing should be lacking to the necessities of the servants of God, who wished to hold a more lofty degree of sanctity in the Church, in cutting off all ties of secular hope, and dedicating a mind at liberty to their godly service of warfare: likewise ought themselves also to obey his precepts, in sympathizing with the weak, and unshackled by love

of private wealth, to labor with their hands for the common good, and submit to their superiors without a murmur; that there may be made up for them out of the oblations of good believers that which, while they labor and do some work whereby they may get their living, yet still by reason of bodily infirmities of some, and by reason of ecclesiastical occupations or erudition of the doctrine which bringeth salvation, they shall account to be lacking.

20. For what these men are about, who will not do bodily work, to what thing they give up their time, I should like to know. “To prayers,” say they, “and psalms, and reading, and the word of God.” A holy life, unquestionably, and in sweetness of Christ worthy of praise; but then, if from these we are not to be called off, neither must we eat, nor our daily viands themselves be prepared, that they may be put before us and taken. Now if to find time for these things the servants of God at certain intervals of times by very infirmity are of necessity compelled, why do we not make account of some portions of times to be allotted also to the observance of Apostolical precepts? For one single prayer of one who obeyeth is sooner heard than ten thousand of a despiser. As for divine songs, however, they can easily, even while working with their hands, say them, and like as rowers with a boat-song, so with godly melody cheer up their very toil. Or are we ignorant how it is with all workmen, to what vanities, and for the most part even filthinesses, of theatrical fables they give their hearts and tongues, while their hands recede not from their work? What then hinders a servant of God while working with his hands to meditate in the law of the Lord, and sing unto the Name of the Lord Most High? provided, of course, that to learn what he may by memory rehearse, he have times set apart. For to this end also those good works of the faithful ought not to be lacking, for resource of making up what is necessary, that the hours which are so taken up in storing of the mind that those bodily works cannot be carried on, may not oppress with want. But they which say that they give up their time to reading, do they not there find that which the Apostle enjoineth? Then what perversity is this, to refuse to be ruled by his reading while he wishes to give up his time thereto; and that he may spend more time in reading what is good, therefore to refuse to do what is read? For who knows not that each

doth the more quickly profit when he reads good things, the quicker he is in doing what he reads?

21. Moreover, if discourse must be bestowed upon any, and this so take up the speaker that he have not time to work with his hands, are all in the monastery able to hold discourse unto brethren which come unto them from another kind of life, whether it be to expound the divine lessons, or concerning any questions which may be put, to reason in an wholesome manner? Then since not all have the ability, why upon this pretext do all want to have nothing else to do? Although even if all were able, they ought to do it by turns; not only that the rest might not be taken up from necessary works, but also because it sufficeth that to many hearers there be one speaker. To come now to the Apostle; how could he find time to work with his hands, unless for the bestowing of the word of God he had certain set times? And indeed God hath not willed this either to be hidden from us. For both of what craft he was a workman, and at what times he was taken up with dispensing the Gospel, holy Scripture has not left untold. Namely, when the day of his departure caused him to be in haste, being at Troas, even on the first day of the week when the brethren were assembled to break bread, such was his earnestness, and so necessary the disputation, that his discourse was prolonged even until midnight, as though it had slipped from their minds that on that day it was not a fast: but when he was making longer stay in any place and disputing daily, who can doubt that he had certain hours set apart for this office? For at Athens, because he had there found most studious inquirers of things, it is thus written of him: “He disputed therefore with the Jews in the synagogue, and with the Gentile inhabitants in the market every day to those who were there.” Not, namely, in the synagogue every day, for there it was his custom to discourse on the sabbath; but “in the market,” saith he, “every day;” by reason, doubtless, of the studiousness of the Athenians. For so it follows: “Certain however of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers conferred with him.” And a little after, it says: “Now the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.” Let us suppose him all those days that he was at Athens not to have worked: on this account, indeed, was his need supplied from Macedonia, as he says in the second to the Corinthians: though in fact he could work both at other hours

and of nights, because he was so strong in both mind and body. But when he had gone from Athens, let us see what says the Scripture: “He disputed,” saith it, “in the synagogue every sabbath;” this at Corinth. In Troas, however, where through necessity of his departure being close at hand, his discourse was protracted until midnight, it was the first day of the week, which is called the Lord’s Day: whence we understand that he was not with Jews but with Christians; when also the narrator himself saith they were gathered together to break bread. And indeed this same is the best management, that all things be distributed to their times and be done in order, lest becoming ravelled in perplexing entanglements, they throw our human mind into confusion.

22. There also is said at what work the Apostle wrought. “After these things,” it says, “he departed from Athens and came to Corinth; and having found a certain Jew, by name Aquila, of Pontus by birth, lately come from Italy, and Priscilla his wife, because that Claudius had ordered all Jews to depart from Rome, he came unto them, and because he was of the same craft he abode with them, doing work: for they were tent-makers.” This if they shall essay to interpret allegorically, they show what proficients they be in ecclesiastical learning, on which they glory that they bestow all their time. And, at the least, touching those sayings above recited, “Or I only and Barnabas, have we not power to forbear working?” and, “We have not used this power;” and, “When we might be burdensome to you, as Apostles of Christ,” and, “Night and day working that we might not burden any of you;” and, “The Lord hath ordained for them which preach the Gospel, of the Gospel to live; but I have used none of these things:” and the rest of this kind, let them either expound otherwise, or if by most clear shining light of truth they be put to it, let them understand and obey; or if to obey they be either unwilling or unable, at least let them own them which be willing, to be better, and them which be also able, to be happier men than they. For it is one thing to plead infirmity of body, either truly alleged, or falsely pretended: but another so to be deceived and so to deceive, that it shall even be thought a proof of righteousness obtaining more mightily in servants of God, if laziness have gotten power to reign among a set of ignorant men. He, namely, who shows a true infirmity of body, must be humanely dealt withal; he who pretends a false one, and cannot be convicted, must be left

unto God: yet neither of them fixeth a pernicious rule; because a good servant of God both serves his manifestly infirm brother; and, when the other deceives, if he believes him because he does not think him a bad man, he does not imitate him that he may be bad; and if he believe him not; he thinks him deceitful, and does, nevertheless, not imitate him. But when a man says, “This is true righteousness, that by doing no bodily work we imitate the birds of the air, because he who shall do any such work, goes against the Gospel:” whoso being infirm in mind hears and believes this, that person, not for that he so bestows all his time, but for that he so erreth, must be mourned over.

23. Hence arises another question; for peradventure one may say, “What then? did the other Apostles, and the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas, sin, in that they did not work? Or did they occasion an hindrance to the Gospel, because blessed Paul saith that he had not used this power on purpose that he might not cause any hindrance to the Gospel of Christ? For if they sinned because they wrought not, then had they not received power not to work, but to live instead by the Gospel. But if they had received this power, by ordinance of the Lord, that they which preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel; and by His saying, “The workman is worthy of his meat;” which power Paul, laying out somewhat more, would not use; then truly they sinned not. If they sinned not, they caused no hindrance. For it is not to be thought no sin to hinder the Gospel. If this be so, “to us also,” say they, “it is free either to use or not to use this power.”

24. This question I should briefly solve, if I should say, because I should also justly say, that we must believe the Apostle. For he himself knew why in the Churches of the Gentiles it was not meet that a venal Gospel were carried about; not finding fault with his fellow-apostles, but distinguishing his own ministry; because they, without doubt by admonition of the Holy Ghost, had so distributed among them the provinces of evangelizing, that Paul and Barnabas should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the Circumcision. But that he gave this precept to them who had not the like power, those many things already said do make manifest. But these brethren of ours rashly arrogate unto themselves, so far as I can judge, that they have this kind of power. For if they be evangelists, I confess, they have it: if

ministers of the altar, dispensers of sacraments, of course it is no arrogating to themselves, but a plain vindicating of a right.

25. If at the least they once had in this world wherewithal they might easily without handiwork sustain this life, which property, when they were converted unto God, they disparted to the needy, then must we both believe their infirmity, and bear with it. For usually such persons, having been, not better brought up, as many think, but what is the truth, more languidly brought up, are not able to bear the labor of bodily works. Such peradventure were many in Jerusalem. For it is also written, that they sold their houses and lands, and laid the prices of them at the Apostles’ feet, that distribution might be made to every one as he had need. Because they were found, being near, and were useful to the Gentiles, who, being afar off, were thence called from the worship of idols, as it is said, “Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem,” therefore hath the Apostle called the Christians of the Gentiles their debtors: “their debtors,” saith he, “they are:” and hath added the reason why, “For if in their spiritual things the Gentiles have communicated, they ought also in carnal things to minister unto them.” But now there come into this profession of the service of God, both persons from the condition of slaves, or also freed-men, or persons on this account freed by their masters or about to be freed, likewise from the life of peasants, and from the exercise and plebeian labor of handicraftsmen, persons whose bringing up doubtless has been all the better for them, the harder it has been: whom not to admit, is a heavy sin. For many of that sort have turned out truly great men and meet to be imitated. For on this account also “hath God chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and the foolish things of the world hath He chosen to confound them who are wise; and ignoble things of the world, and things which are not, as though they were, that the things that are may be brought to nought: that no flesh may glory before God.” This pious and holy thought, accordingly, causeth that even such be admitted as bring no proof of a change of life for the better. For it doth not appear whether they come of purpose for the service of God, or whether running away empty from a poor and laborious life they want to be fed and clothed; yea, moreover, to be honored by them of whom they were wont to be despised and trampled on. Such persons therefore because they cannot

excuse themselves from working by pleading infirmity of body, seeing they are convicted by the custom of their past life, do therefore shelter themselves under the screen of an ill scholarship, that from the Gospel badly understood they should essay to pervert precepts apostolical: truly “fowls of the air,” but in lifting themselves on high through pride; and “grass of the field,” but in being carnally minded.

26. That, namely, befalleth them which in undisciplined younger widows, the same Apostle saith must be avoided: “And withal they learn to be idle; and not only idle, but also busy bodies and full of words, speaking what they ought not.” This very thing said he concerning evil women, which we also in evil men do mourn and bewail, who against him, the very man in whose Epistles we read these things, do, being idle and full of words, speak what they ought not. And if there be any among them who did with that purpose come to the holy warfare, that they may please Him to whom they have proved themselves, these, when they be so vigorous in strength of body, and soundness of health, that they are able not only to be taught, but also, agreeably unto the Apostle, to work, do, by receiving of these men’s idle and corrupt discourses, which they are unable, by reason of their unskilled rawness, to judge of, become changed by pestiferous contagion into the same noisomeness: not only not imitating the obedience of saints which quietly work, and of other monasteries which in most wholesome discipline do live after the apostolic rule; but also insulting better men than themselves, preaching up laziness as the keeper of the Gospel, accusing mercy as the prevaricator therefrom. For a much more merciful work is it to the souls of the weak, to consult for the fair fame of the servants of God, than it is to the bodies of men, to break bread to the hungry. Wherefore I would to God that these, which want to let their hands lie idle, would altogether let their tongues lie idle too. For they would not make so many willing to imitate them, if the examples they set were not merely lazy ones, but mute withal.

27. As it is, however, they, against the Apostle of Christ, recite a Gospel of Christ. For so marvellous are the works of the sluggards, hindered that they want to have that very thing by Gospel, which the Apostle enjoined and did on purpose that the Gospel itself should not be hindered. And yet, if from

the very words of the Gospel we should compel them to live agreeably with their way of understanding it, they will be the first to endeavor to persuade us how they are not to be understood so as they do understand them. For certainly, they say that they therefore ought not to work, for that the birds of the air neither sow nor reap, of which the Lord hath given us a similitude that we should take no thought about such necessaries. Then why do they not attend to that which follows? For it is not only said, that “they sow not, neither reap;” but there is added, “nor gather in apothecas.” Now “apothecae” may be called either “barns,” or word for word, “repositories.” Then why do these persons want to have idle hands and full repositories? Why do they lay by and keep what they receive of the labors of others, that thereof may be every day somewhat forthcoming? Why, in short, do they grind and cook? For the birds do not this. Or, if they find some whom they may persuade to this work also, namely, to bring unto them day by day viands ready made; at least their water they either fetch them from springs, or from cisterns and wells draw and set it by: this the fowls do not. But if so please them, let it be the study of good believers and most devoted subjects of the Eternal King, to carry their service to His most valiant soldiers even to that length, that they shall not be forced even to fill a vessel of water for themselves, if now-a-days people have surpassed even them which at that time were at Jerusalem, in a new grade of righteousness, stepping out beyond them. To them, namely, by reason of famine being imminent, and foretold by the Prophets which were at that time, good believers sent out of Greece supplies of corn; of which I suppose they made them bread, or at least procured to be made; which thing the birds do not. But if now-a-days these persons, as I began to say, have surpassed these in some grade of righteousness, and do altogether in things pertaining to the maintenance of this life, as do the birds; let them show us men doing such service unto birds as they wish to be done unto them, except indeed birds caught and caged because they are not trusted, lest if they fly they come not back: and yet these would rather enjoy liberty and receive from the fields what is enough, than take their food by men laid before them and made ready.

28. Here then shall these persons in their turn be in another more sublime degree of righteousness outdone, by them who shall so order themselves, that every day they shall betake them into the fields as unto pasture, and at

what time they shall find it, pick up their meal, and having allayed their hunger, return. But plainly, on account of the keepers of the fields, how good were it, if the Lord should deign to bestow wings also, that the servants of God being found in other men's fields should not be taken up as thieves, but as starlings be scared off. As things are, however, such an one will do all he can to be like a bird, which the fowler shall not be able to catch. But, lo, let all men allow this to the servants of God, that when they will they should go forth into their fields, and thence depart fearless and refreshed: as it was ordered to the people Israel by the law, that none should lay hands on a thief in his fields, unless he wanted to carry any thing away with him from thence; for if he laid hands on nothing but what he had eaten, they would let him go away free and unpunished. Whence also when the disciples of the Lord plucked the ears of corn, the Jews calumniated them on the score of the sabbath rather than of theft. But how is one to manage about those times of year, at which food that can be taken on the spot is not found in the fields? Whoso shall attempt to take home with him any thing which by cooking he may prepare for himself, he shall, according to these persons' understanding of it, be accosted from the Gospel with, "Put it down; for this the birds do not."

29. But let us grant this also, that the whole year round there may in the fields be found either of tree or of herbs or of any manner of roots, that which may be taken as food uncooked; or, at any rate, let so great exercise of body be used, that the things which require cooking, may be taken even raw without hurt, and people may even in winter weather, no matter how rough, go forth to their fodder; and so it shall be the case that nothing be taken away to be prepared, nothing laid up for the morrow. Yet will not those men be able to keep these rules, who for many days separating themselves from sight of men, and allowing none access to them, do shut themselves up, living in great earnestness of prayers. For these do use to shut up with themselves store of aliments, such indeed as are most easily and cheaply had, yet still a store which may suffice for those days during which they purpose that no man shall see them; which thing the birds do not. Now touching these men's exercising of themselves in so marvellous continency, seeing that they have leisure for the doing of these things, and not in proud elation but in merciful sanctity do propose themselves for

men’s imitation, I not only do not blame it, but know not how to praise it as much as it deserves. And yet what are we to say of such men, according to these persons’ understanding of the evangelical words? Or haply the holier they be, the more unlike are they to the fowls? because unless they lay by for themselves food for many days, to shut themselves up as they do they will not have strength? Howbeit, to them as well as us is it said, “Take therefore no thought for the morrow.”

30. Wherefore, that I may briefly embrace the whole matter, let these persons, who from perverse understanding of the Gospel labor to pervert apostolical precepts, either take no thought for the morrow, even as the birds of the air; or let them obey the Apostle, as dear children: yea rather, let them do both, because both accord. For things contrary to his Lord, Paul the servant of Jesus Christ would never advise. This then we say openly to these persons; If the birds of the air ye in such wise understand in the Gospel, that ye will not by working with your hands procure food and clothing; then neither must ye put any thing by for the morrow, like as the birds of the air do put nothing by. But if to put somewhat by for the morrow, is possibly not against the Gospel where it is said, “Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into stores;” then is it possibly not against the Gospel nor against similitude of the birds of the air, to maintain this life of the flesh by labor of corporal working.

31. For if they be urged from the Gospel that they should put nothing by for the morrow, they most rightly answer, “Why then had the Lord Himself a bag in which to put by the money which was collected? Why so long time beforehand, on occasion of impending famine, were supplies of corn sent to the holy fathers? Why did Apostles in such wise provide things necessary for the indigence of saints lest there should be lack thereafter, that most blessed Paul should thus write to the Corinthians in his Epistle: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that the gatherings be not then first made when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with

me?” These and much else they most copiously and most truly bring forward. To whom we answer: Ye see then, albeit the Lord said, “Take no thought for the morrow,” yet ye are not by these words constrained to reserve nothing for the morrow: then why do ye say that by the same words ye are constrained to do nothing? Why are the birds of the air not a pattern unto you for reserving nothing, and ye will have them to be a pattern for working nothing?

32. Some man will say: “What then does it profit a servant of God, that, having left the former doings which he had in the world he is converted unto the spiritual life and warfare, if it still behove him to do business as of a common workman?” As if truly it could be easily unfolded in words, how greatly profiteth what the Lord, in answer to that rich man who was seeking counsel of laying hold on eternal life, told him to do if he would fain be perfect: sell that he had, distribute all to the indigence of the poor, and follow Him? Or who with so unimpeded course hath followed the Lord, as he who saith, “Not in vain have I run, nor in vain labored?” who yet both enjoined these works, and did them. This unto us, being by so great authority taught and informed, ought to suffice for a pattern of relinquishing our old resources, and of working with our hands. But we too, aided by the Lord Himself, are able perchance in some sort to apprehend what it doth still profit the servants of God to have left their former businesses, while they do yet thus work. For if a person from being rich is converted to this mode of life, and is hindered by no infirmity of body, are we so without taste of the savor of Christ, as not to understand what an healing it is to the swelling of the old pride, when, having pared off the superfluities by which erewhile the mind was deadly inflamed, he refuses not, for the procuring of that little which is still naturally necessary for this present life, even a common workman’s lowly toil? If however he be from a poor estate converted unto this manner of life, let him not account himself to be doing that which he was doing aforetime, if foregoing the love of even increasing his ever so small matter of private substance, and now no more seeking his own but the things which be Jesu Christ’s, he hath translated himself into the charity of a life in common, to live in fellowship of them who have one soul and one heart to Godward, so that no man saith that any thing is his own, but they have all things common. For if in this earthly commonwealth

its chief men in the old times did, as their own men of letters are wont in their most glowing phrase to tell of them, to that degree prefer the common weal of the whole people of their city and country to their own private affairs, that one of them, for subduing of Africa honored with a triumph, would have had nothing to give to his daughter on her marriage, unless by decree of the senate she had been dowered from the public treasury: of what mind ought he to be towards his commonwealth, who is a citizen of that eternal City, the heavenly Jerusalem, but that even what with labor of his own hands he earns, he should have in common with his brother, and if the same lack any thing, supply it from the common store; saying with him whose precept and example he hath followed, "As having nothing, and possessing all things?"

33. Wherefore even they which having relinquished or distributed their former, whether ample or in any sort opulent, means, have chosen with pious and wholesome humility to be numbered among the poor of Christ; if they be so strong in body and free from ecclesiastical occupations, (albeit, bringing as they do so great a proof of their purpose, and conferring from their former havings, either very much, or not a little, upon the indigence of the same society, the common fund itself and brotherly charity owes them in return a sustenance of their life,) yet if they too work with their hands, that they may take away all excuse from lazy brethren who come from a more humble condition in life, and therefore one more used to toil; therein they act far more mercifully than when they divided all their goods to the needy. If indeed they be unwilling to do this, who can venture to compel them? Yet then there ought to be found for them works in the monastery, which if more free from bodily exercise, require to be looked unto with vigilant administration, that not even they may eat their bread for nought, because it is now become the common property. Nor is it to be regarded in what monasteries, or in what place, any man may have bestowed his former having upon his indigent brethren. For all Christians make one commonwealth. And for that cause whoso shall have, no matter in what place, expended upon Christians the things they needed, in what place soever he also receiveth what himself hath need of, from Christ's goods he doth receive it. Because in what place soever himself has given to such, who but Christ received it? But, as for them who before they entered this

holy society got their living by labor of the body, of which sort are the more part of them which come into monasteries, because of mankind also the more part are such; if they will not work, neither let them eat. For not to that end are the rich, in this Christian warfare, brought low unto piety, that the poor may be lifted up unto pride. As indeed it is by no means seemly that in that mode of life where senators become men of toil, there common workmen should become men of leisure; and whereunto there come, relinquishing their dainties, men who had been masters of houses and lands, there common peasants should be dainty.

34. But then the Lord saith, “Be not solicitous for your life what ye shall eat, nor for the body, what ye shall put on.” Rightly: because He had said above, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” For he who preaches the Gospel with an eye to this, that he may have whereof he may eat and whereof be clothed, accounts that he at the same time both serves God, because he preaches the Gospel; and mammon, because he preaches with an eye to these necessaries: which thing the Lord saith to be impossible. And hereby he who doth for the sake of these things preach the Gospel is convicted that he serves not God but mammon; however God may use him, he knows not how, to other men’s advancement. For to this sentence doth He subjoin, saying “Therefore I say unto you, Be not solicitous for your life what ye shall eat, nor for your body what ye shall put on:” not that they should not procure these things, as much as is enough for necessity, by what means they honestly may; but that they should not look to these things, and for the sake of these do whatever in preaching of the Gospel they are bidden to do. The intention, namely, for which a thing is done, He calls the eye: of which a little above He was speaking with purpose to come down to this, and saying, “The light of thy body is thine eye: if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness;” that is, such will be thy deeds as shall be thine intention for which thou doest them. For indeed that He might come to this, He had before given precept concerning alms, saying, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth where rust and moth doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where thy treasure shall be, there will thy heart

be also.” Thereupon He subjoined, “The light of thy body is thine eye:” that they, to wit, which do alms, do them not with that intention that they should either wish to please men, or seek to have repayment on earth of the alms they do. Whence the Apostle, giving charge to Timothy for warning of rich men, “Let them,” says he “readily give, communicate, treasure up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on the true life.” Since then the Lord hath to the future life directed the eye of them which do alms, and to an heavenly reward, in order that the deeds themselves may be full of light when the eye shall be simple, (for of that last retribution is meant that which He says in another place, “He that receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, his reward shall not be lost,”) lest haply after he had reproved the eye of them which bestow things needful upon the indigent both prophets and just men and disciples of the Lord, the eye of the persons to whom these things were done should become depraved, so that for the sake of receiving these things they should wish to serve Christ as His soldiers: “No man,” saith He, “can serve two masters.” And a little after: “Ye cannot,” saith He, “serve God and mammon.” And straightway He hath added, “Therefore I say unto you, be not solicitous for your life what ye shall eat, nor for the body what ye shall put on.”

35. And that which follows concerning birds of the air and lilies of the field, He saith to this end, that no man may think that God careth not for the needs of His servants; when His most wise Providence reacheth unto these in creating and governing those. For it must not be deemed that it is not He that feeds and clothes them also which work with their hands. But lest they turn aside the Christian service of warfare unto their purpose of getting these things, the Lord in this premonisheth His servants that in this ministry which is due to His Sacrament, we should take thought, not for these, but for His kingdom and righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto us, whether working by our hands, or whether by infirmity of body hindered from working, or whether bound by such occupation of our very

warfare that we are able to do nothing else. For neither does it follow that because the Lord hath said, “Call upon Me in the day of tribulation and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me,” therefore the Apostle ought not to have fled, and to be let down by the wall in a basket that he might escape the hands of a pursuer, but should rather have waited to be taken, that, like the three children from the midst of the fires, the Lord might deliver him. Or for this reason ought not the Lord either to have said this, “If they shall persecute you in one city, flee ye to another,” namely, because He hath said, “If ye shall ask of the Father any thing in My name, He will give it you.” As then whoever to Christ’s disciples when fleeing from persecution should cast up this sort of question, why they did not rather stand, and by calling upon God obtain through His marvellous works in such wise deliverance, as Daniel from the lions, as Peter from his chains, they would answer that they ought not to tempt God, but He would then and then only do the like for them, if it should please Him, when they had nothing that they could do; but when He put flight in their power, although they were thereby delivered, yet were they not delivered but by Him: so likewise to servants of God having time and strength after the example and precept of the Apostle to get their living by their own hands, if any from the Gospel shall raise a question concerning the birds of the air, which sow not nor reap nor gather into stores, and concerning lilies of the field that they toil not neither do they spin; they will easily answer, “If we also, by reason of any either infirmity or occupation cannot work, He will so feed and clothe us, as He doth the birds and the lilies, which do no work of this kind: but when we are able, we ought not to tempt our God; because this very ability of ours, we have it by His gift, and in living by it, we live by His bounty Who hath bounteously bestowed upon us that we should have this ability. And therefore concerning these necessary things we are not solicitous; because when we are able to do these things, He by Whom mankind are fed and clothed doth feed and clothe us: but when we are not able to do these things, He feeds and clothes us by Whom the birds are fed and the lilies clothed, because we are more worth than they. Wherefore in this our warfare, neither for the morrow take we thought: because not for the sake of these temporal things, whereunto pertaineth To-morrow, but for the sake of those eternal things, where it is evermore To-day, have we proved ourselves unto Him, that, entangled in no secular business, we may please Him.

36. Since these things are so, suffer me awhile, holy brother, (for the Lord giveth me through thee great boldness,) to address these same our sons and brethren whom I know with what love thou together with us dost travail in birth withal, until the Apostolic discipline be formed in them. O servants of God, soldiers of Christ, is it thus ye dissemble the plottings of our most crafty foe, who fearing your good fame, that so goodly odor of Christ, lest good souls should say, “We will run after the odor of thine ointments,” and so should escape his snares, and in every way desiring to obscure it with his own stenches, hath dispersed on every side so many hypocrites under the garb of monks, strolling about the provinces, no where sent, no where fixed, no where standing, no where sitting. Some hawking about limbs of martyrs, if indeed of martyrs; others magnifying their fringes and phylacteries; others with a lying story, how they have heard say that their parents or kinsmen are alive in this or that country, and therefore be they on their way to them: and all asking, all exacting, either the costs of their lucrative want, or the price of their pretended sanctity. And in the meanwhile wheresoever they be found out in their evil deeds, or in whatever way they become notorious, under the general name of monks, your purpose is blasphemed, a purpose so good, so holy, that in Christ’s name we desire it, as through other lands so through all Africa, to grow and flourish. Then are ye not inflamed with godly jealousy? Does not your heart wax hot within you, and in your meditation a fire kindle, that these men’s evil works ye should pursue with good works, that ye should cut off from them occasion of a foul trafficking, by which your estimation is hurt, and a stumbling-block put before the weak? Have mercy then and have compassion, and show to mankind that ye are not seeking in ease a ready subsistence, but through the strait and narrow way of this purpose, are seeking the kingdom of God. Ye have the same cause which the Apostle had, to cut off occasion from them which seek occasion, that they who by their stinks are suffocated, by your good odor may be refreshed.

37. We are not binding heavy burdens and laying them upon your shoulders, while we with a finger will not touch them. Seek out, and

acknowledge the labor of our occupations, and in some of us the infirmities of our bodies also, and in the Churches which we serve, that custom now grown up, that they do not suffer us to have time ourselves for those works to which we exhort you. For though we might say, “Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who feedeth a flock, and partaketh not of the milk of the flock?” yet I call our Lord Jesus, in Whose name I fearlessly say these things, for a witness upon my soul, that so far as it concerns mine own convenience, I would much rather every day at certain hours, as much as is appointed by rule in well-governed monasteries, do some work with my hands, and have the remaining hours free for reading and praying, or some work pertaining to Divine Letters, than have to hear these most annoying perplexities of other men’s causes about secular matters, which we must either by adjudication bring to an end, or by intervention cut short. Which troubles the same Apostle hath fastened us withal, (not by his own sentence, but by His who spake through him,) while yet we do not read that he had to put up with them himself: indeed his was not the sort of work to admit of it, while running to and fro in his Apostleship. Nor hath he said, “If then ye have secular law-suits, bring them before us;” or, “Appoint us to judge them;” but, “Them which are contemptible in the Church, these,” saith he, “put ye in place. To your abashment I say it: is it so that there is not among you any wise man who can judge between his brother, but brother goeth to law with brother, and that before infidels?” So then wise believers and saints, having their stated abode in the different places, not those who were running hither and hither on the business of the Gospel, were the persons whom he willed to be charged with examination of such affairs. Whence it is no where written of him that he on any occasion gave up his time to such matters; from which we are not able to excuse ourselves, even though we be contemptible; because he willed even such to be put in place, in case there were lack of wise men, rather than have the affairs of Christians to be brought into the public courts. Which labor, however, we not without consolation of the Lord take upon us, for hope of eternal life, that we may bring forth fruit with patience. For we are servants unto His Church, and most of all to the weaker members, whatsoever members we in the same body may chance to be. I pass by other innumerable ecclesiastical cares, which perchance no man credits but he who hath experienced the same.

Therefore we do not bind heavy burdens and place them on your shoulders, while we ourselves touch them not so much as with a finger; since indeed if with safety to our office we might, (He seeth it, Who tries our hearts!) we would rather do these things which we exhort you to do, than the things which we ourselves are forced to do. True it is, to all both us and you, while according to our degree and office we labor, both the way is strait in labor and toil; and yet, while we rejoice in hope, His yoke is easy and His burden light, Who hath called us unto rest, Who passed forth before us from the vale of tears, where not Himself either was without pressure of griefs. If ye be our brethren, if our sons, if we be your fellow-servants, or rather in Christ your servants, hear what we admonish, acknowledge what we enjoin, take what we dispense. But if we be Pharisees, binding heavy burdens and laying them on your shoulders; yet do ye the things we say, even though ye disapprove the things we do. But to us it is a very small thing that we be judged by you, or of any human assize. Of how near and dear charity is our care on your behalf, let Him look into it Who hath given what we may offer to be looked into by His eyes. In fine: think what ye will of us: Paul the Apostle enjoins and beseeches you in the Lord, that with silence, that is, quietly and obediently ordered, ye do work and eat your own bread. Of him, as I suppose, ye believe no evil, and He who by him doth speak, on Him have ye believed.

38. These things, my brother Aurelius, most dear unto me, and in the bowels of Christ to be venerated, so far as He hath bestowed on me the ability Who through thee commanded me to do it, touching work of Monks, I have not delayed to write; making this my chief care, lest good brethren obeying apostolic precepts, should by lazy and disobedient be called even prevaricators from the Gospel: that they which work not, may at the least account them which do work to be better than themselves without doubt. But who can bear that contumacious persons resisting most wholesome admonitions of the Apostle, should, not as weaker brethren be borne withal, but even be preached up as holier men; insomuch that monasteries founded on sounder doctrine should be by this double enticement corrupted, the dissolute license of vacation from labor, and the false name of sanctity? Let it be known then to the rest, our brethren and sons, who are accustomed to favor such men, and through ignorance to defend this kind of presumption,

that they need themselves most chiefly to be corrected, in order that those may be corrected, nor that they become “weary in well-doing.” Truly, in that they do promptly and with alacrity minister unto the servants of God the things they need, not only we blame them not, but we most cordially embrace them: only let them not with perverse mercy more hurt these men’s future life, than to their present life they render aid.

39. For there is less sin, if people do not praise the sinner in the desires of his soul, and speak good of him who practiseth iniquities. Now what is more an iniquity than to wish to be obeyed by inferiors, and to refuse to obey superiors? The Apostle, I mean, not us: insomuch that they even let their hair grow long: a matter, of which he would have no disputing at all, saying, “If any chooseth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Church of God. Now this I command;” which gives us to understand that it is not cleverness of reasoning that we are to look for, but authority of one giving command to attend unto. For whereunto, I pray thee, pertaineth this also, that people so openly against the Apostle’s precepts wear long hair? Is it that there must be in such sort vacation, that not even the barbers are to work? Or, because they say that they imitate the Gospel birds, do they fear to be, as it were, plucked, lest they be not able to fly? I shrink from saying more against this fault, out of respect for certain long-haired brethren, in whom, except this, we find much, and well-nigh every thing, to venerate. But the more we love them in Christ, the more solicitously do we admonish them. Nor are we afraid indeed, lest their humility reject our admonition; seeing that we also desire to be admonished by such as they, wherever we chance to stumble or to go aside. This then we admonish so holy men, not to be moved by foolish quibblings of vain persons, and imitate in this perversity them whom in all else they are far from resembling. For those persons, hawking about a venal hypocrisy, fear lest shorn sanctity be held cheaper than long-haired; because forsooth he who sees them shall call to mind those ancients whom we read of, Samuel and the rest who did not cut off their hair. And they do not consider what is the difference between that prophetic veil, and this unveiling which is in the Gospel, of which the Apostle saith, “When thou shall go over unto Christ, the veil shall be taken away.” That, namely, which was signified in the veil interposed between the face of Moses and the beholding of the people

Israel, that same was also signified in those times by the long hair of the Saints. For the same Apostle saith, that long hair is also instead of a veil: by whose authority these men are hard pressed. Seeing he saith openly, “If a man wear long hair, it is a disgrace to him.” “The very disgrace,” say they, “we take upon us, for desert of our sins:” holding out a screen of simulated humility, to the end that under cover of it they may carry on their trade of self-importance. Just as if the Apostle were teaching pride when he says, “Every man praying or prophesying with veiled head shameth his head;” and, “A man ought not to veil his head, forsomuch as he is the image and glory of God.” Consequently he who says, “Ought not,” knows not perchance how to teach humility! However, if this same disgrace in time of the Gospel, which was a thing of a holy meaning in time of Prophecy, be by these people courted as matter of humility, then let them be shorn, and veil their head with haircloth. Only then there will be none of that attracting of people’s eyes in which they trade, because Samson was veiled not with haircloth, but with his long hair.

40. And then that further device of theirs, (if words can express it), how painfully ridiculous is it, which they have invented for defense of their long locks! “A man,” say they, “the Apostle hath forbidden to have long hair: but then they who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of God are no longer men.” O dotage unparalleled! Well may the person who says this arm himself against Holy Scripture’s most manifest proclamations, with counsel of outrageous impiety, and persevere in a tortuous path, and essay to bring in a pestiferous doctrine that not “Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, and in the way of sinners hath not stood, and in the chair of noisome wickedness hath not sat.” For if he would meditate in God’s law day and night, there he should find the Apostle Paul himself, who assuredly professing highest chastity saith, “I would that all men were even as I:” and yet shows himself a man, not only in so being, but also in so speaking. For he saith, “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; when I became a man, I put away childish things.” But why should I mention the Apostle, when concerning our Lord and Saviour Himself they know not what they think who say these things. For of Whom but Him is it said, “Until we come all to unity of faith and to knowledge of the Son of God, to the Perfect Man, to

the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ; that we be no longer babes, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine, in sleight of men, in cunning craftiness for machination of error.” With which sleight these persons deceive ignorant people, with which cunning craftiness and machinations of the enemy both they themselves are whirled round, and in their whirling essay to make the minds of the weak which cohere unto them so (in a manner) to spin round with them, that they also may not know where they are. For they have heard or read that which is written, “Whosoever of you have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ: where is no Jew nor Greek; no bond nor free; no male nor female.” And they do not understand that it is in reference to concupiscence of carnal sex that this is said, because in the inner man, wherein we are renewed in newness of our mind, no sex of this kind exists. Then let them not deny themselves to be men, just because in respect of their masculine sex they work not. For wedded Christians also who do this work, are of course not Christians on the score of that which they have in common with the rest who are not Christians and with the very cattle. For that is one thing that is either to infirmity conceded or to mortal propagation paid as a debt, but another that which for the laying hold of incorrupt and eternal life is by faithful profession signified. That then which concerning not veiling of the head is enjoined to men, in the body indeed it is set forth in a figure, but that it is enacted in the mind, wherein is the image and glory of God, the words themselves do indicate: “A man indeed,” it saith, “ought not to veil his head, forsomuch as he is the image and glory of God.” For where this image is, he doth himself declare, where he saith, “Lie not one to another; but stripping off the old man with his deeds, put ye on the new, which is renewed to the acknowledging of God, according to the image of Him who created him.” Who can doubt that this renewing takes place in the mind? But and if any doubt, let him hear a more open sentence. For, giving the same admonition, he thus saith in another place: “As is the truth in Jesus, that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, him which is corrupt according to the lust of deception; but be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, him which after God is created.” What then? Have women not this renewal of mind in which is the image of God? Who would say this? But in the sex of their body they do not signify this; therefore they are bidden to be veiled. The part, namely, which they signify in the very fact of their being women, is that which may be called the concupiscential part, over which the mind bears rule, itself also subjected to its God, when life is most rightly and orderly conducted. What, therefore, in a single individual human being is the mind and the concupiscence, (that ruling, this ruled; that lord, this subject,) the same in two human beings, man and woman, is in regard of the sex of the body exhibited in a figure. Of which sacred import the Apostle speaks when he says, that the man ought not to be veiled, the women ought. For the mind doth the more gloriously advance to higher things, the more diligently the concupiscence is curbed from lower things; until the whole man together with even this now mortal and frail body in the last resurrection be clothed with incorruption and immortality, and death be swallowed up in victory.

41. Wherefore, they which will not do right things, let them give over at least to teach wrong things. Howbeit they be others whom in this speech we reprove: but as for those who by this one fault, of letting their hair contrary to apostolic precept grow long, offend and trouble the Church, because when some being unwilling to think of them any thing amiss are forced to twist the manifest words of the Apostle into a wrong meaning, others choose to defend the sound understanding of the Scriptures rather than fawn upon any men, there arise between the weaker and the stronger brethren most bitter and perilous contentions: which things perchance if they knew, these would correct without hesitation this also, in whom we admire and love all else. Those then we not reprove, but ask and solemnly beseech by the Godhead and the Manhood of Christ and by the charity of the Holy Ghost, that they no more put this stumbling-block before the weak for whom Christ died, and aggravate the grief and torment of our heart when we bethink us how much more readily evil men can imitate this evil thing for deceiving of mankind, when they see this in them whom on the score of other so great good we with deserved offices of Christian love do honor. If however, after this admonition, or rather this solemn entreaty of ours, they shall think fit to persevere in the same, we shall do nothing else but only grieve and mourn. This let them know; it is enough. If they be servants of God, they have pity. If they have not pity, I will not say any thing worse. All these things, therefore, in the which peradventure I have been more loquacious than the occupations both of thee and of me could wish, if thou

approve the same, make thou to be known to our brethren and sons, on whose behalf thou hast deigned to put this burden upon me: but if aught seem to thee meet to be withdrawn or amended, by reply of your Blessedness I shall know the same.

ON BAPTISM, AGAINST THE DONATISTS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE BAPTISMO, CONTRA DONATISTAS, LIBRI VII)

CIRCA A.D. 400.

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. J. R. KING, M.A., VICAR OF ST. PETER’S IN THE EAST, OXFORD; AND LATE FELLOW AND TUTOR OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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Preface

This treatise was written about 400 A.D. Concerning it Aug. in Retract. Book II. c. xviii., says: I have written seven books on Baptism against the Donatists, who strive to defend themselves by the authority of the most blessed bishop and martyr Cyprian; in which I show that nothing is so effectual for the refutation of the Donatists, and for shutting their mouths directly from upholding their schism against the Catholic Church, as the letters and act of Cyprian.

Book I

He proves that baptism can be conferred outside the Catholic communion by heretics or schismatics, but that it ought not to be received from them; and that it is of no avail to any while in a state of heresy or schism.

CHAPTER 1

1. In the treatise which we wrote against the published epistle of Parmenianus to Tichonius, we promised that at some future time we would treat the question of baptism more thoroughly; and indeed, even if we had not made this promise, we are not unmindful that this is a debt fairly due from us to the prayers of our brethren. Wherefore in this treatise we have undertaken, with the help of God, not only to refute the objections which the Donatists have been wont to urge against us in this matter, but also to advance what God may enable us to say in respect of the authority of the blessed martyr Cyprian, which they endeavor to use as a prop, to prevent their perversity from falling before the attacks of truth. And this we propose to do, in order that all whose judgment is not blinded by party spirit may understand that, so far from Cyprian's authority being in their favor, it tends directly to their refutation and discomfiture

2. In the treatise above mentioned, it has already been said that the grace of baptism can be conferred outside the Catholic communion, just as it can be also there retained. But no one of the Donatists themselves denies that even apostates retain the grace of baptism; for when they return within the pale of the Church, and are converted through repentance, it is never given to them a second time, and so it is ruled that it never could have been lost. So those, too, who in the sacrilege of schism depart from the communion of the Church, certainly retain the grace of baptism, which they received before their departure, seeing that, in case of their return, it is not again conferred on them whence it is proved, that what they had received while within the unity of the Church, they could not have lost in their separation. But if it can be retained outside, why may it not also be given there? If you say, "It

is not rightly given without the pale;" we answer, "As it is not rightly retained, and yet is in some sense retained, so it is not indeed rightly given, but yet it is given." But as, by reconciliation to unity, that begins to be profitably possessed which was possessed to no profit in exclusion from unity, so, by the same reconciliation, that begins to be profitable which without it was given to no profit. Yet it cannot be allowed that it should be said that that was not given which was given, nor that any one should reproach a man with not having given this, while confessing that he had given what he had himself received. For the sacrament of baptism is what the person possesses who is baptized; and the sacrament of conferring baptism is what he possesses who is ordained. And as the baptized person, if he depart from the unity of the Church, does not thereby lose the sacrament of baptism, so also he who is ordained, if he depart from the unity of the Church, does not lose the sacrament of conferring baptism. For neither sacrament may be wronged. If a sacrament necessarily becomes void in the case of the wicked, both must become void; if it remain valid with the wicked, this must be so with both. If, therefore, the baptism be acknowledged which he could not lose who severed himself from the unity of the Church, that baptism must also be acknowledged which was administered by one who by his secession had not lost the sacrament of conferring baptism. For as those who return to the Church, if they had been baptized before their secession, are not rebaptized, so those who return, having been ordained before their secession, are certainly not ordained again; but either they again exercise their former ministry, if the interests of the Church require it, or if they do not exercise it, at any rate they retain the sacrament of their ordination; and hence it is, that when hands are laid on them, to mark their reconciliation, they are not ranked with the laity. For Felicianus, when he separated himself from them with Maximianus, was not held by the Donatists themselves to have lost either the sacrament of baptism or the sacrament of conferring baptism. For now he is a recognized member of their own body, in company with those very men whom he baptized while he was separated from them in the schism of Maximianus. And so others could receive from them, whilst they still had not joined our society, what they themselves had not lost by severance from our society. And hence it is clear that they are guilty of impiety who endeavor to rebaptize those who are in Catholic unity; and we act rightly who do not dare to repudiate God’s sacraments, even when administered in schism. For in all points in which they think with us, they also are in communion with us, and only are severed from us in those points in which they dissent from us. For contact and disunion are not to be measured by different laws in the case of material or spiritual affinities. For as union of bodies arises from continuity of position, so in the agreement of wills there is a kind of contact between souls. If, therefore, a man who has severed himself from unity wishes to do anything different from that which had been impressed on him while in the state of unity, in this point he does sever himself, and is no longer a part of the united whole; but wherever he desires to conduct himself as is customary in the state of unity, in which he himself learned and received the lessons which he seeks to follow, in these points he remains a member, and is united to the corporate whole.

CHAPTER 2

3. And so the Donatists in some matters are with us; in some matters have gone out from us. Accordingly, those things wherein they agree with us we do not forbid them to do; but in those things in which they differ from us, we earnestly encourage them to come and receive them from us, or return and recover them, as the case may be; and with whatever means we can, we lovingly busy ourselves, that they, freed from faults and corrected, may choose this course. We do not therefore say to them, “Abstain from giving baptism,” but “Abstain from giving it in schism.” Nor do we say to those whom we see them on the point of baptizing, “Do not receive the baptism,” but “Do not receive it in schism.” For if any one were compelled by urgent necessity, being unable to find a Catholic from whom to receive baptism, and so, while preserving Catholic peace in his heart, should receive from one without the pale of Catholic unity the sacrament which he was intending to receive within its pale, this man, should he forthwith depart this life, we deem to be none other than a Catholic. But if he should be delivered from the death of the body, on his restoring himself in bodily presence to that Catholic congregation from which in heart he had never departed, so far from blaming his conduct, we should praise it with the greatest truth and confidence; because he trusted that God was present to his heart, while he was striving to preserve unity, and was unwilling to

depart this life without the sacrament of holy baptism, which he knew to be of God, and not of men; wherever he might find it. But if any one who has it in his power to receive baptism within the Catholic Church prefers, from some perversity of mind, to be baptized in schism, even if he afterwards bethinks himself to come to the Catholic Church, because he is assured that there that sacrament will profit him, which can indeed be received but cannot profit elsewhere, beyond all question he is perverse, and guilty of sin, and that the more flagrant in proportion as it was committed wilfully. For that he entertains no doubt that the sacrament is rightly received in the Church, is proved by his conviction that it is there that he must look for profit even from what he has received elsewhere

CHAPTER 3

4. There are two propositions, moreover, which we affirm,—that baptism exists in the Catholic Church, and that in it alone can it be rightly received,—both of which the Donatists deny. Likewise there are two other propositions which we affirm,—that baptism exists among the Donatists, but that with them it is not rightly received, of which two they strenuously confirm the former, that baptism exists with them; but they are unwilling to allow the latter, that in their Church it cannot be rightly received. Of these four propositions, three are peculiar to us; in one we both agree. For that baptism exists in the Catholic Church, that it is rightly received there, and that it is not rightly received among the Donatists, are assertions made only by ourselves; but that baptism exists also among the Donatists, is asserted by them and allowed by us. If any one, therefore, is desirous of being baptized, and is already convinced that he ought to choose our Church as a medium for Christian salvation, and that the baptism of Christ is only profitable in it, even when it has been received elsewhere, but yet wishes to be baptized in the schism of Donatus, because not they only, nor we only, but both parties alike say that baptism exists with them, let him pause and look to the other three points. For if he has made up his mind to follow us in the points which they deny, though he prefers what both of us acknowledge, to what only we assert, it is enough for our purpose that he prefers what they do not affirm and we alone assert, to what they alone assert. That baptism exists in the Catholic Church, we assert and they deny. That it is

rightly received in the Catholic Church, we assert and they deny. That it is not rightly received in the schism of Donatus, we assert and they deny. As, therefore, he is the more ready to believe what we alone assert should be believed, so let him be the more ready to do what we alone declare should be done. But let him believe more firmly, if he be so disposed, what both parties assert should be believed, than what we alone maintain. For he is inclined to believe more firmly that the baptism of Christ exists in the schism of Donatus, because that is acknowledged by both of us, than that it exists in the Catholic Church, an assertion made alone by the Catholics. But again, he is more ready to believe that the baptism of Christ exists also with us, as we alone assert, than that it does not exist with us, as they alone assert. For he has already determined and is fully convinced, that where we differ, our authority is to be preferred to theirs. So that he is more ready to believe what we alone assert, that baptism is rightly received with us, than that it is not rightly so received, since that rests only on their assertion. And, by the same rule, he is more ready to believe what we alone assert, that it is not rightly received with them, than as they alone assert, that it is rightly so received. He finds, therefore, that his confidence in being baptized among the Donatists is somewhat profitless, seeing that, though we both acknowledge that baptism exists with them, yet we do not both declare that it ought to be received from them. But he has made up his mind to cling rather to us in matters where we disagree. Let him therefore feel confidence in receiving baptism in our communion, where he is assured that it both exists and is rightly received; and let him not receive it in a communion, where those whose opinion he has determined to follow acknowledge indeed that it exists, but say that it cannot rightly be received. Nay, even if he should hold it to be a doubtful question, whether or no it is impossible for that to be rightly received among the Donatists which he is assured can rightly be received in the Catholic Church, he would commit a grievous sin, in matters concerning the salvation of his soul, in the mere fact of preferring uncertainty to certainty. At any rate, he must be quite sure that a man can be rightly baptized in the Catholic Church, from the mere fact that he has determined to come over to it, even if he be baptized elsewhere. But let him at least acknowledge it to be matter of uncertainty whether a man be not improperly baptized among the Donatists, when he finds this asserted by those whose opinion he is convinced should be preferred to theirs; and, preferring certainty to uncertainty, let him be baptized here, where he has good grounds for being assured that it is rightly done, in the fact that when he thought of doing it elsewhere, he had still determined that he ought afterwards to come over to this side

CHAPTER 4

5. Further, if any one fails to understand how it can be that we assert that the sacrament is not rightly conferred among the Donatists, while we confess that it exists among them, let him observe that we also deny that it exists rightly among them, just as they deny that it exists rightly among those who quit their communion. Let him also consider the analogy of the military mark, which, though it can both be retained, as by deserters, and, also be received by those who are not in the army, yet ought not to be either received or retained outside its ranks; and, at the same time, it is not changed or renewed when a man is enlisted or brought back to his service. However, we must distinguish between the case of those who unwittingly join the ranks of these heretics, under the impression that they are entering the true Church of Christ, and those who know that there is no other Catholic Church save that which, according to the promise, is spread abroad throughout the whole world, and extends even to the utmost limits of the earth; which, rising amid tares, and seeking rest in the future from the weariness of offenses, says in the Book of Psalms, “From the end of the earth I cried unto Thee, while my heart was in weariness: Thou didst exalt me on a rock.” But the rock was Christ, in whom the apostle says that we are now raised up, and set together in heavenly places, though not yet actually, but only in hope. And so the psalm goes on to say, “Thou wast my guide, because Thou art become my hope, a tower of strength from the face of the enemy.” By means of His promises, which are like spears and javelins stored up in a strongly fortified place, the enemy is not only guarded against, but overthrown, as he clothes his wolves in sheep’s clothing, that they may say, “Lo, here is Christ, or there;” and that they may separate many from the Catholic city which is built upon a hill, and bring them down to the isolation of their own snares, so as utterly to destroy them. And these men, knowing this, choose to receive the baptism of Christ without the limits of the communion of the unity of Christ’s body, though

they intend afterwards, with the sacrament which they have received elsewhere, to pass into that very communion. For they propose to receive Christ's baptism in antagonism to the Church of Christ, well knowing that it is so even on the very day on which they receive it. And if this is a sin, who is the man that will say, Grant that for a single day I may commit sin? For if he proposes to pass over to the Catholic Church, I would fain ask why. What other answer can he give, but that it is ill to belong to the party of Donatus, and not to the unity of the Catholic Church? Just so many days, then, as you commit this ill, of so many days' sin are you going to be guilty. And it may be said that there is greater sin in more days' commission of it, and less in fewer; but in no wise can it be said that no sin is committed at all. But what is the need of allowing this accursed wrong for a single day, or a single hour? For the man who wishes this license to be granted him, might as well ask of the Church, or of God Himself, that for a single day he should be permitted to apostatize. For there is no reason why he should fear to be an apostate for a day, if he does not shrink from being for that time a schismatic or a heretic

CHAPTER 5

6. I prefer, he says, to receive Christ's baptism where both parties agree that it exists. But those whom you intend to join say that it cannot be received there rightly; and those who say that it can be received there rightly are the party whom you mean to quit. What they say, therefore, whom you yourself consider of inferior authority, in opposition to what those say whom you yourself prefer, is, if not false, at any rate, to use a milder term, at least uncertain. I entreat you, therefore, to prefer what is true to what is false, or what is certain to what is uncertain. For it is not only those whom you are going to join, but you yourself who are going to join them, that confess that what you want can be rightly received in that body which you mean to join when you have received it elsewhere. For if you had any doubts whether it could be rightly received there, you would also have doubts whether you ought to make the change. If, therefore, it is doubtful whether it be not sin to receive baptism from the party of Donatus, who can doubt but that it is certain sin not to prefer receiving it where it is certain that it is not sin? And those who are baptized there through ignorance, thinking that it is the true

Church of Christ, are guilty of less sin in comparison than these, though even they are wounded by the impiety of schism; nor do they escape a grievous hurt, because others suffer even more. For when it is said to certain men, “It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you,” it is not meant that the men of Sodom shall escape torment, but only that the others shall be even more grievously tormented

7. And yet this point had once, perhaps, been involved in obscurity and doubt. But that which is a source of health to those who give heed and receive correction, is but an aggravation of the sin of those who, when they are no longer suffered to be ignorant, persist in their madness to their own destruction. For the condemnation of the party of Maximianus, and their restoration after they had been condemned, together with those whom they had sacrilegiously, to use the language of their own Council, baptized in schism, settles the whole question in dispute, and removes all controversy. There is no point at issue between ourselves and those Donatists who hold communion with Primianus, which could give rise to any doubt that the baptism of Christ may not only be retained, but even conferred by those who are severed from the Church. For as they themselves are obliged to confess that those whom Felicianus baptized in schism received true baptism, inasmuch as they now acknowledge them as members of their own body, with no other baptism than that which they received in schism; so we say that that is Christ’s baptism, even without the pale of Catholic communion, which they confer who are cut off from that communion, inasmuch as they had not lost it when they were cut off. And what they themselves think that they conferred on those persons whom Felicianus baptized in schism, when they admitted them to reconcilation with themselves, viz., not that they should receive that which they did not as yet possess, but that what they had received to no advantage in schism, and were already in possession of, should be of profit to them, this God really confers and bestows through the Catholic communion on those who come from any heresy or schism in which they received the baptism of Christ; viz., not that they should begin to receive the sacrament of baptism as not possessing it before, but that what they already possessed should now begin to profit them.

CHAPTER 6

8. Between us, then, and what we may call the genuine Donatists, whose bishop is Primianus at Carthage, there is now no controversy on this point. For God willed that it should be ended by means of the followers of Maximianus, that they should be compelled by the precedent of his case to acknowledge what they would not allow at the persuasion of Christian charity. But this brings us to consider next, whether those men do not seem to have something to say for themselves, who refuse communion with the party of Primianus, contending that in their body there remains greater sincerity of Donatism, just in proportion to the paucity of their numbers. And even if these were only the party of Maximianus, we should not be justified in despising their salvation. How much more, then, are we bound to consider it, when we find that this same party of Donatus is split up into many most minute fractions, all which small sections of the body blame the one much larger portion which has Primianus for its head, because they receive the baptism of the followers of Maximianus; while each endeavors to maintain that it is the sole receptacle of true baptism, which exists nowhere else, neither in the whole of the world where the Catholic Church extends itself, nor in that larger main body of the Donatists, nor even in the other minute sections, but only in itself. Whereas, if all these fragments would listen not to the voice of man, but to the most unmistakable manifestation of the truth, and would be willing to curb the fiery temper of their own perversity, they would return from their own barrenness, not indeed to the main body of Donatus, a mere fragment of which they are a smaller fragment, but to the never-failing fruitfulness of the root of the Catholic Church. For all of them who are not against us are for us; but when they gather not with us, they scatter abroad

CHAPTER 7

9. For, in the next place, that I may not seem to rest on mere human arguments,—since there is so much obscurity in this question, that in earlier ages of the Church, before the schism of Donatus, it has caused men of great weight, and even our fathers, the bishops, whose hearts were full of charity, so to dispute and doubt among themselves, saving always the peace of the Church, that the several statutes of their Councils in their different

districts long varied from each other, till at length the most wholesome opinion was established, to the removal of all doubts, by a plenary Council of the whole world:—I therefore bring forward from the gospel clear proofs, by which I propose, with God's help, to prove how rightly and truly in the sight of God it has been determined, that in the case of every schismatic and heretic, the wound which caused his separation should be cured by the medicine of the Church; but that what remained sound in him should rather be recognized with approbation, than wounded by condemnation. It is indeed true that the Lord says in the gospel, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Yet when the disciples had brought word to Him that they had seen one casting out devils in His name, and had forbidden him, because he followed not them, He said, "Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us. For there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me." If, indeed, there were nothing in this man requiring correction, then any one would be safe who, setting himself outside the communion of the Church, severing himself from all Christian brotherhood, should gather in Christ's name; and so there would be no truth in this, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." But if he required correction in the point where the disciples in their ignorance were anxious to check him, why did our Lord, by saying, "Forbid him not," prevent this check from being given? And how can that be true which He then says, "He that is not against you is for you?" For in this point he was not against, but for them, when he was working miracles of healing in Christ's name. That both, therefore, should be true, as both are true,—both the declaration, that "he that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad;" and also the injunction, "Forbid him not; for he that is not against you is for you,"—what must we understand, except that the man was to be confirmed in his veneration for that mighty Name, in respect of which he was not against the Church, but for it; and yet he was to be blamed for separating himself from the Church, whereby his gathering became a scattering; and if it should have so happened that he sought union with the Church, he should not have received what he already possessed, but be made to set right the points wherein he had gone astray?

10. Nor indeed were the prayers of the Gentile Cornelius unheard, nor did his alms lack acceptance; nay, he was found worthy that an angel should be sent to him, and that he should behold the messenger, through whom he might assuredly have learned everything that was necessary, without requiring that any man should come to him. But since all the good that he had in his prayers and alms could not benefit him unless he were incorporated in the Church by the bond of Christian brotherhood and peace, he was ordered to send to Peter, and through him learned Christ; and, being also baptized by his orders, he was joined by the tie of communion to the fellowship of Christians, to which before he was bound only by the likeness of good works. And indeed it would have been most fatal to despise what he did not yet possess, vaunting himself in what he had. So too those who, by separating themselves from the society of their fellows, to the overthrow of charity, thus break the bond of unity, if they observe none of the things which they have received in that society, are separated in everything; and so any one whom they have joined to their society, if he afterwards wish to come over to the Church, ought to receive everything which he has not already received. But if they observe some of the same things, in respect of these they have not severed themselves; and so far they are still a part of the framework of the Church, while in all other respects they are cut off from it. Accordingly, any one whom they have associated with themselves is united to the Church in all those points in which they are not separated from it. And therefore, if he wish to come over to the Church, he is made sound in those points in which he was unsound and went astray; but where he was sound in union with the Church, he is not cured, but recognized,—lest in desiring to cure what is sound we should rather inflict a wound. Therefore those whom they baptize they heal from the wound of idolatry or unbelief; but they injure them more seriously with the wound of schism. For idolaters among the people of the Lord were smitten with the sword; but schismatics were swallowed up by the earth opening her mouth. And the apostle says, “Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.”

11. If any one is brought to the surgeon, afflicted with a grievous wound in some vital part of the body, and the surgeon says that unless it is cured it

must cause death, the friends who brought him do not, I presume, act so foolishly as to count over to the surgeon all his sound limbs, and, drawing his attention to them, make answer to him, “Can it be that all these sound limbs are of no avail to save his life, and that one wounded limb is enough to cause his death?” They certainly do not say this, but they entrust him to the surgeon to be cured. Nor, again, because they so entrust him, do they ask the surgeon to cure the limbs that are sound as well; but they desire him to apply drugs with all care to the one part from which death is threatening the other sound parts too, with the certainty that it must come, unless the wound be healed. What will it then profit a man that he has sound faith, or perhaps only soundness in the sacrament of faith, when the soundness of his charity is done away with by the fatal wound of schism, so that by the overthrow of it the other points, which were in themselves sound, are brought into the infection of death? To prevent which, the mercy of God, through the unity of His holy Church, does not cease striving that they may come and be healed by the medicine of reconciliation, through the bond of peace. And let them not think that they are sound because we admit that they have something sound in them; nor let them think, on the other hand, that what is sound must needs be healed, because we show that in some parts there is a wound. So that in the soundness of the sacrament, because they are not against us, they are for us; but in the wound of schism, because they gather not with Christ, they scatter abroad. Let them not be exalted by what they have. Why do they pass the eyes of pride over those parts only which are sound? Let them condescend also to look humbly on their wound, and give heed not only to what they have, but also to what is wanting in them.

CHAPTER 9

12. Let them see how many things, and what important things, are of no avail, if a certain single thing be wanting, and let them see what that one thing is. And herein let them hear not my words, but those of the apostle: “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not

charity, I am nothing.” What does it profit them, therefore, if they have both the voice of angels in the sacred mysteries, and the gift of prophecy, as had Caiaphas and Saul, that so they may be found prophesying, of whom Holy Scripture testifies that they were worthy of condemnation? If they not only know, but even possess the sacraments, as Simon Magus did; if they have faith, as the devils confessed Christ (for we must not suppose that they did not believe when they said, “What have we to do with Thee, O Son of God? We know Thee who Thou art” ; if they distribute of themselves their own substance to the poor, as many do, not only in the Catholic Church, but in the different heretical bodies; if, under the pressure of any persecution, they give their bodies with us to be burned for the faith which they like us confess: yet because they do all these things apart from the Church, not “forbearing one another in love,” nor “endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,” insomuch as they have not charity, they cannot attain to eternal salvation, even with all those good things which profit them not

CHAPTER 10

13. But they think within themselves that they show very great subtlety in asking whether the baptism of Christ in the party of Donatus makes men sons or not; so that, if we allow that it does make them sons, they may assert that theirs is the Church, the mother which could give birth to sons in the baptism of Christ; and since the Church must be one, they may allege that ours is no Church. But if we say that it does not make them sons, “Why then,” say they, “do you not cause those who pass from us to you to be born again in baptism, after they have been baptized with us, if they are not thereby born as yet?”

14. Just as though their party gained the power of generation in virtue of what constitutes its division, and not from what causes its union with the Church. For it is severed from the bond of peace and charity, but it is joined in one baptism. And so there is one Church which alone is called Catholic; and whenever it has anything of its own in these communions of different bodies which are separate from itself, it is most certainly in virtue of this which is its own in each of them that it, not they, has the power of generation. For neither is it their separation that generates, but what they

have retained of the essence of the Church; and if they were to go on to abandon this, they would lose the power of generation. The generation, then, in each case proceeds from the Church, whose sacraments are retained, from which any such birth can alone in any case proceed,—although not all who receive its birth belong to its unity, which shall save those who persevere even to the end. Nor is it those only that do not belong to it who are openly guilty of the manifest sacrilege of schism, but also those who, being outwardly joined to its unity, are yet separated by a life of sin. For the Church had herself given birth to Simon Magus through the sacrament of baptism; and yet it was declared to him that he had no part in the inheritance of Christ. Did he lack anything in respect of baptism, of the gospel, of the sacraments? But in that he wanted charity, he was born in vain; and perhaps it had been well for him that he had never been born at all. Was anything wanting to their birth to whom the apostle says, “I have fed you with milk, and not with meat, even as babes in Christ”? Yet he recalls them from the sacrilege of schism, into which they were rushing, because they were carnal: “I have fed you,” he says, “with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not men?” For of these he says above: “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloee, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” These, therefore, if they continued in the same perverse obstinacy, were doubtless indeed born, but yet would not belong by the bond of peace and unity to the very Church in respect of which they were born. Therefore she herself bears them in her own womb and in the womb of her handmaids, by virtue of the same sacraments, as though by virtue of the seed of her husband. For it is not without meaning that the apostle says that all these things were done by way of figure. But those who are too proud, and are not joined to their lawful mother, are like

Ishmael, of whom it is said, “Cast out this bond-woman and her Son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.” But those who peacefully love the lawful wife of their father, whose sons they are by lawful descent, are like the sons of Jacob, born indeed of handmaids, but yet receiving the same inheritance. But those who are born within the family, of the womb of the mother herself, and then neglect the grace they have received, are like Isaac’s son Esau, who was rejected, God Himself bearing witness to it, and saying, “I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau;” and that though they were twin-brethren, the offspring of the same womb.

CHAPTER 11

15. They ask also, “Whether sins are remitted in baptism in the party of Donatus:” so that, if we say that they are remitted, they may answer, then the Holy Spirit is there; for when by the breathing of our Lord the Holy Spirit was given to the disciples, He then went on to say, “Baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.” And if it is so, they say, then our communion is the Church of Christ; for the Holy Spirit does not work the remission of sins except in the Church. And if our communion is the Church of Christ, then your communion is not the Church of Christ. For that is one, wherever it is, of which it is said, “My dove is but one; she is the only one of her mother;” nor can there be just so many churches as there are schisms. But if we should say that sins are not there remitted, then, say they, there is no true baptism there; and therefore ought you to baptize those whom you receive from us. And since you do not do this, you confess that you are not in the Church of Christ

16. To these we reply, following the Scriptures, by asking them to answer themselves what they ask of us. For I beg them to tell us whether there is any remission of sins where there is not charity; for sins are the darkness of the soul. For we find St. John saying, “He that hateth his brother is still in darkness.” But none would create schisms, if they were not blinded by hatred of their brethren. If, therefore, we say that sins are not remitted there, how is he regenerate who is baptized among them? And what is regeneration in baptism, except the being renovated from the corruption of

the old man? And how can he be so renovated whose past sins are not remitted? But if he be not regenerate, neither does he put on Christ; from which it seems to follow that he ought to be baptized again. For the apostle says, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ;” and if he has not so put on Christ, neither should he be considered to have been baptized in Christ. Further, since we say that he has been baptized in Christ, we confess that he has put on Christ; and if we confess this, we confess that he is regenerate. And if this be so, how does St. John say, “He that hateth his brother remaineth still in darkness,” if remission of his sins has already taken place? Can it be that schism does not involve hatred of one’s brethren? Who will maintain this, when both the origin of, and perseverance in schism consists in nothing else save hatred of the brethren?

17. They think that they solve this question when they say: “There is then no remission of sins in schism, and therefore no creation of the new man by regeneration, and accordingly neither is there the baptism of Christ.” But since we confess that the baptism of Christ exists in schism, we propose this question to them for solution: Was Simon Magus endued with the true baptism of Christ? They will answer, Yes; being compelled to do so by the authority of holy Scripture. I ask them whether they confess that he received remission of his sins. They will certainly acknowledge it. So I ask why Peter said to him that he had no part in the lot of the saints. Because, they say, he sinned afterwards, wishing to buy with money the gift of God, which he believed the apostles were able to sell.

CHAPTER 12

18. What if he approached baptism itself in deceit? were his sins remitted, or were they not? Let them choose which they will. Whichever they choose will answer our purpose. If they say they were remitted, how then shall “the Holy Spirit of discipline flee deceit,” if in him who was full of deceit He worked remission of sins? If they say they were not remitted, I ask whether, if he should afterwards confess his sin with contrition of heart and true sorrow, it would be judged that he ought to be baptized again. And if it is mere madness to assert this, then let them confess that a man can be baptized with the true baptism of Christ, and that yet his heart, persisting in

malice or sacrilege, may not allow remission of sins to be given; and so let them understand that men may be baptized in communions severed from the Church, in which Christ's baptism is given and received in the said celebration of the sacrament, but that it will only then be of avail for the remission of sins, when the recipient, being reconciled to the unity of the Church, is purged from the sacrilege of deceit, by which his sins were retained, and their remission prevented. For, as in the case of him who had approached the sacrament in deceit there is no second baptism, but he is purged by faithful discipline and truthful confession, which he could not be without baptism, so that what was given before becomes then powerful to work his salvation, when the former deceit is done away by the truthful confession; so also in the case of the man who, while an enemy to the peace and love of Christ, received in any heresy or schism the baptism of Christ, which the schismatics in question had not lost from among them, though by his sacrilege his sins were not remitted, yet, when he corrects his error, and comes over to the communion and unity of the Church, he ought not to be again baptized: because by his very reconciliation to the peace of the Church he receives this benefit, that the sacrament now begins in unity to be of avail for the remission of his sins, which could not so avail him as received in schism

19. But if they should say that in the man who has approached the sacrament in deceit, his sins are indeed removed by the holy power of so great a sacrament at the moment when he received it, but return immediately in consequence of his deceit: so that the Holy Spirit has both been present with him at his baptism for the removal of his sins, and has also fled before his perseverance in deceit so that they should return: so that both declarations prove true,—both, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ;" and also, "The holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit;"—that is to say, that both the holiness of baptism clothes him with Christ, and the sinfulness of deceit strips him of Christ; like the case of a man who passes from darkness through light into darkness again, his eyes being always directed towards darkness, though the light cannot but penetrate them as he passes;—if they should say this, let them understand that this is also the case with those who are baptized without the pale of the Church, but yet with the baptism of the Church, which is holy in

itself, wherever it may be; and which therefore belongs not to those who separate themselves, but to the body from which they are separated; while yet it avails even among them so far, that they pass through its light back to their own darkness, their sins, which in that moment had been dispelled by the holiness of baptism, returning immediately upon them, as though it were the darkness returning which the light had dispelled while they were passing through it.

20. For that sins which have been remitted do return upon a man, where there is no brotherly love, is most clearly taught by our Lord, in the case of the servant whom He found owing Him ten thousand talents, and to whom He yet forgave all at his entreaty. But when he refused to have pity on his fellow-servant who owed him a hundred pence, the Lord commanded him to pay what He had forgiven him. The time, then, at which pardon is received through baptism is as it were the time for rendering accounts, so that all the debts which are found to be due may be remitted. Yet it was not afterwards that the servant lent his fellow-servant the money, which he had so pitilessly exacted when the other was unable to pay it; but his fellow-servant already owed him the debt, when he himself, on rendering his accounts to his master, was excused a debt of so vast an amount. He had not first excused his fellow-servant, and so come to receive forgiveness from his Lord. This is proved by the words of the fellow-servant: “Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.” Otherwise he would have said, “You forgave me it before; why do you again demand it?” This is made more clear by the words of the Lord Himself. For He says, “But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants which was owing him a hundred pence.” He does not say, “To whom he had already forgiven a debt of a hundred pence.” Since then He says, “was owing him,” it is clear that he had not forgiven him the debt. And indeed it would have been better, and more in accordance with the position of a man who was going to render an account of so great a debt, and expected forbearance from his lord, that he should first have forgiven his fellow-servant what was due to him, and so have come to render the account when there was such need for imploring the compassion of his lord. Yet the fact that he had not yet forgiven his fellow-servant, did not prevent his lord from forgiving him all his debts on the occasion of receiving his accounts. But what advantage was it to him,

since they all immediately returned with redoubled force upon his head, in consequence of his persistent want of charity? So the grace of baptism is not prevented from giving remission of all sins, even if he to whom they are forgiven continues to cherish hatred towards his brother in his heart. For the guilt of yesterday is remitted, and all that was before it, nay, even the guilt of the very hour and moment previous to baptism, and during baptism itself. But then he immediately begins again to be responsible, not only for the days, hours, moments which ensue, but also for the past,—the guilt of all the sins which were remitted returning on him, as happens only too frequently in the Church.

CHAPTER 13

21. For it often happens that a man has an enemy whom he hates most unjustly; although we are commanded to love even our unjust enemies, and to pray for them. But in some sudden danger of death he begins to be uneasy, and desires baptism, which he receives in such haste, that the emergency scarcely admits of the necessary formal examination of a few words, much less of a long conversation, so that this hatred should be driven from his heart, even supposing it to be known to the minister who baptizes him. Certainly cases of this sort are still found to occur not only with us, but also with them. What shall we say then? Are this man’s sins forgiven or not? Let them choose just which alternative they prefer. For if they are forgiven, they immediately return: this is the teaching of the gospel, the authoritative announcement of truth. Whether, therefore, they are forgiven or not, medicine is necessary afterwards; and yet if the man lives, and learns that his fault stands in need of correction, and corrects it, he is not baptized anew, either with them or with us. So in the points in which schismatics and heretics neither entertain different opinions nor observe different practice from ourselves, we do not correct them when they join us, but rather commend what we find in them. For where they do not differ from us, they are not separated from us. But because these things do them no good so long as they are schismatics or heretics, on account of other points in which they differ from us, not to mention the most grievous sin that is involved in separation itself, therefore, whether their sins remain in them, or return again immediately after remission, in either case we

exhort them to come to the soundness of peace and Christian charity, not only that they may obtain something which they had not before, but also that what they had may begin to be of use to them

CHAPTER 14

22. It is to no purpose, then, that they say to us, “If you acknowledge our baptism, what do we lack that should make you suppose that we ought to think seriously of joining your communion?” For we reply, We do not acknowledge any baptism of yours; for it is not the baptism of schismatics or heretics, but of God and of the Church, wheresoever it may be found, and whithersoever it may be transferred. But it is in no sense yours, except because you entertain false opinions, and do sacrilegious acts, and have impiously separated yourselves from the Church. For if everything else in your practice and opinions were true, and still you were to persist in this same separation, contrary to the bond of brotherly peace, contrary to the union of all the brethren, who have been manifest, according to the promise, in all the world; the particulars of whose history, and the secrets of whose hearts, you never could have known or considered in every case, so as to have a right to condemn them; who, moreover, cannot be liable to condemnation for submitting themselves to the judges of the Church rather than to one of the parties to the dispute,—in this one thing, at least, in such a case, you are deficient, in which he is deficient who lacks charity. Why should we go over our argument again? Look and see yourselves in the apostle, how much there is that you lack. For what does it matter to him who lacks charity, whether he be carried away outside the Church at once by some blast of temptation, or remain within the Lord’s harvest, so as to be separated only at the final winnowing? And yet even such, if they have once been born in baptism, need not be born again

CHAPTER 15

23. For it is the Church that gives birth to all, either within her pale, of her own womb; or beyond it, of the seed of her bridegroom,—(either of herself, or of her handmaid.) But Esau, even though born of the lawful wife, was separated from the people of God because he quarrelled with his brother. And Asher, born indeed by the authority of a wife, but yet of a handmaid,

was admitted to the land of promise on account of his brotherly good-will. Whence also it was not the being born of a handmaid, but his quarrelling with his brother, that stood in the way of Ishmael, to cause his separation from the people of God; and he received no benefit from the power of the wife, whose son he rather was, inasmuch as it was in virtue of her conjugal rights that he was both conceived in and born of the womb of the handmaid. Just as with the Donatists it is by the right of the Church, which exists in baptism, that whosoever is born receives his birth; but if they agree with their brethren, through the unity of peace they come to the land of promise, not to be again cast out from the bosom of their true mother, but to be acknowledged in the seed of their father; but if they persevere in discord, they will belong to the line of Ishmael. For Ishmael was first, and then Isaac; and Esau was the elder, Jacob the younger. Not that heresy gives birth before the Church, or that the Church herself gives birth first to those who are carnal or animal, and afterwards to those who are spiritual; but because, in the actual lot of our mortality, in which we are born of the seed of Adam, “that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual.” But from mere animal sensation, because “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God,” arise all dissensions and schisms. And the apostle says that all who persevere in this animal sensation belong to the old covenant. that is, to the desire of earthly promises, which are indeed the type of the spiritual; but “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.”

24. At whatever time, therefore, men have begun to be of such a nature in this life, that, although they have partaken of such divine sacraments as were appointed for the dispensation under which they lived, they yet savor of carnal things, and hope for and desire carnal things from God, whether in this life or afterwards, they are yet carnal. But the Church, which is the people of God, is an ancient institution even in the pilgrimage of this life, having a carnal interest in some men, a spiritual interest in others. To the carnal belongs the old covenant, to the spiritual the new. But in the first days both were hidden, from Adam even to Moses. But by Moses the old covenant was made manifest, and in it was hidden the new covenant, because after a secret fashion it was typified. But so soon as the Lord came in the flesh, the new covenant was revealed; yet, though the sacraments of

the old covenant passed away; the dispositions peculiar to it did not pass away. For they still exist in those whom the apostle declares to be already born indeed by the sacrament of the new covenant, but yet capable, as being natural, of receiving the things of the Spirit of God. For, as in the sacraments of the old covenant some persons were already spiritual, belonging secretly to the new covenant, which was then concealed, so now also in the sacrament of the new covenant, which has been by this time revealed, many live who are natural. And if they will not advance to receive the things of the Spirit of God, to which the discourse of the apostle urges them, they will still belong to the old covenant. But if they advance, even before they receive them, yet by their very advance and approach they belong to the new covenant; and if, before becoming spiritual, they are snatched away from this life, yet through the protection of the holiness of the sacrament they are reckoned in the land of the living, where the Lord is our hope and our portion. Nor can I find any truer interpretation of the scripture, “Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect” considering what follows, “And in Thy book shall all be written.”

CHAPTER 16

25. But the same mother which brought forth Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham, brought forth also Moses and the prophets who succeeded him till the coming of our Lord; and the mother which gave birth to them gave birth also to our apostles and martyrs, and all good Christians. For all these that have appeared have been born indeed at different times, but are included in the society of our people; and it is as citizens of the same state that they have experienced the labors of this pilgrimage, and some of them are experiencing them, and others will experience them even to the end. Again, the mother who brought forth Cain, and Ham, and Ishmael, and Esau, brought forth also Dathan and others like him in the same people; and she who gave birth to them gave birth also to Judas the false apostle, and Simon Magus, and all the other false Christians who up to this time have persisted obstinately in their carnal affections, whether they have been mingled in the unity of the Church, or separated from it in open schism. But when men of this kind have the gospel preached to them, and receive the sacraments at the hand of those who are spiritual, it is as though Rebecca

gave birth to them of her own womb, as she did to Esau; but when they are produced in the midst of the people of God through the instrumentality of those who preach the gospel not sincerely, Sarah is indeed the mother, but through Hagar. So when good spiritual disciples are produced by the preaching or baptism of those who are carnal, Leah, indeed, or Rachel, gives birth to them in her right as wife, but from the womb of a handmaid. But when good and faithful disciples are born of those who are spiritual in the gospel, and either attain to the development of spiritual age, or do not cease to strive in that direction, or are only deterred from doing so by want of power, these are born like Isaac from the womb of Sarah, or Jacob from the womb of Rebecca, in the new life and the new covenant

CHAPTER 17

26. Therefore, whether they seem to abide within, or are openly outside, whatsoever is flesh is flesh, and what is chaff is chaff, whether they persevere in remaining in their barrenness on the threshing-floor, or, when temptation befalls them, are carried out as it were by the blast of some wind. And even that man is always severed from the unity of the Church which is without spot or wrinkle, who associates with the congregation of the saints in carnal obstinacy. Yet we ought to despair of no man, whether he be one who shows himself to be of this nature within the pale of the Church, or whether he more openly opposes it from without. But the spiritual, or those who are steadily advancing with pious exertion towards this end, do not stray without the pale; since even when, by some perversity or necessity among men, they seem to be driven forth, they are more approved than if they had remained within, since they are in no degree roused to contend against the Church, but remain rooted in the strongest foundation of Christian charity on the solid rock of unity. For hereunto belongs what is said in the sacrifice of Abraham: “But the birds divided he not.”

CHAPTER 18

27. On the question of baptism, then, I think that I have argued at sufficient length; and since this is a most manifest schism which is called by the name of the Donatists, it only remains that on the subject of baptism we should

believe with pious faith what the universal Church maintains, apart from the sacrilege of schism. And yet, if within the Church different men still held different opinions on the point, without meanwhile violating peace, then till some one clear and simple decree should have been passed by an universal Council, it would have been right for the charity which seeks for unity to throw a veil over the error of human infirmity, as it is written "For charity shall cover the multitude of sins." For, seeing that its absence causes the presence of all other things to be of no avail, we may well suppose that in its presence there is found pardon for the absence of some missing things

28. There are great proofs of this existing on the part of the blessed martyr Cyprian, in his letters,—to come at last to him of whose authority they carnally flatter themselves they are possessed, whilst by his love they are spiritually overthrown. For at that time, before the consent of the whole Church had declared authoritatively, by the decree of a plenary Council, what practice should be followed in this matter, it seemed to him, in common with about eighty of his fellow bishops of the African churches, that every man who had been baptized outside the communion of the Catholic Church should, on joining the Church, be baptized anew. And I take it, that the reason why the Lord did not reveal the error in this to a man of such eminence, was, that his pious humility and charity in guarding the peace and health of the Church might be made manifest, and might be noticed, so as to serve as an example of healing power, so to speak, not only to Christians of that age, but also to those who should come after. For when a bishop of so important a Church, himself a man of so great merit and virtue, endowed with such excellence of heart and power of eloquence, entertained an opinion about baptism different from that which was to be confirmed by a more diligent searching into the truth; though many of his colleagues held what was not yet made manifest by authority, but was sanctioned by the past custom of the Church, and afterwards embraced by the whole Catholic world; yet under these circumstances he did not sever himself, by refusal of communion, from the others who thought differently, and indeed never ceased to urge on the others that they should "forbear one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." For so, while the framework of the body remained whole, if any infirmity occurred in certain of its members, it might rather regain its health

from their general soundness, than be deprived of the chance of any healing care by their death in severance from the body. And if he had severed himself, how many were there to follow! what a name was he likely to make for himself among men! how much more widely would the name of Cyprianist have spread than that of Donatist! But he was not a son of perdition, one of those of whom it is said, "Thou castedst them down while they were elevated;" but he was the son of the peace of the Church, who in the clear illumination of his mind failed to see one thing, only that through him another thing might be more excellently seen. "And yet," says the apostle, "show I unto you a more excellent way: though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." He had therefore imperfect insight into the hidden mystery of the sacrament. But if he had known the mysteries of all sacraments, without having charity, it would have been nothing. But as he, with imperfect insight into the mystery, was careful to preserve charity with all courage and humility and faith, he deserved to come to the crown of martyrdom; so that, if any cloud had crept over the clearness of his intellect from his infirmity as man, it might be dispelled by the glorious brightness of his blood. For it was not in vain that our Lord Jesus Christ, when He declared Himself to be the vine, and His disciples, as it were, the branches in the vine, gave command that those which bare no fruit should be cut off, and removed from the vine as useless branches. But what is really fruit, save that new offspring, of which He further says, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another?" This is that very charity, without which the rest profiteth nothing. The apostle also says: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance;" which all begin with charity, and with the rest of the combination forms one unity in a kind of wondrous cluster. Nor is it again in vain that our Lord added, "And every branch that beareth fruit, my Father purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit," but because those who are strong in the fruit of charity may yet have something which requires purging, which the Husbandman will not leave untended. Whilst then, that holy man entertained on the subject of baptism an opinion at variance with the true view, which was afterwards thoroughly examined and confirmed after most diligent consideration, his error was compensated by his remaining in catholic unity, and by the abundance of his charity; and finally it was cleared away by the pruning-hook of martyrdom.

CHAPTER 19

29. But that I may not seem to be uttering these praises of the blessed martyr (which, indeed, are not his, but rather those of Him by whose grace he showed himself what he was), in order to escape the burden of proof, let us now bring forward from his letters the testimony by which the mouths of the Donatists may most of all be stopped. For they advance his authority before the unlearned, to show that in a manner they do well when they baptize afresh the faithful who come to them. Too wretched are they—and, unless they correct themselves, even by themselves are they utterly condemned—who choose in the example set them by so great a man to imitate just that fault, which only did not injure him, because he walked with constant steps even to the end in that from which they have strayed who "have not known the way of peace." It is true that Christ's baptism is holy; and although it may exist among heretics or schismatics, yet it does not belong to the heresy or schism; and therefore even those who come from thence to the Catholic Church herself ought not to be baptized afresh. Yet to err on this point is one thing; it is another thing that those who are straying from the peace of the Church, and have fallen headlong into the pit of schism, should go on to decide that any who join them ought to be baptized again. For the former is a speck on the brightness of a holy soul which abundance of charity would fain have covered; the latter is a stain in their nether foulness which the hatred of peace in their countenance ostentatiously brings to light. But the subject for our further consideration, relating to the authority of the blessed Cyprian, we will commence from a fresh beginning

Book II

In which Augustin proves that it is to no purpose that the Donatists bring forward the authority of Cyprian, bishop and martyr, since it is really more opposed to them than to the Catholics. For that he held that the view of his predecessor Agrippinus, on the subject of baptizing heretics in the Catholic Church when they join its communion, should only be received on condition that peace should be maintained with those who entertained the opposite view, and that the unity of the Church should never be broken by any kind of schism.

CHAPTER 1

1. How much the arguments make for us, that is, for catholic peace, which the party of Donatus profess to bring forward against us from the authority of the blessed Cyprian, and how much they prove against those who bring them forward, it is my intention, with the help of God, to show in the ensuing book. If, therefore, in the course of my argument, I am obliged to repeat what I have already said in other treatises (although I will do so as little as I can,) yet this ought not to be objected to by those who have already read them and agree with them; since it is not only right that those things which are necessary for instruction should be frequently instilled into men of dull intelligence, but even in the case of those who are endowed with larger understanding, it contributes very much both to make their learning easier and their powers of teaching readier, where the same points are handled and discussed in many various ways. For I know how much it discourages a reader, when he comes upon any knotty question in the book which he has in hand, to find himself presently referred for its solution to another which he happens not to have. Wherefore, if I am compelled, by the urgency of the present questions, to repeat what I have already said in other books, I would seek forgiveness from those who know those books already, that those who are ignorant may have their difficulties removed; for it is better to give to one who has already, than to abstain from satisfying any one who is in want

2. What, then, do they venture to say, when their mouth is closed by the force of truth, with which they will not agree? “Cyprian,” say they, “whose great merits and vast learning we all know, decreed in a Council, with many of his fellow-bishops contributing their several opinions, that all heretics and schismatics, that is, all who are severed from the communion of the one Church, are without baptism; and therefore, whosoever has joined the communion of the Church after being baptized by them must be baptized in the Church.” The authority of Cyprian does not alarm me, because I am reassured by his humility. We know, indeed, the great merit of the bishop and martyr Cyprian; but is it in any way greater than that of the apostle and martyr Peter, of whom the said Cyprian speaks as follows in his epistle to Quintus? “For neither did Peter, whom the Lord chose first, and on whom He built His Church, when Paul afterwards disputed with him about circumcision, claim or assume anything insolently and arrogantly to himself, so as to say that he held the primacy, and should rather be obeyed of those who were late and newly come. Nor did he despise Paul because he had before been a persecutor of the Church, but he admitted the counsel of truth, and readily assented to the legitimate grounds which Paul maintained; giving us thereby a pattern of concord and patience, that we should not pertinaciously love our own opinions, but should rather account as our own any true and rightful suggestions of our brethren and colleagues for the common health and weal.” Here is a passage in which Cyprian records what we also learn in holy Scripture, that the Apostle Peter, in whom the primacy of the apostles shines with such exceeding grace, was corrected by the later Apostle Paul, when he adopted a custom in the matter of circumcision at variance with the demands of truth. If it was therefore possible for Peter in some point to walk not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, so as to compel the Gentiles to judaize, as Paul writes in that epistle in which he calls God to witness that he does not lie; for he says, “Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not;” and, after this sacred and awful calling of God to witness, he told the whole tale, saying in the course of it, “But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?”—if Peter, I say, could compel the Gentiles to live after the manner of the Jews, contrary to the rule of truth

which the Church afterwards held, why might not Cyprian, in opposition to the rule of faith which the whole Church afterwards held, compel heretics and schismatics to be baptized afresh? I suppose that there is no slight to Cyprian in comparing him with Peter in respect to his crown of martyrdom; rather I ought to be afraid lest I am showing disrespect towards Peter. For who can be ignorant that the primacy of his apostleship is to be preferred to any episcopate whatever? But, granting the difference in the dignity of their sees, yet they have the same glory in their martyrdom. And whether it may be the case that the hearts of those who confess and die for the true faith in the unity of charity take precedence of each other in different points, the Lord Himself will know, by the hidden and wondrous dispensation of whose grace the thief hanging on the cross once for all confesses Him, and is sent on the selfsame day to paradise, while Peter, the follower of our Lord, denies Him thrice, and has his crown postponed: for us it were rash to form a judgment from the evidence. But if any one were now found compelling a man to be circumcised after the Jewish fashion, as a necessary preliminary for baptism, this would meet with much more general repudiation by mankind, than if a man should be compelled to be baptized again. Wherefore, if Peter, on doing this, is corrected by his later colleague Paul, and is yet preserved by the bond of peace and unity till he is promoted to martyrdom, how much more readily and constantly should we prefer, either to the authority of a single bishop, or to the Council of a single province, the rule that has been established by the statutes of the universal Church? For this same Cyprian, in urging his view of the question, was still anxious to remain in the unity of peace even with those who differed from him on this point, as is shown by his own opening address at the beginning of the very Council which is quoted by the Donatists. For it is as follows:

CHAPTER 2

3. “When, on the calends of September, very many bishops from the provinces of Africa, Numidia, and Mauritania, with their presbyters and deacons, had met together at Carthage, a great part of the laity also being present; and when the letter addressed by Jubaianus to Cyprian, as also the answer of Cyprian to Jubaianus, on the subject of baptizing heretics, had been read, Cyprian said: Ye have heard, most beloved colleagues, what

Jubaianus, our fellow-bishop, has written to me, consulting my moderate ability concerning the unlawful and profane baptism of heretics, and what answer I gave him,—giving a judgment which we have once and again and often given, that heretics coming to the Church ought to be baptized, and sanctified with the baptism of the Church. Another letter of Jubaianus has likewise been read to you, in which, agreeably to his sincere and religious devotion, in answer to our epistle, he not only expressed his assent, but returned thanks also, acknowledging that he had received instruction. It remains that we severally declare our opinion on this subject, judging no one, nor depriving any one of the right of communion if he differ from us. For no one of us sets himself up as a bishop of bishops, or, by tyrannical terror, forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying, inasmuch as every bishop, in the free use of his liberty and power, has the right of forming his own judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he can himself judge another. But we must all await the judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone has the power both of setting us in the government of His Church, and of judging of our acts therein.'"

CHAPTER 3

4. Now let the proud and swelling necks of the heretics raise themselves, if they dare, against the holy humility of this address. Ye mad Donatists, whom we desire earnestly to return to the peace and unity of the holy Church, that ye may receive health therein, what have ye to say in answer to this? You are wont, indeed, to bring up against us the letters of Cyprian, his opinion, his Council; why do ye claim the authority of Cyprian for your schism, and reject his example when it makes for the peace of the Church? But who can fail to be aware that the sacred canon of Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament, is confined within its own limits, and that it stands so absolutely in a superior position to all later letters of the bishops, that about it we can hold no manner of doubt or disputation whether what is confessedly contained in it is right and true; but that all the letters of bishops which have been written, or are being written, since the closing of the canon, are liable to be refuted if there be anything contained in them which strays from the truth, either by the discourse of some one who happens to be wiser in the matter than themselves, or by the weightier

authority and more learned experience of other bishops, by the authority of Councils; and further, that the Councils themselves, which are held in the several districts and provinces, must yield, beyond all possibility of doubt, to the authority of plenary Councils which are formed for the whole Christian world; and that even of the plenary Councils, the earlier are often corrected by those which follow them, when, by some actual experiment, things are brought to light which were before concealed, and that is known which previously lay hid, and this without any whirlwind of sacrilegious pride, without any puffing of the neck through arrogance, without any strife of envious hatred, simply with holy humility, catholic peace, and Christian charity?

CHAPTER 4

5. Wherefore the holy Cyprian, whose dignity is only increased by his humility, who so loved the pattern set by Peter as to use the words, “Giving us thereby a pattern of concord and patience, that we should not pertinaciously love our own opinions, but should rather account as our own any true and rightful suggestions of our brethren and colleagues, for the common health and weal,”—he, I say, abundantly shows that he was most willing to correct his own opinion, if any one should prove to him that it is as certain that the baptism of Christ can be given by those who have strayed from the fold, as that it could not be lost when they strayed; on which subject we have already said much. Nor should we ourselves venture to assert anything of the kind, were we not supported by the unanimous authority of the whole Church, to which he himself would unquestionably have yielded, if at that time the truth of this question had been placed beyond dispute by the investigation and decree of a plenary Council. For if he quotes Peter as an example for his allowing himself quietly and peacefully to be corrected by one junior colleague, how much more readily would he himself, with the Council of his province, have yielded to the authority of the whole world, when the truth had been thus brought to light? For, indeed, so holy and peaceful a soul would have been most ready to assent to the arguments of any single person who could prove to him the truth; and perhaps he even did so, though we have no knowledge of the fact. For it was neither possible that all the proceedings which took place

between the bishops at that time should have been committed to writing, nor are we acquainted with all that was so committed. For how could a matter which was involved in such mists of disputation even have been brought to the full illumination and authoritative decision of a plenary Council, had it not first been known to be discussed for some considerable time in the various districts of the world, with many discussions and comparisons of the views of the bishop on every side? But this is one effect of the soundness of peace, that when any doubtful points are long under investigation, and when, on account of the difficulty of arriving at the truth, they produce difference of opinion in the course of brotherly disputation, till men at last arrive at the unalloyed truth; yet the bond of unity remains, lest in the part that is cut away there should be found the incurable wound of deadly error

CHAPTER 5

6. And so it is that often something is imperfectly revealed to the more learned, that their patient and humble charity, from which proceeds the greater fruit, may be proved, either in the way in which they preserve unity, when they hold different opinions on matters of comparative obscurity, or in the temper with which they receive the truth, when they learn that it has been declared to be contrary to what they thought. And of these two we have a manifestation in the blessed Cyprian of the one, viz., of the way in which he preserved unity with those from whom he differed in opinion. For he says, “Judging no one nor depriving any one of the right of communion if he differ from us.” And the other, viz., in what temper he could receive the truth when found to be different from what he thought it, though his letters are silent on the point, is yet proclaimed by his merits. If there is no letter extant to prove it, it is witnessed by his crown of martyrdom; if the Council of bishops declare it not, it is declared by the host of angels. For it is no small proof of a most peaceful soul, that he won the crown of martyrdom in that unity from which he would not separate, even though he differed from it. For we are but men; and it is therefore a temptation incident to men that we should hold views at variance with the truth on any point. But to come through too great love for our own opinion, or through jealousy of our betters, even to the sacrilege of dividing the communion of

the Church, and of founding heresy or schism, is a presumption worthy of the devil. But never in any point to entertain an opinion at variance with the truth is perfection found only in the angels. Since then we are men, yet forasmuch as in hope we are angels, whose equals we shall be in the resurrection, at any rate, so long as we are wanting in the perfection of angels, let us at least be without the presumption of the devil. Accordingly the apostle says, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man.” It is therefore part of man’s nature to be sometimes wrong. Wherefore he says in another place, “Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.” But to whom does He reveal it when it is His will (be it in this life or in the life to come), save to those who walk in the way of peace, and stray not aside into any schism? Not to such as those who have not known the way of peace, or for some other cause have broken the bond of unity. And so, when the apostle said, “And if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you,” lest they should think that besides the way of peace their own wrong views might be revealed to them, he immediately added, “Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule.” And Cyprian, walking by this rule, by the most persistent tolerance, not simply by the shedding of his blood, but because it was shed in unity (for if he gave his body to be burned, and had not charity, it would profit him nothing), came by the confession of martyrdom to the light of the angels, and if not before, at least then, acknowledged the revelation of the truth on that point on which, while yet in error, he did not prefer the maintenance of a wrong opinion to the bond of unity

CHAPTER 6

7. What then, ye Donatists, what have ye to say to this? If our opinion about baptism is true, yet all who thought differently in the time of Cyprian were not cut off from the unity of the Church, till God revealed to them the truth of the point on which they were in error, why then have ye by your sacrilegious separation broken the bond of peace? But if yours is the true opinion about baptism, Cyprian and the others, in conjunction with whom ye set forth that he held such a Council, remained in unity with those who

thought otherwise; why, therefore, have ye broken the bond of peace? Choose which alternative ye will, ye are compelled to pronounce an opinion against your schism. Answer me, wherefore have ye separated yourselves? Wherefore have ye erected an altar in opposition to the whole world? Wherefore do ye not communicate with the Churches to which apostolic epistles have been sent, which you yourselves read and acknowledge, in accordance with whose tenor you say that you order your lives? Answer me, wherefore have ye separated yourselves? I suppose in order that ye might not perish by communion with wicked men. How then was it that Cyprian, and so many of his colleagues, did not perish? For though they believed that heretics and schismatics did not possess baptism, yet they chose rather to hold communion with them when they had been received into the Church without baptism, although they believed that their flagrant and sacrilegious sins were yet upon their heads, than to be separated from the unity of the Church, according to the words of Cyprian, "Judging no one, nor depriving any one of the right of communion if he differ from us."

8. If, therefore, by such communion with the wicked the just cannot but perish, the Church had already perished in the time of Cyprian. Whence then sprang the origin of Donatus? where was he taught, where was he baptized, where was he ordained, since the Church had been already destroyed by the contagion of communion with the wicked? But if the Church still existed, the wicked could do no harm to the good in one communion with them. Wherefore did ye separate yourselves? Behold, I see in unity Cyprian and others, his colleagues, who, on holding a council, decided that those who have been baptized without the communion of the Church have no true baptism, and that therefore it must be given them when they join the Church. But again, behold I see in the same unity that certain men think differently in this matter, and that, recognizing in those who come from heretics and schismatics the baptism of Christ, they do not venture to baptize them afresh. All of these catholic unity embraces in her motherly breast, bearing each other's burdens by turns, and endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, till God should reveal to one or other of them any error in their views. If the one party held the truth, were they infected by the others, or no? If the others held the truth, were they infected by the first, or no? Choose which ye will. If there was

contamination, the Church even then ceased to exist; answer me, therefore, whence came ye forth hither? But if the Church remained, the good are in no wise contaminated by the bad in such communion; answer me, therefore, why did ye break the bond?

9. Or is it perhaps that schismatics, when received without baptism, bring no infection, but that it is brought by those who deliver up the sacred books? For that there were traditors of your number is proved by the clearest testimony of history. And if you had then brought true evidence against those whom you were accusing, you would have proved your cause before the unity of the whole world, so that you would have been retained whilst they were shut out. And if you endeavored to do this, and did not succeed, the world is not to blame, which trusted the judges of the Church rather than the beaten parties in the suit; whilst, if you would not urge your suit, the world again is not to blame, which could not condemn men without their cause being heard. Why, then, did you separate yourselves from the innocent? You cannot defend the sacrilege of your schism. But this I pass over. But so much I say, that if the traditors could have defiled you, who were not convicted by you, and by whom, on the contrary, you were beaten, much more could the sacrilege of schismatics and heretics, received into the Church, as you maintain, without baptism, have defiled Cyprian. Yet he did not separate himself. And inasmuch as the Church continued to exist, it is clear that it could not be defiled. Wherefore, then, did you separate yourselves, I do not say from the innocent, as the facts proved them, but from the traditors, as they were never proved to be? Are the sins of traditors, as I began to say, heavier than those of schismatics? Let us not bring in deceitful balances, to which we may hang what weights we will and how we will, saying to suit ourselves, “This is heavy and this is light;” but let us bring forward the sacred balance out of holy Scripture, as out of the Lord’s treasure-house, and let us weigh them by it, to see which is the heavier; or rather, let us not weigh them for ourselves, but read the weights as declared by the Lord. At the time when the Lord showed, by the example of recent punishment, that there was need to guard against the sins of olden days, and an idol was made and worshipped, and the prophetic book was burned by the wrath of a scoffing king, and schism was attempted, the idolatry was punished with the sword, the burning of the book by slaughter

in war and captivity in a foreign land, schism by the earth opening, and swallowing up alive the leaders of the schism while the rest were consumed with fire from heaven. Who will now doubt that that was the worse crime which received the heavier punishment? If men coming from such sacrilegious company, without baptism, as you maintain, could not defile Cyprian, how could those defile you who were not convicted but supposed betrayers of the sacred books? For if they had not only given up the books to be burned, but had actually burned them with their own hands, they would have been guilty of a less sin than if they had committed schism; for schism is visited with the heavier, the other with the lighter punishment, not at man's discretion, but by the judgment of God.

CHAPTER 7

10. Wherefore, then, have ye severed yourselves? If there is any sense left in you, you must surely see that you can find no possible answer to these arguments. "We are not left," they say, "so utterly without resource, but that we can still answer, It is our will. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.'" They do not understand that this was said to men who were wishing to judge, not of open facts, but of the hearts of other men. For how does the apostle himself come to say so much about the sins of schisms and heresies? Or how comes that verse in the Psalms, "If of a truth ye love justice, judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?" But why does the Lord Himself say, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment," if we may not judge any man? Lastly, why, in the case of those traditors, whom they have judged unrighteously, have they themselves ventured to pass any judgments at all on another man's servants? To their own master they were standing or falling. Or why, in the case of the recent followers of Maximianus, have they not hesitated to bring forward the judgment delivered with the infallible voice, as they aver, of a plenary Council, in such terms as to compare them with those first schismatics whom the earth swallowed up alive? And yet some of them, as they cannot deny, they either condemned though innocent, or received back again in their guilt. But when a truth is urged which they cannot gainsay, they mutter a truly wholesome murmuring: "It is our will: Who art thou that judgest another man's

servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.’“ But when a weak sheep is espied in the desert, and the pastor who should reclaim it to the fold is nowhere to be seen, then there is setting of teeth, and breaking of the weak neck: “Thou wouldst be a good man, wert thou not a traditor. Consult the welfare of thy soul; be a Christian.” What unconscionable madness! When it is said to a Christian, “Be a Christian,” what other lesson is taught, save a denial that he is a Christian? Was it not the same lesson which those persecutors of the Christians wished to teach, by resisting whom the crown of martyrdom was gained? Or must we even look on crime as lighter when committed with threatening of the sword than with treachery of the tongue?

11. Answer me this, ye ravening wolves, who, seeking to be clad in sheep’s clothing, think that the letters of the blessed Cyprian are in your favor. Did the sacrilege of schismatics defile Cyprian, or did it not? If it did, the Church perished from that instant, and there remained no source from which ye might spring. If it did not, then by what offense on the part of others can the guiltless possibly be defiled, if the sacrilege of schism cannot defile them? Wherefore, then, have ye severed yourselves? Wherefore, while shunning the lighter offenses, which are inventions of your own, have ye committed the heaviest offense of all, the sacrilege of schism? Will ye now perchance confess that those men were no longer schismatics or heretics who had been baptized without the communion of the Church, or in some heresy or schism, because by coming over to the Church, and renouncing their former errors, they had ceased to be what formerly they were? How then was it, that though they were not baptized, their sins remained not on their heads? Was it that the baptism was Christ’s, but that it could not profit them without the communion of the Church; yet when they came over, and, renouncing their past error, were received into the communion of the Church by the laying on of hands, then, being now rooted and founded in charity, without which all other things are profitless, they began to receive profit for the remission of sins and the sanctification of their lives from that sacrament, which, while without the pale of the Church, they possessed in vain?

12. Cease, then, to bring forward against us the authority of Cyprian in favor of repeating baptism, but cling with us to the example of Cyprian for

the preservation of unity. For this question of baptism had not been as yet completely worked out, but yet the Church observed the most wholesome custom of correcting what was wrong, not repeating what was already given, even in the case of schismatics and heretics: she healed the wounded part, but did not meddle with what was whole. And this custom, coming, I suppose, from apostolical tradition (like many other things which are held to have been handed down under their actual sanction, because they are preserved throughout the whole Church, though they are not found either in their letters, or in the Councils of their successors),—this most wholesome custom, I say, according to the holy Cyprian, began to be what is called amended by his predecessor Agrippinus. But, according to the teaching which springs from a more careful investigation into the truth, which, after great doubt and fluctuation, was brought at last to the decision of a plenary Council, we ought to believe that it rather began to be corrupted than to receive correction at the hands of Agrippinus. Accordingly, when so great a question forced itself upon him, and it was difficult to decide the point, whether remission of sins and man's spiritual regeneration could take place among heretics or schismatics, and the authority of Agrippinus was there to guide him, with that of some few men who shared in his misapprehension of this question, having preferred attempting something new to maintaining a custom which they did not understand how to defend; under these circumstances considerations of probability forced themselves into the eyes of his soul, and barred the way to the thorough investigation of the truth.

CHAPTER 8

13. Nor do I think that the blessed Cyprian had any other motive in the free expression and earlier utterance of what he thought in opposition to the custom of the Church, save that he should thankfully receive any one that could be found with a fuller revelation of the truth, and that he should show forth a pattern for imitation, not only of diligence in teaching, but also of modesty in learning; but that, if no one should be found to bring forward any argument by which those considerations of probability should be refuted, then he should abide by his opinion, with the full consciousness that he had neither concealed what he conceived to be the truth, nor violated the unity which he loved. For so he understood the words of the apostle:

“Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.” “In which passage he has taught and shown, that many things are revealed to individuals for the better, and that we ought not each to strive pertinaciously for what he has once imbibed and held, but if anything has appeared better and more useful, he should willingly embrace it.” At any rate, in these words he not only advised those to agree with him who saw no better course, but also exhorted any who could to bring forward arguments by which the maintenance of the former custom might rather be established; that if they should be of such a nature as not to admit of refutation, he might show in his own person with what sincerity he said “that we ought not each to strive pertinaciously for what he has once imbibed and held, but that, if anything has appeared better and more useful, he should willingly embrace it.” But inasmuch as none appeared, except such as simply urged the custom against him, and the arguments which they produced in its favor were not of a kind to bring conviction to a soul like his, this mighty reasoner was not content to give up his opinions, which, though they were not true, as he was himself unable to see, were at any rate not confuted, in favor of a custom which had truth on its side, but had not yet been confirmed. And yet, had not his predecessor Agrippinus, and some of his fellow-bishops throughout Africa, first tempted him to desert this custom, even by the decision of a Council, he certainly would not have dared to argue against it. But, amid the perplexities of so obscure a question, and seeing everywhere around him a strong universal custom, he would rather have put restraint upon himself by prayer and stretching forth his mind towards God, so as to have perceived or taught that for truth which was afterwards decided by a plenary Council. But when he had found relief amid his weariness in the authority of the former Council which was held by Agrippinus, he preferred maintaining what was in a manner the discovery of his predecessors, to expending further toil in investigation. For, at the end of his letter to Quintus, he thus shows how he has sought repose, if one may use the expression, for his weariness, in what might be termed the resting-place of authority

CHAPTER 9

14. “This, moreover,” says he, “Agrippinus, a man of excellent memory, with the rest, bishops with him, who at that time governed the Church of the Lord in the province of Africa and Numidia, did establish and, after the investigation of a mutual Council had weighed it, confirm; whose sentence, being both religious and legitimate and salutary in accordance with the Catholic faith and Church, we also have followed.” By this witness he gives sufficient proof how much more ready he would have been to bear his testimony, had any Council been held to discuss this matter which either embraced the whole Church, or at least represented our brethren beyond the sea. But such a Council had not yet been held, because the whole world was bound together by the powerful bond of custom; and this was deemed sufficient to oppose to those who wished to introduce what was new, because they could not comprehend the truth. Afterwards, however, while the question became matter for discussion and investigation amongst many on either side, the new practice was not only invented, but even submitted to the authority and power of a plenary Council,—after the martyrdom of Cyprian, it is true, but before we were born. But that this was indeed the custom of the Church, which afterwards was confirmed by a plenary Council, in which the truth was brought to light, and many difficulties cleared away, is plain enough from the words of the blessed Cyprian himself in that same letter to Jubaianus, which was quoted as being read in the Council. For he says, “But some one asks, What then will be done in the case of those who, coming out of heresy to the Church, have already been admitted without baptism?” where certainly he shows plainly enough what was usually done, though he would have wished it otherwise; and in the very fact of his quoting the Council of Agrippinus, he clearly proves that the custom of the Church was different. Nor indeed was it requisite that he should seek to establish the practice by this Council, if it was already sanctioned by custom; and in the Council itself some of the speakers expressly declare, in giving their opinion, that they went against the custom of the Church in deciding what they thought was right. Wherefore let the Donatists consider this one point, which surely none can fail to see, that if the authority of Cyprian is to be followed, it is to be followed rather in maintaining unity than in altering the custom of the Church; but if respect is paid to his Council, it must at any rate yield place to the later Council of the universal Church, of which he rejoiced to be a member, often warning his

associates that they should all follow his example in upholding the coherence of the whole body. For both later Councils are preferred among later generations to those of earlier date; and the whole is always, with good reason, looked upon as superior to the parts

CHAPTER 10

15. But what attitude do they assume, when it is shown that the holy Cyprian, though he did not himself admit as members of the Church those who had been baptized in heresy or schism, yet held communion with those who did admit them, according to his express declaration, “Judging no one, nor depriving any one of the right of communion if he differ from us?” If he was polluted by communion with persons of this kind, why do they follow his authority in the question of baptism? But if he was not polluted by communion with them, why do they not follow his example in maintaining unity? Have they anything to urge in their defense except the plea, “We choose to have it so?” What other answer have any sinful or wicked men to the discourse of truth or justice,—the voluptuous, for instance, the drunkards, adulterers, and those who are impure in any way, thieves, robbers, murderers, plunderers, evil-doers, idolaters,—what other answer can they make when convicted by the voice of truth, except “I choose to do it;” “It is my pleasure so”? And if they have in them a tinge of Christianity, they say further, “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant?” Yet these have so much more remains of modesty, that when, in accordance with divine and human law, they meet with punishment for their abandoned life and deeds, they do not style themselves martyrs; while the Donatists wish at once to lead a sacrilegious life and enjoy a blameless reputation, to suffer no punishment for their wicked deeds, and to gain a martyr’s glory in their just punishment. As if they were not experiencing the greater mercy and patience of God, in proportion as “executing His judgments upon them by little and little, He giveth them place of repentance,” and ceases not to redouble His scourgings in this life; that, considering what they suffer, and why they suffer it, they may in time grow wise; and that those who have received the baptism of the party of Maximianus in order to preserve the unity of Donatus, may the more readily embrace the baptism of the whole world in order to preserve the peace of Christ; that they may be restored to

the root, may be reconciled to the unity of the Church, may see that they have nothing left for them to say, though something yet remains for them to do; that for their former deeds the sacrifice of loving-kindness may be offered to a long-suffering God, whose unity they have broken by their wicked sin, on whose sacraments they have inflicted such a lasting wrong. For "the Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, plenteous in mercy and truth." Let them embrace His mercy and long-suffering in this life, and fear His truth in the next. For He willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his way and live; because He bends His judgment against the wrongs that have been inflicted on Him. This is our exhortation

CHAPTER 11

16. For this reason, then, we hold them to be enemies, because we speak the truth, because we are afraid to be silent, because we fear to shrink from pressing our point with all the force that lies within our power, because we obey the apostle when he says, "Preach the word; be instant in season out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort." But, as the gospel says, "They love the praise of men more than the praise of God;" and while they fear to incur blame for a time, they do not fear to incur damnation for ever. They see, too, themselves what wrong they are doing; they see that they have no answer which they can make, but they overspread the inexperienced with mists, whilst they themselves are being swallowed up alive,—that is, are perishing knowingly and willfully. They see that men are amazed, and look with abhorrence on the fact that they have divided themselves into many schisms, especially in Carthage, the capital and most noted city of all Africa; they have endeavored to patch up the disgrace of their rags. Thinking that they could annihilate the followers of Maximianus, they pressed heavily on them through the agency of Optatus the Gildonian; they inflicted on them many wrongs amid the cruellest of persecutions. Then they received back some, thinking that all could be converted under the influence of the same terror; but they were unwilling to do those whom they received the wrong of baptizing afresh those who had been baptized by them in their schism, or rather of causing them to be baptized again within their communion by the very same men by whom they had been baptized outside, and thus they at once made an exception to their own impious

custom. They feel how wickedly they are acting in assailing the baptism of the whole world, when they have received the baptism of the followers of Maximianus. But they fear those whom they have themselves rebaptized, lest they should receive no mercy from them, when they have shown it to others; lest these should call them to account for their souls when they have ceased to destroy those of other men

CHAPTER 12

17. What answer they can give about the followers of Maximianus whom they have received, they cannot divine. If they say, “Those we received were innocent,” the answer is obvious, “Then you had condemned the innocent.” If they say, “We did it in ignorance,” then you judged rashly (just as you passed a rash judgment on the traditors), and your declaration was false that “you must know that they were condemned by the truthful voice of a plenary Council.” For indeed the innocent could never be condemned by a voice of truth. If they say, “We did not condemn them,” it is only necessary to cite the Council, to cite the names of bishops and states alike. If they say, “The Council itself is none of ours,” then we cite the records of the proconsular province, where more than once they quoted the same Council to justify the exclusion of the followers of Maximianus from the basilicas, and to confound them by the din of the judges and the force of their allies. If they say that Felicianus of Musti, and Praetextatus of Assavae, whom they afterwards received, were not of the party of Maximianus, then we cite the records in which they demanded, in the courts of law, that these persons should be excluded from the Council which they held against the party of Maximianus. If they say, “They were received for the sake of peace,” our answer is, “Why then do ye not acknowledge the only true and full peace? Who urged you, who compelled you to receive a schismatic whom you had condemned, to preserve the peace of Donatus, and to condemn the world unheard, in violation of the peace of Christ?” Truth hems them in on every side. They see that there is no answer left for them to make, and they think that there is nothing left for them to do; they cannot find out what to say. They are not allowed to be silent. They had rather strive with perverse utterance against truth, than be restored to peace by a confession of their faults

CHAPTER 13

18. But who can fail to understand what they may be saying in their hearts? “What then are we to do,” say they, “with those whom we have already rebaptized?” Return with them to the Church. Bring those whom you have wounded to be healed by the medicine of peace: bring those whom you have slain to be brought to life again by the life of charity. Brotherly union has great power in propitiating God. “If two of you,” says our Lord, “shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them.” If for two men who agree, how much more for two communities? Let us throw ourselves together on our knees before the Lord. Do you share with us our unity; let us share with you your contrition and let charity cover the multitude of sins. Seek counsel from the blessed Cyprian himself. See how much he considered to depend upon the blessing of unity, from which he did not sever himself to avoid the communion of those who disagreed with him; how, though he considered that those who were baptized outside the communion of the Church had no true baptism, he was yet willing to believe that, by simple admission into the Church, they might, merely in virtue of the bond of unity, be admitted to a share in pardon. For thus he solved the question which he proposed to himself in writing as follows to Jubaianus: “But some will say, What then will become of those who, in times past, coming to the Church from heresy, were admitted without baptism?’ The Lord is able of His mercy to grant pardon, and not to sever from the gifts of His Church those who, being out of simplicity admitted to the Church, have in the Church fallen asleep.”

CHAPTER 14

19. But which is the worse, not to be baptized at all, or to be twice baptized, it is difficult to decide. I see, indeed, which is more repugnant and abhorrent to men’s feelings; but when I have recourse to that divine balance, in which the weight of things is determined, not by man’s feelings, but by the authority of God, I find a statement by our Lord on either side. For He said to Peter, “He who is washed has no need of washing a second time;” and to Nicodemus, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” What is the purport of the more secret determination of God, it is perhaps difficult for men like us to learn; but as

far as the mere words are concerned, any one may see what a difference there is between "has no need of washing," and "cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." The Church, lastly, herself holds as her tradition, that without baptism she cannot admit a man to her altar at all; but since it is allowed that one who has been rebaptized may be admitted after penance, surely this plainly proves that his baptism is considered valid. If, therefore, Cyprian thought that those whom he considered to be unbaptized yet had some share in pardon, in virtue of the bond of unity, the Lord has power to be reconciled even to the rebaptized by means of the simple bond of unity and peace, and by this same compensating power of peace to mitigate His displeasure against those by whom they were rebaptized, and to pardon all the errors which they had committed while in error, on their offering the sacrifice of charity, which covereth the multitude of sins; so that He looks not to the number of those who have been wounded by their separation, but to the greater number who have been delivered from bondage by their return. For in the same bond of peace in which Cyprian conceived that, through the mercy of God, those whom he considered to have been admitted to the Church without baptism, were yet not severed from the gifts of the Church, we also believe that through the same mercy of God the rebaptized can earn their pardon at His hands

CHAPTER 15

20. Since the Catholic Church, both in the time of the blessed Cyprian and in the older time before him, contained within her bosom either some that were rebaptized or some that were unbaptized, either the one section or the other must have won their salvation only by the force of simple unity. For if those who came over from the heretics were not baptized, as Cyprian asserts, they were not rightly admitted into the Church; and yet he himself did not despair of their obtaining pardon from the mercy of God in virtue of the unity of the Church. So again, if they were already baptized, it was not right to rebaptize them. What, therefore, was there to aid the other section, save the same charity that delighted in unity, so that what was hidden from man's weakness, in the consideration of the sacrament, might not be reckoned, by the mercy of God, as a fault in those who were lovers of peace? Why, then, while ye fear those whom ye have rebaptized, do ye

grudge yourselves and them the entrance to salvation? There was at one time a doubt upon the subject of baptism; those who held different opinions yet remained in unity. In course of time, owing to the certain discovery of the truth, that doubt was taken away. The question which, unsolved, did not frighten Cyprian into separation from the Church, invites you, now that it is solved, to return once more within the fold. Come to the Catholic Church in its agreement, which Cyprian did not desert while yet disturbed with doubt; or if now you are dissatisfied with the example of Cyprian, who held communion with those who were received with the baptism of heretics, declaring openly that we should "neither judge any one, nor deprive any one of the right of communion if he differ from us," whither are ye going, ye wretched men? What are ye doing? You are bound to fly even from yourselves, because you have advanced beyond the position where he abode. But if neither his own sins nor those of others could stand in his way, on account of the abundance of his charity and his love of brotherly kindness and the bond of peace, do you return to us, where you will find much less hindrance in the way of either us or you from the fictions which your party have invented

Book III

Augustin undertakes the refutation of the arguments which might be derived from the epistle of Cyprian to Jubaianus, to give color to the view that the baptism of Christ could not be conferred by heretics.

CHAPTER 1

1. I think that it may now be considered clear to every one, that the authority of the blessed Cyprian for the maintenance of the bond of peace, and the avoiding of any violation of that most wholesome charity which preserves unity in the Church, may be urged on our side rather than on the side of the Donatists. For if they have chosen to act upon his example in rebaptizing Catholics, because he thought that heretics ought to be baptized on joining the Catholic Church, shall not we rather follow his example, whereby he laid down a manifest rule that one ought in no wise, by the establishment of a separate communion, to secede from the Catholic communion, that is, from the body of Christians dispersed throughout the world, even on the admission of evil and sacrilegious men, since he was unwilling even to remove from the right of communion those whom he considered to have received sacrilegious men without baptism into the Catholic communion, saying, “Judging no one, nor depriving any of the right of communion if he differ from us?”

CHAPTER 2

2. Nevertheless, I see what may still be required of me, viz., that I should answer those plausible arguments, by which, in even earlier times, Agrippinus, or Cyprian himself, or those in Africa who agreed with them, or any others in far distant lands beyond the sea, were moved, not indeed by the authority of any plenary or even regionary Council, but by a mere epistolary correspondence, to think that they ought to adopt a custom which had no sanction from the ancient custom of the Church, and which was expressly forbidden by the most unanimous resolution of the Catholic world

in order that an error which had begun to creep into the minds of some men, through discussions of this kind, might be cured by the more powerful truth and universal healing power of unity coming on the side of safety. And so they may see with what security I approach this discourse. If I am unable to gain my point, and show how those arguments may be refuted which they bring forward from the Council and the epistles of Cyprian, to the effect that Christ's baptism may not be given by the hands of heretics, I shall still remain safely in the Church, in whose communion Cyprian himself remained with those who differed from him

3. But if they say that the Catholic Church existed then, because there were a few, or, if they prefer it, even a considerable number, who denied the validity of any baptism conferred in an heretical body, and baptized all who came from thence, what then? Did the Church not exist at all before Agrippinus, with whom that new kind of system began, at variance with all previous custom? Or how, again after the time of Agrippinus, when, unless there had been a return to the primitive custom, there would have been no need for Cyprian to set on foot another Council? Was there no Church then, because such a custom as this prevailed everywhere, that the baptism of Christ should be considered nothing but the baptism of Christ, even though it were proved to have been conferred in a body of heretics or schismatics? But if the Church existed even then, and had not perished through a breach of its continuity, but was, on the contrary, holding its ground, and receiving increase in every nation, surely it is the safest plan to abide by this same custom, which then embraced good and bad alike in unity. But if there was then no Church in existence, because sacrilegious heretics were received without baptism, and this prevailed by universal custom, whence has Donatus made his appearance? From what land did he spring? or from what sea did he emerge? or from what sky did he fall? And so we, as I had begun to say, are safe in the communion of that Church, throughout the whole extent of which the custom now prevails, which prevailed in like manner through its whole extent before the time of Agrippinus, and in the interval between Agrippinus and Cyprian, and whose unity neither Agrippinus nor Cyprian ever deserted, nor those who agreed with them, although they entertained different views from the rest of their brethren—all of them remaining in the same communion of unity with the very men from whom

they differed in opinion. But let the Donatists themselves consider what their true position is, if they neither can say whence they derived their origin, if the Church had already been destroyed by the plague-spot of communion with heretics and schismatics received into her bosom without baptism; nor again agree with Cyprian himself, for he declared that he remained in communion with those who received heretics and schismatics, and so also with those who were received as well: while they have separated themselves from the communion of the whole world, on account of the charge of having delivered up the sacred books, which they brought against the men whom they maligned in Africa, but failed to convict when brought to trial beyond the sea; although, even had the crimes which they alleged been true, they were much less heinous than the sins of heresy and schism; and yet these could not defile Cyprian in the persons of those who came from them without baptism, as he conceived, and were admitted without baptism into the Catholic communion. Nor, in the very point in which they say that they imitate Cyprian, can they find any answer to make about acknowledging the baptism of the followers of Maximianus, together with those whom, though they belonged to the party that they had first condemned in their own plenary Council, and then gone on to prosecute even at the tribunal of the secular power, they yet received back into their communion, in the episcopate of the very same bishop under whom they had been condemned. Wherefore, if the communion of wicked men destroyed the Church in the time of Cyprian, they have no source from which they can derive their own communion; and if the Church was not destroyed, they have no excuse for their separation from it. Moreover, they are neither following the example of Cyprian, since they have burst the bond of unity, nor abiding by their own Council, since they have recognized the baptism of the followers of Maximianus.

CHAPTER 3

4. Let us therefore, seeing that we adhere to the example of Cyprian, go on now to consider Cyprian's Council. What says Cyprian? "Ye have heard," he says, "most beloved colleagues, what Jubaianus our fellow-bishop has written to me, consulting my moderate ability concerning the unlawful and profane baptism of heretics, and what answer I gave him,—giving a

judgment which we have once and again and often given, that heretics coming to the Church ought to be baptized and sanctified with the baptism of the Church. Another letter of Jubaianus has likewise been read to you, in which, agreeably to his sincere and religious devotion, in answer to our epistle, he not only expressed his assent, but returned thanks also, acknowledging that he had received instruction.” In these words of the blessed Cyprian, we find that he had been consulted by Jubaianus, and what answer he had given to his questions, and how Jubaianus acknowledged with gratitude that he had received instruction. Ought we then to be thought unreasonably persistent if we desire to consider this same epistle by which Jubaianus was convinced? For till such time as we are also convinced (if there are any arguments of truth whereby this can be done), Cyprian himself has established our security by the right of Catholic communion

5. For he goes on to say: “It remains that we severally declare our opinion on this same subject, judging no one, nor depriving any one of the right of communion if he differ from us.” He allows me, therefore, without losing the right of communion, not only to continue inquiring into the truth, but even to hold opinions differing from his own. “For no one of us,” he says, “setteth himself up as a bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying.” What could be more kind? what more humble? Surely there is here no authority restraining us from inquiry into what is truth. “Inasmuch as every bishop,” he says, “in the free use of his liberty and power, has the right of forming his own judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he can himself judge another,”—that is, I suppose, in those questions which have not yet been brought to perfect clearness of solution; for he knew what a deep question about the sacrament was then occupying the whole Church with every kind of disputation, and gave free liberty of inquiry to every man, that the truth might be made known by investigation. For he was surely not uttering what was false, and trying to catch his simpler colleagues in their speech, so that, when they should have betrayed that they held opinions at variance with his, he might then propose, in violation of his promise, that they should be excommunicated. Far be it from a soul so holy to entertain such accursed treachery; indeed, they who hold such a view about such a man, thinking that it conduces to his praise, do but show that it would be in accordance

with their own nature. I for my part will in no wise believe that Cyprian, a Catholic bishop, a Catholic martyr, whose greatness only made him proportionately humble in all things, so as to find favor before the Lord, should ever, especially in the sacred Council of his colleagues, have uttered with his mouth what was not echoed in his heart, especially as he further adds, “But we must all await the judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ, who alone has the power both of setting us in the government of His Church, and of judging of our acts therein.” When, then, he called to their remembrance so solemn a judgment, hoping to hear the truth from his colleagues, would he first set them the example of lying? May God avert such madness from every Christian man, and how much more from Cyprian! We have therefore the free liberty of inquiry granted to us by the most moderate and most truthful speech of Cyprian.

CHAPTER 4

6. Next his colleagues proceed to deliver their several opinions. But first they listened to the letter written to Jubaianus; for it was read, as was mentioned in the preamble. Let it therefore be read among ourselves also, that we too, with the help of God, may discover from it what we ought to think. “What!” I think I hear some one saying, “do you proceed to tell us what Cyprian wrote to Jubaianus?” I have read the letter, I confess, and should certainly have been a convert to his views, had I not been induced to consider the matter more carefully by the vast weight of authority, originating in those whom the Church, distributed throughout the world amid so many nations, of Latins, Greeks, barbarians, not to mention the Jewish race itself, has been able to produce,—that same Church which gave birth to Cyprian himself,—men whom I could in no wise bring myself to think had been unwilling without reason to hold this view,—not because it was impossible that in so difficult a question the opinion of one or of a few might not have been more near the truth than that of more, but because one must not lightly, without full consideration and investigation of the matter to the best of his abilities, decide in favor of a single individual, or even of a few, against the decision of so very many men of the same religion and communion, all endowed with great talent and abundant learning. And so how much was suggested to me on more diligent inquiry, even by the letter

of Cyprian himself, in favor of the view which is now held by the Catholic Church, that the baptism of Christ is to be recognized and approved, not by the standard of their merits by whom it is administered, but by His alone of whom it is said, “The same is He which baptizeth,” will be shown naturally in the course of our argument. Let us therefore suppose that the letter which was written by Cyprian to Jubaianus has been read among us, as it was read in the Council. And I would have every one read it who means to read what I am going to say, lest he might possibly think that I have suppressed some things of consequence. For it would take too much time, and be irrelevant to the elucidation of the matter in hand, were we at this moment to quote all the words of this epistle

CHAPTER 5

7. But if any one should ask what I hold in the meantime, while discussing this question, I answer that, in the first place, the letter of Cyprian suggested to me what I should hold till I should see clearly the nature of the question which next begins to be discussed. For Cyprian himself says: “But some will say, What then will become of those who in times past, coming to the Church from heresy, were admitted without baptism?’“ Whether they were really without baptism, or whether they were admitted because those who admitted them conceived that they had partaken of baptism, is a matter for our future consideration. At any rate, Cyprian himself shows plainly enough what was the ordinary custom of the Church, when he says that in past time those who came to the Church from heresy were admitted without baptism

8. For in the Council itself Castus of Sicca says: “He who, despising truth, presumes to follow custom, is either envious or evil-disposed towards the brethren to whom the truth is revealed, or is ungrateful towards God, by whose inspiration His Church is instructed.” Whether the truth had been revealed, we shall investigate hereafter; at any rate, he acknowledges that the custom of the Church was different.

CHAPTER 6

9. Libosus also of Vaga says: “The Lord says in the gospel, I am the Truth.’ He does not say, I am custom.’ Therefore, when the truth is made manifest,

custom must give way to truth.” Clearly, no one could doubt that custom must give way to truth where it is made manifest. But we shall see presently about the manifestation of the truth. Meanwhile he also makes it clear that custom was on the other side

CHAPTER 7

10. Zosimus also of Tharassa said: “When a revelation of the truth has been made, error must give way to truth; for even Peter, who at the first circumcised, afterwards gave way to Paul when he declared the truth.” He indeed chose to say error, not custom; but in saying “for even Peter, who at the first circumcised, afterwards gave way to Paul when he declared the truth,” he shows plainly enough that there was a custom also on the subject of baptism at variance with his views. At the same time, also, he warns us that it was not impossible that Cyprian might have held an opinion about baptism at variance with that required by the truth, as held by the Church both before and after him, if even Peter could hold a view at variance with the truth as taught us by the Apostle Paul

CHAPTER 8

11. Likewise Felix of Buslacene said: “In admitting heretics without the baptism of the Church, let no one prefer custom to reason and truth; because reason and truth always prevail to the exclusion of custom.” Nothing could be better, if it be reason, and if it be truth; but this we shall see presently. Meanwhile, it is clear from the words of this man also that the custom was the other way

CHAPTER 9

12. Likewise Honoratus of Tucca said: “Since Christ is the Truth, we ought to follow truth rather than custom.” By all these declarations it is proved that we are not excluded from the communion of the Church, till it shall have been clearly shown what is the nature of the truth, which they say must be preferred to our custom. But if the truth has made it clear that the very regulation ought to be maintained which the said custom had prescribed, then it is evident both that this custom was not established or

confirmed in vain, and also that, in consequence of the discussions in question, the most wholesome observance of so great a sacrament, which could never, indeed, have been changed in the Catholic Church, was even more watchfully guarded with the most scrupulous caution, when it had received the further corroboration of Councils

CHAPTER 10

13. Therefore Cyprian writes to Jubaianus as follows, “concerning the baptism of heretics, who, being placed without, and set down out of the Church,” seem to him to “claim to themselves a matter over which they have neither right nor power. Which we,” he says, “cannot account valid or lawful, since it is clear that among them it is unlawful.” Neither, indeed, do we deny that a man who is baptized among heretics, or in any schism outside the Church, derives no profit from it so far as he is partner in the perverseness of the heretics and schismatics; nor do we hold that those who baptize, although they confer the real true sacrament of baptism, are yet acting rightly, in gathering adherents outside the Church, and entertaining opinions contrary to the Church. But it is one thing to be without a sacrament, another thing to be in possession of it wrongly, and to usurp it unlawfully. Therefore they do not cease to be sacraments of Christ and the Church, merely because they are unlawfully used, not only by heretics, but by all kinds of wicked and impious persons. These, indeed, ought to be corrected and punished, but the sacraments should be acknowledged and revered

14. Cyprian, indeed, says that on this subject not one, but two or more Councils were held; always, however, in Africa. For indeed in one he mentions that seventy-one bishops had been assembled,—to all whose authority we do not hesitate, with all due deference to Cyprian, to prefer the authority, supported by many more bishops, of the whole Church spread throughout the whole world, of which Cyprian himself rejoiced that he was an inseparable member.

15. Nor is the water “profane and adulterous” over which the name of God is invoked, even though it be invoked by profane and adulterous persons; because neither the creature itself of water, nor the name invoked, is

adulterous. But the baptism of Christ, consecrated by the words of the gospel, is necessarily holy, however polluted and unclean its ministers may be; because its inherent sanctity cannot be polluted, and the divine excellence abides in its sacrament, whether to the salvation of those who use it aright, or to the destruction of those who use it wrong. Would you indeed maintain that, while the light of the sun or of a candle, diffused through unclean places, contracts no foulness in itself therefrom, yet the baptism of Christ can be defiled by the sins of any man, whatsoever he may be? For if we turn our thoughts to the visible materials themselves, which are to us the medium of the sacraments, every one must know that they admit of corruption. But if we think on that which they convey to us, who can fail to see that it is incorruptible, however much the men through whose ministry it is conveyed are either being rewarded or punished for the character of their lives?

CHAPTER 11

16. But Cyprian was right in not being moved by what Jubaianus wrote, that “the followers of Novatian rebaptize those who come to them from the Catholic Church.” For, in the first place, it does not follow that whatever heretics have done in a perverse spirit of mimicry, Catholics are therefore to abstain from doing, because the heretics do the same. And again, the reasons are different for which heretics and the Catholic Church ought respectively to abstain from rebaptizing. For it would not be right for heretics to do so, even if it were fitting in the Catholic Church; because their argument is, that among the Catholics is wanting that which they themselves received whilst still within the pale, and took away with them when they departed. Whereas the reason why the Catholic Church should not administer again the baptism which was given among heretics, is that it may not seem to decide that a power which is Christ’s alone belongs to its members, or to pronounce that to be wanting in the heretics which they have received within her pale, and certainly could not lose by straying outside. For thus much Cyprian himself, with all the rest, established, that if any should return from heresy to the Church, they should be received back, not by baptism, but by the discipline of penitence; whence it is clear that they cannot be held to lose by their secession what is not restored to them

when they return. Nor ought it for a moment to be said that, as their heresy is their own, as their error is their own, as the sacrilege of disunion is their own, so also the baptism is their own, which is really Christ's. Accordingly, while the evils which are their own are corrected when they return, so in that which is not theirs His presence should be recognised, from whom it is

CHAPTER 12

17. But the blessed Cyprian shows that it was no new or sudden thing that he decided, because the practice had already begun under Agrippinus. "Many years," he says, "and much time has passed away since, under Agrippinus of honored memory, a large assembly of bishops determined this point." Accordingly, under Agrippinus, at any rate, the thing was new. But I cannot understand what Cyprian means by saying, "And thenceforward to the present day, so many thousand heretics in our provinces, having been converted to our Church, showed no hesitation or dislike, but rather with full consent of reason and will, have embraced the opportunity of the grace of the laver of life and the baptism unto salvation," unless indeed he says, "thenceforward to the present day," because from the time when they were baptized in the Church, in accordance with the Council of Agrippinus, no question of excommunication had arisen in the case of any of the rebaptized. Yet if the custom of baptizing those who came over from heretics remained in force from the time of Agrippinus to that of Cyprian, why should new Councils have been held by Cyprian on this point? Why does he say to this same Jubaianus that he is not doing anything new or sudden, but only what had been established by Agrippinus? For why should Jubaianus be disturbed by the question of novelty, so as to require to be satisfied by the authority of Agrippinus, if this was the continuous practice of the Church from Agrippinus till Cyprian? Why, lastly, did so many of his colleagues urge that reason and truth must be preferred to custom, instead of saying that those who wished to act otherwise were acting contrary to truth and custom alike?

CHAPTER 13

18. But as regards the remission of sins, whether it is granted through baptism at the hands of the heretics, I have already expressed my opinion

on this point in a former book; but I will shortly recapitulate it here. If remission of sins is there conferred by the sacredness of baptism, the sins return again through obstinate perseverance in heresy or schism; and therefore such men must needs return to the peace of the Catholic Church, that they may cease to be heretics and schismatics, and deserve that those sins which had returned on them should be cleansed away by love working in the bond of unity. But if, although among heretics and schismatics it be still the same baptism of Christ, it yet cannot work remission of sins owing to this same foulness of discord and wickedness of dissent, then the same baptism begins to be of avail for the remission of sins when they come to the peace of the Church,—[not] that what has been already truly remitted should not be retained; nor that heretical baptism should be repudiated as belonging to a different religion, or as being different from our own, so that a second baptism should be administered; but that the very same baptism, which was working death by reason of discord outside the Church, may work salvation by reason of the peace within. It was, in fact, the same savor of which the apostle says, “We are a sweet savor of Christ in every place;” and yet, says he, “both in them that are saved and in them that perish. To the one we are the savor of life unto life; and to the other the savor of death unto death.” And although he used these words with reference to another subject, I have applied them to this, that men may understand that what is good may not only work life to those who use it aright, but also death to those who use it wrong

CHAPTER 14

19. Nor is it material, when we are considering the question of the genuineness and holiness of the sacrament, “what the recipient of the sacrament believes, and with what faith he is imbued.” It is of the very highest consequence as regards the entrance into salvation, but is wholly immaterial as regards the question of the sacrament. For it is quite possible that a man may be possessed of the genuine sacrament and a corrupted faith, as it is possible that he may hold the words of the creed in their integrity, and yet entertain an erroneous belief about the Trinity, or the resurrection, or any other point. For it is no slight matter, even within the Catholic Church itself, to hold a faith entirely consistent with the truth

about even God Himself, to say nothing of any of His creatures. Is it then to be maintained, that if any one who has been baptized within the Catholic Church itself should afterwards, in the course of reading, or by listening to instruction, or by quiet argument, find out, through God's own revelation, that he had before believed otherwise than he ought, it is requisite that he should therefore be baptized afresh? But what carnal and natural man is there who does not stray through the vain conceits of his own heart, and picture God's nature to himself to be such as he has imagined out of his carnal sense, and differ from the true conception of God as far as vanity from truth? Most truly, indeed, speaks the apostle, filled with the light of truth: "The natural man," says he, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." And yet herein he was speaking of men whom he himself shows to have been baptized. For he says to them, "Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" These men had therefore the sacrament of baptism; and yet, inasmuch as their wisdom was of the flesh, what could they believe about God otherwise than according to the perception of their flesh, according to which "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God?" To such he says: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal." For such are carried about with every wind of doctrine, of which kind he says, "That we be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." It is then true that, if these men shall have advanced even to the spiritual age of the inner man, and in the integrity of understanding shall have learned how far different from the requirements of the truth has been the belief which they have been led by the fallacious character of their conceits to entertain of God, they are therefore to be baptized again? For, on this principle, it would be possible for a Catholic catechumen to light upon the writings of some heretic, and, not having the knowledge requisite for discerning truth from error, he might entertain some belief contrary to the Catholic faith, yet not condemned by the words of the creed, just as, under color of the same words, innumerable heretical errors have sprung up. Supposing, then, that the catechumen was under the impression that he was studying the work of some great and learned Catholic, and was baptized with that belief in the Catholic Church, and by subsequent research should discover what he ought to believe, so that, embracing the Catholic faith, he should reject his former error, ought he, on confessing this, to be baptized again? Or supposing that, before learning and confessing this for himself, he should be found to entertain such an opinion, and should be taught what he ought to reject and what he should believe, and it were to become clear that he had held this false belief when he was baptized, ought he therefore to be baptized again? Why should we maintain the contrary? Because the sanctity of the sacrament, consecrated in the words of the gospel, remains upon him in its integrity, just as he received it from the hands of the minister, although he, being firmly rooted in the vanity of his carnal mind entertained a belief other than was right at the time when he was baptized. Wherefore it is manifest that it is possible that, with defective faith, the sacrament of baptism may yet remain without defect in any man; and therefore all that is said about the diversity of the several heretics is beside the question. For in each person that is to be corrected which is found to be amiss by the man who undertakes his correction. That is to be made whole which is unsound; that is to be given which is wanting, and, above all, the peace of Christian charity, without which the rest is profitless. Yet, as the rest is there, we must not administer it as though it were wanting, only take care that its possession be to the profit, not the hurt of him who has it, through the very bond of peace and excellence of charity

CHAPTER 15

20. Accordingly, if Marcion consecrated the sacrament of baptism with the words of the gospel, “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” the sacrament was complete, although his faith expressed under the same words, seeing that he held opinions not taught by the Catholic truth, was not complete, but stained with the falsity of fables. For under these same words, “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” not Marcion only, or Valentinus, or Arius, or Eunomius, but the carnal babes of the Church themselves (to whom the apostle said, “I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal”), if they could be individually asked for an accurate exposition of their opinions, would probably show a diversity of opinions as numerous as the persons who held them, “for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of

God.” Can it, however, be said on this account that they do not receive the complete sacrament? or that, if they shall advance, and correct the vanity of their carnal opinions, they must seek again what they had received? Each man receives after the fashion of his own faith; yet how much does he obtain under the guidance of that mercy of God, in the confident assurance of which the same apostle says, “If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you”? Yet the snares of heretics and schismatics prove for this reason only too pernicious to the carnally-minded, because their very progress is intercepted when their vain opinions are confirmed in opposition to the Catholic truth, and the perversity of their dissension is strengthened against the Catholic peace. Yet if the sacraments are the same, they are everywhere complete, even when they are wrongly understood, and perverted to be instruments of discord, just as the very writings of the gospel, if they are only the same, are everywhere complete, even though quoted with a boundless variety of false opinions. For as to what Jeremiah says:—”Why do those who grieve me prevail against me? My wound is stubborn, whence shall I be healed? In its origin it became unto me as lying water, having no certainty,”—if the term “water” were never used figuratively and in the allegorical language of prophecy except to signify baptism, we should have trouble in discovering what these words of Jeremiah meant; but as it is, when “waters” are expressly used in the Apocalypse to signify “peoples,” I do not see why, by “lying water having no certainty,” I should not understand, a “lying people, whom I cannot trust.”

CHAPTER 16

21. But when it is said that “the Holy Spirit is given by the imposition of hands in the Catholic Church only, I suppose that our ancestors meant that we should understand thereby what the apostle says, “Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” For this is that very love which is wanting in all who are cut off from the communion of the Catholic Church; and for lack of this, “though they speak with the tongues of men and of angels, though they understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though they have the gift of prophecy, and all faith, so that they could remove mountains, and though they bestow all their

goods to feed the poor, and though they give their bodies to be burned, it profiteth them nothing.” But those are wanting in God’s love who do not care for the unity of the Church; and consequently we are right in understanding that the Holy Spirit may be said not to be received except in the Catholic Church. For the Holy Spirit is not only given by the laying on of hands amid the testimony of temporal sensible miracles, as He was given in former days to be the credentials of a rudimentary faith, and for the extension of the first beginnings of the Church. For who expects in these days that those on whom hands are laid that they may receive the Holy Spirit should forthwith begin to speak with tongues? but it is understood that invisibly and imperceptibly, on account of the bond of peace, divine love is breathed into their hearts, so that they may be able to say, “Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” But there are many operations of the Holy Spirit, which the same apostle commemorates in a certain passage at such length as he thinks sufficient, and then concludes: “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.” Since, then, the sacrament is one thing, which even Simon Magus could have; and the operation of the Spirit is another thing, which is even often found in wicked men, as Saul had the gift of prophecy; and that operation of the same Spirit is a third thing, which only the good can have, as “the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:” whatever, therefore, may be received by heretics and schismatics, the charity which covereth the multitude of sins is the especial gift of Catholic unity and peace; nor is it found in all that are within that bond, since not all that are within it are of it, as we shall see in the proper place. At any rate, outside the bond that love cannot exist, without which all the other requisites, even if they can be recognized and approved, cannot profit or release from sin. But the laying on of hands in reconciliation to the Church is not, like baptism, incapable of repetition; for what is it more than a prayer offered over a man?

CHAPTER 17

22. “For as regards the fact that to preserve the figure of unity the Lord gave the power to Peter that whatsoever he should loose on earth should be

loosed," it is clear that that unity is also described as one dove without fault. Can it be said, then, that to this same dove belong all those greedy ones, whose existence in the same Catholic Church Cyprian himself so grievously bewailed? For birds of prey, I believe, cannot be called doves, but rather hawks. How then did they baptize those who used to plunder estates by treacherous deceit, and increase their profits by compound usury, if baptism is only given by that indivisible and chaste and perfect dove, that unity which can only be understood as existing among the good? Is it possible that, by the prayers of the saints who are spiritual within the Church, as though by the frequent lamentations of the dove, a great sacrament is dispensed, with a secret administration of the mercy of God, so that their sins also are loosed who are baptized, not by the dove but by the hawk, if they come to that sacrament in the peace of Catholic unity? But if this be so, why should it not also be the case that, as each man comes from heresy or schism to the Catholic peace, his sins should be loosed through their prayers? But the integrity of the sacrament is everywhere recognized, though it will not avail for the irrevocable remission of sins outside the unity of the Church. Nor will the prayers of the saints, or, in other words, the groanings of that one dove, be able to help one who is set in heresy or schism; just as they are not able to help one who is placed within the Church, if by a wicked life he himself retain the debts of his sins against himself, and that though he be baptized, not by this hawk, but by the pious ministry of the dove herself

CHAPTER 18

23. "As my Father hath sent me," says our Lord, "even so send I you. And what He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." Therefore, if they represented the Church, and this was said to them as to the Church herself, it follows that the peace of the Church looses sins, and estrangement from the Church retains them, not according to the will of men, but according to the will of God and the prayers of the saints who are spiritual, who "judge all things, but themselves are judged of no man." For the rock retains, the rock remits; the dove retains, the dove remits; unity retains, unity remits.

But the peace of this unity exists only in the good, in those who are either already spiritual, or are advancing by the obedience of concord to spiritual things; it exists not in the bad, whether they make disturbances abroad, or are endured within the Church with lamentations, baptizing and being baptized. But just as those who are tolerated with groanings within the Church, although they do not belong to the same unity of the dove, and to that "glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing," yet if they are corrected, and confess that they approached to baptism most unworthily, are not baptized again, but begin to belong to the dove, through whose groans those sins are remitted which were retained in them who were estranged from her peace; so those also who are more openly without the Church, if they have received the same sacraments, are not freed from their sins on coming, after correction, to the unity of the Church, by a repetition of baptism, but by the same law of charity and bond of unity. For if "those only may baptize who are set over the Church, and established by the law of the gospel and ordination as appointed by the Lord," were they in any wise of this kind who seized on estates by treacherous frauds, and increased their gains by compound interest? I trow not, since those are established by ordination as appointed of the Lord, of whom the apostle, in giving them a standard, says, "Not greedy, not given to filthy lucre." Yet men of this kind used to baptize in the time of Cyprian himself; and he confesses with many lamentations that they were his fellow-bishops, and endures them with the great reward of tolerance. Yet did they not confer remission of sins, which is granted through the prayers of the saints, that is, the groans of the dove, whoever it be that baptizes, if those to whom it is given belong to her peace. For the Lord would not say to robbers and usurers, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted to him; and whose soever sins ye retain, they shall be retained." "Outside the Church, indeed, nothing can be either bound or loosed, since there there is no one who can either bind or loose;" but he is loosed who has made peace with the dove, and he is bound who is not at peace with the dove, whether he is openly without, or appears to be within

24. But we know that Dathan, Korah, and Abiram, who tried to usurp to themselves the right of sacrificing, contrary to the unity of the people of God, and also the sons of Aaron who offered strange fire upon the altar, did

not escape punishment. Nor do we say that such offenses remain unpunished, unless those guilty of them correct themselves, if the patience of God leading them to repentance give them time for correction.

CHAPTER 19

25. They indeed who say that baptism is not to be repeated, because only hands were laid on those whom Philip the deacon had baptized, are saying what is quite beside the point; and far be it from us, in seeking the truth, to use such arguments as this. Wherefore we are all the further from “yielding to heretics,” if we deny that what they possess of Christ’s Church is their own property, and do not refuse to acknowledge the standard of our General because of the crimes of deserters; nay, all the more because “the Lord our God is a jealous God,” let us refuse, whenever we see anything of His with an alien, to allow him to consider it his own. For of a truth the jealous God Himself rebukes the woman who commits fornication against Him, as the type of an erring people, and says that she gave to her lovers what belonged to Him, and again received from them what was not theirs but His. In the hands of the adulterous woman and the adulterous lovers, God in His wrath, as a jealous God, recognizes His gifts; and do we say that baptism, consecrated in the words of the gospel, belongs to heretics? and are we willing, from consideration of their deeds, to attribute to them even what belongs to God, as though they had the power to pollute it, or as though they could make what is God’s to be their own, because they themselves have refused to belong to God?

26. Who is that adulterous woman whom the prophet Hosea points out, who said, “I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, and everything that befits me?” Let us grant that we may understand this also of the people of the Jews that went astray; yet whom else are the false Christians (such as are all heretics and schismatics) wont to imitate, except false Israelites? For there were also true Israelites, as the Lord Himself bears witness to Nathanael, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” But who are true Christians, save those of whom the same Lord said, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me?” But what is it to keep His commandments, except to abide in love? Whence also He says, “A new commandment I give unto

you, that ye love one another;” and again, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” But who can doubt that this was spoken not only to those who heard His words with their fleshly ears when He was present with them, but also to those who learn His words through the gospel, when He is sitting on His throne in heaven? For He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill. But the fulfilling of the law is love. And in this Cyprian abounded greatly, insomuch that though he held a different view concerning baptism, he yet did not forsake the unity of the Church, and was in the Lord’s vine a branch firmly rooted, bearing fruit, which the heavenly Husbandman purged with the knife of suffering, that it should bear more fruit. But the enemies of this brotherly love, whether they are openly without, or appear to be within, are false Christians, and antichrists. For when they have found an opportunity, they go out, as it is written: “A man wishing to separate himself from his friends, seeketh opportunities.” But even if occasions are wanting, while they seem to be within, they are severed from that invisible bond of love. Whence St. John says, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for had they been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.” He does not say that they ceased to be of us by going out, but that they went out because they were not of us. The Apostle Paul also speaks of certain men who had erred concerning the truth, and were overthrowing the faith of some; whose word was eating as a canker. Yet in saying that they should be avoided, he nevertheless intimates that they were all in one great house, but as vessels to dishonor,—I suppose because they had not as yet gone out. Or if they had already gone out, how can he say that they were in the same great house with the honorable vessels, unless it was in virtue of the sacraments themselves, which even in the severed meetings of heretics are not changed, that he speaks of all as belonging to the same great house, though in different degrees of esteem, some to honor and some to dishonor? For thus he speaks in his Epistle to Timothy: “But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth firm, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." But what is it to purge oneself from such as these, except what he said just before, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." And lest any one should think that, as being in one great house with them, he might perish with such as these, he has most carefully forewarned them, "The Lord knoweth them that are His,"—those, namely, who, by departing from iniquity, purge themselves from the vessels made to dishonor, lest they should perish with them whom they are compelled to tolerate in the great house.

27. They, therefore, who are wicked, evildoers, carnal, fleshly, devilish, think that they receive at the hands of their seducers what are the gifts of God alone, whether sacraments, or any spiritual workings about present salvation. But these men have not love towards God, but are busied about those by whose pride they are led astray, and are compared to the adulterous woman, whom the prophet introduces as saying, "I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, and my oil, and everything that befits me." For thus arise heresies and schisms, when the fleshly people which is not founded on the love of God says, "I will go after my lovers," with whom, either by corruption of her faith, or by the puffing up of her pride, she shamefully commits adultery. But for the sake of those who, having undergone the difficulties, and straits, and barriers of the empty reasoning of those by whom they are led astray, afterwards feel the prickings of fear, and return to the way of peace, to seeking God in all sincerity,—for their sake He goes on to say, "Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them: and she shall seek them, but she shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now." Then, that they may not attribute to their seducers what they have that is sound, and derived from the doctrine of truth, by which they lead them astray to the falseness of their own dogmas and dissensions; that they may not think that what is sound in them belongs to them, he immediately added, "And she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and

multiplied her money; but she made vessels of gold and silver for Baal.” For she had said above, “I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread,” etc., not at all understanding that all this, which was held soundly and lawfully by her seducers, was of God, and not of men. Nor would even they themselves claim these things for themselves, and as it were assert a right in them, had not they in turn been led astray by a people which had gone astray, when faith is reposed in them, and such honors are paid to them, that they should be enabled thereby to say such things, and claim such things for themselves, that their error should be called truth, and their iniquity be thought righteousness, in virtue of the sacraments and Scriptures, which they hold, not for salvation, but only in appearance. Accordingly, the same adulterous woman is addressed by the mouth of Ezekiel: “Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them; and tookest my broidered garments, and coveredst them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them. My meat also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou hast even set it before thine idols for a sweet savor: and this thou hast done.” For she turns all the sacraments, and the words of the sacred books, to the images of her own idols, with which her carnal mind delights to wallow. Nor yet, because those images are false, and the doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, are those sacraments and divine utterances therefore so to lose their due honor, as to be thought to belong to such as these; seeing that the Lord says,” Of my gold, and my silver, and my broidered garments, and mine oil, and mine incense, and my meat,” and so forth. Ought we, because those erring ones think that these things belong to their seducers, therefore not to recognize whose they really are, when He Himself says, “And she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her money”? For He did not say that she did not have these things because she was an adulteress; but she is said to have had them, and that not as belonging to herself or her lovers, but to God, whose alone they are. Although, therefore, she had her fornication, yet those things wherewith she adorned it, whether as seduced or in her turn seducing, belonged not to her, but to God. If these things were spoken in a figure of the Jewish nation, when the scribes and Pharisees were rejecting the commandment of God in order to set up their own traditions, so that they were in a manner committing whoredom with a people which was abandoning their God; and yet for all that, whoredom at that time among the people, such as the Lord brought to light by convicting it, did not cause that the mysteries should belong to them, which were not theirs but God’s, who, in speaking to the adulteress, says that all these things were His; whence the Lord Himself also sent those whom He cleansed from leprosy to the same mysteries, that they should offer sacrifice for themselves before the priests, because that sacrifice had not become efficacious for them, which He Himself afterwards wished to be commemorated in the Church for all of them, because He Himself proclaimed the tidings to them all;—if this be so, how much the more ought we, when we find the sacraments of the New Testament among certain heretics or schismatics, not to attribute them to these men, nor to condemn them, as though we could not recognize them? We ought to recognize the gifts of the true husband, though in the possession of an adulteress, and to amend, by the word of truth, that whoredom which is the true possession of the unchaste woman, instead of finding fault with the gifts, which belong entirely to the pitying Lord.

28. From these considerations, and such as these, our forefathers, not only before the time of Cyprian and Agrippinus, but even afterwards, maintained a most wholesome custom, that whenever they found anything divine and lawful remaining in its integrity even in the midst of any heresy or schism, they approved rather than repudiated it; but whatever they found that was alien, and peculiar to that false doctrine or division, this they convicted in the light of the truth, and healed. The points, however, which remain to be considered in the letter written by Jubaianus, must, I think, when looking at the size of this book, be taken in hand and treated with a fresh beginning.

Book IV

In which he treats of what follows in the same epistle of Cyprian to Jubaianus.

CHAPTER 1

1. The comparison of the Church with Paradise shows us that men may indeed receive her baptism outside her pale, but that no one outside can either receive or retain the salvation of eternal happiness. For, as the words of Scripture testify, the streams from the fountain of Paradise flowed copiously even beyond its bounds. Record indeed is made of their names; and through what countries they flow, and that they are situated beyond the limits of Paradise, is known to all; and yet in Mesopotamia, and in Egypt, to which countries those rivers extended, there is not found that blessedness of life which is recorded in Paradise. Accordingly, though the waters of Paradise are found beyond its boundaries, yet its happiness is in Paradise alone. So, therefore, the baptism of the Church may exist outside, but the gift of the life of happiness is found alone within the Church, which has been founded on a rock, which has received the keys of binding and loosing. "She it is alone who holds as her privilege the whole power of her Bridegroom and Lord;" by virtue of which power as bride, she can bring forth sons even of handmaids. And these, if they be not high-minded, shall be called into the lot of the inheritance; but if they be high-minded, they shall remain outside

CHAPTER 2

2. All the more, then, because "we are fighting for the honor and unity" of the Church, let us beware of giving to heretics the credit of whatever we acknowledged among them as belonging to the Church; but let us teach them by argument, that what they possess that is derived from unity is of no efficacy to their salvation, unless they shall return to that same unity. For "the water of the Church is full of faith, and salvation, and holiness" to

those who use it rightly. No one, however, can use it well outside the Church. But to those who use it perversely, whether within or without the Church, it is employed to work punishment, and does not conduce to their reward. And so baptism "cannot be corrupted and polluted," though it be handled by the corrupt or by adulterers, just as also "the Church herself is uncorrupt, and pure, and chaste." And so no share in it belongs to the avaricious, or thieves, or usurers,—many of whom, by the testimony of Cyprian himself in many places of his letters, exist not only without, but actually within the Church,—and yet they both are baptized and do baptize, with no change in their hearts

3. For this, too, he says, in one of his epistles to the clergy on the subject of prayer toGod, in which, after the fashion of the holy Daniel, he represents the sins of his people as falling upon himself. For among many other evils of which he makes mention, he speaks of them also as "renouncing the world in words only and not in deeds;" as the apostle says of certain men, "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him." These, therefore, the blessed Cyprian shows to be contained within the Church herself, who are baptized without their hearts being changed for the better, seeing that they renounce the world in words and not in deeds, as the Apostle Peter says, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience)," which certainly they had not of whom it is said that they "renounced the world in words only, and not in deeds;" and yet he does his utmost, by chiding and convincing them, to make them at length walk in the way of Christ, and be His friends rather than friends of the world.

CHAPTER 3

4. And if they would have obeyed him, and begun to live rightly, not as false but as true Christians, would he have ordered them to be baptized anew? Surely not; but their true conversion would have gained this for them, that the sacrament which availed for their destruction while they were yet unchanged, should begin when they changed to avail for their salvation

5. For neither are they "devoted to the Church" who seem to be within and live contrary to Christ, that is, act against His commandments; nor can they

be considered in any way to belong to that Church, which He so purifies by the washing of water, “that He may present to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.” But if they are not in that Church to whose members they do not belong, they are not in the Church of which it is said, “My dove is but one; she is the only one of her mother;” for she herself is without spot or wrinkle. Or else let him who can assert that those are members of this dove who renounce the world in words but not in deeds. Meantime there is one thing which we see, from which I think it was said, “He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord,” for God judgeth every day. For, according to His foreknowledge, who knows whom He has foreordained before the foundation of the world to be made like to the image of His Son, many who are even openly outside, and are called heretics, are better than many good Catholics. For we see what they are to-day, what they shall be to-morrow we know not. And with God, with whom the future is already present, they already are what they shall hereafter be. But we, according to what each man is at present, inquire whether they are to be to-day reckoned among the members of the Church which is called the one dove, and the Bride of Christ without a spot or wrinkle, of whom Cyprian says in the letter which I have quoted above, that “they did not keep in the way of the Lord, nor observe the commandments given unto them for their salvation; that they did not fulfill the will of their Lord, being eager about their property and gains, following the dictates of pride, giving way to envy and dissension, careless about single-mindedness and faith, renouncing the world in words only and not in deeds, pleasing each himself, and displeasing all men.” But if the dove does not acknowledge them among her members, and if the Lord shall say to them, supposing that they continue in the same perversity, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity;” then they seem indeed to be in the Church, but are not; “nay, they even act against the Church. How then can they baptize with the baptism of the Church,” which is of avail neither to themselves, nor to those who receive it from them, unless they are changed in heart with a true conversion, so that the sacrament itself, which did not avail them when they received it whilst they were renouncing the world in words and not in deeds, may begin to profit them when they shall begin to renounce it in deeds also? And so too in the case of those whose separation from the

Church is open; for neither these nor those are as yet among the members of the dove, but some of them perhaps will be at some future time.

CHAPTER 4

6. We do not, therefore, “acknowledge the baptism of heretics,” when we refuse to baptize after them; but because we acknowledge the ordinance to be of Christ even among evil men, whether openly separated from us, or secretly severed whilst within our body, we receive it with due respect, having corrected those who were wrong in the points wherein they went astray. However as I seem to be hard pressed when it is said to me, “Does then a heretic confer remission of sins?” so I in turn press hard when I say, Does then he who violates the commands of Heaven, the avaricious man, the robber, the usurer, the envious man, does he who renounces the world in words and not in deeds, confer such remission? If you mean by the force of God’s sacrament, then both the one and the other; if by his own merit, neither of them. For that sacrament, even in the hands of wicked men, is known to be of Christ; but neither the one nor the other of these men is found in the body of the one uncorrupt, holy, chaste dove, which has neither spot nor wrinkle. And just as baptism is of no profit to the man who renounces the world in words and not in deeds, so it is of no profit to him who is baptized in heresy or schism; but each of them, when he amends his ways, begins to receive profit from that which before was not profitable, but was yet already in him

7. “He therefore that is baptized in heresy does not become the temple of God; but does it therefore follow that he is not to be considered as baptized? For neither does the avaricious man, baptized within the Church, become the temple of God unless he depart from his avarice; for they who become the temple of God certainly inherit the kingdom of God. But the apostle says, among many other things, “Neither the covetous, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” For in another place the same apostle compares covetousness to the worship of idols: “Nor covetous man,” he says, “who is an idolater;” which meaning the same Cyprian has so far extended in a letter to Antonianus, that he did not hesitate to compare the sin of covetousness with that of men who in time of persecution had declared in writing that they would offer incense. The man, then, who is

baptized in heresy in the name of the Holy Trinity, yet does not become the temple of God unless he abandons his heresy, just as the covetous man who has been baptized in the same name does not become the temple of God unless he abandons his covetousness, which is idolatry. For this, too, the same apostle says: “What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” Let it not, then, be asked of us “of what God he is made the temple” when we say that he is not made the temple of God at all. Yet he is not therefore unbaptized, nor does his foul error cause that what he has received, consecrated in the words of the gospel, should not be the holy sacrament; just as the other man’s covetousness (which is idolatry) and great uncleanness cannot prevent what he receives from being holy baptism, even though he be baptized with the same words of the gospel by another man covetous like himself.

CHAPTER 5

8. “Further,” Cyprian goes on to say, “in vain do some, who are overcome by reason, oppose to us custom, as though custom were superior to truth, or that were not to be followed in spiritual things which has been revealed by the Holy Spirit, as the better way.” This is clearly true, since reason and truth are to be preferred to custom. But when truth supports custom, nothing should be more strongly maintained. Then he proceeds as follows: “For one may pardon a man who merely errs, as the Apostle Paul says of himself, Who was before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly;’ but he who, after inspiration and revelation given, perseveres advisedly and knowingly in his former error, sins without hope of pardon on the ground of ignorance. For he rests on a kind of presumption and obstinacy, when he is overcome by reason.” This is most true, that his sin is much more grievous who has sinned wittingly than his who has sinned through ignorance. And so in the case of the holy Cyprian, who was not only learned, but also patient of instruction, which he so fully himself understood to be a part of the praise of the bishop whom the apostle describes, that he said, “This also should be approved in a bishop, that he not only teach with knowledge, but also learn with patience.” I do not doubt that if he had had the opportunity of discussing this question, which has been so long and so much disputed in the Church,

with the pious and learned men to whom we owe it that subsequently that ancient custom was confirmed by the authority of a plenary Council, he would have shown, without hesitation, not only how learned he was in those things which he had grasped with all the security of truth, but also how ready he was to receive instruction in what he had failed to perceive. And yet, since it is so clear that it is much more grievous to sin wittingly than in ignorance, I should be glad if any one would tell me which is the worse,—the man who falls into heresy, not knowing how great a sin it is, or the man who refuses to abandon his covetousness, knowing its enormity? I might even put the question thus: If one man unwittingly fall into heresy, and another knowingly refuse to depart from idolatry, since the apostle himself says, “The covetous man, which is an idolater;” and Cyprian too understood the same passage in just the same way, when he says, in his letter to Antonianus, “Nor let the new heretics flatter themselves in this, that they say they do not communicate with idolaters, whereas there are amongst them both adulterers and covetous persons, who are held guilty of the sin of idolatry; for know this, and understand, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God;’ and again, Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.’“ I ask, therefore, which sins more deeply,—he who ignorantly has fallen into heresy, or he who wittingly has refused to abandon covetousness, that is idolatry? According to that rule by which the sins of those who sin wittingly are placed before those of the ignorant, the man who is covetous with knowledge takes the first place in sin. But as it is possible that the greatness of the actual sin should produce the same effect in the case of heresy that the witting commission of the sin produces in that of covetousness, let us suppose the ignorant heretic to be on a par in guilt with the consciously covetous man, although the evidence which Cyprian himself has advanced from the apostle does not seem to prove this. For what is it that we abominate in heretics except their blasphemies? But when he wished to show that ignorance of the sin may conduce to ease in obtaining pardon, he advanced a proof from the case of the apostle, when he says, “Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly.” But if possible, as I said before, let the sins of the two men—the blasphemy of the unconscious, and the idolatry of the conscious sinner—be esteemed of equal weight; and let them be judged by the same sentence,—he who, in seeking for Christ, falls into a truth-like setting forth of what is false, and he who wittingly resists Christ speaking through His apostle, "seeing that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God,"—and then I would ask why baptism and the words of the gospel are held as naught in the former case, and accounted valid in the latter, when each is alike found to be estranged from the members of the dove. Is it because the former is an open combatant outside, that he should not be admitted, the latter a cunning assenter within the fold, that he may not be expelled?

CHAPTER 6

9. But as regards his saying, "Nor let any one affirm that what they have received from the apostles, that they follow; for the apostles handed down only one Church and one baptism, and that appointed only in the same Church:" this does not so much move me to venture to condemn the baptism of Christ when found amongst heretics (just as it is necessary to recognize the gospel itself when I find it with them, though I abominate their error), as it warns me that there were some even in the times of the holy Cyprian who traced to the authority of the apostles that custom against which the African Councils were held, and in respect of which he himself said a little above, "In vain do those who are beaten by reason oppose to us the authority of custom." Nor do I find the reason why the same Cyprian found this very custom, which after his time was confirmed by nothing less than a plenary Council of the whole world, already so strong before his time, that when with all his learning he sought an authority worth following for changing it, he found nothing but a Council of Agrippinus held in Africa a very few years before his own time. And seeing that this was not enough for him, as against the custom of the whole world, he laid hold on these reasons which we just now, considering them with great care, and being confirmed by the antiquity of the custom itself, and by the subsequent authority of a plenary Council, found to be truth-like rather than true; which, however, seemed to him true, as he toiled in a question of the

greatest obscurity, and was in doubt about the remission of sins,—whether it could fail to be given in the baptism of Christ, and whether it could be given among heretics. In which matter, if an imperfect revelation of the truth was given to Cyprian, that the greatness of his love in not deserting the unity of the Church might be made manifest, there is yet not any reason why any one should venture to claim superiority over the strong defenses and excellence of his virtues, and the abundance of graces which were found in him, merely because, with the instruction derived from the strength of a general Council, he sees something which Cyprian did not see, because the Church had not yet held a plenary Council on the matter. Just as no one is so insane as to set himself up as surpassing the merits of the Apostle Peter, because, taught by the epistles of the Apostle Paul, and confirmed by the custom of the Church herself, he does not compel the Gentiles to judaize, as Peter once had done

10. We do not then "find that any one, after being baptized among heretics, was afterwards admitted by the apostles with the same baptism, and communicated;" but neither do we find this, that any one coming from the society of heretics, who had been baptized among them, was baptized anew by the apostles. But this custom, which even then those who looked back to past ages could not find to have been invented by men of a later time, is rightly believed to have been handed down from the apostles. And there are many other things of the same kind, which it would be tedious to recount. Wherefore, if they had something to say for themselves to whom Cyprian, wishing to persuade them of the truth of his own view, says, "Let no one say, What we have received from the apostles, that we follow," with how much more force we now say, What the custom of the Church has always held, what this argument has failed to prove false, and what a plenary Council has confirmed, this we follow! To this we may add that it may also be said, after a careful inquiry into the reasoning on both sides of the discussion, and into the evidence of Scripture, What truth has declared, that we follow.

CHAPTER 7

11. For in fact, as to what some opposed to the reasoning of Cyprian, that the apostle says, "Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in

truth, let Christ be preached;” Cyprian rightly exposed their error, showing that it has nothing to do with the case of heretics, since the apostle was speaking of those who were acting within the Church, with malicious envy seeking their own profit. They announced Christ, indeed, according to the truth whereby we believe in Christ, but not in the spirit in which He was announced by the good evangelists to the sons of the dove. “For Paul,” he says, “in his epistle was not speaking of heretics, or of their baptism, so that it could be shown that he had laid down anything concerning this matter. He was speaking of brethren, whether as walking disorderly and contrary to the discipline of the Church, or as keeping the discipline of the Church in the fear of God. And he declared that some of them spoke the word of God steadfastly and fearlessly, but that some were acting in envy and strife; that some had kept themselves encompassed with kindly Christian love, but that others entertained malice and strife: but yet that he patiently endured all things, with the view that, whether in truth or in pretence, the name of Christ, which Paul preached, might come to the knowledge of the greatest number, and that the sowing of the word, which was as yet a new and unaccustomed work, might spread more widely by the preaching of those that spoke. Furthermore, it is one thing for those who are within the Church to speak in the name of Christ, another thing for those who are without, acting against the Church, to baptize in the name of Christ.” These words of Cyprian seem to warn us that we must distinguish between those who are bad outside, and those who are bad within the Church. And those whom he says that the apostle represents as preaching the gospel impurely and of envy, he says truly were within. This much, however, I think I may say without rashness, if no one outside can have anything which is of Christ, neither can any one within have anything which is of the devil. For if that closed garden can contain the thorns of the devil, why cannot the fountain of Christ equally flow beyond the garden’s bounds? But if it cannot contain them, whence, even in the time of the Apostle Paul himself, did there arise amongst those who were within so great an evil of envy and malicious strife? For these are the words of Cyprian. Can it be that envy and malicious strife are a small evil? How then were those in unity who were not at peace? For it is not my voice, nor that of any man, but of the Lord Himself; nor did the sound go forth from men, but from angels, at the birth of Christ, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.” And this certainly would not have been proclaimed by the voice of angels when Christ was born upon the earth, unless God wished this to be understood, that those are in the unity of the body of Christ who are united in the peace of Christ, and those are in the peace of Christ who are of good will. Furthermore, as good will is shown in kindliness, so is bad will shown in malice

CHAPTER 8

12. In short, we may see how great an evil in itself is envy, which cannot be other than malicious. Let us not look for other testimony. Cyprian himself is sufficient for us, through whose mouth the Lord poured forth so many thunders in most perfect truth, and uttered so many useful precepts about envy and malignity. Let us therefore read the letter of Cyprian about envy and malignity, and see how great an evil it is to envy those better than ourselves,—an evil whose origin he shows in memorable words to have sprung from the devil himself. “To feel jealousy,” he says, “of what you regard as good, and to envy those who are better than yourselves, to some, dearest brethren, seems a light and minute offense.” And again a little later, when he was inquiring into the source and origin of the evil, he says, “From this the devil, in the very beginning of the world, perished first himself, and led others to destruction.” And further on in the same chapter: “What an evil, dearest brethren, is that by which an angel fell! by which that exalted and illustrious loftiness was able to be deceived and overthrown! by which he was deceived who was the deceiver! From that time envy stalks upon the earth, when man, about to perish through malignity, submits himself to the teacher of perdition,—when he who envies imitates the devil, as it is written, Through envy of the devil came death into the world, and they that do hold of his side do find it.’“ How true, how forcible are these words of Cyprian, in an epistle known throughout the world, we cannot fail to recognize. It was truly fitting for Cyprian to argue and warn most forcibly about envy and malignity, from which most deadly evil he proved his own heart to be so far removed by the abundance of his Christian love; by carefully guarding which he remained in the unity of communion with his colleagues, who without ill-feeling entertained different views about baptism, whilst he himself differed in opinion from them, not through any

contention of ill will, but through human infirmity, erring in a point which God, in His own good time, would reveal to him by reason of his perseverance in love. For he says openly, “Judging no one, nor depriving any of the right of communion if he differ from us. For no one of us setteth himself up as a bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying.” And in the end of the epistle before us he says, “These things I have written to you briefly, dearest brother, according to my poor ability, prescribing to or prejudging no one, so as to prevent each bishop from doing what he thinks right in the free exercise of his own judgment. We, so far as in us lies, do not strive on behalf of heretics with our colleges and fellow-bishops, with whom we hold the harmony that God enjoins, and the peace of our Lord, especially as the apostle says, If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.’ Christian love in our souls, the honor of our fraternity, the bond of faith, the harmony of the priesthood, all these are maintained by us with patience and gentleness. For this cause we have also, so far as our poor ability admitted, by the permission and inspiration of the Lord, written now a treatise on the benefit of patience, which we have sent to you in consideration of our mutual affection.”

CHAPTER 9

13. By this patience of Christian love he not only endured the difference of opinion manifested in all kindliness by his good colleagues on an obscure point, as he also himself received toleration, till, in process of time, when it so pleased God, what had always been a most wholesome custom was further confirmed by a declaration of the truth in a plenary Council, but he even put up with those who were manifestly bad, as was very well known to himself, who did not entertain a different view in consequence of the obscurity of the question, but acted contrary to their preaching in the evil practices of an abandoned life, as the apostle says of them, “Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?” For Cyprian says in his letter of such bishops of his own time, his own colleagues, and remaining in communion with him, “While they had brethren starving in the Church, they tried to amass large sums of money, they took possession of estates by fraudulent proceedings, they multiplied their gains by accumulated

usuries.” For here there is no obscure question. Scripture declares openly, “Neither covetous nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God;” and “He that putteth out his money to usury,” and “No whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” He therefore certainly would not, without knowledge, have brought accusations of such covetousness, that men not only greedily treasured up their own goods, but also fraudulently appropriated the goods of others, or of idolatry existing in such enormity as he understands and proves it to exist; nor assuredly would he bear false witness against his fellow-bishops. And yet with the bowels of fatherly and motherly love he endured them, lest that, by rooting out the tares before their time, the wheat should also have been rooted up, imitating assuredly the Apostle Paul, who, with the same love towards the Church, endured those who were ill-disposed and envious towards him

14. But yet because “by the envy of the devil death entered into the world, and they that do hold of his side do find it,” not because they are created by God, but because they go astray of themselves, as Cyprian also says himself, seeing that the devil, before he was a devil, was an angel, and good, how can it be that they who are of the devil’s side are in the unity of Christ? Beyond all doubt, as the Lord Himself says, “an enemy hath done this,” who “sowed tares among the wheat.” As therefore what is of the devil within the fold must be convicted, so what is of Christ without must be recognized. Has the devil what is his within the unity of the Church, and shall Christ not have what is His without? This, perhaps, might be said of individual men, that as the devil has none that are his among the holy angels, so God has none that are His outside the communion of the Church. But though it may be allowed to the devil to mingle tares, that is, wicked men, with this Church which still wears the mortal nature of flesh, so long as it is wandering far from God, he being allowed this just because of the pilgrimage of the Church herself, that men may desire more ardently the rest of that country which the angels enjoy, yet this cannot be said of the sacraments. For, as the tares within the Church can have and handle them, though not for salvation, but for the destruction to which they are destined in the fire, so also can the tares without, which received them from seceders from within; for they did not lose them by seceding. This, indeed, is made

plain from the fact that baptism is not conferred again on their return, when any of the very men who seceded happen to come back again. And let not any one say, Why, what fruit hath the tares? For if this be so, their condition is the same, so far as this goes, both inside and without. For it surely cannot be that grains of corn are found in the tares inside, and not in those without. But when the question is of the sacrament, we do not consider whether the tares bear any fruit, but whether they have any share of heaven; for the tares, both within and without, share the rain with the wheat itself, which rain is in itself heavenly and sweet, even though under its influence the tares grow up in barrenness. And so the sacrament, according to the gospel of Christ, is divine and pleasant; nor is it to be esteemed as naught because of the barrenness of those on whom its dew falls even without.

CHAPTER 10

15. But some one may say that the tares within may more easily be converted into wheat. I grant that it is so; but what has this to do with the question of repeating baptism? You surely do not maintain that if a man converted from heresy, through the occasion and opportunity given by his conversion, should bear fruit before another who, being within the Church, is more slow to be washed from his iniquity, and so corrected and changed, the former therefore needs not to be baptized again, but the churchman to be baptized again, who was outstripped by him who came from the heretics, because of the greater slowness of his amendment. It has nothing, therefore, to do with the question now at issue who is later or slower in being converted from his especial waywardness to the straight path of faith, or hope, or charity. For although the bad within the fold are more easily made good yet it will sometimes happen that certain of the number of those outside will outstrip in their conversion certain of those within; and while these remain in barrenness, the former, being restored to unity and communion, will bear fruit with patience, thirty-fold, or sixty-fold, or a hundred-fold. Or if those only are to be called tares who remain in perverse error to the end, there are many ears of corn outside, and many tares within

16. But it will be urged that the bad outside are worse than those within. It is indeed a weighty question, whether Nicolaus, being already severed from the Church, or Simon, who was still within it, was the worse,—the one

being a heretic, the other a sorcerer. But if the mere fact of division, as being the clearest token of violated charity, is held to be the worse evil, I grant that it is so. Yet many, though they have lost all feelings of charity, yet do not secede from considerations of worldly profit; and as they seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's, what they are unwilling to secede from is not the unity of Christ, but their own temporal advantage. Whence it is said in praise of charity, that she "seeketh not her own."

17. Now, therefore, the question is, how could men of the party of the devil belong to the Church, which has no spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, of which also it is said, "My dove is one?" But if they cannot, it is clear that she groans among those who are not of her, some treacherously laying wait within, some barking at her gate without. Such men, however, even within, both receive baptism, and possess it, and transmit it holy in itself; nor is it in any way defiled by their wickedness, in which they persevere even to the end. Wherefore the same blessed Cyprian teaches us that baptism is to be considered as consecrated in itself by the words of the gospel, as the Church has received, without joining to it or mingling with it any consideration of waywardness and wickedness on the part of either minister or recipients; since he himself points out to us both truths,—both that there have been some within the Church who did not cherish kindly Christian love, but practised envy and unkind dissension, of whom the Apostle Paul spoke; and also that the envious belong to the devil's party, as he testifies in the most open way in the epistle which he wrote about envy and malignity. Wherefore, since it is clearly possible that in those who belong to the devil's party, Christ's sacrament may yet be holy,—not, indeed, to their salvation, but to their condemnation, and that not only if they are led astray after they have been baptized, but even if they were such in heart when they received the sacrament, renouncing the world (as the same Cyprian shows) in words only and not in deeds; and since even if afterwards they be brought into the right way, the sacrament is not to be again administered which they received when they were astray; so far as I can see, the case is already clear and evident, that in the question of baptism we have to consider, not who gives, but what he gives; not who receives, but what he receives; not who has, but what he has. For if men of the party of the devil, and therefore in no way belonging to the one dove, can yet receive, and

have, and give baptism in all its holiness, in no way defiled by their waywardness, as we are taught by the letters of Cyprian himself, how are we ascribing to heretics what does not belong to them? how are we saying that what is really Christ's is theirs, and not rather recognizing in them the signs of our Sovereign, and correcting the deeds of deserters from Him? Wherefore it is one thing, as the holy Cyprian says, "for those within in the Church, to speak in the name of Christ, another thing for those without, who are acting against the Church, to baptize in His name." But both many who are within act against the Church by evil living, and by enticing weak souls to copy their lives; and some who are without speak in Christ's name, and are not forbidden to work the works of Christ, but only to be without, since for the healing of their souls we grasp at them, or reason with them, or exhort them. For he, too, was without who did not follow Christ with His disciples, and yet in Christ's name was casting out devils, which the Lord enjoined that he should not be prevented from doing; although, certainly, in the point where he was imperfect he was to be made whole, in accordance with the words of the Lord, in which He says, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Therefore both some things are done outside in the name of Christ not against the Church, and some things are done inside on the devil's part which are against the Church.

CHAPTER 11

18. What shall we say of what is also wonderful, that he who carefully observes may find that it is possible that certain persons, without violating Christian charity, may yet teach what is useless, as Peter wished to compel the Gentiles to observe Jewish customs, as Cyprian himself would force heretics to be baptized anew? whence the apostle says to such good members, who are rooted in charity, and yet walk not rightly in some points, "If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you;" and that some again, though devoid of charity, may teach something wholesome? of whom the Lord says, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say and do not." Whence the apostle also says of those envious and malicious ones

who yet preach salvation through Christ, “Whether in pretense, or in truth, let Christ be preached.” Wherefore, both within and without, the waywardness of man is to be corrected, but the divine sacraments and utterances are not to be attributed to men. He is not, therefore, a “patron of heretics” who refuses to attribute to them what he knows not to belong to them, even though it be found among them. We do not grant baptism to be theirs; but we recognize His baptism of whom it is said, “The same is He which baptizeth,” wheresoever we find it. But if “the treacherous and blasphemous man” continue in his treachery and blasphemy, he receives no “remission of sins either without” or within the Church; or if, by the power of the sacrament, he receives it for the moment, the same force operates both without and within, as the power of the name of Christ used to work the expulsion of devils even without the Church

CHAPTER 12

19. But he urges that “we find that the apostles, in all their epistles, execrated and abhorred the sacrilegious wickedness of heretics, so as to say that their word does spread as a canker.’“ What then? Does not Paul also show that those who said, “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,” were corrupters of good manners by their evil communications, adding immediately afterwards, “Evil communications corrupt good manners;” and yet he intimated that these were within the Church when he says, “How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?” But when does he fail to express his abhorrence of the covetous? Or could anything be said in stronger terms, than that covetousness should be called idolatry, as the same apostle declared? Nor did Cyprian understand his language otherwise, inserting it when need required in his letters; though he confesses that in his time there were in the Church not covetous men of an ordinary type, but robbers and usurers, and these found not among the masses, but among the bishops. And yet I should be willing to understand that those of whom the apostle says, “Their word does spread as a canker,” were without the Church, but Cyprian himself will not allow me. For, when showing, in his letter to Antonianus, that no man ought to sever himself from the unity of the Church before the time of the final separation of the just and unjust, merely because of the admixture of evil men in the Church, when he makes

it manifest how holy he was, and deserving of the illustrious martyrdom which he won, he says, “What swelling of arrogance it is, what forgetfulness of humility and gentleness, that any one should dare or believe that he can do what the Lord did not grant even to the apostles,—to think that he can distinguish the tares from the wheat, or, as if it were granted to him to carry the fan and purge the floor, to endeavor to separate the chaff from the grain! And whereas the apostle says, But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth,’ that he should seem to choose those of gold and of silver, and despise and cast away and condemn those of wood and of earth, when really the vessels of wood are only to be burned in the day of the Lord by the burning of the divine conflagration, and those of earth are to be broken by Him to whom the rod of iron has been given.’“ By this argument, therefore, against those who, under the pretext of avoiding the society of wicked men, had severed themselves from the unity of the Church, Cyprian shows that by the great house of which the apostle spoke, in which there were not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, he understood nothing else but the Church, in which there should be good and bad, till at the last day it should be cleansed as a threshing-floor by the winnowing-fan. And if this be so, in the Church herself, that is, in the great house itself, there were vessels to dishonor, whose word did spread like a canker. For the apostle, speaking of them, taught as follows: “And their word,” he says, “will spread as doth a canker; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth.” If, therefore, they whose words did spread as doth a canker were as it were vessels to dishonor in the great house, and by that “great house” Cyprian understands the unity of the Church itself, surely it cannot be that their canker polluted the baptism of Christ. Accordingly, neither without, any more than within, can any one who is of the devil’s party, either in himself or in any other person, stain the sacrament which is of Christ. It is not, therefore, the case that “the word which spreads as a canker to the ears of those who hear it gives remission of sins;” but when baptism is given in the words of the gospel, however great be the perverseness of understanding on the part either of him through whom, or of him to whom it is given, the sacrament itself is holy in itself on account of Him whose sacrament it is. And if any one, receiving it at the hands of a misguided man, yet does not receive the perversity of the minister, but only the holiness of the mystery, being closely bound to the unity of the Church in good faith and hope and charity, he receives remission of his sins,—not by the words which do eat as doth a canker, but by the sacraments of the gospel flowing from a heavenly source. But if the recipient himself be misguided, on the one hand, what is given is of no avail for the salvation of the misguided man; and yet, on the other hand, that which is received remains holy in the recipient, and is not renewed to him if he be brought to the right way

CHAPTER 13

20. There is therefore "no fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness," not only without, but also within the Church; for "the Lord knoweth them that are His," and "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." There is also "no communion between light and darkness," not only without, but also within the Church; for "he that hateth his brother is still in darkness." And they at any rate hated Paul, who, preaching Christ of envy and malicious strife, supposed that they added affliction to his bonds; and yet the same Cyprian understands these still to have been within the Church. Since, therefore, "neither darkness can enlighten, nor unrighteousness justify," as Cyprian again says, I ask, how could those men baptize within the very Church herself? I ask, how could those vessels which the large house contains not to honor, but to dishonor, administer what is holy for the sanctifying of men within the great house itself, unless because that holiness of the sacrament cannot be polluted even by the unclean, either when it is given at their hands, or when it is received by those who in heart and life are not changed for the better? of whom, as situated within the Church, Cyprian himself says, "Renouncing the world in word only, and not in deed."

21. There are therefore also within the Church "enemies of God, whose hearts the spirit of Antichrist has possessed;" and yet they, "deal with spiritual and divine things," which cannot profit for their salvation so long

as they remain such as they are; and yet neither can they pollute them by their own uncleanness. With regard to what he says, therefore, “that they have no part given them in the saving grace of the Church, who, scattering and fighting against the Church of Christ, are called adversaries by Christ Himself, and antichrists by His apostles, this must be received under the consideration that there are men of this kind both within and without. But the separation of those that are within from the perfection and unity of the dove is not only known in the case of some men to God, but even in the case of some to their fellow-men; for, by regarding their openly abandoned life and confirmed wickedness, and comparing it with the rules of God’s commandments, they understand to what a multitude of tares and chaff, situated now some within and some without, but destined to be most manifestly separated at the last day, the Lord will then say, “Depart from me, ye that work iniquity,” and “Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

CHAPTER 14

22. But we must not despair of the conversion of any man, whether situated within or without, so long as “the goodness of God leadeth him to repentance,” and “visits their transgressions with the rod, and their inquiry with stripes.” For in this way “He does not utterly take from them His loving-kindness,” if they will themselves sometimes “love their own soul, pleasing God.” But as the good man “that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved,” so the bad man, whether within or without, who shall persevere in his wickedness to the end, shall not be saved. Nor do we say that “all, wheresoever and howsoever baptized, obtain the grace of baptism,” if by the grace of baptism is understood the actual salvation which is conferred by the celebration of the sacrament; but many fail to obtain this salvation even within the Church, although it is clear that they possess the sacrament, which is holy in itself. Well, therefore, does the Lord warn us in the gospel that we should not company with ill-advisers, who walk under the pretence of Christ’s name; but these are found both within and without, as, in fact, they do not proceed without unless they have first been ill-disposed within. And we know that the apostle said of the vessels placed in the great house, “If a man therefore purge himself from these, he

shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.” But in what manner each man ought to purge himself from these he shows a little above, saying, “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity,” that he may not in the last day, with the chaff, whether with that which has already been driven from the threshing-floor, or with that which is to be separated at the last, hear the command, “Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Whence it appears, indeed, as Cyprian says, that “we are not at once to admit and adopt whatsoever is professed in the name of Christ, but only what is done in the truth of Christ.” But it is not an action done in the truth of Christ that men should “seize on estates by fraudulent pretenses, and increase their gains by accumulated usury,” or that they should “renounce the world in word only;” and yet, that all this is done within the Church, Cyprian himself bears sufficient testimony

CHAPTER 15

23. To go on to the point which he pursues at great length, that “they who blaspheme the Father of Christ cannot be baptized in Christ,” since it is clear that they blaspheme through error (for he who comes to the baptism of Christ will not openly blaspheme the Father of Christ, but he is led to blaspheme by holding a view contrary to the teaching of the truth about the Father of Christ), we have already shown at sufficient length that baptism, consecrated in the words of the gospel, is not affected by the error of any man, whether ministrant or recipient, whether he hold views contrary to the revelation of divine teaching on the subject of the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Ghost. For many carnal and natural men are baptized even within the Church, as the apostle expressly says: “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God;” and after they had received baptism, he says that they “are yet carnal.” But according to it carnal sense, a soul given up to fleshly appetites cannot entertain but fleshly wisdom about God. Wherefore many, progressing after baptism, and especially those who have been baptized in infancy or early youth, in proportion as their intellect becomes clearer and brighter, while “the inward man is renewed day by day,” throw away their former opinions which they held about God while they were mocked with vain imaginings, with scorn and horror and

confession of their mistake. And yet they are not therefore considered not to have received baptism, or to have received baptism of a kind corresponding to their error; but in them both the perfection of the sacrament is honored and the delusion of their mind is corrected, even though it had become inveterate through long confirmation, or been, perhaps, maintained in many controversies. Wherefore even the heretic, who is manifestly without, if he has there received baptism as ordained in the gospel, has certainly not received baptism of a kind corresponding to the error which blinds him. And therefore, in returning into the way of wisdom he perceives that he ought to relinquish what he has held amiss, he must not at the same time give up the good which he had received; nor because his error is to be condemned, is the baptism of Christ in him to be therefore extinguished. For it is already sufficiently clear, from the case of those who happen to be baptized within the Church with false views about God, that the truth of the sacrament is to be distinguished from the error of him who believes amiss, although both may be found in the same man. And therefore, when any one grounded in any error, even outside the Church, has yet been baptized with the true sacrament, when he is restored to the unity of the Church, a true baptism cannot take the place of a true baptism, as a true faith takes the place of a false one, because a thing cannot take the place of itself, since neither can it give place. Heretics therefore join the Catholic Church to this end, that what they have evil of themselves may be corrected, not that what they have good of God should be repeated

CHAPTER 16

24. Some one says, Does it then make no difference, if two men, rooted in like error and wickedness, be baptized without change of life or heart, one without, the other within the Church? I acknowledge that there is a difference. For he is worse who is baptized without, in addition to his other sin,—not because of his baptism, however, but because he is without; for the evil of division is in itself far from insignificant or trivial. Yet the difference exists only if he who is baptized within has desired to be within not for the sake of any earthly or temporal advantage, but because he has preferred the unity of the Church spread throughout the world to the divisions of schism; otherwise he too must be considered among those who

are without. Let us therefore put the two cases in this way. Let us suppose that the one, for the sake of argument, held the same opinions as Photinus about Christ, and was baptized in his heresy outside the communion of the Catholic Church; and that another held the same opinion but was baptized in the Catholic Church, believing that his view was really the Catholic faith. I consider him as not yet a heretic, unless, when the doctrine of the Catholic faith is made clear to him, he chooses to resist it, and prefers that which he already holds; and till this is the case, it is clear that he who was baptized outside is the worse. And so in the one case erroneous opinion alone, in the other the sin of schism also, requires correction; but in neither of them is the truth of the sacrament to be repeated. But if any one holds the same view as the first, and knows that it is only in heresy severed from the Church that such a view is taught or learned, but yet for the sake of some temporal emolument has desired to be baptized in the Catholic unity, or, having been already baptized in it, is unwilling on account of the said emolument to secede from it, he is not only to be considered as seceding, but his offense is aggravated, in so far as to the error of heresy and the division of unity he adds the deceit of hypocrisy. Wherefore the depravity of each man, in proportion as it is more dangerous and wanting in straightforwardness, must be corrected with the more earnestness and energy; and yet, if he has anything that is good in him, especially if it be not of himself, but from God, we ought not to think it of no value because of his depravity, or to be blamed like it, or to be ascribed to it, rather than to His bountiful goodness, who even to a soul that plays the harlot, and goes after her lovers, yet gives His bread, and His wine, and His oil, and other food or ornaments, which are neither from herself nor from her lovers, but from Him who in compassion for her is even desirous to warn her to whom she should return

CHAPTER 17

25. “Can the power of baptism,” says Cyprian, “be greater or better than confession? than martyrdom? that a man should confess Christ before men, and be baptized in his own blood? And yet,” he goes on to say, “neither does this baptism profit the heretic, even though for confessing Christ he be put to death outside the Church.” This is most true; for, by being put to death outside the Church, he is proved not to have had charity, of which the

apostle says, “Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” But if martyrdom is of no avail for this reason, because it has not charity, neither does it profit those who, as Paul says, and Cyprian further sets forth, are living within the Church without charity in envy and malice; and yet they can both receive and transmit true baptism. “Salvation,” he says, “is not without the Church.” Who says that it is? And therefore, whatever men have that belongs to the Church, it profits them nothing towards salvation outside the Church. But it is one thing not to have, another to have so as to be of no use. He who has not must be baptized that he may have; but he who has to no avail must be corrected, that what he has may profit him. Nor is the water in the baptism of heretics “adulterous,” because neither is the creature itself which God made evil, nor is fault to be found with the words of the gospel in the mouths of any who are astray; but the fault is theirs in whom there is an adulterous spirit, even though it may receive the adornment of the sacrament from a lawful spouse. Baptism therefore can “be common to us, and the heretics,” just as the gospel can be common to us, whatever difference there may be between our faith and their error,—whether they think otherwise than the truth about the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit; or, being cut away from unity, do not gather with Christ, but scatter abroad,—seeing that the sacrament of baptism can be common to us, if we are the wheat of the Lord, with the covetous within the Church, and with robbers, and drunkards, and other pestilent persons of the same sort, of whom it is said, “They shall not inherit the kingdom of God,” and yet the vices by which they are separated from the kingdom of God are not shared by us

CHAPTER 18

26. Nor indeed, is it of heresies alone that the apostle says “that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” But it may be worth while to look for a moment at the things which he groups together. “The works of the flesh,” he says “are manifest, which are these; fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not

inherit the kingdom of God.” Let us suppose some one, therefore, chaste, continent, free from covetousness, no idolater, hospitable, charitable to the needy, no man’s enemy, not contentious, patient, quiet, jealous of none, envying none, sober, frugal, but a heretic; it is of course clear to all that for this one fault only, that he is a heretic, he will fail to inherit the kingdom of God. Let us suppose another, a fornicator, unclean, lascivious, covetous, or even more openly given to idolatry, a student of witchcraft, a lover of strife and contention, envious, hot-tempered, seditious, jealous, drunken, and a reveller, but a Catholic; can it be that for this sole merit, that he is a Catholic, he will inherit the kingdom of God, though his deeds are of the kind of which the apostle thus concludes: “Of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God?” If we say this, we lead ourselves astray. For the word of God does not lead us astray, which is neither silent, nor lenient, nor deceptive through any flattery. Indeed, it speaks to the same effect elsewhere: “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, which is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words.” We have no reason, therefore, to complain of the word of God. It certainly says, and says openly and freely, that those who live a wicked life have no part in the kingdom of God

CHAPTER 19

27. Let us therefore not flatter the Catholic who is hemmed in with all these vices, nor venture, merely because he is a Catholic Christian, to promise him the impunity which holy Scripture does not promise him; nor, if he has any one of the faults above mentioned, ought we to promise him a partnership in that heavenly land. For, in writing to the Corinthians, the apostle enumerates the several sins, under each of which it is implicitly understood that it shall not inherit the kingdom of God: “Be not deceived,” he says: “neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” He does not say, those who possess all these vices together shall not inherit the kingdom of God; but neither these nor those: so that, as each is named,

you may understand that no one of them shall inherit the kingdom of God. As, therefore, heretics shall not possess the kingdom of God, so the covetous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Nor can we indeed doubt that the punishments themselves, with which they shall be tortured who do not inherit the kingdom of God, will vary in proportion to the difference of their offences, and that some will be more severe than others; so that in the eternal fire itself there will be different tortures in the punishments, corresponding to the different weights of guilt. For indeed it was not idly that the Lord said, “It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.” But yet, so far as failing to inherit the kingdom of God is concerned, it is just as certain, if you choose any one of the less heinous of these vices, as if you choose more than one, or some one which you saw was more atrocious; and because those will inherit the kingdom of God whom the Judge shall set on His right hand, and for those who shall not be found worthy to be set at the right hand nothing will remain but to be at the left, no other announcement is left for them to hear like goats from the mouth of the Shepherd, except, “Depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;” though in that fire, as I said before, it may be that different punishments will be awarded corresponding to the difference of the sins

CHAPTER 20

28. But on the question whether we ought to prefer a Catholic of the most abandoned character to a heretic in whose life, except that he is a heretic, men can find nothing to blame, I do not venture to give a hasty judgment. But if any one says, because he is a heretic, he cannot be this only without other vices also following,—for he is carnal and natural, and therefore must be also envious, and hot-tempered, and jealous, and hostile to truth itself, and utterly estranged from it,—let him fairly understand, that of those other faults of which he is supposed to have chosen some one less flagrant, a single one cannot exist by itself in any man, because he in turn is carnal and natural; as, to take the case of drunkenness, which people have now become accustomed to talk of not only without horror, but with some degree of merriment, can it possibly exist alone in any one in whom it is found? For what drunkard is not also contentious, and hot-tempered, and jealous, and at

variance with all soundness of counsel, and at grievous enmity with those who rebuke him? Further, it is not easy for him to avoid being a fornicator and adulterer, though he may be no heretic; just as a heretic may be no drunkard, nor adulterer, nor fornicator, nor lascivious, nor a lover of money, or given to witchcraft, and cannot well be all these together. Nor indeed is any one vice followed by all the rest. Supposing, therefore, two men,—one a Catholic with all these vices, the other a heretic free from all from which a heretic can be free,—although they do not both contend against the faith, and yet each lives contrary to the faith, and each is deceived by a vain hope, and each is far removed from charity of spirit, and therefore each is severed from connection with the body of the one dove; why do we recognise in one of them the sacrament of Christ, and not in the other, as though it belonged to this or that man, whilst really it is the same in both, and belongs to God alone, and is good even in the worst of men? And if of the men who have it, one is worse than another, it does not follow that the sacrament which they have is worse in the one than in the other, seeing that neither in the case of two bad Catholics, if one be worse than the other, does he possess a worse baptism, nor, if one of them be good and another bad, is baptism bad in the bad one and good in the good one; but it is good in both. Just as the light of the sun, or even of a lamp, is certainly not less brilliant when displayed to bad eyes than when seen by better ones; but it is the same in the case of both, although it either cheers or hurts them differently according to the difference of their powers

CHAPTER 21

29. With regard to the objection brought against Cyprian, that the catechumens who were seized in martyrdom, and slain for Christ’s name’s sake, received a crown even without baptism, I do not quite see what it has to do with the matter, unless, indeed, they urged that heretics could much more be admitted with baptism to Christ’s kingdom, to which catechumens were admitted without it, since He Himself has said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Now, in this matter I do not hesitate for a moment to place the Catholic catechumen, who is burning with love for God, before the baptized heretic; nor yet do we thereby do dishonor to the sacrament of baptism which the

latter has already received, the former not as yet; nor do we consider that the sacrament of the catechumen is to be preferred to the sacrament of baptism, when we acknowledge that some catechumens are better and more faithful than some baptized persons. For the centurion Cornelius, before baptism, was better than Simon, who had been baptized. For Cornelius, even before his baptism, was filled with the Holy Spirit; Simon, even after baptism, was puffed up with an unclean spirit. Cornelius, however, would have been convicted of contempt for so holy a sacrament, if, even after he had received the Holy Ghost, he had refused to be baptized. But when he was baptized, he received in no wise a better sacrament than Simon; but the different merits of the men were made manifest under the equal holiness of the same sacrament—so true is it that the good or ill deserving of the recipient does not increase or diminish the holiness of baptism. But as baptism is wanting to a good catechumen to his receiving the kingdom of heaven, so true conversion is wanting to a bad man though baptized. For He who said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,” said also Himself, “except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” For that the righteousness of the catechumens might not feel secure, it is written, “Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” And again, that the unrighteousness of the baptized might not feel secure because they had received baptism, it is written, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” The one were too little without the other; the two make perfect the heir of that inheritance. As, then, we ought not to depreciate a man’s righteousness, which begins to exist before he is joined to the Church, as the righteousness of Cornelius began to exist before he was in the body of Christian men,—which righteousness was not thought worthless, or the angel would not have said to him, “Thy prayers and thine alms are come up as a memorial before God;” nor did it yet suffice for his obtaining the kingdom of heaven, or he would not have been told to send to Peter,—so neither ought we to depreciate the sacrament of baptism, even though it has been received outside the Church. But since it is of no avail for salvation unless he who has baptism indeed in full perfection be incorporated into the Church, correcting also his own depravity, let us therefore correct the error of the heretics, that we may recognize what in them is not their own but Christ's

CHAPTER 22

30. That the place of baptism is sometimes supplied by martyrdom is supported by an argument by no means trivial, which the blessed Cyprian adduces from the thief, to whom, though he was not baptized, it was yet said, "To-day shall thou be with me in Paradise." On considering which, again and again, I find that not only martyrdom for the sake of Christ may supply what was wanting of baptism, but also faith and conversion of heart, if recourse may not be had to the celebration of the mystery of baptism for want of time. For neither was that thief crucified for the name of Christ, but as the reward of his own deeds; nor did he suffer because he believed, but he believed while suffering. It was shown, therefore, in the case of that thief, how great is the power, even without the visible sacrament of baptism, of what the apostle says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." But the want is supplied invisibly only when the administration of baptism is prevented, not by contempt for religion, but by the necessity of the moment. For much more in the case of Cornelius and his friends, than in the case of that robber, might it seem superfluous that they should also be baptized with water, seeing that in them the gift of the Holy Spirit, which, according to the testimony of holy Scripture, was received by other men only after baptism, had made itself manifest by every unmistakable sign appropriate to those times when they spoke with tongues. Yet they were baptized, and for this action we have the authority of an apostle as the warrant. So far ought all of us to be from being induced by any imperfection in the inner man, if it so happen that before baptism a person has advanced, through the workings of a pious heart, to spiritual understanding, to despise a sacrament which is applied to the body by the hands of the minister, but which is God's own means for working spiritually a man's dedication to Himself. Nor do I conceive that the function of baptizing was assigned to John, so that it should be called John's baptism, for any other reason except that the Lord Himself, who had appointed it, in not disdaining to receive the baptism of His servant, might consecrate the path of humility, and show most plainly

by such an action how high a value was to be placed on His own baptism, with which He Himself was afterwards to baptize. For He saw, like an excellent physician of eternal salvation, that overweening pride would be found in some, who, having made such progress in the understanding of the truth and in uprightness of character that they would not hesitate to place themselves, both in life and knowledge, above many that were baptized, would think it was unnecessary for them to be baptized, since they felt that they had attained a frame of mind to which many that were baptized were still only endeavoring to raise themselves

CHAPTER 23

31. But what is the precise value of the sanctification of the sacrament (which that thief did not receive, not from any want of will on his part, but because it was unavoidably omitted) and what is the effect on a man of its material application, it is not easy to say. Still, had it not been of the greatest value, the Lord would not have received the baptism of a servant. But since we must look at it in itself, without entering upon the question of the salvation of the recipient, which it is intended to work, it shows clearly enough that both in the bad, and in those who renounce the world in word and not in deed, it is itself complete, though they cannot receive salvation unless they amend their lives. But as in the thief, to whom the material administration of the sacrament was necessarily wanting, the salvation was complete, because it was spiritually present through his piety, so, when the sacrament itself is present, salvation is complete, if what the thief possessed be unavoidably wanting. And this is the firm tradition of the universal Church, in respect of the baptism of infants, who certainly are as yet unable "with the heart to believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth to make confession unto salvation," as the thief could do; nay, who even, by crying and moaning when the mystery is performed upon them, raise their voices in opposition to the mysterious words, and yet no Christian will say that they are baptized to no purpose

CHAPTER 24

32. And if any one seek for divine authority in this matter, though what is held by the whole Church, and that not as instituted by Councils, but as a

matter of invariable custom, is rightly held to have been handed down by apostolical authority, still we can form a true conjecture of the value of the sacrament of baptism in the case of infants, from the parallel of circumcision, which was received by God's earlier people, and before receiving which Abraham was justified, as Cornelius also was enriched with the gift of the Holy Spirit before he was baptized. Yet the apostle says of Abraham himself, that "he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith," having already believed in his heart, so that "it was counted unto him for righteousness." Why, therefore, was it commanded him that he should circumcise every male child in order on the eighth day, though it could not yet believe with the heart, that it should be counted unto it for righteousness, because the sacrament in itself was of great avail? And this was made manifest by the message of an angel in the case of Moses' son; for when he was carried by his mother, being yet uncircumcised, it was required, by manifest present peril, that he should be circumcised, and when this was done, the danger of death was removed. As therefore in Abraham the justification of faith came first, and circumcision was added afterwards as the seal of faith; so in Cornelius the spiritual sanctification came first in the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the sacrament of regeneration was added afterwards in the laver of baptism. And as in Isaac, who was circumcised on the eighth day after his birth, the seal of this righteousness of faith was given first, and afterwards, as he imitated the faith of his father, the righteousness itself followed as he grew up, of which the seal had been given before when he was an infant; so in infants, who are baptized, the sacrament of regeneration is given first, and if they maintain a Christian piety, conversion also in the heart will follow, of which the mysterious sign had gone before in the outward body. And as in the thief the gracious goodness of the Almighty supplied what had been wanting in the sacrament of baptism, because it had been missing not from pride or contempt, but from want of opportunity; so in infants who die baptized, we must believe that the same grace of the Almighty supplies the want, that, not from perversity of will, but from insufficiency of age, they can neither believe with the heart unto righteousness, nor make confession with the mouth unto salvation. Therefore, when others take the vows for them, that the celebration of the sacrament may be complete in their behalf, it is unquestionably of avail for their dedication to God, because they cannot answer for themselves. But if another were to answer for one who could answer for himself, it would not be of the same avail. In accordance with which rule, we find in the gospel what strikes every one as natural when he reads it, “He is of age, he shall speak for himself.”

CHAPTER 25

33. By all these considerations it is proved that the sacrament of baptism is one thing, the conversion of the heart another; but that man’s salvation is made complete through the two together. Nor are we to suppose that, if one of these be wanting, it necessarily follows that the other is wanting also; because the sacrament may exist in the infant without the conversion of the heart; and this was found to be possible without the sacrament in the case of the thief, God in either case filling up what was involuntarily wanting. But when either of these requisites is wanting intentionally, then the man is responsible for the omission. And baptism may exist when the conversion of the heart is wanting; but, with respect to such conversion, it may indeed be found when baptism has not been received, but never when it has been despised. Nor can there be said in any way to be a turning of the heart to God when the sacrament of God is treated with contempt. Therefore we are right in censuring, anathematizing, abhorring, and abominating the perversity of heart shown by heretics; yet it does not follow that they have not the sacrament of the gospel, because they have not what makes it of avail. Wherefore, when they come to the true faith, and by penitence seek remission of their sins, we are not flattering or deceiving them, when we instruct them by heavenly discipline for the kingdom of heaven, correcting and reforming in them their errors and perverseness, to the intent that we may by no means do violence to what is sound in them, nor, because of man’s fault, declare that anything which he may have in him from God is either valueless or faulty

CHAPTER 26

34. A few things still remain to be noticed in the epistle to Jubaianus; but since these will raise the question both of the past custom of the Church and of the baptism of John, which is wont to excite no small doubt in those who pay slight attention to a matter which is sufficiently obvious, seeing that

those who had received the baptism of John were commanded by the apostle to be baptized again they are not to be treated in a hasty manner, and had better be reserved for another book, that the dimensions of this may not be inconveniently large

Book V

He examines the last part of the epistle of Cyprian to Jubaianus, together with his epistle to Quintus, the letter of the African synod to the Numidian bishops, and Cyprian's epistle to Pompeius.

CHAPTER 1

1. We have the testimony of the blessed Cyprian, that the custom of the Catholic Church is at present retained, when men coming from the side of heretics or schismatics, if they have received baptism as consecrated in the words of the gospel, are not baptized afresh. For he himself proposed to himself the question, and that as coming from the mouth of brethren either seeking the truth or contending for the truth. For in the course of the arguments by which he wished to show that heretics should be baptized again, which we have sufficiently considered for our present purpose in the former books, he says: "But some will say, What then will become of those who in times past, coming to the Church from heresy, were admitted without baptism?" In this question is involved the shipwreck of the whole cause of the Donatists, with whom our contest is on this point. For if those had not really baptism who were thus received on coming from heretics, and their sins were still upon them, then, when such men were admitted to communion, either by those who came before Cyprian or by Cyprian himself, we must acknowledge that one of two things occurred,—either that the Church perished then and there from the pollution of communion with such men, or that any one abiding in unity is not injured by even the notorious sins of other men. But since they cannot say that the Church then perished through the contamination arising from communion with those who, as Cyprian says, were admitted into it without baptism—for otherwise they cannot maintain the validity of their own origin if the Church then perished, seeing that the list of consuls proves that more than forty years elapsed between the martyrdom of Cyprian and the burning of the sacred books, from which they took occasion to make a schism, spreading abroad the smoke of their calumnies,—it therefore is left for them to acknowledge

that the unity of Christ is not polluted by any such communion, even with known offenders. And, after this confession, they will be unable to discover any reason which will justify them in maintaining that they were bound to separate from the churches of the whole world, which, as we read, were equally founded by the apostles, seeing that, while the others could not have perished from any admixture of offenders, of whatsoever kind, they, though they would not have perished if they had remained in unity with them, brought destruction on themselves in schism, by separating themselves from their brethren, and breaking the bond of peace. For the sacrilege of schism is most clearly evident in them, if they had no sufficient cause for separation. And it is clear that there was no sufficient cause for separation, if even the presence of notorious offenders cannot pollute the good while they abide in unity. But that the good, abiding in unity, are not polluted even by notorious offenders, we teach on the testimony of Cyprian, who says that “men in past times, coming to the Church from heresy, were admitted without baptism;” and yet, if the wickedness of their sacrilege, which was still upon them, seeing it had not been purged away by baptism, could not pollute and destroy the holiness of the Church, it cannot perish by any infection from wicked men. Wherefore, if they allow that Cyprian spoke the truth, they are convicted of schism on his testimony; if they maintain that he does not speak truth, let them not use his testimony on the question of baptism

CHAPTER 2

2. But now that we have begun a disputation with a man of peace like Cyprian, let us go on. For when he had brought an objection against himself, which he knew was urged by his brethren, “What then will become of those who in times past, coming to the Church from heresy, were admitted without baptism? The Lord,” he answers, “is able of His mercy to grant indulgence, and not to separate from the gifts of His Church those who, being admitted in all honesty to His Church, have fallen asleep within the Church.” Well indeed has he assumed that charity can cover the multitude of sins. But if they really had baptism, and this were not rightly perceived by those who thought that they should be baptized again, that error was covered by the charity of unity so long as it contained, not the

discord and spirit of the devil, but merely human infirmity, until, as the apostle says, “if they were otherwise minded, the Lord should reveal it to them.” But woe unto those who, being torn asunder from unity by a sacrilegious rupture, either rebaptize, if baptism exists with both us and them, or do not baptize at all, if baptism exist in the Catholic Church only. Whether, therefore, they rebaptize, or fail to baptize, they are not in the bond of peace; wherefore let them apply a remedy to which they please of these two wounds. But if we admit to the Church without baptism, we are of the number of those who, as Cyprian has assumed, may receive pardon because they preserved unity. But if (as is, I think, already clear from what has been said in the earlier books) Christian baptism can preserve its integrity even amid the perversity of heretics, then even though any in those times did rebaptize, yet without departing from the bond of unity, they might still attain to pardon in virtue of that same love of peace, through which Cyprian bears witness that those admitted even without baptism might obtain that they should not be separated from the gifts of the Church. Further, if it is true that with heretics and schismatics the baptism of Christ does not exist, how much less could the sins of others hurt those who were fixed in unity, if even men’s own sins were forgiven when they came to it even without baptism! For if, according to Cyprian, the bond of unity is of such efficacy, how could they be hurt by other men’s sins, who were unwilling to separate themselves from unity, if even the unbaptized, who wished to come to it from heresy, thereby escaped the destruction due to their own sins?

CHAPTER. 3

3. But in what Cyprian adds, saying, “Nor yet because men once have erred must there be always error, since it rather befits wise and God-fearing men gladly and unhesitatingly to follow truth, when it is clearly laid before their eyes, than obstinately and persistently to fight for heretics against their brethren and their fellow-priests,” he is uttering the most perfect truth; and the man who resists the manifest truth is opposing himself rather than his neighbors. But, so far as I can judge, it is perfectly clear and certain, from the many arguments which I have already adduced, that the baptism of Christ cannot be invalidated even by the perversity of heretics, when it is

given or received among them. But, granting that it is not yet certain, at any rate no one who has considered what has been said, even from a hostile point of view, will assert that the question has been decided the other way. Therefore we are not striving against manifest truth, but either, as I think, we are striving in behalf of what is clearly true, or, at any rate, as those may hold who think that the question has not yet been solved, we are seeking for the truth. And therefore, if the truth be other than we think, yet we are receiving those baptized by heretics with the same honesty of heart with which those received them whom, Cyprian supposed, in virtue of their cleaving to the unity of the Church, to be capable of pardon. But if the baptism of Christ, as is indicated by the many arguments used above, can retain its integrity amid any defect either of life or faith, whether on the part of those who seem to be within, and yet do not belong to the members of the one dove or on the part of those whose severance from her extends to being openly without, then those who sought its repetition in those former days deserved the same pardon for their charity in clinging to unity, which Cyprian thought that those deserved for charity of the same kind whom he believed to have been admitted without baptism. They therefore who, without any cause (since, as Cyprian himself shows, the bad cannot hurt the good in the unity of the Church), have cut themselves off from the charity which is shown in this unity, have lost all place of pardon, and whilst they would incur destruction by the very crime of schism, even though they did not rebaptize those who had been baptized in the Catholic Church, of how bitter punishment are they deserving, who are either endeavoring to give to the Catholics who have it what Cyprian affirms that they themselves have not, or, as is clear from the facts of the case, are bringing as a charge against the Catholic Church that she has not what even they themselves possess?

CHAPTER 4

4. But since now, as I said before, we have begun a disputation with the epistles of Cyprian, I think that I should not seem even to him, if he were present, “to be contending obstinately and persistently in defense of heretics against my brethren and my fellow-priests,” when he learned the powerful reasons which move us to believe that even among heretics, who are perversely obstinate in their malignant error, the baptism of Christ is yet in

itself most holy, and most highly to be reverenced. And seeing that he himself, whose testimony has such weight with us, bears witness that they were wont in past times to be admitted without a second baptism, I would have any one, who is induced by Cyprian’s arguments to hold it as certain that heretics ought to be baptized afresh, yet consider that those who, on account of weight of the arguments on the other side, are not as yet persuaded that this should be so, hold the same place as those in past time, who in all honesty admitted men who were baptized in heresy on the simple correction of their individual error, and who were capable of salvation with them in virtue of the bond of unity. And let any one, who is led by the past custom of the Church, and by the subsequent authority of a plenary Council, and by so many powerful proofs from holy Scripture, and by much evidence from Cyprian himself, and by the clear reasoning of truth, to understand that the baptism of Christ, consecrated in the words of the gospel, cannot be perverted by the error of any man on earth,—let such an one understand, that they who then thought otherwise, but yet preserved their charity, can be saved by the same bond of unity. And herein he should also understand of those who, in the society of the Church dispersed throughout the world, could not have been defiled by any tares, by any chaff, so long as they themselves desired to be fruitful corn, and who therefore severed themselves from the same bond of unity without any cause for the divorce, that at any rate, whichever of the two opinions be true,—that which Cyprian then held, or that which was maintained by the universal voice of the Catholic Church, which Cyprian did not abandon,—in either case they, having most openly placed themselves outside in the plain sacrilege of schism, cannot possibly be saved, and all that they possess of the holy sacraments, and of the free gifts of the one legitimate Bridegroom, is of avail, while they continue what they are, for their confusion rather than the salvation of their souls

CHAPTER 5

5. Wherefore, even if heretics should be truly anxious to correct their error and come to the Church, for the very reason that they believed that they had no baptism unless they received it in the Church, even under these circumstances we should not be bound to yield to their desire for the

repetition of baptism; but rather they should be taught, on the one hand, that baptism, though perfect in itself, could in no way profit their perversity if they would not submit to be corrected; and, on the other hand, that the perfection of baptism could not be impaired by their perversity, while refusing to be corrected: and again, that no further perfection is added to baptism in them because they are submitting to correction; but that, while they themselves are quitting their iniquity, that which was before within them to their destruction is now beginning to be of profit for salvation. For, learning this, they will both recognize the need of salvation in Catholic unity, and will cease to claim as their own what is really Christ's, and will not confound the sacrament of truth, although existing in themselves, with their own individual error

6. To this we may add a further reason, that men, by a sort of hidden inspiration from heaven, shrink from any one who for the second time receives baptism which he had already received in any quarter whatsoever, insomuch that the very heretics themselves, when their arguments start with that subject, rub their forehead in perplexity, and almost all their laity, even those who have grown old in their body, and have conceived an obstinate animosity against the Catholic Church, confess that this one point in their system displeases them; and many who, for the sake of gaining some secular advantage, or avoiding some disadvantage, wish to secede to them, strive with many secret efforts that they may have granted to them, as a peculiar and individual privilege, that they should not be rebaptized; and some, who are led to place credence in their other vain delusions and false accusations against the Catholic Church, are recalled to unity by this one consideration, that they are unwilling to associate with them lest they should be compelled to be rebaptized. And the Donatists, through fear of this feeling, which has so thorough possession of all men's hearts, have consented to acknowledge the baptism which was conferred among the followers of Maximianus, whom they had condemned, and so to cut short their own tongues and close their mouths, in preference to baptizing again so many men of the people of Musti, and Assurae, and other districts, whom they received with Felicianus and Praetextatus, and the others who had been condemned by them and afterwards returned to them.

CHAPTER 6

7. For when this is done occasionally in the case of individuals, at great intervals of time and space, the enormity of the deed is not equally felt; but if all were suddenly to be brought together who had been baptized in course of time by the aforesaid followers of Maximianus, either under pressure of the peril of death or at their Easter solemnities, and it were told them that they must be baptized again, because what they had already received in the sacrilege of schism was null and void, they might indeed say what obstinate perseverance in their error would compel them to say, that they might hide the rigor and iciness of their hardness under any kind of false shade of consistency against the warmth of truth. But in fact, because the party of Maximianus could not bear this, and because the very men who would have to enforce it could not endure what must needs have been done in the case of so many men at once, especially as those very men would be rebaptizing them in the party of Primianus who had already baptized them in the party of Maximianus, for these reasons their baptism was received, and the pride of the Donatists was cut short. And this course they would certainly not have chosen to adopt, had they not thought that more harm would have been done to their cause by the offense men would have taken at the repetition of the baptism, than by the reputation lost in abandoning their defense. And this I would not say with any idea that we ought to be restrained by consideration of human feelings, if the truth compelled those who came from heretics to be baptized afresh. But because the holy Cyprian says, “that heretics might have been all the more impelled to the necessity of coming over, if only they were to be rebaptized in the Catholic Church,” on this account I have wished to place on record the intensity of the repugnance to this act which is seated deeply in the heart of nearly every one,—a repugnance which I can believe was inspired by God Himself, that the Church might be fortified by the instinct of repugnance against any possible arguments which the weak cannot dispel

CHAPTER 7

8. Truly, when I look at the actual words of Cyprian, I am warned to say some things which are very necessary for the solution of this question. “For if they were to see,” he says, “that it was settled and established by our

formal decision and vote, that the baptism with which they are baptized in heresy is considered just and lawful, they will think that they are in just and lawful possession of the Church also, and all its other gifts.” He does not say “that they will think they are in possession,” but “in just and lawful possession of the gifts of the Church.” But we say that we cannot allow that they are in just and lawful possession of baptism. That they are in possession of it we cannot deny, when we recognize the sacrament of the Lord in the words of the gospel. They have therefore lawful baptism, but they do not have it lawfully. For whosoever has it both in Catholic unity, and living worthily of it, both has lawful baptism and has it lawfully; but whosoever has it either within the Catholic Church itself, as chaff mixed with the wheat, or outside, as chaff carried away by the wind, has indeed lawful baptism, but not lawfully. For he has it as he uses it. But the man does not use it lawfully who uses it against the law,—which every one does, who, being baptized, yet leads an abandoned life, whether inside or without the Church

CHAPTER 8

9. Wherefore, as the apostle said of the law, “The law is good, if a man use it lawfully,” so we may fairly say of baptism, Baptism is good, if a man use it lawfully. And as they who used the law unlawfully could not in that case cause that it should not be in itself good, or make it null and void, so any one who uses baptism unlawfully, either because he lives in heresy, or because he lives the worst of lives, yet cannot cause that the baptism should be otherwise than good, or altogether null and void. And so, when he is converted either to Catholic unity, or to a mode of living worthy of so great a sacrament, he begins to have not another and a lawful baptism, but that same baptism in a lawful manner. Nor does the remission of irrevocable sins follow on baptism, unless a man not only have lawful baptism, but have it lawfully; and yet it does not follow that if a man have it not lawfully, so that his sins are either not remitted, or, being remitted, are brought on him again, therefore the sacrament of baptism should be in the baptized person either bad or null and void. For as Judas, to whom the Lord gave a morsel, gave a place within himself of the devil, not by receiving what was bad, but by receiving it badly, so each person, on receiving the sacrament of

the Lord, does not cause that it is bad because he is bad himself, or that he has received nothing because he has not received it to salvation. For it was none the less the body of the Lord and the blood of the Lord, even in those to whom the apostle said, “He that eateth unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself.” ^ Let the heretics therefore seek in the Catholic Church not what they have, but what they have not,—that is, the end of the commandment, without which many holy things may be possessed, but they cannot profit. “Now, the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” Let them therefore hasten to the unity and truth of the Catholic Church, not that they may have the sacrament of washing, if they have been already bathed in it, although in heresy, but that they may have it to their health

CHAPTER 9

10. Now we must see what is said of the baptism of John. For “we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that those who had already been baptized with the baptism of John were yet baptized by Paul,” simply because the baptism of John was not the baptism of Christ, but a baptism allowed by Christ to John, so as to be called especially John’s baptism; as the same John says, “A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.” And that he might not possibly seem to receive this from God the Father in such wise as not to receive it from the Son, speaking presently of Christ Himself, he says, “Of His fullness have all we received.” But by the grace of a certain dispensation John received this, which was to last not for long, but only long enough to prepare for the Lord the way in which he must needs be the forerunner. And as our Lord was presently to enter on this way with all humility, and to lead those who humbly followed Him to perfection, as He washed the feet of His servants, so was He willing to be baptized with the baptism of a servant. For as He set Himself to minister to the feet of those whose guide He was Himself, so He submitted Himself to the gift of John which He Himself had given, that all might understand what sacrilegious arrogance they would show in despising the baptism which they ought each of them to receive from the Lord, when the Lord Himself accepted what He Himself had bestowed upon a servant, that he might give it as his own; and that when John, than whom no greater had arisen among them that are born

of women, bore such testimony to Christ, as to confess that he was not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoe, Christ might both, by receiving his baptism, be found to be the humblest among men, and, by taking away the place for the baptism of John, be believed to be the most high God, at once the teacher of humility and the giver of exaltation

11. For to none of the prophets, to no one at all in holy Scripture, do we read that it was granted to baptize in the water of repentance for the remission of sins, as it was granted to John; that, causing the hearts of the people to hang upon him through this marvellous grace, he might prepare in them the way for Him whom he declared to be so infinitely greater than himself. But the Lord Jesus Christ cleanses His Church by such a baptism that on receiving it no other is required; while John gave a first washing with such a baptism that on receiving it there was further need of the baptism of the Lord,—not that the first baptism should be repeated, but that the baptism of Christ, for whom he was preparing the way, might be further bestowed on those who had received the baptism of John. For if Christ's humility were not to be commended to our notice, neither would there be any need of the baptism of John; again, if the end were in John, after his baptism there would be no need of the baptism of Christ. But because "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," it was shown by John to whom men should go, and in whom, when they had reached Him, they should rest. The same, John, therefore, set forth both the exalted nature of the Lord, when he placed Him far before himself, and His humility, when he baptized Him as the lowest of the people. But if John had baptized Christ alone, he would be thought to have been the dispenser of a better baptism, in that with which Christ alone was baptized, than the baptism of Christ with which Christians are baptized; and again, if all ought to be baptized first with the baptism of John, and then with that of Christ, the baptism of Christ would deservedly seem to be lacking in fullness and perfection, as not sufficing for salvation. Wherefore the Lord was baptized with the baptism of John, that He might bend the proud necks of men to His own health-giving baptism; and He was not alone baptized with it, lest He should show His own to be inferior to this, with which none but He Himself had deserved to be baptized; and He did not allow it to continue longer, lest

the one baptism with which He baptizes might seem to need the other to precede it.

CHAPTER 10

12. I ask, therefore, if sins were remitted by the baptism of John, what more could the baptism of Christ confer on those whom the Apostle Paul desired to be baptized with the baptism of Christ after they had received the baptism of John? But if sins were not remitted by the baptism of John, were those men in the days of Cyprian better than John, of whom he says himself that they "used to seize on estates by treacherous frauds, and increase their gains by accumulated usuries," through whose, administration of baptism the remission of sins was yet conferred? Or was it because they were contained within the unity of the Church? What then? Was John not contained within that unity, the friend of the Bridegroom, the preparer of the way of the Lord, the baptizer of the Lord Himself? Who will be mad enough to assert this? Wherefore, although my belief is that John so baptized with the water of repentance for the remission of sins, that those who were baptized by him received the expectation of the remission of their sins, the actual remission taking place in the baptism of the Lord,—just as the resurrection which is expected at the last day is fulfilled in hope in us, as the apostle says, that "He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus;" and again, "For we are saved by hope;" or as again John himself, while he says, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, for the remission of your sins," yet says, on seeing our Lord, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,"—nevertheless I am not disposed to contend vehemently against any one who maintains that sins were remitted even in the baptism of John, but that some fuller sanctification was conferred by the baptism of Christ on those whom Paul ordered to be baptized anew

CHAPTER 11

13. For we must look at the point which especially concerns the matter before us (whatever be the nature of the baptism of John, since it is clear that he belongs to the unity of Christ), viz., what is the reason for which it was right that men should be baptized again after receiving the baptism of

the holy John, and why they ought not to be baptized again after receiving the baptism of the covetous bishops. For no one denies that in the Lord's field John was as wheat, bearing an hundred-fold, if that be the highest rate of increase; also no one doubts that covetousness, which is idolatry, is reckoned in the Lord's harvest among the chaff. Why then is a man baptized again after receiving baptism from the wheat, and not after receiving it from the chaff? If it was because he was better than John that Paul baptized after John, why did not also Cyprian baptize after his usurious colleagues, than whom he was better beyond all comparison? If it was because they were in unity with him that he did not baptize after such colleagues, neither ought Paul to have baptized after John, because they were joined together in the same unity. Can it be that defrauders and extortioners belong to the members of that one dove, and that he does not belong to it to whom the full power of the Lord Jesus Christ was shown by the appearance of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove? Truly he belongs most closely to it; but the others, who must be separated from it either by the occasion of some scandal, or by the winnowing at the last day, do not by any means belong to it, and yet baptism was repeated after John and not after them. What then is the cause, except that the baptism which Paul ordered them to receive was not the same as that which was given at the hands of John? And so in the same unity of the Church, the baptism of Christ cannot be repeated though it be given by an usurious minister; but those who receive the baptism of John, even from the hands of John Himself, ought to be afterwards baptized with the baptism of Christ

CHAPTER 12

14. Accordingly, I too might use the words of the blessed Cyprian to turn the hearts of those that hear me to the consideration of something truly marvellous, if I were to say "that John, who was accounted greater among the prophets,—he who was filled with divine grace while yet in his mother's womb; he who was upheld in the spirit and power of Elias; who was not the adversary, but a forerunner and herald of the Lord: who not only foretold our Lord in words, but also showed Him to the sight; who baptized Christ Himself, through whom all others are baptized,"—he was not worthy to baptize in such wise that those who were baptized by him

should not be baptized again after him; and shall no one think that a man should be baptized in the Church after he had been baptized by the covetous, by defrauders, by extortioners, by usurers? Is not the answer ready to this invidious question, Why do you think this unmeet, as though either John were dishonored, or the covetous man honored? But His baptism ought not to be repeated, of whom John says, “The same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.” For whoever be the minister by whose hands it is given, it is His baptism of whom it was said, “The same is He which baptizeth.” But neither was the baptism of John himself repeated, when the Apostle Paul commanded those who had been baptized by him to be baptized in Christ. For what they had not received from the friend of the Bridegroom, this it was right that they should receive from the Bridegroom Himself, of whom that friend had said, “The same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.”

CHAPTER 13

15. For the Lord Jesus might, if He had so thought fit, have given the power of His baptism to some one or more of His chief servants, whom He had already made His friends, such as those to whom He says, “Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends;” that, as Aaron was shown to be the priest by the rod that budded, so in His Church, when more and greater miracles are performed, the ministers of more excellent holiness, and the dispensers of His mysteries, might be made manifest by some sign, as those who alone ought to baptize. But if this had been done, then though the power of baptizing were given them by the Lord, yet it would necessarily be called their own baptism, as in the case of the baptism of John. And so Paul gives thanks to God that he baptized none of those men who, as though forgetting in whose name they had been baptized, were for dividing themselves into factions under the names of different individuals. For when baptism is as valid at the hands of a contemptible man as it was when given by an apostle, it is recognized as the baptism neither of this man nor of that, but of Christ; as John bears witness that he learned, in the case of the Lord Himself, through the appearance of the dove. For in what other respect he said, “And I knew Him not,” I cannot clearly see. For if he had not known Him in any sense, he could not have said to Him when He came to his

baptism, “I have need to be baptized of Thee.” What is it, therefore, that he says, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptizewith water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost?” The dove clearly descended on Him after He was baptized. But while He was yet coming to be baptized, John had said, “I have need to be baptized of Thee.” He therefore already knew Him. What does he therefore mean by the words, “I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost,” since this took place after He was baptized, unless it were that he knew Him in respect of certain attributes, and in respect of others knew Him not? He knew Him, indeed, as the Son of God, the Bridegroom, of whose fullness all should receive; but whereas of His fullness he himself had so received the power of baptizing that it should be called the baptism of John, he did not know whether He would so give it to others also, or whether He would have His own baptism in such wise, that at whosesoever hands it was given, whether by a man that brought forth fruit a hundredfold, or sixtyfold, or thirtyfold, whether by the wheat or by the chaff, it should be known to be of Him alone; and this he learned through the Spirit descending like a dove, and abiding on Him

CHAPTER 14

16. Accordingly we find the apostles using the expressions, “My glorying,” though it was certainly in the Lord; and “Mine office,” and “My knowledge,” and “My gospel,” although it was confessedly bestowed and given by the Lord; but no one of them ever once said, “My baptism.” For neither is the glorying of all of them equal, nor do they all minister with equal powers, nor are they all endowed with equal knowledge, and in preaching the gospel one works more forcibly than another, and so one may be said to be more learned than another in the doctrine of salvation itself; but one cannot be said to be more or less baptized than another, whether he be baptized by a greater or a less worthy minister. So when “the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, fornication, uncleanness,

lasciviousnness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like;" if it be strange that it should be said, "Men were baptized after John, and are not baptized after heretics," why is it not equally strange that it should be said, "Men were baptized after John, and are not baptized after the envious," seeing that Cyprian himself bears witness in his epistle concerning envy and malignity that the covetous are of the party of the devil, and Cyprian himself makes it manifest from the words of the Apostle Paul, as we have shown above, that in the time of the apostles themselves there were envious persons in the Church of Christ among the very preachers of the name of Christ?

CHAPTER 15

17. That therefore the baptism of John was not the same as the baptism of Christ, has, I think, been shown with sufficient clearness; and therefore no argument can be drawn from it that baptism should be repeated after heretics because it was repeated after John: since John was not a heretic, and could have a baptism, which, though granted by Christ, was yet not the very baptism of Christ, seeing that he had the love of Christ; while a heretic can have at once the baptism of Christ and the perversity of the devil, as another within the Church may have at once the baptism of Christ and the envy of the devil

18. But it will be urged that baptism after a heretic is much more required, because John was not a heretic, and yet baptism was repeated after him. On this principle, a man may say, much more must we rebaptize after a drunkard, because John was sober, and yet baptism was repeated after him. And we shall have no answer to make to such a man, save that the baptism of Christ was given to those who were baptized by John, because they had it not; but where men have the baptism of Christ, no iniquity on their part can possibly effect that the baptism of Christ should fail to be in them.

19. It is not therefore true that "by baptizing first, the heretic obtains the right of baptism;" but because he did not baptize with his own baptism, and though he did not possess the right of baptizing, yet that which he gave is Christ's, and he who received it is Christ's. For many things are given

wrongfully and yet they are not therefore said to be non-existent or not given at all. For neither does he who renounces the world in word only and not in deed receive baptism lawfully, and yet he does receive it. For both Cyprian records that there were such men in the Church in his day, and we ourselves experience and lament the fact.

20. But it is strange in what sense it can be said that "baptism and the Church cannot in any way be separated and detached from one another." For if baptism remains inseparably in him who is baptized, how can it be that he can be separated from the Church, and baptism cannot? But it is clear that baptism does remain inseparably in the baptized person; because into whatever depth of evil, and into whatever fearful whirlpool of sin the baptized person may fall, even to the ruin of apostasy, he yet is not bereft of his baptism. And therefore, if through repentance he returns, it is not given again, because it is judged that he could not have been bereft of it. But who can ever doubt that a baptized person can be separated from the Church? For hence all the heresies have proceeded which deceive by the use of Christian terms.

CHAPTER 16

Wherefore, since it is manifest that the baptism remains in the baptized person when he is separated from the Church, the baptism which is in him is certainly separated with him. And therefore not all who retain the baptism retain the Church, just as not all who retain the Church retain eternal life. Or if we say that only those retain the Church who observe the commandments of God, we at once concede that there are many who retain baptism, and do not retain the Church

21. Therefore the heretic is not "the first to seize baptism," since he has received it from the Church. Nor, though he seceded, could baptism have been lost by him whom we assert no longer to retain the Church, and yet allow to retain baptism. Nor does any one "yield his birthright, and give it to a heretic," because he says that he took away with him what he could not give lawfully, but what would yet be according to law when given; or that he no longer has lawfully what yet is in accordance with law in his possession. But the birthright rests only in a holy conversation and good

life, to which all belong of whom that bride consists as her members which has no spot or wrinkle, or that dove that groans amid the wickedness of the many crows,—unless it be that, while Esau lost his birthright from his lust after a mess of pottage, we are yet to hold that it is retained by defrauders, robbers, usurers, envious persons, drunkards and the like, over whose existence in the Church of his time Cyprian groaned in his epistles. Wherefore, either it is not the same thing to retain the Church and to retain the birthright in divine things, or, if every one who retains the Church also retains the birthright, then all those wicked ones do not retain the Church who yet both seem and are allowed by every one of us to give baptism within the Church; for no one, save the man who is wholly ignorant of sacred things, would say that they retain the birthright in sacred things.

CHAPTER 17

22. But, having considered and handled all these points, we have now come to that peaceful utterance of Cyprian at the end of the epistle, with which I am never sated, though I read and re-read it again and again,—so great is the pleasantness of brotherly love which breathes forth from it, so great the sweetness of charity in which it abounds. “These things,” he says, “we have written unto you, dearest brother, shortly, according to our poor ability, prescribing to or prejudging no one, lest each bishop should not do what he thinks right, in the free exercise of his own will. We, so far as in us lies, do not contend on the subject of heretics with our colleagues and fellow-bishops, with whom we maintain concord and peace in the Lord; especially as the apostle also says, If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.’ We observe patiently and gently charity of spirit, the honor of our brotherhood, the bond of faith, the harmony of the priesthood. For this reason also, to the best of our poor ability, by the permission and the inspiration of God we have written this treatise on The Good of Patience,’ which we have sent to you in consideration of our mutual love.”

23. There are many things to be considered in these words, wherein the brightness of Christian charity shines forth in this man, who “loved the beauty of the Lord’s house, and the place of the tabernacle of His habitation.” First, that he did not conceal what he felt; then, that he set it

forth so gently and peacefully, in that he maintained the peace of the Church with those who thought otherwise, because he understood how great healthfulness was bound up in the bond of peace, loving it so much, and maintaining it with sobriety, seeing and feeling that even men who think differently may entertain their several sentiments with saving charity. For he would not say that he could maintain divine concord or the peace of the Lord with evil men; for the good man can observe peace towards wicked men, but he cannot be united with them in the peace which they have not. Lastly, that prescribing to no one, and prejudging no one, lest each bishop should not do what he thinks right in the free exercise of his own will, he has left for us also, whatsoever we may be, a place for treating peacefully of those things with him. For he is present, not only in his letters, but by that very charity which existed in so extraordinary a degree in him, and which can never die. Longing, therefore, with the aid of his prayers, to cling to and be in union with him, if I be not hindered by the unmeetness of my sins, I will learn if I can through his letters with how great peace and comfort the Lord administered His Church through him; and, putting on the bowels of humility through the moving influence of his discourse, if, in common with the Church at large, I entertain any doctrine more true than his, I will not prefer my heart to his, even in the point in which he, though holding different views, was yet not severed from the Church throughout the world. For in that, when that question was yet undecided for want of full discussion, though his sentiments differed from those of many of his colleagues, yet he observed so great moderation, that he would not mutilate the sacred fellowship of the Church of God by any stain of schism, a greater strength of excellence appeared in him than would have been shown if, without that virtue, he had held views on every point not only true, but coinciding with their own. Nor should I be acting as he would wish, if I were to pretend to prefer his talent and his fluency of discourse and copiousness of learning to the holy Council of all nations, whereat he was assuredly present through the unity of his spirit, especially as he is now placed in such full light of truth as to see with perfect certainty what he was here seeking in the spirit of perfect peace. For out of that rich abundance he smiles at all that here seems eloquence in us, as though it were the first essay of infancy; there he sees by what rule of piety he acted here, that nothing should be dearer in the Church to him than unity. There, too, with unspeakable delight he beholds with what prescient and most merciful providence the Lord, that He might heal our swellings, “chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise,” and, in the ordering of the members of His Church, placed all things in such a healthful way, that men should not say that they were chosen to the help of the gospel for their own talent or learning, of whose source they yet were ignorant, and so be puffed up with deadly pride. Oh, how Cyprian rejoices! With how much more perfect calmness does he behold how greatly it conduces to the health of the human race, that in the writings even of Christian and pious orators there should be found what merits blame, and in the writings of the fishermen there should nothing of the sort be found! And so I, being fully assured of this joy of that holy soul, neither in any way venture to think or say that my writings are free from every kind of error, nor, in opposing that opinion of his, wherein it seemed to him that those who came from among heretics were to be received otherwise than either they had been in former days, as he himself bears witness, or are now received, as is the reasonable custom, confirmed by a plenary Council of the whole Christian world, do I set against him my own view, but that of the holy Catholic Church, which he so loved and loves, in which he brought forth such abundant fruit with tolerance, whose entirety he himself was not, but in whose entirety he remained; whose root he never left, but, though he already brought forth fruit from its root, he was purged by the heavenly Husbandman that he should bring forth more fruit; for whose peace and safety, that the wheat might not be rooted out together with the tares, he both reproved with the freedom of truth, and endured with the grace of charity, so many evils on the part of men who were placed in unity with himself.

CHAPTER 18

24. Whence Cyprian himself again admonishes us with the greatest fullness, that many who were dead in their trespasses and sins, although they did not belong to the body of Christ, and the members of that innocent and guileless dove (so that if she alone baptized, they certainly could not baptize), yet to all appearance seemed both to be baptized and to baptize within the Church. And among them, however dead they are, their baptism nevertheless lives, which is not dead, and death shall have no more

dominion over it. Since, therefore, there be dead men within the Church, nor are they concealed, for else Cyprian would not have spoken of them so much, who either do not belong at all to that living dove, or at least do not as yet belong to her; and since there be dead men without, who yet more clearly do not belong to her at all, or not as yet; and since it is true that "another man cannot be quickened by one who himself liveth not,"—it is therefore clear that those who within are baptized by such persons, if they approach the sacrament with true conversion of heart, are quickened by Him whose baptism it is. But if they renounce the world in word and not in deed, as Cyprian declares to be the case with some who are within, it is then manifest that they are not themselves quickened unless they be converted, and yet that they have true baptism even though they be not converted. Whence also it is likewise clear that those who are dead without, although they neither "live themselves, nor quicken others," yet have the living baptism, which would profit them unto life so soon as they should be converted unto peace

CHAPTER 19

25. Wherefore, as regards those who received the persons who came from heresy in the same baptism of Christ with which they had been baptized outside the Church, and said "that they followed ancient custom," as indeed the Church now receives such, it is in vain urged against them "that among the ancients there were as yet only the first beginning of heresy and schisms, so that those were involved in them who were seceders from the Church, and had originally been baptized within the Church, so that it was not necessary that they should be baptized again when they returned and did penance." For so soon as each several heresy existed, and departed from the communion of the Catholic Church, it was possible that, I will not even say the next day, but even on that very day, its votaries might have baptized some who flocked to them. And therefore if this was the old custom, that they should be so received into the Church (as could not be denied even by those who maintained the contrary part in the discussion), there can be no doubt in the mind of any one who pays careful attention to the matter, that those also were so received who had been baptized without in heresy

26. But I cannot see what show of reason there is in this, that the name of “erring sheep” should be denied to one whose lot it has been that, while seeking the salvation which is in Christ, he has fallen into the error of heretics, and been baptized in their body; while he is held to have become a sheep already within the body of the Catholic Church herself, who has renounced the world in words and not in deeds, and has received baptism in such falseness of heart as this. Or if such an one also does not become a sheep unless after turning to God with a true heart, then, as he is not baptized at the time when he becomes a sheep, if he had been already baptized, but was not yet a sheep; so he too, who comes from the heretics that he may become a sheep, is not then to be baptized if he had been already baptized with the same baptism, though he was not yet a sheep. Wherefore, since even all the bad that are within—the covetous, the envious, the drunkards, and those that live contrary to the discipline of Christ—may be deservedly called liars, and in darkness, and dead, and antichrists, do they yet therefore not baptize, on the ground that “there can be nothing common between truth and falsehood, between light and darkness, between death and immortality, between Antichrist and Christ?”

27. He makes an assumption, then, not “of mere custom,” but “of the reason of truth itself,” when he says that the sacrament of God cannot be turned to error by the error of any men, since it is declared to exist even in those who have erred. Assuredly the Apostle John says most plainly, “He that hateth his brother is in darkness even until now;” and again, “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer;” and why, therefore, do they baptize those within the Church whom Cyprian himself declares to be in the envy of malice?

CHAPTER 20

How does a murderer cleanse and sanctify the water? How can darkness bless the oil? But if God is present in His sacraments to confirm His words by whomsoever the sacraments may be administered, then both the sacraments of God are everywhere valid, and evil men whom they profit not are everywhere perverse

28. But what kind of argument is this, that “a heretic must be considered not to have baptism, because he has not the Church?” And it must be

acknowledged that “when he is baptized, he is questioned about the Church.” Just as though the same question about the Church were not put in baptism to him who within the Church renounces the world in word and not in deed. As therefore his false answer does not prevent what he receives from being baptism, so also the false reply of the other about the holy Church does not prevent what he receives from being baptism; and as the former, if he afterwards fulfill with truth what he promised in falsehood, does not receive a second baptism, but only an amended life, so also in the case of the latter, if he come afterwards to the Church about which he gave a false answer to the question put to him, thinking that he had it when he had it not, the Church herself which he did not possess is given him, but what he had received is not repeated. But I cannot tell why it should be, that while God can “sanctify the oil” in answer to the words which proceed out of the mouth of a murderer, “He yet cannot sanctify it on the altar reared by a heretic,” unless it be that He who is not hindered by the false conversion of the heart of man within the Church is hindered by the false erection of some wood without from deigning to be present in His sacraments, though no falseness on the part of men can hinder Him. If, therefore, what is said in the gospel, that “God heareth not sinners,” extends so far that the sacraments cannot be celebrated by a sinner, how then does He hear a murderer praying, either over the water of baptism, or over the oil, or over the eucharist, or over the heads of those on whom his hand is laid? All which things are nevertheless done, and are valid, even at the hands of murderers, that is, at the hands of those who hate their brethren, even within, in the Church itself. Since “no one can give what he does not possess himself,” how does a murderer give the Holy Spirit? And yet such an one even baptizeth within the Church. It is God, therefore, that gives the Holy Spirit even when a man of this kind is baptizing.

CHAPTER 21

29. But as to what he says, that “he who comes to the Church is to be baptized and renewed, that within he may be hallowed through the holy,” what will he do, if within also he meets with those who are not holy? Or can it be that the murderer is holy? And if the reason for his being baptized in the Church is that “he should put off this very thing also that he, being a

man that sought to come to God, fell, through the deceit of error, on one profane," where is he afterwards to put off this, that he may chance, while seeking a man of God within the Church itself, to have fallen, through the deceit of error, on a murderer? If "there cannot be in a man something that is void and something that is valid," why is it possible that in a murderer the sacrament should be holy and his heart unholy? If "whosoever cannot give the Holy Spirit cannot baptize," why does the murderer baptize within the Church? Or how has the murderer the Holy Spirit, when every one that has the Holy Spirit is filled with light, but "he who hates his brother is still in darkness?" If because "there is one baptism, and one Spirit," therefore they cannot have the one baptism who have not the one Spirit, why do the innocent man and the murderer within the Church have the one baptism and not have the one Spirit? So therefore the heretic and the Catholic may have the one baptism, and yet not have the one Church, as in the Catholic Church the innocent man and the murderer may have the one baptism, though they have not the one Spirit; for as there is one baptism, so there is one Spirit and one Church. And so the result is, that in each person we must acknowledge what he already has, and to each person we must give what he has not. If "nothing can be confirmed and ratified with God which has been done by those whom God calls His enemies and foes," why is the baptism confirmed which is given by murderers? Are we not to call murderers the enemies and foes of the Lord? But "he that hateth his brother is a murderer." How then did they baptize who hated Paul, the servant of Jesus Christ, and thereby hated Jesus Himself, since He Himself said to Saul, "Why persecutest thou me?" when he was persecuting His servants, and since at the last He Himself shall say, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these that are mine, ye did it not to me?" Wherefore all who go out from us are not of us, but not all who are with us are of us; just as when men thresh, all that flies from the threshing-floor is shown not to be corn, but not all that remains there is therefore corn. And so John too says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." Wherefore God gives the sacrament of grace even through the hands of wicked men, but the grace itself only by Himself or through His saints. And therefore He gives remission of sins either of Himself, or through the members of that dove to whom He says, "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” But since no one can doubt that baptism, which is the sacrament of the remission of sins, is possessed even by murderers, who are yet in darkness because the hatred of their brethren is not excluded from their hearts, therefore either no remission of sins is given to them if their baptism is accompanied by no change of heart for the better, or if the sins are remitted, they at once return on them again. And we learn that the baptism is holy in itself, because it is of God; and whether it be given or whether it be received by men of such like character, it cannot be polluted by any perversity of theirs, either within, or yet outside the Church

CHAPTER 22

30. Accordingly we agree with Cyprian that “heretics cannot give remission of sins;” but we maintain that they can give baptism,—which indeed in them, both when they give and when they receive it, is profitable only to their destruction, as misusing so great a gift of God; just as also the malicious and envious, whom Cyprian himself acknowledges to be within the Church, cannot give remission of sins, while we all confess that they can give baptism. For if it was said of those who have sinned against us, “If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses,” how much more impossible is it that their sins should be forgiven who hate the brethren by whom they are loved, and are baptized in that very hatred; and yet when they are brought to the right way, baptism is not given them anew, but that very pardon which they did not then deserve is granted them in their true conversion? And so even what Cyprian wrote to Quintus, and what, in conjunction with his colleagues Liberalis, Caldonius, Junius, and the rest, he wrote to Saturninus, Maximus, and others, is all found, on due consideration, to be in no wise meet to be preferred as against the agreement of the whole Catholic Church, of which they rejoiced that they were members, and from which they neither cut themselves away nor allowed others to be cut away who held a contrary opinion, until at length, by the will of the Lord, it was made manifest, by a plenary Council many years afterwards, what was the more perfect way, and that not by the institution of any novelty, but by confirming what was old

31. Cyprian writes also to Pompeius about this selfsame matter, and clearly shows in that letter that Stephen, who, as we learn, was then bishop of the Roman Church, not only did not agree with him upon the points before us, but even wrote and taught the opposite views. But Stephen certainly did not "communicate with heretics," merely because he did not dare to impugn the baptism of Christ, which he knew remained perfect in the midst of their perversity. For if none have baptism who entertain false views about God, it has been proved sufficiently, in my opinion, that this may happen even within the Church. "The apostles," indeed, "gave no injunctions on the point;" but the custom, which is opposed to Cyprian, may be supposed to have had its origin in apostolic tradition, just as there are many things which are observed by the whole Church, and therefore are fairly held to have been enjoined by the apostles, which yet are not mentioned in their writings

32. But it will be urged that it is written of heretics that "they are condemned of themselves." What then? are they not also condemned of themselves to whom it was said, "For wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself?" But to these the apostle says, "Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?" and so forth. And such truly were they who, being bishops and established in Catholic unity with Cyprian himself, used to plunder estates by treacherous frauds, preaching all the time to the people the words of the apostle, who says, "Nor shall extortioners inherit the kingdom of God."

33. Wherefore I will do no more than run shortly through the other sentiments founded on the same rules, which are in the aforesaid letter written to Pompeius. By what authority of holy Scripture is it shown that "it is against the commandment of God that persons coming from the society of heretics, if they have already there received the baptism of Christ, are not baptized again?" But it is clearly shown that many pretended Christians, though they are not joined in the same bond of charity with the saints, without which anything holy that they may have been able to possess is of no profit to them, yet have baptism in common with the saints, as has been already sufficiently proved with the greatest fullness. He says "that the

Church, and the Spirit, and baptism, are mutually incapable of separation from each other, and therefore” he wishes that “those who are separated from the Church and the Holy Spirit should be understood to be separated also from baptism.” But if this is the case, then when any one has received baptism in the Catholic Church, it remains so long in him as he himself remains in the Church, which is not so. For it is not restored to him when he returns, just because he did not lose it when he seceded. But as the disaffected sons have not the Holy Spirit in the same manner as the beloved sons, and yet they have baptism; so heretics also have not the Church as Catholics have, and yet they have baptism. “For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit,” and yet baptism will not flee from it. And so, as baptism can continue in one from whom the Holy Spirit withdraws Himself, so can baptism continue where the Church is not. But if “the laying on of hands” were not “applied to one coming from heresy,” he would be as it were judged to be wholly blameless; but for the uniting of love, which is the greatest gift of the Holy Spirit, without which any other holy thing that there may be in a man is profitless to his salvation, hands are laid on heretics when they are brought to a knowledge of the truth.

CHAPTER 24

34. I remember that I have already discussed at sufficient length the question of “the temple of God,” and how this saying is to be taken, “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” For neither are the covetous the temple of God, since it is written, “What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” And Cyprian has adduced the testimony of Paul to the fact that covetousness is idolatry. But men put on Christ, sometimes so far as to receive the sacrament, sometimes so much further as to receive holiness of life. And the first of these is common to good and bad alike; the second, peculiar to the good and pious. Wherefore, if “baptism cannot be without the Spirit,” then heretics have the Spirit also,—but to destruction, not to salvation, just as was the case with Saul. For in the Holy Spirit devils are cast out through the name of Christ, which even he was able to do who was without the Church, which called forth a suggestion from the disciples to their Lord. Just as the covetous have the Holy Spirit, who yet are not the temple of God. For “what agreement hath

the temple of God with idols?” If therefore the covetous have not the Spirit of God, and yet have baptism, it is possible for baptism to exist without the Spirit of God

35. If therefore heresy is rendered “unable to engender sons to God through Christ, because it is not the bride of Christ,” neither can that crowd of evil men established within the Church, since it is also not the bride of Christ; for the bride of Christ is described as being without spot or wrinkle. Therefore either not all baptized persons are the sons of God, or even that which is not the bride can engender the sons of God. But as it is asked whether “he is spiritually born who has received the baptism of Christ in the midst of heretics,” so it may be asked whether he is spiritually born who has received the baptism of Christ in the Catholic Church, without being turned to God in a true heart, of whom it cannot be said that he has not received baptism.

CHAPTER 25

36. I am unwilling to go on to handle again what Cyprian poured forth with signs of irritation against Stephen, as it is, moreover, quite unnecessary. For they are but the selfsame arguments which have already been sufficiently discussed; and it is better to pass over those points which involved the danger of baneful dissension. But Stephen thought that we should even hold aloof from those who endeavored to destroy the primitive custom in the matter of receiving heretics; whereas Cyprian, moved by the difficulty of the question itself, and being most largely endowed with the holy bowels of Christian charity, thought that we ought to remain at unity with those who differed in opinion from ourselves. Therefore, although he was not without excitement, though of a truly brotherly kind, in his indignation, yet the peace of Christ prevailed in their hearts, that in such a dispute no evil of schism should arise between them. But it was not found that “hence grew more abundant heresies and schisms,” because what is of Christ in them is approved, and what is of themselves is condemned; for all the more those who hold this law of rebaptizing were cut into smaller fragments

CHAPTER 26

37. To go on to what he says, “that a bishop should be teachable,’“ adding, “But he is teachable who is gentle and meek to learn; for a bishop ought not only to teach, but to learn as well, since he is indeed the better teacher who daily grows and advances by learning better things;”—in these words assuredly the holy man, endowed with pious charity, sufficiently points out that we should not hesitate to read his letters in such a sense, that we should feel no difficulty if the Church should afterwards confirm what had been discovered by further and longer discussions; because, as there were many things which the learned Cyprian might teach, so there was still something which the teachable Cyprian might learn. But the admonition that he gives us, “that we should go back to the fountain, that is, to apostolic tradition, and thence turn the channel of truth to our times,” is most excellent, and should be followed without hesitation. It is handed down to us, therefore, as he himself records, by the apostles, that there is “one God, and one Christ, and one hope, and one faith, and one Church, and one baptism.” Since then we find that in the times of the apostles themselves there were some who had not the one hope, but had the one baptism, the truth is so brought down to us from the fountain itself, that it is clear to us that it is possible that though there is one Church, as there is one hope, and one baptism, they may yet have the one baptism who have not the one Church; just as even in those early times it was possible that men should have the one baptism who had not the one hope. For how had they one hope with the holy and the just, who used to say, “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,” asserting that there was no resurrection of the dead? And yet they were among the very men to whom the same apostle says, “Was Paul crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” For he writes most manifestly to them, saying, “How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?”

CHAPTER 27

38. And in that the Church is thus described in the Song of Songs, “A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed, a well of living water; thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits;” I dare not understand this save of the holy and just,—not of the covetous, and defrauders, and robbers, and usurers, and drunkards, and

the envious, of whom we yet both learn most fully from Cyprian's letters, as I have often shown, and teach ourselves, that they had baptism in common with the just, in common with whom they certainly had not Christian charity. For I would that some one would tell me how they "crept into the garden enclosed and the fountain sealed," of whom Cyprian bears witness that they renounced the world in word and not in deed, and that yet they were within the Church. For if they both are themselves there, and are themselves the bride of Christ, can she then be as she is described "without spot or wrinkle," and is the fair dove defiled with such a portion of her members? Are these the thorns among which she is a lily, as it is said in the same Song? So far therefore, as the lily extends, so far does "the garden enclosed and the fountain sealed," namely, through all those just persons who are Jews inwardly in the circumcision of the heart (for "the king's daughter is all glorious within"), in whom is the fixed number of the saints predestined before the foundation of the world. But that multitude of thorns, whether in secret or in open separation, is pressing on it from without, above number. "If I would declare them," it is said, "and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." The number, therefore, of the just persons, "who are the called according to His purpose," of whom it is said, "The Lord knoweth them that are His," is itself "the garden enclosed, the fountain sealed, a well of living water, the orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits." Of this number some live according to the Spirit, and enter on the excellent way of charity; and when they "restore a man that is overtaken in a fault in the spirit of meekness, they consider themselves, lest they also be tempted." And when it happens that they also are themselves overtaken, the affection of charity is but a little checked, and not extinguished; and again rising up and being kindled afresh, it is restored to its former course. For they know how to say, "My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto Thy word." But when "in anything they be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto them," if they abide in the burning flame of charity, and do not break the bond of peace. But some who are yet carnal, and full of fleshly appetites, are instant in working out their progress; and that they may become fit for heavenly food, they are nourished with the milk of the holy mysteries, they avoid in the fear of God whatever is manifestly corrupt even in the opinion of the world, and they strive most watchfully that they may be less and less delighted with worldly and temporal matters. They observe most constantly the rule of faith which has been sought out with diligence; and if in aught they stray from it, they submit to speedy correction under Catholic authority, although, in Cyprian's words, they be tossed about, by reason of their fleshly appetite, with the various conflicts of phantasies. There are some also who as yet live wickedly, or even lie in heresies or the superstitions of the Gentiles, and yet even then "the Lord knoweth them that are His." For, in that unspeakable foreknowledge of God, many who seem to be without are in reality within, and many who seem to be within yet really are without. Of all those, therefore, who, if I may so say, are inwardly and secretly within, is that "enclosed garden" composed, "the fountain sealed, a well of living water, the orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits." The divinely imparted gifts of these are partly peculiar to themselves, as in this world the charity that never faileth, and in the world to come eternal life; partly they are common with evil and perverse men, as all the other things in which consist the holy mysteries

CHAPTER 28

39. Hence, therefore, we have now set before us an easier and more simple consideration of that ark of which Noah was the builder and pilot. For Peter says that in the ark of Noah, "few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God)." Wherefore, if those appear to men to be baptized in Catholic unity who renounce the world in words only and not in deeds, how do they belong to the mystery of this ark in whom there is not the answer of a good conscience? Or how are they saved by water, who, making a bad use of holy baptism, though they seem to be within, yet persevere to the end of their days in a wicked and abandoned course of life? Or how can they fail to be saved by water, of whom Cyprian himself records that they were in time past simply admitted to the Church with the baptism which they had received in heresy? For the same unity of the ark saved them, in which no one has been saved except by water. For Cyprian himself says, "The Lord is able of His mercy to grant pardon, and not to sever from the gifts of His Church those who, being in all simplicity admitted to the Church, have

fallen asleep within her pale.” If not by water, how in the ark? If not in the ark, how in the Church? But if in the Church, certainly in the ark; and if in the ark, certainly by water. It is therefore possible that some who have been baptized without may be considered, through the foreknowledge of God, to have been really baptized within, because within the water begins to be profitable to them unto salvation; nor can they be said to have been otherwise saved in the ark except by water. And again, some who seemed to have been baptized within may be considered, through the same foreknowledge of God, more truly to have been baptized without, since, by making a bad use of baptism, they die by water, which then happened to no one who was not outside the ark. Certainly it is clear that, when we speak of within and without in relation to the Church, it is the position of the heart that we must consider, not that of the body, since all who are within in heart are saved in the unity of the ark through the same water, through which all who are in heart without, whether they are also in body without or not, die as enemies of unity. As therefore it was not another but the same water that saved those who were placed within the ark, and destroyed those who were left without the ark, so it is not by different baptisms, but by the same, that good Catholics are saved, and bad Catholics or heretics perish. But what the most blessed Cyprian thinks of the Catholic Church, and how the heretics are utterly crushed by his authority; notwithstanding the much I have already said, I have yet determined to set forth by itself, if God will, with somewhat greater fullness and perspicuity, so soon as I shall have first said about his Council what I think is due from me, which, in God’s will, I shall attempt in the following book

Book VI

In which is considered the Council of Carthage, held under the authority and presidency of Cyprian, to determine the question of the baptism of heretics.

CHAPTER 1

1. It might perhaps have been sufficient, that after the reasons have been so often repeated, and considered, and discussed with such variety of treatment, supplemented too, with the addition of proofs from holy Scripture, and the concurrent testimony of so many passages from Cyprian himself, even those who are slow of heart should thus understand, as I believe they do, that the baptism of Christ cannot be rendered void by any perversity on the part of man, whether in administering or receiving it. And when we find that in those times, when the point in question was decided in a manner contrary to ancient custom, after discussions carried on without violation of saving charity and unity, it appeared to some even eminent men who were bishops of Christ, among whom the blessed Cyprian was specially conspicuous, that the baptism of Christ could not exist among heretics or schismatics, this simply arose from their not distinguishing the sacrament from the effect or use of the sacrament; and because its effect and use were not found among heretics in freeing them from their sins and setting their hearts right, the sacrament itself was also thought to be wanting among them. But if we turn our eyes to the multitude of chaff within the Church, since these also who are perverse and lead an abandoned life in unity itself appear to have no power either of giving or retaining remission of sins, seeing that it is not to the wicked but the good sons that it was said, “Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained,” yet that such persons both have, and give, and receive the sacrament of baptism, was sufficiently manifest to the pastors of the Catholic Church dispersed over the whole world, through whom the original custom was afterwards confirmed by the authority of a plenary Council; so that even the sheep which was straying outside, and had

received the mark of the Lord from false plunderers outside, if it seek the salvation of Christian unity, is purified from error, is freed from captivity, is healed of its wound, and yet the mark of the Lord is recognized rather than rejected in it; since the mark itself is often impressed both by wolves and on wolves, who seem indeed to be within the fold, but yet are proved by the fruits of their conduct, in which they persevere even to the end, not to belong to that sheep which is one in many; because, according to the foreknowledge of God, as many sheep wander outside, so many wolves lurk treacherously within, among whom the Lord yet knoweth them that are His, which hear only the voice of the Shepherd, even when He calls by the voice of men like the Pharisees, of whom it was said, “Whatsoever they bid you observe that observe and do.”

2. For as the spiritual man, keeping “the end of the commandment,” that is, “charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned,” can see some things less clearly out of a body which is yet “corruptible and presseth down the soul,” and is liable to be otherwise minded in some things which God will reveal to him in His own good time if he abide in the same charity, so in a carnal and perverse man something good and useful may be found, which has its origin not in the man himself, but in some other source. For as in the fruitful branch there is found something which must be purged that it may bring forth more fruit, so also a grape is often found to hang on a cane that is barren and dry or fettered. And so, as it is foolish to love the portions which require purging in the fruitful branch, while he acts wisely who does not reject the sweet fruit wherever it may hang, so, if any one cuts himself off from unity by rebaptizing, simply because it seemed to Cyprian that one ought to baptize again those who came from the heretics, such a man turns aside from what merits praise in that great man, and follows what requires correction, and does not even attain to the very thing he follows after. For Cyprian, while grievously abhorring, in his zeal for God, all those who severed themselves from unity, thought that thereby they were separated from baptism itself; while these men, thinking it at most a slight offense that they themselves are severed from the unity of Christ, even maintain that His baptism is not in that unity, but issued forth with them. Therefore they are so far from the

fruitfulness of Cyprian, as not even to be equal to the parts in him which needed purging.

CHAPTER 2

3. Again, if any one not having charity, and walking in the abandoned paths of a most wicked life, seems to be within while he really is without, and at the same time does not seek for the repetition of baptism even in the case of heretics, it in no wise helps his barrenness, because he is not rendered fruitful with his own fruit, but laden with that of others. But it is possible that some one may flourish in the root of charity, and may be most rightly minded in the point in which Cyprian was otherwise minded, and yet there may be more that is fruitful in Cyprian than in him, more that requires purging in him than in Cyprian. Not only, therefore, do we not compare bad Catholics with the blessed Cyprian, but even good Catholics we do not hastily pronounce to be on an equality with him whom our pious mother Church counts among the few rare men of surpassing excellence and grace, although these others may recognize the baptism of Christ even among heretics, while he thought otherwise; so that, by the instance of Cyprian, who saw one point less clearly, and yet remained most firm in the unity of the Church, it might be shown more clearly to heretics what a sacrilegious crime it was to break the bond of peace. For neither were the blind Pharisees, although they sometimes enjoined what was right to be done, to be compared to the Apostle Peter, though he at times enjoined what was not right. But not only is their dryness not to be compared to his greenness, but even the fruit of others may not be deemed equal to his fertility. For no one now compels the Gentiles to judaize, and yet no one now in the Church, however great his progress in goodness, may be compared with the apostleship of Peter. Wherefore, while rendering due reverence, and paying, so far as I can, the fitting honor to the peaceful bishop and glorious martyr Cyprian, I yet venture to say that his view concerning the baptism of schismatics and heretics was contrary to that which was afterwards brought to light by a decision, not of mine, but of the whole Church, confirmed and strengthened by the authority of a plenary Council: just as, while paying the reverence he deserves to Peter, the first of the apostles and most eminent of martyrs, I yet venture to say that he did not do right in compelling the

Gentiles to judaize; for this also, I say, not of my own teaching, but according to the wholesome doctrine of the Apostle Paul, retained and preserved through out the whole Church

4. Therefore, in discussing the opinion of Cyprian, though myself of far inferior merit to Cyprian, I say that good and bad alike can have, can give, can receive the sacrament of baptism,—the good, indeed, to their health and profit; the bad to their destruction and ruin,—while the sacrament itself is of equal perfectness in both of them; and that it is of no consequence to its equal perfectness in all, how much worse the man may be that has it among the bad, just as it makes no difference how much better he may be that has it among the good. And accordingly it makes no difference either how much worse he may be that confers it, as it makes no difference how much better he may be; and so it makes no difference how much worse he may be that receives it, as it makes no difference how much better he may be. For the sacrament is equally holy, in virtue of its own excellence, both in those who are unequally just, and in those who are unequally unjust.

CHAPTER 3

5. But I think that we have sufficiently shown, both from the canon of Scripture, and from the letters of Cyprian himself, that bad men, while by no means converted to a better mind, can have, and confer, and receive baptism, of whom it is most clear that they do not belong to the holy Church of God, though they seem to be within it, inasmuch as they are covetous, robbers, usurers, envious, evil thinkers, and the like; while she is one dove, modest and chaste, a bride without spot or wrinkle, a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed, an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits, with all similar properties which are attributed to her; and all this can only be understood to be in the good, and holy, and just,—following, that is, not only the operations of the gifts of God, which are common to good and bad alike, but also the inner bond of charity conspicuous in those who have the Holy Spirit, to whom the Lord says, “Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained.”

CHAPTER 4

6. And so it is clear that no good ground is shown herein why the bad man, who has baptism, may not also confer it; and as he has it to destruction, so he may also confer it to destruction,—not because this is the character of the thing conferred, nor of the person conferring, but because it is the character of him on whom it is conferred. For when a bad man confers it on a good man, that is, on one in the bond of unity, converted with a true conversion, the wickedness of him who confers it makes no severance between the good sacrament which is conferred, and the good member of the Church on whom it is conferred. And when his sins are forgiven him on his true conversion to God, they are forgiven by those to whom he is united by his true conversion. For the same Spirit forgives them, which is given to all the saints that cling to one another in love, whether they know one another in the body or not. Similarly when a man's sins are retained, they are assuredly retained by those from whom he, in whom they are retained, separates himself by dissimilarity of life, and by the turning away of a corrupt heart, whether they know him in the body or not

CHAPTER 5

7. Wherefore all bad men are separated in the spirit from the good; but if they are separated in the body also by a manifest dissension, they are made yet worse. But, as it has been said, it makes no difference to the holiness of baptism how much worse the man may be that has it, or how much worse he that confers it: yet he that is separated may confer it, as he that is separated may have it; but as he has it to destruction, so he may confer it to destruction. But he on whom he confers it may receive it to his soul's health, if he, on his part, receive it not in separation; as it has happened to many that, in a catholic spirit, and with heart not alienated from the unity of peace, they have, under some pressure of impending death, turned hastily to some heretic and received from him the baptism of Christ without any share in his perversity, so that, whether dying or restored to life, they by no means remain in communion with those to whom they never passed in heart. But if the recipient himself has received the baptism in separation, he receives it so much the more to his destruction, in proportion to the greatness of the good which he has not received well; and it tends the more to his destruction in his separation, as it would avail the more to the salvation of

one in unity. And so, if, reforming himself from his perverseness and turning from his separation, he should come to the Catholic peace, his sins are remitted through the bond of peace and the same baptism under which his sins were retained through the sacrilege of separation, because that is always holy both in the just and the unjust, which is neither increased by the righteousness nor diminished by the unrighteousness of any man

8. This being the case, what bearing has it on so clear a truth, that many of his fellow-bishops agreed with Cyprian in that opinion, and advanced their own several opinions on the same side, except that his charity towards the unity of Christ might become more and more conspicuous? For if he had been the only one to hold that opinion, with no one to agree with him, he might have been thought, in remaining, to have shrunk from the sin of schism, because he found no companions in his error; but when so many agreed with him, he showed, by remaining in unity with the rest who thought differently from him, that he preserved the most sacred bond of universal catholicity, not from any fear of isolation, but from the love of peace. Wherefore it might indeed seem now to be superfluous to consider the several opinions of the other bishops also in that Council; but since those who are slow in heart think that no answer has been made at all, if to any passage in any discourse the answer which might be brought to bear on the spot be given not there but somewhere else, it is better that by reading much they should be polished into sharpness, than that by understanding little they should have room left for complaining that the argument has not been fairly conducted.

CHAPTER 6

9. First, then, let us record for further consideration the case proposed for decision by Cyprian himself, with which he initiates the proceedings of the Council, and by which he shows a peaceful spirit, abounding in the fruitfulness of Christian charity. “Ye have read,” he says, “most beloved colleagues, what Jubaianus, our fellow-bishop, has written to me, consulting my poor ability about the unlawful and profane baptism of heretics, and what I have written back to him, expressing to him the same opinion that I have expressed once and again and often, that heretics coming to the Church ought to be baptized, and sanctified with the baptism

of the Church. Another letter also of Jubaianus has been read to you, in which, agreeably to his sincere and religious devotion, in answer to our epistle, he not only expressed his assent to it, but also gratefully acknowledged that he had received instruction. It remains that we should individually express our opinions on this same subject, judging no one, and removing no one from the right of communion if he should entertain a different opinion. For neither does any one of us set himself up as a bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror force his colleagues to the necessity of obeying, since every bishop, in the free use of his liberty and power, has the right of free judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he can himself judge another. But we are all awaiting the judgment of our Lord Jesus Christ who alone has the power both of preferring us in the government of His Church, and of judging of our actions."

CHAPTER 7

10. I have already, I think, argued to the best of my power, in the preceding books, in the interests of Catholic unanimity and counsel, in whose unity these continued as pious members, in reply not only to the letter which Cyprian wrote to Jubaianus, but also to that which he sent to Quintus, and that which, in conjunction with certain of his colleagues, he sent to certain other colleagues, and that which he sent to Pompeius. Wherefore it seems now to be fitting to consider also what the others severally thought, and that with the liberty of which he himself would not deprive us, as he says, "Judging no one, nor removing any from the right of communion if he entertain different opinions." And that he did not say this with the object of arriving at the hidden thoughts of his colleagues, extracted as it were from their secret lurking-places, but because he really loved peace and unity, is very easily to be seen from other passages of the same sort, where he wrote to individuals as to Jubaianus himself. "These things," he says, "we have written very shortly in answer to you, most beloved brother, according to our poor ability, not preventing any one of the bishops by our writing or judgment, from acting as he thinks right, having a free exercise of his own judgment." And that it might not seem that any one, because of his entertaining different opinions in this same free exercise of his judgment, should be driven from the society of his brethren, he goes on to say, "We, so

far as lies in us, do not strive on behalf of heretics against our colleagues and fellow-bishops, with whom we maintain godly unity and the peace of our Lord;” and a little later he says, “Charity of spirit, respect for our fraternity, the bond of faith, the harmony of the priesthood, are by us maintained with patience and gentleness.” And so also in the epistle which he wrote to Magnus, when he was asked whether there was any difference in the efficacy of baptism by sprinkling or by immersion, “In this matter,” he says, “I am too modest and diffident to prevent any one by my judgment from thinking as he deems right, and acting as he thinks.” By which discourses he clearly shows that these subjects were being handled by them at a time when they were not yet received as decided beyond all question, but were being investigated with great care as being yet unrevealed. We, therefore, maintaining on the subject of the identity of all baptisms what must be acknowledged everywhere to be the custom of the universal Church, and what is confirmed by the decision of general Councils, and taking greater confidence also from the words of Cyprian, which allowed me even then to hold opinions differing from his own without forfeiting the right of communion, seeing that greater importance and praise were attached to unity, such as the blessed Cyprian and his colleagues, with whom he held that Council, maintained with those of different opinions, disturbing and overthrowing thereby the seditious calumnies of heretics and schismatics in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, speaking by His apostle, says, “Forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;” and again, by the mouth of the same apostle, “If in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you,”—we, I say, propose for consideration and discussion the opinions of the holy bishops, without violating the bond of unity and peace with them, in maintaining which we imitate them so far as we can by the aid of the Lord Himself

CHAPTER 8

11. Caecilius of Bilta said: “I know of one baptism in the one Church and of none outside the Church. The one will be where there is true hope and sure faith. For so it is written, One faith, one hope, one baptism.’ Not among heretics, where there is no hope and a false faith; where all things are done

by a lie; where one possessed of a devil exorcises; the question of the sacrament is asked by one from whose mouth and words proceeds a cancer; the faithless gives faith; the guilty gives pardon for sins and Antichrist baptizes in the name of Christ; one accursed of God blesses; the dead promises life; the unpeaceful gives peace; the blasphemer calls on God; the profane administers the priesthood; the sacrilegious sets up the altar. To all this is added this further evil that the servant of the devil dares to celebrate the eucharist. If this be not so, let those who stand by them prove that all of it is false concerning heretics. See the kind of things to which the Church is compelled to assent, being forced to communicate without baptism or the remission of sins. This, brethren, we ought to shun and avoid, separating ourselves from so great a sin, and holding to the one baptism which is granted to the Church alone."

12. To this I answer, that all who even within the Church profess that they know God, but deny Him in their deeds, such as are the covetous and envious, and those who, because they hate their brethren, are pronounced to be murderers, not on my testimony, but on that of the holy Apostle John,—all these are both devoid of hope, because they have a bad conscience; and are faithless, because they do not do what they have vowed to God; and liars, because they make false professions; and possessed of devils, because they give place in their heart to the devil and his angels; and their words work corruption, since they corrupt good manners by evil communications; and they are infidels, because they laugh at the threats which God utters against such men; and accursed, because they live wickedly; and antichrists, because their lives are opposed to Christ; and cursed of God, since holy Scripture everywhere calls down curses on such men; and dead, because they are without the life of righteousness; and unpeaceful, because by their contrary deeds they are at variance with God's behests; and blasphemous, because by their abandoned acts despite is done to the name of Christian; and profane, because they are spiritually shut out from that inner sanctuary of God; and sacrilegious, because by their evil life they defile the temple of God within themselves; and servants of the devil, because they do service to fraud and covetousness, which is idolatry. That of such a kind are some, nay very many, even within the Church, is testified both by Paul the apostle and by Cyprian the bishop. Why, then, do they baptize? Why also are some,

who “renounce the world in words and not in deeds,” baptized without being converted from a life like this, and not rebaptized when they are converted? And as to what he says with such indignation, “See the kind of things to which the Church is compelled to assent, being forced to communicate without baptism or the remission of sins,” he could never have used such expressions had there not been the other bishops who elsewhere forced men to such things. Whence also it is shown that at that time those men held the truer views who did not depart from the primitive custom, which is since confirmed by the consent of a general Council. But what does he mean by adding, “This, brethren, we ought to shun and avoid, separating ourselves from so great a sin?” For if he means that he is not to do nor to approve of this, that is another matter; but if he means to condemn and sever from him those that hold the contrary opinion, he is setting himself against the earlier words of Cyprian, “Judging no man, nor depriving any of the right of communion if he differ from us.”

CHAPTER 9

13. The elder Felix of Migirpa said: “I think that every one coming from heresy should be baptized. For in vain does any one suppose that he has been baptized there, seeing that there is no baptism save the one true baptism in the Church; for there is one Lord, and one faith, and one Church, in which rests the one baptism, and holiness, and the rest. For the things that are practised without have no power to work salvation.”

14. To what Felix of Migirpa said we answer as follows. If the one true baptism did not exist except in the Church, it surely would not exist in those who depart from unity. But it does exist in them, since they do not receive it when they return, simply because they had not lost it when they departed. But as regards his statement, that “the things that are practised without have no power to work salvation,” I agree with him, and think that it is quite true; for it is one thing that baptism should not be there, and another that it should have no power to work salvation. For when men come to the peace of the Catholic Church, then what was in them before they joined it, but did not profit them, begins at once to profit them.

CHAPTER 10

15. To the declaration of Polycarp of Adrumetum, that “those who declare the baptism of heretics to be valid, make ours of none effect,” we answer, if that is the baptism of heretics which is given by heretics, then that is the baptism of the covetous and murderers which is given by them within the Church. But if this be not their baptism, neither is the other the baptism of heretics; and so it is Christ’s, by whomsoever it be given

CHAPTER 11

16. Novatus of Thamugadis said: “Though we know that all Scripture gives its testimony respecting saving baptism, yet we ought to express our belief that heretics and schismatics, coming to the Church with the semblance of having been baptized, ought to be baptized in the unfailing fountain; and that therefore, according to the testimony of the Scriptures, and according to the decree of those most holy men, our colleagues, all schismatics and heretics who are converted to the Church ought to be baptized; and that, moreover, all that seemed to have received ordination should be admitted as simple laymen.”

17. Novatus of Thamugadis has stated what he has done, but he has brought forward no proofs by which to show that he ought to have acted as he did. For he has made mention of the testimony of the Scriptures, and the decree of his colleagues, but he has not adduced out of them anything which we could consider.

CHAPTER 12

18. Nemesianus of Tubunae said: “That the baptism which is given by heretics and schismatics is not true is everywhere declared in the holy Scriptures, inasmuch as their very prelates are false Christs and false prophets, as the Lord declares by the mouth of Solomon, Whoso trusteth in lies, the same feedeth the winds; he also followeth flying birds. For he deserteth the ways of his own vineyard, and hath strayed from the paths of his own field. For he walketh through pathless and dry places, and a land destined to thirst; and he gathereth fruitless weeds in his hands.’ And again, Abstain from strange water, and drink not of a strange fountain, that thou mayest live long, and that years may be added to thy life.’ And in the gospel

our Lord Jesus Christ spake with His own voice, saying, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ This is the Spirit which from the beginning moved upon the face of the waters.’ For neither can the Spirit act without the water, nor the water without the Spirit. Ill, therefore, for themselves do some interpret, saying that by imposition of hands they receive the Holy Ghost, and are received into the Church, when it is manifest that they ought to be born again by both sacraments in the Catholic Church. For then indeed will they be able to become the sons of God, as the apostle says, Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God.’ All this the Catholic Church asserts. And again he says in the gospel, That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; for the Spirit is God, and is born of God.’ Therefore all things whatsoever all heretics and schismatics do are carnal, as the apostle says, Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, seditions, heresies, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.’ The apostle condemns, equally with all the wicked, those also who cause divisions, that is, schismatics and heretics. Unless therefore they receive that saving baptism which is one, and found only in the Catholic Church, they cannot be saved, but will be condemned with the carnal in the judgment of the Lord.”

19. Nemesianus of Tubunae has advanced many passages of Scripture to prove his point; but he has in fact said much on behalf of the view of the Catholic Church, which we have undertaken to set forth and maintain. Unless, indeed, we must suppose that he does not “trust in what is false” who trusts in the hope of things temporal, as do all covetous men and robbers, and those “who renounce the world in words but not in deeds,” of whom Cyprian yet bears witness that such men not only baptize, but even are baptized within the Church. For they themselves also “follow flying birds,” since they do not attain to what they desire. But not only the heretic, but everyone who leads an evil life “deserteth the ways of his own vineyard, and hath strayed from the paths of his own field. And he walketh

through pathless and dry places, and a land destined to thirst; and he gathereth fruitless weeds in his hands;” because all justice is fruitful, and all iniquity is barren. Those, again, who “drink strange water out of a strange fountain,” are found not only among heretics, but among all who do not live according to the teaching of God, and do live according to the teaching of the devil. For if he were speaking of baptism, he would not say, “Do not drink of a strange fountain,” but, do not wash thyself in a strange fountain. Again, I do not see at all what aid he gets towards proving his point from the words of our Lord, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” For it is one thing to say that every one who shall enter into the kingdom of heaven is first born again of water and the Spirit, because except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, which is the Lord’s saying, and is true; another thing to say that every one who is born of water and the Spirit shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, which is assuredly false. For Simon Magus also was born of water and of the Spirit, and yet he did not enter into the kingdom of heaven; and this may possibly be the case with heretics as well. Or if only those are born of the Spirit who are changed with a true conversion, all “who renounce the world in word and not in deed” are assuredly not born of the Spirit, but of water only, and yet they are within the Church, according to the testimony of Cyprian. For we must perforce grant one of two things,—either those who renounce the world deceitfully are born of the Spirit, though it is to their destruction, not to salvation, and therefore heretics may be so born; or if what is written, that “the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit,” extends to proving as much as this, that those who renounce the world deceitfully are not born of the Spirit, then a man may be baptized with water, and not born of the Spirit, and Nemesianus says in vain that neither the Spirit can work without the water, nor the water without the Spirit. Indeed it has been already often shown how it is possible that men should have one baptism in common who have not one Church, as it is possible that in the body of the Church herself those who are sanctified by their righteousness, and those who are polluted through their covetousness, may not have the same one Spirit, and yet have the same one baptism. For it is said “one body,” that is, the Church, just as it is said “one Spirit” and “one baptism.” The other arguments which he has adduced rather favor our position. For he has brought forward a proof from the gospel, in the words, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; for the Spirit is God, and born of God;” and he has advanced the argument that therefore all things that are done by any heretic or schismatic are carnal, as the apostle says, “The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness;” and so he goes through the list which the apostle there enumerates, amongst which he has reckoned heresies, since “they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Then he goes on to add, that “therefore the apostle condemns with all wicked men those also who cause division, that is, schismatics and heretics.” And in this he does well, that when he enumerates the works of the flesh, among which are also heresies, he found and declared that the apostle condemns them all alike. Let him therefore question the holy Cyprian himself, and learn from him how many even within the Church live according to the evil works of the flesh, which the apostle condemns in common with the heresies, and yet these both baptize and are baptized. Why then are heretics alone said to be incapable of possessing baptism, which is possessed by the very partners in their condemnation?

CHAPTER 13

20. Januarius of Lambaese said: “Following the authority of the holy Scriptures, I pronounce that all heretics should be baptized, and so admitted into the holy Church.”

21. To him we answer, that, following the authority of the holy Scriptures, a universal Council of the whole world decreed that the baptism of Christ was not to be disavowed even when found among heretics. But if he had brought forward any proof from the Scriptures, we should have shown either that they were not against us, or even that they were for us, as we proceed to do with him who follows.

CHAPTER 14

22. Lucius of Castra Galbae said: “Since the Lord hath said in His gospel, Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, that which is salted from it shall be thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and

to be trodden under foot of men;’ and seeing that again, after His resurrection, when sending forth His apostles, He commanded them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,’—since then it is plain that heretics, that is, the enemies of Christ, have not the full confession of the sacrament, also that schismatics cannot reason with spiritual wisdom, since they themselves, by withdrawing when they have lost their savor from the Church, which is one, have become contrary to it, let that be done which is written, The houses of those that are opposed to the law must needs be cleansed;’ and it therefore follows that those who have been polluted by being baptized by men opposed to Christ should first be cleansed, and only then baptized.”

23. Lucius of Castra Galbae has brought forward a proof from the gospel, in the words of the Lord, “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, that which is salted from it shall be good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men;” just as though we maintained that men when cast out were of any profit for the salvation either of themselves or of any one else. But those also who, though seeming to be within, are yet of such a kind, not only are without spiritually, but will in the end be separated in the body also. For all such are for nothing. But it does not therefore follow that the sacrament of baptism which is in them is nothing. For even in the very men who are cast out, if they return to their senses and come back, the salvation which had departed from them returns; but the baptism does not return, because it never had departed. And in what the Lord says, “Go therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” He did not permit any to baptize except the good, inasmuch as He did not say to the bad, “Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” How then do the wicked baptize within, who cannot remit sins? How also is it that they baptize the wicked whose hearts are not changed, whose sins are yet upon them, as John says, “He that hateth his brother is in darkness even until now?” But if the sins of these men are remitted when they join themselves in the close bonds of love to the good and just, through whom sins are remitted in the Church, though they have been baptized by the wicked, so the sins of those

also are remitted who come from without and join themselves by the inner bond of peace to the same framework of the body of Christ. Yet the baptism of Christ should be acknowledged in both, and held invalid in none, whether before they are converted, though then it profit them nothing, or after they are converted, that so it may profit them, as he says, “Since they themselves, by withdrawing when they have lost their savor from the Church, which is one, have become contrary to it, let that be done which is written, The houses of those that are opposed to the law must need be cleansed.’ And it therefore follows,” he goes on to say, “that those who have been polluted by being baptized by men opposed to Christ should first be cleansed, and only then baptized.” What then? Are thieves and murderers not contrary to the law, which says, “Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal?” “They must therefore needs be cleansed.” Who will deny it? And yet not only those who are baptized by such within the Church, but also those who, being such themselves, are baptized without being changed in heart, are nevertheless exempt from further baptism when they are so changed. So great is the force of the sacrament of mere baptism, that though we allow that a man who has been baptized and continues to lead an evil life requires to be cleansed, we yet forbid him to be any more baptized.

CHAPTER 15

24. Crescens of Cirta said: “The letters of our most beloved Cyprian to Jubaianus, and also to Stephen, having been read in so large an assembly of our most holy brethren in the priesthood, containing as they do so large a body of sacred testimony derived from the Scriptures that give us our God, that we have every reason to assent to them, being all united by the grace of God, I give my judgment that all heretics or schismatics who wish to come to the Catholic Church should not enter therein unless they have been first exorcised and baptized; with the obvious exception of those who have been originally baptized in the Catholic Church, these being reconciled and admitted to the penance of the Church by the imposition of hands.”

25. Here we are warned once more to inquire why he says, “Except, of course, those who have been originally baptized in the Catholic Church.” Is it because they had not lost what they had before received? Why then could they not also transmit outside the Church what they were able to possess

outside? Is it that outside it is unlawfully transmitted? But neither is it lawfully possessed outside, and yet it is possessed; so it is unlawfully given outside, but yet it is given. But what is given to the person returning from heresy who had been baptized inside, is given to the person coming to the Church who had been baptized outside,—that is, that he may have lawfully inside what before he had unlawfully outside. But perhaps some one may ask what was said on this point in the letter of the blessed Cyprian to Stephen, which is mentioned in this judgment, though not in the opening address to the Council,—I suppose because it was not considered necessary. For Crescens stated that the letter itself had been read in the assembly, which I have no doubt was done, if I am not mistaken, as is customary, in order that the bishops, being already assembled, might receive some information at the same time on the subject contained in that letter. For it certainly has no bearing on the present subject; and I am more surprised at Crescens having thought fit to mention it at all, than at its having been passed over in the opening address. But if any one thinks that I have shrunk from bringing forward something which has been urged in it that is essential to the present point, let him read it and see that what I say is true; or if he finds it otherwise, let him convict me of falsehood. For that letter contains nothing whatsoever about baptism administered among heretics or schismatics, which is the subject of our present argument.

CHAPTER 16

26. Nicomedes of Segermi said: “My judgment is that heretics coming to the Church should be baptized, because they can obtain no remission of sins among sinners outside.”

27. The answer to which is: The judgment of the whole Catholic Church is that heretics, being already baptized with the baptism of Christ, although in heresy, should not be rebaptized on coming to the Church. For if there is no remission of sins among sinners, neither can sinners within the Church remit sins; and yet those who have been baptized by them are not rebaptized.

CHAPTER 17

28. Monnulus of Girba said: “The truth of our mother, the Catholic Church, hath continued, and still continues among us, brethren, especially in the threefold nature of baptism, as our Lord says, Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ Since, therefore,” he goes on to say, “we know clearly that heretics have neither Father, Son, nor Holy Ghost, they ought, on coming to our mother, the Church, to be truly regenerated and baptized, that the cancer which they had, and the wrath of condemnation, and the destructive energy of error may be sanctified by the holy and heavenly laver.”

29. To this we answer, That all who are baptized with the baptism that is consecrated in the words of the gospel have the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost in the sacrament alone; but that in heart and in life neither do those have them who live an abandoned and accursed life within.

CHAPTER 18

30. Secundinus of Cedias said: “Since our Lord Christ said, He that is not with me is against me,’ and the Apostle John declares those who go out from the Church to be antichrists, without all doubt the enemies of Christ, and those who are called antichrists, cannot minister the grace of the baptism which gives salvation; and therefore my judgment is that those who take refuge in the Church from the snares of heresy should be baptized by us, who of His condescension are called the friends of God.”

31. The answer to which is, That all are the opponents of Christ, to whom, on their saying, “Lord, have we not in Thy name done many wonderful things?” with all the rest that is there recorded, He shall at the last day answer, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity,”—all which kind of chaff is destined for the fire, if it persevere to the last in its wickedness, whether any part of it fly outside before its winnowing, or whether it seem to be within. If, therefore, those heretics who come to the Church are to be again baptized, that they may be baptized by the friends of God, are those covetous men, those robbers, murderers, the friends of God, or must those whom they have baptized be baptized afresh?

CHAPTER 19

32. Felix of Bagai said: “As when the blind leads the blind, both fall into the ditch, so when a heretic baptizes a heretic, both fall together into death.”

33. This is true, but it does not follow that what he adds is true. “And therefore,” he says, “the heretic must be baptized and brought to life, lest we who are alive should hold communion with the dead.” Were they not dead who said, “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die?” for they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. Those then who were corrupted by their evil communications, and followed them, were not they likewise falling with them into the pit? And yet among them there were men to whom the apostle was writing as being already baptized; nor would they, therefore, if they were corrected, be baptized afresh. Does not the same apostle say, “To be carnally-minded is death?” and certainly the covetous, the deceivers, the robbers, in the midst of whom Cyprian himself was groaning, were carnally-minded. What then? Did the dead hurt him who was living in unity? Or who would say, that because such men had or gave the baptism of Christ, that it was therefore violated by their iniquities?

CHAPTER 20

34. Polianus of Mileum said: “It is right that a heretic should be baptized in the holy Church.”

35. Nothing, indeed, could be expressed more shortly. But I think this too is short: It is right that the baptism of Christ should not be depreciated in the Church of Christ.

CHAPTER 21

36. Theogenes of Hippo Regius said: “According to the sacrament of the heavenly grace of God which we have received, we believe in the one only baptism which is in the holy Church.”

37. This may be my own judgment also. For it is so balanced, that it contains nothing contrary to the truth. For we also believe in the one only baptism which is in the holy Church. Had he said, indeed, We believe in that which is in the holy Church alone, the same answer must have been made to him as to the rest. But as it is, since he has expressed himself in this

wise, “We believe in the one only baptism which is in the holy Church,” so that it is asserted that it exists in the holy Church, but not denied that it may be elsewhere as well, whatever his meaning may have been, there is no need to argue against these words. For if I were questioned on the several points, first, whether there was one baptism, I should answer that there was one. Then if I were asked, whether this was in the holy Church, I should answer that it was. In the third place, if it were asked whether I believed in this baptism, I should answer that I did so believe; and consequently I should answer that I believed in the one baptism which is in the holy Church. But if it were asked whether it was found in the holy Church alone, and not among heretics and schismatics, I should answer that, in common with the whole Church, I believed the contrary. But since he did not insert this in his judgment, I should consider that it was mere wantonness if I added words which I did not find there, for the sake of arguing against them. For if he were to say, There is one water of the river Euphrates, which is in Paradise, no one could gainsay the truth of what he said. But if he were asked whether that water were in Paradise and nowhere else, and were to say that this was so, he would be saying what was false. For, besides Paradise, it is also in those lands into which it flows from that source. But who is rash enough to say that he would have been likely to assert what is false, when it is quite possible that he was asserting what is true? Wherefore the words of this judgment require no contradiction, because they in no wise run counter to the truth.

CHAPTER 22

38. Dativus of Badiae said “We, so far as lies within our power, refuse to communicate with a heretic, unless he has been baptized in the Church, and received remission of his sins.”

39. The answer to this is: If your reason for wishing him to be baptized is that he has not received remission of sins, supposing you find a man within the Church who has been baptized, though entertaining hatred towards his brother, since the Lord cannot lie, who says, “If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses,” will you bid such an one, when corrected, to be baptized afresh? Assuredly not; so neither should you bid the heretic. It is clear that we must not pass

unnoticed why he did not briefly say, “We do not communicate with a heretic,” but added, “so far as lies within our power.” For he saw that a greater number agreed with this view, from whose communion, however, he and his friends could not separate themselves, lest unity should be impaired, and so he added, “so far as lies within our power,”—showing beyond all doubt that he did not willingly communicate with those whom he held to be without baptism, but that yet all things were to be endured for the sake of peace and unity; just as was done also by those who thought that Dativus and his party were in the wrong, and who held what afterwards was taught by a fuller declaration of the truth, and urged by ancient custom, which received the stronger confirmation of a later Council; yet in turn, with anxious piety, they showed toleration towards each other, though without violation of Christian charity they entertained different opinions, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, till God should reveal to one of them, were he otherwise minded, even this error of his ways. And to this I would have those give heed, by whom unity is attacked on the authority of this very Council by which it is declared how much unity should be loved.

CHAPTER 23

40. Successus of Abbir Germaniciana said: “Heretics may either do nothing or everything. If they can baptize, they can also give the Holy Spirit; but if they cannot give the Holy Spirit, because they do not possess the Holy Spirit, then can they not either spiritually baptize. Therefore we give our judgment that heretics should be baptized.”

41. To this we may answer almost word for word: Murderers may either do nothing or everything. If they can baptize, they can also give the Holy Spirit; but if they cannot give the Holy Spirit, because they do not possess the Holy Spirit, then can they not either spiritually baptize. Therefore we give our judgment that persons baptized by murderers, or murderers themselves who have been baptized without being converted, should, when they have corrected themselves, be baptized. Yet this is not true. For “whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer;” and Cyprian knew such men within the Church, who certainly baptized. Therefore it is to no purpose that words of this sort are used concerning heretics.

CHAPTER 24

42. Fortunatus of Thuccabori said: “Jesus Christ our Lord and God, the Son of God the Father and Creator, built His Church upon a rock, not upon heresy, and gave the power of baptizing to bishops, not to heretics. Wherefore those who are outside the Church, and stand against Christ, scattering His sheep and flock, cannot baptize outside.”

43. He added the word “outside” in order that he might not be answered with a like brevity to Successus. For otherwise he might also have been answered word for word: Jesus Christ our Lord and God, the Son of God the Father and Creator, built His Church upon a rock, not upon iniquity, and gave the power of baptizing to bishops, not to the unrighteous. Wherefore those who do not belong to the rock on which they build, who hear the word of God and do it, but, living contrary to Christ in hearing the word and not doing it, and hereby building on the sand, in this way scatter His sheep and flock by the example of an abandoned character, cannot baptize. Might not this be said with all the semblance of truth? and yet it is false. For the unrighteous do baptize, since those robbers are unrighteous whom Cyprian maintained to be at unity with himself. But for this reason, says the Donatist, he adds “outside.” Why therefore can they not baptize outside? Is it because they are worse from the very fact that they are outside? But it makes no difference, in respect of the validity of baptism, how much worse the minister may be. For there is not so much difference between bad and worse as between good and bad; and yet, when the bad baptizes, he gives the selfsame sacrament as the good. Therefore, also, when the worse baptizes, he gives the selfsame sacrament as the less bad. Or is it that it is not in respect of man’s merit, but of the sacrament of baptism itself, that it cannot be given outside? If this were so, neither could it be possessed outside, and it would be necessary that a man should be baptized again so often as he left the Church and again returned to it.

44. Further, if we inquire more carefully what is meant by “outside,” especially as he himself makes mention of the rock on which the Church is built, are not they in the Church who are on the rock, and they who are not on the rock, not in the Church either? Now, therefore, let us see whether they build their house upon a rock who hear the words of Christ and do

them not. The Lord Himself declares the contrary, saying, “Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock;” and a little later, “Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand.” If, therefore, the Church is on a rock, those who are on the sand, because they are outside the rock, are necessarily outside the Church. Let us recollect, therefore, how many Cyprian mentions as placed within who build upon the sand, that is, who hear the words of Christ and do them not. And therefore, because they are on the sand, they are proved to be outside the rock, that is, outside the Church; yet even while they are so situated, and are either not yet or never changed for the better, not only do they baptize and are baptized, but the baptism which they have remains valid in them though they are destined to damnation.

45. Neither can it be said in this place, Yet who is there that doeth all the words of the Lord which are written in the evangelic sermon itself, at the end of which He says, that he who heard the said words and did them built upon a rock, and he who heard them and did them not built upon the sand? For, granting that by certain persons all the words are not accomplished, yet in the same sermon He has appointed the remedy, saying, “Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.” And after the Lord’s prayer had been recorded in detail in the same sermon, He says, “For I say unto you, if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Hence also Peter says, “For charity shall cover the multitude of sins;” which charity they certainly did not have, and on this account they built upon the sand, of whom the same Cyprian says, that within the Church they held conversation, even in the time of the apostles, in unkindly hatred alien from Christian charity; and therefore they seemed indeed to be within, but really were without, because they were not on that rock by which the Church is signified.

CHAPTER 25

46. Sedatus of Tuburbo said: “Inasmuch as water, sanctified by the prayer of the priest in the Church, washes away sins, just so much does it multiply

sins when infected, as by a cancer, with the words of heretics. Wherefore one must strive, with all such efforts as conduce to peace, that no one who has been infected and tainted by heretical error should refuse to receive the one true baptism, with which whosoever is not baptized shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven."

47. To this we answer, that if the water is not sanctified, when through want of skill the priest who prays utters some words of error, many, not only of the bad, but of the good brethren in the Church itself, fail to sanctify the water. For the prayers of many are corrected every day on being recited to men of greater learning, and many things are found in them contrary to the Catholic faith. Supposing, then, that it were shown that some persons were baptized when these prayers had been uttered over the water, will they be bidden to be baptized afresh? Why not? Because generally the fault in the prayer is more than counterbalanced by the intent of him who offers it; and those fixed words of the gospel, without which baptism cannot be consecrated, are of such efficacy, that, by their virtue, anything faulty that is uttered in the prayer contrary to the rule of faith is made of no effect, just as the devil is excluded by the name of Christ. For it is clear that if a heretic utters a faulty prayer, he has no good intent of love whereby that want of skill may be compensated, and therefore he is like any envious or spiteful person in the Catholic Church itself, such as Cyprian proves to exist within the Church. Or one might offer some prayer, as not unfrequently happens, in which he should speak against the rule of faith, since many rush into the use of prayers which are composed not only by unskillful men who love to talk, but even by heretics, and in the simplicity of ignorance, not being able to discern their true character, use them, thinking they are good; and yet what is erroneous in them does not vitiate what is right, but rather it is rendered null thereby, just as in the man of good hope and approved faith, who yet is but a man, if in anything he be otherwise minded, what he holds aright is not thereby vitiated until God reveal to him also that in which he is otherwise minded. But supposing that the man himself is wicked and perverse, then, if he should offer an upright prayer, in no part contrary to the Catholic faith, it does not follow that because the prayer is right the man himself is also right; and if over some he offer an erroneous prayer, God is present to uphold the words of His gospel, without which the baptism of

Christ cannot be consecrated, and He Himself consecrates His sacrament, that in the recipient, either before he is baptized, or when he is baptized, or at some future time when he turns in truth to God, that very sacrament may be profitable to salvation, which, were he not to be converted, would be powerful to his destruction. But who is there who does not know that there is no baptism of Christ, if the words of the gospel in which consists the outward visible sign be not forthcoming? But you will more easily find heretics who do not baptize at all, than any who baptize without those words. And therefore we say, not that every baptism (for in many of the blasphemous rites of idols men are said to be baptized), but that the baptism of Christ, that is, every baptism consecrated in the words of the gospel, is everywhere the same, and cannot be vitiated by any perversity on the part of any men.

48. We must certainly not lightly pass over in this judgment that he here inserted a clause, and says, “Wherefore we must strive, with all such efforts as conduce to peace, that no one who has been infected,” etc. For he had regard to those words of the blessed Cyprian in his opening speech, “Judging no man, nor depriving any of the right of communion if he entertain a different view.” See of what power is the love of unity and peace in the good sons of the Church, that they should choose rather to show tolerance towards those whom they called sacrilegious and profane, being admitted, as they thought, without the sacrament of baptism, if they could not correct them as they thought was right, than on their account to break that holy bond, lest on account of the tares the wheat also should be rooted out,—permitting, so far as rested with them, as in that noblest judgment of Solomon, that the infant body should rather be nourished by the false mother than be cut in pieces. But this was the opinion both of those who held the truer view about the sacrament of baptism, and of those to whom God, in consideration of their great love, was purposing to reveal any point in which they were otherwise minded.

CHAPTER 26

49. Privatianus of Sufetula said: “He who says that heretics have the power of baptizing should first say who it was that founded heresy. For if heresy is

of God, it may have the divine favor; but if it be not of God, how can it either have or confer on any one the grace of God?”

50. This man may thus be answered word for word: He who says that malicious and envious persons have the power of baptizing, should first say who was the founder of malice and envy. For if malice and envy are of God, they may have the divine favor; but if they are not of God, how can they either have or confer on any one the grace of God? But as these words are in the same way most manifestly false, so are also those which these were uttered to confute. For the malicious and envious baptize, as even Cyprian himself allows, because he bears testimony that they also are within. So therefore even heretics may baptize, because baptism is the sacrament of Christ; but envy and heresy are the works of the devil. Yet though a man possesses them, he does not thereby cause that if he have the sacrament of Christ, it also should itself be reckoned in the number of the devil’s works.

CHAPTER 27

51. Privatus of Sufes said: “What can be said of the man who approves the baptism of heretics, save that he communicates with heretics?”

52. To this we answer: It is not the baptism of heretics which we approve in heretics, as it is not the baptism of the covetous, or the treacherous, or deceitful, or of robbers, or of envious men which we approve in them; for all of these are unjust, but Christ is just, whose sacrament existing in them, they do not in its essence violate. Otherwise another man might say: What can be said of the man who approves the baptism of the unjust, save that he communicates with the unjust. And if this objection were brought against the Catholic Church herself, it would be answered just as I have answered the above.

CHAPTER 28

53. Hortensianus of Lares said: “How many baptisms there are, let those who uphold or favor heretics determine. We assert one baptism of the Church, which we only know in the Church. Or how can those baptize any one in the name of Christ whom Christ Himself declares to be His enemies?”

54. Giving answer to this man in a like tenor of words, we say: Let those who uphold or favor the unrighteous see to it: we recall to the Church when we can the one baptism which we know to be of the Church alone, wherever it be found. Or how can they baptize any one in the name of Christ whom Christ Himself declares to be His enemies? For He says to all the unrighteous, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity;” and yet, when they baptize, it is not themselves that baptize, but He of whom John says, “The same is He which baptizeth.”

CHAPTER 29

55. Cassius of Macomades said: “Since there cannot be two baptisms, he who grants baptism unto heretics takes it away from himself. I therefore declare my judgment that heretics, those objects for our tears, those masses of corruption, should be baptized when they begin to come to the Church, and that so being washed by the sacred and divine laver, and enlightened with the light of life, they may be received into the Church,—as being now made not enemies, but peaceful; not strangers, but of the household of the faith of the Lord; not bastards, but sons of God; partaking not of error, but of salvation,—with the exception of those who, being believers transplanted from the Church, had gone over to heresy, and that these should be restored by the laying on of hands.”

56. Another might say: Since there cannot be two baptisms, he who grants baptism to the unrighteous takes it away from himself. But even our opponents would join us in resisting such a man when he says that we grant baptism to the unrighteous, which is not of the unrighteous, like their unrighteousness, but of Christ, of whom is righteousness, and whose sacrament, even among the unrighteous, is not unrighteous. What, therefore, they would join us in saying of the unrighteous, that let them say to themselves of heretics. And therefore he should rather have said as follows: I therefore give my judgment that heretics, those objects for our tears, those masses of corruption, should not be baptized when they begin to come to the Church, if they already have the baptism of Christ, but should be corrected from their error. For we may similarly say of the unrighteous, of whom the heretics are a part: I therefore give my judgment that the unrighteous, those objects for our tears, and masses of corruption, if they

have been already baptized, should not be baptized again when they begin to come to the Church, that is, to that rock outside which are all who hear the words of Christ and do them not; but being already washed with the sacred and divine laver, and now further enlightened with the light of truth, should be received into the Church no longer as enemies but as peaceful, for the unrighteous have no peace; no longer as strangers, but of the household of the faith of the Lord, for to the unrighteous it is said, “How then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?” no longer as bastards, but the sons of God, for the unrighteous are the sons of the devil, partaking not of error but of salvation, for un-righteousness cannot save. And by the Church I mean that rock, that dove, that garden enclosed and fountain sealed, which is recognized only in the wheat, not in the chaff, whether that be scattered far apart by the wind, or appear to be mingled with the corn even till the last winnowing. In vain, therefore, did Cassius add, “With the exception of those who, being believers transplanted from the Church, had gone over to heresy.” For if even they themselves had lost baptism by seceding, to themselves also let it be restored; but if they had not lost it, let what was given by them receive due recognition.

CHAPTER 30

57. Another Januarius of Vicus Caesaris said: “If error does not obey truth, much more does truth refuse assent to error; and therefore we stand by the Church in which we preside, so that, claiming her baptism for herself alone, we baptize those whom the Church has not baptized.”

58. We answer: Whom the Church baptizes, those that rock baptizes outside which are all they who hear the words of Christ and do them not. Let all, therefore, be baptized again who have been baptized by such. But if this is not done, then, as we recognize the baptism of Christ in these, so should we recognize it in heretics, though we either condemn or correct their unrighteousness and error.

CHAPTER 31

59. Another Secundinus of Carpis said: “Are heretics Christians or not? If they are Christians, why are they not in the Church of God? If they are not

Christians, let them be made so. Else what will be the reference in the discourse of the Lord, in which He says, He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad?’ Whence it is clear that on strange children and the offspring of Antichrist the Holy Spirit cannot descend by the laying on of hands alone, since it is clear that heretics have not baptism.”

60. To this we answer: Are the unrighteous Christians or not? If they are Christians, why are they not on that rock on which the Church is built? for they hear the words of Christ and do them not. If they are not Christians, let them be made so. Else what will be the reference in the discourse of our Lord, in which He says, “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad?” For they scatter His sheep who lead them to the ruin of their lives by a false imitation of the Lord. Whence it is clear that upon strange children (as all the unrighteous are called), and upon the offspring of Antichrist (which all are who oppose themselves to Christ), the Holy Spirit cannot descend by the laying on of hands alone, if there be not added a true conversion of the heart; since it is clear that the unrighteous, so long as they are unrighteous, may indeed have baptism, but cannot have the salvation of which baptism is the sacrament. For let us see whether heretics are described in that psalm where the following words are used of strange children: “Deliver me, O Lord, from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood: whose sons are like young shoots well established, and their daughters polished after the similitude of the temple. Their garners are full, affording all manner of store; their sheep are fruitful, bringing forth plenteously in their streets; their oxen are strong: there is no breaking down of their fence, no opening of a passage out, no complaining in their streets. Men deemed happy the people that is in such a case; rather blessed is the people whose God is the Lord.” If, therefore, those are strange children who place their happiness in temporal things, and in the abundance of earthly prosperity, and despise the commandments of the Lord, let us see whether these are not the very same of whom Cyprian so speaks, transforming them also into himself, that he may show that he is speaking of men with whom he held communion in the sacraments: “In not keeping,” he says, “the way of the Lord, nor observing the heavenly commandments given us for our

salvation. Our Lord did the will of His Father, and we do not do the will of the Lord, being eager about our patrimony or our gains, following after pride, and so forth.” But if these could both have and transmit baptism, why is it denied that it may exist among strange children, whom he yet exhorts, that, by keeping the heavenly commandments conveyed to them through the only-begotten Son, they should deserve to be His brethren and the sons of God?

CHAPTER 32

61. Victoricus of Thabraca said: “If heretics may baptize, and give remission of sins, why do we destroy their credit, and call them heretics?”

62. What if another were to say: If the unrighteous may baptize, and give remission of sins, why do we destroy their credit, and call them unrighteous? The answer which we should give to such an one concerning the unrighteous may also be given to the other concerning heretics,—that is, in the first place, that the baptism with which they baptize is not theirs; and secondly, that it does not follow that whosoever has the baptism of Christ is also certain of the remission of his sins if he has this only in the outward sign, and is not converted with a true conversion of the heart, so that he who gives remission should himself have remission of his sins.

CHAPTER 33

63. Another Felix of Uthina said: “No one can doubt, most holy brethren in the priesthood, that human presumption has not so much power as the adorable and venerable majesty of our Lord Jesus Christ. Remembering then the danger, we ought not only to observe this ourselves, but to confirm it by our general consent, that all heretics who come to the bosom of our mother the Church be baptized, that the heretical mind, which has been polluted by long-continued corruption, may be reformed when cleansed by the sanctification of the laver.”

64. Perhaps the man who has placed the strength of his case for the baptizing of heretics in the cleansing away of the long-continued corruption, would spare those who, having fallen headlong into some heresy, had remained in it a brief space, and presently being corrected, had

passed from thence to the Catholic Church. Furthermore, he has himself failed to observe that it might be said that all unrighteous persons who come to that rock, in which is understood the Church, should be baptized, so that the unrighteous mind, which was building outside the rock upon the sand by hearing the words of Christ and not doing them, might be reformed when cleansed by the sanctification of the laver; and yet this is not done if they have been baptized already, even if it be proved that such was their character when they were baptized, that is, that they "renounced the world in words and not in deeds."

CHAPTER 34

65. Quietus of Burug said: "We who live by faith ought with believing observance to obey what has been before foretold for our instruction. For it is written in Solomon, He that is washed by one dead, what availeth his washing?' Which assuredly he says of those who are washed by heretics, and of those who wash. For if they who are baptized among them receive eternal life through the remission of their sins, why do they come to the Church? But if no salvation is received from a dead person, and they therefore, acknowledging their former error, return with penance to the truth, they ought to be sanctified with the one life-giving baptism which is in the Catholic Church."

66. What it is to be baptized by the dead, we have already, without prejudice to the more careful consideration of the same scripture, sufficiently declared before. But I would ask why it is that they wish heretics alone to be considered dead, when Paul the apostle has said generally of sin, "The wages of sin is death;" and again, "To be carnally minded is death." And when he says that a widow that liveth in pleasure is dead, how are they not dead "who renounce the world in words and not in deeds"? What, therefore, is the profit of washing in him who is baptized by them, except, indeed, that if he himself also is of the same character, he has the laver indeed, but it does not profit him to salvation? But if he by whom he is baptized is such, but the man who is baptized is turned to the Lord with no false heart, he is not baptized by that dead person, but by that living One of whom it is said, "The same is He which baptizeth." But to what he says of heretics, that if they who are baptized among them receive eternal

life through the remission of their sins, why do they come to the Church? we answer: They come for this reason, that although they have received the baptism of Christ up to the point of the celebration of the sacrament, yet they cannot attain to life eternal save through the charity of unity; just as neither would those envious and malicious ones attain to life eternal, who would not have their sins forgiven them, even if they entertained hatred only against those from whom they suffered wrong; since the Truth said, “If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses,” how much less when they were hating those towards whom they were rewarding evil for good? And yet these men, though “renouncing the world in words and not in deeds,” would not be baptized again, if they should afterwards be corrected, but they would be made holy by the one living baptism. And this is indeed in the Catholic Church, but not in it alone, as neither is it in the saints alone who are built upon the rock, and of whom that one dove is composed.

CHAPTER 35

67. Castus of Sicca said: He who presumes to follow custom in despite of truth is either envious and evilly disposed towards the brethren to whom the truth is revealed, or else he is ungrateful towards God, by whose inspiration His Church is instructed.”

68. If this man proved that those who differed from him, and held the view that has since been held by the whole world under the sanction of a Christian Council, were following custom so as to despise truth, we should have reason for fearing these words; but seeing that this custom is found both to have had its origin in truth and to have been confirmed by truth, we have nothing to fear in this judgment. And yet, if they were envious or evilly disposed towards the brethren, or ungrateful towards God, see with what kind of men they were willing to hold communion; see what kind of men, holding different opinions from their own, they treated as Cyprian enjoined them at the first, not removing them from the right of communion; see by what kind of men they were not polluted in the preservation of unity; see how greatly the bond of peace was to be loved; see what views they hold who bring charges against us, founded on the Council of bishops, their predecessors, whose example they do not imitate, and by whose example,

when the rights of the case are considered, they are condemned. If it was the custom, as this judgment bears witness, that heretics coming to the Church should be received with the baptism which they already had, either this was done rightly, or the evil do not pollute the good in unity. If it was rightly done, why do they accuse the world because they are so received? But if the evil do not pollute the good in unity, how do they defend themselves against the charge of sacrilegious separation?

CHAPTER 36

69. Eucratius of Theni said: “Our God and Lord Jesus Christ, teaching the apostles with His own mouth, fully laid down our faith, and the grace of baptism, and the rule of the law of the Church, saying, Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ Therefore the false and unrighteous baptism of heretics is to be repudiated by us, and contradicted with all solemnity of witness, seeing that from their mouth issues not life, but poison, not heavenly grace, but blaspheming of the Trinity. And so it is plain that heretics coming to the Church ought to be baptized with perfect and Catholic baptism, that, being purified from the blasphemy of their presumption, they may be reformed by the grace of the Holy Spirit.”

70. Clearly, if the baptism is not consecrated in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, it should be considered to be of the heretics, and repudiated as unrighteous by us with all solemnity of witness; but if we discern this name in it, we do better to distinguish the words of the gospel from heretical error, and approve what is sound in them, correcting what is faulty.

CHAPTER 37

71. Libosus of Vaga said: “The Lord says in the gospel, I am the truth;’ He did not say, I am custom. Therefore, when the truth is made manifest, let custom yield to truth; so that, if even in time past any one did not baptize heretics in the Church, he may now begin to baptize them.”

72. Here he has in no way tried to show how that is the truth to which he says that custom ought to yield. But it is of more importance that he helps

us against those who have separated themselves from unity, by confessing that the custom existed, than that he thinks it ought to yield to a truth which he does not show. For the custom is of such a nature, that if it admitted sacrilegious men to the altar of Christ without the cleansing of baptism, and polluted none of the good men who remained in unity, then all who have cut themselves off from the same unity, in which they could not be polluted by the contagion of any evil persons whatsoever, have separated themselves without reason, and have committed the manifest sacrilege of schism. But if all perished in pollution through that custom, from what cavern do they issue without the original truth, and with all the cunning of calumny? If, however, the custom was a right one by which heretics were thus received, let them abandon their madness, let them confess their error; let them come to the Catholic Church, not that they may be bathed again with the sacrament of baptism, but that they may be cured from the wound of severance.

CHAPTER 38

73. Lucius of Thebaste said: “I declare my judgment that heretics, and blasphemers, and unrighteous men, who with various words pluck away the sacred and adorable words of the Scriptures, should be held accursed, and therefore exorcised and baptized.”

74. I too think that they should be held accursed, but not that therefore they should be exorcised and baptized; for it is their own falsehood which I hold accursed, but Christ’s sacrament which I venerate.

CHAPTER 39

75. Eugenius of Ammedera said: “I too pronounce this same judgment, that heretics should be baptized.”

76. To him we answer: But this is not the judgment which the Church pronounces, to which also God has now revealed in a plenary Council the point in which ye were then still otherwise minded, but because saving charity was in you, ye remained in unity.

CHAPTER 40

77. Also another Felix of Ammacura said: “I too, following the authority of the holy Scriptures, give my judgment that heretics should be baptized, and with them those also who maintain that they have been baptized among schismatics. For if, according to the warning of Christ, our fountain is sealed to ourselves, let all the enemies of our Church understand that it cannot belong to others; nor can He who is the Shepherd of our flock give the water unto salvation to two different peoples. And therefore it is clear that neither heretics nor schismatics can receive anything heavenly, who dare to accept from men that are sinners and aliens from the Church. When the giver has no ground to stand upon, surely neither can the receiver derive any profit.”

78. To him we answer, that the holy Scriptures nowhere have enjoined that heretics baptized among heretics should be baptized afresh, but that they have shown in many places that all are aliens from the Church who are not on the rock, nor belong to the members of the dove, and yet that they baptize and are baptized and have the sacrament of salvation without salvation. But how our fountain is like the fountain of Paradise, in that, like it, it flows forth even beyond the bounds of Paradise, has been sufficiently set forth above; and that “He who is the Shepherd of our flock cannot give the water unto salvation to two different peoples,” that is, to one that is His own, and to another that is alien, I fully agree in admitting. But does it follow that because the water is not unto salvation it is not the identical water? For the water of the deluge was for salvation unto those who were placed within the ark, but it brought death to those without, and yet it was the same water. And many aliens, that is to say, envious persons, whom Cyprian declares and proves from Scripture to be of the party of the devil, seem as it were to be within, and yet, if they were not without the ark, they would not perish by water. For such men are slain by baptism, as the sweet savor of Christ was unto death to those of whom the apostle speaks. Why then do not either heretics or schismatics receive anything heavenly, just as thorns or tares, like those who were without the ark received indeed the rain from the floods of heaven, but to destruction, not to salvation? And so I do not take the pains to refute what he said in conclusion: “When the giver has no ground to stand upon, surely neither can the receiver derive any profit,” since we also say that it does not profit the receivers while they receive it in

heresy, consenting with the heretics; and therefore they come to Catholic peace and unity, not that they may receive baptism, but that what they had received may begin to profit them.

CHAPTER 41

79. Also another Januarius of Muzuli said: “I wonder that, while all acknowledge that there is one baptism, all do not understand the unity of the same baptism. For the Church and heresy are two distinct things. If heretics have baptism we have it not; but if we have it, heretics cannot have it. But there is no doubt that the Church alone possesses the baptism of Christ, since it alone possesses both the favor and the truth of Christ.”

80. Another might equally say, and say with equal want of truth: I wonder that, while all confess there is one baptism, all do not understand the unity of baptism. For righteousness and unrighteousness are two distinct things. If the unrighteous have baptism, the righteous have it not; but if the righteous have it, the unrighteous cannot have it. But there is no doubt that the righteous alone possess the baptism of Christ, since they alone possess both the favor and the truth of Christ. This is certainly false, as they confess themselves. For those envious ones also who are of the party of the devil, though placed within the Church, as Cyprian tells us, and who were well known to the Apostle Paul, had baptism, but did not belong to the members of that dove which is safely sheltered on the rock.

CHAPTER 42

81. Adelphius of Thasbalte said: “It is surely without cause that they find fault with the truth in false and invidious terms, saying that we rebaptize, since the Church does not rebaptize heretics, but baptizes them.”

82. Truly enough it does not rebaptize them, because it only baptizes those who were not baptized before; and this earlier custom has only been confirmed in a later Council by a more careful perfecting of the truth.

CHAPTER 43

83. Demetrius of the Lesser Leptis said: “We uphold one baptism, because we claim for the Catholic Church alone what is her own. But those who say that heretics baptize truly and lawfully are themselves the men who make, not two, but many baptisms; for since heresies are many in number, the baptisms, too, will be reckoned according to their number.”

84. To him we answer: If this were so, then would as many baptisms be reckoned as there are works of the flesh, of which the apostle says “that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God;” among which are reckoned also heresies; and so many of those very works are tolerated within the Church as though in the chaff, and yet there is one baptism for them all, which is not vitiated by any work of unrighteousness.

CHAPTER 44

85. Vincentius of Thibari said: “We know that heretics are worse than heathens. If they, being converted, wish to come to God, they have assuredly a rule of truth, which the Lord by His divine precept committed to the apostles, saying, Go ye, lay on hands in my name, cast out devils;’ and in another place, Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ Therefore, first by the laying on of hands in exorcism, secondly by regeneration in baptism, they may come to the promises of Christ; but my judgment is that in no other way should this be done.”

86. By what rule he asserts that heretics are worse than heathens I do not know, seeing that the Lord says, “If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.” Is a heretic worse even than such? I do not gainsay it. I do not, however, allow that because the man himself is worse than a heathen, that is, than a Gentile and pagan, therefore whatever the sacrament contains that is Christ’s is mingled with his vices and character, and perishes through the corruption of such admixture. For if even those who depart from the Church, and become not the followers but the founders of heresies, have been baptized before their secession, they continue to have baptism, although, according to the above rule, they are worse than heathens; for if on correction they return, they do not receive it, as they certainly would do if they had lost it. It is therefore possible that a

man may be worse than a heathen, and yet that the sacrament of Christ may not only be in him, but be not a whit inferior to what it is in a holy and righteous man. For although to the extent of his powers he has not preserved the sacrament, but done it violence in heart and will, yet so far as the sacrament's own nature is concerned, it has remained unhurt in its integrity even in the man who despised and rejected it. Were not the people of Sodom heathens, that is to say, Gentiles? The Jews therefore were worse, to whom the Lord says, "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee;" and to whom the prophet says, "Thou hast justified Sodom," that is to say, in comparison with thee Sodom is righteous. Shall we, however, maintain that on this account the holy sacraments which existed among the Jews partook of the nature of the Jews themselves,—those sacraments which the Lord Himself also accepted, and sent the lepers whom He had cleansed to fulfill them, of which when Zacharias was administering them, the angel stood by him, and declared that his prayer had been heard while he was sacrificing in the temple? These same sacraments were both in the good men of that time, and in those bad men who were worse than are the heathens, seeing that they were ranked before the Sodomites for wickedness, and yet those sacraments were perfect and holy in both.

87. For even if the Gentiles themselves could have anything holy and right in their doctrines, our saints did not condemn it, however much the Gentiles themselves were to be detested for their superstitions and idolatry and pride, and the rest of their corruptions, and to be punished with judgment from heaven unless they submitted to correction. For when Paul the apostle also was saying something concerning God before the Athenians, he adduced as a proof of what he said, that certain of them had said something to the same effect, which certainly would not be condemned but recognized in them if they should come to Christ. And the holy Cyprian uses similar evidence against the same heathens; for, speaking of the magi, he says, "The chief of them, however, Hostanes, asserts both that the form of the true God cannot be seen, and also that true angels stand beside His seat. In which Plato also agrees in like manner, and, maintaining the existence of one God, he calls the others angels or demons. Hermes Trismegistus also speaks of one God, and confesses that He is incomprehensible, and past our powers of

estimation.” If, therefore, they were to come to the perception of salvation in Christ, it surely would not be said to them, This that ye have is bad, or false; but clearly it would deservedly be said, Though this in you is perfect and true, yet it would profit nothing unless ye came to the grace of Christ. If, therefore, anything that is holy can be found and rightly approved in the very heathens, although the salvation which is of Christ is not yet to be granted to them, we ought not, even though heretics are worse than they, to be moved to the desire of correcting what is bad in them belonging to themselves, without being willing to acknowledge what is good in them of Christ. But we will set forth from a fresh preface to consider the remaining judgments of this Council.

Book VII

In which the remaining judgments of the Council of Carthage are examined.

CHAPTER 1

1. Let us not be considered troublesome to our readers, if we discuss the same question often and from different points of view. For although the Holy Catholic Church throughout all nations be fortified by the authority of primitive custom and of a plenary Council against those arguments which throw some darkness over the question about baptism, whether it can be the same among heretics and schismatics that it is in the Catholic Church, yet, since a different opinion has at one time been entertained in the unity of the Church itself, by men who are in no wise to be despised, and especially by Cyprian, whose authority men endeavor to use against us who are far removed from his charity, we are therefore compelled to make use of the opportunity of examining and considering all that we find on this subject in his Council and letters, in order, as it were, to handle at some considerable length this same question, and to show how it has more truly been the decision of the whole body of the Catholic Church, that heretics or schismatics, who have received baptism already in the body from which they came, should be admitted with it into the communion of the Catholic Church, being corrected in their error and rooted and grounded in the faith, that, so far as concerns the sacrament of baptism, there should not be an addition of something that was wanting, but a turning to profit of what was in them. And the holy Cyprian indeed, now that the corruptible body no longer presseth down the soul, nor the earthly tabernacle presseth down the mind that museth upon many things, sees with greater clearness that truth to which his charity made him deserving to attain. May he therefore help us by his prayers, while we labor in the mortality of the flesh as in a darksome cloud, that if the Lord so grant it, we may imitate so far as we can the good that was in him. But if he thought otherwise than right on any point, and persuaded certain of his brethren and colleagues to entertain his views in a matter which he now sees clearly through the revelation of Him whom he

loved, let us, who are far inferior to his merits, yet following, as our weakness will allow, the authority of the Catholic Church of which he was himself a conspicuous and most noble member, strive our utmost against heretics and schismatics, seeing that they, being cut off from the unity which he maintained, and barren of the love with which he was fruitful, and fallen away from the humility in which he stood, are disavowed and condemned the more by him, in proportion as he knows that they wish to search out his writings for purposes of treachery, and are unwilling to imitate what he did for the maintainance of peace,—like those who, calling themselves Nazarene Christians, and circumcising the foreskin of their flesh after the fashion of the Jews, being heretics by birth in that error from which Peter, when straying from the truth, was called by Paul persist in the same to the present day. As therefore they have remained in their perversity cut off from the body of the Church, while Peter has been crowned in the primacy of the apostles through the glory of martyrdom, so these men, while Cyprian, through the abundance of his love, has been received into the portion of the saints through the brightness of his passion, are obliged to recognize themselves as exiles from unity, and, in defence of their calumnies, set up a citizen of unity as an opponent against the very home of unity. Let us, therefore, go on to examine the other judgments of that Council after the same fashion

CHAPTER 2

2. Marcus of Mactaris said: “It is not to be wondered at if heretics, being enemies and opponents of the truth, claim to themselves what has been entrusted and vouchsafed to other men. What is marvellous is that some of us, traitors to the truth, uphold heretics and oppose Christians; therefore we decree that heretics should be baptized.”

3. To him we answer: It is indeed much more to be wondered at, and deserving of expressions of great praise, that Cyprian and his colleagues had such love for unity that they continued in unity with those whom they considered to be traitors to the truth, without any apprehension of being polluted by them. For when Marcus said, “It is marvellous that some of us, traitors to the truth, uphold heretics and oppose Christians,” it seemed natural that he should add, Therefore we decree that communion should not

be held with them. This he did not say; but what he does say is, “Therefore we decree that heretics should be baptized,” adhering to what the peaceful Cyprian had enjoined in the first instance, saying, “Judging no man, nor removing any from the right of communion if he entertain a different opinion.” While, therefore, the Donatists calumniate us and call us traditors, I should be glad to know, supposing that any Jew or pagan were found, who, after reading the records of that Council should call both us and them, according to their own rules, traitors to the truth, how we should be able to make our joint defense so as to refute and wash away so grave a charge. They give the name of traditors to men whom they were never able in times past to convict of the offense, and whom they cannot now show to be involved in it, being themselves rather shown to be liable to the same charge. But what has this to do with us? What shall we say of them who, by their own showing, are unquestionably traitors? For if we, however falsely, are called traditors, because, as they allege, we took part in the same communion with traditors, we have all taken part with the traditors in question, seeing that in the time of the blessed Cyprian the party of Donatus had not yet separated itself from unity. For the delivery of the sacred books, from which they began to be called traditors, occurred somewhat more than forty years after his martyrdom. If, therefore, we are traditors, because we sprang from traditors, as they believe or pretend, we both of us derive our origin from those other traitors. For there is no room for saying that they did not communicate with these traitors, since they call them men of their own party. In the words of the Council which they are most forward to quote, “Some of us,” it declares, “traitors to the truth, uphold heretics.” To this is added the testimony of Cyprian, showing clearly that he remained in communion with them, when he says, “Judging no man, nor removing any from the right of communion if he entertain a different opinion.” For those who entertained a different opinion were the very persons whom Marcus calls traitors to the truth because they upheld heretics, as he maintains, by receiving them into the Church without baptism. That it was, moreover, the custom that they should be so received, is testified both by Cyprian himself in many passages, and by some bishops in this Council. Whence it is evident that, if heretics have not baptism, the Church of Christ of those days was full of traitors, who upheld them by receiving them in this way. I would urge, therefore, that we plead our cause in common against the charge of treason which they cannot disavow, and therein our special case will be argued against the charge of delivering the books, which they could not prove against us. But let us argue the point as though they had convicted us; and what we shall answer jointly to those who urge against both of us the general treason of our forefathers, that we will answer to these men who urge against us that our forefathers gave up the sacred books. For as we were dead because our forefathers delivered up the books, which caused them to divide themselves from us, so both we and they themselves are dead through the treason of our forefathers, from whom both we and they are sprung. But since they say they live, they hold that that treason does not in any way affect them, therefore neither are we affected by the delivery of the books. And it should be observed that, according to them, the treason is indisputable: while, according to us, there is no truth either in the former charge of treason, because we say that heretics also may have the baptism of Christ; nor in the latter charge of delivering the books, because in that they were themselves beaten. They have therefore no reason for separating themselves by the wicked sin of schism, because, if our forefathers were not guilty of delivering up the books, as we say, there is no charge which can affect us at all; but if they were guilty of the sin, as these men say, then it is just as far from affecting us as the sin of those other traitors is from affecting either us or them. And hence, since there is no charge that can implicate us from the unrighteousness of our forefathers, the charge arising against them from their own schism is manifestly proved.

CHAPTER 3

4. Satius of Sicilibba said: “If heretics receive forgiveness of their sins in their own baptism, it is without reason that they come to the Church. For since it is for sins that men are punished in the day of judgment, heretics have nothing to fear in the judgment of Christ if they have obtained remission of their sins.”

5. This too might also have been our own judgment; but let its author beware in what spirit it was said. For it is expressed in terms of such import, that I should feel no compunction in consenting and subscribing to it in the same spirit in which I too believe that heretics may indeed have the baptism of Christ, but cannot have the remission of their sins. But he does not say, If

heretics baptize or are baptized, but “If heretics,” he says, “receive forgiveness of their sins in their own baptism, it is without reason that they come to the Church.” For if we were to set in the place of heretics those whom Cyprian knew within the Church as “renouncing the world in words alone and not in deeds,” we also might express this same judgment, in just so many words, with the most perfect truth. If those who only seem to be converted receive forgiveness of their sins in their own baptism, it is without reason that they are afterwards led on to a true conversion. For since it is for sins that men are punished in the day of judgment, “those who renounce the world in words and not in deeds” have nothing to fear in the judgment of Christ if they have obtained remission of their sins. But this reasoning is only made perfect by some such context as is formed by the addition of the words. But they ought to fear the judgment of Christ, and to lose no time in being converted in the truth of their hearts; and, when they have done this, it is certainly not necessary that they should be baptized a second time. It was possible, therefore, for them to receive baptism, and either not to receive remission of their sins, or to be burdened again at once with the load of sins which were forgiven them; and so the same is the case also with the heretics.

CHAPTER 4

6. Victor of Gor said: “Seeing that sins are forgiven only in the baptism of the Church, he who admits heretics to communion without baptism is guilty of two errors contrary to reason; for, on the one hand, he does not cleanse the heretics, and, on the other, he defiles the Christians.”

7. To this we answer that the baptism of the Church exists even among heretics, though they themselves are not within the Church; just as the water of Paradise was found in the land of Egypt, though that land was not itself in Paradise. We do not therefore admit heretics to communion without baptism; and since they come with their waywardness corrected, we receive not their sins, but the sacraments of Christ. And, in respect of the remission of their sins, we say again here exactly what we said above. And certainly, in regard of what he says at the end of his judgment, declaring that he “is guilty of two errors contrary to reason, seeing that on the one hand he does not cleanse the heretics, and on the other he defiles the Christians,” Cyprian

himself is the first and the most earnest in repudiating this with the colleagues who agreed with him. For neither did he think that he was defiled, when, on account of the bond of peace, he decreed that it was right to hold communion with such men, when he used the words, “Judging no one, nor removing any from the right of communion if he entertain a different opinion.” Or, if heretics defile the Church by being admitted to communion without being baptized, then the whole Church has been defiled in virtue of that custom which has been so often recorded here. And just as those men call us traditors because of our forefathers, in whom they were able to prove nothing of the sort when they laid the charge against them, so, if every man partakes of the character of those with whom he may have held communion, all were then made heretics. And if every one who asserts this is mad, it must be false that Victor says, when he declares that “he who admits heretics to communion without baptism, not only fails to cleanse the heretics, but pollutes the Christians as well.” Or if this be true, they were then not admitted without baptism, but those men had the baptism of Christ, although it was given and received among heretics, who were so admitted in accordance with that custom which these very men acknowledged to exist; and on the same grounds they are even now rightly admitted in the same manner.

CHAPTER 5

8. Aurelius of Utica said: “Since the apostle says that we ought not to be partakers with the sins of other men, what else does he do but make himself partaker with the sins of other men, who holds communion with heretics without the baptism of the Church? And therefore I pronounce my judgment that heretics should be baptized, that they may receive remission of their sins, and so communion be allowed to them.”

9. The answer is: Therefore Cyprian and all those bishops were partakers in the sins of other men, inasmuch as they remained in communion with such men, when they removed no one from the right of communion who entertained a different opinion. Where, then, is the Church? Then, to say nothing for the moment of heretics,—since the words of this judgment are applicable also to other sinners, such as Cyprian saw with lamentation to be in the Church with him, whom, while he confuted them, he yet tolerated,—

where is the Church, which, according to these words must be held to have perished from that very moment by the contagion of their sins? But if, as is the most firmly established truth, the Church both has remained and does remain, the partaking of the sins of others, which is forbidden by the apostle, must be considered only to consist in consenting to them. But let heretics be baptized again, that they may receive remission of their sins, if the wayward and the envious are baptized again, who, seeing that “they renounced the world in words and not in deeds,” were indeed able to receive baptism, but did not obtain remission of their sins, as the Lord says, “If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

CHAPTER 6

10. Iambus of Germaniciana said: “Those who approve the baptism of heretics disapprove ours, so as to deny that such as are, I will not say washed, but defiled outside the Church, ought to be baptized within the Church.”

11. To him we answer, that none of our party approves the baptism of heretics, but all the baptism of Christ, even though it be found in heretics who are as it were chaff outside the Church, as it may be found in other unrighteous men who are as chaff within the Church. For if those who are baptized without the Church are not washed, but defiled, assuredly those who are baptized outside the rock on which the Church is built are not washed, but defiled. But all are without the said rock who hear the words of Christ and do them not. Or if it be the case that they are washed indeed in baptism, but yet continue in the defilement of their unrighteousness, from which they were unwilling to be changed for the better, the same is true also of the heretics.

CHAPTER 7

12. Lucianus of Rucuma said: “It is written, And God saw the light that it was good, and God divided the light from the darkness.’ If light and darkness can agree, then can there be something in common between us and heretics. Therefore I give my judgment that heretics should be baptized.”

13. To him the answer is: If light and darkness can agree, then can there be something common between the righteous and unrighteous. Let him therefore declare his judgment that those unrighteous should be baptized afresh whom Cyprian confuted within the Church itself; or let him who can say if those are not unrighteous “who renounce the world in words and not in deeds.”

CHAPTER 8

14. Pelagianus of Luperciana said: “It is written, Either the Lord is God, or Baal is God.’ So now either the Church is the Church, or heresy is the Church. Further, if heresy be not the Church, how can the baptism of the Church exist among heretics?”

15. To him we may answer as follows: Either Paradise is Paradise, or Egypt is Paradise. Further, if Egypt be not Paradise, how can the water of Paradise be in Egypt? But it will be said to us that it extends even thither by flowing forth from Paradise. In like manner, therefore, baptism extends to heretics. Also we say: Either the rock is the Church, or the sand is the Church. Further, since the sand is not the Church, how can baptism exist with those who build upon the sand by hearing the words of Christ and doing them not? And yet it does exist with them; and in like manner also it exists among the heretics.

CHAPTER 9

16. Jader of Midila said: “We know that there is but one baptism in the Catholic Church, and therefore we ought not to admit a heretic unless he has been baptized in our body, lest he should think that he has been baptized outside the Catholic Church.”

17. To him our answer is, that if this were said of those unrighteous men who are outside the rock, it certainly would be falsely said. And so it is therefore also in the case of heretics.

CHAPTER 10

18. Likewise another Felix of Marazana said: “There is one faith, one baptism, but of the Catholic Church, to which alone is given authority to baptize.”

19. What if another were to say as follows: One faith, one baptism, but of the righteous only, to whom alone authority is given to baptize? As these words might be refuted, so also may the judgment of Felix be refuted. Do even the unrighteous who are not changed in heart in baptism, while “they renounce the world in words and not in deeds” yet belong to the members of the Church? Let them consider whether such a Church is the actual rock, the very dove, the bride herself without spot or wrinkle.

CHAPTER 11

20. Paul of Bobba said: “I for my part am not moved if some fail to uphold the faith and truth of the Church, seeing that the apostle says For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea let God be true, but every man a liar.’ But if God be true, how can the truth of baptism be in the company of heretics, where God is not?”

21. To him we answer: What is God among the covetous? And yet baptism exists among them; and so also it exists among heretics. For they among whom God is, are the temple of God. “But what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” Further, Paul considers, and Cyprian agrees with him, that covetousness is idolatry; and Cyprian himself again associates with his colleagues, who were robbers, but yet baptized, with great reward of toleration.

CHAPTER 12

22. Pomponius of Dionysiana said: “It is manifest that heretics cannot baptize and give remission of sins, seeing that no power is given to them that they should be able either to loose or bind anything on earth.”

23. The answer is: This power is not given to murderers either, that is, to those who hate their brothers. For it was not said to such as these, “whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever

sins ye retain, they are retained.” And yet they baptize, and both Paul tolerates them in the same communion of baptism, and Cyprian acknowledges them.

CHAPTER 13

24. Venantius of Tinisa said: “If a husband, going on a journey into foreign countries, had entrusted the guardianship of his wife to a friend, he would surely keep her that was entrusted to his care with the utmost diligence, that her chastity and holiness might not be defiled by any one. Christ our Lord and God, when going to the Father, committed His bride to our care: do we keep her uncorrupt and undefiled, or do we betray her purity and chastity to adulterers and corrupters? For he who makes the baptism of Christ common with heretics betrays the bride of Christ to adulterers.”

25. We answer: What of those who, when they are baptized, turn themselves to the Lord with their lips and not with their heart? do not they possess an adulterous mind? Are not they themselves lovers of the world, which they renounce in words and not in deeds; and they corrupt good manners through evil communications, saying, “Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die?” Did not the discourse of the apostle take heed even against such as these, when he says, “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds [also] should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ?” When, therefore, Cyprian held the baptism of Christ to be in common with such men, did he therefore betray the bride of Christ into the hands of adulterers, or did he not rather recognize the necklace of the Bridegroom even on an adulteress?

CHAPTER 14

26. Aymnius of Ausuaga said: “We have received one baptism, which same also we administer; but he who says that authority is given to heretics also to baptize, the same makes two baptisms.”

27. To him we answer: Why does not he also make two baptisms who maintains that the unrighteous also can baptize? For although the righteous and unrighteous are in themselves opposed to one another, yet the baptism which the righteous give, such as was Paul, or such as was also Cyprian, is

not contrary to the baptism which those unrighteous men were wont to give who hated Paul, whom Cyprian understands to have been not heretics, but bad Catholics; and although the moderation which was found in Cyprian, and the covetousness which was found in his colleagues, are in themselves opposed to one another, yet the baptism which Cyprian used to give was not contrary to the baptism which his colleagues who opposed him used to give, but one and the same with it, because in both cases it is He that baptizes of whom it is said, “The same is He which baptizeth.”

CHAPTER 15

28. Saturninus of Victoriana said: “If heretics may baptize, they are excused and defended in doing unlawful things; nor do I see why either Christ called them His adversaries, or the apostle called them antichrists.”

29. To him we answer: We say that heretics have no authority to baptize in the same sense in which we say that defrauders have no authority to baptize. For not only to the heretic, but to the sinner, God says, “What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?” To the same person He assuredly says, “When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him.” How much worse, therefore, are those who did not consent with thieves, but themselves were wont to plunder farms with treacherous deceits? Yet Cyprian did not consent with them, though he did tolerate them in the corn-field of the Catholic Church, lest the wheat should be rooted out together with it. And yet at the same time the baptism which they themselves conferred was the very selfsame baptism, because it was not of them, but of Christ. As therefore they, although the baptism of Christ be recognized in them, were yet not excused and defended in doing unlawful things, and Christ rightly called those His adversaries who were destined, by persevering in such things, to hear the doom, “Depart from me, ye that work iniquity,” whence also they are called antichrists, because they are contrary to Christ while they live in opposition to His words, so likewise is it the case with heretics.

CHAPTER 16

30. Another Saturninus of Tucca said: “The Gentiles, although they worship idols, yet acknowledge and confess the supreme God, the Father and Creator. Against Him Marcion blasphemes, and some men do not blush to approve the baptism of Marcion. How do such priests either maintain or vindicate the priesthood of God, who do not baptize the enemies of God, and hold communion with them while they are thus unbaptized?”

31. The answer is this: Truly when such terms as this are used, all moderation is passed; nor do they take into consideration that even they themselves hold communion with such men, “judging no one, nor removing any from the right of communion if he entertain a contrary opinion.” But Saturninus has used an argument in this very judgment of his, which might furnish materials for his admonition (if he would pay attention to it), that in each man what is wrong should be corrected, and what is right should be approved, since he says, “The Gentiles, although they worship idols, yet acknowledge and confess the supreme God, the Father and Creator.” If, then, any Gentile of such a kind should come to God, would he wish to correct and change this point in him, that he acknowledged and confessed God the Father and Creator? I trow not. But he would amend in him his idolatry, which was an evil in him; and he would give to him the sacraments of Christ, which he did not possess; and anything that was wayward which he found in him he would correct; and anything which had been wanting he would supply. So also in the Marcionist heretic he would acknowledge the perfectness of baptism, he would correct his waywardness, he would teach him Catholic truth.

CHAPTER 17

32. Marcellus of Zama said: “Since sins are remitted only in the baptism of the Church, he who does not baptize a heretic holds communion with a sinner.”

33. What, does he who holds communion with one who does this not hold communion with a sinner? But what else did all of them do, “in judging no one, or removing from the right of communion any one who entertained a different opinion”? Where, then, is the Church? Are those things not an obstacle to those who are patient, and tolerate the tares lest the wheat

should be rooted out together with them? I would have them therefore say, who have committed the sacrilege of schism by separating themselves from the whole world, how it comes that they have in their mouths the judgment of Cyprian, while they do not have in their hearts the patience of Cyprian. But to this Marcellus we have an answer in what has been said above concerning baptism and the remission of sins, explaining how there can be baptism in a man although there be in him no remission of his sins.

CHAPTER 18

34. Irenaeus of Ululi said: “If the Church does not baptize a heretic, because it is said that he has been baptized already, then heresy is the greater.”

35. The answer is: On the same principle it might be said, If therefore the Church does not baptize the covetous man, because it is said that he has been baptized already, then covetousness is the greater. But this is false, therefore the other is also false.

CHAPTER 19

36. Donatus of Cibaliana said: “I acknowledge one Church, and one baptism that appertains thereto. If there is any one who says that the grace of baptism exists among heretics, he must first show and prove that the Church exists with them.”

37. To him we answer: If you say that the grace of baptism is identical with baptism, then it exists among heretics; but if baptism is the sacrament or outward sign of grace, while the grace itself is the abolition of sins, then the grace of baptism does not exist with heretics. But so there is one baptism and one Church, just as there is one faith. As therefore the good and bad, not having one hope, can yet have one baptism, so those who have not one common Church can have one common baptism.

CHAPTER 20

38. Zozimus of Tharassa said: “When a revelation has been made of the truth, error must give way to truth; inasmuch as Peter also, who before was wont to circumcise, gave way to Paul when he declared the truth.”

39. The answer is: This may also be considered as the expression of our judgment too, and this is just what has been done in respect of this question of baptism. For after that the truth had been more clearly revealed, error gave way to truth, when that most wholesome custom was further confirmed by the authority of a plenary Council. It is well, however, that they so constantly bear in mind that it was possible even for Peter, the chief of the apostles, to have been at one time minded otherwise than the truth required; which we believe, without any disrespect to Cyprian, to have been the case with him, and that with all our love for Cyprian, for it is not right that he should be loved with greater love than Peter.

CHAPTER 21

40. Julianus of Telepte said: “It is written, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven;’ if heresy is from heaven, it can give baptism.”

41. Let him hear another also saying: If covetousness is from heaven, it can give baptism. And yet the covetous do confer it; so therefore also may the heretics.

CHAPTER 22

42. Faustus of Timida Regia said: “Let not these persons flatter themselves who favor heretics. He who interferes with the baptism of the Church on behalf of heretics makes them Christians, and us heretics.”

43. To him we answer: If any one were to say that a man who, when he received baptism had not received remission of his sins, because he entertained hatred towards his brother in his heart, was nevertheless not to be baptized again when he dismissed that hatred from his heart, does such a man interfere with the baptism of the Church on behalf of murderers, or does he make them righteous and us murderers? Let him therefore understand the same also in the case of heretics.

CHAPTER 23

44. Geminius of Furni said: “Certain of our colleagues may prefer heretics to themselves, they cannot prefer them to us: and therefore what we have once decreed we hold, that we should baptize those who come to us from heretics.”

45. This man also acknowledges most openly that certain of his colleagues entertained opinions contrary to his own: whence again and again the love of unity is confirmed, because they were separated from one another by no schism, till God should reveal to one or other of them anything wherein they were otherwise minded. But to him our answer is, that his colleagues did not prefer heretics to themselves, but that, as the baptism of Christ is acknowledged in the covetous, in the fraudulent, in robbers, in murderers, so also they acknowledged it in heretics.

CHAPTER 24

46. Rogatianus of Nova said: “Christ established the Church, the devil heresy: how can the synagogue of Satan have the baptism of Christ?”

47. To him our answer is: Is it true that because Christ established the well-affectioned, and the devil the envious, therefore the party of the devil, which is proved to be among the envious, cannot have the baptism of Christ?

CHAPTER 25

48. Therapius of Bulla said: “If a man gives up and betrays the baptism of Christ to heretics, what else can he be said to be but a Judas to the Bride of Christ?”

49. How great a condemnation have we here of all schismatics, who have separated themselves by wicked sacrilege from the inheritance of Christ dispersed throughout the whole world, if Cyprian held communion with such as was the traitor Judas, and yet was not defiled by them; or if he was defiled, then were all made such as Judas; or if they were not, then the evil deeds of those who went before do not belong to those who came after even though they were the offspring of the same communion. Why, therefore, do they cast in our teeth the traditores, against whom they did not prove their

charge, and do not cast in their own teeth Judas, with whom Cyprian and his colleagues held communion? Behold the Council in which these men are wont to boast! We indeed say, that he who approves the baptism of Christ even in heretics, does not betray to heretics the baptism of Christ; just in the same way as he does not betray to murderers the baptism of Christ who approves the baptism of Christ even in murderers: but inasmuch as they profess to prescribe to us from the decrees of this Council what opinions we ought to hold, let them first assent to it themselves. See how therein were compared to the traitor Judas, all who said that heretics, although baptized in heresy, should not be baptized again. Yet with such Cyprian was willing to hold communion, when he said, “Judging no man, nor depriving any of the right of communion if he entertain a contrary opinion.” But that there had been men of such a sort in former times within the Church, is made clear by the sentence in which he says: “But some one will say, What, then, shall be done with these men who in times past were admitted into the Church without baptism?” That such had been the custom of the Church, is testified again and again by the very men who compose this Council. If, therefore, any one who does this “can be said to be nothing else but a Judas to the Bride of Christ,” according to the terms in which the judgment of Therapius is couched; but Judas, according to the teaching of the gospel, was a traitor; then all those men held communion with traitors who at that time uttered those very judgments, and before they uttered them they all had become traitors through that custom which at that time was retained by the Church. All, therefore—that is to say, both we and they themselves who were the offspring of that unity—are traitors. But we defend ourselves in two ways: first, because without prejudice to the right of unity, as Cyprian himself declared in his opening speech, we do not assent to the decrees of this Council in which this judgment was pronounced; and secondly, because we hold that the wicked in no way hurt the good in Catholic unity, until at the last the chaff be separated from the wheat. But our opponents, inasmuch as they both shelter themselves as it were under the decrees of this Council, and maintain that the good perish as by a kind of infection from communion with the wicked, have no resource to save them from allowing both that the earlier Christians, whose offspring they are, were traitors, inasmuch as they are convicted by their own Council; and that the deeds of those who went before them do reflect on them, since they throw in our teeth the deeds of our ancestors.

CHAPTER 26

50. Also another Lucius of Membresa said: “It is written, God heareth not sinners.’ How can he who is a sinner be heard in baptism?”

51. We answer: How is the covetous man heard, or the robber, and usurer, and murderer? Are they not sinners? And yet Cyprian, while he finds fault with them in the Catholic Church, yet tolerates them.

CHAPTER 27

52. Also another Felix of Buslaceni said: “In admitting heretics to the Church without baptism, let no one place custom before reason and truth; for reason and truth always exclude custom.”

53. To him our answer is: You do not show the truth; you confess the existence of the custom. We should therefore do right in maintaining the custom which has since been confirmed by a plenary Council, even if the truth were still concealed, which we believe to have been already made manifest.

CHAPTER 28

54. Another Saturninus of Abitini said: “If Antichrist can give to any one the grace of Christ, then can heretics also baptize, who are called Antichrists.”

55. What if another were to say, If a murderer can give the grace of Christ, then can they also baptize that hate their brethren who are called murderers? For certainly he would seem in a way to speak the truth, and yet they can baptize; in like manner, therefore, can the heretics as well.

CHAPTER 29

56. Quintus of Aggya said: “He who has a thing can give it; but what can the heretics give, who are well known to have nothing?”

57. To him our answer is: If, then, any man can give a thing who has it, it is clear that heretics can give baptism: for when they separate from the Church, they have still the sacrament of washing which they had received while in the Church; for when they return they do not again receive it, because they had not lost it when they withdrew from the Church.

CHAPTER 30

58. Another Julianus of Marcelliana said: “If a man can serve two masters, God and mammon, then baptism also can serve two, the Christian and the heretic.”

59. Truly, if it can serve the self-restrained and the covetous man, the sober and the drunken, the well-affectioned and the murderer, why should it not also serve the Christian and the heretic?—whom, indeed, it does not really serve; but it ministers to them, and is administered by them, for salvation to those who use it right, and for judgment to such as use it wrong.

CHAPTER 31

60. Tenax of Horrea Celiae said: “There is one baptism, but of the Church; and where the Church is not, there baptism also cannot be.”

61. To him we answer: How then comes it that it may be where the rock is not, but only sand; seeing that the Church is on the rock, and not on sand?

CHAPTER 32

62. Another Victor of Assuras said: “It is written, that there is one God and one Christ, one Church and one baptism.’ How then can any one baptize in a place where there is not either God, or Christ, or the Church?”

63. How can any one baptize either in that sand, where the Church is not, seeing that it is on the rock; nor God and Christ, seeing that there is not there the temple of God and Christ?

CHAPTER 33

64. Donatulus of Capse said: “I also have always entertained this opinion, that heretics, who have gained nothing outside the Church, should be baptized when they are converted to the Church.”

65. To this the answer is: They have, indeed, gained nothing outside the Church, but that is nothing towards salvation, not nothing towards the sacrament. For salvation is peculiar to the good; but the sacraments are common to the good and bad alike.

CHAPTER 34

66. Verulus of Rusiccade said: “A man that is a heretic cannot give that which he has not; much more is this the case with a schismatic, who has lost what he had.”

67. We have already shown that they still have it, because they do not lose it when they separate themselves. For they do not receive it again when they return: wherefore, if it was thought that they could not give it because they were supposed not to have it, let it now be understood that they can give it, because it is understood that they also have it.

CHAPTER 35

68. Pudentianus of Cuiculi said: “My recent ordination to the episcopate induced me, brethren, to wait and hear what my elders would decide. For it is plain that heresies have and can have nothing; and so, if any come from them, it is determined righteously that they should be baptized.”

69. As, therefore, we have already answered those who went before, for whose judgment this man was waiting, so be it understood that we have answered himself.

CHAPTER 36

70. Peter of Hippo Diarrhytus said: “Since there is one baptism in the Catholic Church, it is clear that a man cannot be baptized outside the Church; and therefore I give my judgment, that those who have been bathed in heresy or in schism ought to be baptized on coming to the Church.”

71. There is one baptism in the Catholic Church, in such a sense that, when any have gone out from it, it does not become two in those who go out, but remains one and the same. What, therefore, is recognized in those who return, should also be recognized in those who received it from men who have separated themselves, since they did not lose it when they went apart into heresy.

CHAPTER 37

72. Likewise another Lucius of Ausafa said: “According to the motion of my mind and of the Holy Spirit, since there is one God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one Christ, and one hope, one Spirit, one Church, there ought also to be only one baptism. And therefore I say, both that if anything has been set on foot or done among the heretics, that it ought to be rescinded; and also, that they who come out from among the heretics should be baptized in the Church.”

73. Let it therefore be pronounced of no effect that they baptize, who hear the words of God and do them not, when they shall begin to pass from unrighteousness to righteousness, that is, from the sand to the rock. And if this is not done, because what there was in them of Christ was not violated by their unrighteousness, then let this also be understood in the case of heretics: for neither is there the same hope in the unrighteous, so long as they are on the sand, as there is in those who are upon the rock; and yet there is in both the same baptism, although as it is said that there is one hope, so also is it said that there is one baptism.

CHAPTER 38

74. Felix of Gurgites said: “I give my judgment, that, according to the precepts of the holy Scriptures, those who have been unlawfully baptized outside the Church by heretics, if they wish to flee to the Church, should obtain the grace of baptism where it is lawfully given.”

75. Our answer is: Let them indeed begin to have in a lawful manner to salvation what they before had unlawfully to destruction; because each man is justified under the same baptism, when he has turned himself to God with

a true heart, as that under which he was condemned, when on receiving it he "renounced the world in words alone, and not in deeds."

CHAPTER 39

76. Pusillus of Lamasba said: "I believe that baptism is not unto salvation except within the Catholic Church. Whatsoever is without the Catholic Church is mere pretense."

77. This indeed is true, that "baptism is not unto salvation except within the Catholic Church." For in itself it can indeed exist outside the Catholic Church as well; but there it is not unto salvation, because there it does not work salvation; just as that sweet savor of Christ is certainly not unto salvation in them that perish, though from a fault not in itself, but in them. But "whatsoever is without the Catholic Church is mere pretense," yet only in so far as it is not Catholic. But there may be something Catholic outside the Catholic Church, just as the name of Christ could exist outside the congregation of Christ, in which name he who did not follow with the disciples was casting out devils. For there may be pretense also within the Catholic Church, as is unquestionable in the case of those "who renounce the world in words and not in deeds," and yet the pretense is not Catholic. As, therefore, there is in the Catholic Church something which is not Catholic, so there may be something which is Catholic outside the Catholic Church.

CHAPTER 40

78. Salvianus of Gazaufala said: "It is generally known that heretics have nothing; and therefore they come to us, that they may receive what previously they did not have."

79. Our answer is: On this theory, the very men who founded heresies are not heretics themselves, because they separated themselves from the Church, and certainly they previously had what they received there. But if it is absurd to say that those are not heretics through whom the rest became heretics, it is therefore possible that a heretic should have what turns to his destruction through his evil use of it.

CHAPTER 41

80. Honoratus of Tucca said: “Since Christ is the truth, we ought to follow the truth rather than custom; that we may sanctify by the baptism of the Church the heretics who come to us, simply because they could receive nothing outside.”

81. This man, too, is a witness to the custom, in which he gives us the greatest assistance, whatever else he may appear to say against us. But this is not the reason why heretics come over to us, because they have received nothing outside, but that what they did receive may begin to be of use to them: for this it could not be outside in any wise.

CHAPTER 42

82. Victor of Octavus said: “As ye yourselves also know, I have not been long appointed a bishop, and therefore I waited for the counsel of my seniors. This therefore I express as my opinion, that whosoever comes from heresy should undoubtedly be baptized.”

83. What, therefore, has been answered to those for whom he waited, may be taken as the answer also to himself.

CHAPTER 43

84. Clarus of Mascula said: “The sentence of our Lord Jesus Christ is manifest, when He sent forth His apostles, and gave the power which had been given Him of His Father to them alone, whose successors we are, governing the Church of the Lord with the same power, and baptizing those who believe the faith. And therefore heretics, who, being without, have neither power nor the Church of Christ, cannot baptize any one with His baptism.”

85. Are, then, ill-affectioned murderers successors of the apostles? Why, then, do they baptize? Is it because they are not outside? But they are outside the rock, to which the Lord gave the keys, and on which He said that He would build His Church.

CHAPTER 44

86. Secundianus of Thambei said: “We ought not to deceive heretics by our too great forwardness, that not having been baptized in the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, and having therefore not received remission of their sins, they may not impute to us, when the day of judgment comes, that we have been the cause of their not being baptized, and not having obtained the indulgence of the grace of God. On which account, since there is one Church and one baptism, when they are converted to us, let them receive together with the Church the baptism also of the Church.”

87. Nay, when they are transferred to the rock, and joined to the society of the Dove, let them receive the remission of their sins, which they could not have outside the rock and outside the Dove, whether they were openly without, like the heretics, or apparently within, like the abandoned Catholics; of whom, however, it is clear that they both have and confer baptism without remission of sins, when even from themselves it is received by men, who, being not changed for the better, honor God with their lips, while their heart is far from Him. Yet it is true that there is one baptism, just as there is one Dove, though those who are not in the one communion of the Dove may yet have baptism in common.

CHAPTER 45

88. Also another Aurelius of Chullabi said: “The Apostle John has laid down in his epistle the following precept: If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.’ How can such men be admitted without consideration into the house of God, who are forbidden to be admitted into our private house? Or how can we hold communion with them without the baptism of Christ, when, if we only so much as bid them God speed, we are partakers of their evil deeds?”

89. In respect of this testimony of John there is no need of further disputation, since it has no reference at all to the question of baptism, which we are at present discussing. For he says, “If any come unto you, and bring not the doctrine of Christ.” But heretics leaving the doctrine of their error are converted to the doctrine of Christ, that they may be incorporated with the Church, and may begin to belong to the members of that Dove whose

sacrament they previously had; and therefore what previously they lacked belonging to it is given to them, that is to say, peace and charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. But what they previously had belonging to the Dove is acknowledged, and received without any depreciation; just as in the adulteress God recognises His gifts, even when she is following her lovers; because when after her fornication is corrected she is turned again to chastity, those gifts are not laid to her charge, but she herself is corrected. But just as Cyprian might have defended himself if this testimony of John had been cast in his teeth whilst he was holding communion with men like these, so let those against whom it is spoken make their own defense. For to the question before us, as I said before, it has no reference at all. For John says that we are not to bid God speed to men of strange doctrine; but Paul the apostle says, with even greater vehemence, “If any man that is called a brother be covetous, or a drunkard,” or anything of the sort, with such an one no not to eat; and yet Cyprian used to admit to fellowship, not with his private table, but with the altar of God, his colleagues who were usurers, and treacherous, and fraudulent, and robbers. But in what manner this may be defended has been sufficiently set forth in other books already.

CHAPTER 46

90. Litteus of Gemelli said: “If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.’ Since, therefore, it is clear that heretics can give no light to any one, as being blind themselves, therefore their baptism is invalid.”

91. Neither do we say that it is valid for salvation so long as they are heretics, just as it is of no value to those murderers of whom we spoke, so long as they hate their brethren: for they also themselves are in darkness, and if any one follows them they fall together into the ditch; and yet it does not follow that they either have not baptism or are unable to confer it.

CHAPTER 47

92. Natalis of Oea said: “It is not only I myself who am present, but also Pompeius of Sabrati, and Dioga of Leptis Magna, who commissioned me to represent their views, being absent indeed in body, but present in spirit, who

deliver this same judgment as our colleagues, that heretics cannot have communion with us, unless they have been baptized with the baptism of the Church."

93. He means, I suppose, that communion which belongs to the society of the Dove; for in the partaking of the sacraments they doubtless held communion with them, judging no man, nor removing any from the right of communion if he held a different opinion. But with whatever reference he spoke, there is no great need for these words being refuted. For certainly a heretic would not be admitted to communion, unless he had been baptized with the baptism of the Church. But it is clear that the baptism of the Church exists even among heretics if it be consecrated with the words of the gospel; just as the gospel itself belongs to the Church, and has nothing to do with their waywardness, but certainly retains its own holiness.

CHAPTER 48

94. Junius of Neapolis said: "I do not depart from the judgment which we once pronounced, that we should baptize heretics on their coming to the Church."

95. Since this man has adduced no argument nor proof from the Scriptures, he need not detain us long.

CHAPTER 49

96. Cyprian of Carthage said: "My opinion has been set forth with the greatest fullness in the letter which has been written to our colleague Jubaianus, that heretics being called enemies of Christ and antichrists according to the testimony of the gospel and the apostles, should, when they come to the Church, be baptized with the one baptism of the Church, that from enemies they may be made friends, and that from antichrists they may be made Christians."

97. What need is there of further disputation here, seeing that we have already handled with the utmost care that very epistle to Jubaianus of which he has made mention? And as to what he has said here, let us not forget that it might be said of all unrighteous men who, as he himself bears witness,

are in the Catholic Church, and whose power of possessing and of conferring baptism is not questioned by any of us. For they come to the Church, who pass to Christ from the party of the devil, and build upon the rock, and are incorporated with the Dove, and are placed in security in the garden enclosed and fountain sealed; where none of those are found who live contrary to the precepts of Christ, wherever they may seem to be. For in the epistle which he wrote to Magnus, while discussing this very question, he himself warned us at sufficient length, and in no ambiguous terms, of what kind of society we should understand that the Church consists. For he says, in speaking of a certain man, “Let him become an alien and profane, an enemy to the peace and unity of the Lord, not dwelling in the house of God, that is to say, in the Church of Christ, in which none dwell save those who are of one heart and of one mind.” Let those, therefore, who would lay injunctions on us on the authority of Cyprian, pay attention for a time to what we here say. For if only those who are of one heart and of one mind dwell in the Church of Christ, beyond all question those were not dwelling in the Church of Christ, however much they might appear to be within, who of envy and contention were announcing Christ without charity; by whom he understands, not the heretics and schismatics who are mentioned by the Apostle Paul, but false brethren holding conversation with him within, who certainly ought not to have baptized, because they were not dwelling in the Church, in which he himself says that none dwell save those who are of one heart and of one mind: unless, indeed, any one be so far removed from the truth as to say that those were of one heart and of one mind who were envious and malevolent, and contentious without charity; and yet they used to baptize: nor did the detestable waywardness which they displayed in any degree violate or diminish from the sacrament of Christ, which was handled and dispensed by them.

CHAPTER 50

98. It is indeed worth while to consider the whole of the passage in the aforesaid letter to Magnus, which he has put together as follows: “Not dwelling,” he says, “in the house of God—that is to say, in the Church of Christ—in which none dwell save those that are of one heart and of one

mind, as the Holy Spirit says in the Psalms, speaking of God that maketh men to be of one mind in an house.’ Finally, the very sacrifices of the Lord declare that Christians are united among themselves by a firm and inseparable love for one another. For when the Lord calls bread, which is compacted together by the union of many grains, His body, He is signifying one people, whom He bore, compacted into one body; and when He calls wine, which is pressed out from a multitude of branches and clusters and brought together into one, His blood, He also signifies one flock joined together by the mingling of a multitude united into one.” These words of the blessed Cyprian show that he both understood and loved the glory of the house of God, which house he asserted to consist of those who are of one heart and of one mind, proving it by the testimony of the prophets and the meaning of the sacraments, and in which house certainly were not found those envious persons, those malevolent without charity, who nevertheless used to baptize. From whence it is clear that the sacrament of Christ can both be in and be administered by those who are not in the Church of Christ, in which Cyprian himself bears witness that there are none dwelling save those who are of one heart and of one mind. Nor can it indeed be said that they are allowed to baptize so long as they are undetected, seeing that the Apostle Paul did not fail to detect those of whose ministry he bears unquestionable testimony in his epistle, saying that he rejoices that they also were proclaiming Christ. For he says of them, “Whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.”

CHAPTER 51

99. Taking all these things, therefore, into consideration, I think that I am not rash in saying that there are some in the house of God after such a fashion as not to be themselves the very house of God, which is said to be built upon a rock, which is called the one dove, which is styled the beauteous bride without spot or wrinkle, and a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed, a well of living water, an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits; which house also received the keys, and the power of binding and loosing. If any one shall neglect this house when it arrests and corrects him, the Lord says, “Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” Of this house it is said, “Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house, and

the place where Thine honor dwelleth;” and, “He maketh men to be of one mind in an house;” and, “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord;” and, “Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, O Lord; they will be still praising Thee;” with countless other passages to the same effect. This house is also called wheat, bringing forth fruit with patience, some thirty-fold, some sixtyfold, and some an hundredfold. This house is also in vessels of gold and of silver, and in precious stones and imperishable woods. To this house it is said, “Forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;” and, “For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” For this house is composed of those that are good and faithful, and of the holy servants of God dispersed throughout the world, and bound together by the unity of the Spirit, whether they know each other personally or not. But we hold that others are said to be in the house after such a sort, that they belong not to the substance of the house, nor to the society of fruitful and peaceful justice, but only as the chaff is said to be among the corn; for that they are in the house we cannot deny, when the apostle says, “But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor.” Of this countless multitude are found to be not only the crowd which within the Church afflicts the hearts of the saints, who are so few in comparison with so vast a host, but also the heresies and schisms which exist in those who have burst the meshes of the net, and may now be said to be rather out of the house than in the house, of whom it is said, “They went out from us, but they were not of us.” For they are more thoroughly separated, now that they are also divided from us in the body, than are those who live within the Church in a carnal and worldly fashion, and are separated from us in the spirit

CHAPTER 52

100. Of all these several classes, then, no one doubts respecting those first, who are in the house of God in such a sense as themselves to be the house of God, whether they be already spiritual, or as yet only babes nurtured with milk, but still making progress with earnestness of heart, towards that which is spiritual, that such men both have baptism so as to be of profit to themselves, and transmit it to those who follow their example so as to

benefit them; but that in its transmission to those who are false, whom the Holy Spirit shuns, though they themselves, so far as lies with them, confer it so as to be of profit, yet the others receive it in vain, since they do not imitate those from whom they receive it. But they who are in the great house after the fashion of vessels to dishonor, both have baptism without profit to themselves, and transmit it without profit to those who follow their example: those, however, receive it with profit, who are united in heart and character, not to their ministers, but to the holy house of God. But those who are more thoroughly separated, so as to be rather out of the house than in the house, have baptism without any profit to themselves; and, moreover, there is no profit to those who receive it from them, unless they be compelled by urgent necessity to receive it, and their heart in receiving it does not depart from the bond of unity: yet nevertheless they possess it, though the possession be of no avail; and it is received from them, even when it is of no profit to those who so receive it, though, in order that it may become of use, they must depart from their heresy or schism, and cleave to that house of God. And this ought to be done, not only by heretics and schismatics, but also by those who are in the house through communion in the sacraments, yet so as to be outside the house through the perversity of their character. For so the sacrament begins to be of profit even to themselves, which previously was of no avail

CHAPTER 53

101. The question is also commonly raised, whether baptism is to be held valid which is received from one who had not himself received it, if, from some promptings of curiosity, he had chanced to learn how it ought to be conferred; and whether it makes no difference in what spirit the recipient receives it, whether in mockery or in sincerity: if in mockery, whether the difference arises when the mockery is of deceit, as in the Church, or in what is thought to be the Church; or when it is in jest, as in a play: and which is the more accursed, to receive it deceitfully in the Church, or in heresy or schism without deceit, that is to say, with full sincerity of heart: or whether it be worse to receive it deceitfully in heresy or in good faith in a play, if any one were to be moved by a sudden feeling of religion in the midst of his acting. And yet, if we compare such an one even with him who receives it

deceitfully in the Catholic Church itself, I should be surprised if any one were to doubt which of the two should be preferred; for I do not see of what avail the intention of him who gives in truth can be to him who receives deceitfully. But let us consider, in the case of some one also giving it in deceit, when both the given and the recipient are acting deceitfully in the unity of the Catholic Church itself, whether this should rather be acknowledged as baptism, or that which is given in a play, if any one should be found who received it faithfully from a sudden impulse of religion: or whether it be not true that, so far as the men themselves are concerned, there is a very great difference between the believing recipient in a play, and the mocking recipient in the Church; but that in regard to the genuineness of the sacrament there is no difference. For if it makes no difference in respect to the genuineness of the sacrament within the Catholic Church itself, whether certain persons celebrate it in truth or in deceit, so long as both still celebrate the same thing, I cannot see why it should make a difference outside, seeing that he who receives it is not cloaked by his deceit, but he is changed by his religious impulse. Or have those truthful persons among whom it is celebrated more power for the confirmation of the sacrament, than those deceitful men by whom and in whom it is celebrated can exert for its invalidation? And yet, if the deceit be subsequently brought to light, no one seeks a repetition of the sacrament; but the fraud is either punished by excommunication or set right by penitence

102. But the safe course for us is, not to advance with any rashness of judgment in setting forth a view which has neither been started in any regionary Council of the Catholic Church nor established in a plenary one; but to assert, with all the confidence of a voice that cannot be gainsaid, what has been confirmed by the consent of the universal Church, under the direction of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, if any one were to press me—supposing I were duly seated in a Council in which a question were raised on points like these—to declare what my own opinion was, without reference to the previously expressed views of others, whose judgment I would rather follow, if I were under the influence of the same feelings as led me to assert what I have said before, I should have no hesitation in saying that all men possess baptism who have received it in any place, from any sort of men, provided that it were consecrated in the

words of the gospel, and received without deceit on their part with some degree of faith; although it would be of no profit to them for the salvation of their souls if they were without charity, by which they might be grafted into the Catholic Church. For “though I have faith,” says the apostle, “so that I could remove mountains, but have not charity, I am nothing.” Just as already, from the established decrees of our predecessors, I have no hesitation in saying that all those have baptism who, though they receive it deceitfully, yet receive it in the Church, or where the Church is thought to be by those in whose society it is received, of whom it was said, “They went out from us.” But when there was no society of those who so believed, and when the man who received it did not himself hold such belief, but the whole thing was done as a farce, or a comedy, or a jest,—if I were asked whether the baptism which was thus conferred should be approved, I should declare my opinion that we ought to pray for the declaration of God’s judgment through the medium of some revelation seeking it with united prayer and earnest groanings of suppliant devotion, humbly deferring all the time to the decision of those who were to give their judgment after me, in case they should set forth anything as already known and determined. And, therefore, how much the more must I be considered to have given my opinion now without prejudice to the utterance of more diligent research or authority higher than my own!

CHAPTER 54

103. But now I think that it is fully time for me to bring to their due termination these books also on the subject of baptism, in which our Lord God has shown to us, through the words of the peaceful Bishop Cyprian and his brethren who agreed with him, how great is the love which should be felt for catholic unity; so that even where they were otherwise minded until God should reveal even this to them, they should rather bear with those who thought differently from themselves, than sever themselves from them by a wicked schism; whereby the mouths of the Donatists are wholly closed, even if we say nothing of the followers of Maximian. For if the wicked pollute the good in unity, then even Cyprian himself already found no Church to which he could be joined. But if the wicked do not infect the good in unity, then the sacrilegious Donatist has no ground to set before

himself for separation. But if baptism is both possessed and transferred by the multitude of others who work the works of the flesh, of which it is said, that “they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God,” then it is possessed and transferred also by heretics, who are numbered among those works; because they could have transferred it had they remained, and did not lose it by their secession. But men of this kind confer it on their fellows as fruitlessly and uselessly as the others who resemble them, inasmuch as they shall not inherit the kingdom of God. And as, when those others are brought into the right path, it is not that baptism begins to be present, having been absent before, but that it begins to profit them, having been already in them; so is it the case with heretics as well. Whence Cyprian and those who thought with him could not impose limits on the Catholic Church, which they would not mutilate. But in that they were otherwise minded we feel no fear, seeing that we too share in their veneration for Peter; yet in that they did not depart from unity we rejoice, seeing that we, like them, are founded on the rock

ON CARE TO BE HAD FOR THE DEAD

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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DE CURA PRO MORTUIS.

TRANSLATED BY REV. H. BROWNE, M.A.

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FROM THE RETRACTATIONS, BOOK II. CHAP. 64

The book, On care to be had for the dead, I wrote, having been asked by letter whether it profits any person after death that his body shall be buried at the memorial of any Saint. The book begins thus: Long time unto your Holiness, my venerable fellow-bishop Paulinus.

1. Long time, my venerable fellow-bishop Paulinus, have I been thy Holiness's debtor for an answer; even since thou wrotest to me by them of the household of our most religious daughter Flora, asking of me whether it profit any man after death that his body is buried at the memorial of some Saint. This, namely, had the said widow begged of thee for her son deceased in those parts, and thou hadst written her an answer, consoling her, and announcing to her concerning the body of the faithful young man Cynegius, that the thing which she with motherly and pious affection desired was done, to wit, by placing it in the basilica of most blessed Felix the Confessor. Upon which occasion it came to pass, that by the same bearers of thy letter thou didst write also to me, raising the like question, and craving that I would answer what I thought of this matter, at the same time not forbearing to say what are thine own sentiments. For thou sayest that to thy thinking these be no empty motions of religious and faithful minds, which take this care for their deceased friends. Thou addest,

moreover, that it cannot be void of effect that the whole Church is wont to supplicate for the departed: so that hence it may be further conjectured that it doth profit a person after death, if by the faith of his friends for the interment of his body such a spot be provided wherein may be apparent the aid, likewise in this way sought, of the Saints.

2. But this being the case, how to this opinion that should not be contrary which the Apostle says, “For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each may receive according to the things he hath done by the body, whether good or bad;” this, thou signifiest, thou dost not well see. For this apostolic sentence doth before death admonish to be done, that which may profit after death; not then, first, when there is to be now a receiving of that which a person shall have done before death. True, but this question is thus solved, namely, that there is a certain kind of life by which is acquired, while one lives in this body, that it should be possible for these things to be of some help to the departed; and, consequently, it is “according to the things done by the body,” that they are aided by the things which shall, after they have left the body, be religiously done on their behalf. For there are whom these things aid nothing at all, namely, when they are done either for persons whose merits are so evil, that neither by such things are they worthy to be aided; or for persons whose merits are so good, that of such things they have no need as aids. Of the kind of life, therefore, which each hath led by the body, doth it come, that these things profit or profit not, whatever are piously done on his behalf when he has left the body. For touching merit whereby these things profit, if none have been gotten in this life, it is in vain sought after this life. So it comes to pass as well that not unmeaningly doth the Church, or care of friends, bestow upon the departed whatever of religion it shall be able; as also that, nevertheless, each receiveth “according to the things which he hath done by the body, whether it be good or bad,” the Lord rendering unto each according to his works. For, that this which is bestowed should be capable of profiting him after the body, this was acquired in that life which he hath led in the body.

3. Possibly thy inquiry is satisfied by this my brief reply. But what other considerations move me, to which I think meet to answer, do thou for a short space attend. In the books of the Maccabees we read of sacrifice

offered for the dead. Howbeit even if it were no where at all read in the Old Scriptures, not small is the authority, which in this usage is clear, of the whole Church, namely, that in the prayers of the priest which are offered to the Lord God at His altar, the Commendation of the dead hath also its place. But then, whether there be some profit accruing unto the soul of the dead from the place of its body, requires a more careful inquiry. And first, whether it make any difference in causing or increasing of misery after this life to the spirits of men if their bodies be not buried, this must be looked into, not in the light of opinion however commonly received, but rather of the holy writ of our religion. For we are not to credit that, as is read in Maro, the unburied are prohibited from navigating and crossing the infernal stream: because forsooth

“To none is giv’n to pass the hideous banks

And waters hoarse, ere in their meet abode

The bones have sunk to rest.”

Who can incline a Christian heart to these poetical and fabulous figments, when the Lord Jesus, to the intent that under the hands of their enemies, who should have their bodies in their power, Christians might lie down without a fear, asserts that not a hair of their head shall perish, exhorting that they should not fear them which when they have killed the body have nothing more that they can do? Of which in the first book “On the City of God,” I have methinks enough spoken, to break the teeth in their mouths who, in imputing to Christian times the barbarous devastation, especially that which Rome has lately suffered, do cast up to us this also, that Christ did not there come to the succor of His own. To whom when it is answered that the souls of the faithful were, according to the merits of their faith, by Him taken into protection, they insult over us with talking of their corpses left unburied. All this matter, then, concerning burial I have in such words as these expounded.

4. “But” (say I) “in such a slaughter-heap of dead bodies, could they not even be buried? not this, either, doth pious faith too greatly dread, holding that which is foretold that not even consuming beasts will be an hindrance to the rising again of bodies of which not a hair of the head shall perish. Nor

in any wise would Truth say, “Fear not them which kill the body, but cannot kill the soul;” if it could at all hinder the life to come whatever enemies might choose to do with the bodies of the slain. Unless haply any is so absurd as to contend that they ought not to be feared before death, lest they kill the body, but ought to be feared after death, lest, having killed the body, they suffer it not to be buried. Is that then false which Christ says, “Who kill the body, and afterwards have no more that they can do,” if they have so great things that they can do on dead bodies? Far be the thought, that that should be false which Truth hath said. For the thing said is, that they do somewhat when they kill, because in the body there is feeling while it is in killing, but afterward they have nothing more that they can do because there is no feeling in the body when killed. Many bodies, then, of Christians the earth hath not covered: but none of them hath any separated from heaven and earth, the whole of which He filleth with presence of Himself, Who knoweth whence to resuscitate that which He created. It is said indeed in the Psalm, “The dead bodies of thy servants have they given for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth: they have shed their blood like water round about Jerusalem, and there was no man to bury them:” but more to heighten the cruelty of them who did these things, not to the infelicity of them who suffered them. For, however, in sight of men these things may seem hard and dire, yet “precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” So, then, all these things, care of funeral, bestowal in sepulture, pomp of obsequies, are more for comfort of the living, than for help to the dead. If it at all profit the ungodly to have costly sepulture, it shall harm the godly to have vile sepulture or none. Right handsome obsequies in sight of men did that rich man who was clad in purple receive of the crowd of his housefolk; but far more handsome did that poor man who was full of sores obtain of the ministry of Angels; who bore him not out into a marble tomb, but into Abraham’s bosom bore him on high. All this they laugh at, against whom we have undertaken to defend the City of God: but for all that their own philosophers, even, held care of sepulture in contempt; and often whole armies, while dying for their earthly country, cared not where they should after lie, or to what beasts they should become meat; and the poets had leave to say of this matter with applause

“though all unurn’d he lie,

His cov’ring is the overarching sky.”

How much less ought they to make a vaunting about unburied bodies of Christians, to whom the flesh itself with all its members, re-fashioned, not only from the earth, but even from the other elements, yea, from their most secret windings, whereinto these evanished corpses have retired, is assured to be in an instant of time rendered back and made entire as at the first, according to His promise?

5. Yet it follows not that the bodies of the departed are to be despised and flung aside, and above all of just and faithful men, which bodies as organs and vessels to all good works their spirit hath holily used. For if a father’s garment and ring, and whatever such like, is the more dear to those whom they leave behind, the greater their affection is towards their parents, in no wise are the bodies themselves to be spurned, which truly we wear in more familiar and close conjunction than any of our putting on. For these pertain not to ornament or aid which is applied from without, but to the very nature of man. Whence also the funerals of the just men of old were with dutiful piety cared for, and their obsequies celebrated, and sepulture provided: and themselves while living did touching burial or even translation of their bodies give charge to their sons. Tobias also, to have by burying of the dead obtained favor with God, is by witness of an Angel commended. The Lord Himself also, about to rise on the third day, both preaches, and commends to be preached, the good work of a religious woman, that she poured out a precious ointment over His limbs, and did it for His burial: and they are with praise commemorated in the Gospel, who having received His Body from the cross did carefully and with reverend honor see it wound and laid in the sepulchre. These authorities however do not put us upon thinking that there is in dead bodies any feeling; but rather, that the Providence of God (Who is moreover pleased with such offices of piety) doth charge itself with the bodies also of the dead, this they betoken, to the intent our faith of resurrection might be stayed up thereby. Where also is wholesomely learned, how great may be the reward for alms which we do unto the living and feeling, if not even that be lost before God, whatever of duty and of diligence is paid to the lifeless members of men. There are indeed also other things, which in speaking of the bestowal or removal of their bodies the

holy Patriarchs willed to be understood as spoken by the prophetic Spirit: but this is not the place to treat thoroughly of these things, seeing that sufficeth which we have said. But if the lack of those things which are necessary for sustentation of the living, as food and clothing, however heavy affliction attend the lacking, do not break in good men the manly courage of bearing and enduring, nor eradicate piety from the mind, but by exercising make it more fruitful; how much more doth lack of those things which are wont to be applied for care of funerals and bestowal of bodies of the departed, not make them wretched, now that in the hidden abodes of the pious they are at rest! And therefore, when these things have to dead bodies of Christians in that devastation of the great City or of other towns also been lacking, there is neither fault of the living, who could not afford these things, nor pain of the dead who could not feel the same. This is my opinion concerning the ground and reason of sepulture. Which I have therefore from another book of mine transferred to this, because it was easier to rehearse this, than to express the same matter in another way.

6. If this be true, doubtless also the providing for the interment of bodies a place at the Memorials of Saints, is a mark of a good human affection towards the remains of one’s friends: since if there be religion in the burying, there cannot but be religion in taking thought where the burying shall be. But while it is desirable there should be such like solaces of survivors, for the showing forth of their pious mind towards their beloved, I do not see what helps they be to the dead save in this way: that upon recollection of the place in which are deposited the bodies of those whom they love, they should by prayer commend them to those same Saints, who have as patrons taken them into their charge to aid them before the Lord. Which indeed they would be still able to do, even though they were not able to inter them in such places. But then the only reason why the name Memorials or Monuments is given to those sepulchres of the dead which become specially distinguished, is that they recall to memory, and by putting in mind cause us to think of, them who by death are withdrawn from the eyes of the living, that they may not by forgetfulness be also withdrawn from men’s hearts. For both the term Memorial most plainly shews this, and Monument is so named from monishing, that is, putting in mind. For which reason the Greeks also call that mnemeion which we call a Memorial or

Monument: because in their tongue the memory itself, by which we remember, is called mneme. When therefore the mind recollects where the body of a very dear friend lies buried, and thereupon there occurs to the thoughts a place rendered venerable by the name of a Martyr, to that same Martyr doth it commend the soul in affection of heartfelt recollection and prayer. And when this affection is exhibited to the departed by faithful men who were most dear to them, there is no doubt that it profits them who while living in the body merited that such things should profit them after this life. But even if some necessity should through absence of all facility not allow bodies to be interred, or in such places interred, yet should there be no pretermitting of supplications for the spirits of the dead: which supplications, that they should be made for all in Christian and catholic fellowship departed, even without mentioning of their names, under a general commemoration, the Church hath charged herself withal; to the intent that they which lack, for these offices, parents or sons or whatever kindred or friends, may have the same afforded unto them by the one pious mother which is common to all. But if there were lack of these supplications, which are made with right faith and piety for the dead, I account that it should not a whit profit their spirits, howsoever in holy places the lifeless bodies should be deposited.

7. When therefore the faithful mother of a faithful son departed desired to have his body deposited in the basilica of a Martyr, forasmuch as she believed that his soul would be aided by the merits of the Martyr, the very believing of this was a sort of supplication, and this profited, if aught profited. And in that she recurs in her thoughts to this same sepulchre, and in her prayers more and more commends her son, the spirit of the departed is aided, not by the place of its dead body, but by that which springs from memory of the place, the living affection of the mother. For at once the thought, who is commended and to whom, doth touch, and that with no unprofitable emotion, the religious mind of her who prays. For also in prayer to God, men do with the members of their bodies that which becometh suppliants, when they bend their knees, when they stretch forth their hands, or even prostrate themselves on the ground, and whatever else they visibly do, albeit their invisible will and heart’s intention be known unto God, and He needs not these tokens that any man’s mind should be

opened unto Him: only hereby one more excites himself to pray and groan more humbly and more fervently. And I know not how it is, that, while these motions of the body cannot be made but by a motion of the mind preceding, yet by the same being outwardly in visible sort made, that inward invisible one which made them is increased: and thereby the heart’s affection which preceded that they might be made, groweth because they are made. But still if any be in that way held, or even bound, that he is not able to do these things with his limbs, it does not follow that the inner man does not pray, and before the eyes of God in its most secret chamber, where it hath compunction, cast itself on the ground. So likewise, while it makes very much difference, where a person deposits the body of his dead, while he supplicates for his spirit unto God, because both the affection preceding chose a spot which was holy, and after the body is there deposited the recalling to mind of that holy spot renews and increases the affection which had preceded; yet, though he may not be able in that place which his religious mind did choose to lay in the ground him whom he loves, in no wise ought he to cease from necessary supplications in commending of the same. For wheresoever the flesh of the departed may lie or not lie, the spirit requires rest and must get it: for the spirit in its departing from thence took with it the consciousness without which it could make no odds how one exists, whether in a good estate or a bad: and it does not look for aiding of its life from that flesh to which it did itself afford the life which it withdrew in its departing, and is to render back in its returning; since not flesh to spirit, but spirit unto flesh procureth merit even of very resurrection, whether it be unto punishment or unto glory that it is to come to life again.

8. We read in the Ecclesiastical History which Eusebius wrote in Greek, and Ruffinus turned into the Latin tongue, of Martyr’s bodies in Gaul exposed to dogs, and how the leavings of those dogs and bones of the dead were, even to uttermost consumption, by fire burned up; and the ashes of the same scattered on the river Rhone, lest any thing should be left for any sort whatever of memorial. Which thing must be believed to have been to no other end divinely permitted, but that Christians should learn in confessing Christ, while they despise this life, much more to despise sepulture. For this thing, which with savage rage was done to the bodies of Martyrs, if it could any whit hurt them, to impair the blessed resting of their most victorious

spirits, would assuredly not have been suffered to be done. In very deed therefore it was declared, that the Lord in saying, “Fear not them which kill the body, and afterward have no more that they can do,” did not mean that He would not permit them to do any thing to the bodies of His followers when dead; but that whatever they might be permitted to do, nothing should be done that could lessen the Christian felicity of the departed, nothing thereof reach to their consciousness while yet living after death; nothing avail to the detriment, no, not even of the bodies themselves, to diminish aught of their integrity when they should rise again.

9. And yet, by reason of that affection of the human heart, whereby “no man ever hateth his own flesh,” if men have reason to know that after their death their bodies will lack any thing which in each man’s nation or country the wonted order of sepulture demandeth, it makes them sorrowful as men; and that which after death reacheth not unto them, they do before death fear for their bodies: so that we find in the Books of Kings, God by one prophet threatening another prophet who had transgressed His word, that his carcase should not be brought into the sepulchre of his fathers. Which the Scripture hath on this wise: “Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast been disobedient to the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the charge which the Lord thy God commanded thee, and hast returned and eaten bread and drunk water in the place in which He commanded thee not to eat bread, nor drink water, thy carcase shall not be brought into the sepulchre of thy fathers.” Now if in considering what account is to be made of this punishment, we go by the Gospel, where we have learned that after the slaying of the body there is no cause to fear lest the lifeless members should suffer any thing, it is not even to be called a punishment. But if we consider a man’s human affection towards his own flesh, it was possible for him to be frightened or saddened, while living, by that of which he would have no sense when dead: and this was a punishment, because the mind was pained by that thing about to happen to its body, howsoever when it did happen it would feel no pain. To this intent, namely, it pleased the Lord to punish His servant, who not of his own contumacy had spurned to fulfill His command, but by deceit of another’s falsehood thought himself to be obeying when he obeyed not. For it is not to be thought that he was killed by the teeth of the beast as one whose soul should be thence snatched away to the torments of hell: seeing

that over his very body the same lion which had killed it did keep watch, while moreover the beast on which he rode was left unhurt, and along with that fierce beast did with intrepid presence stand there beside his master's corpse. By which marvellous sign it appeareth, that the man of God was, say rather, checked temporally even unto death, than punished after death. Of which matter, the Apostle when on account of certain offenses he had mentioned the sicknesses and deaths of many, says, "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord. But when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world." That Prophet, truly, the very man who had beguiled him, did with much respect bury in his own tomb, and took order for his own burying beside his bones: in hope that thereby his own bones might be spared, when, according to the prophecy of that man of God, Josiah king of Judah did in that land disinter the bones of many dead, and with the same bones defile the sacrilegious altars which had been set up for the graven images. For he spared that tomb in which lay the prophet who more than three hundred years before predicted those things, and for his sake neither was the sepulture of him who had seduced him violated. By that affection namely, which causes that no man ever hateth his own flesh, this man had taken forethought for his carcase, who had slain with a lie his own soul. By reason then of this, the natural love which every man hath for his own flesh, it was both to the one a punishment to learn that he should not be in the sepulchre of his fathers, and to the other a care to take order beforehand that his own bones should be spared, if he should lie beside him whose sepulchre no man should violate.

10. This affection the Martyrs of Christ contending for the truth did overcome: and it is no marvel that they despised that whereof they should, when death was overpast, have no feeling, when they could not by those tortures, which while alive they did feel, be overcome. God was able, no doubt, (even as He permitted not the lion when it had slain the Prophet, to touch his body further, and of a slayer made it to be a keeper): He was able, I say, to have kept the slain bodies of His own from the dogs to which they had been flung; He was able in innumerable ways to have deterred the rage of the men themselves, that to burn the carcases, to scatter the ashes, they should not dare: but it was fit that this experience also should not be lacking

to manifold variety of temptations, lest the fortitude of confession which would not for the saving of the life of the body give way to the savageness of persecution, should be tremblingly anxious for the honor of a sepulchre: in a word, lest faith of resurrection should dread the consuming of the body. It was fit then, that even these things should be permitted, in order that, even after these examples of so great horror, the Martyrs, fervent in confession of Christ, should become witnesses of this truth also, in which they had learned that they by whom their bodies should be slain had after that no more that they could do. Because, whatever they should do to dead bodies, they would after all do nothing, seeing that in flesh devoid of all life, neither was it possible for him to feel aught who had thence departed, nor for Him to lose aught thereof, Who created the same. But while these things were doing to the bodies of the slain, albeit the Martyrs, not frightened by them, did with great fortitude suffer, yet among the brethren was there exceeding sorrow, because there was given them no means of paying the last honors to the remains of the Saints, neither secretly to withdraw any part thereof, (as the same history testifies,) did the watchings of cruel sentinels permit. So, while those which had been slain, in the tearing asunder of their limbs, in the burning up of their bones, in the dispersion of their ashes, could feel no misery; yet these who had nothing of them that they could bury, did suffer torture of exceeding grief in pitying them; because what those did in no sort feel, these in some sort did feel for them, and where was henceforth for those no more suffering, yet these did in woful compassion suffer for them.

11. In regard to that woful compassion which I have mentioned, are those praised, and by king David blessed, who to the dry bones of Saul and Jonathan afforded mercy of sepulture. But yet what mercy is that, which is afforded to them that have feeling of nothing? Or haply is this to be challenged back to that conceit of an infernal river which men unburied were not able to pass over? Far be this from the faith of Christians: else hath it gone most ill with so great a multitude of Martyrs, for whom there could be no burying of their bodies, and Truth did cheat them when It said, “Fear not them which kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do,” if these have been able to do to them so great evils, by which they were hindered to pass over to the places which they longed for. But, because this

without all doubt is most false, and it neither any whit hurts the faithful to have their bodies denied sepulture, nor any whit the giving of sepulture unto infidels advantageth them; why then are those who buried Saul and his son said to have done mercy, and for this are blessed by that godly king, but because it is a good affection with which the hearts of the pitiful are touched, when they grieve for that in the dead bodies of other men, which, by that affection through which no man ever hateth his own flesh, they would not have done after their own death to their own bodies; and what they would have done by them when they shall have no more feeling, that they take care to do by others now having no feeling while themselves have yet feeling?

12. Stories are told of certain appearances or visions, which may seem to bring into this discussion a question which should not be slighted. It is said, namely, that dead men have at times either in dreams or in some other way appeared to the living who knew not where their bodies lay unburied, and have pointed out to them the place, and admonished that the sepulture which was lacking should be afforded them. These things if we shall answer to be false, we shall be thought impudently to contradict the writings of certain faithful men, and the senses of them who assure us that such things have happened to themselves. But it is to be answered, that it does not follow that we are to account the dead to have sense of these things, because they appear in dreams to say or indicate or ask this. For living men do also appear ofttimes to the living as they sleep, while they themselves know not that they do appear; and they are told by them, what they dreamed, namely, that in their dream the speakers saw them doing or saying something. Then if it may be that a person in a dream should see me indicating to him something that has happened or even foretelling something about to happen, while I am perfectly unwitting of the thing and altogether regardless not only what he dreams, but whether he is awake while I am asleep, or he asleep while I am awake, or whether at one and the same time we are both awake or asleep, at what time he has the dream in which he sees me: what marvel if the dead be unconscious and insensible of these things, and, for all that, are seen by the living in their dreams, and say something which those on awaking find to be true? By angelical operations, then, I should think it is effected, whether permitted from above, or

commanded, that they seem in dreams to say something about burying of their bodies, when they whose the bodies are are utterly unconscious of it. Now this is sometimes serviceably done; whether for some sort of solace to the survivors, to whom pertain those dead whose likenesses appear to them as they dream; or whether that by these admonitions the human race may be made to have regard to humanity of sepulture, which, allow that it be no help to the departed, yet is there culpable irreligiousness in slighting of it. Sometimes however, by fallacious visions, men are cast into great errors, who deserve to suffer this. As, if one should see in a dream, what AEneas by poetic falsity is told to have seen in the world beneath: and there should appear to him the likeness of some unburied man, which should speak such words as Palinurus is said to have spoken to him; and when he awakes, he should find the body in that place where he heard say while dreaming, that it lay unburied, and was admonished and asked to bury it when found; and because he finds this to be true, should believe that the dead are buried on purpose that their souls may pass to places from which he dreamed that the souls of men unburied are by an infernal law prohibited: does he not, in believing all this, exceedingly swerve from the path of truth?

13. Such, however, is human infirmity, that when in a dream a person shall see a dead man, he thinks it is the soul that he sees: but when he shall in like manner dream of a living man, he has no doubt that it is not a soul nor a body, but the likeness of a man that has appeared to him: just as if it were not possible in regard of dead men, in the same sort unconscious of it, that it should not be their souls, but their likenesses that appear to the sleepers. Of a surety, when we were at Milan, we heard tell of a certain person of whom was demanded payment of a debt, with production of his deceased father’s acknowledgment, which debt unknown to the son the father had paid, whereupon the man began to be very sorrowful, and to marvel that his father while dying did not tell him what he owed when he also made his will. Then in this exceeding anxiousness of his, his said father appeared to him in a dream, and made known to him where was the counter acknowledgment by which that acknowledgment was cancelled. Which when the young man had found and showed, he not only rebutted the wrongful claim of a false debt, but also got back his father’s note of hand which the father had not got back when the money was paid. Here then the

soul of a man is supposed to have had care for his son, and to have come to him in his sleep, that, teaching him what he did not know, he might relieve him of a great trouble. But about the very same time as we heard this, it chanced at Carthage that the rhetorician Eulogius, who had been my disciple in that art, being (as he himself, after our return to Africa, told us the story) in course of lecturing to his disciples on Cicero’s rhetorical books, as he looked over the portion of reading which he was to deliver on the following day, fell upon a certain passage, and not being able to understand it, was scarce able to sleep for the trouble of his mind: in which night, as he dreamed, I expounded to him that which he did not understand; nay, not I, but my likeness, while I was unconscious of the thing, and far away beyond the sea, it might be, doing, or it might be dreaming, some other thing, and not in the least caring for his cares. In what way these things come about, I know not: but in what way soever they come, why do we not believe it comes in the same way for a person in a dream to see a dead man, as it comes that he sees a living man? both, no doubt, neither knowing nor caring who, or where, or when, dreams of their images.

14. Like dreams, moreover, are also some visions of persons awake, who have had their senses troubled, such as phrenetic persons, or those who are mad in any way: for they too talk to themselves just as though they were speaking to people verily present, and as well with absent as with present, whose images they perceive, whether persons living or dead. But just as they which live, are unconscious that they are seen of them and talk with them; for indeed they are not really themselves present, or themselves make speeches, but through troubled senses, these persons are wrought upon by such-like imaginary visions; just so they also who have departed this life, to persons thus affected appear as present, while they be absent, and whether any man sees them in regard of their image, are themselves utterly unconscious.

15. Similar to this is also that condition when persons, with their senses more profoundedly in abeyance than is the case in sleep, are occupied with the like visions. For to them also appear images of quick and dead; but then, when they return to their senses, whatever dead they say they have seen are thought to have been verily with them: and they who hear these things pay

no heed to the circumstance that there were seen in like manner the images of certain living persons, absent and unconscious. A certain man by name Curma, of the municipal town of Tullium, which is hard by Hippo, a poor member of the Curia, scarcely competent to serve the office of a duumvir of that place, and a mere rustic, being ill, and all his senses entranced, lay all but dead for several days: a very slight breathing in his nostrils, which on applying the hand was just felt, and barely betokened that he lived, was all that kept him from being buried for dead. Not a limb did he stir, nothing did he take in the way of sustenance, neither in the eyes nor in any other bodily sense was he sensible of any annoyance that impinged upon them. Yet he was seeing many things like as in a dream, which, when at last after a great many days he woke up, he told that he had seen. And first, presently after he opened his eyes, Let some one go, said he, to the house of Curma the smith, and see what is doing there. And when some one had gone thither, the smith was found to have died in that moment that the other had come back to his senses, and, it might almost be said, revived from death. Then, as those who stood by eagerly listened, he told them how the other had been ordered to be had up, when he himself was dismissed; and that he had heard it said in that place from which he had returned, that it was not Curma of the Curia, but Curma the smith who had been ordered to be fetched to that place of the dead. Well, in these dream-like visions of his, among those deceased persons whom he saw handled according to the diversity of their merits, he recognized also some whom he had known when alive. That they were the very persons themselves I might perchance have believed, had he not in the course of this seeming dream of his seen also some who are alive even to this present time, namely, some clerks of his district, by whose presbyter there he was told to be baptized at Hippo by me, which thing he said had also taken place. So then he had seen a presbyter, clerks, myself, persons, to wit, not yet dead, in this vision in which he afterwards also saw dead persons. Why may he not be thought to have seen these last in the same way as he saw us? that is, both the one sort, and the other, absent and unconscious, and consequently not the persons themselves, but similitudes of them just as of the places? He saw, namely, both a plot of ground where was that presbyter with the clerks, and Hippo where he was by me seemingly baptized: in which spots assuredly he was not, when he seemed to himself to be there. For what was at that time going on there, he knew not: which, without doubt, he would have known if he had verily been there. The sights beheld, therefore, were those which are not presented in the things themselves as they are, but shadowed forth in a sort of images of the things. In fine, after much that he saw, he narrated how he had, moreover, been led into Paradise, and how it was there said to him, when he was thence dismissed to return to his own family, "Go, be baptized, if thou wilt be in this place of the blessed." Thereupon, being admonished to be baptized by me, he said it was done already. He who was talking with him replied, "Go, be truly baptized; for that thou didst but see in the vision." After this he recovered, went his way to Hippo. Easter was now approaching, he gave his name among the other Competents, alike with very many unknown to us; nor did he care to make known the vision to me or to any of our people. He was baptized, at the close of the holy days he returned to his own place. After the space of two years or more, I learned the whole matter; first, through a certain friend of mine and his at my own table, while we were talking about some such matters: then I took it up, and made the man in his own person tell me the story, in the presence of some honest townsmen of his attesting the same, both concerning his marvellous illness, how he lay all but dead for many days, and about that other Curma the smith, what I have mentioned above, and about all these matters; which, while he was telling me, they recalled to mind, and assured me, that they had also at that time heard them from his lips. Wherefore, just as he saw his own baptism, and myself, and Hippo, and the basilica, and the baptistery, not in the very realities, but in a sort of similitudes of the things; and so likewise certain other living persons, without consciousness on the part of the same living persons: then why not just so those dead persons also, without consciousness on the part of the same dead persons?

16. Why should we not believe these to be angelic operations through dispensation of the providence of God, Who maketh good use of both good things and evil, according to the unsearchable depth of His judgments? whether thereby the minds of mortals be instructed, or whether deceived; whether consoled, or whether terrified: according as unto each one there is to be either a showing of mercy, or a taking of vengeance, by Him to Whom, not without a meaning, the Church doth sing "of mercy and of judgment." Let each, as it shall please him, take what I say. If the souls of

the dead took part in the affairs of the living, and if it were their very selves that, when we see them, speak to us in sleep; to say nothing of others, there is my own self, whom my pious mother would no night fail to visit, that mother who by land and sea followed me that she might live with me. Far be the thought that she should, by a life more happy, have been made cruel, to that degree that when any thing vexes my heart she should not even console in his sadness the son whom she loved with an only love, whom she never wished to see mournful. But assuredly that which the sacred Psalm sings in our ears, is true; "Because my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord hath taken me up." Then if our parents have forsaken us, how take they part in our cares and affairs? But if parents do not, who else are there of the dead who should know what we are doing, or what we suffer? Isaiah the Prophet says, "For Thou art our Father: because Abraham hath not known us, and Israel is not cognizant of us." If so great Patriarchs were ignorant what was doing towards the People of them begotten, they to whom, believing God, the People itself to spring from their stock was promised; how are the dead mixed up with affairs and doings of the living, either for cognizance or help? How say we that those were favored who deceased ere the evils came which followed hard upon the decease, if also after death they feel whatever things befall in the calamitousness of human life? Or haply do we err in saying this, and in accounting them to be quietly at rest whom the unquiet life of the living makes solicitous? What then is that which to the most godly king Josias God promised as a great benefit, that he should first die, that he might not see the evils which He threatened should come to that place and People? Which words of God are these: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: concerning My words which thou hast heard, and didst fear before My face when thou didst hear what I have spoken concerning this place and them which dwell therein, that it should be forsaken and under a curse; and hast rent thy garments, and wept before Me, and I have heard thee, saith the Lord of Sabaoth: not so; behold, I will add thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be added unto them in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evils which I am bringing upon this place and upon them that dwell therein." He, frightened by God's comminations, had wept, and rent his garments, and is made, by hastening on of his death, to be without care of all future evils, because he should so rest in peace, that all those things he should not see. There then are the spirits of the departed, where they see not whatever things are doing, or events happening, in this life to men. Then how do they see their own graves, or their own bodies, whether they lie cast away, or buried? How do they take part in the misery of the living, when they are either suffering their own evils, if they have contracted such merits; or do rest in peace, as was promised to this Josiah, where they undergo no evils, either by suffering themselves, or by compassionate suffering with others, freed from all evils which by suffering themselves or with others while they lived here they did undergo?

17. Some man may say: “If there be not in the dead any care for the living, how is it that the rich man, who was tormented in hell, asked father Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brothers not as yet dead, and to take course with them, that they should not come themselves also into the same place of torments?” But does it follow, that because the rich man said this, he knew what his brethren were doing, or what they were suffering at that time? Just in that same way had he care for the living, albeit what they were doing he wist not at all, as we have care for the dead, albeit what they do we confessedly wot not. For if we cared not for the dead, we should not, as we do, supplicate God on their behalf. In fine, Abraham did not send Lazarus, and also answered, that they have here Moses and the Prophets, whom they ought to hear that they might not come to those torments. Where again it occurs to ask, how it was that what was doing here, father Abraham himself wist not, while he knew that Moses and the Prophets are here, that is, their books, by obeying which men should escape the torments of hell: and knew, in short, that rich man to have lived in delights, but the poor man Lazarus to have lived in labors and sorrows? For this also he says to him; “Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime hast received good things, but Lazarus evil things.” He knew then these things which had taken place of course among the living, not among the dead. True, but it may be that, not while the things were doing in their lifetime, but after their death, he learned these things, by information of Lazarus: that it be not false which the Prophet saith, “Abraham hath not known us.”

18. So then we must confess that the dead indeed do not know what is doing here, but while it is in doing here: afterwards, however, they hear it from those who from hence go to them at their death; not indeed every

thing, but what things those are allowed to make known who are suffered also to remember these things; and which it is meet for those to hear, whom they inform of the same. It may be also, that from the Angels, who are present in the things which are doing here, the dead do hear somewhat, which for each one of them to hear He judgeth right to Whom all things are subject. For were there not Angels, who could be present in places both of quick and dead, the Lord Jesus had not said, “It came to pass also that the poor man died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom.” Therefore, now here, now there, were they able to be, who from hence bore thither whom God willed. It may be also, that the spirits of the dead do learn some things which are doing here, what things it is necessary that they should know, and what persons it is necessary should know the same, not only things past or present, but even future, by the Spirit of God revealing them: like as not all men, but the Prophets while they lived here did know, nor even they all things, but only what things to be revealed to them the providence of God judged meet. Moreover, that some from the dead are sent to the living, as, on the other hand, Paul from the living was rapt into Paradise, divine Scripture doth testify. For Samuel the Prophet, appearing to Saul when living, predicted even what should befall the king: although some think it was not Samuel himself, that could have been by magical arts evoked, but that some spirit, meet for so evil works, did figure his semblance: though the book Ecclesiasticus, which Jesus, son of Sirach, is reputed to have written, and which on account of some resemblance of style is pronounced to be Solomon’s, contains in the praise of the Fathers, that Samuel even when dead did prophesy. But if this book be spoken against from the canon of the Hebrews, (because it is not contained therein,) what shall we say of Moses, whom certainly we read both in Deuteronomy to have died, and in the Gospel to have, together with Elias who died not, appeared unto the living?

19. Hence too is solved that question, how is it that the Martyrs, by the very benefits which are given to them that pray, indicate that they take an interest in the affairs of men, if the dead know not what the quick are doing. For not only by effects of benefits, but in the very beholding of men, it is certain, that the Confessor Felix (whose denizenship among you thou piously lovest) appeared when the barbarians were attacking Nola, as we have

heard not by uncertain rumors, but by sure witnesses. But such things are of God exhibited, far otherwise than as the usual order hath itself, unto each kind of creatures apportioned. For it does not follow because water was, when it pleased the Lord, in a moment changed into wine, that we are not to regard the worth and efficacy of water in the proper order of the elements, as distinct from the rarity, or rather singularity, of that divine work: nor because Lazarus rose again, therefore that every dead man rises when he will; or that a lifeless man is raised up by a living, in the same way as a sleeping man by one who is awake. Other be the limits of human things, other the signs of divine virtues: other they be that are naturally, other that be miraculously done: albeit both unto nature God is present that it may be, and unto miracles nature is not lacking. We are not to think then, that to be interested in the affairs of the living is in the power of any departed who please, only because to some men's healing or help the Martyrs be present: but rather we are to understand that it must needs be by a Divine power that the Martyrs are interested in affairs of the living, from the very fact that for the departed to be by their proper nature interested in affairs of the living is impossible.

20. Howbeit it is a question which surpasses the strength of my understanding, after what manner the Martyrs aid them who by them, it is certain, are helped; whether themselves by themselves be present at the same time in so different places, and by so great distance lying apart one from another, either where their Memorials are, or beside their Memorials, wheresoever they are felt to be present: or whether, while they themselves, in a place congruous with their merits, are removed from all converse with mortals, and yet do in a general sort pray for the needs of their suppliants, (like as we pray for the dead, to whom however we are not present, nor know where they be or what they be doing,) God Almighty, Who is every where present, neither bounded in with us nor remote from us, hearing and granting the Martyrs' prayers, doth by angelic ministries every where diffused afford to men those solaces, to whom in the misery of this life He seeth meet to afford the same, and, touching His Martyrs, doth where He will, when He will, how He will, and chiefest through their Memorials, because this He knoweth to be expedient for us unto edifying of the faith of Christ for Whose confession they suffered, by marvellous and ineffable

power and goodness cause their merits to be had in honor. A matter is this, too high that I should have power to attain unto it, too abstruse that I should be able to search it out; and therefore which of these two be the case, or whether perchance both one and the other be the case, that sometimes these things be done by very presence of the Martyrs, sometimes by Angels taking upon them the person of the Martyrs, I dare not define; rather would I seek this at them who know it. For it is not to be thought that no man knows these things: (not indeed he who thinks he knows, and knows not,) for there be gifts of God, Who bestows on these some one, on those some other, according to the Apostle who says, that "to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal; to one indeed," saith he, "is given by the Spirit discourse of wisdom; to another discourse of science according to the same Spirit; while to another faith in the same Spirit; to another the gift of healings in one Spirit; to one workings of miracles; to one prophecy; to one discerning of spirits; to one kinds of tongues; to one interpretation of discourses. But all these worketh one and the same spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." Of all these spiritual gifts, which the Apostle hath rehearsed, to whomsoever is given discerning of spirits, the same knoweth these things as they are meet to be known.

21. Such, we may believe, was that John the Monk, whom the elder Theodosius, the Emperor, consulted concerning the issue of the civil war: seeing he had also the gift of prophecy. For that not each several person has a several one of those gifts, but that one man may have more gifts than one, I make no question. This John, then, when once a certain most religious woman desired to see him, and to obtain this did through her husband make vehement entreaty, refused indeed this request because he had never allowed this to women, but "Go," said he, "tell thy wife, she shall see me this night, but in her sleep." And so it came to pass: and he gave her advice, whatever was meet to be given to a wedded believing woman. And she, on her awaking, made known to her husband that she had seen a man of God, such as he knew him to be, and what she had been told by him. The person who learned this from them, reported it to me, a grave man and a noble, and most worthy to be believed. But if I myself had seen that holy monk, because (it is said) he was most patient in hearing questions and most wise in answering, I would have sought of him, as touching our question,

whether he himself came to that woman in sleep, that is to say, his spirit in the form of his body, just as we dream that we see ourselves in the form of our own body; or whether, while he himself was doing something else, or, if asleep, was dreaming of something else, it was either by an Angel or in some other way that such vision took place in the woman's dream; and that it would so be, as he promised, he himself foreknew by the Spirit of prophecy revealing the same. For if he was himself present to her in her dream, of course it was by miraculous grace that he was enabled so to do, not by nature; and by God's gift, not by faculty of his own. But if, while he was doing some other thing or sleeping and occupied with other sights, the woman saw him in her sleep, then doubtless some such thing took place, as that is which we read in the Acts of the Apostles, where the Lord Jesus speaks to Ananias concerning Saul, and informs him that Saul has seen Ananias coming unto him, while Ananias himself wist not of it. The man of God would make answer to me of these things as the case might be, and then about the Martyrs I should go on to ask of him, whether they be themselves present in dreams, or in whatever other way to those who see them in what shape they will; and above all when the demons in men confess themselves tormented by the Martyrs, and ask them to spare them; or whether these things be wrought through angelic powers, to the honor and commendation of the Saints for men's profit, while those are in supreme rest, and wholly free for other far better sights, apart from us, and praying for us. For it chanced at Milan at (the tomb of) the holy Martyrs Protasius and Gervasius, that Ambrose the bishop, at that time living, being expressly named, in like manner as were the dead whose names they were rehearsing, the demons confessed him and besought him to spare them, he being the while otherwise engaged, and when this was taking place, altogether unwitting of it. Or whether indeed these things are wrought, somewhiles by very presence of the Martyrs, otherwhiles by that of Angels; and whether it be possible, or by what tokens possible, for us to discriminate these two cases; or whether to perceive and to judge of these things none be able, but he which hath that gift through God's Spirit, "dividing unto every man severally as He will:" the same John, methinks, would discourse to me of all these matters, as I should wish; that either by his teaching I might learn, and what I should be told should know to be true and certain; or I should believe what I knew not, upon his telling me what things he knew. But if peradventure he should make answer out of holy Scripture, and say, “Things higher than thou, seek thou not; and things stronger than thou, search thou not; but what the Lord hath commanded thee, of those things bethink thee alway:” this also I should thankfully accept. For it is no small gain if, when any things are obscure and uncertain to us, and we not able to comprehend them, it be at any rate clear and certain that we are not to seek them; and what thing each one wishes to learn, accounting it to be profitable that he should know it, he should learn that it is no harm that he know it not.

22. Which things being so, let us not think that to the dead for whom we have a care, any thing reaches save what by sacrifices either of the altar, or of prayers, or of alms, we solemnly supplicate: although not to all for whom they are done be they profitable, but to them only by whom while they live it is obtained that they should be profitable. But forasmuch as we discern not who these be, it is meet to do them for all regenerate persons, that none of them may be passed by to whom these benefits may and ought to reach. For better it is that these things shall be superfluously done to them whom they neither hinder nor help, than lacking to them whom they help. More diligently however doth each man these things for his own near and dear friends, in order that they may be likewise done unto him by his. But as for the burying of the body, whatever is bestowed on that, is no aid of salvation, but an office of humanity, according to that affection by which “no man ever hateth his own flesh.” Whence it is fitting that he take what care he is able for the flesh of his neighbor, when he is gone that bare it. And if they do these things who believe not the resurrection of the flesh, how much more are they beholden to do the same who do believe; that so, an office of this kind bestowed upon a body, dead but yet to rise again and to remain to eternity, may also be in some sort a testimony of the same faith? But, that a person is buried at the memorials of the Martyrs, this, I think, so far profits the departed, that while commending him also to the Martyrs’ patronage, the affection of supplication on his behalf is increased.

23. Here, to the things thou hast thought meet to inquire of me, thou hast such reply as I have been able to render: which if it be more than enough prolix, thou must excuse this, for it was done through love of holding longer

talk with thee. For this book, then, how thy charity shall receive it, let me, I pray thee, know by a second letter: though doubtless it will be more welcome for its bearer’s sake, to wit our brother and fellow-presbyter Candidianus, whom, having been by thy letter made acquainted with him, I have welcomed with all my heart, and am loath to let him depart. For greatly in the charity of Christ hath he by his presence consoled us, and, to say truth, it was at his instance that I have done thy bidding. For with so great businesses is my heart distraught, that had not he by ever and anon putting me in mind not suffered me to forget it, assuredly to thy questioning reply of mind had not been forthcoming.

ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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IN FOUR BOOKS.

TRANSLATED BY REV. PROFESSOR J. F. SHAW, OF LONDONDERRY.

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Book I

Containing a General View of the Subjects Treated in Holy Scripture.

Argument—The author divides his work into two parts, one relating to the discovery, the other to the expression, of the true sense of scripture. He shows that to discover the meaning we must attend both to things and to signs, as it is necessary to know what things we ought to teach to the Christian people, and also the signs of these things, that is, where the knowledge of these things is to be sought. In this first book he treats of things, which he divides into three classes,—things to be enjoyed, things to be used, and things which use and enjoy. The only object which ought to be enjoyed is the triune God, who is our highest good and our true happiness. We are prevented by our sins from enjoying God; and that our sins might be taken away, “the word was made flesh,” our Lord suffered, and died, and rose again, and ascended into heaven, taking to himself as his bride the church, in which we receive remission of our sins. And if our sins are remitted and our souls renewed by grace, we may await with hope the resurrection of the body to eternal glory; if not, we shall be raised to everlasting punishment. These matters relating to faith having been expounded, the author goes on to show that all objects, except God, are for use; for, though some of them may be loved, yet our love is not to rest in them, but to have reference to God. And we ourselves are not objects of enjoyment to God; he uses us, but for our own advantage. He then goes on to show that love—the love of God for his own sake and the love of our neighbor for God’s sake—is the fulfillment and the end of all Scripture. After adding a few words about hope, he shows, in conclusion, that faith, hope, and love are graces essentially necessary for him who would understand and explain aright the Holy Scriptures.

CHAPTER 1

THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE DEPENDS ON THE DISCOVERY AND ENUNCIATION OF THE MEANING, AND IS TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN DEPENDENCE ON GOD’S AID

1. There are two things on which all interpretation of Scripture depends: the mode of ascertaining the proper meaning, and the mode of making known the meaning when it is ascertained. We shall treat first of the mode of ascertaining, next of the mode of making known, the meaning;—a great and arduous undertaking, and one that, if difficult to carry out, it is, I fear, presumptuous to enter upon. And presumptuous it would undoubtedly be, if I were counting on my own strength; but since my hope of accomplishing the work rests on Him who has already supplied me with many thoughts on this subject, I do not fear but that He will go on to supply what is yet wanting when once I have begun to use what He has already given. For a possession which is not diminished by being shared with others, if it is possessed and not shared, is not yet possessed as it ought to be possessed. The Lord saith "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given." He will give, then, to those who have; that is to say, if they use freely and cheerfully what they have received, He will add to and perfect His gifts. The loaves in the miracle were only five and seven in number before the disciples began to divide them among the hungry people. But when once they began to distribute them, though the wants of so many thousands were satisfied, they filled baskets with the fragments that were left. Now, just as that bread increased in the very act of breaking it, so those thoughts which the Lord has already vouchsafed to me with a view to undertaking this work will, as soon as I begin to impart them to others, be multiplied by His grace, so that, in this very work of distribution in which I have engaged, so far from incurring loss and poverty, I shall be made to rejoice in a marvellous increase of wealth.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT A THING IS, AND WHAT A SIGN

2. All instruction is either about things or about signs; but things are learnt by means of signs. I now use the word "thing" in a strict sense, to signify that which is never employed as a sign of anything else: for example, wood, stone, cattle, and other things of that kind. Not, however, the wood which we read Moses cast into the bitter waters to make them sweet, nor the stone which Jacob used as a pillow, nor the ram which Abraham offered up instead of his son; for these, though they are things, are also signs of other

things. There are signs of another kind, those which are never employed except as signs: for example, words. No one uses words except as signs of something else; and hence may be understood what I call signs: those things, to wit, which are used to indicate something else. Accordingly, every sign is also a thing; for what is not a thing is nothing at all. Every thing, however, is not also a sign. And so, in regard to this distinction between things and signs, I shall, when I speak of things, speak in such a way that even if some of them may be used as signs also, that will not interfere with the division of the subject according to which I am to discuss things first and signs afterwards. But we must carefully remember that what we have now to consider about things is what they are in themselves, not what other things they are signs of.

CHAPTER 3

SOME THINGS ARE FOR USE, SOME FOR ENJOYMENT

3. There are some things, then, which are to be enjoyed, others which are to be used, others still which enjoy and use. Those things which are objects of enjoyment make us happy. Those things which are objects of use assist, and (so to speak) support us in our efforts after happiness, so that we can attain the things that make us happy and rest in them. We ourselves, again, who enjoy and use these things, being placed among both kinds of objects, if we set ourselves to enjoy those which we ought to use, are hindered in our course, and sometimes even led away from it; so that, getting entangled in the love of lower gratifications, we lag behind in, or even altogether turn back from, the pursuit of the real and proper objects of enjoyment.

CHAPTER 4

DIFFERENCE OF USE AND ENJOYMENT

4. For to enjoy a thing is to rest with satisfaction in it for its own sake. To use, on the other hand, is to employ whatever means are at one’s disposal to obtain what one desires, if it is a proper object of desire; for an unlawful use ought rather to be called an abuse. Suppose, then, we were wanderers in a strange country, and could not live happily away from our fatherland, and that we felt wretched in our wandering, and wishing to put an end to our

misery, determined to return home. We find, however, that we must make use of some mode of conveyance, either by land or water, in order to reach that fatherland where our enjoyment is to commence. But the beauty of the country through which we pass, and the very pleasure of the motion, charm our hearts, and turning these things which we ought to use into objects of enjoyment, we become unwilling to hasten the end of our journey; and becoming engrossed in a factitious delight, our thoughts are diverted from that home whose delights would make us truly happy. Such is a picture of our condition in this life of mortality. We have wandered far from God; and if we wish to return to our Father’s home, this world must be used, not enjoyed, that so the invisible things of God may be clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,—that is, that by means of what is material and temporary we may lay hold upon that which is spiritual and eternal.

CHAPTER 5

THE TRINITY THE TRUE OBJECT OF ENJOYMENT

5. The true objects of enjoyment, then, are the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, who are at the same time the Trinity, one Being, supreme above all, and common to all who enjoy Him, if He is an object, and not rather the cause of all objects, or indeed even if He is the cause of all. For it is not easy to find a name that will suitably express so great excellence, unless it is better to speak in this way: The Trinity, one God, of whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things. Thus the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and each of these by Himself, is God, and at the same time they are all one God; and each of them by Himself is a complete substance, and yet they are all one substance. The Father is not the Son nor the Holy Spirit; the Son is not the Father nor the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit is not the Father nor the Son: but the Father is only Father, the Son is only Son, and the Holy Spirit is only Holy Spirit. To all three belong the same eternity, the same unchangeableness, the same majesty, the same power. In the Father is unity, in the Son equality, in the Holy Spirit the harmony of unity and equality; and these three attributes are all one because of the Father, all equal because of the Son, and all harmonious because of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 6

IN WHAT SENSE GOD IS INEFFABLE

6. Have I spoken of God, or uttered His praise, in any worthy way? Nay, I feel that I have done nothing more than desire to speak; and if I have said anything, it is not what I desired to say. How do I know this, except from the fact that God is unspeakable? But what I have said, if it had been unspeakable, could not have been spoken. And so God is not even to be called "unspeakable," because to say even this is to speak of Him. Thus there arises a curious contradiction of words, because if the unspeakable is what cannot be spoken of, it is not unspeakable if it can be called unspeakable. And this opposition of words is rather to be avoided by silence than to be explained away by speech. And yet God, although nothing worthy of His greatness can be said of Him, has condescended to accept the worship of men's mouths, and has desired us through the medium of our own words to rejoice in His praise. For on this principle it is that He is called Deus (God). For the sound of those two syllables in itself conveys no true knowledge of His nature; but yet all who know the Latin tongue are led, when that sound reaches their ears, to think of a nature supreme in excellence and eternal in existence.

CHAPTER 7

WHAT ALL MEN UNDERSTAND BY THE TERM GOD

7. For when the one supreme God of gods is thought of, even by those who believe that there are other gods, and who call them by that name, and worship them as gods, their thought takes the form of an endeavor to reach the conception of a nature, than which nothing more excellent or more exalted exists. And since men are moved by different kinds of pleasures, partly by those which pertain to the bodily senses, partly by those which pertain to the intellect and soul, those of them who are in bondage to sense think that either the heavens, or what appears to be most brilliant in the heavens, or the universe itself, is God of gods: or if they try to get beyond the universe, they picture to themselves something of dazzling brightness, and think of it vaguely as infinite, or of the most beautiful form conceivable; or they represent it in the form of the human body, if they

think that superior to all others. Or if they think that there is no one God supreme above the rest, but that there are many or even innumerable gods of equal rank, still these too they conceive as possessed of shape and form, according to what each man thinks the pattern of excellence. Those, on the other hand, who endeavor by an effort of the intelligence to reach a conception of God, place Him above all visible and bodily natures, and even above all intelligent and spiritual natures that are subject to change. All, however, strive emulously to exalt the excellence of God: nor could any one be found to believe that any being to whom there exists a superior is God. And so all concur in believing that God is that which excels in dignity all other objects.

CHAPTER 8

GOD TO BE ESTEEMED ABOVE ALL ELSE, BECAUSE HE IS UNCHANGEABLE WISDOM

8. And since all who think about God think of Him as living, they only can form any conception of Him that is not absurd and unworthy who think of Him as life itself; and, whatever may be the bodily form that has suggested itself to them, recognize that it is by life it lives or does not live, and prefer what is living to what is dead; who understand that the living bodily form itself, however it may outshine all others in splendor, overtop them in size, and excel them in beauty, is quite a distinct thing from the life by which it is quickened; and who look upon the life as incomparably superior in dignity and worth to the mass which is quickened and animated by it. Then, when they go on to look into the nature of the life itself, if they find it mere nutritive life, without sensibility, such as that of plants, they consider it inferior to sentient life, such as that of cattle; and above this, again, they place intelligent life, such as that of men. And, perceiving that even this is subject to change, they are compelled to place above it, again, that unchangeable life which is not at one time foolish, at another time wise, but on the contrary is wisdom itself. For a wise intelligence, that is, one that has attained to wisdom, was, previous to its attaining wisdom, unwise. But wisdom itself never was unwise, and never can become so. And if men never caught sight of this wisdom, they could never with entire confidence prefer a life which is unchangeably wise to one that is subject to change. This will be evident, if we consider that the very rule of truth by which they

affirm the unchangeable life to be the more excellent, is itself unchangeable: and they cannot find such a rule, except by going beyond their own nature; for they find nothing in themselves that is not subject to change.

CHAPTER 9

ALL ACKNOWLEDGE THE SUPERIORITY OF UNCHANGEABLE WISDOM TO THAT WHICH IS VARIABLE

9. Now, no one is so egregiously silly as to ask, “How do you know that a life of unchangeable wisdom is preferable to one of change?” For that very truth about which he asks, how I know it? is unchangeably fixed in the minds of all men, and presented to their common contemplation. And the man who does not see it is like a blind man in the sun, whom it profits nothing that the splendor of its light, so clear and so near, is poured into his very eye-balls. The man, on the other hand, who sees, but shrinks from this truth, is weak in his mental vision from dwelling long among the shadows of the flesh. And thus men are driven back from their native land by the contrary blasts of evil habits, and pursue lower and less valuable objects in preference to that which they own to be more excellent and more worthy.

CHAPTER 10

TO SEE GOD, THE SOUL MUST BE PURIFIED

10. Wherefore, since it is our duty fully to enjoy the truth which lives unchangeably, and since the triune God takes counsel in this truth for the things which He has made, the soul must be purified that it may have power to perceive that light, and to rest in it when it is perceived. And let us look upon this purification as a kind of journey or voyage to our native land. For it is not by change of place that we can come nearer to Him who is in every place, but by the cultivation of pure desires and virtuous habits.

CHAPTER 11

WISDOM BECOMING INCARNATE, A PATTERN TO US OF PURIFICATION

11. But of this we should have been wholly incapable, had not Wisdom condescended to adapt Himself to our weakness, and to show us a pattern of holy life in the form of our own humanity. Yet, since we when we come to Him do wisely, He when He came to us was considered by proud men to have done very foolishly. And since we when we come to Him become strong, He when He came to us was looked upon as weak. But “the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” And thus, though Wisdom was Himself our home, He made Himself also the way by which we should reach our home.

CHAPTER 12

IN WHAT SENSE THE WISDOM OF GOD CAME TO US

And though He is everywhere present to the inner eye when it is sound and clear, He condescended to make Himself manifest to the outward eye of those whose inward sight is weak and dim. “For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”

12. Not then in the sense of traversing space, but because He appeared to mortal men in the form of mortal flesh, He is said to have come to us. For He came to a place where He had always been, seeing that “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him.” But, because men, who in their eagerness to enjoy the creature instead of the Creator had grown into the likeness of this world, and are therefore most appropriately named “the world,” did not recognize Him, therefore the evangelist says, “and the world knew Him not.” Thus, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God. Why then did He come, seeing that He was already here, except that it pleased God through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe?

CHAPTER 13

THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH

In what way did He come but this, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us”? Just as when we speak, in order that what we have in our minds may enter through the ear into the mind of the hearer, the word which we have in our hearts becomes an outward sound and is called speech; and yet our thought does not lose itself in the sound, but remains complete in itself, and takes the form of speech without being modified in its own nature by the change: so the Divine Word, though suffering no change of nature, yet became flesh, that He might dwell among us.

CHAPTER 14

HOW THE WISDOM OF GOD HEALED MAN

13. Moreover, as the use of remedies is the way to health, so this remedy took up sinners to heal and restore them. And just as surgeons, when they bind up wounds, do it not in a slovenly way, but carefully, that there may be a certain degree of neatness in the binding, in addition to its mere usefulness, so our medicine, Wisdom, was by His assumption of humanity adapted to our wounds, curing some of them by their opposites, some of them by their likes. And just as he who ministers to a bodily hurt in some cases applies contraries, as cold to hot, moist to dry, etc., and in other cases applies likes, as a round cloth to a round wound, or an oblong cloth to an oblong wound, and does not fit the same bandage to all limbs, but puts like to like; in the same way the Wisdom of God in healing man has applied Himself to his cure, being Himself healer and medicine both in one. Seeing, then, that man fell through pride, He restored him through humility. We were ensnared by the wisdom of the serpent: we are set free by the foolishness of God. Moreover, just as the former was called wisdom, but was in reality the folly of those who despised God, so the latter is called foolishness, but is true wisdom in those who overcome the devil. We used our immortality so badly as to incur the penalty of death: Christ used His mortality so well as to restore us to life. The disease was brought in through a woman's corrupted soul: the remedy came through a woman's virgin body. To the same class of opposite remedies it belongs, that our vices are cured by the example of His virtues. On the other hand, the following are, as it were, bandages made in the same shape as the limbs and wounds to which they are applied: He was born of a woman to deliver us who fell through a woman: He came as a man to save us who are men, as a mortal to save us who are mortals, by death to save us who were dead. And those

who can follow out the matter more fully, who are not hurried on by the necessity of carrying out a set undertaking, will find many other points of instruction in considering the remedies, whether opposites or likes, employed in the medicine of Christianity.

CHAPTER 15

FAITH IS BUTTRESSED BY THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST, AND IS STIMULATED BY HIS COMING TO JUDGMENT

14. The belief of the resurrection of our Lord from the dead, and of His ascension into heaven, has strengthened our faith by adding a great buttress of hope. For it clearly shows how freely He laid down His life for us when He had it in His power thus to take it up again. With what assurance, then, is the hope of believers animated, when they reflect how great He was who suffered so great things for them while they were still in unbelief! And when men look for Him to come from heaven as the judge of quick and dead, it strikes great terror into the careless, so that they betake themselves to diligent preparation, and learn by holy living to long for His approach, instead of quaking at it on account of their evil deeds. And what tongue can tell, or what imagination can conceive, the reward He will bestow at the last, when we consider that for our comfort in this earthly journey He has given us so freely of His Spirit, that in the adversities of this life we may retain our confidence in, and love for, Him whom as yet we see not; and that He has also given to each gifts suitable for the building up of His Church, that we may do what He points out as right to be done, not only without a murmur, but even with delight?

CHAPTER 16

CHRIST PURGES HIS CHURCH BY MEDICINAL AFFLICTIONS

15. For the Church is His body, as the apostle’s teaching shows us; and it is even called His spouse. His body, then, which has many members, and all performing different functions, He holds together in the bond of unity and love, which is its true health. Moreover He exercises it in the present time, and purges it with many wholesome afflictions, that when He has

transplanted it from this world to the eternal world, He may take it to Himself as His bride, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

CHAPTER 17

CHRIST, BY FORGIVING OUR SINS, OPENED THE WAY TO OUR HOME

16. Further, when we are on the way, and that not a way that lies through space, but through a change of affections, and one which the guilt of our past sins like a hedge of thorns barred against us, what could He, who was willing to lay Himself down as the way by which we should return, do that would be still gracious and more merciful, except to forgive us all our sins, and by being crucified for us to remove the stern decrees that barred the door against our return?

CHAPTER 18

THE KEYS GIVEN TO THE CHURCH

17. He has given, therefore, the keys to His Church, that whatsoever it should bind on earth might be bound in heaven, and whatsoever it should loose on earth might be loosed in heaven; that is to say, that whosoever in the Church should not believe that his sins are remitted, they should not be remitted to him; but that whosoever should believe and should repent, and turn from his sins, should be saved by the same faith and repentance on the ground of which he is received into the bosom of the Church. For he who does not believe that his sins can be pardoned, falls into despair, and becomes worse as if no greater good remained for him than to be evil, when he has ceased to have faith in the results of his own repentance.

CHAPTER 19

BODILY AND SPIRITUAL DEATH AND RESURRECTION

18. Furthermore, as there is a kind of death of the soul, which consists in the putting away of former habits and former ways of life, and which comes through repentance, so also the death of the body consists in the dissolution of the former principle of life. And just as the soul, after it has put away and destroyed by repentance its former habits, is created anew after a better

pattern, so we must hope and believe that the body, after that death which we all owe as a debt contracted through sin, shall at the resurrection be changed into a better form;—not that flesh and blood shall inherit the kingdom of God (for that is impossible), but that this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. And thus the body, being the source of no uneasiness because it can feel no want, shall be animated by a spirit perfectly pure and happy, and shall enjoy unbroken peace.

CHAPTER 20

THE RESURRECTION TO DAMNATION

19. Now he whose soul does not die to this world and begin here to be conformed to the truth, falls when the body dies into a more terrible death, and shall revive, not to change his earthly for a heavenly habitation, but to endure the penalty of his sin.

CHAPTER 21

NEITHER BODY NOR SOUL EXTINGUISHED AT DEATH

And so faith clings to the assurance, and we must believe that it is so in fact, that neither the human soul nor the human body suffers complete extinction, but that the wicked rise again to endure inconceivable punishment, and the good to receive eternal life.

CHAPTER 22

GOD ALONE TO BE ENJOYED

20. Among all these things, then, those only are the true objects of enjoyment which we have spoken of as eternal and unchangeable. The rest are for use, that we may be able to arrive at the full enjoyment of the former. We, however, who enjoy and use other things are things ourselves. For a great thing truly is man, made after the image and similitude of God, not as respects the mortal body in which he is clothed, but as respects the rational soul by which he is exalted in honor above the beasts. And so it becomes an important question, whether men ought to enjoy, or to use,

themselves, or to do both. For we are commanded to love one another: but it is a question whether man is to be loved by man for his own sake, or for the sake of something else. If it is for his own sake, we enjoy him; if it is for the sake of something else, we use him. It seems to me, then, that he is to be loved for the sake of something else. For if a thing is to be loved for its own sake, then in the enjoyment of it consists a happy life, the hope of which at least, if not yet the reality, is our comfort in the present time. But a curse is pronounced on him who places his hope in man.

21. Neither ought any one to have joy in himself, if you look at the matter clearly, because no one ought to love even himself for his own sake, but for the sake of Him who is the true object of enjoyment. For a man is never in so good a state as when his whole life is a journey towards the unchangeable life, and his affections are entirely fixed upon that. If, however, he loves himself for his own sake, he does not look at himself in relation to God, but turns his mind in upon him self, and so is not occupied with anything that is unchangeable. And thus he does not enjoy himself at his best, because he is better when his mind is fully fixed upon, and his affections wrapped up in, the unchangeable good, than when he turns from that to enjoy even himself. Wherefore if you ought not to love even yourself for your own sake, but for His in whom your love finds its most worthy object, no other man has a right to be angry if you love him too for God's sake. For this is the law of love that has been laid down by Divine authority: "Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself;" but, "Thou shall love God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind:" so that you are to concentrate all your thoughts, your whole life and your whole intelligence upon Him from whom you derive all that you bring. For when He says, "With all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," He means that no part of our life is to be unoccupied, and to afford room, as it were, for the wish to enjoy some other object, but that whatever else may suggest itself to us as an object worthy of love is to be borne into the same channel in which the whole current of our affections flows. Whoever, then, loves his neighbor aright, ought to urge upon him that he too should love God with his whole heart, and soul, and mind. For in this way, loving his neighbor as himself, a man turns the whole current of his love both for himself and his neighbor into the channel of the love of God, which suffers

no stream to be drawn off from itself by whose diversion its own volume would be diminished.

CHAPTER 23

MAN NEEDS NO INJUNCTION TO LOVE HIMSELF AND HIS OWN BODY

22. Those things which are objects of use are not all, however, to be loved, but those only which are either united with us in a common relation to God, such as a man or an angel, or are so related to us as to need the goodness of God through our instrumentality, such as the body. For assuredly the martyrs did not love the wickedness of their persecutors, although they used it to attain the favor of God. As, then, there are four kinds of things that are to be loved,—first, that which is above us; second, ourselves; third, that which is on a level with us; fourth, that which is beneath us,—no precepts need be given about the second and fourth of these. For, however far a man may fall away from the truth, he still continues to love himself, and to love his own body. The soul which flies away from the unchangeable Light, the Ruler of all things, does so that it may rule over itself and over its own body; and so it cannot but love both itself and its own body.

23. Morever, it thinks it has attained something very great if it is able to lord it over its companions, that is, other men. For it is inherent in the sinful soul to desire above all things, and to claim as due to itself, that which is properly due to God only. Now such love of itself is more correctly called hate. For it is not just that it should desire what is beneath it to be obedient to it while itself will not obey its own superior; and most justly has it been said, “He who loveth iniquity hateth his own soul.” And accordingly the soul becomes weak, and endures much suffering about the mortal body. For, of course, it must love the body, and be grieved at its corruption; and the immortality and incorruptibility of the body spring out of the health of the soul. Now the health of the soul is to cling steadfastly to the better part, that is, to the unchangeable God. But when it aspires to lord it even over those who are by nature its equals,—that is, its fellow-men,—this is a reach of arrogance utterly intolerable.

CHAPTER 24

NO MAN HATES HIS OWN FLESH, NOT EVEN THOSE WHO ABUSE IT

24. No man, then, hates himself. On this point, indeed, no question was ever raised by any sect. But neither does any man hate his own body. For the apostle says truly, “No man ever yet hated his own flesh.” And when some people say that they would rather be without a body altogether, they entirely deceive themselves. For it is not their body, but its corruptions and its heaviness, that they hate. And so it is not no body, but an uncorrupted and very light body, that they want. But they think a body of that kind would be no body at all, because they think such a thing as that must be a spirit. And as to the fact that they seem in some sort to scourge their bodies by abstinence and toil, those who do this in the right spirit do it not that they may get rid of their body, but that they may have it in subjection and ready for every needful work. For they strive by a kind of toilsome exercise of the body itself to root out those lusts that are hurtful to the body, that is, those habits and affections of the soul that lead to the enjoyment of unworthy objects. They are not destroying themselves; they are taking care of their health.

25. Those, on the other hand, who do this in a perverse spirit, make war upon their own body as if it were a natural enemy. And in this matter they are led astray by a mistaken interpretation of what they read: “The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other.” For this is said of the carnal habit yet unsubdued, against which the spirit lusteth, not to destroy the body, but to eradicate the lust of the body—i.e., its evil habit—and thus to make it subject to the spirit, which is what the order of nature demands. For as, after the resurrection, the body, having become wholly subject to the spirit, will live in perfect peace to all eternity; even in this life we must make it an object to have the carnal habit changed for the better, so that its inordinate affections may not war against the soul. And until this shall take place, “the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh;” the spirit struggling, not in hatred, but for the mastery, because it desires that what it loves should be subject to the higher principle; and the flesh struggling, not in hatred, but because of the bondage of habit which it has derived from its

parent stock, and which has grown in upon it by a law of nature till it has become inveterate. The spirit, then, in subduing the flesh, is working as it were to destroy the ill-founded peace of an evil habit, and to bring about the real peace which springs out of a good habit. Nevertheless, not even those who, led astray by false notions, hate their bodies would be prepared to sacrifice one eye, even supposing they could do so without suffering any pain, and that they had as much sight left in one as they formerly had in two, unless some object was to be attained which would overbalance the loss. This and other indications of the same kind are sufficient to show those who candidly seek the truth how well-founded is the statement of the apostle when he says, “No man ever yet hated his own flesh.” He adds too, “but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church.”

CHAPTER 25

A MAN MAY LOVE SOMETHING MORE THAN HIS BODY, BUT DOES NOT THEREFORE HATE HIS BODY

26. Man, therefore, ought to be taught the due measure of loving, that is, in what measure he may love himself so as to be of service to himself. For that he does love himself, and does desire to do good to himself, nobody but a fool would doubt. He is to be taught, too, in what measure to love his body, so as to care for it wisely and within due limits. For it is equally manifest that he loves his body also, and desires to keep it safe and sound. And yet a man may have something that he loves better than the safety and soundness of his body. For many have been found voluntarily to suffer both pains and amputations of some of their limbs that they might obtain other objects which they valued more highly. But no one is to be told not to desire the safety and health of his body because there is something he desires more. For the miser, though he loves money, buys bread for himself,—that is, he gives away money that he is very fond of and desires to heap up,—but it is because he values more highly the bodily health which the bread sustains. It is superfluous to argue longer on a point so very plain, but this is just what the error of wicked men often compels us to do.

CHAPTER 26

THE COMMAND TO LOVE GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOR INCLUDES A COMMAND TO LOVE OURSELVES

27. Seeing, then, that there is no need of a command that every man should love himself and his own body,—seeing, that is, that we love ourselves, and what is beneath us but connected with us, through a law of nature which has never been violated, and which is common to us with the beasts (for even the beasts love themselves and their own bodies),—it only remained necessary to lay injunctions upon us in regard to God above us, and our neighbor beside us. “Thou shalt love,” He says, “the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Thus the end of the commandment is love, and that twofold, the love of God and the love of our neighbor. Now, if you take yourself in your entirety,—that is, soul and body together,—and your neighbor in his entirety, soul and body together (for man is made up of soul and body), you will find that none of the classes of things that are to be loved is overlooked in these two commandments. For though, when the love of God comes first, and the measure of our love for Him is prescribed in such terms that it is evident all other things are to find their centre in Him, nothing seems to be said about our love for ourselves; yet when it is said, “Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself,” it at once becomes evident that our love for ourselves has not been overlooked.

CHAPTER 27

THE ORDER OF LOVE

28. Now he is a man of just and holy life who forms an unprejudiced estimate of things, and keeps his affections also under strict control, so that he neither loves what he ought not to love, nor fails to love what he ought to love, nor loves that more which ought to be loved less, nor loves that equally which ought to be loved either less or more, nor loves that less or more which ought to be loved equally. No sinner is to be loved as a sinner; and every man is to be loved as a man for God’s sake; but God is to be loved for His own sake. And if God is to be loved more than any man, each

man ought to love God more than himself. Likewise we ought to love another man better than our own body, because all things are to be loved in reference to God, and another man can have fellowship with us in the enjoyment of God, whereas our body cannot; for the body only lives through the soul, and it is by the soul that we enjoy God.

CHAPTER 28

HOW WE ARE TO DECIDE WHOM TO AID

29. Further, all men are to be loved equally. But since you cannot do good to all, you are to pay special regard to those who, by the accidents of time, or place, or circumstance, are brought into closer connection with you. For, suppose that you had a great deal of some commodity, and felt bound to give it away to somebody who had none, and that it could not be given to more than one person; if two persons presented themselves, neither of whom had either from need or relationship a greater claim upon you than the other, you could do nothing fairer than choose by lot to which you would give what could not be given to both. Just so among men: since you cannot consult for the good of them all, you must take the matter as decided for you by a sort of lot, according as each man happens for the time being to be more closely connected with you.

CHAPTER 29

WE ARE TO DESIRE AND ENDEAVOR THAT ALL MEN MAY LOVE GOD

30. Now of all who can with us enjoy God, we love partly those to whom we render services, partly those who render services to us, partly those who both help us in our need and in turn are helped by us, partly those upon whom we confer no advantage and from whom we look for none. We ought to desire, however, that they should all join with us in loving God, and all the assistance that we either give them or accept from them should tend to that one end. For in the theatres, dens of iniquity though they be, if a man is fond of a particular actor, and enjoys his art as a great or even as the very greatest good, he is fond of all who join with him in admiration of his favorite, not for their own sakes, but for the sake of him whom they admire in common; and the more fervent he is in his admiration, the more he works

in every way he can to secure new admirers for him, and the more anxious he becomes to show him to others; and if he find any one comparatively indifferent, he does all he can to excite his interest by urging his favorite's merits: if, however, he meet with any one who opposes him, he is exceedingly displeased by such a man's contempt of his favorite, and strives in every way he can to remove it. Now, if this be so, what does it become us to do who live in the fellowship of the love of God, the enjoyment of whom is true happiness of life, to whom all who love Him owe both their own existence and the love they bear Him, concerning whom we have no fear that any one who comes to know Him will be disappointed in Him, and who desires our love, not for any gain to Himself, but that those who love Him may obtain an eternal reward, even Himself whom they love? And hence it is that we love even our enemies. For we do not fear them, seeing they cannot take away from us what we love; but we pity them rather, because the more they hate us the more are they separated from Him whom we love. For if they would turn to Him, they must of necessity love Him as the supreme good, and love us too as partakers with them in so great a blessing.

CHAPTER 30

WHETHER ANGELS ARE TO BE RECKONED OUR NEIGHBORS

31. There arises further in this connection a question about angels. For they are happy in the enjoyment of Him whom we long to enjoy; and the more we enjoy Him in this life as through a glass darkly, the more easy do we find it to bear our pilgrimage, and the more eagerly do we long for its termination. But it is not irrational to ask whether in those two commandments is included the love of angels also. For that He who commanded us to love our neighbor made no exception, as far as men are concerned, is shown both by our Lord Himself in the Gospel, and by the Apostle Paul. For when the man to whom our Lord delivered those two commandments, and to whom He said that on these hang all the law and the prophets, asked Him, “And who is my neighbor?” He told him of a certain man who, going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among thieves, and was severely wounded by them, and left naked and half dead. And He showed him that nobody was neighbor to this man except him who took

pity upon him and came forward to relieve and care for him. And the man who had asked the question admitted the truth of this when he was himself interrogated in turn. To whom our Lord says, “Go and do thou likewise;” teaching us that he is our neighbor whom it is our duty to help in his need, or whom it would be our duty to help if he were in need. Whence it follows, that he whose duty it would be in turn to help us is our neighbor. For the name “neighbor” is a relative one, and no one can be neighbor except to a neighbor. And, again, who does not see that no exception is made of any one as a person to whom the offices of mercy may be denied when our Lord extends the rule even to our enemies? “Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you.”

32. And so also the Apostle Paul teaches when he says: “For this, Thou shall not commit adultery, Thou shall not kill, Thou shall not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shall not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor.” Whoever then supposes that the apostle did not embrace every man in this precept, is compelled to admit, what is at once most absurd and most pernicious, that the apostle thought it no sin, if a man were not a Christian or were an enemy, to commit adultery with his wife, or to kill him, or to covet his goods. And as nobody but a fool would say this, it is clear that every man is to be considered our neighbor, because we are to work no ill to any man.

33. But now, if every one to whom we ought to show, or who ought to show to us, the offices of mercy is by right called a neighbor, it is manifest that the command to love our neighbor embraces the holy angels also, seeing that so great offices of mercy have been performed by them on our behalf, as may easily be shown by turning the attention to many passages of Holy Scripture. And on this ground even God Himself, our Lord, desired to be called our neighbor. For our Lord Jesus Christ points to Himself under the figure of the man who brought aid to him who was lying half dead on the road, wounded and abandoned by the robbers. And the Psalmist says in his prayer, “I behaved myself as though he had been my friend or brother.” But as the Divine nature is of higher excellence than, and far removed above,

our nature, the command to love God is distinct from that to love our neighbor. For He shows us pity on account of His own goodness, but we show pity to one another on account of His;—that is, He pities us that we may fully enjoy Himself; we pity one another that we may fully enjoy Him.

CHAPTER 31

GOD USES RATHER THAN ENJOYS US

34. And on this ground, when we say that we enjoy only that which we love for its own sake, and that nothing is a true object of enjoyment except that which makes us happy, and that all other things are for use, there seems still to be something that requires explanation. For God loves us, and Holy Scripture frequently sets before us the love He has towards us. In what way then does He love us? As objects of use or as objects of enjoyment? If He enjoys us, He must be in need of good from us, and no sane man will say that; for all the good we enjoy is either Himself, or what comes from Himself. And no one can be ignorant or in doubt as to the fact that the light stands in no need of the glitter of the things it has itself lit up. The Psalmist says most plainly, “I said to the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou needest not my goodness.” He does not enjoy us then, but makes use of us. For if He neither enjoys nor uses us, I am at a loss to discover in what way He can love us.

CHAPTER 32

IN WHAT WAY GOD USES MAN

35. But neither does He use after our fashion of using. For when we use objects, we do so with a view to the full enjoyment of the goodness of God. God, however, in His use of us, has reference to His own goodness. For it is because He is good we exist; and so far as we truly exist we are good. And, further, because He is also just, we cannot with impunity be evil; and so far as we are evil, so far is our existence less complete. Now He is the first and supreme existence, who is altogether unchangeable, and who could say in the fullest sense of the words, “I AM That I AM,” and “Thou shalt say to them, I AM hath sent me unto you;” so that all other things that exist, both owe their existence entirely to Him, and are good only so far as He has

given it to them to be so. That use, then, which God is said to make of us has no reference to His own advantage, but to ours only; and, so far as He is concerned, has reference only to His goodness. When we take pity upon a man and care for him, it is for his advantage we do so; but somehow or other our own advantage follows by a sort of natural consequence, for God does not leave the mercy we show to him who needs it to go without reward. Now this is our highest reward, that we should fully enjoy Him, and that all who enjoy Him should enjoy one another in Him.

CHAPTER 33

IN WHAT WAY MAN SHOULD BE ENJOYED

36. For if we find our happiness complete in one another, we stop short upon the road, and place our hope of happiness in man or angel. Now the proud man and the proud angel arrogate this to themselves, and are glad to have the hope of others fixed upon them. But, on the contrary, the holy man and the holy angel, even when we are weary and anxious to stay with them and rest in them, set themselves to recruit our energies with the provision which they have received of God for us or for themselves; and then urge us thus refreshed to go on our way towards Him, in the enjoyment of whom we find our common happiness. For even the apostle exclaims, “Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” and again: “Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.” And the angel admonisheth the man who is about to worship him, that he should rather worship Him who is his Master, and under whom he himself is a fellow-servant.

37. But when you have joy of a man in God, it is God rather than man that you enjoy. For you enjoy Him by whom you are made happy, and you rejoice to have come to Him in whose presence you place your hope of joy. And accordingly, Paul says to Philemon, “Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord.” For if he had not added “in the Lord,” but had only said, “Let me have joy of thee,” he would have implied that he fixed his hope of happiness upon him, although even in the immediate context to “enjoy” is used in the sense of to “use with delight.” For when the thing that we love is near us, it is a matter of course that it should bring delight with it. And if

you pass beyond this delight, and make it a means to that which you are permanently to rest in, you are using it, and it is an abuse of language to say that you enjoy it. But if you cling to it, and rest in it, finding your happiness complete in it, then you may be truly and properly said to enjoy it. And this we must never do except in the case of the Blessed Trinity, who is the Supreme and Unchangeable Good.

CHAPTER 34

CHRIST THE FIRST WAY TO GOD

38. And mark that even when He who is Himself the Truth and the Word, by whom all things were made, had been made flesh that He might dwell among us, the apostle yet says: “Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more.” For Christ, desiring not only to give the possession to those who had completed the journey, but also to be Himself the way to those who were just setting out, determined to take a fleshly body. Whence also that expression, “The Lord created me in the beginning of His way,” that is, that those who wished to come might begin their journey in Him. The apostle, therefore, although still on the way, and following after God who called him to the reward of His heavenly calling, yet forgetting those things which were behind, and pressing on towards those things which were before, had already passed over the beginning of the way, and had now no further need of it; yet by this way all must commence their journey who desire to attain to the truth, and to rest in eternal life. For He says: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life;” that is, by me men come, to me they come, in me they rest. For when we come to Him, we come to the Father also, because through an equal an equal is known; and the Holy Spirit binds, and as it were seals us, so that we are able to rest permanently in the supreme and unchangeable Good. And hence we may learn how essential it is that nothing should detain us on the way, when not even our Lord Himself, so far as He has condescended to be our way, is willing to detain us, but wishes us rather to press on; and, instead of weakly clinging to temporal things, even though these have been put on and worn by Him for our salvation, to pass over them quickly, and to struggle to attain unto Himself, who has freed our nature from the bondage of temporal things, and has set it down at the right hand of His Father.

CHAPTER 35

THE FULFILLMENT AND END OF SCRIPTURE IS THE LOVE OF GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOR

39. Of all, then, that has been said since we entered upon the discussion about things, this is the sum: that we should clearly understand that the fulfillment and the end of the Law, and of all Holy Scripture, is the love of an object which is to be enjoyed, and the love of an object which can enjoy that other in fellowship with ourselves. For there is no need of a command that each man should love himself. The whole temporal dispensation for our salvation, therefore, was framed by the providence of God that we might know this truth and be able to act upon it; and we ought to use that dispensation, not with such love and delight as if it were a good to rest in, but with a transient feeling rather, such as we have towards the road, or carriages, or other things that are merely means. Perhaps some other comparison can be found that will more suitably express the idea that we are to love the things by which we are borne only for the sake of that towards which we are borne.

CHAPTER 36

THAT INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE WHICH BUILDS US UP IN LOVE IS NOT PERNICIOUSLY DECEPTIVE NOR MENDACIOUS, EVEN THOUGH IT BE FAULTY. THE INTERPRETER, HOWEVER, SHOULD BE CORRECTED

40. Whoever, then, thinks that he understands the Holy Scriptures, or any part of them, but puts such an interpretation upon them as does not tend to build up this twofold love of God and our neighbor, does not yet understand them as he ought. If, on the other hand, a man draws a meaning from them that may be used for the building up of love, even though he does not happen upon the precise meaning which the author whom he reads intended to express in that place, his error is not pernicious, and he is wholly clear from the charge of deception. For there is involved in deception the intention to say what is false; and we find plenty of people who intend to deceive, but nobody who wishes to be deceived. Since, then, the man who knows practises deceit, and the ignorant man is practised upon, it is quite clear that in any particular case the man who is deceived is a better man than he who deceives, seeing that it is better to suffer than to commit

injustice. Now every man who lies commits an injustice; and if any man thinks that a lie is ever useful, he must think that injustice is sometimes useful. For no liar keeps faith in the matter about which he lies. He wishes, of course, that the man to whom he lies should place confidence in him; and yet he betrays his confidence by lying to him. Now every man who breaks faith is unjust. Either, then, injustice is sometimes useful (which is impossible), or a lie is never useful.

41. Whoever takes another meaning out of Scripture than the writer intended, goes astray, but not through any falsehood in Scripture. Nevertheless, as I was going to say, if his mistaken interpretation tends to build up love, which is the end of the commandment, he goes astray in much the same way as a man who by mistake quits the high road, but yet reaches through the fields the same place to which the road leads. He is to be corrected, however, and to be shown how much better it is not to quit the straight road, lest, if he get into a habit of going astray, he may sometimes take cross roads, or even go in the wrong direction altogether.

CHAPTER 37

DANGERS OF MISTAKEN INTERPRETATION

For if he takes up rashly a meaning which the author whom he is reading did not intend, he often falls in with other statements which he cannot harmonize with this meaning. And if he admits that these statements are true and certain, then it follows that the meaning he had put upon the former passage cannot be the true one: and so it comes to pass, one can hardly tell how, that, out of love for his own opinion, he begins to feel more angry with Scripture than he is with himself. And if he should once permit that evil to creep in, it will utterly destroy him. “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” Now faith will totter if the authority of Scripture begin to shake. And then, if faith totter, love itself will grow cold. For if a man has fallen from faith, he must necessarily also fall from love; for he cannot love what he does not believe to exist. But if he both believes and loves, then through good works, and through diligent attention to the precepts of morality, he comes to hope also that he shall attain the object of his love. And so these are the three things to which all knowledge and all prophecy are subservient: faith, hope, love.

CHAPTER 38

LOVE NEVER FAILETH

42. But sight shall displace faith; and hope shall be swallowed up in that perfect bliss to which we shall come: love, on the other hand, shall wax greater when these others fail. For if we love by faith that which as yet we see not, how much more shall we love it when we begin to see! And if we love by hope that which as yet we have not reached, how much more shall we love it when we reach it! For there is this great difference between things temporal and things eternal, that a temporal object is valued more before we possess it, and begins to prove worthless the moment we attain it, because it does not satisfy the soul, which has its only true and sure resting-place in eternity: an eternal object, on the other hand, is loved with greater ardor when it is in possession than while it is still an object of desire, for no one in his longing for it can set a higher value on it than really belongs to it, so as to think it comparatively worthless when he finds it of less value than he thought; on the contrary, however high the value any man may set upon it when he is on his way to possess it, he will find it, when it comes into his possession, of higher value still.

CHAPTER 39

HE WHO IS MATURE IN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE, NEEDS SCRIPTURE NO LONGER

43. And thus a man who is resting upon faith, hope and love, and who keeps a firm hold upon these, does not need the Scriptures except for the purpose of instructing others. Accordingly, many live without copies of the Scriptures, even in solitude, on the strength of these three graces. So that in their case, I think, the saying is already fulfilled: “Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.” Yet by means of these instruments (as they may be called), so great an edifice of faith and love has been built up in them, that, holding to what is perfect, they do not seek for what is only in part perfect—of course, I mean, so far as is possible in this

life; for, in comparison with the future life, the life of no just and holy man is perfect here. Therefore the apostle says: “Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity:” because, when a man shall have reached the eternal world, while the other two graces will fail, love will remain greater and more assured.

CHAPTER 40

WHAT MANNER OF READER SCRIPTURE DEMANDS

44. And, therefore, if a man fully understands that “the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned,” and is bent upon making all his understanding of Scripture to bear upon these three graces, he may come to the interpretation of these books with an easy mind. For while the apostle says “love,” he adds “out of a pure heart,” to provide against anything being loved but that which is worthy of love. And he joins with this “a good conscience,” in reference to hope; for, if a man has the burthen of a bad conscience, he despairs of ever reaching that which he believes in and loves. And in the third place he says: “and of faith unfeigned.” For if our faith is free from all hypocrisy, then we both abstain from loving what is unworthy of our love, and by living uprightly we are able to indulge the hope that our hope shall not be in vain.

For these reasons I have been anxious to speak about the objects of faith, as far as I thought it necessary for my present purpose; for much has already been said on this subject in other volumes, either by others or by myself. And so let this be the end of the present book. In the next I shall discuss, as far as God shall give me light, the subject of signs.

Book II

Argument—Having completed his exposition of things, the author now proceeds to discuss the subject of signs. He first defines what a sign is, and shows that there are two classes of signs, the natural and the conventional. Of conventional signs (which are the only class here noticed), words are the most numerous and important, and are those with which the interpreter of Scripture is chiefly concerned. The difficulties and obscurities of Scripture spring chiefly from two sources, unknown and ambiguous signs. The present book deals only with unknown signs, the ambiguities of language being reserved for treatment in the next book. The difficulty arising from ignorance of signs is to be removed by learning the Greek and Hebrew languages, in which Scripture is written, by comparing the various translations, and by attending to the context. In the interpretation of figurative expressions, knowledge of things is as necessary as knowledge of words; and the various sciences and arts of the heathen, so far as they are true and useful, may be turned to account in removing our ignorance of signs, whether these be direct or figurative. Whilst exposing the folly and futility of many heathen superstitions and practices, the author points out how all that is sound and useful in their science and philosophy may be turned to a Christian use. And in conclusion, he shows the spirit in which it behoves us to address ourselves to the study and interpretation of the sacred books.

CHAPTER 1

SIGNS, THEIR NATURE AND VARIETY

1. As when I was writing about things, I introduced the subject with a warning against attending to anything but what they are in themselves, even though they are signs of something else, so now, when I come in its turn to discuss the subject of signs, I lay down this direction, not to attend to what they are in themselves, but to the fact that they are signs, that is, to what they signify. For a sign is a thing which, over and above the impression it

makes on the senses, causes something else to come into the mind as a consequence of itself: as when we see a footprint, we conclude that an animal whose footprint this is has passed by; and when we see smoke, we know that there is fire beneath; and when we hear the voice of a living man, we think of the feeling in his mind; and when the trumpet sounds, soldiers know that they are to advance or retreat, or do whatever else the state of the battle requires.

2. Now some signs are natural, others conventional. Natural signs are those which, apart from any intention or desire of using them as signs, do yet lead to the knowledge of something else, as, for example, smoke when it indicates fire. For it is not from any intention of making it a sign that it is so, but through attention to experience we come to know that fire is beneath, even when nothing but smoke can be seen. And the footprint of an animal passing by belongs to this class of signs. And the countenance of an angry or sorrowful man indicates the feeling in his mind, independently of his will: and in the same way every other emotion of the mind is betrayed by the tell-tale countenance, even though we do nothing with the intention of making it known. This class of signs, however, it is no part of my design to discuss at present. But as it comes under this division of the subject, I could not altogether pass it over. It will be enough to have noticed it thus far.

CHAPTER 2

OF THE KIND OF SIGNS WE ARE NOW CONCERNED WITH

3. Conventional signs, on the other hand, are those which living beings mutually exchange for the purpose of showing, as well as they can, the feelings of their minds, or their perceptions, or their thoughts. Nor is there any reason for giving a sign except the desire of drawing forth and conveying into another’s mind what the giver of the sign has in his own mind. We wish, then, to consider and discuss this class of signs so far as men are concerned with it, because even the signs which have been given us of God, and which are contained in the Holy Scriptures, were made known to us through men—those, namely, who wrote the Scriptures. The beasts, too, have certain signs among themselves by which they make

known the desires in their mind. For when the poultry-cock has discovered food, he signals with his voice for the hen to run to him, and the dove by cooing calls his mate, or is called by her in turn; and many signs of the same kind are matters of common observation. Now whether these signs, like the expression or the cry of a man in grief, follow the movement of the mind instinctively and apart from any purpose, or whether they are really used with the purpose of signification, is another question, and does not pertain to the matter in hand. And this part of the subject I exclude from the scope of this work as not necessary to my present object.

CHAPTER 3

AMONG SIGNS, WORDS HOLD THE CHIEF PLACE

4. Of the signs, then, by which men communicate their thoughts to one another, some relate to the sense of sight, some to that of hearing, a very few to the other senses. For, when we nod, we give no sign except to the eyes of the man to whom we wish by this sign to impart our desire. And some convey a great deal by the motion of the hands: and actors by movements of all their limbs give certain signs to the initiated, and, so to speak, address their conversation to the eyes: and the military standards and flags convey through the eyes the will of the commanders. And all these signs are as it were a kind of visible words. The signs that address themselves to the ear are, as I have said, more numerous, and for the most part consist of words. For though the bugle and the flute and the lyre frequently give not only a sweet but a significant sound, yet all these signs are very few in number compared with words. For among men words have obtained far and away the chief place as a means of indicating the thoughts of the mind. Our Lord, it is true, gave a sign through the odor of the ointment which was poured out upon His feet; and in the sacrament of His body and blood He signified His will through the sense of taste; and when by touching the hem of His garment the woman was made whole, the act was not wanting in significance. But the countless multitude of the signs through which men express their thoughts consist of words. For I have been able to put into words all those signs, the various classes of which I have briefly touched upon, but I could by no effort express words in terms of those signs.

CHAPTER 4

ORIGIN OF WRITING

5. But because words pass away as soon as they strike upon the air, and last no longer than their sound, men have by means of letters formed signs of words. Thus the sounds of the voice are made visible to the eye, not of course as sounds, but by means of certain signs. It has been found impossible, however, to make those signs common to all nations owing to the sin of discord among men, which springs from every man trying to snatch the chief place for himself. And that celebrated tower which was built to reach to heaven was an indication of this arrogance of spirit; and the ungodly men concerned in it justly earned the punishment of having not their minds only, but their tongues besides, thrown into confusion and discordance.

CHAPTER 5

SCRIPTURE TRANSLATED INTO VARIOUS LANGUAGES

6. And hence it happened that even Holy Scripture, which brings a remedy for the terrible diseases of the human will, being at first set forth in one language, by means of which it could at the fit season be disseminated through the whole world, was interpreted into various tongues, and spread far and wide, and thus became known to the nations for their salvation. And in reading it, men seek nothing more than to find out the thought and will of those by whom it was written, and through these to find out the will of God, in accordance with which they believe these men to have spoken.

CHAPTER 6

USE OF THE OBSCURITIES IN SCRIPTURE WHICH ARISE FROM ITS FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

7. But hasty and careless readers are led astray by many and manifold obscurities and ambiguities, substituting one meaning for another; and in some places they cannot hit upon even a fair interpretation. Some of the expressions are so obscure as to shroud the meaning in the thickest darkness. And I do not doubt that all this was divinely arranged for the

purpose of subduing pride by toil, and of preventing a feeling of satiety in the intellect, which generally holds in small esteem what is discovered without difficulty. For why is it, I ask, that if any one says that there are holy and just men whose life and conversation the Church of Christ uses as a means of redeeming those who come to it from all kinds of superstitions, and making them through their imitation of good men members of its own body; men who, as good and true servants of God, have come to the baptismal font laying down the burdens of the world, and who rising thence do, through the implanting of the Holy Spirit, yield the fruit of a two-fold love, a love, that is, of God and their neighbor;—how is it, I say, that if a man says this, he does not please his hearer so much as when he draws the same meaning from that passage in Canticles, where it is said of the Church, when it is being praised under the figure of a beautiful woman, "Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are shorn which came up from the washing, whereof every one bears twins, and none is barren among them?" Does the hearer learn anything more than when he listens to the same thought expressed in the plainest language, without the help of this figure? And yet, I don't know why, I feel greater pleasure in contemplating holy men, when I view them as the teeth of the Church, tearing men away from their errors, and bringing them into the Church's body, with all their harshness softened down, just as if they had been torn off and masticated by the teeth. It is with the greatest pleasure, too, that I recognize them under the figure of sheep that have been shorn, laying down the burthens of the world like fleeces, and coming up from the washing, i.e., from baptism, and all bearing twins, i.e., the twin commandments of love, and none among them barren in that holy fruit.

8. But why I view them with greater delight under that aspect than if no such figure were drawn from the sacred books, though the fact would remain the same and the knowledge the same, is another question, and one very difficult to answer. Nobody, however, has any doubt about the facts, both that it is pleasanter in some cases to have knowledge communicated through figures, and that what is attended with difficulty in the seeking gives greater pleasure in the finding.—For those who seek but do not find suffer from hunger. Those, again, who do not seek at all because they have what they require just beside them often grow languid from satiety. Now

weakness from either of these causes is to be avoided. Accordingly the Holy Spirit has, with admirable wisdom and care for our welfare, so arranged the Holy Scriptures as by the plainer passages to satisfy our hunger, and by the more obscure to stimulate our appetite. For almost nothing is dug out of those obscure passages which may not be found set forth in the plainest language elsewhere.

CHAPTER 7

STEPS TO WISDOM: FIRST, FEAR; SECOND, PIETY; THIRD, KNOWLEDGE; FOURTH, RESOLUTION; FIFTH, COUNSEL; SIXTH, PURIFICATION OF HEART; SEVENTH, STOP OR TERMINATION, WISDOM

9. First of all, then, it is necessary that we should be led by the fear of God to seek the knowledge of His will, what He commands us to desire and what to avoid. Now this fear will of necessity excite in us the thought of our mortality and of the death that is before us, and crucify all the motions of pride as if our flesh were nailed to the tree. Next it is necessary to have our hearts subdued by piety, and not to run in the face of Holy Scripture, whether when understood it strikes at some of our sins, or, when not understood, we feel as if we could be wiser and give better commands ourselves. We must rather think and believe that whatever is there written, even though it be hidden, is better and truer than anything we could devise by our own wisdom.

10. After these two steps of fear and piety, we come to the third step, knowledge, of which I have now undertaken to treat. For in this every earnest student of the Holy Scriptures exercises himself, to find nothing else in them but that God is to be loved for His own sake, and our neighbor for God’s sake; and that God is to be loved with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and one’s neighbor as one’s self—that is, in such a way that all our love for our neighbor, like all our love for ourselves, should have reference to God. And on these two commandments I touched in the previous book when I was treating about things. It is necessary, then, that each man should first of all find in the Scriptures that he, through being entangled in the love of this world—i.e., of temporal things—has been drawn far away from such a love for God and such a love for his neighbor as Scripture enjoins. Then that fear which leads him to think of the

judgment of God, and that piety which gives him no option but to believe in and submit to the authority of Scripture, compel him to bewail his condition. For the knowledge of a good hope makes a man not boastful, but sorrowful. And in this frame of mind he implores with unremitting prayers the comfort of the Divine help that he may not be overwhelmed in despair, and so he gradually comes to the fourth step,—that is, strength and resolution,—in which he hungers and thirsts after righteousness. For in this frame of mind he extricates himself from every form of fatal joy in transitory things, and turning away from these, fixes his affection on things eternal, to wit, the unchangeable Trinity in unity.

11. And when, to the extent of his power, he has gazed upon this object shining from afar, and has felt that owing to the weakness of his sight he cannot endure that matchless light, then in the fifth step—that is, in the counsel of compassion—he cleanses his soul, which is violently agitated, and disturbs him with base desires, from the filth it has contracted. And at this stage he exercises himself diligently in the love of his neighbor; and when he has reached the point of loving his enemy, full of hopes and unbroken in strength, he mounts to the sixth step, in which he purifies the eye itself which can see God, so far as God can be seen by those who as far as possible die to this world. For men see Him just so far as they die to this world; and so far as they live to it they see Him not. But yet, although that light may begin to appear clearer, and not only more tolerable, but even more delightful, still it is only through a glass darkly that we are said to see, because we walk by faith, not by sight, while we continue to wander as strangers in this world, even though our conversation be in heaven. And at this stage, too, a man so purges the eye of his affections as not to place his neighbor before, or even in comparison with, the truth, and therefore not himself, because not him whom he loves as himself. Accordingly, that holy man will be so single and so pure in heart, that he will not step aside from the truth, either for the sake of pleasing men or with a view to avoid any of the annoyances which beset this life. Such a son ascends to wisdom, which is the seventh and last step, and which he enjoys in peace and tranquillity. For the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. From that beginning, then, till we reach wisdom itself, our way is by the steps now described.

CHAPTER 8

THE CANONICAL BOOKS

12. But let us now go back to consider the third step here mentioned, for it is about it that I have set myself to speak and reason as the Lord shall grant me wisdom. The most skillful interpreter of the sacred writings, then, will be he who in the first place has read them all and retained them in his knowledge, if not yet with full understanding, still with such knowledge as reading gives,—those of them, at least, that are called canonical. For he will read the others with greater safety when built up in the belief of the truth, so that they will not take first possession of a weak mind, nor, cheating it with dangerous falsehoods and delusions, fill it with prejudices adverse to a sound understanding. Now, in regard to the canonical Scriptures, he must follow the judgment of the greater number of catholic churches; and among these, of course, a high place must be given to such as have been thought worthy to be the seat of an apostle and to receive epistles. Accordingly, among the canonical Scriptures he will judge according to the following standard: to prefer those that are received by all the catholic churches to those which some do not receive. Among those, again, which are not received by all, he will prefer such as have the sanction of the greater number and those of greater authority, to such as are held by the smaller number and those of less authority. If, however, he shall find that some books are held by the greater number of churches, and others by the churches of greater authority (though this is not a very likely thing to happen), I think that in such a case the authority on the two sides is to be looked upon as equal.

13. Now the whole canon of Scripture on which we say this judgment is to be exercised, is contained in the following books:—Five books of Moses, that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; one book of Joshua the son of Nun; one of Judges; one short book called Ruth, which seems rather to belong to the beginning of Kings; next, four books of Kings, and two of Chronicles—these last not following one another, but running parallel, so to speak, and going over the same ground. The books now mentioned are history, which contains a connected narrative of the times, and follows the order of the events. There are other books which seem to

follow no regular order, and are connected neither with the order of the preceding books nor with one another, such as Job, and Tobias, and Esther, and Judith, and the two books of Maccabees, and the two of Ezra, which last look more like a sequel to the continuous regular history which terminates with the books of Kings and Chronicles. Next are the Prophets, in which there is one book of the Psalms of David; and three books of Solomon, viz., Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes. For two books, one called Wisdom and the other Ecclesiasticus, are ascribed to Solomon from a certain resemblance of style, but the most likely opinion is that they were written by Jesus the son of Sirach. Still they are to be reckoned among the prophetical books, since they have attained recognition as being authoritative. The remainder are the books which are strictly called the Prophets: twelve separate books of the prophets which are connected with one another, and having never been disjoined, are reckoned as one book; the names of these prophets are as follows:—Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; then there are the four greater prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel. The authority of the Old Testament is contained within the limits of these forty-four books. That of the New Testament, again, is contained within the following:—Four books of the Gospel, according to Matthew, according to Mark, according to Luke, according to John; fourteen epistles of the Apostle Paul—one to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, two to the Thessalonians, one to the Colossians, two to Timothy, one to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews: two of Peter; three of John; one of Jude; and one of James; one book of the Acts of the Apostles; and one of the Revelation of John.

CHAPTER 9

HOW WE SHOULD PROCEED IN STUDYING SCRIPTURE

14. In all these books those who fear God and are of a meek and pious disposition seek the will of God. And in pursuing this search the first rule to be observed is, as I said, to know these books, if not yet with the understanding, still to read them so as to commit them to memory, or at least so as not to remain wholly ignorant of them. Next, those matters that are plainly laid down in them, whether rules of life or rules of faith, are to

be searched into more carefully and more diligently; and the more of these a man discovers, the more capacious does his understanding become. For among the things that are plainly laid down in Scripture are to be found all matters that concern faith and the manner of life,—to wit, hope and love, of which I have spoken in the previous book. After this, when we have made ourselves to a certain extent familiar with the language of Scripture, we may proceed to open up and investigate the obscure passages, and in doing so draw examples from the plainer expressions to throw light upon the more obscure, and use the evidence of passages about which there is no doubt to remove all hesitation in regard to the doubtful passages. And in this matter memory counts for a great deal; but if the memory be defective, no rules can supply the want.

CHAPTER 10

UNKNOWN OR AMBIGUOUS SIGNS PREVENT SCRIPTURE FROM BEING UNDERSTOOD

15. Now there are two causes which prevent what is written from being understood: its being vailed either under unknown, or under ambiguous signs. Signs are either proper or figurative. They are called proper when they are used to point out the objects they were designed to point out, as we say bos when we mean an ox, because all men who with us use the Latin tongue call it by this name. Signs are figurative when the things themselves which we indicate by the proper names are used to signify something else, as we say bos, and understand by that syllable the ox, which is ordinarily called by that name; but then further by that ox understand a preacher of the gospel, as Scripture signifies, according to the apostle’s explanation, when it says: “Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.”

CHAPTER 11

KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGES, ESPECIALLY OF GREEK AND HEBREW, NECESSARY TO REMOVE IGNORANCE OR SIGNS

16. The great remedy for ignorance of proper signs is knowledge of languages. And men who speak the Latin tongue, of whom are those I have undertaken to instruct, need two other languages for the knowledge of Scripture, Hebrew and Greek, that they may have recourse to the original

texts if the endless diversity of the Latin translators throw them into doubt. Although, indeed, we often find Hebrew words untranslated in the books as for example, Amen, Halleluia, Racha, Hosanna, and others of the same kind. Some of these, although they could have been translated, have been preserved in their original form on account of the more sacred authority that attaches to it, as for example, Amen and Halleluia. Some of them, again, are said to be untranslatable into another tongue, of which the other two I have mentioned are examples. For in some languages there are words that cannot be translated into the idiom of another language. And this happens chiefly in the case of interjections, which are words that express rather an emotion of the mind than any part of a thought we have in our mind. And the two given above are said to be of this kind, Racha expressing the cry of an angry man, Hosanna that of a joyful man. But the knowledge of these languages is necessary, not for the sake of a few words like these which it is very easy to mark and to ask about, but, as has been said, on account of the diversities among translators. For the translations of the Scriptures from Hebrew into Greek can be counted, but the Latin translators are out of all number. For in the early days of the faith every man who happened to get his hands upon a Greek manuscript, and who thought he had any knowledge, were it ever so little, of the two languages, ventured upon the work of translation.

CHAPTER 12

A DIVERSITY OF INTERPRETATIONS IS USEFUL. ERRORS ARISING FROM AMBIGUOUS WORDS

17. And this circumstance would assist rather than hinder the understanding of Scripture, if only readers were not careless. For the examination of a number of texts has often thrown light upon some of the more obscure passages; for example, in that passage of the prophet Isaiah, one translator reads: “And do not despise the domestics of thy seed;” another reads: “And do not despise thine own flesh.” Each of these in turn confirms the other. For the one is explained by the other; because “flesh” may be taken in its literal sense, so that a man may understand that he is admonished not to despise his own body; and “the domestics of thy seed” may be understood figuratively of Christians, because they are spiritually born of the same seed

as ourselves, namely, the Word. When now the meaning of the two translators is compared, a more likely sense of the words suggests itself, viz., that the command is not to despise our kinsmen, because when one brings the expression “domestics of thy seed” into relation with “flesh,” kinsmen most naturally occur to one’s mind. Whence, I think, that expression of the apostle, when he says, “If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them;” that is, that through emulation of those who had believed, some of them might believe too. And he calls the Jews his “flesh,” on account of the relationship of blood. Again, that passage from the same prophet Isaiah: “If ye will not believe, ye shall not understand,” another has translated: “If ye will not believe, ye shall not abide.” Now which of these is the literal translation cannot be ascertained without reference to the text in the original tongue. And yet to those who read with knowledge, a great truth is to be found in each. For it is difficult for interpreters to differ so widely as not to touch at some point. Accordingly here, as understanding consists in sight, and is abiding, but faith feeds us as babes, upon milk, in the cradles of temporal things (for now we walk by faith, not by sight); as, moreover, unless we walk by faith, we shall not attain to sight, which does not pass away, but abides, our understanding being purified by holding to the truth;—for these reasons one says, “If ye will not believe, ye shall not understand;” but the other, “If ye will not believe, ye shall not abide.”

18. And very often a translator, to whom the meaning is not well known, is deceived by an ambiguity in the original language, and puts upon the passage a construction that is wholly alien to the sense of the writer. As for example, some texts read: “Their feet are sharp to shed blood;” for the word hozus among the Greeks means both sharp and swift. And so he saw the true meaning who translated: “Their feet are swift to shed blood.” The other, taking the wrong sense of an ambiguous word, fell into error. Now translations such as this are not obscure, but false; and there is a wide difference between the two things. For we must learn not to interpret, but to correct texts of this sort. For the same reason it is, that because the Greek word moschos means a calf, some have not understood that moscheumata are shoots of trees, and have translated the word “calves;” and this error has crept into so many texts, that you can hardly find it written in any other

way. And yet the meaning is very clear; for it is made evident by the words that follow. For “the plantings of an adulterer will not take deep root,” is a more suitable form of expression than the “calves;” because these walk upon the ground with their feet, and are not fixed in the earth by roots. In this passage, indeed, the rest of the context also justifies this translation.

CHAPTER 13

HOW FAULTY INTERPRETATIONS CAN BE EMENDED

19. But since we do not clearly see what the actual thought is which the several translators endeavor to express, each according to his own ability and judgment, unless we examine it in the language which they translate; and since the translator, if he be not a very learned man, often departs from the meaning of his author, we must either endeavor to get a knowledge of those languages from which the Scriptures are translated into Latin, or we must get hold of the translations of those who keep rather close to the letter of the original, not because these are sufficient, but because we may use them to correct the freedom or the error of others, who in their translations have chosen to follow the sense quite as much as the words. For not only single words, but often whole phrases are translated, which could not be translated at all into the Latin idiom by any one who wished to hold by the usage of the ancients who spoke Latin. And though these sometimes do not interfere with the understanding of the passage, yet they are offensive to those who feel greater delight in things when even the signs of those things are kept in their own purity. For what is called a solecism is nothing else than the putting of words together according to a different rule from that which those of our predecessors who spoke with any authority followed. For whether we say inter homines (among men) or inter hominibus, is of no consequence to a man who only wishes to know the facts. And in the same way, what is a barbarism but the pronouncing of a word in a different way from that in which those who spoke Latin before us pronounced it? For whether the word ignoscere (to pardon) should be pronounced with the third syllable long or short, is not a matter of much concern to the man who is beseeching God, in any way at all that he can get the words out, to pardon his sins. What then is purity of speech, except the preserving of the custom of language established by the authority of former speakers?

20. And men are easily offended in a matter of this kind, just in proportion as they are weak; and they are weak just in proportion as they wish to seem learned, not in the knowledge of things which tend to edification, but in that of signs, by which it is hard not to be puffed up, seeing that the knowledge of things even would often set up our neck, if it were not held down by the yoke of our Master. For how does it prevent our understanding it to have the following passage thus expressed: “Quae est terra in quo isti insidunt super eam, si bona est an nequam; et quae sunt civitates, in quibus ipsi inhabitant in ipsis?” And I am more disposed to think that this is simply the idiom of another language than that any deeper meaning is intended. Again, that phrase, which we cannot now take away from the lips of the people who sing it: “Super ipsum autem floriet sanctificatio mea,” surely takes away nothing from the meaning. Yet a more learned man would prefer that this should be corrected, and that we should say, not floriet, but florebit. Nor does anything stand in the way of the correction being made, except the usage of the singers. Mistakes of this kind, then, if a man do not choose to avoid them altogether, it is easy to treat with indifference, as not interfering with a right understanding. But take, on the other hand, the saying of the apostle: “Quod stultum est Dei, sapientius est hominibus, et quod infirmum est Dei, fortius est hominibus.” If any one should retain in this passage the Greek idiom, and say, “Quod stultum est Dei, sapientius est hominum et quod infirmum est Dei fortius est hominum,” a quick and careful reader would indeed by an effort attain to the true meaning, but still a man of slower intelligence either would not understand it at all, or would put an utterly false construction upon it. For not only is such a form of speech faulty in the Latin tongue, but it is ambiguous too, as if the meaning might be, that the folly of men or the weakness of men is wiser or stronger than that of God. But indeed even the expression sapientius est hominibus (stronger than men) is not free from ambiguity, even though it be free from solecism. For whether hominibus is put as the plural of the dative or as the plural of the ablative, does not appear, unless by reference to the meaning. It would be better then to say, sapientius est quam homines, and fortius est quam homines.

CHAPTER 14

HOW THE MEANING OF UNKNOWN WORDS AND IDIOMS IS TO BE DISCOVERED

21. About ambiguous signs, however, I shall speak afterwards. I am treating at present of unknown signs, of which, as far as the words are concerned, there are two kinds. For either a word or an idiom, of which the reader is ignorant, brings him to a stop. Now if these belong to foreign tongues, we must either make inquiry about them from men who speak those tongues, or if we have leisure we must learn the tongues ourselves, or we must consult and compare several translators. If, however, there are words or idioms in our own tongue that we are unacquainted with, we gradually come to know them through being accustomed to read or to hear them. There is nothing that it is better to commit to memory than those kinds of words and phrases whose meaning we do not know, so that where we happen to meet either with a more learned man of whom we can inquire, or with a passage that shows, either by the preceding or succeeding context, or by both, the force and significance of the phrase we are ignorant of, we can easily by the help of our memory turn our attention to the matter and learn all about it. So great, however, is the force of custom, even in regard to learning, that those who have been in a sort of way nurtured and brought up on the study of Holy Scripture, are surprised at other forms of speech, and think them less pure Latin than those which they have learnt from Scripture, but which are not to be found in Latin authors. In this matter, too, the great number of the translators proves a very great assistance, if they are examined and discussed with a careful comparison of their texts. Only all positive error must be removed. For those who are anxious to know, the Scriptures ought in the first place to use their skill in the correction of the texts, so that the uncorrected ones should give way to the corrected, at least when they are copies of the same translation.

CHAPTER 15

AMONG VERSIONS A PREFERENCE IS GIVEN TO THE SEPTUAGINT AND THE ITALA

22. Now among translations themselves the Italian (Itala) is to be preferred to the others, for it keeps closer to the words without prejudice to clearness of expression. And to correct the Latin we must use the Greek versions,

among which the authority of the Septuagint is pre-eminent as far as the Old Testament is concerned; for it is reported through all the more learned churches that the seventy translators enjoyed so much of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in their work of translation, that among that number of men there was but one voice. And if, as is reported, and as many not unworthy of confidence assert, they were separated during the work of translation, each man being in a cell by himself, and yet nothing was found in the manuscript of any one of them that was not found in the same words and in the same order of words in all the rest, who dares put anything in comparison with an authority like this, not to speak of preferring anything to it? And even if they conferred together with the result that a unanimous agreement sprang out of the common labor and judgment of them all; even so, it would not be right or becoming for any one man, whatever his experience, to aspire to correct the unanimous opinion of many venerable and learned men. Wherefore, even if anything is found in the original Hebrew in a different form from that in which these men have expressed it, I think we must give way to the dispensation of Providence which used these men to bring it about, that books which the Jewish race were unwilling, either from religious scruple or from jealousy, to make known to other nations, were, with the assistance of the power of King Ptolemy, made known so long beforehand to the nations which in the future were to believe in the Lord. And thus it is possible that they translated in such a way as the Holy Spirit, who worked in them and had given them all one voice, thought most suitable for the Gentiles. But nevertheless, as I said above, a comparison of those translators also who have kept most closely to the words, is often not without value as a help to the clearing up of the meaning. The Latin texts, therefore, of the Old Testament are, as I was about to say, to be corrected if necessary by the authority of the Greeks, and especially by that of those who, though they were seventy in number, are said to have translated as with one voice. As to the books of the New Testament, again, if any perplexity arises from the diversities of the Latin texts, we must of course yield to the Greek, especially those that are found in the churches of greater learning and research.

CHAPTER 16

THE KNOWLEDGE BOTH OF LANGUAGE AND THINGS IS HELPFUL FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS

23. In the case of figurative signs, again, if ignorance of any of them should chance to bring the reader to a stand-still, their meaning is to be traced partly by the knowledge of languages, partly by the knowledge of things. The pool of Siloam, for example, where the man whose eyes our Lord had anointed with clay made out of spittle was commanded to wash, has a figurative significance, and undoubtedly conveys a secret sense; but yet if the evangelist had not interpreted that name, a meaning so important would lie unnoticed. And we cannot doubt that, in the same way, many Hebrew names which have not been interpreted by the writers of those books, would, if any one could interpret them, be of great value and service in solving the enigmas of Scripture. And a number of men skilled in that language have conferred no small benefit on posterity by explaining all these words without reference to their place in Scripture, and telling us what Adam means, what Eve, what Abraham, what Moses, and also the names of places, what Jerusalem signifies, or Sion, or Sinai, or Lebanon, or Jordan, and whatever other names in that language we are not acquainted with. And when these names have been investigated and explained, many figurative expressions in Scripture become clear.

24. Ignorance of things, too, renders figurative expressions obscure, as when we do not know the nature of the animals, or minerals, or plants, which are frequently referred to in Scripture by way of comparison. The fact so well known about the serpent, for example, that to protect its head it will present its whole body to its assailants—how much light it throws upon the meaning of our Lord’s command, that we should be wise as serpents; that is to say, that for the sake of our head, which is Christ, we should willingly offer our body to the persecutors, lest the Christian faith should, as it were, be destroyed in us, if to save the body we deny our God! Or again, the statement that the serpent gets rid of its old skin by squeezing itself through a narrow hole, and thus acquires new strength—how appropriately it fits in with the direction to imitate the wisdom of the serpent, and to put off the old man, as the apostle says, that we may put on the new; and to put

it off, too, by coming through a narrow place, according to the saying of our Lord, “Enter ye in at the strait gate!” As, then, knowledge of the nature of the serpent throws light upon many metaphors which Scripture is accustomed to draw from that animal, so ignorance of other animals, which are no less frequently mentioned by way of comparison, is a very great drawback to the reader. And so in regard to minerals and plants: knowledge of the carbuncle, for instance, which shines in the dark, throws light upon many of the dark places in books too, where it is used metaphorically; and ignorance of the beryl or the adamant often shuts the doors of knowledge. And the only reason why we find it easy to understand that perpetual peace is indicated by the olive branch which the dove brought with it when it returned to the ark, is that we know both that the smooth touch of olive oil is not easily spoiled by a fluid of another kind, and that the tree itself is an evergreen. Many, again, by reason of their ignorance of hyssop, not knowing the virtue it has in cleansing the lungs, nor the power it is said to have of piercing rocks with its roots, although it is a small and insignificant plant, cannot make out why it is said, “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean.”

25. Ignorance of numbers, too, prevents us from understanding things that are set down in Scripture in a figurative and mystical way. A candid mind, if I may so speak, cannot but be anxious, for example, to ascertain what is meant by the fact that Moses and Elijah, and our Lord Himself, all fasted for forty days. And except by knowledge of and reflection upon the number, the difficulty of explaining the figure involved in this action cannot be got over. For the number contains ten four times, indicating the knowledge of all things, and that knowledge interwoven with time. For both the diurnal and the annual revolutions are accomplished in periods numbering four each; the diurnal in the hours of the morning, the noontide, the evening, and the night; the annual in the spring, summer, autumn, and winter months. Now while we live in time, we must abstain and fast from all joy in time, for the sake of that eternity in which we wish to live; al though by the passage of time we are taught this very lesson of despising time and seeking eternity. Further, the number ten signifies the knowledge of the Creator and the creature, for there is a trinity in the Creator; and the number seven indicates the creature, because of the life and the body. For the life consists

of three parts, whence also God is to be loved with the whole heart, the whole soul, and the whole mind; and it is very clear that in the body there are four elements of which it is made up. In this number ten, therefore, when it is placed before us in connection with time, that is, when it is taken four times we are admonished to live unstained by, and not partaking of, any delight in time, that is, to fast for forty days. Of this we are admonished by the law personified in Moses, by prophecy personified in Elijah, and by our Lord Himself, who, as if receiving the witness both of the law and the prophets, appeared on the mount between the other two, while His three disciples looked on in amazement. Next, we have to inquire in the same way, how out of the number forty springs the number fifty, which in our religion has no ordinary sacredness attached to it on account of the Pentecost, and how this number taken thrice on account of the three divisions of time, before the law, under the law, and under grace, or perhaps on account of the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the Trinity itself being added over and above, has reference to the mystery of the most Holy Church, and reaches to the number of the one hundred and fifty-three fishes which were taken after the resurrection of our Lord, when the nets were cast out on the right-hand side of the boat. And in the same way, many other numbers and combinations of numbers are used in the sacred writings, to convey instruction under a figurative guise, and ignorance of numbers often shuts out the reader from this instruction.

26. Not a few things, too, are closed against us and obscured by ignorance of music. One man, for example, has not unskillfully explained some metaphors from the difference between the psaltery and the harp. And it is a question which it is not out of place for learned men to discuss, whether there is any musical law that compels the psaltery of ten chords to have just so many strings; or whether, if there be no such law, the number itself is not on that very account the more to be considered as of sacred significance, either with reference to the ten commandments of the law (and if again any question is raised about that number, we can only refer it to the Creator and the creature), or with reference to the number ten itself as interpreted above. And the number of years the temple was in building, which is mentioned in the gospel—viz., forty-six—has a certain undefinable musical sound, and when referred to the structure of our Lord's body, in relation to which the

temple was mentioned, compels many heretics to confess that our Lord put on, not a false, but a true and human body. And in several places in the Holy Scriptures we find both numbers and music mentioned with honor.

CHAPTER 17

ORIGIN OF THE LEGEND OF THE NINE MUSES

27. For we must not listen to the falsities of heathen superstition, which represent the nine Muses as daughters of Jupiter and Mercury. Varro refutes these, and I doubt whether any one can be found among them more curious or more learned in such matters. He says that a certain state (I don’t recollect the name) ordered from each of three artists a set of statues of the Muses, to be placed as an offering in the temple of Apollo, intending that whichever of the artists produced the most beautiful statues, they should select and purchase from him. It so happened that these artists executed their works with equal beauty, that all nine pleased the state, and that all were bought to be dedicated in the temple of Apollo; and he says that afterwards Hesiod the poet gave names to them all. It was not Jupiter, therefore, that begat the nine Muses, but three artists created three each. And the state had originally given the order for three, not because it had seen them in visions, nor because they had presented themselves in that number to the eyes of any of the citizens, but because it was obvious to remark that all sound, which is the material of song, is by nature of three kinds. For it is either produced by the voice, as in the case of those who sing with the mouth without an instrument; or by blowing, as in the case of trumpets and flutes; or by striking, as in the case of harps and drums, and all other instruments that give their sound when struck.

CHAPTER 18

NO HELP IS TO BE DESPISED, EVEN THOUGH IT COME FROM A PROFANE SOURCE

28. But whether the fact is as Varro has related, or is not so, still we ought not to give up music because of the superstition of the heathen, if we can derive anything from it that is of use for the understanding of Holy Scripture; nor does it follow that we must busy ourselves with their theatrical trumpery because we enter upon an investigation about harps and

other instruments, that may help us to lay hold upon spiritual things. For we ought not to refuse to learn letters because they say that Mercury discovered them; nor because they have dedicated temples to Justice and Virtue, and prefer to worship in the form of stones things that ought to have their place in the heart, ought we on that account to forsake justice and virtue. Nay, but let every good and true Christian understand that wherever truth may be found, it belongs to his Master; and while he recognizes and acknowledges the truth, even in their religious literature, let him reject the figments of superstition, and let him grieve over and avoid men who, "when they knew God, glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."

CHAPTER 19

TWO KINDS OF HEATHEN KNOWLEDGE

29. But to explain more fully this whole topic (for it is one that cannot be omitted), there are two kinds of knowledge which are in vogue among the heathen. One is the knowledge of things instituted by men, the other of things which they have noted, either as transacted in the past or as instituted by God. The former kind, that which deals with human institutions, is partly superstitious, partly not.

CHAPTER 20

THE SUPERSTITIOUS NATURE OF HUMAN INSTITUTIONS

30. All the arrangements made by men for the making and worshipping of idols are superstitious, pertaining as they do either to the worship of what is created or of some part of it as God, or to consultations and arrangements about signs and leagues with devils, such, for example, as are employed in the magical arts, and which the poets are accustomed not so much to teach as to celebrate. And to this class belong, but with a bolder reach of deception, the books of the haruspices and augurs. In this class we must place also all amulets and cures which the medical art condemns, whether

these consist in incantations, or in marks which they call characters, or in hanging or tying on or even dancing in a fashion certain articles, not with reference to the condition of the body, but to certain signs hidden or manifest; and these remedies they call by the less offensive name of physica, so as to appear not to be engaged in superstitious observances, but to be taking advantage of the forces of nature. Examples of these are the earrings on the top of each ear, or the rings of ostrich bone on the fingers, or telling you when you hiccup to hold your left thumb in your right hand.

31. To these we may add thousands of the most frivolous practices, that are to be observed if any part of the body should jump, or if, when friends are walking arm-in-arm, a stone, or a dog, or a boy, should come between them. And the kicking of a stone, as if it were a divider of friends, does less harm than to cuff an innocent boy if he happens to run between men who are walking side by side. But it is delightful that the boys are sometimes avenged by the dogs; for frequently men are so superstitious as to venture upon striking a dog who has run between them,—not with impunity however, for instead of a superstitious remedy, the dog sometimes makes his assailant run in hot haste for a real surgeon. To this class, too, belong the following rules: To tread upon the threshold when you go out in front of the house; to go back to bed if any one should sneeze when you are putting on your slippers; to return home if you stumble when going to a place; when your clothes are eaten by mice, to be more frightened at the prospect of coming misfortune than grieved by your present loss. Whence that witty saying of Cato, who, when consulted by a man who told him that the mice had eaten his boots, replied, “That is not strange, but it would have been very strange indeed if the boots had eaten the mice.”

CHAPTER 21

SUPERSTITION OF ASTROLOGERS

32. Nor can we exclude from this kind of superstition those who were called genethliaci, on account of their attention to birthdays, but are now commonly called mathematici. For these, too, although they may seek with pains for the true position of the stars at the time of our birth, and may sometimes even find it out, yet in so far as they attempt thence to predict

our actions, or the consequences of our actions, grievously err, and sell inexperienced men into a miserable bondage. For when any freeman goes to an as trologer of this kind, he gives money that he may come away the slave either of Mars or of Venus, or rather, perhaps, of all the stars to which those who first fell into this error, and handed it on to posterity, have given the names either of beasts on account of their likeness to beasts, or of men with a view to confer honor on those men. And this is not to be wondered at, when we consider that even in times more recent and nearer our own, the Romans made an attempt to dedicate the star which we call Lucifer to the name and honor of Caesar. And this would, perhaps, have been done, and the name handed down to distant ages, only that his ancestress Venus had given her name to this star before him, and could not by any law transfer to her heirs what she had never possessed, nor sought to possess, in life. For where a place was vacant, or not held in honor of any of the dead of former times, the usual proceeding in such cases was carried out. For example, we have changed the names of the months Quintilis and Sextilis to July and August, naming them in honor of the men Julius Caesar and Augustus Caesar; and from this instance any one who cares can easily see that the stars spoken of above formerly wandered in the heavens without the names they now bear. But as the men were dead whose memory people were either compelled by royal power or impelled by human folly to honor, they seemed to think that in putting their names upon the stars they were raising the dead men themselves to heaven. But whatever they may be called by men, still there are stars which God has made and set in order after His own pleasure, and they have a fixed movement, by which the seasons are distinguished and varied. And when any one is born, it is easy to observe the point at which this movement has arrived, by use of the rules discovered and laid down by those who are rebuked by Holy Writ in these terms: “For if they were able to know so much that they could weigh the world, how did they not more easily find out the Lord thereof?”

CHAPTER 22

THE FOLLY OF OBSERVING THE STARS IN ORDER TO PREDICT THE EVENTS OF A LIFE

33. But to desire to predict the characters, the acts, and the fate of those who are born from such an observation, is a great delusion and great

madness. And among those at least who have any sort of acquaintance with matters of this kind (which, indeed, are only fit to be unlearnt again), this superstition is refuted beyond the reach of doubt. For the observation is of the position of the stars, which they call constellations, at the time when the person was born about whom these wretched men are consulted by their still more wretched dupes. Now it may happen that, in the case of twins, one follows the other out of the womb so closely that there is no interval of time between them that can be apprehended and marked in the position of the constellations. Whence it necessarily follows that twins are in many cases born under the same stars, while they do not meet with equal fortune either in what they do or what they suffer, but often meet with fates so different that one of them has a most fortunate life, the other a most unfortunate. As, for example, we are told that Esau and Jacob were born twins, and in such close succession, that Jacob, who was born last, was found to have laid hold with his hand upon the heel of his brother, who preceded him. Now, assuredly, the day and hour of the birth of these two could not be marked in any way that would not give both the same constellation. But what a difference there was between the characters, the actions, the labors, and the fortunes of these two, the Scriptures bear witness, which are now so widely spread as to be in the mouth of all nations.

34. Nor is it to the point to say that the very smallest and briefest moment of time that separates the birth of twins, produces great effects in nature, and in the extremely rapid motion of the heavenly bodies. For, although I may grant that it does produce the greatest effects, yet the astrologer cannot discover this in the constellations, and it is by looking into these that he professes to read the fates. If, then, he does not discover the difference when he examines the constellations, which must, of course, be the same whether he is consulted about Jacob or his brother, what does it profit him that there is a difference in the heavens, which he rashly and carelessly brings into disrepute, when there is no difference in his chart, which he looks into anxiously but in vain? And so these notions also, which have their origin in certain signs of things being arbitrarily fixed upon by the presumption of men, are to be referred to the same class as if they were leagues and covenants with devils.

CHAPTER 23

WHY WE REPUDIATE ARTS OF DIVINATION

35. For in this way it comes to pass that men who lust after evil things are, by a secret judgment of God, delivered over to be mocked and deceived, as the just reward of their evil desires. For they are deluded and imposed on by the false angels, to whom the lowest part of the world has been put in subjection by the law of God's providence, and in accordance with His most admirable arrangement of things. And the result of these delusions and deceptions is, that through these superstitious and baneful modes of divination many things in the past and future are made known, and turn out just as they are foretold and in the case of those who practise superstitious observances, many things turn out agreeably to their observances, and ensnared by these successes, they become more eagerly inquisitive, and involve themselves further and further in a labyrinth of most pernicious error. And to our advantage, the Word of God is not silent about this species of fornication of the soul; and it does not warn the soul against following such practices on the ground that those who profess them speak lies, but it says, "Even if what they tell you should come to pass, hearken not unto them." For though the ghost of the dead Samuel foretold the truth to King Saul, that does not make such sacrilegious observances as those by which his ghost was brought up the less detestable; and though the ventriloquist woman in the Acts of the Apostles bore true testimony to the apostles of the Lord, the Apostle Paul did not spare the evil spirit on that account, but rebuked and cast it out, and so made the woman clean.

36. All arts of this sort, therefore, are either nullities, or are part of a guilty superstition, springing out of a baleful fellowship between men and devils, and are to be utterly repudiated and avoided by the Christian as the covenants of a false and treacherous friendship. "Not as if the idol were anything," says the apostle; "but because the things which they sacrifice they sacrifice to devils and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils." Now what the apostle has said about idols and the sacrifices offered in their honor, that we ought to feel in regard to all fancied signs which lead either to the worship of idols, or to worshipping creation or its parts instead of God, or which are connected with attention to

medicinal charms and other observances for these are not appointed by God as the public means of promoting love towards God and our neighbor, but they waste the hearts of wretched men in private and selfish strivings after temporal things. Accordingly, in regard to all these branches of knowledge, we must fear and shun the fellowship of demons, who, with the Devil their prince, strive only to shut and bar the door against our return. As, then, from the stars which God created and ordained, men have drawn lying omens of their own fancy, so also from things that are born, or in any other way come into existence under the government of God’s providence, if there chance only to be something unusual in the occurrence,—as when a mule brings forth young, or an object is struck by lightning,—men have frequently drawn omens by conjectures of their own, and have committed them to writing, as if they had drawn them by rule.

CHAPTER 24

THE INTERCOURSE AND AGREEMENT WITH DEMONS WHICH SUPERSTITIOUS OBSERVANCES MAINTAIN

37. And all these omens are of force just so far as has been arranged with the devils by that previous understanding in the mind which is, as it were, the common language, but they are all full of hurtful curiosity, torturing anxiety, and deadly slavery. For it was not because they had meaning that they were attended to, but it was by attending to and marking them that they came to have meaning. And so they are made different for different people, according to their several notions and prejudices. For those spirits which are bent upon deceiving, take care to provide for each person the same sort of omens as they see his own conjectures and preconceptions have already entangled him in. For, to take an illustration, the same figure of the letter X, which is made in the shape of a cross, means one thing among the Greeks and another among the Latins, not by nature, but by agreement and pre-arrangement as to its signification; and so, any one who knows both languages uses this letter in a different sense when writing to a Greek from that in which he uses it when writing to a Latin. And the same sound, beta, which is the name of a letter among the Greeks, is the name of a vegetable among the Latins; and when I say, lege, these two syllables mean one thing to a Greek and another to a Latin. Now, just as all these signs affect the

mind according to the arrangements of the community in which each man lives, and affect different men’s minds differently, because these arrangements are different; and as, further, men did not agree upon them as signs because they were already significant, but on the contrary they are now significant because men have agreed upon them; in the same way also, those signs by which the ruinous intercourse with devils is maintained have meaning just in proportion to each man’s observations. And this appears quite plainly in the rites of the augurs; for they, both before they observe the omens and after they have completed their observations, take pains not to see the flight or hear the cries of birds, because these omens are of no significance apart from the previous arrangement in the mind of the observer.

CHAPTER 25

IN HUMAN INSTITUTIONS WHICH ARE NOT SUPERSTITIOUS, THERE ARE SOME THINGS SUPERFLUOUS AND SOME CONVENIENT AND NECESSARY

38. But when all these have been cut away and rooted out of the mind of the Christian we must then look at human institutions which are not superstitious, that is, such as are not set up in association with devils, but by men in association with one another. For all arrangements that are in force among men, because they have agreed among themselves that they should be in force, are human institutions; and of these, some are matters of superfluity and luxury, some of convenience and necessity. For if those signs which the actors make in dancing were of force by nature, and not by the arrangement and agreement of men, the public crier would not in former times have announced to the people of Carthage, while the pantomime was dancing, what it was he meant to express,—a thing still remembered by many old men from whom we have frequently heard it. And we may well believe this, because even now, if any one who is unaccustomed to such follies goes into the theatre, unless some one tells him what these movements mean, he will give his whole attention to them in vain. Yet all men aim at a certain degree of likeness in their choice of signs, that the signs may as far as possible be like the things they signify. But because one thing may resemble another in many ways, such signs are not always of the

same significance among men, except when they have mutually agreed upon them.

39. But in regard to pictures and statues, and other works of this kind, which are intended as representations of things, nobody makes a mistake, especially if they are executed by skilled artists, but every one, as soon as he sees the likenesses, recognizes the things they are likenesses of. And this whole class are to be reckoned among the superfluous devices of men, unless when it is a matter of importance to inquire in regard to any of them, for what reason, where, when, and by whose authority it was made. Finally, the thousands of fables and fictions, in whose lies men take delight, are human devices, and nothing is to be considered more peculiarly man's own and derived from himself than anything that is false and lying. Among the convenient and necessary arrangements of men with men are to be reckoned whatever differences they choose to make in bodily dress and ornament for the purpose of distinguishing sex or rank; and the countless varieties of signs without which human intercourse either could not be carried on at all, or would be carried on at great inconvenience; and the arrangements as to weights and measures, and the stamping and weighing of coins, which are peculiar to each state and people, and other things of the same kind. Now these, if they were not devices of men, would not be different in different nations, and could not be changed among particular nations at the discretion of their respective sovereigns.

40. This whole class of human arrangements, which are of convenience for the necessary intercourse of life, the Christian is not by any means to neglect, but on the contrary should pay a sufficient degree of attention to them, and keep them in memory.

CHAPTER 26

WHAT HUMAN CONTRIVANCES WE ARE TO ADOPT, AND WHAT WE ARE TO AVOID

For certain institutions of men are in a sort of way representations and likenesses of natural objects. And of these, such as have relation to fellowship with devils must, as has been said, be utterly rejected and held in detestation; those, on the other hand, which relate to the mutual intercourse of men, are, so far as they are not matters of luxury and superfluity, to be adopted, especially the forms of the letters which are necessary for reading, and the various languages as far as is required—a matter I have spoken of above. To this class also belong shorthand characters, those who are acquainted with which are called shorthand writers. All these are useful, and there is nothing unlawful in learning them, nor do they involve us in superstition, or enervate us by luxury, if they only occupy our minds so far as not to stand in the way of more important objects to which they ought to be subservient.

CHAPTER 27

SOME DEPARTMENTS OF KNOWLEDGE, NOT OF MERE HUMAN INVENTION, AID US IN INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE

41. But, coming to the next point, we are not to reckon among human institutions those things which men have handed down to us, not as arrangements of their own, but as the result of investigation into the occurrences of the past, and into the arrangements of God’s providence. And of these, some pertain to the bodily senses, some to the intellect. Those which are reached by the bodily senses we either believe on testimony, or perceive when they are pointed out to us, or infer from experience.

CHAPTER 28

TO WHAT EXTENT HISTORY IS AN AID

42. Anything, then, that we learn from history about the chronology of past times assists us very much in understanding the Scriptures, even if it be learnt without the pale of the Church as a matter of childish instruction. For we frequently seek information about a variety of matters by use of the Olympiads, and the names of the consuls; and ignorance of the consulship in which our Lord was born, and that in which He suffered, has led some into the error of supposing that He was forty-six years of age when He suffered, that being the number of years He was told by the Jews the temple (which He took as a symbol of His body) was in building. Now we know on the authority of the evangelist that He was about thirty years of age when He was baptized; but the number of years He lived afterwards, although by

putting His actions together we can make it out, yet that no shadow of doubt might arise from another source, can be ascertained more clearly and more certainly from a comparison of profane history with the gospel. It will still be evident, however, that it was not without a purpose it was said that the temple was forty and six years in building; so that, as more secret formation of the body which, for our sakes, the only-begotten Son of God, by whom all things were made, condescended to put on.

43. As to the utility of history, moreover, passing over the Greeks, what a great question our own Ambrose has set at rest! For, when the readers and admirers of Plato dared calumniously to assert that our Lord Jesus Christ learnt all those sayings of His, which they are compelled to admire and praise, from the books of Plato—because (they urged) it cannot be denied that Plato lived long before the coming of our Lord!—did not the illustrious bishop, when by his investigations into profane history he had discovered that Plato made a journey into Egypt at the time when Jeremiah the prophet was there, show that it is much more likely that Plato was through Jeremiah's means initiated into our literature, so as to be able to teach and write those views of his which are so justly praised? For not even Pythagoras himself, from whose successors these men assert Plato learnt theology, lived at a date prior to the books of that Hebrew race, among whom the worship of one God sprang up, and of whom as concerning the flesh our Lord came. And thus, when we reflect upon the dates, it becomes much more probable that those philosophers learnt whatever they said that was good and true from our literature, than that the Lord Jesus Christ learnt from the writings of Plato,—a thing which it is the height of folly to believe.

44. And even when in the course of an historical narrative former institutions of men are described, the history itself is not to be reckoned among human institutions; because things that are past and gone and cannot be undone are to be reckoned as belonging to the course of time, of which God is the author and governor. For it is one thing to tell what has been done, another to show what ought to be done. History narrates what has been done, faithfully and with advantage; but the books of the haruspices,

and all writings of the same kind, aim at teaching what ought to be done or observed, using the boldness of an adviser, not the fidelity of a narrator.

CHAPTER 29

TO WHAT EXTENT NATURAL SCIENCE IS AN EXEGETICAL AID

45. There is also a species of narrative resembling description, in which not a past but an existing state of things is made known to those who are ignorant of it. To this species belongs all that has been written about the situation of places, and the nature of animals, trees, herbs, stones, and other bodies. And of this species I have treated above, and have shown that this kind of knowledge is serviceable in solving the difficulties of Scripture, not that these objects are to be used conformably to certain signs as nostrums or the instruments of superstition; for that kind of knowledge I have already set aside as distinct from the lawful and free kind now spoken of. For it is one thing to say: If you bruise down this herb and drink it, it will remove the pain from your stomach; and another to say: If you hang this herb round your neck, it will remove the pain from your stomach. In the former case the wholesome mixture is approved of, in the latter the superstitious charm is condemned; although indeed, where incantations and invocations and marks are not used, it is frequently doubtful whether the thing that is tied or fixed in any way to the body to cure it, acts by a natural virtue, in which case it may be freely used; or acts by a sort of charm, in which case it becomes the Christian to avoid it the more carefully, the more efficacious it may seem to be. But when the reason why a thing is of virtue does not appear, the intention with which it is used is of great importance, at least in healing or in tempering bodies, whether in medicine or in agriculture.

46. The knowledge of the stars, again, is not a matter of narration, but of description. Very few of these, however, are mentioned in Scripture. And as the course of the moon, which is regularly employed in reference to celebrating the anniversary of our Lord’s passion, is known to most people; so the rising and setting and other movements of the rest of the heavenly bodies are thoroughly known to very few. And this knowledge, although in itself it involves no superstition, renders very little, indeed almost no assistance, in the interpretation of Holy Scripture, and by engaging the

attention unprofitably is a hindrance rather; and as it is closely related to the very pernicious error of the diviners of the fates, it is more convenient and becoming to neglect it. It involves, moreover, in addition to a description of the present state of things, something like a narrative of the past also; because one may go back from the present position and motion of the stars, and trace by rule their past movements. It involves also regular anticipations of the future, not in the way of forebodings and omens, but by way of sure calculation; not with the design of drawing any information from them as to our own acts and fates, in the absurd fashion of the genethliaci, but only as to the motions of the heavenly bodies themselves. For, as the man who computes the moon's age can tell, when he has found out her age today, what her age was any number of years ago, or what will be her age any number of years hence, in just the same way men who are skilled in such computations are accustomed to answer like questions about every one of the heavenly bodies. And I have stated what my views are about all this knowledge, so far as regards its utility.

CHAPTER 30

WHAT THE MECHANICAL ARTS CONTRIBUTE TO EXEGETICS

47. Further, as to the remaining arts, whether those by which something is made which, when the effort of the workman is over, remains as a result of his work, as, for example, a house, a bench, a dish, and other things of that kind; or those which, so to speak, assist God in His operations, as medicine, and agriculture, and navigation; or those whose sole result is an action, as dancing, and racing, and wrestling;—in all these arts experience teaches us to infer the future from the past. For no man who is skilled in any of these arts moves his limbs in any operation without connecting the memory of the past with the expectation of the future. Now of these arts a very superficial and cursory knowledge is to be acquired, not with a view to practising them (unless some duty compel us, a matter on which I do not touch at present), but with a view to forming a judgment about them, that we may not be wholly ignorant of what Scripture means to convey when it employs figures of speech derived from these arts.

CHAPTER 31

USE OF DIALECTICS. OF FALLACIES

48. There remain those branches of knowledge which pertain not to the bodily senses, but to the intellect, among which the science of reasoning and that of number are the chief. The science of reasoning is of very great service in searching into and unravelling all sorts of questions that come up in Scripture, only in the use of it we must guard against the love of wrangling, and the childish vanity of entrapping an adversary. For there are many of what are called sophisms, inferences in reasoning that are false, and yet so close an imitation of the true, as to deceive not only dull people, but clever men too, when they are not on their guard. For example, one man lays before another with whom he is talking, the proposition, “What I am, you are not.” The other assents, for the proposition is in part true, the one man being cunning and the other simple. Then the first speaker adds: “I am a man;” and when the other has given his assent to this also, the first draws his conclusion: “Then you are not a man.” Now of this sort of ensnaring arguments, Scripture, as I judge, expresses detestation in that place where it is said, “There is one that showeth wisdom in words, and is hated;” although, indeed, a style of speech which is not intended to entrap, but only aims at verbal ornamentation more than is consistent with seriousness of purpose, is also called sophistical.

49. There are also valid processes of reasoning which lead to false conclusions, by following out to its logical consequences the error of the man with whom one is arguing; and these conclusions are sometimes drawn by a good and learned man, with the object of making the person from whose error these consequences result, feel ashamed of them and of thus leading him to give up his error when he finds that if he wishes to retain his old opinion, he must of necessity also hold other opinions which he condemns. For example, the apostle did not draw true conclusions when he said, “Then is Christ not risen,” and again, “Then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain;” and further on drew other inferences which are all utterly false; for Christ has risen, the preaching of those who declared this fact was not in vain, nor was their faith in vain who had believed it. But all these false inferences followed legitimately from the opinion of those who

said that there is no resurrection of the dead. These inferences, then, being repudiated as false, it follows that since they would be true if the dead rise not, there will be a resurrection of the dead. As, then, valid conclusions may be drawn not only from true but from false propositions, the laws of valid reasoning may easily be learnt in the schools, outside the pale of the Church. But the truth of propositions must be inquired into in the sacred books of the Church.

CHAPTER 32

VALID LOGICAL SEQUENCE IS NOT DEVISED BUT ONLY OBSERVED BY MAN

50. And yet the validity of logical sequences is not a thing devised by men, but is observed and noted by them that they may be able to learn and teach it; for it exists eternally in the reason of things, and has its origin with God. For as the man who narrates the order of events does not himself create that order; and as he who describes the situations of places, or the natures of animals, or roots, or minerals, does not describe arrangements of man; and as he who points out the stars and their movements does not point out anything that he himself or any other man has ordained;—in the same way, he who says, “When the consequent is false, the antecedent must also be false,” says what is most true; but he does not himself make it so, he only points out that it is so. And it is upon this rule that the reasoning I have quoted from the Apostle Paul proceeds. For the antecedent is, “There is no resurrection of the dead,”—the position taken up by those whose error the apostle wished to overthrow. Next, from this antecedent, the assertion, viz., that there is no resurrection of the dead, the necessary consequence is, “Then Christ is not risen.” But this consequence is false, for Christ has risen; therefore the antecedent is also false. But the antecedent is, that there is no resurrection of the dead. We conclude, therefore, that there is a resurrection of the dead. Now all this is briefly expressed thus: If there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; but Christ is risen, therefore there is a resurrection of the dead. This rule, then, that when the consequent is removed, the antecedent must also be removed, is not made by man, but only pointed out by him. And this rule has reference to the validity of the reasoning, not to the truth of the statements.

CHAPTER 33

FALSE INFERENCES MAY BE DRAWN FROM VALID REASONINGS, AND VICE VERSA

51. In this passage, however, where the argument is about the resurrection, both the law of the inference is valid, and the conclusion arrived at is true. But in the case of false conclusions, too, there is a validity of inference in some such way as the following. Let us suppose some man to have admitted: If a snail is an animal, it has a voice. This being admitted, then, when it has been proved that the snail has no voice, it follows (since when the consequent is proved false, the antecedent is also false) that the snail is not an animal. Now this conclusion is false, but it is a true and valid inference from the false admission. Thus, the truth of a statement stands on its own merits; the validity of an inference depends on the statement or the admission of the man with whom one is arguing. And thus, as I said above, a false inference may be drawn by a valid process of reasoning, in order that he whose error we wish to correct may be sorry that he has admitted the antecedent, when he sees that its logical consequences are utterly untenable. And hence it is easy to understand that as the inferences may be valid where the opinions are false, so the inferences may be unsound where the opinions are true. For example, suppose that a man propounds the statement, “If this man is just, he is good,” and we admit its truth. Then he adds, “But he is not just;” and when we admit this too, he draws the conclusion, “Therefore he is not good.” Now although every one of these statements may be true, still the principle of the inference is unsound. For it is not true that, as when the consequent is proved false the antecedent is also false, so when the antecedent is proved false the consequent is false. For the statement is true, “If he is an orator, he is a man.” But if we add, “He is not an orator,” the consequence does not follow, “He is not a man.”

CHAPTER 34

IT IS ONE THING TO KNOW THE LAWS OF INFERENCE, ANOTHER TO KNOW THE TRUTH OF OPINIONS

52. Therefore it is one thing to know the laws of inference, and another to know the truth of opinions. In the former case we learn what is consequent, what is inconsequent, and what is incompatible. An example of a

consequent is, “If he is an orator, he is a man;” of an inconsequent, “If he is a man, he is an orator;” of an incompatible, “If he is a man, he is a quadruped.” In these instances we judge of the connection. In regard to the truth of opinions, however, we must consider propositions as they stand by themselves, and not in their connection with one another; but when propositions that we are not sure about are joined by a valid inference to propositions that are true and certain, they themselves, too, necessarily become certain. Now some, when they have ascertained the validity of the inference, plume themselves as if this involved also the truth of the propositions. Many, again, who hold the true opinions have an unfounded contempt for themselves, because they are ignorant of the laws of inference; whereas the man who knows that there is a resurrection of the dead is assuredly better than the man who only knows that it follows that if there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen.

CHAPTER 35

THE SCIENCE OF DEFINITION IS NOT FALSE, THOUGH IT MAY BE APPLIED TO FALSITIES

53. Again, the science of definition, of division, and of partition, although it is frequently applied to falsities, is not itself false, nor framed by man’s device, but is evolved from the reason of things. For although poets have applied it to their fictions, and false philosophers, or even heretics—that is, false Christians—to their erroneous doctrines, that is no reason why it should be false, for example, that neither in definition, nor in division, nor in partition, is anything to be included that does not pertain to the matter in hand, nor anything to be omitted that does. This is true, even though the things to be defined or divided are not true. For even falsehood itself is defined when we say that falsehood is the declaration of a state of things which is not as we declare it to be; and this definition is true, although falsehood itself cannot be true. We can also divide it, saying that there are two kinds of falsehood, one in regard to things that cannot be true at all, the other in regard to things that are not, though it is possible they might be, true. For example, the man who says that seven and three are eleven, says what cannot be true under any circumstances; but he who says that it rained on the kalends of January, although perhaps the fact is not so, says what

posssibly might have been. The definition and division, therefore, of what is false may be perfectly true, although what is false cannot, of course, itself be true.

CHAPTER 36

THE RULES OF ELOQUENCE ARE TRUE, THOUGH SOMETIMES USED TO PERSUADE MEN OF WHAT IS FALSE

54. There are also certain rules for a more copious kind of argument, which is called eloquence, and these rules are not the less true that they can be used for persuading men of what is false; but as they can be used to enforce the truth as well, it is not the faculty itself that is to be blamed, but the perversity of those who put it to a bad use. Nor is it owing to an arrangement among men that the expression of affection conciliates the hearer, or that a narrative, when it is short and clear, is effective, and that variety arrests men's attention without wearying them. And it is the same with other directions of the same kind, which, whether the cause in which they are used be true or false, are themselves true just in so far as they are effective in producing knowledge or belief, or in moving men's minds to desire and aversion. And men rather found out that these things are so, than arranged that they should be so.

CHAPTER 37

USE OF RHETORIC AND DIALECTIC

55. This art, however, when it is learnt, is not to be used so much for ascertaining the meaning as for setting forth the meaning when it is ascertained. But the art previously spoken of, which deals with inferences, and definitions, and divisions, is of the greatest assistance in the discovery of the meaning, provided only that men do not fall into the error of supposing that when they have learnt these things they have learnt the true secret of a happy life. Still, it sometimes happens that men find less difficulty in attaining the ob ject for the sake of which these sciences are learnt, than in going through the very intricate and thorny discipline of such rules. It is just as if a man wishing to give rules for walking should warn you not to lift the hinder foot before you set down the front one, and then

should describe minutely the way you ought to move the hinges of the joints and knees. For what he says is true, and one cannot walk in any other way; but men find it easier to walk by executing these movements than to attend to them while they are going through them, or to understand when they are told about them. Those, on the other hand, who cannot walk, care still less about such directions, as they cannot prove them by making trial of them. And in the same way a clever man often sees that an inference is unsound more quickly than he apprehends the rules for it. A dull man, on the other hand, does not see the unsoundness, but much less does he grasp the rules. And in regard to all these laws, we derive more pleasure from them as exhibitions of truth, than assistance in arguing or forming opinions, except perhaps that they put the intellect in better training. We must take care, however that they do not at the same time make it more inclined to mischief or vanity,—that is to say, that they do not give those who have learnt them an inclination to lead people astray by plausible speech and catching questions, or make them think that they have attained some great thing that gives them an advantage over the good and innocent.

CHAPTER 38

THE SCIENCE OF NUMBERS NOT CREATED, BUT ONLY DISCOVERED, BY MAN

56. Coming now to the science of number, it is clear to the dullest apprehension that this was not created by man, but was discovered by investigation. For, though Virgil could at his own pleasure make the first syllable of Italia long, while the ancients pronounced it short, it is not in any man’s power to determine at his pleasure that three times three are not nine, or do not make a square, or are not the triple of three, nor one and a half times the number six, or that it is not true that they are not the double of any number because odd numbers have no half. Whether, then, numbers are considered in themselves, or as applied to the laws of figures, or of sounds, or of other motions, they have fixed laws which were not made by man, but which the acuteness of ingenious men brought to light.

57. The man, however, who puts so high a value on these things as to be inclined to boast himself one of the learned, and who does not rather inquire after the source from which those things which he perceives to be true

derive their truth, and from which those others which he perceives to be unchangeable also derive their truth and unchangeableness, and who, mounting up from bodily appearances to the mind of man, and finding that it too is changeable (for it is sometimes instructed, at other times uninstructed), although it holds a middle place between the unchangeable truth above it and the changeable things beneath it, does not strive to make all things redound to the praise and love of the one God from whom he knows that all things have their being;—the man, I say, who acts in this way may seem to be learned, but wise he cannot in any sense be deemed.

CHAPTER 39

TO WHICH OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED STUDIES ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN, AND IN WHAT SPIRIT

58. Accordingly, I think that it is well to warn studious and able young men, who fear God and are seeking for happiness of life, not to venture heedlessly upon the pursuit of the branches of learning that are in vogue beyond the pale of the Church of Christ, as if these could secure for them the happiness they seek; but soberly and carefully to discriminate among them. And if they find any of those which have been instituted by men varying by reason of the varying pleasure of their founders, and unknown by reason of erroneous conjectures, especially if they involve entering into fellowship with devils by means of leagues and covenants about signs, let these be utterly rejected and held in detestation. Let the young men also withdraw their attention from such institutions of men as are unnecessary and luxurious. But for the sake of the necessities of this life we must not neglect the arrangements of men that enable us to carry on intercourse with those around us. I think, however, there is nothing useful in the other branches of learning that are found among the heathen, except information about objects, either past or present, that relate to the bodily senses, in which are included also the experiments and conclusions of the useful mechanical arts, except also the sciences of reasoning and of number. And in regard to all these we must hold by the maxim, “Not too much of anything;” especially in the case of those which, pertaining as they do to the senses, are subject to the relations of space and time.

59. What, then, some men have done in regard to all words and names found in Scripture, in the Hebrew, and Syriac, and Egyptian, and other tongues, taking up and interpreting separately such as were left in Scripture without interpretation; and what Eusebius has done in regard to the history of the past with a view to the questions arising in Scripture that require a knowledge of history for their solution;—what, I say, these men have done in regard to matters of this kind, making it unnecessary for the Christian to spend his strength on many subjects for the sake of a few items of knowledge, the same, I think, might be done in regard to other matters, if any competent man were willing in a spirit of benevolence to undertake the labor for the advantage of his brethren. In this way he might arrange in their several classes, and give an account of the unknown places, and animals, and plants, and trees, and stones, and metals, and other species of things that are mentioned in Scripture, taking up these only, and committing his account to writing. This might also be done in relation to numbers, so that the theory of those numbers, and those only, which are mentioned in Holy Scripture, might be explained and written down. And it may happen that some or all of these things have been done already (as I have found that many things I had no notion of have been worked out and committed to writing by good and learned Christians), but are either lost amid the crowds of the careless, or are kept out of sight by the envious. And I am not sure whether the same thing can be done in regard to the theory of reasoning; but it seems to me it cannot, because this runs like a system of nerves through the whole structure of Scripture, and on that account is of more service to the reader in disentangling and explaining ambiguous passages, of which I shall speak hereafter, than in ascertaining the meaning of unknown signs, the topic I am now discussing.

CHAPTER 40

WHATEVER HAS BEEN RIGHTLY SAID BY THE HEATHEN, WE MUST APPROPRIATE TO OUR USES

60. Moreover, if those who are called philosophers, and especially the Platonists, have said aught that is true and in harmony with our faith, we are not only not to shrink from it, but to claim it for our own use from those who have unlawful possession of it. For, as the Egyptians had not only the

idols and heavy burdens which the people of Israel hated and fled from, but also vessels and ornaments of gold and silver, and garments, which the same people when going out of Egypt appropriated to themselves, designing them for a better use, not doing this on their own authority, but by the command of God, the Egyptians themselves, in their ignorance, providing them with things which they themselves were not making a good use of; in the same way all branches of heathen learning have not only false and superstitious fancies and heavy burdens of unnecessary toil, which every one of us, when going out under the leadership of Christ from the fellowship of the heathen, ought to abhor and avoid; but they contain also liberal instruction which is better adapted to the use of the truth, and some most excellent precepts of morality; and some truths in regard even to the worship of the One God are found among them. Now these are, so to speak, their gold and silver, which they did not create themselves, but dug out of the mines of God’s providence which are everywhere scattered abroad, and are perversely and unlawfully prostituting to the worship of devils. These, therefore, the Christian, when he separates himself in spirit from the miserable fellowship of these men, ought to take away from them, and to devote to their proper use in preaching the gospel. Their garments, also,—that is, human institutions such as are adapted to that intercourse with men which is indispensable in this life,—we must take and turn to a Christian use.

61. And what else have many good and faithful men among our brethren done? Do we not see with what a quantity of gold and silver and garments Cyprian, that most persuasive teacher and most blessed martyr, was loaded when he came out of Egypt? How much Lactantius brought with him? And Victorinus, and Optatus, and Hilary, not to speak of living men! How much Greeks out of number have borrowed! And prior to all these, that most faithful servant of God, Moses, had done the same thing; for of him it is written that he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. And to none of all these would heathen superstition (especially in those times when, kicking against the yoke of Christ, it was persecuting the Christians) have ever furnished branches of knowledge it held useful, if it had suspected they were about to turn them to the use of worshipping the One God, and thereby overturning the vain worship of idols. But they gave their gold and their

silver and their garments to the people of God as they were going out of Egypt, not knowing how the things they gave would be turned to the service of Christ. For what was done at the time of the exodus was no doubt a type prefiguring what happens now. And this I say without prejudice to any other interpretation that may be as good, or better.

CHAPTER 41

WHAT KIND OF SPIRIT IS REQUIRED FOR THE STUDY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

62. But when the student of the Holy Scriptures, prepared in the way I have indicated, shall enter upon his investigations, let him constantly meditate upon that saying of the apostle's, "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth." For so he will feel that, whatever may be the riches he brings with him out of Egypt, yet unless he has kept the passover, he cannot be safe. Now Christ is our passover sacrificed for us, and there is nothing the sacrifice of Christ more clearly teaches us than the call which He himself addresses to those whom He sees toiling in Egypt under Pharaoh: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." To whom is it light but to the meek and lowly in heart, whom knowledge doth not puff up, but charity edifieth? Let them remember, then, that those who celebrated the passover at that time in type and shadow, when they were ordered to mark their door-posts with the blood of the lamb, used hyssop to mark them with. Now this is a meek and lowly herb, and yet nothing is stronger and more penetrating than its roots; that being rooted and grounded in love, we may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height,—that is, to comprehend the cross of our Lord, the breadth of which is indicated by the transverse wood on which the hands are stretched, its length by the part from the ground up to the cross-bar on which the whole body from the head downwards is fixed, its height by the part from the crossbar to the top on which the head lies, and its depth by the part which is hidden, being fixed in the earth. And by this sign of the cross all Christian action is symbolized, viz., to do good works in Christ, to cling with constancy to Him, to hope for heaven, and not to desecrate the sacraments. And purified by this Christian

action, we shall be able to know even “the love of Christ which passeth knowledge,” who is equal to the Father, by whom all things, were made, “that we may be filled with all the fullness of God.” There is besides in hyssop a purgative virtue, that the breast may not be swollen with that knowledge which puffeth up, nor boast vainly of the riches brought out from Egypt. “Purge me with hyssop,” the psalmist says, “and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness.” Then he immediately adds, to show that it is purifying from pride that is indicated by hyssop, “that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice.”

CHAPTER 42

SACRED SCRIPTURE COMPARED WITH PROFANE AUTHORS

63. But just as poor as the store of gold and silver and garments which the people of Israel brought with them out of Egypt was in comparison with the riches which they afterwards attained at Jerusalem, and which reached their height in the reign of King Solomon, so poor is all the useful knowledge which is gathered from the books of the heathen when compared with the knowledge of Holy Scripture. For whatever man may have learnt from other sources, if it is hurtful, it is there condemned; if it is useful, it is therein contained. And while every man may find there all that he has learnt of useful elsewhere, he will find there in much greater abundance things that are to be found nowhere else, but can be learnt only in the wonderful sublimity and wonderful simplicity of the Scriptures.

When, then, the reader is possessed of the instruction here pointed out, so that unknown signs have ceased to be a hindrance to him; when he is meek and lowly of heart, subject to the easy yoke of Christ, and loaded with His light burden, rooted and grounded and built up in faith, so that knowledge cannot puff him up, let him then approach the consideration and discussion of ambiguous signs in Scripture. And about these I shall now, in a third book, endeavor to say what the Lord shall be pleased to vouchsafe.

Book III

Argument—The author, having discussed in the preceding book the method of dealing with unknown signs, goes on in this third book to treat of ambiguous signs. Such signs may be either direct or figurative. In the case of direct signs ambiguity may arise from the punctuation, the pronunciation, or the doubtful signification of the words, and is to be resolved by attention to the context, a comparison of translations, or a reference to the original tongue. In the case of figurative signs we need to guard against two mistakes:—1. the interpreting literal expressions figuratively; 2. the interpreting figurative expressions literally. The author lays down rules by which we may decide whether an expression is literal or figurative; the general rule being, that whatever can be shown to be in its literal sense inconsistent either with purity of life or correctness of doctrine must be taken figuratively. He then goes on to lay down rules for the interpretation of expressions which have been proved to be figurative; the general principle being, that no interpretation can be true which does not promote the love of God and the love of man. The author then proceeds to expound and illustrate the seven rules of Tichonius the Donatist, which he commends to the attention of the student of Holy Scripture.

CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY OF THE FOREGOING BOOKS, AND SCOPE OF THAT WHICH FOLLOWS

I. The man who fears God seeks diligently in Holy Scripture for a knowledge of His will. And when he has become meek through piety, so as to have no love of strife; when furnished also with a knowledge of languages, so as not to be stopped by unknown words and forms of speech, and with the knowledge of certain necessary objects, so as not to be ignorant of the force and nature of those which are used figuratively; and assisted, besides, by accuracy in the texts, which has been secured by skill and care in the matter of correction;—when thus prepared, let him proceed to the examination and solution of the ambiguities of Scripture. And that he may not be led astray by ambiguous signs, so far as I can give him instruction (it may happen, however, that either from the greatness of his intellect, or the greater clearness of the light he enjoys, he shall laugh at the methods I am going to point out as childish),—but yet, as I was going to say, so far as I can give instruction, let him who is in such a state of mind that he can be instructed by me know, that the ambiguity of Scripture lies either in proper words or in metaphorical, classes which I have already described in the second book.

CHAPTER 2

RULE FOR REMOVING AMBIGUITY BY ATTENDING TO PUNCTUATION

2. But when proper words make Scripture ambiguous, we must see in the first place that there is nothing wrong in our punctuation or pronunciation. Accordingly, if, when attention is given to the passage, it shall appear to be uncertain in what way it ought to be punctuated or pronounced, let the reader consult the rule of faith which he has gathered from the plainer passages of Scripture, and from the authority of the Church, and of which I treated at sufficient length when I was speaking in the first book about things. But if both readings, or all of them (if there are more than two), give a meaning in harmony with the faith, it remains to consult the context, both what goes before and what comes after, to see which interpretation, out of many that offer themselves, it pronounces for and permits to be dovetailed into itself.

3. Now look at some examples. The heretical pointing, “In principio erat verbum, et verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat,” so as to make the next sentence run, “Verbum hoc erat in principio apud Deum,” arises out of unwillingness to confess that the Word was God. But this must be rejected by the rule of faith, which, in reference to the equality of the Trinity, directs us to say: “et Deus erat verbum;” and then to add: “hoc erat in principio apud Deum.”

4. But the following ambiguity of punctuation does not go against the faith in either way you take it, and therefore must be decided from the context. It is where the apostle says: “What I shall choose I wot not: for I am in a strait

betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.” Now it is uncertain whether we should read, “ex duobus concupiscentiam habens” [having a desire for two things], or “compellor autem ex duobus” [I am in a strait betwixt two]; and so to add: “concupiscentiam habens dissolvi, et esse cum Christo” [having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ]. But since there follows “multo enim magis optimum” [for it is far better], it is evident that he says he has a desire for that which is better; so that, while he is in a strait betwixt two, yet he has a desire for one and sees a necessity for the other; a desire, viz., to be with Christ, and a necessity to remain in the flesh. Now this ambiguity is resolved by one word that follows, which is translated enim [for]; and the translators who have omitted this particle have preferred the interpretation which makes the apostle seem not only in a strait betwixt two, but also to have a desire for two. We must therefore punctuate the sentence thus: “et quid eligam ignoro: compellor autem ex duobus” [what I shall choose I wot not: for I am in a strait betwixt two]; and after this point follows: “concupiscentiam habens dissolvi, et esse cum Christo” [having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ]. And, as if he were asked why he has a desire for this in preference to the other, he adds: “multo enim magis optimum” [for it is far better]. Why, then, is he in a strait betwixt the two? Because there is a need for his remaining, which he adds in these terms: “manere in carne necessarium propter vos” [nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you].

5. Where, however, the ambiguity cannot be cleared up, either by the rule of faith or by the context, there is nothing to hinder us to point the sentence according to any method we choose of those that suggest themselves. As is the case in that passage to the Corinthians: “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Receive us; we have wronged no man.” It is doubtful whether we should read, “mundemus nos ab omni coinquinatione carnis et spiritus” [let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit], in accordance with the passage, “that she may be holy both in body and in spirit,” or, “mundemus nos ab omni coinquinatione carnis” [let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh], so as to make the next sentence, “et spiritus perficientes

sanctificationem in timore Dei capite nos” [and perfecting holiness of spirit in the fear of God, receive us]. Such ambiguities of punctuation, therefore, are left to the reader’s discretion.

CHAPTER 3

HOW PRONUNCIATION SERVES TO REMOVE AMBIGUITY. DIFFERENT KINDS OF INTERROGATION

6. And all the directions that I have given about ambiguous punctuations are to be observed likewise in the case of doubtful pronunciations. For these too, unless the fault lies in the carelessness of the reader, are corrected either by the rule of faith, or by a reference to the preceding or succeeding context; or if neither of these methods is applied with success, they will remain doubtful, but so that the reader will not be in fault in whatever way he may pronounce them. For example, if our faith that God will not bring any charges against His elect, and that Christ will not condemn His elect, did not stand in the way, this passage, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” might be pronounced in such a way as to make what follows an answer to this question, “God who justifieth,” and to make a second question, “Who is he that condemneth?” with the answer, “Christ Jesus who died.” But as it would be the height of madness to believe this, the passage will be pronounced in such a way as to make the first part a question of inquiry, and the second a rhetorical interrogative. Now the ancients said that the difference between an inquiry and an interrogative was this, that an inquiry admits of many answers, but to an interrogative the answer must be either “No” or “Yes.” The passage will be pronounced, then, in such a way that after the inquiry, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” what follows will be put as an interrogative: “Shall God who justifieth?”—the answer “No” being understood. And in the same way we shall have the inquiry, “Who is he that condemneth?” and the answer here again in the form of an interrogative, “Is it Christ who died? yea, rather, who is risen again? who is even at the right hand of God? who also maketh intercession for us?”—the answer “No” being understood to every one of these questions. On the other hand, in that passage where the apostle says, “What shall we say then? That the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness have attained to righteousness;” unless after the

inquiry, “What shall we say then?” what follows were given as the answer to this question: “That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness;” it would not be in harmony with the succeeding context. But with whatever tone of voice one may choose to pronounce that saying of Nathanael’s, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”—whether with that of a man who gives an affirmative answer, so that “out of Nazareth” is the only part that belongs to the interrogation, or with that of a man who asks the whole question with doubt and hesitation,—I do not see how a difference can be made. But neither sense is opposed to faith.

7. There is, again, an ambiguity arising out of the doubtful sound of syllables; and this of course has relation to pronunciation. For example, in the passage, “My bone [os meum] was not hid from Thee, which Thou didst make in secret,” it is not clear to the reader whether he should take the word os as short or long. If he make it short, it is the singular of ossa [bones]; if he make it long, it is the singular of ora [mouths]. Now difficulties such as this are cleared up by looking into the original tongue, for in the Greek we find not stoma [mouth], but hosteon [bone]. And for this reason the vulgar idiom is frequently more useful in conveying the sense than the pure speech of the educated. For I would rather have the barbarism, non est absconditum a te ossum meum, than have the passage in better Latin, but the sense less clear. But sometimes when the sound of a syllable is doubtful, it is decided by a word near it belonging to the same sentence. As, for example, that saying of the apostle, “Of the which I tell you before [praedico], as I have also told you in time past [proedixi], that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Now if he had only said, “Of the which I tell you before [quae praedico vobis],” and had not added, “as I have also told you in time past [sicut proedixi],” we could not know without going back to the original whether in the word praedico the middle syllable should be pronounced long or short. But as it is, it is clear that it should be pronounced long; for he does not say, sicut proedicavi, but sicut praedixi.

CHAPTER 4

HOW AMBIGUITIES MAY BE SOLVED

8. And not only these, but also those ambiguities that do not relate either to punctuation or pronunciation, are to be examined in the same way. For example, that one in the Epistle to the Thessalonians: Propterea consolati sumus fratres in vobis. Now it is doubtful whether fratres [brethren] is in the vocative or accusative case, and it is not contrary to faith to take it either way. But in the Greek language the two cases are not the same in form; and accordingly, when we look into the original, the case is shown to be vocative. Now if the translator had chosen to say, propterea consolationem habuimus fratres in vobis, he would have followed the words less literally, but there would have been less doubt about the meaning; or, indeed, if he had added nostri, hardly any one would have doubted that the vocative case was meant when he heard propterea consolati sumus fratres nostri in vobis. But this is a rather dangerous liberty to take. It has been taken, however, in that passage to the Corinthians, where the apostle says, “I protest by your rejoicing [per vestram gloriam] which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.” For one translator has it, per vestram jurogloriam, the form of adjuration appearing in the Greek without any ambiguity. It is therefore very rare and very difficult to find any ambiguity in the case of proper words, as far at least as Holy Scripture is concerned, which neither the context, showing the design of the writer, nor a comparison of translations, nor a reference to the original tongue, will suffice to explain.

CHAPTER 5

IT IS A WRETCHED SLAVERY WHICH TAKES THE FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS OF SCRIPTURE IN A LITERAL SENSE

9. But the ambiguities of metaphorical words, about which I am next to speak, demand no ordinary care and diligence. In the first place, we must beware of taking a figurative expression literally. For the saying of the apostle applies in this case too: “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” For when what is said figuratively is taken as if it were said literally, it is understood in a carnal manner. And nothing is more fittingly called the death of the soul than when that in it which raises it above the brutes, the intelligence namely, is put in subjection to the flesh by a blind adherence to the letter. For he who follows the letter takes figurative words as if they were proper, and does not carry out what is indicated by a proper word into

its secondary signification; but, if he hears of the Sabbath, for example, thinks of nothing but the one day out of seven which recurs in constant succession; and when he hears of a sacrifice, does not carry his thoughts beyond the customary offerings of victims from the flock, and of the fruits of the earth. Now it is surely a miserable slavery of the soul to take signs for things, and to be unable to lift the eye of the mind above what is corporeal and created, that it may drink in eternal light.

CHAPTER 6

UTILITY OF THE BONDAGE OF THE JEWS

10. This bondage, however, in the case of the Jewish people, differed widely from what it was in the case of the other nations; because, though the former were in bondage to temporal things, it was in such a way that in all these the One God was put before their minds. And although they paid attention to the signs of spiritual realities in place of the realities themselves, not knowing to what the signs referred, still they had this conviction rooted in their minds, that in subjecting themselves to such a bondage they were doing the pleasure of the one invisible God of all. And the apostle describes this bondage as being like to that of boys under the guidance of a schoolmaster. And those who clung obstinately to such signs could not endure our Lord’s neglect of them when the time for their revelation had come; and hence their leaders brought it as a charge against Him that He healed on the Sabbath, and the people, clinging to these signs as if they were realities, could not believe that one who refused to observe them in the way the Jews did was God, or came from God. But those who did believe, from among whom the first Church at Jerusalem was formed, showed clearly how great an advantage it had been to be so guided by the schoolmaster that signs, which had been for a season imposed on the obedient, fixed the thoughts of those who observed them on the worship of the One God who made heaven and earth. These men, because they had been very near to spiritual things (for even in the temporal and carnal offerings and types, though they did not clearly apprehend their spiritual meaning, they had learnt to adore the One Eternal God,) were filled with such a measure of the Holy Spirit that they sold all their goods, and laid their price at the apostles’ feet to be distributed among the needy, and

consecrated themselves wholly to God as a new temple, of which the old temple they were serving was but the earthly type.

11. Now it is not recorded that any of the Gentile churches did this, because men who had for their gods idols made with hands had not been so near to spiritual things.

CHAPTER 7

THE USELESS BONDAGE OF THE GENTILES

And if ever any of them endeavored to make it out that their idols were only signs, yet still they used them in reference to the worship and adoration of the creature. What difference does it make to me, for instance, that the image of Neptune is not itself to be considered a god, but only as representing the wide ocean, and all the other waters besides that spring out of fountains? As it is described by a poet of theirs, who says, if I recollect aright, “Thou, Father Neptune, whose hoary temples are wreathed with the resounding sea, whose beard is the mighty ocean flowing forth unceasingly, and whose hair is the winding rivers.” This husk shakes its rattling stones within a sweet covering, and yet it is not food for men, but for swine. He who knows the gospel knows what I mean. What profit is it to me, then, that the image of Neptune is used with a reference to this explanation of it, unless indeed the result be that I worship neither? For any statue you like to take is as much god to me as the wide ocean. I grant, however, that they who make gods of the works of man have sunk lower than they who make gods of the works of God. But the command is that we should love and serve the One God, who is the Maker of all those things, the images of which are worshipped by the heathen either as gods, or as signs and representations of gods. If, then, to take a sign which has been established for a useful end instead of the thing itself which it was designed to signify, is bondage to the flesh, how much more so is it to take signs intended to represent useless things for the things themselves! For even if you go back to the very things signified by such signs, and engage your mind in the worship of these, you will not be anything the more free from the burden and the livery of bondage to the flesh.

CHAPTER 8

THE JEWS LIBERATED FROM THEIR BONDAGE IN ONE WAY, THE GENTILES IN ANOTHER

12. Accordingly the liberty that comes by Christ took those whom it found under bondage to useful signs, and who were (so to speak) near to it, and, interpreting the signs to which they were in bondage, set them free by raising them to the realities of which these were signs. And out of such were formed the churches of the saints of Israel. Those, on the other hand, whom it found in bondage to useless signs, it not only freed from their slavery to such signs, but brought to nothing and cleared out of the way all these signs themselves, so that the Gentiles were turned from the corruption of a multitude of false gods, which Scripture frequently and justly speaks of as fornication, to the worship of the One God: not that they might now fall into bondage to signs of a useful kind, but rather that they might exercise their minds in the spiritual understanding of such.

CHAPTER 9

WHO IS IN BONDAGE TO SIGNS, AND WHO NOT

13. Now he is in bondage to a sign who uses, or pays homage to, any significant object without knowing what it signifies: he, on the other hand, who either uses or honors a useful sign divinely appointed, whose force and significance he understands, does not honor the sign which is seen and temporal, but that to which all such signs refer. Now such a man is spiritual and free even at the time of his bondage, when it is not yet expedient to reveal to carnal minds those signs by subjection to which their carnality is to be overcome. To this class of spiritual persons belonged the patriarchs and the prophets, and all those among the people of Israel through whose instrumentality the Holy Spirit ministered unto us the aids and consolations of the Scriptures. But at the present time, after that the proof of our liberty has shone forth so clearly in the resurrection of our Lord, we are not oppressed with the heavy burden of attending even to those signs which we now understand, but our Lord Himself, and apostolic practice, have handed down to us a few rites in place of many, and these at once very easy to perform, most majestic in their significance, and most sacred in the

observance; such, for example, as the sacrament of baptism, and the celebration of the body and blood of the Lord. And as soon as any one looks upon these observances he knows to what they refer, and so reveres them not in carnal bondage, but in spiritual freedom. Now, as to follow the letter, and to take signs for the things that are signified by them, is a mark of weakness and bondage; so to interpret signs wrongly is the result of being misled by error. He, however, who does not understand what a sign signifies, but yet knows that it is a sign, is not in bondage. And it is better even to be in bondage to unknown but useful signs than, by interpreting them wrongly, to draw the neck from under the yoke of bondage only to insert it in the coils of error.

CHAPTER 10

HOW WE ARE TO DISCERN WHETHER A PHRASE IS FIGURATIVE

14. But in addition to the foregoing rule, which guards us against taking a metaphorical form of speech as if it were literal, we must also pay heed to that which tells us not to take a literal form of speech as if it were figurative. In the first place, then, we must show the way to find out whether a phrase is literal or figurative. And the way is certainly as follows: Whatever there is in the word of God that cannot, when taken literally, be referred either to purity of life or soundness of doctrine, you may set down as figurative. Purity of life has reference to the love of God and one’s neighbor; soundness of doctrine to the knowledge of God and one’s neighbor. Every man, moreover, has hope in his own conscience, so far as he perceives that he has attained to the love and knowledge of God and his neighbor. Now all these matters have been spoken of in the first book.

15. But as men are prone to estimate sins, not by reference to their inherent sinfulness, but rather by reference to their own customs, it frequently happens that a man will think nothing blameable except what the men of his own country and time are accustomed to condemn, and nothing worthy of praise or approval except what is sanctioned by the custom of his companions; and thus it comes to pass, that if Scripture either enjoins what is opposed to the customs of the hearers, or condemns what is not so opposed, and if at the same time the authority of the word has a hold upon

their minds, they think that the expression is figurative. Now Scripture enjoins nothing except charity, and condemns nothing except lust, and in that way fashions the lives of men. In the same way, if an erroneous opinion has taken possession of the mind, men think that whatever Scripture asserts contrary to this must be figurative. Now Scripture asserts nothing but the catholic faith, in regard to things past, future, and present. It is a narrative of the past, a prophecy of the future, and a description of the present. But all these tend to nourish and strengthen charity, and to overcome and root out lust.

16. I mean by charity that affection of the mind which aims at the enjoyment of God for His own sake, and the enjoyment of one's self and one's neighbor in subordination to God; by lust I mean that affection of the mind which aims at enjoying one's self and one's neighbor, and other corporeal things, without reference to God. Again, what lust, when unsubdued, does towards corrupting one's own soul and body, is called vice; but what it does to injure another is called crime. And these are the two classes into which all sins may be divided. But the vices come first; for when these have exhausted the soul, and reduced it to a kind of poverty, it easily slides into crimes, in order to remove hindrances to, or to find assistance in, its vices. In the same way, what charity does with a view to one's own advantage is prudence; but what it does with a view to a neighbor's advantage is called benevolence. And here prudence comes first; because no one can confer an advantage on another which he does not himself possess. Now in proportion as the dominion of lust is pulled down, in the same proportion is that of charity built up.

CHAPTER 11

RULE FOR INTERPRETING PHRASES WHICH SEEM TO ASCRIBE SEVERITY TO GOD AND THE SAINTS

17. Every severity, therefore, and apparent cruelty, either in word or deed, that is ascribed in Holy Scripture to God or His saints, avails to the pulling down of the dominion of lust. And if its meaning be clear, we are not to give it some secondary reference, as if it were spoken figuratively. Take, for example, that saying of the apostle: "But, after thy hardness and impenitent

heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile." But this is addressed to those who, being unwilling to subdue their lust, are themselves involved in the destruction of their lust. When, however, the dominion of lust is overturned in a man over whom it had held sway, this plain expression is used: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." Only that, even in these instances, some words are used figuratively, as for example, "the wrath of God" and "crucified." But these are not so numerous, nor placed in such a way as to obscure the sense, and make it allegorical or enigmatical, which is the kind of expression properly called figurative. But in the saying addressed to Jeremiah, "See, I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down," there is no doubt the whole of the language is figurative, and to be referred to the end I have spoken of.

CHAPTER 12

RULE FOR INTERPRETING THOSE SAYINGS AND ACTIONS WHICH ARE ASCRIBED TO GOD AND THE SAINTS, AND WHICH YET SEEM TO THE UNSKILLFUL TO BE WICKED

18. Those things, again, whether only sayings or whether actual deeds, which appear to the inexperienced to be sinful, and which are ascribed to God, or to men whose holiness is put before us as an example, are wholly figurative, and the hidden kernel of meaning they contain is to be picked out as food for the nourishment of charity. Now, whoever uses transitory objects less freely than is the custom of those among whom he lives, is either temperate or superstitious; whoever, on the other hand, uses them so as to transgress the bounds of the custom of the good men about him, either has a further meaning in what he does, or is sinful. In all such matters it is not the use of the objects, but the lust of the user, that is to blame. Nobody in his sober senses would believe, for example, that when our Lord's feet were anointed by the woman with precious ointment, it was for the same

purpose for which luxurious and profligate men are accustomed to have theirs anointed in those banquets which we abhor. For the sweet odor means the good report which is earned by a life of good works; and the man who wins this, while following in the footsteps of Christ, anoints His feet (so to speak) with the most precious ointment. And so that which in the case of other persons is often a sin, becomes, when ascribed to God or a prophet, the sign of some great truth. Keeping company with a harlot, for example, is one thing when it is the result of abandoned manners, another thing when done in the course of his prophecy by the prophet Hosea. Because it is a shamefully wicked thing to strip the body naked at a banquet among the drunken and licentious, it does not follow that it is a sin to be naked in the baths.

19. We must, therefore, consider carefully what is suitable to times and places and persons, and not rashly charge men with sins. For it is possible that a wise man may use the daintiest food without any sin of epicurism or gluttony, while a fool will crave for the vilest food with a most disgusting eagerness of appetite. And any sane man would prefer eating fish after the manner of our Lord, to eating lentiles after the manner of Esau, or barley after the manner of oxen. For there are several beasts that feed on commoner kinds of food, but it does not follow that they are more temperate than we are. For in all matters of this kind it is not the nature of the things we use, but our reason for using them, and our manner of seeking them, that make what we do either praiseworthy or blameable.

20. Now the saints of ancient times were, under the form of an earthly kingdom, foreshadowing and foretelling the kingdom of heaven. And on account of the necessity for a numerous offspring, the custom of one man having several wives was at that time blameless: and for the same reason it was not proper for one woman to have several husbands, because a woman does not in that way become more fruitful, but, on the contrary, it is base harlotry to seek either gain or offspring by promiscuous intercourse. In regard to matters of this sort, whatever the holy men of those times did without lust, Scripture passes over without blame, although they did things which could not be done at the present time, except through lust. And everything of this nature that is there narrated we are to take not only in its

historical and literal, but also in its figurative and prophetical sense, and to interpret as bearing ultimately upon the end of love towards God or our neighbor, or both. For as it was disgraceful among the ancient Romans to wear tunics reaching to the heels, and furnished with sleeves, but now it is disgraceful for men honorably born not to wear tunics of that description: so we must take heed in regard to other things also, that lust do not mix with our use of them; for lust not only abuses to wicked ends the customs of those among whom we live, but frequently also transgressing the bounds of custom, betrays, in a disgraceful outbreak, its own hideousness, which was concealed under the cover of prevailing fashions.

CHAPTER 13

SAME SUBJECT, CONTINUED

21. Whatever, then, is in accordance with the habits of those with whom we are either compelled by necessity, or undertake as a matter of duty, to spend this life, is to be turned by good and great men to some prudent or benevolent end, either directly, as is our duty, or figuratively, as is allowable to prophets.

CHAPTER 14

ERROR OF THOSE WHO THINK THAT THERE IS NO ABSOLUTE RIGHT AND WRONG

22. But when men unacquainted with other modes of life than their own meet with the record of such actions, unless they are restrained by authority, they look upon them as sins, and do not consider that their own customs either in regard to marriage, or feasts, or dress, or the other necessities and adornments of human life, appear sinful to the people of other nations and other times. And, distracted by this endless variety of customs, some who were half asleep (as I may say)—that is, who were neither sunk in the deep sleep of folly, nor were able to awake into the light of wisdom—have thought that there was no such thing as absolute right, but that every nation took its own custom for right; and that, since every nation has a different custom, and right must remain unchangeable, it becomes manifest that there is no such thing as right at all. Such men did not perceive, to take only one example, that the precept, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to

you, do ye even so to them," cannot be altered by any diversity of national customs. And this precept, when it is referred to the love of God, destroys all vices when to the love of one's neighbor, puts an end to all crimes. For no one is willing to defile his own dwelling; he ought not, therefore, to defile the dwelling of God, that is, himself. And no one wishes an injury to be done him by another; he himself, therefore, ought not to do injury to another.

CHAPTER 15

RULE FOR INTERPRETING FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS

23. The tyranny of lust being thus overthrown, charity reigns through its supremely just laws of love to God for His own sake, and love to one's self and one's neighbor for God's sake. Accordingly, in regard to figurative expressions, a rule such as the following will be observed, to carefully turn over in our minds and meditate upon what we read till an interpretation be found that tends to establish the reign of love. Now, if when taken literally it at once gives a meaning of this kind, the expression is not to be considered figurative.

CHAPTER 16

RULE FOR INTERPRETING COMMANDS AND PROHIBITIONS

24. If the sentence is one of command, either forbidding a crime or vice, or enjoining an act of prudence or benevolence, it is not figurative. If, however, it seems to enjoin a crime or vice, or to forbid an act of prudence or benevolence, it is figurative. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man," says Christ, "and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." This seems to enjoin a crime or a vice; it is therefore a figure, enjoining that we should have a share in the sufferings of our Lord, and that we should retain a sweet and profitable memory of the fact that His flesh was wounded and crucified for us. Scripture says: "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink;" and this is beyond doubt a command to do a kindness. But in what follows, "for in so doing thou shall heap coals of fire on his head," one would think a deed of malevolence was enjoined. Do not doubt, then, that the expression is figurative; and, while it is possible to interpret it in two

ways, one pointing to the doing of an injury, the other to a display of superiority, let charity on the contrary call you back to benevolence, and interpret the coals of fire as the burning groans of penitence by which a man’s pride is cured who bewails that he has been the enemy of one who came to his assistance in distress. In the same way, when our Lord says, “He who loveth his life shall lose it,” we are not to think that He forbids the prudence with which it is a man’s duty to care for his life, but that He says in a figurative sense, “Let him lose his life”—that is, let him destroy and lose that perverted and unnatural use which he now makes of his life, and through which his desires are fixed on temporal things so that he gives no heed to eternal. It is written: “Give to the godly man, and help not a sinner.” The latter clause of this sentence seems to forbid benevolence; for it says, “help not a sinner.” Understand, therefore, that “sinner” is put figuratively for sin, so that it is his sin you are not to help.

CHAPTER 17

SOME COMMANDS ARE GIVEN TO ALL IN COMMON, OTHERS TO PARTICULAR CLASSES

25. Again, it often happens that a man who has attained, or thinks he has attained, to a higher grade of spiritual life, thinks that the commands given to those who are still in the lower grades are figurative; for example, if he has embraced a life of celibacy and made himself a eunuch for the kingdom of heaven’s sake, he contends that the commands given in Scripture about loving and ruling a wife are not to be taken literally, but figuratively; and if he has determined to keep his virgin unmarried, he tries to put a figurative interpretation on the passage where it is said, “Marry thy daughter, and so shall thou have performed a weighty matter.” Accordingly, another of our rules for understanding the Scriptures will be as follows,—to recognize that some commands are given to all in common, others to particular classes of persons, that the medicine may act not only upon the state of health as a whole, but also upon the special weakness of each member. For that which cannot be raised to a higher state must be cared for in its own state.

CHAPTER 18

WE MUST TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE TIME AT WHICH ANYTHING WAS ENJOYED OR ALLOWED

26. We must also be on our guard against supposing that what in the Old Testament, making allowance for the condition of those times, is not a crime or a vice even if we take it literally and not figuratively, can be transferred to the present time as a habit of life. For no one will do this except lust has dominion over him, and endeavors to find support for itself in the very Scriptures which were intended to overthrow it. And the wretched man does not perceive that such matters are recorded with this useful design, that men of good hope may learn the salutary lesson, both that the custom they spurn can be turned to a good use, and that which they embrace can be used to condemnation, if the use of the former be accompanied with charity, and the use of the latter with lust.

27. For, if it was possible for one man to use many wives with chastity, it is possible for another to use one wife with lust. And I look with greater approval on the man who uses the fruitfulness of many wives for the sake of an ulterior object, than on the man who enjoys the body of one wife for its own sake. For in the former case the man aims at a useful object suited to the circumstances of the times; in the latter case he gratifies a lust which is engrossed in temporal enjoyments. And those men to whom the apostle permitted as a matter of indulgence to have one wife because of their incontinence, were less near to God than those who, though they had each of them numerous wives, yet just as a wise man uses food and drink only for the sake of bodily health, used marriage only for the sake of offspring. And, accordingly, if these last had been still alive at the advent of our Lord, when the time not of casting stones away but of gathering them together had come, they would have immediately made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. For there is no difficulty in abstaining unless when there is lust in enjoying. And assuredly those men of whom I speak knew that wantonness even in regard to wives is abuse and intemperance, as is proved by Tobit's prayer when he was married to his wife. For he says: "Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers, and blessed is Thy holy and glorious name for ever; let the heavens bless Thee, and all Thy creatures.

Thou madest Adam, and gavest him Eve his wife for an helper and stay. . . . And now, O Lord, Thou knowest that I take not this my sister for lust, but uprightly: therefore have pity on us, O Lord.”

CHAPTER 19

WICKED MEN JUDGE OTHERS BY THEMSELVES

28. But those who, giving the rein to lust, either wander about steeping themselves in a multitude of debaucheries, or even in regard to one wife not only exceed the measure necessary for the procreation of children, but with the shameless licence of a sort of slavish freedom heap up the filth of a still more beastly excess, such men do not believe it possible that the men of ancient times used a number of wives with temperance, looking to nothing but the duty, necessary in the circumstances of the time, of propagating the race; and what they themselves, who are entangled in the meshes of lust, do not accomplish in the case of a single wife, they think utterly impossible in the case of a number of wives.

29. But these same men might say that it is not right even to honor and praise good and holy men, because they themselves when they are honored and praised, swell with pride, becoming the more eager for the emptiest sort of distinction the more frequently and the more widely they are blown about on the tongue of flattery, and so become so light that a breath of rumor, whether it appear prosperous or adverse, will carry them into the whirlpool of vice or dash them on the rocks of crime. Let them, then, learn how trying and difficult it is for themselves to escape either being caught by the bait of praise, or pierced by the stings of insult; but let them not measure others by their own standard.

CHAPTER 20

CONSISTENCY OF GOOD MEN IN ALL OUTWARD CIRCUMSTANCES

Let them believe, on the contrary, that the apostles of our faith were neither puffed up when they were honored by men, nor cast down when they were despised. And certainly neither sort of temptation was wanting to those great men. For they were both cried up by the loud praises of believers, and cried down by the slanderous reports of their persecutors. But the apostles used all these things, as occasion served, and were not corrupted; and in the same way the saints of old used their wives with reference to the necessities of their own times, and were not in bondage to lust as they are who refuse to believe these things.

30. For if they had been under the influence of any such passion, they could never have restrained themselves from implacable hatred towards their sons, by whom they knew that their wives and concubines were solicited and debauched.

CHAPTER 21

DAVID NOT LUSTFUL, THOUGH HE FELL INTO ADULTERY

But when King David had suffered this injury at the hands of his impious and unnatural son, he not only bore with him in his mad passion, but mourned over him in his death. He certainly was not caught in the meshes of carnal jealousy, seeing that it was not his own injuries but the sins of his son that moved him. For it was on this account he had given orders that his son should not be slain if he were conquered in battle, that he might have a place of repentance after he was subdued; and when he was baffled in this design, he mourned over his son's death, not because of his own loss, but because he knew to what punishment so impious an adulterer and parricide had been hurried. For prior to this, in the case of another son who had been guilty of no crime, though he was dreadfully afflicted for him while he was sick, yet he comforted himself after his death.

31. And with what moderation and self-restraint those men used their wives appears chiefly in this, that when this same king, carried away by the heat of passion and by temporal prosperity, had taken unlawful possession of one woman, whose husband also he ordered to be put to death, he was accused of his crime by a prophet, who, when he had come to show him his sin, set before him the parable of the poor man who had but one ewe-lamb, and whose neighbor, though he had many, yet when a guest came to him spared to take of his own flock, but set his poor neighbor's one lamb before his guest to eat. And David's anger being kindled against the man, he

commanded that he should be put to death, and the lamb restored fourfold to the poor man; thus unwittingly condemning the sin he had wittingly committed. And when he had been shown this, and God's punishment had been denounced against him, he wiped out his sin in deep penitence. But yet in this parable it was the adultery only that was indicated by the poor man's ewe-lamb; about the killing of the woman's husband,—that is, about the murder of the poor man himself who had the one ewe-lamb,—nothing is said in the parable, so that the sentence of condemnation is pronounced against the adultery alone. And hence we may understand with what temperance he possessed a number of wives when he was forced to punish himself for transgressing in regard to one woman. But in his case the immoderate desire did not take up its abode with him, but was only a passing guest. On this account the unlawful appetite is called even by the accusing prophet, a guest. For he did not say that he took the poor man's ewe-lamb to make a feast for his king, but for his guest. In the case of his son Solomon, however, this lust did not come and pass away like a guest, but reigned as a king. And about him Scripture is not silent, but accuses him of being a lover of strange women; for in the beginning of his reign he was inflamed with a desire for wisdom, but after he had attained it through spiritual love, he lost it through carnal lust.

CHAPTER 22

RULE REGARDING PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE IN WHICH APPROVAL IS EXPRESSED OF ACTIONS WHICH ARE NOW CONDEMNED BY GOOD MEN

32. Therefore, although all, or nearly all, the transactions recorded in the Old Testament are to be taken not literally only, but figuratively as well, nevertheless even in the case of those which the reader has taken literally, and which, though the authors of them are praised, are repugnant to the habits of the good men who since our Lord's advent are the custodians of the divine commands, let him refer the figure to its interpretation, but let him not transfer the act to his habits of life. For many things which were done as duties at that time, cannot now be done except through lust.

CHAPTER 23

RULE REGARDING THE NARRATIVE OF SINS OF GREAT MEN

33. And when he reads of the sins of great men, although he may be able to see and to trace out in them a figure of things to come, let him yet put the literal fact to this use also, to teach him not to dare to vaunt himself in his own good deeds, and in comparison with his own righteousness, to despise others as sinners, when he sees in the case of men so eminent both the storms that are to be avoided and the shipwrecks that are to be wept over. For the sins of these men were recorded to this end, that men might everywhere and always tremble at that saying of the apostle: “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” For there is hardly a page of Scripture on which it is not clearly written that God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble.

CHAPTER 24

THE CHARACTER OF THE EXPRESSIONS USED IS ABOVE ALL TO HAVE WEIGHT

34. The chief thing to be inquired into, therefore, in regard to any expression that we are trying to understand is, whether it is literal or figurative. For when it is ascertained to be figurative, it is easy, by an application of the laws of things which we discussed in the first book, to turn it in every way until we arrive at a true interpretation, especially when we bring to our aid experience strengthened by the exercise of piety. Now we find out whether an expression is literal or figurative by attending to the considerations indicated above.

CHAPTER 25

THE SAME WORD DOES NOT ALWAYS SIGNIFY THE SAME THING

And when it is shown to be figurative, the words in which it is expressed will be found to be drawn either from like objects or from objects having some affinity.

35. But as there are many ways in which things show a likeness to each other, we are not to suppose there is any rule that what a thing signifies by

similitude in one place it is to be taken to signify in all other places. For our Lord used leaven both in a bad sense, as when He said, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees,” and in a good sense, as when He said, “The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”

36. Now the rule in regard to this variation has two forms. For things that signify now one thing and now another, signify either things that are contrary, or things that are only different. They signify contraries, for example, when they are used metaphorically at one time in a good sense, at another in a bad, as in the case of the leaven mentioned above. Another example of the same is that a lion stands for Christ in the place where it is said, “The lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed;” and again, stands for the devil where it is written, “Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.” In the same way the serpent is used in a good sense, “Be wise as serpents;” and again, in a bad sense, “The serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty.” Bread is used in a good sense, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven;” in a bad, “Bread eaten in secret is pleasant.” And so in a great many other cases. The examples I have adduced are indeed by no means doubtful in their signification, because only plain instances ought to be used as examples. There are passages, however, in regard to which it is uncertain in what sense they ought to be taken, as for example, “In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red: it is full of mixture.” Now it is uncertain whether this denotes the wrath of God, but not to the last extremity of punishment, that is, “to the very dregs;” or whether it denotes the grace of the Scriptures passing away from the Jews and coming to the Gentiles, because “He has put down one and set up another,”—certain observances, however, which they understand in a carnal manner, still remaining among the Jews, for “the dregs hereof is not yet wrung out.” The following is an example of the same object being taken, not in opposite, but only in different significations: water denotes people, as we read in the Apocalypse, and also the Holy Spirit, as for example, “Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water;” and many other things besides water must be interpreted according to the place in which they are found.

37. And in the same way other objects are not single in their signification, but each one of them denotes not two only but sometimes even several different things, according to the connection in which it is found.

CHAPTER 26

OBSCURE PASSAGES ARE TO BE INTERPRETED BY THOSE WHICH ARE CLEARER

Now from the places where the sense in which they are used is more manifest we must gather the sense in which they are to be understood in obscure passages. For example, there is no better way of understanding the words addressed to God, “Take hold of shield and buckler and stand up for mine help,” than by referring to the passage where we read, “Thou, Lord, hast crowned us with Thy favor as with a shield.” And yet we are not so to understand it, as that wherever we meet with a shield put to indicate a protection of any kind, we must take it as signifying nothing but the favor of God. For we hear also of the shield of faith, “wherewith,” says the apostle, “ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.” Nor ought we, on the other hand, in regard to spiritual armor of this kind to assign faith to the shield only; for we read in another place of the breastplate of faith: “putting on,” says the apostle, “the breastplate of faith and love.”

CHAPTER 27

ONE PASSAGE SUSCEPTIBLE OF VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS

38. When, again, not some one interpretation, but two or more interpretations are put upon the same words of Scripture, even though the meaning the writer intended remain undiscovered, there is no danger if it can be shown from other passages of Scripture that any of the interpretations put on the words is in harmony with the truth. And if a man in searching the Scriptures endeavors to get at the intention of the author through whom the Holy Spirit spoke, whether he succeeds in this endeavor, or whether he draws a different meaning from the words, but one that is not opposed to sound doctrine, he is free from blame so long as he is supported by the testimony of some other passage of Scripture. For the author perhaps saw that this very meaning lay in the words which we are trying to

interpret; and assuredly the Holy Spirit, who through him spoke these words, foresaw that this interpretation would occur to the reader, nay, made provision that it should occur to him, seeing that it too is founded on truth. For what more liberal and more fruitful provision could God have made in regard to the Sacred Scriptures than that the same words might be understood in several senses, all of which are sanctioned by the concurring testimony of other passages equally divine?

CHAPTER 28

IT IS SAFER TO EXPLAIN A DOUBTFUL PASSAGE BY OTHER PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE THAN BY REASON

39. When, however, a meaning is evolved of such a kind that what is doubtful in it cannot be cleared up by indubitable evidence from Scripture, it remains for us to make it clear by the evidence of reason. But this is a dangerous practice. For it is far safer to walk by the light of Holy Scripture; so that when we wish to examine the passages that are obscured by metaphorical expressions, we may either obtain a meaning about which there is no controversy, or if a controversy arises, may settle it by the application of testimonies sought out in every portion of the same Scripture.

CHAPTER 29

THE KNOWLEDGE OF TROPES IS NECESSARY

40. Moreover, I would have learned men to know that the authors of our Scriptures use all those forms of expression which grammarians call by the Greek name tropes, and use them more freely and in greater variety than people who are unacquainted with the Scriptures, and have learnt these figures of speech from other writings, can imagine or believe. Nevertheless those who know these tropes recognize them in Scripture, and are very much assisted by their knowledge of them in understanding Scripture. But this is not the place to teach them to the illiterate, lest it might seem that I was teaching grammar. I certainly advise, however, that they be learnt elsewhere, although indeed I have already given that advice above, in the second book—namely, where I treated of the necessary knowledge of languages. For the written characters from which grammar itself gets its

name (the Greek name for letters being grammata are the signs of sounds made by the articulate voice with which we speak. Now of some of these figures of speech we find in Scripture not only examples (which we have of them all), but the very names as well: for instance, allegory, enigma, and parable. However, nearly all these tropes which are said to be learnt as a matter of liberal education are found even in the ordinary speech of men who have learnt no grammar, but are content to use the vulgar idiom. For who does not say, “So may you flourish?” And this is the figure of speech called metaphor. Who does not speak of a fish-pond in which there is no fish, which was not made for fish, and yet gets its name from fish? And this is the figure called catachresis.

41. It would be tedious to go over all the rest in this way; for the speech of the vulgar makes use of them all, even of those more curious figures which mean the very opposite of what they say, as for example, those called irony and antiphrasis. Now in irony we indicate by the tone of voice the meaning we desire to convey; as when we say to a man who is behaving badly, “You are doing well.” But it is not by the tone of voice that we make an antiphrasis to indicate the opposite of what the words convey; but either the words in which it is expressed are used in the opposite of their etymological sense, as a grove is called lucus from its want of light; or it is customary to use a certain form of expression, although it puts yes for no by a law of contraries, as when we ask in a place for what is not there, and get the answer, “There is plenty;” or we add words that make it plain we mean the opposite of what we say, as in the expression, “Beware of him, for he is a good man.” And what illiterate man is there that does not use such expressions, although he knows nothing at all about either the nature or the names of these figures of speech? And yet the knowledge of these is necessary for clearing up the difficulties of Scripture; because when the words taken literally give an absurd meaning, we ought forthwith to inquire whether they may not be used in this or that figurative sense which we are unacquainted with; and in this way many obscure passages have had light thrown upon them.

CHAPTER 30

THE RULES OF TICHONIUS THE DONATIST EXAMINED

42. One Tichonius, who, although a Donatist himself, has written most triumphantly against the Donatists (and herein showed himself of a most inconsistent disposition, that he was unwilling to give them up altogether), wrote a book which he called the Book of Rules, because in it he laid down seven rules, which are, as it were, keys to open the secrets of Scripture. And of these rules, the first relates to the Lord and His body, the second to the twofold division of the Lord's body, the third to the promises and the law, the fourth to species and genus, the fifth to times, the sixth to recapitulation, the seventh to the devil and his body. Now these rules, as expounded by their author, do indeed, when carefully considered, afford considerable assistance in penetrating the secrets of the sacred writings; but still they do not explain all the difficult passages, for there are several other methods required, which are so far from being embraced in this number of seven, that the author himself explains many obscure passages without using any of his rules; finding, indeed, that there was no need for them, as there was no difficulty in the passage of the kind to which his rules apply. As, for example, he inquires what we are to understand in the Apocalypse by the seven angels of the churches to whom John is commanded to write; and after much and various reasoning, arrives at the conclusion that the angels are the churches themselves. And throughout this long and full discussion, although the matter inquired into is certainly very obscure, no use whatever is made of the rules. This is enough for an example, for it would be too tedious and troublesome to collect all the passages in the canonical Scriptures which present obscurities of such a kind as require none of these seven rules for their elucidation.

43. The author himself, however, when commending these rules, attributes so much value to them that it would appear as if, when they were thoroughly known and duly applied, we should be able to interpret all the obscure passages in the law—that is, in the sacred books. For he thus commences this very book: "Of all the things that occur to me, I consider none so necessary as to write a little book of rules, and, as it were, to make keys for, and put windows in, the secret places of the law. For there are certain mystical rules which hold the key to the secret recesses of the whole law, and render visible the treasures of truth that are to many invisible. And if this system of rules be received as I communicate it, without jealousy,

what is shut shall be laid open, and what is obscure shall be elucidated, so that a man travelling through the vast forest of prophecy shall, if he follow these rules as pathways of light, be preserved from going astray.” Now, if he had said, “There are certain mystical rules which hold the key to some of the secrets of the law,” or even “which hold the key to the great secrets of the law,” and not what he does say, “the secret recesses of the whole law;” and if he had not said “What is shut shall be laid open,” but, “Many things that are shut shall be laid open,” he would have said what was true, and he would not, by attributing more than is warranted by the facts to his very elaborate and useful work, have led the reader into false expectations. And I have thought it right to say thus much, in order both that the book may be read by the studious (for it is of very great assistance in understanding Scripture), and that no more may be expected from it than it really contains. Certainly it must be read with caution, not only on account of the errors into which the author falls as a man, but chiefly on account of the heresies which he advances as a Donatist. And now I shall briefly indicate what these seven rules teach or advise.

CHAPTER 31

THE FIRST RULE OF TICHONIUS

44. The first is about the Lord and His body, and it is this, that, knowing as we do that the head and the body—that is, Christ and His Church—are sometimes indicated to us under one person (for it is not in vain that it is said to believers, “Ye then are Abraham’s seed,” when there is but one seed of Abraham, and that is Christ), we need not be in a difficulty when a transition is made from the head to the body or from the body to the head, and yet no change made in the person spoken of. For a single person is represented as saying, “He hath decked me as a bridegroom with ornaments, and adorned me as a bride with jewels” and yet it is, of course, a matter for interpretation which of these two refers to the head and which to the body, that is, which to Christ and which to the Church.

CHAPTER 32

THE SECOND RULE OF TICHONIUS

45. The second rule is about the twofold division of the body of the Lord; but this indeed is not a suitable name, for that is really no part of the body of Christ which will not be with Him in eternity. We ought, therefore, to say that the rule is about the true and the mixed body of the Lord, or the true and the counterfeit, or some such name; because, not to speak of eternity, hypocrites cannot even now be said to be in Him, although they seem to be in His Church. And hence this rule might be designated thus: Concerning the mixed Church. Now this rule requires the reader to be on his guard when Scripture, although it has now come to address or speak of a different set of persons, seems to be addressing or speaking of the same persons as before, just as if both sets constituted one body in consequence of their being for the time united in a common participation of the sacraments. An example of this is that passage in the Song of Solomon, "I am black, but comely, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon." For it is not said, I was black as the tents of Kedar, but am now comely as the curtains of Solomon. The Church declares itself to be at present both; and this because the good fish and the bad are for the time mixed up in the one net. For the tents of Kedar pertain to Ishmael, who "shall not be heir with the son of the free woman." And in the same way, when God says of the good part of the Church, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight: these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them;" He immediately adds in regard to the other part, the bad that is mixed with the good, "They shall be turned back." Now these words refer to a set of persons altogether different from the former; but as the two sets are for the present united in one body, He speaks as if there were no change in the subject of the sentence. They will not, however, always be in one body; for one of them is that wicked servant of whom we are told in the gospel, whose lord, when he comes, "shall cut him asunder and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites."

CHAPTER 33

THE THIRD RULE OF TICHONIUS

46. The third rule relates to the promises and the law, and may be designated in other terms as relating to the spirit and the letter, which is the

name I made use of when writing a book on this subject. It may be also named, of grace and the law. This, however, seems to me to be a great question in itself, rather than a rule to be applied to the solution of other questions. It was the want of clear views on this question that originated, or at least greatly aggravated, the Pelagian heresy. And the efforts of Tichonius to clear up this point were good, but not complete. For, in discussing the question about faith and works, he said that works were given us by God as the reward of faith, but that faith itself was so far our own that it did not come to us from God; not keeping in mind the saying of the apostle: “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” But he had not come into contact with this heresy, which has arisen in our time, and has given us much labor and trouble in defending against it the grace of God which is through our Lord Jesus Christ, and which (according to the saying of the apostle, “There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you”) has made us much more watchful and diligent to discover in Scripture what escaped Tichonius, who, having no enemy to guard against, was less attentive and anxious on this point, namely, that even faith itself is the gift of Him who “hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.” Whence it is said to certain believers: “Unto you it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” Who, then, can doubt that each of these is the gift of God, when he learns from this passage, and believes, that each of them is given? There are many other testimonies besides which prove this. But I am not now treating of this doctrine. I have, however, dealt with it, one place or another, very frequently.

CHAPTER 34

THE FOURTH RULE OF TICHONIUS

47. The fourth rule of Tichonius is about species and genus. For so he calls it, intending that by species should be understood a part, by genus the whole of which that which he calls species is a part: as, for example, every single city is a part of the great society of nations: the city he calls a species, all nations constitute the genus. There is no necessity for here applying that subtilty of distinction which is in use among logicians, who discuss with

great acuteness the difference between a part and a species. The rule is of course the same, if anything of the kind referred to is found in Scripture, not in regard to a single city, but in regard to a single province, or tribe, or kingdom. Not only, for example, about Jerusalem, or some of the cities of the Gentiles, such as Tyre or Babylon, are things said in Scripture whose significance oversteps the limits of the city, and which are more suitable when applied to all nations; but in regard to Judea also, and Egypt, and Assyria, or any other nation you choose to take which contains numerous cities, but still is not the whole world, but only a part of it, things are said which pass over the limits of that particular country, and apply more fitly to the whole of which this is a part; or, as our author terms it, to the genus of which this is a species. And hence these words have come to be commonly known, so that even uneducated people understand what is laid down specially, and what generally, in any given Imperial command. The same thing occurs in the case of men: things are said of Solomon, for example, the scope of which reaches far beyond him, and which are only properly understood when applied to Christ and His Church, of which Solomon is a part.

48. Now the species is not always overstepped, for things are often said of such a kind as evidently apply to it also, or perhaps even to it exclusively. But when Scripture, having up to a certain point been speaking about the species, makes a transition at that point from the species to the genus, the reader must then be carefully on his guard against seeking in the species what he can find much better and more surely in the genus. Take, for example, what the prophet Ezekiel says: “When the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way, and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman. Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it: and I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way, and according to their doings, I judged them.” Now it is easy to understand that this applies to that house of Israel of which the apostle says, “Behold Israel after the flesh;” because the people of Israel after the flesh did both perform and endure all that is here referred to. What immediately follows, too, may be understood as applying to the same

people. But when the prophet begins to say, “And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord,” the reader ought now carefully to observe the way in which the species is overstepped and the genus taken in. For he goes on to say: “And I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my commandments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses.” Now that this is a prophecy of the New Testament, to which pertain not only the remnant of that one nation of which it is elsewhere said, “For though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall be saved,” but also the other nations which were promised to their fathers and our fathers; and that there is here a promise of that washing of regeneration which, as we see, is now imparted to all nations, no one who looks into the matter can doubt. And that saying of the apostle, when he is commending the grace of the New Testament and its excellence in comparison with the Old, “Ye are our epistle . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart,” has an evident reference to this place where the prophet says, “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.” Now the heart of flesh from which the apostle’s expression, “the fleshy tables of the heart,” is drawn, the prophet intended to point out as distinguished from the stony heart by the possession of sentient life; and by sentient he understood intelligent life. And thus the spiritual Israel is made up, not of one nation, but of all the nations which were promised to the fathers in their seed, that is, in Christ.

49. This spiritual Israel, therefore, is distinguished from the carnal Israel which is of one nation, by newness of grace, not by nobility of descent, in feeling, not in race; but the prophet, in his depth of meaning, while speaking of the carnal Israel, passes on, without indicating the transition, to speak of the spiritual, and although now speaking of the latter, seems to be still speaking of the former; not that he grudges us the clear apprehension of Scripture, as if we were enemies, but that he deals with us as a physician, giving us a wholesome exercise for our spirit. And therefore we ought to take this saying, "And I will bring you into your own land," and what he says shortly afterwards, as if repeating himself, "And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers," not literally, as if they referred to Israel after the flesh, but spiritually, as referring to the spiritual Israel. For the Church, without spot or wrinkle, gathered out of all nations, and destined to reign for ever with Christ, is itself the land of the blessed, the land of the living; and we are to understand that this was given to the fathers when it was promised to them for what the fathers believed would be given in its own time was to them, on account of the unchangeableness of the promise and purpose, the same as if it were already given; just as the apostle, writing to Timothy, speaks of the grace which is given to the saints: "Not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour." He speaks of the grace as given at a time when those to whom it was to be given were not yet in existence; because he looks upon that as having been already done in the arrangement and purpose of God, which was to take place in its own time, and he himself speaks of it as now made manifest. It is possible, however, that these words may refer to the land of the age to come, when there will be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein the unrighteous shall be unable to dwell. And so it is truly said to the righteous, that the land itself is theirs, no part of which will belong to the unrighteous; because it is the same as if it were itself given, when it is firmly settled that it shall be given.

CHAPTER 35

THE FIFTH RULE OF TICHONIUS

50. The fifth rule Tichonius lays down is one he designates of times,—a rule by which we can frequently discover or conjecture quantities of time which are not expressly mentioned in Scripture. And he says that this rule applies in two ways: either to the figure of speech called synecdoche, or to legitimate numbers. The figure synecdoche either puts the part for the whole, or the whole for the part. As, for example, in reference to the time when, in the presence of only three of His disciples, our Lord was transfigured on the mount, so that His face shone as the sun, and His raiment was white as snow, one evangelist says that this event occurred “after eight days,” while another says that it occurred “after six days.” Now both of these statements about the number of days cannot be true, unless we suppose that the writer who says “after eight days,” counted the latter part of the day on which Christ uttered the prediction and the first part of the day on which he showed its fulfillment as two whole days; while the writer who says “after six days,” counted only the whole unbroken days between these two. This figure of speech, which puts the part for the whole, explains also the great question about the resurrection of Christ. For unless to the latter part of the day on which He suffered we join the previous night, and count it as a whole day, and to the latter part of the night in which He arose we join the Lord’s day which was just dawning, and count it also a whole day, we cannot make out the three days and three nights during which He foretold that He would be in the heart of the earth.

51. In the next place, our author calls those numbers legitimate which Holy Scripture more highly favors such as seven, or ten, or twelve, or any of the other numbers which the diligent reader of Scripture soon comes to know. Now numbers of this sort are often put for time universal; as for example, “Seven times in the day do I praise Thee,” means just the same as “His praise shall continually be in my mouth.” And their force is exactly the same, either when multiplied by ten, as seventy and seven hundred (whence the seventy years mentioned in Jeremiah may be taken in a spiritual sense for the whole time during which the Church is a sojourner among aliens); or when multiplied into themselves, as ten into ten gives one hundred, and twelve into twelve gives one hundred and forty-four, which last number is used in the Apocalypse to signify the whole body of the saints. Hence it appears that it is not merely questions about times that are to be settled by

these numbers, but that their significance is of much wider application, and extends to many subjects. That number in the Apocalypse, for example, mentioned above, has not reference to times, but to men.

CHAPTER 36

THE SIXTH RULE OF TICHONIUS

52. The sixth rule Tichonius calls the recapitulation, which, with sufficient watchfulness, is discovered in difficult parts of Scripture. For certain occurrences are so related, that the narrative appears to be following the order of time, or the continuity of events, when it really goes back without mentioning it to previous occurrences, which had been passed over in their proper place. And we make mistakes if we do not understand this, from applying the rule here spoken of. For example, in the book of Genesis we read, “And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.” Now here it seems to be indicated that the events last mentioned took place after God had formed man and put him in the garden; whereas the fact is, that the two events having been briefly mentioned, viz., that God planted a garden, and there put the man whom He had formed, the narrative goes back, by way of recapitulation, to tell what had before been omitted, the way in which the garden was planted: that out of the ground God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food. Here there follows, “The tree of life also was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” Next the river is mentioned which watered the garden, and which was parted into four heads, the sources of four streams; and all this has reference to the arrangements of the garden. And when this is finished, there is a repetition of the fact which had been already told, but which in the strict order of events came after all this: “And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden.” For it was after all these other things were done that man was put in the garden, as now appears from the order of the narrative itself: it was not after man was put there that the other things were done, as the previous statement might be thought to imply, did we not accurately mark and understand the

recapitulation by which the narrative reverts to what had previously been passed over.

53. In the same book, again, when the generations of the sons of Noah are recounted, it is said: “These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations.” And, again, when the sons of Shem are enumerated: “These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.” And it is added in reference to them all: “These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations; and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood. And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech.” Now the addition of this sentence, “And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech,” seems to indicate that at the time when the nations were scattered over the earth they had all one language in common; but this is evidently inconsistent with the previous words, “in their families, after their tongues.” For each family or nation could not be said to have its own language if all had one language in common. And so it is by way of recapitulation it is added, “And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech,” the narrative here going back, without indicating the change, to tell how it was, that from having one language in common, the nations were divided into a multitude of tongues. And, accordingly, we are forthwith told of the building of the tower, and of this punishment being there laid upon them as the judgment of God upon their arrogance; and it was after this that they were scattered over the earth according to their tongues.

54. This recapitulation is found in a still more obscure form; as, for example, our Lord says in the gospel: “The same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. In that day, he which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away; and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot’s wife.” Is it when our Lord shall have been revealed that men are to give heed to these sayings, and not to look behind them, that is, not to long after the past life which they have renounced? Is not the present rather the time to give heed to them, that when the Lord shall have been

revealed every man may receive his reward according to the things he has given heed to or despised? And yet because Scripture says, “In that day,” the time of the revelation of the Lord will be thought the time for giving heed to these sayings, unless the reader be watchful and intelligent so as to understand the recapitulation, in which he will be assisted by that other passage of Scripture which even in the time of the apostles proclaimed: “Little children, it is the last time.” The very time then when the gospel is preached, up to the time that the Lord shall be revealed, is the day in which men ought to give heed to these sayings: for to the same day, which shall be brought to a close by a day of judgment, belongs that very revelation of the Lord here spoken of.

CHAPTER 37

THE SEVENTH RULE OF TICHONIUS

55. The seventh rule of Tichonius and the last, is about the devil and his body. For he is the head of the wicked, who are in a sense his body, and destined to go with him into the punishment of everlasting fire, just as Christ is the head of the Church, which is His body, destined to be with Him in His eternal kingdom and glory. Accordingly, as the first rule, which is called of the Lord and His body, directs us, when Scripture speaks of one and the same person, to take pains to understand which part of the statement applies to the head and which to the body; so this last rule shows us that statements are sometimes made about the devil, whose truth is not so evident in regard to himself as in regard to his body; and his body is made up not only of those who are manifestly out of the way, but of those also who, though they really belong to him, are for a time mixed up with the Church, until they depart from this life, or until the chaff is separated from the wheat at the last great winnowing. For example, what is said in Isaiah, “How he is fallen from heaven, Lucifer, son of the morning!” and the other statements of the context which, under the figure of the king of Babylon, are made about the same person, are of course to be understood of the devil; and yet the statement which is made in the same place, “He is ground down on the earth, who sendeth to all nations,” does not altogether fitly apply to the head himself. For, although the devil sends his angels to all nations, yet it is his body, not himself, that is ground down on the each, except that he

himself is in his body, which is beaten small like the dust which the wind blows from the face of the earth.

56. Now all these rules, except the one about the promises and the law, make one meaning to be understood where another is expressed, which is the peculiarity of figurative diction; and this kind of diction, it seems to me, is too widely spread to be comprehended in its full extent by any one. For, wherever one thing is said with the intention that another should be understood we have a figurative expression, even though the name of the trope is not to be found in the art of rhetoric. And when an expression of this sort occurs where it is customary to find it, there is no trouble in understanding it; when it occurs, however, where it is not customary, it costs labor to understand it, from some more, from some less, just as men have got more or less from God of the gifts of intellect, or as they have access to more or fewer external helps. And, as in the case of proper words which I discussed above, and in which things are to be understood just as they are expressed, so in the case of figurative words, in which one thing is expressed and another is to be understood, and which I have just finished speaking of as much as I thought enough, students of these venerable documents ought to be counselled not only to make themselves acquainted with the forms of expression ordinarily used in Scripture, to observe them carefully, and to remember them accurately, but also, what is especially and before all things necessary, to pray that they may understand them. For in these very books on the study of which they are intent, they read, “The Lord giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding;” and it is from Him they have received their very desire for knowledge, if it is wedded to piety. But about signs, so far as relates to words, I have now said enough. It remains to discuss, in the following book, so far as God has given me light, the means of communicating our thoughts to others.

Book IV

Argument—Passing to the second part of his work, that which treats of expression, the author premises that it is no part of his intention to write a treatise on the laws of rhetoric. These can be learned elsewhere, and ought not to be neglected, being indeed specially necessary for the Christian teacher, whom it behoves to excel in eloquence and power of speech. After detailing with much care and minuteness the various qualities of an orator, he recommends the authors of the Holy Scriptures as the best models of eloquence, far excelling all others in the combination of eloquence with wisdom. He points out that perspicuity is the most essential quality of style, and ought to be cultivated with especial care by the teacher, as it is the main requisite for instruction, although other qualities are required for delighting and persuading the hearer. All these gifts are to be sought in earnest prayer from God, though we are not to forget to be zealous and diligent in study. He shows that there are three species of style, the subdued, the elegant, and the majestic; the first serving for instruction, the second for praise, and the third for exhortation: and of each of these he gives examples, selected both from scripture and from early teachers of the church, Cyprian and Ambrose. He shows that these various styles may be mingled, and when and for what purposes they are mingled; and that they all have the same end in view, to bring home the truth to the hearer, so that he may understand it, hear it with gladness, and practise it in his life. Finally, he exhorts the Christian teacher himself, pointing out the dignity and responsibility of the office he holds to lead a life in harmony with his own teaching, and to show a good example to all.

CHAPTER 1

THIS WORK NOT INTENDED AS A TREATISE ON RHETORIC

1. This work of mine, which is entitled On Christian Doctrine, was at the commencement divided into two parts. For, after a preface, in which I answered by anticipation those who were likely to take exception to the

work, I said, “There are two things on which all interpretation of Scripture depends: the mode of ascertaining the proper meaning, and the mode of making known the meaning when it is ascertained. I shall treat first of the mode of ascertaining, next of the mode of making known, the meaning.” As, then, I have already said a great deal about the mode of ascertaining the meaning, and have given three books to this one part of the subject, I shall only say a few things about the mode of making known the meaning, in order if possible to bring them all within the compass of one book, and so finish the whole work in four books.

2. In the first place, then, I wish by this preamble to put a stop to the expectations of readers who may think that I am about to lay down rules of rhetoric such as I have learnt, and taught too, in the secular schools, and to warn them that they need not look for any such from me. Not that I think such rules of no use, but that whatever use they have is to be learnt elsewhere; and if any good man should happen to have leisure for learning them, he is not to ask me to teach them either in this work or any other.

CHAPTER 2

IT IS LAWFUL FOR A CHRISTIAN TEACHER TO USE THE ART OF RHETORIC

3. Now, the art of rhetoric being available for the enforcing either of truth or falsehood, who will dare to say that truth in the person of its defenders is to take its stand unarmed against falsehood? For example, that those who are trying to persuade men of what is false are to know how to introduce their subject, so as to put the hearer into a friendly, or attentive, or teachable frame of mind, while the defenders of the truth shall be ignorant of that art? That the former are to tell their falsehoods briefly, clearly, and plausibly, while the latter shall tell the truth in such a way that it is tedious to listen to, hard to understand, and, in fine, not easy to believe it? That the former are to oppose the truth and defend falshood with sophistical arguments, while the latter shall be unable either to defend what it true, or to refute what is false? That the former, while imbuing the minds of their hearers with erroneous opinions, are by their power of speech to awe, to melt, to enliven, and to rouse them, while the latter shall in defence of the truth be sluggish, and frigid, and somnolent? Who is such a fool as to think this wisdom?

Since, then, the faculty of eloquence is available for both sides, and is of very great service in the enforcing either of wrong or right, why do not good men study to engage it on the side of truth, when bad men use it to obtain the triumph of wicked and worthless causes, and to further injustice and error?

CHAPTER 3

THE PROPER AGE AND THE PROPER MEANS FOR ACQUIRING RHETORICAL SKILL

4. But the theories and rules on this subject (to which, when you add a tongue thoroughly skilled by exercise and habit in the use of many words and many ornaments of speech, you have what is called eloquence or oratory) may be learnt apart from these writings of mine, if a suitable space of time be set aside for the purpose at a fit and proper age. But only by those who can learn them quickly; for the masters of Roman eloquence themselves did not shrink from saying that any one who cannot learn this art quickly can never thoroughly learn it at all. Whether this be true or not, why need we inquire? For even if this art can occasionally be in the end mastered by men of slower intellect, I do not think it of so much importance as to wish men who have arrived at mature age to spend time in learning it. It is enough that boys should give attention to it; and even of these, not all who are to be fitted for usefulness in the Church, but only those who are not yet engaged in any occupation of more urgent necessity, or which ought evidently to take precedence of it. For men of quick intellect and glowing temperament find it easier to become eloquent by reading and listening to eloquent speakers than by following rules for eloquence. And even outside the canon, which to our great advantage is fixed in a place of secure authority, there is no want of ecclesiastical writings, in reading which a man of ability will acquire a tinge of the eloquence with which they are written, even though he does not aim at this, but is solely intent on the matters treated of; especially, of course, if in addition he practise himself in writing, or dictating, and at last also in speaking, the opinions he has formed on grounds of piety and faith. If, however, such ability be wanting, the rules of rhetoric are either not understood, or if, after great labor has been spent in enforcing them, they come to be in some small measure understood, they prove of no service. For even those who have learnt them, and who speak

with fluency and elegance, cannot always think of them when they are speaking so as to speak in accordance with them, unless they are discussing the rules themselves. Indeed, I think there are scarcely any who can do both things—that is, speak well, and, in order to do this, think of the rules of speaking while they are speaking. For we must be careful that what we have got to say does not escape us whilst we are thinking about saying it according to the rules of art. Nevertheless, in the speeches of eloquent men, we find rules of eloquence carried out which the speakers did not think of as aids to eloquence at the time when they were speaking, whether they had ever learnt them, or whether they had never even met with them. For it is because they are eloquent that they exemplify these rules; it is not that they use them in order to be eloquent.

5. And, therefore, as infants cannot learn to speak except by learning words and phrases from those who do speak, why should not men become eloquent without being taught any art of speech, simply by reading and learning the speeches of eloquent men, and by imitating them as far as they can? And what do we find from the examples themselves to be the case in this respect? We know numbers who, without acquaintance with rhetorical rules, are more eloquent than many who have learnt these; but we know no one who is eloquent without having read and listened to the speeches and debates of eloquent men. For even the art of grammar, which teaches correctness of speech, need not be learnt by boys, if they have the advantage of growing up and living among men who speak correctly. For without knowing the names of any of the faults, they will, from being accustomed to correct speech, lay hold upon whatever is faulty in the speech of any one they listen to, and avoid it; just as city-bred men, even when illiterate, seize upon the faults of rustics.

CHAPTER 4

THE DUTY OF THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER

6. It is the duty, then, of the interpreter and teacher of Holy Scripture, the defender of the true faith and the opponent of error, both to teach what is right and to refute what is wrong, and in the performance of this task to conciliate the hostile, to rouse the careless, and to tell the ignorant both

what is occurring at present and what is probable in the future. But once that his hearers are friendly, attentive, and ready to learn, whether he has found them so, or has himself made them so, the remaining objects are to be carried out in whatever way the case requires. If the hearers need teaching, the matter treated of must be made fully known by means of narrative. On the other hand, to clear up points that are doubtful requires reasoning and the exhibition of proof. If, however, the hearers require to be roused rather than instructed, in order that they may be diligent to do what they already know, and to bring their feelings into harmony with the truths they admit, greater vigor of speech is needed. Here entreaties and reproaches, exhortations and upbraidings, and all the other means of rousing the emotions, are necessary.

7. And all the methods I have mentioned are constantly used by nearly every one in cases where speech is the agency employed.

CHAPTER 5

WISDOM OF MORE IMPORTANCE THAN ELOQUENCE TO THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER

But as some men employ these coarsely, inelegantly, and frigidly, while others use them with acuteness, elegance, and spirit, the work that I am speaking of ought to be undertaken by one who can argue and speak with wisdom, if not with eloquence, and with profit to his hearers, even though he profit them less than he would if he could speak with eloquence too. But we must beware of the man who abounds in eloquent nonsense, and so much the more if the hearer is pleased with what is not worth listening to, and thinks that because the speaker is eloquent what he says must be true. And this opinion is held even by those who think that the art of rhetoric should be taught; for they confess that “though wisdom without eloquence is of little service to states, yet eloquence without wisdom is frequently a positive injury, and is of service never.” If, then, the men who teach the principles of eloquence have been forced by truth to confess this in the very books which treat of eloquence, though they were ignorant of the true, that is, the heavenly wisdom which comes down from the Father of Lights, how much more ought we to feel it who are the sons and the ministers of this higher wisdom! Now a man speaks with more or less wisdom just as he has made more or less progress in the knowledge of Scripture; I do not mean by reading them much and committing them to memory, but by understanding them aright and carefully searching into their meaning. For there are who read and yet neglect them; they read to remember the words, but are careless about knowing the meaning. It is plain we must set far above these the men who are not so retentive of the words, but see with the eyes of the heart into the heart of Scripture. Better than either of these, however, is the man who, when he wishes, can repeat the words, and at the same time correctly apprehends their meaning.

8. Now it is especially necessary for the man who is bound to speak wisely, even though he cannot speak eloquently, to retain in memory the words of Scripture. For the more he discerns the poverty of his own speech, the more he ought to draw on the riches of Scripture, so that what he says in his own words he may prove by the words of Scripture; and he himself, though small and weak in his own words, may gain strength and power from the confirming testimony of great men. For his proof gives pleasure when he cannot please by his mode of speech. But if a man desire to speak not only with wisdom, but with eloquence also (and assuredly he will prove of greater service if he can do both), I would rather send him to read, and listen to, and exercise himself in imitating, eloquent men, than advise him to spend time with the teachers of rhetoric; especially if the men he reads and listens to are justly praised as having spoken, or as being accustomed to speak, not only with eloquence, but with wisdom also. For eloquent speakers are heard with pleasure; wise speakers with profit. And, therefore, Scripture does not say that the multitude of the eloquent, but "the multitude of the wise is the welfare of the world." And as we must often swallow wholesome bitters, so we must always avoid unwholesome sweets. But what is better than wholesome sweetness or sweet wholesomeness? For the sweeter we try to make such things, the easier it is to make their wholesomeness serviceable. And so there are writers of the Church who have expounded the Holy Scriptures, not only with wisdom, but with eloquence as well; and there is not more time for the reading of these than is sufficient for those who are studious and at leisure to exhaust them.

CHAPTER 6

THE SACRED WRITERS UNITE ELOQUENCE WITH WISDOM

9. Here, perhaps, some one inquires whether the authors whose divinely-inspired writings constitute the canon, which carries with it a most wholesome authority, are to be considered wise only, or eloquent as well. A question which to me, and to those who think with me, is very easily settled. For where I understand these writers, it seems to me not only that nothing can be wiser, but also that nothing can be more eloquent. And I venture to affirm that all who truly understand what these writers say, perceive at the same time that it could not have been properly said in any other way. For as there is a kind of eloquence that is more becoming in youth, and a kind that is more becoming in old age, and nothing can be called eloquence if it be not suitable to the person of the speaker, so there is a kind of eloquence that is becoming in men who justly claim the highest authority, and who are evidently inspired of God. With this eloquence they spoke; no other would have been suitable for them; and this itself would be unsuitable in any other, for it is in keeping with their character, while it mounts as far above that of others (not from empty inflation, but from solid merit) as it seems to fall below them. Where, however, I do not understand these writers, though their eloquence is then less apparent, I have no doubt but that it is of the same kind as that I do understand. The very obscurity, too, of these divine and wholesome words was a necessary element in eloquence of a kind that was designed to profit our understandings, not only by the discovery of truth, but also by the exercise of their powers.

10. I could, however, if I had time, show those men who cry up their own form of language as superior to that of our authors (not because of its majesty, but because of its inflation), that all those powers and beauties of eloquence which they make their boast, are to be found in the sacred writings which God in His goodness has provided to mould our characters, and to guide us from this world of wickedness to the blessed world above. But it is not the qualities which these writers have in common with the heathen orators and poets that give me such unspeakable delight in their eloquence; I am more struck with admiration at the way in which, by an eloquence peculiarly their own, they so use this eloquence of ours that it is

not conspicuous either by its presence or its absence: for it did not become them either to condemn it or to make an ostentatious display of it; and if they had shunned it, they would have done the former; if they had made it prominent, they might have appeared to be doing the latter. And in those passages where the learned do note its presence, the matters spoken of are such, that the words in which they are put seem not so much to be sought out by the speaker as spontaneously to suggest themselves; as if wisdom were walking out of its house,—that is, the breast of the wise man, and eloquence, like an inseparable attendant, followed it without being called for.

CHAPTER 7

EXAMPLES OF TRUE ELOQUENCE DRAWN FROM THE EPISTLES OF PAUL AND THE PROPHECIES OF AMOS

11. For who would not see what the apostle meant to say, and how wisely he has said it, in the following passage: “We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us”? Now were any man unlearnedly learned (if I may use the expression) to contend that the apostle had here followed the rules of rhetoric, would not every Christian, learned or unlearned, laugh at him? And yet here we find the figure which is called in Greek klimaz (climax,) and by some in Latin gradatio, for they do not care to call it scala (a ladder), when the words and ideas have a connection of dependency the one upon the other, as we see here that patience arises out of tribulation, experience out of patience, and hope out of experience. nother ornament, too, is found here; for after certain statements finished in a single tone of voice, which we call clauses and sections (membra et caesa), but the Greeks kola and kommata, there follows a rounded sentence (ambitus sive circuitus) which the Greeks call periodos, the clauses of which are suspended on the voice of the speaker till the whole is completed by the last clause. For of the statements which precede the period, this is the first clause, “knowing that tribulation worketh patience;” the second, “and patience, experience;” the third, “and experience, hope.” Then the period which is subjoined is completed in three

clauses, of which the first is, “and hope maketh not ashamed;” the second, “because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts;” the third, “by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” But these and other matters of the same kind are taught in the art of elocution. As then I do not affirm that the apostle was guided by the rules of eloquence, so I do not deny that his wisdom naturally produced, and was accompanied by, eloquence.

12. In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, again, he refutes certain false apostles who had gone out from the Jews, and had been trying to injure his character; and being compelled to speak of himself, though he ascribes this as folly to himself, how wisely and how eloquently he speaks! But wisdom is his guide, eloquence his attendant; he follows the first, the second follows him, and yet he does not spurn it when it comes after him. “I say again,” he says, “Let no man think me a fool: if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little. That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise. For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit, whereinsoever any is bold (I speak foolishly), I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool), I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one, thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern my infirmities.” The thoughtful and attentive perceive how much wisdom there is in these words.

And even a man sound asleep must notice what a stream of eloquence flows through them.

13. Further still, the educated man observes that those sections which the Greeks call kommata, and the clauses and periods of which I spoke a short time ago, being intermingled in the most beautiful variety, make up the whole form and features (so to speak) of that diction by which even the unlearned are delighted and affected. For, from the place where I commenced to quote, the passage consists of periods: the first the smallest possible, consisting of two members; for a period cannot have less than two members, though it may have more: “I say again, let no man think me a fool.” The next has three members: “if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.” The third has four members: “That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.” The fourth has two: “Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.” And the fifth has two: “For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.” The sixth again has two members: “for ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage.” Then follow three sections (caesa): “if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself.” Next three clauses (membra): if “a man smite you on the face. I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak.” Then is subjoined a period of three members: “Howbeit, whereinsoever any is bold (I speak foolishly), I am bold also.” After this, certain separate sections being put in the interrogatory form, separate sections are also given as answers, three to three: “Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.” But a fourth section being put likewise in the interrogatory form, the answer is given not in another section (caesum) but in a clause (membrum): “Are they the ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool.) I am more.” Then the next four sections are given continuously, the interrogatory form being most elegantly suppressed: “in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.” Next is interposed a short period; for, by a suspension of the voice, “of the Jews five times” is to be marked off as constituting one member, to which is joined the second, “received I forty stripes save one.” Then he returns to sections, and three are set down: “Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck.” Next comes a clause: “a night and a

day I have been in the deep.” Next fourteen sections burst forth with a vehemence which is most appropriate: “In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.” After this comes in a period of three members: “Besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.” And to this he adds two clauses in a tone of inquiry: “Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?” In fine, this whole passage, as if panting for breath, winds up with a period of two members: “If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.” And I cannot sufficiently express how beautiful and delightful it is when after this outburst he rests himself, and gives the hearer rest, by interposing a slight narrative. For he goes on to say: “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.” And then he tells, very briefly the danger he had been in, and the way he escaped it.

14. It would be tedious to pursue the matter further, or to point out the same facts in regard to other passages of Holy Scripture. Suppose I had taken the further trouble, at least in regard to the passages I have quoted from the apostle’s writings, to point out figures of speech which are taught in the art of rhetoric? Is it not more likely that serious men would think I had gone too far, than that any of the studious would think I had done enough? All these things when taught by masters are reckoned of great value; great prices are paid for them, and the vendors puff them magniloquently. And I fear lest I too should smack of that puffery while thus descanting on matters of this kind. It was necessary, however, to reply to the ill-taught men who think our authors contemptible; not because they do not possess, but because they do not display, the eloquence which these men value so highly.

15. But perhaps some one is thinking that I have selected the Apostle Paul because he is our great orator. For when he says, “Though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge,” he seems to speak as if granting so much to his detractors, not as confessing that he recognized its truth. If he had said,

“I am indeed rude in speech, but not in knowledge,” we could not in any way have put another meaning upon it. He did not hesitate plainly to assert his knowledge, because without it he could not have been the teacher of the Gentiles. And certainly if we bring forward anything of his as a model of eloquence, we take it from those epistles which even his very detractors, who thought his bodily presence weak and his speech contemptible, confessed to be weighty and powerful.

I see, then, that I must say something about the eloquence of the prophets also, where many things are concealed under a metaphorical style, which the more completely they seem buried under figures of speech, give the greater pleasure when brought to light. In this place, however, it is my duty to select a passage of such a kind that I shall not be compelled to explain the matter, but only to commend the style. And I shall do so, quoting principally from the book of that prophet who says that he was a shepherd or herdsman, and was called by God from that occupation, and sent to prophesy to the people of God. I shall not, however, follow the Septuagint translators, who, being themselves under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in their translation, seem to have altered some passages with the view of directing the reader’s attention more particularly to the investigation of the spiritual sense; (and hence some passages are more obscure, because more figurative, in their translation;) but I shall follow the translation made from the Hebrew into Latin by the presbyter Jerome, a man thoroughly acquainted with both tongues.

16. When, then, this rustic, or quondam rustic prophet, was denouncing the godless, the proud, the luxurious, and therefore the most neglectful of brotherly love, he called aloud, saying: “Woe to you who are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, who are heads and chiefs of the people, entering with pomp into the house of Israel! Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines, and to all the best kingdoms of these: is their border greater than your border? Ye that are set apart for the day of evil, and that come near to the seat of oppression; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch yourselves upon couches that eat the lamb of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the herd; that chant to the sound of the viol. They thought that

they had instruments of music like David; drinking wine in bowls, and anointing themselves with the costliest ointment: and they were not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." Suppose those men who, assuming to be themselves learned and eloquent, despise our prophets as untaught and unskillful of speech, had been obliged to deliver a message like this, and to men such as these, would they have chosen to express themselves in any respect differently—those of them, at least, who would have shrunk from raving like madmen?

17. For what is there that sober ears could wish changed in this speech? In the first place, the invective itself; with what vehemence it throws itself upon the drowsy senses to startle them into wakefulness: "Woe to you who are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountains of Samaria, who are heads and chiefs of the people, entering with pomp into the house of Israel!" Next, that he may use the favors of God, who has bestowed upon them ample territory, to show their ingratitude in trusting to the mountain of Samaria, where idols were worshipped: "Pass ye unto Calneh," he says, "and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistines, and to all the best kingdoms of these: is their border greater than your border?" At the same time also that these things are spoken of, the style is adorned with names of places as with lamps, such as "Zion," "Samaria," "Calneh," "Hamath the great," and "Gath of the Philistines." Then the words joined to these places are most appropriately varied: "ye are at ease," "ye trust," "pass on," "go," "descend."

18. And then the future captivity under an oppressive king is announced as approaching, when it is added: "Ye that are set apart for the day of evil, and come near to the seat of oppression." Then are subjoined the evils of luxury: "ye that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch yourselves upon couches; that eat the lamb from the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the herd." These six clauses form three periods of two members each. For he does not say: Ye who are set apart for the day of evil, who come near to the seat of oppression, who sleep upon beds of ivory, who stretch yourselves upon couches, who eat the lamb from the flock, and calves out of the herd. If he had so expressed it, this would have had its beauty: six separate clauses running on, the same pronoun being repeated each time,

and each clause finished by a single effort of the speaker’s voice. But it is more beautiful as it is, the clauses being joined in pairs under the same pronoun, and forming three sentences, one referring to the prophecy of the captivity: “Ye that are set apart for the day of evil, and come near the seat of oppression;” the second to lasciviousness: “ye that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch yourselves upon couches;” the third to gluttony: “who eat the lamb from the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the herd.” So that it is at the discretion of the speaker whether he finish each clause separately and make six altogether, or whether he suspend his voice at the first, the third, and the fifth, and by joining the second to the first, the fourth to the third, and the sixth to the fifth, make three most elegant periods of two members each: one describing the imminent catastrophe; another, the lascivious couch; and the third, the luxurious table.

19. Next he reproaches them with their luxury in seeking pleasure for the sense of hearing. And here, when he had said, “Ye who chant to the sound of the viol,” seeing that wise men may practise music wisely, he, with wonderful skill of speech, checks the flow of his invective, and not now speaking to, but of, these men, and to show us that we must distinguish the music of the wise from the music of the voluptuary, he does not say, “Ye who chant to the sound of the viol, and think that ye have instruments of music like David;” but he first addresses to themselves what it is right the voluptuaries should hear, “Ye who chant to the sound of the viol;” and then, turning to others, he intimates that these men have not even skill in their art: “they thought that they had instruments of music like David; drinking wine in bowls, and anointing themselves with the costliest ointment.” These three clauses are best pronounced when the voice is suspended on the first two members of the period, and comes to a pause on the third.

20. But now as to the sentence which follows all these: “and they were not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.” Whether this be pronounced continuously as one clause, or whether with more elegance we hold the words, “and they were not grieved,” suspended on the voice, and then add, “for the affliction of Joseph,” so as to make a period of two members; in any case, it is a touch of marvelous beauty not to say, “and they were not grieved for the affliction of their brother;” but to put Joseph for brother, so

as to indicate brothers in general by the proper name of him who stands out illustrious from among his brethren, both in regard to the injuries he suffered and the good return he made. And, indeed, I do not know whether this figure of speech, by which Joseph is put for brothers in general, is one of those laid down in that art which I learnt and used to teach. But how beautiful it is, and how it comes home to the intelligent reader, it is useless to tell any one who does not himself feel it.

21. And a number of other points bearing on the laws of eloquence could be found in this passage which I have chosen as an example. But an intelligent reader will not be so much instructed by carefully analysing it as kindled by reciting it with spirit. Nor was it composed by man’s art and care, but it flowed forth in wisdom and eloquence from the Divine mind; wisdom not aiming at eloquence, yet eloquence not shrinking from wisdom. For if, as certain very eloquent and acute men have perceived and said, the rules which are laid down in the art of oratory could not have been observed, and noted, and reduced to system, if they had not first had their birth in the genius of orators, is it wonderful that they should be found in the messengers of Him who is the author of all genius? Therefore let us acknowledge that the canonical writers are not only wise but eloquent also, with an eloquence suited to a character and position like theirs.

CHAPTER 8

THE OBSCURITY OF THE SACRED WRITERS, THOUGH COMPATIBLE WITH ELOQUENCE, NOT TO BE IMITATED BY CHRISTIAN TEACHERS

22. But although I take some examples of eloquence from those writings of theirs which there is no difficulty in understanding, we are not by any means to suppose that it is our duty to imitate them in those passages where, with a view to exercise and train the minds of their readers, and to break in upon the satiety and stimulate the zeal of those who are willing to learn, and with a view also to throw a veil over the minds of the godless either that they may be converted to piety or shut out from a knowledge of the mysteries, from one or other of these reasons they have expressed themselves with a useful and wholesome obscurity. They have indeed expressed themselves in such a way that those who in after ages understood

and explained them aright have in the Church of God obtained an esteem, not indeed equal to that with which they are themselves regarded, but coming next to it. The expositors of these writers, then, ought not to express themselves in the same way, as if putting forward their expositions as of the same authority; but they ought in all their deliverances to make it their first and chief aim to be understood, using as far as possible such clearness of speech that either he will be very dull who does not understand them, or that if what they say should not be very easily or quickly understood, the reason will lie not in their manner of expression, but in the difficulty and subtilty of the matter they are trying to explain.

CHAPTER 9

HOW, AND WITH WHOM, DIFFICULT PASSAGES ARE TO BE DISCUSSED

23. For there are some passages which are not understood in their proper force, or are understood with great difficulty, at whatever length, however clearly, or with whatever eloquence the speaker may expound them; and these should never be brought before the people at all, or only on rare occasions when there is some urgent reason. In books, however, which are written in such a style that, if understood, they, so to speak, draw their own readers, and if not understood, give no trouble to those who do not care to read them and in private conversations, we must not shrink from the duty of bringing the truth which we ourselves have reached within the comprehension of others, however difficult it may be to understand it, and whatever labor in the way of argument it may cost us. Only two conditions are to be insisted upon, that our hearer or companion should have an earnest desire to learn the truth, and should have capacity of mind to receive it in whatever form it may be communicated, the teacher not being so anxious about the eloquence as about the clearness of his teaching.

CHAPTER 10

THE NECESSITY FOR PERSPICUITY OF STYLE

24. Now a strong desire for clearness sometimes leads to neglect of the more polished forms of speech, and indifference about what sounds well, compared with what clearly expresses and conveys the meaning intended.

Whence a certain author, when dealing with speech of this kind, says that there is in it “a kind of careful negligence.” Yet while taking away ornament, it does not bring in vulgarity of speech; though good teachers have, or ought to have, so great an anxiety about teaching that they will employ a word which cannot be made pure Latin without becoming obscure or ambiguous, but which when used according to the vulgar idiom is neither ambiguous nor obscure, not in the way the learned, but rather in the way the unlearned employ it. For if our translators did not shrink from saying, “Non congregabo conventicula eorum de sanguinibus,” because they felt that it was important for the sense to put a word here in the plural which in Latin is only used in the singular; why should a teacher of godliness who is addressing an unlearned audience shrink from using ossum instead of os, if he fear that the latter might be taken not as the singular of ossa, but as the singular of ora, seeing that African ears have no quick perception of the shortness or length of vowels? And what advantage is there in purity of speech which does not lead to understanding in the hearer, seeing that there is no use at all in speaking, if they do not understand us for whose sake we speak? He, therefore, who teaches will avoid all words that do not teach; and if instead of them he can find words which are at once pure and intelligible, he will take these by preference; if, however, he cannot, either because there are no such words, or because they do not at the time occur to him, he will use words that are not quite pure, if only the substance of his thought be conveyed and apprehended in its integrity.

25. And this must be insisted on as necessary to our being understood, not only in conversations, whether with one person or with several, but much more in the case of a speech delivered in public: for in conversation any one has the power of asking a question; but when all are silent that one may be heard, and all faces are turned attentively upon him, it is neither customary nor decorous for a person to ask a question about what he does not understand; and on this account the speaker ought to be especially careful to give assistance to those who cannot ask it. Now a crowd anxious for instruction generally shows by its movements if it understands what is said; and until some indication of this sort be given, the subject discussed ought to be turned over and over, and put in every shape and form and variety of expression, a thing which cannot be done by men who are repeating words

prepared beforehand and committed to memory. As soon, however, as the speaker has ascertained that what he says is understood, he ought either to bring his address to a close, or pass on to another point. For if a man gives pleasure when he throws light upon points on which people wish for instruction, he becomes wearisome when he dwells at length upon things that are already well known, especially when men's expectation was fixed on having the difficulties of the passage removed. For even things that are very well known are told for the sake of the pleasure they give, if the attention be directed not to the things themselves, but to the way in which they are told. Nay, even when the style itself is already well known, if it be pleasing to the hearers, it is almost a matter of indifference whether he who speaks be a speaker or a reader. For things that are gracefully written are often not only read with delight by those who are making their first acquaintance with them, but re-read with delight by those who have already made acquaintance with them, and have not yet forgotten them; nay, both these classes will derive pleasure even from hearing another man repeat them. And if a man has forgotten anything, when he is reminded of it he is taught. But I am not now treating of the mode of giving pleasure. I am speaking of the mode in which men who desire to learn ought to be taught. And the best mode is that which secures that he who hears shall hear the truth, and that what he hears he shall understand. And when this point has been reached, no further labor need be spent on the truth itself, as if it required further explanation; but perhaps some trouble may be taken to enforce it so as to bring it home to the heart. If it appear right to do this, it ought to be done so moderately as not to lead to weariness and impatience.

CHAPTER 11

THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER MUST SPEAK CLEARLY, BUT NOT INELEGANTLY

26. For teaching, of course, true eloquence consists, not in making people like what they disliked, nor in making them do what they shrank from, but in making clear what was obscure; yet if this be done without grace of style, the benefit does not extend beyond the few eager students who are anxious to know whatever is to be learnt, however rude and unpolished the form in which it is put; and who, when they have succeeded in their object, find the plain truth pleasant food enough. And it is one of the distinctive features of

good intellects not to love words, but the truth in words. For of what service is a golden key, if it cannot open what we want it to open? Or what objection is there to a wooden one if it can, seeing that to open what is shut is all we want? But as there is a certain analogy between learning and eating, the very food without which it is impossible to live must be flavored to meet the tastes of the majority.

CHAPTER 12

THE AIM OF THE ORATOR, ACCORDING TO CICERO, IS TO TEACH, TO DELIGHT, AND TO MOVE. OF THESE, TEACHING IS THE MOST ESSENTIAL

27. Accordingly a great orator has truly said that “an eloquent man must speak so as to teach, to delight, and to persuade.” Then he adds: “To teach is a necessity, to delight is a beauty, to persuade is a triumph.” Now of these three, the one first mentioned, the teaching, which is a matter of necessity, depends on what we say; the other two on the way we say it. He, then, who speaks with the purpose of teaching should not suppose that he has said what he has to say as long as he is not understood; for although what he has said be intelligible to himself it is not said at all to the man who does not understand it. If, however, he is understood, he has said his say, whatever may have been his manner of saying it. But if he wishes to delight or persuade his hearer as well, he will not accomplish that end by putting his thought in any shape no matter what, but for that purpose the style of speaking is a matter of importance. And as the hearer must be pleased in order to secure his attention, so he must be persuaded in order to move him to action. And as he is pleased if you speak with sweetness and elegance, so he is persuaded if he be drawn by your promises, and awed by your threats; if he reject what you condemn, and embrace what you commend; if he grieve when you heap up objects for grief, and rejoice when you point out an object for joy; if he pity those whom you present to him as objects of pity, and shrink from those whom you set before him as men to be feared and shunned. I need not go over all the other things that can be done by powerful eloquence to move the minds of the hearers, not telling them what they ought to do, but urging them to do what they already know ought to be done.

28. If, however, they do not yet know this, they must of course be instructed before they can be moved. And perhaps the mere knowledge of their duty will have such an effect that there will be no need to move them with greater strength of eloquence. Yet when this is needful, it ought to be done. And it is needful when people, knowing what they ought to do, do it not. Therefore, to teach is a necessity. For what men know, it is in their own hands either to do or not to do. But who would say that it is their duty to do what they do not know? On the same principle, to persuade is not a necessity: for it is not always called for; as, for example, when the hearer yields his assent to one who simply teaches or gives pleasure. For this reason also to persuade is a triumph, because it is possible that a man may be taught and delighted, and yet not give his consent. And what will be the use of gaining the first two ends if we fail in the third? Neither is it a necessity to give pleasure; for when, in the course of an address, the truth is clearly pointed out (and this is the true function of teaching), it is not the fact, nor is it the intention, that the style of speech should make the truth pleasing, or that the style should of itself give pleasure; but the truth itself, when exhibited in its naked simplicity, gives pleasure, because it is the truth. And hence even falsities are frequently a source of pleasure when they are brought to light and exposed. It is not, of course, their falsity that gives pleasure; but as it is true that they are false, the speech which shows this to be true gives pleasure.

CHAPTER 13

THE HEARER MUST BE MOVED AS WELL AS INSTRUCTED

29. But for the sake of those who are so fastidious that they do not care for truth unless it is put in the form of a pleasing discourse, no small place has been assigned in eloquence to the art of pleasing. And yet even this is not enough for those stubborn-minded men who both understand and are pleased with the teacher’s discourse, without deriving any profit from it. For what does it profit a man that he both confesses the truth and praises the eloquence, if he does not yield his consent, when it is only for the sake of securing his consent that the speaker in urging the truth gives careful attention to what he says? If the truths taught are such that to believe or to know them is enough, to give one’s assent implies nothing more than to

confess that they are true. When, however, the truth taught is one that must be carried into practice, and that is taught for the very purpose of being practiced, it is useless to be persuaded of the truth of what is said, it is useless to be pleased with the manner in which it is said, if it be not so learnt as to be practiced. The eloquent divine, then, when he is urging a practical truth, must not only teach so as to give instruction, and please so as to keep up the attention, but he must also sway the mind so as to subdue the will. For if a man be not moved by the force of truth, though it is demonstrated to his own confession, and clothed in beauty of style, nothing remains but to subdue him by the power of eloquence.

CHAPTER 14

BEAUTY OF DICTION TO BE IN KEEPING WITH THE MATTER

30. And so much labor has been spent by men on the beauty of expression here spoken of, that not only is it not our duty to do, but it is our duty to shun and abhor, many and heinous deeds of wickedness and baseness which wicked and base men have with great eloquence recommended, not with a view to gaining assent, but merely for the sake of being read with pleasure. But may God avert from His Church what the prophet Jeremiah says of the synagogue of the Jews: “A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests applaud them with their hands; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?” O eloquence, which is the more terrible from its purity, and the more crushing from its solidity! Assuredly it is “a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces.” For to this God Himself has by the same prophet compared His own word spoken through His holy prophets. God forbid, then, God forbid that with us the priest should applaud the false prophet, and that God’s people should love to have it so. God forbid, I say, that with us there should be such terrible madness! For what shall we do in the end thereof? And assuredly it is preferable, even though what is said should be less intelligible, less pleasing, and less persuasive, that truth be spoken, and that what is just, not what is iniquitous, be listened to with pleasure. But this, of course, cannot be, unless what is true and just be expressed with elegance.

31. In a serious assembly, moreover, such as is spoken of when it is said, “I will praise Thee among much people,” no pleasure is derived from that species of eloquence which indeed says nothing that is false, but which buries small and unimportant truths under a frothy mass of ornamental words, such as would not be graceful or dignified even if used to adorn great and fundamental truths. And something of this sort occurs in a letter of the blessed Cyprian, which, I think, came there by accident, or else was inserted designedly with this view, that posterity might see how the wholesome discipline of Christian teaching had cured him of that redundancy of language, and confined him to a more dignified and modest form of eloquence, such as we find in his subsequent letters, a style which is admired without effort, is sought after with eagerness, but is not attained without great difficulty. He says, then, in one place, “Let us seek this abode: the neighboring solitudes afford a retreat where, whilst the spreading shoots of the vine trees, pendulous and intertwined, creep amongst the supporting reeds, the leafy covering has made a portico of vine.” There is wonderful fluency and exuberance of language here; but it is too florid to be pleasing to serious minds. But people who are fond of this style are apt to think that men who do not use it, but employ a more chastened style, do so because they cannot attain the former, not because their judgment teaches them to avoid it. Wherefore this holy man shows both that he can speak in that style, for he has done so once, and that he does not choose, for he never uses it again.

CHAPTER 15

THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER SHOULD PRAY BEFORE PREACHING

32. And so our Christian orator, while he says what is just, and holy, and good (and he ought never to say anything else), does all he can to be heard with intelligence, with pleasure, and with obedience; and he need not doubt that if he succeed in this object, and so far as he succeeds, he will succeed more by piety in prayer than by gifts of oratory; and so he ought to pray for himself, and for those he is about to address, before he attempts to speak. And when the hour is come that he must speak, he ought, before he opens his mouth, to lift up his thirsty soul to God, to drink in what he is about to pour forth, and to be himself filled with what he is about to distribute. For,

as in regard to every matter of faith and love there are many things that may be said, and many ways of saying them, who knows what it is expedient at a given moment for us to say, or to be heard saying, except God who knows the hearts of all? And who can make us say what we ought, and in the way we ought, except Him in whose hand both we and our speeches are? Accordingly, he who is anxious both to know and to teach should learn all that is to be taught, and acquire such a faculty of speech as is suitable for a divine. But when the hour for speech arrives, let him reflect upon that saying of our Lord's as better suited to the wants of a pious mind: "Take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." The Holy Spirit, then, speaks thus in those who for Christ's sake are delivered to the persecutors; why not also in those who deliver Christ's message to those who are willing to learn?

CHAPTER 16

HUMAN DIRECTIONS NOT TO BE DESPISED, THOUGH GOD MAKES THE TRUE TEACHER

33. Now if any one says that we need not direct men how or what they should teach, since the Holy Spirit makes them teachers, he may as well say that we need not pray, since our Lord says, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him;" or that the Apostle Paul should not have given directions to Timothy and Titus as to how or what they should teach others. And these three apostolic epistles ought to be constantly before the eyes of every one who has obtained the position of a teacher in the Church. In the First Epistle to Timothy do we not read: "These things command and teach?" What these things are, has been told previously. Do we not read there: "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father?" Is it not said in the Second Epistle: "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me?" And is he not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth?" And in the same place: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." And so in the Epistle to Titus, does he not say that a bishop ought to "hold fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the

gainsayers?” There, too, he says: “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: that the aged men be sober,” and so on. And there, too: “These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers,” and so on. What then are we to think? Does the apostle in any way contradict himself, when, though he says that men are made teachers by the operation of the Holy Spirit, he yet himself gives them directions how and what they should teach? Or are we to understand, that though the duty of men to teach even the teachers does not cease when the Holy Spirit is given, yet that neither is he who planteth anything, nor he who watereth, but God who giveth the increase? Wherefore though holy men be our helpers, or even holy angels assist us, no one learns aright the things that pertain to life with God, until God makes him ready to learn from Himself, that God who is thus addressed in the psalm: “Teach me to do Thy will; for Thou art my God.” And so the same apostle says to Timothy himself, speaking, of course, as teacher to disciple: “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them.” For as the medicines which men apply to the bodies of their fellow-men are of no avail except God gives them virtue (who can heal without their aid, though they cannot without His), and yet they are applied; and if it be done from a sense of duty, it is esteemed a work of mercy or benevolence; so the aids of teaching, applied through the instrumentality of man, are of advantage to the soul only when God works to make them of advantage, who could give the gospel to man even without the help or agency of men.

CHAPTER 17

THREEFOLD DIVISION OF THE VARIOUS STYLES OF SPEECH

34. He then who, in speaking, aims at enforcing what is good, should not despise any of those three objects, either to teach, or to give pleasure, or to move, and should pray and strive, as we have said above, to be heard with intelligence, with pleasure, and with ready compliance. And when he does this with elegance and propriety, he may justly be called eloquent, even though he do not carry with him the assent of his hearer. For it is these three ends, viz., teaching, giving pleasure, and moving, that the great master of

Roman eloquence himself seems to have intended that the following three directions should subserve: “He, then, shall be eloquent, who can say little things in a subdued style, moderate things in a temperate style, and great things in a majestic style:” as if he had taken in also the three ends mentioned above, and had embraced the whole in one sentence thus: “He, then, shall be eloquent, who can say little things in a subdued style, in order to give instruction, moderate things in a temperate style, in order to give pleasure, and great things in a majestic style, in order to sway the mind.”

CHAPTER 18

THE CHRISTIAN ORATOR IS CONSTANTLY DEALING WITH GREAT MATTERS

35. Now the author I have quoted could have exemplified these three directions, as laid down by himself, in regard to legal questions: he could not, however, have done so in regard to ecclesiastical questions,—the only ones that an address such as I wish to give shape to is concerned with. For of legal questions those are called small which have reference to pecuniary transactions; those great where a matter relating to man’s life or liberty comes up. Cases, again, which have to do with neither of these, and where the intention is not to get the hearer to do, or to pronounce judgment upon anything, but only to give him pleasure, occupy as it were a middle place between the former two, and are on that account called middling, or moderate. For moderate things get their name from modus (a measure); and it is an abuse, not a proper use of the word moderate, to put it for little. In questions like ours, however, where all things, and especially those addressed to the people from the place of authority, ought to have reference to men’s salvation, and that not their temporal but their eternal salvation, and where also the thing to be guarded against is eternal ruin, everything that we say is important; so much so, that even what the preacher says about pecuniary matters, whether it have reference to loss or gain, whether the amount be great or small, should not seem unimportant. For justice is never unimportant, and justice ought assuredly to be observed, even in small affairs of money, as our Lord says: “He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much.” That which is least, then, is very little; but to be faithful in that which is least is great. For as the nature of the circle, viz., that all lines drawn from the centre to the circumference are equal, is the

same in a great disk that it is in the smallest coin; so the greatness of justice is in no degree lessened, though the matters to which justice is applied be small.

36. And when the apostle spoke about trials in regard to secular affairs (and what were these but matters of money?), he says: “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If, then, ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the Church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another: why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?” Why is it that the apostle is so indignant, and that he thus accuses, and upbraids, and chides, and threatens? Why is it that the changes in his tone, so frequent and so abrupt, testify to the depth of his emotion? Why is it, in fine, that he speaks in a tone so exalted about matters so very trifling? Did secular matters deserve so much at his hands? God forbid. No; but all this is done for the sake of justice, charity, and piety, which in the judgment of every sober mind are great, even when applied to matters the very least.

37. Of course, if we were giving men ad vice as to how they ought to conduct secular cases, either for themselves or for their connections, before the church courts, we would rightly advise them to conduct them quietly as matters of little moment. But we are treating of the manner of speech of the man who is to be a teacher of the truths which deliver us from eternal misery and bring us to eternal happiness; and wherever these truths are spoken of, whether in public or private, whether to one or many, whether to friends or enemies, whether in a continuous discourse or in conversation, whether in tracts, or in books, or in letters long or short, they are of great

importance. Unless indeed we are prepared to say that, because a cup of cold water is a very trifling and common thing, the saying of our Lord that he who gives a cup of cold water to one of His disciples shall in no wise lose his reward, is very trivial and unimportant. Or that when a preacher takes this saying as his text, he should think his subject very unimportant, and therefore speak without either eloquence or power, but in a subdued and humble style. Is it not the case that when we happen to speak on this subject to the people, and the presence of God is with us, so that what we say is not altogether unworthy of the subject, a tongue of fire springs up out of that cold water which inflames even the cold hearts of men with a zeal for doing works of mercy in hope of an eternal reward?

CHAPTER 19

THE CHRISTIAN TEACHER MUST USE DIFFERENT STYLES ON DIFFERENT OCCASIONS

38. And yet, while our teacher ought to speak of great matters, he ought not always to be speaking of them in a majestic tone, but in a subdued tone when he is teaching, temperately when he is giving praise or blame. When, however, something is to be done, and we are speaking to those who ought, but are not willing, to do it, then great matters must be spoken of with power, and in a manner calculated to sway the mind. And sometimes the same important matter is treated in all these ways at different times, quietly when it is being taught, temperately when its importance is being urged, and powerfully when we are forcing a mind that is averse to the truth to turn and embrace it. For is there anything greater than God Himself? Is nothing, then, to be learnt about Him? Or ought he who is teaching the Trinity in unity to speak of it otherwise than in the method of calm discussion, so that in regard to a subject which it is not easy to comprehend, we may understand as much as it is given us to understand? Are we in this case to seek out ornaments instead of proofs? Or is the hearer to be moved to do something instead of being instructed so that he may learn something? But when we come to praise God, either in Himself, or in His works, what a field for beauty and splendor of language opens up before man, who can task his powers to the utmost in praising Him whom no one can adequately praise, though there is no one who does not praise Him in some measure! But if He be not worshipped, or if idols, whether they be demons or any

created being whatever, be worshipped with Him or in preference to Him, then we ought to speak out with power and impressiveness, show how great a wickedness this is, and urge men to flee from it.

CHAPTER 20

EXAMPLES OF THE VARIOUS STYLES DRAWN FROM SCRIPTURE

39. But now to come to something more definite. We have an example of the calm, subdued style in the Apostle Paul, where he says: “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all;” and so on. And in the same way where he reasons thus: “Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.” And because it might possibly occur to the hearer to ask, If there is no inheritance by the law, why then was the law given? he himself anticipates this objection and asks, “Wherefore then serveth the law?” And the answer is given: “It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one; but God is one.” And here an objection occurs which he himself has stated: “Is the law then against the promises of God?” He answers: “God forbid.” And he also states the reason in these words: “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath

concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” It is part, then, of the duty of the teacher not only to interpret what is obscure, and to unravel the difficulties of questions, but also, while doing this, to meet other questions which may chance to suggest themselves, lest these should cast doubt or discredit on what we say. If, however, the solution of these questions suggest itself as soon as the questions themselves arise, it is useless to disturb what we cannot remove. And besides, when out of one question other questions arise, and out of these again still others; if these be all discussed and solved, the reasoning is extended to such a length, that unless the memory be exceedingly powerful and active the reasoner finds it impossible to return to the original question from which he set out. It is, however, exceedingly desirable that whatever occurs to the mind as an objection that might be urged should be stated and refuted, lest it turn up at a time when no one will be present to answer it, or lest, if it should occur to a man who is present but says nothing about it, it might never be thoroughly removed.

40. In the following words of the apostle we have the temperate style: “Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers, the younger as sisters.” And also in these: “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is you reasonable service.” And almost the whole of this hortatory passage is in the temperate style of eloquence; and those parts of it are the most beautiful in which, as if paying what was due, things that belong to each other are gracefully brought together. For example: “Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which

persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another.” And how gracefully all this is brought to a close in a period of two members: “Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate!” And a little afterwards: “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.” And these also, though expressed in single clauses, are terminated by a period of two members: “Owe no man anything, but to love one another.” And a little farther on: “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.” Now if the passage were translated thus, “et carnis providentiam ne in concupiscentiis feceritis,” the ear would no doubt be gratified with a more harmonious ending; but our translator, with more strictness, preferred to retain even the order of the words. And how this sounds in the Greek language, in which the apostle spoke, those who are better skilled in that tongue may determine. My opinion, however, is, that what has been translated to us in the same order of words does not run very harmoniously even in the original tongue.

41. And, indeed, I must confess that our authors are very defective in that grace of speech which consists in harmonious endings. Whether this be the fault of the translators, or whether, as I am more inclined to believe, the authors designedly avoided such ornament, I dare not affirm; for I confess I do not know. This I know, however, that if any one who is skilled in this species of harmony would take the closing sentences of these writers and arrange them according to the law of harmony (which he could very easily do by changing some words for words of equivalent meaning, or by retaining the words he finds and altering their arrangement), he will learn that these divinely-inspired men are not defective in any of those points which he has been taught in the schools of the grammarians and rhetoricians to consider of importance; and he will find in them many kinds of speech of great beauty,—beautiful even in our language, but especially beautiful in the original,—none of which can be found in those writings of

which they boast so much. But care must be taken that, while adding harmony, we take away none of the weight from these divine and authoritative utterances. Now our prophets were so far from being deficient in the musical training from which this harmony we speak of is most fully learnt, that Jerome, a very learned man, describes even the metres employed by some of them, in the Hebrew language at least; though, in order to give an accurate rendering of the words, he has not preserved these in his translation. I, however (to speak of my own feeling, which is better known to me than it is to others, and than that of others is to me), while I do not in my own speech, however modestly I think it done, neglect these harmonious endings, am just as well pleased to find them in the sacred authors very rarely.

42. The majestic style of speech differs from the temperate style just spoken of, chiefly in that it is not so much decked out with verbal ornaments as exalted into vehemence by mental emotion. It uses, indeed, nearly all the ornaments that the other does; but if they do not happen to be at hand, it does not seek for them. For it is borne on by its own vehemence; and the force of the thought, not the desire for ornament, makes it seize upon any beauty of expression that comes in its way. It is enough for its object that warmth of feeling should suggest the fitting words; they need not be selected by careful elaboration of speech. If a brave man be armed with weapons adorned with gold and jewels, he works feats of valor with those arms in the heat of battle, not because they are costly, but because they are arms; and yet the same man does great execution, even when anger furnishes him with a weapon that he digs out of the ground. The apostle in the following passage is urging that, for the sake of the ministry of the gospel, and sustained by the consolations of God’s grace, we should bear with patience all the evils of this life. It is a great subject, and is treated with power, and the ornaments of speech are not wanting: “Behold,” he says, “now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry not blamed: but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in strifes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the

word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” See him still burning: “O ye Corinthians, our mouth is opened unto you, our heart is enlarged,” and so on; it would be tedious to go through it all.

43. And in the same way, writing to the Romans, he urges that the persecutions of this world should be overcome by charity, in assured reliance on the help of God. And he treats this subject with both power and beauty: “We know,” he says, “that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

44. Again, in writing to the Galatians, although the whole epistle is written in the subdued style, except at the end, where it rises into a temperate eloquence, yet he interposes one passage of so much feeling that,

notwithstanding the absence of any ornaments such as appear in the passages just quoted, it cannot be called anything but powerful: “Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all. Ye know how, through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them. But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you. My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.” Is there anything here of contrasted words arranged antithetically, or of words rising gradually to a climax, or of sonorous clauses, and sections, and periods? Yet, notwithstanding, there is a glow of strong emotion that makes us feel the fervor of eloquence.

CHAPTER 21

EXAMPLES OF THE VARIOUS STYLES, DRAWN FROM THE TEACHERS OF THE CHURCH, ESPECIALLY AMBROSE AND CYPRIAN

45. But these writings of the apostles, though clear, are yet profound, and are so written that one who is not content with a superficial acquaintance, but desires to know them thoroughly, must not only read and hear them, but must have an expositor. Let us, then, study these various modes of speech as they are exemplified in the writings of men who, by reading the Scriptures, have attained to the knowledge of divine and saving truth, and have ministered it to the Church. Cyprian of blessed memory writes in the subdued style in his treatise on the sacrament of the cup. In this book he resolves the question, whether the cup of the Lord ought to contain water only, or water mingled with wine. But we must quote a passage by way of illustration. After the customary introduction, he proceeds to the discussion

of the point in question. “Observe” he says, “that we are instructed, in presenting the cup, to maintain the custom handed down to us from the Lord, and to do nothing that our Lord has not first done for us: so that the cup which is offered in remembrance of Him should be mixed with wine. For, as Christ says, I am the true vine,’ it follows that the blood of Christ is wine, not water; and the cup cannot appear to contain His blood by which we are redeemed and quickened, if the wine be absent; for by the wine is the blood of Christ typified, that blood which is foreshadowed and proclaimed in all the types and declarations of Scripture. For we find that in the book of Genesis this very circumstance in regard to the sacrament is foreshadowed, and our Lord’s sufferings typically set forth, in the case of Noah, when he drank wine, and was drunken, and was uncovered within his tent, and his nakedness was exposed by his second son, and was carefully hidden by his elder and his younger sons. It is not necessary to mention the other circumstances in detail, as it is only necessary to observe this point, that Noah, foreshadowing the future reality, drank, not water, but wine, and thus showed forth our Lord’s passion. In the same way we see the sacrament of the Lord’s supper prefigured in the case of Melchizedek the priest, according to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, where it says: And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed Abraham.’ Now, that Melchizedek was a type of Christ, the Holy Spirit declares in the Psalms, where the Father addressing the Son says, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.’ “ In this passage, and in all of the letter that follows, the subdued style is maintained, as the reader may easily satisfy himself.

46. St. Ambrose also, though dealing with a question of very great importance, the equality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son, employs the subdued style, because the object he has in view demands, not beauty of diction, nor the swaying of the mind by the stir of emotion, but facts and proofs. Accordingly, in the introduction to his work, we find the following passage among others: “When Gideon was startled by the message he had heard from God, that, though thousands of the people failed, yet through one man God would deliver His people from their enemies, he brought forth a kid of the goats, and by direction of the angel laid it with unleavened cakes upon a rock, and poured the broth over it; and

as soon as the angel of God touched it with the end of the staff that was in his hand, there rose up fire out of the rock and consumed the offering. Now this sign seems to indicate that the rock was a type of the body of Christ, for it is written, They drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ;' this, of course, referring not to Christ's divine nature but to His flesh, whose ever-flowing fountain of blood has ever satisfied the hearts of His thirsting people. And so it was at that time declared in a mystery that the Lord Jesus, when crucified, should abolish in His flesh the sins of the whole world, and not their guilty acts merely, but the evil lusts of their hearts. For the kid's flesh refers to the guilt of the outward act, the broth to the allurement of lust within, as it is written, And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting; and the children of Israel also wept again and again and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?' When the angel, then, stretched out his staff and touched the rock, and fire rose out of it, this was a sign that our Lord's flesh, filled with the Spirit of God, should burn up all the sins of the human race. Whence also the Lord says I am come to send fire on the earth.'" And in the same style he pursues the subject, devoting himself chiefly to proving and enforcing his point.

47. An example of the temperate style is the celebrated encomium on virginity from Cyprian: "Now our discourse addresses itself to the virgins, who, as they are the objects of higher honor, are also the objects of greater care. These are the flowers on the tree of the Church, the glory and ornament of spiritual grace, the joy of honor and praise, a work unbroken and unblemished, the image of God answering to the holiness of the Lord, the brighter portion of the flock of Christ. The glorious fruitfulness of their mother the Church rejoices in them, and in them flourishes more abundantly; and in proportion as bright virginity adds to her numbers, in the same proportion does the mother's joy increase. And at another place in the end of the epistle, As we have borne,' he says, the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.' Virginity bears this image, integrity bears it, holiness and truth bear it; they bear it who are mindful of the chastening of the Lord, who observe justice and piety, who are strong in faith, humble in fear, steadfast in the endurance of suffering, meek in the endurance of injury, ready to pity, of one mind and of one heart in brotherly peace. And every one of these things ought ye, holy virgins, to observe, to

cherish, and fulfill, who having hearts at leisure for God and for Christ, and having chosen the greater and better part, lead and point the way to the Lord, to whom you have pledged your vows. Ye who are advanced in age, exercise control over the younger. Ye who are younger, wait upon the elders, and encourage your equals; stir up one another by mutual exhortations; provoke one another to glory by emulous examples of virtue; endure bravely, advance in spirituality, finish your course with joy; only be mindful of us when your virginity shall begin to reap its reward of honor."

48. Ambrose also uses the temperate and ornamented style when he is holding up before virgins who have made their profession a model for their imitation, and says: "She was a virgin not in body only, but also in mind; not mingling the purity of her affection with any dross of hypocrisy; serious in speech; prudent in disposition; sparing of words; delighting in study; not placing her confidence in uncertain riches, but in the prayer of the poor; diligent in labor; reverent in word; accustomed to look to God, not man, as the guide of her conscience; injuring no one, wishing well to all; dutiful to her elders, not envious of her equals; avoiding boastfulness, following reason, loving virtue. When did she wound her parents even by a look? When did she quarrel with her neighbors? When did she spurn the humble, laugh at the weak, or shun the indigent? She is accustomed to visit only those haunts of men that pity would not blush for, nor modesty pass by. There is nothing haughty in her eyes, nothing bold in her words, nothing wanton in her gestures: her bearing is not voluptuous, nor her gait too free, nor her voice petulant; so that her outward appearance is an image of her mind, and a picture of purity. For a good house ought to be known for such at the very thres hold, and show at the very entrance that there is no dark recess within, as the light of a lamp set inside sheds its radiance on the outside. Why need I detail her sparingness in food, her superabundance in duty,—the one falling beneath the demands of nature, the other rising above its powers? The latter has no intervals of intermission, the former doubles the days by fasting; and when the desire for refreshment does arise, it is satisfied with food such as will support life, but not minister to appetite." Now I have cited these latter passages as examples of the temperate style, because their purpose is not to induce those who have not yet devoted themselves to take the vows of virginity, but to show of what character

those who have taken vows ought to be. To prevail on any one to take a step of such a nature and of so great importance, requires that the mind should be excited and set on fire by the majestic style. Cyprian the martyr, however, did not write about the duty of taking up the profession of virginity, but about the dress and deportment of virgins. Yet that great bishop urges them to their duty even in these respects by the power of a majestic eloquence.

49. But I shall select examples of the majestic style from their treatment of a subject which both of them have touched. Both have denounced the women who color, or rather discolor, their faces with paint. And the first, in dealing with this topic, says: "Suppose a painter should depict in colors that rival nature's the features and form and complexion of some man, and that, when the portrait had been finished with consummate art, another painter should put his hand over it, as if to improve by his superior skill the painting already completed; surely the first artist would feel deeply insulted, and his indignation would be justly roused. Dost thou, then, think that thou wilt carry off with impunity so audacious an act of wickedness, such an insult to God the great artificer? For, granting that thou art not immodest in thy behavior towards men, and that thou art not polluted in mind by these meretricious deceits, yet, in corrupting and violating what is God's, thou provest thyself worse than an adulteress. The fact that thou considerest thyself adorned and beautified by such arts is an impeachment of God's handiwork, and a violation of truth. Listen to the warning voice of the apostle: Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.' Now can sincerity and truth continue to exist when what is sincere is polluted, and what is true is changed by meretricious coloring and the deceptions of quackery into a lie? Thy Lord says, Thou canst not make one hair white or black;' and dost thou wish to have greater power so as to bring to nought the words of thy Lord? With rash and sacrilegious hand thou wouldst fain change the color of thy hair: I would that, with a prophetic look to the future, thou shouldst dye it the color of flame." It would be too long to quote all that follows.

50. Ambrose again, inveighing against such practices, says: “Hence arise these incentives to vice, that women, in their fear that they may not prove attractive to men, paint their faces with carefully-chosen colors, and then from stains on their features go on to stains on their chastity. What folly it is to change the features of nature into those of painting, and from fear of incurring their husband’s disapproval, to proclaim openly that they have incurred their own! For the woman who desires to alter her natural appearance pronounces condemnation on herself; and her eager endeavors to please another prove that she has first been displeasing to herself. And what testimony to thine ugliness can we find, O woman, that is more unquestionable than thine own, when thou art afraid to show thyself? If thou art comely why dost thou hide thy comeliness? If thou art plain, why dost thou lyingly pretend to be beautiful, when thou canst not enjoy the pleasure of the lie either in thine own consciousness or in that of another? For he loves another woman, thou desirest to please another man; and thou art angry if he love another, though he is taught adultery in thee. Thou art the evil promptress of thine own injury. For even the woman who has been the victim of a pander shrinks from acting the pander’s part, and though she be vile, it is herself she sins against and not another. The crime of adultery is almost more tolerable than thine; for adultery tampers with modesty, but thou with nature.” It is sufficiently clear, I think, that this eloquence calls passionately upon women to avoid tampering with their appearance by deceitful arts, and to cultivate modesty and fear. Accordingly, we notice that the style is neither subdued nor temperate, but majestic throughout. Now in these two authors whom I have selected as specimens of the rest, and in other ecclesiastical writers who both speak the truth and speak it well,—speak it, that is, judiciously, pointedly, and with beauty and power of expression,—many examples may be found of the three styles of speech, scattered through their various writings and discourses; and the diligent student may by assiduous reading, intermingled with practice on his own part, become thoroughly imbued with them all.

CHAPTER 22

THE NECESSITY OF VARIETY IN STYLE

51. But we are not to suppose that it is against rule to mingle these various styles: on the contrary, every variety of style should be introduced so far as is consistent with good taste. For when we keep monotonously to one style, we fail to retain the hearer's attention; but when we pass from one style to another, the discourse goes off more gracefully, even though it extend to greater length. Each separate style, again, has varieties of its own which prevent the hearer's attention from cooling or becoming languid. We can bear the subdued style, however, longer without variety than the majestic style. For the mental emotion which it is necessary to stir up in order to carry the hearer's feelings with us, when once it has been sufficiently excited, the higher the pitch to which it is raised, can be maintained the shorter time. And therefore we must be on our guard, lest, in striving to carry to a higher point the emotion we have excited, we rather lose what we have already gained. But after the interposition of matter that we have to treat in a quieter style, we can return with good effect to that which must be treated forcibly, thus making the tide of eloquence to ebb and flow like the sea. It follows from this, that the majestic style, if it is to be long continued, ought not to be unvaried, but should alternate at intervals with the other styles; the speech or writing as a whole, however, being referred to that style which is the prevailing one.

CHAPTER 23

HOW THE VARIOUS STYLES SHOULD BE MINGLED

52. Now it is a matter of importance to determine what style should be alternated with what other, and the places where it is necessary that any particular style should be used. In the majestic style, for instance, it is always, or almost always, desirable that the introduction should be temperate. And the speaker has it in his discretion to use the subdued style even where the majestic would be allowable, in order that the majestic when it is used may be the more majestic by comparison, and may as it were shine out with greater brilliance from the dark background. Again, whatever may be the style of the speech or writing, when knotty questions turn up for solution, accuracy of distinction is required, and this naturally demands the subdued style. And accordingly this style must be used in alternation with the other two styles whenever questions of that sort turn up;

just as we must use the temperate style, no matter what may be the general tone of the discourse, whenever praise or blame is to be given without any ulterior reference to the condemnation or acquittal of any one, or to obtaining the concurrence of any one in a course of action. In the majestic style, then, and in the quiet likewise, both the other two styles occasionally find place. The temperate style, on the other hand, not indeed always, but occasionally, needs the quiet style; for example, when, as I have said, a knotty question comes up to be settled, or when some points that are susceptible of ornament are left unadorned and expressed in the quiet style, in order to give greater effect to certain exuberances (as they may be called) of ornament. But the temperate style never needs the aid of the majestic; for its object is to gratify, never to excite, the mind.

CHAPTER 24

THE EFFECTS PRODUCED BY THE MAJESTIC STYLE

53. If frequent and vehement applause follows a speaker, we are not to suppose on that account that he is speaking in the majestic style; for this effect is often produced both by the accurate distinctions of the quiet style, and by the beauties of the temperate. The majestic style, on the other hand, frequently silences the audience by its impressiveness, but calls forth their tears. For example, when at Caesarea in Mauritania I was dissuading the people from that civil, or worse than civil, war which they called Caterva (for it was not fellow-citizens merely, but neighbors, brothers, fathers and sons even, who, divided into two factions and armed with stones, fought annually at a certain season of the year for several days continuously, every one killing whomsoever he could), I strove with all the vehemence of speech that I could command to root out and drive from their hearts and lives an evil so cruel and inveterate; it was not, however, when I heard their applause, but when I saw their tears, that I thought I had produced an effect. For the applause showed that they were instructed and de lighted, but the tears that they were subdued. And when I saw their tears I was confident even before the event proved it, that this horrible and barbarous custom (which had been handed down to them from their fathers and their ancestors of generations long gone by and which like an enemy was besieging their hearts, or rather had complete possession of them) was overthrown; and

immediately that my sermon was finished I called upon them with heart and voice to give praise and thanks to God. And, lo, with the blessing of Christ, it is now eight years or more since anything of the sort was attempted there. In many other cases besides I have observed that men show the effect made on them by the powerful eloquence of a wise man, not by clamorous applause so much as by groans, sometimes even by tears, finally by change of life.

54. The quiet style, too, has made a change in many; but it was to teach them what they were ignorant of, or to persuade them of what they thought incredible, not to make them do what they knew they ought to do but were unwilling to do. To break down hardness of this sort, speech needs to be vehement. Praise and censure, too, when they are eloquently expressed, even in the temperate style, produce such an effect on some, that they are not only pleased with the eloquence of the encomiums and censures, but are led to live so as themselves to deserve praise, and to avoid living so as to incur blame. But no one would say that all who are thus delighted change their habits in consequence, whereas all who are moved by the majestic style act accordingly, and all who are taught by the quiet style know or believe a truth which they were previously ignorant of.

CHAPTER 25

HOW THE TEMPERATE STYLE IS TO BE USED

55. From all this we may conclude, that the end arrived at by the two styles last mentioned is the one which it is most essential for those who aspire to speak with wisdom and eloquence to secure. On the other hand, what the temperate style properly aims at, viz., to please by beauty of expression, is not in itself an adequate end; but when what we have to say is good and useful, and when the hearers are both acquainted with it and favorably disposed towards it, so that it is not necessary either to instruct or persuade them, beauty of style may have its influence in securing their prompter compliance, or in making them adhere to it more tenaciously. For as the function of all eloquence, whichever of these three forms it may assume, is to speak persuasively, and its object is to persuade, an eloquent man will speak persuasively, whatever style he may adopt; but unless he succeeds in

persuading, his eloquence has not secured its object. Now in the subdued style, he persuades his hearers that what he says is true; in the majestic style, he persuades them to do what they are aware they ought to do, but do not; in the temperate style, he persuades them that his speech is elegant and ornate. But what use is there in attaining such an object as this last? They may desire it who are vain of their eloquence and make a boast of panegyrics, and such-like performances, where the object is not to instruct the hearer, or to persuade him to any course of action, but merely to give him pleasure. We, however, ought to make that end subordinate to another, viz., the effecting by this style of eloquence what we aim at effecting when we use the majestic style. For we may by the use of this style persuade men to cultivate good habits and give up evil ones, if they are not so hardened as to need the vehement style; or if they have already begun a good course, we may induce them to pursue it more zealously, and to persevere in it with constancy. Accordingly, even in the temperate style we must use beauty of expression not for ostentation, but for wise ends; not contenting ourselves merely with pleasing the hearer, but rather seeking to aid him in the pursuit of the good end which we hold out before him.

CHAPTER 26

IN EVERY STYLE THE ORATOR SHOULD AIM AT PERSPICUITY, BEAUTY, AND PERSUASIVENESS

55. Now in regard to the three conditions I laid down a little while ago as necessary to be fulfilled by any one who wishes to speak with wisdom and eloquence, viz., perspicuity, beauty of style, and persuasive power, we are not to understand that these three qualities attach themselves respectively to the three several styles of speech, one to each, so that perspicuity is a merit peculiar to the subdued style, beauty to the temperate, and persuasive power to the majestic. On the contrary, all speech, whatever its style, ought constantly to aim at, and as far as possible to display, all these three merits. For we do not like even what we say in the subdued style to pall upon the hearer; and therefore we would be listened to, not with intelligence merely, but with pleasure as well. Again, why do we enforce what we teach by divine testimony, except that we wish to carry the hearer with us, that is, to com pel his assent by calling in the assistance of Him of whom it is said,

“Thy testimonies are very sure”? And when any one narrates a story, even in the subdued style, what does he wish but to be believed? But who will listen to him if he do not arrest attention by some beauty of style? And if he be not intelligible, is it not plain that he can neither give pleasure nor enforce conviction? The subdued style, again, in its own naked simplicity, when it unravels questions of very great difficulty, and throws an unexpected light upon them; when it worms out and brings to light some very acute observations from a quarter whence nothing was expected; when it seizes upon and exposes the falsity of an opposing opinion, which seemed at its first statement to be unassailable; especially when all this is accompanied by a natural, unsought grace of expression, and by a rhythm and balance of style which is not ostentatiously obtruded, but seems rather to be called forth by the nature of the subject: this style, so used, frequently calls forth applause so great that one can hardly believe it to be the subdued style. For the fact that it comes forth without either ornament or defense, and offers battle in its own naked simplicity, does not hinder it from crushing its adversary by weight of nerve and muscle, and overwhelming and destroying the falsehood that opposes it by the mere strength of its own right arm. How explain the frequent and vehement applause that waits upon men who speak thus, except by the pleasure that truth so irresistibly established, and so victoriously defended, naturally affords? Wherefore the Christian teacher and speaker ought, when he uses the subdued style, to endeavor not only to be clear and intelligible, but to give pleasure and to bring home conviction to the hearer.

57. Eloquence of the temperate style, also, must, in the case of the Christian orator, be neither altogether without ornament, nor unsuitably adorned, nor is it to make the giving of pleasure its sole aim, which is all it professes to accomplish in the hands of others; but in its encomiums and censures it should aim at inducing the hearer to strive after or avoid or renounce what it condemns. On the other hand, without perspicuity this style cannot give pleasure. And so the three qualities, perspicuity, beauty, and persuasiveness, are to be sought in this style also; beauty, of course, being its primary object.

58. Again, when it becomes necessary to stir and sway the hearer's mind by the majestic style (and this is always necessary when he admits that what you say is both true and agreeable, and yet is unwilling to act accordingly), you must, of course, speak in the majestic style. But who can be moved if he does not understand what is said? and who will stay to listen if he receives no pleasure? Wherefore, in this style, too, when an obdurate heart is to be persuaded to obedience, you must speak so as to be both intelligible and pleasing, if you would be heard with a submissive mind.

CHAPTER 27

THE MAN WHOSE LIFE IS IN HARMONY WITH HIS TEACHING WILL TEACH WITH GREATER EFFECT

59. But whatever may be the majesty of the style, the life of the speaker will count for more in securing the hearer's compliance. The man who speaks wisely and eloquently, but lives wickedly, may, it is true, instruct many who are anxious to learn; though, as it is written, he "is unprofitable to himself." Wherefore, also, the apostle says: "Whether in pretence or in truth Christ is preached." Now Christ is the truth; yet we see that the truth can be preached, though not in truth,—that is, what is right and true in itself may be preached by a man of perverse and deceitful mind. And thus it is that Jesus Christ is preached by those that seek their own, and not the things that are Jesus Christ's. But since true believers obey the voice, not of any man, but of the Lord Himself, who says, "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not;" therefore it is that men who themselves lead unprofitable lives are heard with profit by others. For though they seek their own objects, they do not dare to teach their own doctrines, sitting as they do in the high places of ecclesiastical authority, which is established on sound doctrine. Wherefore our Lord Himself, before saying what I have just quoted about men of this stamp, made this observation: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat." The seat they occupied, then, which was not theirs but Moses,' compelled them to say what was good, though they did what was evil. And so they followed their own course in their lives, but were prevented by the seat they occupied, which belonged to another, from preaching their own doctrines.

60. Now these men do good to many by preaching what they themselves do not perform; but they would do good to very many more if they lived as they preach. For there are numbers who seek an excuse for their own evil lives in comparing the teaching with the conduct of their instructors, and who say in their hearts, or even go a little further, and say with their lips: Why do you not do yourself what you bid me do? And thus they cease to listen with submission to a man who does not listen to himself, and in despising the preacher they learn to despise the word that is preached. Wherefore the apostle, writing to Timothy, after telling him, “Let no man despise thy youth,” adds immediately the course by which he would avoid contempt: “but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

CHAPTER 28

TRUTH IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EXPRESSION. WHAT IS MEANT BY STRIFE ABOUT WORDS

61. Such a teacher as is here described may, to secure compliance, speak not only quietly and temperately, but even vehemently, without any breach of modesty, because his life protects him against contempt. For while he pursues an upright life, he takes care to maintain a good reputation as well, providing things honest in the sight of God and men, fearing God, and caring for men. In his very speech even he prefers to please by matter rather than by words; thinks that a thing is well said in proportion as it is true in fact, and that a teacher should govern his words, not let the words govern him. This is what the apostle says: “Not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.” To the same effect also is what he says to Timothy: “Charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.” Now this does not mean that, when adversaries oppose the truth, we are to say nothing in defence of the truth. For where, then, would be what he says when he is describing the sort of man a bishop ought to be: “that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers?” To strive about words is not to be careful about the way to overcome error by truth, but to be anxious that your mode of expression should be preferred to that of another. The man who does not strive about words, whether he speak

quietly, temperately, or vehemently, uses words with no other purpose than to make the truth plain, pleasing, and effective; for not even love itself, which is the end of the commandment and the fulfilling of the law, can be rightly exercised unless the objects of love are true and not false. For as a man with a comely body but an ill-conditioned mind is a more painful object than if his body too were deformed, so men who teach lies are the more pitiable if they happen to be eloquent in speech. To speak eloquently, then, and wisely as well, is just to express truths which it is expedient to teach in fit and proper words,—words which in the subdued style are adequate, in the temperate, elegant, and in the majestic, forcible. But the man who cannot speak both eloquently and wisely should speak wisely without eloquence, rather than eloquently without wisdom.

CHAPTER 29

IT IS PERMISSIBLE FOR A PREACHER TO DELIVER TO THE PEOPLE WHAT HAS BEEN WRITTEN BY A MORE ELOQUENT MAN THAN HIMSELF

If, however, he cannot do even this, let his life be such as shall not only secure a reward for himself, but afford an example to others; and let his manner of living be an eloquent sermon in itself.

63. There are, indeed, some men who have a good delivery, but cannot compose anything to deliver. Now, if such men take what has been written with wisdom and eloquence by others, and commit it to memory, and deliver it to the people, they cannot be blamed, supposing them to do it without deception. For in this way many become preachers of the truth (which is certainly desirable), and yet not many teachers; for all deliver the discourse which one real teacher has composed, and there are no divisions among them. Nor are such men to be alarmed by the words of Jeremiah the prophet, through whom God denounces those who steal His words every one from his neighbor. For those who steal take what does not belong to them, but the word of God belongs to all who obey it; and it is the man who speaks well, but lives badly, who really takes the words that belong to another. For the good things he says seem to be the result of his own thought, and yet they have nothing in common with his manner of life. And so God has said that they steal His words who would appear good by

speaking God’s words, but are in fact bad, as they follow their own ways. And if you look closely into the matter, it is not really themselves who say the good things they say. For how can they say in words what they deny in deeds? It is not for nothing that the apostle says of such men: “They profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him.” In one sense, then, they do say the things, and in another sense they do not say them; for both these statements must be true, both being made by Him who is the Truth. Speaking of such men, in one place He says, “Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works;”—that is to say, what ye hear from their lips, that do; what ye see in their lives, that do ye not;—”for they say and do not.” And so, though they do not, yet they say. But in another place, upbraiding such men, He says, “O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?” And from this it would appear that even what they say, when they say what is good, it is not themselves who say, for in will and in deed they deny what they say. Hence it happens that a wicked man who is eloquent may compose a discourse in which the truth is set forth to be delivered by a good man who is not eloquent; and when this takes place, the former draws from himself what does not belong to him, and the latter receives from another what really belongs to himself. But when true believers render this service to true believers, both parties speak what is their own, for God is theirs, to whom belongs all that they say; and even those who could not compose what they say make it their own by composing their lives in harmony with it.

CHAPTER 30

THE PREACHER SHOULD COMMENCE HIS DISCOURSE WITH PRAYER TO GOD

63. But whether a man is going to address the people or to dictate what others will deliver or read to the people, he ought to pray God to put into his mouth a suitable discourse. For if Queen Esther prayed, when she was about to speak to the king touching the temporal welfare of her race, that God would put fit words into her mouth, how much more ought he to pray for the same blessing who labors in word and doctrine for the eternal welfare of men? Those, again, who are to deliver what others compose for them ought, before they receive their discourse, to pray for those who are preparing it; and when they have received it, they ought to pray both that

they themselves may deliver it well, and that those to whom they address it may give ear; and when the discourse has a happy issue, they ought to render thanks to Him from whom they know such blessings come, so that all the praise may be His “in whose hand are both we and our words.”

CHAPTER 31

APOLOGY FOR THE LENGTH OF THE WORK

64. This book has extended to a greater length than I expected or desired. But the reader or hearer who finds pleasure in it will not think it long. He who thinks it long, but is anxious to know its contents, may read it in part. He who does not care to be acquainted with it need not complain of its length. I, however, give thanks to God that with what little ability I possess I have in these four books striven to depict, not the sort of man I am myself (for my defects are very many), but the sort of man he ought to be who desires to labor in sound, that is, in Christian doctrine, not for his own instruction only, but for that of others also.

ON CONTINENCE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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DE CONTINENTIA.

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ST. Augustin speaks of his work On Continence in Ep. 231, Ad Darium Comitem. [See vol. 1. of this edition, p. 584.—P.S.] Possidius, Ind. c. 10, mentions it, and it is cited in the Collectanea of Bede or Florus, and by Eugypius. Erasmus is therefore wrong in ascribing it to Hugo on the ground of the style, which is not unlike that of the earlier discourses. It is evidently a discourse, and probably for that reason unnoticed in the Retractations. The Manichaean heresy is impugned after the manner of his early works.—(Abridged from Benedictine ed. vol. vi.)

1. It is difficult to treat of the virtue of the soul, which is called Continence, in a manner fully suitable and worthy; but He, whose great gift this virtue is, will help our littleness under the burden of so great a weight. For He, who bestows it upon His faithful ones when they are continent, Himself gives discourse of it to His ministers when they speak. Lastly, of so great a matter purposing to speak what Himself shall grant, in the first place we say and prove that Continence is the gift of God. We have it written in the Book of Wisdom, that no one can be continent, unless God grant it. But the Lord, concerning that greater and more glorious Continence itself, whereby there is continence from the marriage bond, says, “Not all can receive this saying, but they to whom it is given.” And since marriage chastity also itself cannot be guarded, unless there be Continence from unlawful intercourse, the Apostle declared both to be the gift of God, when He spake of both lives, that is, both that of marriage and that without marriage, saying, “I would that all men were so as myself; but each hath his own gift from God; one in this manner, another in that manner.”

2. And lest it should seem that necessary Continence was to be hoped for from the Lord only in respect of the lust of the lower parts of the flesh, it is also sung in the Psalm; “Set, O Lord, a watch to my mouth, and a door of Continence around my lips.” But in this witness of the divine speech, if we understand “mouth” as we ought to understand it, we perceive how great a gift of God Continence there set is. Forsooth it is little to contain the mouth of the body, lest any thing burst forth thence, which is not for the better, through the sound of the voice. For there is, within, the mouth of the heart, where he, who spake these words, and wrote them for us to speak, desired of the Lord that the watch and door of Continence should be set for him. For many things we say not with the mouth of the body, and cry aloud with the heart: but there goes forth from the mouth of the body no word of any thing, whereof there is silence in the heart. Therefore what flows not forth thence, sounds not abroad: but what flows forth thence, if it be evil, although it move not the tongue, defiles the soul. Therefore Continence must be set there, where the conscience even of them who are silent speaks. For it is brought to pass by means of the door of Continence, that there go not forth thence that, which, even when the lips of the flesh are closed, pollutes the life of him that hath the thought.

3. Lastly, to show more plainly the inner mouth, which by these words he meant, after having said, “Set a watch, O Lord, to my mouth, and a door of Continence around my lips,” he added straightway, “Cause not my heart to fall aside into evil words.” The falling aside of the heart, what is it but the consent? For he hath not yet spoken, whosoever in his heart hath with no falling aside of the heart consented unto suggestions that meet him of each several thing that is seen. But, if he hath consented, he hath already spoken in his heart, although he hath not uttered sound by the mouth; although he hath not done with hand or any part whatever of the body, yet hath he done what in his thought he hath already determined that he is to do: guilty by the divine laws, although hidden to human senses; the word having been spoken in the heart, no deed having been committed through the body. But in no case would he have moved the limb without, in a deed, the beginning of which deed had not gone before within in word. For it is no lie that is written, that “the beginning of every work is a word.” Forsooth men do many things with mouth closed, tongue quiet, voice bridled; but yet they do

nothing by work of the body, which they have not before spoken in the heart. And through this since there are many sins in inward sayings which are not in outward deeds, whereas there are none in outward deeds, which do not go before in inward sayings, there will be purity of innocence from both, if the door of Continence be set around the inward lips.

4. For which cause our Lord Himself also with His own mouth saith, “Cleanse what are within, and what are without will be clean.” And, also, in another place, when He was refuting the foolish speeches of the Jews, in that they spake evil against His disciples, eating with unwashen hands; “Not what entereth into the mouth,” said He, “defileth the man: but what cometh forth out of the mouth, that defileth the man.” Which sentence, if the whole of it be taken of the mouth of the body, is absurd. For neither doth vomit defile him, whom food defileth not. Forsooth food entereth into the mouth, vomit proceedeth forth out of the mouth. But without doubt the former words relate to the mouth of the flesh, where He says, “Not what entereth into the mouth defileth the man,” but the latter words to the mouth of the heart, where He saith, “But what proceedeth forth out of the mouth, this defileth the man.” Lastly, when the Apostle Peter sought of Him an explanation of this as of a parable, He answered, “Are ye also yet without understanding? understand ye not, that whatsoever entereth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?” Here surely we perceive the mouth of the flesh, into which the food enters. But in what He next adds, in order that we might recognize the mouth of the heart, the slowness of our heart would not follow, did not the Truth deign to walk even with the slow. For He saith, “But what things go forth from the mouth, go out of the heart;” as though He should say, When you hear it said “from the mouth,” understand “from the heart.” I say both, but I set forth one by the other. The inner man hath an inner mouth, and this the inner ear discerns: what things go forth from this mouth, go out of the heart, and they defile the man. Then having left the term mouth, which may be understood also of the body, He shows more openly what He is saying. “For from the heart go out,” saith He, “evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are what defile the man.” There is surely no one of those evils, which can be committed also by the members of the body, but that the evil thoughts go before and defile the man,

although something hinder the sinful and wicked deeds of the body from following. For if, because power is not given, the hand is free from the murder of a man, is the heart of the murderer forsooth therefore clean from sin? Or if she be chaste, whom one unchaste wishes to commit adultery with, hath he on that account failed to commit adultery with her in his heart? Or if the harlot be not found in the brothel, doth he, who seeks her, on that account fail to commit fornication in his heart? Or if time and place be wanting to one who wishes to hurt his neighbor by a lie, hath he on that account failed already to speak false witness with his inner mouth? Or if any one fearing men, dare not utter aloud blasphemy with tongue of flesh, is he on this account guiltless of this crime, who saith in his heart, "There is no God." Thus all the other evil deeds of men, which no motion of the body performs, of which no sense of the body is conscious, have their own secret criminals, who are also polluted by consent alone in thought, that is, by evil words of the inner mouth. Into which he (the Psalmist) fearing lest his heart should fall aside, asks of the Lord that the door of Continence be set around the lips of this mouth, to contain the heart, that it fall not aside into evil words: but contain it, by not suffering thought to proceed to consent: for thus, according to the precept of the Apostle, sin reigneth not in our mortal body, nor do we yield our members as weapons of unrighteousness unto sin. From fulfilling which precept they are surely far removed, who on this account turn not their members to sin, because no power is allowed them; and if this be present, straightway by the motions of their members, as of weapons, they show, who reigneth in them within. Wherefore so far as is in themselves, they yield their members weapons of unrighteousness unto sin; because this is what they wish, which for this reason they yield not, because they are not able.

5. And on this account that, which, the parts that beget being bridled by modesty, is most chiefly and properly to be called Continence, is violated by no transgression, if the higher Continence, concerning which we have been some time speaking, be preserved in the heart. For this reason the Lord, after He had said, "For from the heart go forth evil thoughts," then went on to add what it is that belongs to evil thoughts, "murders, adulteries," and the rest. He spake not of all; but, having named certain by way of instance, He taught that we are to understand others also. Of which

there is no one that can take place, unless an evil thought have gone before, whereby that is prepared within which is done without, and going forth out of the mouth of the heart already defiles the man, although, through no power being granted, it be not done without by means of the members of the body. When therefore a door of Continence hath been set in the mouth of the heart, whence go out all that defile the man, if nothing such be permitted to go out thence, there followeth a purity, wherein now the conscience may rejoice; although there be not as yet that perfection, wherein Continence shall not strive with vice. But now, so long as "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh," it is enough for us not to consent unto the evils which we feel in us. But, when that consent takes place, then there goeth out of the mouth of the heart what defileth the man. But when through Continence consent is withheld, the evil of the lust of the flesh, against which the lust of the spirit fights, is not suffered to harm.

6. But it is one thing to fight well, which now is, when the strife of death is resisted; another thing not to have an adversary, which will then be, when death, "the last enemy," shall be destroyed. For Continence also itself, when it curbs and restrains lusts, at once both seeks the good unto the immortality of which we aim, and rejects the evil with which in this mortality we contend. Of the one it is forsooth the lover and beholder, but of the other both the enemy and witness: both seeking what becomes, and fleeing what misbecomes. Assuredly Continence would not labor in curbing lusts, if we had no wishes contrary to what is becoming, if there were no opposition on the part of evil lust unto our good will. The Apostle cries aloud, "I know," saith he, "that there dwelleth not in me, that is in my flesh, good. For to will lieth near to me, but to accomplish good I find not." For now good can be done, so far as that there be no assent given unto evil lust: but good will be accomplished, when the evil lust itself shall come to an end. And also the same teacher of the Gentiles cries aloud, "I take pleasure together with the law of God after the inner man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind."

7. This conflict none experience in themselves, save such as war on the side of the virtues, and war down the vices: nor doth any thing storm the evil of

lust, save the good of Continence. But there are, who, being utterly ignorant of the law of God, account not evil lusts among their enemies, and through wretched blindness being slaves to them, over and above think themselves also blessed, by satisfying them rather than taming them. But whoso through the Law have come to know them, ("For through the Law is the knowledge of sin," and, "Lust," saith he, "I knew not, unless the Law should say, Thou shalt not lust after," and yet are overcome by their assault, because they live under the Law, whereby what is good is commanded, but not also given: they live not under Grace, which gives through the Holy Spirit what is commanded through the Law: unto these the Law therefore entered, that in them the offense might abound. The prohibition increased the lust, and made it unconquered: that there might be transgression also, which without the Law was not, although there was sin, "For where there is not Law, neither is there transgression." Thus the Law, Grace not helping, forbidding sin, became over and above the strength of sin; whence the Apostle saith, "The Law is the strength of sin." Nor is it to be wondered at, that man's weakness even from the good Law added strength to evil, whilst it trusts to fulfill the Law itself of its own strength. Forsooth being ignorant of the righteousness of God, which He gives unto the weak, and wishing to establish his own, of which the weak is void, he was not made subject to the righteousness of God, reprobate and proud. But if the Law, as a schoolmaster, lead unto Grace one made an offender, as though for this purpose more grievously wounded, that he may desire a Physician; against the baneful sweetness, whereby lust prevailed, the Lord gives a sweetness that worketh good, that by it Continence may the more delight, and "our land giveth her fruit," whereby the soldier is fed, who by the help of the Lord wars down sin.

8. Such soldiers the Apostolic trumpet enkindles for battle with that sound, "Therefore let not," saith he, "sin reign in your mortal body to obey its lusts; nor yield your members weapons of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as living in place of dead, and your members weapons of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not rule over you. For ye are not under the law, but under Grace." And in another place, "Therefore," saith he, "brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye shall live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if by the Spirit ye shall

mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” This therefore is the business in hand, so long as this our mortal life under Grace lasts, that sin, that is the lust of sin, (for this he in this place calls by the name of sin,) reign not in this our mortal body. But it is then shown to reign, if obedience be yielded to its desires. There is therefore in us lust of sin, which must not be suffered to reign; there are its desires, which we must not obey, lest obeying it reign over us. Wherefore let not lust usurp our members, but let Continence claim them for herself; that they be weapons of righteousness unto God, that they be not weapons of unrighteousness unto sin; for thus sin shall not rule over us. For we are not under the Law, which indeed commandeth what is good yet giveth it not: but we are under Grace, which, making us to love that which the Law commands, is able to rule over the free.

9. And also, when he exhorts us, that we live not after the flesh, lest we die, but that by the Spirit we mortify the deeds of the flesh, that we may live; surely the trumpet which sounds, shows the war in which we are engaged, and enkindles us to contend keenly, and to do our enemies to death, that we be not done to death by them. But who those enemies are, it hath set forth plainly enough. For those are they, whom it willed should be done to death by us, that is to say, the works of the flesh. For so it saith, “But if by the Spirit ye shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.” And in order that we may know what these are, let us hear the same in like manner writing unto the Galatians, and saying, “But the works of the flesh are manifest, which are, fornications, uncleannesses, luxuries, idolatry, witchcrafts, hatreds, contentions, emulations, wraths, strifes, heresies, envyings, drunkennesses, revellings, and such like; of which I foretell to you, as I have foretold, that they who do such things shall not possess the kingdom of God.” For the very war there also was he showing, that he should speak of these, and unto the death-doing of these enemies was he calling up the soldiers of Christ by the same heavenly and spiritual trumpet. For he had said above, “But I say, walk in the Spirit, and perform ye not the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. For these are opposed one to the other, that ye do not what ye would. But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the Law.” Therefore being set under Grace, he would have them have that conflict

against the works of the flesh. And in order to point out these works of the flesh, he added what I have mentioned above. “But the works of the flesh are manifest, which are, fornications,” and the rest, whether what he mentioned, or whether what he admonished were to be understood, chiefly as he added, “and such like.” Lastly, in this battle, against what is in a manner the carnal army leading forth as it were another spiritual line, “But the fruit of the Spirit is,” saith he, “charity, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, continence; against such there is no law.” He saith not “against these,” lest they should be thought to be alone: although even were he to say this, we ought to understand all, whatever goods of the same kind we could think of: but he saith, “against such,” that is to say, both these and whatsoever are such like. However, in that among the goods of which he made mention, he set Continence in the last place, (concerning which we have now undertaken to treat, and on account of which we have already said much,) he willed that it should in an especial manner cleave to our minds. Forsooth this same is of great avail in this case, wherein the Spirit lusteth against the flesh; forasmuch as in a certain way it crucifies the lusts of the flesh. Whence, after the Apostle had thus spoken, he added straightway, “But they who are Jesus Christ’s have crucified their own flesh, with the passions and lusts.” This is the acting of Continence: thus the works of the flesh are done to death. But they do to death those, whom falling away from Continence lust draweth into consent to do such works.

10. But in order that we fall not away from Continence, we ought to watch specially against those snares of the suggestions of the devil, that we presume not of our own strength. For, “Cursed is every one that setteth his hope in man.” And who is he, but man? We cannot therefore truly say that he setteth not his hope in man, who setteth it in himself. For this also, to “live after man,” what is it but to “live after the flesh?” Whoso therefore is tempted by such a suggestion, let him hear, and, if he have any Christian feeling, let him tremble. Let him hear, I say, “If ye shall live after the flesh, ye shall die.”

11. But some one will say to me that it is one thing to live after man, another thing to live after the flesh; because man forsooth is a rational

creature, and there is in him a rational soul, whereby he differs from the beast: but the flesh is the lowest and earthly part of man, and thus to live after it is faulty: and for this reason, he who lives after man, assuredly lives not after the flesh, but rather after that part of man, whereby he is man, that is, after the spirit of the mind whereby he excels the beasts. But this discussion is perhaps of some force in the schools of philosophers: but we, in order to understand the Apostle of Christ, ought to observe in what manner the Christian books are used to speak; at any rate it is the belief of all of us, to whom to live is Christ, that Man was taken unto Himself by the Word of God, not surely without a rational soul, as certain heretics will have it; and yet we read, "The Word was made flesh." What is to be here understood by "flesh," but Man? "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God." What can be understood, but all men? "Unto Thee shall all flesh come." What is it, but all men? "Thou hast given unto Him power over all flesh." What is it, but all men? "Of the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified." What is it, but no man shall be justified? And this the same Apostle in another place confessing more plainly saith, "Man shall not be justified of the works of the Law." The Corinthians also he rebukes, saying, "Are ye not carnal, and walk after man?" After he had called them carnal, he saith not, ye walk after the flesh, but after man, forasmuch as by this also what would he have understood, but after the flesh? For surely if to walk, that is, to live, after the flesh deserved blame, but after man deserved praise, he would not say by way of rebuke, "ye walk after man." Let man recognize the reproach; let him change his purpose, let him shun destruction. Hear thou man: walk not thou after man, but after Him Who made man. Fall not thou away from Him Who made thee, even unto thyself. For a man said, who yet lived not after man, "Not that we are sufficient to think any thing from ourselves, as though of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God." Consider if he lived after man, who spake these things with truth. Therefore the Apostle, admonishing man not to live after man, restores man to God. But whoso liveth not after man, but after God, assuredly liveth not even after himself, because himself also is a man. But he is therefore said also to live after the flesh, when he so lives; because also when the flesh alone hath been named, man is understood, as we have already shown: just as when the soul alone hath been named, man is understood: whence it is said, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers,” that is, every man; and, “Seventy-five souls went down into Egypt with Jacob,” that is, seventy-five men. Therefore live thou not after thyself, O man: thou hadst thence perished, but thou wast sought. Live not then, I say, after thyself, O man; thou hadst thence perished, but thou wast found. Accuse not thou the nature of the flesh, when you hear it said, “If ye shall live after the flesh, ye shall die.” For thus could it be said, and most truly could it, If ye shall live after yourselves ye shall die. For the devil hath not flesh, and yet, because he would live after himself, “he abode not in the truth.” What wonder therefore, if, living after himself, “when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own,” which the Truth spake truly of him.

12. When, therefore, you hear it said, “Sin shall not reign over you;” have not thou confidence of thyself, that sin reign not over thee, but of Him, unto Whom a certain Saint saith in prayer, “Direct my paths after Thy Word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me.” For lest haply, after that we had heard, “sin shall not reign over you,” we should lift up ourselves, and lay this to our own strength, straightway the Apostle saw this, and added, “For ye are not under the Law, but under Grace.” Therefore, Grace causeth that sin reign not over you. Do not thou, therefore, have confidence of thyself, lest it thence reign much more over thee. And, when we hear it said, “If by the Spirit ye shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live,” let us not lay this so great good unto our own spirit, as though of itself it can do this. For, in order that we should not entertain that carnal sense, the spirit being dead rather than that which putteth others to death, straightway he added, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” Therefore that by our spirit we may mortify the works of the flesh, we are led by the Spirit of God, Who gives Continence, whereby to curb, tame, overcome lust.

13. In this so great conflict, wherein man under Grace lives, and when, being aided, he fights well, rejoices in the Lord with trembling, there yet are not wanting even to valiant warriors, and mortifiers however unconquered of the works of the flesh, some wounds of sins, for the healing of which they may say daily, “Forgive us our debts:” against the same vices, and against the devil the prince and king of vices, striving with much greater watchfulness and keenness by the very prayer, that his deadly suggestions avail not aught, whereby he further urges the sinner to excuse rather than

accuse his own sins; and thus those wounds not only be not healed, but also, although they were not deadly, yet may be pressed home to grievous and fatal harm. And here therefore there is need of a more cautious Continence, whereby to restrain the proud appetite of man; whereby he is self-pleased, and unwilling to be found worthy of blame, and disdains, when he sins, to be convicted that he himself has sinned; not with healthful humility taking upon him to accuse himself, but rather with fatal arrogance seeking to find an excuse. In order to restrain this pride, he, whose words I have already set down above, and, as I could, commended, sought Continence from the Lord. For, after that he had said, “Set, O Lord, a watch to my mouth, and a door of Continence around my lips. Make not my heart to fall aside unto evil words;” explaining more clearly whereof he spake this, he saith, “to make excuses in sins.” For what more evil than these words, whereby the evil man denies that he is evil, although convicted of an evil work, which he cannot deny. And since he cannot hide the deed, or say that it is well done, and still sees that it is clear that it was done by him, he seeks to refer to another what he hath done, as though he could remove thence what he hath deserved. Being unwilling that himself be guilty, he rather adds to his guilt, and by excusing, not accusing, his own sins, he knows not that he is putting from him, not punishment, but pardon. For before human judges, forasmuch as they may be deceived, it seems to profit somewhat for the time, to cleanse as it were what hath been done amiss by any deceit whatever; but before God, Who cannot be deceived, we are to use, not a deceitful defense, but a true confession of sins.

14. And some indeed, who are used to excuse their own sins, complain that they are driven to sin by fate, as though the stars had decreed this, and heaven had first sinned by decreeing such, in order that man should after sin by committing such, and thus had rather impute their sin to fortune: who think that all things are driven to and fro by chance accidents, and yet contend that this their wisdom and assertion is not of chance rashness, but of ascertained reason. What madness then is it, to lay to reason their discussions, and to make their actions subject to accidents! Others refer to the devil the whole of what they do ill: and will not have even a share with him, whereas they may suspect whether he by hidden suggestions hath persuaded them to evil, and on the other hand cannot doubt that they have

consented to those suggestions, from whatever source they have come. There are also they who extend their defense of self unto an accusation of God, wretched by the divine judgment, but blasphemers by their own madness. For against Him they bring in from a contrary principle a substance of evil rebelling, which He could not have resisted, had He not blended with that same that was rebelling a portion of His own Substance and Nature, for it to contaminate and corrupt; and they say that they then sin when the nature of evil prevails over the nature of God. This is that most unclean madness of the Manichaeans, whose devilish devices the undoubted truth most easily overthrows; which confesses that the nature of God is incapable of contamination and corruption. But what wicked contamination and corruption do they not deserve to have believed of them, by whom God, Who is good in the very highest degree, and in a way that admits not of comparison, is believed to be capable of contamination and corruption?

15. And there are also they who in excuse of their sins so accuse God, as to say that sins are pleasing to Him. For, if they were displeasing, say they, surely by His most Almighty power He would by no means suffer them to take place. As though indeed God suffered sins to be unpunished, even in the case of those whom by remission of sins He frees from eternal punishment! No one forsooth receives pardon of more grievous punishment due, unless he hath suffered some punishment, be it what it may, although far less than what was due: and the fullness of mercy is so conveyed, as that the justice also of discipline is not abandoned. For also sin, which seems unavenged, hath its own attendant punishment, so that there is no one but by reason of what he hath done either suffers pain from bitterness, or suffers not through blindness. As therefore you say, Why doth He permit those things, if they are displeasing? so I say, Why doth He punish them, if they are pleasing? And thus, as I confess that those things would not take place at all, unless they were permitted by the Almighty, so confess thou that what are punished by the Just One ought not to be done; in order that, by not doing what He punishes, we may deserve to learn of Him, why He permits to exist what He punishes. For, as it is written, “solid food is for the perfect,” wherein they who have made good progress already understand, that it pertained rather unto the Almighty power of God, to allow the

existence of evils coming from the free choice of the will. So great forsooth is His Almighty goodness, as that even of evil He can make good, either by pardoning, or by healing, or by fitting and turning unto the profit of the pious, or even by most justly taking vengeance. For all these are good, and most worthy a good and Almighty God: and yet they are not made save of evils. What therefore better, what more Almighty, than He, Who, whereas He maketh no evil, even of evils maketh well? They who have done ill cry unto Him, "Forgive us our debts;" He hears, He pardons. Their own evils have hurt the sinners; He helps and heals their sicknesses. The enemies of His people rage; of their rage He makes martyrs. Lastly, also, He condemns those, whom He judges worthy of condemnation; although they suffer their own evils, yet He doeth what is good. For what is just cannot but be good, and assuredly as sin is unjust, so the punishment of sin is just.

16. But God wanted not power to make man such as that he should not be able to sin: but He chose rather to make him such, as that it should lie in his power to sin, if he would; not to sin, if he would not; forbidding the one, enjoining the other; that it might be to him first a good desert not to sin, and after a just reward not to be able to sin. For such also at the last will He makes His Saints, as to be without all power to sin. Such forsooth even now hath He His angels, whom in Him we so love, as to have no fear for any of them, lest by sinning he become a devil. And this we presume not of any just man in this mortal life. But we trust that all will be such in that immortal life. For Almighty God Who worketh good even of our evils, what good will He give, when He shall have set us free from all evils? Much may be said more fully and more subtilely on the good use of evil; but this is not what we have undertaken in our present discourse, and we must avoid in it excess of length.

17. Now therefore let us return to that, wherefore we have said what we have. We have need of Continence, and we know it to be a divine gift, that our heart fall not away unto evil words, to make excuses in sins. But what sin is there but that we have need of Continence, to restrain it from being committed, since it is this very Continence which, in case it have been committed, restrains it from being defended by wicked pride? Universally therefore we have need of Continence, in order to turn away from evil. But

to do good seems to pertain to another virtue, that is, to righteousness. This the sacred Psalm admonishes us, where we read, “Turn away from evil, and do good.” But with what end we do this, it adds bye and bye, saying, “Seek peace, and ensue it.” For we shall then have perfect peace, when, our nature cleaving inseparably to its Creator, we shall have nothing of ourselves opposed to ourselves. This our Saviour also Himself would have us to understand, so far as seems to me when He said, “Let your loins be girt, and your lamps burning.” What is it, to gird the loins? To restrain lusts, which is the work of continence. But to have lamps burning is to shine and glow with good works, which is the work of righteousness. Nor was He here silent with what end we do these things, adding and saying, “And you like unto men waiting for their Lord, when He cometh from the marriage.” But, when He shall have come, He will reward us, who have kept ourselves from those things which lust, and have done those things which charity hath bidden us: that we may reign in His perfect and eternal peace, without any strife of evil, and with the highest delight of good.

18. All we therefore, who believe in the Living and True God, Whose Nature, being in the highest sense good and incapable of change, neither doth any evil, nor suffers any evil, from Whom is every good, even that which admits of decrease, and Who admits not at all of decrease in His own Good, Which is Himself, when we hear the Apostle saying, “Walk in the Spirit, and perform ye not the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: For these are opposed one to another, that ye do not what ye would.” Far be it from us to believe, what the madness of the Manichees believes, that there are here shown two natures or principles contrary one to another at strife, the one nature of good, the other of evil. Altogether these two are both good; both the Spirit is a good, and the flesh a good: and man, who is composed of both, one ruling, the other obeying, is assuredly a good, but a good capable of change, which yet could not be made save by a Good incapable of change, by Whom was created every good, whether small or great; but how small soever, yet made by What is Great; and how great soever, yet no way to be compared with the greatness of the Maker. But in this nature of man, that is good, and well formed and ordered by One That is Good, there is now war, since there is not yet health. Let the sickness be healed, there is peace. But

that sickness fault hath deserved, not nature hath had. And this fault indeed through the laver of regeneration the grace of God hath already remitted unto the faithful; but under the hands of the same Physician nature as yet striveth with its sickness. But in such a conflict victory will be entire soundness; and that, soundness not for a time, but for ever: wherein not only this sickness is to come to an end, but also none to arise after it. Wherefore the just man addresseth his soul and saith, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His returns: Who becometh propitious to all thy iniquities, Who healeth all thy sicknesses." He becometh propitious to our iniquities, when He pardons sins: He heals sicknesses when He restrains evil desires. He becometh propitious unto iniquities by the grant of forgiveness: He heals sicknesses, by the grant of continence. The one was done in Baptism to persons confessing; the other is done in the strife to persons contending; wherein through His help we are to overcome our disease. Even now the one is done, when we are heard, saying, "Forgive us our debts;" but the other, when we are heard, saying, "Lead us not into temptation. For every one is tempted," saith the Apostle James, "being drawn away and enticed by his own lust." And against this fault there is sought the help of medicine from Him, Who can heal all such sicknesses, not by the removal of a nature that is alien from us, but in the renewal of our own nature. Whence also the above-mentioned Apostle saith not, "Every one is tempted" by lust, but added, "by his own:" that he who hears this may understand, how he ought to cry, "I said, Lord, have mercy upon me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee." For it would not have needed healing, had it not corrupted itself by sinning, so that its own flesh should lust against it, that is, itself should be opposed to itself, on that side, wherein in the flesh it was made sick.

19. For the flesh lusts after nothing save through the soul, but the flesh is said to lust against the spirit, when the soul with fleshly lust wrestles against the spirit. This whole are we: and the flesh itself, which on the departure of the soul dies, the lowest part of us is not put away as what we are to flee from, but is laid aside as what we are to receive again, and, after having received it, never again to leave. But "there is sown an animal body, there shall rise again a spiritual body." Then from that time the flesh will not lust after any thing against the spirit, when as itself also shall be called

spiritual, forasmuch as not only without any opposition, but also without any need of bodily aliment, it shall be for ever made subject unto the spirit, to be quickened by Christ. Therefore these two things, which are now opposed the one to the other within us, since we exist in both, let us pray and endeavor that they may agree. For we ought not to think the one of them an enemy, but the fault, whereby the flesh lusteth against the spirit: and this, when healed, will itself cease to exist, and either substance will be safe, and no strife between either. Let us hear the Apostle; “I know,” saith he, “that there dwelleth not in me, that is, in my flesh, any good.” This certainly he saith; that the fault of the flesh, in a good thing, is not good; and, when this shall have ceased to exist, it will be flesh, but it will not be now corrupted or faulty flesh. And yet that this pertains to our nature the same teacher shows, by saying, first, “I know that there dwelleth not in me,” in order to expound which, he added, “that is, in my flesh, any good.” Therefore he saith that his flesh is himself. It is not then itself that is our enemy: and when its faults are resisted, itself is loved, because itself is cared for; “For no one ever hated his own flesh,” as the Apostle himself saith. And in another place he saith, “So then I myself with the mind serve the Law of God, but with the flesh the Law of sin.” Let them hear that have ears. “So then I myself;” I with the mind, I with the flesh, but “with the mind I serve the Law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” How “with the flesh the law of sin?” was it at all by consenting unto fleshly lust? Far be it! but by having there motions of desires which he would not have, and yet had. But, by not consenting to them, with the mind he served the Law of God, and kept his members from becoming weapons of sins.

20. There are therefore in us evil desires, by consenting not unto which we live not ill: there are in us lusts of sins, by obeying not which we perfect not evil, but by having them do not as yet perfect good. The Apostle shows both, that neither is good here perfected, where evil is so lusted after, nor evil here perfected, whereas such lust is not obeyed. The one forsooth he shows, where he says, “To will is present with me, but to perfect good is not;” the other, where he says, “Walk in the Spirit, and perfect not the lusts of the flesh.” For neither in the former place doth he say that to do good is not with him, but “to perfect,” nor here doth he say, Have not “lusts of the flesh,” but “perfect not.” Therefore there take place in us evil lusts, when

that pleases which is not lawful; but they are not perfected, when evil lusts are restrained by the mind serving the Law of God. And good takes place, when that, which wrongly pleases, takes not place through the good delight prevailing. But the perfection of good is not fulfilled, so long as by the flesh serving the law of sin, evil lust entices, and, although it be restrained, is yet moved. For there would be no need for it to be restrained, were it not moved. There will be at some time also the perfection of good, when the destruction of evil: the one will be highest, the other will be no more. And if we think that this is to be hoped for in this mortal state, we are deceived. For it shall be then, when death shall not be; and it shall be there, where shall be life eternal. For in that world, and in that kingdom, there shall be highest good, no evil: when there shall be, and where there shall be, highest love of wisdom, no labor of continence. Therefore the flesh is not evil, if it be void of evil, that is, of fault, whereby man was rendered faulty, not made ill, but himself making. For on either part, that is, both soul and body, being made good by the good God, himself made the evil, whereby he was made evil. From the guilt of which evil being already also set free through forgiveness, that he may not think what he hath done to be light, he yet wars with his own fault through continence. But far be it that there be any faults in such as reign in that peace which shall be hereafter; since in this state of war there are lessened daily in such as make progress, not sins only, but the very lusts also, with which, by not consenting, we strive, and by consenting unto which we sin.

21. That, therefore, the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, that there dwelleth not in our flesh good, that the law in our members is opposed to the law of the mind, is not a mingling of two natures caused of contrary principles, but a division of one against itself caused through desert of sin. We were not so in Adam, before that nature, having listened to and followed its deceiver, had despised and offended its Creator: that is, not the former life of man created, but the latter punishment of man condemned. From which condemnation when set free by Grace, through Jesus Christ, being free they contend with their punishment, having received not as yet full salvation, but already a pledge of salvation: but when not set free, they are both guilty by reason of sins, and involved in punishments. But after this life for the guilty there will remain for ever punishment for their crime: for the free there will

no more remain for ever either crime or punishment: but the good substances, spirit and flesh, will continue for ever, which God, Who is good, and incapable of change, created good although capable of change. But they will continue having been changed for the better, never from this time to be changed for the worse: all evil being utterly destroyed, both what man hath unjustly done, and what he hath justly suffered. And, these two kinds of evil perishing utterly, whereof the one is of iniquity going before, the other of unhappiness following after, the will of man will be upright without any depravity. There it will be clear and plain to all, what now many of the faithful believe, few understand, that evil is not a substance: but that, as a wound in a body, so in a substance, which hath made itself faulty, it hath begun to exist, when the disease hath commenced, and ceaseth to exist in it, when the healing hath been perfected. Therefore, all evil having arisen from us, and having been destroyed in us, our good also having been increased and perfected unto the height of most happy incorruption and immortality, of what kind shall either of our substances be? forasmuch as now, in this corruption and mortality, when as yet "the corruptible body weigheth down the soul;" and, what the Apostle saith, "the body is dead by reason of sin;" yet the same himself beareth such witness unto our flesh, that is, to our lowest and earthly part, as to say, what I made mention of a little above, "No one ever hated his own flesh." And to add straightway, "but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ the Church."

22. I say not, therefore, with what error, but with what utter madness, do the Manichees attribute our flesh to some, I know not what, fabled "race of darkness," which they will have hath had its own nature without any beginning ever evil: whereas the true teacher exhorts men to love their own wives by the pattern of their own flesh, and exhorts them unto this very thing by the pattern also of Christ and the Church. Lastly, we must call to mind the whole place itself of the Epistle of the Apostle, relating greatly unto the matter in hand. "Husbands," saith he, "love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of the water in the word: that He might set forth unto Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it may be holy and unspotted. So," saith he, "husbands also ought to love their own wives, as their own bodies. Whoso

loveth his own wife, loveth himself." Then he added, what we have already made mention of, "For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it, and cherisheth it; as also Christ the Church." What saith the madness of most impure impiety in answer to these things? What say ye in answer to these things, ye Manichees; ye who wish to bring in upon us, as if out of the Epistles of the Apostles, two natures without beginning, one of good, the other of evil: and will not listen to the Epistles of the Apostles, that they may correct you from that sacrilegious perverseness? As ye read, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit," and, "There dwelleth not in my flesh any good;" so read ye, "No one ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ the Church." As ye read, "I see another law in my members, opposed to the law of my mind;" so read ye, "As Christ loved the Church, so also ought men to love their own wives, as their own bodies." Be not ye crafty in the former witnesses of Holy Scripture, and deaf in this latter, and ye shall be correct in both. For, if ye receive the latter as right is, ye will endeavor to understand the former also as truth is.

23. The Apostle has made known to us certain three unions, Christ and the Church, husband and wife, spirit and flesh. Of these the former consult for the good of the latter, the latter wait upon the former. All the things are good, when, in them, certain set over by way of pre-eminence, certain made subject in a becoming manner, observe the beauty of order. Husband and wife receive command and pattern how they ought to be one with another. The command is, "Let wives be subject unto their own husbands, as unto the Lord; because the husband is the head of the wife;" and, "Husbands, love your wives." But there is given a pattern, unto wives from the Church, unto husbands from Christ: "As the Church," saith he, "is subject unto Christ, so also wives unto their own husbands in all things." In like manner also, having given command to husbands to love their own wives, he added a pattern, "As Christ loved the Church." But husbands he exhorted to it from a lower matter also, that is, from their own body: not only from a higher, that is, from their Lord. For he not only saith, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church," which is from an higher: but he said also, "Husbands ought to love their own wives, as their own bodies," which is from a lower: because both higher and lower are all good. And yet the woman received not pattern from the body, or flesh, to be so subject to

the husband as the flesh to the spirit; but either the Apostle would have understood by consequence, what he omitted to state: or haply because the flesh lusteth against the spirit in the mortal and sick estate of this life, therefore he would not set the woman a pattern of subjection from it. But the men he would for this reason, because, although the spirit lusteth against the flesh, even in this it consults for the good of the flesh: not like as the flesh lusting against the spirit, by such opposition consulteth neither for the good of the spirit, nor for its own. Yet the good spirit would not consult for its good, whether by nourishing and cherishing its nature by forethought, or by resisting its faults by continence, were it not that each substance showeth God to be the Creator of each, even by the seemliness of this its order. What is it, therefore, that with true madness ye both boast yourselves to be Christians, and with so great, perverseness contend against the Christian Scriptures, with eyes closed, or rather put out, asserting both that Christ hath appeared unto mortals in false flesh, and that the Church in the soul pertains to Christ, in the body to the devil, and that the male and female sex are works of the devil, not of God, and that the flesh is joined unto the spirit, as an evil substance unto a good substance?

24. If what we have made mention of out of the Apostolic Epistles seem to you to fall short of an answer, hear yet others, if ye have ears. What saith the utterly mad Manichaean of the Flesh of Christ? That it was not true, but false. What saith the blessed Apostle to this? “Remember that Christ Jesus rose again from the dead of the seed of David, according to my Gospel.” And Christ Jesus Himself saith, “Handle and see, that a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me to have.” How is there truth in their doctrine, which asserts that in the Flesh of Christ there was falsehood? How was there in Christ no evil, in Whom was so great a lie? Because forsooth to men over-clean true flesh is an evil, and false flesh instead of true is not an evil: it is an evil, true flesh of one born of the seed of David, and it is no evil, false tongue of one saying, “Handle, and see, that a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me to have.” Of the Church what saith the deceiver of men with deadly error? That on the side of souls it pertains unto Christ, on the side of bodies unto the devil? What to this saith the Teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth? “Know ye not,” saith he, “that your bodies are members of Christ?” Of the sex of male and female what saith the son of perdition?

That either sex is not of God, but of the devil. What to this saith the Vessel of Election? “As,” saith he, “the woman from out the man, so also the man through the woman: but all things of God.” Of the flesh what saith the unclean spirit through the Manichaean? That it is an evil substance, and not the creation of God, but of an enemy. What to this saith the Holy Spirit through Paul? “For as the body is one,” saith he, “and hath many members, but all the members of the body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.” And a little after; “God hath set,” saith he, “the members, each one of them in the body, as He willed.” Also a little after; “God,” saith he, “hath tempered the body, giving greater honor unto that to which it was wanting, that there should be no schisms in the body, but that the members have the self-same care one for another: and whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it: or one member be glorified, all the members rejoice with it.” How is the flesh evil, when the souls themselves are admonished to imitate the peace of its members? How is it the creation of the enemy, when the souls themselves, which rule the bodies, take pattern from the members of the body, not to have schisms of enmities among themselves, in order that, what God hath granted unto the body by nature, this themselves also may love to have by grace? With good cause, writing to the Romans, “I beseech you,” saith he, “brethren, by the mercy of God, that ye present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, pleasing to God.” Without reason we contend that darkness is not light, nor light darkness, if we present a sacrifice, living, holy, pleasing to God, of the bodies of the “nation of darkness.”

25. But, say they, how is the flesh by a certain likeness compared unto the Church? What! doth the Church lust against Christ? whereas the same Apostle said, “The Church is subject unto Christ.” Clearly the Church is subject unto Christ; because the spirit therefore lusteth against the flesh, that on every side the Church may be made subject to Christ; but the flesh lusteth against the spirit, because not as yet hath the Church received that peace which was promised perfect. And for this reason the Church is made subject unto Christ for the pledge of salvation, and the flesh lusteth against the spirit from the weakness of sickness. For neither were those other than members of the Church, unto whom he thus spake, “Walk in the spirit, and fulfill not the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and

the spirit against the flesh; for these are opposed the one to the other; that ye do not what we would.” These things were assuredly spoken unto the Church, which if it were not made subject unto Christ, the spirit would not in it lust against the flesh through continence. By reason of which they were indeed able not to perfect the lusts of the flesh, but through the flesh lusting against the Spirit they were not able to do the things which they would, that is, not even to have the very lusts of the flesh. Lastly, why should we not confess that in spiritual men the Church is subject unto Christ, but in carnal men yet lusteth against Christ? Did not they lust against Christ unto whom it was said, “Is Christ divided?” and, “I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. I have given unto you milk to drink as unto babes in Christ, not meat, for ye were not as yet able; but not even now are ye able: for ye are still carnal. For whereas there is among you emulation, and strife, are ye not carnal?” Against whom doth emulation and strife lust, but against Christ? For these lusts of the flesh Christ healeth in His own, but loveth in none. Whence the holy Church, so long as it hath such members, is not yet without spot or wrinkle. To these are added those other sins also, for which the daily cry of the whole Church is, “Forgive us our debts:” and, that we should not think spiritual persons exempt from these, not any one soever of carnal persons, nor any one soever of spiritual persons themselves, but he, who lay on the breast of the Lord, and whom He loved before others, saith, “If we shall say that we have not sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” But in every sin, more in what is greater, less in what is less, there is an act of lust against righteousness. And of Christ it is written: “Who was made unto us by God, Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.” In every sin therefore without doubt there is an act of lust against Christ. But when He, Who “healeth all our sicknesses,” shall have led His Church unto the promised healing of sickness, then in none of its members shall there be any, even the very least spot or wrinkle. Then in no way shall the flesh lust against the spirit, and therefore there shall be no cause why the spirit also lust against the flesh. Then all this conflict shall come to an end, then there shall be the highest concord of both substances; then to such a degree shall no one there be carnal, that even the flesh itself shall be spiritual. What therefore each one living after Christ doth with his flesh, whereas he both lusts against its evil lust, which he restrains, hereafter to be healed, which he holds, not yet healed; and yet nourisheth and cherisheth its good nature, since “no one ever hated his own flesh,” this also Christ doth with the Church, so far as it is lawful to compare lesser with greater matters. For He both represses it with rebukes, that it burst not being puffed up with impunity; and raises it up with consolations, that it sink not being weighed down with infirmity. Hence is that of the Apostle, “For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are rebuked of the Lord, that we be not condemned with this world.” And that in the Psalm, “After the multitude of my griefs in my heart, Thy consolations have gladdened my soul.” We are therefore then to hope for perfect soundness of our flesh without any opposition, when there shall be sure security of the Church of Christ without any fear.

26. Thus much will suffice to have treated on behalf of true Continence against the Manichees deceitfully continent, lest the fruitful and glorious labor of Continence, when it restrains and curbs the lowest part of us, that is, the body, from immoderate and unlawful pleasures, be believed not healthfully to chasten, but hostilely to persecute. Forsooth the body is indeed different from the nature of the soul, yet is it not alien from the nature of man: for the soul is not made up of body, but yet man is made up of soul and body: and assuredly, whom God frees, He frees the whole man. Whence our Saviour Himself also took upon Him the whole man, having deigned to free in us all that He made. They who hold contrary to this truth, what doth it profit them to restrain lusts? if, that is, they restrain any. What in them can be made clean through Continence, whose such Continence is unclean? and which ought not to be called Continence. Forsooth to hold what they hold is the poison of the devil; but Continence is the gift of God. But as not every one who suffers any thing, or with the greatest endurance suffers any pain whatever, possesses that virtue, which in like manner is the gift of God, and is called Patience; for many endure many torments, in order not to betray either such as are wickedly privy with them in their crimes, or themselves; many in order to satiate glowing lusts, and to obtain, or not to abandon those things, whereunto they are bound by chain of evil love; many on behalf of different and destructive errors, whereby they are strongly held: of all of whom far be it from us to say that they have true patience: thus not every one, who contains in any thing, or who

marvellously retrains even the very lusts of the flesh, or mind, is to be said to possess that continence, of the profit and beauty of which we are treating. For certain, what may seem marvellous to say, through incontinence contain themselves: as if a woman were to contain herself from her husband, because she hath sworn this to an adulterer. Certain through injustice, as if spouse yield not to spouse the due of sexual intercourse, because he or she is already able to overcome such appetite of the body. Also certain contain deceived by false faith, and hoping what is vain, and following after what is vain: among whom are all heretics, and whosoever under the name of religion are deceived by any error: whose continence would be true, if their faith also were true: but, whereas that is not to be called faith, on this account, because it is false; without doubt that also is unworthy the name of continence. For what? are we prepared to call continence, which we must truly say is the gift of God, sin? Far be from our hearts so hateful madness. But the blessed Apostle saith “Every thing that is not of faith is sin.” What therefore hath not faith, is not to be called continence.

27. There are also they who, in doing open service to evil demons, contain from pleasures of the body, that, through their means, they may satisfy unlawful pleasures, the violence and glow whereof they contain not. Whence also, (to name one case, and pass over the rest in silence by reason of the length of the discourse,) certain come not near even unto their own wives, whilst, as though clean, they essay through magic arts to gain access unto the wives of others. O marvellous continence, nay rather, singular wickedness and uncleanness! For, if it were true continence, the lust of the flesh ought rather to contain from adultery, than, in order to commit adultery, from marriage. Forsooth marriage continence is wont to ease this lust of the flesh, and to check its curb but thus far, that neither in marriage itself it run riot by immoderate license, but that a measure be observed, either such as is due to the weakness of the spouse, unto whom the Apostle enjoins not this, as of command, but yields it as of permission; or such as is suited for the begetting of sons, which was formerly the one alone occasion of sexual intercourse to both holy fathers and mothers. But continence doing this, that is, moderating, and in a certain way limiting in married persons the lust of the flesh, and ordering in a certain way within fixed limits its unquiet and inordinate motion, uses well the evil of man, whom it

makes and wills to make perfect good: as God uses even evil men, for their sake whom He perfects in goodness.

28. Far be it therefore that we say of continence, of which Scripture saith. “And this very thing was wisdom, to know whose gift it was,” that even they possess it, who, by containing, either serve errors, or overcome any lesser desires for this purpose, that they may fulfill others, by the greatness of which they are overcome. But that continence which is true, coming from above, wills not to repress some evils by other evils, but to heal all evils by goods. And, briefly to comprehend its mode of action, it is the place of continence to keep watch to restrain and heal all delights whatsoever of lust, which are opposed to the delight of wisdom. Whence without doubt they set it within too narrow bounds, who limit it to restraining the lusts of the body alone: certainly they speak better, who say that it pertains to Continence to rule in general lust or desire. Which desire is set down as a fault, nor is it only of the body, but also of the soul. For, if the desire of the body be in fornications and drunkennesses; hard enmities, strifes, emulations, lastly, hatreds, their exercise in the pleasure of the body, and not rather in the motion and troubled states of the soul? Yet the Apostle called all these “works of the flesh,” whether what pertained to the soul, or what pertained properly to the flesh, calling forsooth the man himself by the name of the flesh. Forsooth they are the works of man, whatsoever are not called works of God; forasmuch as man, who does these, lives after himself, not after God, so far as he does these. But there are other works of man, which are rather to be called works of God. “For it is God,” saith the Apostle, “Who worketh in you both to will and to do, according to His good pleasure.” Whence also is that, “For as many as are led by the spirit of God, these are sons of God.”

29. Thus the spirit of man, cleaving unto the Spirit of God, lusts against the flesh, that is, against itself: but for itself, in order that those motions, whether in the flesh or in the soul, after man, not after God, which as yet exist through the sickness man hath gotten, may be restrained by continence, that so health may be gotten; and man, not living after man, may now be able to say, “But I live, now not I, but there liveth in me Christ.” For where not I, there more happily I: and, when any evil motion

after man arises, unto which he, who with the mind serves the Law of God, consents not, let him say that also, “Now it is not I that do this.” To such forsooth are said those words, which we, as partners and sharers with them, ought to listen to. “If ye have risen together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the Right Hand of God: mind the things that are above, not what are upon earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God: when Christ your life shall have appeared, then ye also shall appear with Him in glory.” Let us understand unto whom he is speaking, yea, rather, let us listen with more attention. For what more plain than this? what more clear? He is certainly speaking unto those, who had risen again with Christ, not yet surely in the flesh, but in the mind: whom he calls dead, and on this account the more living: for “your life,” saith he, “is hid with Christ in God.” Of such dead the speech is: “But I live, now not I, but there liveth in me Christ.” They therefore, whose life was hidden in God, are admonished and exhorted to mortify their members, which are upon the earth. For this follows, “Mortify, therefore, your members, which are upon the earth.” And, lest any through excess of dullness should think that such are to mortify the members of the body that are seen, straightway opening what it is he saith, “Fornication,” saith he, “uncleanness, passion, evil lust, and covetousness, which is idolatry.” But is it so to be believed, that they, who were already dead, and their life hidden with Christ in God, were still committing fornication, were still living in unclean habits and works, were still slaves to passions of evil lust and covetousness? What madman would thus think of such? What, therefore, would he that they mortify, save the motions themselves still living in a certain intrusion of their own, without the consent of our mind, without the action of the members of the body? And how are they mortified by the work of continence, save when we consent not to them with the mind, nor are the members of the body yielded to them as weapons; and, what is greater, and to be looked to with yet greater watchfulness of continence, our very thought itself, although in a certain way it be touched by their suggestion, and as it were, whisper, yet turns away from these, that it receive not delight from them, and turns to more delightful thoughts of things above: on this account naming them in discourse, that men abide not in them, but flee from them. And this is brought to pass, if we listen effectually, with His help, Who, through His Apostle gives this command, “Seek things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the Right Hand of God. Mind the things that are above, not what are on earth."

30. But, after that he had made mention of these evils, he added and said, "On account of which cometh the wrath of God on the sons of unbelief." Surely it was a wholesome alarm that believers might not think that they could be saved on account of their faith alone, even although they should live in these evils: the Apostle James with most clear speech crying out against that notion, and saying, "If any say that he have faith, and have not works, shall his faith be able to save him?" Whence also here the Teacher of the Gentiles said, that on account of these evils the wrath of God cometh on the sons of unbelief. But when he saith, "Wherein ye also walked sometime, when ye were living therein;" he shows sufficiently that now they were not living therein. Forsooth unto these they had died, that their life might be hidden in God with Christ. When then they were now not living in them, they were now bidden to mortify such. Forsooth, themselves not living in the same, the things were living, as I have already shown a little above, and were called their members, that is to say, those faults which dwelt in their members; by a way of speech, that which is contained through that which contains; as it is said, The whole Forum talks of it, when men talk who are in the Forum. In this very way of speech it is sung in the Psalm, "Let all the earth worship Thee:" that is, all men who are in the earth.

31. "But now do ye also," saith he, "put down all;" and he makes mention of several more evils of that sort. But what is it, that it is not enough for him to say, "Do ye put down all," but that he added the conjunction and said, "ye also?" save that lest they should not think that they did those evils and lived in them with impunity on this account, because their faith set them free from wrath, which cometh upon the sons of unbelief, doing these things, and living in them without faith. Do ye also, saith he, put down those evils, on account of which cometh the wrath of God on the children of unbelief; nor promise yourselves impunity of them on account of merit of faith. But he would not say, "put ye down," unto those who had already laid down so far as that they consented not to such faults, nor were yielding their members to them as weapons of sin, save that the life of Saints stands in this past deed, and is still engaged in this work, so long as we are mortal.

For, so long as the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, this business proceeds with great earnestness, resistance is offered unto evil delights, unclean lusts, carnal and shameful motions, by the sweetness of holiness, by the love of chastity, by spiritual vigor, and by the beauty of continence; thus they are laid down by them who are dead to them, and who live not in them by consenting. Thus, I say, they are put down, whilst they are weighed down by continued continence, that they rise not again. Whosoever, as though secure, shall cease from this laying aside of them, straightway they will assault the Citadel of the mind, and will themselves put it down thence, and will reduce it into slavery to them, captive after a base and unseemly fashion. Then sin will reign in the mortal body of man to obey its desires; then will it yield its members weapons of unrighteousness unto sin: and the last state of that man shall be worse than the former. For it is much more tolerable not to have begun a contest of this kind, than after one hath begun to have left the conflict, and to have become in place of a good warrior, or even in place of a conqueror, a captive. Whence the Lord saith not, whoso shall begin, but "Whoso shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved."

32. But whether keenly contending, that we be not overcome, or overcoming divers times, or even with unhoped and unlooked for ease, let us give the glory unto Him Who giveth continence unto us. Let us remember that a certain just man said, "I shall never be moved:" and that it was showed him how rashly he had said this, attributing as though to his own strength, what was given to him from above. But this we have learnt from his own confession: for soon after he added, "Lord, in Thy will Thou hast given strength to my beauty; but Thou hast turned away Thy Face, and I was troubled." Through a remedial Providence he was for a short time deserted by his Ruler, in order that he might not himself through deadly pride desert his Ruler. Therefore, whether here, where we engage with our faults in order to subdue and make them less, or there, as it shall be in the end, where we shall be void of every enemy, because of all infection, it is for our health that we are thus dealt with, in order that, "whoso glorieth, he may glory in the Lord."

ON LYING

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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DE MENDACIO.

TRANSLATED BY REV. H. BROWNE, M.A., OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, LATE PRINCIPAL OF THE DIOCESAN COLLEGE, CHICHESTER.

This book appears from its place in the Retractations to have been written about a.d. 395, as it is the last work named in the first book, which contains those which he wrote before he was Bishop. Some editions represent it as addressed to Consentius, but not the mss. The latter are probably right, as his other work on the subject was written in answer to the inquiries of Consentius on the case of the Priscillianists many years later.—Bened. Ed.

Retractations, Book I. last Chapter.

“I have also written a Book on Lying, which though it takes some pains to understand, contains much that is useful for the exercise of the mind, and more that is profitable to morals, in inculcating the love of speaking the truth. This also I was minded to remove from my works, because it seemed to me obscure, and intricate, and altogether troublesome; for which reason I had not sent it abroad. And when I had afterwards written another book, under this title, Against Lying, much more had I determined and ordered that the former should cease to exist; which however was not done. Therefore in this retractation of my works, as I have found this still in being, I have ordered that it should remain; chiefly because therein are to be found some necessary things which in the other are not. Why the other has for its title, Against Lying, but this, Of Lying, the reason is this, that throughout the one is an open assault upon lying, whereas great part of this is taken up with the discussion of the question for and against. Both, however, are directed to the same object. This book begins thus: “Magna quaestio est de Mendacio.”

1. There is a great question about Lying, which often arises in the midst of our every day business, and gives us much trouble, that we may not either rashly call that a lie which is not such, or decide that it is sometimes right to tell a lie, that is, a kind of honest, well-meant, charitable lie. This question we will painfully discuss by seeking with them that seek: whether to any good purpose, we need not take upon ourselves to affirm, for the attentive reader will sufficiently gather from the course of the discussion. It is, indeed, very full of dark corners, and hath many cavern-like windings, whereby it oft eludes the eagerness of the seeker; so that at one moment what was found seems to slip out of one's hands, and anon comes to light again, and then is once more lost to sight. At last, however, the chase will bear down more surely, and will overtake our sentence. Wherein if there is any error, yet as Truth is that which setteth free from all error, and Falsehood that which entangleth in all error, one never errs more safely, methinks, than when one errs by too much loving the truth, and too much rejecting of falsehood. For they who find great fault say it is too much, whereas peradventure Truth would say after all, it is not yet enough. But whoso readest, thou wilt do well to find no fault until thou have read the whole; so wilt thou have less fault to find. Eloquence thou must not look for: we have been intent upon things, and upon dispatch in putting out of hand a matter which nearly concerns our every day life, and therefore have had small pains, or almost none, to bestow upon words.

2. Setting aside, therefore, jokes, which have never been accounted lies, seeing they bear with them in the tone of voice, and in the very mood of the joker a most evident indication that he means no deceit, although the thing he utters be not true: touching which kind of discourse, whether it be meet to be used by perfect minds, is another question which we have not at this time taken in hand to clear; but setting jokes apart, the first point to be attended to, is, that a person should not be thought to lie, who lieth not.

3. For which purpose we must see what a lie is. For not every one who says a false thing lies, if he believes or opines that to be true which he says. Now between believing and opining there is this difference, that sometimes he who believes feels that he does not know that which he believes, (although he may know himself to be ignorant of a thing, and yet have no doubt at all

concerning it, if he most firmly believes it:) whereas he who opines, thinks he knows that which he does not know. Now whoever utters that which he holds in his mind either as belief or as opinion, even though it be false, he lies not. For this he owes to the faith of his utterance, that he thereby produce that which he holds in his mind, and has in that way in which he produces it. Not that he is without fault, although he lie not, if either he believes what he ought not to believe, or thinks he knows what he knows not, even though it should be true: for he accounts an unknown thing for a known. Wherefore, that man lies, who has one thing in his mind and utters another in words, or by signs of whatever kind. Whence also the heart of him who lies is said to be double; that is, there is a double thought: the one, of that thing which he either knows or thinks to be true and does not produce; the other, of that thing which he produces instead thereof, knowing or thinking it to be false. Whence it comes to pass, that he may say a false thing and yet not lie, if he thinks it to be so as he says although it be not so; and, that he may say a true thing, and yet lie, if he thinks it to be false and utters it for true, although in reality it be so as he utters it. For from the sense of his own mind, not from the verity or falsity of the things themselves, is he to be judged to lie or not to lie. Therefore he who utters a false thing for a true, which however he opines to be true, may be called erring and rash: but he is not rightly said to lie; because he has not a double heart when he utters it, neither does he wish to deceive, but is deceived. But the fault of him who lies, is, the desire of deceiving in the uttering of his mind; whether he do deceive, in that he is believed when uttering the false thing; or whether he do not deceive, either in that he is not believed, or in that he utters a true thing with will to deceive, which he does not think to be true: wherein being believed, he does not deceive though it was his will to deceive: except that he deceives in so far as he is thought to know or think as he utters.

4. But it may be a very nice question whether in the absence of all will to deceive, lying is altogether absent. Thus, put the case that a person shall speak a false thing, which he esteems to be false, on the ground that he thinks he is not believed, to the intent, that in that way falsifying his faith he may deter the person to whom he speaks, which person he perceives does not choose to believe him. For here is a person who tells a lie with studied

purpose of not deceiving, if to tell a lie is to utter any thing otherwise than you know or think it to be. But if it be no lie, unless when something is uttered with wish to deceive, that person lies not, who says a false thing, knowing or thinking it to be false, but says it on purpose that the person to whom he speaks by not believing him may not be deceived, because the speaker either knows or thinks the other will not believe him. Whence if it appear to be possible that a person should say a false thing on purpose that he to whom it is said may not be deceived, on the other hand there is this opposite case, the case of a person saying the truth on purpose that he may deceive. For if a man determines to say a true thing because he perceives he is not believed, that man speaks truth on purpose that he may deceive: for he knows or thinks that what is said may be accounted false, just because it is spoken by him. Wherefore in saying a true thing on purpose that it may be thought false, he says a true thing on purpose to deceive. So that it may be inquired, which rather lies: he who says a false thing that he may not deceive, or he who says a true thing that he may deceive? the one knowing or thinking that he says a false thing, and the other knowing or thinking that he says a true thing? For we have already said that the person who does not know the thing to be false which he utters, does not lie if he thinks it to be true; and that that person rather lies who utters even a true thing when he thinks it false: because it is by the sense of their mind that they are to be judged. Concerning these persons therefore, whom we have set forth, there is no small question. The one, who knows or thinks he says a false thing, and says it on purpose that he may not deceive: as, if he knows a certain road to be beset by robbers, and fearing lest some person for whose safety he is anxious should go by that road, which person he knows does not trust him, should tell him that that road has no robbers, on purpose that he may not go by it, as he will think there are robbers there precisely because the other has told him there are none, and he is resolved not to believe him, accounting him a liar. The other, who knowing or thinking that to be true which he says, says it on purpose that he may deceive: for instance, if he tells a person who does not believe him, that there are robbers in that road where he really knows them to be, that he to whom he tells it may the rather go by that road and so fall among robbers, because he thinks that to be false, which the other told him. Which then of these lies? the one who has chosen to say a false thing that he may not deceive? or the other who has chosen to say a true thing that he may deceive? that one, who in saying a false thing aimed that he to whom he spake should follow the truth? or this one, who in saying a true thing aimed that he to whom he spake should follow a falsehood? Or haply have both lied? the one, because he wished to say a false thing: the other, because he wished to deceive? Or rather, has neither lied? not the one, because he had the will not to deceive: not the other, because he had the will to speak the truth? For the question is not now which of them sinned, but which of them lied: as indeed it is presently seen that the latter sinned, because by speaking a truth he brought it about that a person should fall among robbers, and that the former has not sinned, or even has done good, because by speaking a false thing he has been the means of a person's avoiding destruction. But then these instances may be turned the other way, so that the one should be supposed to wish some more grievous suffering to the person whom he wishes not to be deceived; for there are many cases of persons who through knowing certain things to be true, have brought destruction upon themselves, if the things were such as ought to have continued unknown to them: and the other may be supposed to wish some convenience to result to the person whom he wishes to be deceived; for there have been instances of persons who would have destroyed themselves had they known some evil that had really befallen those who were dear to them, and through deeming it false have spared themselves: and so to be deceived has been a benefit to them, as to others it has been a hurt to know the truth. The question therefore is not with what purpose of doing a kindness or a hurt, either the one said a false thing that he might not deceive, or the other a true thing that he might deceive: but, setting apart the convenience or inconvenience of the persons spoken to, in so far as relates to the very truth and falsehood, the question is, whether both of them or neither has lied. For if a lie is an utterance with will of uttering a false thing, that man has rather lied who willed to say a false thing, and said what he willed, albeit he said it of set purpose not to deceive. But if a lie is any utterance whatever with will to deceive; then not the former has lied, but the latter, who even in speaking truth willed to deceive. And if a lie is an utterance with will of any falsity, both have lied; because both the former willed his utterance to be false, and the latter willed a false thing to be believed concerning his utterance which was true. Further, if a lie is an utterance of a person wishing to utter a false thing that he may deceive, neither has lied; because both the former in saying a false thing had the will to make a true thing believed, and the latter to say a true thing in order that he might make a false thing believed. We shall be clear then of all rashness and all lying, if, what we know to be true or right to be believed, we utter when need is, and wish to make that thing believed which we utter. If, however, either thinking that to be true which is false, or accounting as known that which is to us unknown, or believing what we ought not to believe, or uttering it when need is not, we yet have no other aim than to make that believed which we utter; we do not stand clear indeed of the error of temerity, but we do stand clear of all lying. For there is no need to be afraid of any of those definitions, when the mind has a good conscience, that it utters that which to be true it either knows, or opines, or believes, and that it has no wish to make any thing believed but that which it utters.

5. But whether a lie be at some times useful, is a much greater and more concerning question. Whether, as above, it be a lie, when a person has no will to deceive, or even makes it his business that the person to whom he says a thing shall not be deceived although he did wish the thing itself which he uttered to be false, but this on purpose that he might cause a truth to be believed; whether, again, it be a lie when a person willingly utters even a truth for the purpose of deceiving; this may be doubted. But none doubts that it is a lie when a person willingly utters a falsehood for the purpose of deceiving: wherefore a false utterance put forth with will to deceive is manifestly a lie. But whether this alone be a lie, is another question. Meanwhile, taking this kind of lie, in which all agree, let us inquire, whether it be sometimes useful to utter a falsehood with will to deceive. They who think it is, advance testimonies to their opinion, by alleging the case of Sarah, who, when she had laughed, denied to the Angels that she laughed: of Jacob questioned by his father, and answering that he was the elder son Esau: likewise that of the Egyptian midwives, who to save the Hebrew infants from being slain at their birth, told a lie, and that with God’s approbation and reward: and many such like instances they pick out, of lies told by persons whom you would not dare to blame, and so must own that it may sometimes be not only not blameworthy, but even praiseworthy to tell a lie. They add also a case with which to urge not only

those who are devoted to the Divine Books, but all men and common sense, saying, Suppose a man should take refuge with thee, who by thy lie might be saved from death, wouldest thou not tell it? If a sick man should ask a question which it is not expedient that he should know, and might be more grievously afflicted even by thy returning him no answer, wilt thou venture either to tell the truth to the destruction of the man's life, or rather to hold thy peace, than by a virtuous and merciful lie to be serviceable to his weak health? By these and such like arguments they think they most plentifully prove, that if occasion of doing good require, we may sometimes tell a lie.

6. On the other hand, those who say that we must never lie, plead much more strongly, using first the Divine authority, because in the very Decalogue it is written "Thou shall not bear false witness;" under which general term it comprises all lying: for whoso utters any thing bears witness to his own mind. But lest any should contend that not every lie is to be called false witness, what will he say to that which is written, "The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul:" and lest any should suppose that this may be understood with the exception of some liars, let him read in another place, "Thou wilt destroy all that speak leasing." Whence with His own lips the Lord saith, "Let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Hence the Apostle also in giving precept for the putting off of the old man, under which name all sins are understood, says straightway, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak ye truth."

7. Neither do they confess that they are awed by those citations from the Old Testament which are alleged as examples of lies: for there, every incident may possibly be taken figuratively, although it really did take place: and when a thing is either done or said figuratively, it is no lie. For every utterance is to be referred to that which it utters. But when any thing is either done or said figuratively, it utters that which it signifies to those for whose understanding it was put forth. Whence we may believe in regard of those persons of the prophetical times who are set forth as authoritative, that in all that is written of them they acted and spoke prophetically; and no less, that there is a prophetical meaning in all those incidents of their lives which by the same prophetic Spirit have been accounted worthy of being recorded in writing. As to the midwives, indeed, they cannot say that these women

did through the prophetic Spirit, with purpose of signifying a future truth, tell Pharaoh one thing instead of another, (albeit that Spirit did signify something, without their knowing what was doing in their persons:) but, they say that these women were according to their degree approved and rewarded of God. For if a person who is used to tell lies for harm's sake comes to tell them for the sake of doing good, that person has made great progress. But it is one thing that is set forth as laudable in itself, another that in comparison with a worse is preferred. It is one sort of gratulation that we express when a man is in sound health, another when a sick man is getting better. In the Scripture, even Sodom is said to be justified in comparison with the crimes of the people Israel. And to this rule they apply all the instances of lying which are produced from the Old Books, and are found not reprehended, or cannot be reprehended: either they are approved on the score of a progress towards improvement and hope of better things, or in virtue of some hidden signification they are not altogether lies.

8. For this reason, from the books of the New Testament, except the figurative pre-significations used by our Lord, if thou consider the life and manners of the Saints, their actions and sayings, nothing of the kind can be produced which should provoke to imitation of lying. For the simulation of Peter and Barnabas is not only recorded, but also reproved and corrected. For it was not, as some suppose, out of the same simulation that even Paul the Apostle either circumcised Timothy, or himself celebrated certain ceremonies according to the Jewish rite; but he did so, out of that liberty of his mind whereby he preached that neither are the Gentiles the better for circumcision, nor the Jews the worse. Wherefore he judged that neither the former should be tied to the custom of the Jews, nor the Jews deterred from the custom of their fathers. Whence are those words of his: “Is any man called being circumcised let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.” How can a man become uncircumcised after circumcision? but let him not do so, saith he: let him not so live as if he had become uncircumcised, that is, as if he had covered again with flesh the part that was bared, and ceased to be a Jew; as in another place he saith, “Thy circumcision is become

uncircumcision.” And this the Apostle said, not as though he would compel either those to remain in uncircumcision, or the Jews in the custom of their fathers: but that neither these nor those should be forced to the other custom; and, each should have power of abiding in his own custom, not necessity of so doing. For neither if the Jew should wish, where it would disturb no man, to recede from Jewish observances, would he be prohibited by the Apostle, since the object of his counselling to abide therein was that Jews might not by being troubled about superfluous things be hindered from coming to those things which are necessary to salvation. Neither would it be prohibited by him, if any of the Gentiles should wish to be circumcised for the purpose of showing that he does not detest the same as noxious, but holds it indifferently, as a seal, the usefulness of which had already passed away with time; for it did not follow that, if there were now no salvation to be had from it, there was destruction to be dreaded therefrom. And for this reason, Timothy, having been called in uncircumcision, yet because his mother was a Jewess and he was bound, in order to gain his kindred, to show them that he had not learnt in the Christian discipline to abominate the sacraments of the old Law, was circumcised by the Apostle; that in this way they might prove to the Jews, that the reason why the Gentiles do not receive them, is not that they are evil and were perniciously observed by the Fathers, but because they are no longer necessary to salvation after the advent of that so great Sacrament, which through so long times the whole of that ancient Scripture in its prophetical prefigurations did travail in birth withal. For he would circumcise Titus also, when the Jews urged this, but that false brethren, privily brought in, wished it to be done to the intent they might have it to disseminate concerning Paul himself as a token that he had given place to the truth of their preaching, who said that the hope of Gospel salvation is in circumcision of the flesh and observances of that kind, and that without these Christ profiteth no man: whereas on the contrary Christ would nothing profit them, who should be circumcised because they thought that in it was salvation; whence that saying, “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” Out of this liberty, therefore, did Paul keep the observances of his fathers, but with this one precaution and express declaration, that people should not suppose that without these was no Christian salvation. Peter, however, by his making as though salvation consisted in Judaism, was compelling the Gentiles to judaize; as is shown by Paul’s words, where he says, “Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” For they would be under no compulsion unless they saw that he observed them in such manner as if beside them could be no salvation. Peter’s simulation therefore is not to be compared to Paul’s liberty. And while we ought to love Peter for that he willingly received correction, we must not bolster up lying even by the authority of Paul, who both recalled Peter to the right path in the presence of them all, lest the Gentiles through him should be compelled to judaize; and bare witness to his own preaching, that whereas he was accounted hostile to the traditions of the fathers in that he would not impose them on the Gentiles, he did not despise to celebrate them himself according to the custom of his fathers, and therein sufficiently showed that this has remained in them at the Coming of Christ; that neither to the Jews they are pernicious, nor to the Gentiles necessary, nor henceforth to any of mankind means of salvation.

9. But if no authority for lying can be alleged, neither from the ancient Books, be it because that is not a lie which is received to have been done or said in a figurative sense, or be it because good men are not challenged to imitate that which in bad men, beginning to amend, is praised in comparison with the worse; nor yet from the books of the New Testament, because Peter’s correction rather than his simulation, even as his tears rather than his denial, is what we must imitate: then, as to those examples which are fetched from common life, they assert much more confidently that there is no trust to be given to these. For first they teach, that a lie is iniquity, by many proofs of holy writ, especially by that which is written, “Thou, Lord, hatest all workers of iniquity, thou shall destroy them that speak leasing.” For either as the Scripture is wont, in the following clause it expounds the former; so that, as iniquity is a term of a wider meaning, leasing is named as the particular sort of iniquity intended: or if they think there is any difference between the two, leasing is by so much worse than iniquity as “thou wilt destroy” is heavier than “thou hatest.” For it may be that God hates a person to that degree more mildly, as not to destroy him, but whom He destroys He hates the more exceedingly, by how much He punisheth more severely. Now He hateth all who work iniquity: but all who speak leasing He also destroyeth. Which thing being fixed, who of them which

assert this will be moved by those examples, when it is said, suppose a man should seek shelter with thee who by thy lie may be saved from death? For that death which men are foolishly afraid of who are not afraid to sin, kills not the soul but the body, as the Lord teacheth in the Gospel; whence He charges us not to fear that death: but the mouth which lies kills not the body but the soul. For in these words it is most plainly written, “The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul.” How then can it be said without the greatest perverseness, that to the end one man may have life of the body, it is another man’s duty to incur death of the soul? The love of our neighbor hath its bounds in each man’s love of himself. “Thou shall love,” saith He, “thy neighbor as thyself.” How can a man be said to love as himself that man, for whom that he may secure a temporal life, himself loseth life eternal? Since if for his temporal life he lose but his own temporal life, that is not to love as himself, but more than himself: which exceeds the rule of sound doctrine. Much less then is he by telling a lie to lose his own eternal for another’s temporal life. His own temporal life, of course, for his neighbor’s eternal life a Christian man will not hesitate to lose: for this example has gone before, that the Lord died for us. To this point He also saith, “This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” For none is so foolish as to say that the Lord did other than consult for the eternal salvation of men, whether in doing what He hath charged us to do, or in charging us to do what Himself hath done. Since then by lying eternal life is lost, never for any man’s temporal life must a lie be told. And as to those who take it ill and are indignant that one should refuse to tell a lie, and thereby slay his own soul in order that another may grow old in the flesh; what if by our committing theft, what if by committing adultery, a person might be delivered from death: are we therefore to steal, to commit whoredom? They cannot prevail with themselves in a case of this kind: namely, if a person should bring a halter and demand that one should yield to his carnal lust, declaring that he will hang himself unless his request be granted: they cannot prevail with themselves to comply for the sake of, as they say, saving a life. If this is absurd and wicked, why should a man corrupt his own soul with a lie in order that another may live in the body, when, if he were to give his body to be corrupted with such an object, he would in the judgment of all men be held guilty of nefarious turpitude?

Therefore the only point to be attended to in this question is, whether a lie be iniquity. And since this is asserted by the texts above rehearsed, we must see that to ask, whether a man ought to tell a lie for the safety of another, is just the same as asking whether for another's safety a man ought to commit iniquity. But if the salvation of the soul rejects this, seeing it cannot be secured but by equity, and would have us prefer it not only to another's, but even to our own temporal safety: what remains, say they, that should make us doubt that a lie ought not to be told under any circumstances whatsoever? For it cannot be said that there is aught among temporal goods greater or dearer than the safety and life of the body. Wherefore if not even that is to be preferred to truth, what can be put in our way for the sake of which they who think it is sometimes right to lie, can urge that a lie ought to be told?

10. As concerning purity of body; here indeed a very honorable regard seems to come in the way, and to demand a lie in its behalf; to wit, that if the assault of the ravisher may be escaped by means of a lie, it is indubitably right to tell it: but to this it may easily be answered, that there is no purity of body except as it depends on integrity of mind; this being broken, the other must needs fall, even though it seem intact; and for this reason it is not to be reckoned among temporal things, as a thing that might be taken away from people against their will. By no means therefore must the mind corrupt itself by a lie for the sake of its body, which it knows remaineth incorrupt if from the mind itself incorruptness depart not. For that which by violence, with no lust foregoing, the body suffereth, is rather to be called deforcement than corruption. Or if all deforcement is corruption, then not every corruption hath turpitude, but only that which lust hath procured, or to which lust hath consented. Now by how much the mind is more excellent than the body, so much the more heinous is the wickedness if that be corrupted. There, then, purity can be preserved, because there none but a voluntary corruption can have place. For assuredly if the ravisher assault the body, and there is no escaping him either by contrary force, or by any contrivance or lie, we must needs allow that purity cannot be violated by another's lust. Wherefore, since no man doubts that the mind is better than the body, to integrity of body we ought to prefer integrity of mind, which can be preserved for ever. Now who will say that

the mind of him who tells a lie hath its integrity? Indeed lust itself is rightly defined, An appetite of the mind by which to eternal goods any temporal goods whatever are preferred. Therefore no man can prove that it is at any time right to tell a lie, unless he be able to show that any eternal good can be obtained by a lie. But since each man departs from eternity just in so far as he departs from truth, it is most absurd to say, that by departing therefrom it is possible for any man to attain to any good. Else if there be any eternal good which truth compriseth not, it will not be a true good, therefore neither will it be good, because it will be false. But as the mind to the body, so must also truth be preferred to the mind itself, so that the mind should desire it not only more than the body, but even more than its own self. So will the mind be more entire and chaste, when it shall enjoy the immutability of truth rather than its own mutability. Now if Lot, being so righteous a man that he was meet to entertain even Angels, offered his daughters to the lust of the Sodomites, to the intent, that the bodies of women rather than of men might be corrupted by them; how much more diligently and constantly ought the mind's chasteness in the truth to be preserved, seeing it is more truly preferable to its body, than the body of a man to the body of a woman?

11. But if any man supposes that the reason why it is right for a person to tell a lie for another is, that he may live the while, or not be offended in those things which he much loveth, to the end he may attain unto eternal truth by being taught: that man doth not understand, in the first place, that there is no flagitious thing which he may not upon the same ground be compelled to commit, as has been above demonstrated; and in the next place, that the authority of the doctrine itself is cut off and altogether undone if those whom we essay to bring thereunto, are by our lie made to think that it is somewhiles right to lie. For seeing the doctrine which bringeth salvation consisteth partly in things to be believed, partly in things to be understood; and there is no attaining unto those things which are to be understood, unless first those things are believed, which are to be believed; how can there be any believing one who thinks it is sometimes right to lie, lest haply he lie at the moment when he teacheth us to believe? For how can it be known whether he have at that moment some cause, as he thinks, for a well-meant lie, deeming that by a false story a man may be frightened and

kept from lust, and in this way account that by telling a lie he is doing good even in spiritual things? Which kind of lie once admitted and approved, all discipline of faith is subverted altogether; and this being subverted, neither is there any attaining to understanding, for the receiving of which that discipline nurtureth the babes: and so all the doctrine of truth is done away, giving place to most licentious falsehood, if a lie, even well-meant, may from any quarter have place opened for it to enter in. For either whoso tells a lie prefers temporal advantages, his own or another's, to truth; than which what can be more perverse? or when by aid of a lie he wishes to make a person fit for gaining the truth, he bars the approach to truth, for by wishing when he lies to be accommodating, it comes to pass that when he speaks the truth, he cannot be depended upon. Wherefore, either we must not believe good men, or we must believe those whom we think obliged sometimes to tell a lie, or we must not believe that good men sometimes tell lies: of these three the first is pernicious, the second foolish; it remains therefore that good men should never tell lies.

12. Thus has the question been on both sides considered and treated; and still it is not easy to pass sentence: but we must further lend diligent hearing to those who say, that no deed is so evil, but that in avoidance of a worse it ought to be done; moreover that the deeds of men include not only what they do, but whatever they consent to be done unto them. Wherefore, if cause have arisen that a Christian man should choose to burn incense to idols, that he might not consent to bodily defilement which the persecutor threatened him withal, unless he should do so, they think they have a right to ask why he should not also tell a lie to escape so foul a disgrace. For the consent itself to endure violation of the person rather than to burn incense to idols, this, they say, is not a passive thing, but a deed; which rather than do, he chose to burn incense. How much more readily then would he have chosen a lie, if by a lie he might ward off from a holy body so shocking a disgrace?

13. In which proposition these points may well deserve to be questioned: whether such consent is to be accounted as a deed: or whether that is to be called consent which hath not approbation: or whether it be approbation, when it is said, "It is expedient to suffer this rather than do that;" and

whether the person spoken of did right to burn incense rather than suffer violation of his body; and whether it would be right rather to tell a lie, if that was the alternative proposed, than to burn incense? But if such consent is to be accounted as a deed, then are they murderers who have chosen rather to be put to death than bear false witness, yea, what is worse, they are murderers of themselves. For why, at this rate, should it not be said that they have slain themselves, because they chose that this should be done to them that they might not do what they were urged to do? Or, if it be accounted a worse thing to slay another than himself, what if these terms were offered to a Martyr, that, upon his refusing to bear false witness of Christ and to sacrifice to demons, then, before his eyes, not some other man, but his own father should be put to death; his father entreating him that he would not by his persevering permit that to be done? Is it not manifest, that, upon his remaining steadfast in his purpose of most faithful testimony, they alone would be the murderers who should slay his father, and not he a parricide into the bargain? As therefore, in this case, the man would be no party to this so heinous deed, for choosing, rather than violate his faith by false testimony, that his own father should be put to death by others, (yea, though that father were a sacrilegious person whose soul would be snatched away to punishment;) so the like consent, in the former case, would not make him a party to that so foul disgrace, if he refused to do evil himself, let others do what they might in consequence of his not doing it. For what do such persecutors say, but, “Do evil that we may not?” If the case were so, that our doing evil would make them not to have done it, even then it would not be our duty by doing wickedness ourselves to vote them harmless; but as in fact they are already doing it when they say nothing of the kind, why are they to have us to keep them company in wickedness rather than be vile and noisome by themselves? For that is not to be called consent; seeing that we do not approve what they do, always wishing that they would not, and, as much as in us lies, hindering them that they should not do it, and, when it is done, not only not committing it with them, but with all possible detestation condemning the same.

14. “How,” sayest thou, “is it not his doing as well as theirs, when they would not do this, if he would do that?” Why, at this rate we go housebreaking with house-breakers, because if we did not shut the door,

they would not break it open: and we go and murder with highwaymen, if it chance we know that they are going to do it, because if we killed them out of hand, they would not kill others. Or, if a person confess to us that he is going to commit a parricide, we commit it along with him, if, being able, we do not slay him before he can do the deed when we cannot in some other way prevent or thwart him. For it may be said, word for word as before, “Thou hast done it as well as he; for he had not done this, hadst thou done that.” With my good will, neither ill should be done; but only the one was in my power, and I could take care that this should not be done; the other rested with another, and when by my good advice I could not quench the purpose, I was not bound by my evil deed to thwart the doing. It is therefore no approving of a sinner, that one refuses to sin for him; and neither the one nor the other is liked by him who would that neither were done; but in that which pertains to him, he hath the power to do it or not, and with that he perpetrateth it not; in that which pertains to another, he hath only the will to wish it or not, and with that he condemneth. And therefore, on their offering those terms, and saying, “If thou burn not incense, this shalt thou suffer;” if he should answer, “For me, I choose neither, I detest both, I consent unto you in none of these things:” in uttering these and the like words, which certainly, because they would be true, would afford them no consent no approbation of his, let him suffer at their hands what he might, to his account would be set down the receipt of wrongs, to theirs the commission of sins. “Ought he then,” it may be asked, “to suffer his person to be violated rather than burn incense?” If the question be what he ought, he ought to do neither. For should I say that he ought to do any of these things, I shall approve this or that, whereas I reprobate both. But if the question be, which of these he ought in preference to avoid, not being able to avoid both but able to avoid one or other: I will answer, “His own sin, rather than another’s; and rather a lighter sin being his own, than a heavier being another’s.” For, reserving the point for more diligent inquiry, and granting in the mean while that violation of the person is worse than burning incense, yet the latter is his own, the former another’s deed, although he had it done to him; now, whose the deed, his the sin. For though murder is a greater sin than stealing, yet it is worse to steal than to suffer murder. Therefore, if it were proposed to any man that, if he would not steal he should be killed, that is, murder should be committed upon him;

being he could not avoid both, he would prefer to avoid that which would be his own sin, rather than that which would be another’s. Nor would the latter become his act for being committed upon him, and because he might avoid it if he would commit a sin of his own.

15. The whole stress, then, of this question comes to this; whether it be true universally that no sin of another, committed upon thee, is to be imputed to thee, if, being able to avoid it by a lighter sin of thine own, thou do it not; or whether there be an exception of all bodily defilement. No man says that a person is defiled by being murdered, or cast into prison, or bound in chains, or scourged, or afflicted with other tortures and pains, or proscribed and made to suffer most grievous losses even to utter nakedness, or stripped of honors, and subjected to great disgrace by reproaches of whatsoever kind; whatever of all these a man may have unjustly suffered, no man is so senseless as to say that he is thereby defiled. But if he have filth poured all over him, or poured into his mouth, or crammed into him, or if he be carnally used like a woman; then almost all men regard him with a feeling of horror, and they call him defiled and unclean. One must conclude then that the sins of others, be they what they may, those always excepted which defile him on whom they are committed, a man must not seek to avoid by sin of his own, either for himself or for any other, but rather he must put up with them, and suffer bravely; and if by no sins of his own he ought to avoid them, therefore not by a lie: but those which by being committed upon a man do make him unclean, these we are bound to avoid even by sinning ourselves; and for this reason those things are not to be called sins, which are done for the purpose of avoiding that uncleanness. For whatever is done, in consideration that the not doing it were just cause of blame, that thing is not sin. Upon the same principle, neither is that to be called uncleanness when there is no way of avoiding it; for even in that extremity he who suffers it has what he may do aright, namely, patiently bear what he cannot avoid. Now no man while acting aright can be defiled by any corporal contagion. For the unclean in the sight of God is every one who is unrighteous; clean therefore is every one who is righteous; if not in the sight of men, yet in the sight of God, Who judges without error. Nay, even in the act of suffering that defilement with power given of avoiding it, it is not by the mere contact that the man is defiled; but by the sin of refusing to avoid

it when he might. For that would be no sin, whatever might be done for the avoiding of it. Whoever therefore, for the avoiding of it, shall tell a lie, sinneth not.

16. Or, are some lies, also, to be excepted, so that it were better to suffer this than to commit those? If so, then not every thing that is done in order to the avoiding of that defilement ceases to be sin; seeing there are some lies to commit which is worse than to suffer that foul violence. For, suppose quest be making after a person that his body may be deflowered, and that it be possible to screen him by a lie; who dares to say that even in such a case a lie ought not be told? But, if the lie by which he may be concealed be one which may hurt the fair fame of another, by bringing upon him a false accusation of that very uncleanness, to suffer which the other is sought after; as, if it should be said to the inquirer, “Go to such an one,” (naming some chaste man who is a stranger to vices of this kind,) “and he will procure for you one whom you will find a more willing subject, for he knows and loves such;” and thereby the person might be diverted from him whom he sought: I know not whether one man’s fair fame ought to be violated by a lie, in order that another’s body may not be violated by lust to which he is a stranger. And in general, it is never right to tell a lie for any man, such as may hurt another, even if the hurt be slighter than would be the hurt to him unless such a lie were told. Because neither must another man’s bread be taken from him against his will, though he be in good health, and it is to feed one who is weak; nor must an innocent man, against his will, be beaten with rods, that another may not be killed. Of course, if they are willing, let it be done, because they are not hurt if they be willing that so it should be: but whether, even with his own consent, a man’s fair fame ought to be hurt with a false charge of foul lusts, in order that lust may be averted from another’s body, is a great question. And I know not whether it be easy to find in what way it can be just that a man’s fair fame, even with his consent, should be stained with a false charge of lust, any more than a man’s body should be polluted by the lust itself against his will.

17. But yet if the option were proposed to the man who chose to burn incense to idols rather than yield his body to abominable lust, that, if he wished to avoid that, he should violate the fame of Christ by some lie; he

would be most mad to do it. I say more: that he would be mad, if, to avoid another man's lust, and not to have that done upon his person which he would suffer with no lust of his own, he should falsify Christ's Gospel with false praises of Christ; more eschewing that another man should corrupt his body, than himself to corrupt the doctrine of sanctification of souls and bodies. Wherefore, from the doctrine of religion, and from those utterances universally, which are uttered on behalf of the doctrine of religion, in the teaching and learning of the same, all lies must be utterly kept aloof. Nor can any cause whatever be found, one should think, why a lie should be told in matters of this kind, when in this doctrine it is not right to tell a lie for the very purpose of bringing a person to it the more easily. For, once break or but slightly diminish the authority of truth, and all things will remain doubtful: which unless they be believed true, cannot be held as certain. It is lawful then either to him that discourses, disputes, and preaches of things eternal, or to him that narrates or speaks of things temporal pertaining to edification of religion and piety, to conceal at fitting time whatever seems fit to be concealed: but to tell a lie is never lawful, therefore neither to conceal by telling a lie.

18. This being from the very first and most firmly established, touching other lies the question proceeds more securely. But by consequence we must also see that all lies must be kept aloof which hurt any man unjustly: because no man is to have a wrong, albeit a lighter one is done to him, that another may have a heavier kept from him. Nor are those lies to be allowed, which, though they hurt not another, yet do nobody any good, and are hurtful to the persons themselves who gratuitously tell them. Indeed, these are the persons who are properly to be called liars. For there is a difference between lying and being a liar. A man may tell a lie unwillingly; but a liar loves to lie, and inhabits in his mind in the delight of lying. Next to such are those to be placed who by a lie wish to please men, not that they may do wrong or bring reproach upon any man; for we have already before put away that kind; but that they may be pleasant in conversation. These, differ from the class in which we have placed liars in this respect, that liars delight in lying, rejoicing in deceit for its own sake: but these lust to please by agreeable talk, and yet would rather please by saying things that were true, but when they do not easily find true things to say that are pleasant to the

hearers, they choose rather to tell lies than to hold their tongues. Yet it is difficult for these sometimes to undertake a story which is the whole of it false; but most commonly they interweave falsehood with truth, where they are at a loss for something sweet. Now these two sorts of lies do no harm to those who believe them, because they are not deceived concerning any matter of religion and truth, or concerning any profit or advantage of their own. It suffices them, to judge the thing possible which is told, and to have faith in a man of whom they ought not rashly to think that he is telling a lie. For where is the harm of believing that such an one's father or grandfather was a good man, when he was not? or that he has served with the army even in Persia, though he never set foot out of Rome? But to the persons who tell these lies, they do much harm: to the former sort, because they so desert truth as to rejoice in deceit: to the latter, because they want to please people better than the truth.

19. These sorts of lies having been without any hesitation condemned, next follows a sort, as it were by steps rising to something better, which is commonly attributed to well-meaning and good people, when the person who lies not only does no harm to another, but even benefits somebody. Now it is on this sort of lies that the whole dispute turns, whether that person does harm to himself, who benefits another in such sort as to act contrary to the truth. Or, if that alone may be called truth which illustrateth the very minds of men with an intimate and incommutable light, at least he acts contrary to some true thing, because although the bodily senses are deceived, yet he acts contrary to a true thing who says that a thing is so or not so, whereof neither his mind nor senses nor his opinion or belief giveth him any report. Whether therefore he does not hurt himself in so profiting another, or in that compensation not hurt himself in which he profiteth the other, is a great question. If it be so, it should follow that he ought to profit himself by a lie which damages no man. But these things hang together, and if you concede that point, it necessarily draws in its train some very embarrassing consequences. For should it be asked, what harm it does to a person rolling in superfluous wealth, if from countless thousands of bushels of wheat he lose one bushel, which bushel may be profitable as necessary food to the person stealing it; it will follow that theft also may be committed without blame, and false witness borne without sin. Than which,

what can be mentioned more perverse? Or truly, if another had stolen the bushel, and thou sawest it done, and wert questioned, wouldest thou tell a lie with honesty for the poor man, and if thou do it for thine own poverty wilt thou be blamed? As if it were thy duty to love another more than thyself. Both then are disgraceful, and must be avoided.

20. But haply some may think that there is an exception to be added; that there be some honest lies which not only hurt no man, but profit some man, excepting those by which crimes are screened and defended: so that the reason why the aforesaid lie is disgraceful, is that, although it hurt no man, and profit the poor, it screens a theft; but if it should in such sort hurt nobody and profit somebody as not to screen and defend any sin, it would not be morally wrong. As, put the case that some one should in thy sight hide his money that he might not lose it by theft or violence, and thereupon being questioned thou shouldest tell a lie; thou wouldest hurt no man, and wouldest serve him who had need that his money were hidden, and wouldest not have covered a sin by telling a lie. For it is no sin if a man hide his property which he fears to lose. But, if we therefore sin not in telling a lie, for that, while covering no man's sin, we hurt nobody and do good to somebody, what are we about as concerning the sin itself of a lie? For where it is laid down, "Thou shalt not steal," there is also this, "Thou shall not bear false witness." Since then each is severally prohibited, why is false witness culpable if it cover a theft or any other sin, but if without any screening of sin it be done by itself, then not culpable, whereas stealing is culpable in and by itself, and so other sins? Or is it so that to hide a sin is not lawful; to do it, lawful?

21. If this be absurd, what shall we say? Is it so, that there is no "false witness," but when one tells a lie either to invent a crime against some man, or to hide some man's crime, or in any way to oppress any man in judgment? For a witness seems to be necessary to the judge for cognizance of the cause. But if the Scripture named a "witness" only so far as that goes, the Apostle would not say, "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up." For so he shows that it is false witness to tell a lie, yea, in falsely praising a person.

Or peradventure, doth the person who lies then utter false witness when he either invents or hides any man's sin, or hurts any man in whatever way? For, if a lie spoken against a man's temporal life is detestable, how much more one against eternal life? as is every lie, if it take place in doctrine of religion. And it is for this reason that the Apostle calls it false witness, if a man tell a lie about Christ, yea, one which may seem to pertain to His praise. Now if it be a lie that neither inventeth or hideth any man's sin, nor is answered to a question of the judge, and hurteth no man, and profits some man, are we to say that it is neither false witness, nor a reprehensible lie?

22. What then, if a homicide seek refuge with a Christian, or if he see where the homicide have taken refuge, and be questioned of this matter by him who seeks, in order to bring to punishment a man, the slayer of man? Is he to tell a lie? For how does he not hide a sin by lying, when he for whom he lies has been guilty of a heinous sin? Or is it because he is not questioned concerning his sin, but about the place where he is concealed? So then to lie in order to hide a person's sin is evil; but to lie in order to hide the sinner is not evil? "Yea, surely:" says some one: "for a man sins not in avoiding punishment, but in doing something worthy of punishment. Moreover, it pertaineth to Christian discipline neither to despair of any man's amendment, nor to bar against any man the way of repentance." What if thou be led to the judge, and then questioned concerning the very place where the other is in hiding? Art thou prepared to say, either, "He is not there," when thou knowest him to be there; or, "I know not, and have not seen," what thou knowest and hast seen? Art thou then prepared to bear false witness, and to slay thy soul that a manslayer may not be slain? Or, up to the presence of the judge wilt thou lie, but when the judge questions thee, then speak truth that thou be not a false witness? So then thou art going to slay a man thyself by betraying him. Surely the betrayer too is one whom the divine Scripture detesteth. Or haply is he no betrayer, who in answer to the judge's interrogation gives true information; but would be a betrayar, if, unasked, he should delate a man to his destruction? Put the case with respect to a just and innocent man, that thou know where he is in hiding, and be questioned by the judge; which man, however, has been ordered to be taken to execution by a higher power, so that he who interrogates is charged with the execution of the law, not the author of the sentence? Will it

be no false witness that thou shall lie for an innocent man, because the interrogator is not a judge, but only charged with the execution? What if the author of the law interrogate thee, or any unjust judge, making quest of an innocent man to bring him to punishment? What wilt thou do? wilt thou be false witness, or betrayer? Or will he be a betrayer, who to a just judge shall ultroneously delate a lurking homicide; and he not so, who to an unjust judge, interrogating him of the hiding-place of an innocent man whom he seeks to slay, shall inform against the person who has thrown himself upon his honor? Or between the crime of false witness and that of betrayal, wilt thou remain doubtful and unable to make up thy mind? Or by holding thy peace or professing that thou wilt not tell, wilt thou make up thy mind to avoid both? Then why not do this before thou come to the judge, that thou mayest shun the lie also? For, having kept clear of a lie, thou wilt escape all false witness; whether every lie be false witness, or not every: but by keeping clear of all false witness in thy sense of the word, thou wilt not escape all lying. How much braver then, how much more excellent, to say, "I will neither betray nor lie?"

23. This did a former Bishop of the Church of Thagasta, Firmus by name, and even more firm in will. For, when he was asked by command of the emperor, through officers sent by him, for a man who was taking refuge with him, and whom he kept in hiding with all possible care, he made answer to their questions, that he could neither tell a lie, nor betray a man; and when he had suffered so many torments of body, (for as yet emperors were not Christian,) he stood firm in his purpose. Thereupon being brought before the emperor, his conduct appeared so admirable, that he without any difficulty obtained a pardon for the man whom he was trying to save. What conduct could be more brave and constant? But peradventure some more timid person may say, "I can be prepared to bear any torments, or even to submit to death, that I may not sin; but, since it is no sin to tell a lie such that you neither hurt any man, nor bear false witness, and benefit some man, it is foolish and a great sin, voluntarily and to no purpose to submit to torments, and, when one's health and life may haply be useful, to fling them away for nothing to people in a rage." Of whom I ask; Why he fears that which is written, "Thou shall not bear false witness," and fears not that which is said unto God, "Thou wilt destroy all them that speak leasing?"

Says he, “It is not written, Every lie: but I understand it as if it were written, Thou wilt destroy all that speak false witness.” But neither there is it said, All false witness. “Yes, but it is set there,” saith he, “where the other things are set down which are in every sort evil.” What, is this the case with what is set down there, “Thou shalt not kill?” If this be in every sort evil, how shall one clear of this crime even just men, who, upon a law given, have killed many? “But,” it is rejoined, “that man doth not himself kill, who is the minister of some just command.” These men’s fear, then, I do accept, that I still think that laudable man who would neither lie, nor betray a man, did both better understand that which is written, and what he understood did bravely put in practice.

24. But one sometimes comes to a case of this kind, that we are not interrogated where the person is who is sought, nor forced to betray him, if he is hidden in such manner, that he cannot easily be found unless betrayed: but we are asked, whether he be in such a place or not. If we know him to be there, by holding our peace we betray him, or even by saying that we will in no wise tell whether he be there or not: for from this the questioner gathers that he is there, as, if he were not, nothing else would be answered by him who would not lie nor betray a man, but only, that he is not there. So, by our either holding our peace, or saying such words, a man is betrayed, and he who seeks him hath but to enter in, if he have the power, and find him: whereas he might have been turned aside from finding him by our telling a lie. Wherefore if thou know not where he is, there is no cause for hiding the truth, but thou must confess that thou knowest not. But, if thou know where he is, whether he be in the place which is named in the question or elsewhere; thou must not say, when it is asked whether he be there or not, “I will not tell thee what thou askest,” but thou must say, “I know where he is, but I will never show.” For if, touching one place in particular thou answer not and profess that thou wilt not betray, it is just as if thou shouldest point to that same place with thy finger: for a sure suspicion is thereby excited. But if at the first thou confess that thou know where he is, but will not tell, haply the inquisitor may be diverted from that place, and begin now to ply thee that the place where he is may be betrayed. For which good faith and humanity whatever thou shall bravely bear, is judged to be not only not culpable, but even laudable; save only these

things which if a man suffer he is said to suffer not bravely, but immodestly and foully. For this is the last description of lie, concerning which we must treat more diligently.

25. For first to be eschewed is that capital lie and far to be fled from, which is done in doctrine of religion; to which lie a man ought by no consideration to be induced. The second, that he should hurt some man unjustly: which is such that it profits no man and hurts some man. The third, which so profits one as to hurt another, but not in corporal defilement. The fourth, that which is done through only lust of lying and deceiving, which is an unmixed lie. The fifth, what is done with desire of pleasing by agreeableness in talk. All these being utterly eschewed and rejected, there follows a sixth sort which at once hurts nobody and helps somebody; as when, if a person's money is to be unjustly taken from him, one who knows where the money is, should say that he does not know, by whomsoever the question be put. The seventh, which hurts none and profits some: except if a judge interrogate: as when, not wishing to betray a man who is sought for to be put to death, one should lie; not only a just and innocent, but also a culprit; because it belongs to Christian discipline neither to despair of any man's amendment, nor to bar the way of repentance against any. Of which two sorts, which are wont to be attended with great controversy, we have sufficiently treated, and have shown what was our judgment; that by taking the consequences, which are honorably and bravely borne, these kinds also should be eschewed by brave and faithful and truthful men and women. The eighth sort of lie is that which hurts no man, and does good in the preserving somebody from corporal defilement, at least that defilement which we have mentioned above. For even to eat with unwashen hands the Jews thought defilement. Or if a person think this also a defilement, yet not such that a lie ought to be told to avoid it. But if the lie be such as to do an injury to any man, even though it screen a man from that uncleanness which all men abhor and detest; whether a lie of this kind may be told provided the injury done by the lie be such as consists not in that sort of uncleanness with which we are now concerned, is another question: for here the question is no longer about lying, but it is asked whether an injury ought to be done to any man, even otherwise than by a lie, that the said defilement may be warded off from another. Which I should by no means think: though the

case proposed be the slightest wrongs, as that which I mentioned above, about a single measure of wheat; and though it be very embarrassing whether it be our duty not to do even such an injury to any man, if thereby another may be defended or screened from a lustful outrage upon his person. But, as I said, this is another question: at present let us go on with what we have taken in hand: whether a lie ought to be told, if even the inevitable condition be proposed that we either do this, or suffer the deed of lust or some execrable pollution; even though by lying we do no man harm.

26. Touching which matter, there will be some place open for consideration, if first the divine authorities which forbid a lie be diligently discussed: for if these give no place, we vainly seek a loophole; for we are bound to keep in every way the command of God, and the will of God in all that through keeping His command we may suffer, it is our duty with an even mind to follow: but if by some relaxation any outlet be allowed, in such a case we are not to decline a lie. The reason why the Divine Scriptures contain not only God’s commands, but the life and character of the just, is this: that, if haply it be hidden in what way we are to take that which is enjoined, by the actions of the just it may be understood. With the exception, therefore, of those actions which one may refer to an allegorical significance, although none doubts that they really took place, as is the case with almost all the occurrences in the books of the Old Testament. For who can venture to affirm of any thing there, that it does not pertain to a figurative foretelling? Seeing the Apostle, speaking of the sons of Abraham, of whom of course it is most easily said that they were born and did live in the natural order of propagating the people, (for not monsters and prodigies were born, to lead the mind to some presignification,) nevertheless asserteth that they signify the two Testaments; and saith of that marvellous benefit which God bestowed upon His people Israel to rescue them out of the bondage in which they in Egypt were oppressed, and of the punishment which avenged their sin on their journey, that these things befell them in a figure: what actions wilt thou find, from which thou mayest set aside that rule, and take upon thee to affirm that they are not to be reduced to some figure? Excepting therefore these, the things which in the New Testament are done by the Saints, where there is a most evident commending of manners to our

imitation, may avail as examples for the understanding of the Scriptures, which things are digested in the commands.

27. As, when we read in the Gospel, “Thou hast received a blow in the face, make ready the other cheek.” Now as an example of patience can none be found than that of the Lord Himself more potent and excellent; but He, when smitten on the cheek, said not, Behold here is the other cheek, but He said, “If I have spoken ill, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou Me?” Where He shows that the preparation of the other cheek is to be done in the heart. Which also the Apostle Paul knew, for he, too, when he was smitten on the face before the high priest, did not say, Smite the other cheek: but, “God,” saith he, “shall smite thee, thou whited wall: and sittest thou to judge me according to law, and contrary to law commandest me to be smitten?” with most deep insight beholding that the priesthood of the Jews was already become such, that in name it outwardly was clean and fair, but within was foul with muddy lusts; which priesthood he saw in spirit to be ready to pass away through vengeance of the Lord, when he spake those words: but yet he had his heart ready not only to receive other blows on the cheek, but also to suffer for the truth any torments whatever, with love of them from whom he should suffer the same.

28. It is also written, “But I say unto you, Swear not at all.” But the Apostle himself has used oaths in his Epistles. And so he shows how that is to be taken which is said, “I say unto you, Swear not at all:” that is, lest by swearing one come to a facility in swearing, from facility to a custom, and so from a custom there be a downfall into perjury. And therefore he is not found to have sworn except in writing, where there is more wary forethought, and no precipitate tongue withal. And this indeed came of evil, as it is said, “Whatever is more than these is of evil:” not however from evil of his own, but from the evil of infirmity which was in them, in whom he even in this way endeavored to work faith. For that he used an oath in speaking, while not writing, I know not that any Scripture has related concerning him. And yet the Lord says, “Swear not at all:” for He hath not granted license thereof to persons writing. Howbeit, because to pronounce Paul guilty of violating the commandment, especially in Epistles written and sent forth for the spiritual life and salvation of the nations, were an

impiety, we must understand that word which is set down, “At all,” to be set down for this purpose, that as much as in thee lies, thou affect not, love not, nor as though it were for a good thing, with any delight desire, an oath.

29. As that, “Take no thought for the morrow,” and, “Take therefore no thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or what ye shall put on.” Now when we see that the Lord Himself had a bag in which was put what was given, that it might be kept for necessary uses as the time should require; and that the Apostles themselves made much provision for the indigence of the brethren, not only for the morrow, but even for the more protracted time of impending dearth, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles; it is sufficiently clear that these precepts are so to be understood, that we are to do nothing of our work as matter of necessity, through love of obtaining temporal things, or fear of want.

30. Moreover, it was said to the Apostles that they should take nothing with them for their journey, but should live by the Gospel. And in a certain place too the Lord Himself signified why He said this, when He added, “The laborer is worthy of his hire:” where He sufficiently shows that this is permitted, not ordered; lest haply he who should do this, namely, that in this work of preaching the word he should take aught for the uses of this life from them to whom he preached, should think he was doing any thing unlawful. And yet that it may more laudably not be done is sufficiently proved in the Apostle Paul: who, while he said, “Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him, that teacheth in all things,” and showed in many places that this is wholesomely done by them to whom he preached the word, “Nevertheless,” saith he, “I have not used this power.” The Lord, therefore, when He spake those words, gave power, not bound men by a command. So in general, what in words we are not able to understand, in the actions of the Saints we gather how it is meet to be taken, which would easily be drawn to the other side, unless it were recalled by an example.

31. Thus then what is written, “The mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul;” of what mouth it speaketh, is the question. For in general when the Scripture speaks of the mouth, it signifies the very seat of our conception in the heart, where is approved and decreed whatever also by the voice, when we speak the truth, is uttered: so that he lieth with the heart who approveth a lie; yet

that man may possibly not lie with the heart, who uttereth other than is in his mind, in such sort that he knows it to be for the sake of avoiding a greater evil that he admitteth an evil, disapproving withal both the one and the other. And they who assert this, say that thus also is to be understood that which is written, “He that speaketh the truth in his heart:” because always in the heart truth must be spoken; but not always in the mouth of the body, if any cause of avoiding a greater evil require that other than is in the mind be uttered with the voice. And that there is indeed a mouth of the heart, may be understood even from this, that where there is speech, there a mouth is with no absurdity understood: nor would it be right to say, “Who speaketh in his heart,” unless it were right to understand that there is also a mouth in the heart. Though in that very place where it is written, “The mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul,” if the context of the lesson be considered, it may peradventure be taken for no other than the mouth of the heart. For there is an obscure response there, where it is hidden from men, to whom the mouth of the heart, unless the mouth of the body sound therewith, is not audible. But that mouth, the Scripture in that place saith, doth reach to the hearing of the Spirit of the Lord, Who hath filled the whole earth; at the same time mentioning lips and voice and tongue in that place; yet all these the sense permitteth not to be taken, but concerning the heart, because it saith of the Lord, that what is spoken is not hidden from Him: now that which is spoken with that sound which reacheth to our ears, is not hidden from men either. Thus, namely, is it written: “The Spirit of wisdom is loving, and will not acquit an evil-speaker of his lips: for of his reins God is witness, and of his heart a true searcher, and of his tongue a hearer. For the Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole earth, and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice. Therefore he that speaketh unrighteous things cannot be hid: but neither shall the judgment when it punisheth pass by him. For in the thoughts of the ungodly shall there be interrogation; and the hearing of his words shall come from the Lord, to the punishment of his iniquities. For the ear of jealousy heareth all things, and the tumult of murmurings will not be hid. Therefore keep yourselves from murmuring, which profiteth nothing, and from backbiting refrain your tongue: because an obscure response will not go into the void. But the mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul.” It seems then to threaten them who think that to be obscure and secret, which they agitate and turn over in their heart. And this, it would show, is so clear to the ears of God, that it even calls it "tumult."

32. Manifestly also in the Gospel we find the mouth of the heart: so that in one place the Lord is found to have mentioned the mouth both of the body and of the heart, where he saith, "Are ye also yet without understanding? Do ye not yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth, goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? but those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man." Here if thou understand but one mouth, that of the body, how wilt thou understand, "Those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart;" since spitting also and vomiting proceed out of the mouth? Unless peradventure a man is but then defiled when he eateth aught unclean, but is defiled when he vomits it up. But if this be most absurd, it remains that we understand the mouth of the heart to have been expounded by the Lord, when He saith, "The things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart." For being that theft also can be, and often is, perpetrated with silence of the bodily voice and mouth; one must be out of his mind so to understand it as then to account a person to be contaminated by the sin of theft, when he confesses or makes it known, but when he commits it and holds his peace, then to think him undefiled. But, in truth, if we refer what is said to the mouth of the heart, no sin whatever can be committed tacitly: for it is not committed unless it proceed from that mouth which is within.

33. But, like as it is asked of what mouth the Scripture saith, "The mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul," so it may be asked, of what lie. For it seems to speak of that lie in particular, which consists in detraction. It says, "Keep yourselves from murmuring, which profiteth nothing, and from detraction refrain your tongue." Now this detraction takes place through malevolence, when any man not only with mouth and voice of the body doth utter what he forgeth against any, but even without speaking wisheth him to be thought such; which is in truth to detract with the mouth of the heart; which thing, it saith, cannot be obscure and hidden from God.

34. For what is written in another place, “Wish not to use every lie;” they say is not of force for this, that a person is not to use any lie. Therefore, when one man shall say, that according to this testimony of Scripture we must to that degree hold every sort and kind of lie in detestation, that even if a man wish to lie, yea, though he lie not, the very wish is to be condemned; and to this sense interpreteth, that it is not said, Do not use every lie, but, “Do not wish to use every lie;” that one must not dare not only to tell, but not even to wish to tell, any lie whatever: saith another man, “Nay, in that it saith, Do not wish to use every lie, it willeth that from the mouth of the heart we exterminate and estrange lying: so that while from some lies we must abstain with the mouth of the body, as are those chiefly which pertain to doctrine of religion; from some, we are not to abstain with the mouth of the body, if reason of avoiding a greater evil require; but with the mouth of the heart we must abstain utterly from every lie.” Where it behoveth to be understood what is said, “Do not wish:” namely, the will itself is taken as it were the mouth of the heart, so that it concerneth not the mouth of the heart when in shunning a greater evil we lie unwillingly. There is also a third sense in which thou mayest so take this word, “not every,” that, except some lies, it giveth thee leave to lie. Like as if he should say, wish not to believe every man: he would not mean to advise that none should be believed; but that not all, some however, should be believed. And that which follows, “For assiduity thereof will not profit for good,” sounds as if, not lying, but assiduous lying, that is, the custom and love of lying, should seem to be that which he would prohibit. To which that person will assuredly slide down, who either shall think that every lie may be boldly used (for so he will shun not that even which is committed in the doctrine of piety and religion; than which what more abominably wicked thing canst thou easily find, not among all lies, but among all sins?) or to some lie (no matter how easy, how harmless,) shall accommodate the inclination of the will; so as to lie, not unwillingly for the sake of escaping a greater evil, but willingly and with liking. So, seeing there be three things which may be understood in this sentence, either “Every lie, not only tell thou not, but do not even wish to tell:” or, “Do not wish, but even unwillingly tell a lie when aught worse is to be avoided:” or, “Not every,” to wit, that except some lies, the rest are admitted: one of these is found to make for those who hold that one is never to lie, two for those who think that sometimes one may tell a

lie. But yet what follows, “For assiduity thereof will not profit to good,” I know not whether it can countenance the first sentence of these three; except haply so, that while it is a precept for the perfect not only not to lie, but not even to wish; assiduity of lying is not permitted even to beginners. As if, namely, on laying down the rule at no time whatever not merely to lie but so much as to have a wish to lie, and this being gainsaid by examples, in regard that there are some lies which have been even approved by great authority, it should be rejoined that those indeed are lies of beginners, which have, in regard of this life, some kind of duty of mercy; and yet to that degree is every lie evil, and by perfect and spiritual minds in every way to be eschewed, that not even beginners are permitted to have assiduous custom thereof. For we have already spoken concerning the Egyptian midwives, that it is in respect of the promise of growth and proficiency to better things that they while lying are spoken of with approval: because it is some step towards loving the true and eternal saving of the soul, when a person doth mercifully for the saving of any man’s albeit mortal life even tell a lie.

35. Moreover what is written “Thou wilt destroy all that speak leasing:” one saith that no lie is here excepted, but all condemned. Another saith: Yea verily: but they who speak leasing from the heart, as we disputed above; for that man speaketh truth in his heart, who hateth the necessity of lying, which he understands as a penalty of the moral life. Another saith: All indeed will God destroy who speak leasing, but not all leasing: for there is some leasing which the Prophet was at that time insinuating, in which none is spared; that is, if refusing to confess each one his sins, he defend them rather, and will not do penance, so that not content to work iniquity, he must needs wish to be thought just, and succumb not to the medicine of confession: as the very distinction of the words may seem to intimate no other, “Thou hatest all that work iniquity;” but wilt not destroy them if upon repenting they speak the truth in confession, that by doing that truth they may come to the light; as is said in the Gospel according to John, “But be that doeth truth cometh unto the light. Thou wilt destroy all who” not only work what Thou hatest, but also “speak leasing;” in holding out before them false righteousness, and not confessing their sins in penitence.

36. For, concerning false witness, which is set down in the ten commands of the Law, it can indeed in no wise be contended that love of truth may at heart be preserved, and false witness brought forth to him unto whom the witness is borne. For, when it is said to God only, then it is only in the heart that the truth is to be embraced: but when it is said to man, then must we with the mouth also of the body bring forth truth, because man is not an inspector of the heart. But then, touching the witness itself, it is not unreasonably asked, to whom one is a witness? For not to whomsoever we speak unto are we witnesses, but to them to whom it is expedient and due that they by our means should come to know or believe the truth; as is a judge, that he may not err in judging; or he who is taught in doctrine of religion, that he may not err in faith, or by very authority of the teacher waver in doubt. But when the person who interrogates thee or wishes to know aught from thee seeks that which concerneth him not, or which is not expedient for him to know, he craveth not a witness, but a betrayer. Therefore if to him thou tell a lie, from false witness peradventure thou wilt be clear, but from a lie assuredly not. So then with this salvo, that to bear false witness is never lawful, the question is, whether it be lawful sometimes to tell a lie. Or if it be false witness to lie at all, it is to be seen whether it admit of compensation, to wit, that it be said for the sake of avoiding a greater sin: as that which is written, “Honor father and mother,” under stress of a preferable duty is disregarded; whence the paying of the last honors of sepulture to a father, is forbidden to that man who by the Lord Himself is called to preach the kingdom of God.

37. Likewise, touching that which is written, “A son which receiveth the word shall be far from destruction: but receiving, he receiveth it for himself, and no falsehood proceedeth out of his mouth:” some one may say, that what is here set down, “A son which receiveth the word,” is to be taken for no other than the word of God, which is truth. Therefore, “A son receiving the truth shall be far from destruction,” refers to that which is written, “Thou wilt destroy all that speak leasing.” But when it follows, “Receiving he receiveth for himself,” what other doth this insinuate than what the Apostle saith, “But let every man prove his own work, and then he shall have glorying in himself and not in another?” For he that receiveth the word, that is, truth, not for himself, but for men-pleasing, keepeth it not

when he sees they can be pleased by a lie. But whoso receiveth it for himself, no falsehood proceedeth out of his mouth: because even when the way to please men is to lie, that man lieth not, who receiving the truth not thereby to please them but to please God, hath received it for himself. Therefore there is no reason why it should be said here He will destroy all who speak leasing, but not all leasing: because all lies, universally, are cut off in this saying, “And no falsehood proceedeth out of his mouth.” But another saith, it is to be so taken as the Apostle Paul took our Lord’s saying, “But I say unto you, Swear not at all.” For here also all swearing is cut off; but from the mouth of the heart, that it should never be done with approbation of the will, but through necessity of the weakness of another; that is, “from the evil” of another, when it shows that he cannot otherwise be got to believe what is said, unless faith be wrought by an oath; or, from that “evil” of our own, that while as yet involved in the skins of this mortality we are not able to show our heart: which thing were we able to do, of swearing there were no need. Though moreover in this whole sentence, if the saying, “A son receiving the word shall be far from destruction,” be said of none other than that Truth, by Whom all things were made, which remaineth ever incommutable; then, because the doctrine of Religion strives to bring men to the contemplation of this Truth, it may seem that the saying, “And no falsehood proceedeth out of his mouth,” is said to this purpose, that he speaketh no falsehood that pertaineth to doctrine. Which sort of lie is upon no compensation whatever to be gone into, and is utterly and before all to be eschewed. Or if the saying, “No falsehood,” is absurdly taken if it be not referred to every lie, the saying, “From his mouth,” should, as was argued above, be taken to mean the mouth of the heart, in the opinion of him who accounts that sometimes one may tell a lie.

38. Certain it is, albeit all this disputation go from side to side, some asserting that it is never right to lie, and to this effect reciting divine testimonies: others gainsaying, and even in the midst of the very words of the divine testimonies seeking place for a lie; yet no man can say, that he finds this either in example or in word of the Scriptures, that any lie should seem a thing to be loved, or not had in hatred; howbeit sometimes by telling a lie thou must do that thou hatest, that what is more greatly to be detested

may be avoided. But then here it is that people err; they put the precious beneath the vile. For when thou hast granted that some evil is to be admitted, that another and more grievous may not be admitted; not by the rule of truth, but by his own cupidity and custom doth each measure the evil, accounting that to be the more grievous, which himself more greatly dreads, not which is in reality more greatly to be fled from. All this fault is engendered by perversity of loving. For being there are two lives of ours; the one eternal, which is promised of God; the other temporal, in which we now are: when a man shall have begun to love this temporal more than that eternal, for the sake of this which he loveth he thinks all things right to be done; and there are not any, in his estimation, more grievous sins than those which do injury to this life, and either take away from it any commodity unjustly and unlawfully, or by inflicting of death take it utterly away. And so thieves, and robbers, and ruffians, and torturers, and slayers, are more hated of them than lascivious, drunken, luxurious men, if these molest no man. For they do not understand or at all care, that these do wrong to God; not indeed to any inconvenience of Him, but to their own pernicious hurt; seeing they corrupt His gifts bestowed upon them, even His temporal gifts, and by their very corruptions turn away from eternal gifts: above all, if they have already begun to be the Temple of God; which to all Christians the Apostle saith thus: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? Whoso shall corrupt God’s temple, God will corrupt him. For the temple of God is holy: which temple are ye.”

39. And all these sins, truly, whether such whereby an injury is done to men in the comforts of this life, or whereby men corrupt themselves and hurt none against his will: all these sins, then, even though they seem to mean well by this temporal life to the procuring of any delight or profit, (for no man commits any of these things with any other purpose and end;) yet in regard of that life which is forever and ever, they do entangle and in all ways hinder. But there are some of these that hinder the doers only, others likewise those on whom they are done. For as to the things which people keep safe for the sake of utility to this life, when these are taken away by injurious persons, they alone sin and are hindered from eternal life who do this, not they to whom they do it. Therefore, even if a person consent to the taking of them from him, either that he may not do some evil, or that he

may not in these very things suffer some greater inconvenience; not only does he not sin, but in the one case he acts bravely and laudably, in the other usefully and unblameably. But as to those things which are kept for the sake of sanctity and religion, when injurious persons wish to violate these, it is right, if the condition be proposed and the means given, to redeem them even by sins of lesser moment, yet not by wrongs to other men. And then do these things thenceforth cease to be sins, which are undertaken in order to the avoidance of greater sins. For as in things useful, for instance in pecuniary or any other corporal commodity, that is not called a loss which is parted with in order to a greater gain; so in things holy, that is not called sin which is admitted lest a worse be admitted. Or if that is called loss, which one foregoes that he may not forego more; let this also be called sin, while however the necessity of undertaking it in order to the eschewing of a greater is no more to be doubted, than that, in order to avoid a greater loss, it is right to suffer a smaller one.

40. Now the things which are to be kept safe for sanctity's sake are these: pudicity of body, and chastity of soul, and verity of doctrine. Pudicity of body, without consent and permission of the soul, doth no man violate. For, whatever against our will and without our empowering the same is by greater force done upon our body, is no lewdness. Howbeit, of permitting there may be some reason, but of consenting, none. For we consent, when we approve and wish: but we permit even not willing, because of some greater turpitude to be eschewed. Consent, truly, to corporal lewdness violates also chastity of mind. For the mind's chastity consists in a good will and sincere love, which is not corrupted, unless when we love and desire that which Truth teaches ought not to be loved and desired. We have therefore to guard the sincerity of love toward God and our neighbor; for in this is chastity of mind sanctified: and we must endeavor with all the strength in our power, and with pious supplication, that, when the pudicity of our body is sought to be violated, not even that outermost sense of the soul, which is entangled with the flesh, may be touched with any delight; but if it cannot this, at least the mind and thought in not consenting may have its chastity preserved entire. Now what we have to guard in chastity of mind, is, as pertaining to the love of our neighbor, innocence and benevolence; as pertaining to the love of God, piety. Innocence is that we

hurt no man; benevolence, that we also do good to whom we can; piety, that we worship God. But as for verity of doctrine, of religion and piety, that is not violated unless by a lie; whereas the highest and inmost Verity Itself, Whose that doctrine is, can in no wise be violated: which Truth to attain unto, and in It on every wise to remain, and to It thoroughly to cleave, will not be permitted, but when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality. But, because all piety in this life is practice by which we tend to that life, which practice hath a guidance afforded unto it from that doctrine, which in human words and signs of corporal sacraments doth insinuate and intimate Truth herself: for this cause this also, which by lying is possible to be corrupted, is most of all to be kept incorrupt; that so, if aught in that chastity of mind be violated, it may have that wherefrom it may be repaired. For once corrupt authority of doctrine, and there can be none either course or recourse to chastity of mind.

41. There resulteth then from all these this sentence, that a lie which doth not violate the doctrine of piety, nor piety itself, nor innocence, nor benevolence, may on behalf of pudicity of body be admitted. And yet if any man should propose to himself so to love truth, not only that which consists in contemplation, but also in uttering the true thing, which each in its own kind of things is true, and no otherwise to bring forth with the mouth of the body his thought than in the mind it is conceived and beheld; so that he should prize the beauty of truth-telling honesty, not only above gold and silver and jewels and pleasant lands, but above this temporal life itself altogether and every good thing of the body, I know not whether any could wisely say that that man errs. And if he should prefer this and prize it more than all that himself hath of such things; rightly also would he prefer it to the temporal things of other men, whom by his innocence and benevolence he was bound to keep and to help. For he would love perfect faith, not only of believing aright those things which by an excellent authority and worthy of faith should to himself be spoken, but also of faithfully uttering what himself should judge right to be spoken, and should speak. For faith hath its name in the Latin tongue, from that the thing is done which is said: and thus it is manifest that one doth not exhibit when telling a lie. And even if this faith be less violated, when one lies in such sort that he is believed to no inconvenience and no pernicious hurt, with added intention moreover of

guarding either one’s life or corporal purity; yet violated it is, and a thing is violated which ought to be kept safe in chastity and sanctity of mind. Whence we are constrained, not by opinion of men, which for the most part is in error, but by truth itself, truth which is eminent above all, and alone is most invincible, to prefer even to purity of body, perfect faith. For chastity of mind is, love well ordered, which does not place the greater below the smaller. Now it is less, whatever in the body than whatever in the mind can be violated. For assuredly when for corporal chasteness a man tells a lie, he sees indeed that his body is threatened with corruption, not from his own, but from another’s lust, but is cautious lest by permitting at least, he be a party. That permission, however, where is it but in the mind? So then, even corporal chasteness cannot be corrupted but in the mind; which not consenting nor permitting, it can by no means be rightly said that corporal chasteness is violated whatever in the body be perpetrated by another’s lust. Whence it is gathered, that much more must the chastity of the mind be preserved in the mind, in the which is the guardianship of the pudicity of the body. Wherefore, what in us lies, both the one and the other must by holy manners and conversation be walled and hedged round, lest from another quarter it be violated. But when both cannot be, which is to be slighted in comparison of which, who doth not see? when he seeth which to which is to be preferred, the mind to the body, or the body to the mind; and which is more to be shunned among sins, the permitting of another’s deed, or the committing of the deed thyself.

42. It clearly appears then, all being discussed, that those testimonies of Scripture have none other meaning than that we must never at all tell a lie: seeing that not any examples of lies, worthy of imitation, are found in the manners and actions of the Saints, as regards those Scriptures which are referred to no figurative signification, such as is the history in the Acts of the Apostles. For all those sayings of our Lord in the Gospel, which to more ignorant minds seem lies, are figurative significations. And as to what the Apostle says: “I am made all things to all men, that I might gain all;” the right understanding is, that he did this not by lying, but by sympathy; so that he dealt with them in liberating them with so great charity, as if he were himself in that evil from which he wished to make them whole. There must therefore be no lying in the doctrine of piety: it is a heinous wickedness,

and the first sort of detestable lie. There must be no lying of the second sort; because no man must have a wrong done to him. There must be no lying of the third sort; because we are not to consult any man’s good to the injury of another. There must be no lying of the fourth sort, that is, for the lust of lying, which of itself is vicious. There must be no lying of the fifth sort, because not even the truth itself is to be uttered with the aim of men-pleasing, how much less a lie, which of itself, as a lie, is a foul thing? There must be no lying of the sixth sort; for it is not right that even the truth of testimony be corrupted for any man’s temporal convenience and safety. But unto eternal salvation none is to be led by aid of a lie. For not by the ill manners of them that convert him is he to be converted to good manners: because if it is meet to be done towards him, himself also ought when converted to do it toward others; and so is he converted not to good, but to ill manners, seeing that is held out to be imitated by him when converted, which was done unto him in converting him. Neither in the seventh sort must there be any lying; for it is meet that not any man’s commodity or temporal welfare be preferred to the perfecting of faith. Not even if any man is so ill moved by our right deeds as to become worse in his mind, and far more remote from piety, are right deeds therefore to be foregone: since what we are chiefly to hold is that whereunto we ought to call and invite them whom as our own selves we love; and with most courageous mind we must drink in that apostolic sentence: “To some we are a savor of life unto life, to others a savor of death unto death; and who is sufficient for these things?” Nor in the eighth sort must there be lying: because both among good things chastity of mind is greater than pudicity of body; and among evil things, that which ourselves do, than that which we suffer to be done. In these eight kinds, however, a man sins less when he tells a lie, in proportion as he emerges to the eighth: more, in proportion as he diverges to the first. But whoso shall think there is any sort of lie that is not sin, will deceive himself foully, while he deems himself honest as a deceiver of other men.

43. So great blindness, moreover, hath occupied men’s minds, that to them it is too little if we pronounce some lies not to be sins; but they must needs pronounce it to be sin in some things if we refuse to lie: and to such a pass have they been brought by defending lying, that even that first kind which

is of all the most abominably wicked they pronounce to have been used by the Apostle Paul. For in the Epistle to the Galatians, written as it was, like the rest, for doctrine of religion and piety, they say that he has told a lie, in the passage where he says concerning Peter and Barnabas, "When I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel." For, while they wish to defend Peter from error, and from that pravity of way into which he had fallen; the very way of religion in which is salvation for all men, they by breaking and mincing the authority of the Scriptures do endeavor themselves to overthrow. In which they do not see that it is not only lying, but perjury that they lay to the charge of the Apostle in the very doctrine of piety, that is, in an Epistle in which he preaches the Gospel; seeing that he there saith, before he relates that matter, "What I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not." But it is time that we set bounds to this disputation: in the consideration and treatment whereof altogether there is nothing more meet to be, before all else, borne in mind and made our prayer, than that which the same Apostle saith: "God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear, but will with the temptation make also a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

ON MARRIAGE AND CONCUPISCENCE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE NUPTIIS ET CONCUPISCIENTIA.)

EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN’S “RETRACTATIONS,”

IN TWO BOOKS,

ADDRESSED TO THE COUNT VALERIUS

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

WRITTEN IN 419 AND 420.

TRANSLATED BY DR. HOLMES.

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Book II. Chap. 53, On the Following Treatise, “De nuptiis et concupiscentia.”

“I Addressed two books to the Illustrious Count Valerius, upon hearing that the Pelagians had brought sundry vague charges upon us—how, for instance, we condemned marriage by maintaining Original Sin. These books are entitled, On Marriage and Concupiscence. We maintain that marriage is good; and that it must not be supposed that the concupisence of the flesh, or “the law in our members which wars against the law of mind,” is a fault of marriage. Conjugal chastity makes a good use of the evil of concupiscence in the procreation of children. My first treatise contained two books. The first of them found its way into the hands of Julianus the Pelagian, who wrote four books in opposition to it. Out of these, somebody extracted sundry passages, and sent them to Count Valerius; he handed them to us, and after I had received them I wrote a second book in answer to these extracts. The first book of this work of mine opens with these words: “Our new heretics, most beloved son Valerius,” while the second begins thus: “Amid the cares of your duty as a soldier.”

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER ON THE FOLLOWING TREATISE

On revising these two Books, which he addressed to the Count Valerius, Augustin placed them immediately after his reply to the discourse of the Arians, which was affixed to the Proceedings with Emeritus. Now these proceedings are stated to have taken place on the 20th of September, in the year of our Lord 418. There can be no doubt, then, that these subjoined books—or, at any rate, the former of them—were written either at the close of the year 418, or in the beginning of the year 419. For, concerning this first book, Augustin says himself: “This book of mine, however, which he [Julianus] says he answered in four books, I wrote after the condemnation of Pelagius and Coelestius. This,” he adds, “I have deemed it right to mention, because he declares that my words had been used by the enemies of the truth to bring it into odium. Let no one, therefore, suppose that it was owing to this book of mine that condemnation had been passed on the new heretics who are enemies of the grace of Christ.” From these words one may see at once that this first book was published about the same time as the condemnation of the Pelagians in the year 418.

Soon after its publication it began to be assailed by the Pelagians, who observed that its perusal was producing in the minds of the catholics much odium against their heresy. One of them, Julianus, influenced with a warm desire of furthering the heretical movement, attacked the first book of Augustin’s treatise in four books of his own. Out of these, sundry extracts were culled by some interested person, and forwarded to Count Valerius. Valerius despatched them from Ravenna to Rome, to Alypius, in order that he, on returning to Africa, might hand them to Augustin for the purpose of an early refutation, together with a letter in which Valerius thanked Augustin for the previous work which he also mentioned. Augustin saw at once that these extracts had been taken out of the work of Julianus; and, although he preferred reserving his answer to the selections till he had received the entire work from which they were culled, he still thought that he was bound to avoid all delay in satisfying the Count Valerius. Without loss of time, therefore, he drew up in answer his second book, with the same title as before, On Marriage and Concupiscence, which, as we think, must be assigned to the year 420, since the holy doctor wrote it immediately after the expression of thanks for the first book; for it is clearly improbable that Valerius should have waited two years or more to make the acknowledgment of his gratitude.

Moreover, the Valerius whom Augustin dignifies with the title of Illustrious as well as Count, was much employed in public life—not, to be sure, in the forum, but in the field; and from this circumstance we find it difficult to accede to the opinion that supposes him to have been the same person with the Valerius who was Count of the Private Estate in the year 425, Consul in 432, and lastly Master of the Offices under Theodosius the younger in the year 434. These appointments, indeed, had no connection with military service, nor had the prefects of Theodosius anything in common with those of Honorius.

A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE COUNT VALERIUS

On augustin’s forwarding to him what he calls his first book “on marriage and concupiscence.”

To the illustrious and deservedly eminent Lord and his most dearly beloved son in the love of Christ, Valerius, Augustin sends greeting in the Lord.

1. While I was chafing at the long disappointment of receiving no acknowledgments from your Highness of the many letters which I had written to you, I all at once received three letters from your Grace,—one by the hand of my fellow bishop Vindemialis, which was not meant for me only, and two, soon afterwards, through my brother presbyter Firmus. This holy man, who is bound to me, as you may have ascertained from his own lips, by the ties of a most intimate love, had much conversation with me about your excellence, and gave me undoubted proofs of his complete knowledge of your character “in the bowels of Christ;” by these means he had sight, not only of the letters of which the fore-mentioned bishop and he himself had been the bearers, but also of those which we expressed our disappointment at not having received. Now his information respecting you was all the more pleasant to us, inasmuch as he gave me to understand, what it was out of your power to do, that you would not, even at my earnest request for an answer, become the extoller of your own praises, contrary to the permission of Holy Scripture. But I ought myself to hesitate to write to you in this strain, lest I should incur the suspicion of flattering you, my illustrious and deservedly eminent lord and dearly beloved son in the love of Christ.

2. Now, as to your praises in Christ, or rather Christ’s praises in you, see what delight and joy it was to me to hear of them from him, who could neither deceive me because of his fidelity to me, nor be ignorant of them by reason of his friendship with you. But other testimony, which though inferior in amount and certainty has still reached my ear from divers quarters, assures me how sound and catholic is your faith; how devout your hope of the future; how great your love to God and the brethren; how humble your mind amid the highest honours, as you do not trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, and art rich in good works; how your house is a rest and comfort of the saints, and a terror to evil-doers; how great is your care that no man lay snares for Christ’s members (either

among His old enemies or those of more recent days), although he use Christ’s name as a cloak for his wiles; and at the same time, though you give no quarter to the error of these enemies, how provident you are to secure their salvation. This and the like, we frequently hear, as I have already said, even from others; but at the present moment we have, by means of the above-mentioned brother, received a fuller and more trustworthy knowledge.

3. Touching, however, the subject of conjugal purity, that we might be able to bestow our commendation and love upon you for it, could we possibly listen to the information of any one but some bosom friend of your own, who had no mere superficial acquaintance with you, but knew your innermost life? Concerning, therefore, this excellent gift of God to you, I am delighted to converse with you with more frankness and at greater length. I am quite sure that I shall not prove burdensome to you, even if I send you a prolix treatise, the perusal of which will only ensure a longer converse between us. For this have I discovered, that amidst your manifold and weighty cares you pursue your reading with ease and pleasure; and that you take great delight in any little performances of ours, even if they are addressed to other persons, whenever they have chanced to fall into your hands. Whatever, therefore, is addressed to yourself, in which I can speak to you as it were personally, you will deign both to notice with greater attention, and to receive with a higher pleasure. From the perusal, then, of this letter, turn to the book which I send with it. It will in its very commencement, in a more convenient manner, intimate to your Reverence the reason, both why it has been written, and why it has been submitted specially to your consideration.

ON MARRIAGE AND CONCUPISCENCE

Book I

Wherein He expounds the peculiar and natural blessings of marriage. He shows that among these blessings must not be reckoned fleshly concupiscence; insomuch as this is wholly evil, such as does not proceed from the very nature of marriage, but is an accident thereof arising from original sin. This evil, notwithstanding, is rightly employed by marriage for the procreation of children. But, as the result of this concupiscence, it comes to pass that, even from the lawful marriage of the children of God, men are not born children of God, but of the world, and are bound with the chain of sin, although their parents have been liberated therefrom by grace; and are led captive by the devil, if they be not in like manner rescued by the self-same grace of Christ. He explains how it is that concupiscence remains in the baptized in act though not in guilt. He teaches, that by the sanctity of baptism, not merely this original guilt, but all other sins of men whatever, are taken away. He lastly quotes the authority of Ambrose to show that the evil of concupiscence must be distinguished from the good of marriage.

CHAPTER 1

CONCERNING THE ARGUMENT OF THIS TREATISE

Our new heretics, my dearest son Valerius, who maintain that infants born in the flesh have no need of that medicine of Christ whereby sins are healed, are constantly affirming, in their excessive hatred of us, that we condemn marriage and that divine procedure by which God creates human beings by means of men and women, inasmuch as we assert that they who are born of such a union contract that original sin of which the apostle says, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all sinned;” and because we do not deny, that of whatever kind of parents they are born, they are still under the devil’s dominion, unless they be born again in Christ, and by His grace be removed from the power of darkness and translated into His kingdom, who willed not to be born from the same union of the two sexes. Because, then, we affirm this doctrine, which is contained in the oldest and unvarying rule of the catholic faith, these propounders of the novel and perverse dogma, who assert that there is no sin in infants to be washed away in the laver of regeneration, in their unbelief or ignorance calumniate us, as if we condemned marriage, and as if we asserted to be the devil's work what is God's own work—the human being which is born of marriage. Nor do they reflect that the good of marriage is no more impeachable on account of the original evil which is derived therefrom, than the evil of adultery and fornication is excusable on account of the natural good which is born of them. For as sin is the work of the devil, from whencesoever contracted by infants; so man is the work of God, from whencesoever born. Our purpose, therefore, in this book, so far as the Lord vouchsafes us in His help, is to distinguish between the evil of carnal concupiscence from which man who is born therefrom contracts original sin, and the good of marriage. For there would have been none of this shame-producing concupiscence, which is impudently praised by impudent men, if man had not previously sinned; while as to marriage, it would still have existed even if no man had sinned, since the procreation of children in the body that belonged to that life would have been effected without that malady which in "the body of this death" cannot be separated from the process of procreation.

CHAPTER 2. [II.]

WHY THIS TREATISE WAS ADDRESSED TO VALERIUS

Now there are three very special reasons, which I will briefly indicate, why I wished to write to you particularly on this subject. One is, because by the gift of Christ you are a strict observer of conjugal chastity. Another is, because by your great care and diligence you have effectually withstood those profane novelties which we are resisting in our present discussion. The third is, because of my learning that something which they had committed to writing had found its way into your hands; and although in your robust faith you could despise such an attempt, it is still a good thing for us also to know how to bring aid to our faith by defending it. For the Apostle Peter instructs us to be "ready always to give an answer to every one that asketh us a reason of the faith and hope that is in us;" and the Apostle Paul says, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” These are the motives which chiefly impel me to hold such converse with you in this volume, as the Lord shall enable me. I have never liked, indeed, to intrude the perusal of any of my humble labours on any eminent person, who is like yourself conspicuous to all from the elevation of his office, without his own request,—especially when he is not blessed with the enjoyment of a dignified retirement, but is still occupied in the public duties of a soldier’s profession; this has always seemed to me to savour more impertinence than of respectful esteem. If, then, I have incurred censure of this kind, while acting on the reasons which I have now mentioned, I crave the favour of your forgiveness, and kindly regard to the following arguments.

CHAPTER 3 [III.]

CONJUGAL CHASTITY THE GIFT OF GOD

That chastity in the married state is God’s gift, is shown by the most blessed Paul, when, speaking on this very subject, he says: “But I would that all men were even as I myself: but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that.” Observe, he tells us that this gift is from God; and although he classes it below that continence in which he would have all men to be like himself, he still describes it as a gift of God. Whence we understand that, when these precepts are given to us in order that we should do them, nothing else is stated than that there ought to be within us our own will also for receiving and having them. When, therefore, these are shown to be gifts of God, it is meant that they must be sought from Him if they are not already possessed; and if they are possessed, thanks must be given to Him for the possession; moreover, that our own wills have but small avail for seeking, obtaining, and holding fast these gifts, unless they be assisted by God’s grace.

CHAPTER 4

A DIFFICULTY AS REGARDS THE CHASTITY OF UNBELIEVERS. NONE BUT A BELIEVER IS TRULY A CHASTE MAN

What, then, have we to say when conjugal chastity is discovered even in some unbelievers? Must it be said that they sin, in that they make a bad use of a gift of God, in not restoring it to the worship of Him from whom they received it? Or must these endowments, perchance, be not regarded as gifts of God at all, when they are not believers who exercise them; according to the apostle's sentiment, when he says, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin?" But who would dare to say that a gift of God is sin? For the soul and the body, and all the natural endowments which are implanted in the soul and the body, even in the persons of sinful men, are still gifts of God; for it is God who made them, and not they themselves. When it is said, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," only those things are meant which men themselves do. When men, therefore, do without faith those things which seem to appertain to conjugal chastity, they do them either to please men, whether themselves or others, or to avoid incurring such troubles as are incidental to human nature in those things which they corruptly desire, or to pay service to devils. Sins are not really resigned, but some sins are overpowered by other sins. God forbid, then, that a man be truly called chaste who observes connubial fidelity to his wife from any other motive than devotion to the true God.

CHAPTER 5 [IV.]

THE NATURAL GOOD OF MARRIAGE. ALL SOCIETY NATURALLY REPUDIATES A FRAUDULENT COMPANION. WHAT IS TRUE CONJUGAL PURITY? NO TRUE VIRGINITY AND CHASTITY EXCEPT IN DEVOTION TO TRUE FAITH

The union, then, of male and female for the purpose of procreation is the natural good of marriage. But he makes a bad use of this good who uses it bestially, so that his intention is on the gratification of lust, instead of the desire of offspring. Nevertheless, in sundry animals unendowed with reason, as, for instance, in most birds, there is both preserved a certain kind of confederation of pairs, and a social combination of skill in nest-building; and their mutual division of the periods for cherishing their eggs and their alternation in the labor of feeding their young, give them the appearance of so acting, when they mate, as to be intent rather on securing the continuance of their kind than on gratifying lust. Of these two, the one is the likeness of man in a brute; the other, the likeness of the brute in man. With respect, however, to what I ascribed to the nature of marriage, that the male and the female are united together as associates for procreation, and consequently do not defraud each other (forasmuch as every associated state has a natural abhorrence of a fraudulent companion), although even men without faith possess this palpable blessing of nature, yet, since they use it not in faith, they only turn it to evil and sin. In like manner, therefore, the marriage of believers converts to the use of righteousness that carnal concupiscence by which “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit.” For they entertain the firm purpose of generating offspring to be regenerated—that the children who are born of them as “children of the world” may be born again and become “sons of God.” Wherefore all parents who do not beget children with this intention, this will, this purpose, of transferring them from being members of the first man into being members of Christ, but boast as unbelieving parents over unbelieving children,—however circumspect they be in their cohabitation, studiously limiting it to the begetting of children,—really have no conjugal chastity in themselves. For inasmuch as chastity is a virtue, hating unchastity as its contrary vice, and as all the virtues (even those whose operation is by means of the body) have their seat in the soul, how can the body be in any true sense said to be chaste, when the soul itself is committing fornication against the true God? Now such fornication the holy psalmist censures when he says: “For, lo, they that are far from Thee shall perish: Thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from Thee.” There is, then, no true chastity, whether conjugal, or vidual, or virginal, except that which devotes itself to true faith. For though consecrated virginity is rightly preferred to marriage, yet what Christian in his sober mind would not prefer catholic Christian women who have been even more than once married, to not only vestals, but also to heretical virgins? So great is the avail of faith, of which the apostle says, “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin;” and of which it is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, “Without faith it is impossible to please God.”

CHAPTER 6 [V.]

THE CENSURING OF LUST IS NOT A CONDEMNATION OF MARRIAGE; WHENCE COMES SHAME IN THE HUMAN BODY. ADAM AND EVE WERE NOT CREATED BLIND; MEANING OF THEIR “EYES BEING OPENED.”

Now, this being the real state of the question, they undoubtedly err who suppose that, when fleshly lust is censured, marriage is condemned; as if the malady of concupiscence was the outcome of marriage and not of sin. Were not those first spouses, whose nuptials God blessed with the words, “Be fruitful and multiply,” naked, and yet not ashamed? Why, then, did shame arise out of their members after sin, except because an indecent motion arose from them, which, if men had not sinned, would certainly never have existed in marriage? Or was it, forsooth, as some hold (who give little heed to what they read), that human beings were, like dogs, at first created blind; and—absurder still—obtained sight, not as dogs do, by growing, but by sinning? Far be it from us to entertain such an opinion. But they gather that opinion of theirs from reading: “She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat: and the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked.” This accounts for the opinion of unintelligent persons, that the eyes of the first man and woman were previously closed, because Holy Scripture testifies that they were then opened. Well, then, were Hagar’s eyes, the handmaid of Sarah, previously shut, when, with her thirsty and sobbing child, she opened her eyes and saw the well? Or did those two disciples, after the Lord’s resurrection, walk in the way with Him with their eyes shut, since the evangelist says of them that “in the breaking of bread their eyes were opened, and they knew Him”? What, therefore, is written concerning the first man and woman, that “the eyes of them both were opened,” we ought to understand as that they gave attention to perceiving and recognising the new state which had befallen their body. Now that their eyes were opened, their body appeared to them naked, and they knew it. If this were not the meaning, how, when the beast of the field and the fowls of the air were brought unto him, could Adam have given them names if his eyes were shut? He could not have done this without distinguishing them; and he could not distinguish them without seeing them. How, too, could the woman herself have been beheld so clearly by him when he said, “This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh”? If, indeed, any one shall be so determined on cavilling as to insist that Adam might have acquired a discernment of these objects, not by sight but by touch, what explanation will he have to give of the passage wherein we are told how the woman “saw that the tree,” from which she was about to pluck the forbidden fruit, “was pleasant for the eyes to behold”? No; “they were both naked, and were not ashamed,” not because they had no eyesight, but because they perceived no reason to be ashamed in their members, which had all along been seen by them. For it is not said: They were both naked, and knew it not; but “they were not ashamed.” Because, indeed, nothing had previously happened which was not lawful, so nothing had ensued which could cause them shame.

CHAPTER 7 [VI.]

MAN’S DISOBEDIENCE JUSTLY REQUITED IN THE REBELLION OF HIS OWN FLESH; THE BLUSH OF SHAME FOR THE DISOBEDIENT MEMBERS OF THE BODY

When the first man transgressed the law of God, he began to have another law in his members which was repugnant to the law of his mind, and he felt the evil of his own disobedience when he experienced in the disobedience of his flesh a most righteous retribution recoiling on himself. Such, then, was “the opening of his eyes” which the serpent had promised him in his temptation—the knowledge, in fact, of something which he had better been ignorant of. Then, indeed, did man perceive within himself what he had done; then did he distinguish evil from good,—not by avoiding it, but by enduring it. For it certainly was not just that obedience should be rendered by his servant, that is, his body, to him, who had not obeyed his own Lord. Well, then, how significant is the fact that the eyes, and lips, and tongue, and hands, and feet, and the bending of back, and neck, and sides, are all placed within our power—to be applied to such operations as are suitable to them, when we have a body free from impediments and in a sound state of health; but when it must come to man’s great function of the procreation of children the members which were expressly created for this purpose will not obey the direction of the will, but lust has to be waited for to set these members in motion, as if it had legal right over them, and sometimes it refuses to act when the mind wills, while often it acts against its will! Must not this bring the blush of shame over the freedom of the human will, that by its contempt of God, its own Commander, it has lost all proper command for itself over its own members? Now, wherein could be found a more fitting demonstration of the just depravation of human nature by reason of its disobedience, than in the disobedience of those parts whence nature herself derives subsistence by succession? For it is by an especial propriety that those parts of the body are designated as natural. This, then, was the reason why the first human pair, on experiencing in the flesh that motion which was indecent because disobedient, and on feeling the shame of their nakedness, covered these offending members with fig-leaves; in order that, at the very least, by the will of the ashamed offenders, a veil might be thrown over that which was put into motion without the will of those who wished it: and since shame arose from what indecently pleased, decency might be attained by concealment.

CHAPTER 8 [VII.]

THE EVIL OF LUST DOES NOT TAKE AWAY THE GOOD OF MARRIAGE

Forasmuch, then, as the good of marriage could not be lost by the addition of this evil, some imprudent persons suppose that this is not an added evil, but something which appertains to the original good. A distinction, however, occurs not only to subtle reason, but even to the most ordinary natural judgment, which was both apparent in the case of the first man and woman, and also holds good still in the case of married persons to-day. What they afterward effected in propagation,—that is the good of marriage; but what they first veiled through shame,—that is the evil of concupiscence, which everywhere shuns sight, and in its shame seeks privacy. Since, therefore, marriage effects some good even out of that evil, it has whereof to glory; but since the good cannot be effected without the evil, it has reason for feeling shame. The case may be illustrated by the example of a lame man. Suppose him to attain to some good object by limping after it, then, on the one hand, the attainment itself is not evil because of the evil of the man’s lameness; nor, on the other hand, is the lameness good because of the goodness of the attainment. So, on the same principle, we ought not to condemn marriage because of the evil of lust; nor must we praise lust because of the good of marriage.

CHAPTER 9 [VIII.]

THIS DISEASE OF CONCUPISCENCE IN MARRIAGE IS NOT TO BE A MATTER OF WILL, BUT OF NECESSITY; WHAT OUGHT TO BE THE WILL OF BELIEVERS IN THE USE OF MATRIMONY; WHO IS TO BE REGARDED AS USING, AND NOT SUCCUMBING TO, THE EVIL OF CONCUPISCENCE; HOW THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT FORMERLY USED WIVES

This disease of concupiscence is what the apostle refers to, when, speaking to married believers, he says: “This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; not in the disease of desire, even as the Gentiles which know not God.” The married believer, therefore, must not only not use another man’s vessel, which is what they do who lust after others’ wives; but he must know that even his own vessel is not to be possessed in the disease of carnal concupiscence. And this counsel is not to be understood as if the apostle prohibited conjugal—that is to say, lawful and honourable—cohabitation; but so as that that cohabitation (which would have no adjunct of unwholesome lust, were it not that man’s perfect freedom of choice had become by preceding sin so disabled that it has this fatal adjunct) should not be a matter of will, but of necessity, without which, nevertheless, it would be impossible to attain to the fruition of the will itself in the procreation of children. And this wish is not in the marriages of believers determined by the purpose of having such children born as shall pass through life in this present world, but such as shall be born again in Christ, and remain in Him for evermore. Now if this result should come about, the reward of a full felicity will spring from marriage; but if such result be not realized, there will yet ensue to the married pair the peace of their good will. Whosoever possesses his vessel (that is, his wife) with this intention of heart, certainly does not possess her in the “disease of desire,” as the Gentiles which know not God, but in sanctification and honour, as believers who hope in God. A man turns to use the evil of concupiscence, and is not overcome by it, when he bridles and restrains its rage, as it works in inordinate and indecorous motions; and never relaxes his hold upon it except when intent on offspring, and then controls and applies it to the carnal generation of children to be spiritually regenerated, not to the subjection of the spirit to the flesh in a sordid servitude. That the holy fathers of olden times after Abraham, and before him, to whom God gave His testimony that “they pleased Him,” thus used their wives, no one who is a Christian ought to doubt, since it was permitted to certain individuals amongst them to have a plurality of wives, where the reason was for the multiplication of their offspring, not the desire of varying gratification.

CHAPTER 10 [IX.]

WHY IT WAS SOMETIMES PERMITTED THAT A MAN SHOULD HAVE SEVERAL WIVES, YET NO WOMAN WAS EVER ALLOWED TO HAVE MORE THAN ONE HUSBAND. NATURE PREFERS SINGLENESS IN HER DOMINATIONS

Now, if to the God of our fathers, who is likewise our God, such a plurality of wives had not been displeasing for the purpose that lust might have a fuller range of indulgence; then, on such a supposition, the holy women also ought each to have rendered service to several husbands. But if any woman had so acted, what feeling but that of a disgraceful concupiscence could impel her to have more husbands, seeing that by such licence she could not have more children? That the good purpose of marriage, however, is better promoted by one husband with one wife, than by a husband with several wives, is shown plainly enough by the very first union of a married pair, which was made by the Divine Being Himself, with the intention of marriages taking their beginning therefrom, and of its affording to them a more honourable precedent. In the advance, however, of the human race, it came to pass that to certain good men were united a plurality of good wives,—many to each; and from this it would seem that moderation sought rather unity on one side for dignity, while nature permitted plurality on the other side for fecundity. For on natural principles it is more feasible for one to have dominion over many, than for many to have dominion over one. Nor can it be doubted, that it is more consonant with the order of nature that men should bear rule over women, than women over men. It is with this principle in view that the apostle says, “The head of the woman is the man;” and, “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands.” So also the Apostle Peter writes: “Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.” Now, although the fact of the matter is, that while nature loves singleness in her dominations, but we may see plurality existing more readily in the subordinate portion of our race; yet for all that, it was at no time lawful for one man to have a plurality of wives, except for the purpose of a greater number of children springing from him. Wherefore, if one woman cohabits with several men, inasmuch as no increase of offspring accrues to her therefrom, but only a more frequent gratification of lust, she cannot possibly be a wife, but only a harlot.

CHAPTER 11 [X.]

THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE; MARRIAGE INDISSOLUBLE; THE WORLD'S LAW ABOUT DIVORCE DIFFERENT FROM THE GOSPEL'S

It is certainly not fecundity only, the fruit of which consists of offspring, nor chastity only, whose bond is fidelity, but also a certain sacramental bond in marriage which is recommended to believers in wedlock. Accordingly it is enjoined by the apostle: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church." Of this bond the substance undoubtedly is this, that the man and the woman who are joined together in matrimony should remain inseparable as long as they live; and that it should be unlawful for one consort to be parted from the other, except for the cause of fornication. For this is preserved in the case of Christ and the Church; so that, as a living one with a living one, there is no divorce, no separation for ever. And so complete is the observance of this bond in the city of our God, in His holy mountain—that is to say, in the Church of Christ—by all married believers, who are undoubtedly members of Christ, that, although women marry, and men take wives, for the purpose of procreating children, it is never permitted one to put away even an unfruitful wife for the sake of having another to bear children. And whosoever does this is held to be guilty of adultery by the law of the gospel; though not by this world's rule, which allows a divorce between the parties, without even the allegation of guilt, and the contraction of other nuptial engagements,—a concession which, the Lord tells us, even the holy Moses extended to the people of Israel, because of the hardness of their hearts. The same condemnation applies to the woman, if she is married to another man. So enduring, indeed, are the rights of marriage between those who have contracted them, as long as they both live, that even they are looked on as man and wife still, who have separated from one another, rather than they between whom a new connection has been formed. For by this new connection they would not be guilty of adultery, if the previous matrimonial relation did not still continue. If the husband die, with whom a true marriage was made, a true marriage is now possible by a connection which would before have been adultery. Thus between the conjugal pair, as long as they live, the nuptial bond has a permanent obligation, and can be cancelled neither by separation nor by union with another. But this permanence avails, in such cases, only for injury from the sin, not for a bond of the covenant. In like manner the soul of an apostate, which renounces as it were its marriage union with Christ, does not, even though it has cast its faith away, lose the sacrament of its faith, which it received in the laver of regeneration. It would undoubtedly be given back to him if he were to return, although he lost it on his departure from Christ. He retains, however, the sacrament after his apostasy, to the aggravation of his punishment, not for meriting the reward.

CHAPTER 12 [XI.]

MARRIAGE DOES NOT CANCEL A MUTUAL VOW OF CONTINENCE; THERE WAS TRUE WEDLOCK BETWEEN MARY AND JOSEPH; IN WHAT WAY JOSEPH WAS THE FATHER OF CHRIST

But God forbid that the nuptial bond should be regarded as broken between those who have by mutual consent agreed to observe a perpetual abstinence from the use of carnal concupiscence. Nay, it will be only a firmer one, whereby they have exchanged pledges together, which will have to be kept by an especial endearment and concord,—not by the voluptuous links of bodies, but by the voluntary affections of souls. For it was not deceitfully that the angel said to Joseph: “Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife.” She is called his wife because of her first troth of betrothal, although he had had no carnal knowledge of her, nor was destined to have. The designation of wife was neither destroyed nor made untrue, where there never had been, nor was meant to be, any carnal connection. That virgin wife was rather a holier and more wonderful joy to her husband because of her very pregnancy without man, with disparity as to the child that was born, without disparity in the faith they cherished. And because of this conjugal fidelity they are both deservedly called “parents” of Christ (not only she as His mother, but he as His father, as being her husband), both having been such in mind and purpose, though not in the flesh. But while the one was His father in purpose only, and the other His mother in the flesh also, they were both of them, for all that, only the parents of His humility, not of His sublimity; of His weakness, not of His divinity. For the Gospel does not lie, in which one reads, “Both His father and His mother marvelled at those things which were spoken about Him;” and in another passage, “Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year;” and again a little afterwards, “His mother said unto Him, Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing.” In order, however, that He might show them that He had a Father besides them, who begat Him without a mother, He said to them in answer: “How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” Furthermore, lest He should be thought to have repudiated them as His parents by what He had just said, the evangelist at once added: “And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them; and He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them.” Subject to whom but His parents? And who was the subject but Jesus Christ, “who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God”? And wherefore subject to them, who were far beneath the form of God, except that “He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant,”—the form in which His parents lived? Now, since she bore Him without his engendering, they could not surely have both been His parents, of that form of a servant, if they had not been conjugally united, though without carnal connection. Accordingly the genealogical series (although both parents of Christ are mentioned together in the succession) had to be extended, as it is in fact, down rather to Joseph’s name, that no wrong might be done, in the case of this marriage, to the male, and indeed the stronger sex, while at the same time there was nothing detrimental to truth, since Joseph, no less than Mary, was of the seed of David, of whom it was foretold that Christ should come.

CHAPTER 13

IN THE MARRIAGE OF MARY AND JOSEPH THERE WERE ALL THE BLESSINGS OF THE WEDDED STATE; ALL THAT IS BORN OF CONCUBINAGE IS SINFUL FLESH

The entire good, therefore, of the nuptial institution was effected in the case of these parents of Christ: there was offspring, there was faithfulness, there was the bond. As offspring, we recognise the Lord Jesus Himself; the fidelity, in that there was no adultery; the bond, because there was no divorce. [XII.] Only there was no nuptial cohabitation; because He who was to be without sin, and was sent not in sinful flesh, but in the likeness of sinful flesh, could not possibly have been made in sinful flesh itself without that shameful lust of the flesh which comes from sin, and without which He willed to be born, in order that He might teach us, that every one who is born of sexual intercourse is in fact sinful flesh, since that alone which was not born of such intercourse was not sinful flesh. Nevertheless conjugal intercourse is not in itself sin, when it is had with the intention of producing children; because the mind’s good-will leads the ensuing bodily pleasure, instead of following its lead; and the human choice is not distracted by the yoke of sin pressing upon it, inasmuch as the blow of the sin is rightly brought back to the purposes of procreation. This blow has a certain prurient activity which plays the king in the foul indulgences of adultery, and fornication, and lasciviousness, and uncleanness; whilst in the indispensable duties of the marriage state, it exhibits the docility of the slave. In the one case it is condemned as the shameless effrontery of so violent a master; in the other, it gets modest praise as the honest service of so submissive an attendant. This lust, then, is not in itself the good of the nuptial institution; but it is obscenity in sinful men, a necessity in procreant parents, the fire of lascivious indulgences, the shame of nuptial pleasures. Wherefore, then, may not persons remain man and wife when they cease by mutual consent from cohabitation; seeing that Joseph and Mary continued such, though they never even began to cohabit?

CHAPTER 14 [XIII.]

BEFORE CHRIST IT WAS A TIME FOR MARRYING; SINCE CHRIST IT HAS BEEN A TIME FOR CONTINENCE

Now this propagation of children which among the ancient saints was a most bounden duty for the purpose of begetting and preserving a people for God, amongst whom the prophecy of Christ’s coming must needs have had precedence over everything, now has no longer the same necessity. For from among all nations the way is open for an abundant offspring to receive spiritual regeneration, from whatever quarter they derive their natural birth. So that we may acknowledge that the scripture which says there is “a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing,” is to be distributed in its clauses to the periods before Christ and since. The former was the time to embrace, the latter to refrain from embracing.

CHAPTER 15

THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLE ON THIS SUBJECT

Accordingly the apostle also, speaking apparently with this passage in view, declares: “But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had them not; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as though they used it not: for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you without solicitude.” This entire passage (that I may express my view on this subject in the shape of a brief exposition of the apostle’s words) I think must be understood as follows: “This I say, brethren, the time is short.” No longer is God’s people to be propagated by carnal generation; but, henceforth, it is to be gathered out by spiritual regeneration. “It remaineth, therefore, that they that have wives” be not subject to carnal concupiscence; “and they that weep,” under the sadness of present evil, should rejoice in the hope of future blessing; “and they that rejoice,” over any temporary advantage, should fear the eternal judgment; “and they that buy,” should so hold their possessions as not to cleave to them by overmuch love; “and they that use this world” should reflect that it is passing away, and does not remain. “For the fashion of this world passeth away: but,” he says, “I would have you to be without solicitude,”—in other words: I would have you lift up your heart, that it may dwell among those things which do not pass away. He then goes on to say: “He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.” And thus to some extent he explains what he had already said: “Let them that have wives be as though they had none.” For they who have wives in such a way as to care for the things of the Lord, how they may please the Lord, without having any care for the things of the world in order to please their wives, are, in fact, just as if they had no wives. And this is effected with greater ease when the wives, too, are of such a disposition, because they please their husbands not merely because they are rich, because they are high in rank, noble in race, and amiable in natural temper, but because they are believers, because they are religious, because they are chaste, because they are good men.

CHAPTER 16 [XIV.]

A CERTAIN DEGREE OF INTEMPERANCE IS TO BE TOLERATED IN THE CASE OF MARRIED PERSONS; THE USE OF MATRIMONY FOR THE MERE PLEASURE OF LUST IS NOT WITHOUT SIN, BUT BECAUSE OF THE NUPTIAL RELATION THE SIN IS VENIAL

But in the married, as these things are desirable and praiseworthy, so the others are to be tolerated, that no lapse occur into damnable sins; that is, into fornications and adulteries. To escape this evil, even such embraces of husband and wife as have not procreation for their object, but serve an overbearing concupiscence, are permitted, so far as to be within range of forgiveness, though not prescribed by way of commandment: and the married pair are enjoined not to defraud one the other, lest Satan should tempt them by reason of their incontinence. For thus says the Scripture: "Let the husband render unto the wife her due: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other; except it be with consent for a time, that ye may have leisure for prayer; and then come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment." Now in a case where permission must be given, it cannot by any means be contended that there is not some amount of sin. Since, however, the cohabitation for the purpose of procreating children, which must be admitted to be the proper end of marriage, is not sinful, what is it which the apostle allows to be permissible, but that married persons, when they have not the gift of continence, may require one from the other the due of the flesh—and that not from a wish for procreation, but for the pleasure of concupiscence? This gratification incurs not the imputation of guilt on account of marriage, but receives permission on account of marriage. This, therefore, must be reckoned among the praises of matrimony; that, on its own account, it makes pardonable that which does not essentially appertain to itself. For the nuptial embrace, which subserves the demands of concupiscence, is so effected as not to impede the child-bearing, which is the end and aim of marriage.

CHAPTER 17 [XV.]

WHAT IS SINLESS IN THE USE OF MATRIMONY? WHAT IS ATTENDED WITH VENIAL SIN, AND WHAT WITH MORTAL?

It is, however, one thing for married persons to have intercourse only for the wish to beget children, which is not sinful: it is another thing for them to desire carnal pleasure in cohabitation, but with the spouse only, which involves venial sin. For although propagation of offspring is not the motive of the intercourse, there is still no attempt to prevent such propagation, either by wrong desire or evil appliance. They who resort to these, although called by the name of spouses, are really not such; they retain no vestige of true matrimony, but pretend the honourable designation as a cloak for criminal conduct. Having also proceeded so far, they are betrayed into exposing their children, which are born against their will. They hate to nourish and retain those whom they were afraid they would beget. This infliction of cruelty on their offspring so reluctantly begotten, unmasks the sin which they had practised in darkness, and drags it clearly into the light of day. The open cruelty reproves the concealed sin. Sometimes, indeed, this lustful cruelty, or, if you please, cruel lust, resorts to such extravagant methods as to use poisonous drugs to secure barrenness; or else, if unsuccessful in this, to destroy the conceived seed by some means previous to birth, preferring that its offspring should rather perish than receive vitality; or if it was advancing to life within the womb, should be slain before it was born. Well, if both parties alike are so flagitious, they are not husband and wife; and if such were their character from the beginning, they have not come together by wedlock but by debauchery. But if the two are not alike in such sin, I boldly declare either that the woman is, so to say, the husband’s harlot; or the man the wife’s adulterer.

CHAPTER 18 [XVI.]

CONTINENCE BETTER THAN MARRIAGE; BUT MARRIAGE BETTER THAN FORNICATION

Forasmuch, then, as marriage cannot be such as that of the primitive men might have been, if sin had not preceded; it may yet be like that of the holy fathers of the olden time, in such wise that the carnal concupiscence which causes shame (which did not exist in paradise previous to the fall, and after that event was not allowed to remain there), although necessarily forming a part of the body of this death, is not subservient to it, but only submits its function, when forced thereto, for the sole purpose of assisting in the procreation of children; otherwise, since the present time (as we have already said) is the period for abstaining from the nuptial embrace, and therefore makes no necessary demand on the exercise of the said function, seeing that all nations now contribute so abundantly to the production of an offspring which shall receive spiritual birth, there is the greater room for the blessing of an excellent continence. "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it." He, however, who cannot receive it, "even if he marry, sinneth not;" and if a woman have not the gift of continence, let her also marry. "It is good, indeed, for a man not to touch a woman." But since "all men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given," it remains that "to avoid fornication, every man ought to have his own wife, and every woman her own husband." And thus the weakness of incontinence is hindered from falling into the ruin of profligacy by the honourable estate of matrimony. Now that which the apostle says of women, "I will therefore that the younger women marry," is also applicable to males: I will that the younger men take wives; that so it may appertain to both sexes alike "to bear children, to be" fathers and "mothers of families, to give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully."

CHAPTER 19 [XVII.]

BLESSING OF MATRIMONY

In matrimony, however, let these nuptial blessings be the objects of our love—offspring, fidelity, the sacramental bond. Offspring, not that it be born only, but born again; for it is born to punishment unless it be born again to life. Fidelity, not such as even unbelievers observe one towards the other, in their ardent love of the flesh. For what husband, however impious himself, likes an adulterous wife? Or what wife, however impious she be, likes an adulterous husband? This is indeed a natural good in marriage, though a carnal one. But a member of Christ ought to be afraid of adultery, not on account of himself, but of his spouse; and ought to hope to receive from Christ the reward of that fidelity which he shows to his spouse. The sacramental bond, again, which is lost neither by divorce nor by adultery, should be guarded by husband and wife with concord and chastity. For it alone is that which even an unfruitful marriage retains by the law of piety, now that all that hope of fruitfulness is lost for the purpose of which the couple married. Let these nuptial blessings be praised in marriage by him who wishes to extol the nuptial institution. Carnal concupiscence, however, must not be ascribed to marriage: it is only to be tolerated in marriage. It is not a good which comes out of the essence of marriage, but an evil which is the accident of original sin.

CHAPTER 20 [XVIII]

WHY CHILDREN OF WRATH ARE BORN OF HOLY MATRIMONY

This is the reason, indeed, why of even the just and lawful marriages of the children of God are born, not children of God, but children of the world; because also those who generate, if they are already regenerate, beget children not as children of God, but as still children of the world. “The children of this world,” says our Lord, “beget and are begotten.” From the fact, therefore, that we are still children of this world, our outer man is in a state of corruption; and on this account our offspring are born as children of the present world; nor do they become sons of God, except they be regenerated. Yet inasmuch as we are children of God, our inner man is renewed from day to day. And yet even our outer man has been sanctified through the laver of regeneration, and has received the hope of future incorruption, on which account it is justly designated as “the temple of God.” “Your bodies,” says the apostle, “are the temples of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, and which ye have of God; and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a great price: therefore glorify and carry God in your body.” The whole of this statement is made in reference to our present sanctification, but especially in consequence of that hope of which he says in another passage, “We ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” If, then, the redemption of our body is expected, as the apostle declares, it follows, that being an expectation, it is as yet a matter of hope, and not of actual possession. Accordingly the apostle adds: “For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope:

for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Not, therefore, by that which we are waiting for, but by that which we are now enduring, are the children of our flesh born. God forbid that a man who possesses faith should, when he hears the apostle bid men “love their wives,” love that carnal concupiscence in his wife which he ought not to love even in himself; as he may know, if he listens to the words of another apostle: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever, even as also God abideth for ever.”

CHAPTER 21 [XIX.]

THUS SINNERS ARE BORN OF RIGHTEOUS PARENTS, EVEN AS WILD OLIVES SPRING FROM THE OLIVE

That, therefore, which is born of the lust of the flesh is really born of the world, and not of God; but it is born of God, when it is born again of water and of the Spirit. The guilt of this concupiscence, regeneration alone remits, even as natural generation contracts it. What, then, is generated must be regenerated, in order that likewise since it cannot be otherwise, what has been contracted may be remitted. It is, no doubt, very wonderful that what has been remitted in the parent should still be contracted in the offspring; but nevertheless such is the case. That this mysterious verity, which unbelievers neither see nor believe, might get some palpable evidence in its support, God in His providence has secured in the example of certain trees. For why should we not suppose that for this very purpose the wild olive springs from the olive? Is it not indeed credible that, in a thing which has been created for the use of mankind, the Creator provided and appointed what should afford an instructive example, applicable to the human race? It is a wonderful thing, then, how those who have been themselves delivered by grace from the bondage of sin, should still beget those who are tied and bound by the self-same chain, and who require the same process of loosening? Yes; and we admit the wonderful fact. But that the embryo of wild olive trees should latently exist in the germs of true olives, who would deem credible, if it were not proved true by experiment and observation? In the same manner, therefore, as a wild olive grows out of the seed of the wild olive, and from the seed of the true olive springs also nothing but a wild olive, notwithstanding the very great difference there is between the wild olive and the olive; so what is born in the flesh, either of a sinner or of a just man, is in both instances a sinner, notwithstanding the vast distinction which exists between the sinner and the righteous man. He that is begotten is no sinner as yet in act, and is still new from his birth; but in guilt he is old. Human from the Creator, he is a captive of the destroyer, and needs a redeemer. The difficulty, however, is how a state of captivity can possibly befall the offspring, when the parents have been themselves previously redeemed from it. Now it is no easy matter to unravel this intricate point, or to explain it in a set discourse; therefore unbelievers refuse to accept it as true; just as if in that other point about the wild olive and the olive, which we gave in illustration, any reason could be easily found, or explanation clearly given, why the self-same shoot should sprout out of so dissimilar a stock. The truth, however, of this can be discovered by any one who is willing to make the experiment. Let it then serve for a good example for suggesting belief of what admits not of ocular demonstration.

CHAPTER 22 [XX.]

EVEN INFANTS, WHEN UNBAPTIZED, ARE IN THE POWER OF THE DEVIL; EXORCISM IN THE CASE OF INFANTS, AND RENUNCIATION OF THE DEVIL

Now the Christian faith unfalteringly declares, what our new heretics have begun to deny, both that they who are cleansed in the laver of regeneration are redeemed from the power of the devil, and that those who have not yet been redeemed by such regeneration are still captive in the power of the devil, even if they be infant children of the redeemed, unless they be themselves redeemed by the self-same grace of Christ. For we cannot doubt that that blessing of God applies to every stage of human life, which the apostle describes when he says concerning Him: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.” From this power of darkness, therefore, of which the devil is the prince,—in other words, from the power of the devil and his angels,—

infants are delivered when they are baptized; and whosoever denies this, is convicted by the truth of the Church's very sacraments, which no heretical novelty in the Church of Christ is permitted to destroy or change, so long as the Divine Head rules and helps the entire body which He owns—small as well as great. It is true, then, and in no way false, that the devil's power is exorcised in infants, and that they renounce him by the hearts and mouths of those who bring them to baptism, being unable to do so by their own; in order that they may be delivered from the power of darkness, and be translated into the kingdom of their Lord. What is that, therefore, within them which keeps them in the power of the devil until they are delivered from it by Christ's sacrament of baptism? What is it, I ask, but sin? Nothing else, indeed, has the devil found which enables him to put under his own control that nature of man which the good Creator made good. But infants have committed no sin of their own since they have been alive. Only original sin, therefore, remains, whereby they are made captive under the devil's power, until they are redeemed therefrom by the laver of regeneration and the blood of Christ, and pass into their Redeemer's kingdom,—the power of their enthraller being frustrated, and power being given them to become "sons of God" instead of children of this world.

CHAPTER 23 [XXI.]

SIN HAS NOT ARISEN OUT OF THE GOODNESS OF MARRIAGE; THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY A GREAT ONE IN THE CASE OF CHRIST AND THE CHURCH—A VERY SMALL ONE IN THE CASE OF A MAN AND HIS WIFE

If now we interrogate, so to speak, those goods of marriage to which we have often referred, and inquire how it is that sin could possibly have been propagated from them to infants, we shall get this answer from the first of them—the work of procreation of offspring: "My happiness would in paradise have been greater if sin had not been committed. For to me belongs that blessing of almighty God: Be fruitful, and multiply.' For accomplishing this good work, divers members were created suited to each sex; these members were, of course, in existence before sin, but they were not objects of shame." This will be the answer of the second good—the fidelity of chastity: "If sin had not been committed, what in paradise could have been more secure than myself, when there was no lust of my own to spur me, none of another to tempt me?" And then this will be the answer of the sacramental bond of marriage,—the third good: "Of me was that word spoken in paradise before the entrance of sin: A man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they two shall become one flesh.'" This the apostle applies to the case of Christ and of the Church, and calls it then "a great sacrament." What, then, in Christ and in the Church is great, in the instances of each married pair it is but very small, but even then it is the sacrament of an inseparable union. What now is there in these three blessings of marriage out of which the bond of sin could pass over to posterity? Absolutely nothing. And in these blessings it is certain that the goodness of matrimony is entirely comprised; and even now good wedlock consists of these same blessings.

CHAPTER 24

LUST AND SHAME COME FROM SIN; THE LAW OF SIN; THE SHAMELESSNESS OF THE CYNICS

But if, in like manner, the question be asked of the concupiscence of the flesh, how it is that acts now bring shame which once were free from shame, will not her answer be, that she only began to have existence in men's members after sin? [XXII.] And, therefore, that the apostle designated her influence as "the law of sin," inasmuch as she subjugated man to herself when he was unwilling to remain subject to his God; and that it was she who made the first married pair ashamed at that moment when they covered their loins; even as all are still ashamed, and seek out secret retreats for cohabitation, and dare not have even the children, whom they have themselves thus begotten, to be witnesses of what they do. It was against this modesty of natural shame that the Cynic philosophers, in the error of their astonishing shamelessness, struggled so hard: they thought that the intercourse indeed of husband and wife, since it was lawful and honourable, should therefore be done in public. Such barefaced obscenity deserved to receive the name of dogs; and so they went by the title of "Cynics."

CHAPTER 25 [XXIII.]

CONCUPISCENCE IN THE REGENERATE WITHOUT CONSENT IS NOT SIN; IN WHAT SENSE CONCUPISCENCE IS CALLED SIN

Now this concupiscence, this law of sin which dwells in our members, to which the law of righteousness forbids allegiance, saying in the words of the apostle, “Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof; neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin:”—this concupiscence, I say, which is cleansed only by the sacrament of regeneration, does undoubtedly, by means of natural birth, pass on the bond of sin to a man’s posterity, unless they are themselves loosed from it by regeneration. In the case, however, of the regenerate, concupiscence is not itself sin any longer, whenever they do not consent to it for illicit works, and when the members are not applied by the presiding mind to perpetrate such deeds. So that, if what is enjoined in one passage, “Thou shalt not covet,” is not kept, that at any rate is observed which is commanded in another place, “Thou shalt not go after thy concupiscences.” Inasmuch, however, as by a certain manner of speech it is called sin, since it arose from sin, and, when it has the upper hand, produces sin, the guilt of it prevails in the natural man; but this guilt, by Christ’s grace through the remission of all sins, is not suffered to prevail in the regenerate man, if he does not yield obedience to it whenever it urges him to the commission of evil. As arising from sin, it is, I say, called sin, although in the regenerate it is not actually sin; and it has this designation applied to it, just as speech which the tongue produces is itself called “tongue;” and just as the word “hand” is used in the sense of writing, which the hand produces. In the same way concupiscence is called sin, as producing sin when it conquers the will: so to cold and frost the epithet “sluggish” is given; not as arising from, but as productive of, sluggishness; benumbing us, in fact.

CHAPTER 26

WHATEVER IS BORN THROUGH CONCUPISCENCE IS NOT UNDESERVEDLY IN SUBJECTION TO THE DEVIL BY REASON OF SIN; THE DEVIL DESERVES HEAVIER PUNISHMENT THAN MEN

This wound which the devil has inflicted on the human race compels everything which has its birth in consequence of it to be under the devil's power, as if he were rightly plucking fruit off his own tree. Not as if man's nature, which is only of God, came from him, but sin alone, which is not of God. For it is not on its own account that man's nature is under condemnation, because it is the work of God, and therefore laudable; but on account of that condemnable corruption by which it has been vitiated. Now it is by reason of this condemnation that it is in subjection to the devil, who is also in the same damnable state. For the devil is himself an unclean spirit: good, indeed, so far as he is a spirit, but evil as being unclean; for by nature he is a spirit, by the corruption thereof an unclean one. Of these two, the one is of God, the other of himself. His hold over men, therefore, whether of an advanced age or in infancy, is not because they are human, but because they are polluted. He, then, who feels surprise that God's creature is a subject of the devil, should cease from such feeling. For one creature of God is in subjection to another creature of God, the less to the greater, a human being to an angelic one; and this is not owing to nature, but to a corruption of nature: polluted is the sovereign, polluted also the subject. All this is the fruit of that ancient stock of pollution which he has planted in man; himself being destined to suffer a heavier punishment at the last judgment, as being the more polluted; but at the same time even they who will have to bear a less heavy burden in that condemnation are subjects of him as the prince and author of sin, for there will be no other cause of condemnation than sin.

CHAPTER 27 [XXIV.]

THROUGH LUST ORIGINAL SIN IS TRANSMITTED; VENIAL SINS IN MARRIED PERSONS; CONCUPISCENCE OF THE FLESH, THE DAUGHTER AND MOTHER OF SIN

Wherefore the devil holds infants guilty who are born, not of the good by which marriage is good, but of the evil of concupiscence, which, indeed, marriage uses aright, but at which even marriage has occasion to feel shame. Marriage is itself "honourable in all" the goods which properly appertain to it; but even when it has its "bed undefiled" (not only by fornication and adultery, which are damnable disgraces, but also by any of those excesses of cohabitation such as do not arise from any prevailing desire of children, but from an overbearing lust of pleasure, which are venial sins in man and wife), yet, whenever it comes to the actual process of generation, the very embrace which is lawful and honourable cannot be effected without the ardour of lust, so as to be able to accomplish that which appertains to the use of reason and not of lust. Now, this ardour, whether following or preceding the will, does somehow, by a power of its own, move the members which cannot be moved simply by the will, and in this manner it shows itself not to be the servant of a will which commands it, but rather to be the punishment of a will which disobeys it. It shows, moreover, that it must be excited, not by a free choice, but by a certain seductive stimulus, and that on this very account it produces shame. This is the carnal concupiscence, which, while it is no longer accounted sin in the regenerate, yet in no case happens to nature except from sin. It is the daughter of sin, as it were; and whenever it yields assent to the commission of shameful deeds, it becomes also the mother of many sins. Now from this concupiscence whatever comes into being by natural birth is bound by original sin, unless, indeed, it be born again in Him whom the Virgin conceived without this concupiscence. Wherefore, when He vouchsafed to be born in the flesh, He alone was born without sin.

CHAPTER 28 [XXV.]

CONCUPISCENCE REMAINS AFTER BAPTISM, JUST AS LANGUOR DOES AFTER RECOVERY FROM DISEASE; CONCUPISCENCE IS DIMINISHED IN PERSONS OF ADVANCING YEARS, AND INCREASED IN THE INCONTINENT

If the question arises, how this concupiscence of the flesh remains in the regenerate, in whose case has been effected a remission of all sins whatever; seeing that human semination takes place by its means, even when the carnal offspring of even a baptized parent is born: or, at all events, if it may be in the case of a baptized parent concupiscence and not be sin, why should this same concupiscence be sin in the offspring?—the answer to be given is this: Carnal concupiscence is remitted, indeed, in baptism; not so that it is put out of existence, but so that it is not to be imputed for sin. Although its guilt is now taken away, it still remains until our entire infirmity be healed by the advancing renewal of our inner man, day by day, when at last our outward man shall be clothed with incorruption. It does not remain, however, substantially, as a body, or a spirit; but it is nothing more than a certain affection of an evil quality, such as languor, for instance. There is not, to be sure, anything remaining which may be remitted whenever, as the Scripture says, “the Lord forgiveth all our iniquities.” But until that happens which immediately follows in the same passage, “Who healeth all thine infirmities, who redeemeth thy life from corruption,” there remains this concupiscence of the flesh in the body of this death. Now we are admonished not to obey its sinful desires to do evil: “Let not sin reign in your mortal body.” Still this concupiscence is daily lessened in persons of continence and increasing years, and most of all when old age makes a near approach. The man, however, who yields to it a wicked service, receives such great energies that, even when all his members are now failing through age, and those especial parts of his body are unable to be applied to their proper function, he does not ever cease to revel in a still increasing rage of disgraceful and shameless desire.

CHAPTER 29 [XXVI.]

HOW CONCUPISCENCE REMAINS IN THE BAPTIZED IN ACT, WHEN IT HAS PASSED AWAY AS TO ITS GUILT

In the case, then, of those persons who are born again in Christ, when they receive an entire remission of all their sins, it is of course necessary that the guilt also of the still indwelling concupiscence should be remitted, in order that (as I said) it should not be imputed to them for sin. For even as in the case of those sins which cannot be themselves permanent, since they pass away as soon as they are committed, the guilt yet is permanent, and (if not remitted) will remain for evermore; so, when the concupiscence is remitted, the guilt of it also is taken away. For not to have sin means this, not to be deemed guilty of sin. If a man have (for example) committed adultery, though he do not repeat the sin, he is held to be guilty of adultery until the indulgence in guilt be itself remitted. He has the sin, therefore, remaining, although the particular act of his sin no longer exists, since it has passed away along with the time when it was committed. For if to desist from sinning were the same thing as not to have sins, it would be sufficient if Scripture were content to give us the simple warning, “My son, hast thou sinned? Do so no more.” This, however, does not suffice, for it goes on to say, “Ask forgiveness for thy former sins.” Sins remain, therefore, if they are not forgiven. But how do they remain if they are passed away? Only thus, they have passed away in their act, but they are permanent in their guilt. Contrariwise, then, may it happen that a thing may remain in act, but pass away in guilt.

CHAPTER 30 [XXVII.]

THE EVIL DESIRES OF CONCUPISCENCE; WE OUGHT TO WISH THAT THEY MAY NOT BE

For the concupiscence of the flesh is in some sort active, even when it does not exhibit either an assent of the heart, where its seat of empire is, or those members whereby, as its weapons, it fulfils what it is bent on. But what in this action does it effect, unless it be its evil and shameful desires? For if these were good and lawful, the apostle would not forbid obedience to them, saying, “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof.” He does not say, that ye should have the lusts thereof, but “that ye should obey the lusts thereof;” in order that (as these desires are greater or less in different individuals, according as each shall have progressed in the renewal of the inner man) we may maintain the fight of holiness and chastity, for the purpose of withholding obedience to these lusts. Nevertheless, our wish ought to be nothing less than the nonexistence of these very desires, even if the accomplishment of such a wish be not possible in the body of this death. This is the reason why the same apostle, in another passage, addressing us as if in his own person, gives us this instruction: “For what I would,” says he, “that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.” In a word, “I covet.” For he was unwilling to do this, that he might be perfect on every side. “If, then, I do that which I would not,” he goes on to say, “I consent unto the law that it is good.” Because the law, too, wills not that which I also would not. For it wills not that I should have concupiscence, for it says, “Thou shall not covet;” and I am no less unwilling to cherish so evil a desire. In this, therefore, there is complete accord between the will of the law and my own will. But because he was unwilling to covet, and yet did covet, and for all that did not by any means obey this concupiscence so as to yield assent to it, he immediately adds these words: “Now, then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.”

CHAPTER 31 [XXVIII.]

WHO IS THE MAN THAT CAN SAY, “IT IS NO MORE I THAT DO IT”?

A man, however, is much deceived if, while consenting to the lust of his flesh, and then both resolving in his mind to do its desires and setting about it, he supposes that he has still a right to say, “It is not I that do it,” even if he hates and loathes himself for assenting to evil desires. The two things are simultaneous in his case: he hates the thing himself because he knows that it is evil; and yet he does it, because he is bent on doing it. Now if, in addition to all this, he proceeds to do what the Scripture forbids him, when it says, “Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin,” and completes with a bodily act what he was bent on doing in his mind; and says, “It is not I that do the thing, but sin that dwelleth in me,” because he feels displeased with himself for resolving on and accomplishing the deed,—he so greatly errs as not to know his own self. For, whereas he is altogether himself, his mind determining and his body executing his own purpose, he yet supposes that he is himself no longer! [XXIX.] That man, therefore, alone speaks the truth when he says, “It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me,” who only feels the concupiscence, and neither resolves on doing it with the consent of his heart, nor accomplishes it with the ministry of his body.

CHAPTER 32

WHEN GOOD WILL BE PERFECTLY DONE

The apostle then adds these words: “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perfect that which is good I find not.” Now this is said, because a good thing is not then perfected, when there is an absence of evil desires, as evil is perfected when evil desires are obeyed. But when they are present, but are not obeyed, neither evil is performed, since obedience is not yielded to them; nor good, because of their inoperative presence. There is rather an intermediate condition of things: good is effected in some degree, because the evil concupiscence has gained no assent to itself; and in some degree there is a remnant of evil, because the concupiscence is present. This accounts for the apostle’s precise words. He does not say, To do good is not present to him, but “how to perfect it.” For the truth is, one does a good deal of good when he does what the Scripture enjoins, “Go not after thy lusts;” yet he falls short of perfection, in that he fails to keep the great commandment, “Thou shalt not covet.” The law said, “Thou shalt not covet,” in order that, when we find ourselves lying in this diseased state, we might seek the medicine of Grace, and by that commandment know both in what direction our endeavours should aim as we advance in our present mortal condition, and to what a height it is possible to reach in the future immortality. For unless perfection could somewhere be attained, this commandment would never have been given to us.

CHAPTER 33 [XXX.]

TRUE FREEDOM COMES WITH WILLING DELIGHT IN GOD’S LAW

The apostle then repeats his former statement, the more fully to recommend its purport: “For the good,” says he, “that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now, if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” Then follows this: “I find then the law, when I would act, to be good to me; for evil is present with me.” In other words, I find that the law is a good to me, when I wish to do what the law would have me do; inasmuch as it is not with the law itself (which says, “Thou shalt not covet”) that evil is present; no, it is with myself that the evil is present, which I would not do, because I have the concupiscence even in my willingness. “For,” he adds, “I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” This delight with the law of God after the inward man, comes to us from the mighty grace of God; for thereby is our inward man renewed day by day, because it is thereby that progress is made by us with perseverance. In it there is not the fear that has torment, but the love that cheers and gratifies. We are truly free there, where we have no unwilling joy.

CHAPTER 34

HOW CONCUPISCENCE MADE A CAPTIVE OF THE APOSTLE; WHAT THE LAW OF SIN WAS TO THE APOSTLE

Then, indeed, this statement, “I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind,” refers to that very concupiscence which we are now speaking of—the law of sin in our sinful flesh. But when he said, “And bringing me into captivity to the law of sin,” that is, to its own self, “which is in my members,” he either meant “bringing me into captivity,” in the sense of endeavouring to make me captive, that is, urging me to approve and accomplish evil desire; or rather (and this opens no controversy), in the sense of leading me captive according to the flesh, and, if this is not possessed by the carnal concupiscence which he calls the law of sin, no unlawful desire—such as our mind ought not to obey—would, of course, be there to excite and disturb. The fact, however, that the apostle does not say, Bringing my flesh into captivity, but “Bringing me into captivity,” leads us to look out for some other meaning for the phrase, and to understand the term “bringing me into captivity” as if he had said, endeavouring to make me captive. But why, after all, might he not say, “Bringing me into captivity,” and at the same time mean us to understand his flesh? Was it not spoken by one concerning Jesus, when His flesh was not found in the sepulchre: “They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him”? Was Mary’s then an improper question, because she said, “My Lord,” and not “My Lord’s body” or “flesh”?

CHAPTER 35 [XXXI.]

THE FLESH, CARNAL AFFECTION

But we have in the apostle’s own language, a little before, a sufficiently clear proof that he might have meant his flesh when he said, “Bringing me into captivity.” For after declaring, “I know that in me dwelleth no good thing,” he at once added an explanatory sentence to this effect, “That is,in my flesh.” It is then the flesh, in which there dwells nothing good, that is brought into captivity to the law of sin. Now he designates that as the flesh wherein lies a certain morbid carnal affection, not the mere conformation of our bodily fabric whose members are not to be used as weapons for sin—

that is, for that very concupiscence which holds this flesh of ours captive. So far, indeed, as concerns this actual bodily substance and nature of ours, it is already God’s temple in all faithful men, whether living in marriage or in continence. If, however, absolutely nothing of our flesh were in captivity, not even to the devil, because there has accrued to it the remission of sin, that sin be not imputed to it (and this is properly designated the law of sin); yet if under this law of sin, that is, under its own concupiscence, our flesh were not to some degree held captive, how could that be true which the apostle states, when he speaks of our “waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body”? In so far, then, as there is now this waiting for the redemption of our body, there is also in some degree still existing something in us which is a captive to the law of sin. Accordingly he exclaims, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” What are we to understand by such language, but that our body, which is undergoing corruption, weighs heavily on our soul? When, therefore, this very body of ours shall be restored to us in an incorrupt state, there shall be a full liberation from the body of this death; but there will be no such deliverance for them who shall rise again to condemnation. To the body of this death then is understood to be owing the circumstance that there is in our members another law which wars against the law of the mind, so long as the flesh lusts against the spirit—without, however, subjugating the mind, inasmuch as on its side, too, the spirit has a concupiscence contrary to the flesh. Thus, although the actual law of sin partly holds the flesh in captivity (whence comes its resistance to the law of the mind), still it has not an absolute empire in our body, notwithstanding its mortal state, since it refuses obedience to its desires. For in the case of hostile armies between whom there is an earnest conflict, even the side which is inferior in the fight usually holds a something which it has captured; and although in some such way there is somewhat in our flesh which is kept under the law of sin, yet it has before it the hope of redemption: and then there will remain not a particle of this corrupt concupiscence; but our flesh, healed of that diseased plague, and wholly clad in immortality, shall live for evermore in eternal blessedness.

CHAPTER 36

EVEN NOW WHILE WE STILL HAVE CONCUPISCENCE WE MAY BE SAFE IN CHRIST

But the apostle pursues the subject, and says, “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin;” which must be thus understood: “With my mind I serve the law of God,” by refusing my consent to the law of sin; “with my flesh, however,” I serve “the law of sin,” by having the desires of sin, from which I am not yet entirely freed, although I yield them no assent. Then let us observe carefully what he has said after all the above: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” Even now, says he, when the law in my members keeps up its warfare against the law of my mind, and retains in captivity somewhat in the body of this death, there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. And listen why: “For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus,” says he, “hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” How made me free, except by abolishing its sentence of guilt by the remission of all my sins; so that, though it still remains, only daily lessening more and more, it is nevertheless not imputed to me as sin?

CHAPTER 37 [XXXII.]

THE LAW OF SIN WITH ITS GUILT IN UNBAPTIZED INFANTS. BY ADAM’S SIN THE HUMAN RACE HAS BECOME A “WILD OLIVE TREE.”

Until, then, this remission of sins takes place in the offspring, they have within them the law of sin in such manner, that it is really imputed to them as sin; in other words, with that law there is attaching to them its sentence of guilt, which holds them debtors to eternal condemnation. For what a parent transmits to his carnal offspring is the condition of his own carnal birth, not that of his spiritual new birth. For, that he was born in the flesh, although no hindrance after the remission of his guilt to his fruit, still remains hidden, as it were, in the seed of the olive, even though, because of the remission of his sins, it in no respect injures the oil—that is, in plain language, his life which he lives, “righteous by faith,” after Christ, whose very name comes from the oil, that is, from the anointing. That, however, which in the case of a regenerate parent, as in the seed of the pure olive, is covered without any guilt, which has been remitted, is still no doubt retained in the case of his offspring, which is yet unregenerate, as in the wild olive, with all its guilt, until here also it be remitted by the self-same grace. When Adam sinned, he was changed from that pure olive, which had no such corrupt seed whence should spring the bitter issue of the wild olive, into a wild olive tree; and, inasmuch as his sin was so great, that by it his nature became commensurately changed for the worse, he converted the entire race of man into a wild olive stock. The effect of this change we see illustrated, as has been said above, in the instance of these very trees. Whenever God's grace converts a sapling into a good olive, so that the fault of the first birth (that original sin which had been derived and contracted from the concupiscence of the flesh) is remitted, covered, and not imputed, there is still inherent in it that nature from which is born a wild olive, unless it, too, by the same grace, is by the second birth changed into a good olive.

CHAPTER 38 [XXXIII.]

TO BAPTISM MUST BE REFERRED ALL REMISSION OF SINS, AND THE COMPLETE HEALING OF THE RESURRECTION. DAILY CLEANSING

Blessed, therefore, is the olive tree "whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;" blessed is it "to which the Lord hath not imputed sin." But this, which has received the remission, the covering, and the acquittal, even up to the complete change into an eternal immortality, still retains a secret force which furnishes seed for a wild and bitter olive tree, unless the same tillage of God prunes it also, by remission, covering, and acquittal. There will, however, be left no corruption at all in even carnal seed, when the same regeneration, which is now effected through the sacred laver, purges and heals all man's evil to the very end. By its means the very same flesh, through which the carnal mind was formed, shall become spiritual,—no longer having that carnal lust which resists the law of the mind, no longer emitting carnal seed. For in this sense must be understood that which the apostle whom we have so often quoted says elsewhere: "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word; that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." It must, I say, be understood as implying, that by this laver of regeneration and word of sanctification all the evils of regenerate men of whatever kind are cleansed and healed,—not the sins only which are all now remitted in baptism, but those also which after baptism are committed by human ignorance and frailty; not, indeed, that baptism is to be repeated as often as sin is repeated, but that by its one only ministration it comes to pass that pardon is secured to the faithful of all their sins both before and after their regeneration. For of what use would repentance be, either before baptism, if baptism did not follow; or after it, if it did not precede? Nay, in the Lord's Prayer itself, which is our daily cleansing, of what avail or advantage would it be for that petition to be uttered, "Forgive us our debts," unless it be by such as have been baptized? And in like manner, how great soever be the liberality and kindness of a man's alms, what, I ask, would they profit him towards the remission of his sins if he had not been baptized? In short, on whom but on the baptized shall be bestowed the very felicities of the kingdom of heaven; where the Church shall have no spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; where there shall be nothing blameworthy, nothing unreal; where there shall be not only no guilt for sin, but no concupiscence to excite it?

CHAPTER 39 [XXXIV.]

BY THE HOLINESS OF BAPTISM, NOT SINS ONLY, BUT ALL EVILS WHATSOEVER, HAVE TO BE REMOVED. THE CHURCH IS NOT YET FREE FROM ALL STAIN

And thus not only all the sins, but all the ills of men of what kind soever, are in course of removal by the holiness of that Christian laver whereby Christ cleanses His Church, that He may present it to Himself, not in this world, but in that which is to come, as not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Now there are some who maintain that such is the Church even now, and yet they are in it. Well then, since they confess that they have some sins themselves, if they say the truth in this (and, of course, they do, as they are not free from sins), then the Church has "a spot" in them; whilst if they tell an untruth in their confession (as speaking from a double heart), then the Church has in them "a wrinkle." If, however, they assert that it is themselves, and not the Church, which has all this, they then as good as acknowledge that they are not its members, nor belong to its body, so that they are even condemned by their own confession.

CHAPTER 40 [XXXV.]

REFUTATION OF THE PELAGIANS BY THE AUTHORITY OF ST. AMBROSE, WHOM THEY QUOTE TO SHOW THAT THE DESIRE OF THE FLESH IS A NATURAL GOOD

In respect, however, to this concupiscence of the flesh, we have striven in this lengthy discussion to distinguish it accurately from the goods of marriage. This we have done on account of our modern heretics, who cavil whenever concupiscence is censured, as if it involved a censure of marriage. Their object is to praise concupiscence as a natural good, that so they may defend their own baneful dogma, which asserts that those who are born by its means do not contract original sin. Now the blessed Ambrose, bishop of Milan, by whose priestly office I received the washing of regeneration, briefly spoke on this matter, when, expounding the prophet Isaiah, he gathered from him the nativity of Christ in the flesh: “Thus,” says the bishop, “He was both tempted in all points as a man, and in the likeness of man He bare all things; but inasmuch as He was born of the Spirit, He kept Himself from sin. For every man is a liar; and there is none without sin but God alone. It has, therefore, been ever firmly maintained, that it is clear that no man from husband and wife, that is to say, by means of that conjunction of their persons, is free from sin. He who is free from sin is also free from conception of this kind.” Well now, what is it which St. Ambrose has here condemned in the true doctrine of this deliverance?—is it the goodness of marriage, or not rather the worthless opinion of these heretics, although they had not then come upon the stage? I have thought it worth while to adduce this testimony, because Pelagius mentions Ambrose with such commendation as to say: “The blessed Bishop Ambrose, in whose writings more than anywhere else the Roman faith is clearly stated, has flourished like a beautiful flower among the Latin writers. His fidelity and extremely pure perception of the sense of Scripture no opponent even has ever ventured to impugn.” I hope he may regret having entertained opinions opposed to Ambrose, but not that he has bestowed this praise on that holy man.

Here, then, you have my book, which, owing to its tedious length and difficult subject, it has been as troublesome for me to compose as for you to read, in those little snatches of time in which you have been able (or at least, as I suppose, have been able) to find yourself at leisure. Although it has been indeed drawn up with considerable labour amidst my ecclesiastical duties, as God has vouchsafed to give me His help, I should hardly have intruded it on your notice, with all your public cares, if I had not been informed by a godly man, who has an intimate knowledge of you, that you take such pleasure in reading as to lie awake by the hour, night after night, spending the precious time in your favourite pursuit.

PRELIMINARY NOTES ON THE SECOND BOOK

(1) From the Preface of Augustin's "Unfinished Work Against Julianus."

I Wrote a treatise, under the title On Marriage and Concupiscence, and addressed it to the Count Valerius, on learning that he had been informed of the Pelagians that they charge us with condemning marriage. Now in that treatise I showed the distinction, as criticially and accurately as I was able, between the good of marriage and the evil of carnal concupiscence,—an evil which is well used by conjugal chastity. On receiving my treatise, the illustrious man whom I have named sent me in a short paper a few sentences culled from a work of Julianus, a Pelagian heretic. In this work he has thought fit to extend to four books his answer to the before-mentioned treatise of mine, which is limited to one book only, On Marriage and Concupiscence. I do not know to whom we were indebted for the said extracts: he confined his selection, evidently on purpose, to the first book of Julianus' work. At the request of Valerius, I lost no time in drawing up my answer to the extracts. And thus it happened that I have written a second book also under the same title; and in reply to this Julianus has drawn up to eight books, in excess of his loquacious powers.

(2) From Augustin's Epistle to Claudius [CCVII.].

"Whoever has perused this second book of mine, addressed (as the first was) to the Count Valerius, and drawn up (as, indeed, both were) for his use, will have discovered that there are some points in which I have not answered Julianus, but that I meant my work rather for him who made the extracts from that writer's books, and who did not arrange them in the order in which he found them. He deemed some considerable alteration necessary in his arrangement, very probably with the view of appropriating by this method as his own the thoughts which evidently were another person's."

Book II

Augustin, in this latter book, refutes sundry sentences which had been culled by some unknown author from the first of four books that Julianus had published in opposition to the former book of his treatise “On Marriage and Concupiscence;” which sentences had been forwarded to him at the instance of the Count Valerius. He vindicates the Catholic doctrine of original sin from his opponent’s cavils and subtleties, and particularly shows how diverse it is from the infamous heresy of the Manicheans.

CHAPTER 1 [I.]

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

I Cannot tell you, dearly loved and honoured son Valerius, how great is the pleasure which my heart receives when I hear of your warm and earnest interest in the testimony of the word of God against the heretics; and this, too, amidst your military duties and the cares which devolve on you in the eminent position you so justly occupy, and the pressing functions, moreover, of your political life. After reading the letter of your Eminence, in which you acknowledge the book which I dedicated to you, I was roused to write this also; for you request me to attend to the statement, which my brother and fellow-bishop Alypius is commissioned to make to me, about the discussion which is being raised by the heretics over sundry passages of my book. Not only have I received this information from the narrative of my said brother, but I have also read the extracts which he produced, and which you had yourself forwarded to Rome, after his departure from Ravenna. On discovering the boastful language of our adversaries, as I could easily do in these extracts, I determined, with the help of the Lord, to reply to their taunts with all the truthfulness and scriptural authority that I could command.

CHAPTER 2 [II.]

IN THIS AND THE FOUR NEXT CHAPTERS HE ADDUCES THE GARBLED EXTRACTS HE HAS TO CONSIDER

The paper which I now answer starts with this title: “Headings out of a book written by Augustin, in reply to which I have culled a few passages out of books.” I perceive from this that the person who forwarded these written papers to your Excellency wanted to make his extracts out of the books he does not name, with a view, so far as I can judge, to getting a quicker answer, in order that he might not delay your urgency. Now, after considering what books they were which he meant, I suppose that it must have been those which Julianus mentioned in the Epistle he sent to Rome, a copy of which found its way to me at the same time. For he there says: “They go so far as to allege that marriage, now in dispute, was not instituted by God,—a declaration which may be read in a work of Augustin’s, to which I have lately replied in a treatise of four books.” These are the books, as I believe, from which the extracts were taken. It would, then, have been perhaps the better course if I had set myself deliberately to disprove and refute that entire work of his, which he spread out into four volumes. But I was most unwilling to delay my answer, even as you yourself lost no time in forwarding to me the written statements which I was requested to reply to.

CHAPTER 3

THE SAME CONTINUED

The words which he has quoted and endeavoured to refute out of my book, which I sent to you, and with which you are very well acquainted, are the following: “They are constantly affirming, in their excessive hatred of us, that we condemn marriage and that divine procedure by which God creates human beings by means of men and women, inasmuch as we maintain that they who are born of such a union contract original sin, and do not deny that, of whatever parents they are born, they are still under the devil’s dominion unless they be born again in Christ.” Now, in quoting these words of mine, he took care to omit the testimony of the apostle, which I adduced by the weighty significance of which he felt himself too hard pressed. For, after saying that men at their birth contract original sin, I at once introduced the apostle’s words: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all men sinned.” Well, as I have already mentioned, he omitted this passage of the apostle, and then closed up the other remarks of mine which have been now quoted. For he knew too well how acceptable to the hearts and consciences of all faithful catholics are these words of the apostle, which I had adopted, but which he omitted,—words which are so direct and so clear, that these new-fangled heretics use every effort in their dark and tortuous glosses to obscure and deprave their force.

CHAPTER 4

THE SAME CONTINUED

But he has added other words of mine, where I have said: “Nor do they reflect that the good of marriage is no more impeachable by reason of the original evil which is derived therefrom, than the evil of adultery and fornication can be excused by reason of the natural good which is born of them. For as sin is the work of the devil, whether derived from this source or from that; so is man, whether born of this or that, the work of God.” Here, too, he has left out some words, in which he was afraid of catholic ears. For to come to the words here quoted, it had previously been said by us: “Because, then, we affirm this doctrine, which is contained in the oldest and unvarying rule of the catholic faith, these propounders of novel and perverse dogmas, who deny that there is in infants any sin to be washed away in the laver of regeneration, in their unbelief or ignorance calumniate us as if we condemned marriage, and as if we asserted to be the devil’s work what is God’s own work, to wit, the human being which is born of marriage.” All this passage he has passed over, and merely quoted the words which follow it, as given above. Now, in the omitted words he was afraid of the clause which suits all hearts in the catholic Church and appeals to the very faith which has been firmly established and transmitted from ancient times with unfaltering voice and excites their hostility most strongly against us. The clause is this: “They deny that there is in infants any sin to be washed away in the laver of regeneration.” For all persons run to church with their infants for no other reason in the world than that the original sin which is contracted in them by their first and natural birth may be cleansed by the regeneration of their second birth.

CHAPTER 5

THE SAME CONTINUED

He then returns to our words, which were quoted before: “We maintain that they who are born of such a union contract original sin; and we do not deny that, of whatever parents they are born, they are still under the devil’s dominion unless they be born again in Christ.” Why he should again refer to these words of ours I cannot tell; he had already cited them a little before. He then proceeds to quote what we said of Christ: “Who willed not to be born from the same union of the two sexes.” But here again he quietly ignored the words which I placed just previous to these words; my entire sentence being this: “That by His grace they may be removed from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Him who willed not to be born from the same union of the two sexes.” Observe, I pray you, what my words were which he shunned, in the temper of one who is thoroughly opposed to that grace of God which comes through our “Lord Jesus Christ.” He knows well enough that it is the height of improbity and impiety to exclude infants from their interest in the apostle’s words, where he said of God the Father: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear son.” This, no doubt, is the reason why he preferred to omit rather than quote these words.

CHAPTER 6

THE SAME CONTINUED

He has next adduced that passage of ours, wherein we said: “For there would have been none of this shame-producing concupiscence, which is impudently praised by impudent men, if man had not previously sinned; while as to marriage, it would still have existed, even if no man had sinned: for the procreation of children would have been effected without this disease.” Up to this point he cited my words; but he shrank from adding what comes next—”in the body of that chaste life, although without it this cannot be done in the body of this death.’“ He would not complete my sentence, but mutilated it somewhat, because he dreaded the apostle’s exclamation, of which my words gave him a reminder: “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” For the body of this death existed not in paradise before sin; therefore did we say, “In the body of that chaste life,” which was the life of paradise, “the procreation of children could have been effected without the disease, without which now in the body of this death it cannot be done.” The apostle, however, before arriving at that mention of man’s misery and God’s grace which we have just quoted, had first said: “I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” Then it is that he exclaimed, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” In the body of this death, therefore, such as it was in paradise before sin, there certainly was not “another law in our members warring against the law of our mind”—which now, even when we are unwilling, and withhold consent, and use not our members to fulfil that which it desires, still dwells in these members, and harasses our resisting and repugnant mind. And this conflict in itself, although not involving condemnation, because it does not consummate sin, is nevertheless “wretched,” inasmuch as it has no peace. I think, then, that I have shown you clearly enough that this man had a special object as well as method in quoting my words: he adduced them for refutation in such manner as in some instances to interrupt the context of my sentences by removing what stood between them, and in other instances to curtail them by withdrawing their concluding words; and his reason for doing all this I think I have sufficiently explained.

CHAPTER 7 [III.]

AUGUSTIN ADDUCES A PASSAGE SELECTED FROM THE PREFACE OF JULIANUS. (SEE “THE UNFINISHED WORK,” I. 73.)

Let us now look at those words of ours which he adduced just as it suited him, and to which he would oppose his own. For they are followed by his words; moreover, as the person insinuated who sent you the paper of extracts, he copied something out of a preface, which was no doubt the preface of the books from which he selected a few passages. The paragraph thus copied stands as follows: “The teachers of our day, most holy brother, who are the instigators of the disgraceful faction which is now overheated with its zeal, are determined on compassing the injury and discredit of the men with whose sacred fervour they are set on fire, by nothing less than the ruin of the whole Church; little thinking how much honour they have conferred on those whose renown they have shown to be only capable of being destroyed along with the catholic religion. For, if one should say, either that there is free will in man, or that God is the Creator of those that are born, he is at once set down as a Coelestian and a Pelagian. To avoid being called heretics, they turn Manicheans; and so, whilst shirking a pretended infamy, they incur a real reproach; just like the animals, which in hunting they surround with dyed feathers, in order to scare and drive them into their nets; the poor brutes are not gifted with reason, and so they are thrust all together by a vain panic into a real destruction.”

CHAPTER 8

AUGUSTIN REFUTES THE PASSAGE ADDUCED ABOVE

Well, now, whoever you are that have said all this, what you say is by no means true; by no means, I repeat; you are much deceived, or you aim at deceiving others. We do not deny free will; but, even as the Truth declares, “if the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed.” It is yourselves who invidiously deny this Liberator, since you ascribe a vain liberty to yourselves in your captivity. Captives you are; for “of whom a man is overcome,” as the Scripture says, “of the same is he brought in bondage;” and no one except by the grace of the great Liberator is loosed from the chain of this bondage, from which no man living is free. For “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all have sinned.” Thus, then, God is the Creator of those that are born in such wise that all pass from the one into condemnation, who have not the One Liberator by regeneration. For He is described as “the Potter, forming out of the same lump one vessel unto honour in His mercy, and another unto dishonour in judgment.” And so runs the Church’s canticle “mercy and judgment.” You are therefore only misleading yourself and others when you say, “If one should affirm, either that there is free will in man, or that God is the Creator of those that are born, he is at once set down as a Coelestian and a Pelagian;" for the catholic faith says these things. If, however, any one says that there is a free will in man for worshipping God aright, without His assistance; and whosoever says that God is the Creator of those that are born in such wise as to deny that infants have any need of one to redeem them from the power of the devil: that is the man who is set down as a disciple of Coelestius and Pelagius. Therefore that men have within them a free will, and that God is the Creator of those that are born, are propositions which we both allow. You are not Coelestians and Pelagians for merely saying this. But what you do really say is this, that any man whatever has freedom enough of will for doing good without God's help, and that infants undergo no such change as being "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God;" and because you say so, you are Coelestians and Pelagians. Why, then, do you hide under the covering of a common dogma for deceit, concealing your own especial delinquency which has gained for you a party-name; and why, to terrify the ignorant with a shocking term, do you say of us, "To avoid being called heretics, they turn Manicheans?"

CHAPTER 9

THE CATHOLICS MAINTAIN THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN, AND THUS ARE FAR FROM BEING MANICHEANS

Listen, then, for a little while, and observe what is involved in this question. Catholics say that human nature was created good by the good God as Creator; but that, having been corrupted by sin, it needs the physician Christ. The Manicheans affirm, that human nature was not created by God good, and corrupted by sin; but that man was formed by the prince of eternal darkness of a mixture of two natures which had ever existed—one good and the other evil. The Pelagians and Coelestians say that human nature was created good by the good God; but that it is still so sound and healthy in infants at their birth, that they have no need at that age of Christ's medicine. Recognise, then, your name in your dogma; and cease from intruding upon the catholics, who refute you, a name and a dogma which belong to others. For truth rejects both parties—the Manicheans and yourselves. To the Manicheans it says: "Have ye not read that He which made man at the beginning, made them male and female; and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” Now Christ shows, in this passage, that God is both the Creator of man, and the uniter in marriage of husband and wife; whereas the Manicheans deny both these propositions. To you, however, He says: “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.” But you, admirable Christians as you are, answer Christ: “If you came to seek and to save that which was lost, then you did not come for infants; for they were not lost, but are born in a state of salvation: go to older men; we give you a rule from your own words: They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.’“ Now, as it happens, the Manichean, who says that man has evil mixed in his nature, must wish his good soul at any rate to be saved by Christ; whereas you contend that there is in infants nothing to be sired by Christ, since they are already safe. And thus the Manichean besets human nature with his detestable censure, and you with your cruel praise. For whosoever shall believe your laudation, will never bring their babes to the Saviour. Entertaining such impious views as these, of what use is it that you fearlessly face that which is enacted for you in order to induce salutary fear and to treat you as a human being, and not as that poor animal of yours which was surrounded with the coloured feathers to be driven into the hunting toils? Need was that you should hold the truth, and, on account of zeal for it, have no fear; but, as things are, you evade fear in such wise that, if you feared, you would rather run away from the net of the malignant one than run into it. The reason why your catholic mother alarms you is, because she fears for both you and others from you; and if by the help of her sons who possess any authority in the State she acts with a view to make you afraid, she does so, not from cruelty, but from love. You, however, are a very brave man; and you deem it the coward’s part to be afraid of men. Well then, fear God; and do not try with such obstinacy to subvert the ancient foundations of the catholic faith. Although I could even wish that spirited temper of yours would entertain some little fear of human authority, at least in the present case. I could wish, I say, that it would rather tremble through cowardice than perish through audacity.

CHAPTER 10 [IV.]

IN WHAT MANNER THE ADVERSARY’S CAVILS MUST BE REFUTED

Let us now look at the rest of what he has joined together in his selections. But what should be my course of proceeding? Ought I to set forth every passage of his for the purpose of answering it, or, omitting everything which the catholic faith contains, as not in dispute between us, only handle and confute those statements in which he strays away from the beaten path of truth, and endeavours to graft on catholic stems the poisonous shoots of his Pelagian heresy? This is, no doubt, the easier course. But I suppose I must not lose sight of a possible contingency, that any one, after reading my book, without perusing all that has been alleged by him, may think that I was unwilling to bring forward the passages on which his allegations depend, and by which are shown to be truly deduced the statements which I am controverting as false. I should be glad, therefore, if the reader will without exception kindly observe and consider the two classes of contributions which occur in this little work of ours—that is to say, all that he has alleged, and the answers which on my side I give him.

CHAPTER 11

THE DEVIL THE AUTHOR, NOT OF NATURE, BUT ONLY OF SIN

Now, the man who forwarded to your Love the paper in question has introduced the contents thereof with this title: “In opposition to those persons who condemn matrimony, and ascribe its fruits to the devil.” This, then, is not in opposition to us, who neither condemn matrimony, which we even commend in its order with a just commendation, nor ascribe its fruits to the devil. For the fruits of matrimony are men which are orderly engendered from it, and not the sins which accompany their birth. Human beings are not under the devil’s dominion because they are human beings, in which respect they are the fruits of matrimony; but because they are sinful, in which resides the transmission of their sins. For the devil is the author of sin, not of nature.

CHAPTER 12

EVE’S NAME MEANS LIFE, AND IS A GREAT SACRAMENT OF THE CHURCH

Now, observe the rest of the passage in which he thinks he finds, to our prejudice, what is consonant with the above-quoted title. “God,” says he, “who had framed Adam out of the dust of the ground, formed Eve out of his rib, and said, She shall be called Life, because she is the mother of all who live.” Well now, it is not so written. But what matters that to us? For it constantly happens that our memory fails in verbal accuracy, while the sense is still maintained. Nor was it God, but her husband, who gave Eve her name, which should signify Life; for thus it is written: “And Adam called his wife’s name Life, because she is the mother of all living.” But very likely he might have understood the Scripture as testifying that God gave Eve this name through Adam, as His prophet. For in that she was called Life, and the mother of all living, there lies a great sacrament of the Church, of which it would detain us long to speak, and which is unnecessary to our present undertaking. The very same thing which the apostle says, “This is a great sacrament: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church,” was also spoken by Adam when he said, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh.” The Lord Jesus, however, in the Gospel mentions God as having said this of Eve; and the reason, no doubt, is, that God declared through the man what the man, in fact, uttered as a prophecy. Now, observe what follows in the paper of extracts: “By that primitive name,” says he, “He showed for what labour the woman had been provided; and He said accordingly, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.’“ Now, who amongst ourselves denies that the woman was provided for the work of child-bearing by the Lord God, the beneficent Creator of all good? See further what he goes on to say: “God, therefore, who created them male and female, furnished them with members suitable for procreation, and ordained that bodies should be produced from bodies; and yet is security for their capacity for effecting the work, executing all that exists with that power which He used in creation.” Well, even this we acknowledge to be catholic doctrine, as we also do with regard to the passage which he immediately subjoins: “If, then, offspring comes only through sex, and sex only through the body, and the body through God, who can hesitate to allow that fecundity is rightly attributed to God?”

CHAPTER 13

THE PELAGIAN ARGUMENT TO SHOW THAT THE DEVIL HAS NO RIGHTS IN THE FRUITS OF MARRIAGE

After these true and catholic statements, which are, moreover, really contained in the Holy Scriptures, although they are not adduced by him in a catholic spirit, with the earnestness of a catholic mind, he loses no time in introducing to us the heresy of Pelagius and Coelestius, for which purpose he wrote, indeed, his previous remarks. Mark carefully the following words: “You now who say, We do not deny that they, are still, of whatever parents born, under the devil’s power, unless they be born again in Christ,’ show us what the devil can recognise as his own in the sexes, by reason of which he can (to use your phrase) rightly claim as his property the fruit which they produce. Is it the difference of the sexes? But this is inherent in the bodies which God made. Is it their union? But this union is justified in the privilege of the primeval blessing no less than institution. For it is the voice of God that says, A man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they two shall be one flesh.’ It is again the voice of God which says, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.’ Or is it, perchance, their fertility? But this is the very reason why matrimony was instituted.”

CHAPTER 14 [V.]

CONCUPISCENCE ALONE, IN MARRIAGE, IS NOT OF GOD

You see the terms of his question to us: what the devil can find in the sexes to call his own, by reason of which they should be in his power, who are born of parents of whatsoever kind, unless they be born again in Christ; he asks us, moreover, whether it is the difference in the sexes which we ascribe to the devil, or their union, or their very fruitfulness. We answer, then, nothing of these qualities, inasmuch as the difference of sex belongs to “the vessels” of the parents; while the union of the two pertains to the procreation of children; and their fruitfulness to the blessing pronounced on the marriage institution. But all these things are of God; yet amongst them he was unwilling to name that "lust of the flesh, which is not of the Father, but is of the world;" and "of this world" the devil is said to be "the prince." Now, the devil found no carnal concupiscence in the Lord, because the Lord did not come as a man to men by its means. Accordingly, He says Himself: "The prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in me"—nothing, that is, of sin; neither that which is derived from birth, nor that which is added during life. Among all the natural goods of procreation which he mentioned, he was, I repeat, unwilling to name this particular fact of concupiscence, over which even marriage blushes, which glories in all these before-mentioned goods. For why is the especial work of parents withdrawn and hidden even from the eyes of their children, except that it is impossible for them to be occupied in laudable procreation without shameful lust? Because of this it was that even they were ashamed who first covered their nakedness. These portions of their person were not suggestive of shame before, but deserved to be commended and praised as the work of God. They put on their covering when they felt their shame, and they felt their shame when, after their own disobedience to their Maker, they felt their members disobedient to themselves. Our quoter of extracts likewise felt ashamed of this concupiscence. For he mentioned the difference of the sexes; he mentioned also their union, and he mentioned their fertility; but this last concomitant of lust he blushed to mention. And no wonder if mere talkers are ashamed of that which we see parents themselves, so interested in their function, blush to think of.

CHAPTER 15

MAN, BY BIRTH, IS PLACED UNDER THE DOMINION OF THE DEVIL THROUGH SIN; WE WERE ALL ONE IN ADAM WHEN HE SINNED

He then proceeds to ask: "Why, then, are they in the devil's power whom God created?" And he finds an answer to his own question apparently from a phrase of mine. "Because of sin," says he, "not because of nature." Then framing his answer in reference to mine, he says: "But as there cannot be offspring without the sexes, so there cannot be sin without the will." Yes, indeed, such is the truth. For even as "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so also has death passed through to all men, for in him all have sinned.” By the evil will of that one man all sinned in him, since all were that one man, from whom, therefore, they individually derived original sin. “For you allege,” says he, “that the reason why they are in the devil’s power is because they are born of the union of the two sexes.” I plainly aver that it is by reason of transgression that they are in the devil’s power, and that their participation, moreover, of this transgression is due to the circumstance that they are born of the said union of the sexes, which cannot even accomplish its own honourable function without the incident of shameful lust. This has also, in fact, been said by Ambrose, of most blessed memory, bishop of the church in Milan, when he gives as the reason why Christ’s birth in the flesh was free from all sinful fault, that His conception was not the result of a union of the two sexes; whereas there is not one among human beings conceived in such union who is without sin. These are his precise words: “On that account, and being man, He was tried by every sort of temptation, and in the likeness of man He bore them all; inasmuch, however, as He was born of the Spirit, He abstained from all sin. For every man is a liar, and none is without sin, but God only. It has accordingly,” adds he, “been constantly observed, that clearly no one who is born of a man and a woman, that is to say, through the union of their bodies, is free from sin; for whoever is free from sin is free also from conception of this kind.” Well now, will you dare, ye disciples of Pelagius and Coelestius, to call this man a Manichean? as the heretic Jovinian did, when the holy bishop maintained the permanent virginity of the blessed Mary even after child-bearing, in opposition to this man’s impiety. If, however, you do not dare to call him a Manichean, why do you call us Manicheans when we defend the catholic faith in the self-same cause and with the self same opinions? But if you will taunt that most faithful man with having entertained Manichean error in this matter, there is no help for it, you must enjoy your taunts as best you may, and so fill up Jovinian’s measure more fully; as for ourselves, we can patiently endure along with such a man of God your taunts and jibes. And yet your heresiarch Pelagius commends Ambrose’s faith and extreme purity in the knowledge of the Scriptures so greatly, as to declare that not even an enemy could venture to find fault with him. Observe, then, to what length you have gone, and refrain from following any further in the audacious steps of Jovinian. And yet that man, although by his excessive commendation of marriage he put it on a par with holy virginity, never denied the necessity of Christ to save those who are born of marriage even fresh from their mother’s womb, and to redeem them from the power of the devil. This, however, you deny; and because we oppose you in defence of those who cannot yet speak for themselves, and in defence of the very foundations of the catholic faith, you taunt us, with being Manicheans. But let us now see what comes next.

CHAPTER 16 [VI.]

IT IS NOT OF US, BUT OUR SINS, THAT THE DEVIL IS THE AUTHOR

He puts to us, then, another question, saying, “Whom, then, do you confess to be the author of infants? The true God?” I answer: “Yes; the true God.” He then remarks, “But He did not make evil;” and again asks, “Whether we confess the devil to be the creator of infants?” Then again he answers, “But he did not create human nature.” He then closes the subject, as it were, with this inference: “Since union is evil, and the condition of our bodies is degraded, therefore you ascribe our bodies to an evil creator.” My answer to this is, I do not ascribe to an evil creator our bodies, but our sins; by reason of which it came to pass that, whereas in our bodies, that is to say, in what God has made, all was honourable and well-pleasing, there yet accrued in the intercourse of male and female what caused shame, so that their union was not such as might have been in the body of that unimpaired life, but such as we see with a blush in the body of this death. “But God,” says he, “has divided in sex what He would unite in operation. So that from Him comes the union of bodies, from whom first came the creation of bodies.” We have already furnished an answer to this statement, when we said that these bodies are of God. But as regards the disobedience of the members of these bodies, this comes through the lust of the flesh which “is not of the Father.” He goes on to say, that “it is impossible for evil fruits to spring from so many good things, such as bodies, sexes, and their unions; or that human beings should be made by God for the purpose of their being, by lawful right, as you maintain, held in possession by the devil.” Now it has been already affirmed, that they are not thus held because they are men, which designation belongs to their nature, of which the devil is not the author; but because they are sinners, which designation is the result of that fault of nature of which the devil is the author.

CHAPTER 17 [VII.]

THE PELAGIANS ARE NOT ASHAMED TO EULOGIZE CONCUPISCENCE, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE ASHAMED TO MENTION ITS NAME

But among so many names of good things, such as bodies, sexes, unions, he never once mentions the lust or concupiscence of the flesh. He is silent, because he is ashamed; and yet with a strange shamelessness of shame (if the expression may be used), he is not ashamed to praise what he is ashamed to mention. Now just observe how he prefers to point to his object by circumlocution rather than by direct mention of it. “After that the man,” says he, “by natural appetite knew his wife.” See again, he refused to say, He knew his wife by carnal concupiscence; but he used the phrase, “by natural appetite,” by which it is open to us to understand that holy and honourable will which wills the procreation of children, and not that lust, of which even he is so much ashamed, forsooth, that he prefers to use ambiguous language to us, to expressing his mind in unmistakeable words. “Now what is the meaning of his phrase—”by natural appetite”? Is not both the wish to be saved and the wish to beget, nourish, and educate children, natural appetite? and is it not likewise of reason, and not of lust? Since, however, we can ascertain his intention, we are pretty sure that he meant by these words to indicate the lust of the organs of generation. Do not the words in question appear to you to be the fig-leaves, under cover of which is hidden nothing else but that which he feels ashamed of? For just as they of old sewed the leaves together as a girdle of concealment, so has this man woven a web of circumlocution to hide his meaning. Let him weave out his statement: “But when the man knew his wife by natural appetite, the divine Scripture says, Eve conceived, and bare a son, and called his name Cain. But what,” he adds, “does Adam say? Let us hear: I have obtained a man from God. So that it is evident that he was God’s work, and the divine Scripture testifies to his having been received from God.” Well, who can entertain a doubt on this point? Who can deny this statement, especially if he be a catholic Christian? A man is God’s work; but carnal concupiscence (without which, if sin had not preceded, man would have been begotten by means of the organs of generation, not less obedient than the other members to a quiet and normal will) is not of the Father, but is of the world.

CHAPTER 18

THE SAME CONTINUED

But now, I pray you, look a little more attentively, and observe how he contrives to find a name wherewith to cover again what he blushes to unfold. “For,” says he, “Adam begot him by the power of his members, not by diversity of merits.” Now I confess I do not understand what he meant by the latter clause, not by diversity of merits; but when he said, “by the power of his members,” I believe he wished to express what he is ashamed to say openly and clearly. He preferred to use the phrase, “by the power of his members,” rather than say, “by the lust of the flesh.” Plainly—even if the thought did not occur to him—he intimated a something which has an evident application to the subject. For what is more powerful than a man’s members, when they are not in due submission to a man’s will? Even if they be restrained by temperance or continence, their use and control are not in any man’s power. Adam, then, begat his sons by what our author calls “the power of his members,” over which, before he begat them, he blushed, after his sin. If, however, he had never sinned, he would not have begotten them by the power, but in the obedience, of his members. For he would himself have had the power to rule them as subjects to his will, if he, too, by the same will had only submitted himself as a subject to a more powerful One.

CHAPTER 19 [VIII.]

THE PELAGIANS MISUNDERSTAND “SEED” IN SCRIPTURE

He goes on to say: “After a while the divine Scripture says again, Adam knew Eve his wife; and she bare a son, and he called his name Seth: saying, The Lord hath raised me up another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.’“ He then adds: “The Divinity is said to have raised up the seed itself; as a proof that the sexual union was His appointment.” This person did not understand what the Scripture records; for he supposed that the reason why it is said, The Lord hath raised me up another seed instead of Abel, was none other than that God might be supposed to have excited in him a desire for sexual intercourse, by means whereof seed might be raised for being poured into the woman’s womb. He was perfectly unaware that what the Scripture has said is not “Has raised me up seed” in the sense he uses, but only as meaning “Has given me a son.” Indeed, Adam did not use the words in question after his sexual intercourse, when he emitted his seed, but after his wife’s confinement, in which he received his son by the gift of God. For what gratification is there (except perhaps for lascivious persons, and those who, as the apostle says with prohibition, “possess their vessel in the lust of concupiscence”) in the mere shedding of seed as the ultimate pleasure of sexual union, unless it is followed by the true and proper fruit of marriage —conception and birth?

CHAPTER 20

ORIGINAL SIN IS DERIVED FROM THE FAULTY CONDITION OF HUMAN SEED

This, however, I would not say, as implying at all that we must look for some other creator than the supreme and true God, of either human seed or of man himself who comes from the seed; but as meaning, that the seed would have issued from the human being by the quiet and normal obedience of his members to his will’s command, if sin had not preceded. The question now before us does not concern the nature of human seed, but its corruption. Now the nature has God for its author; it is from its corruption that original sin is derived. If, indeed, the seed had itself no corruption, what means that passage in the Book of Wisdom, “Not being ignorant that they were a naughty generation, and that their malice was inbred, and that their cogitation would never be changed; for their seed was accursed from the beginning”? Now whatever may be the particular application of these words, they are spoken of mankind. How, then, is the malice of every man inbred, and his seed cursed from the beginning, unless it be in respect of the fact, that “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all have sinned”? But where is the man whose “evil cogitation can never be changed,” unless because it cannot be effected by himself, but only by divine grace; without the assistance of which, what are human beings, but that which the Apostle Peter says of them, when he describes them as “natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed”? Accordingly, the Apostle Paul, in a certain passage, having both conditions in view,—even the wrath of God with which we are born, and the grace whereby we are delivered,—says: “Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; by whose grace we are saved." What, then, is man's "natural malice," and "the seed cursed from the beginning;" and what are "the natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed," and what the "by nature children of wrath"? Was this the condition of the nature which was formed in Adam? God forbid! Inasmuch as his pure nature, however, was corrupted in him, it has run on in this condition by natural descent through all, and still is running; so that there is no deliverance for it from this ruin, except by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 21 [IX.]

IT IS THE GOOD GOD THAT GIVES FRUITFULNESS, AND THE DEVIL THAT CORRUPTS THE FRUIT

What, therefore, is this man's meaning, in the next passage, wherein he says concerning Noah and his sons, that "they were blessed, even as Adam and Eve were; for God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and have dominion over the earth'"? To these words of the Almighty he added some of his own, saying: "Now that pleasure, which you would have seem diabolical, was resorted to in the case of the above-mentioned married pairs; and it continued to exist, both in the goodness of its institution and in the blessing attached to it. For there can be no doubt that the following words were addressed to Noah and his sons in reference to their bodily connection with their wives, which had become by this time unalterably fixed by use: Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.'" It is unnecessary for us to employ many words in repeating our former argument. The point here in question is the corruption in our nature, whereby its goodness has been depraved, of which corruption the devil is the author. That goodness of nature, as it is in itself, the author of which is God, is not the question we have to consider. Now God has never withdrawn from corrupted and depraved nature His own mercy and goodness, so as to deprive man of fruitfulness, vivacity, and health, as well as the very substance of his mind and body, his senses also and reason, as well as food, and nourishment, and growth. He, moreover, “maketh His sun to arise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust;” and all that is good in human nature is from the good God, even in the case of those men who will not be delivered from evil.

CHAPTER 22

SHALL WE BE ASHAMED OF WHAT WE DO, OR OF WHAT GOD DOES?

It is, however, of pleasure that this man spoke in his passage, because pleasure can be even honourable: of carnal concupiscence, or lust, which produces shame, he made no mention. In some subsequent words, however, he uncovered his susceptibility of shame; and he was unable to dissemble what nature herself has prescribed so forcibly. “There is also,” says he, “that statement: Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh.’“ Then after these words of God, he goes on to offer some of his own, saying: “That he might express faith in works, the prophet approached very near to a perilling of modesty.” What a confession! How clear and extorted from him by the force of truth! The prophet, it would seem, to express faith in works, almost imperilled modesty, when he said, “They twain shall become one flesh;” wishing it to be understood of the sexual union of the male and the female. Let the cause be alleged, why the prophet, in expressing the works of God, should approach so near an imperilling of modesty? Is it then the case that the works of man ought not to produce shame, but must be gloried in at all events, and that the works of God must produce shame? Is it, that in setting forth and expressing the works of God the prophet’s love or labour receives no honour, but his modesty is imperilled? What, then, was it possible for God to do, which it would be a shame for His prophet to describe? And, what is a weightier question still, could a man be ashamed of any work which not man, but God, has made in man? whereas workmen in all cases strive, with all the labour and diligence in their power, to avoid shame in the works of their own hands. The truth, however, is, that we are ashamed of that very thing which made those primitive human beings ashamed, when they covered their loins. That is the penalty of sin; that is the plague and mark of sin; that is the temptation and very fuel of sin; that is the law in our members warring against the law of our mind; that is the rebellion against our own selves, proceeding from our very selves, which by a most righteous retribution is rendered us by our disobedient members. It is this which makes us ashamed, and justly ashamed. If it were not so, what could be more ungrateful, more irreligious in us, if in our members we were to suffer confusion of face, not for our own fault or penalty, but because of the works of God?

CHAPTER 23 [X.]

THE PELAGIANS AFFIRM THAT GOD IN THE CASE OF ABRAHAM AND SARAH AROUSED CONCUPISCENCE AS A GIFT FROM HEAVEN

He has much also to say, though to no purpose, concerning Abraham and Sarah, how they received a son according to the promise; and at last he mentions the word concupiscence. But he does not add the usual phrase, "of the flesh," because this is the very thing which causes the shame. Whereas, on account of concupiscence there is sometimes a call for boasting, inasmuch as there is a concupiscence of the spirit against the flesh, and a concupiscence of wisdom. Accordingly, he says: "Now you have certainly defined as naturally evil this concupiscence which is indispensable for fecundity; whence comes it, therefore, that it is aroused in aged men by the gift of Heaven? Make it clear then, if you can, that that belongs to the devil's work, which you see is conferred by God as a gift." He says this, just as if concupiscence of the flesh had been previously wanting in them, and as if God had bestowed it upon them. No doubt it was inherent in this body of death; that fecundity, however, was wanting of which God is the author; and this was actually given whensoever God willed to confer the gift. Be it, however, far from us to affirm, what he thought we meant to say, that Isaac was begotten without the heat of sexual union.

CHAPTER 24 [XI.]

WHAT COVENANT OF GOD THE NEW-BORN BABE BREAKS. WHAT WAS THE VALUE OF CIRCUMCISION

But let him inform us how it was that his soul would be cut off from his people if he had not been circumcised on the eighth day. How could he have so sinned, how so offended God, as to be punished for the neglect of others towards him with so severe a sentence, had there been no original sin in the case? For thus ran the commandment of God concerning the circumcision of infants: “The uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised on the eighth day, his soul shall be cut off from his people; because he hath broken my covenant.” Let him tell us, if he can, how that child broke God’s covenant,—an innocent babe, so far as he was personally concerned, of eight days’ age; and yet there is by no means any falsehood uttered here by God or Holy Scripture. The fact is, the covenant of God which he then broke was not this which commanded circumcision, but that which forbade the tree; when “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all have sinned.” And in his case the expiation of this was signified by the circumcision of the eighth day, that is, by the sacrament of the Mediator who was to be incarnate. For it was through this same faith in Christ, who was to come in the flesh, and was to die for us, and on the third day (which coming after the seventh or Sabbath day, was to be the eighth) to rise again, that even holy men were saved of old. For “He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.” Ever since circumcision was instituted amongst the people of God, which was at that time the sign of the righteousness of faith, it availed also to signify the cleansing even in infants of the original and primitive sin, just as baptism in like manner from the time of its institution began to be of avail for the renewal of man. Not that there was no justification by faith before circumcision; for even when he was still in uncircumcision, Abraham was himself justified by faith, being the father of those nations which should also imitate his faith. In former times, however, the sacramental mystery of justification by faith lay concealed in every mode. Still it was the self-same faith in the Mediator which saved the saints of old, both small and great—not the old covenant, “which gendereth to bondage;” not the law, which was not so given as to be able to give life; but the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. For as we believe that Christ has come in the flesh, so they believed that He was to come; as, again, we believe that He has died, so they believed that He would die; and as we believe that He has risen from the dead, so they believed that He would rise again; whilst both we and they believe alike, that He will hereafter come to judge the quick and the dead. Let not this man, then, throw any hindrance in the way of its salvation upon human nature, by setting up a bad defence of its merits; because we are all born under sin, and are delivered therefrom by the only One who was born without sin.

CHAPTER 25 [XII.]

AUGUSTIN NOT THE DEVISER OF ORIGINAL SIN

“This sexual connection of bodies,” he says, “together with the ardour, with the pleasure, with the emission of seed, was made by God, and is praiseworthy on its own account, and is therefore to be approved; it, moreover, became sometimes even a great gift to pious men.” He distinctly and severally repeated the phrases, “with ardour,” “with pleasure,” “with emission of seed.” He did not, however, venture to say, “with lust.” Why is this, if it be not that he is ashamed to name what he does not blush to praise? A gift, indeed, for pious men is the prosperous propagation of children; but not that shame-producing excitement of the members, which our nature would not feel were it in a sound state, although corrupted nature now experiences it. On this account, indeed, it is that he who is born of it requires to be born again, in order that he may be a member of Christ; and that he of whom he is born, even though he be already born again, wants to be freed from that which exists in this body of death by reason of the law of sin. Now since this is the case, how is it he goes on to say, “You must, therefore, of necessity confess that the original sin which you had devised is done away with”? It was not I who devised the original sin, which the catholic faith holds from ancient times; but you, who deny it, are undoubtedly an innovating heretic. In the judgment of God, all are in the devil’s power, born in sin, unless they are regenerated in Christ.

CHAPTER 26 [XIII.]

THE CHILD IN NO SENSE FORMED BY CONCUPISCENCE

But as he was speaking of Abraham and Sarah, he goes on to say: “If, indeed, you were to affirm that the natural use was strong in them, and there was no offspring, my answer will be: Whom the Creator promised, the Creator also gave; the child which is born is not the work of cohabitation, but of God. He, indeed, who made the first man of the dust, fashions all men out of seed. As, therefore, the dust of the earth, which was taken as the material, was not the author of man; so likewise that power of sexual pleasure which forms and commingles the seminal elements does not complete the entire process of man’s making, but rather presents to God, out of the treasures of nature, material with which He vouchsafes to make the human being.” Now the whole of this statement of his, except where he says, that the seminal elements are formed and commingled by sexual pleasure, would be correctly expressed by him were he only earnest in making it to defend the catholic sense. To us, however, who are fully aware what he strives to make out of it, he speaks indeed correctly in a perverse manner. The exceptional statement to the general truth, which I do not deny belongs to this passage, is untrue for this reason, because the pleasure in question of carnal concupiscence does not form the seminal elements. These are already in the body, and are formed by the same true God who created the body itself. They do not receive their existence from the libidinous pleasure, but are excited and emitted in company with it. Whether, indeed, such pleasure accompanies the commingling of the seminal elements of the two sexes in the womb, is a question which perhaps women may be able to determine from their inmost feelings; but it is improper for us to push an idle curiosity so far. That concupiscence, however, which we have to be ashamed of, and the shame of which has given to our secret members their shameful designation, pudenda, had no existence in the body during its life in paradise before the entrance of sin; but it began to exist “in the body of this death” after sin, the rebellion of the members retaliating man’s own disobedience. Without this concupiscence it was quite possible to effect the function of the wedded pair in the procreation of children: just as many a laborious work is accomplished by the compliant operation of our other limbs, without any lascivious heat; for they are simply moved by the direction of the will, not excited by the ardour of concupiscence.

CHAPTER 27

THE PELAGIANS ARGUE THAT GOD SOMETIMES CLOSES THE WOMB IN ANGER, AND OPENS IT WHEN APPEASED

Carefully consider the rest of his remarks: “This likewise,” says he, “is confirmed by the apostle’s authority. For when the blessed Paul spoke of the resurrection of the dead, he said, “Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened.” And afterwards, But God giveth it a body as it pleaseth Him, and to every seed its own body.’ If, therefore, God,” says he, “has assigned to human seed, as to every thing else, its own proper body, which no wise or pious man will deny, how will you prove that any person is born guilty? Do, I beg of you, reflect with what a noose this assertion of natural sin is choked. But come,” he says, “deal more gently with yourself, I pray you. Believe me, God made even you: it must, however, be confessed, that a serious error has infected you. For what profaner opinion can be broached than that either God did not make man, or else that He made him for the devil; or, at any rate, that the devil framed God’s image, that is, man,—which clearly is a statement not more absurd than impious? Is then,” says he, “God so poor in resources, so lacking in all sense of propriety, as not to have had aught which He could confer on holy men as their reward, except what the devil, after making them his dupes, might infuse into them for their vitiation? Would you like to know, however, that even in the case of those who are no saints, God can be proved to have bestowed this power of procreation of children? When Abraham, struck with fear among a foreign nation, said that Sarah, his wife, was his sister, it is said that Abimelech, the king of the country, abducted her for a night’s enjoyment of her. But God, who had the holy woman’s honour in His keeping, appeared to Abimelech in his sleep, and restrained the royal audacity; threatening him with death if he went to the length of violating the wife. Then Abimelech said: Wilt thou, O Lord, slay an innocent and righteous nation? Did they not tell me that they were brother and sister? Therefore Abimelech arose early in the morning, and took a thousand pieces of silver, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and women-servants, and gave them to Abraham, and sent away his wife untouched. But Abraham prayed unto God for Abimelech; and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid-servants.’“ Now why he narrated all this at so great a length, you may find in these few words which he added: “God,” he says, “at the prayer of Abraham, restored their potency of generation, which had been taken away from the wombs of even the meanest servants; because God had closed up every womb in the house of Abimelech. Consider now,” says he, “whether that ought to be called a natural evil which sometimes God when angry takes away, and when appeased restores. He," says he, "makes the children both of the pious and of the ungodly, inasmuch as the circumstance of their being parents appertains to that nature which rejoices in God as its Author, whilst the fact of their impiety belongs to the depravity of their desires, and this comes to every person whatever as the consequence of free will."

CHAPTER 28 [XIV.]

AUGUSTIN'S ANSWER TO THIS ARGUMENT. ITS DEALING WITH SCRIPTURE

Now to this lengthy statement of his we have to say in answer, that, in the passages which he has quoted from the sacred writings, there is nothing said about that shameful lust, which we say did not exist in the body of our first parents in their blessedness, when they were naked and were not ashamed. The first passage from the apostle was spoken of the seeds of corn, which first die in order to be quickened. For some reason or other, he was unwilling to complete the verse for his quotation. All he adduces from it is: "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened;" but the apostle adds, "except it die." This writer, however, so far as I can judge, wished this passage, which treats only of corn seeds, to be understood of human seed, by such as read it without either understanding the Holy Scriptures or recollecting them. Indeed, he not merely curtailed this particular sentence, by omitting the clause, "except it die," but he omitted the following words, in which the apostle explained of what seeds he was speaking; for the apostle adds: "And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but the bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain." This he omitted, and closed up his context with what the apostle then writes: "But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed its own body;" just as if the apostle spoke of man in cohabitation when he said, "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened," with a view to our understanding of human seed, that it is quickened by God, not by man in cohabitation begetting children. For he had previously said: "Sexual pleasure does not complete the entire process of man's making, but rather presents to God, out of the treasures of nature, material with which He vouchsafes to make the human being." He then added the quotation, as if the apostle affirmed as follows: Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened,—quickened, that is, by thyself; but God forms the human being out of thy seed. As if the apostle had not said the intermediate words, which this writer chose to pass over; and as if the apostle's aim was to speak of human seed thus: "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened; but God giveth to the seed a body such as pleaseth Him, and to every seed its own body." Indeed, after the apostle's words, he introduces remarks of his own to this effect: "If, therefore, God has assigned to human seed, as to everything else, its own proper body, which no wise or pious man will deny;" quite as if the apostle in the passage in question spoke of human seed.

CHAPTER 29

THE SAME CONTINUED. AUGUSTIN ALSO ASSERTS THAT GOD FORMS MAN AT BIRTH

Though I have given special attention to the point, I have failed to discover what assistance he could obtain from this deceitful use of Scripture, except that he wanted to produce the apostle as a witness, and by him to prove, what we also assert, that God forms man of human seed. And inasmuch as no passage directly occurred to him, he deceitfully manipulated this particular one; fearing no doubt that, if the apostle should chance to seem to have spoken of corn seeds, and not of human, in this passage, we should have suggested to us at once by such procedure of his, how to refute him: not indeed as the pure-minded advocate of a chastened will, but as the impudent proclaimer of a profligate voluptuousness. But from the very seeds, forsooth, which the farmers sow in their fields he can be refuted. For why can we not suppose that God could have granted to man in his happy state in paradise, the same course with regard to his own seed which we see granted to the seeds of corn, in such wise that the former might be sown without any shameful lust, the members of generation simply obeying the inclination of the will; just as the latter is sown without any shameful lust, the hands of the husbandman merely moving in obedience to his will? There being, indeed, this difference, that the desire of begetting children in the parent is a nobler one than that which characterizes the farmer, of filling his barns. Then, again, why might not the almighty Creator, with His incontaminable ubiquity, and his power of creating from human seed just what it pleased Him, have operated in women, with respect to what He even now makes, in the self-same manner as He operates in the ground with corn seeds according to His will, making blessed mothers conceive without lustful passion, and bring forth children without parturient pains, inasmuch as there was not (in that state of happiness, and in the body which was not as yet the body of this death, but rather of that life) in woman when receiving seed anything to produce shame, as there was nothing when giving birth to offspring to cause pain? Whoever refuses to believe this, or is unwilling to have it supposed that, while men previous to any sin lived in that happy state of paradise, such a condition as that which we have sketched could not have been permitted in God’s will and kindness, must be regarded as the lover of shameful pleasure, rather than the encomiast of desirable fecundity.

CHAPTER 30 [XV.]

THE CASE OF ABIMELECH AND HIS HOUSE EXAMINED

Then, again, as to the passage which he has adduced from the inspired history concerning Abimelech, and God’s choosing to close up every womb in his household that the women should not bear children, and afterwards opening them that they might become fruitful, what is all this to the point? What has it to do with that shameful concupiscence which is now the question in dispute? Did God, then, deprive those women of this feeling, and give it to them again just when He liked? The punishment however, was that they were unable to bear children, and the blessing that they were able to bear them, after the manner of this corruptible flesh. For God would not confer such a blessing upon this body of death, as only that body of life in paradise could have had before sin entered; that is, the process of conceiving without the prurience of lust, and of bearing children without excruciating pain. But why should we not suppose, since, indeed, Scripture says that every womb was closed, that this took place with something of pain, so that the women were unable to bear cohabitation, and that God inflicted this pain in His wrath, and removed it in His mercy? For if lust was to be taken away as an impediment to begetting offspring, it ought to have been taken away from the men, not from the women. For a woman might perform her share in cohabitation by her will, even if the lust ceased by which she is stimulated, provided it were not absent from the man for exciting him; unless, perhaps (as Scripture informs us that even Abimelech himself was healed), he would tell us that virile concupiscence was restored to him. If, however, it were true that he had lost this, what necessity was there that he should be warned by God to hold no connection with Abraham's wife? The truth is, Abimelech is said to have been healed, because his household was cured of the affliction which smote it.

CHAPTER 31 [XVI.]

WHY GOD PROCEEDS TO CREATE HUMAN BEINGS, WHO HE KNOWS WILL BE BORN IN SIN

Let us now look at those three clauses of his, than which three, he says, nothing more profane could possibly be uttered: "Either God did not make man, or else He made him for the devil; or, at any rate, the devil framed God's image, that is, man." Now, the first and the last of these sentences, even he himself must allow, if he be not reckless and perverse, were never uttered by us. The dispute is confined to that which he puts second between the other two. In respect of this, he is so far mistaken as to suppose that we had said that God made man for the devil; as if, in the case of human beings whom God creates of human parents, His care and purpose and provision were, that by means of His workmanship the devil should have as slaves those whom he is unable to make for himself. God forbid that any sort of pious belief, however childish, should ever entertain such a sentiment as this! Of His own goodness God has made man—the first without sin, all others under sin—for the purposes of His own profound thoughts. For just as He knew full well what to do with reference to the malice of the devil himself, and what He does is just and good, however unjust and evil he is, about whom He takes His measures; and just as He was not unwilling to create him because He foresaw that he would be evil; so in regard to the entire human race, though not a man of it is born without the taint of sin, He who is supremely good Himself is always working out good, making some men, as it were, "vessels of mercy," whom grace distinguishes from those who are "vessels of wrath;" whilst He makes others, as it were, "vessels of wrath," that He may make known the riches of His glory towards the vessels of mercy. Let, then, this objector go and contest the point against the apostle, whose words I use; nay, against the very Potter, whom the apostle forbids us answering again, in the well-known words: “Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God! Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?” Well now, will this man contend that the vessels of wrath are not under the dominion of the devil? or else, because they are under this dominion, are they made by another creator than He who makes the vessels of mercy? Or does He make them of other material, and not out of the self-same lump? Here, then, he may object, and say: “Therefore God makes these vessels for the devil.” As if God knew not how to make such a use of even these for the furtherance of His own good and righteous works, as He makes of the very devil himself.

CHAPTER 32 [XVII.]

GOD NOT THE AUTHOR OF THE EVIL IN THOSE WHOM HE CREATES

Then, does God feed the children of perdition, the goats on His left hand, for the devil and nourish and clothe them for the devil “because He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust”? He creates, then, the evil just in the same way as He feeds and nourishes the evil; because what He bestows on them by creating them appertains to the goodness of nature; and the growth which He gives them by food and nourishment, He bestows on them, of course, as a kindly help, not to their evil character, but to that same good nature which He in His goodness created. For in as far as they are human beings—this is a good of that nature whose author and maker is God; but in as far as they are born with sin and so destined to perdition unless they are born again, they belong to the seed which was cursed from the beginning, by the fault of the primitive disobedience. This fault, however, is turned to good account by the Maker of even the vessels of wrath, that He may make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy: and that no one may attribute to any merits of his own, pertaining as he does to the self-same mass, his deliverance through grace; but “he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

CHAPTER 33 [XVIII.]

THOUGH GOD MAKES US, WE PERISH UNLESS HE RE-MAKES US IN CHRIST

From this most true and firmly-established principle of the apostolic and catholic faith the writer before us departs in company with the Pelagians. He will not have it that men are born under the dominion of the devil, lest infants be carried to Christ to be delivered from the power of darkness, and to be translated into His kingdom. Thus he becomes the accuser of the Church which is spread over the world; into this Church everywhere infants, when to be baptized, are first exorcised, for no other reason than that the prince of this world may be cast out of them. For by him must they be necessarily possessed, as vessels of wrath, since they are born of Adam, unless they be born again in Christ, and transferred through grace as vessels of mercy into His kingdom. In his attack, however, upon this most firmly-established truth, he would avoid the appearance of an assault upon the entire Church of Christ. Accordingly, he limits his appeal to me alone, and in the tone of reproof and admonition he says: “But God made even you, though it must be confessed that a serious error has infected you.” Well now, I thankfully acknowledge that God did make even me; and still I must have perished with the vessels of wrath, if He had only made me of Adam, and had not re-made me in Christ. Possessed, however, as this man is with the heresy of Pelagius, he does not believe this: if, indeed, he persists in so great an error to the very end, then not he, but catholics, will be able to see the character and extent of the error which has not simply infected, but absolutely destroyed him.

CHAPTER 34 [XIX.]

THE PELAGIANS ARGUE THAT COHABITATION RIGHTLY USED IS A GOOD, AND WHAT IS BORN FROM IT IS GOOD

I request your attention now to the following words. He says, “That children, however, who are conceived in wedlock are by nature good, we may learn from the apostle’s words, when he speaks of men who, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust, men with men working together that which is disgraceful. Here,” says he, “the apostle shows the use of the woman to be both natural and, in its way, laudable; the abuse consisting in the exercise of one’s own will in opposition to the decent use of the institution. Deservedly then,” says he, “in those who make a right use thereof, concupiscence is commended in its kind and mode; whilst the excess of it, in which abandoned persons indulge, is punished. Indeed, at the very time when God punished the abuse in Sodom with His judgment of fire, He invigorated the generative powers of Abraham and Sarah, which had become impotent through old age. If, therefore,” he goes on to say, “you think that fault must be found with the strength of the generative organs, because the Sodomites were steeped in sin thereby, you will have also to censure such created things as bread and wine, since Holy Scripture informs us that they sinned also in the abuse of these gifts. For the Lord, by the mouth of His prophet Ezekiel, says: These, moreover, were the sins of thy sister Sodom; in their pride, she and her children overflowed in fulness of bread and abundance of wine; and they helped not the hand of the poor and needy.’ Choose, therefore,” says he, “which alternative you would rather have: either impute to the work of God the sexual connection of human bodies, or account such created things as bread and wine to be equally evil. But if you should prefer this latter conclusion, you prove yourself to be a Manichean. The truth, however, is this: he who observes moderation in natural concupiscence uses a good thing well; but he who does not observe moderation, abuses a good thing. What means your statement, then,” he asks, “when you say that the good of marriage is no more impeachable on account of the original sin which is derived herefrom, than the evil of adultery and fornication can be excused because of the natural good which is born of them’? In these words,” says he, “you conceded what you had denied, and what you had conceded you nullified; and you aim at nothing so much as to be unintelligible. Show me any bodily marriage without sexual connection. Else impose some one name on this operation, and designate the conjugal union as either a good or an evil. You answer, no doubt, that you have already defined marriages to be good. Well then, if marriage is good,—if the human being is the good fruit of marriage; if this fruit, being God’s work, cannot be evil, born as it is by good agency out of good,—where is the original evil which has been set aside by so many prior admissions?”

CHAPTER 35 [XX.]

HE ANSWERS THE ARGUMENTS OF JULIANUS. WHAT IS THE NATURAL USE OF THE WOMAN? WHAT IS THE UNNATURAL USE?

My answer to this challenge is, that not only the children of wedlock, but also those of adultery, are a good work in so far as they are the work of God, by whom they are created: but as concerns original sin, they are all born under condemnation of the first Adam; not only those who are born in adultery, but likewise such as are born in wedlock, unless they be regenerated in the second Adam, which is Christ. As to what the apostle says of the wicked, that "leaving the natural use of the woman, the men burned in their lust one toward another: men with men working that which is unseemly;" he did not speak of the conjugal use, but the "natural use," wishing us to understand how it comes to pass that by means of the members created for the purpose the two sexes can combine for generation. Thus it follows, that even when a man unites with a harlot to use these members, the use is a natural one. It is not, however, commendable, but rather culpable. But as regards any part of the body which is not meant for generative purposes, should a man use even his own wife in it, it is against nature and flagitious. Indeed, the same apostle had previously said concerning women: "Even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature;" and then concerning men he added, that they worked that which is unseemly by leaving the natural use of the woman. Therefore, by the phrase in question, "the natural use," it is not meant to praise conjugal connection; but thereby are denoted those flagitious deeds which are more unclean and criminal than even men's use of women, which, even if unlawful, is nevertheless natural.

CHAPTER 36 [XXI.]

GOD MADE NATURE GOOD: THE SAVIOUR RESTORES IT WHEN CORRUPTED

Now we do not reprehend bread and wine because some men are luxurious and drunkards, any more than we disapprove of gold because of the greedy and avaricious. Wherefore on the same principle we do not censure the honourable connection between husband and wife, because of the shame-causing lust of bodies. For the former would have been quite possible before any antecedent commission of sin, and by it the united pair would not have been made to blush; whereas the latter arose after the perpetration of sin, and they were obliged to hide it, from very shame. Accordingly, in all united pairs ever since, however well and lawfully they have used this evil, there has been a permanent necessity of avoiding the sight of man in any work of this kind, and thus acknowledging what caused inevitable shame, though a good thing would certainly cause no man to be ashamed. In this way we have two distinct facts insensibly introduced to our notice: the good of that laudable union of the sexes for the purpose of generating children; and the evil of that shameful lust, in consequence of which the offspring must be regenerated in order to escape condemnation. The man, therefore, who, though with the lust which causes shame, joins in lawful cohabitation, turns an evil to good account; whereas he who joins in an unlawful cohabitation uses an evil badly; for that is more correctly called evil than good, at which both bad and good alike blush. We do better to believe him who has said, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing," rather than him who calls that good, by which he is so conformed that he admits it to be evil; but if he feels no shame, he adds the worse evil of impudence. Rightly then did we declare that "the good of marriage is no more impeachable because of the original sin which is derived therefrom, than the evil of adultery and fornication can be excused, because of the natural good which is born of them:" since the human nature which is born, whether of wedlock or of adultery, is the work of God. Now if this nature were an evil, it ought not to have been born; if it had not evil, it would not have to be regenerated: and (that I may combine the two cases in one and the same predicate) if human nature were an evil thing, it would not have to be saved; if it had not in it any evil, it would not have to be saved. He, therefore, who contends that nature is not good, says that the Maker of the creature is not good; whilst he who will have it, that nature has no evil in it, deprives it in its corrupted condition of a merciful Saviour. From this, then, it follows, that in the birth of human beings neither fornication is to be excused on account of the good which is formed out of it by the good Creator, nor is marriage to be impeached by reason of the evil which has to be healed in it by the merciful Saviour.

CHAPTER 37 [XXII.]

IF THERE IS NO MARRIAGE WITHOUT COHABITATION, SO THERE IS NO COHABITATION WITHOUT SHAME

“Show me,” he says, “any bodily marriage without sexual connection.” I do not show him any bodily marriage without sexual connection; but then, neither does he show me any case of sexual connection which is without shame. In paradise, however, if sin had not preceded, there would not have been, indeed, generation without union of the sexes, but this union would certainly have been without shame; for in the sexual union there would have been a quiet acquiescence of the members, not a lust of the flesh productive of shame. Matrimony, therefore, is a good, in which the human being is born after orderly conception; the fruit, too, of matrimony is good, as being the very human being which is thus born; sin, however, is an evil with which every man is born. Now it was God who made and still makes man; but “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all sinned.”

CHAPTER 38 [XXIII.]

JOVINIAN USED FORMERLY TO CALL CATHOLICS MANICHEANS; THE ARIANS ALSO USED TO CALL CATHOLICS SABELLIANS

“By your new mode of controversy,” says he, “you both profess to be a catholic and patronize Manichaeus, inasmuch as you designate matrimony both as a great good and a great evil.” Now he is utterly ignorant of what he says, or pretends to be ignorant. Or else he does not understand what we say, or does not wish it to be understood. But if he does not understand, he is impeded by the pre-occupation of error; or if he does not wish our meaning to be understood, then obstinacy is the fault with which he defends his error. Jovinian, too, who endeavoured a few years ago to found a new heresy, used to declare that the catholics patronized the Manicheans, because in opposition to him they preferred holy virginity to marriage. But this man is sure to reply, that he does not agree with Jovinian in his indifference about marriage and virginity. I do not myself say that this is their opinion; still these new heretics must allow, by the fact of Jovinian’s playing off the Manicheans upon the catholics, that the expedient is not a novel one. We then declare that marriage is a good, not an evil. But just as the Arians charge us with being Sabellians, although we do not say that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one and the same, as the Sabellians hold; but affirm that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost have one and the same nature, as the catholics believe: so do the Pelagians cast the Manicheans in our teeth, although we do not declare marriage to be an evil, as the Manicheans pretend, but affirm that evil accrued to the first man and woman, that is to say, to the first married pair, and from them passed on to all men, as the catholics hold. As, however, the Arians, while avoiding the Sabellians, fall into worse company, because they have had the audacity to divide not the Persons of the Trinity, but the natures; so the Pelagians, in their efforts to escape from the pestilent error of the Manicheans, by taking the opposite extreme, are convicted of entertaining worse sentiments than the Manicheans themselves touching the fruit of matrimony, inasmuch as they believe that infants stand in no need of Christ as their Physician.

CHAPTER 39 [XXIV.]

MAN BORN OF WHATEVER PARENTAGE IS SINFUL AND CAPABLE OF REDEMPTION

He then says: “You conclude that a human being, if born of fornication, is not guilty; and if born in wedlock, is not innocent. Your assertion, therefore, amounts to this, that natural good may possibly subsist from adulterous connections, while original sin is actually derived from marriage.” Well now, he here attempts, but in vain before an intelligent reader, to give a wrong turn to words which are correct enough. Far be it from us to say, that a human being, if born in fornication, is not guilty. But we do affirm, that a human being, whether he be born in wedlock or in fornication, is in some respect good, because of the Author of nature, God; we add, however, that he derives some evil by reason of original sin. Our statement, therefore, “that natural good can subsist even from adulterous parentage, but that original sin is derived even from marriage,” does not amount to what he endeavours to make of it, that one born in adultery is not guilty, nor innocent when born in wedlock; but that one who is generated in either condition is guilty, because of original sin; and that the offspring of either state may be freed by regeneration, because of the good of nature.

CHAPTER 40 [XXV.]

AUGUSTIN DECLINES THE DILEMMA OFFERED HIM

“One of these propositions,” says he, “is true, the other false.” My reply is as brief as the allegation: Both are really true, neither is false. “It is true,” he goes on to say, “that the sin of adultery cannot be excused by reason of the man who is born of it; inasmuch as the sin which adulterers commit, pertains to corruption of the will; but the offspring which they produce tends to the praise of fecundity. If one were to sow wheat which had been stolen, the crop which springs up is none the worse. Of course,” says he, “I blame the thief, but I praise the corn. So I pronounce him innocent who is born of the generous fruitfulness of the seed; even as the apostle puts it: God giveth it a body, as it pleases Him; and to every seed its own body;’ but, at the same time, I condemn the flagitious man who has committed his adulterous sin in his perverse use of the divine appointment.”

CHAPTER 41 [XXVI.]

THE PELAGIANS ARGUE THAT ORIGINAL SIN CANNOT COME THROUGH MARRIAGE IF MARRIAGE IS GOOD

After this he proceeds with the following words: “Certainly if evil is contracted from marriage, it may be blamed, nay, cannot be excused; and you place under the devil’s power its work and fruit, because everything which is the cause of evil is itself without good. The human being, however, who is born of wedlock owes his origin not to the reproaches of wedlock, but to its seminal elements: the cause of these, however, lies in the condition of bodies; and whosoever makes a bad use of these bodies, deals a blow at the good desert thereof, not at their nature. It is therefore clear,” argues he, “that the good is not the cause of the evil. If, therefore,” he continues, “original evil is derived even from marriage, the cause of the evil is the compact of marriage; and that must needs be evil by which and from which the evil fruit has made its appearance; even as the Lord says in the Gospel: A tree is known by its fruits.’ How then,” he asks, “do you think yourself worthy of attention, when you say that marriage is good, and yet declare that nothing but evil proceeds from it? It is evident, then, that marriages are guilty, since original sin is deduced from them; and they are indefensible, too, unless their fruit be proved innocent. But they are defended, and pronounced good; therefore their fruit is proved to be innocent.”

CHAPTER 42

THE PELAGIANS TRY TO GET RID OF ORIGINAL SIN BY THEIR PRAISE OF GOD’S WORKS; MARRIAGE, IN ITS NATURE AND BY ITS INSTITUTION, IS NOT THE CAUSE OF SIN

I have an answer ready for all this; but before I give it, I wish the reader carefully to notice, that the result of the opinions of these persons is, that no Saviour is necessary for infants, whom they deem to be entirely without any sins to be saved from. This vast perversion of the truth, so hostile to God’s great grace, which is given through our Lord Jesus Christ, who “came to seek and to save what was lost,” tries to insinuate its way into the hearts of the unintelligent by eulogizing the works of God; that is, by its eulogy of human nature, of human seed, of marriage, of sexual intercourse, of the fruits of matrimony—which are all of them good things. I will not say that he adds the praise of lust; because he too is ashamed even to name it, so that it is something else, and not it, which he seems to praise. By this method of his, not distinguishing between the evils which have accrued to nature and the goodness of nature’s very self, he does not, indeed, show it to be sound (because that is untrue), but he does not permit its diseased condition to be healed. And, therefore, that first proposition of ours, to the effect that the good thing, even the human being, which is born of adultery, does not excuse the sin of adulterous connection, he allows to be true; and this point, which occasions no question to arise between us, he even defends and strengthens (as he well may) by his similitude of the thief who sows the seed which he stole, and out of which there arises a really good harvest. Our other proposition, however, that “the good of marriage cannot be blamed for the original sin which is derived from it,” he will not admit to be true; if, indeed, he assented to it, he would not be a Pelagian heretic, but a catholic Christian. “Certainly,” says he, “if evil arises from marriage, it may be blamed, nay, cannot be excused; and you place its work and fruit under the devil’s power, because everything which is the cause of evil is itself without good.” And in addition to this, he contrived other arguments to show that good could not possibly be the cause of evil; and from this he drew the inference, that marriage, which is a good, is not the cause of evil; and that consequently from it no man could be born in a sinful state, and having need of a Saviour: just as if we said that marriage is the cause of sin, though it is true that the human being which is born in wedlock is not born without sin. Marriage was instituted not for the purpose of sinning, but of producing children. Accordingly the Lord's blessing on the married state ran thus: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth." The sin, however, which is derived to children from marriage does not belong to marriage, but to the evil which accrues to the human agents, from whose union marriage comes into being. The truth is, both the evil of shameful lust can exist without marriage, and marriage might have been without it. It appertains, however, to the condition of the body (not of that life, but) of this death, that marriage cannot exist without it though it may exist without marriage. Of course that lust of the flesh which causes shame has existence out of the married state, whenever it urges men to the commission of adultery, chambering and uncleanness, so utterly hostile to the purity of marriage; or again, when it does not commit any of these things, because the human agent gives no permission or assent to their commission, but still rises and is set in motion and creates disturbance, and (especially in dreams) effects the likeness of its own veritable work, and reaches the end of its own emotion. Well, now, this is an evil which is not even in the married state actually an evil of marriage; but it has this apparatus all ready in the body of this death, even against its own will, which is indispensable no doubt for the accomplishment of that which it does will. The evil in question, therefore, does not accrue to marriage from its own institution, which was blessed; but entirely from the circumstance that sin entered into the world by one man, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all sinned.

CHAPTER 43

THE GOOD TREE IN THE GOSPEL THAT CANNOT BRING FORTH EVIL FRUIT, DOES NOT MEAN MARRIAGE

What, then, does he mean by saying, "A tree is known by its fruits," on the ground of our reading that the Lord spake thus in the Gospel? Was, then, the Lord speaking of this question in these words, and not rather of men's two wills, the good and the evil, calling one of these the good tree, and the other the corrupt tree, inasmuch as good works spring out of a good will, and evil ones out of an evil will—the converse being impossible, good works out of an evil will, and evil ones out of a good will? If, however, we were to suppose marriage to be the good tree, according to the Gospel simile which he has mentioned, then, of course, we must on the other hand assume fornication to be the corrupt tree. Wherefore, if a human being is said to be the fruit of marriage, in the sense of the good fruit of a good tree, then undoubtedly a human being could never have been born in fornication. "For a corrupt tree bringeth not forth good fruit." Once more, if he were to say that not adultery must be supposed to occupy the place of the tree, but rather human nature, of which man is born, then in this way not even marriage can stand for the tree, but only the human nature of which man is born. His simile, therefore, taken from the Gospel avails him nothing in elucidating this question, because marriage is not the cause of the sin which is transmitted in the natural birth, and atoned for in the new birth; but the voluntary transgression of the first man is the cause of original sin. "You repeat," says he, "your allegation, Just as sin, from whatever source it is derived to infants, is the work of the devil, so man, howsoever he be born, is the work of God.'" Yes, I said this, and most truly too; and if this man were not a Pelagian, but a catholic, he too would have nothing else to avow in the catholic faith.

CHAPTER 44 [XXVII.]

THE PELAGIANS ARGUE THAT IF SIN COMES BY BIRTH, ALL MARRIED PEOPLE DESERVE CONDEMNATION

What, then, is his object when he inquires of us, "By what means sin may be found in an infant, through the will, or through marriage, or through its parents"? He speaks, indeed, in such a way as if he had an answer to all these questions, and as if by clearing all of sin together he would have nothing remain in the infant whence sin could be found. I beg your attention to his very words: "Through what," says he, "is sin found in an infant? Through the will? But there has never been one in him? Through marriage? But this appertains to the parents' work, of whom you had previously declared that in this action they had not sinned; though it appears from your subsequent words that you did not make this concession truly. Marriage, therefore," he says, "must be condemned, since it furnished the cause of the evil. Yet marriage only indicates the work of personal agents. The parents, therefore, who by their coming together afforded occasion for the sin, are properly deserving of the condemnation. It does not then admit of doubt," says he, "any longer, if we are to follow your opinion, that married persons are handed over to eternal punishment, it being by their means brought about that the devil has come to exercise dominion over men. And what becomes of what you just before had said, that man was the work of God? Because if through their birth it happens that evil is in men, and through the evil that the devil has power over men, so in fact you declare the devil to be the author of men, from whom comes their origin at birth. If, however, you believe that man is made by God, and that husband and wife are innocent, see how impossible is your standpoint, that original sin is derived from them."

CHAPTER 45

ANSWER TO THIS ARGUMENT: THE APOSTLE SAYS WE ALL SINNED IN ONE

Now, there is an answer for him to all these questions given by the apostle, who censures neither the infant's will, which is not yet matured in him for sinning, nor marriage, which, as such, has not only its institution, but its blessing also, from God; nor parents, so far as they are parents, who are united together properly and lawfully for the procreation of children; but he says, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for in him all have sinned." Now, if these persons would only receive this statement with catholic hearts and ears, they would not have rebellious feelings against the grace and faith of Christ, nor would they vainly endeavour to convert to their own particular and heretical sense these very clear and manifest words of the apostle, when they assert that the purport of the passage is to this effect: that Adam was the first to sin, and that any one who wished afterwards to commit sin found an example for sinning in him; so that sin, you must know, did not pass from this one upon all men by birth, but by the imitation of this one. Whereas it is certain that if the apostle meant this imitation to be here understood, he would have said that sin had entered into the world and passed upon all men, not by one man, but rather by the devil. For of the devil it is written: “They that are on his side do imitate him.” He used the phrase “by one man,” from whom the generation of men, of course, had its beginning, in order to show us that original sin had passed upon all men by generation.

CHAPTER 46

THE REIGN OF DEATH, WHAT IT IS; THE FIGURE OF THE FUTURE ADAM; HOW ALL MEN ARE JUSTIFIED THROUGH CHRIST

But what else is meant even by the apostle’s subsequent words? For after he had said the above, he added, “For until the law sin was in the world,” as much as to say that not even the law was able to take away sin. “But sin,” adds he, “was not imputed when there was no law.” It existed then, but was not imputed, for it was not set forth so that it might be imputed. It is on the same principle, indeed, that he says in another passage: “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” “Nevertheless,” says he, “death reigned from Adam to Moses;” that is, as he had already expressed it, “until the law.” Not that there was no sin after Moses, but because even the law, which was given by Moses, was unable to deprive death of its power, which, of course, reigns only by sin. Its reign, too, is such as to plunge mortal man even into that second death which is to endure for evermore. “Death reigned,” but over whom? “Even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of Him that was to come.” Of whom that was to come, if not Christ? And in what sort a figure, except in the way of contrariety? which he elsewhere briefly expresses: “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” The one condition was in one, even as the other condition was in the other; this is the figure. But this figure is not conformable in every respect; accordingly the apostle, following up the same idea, added, “But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.” But why “hath it much more abounded,” except it be that all who are delivered through Christ suffer temporal death on Adam’s account, but have everlasting life in store for the sake of Christ Himself? “And not as it was by one that sinned,” says he, “so is the gift: for the judgment was from one to condemnation, but the free gift is from many offences unto justification.” “By one” what, but offence? since it is added, “the free gift is from many offences.” Let these objectors tell us how it can be “by one offence unto condemnation,” unless it be that even the one original sin which has passed over unto all men is sufficient for condemnation? Whereas the free gift delivers from many offences to justification, because it not only cancels the one offence, which is derived from the primal sin, but all others also which are added in every individual man by the motion of his own will. “For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace and righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ. Therefore, by the offence of one upon all men to condemnation; so by the righteousness of one upon all men unto justification of life.” Let them after this persist in their vain imaginations, and maintain that one man did not hand on sin by propagation, but only set the example of committing it. How is it, then, that by one’s offence judgment comes on all men to condemnation, and not rather by each man’s own numerous sins, unless it be that even if there were but that one sin, it is sufficient, without the addition of any more, to lead to condemnation,—as, indeed, it does lead all who die in infancy who are born of Adam, without being born again in Christ? Why, then, does he, when he refuses to hear the apostle, ask us for an answer to his question, “By what means may sin be discovered in an infant,—through the will, or through marriage, or through its parents?” Let him listen in silence, and hear by what means sin may be discovered in an infant. “By the offence of one,” says the apostle, “upon all men to condemnation.” He said, moreover, all to condemnation through Adam, and all to justification through Christ: not, of course, that Christ removes to life all those who die in Adam; but he said “all” and “all,” because, as without Adam no one goes to death, so without Christ no man to life. Just as we say of a teacher of letters, when he is alone in a town: This man teaches all their learning; not because all the inhabitants take lessons, but because no man who learns at all is taught by any but him. Indeed, the apostle afterwards designates as many those whom he had previously described as all, meaning the self-same persons by the two different terms. “For,” says he, “as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

CHAPTER 47

THE SCRIPTURES REPEATEDLY TEACH US THAT ALL SIN IN ONE

Still let him ply his question: “By what means may sin be discovered in an infant?” He may find an answer in the inspired pages: “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all sinned.” “Through the offence of one many are dead.” “The judgment was from one to condemnation.” “By one man’s offence death reigned by one.” “By the offence of one, Judgment came upon all men to condemnation.” “By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.” Behold, then, “by what means sins may be discovered in an infant.” Let him now believe in original sin; let him permit infants to come to Christ, that they may be saved. [XXVIII.] What means this passage of his: “He sins not who is born; he sins not who begat him; He sins not who created him. Amidst these intrenchments of innocence, therefore, what are the breaches through which you pretend that sin entered?” Why does he search for a hidden chink when he has an open door? “By one man,” says the apostle; “through the offence of one,” says the apostle; “By one man’s disobedience,” says the apostle. What does he want more? What does he require plainer? What does he expect to be more impressively repeated?

CHAPTER 48

ORIGINAL SIN AROSE FROM ADAM’S DEPRAVED WILL. WHENCE THE CORRUPT WILL SPRANG

“If,” says he, “sin comes from the will, it is an evil will that causes sin; if it comes from nature, then nature is evil.” I at once answer, Sin does come from the will. Perhaps he wants to know, whether original sin also? I answer, most certainly original sin also. Because it, too, was engendered from the will of the first man; so that it both existed in him, and passed on to all. As for what he next proposes, “If it comes from nature, then nature is evil,” I request him to answer, if he can, to this effect: As it is manifest that all evil works spring from a corrupt will, like the fruits of a corrupt tree; so let him say whence arose the corrupt will itself—the corrupt tree which yields the corrupt fruits. If from an angel, what was the angel, but the good work of God? If from man, what was even he, but the good work of God?

Nay, inasmuch as the corrupt will arose in the angel from an angel, and in man from man, what were both these, previous to the evil arising within them, but the good work of God, with a good and laudable nature? Behold, then, evil arises out of good; nor was there any other source, indeed, whence it could arise, but out of good. I call that will bad which no evil has preceded; no evil works, of course, since they only proceed from an evil will, as from a corrupt tree. Nevertheless, that the evil will arose out of good, could not be, because that good was made by the good God, but because it was created out of nothing—not out of God. What, therefore, becomes of his argument, "If nature is the work of God, it will never do for the work of the devil to permeate the work of God"? Did not the work of the devil, I ask, arise in a work of God, when it first arose in that angel who became the devil? Well, then, if evil, which was absolutely nowhere previously, could arise in a work of God, why could not evil, which had by this time found an existence somewhere, pervade the work of God; especially when the apostle uses the very expression in the passage, "And so death passed upon all men"? Can it be that men are not the work of God? Sin, therefore, has passed upon all men—in other words, the devil's work has penetrated the work of God; or putting the same meaning in another shape, The work done by a work of God has pervaded God's work. And this is the reason why God alone has an unchangeable and almighty goodness: even before any evil came into existence He made all things good; and out of all the evils which have arisen in the good things which He has made, He works through all for good.

CHAPTER 49 [XXIX.]

IN INFANTS NATURE IS OF GOD, AND THE CORRUPTION OF NATURE OF THE DEVIL

"In a single man rightly is the intention blamed and the origin praised; because there must be two things to admit of contraries: in an infant, however, there is but one thing, nature only; because will has no existence in his case. Now this one thing," says he, "is ascribable either to God or to the devil. If nature," he goes on to observe, "is of God, there cannot be original evil in it. If of the devil, there will be nothing on the ground of which man may be vindicated for the work of God. So that he is completely a Manichean who maintains original sin." Let him hear rather what is true in opposition to all this. In a single man the will is to be blamed, and his nature to be praised; because there should be two things for the application of contraries. Still, even in an infant, it is not the case that there is but one thing only, that is, the nature in which man was created by the good God; for he has also that corruption, which has passed upon all men by one, as the apostle wisely says, and not as the folly of Pelagius, or Coelestius, or any of their disciples would represent the matter. Of these two things, then, which we have said exist in an infant, one is ascribed to God, the other to the devil. From the fact, however, that (owing to one of the two, even the corruption) both are subjected to the power of the devil, there really ensues no incongruity; because this happens not from the power of the devil himself, but of God. In fact, corruption is subjected to corruption, nature to nature, because the two are even in the devil; so that whenever those who are beloved and elect are "delivered from the power of darkness" to which they are justly exposed, it is clear enough how great a gift is bestowed on the justified and good by the good God, who brings good even out of evil.

CHAPTER 50

THE RISE AND ORIGIN OF EVIL. THE EXORCISM AND EXSUFFLATION OF INFANTS, A PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN RITE

As to the passage, which he seemed to himself to indite in a pious vein, as it were, "If nature is of God, there cannot be original sin in it," would not another person seem even to him to give a still more pious turn to it, thus: "If nature is of God, there cannot arise any sin in it?" And yet this is not true. The Manicheans, indeed, meant to assert this, and they endeavoured to steep in all sorts of evil the very nature of God itself, and not His creature, made out of nothing. For evil arose in nothing else than what was good—not, however, the supreme and unchangeable good which is God's nature, but that which was made out of nothing by the wisdom of God. This, then, is the reason why man is claimed for a divine work; for he would not be man unless he were made by the operation of God. But evil would not exist in infants, if evil had not been committed by the wilfulness of the first man, and original sin derived from a nature thus corrupted. It is not true, then, as he puts it, "He is completely a Manichean who maintains original sin;" but rather, he is completely a Pelagian who does not believe in original sin. For it is not simply from the time when the pestilent opinions of Manichaeus began to grow that in the Church of God infants about to be baptized were for the first time exorcised with exsufflation,—which ceremonial was intended to show that they were not removed into the kingdom of Christ without first being delivered from the power of darkness; nor is it in the books of Manichaeus that we read how "the Son of man come to seek and to save that which was lost," or how "by one man sin entered into the world," with those other similar passages which we have quoted above; or how God "visits the sins of the fathers upon the children;" or how it is written in the Psalm, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me;" or again, how "man was made like unto vanity: his days pass away like a shadow;" or again, "behold, Thou hast made my days old, and my existence as nothing before Thee; nay, every man living is altogether vanity;" or how the apostle says, "every creature was made subject to vanity;" or how it is written in the book of Ecclesiastes, "vanity of vanities; all is vanity: what profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?" and in the book of Ecclesiasticus, "a heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam from the day that they go out of their mother's womb to the day that they return to the mother of all things;" or how again the apostle writes, "in Adam all die;" or how holy Job says, when speaking about his own sins, "for man that is born of a woman is short-lived and full of wrath: as the flower of grass, so does he fall; and he departs like a shadow, nor shall he stay. Hast Thou not taken account even of him, and caused him to enter into judgment in Thy sight? For who shall be pure from uncleanness? Not even one, even if his life should be but of one day upon the earth." Now when he speaks of uncleanness here, the mere perusal of the passage is enough to show that he meant sin to be understood. It is plain from the words, of what he is speaking. The same phrase and sense occur in the prophet Zechariah, in the place where "the filthy garments" are removed from off the high priest, and it is said to him, "I have taken away thy sins." Well now, I rather think that all these passages, and others of like import, which point to the fact that man is born in sin and under the curse, are not to be read among the dark recesses of the Manicheans, but in the sunshine of catholic truth.

CHAPTER 51

TO CALL THOSE THAT TEACH ORIGINAL SIN MANICHEANS IS TO ACCUSE AMBROSE, CYPRIAN, AND THE WHOLE CHURCH

What, moreover, shall I say of those commentators on the divine Scriptures who have flourished in the catholic Church? They have never tried to pervert these testimonies to an alien sense, because they were firmly established in our most ancient and solid faith, and were never moved aside by the novelty of error. Were I to wish to collect these together, and to make use of their testimony, the task would both be too long, and I should probably seem to have bestowed less preference than I ought on canonical authorities, from which one must never deviate. I will merely mention the most blessed Ambrose, to whom (as I have already observed) Pelagius accorded so signal a testimony of his integrity in the faith. This Ambrose, however, maintained that there was nothing else in infants, which required the healing grace of Christ, than original sin. But in respect of Cyprian, with his all-glorious crown, will any one say of him, that he either was, or ever could by any possibility have been, a Manichean, when he suffered before the pestilent heresy had made its appearance in the Roman world? And yet, in his book on the baptism of infants, he so vigorously maintains original sin as to declare, that even before the eighth day, if necessary, the infant ought to be baptized, lest his soul should be lost; and he wished it to be understood, that the infant could the more readily attain to the indulgence of baptism, inasmuch as it is not so much his own sins, but the sins of another, which are remitted to him. Well, then, let this writer dare to call these Manicheans; let him, moreover, under this scandalous imputation asperse that most ancient tradition of the Church, whereby infants are, as I have said, exorcised with exsufflation, for the purpose of being translated into the kingdom of Christ, after they are delivered from the power of darkness—that is to say, of the devil and his angels. As for ourselves, indeed, we are more ready to be associated with these men, and with the Church of Christ, so firmly rooted in this ancient faith, in suffering any amount of curse and contumely, than with the Pelagians, to be covered with the flattery of public praise.

CHAPTER 52 [XXX.]

SIN WAS THE ORIGIN OF ALL SHAMEFUL CONCUPISCENCE

“Do you,” he asks, “repeat your affirmation, There would be no concupiscence if man had not first sinned; marriage, however, would have existed, even if no one had sinned’?” I never said, “There would be no concupiscence,” because there is a concupiscence of the spirit, which craves wisdom. My words were, “There would be no shameful concupiscence.” Let my words be re-perused, even those which he has cited, that it may be clearly seen how dishonestly they are handled by him. However, let him call it by any name he likes. What I said would not have existed unless man had previously sinned, was that which made them ashamed in paradise when they covered their loins, and which every one will allow would not have been felt, had not the sin of disobedience first occurred. Now he who wishes to understand what they felt, ought to consider what it was they covered. For of the fig-leaves they made themselves “aprons,” not clothes; and these aprons or kilts are called perizomata in Greek. Now all know well enough what it is which these peri-zomata cover, which some Latin writers explain by the word campestria. Who is ignorant of what persons wore this kilt, and what parts of the body such a dress concealed; even the same which the Roman youths used to cover when they practised naked in the campus, from which circumstance the name campester was given to the apron.

CHAPTER 53 [XXXI.]

CONCUPISCENCE NEED NOT HAVE BEEN NECESSARY FOR FRUITFULNESS

He says: “Therefore that marriage which might have been without concupiscence, without bodily motion, without necessity for sexual organs—to use your own statement—is pronounced by you to be laudable; whereas such marriages as are now enacted are, according to your decision, the invention of the devil. Those, therefore, whose institution was possible in your dreams, you deliberately assert to be good, while those which Holy Scripture intends, when it says, Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh,’ you pronounce to be diabolical evils, worthy, in short, to be called a pest, not matrimony.” It is not to be wondered at, that these Pelagian opponents of mine try to twist my words to any meaning they wish them to bear, when it has been their custom to do the same thing with the Holy Scriptures, and not simply in obscure passages, but where their testimony is clear and plain: a custom, indeed, which is followed by all other heretics. Now who could make such an assertion, as that it was possible for marriages to be “without bodily motion, without necessity for sexual organs”? For God made the sexes; because, as it is written, “He created them male and female.” But how could it possibly happen, that they who were to be united together, and by the very union were to beget children, were not to move their bodies, when, of course, there can be no bodily contact of one person with another if bodily motion be not resorted to? The question before us, then, is not about the motion of bodies, without which there could not be sexual intercourse; but about the shameful motion of the organs of generation, which certainly could be absent, and yet the fructifying connection be still not wanting, if the organs of generation were not obedient to lust, but simply to the will, like the other members of the body. Is it not even now the case, in “the body of this death,” that a command is given to the foot, the arm, the finger, the lip, or the tongue, and they are instantly set in motion at this intimation of our will? And (to take a still more wonderful case) even the liquid contained in the urinary vessels obeys the command to flow from us at our pleasure, and when we are not pressed with its overflow; while the vessels, also, which contain the liquid, discharge without difficulty, if they are in a healthy state, the office assigned them by our will of propelling, pressing out, and ejecting their contents. With how much greater ease and quietness, then, if the generative organs of our body were compliant, would natural motion ensue, and human conception be effected; except in the instance of those persons who violate natural order, and by a righteous retribution are punished with the intractability of these members and organs! This punishment is felt by the chaste and pure, who, without doubt, would rather beget children by mere natural desire than by voluptuous pruriency; while unchaste persons, who are impelled by this diseased passion, and bestow their love upon harlots as well as wives, are excited by a still heavier mental remorse in consequence of this carnal chastisement.

CHAPTER 54 [XXXII.]

HOW MARRIAGE IS NOW DIFFERENT SINCE THE EXISTENCE OF SIN

God forbid that we should say, what this man pretends we say, “Such marriages as are now enacted are the invention of the devil.” Why, they are absolutely the same marriages as God made at the very first. For this blessing of His, which He appointed for the procreation of mankind, He has not taken away even from men under condemnation, any more than He has deprived them of their senses and bodily limbs, which are no doubt His gifts, although they are condemned to die by an already incurred retribution. This, I say, is the marriage whereof it was said (only excepting the great sacrament of Christ and the Church, which the institution prefigured): “For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh.” For this, no doubt, was said before sin; and if no one had sinned, it might have been done without shameful lust. And now, although it is not done without that, in the body of this death, there is that nevertheless which does not cease to be done so that a man may cleave to his wife, and they twain be one flesh. When, therefore, it is alleged that marriage is now one thing, but might have been another had no one sinned, this is not predicated of its nature, but of a certain quality which has undergone a change for the worse. Just as a man is said to be different, though he is actually the same individual, when he has changed his manner of life either for the better or the worse; for as a righteous man he is one thing, and as a sinful man another, though the man himself be really the same individual. In like manner, marriage without shameful lust is one thing, and marriage with shameful lust is another. When, however, a woman is lawfully united to her husband in accordance with the true constitution of wedlock, and fidelity to what is due to the flesh is kept free from the sin of adultery, and so children are lawfully begotten, it is actually the very same marriage which God instituted at first, although by his primeval inducement to sin, the devil inflicted a heavy wound, not, indeed, on marriage itself, but on man and woman by whom marriage is made, by his prevailing on them to disobey God,—a sin which is requited in the course of the divine judgment by the reciprocal disobedience of man’s own members. United in this matrimonial state, although they were ashamed of their nakedness, still they were not by any means able altogether to lose the blessedness of marriage which God appointed.

CHAPTER 55 [XXXIII.]

LUST IS A DISEASE; THE WORD “PASSION” IN THE ECCLESIASTICAL SENSE

He then passes on from those who are united in marriage to those who are born of it. It is in relation to these that we have to encounter the most laborious discussions with the new heretics in connection with our subject. Impelled by some hidden instinct from God, he makes avowals which go far to untie the whole knot. For in his desire to raise greater odium against us, because we had said that infants are born in sin even of lawful wedlock, he makes the following observation: “You assert that they, indeed, who have not been ever born might possibly have been good; those, however, who have peopled the world, and for whom Christ died, you decide to be the work of the devil, born in a disordered state, and guilty from the beginning. Therefore,” he continues, “I have shown that you are doing nothing else than denying that God is the Creator of the men who actually exist.” I beg to say, that I declare none but God to be the Creator of all men, however true it be that all are born in sin, and must perish unless born again. It was, indeed, the sinful corruption which had been sown in them by the devil’s persuasion that became the means of their being born in sin; not the created nature of which men are composed. Shameful lust, however, could not excite our members, except at our own will, if it were not a disease. Nor would even the lawful and honourable cohabiting of husband and wife raise a blush, with avoidance of any eye and desire of secrecy, if there were not a diseased condition about it. Moreover, the apostle would not prohibit the possession of wives in this disease, did not disease exist in it. The phrase in the Greek text, en pathei epithumias, is by some rendered in Latin, in morbo desiderii vel concupiscentiae, in the disease of desire or of concupiscence; by others, however, in passione concupiscentiae, in the passion of concupiscence; or however it is found otherwise in different copies: at any rate, the Latin equivalent passio (passion), especially in the ecclesiastical use, is usually understood as a term of censure.

CHAPTER 56

THE PELAGIANS ALLOW THAT CHRIST DIED EVEN FOR INFANTS; JULIANUS SLAYS HIMSELF WITH HIS OWN SWORD

But whatever opinion he may entertain about the shame-causing concupiscence of the flesh, I must request your attention to what he has said respecting infants (and it is in their behalf that we labour), as to their being supposed to need a Saviour, if they are not to die without salvation. I repeat his words once more: “You assert,” says he to me, “that they, indeed, who have not been ever born might possibly have been good; those, however, who have peopled the world, and for whom Christ died, you decide to be the work of the devil, born in a disordered state, and guilty from the very beginning.” Would that he only solved the entire controversy as he unties the knot of this question! For will he pretend to say that he merely spoke of adults in this passage? Why, the subject in hand is about infants, about human beings at their birth; and it is about these that he raises odium against us, because they are defined by us as guilty from the very first, because we declare them to be guilty, since Christ died for them. And why did Christ die for them if they are not guilty? It is entirely from them, yes, from them, we shall find the reason, wherefore he thought odium should be raised against me. He asks: “How are infants guilty, for whom Christ died?” We answer: Nay, how are infants not guilty, since Christ died for them? This dispute wants a judge to determine it. Let Christ be the Judge, and let Him tell us what is the object which has profited by His death? “This is my blood,” He says, “which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins.” Let the apostle, too, be His assessor in the judgment; since even in the apostle it is Christ Himself that speaks. Speaking of God the Father, he exclaims: “He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all!” I suppose that he describes Christ as so delivered up for us all, that infants in this matter are not separated from ourselves. But what need is there to dwell on this point, out of which even he no longer raises a contest? For the truth is, he not only confesses that Christ died even for infants, but he also reproves us out of this admission, because we say that these same infants are guilty for whom Christ died. Now, then, let the apostle, who says that Christ was delivered up for us all, also tell us why Christ was delivered up for us. “He was delivered,” says he, “for our offences, and rose again for our justification.” If, therefore, as even this man both confesses and professes, both admits and objects, infants, too, are included amongst those for whom Christ was delivered up; and if it was for our sins that Christ was delivered up, even infants, of course, must have original sins, for whom Christ was delivered up; He must have something in them to heal, who (as Himself affirms) is not needed as a Physician by the whole, but by the sick; He must have a reason for saving them, seeing that He came into the world, as the Apostle Paul says, “to save sinners;” He must have something in them to remit, who testifies that He shed His blood “for the remission of sins;” He must have good reason for seeking them out, who “came,” as He says, “to seek and to save that which was lost;” the Son of man must find in them something to destroy, who came for the express purpose, as the Apostle John says, “that He might destroy the works of the devil.” Now to this salvation of infants He must be an enemy, who asserts their innocence, in such a way as to deny them the medicine which is required by the hurt and wounded.

CHAPTER 57 [XXXIV.]

THE GREAT SIN OF THE FIRST MAN

Now observe what follows, as he goes on to say: “If, before sin, God created a source from which men should be born, but the devil a source from which parents were disturbed, then beyond a doubt holiness must be ascribed to those that are born, and guilt to those that produce. Since, however, this would be a most manifest condemnation of marriage; remove, I pray you, this view from the midst of the churches, and really believe that all things were made by Jesus Christ, and that without Him nothing was made.” He so speaks here, as if he would make us say, that there is a something in man’s substance which was created by the devil. The devil persuaded evil as a sin; he did not create it as a nature. No doubt he persuaded nature for man is nature; and therefore by his persuasion he corrupted it. He who wounds a limb does not, of course, create it, but he injures it. Those wounds, indeed, which are inflicted on the body produce lameness in a limb, or difficulty of motion; but they do not affect the virtue whereby a man becomes righteous: that wound, however, which has the name of sin, wounds the very life, which was being righteously lived. This wound was at that fatal moment of the fall inflicted by the devil to a vastly wider and deeper extent than are the sins which are known amongst men. Whence it came to pass, that our nature having then and there been deteriorated by that great sin of the first man, not only was made a sinner, but also generates sinners; and yet the very weakness, under which the virtue of a holy life has drooped and died, is not really nature, but corruption; precisely as a bad state of health is not a bodily substance or nature, but disorder; very often, indeed, if not always, the ailing character of parents is in a certain way implanted, and reappears in the bodies of their children.

CHAPTER 58

ADAM'S SIN IS DERIVED FROM HIM TO EVERY ONE WHO IS BORN EVEN OF REGENERATE PARENTS; THE EXAMPLE OF THE OLIVE TREE AND THE WILD OLIVE

But this sin, which changed man for the worse in paradise, because it is far greater than we can form any judgment of, is contracted by every one at his birth, and is remitted only in the regenerate; and this derangement is such as to be derived even from parents who have been regenerated, and in whom the sin is remitted and covered, to the condemnation of the children born of them, unless these, who were bound by their first and carnal birth, are absolved by their second and spiritual birth. Of this wonderful fact the Creator has produced a wonderful example in the cases of the olive and the wild olive trees, in which, from the seed not only of the wild olive, but even of the good olive, nothing but a wild olive springs. Wherefore, although even in persons whose natural birth is followed by regeneration through grace, there exists this carnal concupiscence which contends against the law of the mind, yet, seeing that it is remitted in the remission of sins, it is no longer accounted to them as sin, nor is it in any degree hurtful, unless consent is yielded to its motions for unlawful deeds. Their offspring, however, being begotten not of spiritual concupiscence, but of carnal, like a wild olive of our race from the good olive, derives guilt from them by natural birth to such a degree that it cannot be liberated from that pest except by being born again. How is it, then, that this man affirms that we ascribe holiness to those who are born, and guilt to their parents? when the truth rather shows that even if there has been holiness in the parents, original sin is inherent in their children, which is abolished in them only if they are born again.

CHAPTER 59 [XXXV.]

THE PELAGIANS CAN HARDLY VENTURE TO PLACE CONCUPISCENCE IN PARADISE BEFORE THE COMMISSION OF SIN

This being the case, let him think what he pleases about this concupiscence of the flesh and about the lust which lords it over the unchaste, has to be mastered by the chaste, and yet is to be blushed at both by the chaste and the unchaste; for I see plainly he is much pleased with it. Let him not hesitate to praise what he is ashamed to name; let him call it (as he has in fact called it) the vigour of the members, and let him not be afraid of the honor of chaste ears; let him designate it the power of the members, and let him not care about the impudence. Let him say, if his blushes permit him, that if no one had sinned, this vigour must have flourished like a flower in paradise; nor would there have been any need to cover that which would have been so moved that no one should have felt ashamed; rather, with a wife provided, it would have been ever exercised and never repressed, lest so great a pleasure should ever be denied to so vast a happiness. Far be it from being thought that such blessedness could in such a spot fail to have what it wished, or ever experience in mind or body what it disliked. And so, should the motion of lust precede men’s will, then the will would immediately follow it. The wife, who ought certainly never to be absent in this happy state of things, would be urged on by it, whether about to conceive or already pregnant; and, either a child would be begotten, or a natural and laudable pleasure would be gratified,—for perish all seed rather than disappoint the appetite of so good a concupiscence. Only be sure that the united pair do not apply themselves to that use of each other which is contrary to nature, then (with so modest a reservation) let them use, as often as they would have delight, their organs of generation, created for the purpose. But what if this very use, which is contrary to nature, should peradventure give them delight; what if the aforesaid laudable lust should hanker even after such delight; I wonder whether they should pursue it because it was sweet, or loathe it because it was base? If they should pursue it to gratification, what becomes of all thought about honour? If they should loathe it, where is the peaceful composure of so good a happiness? But at this point perchance his blushes will awake, and he will say that so great is the tranquillity of this happy state, and so entire the orderliness which may have existed in this state of things, that carnal concupiscence never preceded these persons' will: only whenever they themselves wished, would it then arise; and only then would they entertain the wish, when there was need for begetting children; and the result would be, that no seed would ever be emitted to no purpose, nor would any embrace ever ensue which would not be followed by conception and birth; the flesh would obey the will, and concupiscence would vie with it in subserviency. Well, if he says all this of the imagined happy state, he must at least be pretty sure that what he describes does not now exist among men. And even if he will not concede that lust is a corrupt condition, let him at least allow that through the disobedience of the man and woman in the happy state the very concupiscence of their flesh was corrupted, so that what would once be excited obediently and orderly is now moved disobediently and inordinately, and that to such a degree that it is not obedient to the will of even chaste-minded husbands and wives, so that it is excited when it is not wanted; and whenever it is necessary, it never, indeed, follows their will, but sometimes too hurriedly, at other times too tardily, exerts its own movements. Such, then, is the rebellion of this concupiscence which the primitive pair received for their own disobedience, and transfused by natural descent to us. It certainly was not at their bidding, but in utter disorder, that it was excited, when they covered their members, which at first were worthy to be gloried in, but had then become a ground of shame.

CHAPTER 60

LET NOT THE PELAGIANS INDULGE THEMSELVES IN A CRUEL DEFENCE OF INFANTS

As I said, however, let him entertain what views he likes of this lust; let him proclaim it as he pleases, praise it as much as he chooses (and he pleases much, as several of his extracts show), that the Pelagians may gratify themselves, if not with its uses, at all events with its praises, as many of them as fail to enjoy the limitation of continence enjoined in wedlock. Only let him spare the infants, so as not to praise their condition uselessly, and defend them cruelly. Let him not declare them to be safe; let him suffer them to come, not, indeed, to Pelagius for eulogy, but to Christ for salvation. For, that this book may be now brought to a termination, since the dissertation of this man is ended, which was written on the short paper you sent me, I will close with his last words: “Really believe that all things were made by Jesus Christ, and that without Him nothing was made.” Let him grant that Jesus is Jesus even to infants; and as he confesses that all things were made by Him, in that He is God the Word, so let him acknowledge that infants, too, are saved by Him in that He is Jesus; let him, I say, do this if he would be a catholic Christian. For thus it is written in the Gospel: “And they shall call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins”—Jesus, because Jesus is in Latin Salvator, “Saviour.” He shall, indeed, save His people; and amongst His people surely there are infants. “From their sins” shall He save them; in infants, too, therefore, are there original sins, on account of which He can be Jesus, that is, Saviour, even unto them.

ON PATIENCE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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DE PATIENTIA.

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Erasmus infers from the style and language of this piece, that it is not S. Augustin's, putting it in the same category with the treatises On Continence, On substance of Charity, On Faith of things invisible. The Benedictine editors acknowledge that it has peculiarities of style which are calculated to move suspicion; (especially the studied assonances and rhyming endings, e.g. "cautior fuit iste in doloribus quam ille in nemoribus . . . consensit ille oblectamentis, non cessit ille tormentis," chap. 12.); yet they feel themselves bound to retain it among the genuine works by Augustin's own testimony, who mentions both this piece and that On Continence in his Epistle to Darius, 231. chap. 7. [Vol. I. 584.] That it is not named in the Retractations is accounted for by the circumstance that it appears to have been delivered as a sermon, see chap. 1. and 3, and Augustin did not live to fulfill his intention of composing a further book of retractations on review of his popular discourses and letters. Ep. 224. chap. 2. In point of matter and doctrine this treatise has nothing contrary to or not in harmony with S. Augustin's known doctrine and sentiments.

1. That virtue of the mind which is called Patience, is so great a gift of God, that even in Him who bestoweth the same upon us, that, whereby He waiteth for evil men that they may amend, is set forth by the name of Patience, [or long-suffering.] So, although in God there can be no suffering, and "patience" hath its name a patiendo, from suffering, yet a patient God we not only faithfully believe, but also wholesomely confess. But the patience of God, of what kind and how great it is, His, Whom we say to be

impassible, yet not impatient, nay even most patient, in words to unfold this who can be able? Ineffable is therefore that patience, as is His jealousy, as His wrath, and whatever there is like to these. For if we conceive of these as they be in us, in Him are there none. We, namely, can feel none of these without molestation: but be it far from us to surmise that the impassible nature of God is liable to any molestation. But like as He is jealous without any darkening of spirit, wroth without any perturbation, pitiful without any pain, repenteth Him without any wrongness in Him to be set right; so is He patient without aught of passion. Now therefore as concerning human patience, which we are able to conceive and beholden to have, of what sort it is, I will, as God granteth and the brevity of the present discourse alloweth, essay to set forth.

2. The patience of man, which is right and laudable and worthy of the name of virtue, is understood to be that by which we tolerate evil things with an even mind, that we may not with a mind uneven desert good things, through which we may arrive at better. Wherefore the impatient, while they will not suffer ills, effect not a deliverance from ills, but only the suffering of heavier ills. Whereas the patient who choose rather by not committing to bear, than by not bearing to commit, evil, both make lighter what through patience they suffer, and also escape worse ills in which through impatience they would be sunk. But those good things which are great and eternal they lose not, while to the evils which be temporal and brief they yield not: because “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared,” as the Apostle says, “with the future glory that shall be revealed in us.” And again he says, “This our temporal and light tribulation doth in inconceivable manner work for us an eternal weight of glory.”

3. Look we then, beloved, what hardships in labors and sorrows men endure, for things which they viciously love, and by how much they think to be made by them more happy, by so much more unhappily covet. How much for false riches, how much for vain honors, how much for affections of games and shows, is of exceeding peril and trouble most patiently borne! We see men hankering after money, glory, lasciviousness, how, that they may arrive at their desires, and having gotten not lose them, they endure sun, rain, icy cold, waves, and most stormy tempests, the roughnesses and

uncertainties of wars, the strokes of huge blows, and dreadful wounds, not of inevitable necessity but of culpable will. But these madnesses are thought, in a manner, permitted. Thus avarice, ambition, luxury, and the delights of all sorts of games and shows, unless for them some wicked deed be committed or outrage which is prohibited by human laws, are accounted to pertain to innocence: nay moreover, the man who without wrong to any shall, whether for getting or increasing of money, whether for obtaining or keeping of honors, whether in contending in the match, or in hunting, or in exhibiting with applause some theatrical spectacle, have borne great labors and pains, it is not enough that through popular vanity he is checked by no reproofs, but he is moreover extolled with praises: "Because," as it is written, "the sinner is praised in the desires of his soul." For the force of desires makes endurance of labors and pains: and no man save for that which he enjoyeth, freely takes on him to bear that which annoyeth. But these lusts, as I said, for the fulfilling of which they which are on fire with them most patiently endure much hardship and bitterness, are accounted to be permitted, and allowed by laws.

4. Nay more; for is it not so that even for open wickednesses, not to punish but to perpetrate them, men put up with many most grievous troubles? Do not authors of secular letters tell of a certain right noble parricide of his country, that hunger, thirst, cold, all these he was able to endure, and his body was patient of lack of food and warmth and sleep to a degree surpassing belief? Why speak of highway robbers, all of whom while they lie in wait for travellers endure whole nights without sleep, and that they may catch, as they pass by, men who have no thought of harm, will, no matter how foul the weather, plant in one spot their mind and body, which are full of thoughts of harm? Nay it is said that some of them are wont to torture one another by turns, to that degree that this practice and training against pains is not a whit short of pains. For, not so much perchance are they excruciated by the Judge, that through smart of pain the truth may be got at, as they are by their own comrades, that through patience of pain truth may not be betrayed. And yet in all these the patience is rather to be wondered at than praised: nay neither wondered at nor praised, seeing it is no patience; but we must wonder at the hardness, deny the patience: for there is nothing in this rightly to be praised, nothing usefully to be imitated;

and thou wilt rightly judge the mind to be all the more worthy of greater punishment, the more it yields up to vices the instruments of virtues. Patience is companion of wisdom, not handmaid of concupiscence: patience is the friend of a good conscience, not the foe of innocence.

5. When therefore thou shall see any man suffer aught patiently, do not straightway praise it as patience; for this is only shown by the cause of suffering. When it is a good cause, then is it true patience: when that is not polluted by lust, then is this distinguished from falsity. But when that is placed in crime, then is this much misplaced in name. For not just as all who know are partakers of knowledge, just so are all who suffer partakers of patience: but they which rightly use the suffering, these in verity of patience are praised, these with the prize of patience are crowned.

6. But yet, seeing that for lusts' sake, or even wickednesses, seeing, in a word, that for this temporal life and weal men do wonderfully bear the brunt of many horrible sufferings, they much admonish us how great things ought to be borne for the sake of a good life, that it may also hereafter be eternal life, and without any bound of time, without waste or loss of any advantage, in true felicity secure. The Lord saith, “In your patience ye shall possess your souls:” He saith not, your farms, your praises, your luxuries; but, “your souls.” If then the soul endures so great sufferings that it may possess that whereby it may be lost, how great ought it to bear that it may not be lost? And then, to mention a thing not culpable, if it bear so great sufferings for saving of the flesh under the hands of chirurgeons cutting or burning the same, how great ought it to bear for saving of itself under the fury of any soever enemies? Seeing that leeches, that the body may not die, do by pains consult for the body's good; but enemies by threatening the body with pains and death, would urge us on to the slaying of soul and body in hell.

7. Though indeed the welfare even of the body is then more providently consulted for if its temporal life and welfare be disregarded for righteousness' sake, and its pain or death most patiently for righteousness' sake endured. Since it is of the body's redemption which is to be in the end, that the Apostle speaks, where he says, “Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting the adoption of sons, the redemption of our body.” Then

he subjoins, “For in hope are we saved. But hope which is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he also hope for? But if what we see not we hope for, we do by patience wait for it.” When therefore any ills do torture us indeed, yet not extort from us ill works, not only is the soul possessed through patience; but even when through patience the body itself for a time is afflicted or lost, it is unto eternal stability and salvation resumed, and hath through grief and death an inviolable health and happy immortality laid up for itself. Whence the Lord Jesus exhorting his Martyrs to patience, hath promised of the very body a future perfect entireness, without loss, I say not of any limb, but of a single hair. “Verily I say unto you,” saith He, “a hair of your head shall not perish.” That so, because, as the Apostle says, “no man ever hated his own flesh,” a faithful man may more by patience than by impatience take vigilant care for the state of his flesh, and find amends for its present losses, how great soever they may be, in the inestimable gain of future incorruption.

8. But although patience be a virtue of the mind, yet partly the mind exercises it in the mind itself, partly in the body. In itself it exercises patience, when, the body remaining unhurt and untouched, the mind is goaded by any adversities or filthinesses of things or words, to do or to say something that is not expedient or not becoming, and patiently bears all evils that it may not itself commit any evil in work or word. By this patience we bear, even while we be sound in body, that in the midst of the offenses of this world our blessedness is deferred: of which is said what I cited a little before, “If what we see not we hope for, we do by patience wait for it.” By this patience, holy David bore the revilings of a railer, and, when he might easily have avenged himself, not only did it not, but even refrained another who was vexed and moved for him; and more put forth his kingly power by prohibiting than by exercising vengeance. Nor at that time was his body afflicted with any disease or wound, but there was an acknowledging of a time of humility, and a bearing of the will of God, for the sake of which there was a drinking of the bitterness of contumely with most patient mind. This patience the Lord taught, when, the servants being moved at the mixing in of the tares and wishing to gather them up, He said that the householder answered, “Leave both to grow until the harvest.” That, namely, must be patience put up with, which must not be in haste put away.

Of this patience Himself afforded and showed an example, when, before the passion of His Body, He so bore with His disciple Judas, that ere He pointed him out as the traitor, He endured him as a thief; and before experience of bonds and cross and death, did, to those lips so full of guile, not deny the kiss of peace. All these, and whatever else there be, which it were tedious to rehearse, belong to that manner of patience, by which the mind doth, not its own sins but any evils so ever from without, patiently endure in itself, while the body remains altogether unhurt. But the other manner of patience is that by which the same mind bears any troubles and grievances whatsoever in the sufferings of the body; not as do foolish or wicked men for the sake of getting vain things or perpetrating crimes; but as is defined by the Lord, "for righteousness' sake." In both kinds, the holy Martyrs contended. For both with scornful reproofs of the ungodly were they filled, where, the body remaining intact, the mind hath its own (as it were) blows and wounds, and bears these unbroken: and in their bodies they were bound, imprisoned, vexed with hunger and thirst, tortured, gashed, torn asunder, burned, butchered; and with piety immovable submitted unto God their mind, while they were suffering in the flesh all that exquisite cruelty could devise in its mind.

9. It is indeed a greater fight of patience, when it is not a visible enemy that by persecution and rage would urge us into crime which enemy may openly and in broad day be by not consenting overcome; but the devil himself, (he who doth likewise by means of the children of infidelity, as by his vessels, persecute the children of light) doth by himself hiddenly attack us, by his rage putting us on to do or say something against God. As such had holy Job experience of him, by both temptations vexed, but in both through steadfast strength of patience and arms of piety unconquered. For first, his body being left unhurt, he lost all that he had, in order that the mind, before excruciation of the flesh, might through withdrawal of the things which men are wont to prize highly, be broken, and he might say something against God upon loss of the things for the sake of which he was thought to worship Him. He was smitten also with sudden bereavement of all his sons so that whom he had begotten one by one he should lose all at once, as though their numerousness had been not for the adorning of his felicity, but for the increasing of his calamity. But where, having endured these things,

he remained immovable in his God, he cleaved to His will, Whom it was not possible to lose but by his own will; and in place of the things he had lost he held Him who took them away, in Whom he should find what should never be lost. For He that took them away was not that enemy who had will of hurting, but He who had given to that enemy the power of hurting. The enemy next attacked also the body, and now not those things which were in the man from without, but the man himself, in whatever part he could, he smote. From the head to the feet were burning pains, were crawling worms, were running sores; still in the rotting body the mind remained entire, and horrid as were the tortures of the consuming flesh, with inviolate piety and uncorrupted patience it endured them all. There stood the wife, and instead of giving her husband any help, was suggesting blasphemy against God. For we are not to think that the devil, in leaving her when he took away the sons, went to work as one unskilled in mischief: rather, how necessary she was to the tempter, he had already learned in Eve. But now he had not found a second Adam whom he might take by means of a woman. More cautious was Job in his hours of sadness, than Adam in his bowers of gladness, the one was overcome in the midst of pleasant things, the other overcame in the midst of pains; the one consented to that which seemed delightsome, this other quailed not in torments most affrightsome. There stood his friends too, not to console him in his evils, but to suspect evil in him. For while he suffered so great sorrows, they believed him not innocent, nor did their tongue forbear to say that which his conscience had not to say; that so amid ruthless tortures of the body, his mind also might be beaten with truthless reproaches. But he, bearing in his flesh his own pains, in his heart others’ errors, reproved his wife for her folly, taught his friends wisdom, preserved patience in each and all.

10. To this man let them look who put themselves to death when they are sought for to have life put upon them; and by bereaving themselves of the present, deny and refuse also that which is to come. Why, if people were driving them to deny Christ or to do any thing contrary to righteousness, like true Martyrs, they ought rather to bear all patiently than to dare death impatiently. If it could be right to do this for the sake of running away from evils, holy Job would have killed himself, that being in so great evils, in his estate, in his sons, in his limbs, through the devil’s cruelty, he might escape

them all. But he did it not. Far be it from him, a wise man, to commit upon himself what not even that unwise woman suggested. And if she had suggested it, she would with good reason here also have had that answer which she had when suggesting blasphemy; “Thou hast spoken as one of the foolish women. If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not bear evil?” Seeing even he also would have lost patience, if either by blasphemy as she had suggested, or by killing himself which not even she had dared to speak of, he should die, and be among them of whom it is written, “Woe unto them that have lost patience!” and rather increase than escape pains, if after the death of his body he should be hurried off to punishment either of blasphemers, or of murderers, or of them which are worse even than parricides. For if a parricide be on that account more wicked than any homicide, because he kills not merely a man but a near relative; and among parricides too, the nearer the person killed, the greater criminal he is judged to be: without doubt worse still is he who kills himself, because there is none nearer to a man than himself. What then do these miserable persons mean, who, though both here they have inflicted pain upon themselves, and hereafter not only for their impiety towards God but for the very cruelty which they have exercised upon themselves will deservedly suffer pains of His inflicting, do yet seek moreover the glories of Martyrs? since, even if for the true testimony of Christ they suffered persecution, and killed themselves, that they might not suffer any thing from their persecutors, it would be rightly said to them, “Woe unto them which have lost patience!” For how hath patience her just reward, if even an impatient suffering receives the crown? or how shall that man be judged innocent, to whom is said, “Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself,” if he commit murder upon himself which he is forbidden to commit upon his neighbor?

11. Let then the Saints hear from holy Scripture the precepts of patience: “My son, when thou comest to the service of God, stand thou in righteousness and fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation: bring thine heart low, and bear up; that in the last end thy life may increase. All that shall come upon thee receive thou, and in pain bear up, and in thy humility have patience. For in the fire gold and silver is proved, but acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation.” And in another place we read: “My son, faint

not thou in the discipline of the Lord, neither be wearied when thou art chidden of Him. For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” What is here set down, “son whom He receiveth,” the same in the above mentioned testimony is, “acceptable men.” For this is just, that we who from our first felicity of Paradise for contumacious appetence of things to enjoy were dismissed, through humble patience of things that annoy may be received back: driven away for doing evil, brought back by suffering evil: there against righteousness doing ill, here for righteousness’ sake patient of ills.

12. But concerning true patience, worthy of the name of this virtue, whence it is to be had, must now be inquired. For there are some who attribute it to the strength of the human will, not which it hath by Divine assistance, but which it hath of free-will. Now this error is a proud one: for it is the error of them which abound, of whom it is said in the Psalm, “A scornful reproof to them which abound, and a despising to the proud.” It is not therefore that “patience of the poor” which “perisheth not forever.” For these poor receive it from that Rich One, to Whom is said, “My God art Thou, because my goods Thou needest not:” of Whom is “every good gift, and every perfect gift;” to Whom crieth the needy and the poor, and in asking, seeking, knocking, saith, “My God, deliver me from the hand of the sinner, and from the hand of the lawless and unjust: because Thou art my patience, O Lord, my hope from my youth up.” But these which abound, and disdain to be in want before God, lest they receive of Him true patience, they which glory in their own false patience, seek to “confound the counsel of the poor, because the Lord is his hope.” Nor do they regard, seeing they are men, and attribute so much to their own, that is, to the human will, that they run into that which is written, “Cursed is every one who putteth his hope in man.” Whence even if it chance them that they do bear up under any hardships or difficulties, either that they may not displease men, or that they may not suffer worse, or in self-pleasing and love of their own presumption, do with most proud will bear up under these same, it is meet that concerning patience this be said unto them, which concerning wisdom the blessed Apostle James saith, “This wisdom cometh not from above, but is earthly, animal, devilish.” For why may there not be a false patience of the proud, as there is a false wisdom of the proud? But from Whom cometh true wisdom,

from Him cometh also true patience. For to Him singeth that poor in spirit, “Unto God is my soul subjected, because from Him is my patience.”

13. But they answer and speak, saying, “If the will of man without any aid of God by strength of free choice bears so many grievous and horrible distresses, whether in mind or body, that it may enjoy the delight of this mortal life and of sins, why may it not be that in the same manner the selfsame will of man by the same strength of free-choice, not thereunto looking to be aided of God, but unto itself by natural possibility sufficing, doth, in all of labor or sorrow that is put upon it, for righteousness and eternal life’s sake most patiently sustain the same? Or is it so, say they, that the will of the unjust is sufficient, without aid of God, for them, yea even to exercise themselves in undergoing torture for iniquity, and before they be tortured by others; sufficient the will of them which love the respiting of this life that, without aid of God, they should in the midst of most atrocious and protracted torments persevere in a lie, lest confessing their misdeeds they be ordered to be put to death; and not sufficient the will of the just, unless strength be put into them from above, that whatever be their pains, they should, either for beauty’s sake of very righteousness or for love of eternal life, bear the same?”

14. They which say these things, do not understand that as well each one of the wicked is in that measure for endurance of any ills more hard, in what measure the lust of the world is mightier in him; as also that each one of the just is in that measure for endurance of any ills more brave, in what measure in him the love of God is mightier. But lust of the world hath its beginning from choice of the will, its progress from enjoyableness of pleasure, its confirmation from the chain of custom, whereas “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts,” not verily from ourselves, but “by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.” And therefore from Him cometh the patience of the just, by Whom is shed abroad their love (of Him). Which love (of charity) the Apostle praising and setting off, among its other good qualities, saith, that it “beareth all things.” “Charity,” saith he, “is magnanimous.” And a little after he saith, “endureth all things.” The greater then is in saints the charity (or love) of God, the more do they endure all things for Him whom they love, and the greater in sinners the lust of the

world, the more do they endure all things for that which they lust after. And consequently from that same source cometh true patience of the righteous, from which there is in them the love of God; and from that same source the false patience of the unrighteous, from which is in them the lust of the world. With regard to which the Apostle John saith; “Love not the world, neither the things that be in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him: because all that is in the world, is lust of the flesh, and lust of the eyes, and pride of life; which is not of the Father, but is of the world.” This concupiscence, then, which is not of the Father, but is of the world, in what measure it shall in any man be more vehement and ardent, in that measure becometh each more patient of all troubles and sorrows for that which he lusteth after. Therefore, as we said above, this is not the patience which descendeth from above, but the patience of the godly is from above, coming down from the Father of lights. And so that is earthly, this heavenly; that animal, this spiritual; that devilish, this Godlike. Because concupiscence, whereof it cometh that persons sinning suffer all things stubbornly, is of the world; but charity, whereof cometh that persons living aright suffer all things bravely, is of God. And therefore to that false patience it is possible that, without aid of God, the human will may suffice; harder, in proportion as it is more eager of lust, and bearing ills with the more endurance the worse itself becometh: while to this, which is true patience, the human will, unless aided and inflamed from above, doth not suffice, for the very reason that the Holy Spirit is the fire thereof; by Whom unless it be kindled to love that impassible Good, it is not able to bear the ill which it suffereth.

15. For, as the Divine utterances testify, “God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him.” Whoso therefore contends that love of God may be had without aid of God, what else does he contend, but that God may be had without God? Now what Christian would say this, which no madman would venture to say? Therefore in the Apostle, true, pious, faithful patience, saith exultingly, and by the mouth of the Saints; “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors

through Him that loved us:” not through ourselves, but, “through Him that loved us.” And then he goes on and adds; “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” This is that “love of God” which “is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.” But the concupiscence of the bad, by reason of which there is in them a false patience, “is not of the Father,” as saith the Apostle John, but is of the world.

16. Here some man shall say; “If the concupiscence of the bad, whereby it comes that they bear all evils for that which they lust after, be of the world, how is it said to be of their will?” As if, truly, they were not themselves also of the world, when they love the world, forsaking Him by Whom the world was made. For “they serve the creature more than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever.” Whether then by the word “world,” the Apostle John signifies lovers of the world, the will, as it is of themselves, is therefore of the world: or whether under the name of the world he comprises heaven and earth, and all that is therein, that is the creature universally, it is plain that the will of the creature, not being that of the Creator, is of the world. For which cause to such the Lord saith, “Ye are from beneath, I am from above: ye are of this world, I am not of this world.” And to the Apostle He saith, “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own.” But lest they should arrogate more unto themselves than their measure craved, and when He said that they were not of the world, should imagine this to be of nature, not of grace, therefore He saith, “But because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” It follows, that they once were of the world: for, that they might not be of the world, they were chosen out of the world.

17. Now this election the Apostle demonstrating to be, not of merits going before in good works, but election of grace, saith thus: “And in this time a remnant by election of grace is saved. But if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace.” This is election of grace; that is, election in which through the grace of God men are elected: this, I say, is election of grace which goes before all good merits of men. For if it be to

any good merits that it is given, then is it no more gratuitously given, but is paid as a debt, and consequently is not truly called grace; where “reward,” as the same Apostle saith, “is not imputed as grace, but as debt.” Whereas if, that it may be true grace, that is, gratuitous, it find nothing in man to which it is due of merit, (which thing is well understood in that saying, “Thou wilt save them for nothing,”) then assuredly itself gives the merits, not to merits is given. Consequently it goes before even faith, from which it is that all good works begin. “For the just,” as is written, “shall live by faith.” But, moreover, grace not only assists the just, but also justifies the ungodly. And therefore even when it does aid the just and seems to be rendered to his merits, not even then does it cease to be grace, because that which it aids it did itself bestow. With a view therefore to this grace, which precedes all good merits of man, not only was Christ put to death by the ungodly, but “died for the ungodly.” And ere that He died, He elected the Apostles, not of course then just, but to be justified: to whom He saith, “I have chosen you out of the world.” For to whom He said, “Ye are not of the world,” and then, lest they should account themselves never to have been of the world, presently added, “But I have chosen you out of the world;” assuredly that they should not be of the world was by His own election of them conferred upon them. Wherefore, if it had been through their own righteousness, not through His grace, that they were elected, they would not have been chosen out of the world, because they would already not be of the world if already they were just. And again, if the reason why they were elected was, that they were already just, they had already first chosen the Lord. For who can be righteous but by choosing righteousness? “But the end of the law is Christ, for righteousness is to every one that believeth. Who is made unto us wisdom of God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” He then is Himself our righteousness.

18. Whence also the just of old, before the Incarnation of the Word, in this faith of Christ, and in this true righteousness, (which thing Christ is unto us,) were justified; believing this to come which we believe come: and they themselves by grace were saved through faith, not of themselves, but by the gift of God, not of works, lest haply they should be lifted up. For their good works did not come before God’s mercy, but followed it. For to them was it

said, and by them written, long ere Christ was come in the flesh, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will show compassion on whom I will have compassion.” From which words of God the Apostle Paul, should so long after say; “It is not therefore of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” It is also their own voice, long ere Christ was come in the flesh, “My God, His mercy shall prevent me.” How indeed could they be aliens from the faith of Christ, by whose charity even Christ was fore-announced unto us; without the faith of Whom, not any of mortals either hath been, or is, or ever shall be able to be, righteous? If then, being already just, the Apostles were elected by Christ, they would have first chosen Him, that just men might be chosen, because without Him they could not be just. But it was not so: as Himself saith to them, “Not ye have chosen Me, but I have chosen you.” Of which the Apostle John speaks, “Not that we loved God, but that He loved us.”

19. Since the case is so, what is man, while in this life he uses his own proper will, ere he choose and love God, but unrighteous and ungodly? “What,” I say, “is man,” a creature going astray from the Creator, unless his Creator “be mindful of him,” and choose him freely, and love him freely? Because he is himself not able to choose or love, unless being first chosen and loved he be healed, because by choosing blindness he perceiveth not, and by loving laziness is soon wearied. But perchance some man may say: In what manner is it that God first chooses and loves unjust men, that He may justify them, when it is written, “Thou hatest, Lord, all that work iniquity?” In what way, think we, but in a wonderful and ineffable manner? And yet even we are able to conceive, that the good Physician both hates and loves the sick man: hates him, because he is sick; loves him, that he may drive away his sickness.

20. Let thus much have been said with regard to charity, without which in us there cannot be true patience, because in good men it is the love of God which endureth all things, as in bad men the lust of the world. But this love is in us by the Holy Spirit which was given us. Whence, of Whom cometh in us love, of Him cometh patience. But the lust of the world, when it patiently bears the burdens of any manner of calamity, boasts of the strength of its own will, like as of the stupor of disease, not robustness of health.

This boasting is insane: it is not the language of patience, but of dotage. A will like this in that degree seems more patient of bitter ills, in which it is more greedy of temporal good things, because more empty of eternal.

21. But if it be goaded on and inflamed with deceitful visions and unclean incentives by the devilish spirit, associated and conspiring therewith in malignant agreement, this spirit makes the will of the man either frantic with error, or burning with appetite of some worldly delight; and hence, it seems to show a marvellous endurance of intolerable evils: but yet it does not follow from this that an evil will without instigation of another and unclean spirit, like as a good will without aid of the Holy Spirit, cannot exist. For that there may be an evil will even without any spirit either seducing or inciting, is sufficiently clear in the instance of the devil himself, who is found to have become a devil, not through some other devil, but of his own proper will. An evil will therefore, whether it be hurried on by lust, whether called back by fear, whether expanded by gladness, whether contracted by sadness, and in all these perturbations of mind enduring and making light of whatever are to others, or at another time, more grievous, this evil will may, without another spirit to goad it on, seduce itself, and in lapsing by defection from the higher to the lower, the more pleasant it shall account that thing to be which it seeks to get or fears to lose, or rejoices to have gotten, or grieves to have lost, the more tolerably for its sake bear what is less for it to suffer than that is to be enjoyed. For whatever that thing be, it is of the creature, of which one knows the pleasure. Because in some sort, the creature loved approaches itself to the creature loving in fond contact and connection, to the giving experience of its sweetness.

22. But the pleasure of the Creator, of which is written, “And from the river of Thy pleasure wilt Thou give them to drink,” is of far other kind, for it is not, like us, a creature. Unless then its love be given to us from thence there is no source whence it may be in us. And consequently, a good will, by which we love God, cannot be in man, save in whom God also worketh to will. This good will therefore, that is, a will faithfully subjected to God, a will set on fire by sanctity of that ardor which is above, a will which loves God and his neighbor for God’s sake; whether through love, of which the Apostle Peter makes answer, “Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee;”

whether through fear, of which says the Apostle Paul, “In fear and trembling work out your own salvation;” whether through joy, of which he says, “In hope rejoicing, in tribulation patient;” whether through sorrow, with which he says he had great grief for his brethren; in whatever way it endure what bitterness and hardships soever, it is the love of God which “endureth all things,” and which is not shed abroad in our hearts but by the Holy Spirit given unto us. Whereof piety makes no manner of doubt, but, as the charity of them which holily love, so the patience of them which piously endure, is the gift of God. For it cannot be that the divine Scripture deceiveth or is deceived, which not only in the Old Books hath testimonies of this thing, when it is said unto God, “My Patience art Thou,” and, “From Him is my patience;” and where another prophet saith, that we receive the spirit of fortitude; but also in the Apostolic writings we read, “Because unto you is given on behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but to suffer for Him.” Therefore let not that make the mind to be as of its own merit uplifted, wherewith he is told that he is of Another’s mercy gifted.

23. But if moreover any not having charity, which pertaineth to the unity of spirit and the bond of peace whereby the Catholic Church is gathered and knit together, being involved in any schism, doth, that he may not deny Christ, suffer tribulations, straits, hunger, nakedness, persecution, perils, prisons, bonds, torments, swords, or flames, or wild beasts, or the very cross, through fear of hell and everlasting fire; in nowise is all this to be blamed, nay rather this also is a patience meet to be praised. For we cannot say that it would have been better for him that by denying Christ he should suffer none of these things, which he did suffer by confessing Him: but we must account that it will perhaps be more tolerable for him in the judgment, than if by denying Christ he should avoid all those things: so that what the Apostle saith, “If I shall give my body to be burned, but have not charity, it profiteth me nothing,” should be understood to profit nothing for obtaining the kingdom of heaven, but not for having more tolerable punishment to undergo in the last judgment.

24. But it may well be asked, whether this patience likewise be the gift of God, or to be attributed to strength of the human will, by which patience, one who is separated from the Church doth, not for the error which

separated him but for the truth of the Sacrament or Word which hath remained with him, for fear of pains eternal suffer pains temporal. For we must take heed lest haply, if we affirm that patience to be the gift of God, they in whom it is should be thought to belong also to the kingdom of God; but if we deny it to be the gift of God, we should be compelled to allow that without aid and gift of God there can be in the will of man somewhat of good. Because it is not to be denied that it is a good thing that a man believe he shall undergo pain of eternal punishment if he shall deny Christ, and for that faith endure and make light of any manner of punishment of man's inflicting.

25. So then, as we are not to deny that this is the gift of God, we are thus to understand that there be some gifts of God possessed by the sons of that Jerusalem which is above, and free, and mother of us all, (for these are in some sort the hereditary possessions in which we are "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ:") but some other which may be received even by the sons of concubines to whom carnal Jews and schismatics or heretics are compared. For though it be written, "Cast out the bondmaid and her son, for the son of the bondmaid shall not be heir with my son Isaac:" and though God said to Abraham, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called:" which the Apostle hath so interpreted as to say, "That is, not they which be sons of the flesh, these be the sons of God; but the sons of the promise are counted for the seed;" that we might understand the seed of Abraham in regard of Christ to pertain by reason of Christ to the sons of God, who are Christ's body and members, that is to say, the Church of God, one, true, very-begotten, catholic, holding the godly faith; not the faith which works through elation or fear, but "which worketh by love;" nevertheless, even the sons of the concubines, when Abraham sent them away from his son Isaac, he did not omit to bestow upon them some gifts, that they might not be left in every way empty, but not that they should be held as heirs. For so we read: "And Abraham gave all his estate unto Isaac; and to the sons of his concubines gave Abraham gifts, and sent them away from his son Isaac." If then we be sons of Jerusalem the free, let us understand that other be the gifts of them which are put out of the inheritance, other the gifts of them which be heirs. For these be the heirs, to whom is said, "Ye have not received the spirit of

bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

26. Cry we therefore with the spirit of charity, and until we come to the inheritance in which we are alway to remain, let us be, through love which becometh the free-born, not through fear which becometh bondmen, patient of suffering. Cry we, so long as we are poor, until we be with that inheritance made rich. Seeing how great earnest thereof we have received, in that Christ to make us rich made Himself poor; Who being exalted unto the riches which are above, there was sent One Who should breathe into our hearts holy longings, the Holy Spirit. Of these poor, as yet believing, not yet beholding; as yet hoping, not yet enjoying; as yet sighing in desire, not yet reigning in felicity; as yet hungering and thirsting, not yet satisfied: of these poor, then, “the patience shall not perish for ever:” not that there will be patience there also, where aught to endure shall not be; but “will not perish,” meaning that it will not be unfruitful. But its fruit it will have for ever, therefore it “shall not perish for ever.” For he who labors in vain, when his hope fails for which he labored, says with good cause, “I have lost so much labor:” but he who comes to the promise of his labor says, congratulating himself, I have not lost my labor. Labor then is said not to perish (or be lost), not because it lasts perpetually, but because it is not spent in vain. So also the patience of the poor of Christ (who yet are to be made rich as heirs of Christ) shall not perish for ever: not because there also we shall be commanded patiently to bear, but because for that which we have here patiently borne, we shall enjoy eternal bliss. He will put no end to everlasting felicity, Who giveth temporal patience unto the will: because both the one and the other is of Him bestowed as a gift upon charity, Whose gift that charity is also.

ON THE CATECHISING OF THE UNINSTRUCTED

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IN ONE BOOK.

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ON THE CATECHISING OF THE UNINSTRUCTED

CHAPTER 1

HOW AUGUSTIN WRITES IN ANSWER TO A FAVOR ASKED BY A DEACON OF CARTHAGE

1. You have requested me, brother Deogratias, to send you in writing something which might be of service to you in the matter of catechising the uninstructed. For you have informed me that in Carthage, where you hold the position of a deacon, persons, who have to be taught the Christian faith from its very rudiments, are frequently brought to you by reason of your enjoying the reputation of possessing a rich gift in catechising, due at once to an intimate acquaintance with the faith, and to an attractive method of discourse; but that you almost always find yourself in a difficulty as to the manner in which a suitable declaration is to be made of the precise doctrine, the belief of which constitutes us Christians: regarding the point at which our statement of the same ought to commence, and the limit to which it should be allowed to proceed: and with respect to the question whether, when our narration is concluded, we ought to make use of any kind of exhortation, or simply specify those precepts in the observance of which the person to whom we are discoursing may know the Christian life and profession to be maintained. At the same time, you have made the confession and complaint that it has often befallen you that in the course of a lengthened and languid address you have become profitless and distasteful even to yourself, not to speak of the learner whom you have been endeavoring to instruct by your utterance, and the other parties who have been present as hearers; and that you have been constrained by these straits to put upon me the constraint of that love which I owe to you, so that I may not feel it a burdensome thing among all my engagements to write you something on this subject.

2. As for myself then, if, in the exercise of those capacities which through the bounty of our Lord I am enabled to present, the same Lord requires me to offer any manner of aid to those whom He has made brethren to me, I feel constrained not only by that love and service which is due from me to you on the terms of familiar friendship, but also by that which I owe universally to my mother the Church, by no means to refuse the task, but rather to take it up with a prompt and devoted willingness. For the more extensively I desire to see the treasure of the Lord distributed, the more does it become my duty, if I ascertain that the stewards, who are my fellow-servants, find any difficulty in laying it out, to do all that lies in my power to the end that they may be able to accomplish easily and expeditiously what they sedulously and earnestly aim at.

CHAPTER 2

HOW IT OFTEN HAPPENS THAT A DISCOURSE WHICH GIVES PLEASURE TO THE HEARER IS DISTASTEFUL TO THE SPEAKER; AND WHAT EXPLANATION IS TO BE OFFERED OF THAT FACT

3. But as regards the idea thus privately entertained by yourself in such efforts, I would not have you to be disturbed by the consideration that you have often appeared to yourself to be delivering a poor and wearisome discourse. For it may very well be the case that the matter has not so presented itself to the person whom you were trying to instruct, but that what you were uttering seemed to you to be unworthy of the ears of others, simply because it was your own earnest desire that there should be something better to listen to. Indeed with me, too, it is almost always the fact that my speech displeases myself. For I am covetous of something better, the possession of which I frequently enjoy within me before I commence to body it forth in intelligible words: and then when my capacities of expression prove inferior to my inner apprehensions, I grieve over the inability which my tongue has betrayed in answering to my heart. For it is my wish that he who hears me should have the same complete understanding of the subject which I have myself; and I perceive that I fail to speak in a manner calculated to effect that, and that this arises mainly from the circumstance that the intellectual apprehension diffuses itself through the mind with something like a rapid flash, whereas the utterance is

slow, and occupies time, and is of a vastly different nature, so that, while this latter is moving on, the intellectual apprehension has already withdrawn itself within its secret abodes. Yet, in consequence of its having stamped certain impressions of itself in a marvellous manner upon the memory, these prints endure with the brief pauses of the syllables; and as the outcome of these same impressions we form intelligible signs, which get the name of a certain language, either the Latin, or the Greek, or the Hebrew, or some other. And these signs may be objects of thought, or they may also be actually uttered by the voice. On the other hand however, the impressions themselves are neither Latin, nor Greek, nor Hebrew, nor peculiar to any other race whatsoever, but are made good in the mind just as looks are in the body. For anger is designated by one word in Latin, by another in Greek, and by different terms in other languages, according to their several diversities. But the look of the angry man is neither (peculiarly) Latin nor (peculiarly) Greek. Thus it is that when a person says Iratus sum, he is not understood by every nation, but only by the Latins; whereas, if the mood of his mind when it is kindling to wrath comes forth upon the face and affects the look, all who have the individual within their view understand that he is angry. But, again, it is not in our power to bring out those impressions which the intellectual apprehension stamps upon the memory, and to hold them forth, as it were, to the perception of the hearers by means of the sound of the voice, in any manner parallel to the clear and evident form in which the look appears. For those former are within in the mind, while this latter is without in the body. Wherefore we have to surmise how far the sound of our mouth must be from representing that stroke of the intelligence, seeing that it does not correspond even with the impression produced upon the memory. Now, it is a common occurrence with us that, in the ardent desire to effect what is of profit to our hearer, our aim is to express ourselves to him exactly as our intellectual apprehension is at the time, when, in the very effort, we are failing in the ability to speak; and then, because this does not succeed with us, we are vexed, and we pine in weariness as if we were applying ourselves to vain labors; and, as the result of this very weariness, our discourse becomes itself more languid and pointless even than it was when it first induced such a sense of tediousness.

4. But ofttimes the earnestness of those who are desirous of hearing me shows me that my utterance is not so frigid as it seems to myself to be. From the delight, too, which they exhibit, I gather that they derive some profit from it. And I occupy myself sedulously with the endeavor not to fail in putting before them a service in which I perceive them to take in such good part what is put before them. Even, so, on your side also, the very fact that persons who require to be instructed in the faith are brought so frequently to you, ought to help you to understand that your discourse is not displeasing to others as it is displeasing to yourself; and you ought not to consider yourself unfruitful, simply because you do not succeed in setting forth in such a manner as you desire the things which you discern; for, perchance, you may be just as little able to discern them in the way you wish. For in this life who sees except as “in an enigma and through a glass”? Neither is love itself of might sufficient to rend the darkness of the flesh, and penetrate into that eternal calm from which even things which pass away derive the light in which they shine. But inasmuch as day by day the good are making advances towards the vision of that day, independent of the rolling sky, and without the invasion of the night, “which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man,” there is no greater reason why our discourse should become valueless in our own estimate, when we are engaged in teaching the uninstructed, than this,—namely, that it is a delight to us to discern in an extraordinary fashion, and a weariness to speak in an ordinary. And in reality we are listened to with much greater satisfaction, indeed, when we ourselves also have pleasure in the same work; for the thread of our address is affected by the very joy of which we ourselves are sensible, and it proceeds from us with greater ease and with more acceptance. Consequently, as regards those matters which are recommended as articles of belief, the task is not a difficult one to lay down injunctions, with respect to the points at which the narration should be commenced and ended, or with respect to the method in which the narration is to be varied, so that at one time it may be briefer, at another more lengthened, and yet at all times full and perfect; and, again, with respect to the particular occasions on which it may be right to use the shorter form, and those on which it will be proper to employ the longer. But as to the means by which all is to be done, so that every one may have pleasure in his work when he catechises (for the better he succeeds in this

the more attractive will he be),—that is what requires the greatest consideration. And yet we have not far to seek for the precept which will rule in this sphere. For if, in the matter of carnal means, God loves a cheerful giver, how much more so in that of the spiritual? But our security that this cheerfulness may be with us at the seasonable hour, is something dependent upon the mercy of Him who has given us such precepts. Therefore, in accordance with my understanding of what your own wish is, we shall discuss in the first place the subject of the method of narration, then that of the duty of delivering injunction and exhortation, and afterwards that of the attainment of the said cheerfulness, so far as God may furnish us with the ideas.

CHAPTER 3

OF THE FULL NARRATION TO BE EMPLOYED IN CATECHISING

5. The narration is full when each person is catechised in the first instance from what is written in the text, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," on to the present times of the Church. This does not imply, however, either that we ought to repeat by memory the entire Pentateuch, and the entire Books of Judges, and Kings, and Esdras, and the entire Gospel and Acts of the Apostles, if we have learned all these word for word; or that we should put all the matters which are contained in these volumes into our own words, and in that manner unfold and expound them as a whole. For neither does the time admit of that, nor does any necessity demand it. But what we ought to do is, to give a comprehensive statement of all things, summarily and generally, so that certain of the more wonderful facts may be selected which are listened to with superior gratification, and which have been ranked so remarkably among the exact turning-points (of the history); that, instead of exhibiting them to view only in their wrappings, if we may so speak, and then instantly snatching them from our sight, we ought to dwell on them for a certain space, and thus, as it were, unfold them and open them out to vision, and present them to the minds of the hearers as things to be examined and admired. But as for all other details, these should be passed over rapidly, and thus far introduced and woven into the narrative. The effect of pursuing this plan is, that the particular facts which we wish to see specially commended to attention

obtain greater prominence in consequence of the others being made to yield to them; while, at the same time, neither does the learner, whose interest we are anxious to stimulate by our statement, come to these subjects with a mind already exhausted, nor is confusion induced upon the memory of the person whom we ought to be instructing by our teaching.

6. In all things, indeed, not only ought our own eye to be kept fixed upon the end of the commandment, which is "charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned," to which we should make all that we utter refer; but in like manner ought the gaze of the person whom we are instructing by our utterance to be moved toward the same, and guided in that direction. And, in truth, for no other reason were all those things which we read in the Holy Scriptures written, previous to the Lord's advent, but for this,—namely, that His advent might be pressed upon the attention, and that the Church which was to be, should be intimated beforehand, that is to say, the people of God throughout all nations; which Church is His body, wherewith also are united and numbered all the saints who lived in this world, even before His advent, and who believed then in His future coming, just as we believe in His past coming. For (to use an illustration) Jacob, at the time when he was being born, first put forth from the womb a hand, with which also he held the foot of the brother who was taking priority of him in the act of birth; and next indeed the head followed, and thereafter, at last, and as matter of course, the rest of the members: while, nevertheless the head in point of dignity and power has precedence, not only of those members which followed it then, but also of the very hand which anticipated it in the process of the birth, and is really the first, although not in the matter of the time of appearing, at least in the order of nature. And in an analogous manner, the Lord Jesus Christ, previous to His appearing in the flesh, and coming forth in a certain manner out of the womb of His secrecy, before the eyes of men as Man, the Mediator between God and men, "who is over all, God blessed for ever," sent before Him, in the person of the holy patriarchs and prophets, a certain portion of His body, wherewith, as by a hand, He gave token beforetime of His own approaching birth, and also supplanted the people who were prior to Him in their pride, using for that purpose the bonds of the law, as if they were His five fingers. For through five epochs of times there was no cessation in the foretelling

and prophesying of His own destined coming; and in a manner consonant with this, he through whom the law was given wrote five books; and proud men, who were carnally minded, and sought to “establish their own righteousness,” were not filled with blessing by the open hand of Christ, but were debarred from such good by the hand compressed and closed; and therefore their feet were tied, and “they fell, while we are risen, and stand upright.” But although, as I have said, the Lord Christ did thus send before Him a certain portion of His body, in the person of those holy men who came before Him as regards the time of birth, nevertheless He is Himself the Head of the body, the Church, and all these have been attached to that same body of which He is the head, in virtue of their believing in Him whom they announced prophetically. For they were not sundered (from that body) in consequence of fulfilling their course before Him, but rather were they made one with the same by reason of their obedience. For although the hand may be put forward away before the head, still it has its connection beneath the head. Wherefore all things which were written aforetime were written in order that we might be taught thereby, and were our figures, and happened in a figure in the case of these men. Moreover they were written for our sakes, upon whom the end of the ages has come.

CHAPTER 4

THAT THE GREAT REASON FOR THE ADVENT OF CHRIST WAS THE COMMENDATION OF LOVE

7. Moreover, what greater reason is apparent for the advent of the Lord than that God might show His love in us, commending it powerfully, inasmuch as “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”? And furthermore, this is with the intent that, inasmuch as charity is “the end of the commandment,” and “the fulfilling of the law,” we also may love one another and lay down our life for the brethren, even as He laid down His life for us. And with regard to God Himself, its object is that, even if it were an irksome task to love Him, it may now at least cease to be irksome for us to return His love, seeing that “He first loved us,” and “spared not His own only Son, but delivered Him up for us all.” For there is no mightier invitation to love than to anticipate in loving; and that soul is over hard which, supposing it unwilling indeed to give love, is unwilling also to give the return of love.

But if, even in the case of criminal and sordid loves, we see how those who desire to be loved in return make it their special and absorbing business, by such proofs as are within their power, to render the strength of the love which they themselves bear plain and patent; if we also perceive how they affect to put forward an appearance of justice in what they thus offer, such as may qualify them in some sort to demand that a response be made in all fairness to them on the part of those souls which they are laboring to beguile; if, further, their own passion burns more vehemently when they observe that the minds which they are eager to possess are also moved now by the same fire: if thus, I say, it happens at once that the soul which before was torpid is excited so soon as it feels itself to be loved, and that the soul which was enkindled already becomes the more inflamed so soon as it is made cognizant of the return of its own love, it is evident that no greater reason is to be found why love should be either originated or enlarged, than what appears in the occasion when one who as yet loves not at all comes to know himself to be the object of love, or when one who is already a lover either hopes that he may yet be loved in turn, or has by this time the evidence of a response to his affection. And if this holds good even in the case of base loves, how much more in (true) friendship? For what else have we carefully to attend to in this question touching the injuring of friendship than to this, namely, not to give our friend cause to suppose either that we do not love him at all, or that we love him less than he loves us? If, indeed, he is led to entertain this belief, he will be cooler in that love in which men enjoy the interchange of intimacies one with another; and if he is not of that weak type of character to which such an offense to affection will serve as a cause of freezing off from love altogether, he yet confines himself to that kind of affection in which he loves, not with the view of enjoyment to himself, but with the idea of studying the good of others. But again it is worth our while to notice how,—although superiors also have the wish to be loved by their inferiors, and are gratified with the zealous attention paid to them by such, and themselves cherish greater affection towards these inferiors the more they become cognizant of that,—with what might of love, nevertheless, the inferior kindles so soon as he learns that he is beloved by his superior. For there have we love in its more grateful aspect, where it does not consume itself in the drought of want, but flows forth in the plenteousness of beneficence. For the former type of love is of misery, the latter of mercy. And furthermore, if the inferior was despairing even of the possibility of his being loved by his superior, he will now be inexpressibly moved to love if the superior has of his own will condescended to show how much he loves this person who could by no means be bold enough to promise himself so great a good. But what is there superior to God in the character of Judge? and what more desperate than man in the character of sinner?—than man, I ask, who had given himself all the more unreservedly up to the wardship and domination of proud powers which are unable to make him blessed, as he had come more absolutely to despair of the possibility of his being an object of interest to that power which wills not to be exalted in wickedness, but is exalted in goodness.

8. If, therefore, it was mainly for this purpose that Christ came, to wit, that man might learn how much God loves him; and that he might learn this, to the intent that he might be kindled to the love of Him by whom he was first loved, and might also love his neighbor at the command and showing of Him who became our neighbor, in that He loved man when, instead of being a neighbor to Him, he was sojourning far apart: if, again, all divine Scripture, which was written aforetime, was written with the view of presignifying the Lord’s advent; and if whatever has been committed to writing in times subsequent to these, and established by divine authority, is a record of Christ, and admonishes us of love, it is manifest that on those two commandments of love to God and love to our neighbor hang not only all the law and the prophets, which at the time when the Lord spoke to that effect were as yet the only Holy Scripture, but also all those books of the divine literature which have been written at a later period for our health, and consigned to remembrance. Wherefore, in the Old Testament there is a veiling of the New, and in the New Testament there is a revealing of the Old. According to that veiling, carnal men, understanding things in a carnal fashion, have been under the dominion, both then and now, of a penal fear. According to this revealing, on the other hand, spiritual men,—among whom we reckon at once those then who knocked in piety and found even hidden things opened to them, and others now who seek in no spirit of pride, lest even things uncovered should be closed to them,—understanding in a spiritual fashion, have been made free through the love wherewith they have been gifted. Consequently, inasmuch as there is nothing more adverse

to love than envy, and as pride is the mother of envy, the same Lord Jesus Christ, God-man, is both a manifestation of divine love towards us, and an example of human humility with us, to the end that our great swelling might be cured by a greater counteracting remedy. For here is great misery, proud man! But there is greater mercy, a humble God! Take this love, therefore, as the end that is set before you, to which you are to refer all that you say, and, whatever you narrate, narrate it in such a manner that he to whom you are discoursing on hearing may believe, on believing may hope, on hoping may love.

CHAPTER 5

THAT THE PERSON WHO COMES FOR CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION IS TO BE EXAMINED WITH RESPECT TO HIS VIEWS, ON DESIRING TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

9. Moreover, it is on the gound of that very severity of God, by which the hearts of mortals are agitated with a most wholesome terror, that love is to be built up; so that, rejoicing that he is loved by Him whom he fears, man may have boldness to love Him in return, and yet at the same time be afraid to displease His love toward himself, even should he be able to do so with impunity. For certainly it very rarely happens, nay, I should rather say, never, that any one approaches us with the wish to become a Christian who has not been smitten with some sort of fear of God. For if it is in the expectation of some advantage from men whom he deems himself unlikely to please in any other way, or with the idea of escaping any disadvantage at the hands of men of whose displeasure or hostility he is seriously afraid, that a man wishes to become a Christian, then his wish to become one is not so earnest as his desire to feign one. For faith is not a matter of the body which does obeisance, but of the mind which believes. But unmistakeably it is often the case that the mercy of God comes to be present through the ministry of the catechiser, so that, affected by the discourse, the man now wishes to become in reality that which he had made up his mind only to feign. And so soon as he begins to have this manner of desire, we may judge him then to have made a genuine approach to us. It is true, indeed, that the precise time when a man, whom we perceive to be present with us already in the body, comes to us in reality with his mind, is a thing hidden from us. But, notwithstanding that, we ought to deal with him in such a

manner that this wish may be made to arise within him, even should it not be there at present. For no such labor is lost, inasmuch as, if there is any wish at all, it is assuredly strengthened by such action on our part, although we may be ignorant of the time or the hour at which it began. It is useful certainly, if it can be done, to get from those who know the man some idea beforehand of the state of mind in which he is, or of the causes which have induced him to come with the view of embracing religion. But if there is no other person available from whom we may gather such information, then, indeed, the man himself is to be interrogated, so that from what he says in reply we may draw the beginning of our discourse. Now if he has come with a false heart, desirous only of human advantages or thinking to escape disadvantages, he will certainly speak what is untrue. Nevertheless, the very untruth which he utters should be made the point from which we start. This should not be done, however, with the (open) intention of confuting his falsehood, as if that were a settled matter with you; but, taking it for granted that he has professed to have come with a purpose which is really worthy of approbation (whether that profession be true or false), it should rather be our aim to commend and praise such a purpose as that with which, in his reply, he has declared himself to have come; so that we may make him feel it a pleasure to be the kind of man actually that he wishes to seem to be. On the other hand, supposing him to have given a declaration of his views other than what ought to be before the mind of one who is to be instructed in the Christian faith, then by reproving him with more than usual kindness and gentleness, as a person uninstructed and ignorant, by pointing out and commending, concisely and in a grave spirit the end of Christian doctrine in its genuine reality, and by doing all this in such a manner as neither to anticipate the times of a narration, which should be given subsequently, nor to venture to impose that kind of statement upon a mind not previously set for it, you may bring him to desire that which, either in mistake or in dissimulation, he has not been desiring up to this stage.

CHAPTER 6

OF THE WAY TO COMMENCE THE CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION, AND OF THE NARRATION OF FACTS FROM THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD'S CREATION ON TO THE PRESENT TIMES OF THE CHURCH

10. But if it happens that his answer is to the effect that he has met with some divine warning, or with some divine terror, prompting him to become a Christian, this opens up the way most satisfactorily for a commencement to our discourse, by suggesting the greatness of God’s interest in us. His thoughts, however, ought certainly to be turned away from this line of things, whether miracles or dreams, and directed to the more solid path and the surer oracles of the Scriptures; so that he may also come to understand how mercifully that warning was administered to him in advance, previous to his giving himself to the Holy Scriptures. And assuredly it ought to be pointed out to him, that the Lord Himself would neither thus have admonished him and urged him on to become a Christian, and to be incorporated into the Church, nor have taught him by such signs or revelations, had it not been His will that, for his greater safety and security, he should enter upon a pathway already prepared in the Holy Scriptures, in which he should not seek after visible miracles, but learn the habit of hoping for things invisible, and in which also he should receive monitions not in sleep but in wakefulness. At this point the narration ought now to be commenced, which should start with the fact that God made all things very good, and which should be continued, as we have said, on to the present times of the Church. This should be done in such a manner as to give, for each of the affairs and events which we relate, causes and reasons by which we may refer them severally to that end of love from which neither the eye of the man who is occupied in doing anything, nor that of the man who is engaged in speaking, ought to be turned away. For if, even in handling the fables of the poets, which are but fictitious creations and things devised for the pleasure of minds whose food is found in trifles, those grammarians who have the reputation and the name of being good do nevertheless endeavor to bring them to bear upon some kind of (assumed) use, although that use itself may be only something vain and grossly bent upon the coarse nutriment of this world: how much more careful does it become us to be, not to let those genuine verities which we narrate, in consequence of any want of a well-considered account of their causes, be accepted either with a gratification which issues in no practical good, or, still less, with a cupidity which may prove hurtful! At the same time, we are not to set forth these causes in such a manner as to leave the proper course of our narration, and let our heart and our tongue indulge in digressions into the knotty questions

of more intricate discussion. But the simple truth of the explanation which we adduce ought to be like the gold which binds together a row of gems, and yet does not interfere with the choice symmetry of the ornament by any undue intrusion of itself.

CHAPTER 7

OF THE EXPOSITION OF THE RESURRECTION, THE JUDGMENT, AND OTHER SUBJECTS, WHICH SHOULD FOLLOW THIS NARRATION

11. On the completion of this narration, the hope of the resurrection should be set forth, and, so far as the capacity and strength of the hearer will bear it, and so far also as the measure of time at our disposal will allow, we ought to handle our arguments against the vain scoffings of unbelievers on the subject of the resurrection of the body, as well as on that of the future judgment, with its goodness in relation to the good, its severity in relation to the evil, its truth in relation to all. And after the penalties of the impious have thus been declared with detestation and horror, then the kingdom of the righteous and faithful, and that supernal city and its joy, should form the next themes for our discourse. At this point, moreover, we ought to equip and animate the weakness of man in withstanding temptations and offenses, whether these emerge without or rise within the church itself; without, as in opposition to Gentiles, or Jews, or heretics; within, on the other hand, as in opposition to the chaff of the Lord’s threshing-floor. It is not meant, however, that we are to dispute against each several type of perverse men, and that all their wrong opinions are to be refuted by set arrays of argumentations: but, in a manner suitable to a limited allowance of time, we ought to show how all this was foretold, and to point out of what service temptations are in the training of the faithful, and what relief there is in the example of the patience of God, who has resolved to permit them even to the end. But, again, while he is being furnished against these (adversaries), whose perverse multitudes fill the churches so far as bodily presence is concerned, the precepts of a Christian and honorable manner of life should also be briefly and befittingly detailed at the same time, to the intent that he may neither allow himself to be easily led astray in this way, by any who are drunkards, covetous, fraudulent, gamesters, adulterers, fornicators, lovers of public spectacles, wearers of unholy charms, sorcerers,

astrologers, or diviners practising any sort of vain and wicked arts, and all other parties of a similar character; nor to let himself fancy that any such course may be followed with impunity on his part, simply because he sees many who are called Christians loving these things, and engaging themselves with them, and defending them, and recommending them, and actually persuading others to their use. For as to the end which is appointed for those who persist in such a mode of life, and as to the method in which they are to be borne with in the church itself, out of which they are destined to be separated in the end,—these are subjects in which the learner ought to be instructed by means of the testimonies of the divine books. He should also, however, be informed beforehand that he will find in the church many good Christians, most genuine citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, if he sets about being such himself. And, finally, he must be sedulously warned against letting his hope rest on man. For it is not a matter that can be easily judged by man, what man is righteous. And even were this a matter which could be easily done, still the object with which the examples of righteous men are set before us is not that we may be justified by them, but that, as we imitate them, we may understand how we ourselves also are justified by their Justifier. For the issue of this will be something which must merit the highest approval,—namely this, that when the person who is hearing us, or rather, who is hearing God by us, has begun to make some progress in moral qualities and in knowledge, and to enter upon the way of Christ with ardor, he will not be so bold as to ascribe the change either to us or to himself; but he will love both himself and us, and whatever other persons he loves as friends, in Him, and for His sake who loved him when he was an enemy, in order that He might justify him and make him a friend. And now that we have advanced thus far, I do not think that you need any preceptor to tell you how you should discuss matters briefly, when either your own time or that of those who are hearing you is occupied; and how, on the other hand, you should discourse at greater length when there is more time at your command. For the very necessity of the case recommends this, apart from the counsel of any adviser.

CHAPTER 8

OF THE METHOD TO BE PURSUED IN CATECHISING THOSE WHO HAVE HAD A LIBERAL EDUCATION

12. But there is another case which evidently must not be overlooked. I mean the case of one coming to you to receive catchetical instruction who has cultivated the field of liberal studies, who has already made up his mind to be a Christian, and who has betaken himself to you for the express purpose of becoming one. It can scarcely fail to be the fact that a person of this character has already acquired a considerable knowledge of our Scriptures and literature; and, furnished with this, he may have come now simply with the view of being made a partaker in the sacraments. For it is customary with men of this class to inquire carefully into all things, not at the very time when they are made Christians, but previous to that, and thus early also to communicate and reason, with any whom they can reach, on the subject of the feelings of their own minds. Consequently a brief method of procedure should be adopted with these, so as not to inculcate on them, in an odious fashion things which they know already, but to pass over these with a light and modest touch. Thus we should say how we believe that they are already familiar with this and the other subject, and that we therefore simply reckon up in a cursory manner all those facts which require to be formally urged upon the attention of the uninstructed and unlearned. And we should endeavor so to proceed, that, supposing this man of culture to have been previously acquainted with any one of our themes, he may not hear it now as from a teacher; and that, in the event of his being still ignorant of any of them, he may yet learn the same while we are going over the things with which we understand him to be already familiar. Moreover, it is certainly not without advantage to interrogate the man himself as to the means by which he was induced to desire to be a Christian; so that, if you discover him to have been moved to that decision by books, whether they be the canonical writings or the compositions of literary men worth the studying, you may say something about these at the outset, expressing your approbation of them in a manner which may suit the distinct merits which they severally possess, in respect of canonical authority and of skillfully applied diligence on the part of these expounders; and, in the case of the canonical Scriptures, commending above all the most salutary modesty (of

language) displayed alongside their wonderful loftiness (of subject); while, in those other productions you notice, in accordance with the characteristic faculty of each several writer, a style of a more sonorous and, as it were more rounded eloquence adapted to minds that are prouder, and, by reason thereof weaker. We should certainly also elicit from him some account of himself, so that he may give us to understand what writer he chiefly perused, and with what books he was more familiarly conversant, as these were the means of moving him to wish to be associated with the church. And when he has given us this information, then if the said books are known to us, or if we have at least ecclesiastical report as our warrant for taking them to have been written by some catholic man of note, we should joyfully express our approbation. But if, on the other hand, he has fallen upon the productions of some heretic and in ignorance, it may be, has retained in his mind anything which the true faith condemns, and yet supposes it to be catholic doctrine, then we must set ourselves sedulously to teach him, bringing before him (in its rightful superiority) the authority of the Church universal, and of other most learned men reputed both for their disputations and for their writings in (the cause of) its truth. At the same time, it is to be admitted that even those who have departed this life as genuine catholics, and have left to posterity some Christian writings, in certain passages of their small works, either in consequence of their failing to be understood, or (as the way is with human infirmity) because they lack ability to pierce into the deeper mysteries with the eye of the mind, and in (pursuing) the semblance of what is true, wander from the truth itself, have proved an occasion to the presumptuous and audacious for constructing and generating some heresy. This, however, is not to be wondered at, when, even in the instance of the canonical writings themselves, where all things have been expressed in the soundest manner, we see how it has happened,—not indeed through merely taking certain passages in a sense different from that which the writer had in view or which is consistent with the truth itself, (for if this were all, who would not gladly pardon human infirmity, when it exhibits a readiness to accept correction?), but by persistently defending, with the bitterest vehemence and in impudent arrogance, opinions which they have taken up in perversity and error,—many have given birth to many pernicious dogmas at the cost of rending the unity of the (Christian) communion. All these subjects we should discuss in modest conference with the individual who makes his approach to the society of the Christian people, not in the character of an uneducated man, as they say, but in that of one who has passed through a finished culture and training in the books of the learned. And in enjoining him to guard against the errors of presumption, we should assume only so much authority as that humility of his, which induced him to come to us, is now felt to admit of. As to other things, moreover, in accordance with the rules of saving doctrine, which require to be narrated or discussed, whether they be matters relating to the faith, or questions bearing on the moral life, or others dealing with temptations, all these should be gone through in the manner which I have indicated, and ought therein to be referred to the more excellent way (already noticed).

CHAPTER 9

OF THE METHOD IN WHICH GRAMMARIANS AND PROFESSIONAL SPEAKERS ARE TO BE DEALT WITH

13. There are also some who come from the commonest schools of the grammarians and professional speakers, whom you may not venture to reckon either among the uneducated or among those very learned classes whose minds have been exercised in questions of real magnitude. When such persons, therefore, who appear to be superior to the rest of mankind, so far as the art of speaking is concerned, approach you with the view of becoming Christians, it will be your duty in your communications with them, in a higher degree than in your dealings with those other illiterate hearers, to make it plain that they are to be diligently admonished to clothe themselves with Christian humility, and learn not to despise individuals whom they may discover keeping themselves free from vices of conduct more carefully than from faults of language; and also that they ought not to presume so much as to compare with a pure heart the practised tongue which they were accustomed even to put in preference. But above all, such persons should be taught to listen to the divine Scriptures, so that they may neither deem solid eloquence to be mean, merely because it is not inflated, nor suppose that the words or deeds of men, of which we read the accounts in those books, involved and covered as they are in carnal wrappings, are not to be drawn forth and unfolded with a view to an (adequate)

understanding of them, but are to be taken merely according to the sound of the letter. And as to this same matter of the utility of the hidden meaning, the existence of which is the reason why they are called also mysteries, the power wielded by these intricacies of enigmatical utterances in the way of sharpening our love for the truth, and shaking off the torpor of weariness, is a thing which the persons in question must have made good to them by actual experience, when some subject which failed to move them when it was placed baldly before them, has its significance elicited by the detailed working out of an allegorical sense. For it is in the highest degree useful to such men to come to know how ideas are to be preferred to words, just as the soul is preferred to the body. And from this, too, it follows that they ought to have the desire to listen to discourses remarkable for their truth, rather than to those which are notable for their eloquence; just as they ought to be anxious to have friends distinguished for their wisdom, rather than those whose chief merit is their beauty. They should also understand that there is no voice for the ears of God save the affection of the soul. For thus they will not act the mocker if they happen to observe any of the prelates and ministers of the Church either calling upon God in language marked by barbarisms and solecisms, or failing in understanding correctly the very words which they are pronouncing, and making confused pauses. It is not meant, of course, that such faults are not to be corrected, so that the people may say “Amen” to something which they plainly understand; but what is intended is, that such things should be piously borne with by those who have come to understand how, as in the forum it is in the sound, so in the church it is in the desire that the grace of speech resides. Therefore that of the forum may sometimes be called good speech, but never gracious speech. Moreover, with respect to the sacrament which they are about to receive, it is enough for the more intelligent simply to hear what the thing signifies. But with those of slower intellect, it will be necessary to adopt a somewhat more detailed explanation, together with the use of similitudes, to prevent them from despising what they see.

CHAPTER 10

OF THE ATTAINMENT OF CHEERFULNESS IN THE DUTY OF CATECHISING, AND OF VARIOUS CAUSES PRODUCING WEARINESS IN THE CATECHUMEN

14. At this point you perhaps desiderate some example of the kind of discourse intended, so that I may show you by an actual instance how the things which I have recommended are to be done. This indeed I shall do, so far as by God's help I shall be able. But before proceeding to that, it is my duty, in consistency with what I have promised, to speak of the acquisition of the cheerfulness (to which I have alluded). For as regards the matter of the rules in accordance with which your discourse should be set forth, in the case of the catechetical instruction of a person who comes with the express view of being made a Christian, I have already made good, as far as has appeared sufficient, the promise which I made. And surely I am under no obligation at the same time to do myself in this volume that which I enjoin as the right thing to be done. Consequently, if I do that, it will have the value of an overplus. But how can the overplus be super-added by me before I have filled up the measure of what is due? Besides, one thing which I have heard you make the subject of your complaint above all others, is the fact that your discourse seemed to yourself to be poor and spiritless when you were instructing any one in the Christian name. Now this, I know, results not so much from want of matter to say, with which I am well aware you are sufficiently provided and furnished, or from poverty of speech itself, as rather from weariness of mind. And that may spring either from the cause of which I have already spoken, namely, the fact that our intelligence is better pleased and more thoroughly arrested by that which we perceive in silence in the mind, and that we have no inclination to have our attention called off from it to a noise of words coming far short of representing it; or from the circumstance that even when discourse is pleasant, we have more delight in hearing or reading things which have been expressed in a superior manner, and which are set forth without any care or anxiety on our part, than in putting together, with a view to the comprehension of others, words suddenly conceived, and leaving it an uncertain issue, on the one hand, whether such terms occur to us as adequately represent the sense, and on the other, whether they be accepted in such a manner as to profit; or yet again, from the consideration that, in consequence of their being now thoroughly familiar to ourselves, and no longer necessary to our own advancement, it becomes irksome to us to be recurring very frequently to those matters which are urged upon the uninstructed, and our mind, as being by this time pretty well matured,

moves with no manner of pleasure in the circle of subjects so well-worn, and, as it were, so childish. A sense of weariness is also induced upon the speaker when he has a hearer who remains unmoved, either in that he is actually not stirred by any feeling, or in that he does not indicate by any motion of the body that he understands or that he is pleased with what is said. Not that it is a becoming disposition in us to be greedy of the praises of men, but that the things which we minister are of God; and the more we love those to whom we discourse, the more desirous are we that they should be pleased with the matters which are held forth for their salvation: so that if we do not succeed in this, we are pained, and we are weakened, and become broken-spirited in the midst of our course, as if we were wasting our efforts to no purpose. Sometimes, too, when we are drawn off from some matter which we are desirous to go on with, and the transaction of which was a pleasure to us, or appeared to be more than usually needful, and when we are compelled, either by the command of a person whom we are unwilling to offend, or by the importunity of some parties that we find it impossible to get rid of, to instruct any one catechetically, in such circumstances we approach a duty for which great calmness is indispensable with minds already perturbed, and grieving at once that we are not permitted to keep that order which we desire to observe in our actions, and that we cannot possibly be competent for all things; and thus out of very heaviness our discourse as it advances is less of an attraction, because, starting from the arid soil of dejection, it goes on less flowingly. Sometimes, too, sadness has taken possession of our heart in consequence of some offense or other, and at that very time we are addressed thus: “Come, speak with this person; he desires to become a Christian.” For they who thus address us do it in ignorance of the hidden trouble which is consuming us within. So it happens that, if they are not the persons to whom it befits us to open up our feelings, we undertake with no sense of pleasure what they desire; and then, certainly, the discourse will be languid and unenjoyable which is transmitted through the agitated and fuming channel of a heart in that condition. Consequently, seeing there are so many causes serving to cloud the calm serenity of our minds, in accordance with God’s will we must seek remedies for them, such as may bring us relief from these feelings of heaviness, and help us to rejoice in fervor of spirit, and to be jocund in the tranquility of a good work. “For God loveth a cheerful giver.”

15. Now if the cause of our sadness lies in the circumstance that our hearer does not apprehend what we mean, so that we have to come down in a certain fashion from the elevation of our own conceptions, and are under the necessity of dwelling long in the tedious processes of syllables which come far beneath the standard of our ideas, and have anxiously to consider how that which we ourselves take in with a most rapid draught of mental apprehension is to be given forth by the mouth of flesh in the long and perplexed intricacies of its method of enunciation; and if the great dissimilarity thus felt (between our utterance and our thought) makes it distasteful to us to speak, and a pleasure to us to keep silence, then let us ponder what has been set before us by Him who has “showed us an example that we should follow His steps.” For however much our articulate speech may differ from the vivacity of our intelligence, much greater is the difference of the flesh of mortality from the equality of God. And, neverless, “although He was in the same form, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant,”—and so on down to the words “the death of the cross.” What is the explanation of this but that He made Himself “weak to the weak, in order that He might gain the weak?” Listen to His follower as he expresses himself also in another place to this effect: “For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that He died for all.” And how, indeed, should one be ready to be spent for their souls, if he should find it irksome to him to bend himself to their ears? For this reason, therefore, He became a little child in the midst of us, (and) like a nurse cherishing her children. For is it a pleasure to lisp shortened and broken words, unless love invites us? And yet men desire to have infants to whom they have to do that kind of service; and it is a sweeter thing to a mother to put small morsels of masticated food into her little son’s mouth, than to eat up and devour larger pieces herself. In like manner, accordingly, let not the thought of the hen recede from your heart, who covers her tender brood with her drooping feathers, and with broken voice calls her chirping young ones to her, while they that turn away from her fostering wings in their pride become a prey to birds. For if intelligence brings delights in its

purest recesses, it should also be a delight to us to have an intelligent understanding of the manner in which charity, the more complaisantly it descends to the lowest objects, finds its way back, with all the greater vigor to those that are most secret, along the course of a good conscience which witnesses that it has sought nothing from those to whom it has descended except their everlasting salvation.

CHAPTER 11

OF THE REMEDY FOR THE SECOND SOURCE OF WEARINESS

16. If, however, it is rather our desire to read or hear such things as are already prepared for our use and expressed in a superior style, and if the consequence is that we feel it irksome to put together, at the time and with an uncertain issue, the terms of discourse on our own side, then, provided only that our mind does not wander off from the truth of the facts themselves, it is an easy matter for the hearer, if he is offended by anything in our language, to come to see in that very circumstance how little value should be set, supposing the subject itself to be rightly understood, upon the mere fact that there may have been some imperfection or some inaccuracy in the literal expressions, which were employed indeed simply with the view of securing a correct apprehension of the subject-matter. But if the bent of human infirmity has wandered off from the truth of the facts themselves,—although in the catechetical instruction of the unlearned, where we have to keep by the most beaten track, that cannot occur very readily,—still, lest haply it should turn out that our hearer finds cause of offence even in this direction, we ought not to deem this to have come upon us in any other way than as the issue of God’s own wish to put us to the test with respect to our readiness to receive correction in calmness of mind, so as not to rush headlong, in the course of a still greater error, into the defense of our error. But if, again, no one has told us of it, and if the thing has altogether escaped our own notice, as well as the observation of our hearers, then there is nothing to grieve over, provided only the same thing does not occur a second time. For the most part, however, when we recall what we have said, we ourselves discover something to find fault with, and are ignorant of the manner in which it was received when it was uttered; and so when charity is fervent within us, we are the more vexed if the thing, while

really false, has been received with unquestioning acceptance. This being the case, then, whenever an opportunity occurs, as we have been finding fault with ourselves in silence, we ought in like manner to see to it that those persons be also set right on the subject in a considerate method, who have fallen into some sort of error, not by the words of God, but plainly by those used by us. If, on the other hand, there are any who, blinded by insensate spite, rejoice that we have committed a mistake, whisperers as they are, and slanderers, and “hateful to God,” such characters should afford us matter for the exercise of patience with pity, inasmuch as also the “patience of God leadeth them to repentance.” For what is more detestable, and what more likely to “treasure up wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,” than to rejoice, after the evil likeness and pattern of the devil, in the evil of another? At times, too, even when all is correctly and truly spoken, either something which has not been understood, or something which, as being opposed to the idea and wont of an old error, seems harsh in its very novelty, offends and disturbs the hearer. But if this becomes apparent, and if the person shows himself capable of being set right, he should be set right without any delay by the use of abundance of authorities and reasons. On the other hand, if the offense is tacit and hidden, the medicine of God is the effective remedy for it. And if, again, the person starts back and declines to be cured, we should comfort ourselves with that example of our Lord, who, when men were offended at His word, and shrank from it as a hard saying, addressed Himself at the same time to those who had remained, in these terms, “Will ye also go away?” For it ought to be retained as a thoroughly “fixed and immovable” position in our heart, that Jerusalem which is in captivity is set free from the Babylon of this world when the times have run their course, and that none belonging to her shall perish: for whoever may perish was not of her. “For the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His; and, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” If we ponder these things, and call upon the Lord to come into our heart, we shall be less apprehensive of the uncertain issues of our discourse, consequent on the uncertain feelings of our hearers; and the very endurance of vexations in the cause of a work of mercy will also be something pleasant to us, if we seek not our own glory in the same. For then is a work truly good, when the aim of the doer gets its impetus from charity, and, as if returning to its own place, rests again in charity. Moreover, the reading which delights us, or any listening to an eloquence superior to our own, the effect of which is to make us inclined to set a greater value upon it than upon the discourse which we ourselves have to deliver, and so to lead us to speak with a reluctant or tedious utterance, will come upon us in a happier spirit, and will be found to be more enjoyable after labor. Then, too, with a stronger confidence shall we pray to God to speak to us as we wish, if we cheerfully submit to let Him speak by us as we are able. Thus is it brought about that all things come together for good to them that love God.

CHAPTER 12

OF THE REMEDY FOR THE THIRD SOURCE OF WEARINESS

17. Once more, however, we often feel it very wearisome to go over repeatedly matters which are thoroughly familiar, and adapted (rather) to children. If this is the case with us, then we should endeavor to meet them with a brother’s, a father’s, and a mother’s love; and, if we are once united with them thus in heart, to us no less than to them will these things seem new. For so great is the power of a sympathetic disposition of mind, that, as they are affected while we are speaking, and we are affected while they are learning, we have our dwelling in each other; and thus, at one and the same time, they as it were in us speak what they hear, and we in them learn after a certain fashion what we teach. Is it not a common occurrence with us, that when we show to persons, who have never seen them, certain spacious and beautiful tracts, either in cities or in fields, which we have been in the habit of passing by without any sense of pleasure, simply because we have become so accustomed to the sight of them, we find our own enjoyment renewed in their enjoyment of the novelty of the scene? And this is so much the more our experience in proportion to the intimacy of our friendship with them; because, just as we are in them in virtue of the bond of love, in the same degree do things become new to us which previously were old. But if we ourselves have made any considerable progress in the contemplative study of things, it is not our wish that those whom we love should simply be gratified and astonished as they gaze upon the works of men’s hands; but it becomes our wish to lift them to (the contemplation of) the very skill or wisdom of their author, and from this to (see them) rise to the admiration

and praise of the all-creating God, with whom is the most fruitful end of love. How much more, then, ought we to be delighted when men come to us with the purpose already formed of obtaining the knowledge of God Himself, with a view to (the knowledge of) whom all things should be learned which are to be learned! And how ought we to feel ourselves renewed in their newness (of experience), so that if our ordinary preaching is somewhat frigid, it may rise to fresh warmth under (the stimulus of) their extraordinary hearing! There is also this additional consideration to help us in the attainment of gladness, namely, that we ponder and bear in mind out of what death of error the man is passing over into the life of faith. And if we walk through streets which are most familiar to us, with a beneficent cheerfulness, when we happen to be pointing out the way to some individual who had been in distress in consequence of missing his direction, how much more should be the alacrity of spirit, and how much greater the joy with which, in the matter of saving doctrine, we ought to traverse again and again even those tracks which, so far as we are ourselves concerned, there is no need to open up any more; seeing that we are leading a miserable soul, and one worn out with the devious courses of this world, through the paths of peace, at the command of Him who made that peace good to us!

CHAPTER 13

OF THE REMEDY FOR THE FOURTH SOURCE OF WEARINESS

18. But in good truth it is a serious demand to make upon us, to continue discoursing on to the set limit when we fail to see our hearer in any degree moved; whether it be that, under the restraints of the awe of religion, he has not the boldness to signify his approval by voice or by any movement of his body, or that he is kept back by the modesty proper to man, or that he does not understand our sayings, or that he counts them of no value. Since, then, this must be a matter of uncertainty to us, as we cannot discern his mind, it becomes our duty in our discourse to make trial of all things which may be of any avail in stirring him up and drawing him forth as it were from his place of concealment. For that sort of fear which is excessive, and which obstructs the declaration of his judgment, ought to be dispelled by the force of kindly exhortation; and by bringing before him the consideration of our brotherly affinity, we should temper his reverence for us; and by

questioning him, we should ascertain whether he understands what is addressed to him; and we should impart to him a sense of confidence, so that he may give free expression to any objection which suggests itself to him. We should at the same time ask him whether he has already listened to such themes on some previous occasion, and whether perchance they fail to move him now in consequence of their being to him like things well known and commonplace. And we ought to shape our course in accordance with his answer, so as either to speak in a simpler style and with greater detail of explanation, or to refute some antagonistic opinion, or, instead of attempting any more diffuse exposition of the subjects which are known to him, to give a brief summary of these, and to select some of those matters which are handled in a mystical manner in the holy books, and especially in the historical narrative, the unfolding and setting forth of which may make our addresses more attractive. But if the man is of a very sluggish disposition, and if he is senseless, and without anything in common with all such sources of pleasure, then we must simply bear with him in a compassionate spirit; and, after briefly going over other points, we ought to impress upon him, in a manner calculated to inspire him with awe, the truths which are most indispensable on the subject of the unity of the Catholic Church, on that of temptation, on that of a Christian conversation in view of the future judgment; and we ought rather to address ourselves to God for him than address much to him concerning God.

19. It is likewise a frequent occurrence that one who at first listened to us with all readiness, becomes exhausted either by the effort of hearing or by standing, and now no longer commends what is said, but gapes and yawns, and even unwillingly exhibits a disposition to depart. When we observe that, it becomes our duty to refresh his mind by saying something seasoned with an honest cheerfulness and adapted to the matter which is being discussed, or something of a very wonderful and amazing order, or even, it may be, something of a painful and mournful nature. Whatever we thus say may be all the better if it affects himself more immediately, so that the quick sense of self-concern may keep his attention on the alert. At the same time, however, it should not be of the kind to offend his spirit of reverence by any harshness attaching to it; but it should be of a nature fitted rather to conciliate him by the friendliness which it breathes. Or else, we should

relieve him by accommodating him with a seat, although unquestionably matters will be better ordered if from the outset, whenever that can be done with propriety, he sits and listens. And indeed in certain of the churches beyond the sea, with a far more considerate regard to the fitness of things, not only do the prelates sit when they address the people, but they also themselves put down seats for the people, lest any person of enfeebled strength should become exhausted by standing, and thus have his mind diverted from the most wholesome purport (of the discourse), or even be under the necessity of departing. And yet it is one thing if it be simply some one out of a great multitude who withdraws in order to recruit his strength, he being also already under the obligations which result from participation in the sacraments; and it is quite another thing if the person withdrawing is one (inasmuch as it is usually the case in these circumstances that the man is unavoidably urged to that course by the fear that he should even fall, overcome by internal weakness) who has to be initiated in the first sacraments; for a person in this position is at once restrained by the sense of shame from stating the reason of his going, and not permitted to stand through the force of his weakness. This I speak from experience. For this was the case with a certain individual, a man from the country, when I was instructing him catechetically: and from his instance I have learned that this kind of thing is carefully to be guarded against. For who can endure our arrogance when we fail to make men who are our brethren, or even those who are not yet in that relation to us (for our solicitude then should be all the greater to get them to become our brethren), to be seated in our presence, seeing that even a woman sat as she listened to our Lord Himself, in whose service the angels stand alert? Of course if the address is to be but short, or if the place is not well adapted for sitting, they should listen standing. But that should be the case only when there are many hearers, and when they are not to be formally admitted at the time. For when the audience consists only of one or two, or a few, who have come with the express purpose of being made Christians, there is a risk in speaking to them standing. Nevertheless, supposing that we have once begun in that manner, we ought at least, whenever we observe signs of weariness on the part of the hearer, to offer him the liberty of being seated; nay more, we should urge him by all means to sit down, and we ought to drop some remark calculated at once to refresh him and to banish from his mind any anxiety which may have chanced to break in upon him and draw off his attention. For inasmuch as the reasons why he remains silent and declines to listen cannot be certainly known to us, now that he is seated we may speak to some extent against the incidence of thoughts about worldly affairs, delivering ourselves either in the cheerful spirit to which I have already adverted, or in a serious vein; so that, if these are the particular anxieties which have occupied his mind, they may be made to give way as if indicted by name: while, on the other hand, supposing them not to be the special causes (of the loss of interest), and supposing him to be simply worn out with listening, his attention will be relieved of the pressure of weariness when we address to him some unexpected and extraordinary strain of remark on these subjects, in the mode of which I have spoken, as if they were the particular anxieties,—for indeed we are simply ignorant (of the true causes). But let the remark thus made be short, especially considering that it is thrown in out of order, lest the very medicine even increase the malady of weariness which we desire to relieve; and, at the same time, we should go on rapidly with what remains, and promise and present the prospect of a conclusion nearer than was looked for.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE REMEDY AGAINST THE FIFTH AND SIXTH SOURCES OF WEARINESS

20. If, again, your spirit has been broken by the necessity of giving up some other employment, on which, as the more requisite, you were now bent; and if the sadness caused by that constraint makes you catechise in no pleasant mood, you ought to ponder the fact that, excepting that we know it to be our duty, in all our dealings with men, to act in a merciful manner, and in the exercise of the sincerest charity,—with this one exception, I say, it is quite uncertain to us what is the more profitable thing for us to do, and what the more opportune thing for us either to pass by for a time or altogether to omit. For inasmuch as we know not how the merits of men, on whose behalf we are acting, stand with God, the question as to what is expedient for them at a certain time is something which, instead of being able to comprehend, we can rather only surmise, without the aid of any (clear) inferences, or (at best) with the slenderest and the most uncertain. Therefore we ought certainly to dispose the matters with which we have to deal

according to our intelligence; and then, if we prove able to carry them out in the manner upon which we have resolved, we should rejoice, not indeed that it was our will, but that it was God's will, that they should thus be accomplished. But if anything unavoidable happens, by which the disposition thus proposed by us is interfered with, we should bend ourselves to it readily, lest we be broken; so that the very disposition of affairs which God has preferred to ours may also be made our own. For it is more in accordance with propriety that we should follow His will than that He should follow ours. Besides, as regards this order in the doing of things, which we wish to keep in accordance with our own judgment, surely that course is to be approved of in which objects that are superior have the precedence. Why then are we aggrieved that the precedence over men should be held by the Lord God in His vast superiority to us men, so that in the said love which we entertain for our own order, we should thus (exhibit the disposition to) despise order? For "no one orders for the better" what he has to do, except the man who is rather ready to leave undone what he is prohibited from doing by the divine power, than desirous of doing that which he meditates in his own human cogitations. For "there are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord stands for ever."

21. But if our mind is agitated by some cause of offense, so as not to be capable of delivering a discourse of a calm and enjoyable strain, our charity towards those for whom Christ died, desiring to redeem them by the price of His own blood from the death of the errors of this world, ought to be so great, that the very circumstance of intelligence being brought us in our sadness, regarding the advent of some person who longs to become a Christian, ought to be enough to cheer us and dissipate that heaviness of spirit, just as the delights of gain are wont to soften the pain of losses. For we are not (fairly) oppressed by the offense of any individual, unless it be that of the man whom we either perceive or believe to be perishing himself, or to be the occasion of the undoing of some weak one. Accordingly, one who comes to us with the view of being formally admitted, in that we cherish the hope of his ability to go forward, should wipe away the sorrow caused by one who fails us. For even if the dread that our proselyte may become the child of hell comes into our thoughts, as, there are many such

before our eyes, from whom those offenses arise by which we are distressed, this ought to operate, not in the way of keeping us back, but rather in the way of stimulating us and spurring us on. And in the same measure we ought to admonish him whom we are instructing to be on his guard against imitating those who are Christians only in name and not in very truth, and to take care not to suffer himself to be so moved by their numbers as either to be desirous of following them, or to be reluctant to follow Christ on their account, and either to be unwilling to be in the Church of God, where they are, or to wish to be there in such a character as they bear. And somehow or other, in admonitions of this sort, that address is the more glowing to which a present sense of grief supplies the fuel; so that instead of being duller, we utter with greater fire and vehemence under such feelings things which, in times of greater ease, we would give forth in a colder and less energetic manner. And this should make us rejoice that an opportunity is afforded us under which the emotions of our mind pass not away without yielding some fruit.

22. If, however, grief has taken possession of us on account of something in which we ourselves have erred or sinned, we should bear in mind not only that a “broken spirit is a sacrifice to God,” but also the saying, “Like as water quencheth fire, so alms sin;” and again, “I will have mercy,” saith He, “rather than sacrifice.” Therefore, as in the event of our being in peril from fire we would certainly run to the water in order to get the fire extinguished, and we would be grateful if any person were to offer it in the immediate vicinity; so, if some flame of sin has risen from our own stack, and if we are troubled on that account, when an opportunity has been given for a most merciful work, we should rejoice in it, as if a fountain were offered us in order that by it the conflagration which had burst forth might be extinguished. Unless haply we are foolish enough to think that we ought to be readier in running with bread, wherewith we may fill the belly of a hungry man, than with the word of God, wherewith we may instruct the mind of the man who feeds on it. There is this also to consider, namely, that if it would only be of advantage to us to do this thing, and entail no disadvantage to leave it undone, we might despise a remedy offered in an unhappy fashion in the time of peril with a view to the safety, not now of a neighbor, but of ourselves. But when from the mouth of the Lord this so

threatening sentence is heard, “Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou oughtest to give my money to the exchangers,” what madness, I pray thee, is it thus, seeing that our sin pains us, to be minded to sin again, by refusing to give the Lord’s money to one who desires it and asks it! When these and such like considerations and reflections have succeeded in dispelling the darkness of weary feelings, the bent of mind is rendered apt for the duty of catechising, so that that is received in a pleasant manner which breaks forth vigorously and cheerfully from the rich vein of charity. For these things indeed which are uttered here are spoken, not so much by me to you, as rather to us all by that very “love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit that is given to us.”

CHAPTER 15

OF THE METHOD IN WHICH OUR ADDRESS SHOULD BE ADAPTED TO DIFFERENT CLASSES OF HEARERS

23. But now, perhaps, you also demand of me as a debt that which, previous to the promise which I made, I was under no obligation to give, namely, that I should not count it burdensome to unfold some sort of example of the discourse intended, and to set it before you for your study, just as if I were myself engaged in catechising some individual. Before I do that, however, I wish you to keep in mind the fact that the mental effort is of one kind in the case of a person who dictates, with a future reader in his view, and that it is of quite another kind in the case of a person who speaks with a present hearer to whom to direct his attention. And further, it is to be remembered that, in this latter instance in particular, the effort is of one kind when one is admonishing in private, and when there is no other person at hand to pronounce judgment on us; whereas it is of a different order when one is conveying any instruction in public, and when there stands around him an audience of persons holding dissimilar opinions; and again, that in this exercise of teaching, the effort will be of one sort when only a single individual is being instructed, while all the rest listen, like persons judging or attesting things well known to them, and that it will be different when all those who are present wait for what we have to deliver to them; and once more, that, in this same instance, the effort will be one thing when all are seated, as it were, in private conference with a view to engaging in some

discussion, and that it will be quite another thing when the people sit silent and intent on giving their attention to some single speaker who is to address them from a higher position. It will likewise make a considerable difference, even when we are discoursing in that style, whether there are few present or many, whether they are learned or unlearned, or made up of both classes combined; whether they are city-bred or rustics, or both the one and the other together; or whether, again, they are a people composed of all orders of men in due proportion. For it is impossible but that they will affect in different ways the person who has to speak to them and discourse with them, and that the address which is delivered will both bear certain features, as it were, expressive of the feelings of the mind from which it proceeds, and also influence the hearers in different ways, in accordance with that same difference (in the speaker's disposition), while at the same time the hearers themselves will influence one another in different ways by the simple force of their presence with each other. But as we are dealing at present with the matter of the instruction of the unlearned, I am a witness to you, as regards my own experience, that I find myself variously moved, according as I see before me, for the purposes of catechetical instruction, a highly educated man, a dull fellow, a citizen, a foreigner, a rich man, a poor man, a private individual, a man of honors, a person occupying some position of authority, an individual of this or the other nation, of this or the other age or sex, one proceeding from this or the other sect, from this or the other common error,—and ever in accordance with the difference of my feelings does my discourse itself at once set out, go on, and reach its end. And inasmuch as, although the same charity is due to all, yet the same medicine is not to be administered to all, in like manner charity itself travails with some, is made weak together with others; is at pains to edify some, tremblingly apprehends being an offense to others; bends to some, lifts itself erect to others; is gentle to some, severe to others; to none an enemy, to all a mother. And when one, who has not gone through the kind of experience to which I refer in the same spirit of charity, sees us attaining, in virtue of some gift which has been conferred upon us, and which carries the power of pleasing, a certain repute of an eulogistic nature in the mouth of the multitude, he counts us happy on that account. But may God, into whose cognizance the "groaning of them that are bound enters," look upon our humility, and our labor, and forgive us all our sins. Wherefore, if anything in us has so far pleased you as to make you desirous of hearing from us some remarks on the subject of the form of discourse which you ought to follow, you should acquire a more thorough understanding of the matter by contemplating us, and listening to us when we are actually engaged with these topics, than by a perusal when we are only dictating them.

CHAPTER 16

A SPECIMEN OF A CATECHETICAL ADDRESS; AND FIRST, THE CASE OF A CATECHUMEN WITH WORTHY VIEWS

24. Nevertheless, however that may be, let us here suppose that some one has come to us who desires to be made a Christian, and who belongs indeed to the order of private persons, and yet not to the class of rustics, but to that of the city-bred, such as those whom you cannot fail to come across in numbers in Carthage. Let us also suppose that, on being asked whether the inducement leading him to desire to be a Christian is any advantage looked for in the present life, or the rest which is hoped for after this life, he has answered that his inducement has been the rest that is yet to come. Then perchance such a person might be instructed by us in some such strain of address as the following: “Thanks be to God, my brother; cordially do I wish you joy, and I am glad on your account that, amid all the storms of this world, which are at once so great and so dangerous, you have bethought yourself of some true and certain security. For even in this life men go in quest of rest and security at the cost of heavy labors, but they fail to find such in consequence of their wicked lusts. For their thought is to find rest in things which are unquiet, and which endure not. And these objects, inasmuch as they are withdrawn from them and pass away in the course of time, agitate them by fears and griefs, and suffer them not to enjoy tranquillity. For if it be that a man seeks to find his rest in wealth, he is rendered proud rather than at ease. Do we not see how many have lost their riches on a sudden,—how many, too, have been undone by reason of them, either as they have been coveting to possess them, or as they have been borne down and despoiled of them by others more covetous than themselves? And even should they remain with the man all his life long, and never leave their lover, yet would he himself (have to) leave them at his

death. For of what measure is the life of man, even if he lives to old age? Or when men desire for themselves old age, what else do they really desire but long infirmity? So, too, with the honors of this world,—what are they but empty pride and vanity, and peril of ruin? For holy Scripture speaks in this wise: All flesh is grass, and the glory of man is as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, the flower thereof falleth away; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.’ Consequently, if any man longs for true rest and true felicity, he ought to lift his hope off things which are mortal and transitory, and fix it on the word of the Lord; so that, cleaving to that which endures for ever, he may himself together with it endure for ever.

25. “There are also other men who neither crave to be rich nor go about seeking the vain pomps of honors, but who nevertheless are minded to find their pleasure and rest in dainty meats, and in fornications, and in those theatres and spectacles which are at their disposal in great cities for nothing. But it fares with these, too, in the same way; or they waste their small means in luxury, and subsequently, under pressure of want, break out into thefts and burglaries, and at times even into highway robberies, and so they are suddenly filled with fears both numerous and great; and men who a little before were singing in the house of revelry, are now dreaming of the sorrows of the prison. Moreover, in their eager devotion to the public spectacles, they come to resemble demons, as they incite men by their cries to wound each other, and instigate those who have done them no hurt to engage in furious contests with each other, while they seek to please an insane people. And if they perceive any such to be peaceably disposed, they straightway hate them and persecute them, and raise an outcry, asking that they should be beaten with clubs, as if they had been in collusion to cheat them; and this iniquity they force even the judge, who is the (appointed) avenger of iniquities, to perpetrate. On the other hand, if they observe such men exerting themselves in horrid hostilities against each other, whether they be those who are called sintoe, or theatrical actors and players, or charioteers, or hunters,—those wretched men whom they engage in conflicts and struggles, not only men with men, but even men with beasts,—then the fiercer the fury with which they perceive these unhappy creatures rage against each other, the better they like them, and the greater the enjoyment they have in them; and they favor them when thus excited,

and by so favoring them they excite them all the more, the spectators themselves striving more madly with each other, as they espouse the cause of different combatants, than is the case even with those very men whose madness they madly provoke, while at the same time they also long to be spectators of the same in their mad frenzy. How then can that mind keep the soundness of peace which feeds on strifes and contentions? For just as is the food which is received, such is the health which results. In fine, although mad pleasures are no pleasures, nevertheless let these things be taken as they are, and it still remains the case that, whatever their nature may be, and whatever the measure of enjoyment yielded by the boasts of riches, and the inflation of honors, and the spendthrift pleasures of the taverns, and the contests of the theatres, and the impurity of fornications, and the pruriency of the baths, they are all things of which one little fever deprives us, while, even from those who still survive, it takes away the whole false happiness of their life. Then there remains only a void and wounded conscience, destined to apprehend that God as a Judge whom it refused to have as a Father, and destined also to find a severe Lord in Him whom it scorned to seek and love as a tender Father. But thou, inasmuch as thou seekest that true rest which is promised to Christians after this life, wilt taste the same sweet and pleasant rest even here among the bitterest troubles of this life, if thou continuest to love the commandments of Him who hath promised the same. For quickly wilt thou feel that the fruits of righteousness are sweeter than those of unrighteousness, and that a man finds a more genuine and pleasurable joy in the possession of a good conscience in the midst of troubles than in that of an evil conscience in the midst of delights. For thou hast not come to be united to the Church of God with the idea of seeking from it any temporal advantage.

CHAPTER 17

THE SPECIMEN OF CATECHETICAL DISCOURSE CONTINUED, IN REFERENCE SPECIALLY TO THE REPROVAL OF FALSE AIMS ON THE CATECHUMEN’S PART

26. “For there are some whose reason for desiring to become Christians is either that they may gain the favor of men from whom they look for temporal advantages, or that they are reluctant to offend those whom they fear. But these are reprobate; and although the church bears them for a time,

as the threshing-floor bears the chaff until the period of winnowing, yet if they fail to amend and begin to be Christians in sincerity in view of the everlasting rest which is to come, they will be separated from it in the end. And let not such flatter themselves, because it is possible for them to be in the threshing-floor along with the grain of God. For they will not be together with that in the barn, but are destined for the fire, which is their due. There are also others of better hope indeed, but nevertheless in no inferior danger. I mean those who now fear God, and mock not the Christian name, neither enter the church of God with an assumed heart, but still look for their felicity in this life, expecting to have more felicity in earthly things than those enjoy who refuse to worship God. And the consequence of this false anticipation is, that when they see some wicked and impious men strongly established and excelling in this worldly prosperity, while they themselves either possess it in a smaller degree or miss it altogether, they are troubled with the thought that they are serving God without reason, and so they readily fall away from the faith.

27. “But as to the man who has in view that everlasting blessedness and perpetual rest which is promised as the lot destined for the saints after this life, and who desires to become a Christian, in order that he may not pass into eternal fire with the devil, but enter into the eternal kingdom together with Christ, such an one is truly a Christian; (and he will be) on his guard in every temptation, so that he may neither be corrupted by prosperity nor be utterly broken in spirit by adversity, but remain at once modest and temperate when the good things of earth abound with him, and brave and patient when tribulations overtake him. A person of this character will also advance in attainments until he comes to that disposition of mind which will make him love God more than he fears hell; so that even were God to say to him, Avail yourself of carnal pleasures for ever, and sin as much as you are able, and you shall neither die nor be sent into hell, but you will only not be with me, he would be terribly dismayed, and would altogether abstain from sinning, not now (simply) with the purpose of not falling into that of which he was wont to be afraid, but with the wish not to offend Him whom he so greatly loves: in whom alone also there is the rest which eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of

man (to conceive),—the rest which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

28. “Now, on the subject of this rest Scripture is significant, and refrains not to speak, when it tells us how at the beginning of the world, and at the time when God made heaven and earth and all things which are in them, He worked during six days, and rested on the seventh day. For it was in the power of the Almighty to make all things even in one moment of time. For He had not labored in the view that He might enjoy (a needful) rest, since indeed “He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created;” but that He might signify how, after six ages of this world, in a seventh age, as on the seventh day, He will rest in His saints; inasmuch as these same saints shall rest also in Him after all the good works in which they have served Him,—which He Himself, indeed, works in them, who calls them, and instructs them, and puts away the offenses that are past, and justifies the man who previously was ungodly. For as, when by His gift they work that which is good, He is Himself rightly said to work (that in them), so, when they rest in Him, He is rightly said to rest Himself. For, as regards Himself, He seeks no cessation, because He feels no labor. Moreover He made all things by His Word; and His Word is Christ Himself, in whom the angels and all those purest spirits of heaven rest in holy silence. Man, however in that he fell by sin, has lost the rest which he possessed in His divinity, and receives it again (now) in His humanity; and for this purpose He became man, and was born of a woman, at the seasonable time at which He Himself knew it behoved it so to be fulfilled. And from the flesh assuredly He could not sustain any contamination, being Himself rather destined to purify the flesh. Of His future coming the ancient saints, in the revelation of the Spirit, had knowledge, and prophesied. And thus were they saved by believing that He was to come, even as we are saved by believing that He has come. Hence ought we to love God who has so loved us as to have sent His only Son, in order that He might endue Himself with the lowliness of our mortality, and die both at the hands of sinners and on behalf of sinners. For even in times of old, and in the opening ages, the depth of this mystery ceases not to be prefigured and prophetically announced.

CHAPTER 18

OF WHAT IS TO BE BELIEVED ON THE SUBJECT OF THE CREATION OF MAN AND OTHER OBJECTS

29. “Whereas, then, the omnipotent God, who is also good and just and merciful, who made all things,—whether they be great or small, whether they be highest or lowest, whether they be things which are seen, such as are the heavens and the earth and the sea, and in the heavens, in particular, the sun and the moon and other luminaries, and in the earth and the sea, again, trees and shrubs and animals each after their kind, and all bodies celestial or terrestrial alike, or whether they be things which are not seen, such as are those spirits whereby bodies are animated and endowed with life,—made also man after His own image, in order that, as He Himself, in virtue of His omnipotence, presides over universal creation, so man, in virtue of that intelligence of his by which he comes to know even his Creator and worships Him, might preside over all the living creatures of earth: Whereas, too, he made the woman to be an helpmeet for him: not for carnal concupiscence,—since, indeed, they had not corruptible bodies at that period, before the punishment of sin invaded them in the form of mortality,—but for this purpose, that the man might at once have glory of the woman in so far as he went before her to God, and present in himself an example to her for imitation in holiness and piety, even as he himself was to be the glory of God in so far as he followed his wisdom:

30. “Therefore did he place them in a certain locality of perpetual blessedness, which the Scripture designates Paradise: and he gave them a commandment, on condition of not violating which they were to continue for ever in that blessedness of immortality; while, on the other hand, if they transgressed it, they were to sustain the penalties of mortality. Now God knew beforehand that they would trangress it. Nevertheless, in that He is the author and maker of everything good, He chose rather to make them, as He also made the beasts, in order that He might replenish the earth with the good things proper to earth. And certainly man, even sinful man, is better than a beast. And the commandment, which they were not to keep, He yet preferred to give them, in order that they might be without excuse when He should begin to vindicate Himself against them. For whatever man may

have done, he finds God worthy to be praised in all His doings: if he shall have acted rightly, he finds Him worthy to be praised for the righteousness of His rewards: if he shall have sinned, he finds Him worthy to be praised for the righteousness of His punishments: if he shall have confessed his sins and returned to an upright life, he finds Him worthy to be praised for the mercy of His pardoning favors. Why, then, should God not make man, although He foreknew that he would sin, when He might crown him if he stood, and set him right if he fell, and help him if he rose, Himself being always and everywhere glorious in goodness, righteousness, and clemency? Above all, why should He not do so, since He also foreknew this, namely, that from the race of that mortality there would spring saints, who should not seek their own, but give glory to their Creator; and who, obtaining deliverance from every corruption by worshipping Him, should be counted worthy to live for ever, and to live in blessedness with the holy angels? For He who gave freedom of will to men, in order that they might worship God not of slavish necessity but with ingenuous inclination, gave it also to the angels; and hence neither did the angel, who, in company with other spirits who were his satellites, forsook in pride the obedience of God and became the devil, do any hurt to God, but to himself. For God knoweth how to dispose of souls that leave Him, and out of their righteous misery to furnish the inferior sections of His creatures with the most appropriate and befitting laws of His wonderful dispensation. Consequently, neither did the devil in any manner harm God, whether in falling himself, or in seducing man to death; nor did man himself in any degree impair the truth, or power, or blessedness of His Maker, in that, when his partner was seduced by the devil, he of his own deliberate inclination consented unto her in the doing of that which God had forbidden. For by the most righteous laws of God all were condemned, God Himself being glorious in the equity of retribution, while they were shamed through the degradation of punishment: to the end that man, when he turned away from his Creator, should be overcome by the devil and made his subject, and that the devil might be set before man as an enemy to be conquered, when he turned again to his Creator; so that whosoever should consent unto the devil even to the end, might go with him into eternal punishments; whereas those who should humble themselves to God, and by His grace overcome the devil, might be counted worthy of eternal rewards.

CHAPTER 19

OF THE CO-EXISTENCE OF GOOD AND EVIL IN THE CHURCH, AND THEIR FINAL SEPARATION

31. “Neither ought we to be moved by the consideration that many consent unto the devil, and few follow God; for the grain, too, in comparison with the chaff, has greatly the defect in number. But even as the husbandman knows what to do with the mighty heap of chaff, so the multitude of sinners is nothing to God, who knows what to do with them, so as not to let the administration of His kingdom be disordered and dishonored in any part. Nor is the devil to be supposed to have proved victorious for the mere reason of his drawing away with him more than the few by whom he may be overcome. In this way there are two communities—one of the ungodly, and another of the holy—which are carried down from the beginning of the human race even to the end of the world, which are at present commingled in respect of bodies, but separated in respect of wills, and which, moreover, are destined to be separated also in respect of bodily presence in the day of judgment. For all men who love pride and temporal power with vain elation and pomp of arrogance, and all spirits who set their affections on such things and seek their own glory in the subjection of men, are bound fast together in one association; nay, even although they frequently fight against each other on account of these things, they are nevertheless precipitated by the like weight of lust into the same abyss, and are united with each other by similarity of manners and merits. And, again, all men and all spirits who humbly seek the glory of God and not their own, and who follow Him in piety, belong to one fellowship. And, notwithstanding this, God is most merciful and patient with ungodly men, and offers them a place for penitence and amendment.

32. “For with respect also to the fact that He destroyed all men in the flood, with the exception of one righteous man together with his house, whom He willed to be saved in the ark, He knew indeed that they would not amend themselves; yet, nevertheless, as the building of the ark went on for the space of a hundred years, the wrath of God which was to come upon them was certainly preached to them: and if they only would have turned to God, He would have spared them, as at a later period He spared the city of

Nineveh when it repented, after He had announced to it, by means of a prophet, the destruction that was about to overtake it. Thus, moreover, God acts, granting a space for repentance even to those who He knows will persist in wickedness, in order that He may exercise and instruct our patience by His own example; whereby also we may know how greatly it befits us to bear with the evil in long-suffering, when we know not what manner of men they will prove hereafter, seeing that He, whose cognizance nothing that is yet to be escapes, spares them and suffers them to live. Under the sacramental sign of the flood, however, in which the righteous were rescued by the wood, there was also a fore-announcement of the Church which was to be, which Christ, its King and God, has raised on high; by the mystery of His cross, in safety from the submersion of this world. Moreover, God was not ignorant of the fact that, even of those who had been saved in the ark, there would be born wicked men, who would cover the face of the earth a second time with iniquities. But, nevertheless, He both gave them a pattern of the future judgment, and fore-announced the deliverance of the holy by the mystery of the wood. For even after these things wickedness did not cease to sprout forth again through pride, and lusts, and illicit impieties, when men, forsaking their Creator, not only fell to the (standard of the) creature which God made, so as to worship instead of God that which God made, but even bowed their souls to the works of the hands of men and to the contrivances of craftsmen, wherein a more shameful triumph was to be won over them by the devil, and by those evil spirits who rejoice in finding themselves adored and reverenced in such false devices, while they feed their own errors with the errors of men.

33. “But in truth there were not wanting in those times righteous men also of the kind to seek God piously and to overcome the pride of the devil, citizens of that holy community, who were made whole by the humiliation of Christ, which was then only destined to enter, but was revealed to them by the Spirit. From among these, Abraham, a pious and faithful servant of God, was chosen, in order that to him might be shown the sacrament of the Son of God, so that thus, in virtue of the imitation of his faith, all the faithful of all nations might be called his children in the future. Of him was born a people, by whom the one true God who made heaven and earth should be worshipped when all other nations did service to idols and evil

spirits. In that people, plainly, the future Church was much more evidently prefigured. For in it there was a carnal multitude that worshipped God with a view to visible benefits. But in it there were also a few who thought of the future rest, and looked longingly for the heavenly fatherland, to whom through prophecy was revealed the coming humiliation of God in the person of our King and Lord Jesus Christ, in order that they might be made whole of all pride and arrogance through that faith. And with respect to these saints who in point of time had precedence of the birth of the Lord, not only their speech, but also their life, and their marriages, and their children, and their doings, constituted a prophecy of this time, at which the Church is being gathered together out of all nations through faith in the passion of Christ. By the instrumentality of those holy patriarchs and prophets this carnal people of Israel, who at a later period were also called Jews, had ministered unto them at once those visible benefits which they eagerly desired of the Lord in a carnal manner, and those chastisements, in the form of bodily punishments, which were intended to terrify them for the time, as was befitting for their obstinacy. And in all these, nevertheless, there were also spiritual mysteries signified, such as were meant to bear upon Christ and the Church; of which Church those saints also were members, although they existed in this life previous to the birth of Christ, the Lord, according to the flesh. For this same Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, the Word of the Father, equal and co-eternal with the Father, by whom all things were made, was Himself also made man for our sakes, in order that of the whole Church, as of His whole body, He might be the Head. But just as when the whole man is in the process of being born, although he may put the hand forth first in the act of birth, yet is that hand joined and compacted together with the whole body under the head, even as also among these same patriarchs some were born with the hand put forth first as a sign of this very thing: so all the saints who lived upon the earth previous to the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, although they were born antecedently, were nevertheless united under the Head with that universal body of which He is the Head.

CHAPTER 20

OF ISRAEL’S BONDAGE IN EGYPT, THEIR DELIVERANCE, AND THEIR PASSAGE THROUGH THE RED SEA

34. “That people, then, having been brought down into Egypt, were in bondage to the harshest of kings; and, taught by the most oppressive labors, they sought their deliverer in God; and there was sent to them one belonging to the people themselves, Moses, the holy servant of God, who, in the might of God, terrified the impious nation of the Egyptians in those days by great miracles, and led forth the people of God out of that land through the Red Sea, where the water parted and opened up a way for them as they crossed it, whereas, when the Egyptians pressed on in pursuit, the waves returned to their channel and overwhelmed them, so that they perished. Thus, then, just as the earth through the agency of the flood was cleansed by the waters from the wickedness of the sinners, who in those times were destroyed in their inundation, while the righteous escaped by means of the wood; so the people of God, when they went forth from Egypt, found a way through the waters by which their enemies were devoured. Nor was the sacrament of the wood wanting there. For Moses smote with his rod, in order that that miracle might be effected. Both these are signs of holy baptism, by which the faithful pass into the new life, while their sins are done away with like enemies, and perish. But more clearly was the passion of Christ prefigured in the case of that people, when they were commanded to slay and eat the lamb, and to mark their door-posts with its blood, and to celebrate this rite every year, and to designate it the Lord’s passover. For surely prophecy speaks with the utmost plainness of the Lord Jesus Christ, when it says that “He was led as a lamb to the slaughter.” And with the sign of His passion and cross, thou art this day to be marked on thy forehead, as on the door-post, and all Christians are marked with the same.

35. “Thereafter this people was conducted through the wilderness for forty years. They also received the law written by the finger of God, under which name the Holy Spirit is signified, as it is declared with the utmost plainness in the Gospel. For God is not defined by the form of a body, neither are members and fingers to be thought of as existent in Him in the way in

which we see them in ourselves. But, inasmuch as it is through the Holy Spirit that God’s gifts are divided to His saints, in order that, although they vary in their capacities, they may nevertheless not lapse from the concord of charity, and inasmuch as it is especially in the fingers that there appears a certain kind of division, while nevertheless there is no separation from unity, this may be the explanation of the phrase. But whether this may be the case, or whatever other reason may be assigned for the Holy Spirit being called the finger of God, we ought not at any rate to think of the form of a human body when we hear this expression used. The people in question, then, received the law written by the finger of God, and that in good sooth on tables of stone, to signify the hardness of their heart in that they were not to fulfill the law. For, as they eagerly sought from the Lord gifts meant for the uses of the body, they were held by carnal fear rather than by spiritual charity. But nothing fulfills the law save charity. Consequently, they were burdened with many visible sacraments, to the intent that they should feel the pressure of the yoke of bondage in the observances of meats, and in the sacrifices of animals, and in other rites innumerable; which things, at the same time, were signs of spiritual matters relating to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the Church; which, furthermore, at that time were both understood by a few holy men to the effect of yielding the fruit of salvation, and observed by them in accordance with the fitness of the time, while by the multitude of carnal men they were observed only and not understood.

36. “In this manner, then, through many varied signs of things to come, which it would be tedious to enumerate in complete detail, and which we now see in their fulfillment in the Church, that people were brought to the land of promise, in which they were to reign in a temporal and carnal way in accordance with their own longings: which earthly kingdom, nevertheless, sustained the image of a spiritual kingdom. There Jerusalem was founded, that most celebrated city of God, which, while in bondage, served as a sign of the free city, which is called the heavenly Jerusalem which latter term is a Hebrew word, and signifies by interpretation the vision of peace.’ The citizens thereof are all sanctified men, who have been, who are, and who are yet to be; and all sanctified spirits, even as many as are obedient to God with pious devotion in the exalted regions of heaven,

and imitate not the impious pride of the devil and his angels. The King of this city is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, by whom the highest angels are governed, and at the same time the Word that took unto Himself human nature, in order that by Him men also might be governed, who, in His fellowship, shall reign all together in eternal peace. In the service of prefiguring this King in that earthly kingdom of the people of Israel, King David stood forth pre-eminent, of whose seed according to the flesh that truest King was to come, to wit, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever.’ In that land of promise many things were done, which held good as figures of the Christ who was to come, and of the Church, with which you will have it in your power to acquaint yourself by degrees in the Holy Books.

CHAPTER 21

OF THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY, AND THE THINGS SIGNIFIED THEREBY

37. “Howbeit, after the lapse of some generations, another type was presented, which bears very emphatically on the matter in hand. For that city was brought into captivity, and a large section of the people were carried off into Babylonia. Now, as Jerusalem signifies the city and fellowship of the saints, so Babylonia signifies the city and fellowship of the wicked, seeing that by interpretation it denotes confusion. On the subject of these two cities, which have been running their courses, mingling the one with the other, through all the changes of time from the beginning of the human race, and which shall so move on together until the end of the world, when they are destined to be separated at the last judgment, we have spoken already a little ago. That captivity, then, of the city of Jerusalem, and the people thus carried into Babylonia in bondage, were ordained so to proceed by the Lord, by the voice of Jeremiah, a prophet of that time. And there appeared kings of Babylon, under whom they were in slavery, who on occasion of the captivity of this people were so wrought upon by certain miracles that they came to know the one true God who founded universal creation, and worshipped Him, and commanded that He should be worshipped. Moreover the people were ordered both to pray for those by whom they were detained in captivity, and in their peace to hope for peace, to the effect that they should beget children, and build houses, and plant

gardens and vineyards. But at the end of seventy years, release from their captivity was promised to them. All this, furthermore, signified in a figure that the Church of Christ in all His saints, who are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, would have to do service under the kings of this world. For the doctrine of the apostles speaks also in this wise, that every soul should be subject to the higher powers,’ and that there should be rendered all things to all men, tribute to whom tribute (is due), custom to whom custom,’ and all other things in like manner which, without detriment to the worship of our God, we render to the rulers in the constitution of human society: for the Lord Himself also, in order to set before us an example of this sound doctrine, did not deem it unworthy of Him to pay tribute on account of that human individuality wherewith He was invested. Again, Christian servants and good believers are also commanded to serve their temporal masters in equanimity and faithfulness; whom they will hereafter judge, if even on to the end they find them wicked, or with whom they will hereafter reign in equality, if they too shall have been converted to the true God. Still all are enjoined to be subject to the powers that are of man and of earth, even until, at the end of the predetermined time which the seventy years signify, the Church shall be delivered from the confusion of this world, like as Jerusalem was to be set free from the captivity in Babylonia. By occasion of that captivity, however, the kings of earth too have themselves been led to forsake the idols on account of which they were wont to persecute the Christians, and have come to know, and now worship, the one true God and Christ the Lord; and it is on their behalf that the Apostle Paul enjoins prayer to be made, even although they should persecute the Church. For he speaks in these terms: I entreat, therefore, that first of all supplications, adorations, intercessions, and givings of thanks be made for kings, for all men, and all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, with all godliness and charity.’ Accordingly peace has been given to the Church by these same persons, although it be but of a temporal sort,—a temporal quiet for the work of building houses after a spiritual fashion, and planting gardens and vineyards. For witness your own case, too,—at this very time we are engaged, by means of this discourse, in building you up and planting you. And the like process is going on throughout the whole circle of lands, in virtue of the peace allowed by Christian kings, even as the same apostle thus expresses himself: Ye are God’s husbandry; ye are God’s building.’

38. “And, indeed, after the lapse of the seventy years of which Jeremiah had mystically prophesied, to the intent of prefiguring the end of times, with a view still to the perfecting of that same figure, no settled peace and liberty were conceded again to the Jews. Thus it was that they were conquered subsequently by the Romans and made tributary. From that period, in truth, at which they received the land of promise and began to have kings, in order to preclude the supposition that the promise of the Christ who was to be their Liberator had met its complete fulfillment in the person of any one of their kings, Christ was prophesied of with greater clearness in a number of prophecies; not only by David himself in the book of Psalms, but also by the rest of the great and holy prophets, even on to the time of their conveyance into captivity in Babylonia; and in that same captivity there were also prophets whose mission was to prophesy of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Liberator of all. And after the restoration of the temple, when the seventy years had passed, the Jews sustained grievous oppressions and sufferings at the hands of the kings of the Gentiles, fitted to make them understand that the Liberator was not yet come, whom they failed to apprehend as one who was to effect for them a spiritual deliverance, and whom they fondly longed for on account of a carnal liberation.

CHAPTER 22

OF THE SIX AGES OF THE WORLD

39. “Five ages of the world, accordingly, having been now completed (there has entered the sixth). Of these ages the first is from the beginning of the human race, that is, from Adam, who was the first man that was made, down to Noah, who constructed the ark at the time of the flood. Then the second extends from that period on to Abraham, who was called the father indeed of all nations which should follow the example of his faith, but who at the same time in the way of natural descent from his own flesh was the father of the destined people of the Jews; which people, previous to the entrance of the Gentiles into the Christian faith, was the one people among all the nations of all lands that worshipped the one true God: from which people also Christ the Saviour was decreed to come according to the flesh. For these turning-points of those two ages occupy an eminent place in the

ancient books. On the other hand, those of the other three ages are also declared in the Gospel, where the descent of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh is likewise mentioned. For the third age extends from Abraham on to David the king; the fourth from David on to that captivity whereby the people of God passed over into Babylonia; and the fifth from that transmigration down to the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. With His coming the sixth age has entered on its process; so that now the spiritual grace, which in previous times was known to a few patriarchs and prophets, may be made manifest to all nations; to the intent that no man should worship God but freely, fondly desiring of Him not the visible rewards of His services and the happiness of this present life, but that eternal life alone in which he is to enjoy God Himself: in order that in this sixth age the mind of man may be renewed after the image of God, even as on the sixth day man was made after the image of God. For then, too, is the law fulfilled, when all that it has commanded is done, not in the strong desire for things temporal, but in the love of Him who has given the commandment. Who is there, moreover, who should not be earnestly disposed to give the return of love to a God of supreme righteousness and also of supreme mercy, who has first loved men of the greatest unrighteousness and the loftiest pride, and that, too, so deeply as to have sent in their behalf His only Son, by whom He made all things, and who being made man, not by any change of Himself, but by the assumption of human nature, was designed thus to become capable not only of living with them, but also of dying at once for them and by their hands?

40. “Thus, then, showing forth the New Testament of our everlasting inheritance, wherein man was to be renewed by the grace of God and lead a new life, that is, a spiritual life; and with the view of exhibiting the first one as an old dispensation, wherein a carnal people acting out the old man (with the exception of a few patriarchs and prophets, who had understanding, and some hidden saints), and leading a carnal life, desiderated carnal rewards at the hands of the Lord God, and received in that fashion but the figures of spiritual blessings;—with this intent, I say, the Lord Christ, when made man, despised all earthly good things, in order that He might show us how these things ought to be despised; and He endured all earthly ills which He was inculcating as things needful to be endured; so that neither might our

happiness be sought for in the former class, nor our unhappiness be apprehended in the latter. For being born of a mother who, although she conceived without being touched by man and always remained thus untouched, in virginity conceiving, in virginity bringing forth, in virginity dying, had nevertheless been espoused to a handicraftsman, He extinguished all the inflated pride of carnal nobility. Moreover, being born in the city of Bethlehem, which among all the cities of Judaea was so insignificant that even in our own day it is designated a village, He willed not that any one should glory in the exalted position of any city of earth. He, too, whose are all things and by whom all things were created, was made poor, in order that no one, while believing in Him, might venture to boast himself in earthly riches. He refused to be made by men a king, because He displayed the pathway of humility to those unhappy ones whom pride had separated from Him; and yet universal creation attests the fact of His everlasting kingdom. An hungered was He who feeds all men; athirst was He by whom is created whatsoever is drunk, and who in a spiritual manner is the bread of the hungry and the fountain of the thirsty; in journeying on earth, wearied was He who has made Himself the way for us into heaven; as like one dumb and deaf in the presence of His revilers was He by whom the dumb spoke and the deaf heard; bound was He who freed us from the bonds of infirmities; scourged was He who expelled from the bodies of man the scourges of all distresses; crucified was He who put an end to our crucial pains; dead did He become who raised the dead. But He also rose again, no more to die, so that no one should from Him learn so to contemn death as if he were never to live again.

CHAPTER 23

OF THE MISSION OF THE HOLY GHOST FIFTY DAYS AFTER CHRIST’S RESURRECTION

41. “Thereafter, having confirmed the disciples, and having sojourned with them forty days, He ascended up into heaven, as these same persons were beholding Him. And on the completion of fifty days from His resurrection He sent to them the Holy Spirit (for so He had promised), by whose agency they were to have love shed abroad in their hearts, to the end that they might be able to fulfill the law, not only without the sense of its being burdensome, but even with a joyful mind. This law was given to the Jews in

the ten commandments, which they call the Decalogue. And these commandments, again, are reduced to two, namely that we should love God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind; and that we should love our neighbor as ourselves. For that on these two precepts hang all the law and the prophets, the Lord Himself has at once declared in the Gospel and shown in His own example. For thus it was likewise in the instance of the people of Israel, that from the day on which they first celebrated the passover in a form, slaying and eating the sheep, with whose blood their door-posts were marked for the securing of their safety,—from this day, I repeat, the fiftieth day in succession was completed, and then they received the law written by the finger of God, under which phrase we have already stated that the Holy Spirit is signified. And in the same manner, after the passion and resurrection of the Lord, who is the true passover, the Holy Ghost was sent personally to the disciples on the fiftieth day: not now, however, by tables of stone significant of the hardness of their hearts; but, when they were gathered together in one place at Jerusalem itself, suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as if a violent blast were being borne onwards, and there appeared to them tongues cloven like fire, and they began to speak with tongues, in such a manner that all those who had come to them recognized each his own language (for in that city the Jews were in the habit of assembling from every country wheresoever they had been scattered abroad, and had learned the diverse tongues of diverse nations); and thereafter, preaching Christ with all boldness, they wrought many signs in His name,—so much so, that as Peter was passing by, his shadow touched a certain dead person, and the man rose in life again.

42. “But when the Jews perceived so great signs to be wrought in the name of Him, whom, partly through ill-will and partly in ignorance, they crucified, some of them were provoked to persecute the apostles, who were His preachers; while others, on the contrary, marvelling the more at this very circumstance, that so great miracles were being performed in the name of Him whom they had derided as one overborne and conquered by themselves, repented, and were converted, so that thousands of Jews believed on Him. For these parties were not bent now on craving at the hand of God temporal benefits and an earthly kingdom, neither did they look any more for Christ, the promised king, in a carnal spirit; but they

continued in immortal fashion to apprehend and love Him, who in mortal fashion endured on their behalf at their own hands sufferings so heavy, and imparted to them the gift of forgiveness for all their sins, even down to the iniquity of His own blood, and by the example of His own resurrection unfolded immortality as the object which they should hope for and long for at His hands. Accordingly, now mortifying the earthly cravings of the old man, and inflamed with the new experience of the spiritual life, as the Lord had enjoined in the Gospel, they sold all that they had, and laid the price of their possessions at the feet of the apostles, in order that these might distribute to every man according as each had need; and living in Christian love harmoniously with each other, they did not affirm anything to be their own, but they had all things in common, and were one in soul and heart toward God. Afterwards these same persons also themselves suffered persecution in their flesh at the hands of the Jews, their carnal fellow-countrymen, and were dispersed abroad, to the end that, in consequence of their dispersion, Christ should be preached more extensively, and that they themselves at the same time should be followers of the patience of their Lord. For He who in meekness had endured them, enjoined them in meekness to endure for His sake.

43. “Among those same persecutors of the saints the Apostle Paul had once also ranked; and he raged with eminent violence against the Christians. But, subsequently, he became a believer and an apostle, and was sent to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, suffering (in that ministry) things more grievous on behalf of the name of Christ than were those which he had done against the name of Christ. Moreover, in establishing churches throughout all the nations where he was sowing the seed of the gospel, he was wont to give earnest injunction that, as these converts (coming as they did from the worship of idols and without experience in the worship of the one God) could not readily serve God in the way of selling and distributing their possessions, they should make offerings for the poor brethren among the saints who were in the churches of Judea which had believed in Christ. In this manner the doctrine of the apostle constituted some to be, as it were, soldiers, and others to be, as it were, provincial tributaries, while it set Christ in the centre of them like the corner-stone (in accordance with what had been announced beforetime by the prophet), in whom both parties, like

walls advancing from different sides, that is to say, from Jews and from Gentiles, might be joined together in the affection of kinship. But at a later period heavier and more frequent persecutions arose from the unbelieving Gentiles against the Church of Christ, and day by day was fulfilled that prophetic word which the Lord spake when He said, Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves.’

CHAPTER 24

OF THE CHURCH IN ITS LIKENESS TO A VINE SPROUTING AND SUFFERING PRUNING

44. “But that vine, which was spreading forth its fruitful shoots throughout the circle of lands, according as had been prophesied with regard to it, and as had been foretold by the Lord Himself, sprouted all the more luxuriantly in proportion as it was watered with richer streams of the blood of martyrs. And as these died in behalf of the truth of the faith in countless numbers throughout all lands, even the persecuting kingdoms themselves desisted, and were converted to the knowledge and worship of Christ, with the neck of their pride broken. Moreover it behoved that this same vine should be pruned in accordance with the Lord’s repeated predictions, and that the unfruitful twigs should be cut out of it, by which heresies and schisms were occasioned in various localities, under the name of Christ, on the part of men who sought not His glory but their own; whose oppositions, however, also served more and more to discipline the Church, and to test and illustrate both its doctrine and its patience.

45. “All these things, then, we now perceive to be realized precisely as we read of them in predictions uttered so long before the event. And as the first Christians, inasmuch as they did not see these things literally made good in their own day, were moved by miracles to believe them; so as regards ourselves, inasmuch as all these things have now been brought to pass exactly as we read of them in those books which were written a long time previous to the fulfillment of the things in question, wherein they were all announced as matters yet future, even as they are now seen to be actually present, we are built up unto faith, so that, enduring and persevering in the Lord, we believe without any hesitation in the destined accomplishment even of those things which still remain to be realized. For, indeed, in the

same Scriptures, tribulations yet to come are still read of, as well as the final day of judgment itself, when all the citizens of these two states shall receive their bodies again, and rise and give account of their life before the judgment-seat of Christ. For He will come in the glory of His power, who of old condescended to come in the lowliness of humanity; and He will separate all the godly from the ungodly,—not only from those who have utterly refused to believe in Him at all, but also from those who have believed in Him to no purpose and without fruit. To the one class He will give an eternal kingdom together with Himself, while to the other He will award eternal punishment together with the devil. But as no joy yielded by things temporal can be found in any measure comparable to the joy of life eternal which the saints are destined to attain, so no torment of temporal punishments can be compared to the everlasting torments of the unrighteous.

CHAPTER 25

OF CONSTANCY IN THE FAITH OF THE RESURRECTION

46. “Therefore, brother, confirm yourself in the name and help of Him in whom you believe, so as to withstand the tongues of those who mock at our faith, in whose case the devil speaks seductive words, bent above all on making a mockery of the faith in a resurrection. But, judging from your own history, believe that, seeing you have been, you will also be hereafter, even as you perceive yourself now to be, although previously you were not. For where was this great structure of your body, and where this formation and compacted connection of members a few years ago, before you were born, or even before you were conceived in your mother’s womb? Where, I repeat, was then this structure and this stature of your body? Did it not come forth to light from the hidden secrets of this creation, under the invisible formative operations of the Lord God, and did it not rise to its present magnitude and fashion by those fixed measures of increase which come with the successive periods of life? Is it then in any way a difficult thing for God, who also in a moment brings together out of secrecy the masses of the clouds and veils the heavens in an instant of time, to make this quantity of your body again what it was, seeing that He was able to make it what formerly it was not? Consequently, believe with a manful and

unshaken spirit that all those things which seem to be withdrawn from the eyes of men as if to perish, are safe and exempt from loss in relation to the omnipotence of God, who will restore them, without any delay or difficulty, when He is so minded,—those of them at least, I should say, that are judged by His justice to merit restoration; in order that men may give account of their deeds in their very bodies in which they have done them; and that in these they may be deemed worthy to receive either the exchange of heavenly incorruption in accordance with the deserts of their piety, or the corruptible condition of body in accordance with the deserts of their wickedness,—and that, too, not a condition such as may be done away with by death, but such as shall furnish material for everlasting pains.

47. “Flee, therefore, by steadfast faith and good manners,—flee, brother, those torments in which neither the torturers fail, nor do the tortured die; to whom it is death without end, to be unable to die in their pains. And be kindled with love and longing for the everlasting life of the saints, in which neither will action be toilsome nor will rest be indolent; in which the praise of God will be without irksomeness and without defect; wherein there will be no weariness in the mind, no exhaustion in the body; wherein, too, there shall be no want, whether on your own part, so that you should crave for relief, or on your neighbor’s part, so that you should be in haste to carry relief to him. God will be the whole enjoyment and satisfaction of that holy city, which lives in Him and of Him, in wisdom and beatitude. For as we hope and look for what has been promised by Him, we shall be made equal to the angels of God, and together with them we shall enjoy that Trinity now by sight, wherein at present we walk by faith. For we believe that which we see not, in order that through these very deserts of faith we may be counted worthy also to see that which we believe, and to abide in it; to the intent that these mysteries of the equality of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and the unity of this same Trinity, and the manner in which these three subsistences are one God, need no more be uttered by us in words of faith and sounding syllables, but may be drunk in in purest and most burning contemplation in that silence.

48. “These things hold fixed in your heart, and call upon the God in whom you believe, to defend you against the temptations of the devil; and be

careful, lest that adversary come stealthily upon you from a strange quarter, who, as a most malevolent solace for his own damnation, seeks others whose companionship he may obtain in that damnation. For he is bold enough not only to tempt Christian people through the instrumentality of those who hate the Christian name, or are pained to see the world taken possession of by that name, and still fondly desire to do service to idols and to the curious rites of evil spirits, but at times he also attempts the same through the agency of such men as we have mentioned a little ago, to wit, persons severed from the unity of the Church, like the twigs which are lopped off when the vine is pruned, who are called heretics or schismatics. Howbeit sometimes also he makes the same effort by means of the Jews, seeking to tempt and seduce believers by their instrumentality. Nevertheless, what ought above all things to be guarded against is, that no individual may suffer himself to be tempted and deceived by men who are within the Catholic Church itself, and who are borne by it like the chaff that is sustained against the time of its winnowing. For in being patient toward such persons, God has this end in view, namely, to exercise and confirm the faith and prudence of His elect by means of the perverseness of these others while at the same time He also takes account of the fact that many of their number make an advance, and are converted to the doing of the good pleasure of God with a great impetus, when led to take pity upon their own souls. For not all treasure up for themselves, through the patience of God, wrath in the day of the wrath of His just judgment; but many are brought by the same patience of the Almighty to the most wholesome pain of repentance. And until that is effected, they are made the means of exercising not only the forbearance, but also the compassion of those who are already holding by the right way. Accordingly, you will have to witness many drunkards, covetous men, deceivers gamesters, adulterers, fornicators, men who bind upon their persons sacrilegious charms and others given up to sorcerers and astrologers, and diviners practised in all kinds of impious arts. You will also have to observe how those very crowds which fill the theatres on the festal days of the pagans also fill the churches on the festal days of the Christians. And when you see these things you will be tempted to imitate them. Nay, why should I use the expression, you will see, in reference to what you assuredly are acquainted with even already? For you are not ignorant of the fact that many who are called Christians engage in all these evil things which I have briefly mentioned. Neither are you ignorant that at times, perchance, men whom you know to bear the name of Christians are guilty of even more grievous offenses than these. But if you have come with the notion that you may do such things as in a secured position, you are greatly in error; neither will the name of Christ be of any avail to you when He begins to judge in utmost strictness, who also of old condescended in utmost mercy to come to man’s relief. For He Himself has foretold these things, and speaks to this effect in the Gospel: Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father. Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, in thy name we have eaten and drunken.’ For all, therefore, who persevere in such works the end is damnation. Consequently, when you see many not only doing these things but also defending and recommending them, keep yourself firmly by the law of God, and follow not its willful transgressors. For it is not according to their mind, but according to His truth that you will be judged.

49. “Associate with the good, whom you perceive to be at one with you in loving your King. For there are many such for you to discover, if you also begin to cultivate that character yourself. For if in the public spectacles you wished to be in congenial company, and to attach yourself closely to men who are united with you in a liking for some charioteer, or some hunter, or some player or other, how much more ought you to find pleasure in associating with those who are at one with you in loving that God, with regard to whom no one that loves Him shall ever have cause for the blush of shame, inasmuch as not only is He Himself incapable of being overcome, but He will also render those unconquerable who are affectionately disposed toward Him. At the same time, not even on those same good men, who either anticipate you or accompany you on the way to God, ought you to set your hope, seeing that no more ought you to place it on yourself, however great may be the progress you have made, but on Him who justifies both them and you, and thus makes you what you are. For you are secure in God, because He changes not; but in man no one prudently counts himself secure. But if we ought to love those who are not righteous as yet, with the view that they may be so, how much more warmly ought those to be loved who already are righteous? At the same time, it is one thing to love

man, and another thing to set one’s hope in man; and the difference is so great, that God enjoins the one and forbids the other. Moreover, if you have to sustain either any insults or any sufferings in the cause of the name of Christ, and neither fall away from the faith nor decline from the good way, you are certain to receive the greater reward; whereas those who give way to the devil in such circumstances, lose even the less reward. But be humble toward God, in order that He may not permit you to be tempted beyond your strength.”

CHAPTER 26

OF THE FORMAL ADMISSION OF THE CATECHUMEN, AND OF THE SIGNS THEREIN MADE USE OF

50. At the conclusion of this address the person is to be asked whether he believes these things and earnestly desires to observe them. And on his replying to that effect then certainly he is to be solemnly signed and dealt with in accordance with the custom of the Church. On the subject of the sacrament, indeed, which he receives, it is first to be well impressed upon his notice that the signs of divine things are, it is true, things visible, but that the invisible things themselves are also honored in them, and that that species, which is then sanctified by the blessing, is therefore not to be regarded merely in the way in which it is regarded in any common use. And thereafter he ought to be told what is also signified by the form of words to which he has listened, and what in him is seasoned by that (spiritual grace) of which this material substance presents the emblem. Next we should take occasion by that ceremony to admonish him that, if he hears anything even in the Scriptures which may carry a carnal sound, he should, even although he fails to understand it, nevertheless believe that something spiritual is signified thereby, which bears upon holiness of character and the future life. Moreover, in this way he learns briefly that, whatever he may hear in the canonical books of such a kind as to make him unable to refer it to the love of eternity, and of truth, and of sanctity, and to the love of our neighbor, he should believe that to have been spoken or done with a figurative significance; and that, consequently, he should endeavor to understand it in such a manner as to refer it to that twofold (duty of) love. He should be further admonished, however, not to take the term neighbor in a carnal

sense, but to understand under it every one who may ever be with him in that holy city, whether there already or not yet apparent. And (he should finally be counselled) not to despair of the amendment of any man whom he perceives to be living under the patience of God for no other reason, as the apostle says, than that he may be brought to repentance.

51. If this discourse, in which I have supposed myself to have been teaching some uninstructed person in my presence, appears to you to be too long, you are at liberty to expound these matters with greater brevity. I do not think, however, that it ought to be longer than this. At the same time, much depends on what the case itself, as it goes on, may render advisable, and what the audience actually present shows itself not only to bear, but also to desire. When, however, rapid despatch is required, notice with what facility the whole matter admits of being explained. Suppose once more that some one comes before us who desires to be a Christian; and accordingly, suppose further that he has been interrogated, and that he has returned the answer which we have taken the former catechumen to have given; for, even should he decline to make this reply, it must at least be said that he ought to have given it;—then all that remains to be said to him should be put together in the following manner:—

52. Of a truth, brother, that is great and true blessedness which is promised to the saints in a future world. All visible things, on the other hand, pass away, and all the pomp, and pleasure, and solicitude of this world will perish, and (even now) they drag those who love them along with them onward to destruction. The merciful God, willing to deliver men from this destruction, that is to say, from everlasting pains, if they should not prove enemies to themselves, and if they should not withstand the mercy of their Creator, sent His only-begotten Son, that is to say, His Word, equal with Himself, by whom He made all things. And He, while abiding indeed in His divinity, and neither receding from the Father nor being changed in anything, did at the same time, by taking on Himself human nature, and appearing to men in mortal flesh, come unto men; in order that, just as death entered among the human race by one man, to wit, the first that was made, that is to say, Adam, because he consented unto his wife when she was seduced by the devil to the effect that they (both) transgressed the

commandment of God; even so by one man, Jesus Christ, who is also God, the Son of God, all those who believe in Him might have all their past sins done away with, and enter into eternal life.

CHAPTER 27

OF THE PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THEIR VISIBLE FULFILLMENT IN THE CHURCH

53. “For all those things, which at present you witness in the Church of God, and which you see to be taking place under the name of Christ throughout the whole world, were predicted long ages ago. And even as we read of them, so also we now see them. And by means of these things we are built up unto faith. Once of old there occurred a flood over the whole earth, the object of which was that sinners might be destroyed. And, nevertheless, those who escaped in the ark exhibited a sacramental sign of the Church that was to be, which at present is floating on the waves of the world, and is delivered from submersion by the wood of the cross of Christ. It was predicted to Abraham, a faithful servant of God, a single man, that of Him it was determined that a people should be born who should worship one God in the midst of all other nations which worshipped idols; and all things which were prophesied of as destined to happen to that people have come to pass exactly as they were foretold. Among that people Christ, the King of all saints and their God, was also prophesied of as destined to come of the seed of that same Abraham according to the flesh, which (flesh) He took unto Himself, in order that all those also who became followers of His faith might be sons of Abraham; and thus it has come to pass: Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, who belonged to that race. It was foretold by the prophets that He would suffer on the cross at the hands of that same people of the Jews, of whose lineage, according to the flesh, He came; and thus it has come to pass. It was foretold that He would rise again: He has risen again; and, in accordance with these same predictions of the prophets, He has ascended into heaven and has sent the Holy Spirit to His disciples. It was foretold not only by the prophets, but also by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that His Church would exist throughout the whole world, extended by the martyrdoms and sufferings of the saints; and this was foretold at a time when as yet His name was at once undeclared to the Gentiles, and

made a subject of derision where it was known; and, nevertheless, in the power of His miracles, whether those which He wrought by His own hand or those which he effected by means of His servants, as these things are being reported and believed, we already see the fulfillment of that which was predicted, and behold the very kings of the earth, who formerly were wont to persecute the Christians, even now brought into subjection to the name of Christ. It was also foretold that schisms and heresies would arise from His Church, and that under His name they would seek their own glory instead of Christ's, in such places as they might be able to command; and these predictions have been realized.

54. "Will those things, then, which yet remain fail to come to pass? It is manifest that, just as the former class of things which were foretold have come to pass, so will these latter also come to pass. I refer to all the tribulations of the righteous, which yet wait for fulfillment, and to the day of judgment, which will separate all the wicked from the righteous in the resurrection of the dead;—and not only will it thus separate those wicked men who are outside the Church, but also it will set apart for the fire, which is due to such, the chaff of the Church itself, which must be borne with in utmost patience on to the last winnowing. Moreover, they who deride the (doctrine of a) resurrection, because they think that this flesh, inasmuch as it becomes corrupt, cannot rise again, will certainly rise in the same unto punishment, and God will make it plain to such, that He who was able to form these bodies when as yet they were not, is able in a moment to restore them as they were. But all the faithful who are destined to reign with Christ shall rise with the same body in such wise that they may also be counted worthy to be changed into angelic incorruption; so that they may be made equal unto the angels of God, even as the Lord Himself has promised; and that they may praise Him without any failure and without any weariness, ever living in Him and of Him, with such joy and blessedness as can be neither expressed nor conceived by man.

55. "Believe these things, therefore, and be on your guard against temptations (for the devil seeks for others who may be brought to perish along with himself); so that not only may that adversary fail to seduce you by the help of those who are without the Church, whether they be pagans,

or Jews, or heretics; but you yourself also may decline to follow the example of those within the Catholic Church itself whom you see leading an evil life, either indulging in excess in the pleasures of the belly and the throat, or unchaste, or given up to the vain and unlawful observances of curious superstitions, whether they be addicted to (the inanities of) public spectacles, or charms, or divinations of devils, or be living in the pomp and inflated arrogance of covetousness and pride, or be pursuing any sort of life which the law condemns and punishes. But rather connect yourself with the good, whom you will easily find out, if you yourself were once become of that character; so that you may unite with each other in worshipping and loving God for His own sake; for He himself will be our complete reward to the intent that we may enjoy His goodness and beauty in that life. He is to be loved, however, not in the way in which any object that is seen with the eyes is loved, but as wisdom is loved, and truth, and holiness, and righteousness, and charity, and whatever else may be mentioned as of kindred nature; and further, with a love conformable to these things not as they are in men, but as they are in the very fountain of incorruptible and unchangeable wisdom. Whomsoever, therefore, you may observe to be loving these things, attach yourself to them, so that through Christ, who became man in order that He might be the Mediator between God and men, you may be reconciled to God. But as regards the perverse, even if they find their way within the walls of the Church, think not that they will find their way into the kingdom of heaven; for in their own time they will be set apart, if they have not altered to the better. Consequently, follow the example of good men, bear with the wicked, love all; forasmuch as you know not what he will be to-morrow who to-day is evil. Howbeit, love not the unrighteousness of such; but love the persons themselves with the express intent that they may apprehend righteousness; for not only is the love of God enjoined upon us, but also the love of our neighbor, on which two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. And this is fulfilled by no one save the man who has received the (other) gift, the Holy Spirit, who is indeed equal with the Father and with the Son; for this same Trinity is God; and on this God every hope ought to be placed. On man our hope ought not to be placed, of whatsoever character he may be. For He, by whom we are justified, is one thing; and they, together with whom we are justified, are another. Moreover, it is not only by lusts that the devil tempts, but also by the terrors of insults, and pains, and death itself. But whatever a man shall have suffered on behalf of the name of Christ, and for the sake of the hope of eternal life, and shall have endured in constancy, (in accordance therewith) the greater reward shall be given him; whereas, if he shall give way to the devil, he shall be damned along with him. But works of mercy, conjoined with pious humility, meet with this acknowledgment from God, to wit, that He will not suffer His servants to be tempted more than they are able to bear.”

ON THE CREED

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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DE SYMBOLO AD CATECHUMENOS.

A SERMON TO THE CATECHUMENS.

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. C. L. CORNISH, M.A., OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD

1. Receive, my children, the Rule of Faith, which is called the Symbol (or Creed). And when ye have received it, write it in your heart, and be daily saying it to yourselves; before ye sleep, before ye go forth, arm you with your Creed. The Creed no man writes so as it may be able to be read: but for rehearsal of it, lest haply forgetfulness obliterate what care hath delivered, let your memory be your record-roll: what ye are about to hear, that are ye to believe; and what ye shall have believed, that are about to give back with your tongue. For the Apostle says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." For this is the Creed which ye are to rehearse and to repeat in answer. These words which ye have heard are in the Divine Scriptures scattered up and down: but thence gathered and reduced into one, that the memory of slow persons might not be distressed; that every person may be able to say, able to hold, what he believes. For have ye now merely heard that God is Almighty? But ye begin to have him for your father, when ye have been born by the church as your Mother.

2. Of this, then, ye have now received, have meditated, and having meditated have held, that ye should say, "I believe in God the Father Almighty." God is Almighty, and yet, though Almighty, He cannot die, cannot be deceived, cannot lie; and, as the Apostle says, "cannot deny Himself." How many things that He cannot do, and yet is Almighty! yea therefore is Almighty, because He cannot do these things. For if He could die, He were not Almighty; if to lie, if to be deceived, if to do unjustly, were

possible for Him, He were not Almighty: because if this were in Him, He should not be worthy to be Almighty. To our Almighty Father, it is quite impossible to sin. He does whatsoever He will: that is Omnipotence. He does whatsoever He rightly will, whatsoever He justly will: but whatsoever is evil to do, He wills not. There is no resisting one who is Almighty, that He should not do what He will. It was He Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, invisible and visible. Invisible such as are in heaven, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers, archangels, angels: all, if we shall live aright, our fellow-citizens. He made in heaven the things visible; the sun, the moon, the stars. With its terrestrial animals He adorned the earth, filled the air with things that fly, the land with them that walk and creep, the sea with them that swim: all He filled with their own proper creatures. He made also man after His own image and likeness, in the mind: for in that is the image of God. This is the reason why the mind cannot be comprehended even by itself, because in it is the image of God. To this end were we made, that over the other creatures we should bear rule: but through sin in the first man we fell, and are all come into an inheritance of death. We were brought low, became mortal, were filled with fears, with errors: this by desert of sin: with which desert and guilt is every man born. This is the reason why, as ye have seen to-day, as ye know, even little children undergo exsufflation, exorcism; to drive away from them the power of the devil their enemy, which deceived man that it might possess mankind. It is not then the creature of God that in infants undergoes exorcism or exsufflation: but he under whom are all that are born with sin; for he is the first of sinners. And for this cause by reason of one who fell and brought all into death, there was sent One without sin, Who should bring unto life, by delivering them from sin, all that believe on Him.

3. For this reason we believe also in His Son, that is to say, God the Father Almighty’s, “His Only Son, our Lord.” When thou hearest of the Only Son of God, acknowledge Him God. For it could not be that God’s Only Son should not be God. What He is, the same did He beget, though He is not that Person Whom He begot. If He be truly Son, He is that which the Father is; if He be not that which the Father is, He is not truly Son. Observe mortal and earthly creatures: what each is, that it engendereth. Man besets not an ox, sheep besets not dog, nor dog sheep. Whatever it be that begetteth, that

which it is, it begetteth. Hold ye therefore boldly, firmly, faithfully, that the Begotten of God the Father is what Himself is, Almighty. These mortal creatures engender by corruption. Does God so beget? He that is begotten mortal generates that which himself is; the Immortal generates what He is: corruptible begets corruptible, Incorruptible begets Incorruptible: the corruptible begets corruptibly, Incorruptible, Incorruptibly: yea, so begetteth what Itself is, that One begets One, and therefore Only. Ye know, that when I pronounced to you the Creed, so I said, and so ye are bounden to believe; that we "believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His Only Son." Here too, when thou believest that He is the Only, believe Him Almighty: for it is not to be thought that God the Father does what He will, and God the Son does not what He will. One Will of Father and Son, because one Nature. For it is impossible for the will of the Son to be any whit parted from the Father's will. God and God; both one God: Almighty and Almighty; both One Almighty.

4. We do not bring in two Gods as some do, who say, "God the Father and God the Son, but greater God the Father and lesser God the Son." They both are what? Two Gods? Thou blushest to speak it, blush to believe it. Lord God the Father, thou sayest, and Lord God the Son: and the Son Himself saith, "No man can serve two Lords." In His family shall we be in such wise, that, like as in a great house where there is the father of a family and he hath a son, so we should say, the greater Lord, the lesser Lord? Shrink from such a thought. If ye make to yourselves such like in your heart, ye set up idols in the "one soul." Utterly repel it. First believe, then understand. Now to whom God gives that when he has believed he soon understands; that is God's gift, not human frailness. Still, if ye do not yet understand, believe: One God the Father, God Christ the Son of God. Both are what? One God. And how are both said to be One God? How? Dost thou marvel? In the Acts of the Apostles, "There was," it says, "in the believers, one soul and one heart." There were many souls, faith had made them one. So many thousands of souls were there; they loved each other, and many are one: they loved God in the fire of charity, and from being many they are come to the oneness of beauty. If all those many souls the dearness of love made one soul, what must be the dearness of love in God, where is no diversity, but entire equality! If on earth and among men there

could be so great charity as of so many souls to make one soul, where Father from Son, Son from Father, hath been ever inseparable, could They both be other than One God? Only, those souls might be called both many souls and one soul; but God, in Whom is ineffable and highest conjunction, may be called One God, not two Gods.

5. The Father doeth what He will, and what He will doeth the Son. Do not imagine an Almighty Father and a not Almighty Son: it is error, blot it out within you, let it not cleave in your memory, let it not be drunk into your faith, and if haply any of you shall have drunk it in, let him vomit it up. Almighty is the Father, Almighty the Son. If Almighty begat not Almighty, He begat not very Son. For what say we, brethren, if the Father being greater begat a Son less than He? What said I, begat? Man engenders, being greater, a son being less: it is true: but that is because the one grows old, the other grows up, and by very growing attains to the form of his father. The Son of God, if He groweth not because neither can God wax old, was begotten perfect. And being begotten perfect, if He groweth not, and remained not less, He is equal. For that ye may know Almighty begotten of Almighty, hear Him Who is Truth. That which of Itself Truth saith, is true. What saith Truth? What saith the Son, Who is Truth? “Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also the Son likewise doeth.” The Son is Almighty, in doing all things that He willeth to do. For if the Father doeth some things which the Son doeth not, the Son said falsely, “Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also the Son doeth likewise.” But because the Son spake truly, believe it: “Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also the Son doeth likewise,” and ye have believed in the Son that He is Almighty. Which word although ye said not in the Creed, yet this is it that ye expressed when ye believed in the Only Son, Himself God. Hath the Father aught that the Son hath not? This Arian heretic blasphemers say, not I. But what say I? If the Father hath aught that the Son hath not, the Son lieth in saying, “All things that the Father hath, are Mine.” Many and innumerable are the testimonies by which it is proved that the Son is Very Son of God the Father, and the Father God hath His Very-begotten Son God, and Father and Son is One God.

6. But this Only Son of God, the Father Almighty, let us see what He did for us, what He suffered for us. “Born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary.” He, so great God, equal with the Father, born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary, born lowly, that thereby He might heal the proud. Man exalted himself and fell; God humbled Himself and raised him up. Christ’s lowliness, what is it? God hath stretched out an hand to man laid low. We fell, He descended: we lay low, He stooped. Let us lay hold and rise, that we fall not into punishment. So then His stooping to us is this, “Born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary.” His very Nativity too as man, it is lowly, and it is lofty. Whence lowly? That as man He was born of men. Whence lofty? That He was born of a virgin. A virgin conceived, a virgin bore, and after the birth was a virgin still.

7. What next? “Suffered under Pontius Pilate.” He was in office as governor and was the judge, this same Pontius Pilate, what time as Christ suffered. In the name of the judge there is a mark of the times, when He suffered under Pontius Pilate: when He suffered, “was crucified, dead, and buried.” Who? what? for whom? Who? God’s Only Son, our Lord. What? Crucified, dead, and buried. For whom? for ungodly and sinners. Great condescension, great grace! “What shall I render unto the Lord for all that He hath bestowed on me?”

8. He was begotten before all times, before all worlds. “Begotten before.” Before what, He in Whom is no before? Do not in the least imagine any time before that Nativity of Christ whereby He was begotten of the Father; of that Nativity I am speaking by which He is Son of God Almighty, His Only Son our Lord; of that am I first speaking. Do not imagine in this Nativity a beginning of time; do not imagine any space of eternity in which the Father was and the Son was not. Since when the Father was, since then the Son. And what is that “since,” where is no beginning? Therefore ever Father without beginning, ever Son without beginning. And how, thou wilt say, was He begotten, if He have no beginning? Of eternal, coeternal. At no time was the Father, and the Son not, and yet Son of Father was begotten. Whence is any manner of similitude to be had? We are among things of earth, we are in the visible creature. Let the earth give me a similitude: it gives none. Let the element of the waters give me some similitude: it hath

not whereof to give. Some animal give me a similitude: neither can this do it. An animal indeed engenders, both what engenders and what is engendered: but first is the father, and then is born the son. Let us find the coeval and imagine it coeternal. If we shall be able to find a father coeval with his son, and son coeval with his father, let us believe God the Father coeval with His Son, and God the Son coeternal with His Father. On earth we can find some coeval, we cannot find any coeternal. Let us stretch the coeval and imagine it coeternal. Some one, it may be, will put you on the stretch, by saying, "When is it possible for a father to be found coeval with his son, or son coeval with his father? That the father may beget he goes before in age; that the son may be begotten, he comes after in age: but this father coeval with son, or son with father, how can it be?" Imagine to yourselves fire as father, its shining as son; see, we have found the coevals. From the instant that the fire begins to be, that instant it begets the shining: neither fire before shining, nor shining after fire. And if we ask, which begets which? the fire the shining, or the shining the fire? Immediately ye conceive by natural sense, by the innate wit of your minds ye all cry out, The fire the shining, not the shining the fire. Lo, here you have a father beginning; lo, a son at the same time, neither going before nor coming after. Lo, here then is a father beginning, lo, a son at the same time beginning. If I have shown you a father beginning, and a son at the same time beginning, believe the Father not beginning, and with Him the Son not beginning either; the one eternal, the other coeternal. If ye get on with your learning, ye understand: take pains to get on. The being born, ye have; but also the growing, ye ought to have; because no man begins with being perfect. As for the Son of God, indeed, He could be born perfect, because He was begotten without time, coeternal with the Father, long before all things, not in age, but in eternity. He then was begotten coeternal, of which generation the Prophet said, "His generation who shall declare?" begotten of the Father without time, He was born of the Virgin in the fullness of times. This nativity had times going before it. In opportunity of time, when He would, when He knew, then was He born: for He was not born without His will. None of us is born because he will, and none of us dies when he will: He, when He would, was born; when He would, He died: how He would, He was born of a Virgin: how He would, He died; on the cross. Whatever He would, He did: because He was in such wise Man that, unseen, He was God; God assuming, Man assumed; One Christ, God and Man.

9. Of His cross what shall I speak, what say? This extremest kind of death He chose, that not any kind of death might make His Martyrs afraid. The doctrine He shewed in His life as Man, the example of patience He demonstrated in His Cross. There, you have the work, that He was crucified; example of the work, the Cross; reward of the work, Resurrection. He shewed us in the Cross what we ought to endure, He shewed in the Resurrection what we have to hope. Just like a consummate task-master in the matches of the arena, He said, Do, and bear; do the work and receive the prize; strive in the match and thou shall be crowned. What is the work? Obedience. What the prize? Resurrection without death. Why did I add, "without death?" Because "Lazarus rose, and died: Christ rose again, "dieth no more, death will no longer have dominion over Him."

10. Scripture saith, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord." When we read what great trials Job endured, it makes one shudder, it makes one shrink, it makes one quake. And what did he receive? The double of what he had lost. Let not a man therefore with an eye to temporal rewards be willing to have patience, and say to himself, "Let me endure loss, God will give me back sons twice as many; Job received double of all, and begat as many sons as he had buried." Then is this not the double? Yes, precisely the double, because the former sons still lived. Let none say, "Let me bear evils, and God will repay me as He repaid Job:" that it be now no longer patience but avarice. For if it was not patience which that Saint had, nor a brave enduring of all that came upon him; the testimony which the Lord gave, whence should he have it? "Hast thou observed," saith the Lord, "my servant Job? For there is not like him any on the earth, a man without fault, true worshipper of God." What a testimony, my brethren, did this holy man deserve of the Lord! And yet him a bad woman sought by her persuasion to deceive, she too representing that serpent, who, like as in Paradise he deceived the man whom God first made, so likewise here by suggesting blasphemy thought to be able to deceive a man who pleased God. What things he suffered, my brethren! Who can have so much to suffer in his estate, his house, his sons, his flesh,

yea in his very wife who was left to be his tempter! But even her who was left, the devil would have taken away long ago, but that he kept her to be his helper: because by Eve he had mastered the first man, therefore had he kept an Eve. What things, then, he suffered! He lost all that he had; his house fell; would that were all! it crushed his sons also. And, to see that patience had great place in him, hear what he answered; “The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord, so hath it been done; blessed be the name of the Lord.” He hath taken what He gave, is He lost Who gave? He hath taken what He gave. As if he should say, He hath taken away all, let Him take all, send me away naked, and let me keep Him. What shall I lack if I have God? or what is the good of all else to me, if I have not God? Then it came to his flesh, he was stricken with a wound from head to foot; he was one running sore, one mass of crawling worms: and showed himself immovable in his God, stood fixed. The woman wanted, devil’s helper as she was not husband’s comforter, to put him up to blaspheme God. “How long,” said she, “dost thou suffer” so and so; “speak some word against the Lord, and die.” So then, because he had been brought low, he was to be exalted. And this the Lord did, in order to show it to men; as for His servant, He kept greater things for him in heaven. So then Job who was brought low, He exalted; the devil who was lifted up, He brought low: for “He putteth down one and setteth up another.” But let not any man, my beloved brethren, when he suffers any such-like tribulations, look for a reward here: for instance, if he suffer any losses, let him not peradventure say, “The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord, so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord;” only with the mind to receive twice as much again. Let patience praise God, not avarice. If what thou hast lost thou seekest to receive back twofold, and therefore praisest God, it is of covetousness thou praisest, not of love. Do not imagine this to be the example of that holy man; thou deceivest thyself. When Job was enduring all, he was not hoping for to have twice as much again. Both in his first confession when he bore up under his losses, and bore out to the grave the dead bodies of his sons, and in the second when he was now suffering torments of sores in his flesh, ye may observe what I am saying. Of his former confession the words run thus: “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it pleased the Lord, so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord.” He might have said, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away;

He that took away can once more give; can bring back more than He took." He said not this, but, "As it pleased the Lord," said he, "so is it done:" because it pleases Him, let it please me: let not that which hath pleased the good Lord misplease His submissive servant; what pleased the Physician, not misplease the sick man. Hear his other confession: "Thou hast spoken," said he to his wife, "like one of the foolish women. If we have received good at the hand of the Lord, why shall we not bear evil?" He did not add, what, if he had said it, would have been true. "The Lord is able both to bring back my flesh into its former condition, and that which He hath taken away from us, to make manifold more:" lest he should seem to have endured in hope of this. This was not what he said, not what he hoped. But, that we might be taught, did the Lord that for him, not hoping for it, by which we should be taught, that God was with him: because if He had not also restored to him those things, there was the crown indeed, but hidden, and we could not see it. And therefore what says the divine Scripture in exhorting to patience and hope of things future, not reward of things present? "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord." Why is it, "the patience of Job," and not, Ye have seen the end of Job himself? Thou wouldest open thy mouth for the "twice as much;" wouldest say, "Thanks be to God; let me bear up: I receive twice as much again, like Job." "Patience of Job, end of the Lord." The patience of Job we know, and the end of the Lord we know. What end of the Lord? "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" They are the words of the Lord hanging on the cross. He did as it were leave Him for present felicity, not leave Him for eternal immortality. In this is "the end of the Lord." The Jews hold Him, the Jews insult, the Jews bind Him, crown Him with thorns, dishonor Him with spitting, scourge Him, overwhelm Him with revilings, hang Him upon the tree, pierce Him with a spear, last of all bury Him. He was as it were left: but by whom? By those insulting ones. Therefore thou shall but to this end have patience, that thou mayest rise again and not die, that is, never die, even as Christ. For so we read, "Christ rising from the dead henceforth dieth not."

11. "He ascended into heaven:" believe. "He sitteth at the right hand of the Father:" believe. By sitting, understand dwelling: as [in Latin] we say of any person, "In that country he dwelt (sedit) three years." The Scripture

also has that expression, that such an one dwelt (sedisse) in a city for such a time. Not meaning that he sat and never rose up? On this account the dwellings of men are called seats (sedes). Where people are seated (in this sense), are they always sitting? Is there no rising, no walking, no lying down? And yet they are called seats (sedes). In this way, then, believe an inhabiting of Christ on the right hand of God the Father: He is there. And let not your heart say to you, What is He doing? Do not want to seek what is not permitted to find: He is there; it suffices you. He is blessed, and from blessedness which is called the right hand of the Father, of very blessedness the name is, right hand of the Father. For if we shall take it carnally, then because He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, the Father will be on His left hand. Is it consistent with piety so to put Them together, the Son on the right, the Father on the left? There it is all right-hand, because no misery is there.

12. “Thence He shall come to judge the quick and dead.” The quick, who shall be alive and remain; the dead, who shall have gone before. It may also be understood thus: The living, the just; the dead, the unjust. For He judges both, rendering unto each his own. To the just He will say in the judgment, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.” For this prepare yourselves, for these things hope, for this live, and so live, for this believe, for this be baptized, that it may be said to you, “Come ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” To them on the left hand, what? “Go into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” Thus will they be judged by Christ, the quick and the dead. We have spoken of Christ’s first nativity, which is without time; spoken of the other in the fullness of time, Christ’s nativity of the Virgin; spoken of the passion of Christ; spoken of the coming of Christ to judgment. The whole is spoken, that was to be spoken of Christ, God’s Only Son, our Lord. But not yet is the Trinity perfect.

13. It follows in the Creed, “And in the Holy Ghost.” This Trinity, one God, one nature, one substance, one power; highest equality, no division, no diversity, perpetual dearness of love. Would ye know the Holy Ghost, that He is God? Be baptized, and ye will be His temple. The Apostle says,

“Know ye not that your bodies are the temple within you of the Holy Ghost, Whom ye have of God?” A temple is for God: thus also Solomon, king and prophet, was bidden to build a temple for God. If he had built a temple for the sun or moon or some star or some angel, would not God condemn him? Because therefore he built a temple for God he showed that he worshipped God. And of what did he build? Of wood and stone, because God deigned to make unto Himself by His servant an house on earth, where He might be asked, where He might be had in mind. Of which blessed Stephen says, “Solomon built Him an house; howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made by hand.” If then our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost, what manner of God is it that built a temple for the Holy Ghost? But it was God. For if our bodies be a temple of the Holy Ghost, the same built this temple for the Holy Ghost, that built our bodies. Listen to the Apostle saying, “God hath tempered the body, giving unto that which lacked the greater honor;” when he was speaking of the different members that there should be no schisms in the body. God created our body. The grass, God created; our body Who created? How do we prove that the grass is God’s creating? He that clothes, the same creates. Read the Gospel, “If then the grass of the fields,” saith it, “which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, God so clotheth.” He, then, creates Who clothes. And the Apostle: “Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but a bare grain, as perchance of wheat, or of some other corn; but God giveth it a body as He would, and to each one of seeds its proper body.” If then it be God that builds our bodies, God that builds our members, and our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost, doubt not that the Holy Ghost is God. And do not add as it were a third God; because Father and Son and Holy Ghost is One God. So believe ye.

14. It follows after commendation of the Trinity, “The Holy Church.” God is pointed out, and His temple. “For the temple of God is holy,” says the Apostle, “which (temple) are ye.” This same is the holy Church, the one Church, the true Church, the catholic Church, fighting against all heresies: fight, it can: be fought down, it cannot. As for heresies, they went all out of it, like as unprofitable branches pruned from the vine: but itself abideth in

its root, in its Vine, in its charity. “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

15. “Forgiveness of sins.” Ye have [this article of] the Creed perfectly in you when ye receive Baptism. Let none say, “I have done this or that sin: perchance that is not forgiven me.” What hast thou done? How great a sin hast thou done? Name any heinous thing thou hast committed, heavy, horrible, which thou shudderest even to think of: have done what thou wilt: hast thou killed Christ? There is not than that deed any worse, because also than Christ there is nothing better. What a dreadful thing is it to kill Christ! Yet the Jews killed Him, and many afterwards believed on Him and drank His blood: they are forgiven the sin which they committed. When ye have been baptized, hold fast a good life in the commandments of God, that ye may guard your Baptism even unto the end. I do not tell you that ye will live here without sin; but they are venial, without which this life is not. For the sake of all sins was Baptism provided; for the sake of light sins, without which we cannot be, was prayer provided. What hath the Prayer? “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” Once for all we have washing in Baptism, every day we have washing in prayer. Only, do not commit those things for which ye must needs be separated from Christ’s body: which be far from you! For those whom ye have seen doing penance, have committed heinous things, either adulteries or some enormous crimes: for these they do penance. Because if theirs had been light sins, to blot out these daily prayer would suffice.

16. In three ways then are sins remitted in the Church; by Baptism, by prayer, by the greater humility of penance; yet God doth not remit sins but to the baptized. The very sins which He remits first, He remits not but to the baptized. When? when they are baptized. The sins which are after remitted upon prayer, upon penance, to whom He remits, it is to the baptized that He remitteth. For how can they say, “Our Father,” who are not yet born sons? The Catechumens, so long as they be such, have upon them all their sins. If Catechumens, how much more Pagans? how much more heretics? But to heretics we do not change their baptism. Why? because they have baptism in the same way as a deserter has the soldier’s mark: just so these also have Baptism; they have it, but to be condemned thereby, not crowned. And yet

if the deserter himself, being amended, begin to do duty as a soldier, does any man dare to change his mark?

17. We believe also “the resurrection of the flesh,” which went before in Christ: that the body too may have hope of that which went before in its Head. The Head of the Church, Christ: the Church, the body of Christ. Our Head is risen, ascended into heaven: where the Head, there also the members. In what way the resurrection of the flesh? Lest any should chance to think it like as Lazarus’s resurrection, that thou mayest know it to be not so, it is added, “Into life everlasting.” God regenerate you! God preserve and keep you! God bring you safe unto Himself, Who is the Life Everlasting. Amen.

ON THE GOOD OF WIDOWHOOD

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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DE BONO VIDUITATIS.

TRANSLATED BY REV. C. L. CORNISH, M.A., OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

This work is not mentioned in the Retractations, probably because it is a letter, and as such it is reckoned by Possidius, cap. 7. It is also marked as St. Augustin's by its references to his other works, De Bono Conjugali, etc. cap. 15. Ep. to Proba, cap. 23. The date is marked by the recent consecration of Demetrias, which was in 413. The admonition for which he is thanked by Juliana, Ep. 188, may be that against Pelagianism.

An objection has been raised from its disagreement with the fourth Council of Carthage, an. 398. can. 104, which excommunicates widows who marry again after consecration, and pronounces them guilty of adultery, whereas in cap. 10 and 11, the opinion that such marriages are no marriages, and that they ought to return to continence, is refuted. The two, however, are not wholly irreconcileable, as there may be a guilt similar to that of adultery incurred, and it may be visited with a censure in the form of excommunication, and yet the marriage may remain valid. The 16th Canon of Chalcedon imposes such a penalty, with power to the Bishop to relax it. —Abridged from the Benedictine Edition.

Augustin the Bishop, servant of Christ, and of the servants of Christ, unto the religious handmaiden of God, Juliana, in the Lord of lords health.

Not any longer to be in debt of my promise to your request and love in Christ, I have seized the occasion as I could, amid other my very pressing engagements, to write to you somewhat concerning the profession of holy widowhood, forasmuch as, when I was present, you laded me with entreaty, and, when I had not been able to deny you this, you often by letters demanded my promise. And in this work of ours, when you shall find in reading that some things pertain not at all unto your own person, or unto the person of you, who are living together in Christ, nor are strictly necessary to give counsel unto your life, it will be your duty not on this account to judge them superfluous. Forsooth this letter, although it be addressed to you, was not to be written for you alone; but certainly it was a matter for us not to neglect, that it should profit others also through your means. Whatsoever, therefore, you shall find here, such as either hath been at no time necessary for you, or is not so now, and which yet you shall perceive to be necessary for others, grieve not either to possess or to lend to read; that your charity also may be the profit of others.

2. Whereas, therefore, in every question, which relates to life and conduct, not only teaching, but exhortation also is necessary; in order that by teaching we may know what is to be done, and by exhortation may be incited not to think it irksome to do what we already know is to be done; what more can I teach you, than what we read in the Apostle? For holy Scripture setteth a rule to our teaching, that we dare not “be wise more than it behoveth to be wise;” but be wise, as himself saith, “unto soberness, according as unto each God hath allotted the measure of faith.” Be it not therefore for me to teach you any other thing, save to expound to you the words of the Teacher, and to treat of them as the Lord shall have given to me.

3. Therefore (thus) saith the Apostle, the teacher of the Gentiles, the vessel of election, “But I say unto the unmarried and the widows, that it is good for them, if they shall have so continued, even as I also.” These words are to be so understood, as that we think not that widows ought not to be called unmarried, in that they seem to have made trial of marriage: for by the name of unmarried women he means those, who are not now bound by marriage, whether they have been, or whether they have not been so. And this in another place he opens, where he says, “Divided is a woman unmarried and a virgin.” Assuredly when he adds a virgin also, what would he have understood by an unmarried woman, but a widow? Whence also, in

what follows, under the one term “unmarried” he embraces both professions, saying, “She who is unmarried is careful of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord: but she who is married is careful of the things of the world, how to please her husband.” Certainly by the unmarried he would have understood, not only her who hath never married, but her also, who, being by widowhood set free from the bond of marriage, hath ceased to be married; for on this account also he calleth not married, save her, who hath an husband; not her also, who hath had, and hath not. Wherefore every widow is unmarried; but, because not every unmarried woman is a widow, for there are virgins also; therefore he hath here set both, where he says, “But I say unto the unmarried and the widows;” as if he should say, What I say unto the unmarried, I say not unto them alone, who are virgins, but unto them also who are widows; “that it is good for them, if they shall have so continued, even as also I.”

4. Lo, there is your good compared to that good, which the Apostle calls his own, if faith be present: yea, rather, because faith is present. Short is this teaching, yet not on this account to be despised, because it is short; but on this account to be retained the more easily and the more dearly, in that in shortness it is not cheap. For it is not every kind of good soever, which the Apostle would here set forth, which he hath unambiguously placed above the faith of married women. But how great good the faith of married women, that is, of Christian and religious women joined in marriage, hath, may be understood from this, that, when he was giving charge for the avoiding of fornication, wherein assuredly he was addressing married persons also, he saith, “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?” So great then is the good of faithful marriage, that even the very members are (members) of Christ. But, forasmuch as the good of widowed continence is better than this good, the purpose of this profession is, not that a catholic widow be any thing more than a member of Christ, but that she have a better place, than a married woman, among the members of Christ. Forsooth the same Apostle says, “For, as in one body we have many members, but all members have not the same course of action; so being many we are one body in Christ, and each members one of another: having gifts diverse according unto the grace, which hath been given unto us.”

5. Wherefore also when he was advising married persons not to defraud one another of the due of carnal intercourse; lest, by this means, the one of them, (the due of marriage being denied to him,) being through his own incontinence tempted of Satan, should fall away into fornication, he saith, “But this I say of leave, not of command; but I would that all men were as I myself; but each one hath his own proper gift from God; but one in this way, and another in that.” You see that wedded chastity also, and the marriage faith of the Christian bed, is a “gift,” and this of God; so that, when as carnal lust exceeds somewhat the measure of sensual intercourse, beyond what is necessary for the begetting of children, this evil is not of marriage, but venial by reason of the good of marriage. For not concerning marriage, which is contracted for the begetting of children, and the faith of wedded chastity, and the sacrament (indissoluble, so long as both live) of matrimony, all which are good; but concerning that immoderate use of the flesh, which is recognized in the weakness of married persons, and is pardoned by the intervention of the good of marriage, the Apostle saith, “I speak of leave, not of command.” Also, when he says, “The woman is bound, so long as her husband lives: but, in case her husband shall have died, she is set free: let her be married to whom she will, only in the Lord: but she shall be more blessed, if she shall have so continued, according to my counsel;” he shows sufficiently that a faithful woman is blessed in the Lord, even when she marries a second time after the death of her husband, but that a widow is more blessed in the same Lord; that is, to speak not only in the words, but by instances also, of the Scriptures, that Ruth is blessed, but that Anna is more blessed.

6. Wherefore this in the first place you ought to know, that by the good, which you have chosen, second marriages are not condemned, but are set in lower honor. For, even as the good of holy virginity, which thy daughter hath chosen, doth not condemn thy one marriage; so neither doth thy widowhood the second marriage of any. For hence, specially, the heresies of the Cataphryges and of the Novatians swelled, which Tertullian also, inflated with cheeks full of sound not of wisdom, whilst with railing tooth he attacks second marriages, as though unlawful, which the Apostle with sober mind allows to be altogether lawful. From this soundness of doctrine let no man’s reasoning, be he unlearned, or be he learned, move thee; nor do

thou so extol thy own good, as to charge as evil that of another's which is not evil; but do thou rejoice so much the more of thy own good, the more thou seest, that, by it, not only are evils shunned, but some goods too surpassed. For adultery and fornication are evils. But from these unlawful things she is very far removed, who hath bound herself by liberty of vow, and, not by command of law, but by counsel of charity, hath brought to pass that even things lawful should not be lawful to her. And marriage chastity is a good, but widowed continence is a better good. Therefore this better good is honored by the submission of that other, not that other condemned by the praise of this that is better.

7. But whereas the Apostle, when commending the fruit of unmarried men and women, in that they have thought of the things of the Lord, how to please God, added and saith, "But this I say for your profit, not to cast a snare on you," that is, not to force you; "but in order to that which is honorable;" we ought not, because he saith that the good of the unmarried is honorable, therefore to think that the bond of marriage is base; otherwise we shall condemn first marriages also, which neither Cataphryges, nor Novatians, nor their most learned upholder Tertullian dared to call base. But as, when he says, "But I say unto the unmarried and widows, that it is good for them if they shall have so continued;" assuredly he set down "good" for "better," since every thing, which, when compared with a good, is called better, this also without doubt is a good; for what else is it that it is so called better, save that it is more good? and yet we do not on this account suppose him by consequence to have thought that it was an evil, in case they married, in that he said, "it is good for them, if they shall have so continued;" so also, when he says, "but in order to that which is honest," he hath not shown that marriage is base, but that which was honester than (another thing also) honest, he hath commended by the name of honest in general. Because what is honester, save what is more honest? But what is more honest is certainly honest. Forsooth he plainly showed that this is better than that other that is good, where he says, "Whoso giveth to marry, doeth well; but whoso giveth not to marry, doeth better." And this more blessed than that other that is blessed, where he saith, "But she shall be more blessed, if she shall have so continued." As, therefore, there is than good a better, and than blessed a more blessed, so is there than honest an

honester, which he chose to call honest. For far be it that that be base, of which the Apostle Peter speaking saith, “Husbands, unto your wives, as unto the weaker and subject vessel, give honor, as unto co-heirs of grace;” and addressing the wives, he exhorts them, by the pattern of Sarah, to be subject unto their husbands; “For so,” saith he, “certain holy women, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, obeying their own husbands; even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters ye are made, well-doing, and not fearing any disturbance.”

8. Whence, also, what the Apostle Paul said of the unmarried woman, “that she may be holy both in body and spirit;” we are not so to understand, as though a faithful woman being married and chaste, and according to the Scriptures subject unto her husband, be not holy in body, but only in spirit. For it cannot come to pass, that when the spirit is sanctified, the body also be not holy, of which the sanctified spirit maketh use: but, that we seem not to any to argue rather than to prove this by divine saying; since the Apostle Peter, making mention of Sarah, saith only “holy women,” and saith not, “and in body;” let us consider that saying of the same Paul, where forbidding fornication he saith, “Know ye not, that your bodies are members of Christ? Taking, therefore, members of Christ, shall I make them members of an harlot? Far be it.” Therefore let any one dare to say that the members of Christ are not holy; or let him not dare to separate from the members of Christ the bodies of the faithful that are married. Whence, also, a little after he saith, “Your body is the temple within you of the Holy Spirit, Whom ye have from God; and ye are not your own; for ye have been bought with a great price.” He saith that the body of the faithful is both members of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit, wherein assuredly the faithful of both sexes are understood. There therefore are married women, there unmarried women also; but distinct in their deserts, and as members preferred to members, whilst yet neither are separated from the body. Whereas, therefore, he saith, speaking of an unmarried woman, “that she may be holy both in body and spirit,” he would have understood a fuller sanctification both in body and in spirit, and hath not deprived the body of married women of all sanctification.

9. Learn, therefore, that thy good, yea, rather, remember what thou hast learned, that thy good is more praised, because there is another good than which this is better, than if this could not on any other condition be a good, unless that were an evil, or altogether were not. The eyes have great honor in the body, but they would have less, if they were alone, and there were not other members of less honor. In heaven itself the sun by its light surpasses, not chides, the moon; and star from star differs in glory, not is at variance through pride. Therefore, “God made all things, and, lo, very good;” not only “good,” but also “very;” for no other reason, than because “all.” For of each several work throughout it was also said, “God saw that it is good.” But, when “all” were named, “very” was added; and it was said, “God saw all things which He made, and, lo, very good.” For certain several things were better than other several, but all together better than any several. Therefore, may the sound doctrine of Christ make thee in His Body sound through His Grace, that, what thou hast better than others in body and spirit, the self-same thy spirit, which ruleth the body, may neither extol with insolence, nor distinguish with lack of knowledge.

10. Nor, because I called Ruth blessed, Anna more blessed, in that the former married twice, the latter, being soon widowed of her one husband, so lived long, do you straightway also think that you are better than Ruth. Forsooth different in the times of the Prophets was the dispensation of holy females, whom obedience, not lust, forced to marry, for the propagation of the people of God, that in them Prophets of Christ might be sent beforehand; whereas the People itself also, by those things which in figure happened among them, whether in the case of those who knew, or in the case of those who knew not those things, was nothing else than a Prophet of Christ, of whom should be born the Flesh also of Christ. In order therefore for the propagation of that people, he was accounted accursed by sentence of the Law, whoso raised not up seed in Israel. Whence also holy women were kindled, not by lust of sensual intercourse, but by piety of bearing; so that we most rightly believe of them that they would not have sought sensual intercourse, in case a family could have come by any other means. And to the husbands was allowed the use of several wives living; and that the cause of this was not lust of the flesh, but forethought of begetting, is shown by the fact, that, as it was lawful for holy men to have several wives

living, it was not likewise lawful for holy women to have intercourse with several husbands living; in that they would be by so much the baser, by how much the more they sought what would not add to their fruitfulness. Wherefore holy Ruth, not having seed such as at that time was necessary in Israel, on the death of her husband sought another of whom to have it. Therefore than this one twice married, Anna once married a widow was on this account more blessed, in that she attained also to be a prophetess of Christ; concerning whom we are to believe, that, although she had no sons, (which indeed Scripture by keeping silence hath left uncertain,) yet, had she by that Spirit foreseen that Christ would immediately come of a virgin, by Which she was enabled to recognize Him even as a child: whence, with good reason, even without sons, (that is, assuming she had none,) she refused a second marriage: in that she knew that now was the time wherein Christ were better served, not by duty of bearing, but by zeal of containing: not by fruitfulness of married womb, but by chastity of widowed conduct. But if Ruth also was aware that by her flesh was propagated a seed, whereof Christ should hereafter have flesh, and by marrying set forth her ministering to this knowledge, I dare not any longer say that the widowhood of Anna was more blessed than her fruitfulness.

11. But thou who both hast sons, and livest in that end of the world, wherein now is the time not of casting stones, but of gathering; not of embracing, but of abstaining from embracing; when the Apostle cries out, “But this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remains, that both they who have wives be as not having;” assuredly if thou hadst sought a second marriage, it would have been no obedience of prophecy or law, no carnal desire even of family, but a mark of incontinence alone. For you would have done what the Apostle says, after he had said, “It is good for them, if they shall have so continued, even as I;” forsooth he straightway added, “But if they contain not themselves, let them marry; for I had rather that they marry than be burned.” For this he said, in order that the evil of unbridled desire might not be carried headlong into criminal baseness, being taken up by the honest estate of marriage. But thanks be to the Lord, in that thou hast given birth to what thou wouldest not be, and the virginity of thy child hath compensated for the loss of thy virginity. For Christian doctrine, having diligent question made of it, makes answer, that a first marriage also now at this time is to be

despised, unless incontinence stand in the way. For he, who said, “If they contain not themselves, let them marry,” could have said, “If they have not sons, let them marry,” if, when now after theResurrection and Preaching of Christ, there is unto all nations so great and abundant supply of sons to be spiritually begotten, it were any such duty to beget sons after the flesh as it was in the first times. And, whereas in another place he saith, “But I will that the younger marry, bear children, be mothers of families,” he commends with apostolic sobriety and authority the good of marriage, but doth not impose the duty of bearing, as though in order to obey the law, even on those who “receive” the good of continence. Lastly, why he had said this, he unfolds, when he adds and says, “To give no occasion of speaking evil to the adversary; for already certain have turned back after Satan:” that by these words of his we may understand, that those, whom he would have marry, could have done better to contain than marry; but better to marry than to go back after Satan, that is, to fall away from that excellent purpose of virginal or widowed chastity, by looking back to things that are behind, and perish. Wherefore, such as contain not themselves, let them marry before they make profession of continence, before they vow unto God, what, if they pay not, they are justly condemned. Forsooth in another place he saith of such, “For when they have lived in delights in Christ, they wish to marry: having condemnation, in that they have made of none effect their first faith;” that is, they have turned aside their will from the purpose of continence unto marriage. Forsooth they have made of none effect the faith, whereby they formerly vowed what they were unwilling by perseverance to fulfill. Therefore the good of marriage is indeed ever a good: but in the people of God it was at one time an act of obedience unto the law; now it is a remedy for weakness, but in certain a solace of human nature. Forsooth to be engaged in the getting of children, not after the fashion of dogs by promiscuous use of females, but by honest order of marriage, is not an affection such as we are to blame in a man; yet this affection itself the Christian mind, having thoughts of heavenly things, in a more praiseworthy manner surpasses and overcomes.

12. But since, as the Lord saith, “Not all receive this word;” therefore let her who can receive it, receive it; and let her, who containeth not, marry; let her, who hath not begun, deliberate; let her, who hath undertaken it,

persevere; let there be no occasion given unto the adversary, let there be no oblation withdrawn from Christ. Forsooth in the marriage bond if chastity be preserved, condemnation is not feared; but in widowed and virginal continence, the excellence of a greater gift is sought for: and, when this has been sought, and chosen, and by debt of vow offered, from this time not only to enter upon marriage, but, although one be not married, to wish to marry is matter of condemnation. For, in order to show this, the Apostle saith not, "When they shall have lived in delights, in Christ" they marry; but "they wish to marry; having," saith he, "condemnation, in that they have made of none effect their first faith," although not by marrying, yet by wishing; not that the marriages even of such are judged matter of condemnation; but there is condemned a wrong done to purpose, there is condemned a broken faith of vow, there is condemned not a relief by lower good, but a fall from higher good: lastly, such are condemned, not because they have entered upon marriage faith afterwards, but because they have made of none effect the first faith of continence. And in order to suggest this in few words, the Apostle would not say, that they have condemnation, who after purpose of greater sanctity marry, (not because they are not condemned, but lest in them marriage itself should be thought to be condemned:) but, after he had said, "they wish to marry," he straightway added, "having condemnation." And he stated the reason, "in that they have made of none effect their former faith," in order that it may appear that it is the will which fell away from its purpose, which is condemned, whether marriage follow, or fail to follow.

13. Wherefore they who say that the marriages of such are not marriages, but rather adulteries, seem not to me to consider with sufficient acuteness and care what they say; forsooth they, are misled by a semblance of truth. For, whereas they, who of Christian sanctity marry not, are said to choose the marriage of Christ, hence certain argue saying, If she, who during the life of her husband is married to another, be an adulteress, even as the Lord Himself hath laid down in the Gospel; therefore, during the life of Christ, over Whom death hath no more dominion, if she who had chosen His marriage, be married to a man, she is an adulteress. They, who say this, are moved indeed with acuteness, but fail to observe, how great absurdity in fact follows on this reasoning. For whereas it is praiseworthy that, even

during the life of her husband, by his consent, a female vow continence unto Christ, now, according to the reasoning of these persons, no one ought to do this, lest she make Christ Himself, what is impious to imagine, an adulterer, by being married to Him during the life of her husband. Next, whereas first marriages are of better desert than second, far be it that this be the thought of holy widows, that Christ seem unto them as a second husband. For Himself they used heretofore also to have, (when they were subject and did faithful service to their own husbands,) not after the flesh, but after the Spirit a Husband; unto Whom the Church herself, of which they are members, is the wife; who by soundness of faith, of hope, of charity, not in the virgins alone, but in widows also, and faithful married women, is altogether a virgin. Forsooth unto the universal Church, of which they all are members, the Apostle saith, “I joined you unto one husband a chaste virgin to present unto Christ.” But He knoweth how to make fruitful, without marring of chastity, a wife a virgin, Whom even in the flesh itself His Mother could without violation of chastity conceive. But there is brought to pass by means of this ill-considered notion, (whereby they think that the marriages of women who have fallen away from this holy purpose, in case they shall have married, are no marriages,) no small evil, that wives be separated from their husbands, as though they were adulteresses, not wives; and wishing to restore to continence the women thus separated, they make their husbands real adulterers, in that during the life of their wives they have married others.

14. Wherefore I cannot indeed say, of females who have fallen away from a better purpose, in case they shall have married, that they are adulteries, not marriages; but I plainly would not hesitate to say, that departures and fallings away from a holier chastity, which is vowed unto the Lord, are worse than adulteries. For if, what may no way be doubted, it pertains unto an offense against Christ, when a member of Him keepeth not faith to her husband; how much graver offense is it against Him, when unto Himself faith is not kept, in a matter which He requires when offered, Who had not required that it should be offered. For when each fails to render that which, not by force of command, but by advice of counsel, he vowed, by so much the more doth he increase the unrighteousness of the wrong done to his vow, by how much the less necessity he had to vow. These matters I for this

reason treat of, that you may not think either that second marriages are criminal, or that any marriages whatsoever, being marriages, are an evil. Therefore let this be your mind, not that you condemn them, but that you despise them. Therefore the good of widowed chastity is becoming after a brighter fashion, in that in order to make vow and profession of it, females may despise what is both pleasing and lawful. But after profession of vow made they must continue to rein in, and overcome, what is pleasing, because it is no longer lawful.

15. Men are wont to move a question concerning a third or fourth marriage, and even more numerous marriages than this. On which to make answer strictly, I dare neither to condemn any marriage, nor to take from these the shame of their great number. But, lest the brevity of this my answer may chance to displease any, I am prepared to listen to my reprover treating more fully. For perhaps he alleges some reason, why second marriages be not condemned, but third be condemned. For I, as in the beginning of this discourse I gave warning, dare not to be more wise than it behoveth to be wise. For who am I, that I should think that that must be defined which I see that the Apostle hath not defined? For he saith, “A woman is bound, so long as her husband liveth.” He said not, her first; or, second; or, third; or, fourth; but, “A woman,” saith he, “is bound, so long as her husband liveth; but if her husband shall be dead, she is set free; let her be married to whom she will, only in the Lord: but she shall be more blessed, if she shall have so continued.” I know not what can be added to, or taken from, this sentence, so far as relates to this matter. Next I hear Himself also, the Master and Lord of the Apostles and of us, answering the Sadducees, when they had proposed to Him a woman not once-married, or twice-married, but, if it can be said, seven-married, whose wife she should be in the resurrection? For rebuking them, He saith, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they shall neither be married, nor marry wives; for they shall not begin to die, but shall be equal to the Angels of God.” Therefore He made mention of their resurrection, who shall rise again unto life, not who shall rise again unto punishment. Therefore He might have said, Ye do err, knowing not the Scriptures, nor the power of God: for in that resurrection it will not be possible that there be those that were wives of many; and then added, that neither doth any there marry. But

neither, as we see, did He in this sentence show any sign of condemning her who was the wife of so many husbands. Wherefore neither dare I, contrary to the feeling of natural shame, say, that, when her husbands are dead, a woman marry as often as she will; nor dare I, out of my own heart, beside the authority of holy Scripture, condemn any number of marriages whatever. But, what I say to a widow, who hath had one husband, this I say to every widow; you will be more blessed, if you shall have so continued.

16. For that also is no foolish question which is wont to be proposed, that whoso can may say, which widow is to be preferred in desert; whether one who hath had one husband, who, after having lived a considerable time with her husband, being left a widow with sons born to her and alive, hath made profession of continence; or she who as a young woman having lost two husbands within two years, having no children left alive to console her, hath vowed to God continence, and in it hath grown old with most enduring sanctity. Herein let them exercise themselves, if they can, by discussing, and by showing some proof to us, who weigh the merits of widows by number of husbands, not by the strength itself of continence. For, if they shall have said, that she who hath had one husband is to be preferred to her who hath had two; unless they shall have alleged some special reason or authority, they will assuredly be found to set before excellence of soul, not greater excellence of soul, but good fortune of the flesh. Forsooth it pertained unto good fortune of the flesh, both to live a long time with her husband, and to conceive sons. But, if they prefer her not on this account, that she had sons; at any rate the very fact that she lived a long time with her husband, what else was it than good fortune of the flesh? Further, the desert of Anna herself is herein chiefly commended, in that, after she had so soon buried her husband, through her protracted life she long contended with the flesh, and overcame. For so it is written, “And there was Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser; she was far advanced in many days; and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a widow even unto eighty-four years, who used not to depart from the Temple, by fastings and prayers serving day and night.” You see how the holy widow is not only commended in this, that she had had one husband, but also, that she had lived few years with a husband

from her virginity, and had with so great service of piety continued her office of widowed chastity even unto so great age.

17. Let us therefore set before our eyes three widows, each having one of the things, the whole of which were in her: let us suppose one who had had one husband, in whose case is wanting both so great length of widowhood, in that she hath lived long with her husband, and so great zeal of piety, in that she doth not so serve with fasts and prayers: a second, who after the very short life of her former husband, had quickly lost a second also, and is now long time a widow, but yet herself also doth not so set herself to the most religious service of fasts and prayers: a third, who not only hath had two husbands, but also hath lived long with each of them singly, or with one of them, and being left a widow at a later period of life, wherein indeed, in case she had wished to marry, she might also conceive sons, hath taken upon her widowed continence; but is more intent on God, more careful to do always the things that please Him, day and night, like Anna, serving by prayers and fasts. If a question be raised, which of these is to be preferred in deserts, who but must see that in this contest the palm must be given to the greater and, more glowing piety? So also if three others be set, in each of whom are two of those three, but one of the three in each wanting, who can doubt that they will be the better, who shall have in a more excellent manner in their two goods pious humility, in order that there may be lofty piety?

18. No one indeed of these six widows could come up to your standard. For you, in case that you shall have maintained this vow even unto old age, mayest have all the three things wherein the desert of Anna excelled. For both thou hast had one husband, and he lived not long with thee in the flesh; and, by this means, in case that thou shall show forth obedience to the words of the Apostle, saying, “But she who is a widow indeed and desolate, hath hoped in the Lord, and persevereth in prayers night and day,” and with sober watchfulness shall shun what follows, “But she who passes her time in delights, living is dead,” all those three goods, which were Anna’s, shall be thine also. But you have sons also, which haply she had not. And yet you are not on this account to be praised, that you have them, but that you are zealous to nurture and educate them piously. For that they were born to

thee, was of fruitfulness; that they are alive, is of good fortune; that they be so brought up, is of your will and disposal. In the former let men congratulate you, in this let them imitate you. Anna, through prophetic knowledge, recognized Christ with His virgin Mother; thee the grace of the Gospel hath made the mother of a virgin of Christ. Therefore that holy virgin, whom herself willing and seeking it ye have offered unto Christ, hath added something of virginal desert also unto the widowed deserts of her grandmother and mother. For ye who have her, fail not to have something thence; and in her ye are, what in yourselves ye are not. For that holy virginity should be taken from you at your marriage, was on this account brought to pass, in order that she should be born of you.

19. These discussions, therefore, concerning the different deserts of married women, and of different widows, I would not in this work enter upon, if, what I am writing unto you, I were writing only for you. But, since there are in this kind of discourse certain very difficult questions, it was my wish to say something more than what properly relates to you, by reason of certain, who seem not to themselves learned, unless they essay, not by passing judgment to discuss, but by rending to cut in pieces the labors of others: in the next place, that you yourself also may not only keep what you have vowed, and make advance in that good; but also know more carefully and more surely, that this same good of yours is not distinguished from the evil of marriage, but is set before the good of marriage. For let not such, as condemn the marriage of widowed females, although they exercise their continence in abstaining from many things, which you make use of, on this account lead you astray, to think what they think, although you cannot do what they do. For no one would be a madman, although he see that the strength of a madman is greater than of men in their sound senses. Chiefly, therefore, let sound doctrine both adorn and guard goodness of purpose. Forsooth it is from this cause that catholic females, even after that they have been married more than once, are by just judgment preferred, not only to the widows who have had one husband, but also to the virgins of heretics. There are indeed on these three matters, of marriage, widowhood, and virginity, many winding recesses of questions, many perplexities; and in order by discussion to enter deeply into and solve these, there is required both greater care, and a fuller discourse; that either we may have a right

mind in all those things, or, if in any matter we be otherwise minded, this also God may reveal unto us. However, what there also the Apostle saith next after, “Whereunto we have arrived, in that let us walk.” But we have arrived, in what relates to this matter on which we are speaking, so far as to set continence before marriage, but holy virginity even before widowed continence; and not to condemn any marriages, which yet are not adulteries but marriages, by praise of any purpose whatever of our own or of our friends. Many other things on these matters we have said in a Book concerning the Good of Marriage, and in another Book concerning Holy Virginity, and in a Book which we composed with as great pains as we could against Faustus the Manichee; since, by most biting reproaches in his writings of the chaste marriages of Patriarchs and Prophets, he had turned aside the minds of certain unlearned persons from soundness of faith.

20. Wherefore, forasmuch as in the beginning of this little work I had proposed certain two necessary matters, and had undertaken to follow them out; one which related to doctrine, the other to exhortation; and I have not failed in the former part, to the best of my power, according to the business which I had undertaken; let us come to exhortation, in order that the good which is known wisely, may be pursued ardently. And in this matter I give you this advice first, that, how great soever love of pious continence you feel to be in you, you ascribe it to the favor of God, and give Him thanks, Who of His Holy Spirit hath freely given unto you so much, as that, His love being shed abroad in your heart, the love of a better good should take away from you the permission of a lawful matter. For it was His gift to you that you should not wish to marry, when it was lawful, in order that now it should not be lawful, even if you wished; and that by this means the wish not to do it might be the more settled, lest what were now unlawful be done, which was not done even when lawful; and that, a widow of Christ, you should so far attain as to see your daughter also a virgin of Christ; for whilst you are praying as Anna, she hath become what Mary was. These by how much the more you know them to be gifts of God, by so much the more are you by the same gifts blessed; yea, rather, you are not so otherwise than as you know from Whom you have what you have. For listen to what the Apostle said on this matter, “But we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit Which is of God, that we may know what things have

been given to us by God.” Forsooth many have many gifts of God, and by not knowing from Whom they have them, come to boast themselves with impious vanity. But there is no one blessed with the gifts of God, who is ungrateful to the Giver. Forasmuch as, also, whereas in the course of the sacred Mysteries we are bidden to “lift up our hearts,” it is by His help that we are able, by Whose bidding we are admonished; and therefore it follows, that, of this so great good of the heart lifted up, we give not the glory to ourselves as of our own strength, but render thanks unto our Lord God. For of this we are straightway admonished, that “this is meet,” “this is right.” You remember whence these words are taken, you recognize by what sanction , and by how great holiness they are commended within. Therefore hold and have what you have received, and return thanks to the Giver. For, although it be yours to receive and have, yet you have that, which you have received; forasmuch as to one waxing proud, and impiously glorying of that which he had, as though he had it of himself, the Truth saith by the Apostle, “But what hast thou, which thou hast not received? But, if thou hast received, why boastest thou, as if thou hadst not received?”

21. These things I am compelled to admonish by reason of certain little discourses of some men, that are to be shunned and avoided, which have begun to steal through the ears unto the minds of many, being (as must be said with tears) hostile to the grace of Christ, which go to persuade that we count not as necessary for us prayer unto the Lord, that we enter not into temptation. For they so essay to defend the free will of man, as that by it alone, even without help of the grace of God, we are able to fulfill what is commanded us of God. And thus it follows, that the Lord in vain said, “Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation;” and in vain daily in the Lord’s Prayer itself we say, “Lead us not into temptation.” For if it is of our own power alone that we be not overcome by temptation, why do we pray that we enter not, nor be led into it? Rather let us do what is of our own free will, and most absolute power; and let us mock at the Apostle, saying, “God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able;” and let us oppose him, and say, Why seek I of the Lord, what He hath set in my own power? But far be it, that he be so minded, who is sound minded. Wherefore let us seek that He may give, what He bids us that we have. For to this end He bids us have this, which as yet we have not, to admonish as

what to seek; and that when we shall have found the power to do what He hath bidden, we may understand, of this also, whence we have received it; lest, being puffed and lifted up by the spirit of this world, we know not what things have been given unto us of God. Wherefore the free choice of the human will we by no means destroy, when the Grace of God, by which the free choice itself is helped, we deny not with ungrateful pride, but rather set forth with grateful piety. For it is ours to will: but the will itself is both admonished that it may arise, and healed, that it may have power; and enlarged, that it may receive; and filled, that it may have. For were not we to will, certainly neither should we receive the things that are given, nor should we have. For who would have continence, (among the rest of the gifts of God to speak of this rather, of which I am speaking to you,) who, I say, would have continence, unless willing? forasmuch as also no one would receive unless willing. But if you ask, Whose gift it is, that it can be by our will received and had? listen to Scripture; yea, rather, because thou knowest, recollect what thou hast read, “Whereas I knew,” saith he, “that no one can be continent, unless God give it, and this itself was of wisdom, to know whose gift it was.” Great are these two gifts, wisdom and continence; wisdom, forsooth, whereby we are formed in the knowledge of God; but continence, whereby we are not conformed unto this world. But God bids us that we be both wise and continent, without which goods we cannot be just and perfect. But let us pray that He give what He bids, by helping and inspiring, Who hath admonished us what to will by commanding and calling. Whatsoever of this He hath given, let us pray that He preserve; but what He hath not given as yet, let us pray that He supply; yet let us pray and give thanks for what we have received; and for what we have not yet received, from the very fact that we are not ungrateful for what we have received, let us trust that we shall receive it. For He, Who hath given power unto the faithful who are married to contain from adulteries and fornications, Himself hath given unto holy virgins and widows to contain from all sexual intercourse; in the case of which virtue now the term inviolate chastity or continence is properly used. Or is it haply that from Him indeed we have received continence, but from ourselves have wisdom? What then is it that the Apostle James saith, “But if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, Who giveth unto all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given unto him.” But on this question, already in other little works of ours, so far as the Lord hath helped us, we have said many things; and at other times, so far as through Him we shall be able, when opportunity is given, we will speak.

22. Now it has been my wish on this account to say something on this subject, by reason of certain of our brethren most friendly and dear to us, and without willful guilt indeed entangled in this error, but yet entangled; who think, that, when they exhort any to righteousness and piety, their exhortation will not have force, unless the whole of that, wherein they would work upon man that man should work, they set in the power of man, not helped by the grace of God, but put forth by the alone choice of the free will; as though there can be free will to perform a good work, unless set free by the gift of God! And they mark not that this very thing themselves also have by the gift of God, that with such power they exhort, as to excite the dull wills of men to enter upon a good life, to enkindle the cold, to correct such as are in error, to convert such as are turned aside, to pacify such as are opposed. For thus they are able to succeed in persuading what they would persuade to, or if they work not these things in the wills of men, what is their work? wherefore speak they? Let them leave them rather to their own choice. But if in them they work these things, what? I pray, doth man, in the will of man, work so great things by speaking, and doth God work nothing there by helping? Yea rather, with how great soever power of discourse man may prevail, as that by skill of discussion, and sweetness of speech, he in the will of man implant truth, nourish charity, by teaching remove error, by exhortation remove sloth, “Neither he who planteth is any thing, nor he who watereth, but God Who giveth the increase.” For in vain would the workman use all means without, unless the Creator should work secretly within. I hope therefore that this letter of mine by the worthy deed of your Excellence will soon come into the hands of such also; on this account I thought that I ought to say something on this subject. Next that both you yourself, and whatsoever other widows shall read this, or hear it read, may know that you make more advance unto the love and profession of the good of continence by your own prayers than by our exhortations; forasmuch as if it be any help to you that our addresses also are supplied to you, the whole must be assigned to His grace, “in Whose Hand,” as it is written, “are both we and our discourses.”

23. If, therefore, you had not as yet vowed unto God widowed continence, we would assuredly exhort you to vow it; but, in that you have already vowed it, we exhort you to persevere. And yet I see that I must so speak as to lead those also who had as yet thought of marriage to love it and to seize on it. Therefore let us give ear unto the Apostle, “She who is unmarried,” saith he, “is careful about the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit; but she who is married is careful about the things of the world, how to please her husband.” He saith not, is careful about the things of the world, so as not to be holy; but certainly that that marriage holiness is less, in regard of that portion of cares, which hath thought of the pleasure of the world. Whatever, therefore, I of earnest purpose of mind would be expended also on these things whereby she would have to please a husband, the unmarried Christian woman ought in a certain way to gather and bring together unto that earnest purpose whereby she is to please the Lord. And consider, Whom she pleases, who pleases the Lord; and assuredly she is by so much the more blessed by how much the more she pleases Him; but by how much the more her thoughts are of the things of the world, by so much the less does she please Him. Therefore do ye with all earnest purpose please Him, Who is “‘fair of form above the sons of men.” For that ye please Him, it is by His grace which is “shed abroad on His lips.” Please ye Him in that portion of thought also, which would be occupied by the world, in order to please a husband. Please ye Him, Who displeased the world, in order that such as please Him might be set free from the world. For This One, fair of form above the sons of men, men saw on the Cross of the Passion; “and He had not form or beauty, but His face cast down, and His posture unseemly.” Yet from this unseemliness of your Redeemer flowed the price of your beauty, but of a beauty within, for “all the beauty of the King’s daughter is within.” By this beauty please ye Him, this beauty order ye with studious care and anxious thought. He loves not dyes of deceits; the Truth delighteth in things that are true, and He, if you recognize what you have read, is called the Truth. “I am,” saith He, “the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.” Run ye to Him through Him, please ye Him of Him; live ye with Him, in Him, of Him. With true affections and holiest chastity love ye to be loved by such a Husband.

24. Let the inner ear of the virgin also, thy holy child, hear these things. I shall see how far she goes before you in the Kingdom of That King: it is another question. Yet ye have found, mother and daughter, Him, Whom by beauty of chastity ye ought to please together, having despised, she all, you second, marriage. Certainly if there were husbands whom ye had to please, by this time, perhaps, you would feel ashamed to adorn yourself together with your daughter; now let it not shame you, to set yourselves to do what may adorn you both together; because it is not matter of blame, but of glory, that ye be loved both together by That One. But white and red, feigned and laid on with paints, ye would not use, even if ye had husbands; not thinking that they were fit persons for you to deceive, or yourselves such as ought to deceive; now therefore That King, Who had longed for the beauty of His Only Spouse, of Whom ye are members, do ye with all truth together please, together cleave unto; she with virginal chastity, you with widowed continence, both with spiritual beauty. In which beauty also her grandmother, and your mother-in-law, who by this time surely hath grown old, is beautiful together with you. Forsooth whilst charity carries the vigor of this beauty into things that are before, length of years causeth not in it a wrinkle. You have with you a holy aged woman, both in your house and in Christ, whom to consult concerning perseverance; how you are to fight with this or that temptation, what you are to do, that it may be the more easily overcome; what safeguard you are to take, that it may not easily again lay wait; and if there be any thing of this sort, she teaches you, who is now by time fixed, by love a well-wisher, by natural affection full of cares, by age secure. Do you specially, do you in such things consult her, who hath made trial of what you have made trial of. For your child sings that song, which in the Apocalypse none save virgins can sing. But for both of you she prays more carefully than for herself, but she is more full of care for her granddaughter, for whom there remains a longer space of years to overcome temptations; but you she sees nearer to her own age, and mother of a daughter of such an age, as that, had you seen her married, (which now is not lawful, and far be it from her,) I think you would have blushed to bear children together with her. How much then is it that now remains to you of a dangerous age, who are on this account not called a grandmother, in order that together with your daughter you may be fruitful in offspring of holy thoughts and works? Therefore not without reason is the grandmother more

full of care for her, for whom you also the mother; because both what she hath vowed is greater, and the whole of what she hath just now begun remains to her. May the Lord hear her prayers, that ye may holily follow her good deserts, Who in youth gave birth to the flesh of your husband, in old age travaileth with the heart of your daughter. Therefore do ye all, alike and with one accord, by conduct please, by prayers press upon, That One Husband of One Wife, in Whose Body by One Spirit ye are living.

25. The past day returns not hereafter, and after yesterday proceeds to-day, and after to-day will proceed to-morrow; and, lo, all times and the things of time pass away, that there may come the promise that shall abide; and “whoso shall have persevered even unto the end, this one shall be saved.” If the world is now perishing, the married woman, for whom beareth she? Or in heart about to bear, and in flesh not about to bear, why doth she marry? But if the world is still about to last, why is not He more loved, by Whom the world was made? If already enticements of this life are failing, there is not any thing for a Christian soul with desire to seek after; but if they shall yet remain, there is what with holiness he may despise. For the one of these two there is no hope of lust, in the other greater glory of charity. How many or how long are the very years, in which the flower of carnal age seems to flourish? Some females having thoughts of marriage, and with ardor wishing it, whilst they are being despised or put off, on a sudden have grown old, so as that now they would feel shame, rather than desire, to marry. But many having married, their husbands having set out into distant countries very soon after their union, have grown aged expecting their return, and, as though soon left widows, at times have not even attained so as at least as old women to receive their old men on their return. If therefore, when betrothed bridegrooms despised or delayed, or when husbands were abroad, carnal desire could be restrained from commission of fornication or adultery, why cannot it be restrained from commission of sacrilege? If it hath been repressed, when being deferred it was glowing, why is it not put down, when having been cut off it had grown cold? For they in greater measure endure glowing of desire, who despair not of the pleasure of the same desire. But whoso of unmarried persons vow chastity to God, withdraw that very hope, which is the fuel of love. Hence with more ease is desire bridled, which is kindled by no expectation; and yet,

unless against this prayer be made, in order to overcome it, itself as unlawful is the more ardently wished for.

26. Therefore let spiritual delights succeed to the place of carnal delights in holy chastity; reading, prayer, psalm, good thought, frequency in good works, hope of the world to come, and a heart upward; and for all these giving of thanks unto the Father of lights, from Whom, without any doubt, every good gift, and every perfect gift, as Scripture bears witness, cometh down. For when, in stead of the delights of married women, which they have in the flesh of their husbands, the use of other carnal delights is taken, as it were to solace them, why should I speak of the evils which follow, when the Apostle hath said in short, that the widow, who lives in delights, living is dead. But far be it from you, that ye be taken with lust of riches instead of lust of marriage, or that in your hearts money succeed to the place of love of a husband. For looking into men's conversation, we have often found by experience, that in certain persons, when wantonness hath been restrained, avarice hath increased. For, as, in the senses themselves of the body, they who see not hear more keenly, and discern many things by touch, nor have such as have the use of their eyes so great life in their touch; and in this instance it is understood that, when the exertion of the power of attention hath been restrained in one approach, that is, of the eyes, it puts itself forth into other senses, more ready with keenness to distinguish, as though it essayed to supply from the one what was denied in the other; thus also often carnal lust, being restrained from pleasure of sensual intercourse, with greater strength reaches itself forth to desire money, and when turned away from the one, turns itself with more glow of passion to the other. But in you let the love of riches grow cold together with the love of marriage, and let a pious use of what property you possess be directed to spiritual delights, that your liberality wax warm rather in helping such as are in want than in enriching covetous persons. Forsooth into the heavenly treasury are sent not gifts to the covetous, but alms to the needy, which above measure help the prayers of widows. Fastings, also, and watchings, so far as they disturb not health, if they be spent in praying, singing psalms, reading, and meditating in the Law of God, even the very things which seem laborious are turned into spiritual delights. For no way burdensome are the labors of such as love, but even of themselves delight,

as of such as hunt, fowl, fish, gather grapes, traffic, delight themselves with some game. It matters therefore what be loved. For, in the case of what is loved, either there is no labor, or the labor also is loved. And consider how it should be matter for shame and grief, if there be pleasure in labor, to take a wild beast, to fill cask and purse, to cast a ball, and there be no pleasure in labors to win God!

27. Indeed in all spiritual delights, which unmarried women enjoy, their holy conversation ought also to be with caution; lest haply, though their life be not evil through haughtiness, their report be evil through negligence. Nor are they to be listened to, whether they be holy men or women, when (upon occasion of their neglect in some matter being blamed, through which it comes to pass that they fall into evil suspicion, from which they know that their life is far removed) they say that it is enough for them their conscience before God, despising what men think of them, not only imprudently but also cruelly; when they slay the souls of others; whether of such as blaspheme the way of God, who following their suspicion are displeased at what is the chaste life of the Saints, as though it were shameful, or of such also as make excuse, and imitate, not what they see, but what they think. Wherefore whosoever guards his life from charges of shameful and evil deeds, does good to himself; but whosoever guards his character too, is merciful also towards others. For unto ourselves our own life is necessary, unto others our character; and certainly even what we mercifully minister unto others, for their health, abounds also to our own profit. Whence not in vain the Apostle, “We provide good things,” saith he, “not only before God, but also before men;” also he saith, “Please ye all men through all things; even as I also please all men through all things, not seeking what is of profit unto myself, but what unto many, that they may be saved.” Also in a certain exhortation he says, “For the rest, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are most dear, whatsoever things are of good report; if any virtue, if any praise, these things think on, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me.” You see how among many things, unto which by exhortation he admonished them, he neglected not to set, “whatsoever things are of good report;” and in two words included all things, where he saith, “if any virtue, if any praise.” For unto

virtue pertain the good things of which He made mention above; but good report unto praise. I think that the Apostle took not the praise of men for any great thing, saying in another place, “But to me it is the least thing, that I be judged of you, or of day of man;” and in another place, “If I were pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ;” and again, “For our glory is this, the testimony of our conscience.” But of these two, that is, of a good life, and a good report, or as is said more shortly, of virtue and praise, the one for his own sake he most wisely kept, the other for the sake of others he most mercifully provided. But, forasmuch as human caution, how great soever, cannot on every side avoid most malevolent suspicions, when for our good report we shall have done whatever we rightly can, if any, either by falsely pretending evil things of us, or from believing evil of us, endeavor to stain our fair fame, let there be present the solace of conscience, and clearly also the joy, in that our reward is great in Heaven, even when men say many evil things of us, and we yet live godly and righteously. For that reward is as the pay of such as serve as soldiers, through the arms of righteousness, not only on the right hand, but on the left also; that is to say, through glory and mean estate, through ill report and good report.

28. Go on therefore in your course, and run with perseverance, in order that ye may obtain; and by pattern of life, and discourse of exhortation, carry away with you into this same your course, whomsoever ye shall have had power. Let there not bend you from this earnest purpose, whereby ye excite many to follow, the complaint of vain persons, who say, How shall the human race subsist, if all shall have been continent? As though it were for any other reason that this world is delayed, save that the predestined number of the Saints be fulfilled, and were this the sooner fulfilled, assuredly the end of the world would not be put off. Nor let it stay you from your earnest purpose of persuading others to the same good ye have, if it be said to you, Whereas marriage also is good, how shall there be all goods in the Body of Christ, both the greater, forsooth, and the lesser, if all through praise and love of continence imitate? In the first place, because with the endeavor that all be continent, there will still be but few, for “not all receive this word.” But forasmuch as it is written, “Whoso can receive, let him receive;” then do they receive who can, when silence is not kept even

toward those who cannot. Next, neither ought we to fear lest haply all receive it, and some one of lesser goods, that is, married life, be wanting in the body of Christ. For if all shall have heard, and all shall have received, we ought to understand that this very thing was predestinated, that married goods already suffice in the number of those members which so many have passed out of this life. For neither now, if all shall have been continent, will they give the honor of the continent to those who have already borne into the garners of the Lord the fruit thirty-fold, if that be understood of married good. Therefore all these goods will have there their place, although from this time no woman wish to be married, no man wish to marry a wife. Therefore without anxiety urge on whom ye can, to become what ye are; and pray with watchfulness and fervor, that by the help of the Right Hand of the Most High, and by the abundance of the most merciful grace of the Lord, ye may both persevere in that which ye are, and may make advances unto that which ye shall be.

29. Next I entreat you, by Him, from Whom ye have both received this gift, and hope for the rewards of this gift, that ye be mindful to set me also in your prayers with all your household Church. Forsooth it hath come to pass in most proper order, that I should write unto your Mother now aged a letter concerning prayer; unto her, forsooth, it chiefly pertains by praying to contend on your behalf, who is less full of care for herself than for you; and that for you rather than for her I should compose this little work concerning widowed continence; because unto you it remaineth to overcome, what her age hath already overcome. But the holy virgin your child, if she desire aught concerning her profession from our labors, she hath a large book on Holy Virginity to read. Concerning the reading of which I had also admonished you, forasmuch as it contains many things necessary unto either chastity, that is, virginal and widowed, which things on this account I have here partly touched on lightly, partly altogether passed over, because I there discussed them more fully.

May you persevere in the grace of Christ.

ON THE GOOD OF MARRIAGE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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DE BONO CONJUGALI.

TRANSLATED BY REV. C. L. CORNISH, M.A., OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

This treatise, and the following, were written against somewhat that still remained of the heresy of Jovinian. S. Aug. mentions this error in b. ii. c. 23, de Nuptiis et Conc. “Jovinianus,” he says, “who a few years since tried to found a new heresy, said that the Catholics favored the Manichaeans, because in opposition to him they preferred holy Virginity to Marriage.” And in his book on Heresies, c. 82. “That heresy took its rise from one Jovinianus, a Monk, in our own time, when we were yet young.” And he adds that it was soon overborne and extinguished, say about A.D. 390, having been condemned first at Rome, then at Milan. There are letters of Pope Siricius on the subject to the Church of Milan, and the answer sent him by the Synod of Milan, at which St. Ambrose presided. Jerome had refuted Jovinian, but was said to have attempted the defense of the excellency of the virgin state, at the expense of condemning marriage. That Augustin might not be subject to any such complaint or calumny, before speaking of the superiority of Virginity, he thought it well to write on the Good of Marriage.

This work we learn to have been finished about the year 401, not only from the order of his Retractations, but also from his books on Genesis after the Letter, begun about that year. For in b. ix. on Genesis, c. 7, where he commends the Good of Marriage, he says: “Now this is threefold, faithfulness, offspring, and the Sacrament. For faithfulness, it is observed, that there be no lying with other man or woman, out of the bond of wedlock: for the offspring, that it be lovingly welcomed, kindly nourished, religiously brought up: for the Sacrament, that marriage be not severed, and that man or woman divorced be not joined to another even for the sake of offspring. This is as it were the rule of Marriages by which rule either fruitfulness is made seemly, or the perverseness of incontinence is brought to order. Upon which since we have sufficiently discoursed in that book, which we lately published, on the Good of Marriage, where we have also distinguished the Widow's continence and the Virgin's excellency, according to the worthiness of their degrees, our pen is not to be now longer occupied." This very work is referred to in Book I. on the Deserts and Remission of Sins, c. 29.—Bened. Ed.

NOTICE.

The Editors are, of course, aware of the danger there is in reading a treatise like the following in a spirit of idle curiosity, and they beg any reader who has not well assured himself that his aim is right and holy to abstain from perusing it. At the same time it must not be forgotten, that something far other than a mere shrinking from subjects offensive to modern delicacy is needed, in order to purify the thoughts with respect to the holy estate of Matrimony. The mind that will but seriously attend to it in that light, will certainly be strengthened against evil suggestions by seeing in the whole subject a field of Christian duty.

It seemed further requisite to bring forward a work calculated to remove the imputation so falsely cast on the holy Fathers, that they regarded Matrimony as unholy, and almost agreed with the Manichean view of it, as a defilement and degradation to the Christian. They did, it is true, prefer Virginity to Marriage, but as St. Augustin expressly states, as the "better of two good things," not as though one were good, and the other evil.

In estimating the work and the writer, the age in which it was written must be kept in view, and what that age required must not be imputed as a fault to him or to his religion. And perhaps what was written for another age may serve the more safely towards our improvement and guidance from the very circumstance that the style and manner of antiquity has become a kind of veil, which takes off somewhat from the strength and vividness of first impressions, and leaves the mind more at liberty to use what is laid before it as it will, than a more modern way of speaking would be likely to do. Let that liberty be used rightly and conscientiously, and the effect of reading will be good.—Eds. of the Oxford Library.

1. Forasmuch as each man is a part of the human race, and human nature is something social, and hath for a great and natural good, the power also of friendship; on this account God willed to create all men out of one, in order that they might be held in their society not only by likeness of kind, but also by bond of kindred. Therefore the first natural bond of human society is man and wife. Nor did God create these each by himself, and join them together as alien by birth: but He created the one out of the other, setting a sign also of the power of the union in the side, whence she was drawn, was formed. For they are joined one to another side by side, who walk together, and look together whither they walk. Then follows the connexion of fellowship in children, which is the one alone worthy fruit, not of the union of male and female, but of the sexual intercourse. For it were possible that there should exist in either sex, even without such intercourse, a certain friendly and true union of the one ruling, and the other obeying.

2. Nor is it now necessary that we enquire, and put forth a definite opinion on that question, whence could exist the progeny of the first men, whom God had blessed, saying, “Increase, and be ye multiplied, and fill the earth;” if they had not sinned, whereas their bodies by sinning deserved the condition of death, and there can be no sexual intercourse save of mortal bodies. For there have existed several and different opinions on this matter; and if we must examine, which of them be rather agreeable to the truth of Divine Scriptures, there is matter for a lengthened discussion. Whether, therefore, without intercourse, in some other way, had they not sinned, they would have had sons, from the gift of the Almighty Creator, Who was able to create themselves also without parents, Who was able to form the Flesh of Christ in a virgin womb, and (to speak even to unbelievers themselves) Who was able to bestow on bees a progeny without sexual intercourse; or whether many things there were spoken by way of mystery and figure, and we are to understand in another sense what is written, “Fill the earth, and rule over it;” that is, that it should come to pass by fullness and perfection

of life and power, so that the very increase and multiplication, whereby it is said, “Increase, and be ye multiplied,” be understood to be by advance of mind, and abundance of virtue, as it is set in the Psalm, “Thou shall multiply me in my soul by virtue;” and that succession of progeny was not given unto man, save after that, by reason of sin, there was to be hereafter departure in death: or whether the body was not made spiritual in the case of these men, but at the first animal, in order that by merit of obedience it might after become spiritual, to lay hold of immortality, not after death, which by the malice of the devil entered into the world, and was made the punishment of sin; but after that change, which the Apostle signifies, when he says, “Then we living, who remain, together with them, shall be caught up in the clouds, to meet Christ, into the air,” that we may understand both that those bodies of the first pair were mortal, in the first forming, and yet that they would not have died, had they not sinned, as God had threatened: even as if He should threaten a wound, in that the body was capable of wounds; which yet would not have happened, unless what He had forbidden were done. Thus, therefore, even through sexual intercourse there might take place generations of such bodies, as up to a certain point should have increase, and yet should not pass into old age; or even into old age, and yet not into death; until the earth were filled with that multiplication of the blessing. For if to the garments of the Israelites God granted their proper state without any wearing away during forty years, how much more would He grant unto the bodies of such as obeyed His command a certain most happy temperament of sure state, until they should be changed for the better, not by death of the man, whereby the body is abandoned by the soul, but by a blessed change from mortality to immortality, from an animal to a spiritual quality. Of these opinions which be true, or whether some other or others yet may be formed out of these words, were a long matter to enquire and discuss.

3. This we now say, that, according to this condition of being born and dying, which we know, and in which we have been created, the marriage of male and female is some good; the compact whereof divine Scripture so commends, as that neither is it allowed one put away by her husband to marry, so long as her husband lives: nor is it allowed one put away by his wife to marry another, unless she who have separated from him be dead.

Therefore, concerning the good of marriage, which the Lord also confirmed in the Gospel, not only in that He forbade to put away a wife, save because of fornication, but also in that He came by invitation to a marriage, there is good ground to inquire for what reason it be a good. And this seems not to me to be merely on account of the begetting of children, but also on account of the natural society itself in a difference of sex. Otherwise it would not any longer be called marriage in the case of old persons, especially if either they had lost sons, or had given birth to none. But now in good, although aged, marriage, albeit there hath withered away the glow of full age between male and female, yet there lives in full vigor the order of charity between husband and wife: because, the better they are, the earlier they have begun by mutual consent to contain from sexual intercourse with each other: not that it should be matter of necessity afterwards not to have power to do what they would, but that it should be matter of praise to have been unwilling at the first, to do what they had power to do. If therefore there be kept good faith of honor, and of services mutually due from either sex, although the members of either be languishing and almost corpse-like, yet of souls duly joined together, the chastity continues, the purer by how much it is the more proved, the safer, by how much it is the calmer. Marriages have this good also, that carnal or youthful incontinence, although it be faulty, is brought unto an honest use in the begetting of children, in order that out of the evil of lust the marriage union may bring to pass some good. Next, in that the lust of the flesh is repressed, and rages in a way more modestly, being tempered by parental affection. For there is interposed a certain gravity of glowing pleasure, when in that wherein husband and wife cleave to one another, they have in mind that they be father and mother.

4. There is this further, that in that very debt which married persons pay one to another, even if they demand it with somewhat too great intemperance and incontinence, yet they owe faith alike one to another. Unto which faith the Apostle allows so great right, as to call it “power,” saying, “The woman hath not power of her own body, but the man; again in like manner also the man hath not power of his own body, but the woman.” But the violation of this faith is called adultery, when either by instigation of one’s own lust, or by consent of lust of another, there is sexual intercourse on either side with another against the marriage compact: and thus faith is broken, which, even

in things that are of the body, and mean, is a great good of the soul: and therefore it is certain that it ought to be preferred even to the health of the body, wherein even this life of ours is contained. For, although a little chaff in comparison of much gold is almost nothing; yet faith, when it is kept pure in a matter of chaff, as in gold, is not therefore less because it is kept in a lesser matter. But when faith is employed to commit sin, it were strange that we should have to call it faith; however of what kind soever it be, if also the deed be done against it, it is the worse done; save when it is on this account abandoned, that there may be a return unto true and lawful faith, that is, that sin may be amended, by correction of perverseness of the will. As if any, being unable alone to rob a man, should find a partner in his iniquity, and make an agreement with him to do it together, and to divide the spoil; and, after the crime hath been committed, should take off the whole to himself alone. That other grieves and complains that faith hath not been kept with him, but in his very complaint he ought to consider, that he himself rather ought to have kept faith with human society in a good life, and not to make unjust spoil of a man, if he feels with how great injustice it hath failed to be kept with himself in a fellowship of sin. Forsooth the former, being faithless in both instances, must assuredly be judged the more wicked. But, if he had been displeased at what they had done ill, and had been on this account unwilling to divide the spoil with his partner in crime, in order that it might be restored to the man, from whom it had been taken, not even a faithless man would call him faithless. Thus a woman, if, having broken her marriage faith, she keep faith with her adulterer, is certainly evil: but, if not even with her adulterer, worse. Further, if she repent her of her sin, and returning to marriage chastity, renounce all adulterous compacts and resolutions, I count it strange if even the adulterer himself will think her one who breaks faith.

5. Also the question is wont to be asked, when a male and female, neither the one the husband, nor the other the wife, of any other, come together, not for the begetting of children, but, by reason of incontinence, for the mere sexual intercourse, there being between them this faith, that neither he do it with any other woman, nor she with any other man, whether it is to be called marriage. And perhaps this may, not without reason, be called marriage, if it shall be the resolution of both parties until the death of one,

and if the begetting of children, although they came not together for that cause, yet they shun not, so as either to be unwilling to have children born to them, or even by some evil work to use means that they be not born. But, if either both, or one, of these be wanting, I find not how we can call it marriage. For, if a man should take unto him any one for a time, until he find another worthy either of his honors or of his means, to marry as his compeer; in his soul itself he is an adulterer, and that not with her whom he is desirous of finding, but with her, with whom he so lies, as not to have with her the partnership of a husband. Whence she also herself, knowing and willing this, certainly acts unchastely in having intercourse with him, with whom she has not the compact of a wife. However, if she keep to him faith of bed, and after he shall have married, have no thought of marriage herself, and prepare to contain herself altogether from any such work, perhaps I should not dare lightly to call her an adulteress; but who shall say that she sins not, when he is aware that she has intercourse with a man, not being his wife? But further, if from that intercourse, so far as pertains to herself, she has no wish but for sons, and suffers unwilling whatever she suffers beyond the cause of begetting; there are many matrons to whom she is to be preferred; who, although they are not adulteresses, yet force their husbands, for the most part also wishing to exercise continence, to pay the due of the flesh, not through desire of children, but through glow of lust making an intemperate use of their very right; in whose marriages, however, this very thing, that they are married, is a good. For for this purpose are they married, that the lust being brought under a lawful bond, should not float at large without form and loose; having of itself weakness of flesh that cannot be curbed, but of marriage fellowship of faith that cannot be dissolved; of itself encroachment of immoderate intercourse, of marriage a way of chastely begetting. For, although it be shameful to wish to use a husband for purposes of lust, yet it is honorable to be unwilling to have intercourse save with an husband, and not to give birth to children save from a husband. There are also men incontinent to that degree, that they spare not their wives even when pregnant. Therefore whatever that is immodest, shameless, base, married persons do one with another, is the sin of the persons, not the fault of marriage.

6. Further, in the very case of the more immoderate requirement of the due of the flesh, which the Apostle enjoins not on them by way of command, but allows to them by way of leave, that they have intercourse also beside the cause of begetting children; although evil habits impel them to such intercourse, yet marriage guards them from adultery or fornication. For neither is that committed because of marriage, but is pardoned because of marriage. Therefore married persons owe one another not only the faith of their sexual intercourse itself, for the begetting of children, which is the first fellowship of the human kind in this mortal state; but also, in a way, a mutual service of sustaining one another's weakness, in order to shun unlawful intercourse: so that, although perpetual continence be pleasing to one of them, he may not, save with consent of the other. For thus far also, "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the man: in like manner also the man hath not power of his own body, but the woman." That that also, which, not for the begetting of children, but for weakness and incontinence, either he seeks of marriage, or she of her husband, they deny not the one or the other; lest by this they fall into damnable seductions, through temptation of Satan, by reason of incontinence either of both, or of whichever of them. For intercourse of marriage for the sake of begetting hath not fault; but for the satisfying of lust, but yet with husband or wife, by reason of the faith of the bed, it hath venial fault: but adultery or fornication hath deadly fault, and, through this, continence from all intercourse is indeed better even than the intercourse of marriage itself, which takes place for the sake of begetting. But because that Continence is of larger desert, but to pay the due of marriage is no crime, but to demand it beyond the necessity of begetting is a venial fault, but to commit fornication or adultery is a crime to be punished; charity of the married ought to beware, lest whilst it seek for itself occasion of larger honor, it do that for its partner which cause condemnation. "For whosoever putteth away his wife, except for the cause of fornication, maketh her to commit adultery." To such a degree is that marriage compact entered upon a matter of a certain sacrament, that it is not made void even by separation itself, since, so long as her husband lives, even by whom she hath been left, she commits adultery, in case she be married to another: and he who hath left her, is the cause of this evil.

7. But I marvel, if, as it is allowed to put away a wife who is an adulteress, so it be allowed, having put her away, to marry another. For holy Scripture causes a hard knot in this matter, in that the Apostle says, that, by commandment of the Lord, the wife ought not to depart from her husband, but, in case she shall have departed, to remain unmarried, or to be reconciled to her husband; whereas surely she ought not to depart and remain unmarried, save from an husband that is an adulterer, lest by withdrawing from him, who is not an adulterer, she cause him to commit adultery. But perhaps she may justly be reconciled to her husband, either he being to be borne with, if she cannot contain herself, or being now corrected. But I see not how the man can have permission to marry another, in case he have left an adulteress, when a woman has not to be married to another, in case she have left an adulterer. And, this being the case, so strong is that bond of fellowship in married persons, that, although it be tied for the sake f begetting children, not even for the sake of begetting children is it loosed. For it is in a man's power to put away a wife that is barren, and marry one of whom to have children. And yet it is not allowed; and now indeed in our times, and after the usage of Rome, neither to marry in addition, so as to have more than one wife living: and, surely, in case of an adulteress or adulterer being left, it would be possible that more men should be born, if either the woman were married to another, or the man should marry another. And yet, if this be not lawful, as the Divine Rule seems to prescribe, who is there but it must make him attentive to learn, what is the meaning of this so great strength of the marriage bond? Which I by no means think could have been of so great avail, were it not that there were taken a certain sacrament of some greater matter from out this weak mortal state of men, so that, men deserting it, and seeking to dissolve it, it should remain unshaken for their punishment. Seeing that the compact of marriage is not done away by divorce intervening; so that they continue wedded persons one to another, even after separation; and commit adultery with those, with whom they shall be joined, even after their own divorce, either the woman with a man, or the man with a woman. And yet, save in the City of our God, in His Holy Mount, the case is not such with the wife. But, that the laws of the Gentiles are otherwise, who is there that knows not; where, by the interposition of divorce, without any offense of which man takes cognizance, both the woman is married to whom she will, and the man

marries whom he will. And something like this custom, on account of the hardness of the Israelites, Moses seems to have allowed, concerning a bill of divorcement. In which matter there appears rather a rebuke, than an approval, of divorce.

8. “Honorable,” therefore, “is marriage in all, and the bed undefiled.” And this we do not so call a good, as that it is a good in comparison of fornication: otherwise there will be two evils, of which the second is worse: or fornication will also be a good, because adultery is worse: for it is worse to violate the marriage of another, than to cleave unto an harlot: and adultery will be a good, because incest is worse; for it is worse to lie with a mother than with the wife of another: and, until we arrive at those things, which, as the Apostle saith, “it is a shame even to speak of,” all will be good in comparison of what are worse. But who can doubt that this is false? Therefore marriage and fornication are not two evils, whereof the second is worse: but marriage and continence are two goods, whereof the second is better, even as this temporal health and sickness are not two evils, whereof the second is worse; but that health and immortality are two goods, whereof the second is better. Also knowledge and vanity are not two evils, whereof vanity is the worse: but knowledge and charity are two goods, whereof charity is the better. For “knowledge shall be destroyed,” saith the Apostle: and yet it is necessary for this time: but “charity shall never fail.” Thus also this mortal begetting, on account of which marriage takes place, shall be destroyed: but freedom from all sexual intercourse is both angelic exercise here, and continueth for ever. But as the repasts of the Just are better than the fasts of the sacrilegious, so the marriage of the faithful is to be set before the virginity of the impious. However neither in that case is repast preferred to fasting, but righteousness to sacrilege; nor in this, marriage to virginity, but faith to impiety. For for this end the righteous, when need is, take their repast, that, as good masters, they may give to their slaves, i.e., their bodies, what is just and fair: but for this end the sacrilegious fast, that they may serve devils. Thus for this end the faithful are married, that they may be chastely joined unto husbands, but for this end the impious are virgins, that they may commit fornication away from the true God. As, therefore, that was good, which Martha was doing, being engaged in the ministering unto the Saints, but that better, which Mary, her sister, sitting at

the feet of the Lord, and hearing His word; thus we praise the good of Susanna in married chastity, but yet we set before her the good of the widow Anna, and, much more, of the Virgin Mary. It was good that they were doing, who of their substance were ministering necessaries unto Christ and His disciples: but better, who left all their substance, that they might be freer to follow the same Lord. But in both these cases of good, whether what these, or whether what Martha and Mary were doing, the better could not be done, unless the other had been passed over or left. Whence we are to understand, that we are not, on this account, to think marriage an evil, because, unless there be abstinence from it, widowed chastity, or virgin purity, cannot be had. For neither on this account was what Martha was doing evil, because, unless her sister abstained from it, she could not do what was better: nor on this account is it evil to receive a just man or a prophet into one's house, because he, who wills to follow Christ unto perfection, ought not even to have a house, in order to do what is better.

9. Truly we must consider, that God gives us some goods, which are to be sought for their own sake, such as wisdom, health, friendship: but others, which are necessary for the sake of somewhat, such as learning, meat, drink, sleep, marriage, sexual intercourse. For of these certain are necessary for the sake of wisdom, as learning: certain for the sake of health, as meat and drink and sleep: certain for the sake of friendship, as marriage or sexual intercourse: for hence subsists the propagation of the human kind, wherein friendly fellowship is a great good. These goods, therefore, which are necessary for the sake of something else, whoso useth not for this purpose, wherefore they were instituted, sins; in some cases venially, in other cases damnably. But whoso useth them for this purpose, wherefore they were given doeth well. Therefore, to whomsoever they are not necessary, if he use them not, he doeth better. Wherefore, these goods, when we have need, we do well to wish; but we do better not to wish than to wish: because ourselves are in a better state, when we account them not necessary. And on this account it is good to marry, because it is good to beget children, to be a mother of a family: but it is better not to marry, because it is better not to stand in need of this work, in order to human fellowship itself. For such is the state of the human race now, that (others, who contain not, not only being taken up with marriage, but many also waxing wanton through

unlawful concubinages, the Good Creator working what is good out of their evils) there fails not numerous progeny, and abundant succession, out of which to procure holy friendships. Whence we gather, that, in the first times of the human race, chiefly for the propagation of the People of God, through whom the Prince and Saviour of all people should both be prophesied of, and be born, it was the duty of the Saints to use this good of marriage, not as to be sought for its own sake, but necessary for the sake of something else: but now, whereas, in order to enter upon holy and pure fellowship, there is on all sides from out all nations an overflowing fullness of spiritual kindred, even they who wish to contract marriage only for the sake of children, are to be admonished, that they use rather the larger good of continence.

10. But I am aware of some that murmur: What, say they, if all men should abstain from all sexual intercourse, whence will the human race exist? Would that all would this, only in “charity out of a pure heart, and good conscience, and faith unfeigned;” much more speedily would the City of God be filled, and the end of the world hastened. For what else doth the Apostle, as is manifest, exhort to, when he saith, speaking on this head, “I would that all were as myself;” or in that passage, “But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remains that both they who have wives, be as though not having: and they who weep, as though not weeping: and they who rejoice, as though not rejoicing: and they who buy, as though not buying: and they who use this world as though they use it not. For the form of this world passeth by. I would have you without care.” Then he adds, “Whoso is without a wife thinks of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord: but whoso is joined in marriage, thinks of the things of the world, how to please his wife: and a woman that is unmarried and a virgin is different: she that is unmarried is anxious about the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit: but she that is married, is anxious about the things of the world, how to please her husband.” Whence it seems to me, that at this time, those only, who contain not, ought to marry, according to that sentence of the same Apostle, “But if they contain not, let them be married: for it is better to be married than to burn.”

11. And yet not to these themselves is marriage a sin; which, if it were chosen in comparison of fornication, would be a less sin than fornication, and yet would be a sin. But now what shall we say against the most plain speech of the Apostle, saying, “Let her do what she will; she sinneth not, if she be married;” and, “If thou shalt have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned: and, if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not.” Hence surely it is not lawful now to doubt that marriage is no sin. Therefore the Apostle alloweth not marriage as matter “of pardon:” for who can doubt that it is extremely absurd to say, that they have not sinned, unto whom “pardon” is granted. But he allows, as matter of “pardon,” that sexual intercourse, which takes place through incontinence, not alone for the begetting of children, and, at times, not at all for the begetting of children; and it is not that marriage forces this to take place, but that it procures pardon for it; provided however it be not so in excess as to hinder what ought to be set aside as seasons of prayer, nor be changed into that use which is against nature, on which the Apostle could not be silent, when speaking of the excessive corruptions of unclean and impious men. For necessary sexual intercourse for begetting is free from blame, and itself is alone worthy of marriage. But that which goes beyond this necessity, no longer follows reason, but lust. And yet it pertains to the character of marriage, not to exact this, but to yield it to the partner, lest by fornication the other sin damnably. But, if both are set under such lust, they do what is plainly not matter of marriage. However, if in their intercourse they love what is honest more than what is dishonest, that is, what is matter of marriage more than what is not matter of marriage, this is allowed to them on the authority of the Apostle as matter of pardon: and for this fault, they have in their marriage, not what sets them on to commit it, but what entreats pardon for it, if they turn not away from them the mercy of God, either by not abstaining on certain days, that they may be free to pray, and through this abstinence, as through fasting, may commend their prayers; or by changing the natural use into that which is against nature, which is more damnable when it is done in the case of husband or wife.

12. For, whereas that natural use, when it pass beyond the compact of marriage, that is, beyond the necessity of begetting, is pardonable in the case of a wife, damnable in the case of an harlot; that which is against

nature is execrable when done in the case of an harlot, but more execrable in the case of a wife. Of so great power is the ordinance of the Creator, and the order of Creation, that, in matters allowed us to use, even when the due measure is exceeded, it is far more tolerable, than, in what are not allowed, either a single, or rare excess. And, therefore, in a matter allowed, want of moderation, in a husband or wife, is to be borne with, in order that lust break not forth into a matter that is not allowed. Hence is it also that he sins far less, who is ever so unceasing in approaches to his wife, than he who approaches ever so seldom to commit fornication. But, when the man shall wish to use the member of the wife not allowed for this purpose, the wife is more shameful, if she suffer it to take place in her own case, than if in the case of another woman. Therefore the ornament of marriage is chastity of begetting, and faith of yielding the due of the flesh: this is the work of marriage, this the Apostle defends from every charge, in saying, “Both if thou shall have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned: and if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not:” and, “Let her do what she will: she sinneth not if she be married.” But an advance beyond moderation in demanding the due of either sex, for the reasons which I have stated above, is allowed to married persons as matter of pardon.

13. What therefore he says, “She, that is unmarried, thinketh of the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit;” we are not to take in such sense, as to think that a chaste Christian wife is not holy in body. Forsooth unto all the faithful it was said, “Know ye not that your bodies are a temple of the Holy Ghost within you, Whom ye have from God?” Therefore the bodies also of the married are holy, so long as they keep faith to one another and to God. And that this sanctity of either of them, even an unbelieving partner does not stand in the way of, but rather that the sanctity of the wife profits the unbelieving husband, and the sanctity of the husband profits the unbelieving wife, the same Apostle is witness, saying, “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in a brother.” Wherefore that was said according to the greater sanctity of the unmarried than of the married, unto which there is also due a greater reward, according as, the one being a good, the other is a greater good: inasmuch as also she has this thought only, how to please the Lord. For it is not that a female who believes, keeping married

chastity, thinks not how to please the Lord; but assuredly less so, in that she thinks of the things of the world, how to please her husband. For this is what he would say of them, that they may, in a certain way, find themselves obliged by marriage to think of the things of the world, how to please their husbands.

14. And not without just cause a doubt is raised, whether he said this of all married women, or of such as so many are, as that nearly all may be thought so to be. For neither doth that, which he saith of unmarried women, “She, that is unmarried, thinkest of the things of the Lord, to be holy both in body and spirit:” pertain unto all unmarried women: whereas there are certain widows who are dead, who live in delights. However, so far as regards a certain distinction and, as it were, character of their own, of the unmarried and married; as she deserves the excess of hatred, who containing from marriage, that is, from a thing allowed, does not contain from offenses, either of luxury, or pride, or curiosity and prating; so the married woman is seldom met with, who, in the very obedience of married life, hath no thought save how to please God, by adorning herself, not with plaited hair, or gold and pearls and costly attire, but as becometh women making profession of piety, through a good conversation. Such marriages, forsooth, the Apostle Peter also describes by giving commandment. “In like manner,” saith he, “wives obeying their own husbands; in order that, even if any obey not the word, they may be gained without discourse through the conversation of the wives, seeing your fear and chaste conversation: that they be not they that are adorned without with crispings of hair, or clothed with gold or with fair raiment; but that hidden man of your heart, in that unbroken continuance of a quiet and modest spirit, which before the Lord also is rich. For thus certain holy women, who hoped in the Lord, used to adorn themselves, obeying their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord: whose daughters ye are become, when ye do well, and fear not with any vain fear. Husbands in like manner living at peace and in chastity with your wives, both give ye honor as to the weaker and subject vessel, as with co-heirs of grace, and see that your prayers be not hindered.” Is it indeed that such marriages have no thought of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord? But they are very rare: who denies this? And,

being, as they are, rare, nearly all the persons who are such, were not joined together in order to be such, but being already joined together became such.

15. For what Christian men of our time being free from the marriage bond, having power to contain from all sexual intercourse, seeing it to be now “a time,” as it is written, “not of embracing, but of abstaining from embrace,” would not choose rather to keep virginal or widowed continence, than (now that there is no obligation from duty to human society) to endure tribulation of the flesh, without which marriages cannot be (to pass over in silence other things from which the Apostle spares.) But when through desire reigning they shall have been joined together, if they shall after overcome it, because it is not lawful to loose, in such wise as it was lawful not to tie, the marriage bond, they become such as the form of marriage makes profession of, so as that either by mutual consent they ascend unto a higher degree of holiness, or, if both are not such, the one who is such will not be one to exact but to yield the due, observing in all things a chaste and religious concord. But in those times, wherein as yet the mystery of our salvation was veiled in prophetic sacraments, even they who were such before marriage, yet contracted marriage through the duty of begetting children, not overcome by lust, but led by piety, unto whom if there were given such choice as in the revelation of the New Testament there hath been given, the Lord saying “Whoso can receive, let him receive;” no one doubts that they would have been ready to receive it even with joy, who reads with careful attention what use they made of their wives, at a time when also it was allowed one man to have several, whom he had with more chastity, than any now has his one wife, of these, unto whom we see what the Apostle allows by way of leave. For they had them in the work of begetting children, not “in the disease of desire, as the nations which know not God.” And this is so great a thing, that many at this day more easily abstain from all sexual intercourse their whole life through, than, if they are joined in marriage, observe the measure of not coming together except for the sake of children. Forsooth we have many brethren and partners in the heavenly inheritance of both sexes that are continent, whether they be such as have made trial of marriage, or such as are entirely free from all such intercourse: forsooth they are without number: yet, in our familiar discourses with them, whom have we heard, whether of those who are, or of those who have been,

married, declaring to us that he has never had sexual intercourse with his wife, save with the hope of conception? What, therefore, the Apostles command the married, this is proper to marriage, but what they allow by way of pardon, or what hinders prayers, this marriage compels not, but bears with.

16. Therefore if haply, (which whether it can take place, I know not; and rather think it cannot take place; but yet, if haply), having taken unto himself a concubine for a time, a man shall have sought sons only from this same intercourse; neither thus is that union to be preferred to the marriage even of those women, who do this, that is matter of pardon. For we must consider what belongs to marriage, not what belongs to such women as marry and use marriage with less moderation than they ought. For neither if each one so use lands entered upon unjustly and wrongly, as out of their fruits to give large alms, doth he therefore justify rapine: nor if another brood over, through avarice, an estate to which he has succeeded, or which he hath justly gained, are we on this account to blame the rule of civil law, whereby he is made a lawful owner. Nor will the wrongfulness of a tyrannical rebellion deserve praise, if the tyrant treat his subjects with royal clemency: nor will the order of royal power deserve blame, if a king rage with tyrannical cruelty. For it is one thing to wish to use well unjust power, and it is another thing to use unjustly just power. Thus neither do concubines taken for a time, if they be such in order to sons, make their concubinage lawful; nor do married women, if they live wantonly with their husbands, attach any charge to the order of marriage.

17. That marriage can take place of persons first ill joined, an honest decree following after, is manifest. But a marriage once for all entered upon in the City of our God, where, even from the first union of the two, the man and the woman, marriage bears a certain sacramental character, can no way be dissolved but by the death of one of them. For the bond of marriage remains, although a family, for the sake of which it was entered upon, do not follow through manifest barrenness; so that, when now married persons know that they shall not have children, yet it is not lawful for them to separate even for the very sake of children, and to join themselves unto others. And if they shall so do, they commit adultery with those unto whom

they join themselves, but themselves remain husbands and wives. Clearly with the good will of the wife to take another woman, that from her may be born sons common to both, by the sexual intercourse and seed of the one, but by the right and power of the other, was lawful among the ancient fathers: whether it be lawful now also, I would not hastily pronounce. For there is not now necessity of begetting children, as there then was, when, even when wives bare children, it was allowed, in order to a more numerous posterity, to marry other wives in addition, which now is certainly not lawful. For the difference that separates times causes the due season to have so great force unto the justice and doing or not doing any thing, that now a man does better, if he marry not even one wife, unless he be unable to contain. But then they married even several without any blame, even those who could much more easily contain, were it not that piety at that time had another demand upon them. For, as the wise and just man, who now desires to be dissolved and to be with Christ, and takes more pleasure in this, the best, now not from desire of living here, but from duty of being useful , takes food that he may remain in the flesh, which is necessary for the sake of others; so to have intercourse with females in right of marriage, was to holy men at that time a matter of duty not of lust.

18. For what food is unto the conservation of the man, this sexual intercourse is unto the conservation of the race: and both are not without carnal delight: which yet being modified, and by restraint of temperance reduced unto the use after nature, cannot be lust. But what unlawful food is in the supporting of life, this sexual intercourse of fornication or adultery is in the seeking of a family. And what unlawful food is in luxury of belly and throat, this unlawful intercourse is in lust that seeks not a family. And what the excessive appetite of some is in lawful food, this that intercourse that is matter of pardon is in husband and wife. As therefore it is better to die of hunger than to eat things offered unto idols: so it is better to die without children, than to seek a family from unlawful intercourse. But from whatever source men be born, if they follow not the vices of their parents, and worship God aright, they shall be honest and safe. For the seed of man, from out what kind of man soever, is the creation of God, and it shall fare ill with those who use it ill, yet shall not, itself at any time be evil. But as the good sons of adulterers are no defense of adulteries, so the evil sons of

married persons are no charge against marriage. Wherefore as the Fathers of the time of the New Testament taking food from the duty of conservation, although they took it with natural delight of the flesh, were yet in no way compared with the delight of those who fed on what had been offered in sacrifice, or of those who, although the food was lawful, yet took it to excess: so the Fathers of the time of the Old Testament from the duty of conservation used sexual intercourse; and yet that their natural delight, by no means relaxed unto unreasonable and unlawful lust, is not to be compared either with the vileness of fornications, or with the intemperance of married persons. Forsooth through the same vein of charity, now after the spirit, then after the flesh, it was a duty to beget sons for the sake of that mother Jerusalem: but it was nought save the difference of times which made the works of the fathers different. But thus it was necessary that even Prophets, not living after the flesh, should come together after the flesh; even as it was necessary that Apostles also, not living after the flesh, should eat food after the flesh.

19. Therefore as many women as there are now, unto whom it is said, “if they contain not, let them be married, ^” are not to be compared to the holy women then, even when they married. Marriage itself indeed in all nations is for the same cause of begetting sons, and of what character soever these may be afterward, yet was marriage for this purpose instituted, that they may be born in due and honest order. But men, who contain not, as it were ascend unto marriage by a step of honesty: but they, who without doubt would contain, if the purpose of that time had allowed this, in a certain measure descended unto marriage by a step of piety. And, on this account, although the marriages of both, so far as they are marriages, in that they are for the sake of begetting, are equally good, yet these men when married are not to be compared with those men as married. For these have, what is allowed them by the way of leave, on account of the honesty of marriage, although it pertain not to marriage; that is, the advance which goes beyond the necessity of begetting, which they had not. But neither can these, if haply there be now any found, who neither seek, nor desire, in marriage any thing, save that wherefore marriage was instituted, be made equal to those men. For in these the very desire of sons is carnal, but in those it was spiritual, in that it was suited to the sacrament of that time. Forsooth now no

one who is made perfect in piety seeks to have sons, save after a spiritual sense; but then it was the work of piety itself to beget sons even after a carnal sense: in that the begetting of that people was fraught with tidings of things to come, and pertained unto the prophetic dispensation.

20. And on this account, not, so as it was allowed one man to have even several wives, was it allowed one female to have several husbands, not even for the sake of a family, in case it should happen that the woman could bear, the man could not beget. For by a secret law of nature things that stand chief love to be singular; but what are subject are set under, not only one under one, but, if the system of nature or society allow, even several under one, not without becoming beauty. For neither hath one slave so several masters, in the way that several slaves have one master. Thus we read not that any of the holy women served two or more living husbands: but we read that many females served one husband, when the social state of that nation allowed it, and the purpose of the time persuaded to it: for neither is it contrary to the nature of marriage. For several females can conceive from one man: but one female cannot from several, (such is the power of things principal:) as many souls are rightly made subject unto one God. And on this account there is no True God of souls, save One: but one soul by means of many false gods may commit fornication, but not be made fruitful.

21. But since out of many souls there shall be hereafter one City of such as have one soul and one heart towards God; which perfection of our unity shall be hereafter, after this sojourn in a strange land, wherein the thoughts of all shall neither be hidden one from another, nor shall be in any matter opposed one to another; on this account the Sacrament of marriage of our time hath been so reduced to one man and one wife, as that it is not lawful to ordain any as a steward of the Church, save the husband of one wife. And this they have understood more acutely who have been of opinion, that neither is he to be ordained, who as a catechumen or as a heathen had a second wife. For it is a matter of sacrament, not of sin. For in baptism all sins are put away. But he who said, “If thou shall have taken a wife, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin shall have been married, she sinneth not:” and, “Let her do what she will, she sinneth not, if she be married,” hath made it plain enough that marriage is no sin. But on account of the sanctity

of the Sacrament, as a female, although it be as a catechumen that she hath suffered violence, cannot after Baptism be consecrated among the virgins of God: so there was no absurdity in supposing of him who had exceeded the number of one wife, not that he had committed any sin, but that he had lost a certain prescript rule of a sacrament necessary not unto desert of good life, but unto the seal of ecclesiastic ordination; and thus, as the many wives of the old Fathers signified our future Churches out of all nations made subject unto one husband, Christ: so our chief-priest, the husband of one wife, signifies unity out of all nations, made subject unto one husband, Christ: which shall then be perfected, when He shall have unveiled the hidden things of darkness, and shall have made manifest the thoughts of the heart, that then each may have praise from God. But now there are manifest, there are hidden, dissensions, even where charity is safe between those, who shall be hereafter one, and in one; which shall then certainly have no existence. As therefore the Sacrament of marriage with several of that time signified the multitude that should be hereafter made subject unto God in all nations of the earth, so the Sacrament of marriage with one of our times signifies the unity of us all made subject to God, which shall be hereafter in one Heavenly City. Therefore as to serve two or more, so to pass over from a living husband into marriage with another, was neither lawful then, nor is it lawful now, nor will it ever be lawful. Forsooth to apostatise from the One God, and to go into adulterous superstition of another, is ever an evil. Therefore not even for the sake of a more numerous family did our Saints do, what the Roman Cato is said to have done, to give up his wife, during his own life, to fill even another’s house with sons. Forsooth in the marriage of one woman the sanctity of the Sacrament is of more avail than the fruitfulness of the womb.

22. If, therefore, even they who are united in marriage only for the purpose of begetting, for which purpose marriage was instituted, are not compared with the Fathers, seeking their very sons in a way far other than do these; forasmuch as Abraham, being bidden to slay his son, fearless and devoted, spared not his only son, whom from out of great despair he had received save that he laid down his hand, when He forbade him, at Whose command he had lifted it up; it remains that we consider, whether at least continent persons among us are to be compared to those Fathers who were married;

unless haply now these are to be preferred to them, to whom we have not yet found persons to compare. For there was a greater good in their marriage, than is the proper good of marriage: to which without doubt the good of Continence is to be preferred: because they sought not sons from marriage by such duty as these are led by, from a certain sense of mortal nature requiring succession against decease. And, whoso denies this to be good he knows not God, the Creator of all things good, from things heavenly even unto things earthly, from things immortal even unto things mortal. But neither are beasts altogether without this sense of begetting, and chiefly birds, whose care of building nests meets us at once, and a certain likeness to marriages, in order to beget and nurture together. But those men, with mind far holier, surpassed this affection of mortal nature, the chastity whereof in its own kind, there being added thereto the worship of God, as some have understood, is set forth as bearing first thirty-fold; who sought sons of their marriage for the sake of Christ; in order to distinguish His race after the flesh from all nations: even as God was pleased to order, that this above the rest should avail to prophesy of Him, in that it was foretold of what race also, and of what nation, He should hereafter come in the flesh. Therefore it was a far greater good than the chaste marriages of believers among us, which father Abraham knew in his own thigh, under which he bade his servant to put his hand, that he might take an oath concerning the wife, whom his son was to marry. For putting his hand under the thigh of a man, and swearing by the God of Heaven, what else did he signify, than that in that Flesh, which derived its origin from that thigh, the God of Heaven would come? Therefore marriage is a good, wherein married persons are so much the better, in proportion as they fear God with greater chastity and faithfulness, specially if the sons, whom they desire after the flesh, they also bring up after the spirit.

23. Nor, in that the Law orders a man to be purified even after intercourse with a wife, doth it show it to be sin: unless it be that which is allowed by way of pardon, which also, being in excess, hinders prayers. But, as the Law sets many things in sacraments and shadows of things to come; a certain as it were material formless state of the seed, which having received form will hereafter produce the body of man, is set to signify a life formless, and untaught: from which formless state, forasmuch as it behoves

that man be cleansed by form and teaching of learning; as a sign of this, that purification was ordered after the emission of seed. For neither in sleep also doth it take place through sin. And yet there also a purification was commanded. Or, if any think this also to be sin, thinking that it comes not to pass save from some lust of this kind, which without doubt is false; what? are the ordinary menses also of women sins? And yet from these the same old Law commanded that they should be cleansed by expiation; for no other cause, save the material formless state itself, in that which, when conception hath taken place, is added as it were to build up the body, and for this reason, when it flows without form, the Law would have signified by it a soul without form of discipline, flowing and loose in an unseemly manner. And that this ought to receive form, it signifies, when it commands such flow of the body to be purified. Lastly, what? to die, is that also a sin? or, to bury a dead person, is it not also a good work of humanity? and yet a purification was commanded even on occasion of this also; because also a dead body, life abandoning it, is not sin, but signifies the sin of a soul abandoned by righteousness.

24. Marriage, I say, is a good, and may be, by sound reason, defended against all calumnies. But with the marriage of the holy fathers, I inquire not what marriage, but what continence, is on a level: or rather not marriage with marriage; for it is an equal gift in all cases given to the mortal nature of men; but men who use marriage, forasmuch as I find not, to compare with other men who used marriage in a far other spirit, we must require what continent persons admit of being compared with those married persons. Unless, haply, Abraham could not contain from marriage, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, he who, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, could fearless sacrifice his only pledge of offspring, for whose sake marriage was dear!

25. Forsooth continence is a virtue, not of the body, but of the soul. But the virtues of the soul are sometimes shown in work, sometimes lie hid in habit, as the virtue of martyrdom shone forth and appeared by enduring sufferings; but how many are there of the same virtue of mind, unto whom trial is wanting, whereby what is within, in the sight of God, may go forth also into the sight of men, and not to men begin to exist, but only become

known? For there was already in Job patience, which God knew, and to which He bore witness: but it became known unto men by test of trial: and what lay hid within was not produced, but shown, by the things that were brought on him from without. Timothy also certainly had the virtue of abstaining from wine, which Paul took not from him, by advising him to use a moderate portion of wine, “for the sake of his stomach and his often infirmities,” otherwise he taught him a deadly lesson, that for the sake of the health of the body there should be a loss of virtue in the soul: but because what he advised could take place with safety to that virtue, the profit of drinking was so left free to the body, as that the habit of continence continued in the soul. For it is the habit itself, whereby any thing is done, when there is need; but when it is not done, it can be done, only there is no need. This habit, in the matter of that continence which is from sexual intercourse, they have not, unto whom it is said, “If they contain not, let them be married.” But this they have, unto whom it is said, “Whoso can receive, let him receive.” Thus have perfect souls used earthly goods, that are necessary for something else, through this habit of continence, so as, by it, not to be bound by them, and so as by it, to have power also not to use them, in case there were no need. Nor doth any use them well, save who hath power also not to use them. Many indeed with more ease practise abstinence, so as not to use, than practise temperance, so as to use well. But no one can wisely use them, save who can also continently not use them. From this habit Paul also said, “I know both to abound, and to suffer want.” Forsooth to suffer want is the part of any men soever; but to know to suffer want is the part of great men. So, also, to abound, who cannot? but to know also to abound, is not, save of those, whom abundance corrupts not.

26. But, in order that it may be more clearly understood, how there may be virtue in habit, although it be not in work, I speak of an example, about which no Catholic Christian can doubt. For that our Lord Jesus Christ in truth of flesh hungered and thirsted, ate and drank, no one doubts of such as out of the Gospel are believers. What, then, was there not in Him the virtue of continence from meat and drink, as great as in John Baptist? “For John came neither eating nor drinking; and they said, He hath a devil; the Son of Man came both eating and drinking; and they said, “Lo, a glutton and winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.” What, are not such things said

also against them of His household, our fathers, from another kind of using of things earthy, so far as pertains to sexual intercourse; “Lo, men lustful and unclean, lovers of women and lewdness?” And yet as in Him that was not true, although it were true that He abstained not, even as John, from eating and drinking, for Himself saith most plainly and truly, “John came, not eating, nor drinking; the Son of Man came eating and drinking:” so neither is this true in these Fathers; although there hath come now the Apostle of Christ, not wedded, nor begetting, so that the heathen say of him, He was a magician; but there came then the Prophet of Christ, marrying and begetting sons, so that the Manichees say of him, He was a man fond of women: “And wisdom,” saith He, “hath been justified of her children.” What the Lord there added, after He had thus spoken of John and of Himself; “But wisdom,” saith He, “hath been justified of her children.” Who see that the virtue of continence ought to exist even in the habit of the soul, but to be shown forth in deed, according to opportunity of things and times; even as the virtue of patience of holy martyrs appeared in deed; but of the rest equally holy was in habit. Wherefore, even as there is not unequal desert of patience in Peter, who suffered, and in John, who suffered not; so there is not unequal desert of continence in John who made no trial of marriage, and in Abraham, who begat sons. For both the celibate of the one, and the marriage estate of the other, did service as soldiers to Christ, as times were allotted; but John had continence in work also, but Abraham in habit alone.

27. Therefore at that time, when the Law also, following upon the days of the Patriarchs, pronounced accursed, whoso raised not up seed in Israel, even he, who could, put it not forth, but yet possessed it. But from the period that the fullness of time hath come, that it should be said, “Whoso can receive, let him receive,” from that period even unto this present, and from henceforth even unto the end, whoso hath, worketh: whoso shall be unwilling to work, let him not falsely say, that he hath. And through this means, they, who corrupt good manners by evil communications, with empty and vain craft, say to a Christian man exercising continence, and refusing marriage, What then, are you better than Abraham? But let him not, upon hearing this, be troubled; neither let him dare to say, “Better,” nor let him fall away from his purpose: for the one he saith not truly, the other

he doth not rightly. But let him say, I indeed am not better than Abraham, but the chastity of the unmarried is better than the chastity of marriage; whereof Abraham had one in use, both in habit. For he lived chastely in the marriage state: but it was in his power to be chaste without marriage, but at that time it behoved not. But I with more ease use not marriage, which Abraham used, than so use marriage as Abraham used it: and therefore I am better than those, who through incontinence of mind cannot do what I do; not than those, who, on account of difference of time, did not do what I do. For what I now do, they would have done better, if it had been to be done at that time; but what they did, I should not so do, although it were now to be done. Or, if he feels and knows himself to be such, as that, (the virtue of continence being preserved and continued in the habit of his mind, in case he had descended unto the use of marriage from some duty of religion,) he should be such an husband, and such a father, as Abraham was; let him dare to make plain answer to that captious questioner, and to say, I am not indeed better than Abraham, only in this kind of continence, of which he was not void, although it appeared not: but I am such, not having other than he, but doing other. Let him say this plainly: forasmuch as, even if he shall wish to glory, he will not be a fool, for he saith the truth. But if he spare, lest any think of him above what he sees him, or hears any thing of him; let him remove from his own person the knot of the question, and let him answer, not concerning the man, but concerning the thing itself, and let him say, Whoso hath so great power is such as Abraham. But it may happen that the virtue of continence is less in his mind, who uses not marriage, which Abraham used: but yet it is greater than in his mind, who on this account held chastity of marriage, in that he could not a greater. Thus also let the unmarried woman, whose thoughts are of the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit, when she shall have heard that shameless questioner saying, What, then, are you better than Sara? answer, I am better, but than those, who are void of the virtue of continence, which I believe not of Sara: she therefore together with this virtue did what was suited to that time, from which I am free, that in my body also may appear, what she kept in her mind.

28. Therefore, if we compare the things themselves, we may no way doubt that the chastity of continence is better than marriage chastity, whilst yet

both are good: but when we compare the persons, he is better, who hath a greater good than another. Further, he who hath a greater of the same kind, hath also that which is less; but he, who only hath what is less, assuredly hath not that which is greater. For in sixty, thirty also are contained, not sixty also in thirty. But not to work from out that which he hath, stands in the allotment of duties, not in the want of virtues: forasmuch as neither is he without the good of mercy, who finds not wretched persons such as he may mercifully assist.

29. And there is this further, that men are not rightly compared with men in regard of some one good. For it may come to pass, that one hath not what another hath, but hath another thing, which must be esteemed of more value. The good of obedience is better than of continence. For marriage is in no place condemned by authority of our Scriptures, but disobedience is in no place acquitted. If therefore there be set before us a virgin about to continue so, but yet disobedient, and a married woman who could not continue a virgin, but yet obedient, which shall we call better? shall it be (the one) less praiseworthy, than if she were a virgin, or (the other) worthy of blame, even as she is a virgin? So, if you compare a drunken virgin with a sober married woman, who can doubt to pass the same sentence? Forsooth marriage and virginity are two goods, whereof the one is greater; but sobriety and drunkenness, even as obedience and stubbornness, are, the one good, and the other evil. But it is better to have all goods even in a less degree, than great good with great evil: forasmuch as in the goods of the body also it is better to have the stature of Zacchaeus with sound health, than that of Goliah with fever.

30. The right question plainly is, not whether a virgin every way disobedient is to be compared to an obedient married woman, but a less obedient to a more obedient: forasmuch as that also of marriage is chastity, and therefore a good, but less than virginal. Therefore if the one, by so much less in the good of obedience, as she is greater in the good of chastity, be compared with the other, which of them is to be preferred that person judges, who in the first place comparing chastity itself and obedience, sees that obedience is in a certain way the mother of all virtues. And therefore, for this reason, there may be obedience without virginity, because virginity

is of counsel, not of precept. But I call that obedience, whereby precepts are complied with. And, therefore, there may be obedience to precepts without virginity, but not without chastity. For it pertains unto chastity, not to commit fornication, not to commit adultery, to be defiled by no unlawful intercourse: and whoso observe not these, do contrary to the precepts of God, and on this account are banished from the virtue of obedience. But there may be virginity without obedience, on this account, because it is possible for a woman, having received the counsel of virginity, and having guarded virginity, to slight precepts: even as we have known many sacred virgins, talkative, curious, drunken, litigious, covetous, proud: all which are contrary to precepts, and slay one, even as Eve herself, by the crime of disobedience. Wherefore not only is the obedient to be preferred to the disobedient, but a more obedient married woman to a less obedient virgin.

31. From this obedience that Father, who was not without a wife, was prepared to be without an only son, and that slain by himself. For I shall not without due cause call him an only son, concerning whom he heard the Lord say, “In Isaac shall there be called for thee a seed. ^” Therefore how much sooner would he hear it, that he should be even without a wife, if this he were bidden? Wherefore it is not without reason that we often consider, that some of both sexes, containing from all sexual intercourse, are negligent in obeying precepts, after having with so great warmth caught at the not making use of things that are allowed. Whence who doubts that we do not rightly compare unto the excellence of those holy fathers and mothers begetting sons, the men and women of our time, although free from all intercourse, yet in virtue of obedience inferior: even if there had been wanting to those men in habit of mind also, what is plain in the deed of the latter. Therefore let these follow the Lamb, boys singing the new song, as it is written in the Apocalypse, “who have not defiled themselves with women:” for no other reason than that they have continued virgins. Nor let them on this account think themselves better than the first holy fathers, who used marriage, so to speak, after the fashion of marriage. Forsooth the use of it is such, as that, if in it there hath taken place through carnal intercourse aught which exceeds necessity of begetting, although in a way that deserves pardon, there is pollution. For what doth pardon expiate, if that advance

cause no pollution whatever? From which pollution it were strange if boys following the Lamb were free, unless they continued virgins.

32. Therefore the good of marriage throughout all nations and all men stands in the occasion of begetting, and faith of chastity: but, so far as pertains unto the People of God, also in the sanctity of the Sacrament, by reason of which it is unlawful for one who leaves her husband, even when she has been put away, to be married to another, so long as her husband lives, no not even for the sake of bearing children: and, whereas this is the alone cause, wherefore marriage takes place, not even where that very thing, wherefore it takes place, follows not, is the marriage bond loosed, save by the death of the husband or wife. In like manner as if there take place an ordination of clergy in order to form a congregation of people, although the congregation of people follow not, yet there remains in the ordained persons the Sacrament of Ordination; and if, for any fault, any be removed from his office, he will not be without the Sacrament of the Lord once for all set upon him, albeit continuing unto condemnation. Therefore that marriage takes place for the sake of begetting children, the Apostle is a witness thus, “I will,” says he, “that the younger women be married.” And, as though it were said to him, For what purpose? straightway he added, “to have children, to be mothers of families.” But unto the faith of chastity pertains that saying, “The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.” But unto the sanctity of the Sacrament that saying, “The wife not to depart from her husband, but, in case she shall have departed, to remain unmarried, or to be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.” All these are goods, on account of which marriage is a good; offspring, faith, sacrament. But now, at this time, not to seek offspring after the flesh, and by this means to maintain a certain perpetual freedom from every such work, and to be made subject after a spiritual manner unto one Husband Christ, is assuredly better and holier; provided, that is, men so use that freedom, as it is written, so as to have their thoughts of the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord; that is, that Continence at all times do take thought, that obedience fall not short in any matter: and this virtue, as the root-virtue, and (as it is wont to be called) the womb, and clearly universal, the holy fathers of old exercised in deed; but that

Continence they possessed in habit of mind. Who assuredly, through that obedience, whereby they were just and holy, and ever prepared unto every good work, even if they were bidden to abstain from all sexual intercourse, would perform it. For how much more easily could they, at the bidding or exhortation of God, not use sexual intercourse, who, as an act of obedience, could slay the child, for the begetting of which alone they used the ministry of sexual intercourse?

33. And, the case being thus, enough and more than enough answer has been made to the heretics, whether they be Manichees, or whosoever other that bring false charges against the Fathers of the Old Testament, on the subject of their having several wives, thinking this a proof whereby to convict them of incontinence: provided, that is, that they perceive, that that is no sin, which is committed neither against nature, in that they used those women not for wantonness, but for the begetting of children: nor against custom, forasmuch as such things were usually done at those times: nor against command, forasmuch as they were forbidden by no law. But such as used women unlawfully, either the divine sentence in those Scriptures convicts them, or the reading sets them forth for us to condemn and shun, not to approve or imitate.

34. But those of ours who have wives we advise, with all our power, that they dare not to judge of those holy fathers after their own weakness, comparing, as the Apostle says, themselves with themselves; and therefore, not understanding how great strength the soul hath, doing service unto righteousness against lusts, that it acquiesce not in carnal motions of this sort, or suffer them to glide on or advance unto sexual intercourse beyond the necessity of begetting children, so far as the order of nature, so far as the use of custom, so far as the decrees of laws prescribe. Forsooth it is on this account that men have this suspicion concerning those fathers, in that they themselves have either chosen marriage through incontinence, or use their wives with intemperance. But however let such as are continent, either men, who, on the death of their wives, or, women, who, on the death of their husbands, or both, who, with mutual consent, have vowed continence unto God, know that to them indeed there is due a greater recompense than marriage chastity demands; but, (as regards) the marriages of the holy

Fathers, who were joined after the manner of prophecy, who neither in sexual intercourse sought aught save children, nor in children themselves aught save what should set forward Christ coming hereafter in the flesh, not only let them not despise them in comparison of their own purpose, but let them without any doubting prefer them even to their own purpose.

35. Boys also and virgins dedicating unto God actual chastity we do before all things admonish, that they be aware that they must guard their life meanwhile upon earth with so great humility, by how much the more what they have vowed is heavenly. Forsooth it is written, “How great soever thou art, by so much humble thyself in all things.” Therefore it is our part to say something of their greatness, it is their part to have thought of great humility. Therefore, except certain, those holy fathers and mothers who were married, than whom these although they be not married are not better, for this reason, that, if they were married, they would not be equal, let them not doubt that they surpass all the rest of this time, either married, or after trial made of marriage, exercising continence; not so far as Anna surpasses Susanna; but so far as Mary surpasses both. I am speaking of what pertains unto the holy chastity itself of the flesh; for who knows not, what other deserts Mary hath? Therefore let them add to this so high purpose conduct suitable, that they may have an assured security of the surpassing reward; knowing of a truth, that, unto themselves and unto all the faithful, beloved and chosen members of Christ, coming many from the East, and from the West, although shining with light of glory that differeth one from another, according to their deserts, there is this great gift bestowed in common, to sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, who not for the sake of this world, but for the sake of Christ, were husbands, for the sake of Christ were fathers.

ON THE MORALS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE MORIBUS ECCLESIAE CATHOLICAE)

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ON THE MORALS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Preface

It is laid down at the outset that the customs of the holy life of the Church should be referred to the chief good of man, that is, God. We must seek after God with supreme affection; and this doctrine is supported in the Catholic Church by the authority of both Testaments. The four virtues get their names from different forms of this love. Then follow the duties of love to our neighbor. In the Catholic Church we find examples of continence and of true Christian conduct.

CHAPTER 1

HOW THE PRETENSIONS OF THE MANICHAEANS ARE TO BE REFUTED. TWO MANICHAEAN FALSEHOODS

1. Enough, probably, has been done in our other books in the way of answering the ignorant and profane attacks which the Manichaeans make on the law, which is called the Old Testament, in a spirit of vainglorious boasting, and with the approval of the uninstructed. Here, too, I may shortly touch upon the subject. For every one with average intelligence can easily see that the explanation of the Scriptures should be sought for from those who are the professed teachers of the Scriptures; and that it may happen, and indeed always happens, that many things seem absurd to the ignorant, which, when they are explained by the learned, appear all the more excellent, and are received in the explanation with the greater pleasure on account of the obstructions which made it difficult to reach the meaning. This commonly happens as regards the holy books of the Old Testament, if only the man who meets with difficulties applies to a pious teacher, and not to a profane critic, and if he begins his inquiries from a desire to find truth, and not in rash opposition. And should the inquirer meet with some, whether bishops or presbyters, or any officials or ministers of the Catholic Church, who either avoid in all cases opening up mysteries, or, content with simple faith, have no desire for more recondite knowledge, he must not despair of finding the knowledge of the truth in a case where neither are all

able to teach to whom the inquiry is addressed, nor are all inquirers worthy of learning the truth. Diligence and piety are both necessary: on the one hand, we must have knowledge to find truth, and, on the other hand, we must deserve to get the knowledge.

2. But as the Manichaeans have two tricks for catching the unwary, so as to make them take them as teachers,—one, that of finding fault with the Scriptures, which they either misunderstand or wish to be misunderstood, the other, that of making a show of chastity and of notable abstinence,—this book shall contain our doctrine of life and morals according to Catholic teaching, and will perhaps make it appear how easy it is to pretend to virtue, and how difficult to possess virtue. I will refrain, if I can, from attacking their weak points, which I know well, with the violence with which they attack what they know nothing of; for I wish them, if possible, to be cured rather than conquered. And I will quote such testimonies from the Scriptures as they are bound to believe, for they shall be from the New Testament; and even from this I will take none of the passages which the Manichaeans when hard pressed are accustomed to call spurious, but passages which they are obliged to acknowledge and approve. And for every testimony from apostolic teaching I will bring a similar statement from the Old Testament, that if they ever become willing to wake up from their persistent dreams, and to rise towards the light of Christian faith, they may discover both how far from being Christian is the life which they profess, and how truly Christian is the Scripture which they cavil at.

CHAPTER 2

HE BEGINS WITH ARGUMENTS, IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE MISTAKEN METHOD OF THE MANICHAEANS

3. Where, then, shall I begin? With authority, or with reasoning? In the order of nature, when we learn anything, authority precedes reasoning. For a reason may seem weak, when, after it is given, it requires authority to confirm it. But because the minds of men are obscured by familiarity with darkness, which covers them in the night of sins and evil habits, and cannot perceive in a way suitable to the clearness and purity of reason, there is most wholesome provision for bringing the dazzled eye into the light of

truth under the congenial shade of authority. But since we have to do with people who are perverse in all their thoughts and words and actions, and who insist on nothing more than on beginning with argument, I will, as a concession to them, take what I think a wrong method in discussion. For I like to imitate, as far as I can, the gentleness of my Lord Jesus Christ, who took on Himself the evil of death itself, wishing to free us from it.

CHAPTER 3

HAPPINESS IS IN THE ENJOYMENT OF MAN'S CHIEF GOOD. TWO CONDITIONS OF THE CHIEF GOOD: 1ST, NOTHING IS BETTER THAN IT; 2D, IT CANNOT BE LOST AGAINST THE WILL

4. How then, according to reason, ought man to live? We all certainly desire to live happily; and there is no human being but assents to this statement almost before it is made. But the title happy cannot, in my opinion, belong either to him who has not what he loves, whatever it may be, or to him who has what he loves if it is hurtful or to him who does not love what he has, although it is good in perfection. For one who seeks what he cannot obtain suffers torture, and one who has got what is not desirable is cheated, and one who does not seek for what is worth seeking for is diseased. Now in all these cases the mind cannot but be unhappy, and happiness and unhappiness cannot reside at the same time in one man; so in none of these cases can the man be happy. I find, then, a fourth case, where the happy life exists,—when that which is man's chief good is both loved and possessed. For what do we call enjoyment but having at hand the objects of love? And no one can be happy who does not enjoy what is man's chief good, nor is there any one who enjoys this who is not happy. We must then have at hand our chief good, if we think of living happily.

5. We must now inquire what is man's chief good, which of course cannot be anything inferior to man himself. For whoever follows after what is inferior to himself, becomes himself inferior. But every man is bound to follow what is best. Wherefore man's chief good is not inferior to man. Is it then something similar to man himself? It must be so, if there is nothing above man which he is capable of enjoying. But if we find something which is both superior to man, and can be possessed by the man who loves it, who can doubt that in seeking for happiness man should endeavor to reach that

which is more excellent than the being who makes the endeavor. For if happiness consists in the enjoyment of a good than which there is nothing better, which we call the chief good, how can a man be properly called happy who has not yet attained to his chief good? or how can that be the chief good beyond which something better remains for us to arrive at? Such, then, being the chief good, it must be something which cannot be lost against the will. For no one can feel confident regarding a good which he knows can be taken from him, although he wishes to keep and cherish it. But if a man feels no confidence regarding the good which he enjoys, how can he be happy while in such fear of losing it?

CHAPTER 4

MAN—WHAT?

6. Let us then see what is better than man. This must necessarily be hard to find, unless we first ask and examine what man is. I am not now called upon to give a definition of man. The question here seems to me to be,—since almost all agree, or at least, which is enough, those I have now to do with are of the same opinion with me, that we are made up of soul and body,—What is man? Is he both of these? or is he the body only, or the soul only? For although the things are two, soul and body, and although neither without the other could be called man (for the body would not be man without the soul, nor again would the soul be man if there were not a body animated by it), still it is possible that one of these may be held to be man, and may be called so. What then do we call man? Is he soul and body, as in a double harness, or like a centaur? Or do we mean the body only, as being in the service of the soul which rules it, as the word lamp denotes not the light and the case together, but only the case, yet it is on account of the light that it is so called? Or do we mean only the mind, and that on account of the body which it rules, as horseman means not the man and the horse, but the man only, and that as employed in ruling the horse? This dispute is not easy to settle; or, if the proof is plain, the statement requires time. This is an expenditure of time and strength which we need not incur. For whether the name man belongs to both, or only to the soul, the chief good of man is not the chief good of the body; but what is the chief good either of both soul and body, or of the soul only, that is man’s chief good.

CHAPTER 5

MAN’S CHIEF GOOD IS NOT THE CHIEF GOOD OF THE BODY ONLY, BUT THE CHIEF GOOD OF THE SOUL

7. Now if we ask what is the chief good of the body, reason obliges us to admit that it is that by means of which the body comes to be in its best state. But of all the things which invigorate the body, there is nothing better or greater than the soul. The chief good of the body, then, is not bodily pleasure, not absence of pain, not strength, not beauty, not swiftness, or whatever else is usually reckoned among the goods of the body, but simply the soul. For all the things mentioned the soul supplies to the body by its presence, and, what is above them all, life. Hence I conclude that the soul is not the chief good of man, whether we give the name of man to soul and body together, or to the soul alone. For as according to reason, the chief good of the body is that which is better than the body, and from which the body receives vigor and life, so whether the soul itself is man, or soul and body both, we must discover whether there is anything which goes before the soul itself, in following which the soul comes to the perfection of good of which it is capable in its own kind. If such a thing can be found, all uncertainty must be at an end, and we must pronounce this to be really and truly the chief good of man.

8. If, again, the body is man, it must be admitted that the soul is the chief good of man. But clearly, when we treat of morals,—when we inquire what manner of life must be held in order to obtain happiness,—it is not the body to which the precepts are addressed, it is not bodily discipline which we discuss. In short, the observance of good customs belongs to that part of us which inquires and learns, which are the prerogatives of the soul; so, when we speak of attaining to virtue, the question does not regard the body. But if it follows, as it does, that the body which is ruled over by a soul possessed of virtue is ruled both better and more honorably, and is in its greatest perfection in consequence of the perfection of the soul which rightfully governs it, that which gives perfection to the soul will be man’s chief good, though we call the body man. For if my coachman, in obedience to me, feeds and drives the horses he has charge of in the most satisfactory manner, himself enjoying the more of my bounty in proportion to his good

conduct, can any one deny that the good condition of the horses, as well as that of the coachman, is due to me? So the question seems to me to be not, whether soul and body is man, or the soul only, or the body only, but what gives perfection to the soul; for when this is obtained, a man cannot but be either perfect, or at least much better than in the absence of this one thing.

CHAPTER 6

VIRTUE GIVES PERFECTION TO THE SOUL; THE SOUL OBTAINS VIRTUE BY FOLLOWING GOD; FOLLOWING GOD IS THE HAPPY LIFE

9. No one will question that virtue gives perfection to the soul. But it is a very proper subject of inquiry whether this virtue can exist by itself or only in the soul. Here again arises a profound discussion, needing lengthy treatment; but perhaps my summary will serve the purpose. God will, I trust, assist me, so that, notwithstanding our feebleness, we may give instruction on these great matters briefly as well as intelligibly. In either case, whether virtue can exist by itself without the soul, or can exist only in the soul, undoubtedly in the pursuit of virtue the soul follows after something, and this must be either the soul itself, or virtue, or something else. But if the soul follows after itself in the pursuit of virtue, it follows after a foolish thing; for before obtaining virtue it is foolish. Now the height of a follower's desire is to reach that which he follows after. So the soul must either not wish to reach what it follows after, which is utterly absurd and unreasonable, or, in following after itself while foolish, it reaches the folly which it flees from. But if it follows after virtue in the desire to reach it, how can it follow what does not exist? or how can it desire to reach what it already possesses? Either, therefore, virtue exists beyond the soul, or if we are not allowed to give the name of virtue except to the habit and disposition of the wise soul, which can exist only in the soul, we must allow that the soul follows after something else in order that virtue may be produced in itself; for neither by following after nothing, nor by following after folly, can the soul, according to my reasoning, attain to wisdom.

10. This something else then, by following after which the soul becomes possessed of virtue and wisdom, is either a wise man or God. But we have said already that it must be something that we cannot lose against our will.

No one can think it necessary to ask whether a wise man, supposing we are content to follow after him, can be taken from us in spite of our unwillingness or our persistence. God then remains, in following after whom we live well, and in reaching whom we live both well and happily. If any deny God's existence, why should I consider the method of dealing with them, when it is doubtful whether they ought to be dealt with at all? At any rate, it would require a different starting-point, a different plan, a different investigation from what we are now engaged in. I am now addressing those who do not deny the existence of God, and who, moreover, allow that human affairs are not disregarded by Him. For there is no one, I suppose, who makes any profession of religion but will hold that divine Providence cares at least for our souls.

CHAPTER 7

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD TO BE OBTAINED FROM THE SCRIPTURE. THE PLAN AND PRINCIPAL MYSTERIES OF THE DIVINE SCHEME OF REDEMPTION

11. But how can we follow after Him whom we do not see? or how can we see Him, we who are not only men, but also men of weak understanding? For though God is seen not with the eyes but with the mind, where can such a mind be found as shall, while obscured by foolishness, succeed or even attempt to drink in that light? We must therefore have recourse to the instructions of those whom we have reason to think wise. Thus far argument brings us. For in human things reasoning is employed, not as of greater certainty, but as easier from use. But when we come to divine things, this faculty turns away; it cannot behold; it pants, and gasps, and burns with desire; it falls back from the light of truth, and turns again to its wonted obscurity, not from choice, but from exhaustion. What a dreadful catastrophe is this, that the soul should be reduced to greater helplessness when it is seeking rest from its toil! So, when we are hasting to retire into darkness, it will be well that by the appointment of adorable Wisdom we should be met by the friendly shade of authority, and should be attracted by the wonderful character of its contents, and by the utterances of its pages, which, like shadows, typify and attemper the truth.

12. What more could have been done for our salvation? What can be more gracious and bountiful than divine providence, which, when man had fallen from its laws, and, in just retribution for his coveting mortal things, had brought forth a mortal offspring, still did not wholly abandon him? For in this most righteous government, whose ways are strange and inscrutable, there is, by means of unknown connections established in the creatures subject to it, both a severity of punishment and a mercifulness of salvation. How beautiful this is, how great, how worthy of God, in fine, how true, which is all we are seeking for, we shall never be able to perceive, unless, beginning with things human and at hand, and holding by the faith and the precepts of true religion, we continue without turning from it in the way which God has secured for us by the separation of the patriarchs, by the bond of the law, by the foresight of the prophets, by the witness of the apostles, by the blood of the martyrs, and by the subjugation of the Gentiles. From this point, then, let no one ask me for my opinion, but let us rather hear the oracles, and submit our weak inferences to the announcements of Heaven.

CHAPTER 8

GOD IS THE CHIEF GOOD, WHOM WE ARE TO SEEK AFTER WITH SUPREME AFFECTION

13. Let us see how the Lord Himself in the gospel has taught us to live; how, too, Paul the apostle,—for the Manichaeans dare not reject these Scriptures. Let us hear, O Christ, what chief end Thou dost prescribe to us; and that is evidently the chief end after which we are told to strive with supreme affection. “Thou shalt love,” He says, “the Lord thy God.” Tell me also, I pray Thee, what must be the measure of love; for I fear lest the desire enkindled in my heart should either exceed or come short in fervor. “With all thy heart,” He says. Nor is that enough. “With all thy soul.” Nor is it enough yet. “With all thy mind.” What do you wish more? I might, perhaps, wish more if I could see the possibility of more. What does Paul say on this? “We know,” he says, “that all things issue in good to them that love God.” Let him, too, say what is the measure of love. “Who then,” he says, “shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?” We have

heard, then, what and how much we must love; this we must strive after, and to this we must refer all our plans. The perfection of all our good things and our perfect good is God. We must neither come short of this nor go beyond it: the one is dangerous, the other impossible.

CHAPTER 9

HARMONY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT ON THE PRECEPTS OF CHARITY

14. Come now, let us examine, or rather let us take notice,—for it is obvious and can be seen, at once,—whether the authority of the Old Testament too agrees with those statements taken from the gospel and the apostle. What need to speak of the first statement, when it is clear to all that it is a quotation from the law given by Moses? For it is there written, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” And not to go farther for a passage of the Old Testament to compare with that of the apostle, he has himself added one. For after saying that no tribulation, no distress, no persecution, no pressure of bodily want, no peril, no sword, separates us from the love of Christ, he immediately adds, “As it is written, For Thy sake we are in suffering all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” The Manichaeans are in the habit of saying that this is an interpolation,—so unable are they to reply, that they are forced in their extremity to say this. But every one can see that this is all that is left for men to say when it is proved that they are wrong.

15. And yet I ask them if they deny that this is said in the Old Testament, or if they hold that the passage in the Old Testament does not agree with that of the apostle. For the first, the books will prove it; and as for the second, those prevaricators who fly off at a tangent will be brought to agree with me, if they will only reflect a little and consider what is said, or else I will press upon them the opinion of those who judge impartially. For what could agree more harmoniously than these passages? For tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, cause great suffering to man while in this life. So all these words are implied in the single quotation from the law, where it is said, “For Thy sake we are in suffering.” The only other thing is the sword, which does not inflict a painful life, but removes whatever life it

meets with. Answering to this are the words, “We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” And love could not have been more plainly expressed than by the words, “For Thy sake.” Suppose, then, that this testimony is not found in the Apostle Paul, but is quoted by me, must you not prove, you heretic, either that this is not written in the old law, or that it does not harmonize with the apostle? And if you dare not say either of these things (for you are shut up by the reading of the manuscript, which will show that it is written, and by common sense, which sees that nothing could agree better with what is said by the apostle), why do you imagine that there is any force in accusing the Scriptures of being corrupted? And once more, what will you reply to a man who says to you, This is what I understand, this is my view, this is my belief, and I read these books only because I see that everything in them agrees with the Christian faith? Or tell me at once if you will venture deliberately to tell me to the face that we are not to believe that the apostles and martyrs are spoken of as having endured great sufferings for Christ’s sake, and as having been accounted by their persecutors as sheep for the slaughter? If you cannot say this, why should you bring a charge against the book in which I find what you acknowledge I ought to believe?

CHAPTER 10

WHAT THE CHURCH TEACHES ABOUT GOD. THE TWO GODS OF THE MANICHAEANS

16. Will you say that you grant that we are bound to love God, but not the God worshipped by those who acknowledge the authority of the Old Testament? In that case you refuse to worship the God who made heaven and earth, for this is the God set forth all through these books. And you admit that the whole of the world, which is called heaven and earth, had God and a good God for its author and maker. For in speaking to you about God we must make a distinction. For you hold that there are two gods, one good and the other bad.

But if you say that you worship and approve of worshipping the God who made heaven and earth, but not the God supported by the authority of the Old Testament, you act impertinently in trying, though vainly, to attribute to us views and opinions altogether unlike the wholesome and profitable doctrine we really hold. Nor can your silly and profane discourses be at all compared with the expositions in which learned and pious men of the Catholic Church open up those Scriptures to the willing and worthy. Our understanding of the law and the prophets is quite different from what you suppose. Mistake us no longer. We do not worship a God who repents, or is envious, or needy, or cruel, or who takes pleasure in the blood of men or beasts, or is pleased with guilt and crime, or whose possession of the earth is limited to a little corner of it. These and such like are the silly notions you are in the habit of denouncing at great length. Your denunciation does not touch us. The fancies of old women or of children you attack with a vehemence that is only ridiculous. Any one whom you persuade in this way to join you shows no fault in the teaching of the Church, but only proves his own ignorance of it.

17. If, then, you have any human feeling,—if you have any regard for your own welfare,—you should rather examine with diligence and piety the meaning of these passages of Scripture. You should examine, unhappy beings that you are; for we condemn with no less severity and copiousness any faith which attributes to God what is unbecoming Him, and in those by whom these passages are literally understood we correct the mistake of ignorance, and look upon persistence in it as absurd. And in many other things which you cannot understand there is in the Catholic teaching a check on the belief of those who have got beyond mental childishness, not in years, but in knowledge and understanding—old in the progress towards wisdom. For we learn the folly of believing that God is bounded by any amount of space, even though infinite; and it is held unlawful to think of God, or any part of Him, as moving from one place to another. And should any one suppose that anything in God’s substance or nature can suffer change or conversion, he will be held guilty of wild profanity. There are thus among us children who think of God as having a human form, which they suppose He really has, which is a most degrading idea; and there are many of full age to whose mind the majesty of God appears in its inviolableness and unchangeableness as not only above the human body, but above their own mind itself. These ages, as we said, are distinguished not by time, but by virtue and discretion. Among you, again, there is no one who will picture God in a human form; but neither is there one who sets

God apart from the contamination of human error. As regards those who are fed like crying babies at the breast of the Catholic Church, if they are not carried off by heretics, they are nourished according to the vigor and capacity of each, and arrive at last, one in one way and another in another, first to a perfect man, and then to the maturity and hoary hairs of wisdom, when they may get life as they desire, and life in perfect happiness.

CHAPTER 11

GOD IS THE ONE OBJECT OF LOVE; THEREFORE HE IS MAN’S CHIEF GOOD. NOTHING IS BETTER THAN GOD. GOD CANNOT BE LOST AGAINST OUR WILL

18. Following after God is the desire of happiness; to reach God is happiness itself. We follow after God by loving Him; we reach Him, not by becoming entirely what He is, but in nearness to Him, and in wonderful and immaterial contact with Him, and in being inwardly illuminated and occupied by His truth and holiness. He is light itself; we get enlightenment from Him. The greatest commandment, therefore, which leads to happy life, and the first, is this: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind.” For to those who love the Lord all things issue in good. Hence Paul adds shortly after, “I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor virtue, nor things present, nor things future, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” If, then, to those who love God all things issue in good, and if, as no one doubts, the chief or perfect good is not only to be loved, but to be loved so that nothing shall be loved better, as is expressed in the words, “With all thy soul, with all thy heart, and with all thy mind,” who, I ask, will not at once conclude, when these things are all settled and most surely believed, that our chief good which we must hasten to arrive at in preference to all other things is nothing else than God? And then, if nothing can separate us from His love, must not this be surer as well as better than any other good?

19. But let us consider the points separately. No one separates us from this by threatening death. For that with which we love God cannot die, except in not loving God; for death is not to love God, and that is when we prefer anything to Him in affection and pursuit. No one separates us from this in

promising life; for no one separates us from the fountain in promising water. Angels do not separate us; for the mind cleaving to God is not inferior in strength to an angel. Virtue does not separate us; for if what is here called virtue is that which has power in this world, the mind cleaving to God is far above the whole world. Or if this virtue is perfect rectitude of our mind itself, this in the case of another will favor our union with God, and in ourselves will itself unite us with God. Present troubles do not separate us; for we feel their burden less the closer we cling to Him from whom they try to separate us. The promise of future things does not separate us; for both future good of every kind is surest in the promise of God, and nothing is better than God Himself, who undoubtedly is already present to those who truly cleave to Him. Height and depth do not separate us; for if the height and depth of knowledge are what is meant, I will rather not be inquisitive than be separated from God; nor can any instruction by which error is removed separate me from Him, by separation from whom it is that any one is in error. Or if what is meant are the higher and lower parts of this world, how can the promise of heaven separate me from Him who made heaven? Or who from beneath can frighten me into forsaking God, when I should not have known of things beneath but by forsaking Him? In fine, what place can remove me from His love, when He could not be all in every place unless He were contained in none?

CHAPTER 12

WE ARE UNITED TO GOD BY LOVE, IN SUBJECTION TO HIM

20. “No other creature,” he says, separates us. O man of profound mysteries! He thought it not enough to say, no creature: but he says no other creature; teaching that with which we love God and by which we cleave to God, our mind, namely, and understanding, is itself a creature. Thus the body is another creature; and if the mind is an object of intellectual perception, and is known only by this means, the other creature is all that is an object of sense, which as it were makes itself known through the eyes, or ears, or smell, or taste, or touch, and this must be inferior to what is perceived by the intellect alone. Now, as God also can be known by the worthy, only intellectually, exalted though He is above the intelligent mind as being its Creator and Author, there was danger lest the human mind,

from being reckoned among invisible and immaterial things, should be thought to be of the same nature with Him who created it, and so should fall away by pride from Him to whom it should be united by love. For the mind becomes like God, to the extent vouchsafed by its subjection of itself to Him for information and enlightenment. And if it obtains the greatest nearness by that subjection which produces likeness, it must be far removed from Him by that presumption which would make the likeness greater. It is this presumption which leads the mind to refuse obedience to the laws of God, in the desire to be sovereign, as God is.

21. The farther, then, the mind departs from God, not in space, but in affection and lust after things below Him, the more it is filled with folly and wretchedness. So by love it returns to God,—a love which places it not along with God, but under Him. And the more ardor and eagerness there is in this, the happier and more elevated will the mind be, and with God as sole governor it will be in perfect liberty. Hence it must know that it is a creature. It must believe what is the truth,—that its Creator remains ever possessed of the inviolable and immutable nature of truth and wisdom, and must confess, even in view of the errors from which it desires deliverance, that it is liable to folly and falsehood. But then again, it must take care that it be not separated by the love of the other creature, that is, of this visible world, from the love of God Himself, which sanctifies it in order to lasting happiness. No other creature, then,—for we are ourselves a creature,—separates us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CHAPTER 13

WE ARE JOINED INSEPARABLY TO GOD BY CHRIST AND HIS SPIRIT

22. Let this same Paul tell us who is this Christ Jesus our Lord. “To them that are called,” he says, “we preach Christ the virtue of God, and the wisdom of God.” And does not Christ Himself say, “I am the truth?” If, then, we ask what it is to live well,—that is, to strive after happiness by living well,—it must assuredly be to love virtue, to love wisdom, to love truth, and to love with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the mind; virtue which is inviolable and immutable, wisdom which never gives place to folly, truth which knows no change or variation from its uniform

character. Through this the Father Himself is seen; for it is said, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me.” To this we cleave by sanctification. For when sanctified we burn with full and perfect love, which is the only security for our not turning away from God, and for our being conformed to Him rather than to this world; for “He has predestinated us,” says the same apostle, “that we should be conformed to the image of His Son.”

23. It is through love, then, that we become conformed to God; and by this conformation, and configuration, and circumcision from this world we are not confounded with the things which are properly subject to us. And this is done by the Holy Spirit. “For hope,” he says, “does not confound us; for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us.” But we could not possibly be restored to perfection by the Holy Spirit, unless He Himself continued always perfect and immutable. And this plainly could not be unless He were of the nature and of the very substance of God, who alone is always possessed of immutability and invariableness. “The creature,” it is affirmed, not by me but by Paul, “has been made subject to vanity.” And what is subject to vanity is unable to separate us from vanity, and to unite us to the truth. But the Holy Spirit does this for us. He is therefore no creature. For whatever is, must be either God or the creature.

CHAPTER 14

WE CLEAVE TO THE TRINITY, OUR CHIEF GOOD, BY LOVE

24. We ought then to love God, the Trinity in unity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; for this must be said to be God Himself, for it is said of God, truly and in the most exalted sense, “Of whom are all things, by whom are all things, in whom are all things.” Those are Paul’s words. And what does he add? “To Him be glory.” All this is exactly true. He does not say, To them; for God is one. And what is meant by, To Him be glory, but to Him be chief and perfect and widespread praise? For as the praise improves and extends, so the love and affection increases in fervor. And when this is the case, mankind cannot but advance with sure and firm step to a life of perfection and bliss. This, I suppose, is all we wish to find when we speak of the chief good of man, to which all must be referred in life and conduct. For the good

plainly exists; and we have shown by reasoning, as far as we were able, and by the divine authority which goes beyond our reasoning, that it is nothing else but God Himself. For how can any thing be man's chief good but that in cleaving to which he is blessed? Now this is nothing but God, to whom we can cleave only by affection, desire, and love.

CHAPTER 15

THE CHRISTIAN DEFINITION OF THE FOUR VIRTUES

25. As to virtue leading us to a happy life, I hold virtue to be nothing else than perfect love of God. For the fourfold division of virtue I regard as taken from four forms of love. For these four virtues (would that all felt their influence in their minds as they have their names in their mouths!), I should have no hesitation in defining them: that temperance is love giving itself entirely to that which is loved; fortitude is love readily bearing all things for the sake of the loved object; justice is love serving only the loved object, and therefore ruling rightly; prudence is love distinguishing with sagacity between what hinders it and what helps it. The object of this love is not anything, but only God, the chief good, the highest wisdom, the perfect harmony. So we may express the definition thus: that temperance is love keeping itself entire and incorrupt for God; fortitude is love bearing everything readily for the sake of God; justice is love serving God only, and therefore ruling well all else, as subject to man; prudence is love making a right distinction between what helps it towards God and what might hinder it.

CHAPTER 16

HARMONY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

26. I will briefly set forth the manner of life according to these virtues, one by one, after I have brought forward, as I promised, passages from the Old Testament parallel to those I have been quoting from the New Testament. For is Paul alone in saying that we should be joined to God so that there should be nothing between to separate us? Does not the prophet say the same most aptly and concisely in the words, "It is good for me to cleave to God?" Does not this one word cleave express all that the apostle says at

length about love? And do not the words, It is good, point to the apostle's statement, "All things issue in good to them that love God?" Thus in one clause and in two words the prophet sets forth the power and the fruit of love.

27. And as the apostle says that the Son of God is the virtue of God and the wisdom of God,—virtue being understood to refer to action, and wisdom to teaching (as in the gospel these two things are expressed in the words, "All things were made by Him," which belongs to action and virtue; and then, referring to teaching and the knowledge of the truth, he says, "The life was the light of men"),—could anything agree better with these passages than what is said in the Old Testament of wisdom, "She reaches from end to end in strength, and orders all things sweetly?" For reaching in strength expresses virtue, while ordering sweetly expresses skill and method. But if this seems obscure, see what follows: "And of all," he says, "God loved her; for she teaches the knowledge of God, and chooses His works." Nothing more is found here about action; for choosing works is not the same as working, so this refers to teaching. There remains action to correspond with the virtue, to complete the truth we wish to prove. Read then what comes next: "But if," he says, "the possession which is desired in life is honorable, what is more honorable than wisdom, which works all things?" Could anything be brought forward more striking or more distinct than this, or even more fully expressed? Or, if you wish more, hear another passage of the same meaning. "Wisdom," he says, "teaches sobriety, and justice, and virtue." Sobriety refers, I think, to the knowledge of the truth, or to teaching; justice and virtue to work and action. And I know nothing comparable to these two things, that is, to efficiency in action and sobriety in contemplation, which the virtue of God and the wisdom of God, that is, the Son of God, gives to them that love Him, when the same prophet goes on to show their value; for it is thus stated: "Wisdom teaches sobriety, and justice, and virtue, than which nothing is more useful in life to man."

28. Perhaps some may think that those passages do not refer to the Son of God. What, then, is taught in the following words: "She displays the nobility of her birth, having her dwelling with God?" To what does birth refer but to parentage? And does not dwelling with the Father claim and

assert equality? Again, as Paul says that the Son of God is the wisdom of God, and as the Lord Himself says, “No man knoweth the Father save the only-begotten Son,” what could be more concordant than those words of the prophet: “With Thee is wisdom which knows Thy works, which was present at the time of Thy making the world, and knew what would be pleasing in Thine eyes?” And as Christ is called the truth, which is also taught by His being called the brightness of the Father (for there is nothing round about the sun but its brightness which is produced from it), what is there in the Old Testament more plainly and obviously in accordance with this than the words, “Thy truth is round about Thee?” Once more, Wisdom herself says in the gospel, “No man cometh unto the Father but by me;” and the prophet says, “Who knoweth Thy mind, unless Thou givest wisdom?” and a little after, “The things pleasing to Thee men have learned, and have been healed by wisdom.”

29. Paul says, “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us;” and the prophet says, “The Holy Spirit of knowledge will shun guile.” For where there is guile there is no love. Paul says that we are “conformed to the image of the Son of God;” and the prophet says, “The light of Thy countenance is stamped upon us.” Paul teaches that the Holy Spirit is God, and therefore is no creature; and the prophet says, “Thou sendest Thy Spirit from the higher.” For God alone is the highest, than whom nothing is higher. Paul shows that the Trinity is one God, when he says, “To Him be glory;” and in the Old Testament it is said, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God.”

CHAPTER 17

APPEAL TO THE MANICHAEANS, CALLING ON THEM TO REPENT

30. What more do you wish? Why do you resist ignorantly and obstinately? Why do you pervert untutored minds by your mischievous teaching? The God of both Testaments is one. For as there is an agreement in the passages quoted from both, so is there in all the rest, if you are willing to consider them carefully and impartially. But because many expressions are undignified, and so far adapted to minds creeping on the earth, that they may rise by human things to divine, while many are figurative, that the

inquiring mind may have the more profit from the exertion of finding their meaning, and the more delight when it is found, you pervert this admirable arrangement of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of deceiving and ensnaring your followers. As to the reason why divine Providence permits you to do this, and as to the truth of the apostle's saying, "There must needs be many heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you," it would take long to discuss these things, and you, with whom we have now to do, are not capable of understanding them. I know you well. To the consideration of divine things, which are far higher than you suppose, you bring minds quite gross and sickly, from being fed with material images.

31. We must therefore in your case try not to make you understand divine things, which is impossible, but to make you desire to understand. This is the work of the pure and guileless love of God, which is seen chiefly in the conduct, and of which we have already said much. This love, inspired by the Holy Spirit, leads to the Son, that is, to the wisdom of God, by which the Father Himself is known. For if wisdom and truth are not sought for with the whole strength of the mind, it cannot possibly be found. But when it is sought as it deserves to be, it cannot withdraw or hide itself from its lovers. Hence its words, which you too are in the habit of repeating, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:" "Nothing is hid which shall not be revealed." It is love that asks, love that seeks, love that knocks, love that reveals, love, too, that gives continuance in what is revealed. From this love of wisdom, and this studious inquiry, we are not debarred by the Old Testament, as you always say most falsely, but are exhorted to this with the greatest urgency.

32. Hear, then, at length, and consider, I pray you, what is said by the prophet: "Wisdom is glorious, and never fadeth away; yea, she is easily seen of them that love her, and found of such as seek her. She preventeth them that desire her, in making herself first known unto them. Whoso seeketh her early shall have no great travail; for he shall find her sitting at his doors. To think, therefore, upon her is perfection of wisdom; and whoso watcheth for her shall quickly be without care. For she goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her, showeth herself favorably unto them in the ways, and meeteth them in every thought. For the very true beginning of her is the

desire of discipline; and the care of discipline is love; and love is the keeping of her laws; and the giving heed unto her laws is the assurance of incorruption; and incorruption maketh us near unto God. Therefore the desire of wisdom bringeth to a kingdom." Will you still continue in dogged hostility to these things? Do not things thus stated, though not yet understood, make it evident to every one that they contain something deep and unutterable? Would that you could understand the things here said! Forthwith you would abjure all your silly legends and your unmeaning material imaginations, and with great alacrity, sincere love, and full assurance of faith, would betake yourselves bodily to the shelter of the most holy bosom of the Catholic Church.

CHAPTER 18

ONLY IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS PERFECT TRUTH ESTABLISHED ON THE HARMONY OF BOTH TESTAMENTS

33. I could, according to the little ability I have, take up the points separately, and could expound and prove the truths I have learned, which are generally more excellent and lofty than words can express; but this cannot be done while you bark at it. For not in vain is it said, "Give not that which is holy to dogs." Do not be angry. I too barked and was a dog; and then, as was right, instead of the food of teaching, I got the rod of correction. But were there in you that love of which we are speaking, or should it ever be in you as much as the greatness of the truth to be known requires, may God vouchsafe to show you that neither is there among the Manichaeans the Christian faith which leads to the summit of wisdom and truth, the attainment of which is the true happy life, nor is it anywhere but in the Catholic teaching. Is not this what the Apostle Paul appears to desire when he says, "For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant unto you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man: that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the height, and length, and breadth, and depth, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth

knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God?” Could anything be more plainly expressed?

34. Wake up a little, I beseech you, and see the harmony of both Testaments, making it quite plain and certain what should be the manner of life in our conduct, and to what all things should be referred. To the love of God we are incited by the gospel, when it is said, “Ask, seek, knock;” by Paul, when he says, “That ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend;” by the prophet also, when he says that wisdom can easily be known by those who love it, seek for it, desire it, watch for it, think about it, care for it. The salvation of the mind and the way of happiness is pointed out by the concord of both Scriptures; and yet you choose rather to bark at these things than to obey them. I will tell you in one word what I think. Do you listen to the learned men of the Catholic Church with as peaceable a disposition, and with the same zeal, that I had when for nine years I attended on you: there will be no need of so long a time as that during which you made a fool of me. In a much, a very much, shorter time you will see the difference between truth and vanity.

CHAPTER 19

DESCRIPTION OF THE DUTIES OF TEMPERANCE, ACCORDING TO THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

35. It is now time to return to the four virtues, and to draw out and prescribe a way of life in conformity with them, taking each separately. First, then, let us consider temperance, which promises us a kind of integrity and incorruption in the love by which we are united to God. The office of temperance is in restraining and quieting the passions which make us pant for those things which turn us away from the laws of God and from the enjoyment of His goodness, that is, in a word, from the happy life. For there is the abode of truth; and in enjoying its contemplation, and in cleaving closely to it, we are assuredly happy; but departing from this, men become entangled in great errors and sorrows. For, as the apostle says, “The root of all evils is covetousness; which some having followed, have made shipwreck of the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” And this sin of the soul is quite plainly, to those rightly

understanding, set forth in the Old Testament in the transgression of Adam in Paradise. Thus, as the apostle says, “In Adam we all die, and in Christ we shall all rise again.” Oh, the depth of these mysteries! But I refrain; for I am now engaged not in teaching you the truth, but in making you unlearn your errors, if I can, that is, if God aid my purpose regarding you.

36. Paul then says that covetousness is the root of all evils; and by covetousness the old law also intimates that the first man fell. Paul tells us to put off the old man and put on the new. By the old man he means Adam who sinned, and by the new man him whom the Son of God took to Himself in consecration for our redemption. For he says in another place, “The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven, heavenly. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, let us also bear the image of the heavenly,”—that is, put off the old man, and put on the new. The whole duty of temperance, then, is to put off the old man, and to be renewed in God,—that is, to scorn all bodily delights, and the popular applause, and to turn the whole love to things divine and unseen. Hence that following passage which is so admirable: “Though our outward man perish, our inward man is renewed day by day.” Hear, too, the prophet singing, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” What can be said against such harmony except by blind barkers?

CHAPTER 20

WE ARE REQUIRED TO DESPISE ALL SENSIBLE THINGS, AND TO LOVE GOD ALONE

37. Bodily delights have their source in all those things with which the bodily sense comes in contact, and which are by some called the objects of sense; and among these the noblest is light, in the common meaning of the word, because among our senses also, which the mind uses in acting through the body, there is nothing more valuable than the eyes, and so in the Holy Scriptures all the objects of sense are spoken of as visible things. Thus in the New Testament we are warned against the love of these things in the following words: “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but

the things which are not seen are eternal.” This shows how far from being Christians those are who hold that the sun and moon are to be not only loved but worshipped. For what is seen if the sun and moon are not? But we are forbidden to regard things which are seen. The man, therefore, who wishes to offer that incorrupt love to God must not love these things too. This subject I will inquire into more particularly elsewhere. Here my plan is to write not of faith, but of the life by which we become worthy of knowing what we believe. God then alone is to be loved; and all this world, that is, all sensible things, are to be despised,—while, however, they are to be used as this life requires.

CHAPTER 21

POPULAR RENOWN AND INQUISITIVENESS ARE CONDEMNED IN THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

38. Popular renown is thus slighted and scorned in the New Testament: “If I wished,” says St. Paul, “to please men, I should not be the servant of Christ.” Again, there is another production of the soul formed by imaginations derived from material things, and called the knowledge of things. In reference to this we are fitly warned against inquisitiveness to correct which is the great function of temperance. Thus it is said, “Take heed lest any one seduce you by philosophy.” And because the word philosophy originally means the love and pursuit of wisdom, a thing of great value and to be sought with the whole mind, the apostle, with great prudence, that he might not be thought to deter from the love of wisdom, has added the words, “And the elements of this world.” For some people, neglecting virtues, and ignorant of what God is, and of the majesty of nature which remains always the same, think that they are engaged in an important business when searching with the greatest inquisitiveness and eagerness into this material mass which we call the world. This begets so much pride, that they look upon themselves as inhabitants of the heaven of which they often discourse. The soul, then, which purposes to keep itself chaste for God must refrain from the desire of vain knowledge like this. For this desire usually produces delusion, so that the soul thinks that nothing exists but what is material; or if, from regard to authority, it confesses that there is an immaterial existence, it can think of it only under material images, and has

no belief regarding it but that imposed by the bodily sense. We may apply to this the precept about fleeing from idolatry.

39. To this New Testament authority, requiring us not to love anything in this world, especially in that passage where it is said, “Be not conformed to this world,”—for the point is to show that a man is conformed to whatever he loves,—to this authority, then, if I seek for a parallel passage in the Old Testament, I find several; but there is one book of Solomon, called Ecclesiastes, which at great length brings all earthly things into utter contempt. The book begins thus: “Vanity of the vain, saith the Preacher, vanity of the vain; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun?” If all these words are considered, weighed, and thoroughly examined, many things are found of essential importance to those who seek to flee from the world and to take shelter in God; but this requires time and our discourse hastens on to other topics. But, after this beginning, he goes on to show in detail that the vain are those who are deceived by things of this sort; and he calls this which deceives them vanity,—not that God did not create those things, but because men choose to subject themselves by their sins to those things, which the divine law has made subject to them in well-doing. For when you consider things beneath yourself to be admirable and desirable, what is this but to be cheated and misled by unreal goods? The man, then, who is temperate in such mortal and transient things has his rule of life confirmed by both Testaments, that he should love none of these things, nor think them desirable for their own sakes, but should use them as far as is required for the purposes and duties of life, with the moderation of an employer instead of the ardor of a lover. These remarks on temperance are few in proportion to the greatness of the theme, but perhaps too many in view of the task on hand.

CHAPTER 22

FORTITUDE COMES FROM THE LOVE OF GOD

40. On fortitude we must be brief. The love, then, of which we speak, which ought with all sanctity to burn in desire for God, is called temperance, in not seeking for earthly things, and fortitude in bearing the loss of them. But among all things which are possessed in this life, the body

is, by God’s most righteous laws, for the sin of old, man’s heaviest bond, which is well known as a fact but most incomprehensible in its mystery. Lest this bond should be shaken and disturbed, the soul is shaken with the fear of toil and pain; lest it should be lost and destroyed, the soul is shaken with the fear of death. For the soul loves it from the force of habit, not knowing that by using it well and wisely its resurrection and reformation will, by the divine help and decree, be without any trouble made subject to its authority. But when the soul turns to God wholly in this love, it knows these things, and so will not only disregard death, but will even desire it.

41. Then there is the great struggle with pain. But there is nothing, though of iron hardness, which the fire of love cannot subdue. And when the mind is carried up to God in this love, it will soar above all torture free and glorious, with wings beauteous and unhurt, on which chaste love rises to the embrace of God. Otherwise God must allow the lovers of gold, the lovers of praise, the lovers of women, to have more fortitude than the lovers of Himself, though love in those cases is rather to be called passion or lust. And yet even here we may see with what force the mind presses on with unflagging energy, in spite of all alarms, towards that it loves; and we learn that we should bear all things rather than forsake God, since those men bear so much in order to forsake Him.

CHAPTER 23

SCRIPTURE PRECEPTS AND EXAMPLES OF FORTITUDE

42. Instead of quoting here authorities from the New Testament, where it is said, “Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience and experience, hope;” and where, in addition to these words, there is proof and confirmation of them from the example of those who spoke them; I will rather summon an example of patience from the Old Testament, against which the Manichaeans make fierce assaults. Nor will I refer to the man who, in the midst of great bodily suffering, and with a dreadful disease in his limbs, not only bore human evils, but discoursed of things divine. Whoever gives considerate attention to the utterances of this man, will learn from every one of them what value is to be attached to those things which men try to keep in their power, and in so doing are themselves brought by

passion into bondage, so that they become the slaves of mortal things, while seeking ignorantly to be their masters. This man, in the loss of all his wealth, and on being suddenly reduced to the greatest poverty, kept his mind so unshaken and fixed upon God, as to manifest that these things were not great in his view, but that he was great in relation to them, and God to him. If this mind were to be found in men in our day, we should not be so strongly cautioned in the New Testament against the possession of these things in order that we may be perfect; for to have these things without cleaving to them is much more admirable than not to have them at all.

43. But since we are speaking here of bearing pain and bodily sufferings, I pass from this man, great as he was, indomitable as he was: this is the case of a man. But these Scriptures present to me a woman of amazing fortitude, and I must at once go on to her case. This woman, along with seven children, allowed the tyrant and executioner to extract her vitals from her body rather than a profane word from her mouth, encouraging her sons by her exhortations, though she suffered in the tortures of their bodies, and was herself to undergo what she called on them to bear. What patience could be greater than this? And yet why should we be astonished that the love of God, implanted in her inmost heart, bore up against tyrant, and executioner, and pain, and sex, and natural affection? Had she not heard, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints?" Had she not heard, "A patient man is better than the mightiest?" Had she not heard, "All that is appointed thee receive; and in pain bear it; and in abasement keep thy patience: for in fire are gold and silver tried?" Had she not heard, "The fire tries the vessels of the potter, and for just men is the trial of tribulation?" These she knew, and many other precepts of fortitude written in these books, which alone existed at that time, by the same divine Spirit who writes those in the New Testament.

CHAPTER 24

OF JUSTICE AND PRUDENCE

44. What of justice that pertains to God? As the Lord says, "Ye cannot serve two masters," and the apostle denounces those who serve the creature rather than the Creator, was it not said before in the Old Testament, "Thou shalt

worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve?” I need say no more on this, for these books are full of such passages. The lover, then, whom we are describing, will get from justice this rule of life, that he must with perfect readiness serve the God whom he loves, the highest good, the highest wisdom, the highest peace; and as regards all other things, must either rule them as subject to himself, or treat them with a view to their subjection. This rule of life, is, as we have shown, confirmed by the authority of both Testaments.

45. With equal brevity we must treat of prudence, to which it belongs to discern between what is to be desired and what to be shunned. Without this, nothing can be done of what we have already spoken of. It is the part of prudence to keep watch with most anxious vigilance, lest any evil influence should stealthily creep in upon us. Thus the Lord often exclaims, “Watch;” and He says, “Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you.” And then it is said, “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?” And no passage can be quoted from the Old Testament more expressly condemning this mental somnolence, which makes us insensible to destruction advancing on us step by step, than those words of the prophet, “He who despiseth small things shall fall by degrees.” On this topic I might discourse at length did our haste allow of it. And did our present task demand it, we might perhaps prove the depth of these mysteries, by making a mock of which profane men in their perfect ignorance fall, not certainly by degrees, but with a headlong overthrow.

CHAPTER 25

FOUR MORAL DUTIES REGARDING THE LOVE OF GOD, OF WHICH LOVE THE REWARD IS ETERNAL LIFE AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH

46. I need say no more about right conduct. For if God is man’s chief good, which you cannot deny, it clearly follows, since to seek the chief good is to live well, that to live well is nothing else but to love God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind; and, as arising from this, that this love must be preserved entire and incorrupt, which is the part of temperance; that it give way before no troubles, which is the part of fortitude; that it serve no other, which is the part of justice; that it be watchful in its inspection of

things lest craft or fraud steal in, which is the part of prudence. This is the one perfection of man, by which alone he can succeed in attaining to the purity of truth. This both Testaments enjoin in concert; this is commended on both sides alike. Why do you continue to cast reproaches on Scriptures of which you are ignorant? Do you not see the folly of your attack upon books which only those who do not understand them find fault with, and which only those who find fault fail in understanding? For neither can an enemy know them, nor can one who knows them be other than a friend to them.

47. Let us then, as many as have in view to reach eternal life, love God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind. For eternal life contains the whole reward in the promise of which we rejoice; nor can the reward precede desert, nor be given to a man before he is worthy of it. What can be more unjust than this, and what is more just than God? We should not then demand the reward before we deserve to get it. Here, perhaps, it is not out of place to ask what is eternal life; or rather let us hear the Bestower of it: “This,” He says, “is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” So eternal life is the knowledge of the truth. See, then, how perverse and preposterous is the character of those who think that their teaching of the knowledge of God will make us perfect, when this is the reward of those already perfect! What else, then, have we to do but first to love with full affection Him whom we desire to know? Hence arises that principle on which we have all along insisted, that there is nothing more wholesome in the Catholic Church than using authority before argument.

CHAPTER 26

LOVE OF OURSELVES AND OF OUR NEIGHBOR

48. To proceed to what remains. It may be thought that there is nothing here about man himself, the lover. But to think this, shows a want of clear perception. For it is impossible for one who loves God not to love himself. For he alone has a proper love for himself who aims diligently at the attainment of the chief and true good; and if this is nothing else but God, as has been shown, what is to prevent one who loves God from loving

himself? And then, among men should there be no bond of mutual love? Yea, verily; so that we can think of no surer step towards the love of God than the love of man to man.

49. Let the Lord then supply us with the other precept in answer to the question about the precepts of life; for He was not satisfied with one as knowing that God is one thing and man another, and that the difference is nothing less than that between the Creator and the thing created in the likeness of its Creator. He says then that the second precept is, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Now you love yourself suitably when you love God better than yourself. What, then, you aim at in yourself you must aim at in your neighbor, namely, that he may love God with a perfect affection. For you do not love him as yourself, unless you try to draw him to that good which you are yourself pursuing. For this is the one good which has room for all to pursue it along with thee. From this precept proceed the duties of human society, in which it is hard to keep from error. But the first thing to aim at is, that we should be benevolent, that is, that we cherish no malice and no evil design against another. For man is the nearest neighbor of man.

50. Hear also what Paul says: “The love of our neighbor,” he says, “worketh no ill.” The testimonies here made use of are very short, but, if I mistake not, they are to the point, and sufficient for the purpose. And every one knows how many and how weighty are the words to be found everywhere in these books on the love of our neighbor. But as a man may sin against another in two ways, either by injuring him or by not helping him when it is in his power, and as it is for these things which no loving man would do that men are called wicked, all that is required is, I think, proved by these words, “The love of our neighbor worketh no ill.” And if we cannot attain to good unless we first desist from working evil, our love of our neighbor is a sort of cradle of our love to God, so that, as it is said, “the love of our neighbor worketh no ill,” we may rise from this to these other words, “We know that all things issue in good to them that love God.”

51. But there is a sense in which these either rise together to fullness and perfection, or, while the love of God is first in beginning, the love of our neighbor is first in coming to perfection. For perhaps divine love takes hold

on us more rapidly at the outset, but we reach perfection more easily in lower things. However that may be, the main point is this, that no one should think that while he despises his neighbor he will come to happiness and to the God whom he loves. And would that it were as easy to seek the good of our neighbor, or to avoid hurting him, as it is for one well trained and kind-hearted to love his neighbor! These things require more than mere good-will, and can be done only by a high degree of thoughtfulness and prudence, which belongs only to those to whom it is given by God, the source of all good. On this topic—which is one, I think, of great difficulty—I will try to say a few words such as my plan admits of, resting all my hope in Him whose gifts these are.

CHAPTER 27

ON DOING GOOD TO THE BODY OF OUR NEIGHBOR

52. Man, then, as viewed by his fellow-man, is a rational soul with a mortal and earthly body in its service. Therefore he who loves his neighbor does good partly to the man’s body, and partly to his soul. What benefits the body is called medicine; what benefits the soul, discipline. Medicine here includes everything that either preserves or restores bodily health. It includes, therefore, not only what belongs to the art of medical men, properly so called, but also food and drink, clothing and shelter, and every means of covering and protection to guard our bodies against injuries and mishaps from without as well as from within. For hunger and thirst, and cold and heat, and all violence from without, produce loss of that health which is the point to be considered.

53. Hence those who seasonably and wisely supply all the things required for warding off these evils and distresses are called compassionate, although they may have been so wise that no painful feeling disturbed their mind in the exercise of compassion. No doubt the word compassionate implies suffering in the heart of the man who feels for the sorrow of another. And it is equally true that a wise man ought to be free from all painful emotion when he assists the needy, when he gives food to the hungry and water to the thirsty, when he clothes the naked, when he takes the stranger into his house, when he sets free the oppressed, when, lastly, he

extends his charity to the dead in giving them burial. Still the epithet compassionate is a proper one, although he acts with tranquillity of mind, not from the stimulus of painful feeling, but from motives of benevolence. There is no harm in the word compassionate when there is no passion in the case.

54. Fools, again, who avoid the exercise of compassion as a vice, because they are not sufficiently moved by a sense of duty without feeling also distressful emotion, are frozen into hard insensibility, which is very different from the calm of a rational serenity. God, on the other hand, is properly called compassionate; and the sense in which He is so will be understood by those whom piety and diligence have made fit to understand. There is a danger lest, in using the words of the learned, we harden the souls of the unlearned by leading them away from compassion instead of softening them with the desire of a charitable disposition. As compassion, then, requires us to ward off these distresses from others, so harmlessness forbids the infliction of them.

CHAPTER 28

ON DOING GOOD TO THE SOUL OF OUR NEIGHBOR. TWO PARTS OF DISCIPLINE, RESTRAINT AND INSTRUCTION. THROUGH GOOD CONDUCT WE ARRIVE AT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH

55. As regards discipline, by which the health of the mind is restored, without which bodily health avails nothing for security against misery, the subject is one of great difficulty. And as in the body we said it is one thing to cure diseases and wounds, which few can do properly, and another thing to meet the cravings of hunger and thirst, and to give assistance in all the other ways in which any man may at any time help another; so in the mind there are some things in which the high and rare offices of the teacher are not much called for,—as, for instance, in advice and exhortation to give to the needy the things already mentioned as required for the body. To give such advice is to aid the mind by discipline, as giving the things themselves is aiding the body by our resources. But there are other cases where diseases of the mind, many and various in kind, are healed in a way strange and indescribable. Unless His medicine were sent from heaven to men, so heedlessly do they go on in sin, there would be no hope of salvation; and,

indeed, even bodily health, if you go to the root of the matter, can have come to men from none but God, who gives to all things their being and their well-being.

56. This discipline, then, which is the medicine of the mind, as far as we can gather from the sacred Scriptures, includes two things, restraint and instruction. Restraint implies fear, and instruction love, in the person benefited by the discipline; for in the giver of the benefit there is the love without the fear. In both of these God Himself, by whose goodness and mercy it is that we are anything, has given us in the two Testaments a rule of discipline. For though both are found in both Testaments, still fear is prominent in the Old, and love in the New; which the apostle calls bondage in the one, and liberty in the other. Of the marvellous order and divine harmony of these Testaments it would take long to speak, and many pious and learned men have discoursed on it. The theme demands many books to set it forth and explain it as far as is possible for man. He, then, who loves his neighbor endeavors all he can to procure his safety in body and in soul, making the health of the mind the standard in his treatment of the body. And as regards the mind, his endeavors are in this order, that he should first fear and then love God. This is true excellence of conduct, and thus the knowledge of the truth is acquired which we are ever in the pursuit of.

57. The Manichaeans agree with me as regards the duty of loving God and our neighbor, but they deny that this is taught in the Old Testament. How greatly they err in this is, I think, clearly shown by the passages quoted above on both these duties. But, in a single word, and one which only stark madness can oppose, do they not see the unreasonableness of denying that these very two precepts which they commend are quoted by the Lord in the Gospel from the Old Testament, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;” and the other, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?” Or if they dare not deny this, from the light of truth being too strong for them, let them deny that these precepts are salutary; let them deny, if they can, that they teach the best morality; let them assert that it is not a duty to love God, or to love our neighbor; that all things do not issue in good to them that love God; that it is not true that the love of our neighbor worketh no ill (a two-fold regulation of human life

which is most salutary and excellent). By such assertions they cut themselves off not only from Christians, but from mankind. But if they dare not speak thus, but must confess the divinity of the precepts, why do they not desist from assailing and maligning with horrible profanity the books from which they are quoted?

58. Will they say, as they often do, that although we find these precepts in the books, it does not follow that all is good that is found there? How to meet and refute this quibble I do not well see. Shall I discuss the words of the Old Testament one by one, to prove to stubborn and ignorant men their perfect agreement with the New Testament? But when will this be done? When shall I have time, or they patience? What, then, is to be done? Shall I desert the cause, and leave them to escape detection in an opinion which, though false and impious, is hard to disprove? I will not. God will Himself be at hand to aid me; nor will He suffer me in those straits to remain helpless or forsaken.

CHAPTER 29

OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

59. Attend, then, ye Manichaeans, if perchance there are some of you of whom your superstition has hold so as to allow you yet to escape. Attend, I say, without obstinacy, without the desire to oppose, otherwise your decision will be fatal to yourselves. No one can doubt, and you are not so lost to the truth as not to understand that if it is good, as all allow, to love God and our neighbor, whatever hangs on these two precepts cannot rightly be pronounced bad. What it is that hangs on them it would be absurd to think of learning from me. Hear Christ Himself; hear Christ, I say; hear the Wisdom of God: “On these two commandments,” He says, “hang all the law and the prophets.”

60. What can the most shameless obstinacy say to this? That these are not Christ’s words? But they are written in the Gospel as His words. That the writing is false? Is not this most profane blasphemy? Is it not most presumptuous to speak thus? Is it not most foolhardy? Is it not most criminal? The worshippers of idols, who hate even the name of Christ,

never dared to speak thus against these Scriptures. For the utter overthrow of all literature will follow, and there will be an end to all books handed down from the past, if what is supported by such a strong popular belief and established by the uniform testimony of so many men and so many times, is brought into such suspicion, that it is not allowed to have the credit and the authority of common history. In fine, what can you quote from any writings of which I may not speak in this way if it is quoted against my opinion and my purpose?

61. And is it not intolerable that they forbid us to believe a book widely known and placed now in the hands of all, while they insist on our believing the book which they quote? If any writing is to be suspected, what should be more so than one which has not merited notoriety, or which may be throughout a forgery, bearing a false name? If you force such a writing on me against my will, and make a display of authority to drive me into belief, shall I, when I have a writing which I see spread far and wide for a length of time, and sanctioned by the concordant testimony of churches scattered over all the world, degrade myself by doubting, and, worse degradation, by doubting at your suggestion? Even if you brought forward other readings, I should not receive them unless supported by general agreement; and this being the case, do you think that now, when you bring forward nothing to compare with the text except your own silly and inconsiderate statement, mankind are so unreasonable and so forsaken by divine Providence as to prefer to those Scriptures not others quoted by you in refutation, but merely your own words? You ought to bring forward another manuscript with the same contents, but incorrupt and more correct, with only the passage wanting which you charge with being spurious. For example, if you hold that the Epistle of Paul to the Romans is spurious, you must bring forward another incorrupt, or rather another manuscript with the same epistle of the same apostle, free from error and corruption. You say you will not, lest you be suspected of corrupting it. This is your usual reply, and a true one. Were you to do this, we should assuredly have this very suspicion; and all men of any sense would have it too. See then what you are to think of your own authority; and consider whether it is right to believe your words against these Scriptures, when the simple fact that a manuscript is brought forward by you makes it dangerous to put faith in it.

CHAPTER 30

THE CHURCH APOSTROPHISED AS TEACHER OF ALL WISDOM. DOCTRINE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

62. But why say more on this? For who but sees that men who dare to speak thus against the Christian Scriptures, though they may not be what they are suspected of being, are at least no Christians? For to Christians this rule of life is given, that we should love the Lord Our God with all the heart, with all the soul, and with all the mind, and our neighbor as ourselves; for on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Rightly, then, Catholic Church, most true mother of Christians, dost thou not only teach that God alone, to find whom is the happiest life, must be worshipped in perfect purity and chastity, bringing in no creature as an object of adoration whom we should be required to serve; and from that incorrupt and inviolable eternity to which alone man should be made subject, in cleaving to which alone the rational soul escapes misery, excluding everything made, everything liable to change, everything under the power of time; without confounding what eternity, and truth, and peace itself keeps separate, or separating what a common majesty unites: but thou dost also contain love and charity to our neighbor in such a way, that for all kinds of diseases with which souls are for their sins afflicted, there is found with thee a medicine of prevailing efficacy.

63. Thy training and teaching are childlike for children, forcible for youths, peaceful for the aged, taking into account the age of the mind as well as of the body. Thou subjectest women to their husbands in chaste and faithful obedience, not to gratify passion, but for the propagation of offspring, and for domestic society. Thou givest to men authority over their wives, not to mock the weaker sex, but in the laws of unfeigned love. Thou dost subordinate children to their parents in a kind of free bondage, and dost set parents over their children in a godly rule. Thou bindest brothers to brothers in a religious tie stronger and closer than that of blood. Without violation of the connections of nature and of choice, thou bringest within the bond of mutual love every relationship of kindred, and every alliance of affinity. Thou teachest servants to cleave to their masters from delight in their task rather than from the necessity of their position. Thou renderest masters

forbearing to their servants, from a regard to God their common Master, and more disposed to advise than to compel. Thou unitest citizen to citizen, nation to nation, yea, man to man, from the recollection of their first parents, not only in society but in fraternity. Thou teachest kings to seek the good of their peoples; thou counsellest peoples to be subject to their kings. Thou teachest carefully to whom honor is due, to whom regard, to whom reverence, to whom fear, to whom consolation, to whom admonition, to whom encouragement, to whom discipline, to whom rebuke, to whom punishment; showing both how all are not due to all, and how to all love is due, and how injury is due to none.

64. Then, after this human love has nourished and invigorated the mind cleaving to thy breast, and fitted it for following God, when the divine majesty has begun to disclose itself as far as suffices for man while a dweller on the earth, such fervent charity is produced, and such a flame of divine love is kindled, that by the burning out of all vices, and by the purification and sanctification of the man, it becomes plain how divine are these words, “I am a consuming fire,” and, “I have come to send fire on the earth.” These two utterances of one God stamped on both Testaments, exhibit with harmonious testimony, the sanctification of the soul, pointing forward to the accomplishment of that which is also quoted in the New Testament from the Old: “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? Where, O death, is thy contest?” Could these heretics understand this one saying, no longer proud but quite reconciled, they would worship God nowhere but with thee and in thy bosom. In thee, as is fit, divine precepts are kept by widely-scattered multitudes. In thee, as is fit, it is well understood how much more heinous sin is when the law is known than when it is unknown. For “the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law,” which adds to the force with which the consciousness of disregard of the precept strikes and slays. In thee it is seen, as is fit, how vain is effort under the law, when lust lays waste the mind, and is held in check by fear of punishment, instead of being overborne by the love of virtue. Thine, as is fit, are the many hospitable, the many friendly, the many compassionate, the many learned, the many chaste, the many saints, the many so ardent in their love to God, that in perfect continence and amazing indifference to this world they find happiness even in solitude.

CHAPTER 31

THE LIFE OF THE ANACHORETES AND COENOBITES SET AGAINST THE CONTINENCE OF THE MANICHAEANS

65. What must we think is seen by those who can live without seeing their fellow-creatures, though not without loving them? It must be something transcending human things in contemplating which man can live without seeing his fellow-man. Hear now, ye Manichaeans, the customs and notable continence of perfect Christians, who have thought it right not only to praise but also to practise the height of chastity, that you may be restrained, if there is any shame in you, from vaunting your abstinence before uninstructed minds as if it were the hardest of all things. I will speak of things of which you are not ignorant, though you hide them from us. For who does not know that there is a daily increasing multitude of Christian men of absolute continence spread all over the world, especially in the East and in Egypt, as you cannot help knowing?

66. I will say nothing of those to whom I just now alluded, who, in complete seclusion from the view of men, inhabit regions utterly barren, content with simple bread, which is brought to them periodically, and with water, enjoying communion with God, to whom in purity of mind they cleave, and most blessed in contemplating His beauty, which can be seen only by the understanding of saints. I will say nothing of them, because some people think them to have abandoned human things more than they ought, not considering how much those may benefit us in their minds by prayer, and in their lives by example, whose bodies we are not permitted to see. But to discuss this point would take long, and would be fruitless; for if a man does not of his own accord regard this high pitch of sanctity as admirable and honorable, how can our speaking lead him to do so? Only the Manichaeans, who make a boast of nothing, should be reminded that the abstinence and continence of the great saints of the Catholic Church has gone so far, that some think it should be checked and recalled within the limits of humanity,—so far above men, even in the judgment of those who disapprove, have their minds soared.

67. But if this is beyond our tolerance, who can but admire and commend those who, slighting and discarding the pleasures of this world, living

together in a most chaste and holy society, unite in passing their time in prayers, in readings, in discussions, without any swelling of pride, or noise of contention, or sullenness of envy; but quiet, modest, peaceful, their life is one of perfect harmony and devotion to God, an offering most acceptable to Him from whom the power to do those things is obtained? No one possesses anything of his own; no one is a burden to another. They work with their hands in such occupations as may feed their bodies without distracting their minds from God. The product of their toil they give to the decans or tithesmen,—so called from being set over the tithes,—so that no one is occupied with the care of his body, either in food or clothes, or in anything else required for daily use or for the common ailments. These decans, again, arranging everything with great care, and meeting promptly the demands made by that life on account of bodily infirmities, have one called “father,” to whom they give in their accounts. These fathers are not only more saintly in their conduct, but also distinguished for divine learning, and of high character in every way; and without pride they superintend those whom they call their children, having themselves great authority in giving orders, and meeting with willing obedience from those under their charge. At the close of the day they assemble from their separate dwellings before their meal to hear their father, assembling to the number of three thousand at least for one father; for one may have even a much larger number than this. They listen with astonishing eagerness in perfect silence, and give expression to the feelings of their minds as moved by the words of the preacher, in groans, or tears, or signs of joy without noise or shouting. Then there is refreshment for the body, as much as health and a sound condition of the body requires, every one checking unlawful appetite, so as not to go to excess even in the poor, inexpensive fare provided. So they not only abstain from flesh and wine, in order to gain the mastery over their passions, but also from those things which are only the more likely to whet the appetite of the palate and of the stomach, from what some call their greater cleanness, which often serves as a ridiculous and disgraceful excuse for an unseemly taste for exquisite viands, as distant from animal food. Whatever they possess in addition to what is required for their support (and much is obtained, owing to their industry and frugality), they distribute to the needy with greater care than they took in procuring it for themselves. For while they make no effort to obtain abundance, they make every effort to prevent their abundance remaining with them,—so much so, that they send shiploads to places inhabited by poor people. I need say no more on a matter known to all.

68. Such, too, is the life of the women, who serve God assiduously and chastely, living apart and removed as far as propriety demands from the men, to whom they are united only in pious affection and in imitation of virtue. No young men are allowed access to them, nor even old men, however respectable and approved, except to the porch, in order to furnish necessary supplies. For the women occupy and maintain themselves by working in wool, and hand over the cloth to the brethren, from whom, in return, they get what they need for food. Such customs, such a life, such arrangements, such a system, I could not commend as it deserves, if I wished to commend it; besides, I am afraid that it would seem as if I thought it unlikely to gain acceptance from the mere description of it, if I considered myself obliged to add an ornamental eulogium to the simple narrative. Ye Manichaeans, find fault here if you can. Do not bring into prominence our tares before men too blind to discriminate.

CHAPTER 32

PRAISE OF THE CLERGY

69. There is not, however, such narrowness in the moral excellence of the Catholic Church as that I should limit my praise of it to the life of those here mentioned. For how many bishops have I known most excellent and holy men, how many presbyters, how many deacons, and ministers of all kinds of the divine sacraments, whose virtue seems to me more admirable and more worthy of commendation on account of the greater difficulty of preserving it amidst the manifold varieties of men, and in this life of turmoil! For they preside over men needing cure as much as over those already cured. The vices of the crowd must be borne with in order that they may be cured, and the plague must be endured before it is subdued. To keep here the best way of life and a mind calm and peaceful is very hard. Here, in a word, we are among people who are learning to live. There they live.

CHAPTER 33

ANOTHER KIND OF MEN LIVING TOGETHER IN CITIES. FASTS OF THREE DAYS

70. Still I would not on this account cast a slight upon a praiseworthy class of Christians,—those, namely, who live together in cities, quite apart from common life. I saw at Milan a lodging-house of saints, in number not a few, presided over by one presbyter, a man of great excellence and learning. At Rome I knew several places where there was in each one eminent for weight of character, and prudence, and divine knowledge, presiding over all the rest who lived with him, in Christian charity, and sanctity, and liberty. These, too, are not burdensome to any one; but, in the Eastern fashion, and on the authority of the Apostle Paul, they maintain themselves with their own hands. I was told that many practised fasts of quite amazing severity, not merely taking only one meal daily towards night, which is everywhere quite common, but very often continuing for three days or more in succession without food or drink. And this among not men only, but women, who also live together in great numbers as widows or virgins, gaining a livelihood by spinning and weaving, and presided over in each case by a woman of the greatest judgment and experience, skilled and accomplished not only in directing and forming moral conduct, but also in instructing the understanding.

71. With all this, no one is pressed to endure hardships for which he is unfit; nothing is imposed on any one against his will; nor is he condemned by the rest because he confesses himself too feeble to imitate them: for they bear in mind how strongly Scripture enjoins charity on all: they bear in mind “To the pure all things are pure,” and “Not that which entereth into your mouth defileth you, but that which cometh out of it.” Accordingly, all their endeavors are concerned not about the rejection of kinds of food as polluted, but about the subjugation of inordinate desire and the maintenance of brotherly love. They remember, “Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them;” and again, “Neither if we eat shall we abound, nor if we refrain from eating shall we be in want;” and, above all, this: “It is good, my brethren, not to eat flesh, nor drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother is offended;” for this passage shows that love is the end to be aimed at in all these things. “For one man,” he says,

“believes that he can eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. He that eateth, let him not despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath approved him. Who art thou that thou shouldest judge another man’s servant? To his own master he stands or fails; but he shall stand: for God is able to make him to stand.” And a little after: “He that eateth, to the Lord he eateth, and giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.” And also in what follows: “So every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not, then, any more judge one another: but judge this rather, that ye place no stumbling-block, or cause of offence, in the way of a brother. I know, and am confident in the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing common in itself: but to him that thinketh anything to be common, to him it is common.” Could he have shown better that it is not in the things we eat, but in the mind, that there is a power able to pollute it, and therefore that even those who are fit to think lightly of these things, and know perfectly that they are not polluted if they take any food in mental superiority, without being gluttons, should still have regard to charity? See what he adds: “For if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably.”

72. Read the rest: it is too long to quote all. You will find that those able to think lightly of such things,—that is, those of greater strength and stability,—are told that they must nevertheless abstain, lest those should be offended who from their weakness are still in need of such abstinence. The people I was describing know and observe these things; for they are Christians, not heretics. They understand Scripture according to the apostolic teaching, not according to the presumptuous and fictitious name of apostle. Him that eats not no one despises; him that eats no one judges; he who is weak eats herbs. Many who are strong, however, do this for the sake of the weak; with many the reason for so doing is not this, but that they may have a cheaper diet, and may lead a life of the greatest tranquillity, with the least expensive provision for the support of the body. “For all things are lawful for me,” he says; “but I will not be brought under the power of any.” Thus many do not eat flesh, and yet do not superstitiously regard it as unclean. And so the same people who abstain when in health take it when unwell without any fear, if it is required as a cure. Many drink no wine; but they do not think

that wine defiles them; for they cause it to be given with the greatest propriety and moderation to people of languid temperament, and, in short, to all who cannot have bodily health without it. When some foolishly refuse it, they counsel them as brothers not to let a silly superstition make them weaker instead of making them holier. They read to them the apostle's precept to his disciple to "take a little wine for his many infirmities." Then they diligently exercise piety; bodily exercise, they know, profiteth for a short time, as the same apostle says.

73. Those, then who are able, and they are without number, abstain both from flesh and from wine for two reasons: either for the weakness of their brethren, or for their own liberty. Charity is principally attended to. There is charity in their choice of diet, charity in their speech, charity in their dress, charity in their looks. Charity is the point where they meet, and the plan by which they act. To transgress against charity is thought criminal, like transgressing against God. Whatever opposes this is attacked and expelled; whatever injures it is not allowed to continue for a single day. They know that it has been so enjoined by Christ and the apostles; that without it all things are empty, with it all are fulfilled.

CHAPTER 34

THE CHURCH IS NOT TO BE BLAMED FOR THE CONDUCT OF BAD CHRISTIANS, WORSHIPPERS OF TOMBS AND PICTURES

74. Make objections against these, ye Manichaeans, if you can. Look at these people, and speak of them reproachfully, if you dare, without falsehood. Compare their fasts with your fasts, their chastity with yours; compare them to yourselves in dress, food, self-restraint, and, lastly, in charity. Compare, which is most to the point, their precepts with yours. Then you will see the difference between show and sincerity, between the right way and the wrong, between faith and imposture, between strength and inflatedness, between happiness and wretchedness, between unity and disunion; in short, between the sirens of superstition and the harbor of religion.

75. Do not summon against me professors of the Christian name, who neither know nor give evidence of the power of their profession. Do not

hunt up the numbers of ignorant people, who even in the true religion are superstitious, or are so given up to evil passions as to forget what they have promised to God. I know that there are many worshippers of tombs and pictures. I know that there are many who drink to great excess over the dead, and who, in the feasts which they make for corpses, bury themselves over the buried, and give to their gluttony and drunkenness the name of religion. I know that there are many who in words have renounced this world, and yet desire to be burdened with all the weight of worldly things, and rejoice in such burdens. Nor is it surprising that among so many multitudes you should find some by condemning whose life you may deceive the unwary and seduce them from Catholic safety; for in your small numbers you are at a loss when called on to show even one out of those whom you call the elect who keeps the precepts, which in your indefensible superstition you profess. How silly those are, how impious, how mischievous, and to what extent they are neglected by most, nearly all of you, I have shown in another volume.

76. My advice to you now is this: that you should at least desist from slandering the Catholic Church, by declaiming against the conduct of men whom the Church herself condemns, seeking daily to correct them as wicked children. Then, if any of them by good will and by the help of God are corrected, they regain by repentance what they had lost by sin. Those, again, who with wicked will persist in their old vices, or even add to them others still worse, are indeed allowed to remain in the field of the Lord, and to grow along with the good seed; but the time for separating the tares will come. Or if, from their having at least the Christian name, they are to be placed among the chaff rather than among thistles, there will also come One to purge the floor and to separate the chaff from the wheat, and to assign to each part (according to its desert) the due reward.

CHAPTER 35

MARRIAGE AND PROPERTY ALLOWED TO THE BAPTIZED BY THE APOSTLES

77. Meanwhile, why do you rage? why does party spirit blind your eyes? Why do you entangle yourselves in a long defence of such great error? Seek for fruit in the field, seek for wheat in the floor: they will be found easily,

and will present themselves to the inquirer. Why do you look so exclusively at the dross? Why do you use the roughness of the hedge to scare away the inexperienced from the fatness of the garden? There is a proper entrance, though known to but a few; and by it men come in, though you disbelieve it, or do not wish to find it. In the Catholic Church there are believers without number who do not use the world, and there are those who “use it,” in the words of the apostle, “as not using it,” as was proved in those times when Christians were forced to worship idols. For then, how many wealthy men, how many peasant householders, how many merchants, how many military men, how many leading men in their own cities, and how many senators, people of both sexes, giving up all these empty and transitory things, though while they used them they were not bound down by them, endured death for the salutary faith and religion, and proved to unbelievers that instead of being possessed by all these things they really possessed them?

78. Why do you reproach us by saying that men renewed in baptism ought no longer to beget children, or to possess fields, and houses, and money? Paul allows it. For, as cannot be denied, he wrote to believers, after recounting many kinds of evil-doers who shall not possess the kingdom of God: “And such were you,” he says: “but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” By the washed and sanctified, no one, assuredly, will venture to think any are meant but believers, and those who have renounced this world. But, after showing to whom he writes, let us see whether he allows these things to them. He goes on: “All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Meat for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. But God raised up the Lord, and will raise us up also by His own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is made one body? for the twain, saith He, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Whatever sin a man doeth is without the body: but he that committeth

fornication sinneth against his own body. Know ye not that your members are the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a great price: glorify God, and carry Him in your body." "But of the things concerning which ye wrote to me: it is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may have leisure for prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment. For I would that all men were even as I myself: but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that."

79. Has the apostle, think you, both shown sufficiently to the strong what is highest, and permitted to the weaker what is next best? Not to touch a woman he shows is highest when he says, "I would that all men were even as I myself." But next to this highest is conjugal chastity, that man may not be the prey of fornication. Did he say that these people were not yet believers because they were married? Indeed, by this conjugal chastity he says that those who are united are sanctified by one another, if one of them is an unbeliever, and that their children also are sanctified. "The unbelieving husband," he says, "is sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving woman by the believing husband: otherwise your children would be unclean; but now are they holy." Why do you persist in opposition to such plain truth? Why do you try to darken the light of Scripture by vain shadows?

80. Do not say that catechumens are allowed to have wives, but not believers; that catechumens may have money, but not believers. For there are many who use as not using. And in that sacred washing the renewal of the new man is begun so as gradually to reach perfection, in some more quickly, in others more slowly. The progress, however, to a new life is made in the case of many, if we view the matter without hostility, but attentively.

As the apostle says of himself, “Though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day.” The apostle says that the inward man is renewed day by day that it may reach perfection; and you wish it to begin with perfection! And it were well if you did wish it. In reality, you aim not at raising the weak, but at misleading the unwary. You ought not to have spoken so arrogantly, even if it were known that you are perfect in your childish precepts. But when your conscience knows that those whom you bring into your sect, when they come to a more intimate acquaintance with you, will find many things in you which nobody hearing you accuse others would suspect, is it not great impertinence to demand perfection in the weaker Catholics, to turn away the inexperienced from the Catholic Church, while you show nothing of the kind in yourself to those thus turned away? But not to seem to inveigh against you without reason, I will now close this volume, and will proceed at last to set forth the precepts of your life and your notable customs.

ON THE MORALS OF THE MANICHAEANS

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(DE MORIBUS MANICHAEORUM)

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TRANSLATED BY THE

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BOMBAY

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CHAPTER 1

THE SUPREME GOOD IS THAT WHICH IS POSSESSED OF SUPREME EXISTENCE

1. Every one, I suppose, will allow that the question of things good and evil belongs to moral science, in which such terms are in common use. It is therefore to be wished that men would bring to these inquiries such a clear intellectual perfection as might enable them to see the chief good, than which nothing is better or higher, next in order to which comes a rational soul in a state of purity and perfection. If this were clearly understood, it would also become evident that the chief good is that which is properly described as having supreme and original existence. For that exists in the highest sense of the word which continues always the same, which is throughout like itself, which cannot in any part be corrupted or changed, which is not subject to time, which admits of no variation in its present as compared with its former condition. This is existence in its true sense. For in this signification of the word existence there is implied a nature which is self-contained, and which continues immutably. Such things can be said only of God, to whom there is nothing contrary in the strict sense of the word. For the contrary of existence is non-existence. There is therefore no nature contrary to God. But since the minds with which we approach the study of these subjects have their vision damaged and dulled by silly notions, and by perversity of will, let us try as we can to gain some little knowledge of this great matter by degrees and with caution, making our inquiries not like men able to see, but like men groping the dark.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT EVIL IS. THAT EVIL IS THAT WHICH IS AGAINST NATURE. IN ALLOWING THIS, THE MANICHAEANS REFUTE THEMSELVES

2. You Manichaeans often, if not in every case, ask those whom you try to bring over to your heresy, Whence is evil? Suppose I had now met you for the first time, I would ask you, if you please, to follow my example in putting aside for a little the explanation you suppose yourselves to have got of these subjects, and to commence this great inquiry with me as if for the first time. You ask me, Whence is evil? I ask you in return, What is evil? Which is the more reasonable question? Are those right who ask whence a thing is, when they do not know what it is; or he who thinks it necessary to inquire first what it is, in order to avoid the gross absurdity of searching for the origin of a thing unknown? Your answer is quite correct, when you say that evil is that which is contrary to nature; for no one is so mentally blind as not to see that, in every kind, evil is that which is contrary to the nature of the kind. But the establishment of this doctrine is the overthrow of your heresy. For evil is no nature, if it is contrary to nature. Now, according to you, evil is a certain nature and substance. Moreover, whatever is contrary to nature must oppose nature and seek its destruction. For nature means nothing else than that which anything is conceived of as being in its own kind. Hence is the new word which we now use derived from the word for being,—essence namely, or, as we usually say, substance,—while before these words were in use, the word nature was used instead. Here, then, if you will consider the matter without stubbornness, we see that evil is that which falls away from essence and tends to non-existence.

3. Accordingly, when the Catholic Church declares that God is the author of all natures and substances, those who understand this understand at the same time that God is not the author of evil. For how can He who is the cause of the being of all things be at the same time the cause of their not being,—that is, of their falling off from essence and tending to non-existence? For this is what reason plainly declares to be the definition of evil. Now, how can that race of evil of yours, which you make the supreme evil, be against nature, that is, against substance, when it, according to you, is itself a nature and substance? For if it acts against itself, it destroys its

own existence; and when that is completely done, it will come at last to be the supreme evil. But this cannot be done, because you will have it not only to be, but to be everlasting. That cannot then be the chief evil which is spoken of as a substance.

4. But what am I to do? I know that many of you can understand nothing of all this. I know, too, that there are some who have a good understanding and can see these things, and yet are so stubborn in their choice of evil,—a choice that will ruin their understanding as well,—that they try rather to find what reply they can make in order to impose upon inactive and feeble minds, instead of giving their assent to the truth. Still I shall not regret having written either what one of you may come some day to consider impartially, and be led to abandon your error, or what men of understanding and in allegiance to God, and who are still untainted with your errors, may read and so be kept from being led astray by your addresses.

CHAPTER 3

IF EVIL IS DEFINED AS THAT WHICH IS HURTFUL, THIS IMPLIES ANOTHER REFUTATION OF THE MANICHAEANS

5. Let us then inquire more carefully, and, if possible, more plainly. I ask you again, What is evil? If you say it is that which is hurtful, here, too, you will not answer amiss. But consider, I pray you; be on your guard, I beg of you; be so good as to lay aside party spirit, and make the inquiry for the sake of finding the truth, not of getting the better of it. Whatever is hurtful takes away some good from that to which it is hurtful; for without the loss of good there can be no hurt. What, I appeal to you, can be plainer than this? what more intelligible? What else is required for complete demonstration to one of average understanding, if he is not perverse? But, if this is granted, the consequence seems plain. In that race which you take for the chief evil, nothing can be liable to be hurt, since there is no good in it. But if, as you assert, there are two natures,—the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness; since you make the kingdom of light to be God, attributing to it an uncompounded nature, so that it has no part inferior to another, you must grant, however decidedly in opposition to yourselves, you must grant, nevertheless, that this nature, which you not only do not

deny to be the chief good, but spend all your strength in trying to show that it is so, is immutable, incorruptible, impenetrable, inviolable, for otherwise it would not be the chief good; for the chief good is that than which there is nothing better, and for such a nature to be hurt is impossible. Again, if, as has been shown, to hurt is to deprive of good, there can be no hurt to the kingdom of darkness, for there is no good in it. And as the kingdom of light cannot be hurt, as it is inviolable, what can the evil you speak of be hurtful to?

CHAPTER 4

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT IS GOOD IN ITSELF AND WHAT IS GOOD BY PARTICIPATION

6. Now, compare with this perplexity, from which you cannot escape, the consistency of the statements in the teaching of the Catholic Church, according to which there is one good which is good supremely and in itself, and not by the participation of any good, but by its own nature and essence; and another good which is good by participation, and by having something bestowed. Thus it has its being as good from the supreme good, which, however, is still self-contained, and loses nothing. This second kind of good is called a creature, which is liable to hurt through falling away. But of this falling away God is not the author, for He is author of existence and of being. Here we see the proper use of the word evil; for it is correctly applied not to essence, but to negation or loss. We see, too, what nature it is which is liable to hurt. This nature is not the chief evil, for when it is hurt it loses good; nor is it the chief good, for its falling away from good is because it is good not intrinsically, but by possessing the good. And a thing cannot be good by nature when it is spoken of as being made, which shows that the goodness was bestowed. Thus, on the one hand, God is the good, and all things which He has made are good, though not so good as He who made them. For what madman would venture to require that the works should equal the workman, the creatures the Creator? What more do you want? Could you wish for anything plainer than this?

CHAPTER 5

IF EVIL IS DEFINED TO BE CORRUPTION, THIS COMPLETELY REFUTES THE MANICHAEAN HERESY

7. I ask a third time, What is evil? Perhaps you will reply, Corruption. Undeniably this is a general definition of evil; for corruption implies opposition to nature, and also hurt. But corruption exists not by itself, but in some substance which it corrupts; for corruption itself is not a substance. So the thing which it corrupts is not corruption, is not evil; for what is corrupted suffers the loss of integrity and purity. So that which has no purity to lose cannot be corrupted; and what has, is necessarily good by the participation of purity. Again, what is corrupted is perverted; and what is perverted suffers the loss of order, and order is good. To be corrupted, then, does not imply the absence of good; for in corruption it can be deprived of good, which could not be if there was the absence of good. Therefore that race of darkness, if it was destitute of all good, as you say it was, could not be corrupted, for it had nothing which corruption could take from it; and if corruption takes nothing away, it does not corrupt. Say now, if you dare, that God and the kingdom of God can be corrupted, when you cannot show how the kingdom of the devil, such as you make it, can be corrupted.

CHAPTER 6

WHAT CORRUPTION AFFECTS AND WHAT IT IS

8. What further does the Catholic light say? What do you suppose, but what is the actual truth, that it is the created substance which can be corrupted, for the uncreated, which is the chief good, is incorruptible; and corruption, which is the chief evil, cannot be corrupted; besides, that it is not a substance? But if you ask what corruption is, consider to what it seeks to bring the things which it corrupts; for it affects those things according to its own nature. Now all things by corruption fall away from what they were, and are brought to non-continuance, to non-existence; for existence implies continuance. Thus the supreme and chief existence is so called because it continues in itself, or is self-contained. In the case of a thing changing for the better, the change is not from continuance, but from perversion to the worse, that is, from falling away from essence; the author of which falling

away is not He who is the author of the essence. So in some things there is change for the better, and so a tendency towards existence. And this change is not called a perversion, but reversion or conversion; for perversion is opposed to orderly arrangement. Now things which tend towards existence tend towards order, and, attaining order they attain existence, as far as that is possible to a creature. For order reduces to a certain uniformity that which it arranges; and existence is nothing else than being one. Thus, so far as anything acquires unity, so far it exists. For uniformity and harmony are the effects of unity, and by these compound things exist as far as they have existence. For simple things exist by themselves, for they are one. But things not simple imitate unity by the agreement of their parts; and so far as they attain this, so far they exist. This arrangement is the cause of existence, disorder of non-existence; and perversion or corruption are the other names for disorder. So whatever is corrupted tends to non-existence. You may now be left to reflect upon the effect of corruption, that you may discover what is the chief evil; for it is that which corruption aims at accomplishing.

CHAPTER 7

THE GOODNESS OF GOD PREVENTS CORRUPTION FROM BRINGING ANYTHING TO NON-EXISTENCE. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CREATING AND FORMING

9. But the goodness of God does not permit the accomplishment of this end, but so orders all things that fall away that they may exist where their existence is most suitable, till in the order of their movements they return to that from which they fell away. Thus, when rational souls fall away from God, although they possess the greatest amount of free-will, He ranks them in the lower grades of creation, where their proper place is. So they suffer misery by the divine judgment, while they are ranked suitably to their deserts. Hence we see the excellence of that saying which you are always inveighing against so strongly, “I make good things, and create evil things.” To create is to form and arrange. So in some copies it is written, “I make good things and form evil things.” To make is used of things previously not in existence; but to form is to arrange what had some kind of existence, so as to improve and enlarge it. Such are the things which God arranges when He says, “I form evil things,” meaning things which are falling off, and so tending to non-existence,—not things which have reached that to which

they tend. For it has been said, Nothing is allowed in the providence of God to go the length of non-existence.

10. These things might be discussed more fully and at greater length, but enough has been said for our purpose in dealing with you. We have only to show you the gate which you despair of finding, and make the uninstructed despair of it too. You can be made to enter only by good-will, on which the divine mercy bestows peace, as the song in the Gospel says, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good-will.” It is enough, I say, to have shown you that there is no way of solving the religious question of good and evil, unless whatever is, as far as it is, is from God; while as far as it falls away from being it is not of God, and yet is always ordered by Divine Providence in agreement with the whole system. If you do not yet see this, I know nothing else that I can do but to discuss the things already said with greater particularity. For nothing save piety and purity can lead the mind to greater things.

CHAPTER 8

EVIL IS NOT A SUBSTANCE, BUT A DISAGREEMENT HOSTILE TO SUBSTANCE

11. For what other answer will you give to the question, What is evil? but either that it is against nature, or that it is hurtful, or that it is corruption, or something similar? But I have shown that in these replies you make shipwreck of your cause, unless, indeed, you will answer in the childish way in which you generally speak to children, that evil is fire, poison, a wild beast, and so on. For one of the leaders of this heresy, whose instructions we attended with great familiarity and frequency, used to say with reference to a person who held that evil was not a substance, “I should like to put a scorpion in the man’s hand, and see whether he would not withdraw his hand; and in so doing he would get a proof, not in words but in the thing itself, that evil is a substance, for he would not deny that the animal is a substance.” He said this not in the presence of the person, but to us, when we repeated to him the remark which had troubled us, giving, as I said, a childish answer to children. For who with the least tincture of learning or science does not see that these things hurt by disagreement with the bodily temperament, while at other times they agree with it, so as not

only not to hurt, but to produce the best effects? For if this poison were evil in itself, the scorpion itself would suffer first and most. In fact, if the poison were quite taken from the animal, it would die. So for its body it is evil to lose what it is evil for our body to receive; and it is good for it to have what it is good for us to want. Is the same thing then both good and evil? By no means; but evil is what is against nature, for this is evil both to the animal and to us. This evil is the disagreement, which certainly is not a substance, but hostile to substance. Whence then is it? See what it leads to, and you will learn, if any inner light lives in you. It leads all that it destroys to non-existence. Now God is the author of existence; and there is no existence which, as far as it is existing, leads to non-existence: Thus we learn whence disagreement is not; as to whence it is, nothing can be said.

12. We read in history of a female criminal in Athens, who succeeded in drinking the quantity of poison allotted as a fatal draught for the condemned with little or no injury to her health, by taking it at intervals. So being condemned, she took the poison in the prescribed quantity like the rest, but rendered it powerless by accustoming herself to it, and did not die like the rest. And as this excited great wonder, she was banished. If poison is an evil, are we to think that she made it to be no evil to her? What could be more absurd than this? But because disagreement is an evil, what she did was to make the poisonous matter agree with her own body by a process of habituation. For how could she by any amount of cunning have brought it about that disagreement should not hurt her? Why so? Because what is truly and properly an evil is hurtful both always and to all. Oil is beneficial to our bodies, but very much the opposite to many six-footed animals. And is not hellebore sometimes food, sometimes medicine, and sometimes poison. Does not every one maintain that salt taken in excess is poisonous? And yet the benefits to the body from salt are innumerable and most important. Sea-water is injurious when drunk by land animals, but it is most suitable and useful to many who bathe their bodies in it and to fish it is useful and wholesome in both ways. Bread nourishes man, but kills hawks. And does not mud itself, which is offensive and noxious when swallowed or smelt, serve as cooling to the touch in hot weather, and as a cure for wounds from fire? What can be nastier than dung, or more worthless than ashes? And yet they are of such use to the fields, that the Romans thought divine honors

due to the discoverer, Stercutio, from whose name the word for dung [stercus] is derived.

13. But why enumerate details which are countless? We need not go farther than the four elements themselves, which, as every one knows, are beneficial when there is agreement, and bitterly opposed to nature when there is disagreement in the objects acted upon. We who live in air die under earth or under water, while innumerable animals creep alive in sand or loose earth, and fish die in our air. Fire consumes our bodies, but, when suitably applied, it both restores from cold, and expels diseases without number. The sun to which you bow the knee, and than which, indeed, there is no fairer object among visible things, strengthens the eyes of eagles, but hurts and dims our eyes when we gaze on it; and yet we too can accustom ourselves to look upon it without injury. Will you, then, allow the sun to be compared to the poison which the Athenian woman made harmless by habituating herself to it? Reflect for once, and consider that if a substance is an evil because it hurts some one, the light which you worship cannot be acquitted of this charge. See the preferableness of making evil in general to consist in this disagreement, from which the sun's ray produces dimness in the eyes, though nothing is pleasanter to the eyes than light.

CHAPTER 9

THE MANICHAEAN FICTIONS ABOUT THINGS GOOD AND EVIL ARE NOT CONSISTENT WITH THEMSELVES

14. I have said these things to make you cease, if that is possible, giving the name of evil to a region boundless in depth and length; to a mind wandering through the region; to the five caverns of the elements,—one full of darkness, another of waters, another of winds, another of fire, another of smoke; to the animals born in each of these elements,—serpents in the darkness, swimming creatures in the waters, flying creatures in the winds, quadrupeds in the fire, bipeds in the smoke. For these things, as you describe them, cannot be called evil; for all such things, as far as they exist, must have their existence from the most high God, for as far as they exist they are good. If pain and weakness is an evil, the animals you speak of were of such physical strength that their abortive offspring, after, as your

sect believes, the world was formed of them, fell from heaven to earth, according to you, and could not die. If blindness is an evil, they could see; if deafness, they could hear. If to be nearly or altogether dumb is an evil, their speech was so clear and intelligible, that, as you assert, they decided to make war against God in compliance with an address delivered in their assembly. If sterility is an evil, they were prolific in children. If exile is an evil, they were in their own country, and occupied their own territories. If servitude is an evil, some of them were rulers. If death is an evil, they were alive, and the life was such that, by your statement, even after God was victorious, it was impossible for the mind ever to die.

15. Can you tell me how it is that in the chief evil so many good things are to be found, the opposites of the evils above mentioned? and if these are not evils, can any substance be an evil, as far as it is a substance? If weakness is not an evil, can a weak body be an evil? If blindness is not an evil, can darkness be an evil? If deafness is not an evil, can a deaf man be an evil? If dumbness is not an evil, can a fish be an evil? If sterility is not an evil, how can we call a barren animal an evil? If exile is not an evil, how can we give that name to an animal in exile, or to an animal sending some one into exile? If servitude is not an evil, in what sense is a subject animal an evil, or one enforcing subjection? If death is not an evil, in what sense is a mortal animal an evil, or one causing death? Or if these are evils, must we not give the name of good things to bodily strength, sight, hearing, persuasive speech, fertility, native land, liberty, life, all which you hold to exist in that kingdom of evil, and yet venture to call it the perfection of evil?

16. Once more, if, as has never been denied, unsuitableness is an evil, what can be more suitable than those elements to their respective animals,—the darkness to serpents, the waters to swimming creatures, the winds to flying creatures, the fire to voracious animals, the smoke to soaring animals? Such is the harmony which you describe as existing in the race of strife; such the order in the seat of confusion. If what is hurtful is an evil, I do not repeat the strong objection already stated, that no hurt can be suffered where no good exists; but if that is not so clear, one thing at least is easily seen and understood as following from the acknowledged truth, that what is hurtful is an evil. The smoke in that region did not hurt bipeds: it produced them, and

nourished and sustained them without injury in their birth, their growth, and their rule. But now, when the evil has some good mixed with it, the smoke has become more hurtful, so that we, who certainly are bipeds, instead of being sustained by it, are blinded, and suffocated, and killed by it. Could the mixture of good have given such destructiveness to evil elements? Could there be such confusion in the divine government?

17. In the other cases, at least, how is it that we find that congruity which misled your author and induced him to fabricate falsehoods? Why does darkness agree with serpents, and waters with swimming creatures, and winds with flying creatures, though the fire burns up quadrupeds, and smoke chokes us? Then, again, have not serpents very sharp sight, and do they not love the sunshine, and abound most where the calmness of the air prevents the clouds from gathering much or often? How very absurd that the natives and lovers of darkness should live most comfortably and agreeably where the clearest light is enjoyed! Or if you say that it is the heat rather than the light that they enjoy, it would be more reasonable to assign to fire serpents, which are naturally of rapid motion, than the slow-going asp. Besides, all must admit that light is agreeable to the eyes of the asp, for they are compared to an eagle’s eyes. But enough of the lower animals. Let us, I pray, attend to what is true of ourselves without persisting in error, and so our minds shall be disentangled from silly and mischievous falsehoods. For is it not intolerable perversity to say that in the race of darkness, where there was no mixture of light, the biped animals had so sound and strong, so incredible force of eyesight, that even in their darkness they could see the perfectly pure light (as you represent it) of the kingdom of God? for, according to you, even these beings could see this light, and could gaze at it, and study it, and delight in it, and desire it; whereas our eyes, after mixture with light, with the chief good, yea, with God, have become so tender and weak, that we can neither see anything in the dark, nor bear to look at the sun, but, after looking, lose sight of what we could see before.

18. The same remarks are applicable if we take corruption to be an evil, which no one doubts. The smoke did not corrupt that race of animals, though it corrupts animals now. Not to go over all the particulars, which would be tedious, and is not necessary, the living creatures of your

imaginary description were so much less liable to corruption than animals are now, that their abortive and premature offspring, cast headlong from heaven to earth, both lived and were productive, and could band together again, having, forsooth, their original vigor, because they were conceived before good was mixed with the evil; for, after this mixture, the animals born are, according to you, those which we now see to be very feeble and easily giving way to corruption. Can any one persist in the belief of error like this, unless he fails to see these things, or is affected by your habit and association in such an amazing way as to be proof against all the force of reasoning?

CHAPTER 10

THREE MORAL SYMBOLS DEVISED BY THE MANICHAEANS FOR NO GOOD

19. Now that I have shown, as I think, how much darkness and error is in your opinions about good and evil things in general, let us examine now those three symbols which you extol so highly, and boast of as excellent observances. What then are those three symbols? That of the mouth, that of the hands, and that of the breast. What does this mean? That man, we are told, should be pure and innocent in mouth, in hands, and in breast. But what if he sins with eyes, ears, or nose? What if he hurts some one with his heels, or perhaps kills him? How can he be reckoned criminal when he has not sinned with mouth, hands, or breast? But, it is replied, by the mouth we are to understand all the organs of sense in the head; by the hands, all bodily actions; by the breast, all lustful tendencies. To what, then, do you assign blasphemies? To the mouth or to the hand? For blasphemy is an action of the tongue. And if all actions are to be classed under one head, why should you join together the actions of the hands and the feet, and not those of the tongue. Do you wish to separate the action of the tongue, as being for the purpose of expressing something, from actions which are not for this purpose, so that the symbol of the hands should mean abstinence from all evil actions which are not for the purpose of expressing something? But then, what if some one sins by expressing something with his hands, as is done in writing or in some significant gesture? This cannot be assigned to the tongue and the mouth, for it is done by the hands. When you have three symbols of the mouth, the hands, and the breast, it is quite inadmissible to

charge against the mouth sins found in the hands. And if you assign action in general to the hands, there is no reason for including under this the action of the feet and not that of the tongue. Do you see how the desire of novelty, with its attendant error, lands you in great difficulties? For you find it impossible to include purification of all sins in these three symbols, which you set forth as a kind of new classification.

CHAPTER 11

THE VALUE OF THE SYMBOL OF THE MOUTH AMONG THE MANICHAEANS, WHO ARE FOUND GUILTY OF BLASPHEMING GOD

20. Classify as you please, omit what you please, we must discuss the doctrines you insist upon most. You say that the symbol of the mouth implies refraining from all blasphemy. But blasphemy is speaking evil of good things. So usually the word blasphemy is applied only to speaking evil of God; for as regards man there is uncertainty, but God is without controversy good. If, then, you are proved guilty of saying worse things of God than any one else says, what becomes of your famous symbol of the mouth? The evidence is not obscure, but clear and obvious to every understanding, and irresistible, the more so that no one can remain in ignorance of it, that God is incorruptible, immutable, liable to no injury, to no want, to no weakness, to no misery. All this the common sense of rational beings perceives, and even you assent when you hear it.

21. But when you begin to relate your fables, that God is corruptible, and mutable, and subject to injury, and exposed to want and weakness, and not secure from misery, this is what you are blind enough to teach, and what some are blind enough to believe. And this is not all; for, according to you, God is not only corruptible, but corrupted; not only changeable, but changed; not only subject to injury, but injured; not only liable to want, but in want; not only possibly, but actually weak; not only exposed to misery, but miserable. You say that the soul is God, or a part of God. I do not see how it can be part of God without being God. A part of gold is gold; of silver silver; of stone stone; and, to come to greater things, part of earth is earth, part of water is water, and of air air; and if you take part from fire, you will not deny it to be fire; and part of light can be nothing but light.

Why then should part of God not be God? Has God a jointed body, like man and the lower animals? For part of man is not man.

22. I will deal with each of these opinions separately. If you view God as resembling light, you must admit that part of God is God. Hence, when you make the soul part of God, though you allow it to be corrupted as being foolish, and changed as having once been wise, and in want as needing health, and feeble as needing medicine, and miserable as desiring happiness, all these things you profanely attribute to God. Or if you deny these things of the mind, it follows that the Spirit is not required to lead the soul into truth, since it is not in folly; nor is the soul renewed by true religion, since it does not need renewal; nor is it perfected by your symbols, since it is already perfect; nor does God give it assistance, since it does not need it; nor is Christ its physician, since it is in health; nor does it require the promise of happiness in another life. Why then is Jesus called the deliverer, according to His own words in the Gospel, “If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed?” And the Apostle Paul says, “Ye have been called to liberty.” The soul, then, which has not attained this liberty is in bondage. Therefore, according to you, God, since part of God is God, is both corrupted by folly, and is changed by falling, and is injured by the loss of perfection, and is in need of help, and is weakened by disease, and bowed down with misery, and subject to disgraceful bondage.

23. Again, if part of God is not God, still He is not incorrupt when His part is corrupted, nor unchanged when there is change in any part, nor uninjured when He is not perfect in every part, nor free from want when He is busily endeavoring to recover part of Himself, nor quite whole when He has a weak part, nor perfectly happy when any part is suffering misery, nor entirely free when any part is under bondage. These are conclusions to which you are driven, because you say that the soul, which you see to be in such a calamitous condition, is part of God. If you can succeed in making your sect abandon these and many similar opinions, then you may speak of your mouth being free from blasphemies. Better still, leave the sect; for if you cease to believe and to repeat what Manichaeus has written, you will be no longer Manichaeans.

24. That God is the supreme good, and that than which nothing can be or can be conceived better, we must either understand or believe, if we wish to keep clear of blasphemy. There is a relation of numbers which cannot possibly be impaired or altered, nor can any nature by any amount of violence prevent the number which comes after one from being the double of one. This can in no way be changed; and yet you represent God as changeable! This relation preserves its integrity inviolable; and you will not allow God an equality even in this! Let some race of darkness take in the abstract the number three, consisting of indivisible units, and divide it into two equal parts. Your mind perceives that no hostility could effect this. And can that which is unable to injure a numerical relation injure God? If it could not, what possible necessity could there be for a part of him to be mixed with evil, and driven into such miseries?

CHAPTER 12

MANICHAEAN SUBTERFUGE

25. For this gives rise to the question, which used to throw us into great perplexity even when we were your zealous disciples, nor could we find any answer,—what the race of darkness would have done to God, supposing He had refused to fight with it at the cost of such calamity to part of Himself. For if God would not have suffered any loss by remaining quiet, we thought it hard that we had been sent to endure so much. Again, if He would have suffered, His nature cannot have been incorruptible, as it behoves the nature of God to be. Sometimes the answer was, that it was not for the sake of escaping evil or avoiding injury, but that God in His natural goodness wished to bestow the blessing of order on a disturbed and disordered nature. This is not what we find in the Manichaean books: there it is constantly implied and constantly asserted that God guarded against an invasion of His enemies. But supposing this answer, which was given from want of a better, to represent the opinion of the Manichaeans, is God, in their view, vindicated from the charge of cruelty or weakness? For this goodness of His to the hostile race proved most pernicious to His own subjects. Besides, if God's nature could not be corrupted nor changed, neither could any destructive influence corrupt or change us; and the order

to be bestowed on the race of strangers might have been bestowed without robbing us of it.

26. Since those times, however, another answer has appeared which I heard recently at Carthage. For one, whom I wish much to see brought out of this error, when reduced to this same dilemma, ventured to say that the kingdom had its own limits, which might be invaded by a hostile race, though God Himself could not be injured. But this is a reply which your founder would never consent to give; for he would be likely to see that such an opinion would lead to a still speedier demolition of his heresy. And in fact any one of average intellect, who hears that in this nature part is subject to injury and part not, will at once perceive that this makes not two but three natures, —one violable, a second inviolable, and a third violating.

CHAPTER 13

ACTIONS TO BE JUDGED OF FROM THEIR MOTIVE, NOT FROM EXTERNALS. MANICHAEAN ABSTINENCE TO BE TRIED BY THIS PRINCIPLE

27. Having every day in your mouth these blasphemies which come from your heart, you ought not to continue holding up the symbol of the mouth as something wonderful, to ensnare the ignorant. But perhaps you think the symbol of the mouth excellent and admirable because you do not eat flesh or drink wine. But what is your end in this? For according as the end we have in view in our actions, on account of which we do whatever we do, is not only not culpable but also praiseworthy, so only can our actions merit any praise. If the end we have regard to in any performance is unlawful and blameworthy, the performance itself will be unhesitatingly condemned as improper.

28. We are told of Catiline that he could bear cold, thirst, and hunger. This the vile miscreant had in common with our apostles. What then distinguishes the parricide from our apostles but the precisely opposite end which he followed? He bore these things in order to gratify his fierce and ungoverned passions; they, on the other hand, in order to restrain these passions and subdue them to reason. You often say, when you are told of the great number of Catholic virgins, a she-mule is a virgin. This, indeed, is said in ignorance of the Catholic system, and is not applicable. Still, what

you mean is that this continence is worthless unless it leads, on right principles, to an end of high excellence. Catholic Christians might also compare your abstinence from wine and flesh to that of cattle and many small birds, as likewise of countless sorts of worms. But, not to be impertinent like you, I will not make this comparison prematurely, but will first examine your end in what you do. For I suppose I may safely take it as agreed on, that in such customs the end is the thing to look to. Therefore, if your end is to be frugal and to restrain the appetite which finds gratification in eating and drinking, I assent and approve. But this is not the case.

29. Suppose, what is quite possible, that there is one so frugal and sparing in his diet, that, instead of gratifying his appetite or his palate, he refrains from eating twice in one day, and at supper takes a little cabbage moistened and seasoned with lard, just enough to keep down hunger; and quenches his thirst, from regard to his health, with two or three draughts of pure wine; and this is his regular diet: whereas another of different habits never takes flesh or wine, but makes an agreeable repast at two o’clock on rare and foreign vegetables, varied with a number of courses, and well sprinkled with pepper, and sups in the same style towards night; and drinks honey-vinegar, mead, raisin-wine, and the juices of various fruits, no bad imitation of wine, and even surpassing it in sweetness; and drinks not for thirst but for pleasure; and makes this provision for himself daily, and feasts in this sumptuous style, not because he requires it, but only gratifying his taste;—which of these two do you regard as living most abstemiously in food and drink? You cannot surely be so blind as not to put the man of the little lard and wine above this glutton!

30. This is the true view; but your doctrine sounds very differently. For one of your elect distinguished by the three symbols may live like the second person in this description, and though he may be reproved by one or two of the more sedate, he cannot be condemned as abusing the symbols. But should he sup with the other person, and moisten his lips with a morsel of rancid bacon, or refresh them with a drink of spoilt wine, he is pronounced a transgressor of the symbol, and by the judgment of your founder is consigned to hell, while you, though wondering, must assent. Will you not discard these errors? Will you not listen to reason? Will you not offer some

little resistance to the force of habit? Is not such doctrine most unreasonable? Is it not insanity? Is it not the greatest absurdity that one, who stuffs and loads his stomach every day to gratify his appetite with mushrooms, rice, truffles, cake, mead, pepper, and assafoetida, and who fares thus every day, cannot be convicted of transgressing the three symbols, that is, the rule of sanctity; whereas another, who seasons his dish of the commonest herbs with some smoky morsel of meat, and takes only so much of this as is needed for the refreshment of his body, and drinks three cups of wine for the sake of keeping in health, should, for exchanging the former diet for this, be doomed to certain punishment?

CHAPTER 14

THREE GOOD REASONS FOR ABSTAINING FROM CERTAIN KINDS OF FOOD

31. But, you reply, the apostle says, “It is good, brethren, neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine.” No one denies that this is good, provided that it is for the end already mentioned, of which it is said, “Make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof;” or for the ends pointed out by the apostle, namely, either to check the appetite, which is apt to go to a more wild and uncontrollable excess in these things than in others, or lest a brother should be offended, or lest the weak should hold fellowship with an idol. For at the time when the apostle wrote, the flesh of sacrifices was often sold in the market. And because wine, too, was used in libations to the gods of the Gentiles, many weaker brethren, accustomed to purchase such things, preferred to abstain entirely from flesh and wine rather than run the risk of having fellowship, as they considered it, with idols, even ignorantly. And, for their sakes, even those who were stronger, and had faith enough to see the insignificance of these things, knowing that nothing is unclean except from an evil conscience, and holding by the saying of the Lord, “Not that which entereth into your mouth defileth you, but that which cometh out of it,” still, lest these weaker brethren should stumble, were bound to abstain from these things. And this is not a mere theory, but is clearly taught in the epistles of the apostle himself. For you are in the habit of quoting only the words, “It is good, brethren, neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine,” without adding what follows, “nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth,

or is offended or is made weak.” These words show the intention of the apostle in giving the admonition.

32. This is evident from the preceding and succeeding context. The passage is a long one to quote, but, for the sake of those who are indolent in reading and searching the sacred Scriptures, we must give the whole of it. “Him that is weak in the faith,” says the apostle, “receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth, for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ both lived, and died and rose again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or occasion to fall, in his brother’s way. I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing common of itself: but to him that esteemeth anything to be common, to him it is common. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then our good be evil spoken of. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he who in this serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another. For meat destroys not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for

that man who eateth with offense. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he who condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that distinguishes is damned if he eats, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself.”

33. Is it not clear that what the apostle required was, that the stronger should not eat flesh nor drink wine, because they gave offense to the weak by not going along with them, and made them think that those who in faith judged all things to be pure, did homage to idols in not abstaining from that kind of food and drink? This is also set forth in the following passage of the Epistle to the Corinthians: “As concerning, therefore, the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some, with conscience of the idol unto this hour, eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, shall we abound; neither, if we eat not, shall we suffer want. But take heed, lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak. For if any man see one who has knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not his conscience being weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh forever, lest I make my brother to offend.”

34. Again, in another place: “What say I then? that the idol is anything? or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is anything? But the things which

the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than He? All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man what is another’s. Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake. But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shows it, and for conscience sake: conscience, I say, not thine own, but another’s: for why is my liberty judged of another man’s conscience? For if I be a partaker with thanksgiving, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks? Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Greeks, nor to the Church of God: even as I please all men in all things not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved. Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”

35. It is clear, then, I think, for what end we should abstain from flesh and wine. The end is threefold: to check indulgence, which is mostly practised in this sort of food, and in this kind of drink goes the length of intoxication; to protect weakness, on account of the things which are sacrificed and offered in libation; and, what is most praiseworthy of all, from love, not to offend the weakness of those more feeble than ourselves, who abstain from these things. You, again, consider a morsel of meat unclean; whereas the apostle says that all things are clean, but that it is evil to him that eateth with offence. And no doubt you are defiled by such food, simply because you think it unclean. For the apostle says, “I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing common of itself: but to him that esteemeth anything common, to him it is common.” And every one can see that by common he means unclean and defiled. But it is folly to discuss passages of Scripture with you; for you both mislead people by promising to prove your doctrines, and those books which possess authority to demand our homage you affirm to be corrupted by spurious interpolations. Prove then to me your doctrine that flesh defiles the eater, when it is taken without offending any one, without any weak notions, and without any excess.

CHAPTER 15

WHY THE MANICHAEANS PROHIBIT THE USE OF FLESH

36. It is worth while to take note of the whole reason for their superstitious abstinence, which is given as follows:—Since, we are told, the member of God has been mixed with the substance of evil, to repress it and to keep it from excessive ferocity,—for that is what you say,—the world is made up of both natures, of good and evil, mixed together. But this part of God is daily being set free in all parts of the world, and restored to its own domain. But in its passage upwards as vapor from earth to heaven, it enters plants, because their roots are fixed in the earth, and so gives fertility and strength to all herbs and shrubs. From these animals get their food, and, where there is sexual intercourse, fetter in the flesh the member of God, and, turning it from its proper course, they come in the way and entangle it in errors and troubles. So then, if food consisting of vegetables and fruits comes to the saints, that is, to the Manichaeans by means of their chastity, and prayers, and psalms, whatever in it is excellent and divine is purified, and so is entirely perfected, in order to restoration, free from all hindrance, to its own domain. Hence you forbid people to give bread or vegetables, or even water, which would cost nobody anything, to a beggar, if he is not a Manichaean, lest he should defile the member of God by his sins, and obstruct its return.

37. Flesh, you say, is made up of pollution itself. For, according to you, some portion of that divine part escapes in the eating of vegetables and fruits: it escapes while they undergo the infliction of rubbing, grinding, or cooking, as also of biting or chewing. It escapes, too, in all motions of animals, in the carriage of burdens, in exercise, in toil, or in any sort of action. It escapes, too, in our rest, when digestion is going on in the body by means of internal heat. And as the divine nature escapes in all these ways, some very unclean dregs remain, from which, in sexual intercourse, flesh is formed. These dregs, however, fly off, in the motions above mentioned, along with what is good in the soul; for though it is mostly, it is not entirely good. So, when the soul has left the flesh, the dregs are utterly filthy, and the soul of those who eat flesh is defiled.

CHAPTER 16

DISCLOSURE OF THE MONSTROUS TENETS OF THE MANICHAEANS

38. O the obscurity of the nature of things! How hard to expose falsehood! Who that hears these things, if he is one who has not learned the causes of things, and who, not yet illuminated by any ray of truth, is deceived by material images, would not think them true, precisely because the things spoken of are invisible, and are presented to the mind under the form of visible things, and can be eloquently expressed? Men of this description exist in numbers and in droves, who are kept from being led away into these errors more by a fear grounded on religious feeling than by reason. I will therefore endeavor, as God may please to enable me, so to refute these errors, as that their falsehood and absurdity will be manifest not only in the judgment of the wise, who reject them on hearing them, but also to the intelligence of the multitude.

39. Tell me then, first, where you get the doctrine that part of God, as you call it, exists in corn, beans, cabbage, and flowers and fruits. From the beauty of the color, say they, and the sweetness of the taste; this is evident; and as these are not found in rotten substances, we learn that their good has been taken from them. Are they not ashamed to attribute the finding of God to the nose and the palate? But I pass from this. For I will speak, using words in their proper sense; and, as the saying is, this is not so easy in speaking to you. Let us see rather what sort of mind is required to understand this; how, if the presence of good in bodies is shown by their color, the dung of animals, the refuse of flesh itself, has all kinds of bright colors, sometimes white, often golden; and so on, though these are what you take in fruits and flowers as proofs of the presence and indwelling of God. Why is it that in a rose you hold the red color to be an indication of an abundance of good, while the same color in blood you condemn? Why do you regard with pleasure in a violet the same color which you turn away from in cases of cholera, or of people with jaundice, or in the excrement of infants? Why do you believe the light, shining appearance of oil to be a sign of a plentiful admixture of good, which you readily set about purifying by taking the oil into your throats and stomachs, while you are afraid to touch your lips with a drop of fat, though it has the same shining appearance as

oil? Why do you look upon a yellow melon as part of the treasures of God, and not rancid bacon fat or the yolk of an egg? Why do you think that whiteness in a lettuce proclaims God, and not in milk? So much for colors, as regards which (to mention nothing else) you cannot compare any flower-clad meadow with the wings and feathers of a single peacock, though these are of flesh and of fleshly origin.

40. Again, if this good is discovered also by smell, perfumes of excellent smell are made from the flesh of some animals. And the smell of food, when cooked along with flesh of delicate flavor, is better than if cooked without it. Once more, if you think that the things that have a better smell than others are therefore cleaner, there is a kind of mud which you ought to take to your meals instead of water from the cistern; for dry earth moistened with rain has an odor most agreeable to the sense, and this sort of mud has a better smell than rain-water taken by itself. But if we must have the authority of taste to prove the presence in any object of part of God, he must dwell in dates and honey more than in pork, but more in pork than in beans. I grant that He dwells more in a fig than in a liver; but then you must allow that He is more in liver than in beet. And, on this principle, must you not confess that some plants, which none of you can doubt to be cleaner than flesh, receive God from this very flesh, if we are to think of God as mixed with the flavor? For both cabbages taste better when cooked along with flesh; and, while we cannot relish the plants on which cattle feed, when these are turned into milk we think them improved in color, and find them very agreeable to the taste.

41. Or must we think that good is to be found in greater quantity where the three good qualities—a good color, and smell, and taste—are found together? Then you must not admire and praise flowers so much, as you cannot admit them to be tried at the tribunal of the palate. At least you must not prefer purslain to flesh, since flesh when cooked is superior in color, smell, and taste. A young pig roasted (for your ideas on this subject force us to discuss good and evil with you as if you were cooks and confectioners, instead of men of reading or literary taste) is bright in color, and agreeable in smell, and pleasant in taste. Here is a perfect evidence of the presence of the divine substance. You are invited by this threefold testimony, and called

on to purify this substance by your sanctity. Make the attack. Why do you hold back? What objection have you to make. In color alone the excrement of an infant surpasses lentils; in smell alone a roast morsel surpasses a soft green fig; in taste alone a kid when slaughtered surpasses the plant which it fed on when alive: and we have found a kind of flesh in flavor of which all three give evidence. What more do you require? What reply will you make? Why should eating meat make you unclean, if using such monstrosities in discussion does not? And, above all, the rays of the sun, which you surely think more of than all animal or vegetable food, have no smell or taste, and are remarkable among other substances only by their eminently bright color; which is a loud call to you, and an obligation, in spite of yourselves, to place nothing higher than a bright color among the evidences of an admixture of good.

42. Thus you are forced into this difficulty, that you must acknowledge the part of God as dwelling more in blood, and in the filthy but bright-colored animal refuse which is thrown out in the streets, than in the pale leaves of the olive. If you reply, as you actually do, that olive leaves when burnt give out a flame, which proves the presence of light, while flesh when burnt does not, what will you say of oil, which lights nearly all the lamps in Italy? What of cow dung (which surely is more unclean than the flesh), which peasants use when dry as fuel, so that the fire is always at hand, and the liberation of the smoke is always going on? And if brightness and lustre prove a greater presence of the divine part, why do you yourselves not purify it, why not appropriate it, why not liberate it? For it is found chiefly in flowers, not to speak of blood and countless things almost the same as blood in flesh or coming from it, and yet you cannot feed on flowers. And even if you were to eat flesh, you would certainly not take with your gruel the scales of fish, or some worms and flies, though these all shine with a light of their own in the dark.

43. What then remains, but that you should cease saying that you have in your eyes, nose, and palate sufficient means of testing the presence of the divine part in material objects? And, without these means, how can you tell not only that there is a greater part of God in plants than in flesh, but that there is any part in plants at all? Are you led to think this by their beauty—

not the beauty of agreeable color, but that of agreement of parts? An excellent reason, in my opinion. For you will never be so bold as to compare twisted pieces of wood with the bodies of animals, which are formed of members answering to one another. But if you choose the testimony of the senses, as those must do who cannot see with their mind the full force of existence, how do you prove that the substance of good escapes from bodies in course of time, and by some kind of attrition, but because God has gone out of it, according to your view, and has left one place for another? The whole is absurd. But, as far as I can judge, there are no marks or appearances to give rise to this opinion. For many things plucked from trees, or pulled out of the ground, are the better of some interval of time before we use them for food, as leeks and endive, lettuce, grapes, apples, figs, and some pears; and there are many other things which get a better color when they are not used immediately after being plucked, besides being more wholesome for the body, and having a finer flavor to the palate. But these things should not possess all these excellent and agreeable qualities, if, as you say, they become more destitute of good the longer they are kept after separation from their mother earth. Animal food itself is better and more fit for use the day after the animal is killed; but this should not be, if, as you hold, it possessed more good immediately after the slaughter than next day, when more of the divine substance had escaped.

44. Who does not know that wine becomes purer and better by age? Nor is it, as you think, more tempting to the destruction of the senses, but more useful for invigorating the body,—only let there be moderation, which ought to control everything. The senses are sooner destroyed by new wine. When the must has been only a short time in the vat, and has begun to ferment, it makes those who look down into it fall headlong, affecting their brain, so that without assistance they would perish. And as regards health, every one knows that bodies are swollen up and injuriously distended by new wine? Has it these bad properties because there is more good in it? Are they not found in wine when old because a good deal of the divine substance has gone? An absurd thing to say, especially for you, who prove the divine presence by the pleasing effect produced on your eyes, nose, and palate! And what a contradiction it is to make wine the poison of the princes of darkness, and yet to eat grapes! Has it more of the poison when

in the cup than when in the cluster? Or if the evil remains unmixed after the good is gone, and that by the process of time, how is it that the same grapes, when hung up for awhile, become milder, sweeter, and more wholesome? or how does the wine itself, as already mentioned, become purer and brighter when the light has gone, and more wholesome by the loss of the beneficial substance?

45. What are we to say of wood and leaves, which in course of time become dry, but cannot be the worse on that account in your estimation? For while they lose that which produces smoke, they retain that from which a bright flame arises; and, to judge by the clearness, which you think so much of, there is more good in the dry than in the green. Hence you must either deny that there is more of God in the pure light than in the smoky one, which will upset all your evidences; or you must allow it to be possible that, when plants are plucked up, or branches plucked off, and kept for a time, more of the nature of evil may escape from them than of the nature of good. And, on the strength of this, we shall hold that more evil may go off from plucked fruits; and so more good may remain in animal food. So much on the subject of time.

46. As for motion, and tossing, and rubbing, if these give the divine nature the opportunity of escaping from these substances, many things of the same kind are against you, which are improved by motion. In some grains the juice resembles wine, and is excellent when moved about. Indeed, as must not be overlooked, this kind of drink produces intoxication rapidly; and yet you never called the juice of grain the poison of the princes of darkness. There is a preparation of water, thickened with a little meal, which is the better of being shaken, and, strange to say, is lighter in color when the light is gone. The pastry cook stirs honey for a long time to give it this light color, and to make its sweetness milder and less unwholesome: you must explain how this can come from the loss of good. Again, if you prefer to test the presence of God by the agreeable effects on the hearing, and not sight, or smell, or taste, harps get their strings and pipes their bones from animals; and these become musical by being dried, and rubbed, and twisted. So the pleasures of music, which you hold to have come from the divine kingdom, are obtained from the refuse of dead animals, and that, too, when

they are dried by time, and lessened by rubbing, and stretched by twisting. Such rough treatment, according to you, drives the divine substance from living objects; even cooking them, you say, does this. Why then are boiled thistles not unwholesome? Is it because God, or part of God, leaves them when they are cooked?

47. Why mention all the particulars, when it is difficult to enumerate them? Nor is it necessary; for every one knows how many things are sweeter and more wholesome when cooked. This ought not to be, if, as you suppose, things lose the good by being thus moved about. I do not suppose that you will find any proof from your bodily senses that flesh is unclean, and defiles the souls of those who eat it, because fruits, when plucked and shaken about in various ways, become flesh; especially as you hold that vinegar, in its age and fermentation, is cleaner than wine, and the mead you drink is nothing else than cooked wine, which ought to be more impure than wine, if material things lose the divine members by being moved about and cooked. But if not, you have no reason to think that fruits, when plucked, kept, handled, cooked, and digested, are forsaken by the good, and therefore supply most unclean matter for the formation of bodies.

48. But if it is not from their color and appearance, and smell and taste, that you think the good to be in these things, what else can you bring forward? Do you prove it from the strength and vigor which those things seem to lose when they are separated from the earth and put to use? If this is your reason (though its erroneousness is seen at once, from the fact that the strength of some things is increased after their separation from the earth, as in the case already mentioned of wine, which becomes stronger from age),—if the strength, then, is your reason, it would follow that the part of God is to be found in no food more abundantly than in flesh. For athletes, who especially require vigor and energy, are not in the habit of feeding on cabbage and fruit without animal food.

49. Is your reason for thinking the bodies of trees better than our bodies, that flesh is nourished by trees and not trees by flesh. You forget the obvious fact that plants, when manured with dung, become richer and more fertile and crops heavier, though you think it your gravest charge against flesh that it is the abode of dung. This then gives nourishment to things you

consider clean, though it is, according to you, the most unclean part of what you consider unclean. But if you dislike flesh because it springs from sexual intercourse, you should be pleased with the flesh of worms, which are bred in such numbers, and of such a size, in fruits, in wood, and in the earth itself, without any sexual intercourse. But there is some insincerity in this. For if you were displeased with flesh because it is formed from the cohabitation of father and mother, you would not say that those princes of darkness were born from the fruits of their own trees; for no doubt you think worse of these princes than of flesh, which you refuse to eat.

50. Your idea that all the souls of animals come from the food of their parents, from which confinement you pretend to liberate the divine substance which is held bound in your viands, is quite inconsistent with your abstinence from flesh, and makes it a pressing duty for you to eat animal food. For if souls are bound in the body by those who eat animal food, why do you not secure their liberation by being beforehand in eating the food? You reply, it is not from the animal food that the good part comes which those people bring into bondage, but from the vegetables which they take with their meat. What will you say then of the souls of lions, who feed only on flesh? They drink, is the reply, and so the soul is drawn in from the water and confined in flesh. But what of birds without number? What of eagles, which eat only flesh, and need no drink? Here you are at a loss, and can find no answer. For if the soul comes from food, and there are animals which neither drink anything nor have any food but flesh, and yet bring forth young, there must be some soul in flesh; and you are bound to try your plan of purifying it by eating the flesh. Or will you say that a pig has a soul of light, because it eats vegetables, and drinks water; and that the eagle, because it eats only flesh, has a soul of darkness, though it is so fond of the sun?

51. What a confusion of ideas! What amazing fatuity! All this you would have escaped, if you had rejected idle fictions, and had followed what truth sanctions in abstinence from food, which would have taught you that sumptuous eating is to be avoided, not to escape pollution, as there is nothing of the kind, but to subdue the sensual appetite. For should any one, from inattention to the nature of things, and the properties of the soul and

body, allow that the soul is polluted by animal food, you will admit that it is much much more defiled by sensuality. Is it reasonable, then, or rather, is it not most unreasonable, to expel from the number of the elect a man who, perhaps for his health's sake, takes some animal food without sensual appetite; while, if a man eagerly devours peppered truffles, you can only reprove him for excess, but cannot condemn him as abusing your symbol? So one who has been induced, not by sensuality, but for health, to eat part of a fowl, cannot remain among your elect; though one may remain who has yielded voluntarily to an excessive appetite for comfits and cakes without animal matter. You retain the man plunged in the defilements of sensuality, and dismiss the man polluted, as you think, by the mere food; though you allow that the defilement of sensuality is far greater than that of meat. You keep hold of one who gloats with delight over highly-seasoned vegetables, unable to keep possession of himself; while you shut out one who, to satisfy hunger, takes whatever comes, if suitable for nourishment, ready either to use the food, or to let it go. Admirable customs! Excellent morals! Notable temperance!

52. Again, the notion that it is unlawful for any one but the elect to touch as food what is brought to your meals for what you call purification, leads to shameful and sometimes to criminal practices. For sometimes so much is brought that it cannot easily be eaten up by a few; and as it is considered sacrilege to give what is left to others, or, at least, to throw it away, you are obliged to eat to excess, from the desire to purify, as you call it, all that is given. Then, when you are full almost to bursting, you cruelly use force in making the boys of your sect eat the rest. So it was charged against some one at Rome that he killed some poor children, by compelling them to eat for this superstitious reason. This I should not believe, did I not know how sinful you consider it to give this food to those who are not elect, or, at any rate, to throw it away. So the only way is to eat it; and this leads every day to gluttony, and may sometimes lead to murder.

53. For the same reason you forbid giving bread to beggars. By way of showing compassion, or rather of avoiding reproach, you advise to give money. The cruelty of this is equalled by its stupidity. For suppose a place where food cannot be purchased: the beggar will die of starvation, while

you, in your wisdom and benevolence, have more mercy on a cucumber than on a human being! This is in truth (for how could it be better designated) pretended compassion, and real cruelty. Then observe the stupidity. What if the beggar buys bread for himself with the money you give him? Will the divine part, as you call it, not suffer the same in him when he buys the food as it would have suffered if he had taken it as a gift from you? So this sinful beggar plunges in corruption part of God eager to escape, and is aided in this crime by your money! But you in your great sagacity think it enough that you do not give to one about to commit murder a man to kill, though you knowingly give him money to procure somebody to be killed. Can any madness go beyond this? The result is, that either the man dies if he cannot get food for his money, or the food itself dies if he gets it. The one is true murder; the other what you call murder: though in both cases you incur the guilt of real murder. Again, there is the greatest folly and absurdity in allowing your followers to eat animal food, while you forbid them to kill animals. If this food does not defile, take it yourselves. If it defiles, what can be more unreasonable than to think it more sinful to separate the soul of a pig from its body than to defile the soul of a man with the pig’s flesh.

CHAPTER 17

DESCRIPTION OF THE SYMBOL OF THE HANDS AMONG THE MANICHAEANS

54. We must now notice and discuss the symbol of the hands. And, in the first place, your abstaining from the slaughter of animals and from injuring plants is shown by Christ to be mere superstition; for, on the ground that there is no community of rights between us and brutes and trees, He both sent the devils into an herd of swine, and withered by His curse a tree in which He had found no fruit. The swine assuredly had not sinned, nor had the tree. We are not so insane as to think that a tree is fruitful or barren by its own choice. Nor is it any reply to say that our Lord wished in these actions to teach some other truths; for every one knows that. But assuredly the Son of God would not commit murder to illustrate truth, if you call the destruction of a tree or of an animal murder. The signs which Christ wrought in the case of men, with whom we certainly have a community of rights, were in healing, not in killing them. And it would have been the

same in the case of beasts and trees, if we had that community with them which you imagine.

55. I think it right to refer here to the authority of Scripture, because we cannot here enter on a profound discussion about the soul of animals, or the kind of life in trees. But as you preserve the right to call the Scriptures corrupted, in case you should find them too strongly opposed to you,—although you have never affirmed the passages about the tree and the herd of swine to be spurious,—still, lest some day you should wish to say this of them too, when you find how much they are against you, I will adhere to my plan, and will ask you, who are so liberal in your promises of evidence and truth, to tell me first what harm is done to a tree, I say not by plucking a leaf or an apple,—for which, however, one of you would be condemned at once as having abused the symbol, if he did it intentionally, and not accidentally,—but if you tear it up by the root. For the soul in trees, which, according to you, is a rational soul, is, in your theory, freed from bondage when the tree is cut down,—a bondage, too, where it suffered great misery and got no profit. For it is well known that you, in the words of your founder, threaten as a great, though not the greatest punishment, the change from a man to a tree; and it is not probable that the soul in a tree can grow in wisdom as it does in a man. There is the best reason for not killing a man, in case you should kill one whose wisdom or virtue might be of use to many, or one who might have attained to wisdom, whether by the advice of another without himself, or by divine illumination in his own mind. And the more wisdom the soul has when it leaves the body, the more profitable is its departure, as we know both from well-grounded reasoning and from wide-spread belief. Thus to cut down a tree is to set free the soul from a body in which it makes no progress in wisdom. You—the holy men, I mean—ought to be mainly occupied in cutting down trees, and in leading the souls thus emancipated to better things by prayers and psalms. Or can this be done only with the souls which you take into your belly, instead of aiding them by your understanding?

56. And you cannot escape the admission that the souls in trees make no progress in wisdom while they are there, when you are asked why no apostle was sent to teach trees as well as men, or why the apostle sent to

men did not preach the truth to trees also. Your reply must be, that the souls while in such bodies cannot understand the divine precepts. But this reply lands you in great difficulties; for you declare that these souls can hear your voices and understand what you say, and see bodies and their motions, and even discern thoughts. If this is true, why could they learn nothing from the apostle of light? Why could they not learn even much better than we, since they can see into the mind? Your master, who, as you say, has difficulty in teaching you by speech, might have taught these souls by thought; for they could see his ideas in his mind before he expressed them. But if this is untrue, consider into what errors you have fallen.

57. As for your not plucking fruits or pulling up vegetables yourselves, while you get your followers to pluck and pull and bring them to you, that you may confer benefits not only on those who bring the food but on the food which is brought, what thoughtful person can bear to hear this? For, first, it matters not whether you commit a crime yourself, or wish another to commit it for you. You deny that you wish this! How then can relief be given to the divine part contained in lettuce and leeks, unless some one pull them and bring them to the saints to be purified. And again, if you were passing through a field where the right of friendship permitted you to pluck anything you wished, what would you do if you saw a crow on the point of eating a fig? Does not, according to your ideas, the fig itself seem to address you and to beg of you piteously to pluck it yourself and give it burial in a holy belly, where it may be purified and restored, rather than that the crow should swallow it and make it part of his cursed body, and then hand it over to bondage and torture in other forms? If this is true, how cruel you are! If not, how silly! What can be more contrary to your opinions than to break the symbol? What can be more unkind to the member of God than to keep it?

58. This supposes the truth of your false and vain ideas. But you can be shown guilty of plain and positive cruelty flowing from the same error. For were any one lying on the road, his body wasted with disease, weary with journeying, and half-dead from his sufferings, and able only to utter some broken words, and if eating a pear would do him good as an astringent, and were he to beg you to help him as you passed by, and were he to implore

you to bring the fruit from a neighboring tree, with no divine or human prohibition to prevent your doing so, while the man is sure to die for the want of it, you, a Christian man and a saint, will rather pass on and abandon a man thus suffering and entreating, lest the tree should lament the loss of its fruit, and you should be doomed to the punishment threatened by Manichaeus for breaking the symbol. Strange customs, and strange harmlessness!

59. Now, as regards killing animals, and the reasons for your opinion, much that has been said will apply also to this. For what harm will be done to the soul of a wolf by killing the wolf, since the wolf, as long as it lives, will be a wolf, and will not listen to any preacher, or give up, in the least, shedding the blood of sheep; and, by killing it, the rational soul, as you think, will be set free from its confinement in the body? But you make this slaughter unlawful even for your followers; for you think it worse than that of trees. And in this there is not much fault to be found with your senses,—that is, your bodily senses. For we see and hear by their cries that animals die with pain, although man disregards this in a beast, with which, as not having a rational soul, we have no community of rights. But as to your senses in the observation of trees, you must be entirely blind. For not to mention that there are no movements in the wood expressive of pain, what is clearer than that a tree is never better than when it is green and flourishing, gay with flowers, and rich in fruit? And this comes generally and chiefly from pruning. But if it felt the iron, as you suppose, it ought to die of wounds so many, so severe, instead of sprouting at the places, and reviving with such manifest delight.

60. But why do you think it a greater crime to destroy animals than plants, although you hold that plants have a purer soul than animals? There is a compensation, we are told, when part of what is taken from the fields is given to the elect and the saints to be purified. This has already been refuted; and it has, I think, been proved sufficiently that there is no reason for saying that more of the good part is found in vegetables than in flesh. But should any one support himself by selling butcher-meat, and spend the whole profit of his business in purchasing food for your elect, and bring larger supplies for those saints than any peasant or farmer, will he not plead

this compensation as a warrant for his killing animals? But there is, we are told, some other mysterious reason; for a cunning man can always find some resource in the secrets of nature when addressing unlearned people. The story, then, is that the heavenly princes who were taken from the race of darkness and bound, and have a place assigned them in this region by the Creator of the world, have animals on the earth specially belonging to them, each having those coming from his own stock and class; and they hold the slaughterers of those animals guilty, and do not allow them to leave the earth, but harass them as much as they can with pains and torments. What simple man will not be frightened by this, and, seeing nothing in the darkness shrouding these things, will not think that the fact is as described? But I will hold to my purpose, with God's help, to rebut mysterious falsehood by the plainest truth.

61. Tell me, then, if animals on land and in water come in regular succession by ordinary generation from this race of princes, since the origin of animal life is traced to the abortive births in that race;—tell me, I say, whether bees and frogs, and many other creatures not sprung from sexual intercourse, may be killed with impunity. We are told they cannot. So it is not on account of their relation to certain princes that you forbid your followers to kill animals. Or if you make a general relationship to all bodies, the princes would be equally concerned about trees, which you do not require your followers to spare. You are brought back to the weak reply, that the injuries done in the case of plants are atoned for by the fruits which your followers bring to your church. For this implies that those who slaughter animals, and sell their flesh in the market, if they are your followers, and if they bring to you vegetables bought with their gains, may think nothing of the daily slaughter, and are cleared of any sin that may be in it by your repasts.

62. But if you say that, in order to expiate the slaughter, the thing must be given as food, as in the case of fruits and vegetables,—which cannot be done, because the elect do not eat flesh, and so your followers must not slaughter animals,—what reply will you give in the case of thorns and weeds, which farmers destroy in clearing their fields, while they cannot bring any food to you from them? How can there be pardon for such

destruction, which gives no nourishment to the saints? Perhaps you also put away any sin committed, for the benefit of the fruits and vegetables, by eating some of these. What then if the fields are plundered by locusts, mice, or rats, as we see often happen? Can your rustic follower kill these with impunity, because he sins for the good of his crops? Here you are at a loss; for you either allow your followers to kill animals, which your founder prohibited, or you forbid them to be cultivators, which he made lawful. Indeed, you sometimes go so far as to say that an usurer is more harmless than a cultivator,—you feel so much more for melons than for men. Rather than hurt the melons, you would have a man ruined as a debtor. Is this desirable and praiseworthy justice, or not rather atrocious and damnable error? Is this commendable compassion, or not rather detestable barbarity?

63. What, again, of your not abstaining yourselves from the slaughter of lice, bugs, and fleas? You think it a sufficient excuse for this to say that these are the dirt of our bodies. But this is clearly untrue of fleas and bugs; for every one knows that these animals do not come from our bodies. Besides, if you abhor sexual intercourse as much as you pretend to do, you should think those animals all the cleaner which come from our bodies without any other generation; for although they produce offspring of their own, they are not produced in ordinary generation from us. Again, if we must consider as most filthy the production of living bodies, still worse must be the production of dead bodies. There must be less harm, therefore, in killing a rat, a snake, or a scorpion, which you constantly say come from our dead bodies. But to pass over what is less plain and certain, it is a common opinion regarding bees that they come from the carcases of oxen; so there is no harm in killing them. Or if this too is doubted, every one allows that beetles, at least, are bred in the ball of mud which they make and bury. You ought therefore to consider these animals, and others that it would be tedious to specify, more unclean than your lice; and yet you think it sinful to kill them, though it would be foolish not to kill the lice. Perhaps you hold the lice cheap because they are small. But if an animal is to be valued by its size, you must prefer a camel to a man.

64. Here we may use the gradation which often perplexed us when we were your followers. For if a flea may be killed on account of its small size, so

may the fly which is bred in beans. And if this, so also may one of a little larger size, for its size at birth is even less. Then again, a bee may be killed, for its young is no larger than a fly. So on to the young of a locust, and to a locust; and then to the young of a mouse, and to a mouse. And, to cut short, it is clear we may come at last to an elephant; so that one who thinks it no sin to kill a flea, because of its small size, must allow that it would be no sin in him to kill this huge creature. But I think enough has been said of these absurdities.

CHAPTER 18

OF THE SYMBOL OF THE BREAST, AND OF THE SHAMEFUL MYSTERIES OF THE MANICHAEANS

65. Lastly, there is the symbol of the breast, in which your very questionable chastity consists. For though you do not forbid sexual intercourse, you, as the apostle long ago said, forbid marriage in the proper sense, although this is the only good excuse for such intercourse. No doubt you will exclaim against this, and will make it a reproach against us that you highly esteem and approve perfect chastity, but do not forbid marriage, because your followers—that is, those in the second grade among you—are allowed to have wives. After you have said this with great noise and heat, I will quietly ask, Is it not you who hold that begetting children, by which souls are confined in flesh, is a greater sin than cohabitation? Is it not you who used to counsel us to observe as much as possible the time when a woman, after her purification, is most likely to conceive, and to abstain from cohabitation at that time, lest the soul should be entangled in flesh? This proves that you approve of having a wife, not for the procreation of children, but for the gratification of passion. In marriage, as the marriage law declares, the man and woman come together for the procreation of children. Therefore whoever makes the procreation of children a greater sin than copulation, forbids marriage, and makes the woman not a wife, but a mistress, who for some gifts presented to her is joined to the man to gratify his passion. Where there is a wife there must be marriage. But there is no marriage where motherhood is not in view; therefore neither is there a wife. In this way you forbid marriage. Nor can you defend yourselves

successfully from this charge, long ago brought against you prophetically by the Holy Spirit.

66. Moreover, when you are so eager in your desire to prevent the soul from being confined in flesh by conjugal intercourse, and so eager in asserting that the soul is set free from seed by the food of the saints, do you not sanction, unhappy beings, the suspicion entertained about you? For why should it be true regarding corn and beans and lentils and other seeds, that when you eat them you wish to set free the soul, and not true of the seeds of animals? For what you say of the flesh of a dead animal, that it is unclean because there is no soul in it, cannot be said of the seed of the animal; for you hold that it keeps confined the soul which will appear in the offspring, and you avow that the soul of Manichaeus himself is thus confined. And as your followers cannot bring these seeds to you for purification, who will not suspect that you make this purification secretly among yourselves, and hide it from your followers, in case they should leave you? If you do not these things, as it is to be hoped you do not, still you see how open to suspicion your superstition is, and how impossible it is to blame men for thinking what your own profession suggests, when you maintain that you set free souls from bodies and from senses by eating and drinking. I wish to say no more about this: you see yourselves what room there is here for denunciation. But as the matter is one rather to repress than to invite remark, and also as throughout my discourse my purpose appears of exaggerating nothing, and of keeping to bare facts and arguments, we shall pass on to other matters.

CHAPTER 19

CRIMES OF THE MANICHAEANS

67. We see then, now, the nature of your three symbols. These are your customs. This is the end of your notable precepts, in which there is nothing sure, nothing steadfast, nothing consistent, nothing irreproachable, but all doubtful, or rather undoubtedly and entirely false, all contradictory, abominable, absurd. In a word, evil practices are detected in your customs so many and so serious, that one wishing to denounce them all, if he were at all able to enlarge, would require at least a separate treatise for each. Were

you to observe these, and to act up to your profession, no childishness, or folly, or absurdity would go beyond yours; and when you praise and teach these things without doing them, you display craft and deceit and malevolence equal to anything that can be described or imagined.

68. During nine full years that I attended you with great earnestness and assiduity, I could not hear of one of your elect who was not found transgressing these precepts, or at least was not suspected of doing so. Many were caught at wine and animal food, many at the baths; but this we only heard by report. Some were proved to have seduced other men’s wives, so that in this case I could not doubt the truth of the charge. But suppose this, too, a report rather than a fact. I myself saw, and not I only, but others who have either escaped from that superstition, or will, I hope, yet escape,—we saw, I say, in a square in Carthage, on a road much frequented, not one, but more than three of the elect walking behind us, and accosting some women with such indecent sounds and gestures as to outdo the boldness and insolence of all ordinary rascals. And it was clear that this was quite habitual, and that they behaved in this way to one another, for no one was deterred by the presence of a companion, showing that most of them, if not all, were affected with this evil tendency. For they did not all come from one house, but lived in quite different places, and quite accidentally left together the place where they had met. It was a great shock to us, and we lodged a complaint about it. But who thought of inflicting punishment,—I say not by separation from the church, but even by severe rebuke in proportion to the heinousness of the offence?

69. All the excuse given for the impunity of those men was that, at that time, when their meetings were forbidden by law, it was feared that the persons suffering punishment might retaliate by giving information. What then of their assertion that they will always have persecution in this world, for which they suppose that they will be thought the more of? for this is the application they make of the words about the world hating them. And they will have it that truth must be sought for among them, because, in the promise of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, it is said that the world cannot receive Him. This is not the place to discuss this question. But clearly, if you are always to be persecuted, even to the end of the world, there will be

no end to this laxity, and to the unchecked spread of all this immorality, from your fear of giving offence to men of this character.

70. This answer was also given to us, when we reported to the very highest authorities that a woman had complained to us that in a meeting, where she was along with other women, not doubting of the sanctity of these people, some of the elect came in, and when one of them had put out the lamp, one, whom she could not distinguish, tried to embrace her, and would have forced her into sin, had she not escaped by crying out. How common must we conclude the practice to have been which led to the misdeed on this occasion! And this was done on the night when you keep the feast of vigils. Forsooth, besides the fear of information being given, no one could bring the offender before the bishop, as he had so well guarded against being recognized. As if all who entered along with him were not implicated in the crime; for in their indecent merriment they all wished the lamp to be put out.

71. Then what wide doors were opened for suspicions, when we saw them full of envy, full of covetousness, full of greed for costly foods, constantly at strife, easily excited about trifles! We concluded that they were not competent to abstain from the things they professed to abstain from, if they found an opportunity in secret or in the dark. There were two of sufficiently good character, of active minds, and leaders in their debates, with whom we had a more particular and intimate acquaintance than with the rest. One of them was much associated with us, because he was also engaged in liberal studies; he is said to be now an elder there. These two were very jealous of one another, and one accused the other—not openly, but in conversation, as he had opportunity, and in whispers—of having made a criminal assault on the wife of one of the followers. He again, in clearing himself to us, brought the same charge against another of the elect, who lived with this follower as his most trusted friend. He had, going in suddenly, caught this man with the woman, and his enemy and rival had advised the woman and her paramour to raise this false report about him, that he might not be believed if he gave any information. We were much distressed, and took it greatly to heart, that although there was a doubt about the assault on the woman, the jealous

feeling in those two men, than whom we found none better in the place, showed itself so keenly, and inevitably raised a suspicion of other things.

72. Another thing was, that we very often saw in theatres men belonging to the elect, men of years and, it was supposed, of character, along with a hoary-headed elder. We pass over the youths, whom we used to come upon quarrelling about the people connected with the stage and the races; from which we may safely conclude how they would be able to refrain in secret, when they could not subdue the passion by which they were exposed in the eyes of their followers, bringing on them disgrace and flight. In the case of the saint, whose discussions we attended in the street of the fig-sellers, would his atrocious crime have been discovered if he had been able to make the dedicated virgin his wife without making her pregnant? The swelling womb betrayed the secret and unthought-of iniquity. When her brother, a young man, heard of it from his mother, he felt keenly the injury, but refrained, from regard to religion, from a public accusation. He succeeded in getting the man expelled from that church, for such conduct cannot always be tolerated; and that the crime might not be wholly unpunished, he arranged with some of his friends to have the man well beaten and kicked. When he was thus assailed, he cried out that they should spare him, from regard to the authority of the opinion of Manichaeus, that Adam the first hero had sinned, and was a greater saint after his sin.

73. This, in fact, is your notion about Adam and Eve. It is a long story; but I will touch only on what concerns the present matter. You say that Adam was produced from his parents, the abortive princes of darkness; that he had in his soul the most part of light, and very little of the opposite race. So while he lived a holy life, on account of the prevalence of good, still the opposite part in him was stirred up, so that he was led away into conjugal intercourse. Thus he fell and sinned, but afterwards lived in greater holiness. Now, my complaint is not so much about this wicked man, who, under the garb of an elect and holy man, brought such shame and reproach on a family of strangers by his shocking immorality. I do not charge you with this. Let it be attributed to the abandoned character of the man, and not to your habits. I blame the man for the atrocity, and not you. Still there is this in you all that cannot, as far as I can see, be admitted or tolerated, that

while you hold the soul to be part of God, you still maintain that the mixture of a little evil prevailed over the superior force and quantity of good. Who that believes this, when incited by passion, will not find here an excuse, instead of checking and controlling his passion?

CHAPTER 20

DISGRACEFUL CONDUCT DISCOVERED AT ROME

74. What more shall I say of your customs? I have mentioned what I found myself when I was in the city when the things were done. To go through all that happened at Rome in my absence would take a long time. I will, however, give a short account of it; for the matter became so notorious, that even the absent could not remain in ignorance of it. And when I was afterwards in Rome, I ascertained the truth of all I had heard, although the story was told me by an eye-witness whom I knew so well and esteemed so highly, that I could not feel any doubt about it. One of your followers, then, quite equal to the elect in their far-famed abstinence, for he was both liberally educated, and was in the habit of defending your sect with great zeal, took it very ill that he had cast in his teeth the vile conduct of the elect, who lived in all kinds of places, and went hither and thither for lodging of the worst description. He therefore desired, if possible, to assemble all who were willing to live according to the precepts into his own house, and to maintain them at his own expense; for he was above the average in carelessness as to spending money, besides being above the average in the amount he had to spend. He complained that his efforts were hindered by the remissness of the bishops, whose assistance he required for success. At last one of your bishops was found,—a man, as I know, very rude and unpolished, but somehow, from his very moroseness, the more inclined to strict observance of morality. The follower eagerly lays hold of this man as the person he had long wished for and found at last, and relates his whole plan. He approves and assents, and agrees to be the first to take up his abode in the house. When this was done, all the elect who could be at Rome were assembled there. The rule of life in the epistle of Manichaeus was laid before them. Many thought it intolerable, and left; not a few felt ashamed, and stayed. They began to live as they had agreed, and as this high authority enjoined. The follower all the time was zealously enforcing everything on

everybody, though never, in any case, what he did not undertake himself. Meanwhile quarrels constantly arose among the elect. They charged one another with crimes, all which he lamented to hear, and managed to make them unintentionally expose one another in their altercations. The revelations were vile beyond description. Thus appeared the true character of those who were unlike the rest in being willing to bend to the yoke of the precepts. What then is to be suspected, or rather, concluded, of the others? To come to a close, they gathered together on one occasion and complained that they could not keep the regulations. Then came rebellion. The follower stated his case most concisely, that either all must be kept, or the man who had given such a sanction to such precepts, which no one could fulfill, must be thought a great fool. But, as was inevitable, the wild clamor of the mob prevailed over the opinion of one man. The bishop himself gave way at last, and took to flight with great disgrace; and he was said to have got in provisions by stealth, contrary to rule, which were often discovered. He had a supply of money from his private purse, which he carefully kept concealed.

75. If you say these things are false, you contradict what is too clear and public. But you may say so if you like. For, as the things are certain, and easily known by those who wish to know them, those who deny that they are true show what their habit of telling the truth is. But you have other replies with which I do not find fault. For you either say that some do keep your precepts, and that they should not be mixed up with the guilty in condemning the others; or that the whole inquiry into the character of the members of your sect is wrong, for the question is of the character of the profession. Should I grant both of these (although you can neither point out those faithful observers of the precepts, nor clear your heresy of all those frivolities and iniquities), still I must insist on knowing why you heap reproaches on Christians of the Catholic name on seeing the immoral life of some, while you either have the effrontery to repel inquiry about your members, or the still greater effrontery not to repel it, wishing it to be understood that in your scanty membership there are some unknown individuals who keep the precepts they profess, but that among the multitudes in the Catholic Church there are none.

ON THE PROFIT OF BELIEVING

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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DE UTILITATE CREDENDI.

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. C. L. CORNISH, M.A.

Retract. i. cap. 14. Moreover now at Hippo-Regius as Presbyter I wrote a book on the Profit of Believing, to a friend of mine who had been taken in by the Manichees, and whom I knew to be still held in that error, and to deride the Catholic school of Faith, in that men were bid believe, but not taught what was truth by a most certain method. In this book I said, &c. * * *. This book begins thus, “Si mihi Honorate, unum atque idem videretur esse.”

St. Augustin enumerates his book on the Profit of Believing first amongst those he wrote as Presbyter, to which order he was raised at Hippo about the beginning of the year 391. The person for whom he wrote had been led into error by himself, and appears to have been recovered from it, at least if he is the same who wrote to St. Augustin from Carthage about 412, proposing several questions, and to whom St. Augustin wrote his 140th Epistle. Cassiodorus calls him a Presbyter, though at that time he was not baptized. In Ep. 83, St. Augustin speaks of the death of another Honoratus, a Presbyter. Towards the end of his life he also wrote his 228th Epistle to a Bishop of Thabenna of the same name.—(Bened. Ed.)

The remarks in the Retractations are given in notes to the passages where they occur.

1. IF, Honoratus, a heretic, and a man trusting heretics seemed to me one and the same, I should judge it my duty to remain silent both in tongue and

pen in this matter. But now, whereas there is a very great difference between these two: forasmuch as he, in my opinion, is an heretic, who, for the sake of some temporal advantage, and chiefly for the sake of his own glory and pre-eminence, either gives birth to, or follows, false and new opinions; but he, who trusts men of this kind, is a man deceived by a certain imagination of truth and piety. This being the case, I have not thought it my duty to be silent towards you, as to my opinions on the finding and retaining of truth: with great love of which, as you know, we have burned from our very earliest youth: but it is a thing far removed from the minds of vain men, who, having too far advanced and fallen into these corporeal things, think that there is nothing else than what they perceive by those five well-known reporters of the body; and what impressions and images they have received from these, they carry over with themselves, even when they essay to withdraw from the senses; and by the deadly and most deceitful rule of these think that they measure most rightly the unspeakable recesses of truth. Nothing is more easy, my dearest friend, than for one not only to say, but also to think, that he hath found out the truth; but how difficult it is in reality, you will perceive, I trust, from this letter of mine. And that this may profit you, or at any rate may in no way harm you, and also all, into whose hands it shall chance to come, I have both prayed, and do pray, unto God; and I hope that it will be so, forasmuch as I am fully conscious that I have undertaken to write it, in a pious and friendly spirit, not as aiming at vain reputation, or trifling display.

2. It is then my purpose to prove to you, if I can, that the Manichees profanely and rashly inveigh against those, who, following the authority of the Catholic Faith, before that they are able to gaze upon that Truth, which the pure mind beholds, are by believing forearmed, and prepared for God Who is about to give them light. For you know, Honoratus, that for no other reason we fell in with such men, than because they used to say, that, apart from all terror of authority, by pure and simple reason, they would lead within to God, and set free from all error those who were willing to be their hearers. For what else constrained me, during nearly nine years, spurning the religion which had been set in me from a child by my parents, to be a follower and diligent hearer of those men, save that they said that we are alarmed by superstition, and are commanded to have faith before reason,

but that they urge no one to have faith, without having first discussed and made clear the truth? Who would not be enticed by such promises, especially the mind of a young man desirous of the truth, and further a proud and talkative mind by discussions of certain learned men in the school? such as they then found me, disdainful forsooth as of old wives' fables, and desirous to grasp and drink in, what they promised, the open and pure Truth? But what reason, on the other hand, recalled me, not to be altogether joined to them, so that I continued in that rank which they call of Hearers, so that I resigned not the hope and business of this world; save that I noticed that they also are rather eloquent and full in refutation of others, than abide firm and sure in proof of what is their own. But of myself what shall I say, who was already a Catholic Christian? teats which now, after very long thirst, I almost exhausted and dry, have returned to with all greediness, and with deeper weeping and groaning have shaken together and wrung them out more deeply, that so there might flow what might be enough to refresh me affected as I was, and to bring back hope of life and safety. What then shall I say of myself? You, not yet a Christian, who, through encouragement from me, execrating them greatly as you did, were hardly led to believe that you ought to listen to them and make trial of them, by what else, I pray you, were you delighted, call to mind, I entreat you, save by a certain great presumption and promise of reasons? But because they disputed long and much with very great copiousness and vehemence concerning the errors of unlearned men, a thing which I learned too late at length to be most easy for any moderately educated man; if even of their own they implanted in us any thing, we thought that we were obliged to retain it, insomuch as there fell not in our way other things, wherein to acquiesce. So they did in our case what crafty fowlers are wont to do, who set branches smeared with bird-lime beside water to deceive thirsty birds. For they fill up and cover anyhow the other waters which are around, or fright them from them by alarming devices, that they may fall into their snares, not through choice, but want.

3. But why do I not make answer to myself, that these fair and clever similies, and charges of this nature may be poured forth against all who are teachers of any thing by any adversary, with abundance of wit and sarcasm? But I thought that I ought to insert something of this kind in my letter, in

order to admonish them to give over such proceedings; so that, as he says, apart from trifles of common-places, matter may contend with matter, cause with cause, reason with reason. Wherefore let them give over that saying, which they have in their mouths as though of necessity, when any one, who hath been for some long time a hearer, hath left them; "The Light hath made a passage through him." For you see, you who are my chief care, (for I am not over anxious about them,) how empty this is, and most easy for any one to find fault with. Therefore I leave this for your own wisdom to consider. For I have no fear that you will think me possessed by indwelling Light, when I was entangled in the life of this world, having a darkened hope, of beauty of wife, of pomp of riches, of emptiness of honors, and of all other hurtful and deadly pleasures. For all these, as is not unknown to you, I ceased not to desire and hope for, at the time when I was their attentive hearer. And I do not lay this to the charge of their teaching; for I also confess that they also carefully advise to shun these. But now to say that I am deserted by light, when I have turned myself from all these shadows of things, and have determined to be content with that diet merely which is necessary for health of body; but that I was enlightened and shining, at a time when I loved these things, and was wrapped up in them, is the part of a man, to use the mildest expression, wanting in a keen insight into matters, on which he loves to speak at length. But, if you please, let us come to the cause in hand.

4. For you well know that the Manichees move the unlearned by finding fault with the Catholic Faith, and chiefly by rending in pieces and tearing the Old Testament: and they are utterly ignorant, how far these things are to be taken, and how drawn out they descend with profit into the veins and marrows of souls as yet as it were but able to cry. And because there are in them certain things which are some slight offense to minds ignorant and careless of themselves, (and there are very many such,) they admit of being accused in a popular way: but defended in a popular way they cannot be, by any great number of persons, by reason of the mysteries that are contained in them. But the few, who know how to do this, do not love public and much talked of controversies and disputes: and on this account are very little known, save to such as are most earnest in seeking them out. Concerning then this rashness of the Manichees, whereby they find fault

with the Old Testament and the Catholic Faith, listen, I entreat you, to the considerations which move me. But I desire and hope that you will receive them in the same spirit in which I say them. For God, unto Whom are known the secrets of my conscience knows, that in this discourse I am doing nothing of evil craft; but, as I think it should be received, for the sake of proving the truth, for which one thing we have now long ago determined to live; and with incredible anxiety, lest it may have been most easy for me to err with you, but most difficult, to use no harder term, to hold the right way with you. But I venture to anticipate that, in this hope, wherein I hope that you will hold with us the way of wisdom, He will not fail me, unto Whom I have been consecrated; Whom day and night I endeavor to gaze upon: and since, by reason of my sins, and by reason of past habit, having the eye of the mind wounded by strokes of feeble opinions, I know that I am without strength, I often entreat with tears, and as, after long blindness and darkness the eyes being hardly opened, and as yet, by frequent throbbing and turning away, refusing the light which yet they long after; specially if one endeavor to show to them the very sun; so it has now befallen me, who do not deny that there is a certain unspeakable and singular good of the soul, which the mind sees; and who with tears and groaning confess that I am not yet worthy of it. He will not then fail me, if I feign nothing, if I am led by duty, if I love truth, if I esteem friendship, if I fear much lest you be deceived.

5. All that Scripture therefore, which is called the Old Testament, is handed down fourfold to them who desire to know it, according to history, according to aetiology, according to analogy, according to allegory. Do not think me silly for using Greek words. In the first place, because I have so received, nor do I dare to make known to you otherwise than I have received. Next you yourself perceive, that we have not in use terms for such things: and had I translated and made such, I should have been indeed more silly: but, were I to use circumlocution, I should be less free in treating: this only I pray you to believe, that in whatever way I err, I am not inflated or swollen in any thing that I do. Thus (for example) it is handed down according to history, when there is taught what hath been written, or what hath been done; what not done, but only written as though it had been done. According to aetiology, when it is shown for what cause any thing hath

been done or said. According to analogy, when it is shown that the two Testaments, the Old and the New, are not contrary the one to the other. According to allegory, when it is taught that certain things which have been written are not to be taken in the letter, but are to be understood in a figure.

6. All these ways our Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles used. For when it had been objected that His disciples had plucked the ears of corn on the sabbath-day, the instance was taken from history; “Have ye not read,” saith He, “what David did when he was an hungered, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priests?” But the instance pertains to aetiology, that, when Christ had forbidden a wife to be put away, save for the cause of fornication, and they, who asked Him, had alleged that Moses had granted permission after a writing of divorcement had been given, This, saith He, “Moses did because of the hardness of your heart.” For here a reason was given, why that had been well allowed by Moses for a time; that this command of Christ might seem to show that now the times were other. But it were long to explain the changes of these times, and their order arranged and settled by a certain marvellous appointment of Divine Providence.

7. And further, analogy, whereby the agreement of both Testaments is plainly seen, why shall I say that all have made use of, to whose authority they yield; whereas it is in their power to consider with themselves, how many things they are wont to say have been inserted in the divine Scriptures by certain, I know not who, corrupters of truth? Which speech of theirs I always thought to be most weak, even at the time that I was their hearer: nor I alone, but you also, (for I well remember,) and all of us, who essayed to exercise a little more care in forming a judgment than the crowd of hearers. But now, after that many things have been expounded and made clear to me, which used chiefly to move me: those I mean, wherein their discourse for the most part boasts itself, and expatiates the more freely, the more safely it can do so as having no opponent; it seems to me that there is no assertion of theirs more shameless, or (to use a milder phrase) more careless and weak than that the divine Scriptures have been corrupted; whereas there are no copies in existence, in a matter of so recent date,

whereby they can prove it. For were they to assert, that they thought not that they ought thoroughly to receive them, because they had been written by persons, who they thought had not written the truth; any how their refusal would be more right, or their error more natural. For this is what they have done in the case of the Book which is inscribed the Acts of the Apostles. And this device of theirs, when I consider with myself, I cannot enough wonder at. For it is not the want of wisdom in the men that I complain of in this matter, but the want of ordinary understanding. For that book hath so great matters, which are like what they receive, that it seems to me great folly to refuse to receive this book also, and if any thing offend them there to call it false and inserted. Or, if such language is shameless, as it is why in the Epistles of Paul, why in the four books of the Gospel, do they think that they are of any avail, in which I am not sure but that there are in proportion many more things, than could be in that book, which they will have believed to have been interpolated by falsifiers. But forsooth this is what I believe to be the case, and I ask of you to consider it with me with as calm and serene a judgment as possible. For you know that, essaying to bring the person of their founder Manichaeus into the number of the Apostles, they say that the Holy Spirit, Whom the Lord promised His disciples that He would send, hath come to us through him. Therefore, were they to receive those Acts of the Apostles, in which the coming of the Holy Spirit is plainly set forth, they could not find how to say that it was interpolated. For they will have it that there were some, I know not who, falsifiers of the divine Books before the times of Manichaeus himself; and that they were falsified by persons who wished to combine the Law of the Jews with the Gospel. But this they cannot say concerning the Holy Spirit, unless haply they assert that those persons divined, and set in their books what should be brought forward against Manichaeus, who should at some future time arise, and say that the Holy Spirit had been sent through him. But concerning the Holy Spirit we will speak somewhat more plainly in another place. Now let us return to my purpose.

8. For that both history of the Old Testament, and aetiology, and analogy are found in the New Testament, has been, as I think, sufficiently proved: it remains to show this of allegory. Our Redeemer Himself in the Gospel uses allegory out of the Old Testament. “This generation,” saith He, “seeketh a

sign, and there shall not be given it save the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so also shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." For why should I speak of the Apostle Paul, who in his first Epistle to the Corinthians shows that even the very history of the Exodus was an allegory of the future Christian People. "But I would not that ye should be ignorant, brethren, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized into Moses, in the cloud, and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of the spiritual Rock that followed with them; and that Rock was Christ. But in the more part of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. But these things were figures of us, that we be not lustful of evil things, as they also lusted. Neither let us worship idols, as certain of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as certain of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand men. Neither let us tempt Christ, as certain of them tempted, and perished of serpents. Neither murmur we, as certain of them murmured, and perished of the destroyer. But all these things happened unto them in a figure. But they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come." There is also in the Apostle a certain allegory, which indeed greatly relates to the cause in hand, for this reason that they themselves are wont to bring it forward, and make a display of it in disputing. For the same Paul says to the Galatians, "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, one of a bond-maid, and one of a free woman. But he who was of the bond-maid was born after the flesh: but he who was of the free woman, by promise: which things were spoken by way of allegory. For these are the two Testaments, one of Mount Sinai gendering unto bondage, which is Agar: for Sinai is a mount in Arabia, which bordereth upon that Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But that Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

9. Here therefore these men too evil, while they essay to make void the Law, force us to approve these Scriptures. For they mark what is said, that they who are under the Law are in bondage, and they keep flying above the rest that last saying, "Ye are made empty of Christ, as many of you as are

justified in the Law; ye have fallen from Grace.” We grant that all these things are true, and we say that the Law is not necessary, save for them unto whom bondage is yet profitable: and that the Law was on this account profitably enacted, in that men, who could not be recalled from sins by reason, needed to be restrained by such a Law, that is to say, by the threats and terrors of those punishments which can be seen by fools: from which when the Grace of Christ sets us free, it condemns not that Law, but invites us at length to yield obedience to its love, not to be slaves to the fear of the Law. Itself is Grace, that is free gift, which they understand not to have come to them from God, who still desire to be under the bonds of the Law. Whom Paul deservedly rebukes as unbelievers, because they do not believe that now through our Lord Jesus they have been set free from that bondage, under which they were placed for a certain time by the most just appointment of God. Hence is that saying of the same Apostle, “For the Law was our schoolmaster in Christ.” He therefore gave to men a schoolmaster to fear, Who after gave a Master to love. And yet in these precepts and commands of the Law, which now it is not allowed Christians to use, such as either the Sabbath, or Circumcision, or Sacrifices, and if there be any thing of this kind, so great mysteries are contained, as that every pious person may understand, there is nothing more deadly than that whatever is there be understood to the letter, that is, to the word: and nothing more healthful than that it be unveiled in the Spirit. Hence it is: “The letter killeth, but the Spirit quickeneth.” Hence it is, “That same veil remaineth in the reading of the Old Testament, which veil is not taken away; since it is made void in Christ.” For there is made void in Christ, not the Old Testament, but its veil: that so through Christ that may be understood, and, as it were, laid bare, which without Christ is obscure and covered. Forasmuch as the same Apostle straightway adds, “But when thou shalt have passed over to Christ, the veil shall be taken away.” For he saith not, the Law shall be taken away, or, the Old Testament. Not therefore through the Grace of the Lord, as though useless things were there hidden, have they been taken away; but rather the covering whereby useful things were covered. In this manner all they are dealt with, who earnestly and piously, not disorderly and shamelessly, seek the sense of those Scriptures, and they are carefully shown both the order of events, and the causes of deeds and words, and so great agreement of the Old Testament with the

New, that there is left no jot that agrees not; and so great secrets of figures, that all the things that are drawn forth by interpretation force them to confess that they are wretched, who will to condemn these before they learn them.

10. But, passing over in the mean while the depth of knowledge, to deal with you as I think I ought to deal with my intimate friend; that is, as I have myself power, not as I have wondered at the power of very learned men; there are three kinds of error, whereby men err, when they read anything. I will speak of them one by one. The first kind is, wherein that which is false is thought true, whereas the writer thought otherwise. A second kind, although not so extensive, yet not less hurtful, when that, which is false, is thought true, yet the thought is the same as that of the writer. A third kind, when from the writing of another some truth is understood, whereas the writer understood it not. In which kind there is no little profit, rather, if you consider carefully, the whole entire fruit of reading. An instance of the first kind is, as if any one, for example, should say and believe that Rhadamanthus hears and judges the causes of the dead in the realms below, because he hath so read in the strain of Maro. For this one errs in two ways: both in that he believes a thing not to be believed, and also in that he, whom he reads, is not to be thought to have believed it. The second kind may be thus noticed: if one, because Lucretius writes that the soul is formed of atoms, and that after death it is dissolved into the same atoms and perishes, were to think this to be true and what he ought to believe. For this one also is not less wretched, if, in a matter of so great moment, he hath persuaded himself of that which is false, as certain; although Lucretius, by whose books he hath been deceived, held this opinion. For what doth it profit this one to be assured of the meaning of the author, whereas he hath chosen him to himself not so as through him to escape error, but so as with him to err. An instance suited to the third kind is, if one, after having read in the books of Epicurus some place wherein he praises continence, were to assert that he had made the chief good to consist in virtue, and that therefore he is not to be blamed. For how is this man injured by the error of Epicurus, what though Epicurus believe that bodily pleasure is the chief good of man: whereas he hath not surrendered up himself to so base and hurtful an opinion, and is pleased with Epicurus for no other reason, than that he

thinks him not to have held sentiments which ought not to be holden. This error is not only natural to man, but often also most worthy of a man. For what, if word were brought to me, concerning some one whom I loved, that, when now he was of bearded age, he had said, in the hearing of many, that he was so pleased with boyhood and childhood, as even to swear that he wished to live after the same fashion, and that that was so proved to me, as that I should be shameless to deny it: I should not, should I, seem worthy of blame, if I thought that, in saying this, he wished to show, that he was pleased with the innocence, and with the temper of mind alien from those desires in which the race of man is wrapped up, and from this circumstance should love him yet more and more, than I used to love him before; although perhaps he had been foolish enough to love in the age of children a certain freedom in play and food, and an idle ease? For suppose that he had died after this report had reached me, and that I had been unable to make any inquiry of him, so as for him to open his meaning; would there be any one so shameless as to be angry with me, for praising the man's purpose and wish, through those very words which I had heard? What, that even a just judge of matters would not hesitate perhaps to praise my sentiment and wish, in that both I was pleased with innocence, and, as man of man, in a matter of doubt, preferred to think well, when it was in my power also to think ill?

11. And, this being so, hear also just so many conditions and differences of the same Scriptures. For it must be that just so many meet us. For either any one hath written profitably, and is not profitably understood by some one: or both take place unprofitably: or the reader understands profitably, whereas he, who is read, hath written contrariwise. Of these the first I blame not, the last I regard not. For neither can I blame the man, who without any fault of his own hath been ill understood; nor can I be distressed at any one being read, who hath failed to see the truth, when I see that the readers are no way injured. There is then one kind most approved, and as it were most cleansed, when both the things written are well, and are taken in a good sense by the readers. And yet that also is still further divided into two: for it doth not altogether shut out error. For it generally comes to pass, that, when a writer hath held a good sense, the reader also holds a good sense; still other than he, and often better, often worse, yet

profitably. But when both we hold the same sense as he whom we read, and that is every way suited to right conduct of life, there is the fullest possible measure of truth, and there is no place opened for error from any other quarter. And this kind is altogether very rare, when what we read is matter of extreme obscurity: nor can it, in my opinion, be clearly known, but only believed. For by what proofs shall I so gather the will of a man who is absent or dead, as that I can swear to it: when, even if he were questioned being present, there might be many things, which, if he were no ill man, he would most carefully hide? But I think that it hath nothing to do towards learning the matter of fact, of what character the writer was; yet is he most fairly believed good, whose writings have benefited the human race and posterity.

12. Wherefore I would that they would tell me, in what kind they place the, supposed, error of the Catholic Church. If in the first, it is altogether a grave charge; but it needs not a far-fetched defense: for it is enough to deny that we so understand, as the persons, who inveigh against us, suppose. If in the second, the charge is not less grave; but they shall be refuted by the same saying. If in the third, it is no charge at all. Proceed, and next consider the Scriptures themselves. For what objection do they raise against the books of (what is called) the Old Testament? Is it that they are good, but are understood by us in an ill sense? But they themselves do not receive them. Or is it that they are neither good, nor are well understood? But our defense above is enough to drive them from this position. Or is it this that they will say, although they are understood by you in a good sense, yet they are evil? What is this other than to acquit living adversaries, with whom they have to do, and to accuse men long ago dead, with whom they have no strife? I indeed believe that both those men profitably delivered to memory all things, and that they were great and divine. And that that Law was published, and framed by the command and will of God: and of this, although I have but very slight knowledge of books of that kind, yet I can easily persuade any, if there apply to me a mind fair and no way obstinate: and this I will do, when you shall grant to me your ears and mind well disposed: this however when it shall be in my power: but now is it not enough for me, however that matter may stand, not to have been deceived?

13. I call to witness, Honoratus, my conscience, and God Who hath His dwelling in pure souls, that I account nothing more prudent, chaste, and religious, than are all those Scriptures, which under the name of the Old Testament the Catholic Church retains. You wonder at this, I am aware. For I cannot hide that we were far otherwise persuaded. But there is indeed nothing more full of rashness, (which at that time, being boys, we had in us,) than in the case of each several book, to desert expounders, who profess that they hold them, and that they can deliver them to their scholars, and to seek their meaning from those, who, I know not from what cause compelling, have proclaimed a most bitter war against the framers and authors of them. For who ever thought that the hidden and dark books of Aristotle were to be expounded to him by one who was the enemy of Aristotle; to speak of these systems of teaching, wherein a reader may perhaps err without sacrilege? Who, in fine, willed to read or learn the geometrical writings of Archimedes, under Epicurus as a master; against which Epicurus used to argue with great obstinacy, so far as I judge, understanding them not at all? What are those Scriptures of the law most plain, against which, as though set forth in public, these men make their attack in vain and to no purpose? And they seem to me to be like that weak woman, whom these same men are wont to mock at, who enraged at the sun being extolled to her, and recommended as an object of worship by a certain female Manichee, being as she was simple-minded and of a religions spirit, leaped up in haste, and often striking with her foot that spot on which the sun through the window cast light, began to cry out, Lo, I trample on the sun and your God: altogether after a foolish and womanish manner; Who denies it? But do not those men seem to you to be such, who, in matters which they understand not, either wherefore, or altogether of what kind they are, although like to matters cast in the way, yet to such as understand them exact and divine, rending them with great onset of speech and reproaches, think that they are effecting something, because the unlearned applaud them? Believe me, whatever there is in these Scriptures, it is lofty and divine: there is in them altogether truth, and a system of teaching most suited to refresh and renew minds: and clearly so ordered in measure, as that there is no one but may draw thence, what is enough for himself, if only he approach to draw with devotion and piety, as true religion demands. To prove this to you, needs many reasons and a longer discourse. For first I

must so treat with you as that you may not hate the authors themselves; next, so as that you may love them: and this I must treat in any other way, rather than by expounding their meanings and words. For this reason, because in case we hated Virgil, nay, rather in case we loved him not, before understanding him, by the commendation of our forefathers, we should never be satisfied on those questions about him without number, by which grammarians are wont to be disquieted and troubled; nor should we listen willingly to one who solved these at the same time praising him; but should favor that one who by means of these essayed to show that he had erred and doated. But now, whereas many essay to open these, and each (in a different way according to his capacity, we applaud these in preference, through whose exposition the poet is found better, who is believed, even by those who do not understand him, not only in nothing to have offended, but also to have sung nothing but what was worthy of praise. So that in some minute question, we are rather angry with the master who fails, and has not what to answer, than think him silent through any fault in Maro. And now, if, in order to defend himself, he should wish to assert a fault in so great an author, hardly will his scholars remain with him, even after they have paid his fee. How great matter were it, that we should shew like good will towards them, of whom it hath been confirmed by so long time of old that the Holy Spirit spake by them? But, forsooth, we youths of the greatest understanding, and marvellous searchers out of reasons, without having at least unrolled these writings, without having sought teachers, without having somewhat chided our own dullness, lastly, without having yielded our heart even in a measure to those who have willed that writings of this kind be so long read, kept, and handled through the whole world; have thought that nothing in them is to be believed, moved by the speech of those who are unfriendly and hostile to them, with whom, under a false promise of reason, we should be compelled to believe and cherish thousands of fables.

14. But now I will proceed with what I have begun, if I can, and I will so treat with you, as not in the mean while to lay open the Catholic Faith, but, in order that they may search out its great mysteries, to show to those who have a care for their souls, hope of divine fruit, and of the discerning of truth. No one doubts of him who seeks true religion, either that he already

believes that there is an immortal soul for that religion to profit, or that he also wishes to find that very thing in this same religion. Therefore all religion is for the sake of the soul; for howsoever the nature of the body may be, it causes no care or anxiety, especially after death, to him, whose soul possesses that whereby it is blessed. For the sake of the soul, therefore, either alone or chiefly, hath true religion, if there be any such, been appointed. But this soul, (I will consider for what reason, and I confess the matter to be most obscure,) yet errs, and is foolish, as we see, until it attain to and perceive wisdom, and perhaps this very [wisdom] is true religion. I am not, am I, sending you to fables? I am not, am I, forcing you to believe rashly? I say that our soul entangled and sunk in error and folly seeks the way of truth, if there be any such. If this be not your case, pardon me, I pray, and share with me your wisdom; but if you recognize in yourself what I say, let us, I entreat, together seek the truth.

15. Put the case that we have not as yet heard a teacher of any religion. Lo we have undertaken a new matter and business. We must seek, I suppose, them who profess this matter, if it have any existence. Suppose that we have found different persons holding different opinions, and through their difference of opinions seeking to draw persons each one to himself: but that, in the mean while, there are certain pre-eminent from being much spoken of, and from having possession of nearly all peoples. Whether these hold the truth, is a great question: but ought we not to make full trial of them first, in order that, so long as we err, being as we are men, we may seem to err with the human race itself?

16. But it will be said, the truth is with some few; therefore you already know what it is, if you know with whom it is. Said I not a little above, that we were in search of it as unlearned men? But if from the very force of truth you conjecture that few possess it, but know not who they are; what if it is thus, that there are so few who know the truth, as that they hold the multitude by their authority, whence the small number may set itself free, and, as it were, strain itself forth into those secrets? Do we not see how few attain the highest eloquence, whereas through the whole world the schools of rhetoricians are resounding with troops of young men? What, do they, as many as desire to turn out good orators, alarmed at the multitude of the

unlearned, think that they are to bestow their labor on the orations of Caecilius, or Erucius, rather than those of Tullius? All aim at these, which are confirmed by authority of our forefathers. Crowds of unlearned persons essay to learn the same, which by the few learned are received as to be learned: yet very few attain, yet fewer practise, the very fewest possible become famous. What, if true religion be some such thing? What if a multitude of unlearned persons attend the Churches, and yet that be no proof, that therefore no one is made perfect by these mysteries? And yet, if they who studied eloquence were as few as the few who are eloquent, our parents would never believe that we ought to be committed to such masters. Whereas, then, we have been called to these studies by a multitude, which is numerous in that portion of it which is made up of the unlearned, so as to become enamored of that which few can attain unto; why are we unwilling to be in the same case in religion, which perhaps we despise with great danger to our soul? For if the truest and purest worship of God, although it be found with a few, be yet found with those, with whom a multitude albeit wrapped up in lusts, and removed far from purity of understanding, agrees; (and who can doubt that this may happen?) I ask, if one were to charge us with rashness and folly, that we seek not diligently with them who teach it, that, which we are greatly anxious to discover, what can we answer? [Shall we say,] I was deterred by numbers? Why from the pursuit of liberal arts, which hardly bring any profit to this present life; why from search after money? Why from attaining unto honor; why, in fine, from gaining and keeping good health; lastly, why from the very aim at a happy life; whereas all are engaged in these, few excel; were you deterred by no numbers?

17. “But they seemed there to make absurd statements.” On whose assertion? Forsooth on that of enemies, for whatever cause, for whatever reason, for this is not now the question, still enemies. Upon reading, I found it so of myself. Is it so? Without having received any instruction in poetry, you would not dare to essay to read Terentianus Maurus without a master: Asper, Cornutus, Donatus, and others without number are needed, that any poet whatever may be understood, whose strains seem to court even the applause of the theatre; do you in the case of those books, which, however they may be, yet by the confession of well-nigh the whole human race are commonly reported to be sacred and full of divine things, rush upon them

without a guide, and dare to deliver an opinion on them without a teacher; and, if there meet you any matters, which seem absurd, do not accuse rather your own dullness, and mind decayed by the corruption of this world, such as is that of all that are foolish, than those [books] which haply cannot be understood by such persons! You should seek some one at once pious and learned, or who by consent of many was said to be such, that you might be both bettered by his advice, and instructed by his learning. Was he not easy to find? He should be searched out with pains. Was there no one in the country in which you lived? What cause could more profitably force to travel? Was he quite hidden, or did he not exist on the continent ? One should cross the sea. If across the sea he was not found in any place near to us, you should proceed even as far as those lands, in which the things related in those books are said to have taken place. What, Honoratus, have we done of this kind? And yet a religion perhaps the most holy, (for as yet I am speaking as though it were matter of doubt,) the opinion whereof hath by this time taken possession of the whole world, we wretched boys condemned at our own discretion and sentence. What if those things which in those same Scriptures seem to offend some unlearned persons, were so set there for this purpose, that when things were read of such as are abhorrent from the feeling of ordinary men, not to say of wise and holy men, we might with much more earnestness seek the hidden meaning. Perceive you not how the Catamite of the Bucolics, for whom the rough shepherd gushed forth into tears, men essay to interpret, and affirm that the boy Alexis, on whom Plato also is said to have composed a love strain, hath some great meaning or other, but escapes the judgment of the unlearned; whereas without any sacrilege a poet however rich may seem to have published wanton songs?

18. But in truth was there either decree of any law, or power of gainsayers, or vile character of persons consecrated, or shameful report, or newness of institution, or hidden profession, to recall us from, and forbid us, the search? There is nothing of these. All laws divine and human allow us to seek the Catholic Faith; but to hold and exercise it is allowed us at any rate by human law, even if so long as we are in error there be a doubt concerning divine law; no enemy alarms our weakness, (although truth and the salvation of the soul, in case being diligently sought it be not found

where it may with most safety, ought to be sought at any risk); the degrees of all ranks and powers most devotedly minister to this divine worship; the name of religion is most honorable and most famous. What, I pray, hinders to search out and discuss with pious and careful enquiry, whether there be here that which it must needs be few know and guard in entire purity, although the goodwill and affection of all nations conspire in its favor?

19. The case standing thus, suppose, as I said, that we are now for the first time seeking unto what religion we shall deliver up our souls, for it to cleanse and renew them; without doubt we must begin with the Catholic Church. For by this time there are more Christians, than if the Jews and idolaters be added together. But of these same Christians, whereas there are several heresies, and all wish to appear Catholics, and call all others besides themselves heretics, there is one Church, as all allow: if you consider the whole world, more full filled in number; but, as they who know affirm, more pure also in truth than all the rest. But the question of truth is another; but, what is enough for such as are in search, there is one Catholic, to which different heresies give different names whereas they themselves are called each by names of their own, which they dare not deny. From which may be understood, by judgment of umpires who are hindered by no favor, to which is to be assigned the name Catholic, which all covet. But, that no one may suppose that it is to be made matter of over garrulous or unnecessary discussion, this is at any rate one, in which human laws themselves also are in a certain way Christian. I do not wish any prejudgment to be formed from this fact, but I account it a most favorable commencement for enquiry. For we are not to fear lest the true worship of God; resting on no strength of its own, seem to need to be supported by them whom it ought to support: but, at any rate, it is perfect happiness, if the truth may be there found, where it is most safe both to search for it and to hold it: in case it cannot, then at length, at whatever risk, we must go and search some other where.

20. Having then laid down these principles, which, as I think, are so just that I ought to win this cause before you, let who will be my adversary, I will set forth to you, as I am able, what way I followed, when I was searching after true religion in that spirit, in which I have now set forth that it ought to be sought. For upon leaving you and crossing the sea, now

delaying and hesitating, what I ought to hold, what to let go; which delay rose upon me every day the more, from the time that I was a hearer of that man, whose coming was promised to us, as you know, as if from heaven, to explain all things which moved us, and found him, with the exception of a certain eloquence, such as the rest; being now settled in Italy, I reasoned and deliberated greatly with myself, not whether I should continue in that sect, into which I was sorry that I had fallen, but in what way I was to find the truth, my sighs through love of which are known to no one better than to yourself. Often it seemed to me that it could not be found, and huge waves of my thoughts would roll toward deciding in favor of the Academics. Often again, with what power I had, looking into the human soul, with so much life, with so much intelligence, with so much clearness, I thought that the truth lay not hid, save that in it the way of search lay hid, and that this same way must be taken from some divine authority. It remained to enquire what was that authority, where in so great dissensions each promised that he would deliver it. Thus there met me a wood, out of which there was no way, which I was very loath to be involved in: and amid these things, without any rest, my mind was agitated through desire of finding the truth. However, I continued to unsew myself more and more from those whom now I had proposed to leave. But there remained nothing else, in so great dangers, than with words full of tears and sorrow to entreat the Divine Providence to help me. And this I was content to do: and now certain disputations of the Bishop of Milan had almost moved me to desire, not without some hope, to enquire into many things concerning the Old Testament itself, which, as you know, we used to view as accursed, having been ill commended to us. And I had decided to be a Catechumen in the Church, unto which I had been delivered by my parents, until such time as I should either find what I wished, or should persuade myself that it needed not to be sought. Therefore had there been one who could teach me, he would find me at a very critical moment most fervently disposed and very apt to learn. If you see that you too have been long affected in this way, therefore, and with a like care for thy soul, and if now you seem to yourself to have been tossed to and fro enough, and wish to put an end to labors of this kind, follow the pathway of Catholic teaching, which hath flowed down from Christ Himself through the Apostles even unto us, and will hereafter flow down to posterity.

21. This, you will say, is ridiculous, whereas all profess to hold and teach this: all heretics make this profession, I cannot deny it; but so, as that they promise to those whom they entice, that they will give them a reason concerning matters the most obscure: and on this account chiefly charge the Catholic [Church], that they who come to her are enjoined to believe; but they make it their boast, that they impose not a yoke of believing, but open a fount of teaching. You answer, What could be said, that should pertain more to their praise? It is not so. For this they do, without being endued with any strength, but in order to conciliate to themselves a crowd by the name of reason: on the promise of which the human soul naturally is pleased, and, without considering its own strength and state of health, by seeking the food of the sound, which is ill entrusted save to such as are in health, rushes upon the poisons of them who deceive. For true religion, unless those things be believed, which each one after, if he shall conduct himself well and shall be worthy, attains unto and understands, and altogether without a certain weighty power of authority, can in no way be rightly entered upon.

22. But perhaps you seek to have some reason given you on this very point, such as may persuade you, that you ought not to be taught by reason before faith. Which may easily be done, if only you make yourself a fair hearer. But, in order that it may be done suitably, I wish you as it were to answer my questions; and, first, to tell me, why you, think that one ought not to believe. Because, you say, credulity, from which men are called credulous, in itself, seems to me to be a certain fault: otherwise we should not use to cast this as a term of reproach. For if a suspicious man is in fault, in that he suspects things not ascertained; how much more a credulous man, who herein differs from a suspicious man, that the one allows some doubt, the other none, in matters which he knows not. In the mean while I accept this opinion and distinction. But you know that we are not wont to call a person even curious without some reproach; but we call him studious even with praise. Wherefore observe, if you please, what seems to you to be the difference between these two. This surely, you answer, that, although both be led by great desire to know, yet the curious man seeks after things that no way pertain to him, but the studious man, on the contrary, seeks after what pertain to him. But, because we deny not that a man’s wife and

children, and their health, pertain unto him; if any one, being settled abroad, were to be careful to ask all comers, how his wife and children are and fare, he is surely led by great desire to know, and yet we call not this man studious, who both exceedingly wishes to know, and that (in) matters which very greatly pertain unto him. Wherefore you now understand that the definition of a studious person falters in this point, that every studious person wishes to know what pertain to himself, and yet not every one, who makes this his business, is to be called studious; but he who with all earnestness seeks those things which pertain unto the liberal culture and adornment of the mind. Yet we rightly call him one who studies, especially if we add what he studies to hear. For we may call him even studious of his own (family) if he love only his own (family), we do not however, without some addition, think him worthy of the common name of the studious. But one who was desirous to hear how his family were I should not call studious of hearing, unless taking pleasure in the good report, he should wish to hear it again and again: but one who studied, even if only once. Now return to the curious person, and tell me, if any one should be willing to listen to some tale, such as would no way profit him, that is, of matters that pertain not to him: and that not in an offensive way and frequently, but very seldom and with great moderation, either at a feast, or in some company, or meeting of any kind; would he seem to you curious? I think not: but at any rate he would certainly seem to have a care for that matter, to which he was willing to listen. Wherefore the definition of a curious person also must be corrected by the same rule as that of a studious person: Consider therefore whether the former statements also do not need to be corrected. For why should not both he, who at some time suspects something, be unworthy the name of a suspicious person; and he who at some time believes something, of a credulous person? Thus as there is very great difference between one who studies any matter, and the absolutely studious; and again between him who hath a care and the curious; so is there between him who believes and the credulous.

23. But you will say, consider now whether we ought to believe in religion. For, although we grant that it is one thing to believe, another to be credulous, it does not follow that it is no fault to believe in matters of religion. For what if it be a fault both to believe and to be credulous, as (it

is) both to be drunk and to be a drunkard? Now he who thinks this certain, it seems to me can have no friend; for, if it is base to believe any thing, either he acts basely who believes a friend, or in nothing believing a friend I see not how he can call either him or himself a friend. Here perhaps you may say, I grant that we must believe something at some time; now make plain, how in the case of religion it be not base to believe before one knows. I will do so, if I can. Wherefore I ask of you, which you esteem the graver fault, to deliver religion to one unworthy, or to believe what is said by them who deliver it. If you understand not whom I call unworthy, I call him, who approaches with feigned breast. You grant, as I suppose, that it is more blameable to unfold unto such an one whatever holy secrets there are, than to believe religious men affirming any thing on the matter of religion itself. For it would be unbecoming you to make any other answer. Wherefore now suppose him present, who is about to deliver to you a religion, in what way shall you assure him, that you approach with a true mind, and that, so far as this matter is concerned, there is in you no fraud or feigning? You will say, your own good conscience that you are no way feigning, asserting this with words as strong as you can, but yet with words. For you cannot lay open man to man the hiding places of your soul, so that you may be thoroughly known. But if he shall say, Lo, I believe you, but is it not more fair that you also believe me, when, if I hold any truth, you are about to receive, I about to give, a benefit? what will you answer, save that you must believe.

24. But you say, Were it not better that you should give me a reason, that, wherever, that shall lead me, I may follow without any rashness? Perhaps it were: but, it being so great a matter, that you are by reason to come to the knowledge of God, do you think that all are qualified to understand the reasons, by which the human soul is led to know God, or many, or few? Few I think, you say. Do you believe that you are in the number of these? It is not for me, you say, to answer this. Therefore you think it is for him to believe you in this also: and this indeed he does: only do you remember, that he hath already twice believed you saying things uncertain; that you are unwilling to believe him even once admonishing you in a religious spirit. But suppose that it is so, and that you approach with a true mind to receive religion, and that you are one of few men in such sense as to be able to take in the reasons by which the Divine Power is brought into certain

knowledge; what? do you think that other men, who are not endued with so serene a disposition, are to be denied religion? or do you think that they are to be led gradually by certain steps unto those highest inner recesses? You see clearly which is the more religious. For you cannot think that any one whatever in a case where he desires so great a thing, ought by any means to be abandoned or rejected. But do you not think, that, unless he do first believe that he shall attain unto that which he purposes; and do yield his mind as a suppliant; and, submitting to certain great and necessary precepts, do by a certain course of life thoroughly cleanse it, that he will not otherwise attain the things that are purely true? Certainly you think so. What, then, is the case of those, (of whom I already believe you to be one,) who are able most easily to receive divine secrets by sure reason, will it, I ask, be to them any hindrance at all, if they so come as they who at the first believe? I think not. But yet, you say, what need to delay them? Because although they will in no way harm themselves by what is done, yet they will harm the rest by the precedent. For there is hardly one who has a just notion of his own power: but he who has a less notion must be roused; he who has a greater notion must be checked: that neither the one be broken by despair, nor the other carried headlong by rashness. And this is easily done, if even they, who are able to fly, (that they be not alluring the occasion of any into danger,) are forced for a short time to walk where the rest also may walk with safety. This is the forethought of true religion: this the command of God: this what hath been handed down from our blessed forefathers, this what hath been preserved even unto us: to wish to distrust and overthrow this, is nothing else than to seek a sacrilegious way unto true religion. And whoso do this, not even if what they wish be granted to them are they able to arrive at the point at which they aim. For whatever kind of excellent genius they have, unless God be present, they creep on the ground. But He is then present, if they, who are aiming at God, have a regard for their fellow men. Than which step there can be found nothing more sure Heavenward. I for my part cannot resist this reasoning, for how can I say that we are to believe nothing without certain knowledge? whereas both there can be no friendship at all, unless there be believed something which cannot be proved by some reason, and often stewards, who are slaves, are trusted by their masters without any fault on their part. But in religion what can there be more unfair than that the ministers of God believe us when we promise an unfeigned mind, and we are unwilling to believe them when they enjoin us any thing. Lastly, what way can there be more healthful, than for a man to become fitted to receive the truth by believing those things, which have been appointed by God to serve for the previous culture and treatment of the mind? Or, if you be already altogether fitted, rather to make some little circuit where it is safest to tread, than both to cause yourself danger, and to be a precedent for rashness to other men?

25. Wherefore it now remains to consider, in what manner we ought not to follow these, who profess that they will lead by reason. For how we may without fault follow those who bid us to believe, hath been already said: but unto these who make promises of reason certain think that they come, not only without blame, but also with some praise: but it is not so. For there are two (classes of) persons, praiseworthy in religion; one of those who have already found, whom also we must needs judge most blessed; another of those who are seeking with all earnestness and in the right way. The first, therefore, are already in very possession, the other on the way, yet on that way whereby they are most sure to arrive. There are three other kinds of men altogether to be disapproved of and detested. One is of those who hold an opinion, that is, of those who think that they know what they know not. Another is of those who are indeed aware that they know not, but do not so seek as to be able to find. A third is of those who neither think that they know, nor wish to seek. There are also three things, as it were bordering upon one another, in the minds of men well worth distinguishing; understanding, belief, opinion. And, if these be considered by themselves, the first is always without fault, the second sometimes with fault, the third never without fault. For the understanding of matters great, and honorable, and even divine, is most blessed. But the understanding of things unnecessary is no injury; but perhaps the learning was an injury, in that it took up the time of necessary matters. But on the matters themselves that are injurious, it is not the understanding, but the doing or suffering them, that is wretched. For not, in case any understand how an enemy may be slain without danger to himself, is he guilty from the mere understanding, not the wish; and, if the wish be absent, what can be called more innocent? But belief is then worthy of blame, when either any thing is believed of God which is unworthy of Him, or any thing is over easily believed of man. But

in all other matters if any believe aught, provided he understand that he knows it not, there is no fault. For I believe that very wicked conspirators were formerly put to death by the virtue of Cicero; but this I not only know not, but also I know for certain that I can by no means know. But opinion is on two accounts very base; in that both he who hath persuaded himself that he already knows, cannot learn; provided only it may be learnt; and in itself rashness is a sign of a mind not well disposed. For even if any suppose that he know what I said of Cicero, (although it be no hindrance to him from learning, in that the matter itself is incapable of being grasped by any knowledge;) yet, (in that he understands not that there is a great difference, whether any thing be grasped by sure reason of mind, which we call understanding, or whether for practical purposes it be entrusted to common fame or writing, for posterity to believe it,) he assuredly errs, and no error is without what is base. What then we understand, we owe to reason; what we believe, to authority; what we have an opinion on, to error. But every one who understands also believes, and also every one who has an opinion believes; not every one who believes understands, no one who has an opinion understands. Therefore if these three things be referred unto the five kinds of men, which we mentioned a little above; that is, two kinds to be approved, which we set first, and three that remain faulty; we find that the first kind, that of the blessed, believe the truth itself; but the second kind, that of such as are earnest after, and lovers of, the truth, believe authority. In which kinds, of the two, the act of belief is praiseworthy. But in the first of the faulty kinds, that is, of those who have an opinion that they know what they know not, there is an altogether faulty credulity. The other two kinds that are to be disapproved believe nothing, both they who seek the truth despairing of finding it, and they who seek it not at all. And this only in matters which pertain unto any system of teaching. For in the other business of life, I am utterly ignorant by what means a man can believe nothing. Although in the case of those also they who say that in practical matters they follow probabilities, would seem rather to be unable to know than unable to believe. For who believes not what he approves? or how is what they follow probable, if it be not approved? Wherefore there may be two kinds of such as oppose the truth: one of those who assail knowledge alone, not faith; the other of those who condemn both: and yet again, I am ignorant whether these can be found in matters of human life.

These things have been said, in order that we might understand, that, in retaining faith, even of those things which as yet we comprehend not, we are set free from the rashness of such as have an opinion. For they, who say that we are to believe nothing but what we know, are on their guard against that one name “opining,” which must be confessed to be base and very wretched, but, if they consider carefully that there is a very great difference, whether one think that he knows, or moved by some authority believe that which he understands that he knows not, surely he will escape the charge of error, and inhumanity, and pride.

26. For I ask, if what is not known must not be believed, in what way may children do service to their parents, and love with mutual affection those whom they believe not to be their parents? For it cannot, by any means, be known by reason. But the authority of the mother comes in, that it be believed of the father; but of the mother it is usually not the mother that is believed, but midwives, nurses, servants. For she, from whom a son may be stolen and another put in his place, may she not being deceived deceive? Yet we believe, and believe without any doubt, what we confess we cannot know. For who but must see, that unless it be so, filial affection, the most sacred bond of the human race, is violated by extreme pride of wickedness? For what madman even would think him to be blamed who discharged the duties that were due to those whom he believed to be his parents, although they were not so? Who, on the other hand, would not judge him to deserve banishment, who failed to love those who were perhaps his true parents, through fear lest he should love pretended. Many things may be alleged, whereby to show that nothing at all of human society remains safe, if we shall determine to believe nothing, which we cannot grasp by full apprehension.

27. But now hear, what I trust I shall by this time more easily persuade you of. In a matter of religion, that is, of the worship and knowledge of God, they are less to be followed, who forbid us to believe, making most ready professions of reason. For no one doubts that all men are either fools or wise. But now I call wise, not clever and gifted men, but those, in whom there is, so much as may be in man, the knowledge of man himself and of God most surely received, and a life and manners suitable to that

knowledge; but all others, whatever be their skill or want of skill, whatever their manner of life, whether to be approved or disapproved, I would account in the number of fools. And, this being so, who of moderate understanding but will clearly see, that it is more useful and more healthful for fools to obey the precepts of the wise, than to live by their own judgment? For everything that is done, if it be not rightly done, is a sin, nor can that any how be rightly done which proceeds not from right reason. Further, right reason is very virtue. But to whom of men is virtue at hand, save to the mind of the wise? Therefore the wise man alone sins not. Therefore every fool sins, save in those actions, in which he hath obeyed a wise man: for all such actions proceed from right reason, and, so to say, the fool is not to be accounted master of his own action, he being, as it were, the instrument and that which ministers to the wise man. Wherefore, if it be better for all men not to sin than to sin; assuredly all fools would live better, if they could be slaves of the wise. And, if no one doubts that this is better in lesser matters, as in buying and selling, and cultivating the ground, in taking a wife, in undertaking and bringing up children, lastly, in the management of household property, much more in religion. For both human matters are more easy to distinguish between, than divine; and in all matters of greater sacredness and excellence, the greater obedience and service we owe them, the more wicked and the more dangerous is it to sin. Therefore you see henceforth that nothing else is left us, so long as we are fools, if our heart be set on an excellent and religious life, but to seek wise men, by obeying whom we may be enabled both to lessen the great feeling of the rule of folly, whilst it is in us, and at the last to escape from it.

28. Here again arises a very difficult question. For in what way shall we fools be able to find a wise man, whereas this name, although hardly any one dare openly, yet most men lay claim to indirectly: so disagreeing one with another in the very matters, in the knowledge of which wisdom consists, as that it must needs be that either none of them, or but some certain one be wise? But when the fool enquires, who is that wise man? I do not at all see, in what way he can be distinguished and perceived. For by no signs whatever can one recognize any thing, unless he shall have known that thing, whereof these are signs. But the fool is ignorant of wisdom. For not, as, in the case of gold and silver and other things of that kind, it is

allowed both to know them when you see them and not to have them, thus may wisdom be seen by the mind’s eye of him who hath it not. For whatever things we come into contact with by bodily sense, are presented to us from without; and therefore we may perceive by the eyes what belong to others, when we ourselves possess not any of them or of that kind. But what is perceived by the understanding is within in the mind, and to have it is nothing else than to see. But the fool is void of wisdom, therefore he knows not wisdom. For he could not see it with the eyes: but he cannot see it and not have it, nor have it and be a fool. Therefore he knoweth it not, and, so long as he knoweth it not, he cannot recognize it in another place. No one, so long as he is a fool, can by most sure knowledge find out a wise man, by obeying whom he may be set free from so great evil of folly.

29. Therefore this so vast difficulty, since our enquiry is about religion, God alone can remedy: nor indeed, unless we believe both that He is, and that He helps men’s minds, ought we even to enquire after true religion itself. For what I ask do we with so great endeavor desire to search out? What do we wish to attain unto? Whither do we long to arrive? Is it at that which we believe not exists or pertains to us? Nothing is more perverse than such a state of mind. Then, when you would not dare to ask of me a kindness, or at any rate would be shameless in daring, come you to demand the discovery of religion, when you think that God neither exists, nor, if He exist, hath any care for us? What, if it be so great a matter, as that it cannot be found out, unless it be sought carefully and with all our might? What, if the very extreme difficulty of discovery be an exercise for the mind of the inquirer, in order to receive what shall be discovered? For what more pleasant and familiar to our eyes than this light? And yet men are unable after long darkness to hear and endure it. What more suited to the body exhausted by sickness than meat and drink? And yet we see that persons who are recovering are restrained and checked, lest they dare to commit themselves to the fullness of persons in health, and so bring to pass by means of their very food their return to that disease which used to reject it. I speak of persons who are recovering. What, the very sick, do we not urge them to take something? Wherein assuredly they would not with so great discomfort obey us, if they believed not that they would recover from that disease. When then will you give yourself up to a search very full of pains and

labor? When will you have the heart to impose upon yourself so great care and trouble as the matter deserves, when you believe not in the existence of that which you are in search of? Rightly therefore hath it been ordained by the majesty of the Catholic system of teaching, that they who approach unto religion be before all things persuaded to have faith.

30. Wherefore that heretic, (inasmuch as our discourse is of those who wish to be called Christians,) I ask you, what reason he alleges to me? What is there whereby for him to call me back from believing, as if from rashness? If he bid me believe nothing; I believe not that this very true religion hath any existence in human affairs; and what I believe not to exist, I seek not. But He, as I suppose, will show it to me seeking it: for so it it written, “He that seeketh shall find.” Therefore I should not come unto him, who forbids me to believe, unless I believed something. Is there any greater madness, than that I should displease him by faith alone, which is founded on no knowledge, which faith alone led me to him?

31. What, that all heretics exhort us to believe in Christ? Can they possibly be more opposed to themselves? And in this matter they are to be pressed in a twofold way. In the first place we must ask of them, where is the reason which they used to promise, where the reproof of rashness, where the assumption of knowledge? For, if it be disgraceful to believe any without reason, what do you wait for, what are you busied about, that I believe some one without reason, in order that I may the more easily be led by your reason? What, will your reason raise any firm superstructure on the foundation of rashness? I speak after their manner, whom we displease by believing. For I not only judge it most healthful to believe before reason, when you are not qualified to receive reason, and by the very act of faith thoroughly to cultivate the mind to receive the seeds of truth, but altogether a thing of such sort as that without it health cannot return to sick souls. And in that this seems to them matter for mockery and full of rashness, surely they are shameless in making it their business that we believe in Christ. Next, I confess that I have already believed in Christ, and have convinced myself that what He hath said is true, although it be supported by no reason; is this, heretic, what you will teach me in the first place? Suffer me to consider a little with myself, (since I have not seen Christ Himself, as He

willed to appear unto men, Who is said to have been seen by them, even by common eyes,) who they are that I have believed concerning Him, in order that I may approach you already furnished beforehand with such a faith. I see that there are none that I have believed, save the confirmed opinion and widely extended report of peoples and nations: and that the mysteries of the Church Catholic have in all times and places had possession of these peoples. Why therefore shall I not of these, in preference to others, inquire with all care, what Christ commanded, by whose authority I have been moved already to believe that Christ hath commanded something that is profitable? Are you likely to be a better expounder to me of what He said, Whose past or present existence I should not believe, if by you I were to be recommended to believe thus? This therefore I have believed, as I said, trusting to report strengthened by numbers, agreement, antiquity. But you, who are both so few, and so turbulent, and so new, no one doubts that ye bring forward nothing worthy of authority. What then is that so great madness? Believe them, that you are to believe in Christ, and learn from us what He said. Why, I pray you? For were they to fail and to be unable to teach me any thing with much greater ease could I persuade my self, that I am not to believe in Christ, than that I am to learn any thing concerning Him, save from those through whom I had believed in Him. O vast confidence, or rather absurdity! I teach you what Christ, in Whom you believe, commanded. What, in case I believed not in Him? You could not, could you, teach me any thing concerning Him? But, says he, it behoves you to believe. You do not mean, do you, that I am (to believe) you when you commend Him to my faith? No, saith he, for we lead by reason them who believe in Him. Why then should I believe in Him? Because report hath been grounded. Whether is it through you, or through others? Through others, saith he. Shall I then believe them, in order that you may teach me? Perhaps I ought to do so, were it not that they gave me this chief charge, that I should not approach you at all; for they say that you have deadly doctrines. You will answer, They lie. How then shall I believe them concerning Christ, Whom they have not seen, (and) not believe them concerning you, whom they are unwilling to see? Believe the Scriptures, saith he. But every writing, if it be brought forward new and unheard of, or be commended by few, with no reason to confirm it, it is not it that is believed, but they who bring it forward. Wherefore, for those Scriptures, if you are they who bring them forward, you so few and unknown, I am not pleased to believe them. At the same time also you are acting contrary to your promise, in enforcing faith rather than giving a reason. You will recall me again to numbers and (common) report. Curb, I pray you, your obstinacy, and that untamed lust, I know not what, of spreading your name: and advise me rather to seek the chief men of this multitude, and to seek with all care and pains rather to learn something concerning these writings from these men, but for whose existence, I should not know that I had to learn at all. But do you return into your dens, and lay not any snares under the name of truth, which you endeavor to take from those, to whom you yourself grant authority.

32. But if they say that we are not even to believe in Christ, unless undoubted reason shall be given us, they are not Christians. For this is what certain pagans say against us, foolishly indeed, yet not contrary to, or inconsistent with, themselves. But who can endure that these profess to belong to Christ, who contend that they are to believe nothing, unless they shall bring forward to fools most open reason concerning God? But we see that He Himself, so far as that history, which they themselves believe, teaches, willed nothing before, or more strongly than, that He should be believed in: whereas they, with whom He had to do, were not yet qualified to receive the secret things of God. For, for what other purpose are so great and so many miracles, He Himself also saying, that they are done for no other cause, than that He may be believed in? He used to lead fools by faith, you lead by reason. He used to cry out, that He should be believed in, ye cry out against it. He used to praise such as believe in Him, ye blame them. But unless either He should change water into wine, to omit other (miracles), if men would follow Him, doing no such, but (only) teaching; either we must make no account of that saying, “Believe ye God, believe also Me;” or we must charge him with rashness, who willed not that He should come into his house, believing that the disease of his servant would depart at His mere command. Therefore He bringing to us a medicine such as should heal our utterly corrupt manners, by miracles procured to Himself authority, by authority obtained Himself belief, by belief drew together a multitude, by a multitude possessed antiquity, by antiquity strengthened religion: so that not only the utterly foolish novelty of heretics dealing deceitfully, but also the

inveterate error of the nations opposing with violence, should be unable on any side to rend it asunder.

33. Wherefore, although I am not able to teach, yet I cease not to advise, that, (whereas many wish to appear wise, and it is no easy matter to discern whether they be fools,) with all earnestness, and with all prayers, and lastly with groans, or even, if so it may be, with tears, you entreat of God to set you free from the evil of error; if your heart be set on a happy life. And this will take place the more easily, if you obey with a willing mind His commands, which He hath willed should be confirmed by so great authority of the Catholic Church. For whereas the wise man is so joined to God in mind, as that there is nothing set between to separate; for God is Truth; and no one is by any means wise, unless his mind come into contact with the Truth; we cannot deny that between the folly of man, and the most pure Truth of God, the wisdom of man is set, as something in the middle. For the wise man, so far as it is given unto him, imitates God; but for a man who is a fool, there is nothing nearer to him, than a man who is wise, for him to imitate with profit: and since, as has been said, it is not easy to understand this one by reason, it behoved that certain miracles be brought near to the very eyes, which fools use with much greater readiness than the mind, that, men being moved by authority, their life and habits might first be cleansed, and they thus rendered capable of receiving reason. Whereas, therefore, it needed both that man be imitated, and that our hope be not set in man, what could be done on the part of God more full of kindness and grace, than that the very pure, eternal, unchangeable Wisdom of God, unto Whom it behoves us to cleave, should deign to take upon Him (the nature of) man? That not only He might do what should invite us to follow God, but also might suffer what used to deter us from following God. For, whereas no one can attain unto the most sure and chief good, unless he shall fully and perfectly love it; which will by no means take place, so long as the evils of the body and of fortune are dreaded; He by being born after a miraculous manner and working caused Himself to be loved; and by dying and rising again shut out fear. And, further, in all other matters, which it were long to go through, He shewed Himself such, as that we might perceive unto what the clemency of God could be reached forth, and unto what the weakness of man be lifted up.

34. This is, believe me, a most wholesome authority, this a lifting up first of our mind from dwelling on the earth, this a turning from the love of this world unto the True God. It is authority alone which moves fools to hasten unto wisdom. So long as we cannot understand pure (truths), it is indeed wretched to be deceived by authority, but surely more wretched not to be moved. For, if the Providence of God preside not over human affairs, we have no need to busy ourselves about religion. But if both the outward form of all things, which we must believe assuredly flows from some fountain of truest beauty, and some, I know not what, inward conscience exhorts, as it were, in public and in private, all the better order of minds to seek God, and to serve God; we must not give up all hope that the same God Himself hath appointed some authority, whereon, resting as on a sure step, we may be lifted up unto God. But this, setting aside reason, which (as we have often said) it is very hard for fools to understand pure, moves us two ways; in part by miracles, in part by multitude of followers: no one of these is necessary to the wise man; who denies it? But this is now the business in hand, that we may be able to be wise, that is, to cleave to the truth; which the filthy soul is utterly unable to do: but the filth of the soul, to say shortly what I mean, is the love of any things whatsoever save God and the soul: from which filth the more any one is cleansed, the more easily he sees the truth. Therefore to wish to see the truth, in order to purge your soul, when as it is purged for the very purpose that you may see, is surely perverse and preposterous. Therefore to man unable to see the truth, authority is at hand, in order that he may be made fitted for it, and may allow himself to be cleansed; and, as I said a little above, no one doubts that this prevails, in part by miracles, in part by multitude. But I call that a miracle, whatever appears that is difficult or unusual above the hope or power of them who wonder. Of which kind there is nothing more suited for the people, and in general for foolish men, than what is brought near to the senses. But these, again, are divided into two kinds; for there are certain, which cause only wonder, but certain others procure also great favor and good-will. For, if one were to see a man flying, inasmuch as that matter brings no advantage to the spectator, beside the spectacle itself, he only wonders. But if any affected with grievous and hopeless disease were to recover straightway, upon being bidden, his affection for him who heals, will go beyond even his wonder at his healing. Such were done at that time at which God in True

Man appeared unto men, as much as was enough. The sick were healed, the lepers were cleansed; walking was restored to the lame, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf. The men of that time saw water turned into wine, five thousand filled with five loaves, seas passed on foot, dead rising again: thus certain provided for the good of the body by more open benefit, certain again for the good of the soul by more hidden sign, and all for the good of men by their witness to Majesty: thus, at that time, was the divine authority moving towards Itself the wandering souls of mortal men. Why, say you, do not those things take place now? because they would not move, unless they were wonderful, and, if they were usual, they would not be wonderful. For the interchanges of day and night, and the settled order of things in Heaven, the revolution of years divided into four parts, the fall and return of leaves to trees, the boundless power of seeds, the beauty of light, the varieties of colors, sounds, tastes, and scents, let there be some one who shall see and perceive them for the first time, and yet such an one as we may converse with; he is stupified and overwhelmed with miracles: but we contemn all these, not because they are easy to understand, (for what more obscure than the causes of these?) but surely because they constantly meet our senses. Therefore they were done at a very suitable time, in order that, by these a multitude of believers having been gathered together and spread abroad, authority might be turned with effect upon habits.

35. But any habits whatever have so great power to hold possession of men’s minds, that even what in them are evil, which usually takes place through excess of lusts, we can sooner disapprove of and hate, than desert or change. Do you think that little hath been done for the benefit of man, that not some few very learned men maintain by argument, but also an unlearned crowd of males and females in so many and different nations both believe and set forth, that we are to worship as God nothing of earth, nothing of fire, nothing, lastly, which comes into contact with the senses of the body, but that we are to seek to approach Him by the understanding only? that abstinence is extended even unto the slenderest food of bread and water, and fastings not only for the day, but also continued through several days together; that chastity is carried even unto the contempt of marriage and family; that patience even unto the setting light by crosses and flames; that liberality even unto the distribution of estates unto the poor; that, lastly,

the contempt of this whole world even unto the desire of death? Few do these things, yet fewer do them well and wisely: but whole nations approve, nations hear, nations favor, nations, lastly, love. Nations accuse their own weakness that they cannot do these things, and that not without the mind being carried forward unto God, nor without certain sparks of virtue. This hath been brought to pass by the Divine Providence, through the prophecies of the Prophets, through the manhood and teaching of Christ, through the journeys of the Apostles, through the insults, crosses, blood, of the Martyrs, through the praiseworthy life of the Saints, and, in all these, according as times were seasonable, through miracles worthy of so great matters and virtues. When therefore we see so great help of God, so great progress and fruit, shall we doubt to hide ourselves in the bosom of that Church, which even unto the confession of the human race from [the] apostolic chair through successions of Bishops, (heretics in vain lurking around her and being condemned, partly by the judgment of the very people, partly by the weight of councils, partly also by the majesty of miracles,) hath held the summit of authority. To be unwilling to grant to her the first place, is either surely the height of impiety, or is headlong arrogance. For, if there be no sure way unto wisdom and health of souls, unless where faith prepare them for reason, what else is it to be ungrateful for the Divine help and aid, than to wish to resist authority furnished with so great labor? And if every system of teaching, however mean and easy, requires, in order to its being received, a teacher or master, what more full of rash pride, than, in the case of books of divine mysteries, both to be unwilling to learn from such as interpret them, and to wish to condemn them unlearned?

36. Wherefore, if either our reasoning or our discourse hath in any way moved you, and if you have, as I believe, a true care for yourself, I would you would listen to me, and with pious faith, lively hope, and simple charity, entrust yourself to good teachers of Catholic Christianity; and cease not to pray unto God Himself, by Whose goodness alone we were created, and suffer punishment by His justice, and are set free by His mercy. Thus there will be wanting to you neither precepts and treatises of most learned and truly Christian men, nor books, nor calm thoughts themselves, whereby you may easily find what you are seeking. For do you abandon utterly those wordy and wretched men, (for what other milder name can I use?) who,

whilst they seek to excess whence is evil, find nothing but evil. And on this question they often rouse their hearers to inquire; but after that they have been roused, they teach them such lessons as that it were preferable even to sleep for ever, than than thus to be awake. For in place of lethargic they make them frantic, between which diseases, both being usually fatal, there is still this difference, that lethargic persons die without doing violence to others; but the frantic person many who are sound, and specially they who wish to help him, have reason to fear. For neither is God the author of evil, nor hath it ever repented Him that He hath done aught, nor is He troubled by storm of any passion of soul, nor is a small part of earth His Kingdom: He neither approves nor commands any sins or wickedness, He never lies. For these and such like used to move us, when they used them to make great and threatening assaults, and charged this as being the system of teaching of the Old Testament, which is most false. Thus then I allow that they do right in censuring these. What then have I learnt? What think you, save that, when these are censured, the Catholic system of teaching is not censured. Thus what I had learnt among them that is true, I hold, what is false that I had thought I reject. But the Catholic Church hath taught me many other things also, which those men of bloodless bodies, but coarse minds, cannot aspire unto; that is to say, that God is not corporeal, that no part of Him can be perceived by corporeal eyes, that nothing of His Substance or Nature can any way suffer violence or change, or is compounded or formed; and if you grant me these, (for we may not think otherwise concerning God,) all their devices are overthrown. But how it is, that neither God begot or created evil, nor yet is there, or hath there been ever, any nature and substance, which God either begot not or created not, and yet that He setteth us free from evil, is proved by reasons so necessary, that it cannot at all be matter of doubt; especially to you and such as you; that is, if to a good disposition there be added piety and a certain peace of mind, without which nothing at all can be understood concerning so great matters. And here there is no rumor concerning smoke, and I know not what Persian vain fable, unto which it is enough to lend an ear, and soul not subtile, but absolutely childish. Far altogether, far otherwise is the truth, than as the Manichees dote. But since this discourse of ours hath gone much further than I thought, here let us end the book; in which I wish you to remember, that I have not yet begun to refute the Manichees, and that I have not yet assailed that nonsense; and that neither have I unfolded any thing great concerning the Catholic Church itself, but that I have only wished to root out of you, if I could, a false notion concerning true Christians that was maliciously or ignorantly suggested to us, and to arouse you to learn certain great and divine things. Wherefore let this volume be as it is; but when your soul becomes more calmed, I shall perhaps be more ready in what remains.

ON THE TRINITY

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DE TRINITATE, LIBRI XV.

THE FIFTEEN BOOKS OF AURELIUS AUGUSTINUS, BISHOP OF HIPPO.

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. ARTHUR WEST HADDAN, B.D.

REVISED AND ANNOTATE, TOGETHER WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY, BY

THE REV. PROFESSOR W. G. T. SHEDD, D.D.

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Chapter 28
The Conclusion of the Book with a Prayer, and an Apology for Multitude of Words

Book I

In which the unity and equality of the supreme Trinity is established from the sacred Scriptures, and some texts alleged against the equality of the Son are explained.

CHAPTER 1

THIS WORK IS WRITTEN AGAINST THOSE WHO SOPHISTICALLY ASSAIL THE FAITH OF THE TRINITY, THROUGH MISUSE OF REASON. THEY WHO DISPUTE CONCERNING GOD ERR FROM A THREEFOLD CAUSE. HOLY SCRIPTURE, REMOVING WHAT IS FALSE, LEADS US ON BY DEGREES TO THINGS DIVINE. WHAT TRUE IMMORTALITY IS. WE ARE NOURISHED BY FAITH, THAT WE MAY BE ENABLED TO APPREHEND THINGS DIVINE

1. The following dissertation concerning the Trinity, as the reader ought to be informed, has been written in order to guard against the sophistries of those who disdain to begin with faith, and are deceived by a crude and perverse love of reason. Now one class of such men endeavor to transfer to things incorporeal and spiritual the ideas they have formed, whether through experience of the bodily senses, or by natural human wit and diligent quickness, or by the aid of art, from things corporeal; so as to seek to measure and conceive of the former by the latter. Others, again, frame whatever sentiments they may have concerning God according to the nature or affections of the human mind; and through this error they govern their discourse, in disputing concerning God, by distorted and fallacious rules. While yet a third class strive indeed to transcend the whole creation, which doubtless is changeable, in order to raise their thought to the unchangeable substance, which is God; but being weighed down by the burden of mortality, whilst they both would seem to know what they do not, and cannot know what they would, preclude themselves from entering the very path of understanding, by an over-bold affirmation of their own presumptuous judgments; choosing rather not to correct their own opinion when it is perverse, than to change that which they have once defended. And, indeed, this is the common disease of all the three classes which I

have mentioned,—viz., both of those who frame their thoughts of God according to things corporeal, and of those who do so according to the spiritual creature, such as is the soul; and of those who neither regard the body nor the spiritual creature, and yet think falsely about God; and are indeed so much the further from the truth, that nothing can be found answering to their conceptions, either in the body, or in the made or created spirit, or in the Creator Himself. For he who thinks, for instance, that God is white or red, is in error; and yet these things are found in the body. Again, he who thinks of God as now forgetting and now remembering, or anything of the same kind, is none the less in error; and yet these things are found in the mind. But he who thinks that God is of such power as to have generated Himself, is so much the more in error, because not only does God not so exist, but neither does the spiritual nor the bodily creature; for there is nothing whatever that generates its own existence.

2. In order, therefore, that the human mind might be purged from falsities of this kind, Holy Scripture, which suits itself to babes has not avoided words drawn from any class of things really existing, through which, as by nourishment, our understanding might rise gradually to things divine and transcendent. For, in speaking of God, it has both used words taken from things corporeal, as when it says, “Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings;” and it has borrowed many things from the spiritual creature, whereby to signify that which indeed is not so, but must needs so be said: as, for instance, “I the Lord thy God am a jealous God;” and, “It repenteth me that I have made man.” But it has drawn no words whatever, whereby to frame either figures of speech or enigmatic sayings, from things which do not exist at all. And hence it is that they who are shut out from the truth by that third kind of error are more mischievously and emptily vain than their fellows; in that they surmise respecting God, what can neither be found in Himself nor in any creature. For divine Scripture is wont to frame, as it were, allurements for children from the things which are found in the creature; whereby, according to their measure, and as it were by steps, the affections of the weak may be moved to seek those things that are above, and to leave those things that are below. But the same Scripture rarely employs those things which are spoken properly of God, and are not found in any creature; as, for instance, that which was said to Moses, “I am that I

am;” and, “I Am hath sent me to you.” For since both body and soul also are said in some sense to be, Holy Scripture certainly would not so express itself unless it meant to be understood in some special sense of the term. So, too, that which the Apostle says, “Who only hath immortality.” Since the soul also both is said to be, and is, in a certain manner immortal, Scripture would not say “only hath,” unless because true immortality is unchangeableness; which no creature can possess, since it belongs to the creator alone. So also James says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” So also David, “Thou shall change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same.”

3. Further, it is difficult to contemplate and fully know the substance of God; who fashions things changeable, yet without any change in Himself, and creates things temporal, yet without any temporal movement in Himself. And it is necessary, therefore, to purge our minds, in order to be able to see ineffably that which is ineffable; whereto not having yet attained, we are to be nourished by faith, and led by such ways as are more suited to our capacity, that we may be rendered apt and able to comprehend it. And hence the Apostle says, that “in Christ indeed are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;” and yet has commended Him to us, as to babes in Christ, who, although already born again by His grace, yet are still carnal and psychical, not by that divine virtue wherein He is equal to the Father, but by that human infirmity whereby He was crucified. For he says, “I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified;” and then he continues, “And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.” And a little after he says to them, “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.” There are some who are angry at language of this kind, and think it is used in slight to themselves, and for the most part prefer rather to believe that they who so speak to them have nothing to say, than that they themselves cannot understand what they have said. And sometimes, indeed, we do allege to them, not certainly that account of the case which they seek in their inquiries about God,—because neither can they themselves receive it, nor

can we perhaps either apprehend or express it,—but such an account of it as to demonstrate to them how incapable and utterly unfit they are to understand that which they require of us. But they, on their parts, because they do not hear what they desire, think that we are either playing them false in order to conceal our own ignorance, or speaking in malice because we grudge them knowledge; and so go away indignant and perturbed.

CHAPTER 2

IN WHAT MANNER THIS WORK PROPOSES TO DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE TRINITY

4. Wherefore, our Lord God helping, we will undertake to render, as far as we are able, that very account which they so importunately demand: viz., that the Trinity is the one and only and true God, and also how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are rightly said, believed, understood, to be of one and the same substance or essence; in such wise that they may not fancy themselves mocked by excuses on our part, but may find by actual trial, both that the highest good is that which is discerned by the most purified minds, and that for this reason it cannot be discerned or understood by themselves, because the eye of the human mind, being weak, is dazzled in that so transcendent light, unless it be invigorated by the nourishment of the righteousness of faith. First, however, we must demonstrate, according to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, whether the faith be so. Then, if God be willing and aid us, we may perhaps at least so far serve these talkative arguers—more puffed up than capable, and therefore laboring under the more dangerous disease—as to enable them to find something which they are not able to doubt, that so, in that case where they cannot find the like, they may be led to lay the fault to their own minds, rather than to the truth itself or to our reasonings; and thus, if there be anything in them of either love or fear towards God, they may return and begin from faith in due order: perceiving at length how healthful a medicine has been provided for the faithful in the holy Church, whereby a heedful piety, healing the feebleness of the mind, may render it able to perceive the unchangeable truth, and hinder it from falling headlong, through disorderly rashness, into pestilent and false opinion. Neither will I myself shrink from inquiry, if I am anywhere in doubt; nor be ashamed to learn, if I am anywhere in error.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT AUGUSTIN REQUESTS FROM HIS READERS. THE ERRORS OF READERS DULL OF COMPREHENSION NOT TO BE ASCRIBED TO THE AUTHOR

5. Further let me ask of my reader, wherever, alike with myself, he is certain, there to go on with me; wherever, alike with myself, he hesitates, there to join with me in inquiring; wherever he recognizes himself to be in error, there to return to me; wherever he recognizes me to be so, there to call me back: so that we may enter together upon the path of charity, and advance towards Him of whom it is said, "Seek His face evermore." And I would make this pious and safe agreement, in the presence of our Lord God, with all who read my writings, as well in all other cases as, above all, in the case of those which inquire into the unity of the Trinity, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; because in no other subject is error more dangerous, or inquiry more laborious, or the discovery of truth more profitable. If, then, any reader shall say, This is not well said, because I do not understand it; such an one finds fault with my language, not with my faith: and it might perhaps in very truth have been put more clearly; yet no man ever so spoke as to be understood in all things by all men. Let him, therefore, who finds this fault with my discourse, see whether he can understand other men who have handled similar subjects and questions, when he does not understand me: and if he can, let him put down my book, or even, if he pleases, throw it away; and let him spend labor and time rather on those whom he understands. Yet let him not think on that account that I ought to have been silent, because I have not been able to express myself so smoothly and clearly to him as those do whom he understands. For neither do all things, which all men have written, come into the hands of all. And possibly some, who are capable of understanding even these our writings, may not find those more lucid works, and may meet with ours only. And therefore it is useful that many persons should write many books, differing in style but not in faith, concerning even the same questions, that the matter itself may reach the greatest number—some in one way, some in another. But if he who complains that he has not understood these things has never been able to comprehend any careful and exact reasonings at all upon such subjects, let him in that case deal with himself by resolution and study, that he may know better; not with me by quarrellings and wranglings,

that I may hold my peace. Let him, again, who says, when he reads my book, Certainly I understand what is said, but it is not true, assert, if he pleases, his own opinion, and refute mine if he is able. And if he do this with charity and truth, and take the pains to make it known to me (if I am still alive), I shall then receive the most abundant fruit of this my labor. And if he cannot inform myself, most willing and glad should I be that he should inform those whom he can. Yet, for my part, “I meditate in the law of the Lord,” if not “day and night,” at least such short times as I can; and I commit my meditations to writing, lest they should escape me through forgetfulness; hoping by the mercy of God that He will make me hold steadfastly all truths of which I feel certain; “but if in anything I be otherwise minded, that He will himself reveal even this to me,” whether through secret inspiration and admonition, or through His own plain utterances, or through the reasonings of my brethren. This I pray for, and this my trust and desire I commit to Him, who is sufficiently able to keep those things which He has given me, and to render those which He has promised.

6. I expect, indeed, that some, who are more dull of understanding, will imagine that in some parts of my books I have held sentiments which I have not held, or have not held those which I have. But their error, as none can be ignorant, ought not to be attributed to me, if they have deviated into false doctrine through following my steps without apprehending me, whilst I am compelled to pick my way through a hard and obscure subject: seeing that neither can any one, in any way, rightly ascribe the numerous and various errors of heretics to the holy testimonies themselves of the divine books; although all of them endeavor to defend out of those same Scriptures their own false and erroneous opinions. The law of Christ, that is, charity, admonishes me clearly, and commands me with a sweet constraint, that when men think that I have held in my books something false which I have not held, and that same falsehood displeases one and pleases another, I should prefer to be blamed by him who reprehends the falsehood, rather than praised by him who praises it. For although I, who never held the error, am not rightly blamed by the former, yet the error itself is rightly censured; whilst by the latter neither am I rightly praised, who am thought to have held that which the truth censures, nor the sentiment itself, which the truth

also censures. Let us therefore essay the work which we have undertaken in the name of the Lord.

CHAPTER 4

WHAT THE DOCTRINE OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH IS CONCERNING THE TRINITY

7. All those Catholic expounders of the divine Scriptures, both Old and New, whom I have been able to read, who have written before me concerning the Trinity, Who is God, have purposed to teach, according to the Scriptures, this doctrine, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit intimate a divine unity of one and the same substance in an indivisible equality; and therefore that they are not three Gods, but one God: although the Father hath begotten the Son, and so He who is the Father is not the Son; and the Son is begotten by the Father, and so He who is the Son is not the Father; and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son, but only the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, Himself also co-equal with the Father and the Son, and pertaining to the unity of the Trinity. Yet not that this Trinity was born of the Virgin Mary, and crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven, but only the Son. Nor, again, that this Trinity descended in the form of a dove upon Jesus when He was baptized; nor that, on the day of Pentecost, after the ascension of the Lord, when “there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind,” the same Trinity “sat upon each of them with cloven tongues like as of fire,” but only the Holy Spirit. Nor yet that this Trinity said from heaven, “Thou art my Son,” whether when He was baptized by John, or when the three disciples were with Him in the mount, or when the voice sounded, saying, “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again;” but that it was a word of the Father only, spoken to the Son; although the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as they are indivisible, so work indivisibly. This is also my faith, since it is the Catholic faith.

CHAPTER 5

OF DIFFICULTIES CONCERNING THE TRINITY: IN WHAT MANNER THREE ARE ONE GOD, AND HOW, WORKING INDIVISIBLY, THEY YET PERFORM SOME THINGS SEVERALLY

8. Some persons, however, find a difficulty in this faith; when they hear that the Father is God, and the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God, and yet that this Trinity is not three Gods, but one God; and they ask how they are to understand this: especially when it is said that the Trinity works indivisibly in everything that God works, and yet that a certain voice of the Father spoke, which is not the voice of the Son; and that none except the Son was born in the flesh, and suffered, and rose again, and ascended into heaven; and that none except the Holy Spirit came in the form of a dove. They wish to understand how the Trinity uttered that voice which was only of the Father; and how the same Trinity created that flesh in which the Son only was born of the Virgin; and how the very same Trinity itself wrought that form of a dove, in which the Holy Spirit only appeared. Yet, otherwise, the Trinity does not work indivisibly, but the Father does some things, the Son other things, and the Holy Spirit yet others: or else, if they do some things together, some severally, then the Trinity is not indivisible. It is a difficulty, too, to them, in what manner the Holy Spirit is in the Trinity, whom neither the Father nor the Son, nor both, have begotten, although He is the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son. Since, then, men weary us with asking such questions, let us unfold to them, as we are able, whatever wisdom God's gift has bestowed upon our weakness on this subject; neither "let us go on our way with consuming envy." Should we say that we are not accustomed to think about such things, it would not be true; yet if we acknowledge that such subjects commonly dwell in our thoughts, carried away as we are by the love of investigating the truth, then they require of us, by the law of charity, to make known to them what we have herein been able to find out. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect" (for, if the Apostle Paul, how much more must I, who lie far beneath his feet, count myself not to have apprehended!); but, according to my measure, "if I forget those things that are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before, and press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling," I am requested to disclose so much of the road as I have already passed, and the point to which I have reached, whence the course yet remains to bring me to the end. And those make the request, whom a generous charity compels me to serve. Needs must too, and God will grant that, in supplying them with matter to read, I shall profit myself also; and that, in seeking to reply to their inquiries, I shall myself likewise find that

for which I was inquiring. Accordingly I have undertaken the task, by the bidding and help of the Lord my God, not so much of discoursing with authority respecting things I know already, as of learning those things by piously discoursing of them.

CHAPTER 6

THAT THE SON IS VERY GOD, OF THE SAME SUBSTANCE WITH THE FATHER. NOT ONLY THE FATHER, BUT THE TRINITY, IS AFFIRMED TO BE IMMORTAL. ALL THINGS ARE NOT FROM THE FATHER ALONE, BUT ALSO FROM THE SON. THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS VERY GOD, EQUAL WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON

9. They who have said that our Lord Jesus Christ is not God, or not very God, or not with the Father the One and only God, or not truly immortal because changeable, are proved wrong by the most plain and unanimous voice of divine testimonies; as, for instance, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” For it is plain that we are to take the Word of God to be the only Son of God, of whom it is afterwards said, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” on account of that birth of His incarnation, which was wrought in time of the Virgin. But herein is declared, not only that He is God, but also that He is of the same substance with the Father; because, after saying, “And the Word was God,” it is said also, “The same was in the beginning with God: all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made.” Not simply “all things;” but only all things that were made, that is; the whole creature. From which it appears clearly, that He Himself was not made, by whom all things were made. And if He was not made, then He is not a creature; but if He is not a creature, then He is of the same substance with the Father. For all substance that is not God is creature; and all that is not creature is God. And if the Son is not of the same substance with the Father, then He is a substance that was made: and if He is a substance that was made, then all things were not made by Him; but “all things were made by Him,” therefore He is of one and the same substance with the Father. And so He is not only God, but also very God. And the same John most expressly affirms this in his epistle: “For we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know the true God,

and that we may be in His true Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.”

10. Hence also it follows by consequence, that the Apostle Paul did not say, “Who alone has immortality,” of the Father merely; but of the One and only God, which is the Trinity itself. For that which is itself eternal life is not mortal according to any changeableness; and hence the Son of God, because “He is Eternal Life,” is also Himself understood with the Father, where it is said, “Who only hath immortality.” For we, too, are made partakers of this eternal life, and become, in our own measure, immortal. But the eternal life itself, of which we are made partakers, is one thing; we ourselves, who, by partaking of it, shall live eternally, are another. For if He had said, “Whom in His own time the Father will show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality;” not even so would it be necessarily understood that the Son is excluded. For neither has the Son separated the Father from Himself, because He Himself, speaking elsewhere with the voice of wisdom (for He Himself is the Wisdom of God), says, “I alone compassed the circuit of heaven.” And therefore so much the more is it not necessary that the words, “Who hath immortality,” should be understood of the Father alone, omitting the Son; when they are said thus: “That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: whom in His own time He will show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen.” In which words neither is the Father specially named, nor the Son, nor the Holy Spirit; but the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; that is, the One and only and true God, the Trinity itself.

11. But perhaps what follows may interfere with this meaning; because it is said, “Whom no man hath seen, nor can see:” although this may also be taken as belonging to Christ according to His divinity, which the Jews did not see, who yet saw and crucified Him in the flesh; whereas His divinity can in no wise be seen by human sight, but is seen with that sight with which they who see are no longer men, but beyond men. Rightly, therefore,

is God Himself, the Trinity, understood to be the "blessed and only Potentate," who "shows the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in His own time." For the words, "Who only hath immortality," are said in the same way as it is said, "Who only doeth wondrous things." And I should be glad to know of whom they take these words to be said. If only of the Father, how then is that true which the Son Himself says, "For what things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise?" Is there any, among wonderful works, more wonderful than to raise up and quicken the dead? Yet the same Son saith, "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." How, then, does the Father alone "do wondrous things," when these words allow us to understand neither the Father only, nor the Son only, but assuredly the one only true God, that is, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit?

12. Also, when the same apostle says, "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him," who can doubt that he speaks of all things which are created; as does John, when he says, "All things were made by Him"? I ask, therefore, of whom he speaks in another place: "For of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." For if of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, so as to assign each clause severally to each person: of Him, that is to say, of the Father; through Him, that is to say, through the Son; in Him, that is to say, in the Holy Spirit,—it is manifest that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one God, inasmuch as the words continue in the singular number, "To whom be glory for ever." For at the beginning of the passage he does not say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge" of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit, but "of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" "How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? Or who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." But if they will have this to be understood only of the Father, then in what way are all things by the Father, as is said here; and all things by the Son, as where it is said to the Corinthians, "And one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things," and as in

the Gospel of John, “All things were made by Him?” For if some things were made by the Father, and some by the Son, then all things were not made by the Father, nor all things by the Son; but if all things were made by the Father, and all things by the Son, then the same things were made by the Father and by the Son. The Son, therefore, is equal with the Father, and the working of the Father and the Son is indivisible. Because if the Father made even the Son, whom certainly the Son Himself did not make, then all things were not made by the Son; but all things were made by the Son: therefore He Himself was not made, that with the Father He might make all things that were made. And the apostle has not refrained from using the very word itself, but has said most expressly, “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;” using here the name of God specially of the Father; as elsewhere, “But the head of Christ is God.”

13. Similar evidence has been collected also concerning the Holy Spirit, of which those who have discussed the subject before ourselves have most fully availed themselves, that He too is God, and not a creature. But if not a creature, then not only God (for men likewise are called gods), but also very God; and therefore absolutely equal with the Father and the Son, and in the unity of the Trinity consubstantial and co-eternal. But that the Holy Spirit is not a creature is made quite plain by that passage above all others, where we are commanded not to serve the creature, but the Creator; not in the sense in which we are commanded to “serve” one another by love, which is in Greek douleuein, but in that in which God alone is served, which is in Greek latreuein. From whence they are called idolaters who tender that service to images which is due to God. For it is this service concerning which it is said, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.” For this is found also more distinctly in the Greek Scriptures, which have latreuseis. Now if we are forbidden to serve the creature with such a service, seeing that it is written, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve” (and hence, too, the apostle repudiates those who worship and serve the creature more than the Creator), then assuredly the Holy Spirit is not a creature, to whom such a service is paid by all the saints; as says the apostle, “For we are the circumcision, which serve the Spirit of God,” which is in the Greek latreuontes. For even most Latin copies also have it thus, “We who serve

the Spirit of God;" but all Greek ones, or almost all, have it so. Although in some Latin copies we find, not "We worship the Spirit of God," but, "We worship God in the Spirit." But let those who err in this case, and refuse to give up to the more weighty authority, tell us whether they find this text also varied in the mss.: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?" Yet what can be more senseless or more profane, than that any one should dare to say that the members of Christ are the temple of one who, in their opinion, is a creature inferior to Christ? For the apostle says in another place, "Your bodies are members of Christ." But if the members of Christ are also the temple of the Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit is not a creature; because we must needs owe to Him, of whom our body is the temple, that service wherewith God only is to be served, which in Greek is called latreia. And accordingly the apostle says, "Therefore glorify God in your body."

CHAPTER 7

IN WHAT MANNER THE SON IS LESS THAN THE FATHER, AND THAN HIMSELF

14. In these and like testimonies of the divine Scriptures, by free use of which, as I have said, our predecessors exploded such sophistries or errors of the heretics, the unity and equality of the Trinity are intimated to our faith. But because, on account of the incarnation of the Word of God for the working out of our salvation, that the man Christ Jesus might be the Mediator between God and men, many things are so said in the sacred books as to signify, or even most expressly declare, the Father to be greater than the Son; men have erred through a want of careful examination or consideration of the whole tenor of the Scriptures, and have endeavored to transfer those things which are said of Jesus Christ according to the flesh, to that substance of His which was eternal before the incarnation, and is eternal. They say, for instance, that the Son is less than the Father, because it is written that the Lord Himself said, "My Father is greater than I." But the truth shows that after the same sense the Son is less also than Himself; for how was He not made less also than Himself, who "emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant?" For He did not so take the form of a servant as that He should lose the form of God, in which He was equal to the Father. If, then, the form of a servant was so taken that the form of

God was not lost, since both in the form of a servant and in the form of God He Himself is the same only-begotten Son of God the Father, in the form of God equal to the Father, in the form of a servant the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; is there any one who cannot perceive that He Himself in the form of God is also greater than Himself, but yet likewise in the form of a servant less than Himself? And not, therefore, without cause the Scripture says both the one and the other, both that the Son is equal to the Father, and that the Father is greater than the Son. For there is no confusion when the former is understood as on account of the form of God, and the latter as on account of the form of a servant. And, in truth, this rule for clearing the question through all the sacred Scriptures is set forth in one chapter of an epistle of the Apostle Paul, where this distinction is commended to us plainly enough. For he says, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and was found in fashion as a man." The Son of God, then, is equal to God the Father in nature, but less in "fashion." For in the form of a servant which He took He is less than the Father; but in the form of God, in which also He was before He took the form of a servant, He is equal to the Father. In the form of God He is the Word, "by whom all things are made;" but in the form of a servant He was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." In like manner, in the form of God He made man; in the form of a servant He was made man. For if the Father alone had made man without the Son, it would not have been written, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Therefore, because the form of God took the form of a servant, both is God and both is man; but both God, on account of God who takes; and both man, on account of man who is taken. For neither by that taking is the one of them turned and changed into the other: the Divinity is not changed into the creature, so as to cease to be Divinity; nor the creature into Divinity, so as to cease to be creature.

CHAPTER 8

THE TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE EXPLAINED RESPECTING THE SUBJECTION OF THE SON TO THE FATHER, WHICH HAVE BEEN MISUNDERSTOOD. CHRIST WILL NOT SO GIVE UP THE KINGDOM TO THE FATHER, AS TO TAKE IT AWAY FROM HIMSELF. THE BEHOLDING HIM IS THE PROMISED END OF ALL ACTIONS. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SUFFICIENT TO OUR BLESSEDNESS EQUALLY WITH THE FATHER

15. As for that which the apostle says, “And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him:” either the text has been so turned, lest any one should think that the “fashion” of Christ, which He took according to the human creature, was to be transformed hereafter into the Divinity, or (to express it more precisely) the Godhead itself, who is not a creature, but is the unity of the Trinity,—a nature incorporeal, and unchangeable, and consubstantial, and co-eternal with itself; or if any one contends, as some have thought, that the text, “Then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him,” is so turned in order that one may believe that very “subjection” to be a change and conversion hereafter of the creature into the substance or essence itself of the Creator, that is, that that which had been the substance of a creature shall become the substance of the Creator;—such an one at any rate admits this, of which in truth there is no possible doubt, that this had not yet taken place, when the Lord said, “My Father is greater than I.” For He said this not only before He ascended into heaven, but also before He had suffered, and had risen from the dead. But they who think that the human nature in Him is to be changed and converted into the substance of the Godhead, and that it was so said, “Then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him,”—as if to say, Then also the Son of man Himself, and the human nature taken by the Word of God, shall be changed into the nature of Him who put all things under Him,—must also think that this will then take place, when, after the day of judgment, “He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.” And hence even still, according to this opinion, the Father is greater than that form of a servant which was taken of the Virgin. But if some affirm even further, that the man Christ Jesus has already been changed into the substance of God, at least they cannot deny that the human nature still remained, when He said before His passion, “For my Father is greater than I;” whence there is no question that it was said in

this sense, that the Father is greater than the form of a servant, to whom in the form of God the Son is equal. Nor let any one, hearing what the apostle says, “But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted which did put all things under Him,” think the words, that He hath put all things under the Son, to be so understood of the Father, as that He should not think that the Son Himself put all things under Himself. For this the apostle plainly declares, when he says to the Philippians, “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.” For the working of the Father and of the Son is indivisible. Otherwise, neither hath the Father Himself put all things under Himself, but the Son hath put all things under Him, who delivers the kingdom to Him, and puts down all rule and all authority and power. For these words are spoken of the Son: “When He shall have delivered up,” says the apostle, “the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and all power.” For the same that puts down, also makes subject.

16. Neither may we think that Christ shall so give up the kingdom to God, even the Father, as that He shall take it away from Himself. For some vain talkers have thought even this. For when it is said, “He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,” He Himself is not excluded; because He is one God together with the Father. But that word “until” deceives those who are careless readers of the divine Scriptures, but eager for controversies. For the text continues, “For He must reign, until He hath put all enemies under His feet;” as though, when He had so put them, He would no more reign. Neither do they perceive that this is said in the same way as that other text, “His heart is established: He shall not be afraid, until He see His desire upon His enemies.” For He will not then be afraid when He has seen it. What then means, “When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,” as though God and the Father has not the kingdom now? But because He is hereafter to bring all the just, over whom now, living by faith, the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, reigns, to that sight which the same apostle calls “face to face;” therefore the words, “When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to

God, even the Father," are as much as to say, When He shall have brought believers to the contemplation of God, even the Father. For He says, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." The Father will then be revealed by the Son, "when He shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and all power;" that is, in such wise that there shall be no more need of any economy of similitudes, by means of angelic rulers, and authorities, and powers. Of whom that is not unfitly understood, which is said in the Song of Songs to the bride, "We will make thee borders of gold, with studs of silver, while the King sitteth at His table;" that is, as long as Christ is in His secret place: since "your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Before which time, "we see now through a glass, in an enigma," that is, in similitudes, "but then face to face."

17. For this contemplation is held forth to us as the end of all actions, and the everlasting fullness of joy. For "we are the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." For that which He said to His servant Moses, "I am that I am; thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me to you;" this it is which we shall contemplate when we shall live in eternity. For so it is said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." This shall be when the Lord shall have come, and "shall have brought to light the hidden things of darkness;" when the darkness of this present mortality and corruption shall have passed away. Then will be our morning, which is spoken of in the Psalm, "In the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will contemplate Thee." Of this contemplation I understand it to be said, "When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;" that is, when He shall have brought the just, over whom now, living by faith, the Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, reigns, to the contemplation of God, even the Father. If herein I am foolish, let him who knows better correct me; to me at least the case seems as I have said. For we shall not seek anything else, when we shall have come to the contemplation of Him. But that contemplation is not yet,

so long as our joy is in hope. For “hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it,” viz. “as long as the King sitteth at His table.” Then will take place that which is written, “In Thy presence is fullness of joy.” Nothing more than that joy will be required; because there will be nothing more than can be required. For the Father will be manifested to us, and that will suffice for us. And this much Philip had well understood, so that he said to the Lord, “Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.” But he had not yet understood that he himself was able to say this very same thing in this way also: Lord, show Thyself to us, and it sufficeth us. For, that he might understand this, the Lord replied to him, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” But because He intended him, before he could see this, to live by faith, He went on to say, “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?” For “while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by faith, not by sight.” For contemplation is the recompense of faith, for which recompense our hearts are purified by faith; as it is written, “Purifying their hearts by faith.” And that our hearts are to be purified for this contemplation, is proved above all by this text, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” And that this is life eternal, God says in the Psalm, “With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.” Whether, therefore, we hear, Show us the Son; or whether we hear, Show us the Father; it is even all one, since neither can be manifested without the other. For they are one, as He also Himself says, “My Father and I are one.” Finally, on account of this very indivisibility, it suffices that sometimes the Father alone, or the Son alone, should be named, as hereafter to fill us with the joy of His countenance.

18. Neither is the Spirit of either thence excluded, that is, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son; which Holy Spirit is specially called “the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive.” For to have the fruition of God the Trinity, after whose image we are made, is indeed the fullness of our joy, than which there is no greater. On this account the Holy Spirit is sometimes spoken of as if He alone sufficed to our blessedness: and He does alone so suffice, because He cannot be divided from the Father and the Son; as the Father alone is sufficient, because He cannot be divided from the Son and

the Holy Spirit; and the Son alone is sufficient because He cannot be divided from the Father and the Holy Spirit. For what does He mean by saying, “If ye love me, keep my commandments; and I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive,” that is, the lovers of the world? For “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” But it may perhaps seem, further, as if the words, “And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter,” were so said as if the Son alone were not sufficient. And that place so speaks of the Spirit, as if He alone were altogether sufficient: “When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.” Pray, therefore, is the Son here excluded, as if He did not teach all truth, or as if the Holy Spirit were to fill up that which the Son could not fully teach? Let them say then, if it pleases them, that the Holy Spirit is greater than the Son, whom they are wont to call less. Or is it, forsooth, because it is not said, He alone,—or, No one else except Himself—will guide you into all truth, that they allow that the Son also may be believed to teach together with Him? In that case the apostle has excluded the Son from knowing those things which are of God, where he says, “Even so the things of God knoweth no one, but the Spirit of God:” so that these perverse men might, upon this ground, go on to say that none but the Holy Spirit teaches even the Son the things of God, as the greater teaches the less; to whom the Son Himself ascribes so much as to say, “But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.”

CHAPTER 9

ALL ARE SOMETIMES UNDERSTOOD IN ONE PERSON

But this is said, not on account of any inequality of the Word of God and of the Holy Spirit, but as though the presence of the Son of man with them would be a hindrance to the coming of Him, who was not less, because He did not “empty Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant,” as the Son did. It was necessary, then, that the form of a servant should be taken away from their eyes, because, through gazing upon it, they thought that alone which they saw to be Christ. Hence also is that which is said, “If ye loved me, ye would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I:'" that is, on that account it is necessary for me to go to the Father, because, whilst you see me thus, you hold me to be less than the Father through that which you see; and so, being taken up with the creature and the "fashion" which I have taken upon me, you do not perceive the equality which I have with the Father. Hence, too, is this: "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." For touch, as it were, puts a limit to their conception, and He therefore would not have the thought of the heart, directed towards Himself, to be so limited as that He should be held to be only that which He seemed to be. But the "ascension to the Father" meant, so to appear as He is equal to the Father, that the limit of the sight which sufficeth us might be attained there. Sometimes also it is said of the Son alone, that He himself sufficeth, and the whole reward of our love and longing is held forth as in the sight of Him. For so it is said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Pray, because He has not here said, And I will show the Father also to him, has He therefore excluded the Father? On the contrary, because it is true, "I and my Father are one," when the Father is manifested, the Son also, who is in Him, is manifested; and when the Son is manifested, the Father also, who is in Him, is manifested. As, therefore, when it is said, "And I will manifest myself to him," it is understood that He manifests also the Father; so likewise in that which is said, "When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father," it is understood that He does not take it away from Himself; since, when He shall bring believers to the contemplation of God, even the Father, doubtless He will bring them to the contemplation of Himself, who has said, "And I will manifest myself to him." And so, consequently, when Judas had said to Him, "Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" Jesus answered and said to him, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." Behold, that He manifests not only Himself to him by whom He is loved, because He comes to him together with the Father, and abides with him.

19. Will it perhaps be thought, that when the Father and the Son make their abode with him who loves them, the Holy Spirit is excluded from that abode? What, then, is that which is said above of the Holy Spirit: “Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not: but ye know Him; for He abideth with you, and is in you”? He, therefore, is not excluded from that abode, of whom it is said, “He abideth with you, and is in you;” unless, perhaps, any one be so senseless as to think, that when the Father and the Son have come that they may make their abode with him who loves them, the Holy Spirit will depart thence, and (as it were) give place to those who are greater. But the Scripture itself meets this carnal idea; for it says a little above: “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.” He will not therefore depart when the Father and the Son come, but will be in the same abode with them eternally; because neither will He come without them, nor they without Him. But in order to intimate the Trinity, some things are separately affirmed, the Persons being also each severally named; and yet are not to be understood as though the other Persons were excluded, on account of the unity of the same Trinity and the One substance and Godhead of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 10

IN WHAT MANNER CHRIST SHALL DELIVER UP THE KINGDOM TO GOD, EVEN THE FATHER. THE KINGDOM HAVING BEEN DELIVERED TO GOD, EVEN THE FATHER, CHRIST WILL NOT THEN MAKE INTERCESSION FOR US

20. Our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, will so deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, Himself not being thence excluded, nor the Holy Spirit, when He shall bring believers to the contemplation of God, wherein is the end of all good actions, and everlasting rest, and joy which never will be taken from us. For He signifies this in that which He says: “I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you.” Mary, sitting at the feet of the Lord, and earnestly listening to His word, foreshowed a similitude of this joy; resting as she did from all business, and intent upon the truth, according to that manner of which this life is capable, by which, however, to prefigure that which shall be for eternity. For while Martha, her sister, was cumbered about necessary business, which, although

good and useful, yet, when rest shall have succeeded, is to pass away, she herself was resting in the word of the Lord. And so the Lord replied to Martha, when she complained that her sister did not help her: “Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her.” He did not say that Martha was acting a bad part; but that “best part that shall not be taken away.” For that part which is occupied in the ministering to a need shall be “taken away” when the need itself has passed away. Since the reward of a good work that will pass away is rest that will not pass away. In that contemplation, therefore, God will be all in all; because nothing else but Himself will be required, but it will be sufficient to be enlightened by and to enjoy Him alone. And so he in whom “the Spirit maketh intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered,” says, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to contemplate the beauty of the Lord.” For we shall then contemplate God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, when the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, so as no longer to make intercession for us, as our Mediator and Priest, Son of God and Son of man; but that He Himself too, in so far as He is a Priest that has taken the form of a servant for us, shall be put under Him who has put all things under Him, and under whom He has put all things: so that, in so far as He is God, He with Him will have put us under Himself; in so far as He is a Priest, He with us will be put under Him. And therefore as the [incarnate] Son is both God and man, it is rather to be said that the manhood in the Son is another substance [from the Son], than that the Son in the Father [is another substance from the Father]; just as the carnal nature of my soul is more another substance in relation to my soul itself, although in one and the same man, than the soul of another man is in relation to my soul.

21. When, therefore, He “shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,”—that is, when He shall have brought those who believe and live by faith, for whom now as Mediator He maketh intercession, to that contemplation, for the obtaining of which we sigh and groan, and when labor and groaning shall have passed away,—then, since the kingdom will have been delivered up to God, even the Father, He will no more make intercession for us. And this He signifies, when He says: “These things

have I spoken unto you in similitudes; but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in similitudes, but I shall declare to you plainly of the Father:” that is, they will not then be “similitudes,” when the sight shall be “face to face.” For this it is which He says, “But I will declare to you plainly of the Father;” as if He said I will plainly show you the Father. For He says, I will “declare” to you, because He is His word. For He goes on to say, “At that day ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.” What is meant by “I came forth from the Father,” unless this, that I have not appeared in that form in which I am equal to the Father, but otherwise, that is, as less than the Father, in the creature which I have taken upon me? And what is meant by “I am come into the world,” unless this, that I have manifested to the eyes even of sinners who love this world, the form of a servant which I took, making myself of no reputation? And what is meant by “Again, I leave the world,” unless this, that I take away from the sight of the lovers of this world that which they have seen? And what is meant by “I go to the Father,” unless this, that I teach those who are my faithful ones to understand me in that being in which I am equal to the Father? Those who believe this will be thought worthy of being brought by faith to sight, that is, to that very sight, in bringing them to which He is said to “deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father.” For His faithful ones, whom He has redeemed with His blood, are called His kingdom, for whom He now intercedes; but then, making them to abide in Himself there, where He is equal to the Father, He will no longer pray the Father for them. “For,” He says, “the Father Himself loveth you.” For indeed He “prays,” in so far as He is less than the Father; but as He is equal with the Father, He with the Father grants. Wherefore He certainly does not exclude Himself from that which He says, “The Father Himself loveth you;” but He means it to be understood after that manner which I have above spoken of, and sufficiently intimated,—namely, that for the most part each Person of the Trinity is so named, that the other Persons also may be understood. Accordingly, “For the Father Himself loveth you,” is so said that by consequence both the Son and the Holy Spirit also may be understood: not that He does not now love us, who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; but God loves us, such as we shall be, not such as we are, for such as they are whom He loves, such are they whom He keeps eternally; which shall then be, when He who now maketh intercession for us shall have "delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father," so as no longer to ask the Father, because the Father Himself loveth us. But for what deserving, except of faith, by which we believe before we see that which is promised? For by this faith we shall arrive at sight; so that He may love us, being such, as He loves us in order that we may become; and not such, as He hates us because we are, and exhorts and enables us to wish not to be always.

CHAPTER 11

BY WHAT RULE IN THE SCRIPTURES IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE SON IS NOW EQUAL AND NOW LESS

22. Wherefore, having mastered this rule for interpreting the Scriptures concerning the Son of God, that we are to distinguish in them what relates to the form of God, in which He is equal to the Father, and what to the form of a servant which He took, in which He is less than the Father; we shall not be disquieted by apparently contrary and mutually repugnant sayings of the sacred books. For both the Son and the Holy Spirit, according to the form of God, are equal to the Father, because neither of them is a creature, as we have already shown: but according to the form of a servant He is less than the Father, because He Himself has said, "My Father is greater than I;" and He is less than Himself, because it is said of Him, He emptied Himself;" and He is less than the Holy Spirit, because He Himself says, "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven Him." And in the Spirit too He wrought miracles, saying: "But if I with the Spirit of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you." And in Isaiah He says,—in the lesson which He Himself read in the synagogue, and showed without a scruple of doubt to be fulfilled concerning Himself,—"The Spirit of the Lord God," He says, "is upon me: because He hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek He hath sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives," etc.: for the doing of which things He therefore declares Himself to be "sent," because the Spirit of God is upon Him. According to the form of God, all things were made by Him;

according to the form of a servant, He was Himself made of a woman, made under the law. According to the form of God, He and the Father are one; according to the form of a servant, He came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. According to the form of God, “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;” according to the form of a servant, His “soul is sorrowful even unto death;” and, “O my Father,” He says, “if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” According to the form of God, “He is the True God, and eternal life;” according to the form of a servant, “He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”—23. According to the form of God, all things that the Father hath are His, and “All mine,” He says, “are Thine, and Thine are mine;” according to the form of a servant, the doctrine is not His own, but His that sent Him.

CHAPTER 12

IN WHAT MANNER THE SON IS SAID NOT TO KNOW THE DAY AND THE HOUR WHICH THE FATHER KNOWS. SOME THINGS SAID OF CHRIST ACCORDING TO THE FORM OF GOD, OTHER THINGS ACCORDING TO THE FORM OF A SERVANT. IN WHAT WAY IT IS OF CHRIST TO GIVE THE KINGDOM, IN WHAT NOT OF CHRIST. CHRIST WILL BOTH JUDGE AND NOT JUDGE

Again, “Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven; neither the Son, but the Father.” For He is ignorant of this, as making others ignorant; that is, in that He did not so know as at that time to show His disciples: as it was said to Abraham, “Now I know that thou fearest God,” that is, now I have caused thee to know it; because he himself, being tried in that temptation, became known to himself. For He was certainly going to tell this same thing to His disciples at the fitting time; speaking of which yet future as if past, He says, “Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you;” which He had not yet done, but spoke as though He had already done it, because He certainly would do it. For He says to the disciples themselves, “I have yet many things to say unto you; but ye cannot bear them now.” Among which is to be understood also, “Of the day and hour.” For the apostle also says, “I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified;” because he was speaking to those who were not able to receive higher things concerning the Godhead of Christ. To whom also a little while after he says, “I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal.” He was “ignorant,” therefore, among them of that which they were not able to know from him. And that only he said that he knew, which it was fitting that they should know from him. In short, he knew among the perfect what he knew not among babes; for he there says: “We speak wisdom among them that are perfect.” For a man is said not to know what he hides, after that kind of speech, after which a ditch is called blind which is hidden. For the Scriptures do not use any other kind of speech than may be found in use among men, because they speak to men.

24. According to the form of God, it is said “Before all the hills He begat me,” that is, before all the loftinesses of things created and, “Before the dawn I begat Thee,” that is, before all times and temporal things: but according to the form of a servant, it is said, “The Lord created me in the beginning of His ways.” Because, according to the form of God, He said, “I am the truth;” and according to the form of a servant, “I am the way.” For, because He Himself, being the first-begotten of the dead, made a passage to the kingdom of God to life eternal for His Church, to which He is so the Head as to make the body also immortal, therefore He was “created in the beginning of the ways” of God in His work. For, according to the form of God, He is the beginning, that also speaketh unto us, in which “beginning” God created the heaven and the earth; but according to the form of a servant, “He is a bridegroom coming out of His chamber.” According to the form of God, “He is the first-born of every creature, and He is before all things and by him all things consist;” according to the form of a servant, “He is the head of the body, the Church.” According to the form of God, “He is the Lord of glory.” From which it is evident that He Himself glorifies His saints: for, “Whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” Of Him accordingly it is said, that He justifieth the ungodly; of Him it is said, that He is just and a justifier. If, therefore, He has also glorified those whom He has justified, He who justifies, Himself also glorifies; who is, as I have said, the Lord of glory. Yet, according to the form of a servant, He replied to His disciples, when inquiring about their

own glorification: “To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but [it shall be given to them] for whom it is prepared by my Father.”

25. But that which is prepared by His Father is prepared also by the Son Himself, because He and the Father are one. For we have already shown, by many modes of speech in the divine Scriptures, that, in this Trinity, what is said of each is also said of all, on account of the indivisible working of the one and same substance. As He also says of the Holy Spirit, “If I depart, I will send Him unto you.” He did not say, We will send; but in such way as if the Son only should send Him, and not the Father; while yet He says in another place, “These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you; but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things.” Here again it is so said as if the Son also would not send Him, but the Father only. As therefore in these texts, so also where He says, “But for them for whom it is prepared by my Father,” He meant it to be understood that He Himself, with the Father, prepares seats of glory for those for whom He will. But some one may say: There, when He spoke of the Holy Spirit, He so says that He Himself will send Him, as not to deny that the Father will send Him; and in the other place, He so says that the Father will send Him, as not to deny that He will do so Himself; but here He expressly says, “It is not mine to give,” and so goes on to say that these things are prepared by the Father. But this is the very thing which we have already laid down to be said according to the form of a servant: viz., that we are so to understand “It is not mine to give,” as if it were said, This is not in the power of man to give; that so He may be understood to give it through that wherein He is God equal to the Father. “It is not mine,” He says, “to give;” that is, I do not give these things by human power, but “to those for whom it is prepared by my Father;” but then take care you understand also, that if “all things which the Father hath are mine,” then this certainly is mine also, and I with the Father have prepared these things.

26. For I ask again, in what manner this is said, “If any man hear not my words, I will not judge him?” For perhaps He has said here, “I will not judge him,” in the same sense as there, “It is not mine to give.” But what follows here? “I came not,” He says, “to judge the world, but to save the

world;” and then He adds, “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him.” Now here we should understand the Father, unless He had added, “The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” Well, then, will neither the Son judge, because He says, “I will not judge him,” nor the Father, but the word which the Son hath spoken? Nay, but hear what yet follows: “For I,” He says, “have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak; and I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.” If therefore the Son judges not, but “the word which the Son hath spoken;” and the word which the Son hath spoken therefore judges, because the Son “hath not spoken of Himself, but the Father who sent Him gave Him a commandment what He should say, and what He should speak:” then the Father assuredly judges, whose word it is which the Son hath spoken; and the same Son Himself is the very Word of the Father. For the commandment of the Father is not one thing, and the word of the Father another; for He hath called it both a word and a commandment. Let us see, therefore, whether perchance, when He says, “I have not spoken of myself,” He meant to be understood thus,—I am not born of myself. For if He speaks the word of the Father, then He speaks Himself, because He is Himself the Word of the Father. For ordinarily He says, “The Father gave to me;” by which He means it to be understood that the Father begat Him: not that He gave anything to Him, already existing and not possessing it; but that the very meaning of, To have given that He might have, is, To have begotten that He might be. For it is not, as with the creature so with the Son of God before the incarnation and before He took upon Him our flesh, the Only-begotten by whom all things were made; that He is one thing, and has another: but He is in such way as to be what He has. And this is said more plainly, if any one is fit to receive it, in that place where He says: “For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” For He did not give to Him, already existing and not having life, that He should have life in Himself; inasmuch as, in that He is, He is life. Therefore “He gave to the Son to have life in Himself” means, He begat the Son to be unchangeable life, which is life eternal. Since, therefore, the Word of God is the Son of God, and the Son of God is “the true God and eternal life,” as John says in his Epistle; so here, what else are we to acknowledge when the Lord says, “The word which I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day,” and calls that very word the word of the Father and the commandment of the Father, and that very commandment everlasting life?” “And I know,” He says, “that His commandment is life everlasting.”

27. I ask, therefore, how we are to understand, “I will not judge him; but the Word which I have spoken shall judge him:” which appears from what follows to be so said, as if He would say, I will not judge; but the Word of the Father will judge. But the Word of the Father is the Son of God Himself. Is it to be so understood: I will not judge, but I will judge? How can this be true, unless in this way: viz., I will not judge by human power, because I am the Son of man; but I will judge by the power of the Word, because I am the Son of God? Or if it still seems contradictory and inconsistent to say, I will not judge, but I will judge; what shall we say of that place where He says, “My doctrine is not mine?” How “mine,” when “not mine?” For He did not say, This doctrine is not mine, but “My doctrine is not mine:” that which He called His own, the same He called not His own. How can this be true, unless He has called it His own in one relation; not His own, in another? According to the form of God, His own; according to the form of a servant, not His own. For when He says, “It is not mine, but His that sent me,” He makes us recur to the Word itself. For the doctrine of the Father is the Word of the Father, which is the Only Son. And what, too, does that mean, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me?” How believe on Him, yet not believe on Him? How can so opposite and inconsistent a thing be understood—”Whoso believeth on me,” He says, “believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me;”—unless you so understand it, Whoso believeth on me believeth not on that which he sees, lest our hope should be in the creature; but on Him who took the creature, whereby He might appear to human eyes, and so might cleanse our hearts by faith, to contemplate Himself as equal to the Father? So that in turning the attention of believers to the Father, and saying, “Believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me,” He certainly did not mean Himself to be separated from the Father, that is, from Him that sent Him; but that men might so believe on Himself, as they believe on the Father, to whom He is equal. And this He says in express terms in another place, “Ye believe in God, believe also in me:” that is, in

the same way as you believe in God, so also believe in me; because I and the Father are One God. As therefore, here, He has as it were withdrawn the faith of men from Himself, and transferred it to the Father, by saying, “Believeth not on me, but on Him that sent me,” from whom nevertheless He certainly did not separate Himself; so also, when He says, “It is not mine to give, but [it shall be given to them] for whom it is prepared by my Father,” it is I think plain in what relation both are to be taken. For that other also is of the same kind, “I will not judge;” whereas He Himself shall judge the quick and dead. But because He will not do so by human power, therefore, reverting to the Godhead, He raises the hearts of men upwards; which to lift up, He Himself came down.

CHAPTER 13

DIVERSE THINGS ARE SPOKEN CONCERNING THE SAME CHRIST, ON ACCOUNT OF THE DIVERSE NATURES OF THE ONE HYPOSTASIS [THEANTHROPIC PERSON]. WHY IT IS SAID THAT THE FATHER WILL NOT JUDGE, BUT HAS GIVEN JUDGMENT TO THE SON

28. Yet unless the very same were the Son of man on account of the form of a servant which He took, who is the Son of God on account of the form of God in which He is; Paul the apostle would not say of the princes of this world, “For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” For He was crucified after the form of a servant, and yet “the Lord of glory” was crucified. For that “taking” was such as to make God man, and man God. Yet what is said on account of what, and what according to what, the thoughtful, diligent, and pious reader discerns for himself, the Lord being his helper. For instance, we have said that He glorifies His own, as being God, and certainly then as being the Lord of glory; and yet the Lord of glory was crucified, because even God is rightly said to have been crucified, not after the power of the divinity, but after the weakness of the flesh: just as we say, that He judges as God, that is, by divine power, not by human; and yet the man Himself will judge, just as the Lord of glory was crucified: for so He expressly says, “When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, and before Him shall be gathered all nations;” and the rest that is foretold of the future judgment in that place even to the last sentence. And the Jews, inasmuch as they will be punished in that judgment for persisting in their wickedness, as it is

elsewhere written, “shall look upon Him whom they have pierced.” For whereas both good and bad shall see the Judge of the quick and dead, without doubt the bad will not be able to see Him, except after the form in which He is the Son of man; but yet in the glory wherein He will judge, not in the lowliness wherein He was judged. But the ungodly without doubt will not see that form of God in which He is equal to the Father. For they are not pure in heart; and “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” And that sight is face to face, the very sight that is promised as the highest reward to the just, and which will then take place when He “shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;” and in this “kingdom” He means the sight of His own form also to be understood, the whole creature being made subject to God, including that wherein the Son of God was made the Son of man. Because, according to this creature, “The Son also Himself shall be subject unto Him, that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.” Otherwise if the Son of God, judging in the form in which He is equal to the Father, shall appear when He judges to the ungodly also; what becomes of that which He promises, as some great thing, to him who loves Him, saying, “And I will love him, and will manifest myself to him?” Wherefore He will judge as the Son of man, yet not by human power, but by that whereby He is the Son of God; and on the other hand, He will judge as the Son of God, yet not appearing in that [unincarnate] form in which He is God equal to the Father, but in that [incarnate form] in which He is the Son of man.

29. Therefore both ways of speaking may be used; the Son of man will judge, and, the Son of man will not judge: since the Son of man will judge, that the text may be true which says, “When the Son of man shall come, then before Him shall be gathered all nations;” and the Son of man will not judge, that the text may be true which says, “I will not judge him;” and, “I seek not mine own glory: there is One that seeketh and judgeth.” For in respect to this, that in the judgment, not the form of God, but the form of the Son of man will appear, the Father Himself will not judge; for according to this it is said, “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” Whether this is said after that mode of speech which we have mentioned above, where it is said, “So hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself,” that it should signify that so He begat the Son;

or, whether after that of which the apostle speaks, saying, “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name:”—(For this is said of the Son of man, in respect to whom the Son of God was raised from the dead; since He, being in the form of God equal to the Father, wherefrom He “emptied” Himself by taking the form of a servant, both acts and suffers, and receives, in that same form of a servant, what the apostle goes on to mention: “He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, in the Glory of God the Father:”—whether then the words, “He hath committed all judgment unto the Son,” are said according to this or that mode of speech; it sufficiently appears from this place, that if they were said according to that sense in which it is said, “He hath given to the Son to have life in Himself,” it certainly would not be said, “The Father judgeth no man.” For in respect to this, that the Father hath begotten the Son equal to Himself, He judges with Him. Therefore it is in respect to this that it is said, that in the judgment, not the form of God, but the form of the Son of man will appear. Not that He will not judge, who hath committed all judgment unto the Son, since the Son saith of Him, “There is One that seeketh and judgeth:” but it is so said, “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;” as if it were said, No one will see the Father in the judgment of the quick and the dead, but all will see the Son: because He is also the Son of man, so that He can be seen even by the ungodly, since they too shall see Him whom they have pierced.

30. Lest, however, we may seem to conjecture this rather than to prove it clearly, let us produce a certain and plain sentence of the Lord Himself, by which we may show that this was the cause why He said, “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son,” viz. because He will appear as Judge in the form of the Son of man, which is not the form of the Father, but of the Son; nor yet that form of the Son in which He is equal to the Father, but that in which He is less than the Father; in order that, in the judgment, He may be visible both to the good and to the

bad. For a little while after He says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but shall pass from death unto life.” Now this life eternal is that sight which does not belong to the bad. Then follows, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” And this is proper to the godly, who so hear of His incarnation, as to believe that He is the Son of God, that is, who so receive Him, as made for their sakes less than the Father, in the form of a servant, that they believe Him equal to the Father, in the form of God. And thereupon He continues, enforcing this very point, “For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” And then He comes to the sight of His own glory, in which He shall come to judgment; which sight will be common to the ungodly and to the just. For He goes on to say, “And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.” I think nothing can be more clear. For inasmuch as the Son of God is equal to the Father, He does not receive this power of executing judgment, but He has it with the Father in secret; but He receives it, so that the good and the bad may see Him judging, inasmuch as He is the Son of man. Since the sight of the Son of man will be shown to the bad also: for the sight of the form of God will not be shown except to the pure in heart, for they shall see God; that is, to the godly only, to whose love He promises this very thing, that He will show Himself to them. And see, accordingly, what follows: “Marvel not at this,” He says. Why does He forbid us to marvel, unless it be that, in truth, every one marvels who does not understand, that therefore He said the Father gave Him power also to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man; whereas, it might rather have been anticipated that He would say, since He is the Son of God? But because the wicked are not able to see the Son of God as He is in the form of God equal to the Father, but yet it is necessary that both the just and the wicked should see the Judge of the quick and dead, when they will be judged in His presence; “Marvel not at this,” He says, “for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” For this purpose, then, it was necessary that He should therefore receive that power, because

He is the Son of man, in order that all in rising again might see Him in the form in which He can be seen by all, but by some to damnation, by others to life eternal. And what is life eternal, unless that sight which is not granted to the ungodly? “That they might know Thee,” He says, “the One true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.” And how are they to know Jesus Christ Himself also, unless as the One true God, who will show Himself to them; not as He will show Himself, in the form of the Son of man, to those also that shall be punished?

31. He is “good,” according to that sight, according to which God appears to the pure in heart; for “truly God is good unto Israel even to such as are of a clean heart.” But when the wicked shall see the Judge, He will not seem good to them; because they will not rejoice in their heart to see Him, but all “kindreds of the earth shall then wail because of Him,” namely, as being reckoned in the number of all the wicked and unbelievers. On this account also He replied to him, who had called Him Good Master, when seeking advice of Him how he might attain eternal life, “Why askest thou me about good? there is none good but One, that is, God.” And yet the Lord Himself, in another place, calls man good: “A good man,” He says, “out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things.” But because that man was seeking eternal life, and eternal life consists in that contemplation in which God is seen, not for punishment, but for everlasting joy; and because he did not understand with whom he was speaking, and thought Him to be only the Son of man: Why, He says, askest thou me about good? that is, with respect to that form which thou seest, why askest thou about good, and callest me, according to what thou seest, Good Master? This is the form of the Son of man, the form which has been taken, the form that will appear in judgment, not only to the righteous, but also to the ungodly; and the sight of this form will not be for good to those who are wicked. But there is a sight of that form of mine, in which when I was, I thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but in order to take this form I emptied myself. That one God, therefore, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, who will not appear, except for joy which cannot be taken away from the just; for which future joy he sighs, who says, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of

my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord:” that one God, therefore, Himself, I say, is alone good, for this reason, that no one sees Him for sorrow and wailing, but only for salvation and true joy. If you understand me after this latter form, then I am good; but if according to that former only, then why askest thou me about good? If thou art among those who “shall look upon Him whom they have pierced,” that very sight itself will be evil to them, because it will be penal. That after this meaning, then, the Lord said, “Why askest thou me about good? there is none good but One, that is, God,” is probable upon those proofs which I have alleged, because that sight of God, whereby we shall contemplate the substance of God unchangeable and invisible to human eyes (which is promised to the saints alone; which the Apostle Paul speaks of, as “face to face;” and of which the Apostle John says, “We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is;” and of which it is said, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I may behold the beauty of the Lord,” and of which the Lord Himself says, “I will both love him, and will manifest myself to him;” and on account of which alone we cleanse our hearts by faith, that we may be those “pure in heart who are blessed for they shall see God:” and whatever else is spoken of that sight: which whosoever turns the eye of love to seek it, may find most copiously scattered through all the Scriptures),—that sight alone, I say, is our chief good, for the attaining of which we are directed to do whatever we do aright. But that sight of the Son of man which is foretold, when all nations shall be gathered before Him, and shall say to Him, “Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or thirsty, etc.?” will neither be a good to the ungodly, who shall be sent into everlasting fire, nor the chief good to the righteous. For He still goes on to call these to the kingdom which has been prepared for them from the foundation of the world. For, as He will say to those, “Depart into everlasting fire;” so to these, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” And as those will go into everlasting burning; so the righteous will go into life eternal. But what is life eternal, except “that they may know Thee,” He says, “the One true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent?” but know Him now in that glory of which He says to the Father, “Which I had with Thee before the world was.” For then He will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that the good servant may enter into the joy of his Lord, and that He may hide those whom God keeps in the hiding of His countenance from the confusion of men, namely, of those men who shall then be confounded by hearing this sentence; of which evil hearing “the righteous man shall not be afraid” if only he be kept in “the tabernacle,” that is, in the true faith of the Catholic Church, from “the strife of tongues,” that is, from the sophistries of heretics. But if there is any other explanation of the words of the Lord, where He says, “Why asketh thou me about good? there is none good, but One, that is, God;” provided only that the substance of the Father be not therefore believed to be of greater goodness than that of the Son, according to which He is the Word by whom all things were made; and if there is nothing in it abhorrent from sound doctrine; let us securely use it, and not one explanation only, but as many as we are able to find. For so much the more powerfully are the heretics proved wrong, the more outlets are open for avoiding their snares. But let us now start afresh, and address ourselves to the consideration of that which still remains.

Book II

Augustin pursues his defense of the equality of the Trinity; and in treating of the sending of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and of the various appearances of God, demonstrates that He who is sent is not therefore less than He who sends, because the one has sent, the other has been sent; but that the Trinity, being in all things equal, and alike in its own nature unchangeable and invisible and omnipresent, works indivisibly in each sending or appearance.

PREFACE

When men seek to know God, and bend their minds according to the capacity of human weakness to the understanding of the Trinity; learning, as they must, by experience, the wearisome difficulties of the task, whether from the sight itself of the mind striving to gaze upon light unapproachable, or, indeed, from the manifold and various modes of speech employed in the sacred writings (wherein, as it seems to me, the mind is nothing else but roughly exercised, in order that it may find sweetness when glorified by the grace of Christ);—such men, I say, when they have dispelled every ambiguity, and arrived at something certain, ought of all others most easily to make allowance for those who err in the investigation of so deep a secret. But there are two things most hard to bear with, in the case of those who are in error: hasty assumption before the truth is made plain; and, when it has been made plain, defence of the falsehood thus hastily assumed. From which two faults, inimical as they are to the finding out of the truth, and to the handling of the divine and sacred books, should God, as I pray and hope, defend and protect me with the shield of His good will, and with the grace of His mercy, I will not be slow to search out the substance of God, whether through His Scripture or through the creature. For both of these are set forth for our contemplation to this end, that He may Himself be sought, and Himself be loved, who inspired the one, and created the other. Nor shall I be afraid of giving my opinion, in which I shall more desire to be examined by the upright, than fear to be carped at by the perverse. For charity, most excellent and unassuming, gratefully accepts the dovelike eye; but for the dog's tooth nothing remains, save either to shun it by the most cautious humility, or to blunt it by the most solid truth; and far rather would I be censured by any one whatsoever, than be praised by either the erring or the flatterer. For the lover of truth need fear no one's censure. For he that censures, must needs be either enemy or friend. And if an enemy reviles, he must be borne with: but a friend, if he errs, must be taught; if he teaches, listened to. But if one who errs praises you, he confirms your error; if one who flatters, he seduces you into error. "Let the righteous," therefore, "smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me; but the oil of the sinner shall not anoint my head."

CHAPTER 1

THERE IS A DOUBLE RULE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE SCRIPTURAL MODES OF SPEECH CONCERNING THE SON OF GOD. THESE MODES OF SPEECH ARE OF A THREEFOLD KIND

2. Wherefore, although we hold most firmly, concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, what may be called the canonical rule, as it is both disseminated through the Scriptures, and has been demonstrated by learned and Catholic handlers of the same Scriptures, namely, that the Son of God is both understood to be equal to the Father according to the form of God in which He is, and less than the Father according to the form of a servant which He took; in which form He was found to be not only less than the Father, but also less than the Holy Spirit; and not only so, but less even than Himself,—not than Himself who was, but than Himself who is; because, by taking the form of a servant, He did not lose the form of God, as the testimonies of the Scriptures taught us, to which we have referred in the former book: yet there are some things in the sacred text so put as to leave it ambiguous to which rule they are rather to be referred; whether to that by which we understand the Son as less, in that He has taken upon Him the creature, or to that by which we understand that the Son is not indeed less than, but equal to the Father, but yet that He is from Him, God of God, Light of light. For we call the Son God of God; but the Father, God only; not of God. Whence it is plain that the Son has another of whom He is, and to whom He is Son; but that the Father has not a Son of whom He is, but only to whom He is

father. For every son is what he is, of his father, and is son to his father; but no father is what he is, of his son, but is father to his son.

3. Some things, then, are so put in the Scriptures concerning the Father and the Son, as to intimate the unity and equality of their substance; as, for instance, "I and the Father are one;" and, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" and whatever other texts there are of the kind. And some, again, are so put that they show the Son as less on account of the form of a servant, that is, of His having taken upon Him the creature of a changeable and human substance; as, for instance, that which says, "For my Father is greater than I;" and, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." For a little after he goes on to say, "And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man." And further, some are so put, as to show Him at that time neither as less nor as equal, but only to intimate that He is of the Father; as, for instance, that which says, "For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;" and that other: "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do." For if we shall take this to be therefore so said, because the Son is less in the form taken from the creature, it will follow that the Father must have walked on the water, or opened the eyes with clay and spittle of some other one born blind, and have done the other things which the Son appearing in the flesh did among men, before the Son did them; in order that He might be able to do those things, who said that the Son was not able to do anything of Himself, except what He hath seen the Father do. Yet who, even though he were mad, would think this? It remains, therefore, that these texts are so expressed, because the life of the Son is unchangeable as that of the Father is, and yet He is of the Father; and the working of the Father and of the Son is indivisible, and yet so to work is given to the Son from Him of whom He Himself is, that is, from the Father; and the Son so sees the Father, as that He is the Son in the very seeing Him. For to be of the Father, that is, to be born of the Father, is to Him nothing else than to see the Father; and to see Him working, is nothing else than to work with Him: but therefore not from Himself, because He is not from Himself. And, therefore, those things which "He sees the Father do, these also doeth the Son likewise," because He is of the Father. For He neither does other things

in like manner, as a painter paints other pictures, in the same way as he sees others to have been painted by another man; nor the same things in a different manner, as the body expresses the same letters, which the mind has thought; but “whatsoever things,” saith He, “the Father doeth, these same things also doeth the Son likewise.” He has said both “these same things,” and “likewise;” and hence the working of both the Father and the Son is indivisible and equal, but it is from the Father to the Son. Therefore the Son cannot do anything of Himself, except what He seeth the Father do. From this rule, then, whereby the Scriptures so speak as to mean, not to set forth one as less than another, but only to show which is of which, some have drawn this meaning, as if the Son were said to be less. And some among ourselves who are more unlearned and least instructed in these things, endeavoring to take these texts according to the form of a servant, and so misinterpreting them, are troubled. And to prevent this, the rule in question is to be observed whereby the Son is not less, but it is simply intimated that He is of the Father, in which words not His inequality but His birth is declared.

CHAPTER 2

THAT SOME WAYS OF SPEAKING CONCERNING THE SON ARE TO BE UNDERSTOOD ACCORDING TO EITHER RULE

4. There are, then, some things in the sacred books, as I began by saying, so put, that it is doubtful to which they are to be referred: whether to that rule whereby the Son is less on account of His having taken the creature; or whether to that whereby it is intimated that although equal, yet He is of the Father. And in my opinion, if this is in such way doubtful, that which it really is can neither be explained nor discerned, then such passages may without danger be understood according to either rule, as that, for instance, “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me.” For this may both be taken according to the form of a servant, as we have already treated it in the former book; or according to the form of God, in which He is in such way equal to the Father, that He is yet of the Father. For according to the form of God, as the Son is not one and His life another, but the life itself is the Son; so the Son is not one and His doctrine another, but the doctrine itself is the Son. And hence, as the text, “He hath given life to the Son,” is no otherwise

to be understood than, He hath begotten the Son, who is life; so also when it is said, He hath given doctrine to the Son, it may be rightly understood to mean, He hath begotten the Son, who is doctrine so that, when it is said, “My doctrine is not mine, but His who sent me,” it is so to be understood as if it were, I am not from myself, but from Him who sent me.

CHAPTER 3

SOME THINGS CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE TO BE UNDERSTOOD ACCORDING TO THE ONE RULE ONLY

5. For even of the Holy Spirit, of whom it is not said, “He emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant;” yet the Lord Himself says, “Howbeit, when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth. For He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.” And except He had immediately gone on to say after this, “All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you;” it might, perhaps, have been believed that the Holy Spirit was so born of Christ, as Christ is of the Father. Since He had said of Himself, “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me;” but of the Holy Spirit, “For He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall He speak;” and, “For He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.” But because He has rendered the reason why He said, “He shall receive of mine” (for He says, “All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine”); it remains that the Holy Spirit be understood to have of that which is the Father’s, as the Son also hath. And how can this be, unless according to that which we have said above, “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me”? He is said, therefore, not to speak of Himself, in that He proceedeth from the Father; and as it does not follow that the Son is less because He said, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do” (for He has not said this according to the form of a servant, but according to the form of God, as we have already shown, and these words do not set Him forth as less than, but as of the Father), so it is not brought to pass that the

Holy Spirit is less, because it is said of Him, “For He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak;” for the words belong to Him as proceeding from the Father. But whereas both the Son is of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father, why both are not called sons, and both not said to be begotten, but the former is called the one only-begotten Son, and the latter, viz. the Holy Spirit, neither son nor begotten, because if begotten, then certainly a son, we will discuss in another place, if God shall grant, and so far as He shall grant.

CHAPTER 4

THE GLORIFICATION OF THE SON BY THE FATHER DOES NOT PROVE INEQUALITY

6. But here also let them wake up if they can, who have thought this, too, to be a testimony on their side, to show that the Father is greater than the Son, because the Son hath said, “Father, glorify me.” Why, the Holy Spirit also glorifies Him. Pray, is the Spirit, too, greater than He? Moreover, if on that account the Holy Spirit glorifies the Son, because He shall receive of that which is the Son’s, and shall therefore receive of that which is the Son’s because all things that the Father has are the Son’s also; it is evident that when the Holy Spirit glorifies the Son, the Father glorifies the Son. Whence it may be perceived that all things that the Father hath are not only of the Son, but also of the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is able to glorify the Son, whom the Father glorifies. But if he who glorifies is greater than he whom he glorifies, let them allow that those are equal who mutually glorify each other. But it is written, also, that the Son glorifies the Father; for He says, “I have glorified Thee on the earth.” Truly let them beware lest the Holy Spirit be thought greater than both, because He glorifies the Son whom the Father glorifies, while it is not written that He Himself is glorified either by the Father or by the Son.

CHAPTER 5

THE SON AND HOLY SPIRIT ARE NOT THEREFORE LESS BECAUSE SENT. THE SON IS SENT ALSO BY HIMSELF. OF THE SENDING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

7. But being proved wrong so far, men betake themselves to saying, that he who sends is greater than he who is sent: therefore the Father is greater than

the Son, because the Son continually speaks of Himself as being sent by the Father; and the Father is also greater than the Holy Spirit, because Jesus has said of the Spirit, “Whom the Father will send in my name;” and the Holy Spirit is less than both, because both the Father sends Him, as we have said, and the Son, when He says, “But if I depart, I will send Him unto you.” I first ask, then, in this inquiry, whence and whither the Son was sent. “I,” He says, “came forth from the Father, and am come into the world.” Therefore, to be sent, is to come forth forth from the Father, and to come into the world. What, then, is that which the same evangelist says concerning Him, “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not;” and then he adds, “He came unto His own?” Certainly He was sent thither, whither He came; but if He was sent into the world, because He came forth from the Father, then He both came into the world and was in the world. He was sent therefore thither, where He already was. For consider that, too, which is written in the prophet, that God said, “Do not I fill heaven and earth?” If this is said of the Son (for some will have it understood that the Son Himself spoke either by the prophets or in the prophets), whither was He sent except to the place where He already was? For He who says, “I fill heaven and earth,” was everywhere. But if it is said of the Father, where could He be without His own word and without His own wisdom, which “reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly ordereth all things?” But He cannot be anywhere without His own Spirit. Therefore, if God is everywhere, His Spirit also is everywhere. Therefore, the Holy Spirit, too, was sent thither, where He already was. For he, too, who finds no place to which he might go from the presence of God, and who says, “If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I shall go down into hell, behold, Thou art there;” wishing it to be understood that God is present everywhere, named in the previous verse His Spirit; for He says,” Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?”

8. For this reason, then, if both the Son and the Holy Spirit are sent thither where they were, we must inquire, how that sending, whether of the Son or of the Holy Spirit, is to be understood; for of the Father alone, we nowhere read that He is sent. Now, of the Son, the apostle writes thus: “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman,

made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." "He sent," he says, "His Son, made of a woman." And by this term, woman, what Catholic does not know that he did not wish to signify the privation of virginity; but, according to a Hebraism, the difference of sex? When, therefore, he says, "God sent His Son, made of a woman," he sufficiently shows that the Son was "sent" in this very way, in that He was "made of a woman." Therefore, in that He was born of God, He was in the world; but in that He was born of Mary, He was sent and came into the world. Moreover, He could not be sent by the Father without the Holy Spirit, not only because the Father, when He sent Him, that is, when He made Him of a woman, is certainly understood not to have so made Him without His own Spirit; but also because it is most plainly and expressly said in the Gospel in answer to the Virgin Mary, when she asked of the angel, "How shall this be?" "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." And Matthew says, "She was found with child of the Holy Ghost." Although, too, in the prophet Isaiah, Christ Himself is understood to say of His own future advent, "And now the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me."

9. Perhaps some one may wish to drive us to say, that the Son is sent also by Himself, because the conception and childbirth of Mary is the working of the Trinity, by whose act of creating all things are created. And how, he will go on to say, has the Father sent Him, if He sent Himself? To whom I answer first, by asking him to tell me, if he can, in what manner the Father hath sanctified Him, if He hath sanctified Himself? For the same Lord says both; "Say ye of Him," He says, "whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God;" while in another place He says, "And for their sake I sanctify myself." I ask, also, in what manner the Father delivered Him, if He delivered Himself? For the Apostle Paul says both: "Who," he says, "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all;" while elsewhere he says of the Saviour Himself, "Who loved me, and delivered Himself for me." He will reply, I suppose, if he has a right sense in these things, Because the will of the Father and the Son is one, and their working indivisible. In like manner, then, let him understand the incarnation and nativity of the Virgin, wherein the Son is understood as sent, to have been wrought by one and the same

operation of the Father and of the Son indivisibly; the Holy Spirit certainly not being thence excluded, of whom it is expressly said, “She was found with child by the Holy Ghost.” For perhaps our meaning will be more plainly unfolded, if we ask in what manner God sent His Son. He commanded that He should come, and He, complying with the commandment, came. Did He then request, or did He only suggest? But whichever of these it was, certainly it was done by a word, and the Word of God is the Son of God Himself. Wherefore, since the Father sent Him by a word, His being sent was the work of both the Father and His Word; therefore the same Son was sent by the Father and the Son, because the Son Himself is the Word of the Father. For who would embrace so impious an opinion as to think the Father to have uttered a word in time, in order that the eternal Son might thereby be sent and might appear in the flesh in the fullness of time? But assuredly it was in that Word of God itself which was in the beginning with God and was God, namely, in the wisdom itself of God, apart from time, at what time that wisdom must needs appear in the flesh. Therefore, since without any commencement of time, the Word was in the beginning, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, it was in the Word itself without any time, at what time the Word was to be made flesh and dwell among us. And when this fullness of time had come, “God sent His Son, made of a woman,” that is, made in time, that the Incarnate Word might appear to men; while it was in that Word Himself, apart from time, at what time this was to be done; for the order of times is in the eternal wisdom of God without time. Since, then, that the Son should appear in the flesh was wrought by both the Father and the Son, it is fitly said that He who appeared in that flesh was sent, and that He who did not appear in it, sent Him; because those things which are transacted outwardly before the bodily eyes have their existence from the inward structure (apparatu) of the spiritual nature, and on that account are fitly said to be sent. Further, that form of man which He took is the person of the Son, not also of the Father; on which account the invisible Father, together with the Son, who with the Father is invisible, is said to have sent the same Son by making Him visible. But if He became visible in such way as to cease to be invisible with the Father, that is, if the substance of the invisible Word were turned by a change and transition into a visible creature, then the Son would be so understood to be sent by the Father, that He would be found to be only sent; not also, with the Father, sending. But since He so took the form of a servant, as that the unchangeable form of God remained, it is clear that that which became apparent in the Son was done by the Father and the Son not being apparent; that is, that by the invisible Father, with the invisible Son, the same Son Himself was sent so as to be visible. Why, therefore, does He say, "Neither came I of myself?" This, we may now say, is said according to the form of a servant, in the same way as it is said, "I judge no man."

10. If, therefore, He is said to be sent, in so far as He appeared outwardly in the bodily creature, who inwardly in His spiritual nature is always hidden from the eyes of mortals, it is now easy to understand also of the Holy Spirit why He too is said to be sent. For in due time a certain outward appearance of the creature was wrought, wherein the Holy Spirit might be visibly shown; whether when He descended upon the Lord Himself in a bodily shape as a dove, or when, ten days having past since His ascension, on the day of Pentecost a sound came suddenly from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and cloven tongues like as of fire were seen upon them, and it sat upon each of them. This operation, visibly exhibited, and presented to mortal eyes, is called the sending of the Holy Spirit; not that His very substance appeared, in which He himself also is invisible and unchangeable, like the Father and the Son, but that the hearts of men, touched by things seen outwardly, might be turned from the manifestation in time of Him as coming to His hidden eternity as ever present.

CHAPTER 6

THE CREATURE IS NOT SO TAKEN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT AS FLESH IS BY THE WORD

11. It is, then, for this reason nowhere written, that the Father is greater than the Holy Spirit, or that the Holy Spirit is less than God the Father, because the creature in which the Holy Spirit was to appear was not taken in the same way as the Son of man was taken, as the form in which the person of the Word of God Himself should be set forth not that He might possess the word of God, as other holy and wise men have possessed it, but "above His fellows;" not certainly that He possessed the word more than they, so as to be of more surpassing wisdom than the rest were, but that He was the very

Word Himself. For the word in the flesh is one thing, and the Word made flesh is another; i.e. the word in man is one thing, the Word that is man is another. For flesh is put for man, where it is said, “The Word was made flesh;” and again, “And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” For it does not mean flesh without soul and without mind; but “all flesh,” is the same as if it were said, every man. The creature, then, in which the Holy Spirit should appear, was not so taken, as that flesh and human form were taken, of the Virgin Mary. For the Spirit did not beatify the dove, or the wind, or the fire, and join them for ever to Himself and to His person in unity and “fashion.” Nor, again, is the nature of the Holy Spirit mutable and changeable; so that these things were not made of the creature, but He himself was turned and changed first into one and then into another, as water is changed into ice. But these things appeared at the seasons at which they ought to have appeared, the creature serving the Creator, and being changed and converted at the command of Him who remains immutably in Himself, in order to signify and manifest Him in such way as it was fit He should be signified and manifested to mortal men. Accordingly, although that dove is called the Spirit; and in speaking of that fire, “There appeared unto them,” he says, “cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance; in order to show that the Spirit was manifested by that fire, as by the dove; yet we cannot call the Holy Spirit both God and a dove, or both God and fire, in the same way as we call the Son both God and man; nor as we call the Son the Lamb of God; which not only John the Baptist says, “Behold the Lamb of God,” but also John the Evangelist sees the Lamb slain in the Apocalypse. For that prophetic vision was not shown to bodily eyes through bodily forms, but in the spirit through spiritual images of bodily things. But whosoever saw that dove and that fire, saw them with their eyes. Although it may perhaps be disputed concerning the fire, whether it was seen by the eyes or in the spirit, on account of the form of the sentence. For the text does not say, They saw cloven tongues like fire, but, “There appeared to them.” But we are not wont to say with the same meaning, It appeared to me; as we say, I saw. And in those spiritual visions of corporeal images the usual expressions are, both, It appeared to me; and, I saw: but in those things which are shown to the eyes through express corporeal forms, the common expression is not, It appeared to me; but, I saw. There may, therefore, be a question raised respecting that fire, how it was seen; whether within in the spirit as it were outwardly, or really outwardly before the eyes of the flesh. But of that dove, which is said to have descended in a bodily form, no one ever doubted that it was seen by the eyes. Nor, again, as we call the Son a Rock (for it is written, “And that Rock was Christ”), can we so call the Spirit a dove or fire. For that rock was a thing already created, and after the mode of its action was called by the name of Christ, whom it signified; like the stone placed under Jacob’s head, and also anointed, which he took in order to signify the Lord; or as Isaac was Christ, when he carried the wood for the sacrifice of himself. A particular significative action was added to those already existing things; they did not, as that dove and fire, suddenly come into being in order simply so to signify. The dove and the fire, indeed, seem to me more like that flame which appeared to Moses in the bush, or that pillar which the people followed in the wilderness, or the thunders and lightnings which came when the Law was given in the mount. For the corporeal form of these things came into being for the very purpose, that it might signify something, and then pass away.

CHAPTER 7

A DOUBT RAISED ABOUT DIVINE APPEARANCES

12. The Holy Spirit, then, is also said to be sent, on account of these corporeal forms which came into existence in time, in order to signify and manifest Him, as He must needs be manifested, to human senses; yet He is not said to be less than the Father, as the Son, because He was in the form of a servant, is said to be; because that form of a servant inhered in the unity of the person of the Son, but those corporeal forms appeared for a time, in order to show what was necessary to be shown, and then ceased to be. Why, then, is not the Father also said to be sent, through those corporeal forms, the fire of the bush, and the pillar of cloud or of fire, and the lightnings in the mount, and whatever other things of the kind appeared at that time, when (as we have learned from Scripture testimony) He spake face to face with the fathers, if He Himself was manifested by those modes and forms of the creature, as exhibited and presented corporeally to human sight? But if the Son was manifested by them, why is He said to be sent so long after,

when He was made of a woman, as the apostle says, “But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman,” seeing that He was sent also before, when He appeared to the fathers by those changeable forms of the creature? Or if He cannot rightly be said to be sent, unless when the Word was made flesh, why is the Holy Spirit said to be sent, of whom no such incarnation was ever wrought? But if by those visible things, which are put before us in the Law and in the prophets, neither the Father nor the Son but the Holy Spirit was manifested, why also is He said to be sent now, when He was sent also before after these modes?

13. In the perplexity of this inquiry, the Lord helping us, we must ask, first, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit; or whether, sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, sometimes the Holy Spirit; or whether it was without any distinction of persons, in such way as the one and only God is spoken of, that is, that the Trinity itself appeared to the Fathers by those forms of the creature. Next, whichever of these alternatives shall have been found or thought true, whether for this purpose only the creature was fashioned, wherein God, as He judged it suitable at that time, should be shown to human sight; or whether angels, who already existed, were so sent, as to speak in the person of God, taking a corporeal form from the corporeal creature, for the purpose of their ministry, as each had need; or else, according to the power the Creator has given them, changing and converting their own body itself, to which they are not subject, but govern it as subject to themselves, into whatever appearances they would that were suited and apt to their several actions. Lastly, we shall discern that which it was our purpose to ask, viz. whether the Son and the Holy Spirit were also sent before; and, if they were so sent, what difference there is between that sending, and the one which we read of in the Gospel; or whether in truth neither of them were sent, except when either the Son was made of the Virgin Mary, or the Holy Spirit appeared in a visible form, whether in the dove or in tongues of fire.

CHAPTER 8

THE ENTIRE TRINITY INVISIBLE

14. Let us therefore say nothing of those who, with an over carnal mind, have thought the nature of the Word of God, and the Wisdom, which, “remaining in herself, maketh all things new,” whom we call the only Son of God, not only to be changeable, but also to be visible. For these, with more audacity than religion, bring a very dull heart to the inquiry into divine things. For whereas the soul is a spiritual substance, and whereas itself also was made, yet could not be made by any other than by Him by whom all things were made, and without whom nothing is made, it, although changeable, is yet not visible; and this they have believed to be the case with the Word Himself and with the Wisdom of God itself, by which the soul was made; whereas this Wisdom is not only invisible, as the soul also is, but likewise unchangeable, which the soul is not. It is in truth the same unchangeableness in it, which is referred to when it was said, “Remaining in herself she maketh all things new.” Yet these people, endeavoring, as it were, to prop up their error in its fall by testimonies of the divine Scriptures, adduce the words of the Apostle Paul; and take that, which is said of the one only God, in whom the Trinity itself is understood, to be said only of the Father, and neither of the Son nor of the Holy Spirit: “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever;” and that other passage, “The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” How these passages are to be understood, I think we have already discoursed sufficiently.

CHAPTER 9

AGAINST THOSE WHO BELIEVED THE FATHER ONLY TO BE IMMORTAL AND INVISIBLE. THE TRUTH TO BE SOUGHT BY PEACEFUL STUDY

15. But they who will have these texts understood only of the Father, and not of the Son or the Holy Spirit, declare the Son to be visible, not by having taken flesh of the Virgin, but aforetime also in Himself. For He Himself, they say, appeared to the eyes of the Fathers. And if you say to them, In whatever manner, then, the Son is visible in Himself, in that manner also He is mortal in Himself; so that it plainly follows that you would have this saying also understood only of the Father, viz., “Who only

hath immortality;” for if the Son is mortal from having taken upon Him our flesh, then allow that it is on account of this flesh that He is also visible: they reply, that it is not on account of this flesh that they say that the Son is mortal; but that, just as He was also before visible, so He was also before mortal. For if they say the Son is mortal from having taken our flesh, then it is not the Father alone without the Son who hath immortality; because His Word also has immortality, by which all things were made. For He did not therefore lose His immortality, because He took mortal flesh; seeing that it could not happen even to the human soul, that it should die with the body, when the Lord Himself says, “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.” Or, forsooth, also the Holy Spirit took flesh: concerning whom certainly they will, without doubt, be troubled to say—if the Son is mortal on account of taking our flesh—in what manner they understand that the Father only has immortality without the Son and the Holy Spirit, since, indeed, the Holy Spirit did not take our flesh; and if He has not immortality, then the Son is not mortal on account of taking our flesh; but if the Holy Spirit has immortality, then it is not said only of the Father, “Who only hath immortality.” And therefore they think they are able to prove that the Son in Himself was mortal also before the incarnation, because changeableness itself is not unfitly called mortality, according to which the soul also is said to die; not because it is changed and turned into body, or into some substance other than itself, but because, whatever in its own selfsame substance is now after another mode than it once was, is discovered to be mortal, in so far as it has ceased to be what it was. Because then, say they, before the Son of God was born of the Virgin Mary, He Himself appeared to our fathers, not in one and the same form only, but in many forms; first in one form, then in another; He is both visible in Himself, because His substance was visible to mortal eyes, when He had not yet taken our flesh, and mortal, inasmuch as He is changeable. And so also the Holy Spirit, who appeared at one time as a dove, and another time as fire. Whence, they say, the following texts do not belong to the Trinity, but singularly and properly to the Father only: “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise God;” and, “Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.”

16. Passing by, then, these reasoners, who are unable to know the substance even of the soul, which is invisible, and therefore are very far indeed from knowing that the substance of the one and only God, that is, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, remains ever not only invisible, but also unchangeable, and that hence it possesses true and real immortality; let us, who deny that God, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, ever appeared to bodily eyes, unless through the corporeal creature made subject to His own power; let us, I say—ready to be corrected, if we are reproved in a fraternal and upright spirit, ready to be so, even if carped at by an enemy, so that he speak the truth—in catholic peace and with peaceful study inquire, whether God indiscriminately appeared to our fathers before Christ came in the flesh, or whether it was any one person of the Trinity, or whether severally, as it were by turns.

CHAPTER 10

WHETHER GOD THE TRINITY INDISCRIMINATELY APPEARED TO THE FATHERS, OR ANY ONE PERSON OF THE TRINITY. THE APPEARING OF GOD TO ADAM. OF THE SAME APPEARANCE. THE VISION TO ABRAHAM

17. And first, in that which is written in Genesis, viz., that God spake with man whom He had formed out of the dust; if we set apart the figurative meaning, and treat it so as to place faith in the narrative even in the letter, it should appear that God then spake with man in the appearance of a man. This is not indeed expressly laid down in the book, but the general tenor of its reading sounds in this sense, especially in that which is written, that Adam heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the evening, and hid himself among the trees of the garden; and when God said, “Adam, where art thou?” replied, “I heard Thy voice, and I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself from Thy face.” For I do not see how such a walking and conversation of God can be understood literally, except He appeared as a man. For it can neither be said that a voice only of God was framed, when God is said to have walked, or that He who was walking in a place was not visible; while Adam, too, says that he hid himself from the face of God. Who then was He? Whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit? Whether altogether indiscriminately did God the Trinity Himself speak to man in the form of man? The context, indeed, itself of the

Scripture nowhere, it should seem, indicates a change from person to person; but He seems still to speak to the first man, who said, “Let there be light,” and, “Let there be a firmament,” and so on through each of those days; whom we usually take to be God the Father, making by a word whatever He willed to make. For He made all things by His word, which Word we know, by the right rule of faith, to be His only Son. If, therefore, God the Father spake to the first man, and Himself was walking in the garden in the cool of the evening, and if it was from His face that the sinner hid himself amongst the trees of the garden, why are we not to go on to understand that it was He also who appeared to Abraham and to Moses, and to whom He would, and how He would, through the changeable and visible creature, subjected to Himself, while He Himself remains in Himself and in His own substance, in which He is unchangeable and invisible? But, possibly, it might be that the Scripture passed over in a hidden way from person to person, and while it had related that the Father said “Let there be light,” and the rest which it mentioned Him to have done by the Word, went on to indicate the Son as speaking to the first man; not unfolding this openly, but intimating it to be understood by those who could understand it.

18. Let him, then, who has the strength whereby he can penetrate this secret with his mind’s eye, so that to him it appears clearly, either that the Father also is able, or that only the Son and Holy Spirit are able, to appear to human eyes through a visible creature; let him, I say, proceed to examine these things if he can, or even to express and handle them in words; but the thing itself, so far as concerns this testimony of Scripture, where God spake with man, is, in my judgment, not discoverable, because it does not evidently appear even whether Adam usually saw God with the eyes of his body; especially as it is a great question what manner of eyes it was that were opened when they tasted the forbidden fruit; for before they had tasted, these eyes were closed. Yet I would not rashly assert, even if that scripture implies Paradise to have been a material place, that God could not have walked there in any way except in some bodily form. For it might be said, that only words were framed for the man to hear, without seeing any form. Neither, because it is written, “Adam hid himself from the face of God,” does it follow forthwith that he usually saw His face. For what if he himself indeed could not see, but feared to be himself seen by Him whose

voice he had heard, and had felt His presence as he walked? For Cain, too, said to God, “From Thy face I will hide myself;” yet we are not therefore compelled to admit that he was wont to behold the face of God with his bodily eyes in any visible form, although he had heard the voice of God questioning and speaking with him of his sin. But what manner of speech it was that God then uttered to the outward ears of men, especially in speaking to the first man, it is both difficult to discover, and we have not undertaken to say in this discourse. But if words alone and sounds were wrought, by which to bring about some sensible presence of God to those first men, I do not know why I should not there understand the person of God the Father, seeing that His person is manifested also in that voice, when Jesus appeared in glory on the mount before the three disciples; and in that when the dove descended upon Him at His baptism; and in that where He cried to the Father concerning His own glorification and it was answered Him, “I have both glorified, and will glorify again.” Not that the voice could be wrought without the work of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (since the Trinity works indivisibly), but that such a voice was wrought as to manifest the person of the Father only; just as the Trinity wrought that human form from the Virgin Mary, yet it is the person of the Son alone; for the invisible Trinity wrought the visible person of the Son alone. Neither does anything forbid us, not only to understand those words spoken to Adam as spoken by the Trinity, but also to take them as manifesting the person of that Trinity. For we are compelled to understand of the Father only, that which is said, “This is my beloved Son.” For Jesus can neither be believed nor understood to be the Son of the Holy Spirit, or even His own Son. And where the voice uttered, “I have both glorified, and will glorify again,” we confess it was only the person of the Father; since it is the answer to that word of the Lord, in which He had said, “Father, glorify thy Son,” which He could not say except to God the Father only, and not also to the Holy Spirit, whose Son He was not. But here, where it is written, “And the Lord God said to Adam,” no reason can be given why the Trinity itself should not be understood.

19. Likewise, also, in that which is written, “Now the Lord had said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and thy father’s house,” it is not clear whether a voice alone came to the ears of

Abraham, or whether anything also appeared to his eyes. But a little while after, it is somewhat more clearly said, “And the Lord appeared unto Abraham, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land.” But neither there is it expressly said in what form God appeared to him, or whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit appeared to him. Unless, perhaps, they think that it was the Son who appeared to Abraham, because it is not written, God appeared to him, but “the Lord appeared to him.” For the Son seems to be called the Lord as though the name was appropriated to Him; as e.g. the apostle says, “For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.” But since it is found that God the Father also is called Lord in many places,—for instance, “The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee;” and again, “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand;” since also the Holy Spirit is found to be called Lord, as where the apostle says, “Now the Lord is that Spirit;” and then, lest any one should think the Son to be signified, and to be called the Spirit on account of His incorporeal substance, has gone on to say, “And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;” and no one ever doubted the Spirit of the Lord to be the Holy Spirit: therefore, neither here does it appear plainly whether it was any person of the Trinity that appeared to Abraham, or God Himself the Trinity, of which one God it is said, “Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and Him only shall thou serve.” But under the oak at Mamre he saw three men, whom he invited, and hospitably received, and ministered to them as they feasted. Yet Scripture at the beginning of that narrative does not say, three men appeared to him, but, “The Lord appeared to him.” And then, setting forth in due order after what manner the Lord appeared to him, it has added the account of the three men, whom Abraham invites to his hospitality in the plural number, and afterwards speaks to them in the singular number as one; and as one He promises him a son by Sara, viz. the one whom the Scripture calls Lord, as in the beginning of the same narrative, “The Lord,” it says, “appeared to Abraham.” He invites them then, and washes their feet, and leads them forth at their departure, as though they were men; but he speaks as with the Lord God, whether when a son is promised to him, or when the destruction is shown to him that was impending over Sodom.

CHAPTER 11

OF THE SAME APPEARANCE

20. That place of Scripture demands neither a slight nor a passing consideration. For if one man had appeared, what else would those at once cry out, who say that the Son was visible also in His own substance before He was born of the Virgin, but that it was Himself? since it is said, they say, of the Father, “To the only invisible God.” And yet, I could still go on to demand, in what manner “He was found in fashion as a man,” before He had taken our flesh, seeing that his feet were washed, and that He fed upon earthly food? How could that be, when He was still “in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God?” For, pray, had He already “emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant, and made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man?” when we know when it was that He did this through His birth of the Virgin. How, then, before He had done this, did He appear as one man to Abraham? or, was not that form a reality? I could put these questions, if it had been one man that appeared to Abraham, and if that one were believed to be the Son of God. But since three men appeared, and no one of them is said to be greater than the rest either in form, or age, or power, why should we not here understand, as visibly intimated by the visible creature, the equality of the Trinity, and one and the same substance in three persons?

21. For, lest any one should think that one among the three is in this way intimated to have been the greater, and that this one is to be understood to have been the Lord, the Son of God, while the other two were His angels; because, whereas three appeared, Abraham there speaks to one as the Lord: Holy Scripture has not forgotten to anticipate, by a contradiction, such future cogitations and opinions, when a little while after it says that two angels came to Lot, among whom that just man also, who deserved to be freed from the burning of Sodom, speaks to one as to the Lord. For so Scripture goes on to say, “And the Lord went His way, as soon as He left communing with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.”

CHAPTER 12

THE APPEARANCE TO LOT IS EXAMINED

“But there came two angels to Sodom at even.” Here, what I have begun to set forth must be considered more attentively. Certainly Abraham was speaking with three, and called that one, in the singular number, the Lord. Perhaps, some one may say, he recognized one of the three to be the Lord, but the other two His angels. What, then, does that mean which Scripture goes on to say, “And the Lord went His way, as soon as He had left communing with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place: and there came two angels to Sodom at even?” Are we to suppose that the one who, among the three, was recognized as the Lord, had departed, and had sent the two angels that were with Him to destroy Sodom? Let us see, then, what follows. “There came,” it is said, “two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them, rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; and he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant’s house.” Here it is clear, both that there were two angels, and that in the plural number they were invited to partake of hospitality, and that they were honorably designated lords, when they perchance were thought to be men.

22. Yet, again, it is objected that except they were known to be angels of God, Lot would not have bowed himself with his face to the ground. Why, then, is both hospitality and food offered to them, as though they wanted such human succor? But whatever may here lie hid, let us now pursue that which we have undertaken. Two appear; both are called angels; they are invited plurally; he speaks as with two plurally, until the departure from Sodom. And then Scripture goes on to say, “And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that they said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, and there thou shalt be saved, lest thou be consumed. And Lot said unto them, Oh! not so, my lord: behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight,” etc. What is meant by his saying to them, “Oh! not so, my lord,” if He who was the Lord had already departed, and had sent the angels? Why is it said, “Oh! not so, my lord,” and not, “Oh! not so, my lords?” Or if he wished to speak to one of them, why does Scripture say, “But Lot said to them, Oh! not so, my lord: behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight,” etc.? Are we here, too, to understand two persons in the plural number, but when the two are addressed as one, then the one Lord God of one

substance? But which two persons do we here understand?—of the Father and of the Son, or of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, or of the Son and of the Holy Spirit? The last, perhaps, is the more suitable; for they said of themselves that they were sent, which is that which we say of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. For we find nowhere in the Scriptures that the Father was sent.

CHAPTER 13

THE APPEARANCE IN THE BUSH

23. But when Moses was sent to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, it is written that the Lord appeared to him thus: “Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” He is here also first called the Angel of the Lord, and then God. Was an angel, then, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? Therefore He may be rightly understood to be the Saviour Himself, of whom the apostle says, “Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.” He, therefore, “who is over all, God blessed for ever,” is not unreasonably here understood also to be Himself the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. But why is He previously called the Angel of the Lord, when He appeared in a flame of fire out of the bush? Was it because it was one of many angels, who by an economy [or arrangement] bare the person of his Lord? or was something of the creature assumed by Him in order to bring about a visible appearance for the business in hand, and that words might thence be audibly uttered, whereby the presence of the Lord might be shown, in such way as was fitting, to the corporeal senses of man, by means of the creature made subject? For if he was one of the angels, who could easily affirm whether it was the person of

the Son which was imposed upon him to announce, or that of the Holy Spirit, or that of God the Father, or altogether of the Trinity itself, who is the one and only God, in order that he might say, “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?” For we cannot say that the Son of God is the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and that the Father is not; nor will any one dare to deny that either the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity itself, whom we believe and understand to be the one God, is the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he who is not God, is not the God of those fathers. Furthermore, if not only the Father is God, as all, even heretics, admit; but also the Son, which, whether they will or not, they are compelled to acknowledge, since the apostle says, “Who is over all, God blessed for ever;” and the Holy Spirit, since the same apostle says, “Therefore glorify God in your body;” when he had said above, “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?” and these three are one God, as catholic soundness believes: it is not sufficiently apparent which person of the Trinity that angel bare, if he was one of the rest of the angels, and whether any person, and not rather that of the Trinity itself. But if the creature was assumed for the purpose of the business in hand, whereby both to appear to human eyes, and to sound in human ears, and to be called the Angel of the Lord, and the Lord, and God; then cannot God here be understood to be the Father, but either the Son or the Holy Spirit. Although I cannot call to mind that the Holy Spirit is anywhere else called an angel, which yet may be understood from His work; for it is said of Him, “And He will show you things to come;” and “angel” in Greek is certainly equivalent to “messenger” in Latin: but we read most evidently of the Lord Jesus Christ in the prophet, that He is called “the Angel of Great Counsel,” while both the Holy Spirit and the Son of God is God and Lord of the angels.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE APPEARANCE IN THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND OF FIRE

24. Also in the going forth of the children of Israel from Egypt it is written, “And the Lord went before them, by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them the way, and by night in a pillar of fire. He took not away the pillar of the

cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.” Who here, too, would doubt that God appeared to the eyes of mortal men by the corporeal creature made subject to Him, and not by His own substance? But it is not similarly apparent whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity itself, the one God. Nor is this distinguished there either, in my judgment, where it is written, “The glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud, and the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel,” etc.

CHAPTER 15

OF THE APPEARANCE ON SINAI. WHETHER THE TRINITY SPAKE IN THAT APPEARANCE OR SOME ONE PERSON SPECIALLY

25. But now of the clouds, and voices, and lightnings, and the trumpet, and the smoke on Mount Sinai, when it was said, “And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace; and all the people that was in the camp trembled; and when the voice of the trumpet sounded long and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.” And a little after, when the Law had been given in the ten commandments, it follows in the text, “And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking.” And a little after, “And [when the people saw it,] they removed and stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was, and the Lord said unto Moses,” etc. What shall I say about this, save that no one can be so insane as to believe the smoke, and the fire, and the cloud, and the darkness, and whatever there was of the kind, to be the substance of the word and wisdom of God which is Christ, or of the Holy Spirit? For not even the Arians ever dared to say that they were the substance of God the Father. All these things, then, were wrought through the creature serving the Creator, and were presented in a suitable economy (dispensatio) to human senses; unless, perhaps, because it is said, “And Moses drew near to the cloud where God was,” carnal thoughts must needs suppose that the cloud was indeed seen by the people, but that within the cloud Moses with the eyes of the flesh saw the Son of God, whom doting heretics will have to be seen in His own substance. Forsooth, Moses may

have seen Him with the eyes of the flesh, if not only the wisdom of God which is Christ, but even that of any man you please and howsoever wise, can be seen with the eyes of the flesh; or if, because it is written of the elders of Israel, that "they saw the place where the God of Israel had stood," and that "there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness," therefore we are to believe that the word and wisdom of God in His own substance stood within the space of an earthly place, who indeed "reacheth firmly from end to end, and sweetly ordereth all things;" and that the Word of God, by whom all things were made, is in such wise changeable, as now to contract, now to expand Himself; (may the Lord cleanse the hearts of His faithful ones from such thoughts!) But indeed all these visible and sensible things are, as we have often said, exhibited through the creature made subject in order to signify the invisible and intelligible God, not only the Father, but also the Son and the Holy Spirit, "of whom are all things, and through whom are all things, and in whom are all things;" although "the invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead."

26. But as far as concerns our present undertaking, neither on Mount Sinai do I see how it appears, by all those things which were fearfully displayed to the senses of mortal men, whether God the Trinity spake, or the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit severally. But if it is allowable, without rash assertion, to venture upon a modest and hesitating conjecture from this passage, if it is possible to understand it of one person of the Trinity, why do we not rather understand the Holy Spirit to be spoken of, since the Law itself also, which was given there, is said to have been written upon tables of stone with the finger of God, by which name we know the Holy Spirit to be signified in the Gospel. And fifty days are numbered from the slaying of the lamb and the celebration of the Passover until the day in which these things began to be done in Mount Sinai; just as after the passion of our Lord fifty days are numbered from His resurrection, and then came the Holy Spirit which the Son of God had promised. And in that very coming of His, which we read of in the Acts of the Apostles, there appeared cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them: which agrees with Exodus,

where it is written, “And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire;” and a little after, “And the sight of the glory of the Lord,” he says, “was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.” Or if these things were therefore wrought because neither the Father nor the Son could be there presented in that mode without the Holy Spirit, by whom the Law itself must needs be written; then we know doubtless that God appeared there, not by His own substance, which remains invisible and unchangeable, but by the appearance above mentioned of the creature; but that some special person of the Trinity appeared, distinguished by a proper mark, as far as my capacity of understanding reaches, we do not see.

CHAPTER 16

IN WHAT MANNER MOSES SAW GOD

26. There is yet another difficulty which troubles most people, viz. that it is written, “And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend;” whereas a little after, the same Moses says, “Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thyself plainly, that I may see Thee, that I may find grace in Thy sight, and that I may consider that this nation is Thy people;” and a little after Moses again said to the Lord, “Show me Thy glory.” What means this then, that in everything which was done, as above said, God was thought to have appeared by His own substance; whence the Son of God has been believed by these miserable people to be visible not by the creature, but by Himself; and that Moses, entering into the cloud, appeared to have had this very object in entering, that a cloudy darkness indeed might be shown to the eyes of the people, but that Moses within might hear the words of God, as though he beheld His face; and, as it is said, “And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend;” and yet, behold, the same Moses says, “If I have found grace in Thy sight, show me Thyself plainly?” Assuredly he knew that he saw corporeally, and he sought the true sight of God spiritually. And that mode of speech accordingly which was wrought in words, was so modified, as if it were of a friend speaking to a friend. Yet who sees God the Father with the eyes of the body? And that Word, which was in the beginning, the Word which was with God, the Word

which was God, by which all things were made,—who sees Him with the eyes of the body? And the spirit of wisdom, again, who sees with the eyes of the body? Yet what is, "Show me now Thyself plainly, that I may see Thee," unless, Show me Thy substance? But if Moses had not said this, we must indeed have borne with those foolish people as we could, who think that the substance of God was made visible to his eyes through those things which, as above mentioned, were said or done. But when it is here demonstrated most evidently that this was not granted to him, even though he desired it; who will dare to say, that by the like forms which had appeared visibly to him also, not the creature serving God, but that itself which is God, appeared to the eyes of a mortal man?

28. Add, too, that which the Lord afterward said to Moses, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see my face, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shall stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee into a watch-tower of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen."

CHAPTER 17

HOW THE BACK PARTS OF GOD WERE SEEN. THE FAITH OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ONLY IS THE PLACE FROM WHENCE THE BACK PARTS OF GOD ARE SEEN. THE BACK PARTS OF GOD WERE SEEN BY THE ISRAELITES. IT IS A RASH OPINION TO THINK THAT GOD THE FATHER ONLY WAS NEVER SEEN BY THE FATHERS

Not unfitly is it commonly understood to be prefigured from the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, that His "back parts" are to be taken to be His flesh, in which He was born of the Virgin, and died, and rose again; whether they are called back parts on account of the posteriority of mortality, or because it was almost in the end of the world, that is, at a late period, that He deigned to take it: but that His "face" was that form of God, in which He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," which no one certainly can see and live; whether because after this life, in which we are absent from the Lord, and where the corruptible body presseth down the soul, we shall see "face to face," as the apostle says—(for it is said in the Psalms, of this life, “Verily every man living is altogether vanity;” and again, “For in Thy sight shall no man living be justified;” and in this life also, according to John, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know,” he says, “that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is,” which he certainly intended to be understood as after this life, when we shall have paid the debt of death, and shall have received the promise of the resurrection);—or whether that even now, in whatever degree we spiritually understand the wisdom of God, by which all things were made, in that same degree we die to carnal affections, so that, considering this world dead to us, we also ourselves die to this world, and say what the apostle says, “The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” For it was of this death that he also says, “Wherefore, if ye be dead with Christ, why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances?” Not therefore without cause will no one be able to see the “face,” that is, the manifestation itself of the wisdom of God, and live. For it is this very appearance, for the contemplation of which every one sighs who strives to love God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind; to the contemplation of which, he who loves his neighbor, too, as himself builds up his neighbor also as far as he may; on which two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. And this is signified also in Moses himself. For when he had said, on account of the love of God with which he was specially inflamed, “If I have found grace in thy sight, show me now Thyself plainly, that I may find grace in Thy sight;” he immediately subjoined, on account of the love also of his neighbor, “And that I may know that this nation is Thy people.” It is therefore that “appearance” which hurries away every rational soul with the desire of it, and the more ardently the more pure that soul is; and it is the more pure the more it rises to spiritual things; and it rises the more to spiritual things the more it dies to carnal things. But whilst we are absent from the Lord, and walk by faith, not by sight, we ought to see the “back parts” of Christ, that is His flesh, by that very faith, that is, standing on the solid foundation of faith, which the rock signifies, and beholding it from such a safe watch-tower, namely in the Catholic Church, of which it is said, “And upon this rock I will build my Church.” For so much the more certainly we love that face of Christ, which we earnestly desire to see, as we recognize in His back parts how much first Christ loved us.

29. But in the flesh itself, the faith in His resurrection saves and justifies us. For, “If thou shalt believe,” he says, “in thine heart, that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved;” and again, “Who was delivered,” he says, “for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.” So that the reward of our faith is the resurrection of the body of our Lord. For even His enemies believe that that flesh died on the cross of His passion, but they do not believe it to have risen again. Which we believing most firmly, gaze upon it as from the solidity of a rock: whence we wait with certain hope for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body; because we hope for that in the members of Christ, that is, in ourselves, which by a sound faith we acknowledge to be perfect in Him as in our Head. Thence it is that He would not have His back parts seen, unless as He passed by, that His resurrection may be believed. For that which is Pascha in Hebrew, is translated Passover. Whence John the Evangelist also says, “Before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come, that He should pass out of this world unto the Father.”

30. But they who believe this, but believe it not in the Catholic Church, but in some schism or in heresy, do not see the back parts of the Lord from “the place that is by Him.” For what does that mean which the Lord says, “Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock?” What earthly place is “by” the Lord, unless that is “by Him” which touches Him spiritually? For what place is not “by” the Lord, who “reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth order all things,” and of whom it is said, “Heaven is His throne, and earth is His footstool;” and who said, “Where is the house that ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest? For has not my hand made all those things?” But manifestly the Catholic Church itself is understood to be “the place by Him,” wherein one stands upon a rock, where he healthfully sees the “Pascha Domini,” that is, the “Passing by” of the Lord, and His back parts, that is, His body, who believes in His resurrection. “And thou shalt stand,” He says, “upon a rock while my glory passeth by.” For in reality, immediately after the majesty of the Lord had passed by in the glorification of the Lord, in which He rose again and ascended to the Father, we stood firm upon the rock. And Peter himself then stood firm, so that he preached Him with confidence, whom, before he stood firm, he had thrice from fear denied; although, indeed,

already before placed in predestination upon the watch-tower of the rock, but with the hand of the Lord still held over him that he might not see. For he was to see His back parts, and the Lord had not yet "passed by," namely, from death to life; He had not yet been glorified by the resurrection.

31. For as to that, too, which follows in Exodus, "I will cover thee with mine hand while I pass by, and I will take away my hand and thou shalt see my back parts;" many Israelites, of whom Moses was then a figure, believed in the Lord after His resurrection, as if His hand had been taken off from their eyes, and they now saw His back parts. And hence the evangelist also mentions that prophesy of Isaiah, "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes." Lastly, in the Psalm, that is not unreasonably understood to be said in their person, "For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me." "By day," perhaps, when He performed manifest miracles, yet was not acknowledged by them; but "by night," when He died in suffering, when they thought still more certainly that, like any one among men, He was cut off and brought to an end. But since, when He had already passed by, so that His back parts were seen, upon the preaching to them by the Apostle Peter that it behoved Christ to suffer and rise again, they were pricked in their hearts with the grief of repentance, that that might come to pass among the baptized which is said in the beginning of that Psalm, "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;" therefore, after it had been said, "Thy hand is heavy upon me," the Lord, as it were, passing by, so that now He removed His hand, and His back parts were seen, there follows the voice of one who grieves and confesses and receives remission of sins by faith in the resurrection of the Lord: "My moisture," he says, "is turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." For we ought not to be so wrapped up in the darkness of the flesh, as to think the face indeed of God to be invisible, but His back visible, since both appeared visibly in the form of a servant; but far be it from us to think anything of the kind in the form of God; far be it from us to think that the Word of God and the Wisdom of God has a face on one side, and on the other a back, as a human body has, or is at all changed either in place or time by any appearance or motion.

32. Wherefore, if in those words which were spoken in Exodus, and in all those corporeal appearances, the Lord Jesus Christ was manifested; or if in some cases Christ was manifested, as the consideration of this passage persuades us, in others the Holy Spirit, as that which we have said above admonishes us; at any rate no such result follows, as that God the Father never appeared in any such form to the Fathers. For many such appearances happened in those times, without either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit being expressly named and designated in them; but yet with some intimations given through certain very probable interpretations, so that it would be too rash to say that God the Father never appeared by any visible forms to the fathers or the prophets. For they gave birth to this opinion who were not able to understand in respect to the unity of the Trinity such texts as, “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God;” and, “Whom no man hath seen, nor can see.” Which texts are understood by a sound faith in that substance itself, the highest, and in the highest degree divine and unchangeable, whereby both the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit is the one and only God. But those visions were wrought through the changeable creature, made subject to the unchangeable God, and did not manifest God properly as He is, but by intimations such as suited the causes and times of the several circumstances.

CHAPTER 18

THE VISION OF DANIEL

33. I do not know in what manner these men understand that the Ancient of Days appeared to Daniel, from whom the Son of man, which He deigned to be for our sakes, is understood to have received the kingdom; namely, from Him who says to Him in the Psalms, “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee; ask of me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance;” and who has “put all things under His feet.” If, however, both the Father giving the kingdom, and the Son receiving it, appeared to Daniel in bodily form, how can those men say that the Father never appeared to the prophets, and, therefore, that He only ought to be understood to be invisible whom no man has seen, nor can see? For Daniel has told us thus: “I beheld,” he says, “till the thrones were set, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure

wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened," etc. And a little after, "I saw," he says, "in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Behold the Father giving, and the Son receiving, an eternal kingdom; and both are in the sight of him who prophesies, in a visible form. It is not, therefore, unsuitably believed that God the Father also was wont to appear in that manner to mortals.

34. Unless, perhaps, some one shall say, that the Father is therefore not visible, because He appeared within the sight of one who was dreaming; but that therefore the Son and the Holy Spirit are visible, because Moses saw all those things being awake; as if, forsooth, Moses saw the Word and the Wisdom of God with fleshly eyes, or that even the human spirit which quickens that flesh can be seen, or even that corporeal thing which is called wind;—how much less can that Spirit of God be seen, who transcends the minds of all men, and of angels, by the ineffable excellence of the divine substance? Or can any one fall headlong into such an error as to dare to say, that the Son and the Holy Spirit are visible also to men who are awake, but that the Father is not visible except to those who dream? How, then, do they understand that of the Father alone, "Whom no man hath seen, nor can see."? When men sleep, are they then not men? Or cannot He, who can fashion the likeness of a body to signify Himself through the visions of dreamers, also fashion that same bodily creature to signify Himself to the eyes of those who are awake? Whereas His own very substance, whereby He Himself is that which He is, cannot be shown by any bodily likeness to one who sleeps, or by any bodily appearance to one who is awake; but this not of the Father only, but also of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And certainly, as to those who are moved by the visions of waking men to believe that not the Father, but only the Son, or the Holy Spirit, appeared to

the corporeal sight of men,—to omit the great extent of the sacred pages, and their manifold interpretation, such that no one of sound reason ought to affirm that the person of the Father was nowhere shown to the eyes of waking men by any corporeal appearance;—but, as I said, to omit this, what do they say of our father Abraham, who was certainly awake and ministering, when, after Scripture had premised, “The Lord appeared unto Abraham,” not one, or two, but three men appeared to him; no one of whom is said to have stood prominently above the others, no one more than the others to have shone with greater glory, or to have acted more authoritatively?

35. Wherefore, since in that our threefold division we determined to inquire, first, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit; or whether sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, sometimes the Holy Spirit; or whether, without any distinction of persons, as it is said, the one and only God, that is, the Trinity itself, appeared to the fathers through those forms of the creature: now that we have examined, so far as appeared to be sufficient what places of the Holy Scriptures we could, a modest and cautious consideration of divine mysteries leads, as far as I can judge, to no other conclusion, unless that we may not rashly affirm which person of the Trinity appeared to this or that of the fathers or the prophets in some body or likeness of body, unless when the context attaches to the narrative some probable intimations on the subject. For the nature itself, or substance, or essence, or by whatever other name that very thing, which is God, whatever it be, is to be called, cannot be seen corporeally: but we must believe that by means of the creature made subject to Him, not only the Son, or the Holy Spirit, but also the Father, may have given intimations of Himself to mortal senses by a corporeal form or likeness. And since the case stands thus, that this second book may not extend to an immoderate length, let us consider what remains in those which follow.

Book III

The question is discussed with respect to the appearances of God spoken of in the previous book, which were made under bodily forms, whether only a creature was formed, for the purpose of manifesting God to human sight in such way as He at each time judged fitting; or whether angels, already existing, were so sent as to speak in the person of God; and this, either by assuming a bodily appearance from the bodily creature, or by changing their own bodies into whatever forms they would, suitable to the particular action, according to the power given to them by the Creator; while the essence itself of God was never seen in itself.

PREFACE

WHY AUGUSTIN WRITES OF THE TRINITY. WHAT HE CLAIMS FROM READERS. WHAT HAS BEEN SAID IN THE PREVIOUS BOOK

1. I Would have them believe, who are willing to do so, that I had rather bestow labor in reading, than in dictating what others may read. But let those who will not believe this, but are both able and willing to make the trial, grant me whatever answers may be gathered from reading, either to my own inquiries, or to those interrogations of others, which for the character I bear in the service of Christ, and for the zeal with which I burn that our faith may be fortified against the error of carnal and natural men, I must needs bear with; and then let them see how easily I would refrain from this labor, and with how much even of joy I would give my pen a holiday. But if what we have read upon these subjects is either not sufficiently set forth, or is not to be found at all, or at any rate cannot easily be found by us, in the Latin tongue, while we are not so familiar with the Greek tongue as to be found in any way competent to read and understand therein the books that treat of such topics, in which class of writings, to judge by the little which has been translated for us, I do not doubt that everything is contained that we can profitably seek; while yet I cannot resist my brethren when they exact of me, by that law by which I am made their servant, that I should

minister above all to their praiseworthy studies in Christ by my tongue and by my pen, of which two yoked together in me, Love is the charioteer; and while I myself confess that I have by writing learned many things which I did not know: if this be so, then this my labor ought not to seem superfluous to any idle, or to any very learned reader; while it is needful in no small part, to many who are busy, and to many who are unlearned, and among these last to myself. Supported, then, very greatly, and aided by the writings we have already read of others on this subject, I have undertaken to inquire into and to discuss, whatever it seems to my judgment can be reverently inquired into and discussed, concerning the Trinity, the one supreme and supremely good God; He himself exhorting me to the inquiry, and helping me in the discussion of it; in order that, if there are no other writings of the kind, there may be something for those to have and read who are willing and capable; but if any exist already, then it may be so much the easier to find some such writings, the more there are of the kind in existence.

2. Assuredly, as in all my writings I desire not only a pious reader, but also a free corrector, so I especially desire this in the present inquiry, which is so important that I would there were as many inquirers as there are objectors. But as I do not wish my reader to be bound down to me, so I do not wish my corrector to be bound down to himself. Let not the former love me more than the catholic faith, let not the latter love himself more than the catholic verity. As I say to the former, Do not be willing to yield to my writings as to the canonical Scriptures; but in these, when thou hast discovered even what thou didst not previously believe, believe it unhesitatingly; while in those, unless thou hast understood with certainty what thou didst not before hold as certain, be unwilling to hold it fast: so I say to the latter, Do not be willing to amend my writings by thine own opinion or disputation, but from the divine text, or by unanswerable reason. If thou apprehendest anything of truth in them, its being there does not make it mine, but by understanding and loving it, let it be both thine and mine; but if thou convictest anything of falsehood, though it have once been mine, in that I was guilty of the error, yet now by avoiding it let it be neither thine nor mine.

3. Let this third book, then, take its beginning at the point to which the second had reached. For after we had arrived at this, that we desired to

show that the Son was not therefore less than the Father, because the Father sent and the Son was sent; nor the Holy Spirit therefore less than both, because we read in the Gospel that He was sent both by the one and by the other; we undertook then to inquire, since the Son was sent thither, where He already was, for He came into the world, and "was in the world;" since also the Holy Spirit was sent thither, where He already was, for "the Spirit of the Lord filleth the world, and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice;" whether the Lord was therefore "sent" because He was born in the flesh so as to be no longer hidden, and, as it were, came forth from the bosom of the Father, and appeared to the eyes of men in the form of a servant; and the Holy Spirit also was therefore "sent," because He too was seen as a dove in a corporeal form, and in cloven tongues, like as of fire; so that, to be sent, when spoken of them, means to go forth to the sight of mortals in some corporeal form from a spiritual hiding-place; which, because the Father did not, He is said only to have sent, not also to be sent. Our next inquiry was, Why the Father also is not sometimes said to be sent, if He Himself was manifested through those corporeal forms which appeared to the eyes of the ancients. But if the Son was manifested at these times, why should He be said to be "sent" so long after, when the fullness of time was come that He should be born of a woman; since, indeed, He was sent before also, viz., when He appeared corporeally in those forms? Or if He were not rightly said to be "sent," except when the Word was made flesh; why should the Holy Spirit be read of as "sent," of whom such an incarnation never took place? But if neither the Father, nor the Son, but the Holy Spirit was manifested through these ancient appearances; why should He too be said to be "sent" now, when He was also sent before in these various manners? Next we subdivided the subject, that it might be handled most carefully, and we made the question threefold, of which one part was explained in the second book, and two remain, which I shall next proceed to discuss. For we have already inquired and determined, that not only the Father, nor only the Son, nor only the Holy Spirit appeared in those ancient corporeal forms and visions, but either indifferently the Lord God, who is understood to be the Trinity itself, or some one person of the Trinity, whichever the text of the narrative might signify, through intimations supplied by the context.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS TO BE SAID THEREUPON

4. Let us, then, continue our inquiry now in order. For under the second head in that division the question occurred, whether the creature was formed for that work only, wherein God, in such way as He then judged it to be fitting, might be manifested to human sight; or whether angels, who already existed, were so sent as to speak in the person of God, assuming a corporeal appearance from the corporeal creature for the purpose of their ministry; or else changing and turning their own body itself, to which they are not subject, but govern it as subject to themselves, into whatever forms they would, that were appropriate and fit for their actions, according to the power given to them by the Creator. And when this part of the question shall have been investigated, so far as God permit, then, lastly, we shall have to see to that question with which we started, viz., whether the Son and the Holy Spirit were also "sent" before; and if it be so, then what difference there is between that sending and the one of which we read in the Gospel; or whether neither of them were sent, except when either the Son was made of the Virgin Mary, or when the Holy Spirit appeared in a visible form, whether as a dove or in tongues of fire.

5. I confess, however, that it reaches further than my purpose can carry me to inquire whether the angels, secretly working by the spiritual quality of their body abiding still in them, assume somewhat from the inferior and more bodily elements, which, being fitted to themselves, they may change and turn like a garment into any corporeal appearances they will, and those appearances themselves also real, as real water was changed by our Lord into real wine; or whether they transform their own bodies themselves into that which they would, suitably to the particular act. But it does not signify to the present question which of these it is. And although I be not able to understand these things by actual experience, seeing that I am a man, as the angels do who do these things, and know them better than I know them, viz., how far my body is changeable by the operation of my will; whether it be by my own experience of myself, or by that which I have gathered from others; yet it is not necessary here to say which of these alternatives I am to believe upon the authority of the divine Scriptures, lest I be compelled to

prove it, and so my discourse become too long upon a subject which does not concern the present question.

6. Our present inquiry then is, whether the angels were then the agents both in showing those bodily appearances to the eyes of men and in sounding those words in their ears when the sensible creature itself, serving the Creator at His beck, was turned for the time into whatever was needful; as it is written in the book of Wisdom, “For the creature serveth Thee, who art the Maker, increaseth his strength against the unrighteous for their punishment, and abateth his strength for the benefit of such as put their trust in Thee. Therefore, even then was it altered into all fashions, and was obedient to Thy grace, that nourisheth all things according to the desire of them that longed for Thee.” For the power of the will of God reaches through the spiritual creature even to visible and sensible effects of the corporeal creature. For where does not the wisdom of the omnipotent God work that which He wills, which “reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth order all things”?

CHAPTER 2

THE WILL OF GOD IS THE HIGHER CAUSE OF ALL CORPOREAL CHANGE. THIS IS SHOWN BY AN EXAMPLE

7. But there is one kind of natural order in the conversion and changeableness of bodies, which, although itself also serves the bidding of God, yet by reason of its unbroken continuity has ceased to cause wonder; as is the case, for instance, with those things which are changed either in very short, or at any rate not long, intervals of time, in heaven, or earth, or sea; whether it be in rising, or in setting, or in change of appearance from time to time; while there are other things, which, although arising from that same order, yet are less familiar on account of longer intervals of time. And these things, although the many stupidly wonder at them, yet are understood by those who inquire into this present world, and in the progress of generations become so much the less wonderful, as they are the more often repeated and known by more people. Such are the eclipses of the sun and moon, and some kinds of stars, appearing seldom, and earthquakes, and unnatural births of living creatures, and other similar things; of which not

one takes place without the will of God; yet, that it is so, is to most people not apparent. And so the vanity of philosophers has found license to assign these things also to other causes, true causes perhaps, but proximate ones, while they are not able to see at all the cause that is higher than all others, that is, the will of God; or again to false causes, and to such as are not even put forward out of any diligent investigation of corporeal things and motions, but from their own guess and error.

8. I will bring forward an example, if I can, that this may be plainer. There is, we know, in the human body, a certain bulk of flesh and an outward form, and an arrangement and distraction of limbs, and a temperament of health; and a soul breathed into it governs this body, and that soul a rational one; which, therefore, although changeable, yet can be partaker of that unchangeable wisdom, so that "it may partake of that which is in and of itself;" as it is written in the Psalm concerning all saints, of whom as of living stones is built that Jerusalem which is the mother of us all, eternal in the heavens. For so it is sung, "Jerusalem is builded as a city, that is partaker of that which is in and of itself." For "in and of itself," in that place, is understood of that chiefest and unchangeable good, which is God, and of His own wisdom and will. To whom is sung in another place, "Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same."

CHAPTER 3

OF THE SAME ARGUMENT

Let us take, then, the case of a wise man, such that his rational soul is already partaker of the unchangeable and eternal truth, so that he consults it about all his actions, nor does anything at all, which he does not by it know ought to be done, in order that by being subject to it and obeying it he may do rightly. Suppose now that this man, upon counsel with the highest reason of the divine righteousness, which he hears with the ear of his heart in secret, and by its bidding, should weary his body by toil in some office of mercy, and should contract an illness; and upon consulting the physicians, were to be told by one that the cause of the disease was overmuch dryness of the body, but by another that it was overmuch moisture; one of the two no doubt would allege the true cause and the other would err, but both would pronounce concerning proximate causes only, that is, corporeal ones. But if the cause of that dryness were to be inquired into, and found to be the self-imposed toil, then we should have come to a yet higher cause, which proceeds from the soul so as to affect the body which the soul governs. Yet neither would this be the first cause, for that doubtless was a higher cause still, and lay in the unchangeable wisdom itself, by serving which in love, and by obeying its ineffable commands, the soul of the wise man had undertaken that self-imposed toil; and so nothing else but the will of God would be found most truly to be the first cause of that illness. But suppose now in that office of pious toil this wise man had employed the help of others to co-operate in the good work, who did not serve God with the same will as himself, but either desired to attain the reward of their own carnal desires, or shunned merely carnal unpleasantnesses;—suppose, too, he had employed beasts of burden, if the completion of the work required such a provision, which beasts of burden would be certainly irrational animals, and would not therefore move their limbs under their burdens because they at all thought of that good work, but from the natural appetite of their own liking, and for the avoiding of annoyance;—suppose, lastly, he had employed bodily things themselves that lack all sense, but were necessary for that work, as e.g. corn, and wine, and oils, clothes, or money, or a book, or anything of the kind;—certainly, in all these bodily things thus employed in this work, whether animate or inanimate, whatever took place of movement, of wear and tear, of reparation, of destruction, of renewal or of change in one way or another, as places and times affected them; pray, could there be, I say, any other cause of all these visible and changeable facts, except the invisible and unchangeable will of God, using all these, both bad and irrational souls, and lastly bodies, whether such as were inspired and animated by those souls, or such as lacked all sense, by means of that upright soul as the seat of His wisdom, since primarily that good and holy soul itself employed them, which His wisdom had subjected to itself in a pious and religious obedience?

CHAPTER 4

GOD USES ALL CREATURES AS HE WILL, AND MAKES VISIBLE THINGS FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF HIMSELF

9. What, then, we have alleged by way of example of a single wise man, although of one still bearing a mortal body and still seeing only in part, may be allowably extended also to a family, where there is a society of such men, or to a city, or even to the whole world, if the chief rule and government of human affairs were in the hands of the wise, and of those who were piously and perfectly subject to God; but because this is not the case as yet (for it behoves us first to be exercised in this our pilgrimage after mortal fashion, and to be taught with stripes by force of gentleness and patience), let us turn our thoughts to that country itself that is above and heavenly, from which we here are pilgrims. For there the will of God, “who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flaming fire,” presiding among spirits which are joined in perfect peace and friendship, and combined in one will by a kind of spiritual fire of charity, as it were in an elevated and holy and secret seat, as in its own house and in its own temple, thence diffuses itself through all things by certain most perfectly ordered movements of the creature; first spiritual, then corporeal; and uses all according to the unchangeable pleasure of its own purpose, whether incorporeal things or things corporeal, whether rational or irrational spirits, whether good by His grace or evil through their own will. But as the more gross and inferior bodies are governed in due order by the more subtle and powerful ones, so all bodies are governed by the living spirit; and the living spirit devoid of reason, by the reasonable living spirit; and the reasonable living spirit that makes default and sins, by the living and reasonable spirit that is pious and just; and that by God Himself, and so the universal creature by its Creator, from whom and through whom and in whom it is also created and established. And so it comes to pass that the will of God is the first and the highest cause of all corporeal appearances and motions. For nothing is done visibly or sensibly, unless either by command or permission from the interior palace, invisible and intelligible, of the supreme Governor, according to the unspeakable justice of rewards and punishments, of favor and retribution, in that far-reaching and boundless commonwealth of the whole creature.

10. If, therefore, the Apostle Paul, although he still bare the burden of the body, which is subject to corruption and presseth down the soul, and although he still saw only in part and in an enigma, wishing to depart and

be with Christ, and groaning within himself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of his body, yet was able to preach the Lord Jesus Christ significantly, in one way by his tongue, in another by epistle, in another by the sacrament of His body and blood (since, certainly, we do not call either the tongue of the apostle, or the parchments, or the ink, or the significant sounds which his tongue uttered, or the alphabetical signs written on skins, the body and blood of Christ; but that only which we take of the fruits of the earth and consecrate by mystic prayer, and then receive duly to our spiritual health in memory of the passion of our Lord for us: and this, although it is brought by the hands of men to that visible form, yet is not sanctified to become so great a sacrament, except by the spirit of God working invisibly; since God works everything that is done in that work through corporeal movements, by setting in motion primarily the invisible things of His servants, whether the souls of men, or the services of hidden spirits subject to Himself): what wonder if also in the creature of heaven and earth, of sea and air, God works the sensible and visible things which He wills, in order to signify and manifest Himself in them, as He Himself knows it to be fitting, without any appearing of His very substance itself, whereby He is, which is altogether unchangeable, and more inwardly and secretly exalted than all spirits whom He has created?

CHAPTER 5

WHY MIRACLES ARE NOT USUAL WORKS

11. For since the divine power administers the whole spiritual and corporeal creature, the waters of the sea are summoned and poured out upon the face of the earth on certain days of every year. But when this was done at the prayer of the holy Elijah; because so continued and long a course of fair weather had gone before, that men were famished; and because at that very hour, in which the servant of God prayed, the air itself had not, by any moist aspect, put forth signs of the coming rain; the divine power was apparent in the great and rapid showers that followed, and by which that miracle was granted and dispensed. In like manner, God works ordinarily through thunders and lightnings: but because these were wrought in an unusual manner on Mount Sinai, and those sounds were not uttered with a confused noise, but so that it appeared by most sure proofs that certain

intimations were given by them, they were miracles. Who draws up the sap through the root of the vine to the bunch of grapes, and makes the wine, except God; who, while man plants and waters, Himself giveth the increase? But when, at the command of the Lord, the water was turned into wine with an extraordinary quickness, the divine power was made manifest, by the confession even of the foolish. Who ordinarily clothes the trees with leaves and flowers except God? Yet, when the rod of Aaron the priest blossomed, the Godhead in some way conversed with doubting humanity. Again, the earthy matter certainly serves in common to the production and formation both of all kinds of wood and of the flesh of all animals: and who makes these things, but He who said, Let the earth bring them forth; and who governs and guides by the same word of His, those things which He has created? Yet, when He changed the same matter out of the rod of Moses into the flesh of a serpent, immediately and quickly, that change, which was unusual, although of a thing which was changeable, was a miracle. But who is it that gives life to every living thing at its birth, unless He who gave life to that serpent also for the moment, as there was need.

CHAPTER 6

DIVERSITY ALONE MAKES A MIRACLE

And who is it that restored to the corpses their proper souls when the dead rose again, unless He who gives life to the flesh in the mother’s womb, in order that they may come into being who yet are to die? But when such things happen in a continuous kind of river of ever-flowing succession, passing from the hidden to the visible, and from the visible to the hidden, by a regular and beaten track, then they are called natural; when, for the admonition of men, they are thrust in by an unusual changeableness, then they are called miracles.

CHAPTER 7

GREAT MIRACLES WROUGHT BY MAGIC ARTS

12. I see here what may occur to a weak judgment, namely, why such miracles are wrought also by magic arts; for the wise men of Pharaoh likewise made serpents, and did other like things. Yet it is still more a

matter of wonder, how it was that the power of those magicians, which was able to make serpents, when it came to very small flies, failed altogether. For the lice, by which third plague the proud people of Egypt were smitten, are very short-lived little flies; yet there certainly the magicians failed, saying, “This is the finger of God.” And hence it is given us to understand that not even those angels and powers of the air that transgressed, who have been thrust down into that lowest darkness, as into a peculiar prison, from their habitation in that lofty ethereal purity, through whom magic arts have whatever power they have, can do anything except by power given from above. Now that power is given either to deceive the deceitful, as it was given against the Egyptians, and against the magicians also themselves, in order that in the seducing of those spirits they might seem admirable by whom they were wrought, but to be condemned by the truth of God; or for the admonishing of the faithful, lest they should desire to do anything of the kind as though it were a great thing, for which reason they have been handed down to us also by the authority of Scripture; or lastly, for the exercising, proving, and manifesting of the patience of the righteous. For it was not by any small power of visible miracles that Job lost all that he had, and both his children and his bodily health itself.

CHAPTER 8

GOD ALONE CREATES THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE CHANGED BY MAGIC ART

13. Yet it is not on this account to be thought that the matter of visible things is subservient to the bidding of those wicked angels; but rather to that of God, by whom this power is given, just so far as He, who is unchangeable, determines in His lofty and spiritual abode to give it. For water and fire and earth are subservient even to wicked men, who are condemned to the mines, in order that they may do therewith what they will, but only so far as is permitted. Nor, in truth, are those evil angels to be called creators, because by their means the magicians, withstanding the servant of God, made frogs and serpents; for it was not they who created them. But, in truth, some hidden seeds of all things that are born corporeally and visibly, are concealed in the corporeal elements of this world. For those seeds that are visible now to our eyes from fruits and living things, are quite distinct from the hidden seeds of those former seeds; from which, at the

bidding of the Creator, the water produced the first swimming creatures and fowl, and the earth the first buds after their kind, and the first living creatures after their kind. For neither at that time were those seeds so drawn forth into products of their several kinds, as that the power of production was exhausted in those products; but oftentimes, suitable combinations of circumstances are wanting, whereby they may be enabled to burst forth and complete their species. For, consider, the very least shoot is a seed; for, if fitly consigned to the earth, it produces a tree. But of this shoot there is a yet more subtle seed in some grain of the same species, and this is visible even to us. But of this grain also there is further still a seed, which, although we are unable to see it with our eyes, yet we can conjecture its existence from our reason; because, except there were some such power in those elements, there would not so frequently be produced from the earth things which had not been sown there; nor yet so many animals, without any previous commixture of male and female; whether on the land, or in the water, which yet grow, and by commingling bring forth others, while themselves sprang up without any union of parents. And certainly bees do not conceive the seeds of their young by commixture, but gather them as they lie scattered over the earth with their mouth. For the Creator of these invisible seeds is the Creator of all things Himself; since whatever comes forth to our sight by being born, receives the first beginnings of its course from hidden seeds, and takes the successive increments of its proper size and its distinctive forms from these as it were original rules. As therefore we do not call parents the creators of men, nor farmers the creators of corn,—although it is by the outward application of their actions that the power of God operates within for the creating these things;—so it is not right to think not only the bad but even the good angels to be creators, if, through the subtilty of their perception and body, they know the seeds of things which to us are more hidden, and scatter them secretly through fit temperings of the elements, and so furnish opportunities of producing things, and of accelerating their increase. But neither do the good angels do these things, except as far as God commands, nor do the evil ones do them wrongfully, except as far as He righteously permits. For the malignity of the wicked one makes his own will wrongful; but the power to do so, he receives rightfully, whether for his own punishment, or, in the case of others, for the punishment of the wicked, or for the praise of the good.

14. Accordingly, the Apostle Paul, distinguishing God’s creating and forming within, from the operations of the creature which are applied from without, and drawing a similitude from agriculture, says, “I planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” As, therefore, in the case of spiritual life itself, no one except God can work righteousness in our minds, yet men also are able to preach the gospel as an outward means, not only the good in sincerity, but also the evil in pretence; so in the creation of visible things it is God that works from within; but the exterior operations, whether of good or bad, of angels or men, or even of any kind of animal, according to His own absolute power, and to the distribution of faculties, and the several appetites for things pleasant, which He Himself has imparted, are applied by Him to that nature of things wherein He creates all things, in like manner as agriculture is to the soil. Wherefore I can no more call the bad angels, evoked by magic arts, the creators of the frogs and serpents, than I can say that bad men were creators of the corn crop, which I see to have sprung up through their labor.

15. Just as Jacob, again, was not the creator of the colors in the flocks, because he placed the various colored rods for the several mothers, as they drank, to look at in conceiving. Yet neither were the cattle themselves creators of the variety of their own offspring, because the variegated image, impressed through their eyes by the sight of the varied rods, clave to their soul, but could affect the body that was animated by the spirit thus affected only through sympathy with this commingling, so far as to stain with color the tender beginnings of their offspring. For that they are so affected from themselves, whether the soul from the body, or the body from the soul, arises in truth from suitable reasons, which immutably exist in that highest wisdom of God Himself, which no extent of place contains; and which, while it is itself unchangeable, yet quits not one even of those things which are changeable, because there is not one of them that is not created by itself. For it was the unchangeable and invisible reason of the wisdom of God, by which all things are created, which caused not rods, but cattle, to be born from cattle; but that the color of the cattle conceived should be in any degree influenced by the variety of the rods, came to pass through the soul of the pregnant cattle being affected through their eyes from without, and so according to its own measure drawing inwardly within itself the rule of

formation, which it received from the innermost power of its own Creator. How great, however, may be the power of the soul in affecting and changing corporeal substance (although certainly it cannot be called the creator of the body, because every cause of changeable and sensible substance, and all its measure and number and weight, by which are brought to pass both its being at all and its being of such and such a nature, arise from the intelligible and unchangeable life, which is above all things, and which reaches even to the most distant and earthly things), is a very copious subject, and one not now necessary. But I thought the act of Jacob about the cattle should be noticed, for this reason, viz. in order that it might be perceived that, if the man who thus placed those rods cannot be called the creator of the colors in the lambs and kids; nor yet even the souls themselves of the mothers, which colored the seeds conceived in the flesh by the image of variegated color, conceived through the eyes of the body, so far as nature permitted it; much less can it be said that the creators of the frogs and serpents were the bad angels, through whom the magicians of Pharaoh then made them.

CHAPTER 9

THE ORIGINAL CAUSE OF ALL THINGS IS FROM GOD

16. For it is one thing to make and administer the creature from the innermost and highest turning-point of causation, which He alone does who is God the Creator; but quite another thing to apply some operation from without in proportion to the strength and faculties assigned to each by Him, so that what is created may come forth into being at this time or at that, and in this or that way. For all these things in the way of original and beginning have already been created in a kind of texture of the elements, but they come forth when they get the opportunity. For as mothers are pregnant with young, so the world itself is pregnant with the causes of things that are born; which are not created in it, except from that highest essence, where nothing either springs up or dies, either begins to be or ceases. But the applying from without of adventitious causes, which, although they are not natural, yet are to be applied according to nature, in order that those things which are contained and hidden in the secret bosom of nature may break forth and be outwardly created in some way by the unfolding of the proper

measures and numbers and weights which they have received in secret from Him "who has ordered all things in measure and number and weight:" this is not only in the power of bad angels, but also of bad men, as I have shown above by the example of agriculture.

17. But lest the somewhat different condition of animals should trouble any one, in that they have the breath of life with the sense of desiring those things that are according to nature, and of avoiding those things that are contrary to it; we must consider also, how many men there are who know from what herbs or flesh, or from what juices or liquids you please, of whatever sort, whether so placed or so buried, or so bruised or so mixed, this or that animal is commonly born; yet who can be so foolish as to dare to call himself the creator of these animals? Is it, therefore, to be wondered at, if just as any, the most worthless of men, can know whence such or such worms and flies are produced; so the evil angels in proportion to the subtlety of their perceptions discern in the more hidden seeds of the elements whence frogs and serpents are produced, and so through certain and known opportune combinations applying these seeds by secret movements, cause them to be created, but do not create them? Only men do not marvel at those things that are usually done by men. But if any one chance to wonder at the quickness of those growths, in that those living beings were so quickly made, let him consider how even this may be brought about by men in proportion to the measure of human capability. For whence is it that the same bodies generate worms more quickly in summer than in winter, or in hotter than in colder places? Only these things are applied by men with so much the more difficulty, in proportion as their earthly and sluggish members are wanting in subtlety of perception, and in rapidity of bodily motion. And hence it arises that in the case of any kind of angels, in proportion as it is easier for them to draw out the proximate causes from the elements, so much the more marvellous is their rapidity in works of this kind.

18. But He only is the creator who is the chief former of these things. Neither can any one be this, unless He with whom primarily rests the measure, number, and weight of all things existing; and He is God the one Creator, by whose unspeakable power it comes to pass, also, that what these

angels were able to do if they were permitted, they are therefore not able to do because they are not permitted. For there is no other reason why they who made frogs and serpents were not able to make the most minute flies, unless because the greater power of God was present prohibiting them, through the Holy Spirit; which even the magicians themselves confessed, saying, “This is the finger of God.” But what they are able to do by nature, yet cannot do, because they are prohibited; and what the very condition of their nature itself does not suffer them to do; it is difficult, nay, impossible, for man to search out, unless through that gift of God which the apostle mentions when he says, “To another the discerning of spirits.” For we know that a man can walk, yet that he cannot do so if he is not permitted; but that he cannot fly, even if he be permitted. So those angels, also, are able to do certain things if they are permitted by more powerful angels, according to the supreme commandment of God; but cannot do certain other things, not even if they are permitted by them; because He does not permit from whom they have received such and such a measure of natural powers: who, even by His angels, does not usually permit what He has given them power to be able to do.

19. Excepting, therefore, those corporeal things which are done in the order of nature in a perfectly usual series of times, as e.g., the rising and setting of the stars, the generations and deaths of animals, the innumerable diversities of seeds and buds, the vapors and the clouds, the snow and the rain, the lightnings and the thunder, the thunderbolts and the hail, the winds and the fire, cold and heat, and all like things; excepting also those which in the same order of nature occur rarely, such as eclipses, unusual appearances of stars, and monsters, and earthquakes, and such like;—all these, I say, are to be excepted, of which indeed the first and chief cause is only the will of God; whence also in the Psalm, when some things of this kind had been mentioned, “Fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind,” lest any one should think those to be brought about either by chance or only from corporeal causes, or even from such as are spiritual, but exist apart from the will of God, it is added immediately, “fulfilling His word.”

CHAPTER 10

IN HOW MANY WAYS THE CREATURE IS TO BE TAKEN BY WAY OF SIGN. THE EUCHARIST

Excepting, therefore, all these things as I just now said, there are some also of another kind; which, although from the same corporeal substance, are yet brought within reach of our senses in order to announce something from God, and these are properly called miracles and signs; yet is not the person of God Himself assumed in all things which are announced to us by the Lord God. When, however, that person is assumed, it is sometimes made manifest as an angel; sometimes in that form which is not an angel in his own proper being, although it is ordered and ministered by an angel. Again, when it is assumed in that form which is not an angel in his own proper being; sometimes in this case it is a body itself already existing, assumed after some kind of change, in order to make that message manifest; sometimes it is one that comes into being for the purpose, and that being accomplished, is discarded. Just as, also, when men are the messengers, sometimes they speak the words of God in their own person, as when it is premised, “The Lord said,” or, “Thus saith the Lord,” or any other such phrase, but sometimes without any such prefix, they take upon themselves the very person of God, as e.g.: “I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way wherein thou shalt go:” so, not only in word, but also in act, the signifying of the person of God is imposed upon the prophet, in order that he may bear that person in the ministering of the prophecy; just as he, for instance, bore that person who divided his garment into twelve parts, and gave ten of them to the servant of King Solomon, to the future king of Israel. Sometimes, also, a thing which was not a prophet in his own proper self, and which existed already among earthly things, was assumed in order to signify this; as Jacob, when he had seen the dream, upon waking up did with the stone, which when asleep he had under his head. Sometimes a thing is made in the same kind, for the mere purpose; so as either to continue a little while in existence, as that brazen serpent was able to do which was lifted up in the wilderness, and as written records are able to do likewise; or so as to pass away after having accomplished its ministry, as the bread made for the purpose is consumed in the receiving of the sacrament.

20. But because these things are known to men, in that they are done by men, they may well meet with reverence as being holy things, but they cannot cause wonder as being miracles. And therefore those things which are done by angels are the more wonderful to us, in that they are more difficult and more known; but they are known and easy to them as being their own actions. An angel speaks in the person of God to man, saying, “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;” the Scripture having said just before, “The angel of the Lord appeared to him.” And a man also speaks in the person of God, saying, “Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee, O Israel: I am the Lord thy God.” A rod was taken to serve as a sign, and was changed into a serpent by angelical power; but although that power is wanting to man, yet a stone was taken also by man for a similar sign. There is a wide difference between the deed of the angel and the deed of the man. The former is both to be wondered at and to be understood, the latter only to be understood. That which is understood from both, is perhaps one and the same; but those things from which it is understood, are different. Just as if the name of God were written both in gold and in ink; the former would be the more precious, the latter the more worthless; yet that which is signified in both is one and the same. And although the serpent that came from Moses’ rod signified the same thing as Jacob’s stone, yet Jacob’s stone signified something better than did the serpents of the magicians. For as the anointing of the stone signified Christ in the flesh, in which He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows; so the rod of Moses, turned into a serpent, signified Christ Himself made obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Whence it is said, “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;” just as by gazing on that serpent which was lifted up in the wilderness, they did not perish by the bites of the serpents. For “our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.” For by the serpent death is understood, which was wrought by the serpent in paradise, the mode of speech expressing the effect by the efficient. Therefore the rod passed into the serpent, Christ into death; and the serpent again into the rod, whole Christ with His body into the resurrection; which body is the Church; and this shall be in the end of time, signified by the tail, which Moses held, in order that it might return into a rod. But the serpents

of the magicians, like those who are dead in the world, unless by believing in Christ they shall have been as it were swallowed up by, and have entered into, His body, will not be able to rise again in Him. Jacob's stone, therefore, as I said, signified something better than did the serpents of the magicians; yet the deed of the magicians was much more wonderful. But these things in this way are no hindrance to the understanding of the matter; just as if the name of a man were written in gold, and that of God in ink.

21. What man, again, knows how the angels made or took those clouds and fires in order to signify the message they were bearing, even if we supposed that the Lord or the Holy Spirit was manifested in those corporeal forms? Just as infants do not know of that which is placed upon the altar and consumed after the performance of the holy celebration, whence or in what manner it is made, or whence it is taken for religious use. And if they were never to learn from their own experience or that of others, and never to see that species of thing except during the celebration of the sacrament, when it is being offered and given; and if it were told them by the most weighty authority whose body and blood it is; they will believe nothing else, except that the Lord absolutely appeared in this form to the eyes of mortals, and that that liquid actually flowed from the piercing of a side which resembled this. But it is certainly a useful caution to myself, that I should remember what my own powers are, and admonish my brethren that they also remember what theirs are, lest human infirmity pass on beyond what is safe. For how the angels do these things, or rather, how God does these things by His angels, and how far He wills them to be done even by the bad angels, whether by permitting, or commanding, or compelling, from the hidden seat of His own supreme power; this I can neither penetrate by the sight of the eyes, nor make clear by assurance of reason, nor be carried on to comprehend it by reach of intellect, so as to speak thereupon to all questions that may be asked respecting these matters, as certainly as if I were an angel, or a prophet, or an apostle. "For the thoughts of mortal men are miserable, and our devices are but uncertain. For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind, that museth upon many things. And hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth, and with labor do we find the things that are before us; but the things that are in heaven, who hath searched out?" But because it goes

on to say, “And Thy counsel who hath known, except Thou give wisdom, and send Thy Holy Spirit from above;” therefore we refrain indeed from searching out the things which are in heaven, under which kind are contained both angelical bodies according to their proper dignity, and any corporeal action of those bodies; yet, according to the Spirit of God sent to us from above, and to His grace imparted to our minds, I dare to say confidently, that neither God the Father, nor His Word, nor His Spirit, which is the one God, is in any way changeable in regard to that which He is, and whereby He is that which He is; and much less is in this regard visible. Since there are no doubt some things changeable, yet not visible, as are our thoughts, and memories, and wills, and the whole incorporeal creature; but there is nothing that is visible that is not also changeable.

CHAPTER 11

THE ESSENCE OF GOD NEVER APPEARED IN ITSELF. DIVINE APPEARANCES TO THE FATHERS WROUGHT BY THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS. AN OBJECTION DRAWN FROM THE MODE OF SPEECH REMOVED. THAT THE APPEARING OF GOD TO ABRAHAM HIMSELF, JUST AS THAT TO MOSES, WAS WROUGHT BY ANGELS. THE SAME THING IS PROVED BY THE LAW BEING GIVEN TO MOSES BY ANGELS. WHAT HAS BEEN SAID IN THIS BOOK, AND WHAT REMAINS TO BE SAID IN THE NEXT

Wherefore the substance, or, if it is better so to say, the essence of God, wherein we understand, in proportion to our measure, in however small a degree, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, since it is in no way changeable, can in no way in its proper self be visible.

22. It is manifest, accordingly, that all those appearances to the fathers, when God was presented to them according to His own dispensation, suitable to the times, were wrought through the creature. And if we cannot discern in what manner He wrought them by ministry of angels, yet we say that they were wrought by angels; but not from our own power of discernment, lest we should seem to any one to be wise beyond our measure, whereas we are wise so as to think soberly, as God hath dealt to us the measure of faith; and we believe, and therefore speak. For the authority is extant of the divine Scriptures, from which our reason ought not to turn aside; nor by leaving the solid support of the divine utterance, to fall headlong over the precipice of its own surmisings, in matters wherein

neither the perceptions of the body rule, nor the clear reason of the truth shines forth. Now, certainly, it is written most clearly in the Epistle to the Hebrews, when the dispensation of the New Testament was to be distinguished from the dispensation of the Old, according to the fitness of ages and of times, that not only those visible things, but also the word itself, was wrought by angels. For it is said thus: “But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Whence it appears that all those things were not only wrought by angels, but wrought also on our account, that is, on account of the people of God, to whom is promised the inheritance of eternal life. As it is written also to the Corinthians, “Now all these things happened unto them in a figure: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” And then, demonstrating by plain consequence that as at that time the word was spoken by the angels, so now by the Son; “Therefore,” he says, “we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” And then, as though you asked, What salvation?—in order to show that he is now speaking of the New Testament, that is, of the word which was spoken not by angels, but by the Lord, he says, “Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will.”

23. But some one may say, Why then is it written, “The Lord said to Moses;” and not, rather, The angel said to Moses? Because, when the crier proclaims the words of the judge, it is not usually written in the record, so and so the crier said, but so and so the judge. In like manner also, when the holy prophet speaks, although we say, The prophet said, we mean nothing else to be understood than that the Lord said; and if we were to say, The Lord said, we should not put the prophet aside, but only intimate who spake by him. And, indeed, these Scriptures often reveal the angel to be the Lord, of whose speaking it is from time to time said, “the Lord said,” as we have

shown already. But on account of those who, since the Scripture in that place specifies an angel, will have the Son of God Himself and in Himself to be understood, because He is called an angel by the prophet, as announcing the will of His Father and of Himself; I have therefore thought fit to produce a plainer testimony from this epistle, where it is not said by an angel, but "by angels."

24. For Stephen, too, in the Acts of the Apostles, relates these things in that manner in which they are also written in the Old Testament: "Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken," he says; "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia." But lest any one should think that the God of glory appeared then to the eyes of any mortal in that which He is in Himself, he goes on to say that an angel appeared to Moses. "Then fled Moses," he says, "at that saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons. And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet," etc. Here, certainly, he speaks both of angel and of Lord; and of the same as the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; as is written in Genesis.

25. Can there be any one who will say that the Lord appeared to Moses by an angel, but to Abraham by Himself? Let us not answer this question from Stephen, but from the book itself, whence Stephen took his narrative. For, pray, because it is written, "And the Lord God said unto Abraham;" and a little after, "And the Lord God appeared unto Abraham;" were these things, for this reason, not done by angels? Whereas it is said in like manner in another place, "And the Lord appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;" and yet it is added immediately, "And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him:" of whom we have already spoken. For how will these people, who either will not rise from the words to the meaning, or easily throw themselves down

from the meaning to the words,—how, I say, will they be able to explain that God was seen in three men, except they confess that they were angels, as that which follows also shows? Because it is not said an angel spoke or appeared to him, will they therefore venture to say that the vision and voice granted to Moses was wrought by an angel because it is so written, but that God appeared and spake in His own substance to Abraham because there is no mention made of an angel? What of the fact, that even in respect to Abraham an angel is not left unmentioned? For when his son was ordered to be offered up as a sacrifice, we read thus: "And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains that I will tell thee of." Certainly God is here mentioned, not an angel. But a little afterwards Scripture hath it thus: "And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him." What can be answered to this? Will they say that God commanded that Isaac should be slain, and that an angel forbade it? and further, that the father himself, in opposition to the decree of God, who had commanded that he should be slain, obeyed the angel, who had bidden him spare him? Such an interpretation is to be rejected as absurd. Yet not even for it, gross and abject as it is, does Scripture leave any room, for it immediately adds: "For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, on account of me." What is "on account of me," except on account of Him who had commanded him to be slain? Was then the God of Abraham the same as the angel, or was it not rather God by an angel? Consider what follows. Here, certainly, already an angel has been most clearly spoken of; yet notice the context: "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place, The Lord saw: as it is said to this day, In the mount the Lord was seen." Just as that which a little before God said by an angel, "For now I know that thou fearest God;" not because it was to be understood that God then came to know, but that He brought it to pass that through God Abraham himself came to know what strength of heart he had to obey God, even to the sacrificing of his only son: after that mode of speech in which the effect is signified by the efficient,—as cold is said to be sluggish, because it makes men sluggish; so that He was therefore said to know, because He had made Abraham himself to know, who might well have not discerned the firmness of his own faith, had it not been proved by such a trial. So here, too, Abraham called the name of the place "The Lord saw," that is, caused Himself to be seen. For he goes on immediately to say, "As it is said to this day, In the mount the Lord was seen." Here you see the same angel is called Lord: wherefore, unless because the Lord spake by the angel? But if we pass on to that which follows, the angel altogether speaks as a prophet, and reveals expressly that God is speaking by the angel. "And the angel of the Lord," he says, "called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself I have sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, on account of me," etc. Certainly these words, viz. that he by whom the Lord speaks should say, "Thus saith the Lord," are commonly used by the prophets also. Does the Son of God say of the Father, "The Lord saith," while He Himself is that Angel of the Father? What then? Do they not see how hard pressed they are about these three men who appeared to Abraham, when it had been said before, "The Lord appeared to him?" Were they not angels because they are called men? Let them read Daniel, saying, "Behold the man Gabriel."

26. But why do we delay any longer to stop their mouths by another most clear and most weighty proof, where not an angel in the singular nor men in the plural are spoken of, but simply angels; by whom not any particular word was wrought, but the Law itself is most distinctly declared to be given; which certainly none of the faithful doubts that God gave to Moses for the control of the children of Israel, or yet, that it was given by angels. So Stephen speaks: "Ye stiff-necked," he says, "and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the Law by

the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.” What is more evident than this? What more strong than such an authority? The Law, indeed, was given to that people by the disposition of angels; but the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ was by it prepared and pre-announced; and He Himself, as the Word of God, was in some wonderful and unspeakable manner in the angels, by whose disposition the Law itself was given. And hence He said in the Gospel, “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me.” Therefore then the Lord was speaking by the angels; and the son of God, who was to be the Mediator of God and men, from the seed of Abraham, was preparing His own advent by the angels, that He might find some by whom He would be received, confessing themselves guilty, whom the Law unfulfilled had made transgressors. And hence the apostle also says to the Galatians, “Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made, which [seed] was ordered through angels in the hand of a mediator;” that is, ordered through angels in His own hand. For He was not born in limitation, but in power. But you learn in another place that he does not mean any one of the angels as a mediator, but the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in so far as He deigned to be made man: “For there is one God,” he says, “and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” Hence that passover in the killing of the lamb: hence all those things which are figuratively spoken in the Law, of Christ to come in the flesh, and to suffer, but also to rise again, which Law was given by the disposition of angels; in which angels, were certainly the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and in which, sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, sometimes the Holy Spirit, and sometimes God, without any distinction of person, was figuratively signified by them, although appearing in visible and sensible forms, yet by His own creature, not by His substance, in order to the seeing of which, hearts are cleansed through all those things which are seen by the eyes and heard by the ears.

27. But now, as I think, that which we had undertaken to show in this book has been sufficiently discussed and demonstrated, according to our capacity; and it has been established, both by probable reason, so far as a man, or rather, so far as I am able, and by strength of authority, so far as the divine declarations from the Holy Scriptures have been made clear, that

those words and bodily appearances which were given to these ancient fathers of ours before the incarnation of the Saviour, when God was said to appear, were wrought by angels: whether themselves speaking or doing something in the person of God, as we have shown that the prophets also were wont to do, or assuming from the creature that which they themselves were not, wherein God might be shown in a figure to men; which manner of showing also, Scripture teaches by many examples, that the prophets, too, did not omit. It remains, therefore, now for us to consider,—since both in the Lord as born of a virgin, and in the Holy Spirit descending in a corporeal form like a dove, and in the tongues like as of fire, which appeared with a sound from heaven on the day of Pentecost, after the ascension of the Lord, it was not the Word of God Himself by His own substance, in which He is equal and eternal with the Father, nor the Spirit of the Father and of the Son by His own substance, in which He Himself also is equal and co-eternal with both, but assuredly a creature, such as could be formed and exist in these fashions, which appeared to corporeal and mortal senses,—it remains, I say, to consider what difference there is between these manifestations and those which were proper to the Son of God and to the Holy Spirit, although wrought by the visible creature; which subject we shall more conveniently begin in another book.

Book IV

Explains for what the Son of God was sent, viz, that by Christ's dying for sinners, we were to be convinced how great is God's love for us, and also what manner of men we are whom He loved. That the Word came in the flesh, to the purpose also of enabling us to be so cleansed as to contemplate and cleave to God. That our double death was abolished by His death, being one and single. And hereupon is discussed, how the single of our Saviour harmonizes to salvation with our double; and the perfection is treated at length of the senary number, to which the ratio itself of single to double is reducible. That all are gathered together from many into one by the one Mediator of life, viz. Christ, through Whom alone is wrought the true cleansing of the soul. Further it is demonstrated that the Son of God, although made less by being sent, on account of the form of a servant which He took, is not therefore less than the Father according to the form of God, because He was sent by Himself: and that the same account is to be given of the sending of the Holy Spirit.

PREFACE

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS TO BE SOUGHT FROM GOD

1. Theknowledge of things terrestrial and celestial is commonly thought much of by men. Yet those doubtless judge better who prefer to that knowledge, the knowledge of themselves; and that mind is more praiseworthy which knows even its own weakness, than that which, without regard to this, searches out, and even comes to know, the ways of the stars, or which holds fast such knowledge already acquired, while ignorant of the way by which itself to enter into its own proper health and strength. But if any one has already become awake towards God, kindled by the warmth of the Holy Spirit, and in the love of God has become vile in his own eyes; and through wishing, yet not having strength to come in unto Him, and through the light He gives, has given heed to himself, and has found himself, and has learned that his own filthiness cannot mingle with His purity; and feels

it sweet to weep and to entreat Him, that again and again He will have compassion, until he have put off all his wretchedness; and to pray confidently, as having already received of free gift the pledge of salvation through his only Saviour and Enlightener of man:—such an one, so acting, and so lamenting, knowledge does not puff up, because charity edifieth; for he has preferred knowledge to knowledge, he has preferred to know his own weakness, rather than to know the walls of the world, the foundations of the earth, and the pinnacles of heaven. And by obtaining this knowledge, he has obtained also sorrow; but sorrow for straying away from the desire of reaching his own proper country, and the Creator of it, his own blessed God. And if among men such as these, in the family of Thy Christ, O Lord my God, I groan among Thy poor, give me out of Thy bread to answer men who do not hunger and thirst after righteousness, but are sated and abound. But it is the vain image of those things that has sated them, not Thy truth, which they have repelled and shrunk from, and so fall into their own vanity. I certainly know how many figments the human heart gives birth to. And what is my own heart but a human heart? But I pray the God of my heart, that I may not vomit forth (eructuem) into these writings any of these figments for solid truths, but that there may pass into them only what the breath of His truth has breathed into me; cast out though I am from the sight of His eyes, and striving from afar to return by the way which the divinity of His only-begotten Son has made by His humanity. And this truth, changeable though I am, I so far drink in, as far as in it I see nothing changeable: neither in place and time, as is the case with bodies; nor in time alone, and in a certain sense place, as with the thoughts of our own spirits; nor in time alone, and not even in any semblance of place, as with some of the reasonings of our own minds. For the essence of God, whereby He is, has altogether nothing changeable, neither in eternity, nor in truth, nor in will; since there truth is eternal, love eternal; and there love is true, eternity true; and there eternity is loved, and truth is loved.

CHAPTER 1

WE ARE MADE PERFECT BY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OUR OWN WEAKNESS. THE INCARNATE WORD DISPELS OUR DARKNESS

2. But since we are exiled from the unchangeable joy, yet neither cut off nor torn away from it so that we should not seek eternity, truth, blessedness, even in those changeable and temporal things (for we wish neither to die, nor to be deceived, nor to be troubled); visions have been sent to us from heaven suitable to our state of pilgrimage, in order to remind us that what we seek is not here, but that from this pilgrimage we must return thither, whence unless we originated we should not here seek these things. And first we have had to be persuaded how much God loved us, lest from despair we should not dare to look up to Him. And we needed to be shown also what manner of men we are whom He loved, lest being proud, as if of our own merits, we should recede the more from Him, and fail the more in our own strength. And hence He so dealt with us, that we might the rather profit by His strength, and that so in the weakness of humility the virtue of charity might be perfected. And this is intimated in the Psalm, where it is said, "Thou, O God, didst send a spontaneous rain, whereby Thou didst make Thine inheritance perfect, when it was weary." For by "spontaneous rain" nothing else is meant than grace, not rendered to merit, but given freely, whence also it is called grace; for He gave it, not because we were worthy, but because He willed. And knowing this, we shall not trust in ourselves; and this is to be made "weak." But He Himself makes us perfect, who says also to the Apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Man, then, was to be persuaded how much God loved us, and what manner of men we were whom He loved; the former, lest we should despair; the latter, lest we should be proud. And this most necessary topic the apostle thus explains: "But God commendeth," he says, "His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Also in another place: "What," he says, "shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how has He not with Him also freely given us all things?" Now that which is declared to us as already done, was shown also to the ancient righteous as about to be done; that through the same faith they themselves also might be humbled, and so made weak; and might be made weak, and so perfected.

3. Because therefore the Word of God is One, by which all things were made, which is the unchangeable truth, all things are simultaneously therein, potentially and unchangeably; not only those things which are now in this whole creation, but also those which have been and those which shall be. And therein they neither have been, nor shall be, but only are; and all things are life, and all things are one; or rather it is one being and one life. For all things were so made by Him, that whatsoever was made in them was not made in Him, but was life in Him. Since, "in the beginning," the Word was not made, but "the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and all things were made by Him;" neither had all things been made by Him, unless He had Himself been before all things and not made. But in those things which were made by Him, even body, which is not life, would not have been made by Him, except it had been life in Him before it was made. For "that which was made was already life in Him;" and not life of any kind soever: for the soul also is the life of the body, but this too is made, for it is changeable; and by what was it made, except by the unchangeable Word of God? For "all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." "What, therefore, was made was already life in Him;" and not any kind of life, but "the life [which] was the light of men;" the light certainly of rational minds, by which men differ from beasts, and therefore are men. Therefore not corporeal light, which is the light of the flesh, whether it shine from heaven, or whether it be lighted by earthly fires; nor that of human flesh only, but also that of beasts, and down even to the minutest of worms. For all these things see that light: but that life was the light of men; nor is it far from any one of us, for in it "we live, and move, and have our being."

CHAPTER 2

HOW WE ARE RENDERED APT FOR THE PERCEPTION OF TRUTH THROUGH THE INCARNATE WORD

4. But "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." Now the "darkness" is the foolish minds of men, made blind by vicious desires and unbelief. And that the Word, by whom all things were made, might care for these and heal them, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." For our enlightening is the partaking of the Word,

namely, of that life which is the light of men. But for this partaking we were utterly unfit, and fell short of it, on account of the uncleanness of sins. Therefore we were to be cleansed. And further, the one cleansing of the unrighteous and of the proud is the blood of the Righteous One, and the humbling of God Himself; that we might be cleansed through Him, made as He was what we are by nature, and what we are not by sin, that we might contemplate God, which by nature we are not. For by nature we are not God: by nature we are men, by sin we are not righteous. Wherefore God, made a righteous man, interceded with God for man the sinner. For the sinner is not congruous to the righteous, but man is congruous to man. By joining therefore to us the likeness of His humanity, He took away the unlikeness of our unrighteousness; and by being made partaker of our mortality, He made us partakers of His divinity. For the death of the sinner springing from the necessity of comdemnation is deservedly abolished by the death of the Righteous One springing from the free choice of His compassion, while His single [death and resurrection] answers to our double [death and resurrection]. For this congruity, or suitableness, or concord, or consonance, or whatever more appropriate word there may be, whereby one is [united] to two, is of great weight in all compacting, or better, perhaps, co-adaptation, of the creature. For (as it just occurs to me) what I mean is precisely that co-adaptation which the Greeks call harmonia. However this is not the place to set forth the power of that consonance of single to double which is found especially in us, and which is naturally so implanted in us (and by whom, except by Him who created us?), that not even the ignorant can fail to perceive it, whether when singing themselves or hearing others. For by this it is that treble and bass voices are in harmony, so that any one who in his note departs from it, offends extremely, not only trained skill, of which the most part of men are devoid, but the very sense of hearing. To demonstrate this, needs no doubt a long discourse; but any one who knows it, may make it plain to the very ear in a rightly ordered monochord.

CHAPTER 3

THE ONE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF THE BODY OF CHRIST HARMONIZES WITH OUR DOUBLE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF BODY AND SOUL, TO THE EFFECT OF SALVATION. IN WHAT WAY THE SINGLE DEATH OF CHRIST IS BESTOWED UPON OUR DOUBLE DEATH

5. But for our present need we must discuss, so far as God gives us power, in what manner the single of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ answers to, and is, so to say, in harmony with our double to the effect of salvation. We certainly, as no Christian doubts, are dead both in soul and body: in soul, because of sin; in body, because of the punishment of sin, and through this also in body because of sin. And to both these parts of ourselves, that is, both to soul and to body, there was need both of a medicine and of resurrection, that what had been changed for the worse might be renewed for the better. Now the death of the soul is ungodliness, and the death of the body is corruptibility, through which comes also a departure of the soul from the body. For as the soul dies when God leaves it, so the body dies when the soul leaves it; whereby the former becomes foolish, the latter lifeless. For the soul is raised up again by repentance, and the renewing of life is begun in the body still mortal by faith, by which men believe on Him who justifies the ungodly; and it is increased and strengthened by good habits from day to day, as the inner man is renewed more and more. But the body, being as it were the outward man, the longer this life lasts is so much the more corrupted, either by age or by disease, or by various afflictions, until it come to that last affliction which all call death. And its resurrection is delayed until the end; when also our justification itself shall be perfected ineffably. For then we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. But now, so long as the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and human life upon earth is all temptation, in His sight shall no man living be justified, in comparison of the righteousness in which we shall be made equal with the angels, and of the glory which shall be revealed in us. But why mention more proofs respecting the difference between the death of the soul and the death of the body, when the Lord in one sentence of the Gospel has made either death easily distinguishable by any one from the other, where He says, “Let the dead bury their dead”? For burial was the fitting disposal of a dead body. But by those who were to bury it He meant those who were dead

in soul by the impiety of unbelief, such, namely, as are awakened when it is said, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” And there is a death which the apostle denounces, saying of the widow, “But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.” Therefore the soul, which was before ungodly and is now godly, is said to have come alive again from the dead and to live, on account of the righteousness of faith. But the body is not only said to be about to die, on account of that departure of the soul which will be; but on account of the great infirmity of flesh and blood it is even said to be now dead, in a certain place in the Scriptures, namely, where the apostle says, that “the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness.” Now this life is wrought by faith, “since the just shall live by faith.” But what follows? “But if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit which dwelleth in you.”

6. Therefore on this double death of ours our Saviour bestowed His own single death; and to cause both our resurrections, He appointed beforehand and set forth in mystery and type His own one resurrection. For He was not a sinner or ungodly, that, as though dead in spirit, He should need to be renewed in the inner man, and to be recalled as it were to the life of righteousness by repentance; but being clothed in mortal flesh, and in that alone dying, in that alone rising again, in that alone did He answer to both for us; since in it was wrought a mystery as regards the inner man, and a type as regards the outer. For it was in a mystery as regards our inner man, so as to signify the death of our soul, that those words were uttered, not only in the Psalm, but also on the cross: “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” To which words the apostle agrees, saying, “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin;” since by the crucifixion of the inner man are understood the pains of repentance, and a certain wholesome agony of self-control, by which death the death of ungodliness is destroyed, and in which death God has left us. And so the body of sin is destroyed through such a cross, that now we should not yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. Because, if even the inner man certainly is renewed day by day, yet undoubtedly it is old before it is

renewed. For that is done inwardly of which the same apostle speaks: “Put off the old man, and put on the new;” which he goes on to explain by saying, “Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth.” But where is lying put away, unless inwardly, that he who speaketh the truth from his heart may inhabit the holy hill of God? But the resurrection of the body of the Lord is shown to belong to the mystery of our own inner resurrection, where, after He had risen, He says to the woman, “Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father;” with which mystery the apostle’s words agree, where he says, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; set your thoughts on things above.” For not to touch Christ, unless when He had ascended to the Father, means not to have thoughts of Christ after a fleshly manner. Again, the death of the flesh of our Lord contains a type of the death of our outer man, since it is by such suffering most of all that He exhorts His servants that they should not fear those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Wherefore the apostle says, “That I may fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh.” And the resurrection of the body of the Lord is found to contain a type of the resurrection of our outward man, because He says to His disciples, “Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” And one of the disciples also, handling His scars, exclaimed, “My Lord and my God!” And whereas the entire integrity of that flesh was apparent, this was shown in that which He had said when exhorting His disciples: “There shall not a hair of your head perish.” For how comes it that first is said, “Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father;” and how comes it that before He ascends to the Father, He actually is touched by the disciples: unless because in the former the mystery of the inner man was intimated, in the latter a type was given of the outer man? Or can any one possibly be so without understanding, and so turned away from the truth, as to dare to say that He was touched by men before He ascended, but by women when He had ascended? It was on account of this type, which went before in the Lord, of our future resurrection in the body, that the apostle says, “Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s.” For it was the resurrection of the body to which this place refers, on account of which he also says, “Who has changed our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.” The one death therefore of our Saviour brought salvation to our double death, and His one resurrection wrought for us two resurrections; since His body in both cases, that is, both in His death and in His resurrection, was ministered to us by a kind of healing suitableness, both as a mystery of the inner man, and as a type of the outer.

CHAPTER 4

THE RATIO OF THE SINGLE TO THE DOUBLE COMES FROM THE PERFECTION OF THE SENARY NUMBER. THE PERFECTION OF THE SENARY NUMBER IS COMMENDED IN THE SCRIPTURES. THE YEAR ABOUNDS IN THE SENARY NUMBER

7. Now this ratio of the single to the double arises, no doubt, from the ternary number, since one added to two makes three; but the whole which these make reaches to the senary, for one and two and three make six. And this number is on that account called perfect, because it is completed in its own parts: for it has these three, sixth, third, and half; nor is there any other part found in it, which we can call an aliquot part. The sixth part of it, then, is one; the third part, two; the half, three. But one and two and three complete the same six. And Holy Scripture commends to us the perfection of this number, especially in this, that God finished His works in six days, and on the sixth day man was made in the image of God. And the Son of God came and was made the Son of man, that He might re-create us after the image of God, in the sixth age of the human race. For that is now the present age, whether a thousand years apiece are assigned to each age, or whether we trace out memorable and remarkable epochs or turning-points of time in the divine Scriptures, so that the first age is to be found from Adam until Noah, and the second thence onwards to Abraham, and then next, after the division of Matthew the evangelist, from Abraham to David, from David to the carrying away to Babylon, and from thence to the travail of the Virgin, which three ages joined to those other two make five. Accordingly, the nativity of the Lord began the sixth, which is now going onwards until the hidden end of time. We recognize also in this senary number a kind of figure of time, in that threefold mode of division, by which we compute one portion of time before the Law; a second, under the Law; a third, under grace. In which last time we have received the sacrament of renewal, that we may be renewed also in the end of time, in every part, by the resurrection of the flesh, and so may be made whole from

our entire infirmity, not only of soul, but also of body. And thence that woman is understood to be a type of the church, who was made whole and upright by the Lord, after she had been bowed by infirmity through the binding of Satan. For those words of the Psalm lament such hidden enemies: “They bowed down my soul.” And this woman had her infirmity eighteen years, which is thrice six. And the months of eighteen years are found in number to be the cube of six, viz. six times six times six. Nearly, too, in the same place in the Gospel is that fig tree, which was convicted also by the third year of its miserable barrenness. But intercession was made for it, that it might be let alone that year, that year, that if it bore fruit, well; if otherwise, it should be cut down. For both three years belong to the same threefold division, and the months of three years make the square of six, which is six times six.

8. A single year also, if the whole twelve months are taken into account, which are made up of thirty days each (for the month that has been kept from of old is that which the revolution of the moon determines), abounds in the number six. For that which six is, in the first order of numbers, which consists of units up to ten, that sixty is in the second order, which consists of tens up to a hundred. Sixty days, then, are a sixth part of the year. Further, if that which stands as the sixth of the second order is multiplied by the sixth of the first order, then we make six times sixty, i.e. three hundred and sixty days, which are the whole twelve months. But since, as the revolution of the moon determines the month for men, so the year is marked by the revolution of the sun; and five days and a quarter of a day remain, that the sun may fulfill its course and end the year; for four quarters make one day, which must be intercalated in every fourth year, which they call bissextile, that the order of time may not be disturbed: if we consider, also, these five days and a quarter themselves, the number six prevails in them. First, because, as it is usual to compute the whole from a part, we must not call it five days, but rather six, taking the quarter days for one day. Next, because five days themselves are the sixth part of a month; while the quarter of a day contains six hours. For the entire day, i.e. including its night, is twenty-four hours, of which the fourth part, which is a quarter of a day, is found to be six hours. So much in the course of the year does the sixth number prevail.

CHAPTER 5

THE NUMBER SIX IS ALSO COMMENDED IN THE BUILDING UP OF THE BODY OF CHRIST AND OF THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM

9. And not without reason is the number six understood to be put for a year in the building up of the body of the Lord, as a figure of which He said that He would raise up in three days the temple destroyed by the Jews. For they said, “Forty and six years was this temple in building.” And six times forty-six makes two hundred and seventy-six. And this number of days completes nine months and six days, which are reckoned, as it were, ten months for the travail of women; not because all come to the sixth day after the ninth month, but because the perfection itself of the body of the Lord is found to have been brought in so many days to the birth, as the authority of the church maintains upon the tradition of the elders. For He is believed to have been conceived on the 25th of March, upon which day also He suffered; so the womb of the Virgin, in which He was conceived, where no one of mortals was begotten, corresponds to the new grave in which He was buried, wherein was never man laid, neither before nor since. But He was born, according to tradition, upon December the 25th. If, then you reckon from that day to this you find two hundred and seventy-six days which is forty-six times six. And in this number of years the temple was built, because in that number of sixes the body of the Lord was perfected; which being destroyed by the suffering of death, He raised again on the third day. For “He spake this of the temple of His body,” as is declared by the most clear and solid testimony of the Gospel; where He said, “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

CHAPTER 6

THE THREE DAYS OF THE RESURRECTION, IN WHICH ALSO THE RATIO OF SINGLE TO DOUBLE IS APPARENT

10. Scripture again witnesses that the space of those three days themselves was not whole and entire, but the first day is counted as a whole from its last part, and the third day is itself also counted as a whole from its first part; but the intervening day, i.e. the second day, was absolutely a whole

with its twenty-four hours, twelve of the day and twelve of the night. For He was crucified first by the voices of the Jews in the third hour, when it was the sixth day of the week. Then He hung on the cross itself at the sixth hour, and yielded up His spirit at the ninth hour. But He was buried, “now when the even was come,” as the words of the evangelist express it; which means, at the end of the day. Wheresoever then you begin,—even if some other explanation can be given, so as not to contradict the Gospel of John, but to understand that He was suspended on the cross at the third hour,—still you cannot make the first day an entire day. It will be reckoned then an entire day from its last part, as the third from its first part. For the night up to the dawn, when the resurrection of the Lord was made known, belongs to the third day; because God (who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, that through the grace of the New Testament and the partaking of the resurrection of Christ the words might be spoken to us “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord”) intimates to us in some way that the day takes its beginning from the night. For as the first days of all were reckoned from light to night, on account of the future fall of man; so these on account of the restoration of man, are reckoned from darkness to light. From the hour, then, of His death to the dawn of the resurrection are forty hours, counting in also the ninth hour itself. And with this number agrees also His life upon earth of forty days after His resurrection. And this number is most frequently used in Scripture to express the mystery of perfection in the fourfold world. For the number ten has a certain perfection, and that multiplied by four makes forty. But from the evening of the burial to the dawn of the resurrection are thirty-six hours which is six squared. And this is referred to that ratio of the single to the double wherein there is the greatest consonance of co-adaptation. For twelve added to twenty-four suits the ratio of single added to double and makes thirty-six: namely a whole night with a whole day and a whole night, and this not without the mystery which I have noticed above. For not unfitly do we liken the spirit to the day and the body to the night. For the body of the Lord in His death and resurrection was a figure of our spirit and a type of our body. In this way, then, also that ratio of the single to the double is apparent in the thirty-six hours, when twelve are added to twenty-four. As to the reasons, indeed, why these numbers are so put in the Holy Scriptures, other people may trace out other reasons, either such that those which I have given are to be preferred to them, or such as are equally probable with mine, or even more probable than they are; but there is no one surely so foolish or so absurd as to contend that they are so put in the Scriptures for no purpose at all, and that there are no mystical reasons why those numbers are there mentioned. But those reasons which I have here given, I have either gathered from the authority of the church, according to the tradition of our forefathers, or from the testimony of the divine Scriptures, or from the nature itself of numbers and of similitudes. No sober person will decide against reason, no Christian against the Scriptures, no peaceable person against the church.

CHAPTER 7

IN WHAT MANNER WE ARE GATHERED FROM MANY INTO ONE THROUGH ONE MEDIATOR

11. This mystery, this sacrifice, this priest, this God, before He was sent and came, being made of a woman—of Him, all those things which appeared to our fathers in a sacred and mystical way by angelical miracles, or which were done by the fathers themselves, were similitudes; in order that every creature by its acts might speak in some way of that One who was to be, in whom there was to be salvation in the recovery of all from death. For because by the wickedness of ungodliness we had recoiled and fallen away in discord from the one true and supreme God, and had in many things become vain, being distracted through many things and cleaving fast to many things; it was needful, by the decree and command of God in His mercy, that those same many things should join in proclaiming the One that should come, and that One should come so proclaimed by these many things, and that these many things should join in witnessing that this One had come; and that so, freed from the burden of these many things, we should come to that One, and dead as we were in our souls by many sins, and destined to die in the flesh on account of sin, that we should love that One who, without sin, died in the flesh for us; and by believing in Him now raised again, and by rising again with Him in the spirit through faith, that we should be justified by being made one in the one righteous One; and that we should not despair of our own resurrection in the flesh itself, when we consider that the one Head had gone before us the many members; in

whom, being now cleansed through faith, and then renewed by sight, and through Him as mediator reconciled to God, we are to cleave to the One, to feast upon the One, to continue one.

CHAPTER 8

IN WHAT MANNER CHRIST WILLS THAT ALL SHALL BE ONE IN HIMSELF

12. So the Son of God Himself, the Word of God, Himself also the Mediator between God and men, the Son of man, equal to the Father through the unity of the Godhead, and partaker with us by the taking upon Him of humanity, interceding for us with the Father in that He was man, yet not concealing that He was God, one with the Father, among other things speaks thus: “Neither pray I for these alone,” He says, “but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me. And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.”

CHAPTER 9

THE SAME ARGUMENT CONTINUED

He did not say, I and they are one thing; although, in that He is the head of the church which is His body, He might have said, and they are, not one thing, but one person, because the head and the body is one Christ; but in order to show His own Godhead consubstantial with the Father (for which reason He says in another place, “I and my Father are one”), in His own kind, that is, in the consubstantial parity of the same nature, He wills His own to be one, but in Himself; since they could not be so in themselves, separated as they are one from another by divers pleasures and desires and uncleannesses of sin; whence they are cleansed through the Mediator, that they may be one in Him, not only through the same nature in which all become from mortal men equal to the angels, but also through the same will most harmoniously conspiring to the same blessedness, and fused in some way by the fire of charity into one spirit. For to this His words come, “That they may be one, even as we are one;” namely, that as the Father and Son are one, not only in equality of substance, but also in will, so those also may be one, between whom and God the Son is mediator, not only in that they are of the same nature, but also through the same union of love. And then He goes on thus to intimate the truth itself, that He is the Mediator, through whom we are reconciled to God, by saying, “I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.”

CHAPTER 10

AS CHRIST IS THE MEDIATOR OF LIFE, SO THE DEVIL IS THE MEDIATOR OF DEATH

13. Therein is our true peace and firm bond of union with our Creator, that we should be purified and reconciled through the Mediator of life, as we had been polluted and alienated, and so had departed from Him, through the mediator of death. For as the devil through pride led man through pride to death; so Christ through lowliness led back man through obedience to life. Since, as the one fell through being lifted up, and cast down [man] also who consented to him; so the other was raised up through being abased, and lifted up [man] also who believed in Him. For because the devil had not himself come thither whither he had led the way (inasmuch as he bare indeed in his ungodliness the death of the spirit, but had not undergone the death of the flesh, because he had not assumed the covering of the flesh), he appeared to man to be a mighty chief among the legions of devils, through whom he exercises his reign of deceits; so puffing up man the more, who is eager for power more than righteousness, through the pride of elation, or through false philosophy; or else entangling him through sacrilegious rites, in which, while casting down headlong by deceit and illusion the minds of the more curious and prouder sort, he holds him captive also to magical trickery; promising too the cleansing of the soul, through those initiations which they call teletai, by transforming himself into an angel of light, through divers machinations in signs and prodigies of lying.

CHAPTER 11

MIRACLES WHICH ARE DONE BY DEMONS ARE TO BE SPURNED

14. For it is easy for the most worthless spirits to do many things by means of aerial bodies, such as to cause wonder to souls which are weighed down by earthly bodies, even though they be of the better inclined. For if earthly

bodies themselves, when trained by a certain skill and practice, exhibit to men so great marvels in theatrical spectacles, that they who never saw such things scarcely believe them when told; why should it be hard for the devil and his angels to make out of corporeal elements, through their own aerial bodies, things at which the flesh marvels; or even by hidden inspirations to contrive fantastic appearances to the deluding of men's senses, whereby to deceive them, whether awake or asleep, or to drive them into frenzy? But just as it may happen that one who is better than they in life and character may gaze at the most worthless of men, either walking on a rope, or doing by various motions of the body many things difficult of belief, and yet he may not at all desire to do such things, nor think those men on that account to be preferred to himself; so the faithful and pious soul, not only if it sees, but even if on account of the frailty of the flesh it shudders at, the miracles of demons; yet will not for that either deplore its own want of power to do such things, or judge them on this account to be better than itself; especially since it is in the company of the holy, who, whether they are men or good angels, accomplish, through the power of God, to whom all things are subject, wonders which are far greater and the very reverse of deceptive.

CHAPTER 12

THE DEVIL THE MEDIATOR OF DEATH, CHRIST OF LIFE

15. In no wise therefore are souls cleansed and reconciled to God by sacrilegious imitations, or curious arts that are impious, or magical incantations; since the false mediator does not translate them to higher things, but rather blocks and cuts off the way thither through the affections, malignant in proportion as they are proud, which he inspires into those of his own company; which are not able to nourish the wings of virtues so as to fly upwards, but rather to heap up the weight of vices so as to press downwards; since the soul will fall down the more heavily, the more it seems to itself to have been carried upwards. Accordingly, as the Magi did when warned of God, whom the star led to adore the low estate of the Lord; so we also ought to return to our country, not by the way by which we came, but by another way which the lowly King has taught, and which the proud king, the adversary of that lowly King, cannot block up. For to us, too, that we may adore the lowly Christ, the "heavens have declared the

glory of God, when their sound went into all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.” A way was made for us to death through sin in Adam. For, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned.” Of this way the devil was the mediator, the persuader to sin, and the caster down into death. For he, too, applied his one death to work out our double death. Since he indeed died in the spirit through ungodliness, but certainly did not die in the flesh: yet both persuaded us to ungodliness, and thereby brought it to pass that we deserved to come into the death of the flesh. We desired therefore the one through wicked persuasion, the other followed us by a just condemnation; and therefore it is written, “God made not death,” since He was not Himself the cause of death; but yet death was inflicted on the sinner, through His most just retribution. Just as the judge inflicts punishment on the guilty; yet it is not the justice of the judge, but the desert of the crime, which is the cause of the punishment. Whither, then, the mediator of death caused us to pass, yet did not come himself, that is, to the death of the flesh, there our Lord God introduced for us the medicine of correction, which He deserved not, by a hidden and exceeding mysterious decree of divine and profound justice. In order, therefore, that as by one man came death, so by one man might come also the resurrection of the dead; because men strove more to shun that which they could not shun, viz. the death of the flesh, than the death of the spirit, i.e. punishment more than the desert of punishment (for not to sin is a thing about which either men are not solicitous or are too little solicitous; but not to die, although it be not within reach of attainment, is yet eagerly sought after); the Mediator of life, making it plain that death is not to be feared, which by the condition of humanity cannot now be escaped, but rather ungodliness, which can be guarded against through faith, meets us at the end to which we have come, but not by the way by which we came. For we, indeed, came to death through sin; He through righteousness: and, therefore, as our death is the punishment of sin, so His death was made a sacrifice for sin.

CHAPTER 13

THE DEATH OF CHRIST VOLUNTARY. HOW THE MEDIATOR OF LIFE SUBDUED THE MEDIATOR OF DEATH. HOW THE DEVIL LEADS HIS OWN TO DESPISE THE DEATH OF CHRIST

16. Wherefore, since the spirit is to be preferred to the body, and the death of the spirit means that God has left it, but the death of the body that the spirit has left it; and since herein lies the punishment in the death of the body, that the spirit leaves the body against its will, because it left God willingly; so that, whereas the spirit left God because it would, it leaves the body although it would not; nor leaves it when it would, unless it has offered violence to itself, whereby the body itself is slain: the spirit of the Mediator showed how it was through no punishment of sin that He came to the death of the flesh, because He did not leave it against His will, but because He willed, when He willed, as He willed. For because He is so commingled [with the flesh] by the Word of God as to be one, He says: "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay down my life that I might take it again." And, as the Gospel tells us, they who were present were most astonished at this, that after that [last] word, in which He set forth the figure of our sin, He immediately gave up His spirit. For they who are hung on the cross are commonly tortured by a prolonged death. Whence it was that the legs of the thieves were broken, in order that they might die directly, and be taken down from the cross before the Sabbath. And that He was found to be dead already, caused wonder. And it was this also, at which, as we read, Pilate marvelled, when the body of the Lord was asked of him for burial.

17. Because that deceiver then,—who was a mediator to death for man, and feignedly puts himself forward as to life, under the name of cleansing by sacrilegious rites and sacrifices, by which the proud are led away,—can neither share in our death, nor rise again from his own: he has indeed been able to apply his single death to our double one; but he certainly has not been able to apply a single resurrection, which should be at once a mystery of our renewal, and a type of that waking up which is to be in the end. He then who being alive in the spirit raised again His own flesh that was dead, the true Mediator of life, has cast out him, who is dead in the spirit and the mediator of death, from the spirits of those who believe in Himself, so that he should not reign within, but should assault from without, and yet not prevail. And to him, too, He offered Himself to be tempted, in order that He might be also a mediator to overcome his temptations, not only by succor, but also by example. But when the devil, from the first, although striving

through every entrance to creep into His inward parts, was thrust out, having finished all his alluring temptation in the wilderness after the baptism; because, being dead in the spirit, he forced no entrance into Him who was alive in the spirit, he betook himself, through eagerness for the death of man in any way whatsoever, to effecting that death which he could, and was permitted to effect it upon that mortal element which the living Mediator had received from us. And where he could do anything, there in every respect he was conquered; and wherein he received outwardly the power of slaying the Lord in the flesh, therein his inward power, by which he held ourselves, was slain. For it was brought to pass that the bonds of many sins in many deaths were loosed, through the one death of One which no sin had preceded. Which death, though not due, the Lord therefore rendered for us, that the death which was due might work us no hurt. For He was not stripped of the flesh by obligation of any authority, but He stripped Himself. For doubtless He who was able not to die, if He would not, did die because He would: and so He made a show of principalities and powers, openly triumphing over them in Himself. For whereas by His death the one and most real sacrifice was offered up for us, whatever fault there was, whence principalities and powers held us fast as of right to pay its penalty, He cleansed, abolished, extinguished; and by His own resurrection He also called us whom He predestinated to a new life; and whom He called, them He justified; and whom He justified, them He glorified. And so the devil, in that very death of the flesh, lost man, whom he was possessing as by an absolute right, seduced as he was by his own consent, and over whom he ruled, himself impeded by no corruption of flesh and blood, through that frailty of man’s mortal body, whence he was both too poor and too weak; he who was proud in proportion as he was, as it were, both richer and stronger, ruling over him who was, as it were, both clothed in rags and full of troubles. For whither he drove the sinner to fall, himself not following, there by following he compelled the Redeemer to descend. And so the Son of God deigned to become our friend in the fellowship of death, to which because he came not, the enemy thought himself to be better and greater than ourselves. For our Redeemer says, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Wherefore also the devil thought himself superior to the Lord Himself, inasmuch as the Lord in His sufferings yielded to him; for of Him, too, is understood what is read in the Psalm, “For Thou hast made Him a little lower than the angels:” so that He, being Himself put to death, although innocent, by the unjust one acting against us as it were by just right, might by a most just right overcome him, and so might lead captive the captivity wrought through sin, and free us from a captivity that was just on account of sin, by blotting out the handwriting, and redeeming us who were to be justified although sinners, through His own righteous blood unrighteously poured out.

18. Hence also the devil mocks those who are his own until this very day, to whom he presents himself as a false mediator, as though they would be cleansed or rather entangled and drowned by his rites, in that he very easily persuades the proud to ridicule and despise the death of Christ, from which the more he himself is estranged, the more is he believed by them to be the holier and more divine. Yet those who have remained with him are very few, since the nations acknowledge and with pious humility imbibe the price paid for themselves, and in trust upon it abandon their enemy, and gather together to their Redeemer. For the devil does not know how the most excellent wisdom of God makes use of both his snares and his fury to bring about the salvation of His own faithful ones, beginning from the former end, which is the beginning of the spiritual creature, even to the latter end, which is the death of the body, and so “reaching from the one end to the other, mightily and sweetly ordering all things.” For wisdom “passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness, and no defiled thing can fall into her.” And since the devil has nothing to do with the death of the flesh, whence comes his exceeding pride, a death of another kind is prepared in the eternal fire of hell, by which not only the spirits that have earthly, but also those who have aerial bodies, can be tormented. But proud men, by whom Christ is despised, because He died, wherein He bought us with so great a price, both bring back the former death, and also men, to that miserable condition of nature, which is derived from the first sin, and will be cast down into the latter death with the devil. And they on this account preferred the devil to Christ, because the former cast them into that former death, whither he himself fell not through the difference of his nature, and whither on account of them Christ descended through His great mercy: and yet they do not hesitate to believe themselves better than the devils, and do not cease to assail and denounce them with every sort of

malediction, while they know them at any rate to have nothing to do with the suffering of this kind of death, on account of which they despise Christ. Neither will they take into account that the case may possibly be, that the Word of God, remaining in Himself, and in Himself in no way changeable, may yet, through the taking upon Him of a lower nature, be able to suffer somewhat of a lower kind, which the unclean spirit cannot suffer, because he has not an earthly body. And so, whereas they themselves are better than the devils, yet, because they bear a body of flesh, they can so die, as the devils certainly cannot die, who do not bear such a body. They presume much on the deaths of their own sacrifices, which they do not perceive that they sacrifice to deceitful and proud spirits; or if they have come to perceive it, think their friendship to be of some good to themselves, treacherous and envious although they are, whose purpose is bent upon nothing else except to hinder our return.

CHAPTER 14

CHRIST THE MOST PERFECT VICTIM FOR CLEANSING OUR FAULTS. IN EVERY SACRIFICE FOUR THINGS ARE TO BE CONSIDERED

19. They do not understand, that not even the proudest of spirits themselves could rejoice in the honor of sacrifices, unless a true sacrifice was due to the one true God, in whose stead they desire to be worshipped: and that this cannot be rightly offered except by a holy and righteous priest; nor unless that which is offered be received from those for whom it is offered; and unless also it be without fault, so that it may be offered for cleansing the faulty. This at least all desire who wish sacrifice to be offered for themselves to God. Who then is so righteous and holy a priest as the only Son of God, who had no need to purge His own sins by sacrifice, neither original sins, nor those which are added by human life? And what could be so fitly chosen by men to be offered for them as human flesh? And what so fit for this immolation as mortal flesh? And what so clean for cleansing the faults of mortal men as the flesh born in and from the womb of a virgin, without any infection of carnal concupiscence? And what could be so acceptably offered and taken, as the flesh of our sacrifice, made the body of our priest? In such wise that, whereas four things are to be considered in every sacrifice,—to whom it is offered, by whom it is offered, what is

offered, for whom it is offered,—the same One and true Mediator Himself, reconciling us to God by the sacrifice of peace, might remain one with Him to whom He offered, might make those one in Himself for whom He offered, Himself might be in one both the offerer and the offering.

CHAPTER 15

THEY ARE PROUD WHO THINK THEY ARE ABLE, BY THEIR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, TO BE CLEANSED SO AS TO SEE GOD

20. There are, however, some who think themselves capable of being cleansed by their own righteousness, so as to contemplate God, and to dwell in God; whom their very pride itself stains above all others. For there is no sin to which the divine law is more opposed, and over which that proudest of spirits, who is a mediator to things below, but a barrier against things above, receives a greater right of mastery: unless either his secret snares be avoided by going another way, or if he rage openly by means of a sinful people (which Amalek, being interpreted, means), and forbid by fighting the passage to the land of promise, he be overcome by the cross of the Lord, which is prefigured by the holding out of the hands of Moses. For these persons promise themselves cleansing by their own righteousness for this reason, because some of them have been able to penetrate with the eye of the mind beyond the whole creature, and to touch, though it be in ever so small a part, the light of the unchangeable truth; a thing which they deride many Christians for being not yet able to do, who, in the meantime, live by faith alone. But of what use is it for the proud man, who on that account is ashamed to embark upon the ship of wood, to behold from afar his country beyond the sea? Or how can it hurt the humble man not to behold it from so great a distance, when he is actually coming to it by that wood upon which the other disdains to be borne?

CHAPTER 16

THE OLD PHILOSOPHERS ARE NOT TO BE CONSULTED CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION AND CONCERNING THINGS TO COME

21. These people also blame us for believing the resurrection of the flesh, and rather wish us to believe themselves concerning these things. As

though, because they have been able to understand the high and unchangeable substance by the things which are made, for this reason they had a claim to be consulted concerning the revolutions of mutable things, or concerning the connected order of the ages. For pray, because they dispute most truly, and persuade us by most certain proofs, that all things temporal are made after a science that is eternal, are they therefore able to see clearly in the matter of this science itself, or to collect from it, how many kinds of animals there are, what are the seeds of each in their beginnings, what measure in their increase, what numbers run through their conceptions, births, ages, settings; what motions in desiring things according to their nature, and in avoiding the contrary? Have they not sought out all these things, not through that unchangeable wisdom, but through the actual history of places and times, or have trusted the written experience of others? Wherefore it is the less to be wondered at, that they have utterly failed in searching out the succession of more lengthened ages, and in finding any goal of that course, down which, as though down a river, the human race is sailing, and the transition thence of each to its own appropriate end. For these are subjects which historians could not describe, inasmuch as they are far in the future, and have been experienced and related by no one. Nor have those philosophers, who have profiled better than others in that high and eternal science, been able to grasp such subjects with the understanding; otherwise they would not be inquiring as they could into past things of the kind, such as are in the province of historians, but rather would foreknow also things future; and those who are able to do this are called by them soothsayers, but by us prophets:

CHAPTER 17

IN HOW MANY WAYS THINGS FUTURE ARE FOREKNOWN. NEITHER PHILOSOPHERS, NOR THOSE WHO WERE DISTINGUISHED AMONG THE ANCIENTS, ARE TO BE CONSULTED CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

22.—although the name of prophets, too, is not altogether foreign to their writings. But it makes the greatest possible difference, whether things future are conjectured by experience of things past (as physicians also have committed many things to writing in the way of foresight, which they themselves have noted by experience; or as again husbandmen, or sailors, too, foretell many things; for if such predictions are made a long while before, they are thought to be divinations), or whether such things have already started on their road to come to us, and being seen coming far off, are announced in proportion to the acuteness of the sense of those who see them, by doing which the aerial powers are thought to divine (just as if a person from the top of a mountain were to see far off some one coming, and were to announce it beforehand to those who dwelt close by in the plain); or whether they are either fore-announced to certain men, or are heard by them and again transmitted to other men, by means of holy angels, to whom God shows those things by His Word and His Wisdom, wherein both things future and things past consist: or whether the minds of certain men themselves are so far borne upwards by theHoly Spirit, as to behold, not through the angels, but of themselves, the immoveable causes of things future, in that very highest pinnacle of the universe itself. [And I say, behold,] for the aerial powers, too, hear these things, either by message through angels, or through men; and hear only so much as He judges to be fitting, to whom all things are subject. Many things, too, are foretold by a kind of instinct and inward impulse of such as know them not: as Caiaphas did not know what he said, but being the high priest, he prophesied.

23. Therefore, neither concerning the successions of ages, nor concerning the resurrection of the dead, ought we to consult those philosophers, who have understood as much as they could the eternity of the Creator, in whom “we live, and move, and have our being.” Since, knowing God through those things which are made, they have not glorified Him as God, neither were thankful but professing themselves wise, they became fools. And whereas they were not fit to fix the eye of the mind so firmly upon the eternity of the spiritual and unchangeable nature, as to be able to see, in the wisdom itself of the Creator and Governor of the universe, those revolutions of the ages, which in that wisdom were already and were always, but here were about to be so that as yet they were not; or, again, to see therein those changes for the better, not of the souls only, but also of the bodies of men, even to the perfection of their proper measure; whereas then, I say, they were in no way fit to see these things therein, they were not even judged worthy of receiving any announcement of them by the holy angels; whether externally through the senses of the body, or by interior revelations

exhibited in the spirit; as these things actually were manifested to our fathers, who were gifted with true piety, and who by foretelling them, obtaining credence either by present signs, or by events close at hand, which turned out as they had foretold, earned authority to be believed respecting things remotely future, even to the end of the world. But the proud and deceitful powers of the air, even if they are found to have said through their soothsayers some things of the fellowship and citizenship of the saints, and of the true Mediator, which they heard from the holy prophets or the angels, did so with the purpose of seducing even the faithful ones of God, if they could, by these alien truths, to revolt to their own proper falsehoods. But God did this by those who knew not what they said, in order that the truth might sound abroad from all sides, to aid the faithful, to be a witness against the ungodly.

CHAPTER 18

THE SON OF GOD BECAME INCARNATE IN ORDER THAT WE BEING CLEANSED BY FAITH MAY BE RAISED TO THE UNCHANGEABLE TRUTH

24. Since, then, we were not fit to take hold of things eternal, and since the foulness of sins weighed us down, which we had contracted by the love of temporal things, and which were implanted in us as it were naturally, from the root of mortality, it was needful that we should be cleansed. But cleansed we could not be, so as to be tempered together with things eternal, except it were through things temporal, wherewith we were already tempered together and held fast. For health is at the opposite extreme from disease; but the intermediate process of healing does not lead us to perfect health, unless it has some congruity with the disease. Things temporal that are useless merely deceive the sick; things temporal that are useful take up those that need healing, and pass them on healed, to things eternal. And the rational mind, as when cleansed it owes contemplation to things eternal; so, when needing cleansing, owes faith to things temporal. One even of those who were formerly esteemed wise men among the Greeks has said, The truth stands to faith in the same relation in which eternity stands to that which has a beginning. And he is no doubt right in saying so. For what we call temporal, he describes as having had a beginning. And we also ourselves come under this kind, not only in respect to the body, but also in

respect to the changeableness of the soul. For that is not properly called eternal which undergoes any degree of change. Therefore, in so far as we are changeable, in so far we stand apart from eternity. But life eternal is promised to us through the truth, from the clear knowledge of which, again, our faith stands as far apart as mortality does from eternity. We then now put faith in things done in time on our account, and by that faith itself we are cleansed; in order that when we have come to sight, as truth follows faith, so eternity may follow upon mortality. And therefore, since our faith will become truth, when we have attained to that which is promised to us who believe: and that which is promised us is eternal life; and the Truth (not that which shall come to be according as our faith shall be, but that truth which is always, because in it is eternity,—the Truth then) has said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent:" when our faith by seeing shall come to be truth, then eternity shall possess our now changed mortality. And until this shall take place, and in order that it may take place,—because we adapt the faith of belief to things which have a beginning, as in things eternal we hope for the truth of contemplation, lest the faith of mortal life should be at discord with the truth of eternal life,—the Truth itself, co-eternal with the Father, took a beginning from earth, when the Son of God so came as to become the Son of man, and to take to Himself our faith, that He might thereby lead us on to His own truth, who so undertook our mortality, as not to lose His own eternity. For truth stands to faith in the relation in which eternity stands to that which has a beginning. Therefore, we must needs so be cleansed, that we may come to have such a beginning as remains eternal, that we may not have one beginning in faith, and another in truth. Neither could we pass to things eternal from the condition of having a beginning, unless we were transferred, by union of the eternal to ourselves through our own beginning, to His own eternity. Therefore our faith has, in some measure, now followed thither, whither He in whom we have believed has ascended; born, dead, risen again, taken up. Of these four things, we knew the first two in ourselves. For we know that men both have a beginning and die. But the remaining two, that is, to be raised, and to be taken up, we rightly hope will be in us, because we have believed them done in Him. Since, therefore, in Him that, too, which had a beginning has passed over to eternity, in ourselves also it will so pass over, when faith shall have arrived at truth. For to those who thus believe, in order that they might remain in the word of faith, and being thence led on to the truth, and through that to eternity, might be freed from death, He speaks thus: “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.” And as though they would ask, With what fruit? He proceeds to say, “And ye shall know the truth.” And again, as though they would say, Of what good is truth to mortal men? “And the truth,” He says, “shall make you free.” From what, except from death, from corruptions, from changeableness? Since truth remains immortal, incorrupt, unchangeable. But true immortality, true incorruptibility, true unchangeableness, is eternity itself.

CHAPTER 19

IN WHAT MANNER THE SON WAS SENT AND PROCLAIMED BEFOREHAND. HOW IN THE SENDING OF HIS BIRTH IN THE FLESH HE WAS MADE LESS WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO HIS EQUALITY WITH THE FATHER

25. Behold, then, why the Son of God was sent; nay, rather behold what it is for the Son of God to be sent. Whatever things they were which were wrought in time, with a view to produce faith, whereby we might be cleansed so as to contemplate truth, in things that have a beginning, which have been put forth from eternity, and are referred back to eternity: these were either testimonies of this mission, or they were the mission itself of the Son of God. But some of these testimonies announced Him beforehand as to come, some testified that He had come already. For that He was made a creature by whom the whole creation was made, must needs find a witness in the whole creation. For except one were preached by the sending of many [witnesses] one would not be bound to, the sending away of many. And unless there were such testimonies as should seem to be great to those who are lowly, it would not be believed, that He being great should make men great, who as lowly was sent to the lowly. For the heaven and the earth and all things in them are incomparably greater works of the Son of God, since all things were made by Him, than the signs and the portents which broke forth in testimony of Him. But yet men, in order that, being lowly, they might believe these great things to have been wrought by Him, trembled at those lowly things, as if they had been great.

26. “When, therefore, the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law;” to such a degree lowly, that He was “made;” in this way therefore sent, in that He was made. If, therefore, the greater sends the less, we too, acknowledge Him to have been made less; and in so far less, in so far as made; and in so far made, in so far as sent. For “He sent forth His Son made of a woman.” And yet, because all things were made by Him, not only before He was made and sent, but before all things were at all, we confess the same to be equal to the sender, whom we call less, as having been sent. In what way, then, could He be seen by the fathers, when certain angelical visions were shown to them, before that fullness of time at which it was fitting He should be sent, and so before He was sent, at a time when not yet sent He was seen as He is equal with the Father? For how does He say to Philip, by whom He was certainly seen as by all the rest, and even by those by whom He was crucified in the flesh, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also;” unless because He was both seen and yet not seen? He was seen, as He had been made in being sent; He was not seen, as by Him all things were made. Or how does He say this too, “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him,” at a time when He was manifest before the eyes of men; unless because He was offering that flesh, which the Word was made in the fullness of time, to be accepted by our faith; but was keeping back the Word itself, by whom all things were made, to be contemplated in eternity by the mind when cleansed by faith?

CHAPTER 20

THE SENDER AND THE SENT EQUAL. WHY THE SON IS SAID TO BE SENT BY THE FATHER. OF THE MISSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. HOW AND BY WHOM HE WAS SENT. THE FATHER THE BEGINNING OF THE WHOLE GODHEAD

27. But if the Son is said to be sent by the Father on this account, that the one is the Father, and the other the Son, this does not in any manner hinder us from believing the Son to be equal, and consubstantial, and co-eternal with the Father, and yet to have been sent as Son by the Father. Not because the one is greater, the other less; but because the one is Father, the other

Son; the one begetter, the other begotten; the one, He from whom He is who is sent; the other, He who is from Him who sends. For the Son is from the Father, not the Father from the Son. And according to this manner we can now understand that the Son is not only said to have been sent because “the Word was made flesh,” but therefore sent that the Word might be made flesh, and that He might perform through His bodily presence those things which were written; that is, that not only is He understood to have been sent as man, which the Word was made but the Word, too, was sent that it might be made man; because He was not sent in respect to any inequality of power, or substance, or anything that in Him was not equal to the Father; but in respect to this, that the Son is from the Father, not the Father from the Son; for the Son is the Word of the Father, which is also called His wisdom. What wonder, therefore, if He is sent, not because He is unequal with the Father, but because He is “a pure emanation (manatio) issuing from the glory of the Almighty God?” For there, that which issues, and that from which it issues, is of one and the same substance. For it does not issue as water issues from an aperture of earth or of stone, but as light issues from light. For the words, “For she is the brightness of the everlasting light,” what else are they than, she is light of everlasting light? For what is the brightness of light, except light itself? and so co-eternal, with the light, from which the light is. But it is preferable to say, “the brightness of light,” rather than” the light of light;” lest that which issues should be thought to be darker than that from which it issues. For when one hears of the brightness of light as being light itself, it is more easy to believe that the former shines by means of the latter, than that the latter shines less. But because there was no need of warning men not to think that light to be less, which begat the other (for no heretic ever dared say this, neither is it to be believed that any one will dare to do so), Scripture meets that other thought, whereby that light which issues might seem darker than that from which it issues; and it has removed this surmise by saying, “It is the brightness of that light,” namely, of eternal light, and so shows it to be equal. For if it were less, then it would be its darkness, not its brightness; but if it were greater, then it could not issue from it, for it could not surpass that from which it is educed. Therefore, because it issues from it, it is not greater than it is; and because it is not its darkness, but its brightness, it is not less than it is: therefore it is equal. Nor ought this to trouble us, that it is called a pure emanation issuing from the glory of the Almighty God, as if itself were not omnipotent, but an emanation from the Omnipotent; for soon after it is said of it, “And being but one, she can do all things.” But who is omnipotent, unless He who can do all things? It is sent, therefore, by Him from whom it issues; for so she is sought after by him who loved and desired her. “Send her,” he says, “out of Thy holy heavens, and from the throne of Thy glory, that, being present, she may labor with me;” that is, may teach me to labor [heartily] in order that I may not labor [irksomely]. For her labors are virtues. But she is sent in one way that she may be with man; she has been sent in another way that she herself may be man. For, “entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets;” so she also fills the holy angels, and works all things fitting for such ministries by them. But when the fullness of time was come, she was sent, not to fill angels, nor to be an angel, except in so far as she announced the counsel of the Father, which was her own also; nor, again, to be with men or in men, for this too took place before, both in the fathers and in the prophets; but that the Word itself should be made flesh, that is, should be made man. In which future mystery, when revealed, was to be the salvation of those wise and holy men also, who, before He was born of the Virgin, were born of women; and in which, when done and made known, is the salvation of all who believe, and hope, and love. For this is “the great mystery of godliness, which was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

28. Therefore the Word of God is sent by Him, of whom He is the Word; He is sent by Him, from whom He was begotten (genitum); He sends who begot, That is sent which is begotten. And He is then sent to each one, when He is apprehended and perceived by each, in so far as He can be apprehended and perceived, in proportion to the comprehension of the rational soul, either advancing towards God, or already perfect in God. The Son, therefore, is not properly said to have been sent in that He is begotten of the Father; but either in that the Word made flesh appeared to the world, whence He says, “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world;” or in that from time to time, He is perceived by the mind of each, according to the saying, “Send her, that, being present with me, she may labor with me.” What then is born (natum) from eternity is eternal, “for it is

the brightness of the everlasting light;" but what is sent from time to time, is that which is apprehended by each. But when the Son of God was made manifest in the flesh, He was sent into this world in the fullness of time, made of a woman. "For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God" (since "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not"), it "pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe," and that the Word should be made flesh, and dwell among us. But when from time to time He comes forth and is perceived by the mind of each, He is said indeed to be sent, but not into this world; for He does not appear sensibly, that is, He does not present Himself to the corporeal senses. For we ourselves, too, are not in this world, in respect to our grasping with the mind as far as we can that which is eternal; and the spirits of all the righteous are not in this world, even of those who are still living in the flesh, in so far as they have discernment in things divine. But the Father is not said to be sent, when from time to time He is apprehended by any one, for He has no one of whom to be, or from whom to proceed; since Wisdom says, "I came out of the mouth of the Most High," and it is said of the Holy Spirit, "He proceedeth from the Father," but the Father is from no one.

29. As, therefore, the Father begat, the Son is begotten; so the Father sent, the Son was sent. But in like manner as He who begat and He who was begotten, so both He who sent and He who was sent, are one, since the Father and the Son are one. So also the Holy Spirit is one with them, since these three are one. For as to be born, in respect to the Son, means to be from the Father; so to be sent, in respect to the Son, means to be known to be from the Father. And as to be the gift of God in respect to the Holy Spirit, means to proceed from the Father; so to be sent, is to be known to proceed from the Father. Neither can we say that the Holy Spirit does not also proceed from the Son, for the same Spirit is not without reason said to be the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son. Nor do I see what else He intended to signify, when He breathed on the face of the disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." For that bodily breathing, proceeding from the body with the feeling of bodily touching, was not the substance of the Holy Spirit, but a declaration by a fitting sign, that the Holy Spirit proceeds not only from the Father, but also from the Son. For the veriest of madmen

would not say, that it was one Spirit which He gave when He breathed on them, and another which He sent after His ascension. For the Spirit of God is one, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, the Holy Spirit, who worketh all in all. But that He was given twice was certainly a significant economy, which we will discuss in its place, as far as the Lord may grant. That then which the Lord says,—”Whom I will send unto you from the Father,”—shows the Spirit to be both of the Father and of the Son; because, also, when He had said, “Whom the Father will send,” He added also, “in my name.” Yet He did not say, Whom the Father will send from me, as He said, “Whom I will send unto you from the Father,”—showing, namely, that the Father is the beginning (principium) of the whole divinity, or if it is better so expressed, deity. He, therefore, who proceeds from the Father and from the Son, is referred back to Him from whom the Son was born (natus). And that which the evangelist says, “For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified;” how is this to be understood, unless because the special giving or sending of the Holy Spirit after the glorification of Christ was to be such as it had never been before? For it was not previously none at all, but it had not been such as this. For if the Holy Spirit was not given before, wherewith were the prophets who spoke filled? Whereas the Scripture plainly says, and shows in many places, that they spake by the Holy Spirit. Whereas, also, it is said of John the Baptist, “And he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb.” And his father Zacharias is found to have been filled with the Holy Ghost, so as to say such things of him. And Mary, too, was filled with the Holy Ghost, so as to foretell such things of the Lord, whom she was bearing in her womb. And Simeon and Anna were filled with the Holy Spirit, so as to acknowledge the greatness of the little child Christ. How, then, was “the Spirit not yet given, since Jesus was not yet glorified,” unless because that giving, or granting, or mission of the Holy Spirit was to have a certain speciality of its own in its very advent, such as never was before? For we read nowhere that men spoke in tongues which they did not know, through the Holy Spirit coming upon them; as happened then, when it was needful that His coming should be made plain by visible signs, in order to show that the whole world, and all nations constituted with different tongues, should believe in Christ through the gift of the Holy Spirit, to fulfill that which is sung in the Psalm, “There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard; their sound is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.”

30. Therefore man was united, and in some sense commingled, with the Word of God, so as to be One Person, when the fullness of time was come, and the Son of God, made of a woman, was sent into this world, that He might be also the Son of man for the sake of the sons of men. And this person angelic nature could prefigure beforehand, so as to pre-announce, but could not appropriate, so as to be that person itself.

CHAPTER 21

OF THE SENSIBLE SHOWING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND OF THE COETERNITY OF THE TRINITY. WHAT HAS BEEN SAID, AND WHAT REMAINS TO BE SAID

But with respect to the sensible showing of the Holy Spirit, whether by the shape of a dove, or by fiery tongues, when the subjected and subservient creature by temporal motions and forms manifested His substance co-eternal with the Father and the Son, and alike with them unchangeable, while it was not united so as to be one person with Him, as the flesh was which the Word was made; I do not dare to say that nothing of the kind was done aforetime. But I would boldly say, that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, of one and the same substance, God the Creator, the Omnipotent Trinity, work indivisibly; but that this cannot be indivisibly manifested by the creature, which is far inferior, and least of all by the bodily creature: just as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit cannot be named by our words, which certainly are bodily sounds, except in their own proper intervals of time, divided by a distinct separation, which intervals the proper syllables of each word occupy. Since in their proper substance wherein they are, the three are one, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the very same, by no temporal motion, above the whole creature, without any interval of time and place, and at once one and the same from eternity to eternity, as it were eternity itself, which is not without truth and charity. But, in my words, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are separated, and cannot be named at once, and occupy their own proper places separately invisible letters. And as, when I name my memory, and intellect, and will, each name refers to each severally, but yet each is uttered by all three; for there is no one of these three names that is not uttered by both my memory and my intellect and my will together [by the soul as a whole]; so the Trinity together wrought both the voice of the Father, and the flesh of the Son, and the dove of the Holy Spirit, while each of these things is referred severally to each person. And by this similitude it is in some degree discernible, that the Trinity, which is inseparable in itself, is manifested separably by the appearance of the visible creature; and that the operation of the Trinity is also inseparable in each severally of those things which are said to pertain properly to the manifesting of either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit.

31. If then I am asked, in what manner either words or sensible forms and appearances were wrought before the incarnation of the Word of God, which should prefigure it as about to come, I reply that God wrought those things by the angels; and this I have also shown sufficiently, as I think, by testimonies of the Holy Scriptures. And if I am asked how the incarnation itself was brought to pass, I reply that the Word of God itself was made flesh, that is, was made man, yet not turned and changed into that which was made; but so made, that there should be there not only the Word of God and the flesh of man, but also the rational soul of man, and that this whole should both be called God on account of God, and man on account of man. And if this is understood with difficulty, the mind must be purged by faith, by more and more abstaining from sins, and by doing good works, and by praying with the groaning of holy desires; that by profiting through the divine help, it may both understand and love. And if I am asked, how, after the incarnation of the Word, either a voice of the Father was produced, or a corporeal appearance by which the Holy Spirit was manifested: I do not doubt indeed that this was done through the creature; but whether only corporeal and sensible, or whether by the employment also of the spirit rational or intellectual (for this is the term by which some choose to call what the Greeks name noeron), not certainly so as to form one person (for who could possibly say that whatever creature it was by which the voice of the Father sounded, is in such sense God the Father; or whatever creature it was by which the Holy Spirit was manifested in the form of a dove, or in fiery tongues, is in such sense the Holy Spirit, as the Son of God is that man who was made of a virgin?), but only to the ministry of bringing about such intimations as God judged needful; or whether anything else is to be

understood: is difficult to discover, and not expedient rashly to affirm. Yet I see not how those things could have been brought to pass without the rational or intellectual creature. But it is not yet the proper place to explain, as the Lord may give me strength, why I so think; for the arguments of heretics must first be discussed and refuted, which they do not produce from the divine books, but from their own reasons, and by which, as they think, they forcibly compel us so to understand the testimonies of the Scriptures which treat of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as they themselves will.

32. But now, as I think, it has been sufficiently shown, that the Son is not therefore less because He is sent by the Father, nor the Holy Spirit less because both the Father sent Him and the Son. For these things are perceived to be laid down in the Scriptures, either on account of the visible creature; or rather on account of commending to our thoughts the emanation [within the Godhead]; but not on account of inequality, or imparity, or unlikeness of substance; since, even if God the Father had willed to appear visibly through the subject creature, yet it would be most absurd to say that He was sent either by the Son, whom He begot, or by the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from Him. Let this, therefore, be the limit of the present book. Henceforth in the rest we shall see, the Lord helping, of what sort are those crafty arguments of the heretics, and in what manner they may be confuted.

Book V

Proceeds to treat of the arguments put forward by the heretics, not from Scripture, but from their own reason. Those are refuted, who think the substance of the Father and of the Son to be not the same, because everything predicated of God is, in their opinion, predicated of Him according to substance; and therefore it follows, that to beget and to be begotten, or to be begotten and unbegotten, being diverse, are diverse substances; whereas it is here demonstrated that not everything predicated of God is predicated according to substance, in such manner as He is called good and great according to substance, or anything else that is predicated of Him in respect to Himself; but that some things are also predicated of Him relatively, i.e. not in respect to Himself, but to something not Himself, as He is called Father in respect to the Son, and Lord in respect to the creature that serveth Him; in which case, if anything thus predicated relatively, i.e. in respect to something not Himself, is even predicated as happening in time, as e.g. "Lord, thou hast become our refuge," yet nothing happens to God so as to work a change in Him, but He Himself remains absolutely unchangeable in His own nature or essence.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT THE AUTHOR ENTREATS FROM GOD, WHAT FROM THE READER. IN GOD NOTHING IS TO BE THOUGHT CORPOREAL OR CHANGEABLE

1. Beginning, as I now do henceforward, to speak of subjects which cannot altogether be spoken as they are thought, either by any man, or, at any rate, not by myself; although even our very thought, when we think of God the Trinity, falls (as we feel) very far short of Him of whom we think, nor comprehends Him as He is; but He is seen, as it is written, even by those who are so great as was the Apostle Paul, "through a glass and in an enigma:" first, I pray to our Lord God Himself, of whom we ought always to think, and of whom we are not able to think worthily, in praise of whom blessing is at all times to be rendered, and whom no speech is sufficient to

declare, that He will grant me both help for understanding and explaining that which I design, and pardon if in anything I offend. For I bear in mind, not only my desire, but also my infirmity. I ask also of my readers to pardon me, where they may perceive me to have had the desire rather than the power to speak, what they either understand better themselves, or fail to understand through the obscurity of my language, just as I myself pardon them what they cannot understand through their own dullness.

2. And we shall mutually pardon one another the more easily, if we know, or at any rate firmly believe and hold, that whatever is said of a nature, unchangeable, invisible and having life absolutely and sufficient to itself, must not be measured after the custom of things visible, and changeable, and mortal, or not self-sufficient. But although we labor, and yet fail, to grasp and know even those things which are within the scope of our corporeal senses, or what we are ourselves in the inner man; yet it is with no shamelessness that faithful piety burns after those divine and unspeakable things which are above: piety, I say, not inflated by the arrogance of its own power, but inflamed by the grace of its Creator and Saviour Himself. For with what understanding can man apprehend God, who does not yet apprehend that very understanding itself of his own, by which he desires to apprehend Him? And if he does already apprehend this, let him carefully consider that there is nothing in his own nature better than it; and let him see whether he can there see any outlines of forms, or brightness of colors, or greatness of space, or distance of parts, or extension of size, or any movements through intervals of place, or any such thing at all. Certainly we find nothing of all this in that, than which we find nothing better in our own nature, that is, in our own intellect, by which we apprehend wisdom according to our capacity. What, therefore, we do not find in that which is our own best, we ought not to seek in Him who is far better than that best of ours; that so we may understand God, if we are able, and as much as we are able, as good without quality, great without quantity, a creator though He lack nothing, ruling but from no position, sustaining all things without “having” them, in His wholeness everywhere, yet without place, eternal without time, making things that are changeable, without change of Himself, and without passion. Whoso thus thinks of God,

although he cannot yet find out in all ways what He is, yet piously takes heed, as much as he is able, to think nothing of Him that He is not.

CHAPTER 2

GOD THE ONLY UNCHANGEABLE ESSENCE

3. He is, however, without doubt, a substance, or, if it be better so to call it, an essence, which the Greeks call ousia. For as wisdom is so called from the being wise, and knowledge from knowing; so from being comes that which we call essence. And who is there that is, more than He who said to His servant Moses, “I am that I am;” and, “Thus shall thou say unto the children of Israel, He who is hath sent me unto you?” But other things that are called essences or substances admit of accidents, whereby a change, whether great or small, is produced in them. But there can be no accident of this kind in respect to God; and therefore He who is God is the only unchangeable substance or essence, to whom certainly being itself, whence comes the name of essence, most especially and most truly belongs. For that which is changed does not retain its own being; and that which can be changed, although it be not actually changed, is able not to be that which it had been; and hence that which not only is not changed, but also cannot at all be changed, alone falls most truly, without difficulty or hesitation, under the category of being.

CHAPTER 3

THE ARGUMENT OF THE ARIANS IS REFUTED, WHICH IS DRAWN FROM THE WORDS BEGOTTEN AND UNBEGOTTEN

4. Wherefore,—to being now to answer the adversaries of our faith, respecting those things also, which are neither said as they are thought, nor thought as they really are:—among the many things which the Arians are wont to dispute against the Catholic faith, they seem chiefly to set forth this, as their most crafty device, namely, that whatsoever is said or understood of God, is said not according to accident, but according to substance, and therefore, to be unbegotten belongs to the Father according to substance, and to be begotten belongs to the Son according to substance; but to be unbegotten and to be begotten are different; therefore the substance of the

Father and that of the Son are different. To whom we reply, If whatever is spoken of God is spoken according to substance, then that which is said, “I and the Father are one,” is spoken according to substance. Therefore there is one substance of the Father and the Son. Or if this is not said according to substance, then something is said of God not according to substance, and therefore we are no longer compelled to understand unbegotten and begotten according to substance. It is also said of the Son, “He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” We ask, equal according to what? For if He is not said to be equal according to substance, then they admit that something may be said of God not according to substance. Let them admit, then, that unbegotten and begotten are not spoken according to substance. And if they do not admit this, on the ground that they will have all things to be spoken of God according to substance, then the Son is equal to the Father according to substance.

CHAPTER 4

THE ACCIDENTAL ALWAYS IMPLIES SOME CHANGE IN THE THING

5. That which is accidental commonly implies that it can be lost by some change of the thing to which it is an accident. For although some accidents are said to be inseparable, which in Greek are called achorista, as the color black is to the feather of a raven; yet the feather loses that color, not indeed so long as it is a feather, but because the feather is not always. Wherefore the matter itself is changeable; and whenever that animal or that feather ceases to be, and the whole of that body is changed and turned into earth, it loses certainly that color also. Although the kind of accident which is called separable may likewise be lost, not by separation, but by change; as, for instance, blackness is called a separable accident to the hair of men, because hair continuing to be hair can grow white; yet, if carefully considered, it is sufficiently apparent, that it is not as if anything departed by separation away from the head when it grows white, as though blackness departed thence and went somewhere and whiteness came in its place, but that the quality of color there is turned and changed. Therefore there is nothing accidental in God, because there is nothing changeable or that may be lost. But if you choose to call that also accidental, which, although it may not be lost, yet can be decreased or increased,—as, for instance, the

life of the soul: for as long as it is a soul, so long it lives, and because the soul is always, it always lives; but because it lives more when it is wise, and less when it is foolish, here, too, some change comes to pass, not such that life is absent, as wisdom is absent to the foolish, but such that it is less;—nothing of this kind, either, happens to God, because He remains altogether unchangeable.

CHAPTER 5

NOTHING IS SPOKEN OF GOD ACCORDING TO ACCIDENT, BUT ACCORDING TO SUBSTANCE OR ACCORDING TO RELATION

6. Wherefore nothing in Him is said in respect to accident, since nothing is accidental to Him, and yet all that is said is not said according to substance. For in created and changeable things, that which is not said according to substance, must, by necessary alternative, be said according to accident. For all things are accidents to them, which can be either lost or diminished, whether magnitudes or qualities; and so also is that which is said in relation to something, as friendships, relationships, services, likenesses, equalities, and anything else of the kind; so also positions and conditions, places and times, acts and passions. But in God nothing is said to be according to accident, because in Him nothing is changeable; and yet everything that is said, is not said, according to substance. For it is said in relation to something, as the Father in relation to the Son and the Son in relation to the Father, which is not accident; because both the one is always Father, and the other is always Son: yet not "always," meaning from the time when the Son was born [natus], so that the Father ceases not to be the Father because the Son never ceases to be the Son, but because the Son was always born, and never began to be the Son. But if He had begun to be at any time, or were at any time to cease to be, the Son, then He would be called Son according to accident. But if the Father, in that He is called the Father, were so called in relation to Himself, not to the Son; and the Son, in that He is called the Son, were so called in relation to Himself, not to the Father; then both the one would be called Father, and the other Son, according to substance. But because the Father is not called the Father except in that He has a Son, and the Son is not called Son except in that He has a Father, these things are not said according to substance; because each of them is not so called in

relation to Himself, but the terms are used reciprocally and in relation each to the other; nor yet according to accident, because both the being called the Father, and the being called the Son, is eternal and unchangeable to them. Wherefore, although to be the Father and to be the Son is different, yet their substance is not different; because they are so called, not according to substance, but according to relation, which relation, however, is not accident, because it is not changeable.

CHAPTER 6

REPLY IS MADE TO THE CAVILS OF THE HERETICS IN RESPECT TO THE SAME WORDS BEGOTTEN AND UNBEGOTTEN

7. But if they think they can answer this reasoning thus,—that the Father indeed is so called in relation to the Son, and the Son in relation to the Father, but that they are said to be unbegotten and begotten in relation to themselves, not in relation each to the other; for that it is not the same thing to call Him unbegotten as it is to call Him the Father, because there would be nothing to hinder our calling Him unbegotten even if He had not begotten the Son; and if any one beget a son, he is not therefore himself unbegotten, for men, who are begotten by other men, themselves also beget others; and therefore they say the Father is called Father in relation to the Son, and the Son is called Son in relation to the Father, but unbegotten is said in relation to Himself, and begotten in relation to Himself; and therefore, if whatever is said in relation to oneself is said according to substance, while to be unbegotten and to be begotten are different, then the substance is different:—if this is what they say, then they do not understand that they do indeed say something that requires more careful discussion in respect to the term unbegotten, because neither is any one therefore a father because unbegotten, nor therefore unbegotten because he is a father, and on that account he is supposed to be called unbegotten, not in relation to anything else, but in respect to himself; but, on the other hand, with a wonderful blindness, they do not perceive that no one can be said to be begotten except in relation to something. For he is therefore a son because begotten; and because a son, therefore certainly begotten. And as is the relation of son to father, so is the relation of the begotten to the begetter; and as is the relation of father to son, so is the relation of the begetter to the

begotten. And therefore any one is understood to be a begetter under one notion, but understood to be unbegotten under another. For though both are said of God the Father, yet the former is said in relation to the begotten, that is to the Son, which, indeed, they do not deny; but that He is called unbegotten, they declare to be said in respect to Himself. They say then, If anything is said to be a father in respect to itself, which cannot be said to be a son in respect to itself, and whatever is said in respect to self is said according to substance; and He is said to be unbegotten in respect to Himself, which the Son cannot be said to be; therefore He is said to be unbegotten according to substance; and because the Son cannot be so said to be, therefore He is not of the same substance. This subtlety is to be answered by compelling them to say themselves according to what it is that the Son is equal to the Father; whether according to that which is said in relation to Himself, or according to that which is said in relation to the Father. For it is not according to that which is said in relation to the Father, since in relation to the Father He is said to be Son, and the Father is not Son, but Father. Since Father and Son are not so called in relation to each other in the same way as friends and neighbors are; for a friend is so called relatively to his friend, and if they love each other equally, then the same friendship is in both; and a neighbor is so called relatively to a neighbor, and because they are equally neighbors to each other (for each is neighbor to the other, in the same degree as the other is neighbor to him), there is the same neighborhood in both. But because the Son is not so called relatively to the Son, but to the Father, it is not according to that which is said in relation to the Father that the Son is equal to the Father; and it remains that He is equal according to that which is said in relation to Himself. But whatever is said in relation to self is said according to substance: it remains therefore that He is equal according to substance; therefore the substance of both is the same. But when the Father is said to be unbegotten, it is not said what He is, but what He is not; and when a relative term is denied, it is not denied according to substance, since the relative itself is not affirmed according to substance.

CHAPTER 7

THE ADDITION OF A NEGATIVE DOES NOT CHANGE THE PREDICAMENT

8. This is to be made clear by examples. And first we must notice, that by the word begotten is signified the same thing as is signified by the word son. For therefore a son, because begotten, and because a son, therefore certainly begotten. By the word unbegotten, therefore, it is declared that he is not son. But begotten and unbegotten are both of them terms suitably employed; whereas in Latin we can use the word “filius,” but the custom of the language does not allow us to speak of “infilius.” It makes no difference, however, in the meaning if he is called “non filius;” just as it is precisely the same thing if he is called “non genitus,” instead of “ingenitus.” For so the terms of both neighbor and friend are used relatively, yet we cannot speak of “invicinus” as we can of “inimicus.” Wherefore, in speaking of this thing or that, we must not consider what the usage of our own language either allows or does not allow, but what clearly appears to be the meaning of the things themselves. Let us not therefore any longer call it unbegotten, although it can be so called in Latin; but instead of this let us call it not begotten, which means the same. Is this then anything else than saying that he is not a son? Now the prefixing of that negative particle does not make that to be said according to substance, which, without it, is said relatively; but that only is denied, which, without it, was affirmed, as in the other predicaments. When we say he is a man, we denote substance. He therefore who says he is not a man, enunciates no other kind of predicament, but only denies that. As therefore I affirm according to substance in saying he is a man, so I deny according to substance in saying he is not a man. And when the question is asked how large he is? and I say he is quadrupedal, that is, four feet in measure, I affirm according to quantity, and he who says he is not quadrupedal, denies according to quantity. I say he is white, I affirm according to quality; if I say he is not white, I deny according to quality. I say he is near, I affirm according to relation; if I say he is not near, I deny according to relation. I affirm according to position, when I say he lies down; I deny according to position, when I say he does not lie down. I speak according to condition, when I say he is armed; I deny according to condition, when I say he is not armed; and it comes to the same thing as if I should say he is unarmed. I affirm according to time, when I say he is of yesterday; I deny according to time, when I say he is not of yesterday. And when I say he is at Rome, I affirm according to place; and I deny according to place, when I say he is

not at Rome. I affirm according to the predicament of action, when I say he smites; but if I say he does not smite, I deny according to action, so as to declare that he does not so act. And when I say he is smitten, I affirm according to the predicament of passion; and I deny according to the same, when I say he is not smitten. And, in a word, there is no kind of predicament according to which we may please to affirm anything, without being proved to deny according to the same predicament, if we prefix the negative particle. And since this is so, if I were to affirm according to substance, in saying son, I should deny according to substance, in saying not son. But because I affirm relatively when I say he is a son, for I refer to the father; therefore I deny relatively if I say he is not a son, for I refer the same negation to the father, in that I wish to declare that he has not a parent. But if to be called son is precisely equivalent to the being called begotten (as we said before), then to be called not begotten is precisely equivalent to the being called not son. But we deny relatively when we say he is not son, therefore we deny relatively when we say he is not begotten. Further, what is unbegotten, unless not begotten? We do not escape, therefore, from the relative predicament, when he is called unbegotten. For as begotten is not said in relation to self, but in that he is of a begetter; so when one is called unbegotten, he is not so called in relation to himself, but it is declared that he is not of a begetter. Both meanings, however, turn upon the same predicament, which is called that of relation. But that which is asserted relatively does not denote substance, and accordingly, although begotten and unbegotten are diverse, they do not denote a different substance; because, as son is referred to father, and not son to not father, so it follows inevitably that begotten must be referred to begetter, and not-begotten to not-begetter.

CHAPTER 8

WHATEVER IS SPOKEN OF GOD ACCORDING TO SUBSTANCE, IS SPOKEN OF EACH PERSON SEVERALLY, AND TOGETHER OF THE TRINITY ITSELF. ONE ESSENCE IN GOD, AND THREE, IN GREEK, HYPOSTASES, IN LATIN, PERSONS

9. Wherefore let us hold this above all, that whatsoever is said of that most eminent and divine loftiness in respect to itself, is said in respect to substance, but that which is said in relation to anything, is not said in

respect to substance, but relatively; and that the effect of the same substance in Father and Son and Holy Spirit is, that whatsoever is said of each in respect to themselves, is to be taken of them, not in the plural in sum, but in the singular. For as the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, which no one doubts to be said in respect to substance, yet we do not say that the very Supreme Trinity itself is three Gods, but one God. So the Father is great, the Son great, and the Holy Spirit great; yet not three greats, but one great. For it is not written of the Father alone, as they perversely suppose, but of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, "Thou art great: Thou art God alone." And the Father is good, the Son good, and the Holy Spirit good; yet not three goods, but one good, of whom it is said, "None is good, save one, that is, God." For the Lord Jesus, lest He should be understood as man only by him who said, "Good Master," as addressing a man, does not therefore say, There is none good, save the Father alone; but, "None is good, save one, that is, God." For the Father by Himself is declared by the name of Father; but by the name of God, both Himself and the Son and the Holy Spirit, because the Trinity is one God. But position, and condition, and places, and times, are not said to be in God properly, but metaphorically and through similitudes. For He is both said to dwell between the cherubims, which is spoken in respect to position; and to be covered with the deep as with a garment, which is said in respect to condition; and "Thy years shall have no end," which is said in respect of time; and, "If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there," which is said in respect to place. And as respects action (or making), perhaps it may be said most truly of God alone, for God alone makes and Himself is not made. Nor is He liable to passions as far as belongs to that substance whereby He is God. So the Father is omnipotent, the Son omnipotent, and the Holy Spirit is omnipotent; yet not three omnipotents, but one omnipotent: "For of Him are all things, and through Him are all things, and in Him are all things; to whom be glory." Whatever, therefore, is spoken of God in respect to Himself, is both spoken singly of each person, that is, of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and together of the Trinity itself, not plurally but in the singular. For inasmuch as to God it is not one thing to be, and another thing to be great, but to Him it is the same thing to be, as it is to be great; therefore, as we do not say three essences, so we do not say three greatnesses, but one essence and one greatness. I say essence, which in Greek is called ousia, and which we call more usually substance.

10. They indeed use also the word hypostasis; but they intend to put a difference, I know not what, between ousia and hypostasis: so that most of ourselves who treat these things in the Greek language, are accustomed to say, mian ousian, treis hupostaseis or in Latin, one essence, three substances.

CHAPTER 9

THE THREE PERSONS NOT PROPERLY SO CALLED [IN A HUMAN SENSE]

But because with us the usage has already obtained, that by essence we understand the same thing which is understood by substance; we do not dare to say one essence, three substances, but one essence or substance and three persons: as many writers in Latin, who treat of these things, and are of authority, have said, in that they could not find any other more suitable way by which to enunciate in words that which they understood without words. For, in truth, as the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father, and that Holy Spirit who is also called the gift of God is neither the Father nor the Son, certainly they are three. And so it is said plurally, “I and my Father are one.” For He has not said, “is one,” as the Sabellians say; but, “are one.” Yet, when the question is asked, What three? human language labors altogether under great poverty of speech. The answer, however, is given, three “persons,” not that it might be [completely] spoken, but that it might not be left [wholly] unspoken.

CHAPTER 10

THOSE THINGS WHICH BELONG ABSOLUTELY TO GOD AS AN ESSENCE, ARE SPOKEN OF THE TRINITY IN THE SINGULAR, NOT IN THE PLURAL

11. As, therefore, we do not say three essences, so we do not say three greatnesses, or three who are great. For in things which are great by partaking of greatness, to which it is one thing to be, and another to be great, as a great house, and a great mountain, and a great mind; in these things, I say, greatness is one thing, and that which is great because of

greatness is another, and a great house, certainly, is not absolute greatness itself. But that is absolute greatness by which not only a great house is great, and any great mountain is great, but also by which every other thing whatsoever is great, which is called great; so that greatness itself is one thing, and those things are another which are called great from it. And this greatness certainly is primarily great, and in a much more excellent way than those things which are great by partaking of it. But since God is not great with that greatness which is not Himself, so that God, in being great, is, as it were, partaker of that greatness;—otherwise that will be a greatness greater than God, whereas there is nothing greater than God; therefore, He is great with that greatness by which He Himself is that same greatness. And, therefore, as we do not say three essences, so neither do we say three greatnesses; for it is the same thing to God to be, and to be great. For the same reason neither do we say three greats, but one who is great; since God is not great by partaking of greatness, but He is great by Himself being great, because He Himself is His own greatness. Let the same be said also of the goodness, and of the eternity, and of the omnipotence of God, and, in short, of all the predicaments which can be predicated of God, as He is spoken of in respect to Himself, not metaphorically and by similitude, but properly, if indeed anything can be spoken of Him properly, by the mouth of man.

CHAPTER 11

WHAT IS SAID RELATIVELY IN THE TRINITY

12. But whereas, in the same Trinity, some things severally are specially predicated, these are in no way said in reference to themselves in themselves, but either in mutual reference, or in respect to the creature; and, therefore, it is manifest that such things are spoken relatively, not in the way of substance. For the Trinity is called one God, great, good, eternal, omnipotent; and the same God Himself may be called His own deity, His own magnitude, His own goodness, His own eternity, His own omnipotence: but the Trinity cannot in the same way be called the Father, except perhaps metaphorically, in respect to the creature, on account of the adoption of sons. For that which is written, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord,” ought certainly not to be understood as if the Son were

excepted, or the Holy Spirit were excepted; which one Lord our God we rightly call also our Father, as regenerating us by His grace. Neither can the Trinity in any wise be called the Son, but it can be called, in its entirety, the Holy Spirit, according to that which is written, “God is a Spirit;” because both the Father is a spirit and the Son is a spirit, and the Father is holy and the Son is holy. Therefore, since the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one God, and certainly God is holy, and God is a spirit, the Trinity can be called also the Holy Spirit. But yet that Holy Spirit, who is not the Trinity, but is understood as in the Trinity, is spoken of in His proper name of the Holy Spirit relatively, since He is referred both to the Father and to the Son, because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son. But the relation is not itself apparent in that name, but it is apparent when He is called the gift of God; for He is the gift of the Father and of the Son, because “He proceeds from the Father,” as the Lord says; and because that which the apostle says, “Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His,” he says certainly of the Holy Spirit Himself. When we say, therefore, the gift of the giver, and the giver of the gift, we speak in both cases relatively in reciprocal reference. Therefore the Holy Spirit is a certain unutterable communion of the Father and the Son; and on that account, perhaps, He is so called, because the same name is suitable to both the Father and the Son. For He Himself is called specially that which they are called in common; because both the Father is a spirit and the Son a spirit, both the Father is holy and the Son holy. In order, therefore, that the communion of both may be signified from a name which is suitable to both, the Holy Spirit is called the gift of both. And this Trinity is one God, alone, good, great, eternal, omnipotent; itself its own unity, deity, greatness, goodness, eternity, omnipotence.

CHAPTER 12

IN RELATIVE THINGS THAT ARE RECIPROCAL, NAMES ARE SOMETIMES WANTING

13. Neither ought it to influence us—since we have said that the Holy Spirit is so called relatively, not the Trinity itself, but He who is in the Trinity—that the designation of Him to whom He is referred, does not seem to answer in turn to His designation. For we cannot, as we say the servant of a master, and the master of a servant, the son of a father and the father of a

son, so also say here—because these things are said relatively. For we speak of the Holy Spirit of the Father; but, on the other hand, we do not speak of the Father of the Holy Spirit, lest the Holy Spirit should be understood to be His Son. So also we speak of the Holy Spirit of the Son; but we do not speak of the Son of the Holy Spirit, lest the Holy Spirit be understood to be His Father. For it is the case in many relatives, that no designation is to be found by which those things which bear relation to each other may [in name] mutually correspond to each other. For what is more clearly spoken relatively than the word earnest? Since it is referred to that of which it is an earnest, and an earnest is always an earnest of something. Can we then, as we say, the earnest of the Father and of the Son, say in turn, the Father of the earnest or the Son of the earnest? But, on the other hand, when we say the gift of the Father and of the Son, we cannot indeed say the Father of the gift, or the Son of the gift; but that these may correspond mutually to each other, we say the gift of the giver and the giver of the gift; because here a word in use may be found, there it cannot.

CHAPTER 13

HOW THE WORD BEGINNING (PRINCIPIUM) IS SPOKEN RELATIVELY IN THE TRINITY

14. The Father is called so, therefore, relatively, and He is also relatively said to be the Beginning, and whatever else there may be of the kind; but He is called the Father in relation to the Son, the Beginning in relation to all things, which are from Him. So the Son is relatively so called; He is called also relatively the Word and the Image. And in all these appellations He is referred to the Father, but the Father is called by none of them. And the Son is also called the Beginning; for when it was said to Him, “Who art Thou?” He replied, “Even the Beginning, who also speak to you.” But is He, pray, the Beginning of the Father? For He intended to show Himself to be the Creator when He said that He was the Beginning, as the Father also is the beginning of the creature in that all things are from Him. For creator, too, is spoken relatively to creature, as master to servant. And so when we say, both that the Father is the Beginning, and that the Son is the Beginning, we do not speak of two beginnings of the creature; since both the Father and the Son together is one beginning in respect to the creature, as one Creator, as one God. But if whatever remains within itself and produces or works

anything is a beginning to that thing which it produces or works; then we cannot deny that the Holy Spirit also is rightly called the Beginning, since we do not separate Him from the appellation of Creator: and it is written of Him that He works; and assuredly, in working, He remains within Himself; for He Himself is not changed and turned into any of the things which He works. And see what it is that He works: "But the manifestation of the Spirit," he says, "is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another the discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will;" certainly as God—for who can work such great things but God?—but "it is the same God which worketh all in all." For if we are asked point by point concerning the Holy Spirit, we answer most truly that He is God; and with the Father and the Son together He is one God. Therefore, God is spoken of as one Beginning in respect to the creature, not as two or three beginnings.

CHAPTER 14

THE FATHER AND THE SON THE ONLY BEGINNING (PRINCIPIUM) OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

15. But in their mutual relation to one another in the Trinity itself, if the begetter is a beginning in relation to that which he begets, the Father is a beginning in relation to the Son, because He begets Him; but whether the Father is also a beginning in relation to the Holy Spirit, since it is said, "He proceeds from the Father," is no small question. Because, if it is so, He will not only be a beginning to that thing which He begets or makes, but also to that which He gives. And here, too, that question comes to light, as it can, which is wont to trouble many, Why the Holy Spirit is not also a son, since He, too, comes forth from the Father, as it is read in the Gospel. For the Spirit came forth, not as born, but as given; and so He is not called a son, because He was neither born, as the Only-begotten, nor made, so that by the grace of God He might be born into adoption, as we are. For that which is born of the Father, is referred to the Father only when called Son, and so the Son is the Son of the Father, and not also our Son; but that which is given is

referred both to Him who gave, and to those to whom He gave; and so the Holy Spirit is not only the Spirit of the Father and of the Son who gave Him, but He is also called ours, who have received Him: as "The salvation of the Lord," who gives salvation, is said also to be our salvation, who have received it. Therefore, the Spirit is both the Spirit of God who gave Him, and ours who have received Him. Not, indeed, that spirit of ours by which we are, because that is the spirit of a man which is in him; but this Spirit is ours in another mode, viz. that in which we also say, "Give us this day our bread." Although certainly we have received that spirit also, which is called the spirit of a man. "For what hast thou," he says, "which thou didst not receive?" But that is one thing, which we have received that we might be; another, that which we have received that we might be holy. Whence it is also written of John, that he "came in the spirit and power of Elias;" and by the spirit of Elias is meant the Holy Spirit, whom Elias received. And the same thing is to be understood of Moses, when the Lord says to him, "And I will take of thy spirit, and will put it upon them;" that is, I will give to them of the Holy Spirit, which I have already given to thee. If, therefore, that also which is given has him for a beginning by whom it is given, since it has received from no other source that which proceeds from him; it must be admitted that the Father and the Son are a Beginning of the Holy Spirit, not two Beginnings; but as the Father and Son are one God, and one Creator, and one Lord relatively to the creature, so are they one Beginning relatively to the Holy Spirit. But the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one Beginning in respect to the creature, as also one Creator and one God.

CHAPTER 15

WHETHER THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS A GIFT BEFORE AS WELL AS AFTER HE WAS GIVEN

16. But it is asked further, whether, as the Son, by being born, has not only this, that He is the Son, but that He is absolutely; and so also the Holy Spirit, by being given, has not only this, that He is given, but that He is absolutely—whether therefore He was, before He was given, but was not yet a gift; or whether, for the very reason that God was about to give Him, He was already a gift also before He was given. But if He does not proceed unless when He is given, and assuredly could not proceed before there was one to whom He might be given; how, in that case, was He [absolutely] in

His very substance, if He is not unless because He is given? just as the Son, by being born, not only has this, that He is a Son, which is said relatively, but His very substance absolutely, so that He is. Does the Holy Spirit proceed always, and proceed not in time, but from eternity, but because He so proceeded that He was capable of being given, was already a gift even before there was one to whom He might be given? For there is a difference in meaning between a gift and a thing that has been given. For a gift may exist even before it is given; but it cannot be called a thing that has been given unless it has been given.

CHAPTER 16

WHAT IS SAID OF GOD IN TIME, IS SAID RELATIVELY, NOT ACCIDENTALLY

17. Nor let it trouble us that the Holy Spirit, although He is co-eternal with the Father and the Son, yet is called something which exists in time; as, for instance, this very thing which we have called Him, a thing that has been given. For the Spirit is a gift eternally, but a thing that has been given in time. For if a lord also is not so called unless when he begins to have a slave, that appellation likewise is relative and in time to God; for the creature is not from all eternity, of which He is the Lord. How then shall we make it good that relative terms themselves are not accidental, since nothing happens accidentally to God in time, because He is incapable of change, as we have argued in the beginning of this discussion? Behold! to be the Lord, is not eternal to God; otherwise we should be compelled to say that the creature also is from eternity, since He would not be a lord from all eternity unless the creature also was a servant from all eternity. But as he cannot be a slave who has not a lord, neither can he be a lord who has not a slave. And if there be any one who says that God, indeed, is alone eternal, and that times are not eternal on account of their variety and changeableness, but that times nevertheless did not begin to be in time (for there was no time before times began, and therefore it did not happen to God in time that He should be Lord, since He was Lord of the very times themselves, which assuredly did not begin in time): what will he reply respecting man, who was made in time, and of whom assuredly He was not the Lord before he was of whom He was to be Lord? Certainly to be the Lord of man happened to God in time. And that all dispute may seem to be

taken away, certainly to be your Lord, or mine, who have only lately begun to be, happened to God in time. Or if this, too, seems uncertain on account of the obscure question respecting the soul, what is to be said of His being the Lord of the people of Israel? since, although the nature of the soul already existed, which that people had (a matter into which we do not now inquire), yet that people existed not as yet, and the time is apparent when it began to exist. Lastly, that He should be Lord of this or that tree, or of this or that corn crop, which only lately began to be, happened in time; since, although the matter itself already existed, yet it is one thing to be Lord of the matter (materiae), another to be Lord of the already created nature (naturae). For man, too, is lord of the wood at one time, and at another he is lord of the chest, although fabricated of that same wood; which he certainly was not at the time when he was already the lord of the wood. How then shall we make it good that nothing is said of God according to accident, except because nothing happens to His nature by which He may be changed, so that those things are relative accidents which happen in connection with some change of the things of which they are spoken. As a friend is so called relatively: for he does not begin to be one, unless when he has begun to love; therefore some change of will takes place, in order that he may be called a friend. And money, when it is called a price, is spoken of relatively, and yet it was not changed when it began to be a price; nor, again, when it is called a pledge, or any other thing of the kind. If, therefore, money can so often be spoken of relatively with no change of itself, so that neither when it begins, nor when it ceases to be so spoken of, does any change take place in that nature or form of it, whereby it is money; how much more easily ought we to admit, concerning that unchangeable substance of God, that something may be so predicated relatively in respect to the creature, that although it begin to be so predicated in time, yet nothing shall be understood to have happened to the substance itself of God, but only to that creature in respect to which it is predicated? “Lord,” it is said, “Thou hast been made our refuge.” God, therefore, is said to be our refuge relatively, for He is referred to us, and He then becomes our refuge when we flee to Him; pray does anything come to pass then in His nature, which, before we fled to Him, was not? In us therefore some change does take place; for we were worse before we fled to Him, and we become better by fleeing to Him: but in Him there is no change. So also He begins to be our Father, when we are regenerated through His grace, since He gave us power to become the sons of God. Our substance therefore is changed for the better, when we become His sons; and He at the same time begins to be our Father, but without any change of His own substance. Therefore that which begins to be spoken of God in time, and which was not spoken of Him before, is manifestly spoken of Him relatively; yet not according to any accident of God, so that anything should have happened to Him, but clearly according to some accident of that, in respect to which God begins to be called something relatively. When a righteous man begins to be a friend of God, he himself is changed; but far be it from us to say, that God loves any one in time with as it were a new love, which was not in Him before, with whom things gone by have not passed away and things future have been already done. Therefore He loved all His saints before the foundation of the world, as He predestinated them; but when they are converted and find them; then they are said to begin to be loved by Him, that what is said may be said in that way in which it can be comprehended by human affections. So also, when He is said to be wroth with the unrighteous, and gentle with the good, they are changed, not He: just as the light is troublesome to weak eyes, pleasant to those that are strong; namely, by their change, not its own.

Book VI

The question is proposed, how the apostle calls Christ “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” And an argument is raised, whether the Father is not wisdom Himself, but only the Father of wisdom; or whether Wisdom begat Wisdom. But the answer to this is deferred for a little, while the unity and equality of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, are proved; and that we ought to believe in a Trinity, not in a threefold (triplicem) god. Lastly, that saying of Hilary is explained, eternity in the Father, appearance in the image, use in the gift.

CHAPTER 1

THE SON, ACCORDING TO THE APOSTLE, IS THE POWER AND WISDOM OF THE FATHER. HENCE THE REASONING OF THE CATHOLICS AGAINST THE EARLIER ARIANS. A DIFFICULTY IS RAISED, WHETHER THE FATHER IS NOT WISDOM HIMSELF, BUT ONLY THE FATHER OF WISDOM

1. Somethink themselves hindered from admitting the equality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, because it is written, “Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God;” in that, on this ground, there does not appear to be equality; because the Father is not Himself power and wisdom, but the begetter of power and wisdom. And, in truth, the question is usually asked with no common earnestness, in what way God can be called the Father of power and wisdom. For the apostle says, “Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” And hence some on our side have reasoned in this way against the Arians, at least against those who at first set themselves up against the Catholic faith. For Arius himself is reported to have said, that if He is a Son, then He was born; if He was born, there was a time when the Son was not: not understanding that even to be born is, to God, from all eternity; so that the Son is co-eternal with the Father, as the brightness which is produced and is spread around by fire is co-eval with it, and would be co-eternal, if fire were eternal. And therefore some of the later Arians have abandoned that opinion, and have confessed that the Son of God did not begin to be in time. But among the arguments which those on our side

used to hold against them who said that there was a time when the Son was not, some were wont to introduce such an argument as this: If the Son of God is the power and wisdom of God, and God was never without power and wisdom, then the Son is co-eternal with God the Father; but the apostle says, “Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God;” and a man must be senseless to say that God at any time had not power or wisdom; therefore there was no time when the Son was not.

2. Now this argument compels us to say that God the Father is not wise, except by having the wisdom which He begat, not by the Father in Himself being wisdom itself. Further, if it be so, just as the Son also Himself is called God of God, Light of Light, we must consider whether He can be called wisdom of wisdom, if God the Father is not wisdom itself, but only the begetter of wisdom. And if we hold this, why is He not the begetter also of His own greatness, and of His own goodness, and of His own eternity, and of His own omnipotence; so that He is not Himself His own greatness, and His own goodness, and His own eternity, and His own omnipotence; but is great with that greatness which He begat, and good with that goodness, and eternal with that eternity, and omnipotent with that omnipotence, which was born of Him; just as He Himself is not His own wisdom, but is wise with that wisdom which was born of Him? For we need not be afraid of being compelled to say that there are many sons of God, over and above the adoption of the creature, co-eternal with the Father, if He be the begetter of His own greatness, and goodness, and eternity, and omnipotence. Because it is easy to reply to this cavil, that it does not at all follow, because many things are named, that He should be the Father of many co-eternal sons; just as it does not follow that He is the Father of two sons, because Christ is said to be the power of God, and the wisdom of God. For that certainly is the power which is the wisdom, and that is the wisdom which is the power; and in like manner, therefore, of the rest also; so that that is the greatness which is the power, or any other of those things which either have been mentioned above, or may hereafter be mentioned.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT IS SAID OF THE FATHER AND SON TOGETHER, AND WHAT NOT

3. But if nothing is spoken of the Father as such, except that which is spoken of Him in relation to the Son, that is, that He is His father, or begetter, or beginning; and if also the begetter is by consequence a beginning to that which he begets of himself; but whatever else is spoken of Him is so spoken as with the Son, or rather in the Son; whether that He is great with that greatness which He begat, or just with that justice which He begat, or good with that goodness which He begat, or powerful with that force or power which He begat, or wise with that wisdom which He begat: yet the Father is not said to be greatness itself, but the begetter of greatness; but the Son, as He is called the Son as such, is not so called with the Father but in relation to the Father, so is not great in and by himself, but with the Father, of whom He is the greatness; and so also is called wise with the Father, of whom He Himself is the wisdom; just as the Father is called wise with the Son, because He is wise with that wisdom which He begat; therefore the one is not called without the other, whatever they are called in respect to themselves; that is, whatever they are called that manifests their essential nature, both are so called together;—if these things are so, then the Father is not God without the Son, nor the Son God without the Father, but both together are God. And that which is said, “In the beginning was the Word,” means that the Word was in the Father. Or if “In the beginning” is intended to mean, Before all things; then in that which follows, “And the Word was with God,” the Son alone is understood to be the Word, not the Father and Son together, as though both were one Word (for He is the Word in the same way as He is the Image, but the Father and Son are not both together the Image, but the Son alone is the Image of the Father: just as He is also the Son of the Father, for both together are not the Son). But in that which is added, “And the Word was with God,” there is much reason to understand thus: “The Word,” which is the Son alone, “was with God,” which is not the Father alone, but God the Father and the Son together. But what wonder is there, if this can be said in the case of some twofold things widely different from each other? For what are so different as soul and body? Yet we can say the soul was with a man, that is, in a man; although the soul is not the body, and man is both soul and body together. So that what follows in the Scripture, “And the Word was God,” may be understood thus: The Word, which is not the Father, was God together with the Father. Are we then to say thus, that the Father is the begetter of His own greatness,

that is, the begetter of His own power, or the begetter of His own wisdom; and that the Son is greatness, and power, and wisdom; but that the great, omnipotent, and wise God, is both together? How then God of God, Light of Light? For not both together are God of God, but only the Son is of God, that is to say, of the Father; nor are both together Light of Light, but the Son only is of Light, that is, of the Father. Unless, perhaps, it was in order to intimate and inculcate briefly that the Son is co-eternal with the Father, that it is said, God of God, and Light of Light, or anything else of the like kind: as if to say, This which is not the Son without the Father, of this which is not the Father without the Son; that is, this Light which is not Light without the Father, of that Light, viz. the Father, which is not Light without the Son; so that, when it is said, God which is not the Son without the Father, and of God which is not the Father without the Son, it may be perfectly understood that the Begetter did not precede that which He begot. And if this be so, then this alone cannot be said of them, namely, this or that of this or that, which they are not both together. Just as the Word cannot be said to be of the Word, because both are not the Word together, but only the Son; nor image of image, since they are not both together the image; nor Son of Son, since both together are not the Son, according to that which is said, “I and my Father are one.” For “we are one” means, what He is, that am I also; according to essence, not according to relation.

CHAPTER 3

THAT THE UNITY OF THE ESSENCE OF THE FATHER AND THE SON IS TO BE GATHERED FROM THE WORDS, “WE ARE ONE.” THE SON IS EQUAL TO THE FATHER BOTH IN WISDOM AND IN ALL OTHER THINGS

4. And I know not whether the words, “They are one,” are ever found in Scripture as spoken of things of which the nature is different. But if there are more things than one of the same nature, and they differ in sentiment, they are not one, and that so far as they differ in sentiment. For if the disciples were already one by the fact of being men, He would not say, “That they may be one, as we are one,” when commending them to the Father. But because Paul and Apollos were both alike men, and also of like sentiments, “He that planteth,” he says, “and he that watereth are one.” When, therefore, anything is so called one, that it is not added in what it is

one, and yet more things than one are called one, then the same essence and nature is signified, not differing nor disagreeing. But when it is added in what it is one, it may be meant that something is made one out of things more than one, though they are different in nature. As soul and body are assuredly not one; for, what are so different? unless there be added, or understood in what they are one, that is, one man, or one animal [person]. Thence the apostle says, “He who is joined to a harlot, is one body;” he does not say, they are one or he is one; but he has added “body,” as though it were one body composed by being joined together of two different bodies, masculine and feminine. And, “He that is joined unto the Lord,” he says,” is one spirit:” he did not say, he that is joined unto the Lord is one, or they are one; but he added, “spirit.” For the spirit of man and the Spirit of God are different in nature; but by being joined they become one spirit of two different spirits, so that the Spirit of God is blessed and perfect without the human spirit, but the spirit of man cannot be blessed without God. Nor is it without cause, I think, that when the Lord said so much in the Gospel according to John, and so often, of unity itself, whether of His own with the Father, or of ours interchangeably with ourselves; He has nowhere said, that we are also one with Himself, but, “that they maybe one as we also are one.” Therefore the Father and the Son are one, undoubtedly according to unity of substance; and there is one God, and one great, and one wise, as we have argued.

5. Whence then is the Father greater? For if greater, He is greater by greatness; but whereas the Son is His greatness, neither assuredly is the Son greater than He who begat Him, nor is the Father greater than that greatness, whereby He is great; therefore they are equal. For whence is He equal, if not in that which He is, to whom it is not one thing to be, and another to be great? Or if the Father is greater in eternity, the Son is not equal in anything whatsoever. For whence equal? If you say in greatness, that greatness is not equal which is less eternal, and so of all things else. Or is He perhaps equal in power, but not equal in wisdom? But how is that power which is less wise, equal? Or is He equal in wisdom, but not equal in power? But how is that wisdom equal which is less powerful? It remains, therefore, that if He is not equal in anything, He is not equal in all. But Scripture proclaims, that “He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.”

Therefore any adversary of the truth whatever, provided he feels bound by apostolical authority, must needs confess that the Son is equal with God in each one thing whatsoever. Let him choose that which he will; from it he will be shown, that He is equal in all things which are said of His substance.

CHAPTER 4

THE SAME ARGUMENT CONTINUED

6. For in like manner the virtues which are in the human mind, although each has its own several and different meaning, yet are in no way mutually separable; so that, for instance, whosoever were equal in courage, are equal also in prudence, and temperance, and justice. For if you say that such and such men are equal in courage, but that one of them is greater in prudence, it follows that the courage of the other is less prudent, and so neither are they equal in courage, since the courage of the former is more prudent. And so you will find it to be the case with the other virtues, if you consider them one by one. For the question is not of the strength of the body, but of the courage of the mind. How much more therefore is this the case in that unchangeable and eternal substance, which is incomparably more simple than the human mind is? Since, in the human mind, to be is not the same as to be strong, or prudent, or just, or temperate; for a mind can exist, and yet have none of these virtues. But in God to be is the same as to be strong, or to be just, or to be wise, or whatever is said of that simple multiplicity, or multifold simplicity, whereby to signify His substance. Wherefore, whether we say God of God in such way that this name belongs to each, yet not so that both together are two Gods, but one God; for they are in such way united with each other, as according to the apostle's testimony may take place even in diverse and differing substances; for both the Lord alone is a Spirit, and the spirit of a man alone is assuredly a spirit; yet, if it cleave to the Lord, "it is one spirit:" how much more there, where there is an absolutely inseparable and eternal union, so that He may not seem absurdly to be called as it were the Son of both, when He is called the Son of God, if that which is called God is only said of both together. Or perhaps it is, that whatever is said of God so as to indicate His substance, is not said except of both together, nay of the Trinity itself together? Whether therefore it be this or that (which needs a closer inquiry), it is enough for the present to see

from what has been said, that the Son is in no respect equal with the Father, if He is found to be unequal in anything which has to do with signifying His substance, as we have already shown. But the apostle has said that He is equal. Therefore the Son is equal with the Father in all things, and is of one and the same substance.

CHAPTER 5

THE HOLY SPIRIT ALSO IS EQUAL TO THE FATHER AND THE SON IN ALL THINGS

7. Wherefore also the Holy Spirit consists in the same unity of substance, and in the same equality. For whether He is the unity of both, or the holiness, or the love, or therefore the unity because the love, and therefore the love because the holiness, it is manifest that He is not one of the two, through whom the two are joined, through whom the Begotten is loved by the Begetter, and loves Him that begat Him, and through whom, not by participation, but by their own essence, neither by the gift of any superior, but by their own, they are "keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" which we are commanded to imitate by grace, both towards God and towards ourselves. "On which two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." So those three are God, one, alone, great, wise, holy, blessed. But we are blessed from Him, and through Him, and in Him; because we ourselves are one by His gift, and one spirit with Him, because our soul cleaves to Him so as to follow Him. And it is good for us to cleave to God, since He will destroy every man who is estranged from Him. Therefore the Holy Spirit, whatever it is, is something common both to the Father and Son. But that communion itself is consubstantial and co-eternal; and if it may fitly be called friendship, let it be so called; but it is more aptly called love. And this is also a substance, since God is a substance, and "God is love," as it is written. But as He is a substance together with the Father and the Son, so that substance is together with them great, and together with them good, and together with them holy, and whatsoever else is said in reference to substance; since it is not one thing to God to be, and another to be great or to be good, and the rest, as we have shown above. For if love is less great therein [i.e. in God] than wisdom, then wisdom is loved in less degree than according to what it is; love is therefore equal, in order that wisdom may be loved according to its being; but wisdom is equal with the

Father, as we have proved above; therefore also the Holy Spirit is equal; and if equal, equal in all things, on account of the absolute simplicity which is in that substance. And therefore they are not more than three: One who loves Him who is from Himself, and One who loves Him from whom He is, and Love itself. And if this last is nothing, how is “God love”? If it is not substance, how is God substance?

CHAPTER 6

HOW GOD IS A SUBSTANCE BOTH SIMPLE AND MANIFOLD

8. But if it is asked how that substance is both simple and manifold: consider, first, why the creature is manifold, but in no way really simple. And first, all that is body is composed certainly of parts; so that therein one part is greater, another less, and the whole is greater than any part whatever or how great soever. For the heaven and the earth are parts of the whole bulk of the world; and the earth alone, and the heaven alone, is composed of innumerable parts; and its third part is less than the remainder, and the half of it is less than the whole; and the whole body of the world, which is usually called by its two parts, viz. the heaven and the earth, is certainly greater than the heaven alone or the earth alone. And in each several body, size is one thing, color another, shape another; for the same color and the same shape may remain with diminished size; and the same shape and the same size may remain with the color changed; and the same shape not remaining, yet the thing may be just as great, and of the same color. And whatever other things are predicated together of body can be changed either all together, or the larger part of them without the rest. And hence the nature of body is conclusively proved to be manifold, and in no respect simple. The spiritual creature also, that is, the soul, is indeed the more simple of the two if compared with the body; but if we omit the comparison with the body, it is manifold, and itself also not simple. For it is on this account more simple than the body, because it is not diffused in bulk through extension of place, but in each body, it is both whole in the whole, and whole in each several part of it; and, therefore, when anything takes place in any small particle whatever of the body, such as the soul can feel, although it does not take place in the whole body, yet the whole soul feels it, since the whole soul is not unconscious of it. But, nevertheless, since in the soul also it is

one thing to be skillful, another to be indolent, another to be intelligent, another to be of retentive memory; since cupidity is one thing, fear another, joy another, sadness another; and since things innumerable, and in innumerable ways, are to be found in the nature of the soul, some without others, and some more, some less; it is manifest that its nature is not simple, but manifold. For nothing simple is changeable, but every creature is changeable.

CHAPTER 7

GOD IS A TRINITY, BUT NOT TRIPLE (TRIPLEX)

But God is truly called in manifold ways, great, good, wise, blessed, true, and whatsoever other thing seems to be said of Him not unworthily: but His greatness is the same as His wisdom; for He is not great by bulk, but by power; and His goodness is the same as His wisdom and greatness, and His truth the same as all those things; and in Him it is not one thing to be blessed, and another to be great, or wise, or true, or good, or in a word to be Himself.

9. Neither, since He is a Trinity, is He therefore to be thought triple (triplex) otherwise the Father alone, or the Son alone, will be less than the Father and Son together. Although, indeed, it is hard to see how we can say, either the Father alone, or the Son alone; since both the Father is with the Son, and the Son with the Father, always and inseparably: not that both are the Father, or both are the Son; but because they are always one in relation to the other, and neither the one nor the other alone. But because we call even the Trinity itself God alone, although He is always with holy spirits and souls, but say that He only is God, because they are not also God with Him; so we call the Father the Father alone, not because He is separate from the Son, but because they are not both together the Father.

CHAPTER 8

NO ADDITION CAN BE MADE TO THE NATURE OF GOD

Since, therefore, the Father alone, or the Son alone, or the Holy Spirit alone, is as great as is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit together, in no manner is He to be called threefold. Forasmuch as bodies increase by union of themselves. For although he who cleaves to his wife is one body; yet it is a greater body than if it were that of the husband alone, or of the wife alone. But in spiritual things, when the less adheres to the greater, as the creature to the Creator, the former becomes greater than it was, not the latter. For in those things which are not great by bulk, to be greater is to be better. And the spirit of any creature becomes better, when it cleaves to the Creator, than if it did not so cleave; and therefore also greater because better. “He,” then, “that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit:” but yet the Lord does not therefore become greater, although he who is joined to the Lord does so. In God Himself, therefore when the equal Son, or the Holy Spirit equal to the Father and the Son, is joined to the equal Father, God does not become greater than each of them severally; because that perfectness cannot increase. But whether it be the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, He is perfect, and God the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit is perfect; and therefore He is a Trinity rather than triple.

CHAPTER 9

WHETHER ONE OR THE THREE PERSONS TOGETHER ARE CALLED THE ONLY GOD

10. And since we are showing how we can say the Father alone, because there is no Father in the Godhead except Himself, we must consider also the opinion which holds that the only true God is not the Father alone, but the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. For if any one should ask whether the Father alone is God, how can it be replied that He is not, unless perhaps we were to say that the Father indeed is God, but that He is not God alone, but that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are God alone? But then what shall we do with that testimony of the Lord? For He was speaking to the Father, and had named the Father as Him to whom He was speaking, when He says, “And this is life eternal, that they may know Thee the one true God.” And this the Arians indeed usually take, as if the Son were not true God. Passing them by, however, we must see whether, when it is said to the Father, “That they may know Thee the one true God,” we are forced to understand it as if He wished to intimate that the Father alone is the true God; lest we should not understand any to be God, except the three together, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Are we therefore, from the

testimony of the Lord, both to call the Father the one true God, and the Son the one true God, and the Holy Spirit the one true God, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit together, that is, the Trinity itself together, not three true Gods but one true God? Or because He added, "And Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent," are we to supply "the one true God;" so that the order of the words is this, "That they may know Thee, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent, the one true God?" Why then did He omit to mention the Holy Spirit? Is it because it follows, that whenever we name One who cleaves to One by a harmony so great that through this harmony both are one, this harmony itself must be understood, although it is not mentioned? For in that place, too, the apostle seems as it were to pass over the Holy Spirit; and yet there, too, He is understood, where he says, "All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." And again, "The head of the woman is the man, the head of the man is Christ, and the head of Christ is God." But again, if God is only all three together, how can God be the head of Christ, that is, the Trinity the head of Christ, since Christ is in the Trinity in order that it may be the Trinity? Is that which is the Father with the Son, the head of that which is the Son alone? For the Father with the Son is God, but the Son alone is Christ: especially since it is the Word already made flesh that speaks; and according to this His humiliation also, the Father is greater than He, as He says, "for my Father is greater than I;" so that the very being of God, which is one to Him with the Father, is itself the head of the man who is mediator, which He is alone. For if we rightly call the mind the chief thing of man, that is, as it were the head of the human substance, although the man himself together with the mind is man; why is not the Word with the Father, which together is God, much more suitably and much more the head of Christ, although Christ as man cannot be understood except with the Word which was made flesh? But this, as we have already said, we shall consider somewhat more carefully hereafter. At present the equality and one and the same substance of the Trinity has been demonstrated as briefly as possible, that in whatever way that other question be determined, the more rigorous discussion of which we have deferred, nothing may hinder us from confessing the absolute equality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 10

OF THE ATTRIBUTES ASSIGNED BY HILARY TO EACH PERSON. THE TRINITY IS REPRESENTED IN THINGS THAT ARE MADE

11. A certain writer, when he would briefly intimate the special attributes of each of the persons in the Trinity, tells us that “Eternity is in the Father, form in the Image, use in the Gift.” And since he was a man of no mean authority in handling the Scriptures, and in the assertion of the faith, for it is Hilary who put this in his book (On the Trinity, ii.); I have searched into the hidden meaning of these words as far as I can, that is, of the Father, and the Image, and the Gift, of eternity, and of form, and of use. And I do not think that he intended more by the word eternity, than that the Father has not a father from whom He is; but the Son is from the Father, so as to be, and so as to be co-eternal with Him. For if an image perfectly fills the measure of that of which it is the image, then the image is made equal to that of which it is the image, not the latter to its own image. And in respect to this image he has named form, I believe on account of the quality of beauty, where there is at once such great fitness, and prime equality, and prime likeness, differing in nothing, and unequal in no respect, and in no part unlike, but answering exactly to Him whose image it is: where there is prime and absolute life, to whom it is not one thing to live, and another to be, but the same thing to be and to live; and prime and absolute intellect, to whom it is not one thing to live, another to understand, but to understand is to live, and is to be, and all things are one: as though a perfect Word (John i. 1), to which nothing is wanting, and a certain skill of the omnipotent and wise God, full of all living, unchangeable sciences, and all one in it, as itself is one from one, with whom it is one. Therein God knew all things which He made by it; and therefore, while times pass away and succeed, nothing passes away or succeeds to the knowledge of God. For things which are created are not therefore known by God, because they have been made; and not rather have been therefore made, even although changeable, because they are known unchangeably by Him. Therefore that unspeakable conjunction of the Father and His image is not without fruition, without love, without joy. Therefore that love, delight, felicity, or blessedness, if indeed it can be worthily expressed by any human word, is called by him, in short, Use; and is the Holy Spirit in the Trinity, not begotten, but the

sweetness of the begetter and of the begotten, filling all creatures according to their capacity with abundant bountifulness and copiousness, that they may keep their proper order and rest satisfied in their proper place.

12. Therefore all these things which are made by divine skill, show in themselves a certain unity, and form, and order; for each of them is both some one thing, as are the several natures of bodies and dispositions of souls; and is fashioned in some form, as are the figures or qualities of bodies, and the various learning or skill of souls; and seeks or preserves a certain order, as are the several weights or combinations of bodies and the loves or delights of souls. When therefore we regard the Creator, who is understood by the things that are made we must needs understand the Trinity of whom there appear traces in the creature, as is fitting. For in that Trinity is the supreme source of all things, and the most perfect beauty, and the most blessed delight. Those three, therefore, both seem to be mutually determined to each other, and are in themselves infinite. But here in corporeal things, one thing alone is not as much as three together, and two are something more than one; but in that highest Trinity one is as much as the three together, nor are two anything more than one. And They are infinite in themselves. So both each are in each, and all in each, and each in all, and all in all, and all are one. Let him who sees this, whether in part, or “through a glass and in an enigma,” rejoice in knowing God; and let him honor Him as God, and give thanks; but let him who does not see it, strive to see it through piety, not to cavil at it through blindness. Since God is one, but yet is a Trinity. Neither are we to take the words, “of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things,” as used indiscriminately [i.e., to denote a unity without distinctions]; nor yet to denote many gods, for “to Him, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

Book VII

The question is explained, which had been deferred in the previous book, viz. that God the Father, who begat the Son, His power and wisdom, is not only the Father of power and wisdom, but also Himself power and wisdom; and similarly the Holy Spirit: yet that there are not three powers or three wisdoms, but one power and one wisdom, as there is one God and one essence. Inquiry is then made, why the Latins say one essence, three persons, in God; but the Greeks, one essence, three substances or hypostases: and both modes of expression are shown to arise from the necessities of speech, that we might have an answer to give when asked, what three, while truly confessing that there are three, viz. the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 1

AUGUSTIN RETURNS TO THE QUESTION, WHETHER EACH PERSON OF THE TRINITY BY ITSELF IS WISDOM. WITH WHAT DIFFICULTY, OR IN WHAT WAY, THE PROPOSED QUESTION IS TO BE SOLVED

1. Let us now inquire more carefully, so far as God grants, into that which a little before we deferred; whether each person also in the Trinity can also by Himself and not with the other two be called God, or great, or wise, or true, or omnipotent, or just, or anything else that can be said of God, not relatively, but absolutely; or whether these things cannot be said except when the Trinity is understood. For the question is raised,—because it is written, “Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God,”—whether He is so the Father of His own wisdom and His own power, as that He is wise with that wisdom which He begat, and powerful with that power which He begat; and whether, since He is always powerful and wise, He always begat power and wisdom. For if it be so, then, as we have said, why is He not also the Father of His own greatness by which He is great, and of His own goodness by which He is good, and of His own justice by which He is just, and whatever else there is? Or if all these things are understood, although under more names than one, to be in the same wisdom and power, so that

that is greatness which is power, that is goodness which is wisdom, and that again is wisdom which is power, as we have already argued; then let us remember, that when I mention any one of these, I am to be taken as if I mentioned all. It is asked, then, whether the Father also by Himself is wise, and is Himself His own wisdom itself; or whether He is wise in the same way as He speaks. For He speaks by the Word which He begat, not by the word which is uttered, and sounds, and passes away, but by the Word which was with God, and the Word was God, and all things were made by Him: by the Word which is equal to Himself, by whom He always and unchangeably utters Himself. For He is not Himself the Word, as He is not the Son nor the image. But in speaking (putting aside those words of God in time which are produced in the creature, for they sound and pass away,—in speaking then) by that co-eternal Word, He is not understood singly, but with that Word itself, without whom certainly He does not speak. Is He then in such way wise as He is one who speaks, so as to be in such way wisdom, as He is the Word, and so that to be the Word is to be wisdom, that is, also to be power, so that power and wisdom and the Word may be the same, and be so called relatively as the Son and the image: and that the Father is not singly powerful or wise, but together with the power and wisdom itself which He begat (genuit); just as He is not singly one who speaks, but by that Word and together with that Word which He begat; and in like way great by that and together with that greatness, which He begat? And if He is not great by one thing, and God by another, but great by that whereby He is God, because it is not one thing to Him to be great and another to be God; it follows that neither is He God singly, but by that and together with that deity (deitas) which He begat; so that the Son is the deity of the Father, as He is the wisdom and power of the Father, and as He is the Word and image of the Father. And because it is not one thing to Him to be, another to be God, the Son is also the essence of the Father, as He is His Word and image. And hence also—except that He is the Father [the Unbegotten]—the Father is not anything unless because He has the Son; so that not only that which is meant by Father (which it is manifest He is not called relatively to Himself but to the Son, and therefore is the Father because He has the Son), but that which He is in respect to His own substance is so called, because He begat His own essence. For as He is great, only with that greatness which He begat, so also He is, only with that essence which He begat; because it is not one thing to Him to be, and another to be great. Is He therefore the Father of His own essence, in the same way as He is the Father of His own greatness, as He is the Father of His own power and wisdom? since His greatness is the same as His power, and His essence the same as His greatness.

2. This discussion has arisen from that which is written, that “Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” Wherefore our discourse is compressed into these narrow limits, while we desire to speak things unspeakable; that either we must say that Christ is not the power of God and the wisdom of God, and so shamelessly and impiously resist the apostle; or we must acknowledge that Christ is indeed the power of God and the wisdom of God, but that His Father is not the Father of His own power and wisdom, which is not less impious; for so neither will He be the Father of Christ, because Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God; or that the Father is not powerful with His own power, or wise with His own wisdom: and who shall dare to say this? Or yet, again, that we must understand, that in the Father it is one thing to be, another thing to be wise, so that He is not by that by which He is wise: a thing usually understood of the soul, which is at some times unwise, at others wise; as being by nature changeable, and not absolutely and perfectly simple. Or, again, that the Father is not anything in respect to His own substance; and that not only that He is the Father, but that He is, is said relatively to the Son. How then can the Son be of the same essence as the Father, seeing that the Father, in respect to Himself, is neither His own essence, nor is at all in respect to Himself, but even His essence is in relation to the Son? But, on the contrary, much more is He of one and the same essence, since the Father and Son are one and the same essence; seeing that the Father has His being itself not in respect to Himself, but to the Son, which essence He begat, and by which essence He is whatever He is. Therefore neither [person] is in respect to Himself alone; and both exist relatively the one to the other. Or is the Father alone not called Father of himself, but whatever He is called, is called relatively to the Son, but the Son is predicated of in reference to Himself? And if it be so, what is predicated of Him in reference to Himself? Is it His essence itself? But the Son is the essence of the Father, as He is the power and wisdom of the Father, as He is the Word of the Father, and the

image of the Father. Or if the Son is called essence in reference to Himself, but the Father is not essence, but the begetter of the essence, and is not in respect to Himself, but is by that very essence which He begat; as He is great by that greatness which He begat: therefore the Son is also called greatness in respect to Himself; therefore He is also called, in like manner, power, and wisdom, and word, and image. But what can be more absurd than that He should be called image in respect to Himself? Or if image and word are not the very same with power and wisdom, but the former are spoken relatively, and the latter in respect to self, not to another; then we get to this, that the Father is not wise with that wisdom which He begat, because He Himself cannot be spoken relatively to it, and it cannot be spoken relatively to Him. For all things which are said relatively are said reciprocally; therefore it remains that even in essence the Son is spoken of relatively to the Father. But from this is educed a most unexpected sense: that essence itself is not essence, or at least that, when it is called essence, not essence but something relative is intimated. As when we speak of a master, essence is not intimated, but a relative which has reference to a slave; but when we speak of a man, or any such thing which is said in respect to self not to something else, then essence is intimated. Therefore when a man is called a master, man himself is essence, but he is called master relatively; for he is called man in respect to himself, but master in respect to his slave. But in regard to the point from which we started, if essence itself is spoken relatively, essence itself is not essence. Add further, that all essence which is spoken of relatively, is also something, although the relation be taken away; as e.g. in the case of a man who is a master, and a man who is a slave, and a horse that is a beast of burden, and money that is a pledge, the man, and the horse, and the money are spoken in respect to themselves, and are substances or essences; but master, and slave, and beast of burden, and pledge, are spoken relatively to something. But if there were not a man, that is, some substance, there would be none who could be called relatively a master; and if there were no horse having a certain essence, there would be nothing that could be called relatively a beast of burden; so if money were not some kind of substance, it could not be called relatively a pledge. Wherefore, if the Father also is not something in respect to Himself then there is no one at all that can be spoken of relatively to something. For it is not as it is with color. The color of a thing is referred to the thing colored, and color is not spoken at all in reference to substance, but is always of something that is colored; but that thing of which it is the color, even if it is referred to color in respect to its being colored, is yet, in respect to its being a body, spoken of in respect to substance. But in no way may we think, in like manner, that the Father cannot be called anything in respect to His own substance, but that whatever He is called, He is called in relation to the Son; while the same Son is spoken of both in respect to His own substance and in relation to the Father, when He is called great greatness, and powerful power, plainly in respect to Himself, and the greatness and power of the great and powerful Father, by which the Father is great and powerful. It is not so; but both are substance, and both are one substance. And as it is absurd to say that whiteness is not white, so is it absurd to say that wisdom is not wise; and as whiteness is called white in respect to itself, so also wisdom is called wise in respect to itself. But the whiteness of a body is not an essence, since the body itself is the essence, and that is a quality of it; and hence also a body is said from that quality to be white, to which body to be is not the same thing as to be white. For the form in it is one thing, and the color another; and both are not in themselves, but in a certain bulk, which bulk is neither form nor color, but is formed and colored. True wisdom is both wise, and wise in itself. And since in the case of every soul that becomes wise by partaking of wisdom, if it again becomes foolish, yet wisdom in itself remains; nor when that soul was changed into folly is the wisdom likewise so changed; therefore wisdom is not in him who becomes wise by it, in the same manner as whiteness is in the body which is by it made white. For when the body has been changed into another color, that whiteness will not remain, but will altogether cease to be. But if the Father who begat wisdom is also made wise by it, and to be is not to Him the same as to be wise, then the Son is His quality, not His offspring; and there will no longer be absolute simplicity in the Godhead. But far be it from being so, since in truth in the Godhead is absolutely simple essence, and therefore to be is there the same as to be wise. But if to be is there the same as to be wise, then the Father is not wise by that wisdom which He begat; otherwise He did not beget it, but it begat Him. For what else do we say when we say, that to Him to be is the same as to be wise, unless that He is by that whereby He is wise? Wherefore, that which is the cause to Him of being wise, is itself also the cause to Him that He is; and accordingly, if the wisdom which He begat is the cause to Him of being wise, it is also the cause to Him that He is; and this cannot be the case, except either by begetting or by creating Him. But no one ever said in any sense that wisdom is either the begetter or the creator of the Father; for what could be more senseless? Therefore both the Father Himself is wisdom, and the Son is in such way called the wisdom of the Father, as He is called the light of the Father; that is, that in the same manner as light from light, and yet both one light, so we are to understand wisdom of wisdom, and yet both one wisdom; and therefore also one essence, since, in God, to be, is the same as to be wise. For what to be wise is to wisdom, and to be able is to power, and to be eternal is to eternity, and to be just to justice, and to be great to greatness, that being itself is to essence. And since in the Divine simplicity, to be wise is nothing else than to be, therefore wisdom there is the same as essence.

CHAPTER 2

THE FATHER AND THE SON ARE TOGETHER ONE WISDOM, AS ONE ESSENCE, ALTHOUGH NOT TOGETHER ONE WORD

3. Therefore the Father and the Son together are one essence, and one greatness, and one truth, and one wisdom. But the Father and Son both together are not one Word, because both together are not one Son. For as the Son is referred to the Father, and is not so called in respect to Himself, so also the Word is referred to him whose Word it is, when it is called the Word. Since He is the Son in that He is the Word, and He is the Word in that He is the Son. Inasmuch, therefore, as the Father and the Son together are certainly not one Son, it follows that the Father and the Son together are not the one Word of both. And therefore He is not the Word in that He is wisdom; since He is not called the Word in respect to Himself, but only relatively to Him whose Word He is, as He is called the Son in relation to the Father; but He is wisdom by that whereby He is essence. And therefore, because one essence, one wisdom. But since the Word is also wisdom, yet is not thereby the Word because He is wisdom for He is understood to be the Word relatively, but wisdom essentially: let us understand, that when He is called the Word, it is meant, wisdom that is born, so as to be both the Son and the Image; and that when these two words are used, namely wisdom

(is) born, in one of the two, namely born, both Word, and Image, and Son, are understood, and in all these names essence is not expressed, since they are spoken relatively; but in the other word, namely wisdom, since it is spoken also in respect to substance, for wisdom is wise in itself, essence also is expressed, and that being of His which is to be wise. Whence the Father and Son together are one wisdom, because one essence, and singly wisdom of wisdom, as essence of essence. And hence they are not therefore not one essence, because the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father, or because the Father is un-begotten, but the Son is begotten: since by these names only their relative attributes are expressed. But both together are one wisdom and one essence; in which to be, is the same as to be wise. And both together are not the Word or the Son, since to be is not the same as to be the Word or the Son, as we have already sufficiently shown that these terms are spoken relatively.

CHAPTER 3

WHY THE SON CHIEFLY IS INTIMATED IN THE SCRIPTURES BY THE NAME OF WISDOM, WHILE BOTH THE FATHER AND THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE WISDOM. THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT, TOGETHER WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON, IS ONE WISDOM

4. Why, then, is scarcely anything ever said in the Scriptures of wisdom, unless to show that it is begotten or created of God?—begotten in the case of that Wisdom by which all things are made; but created or made, as in men, when they are converted to that Wisdom which is not created and made but begotten, and are so enlightened; for in these men themselves there comes to be something which may be called their wisdom: even as the Scriptures foretell or narrate, that “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;” for in this way Christ was made wisdom, because He was made man. Is it on this account that wisdom does not speak in these books, nor is anything spoken of it, except to declare that it is born of God, or made by Him (although the Father is Himself wisdom), namely, because wisdom ought to be commended and imitated by us, by the imitation of which we are fashioned [rightly]? For the Father speaks it, that it may be His Word: yet not as a word producing a sound proceeds from the mouth, or is thought before it is pronounced. For this word is completed in certain spaces of time, but that is eternal, and speaks to us by enlightening us, what ought to

be spoken to men, both of itself and of the Father. And therefore He says, “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him:” since the Father reveals by the Son, that is, by His Word. For if that word which we utter, and which is temporal and transitory, declares both itself, and that of which we speak, how much more the Word of God, by which all things are made? For this Word so declares the Father as He is the Father; because both itself so is, and is that which is the Father, in so far as it is wisdom and essence. For in so far as it is the Word, it is not what the Father is; because the Word is not the Father, and Word is spoken relatively, as is also Son, which assuredly is not the Father. And therefore Christ is the power and wisdom of God, because He Himself, being also power and wisdom, is from the Father, who is power and wisdom; as He is light of the Father, who is light, and the fountain of life with God the Father, who is Himself assuredly the fountain of life. For “with Thee,” He says, “is the fountain of life, and in Thy light shall we see light.” Because, “as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself:” and, “He was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world:” and this light, “the Word,” was “with God;” but “the Word also was God;” and “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all:” but a light that is not corporeal, but spiritual; yet not in such way spiritual, that it was wrought by illumination, as it was said to the apostles, “Ye are the light of the world,” but “the light which lighteth every man,” that very supreme wisdom itself who is God, of whom we now treat. The Son therefore is Wisdom of wisdom, namely the Father, as He is Light of light, and God of God; so that both the Father singly is light, and the Son singly is light; and the Father singly is God, and the Son singly is God: therefore the Father also singly is wisdom, and the Son singly is wisdom. And as both together are one light and one God, so both are one wisdom. But the Son is “by God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification;” because we turn ourselves to Him in time, that is, from some particular time, that we may remain with Him for ever. And He Himself from a certain time was “the Word made flesh, and dwelt among us.”

5. On this account, then, when anything concerning wisdom is declared or narrated in the Scriptures, whether as itself speaking, or where anything is

spoken of it, the Son chiefly is intimated to us. And by the example of Him who is the image, let us also not depart from God, since we also are the Image of God: not indeed that which is equal to Him, since we are made so by the Father through the Son, and not born of the Father, as that is. And we are so, because we are enlightened with light; but that is so, because it is the light that enlightens; and which, therefore, being without pattern, is to us a pattern. For He does not imitate any one going before Him, in respect to the Father, from whom He is never separable at all, since He is the very same substance with Him from whom He is. But we by striving imitate Him who abides, and follow Him who stands still, and walking in Him, reach out towards Him; because He is made for us a way in time by His humiliation, which is to us an eternal abiding-place by His divinity. For since to pure intellectual spirits, who have not fallen through pride, He gives an example in the form of God and as equal with God and as God; so, in order that He might also give Himself as an example of returning to fallen man who on account of the uncleanness of sins and the punishment of mortality cannot see God, "He emptied Himself;" not by changing His own divinity, but by assuming our changeableness: and "taking upon Him the form of a servant" He came to us into this world," who "was in this world," because "the world was made by Him;" that He might be an example upwards to those who see God, an example downwards to those who admire man, an example to the sound to persevere, an example to the sick to be made whole, an example to those who are to die that they may not fear, an example to the dead that they may rise again, "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." So that, because man ought not to follow any except God to blessedness, and yet cannot perceive God; by following God made man, he might follow at once Him whom he could perceive, and whom he ought to follow. Let us then love Him and cleave to Him, by charity spread abroad in our hearts, through the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. It is not therefore to be wondered at, if, on account of the example which the Image, which is equal to the Father, gives to us, in order that we may be refashioned after the image of God, Scripture, when it speaks of wisdom, speaks of the Son, whom we follow by living wisely; although the Father also is wisdom, as He is both light and God.

6. The Holy Spirit also, whether we are to call Him that absolute love which joins together Father and Son, and joins us also from beneath, that so that is not unfitly said which is written, “God is love;” how is He not also Himself wisdom, since He is light, because “God is light”? or whether after any other way the essence of the Holy Spirit is to be singly and properly named; then, too, since He is God, He is certainly light; and since He is light, He is certainly wisdom. But that the Holy Spirit is God, Scripture proclaims by the apostle, who says, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?” and immediately subjoins, “And the Spirit of God dwelleth in you;” for God dwelleth in His own temple. For the Spirit of God does not dwell in the temple of God as a servant, since he says more plainly in another place, “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a great price: therefore glorify God in your body.” But what is wisdom, except spiritual and unchangeable light? For yonder sun also is light, but it is corporeal; and the spiritual creature also is light, but it is not unchangeable. Therefore the Father is light, the Son is light, and the Holy Spirit is light; but together not three lights, but one light. And so the Father is wisdom, the Son is wisdom, and the Holy Spirit is wisdom, and together not three wisdoms, but one wisdom: and because in the Trinity to be is the same as to be wise, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are one essence. Neither in the Trinity is it one thing to be and another to be God; therefore the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are one God.

CHAPTER 4

HOW IT WAS BROUGHT ABOUT THAT THE GREEKS SPEAK OF THREE HYPOSTASES, THE LATINS OF THREE PERSONS. SCRIPTURE NOWHERE SPEAKS OF THREE PERSONS IN ONE GOD

7. For the sake, then, of speaking of things that cannot be uttered, that we may be able in some way to utter what we are able in no way to utter fully, our Greek friends have spoken of one essence, three substances; but the Latins of one essence or substance, three persons; because, as we have already said, essence usually means nothing else than substance in our language, that is, in Latin. And provided that what is said is understood only in a mystery, such a way of speaking was sufficient, in order that there

might be something to say when it was asked what the three are, which the true faith pronounces to be three, when it both declares that the Father is not the Son, and that the Holy Spirit, which is the gift of God, is neither the Father nor the Son. When, then, it is asked what the three are, or who the three are, we betake ourselves to the finding out of some special or general name under which we may embrace these three; and no such name occurs to the mind, because the super-eminence of the Godhead surpasses the power of customary speech. For God is more truly thought than He is altered, and exists more truly than He is thought. For when we say that Jacob was not the same as Abraham, but that Isaac was neither Abraham nor Jacob, certainly we confess that they are three, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But when it is asked what three, we reply three men, calling them in the plural by a specific name; but if we were to say three animals, then by a generic name; for man, as the ancients have defined him, is a rational, mortal animal: or again, as our Scriptures usually speak, three souls, since it is fitting to denominate the whole from the better part, that is, to denominate both body and soul, which is the whole man, from the soul; for so it is said that seventy-five souls went down into Egypt with Jacob, instead of saying so many men. Again, when we say that your horse is not mine, and that a third belonging to some one else is neither mine nor yours, then we confess that there are three; and if any one ask what three, we answer three horses by a specific name, but three animals by a generic one. And yet again, when we say that an ox is not a horse, but that a dog is neither an ox nor a horse, we speak of a three; and if any one questions us what three, we do not speak now by a specific name of three horses, or three oxen, or three dogs, because the three are not contained under the same species, but by a generic name, three animals; or if under a higher genus, three substances, or three creatures, or three natures. But whatsoever things are expressed in the plural number specifically by one name, can also be expressed generically by one name. But all things which are generically called by one name cannot also be called specifically by one name. For three horses, which is a specific name, we also call three animals; but, a horse, and an ox, and a dog, we call only three animals or substances, which are generic names, or anything else that can be spoken generically concerning them; but we cannot speak of them as three horses, or oxen, or dogs, which are specific names; for we express those things by one name, although in the plural number, which have that in common that is signified by the name. For Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, have in common that which is man; therefore they are called three men: a horse also, and an ox, and a dog, have in common that which is animal; therefore they are called three animals. So three several laurels we also call three trees; but a laurel, and a myrtle, and an olive, we call only three trees, or three substances, or three natures: and so three stones we call also three bodies; but stone, and wood, and iron, we call only three bodies, or by any other higher generic name by which they can be called. Of the Father, therefore, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, seeing that they are three, let us ask what three they are, and what they have in common. For the being the Father is not common to them, so that they should be interchangeably fathers to one another: as friends, since they are so called relatively to each other, can be called three friends, because they are so mutually to each other. But this is not the case in the Trinity, since the Father only is there father; and not Father of two, but of the Son only. Neither are they three Sons, since the Father there is not the Son, nor is the Holy Spirit. Neither three Holy Spirits, because the Holy Spirit also, in that proper meaning by which He is also called the gift of God, is neither the Father nor the Son. What three therefore? For if three persons, then that which is meant by person is common to them; therefore this name is either specific or generic to them, according to the manner of speaking. But where there is no difference of nature, there things that are several in number are so expressed generically, that they can also be expressed specifically. For the difference of nature causes, that a laurel, and a myrtle, and an olive, or a horse, and an ox, and a dog, are not called by the specific name, the former of three laurels, or the latter of three oxen, but by the generic name, the former of three trees, and the latter of three animals. But here, where there is no difference of essence, it is necessary that these three should have a specific name, which yet is not to be found. For person is a generic name, insomuch that man also can be so called, although there is so great a difference between man and God.

8. Further, in regard to that very generic (generalis) word, if on this account we say three persons, because that which person means is common to them (otherwise they can in no way be so called, just as they are not called three sons, because that which son means is not common to them); why do we

not also say three Gods? For certainly, since the Father is a person, and the Son a person, and the Holy Spirit a person, therefore there are three persons: since then the Father is God, and the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God, why not three Gods? Or else, since on account of their ineffable union these three are together one God, why not also one person; so that we could not say three persons, although we call each a person singly, just as we cannot say three Gods, although we call each singly God, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit? Is it because Scripture does not say three Gods? But neither do we find that Scripture anywhere mentions three persons. Or is it because Scripture does not call these three, either three persons or one person (for we read of the person of the Lord, but not of the Lord as a person), that therefore it was lawful through the mere necessity of speaking and reasoning to say three persons, not because Scripture says it, but because Scripture does not contradict it: whereas, if we were to say three Gods, Scripture would contradict it, which says, “Hear, O Israel; the Lord thy God is one God?” Why then is it not also lawful to say three essences; which, in like manner, as Scripture does not say, so neither does it contradict? For if essence is a specific (specialis) name common to three, why are They not to be called three essences, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are called three men, because man is the specific name common to all men? But if essence is not a specific name, but a generic one, since man, and cattle, and tree, and constellation, and angel, are called essences; why are not these called three essences, as three horses are called three animals, and three laurels are called three trees, and three stones three bodies? Or if they are not called three essences, but one essence, on account of the unity of the Trinity, why is it not the case, that on account of the same unity of the Trinity they are not to be called three substances or three persons, but one substance and one person? For as the name of essence is common to them, so that each singly is called essence, so the name of either substance or person is common to them. For that which must be understood of persons according to our usage, this is to be understood of substances according to the Greek usage; for they say three substances, one essence, in the same way as we say three persons, one essence or substance.

9. What therefore remains, except that we confess that these terms sprang from the necessity of speaking, when copious reasoning was required

against the devices or errors of the heretics? For when human weakness endeavored to utter in speech to the senses of man what it grasps in the secret places of the mind in proportion to its comprehension respecting the Lord God its creator, whether by devout faith, or by any discernment whatsoever; it feared to say three essences, lest any difference should be understood to exist in that absolute equality. Again, it could not say that there were not three somewhats (tria quaedam), for it was because Sabellius said this that he fell into heresy. For it must be devoutly believed, as most certainly known from the Scriptures, and must be grasped by the mental eye with undoubting perception, that there is both Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit; and that the Son is not the same with the Father, nor the Holy Spirit the same with the Father or the Son. It sought then what three it should call them, and answered substances or persons; by which names it did not intend diversity to be meant, but singleness to be denied: that not only unity might be understood therein from the being called one essence, but also Trinity from the being called three substances or persons. For if it is the same thing with God to be (esse) as to subsist (subsistere), they were not to be called three substances, in such sense as they are not called three essences; just as, because it is the same thing with God to be as to be wise, as we do not say three essences, so neither three wisdoms. For so, because it is the same thing to Him to be God as to be, it is not right to say three essences, as it is not right to say three Gods. But if it is one thing to God to be, another to subsist, as it is one thing to God to be, another to be the Father or the Lord (for that which He is, is spoken in respect to Himself, but He is called Father in relation to the Son, and Lord in relation to the creature which serves Him); therefore He subsists relatively, as He begets relatively, and bears rule relatively: so then substance will be no longer substance, because it will be relative. For as from being, He is called essence, so from subsisting, we speak of substance. But it is absurd that substance should be spoken relatively, for everything subsists in respect to itself; how much more God?

CHAPTER 5

IN GOD, SUBSTANCE IS SPOKEN IMPROPERLY, ESSENCE PROPERLY

10. If, however, it is fitting that God should be said to subsist—(For this word is rightly applied to those things, in which as subjects those things are, which are said to be in a subject, as color or shape in body. For body subsists, and so is substance; but those things are in the body, which subsists and is their subject, and they are not substances, but are in a substance: and so, if either that color or that shape ceases to be, it does not deprive the body of being a body, because it is not of the being of body, that it should retain this or that shape or color; therefore neither changeable nor simple things are properly called substances.)—If, I say, God subsists so that He can be properly called a substance, then there is something in Him as it were in a subject, and He is not simple, i.e. such that to Him to be is the same as is anything else that is said concerning Him in respect to Himself; as, for instance, great, omnipotent, good, and whatever of this kind is not unfitly said of God. But it is an impiety to say that God subsists, and is a subject in relation to His own goodness, and that this goodness is not a substance or rather essence, and that God Himself is not His own goodness, but that it is in Him as in a subject. And hence it is clear that God is improperly called substance, in order that He may be understood to be, by the more usual name essence, which He is truly and properly called; so that perhaps it is right that God alone should be called essence. For He is truly alone, because He is unchangeable; and declared this to be His own name to His servant Moses, when He says, "I am that I am;" and, "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: He who is hath sent me unto you." However, whether He be called essence, which He is properly called, or substance, which He is called improperly, He is called both in respect to Himself, not relatively to anything; whence to God to be is the same thing as to subsist; and so the Trinity, if one essence, is also one substance. Perhaps therefore they are more conveniently called three persons than three substances.

CHAPTER 6

WHY WE DO NOT IN THE TRINITY SPEAK OF ONE PERSON, AND THREE ESSENCES. WHAT HE OUGHT TO BELIEVE CONCERNING THE TRINITY WHO DOES NOT RECEIVE WHAT IS SAID ABOVE. MAN IS BOTH AFTER THE IMAGE, AND IS THE IMAGE OF GOD

11. But lest I should seem to favor ourselves [the Latins], let us make this further inquiry. Although they [the Greeks] also, if they pleased, as they call

three substances three hypostases, so might call three persons three “prosopa,” yet they preferred that word which, perhaps, was more in accordance with the usage of their language. For the case is the same with the word persons also; for to God it is not one thing to be, another to be a person, but it is absolutely the same thing. For if to be is said in respect to Himself, but person relatively; in this way we should say three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; just as we speak of three friends, or three relations, or three neighbors, in that they are so mutually, not that each one of them is so in respect to himself. Wherefore any one of these is the friend of the other two, or the relation, or the neighbor, because these names have a relative signification. What then? Are we to call the Father the person of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, or the Son the person of the Father and of the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit the person of the Father and of the Son? But neither is the word person commonly so used in any case; nor in this Trinity, when we speak of the person of the Father, do we mean anything else than the substance of the Father. Wherefore, as the substance of the Father is the Father Himself, not as He is the Father, but as He is, so also the person of the Father is not anything else than the Father Himself; for He is called a person in respect to Himself, not in respect to the Son, or the Holy Spirit: just as He is called in respect to Himself both God and great, and good, and just, and anything else of the kind; and just as to Him to be is the same as to be God, or as to be great, or as to be good, so it is the same thing to Him to be, as to be a person. Why, therefore, do we not call these three together one person, as one essence and one God, but say three persons, while we do not say three Gods or three essences; unless it be because we wish some one word to serve for that meaning whereby the Trinity is understood, that we might not be altogether silent, when asked, what three, while we confessed that they are three? For if essence is the genus, and substance or person the species, as some think, then I must omit what I just now said, that they ought to be called three essences, as they are called three substances or persons; as three horses are called three horses, and the same are called three animals, since horse is the species, animal the genus. For in this case the species is not spoken of in the plural, and the genus in the singular, as if we were to say that three horses were one animal; but as they are three horses by the special name, so they are three animals by the generic one. But if they say that the name of substance or person does not signify species, but something singular and individual; so that any one is not so called a substance or person as he is called a man, for man is common to all men, but in the same manner as he is called this or that man, as Abraham, as Isaac, as Jacob, or anyone else who, if present, could be pointed out with the finger: so will the same reason reach these too. For as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are called three individuals, so are they called three men, and three souls. Why then are both the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, if we are to reason about them also according to genus and species and individual, not so called three essences, as they are called three substances or persons? But this, as I said, I pass over: but I do affirm, that if essence is a genus, then a single essence has no species; just as, because animal is a genus, a single animal has no species. Therefore the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not three species of one essence. But if essence is a species, as man is a species, but those are three which we call substances or persons, then they have the same species in common, in such way as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have in common the species which is called man; not as man is subdivided into Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so can one man also be subdivided into several single men; for this is altogether impossible, since one man is already a single man. Why then is one essence subdivided into three substances or persons? For if essence is a species, as man is, then one essence is as one man is: or do we, as we say that any three human beings of the same sex, of the same constitution of body, of the same mind, are one nature,—for they are three human beings, but one nature,—so also say in the Trinity three substances one essence, or three persons one substance or essence? But this is somehow a parallel case, since the ancients also who spoke Latin, before they had these terms, which have not long come into use, that is, essence or substance, used for them to say nature. We do not therefore use these terms according to genus or species, but as if according to a matter that is common and the same. Just as if three statues were made of the same gold, we should say three statues one gold, yet should neither call the gold genus, and the statues species; nor the gold species, and the statues individuals. For no species goes beyond its own individuals, so as to comprehend anything external to them. For when I define what man is, which is a specific name, every several man that exists is contained in the same individual definition, neither does anything belong to it which is not a man. But when I define gold, not statues alone, if they be gold, but rings also, and anything else that is made of gold, will belong to gold; and even if nothing were made of it, it would still be called gold; since, even if there were no gold statues, there will not therefore be no statues at all. Likewise no species goes beyond the definition of its genus. For when I define animal, since horse is a species of this genus, every horse is an animal; but every statue is not gold. So, although in the case of three golden statues we should rightly say three statues, one gold; yet we do not so say it, as to understand gold to be the genus, and the statues to be species. Therefore neither do we so call the Trinity three persons or substances, one essence and one God, as though three somethings subsisted out of one matter [leaving a remainder, i. e.]; although whatever that is, it is unfolded in these three. For there is nothing else of that essence besides the Trinity. Yet we say three persons of the same essence, or three persons one essence; but we do not say three persons out of the same essence, as though therein essence were one thing, and person another, as we can say three statues out of the same gold; for there it is one thing to be gold, another to be statues. And when we say three men one nature, or three men of the same nature, they also can be called three men out of the same nature, since out of the same nature there can be also three other such men. But in that essence of the Trinity, in no way can any other person whatever exist out of the same essence. Further, in these things, one man is not as much as three men together; and two men are something more than one man: and in equal statues, three together amount to more of gold than each singly, and one amounts to less of gold than two. But in God it is not so; for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit together is not a greater essence than the Father alone or the Son alone; but these three substances or persons, if they must be so called, together are equal to each singly: which the natural man does not comprehend. For he cannot think except under the conditions of bulk and space, either small or great, since phantasms or as it were images of bodies flit about in his mind.

12. And until he be purged from this uncleanness, let him believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, alone, great, omnipotent, good, just, merciful, Creator of all things visible and invisible, and whatsoever can be worthily and truly said of Him in proportion to human capacity. And when he is told that the Father only is God, let him not separate from Him the Son

or the Holy Spirit; for together with Him He is the only God, together with whom also He is one God; because, when we are told that the Son also is the only God, we must needs take it without any separation of the Father or the Holy Spirit. And let him so say one essence, as not to think one to be either greater or better than, or in any respect differing from, another. Yet not that the Father Himself is both Son and Holy Spirit, or whatever else each is singly called in relation to either of the others; as Word, which is not said except of the Son, or Gift, which is not said except of the Holy Spirit. And on this account also they admit the plural number, as it is written in the Gospel, "I and my Father are one." He has both said "one," and "we are one," according to essence, because they are the same God; "we are," according to relation, because the one is Father, the other is Son. Sometimes also the unity of the essence is left unexpressed, and the relatives alone are mentioned in the plural number: "My Father and I will come unto him, and make our abode with him." We will come, and we will make our abode, is the plural number, since it was said before, "I and my Father," that is, the Son and the Father, which terms are used relatively to one another. Sometimes the meaning is altogether latent, as in Genesis: "Let us make man after our image and likeness." Both let us make and our is said in the plural, and ought not to be received except as of relatives. For it was not that gods might make, or make after the image and likeness of gods; but that the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit might make after the image of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, that man might subsist as the image of God. And God is the Trinity. But because that image of God was not made altogether equal to Him, as being not born of Him, but created by Him; in order to signify this, he is in such way the image as that he is "after the image," that is, he is not made equal by parity, but approaches to Him by a sort of likeness. For approach to God is not by intervals of place, but by likeness, and withdrawal from Him is by unlikeness. For there are some who draw this distinction, that they will have the Son to be the image, but man not to be the image, but "after the image." But the apostle refutes them, saying, "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God." He did not say after the image, but the image. And this image, since it is elsewhere spoken of as after the image, is not as if it were said relatively to the Son, who is the image equal to the Father; otherwise he would not say after our image. For how our, when the Son is the image of the Father alone? But man is said to be “after the image,” on account, as we have said, of the inequality of the likeness; and therefore after our image, that man might be the image of the Trinity; not equal to the Trinity as the Son is equal to the Father, but approaching to it, as has been said, by a certain likeness; just as nearness may in a sense be signified in things distant from each other, not in respect of place, but of a sort of imitation. For it is also said, “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind;” to whom he likewise says, “Be ye therefore imitators of God as dear children.” For it is said to the new man, “which is renewed to the knowledge of God, after the image of Him that created him.” Or if we choose to admit the plural number, in order to meet the needs of argument, even putting aside relative terms, that so we may answer in one term when it is asked what three, and say three substances or three persons; then let no one think of any bulk or interval, or of any distance of howsoever little unlikeness, so that in the Trinity any should be understood to be even a little less than another, in whatsoever way one thing can be less than another: in order that there may be neither a confusion of persons, nor such a distinction as that there should be any inequality. And if this cannot be grasped by the understanding, let it be held by faith, until He shall dawn in the heart who says by the prophet, “If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not understand.”

Book VIII

Explains and proves that not only the Father is not greater than the Son, but neither are both together anything greater than the Holy Spirit, nor any two together in the same trinity anything greater than one, nor all three together anything greater than each severally. It is then shown how the nature itself of God may be understood from our understanding of truth, and from our knowledge of the supreme good, and from the innate love of righteousness, whereby a righteous soul is loved even by a soul that is itself not yet righteous. But it is urged above all, that the knowledge of God is to be sought by love, which God is said to be in the Scriptures; and in this love is also pointed out the existence of some trace of a trinity.

PREFACE

THE CONCLUSION OF WHAT HAS BEEN SAID ABOVE. THE RULE TO BE OBSERVED IN THE MORE DIFFICULT QUESTIONS OF THE FAITH

We have said elsewhere that those things are predicated specially in the Trinity as belonging severally to each person, which are predicated relatively the one to the other, as Father and Son, and the gift of both, the Holy Spirit; for the Father is not the Trinity, nor the Son the Trinity, nor the gift the Trinity: but what whenever each is singly spoken of in respect to themselves, then they are not spoken of as three in the plural number, but one, the Trinity itself, as the Father God, the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God; the Father good, the Son good, and the Holy Spirit good; and the Father omnipotent, the Son omnipotent, and the Holy Spirit omnipotent: yet neither three Gods, nor three goods, nor three omnipotents, but one God, good, omnipotent, the Trinity itself; and whatsoever else is said of them not relatively in respect to each other, but individually in respect to themselves. For they are thus spoken of according to essence, since in them to be is the same as to be great, as to be good, as to be wise, and whatever else is said of each person individually therein, or of the Trinity itself, in respect to themselves. And that therefore they are called three persons, or three substances, not in order that any difference of essence may be understood, but that we may be able to answer by some one word, should any one ask what three, or what three things? And that there is so great an equality in that Trinity, that not only the Father is not greater than the Son, as regards divinity, but neither are the Father and Son together greater than the Holy Spirit; nor is each individual person, whichever it be of the three, less than the Trinity itself. This is what we have said; and if it is handled and repeated frequently, it becomes, no doubt, more familiarly known: yet some limit, too, must be put to the discussion, and we must supplicate God with most devout piety, that He will open our understanding, and take away the inclination of disputing, in order that our minds may discern the essence of the truth, that has neither bulk nor moveableness. Now, therefore, so far as the Creator Himself aids us in His marvellous mercy, let us consider these subjects, into which we will enter more deeply than we entered into those which preceded, although they are in truth the same; preserving the while this rule, that what has not yet been made clear to our intellect, be nevertheless not loosened from the firmness of our faith.

CHAPTER 1

IT IS SHOWN BY REASON THAT IN GOD THREE ARE NOT ANYTHING GREATER THAN ONE PERSON

2. For we say that in this Trinity two or three persons are not anything greater than one of them; which carnal perception does not receive, for no other reason except because it perceives as it can the true things which are created, but cannot discern the truth itself by which they are created; for if it could, then the very corporeal light would in no way be more clear than this which we have said. For in respect to the substance of truth, since it alone truly is, nothing is greater, unless because it more truly is. But in respect to whatsoever is intelligible and unchangeable, no one thing is more truly than another, since all alike are unchangeably eternal; and that which therein is called great, is not great from any other source than from that by which it truly is. Wherefore, where magnitude itself is truth, whatsoever has more of magnitude must needs have more of truth; whatsoever therefore has not more of truth, has not also more of magnitude. Further, whatsoever has more of truth is certainly more true, just as that is greater which has more of

magnitude; therefore in respect to the substance of truth that is more great which is more true. But the Father and the Son together are not more truly than the Father singly, or the Son singly. Both together, therefore, are not anything greater than each of them singly. And since also the Holy Spirit equally is truly, the Father and Son together are not anything greater than He, since neither are they more truly. The Father also and the Holy Spirit together, since they do not surpass the Son in truth (for they are not more truly), do not surpass Him either in magnitude. And so the Son and the Holy Spirit together are just as great as the Father alone, since they are as truly. So also the Trinity itself is as great as each several person therein. For where truth itself is magnitude, that is not more great which is not more true: since in regard to the essence of truth, to be true is the same as to be, and to be is the same as to be great; therefore to be great is the same as to be true. And in regard to it, therefore, what is equally true must needs also be equally great.

CHAPTER 2

EVERY CORPOREAL CONCEPTION MUST BE REJECTED, IN ORDER THAT IT MAY BE UNDERSTOOD HOW GOD IS TRUTH

3. But in respect to bodies, it may be the case that this gold and that gold may be equally true [real], but this may be greater than that, since magnitude is not the same thing in this case as truth; and it is one thing for it to be gold, another to be great. So also in the nature of the soul; a soul is not called great in the same respect in which it is called true. For he, too, has a true [real] soul who has not a great soul; since the essence of body and soul is not the essence of the truth [reality] itself; as is the Trinity, one God, alone, great, true, truthful, the truth. Of whom if we endeavor to think, so far as He Himself permits and grants, let us not think of any touch or embrace in local space, as if of three bodies, or of any compactness of conjunction, as fables tell of three-bodied Geryon; but let whatsoever may occur to the mind, that is of such sort as to be greater in three than in each singly, and less in one than in two, be rejected without any doubt; for so everything corporeal is rejected. But also in spiritual things let nothing changeable that may have occurred to the mind be thought of God. For when we aspire from this depth to that height, it is a step towards no small

knowledge, if, before we can know what God is, we can already know what He is not. For certainly He is neither earth nor heaven; nor, as it were, earth and heaven; nor any such thing as we see in the heaven; nor any such thing as we do not see, but which perhaps is in heaven. Neither if you were to magnify in the imagination of your thought the light of the sun as much as you are able, either that it may be greater, or that it may be brighter, a thousand times as much, or times without number; neither is this God. Neither as we think of the pure angels as spirits animating celestial bodies, and changing and dealing with them after the will by which they serve God; not even if all, and there are "thousands of thousands," were brought together into one, and became one; neither is any such thing God. Neither if you were to think of the same spirits as without bodies—a thing indeed most difficult for carnal thought to do. Behold and see, if thou canst, O soul pressed down by the corruptible body, and weighed down by earthly thoughts, many and various; behold and see, if thou canst, that God is truth. For it is written that "God is light;" not in such way as these eyes see, but in such way as the heart sees, when it is said, He is truth [reality]. Ask not what is truth [reality] for immediately the darkness of corporeal images and the clouds of phantasms will put themselves in the way, and will disturb that calm which at the first twinkling shone forth to thee, when I said truth [reality]. See that thou remainest, if thou canst, in that first twinkling with which thou art dazzled, as it were, by a flash, when it is said to thee, Truth [Reality]. But thou canst not; thou wilt glide back into those usual and earthly things. And what weight, pray, is it that will cause thee so to glide back, unless it be the bird-lime of the stains of appetite thou hast contracted, and the errors of thy wandering from the right path?

CHAPTER 3

HOW GOD MAY BE KNOWN TO BE THE CHIEF GOOD. THE MIND DOES NOT BECOME GOOD UNLESS BY TURNING TO GOD

4. Behold again, and see if thou canst. Thou certainly dost not love anything except what is good, since good is the earth, with the loftiness of its mountains, and the due measure of its hills, and the level surface of its plains; and good is an estate that is pleasant and fertile; and good is a house that is arranged in due proportions, and is spacious and bright; and good are

animal and animate bodies; and good is air that is temperate, and salubrious; and good is food that is agreeable and fit for health; and good is health, without pains or lassitude; and good is the countenance of man that is disposed in fit proportions, and is cheerful in look, and bright in color; and good is the mind of a friend, with the sweetness of agreement, and with the confidence of love; and good is a righteous man; and good are riches, since they are readily useful; and good is the heaven, with its sun, and moon, and stars; and good are the angels, by their holy obedience; and good is discourse that sweetly teaches and suitably admonishes the hearer; and good is a poem that is harmonious in its numbers and weighty in its sense. And why add yet more and more? This thing is good and that good, but take away this and that, and regard good itself if thou canst; so wilt thou see God, not good by a good that is other than Himself, but the good of all good. For in all these good things, whether those which I have mentioned, or any else that are to be discerned or thought, we could not say that one was better than another, when we judge truly, unless a conception of the good itself had been impressed upon us, such that according to it we might both approve some things as good, and prefer one good to another. So God is to be loved, not this and that good, but the good itself. For the good that must be sought for the soul is not one above which it is to fly by judging, but to which it is to cleave by loving; and what can this be except God? Not a good mind, or a good angel, or the good heaven, but the good good. For perhaps what I wish to say may be more easily perceived in this way. For when, for instance, a mind is called good, as there are two words, so from these words I understand two things—one whereby it is mind, and another whereby it is good. And itself had no share in making itself a mind, for there was nothing as yet to make itself to be anything; but to make itself to be a good mind, I see, must be brought about by the will: not because that by which it is mind is not itself anything good;—for how else is it already called, and most truly called, better than the body?—but it is not yet called a good mind, for this reason, that the action of the will still is wanted, by which it is to become more excellent; and if it has neglected this, then it is justly blamed, and is rightly called not a good mind. For it then differs from the mind which does perform this; and since the latter is praiseworthy, the former doubtless, which does not perform, it is blameable. But when it does this of set purpose, and becomes a good mind, it yet cannot attain to being so unless it turn itself to something which itself is not. And to what can it turn itself that it may become a good mind, except to the good which it loves, and seeks, and obtains? And if it turns itself back again from this, and becomes not good, then by the very act of turning away from the good, unless that good remain in it from which it turns away, it cannot again turn itself back thither if it should wish to amend.

5. Wherefore there would be no changeable goods, unless there were the unchangeable good. Whenever then thou art told of this good thing and that good thing, which things can also in other respects be called not good, if thou canst put aside those things which are good by the participation of the good, and discern that good itself by the participation of which they are good (for when this or that good thing is spoken of, thou understandest together with them the good itself also): if, then, I say thou canst remove these things, and canst discern the good in itself, then thou wilt have discerned God. And if thou shalt cleave to Him with love, thou shalt be forthwith blessed. But whereas other things are not loved, except because they are good, be ashamed, in cleaving to them, not to love the good itself whence they are good. That also, which is a mind, only because it is a mind, while it is not yet also good by the turning itself to the unchangeable good, but, as I said, is only a mind; whenever it so pleases us, as that we prefer it even, if we understand aright, to all corporeal light, does not please us in itself, but in that skill by which it was made. For it is thence approved as made, wherein it is seen to have been to be made. This is truth, and simple good: for it is nothing else than the good itself, and for this reason also the chief good. For no good can be diminished or increased, except that which is good from some other good. Therefore the mind turns itself, in order to be good, to that by which it comes to be a mind. Therefore the will is then in harmony with nature, so that the mind may be perfected in good, when that good is loved by the turning of the will to it, whence that other good also comes which is not lost by the turning away of the will from it. For by turning itself from the chief good, the mind loses the being a good mind; but it does not lose the being a mind. And this, too, is a good already, and one better than the body. The will, therefore, loses that which the will obtains. For the mind already was, that could wish to be turned to that from which it was: but that as yet was not, that could wish to be before it was.

And herein is our [supreme] good, when we see whether the thing ought to be or to have been, respecting which we comprehend that it ought to be or to have been, and when we see that the thing could not have been unless it ought to have been, of which we also do not comprehend in what manner it ought to have been. This good then is not far from every one of us: for in it we live, and move, and have our being.

CHAPTER 4

GOD MUST FIRST BE KNOWN BY AN UNERRING FAITH, THAT HE MAY BE LOVED

6. But it is by love that we must stand firm to this and cleave to this, in order that we may enjoy the presence of that by which we are, and in the absence of which we could not be at all. For as "we walk as yet by faith, and not by sight," we certainly do not yet see God, as the same [apostle] saith, "face to face:" whom however we shall never see, unless now already we love. But who loves what he does not know? For it is possible something may be known and not loved: but I ask whether it is possible that what is not known can be loved; since if it cannot, then no one loves God before he knows Him. And what is it to know God except to behold Him and steadfastly perceive Him with the mind? For He is not a body to be searched out by carnal eyes. But before also that we have power to behold and to perceive God, as He can be beheld and perceived, which is permitted to the pure in heart; for "blessed are the pure in heart. for they shall see God;" except He is loved by faith, it will not be possible for the heart to be cleansed, in order that it may be apt and meet to see Him. For where are there those three, in order to build up which in the mind the whole apparatus of the divine Scriptures has been raised up, namely Faith, Hope, and Charity, except in a mind believing what it does not yet see, and hoping and loving what it believes? Even He therefore who is not known, but yet is believed, can be loved. But indisputably we must take care, lest the mind believing that which it does not see, feign to itself something which is not, and hope for and love that which is false. For in that case, it will not be charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned, which is the end of the commandment, as the same apostle says.

7. But it must needs be, that, when by reading or hearing of them we believe in any corporeal things which we have not seen, the mind frames for itself something under bodily features and forms, just as it may occur to our thoughts; which either is not true, or even if it be true, which can most rarely happen, yet this is of no benefit to us to believe in by faith, but it is useful for some other purpose, which is intimated by means of it. For who is there that reads or hears what the Apostle Paul has written, or what has been written of him, that does not imagine to himself the countenance both of the apostle himself, and of all those whose names are there mentioned? And whereas, among such a multitude of men to whom these books are known, each imagines in a different way those bodily features and forms, it is assuredly uncertain which it is that imagines them more nearly and more like the reality. Nor, indeed, is our faith busied therein with the bodily countenance of those men; but only that by the grace of God they so lived and so acted as that Scripture witnesses: this it is which it is both useful to believe, and which must not be despaired of, and must be sought. For even the countenance of our Lord Himself in the flesh is variously fancied by the diversity of countless imaginations, which yet was one, whatever it was. Nor in our faith which we have of our Lord Jesus Christ, is that wholesome which the mind imagines for itself, perhaps far other than the reality, but that which we think of man according to his kind: for we have a notion of human nature implanted in us, as it were by rule, according to which we know forthwith, that whatever such thing we see is a man or the form of a man.

CHAPTER 5

HOW THE TRINITY MAY BE LOVED THOUGH UNKNOWN

Our conception is framed according to this notion, when we believe that God was made man for us, as an example of humility, and to show the love of God towards us. For this it is which it is good for us to believe, and to retain firmly and unshakenly in our heart, that the humility by which God was born of a woman, and was led to death through contumelies so great by mortal men, is the chiefest remedy by which the swelling of our pride may be cured, and the profound mystery by which the bond of sin may be loosed. So also, because we know what omnipotence is, we believe concerning the omnipotent God in the power of His miracles and of His resurrection, and we frame conceptions respecting actions of this kind, according to the species and genera of things that are either ingrafted in us by nature, or gathered by experience, that our faith may not be feigned. For neither do we know the countenance of the Virgin Mary; from whom, untouched by a husband, nor tainted in the birth itself, He was wonderfully born. Neither have we seen what were the lineaments of the body of Lazarus; nor yet Bethany; nor the sepulchre, and that stone which He commanded to be removed when He raised Him from the dead; nor the new tomb cut out in the rock, whence He Himself arose; nor the Mount of Olives, from whence He ascended into heaven. And, in short, whoever of us have not seen these things, know not whether they are as we conceive them to be, nay judge them more probably not to be so. For when the aspect either of a place, or a man, or of any other body, which we happened to imagine before we saw it, turns out to be the same when it occurs to our sight as it was when it occurred to our mind, we are moved with no little wonder. So scarcely and hardly ever does it happen. And yet we believe those things most steadfastly, because we imagine them according to a special and general notion, of which we are certain. For we believe our Lord Jesus Christ to be born of a virgin who was called Mary. But what a virgin is, or what it is to be born, and what is a proper name, we do not believe, but certainly know. And whether that was the countenance of Mary which occurred to the mind in speaking of those things or recollecting them, we neither know at all, nor believe. It is allowable, then, in this case to say without violation of the faith, perhaps she had such or such a countenance, perhaps she had not: but no one could say without violation of the Christian faith, that perhaps Christ was born of a virgin.

8. Wherefore, since we desire to understand the eternity, and equality, and unity of the Trinity, as much as is permitted us, but ought to believe before we understand; and since we must watch carefully, that our faith be not feigned; since we must have the fruition of the same Trinity, that we may live blessedly; but if we have believed anything false of it, our hope would be worthless, and our charity not pure: how then can we love, by believing, that Trinity which we do not know? Is it according to the special or general notion, according to which we love the Apostle Paul? In whose case, even if

he was not of that countenance which occurs to us when we think of him (and this we do not know at all), yet we know what a man is. For not to go far away, this we are; and it is manifest he, too, was this, and that his soul joined to his body lived after the manner of mortals. Therefore we believe this of him, which we find in ourselves, according to the species or genus under which all human nature alike is comprised. What then do we know, whether specially or generally, of that most excellent Trinity, as if there were many such trinities, some of which we had learned by experience, so that we may believe that Trinity, too, to have been such as they, through the rule of similitude, impressed upon us, whether a special or a general notion; and thus love also that thing which we believe and do not yet know, from the parity of the thing which we do know? But this certainly is not so. Or is it that, as we love in our Lord Jesus Christ, that He rose from the dead, although we never saw any one rise from thence, so we can believe in and love the Trinity which we do not see, and the like of which we never have seen? But we certainly know what it is to die, and what it is to live; because we both live, and from time to time have seen and experienced both dead and dying persons. And what else is it to rise again, except to live again, that is, to return to life from death? When, therefore, we say and believe that there is a Trinity, we know what a Trinity is, because we know what three are; but this is not what we love. For we can easily have this whenever we will, to pass over other things, by just holding up three fingers. Or do we indeed love, not every trinity, but the Trinity, that is God? We love then in the Trinity, that it is God: but we never saw or knew any other God, because God is One; He alone whom we have not yet seen, and whom we love by believing. But the question is, from what likeness or comparison of known things can we believe, in order that we may love God, whom we do not yet know?

CHAPTER 6

HOW THE MAN NOT YET RIGHTEOUS CAN KNOW THE RIGHTEOUS MAN WHOM HE LOVES

9. Return then with me, and let us consider why we love the apostle. Is it at all on account of his human kind, which we know right well, in that we believe him to have been a man? Assuredly not; for if it were so, he now is

not him whom we love, since he is no longer that man, for his soul is separated from his body. But we believe that which we love in him to be still living, for we love his righteous mind. From what general or special rule then, except that we know both what a mind is, and what it is to be righteous? And we say, indeed, not unfitly, that we therefore know what a mind is, because we too have a mind. For neither did we ever see it with our eyes, and gather a special or general notion from the resemblance of more minds than one, which we had seen; but rather, as I have said before, because we too have it. For what is known so intimately, and so perceives itself to be itself, as that by which also all other things are perceived, that is, the mind itself? For we recognize the movements of bodies also, by which we perceive that others live besides ourselves, from the resemblance of ourselves; since we also so move our body in living as we observe those bodies to be moved. For even when a living body is moved, there is no way opened to our eyes to see the mind, a thing which cannot be seen by the eyes; but we perceive something to be contained in that bulk, such as is contained in ourselves, so as to move in like manner our own bulk, which is the life and the soul. Neither is this, as it were, the property of human foresight and reason, since brute animals also perceive that not only they themselves live, but also other brute animals interchangeably, and the one the other, and that we ourselves do so. Neither do they see our souls, save from the movements of the body, and that immediately and most easily by some natural agreement. Therefore we both know the mind of any one from our own, and believe also from our own of him whom we do not know. For not only do we perceive that there is a mind, but we can also know what a mind is, by reflecting upon our own: for we have a mind. But whence do we know what a righteous man is? For we said above that we love the apostle for no other reason except that he is a righteous mind. We know, then, what a righteous man also is, just as we know what a mind is. But what a mind is, as has been said, we know from ourselves, for there is a mind in us. But whence do we know what a righteous man is, if we are not righteous? But if no one but he who is righteous knows what is a righteous man, no one but a righteous man loves a righteous man; for one cannot love him whom one believes to be righteous, for this very reason that one does believe him to be righteous, if one does not know what it is to be righteous; according to that which we have shown above, that no one loves what he believes and does not see, except by some rule of a general or special notion. And if for this reason no one but a righteous man loves a righteous man, how will any one wish to be a righteous man who is not yet so? For no one wishes to be that which he does not love. But, certainly, that he who is not righteous may be so, it is necessary that he should wish to be righteous; and in order that he may wish to be righteous, he loves the righteous man. Therefore, even he who is not yet righteous, loves the righteous man. But he cannot love the righteous man, who is ignorant what a righteous man is. Accordingly, even he who is not yet righteous, knows what a righteous man is. Whence then does he know this? Does he see it with his eyes? Is any corporeal thing righteous, as it is white, or black, or square, or round? Who could say this? Yet with one's eyes one has seen nothing except corporeal things. But there is nothing righteous in a man except the mind; and when a man is called a righteous man, he is called so from the mind, not from the body. For righteousness is in some sort the beauty of the mind, by which men are beautiful; very many too who are misshapen and deformed in body. And as the mind is not seen with the eyes, so neither is its beauty. From whence then does he who is not yet righteous know what a righteous man is, and love the righteous man that he may become righteous? Do certain signs shine forth by the motion of the body, by which this or that man is manifested to be righteous? But whence does any one know that these are the signs of a righteous mind when he is wholly ignorant what it is to be righteous? Therefore he does know. But whence do we know what it is to be righteous, even when we are not yet righteous? If we know from without ourselves, we know it by some bodily thing. But this is not a thing of the body. Therefore we know in ourselves what it is to be righteous. For I find this nowhere else when I seek to utter it, except within myself; and if I ask another what it is to be righteous, he seeks within himself what to answer; and whosoever hence can answer truly, he has found within himself what to answer. And when indeed I wish to speak of Carthage, I seek within myself what to speak, and I find within myself a notion or image of Carthage; but I have received this through the body, that is, through the perception of the body, since I have been present in that city in the body, and I saw and perceived it, and retained it in my memory, that I might find within myself a word concerning it, whenever I might wish to speak of it. For its word is the image itself of it in my memory, not that sound of two syllables when

Carthage is named, or even when that name itself is thought of silently from time to time, but that which I discern in my mind, when I utter that dissyllable with my voice, or even before I utter it. So also, when I wish to speak of Alexandria, which I never saw, an image of it is present with me. For whereas I had heard from many and had believed that city to be great, in such way as it could be told me, I formed an image of it in my mind as I was able; and this is with me its word when I wish to speak of it, before I utter with my voice the five syllables which make the name that almost every one knows. And yet if I could bring forth that image from my mind to the eyes of men who know Alexandria, certainly all either would say, It is not it; or if they said, It is, I should greatly wonder; and as I gazed at it in my mind, that is, at the image which was as it were its picture, I should yet not know it to be it, but should believe those who retained an image they had seen. But I do not so ask what it is to be righteous, nor do I so find it, nor do I so gaze upon it, when I utter it; neither am I so approved when I am heard, nor do I so approve when I hear; as though I have seen such a thing with my eyes, or learned it by some perception of the body, or heard it from those who had so learned it. For when I say, and say knowingly, that mind is righteous which knowingly and of purpose assigns to every one his due in life and behavior, I do not think of anything absent, as Carthage, or imagine it as I am able, as Alexandria, whether it be so or not; but I discern something present, and I discern it within myself, though I myself am not that which I discern; and many if they hear will approve it. And whoever hears me and knowingly approves, he too discerns this same thing within himself, even though he himself be not what he discerns. But when a righteous man says this, he discerns and says that which he himself is. And whence also does he discern it, except within himself? But this is not to be wondered at; for whence should he discern himself except within himself? The wonderful thing is, that the mind should see within itself that which it has seen nowhere else, and should see truly, and should see the very true righteous mind, and should itself be a mind, and yet not a righteous mind, which nevertheless it sees within itself. Is there another mind that is righteous in a mind that is not yet righteous? Or if there is not, what does it there see when it sees and says what is a righteous mind, nor sees it anywhere else but in itself, when itself is not a righteous mind? Is that which it sees an inner truth present to the mind which has power to behold it? Yet all have not that power; and they who have power to behold it, are not all also that which they behold, that is, they are not also righteous minds themselves, just as they are able to see and to say what is a righteous mind. And whence will they be able to be so, except by cleaving to that very same form itself which they behold, so that from thence they may be formed and may be righteous minds; not only discerning and saying that the mind is righteous which knowingly and of purpose assigns to every one that which is his due in life and behavior, but so likewise that they themselves may live righteously and be righteous in character, by assigning to every one that which is his due, so as to owe no man anything, but to love one another. And whence can any one cleave to that form but by loving it? Why then do we love another whom we believe to be righteous, and do not love that form itself wherein we see what is a righteous mind, that we also may be able to be righteous? Is it that unless we loved that also, we should not love him at all, whom through it we love; but whilst we are not righteous, we love that form too little to allow of our being able to be righteous? The man therefore who is believed to be righteous, is loved through that form and truth which he who loves discerns and understands within himself; but that very form and truth itself cannot be loved from any other source than itself. For we do not find any other such thing besides itself, so that by believing we might love it when it is unknown, in that we here already know another such thing. For whatsoever of such a kind one may have seen, is itself; and there is not any other such thing, since itself alone is such as itself is. He therefore who loves men, ought to love them either because they are righteous, or that they may become righteous. For so also he ought to love himself, either because he is righteous, or that he may become righteous; for in this way he loves his neighbor as himself without any risk. For he who loves himself otherwise, loves himself wrongfully, since he loves himself to this end that he may be unrighteous; therefore to this end that he may be wicked; and hence it follows next that he does not love himself; for, “He who loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul.”

CHAPTER 7

OF TRUE LOVE, BY WHICH WE ARRIVE AT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRINITY. GOD IS TO BE SOUGHT, NOT OUTWARDLY, BY SEEKING TO DO WONDERFUL THINGS WITH THE ANGELS, BUT INWARDLY, BY IMITATING THE PIETY OF GOOD ANGELS

10. No other thing, then, is chiefly to be regarded in this inquiry, which we make concerning the Trinity and concerning knowing God, except what is true love, nay, rather what is love. For that is to be called love which is true, otherwise it is desire; and so those who desire are said improperly to love, just as they who love are said improperly to desire. But this is true love, that cleaving to the truth we may live righteously, and so may despise all mortal things in comparison with the love of men, whereby we wish them to live righteously. For so we should be prepared also to die profitably for our brethren, as our Lord Jesus Christ taught us by His example. For as there are two commandments on which hang all the Law and the prophets, love of God and love of our neighbor; not without cause the Scripture mostly puts one for both: whether it be of God only, as is that text, “For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God;” and again, “But if any man love God, the same is known of Him;” and that, “Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us;” and many other passages; because he who loves God must both needs do what God has commanded, and loves Him just in such proportion as he does so; therefore he must needs also love his neighbor, because God has commanded it: or whether it be that Scripture only mentions the love of our neighbor, as in that text, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ;” and again, “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;” and in the Gospel, “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the prophets.” And many other passages occur in the sacred writings, in which only the love of our neighbor seems to be commanded for perfection, while the love of God is passed over in silence; whereas the Law and the prophets hang on both precepts. But this, too, is because he who loves his neighbor must needs also love above all else love itself. But “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God.” Therefore he must needs above all else love God.

11. Wherefore they who seek God through those Powers which rule over the world, or parts of the world, are removed and cast away far from Him; not by intervals of space, but by difference of affections: for they endeavor to find a path outwardly, and forsake their own inward things, within which is God. Therefore, even although they may either have heard some holy

heavenly Power, or in some way or another may have thought of it, yet they rather covet its deeds at which human weakness marvels, but do not imitate the piety by which divine rest is acquired. For they prefer, through pride, to be able to do that which an angel does, more than, through devotion, to be that which an angel is. For no holy being rejoices in his own power, but in His from whom he has the power which he fitly can have; and he knows it to be more a mark of power to be united to the Omnipotent by a pious will, than to be able, by his own power and will, to do what they may tremble at who are not able to do such things. Therefore the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in doing such things, in order that He might teach better things to those who marvelled at them, and might turn those who were intent and in doubt about unusual temporal things to eternal and inner things, says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you." And He does not say, Learn of me, because I raise those who have been dead four days; but He says, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." For humility, which is most solid, is more powerful and safer than pride, that is most inflated. And so He goes on to say, "And ye shall find rest unto your souls," for "Love is not puffed up;" and "God is Love;" and "such as be faithful in love shall rest in Him," called back from the din which is without to silent joys. Behold, "God is Love:" why do we go forth and run to the heights of the heavens and the lowest parts of the earth, seeking Him who is within us, if we wish to be with Him?

CHAPTER 8

THAT HE WHO LOVES HIS BROTHER, LOVES GOD; BECAUSE HE LOVES LOVE ITSELF, WHICH IS OF GOD, AND IS GOD

12. Let no one say, I do not know what I love. Let him love his brother, and he will love the same love. For he knows the love with which he loves, more than the brother whom he loves. So now he can know God more than he knows his brother: clearly known more, because more present; known more, because more within him; known more, because more certain. Embrace the love of God, and by love embrace God. That is love itself, which associates together all good angels and all the servants of God by the bond of sanctity, and joins together us and them mutually with ourselves,

and joins us subordinately to Himself. In proportion, therefore, as we are healed from the swelling of pride, in such proportion are we more filled with love; and with what is he full, who is full of love, except with God? Well, but you will say, I see love, and, as far as I am able, I gaze upon it with my mind, and I believe the Scripture, saying, that "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God;" but when I see love, I do not see in it the Trinity. Nay, but thou dost see the Trinity if thou seest love. But if I can I will put you in mind, that thou mayest see that thou seest it; only let itself be present, that we may be moved by love to something good. Since, when we love love, we love one who loves something, and that on account of this very thing, that he does love something; therefore what does love love, that love itself also may be loved? For that is not love which loves nothing. But if it loves itself it must love something, that it may love itself as love. For as a word indicates something, and indicates also itself, but does not indicate itself to be a word, unless it indicates that it does indicate something; so love also loves indeed itself, but except it love itself as loving something, it loves itself not as love. What therefore does love love, except that which we love with love? But this, to begin from that which is nearest to us, is our brother. And listen how greatly the Apostle John commends brotherly love: "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him." It is manifest that he placed the perfection of righteousness in the love of our brother; for he certainly is perfect in whom "there is no occasion of stumbling." And yet he seems to have passed by the love of God in silence; which he never would have done, unless because he intends God to be understood in brotherly love itself. For in this same epistle, a little further on, he says most plainly thus: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." And this passage declares sufficiently and plainly, that this same brotherly love itself (for that is brotherly love by which we love each other) is set forth by so great authority, not only to be from God, but also to be God. When, therefore, we love our brother from love, we love our brother from God; neither can it be that we do not love above all else that same love by which we love our brother: whence it may be gathered that these two commandments cannot exist unless interchangeably. For since "God is love," he who loves love certainly loves God; but he must needs love love, who loves his brother. And so a little after he says, “For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen”? because the reason that he does not see God is, that he does not love his brother. For he who does not love his brother, abideth not in love; and he who abideth not in love, abideth not in God, because God is love. Further, he who abideth not in God, abideth not in light; for “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” He therefore who abideth not in light, what wonder is it if he does not see light, that is, does not see God, because he is in darkness? But he sees his brother with human sight, with which God cannot be seen. But if he loved with spiritual love him whom he sees with human sight, he would see God, who is love itself, with the inner sight by which He can be seen. Therefore he who does not love his brother whom he sees, how can he love God, whom on that account he does not see, because God is love, which he has not who does not love his brother? Neither let that further question disturb us, how much of love we ought to spend upon our brother, and how much upon God: incomparably more upon God than upon ourselves, but upon our brother as much as upon ourselves; and we love ourselves so much the more, the more we love God. Therefore we love God and our neighbor from one and the same love; but we love God for the sake of God, and ourselves and our neighbors for the sake of God.

CHAPTER 9

OUR LOVE OF THE RIGHTEOUS IS KINDLED FROM LOVE ITSELF OF THE UNCHANGEABLE FORM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

13. For why is it, pray, that we burn when we hear and read, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation: giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed: but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we

live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things?” Why is it that we are inflamed with love of the Apostle Paul, when we read these things, unless that we believe him so to have lived? But we do not believe that the ministers of God ought so to live because we have heard it from any one, but because we behold it inwardly within ourselves, or rather above ourselves, in the truth itself. Him, therefore, whom we believe to have so lived, we love for that which we see. And except we loved above all else that form which we discern as always steadfast and unchangeable, we should not for that reason love him, because we hold fast in our belief that his life, when he was living in the flesh, was adapted to, and in harmony with, this form. But somehow we are stirred up the more to the love of this form itself, through the belief by which we believe some one to have so lived; and to the hope by which we no more at all despair, that we, too, are able so to live; we who are men, from this fact itself, that some men have so lived, so that we both desire this more ardently, and pray for it more confidently. So both the love of that form, according to which they are believed to have lived, makes the life of these men themselves to be loved by us; and their life thus believed stirs up a more burning love towards that same form; so that the more ardently we love God, the more certainly and the more calmly do we see Him, because we behold in God the unchangeable form of righteousness, according to which we judge that man ought to live. Therefore faith avails to the knowledge and to the love of God, not as though of one altogether unknown, or altogether not loved; but so that thereby He may be known more clearly, and loved more steadfastly.

CHAPTER 10

THERE ARE THREE THINGS IN LOVE, AS IT WERE A TRACE OF THE TRINITY

14. But what is love or charity, which divine Scripture so greatly praises and proclaims, except the love of good? But love is of some one that loves, and with love something is loved. Behold, then, there are three things: he that loves, and that which is loved, and love. What, then, is love, except a certain life which couples or seeks to couple together some two things, namely, him that loves, and that which is loved? And this is so even in outward and carnal loves. But that we may drink in something more pure

and clear, let us tread down the flesh and ascend to the mind. What does the mind love in a friend except the mind? There, then, also are three things: he that loves, and that which is loved, and love. It remains to ascend also from hence, and to seek those things which are above, as far as is given to man. But here for a little while let our purpose rest, not that it may think itself to have found already what it seeks; but just as usually the place has first to be found where anything is to be sought, while the thing itself is not yet found, but we have only found already where to look for it; so let it suffice to have said thus much, that we may have, as it were, the hinge of some starting-point, whence to weave the rest of our discourse.

Book IX

That a kind of trinity exists in man, who is the image of God, viz. the mind, and the knowledge wherewith the mind knows itself, and the love wherewith it loves both itself and its own knowledge; and these three are shown to be mutually equal, and of one essence.

CHAPTER 1

IN WHAT WAY WE MUST INQUIRE CONCERNING THE TRINITY

1. We certainly seek a trinity,—not any trinity, but that Trinity which is God, and the true and supreme and only God. Let my hearers then wait, for we are still seeking. And no one justly finds fault with such a search, if at least he who seeks that which either to know or to utter is most difficult, is steadfast in the faith. But whosoever either sees or teaches better, finds fault quickly and justly with any one who confidently affirms concerning it. “Seek God,” he says, “and your heart shall live;” and lest any one should rashly rejoice that he has, as it were, apprehended it, “Seek,” he says, “His face evermore.” And the apostle: “If any man,” he says, “think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of Him.” He has not said, has known Him, which is dangerous presumption, but “is known of Him.” So also in another place, when he had said, “But now after that ye have known God:” immediately correcting himself, he says, “or rather are known of God.” And above all in that other place, “Brethren,” he says, “I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press in purpose toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded.” Perfection in this life, he tells us, is nothing else than to forget those things which are behind, and to reach forth and press in purpose toward those things which are before. For he that seeks has the safest purpose, [who seeks] until that is taken hold of whither we are tending, and for which we are reaching forth.

But that is the right purpose which starts from faith. For a certain faith is in some way the starting-point of knowledge; but a certain knowledge will not be made perfect, except after this life, when we shall see face to face. Let us therefore be thus minded, so as to know that the disposition to seek the truth is more safe than that which presumes things unknown to be known. Let us therefore so seek as if we should find, and so find as if we were about to seek. For “when a man hath done, then he beginneth.” Let us doubt without unbelief of things to be believed; let us affirm without rashness of things to be understood: authority must be held fast in the former, truth sought out in the latter. As regards this question, then, let us believe that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit is one God, the Creator and Ruler of the whole creature; and that the Father is not the Son, nor the Holy Spirit either the Father or the Son, but a trinity of persons mutually interrelated, and a unity of an equal essence. And let us seek to understand this, praying for help from Himself, whom we wish to understand; and as much as He grants, desiring to explain what we understand with so much pious care and anxiety, that even if in any case we say one thing for another, we may at least say nothing unworthy. As, for the sake of example, if we say anything concerning the Father that does not properly belong to the Father, or does belong to the Son, or to the Holy Spirit, or to the Trinity itself; and if anything of the Son which does not properly suit with the Son, or at all events which does suit with the Father, or with the Holy Spirit, or with the Trinity; or if, again, anything concerning the Holy Spirit, which is not fitly a property of the Holy Spirit, yet is not alien from the Father, or from the Son, or from the one God the Trinity itself. Even as now our wish is to see whether the Holy Spirit is properly that love which is most excellent which if He is not, either the Father is love, or the Son, or the Trinity itself; since we cannot withstand the most certain faith and weighty authority of Scripture, saying, “God is love.” And yet we ought not to deviate into profane error, so as to say anything of the Trinity which does not suit the Creator, but rather the creature, or which is feigned outright by mere empty thought.

CHAPTER 2

THE THREE THINGS WHICH ARE FOUND IN LOVE MUST BE CONSIDERED

2. And this being so, let us direct our attention to those three things which we fancy we have found. We are not yet speaking of heavenly things, nor yet of God the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, but of that inadequate image, which yet is an image, that is, man; for our feeble mind perhaps can gaze upon this more familiarly and more easily. Well then, when I, who make this inquiry, love anything, there are three things concerned—myself, and that which I love, and love itself. For I do not love love, except I love a lover; for there is no love where nothing is loved. Therefore there are three things—he who loves, and that which is loved, and love. But what if I love none except myself? Will there not then be two things—that which I love, and love? For he who loves and that which is loved are the same when any one loves himself; just as to love and to be loved, in the same way, is the very same thing when any one loves himself. Since the same thing is said, when it is said, he loves himself, and he is loved by himself. For in that case to love and to be loved are not two different things: just as he who loves and he who is loved are not two different persons. But yet, even so, love and what is loved are still two things. For there is no love when any one loves himself, except when love itself is loved. But it is one thing to love one's self, another to love one's own love. For love is not loved, unless as already loving something; since where nothing is loved there is no love. Therefore there are two things when any one loves himself—love, and that which is loved. For then he that loves and that which is loved are one. Whence it seems that it does not follow that three things are to be understood wherever love is. For let us put aside from the inquiry all the other many things of which a man consists; and in order that we may discover clearly what we are now seeking, as far as in such a subject is possible, let us treat of the mind alone. The mind, then, when it loves itself, discloses two things—mind and love. But what is to love one's self, except to wish to help one's self to the enjoyment of self? And when any one wishes himself to be just as much as he is, then the will is on a par with the mind, and the love is equal to him who loves. And if love is a substance, it is certainly not body, but spirit; and the mind also is not body, but spirit. Yet love and mind are not two spirits, but one spirit; nor yet two essences, but one: and yet here are two things that are one, he that loves and love; or, if you like so to put it, that which is loved and love. And these two, indeed, are mutually said relatively. Since he who loves is referred to love, and love to him who

loves. For he who loves, loves with some love, and love is the love of some one who loves. But mind and spirit are not said relatively, but express essence. For mind and spirit do not exist because the mind and spirit of some particular man exists. For if we subtract the body from that which is man, which is so called with the conjunction of body, the mind and spirit remain. But if we subtract him that loves, then there is no love; and if we subtract love, then there is no one that loves. And therefore, in so far as they are mutually referred to one another, they are two; but whereas they are spoken in respect to themselves, each are spirit, and both together also are one spirit; and each are mind, and both together one mind. Where, then, is the trinity? Let us attend as much as we can, and let us invoke the everlasting light, that He may illuminate our darkness, and that we may see in ourselves, as much as we are permitted, the image of God.

CHAPTER 3

THE IMAGE OF THE TRINITY IN THE MIND OF MAN WHO KNOWS HIMSELF AND LOVES HIMSELF. THE MIND KNOWS ITSELF THROUGH ITSELF

3. For the mind cannot love itself, except also it know itself; for how can it love what it does not know? Or if any body says that the mind, from either general or special knowledge, believes itself of such a character as it has by experience found others to be and therefore loves itself, he speaks most foolishly. For whence does a mind know another mind, if it does not know itself? For the mind does not know other minds and not know itself, as the eye of the body sees other eyes and does not see itself; for we see bodies through the eyes of the body, because, unless we are looking into a mirror, we cannot refract and reflect the rays into themselves which shine forth through those eyes, and touch whatever we discern,—a subject, indeed, which is treated of most subtlely and obscurely, until it be clearly demonstrated whether the fact be so, or whether it be not. But whatever is the nature of the power by which we discern through the eyes, certainly, whether it be rays or anything else, we cannot discern with the eyes that power itself; but we inquire into it with the mind, and if possible, understand even this with the mind. As the mind, then, itself gathers the knowledge of corporeal things through the senses of the body, so of incorporeal things through itself. Therefore it knows itself also through

itself, since it is incorporeal; for if it does not know itself, it does not love itself.

CHAPTER 4

THE THREE ARE ONE, AND ALSO EQUAL, VIZ THE MIND ITSELF, AND THE LOVE, AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF IT. THAT THE SAME THREE EXIST SUBSTANTIALLY, AND ARE PREDICATED RELATIVELY. THAT THE SAME THREE ARE INSEPARABLE. THAT THE SAME THREE ARE NOT JOINED AND COMMINGLED LIKE PARTS, BUT THAT THEY ARE OF ONE ESSENCE, AND ARE RELATIVES

4. But as there are two things (duo quaedam), the mind and the love of it, when it loves itself; so there are two things, the mind and the knowledge of it, when it knows itself. Therefore the mind itself, and the love of it, and the knowledge of it, are three things (tria quaedam), and these three are one; and when they are perfect they are equal. For if one loves himself less than as he is,—as for example, suppose that the mind of a man only loves itself as much as the body of a man ought to be loved, whereas the mind is more than the body,—then it is in fault, and its love is not perfect. Again, if it loves itself more than as it is,—as if, for instance, it loves itself as much as God is to be loved, whereas the mind is incomparably less than God,—here also it is exceedingly in fault, and its love of self is not perfect. But it is in fault more perversely and wrongly still, when it loves the body as much as God is to be loved. Also, if knowledge is less than that thing which is known, and which can be fully known, then knowledge is not perfect; but if it is greater, then the nature which knows is above that which is known, as the knowledge of the body is greater than the body itself, which is known by that knowledge. For knowledge is a kind of life in the reason of the knower, but the body is not life; and any life is greater than any body, not in bulk, but in power. But when the mind knows itself, its own knowledge does not rise above itself, because itself knows, and itself is known. When, therefore, it knows itself entirely, and no other thing with itself, then its knowledge is equal to itself; because its knowledge is not from another nature, since it knows itself. And when it perceives itself entirely, and nothing more, then it is neither less nor greater. We said therefore rightly, that these three things, [mind, love, and knowledge], when they are perfect, are by consequence equal.

5. Similar reasoning suggests to us, if indeed we can any way understand the matter, that these things [i.e. love and knowledge] exist in the soul, and that, being as it were involved in it, they are so evolved from it as to be perceived and reckoned up substantially, or, so to say, essentially. Not as though in a subject; as color, or shape, or any other quality or quantity, are in the body. For anything of this [material] kind does not go beyond the subject in which it is; for the color or shape of this particular body cannot be also those of another body. But the mind can also love something besides itself, with that love with which it loves itself. And further, the mind does not know itself only, but also many other things. Wherefore love and knowledge are not contained in the mind as in a subject, but these also exist substantially, as the mind itself does; because, even if they are mutually predicated relatively, yet they exist each severally in their own substance. Nor are they so mutually predicated relatively as color and the colored subject are; so that color is in the colored subject, but has not any proper substance in itself, since colored body is a substance, but color is in a substance; but as two friends are also two men, which are substances, while they are said to be men not relatively, but friends relatively.

6. But, further, although one who loves or one who knows is a substance, and knowledge is a substance, and love is a substance, but he that loves and love, or, he that knows and knowledge, are spoken of relatively to each other, as are friends: yet mind or spirit are not relatives, as neither are men relatives: nevertheless he that loves and love, or he that knows and knowledge, cannot exist separately from each other, as men can that are friends. Although it would seem that friends, too, can be separated in body, not in mind, in as far as they are friends: nay, it can even happen that a friend may even also begin to hate a friend and on this account cease to be a friend while the other does not know it, and still loves him. But if the love with which the mind loves itself ceases to be, then the mind also will at the same time cease to love. Likewise, if the knowledge by which the mind knows itself ceases to be, then the mind will also at the same time cease to know itself. Just as the head of anything that has a head is certainly a head, and they are predicated relatively to each other, although they are also substances: for both a head is a body, and so is that which has a head; and if

there be no head, then neither will there be that which has a head. Only these things can be separated from each other by cutting off, those cannot.

7. And even if there are some bodies which cannot be wholly separated and divided, yet they would not be bodies unless they consisted of their own proper parts. A part then is predicated relatively to a whole, since every part is a part of some whole, and a whole is a whole by having all its parts. But since both part and whole are bodies, these things are not only predicated relatively, but exist also substantially. Perhaps, then, the mind is a whole, and the love with which it loves itself, and the knowledge with which it knows itself, are as it were its parts, of which two parts that whole consists. Or are there three equal parts which make up the one whole? But no part embraces the whole, of which it is a part; whereas, when the mind knows itself as a whole, that is, knows itself perfectly, then the knowledge of it extends through the whole of it; and when it loves itself perfectly, then it loves itself as a whole, and the love of it extends through the whole of it. Is it, then, as one drink is made from wine and water and honey, and each single part extends through the whole, and yet they are three things (for there is no part of the drink which does not contain these three things; for they are not joined as if they were water and oil, but are entirely commingled: and they are all substances, and the whole of that liquor which is composed of the three is one substance),—is it, I say, in some such way as this we are to think these three to be together, mind, love, and knowledge? But water, wine, and honey are not of one substance, although one substance results in the drink made from the commingling of them. And I cannot see how those other three are not of the same substance, since the mind itself loves itself, and itself knows itself; and these three so exist, as that the mind is neither loved nor known by any other thing at all. These three, therefore, must needs be of one and the same essence; and for that reason, if they were confounded together as it were by a commingling, they could not be in any way three, neither could they be mutually referred to each other. Just as if you were to make from one and the same gold three similar rings, although connected with each other, they are mutually referred to each other, because they are similar. For everything similar is similar to something, and there is a trinity of rings, and one gold. But if they are blended with each other, and each mingled with the other through the

whole of their own bulk, then that trinity will fall through, and it will not exist at all; and not only will it be called one gold, as it was called in the case of those three rings, but now it will not be called three things of gold at all.

CHAPTER 5

THAT THESE THREE ARE SEVERAL IN THEMSELVES, AND MUTUALLY ALL IN ALL

8. But in these three, when the mind knows itself and loves itself, there remains a trinity: mind, love, knowledge; and this trinity is not confounded together by any commingling: although they are each severally in themselves and mutually all in all, or each severally in each two, or each two in each. Therefore all are in all. For certainly the mind is in itself, since it is called mind in respect to itself: although it is said to be knowing, or known, or knowable, relatively to its own knowledge; and although also as loving, and loved, or lovable, it is referred to love, by which it loves itself. And knowledge, although it is referred to the mind that knows or is known, nevertheless is also predicated both as known and knowing in respect to itself: for the knowledge by which the mind knows itself is not unknown to itself. And although love is referred to the mind that loves, whose love it is; nevertheless it is also love in respect to itself, so as to exist also in itself: since love too is loved, yet cannot be loved with anything except with love, that is with itself. So these things are severally in themselves. But so are they in each other; because both the mind that loves is in love, and love is in the knowledge of him that loves, and knowledge is in the mind that knows. And each severally is in like manner in each two, because the mind which knows and loves itself, is in its own love and knowledge: and the love of the mind that loves and knows itself, is in the mind and in its knowledge: and the knowledge of the mind that knows and loves itself is in the mind and in its love, because it loves itself that knows, and knows itself that loves. And hence also each two is in each severally, since the mind which knows and loves itself, is together with its own knowledge in love, and together with its own love in knowledge; and love too itself and knowledge are together in the mind, which loves and knows itself. But in what way all are in all, we have already shown above; since the mind loves itself as a whole, and knows itself as a whole, and knows its own love wholly, and

loves its own knowledge wholly, when these three things are perfect in respect to themselves. Therefore these three things are marvellously inseparable from each other, and yet each of them is severally a substance, and all together are one substance or essence, whilst they are mutually predicated relatively.

CHAPTER 6

THERE IS ONE KNOWLEDGE OF THE THING IN THE THING ITSELF, AND ANOTHER IN ETERNAL TRUTH ITSELF. THAT CORPOREAL THINGS, TOO, ARE TO BE JUDGED THE RULES OF ETERNAL TRUTH

9. But when the human mind knows itself and loves itself, it does not know and love anything unchangeable: and each individual man declares his own particular mind by one manner of speech, when he considers what takes place in himself; but defines the human mind abstractly by special or general knowledge. And so, when he speaks to me of his own individual mind, as to whether he understands this or that, or does not understand it, or whether he wishes or does not wish this or that, I believe; but when he speaks the truth of the mind of man generally or specially, I recognize and approve. Whence it is manifest, that each sees a thing in himself, in such way that another person may believe what he says of it, yet may not see it; but another [sees a thing] in the truth itself, in such way that another person also can gaze upon it; of which the former undergoes changes at successive times, the latter consists in an unchangeable eternity. For we do not gather a generic or specific knowledge of the human mind by means of resemblance by seeing many minds with the eyes of the body: but we gaze upon indestructible truth, from which to define perfectly, as far as we can, not of what sort is the mind of any one particular man, but of what sort it ought to be upon the eternal plan.

10. Whence also, even in the case of the images of things corporeal which are drawn in through the bodily sense, and in some way infused into the memory, from which also those things which have not been seen are thought under a fancied image, whether otherwise than they really are, or even perchance as they are;—even here too, we are proved either to accept or reject, within ourselves, by other rules which remain altogether unchangeable above our mind, when we approve or reject anything rightly.

For both when I recall the walls of Carthage which I have seen, and imagine to myself the walls of Alexandria which I have not seen, and, in preferring this to that among forms which in both cases are imaginary, make that preference upon grounds of reason; the judgment of truth from above is still strong and clear, and rests firmly upon the utterly indestructible rules of its own right; and if it is covered as it were by cloudiness of corporeal images, yet is not wrapt up and confounded in them.

11. But it makes a difference, whether, under that or in that darkness, I am shut off as it were from the clear heaven; or whether (as usually happens on lofty mountains), enjoying the free air between both, I at once look up above to the calmest light, and down below upon the densest clouds. For whence is the ardor of brotherly love kindled in me, when I hear that some man has borne bitter torments for the excellence and steadfastness of faith? And if that man is shown to me with the finger, I am eager to join myself to him, to become acquainted with him, to bind him to myself in friendship. And accordingly, if opportunity offers, I draw near, I address him, I converse with him, I express my goodwill towards him in what words I can, and wish that in him too in turn should be brought to pass and expressed goodwill towards me; and I endeavor after a spiritual embrace in the way of belief, since I cannot search out so quickly and discern altogether his innermost heart. I love therefore the faithful and courageous man with a pure and genuine love. But if he were to confess to me in the course of conversation, or were through unguardedness to show in any way, that either he believes something unseemly of God, and desires also something carnal in Him, and that he bore these torments on behalf of such an error, or from the desire of money for which he hoped, or from empty greediness of human praise: immediately it follows that the love with which I was borne towards him, displeased, and as it were repelled, and taken away from an unworthy man, remains in that form, after which, believing him such as I did, I had loved him; unless perhaps I have come to love him to this end, that he may become such, while I have found him not to be such in fact. And in that man, too, nothing is changed: although it can be changed, so that he may become that which I had believed him to be already. But in my mind there certainly is something changed, viz., the estimate I had formed of him, which was before of one sort, and now is of another: and the same

love, at the bidding from above of unchangeable righteousness, is turned aside from the purpose of enjoying, to the purpose of taking counsel. But the form itself of unshaken and stable truth, wherein I should have enjoyed the fruition of the man, believing him to be good, and wherein likewise I take counsel that he may be good, sheds in an immoveable eternity the same light of incorruptible and most sound reason, both upon the sight of my mind, and upon that cloud of images, which I discern from above, when I think of the same man whom I had seen. Again, when I call back to my mind some arch, turned beautifully and symmetrically, which, let us say, I saw at Carthage; a certain reality that had been made known to the mind through the eyes, and transferred to the memory, causes the imaginary view. But I behold in my mind yet another thing, according to which that work of art pleases me; and whence also, if it displeased me, I should correct it. We judge therefore of those particular things according to that [form of eternal truth], and discern that form by the intuition of the rational mind. But those things themselves we either touch if present by the bodily sense, or if absent remember their images as fixed in our memory, or picture, in the way of likeness to them, such things as we ourselves also, if we wished and were able, would laboriously build up: figuring in the mind after one fashion the images of bodies, or seeing bodies through the body; but after another, grasping by simple intelligence what is above the eye of the mind, viz., the reasons and the unspeakably beautiful skill of such forms.

CHAPTER 7

WE CONCEIVE AND BEGET THE WORD WITHIN, FROM THE THINGS WE HAVE BEHELD IN THE ETERNAL TRUTH. THE WORD, WHETHER OF THE CREATURE OR OF THE CREATOR, IS CONCEIVED BY LOVE

12. We behold, then, by the sight of the mind, in that eternal truth from which all things temporal are made, the form according to which we are, and according to which we do anything by true and right reason, either in ourselves, or in things corporeal; and we have the true knowledge of things, thence conceived, as it were as a word within us, and by speaking we beget it from within; nor by being born does it depart from us. And when we speak to others, we apply to the word, remaining within us, the ministry of the voice or of some bodily sign, that by some kind of sensible

remembrance some similar thing may be wrought also in the mind of him that hears,—similar, I say, to that which does not depart from the mind of him that speaks. We do nothing, therefore, through the members of the body in our words and actions, by which the behavior of men is either approved or blamed, which we do not anticipate by a word uttered within ourselves. For no one willingly does anything, which he has not first said in his heart.

13. And this word is conceived by love, either of the creature or of the Creator, that is, either of changeable nature or of unchangeable truth.

CHAPTER 8

IN WHAT DESIRE AND LOVE DIFFER

[Conceived] therefore, either by desire or by love: not that the creature ought not to be loved; but if that love [of the creature] is referred to the Creator, then it will not be desire (cupiditas), but love (charitas). For it is desire when the creature is loved for itself. And then it does not help a man through making use of it, but corrupts him in the enjoying it. When, therefore, the creature is either equal to us or inferior, we must use the inferior in order to God, but we must enjoy the equal duly in God. For as thou oughtest to enjoy thyself, not in thyself, but in Him who made thee, so also him whom thou lovest as thyself. Let us enjoy, therefore, both ourselves and our brethren in the Lord; and hence let us not dare to yield, and as it were to relax, ourselves to ourselves in the direction downwards. Now a word is born, when, being thought out, it pleases us either to the effect of sinning, or to that of doing right. Therefore love, as it were a mean, conjoins our word and the mind from which it is conceived, and without any confusion binds itself as a third with them, in an incorporeal embrace.

CHAPTER 9

IN THE LOVE OF SPIRITUAL THINGS THE WORD BORN IS THE SAME AS THE WORD CONCEIVED. IT IS OTHERWISE IN THE LOVE OF CARNAL THINGS

14. But the word conceived and the word born are the very same when the will finds rest in knowledge itself, as is the case in the love of spiritual things. For instance, he who knows righteousness perfectly, and loves it

perfectly, is already righteous; even if no necessity exist of working according to it outwardly through the members of the body. But in the love of carnal and temporal things, as in the offspring of animals, the conception of the word is one thing, the bringing forth another. For here what is conceived by desiring is born by attaining. Since it does not suffice to avarice to know and to love gold, except it also have it; nor to know and love to eat, or to lie with any one, unless also one does it; nor to know and love honors and power, unless they actually come to pass. Nay, all these things, even if obtained, do not suffice. “Whosoever drinketh of this water,” He says, “shall thirst again.” And so also the Psalmist, “He hath conceived pain and brought forth iniquity.” And he speaks of pain or labor as conceived, when those things are conceived which it is not sufficient to know and will, and when the mind burns and grows sick with want, until it arrives at those things, and, as it were, brings them forth. Whence in the Latin language we have the word “parta” used elegantly for both “reperta” and “comperta,” which words sound as if derived from bringing forth. Since “lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin.” Wherefore the Lord proclaims, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden;” and in another place “Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days!” And when therefore He referred all either right actions or sins to the bringing forth of the word, “By thy mouth,” He says, “thou shalt be justified, and by thy mouth thou shalt be condemned,” intending thereby not the visible mouth, but that which is within and invisible, of the thought and of the heart.

CHAPTER 10

WHETHER ONLY KNOWLEDGE THAT IS LOVED IS THE WORD OF THE MIND

15. It is rightly asked then, whether all knowledge is a word, or only knowledge that is loved. For we also know the things which we hate; but what we do not like, cannot be said to be either conceived or brought forth by the mind. For not all things which in anyway touch it, are conceived by it; but some only reach the point of being known, but yet are not spoken as words, as for instance those of which we speak now. For those are called words in one way, which occupy spaces of time by their syllables, whether they are pronounced or only thought; and in another way, all that is known

is called a word imprinted on the mind, as long as it can be brought forth from the memory and defined, even though we dislike the thing itself; and in another way still, when we like that which is conceived in the mind. And that which the apostle says, must be taken according to this last kind of word, “No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost;” since those also say this, but according to another meaning of the term “word,” of whom the Lord Himself says, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Nay, even in the case of things which we hate, when we rightly dislike and rightly censure them, we approve and like the censure bestowed upon them, and it becomes a word. Nor is it the knowledge of vices that displeases us, but the vices themselves. For I like to know and define what intemperance is; and this is its word. Just as there are known faults in art, and the knowledge of them is rightly approved, when a connoisseur discerns the species or the privation of excellence, as to affirm and deny that it is or that it is not; yet to be without excellence and to fall away into fault, is worthy of condemnation. And to define intemperance, and to say its word, belongs to the art of morals; but to be intemperate belongs to that which that art censures. Just as to know and define what a solecism is, belongs to the art of speaking; but to be guilty of one, is a fault which the same art reprehends. A word, then, which is the point we wish now to discern and intimate, is knowledge together with love. Whenever, then, the mind knows and loves itself, its word is joined to it by love. And since it loves knowledge and knows love, both the word is in love and love is in the word, and both are in him who loves and speaks.

CHAPTER 11

THAT THE IMAGE OR BEGOTTEN WORD OF THE MIND THAT KNOWS ITSELF IS EQUAL TO THE MIND ITSELF

16. But all knowledge according to species is like the thing which it knows. For there is another knowledge according to privation, according to which we speak a word only when we condemn. And this condemnation of a privation is equivalent to praise of the species, and so is approved. The mind, then, contains some likeness to a known species, whether when liking that species or when disliking its privation. And hence, in so far as we know God, we are like Him, but not like to the point of equality, since we do not

know Him to the extent of His own being. And as, when we speak of bodies by means of the bodily sense, there arises in our mind some likeness of them, which is a phantasm of the memory; for the bodies themselves are not at all in the mind, when we think them, but only the likenesses of those bodies; therefore, when we approve the latter for the former, we err, for the approving of one thing for another is an error; yet the image of the body in the mind is a thing of a better sort than the species of the body itself, inasmuch as the former is in a better nature, viz. in a living substance, as the mind is: so when we know God, although we are made better than we were before we knew Him, and above all when the same knowledge being also liked and worthily loved becomes a word, and so that knowledge becomes a kind of likeness of God; yet that knowledge is of a lower kind, since it is in a lower nature; for the mind is creature, but God is Creator. And from this it may be inferred, that when the mind knows and approves itself, this same knowledge is in such way its word, as that it is altogether on a par and equal with it, and the same; because it is neither the knowledge of a lower essence, as of the body, nor of a higher, as of God. And whereas knowledge bears a likeness to that which it knows, that is, of which it is the knowledge; in this case it has perfect and equal likeness, when the mind itself, which knows, is known. And so it is both image and word; because it is uttered concerning that mind to which it is equalled in knowing, and that which is begotten is equal to the begetter.

CHAPTER 12

WHY LOVE IS NOT THE OFFSPRING OF THE MIND, AS KNOWLEDGE IS SO. THE SOLUTION OF THE QUESTION. THE MIND WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF ITSELF AND THE LOVE OF ITSELF IS THE IMAGE OF THE TRINITY

17. What then is love? Will it not be an image? Will it not be a word? Will it not be begotten? For why does the mind beget its knowledge when it knows itself, and not beget its love when it loves itself? For if it is the cause of its own knowing, for the reason that it is knowable, it is also the cause of its own love because it is lovable. It is hard, then, to say why it does not beget both. For there is a further question also respecting the supreme Trinity itself, the omnipotent God the Creator, after whose image man is made, which troubles men, whom the truth of God invites to the faith by

human speech; viz. why the Holy Spirit is not also to be either believed or understood to be begotten by God the Father, so that He also may be called a Son. And this question we are endeavoring in some way to investigate in the human mind, in order that from a lower image, in which our own nature itself as it were answers, upon being questioned, in a way more familiar to ourselves, we may be able to direct a more practised mental vision from the enlightened creature to the unchangeable light; assuming, however, that the truth itself has persuaded us, that as no Christian doubts the Word of God to be the Son, so that the Holy Spirit is love. Let us return, then, to a more careful questioning and consideration upon this subject of that image which is the creature, that is, of the rational mind; wherein the knowledge of some things coming into existence in time, but which did not exist before, and the love of some things which were not loved before, opens to us more clearly what to say: because to speech also itself, which must be disposed in time, that thing is easier of explanation which is comprehended in the order of time.

18. First, therefore, it is clear that a thing may possibly be knowable, that is, such as can be known, and yet that it may be unknown; but that it is not possible for that to be known which is not knowable. Wherefore it must be clearly held that everything whatsoever that we know begets at the same time in us the knowledge of itself; for knowledge is brought forth from both, from the knower and from the thing known. When, therefore, the mind knows itself, it alone is the parent of its own knowledge; for it is itself both the thing known and the knower of it. But it was knowable to itself also before it knew itself, only the knowledge of itself was not in itself so long as it did not know itself. In knowing itself, then, it begets a knowledge of itself equal to itself; since it does not know itself as less than itself is, nor is its knowledge the knowledge of the essence of some one else, not only because itself knows, but also because it knows itself, as we have said above. What then is to be said of love; why, when the mind loves itself, it should not seem also to have begotten the love of itself? For it was lovable to itself even before it loved itself since it could love itself; just as it was knowable to itself even before it knew itself, since it could know itself. For if it were not knowable to itself, it never could have known itself; and so, if it were not lovable to itself, it never could have loved itself. Why therefore

may it not be said by loving itself to have begotten its own love, as by knowing itself it has begotten its own knowledge? Is it because it is thereby indeed plainly shown that this is the principle of love, whence it proceeds? for it proceeds from the mind itself, which is lovable to itself before it loves itself, and so is the principle of its own love by which it loves itself: but that this love is not therefore rightly said to be begotten by the mind, as is the knowledge of itself by which the mind knows itself, because in the case of knowledge the thing has been found already, which is what we call brought forth or discovered; and this is commonly preceded by an inquiry such as to find rest when that end is attained. For inquiry is the desire of finding, or, what is the same thing, of discovering. But those things which are discovered are as it were brought forth, whence they are like offspring; but wherein, except in the case itself of knowledge? For in that case they are as it were uttered and fashioned. For although the things existed already which we found by seeking, yet the knowledge of them did not exist, which knowledge we regard as an offspring that is born. Further, the desire (appetitus) which there is in seeking proceeds from him who seeks, and is in some way in suspense, and does not rest in the end whither it is directed, except that which is sought be found and conjoined with him who seeks. And this desire, that is, inquiry,—although it does not seem to be love, by which that which is known is loved, for in this case we are still striving to know,—yet it is something of the same kind. For it can be called will (voluntas), since every one who seeks wills (vult) to find; and if that is sought which belongs to knowledge, every one who seeks wills to know. But if he wills ardently and earnestly, he is said to study (studere): a word that is most commonly employed in the case of pursuing and obtaining any branches of learning. Therefore, the bringing forth of the mind is preceded by some desire, by which, through seeking and finding what we wish to know, the offspring, viz. knowledge itself, is born. And for this reason, that desire by which knowledge is conceived and brought forth, cannot rightly be called the bringing forth and the offspring; and the same desire which led us to long for the knowing of the thing, becomes the love of the thing when known, while it holds and embraces its accepted offspring, that is, knowledge, and unites it to its begetter. And so there is a kind of image of the Trinity in the mind itself, and the knowledge of it, which is its offspring and its word concerning itself, and love as a third, and these three are one, and one substance. Neither is the offspring less, since the mind knows itself according to the measure of its own being; nor is the love less, since it loves itself according to the measure both of its own knowledge and of its own being.

Book X

In which there is shown to be another trinity in the mind of man, and one that appears much more evidently, viz. in his memory, understanding, and will.

CHAPTER 1

THE LOVE OF THE STUDIOUS MIND, THAT IS, OF ONE DESIROUS TO KNOW, IS NOT THE LOVE OF A THING WHICH IT DOES NOT KNOW

1. Let us now proceed, then, in due order, with a more exact purpose, to explain this same point more thoroughly. And first, since no one can love at all a thing of which he is wholly ignorant, we must carefully consider of what sort is the love of those who are studious, that is, of those who do not already know, but are still desiring to know any branch of learning. Now certainly, in those things whereof the word study is not commonly used, love often arises from hearsay, when the reputation of anything for beauty inflames the mind to the seeing and enjoying it; since the mind knows generically wherein consist the beauties of corporeal things, from having seen them very frequently, and since there exists within a faculty of approving that which outwardly is longed for. And when this happens, the love that is called forth is not of a thing wholly unknown, since its genus is thus known. But when we love a good man whose face we never saw, we love him from the knowledge of his virtues, which virtues we know [abstractly] in the truth itself. But in the case of learning, it is for the most part the authority of others who praise and commend it that kindles our love of it; although nevertheless we could not burn with any zeal at all for the study of it, unless we had already in our mind at least a slight impression of the knowledge of each kind of learning. For who, for instance, would devote any care and labor to the learning of rhetoric, unless he knew before that it was the science of speaking? Sometimes, again, we marvel at the results of learning itself, which we have heard of or experienced; and hence burn to obtain, by learning, the power of attaining these results. Just as if it

were said to one who did not know his letters, that there is a kind of learning which enables a man to send words, wrought with the hand in silence, to one who is ever so far absent, for him in turn to whom they are sent to gather these words, not with his ears, but with his eyes; and if the man were to see the thing actually done, is not that man, since he desires to know how he can do this thing, altogether moved to study with a view to the result which he already knows and holds? So it is that the studious zeal of those who learn is kindled: for that of which any one is utterly ignorant, he can in no way love.

2. So also, if any one hear an unknown sign, as, for instance, the sound of some word of which he does not know the signification, he desires to know what it is; that is, he desires to know what thing it is which it is agreed shall be brought to mind by that sound: as if he heard the word temetum uttered, and not knowing, should ask what it is. He must then know already that it is a sign, i.e. that the word is not an empty sound, but that something is signified by it; for in other respects this trisyllabic word is known to him already, and has already impressed its articulate form upon his mind through the sense of hearing. And then what more is to be required in him, that he may go on to a greater knowledge of that of which all the letters and all the spaces of its several sounds are already known, unless that it shall at the same time have become known to him that it is a sign, and shall have also moved him with the desire of knowing of what it is the sign? The more, then, the thing is known, yet not fully known, the more the mind desires to know concerning it what remains to be known. For if he knew it to be only such and such a spoken word, and did not know that it was the sign of something, he would seek nothing further, since the sensible thing is already perceived as far as it can be by the sense. But because he knows it to be not only a spoken word, but also a sign, he wishes to know it perfectly; and no sign is known perfectly, except it be known of what it is the sign. He then who with ardent carefulness seeks to know this, and inflamed by studious zeal perseveres in the search; can such an one be said to be without love? What then does he love? For certainly nothing can be loved unless it is known. For that man does not love those three syllables which he knows already. But if he loves this in them, that he knows them to signify something, this is not the point now in question, for it is not this

which he seeks to know. But we are now asking what it is he loves, in that which he is desirous to know, but which certainly he does not yet know; and we are therefore wondering why he loves, since we know most assuredly that nothing can be loved unless it be known. What then does he love, except that he knows and perceives in the reason of things what excellence there is in learning, in which the knowledge of all signs is contained; and what benefit there is in the being skilled in these, since by them human fellowship mutually communicates its own perceptions, lest the assemblies of men should be actually worse than utter solitude, if they were not to mingle their thoughts by conversing together? The soul, then, discerns this fitting and serviceable species, and knows it, and loves it; and he who seeks the meaning of any words of which he is ignorant, studies to render that species perfect in himself as much as he can: for it is one thing to behold it in the light of truth, another to desire it as within his own capacity. For he beholds in the light of truth how great and how good a thing it is to understand and to speak all tongues of all nations, and so to hear no tongue and to be heard by none as from a foreigner. The beauty, then, of this knowledge is already discerned by thought, and the thing being known is loved; and that thing is so regarded, and so stimulates the studious zeal of learners, that they are moved with respect to it, and desire it eagerly in all the labor which they spend upon the attainment of such a capacity, in order that they may also embrace in practice that which they know beforehand by reason. And so every one, the nearer he approaches that capacity in hope, the more fervently desires it with love; for those branches of learning are studied the more eagerly, which men do not despair of being able to attain; for when any one entertains no hope of attaining his end, then he either loves lukewarmly or does not love at all, howsoever he may see the excellence of it. Accordingly, because the knowledge of all languages is almost universally felt to be hopeless, every one studies most to know that of his own nation; but if he feels that he is not sufficient even to comprehend this perfectly, yet no one is so indolent in this knowledge as not to wish to know, when he hears an unknown word, what it is, and to seek and learn it if he can. And while he is seeking it, certainly he has a studious zeal of learning, and seems to love a thing he does not know; but the case is really otherwise. For that species touches the mind, which the mind knows and thinks, wherein the fitness is clearly visible which accrues from the associating of minds with one another, in the hearing and returning of known and spoken words. And this species kindles studious zeal in him who seeks what indeed he knows not, but gazes upon and loves the unknown form to which that pertains. If then, for example, any one were to ask, What is temetum (for I had instanced this word already), and it were said to him, What does this matter to you? he will answer, Lest perhaps I hear some one speaking, and understand him not; or perhaps read the word somewhere, and know not what the writer meant. Who, pray, would say to such an inquirer, Do not care about understanding what you hear; do not care about knowing what you read? For almost every rational soul quickly discerns the beauty of that knowledge, through which the thoughts of men are mutually made known by the enunciation of significant words; and it is on account of this fitness thus known, and because known therefore loved, that such an unknown word is studiously sought out. When then he hears and learns that wine was called "temetum" by our forefathers, but that the word is already quite obsolete in our present usage of language, he will think perhaps that he has still need of the word on account of this or that book of those forefathers. But if he holds these also to be superfluous, perhaps he does now come to think the word not worth remembering, since he sees it has nothing to do with that species of learning which he knows with the mind, and gazes upon, and so loves.

3. Wherefore in all cases the love of a studious mind, that is, of one that wishes to know what it does not know, is not the love of that thing which it does not know, but of that which it knows; on account of which it wishes to know what it does not know. Or if it is so inquisitive as to be carried away, not for any other cause known to it, but by the mere love of knowing things unknown; then such an inquisitive person is, doubtless distinguishable from an ordinary student, yet does not, any more than he, love things he does not know; nay, on the contrary, he is more fitly said to hate things he knows not, of which he wishes that there should be none, in wishing to know everything. But lest any one should lay before us a more difficult question, by declaring that it is just as impossible for any one to hate what he does not know, as to love what he does not know, we will not withstand what is true; but it must be understood that it is not the same thing to say he loves to know things unknown, as to say he loves things unknown. For it is possible

that a man may love to know things unknown; but it is not possible that he should love things unknown. For the word to know is not placed there without meaning; since he who loves to know things unknown, does not love the unknown things themselves, but the knowing of them. And unless he knew what knowing means, no one could say confidently, either that he knew or that he did not know. For not only he who says I know, and says so truly, must needs know what knowing is; but he also who says, I do not know, and says so confidently and truly, and knows that he says so truly, certainly knows what knowing is; for he both distinguishes him who does not know from him who knows, when he looks into himself and says truly I do not know; and whereas he knows that he says this truly, whence should he know it, if he did not know what knowing is?

CHAPTER 2

NO ONE AT ALL LOVES THINGS UNKNOWN

4. No studious person, then, no inquisitive person, loves things he does not know, even while he is urgent with the most vehement desire to know what he does not know. For he either knows already generically what he loves, and longs to know it also in some individual or individuals, which perhaps are praised, but not yet known to him; and he pictures in his mind an imaginary form by which he may be stirred to love. And whence does he picture this, except from those things which he has already known? And yet perhaps he will not love it, if he find that form which was praised to be unlike that other form which was figured and in thought most fully known to his mind. And if he has loved it, he will begin to love it from that time when he learned it; since a little before, that form which was loved was other than that which the mind that formed it had been wont to exhibit to itself. But if he shall find it similar to that form which report had proclaimed, and to be such that he could truly say I was already loving thee; yet certainly not even then did he love a form he did not know, since he had known it in that likeness. Or else we see somewhat in the species of the eternal reason, and therein love it; and when this is manifested in some image of a temporal thing, and we believe the praises of those who have made trial of it, and so love it, then we do not love anything unknown, according to that which we have already sufficiently discussed above. Or

else, again, we love something known, and on account of it seek something unknown; and so it is by no means the love of the thing unknown that possesses us, but the love of the thing known, to which we know the unknown thing belongs, so that we know that too which we seek still as unknown; as a little before I said of an unknown word. Or else, again, every one loves the very knowing itself, as no one can fail to know who desires to know anything. For these reasons they seem to love things unknown who wish to know anything which they do not know, and who, on account of their vehement desire of inquiry, cannot be said to be without love. But how different the case really is, and that nothing at all can be loved which is not known, I think I must have persuaded every one who carefully looks upon truth. But since the examples which we have given belong to those who desire to know something which they themselves are not, we must take thought lest perchance some new notion appear, when the mind desires to know itself.

CHAPTER 3

THAT WHEN THE MIND LOVES ITSELF, IT IS NOT UNKNOWN TO ITSELF

5. What, then, does the mind love, when it seeks ardently to know itself, whilst it is still unknown to itself? For, behold, the mind seeks to know itself, and is excited thereto by studious zeal. It loves, therefore; but what does it love? Is it itself? But how can this be when it does not yet know itself, and no one can love what he does not know? Is it that report has declared to it its own species, in like way as we commonly hear of people who are absent? Perhaps, then, it does not love itself, but loves that which it imagines of itself, which is perhaps widely different from what itself is: or if the phantasy in the mind is like the mind itself, and so when it loves this fancied image, it loves itself before it knew itself, because it gazes upon that which is like itself; then it knew other minds from which to picture itself, and so is known to itself generically. Why, then, when it knows other minds, does it not know itself, since nothing can possibly be more present to it than itself? But if, as other eyes are more known to the eyes of the body, than those eyes are to themselves; then let it not seek itself, because it never will find itself. For eyes can never see themselves except in looking-glasses; and it cannot be supposed in any way that anything of that kind can

be applied also to the contemplation of incorporeal things, so that the mind should know itself, as it were, in a looking-glass. Or does it see in the reason of eternal truth how beautiful it is to know one's self, and so loves this which it sees, and studies to bring it to pass in itself? because, although it is not known to itself, yet it is known to it how good it is, that it should be known to itself. And this, indeed, is very wonderful, that it does not yet know itself, and yet knows already how excellent a thing it is to know itself. Or does it see some most excellent end, viz. its own serenity and blessedness, by some hidden remembrance, which has not abandoned it, although it has gone far onwards, and believes that it cannot attain to that same end unless it know itself? And so while it loves that, it seeks this; and loves that which is known, on account of which it seeks that which is unknown. But why should the remembrance of its own blessedness be able to last, and the remembrance of itself not be able to last as well; that so it should know itself which wishes to attain, as well as know that to which it wishes to attain? Or when it loves to know itself, does it love, not itself, which it does not yet know, but the very act of knowing; and feel the more annoyed that itself is wanting to its own knowledge wherewith it wishes to embrace all things? And it knows what it is to know; and whilst it loves this, which it knows, desires also to know itself. Whereby, then, does it know its own knowing, if it does not know itself? For it knows that it knows other things, but that it does not know itself; for it is from hence that it knows also what knowing is. In what way, then, does that which does not know itself, know itself as knowing anything? For it does not know that some other mind knows, but that itself does so. Therefore it knows itself. Further, when it seeks to know itself, it knows itself now as seeking. Therefore again it knows itself. And hence it cannot altogether not know itself, when certainly it does so far know itself as that it knows itself as not knowing itself. But if it does not know itself not to know itself, then it does not seek to know itself. And therefore, in the very fact that it seeks itself, it is clearly convicted of being more known to itself than unknown. For it knows itself as seeking and as not knowing itself, in that it seeks to know itself.

CHAPTER 4

HOW THE MIND KNOWS ITSELF, NOT IN PART, BUT AS A WHOLE

6. What then shall we say? Does that which knows itself in part, not know itself in part? But it is absurd to say, that it does not as a whole know what it knows. I do not say, it knows wholly; but what it knows, it as a whole knows. When therefore it knows anything about itself, which it can only know as a whole, it knows itself as a whole. But it does know that itself knows something, while yet except as a whole it cannot know anything. Therefore it knows itself as a whole. Further, what in it is so known to itself, as that it lives? And it cannot at once be a mind, and not live, while it has also something over and above, viz., that it understands: for the souls of beasts also live, but do not understand. As therefore a mind is a whole mind, so it lives as a whole. But it knows that it lives. Therefore it knows itself as a whole. Lastly, when the mind seeks to know itself, it already knows that it is a mind: otherwise it knows not whether it seeks itself, and perhaps seeks one thing while intending to seek another. For it might happen that itself was not a mind, and so, in seeking to know a mind, that it did not seek to know itself. Wherefore since the mind, when it seeks to know what mind is, knows that it seeks itself, certainly it knows that itself is a mind. Furthermore, if it knows this in itself, that it is a mind, and a whole mind, then it knows itself as a whole. But suppose it did not know itself to be a mind, but in seeking itself only knew that it did seek itself. For so, too, it may possibly seek one thing for another, if it does not know this: but that it may not seek one thing for another, without doubt it knows what it seeks. But if it knows what it seeks, and seeks itself, then certainly it knows itself. What therefore more does it seek? But if it knows itself in part, but still seeks itself in part, then it seeks not itself, but part of itself. For when we speak of the mind itself, we speak of it as a whole. Further, because it knows that it is not yet found by itself as a whole, it knows how much the whole is. And so it seeks that which is wanting, as we are wont to seek to recall to the mind something that has slipped from the mind, but has not altogether gone away from it; since we can recognize it, when it has come back, to be the same thing that we were seeking. But how can mind come into mind, as though it were possible for the mind not to be in the mind? Add to this, that if, having found a part, it does not seek itself as a

whole, yet it as a whole seeks itself. Therefore as a whole it is present to itself, and there is nothing left to be sought: for that is wanting which is sought, not the mind which seeks. Since therefore it as a whole seeks itself, nothing of it is wanting. Or if it does not as a whole seek itself, but the part which has been found seeks the part which has not yet been found then the mind does not seek itself, of which no part seeks itself. For the part which has been found, does not seek itself; nor yet does the part itself which has not yet been found, seek itself; since it is sought by that part which has been already found. Wherefore, since neither the mind as a whole seeks itself, nor does any part of it seek itself, the mind does not seek itself at all.

CHAPTER 5

WHY THE SOUL IS ENJOINED TO KNOW ITSELF. WHENCE COME THE ERRORS OF THE MIND CONCERNING ITS OWN SUBSTANCE

7. Why therefore is it enjoined upon it, that it should know itself? I suppose, in order that, it may consider itself, and live according to its own nature; that is, seek to be regulated according to its own nature, viz., under Him to whom it ought to be subject, and above those things to which it is to be preferred; under Him by whom it ought to be ruled, above those things which it ought to rule. For it does many things through vicious desire, as though in forgetfulness of itself. For it sees some things intrinsically excellent, in that more excellent nature which is God: and whereas it ought to remain steadfast that it may enjoy them, it is turned away from Him, by wishing to appropriate those things to itself, and not to be like to Him by His gift, but to be what He is by its own, and it begins to move and slip gradually down into less and less, which it thinks to be more and more; for it is neither sufficient for itself, nor is anything at all sufficient for it, if it withdraw from Him who is alone sufficient: and so through want and distress it becomes too intent upon its own actions and upon the unquiet delights which it obtains through them: and thus, by the desire of acquiring knowledge from those things that are without, the nature of which it knows and loves, and which it feels can be lost unless held fast with anxious care, it loses its security, and thinks of itself so much the less, in proportion as it feels the more secure that it cannot lose itself. So, whereas it is one thing not to know oneself, and another not to think of oneself (for we do not say

of the man that is skilled in much learning, that he is ignorant of grammar, when he is only not thinking of it, because he is thinking at the time of the art of medicine);—whereas, then, I say it is one thing not to know oneself, and another not to think of oneself, such is the strength of love, that the mind draws in with itself those things which it has long thought of with love, and has grown into them by the close adherence of diligent study, even when it returns in some way to think of itself. And because these things are corporeal which it loved externally through the carnal senses; and because it has become entangled with them by a kind of daily familiarity, and yet cannot carry those corporeal things themselves with itself internally as it were into the region of incorporeal nature; therefore it combines certain images of them, and thrusts them thus made from itself into itself. For it gives to the forming of them somewhat of its own substance, yet preserves the while something by which it may judge freely of the species of those images; and this something is more properly the mind, that is, the rational understanding, which is preserved that it may judge. For we see that we have those parts of the soul which are informed by the likenesses of corporeal things, in common also with beasts.

CHAPTER 6

THE OPINION WHICH THE MIND HAS OF ITSELF IS DECEITFUL

8. But the mind errs, when it so lovingly and intimately connects itself with these images, as even to consider itself to be something of the same kind. For so it is conformed to them to some extent, not by being this, but by thinking it is so: not that it thinks itself to be an image, but outright that very thing itself of which it entertains the image. For there still lives in it the power of distinguishing the corporeal thing which it leaves without, from the image of that corporeal thing which it contains therefrom within itself: except when these images are so projected as if felt without and not thought within, as in the case of people who are asleep, or mad, or in a trance.

CHAPTER 7

THE OPINIONS OF PHILOSOPHERS RESPECTING THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SOUL. THE ERROR OF THOSE WHO ARE OF OPINION THAT THE SOUL IS CORPOREAL, DOES NOT ARISE FROM DEFECTIVE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOUL, BUT FROM THEIR ADDING THERE TO SOMETHING FOREIGN TO IT. WHAT IS MEANT BY FINDING

9. When, therefore, it thinks itself to be something of this kind, it thinks itself to be a corporeal thing; and since it is perfectly conscious of its own superiority, by which it rules the body, it has hence come to pass that the question has been raised what part of the body has the greater power in the body; and the opinion has been held that this is the mind, nay, that it is even the whole soul altogether. And some accordingly think it to be the blood, others the brain, others the heart; not as the Scripture says, “I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart;” and, “Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thine heart;” for this word by misapplication or metaphor is transferred from the body to the soul; but they have simply thought it to be that small part itself of the body, which we see when the inward parts are rent asunder. Others, again, have believed the soul to be made up of very minute and individual corpustules, which they call atoms, meeting in themselves and cohering. Others have said that its substance is air, others fire. Others have been of opinion that it is no substance at all, since they could not think any substance unless it is body, and they did not find that the soul was body; but it was in their opinion the tempering together itself of our body, or the combining together of the elements, by which that flesh is as it were conjoined. And hence all of these have held the soul to be mortal; since, whether it were body, or some combination of body, certainly it could not in either case continue always without death. But they who have held its substance to be some kind of life the reverse of corporeal, since they have found it to be a life that animates and quickens every living body, have by consequence striven also, according as each was able, to prove it immortal, since life cannot be without life.

For as to that fifth kind of body, I know not what, which some have added to the four well-known elements of the world, and have said that the soul was made of this, I do not think we need spend time in discussing it in this place. For either they mean by body what we mean by it, viz., that of which a part is less than the whole in extension of place, and they are to be reckoned among those who have believed the mind to be corporeal: or if they call either all substance, or all changeable substance, body, whereas they know that not all substance is contained in extension of place by any length and breadth and height, we need not contend with them about a question of words.

10. Now, in the case of all these opinions, any one who sees that the nature of the mind is at once substance, and yet not corporeal,—that is, that it does not occupy a less extension of place with a less part of itself, and a greater with a greater,—must needs see at the same time that they who are of opinion that it is corporeal do not err from defect of knowledge concerning mind, but because they associate with it qualities without which they are not able to conceive any nature at all. For if you bid them conceive of existence that is without corporeal phantasms, they hold it merely nothing. And so the mind would not seek itself, as though wanting to itself. For what is so present to knowledge as that which is present to the mind? Or what is so present to the mind as the mind itself? And hence what is called “invention,” if we consider the origin of the word, what else does it mean, unless that to find out is to “come into” that which is sought? Those things accordingly which come into the mind as it were of themselves, are not usually said to be found out, although they may be said to be known; since we did not endeavor by seeking to come into them, that is to invent or find them out. And therefore, as the mind itself really seeks those things which are sought by the eyes or by any other sense of the body (for the mind directs even the carnal sense, and then finds out or invents, when that sense comes to the things which are sought); so, too, it finds out or invents other things which it ought to know, not with the medium of corporeal sense, but through itself, when it “comes into” them; and this, whether in the case of the higher substance that is in God, or of the other parts of the soul; just as it does when it judges of bodily images themselves, for it finds these within, in the soul, impressed through the body.

CHAPTER 8

HOW THE SOUL INQUIRES INTO ITSELF. WHENCE COMES THE ERROR OF THE SOUL CONCERNING ITSELF

11. It is then a wonderful question, in what manner the soul seeks and finds itself; at what it aims in order to seek, or whither it comes, that it may come into or find out. For what is so much in the mind as the mind itself? But because it is in those things which it thinks of with love, and is wont to be in sensible, that is, in corporeal things with love, it is unable to be in itself without the images of those corporeal things. And hence shameful error arises to block its way, whilst it cannot separate from itself the images of sensible things, so as to see itself alone. For they have marvellously cohered with it by the close adhesion of love. And herein consists its uncleanness; since, while it strives to think of itself alone, it fancies itself to be that, without which it cannot think of itself. When, therefore, it is bidden to become acquainted with itself, let it not seek itself as though it were withdrawn from itself; but let it withdraw that which it has added to itself. For itself lies more deeply within, not only than those sensible things, which are clearly without, but also than the images of them; which are indeed in some part of the soul, viz., that which beasts also have, although these want understanding, which is proper to the mind. As therefore the mind is within, it goes forth in some sort from itself, when it exerts the affection of love towards these, as it were, footprints of many acts of attention. And these footprints are, as it were, imprinted on the memory, at the time when the corporeal things which are without are perceived in such way, that even when those corporeal things are absent, yet the images of them are at hand to those who think of them. Therefore let the mind become acquainted with itself, and not seek itself as if it were absent; but fix upon itself the act of [voluntary] attention, by which it was wandering among other things, and let it think of itself. So it will see that at no time did it ever not love itself, at no time did it ever not know itself; but by loving another thing together with itself it has confounded itself with it, and in some sense has grown one with it. And so, while it embraces diverse things, as though they were one, it has come to think those things to be one which are diverse.

CHAPTER 9

THE MIND KNOWS ITSELF, BY THE VERY ACT OF UNDERSTANDING THE PRECEPT TO KNOW ITSELF

12. Let it not therefore seek to discern itself as though absent, but take pains to discern itself as present. Nor let it take knowledge of itself as if it did not know itself, but let it distinguish itself from that which it knows to be another. For how will it take pains to obey that very precept which is given it, “Know thyself,” if it knows not either what “know” means or what “thyself” means? But if it knows both, then it knows also itself. Since “know thyself” is not so said to the mind as is “Know the cherubim and the seraphim;” for they are absent, and we believe concerning them, and according to that belief they are declared to be certain celestial powers. Nor yet again as it is said, Know the will of that man: for this it is not within our reach to perceive at all, either by sense or understanding, unless by corporeal signs actually set forth; and this in such a way that we rather believe than understand. Nor again as it is said to a man, Behold thy own face; which he can only do in a looking-glass. For even our own face itself is out of the reach of our own seeing it; because it is not there where our look can be directed. But when it is said to the mind, Know thyself; then it knows itself by that very act by which it understands the word “thyself;” and this for no other reason than that it is present to itself. But if it does not understand what is said, then certainly it does not do as it is bid to do. And therefore it is bidden to do that thing which it does do, when it understands the very precept that bids it.

CHAPTER 10

EVERY MIND KNOWS CERTAINLY THREE THINGS CONCERNING ITSELF—THAT IT UNDERSTANDS, THAT IT IS, AND THAT IT LIVES

13. Let it not then add anything to that which it knows itself to be, when it is bidden to know itself. For it knows, at any rate, that this is said to itself; namely, to the self that is, and that lives, and that understands. But a dead body also is, and cattle live; but neither a dead body nor cattle understand. Therefore it so knows that it so is, and that it so lives, as an understanding is and lives. When, therefore, for example’s sake, the mind thinks itself air, it thinks that air understands; it knows, however, that itself understands, but it does not know itself to be air, but only thinks so. Let it separate that which it thinks itself; let it discern that which it knows; let this remain to it, about which not even have they doubted who have thought the mind to be this

corporeal thing or that. For certainly every mind does not consider itself to be air; but some think themselves fire, others the brain, and some one kind of corporeal thing, others another, as I have mentioned before; yet all know that they themselves understand, and are, and live; but they refer understanding to that which they understand, but to be, and to live, to themselves. And no one doubts, either that no one understands who does not live, or that no one lives of whom it is not true that he is; and that therefore by consequence that which understands both is and lives; not as a dead body is which does not live, nor as a soul lives which does not understand, but in some proper and more excellent manner. Further, they know that they will, and they equally know that no one can will who is not and who does not live; and they also refer that will itself to something which they will with that will. They know also that they remember; and they know at the same time that nobody could remember, unless he both was and lived; but we refer memory itself also to something, in that we remember those things. Therefore the knowledge and science of many things are contained in two of these three, memory and understanding; but will must be present, that we may enjoy or use them. For we enjoy things known, in which things themselves the will finds delight for their own sake, and so reposes; but we use those things, which we refer to some other thing which we are to enjoy. Neither is the life of man vicious and culpable in any other way, than as wrongly using and wrongly enjoying. But it is no place here to discuss this.

14. But since we treat of the nature of the mind, let us remove from our consideration all knowledge which is received from without, through the senses of the body; and attend more carefully to the position which we have laid down, that all minds know and are certain concerning themselves. For men certainly have doubted whether the power of living, of remembering, of understanding, of willing, of thinking, of knowing, of judging, be of air, or of fire, or of the brain, or of the blood, or of atoms, or besides the usual four elements of a fifth kind of body, I know not what; or whether the combining or tempering together of this our flesh itself has power to accomplish these things. And one has attempted to establish this, and another to establish that. Yet who ever doubts that he himself lives, and remembers, and understands, and wills, and thinks, and knows, and judges?

Seeing that even if he doubts, he lives; if he doubts, he remembers why he doubts; if he doubts, he understands that he doubts; if he doubts, he wishes to be certain; if he doubts, he thinks; if he doubts, he knows that he does not know; if he doubts, he judges that he ought not to assent rashly. Whosoever therefore doubts about anything else, ought not to doubt of all these things; which if they were not, he would not be able to doubt of anything.

15. They who think the mind to be either a body or the combination or tempering of the body, will have all these things to seem to be in a subject, so that the substance is air, or fire, or some other corporeal thing, which they think to be the mind; but that the understanding (intelligentia) is in this corporeal thing as its quality, so that this corporeal thing is the subject, but the understanding is in the subject: viz. that the mind is the subject, which they judge to be a corporeal thing, but the understanding [intelligence], or any other of those things which we have mentioned as certain to us, is in that subject. They also hold nearly the same opinion who deny the mind itself to be body, but think it to be the combination or tempering together of the body; for there is this difference, that the former say that the mind itself is the substance, in which the understanding [intelligence] is, as in a subject; but the latter say that the mind itself is in a subject, viz. in the body, of which it is the combination or tempering together. And hence, by consequence, what else can they think, except that the understanding also is in the same body as in a subject?

16. And all these do not perceive that the mind knows itself, even when it seeks for itself, as we have already shown. But nothing is at all rightly said to be known while its substance is not known. And therefore, when the mind knows itself, it knows its own substance; and when it is certain about itself, it as certain about its own substance. But it is certain about itself, as those things which are said above prove convincingly; although it is not at all certain whether itself is air, or fire, or some body, or some function of body. Therefore it is not any of these. And to that whole which is bidden to know itself, belongs this, that it is certain that it is not any of those things of which it is uncertain, and is certain that it is that only, which only it is certain that it is. For it thinks in this way of fire, or air, and whatever else of the body it thinks of. Neither can it in any way be brought to pass that it

should so think that which itself is, as it thinks that which itself is not. Since it thinks all these things through an imaginary phantasy, whether fire, or air, or this or that body, or that part or combination and tempering together of the body: nor assuredly is it said to be all those things, but some one of them. But if it were any one of them, it would think this one in a different manner from the rest viz. not through an imaginary phantasy, as absent things are thought, which either themselves or some of like kind have been touched by the bodily sense; but by some inward, not feigned, but true presence (for nothing is more present to it than itself); just as it thinks that itself lives, and remembers, and understands, and wills. For it knows these things in itself, and does not imagine them as though it had touched them by the sense outside itself, as corporeal things are touched. And if it attaches nothing to itself from the thought of these things, so as to think itself to be something of the kind, then whatsoever remains to it from itself that alone is itself.

CHAPTER 11

IN MEMORY, UNDERSTANDING [OR INTELLIGENCE], AND WILL, WE HAVE TO NOTE ABILITY, LEARNING, AND USE. MEMORY, UNDERSTANDING, AND WILL ARE ONE ESSENTIALLY, AND THREE RELATIVELY

17. Putting aside, then, for a little while all other things, of which the mind is certain concerning itself, let us especially consider and discuss these three—memory, understanding, will. For we may commonly discern in these three the character of the abilities of the young also; since the more tenaciously and easily a boy remembers, and the more acutely he understands, and the more ardently he studies, the more praiseworthy is he in point of ability. But when the question is about any one’s learning, then we ask not how solidly and easily he remembers, or how shrewdly he understands; but what it is that he remembers, and what it is that he understands. And because the mind is regarded as praiseworthy, not only as being learned, but also as being good, one gives heed not only to what he remembers and what he understands, but also to what he wills (velit); not how ardently he wills, but first what it is he wills, and then how greatly he wills it. For the mind that loves eagerly is then to be praised, when it loves that which ought to be loved eagerly. Since, then, we speak of these three—

ability, knowledge, use—the first of these is to be considered under the three heads, of what a man can do in memory, and understanding, and will. The second of them is to be considered in regard to that which any one has in his memory and in his understanding, which he has attained by a studious will. But the third, viz. use, lies in the will, which handles those things that are contained in the memory and understanding, whether it refer them to anything further, or rest satisfied with them as an end. For to use, is to take up something into the power of the will; and to enjoy, is to use with joy, not any longer of hope, but of the actual thing. Accordingly, every one who enjoys, uses; for he takes up something into the power of the will, wherein he also is satisfied as with an end. But not every one who uses, enjoys, if he has sought after that, which he takes up into the power of the will, not on account of the thing itself, but on account of something else.

18. Since, then, these three, memory, understanding, will, are not three lives, but one life; nor three minds, but one mind; it follows certainly that neither are they three substances, but one substance. Since memory, which is called life, and mind, and substance, is so called in respect to itself; but it is called memory, relatively to something. And I should say the same also of understanding and of will, since they are called understanding and will relatively to something; but each in respect to itself is life, and mind, and essence. And hence these three are one, in that they are one life, one mind, one essence; and whatever else they are severally called in respect to themselves, they are called also together, not plurally, but in the singular number. But they are three, in that wherein they are mutually referred to each other; and if they were not equal, and this not only each to each, but also each to all, they certainly could not mutually contain each other; for not only is each contained by each, but also all by each. For I remember that I have memory and understanding, and will; and I understand that I understand, and will, and remember; and I will that I will, and remember, and understand; and I remember together my whole memory, and understanding, and will. For that of my memory which I do not remember, is not in my memory; and nothing is so much in the memory as memory itself. Therefore I remember the whole memory. Also, whatever I understand I know that I understand, and I know that I will whatever I will; but whatever I know I remember. Therefore I remember the whole of my

understanding, and the whole of my will. Likewise, when I understand these three things, I understand them together as whole. For there is none of things intelligible which I do not understand, except what I do not know; but what I do not know, I neither remember, nor will. Therefore, whatever of things intelligible I do not understand, it follows also that I neither remember nor will. And whatever of things intelligible I remember and will, it follows that I understand. My will also embraces my whole understanding and my whole memory whilst I use the whole that I understand and remember. And, therefore, while all are mutually comprehended by each, and as wholes, each as a whole is equal to each as a whole, and each as a whole at the same time to all as wholes; and these three are one, one life, one mind, one essence.

CHAPTER 12

THE MIND IS AN IMAGE OF THE TRINITY IN ITS OWN MEMORY, AND UNDERSTANDING, AND WILL

19. Are we, then, now to go upward, with whatever strength of purpose we may, to that chiefest and highest essence, of which the human mind is an inadequate image, yet an image? Or are these same three things to be yet more distinctly made plain in the soul, by means of those things which we receive from without, through the bodily sense, wherein the knowledge of corporeal things is impressed upon us in time? Since we found the mind itself to be such in its own memory, and understanding, and will, that since it was understood always to know and always to will itself, it was understood also at the same time always to remember itself, always to understand and love itself, although not always to think of itself as separate from those things which are not itself; and hence its memory of itself, and understanding of itself, are with difficult discerned in it. For in this case, where these two things are very closely conjoined, and one is not preceded by the other by any time at all, it looks as if they were not two things, but one called by two names; and love itself is not so plainly felt to exist when the sense of need does not disclose it, since what is loved is always at hand. And hence these things may be more lucidly set forth, even to men of duller minds, if such topics are treated of as are brought within reach of the mind in time, and happen to it in time; while it remembers what it did not

remember before, and sees what it did not see before, and loves what it did not love before. But this discussion demands now another beginning, by reason of the measure of the present book.

Book XI

A kind of image of the Trinity is pointed out, even in the outer man; first of all, in those things which are perceived from without, viz. in the bodily object that is seen, and in the form that is impressed by it upon the sight of the seer, and in the purpose of the will that combines the two; although these three are neither mutually equal, nor of one substance. Next, a kind of trinity, in three somewhats of one substance, is observed to exist in the mind itself, as it were introduced there from those things that are perceived from without; viz. the image of the bodily object which is in the memory, and the impression formed therefrom when the mind's eye of the thinker is turned to it, and the purpose of the will combining both. And this latter trinity is also said to pertain to the outer man, in that it is introduced into the mind from bodily objects, which are perceived from without.

CHAPTER 1

A TRACE OF THE TRINITY ALSO IN THE OUTER MAN

1. No one doubts that, as the inner man is endued with understanding, so is the outer with bodily sense. Let us try, then, if we can, to discover in this outer man also, some trace, however slight, of the Trinity, not that itself also is in the same manner the image of God. For the opinion of the apostle is evident, which declares the inner man to be renewed in the knowledge of God after the image of Him that created him: whereas he says also in another place, "But though our outer man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Let us seek, then, so far as we can, in that which perishes, some image of the Trinity, if not so express, yet perhaps more easy to be discerned. For that outer man also is not called man to no purpose, but because there is in it some likeness of the inner man. And owing to that very order of our condition whereby we are made mortal and fleshly, we handle things visible more easily and more familiarly than things intelligible; since the former are outward, the latter inward; and the former are perceived by the bodily sense, the latter are understood by the mind; and

we ourselves, i.e. our minds, are not sensible things, that is, bodies, but intelligible things, since we are life. And yet, as I said, we are so familiarly occupied with bodies, and our thought has projected itself outwardly with so wonderful a proclivity towards bodies, that, when it has been withdrawn from the uncertainty of things corporeal, that it may be fixed with a much more certain and stable knowledge in that which is spirit, it flies back to those bodies, and seeks rest there whence it has drawn weakness. And to this its feebleness we must suit our argument; so that, if we would endeavor at any time to distinguish more aptly, and intimate more readily, the inward spiritual thing, we must take examples of likenesses from outward things pertaining to the body. The outer man, then, endued as he is with the bodily sense, is conversant with bodies. And this bodily sense, as is easily observed, is fivefold; seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching. But it is both a good deal of trouble, and is not necessary, that we should inquire of all these five senses about that which we seek. For that which one of them declares to us, holds also good in the rest. Let us use, then, principally the testimony of the eyes. For this bodily sense far surpasses the rest; and in proportion to its difference of kind, is nearer to the sight of the mind.

CHAPTER 2

A CERTAIN TRINITY IN THE SIGHT. THAT THERE ARE THREE THINGS IN SIGHT, WHICH DIFFER IN THEIR OWN NATURE. IN WHAT MANNER FROM A VISIBLE THING VISION IS PRODUCED, OR THE IMAGE OF THAT THING WHICH IS SEEN. THE MATTER IS SHOWN MORE CLEARLY BY AN EXAMPLE. HOW THESE THREE COMBINE IN ONE

2. When, then, we see any corporeal object, these three things, as is most easy to do, are to be considered and distinguished: First, the object itself which we see; whether a stone, or flame, or any other thing that can be seen by the eyes; and this certainly might exist also already before it was seen; next, vision or the act of seeing, which did not exist before we perceived the object itself which is presented to the sense; in the third place, that which keeps the sense of the eye in the object seen, so long as it is seen, viz. the attention of the mind. In these three, then, not only is there an evident distinction, but also a diverse nature. For, first, that visible body is of a far different nature from the sense of the eyes, through the incidence of which sense upon it vision arises. And what plainly is vision itself other than

perception informed by that thing which is perceived? Although there is no vision if the visible object be withdrawn, nor could there be any vision of the kind at all if there were no body that could be seen; yet the body by which the sense of the eyes is informed, when that body is seen, and the form itself which is imprinted by it upon the sense, which is called vision, are by no means of the same substance. For the body that is seen is, in its own nature, separable; but the sense, which was already in the living subject, even before it saw what it was able to see, when it fell in with something visible,—or the vision which comes to be in the sense from the visible body when now brought into connection with it and seen,—the sense, then, I say, or the vision, that is, the sense informed from without, belongs to the nature of the living subject, which is altogether other than that body which we perceive by seeing, and by which the sense is not so formed as to be sense, but as to be vision. For unless the sense were also in us before the presentation to us of the sensible object, we should not differ from the blind, at times when we are seeing nothing, whether in darkness, or when our eyes are closed. But we differ from them in this, that there is in us, even when we are not seeing, that whereby we are able to see, which is called the sense; whereas this is not in them, nor are they called blind for any other reason than because they have it not. Further also, that attention of the mind which keeps the sense in that thing which we see, and connects both, not only differs from that visible thing in its nature; in that the one is mind, and the other body; but also from the sense and the vision itself: since this attention is the act of the mind alone; but the sense of the eyes is called a bodily sense, for no other reason than because the eyes themselves also are members of the body; and although an inanimate body does not perceive, yet the soul commingled with the body perceives through a corporeal instrument, and that instrument is called sense. And this sense, too, is cut off and extinguished by suffering on the part of the body, when any one is blinded; while the mind remains the same; and its attention, since the eyes are lost, has not, indeed, the sense of the body which it may join, by seeing, to the body without it, and so fix its look thereupon and see it, yet by the very effort shows that, although the bodily sense be taken away, itself can neither perish nor be diminished. For there remains unimpaired a desire [appetitus] of seeing, whether it can be carried into effect or not. These three, then, the body that is seen, and vision itself, and the attention of mind which joins both together, are manifestly distinguishable, not only on account of the properties of each, but also on account of the difference of their natures.

3. And since, in this case, the sensation does not proceed from that body which is seen, but from the body of the living being that perceives, with which the soul is tempered together in some wonderful way of its own; yet vision is produced, that is, the sense itself is informed, by the body which is seen; so that now, not only is there the power of sense, which can exist also unimpaired even in darkness, provided the eyes are sound, but also a sense actually informed, which is called vision. Vision, then, is produced from a thing that is visible; but not from that alone, unless there be present also one who sees. Therefore vision is produced from a thing that is visible, together with one who sees; in such way that, on the part of him who sees, there is the sense of seeing and the intention of looking and gazing at the object; while yet that information of the sense, which is called vision, is imprinted only by the body which is seen, that is, by some visible thing; which being taken away, that form remains no more which was in the sense so long as that which was seen was present: yet the sense itself remains, which existed also before anything was perceived; just as the trace of a thing in water remains so long as the body itself, which is impressed on it, is in the water; but if this has been taken away, there will no longer be any such trace, although the water remains, which existed also before it took the form of that body. And therefore we cannot, indeed, say that a visible thing produces the sense; yet it produces the form, which is, as it were, its own likeness, which comes to be in the sense, when we perceive anything by seeing. But we do not distinguish, through the same sense, the form of the body which we see, from the form which is produced by it in the sense of him who sees; since the union of the two is so close that there is no room for distinguishing them. But we rationally infer that we could not have sensation at all, unless some similitude of the body seen was wrought in our own sense. For when a ring is imprinted on wax, it does not follow that no image is produced, because we cannot discern it unless when it has been separated. But since, after the wax is separated, what was made remains, so that it can be seen; we are on that account easily persuaded that there was already also in the wax a form impressed from the ring before it was

separated from it. But if the ring were imprinted upon a fluid, no image at all would appear when it was withdrawn; and yet none the less for this ought the reason to discern that there was in that fluid before the ring was withdrawn a form of the ring produced from the ring, which is to be distinguished from that form which is in the ring, whence that form was produced which ceases to be when the ring is withdrawn, although that in the ring remains, whence the other was produced. And so the [sensuous] perception of the eyes may not be supposed to contain no image of the body, which is seen as long as it is seen, [merely] because when that is withdrawn the image does not remain. And hence it is very difficult to persuade men of duller mind that an image of the visible thing is formed in our sense, when we see it, and that this same form is vision.

4. But if any perhaps attend to what I am about to mention, they will find no such trouble in this inquiry. Commonly, when we have looked for some little time at a light, and then shut our eyes, there seem to play before our eyes certain bright colors variously changing themselves, and shining less and less until they wholly cease; and these we must understand to be the remains of that form which was wrought in the sense, while the shining body was seen, and that these variations take place in them as they slowly and step by step fade away. For the lattices, too, of windows, should we happen to be gazing at them, appear often in these colors; so that it is evident that our sense is affected by such impressions from that thing which is seen. That form therefore existed also while we were seeing, and at that time it was more clear and express. But it was then closely joined with the species of that thing which was being perceived, so that it could not be at all distinguished from it; and this was vision itself. Why, even when the little flame of a lamp is in some way, as it were, doubled by the divergent rays of the eyes, a twofold vision comes to pass, although the thing which is seen is one. For the same rays, as they shoot forth each from its own eye, are affected severally, in that they are not allowed to meet evenly and conjointly, in regarding that corporeal thing, so that one combined view might be formed from both. And so, if we shut one eye, we shall not see two flames, but one as it really is. But why, if we shut the left eye, that appearance ceases to be seen, which was on the right; and if, in turn, we shut the right eye, that drops out of existence which was on the left, is a

matter both tedious in itself, and not necessary at all to our present subject to inquire and discuss. For it is enough for the business in hand to consider, that unless some image, precisely like the thing we perceive, were produced in our sense, the appearance of the flame would not be doubled according to the number of the eyes; since a certain way of perceiving has been employed, which could separate the union of rays. Certainly nothing that is really single can be seen as if it were double by one eye, draw it down, or press, or distort it as you please, if the other is shut.

5. The case then being so, let us remember how these three things, although diverse in nature, are tempered together into a kind of unity; that is, the form of the body which is seen, and the image of it impressed on the sense, which is vision or sense informed, and the will of the mind which applies the sense to the sensible thing, and retains the vision itself in it. The first of these, that is, the visible thing itself, does not belong to the nature of the living being, except when we discern our own body. But the second belongs to that nature to this extent, that it is wrought in the body, and through the body in the soul; for it is wrought in the sense, which is neither without the body nor without the soul. But the third is of the soul alone, because it is the will. Although then the substances of these three are so different, yet they coalesce into such a unity that the two former can scarcely be distinguished, even with the intervention of the reason as judge, namely the form of the body which is seen, and the image of it which is wrought in the sense, that is, vision. And the will so powerfully combines these two, as both to apply the sense, in order to be informed, to that thing which is perceived, and to retain it when informed in that thing. And if it is so vehement that it can be called love, or desire, or lust, it vehemently affects also the rest of the body of the living being; and where a duller and harder matter does not resist, changes it into like shape and color. One may see the little body of a chameleon vary with ready change, according to the colors which it sees. And in the case of other animals, since their grossness of flesh does not easily admit change, the offspring, for the most part, betray the particular fancies of the mothers, whatever it is that they have beheld with special delight. For the more tender, and so to say, the more formable, are the primary seeds, the more effectually and capably they follow the bent of the soul of the mother, and the phantasy that is wrought in it through that body,

which it has greedily beheld. Abundant instances might be adduced, but one is sufficient, taken from the most trustworthy books; viz. what Jacob did, that the sheep and goats might give birth to offspring of various colors, by placing variegated rods before them in the troughs of water for them to look at as they drank, at the time they had conceived.

CHAPTER 3

THE UNITY OF THE THREE TAKES PLACE IN THOUGHT, VIZ OF MEMORY, OF TERNAL VISION, AND OF WILL COMBINING BOTH

6. The rational soul, however, lives in a degenerate fashion, when it lives according to a trinity of the outer man; that is, when it applies to those things which form the bodily sense from without, not a praiseworthy will, by which to refer them to some useful end, but a base desire, by which to cleave to them. Since even if the form of the body, which was corporeally perceived, be withdrawn, its likeness remains in the memory, to which the will may again direct its eye, so as to be formed thence from within, as the sense was formed from without by the presentation of the sensible body. And so that trinity is produced from memory, from internal vision, and from the will which unites both. And when these three things are combined into one, from that combination itself they are called conception. And in these three there is no longer any diversity of substance. For neither is the sensible body there, which is altogether distinct from the nature of the living being, nor is the bodily sense there informed so as to produce vision, nor does the will itself perform its office of applying the sense, that is to be informed, to the sensible body, and of retaining it in it when informed; but in place of that bodily species which was perceived from without, there comes the memory retaining that species which the soul has imbibed through the bodily sense; and in place of that vision which was outward when the sense was informed through the sensible body, there comes a similar vision within, while the eye of the mind is informed from that which the memory retains, and the corporeal things that are thought of are absent; and the will itself, as before it applied the sense yet to be informed to the corporeal thing presented from without, and united it thereto when informed, so now converts the vision of the recollecting mind to memory, in order that the mental sight may be informed by that which the memory has

retained, and so there may be in the conception a like vision. And as it was the reason that distinguished the visible appearance by which the bodily sense was informed, from the similitude of it, which was wrought in the sense when informed in order to produce vision (otherwise they had been so united as to be thought altogether one and the same); so, although that phantasy also, which arises from the mind thinking of the appearance of a body that it has seen, consists of the similitude of the body which the memory retains, together with that which is thence formed in the eye of the mind that recollects; yet it so seems to be one and single, that it can only be discovered to be two by the judgment of reason, by which we understand that which remains in the memory, even when we think it from some other source, to be a different thing from that which is brought into being when we remember, that is, come back again to the memory, and there find the same appearance. And if this were not now there, we should say that we had so forgotten as to be altogether unable to recollect. And if the eye of him who recollects were not informed from that thing which was in the memory, the vision of the thinker could in no way take place; but the conjunction of both, that is, of that which the memory retains, and of that which is thence expressed so as to inform the eye of him who recollects, makes them appear as if they were one, because they are exceedingly like. But when the eye of the concipient is turned away thence, and has ceased to look at that which was perceived in the memory, then nothing of the form that was impressed thereon will remain in that eye, and it will be informed by that to which it had again been turned, so as to bring about another conception. Yet that remains which it has left in the memory, to which it may again be turned when we recollect it, and being turned thereto may be informed by it, and become one with that whence it is informed.

CHAPTER 4

HOW THIS UNITY COMES TO PASS

7. But if that will which moves to and fro, hither and thither, the eye that is to be informed, and unites it when formed, shall have wholly converged to the inward phantasy, and shall have absolutely turned the mind's eye from the presence of the bodies which lie around the senses, and from the very bodily senses themselves, and shall have wholly turned it to that image,

which is perceived within; then so exact a likeness of the bodily species expressed from the memory is presented, that not even reason itself is permitted to discern whether the body itself is seen without, or only something of the kind thought of within. For men sometimes either allured or frightened by over-much thinking of visible things, have even suddenly uttered words accordingly, as if in real fact they were engaged in the very midst of such actions or sufferings. And I remember some one telling me that he was wont to perceive in thought, so distinct and as it were solid, a form of a female body, as to be moved, as though it were a reality. Such power has the soul over its own body, and such influence has it in turning and changing the quality of its [corporeal] garment; just as a man may be affected when clothed, to whom his clothing sticks. It is the same kind of affection, too, with which we are beguiled through imaginations in sleep. But it makes a very great difference, whether the senses of the body are lulled to torpor, as in the case of sleepers, or disturbed from their inward structure, as in the case of madmen, or distracted in some other mode, as in that of diviners or prophets; and so from one or other of these causes, the intention of the mind is forced by a kind of necessity upon those images which occur to it, either from memory, or by some other hidden force through certain spiritual commixtures of a similarly spiritual substance: or whether, as sometimes happens to people in health and awake, that the will occupied by thought turns itself away from the senses, and so informs the eye of the mind by various images of sensible things, as though those sensible things themselves were actually perceived. But these impressions of images not only take place when the will is directed upon such things by desiring them, but also when, in order to avoid and guard against them, the mind is carried away to look upon these very thing so as to flee from them. And hence, not only desire, but fear, causes both the bodily eye to be informed by the sensible things themselves, and the mental eye (acies) by the images of those sensible things. Accordingly, the more vehement has been either fear or desire, the more distinctly is the eye informed, whether in the case of him who [sensuously] perceives by means of the body that which lies close to him in place, or in the case of him who conceives from the image of the body which is contained in the memory. What then a body in place is to the bodily sense, that, the similitude of a body in memory is to the eye of the mind; and what the vision of one who looks at a thing is to that appearance of the body from which the sense is informed, that, the vision of a concipient is to the image of the body established in the memory, from which the eye of the mind is informed; and what the intention of the will is towards a body seen and the vision to be combined with it, in order that a certain unity of three things may therein take place, although their nature is diverse, that, the same intention of the will is towards combining the image of the body which is in the memory, and the vision of the concipient, that is, the form which the eye of the mind has taken in returning to the memory, in order that here too a certain unity may take place of three things, not now distinguished by diversity of nature, but of one and the same substance; because this whole is within, and the whole is one mind.

CHAPTER 5

THE TRINITY OF THE OUTER MAN, OR OF EXTERNAL VISION, IS NOT AN IMAGE OF GOD. THE LIKENESS OF GOD IS DESIRED EVEN IN SINS. IN EXTERNAL VISION THE FORM OF THE CORPOREAL THING IS AS IT WERE THE PARENT, VISION THE OFFSPRING; BUT THE WILL THAT UNITES THESE SUGGESTS THE HOLY SPIRIT

8. But as, when [both] the form and species of a body have perished, the will cannot recall to it the sense of perceiving; so, when the image which memory bears is blotted out by forgetfulness, the will will be unable to force back the eye of the mind by recollection, so as to be formed thereby. But because the mind has great power to imagine not only things forgotten, but also things that it never saw, or experienced, either by increasing, or diminishing, or changing, or compounding, after its pleasure, those which have not dropped out of its remembrance, it often imagines things to be such as either it knows they are not, or does not know that they are. And in this case we have to take care, lest it either speak falsely that it may deceive, or hold an opinion so as to be deceived. And if it avoid these two evils, then imagined phantasms do not hinder it: just as sensible things experienced or retained by memory do not hinder it, if they are neither passionately sought for when pleasant, nor basely shunned when unpleasant. But when the will leaves better things, and greedily wallows in these, then it becomes unclean; and they are so thought of hurtfully, when they are present, and also more hurtfully when they are absent. And he

therefore lives badly and degenerately who lives according to the trinity of the outer man; because it is the purpose of using things sensible and corporeal, that has begotten also that trinity, which although it imagines within, yet imagines things without. For no one could use those things even well, unless the images of things perceived by the senses were retained in the memory. And unless the will for the greatest part dwells in the higher and interior things, and unless that will itself, which is accommodated either to bodies without, or to the images of them within, refers whatever it receives in them to a better and truer life, and rests in that end by gazing at which it judges that those things ought to be done; what else do we do, but that which the apostle prohibits us from doing, when he says, “Be not conformed to this world”? And therefore that trinity is not an image of God since it is produced in the mind itself through the bodily sense, from the lowest, that is, the corporeal creature, than which the mind is higher. Yet neither is it altogether dissimilar: for what is there that has not a likeness of God, in proportion to its kind and measure, seeing that God made all things very good, and for no other reason except that He Himself is supremely good? In so far, therefore, as anything that is, is good, in so far plainly it has still some likeness of the supreme good, at however great a distance; and if a natural likeness, then certainly a right and well-ordered one; but if a faulty likeness, then certainly a debased and perverse one. For even souls in their very sins strive after nothing else but some kind of likeness of God, in a proud and preposterous, and, so to say, slavish liberty. So neither could our first parents have been persuaded to sin unless it had been said, “Ye shall be as gods.” No doubt every thing in the creatures which is in any way like God, is not also to be called His image; but that alone than which He Himself alone is higher. For that only is in all points copied from Him, between which and Himself no nature is interposed.

9. Of that vision then; that is, of the form which is wrought in the sense of him who sees; the form of the bodily thing from which it is wrought, is, as it were, the parent. But it is not a true parent; whence neither is that a true offspring; for it is not altogether born therefrom, since something else is applied to the bodily thing in order that it may be formed from it, namely, the sense of him who sees. And for this reason, to love this is to be estranged. Therefore the will which unites both, viz. the quasi-parent and

the quasi-child, is more spiritual than either of them. For that bodily thing which is discerned, is not spiritual at all. But the vision which comes into existence in the sense, has something spiritual mingled with it, since it cannot come into existence without the soul. But it is not wholly spiritual; since that which is formed is a sense of the body. Therefore the will which unites both is confessedly more spiritual, as I have said; and so it begins to suggest (insinuare), as it were, the person of the Spirit in the Trinity. But it belongs more to the sense that is formed, than to the bodily thing whence it is formed. For the sense and will of an animate being belongs to the soul, not to the stone or other bodily thing that is seen. It does not therefore proceed from that bodily thing as from a parent; yet neither does it proceed from that other as it were offspring, namely, the vision and form that is in the sense. For the will existed before the vision came to pass, which will applied the sense that was to be formed to the bodily thing that was to be discerned; but it was not yet satisfied. For how could that which was not yet seen satisfy? And satisfaction means a will that rests content. And, therefore, we can neither call the will the quasi-offspring of vision, since it existed before vision; nor the quasi-parent, since that vision was not formed and expressed from the will, but from the bodily thing that was seen.

CHAPTER 6

OF WHAT KIND WE ARE TO RECKON THE REST (REQUIES), AND END (FINIS), OF THE WILL IN VISION

10. Perhaps we can rightly call vision the end and rest of the will, only with respect to this one object [namely, the bodily thing that is visible]. For it will not will nothing else merely because it sees something which it is now willing. It is not therefore the whole will itself of the man, of which the end is nothing else than blessedness; but the will provisionally directed to this one object, which has as its end in seeing, nothing but vision, whether it refer the thing seen to any other thing or not. For if it does not refer the vision to anything further, but wills only to see this, there can be no question made about showing that the end of the will is the vision; for it is manifest. But if it does refer it to anything further, then certainly it does will something else, and it will not be now a will merely to see; or if to see, not one to see the particular thing. Just as, if any one wished to see the scar, that

from thence he might learn that there had been a wound; or wished to see the window, that through the window he might see the passers-by: all these and other such acts of will have their own proper [proximate] ends, which are referred to that [final] end of the will by which we will to live blessedly, and to attain to that life which is not referred to anything else, but suffices of itself to him who loves it. The will then to see, has as its end vision; and the will to see this particular thing, has as its end the vision of this particular thing. Therefore the will to see the scar, desires its own end, that is, the vision of the scar, and does not reach beyond it; for the will to prove that there had been a wound, is a distinct will, although dependent upon that, of which the end also is to prove that there had been a wound. And the will to see the window, has as its end the vision of the window; for that is another and further will which depends upon it, viz. to see the passers-by through the window, of which also the end is the vision of the passers-by. But all the several wills that are bound to each other, are at once right, if that one is good, to which all are referred; and if that is bad, then all are bad. And so the connected series of right wills is a sort of road which consists as it were of certain steps, whereby to ascend to blessedness; but the entanglement of depraved and distorted wills is a bond by which he will be bound who thus acts, so as to be cast into outer darkness. Blessed therefore are they who in act and character sing the song of the steps [degrees]; and woe to those that draw sin, as it were a long rope. And it is just the same to speak of the will being in repose, which we call its end, if it is still referred to something further, as if we should say that the foot is at rest in walking, when it is placed there, whence yet another foot may be planted in the direction of the man’s steps. But if something so satisfies, that the will acquiesces in it with a certain delight; it is nevertheless not yet that to which the man ultimately tends; but this too is referred to something further, so as to be regarded not as the native country of a citizen, but as a place of refreshment, or even of stopping, for a traveller.

CHAPTER 7

THERE IS ANOTHER TRINITY IN THE MEMORY OF HIM WHO THINKS OVER AGAIN WHAT HE HAS SEEN

11. But yet again, take the case of another trinity, more inward indeed than that which is in things sensible, and in the senses, but which is yet conceived from thence; while now it is no longer the sense of the body that is informed from the body, but the eye of the mind that is informed from the memory, since the species of the body which we perceived from without has inhered in the memory itself. And that species, which is in the memory, we call the quasi-parent of that which is wrought in the phantasy of one who conceives. For it was in the memory also, before we conceived it, just as the body was in place also before we [sensuously] perceived it, in order that vision might take place. But when it is conceived, then from that form which the memory retains, there is copied in the mind's eye (acie) of him who conceives, and by remembrance is formed, that species, which is the quasi-offspring of that which the memory retains. But neither is the one a true parent, nor the other a true offspring. For the mind's vision which is formed from memory when we think anything by recollection, does not proceed from that species which we remember as seen; since we could not indeed have remembered those things, unless we had seen them; yet the mind's eye, which is informed by the recollection, existed also before we saw the body that we remember; and therefore how much more before we committed it to memory? Although therefore the form which is wrought in the mind's eye of him who remembers, is wrought from that form which is in the memory; yet the mind's eye itself does not exist from thence, but existed before it. And it follows, that if the one is not a true parent, neither is the other a true offspring. But both that quasi-parent and that quasi-offspring suggest something, whence the inner and truer things may appear more practically and more certainly.

12. Further, it is more difficult to discern clearly, whether the will which connects the vision to the memory is not either the parent or the offspring of some one of them; and the likeness and equality of the same nature and substance cause this difficulty of distinguishing. For it is not possible to do in this case, as with the sense that is formed from without (which is easily discerned from the sensible body, and again the will from both), on account of the difference of nature which is mutually in all three, and of which we have treated sufficiently above. For although this trinity, of which we at present speak, is introduced into the mind from without; yet it is transacted

within, and there is no part of it outside of the nature of the mind itself. In what way, then, can it be demonstrated that the will is neither the quasi-parent, nor the quasi-offspring, either of the corporeal likeness which is contained in the memory, or of that which is copied thence in recollecting; when it so unites both in the act of conceiving, as that they appear singly as one, and cannot be discerned except by reason? It is then first to be considered that there cannot be any will to remember, unless we retain in the recesses of the memory either the whole, or some part, of that thing which we wish to remember. For the very will to remember cannot arise in the case of a thing which we have forgotten altogether and absolutely; since we have already remembered that the thing which we wish to remember is or has been, in our memory. For example, if I wish to remember what I supped on yesterday, either I have already remembered that I did sup, or if not yet this, at least I have remembered something about that time itself, if nothing else; at all events, I have remembered yesterday, and that part of yesterday in which people usually sup, and what supping is. For if I had not remembered anything at all of this kind, I could not wish to remember what I supped on yesterday. Whence we may perceive that the will of remembering proceeds, indeed, from those things which are retained in the memory, with the addition also of those which, by the act of discerning, are copied thence through recollection; that is, from the combination of something which we have remembered, and of the vision which was thence wrought, when we remembered, in the mind’s eye of him who thinks. But the will itself which unites both requires also some other thing, which is, as it were, close at hand, and adjacent to him who remembers. There are, then, as many trinities of this kind as there are remembrances; because there is no one of them wherein there are not these three things, viz. that which was stored up in the memory also before it was thought, and that which takes place in the conception when this is discerned, and the will that unites both, and from both and itself as a third, completes one single thing. Or is it rather that we so recognize some one trinity in this kind, as that we are to speak generally, of whatever corporeal species lie hidden in the memory, as of a single unity, and again of the general vision of the mind which remembers and conceives such things, as of a single unity, to the combination of which two there is to be joined as a third the will that combines them, that this whole may be a certain unity made up from three?

CHAPTER 8

DIFFERENT MODES OF CONCEIVING

But since the eye of the mind cannot look at all things together, in one glance, which the memory retains, these trinities of thought alternate in a series of withdrawals and successions, and so that trinity becomes most innumerably numerous; and yet not infinite, if it pass not beyond the number of things stored up in the memory. For, although we begin to reckon from the earliest perception which any one has of material things through any bodily sense, and even take in also those things which he has forgotten, yet the number would undoubtedly be certain and determined, although innumerable. For we not only call infinite things innumerable, but also those, which, although finite, exceed any one’s power of reckoning.

13. But we can hence perceive a little more clearly that what the memory stores up and retains is a different thing from that which is thence copied in the conception of the man who remembers, although, when both are combined together, they appear to be one and the same; because we can only remember just as many species of bodies as we have actually seen, and so great, and such, as we have actually seen; for the mind imbibes them into the memory from the bodily sense; whereas the things seen in conception, although drawn from those things which are in the memory, yet are multiplied and varied innumerably, and altogether without end. For I remember, no doubt, but one sun, because according to the fact, I have seen but one; but if I please, I conceive of two, or three, or as many as I will; but the vision of my mind, when I conceive of many, is formed from the same memory by which I remember one. And I remember it just as large as I saw it. For if I remember it as larger or smaller than I saw it, then I no longer remember what I saw, and so I do not remember it. But because I remember it, I remember it as large as I saw it; yet I conceive of it as greater or as less according to my will. And I remember it as I saw it; but I conceive of it as running its course as I will, and as standing still where I will, and as coming whence I will, and whither I will. For it is in my power to conceive of it as square, although I remember it as round; and again, of what color I please, although I have never seen, and therefore do not remember, a green sun; and as the sun, so all other things. But owing to the corporeal and sensible

nature of these forms of things, the mind falls into error when it imagines them to exist without, in the same mode in which it conceives them within, either when they have already ceased to exist without, but are still retained in the memory, or when in any other way also, that which we remember is formed in the mind, not by faithful recollection, but after the variations of thought.

14. Yet it very often happens that we believe also a true narrative, told us by others, of things which the narrators have themselves perceived by their senses. And in this case, when we conceive the things narrated to us, as we hear them, the eye of the mind does not seem to be turned back to the memory, in order to bring up visions in our thoughts; for we do not conceive these things from our own recollection, but upon the narration of another; and that trinity does not here seem to come to its completion, which is made when the species lying hid in the memory, and the vision of the man that remembers, are combined by will as a third. For I do not conceive that which lay hid in my memory, but that which I hear, when anything is narrated to me. I am not speaking of the words themselves of the speaker, lest any one should suppose that I have gone off to that other trinity, which is transacted without, in sensible things, or in the senses: but I am conceiving of those species of material things, which the narrator signifies to me by words and sounds; which species certainly I conceive of not by remembering, but by hearing. But if we consider the matter more carefully, even in this case, the limit of the memory is not overstepped. For I could not even understand the narrator, if I did not remember generically the individual things of which he speaks, even although I then hear them for the first time as connected together in one tale. For he who, for instance, describes to me some mountain stripped of timber, and clothed with olive trees, describes it to me who remembers the species both of mountains, and of timber, and of olive trees; and if I had forgotten these, I should not know at all of what he was speaking, and therefore could not conceive that description. And so it comes to pass, that every one who conceives things corporeal, whether he himself imagine anything, or hear, or read, either a narrative of things past, or a foretelling of things future, has recourse to his memory, and finds there the limit and measure of all the forms at which he gazes in his thought. For no one can conceive at all, either a color or a form

of body, which he never saw, or a sound which he never heard, or a flavor which he never tasted, or a scent which he never smelt, or any touch of a corporeal thing which he never felt. But if no one conceives anything corporeal except what he has [sensuously] perceived, because no one remembers anything corporeal except what he has thus perceived, then, as is the limit of perceiving in bodies, so is the limit of thinking in the memory. For the sense receives the species from that body which we perceive, and the memory from the sense; but the mental eye of the concipient, from the memory.

15. Further, as the will applies the sense to the bodily object, so it applies the memory to the sense, and the eye of the mind of the concipient to the memory. But that which harmonizes those things and unites them, itself also disjoins and separates them, that is, the will. But it separates the bodily senses from the bodies that are to be perceived, by movement of the body, either to hinder our perceiving the thing, or that we may cease to perceive it: as when we avert our eyes from that which we are unwilling to see, or shut them; so, again, the ears from sounds, or the nostrils from smells. So also we turn away from tastes, either by shutting the mouth, or by casting the thing out of the mouth. In touch, also, we either remove the bodily thing, that we may not touch what we do not wish, or if we were already touching it, we fling or push it away. Thus the will acts by movement of the body, so that the bodily sense shall not be joined to the sensible things. And it does this according to its power; for when it endures hardship in so doing, on account of the condition of slavish mortality, then torment is the result, in such wise that nothing remains to the will save endurance. But the will averts the memory from the sense; when, through its being intent on something else, it does not suffer things present to cleave to it. As any one may see, when often we do not seem to ourselves to have heard some one who was speaking to us, because we were thinking of something else. But this is a mistake; for we did hear, but we do not remember, because the words of the speaker presently slipped out of the perception of our ears, through the bidding of the will being diverted elsewhere, by which they are usually fixed in the memory. Therefore, we should say more accurately in such a case, we do not remember, than, we did not hear; for it happens even in reading, and to myself very frequently, that when I have read through a

page or an epistle, I do not know what I have read, and I begin it again. For the purpose of the will being fixed on something else, the memory was not so applied to the bodily sense, as the sense itself was applied to the letters. So, too, any one who walks with the will intent on something else, does not know where he has got to; for if he had not seen, he would not have walked thither, or would have felt his way in walking with greater attention, especially if he was passing through a place he did not know; yet, because he walked easily, certainly he saw; but because the memory was not applied to the sense itself in the same way as the sense of the eyes was applied to the places through which he was passing, he could not remember at all even the last thing he saw. Now, to will to turn away the eye of the mind from that which is in the memory, is nothing else but not to think thereupon.

CHAPTER 9

SPECIES IS PRODUCED BY SPECIES IN SUCCESSION

16. In this arrangement, then, while we begin from the bodily species and arrive finally at the species which comes to be in the intuition (contuitu) of the concipient, we find four species born, as it were, step by step one from the other, the second from the first, the third from the second, the fourth from the third: since from the species of the body itself, there arises that which comes to be in the sense of the percipient; and from this, that which comes to be in the memory; and from this, that which comes to be in the mind’s eye of the concipient. And the will, therefore, thrice combines as it were parent with offspring: first the species of the body with that to which it gives birth in the sense of the body; and that again with that which from it comes to be in the memory; and this also, thirdly, with that which is born from it in the intuition of the concipient’s mind. But the intermediate combination which is the second, although it is nearer to the first, is yet not so like the first as the third is. For there are two kinds of vision, the one of [sensuous] perception (sentientis), the other of conception (cogitantis). But in order that the vision of conception may come to be, there is wrought for the purpose, in the memory, from the vision of [sensuous] perception something like it, to which the eye of the mind may turn itself in conceiving, as the glance (acies) of the eyes turns itself in [sensuously] perceiving to the bodily object. I have, therefore, chosen to put forward two

trinities in this kind: one when the vision of [sensuous] perception is formed from the bodily object, the other when the vision of conception is formed from the memory. But I have refrained from commending an intermediate one; because we do not commonly call it vision, when the form which comes to be in the sense of him who perceives, is entrusted to the memory. Yet in all cases the will does not appear unless as the combiner as it were of parent and offspring; and so, proceed from whence it may, it can be called neither parent nor offspring.

CHAPTER 10

THE IMAGINATION ALSO ADDS EVEN TO THINGS WE HAVE NOT SEEN, THOSE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE SEEN ELSEWHERE

17. But if we do not remember except what we have [sensuously] perceived, nor conceive except what we remember; why do we often conceive things that are false, when certainly we do not remember falsely those things which we have perceived, unless it be because that will (which I have already taken pains to show as much as I can to be the uniter and the separater of things of this kind) leads the vision of the conceiver that is to be formed, after its own will and pleasure, through the hidden stores of the memory; and, in order to conceive [imagine] those things which we do not remember, impels it to take one thing from hence, and another from thence, from those which we do remember; and these things combining into one vision make something which is called false, because it either does not exist externally in the nature of corporeal things, or does not seem copied from the memory, in that we do not remember that we ever saw such a thing. For who ever saw a black swan? And therefore no one remembers a black swan; yet who is there that cannot conceive it? For it is easy to apply to that shape which we have come to know by seeing it, a black color, which we have not the less seen in other bodies; and because we have seen both, we remember both. Neither do I remember a bird with four feet, because I never saw one; but I contemplate such a phantasy very easily, by adding to some winged shape such as I have seen, two other feet, such as I have likewise seen. And therefore, in conceiving conjointly, what we remember to have seen singly, we seem not to conceive that which we remember; while we really do this under the law of the memory, whence we take everything which we join

together after our own pleasure in manifold and diverse ways. For we do not conceive even the very magnitudes of bodies, which magnitudes we never saw, without help of the memory; for the measure of space to which our gaze commonly reaches through the magnitude of the world, is the measure also to which we enlarge the bulk of bodies, whatever they may be, when we conceive them as great as we can. And reason, indeed, proceeds still beyond, but phantasy does not follow her; as when reason announces the infinity of number also, which no vision of him who conceives according to corporeal things can apprehend. The same reason also teaches that the most minute atoms are infinitely divisible; yet when we have come to those slight and minute particles which we remember to have seen, then we can no longer behold phantasms more slender and more minute, although reason does not cease to continue to divide them. So we conceive no corporeal things, except either those we remember, or from those things which we remember.

CHAPTER 11

NUMBER, WEIGHT, MEASURE

18. But because those things which are impressed on the memory singly, can be conceived according to number, measure seems to belong to the memory, but number to the vision; because, although the multiplicity of such visions is innumerable, yet a limit not to be transgressed is prescribed for each in the memory. Therefore, measure appears in the memory, number in the vision of things: as there is some measure in visible bodies themselves, to which measure the sense of those who see is most numerously adjusted, and from one visible object is formed the vision of many beholders, so that even a single person sees commonly a single thing under a double appearance, on account of the number of his two eyes, as we have laid down above. Therefore there is some measure in those things whence visions are copied, but in the visions themselves there is number. But the will which unites and regulates these things, and combines them into a certain unity, and does not quietly rest its desire of [sensuously] perceiving or of conceiving, except in those things from whence the visions are formed, resembles weight. And therefore I would just notice by way of anticipation these three things, measure, number, weight, which are to be

perceived in all other things also. In the meantime, I have now shown as much as I can, and to whom I can, that the will is the uniter of the visible thing and of the vision; as it were, of parent and of offspring; whether in [sensuous] perception or in conception, and that it cannot be called either parent or offspring. Wherefore time admonishes us to seek for this same trinity in the inner man, and to strive to pass inwards from that animal and carnal and (as he is called) outward man, of whom I have so long spoken. And here we hope to be able to find an image of God according to the Trinity, He Himself helping our efforts, who as things themselves show, and as Holy Scripture also witnesses, has regulated all things in measure, and number, and weight.

Book XII

Commencing with a distinction between wisdom and knowledge, points out a kind of trinity, of a peculiar sort, in that which is properly called knowledge, and which is the lower of the two; and this trinity, although it certainly pertains to the inner man, is still not yet to be called or thought an image of God.

CHAPTER 1

OF WHAT KIND ARE THE OUTER AND THE INNER MAN

1. Come now, and let us see where lies, as it were, the boundary line between the outer and inner man. For whatever we have in the mind common with the beasts, thus much is rightly said to belong to the outer man. For the outer man is not to be considered to be the body only, but with the addition also of a certain peculiar life of the body, whence the structure of the body derives its vigor, and all the senses with which he is equipped for the perception of outward things; and when the images of these outward things already perceived, that have been fixed in the memory, are seen again by recollection, it is still a matter pertaining to the outer man. And in all these things we do not differ from the beasts, except that in shape of body we are not prone, but upright. And we are admonished through this, by Him who made us, not to be like the beasts in that which is our better part—that is, the mind—while we differ from them by the uprightness of the body. Not that we are to throw our mind into those bodily things which are exalted; for to seek rest for the will, even in such things, is to prostrate the mind. But as the body is naturally raised upright to those bodily things which are most elevated, that is, to things celestial; so the mind, which is a spiritual substance, must be raised upright to those things which are most elevated in spiritual things, not by the elation of pride, but by the dutifulness of righteousness.

CHAPTER 2

MAN ALONE OF ANIMATE CREATURES PERCEIVES THE ETERNAL REASONS OF THINGS PERTAINING TO THE BODY

2. And the beasts, too, are able both to perceive things corporeal from without, through the senses of the body, and to fix them in the memory, and remember them, and in them to seek after things suitable, and shun things inconvenient. But to note these things, and to retain them not only as caught up naturally but also as deliberately committed to memory, and to imprint them again by recollection and conception when now just slipping away into forgetfulness; in order that as conception is formed from that which the memory contains, so also the contents themselves of the memory may be fixed firmly by thought: to combine again imaginary objects of sight, by taking this or that of what the memory remembers, and, as it were, tacking them to one another: to examine after what manner it is that in this kind things like the true are to be distinguished from the true, and this not in things spiritual, but in corporeal things themselves;—these acts, and the like, although performed in reference to things sensible, and those which the mind has deduced through the bodily senses, yet, as they are combined with reason, so are not common to men and beasts. But it is the part of the higher reason to judge of these corporeal things according to incorporeal and eternal reasons; which, unless they were above the human mind, would certainly not be unchangeable; and yet, unless something of our own were subjoined to them, we should not be able to employ them as our measures by which to judge of corporeal things. But we judge of corporeal things from the rule of dimensions and figures, which the mind knows to remain unchangeably.

CHAPTER 3

THE HIGHER REASON WHICH BELONGS TO CONTEMPLATION, AND THE LOWER WHICH BELONGS TO ACTION, ARE IN ONE MIND

3. But that of our own which thus has to do with the handling of corporeal and temporal things, is indeed rational, in that it is not common to us with the beasts; but it is drawn, as it were, out of that rational substance of our mind, by which we depend upon and cleave to the intelligible and

unchangeable truth, and which is deputed to handle and direct the inferior things. For as among all the beasts there was not found for the man a help like unto him, unless one were taken from himself, and formed to be his consort: so for that mind, by which we consult the supernal and inward truth, there is no like help for such employment as man's nature requires among things corporeal out of those parts of the soul which we have in common with the beasts. And so a certain part of our reason, not separated so as to sever unity, but, as it were, diverted so as to be a help to fellowship, is parted off for the performing of its proper work. And as the twain is one flesh in the case of male and female, so in the mind one nature embraces our intellect and action, or our counsel and performance, or our reason and rational appetite, or whatever other more significant terms there may be by which to express them; so that, as it was said of the former, "And they two shall be in one flesh," it may be said of these, they two are in one mind.

CHAPTER 4

THE TRINITY AND THE IMAGE OF GOD IS IN THAT PART OF THE MIND ALONE WHICH BELONGS TO THE CONTEMPLATION OF ETERNAL THINGS

4. When, therefore, we discuss the nature of the human mind, we discuss a single subject, and do not double it into those two which I have mentioned, except in respect to its functions. Therefore, when we seek the trinity in the mind, we seek it in the whole mind, without separating the action of the reason in things temporal from the contemplation of things eternal, so as to have further to seek some third thing, by which a trinity may be completed. But this trinity must needs be so discovered in the whole nature of the mind, as that even if action upon temporal things were to be withdrawn, for which work that help is necessary, with a view to which some part of the mind is diverted in order to deal with these inferior things, yet a trinity would still be found in the one mind that is no where parted off; and that when this distribution has been already made, not only a trinity may be found, but also an image of God, in that alone which belongs to the contemplation of eternal things; while in that other which is diverted from it in the dealing with temporal things, although there may be a trinity, yet there cannot be found an image of God.

CHAPTER 5

THE OPINION WHICH DEVISES AN IMAGE OF THE TRINITY IN THE MARRIAGE OF MALE AND FEMALE, AND IN THEIR OFFSPRING

5. Accordingly they do not seem to me to advance a probable opinion, who lay it down that a trinity of the image of God in three persons, so far as regards human nature, can so be discovered as to be completed in the marriage of male and female and in their offspring; in that the man himself, as it were, indicates the person of the Father, but that which has so proceeded from him as to be born, that of the Son; and so the third person as of the Spirit, is, they say, the woman, who has so proceeded from the man as not herself to be either son or daughter, although it was by her conception that the offspring was born. For the Lord hath said of the Holy Spirit that He proceedeth from the Father, and yet he is not a son. In this erroneous opinion, then, the only point probably alleged, and indeed sufficiently shown according to the faith of the Holy Scripture, is this,—in the account of the original creation of the woman,—that what so comes into existence from some person as to make another person, cannot in every case be called a son; since the person of the woman came into existence from the person of the man, and yet she is not called his daughter. All the rest of this opinion is in truth so absurd, nay indeed so false, that it is most easy to refute it. For I pass over such a thing, as to think the Holy Spirit to be the mother of the Son of God, and the wife of the Father; since perhaps it may be answered that these things offend us in carnal things, because we think of bodily conceptions and births. Although these very things themselves are most chastely thought of by the pure, to whom all things are pure; but to the defiled and unbelieving, of whom both the mind and conscience are polluted, nothing is pure; so that even Christ, born of a virgin according to the flesh, is a stumbling-block to some of them. But yet in the case of those supreme spiritual things, after the likeness of which those kinds of the inferior creature also are made although most remotely, and where there is nothing that can be injured and nothing corruptible, nothing born in time, nothing formed from that which is formless, or whatever like expressions there may be; yet they ought not to disturb the sober prudence of any one, lest in avoiding empty disgust he run into pernicious error. Let him accustom himself so to find in corporeal things the traces of things spiritual,

that when he begins to ascend upwards from thence, under the guidance of reason, in order to attain to the unchangeable truth itself through which these things were made, he may not draw with himself to things above what he despises in things below. For no one ever blushed to choose for himself wisdom as a wife, because the name of wife puts into a man's thoughts the corruptible connection which consists in begetting children; or because in truth wisdom itself is a woman in sex, since it is expressed in both Greek and Latin tongues by a word of the feminine gender.

CHAPTER 6

WHY THIS OPINION IS TO BE REJECTED

6. We do not therefore reject this opinion, because we fear to think of that holy and inviolable and unchangeable Love, as the spouse of God the Father, existing as it does from Him, but not as an offspring in order to beget the Word by which all things are made; but because divine Scripture evidently shows it to be false. For God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;" and a little after it is said, "So God created man in the image of God." Certainly, in that it is of the plural number, the word "our" would not be rightly used if man were made in the image of one person, whether of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Spirit; but because he was made in the image of the Trinity, on that account it is said, "After our image." But again, lest we should think that three Gods were to be believed in the Trinity, whereas the same Trinity is one God, it is said, "So God created man in the image of God," instead of saying, "In His own image."

7. For such expressions are customary in the Scriptures; and yet some persons, while maintaining the Catholic faith, do not carefully attend to them, in such wise that they think the words, "God made man in the image of God," to mean that the Father made man after the image of the Son; and they thus desire to assert that the Son also is called God in the divine Scriptures, as if there were not other most true and clear proofs wherein the Son is called not only God, but also the true God. For whilst they aim at explaining another difficulty in this text, they become so entangled that they cannot extricate themselves. For if the Father made man after the image of

the Son, so that he is not the image of the Father, but of the Son, then the Son is unlike the Father. But if a pious faith teaches us, as it does, that the Son is like the Father after an equality of essence, then that which is made in the likeness of the Son must needs also be made in the likeness of the Father. Further, if the Father made man not in His own image, but in the image of His Son, why does He not say, “Let us make man after Thy image and likeness,” whereas He does say, “our;” unless it be because the image of the Trinity was made in man, that in this way man should be the image of the one true God, because the Trinity itself is the one true God? Such expressions are innumerable in the Scriptures, but it will suffice to have produced these. It is so said in the Psalms, “Salvation belongeth unto the Lord; Thy blessing is upon Thy people;” as if the words were spoken to some one else, not to Him of whom it had been said, “Salvation belongeth unto the Lord.” And again, “For by Thee,” he says, “I shall be delivered from temptation, and by hoping in my God I shall leap over the wall;” as if he said to some one else, “By Thee I shall be delivered from temptation.” And again, “In the heart of the king’s enemies; whereby the people fall under Thee;” as if he were to say, in the heart of Thy enemies. For he had said to that King, that is, to our Lord Jesus Christ, “The people fall under Thee,” whom he intended by the word King, when he said, “In the heart of the king’s enemies.” Things of this kind are found more rarely in the New Testament. But yet the apostle says to the Romans, “Concerning His Son who was made to Him of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord;” as though he were speaking above of some one else. For what is meant by the Son of God declared by the resurrection of the dead of Jesus Christ, except of the same Jesus Christ who was declared to be Son of God with power? And as then in this passage, when we are told, “the Son of God with power of Jesus Christ,” or “the Son of God according to the spirit of holiness of Jesus Christ,” or “the Son of God by the resurrection of the dead of Jesus Christ,” whereas it might have been expressed in the ordinary way, In His own power, or according to the spirit of His own holiness, or by the resurrection of His dead, or of their dead: as, I say, we are not compelled to understand another person, but one and the same, that is, the person of the Son of God our Lord Jesus Christ; so, when we are told that “God made man in the image of God," although it might have been more usual to say, after His own image, yet we are not compelled to understand any other person in the Trinity, but the one and selfsame Trinity itself, who is one God, and after whose image man is made.

8. And since the case stands thus, if we are to accept the same image of the Trinity, as not in one, but in three human beings, father and mother and son, then the man was not made after the image of God before a wife was made for him, and before they procreated a son; because there was not yet a trinity. Will any one say there was already a trinity, because, although not yet in their proper form, yet in their original nature, both the woman was already in the side of the man, and the son in the loins of his father? Why then, when Scripture had said, "God made man after the image of God," did it go on to say, "God created him; male and female created He them: and God blessed them"? (Or if it is to be so divided, "And God created man," so that thereupon is to be added, "in the image of God created He him," and then subjoined in the third place, "male and female created He them;" for some have feared to say, He made him male and female, lest something monstrous, as it were, should be understood, as are those whom they call hermaphrodites, although even so both might be understood not falsely in the singular number, on account of that which is said, "Two in one flesh.") Why then, as I began by saying, in regard to the nature of man made after the image of God, does Scripture specify nothing except male and female? Certainly, in order to complete the image of the Trinity, it ought to have added also son, although still placed in the loins of his father, as the woman was in his side. Or was it perhaps that the woman also had been already made, and that Scripture had combined in a short and comprehensive statement, that of which it was going to explain afterwards more carefully, how it was done; and that therefore a son could not be mentioned, because no son was yet born? As if the Holy Spirit could not have comprehended this, too, in that brief statement, while about to narrate the birth of the son afterwards in its own place; as it narrated afterwards in its own place, that the woman was taken from the side of the man, and yet has not omitted here to name her.

CHAPTER 7

HOW MAN IS THE IMAGE OF GOD. WHETHER THE WOMAN IS NOT ALSO THE IMAGE OF GOD. HOW THE SAYING OF THE APOSTLE, THAT THE MAN IS THE IMAGE OF GOD, BUT THE WOMAN IS THE GLORY OF THE MAN, IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD FIGURATIVELY AND MYSTICALLY

9. We ought not therefore so to understand that man is made in the image of the supreme Trinity, that is, in the image of God, as that the same image should be understood to be in three human beings; especially when the apostle says that the man is the image of God, and on that account removes the covering from his head, which he warns the woman to use, speaking thus: “For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man.” What then shall we say to this? If the woman fills up the image of the trinity after the measure of her own person, why is the man still called that image after she has been taken out of his side? Or if even one person of a human being out of three can be called the image of God, as each person also is God in the supreme Trinity itself, why is the woman also not the image of God? For she is instructed for this very reason to cover her head, which he is forbidden to do because he is the image of God.

10. But we must notice how that which the apostle says, that not the woman but the man is the image of God, is not contrary to that which is written in Genesis, “God created man: in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them: and He blessed them.” For this text says that human nature itself, which is complete [only] in both sexes, was made in the image of God; and it does not separate the woman from the image of God which it signifies. For after saying that God made man in the image of God, “He created him,” it says, “male and female:” or at any rate, punctuating the words otherwise, “male and female created He them.” How then did the apostle tell us that the man is the image of God, and therefore he is forbidden to cover his head; but that the woman is not so, and therefore is commanded to cover hers? Unless, forsooth, according to that which I have said already, when I was treating of the nature of the human mind, that the woman together with her own husband is the image of God, so that that whole substance may be one image; but when she is referred separately to her quality of help-meet, which regards the woman herself

alone, then she is not the image of God; but as regards the man alone, he is the image of God as fully and completely as when the woman too is joined with him in one. As we said of the nature of the human mind, that both in the case when as a whole it contemplates the truth it is the image of God; and in the case when anything is divided from it, and diverted in order to the cognition of temporal things; nevertheless on that side on which it beholds and consults truth, here also it is the image of God, but on that side whereby it is directed to the cognition of the lower things, it is not the image of God. And since it is so much the more formed after the image of God, the more it has extended itself to that which is eternal, and is on that account not to be restrained, so as to withhold and refrain itself from thence; therefore the man ought not to cover his head. But because too great a progression towards inferior things is dangerous to that rational cognition that is conversant with things corporeal and temporal; this ought to have power on its head, which the covering indicates, by which it is signified that it ought to be restrained. For a holy and pious meaning is pleasing to the holy angels. For God sees not after the way of time, neither does anything new take place in His vision and knowledge, when anything is done in time and transitorily, after the way in which such things affect the senses, whether the carnal senses of animals and men, or even the heavenly senses of the angels.

11. For that the Apostle Paul, when speaking outwardly of the sex of male and female, figured the mystery of some more hidden truth, may be understood from this, that when he says in another place that she is a widow indeed who is desolate, without children and nephews, and yet that she ought to trust in God, and to continue in prayers night and day, he here indicates, that the woman having been brought into the transgression by being deceived, is brought to salvation by child-bearing; and then he has added, “If they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness, with sobriety.” As if it could possibly hurt a good widow, if either she had not sons, or if those whom she had did not choose to continue in good works. But because those things which are called good works are, as it were, the sons of our life, according to that sense of life in which it answers to the question, What is a man’s life? that is, How does he act in these temporal things? which life the Greeks do not call xoe but bios; and because these good works are

chiefly performed in the way of offices of mercy, while works of mercy are of no profit, either to Pagans, or to Jews who do not believe in Christ, or to any heretics or schismstics whatsoever in whom faith and charity and sober holiness are not found: what the apostle meant to signify is plain, and in so far figuratively and mystically, because he was speaking of covering the head of the woman, which will remain mere empty words, unless referred to some hidden sacrament.

12. For, as not only most true reason but also the authority of the apostle himself declares, man was not made in the image of God according to the shape of his body, but according to his rational mind. For the thought is a debased and empty one, which holds God to be circumscribed and limited by the lineaments of bodily members. But further, does not the same blessed apostle say, “Be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man, which is created after God;” and in another place more clearly, “Putting off the old man,” he says, “with his deeds; put on the new man, which is renewed to the knowledge of God after the image of Him that created him?” If, then, we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and he is the new man who is renewed to the knowledge of God after the image of Him that created him; no one can doubt, that man was made after the image of Him that created him, not according to the body, nor indiscriminately according to any part of the mind, but according to the rational mind, wherein the knowledge of God can exist. And it is according to this renewal, also, that we are made sons of God by the baptism of Christ; and putting on the new man, certainly put on Christ through faith. Who is there, then, who will hold women to be alien from this fellowship, whereas they are fellow-heirs of grace with us; and whereas in another place the same apostle says, “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; for as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ: there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus?” Pray, have faithful women then lost their bodily sex? But because they are there renewed after the image of God, where there is no sex; man is there made after the image of God, where there is no sex, that is, in the spirit of his mind. Why, then, is the man on that account not bound to cover his head, because he is the image and glory of God, while the woman is bound to do so, because she is

the glory of the man; as though the woman were not renewed in the spirit of her mind, which spirit is renewed to the knowledge of God after the image of Him who created him? But because she differs from the man in bodily sex, it was possible rightly to represent under her bodily covering that part of the reason which is diverted to the government of temporal things; so that the image of God may remain on that side of the mind of man on which it cleaves to the beholding or the consulting of the eternal reasons of things; and this, it is clear, not men only, but also women have.

CHAPTER 8

TURNING ASIDE FROM THE IMAGE OF GOD

13. A common nature, therefore, is recognized in their minds, but in their bodies a division of that one mind itself is figured. As we ascend, then, by certain steps of thought within, along the succession of the parts of the mind, there where something first meets us which is not common to ourselves with the beasts reason begins, so that here the inner man can now be recognized. And if this inner man himself, through that reason to which the administering of things temporal has been delegated, slips on too far by over-much progress into outward things, that which is his head moreover consenting, that is, the (so to call it) masculine part which presides in the watch-tower of counsel not restraining or bridling it: then he waxeth old because of all his enemies, viz. the demons with their prince the devil, who are envious of virtue; and that vision of eternal things is withdrawn also from the head himself, eating with his spouse that which was forbidden, so that the light of his eyes is gone from him; and so both being naked from that enlightenment of truth, and with the eyes of their conscience opened to behold how they were left shameful and unseemly, like the leaves of sweet fruits, but without the fruits themselves, they so weave together good words without the fruit of good works, as while living wickedly to cover over their disgrace as it were by speaking well.

CHAPTER 9

THE SAME ARGUMENT IS CONTINUED

14. For the soul loving its own power, slips onwards from the whole which is common, to a part, which belongs especially to itself. And that apostatizing pride, which is called “the beginning of sin,” whereas it might have been most excellently governed by the laws of God, if it had followed Him as its ruler in the universal creature, by seeking something more than the whole, and struggling to govern this by a law of its own, is thrust on, since nothing is more than the whole, into caring for a part; and thus by lusting after something more, is made less; whence also covetousness is called “the root of all evil.” And it administers that whole, wherein it strives to do something of its own against the laws by which the whole is governed, by its own body, which it possesses only in part; and so being delighted by corporeal forms and motions, because it has not the things themselves within itself, and because it is wrapped up in their images, which it has fixed in the memory, and is foully polluted by fornication of the phantasy, while it refers all its functions to those ends, for which it curiously seeks corporeal and temporal things through the senses of the body, either it affects with swelling arrogance to be more excellent than other souls that are given up to the corporeal senses, or it is plunged into a foul whirlpool of carnal pleasure.

CHAPTER 10

THE LOWEST DEGRADATION REACHED BY DEGREES

15. When the soul then consults either for itself or for others with a good will towards perceiving the inner and higher things, such as are possessed in a chaste embrace, without any narrowness or envy, not individually, but in common by all who love such things; then even if it be deceived in anything, through ignorance of things temporal (for its action in this case is a temporal one), and if it does not hold fast to that mode of acting which it ought, the temptation is but one common to man. And it is a great thing so to pass through this life, on which we travel, as it were, like a road on our return home, that no temptation may take us, but what is common to man. For this is a sin, without the body, and must not be reckoned fornication, and on that account is very easily pardoned. But when the soul does anything in order to attain those things which are perceived through the body, through lust of proving or of surpassing or of handling them, in order

that it may place in them its final good, then whatever it does, it does wickedly, and commits fornication, sinning against its own body: and while snatching from within the deceitful images of corporeal things, and combining them by vain thought, so that nothing seems to it to be divine, unless it be of such a kind as this; by selfish greediness it is made fruitful in errors, and by selfish prodigality it is emptied of strength. Yet it would not leap on at once from the commencement to such shameless and miserable fornication, but, as it is written, “He that contemneth small things, shall fall by little and little.”

CHAPTER 11

THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST IN MAN

16. For as a snake does not creep on with open steps, but advances by the very minutest efforts of its several scales; so the slippery motion of falling away [from what is good] takes possession of the negligent only gradually, and beginning from a perverse desire for the likeness of God, arrives in the end at the likeness of beasts. Hence it is that being naked of their first garment, they earned by mortality coats of skins. For the true honor of man is the image and likeness of God, which is not preserved except it be in relation to Him by whom it is impressed. The less therefore that one loves what is one’s own, the more one cleaves to God. But through the desire of making trial of his own power, man by his own bidding falls down to himself as to a sort of intermediate grade. And so, while he wishes to be as God is, that is, under no one, he is thrust on, even from his own middle grade, by way of punishment, to that which is lowest, that is, to those things in which beasts delight: and thus, while his honor is the likeness of God, but his dishonor is the likeness of the beast, “Man being in honor abideth not: he is compared to the beasts that are foolish, and is made like to them.” By what path, then, could he pass so great a distance from the highest to the lowest, except through his own intermediate grade? For when he neglects the love of wisdom, which remains always after the same fashion, and lusts after knowledge by experiment upon things temporal and mutable, that knowledge puffeth up, it does not edify: so the mind is overweighed and thrust out, as it were, by its own weight from blessedness; and learns by its own punishment, through that trial of its own intermediateness, what the

difference is between the good it has abandoned and the bad to which it has committed itself; and having thrown away and destroyed its strength, it cannot return, unless by the grace of its Maker calling it to repentance, and forgiving its sins. For who will deliver the unhappy soul from the body of this death, unless the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord? of which grace we will discourse in its place, so far as He Himself enables us.

CHAPTER 12

THERE IS A KIND OF HIDDEN WEDLOCK IN THE INNER MAN. UNLAWFUL PLEASURES OF THE THOUGHTS

17. Let us now complete, so far as the Lord helps us, the discussion which we have undertaken, respecting that part of reason to which knowledge belongs, that is, the cognizance of things temporal and changeable, which is necessary for managing the affairs of this life. For as in the case of that visible wedlock of the two human beings who were made first, the serpent did not eat of the forbidden tree, but only persuaded them to eat of it; and the woman did not eat alone, but gave to her husband, and they eat together; although she alone spoke with the serpent, and she alone was led away by him: so also in the case of that hidden and secret kind of wedlock, which is transacted and discerned in a single human being, the carnal, or as I may say, since it is directed to the senses of the body, the sensuous movement of the soul, which is common to us with beasts, is shut off from the reason of wisdom. For certainly bodily things are perceived by the sense of the body; but spiritual things, which are eternal and unchangeable, are understood by the reason of wisdom. But the reason of knowledge has appetite very near to it: seeing that what is called the science or knowledge of actions reasons concerning the bodily things which are perceived by the bodily sense; if well, in order that it may refer that knowledge to the end of the chief good; but if ill, in order that it may enjoy them as being such good things as those wherein it reposes with a false blessedness. Whenever, then, that carnal or animal sense introduces into this purpose of the mind which is conversant about things temporal and corporeal, with a view to the offices of a man’s actions, by the living force of reason, some inducement to enjoy itself, that is, to enjoy itself as if it were some private good of its own, not as the public and common, which is the unchangeable, good; then, as it were, the

serpent discourses with the woman. And to consent to this allurement, is to eat of the forbidden tree. But if that consent is satisfied by the pleasure of thought alone, but the members are so restrained by the authority of higher counsel that they are not yielded as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; this, I think, is to be considered as if the woman alone should have eaten the forbidden food. But if, in this consent to use wickedly the things which are perceived through the senses of the body, any sin at all is so determined upon, that if there is the power it is also fulfilled by the body; then that woman must be understood to have given the unlawful food to her husband with her, to be eaten together. For it is not possible for the mind to determine that a sin is not only to be thought of with pleasure, but also to be effectually committed, unless also that intention of the mind yields, and serves the bad action, with which rests the chief power of applying the members to an outward act, or of restraining them from one.

18. And yet, certainly, when the mind is pleased in thought alone with unlawful things, while not indeed determining that they are to be done, but yet holding and pondering gladly things which ought to have been rejected the very moment they touched the mind, it cannot be denied to be a sin, but far less than if it were also determined to accomplished it in outward act. And therefore pardon must be sought for such thoughts too, and the breast must be smitten, and it must be said, “Forgive us our debts;” and what follows must be done, and must be joined in our prayer, “As we also forgive our debtors.” For it is not as it was with those two first human beings, of which each one bare his own person; and so, if the woman alone had eaten the forbidden food, she certainly alone would have been smitten with the punishment of death: it cannot, I say, be so said also in the case of a single human being now, that if the thought, remaining alone, be gladly fed with unlawful pleasures, from which it ought to turn away directly, while yet there is no determination that the bad actions are to be done, but only that they are retained with pleasure in remembrance, the woman as it were can be condemned without the man. Far be it from us to believe this. For here is one person, one human being, and he as a whole will be condemned, unless those things which, as lacking the will to do, and yet having the will to please the mind with them, are perceived to be sins of thought alone, are pardoned through the grace of the Mediator.

19. This reasoning, then, whereby we have sought in the mind of each several human being a certain rational wedlock of contemplation and action, with functions distributed through each severally, yet with the unity of the mind preserved in both; saving meanwhile the truth of that history which divine testimony hands down respecting the first two human beings, that is, the man and his wife, from whom the human species is propagated;—this reasoning, I say, must be listened to only thus far, that the apostle may be understood to have intended to signify something to be sought in one individual man, by assigning the image of God to the man only, and not also to the woman, although in the merely different sex of two human beings.

CHAPTER 13

THE OPINION OF THOSE WHO HAVE THOUGHT THAT THE MIND WAS SIGNIFIED BY THE MAN, THE BODILY SENSE BY THE WOMAN

20. Nor does it escape me, that some who before us were eminent defenders of the Catholic faith and expounders of the word of God, while they looked for these two things in one human being, whose entire soul they perceived to be a sort of excellent paradise, asserted that the man was the mind, but that the woman was the bodily sense. And according to this distribution, by which the man is assumed to be the mind, but the woman the bodily sense, all things seem aptly to agree together if they are handled with due attention: unless that it is written, that in all the beasts and flying things there was not found for man an helpmate like to himself; and then the woman was made out of his side. And on this account I, for my part, have not thought that the bodily sense should be taken for the woman, which we see to be common to ourselves and to the beasts; but I have desired to find something which the beasts had not; and I have rather thought the bodily sense should be understood to be the serpent, whom we read to have been more subtle than all beasts of the field. For in those natural good things which we see are common to ourselves and to the irrational animals, the sense excels by a kind of living power; not the sense of which it is written in the epistle addressed to the Hebrews, where we read, that "strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil;" for these "senses"

belong to the rational nature and pertain to the understanding; but that sense which is divided into five parts in the body, through which corporeal species and motion is perceived not only by ourselves, but also by the beasts.

21. But whether that the apostle calls the man the image and glory of God, but the woman the glory of the man, is to be received in this, or that, or in any other way; yet it is clear, that when we live according to God, our mind which is intent on the invisible things of Him ought to be fashioned with proficiency from His eternity, truth, charity; but that something of our own rational purpose, that is, of the same mind, must be directed to the using of changeable and corporeal things, without which this life does not go on; not that we may be conformed to this world, by placing our end in such good things, and by forcing the desire of blessedness towards them, but that whatever we do rationally in the using of temporal things, we may do it with the contemplation of attaining eternal things, passing through the former, but cleaving to the latter.

CHAPTER 14

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE. THE WORSHIP OF GOD IS THE LOVE OF HIM. HOW THE INTELLECTUAL COGNIZANCE OF ETERNAL THINGS COMES TO PASS THROUGH WISDOM

For knowledge also has its own good measure, if that in it which puffs up, or is wont to puff up, is conquered by love of eternal things, which does not puff up, but, as we know, edifieth. Certainly without knowledge the virtues themselves, by which one lives rightly, cannot be possessed, by which this miserable life may be so governed, that we may attain to that eternal life which is truly blessed.

22. Yet action, by which we use temporal things well, differs from contemplation of eternal things; and the latter is reckoned to wisdom, the former to knowledge. For although that which is wisdom can also be called knowledge, as the apostle too speaks, where he says, “Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known;” when doubtless he meant his words to be understood of the knowledge of the contemplation of God, which will be the highest reward of the saints; yet where he says, “For to

one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit," certainly he distinguishes without doubt these two things, although he does not there explain the difference, nor in what way one may be discerned from the other. But having examined a great number of passages from the Holy Scriptures, I find it written in the Book of Job, that holy man being the speaker, "Behold, piety, that is wisdom; but to depart from evil is knowledge." In thus distinguishing, it must be understood that wisdom belongs to contemplation, knowledge to action. For in this place he meant by piety the worship of God, which in Greek is called theosebeia. For the sentence in the Greek mss. has that word. And what is there in eternal things more excellent than God, of whom alone the nature is unchangeable? And what is the worship of Him except the love of Him, by which we now desire to see Him, and we believe and hope that we shall see Him; and in proportion as we make progress, see now through a glass in an enigma, but then in clearness? For this is what the Apostle Paul means by "face to face." This is also what John says, "Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Discourse about these and the like subjects seems to me to be the discourse itself of wisdom. But to depart from evil, which Job says is knowledge, is without doubt of temporal things. Since it is in reference to time [and this world] that we are in evil, from which we ought to abstain that we may come to those good eternal things. And therefore, whatsoever we do prudently, boldly, temperately, and justly, belongs to that knowledge or discipline wherewith our action is conversant in avoiding evil and desiring good; and so also, whatsoever we gather by the knowledge that comes from inquiry, in the way of examples either to be guarded against or to be imitated, and in the way of necessary proofs respecting any subject, accommodated to our use.

23. When a discourse then relates to these things, I hold it to be a discourse belonging to knowledge, and to be distinguished from a discourse belonging to wisdom, to which those things belong, which neither have been, nor shall be, but are; and on account of that eternity in which they are, are said to have been, and to be, and to be about to be, without any changeableness of times. For neither have they been in such way as that

they should cease to be, nor are they about to be in such way as if they were not now; but they have always had and always will have that very absolute being. And they abide, but not as if fixed in some place as are bodies; but as intelligible things in incorporeal nature, they are so at hand to the glance of the mind, as things visible or tangible in place are to the sense of the body. And not only in the case of sensible things posited in place, there abide also intelligible and incorporeal reasons of them apart from local space; but also of motions that pass by in successive times, apart from any transit in time, there stand also like reasons, themselves certainly intelligible, and not sensible. And to attain to these with the eye of the mind is the lot of few; and when they are attained as much as they can be, he himself who attains to them does not abide in them, but is as it were repelled by the rebounding of the eye itself of the mind, and so there comes to be a transitory thought of a thing not transitory. And yet this transient thought is committed to the memory through the instructions by which the mind is taught; that the mind which is compelled to pass from thence, may be able to return thither again; although, if the thought should not return to the memory and find there what it had committed to it, it would be led thereto like an uninstructed person, as it had been led before, and would find it where it had first found it, that is to say, in that incorporeal truth, whence yet once more it may be as it were written down and fixed in the mind. For the thought of man, for example, does not so abide in that incorporeal and unchangeable reason of a square body, as that reason itself abides: if, to be sure, it could attain to it at all without the phantasy of local space. Or if one were to apprehend the rhythm of any artificial or musical sound, passing through certain intervals of time, as it rested without time in some secret and deep silence, it could at least be thought as long as that song could be heard; yet what the glance of the mind, transient though it was, caught from thence, and, absorbing as it were into a belly, so laid up in the memory, over this it will be able to rumiuate in some measure by recollection, and to transfer what it has thus learned into systematic knowledge. But if this has been blotted out by absolute forgetfulness, yet once again, under the guidance of teaching, one will come to that which had altogether dropped away, and it will be found such as it was.

CHAPTER 15

IN OPPOSITION TO THE REMINISCENCE OF PLATO AND PYTHAGORAS. PYTHAGORAS THE SAMIAN. OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE, AND OF SEEKING THE TRINITY IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF TEMPORAL THINGS

24. And hence that noble philosopher Plato endeavored to persuade us that the souls of men lived even before they bare these bodies; and that hence those things which are learnt are rather remembered, as having been known already, than taken into knowledge as things new. For he has told us that a boy, when questioned I know not what respecting geometry, replied as if he were perfectly skilled in that branch of learning. For being questioned step by step and skillfully, he saw what was to be seen, and said that which he saw. But if this had been a recollecting of things previously known, then certainly every one, or almost every one, would not have been able so to answer when questioned. For not every one was a geometrician in the former life, since geometricians are so few among men that scarcely one can be found anywhere. But we ought rather to believe, that the intellectual mind is so formed in its nature as to see those things, which by the disposition of the Creator are subjoined to things intelligible in a natural order, by a sort of incorporeal light of an unique kind; as the eye of the flesh sees things adjacent to itself in this bodily light, of which light it is made to be receptive, and adapted to it. For none the more does this fleshly eye, too, distinguish black things from white without a teacher, because it had already known them before it was created in this flesh. Why, lastly, is it possible only in intelligible things that any one properly questioned should answer according to any branch of learning, although ignorant of it? Why can no one do this with things sensible, except those which he has seen in this his present body, or has believed the information of others who knew them, whether somebody’s writings or words? For we must not acquiesce in their story, who assert that the Samian Pythagoras recollected some things of this kind, which he had experienced when he was previously here in another body; and others tell yet of others, that they experienced something of the same sort in their minds: but it may be conjectured that these were untrue recollections, such as we commonly experience in sleep, when we fancy we remember, as though we had done or seen it, what we never did or saw at all; and that the minds of these persons, even though awake, were

affected in this way at the suggestion of malignant and deceitful spirits, whose care it is to confirm or to sow some false belief concerning the changes of souls, in order to deceive men. This, I say, may be conjectured from this, that if they really remembered those things which they had seen here before, while occupying other bodies, the same thing would happen to many, nay to almost all; since they suppose that as the dead from the living, so, without cessation and continually, the living are coming into existence from the dead; as sleepers from those that are awake, and those that are awake from them that sleep.

25. If therefore this is the right distinction between wisdom and knowledge, that the intellectual cognizance of eternal things belongs to wisdom, but the rational cognizance of temporal things to knowledge, it is not difficult to judge which is to be preferred or postponed to which. But if we must employ some other distinction by which to know these two apart, which without doubt the apostle teaches us are different, saying, “To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit:” still the difference between those two which we have laid down is a most evident one, in that the intellectual cognizance of eternal things is one thing, the rational cognizance of temporal things another; and no one doubts but that the former is to be preferred to the latter. As then we leave behind those things which belong to the outer man, and desire to ascend within from those things which we have in common with beasts, before we come to the cognizance of things intelligible and supreme, which are eternal, the rational cognizance of temporal things presents itself. Let us then find a trinity in this also, if we can, as we found one in the senses of the body, and in those things which through them entered in the way of images into our soul or spirit; so that instead of corporeal things which we touch by corporeal sense, placed as they are without us, we might have resemblances of bodies impressed within on the memory from which thought might be formed, while the will as a third united them; just as the sight of the eyes was formed from without, which the will applied to the visible thing in order to produce vision, and united both, while itself also added itself thereto as a third. But this subject must not be compressed into this book; so that in that which follows, if God help, it may be suitably examined, and the conclusions to which we come may be unfolded.

Book XIII

The inquiry is prosecuted respecting knowledge, in which, as distinguished from wisdom, Augustin had begun in the former book to look for a kind of trinity. And occasion is taken of commending Christian faith, and of explaining how the faith of believers is one and common. Next, that all desire blessedness, yet that all have not the faith whereby we arrive at blessedness; and that this faith is defined in Christ, who in the flesh rose from the dead; and that no one is set free from the dominion of the devil through forgiveness of sins, save through Him. It is shown also at length that it was needful that the devil should be conquered by Christ, not by power, but by righteousness. Finally, that when the words of this faith are committed to memory, there is in the mind a kind of trinity, since there are, first, in the memory the sounds of the words, and this even when the man is not thinking of them; and next, the mind’s eye of his recollection is formed thereupon when he thinks of them; and, lastly, the will, when he so thinks and remembers, combines both.

CHAPTER 1

THE ATTEMPT IS MADE TO DISTINGUISH OUT OF THE SCRIPTURES THE OFFICES OF WISDOM AND OF KNOWLEDGE. THAT IN THE BEGINNING OF JOHN SOME THINGS THAT ARE SAID BELONG TO WISDOM, SOME TO KNOWLEDGE. SOME THINGS THERE ARE ONLY KNOWN BY THE HELP OF FAITH. HOW WE SEE THE FAITH THAT IS IN US. IN THE SAME NARRATIVE OF JOHN, SOME THINGS ARE KNOWN BY THE SENSE OF THE BODY, OTHERS ONLY BY THE REASON OF THE MIND

1. In the book before this, viz. the twelfth of this work, we have done enough to distinguish the office of the rational mind in temporal things, wherein not only our knowing but our action is concerned, from the more excellent office of the same mind, which is employed in contemplating eternal things, and is limited to knowing alone. But I think it more convenient that I should insert somewhat out of the Holy Scriptures, by which the two may more easily be distinguished.

2. John the Evangelist has thus begun his Gospel: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without was Him not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.” This entire passage, which I have here taken from the Gospel, contains in its earlier portions what is immutable and eternal, the contemplation of which makes us blessed; but in those which follow, eternal things are mentioned in conjunction with temporal things. And hence some things there belong to knowledge, some to wisdom, according to our previous distinction in the twelfth book. For the words,—”In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not:”—require a contemplative life, and must be discerned by the intellectual mind; and the more any one has profited in this, the wiser without doubt will he become. But on account of the verse, “The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not,” faith certainly was necessary, whereby that which was not seen might be believed. For by “darkness” he intended to signify the hearts of mortals turned away from light of this kind, and hardly able to behold it; for which reason he subjoins, “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe.” But here we come to a thing that was

done in time, and belongs to knowledge, which is comprised in the cognizance of facts. And we think of the man John under that phantasy which is impressed on our memory from the notion of human nature. And whether men believe or not, they think this in the same manner. For both alike know what man is, the outer part of whom, that is, his body, they have learned through the eyes of the body; but of the inner, that is, the soul, they possess the knowledge in themselves, because they also themselves are men, and through intercourse with men; so that they are able to think what is said, "There was a man, whose name was John," because they know the names also by interchange of speech. But that which is there also, viz. "sent from God," they who hold at all, hold by faith; and they who do not hold it by faith, either hesitate through doubt, or deride it through unbelief. Yet both, if they are not in the number of those over-foolish ones, who say in their heart "There is no God," when they hear these words, think both things, viz. both what God is, and what it is to be sent from God; and if they do not do this as the things themselves really are, they do it at any rate as they can.

3. Further, we know from other sources the faith itself which a man sees to be in his own heart, if he believes, or not to be there, if he does not believe: but not as we know bodies, which we see with the bodily eyes, and think of even when absent through the images of themselves which we retain in memory; nor yet as those things which we have not seen, and which we frame howsoever we can in thought from those which we have seen, and commit them to memory, that we may recur to them when we will, in order that therein we may similarly by recollection discern them, or rather discern the images of them, of what sort soever these are which we have fixed there; nor again as a living man, whose soul we do not indeed see, but conjecture from our own, and from corporeal motions gaze also in thought upon the living man, as we have learnt him by sight. Faith as not so seen in the heart in which it is, by him whose it is; but most certain knowledge holds it fast, and conscience proclaims it. Although therefore we are bidden to believe on this account, because we cannot see what we are bidden to believe; nevertheless we see faith itself in ourselves, when that faith is in us; because faith even in absent things is present, and faith in things which are without us is within, and faith in things which are not seen is itself seen,

and itself none the less comes into the hearts of men in time; and if any cease to be faithful and become unbelievers, then it perishes from them. And sometimes faith is accommodated even to falsehoods; for we sometimes so speak as to say, I put faith in him, and he deceived me. And this kind of faith, if indeed it too is to be called faith, perishes from the heart without blame, when truth is found and expels it. But faith in things that are true, passes, as one should wish it to pass, into the things themselves. For we must not say that faith perishes, when those things which were believed are seen. For is it indeed still to be called faith, when faith, according to the definition in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is the evidence of things not seen?

4. In the words which follow next, “The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe;” the action, as we have said, is one done in time. For to bear witness even to that which is eternal, as is that light that is intelligible, is a thing done in time. And of this it was that John came to bear witness who “was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.” For he adds “That was the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” Now they who know the Latin language, understand all these words, from those things which they know: and of these, some have become known to us through the senses of the body, as man, as the world itself, of which the greatness is so evident to our sight; as again the sounds of the words themselves, for hearing also is a sense of the body; and some through the reason of the mind, as that which is said, “And His own received Him not;” for this means, that they did not believe in Him; and what belief is, we do not know by any sense of the body, but by the reason of the mind. We have learned, too, not the sounds, but the meanings of the words themselves, partly through the sense of the body, partly through the reason of the mind. Nor have we now heard those words for the first time, but they are words we had heard before. And we were retaining in our memory as things known, and we here recognized, not only the words themselves, but also what they meant. For when the bisyllabic word mundus is uttered, then something that is certainly corporeal, for it is a sound, has become known through the body, that is,

through the ear. But that which it means also, has become known through the body, that is, through the eyes of the flesh. For so far as the world is known to us at all, it is known through sight. But the quadri-syllabic word crediderunt reaches us, so far as its sound, since that is a corporeal thing, through the ear of the flesh; but its meaning is discoverable by no sense of the body, but by the reason of the mind. For unless we knew through the mind what the word crediderunt meant, we should not understand what they did not do, of whom it is said, “And His own received Him not.” The sound then of the word rings upon the ears of the body from without, and reaches the sense which is called hearing. The species also of man is both known to us in ourselves, and is presented to the senses of the body from without, in other men; to the eyes, when it is seen; to the ears, when it is heard; to the touch, when it is held and touched; and it has, too, its image in our memory, incorporeal indeed, but like the body. Lastly, the wonderful beauty of the world itself is at hand from without, both to our gaze, and to that sense which is called touch, if we come in contact with any of it: and this also has its image within in our memory, to which we revert, when we think of it either in the enclosure of a room, or again in darkness. But we have already sufficiently spoken in the eleventh book of these images of corporeal things; incorporeal indeed, yet having the likeness of bodies, and belonging to the life of the outer man. But we are treating now of the inner man, and of his knowledge, namely, that knowledge which is of things temporal and changeable; into the purpose and scope of which, when anything is assumed, even of things belonging to the outer man, it must be assumed for this end, that something may thence be taught which may help rational knowledge. And hence the rational use of those things which we have in common with irrational animals belongs to the inner man; neither can it rightly be said that this is common to us with the irrational animals.

CHAPTER 2

FAITH A THING OF THE HEART, NOT OF THE BODY; HOW IT IS COMMON AND ONE AND THE SAME IN ALL BELIEVERS. THE FAITH OF BELIEVERS IS ONE, NO OTHERWISE THAN THE WILL OF THOSE WHO WILL IS ONE

5. But faith, of which we are compelled, by reason of the arrangement of our subject, to dispute somewhat more at length in this book: faith I say,

which they who have are called the faithful, and they who have not, unbelievers, as were those who did not receive the Son of God coming to His own; although it is wrought in us by hearing, yet does not belong to that sense of the body which is called hearing, since it is not a sound; nor to the eyes of this our flesh, since it is neither color nor bodily form; nor to that which is called touch, since it has nothing of bulk; nor to any sense of the body at all, since it is a thing of the heart, not of the body; nor is it without apart from us, but deeply seated within us; nor does any man see it in another, but each one in himself. Lastly, it is a thing that can both be feigned by pretence, and be thought to be in him in whom it is not. Therefore every one sees his own faith in himself; but does not see, but believes, that it is in another; and believes this the more firmly, the more he knows the fruits of it, which faith is wont to work by love. And therefore this faith is common to all of whom the evangelist subjoins, “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;” common I say, not as any form of a bodily object is common, as regards sight, to the eyes of all to whom it is present, for in some way the gaze of all that behold it is informed by the same one form; but as the human countenance can be said to be common to all men; for this is so said that yet each certainly has his own. We say certainly with perfect truth, that the faith of believers is impressed from one doctrine upon the heart of each several person who believes the same thing. But that which is believed is a different thing from the faith by which it is believed. For the former is in things which are said either to be, or to have been or to be about to be; but the latter is in the mind of the believer, and is visible to him only whose it is; although not indeed itself but a faith like it, is also in others. For it is not one in number, but in kind; yet on account of the likeness, and the absence of all difference, we rather call it one than many. For when, too, we see two men exceedingly alike, we wonder, and say that both have one countenance. It is therefore more easily said that the souls were many,—a several soul, of course, for each several person—of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that they were of one soul,—than it is, where the apostle speaks of “one faith,” for any one to venture to say that there are as many faiths as there are faithful. And yet He who says, “O woman, great is thy faith;” and to another, “O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” intimates that each has his own faith. But the like faith of believers is said to be one, in the same way as a like will of those who will is said to be one; since in the case also of those who have the same will, the will of each is visible to himself, but that of the other is not visible, although he wills the same thing; and if it intimate itself by any signs, it is believed rather than seen. But each being conscious of his own mind certainly does not believe, but manifestly sees outright, that this is his own will.

CHAPTER 3

SOME DESIRES BEING THE SAME IN ALL, ARE KNOWN TO EACH. THE POET ENNIUS

6. There is, indeed, so closely conspiring a harmony in the same nature living and using reason, that although one knows not what the other wills, yet there are some wills of all which are also known to each; and although each man does not know what any other one man wills, yet in some things he may know what all will. And hence comes that story of the comic actor’s witty joke, who promised that he would say in the theatre, in some other play, what all had in their minds, and what all willed; and when a still greater crowd had come together on the day appointed, with great expectation, all being in suspense and silent, is affirmed to have said: You will to buy cheap, and sell dear. And mean actor though he was, yet all in his words recognized what themselves were conscious of, and applauded him with wonderful goodwill, for saying before the eyes of all what was confessedly true, yet what no one looked for. And why was so great expectation raised by his promising that he would say what was the will of all, unless because no man knows the wills of other men? But did not he know that will? Is there any one who does not know it? Yet why, unless because there are some things which not unfitly each conjectures from himself to be in others, through sympathy or agreement either in vice or virtue? But it is one thing to see one’s own will; another to conjecture, however certainly, what is another’s. For, in human affairs, I am as certain that Rome was built as that Constantinople was, although I have seen Rome with my eyes, but know nothing of the other city, except what I have believed on the testimony of others. And truly that comic actor believed it to be common to all to will to buy cheap and sell dear, either by observing

himself or by making experiment also of others. But since such a will is in truth a fault, every one can attain the counter virtue, or run into the mischief of some other fault which is contrary to it, whereby to resist and conquer it. For I myself know a case where a manuscript was offered to a man for purchase, who perceived that the vendor was ignorant of its value, and was therefore asking something very small, and who thereupon gave him, though not expecting it, the just price, which was much more. Suppose even the case of a man possessed with wickedness so great as to sell cheap what his parents left to him, and to buy dear, in order to waste it on his own lusts? Such wanton extravagance, I fancy, is not incredible; and if such men are sought, they may be found, or even fall in one's way although not sought; who, by a wickedness more than that of the theatre, make a mock of the theatrical proposition or declaration, by buying dishonor at a great price, while selling lands at a small one. We have heard, too, of persons that, for the sake of distribution, have bought corn at a higher price, and sold it to their fellow-citizens at a lower one. And note also what the old poet Ennius has said: that "all mortals wish themselves to be praised;" wherein, doubtless, he conjectured what was in others, both by himself, and by those whom he knew by experience; and so seems to have declared what it is that all men will. Lastly, if that comic actor himself, too, had said, You all will to be praised, no one of you wills to be abused; he would have seemed in like manner to have expressed what all will. Yet there are some who hate their own faults, and do not desire to be praised by others for that for which they are displeased with themselves; and who thank the kindness of those who rebuke them, when the purpose of that rebuke is their own amendment. But if he had said, You all will to be blessed, you do not will to be wretched; he would have said something which there is no one that would not recognize in his own will. For whatever else a man may will secretly, he does not withdraw from that will, which is well known to all men, and well known to be in all men.

CHAPTER 4

THE WILL TO POSSESS BLESSEDNESS IS ONE IN ALL, BUT THE VARIETY OF WILLS IS VERY GREAT CONCERNING THAT BLESSEDNESS ITSELF

7. It is wonderful, however, since the will to obtain and retain blessedness is one in all, whence comes, on the other hand, such a variety and diversity of wills concerning that blessedness itself; not that any one is unwilling to have it, but that all do not know it. For if all knew it, it would not be thought by some to be in goodness of mind; by others, in pleasure of body; by others, in both; and by some in one thing, by others in another. For as men find special delight in this thing or that, so have they placed in it their idea of a blessed life. How, then, do all love so warmly what not all know? Who can love what he does not know?—a subject which I have already discussed in the preceding books. Why, therefore, is blessedness loved by all, when it is not known by all? Is it perhaps that all know what it is itself, but all do not know where it is to be found, and that the dispute arises from this?—as if, forsooth, the business was about some place in this world, where every one ought to will to live who wills to live blessedly; and as if the question where blessedness is were not implied in the question what it is. For certainly, if it is in the pleasure of the body, he is blessed who enjoys the pleasure of the body; if in goodness of mind, he has it who enjoys this; if in both, he who enjoys both. When, therefore, one says, to live blessedly is to enjoy the pleasure of the body; but another, to live blessedly is to enjoy goodness of mind; is it not, that either both know, or both do not know, what a blessed life is? How, then, do both love it, if no one can love what he does not know? Or is that perhaps false which we have assumed to be most true and most certain, viz. that all men will to live blessedly? For if to live blessedly is, for argument’s sake, to live according to goodness of mind, how does he will to live blessedly who does not will this? Should we not say more truly, That man does not will to live blessedly, because he does not wish to live according to goodness, which alone is to live blessedly? Therefore all men do not will to live blessedly; on the contrary, few wish it; if to live blessedly is nothing else but to live according to goodness of mind, which many do not will to do. Shall we, then, hold that to be false of which the Academic Cicero himself did not doubt (although Academics doubt every thing), who, when he wanted in the dialogue Hortensius to find some certain thing, of which no one doubted, from which to start his argument, says, We certainly all will to be blessed? Far be it from me to say this is false. But what then? Are we to say that, although there is no other way of living blessedly than living according to goodness of mind, yet even he who

does not will this, wills to live blessedly? This, indeed, seems too absurd. For it is much as if we should say, Even he who does not will to live blessedly, wills to live blessedly. Who could listen to, who could endure, such a contradiction? And yet necessity thrusts us into this strait, if it is both true that all will to live blessedly, and yet all do not will to live in that way in which alone one can live blessedly.

CHAPTER 5

OF THE SAME THING

8. Or is, perhaps, the deliverance from our difficulties to be found in this, that, since we have said that every one places his idea of a blessed life in that which has most pleased him, as pleasure pleased Epicurus, and goodness Zeno, and something else pleased other people, we say that to live blessedly is nothing else but to live according to one's own pleasure: so that it is not false that all will to live blessedly, because all will that which pleases each? For if this, too, had been proclaimed to the people in the theatre, all would have found it in their own wills. But when Cicero, too, had propounded this in opposition to himself, he so refuted it as to make them blush who thought so. For he says: "But, behold! people who are not indeed philosophers, but who yet are prompt to dispute, say that all are blessed, whoever live as they will;" which is what we mean by, as pleases each. But by and by he has subjoined: "But this is indeed false. For to will what is not fitting, is itself most miserable; neither is it so miserable not to obtain what one wills, as to will to obtain what one ought not." Most excellently and altogether most truly does he speak. For who can be so blind in his mind, so alienated from all light of decency, and wrapped up in the darkness of indecency, as to call him blessed, because he lives as he will, who lives wickedly and disgracefully; and with no one restraining him, no one punishing, and no one daring even to blame him, nay more, too, with most people praising him, since, as divine Scripture says, "The wicked is praised in his heart's desire: and he who works iniquity is blessed," gratifies all his most criminal and flagitious desires; when, doubtless, although even so he would be wretched, yet he would be less wretched, if he could have had nothing of those things which he had wrongly willed? For every one is made wretched by a wicked will also, even though it stop

short with will but more wretched by the power by which the longing of a wicked will is fulfilled. And, therefore, since it is true that all men will to be blessed, and that they seek for this one thing with the most ardent love, and on account of this seek everything which they do seek; nor can any one love that of which he does not know at all what or of what sort it is, nor can be ignorant what that is which he knows that he wills; it follows that all know a blessed life. But all that are blessed have what they will, although not all who have what they will are forewith blessed. But they are forewith wretched, who either have not what they will, or have that which they do not rightly will. Therefore he only is a blessed man, who both has all things which he wills, and wills nothing ill.

CHAPTER 6

WHY, WHEN ALL WILL TO BE BLESSED, THAT IS RATHER CHOSEN BY WHICH ONE WITHDRAWS FROM BEING SO

9. Since, then, a blessed life consists of these two things, and is known to all, and dear to all; what can we think to be the cause why, when they cannot have both, men choose, out of these two, to have all things that they will, rather than to will all things well, even although they do not have them? Is it the depravity itself of the human race, in such wise that, while they are not unaware that neither is he blessed who has not what he wills, nor he who has what he wills wrongly, but he who both has whatsoever good things he wills, and wills no evil ones, yet, when both are not granted of those two things in which the blessed life consists, that is rather chosen by which one is withdrawn the more from a blessed life (since he certainly is further from it who obtains things which he wickedly desired, than he who only does not obtain the things which he desired); whereas the good will ought rather to be chosen, and to be preferred, even if it do not obtain the things which it seeks? For he comes near to being a blessed man, who wills well whatsoever he wills, and wills things, which when he obtains, he will be blessed. And certainly not bad things, but good, make men blessed, when they do so make them. And of good things he already has something, and that, too, a something not to be lightly esteemed,—namely, the very good will itself; who longs to rejoice in those good things of which human nature is capable, and not in the performance or the attainment of any evil;

and who follows diligently, and attains as much as he can, with a prudent, temperate, courageous, and right mind, such good things as are possible in the present miserable life; so as to be good even in evils, and when all evils have been put an end to, and all good things fulfilled, then to be blessed.

CHAPTER 7

FAITH IS NECESSARY, THAT MAN MAY AT SOME TIME BE BLESSED, WHICH HE WILL ONLY ATTAIN IN THE FUTURE LIFE. THE BLESSEDNESS OF PROUD PHILOSOPHERS RIDICULOUS AND PITIABLE

10. And on this account, faith, by which men believe in God, is above all things necessary in this mortal life, most full as it is of errors and hardships. For there are no good things whatever, and above all, not those by which any one is made good, or those by which he will become blessed, of which any other source can be found whence they come to man, and are added to man, unless it be from God. But when he who is good and faithful in these miseries shall have come from this life to the blessed life, then will truly come to pass what now is absolutely impossible,—namely, that a man may live as he will. For he will not will to live badly in the midst of that felicity, nor will he will anything that will be wanting, nor will there be wanting anything which he shall have willed. Whatever shall be loved, will be present; nor will that be longed for, which shall not be present. Everything which will be there will be good, and the supreme God will be the supreme good and will be present for those to enjoy who love Him; and what altogether is most blessed, it will be certain that it will be so forever. But now, indeed, philosophers have made for themselves, according to the pleasure of each, their own ideals of a blessed life; that they might be able, as it were by their own power, to do that, which by the common conditions of mortals they were not able to do,—namely, to live as they would. For they felt that no one could be blessed otherwise than by having what he would, and by suffering nothing which he would not. And who would not will, that the life whatsoever it be, with which he is delighted, and which he therefore calls blessed, were so in his own power, that he could have it continually? And yet who is in this condition? Who wills to suffer troubles in order that he may endure them manfully, although he both wills and is able to endure them if he does suffer them? Who would will to live in

torments, even although he is able to live laudably by holding fast to righteousness in the midst of them through patience? They who have endured these evils, either in wishing to have or in fearing to lose what they loved, whether wickedly or laudably, have thought of them as transitory. For many have stretched boldly through transitory evils to good things which will last. And these, doubtless, are blessed through hope, even while actually suffering such transitory evils, through which they arrive at good things which will not be transitory. But he who is blessed through hope is not yet blessed: for he expects, through patience, a blessedness which he does not yet grasp. Whereas he, on the other hand, who is tormented without any such hope, without any such reward, let him use as much endurance as he pleases, is not truly blessed, but bravely miserable. For he is not on that account not miserable, because he would be more so if he also bore misery impatiently. Further, even if he does not suffer those things which he would not will to suffer in his own body, not even then is he to be esteemed blessed, inasmuch as he does not live as he wills. For to omit other things, which, while the body remains unhurt, belong to those annoyances of the mind, without which we should will to live, and which are innumerable; he would will, at any rate, if he were able, so to have his body safe and sound, and so to suffer no inconveniences from it, as to have it within his own control, or even to have it with an imperishableness of the body itself; and because he does not possess this, and hangs in doubt about it, he certainly does not live as he wills. For although he may be ready from fortitude to accept, and bear with an equal mind, whatever adversities may happen to him, yet he had rather they should not happen, and prevents them if he is able; and he is in such way ready for both alternatives, that, as much as is in him, he wishes for the one and shuns the other; and if he have fallen into that which he shuns, he therefore bears it willingly, because that could not happen which he willed. He bears it, therefore, in order that he may not be crushed; but he would not willingly be even burdened. How, then, does he live as he wills? Is it because he is willingly strong to bear what he would not will to be put upon him? Then he only wills what he can, because he cannot have what he wills. And here is the sum-total of the blessedness of proud mortals, I know not whether to be laughed at, or not rather to be pitied, who boast that they live as they will, because they willingly bear patiently what they are unwilling should happen to them. For this, they say, is like Terence's wise saying,—

"Since that cannot be which you will, will that which thou canst."

That this is aptly said, who denies? But it is advice given to the miserable man, that he may not be more miserable. And it is not rightly or truly said to the blessed man, such as all wish themselves to be, That cannot be which you will. For if he is blessed, whatever he wills can be; since he does not will that which cannot be. But such a life is not for this mortal state, neither will it come to pass unless when immortality also shall come to pass. And if this could not be given at all to man, blessedness too would be sought in vain, since it cannot be without immortality.

CHAPTER 8

BLESSEDNESS CANNOT EXIST WITHOUT IMMORTALITY

11. As, therefore, all men will to be blessed, certainly, if they will truly, they will also to be immortal; for otherwise they could not be blessed. And further, if questioned also concerning immortality, as before concerning blessedness, all reply that they will it. But blessedness of what quality soever, such as is not so, but rather is so called, is sought, nay indeed is feigned in this life, whilst immortality is despaired of, without which true blessedness cannot be. Since he lives blessedly, as we have already said before, and have sufficiently proved and concluded, who lives as he wills, and wills nothing wrongly. But no one wrongly wills immortality, if human nature is by God's gift capable of it; and if it is not capable of it, it is not capable of blessedness. For, that a man may live blessedly, he must needs live. And if life quits him by his dying, how can a blessed life remain with him? And when it quits him, without doubt it either quits him unwilling, or willing, or neither. If unwilling, how is the life blessed which is so within his will as not to be within his power? And whereas no one is blessed who wills something that he does not have, how much less is he blessed who is quitted against his will, not by honor, nor by possessions, nor by any other thing, but by the blessed life itself, since he will have no life at all? And hence, although no feeling is left for his life to be thereby miserable (for the

blessed life quits him, because life altogether quits him), yet he is wretched as long as he feels, because he knows that against his will that is being destroyed for the sake of which he loves all else, and which he loves beyond all else. A life therefore cannot both be blessed, and yet quit a man against his will, since no one becomes blessed against his will; and hence how much more does it make a man miserable by quitting him against his will, when it would make him miserable if he had it against his will! But if it quit him with his will, even so how was that a blessed life, which he who had it willed should perish? It remains then for them to say, that neither of these is in the mind of the blessed man; that is, that he is neither unwilling nor willing to be quitted by a blessed life, when through death life quits him altogether; for that he stands firm with an even heart, prepared alike for either alternative. But neither is that a blessed life which is such as to be unworthy of his love whom it makes blessed. For how is that a blessed life which the blessed man does not love? Or how is that loved, of which it is received indifferently, whether it is to flourish or to perish? Unless perhaps the virtues, which we love in this way on account of blessedness alone, venture to persuade us that we do not love blessedness itself. Yet if they did this, we should certainly leave off loving the virtues themselves, when we do not love that on account of which alone we loved them. And further, how will that opinion be true, which has been so tried, and sifted, and thoroughly strained, and is so certain, viz. that all men will to be blessed, if they themselves who are already blessed neither will nor do not will to be blessed? Or if they will it, as truth proclaims, as nature constrains, in which indeed the supremely good and unchangeably blessed Creator has implanted that will: if, I say, they will to be blessed who are blessed, certainly they do not will to be not blessed. But if they do not will not to be blessed, without doubt they do not will to be annihilated and perish in regard to their blessedness. But they cannot be blessed except they are alive; therefore they do not will so to perish in regard to their life. Therefore, whoever are either truly blessed or desire to be so, will to be immortal. But he does not live blessedly who has not that which he wills. Therefore it follows that in no way can life be truly blessed unless it be eternal.

CHAPTER 9

WE SAY THAT FUTURE BLESSEDNESS IS TRULY ETERNAL, NOT THROUGH HUMAN REASONINGS, BUT BY THE HELP OF FAITH. THE IMMORTALITY OF BLESSEDNESS BECOMES CREDIBLE FROM THE INCARNATION OF THE SON OF GOD

12. Whether human nature can receive this, which yet it confesses to be desirable, is no small question. But if faith be present, which is in those to whom Jesus has given power to become the sons of God, then there is no question. Assuredly, of those who endeavor to discover it from human reasonings, scarcely a few, and they endued with great abilities, and abounding in leisure, and learned with the most subtle learning, have been able to attain to the investigation of the immortality of the soul alone. And even for the soul they have not found a blessed life that is stable, that is, true; since they have said that it returns to the miseries of this life even after blessedness. And they among them who are ashamed of this opinion, and have thought that the purified soul is to be placed in eternal happiness without a body, hold such opinions concerning the past eternity of the world, as to confute this opinion of theirs concerning the soul; a thing which here it is too long to demonstrate; but it has been, as I think, sufficiently explained by us in the twelfth book of the City of God. But that faith promises, not by human reasoning, but by divine authority, that the whole man, who certainly consists of soul and body, shall be immortal, and on this account truly blessed. And so, when it had been said in the Gospel, that Jesus has given "power to become the sons of God to them who received Him;" and what it is to have received Him had been shortly explained by saying, "To them that believe on His name;" and it was further added in what way they are to become sons of God, viz., "Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;"—lest that infirmity of men which we all see and bear should despair of attaining so great excellence, it is added in the same place, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;" that, on the contrary, men might be convinced of that which seemed incredible. For if He who is by nature the Son of God was made the Son of man through mercy for the sake of the sons of men,—for this is what is meant by "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" men,—how much more credible is it that the sons of men by nature should be made the sons of God by the grace of God,

and should dwell in God, in whom alone and from whom alone the blessed can be made partakers of that immortality; of which that we might be convinced, the Son of God was made partaker of our mortality?

CHAPTER 10

THERE WAS NO OTHER MORE SUITABLE WAY OF FREEING MAN FROM THE MISERY OF MORTALITY THAN THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD. THE MERITS WHICH ARE CALLED OURS ARE THE GIFTS OF GOD

13. Those then who say, What, had God no other way by which He might free men from the misery of this mortality, that He should will the only-begotten Son, God co-eternal with Himself, to become man, by putting on a human soul and flesh, and being made mortal to endure death?—these, I say, it is not enough so to refute, as to assert that that mode by which God deigns to free us through the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, is good and suitable to the dignity of God; but we must show also, not indeed that no other mode was possible to God, to whose power all things are equally subject, but that there neither was nor need have been any other mode more appropriate for curing our misery. For what was so necessary for the building up of our hope, and for the freeing the minds of mortals cast down by the condition of mortality itself, from despair of immortality, than that it should be demonstrated to us at how great a price God rated us, and how greatly He loved us? But what is more manifest and evident in this so great proof hereof, than that the Son of God, unchangeably good, remaining what He was in Himself, and receiving from us and for us what He was not, apart from any loss of His own nature, and deigning to enter into the fellowship of ours, should first, without any evil desert of His own, bear our evils; and so with unobligated munificence should bestow His own gifts upon us, who now believe how much God loves us, and who now hope that of which we used to despair, without any good deserts of our own, nay, with our evil deserts too going before?

14. Since those also which are called our deserts, are His gifts. For, that faith may work by love, “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” And He was then given, when Jesus was glorified by the resurrection. For then He promised that He Himself would send Him, and He sent Him; because then, as it was written and

foretold of Him, “He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” These gifts constitute our deserts, by which we arrive at the chief good of an immortal blessedness. “But God,” says the apostle, “commendeth His love towards as, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” To this he goes on to add, “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.” Those whom he first calls sinners he afterwards calls the enemies of God; and those whom he first speaks of as justified by His blood, he afterwards speaks of as reconciled by the death of the Son of God; and those whom he speaks of first as saved from wrath through Him, he afterwards speaks of as saved by His life. We were not, therefore, before that grace merely anyhow sinners, but in such sins that we were enemies of God. But the same apostle calls us above several times by two appellations, viz. sinners and enemies of God,—one as if the most mild, the other plainly the most harsh,—saying, “For if when we were yet weak, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” Those whom he called weak, the same he called ungodly. Weakness seems something slight; but sometimes it is such as to be called impiety. Yet except it were weakness, it would not need a physician, who is in the Hebrew Jesus, in the Greek Soter, but in our speech Saviour. And this word the Latin language had not previously, but could have seeing that it could have it when it wanted it. And this foregoing sentence of the apostle, where he says, “For when we were yet weak, in due time He died for the ungodly,” coheres with those two following sentences; in the one of which he spoke of sinners, in the other of enemies of God, as though he referred each severally to each, viz. sinners to the weak, the enemies of God to the ungodly.

CHAPTER 11

A DIFFICULTY, HOW WE ARE JUSTIFIED IN THE BLOOD OF THE SON OF GOD

15. But what is meant by “justified in His blood?” What power is there in this blood, I beseech you, that they who believe should be justified in it? And what is meant by “being reconciled by the death of His Son?” Was it indeed so, that when God the Father was wroth with us, He saw the death of

His Son for us, and was appeased towards us? Was then His Son already so far appeased towards us, that He even deigned to die for us; while the Father was still so far wroth, that except His Son died for us, He would not be appeased? And what, then, is that which the same teacher of the Gentiles himself says in another place: “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; how has He not with Him also freely given us all things?” Pray, unless the Father had been already appeased, would He have delivered up His own Son, not sparing Him for us? Does not this opinion seem to be as it were contrary to that? In the one, the Son dies for us, and the Father is reconciled to us by His death; in the other, as though the Father first loved us, He Himself on our account does not spare the Son, He Himself for us delivers Him up to death. But I see that the Father loved us also before, not only before the Son died for us, but before He created the world; the apostle himself being witness, who says, “According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.” Nor was the Son delivered up for us as it were unwillingly, the Father Himself not sparing Him; for it is said also concerning Him, “Who loved me, and delivered up Himself for me.” Therefore together both the Father and the Son, and the Spirit of both, work all things equally and harmoniously; yet we are justified in the blood of Christ, and we are reconciled to God by the death of His Son. And I will explain, as I shall be able, here also, how this was done, as much as may seem sufficient.

CHAPTER 12

ALL, ON ACCOUNT OF THE SIN OF ADAM, WERE DELIVERED INTO THE POWER OF THE DEVIL

16. By the justice of God in some sense, the human race was delivered into the power of the devil; the sin of the first man passing over originally into all of both sexes in their birth through conjugal union, and the debt of our first parents binding their whole posterity. This delivering up is first signified in Genesis, where, when it had been said to the serpent, “Dust shalt thou eat,” it was said to the man, “Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shall return.” In the words, “Unto dust shalt thou return,” the death of the body is fore-announced, because he would not have experienced that either,

if he had continued to the end upright as he was made; but in that it is said to him whilst still living, “Dust thou art,” it is shown that the whole man was changed for the worse. For “Dust thou art” is much the same as, “My spirit shall not always remain in these men, for that they also are flesh.” Therefore it was at that time shown, that he was delivered to him, in that it had been said to him, “Dust shall thou eat.” But the apostle declares this more clearly, where he says: “And you who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of unfaithfulness; among whom we also had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” The “children of unfaithfulness” are the unbelievers; and who is not this before he becomes a believer? And therefore all men are originally under the prince of the power of the air, “who worketh in the children of unfaithfulness.” And that which I have expressed by “originally” is the same that the apostle expresses when he speaks of themselves who “by nature” were as others; viz. by nature as it has been depraved by sin, not as it was created upright from the beginning. But the way in which man was thus delivered into the power of the devil, ought not to be so understood as if God did this, or commanded it to be done; but that He only permitted it, yet that justly. For when He abandoned the sinner, the author of the sin immediately entered. Yet God did not certainly so abandon His own creature as not to show Himself to him as God creating and quickening, and among penal evils bestowing also many good things upon the evil. For He hath not in anger shut up His tender mercies. Nor did He dismiss man from the law of His own power, when He permitted him to be in the power of the devil; since even the devil himself is not separated from the power of the Omnipotent, as neither from His goodness. For whence do even the evil angels subsist in whatever manner of life they have, except through Him who quickens all things? If, therefore, the commission of sins through the just anger of God subjected man to the devil, doubtless the remission of sins through the merciful reconciliation of God rescues man from the devil.

CHAPTER 13

MAN WAS TO BE RESCUED FROM THE POWER OF THE DEVIL, NOT BY POWER, BUT BY RIGHTEOUSNESS

17. But the devil was to be overcome, not by the power of God, but by His righteousness. For what is more powerful than the Omnipotent? Or what creature is there of which the power can be compared to the power of the Creator? But since the devil, by the fault of his own perversity, was made a lover of power, and a forsaker and assailant of righteousness,—for thus also men imitate him so much the more in proportion as they set their hearts on power, to the neglect or even hatred of righteousness, and as they either rejoice in the attainment of power, or are inflamed by the lust of it,—it pleased God, that in order to the rescuing of man from the grasp of the devil, the devil should be conquered, not by power, but by righteousness; and that so also men, imitating Christ, should seek to conquer the devil by righteousness, not by power. Not that power is to be shunned as as though it were something evil; but the order must be preserved, whereby righteousness is before it. For how great can be the power of mortals? Therefore let mortals cleave to righteousness; power will be given to immortals. And compared to this, the power, how great soever, of those men who are called powerful on earth, is found to be ridiculous weakness, and a pitfall is dug there for the sinner, where the wicked seem to be most powerful. And the righteous man says in his song, “Blessed is the man whom Thou chasteneth, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy law: that Thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked. For the Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance, until righteousness return unto judgment, and all who follow it are upright in heart.” At this present time, then, in which the might of the people of God is delayed, “the Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance,” how bitter and unworthy things soever it may suffer in its humility and weakness; “until the righteousness,” which the weakness of the pious now possesses, “shall return to judgment,” that is, shall receive the power of judging; which is preserved in the end for the righteous when power in its due order shall have followed after righteousness going before. For power joined to righteousness, or righteousness added to power, constitutes a judicial

authority. But righteousness belongs to a good will; whence it was said by the angels when Christ was born: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.” But power ought to follow righteousness, not to go before it; and accordingly it is placed in “second,” that is, prosperous fortune; and this is called “second,” from “following.” For whereas two things make a man blessed, as we have argued above, to will well, and to be able to do what one wills, people ought not to be so perverse, as has been noted in the same discussion, as that a man should choose from the two things which make him blessed, the being able to do what he wills, and should neglect to will what he ought; whereas he ought first to have a good will, but great power afterwards. Further, a good will must be purged from vices, by which if a man is overcome, he is in such wise overcome as that he wills evil; and then how will his will be still good? It is to be wished, then, that power may now be given, but power against vices, to conquer which men do not wish to be powerful, while they wish to be so in order to conquer men; and why is this, unless that, being in truth conquered, they feignedly conquer, and are conquerors not in truth, but in opinion? Let a man will to be prudent, will to be strong, will to be temperate, will to be just; and that he may be able to have these things truly, let him certainly desire power, and seek to be powerful in himself, and (strange though it be) against himself for himself. But all the other things which he wills rightly, and yet is not able to have, as, for instance, immortality and true and full felicity, let him not cease to long for, and let him patiently expect.

CHAPTER 14

THE UNOBLIGATED DEATH OF CHRIST HAS FREED THOSE WHO WERE LIABLE TO DEATH

18. What, then, is the righteousness by which the devil was conquered? What, except the righteousness of Jesus Christ? And how was he conquered? Because, when he found in Him nothing worthy of death, yet he slew Him. And certainly it is just, that we whom he held as debtors, should be dismissed free by believing in Him whom he slew without any debt. In this way it is that we are said to be justified in the blood of Christ. For so that innocent blood was shed for the remission of our sins. Whence He calls Himself in the Psalms, “Free among the dead.” For he only that is dead is

free from the debt of death. Hence also in another psalm He says, “Then I restored that which I seized not;” meaning sin by the thing seized, because sin is laid hold of against what is lawful. Whence also He says, by the mouth of His own Flesh, as is read in the Gospel: “For the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me,” that is, no sin; but “that the world may know,” He says, “that I do the commandment of the Father; arise, let us go hence.” And hence He proceeds to His passion, that He might pay for us debtors that which He Himself did not owe. Would then the devil be conquered by this most just right, if Christ had willed to deal with him by power, not by righteousness? But He held back what was possible to Him, in order that He might first do what was fitting. And hence it was necessary that He should be both man and God. For unless He had been man, He could not have been slain; unless He had been God, men would not have believed that He would not do what He could, but that He could not do what He would; nor should we have thought that righteousness was preferred by Him to power, but that He lacked power. But now He suffered for us things belonging to man, because He was man; but if He had been unwilling, it would have been in His power to not so to suffer, because He was also God. And righteousness was therefore made more acceptable in humility, because so great power as was in His Divinity, if He had been unwilling, would have been able not to suffer humility; and thus by Him who died, being thus powerful, both righteousness was commended, and power promised, to us, weak mortals. For He did one of these two things by dying, the other by rising again. For what is more righteous, than to come even to the death of the cross for righteousness? And what more powerful, than to rise from the dead, and to ascend into heaven with that very flesh in which He was slain? And therefore He conquered the devil first by righteousness, and afterwards by power: namely, by righteousness, because He had no sin, and was slain by him most unjustly; but by power, because having been dead He lived again, never afterwards to die. But He would have conquered the devil by power, even though He could not have been slain by him: although it belongs to a greater power to conquer death itself also by rising again, than to avoid it by living. But the reason is really a different one, why we are justified in the blood of Christ, when we are rescued from the power of the devil through the remission of sins: it pertains to this, that the devil is conquered by Christ by righteousness, not by power. For Christ was crucified, not through immortal power, but through the weakness which He took upon Him in mortal flesh; of which weakness nevertheless the apostle says, “that the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

CHAPTER 15

OF THE SAME SUBJECT

19. It is not then difficult to see that the devil was conquered, when he who was slain by Him rose again. It is something more, and more profound of comprehension, to see that the devil was conquered when he thought himself to have conquered, that is, when Christ was slain. For then that blood, since it was His who had no sin at all, was poured out for the remission of our sins; that, because the devil deservedly held those whom, as guilty of sin, he bound by the condition of death, he might deservedly loose them through Him, whom, as guilty of no sin, the punishment of death undeservedly affected. The strong man was conquered by this righteousness, and bound with this chain, that his vessels might be spoiled, which with himself and his angels had been vessels of wrath while with him, and might be turned into vessels of mercy. For the Apostle Paul tells us, that these words of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself were spoken from heaven to him when he was first called. For among the other things which he heard, he speaks also of this as said to him thus: “For I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen from me, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open the eyes of the blind, and to turn them from darkness [to light], and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified, and faith that is in me.” And hence the same apostle also, exhorting believers to the giving of thanks to God the Father, says: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins.” In this redemption, the blood of Christ was given, as it were, as a price for us, by accepting which the devil was not enriched, but bound: that we might be loosened from his bonds, and that he might not

with himself involve in the meshes of sins, and so deliver to the destruction of the second and eternal death, any one of those whom Christ, free from all debt, had redeemed by pouring out His own blood unindebtedly; but that they who belong to the grace of Christ, foreknown, and predestinated, and elected before the foundation of the world should only so far die as Christ Himself died for them, i.e. only by the death of the flesh, not of the spirit.

CHAPTER 16

THE REMAINS OF DEATH AND THE EVIL THINGS OF THE WORLD TURN TO GOOD FOR THE ELECT. HOW FITLY THE DEATH OF CHRIST WAS CHOSEN, THAT WE MIGHT BE JUSTIFIED IN HIS BLOOD. WHAT THE ANGER OF GOD IS

20. For although the death, too, of the flesh itself came originally from the sin of the first man, yet the good use of it has made most glorious martyrs. And so not only that death itself, but all the evils of this world, and the griefs and labors of men, although they come from the deserts of sins, and especially of original sin, whence life itself too became bound by the bond of death, yet have fitly remained, even when sin is forgiven; that man might have wherewith to contend for truth, and whereby the goodness of the faithful might be exercised; in order that the new man through the new covenant might be made ready among the evils of this world for a new world, by bearing wisely the misery which this condemned life deserved, and by rejoicing soberly because it will be finished, but expecting faithfully and patiently the blessedness which the future life, being set free, will have for ever. For the devil being cast forth from his dominion, and from the hearts of the faithful, in the condemnation and faithlessness of whom he, although himself also condemned, yet reigned, is only so far permitted to be an adversary according to the condition of this mortality, as God knows to be expedient for them: concerning which the sacred writings speak through the mouth of the apostle: “God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” And those evils which the faithful endure piously, are of profit either for the correction of sins, or for the exercising and proving of righteousness, or to manifest the misery of this life, that the life where will be that true and perpetual blessedness may be desired more ardently, and sought out more earnestly. But it is on their

account that these evils are still kept in being, of whom the apostle says: “For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called to be holy according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” It is of these who are predestinated, that not one shall perish with the devil; not one shall remain even to death under the power of the devil. And then follows what I have already cited above: “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; how has He not with Him also freely given us all things?”

21. Why then should the death of Christ not have come to pass? Nay, rather, why should not that death itself have been chosen above all else to be brought to pass, to the passing by of the other innumerable ways which He who is omnipotent could have employed to free us; that death, I say, wherein neither was anything diminished or changed from His divinity, and so great benefit was conferred upon men, from the humanity which He took upon Him, that a temporal death, which was not due, was rendered by the eternal Son of God, who was also the Son of man, whereby He might free them from an eternal death which was due? The devil was holding fast our sins, and through them was fixing us deservedly in death. He discharged them, who had none of His own, and who was led by him to death undeservedly. That blood was of such price, that he who even slew Christ for a time by a death which was not due, can as his due detain no one, who has put on Christ, in the eternal death which was due. Therefore “God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.” Justified, he says, in His blood,—justified plainly, in that we are freed from all sin; and freed from all sin, because the Son of God, who knew no sin, was slain for us. Therefore “we shall be saved from wrath through Him;” from the wrath certainly of God, which is nothing else but just retribution. For the wrath of God is not, as is that of man, a perturbation of the mind; but it is the wrath of Him to whom Holy

Scripture says in another place, “But Thou, O Lord, mastering Thy power, judgest with calmness.” If, therefore, the just retribution of God has received such a name, what can be the right understanding also of the reconciliation of God, unless that then such wrath comes to an end? Neither were we enemies to God, except as sins are enemies to righteousness; which being forgiven, such enmities come to an end, and they whom He Himself justifies are reconciled to the Just One. And yet certainly He loved them even while still enemies, since “He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all,” when we were still enemies. And therefore the apostle has rightly added: “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son,” by which that remission of sins was made, “much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved in His life.” Saved in life, who were reconciled by death. For who can doubt that He will give His life for His friends, for whom, when enemies, He gave His death? “And not only so,” he says, “but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” “Not only,” he says, “shall we be saved,” but “we also joy;” and not in ourselves, but “in God;” nor through ourselves, “but through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement,” as we have argued above. Then the apostle adds, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned;” etc.: in which he disputes at some length concerning the two men; the one the first Adam, through whose sin and death we, his descendants, are bound by, as it were, hereditary evils; and the other the second Adam, who is not only man, but also God, by whose payment for us of what He owed not, we are freed from the debts both of our first father and of ourselves. Further, since on account of that one the devil held all who were begotten through his corrupted carnal concupiscence, it is just that on account of this one he should loose all who are regenerated through His immaculate spiritual grace.

CHAPTER 17

OTHER ADVANTAGES OF THE INCARNATION

22. There are many other things also in the incarnation of Christ, displeasing as it is to the proud, that are to be observed and thought of

advantageously. And one of them is, that it has been demonstrated to man what place he has in the things which God has created; since human nature could so be joined to God, that one person could be made of two substances, and thereby indeed of three—God, soul, and flesh: so that those proud malignant spirits, who interpose themselves as mediators to deceive, although as if to help, do not therefore dare to place themselves above man because they have not flesh; and chiefly because the Son of God deigned to die also in the same flesh, lest they, because they seem to be immortal, should therefore succeed in getting themselves worshipped as gods. Further, that the grace of God might be commended to us in the man Christ without any precedent merits; because not even He Himself obtained by any precedent merits that He should be joined in such great unity with the true God, and should become the Son of God, one Person with Him; but from the time when He began to be man, from that time He is also God; whence it is said, "The Word was made flesh." Then, again, there is this, that the pride of man, which is the chief hindrance against his cleaving to God, can be confuted and healed through such great humility of God. Man learns also how far he has gone away from God; and what it is worth to him as a pain to cure him, when he returns through such a Mediator, who both as God assists men by His divinity, and as man agrees with men by His weakness. For what greater example of obedience could be given to us, who had perished through disobedience, than God the Son obedient to God the Father, even to the death of the cross? Nay, wherein could the reward of obedience itself be better shown, than in the flesh of so great a Mediator, which rose again to eternal life? It belonged also to the justice and goodness of the Creator, that the devil should be conquered by the same rational creature which he rejoiced to have conquered, and by one that came from that same race which, by the corruption of its origin through one, he held altogether.

CHAPTER 18

WHY THE SON OF GOD TOOK MAN UPON HIMSELF FROM THE RACE OF ADAM, AND FROM A VIRGIN

23. For assuredly God could have taken upon Himself to be man, that in that manhood He might be the Mediator between God and men, from some

other source, and not from the race of that Adam who bound the human race by his sin; as He did not create him whom He first created, of the race of some one else. Therefore He was able, either so, or in any other mode that He would, to create yet one other, by whom the conqueror of the first might be conquered. But God judged it better both to take upon Him man through whom to conquer the enemy of the human race, from the race itself that had been conquered; and yet to do this of a virgin, whose conception, not flesh but spirit, not lust but faith, preceded. Nor did that concupiscence of the flesh intervene, by which the rest of men, who derive original sin, are propagated and conceived; but holy virginity became pregnant, not by conjugal intercourse, but by faith,—lust being utterly absent,—so that that which was born from the root of the first man might derive only the origin of race, not also of guilt. For there was born, not a nature corrupted by the contagion of transgression, but the one only remedy of all such corruptions. There was born, I say, a Man having nothing at all, and to have nothing at all, of sin; through whom they were to be born again so as to be freed from sin, who could not be born without sin. For although conjugal chastity makes a right use of the carnal concupiscence which is in our members; yet it is liable to motions not voluntary, by which it shows either that it could not have existed at all in paradise before sin, or if it did, that it was not then such as that sometimes it should resist the will. But now we feel it to be such, that in opposition to the law of the mind, and even if there is no question of begetting, it works in us the incitement of sexual intercourse; and if in this men yield to it, then it is satisfied by an act of sin; if they do not, then it is bridled by an act of refusal: which two things who could doubt to have been alien from paradise before sin? For neither did the chastity that then was do anything indecorous, nor did the pleasure that then was suffer anything unquiet. It was necessary, therefore, that this carnal concupiscence should be entirely absent, when the offspring of the Virgin was conceived; in whom the author of death was to find nothing worthy of death, and yet was to slay Him in order that he might be conquered by the death of the Author of life: the conqueror of the first Adam, who held fast the human race, conquered by the second Adam, and losing the Christian race, freed out of the human race from human guilt, through Him who was not in the guilt, although He was of the race; that that deceiver might be conquered by that race which he had conquered by guilt. And this was so done, in order that man may not be lifted up, but “that he that glorieth should glory in the Lord.” For he who was conquered was only man; and he was therefore conquered, because he lusted proudly to be a god. But He who conquered was both man and God; and therefore He so conquered, being born of a virgin, because God in humility did not, as He governs other saints, so govern that Man, but bare Him [as a Son]. These so great gifts of God, and whatever else there are, which it is too long for us now upon this subject both to inquire and to discuss, could not exist unless the Word had been made flesh.

CHAPTER 19

WHAT IN THE INCARNATE WORD BELONGS TO KNOWLEDGE, WHAT TO WISDOM

24. And all these things which the Word made flesh did and bare for us in time and place, belong, according to the distinction which we have undertaken to demonstrate, to knowledge, not to wisdom. And as the Word is without time and without place, it is co-eternal with the Father, and in its wholeness everywhere; and if any one can, and as much as he can, speak truly concerning this Word, then his discourse will pertain to wisdom. And hence the Word made flesh, which is Christ Jesus, has the treasures both of wisdom and of knowledge. For the apostle, writing to the Colossians, says: “For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God which is Christ Jesus: in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” To what extent the apostle knew all those treasures, how much of them he had penetrated, and in them to how great things he had reached, who can know? Yet, for my part, according to that which is written, “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal; for to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;” if these two are in such way to be distinguished from each other, that wisdom is to be assigned to divine things, knowledge to human, I acknowledge both in Christ, and so with me do all His faithful ones. And when I read, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” I understand by the Word the true Son of God, I

acknowledge in the flesh the true Son of man, and both together joined into one Person of God and man, by an ineffable copiousness of grace. And on account of this, the apostle goes on to say, “And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” If we refer grace to knowledge, and truth to wisdom, I think we shall not swerve from that distinction between these two things which we have commended. For in those things that have their origin in time, this is the highest grace, that man is joined with God in unity of person; but in things eternal the highest truth is rightly attributed to the Word of God. But that the same is Himself the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,—this took place, in order that He Himself in things done for us in time should be the same for whom we are cleansed by the same faith, that we may contemplate Him steadfastly in things eternal. And those distinguished philosophers of the heathen who have been able to understand and discern the invisible things of God by those things which are made, have yet, as is said of them, “held down the truth in iniquity;” because they philosophized without a Mediator, that is, without the man Christ, whom they neither believed to be about to come at the word of the prophets, nor to have come at that of the apostles. For, placed as they were in these lowest things, they could not but seek some media through which they might attain to those lofty things which they had understood; and so they fell upon deceitful spirits, through whom it came to pass, that “they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.” For in such forms also they set up or worshipped idols. Therefore Christ is our knowledge, and the same Christ is also our wisdom. He Himself implants in us faith concerning temporal things, He Himself shows forth the truth concerning eternal things. Through Him we reach on to Himself: we stretch through knowledge to wisdom; yet we do not withdraw from one and the same Christ, “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge.” But now we speak of knowledge, and will hereafter speak of wisdom as much as He Himself shall grant. And let us not so take these two things, as if it were not allowable to speak either of the wisdom which is in human things, or of the knowledge which is in divine. For after a laxer custom of speech, both can be called wisdom, and both knowledge. Yet the apostle could not in any way have written, “To one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge,” except also these several things had been properly called by the several names, of the distinction between which we are now treating.

CHAPTER 20

WHAT HAS BEEN TREATED OF IN THIS BOOK. HOW WE HAVE REACHED BY STEPS TO A CERTAIN TRINITY, WHICH IS FOUND IN PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE AND TRUE FAITH

25. Now, therefore, let us see what this prolix discourse has effected, what it has gathered, whereto it has reached. It belongs to all men to will to be blessed; yet all men have not faith, whereby the heart is cleansed, and so blessedness is reached. And thus it comes to pass, that by means of the faith which not all men will, we have to reach on to the blessedness which every one wills. All see in their own heart that they will to be blessed; and so great is the agreement of human nature on this subject, that the man is not deceived who conjectures this concerning another’s mind, out of his own: in short, we know ourselves that all will this. But many despair of being immortal, although no otherwise can any one be that which all will, that is, blessed. Yet they will also to be immortal if they could; but through not believing that they can, they do not so live that they can. Therefore faith is necessary, that we may attain blessedness in all the good things of human nature, that is, of both soul and body. But that same faith requires that this faith be limited in Christ, who rose in the flesh from the dead, not to die any more; and that no one is freed from the dominion of the devil, through the forgiveness of sins, save by Him; and that in the abiding place of the devil, life must needs be at once miserable and never-ending, which ought rather to be called death than life. All which I have also argued, so far as space permitted, in this book, while I have already said much on the subject in the fourth book of this work as well; but in that place for one purpose, here for another,—namely, there, that I might show why and how Christ was sent in the fullness of time by the Father, on account of those who say that He who sent and He who was sent cannot be equal in nature; but here, in order to distinguish practical knowlege from contemplative wisdom.

26. For we wished to ascend, as it were, by steps, and to seek in the inner man, both in knowledge and in wisdom, a sort of trinity of its own special kind, such as we sought before in the outer man; in order that we may

come, with a mind more practised in these lower things, to the contemplation of that Trinity which is God, according to our little measure, if indeed, we can even do this, at least in a riddle and as through a glass. If, then, any one have committed to memory the words of this faith in their sounds alone, not knowing what they mean, as they commonly who do not know Greek hold in memory Greek words, or similarly Latin ones, or those of any other language of which they are ignorant, has not he a sort of trinity in his mind? because, first, those sounds of words are in his memory, even when he does not think thereupon; and next, the mental vision (acies) of his act of recollection is formed thence when he conceives of them; and next, the will of him who remembers and thinks unites both. Yet we should by no means say that the man in so doing busies himself with a trinity of the interior man, but rather of the exterior; because he remembers, and when he wills, contemplates as much as he wills, that alone which belongs to the sense of the body, which is called hearing. Nor in such an act of thought does he do anything else than deal with images of corporeal things, that is, of sounds. But if he holds and recollects what those words signify, now indeed something of the inner man is brought into action; not yet, however, ought he to be said or thought to live according to a trinity of the inner man, if he does not love those things which are there declared, enjoined, promised. For it is possible for him also to hold and conceive these things, supposing them to be false, in order that he may endeavor to disprove them. Therefore that will, which in this case unites those things which are held in the memory with those things which are thence impressed on the mind’s eye in conception, completes, indeed, some kind of trinity, since itself is a third added to two others; but the man does not live according to this, when those things which are conceived are taken to be false, and are not accepted. But when those things are believed to be true, and those things which therein ought to be loved, are loved, then at last the man does live according to a trinity of the inner man; for every one lives according to that which he loves. But how can things be loved which are not known, but only believed? This question has been already treated of in former books; and we found, that no one loves what he is wholly ignorant of, but that when things not known are said to be loved, they are loved from those things which are known. And now we so conclude this book, that we admonish the just to live by faith, which faith worketh by love, so that the virtues also themselves, by which one lives prudently, boldly, temperately, and justly, be all referred to the same faith; for not otherwise can they be true virtues. And yet these in this life are not of so great worth, as that the remission of sins, of some kind or other, is not sometimes necessary here; and this remission comes not to pass, except through Him, who by His own blood conquered the prince of sinners. Whatsoever ideas are in the mind of the faithful man from this faith, and from such a life, when they are contained in the memory, and are looked at by recollection, and please the will, set forth a kind of trinity of its own sort. But the image of God, of which by His help we shall afterwards speak, is not yet in that trinity; a thing which will then be more apparent, when it shall have been shown where it is, which the reader may expect in a succeeding book.

Book XIV

The true wisdom of man is treated of; and it is shown that the image of God, which man is in respect to his mind, is not placed properly in transitory things, as in memory, understanding, and love, whether of faith itself as existing in time, or even of the mind as busied with itself, but in things that are permanent; and that this wisdom is then perfected, when the mind is renewed in the knowledge of God, according to the image of Him who created man after His own Image, and thus attains to wisdom, wherein that which is contemplated is eternal.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT THE WISDOM IS OF WHICH WE ARE HERE TO TREAT. WHENCE THE NAME OF PHILOSOPHER AROSE. WHAT HAS BEEN ALREADY SAID CONCERNING THE DISTINCTION OF KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM

1. We must now discourse concerning wisdom; not the wisdom of God, which without doubt is God, for His only-begotten Son is called the wisdom of God; but we will speak of the wisdom of man, yet of true wisdom, which is according to God, and is His true and chief worship, which is called in Greek by one term, theosebeia. And this term, as we have already observed, when our own countrymen themselves also wished to interpret it by a single term, was by them rendered piety, whereas piety means more commonly what the Greeks call eusebeia. But because theosebeia cannot be translated perfectly by any one word, it is better translated by two, so as to render it rather by “the worship of God.” That this is the wisdom of man, as we have already laid down in the twelfth book of this work, is shown by the authority of Holy Scripture, in the book of God’s servant Job, where we read that the Wisdom of God said to man, “Behold piety, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is knowledge;” or, as some have translated the Greek word epistemen, “learning,” which certainly takes its name from learning, whence also it may be called knowledge. For everything is learned in order that it may be known. Although the same word, indeed, is employed in a different sense, where any one suffers evils for his sins, that

he may be corrected. Whence is that in the Epistle to the Hebrews, “For what son is he to whom the father giveth not discipline?” And this is still more apparent in the same epistle: “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” Therefore God Himself is the chiefest wisdom; but the worship of God is the wisdom of man, of which we now speak. For “the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.” It is in respect to this wisdom, therefore, which is the worship of God, that Holy Scripture says, “The multitude of the wise is the welfare of the world.”

2. But if to dispute of wisdom belongs to wise men, what shall we do? Shall we dare indeed to profess wisdom, lest it should be mere impudence for ourselves to dispute about it? Shall we not be alarmed by the example of Pythagoras?—who dared not profess to be a wise man, but answered that he was a philosopher, i.e., a lover of wisdom; whence arose the name, that became thenceforth so much the popular name, that no matter how great the learning wherein any one excelled, either in his own opinion or that of others, in things pertaining to wisdom, he was still called nothing more than philosopher. Or was it for this reason that no one, even of such as these, dared to profess himself a wise man,—because they imagined that a wise man was one without sin? But our Scriptures do not say this, which say, “Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.” For doubtless he who thinks a man ought to be rebuked, judges him to have sin. However, for my part, I dare not profess myself a wise man even in this sense; it is enough for me to assume, what they themselves cannot deny, that to dispute of wisdom belongs also to the philosopher, i.e., the lover of wisdom. For they have not given over so disputing who have professed to be lovers of wisdom rather than wise men.

3. In disputing, then, about wisdom, they have defined it thus: Wisdom is the knowledge of things human and divine. And hence, in the last book, I have not withheld the admission, that the cognizance of both subjects, whether divine or human, may be called both knowledge and wisdom. But according to the distinction made in the apostle’s words, “To one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge,” this definition is to

be divided, so that the knowledge of things divine shall be called wisdom, and that of things human appropriate to itself the name of knowledge; and of the latter I have treated in the thirteenth book, not indeed so as to attribute to this knowledge everything whatever that can be known by man about things human, wherein there is exceeding much of empty vanity and mischievous curiosity, but only those things by which that most wholesome faith, which leads to true blessedness, is begotten, nourished, defended, strengthened; and in this knowledge most of the faithful are not strong, however exceeding strong in the faith itself. For it is one thing to know only what man ought to believe in order to attain to a blessed life, which must needs be an eternal one; but another to know in what way this belief itself may both help the pious, and be defended against the impious, which last the apostle seems to call by the special name of knowledge. And when I was speaking of this knowledge before, my especial business was to commend faith, first briefly distinguishing things eternal from things temporal, and there discoursing of things temporal; but while deferring things eternal to the present book, I showed also that faith respecting things eternal is itself a thing temporal, and dwells in time in the hearts of believers, and yet is necessary in order to attain the things eternal themselves. I argued also, that faith respecting the things temporal which He that is eternal did and suffered for us as man, which manhood He bare in time and carried on to things eternal, is profitable also for the obtaining of things eternal; and that the virtues themselves, whereby in this temporal and mortal life men live prudently, bravely, temperately, and justly, are not true virtues, unless they are referred to that same faith, temporal though it is, which leads on nevertheless to things eternal.

CHAPTER 2

THERE IS A KIND OF TRINITY IN THE HOLDING, CONTEMPLATING, AND LOVING OF FAITH TEMPORAL, BUT ONE THAT DOES NOT YET ATTAIN TO BEING PROPERLY AN IMAGE OF GOD

4. Wherefore since, as it is written, “While we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord; for we walk by faith, not by sight;” undoubtedly, so long as the just man lives by faith, howsoever he lives according to the inner man, although he aims at truth and reaches on to things eternal by this

same temporal faith, nevertheless in the holding, contemplating, and loving this temporal faith, we have not yet reached such a trinity as is to be called an image of God; lest that should seem to be constituted in things temporal which ought to be so in things eternal. For when the human mind sees its own faith, whereby it believes what it does not see, it does not see a thing eternal. For that will not always exist, which certainly will not then exist, when this pilgrimage, whereby we are absent from God, in such way that we must needs walk by faith, shall be ended, and that sight shall have succeeded it whereby we shall see face to face; just as now, because we believe although we do not see, we shall deserve to see, and shall rejoice at having been brought through faith to sight. For then it will be no longer faith, by which that is believed which is not seen; but sight, by which that is seen which is believed. And then, therefore, although we remember this past mortal life, and call to mind by recollection that we once believed what we did not see, yet that faith will be reckoned among things past and done with, not among things present and always continuing. And hence also that trinity which now consists in the remembering, contemplating, and loving this same faith while present and continuing, will then be found to be done with and past, and not still enduring. And hence it is to be gathered, that if that trinity is indeed an image of God, then this image itself would have to be reckoned, not among things that exist always, but among things transient.

CHAPTER 3

A DIFFICULTY REMOVED, WHICH LIES IN THE WAY OF WHAT HAS JUST BEEN SAID

But far be it from us to think, that while the nature of the soul is immortal, and from the first beginning of its creation thenceforth never ceases to be, yet that that which is the best thing it has should not endure for ever with its own immortality. Yet what is there in its nature as created, better than that it is made after the image of its Creator? We must find then what may be fittingly called the image of God, not in the holding, contemplating, and loving that faith which will not exist always, but in that which will exist always.

5. Shall we then scrutinize somewhat more carefully and deeply whether the case is really thus? For it may be said that this trinity does not perish even when faith itself shall have passed away; because, as now we both hold it by memory, and discern it by thought, and love it by will; so then also, when we shall both hold in memory, and shall recollect, that we once had it, and shall unite these two by the third, namely will, the same trinity will still continue. Since, if it have left in its passage as it were no trace in us, doubtless we shall not have ought of it even in our memory, whereto to recur when recollecting it as past, and by the third, viz. purpose, coupling both these, to wit, what was in our memory though we were not thinking about it, and what is formed thence by conception. But he who speaks thus, does not perceive, that when we hold, see, and love in ourselves our present faith, we are concerned with a different trinity as now existing, from that trinity which will exist, when we shall contemplate by recollection, not the faith itself, but as it were the imagined trace of it laid up in the memory, and shall unite by the will, as by a third, these two things, viz. that which was in the memory of him who retains, and that which is impressed thence upon the vision of the mind of him who recollects. And that we may understand this, let us take an example from things corporeal, of which we have sufficiently spoken in the eleventh book. For as we ascend from lower to higher things, or pass inward from outer to inner things, we first find a trinity in the bodily object which is seen, and in the vision of the seer, which, when he sees it, is informed thereby, and in the purpose of the will which combines both. Let us assume a trinity like this, when the faith which is now in ourselves is so established in our memory as the bodily object we spoke of was in place, from which faith is formed the conception in recollection, as from that bodily object was formed the vision of the beholder; and to these two, to complete the trinity, will is to be reckoned as a third, which connects and combines the faith established in the memory, and a sort of effigy of that faith impressed upon the vision of recollection; just as in that trinity of corporeal vision, the form of the bodily object that is seen, and the corresponding form wrought in the vision of the beholder, are combined by the purpose of the will. Suppose, then, that this bodily object which was beheld was dissolved and had perished, and that nothing at all of it remained anywhere, to the vision of which the gaze might have recourse; are we then to say, that because the image of the bodily object thus now

past and done with remains in the memory, whence to form the conception in recollecting, and to have the two united by will as a third, therefore it is the same trinity as that former one, when the appearance of the bodily object posited in place was seen? Certainly not, but altogether a different one: for, not to say that that was from without, while this is from within; the former certainly was produced by the appearance of a present bodily object, the latter by the image of that object now past. So, too, in the case of which we are now treating, to illustrate which we have thought good to adduce this example, the faith which is even now in our mind, as that bodily object was in place, while held, looked at, loved, produces a sort of trinity; but that trinity will exist no more, when this faith in the mind, like that bodily object in place, shall no longer exist. But that which will then exist, when we shall remember it to have been, but not now to be, in us, will doubtless be a different one. For that which now is, is wrought by the thing itself, actually present and attached to the mind of one who believes; but that which shall then be, will be wrought by the imagination of a past thing left in the memory of one who recollects.

CHAPTER 4

THE IMAGE OF GOD IS TO BE SOUGHT IN THE IMMORTALITY OF THE RATIONAL SOUL. HOW A TRINITY IS DEMONSTRATED IN THE MIND

6. Therefore neither is that trinity an image of God, which is not now, nor is that other an image of God, which then will not be; but we must find in the soul of man, i.e., the rational or intellectual soul, that image of the Creator which is immortally implanted in its immortality. For as the immortality itself of the soul is spoken with a qualification; since the soul too has its proper death, when it lacks a blessed life, which is to be called the true life of the soul; but it is therefore called immortal, because it never ceases to live with some life or other, even when it is most miserable;—so, although reason or intellect is at one time torpid in it, at another appears small, and at another great, yet the human soul is never anything save rational or intellectual; and hence, if it is made after the image of God in respect to this, that it is able to use reason and intellect in order to understand and behold God, then from the moment when that nature so marvellous and so great began to be, whether this image be so worn out as to be almost none at

all, or whether it be obscure and defaced, or bright and beautiful, certainly it always is. Further, too, pitying the defaced condition of its dignity, divine Scripture tells us, that "although man walks in an image, yet he disquieteth himself in vain; he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them." It would not therefore attribute vanity to the image of God, unless it perceived it to have been defaced. Yet it sufficiently shows that such defacing does not extend to the taking away its being an image, by saying, "Although man walks in an image." Wherefore in both ways that sentence can be truly enunciated; in that, as it is said, "Although man walketh in an image, yet he disquieteth himself in vain," so it may be said, "Although man disquieteth himself in vain, yet he walketh in an image." For although the nature of the soul is great, yet it can be corrupted, because it is not the highest; and although it can be corrupted, because it is not the highest, yet because it is capable and can be partaker of the highest nature, it is a great nature. Let us seek, then, in this image of God a certain trinity of a special kind, with the aid of Him who Himself made us after His own image. For no otherwise can we healthfully investigate this subject, or arrive at any result according to the wisdom which is from Him. But if the reader will either hold in remembrance and recollect what we have said of the human soul or mind in former books, and especially in the tenth, or will carefully re-peruse it in the passages wherein it is contained, he will not require here any more lengthy discourse respecting the inquiry into so great a thing.

7. We said, then, among other things in the tenth book, that the mind of man knows itself. For the mind knows nothing so much as that which is close to itself; and nothing is more close to the mind than itself. We adduced also other evidences, as much as seemed sufficient, whereby this might be most certainly proved.

CHAPTER 5

WHETHER THE MIND OF INFANTS KNOWS ITSELF

What, then, is to be said of the mind of an infant, which is still so small, and buried in such profound ignorance of things, that the mind of a man which knows anything shrinks from the darkness of it? Is that too to be believed to know itself; but that, as being too intent upon those things which it has begun to perceive through the bodily senses, with the greater delight in proportion to their novelty, it is not able indeed to be ignorant of itself, but is also not able to think of itself? Moreover, how intently it is bent upon sensible things that are without it, may be conjectured from this one fact, that it is so greedy of sensible light, that if any one through carelessness, or ignorance of the possible consequences, place a light at nighttime where an infant is lying down, on that side to which the eyes of the child so lying down can be bent, but its neck cannot be turned, the gaze of that child will be so fixed in that direction, that we have known some to have come to squint by this means, in that the eyes retained that form which habit in some way impressed upon them while tender and soft. In the case, too, of the other bodily senses, the souls of infants, as far as their age permits, so narrow themselves as it were, and are bent upon them, that they either vehemently detest or vehemently desire that only which offends or allures through the flesh, but do not think of their own inward self, nor can be made to do so by admonition; because they do not yet know the signs that express admonition, whereof words are the chief, of which as of other things they are wholly ignorant. And that it is one thing not to know oneself, another not to think of oneself, we have shown already in the same book.

8. But let us pass by the infantine age, since we cannot question it as to what goes on within itself, while we have ourselves pretty well forgotten it. Let it suffice only for us hence to be certain, that when man has come to be able to think of the nature of his own mind, and to find out what is the truth, he will find it nowhere else but in himself. And he will find, not what he did not know, but that of which he did not think. For what do we know, if we do not know what is in our own mind; when we can know nothing at all of what we do know, unless by the mind?

CHAPTER 6

HOW A KIND OF TRINITY EXISTS IN THE MIND THINKING OF ITSELF. WHAT IS THE PART OF THOUGHT IN THIS TRINITY

The function of thought, however, is so great, that not even the mind itself can, so to say, place itself in its own sight, except when it thinks of itself;

and hence it is so far the case, that nothing is in the sight of the mind, except that which is being thought of, that not even the mind itself, whereby we think whatever we do think, can be in its own sight otherwise than by thinking of itself. But in what way it is not in its own sight when it is not thinking of itself, while it can never be without itself, as though itself were one thing, and the sight of itself another, it is not in my power to discover. For this is not unreasonably said of the eye of the body; for the eye itself of the body is fixed in its own proper place in the body, but its sight extends to things external to itself, and reaches even to the stars. And the eye is not in its own sight, since it does not look at itself, unless by means of a mirror, as is said above; a thing that certainly does not happen when the mind places itself in its own sight by thinking of itself. Does it then see one part of itself by means of another part of itself, when it looks at itself in thought, as we look at some of our members, which can be in our sight, with other also of our members, viz. with our eyes? What can be said or thought more absurd? For by what is the mind removed, except by itself? or where is it placed so as to be in its own sight, except before itself? Therefore it will not be there, where it was, when it was not in its own sight; because it has been put down in one place, after being taken away from another. But if it migrated in order to be beheld, where will it remain in order to behold? Is it as it were doubled, so as to be in this and in that place at the same time, viz. both where it can behold, and where it can be beheld; that in itself it may be beholding, and before itself beheld? If we ask the truth, it will tell us nothing of the sort since it is but feigned images of bodily objects of which we conceive when we conceive thus; and that the mind is not such, is very certain to the few minds by which the truth on such a subject can be inquired. It appears, therefore, that the beholding of the mind is something pertaining to its nature, and is recalled to that nature when it conceives of itself, not as if by moving through space, but by an incorporeal conversion; but when it is not conceiving of itself, it appears that it is not indeed in its own sight, nor is its own perception formed from it, but yet that it knows itself as though it were to itself a remembrance of itself. Like one who is skilled in many branches of learning: the things which he knows are contained in his memory, but nothing thereof is in the sight of his mind except that of which he is conceiving; while all the rest are stored up in a kind of secret knowledge, which is called memory. The trinity, then, which we were setting forth, was constituted in this way: first, we placed in the memory the object by which the perception of the percipient was formed; next, the conformation, or as it were the image which is impressed thereby; lastly, love or will as that which combines the two. When the mind, then, beholds itself in conception, it understands and cognizes itself; it begets, therefore, this its own understanding and cognition. For an incorporeal thing is understood when it is beheld, and is cognized when understood. Yet certainly the mind does not so beget this knowledge of itself, when it beholds itself as understood by conception, as though it had before been unknown to itself; but it was known to itself, in the way in which things are known which are contained in the memory, but of which one is not thinking; since we say that a man knows letters even when he is thinking of something else, and not of letters. And these two, the begetter and the begotten, are coupled together by love, as by a third, which is nothing else than will, seeking or holding fast the enjoyment of something. We held, therefore, that a trinity of the mind is to be intimated also by these three terms, memory, intelligence, will.

9. But since the mind, as we said near the end of the same tenth book, always remembers itself, and always understands and loves itself, although it does not always think of itself as distinguished from those things which are not itself; we must inquire in what way understanding (intellectus) belongs to conception, while the notion (notitia) of each thing that is in the mind, even when one is not thinking of it, is said to belong only to the memory. For if this is so, then the mind had not these three things: viz. the remembrance, the understanding, and the love of itself; but it only remembered itself, and afterwards, when it began to think of itself, then it understood and loved itself.

CHAPTER 7

THE THING IS MADE PLAIN BY AN EXAMPLE. IN WHAT WAY THE MATTER IS HANDLED IN ORDER TO HELP THE READER

Wherefore let us consider more carefully that example which we have adduced, wherein it was shown that not knowing a thing is different from not thinking [conceiving] of it; and that it may so happen that a man knows something of which he is not thinking, when he is thinking of something else, not of that. When any one, then, who is skilled in two or more branches of knowledge is thinking of one of them, though he is not thinking of the other or others, yet he knows them. But can we rightly say, This musician certainly knows music, but he does not now understand it, because he is not thinking of it; but he does now understand geometry, for of that he is now thinking? Such an assertion, as far as appears, is absurd. What, again, if we were to say, This musician certainly knows music, but he does not now love it, while he is not now thinking of it; but he does now love geometry, because of that he is now thinking,—is not this similarly absurd? But we say quite correctly, This person whom you perceive disputing about geometry is also a perfect musician, for he both remembers music, and understands, and loves it; but although he both knows and loves it, he is not now thinking of it, since he is thinking of geometry, of which he is disputing. And hence we are warned that we have a kind of knowledge of certain things stored up in the recesses of the mind, and that this, when it is thought of, as it were, steps forth in public, and is placed as if openly in the sight of the mind; for then the mind itself finds that it both remembers, and understands, and loves itself, even although it was not thinking of itself, when it was thinking of something else. But in the case of that of which we have not thought for a long time, and cannot think of it unless reminded; that, if the phrase is allowable, in some wonderful way I know not how, we do not know that we know. In short, it is rightly said by him who reminds, to him whom he reminds, You know this, but you do not know that you know it; I will remind you, and you will find that you know what you had thought you did not know. Books, too, lead to the same results, viz. those that are written upon subjects which the reader under the guidance of reason finds to be true; not those subjects which he believes to be true on the faith of the narrator, as in the case of history; but those which he himself also finds to be true, either of himself, or in that truth itself which is the light of the mind. But he who cannot contemplate these things, even when reminded, is too deeply buried in the darkness of ignorance, through great blindness of heart and too wonderfully needs divine help, to be able to attain to true wisdom.

10. For this reason I have wished to adduce some kind of proof, be it what it might, respecting the act of conceiving, such as might serve to show in what way, out of the things contained in the memory, the mind's eye is informed in recollecting, and some such thing is begotten, when a man conceives, as was already in him when, before he conceived, he remembered; because it is easier to distinguish things that take place at successive times, and where the parent precedes the offspring by an interval of time. For if we refer ourselves to the inner memory of the mind by which it remembers itself, and to the inner understanding by which it understands itself, and to the inner will by which it loves itself, where these three always are together, and always have been together since they began to be at all, whether they were being thought of or not; the image of this trinity will indeed appear to pertain even to the memory alone; but because in this case a word cannot be without a thought (for we think all that we say, even if it be said by that inner word which belongs to no separate language), this image is rather to be discerned in these three things, viz. memory, intelligence, will. And I mean now by intelligence that by which we understand in thought, that is, when our thought is formed by the finding of those things, which had been at hand to the memory but were not being thought of; and I mean that will, or love, or preference which combines this offspring and parent, and is in some way common to both. Hence it was that I tried also, viz. in the eleventh book, to lead on the slowness of readers by means of outward sensible things which are seen by the eyes of the flesh; and that I then proceeded to enter with them upon that power of the inner man whereby he reasons of things temporal, deferring the consideration of that which dominates as the higher power, by which he contemplates things eternal. And I discussed this in two books, distinguishing the two in the twelfth, the one of them being higher and the other lower, and that the lower ought to be subject to the higher; and in the thirteenth I discussed, with what truth and brevity I could, the office of the lower, in which the wholesome knowledge of things human is contained, in order that we may so act in this temporal life as to attain that which is eternal; since, indeed, I have cursorily included in a single book a subject so manifold and copious, and one so well known by the many and great arguments of many and great men, while manifesting that a trinity exists also in it, but not yet one that can be called an image of God.

CHAPTER 8

THE TRINITY WHICH IS THE IMAGE OF GOD IS NOW TO BE SOUGHT IN THE NOBLEST PART OF THE MIND

11. But we have come now to that argument in which we have undertaken to consider the noblest part of the human mind, by which it knows or can know God, in order that we may find in it the image of God. For although the human mind is not of the same nature with God, yet the image of that nature than which none is better, is to be sought and found in us, in that than which our nature also has nothing better. But the mind must first be considered as it is in itself, before it becomes partaker of God; and His image must be found in it. For, as we have said, although worn out and defaced by losing the participation of God, yet the image of God still remains. For it is His image in this very point, that it is capable of Him, and can be partaker of Him; which so great good is only made possible by its being His image. Well, then, the mind remembers, understands, loves itself; if we discern this, we discern a trinity, not yet indeed God, but now at last an image of God. The memory does not receive from without that which it is to hold; nor does the understanding find without that which it is to regard, as the eye of the body does; nor has will joined these two from without, as it joins the form of the bodily object and that which is thence wrought in the vision of the beholder; nor has conception, in being turned to it, found an image of a thing seen without, which has been somehow seized and laid up in the memory, whence the intuition of him that recollects has been formed, will as a third joining the two: as we showed to take place in those trinities which were discovered in things corporeal, or which were somehow drawn within from bodily objects by the bodily sense; of all which we have discoursed in the eleventh book. Nor, again, as it took place, or appeared to do so, when we went on further to discuss that knowledge, which had its place now in the workings of the inner man, and which was to be distinguished from wisdom; of which knowledge the subject-matter was, as it were, adventitious to the mind, and either was brought thither by historical information,—as deeds and words, which are performed in time and pass away, or which again are established in the nature of things in their own times and places,—or arises in the man himself not being there before, whether on the information of others, or by his own thinking,—as faith,

which we commended at length in the thirteenth book, or as the virtues, by which, if they are true, one so lives well in this mortality as to live blessedly in that immortality which God promises. These and other things of the kind have their proper order in time, and in that order we discerned more easily a trinity of memory, sight, and love. For some of such things anticipate the knowledge of learners. For they are knowable also before they are known, and beget in the learner a knowledge of themselves. And they either exist in their own proper places, or have happened in time past; although things that are past do not themselves exist, but only certain signs of them as past, the sight or hearing of which makes it known that they have been and have passed away. And these signs are either situate in the places themselves, as e.g. monuments of the dead or the like; or exist in written books worthy of credit, as is all history that is of weight and approved authority; or are in the minds of those who already know them; since what is already known to them is knowable certainly to others also, whose knowledge it has anticipated, and who are able to know it on the information of those who do know it. And all these things, when they are learned, produce a certain kind of trinity, viz. by their own proper species, which was knowable also before it was known, and by the application to this of the knowledge of the learner, which then begins to exist when he learns them, and by will as a third which combines both; and when they are known, yet another trinity is produced in the recollecting of them, and this now inwardly in the mind itself, from those images which, when they were learned, were impressed upon the memory, and from the informing of the thought when the look has been turned upon these by recollection, and from the will which as a third combines these two. But those things which arise in the mind, not having been there before, as faith and other things of that kind, although they appear to be adventitious, since they are implanted by teaching, yet are not situate without or transacted without, as are those things which are believed; but began to be altogether within in the mind itself. For faith is not that which is believed, but that by which it is believed; and the former is believed, the latter seen. Nevertheless, because it began to be in the mind, which was a mind also before these things began to be in it, it seems to be somewhat adventitious, and will be reckoned among things past, when sight shall have succeeded, and itself shall have ceased to be. And it makes now by its presence, retained as it is, and beheld, and loved, a different trinity from that which it will then make by means of some trace of itself, which in passing it will have left in the memory: as has been already said above.

CHAPTER 9

WHETHER JUSTICE AND THE OTHER VIRTUES CEASE TO EXIST IN THE FUTURE LIFE

12. There is, however, some question raised, whether the virtues likewise by which one lives well in this present mortality, seeing that they themselves begin also to be in the mind, which was a mind none the less when it existed before without them, cease also to exist at that time when they have brought us to things eternal. For some have thought that they will cease, and in the case of three—prudence, fortitude, temperance—such an assertion seems to have something in it; but justice is immortal, and will rather then be made perfect in us than cease to be. Yet Tullius, the great author of eloquence, when arguing in the dialogue Hortensius, says of all four: "If we were allowed, when we migrated from this life, to live forever in the islands of the blessed, as fables tell, what need were there of eloquence when there would be no trials, or what need, indeed, of the very virtues themselves? For we should not need fortitude when nothing of either toil or danger was proposed to us; nor justice, when there was nothing of anybody else's to be coveted; nor temperance, to govern lusts that would not exist; nor, indeed, should we need prudence, when there was no choice offered between good and evil. We should be blessed, therefore, solely by learning and knowing nature, by which alone also the life of the gods is praiseworthy. And hence we may perceive that everything else is a matter of necessity, but this is one of free choice." This great orator, then, when proclaiming the excellence of philosophy, going over again all that he had learned from philosophers, and excellently and pleasantly explaining it, has affirmed all four virtues to be necessary in this life only, which we see to be full of troubles and mistakes; but not one of them when we shall have migrated from this life, if we are permitted to live there where is a blessed life; but that blessed souls are blessed only in learning and knowing, i.e. in the contemplation of nature, than which nothing is better and more lovable. It is that nature which created and appointed all other natures. And if it belongs to justice to be subject to the government of this nature then justice is certainly immortal; nor will it cease to be in that blessedness, but will be

such and so great that it cannot be more perfect or greater. Perhaps, too, the other three virtues—prudence although no longer with any risk of error, and fortitude without the vexation of bearing evils, and temperance without the thwarting of lust—will exist in that blessedness: so that it may be the part of prudence to prefer or equal no good thing to God; and of fortitude, to cleave to Him most steadfastly; and of temperance, to be pleased by no harmful defect. But that which justice is now concerned with in helping the wretched, and prudence in guarding against treachery, and fortitude in bearing troubles patiently, and temperance in controlling evil pleasures, will not exist there, where there will be no evil at all. And hence those acts of the virtues which are necessary to this mortal life, like the faith to which they are to be referred, will be reckoned among things past; and they make now a different trinity, whilst we hold, look at, and love them as present, from that which they will then make, when we shall discover them not to be, but to have been, by certain traces of them which they will have left in passing in the memory; since then, too, there will be a trinity, when that trace, be it of what sort it may, shall be retained in the memory, and truly recognized, and then these two be joined by will as a third.

CHAPTER 10

HOW A TRINITY IS PRODUCED BY THE MIND REMEMBERING, UNDERSTANDING, AND LOVING ITSELF

13. In the knowledge of all these temporal things which we have mentioned, there are some knowable things which precede the acquisition of the knowledge of them by an interval of time, as in the case of those sensible objects which were already real before they were known, or of all those things that are learned through history; but some things begin to be at the same time with the knowing of them,—just as, if any visible object, which did not exist before at all, were to rise up before our eyes, certainly it does not precede our knowing it; or if there be any sound made where there is some one to hear, no doubt the sound and the hearing that sound begin and end simultaneously. Yet none the less, whether preceding in time or beginning to exist simultaneously, knowable things generate knowledge, and are not generated by knowledge. But when knowledge has come to pass, whenever the things known and laid up in memory are reviewed by

recollection, who does not see that the retaining them in the memory is prior in time to the sight of them in recollection, and to the uniting of the two things by will as a third? In the mind, howver, it is not so. For the mind is not adventitious to itself, as though there came to itself already existing, that same self not already existing, from somewhere else, or did not indeed come from somewhere else, but that in the mind itself already existing, there was born that same mind not already existing; just as faith, which before was not, arises in the mind which already was. Nor does the mind see itself, as it were, set up in its own memory by recollection subsequently to the knowing of itself, as though it was not there before it knew itself; whereas, doubtless, from the time when it began to be, it has never ceased to remember, to understand, and to love itself, as we have already shown. And hence, when it is turned to itself by thought, there arises a trinity, in which now at length we can discern also a word; since it is formed from thought itself, will uniting both. Here, then, we may recognize, more than we have hitherto done, the image of which we are in search.

CHAPTER 11

WHETHER MEMORY IS ALSO OF THINGS PRESENT

14. But some one will say, That is not memory by which the mind, which is ever present to itself, is affirmed to remember itself; for memory is of things past, not of things present. For there are some, and among them Cicero, who, in treating of the virtues, have divided prudence into these three—memory, understanding, forethought: to wit, assigning memory to things past, understanding to things present, forethought to things future; which last is certain only in the case of those who are prescient of the future; and this is no gift of men, unless it be granted from above, as to the prophets. And hence the book of Wisdom, speaking of men, “The thoughts of mortals,” it says, “are fearful, and our forethought uncertain.” But memory of things past, and understanding of things present, are certain: certain, I mean, respecting things incorporeal, which are present; for things corporeal are present to the sight of the corporeal eyes. But let any one who denies that there is any memory of things present, attend to the language used even in profane literature, where exactness of words was more looked for than truth of things. “Nor did Ulysses suffer such things, nor did the Ithacan

forget himself in so great a peril.” For when Virgil said that Ulysses did not forget himself, what else did he mean, except that he remembered himself? And since he was present to himself, he could not possibly remember himself, unless memory pertained to things present. And, therefore, as that is called memory in things past which makes it possible to recall and remember them; so in a thing present, as the mind is to itself, that is not unreasonably to be called memory, which makes the mind at hand to itself, so that it can be understood by its own thought, and then both be joined together by love of itself.

CHAPTER 12

THE TRINITY IN THE MIND IS THE IMAGE OF GOD, IN THAT IT REMEMBERS, UNDERSTANDS, AND LOVES GOD, WHICH TO DO IS WISDOM

15. This trinity, then, of the mind is not therefore the image of God, because the mind remembers itself, and understands and loves itself; but because it can also remember, understand, and love Him by whom it was made. And in so doing it is made wise itself. But if it does not do so, even when it remembers, understands, and loves itself, then it is foolish. Let it then remember its God, after whose image it is made, and let it understand and love Him. Or to say the same thing more briefly, let it worship God, who is not made, by whom because itself was made, it is capable and can be partaker of Him; wherefore it is written, “Behold, the worship of God, that is wisdom.” And then it will be wise, not by its own light, but by participation of that supreme Light; and wherein it is eternal, therein shall reign in blessedness. For this wisdom of man is so called, in that it is also of God. For then it is true wisdom; for if it is human, it is vain. Yet not so of God, as is that wherewith God is wise. For He is not wise by partaking of Himself, as the mind is by partaking of God. But as we call it the righteousness of God, not only when we speak of that by which He Himself is righteous, but also of that which He gives to man when He justifies the ungodly, which latter righteousness the apostle commending, says of some, that “not knowing the righteousness of God and going about to establish their own righteousness, they are not subject to the righteousness of God;” so also it may be said of some, that not knowing the wisdom of God and

going about to establish their own wisdom, they are not subject to the wisdom of God.

16. There is, then, a nature not made, which made all other natures, great and small, and is without doubt more excellent than those which it has made, and therefore also than that of which we are speaking; viz. than the rational and intellectual nature, which is the mind of man, made after the image of Him who made it. And that nature, more excellent than the rest, is God. And indeed "He is not far from every one of us," as the apostle says, who adds, "For in Him we live, and are moved, and have our being." And if this were said in respect to the body, it might be understood even of this corporeal world; for in it too in respect to the body, we live, and are moved, and have our being. And therefore it ought to be taken in a more excellent way, and one that is spiritual, not visible, in respect to the mind, which is made after His image. For what is there that is not in Him, of whom it is divinely written, "For of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things"? If, then, all things are in Him, in whom can any possibly live that do live, or be moved that are moved, except in Him in whom they are? Yet all are not with Him in that way in which it is said to Him, "I am continually with Thee." Nor is He with all in that way in which we say, The Lord be with you. And so it is the especial wretchedness of man not to be with Him, without whom he cannot be. For, beyond a doubt, he is not without Him in whom he is; and yet if he does not remember, and understand, and love Him, he is not with Him. And when any one absolutely forgets a thing, certainly it is impossible even to remind him of it.

CHAPTER 13

HOW ANY ONE CAN FORGET AND REMEMBER GOD

17. Let us take an instance for the purpose from visible things. Somebody whom you do not recognize, says to you, You know me; and in order to remind you, tells you where, when, and how he became known to you; and if, after the mention of every sign by which you might be recalled to remembrance, you still do not recognize him, then you have so come to forget, as that the whole of that knowledge is altogether blotted out of your

mind; and nothing else remains, but that you take his word for it who tells you that you once knew him; or do not even do that, if you do not think the person who speaks to you to be worthy of credit. But if you do remember him, then no doubt you return to your own memory, and find in it that which had not been altogether blotted out by forgetfulness. Let us return to that which led us to adduce this instance from the intercourse of men. Among other things, the 9th Psalm says, “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations. that forget God;” and again the 22d Psalm, “All the ends of the world shall be reminded, and turned unto the Lord.” These nations, then, will not so have forgotten God as to be unable to remember Him when reminded of Him; yet, by forgetting God, as though forgetting their own life, they had been turned into death, i.e. into hell. But when reminded they are turned to the Lord, as though coming to life again by remembering their proper life which they had forgotten. It is read also in the 94th Psalm, “Perceive now, ye who are unwise among the people; and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall He not hear?” etc. For this is spoken to those, who said vain things concerning God through not understanding Him.

CHAPTER 14

THE MIND LOVES GOD IN RIGHTLY LOVING ITSELF; AND IF IT LOVE NOT GOD, IT MUST BE SAID TO HATE ITSELF. EVEN A WEAK AND ERRING MIND IS ALWAYS STRONG IN REMEMBERING, UNDERSTANDING, AND LOVING ITSELF. LET IT BE TURNED TO GOD, THAT IT MAY BE BLESSED BY REMEMBERING, UNDERSTANDING, AND LOVING HIM

18. But there are yet more testimonies in the divine Scriptures concerning the love of God. For in it, those other two [namely, memory and understanding] are understood by consequence, inasmuch as no one loves that which he does not remember, or of which he is wholly ignorant. And hence is that well known and primary commandment, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.” The human mind, then, is so constituted, that at no time does it not remember, and understand, and love itself. But since he who hates any one is anxious to injure him, not undeservedly is the mind of man also said to hate itself when it injures itself. For it wills ill to itself through ignorance, in that it does not think that what it wills is prejudicial to it; but it none the less does will ill to itself, when it wills what would be prejudicial

to it. And hence it is written, “He that loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul.” He, therefore, who knows how to love himself, loves God; but he who does not love God, even if he does love himself,—a thing implanted in him by nature,—yet is not unsuitably said to hate himself, inasmuch as he does that which is adverse to himself, and assails himself as though he were his own enemy. And this is no doubt a terrible delusion, that whereas all will to profit themselves, many do nothing but that which is most pernicious to themselves. When the poet was describing a like disease of dumb animals, “May the gods,” says he, “grant better things to the pious, and assign that delusion to enemies. They were rending with bare teeth their own torn limbs.” Since it was a disease of the body he was speaking of, why has he called it a delusion, unless because, while nature inclines every animal to take all the care it can of itself, that disease was such that those animals rent those very limbs of theirs which they desired should be safe and sound? But when the mind loves God, and by consequence, as has been said remembers and understands Him, then it is rightly enjoined also to love its neighbor as itself; for it has now come to love itself rightly and not perversely when it loves God, by partaking of whom that image not only exists, but is also renewed so as to be no longer old, and restored so as to be no longer defaced, and beatified so as to be no longer unhappy. For although it so love itself, that, supposing the alternative to be proposed to it, it would lose all things which it loves less than itself rather than perish; still, by abandoning Him who is above it, in dependence upon whom alone it could guard its own strength, and enjoy Him as its light, to whom it is sung in the Psalm, “I will guard my strength in dependence upon Thee,” and again, “Draw near to Him, and be enlightened,”—it has been made so weak and so dark, that it has fallen away unhappily from itself too, to those things that are not what itself is, and which are beneath itself, by affections that it cannot conquer, and delusions from which it sees no way to return. And hence, when by God’s mercy now penitent, it cries out in the Psalms, “My strength faileth me; as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me.”

19. Yet, in the midst of these evils of weakness and delusion, great as they are, it could not lose its natural memory, understanding and love of itself. And therefore what I quoted above can be rightly said, “Although man walketh in an image, surely he is disquieted in vain: he heapeth up

treasures, and knoweth not who shall gather them.” For why does he heap up treasures, unless because his strength has deserted him, through which he would have God, and so lack nothing? And why cannot he tell for whom he shall gather them, unless because the light of his eyes is taken from him? And so he does not see what the Truth saith, “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?” Yet because even such a man walketh in an image, and the man’s mind has remembrance, understanding, and love of itself; if it were made plain to it that it could not have both, while it was permitted to choose one and lose the other, viz. either the treasures it has heaped up, or the mind; who is so utterly without mind, as to prefer to have the treasures rather than the mind? For treasures commonly are able to subvert the mind, but the mind that is not subverted by treasures can live more easily and unencumberedly without any treasures. But who will be able to possess treasures unless it be by means of the mind? For if an infant, born as rich as you please, although lord of everything that is rightfully his, yet possesses nothing if his mind be unconscious, how can any one possibly possess anything whose mind is wholly lost? But why say of treasures, that anybody, if the choice be given him, prefers going without them to going without a mind; when there is no one that prefers, nay, no one that compares them, to those lights of the body, by which not one man only here and there, as in the case of gold, but every man, possesses the very heaven? For every one possesses by the eyes of the body whatever he gladly sees. Who then is there, who, if he could not keep both, but must lose one, would not rather lose his treasures than his eyes? And yet if it were put to him on the same condition, whether he would rather lose eyes than mind, who is there with a mind that does not see that he would rather lose the former than the latter? For a mind without the eyes of the flesh is still human, but the eyes of the flesh without a mind are bestial. And who would not rather be a man, even though blind in fleshly sight, than a beast that can see?

20. I have said thus much, that even those who are slower of understanding, to whose eyes or ears this book may come, might be admonished, however briefly, how greatly even a weak and erring mind loves itself, in wrongly loving and pursuing things beneath itself. Now it could not love itself if it were altogether ignorant of itself, i.e. if it did not remember itself, nor

understand itself by which image of God within itself it has such power as to be able to cleave to Him whose image it is. For it is so reckoned in the order, not of place, but of natures, as that there is none above it save Him. When, finally, it shall altogether cleave to Him, then it will be one spirit, as the apostle testifies, saying, “But he who cleaves to the Lord is one spirit.” And this by its drawing near to partake of His nature, truth, and blessedness, yet not by His increasing in His own nature, truth and blessedness. In that nature, then, when it happily has cleaved to it, it will live unchangeably, and will see as unchangeable all that it does see. Then, as divine Scripture promises, “His desire will be satisfied with good things,” good things unchangeable,—the very Trinity itself, its own God, whose image it is. And that it may not ever thenceforward suffer wrong, it will be in the hidden place of His presence, filled with so great fullness of Him, that sin thenceforth will never delight it. But now, when it sees itself, it sees something not unchangeable.

CHAPTER 15

ALTHOUGH THE SOUL HOPES FOR BLESSEDNESS, YET IT DOES NOT REMEMBER LOST BLESSEDNESS, BUT REMEMBERS GOD AND THE RULES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. THE UNCHANGEABLE RULES OF RIGHT LIVING ARE KNOWN EVEN TO THE UNGODLY

21. And of this certainly it feels no doubt, that it is wretched, and longs to be blessed nor can it hope for the possibility of this on any other ground than its own changeableness for if it were not changeable, then, as it could not become wretched after being blessed, so neither could it become blessed after being wretched. And what could have made it wretched under an omnipotent and good God, except its own sin and the righteousness of its Lord? And what will make it blessed, unless its own merit, and its Lord’s reward? But its merit, too, is His grace, whose reward will be its blessedness; for it cannot give itself the righteousness it has lost, and so has not. For this it received when man was created, and assuredly lost it by sinning. Therefore it receives righteousness, that on account of this it may deserve to receive blessedness; and hence the apostle truly says to it, when beginning to be proud as it were of its own good, “For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?” But when it rightly remembers its own Lord,

having received His Spirit, then, because it is so taught by an inward teaching, it feels wholly that it cannot rise save by His affection freely given, nor has been able to fall save by its own defection freely chosen. Certainly it does not remember its own blessedness; since that has been, but is not, and it has utterly forgotten it, and therefore cannot even be reminded of it. But it believes what the trustworthy Scriptures of its God tell of that blessedness, which were written by His prophet, and tell of the blessedness of Paradise, and hand down to us historical information of that first both good and ill of man. And it remembers the Lord its God; for He always is, nor has been and is not, nor is but has not been; but as He never will not be, so He never was not. And He is whole everywhere. And hence it both lives, and is moved, and is in Him; and so it can remember Him. Not because it recollects the having known Him in Adam or anywhere else before the life of this present body, or when it was first made in order to be implanted in this body; for it remembers nothing at all of all this. Whatever there is of this, it has been blotted out by forgetfulness. But it is reminded, that it may be turned to God, as though to that light by which it was in some way touched, even when turned away from Him. For hence it is that even the ungodly think of eternity, and rightly blame and rightly praise many things in the morals of men. And by what rules do they thus judge, except by those wherein they see how men ought to live, even though they themselves do not so live? And where do they see these rules? For they do not see them in their own [moral] nature; since no doubt these things are to be seen by the mind, and their minds are confessedly changeable, but these rules are seen as unchangeable by him who can see them at all; nor yet in the character of their own mind, since these rules are rules of righteousness, and their minds are confessedly unrighteous. Where indeed are these rules written, wherein even the unrighteous recognizes what is righteous, wherein he discerns that he ought to have what he himself has not? Where, then, are they written, unless in the book of that Light which is called Truth? whence every righteous law is copied and transferred (not by migrating to it, but by being as it were impressed upon it) to the heart of the man that worketh righteousness; as the impression from a ring passes into the wax, yet does not leave the ring. But he who worketh not, and yet sees how he ought to work, he is the man that is turned away from that light, which yet touches him. But he who does not even see how he ought to live, sins indeed with more excuse, because he is not a transgressor of a law that he knows; but even he too is just touched sometimes by the splendor of the everywhere present truth, when upon admonition he confesses.

CHAPTER 16

HOW THE IMAGE OF GOD IS FORMED ANEW IN MAN

22. But those who, by being reminded, are turned to the Lord from that deformity whereby they were through worldly lusts conformed to this world, are formed anew from the world, when they hearken to the apostle, saying, “Be not conformed to this world, but be ye formed again in the renewing of your mind;” that that image may begin to be formed again by Him by whom it had been formed at first. For that image cannot form itself again, as it could deform itself. He says again elsewhere: “Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put ye on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” That which is meant by “created after God,” is expressed in another place by “after the image of God.” But it lost righteousness and true holiness by sinning, through which that image became defaced and tarnished; and this it recovers when it is formed again and renewed. But when he says, “In the spirit of your mind,” he does not intend to be understood of two things, as though mind were one, and the spirit of the mind another; but he speaks thus, because all mind is spirit, but all spirit is not mind. For there is a Spirit also that is God, which cannot be renewed, because it cannot grow old. And we speak also of a spirit in man distinct from the mind, to which spirit belong the images that are formed after the likeness of bodies; and of this the apostle speaks to the Corinthians, where he says, “But if I shall have prayed with a tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.” For he speaks thus, when that which is said is not understood; since it cannot even be said, unless the images of the corporeal articulate sounds anticipate the oral sound by the thought of the spirit. The soul of man is also called spirit, whence are the words in the Gospel, “And He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit;” by which the death of the body, through the spirit’s leaving it, is signified. We speak also of the spirit of a beast, as it is expressly written in the book of Solomon called Ecclesiastes; “Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the

earth?” It is written too in Genesis, where it is said that by the deluge all flesh died which “had in it the spirit of life.” We speak also of the spirit, meaning the wind, a thing most manifestly corporeal; whence is that in the Psalms, “Fire and hail, snow and ice, the spirit of the storm.” Since spirit, then, is a word of so many meanings, the apostle intended to express by “the spirit of the mind” that spirit which is called the mind. As the same apostle also, when he says, “In putting off the body of the flesh,” certainly did not intend two things, as though flesh were one, and the body of the flesh another; but because body is the name of many things that have no flesh (for besides the flesh, there are many bodies celestial and bodies terrestrial), he expressed by the body of the flesh that body which is flesh. In like manner, therefore, by the spirit of the mind, that spirit which is mind. Elsewhere, too, he has even more plainly called it an image, while enforcing the same thing in other words. “Do you,” he says, “putting off the old man with his deeds, put on the new man, which is renewed in the knowledge of God after the image of Him that created him.” Where the one passage reads, “Put ye on the new man, which is created after God,” the other has, “Put ye on the new man, which is renewed after the image of Him that created him.”

In the one place he says, “After God;” in the other, “After the image of Him that created him.” But instead of saying, as in the former passages “In righteousness and true holiness,” he has put in the latter, “In the knowledge of God.” This renewal, then, and forming again of the mind, is wrought either after God, or after the image of God. But it is said to be after God, in order that it may not be supposed to be after another creature; and to be after the image of God, in order that this renewing may be understood to take place in that wherein is the image of God, i.e. in the mind. Just as we say, that he who has departed from the body a faithful and righteous man, is dead after the body, not after the spirit. For what do we mean by dead after the body, unless as to the body or in the body, and not dead as to the soul or in the soul? Or if we want to say he is handsome after the body, or strong after the body, not after the mind; what else is this, than that he is handsome or strong in body, not in mind? And the same is the case with numberless other instances. Let us not therefore so understand the words, “After the image of Him that created him," as though it were a different image after which he is renewed, and not the very same which is itself renewed.

CHAPTER 17

HOW THE IMAGE OF GOD IN THE MIND IS RENEWED UNTIL THE LIKENESS OF GOD IS PERFECTED IN IT IN BLESSEDNESS

23. Certainly this renewal does not take place in the single moment of conversion itself, as that renewal in baptism takes place in a single moment by the remission of all sins; for not one, be it ever so small, remains unremitted. But as it is one thing to be free from fever, and another to grow strong again from the infirmity which the fever produced; and one thing again to pluck out of the body a weapon thrust into it, and another to heal the wound thereby made by a prosperous cure; so the first cure is to remove the cause of infirmity, and this is wrought by the forgiving of all sins; but the second cure is to heal the infirmity itself, and this takes place gradually by making progress in the renewal of that image: which two things are plainly shown in the Psalm, where we read, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities," which takes place in baptism; and then follows, "and healeth all thine infirmities;" and this takes place by daily additions, while this image is being renewed. And the apostle has spoken of this most expressly, saying, "And though our outward man perish, yet the inner man is renewed day by day." And "it is renewed in the knowledge of God, i.e. in righteousness and true holiness," according to the testimonies of the apostle cited a little before. He, then, who is day by day renewed by making progress in the knowledge of God, and in righteousness and true holiness, transfers his love from things temporal to things eternal, from things visible to things intelligible, from things carnal to things spiritual; and diligently perseveres in bridling and lessening his desire for the former, and in binding himself by love to the latter. And he does this in proportion as he is helped by God. For it is the sentence of God Himself, "Without me ye can do nothing." And when the last day of life shall have found any one holding fast faith in the Mediator in such progress and growth as this, he will be welcomed by the holy angels, to be led to God, whom he has worshipped, and to be made perfect by Him; and so will receive in the end of the world an incorruptible body, in order not to punishment, but to glory. For the likeness of God will

then be perfected in this image, when the sight of God shall be perfected. And of this the Apostle Paul speaks: “Now we see through a glass, in an enigma, but then face to face.” And again: “But we with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.” And this is what happens from day to day in those that make good progress.

CHAPTER 18

WHETHER THE SENTENCE OF JOHN IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD OF OUR FUTURE LIKENESS WITH THE SON OF GOD IN THE IMMORTALITY ITSELF ALSO OF THE BODY

24. But the Apostle John says, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” Hence it appears, that the full likeness of God is to take place in that image of God at that time when it shall receive the full sight of God. And yet this may also possibly seem to be said by the Apostle John of the immortality of the body. For we shall be like to God in this too, but only to the Son, because He only in the Trinity took a body, in which He died and rose again, and which He carried with Him to heaven above. For this, too, is called an image of the Son of God, in which we shall have, as He has, an immortal body, being conformed in this respect not to the image of the Father or of the Holy Spirit, but only of the Son, because of Him alone is it read and received by a sound faith, that “the Word was made flesh.” And for this reason the apostle says, “Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.” “The first-born” certainly “from the dead,” according to the same apostle; by which death His flesh was sown in dishonor, and rose again in glory. According to this image of the Son, to which we are conformed in the body by immortality, we also do that of which the same apostle speaks, “As we have borne the image of the earthy, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly;” to wit, that we who are mortal after Adam, may hold by a true faith, and a sure and certain hope, that we shall be immortal after Christ. For so can we now bear the same image, not yet in sight, but in faith; not yet in fact, but in hope. For the apostle, when he said this, was speaking of the resurrection of the body.

CHAPTER 19

JOHN IS RATHER TO BE UNDERSTOOD OF OUR PERFECT LIKENESS WITH THE TRINITY IN LIFE ETERNAL. WISDOM IS PERFECTED IN HAPPINESS

25. But in respect to that image indeed, of which it is said, “Let us make man after our image and likeness,” we believe,—and, after the utmost search we have been able to make, understand,—that man was made after the image of the Trinity, because it is not said, After my, or After thy image. And therefore that place too of the Apostle John must be understood rather according to this image, when he says, “We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is;” because he spoke too of Him of whom he had said, “We are the sons of God.” And the immortality of the flesh will be perfected in that moment of the resurrection, of which the Apostle Paul says, “In the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” For in that very twinkling of an eye, before the judgment, the spiritual body shall rise again in power, in incorruption, in glory, which is now sown a natural body in weakness, in corruption, in dishonor. But the image which is renewed in the spirit of the mind in the knowledge of God, not outwardly, but inwardly, from day to day, shall be perfected by that sight itself; which then after the judgment shall be face to face, but now makes progress as through a glass in an enigma. And we must understand it to be said on account of this perfection, that “we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” For this gift will be given to us at that time, when it shall have been said, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” For then will the ungodly be taken away, so that he shall not see the glory of the Lord, when those on the left hand shall go into eternal punishment, while those on the right go into life eternal. But “this is eternal life,” as the Truth tells us; “to know Thee,” He says, “the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”

26. This contemplative wisdom, which I believe is properly called wisdom as distinct from knowledge in the sacred writings; but wisdom only of man, which yet man has not except from Him, by partaking of whom a rational and intellectual mind can be made truly wise;—this contemplative wisdom, I say, it is that Cicero commends, in the end of the dialogue Hortensius,

when he says: “While, then, we consider these things night and day, and sharpen our understanding, which is the eye of the mind, taking care that it be not ever dulled, that is, while we live in philosophy; we, I say, in so doing, have great hope that, if, on the one hand, this sentiment and wisdom of ours is mortal and perishable, we shall still, when we have discharged our human offices, have a pleasant setting, and a not painful extinction, and as it were a rest from life: or if, on the other, as ancient philosophers thought,—and those, too, the greatest and far the most celebrated,—we have souls eternal and divine, then must we needs think, that the more these shall have always kept in their own proper course, i.e. in reason and in the desire of inquiry, and the less they shall have mixed and entangled themselves in the vices and errors of men, the more easy ascent and return they will have to heaven.” And then he says, adding this short sentence, and finishing his discourse by repeating it: “Wherefore, to end my discourse at last, if we wish either for a tranquil extinction, after living in the pursuit of these subjects, or if to migrate without delay from this present home to another in no little measure better, we must bestow all our labor and care upon these pursuits.” And here I marvel, that a man of such great ability should promise to men living in philosophy, which makes man blessed by contemplation of truth, “a pleasant setting after the discharge of human offices, if this our sentiment and wisdom is mortal and perishable;” as if that which we did not love, or rather which we fiercely hated, were then to die and come to nothing, so that its setting would be pleasant to us! But indeed he had not learned this from the philosophers, whom he extols with great praise; but this sentiment is redolent of that New Academy, wherein it pleased him to doubt of even the plainest things. But from the philosophers that were greatest and far most celebrated, as he himself confesses, he had learned that souls are eternal. For souls that are eternal are not unsuitably stirred up by the exhortation to be found in “their own proper course,” when the end of this life shall have come, i.e. “in reason and in the desire of inquiry,” and to mix and entangle themselves the less in the vices and errors of men, in order that they may have an easier return to God. But that course which consists in the love and investigation of truth does not suffice for the wretched, i.e. for all mortals who have only this kind of reason, and are without faith in the Mediator; as I have taken pains to prove, as much as I could, in former books of this work, especially in the fourth and thirteenth.

Book XV

Begins by setting forth briefly and in sum the contents of the previous fourteen books. The argument is then shown to have reached so far as to allow of our now inquiring concerning the Trinity, which is God, in those eternal, incorporeal, and unchangeable things themselves, in the perfect contemplation of which a blessed life is promised to us. But this Trinity, as he shows, is here seen by us as by a mirror and in an enigma, in that it is seen by means of the image of God, which we are, as in a likeness that is obscure and hard of discernment. In like manner, it is shown, that some kind of conjecture and explanation may be gathered respecting the generation of the divine Word, from the word of our own mind, but only with difficulty, on account of the exceeding disparity which is discernible between the two words; and, again, respecting the procession of the Holy Spirit, from the love that is joined thereto by the will.

CHAPTER 1

GOD IS ABOVE THE MIND

1. Desiring to exercise the reader in the things that are made, in order that he may know Him by whom they are made, we have now advanced so far as to His image, which is man, in that wherein he excels the other animals, i.e. in reason or intelligence, and whatever else can be said of the rational or intellectual soul that pertains to what is called the mind. For by this name some Latin writers, after their own peculiar mode of speech, distinguish that which excels in man, and is not in the beast, from the soul, which is in the beast as well. If, then, we seek anything that is above this nature, and seek truly, it is God,—namely, a nature not created, but creating. And whether this is the Trinity, it is now our business to demonstrate not only to believers, by authority of divine Scripture, but also to such as understand, by some kind of reason, if we can. And why I say, if we can, the thing itself will show better when we have begun to argue about it in our inquiry.

CHAPTER 2

GOD, ALTHOUGH INCOMPREHENSIBLE, IS EVER TO BE SOUGHT. THE TRACES OF THE TRINITY ARE NOT VAINLY SOUGHT IN THE CREATURE

2. For God Himself, whom we seek, will, as I hope, help our labors, that they may not be unfruitful, and that we may understand how it is said in the holy Psalm, “Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. Seek the Lord, and be strengthened: seek His face evermore.” For that which is always being sought seems as though it were never found; and how then will the heart of them that seek rejoice, and not rather be made sad, if they cannot find what they seek? For it is not said, The heart shall rejoice of them that find, but of them that seek, the Lord. And yet the prophet Isaiah testifies, that the Lord God can be found when He is sought, when he says: “Seek ye the Lord; and as soon as ye have found Him, call upon Him: and when He has drawn near to you, let the wicked man forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.” If, then, when sought, He can be found, why is it said, “Seek ye His face evermore?” Is He perhaps to be sought even when found? For things incomprehensible must so be investigated, as that no one may think he has found nothing, when he has been able to find how incomprehensible that is which he was seeking. Why then does he so seek, if he comprehends that which he seeks to be incomprehensible, unless because he may not give over seeking so long as he makes progress in the inquiry itself into things incomprehensible, and becomes ever better and better while seeking so great a good, which is both sought in order to be found, and found in order to be sought? For it is both sought in order that it may be found more sweetly, and found in order that it may be sought more eagerly. The words of Wisdom in the book of Ecclesiasticus may be taken in this meaning: “They who eat me shall still be hungry, and they who drink me shall still be thirsty.” For they eat and drink because they find; and they still continue seeking because they are hungry and thirst. Faith seeks, understanding finds; whence the prophet says, “Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand.” And yet, again, understanding still seeks Him, whom it finds; for “God looked down upon the sons of men,” as it is sung in the holy Psalm, “to see if there were any that would understand, and seek after God.” And man, therefore, ought for this purpose to have understanding, that he may seek after God.

3. We shall have tarried then long enough among those things that God has made, in order that by them He Himself may be known that made them. “For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.” And hence they are rebuked in the book of Wisdom, “who could not out of the good things that are seen know Him that is: neither by considering the works did they acknowledge the workmaster; but deemed either fire, or wind, or the swift air or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the lights of heaven, to be the gods which govern the world: with whose beauty if they, being delighted, took them to be gods, let them know how much better the Lord of them is; for the first Author of beauty hath created them. But if they were astonished at their power and virtue, let them understand by them how much mightier He is that made them. For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably the Maker of them is seen.” I have quoted these words from the book of Wisdom for this reason, that no one of the faithful may think me vainly and emptily to have sought first in the creature, step by step through certain trinities, each of their own appropriate kind, until I came at last to the mind of man, traces of that highest Trinity which we seek when we seek God.

CHAPTER 3

A BRIEF RECAPITULATION OF ALL THE PREVIOUS BOOKS

4. But since the necessities of our discussion and argument have compelled us to say a great many things in the course of fourteen books, which we cannot view at once in one glance, so as to be able to refer them quickly in thought to that which we desire to grasp, I will attempt, by the help of God, to the best of my power, to put briefly together, without arguing, whatever I have established in the several books by argument as known, and to place, as it were, under one mental view, not the way in which we have been convinced of each point, but the points themselves of which we have been convinced; in order that what follows may not be so far separated from that which precedes, as that the perusal of the former shall produce forgetfulness of the latter; or at any rate, if it have produced such forgetfulness, that what has escaped the memory may be speedily recalled by re-perusal.

5. In the first book, the unity and equality of that highest Trinity is shown from Holy Scripture. In the second, and third, and fourth, the same: but a careful handling of the question respecting the sending of the Son and of the Holy Spirit has resulted in three books; and we have demonstrated, that He who is sent is not therefore less than He who sends because the one sent, the other was sent; since the Trinity, which is in all things equal, being also equally in its own nature unchangeable, and invisible, and everywhere present, works indivisibly. In the fifth,—with a view to those who think that the substance of the Father and of the Son is therefore not the same, because they suppose everything that is predicated of God to be predicated according to substance, and therefore contend that to beget and to be begotten, or to be begotten and unbegotten, as being diverse, are diverse substances,—it is demonstrated that not everything that is predicated of God is predicated according to substance, as He is called good and great according to substance, or anything else that is predicated of Him in respect to Himself, but that some things also are predicated relatively, i.e. not in respect to Himself, but in respect to something which is not Himself; as He is called the Father in respect to the Son, or the Lord in respect to the creature that serves Him; and that here, if anything thus relatively predicated, i.e. predicated in respect to something that is not Himself, is predicated also as in time, as, e.g., “Lord, Thou hast become our refuge,” then nothing happens to Him so as to work a change in Him, but He Himself continues altogether unchangeable in His own nature or essence. In the sixth, the question how Christ is called by the mouth of the apostle “the power of God and the wisdom of God,” is so far argued that the more careful handling of that question is deferred, viz. whether He from whom Christ is begotten is not wisdom Himself, but only the father of His own wisdom, or whether wisdom begat wisdom. But be it which it may, the equality of the Trinity became apparent in this book also, and that God was not triple, but a Trinity; and that the Father and the Son are not, as it were, a double as opposed to the single Holy Spirit: for therein three are not anything more than one. We considered, too, how to understand the words of Bishop Hilary, “Eternity in the Father, form in the Image, use in the Gift.” In the seventh, the question is explained which had been deferred: in what way that God who begat the Son is not only Father of His own power and wisdom, but is Himself also power and wisdom; so, too, the Holy

Spirit; and yet that they are not three powers or three wisdoms, but one power and one wisdom, as one God and one essence. It was next inquired, in what way they are called one essence, three persons, or by some Greeks one essence, three substances; and we found that the words were so used through the needs of speech, that there might be one term by which to answer, when it is asked what the three are, whom we truly confess to be three, viz. Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. In the eighth, it is made plain by reason also to those who understand, that not only the Father is not greater than the Son in the substance of truth, but that both together are not anything greater than the Holy Spirit alone, nor that any two at all in the same Trinity are anything greater than one, nor all three together anything greater than each severally. Next, I have pointed out, that by means of the truth, which is beheld by the understanding, and by means of the highest good, from which is all good, and by means of the righteousness for which a righteous mind is loved even by a mind not yet righteous, we might understand, so far as it is possible to understand, that not only incorporeal but also unchangeable nature which is God; and by means, too, of love, which in the Holy Scriptures is called God, by which, first of all, those who have understanding begin also, however feebly, to discern the Trinity, to wit, one that loves, and that which is loved, and love. In the ninth, the argument advances as far as to the image of God, viz. man in respect to his mind; and in this we found a kind of trinity, i.e. the mind, and the knowledge whereby the mind knows itself, and the love whereby it loves both itself and its knowledge of itself; and these three are shown to be mutually equal, and of one essence. In the tenth, the same subject is more carefully and subtly handled, and is brought to this point, that we found in the mind a still more manifest trinity of the mind, viz. in memory, and understanding, and will. But since it turned out also, that the mind could never be in such a case as not to remember, understand, and love itself, although it did not always think of itself; but that when it did think of itself, it did not in the same act of thought distinguish itself from things corporeal; the argument respecting the Trinity, of which this is an image, was deferred, in order to find a trinity also in the things themselves that are seen with the body, and to exercise the reader’s attention more distinctly in that. Accordingly, in the eleventh, we chose the sense of sight, wherein that which should have been there found to hold good might be recognized also in the other four bodily senses, although not expressly mentioned; and so a trinity of the outer man first showed itself in those things which are discerned from without, to wit, from the bodily object which is seen, and from the form which is thence impressed upon the eye of the beholder, and from the purpose of the will combining the two. But these three things, as was patent, were not mutually equal and of one substance. Next, we found yet another trinity in the mind itself, introduced into it, as it were, by the things perceived from without; wherein the same three things, as it appeared, were of one substance: the image of the bodily object which is in the memory, and the form thence impressed when the mind's eye of the thinker is turned to it, and the purpose of the will combining the two. But we found this trinity to pertain to the outer man, on this account, that it was introduced into the mind from bodily objects which are perceived from without. In the twelfth, we thought good to distinguish wisdom from knowledge, and to seek first, as being the lower of the two, a kind of appropriate and special trinity in that which is specially called knowledge; but that although we have got now in this to something pertaining to the inner man, yet it is not yet to be either called or thought an image of God. And this is discussed in the thirteenth book by the commendation of Christian faith. In the fourteenth we discuss the true wisdom of man, viz. that which is granted him by God's gift in the partaking of that very God Himself, which is distinct from knowledge; and the discussion reached this point, that a trinity is discovered in the image of God, which is man in respect to his mind, which mind is "renewed in the knowledge" of God, "after the image of Him that created" man; "after His own image;" and so obtains wisdom, wherein is the contemplation of things eternal.

CHAPTER 4

WHAT UNIVERSAL NATURE TEACHES US CONCERNING GOD

6. Let us, then, now seek the Trinity which is God, in the things themselves that are eternal, incorporeal, and unchangeable; in the perfect contemplation of which a blessed life is promised us, which cannot be other than eternal. For not only does the authority of the divine books declare that God is; but the whole nature of the universe itself which surrounds us, and to which we also belong, proclaims that it has a most excellent Creator, who has given to

us a mind and natural reason, whereby to see that things living are to be preferred to things that are not living; things that have sense to things that have not; things that have understanding to things that have not; things immortal to things mortal; things powerful to things impotent; things righteous to things unrighteous; things beautiful to things deformed; things good to things evil; things incorruptible to things corruptible; things unchangeable to things changeable; things invisible to things visible; things incorporeal to things corporeal; things blessed to things miserable. And hence, since without doubt we place the Creator above things created, we must needs confess that the Creator both lives in the highest sense, and perceives and understands all things, and that He cannot die, or suffer decay, or be changed; and that He is not a body, but a spirit, of all the most powerful, most righteous, most beautiful, most good, most blessed.

CHAPTER 5

HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO DEMONSTRATE THE TRINITY BY NATURAL REASON

7. But all that I have said, and whatever else seems to be worthily said of God after the like fashion of human speech, applies to the whole Trinity, which is one God, and to the several Persons in that Trinity. For who would dare to say either of the one God, which is the Trinity itself, or of the Father, or Son, or Holy Spirit, either that He is not living, or is without sense or intelligence; or that, in that nature in which they are affirmed to be mutually equal, any one of them is mortal, or corruptible, or changeable, or corporeal? Or is there any one who would deny that any one in the Trinity is most powerful, most righteous, most beautiful, most good, most blessed? If, then, these things, and all others of the kind, can be predicated both of the Trinity itself, and of each several one in that Trinity, where or how shall the Trinity manifest itself? Let us therefore first reduce these numerous predicates to some limited number. For that which is called life in God, is itself His essence and nature. God, therefore, does not live, unless by the life which He is to Himself. And this life is not such as that which is in a tree, wherein is neither understanding nor sense; nor such as is in a beast, for the life of a beast possesses the fivefold sense, but has no understanding. But the life which is God perceives and understands all things, and perceives by mind, not by body, because “God is a spirit.” And God does

not perceive through a body, as animals do, which have bodies, for He does not consist of soul and body. And hence that single nature perceives as it understands, and understands as it perceives, and its sense and understanding are one and the same. Nor yet so, that at any time He should either cease or begin to be; for He is immortal. And it is not said of Him in vain, that "He only hath immortality." For immortality is true immortality in His case whose nature admits no change. That is also true eternity by which God is unchangeable, without beginning, without end; consequently also incorruptible. It is one and the same thing, therefore, to call God eternal, or immortal, or incorruptible, or unchangeable; and it is likewise one and the same thing to say that He is living, and that He is intelligent, that is, in truth, wise. For He did not receive wisdom whereby to be wise, but He is Himself wisdom. And this is life, and again is power or might, and yet again beauty, whereby He is called powerful and beautiful. For what is more powerful and more beautiful than wisdom, "which reaches from end to end mightily, and sweetly disposes all things"? Or do goodness, again, and righteousness, differ from each other in the nature of God, as they differ in His works, as though they were two diverse qualities of God—goodness one, and righteousness another? Certainly not; but that which is righteousness is also itself goodness; and that which is goodness is also itself blessedness. And God is therefore called incorporeal, that He may be believed and understood to be a spirit, not a body.

8. Further, if we say, Eternal, immortal, incorruptible, unchangeable, living, wise, powerful, beautiful, righteous, good, blessed spirit; only the last of this list as it were seems to signify substance, but the rest to signify qualities of that substance; but it is not so in that ineffable and simple nature. For whatever seems to be predicated therein according to quality, is to be understood according to substance or essence. For far be it from us to predicate spirit of God according to substance, and good according to quality; but both according to substance. And so in like manner of all those we have mentioned, of which we have already spoken at length in the former books. Let us choose, then, one of the first four of those in our enumeration and arrangement, i.e. eternal, immortal, incorruptible, unchangeable; since these four, as I have argued already, have one meaning; in order that our aim may not be distracted by a multiplicity of objects. And

let it be rather that which was placed first, viz. eternal. Let us follow the same course with the four that come next, viz. living, wise, powerful, beautiful. And since life of some sort belongs also to the beast, which has not wisdom; while the next two, viz. wisdom and might, are so compared to one another in the case of man, as that Scripture says, “Better is he that is wise than he that is strong;” and beauty, again, is commonly attributed to bodily objects also: out of these four that we have chosen, let Wise be the one we take. Although these four are not to be called unequal in speaking of God; for they are four names, but one thing. But of the third and last four,—although it is the same thing in God to be righteous that it is to be good or to be blessed; and the same thing to be a spirit that it is to be righteous, and good, and blessed; yet, because in men there can be a spirit that is not blessed, and there can be one both righteous and good, but not yet blessed; but that which is blessed is doubtless both just, and good, and a spirit,—let us rather choose that one which cannot exist even in men without the three others, viz. blessed.

CHAPTER 6

HOW THERE IS A TRINITY IN THE VERY SIMPLICITY OF GOD. WHETHER AND HOW THE TRINITY THAT IS GOD IS MANIFESTED FROM THE TRINITIES WHICH HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO BE IN MEN

9. When, then, we say, Eternal, wise, blessed, are these three the Trinity that is called God? We reduce, indeed, those twelve to this small number of three; but perhaps we can go further, and reduce these three also to one of them. For if wisdom and might, or life and wisdom, can be one and the same thing in the nature of God, why cannot eternity and wisdom, or blessedness and wisdom, be one and the same thing in the nature of God? And hence, as it made no difference whether we spoke of these twelve or of those three when we reduced the many to the small number; so does it make no difference whether we speak of those three, or of that one, to the singularity of which we have shown that the other two of the three may be reduced. What fashion, then, of argument, what possible force and might of understanding, what liveliness of reason, what sharp-sightedness of thought, will set forth how (to pass over now the others) this one thing, that God is called wisdom, is a trinity? For God does not receive wisdom from any one

as we receive it from Him, but He is Himself His own wisdom; because His wisdom is not one thing, and His essence another, seeing that to Him to be wise is to be. Christ, indeed, is called in the Holy Scriptures, “the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” But we have discussed in the seventh book how this is to be understood, so that the Son may not seem to make the Father wise; and our explanation came to this, that the Son is wisdom of wisdom, in the same way as He is light of light, God of God. Nor could we find the Holy Spirit to be in any other way than that He Himself also is wisdom, and altogether one wisdom, as one God, one essence. How, then, do we understand this wisdom, which is God, to be a trinity? I do not say, How do we believe this? For among the faithful this ought to admit no question. But supposing there is any way by which we can see with the understanding what we believe, what is that way?

10. For if we recall where it was in these books that a trinity first began to show itself to our understanding, the eighth book is that which occurs to us; since it was there that to the best of our power we tried to raise the aim of the mind to understand that most excellent and unchangeable nature, which our mind is not. And we so contemplated this nature as to think of it as not far from us, and as above us, not in place, but by its own awful and wonderful excellence, and in such wise that it appeared to be with us by its own present light. Yet in this no trinity was yet manifest to us, because in that blaze of light we did not keep the eye of the mind steadfastly bent upon seeking it; only we discerned it in a sense, because there was no bulk wherein we must needs think the magnitude of two or three to be more than that of one. But when we came to treat of love, which in the Holy Scriptures is called God, then a trinity began to dawn upon us a little, i.e. one that loves, and that which is loved, and love. But because that ineffable light beat back our gaze, and it became in some degree plain that the weakness of our mind could not as yet be tempered to it, we turned back in the midst of the course we had begun, and planned according to the (as it were) more familiar consideration of our own mind, according to which man is made after the image of God, in order to relieve our overstrained attention; and thereupon we dwelt from the ninth to the fourteenth book upon the consideration of the creature, which we are, that we might be able to understand and behold the invisible things of God by those things which are

made. And now that we have exercised the understanding, as far as was needful, or perhaps more than was needful, in lower things, lo! we wish, but have not strength, to raise ourselves to behold that highest Trinity which is God. For in such manner as we see most undoubted trinities, whether those which are wrought from without by corporeal things, or when these same things are thought of which were perceived from without; or when those things which take their rise in the mind, and do not pertain to the senses of the body, as faith, or as the virtues which comprise the art of living, are discerned by manifest reason, and, held fast by knowledge; or when the mind itself, by which we know whatever we truly say that we know, is known to itself, or thinks of itself; or when that mind beholds anything eternal and unchangeable, which itself is not;—in such way, then, I say, as we see in all these instances most undoubted trinities, because they are wrought in ourselves, or are in ourselves, when we remember, look at, or desire these things;—do we, I say, in such manner also see the Trinity that is God; because there also, by the understanding, we behold both Him as it were speaking, and His Word, i.e. the Father and the Son; and then, proceeding thence, the love common to both, namely, the Holy Spirit? These trinities that pertain to our senses or to our mind, do we rather see than believe them, but rather believe than see that God is a trinity? But if this is so, then doubtless we either do not at all understand and behold the invisible things of God by those things that are made, or if we behold them at all, we do not behold the Trinity in them; and there is therein somewhat to behold, and somewhat also which we ought to believe, even though not beheld. And as the eighth book showed that we behold the unchangeable good which we are not, so the fourteenth reminded us thereof, when we spoke of the wisdom that man has from God. Why, then, do we not recognize the Trinity therein? Does that wisdom which God is said to be, not perceive itself, and not love itself? Who would say this? Or who is there that does not see, that where there is no knowledge, there in no way is there wisdom? Or are we, in truth, to think that the Wisdom which is God knows other things, and does not know itself; or loves other things, and does not love itself? But if this is a foolish and impious thing to say or believe, then behold we have a trinity,—to wit, wisdom, and the knowledge wisdom has of itself, and its love of itself. For so, too, we find a trinity in man also, i.e.

mind, and the knowledge wherewith mind knows itself, and the love wherewith it loves itself.

CHAPTER 7

THAT IT IS NOT EASY TO DISCOVER THE TRINITY THAT IS GOD FROM THE TRINITIES WE HAVE SPOKEN OF

11. But these three are in such way in man, that they are not themselves man. For man, as the ancients defined him, is a rational mortal animal. These things, therefore, are the chief things in man, but are not man themselves. And any one person, i.e. each individual man, has these three things in his mind. But if, again, we were so to define man as to say, Man is a rational substance consisting of mind and body, then without doubt man has a soul that is not body, and a body that is not soul. And hence these three things are not man, but belong to man, or are in man. If, again, we put aside the body, and think of the soul by itself, the mind is somewhat belonging to the soul, as though its head, or eye, or countenance; but these things are not to be regarded as bodies. It is not then the soul, but that which is chief in the soul, that is called the mind. But can we say that the Trinity is in such way in God, as to be somewhat belonging to God, and not itself God? And hence each individual man, who is called the image of God, not according to all things that pertain to his nature, but according to his mind alone, is one person, and is an image of the Trinity in his mind. But that Trinity of which he is the image is nothing else in its totality than God, is nothing else in its totality than the Trinity. Nor does anything pertain to the nature of God so as not to pertain to that Trinity; and the Three Persons are of one essence, not as each individual man is one person.

12. There is, again, a wide difference in this point likewise, that whether we speak of the mind in a man, and of its knowledge and love; or of memory, understanding, will,—we remember nothing of the mind except by memory, nor understand anything except by understanding, nor love anything except by will. But in that Trinity, who would dare to say that the Father understands neither Himself, nor the Son, nor the Holy Spirit, except by the Son, or loves them except by the Holy Spirit; and that He remembers only by Himself either Himself, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit; and in the same

way that the Son remembers neither Himself nor the Father, except by the Father, nor loves them except by the Holy Spirit; but that by Himself He only understands both the Father and Son and Holy Spirit: and in like manner, that the Holy Spirit by the Father remembers both the Father and the Son and Himself, and by the Son understands both the Father and the Son and Himself; but by Himself only loves both Himself and the Father and the Son;—as though the Father were both His own memory, and that of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; and the Son were the understanding of both Himself, and the Father and the Holy Spirit; but the Holy Spirit were the love both of Himself, and of the Father and of the Son? Who would presume to think or affirm this of that Trinity? For if therein the Son alone understands both for Himself and for the Father and for the Holy Spirit, we have returned to the old absurdity, that the Father is not wise from Himself, but from the Son, and that wisdom has not begotten wisdom, but that the Father is said to be wise by that wisdom which He begat. For where there is no understanding there can be no wisdom; and hence, if the Father does not understand Himself for Himself, but the Son understands for the Father, assuredly the Son makes the Father wise. But if to God to be is to be wise, and essence is to Him the same as wisdom, then it is not the Son that has His essence from the Father, which is the truth, but rather the Father from the Son, which is a most absurd falsehood. And this absurdity, beyond all doubt, we have discussed, disproved, and rejected, in the seventh book. Therefore God the Father is wise by that wisdom by which He is His own wisdom, and the Son is the wisdom of the Father from the wisdom which is the Father, from whom the Son is begotten; whence it follows that the Father understands also by that understanding by which He is His own understanding (for he could not be Wise that did not understand); and that the Son is the understanding of the Father, begotten of the understanding which is the Father. And this same may not be unfitly said of memory also. For how is he wise, that remembers nothing, or does not remember himself? Accordingly, since the Father is wisdom, and the Son is wisdom, therefore, as the Father remembers Himself, so does the Son also remember Himself; and as the Father remembers both Himself and the Son, not by the memory of the Son, but by His own, so does the Son remember both Himself and the Father, not by the memory of the Father, but by His own. Where, again, there is no love, who would say there was any wisdom? And hence we must infer that the Father is in such way His own love, as He is His own understanding and memory. And therefore these three, i.e. memory, understanding, love or will in that highest and unchangeable essence which is God, are, we see, not the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, but the Father alone. And because the Son too is wisdom begotten of wisdom, as neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit understands for Him, but He understands for Himself; so neither does the Father remember for Him, nor the Holy Spirit love for Him, but He remembers and loves for Himself: for He is Himself also His own memory, His own understanding, and His own love. But that He is so comes to Him from the Father, of whom He is born. And because the Holy Spirit also is wisdom proceeding from wisdom, He too has not the Father for a memory, and the Son for an understanding, and Himself for love: for He would not be wisdom if another remembered for Him, and yet another understood for Him, and He only loved for Himself; but Himself has all three things, and has them in such way that they are Himself. But that He is so comes to Him thence, whence He proceeds.

13. What man, then, is there who can comprehend that wisdom by which God knows all things, in such wise that neither what we call things past are past therein, nor what we call things future are therein waited for as coming, as though they were absent, but both past and future with things present are all present; nor yet are things thought severally, so that thought passes from one to another, but all things simultaneously are at hand in one glance;—what man, I say, is there that comprehends that wisdom, and the like prudence, and the like knowledge, since in truth even our own wisdom is beyond our comprehension? For somehow we are able to behold the things that are present to our senses or to our understanding; but the things that are absent, and yet have once been present, we know by memory, if we have not forgotten them. And we conjecture, too, not the past from the future, but the future from the past, yet by all unstable knowledge. For there are some of our thoughts to which, although future, we, as it were, look onward with greater plainness and certainty as being very near; and we do this by the means of memory when we are able to do it, as much as we ever are able, although memory seems to belong not to the future, but to the past. And this may be tried in the case of any words or songs, the due order of which we are rendering by memory; for we certainly should not utter each in

succession, unless we foresaw in thought what came next. And yet it is not foresight, but memory, that enables us to foresee it; for up to the very end of the words or the song, nothing is uttered except as foreseen and looked forward to. And yet in doing this, we are not said to speak or sing by foresight, but by memory; and if any one is more than commonly capable of uttering many pieces in this way, he is usually praised, not for his foresight, but for his memory. We know, and are absolutely certain, that all this takes place in our mind or by our mind; but how it takes place, the more attentively we desire to scrutinize, the more do both our very words break down, and our purpose itself fails, when by our understanding, if not our tongue, we would reach to something of clearness. And do such as we are, think, that in so great infirmity of mind we can comprehend whether the foresight of God is the same as His memory and His understanding, who does not regard in thought each several thing, but embraces all that He knows in one eternal and unchangeable and ineffable vision? In this difficulty, then, and strait, we may well cry out to the living God, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it.” For I understand by myself how wonderful and incomprehensible is Thy knowledge, by which Thou madest me, when I cannot even comprehend myself whom Thou hast made! And yet, “while I was musing, the fire burned,” so that “I seek Thy face evermore.”

CHAPTER 8

HOW THE APOSTLE SAYS THAT GOD IS NOW SEEN BY US THROUGH A GLASS

14. I know that wisdom is an incorporeal substance, and that it is the light by which those things are seen that are not seen by carnal eyes; and yet a man so great and so spiritual [as Paul] says, “We see now through a glass, in an enigma, but then face to face.” If we ask what and of what sort is this “glass,” this assuredly occurs to our minds, that in a glass nothing is discerned but an image. We have endeavored, then, so to do; in order that we might see in some way or other by this image which we are, Him by whom we are made, as by a glass. And this is intimated also in the words of the same apostle: “But we with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” “Beholding as in a glass,” he has said, i.e.

seeing by means of a glass, not looking from a watch-tower: an ambiguity that does not exist in the Greek language, whence the apostolic epistles have been rendered into Latin. For in Greek, a glass, in which the images of things are visible, is wholly distinct in the sound of the word also from a watch-tower, from the height of which we command a more distant view. And it is quite plain that the apostle, in using the word “speculantes” in respect to the glory of the Lord, meant it to come from “speculum,” not from “specula.” But where he says, “We are transformed into the same image,” he assuredly means to speak of the image of God; and by calling it “the same,” he means that very image which we see in the glass, because that same image is also the glory of the Lord; as he says elsewhere, “For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God,”—a text already discussed in the twelfth book. He means, then, by “We are transformed,” that we are changed from one form to another, and that we pass from a form that is obscure to a form that is bright: since the obscure form, too, is the image of God; and if an image, then assuredly also “glory,” in which we are created as men, being better than the other animals. For it is said of human nature in itself, “The man ought not to cover his head, because he is the image and glory of God.” And this nature, being the most excellent among things created, is transformed from a form that is defaced into a form that is beautiful, when it is justified by its own Creator from ungodliness. Since even in ungodliness itself, the more the faultiness is to be condemned, the more certainly is the nature to be praised. And therefore he has added, “from glory to glory:” from the glory of creation to the glory of justification. Although these words, “from glory to glory,” may be understood also in other ways;—from the glory of faith to the glory of sight, from the glory whereby we are sons of God to the glory whereby we shall be like Him, because “we shall see Him as He is.” But in that he has added “as from the Spirit of the Lord,” he declares that the blessing of so desirable a transformation is conferred upon us by the grace of God.

CHAPTER 9

OF THE TERM “ENIGMA,” AND OF TROPICAL MODES OF SPEECH

15. What has been said relates to the words of the apostle, that “we see now through a glass;” but whereas he has added, “in an enigma,” the meaning of this addition is unknown to any who are unacquainted with the books that contain the doctrine of those modes of speech, which the Greeks call Tropes, which Greek word we also use in Latin. For as we more commonly speak of schemata than of figures, so we more commonly speak of tropes than of modes. And it is a very difficult and uncommon thing to express the names of the several modes or tropes in Latin, so as to refer its appropriate name to each. And hence some Latin translators, through unwillingness to employ a Greek word, where the apostle says, “Which things are an allegory,” have rendered it by a circumlocution—Which things signify one thing by another. But there are several species of this kind of trope that is called allegory, and one of them is that which is called enigma. Now the definition of the generic term must necessarily embrace also all its species; and hence, as every horse is an animal, but not every animal is a horse, so every enigma is an allegory, but every allegory is not an enigma. What then is an allegory, but a trope wherein one thing is understood from another? as in the Epistle to the Thessalonians, “Let us not therefore sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober: for they who sleep, sleep in the night; and they who are drunken, are drunken in the night: but let us who are of the day, be sober.” But this allegory is not an enigma. for here the meaning is patent to all but the very dull; but an enigma is, to explain it briefly, an obscure allegory, as, e.g., “The horseleech had three daughters,” and other like instances. But when the apostle spoke of an allegory, he does not find it in the words, but in the fact; since he has shown that the two Testaments are to be understood by the two sons of Abraham, one by a bondmaid, and the other by a free woman, which was a thing not said, but also done. And before this was explained, it was obscure; and accordingly such an allegory, which is the generic name, could be specifically called an enigma.

16. But because it is not only those that are ignorant of the books that contain the doctrine of tropes, who inquire the apostle’s meaning, when he said that we “see now in an enigma,” but those, too, who are acquainted with the doctrine, but yet desire to know what that enigma is in which “we now see;” we must find a single meaning for the two phrases, viz. for that which says, “we see now through a glass,” and for that which adds, “in an

enigma.” For it makes but one sentence, when the whole is so uttered, “We see now through a glass in an enigma.” Accordingly, as far as my judgment goes, as by the word glass he meant to signify an image, so by that of enigma any likeness you will, but yet one obscure, and difficult to see through. While, therefore, any likenesses whatever may be understood as signified by the apostle when he speaks of a glass and an enigma, so that they are adapted to the understanding of God, in such way as He can be understood; yet nothing is better adapted to this purpose than that which is not vainly called His image. Let no one, then, wonder, that we labor to see in any way at all, even in that fashion of seeing which is granted to us in this life, viz. through a glass, in an enigma. For we should not hear of an enigma in this place if sight were easy. And this is a yet greater enigma, that we do not see what we cannot but see. For who does not see his own thought? And yet who does see his own thought, I do not say with the eye of the flesh, but with the inner sight itself? Who does not see it, and who does see it? Since thought is a kind of sight of the mind; whether those things are present which are seen also by the bodily eyes, or perceived by the other senses; or whether they are not present, but their likenesses are discerned by thought; or whether neither of these is the case, but things are thought of that are neither bodily things nor likenesses of bodily things, as the virtues and vices; or as, indeed, thought itself is thought of; or whether it be those things which are the subjects of instruction and of liberal sciences; or whether the higher causes and reasons themselves of all these things in the unchangeable nature are thought of; or whether it be even evil, and vain, and false things that we are thinking of, with either the sense not consenting, or erring in its consent.

CHAPTER 10

CONCERNING THE WORD OF THE MIND, IN WHICH WE SEE THE WORD OF GOD, AS IN A GLASS AND AN ENIGMA

17. But let us now speak of those things of which we think as known, and have in our knowledge even if we do not think of them; whether they belong to the contemplative knowledge, which, as I have argued, is properly to be called wisdom, or to the active which is properly to be called knowledge. For both together belong to one mind, and are one image of

God. But when we treat of the lower of the two distinctly and separately, then it is not to be called an image of God, although even then, too, some likeness of that Trinity may be found in it; as we showed in the thirteenth book. We speak now, therefore, of the entire knowledge of man altogether, in which whatever is known to us is known; that, at any rate, which is true; otherwise it would not be known. For no one knows what is false, except when he knows it to be false; and if he knows this, then he knows what is true: for it is true that that is false. We treat, therefore, now of those things which we think as known, and which are known to us even if they are not being thought of. But certainly, if we would utter them in words, we can only do so by thinking them. For although there were no words spoken, at any rate, he who thinks speaks in his heart. And hence that passage in the book of Wisdom: “They said within themselves, thinking not aright.” For the words, “They said within themselves,” are explained by the addition of “thinking.” A like passage to this is that in the Gospel,—that certain scribes, when they heard the Lord’s words to the paralytic man, “Be of good cheer, my son, thy sins are forgiven thee,” said within themselves, “This man blasphemeth.” For how did they “say within themselves,” except by thinking? Then follows, “And when Jesus saw their thoughts, He said, Why think ye evil in your thoughts?” So far Matthew. But Luke narrates the same thing thus: “The scribes and Pharisees began to think, saying, Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone? But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He, answering, said unto them, What think ye in your hearts?” That which in the book of Wisdom is, “They said, thinking,” is the same here with, “They thought, saying.” For both there and here it is declared, that they spake within themselves, and in their own heart, i.e. spake by thinking. For they “spake within themselves,” and it was said to them, “What think ye?” And the Lord Himself says of that rich man whose ground brought forth plentifully, “And he thought within himself, saying.”

18. Some thoughts, then, are speeches of the heart, wherein the Lord also shows that there is a mouth, when He says, “Not that which entereth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which proceedeth out of the mouth, that defileth a man.” In one sentence He has comprised two diverse mouths of the man, one of the body, one of the heart. For assuredly, that from which

they thought the man to be defiled, enters into the mouth of the body; but that from which the Lord said the man was defiled, proceedeth out of the mouth of the heart. So certainly He Himself explained what He had said. For a little after, He says also to His disciples concerning the same thing: “Are ye also yet without understanding? Do ye not understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?” Here He most certainly pointed to the mouth of the body. But in that which follows He plainly speaks of the mouth of the heart, where He says, “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts,” etc. What is clearer than this explanation? And yet, when we call thoughts speeches of the heart, it does not follow that they are not also acts of sight, arising from the sight of knowledge, when they are true. For when these things are done outwardly by means of the body, then speech and sight are different things; but when we think inwardly, the two are one,—just as sight and hearing are two things mutually distinct in the bodily senses, but to see and hear are the same thing in the mind; and hence, while speech is not seen but rather heard outwardly, yet the inward speeches, i.e. thoughts, are said by the holy Gospel to have been seen, not heard, by the Lord. “They said within themselves, This man blasphemeth,” says the Gospel; and then subjoined, “And when Jesus saw their thoughts.” Therefore He saw, what they said. For by His own thought He saw their thoughts, which they supposed no one saw but themselves.

19. Whoever, then, is able to understand a word, not only before it is uttered in sound, but also before the images of its sounds are considered in thought,—for this it is which belongs to no tongue, to wit, of those which are called the tongues of nations, of which our Latin tongue is one;—whoever, I say, is able to understand this, is able now to see through this glass and in this enigma some likeness of that Word of whom it is said, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” For of necessity, when we speak what is true, i.e. speak what we know, there is born from the knowledge itself which the memory retains, a word that is altogether of the same kind with that knowledge from which it is born. For the thought that is formed by the thing which we know, is the word which we speak in the heart: which word is neither Greek nor Latin, nor of any

other tongue. But when it is needful to convey this to the knowledge of those to whom we speak, then some sign is assumed whereby to signify it. And generally a sound, sometimes a nod, is exhibited, the former to the ears, the latter to the eyes, that the word which we bear in our mind may become known also by bodily signs to the bodily senses. For what is to nod or beckon, except to speak in some way to the sight? And Holy Scripture gives its testimony to this; for we read in the Gospel according to John: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one upon another, doubting of whom He spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus' breast one of His disciples whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckons to him, and says to him, Who is it of whom He speaks?" Here he spoke by beckoning what he did not venture to speak by sounds. But whereas we exhibit these and the like bodily signs either to ears or eyes of persons present to whom we speak, letters have been invented that we might be able to converse also with the absent; but these are signs of words, as words themselves are signs in our conversation of those things which we think.

CHAPTER 11

THE LIKENESS OF THE DIVINE WORD, SUCH AS IT IS, IS TO BE SOUGHT, NOT IN OUR OWN OUTER AND SENSIBLE WORD, BUT IN THE INNER AND MENTAL ONE. THERE IS THE GREATEST POSSIBLE UNLIKENESS BETWEEN OUR WORD AND KNOWLEDGE AND THE DIVINE WORD AND KNOWLEDGE

20. Accordingly, the word that sounds outwardly is the sign of the word that gives light inwardly; which latter has the greater claim to be called a word. For that which is uttered with the mouth of the flesh, is the articulate sound of a word; and is itself also called a word, on account of that to make which outwardly apparent it is itself assumed. For our word is so made in some way into an articulate sound of the body, by assuming that articulate sound by which it may be manifested to men's senses, as the Word of God was made flesh, by assuming that flesh in which itself also might be manifested to men's senses. And as our word becomes an articulate sound, yet is not changed into one; so the Word of God became flesh, but far be it from us to say He was changed into flesh. For both that word of ours became an articulate sound, and that other Word became flesh, by assuming it, not by

consuming itself so as to be changed into it. And therefore whoever desires to arrive at any likeness, be it of what sort it may, of the Word of God, however in many respects unlike, must not regard the word of ours that sounds in the ears, either when it is uttered in an articulate sound or when it is silently thought. For the words of all tongues that are uttered in sound are also silently thought, and the mind runs over verses while the bodily mouth is silent. And not only the numbers of syllables, but the tunes also of songs, since they are corporeal, and pertain to that sense of the body which is called hearing, are at hand by certain incorporeal images appropriate to them, to those who think of them, and who silently revolve all these things. But we must pass by this, in order to arrive at that word of man, by the likeness of which, be it of what sort it may, the Word of God may be somehow seen as in an enigma. Not that word which was spoken to this or that prophet, and of which it is said, “Now the word of God grew and multiplied;” and again, “Faith then cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ;” and again, “When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men but, as it is in truth, the word of God” (and there are countless other like sayings in the Scriptures respecting the word of God, which is disseminated in the sounds of many and diverse languages through the hearts and mouths of men; and which is therefore called the word of God, because the doctrine that is delivered is not human, but divine);—but we are now seeking to see, in whatsoever way we can, by means of this likeness, that Word of God of which it is said, “The Word was God;” of which it is said, “All things were made by Him;” of which it is said, “The Word became flesh;” of which it is said “The Word of God on high is the fountain of wisdom.” We must go on, then, to that word of man, to the word of the rational animal, to the word of that image of God, that is not born of God, but made by God; which is neither utterable in sound nor capable of being thought under the likeness of sound such as must needs be with the word of any tongue; but which precedes all the signs by which it is signified, and is begotten from the knowledge that continues in the mind, when that same knowledge is spoken inwardly according as it really is. For the sight of thinking is exceedingly like the sight of knowledge. For when it is uttered by sound, or by any bodily sign, it is not uttered according as it really is, but as it can be seen or heard by the body. When, therefore, that is in the word which is in the knowledge, then there is a true word, and truth, such as is looked for from man; such that what is in the knowledge is also in the word, and what is not in the knowledge is also not in the word. Here may be recognized, “Yea, yea; nay, nay.” And so this likeness of the image that is made, approaches as nearly as is possible to that likeness of the image that is born, by which God the Son is declared to be in all things like in substance to the Father. We must notice in this enigma also another likeness of the word of God; viz. that, as it is said of that Word, “All things were made by Him,” where God is declared to have made the universe by His only-begotten Son, so there are no works of man that are not first spoken in his heart: whence it is written, “A word is the beginning of every work.” But here also, it is when the word is true, that then it is the beginning of a good work. And a word is true when it is begotten from the knowledge of working good works, so that there too may be preserved the “yea yea, nay nay;” in order that whatever is in that knowledge by which we are to live, may be also in the word by which we are to work, and whatever is not in the one may not be in the other. Otherwise such a word will be a lie, not truth; and what comes thence will be a sin, and not a good work. There is yet this other likeness of the Word of God in this likeness of our word, that there can be a word of ours with no work following it, but there cannot be any work unless a word precedes; just as the Word of God could have existed though no creature existed, but no creature could exist unless by that Word by which all things are made. And therefore not God the Father, not the Holy Spirit, not the Trinity itself, but the Son only, which is the Word of God, was made flesh; although the Trinity was the maker: in order that we might live rightly through our word following and imitating His example, i.e. by having no lie in either the thought or the work of our word. But this perfection of this image is one to be at some time hereafter. In order to attain this it is that the good master teaches us by Christian faith, and by pious doctrine, that “with face unveiled” from the veil of the law, which is the shadow of things to come, “beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,” i.e. gazing at it through a glass, “we may be transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord;” as we explained above.

21. When, therefore, this image shall have been renewed to perfection by this transformation, then we shall be like God, because we shall see Him,

not through a glass, but “as He is;” which the Apostle Paul expresses by “face to face.” But now, who can explain how great is the unlikeness also, in this glass, in this enigma, in this likeness such as it is? Yet I will touch upon some points, as I can, by which to indicate it.

CHAPTER 12

THE ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY

First, of what sort and how great is the very knowledge itself that a man can attain, be he ever so skillful and learned, by which our thought is formed with truth, when we speak what we know? For to pass by those things that come into the mind from the bodily senses, among which so many are otherwise than they seem to be, that he who is overmuch pressed down by their resemblance to truth, seems sane to himself, but really is not sane;—whence it is that the Academic philosophy has so prevailed as to be still more wretchedly insane by doubting all things;—passing by, then, those things that come into the mind by the bodily senses, how large a proportion is left of things which we know in such manner as we know that we live? In regard to this, indeed, we are absolutely without any fear lest perchance we are being deceived by some resemblance of the truth; since it is certain, that he who is deceived, yet lives. And this again is not reckoned among those objects of sight that are presented from without, so that the eye may be deceived in it; in such way as it is when an oar in the water looks bent, and towers seem to move as you sail past them, and a thousand other things that are otherwise than they seem to be: for this is not a thing that is discerned by the eye of the flesh. The knowledge by which we know that we live is the most inward of all knowledge, of which even the Academic cannot insinuate: Perhaps you are asleep, and do not know it, and you see things in your sleep. For who does not know that what people see in dreams is precisely like what they see when awake? But he who is certain of the knowledge of his own life, does not therein say, I know I am awake, but, I know I am alive; therefore, whether he be asleep or awake, he is alive. Nor can he be deceived in that knowledge by dreams; since it belongs to a living man both to sleep and to see in sleep. Nor can the Academic again say, in confutation of this knowledge: Perhaps you are mad, and do not know it: for what madmen see is precisely like what they also see who are sane; but he who is mad is alive. Nor does he answer the Academic by saying, I know I am not mad, but, I know I am alive. Therefore he who says he knows he is alive, can neither be deceived nor lie. Let a thousand kinds, then, of deceitful objects of sight be presented to him who says, I know I am alive; yet he will fear none of them, for he who is deceived yet is alive. But if such things alone pertain to human knowledge, they are very few indeed; unless that they can be so multiplied in each kind, as not only not to be few, but to reach in the result to infinity. For he who says, I know I am alive, says that he knows one single thing. Further, if he says, I know that I know I am alive, now there are two; but that he knows these two is a third thing to know. And so he can add a fourth and a fifth, and innumerable others, if he holds out. But since he cannot either comprehend an innumerable number by additions of units, or say a thing innumerable times, he comprehends this at least, and with perfect certainty, viz. that this is both true and so innumerable that he cannot truly comprehend and say its infinite number. This same thing may be noticed also in the case of a will that is certain. For it would be an impudent answer to make to any one who should say, I will to be happy, that perhaps you are deceived. And if he should say, I know that I will this, and I know that I know it, he can add yet a third to these two, viz. that he knows these two; and a fourth, that he knows that he knows these two; and so on ad infinitum. Likewise, if any one were to say, I will not to be mistaken; will it not be true, whether he is mistaken or whether he is not, that nevertheless he does will not to be mistaken? Would it not be most impudent to say to him, Perhaps you are deceived? when beyond doubt, whereinsoever he may be deceived, he is nevertheless not deceived in thinking that he wills not to be deceived. And if he says he knows this, he adds any number he chooses of things known, and perceives that number to be infinite. For he who says, I will not to be deceived, and I know that I will not to be so, and I know that I know it, is able now to set forth an infinite number here also, however awkward may be the expression of it. And other things too are to be found capable of refuting the Academics, who contend that man can know nothing. But we must restrict ourselves, especially as this is not the subject we have undertaken in the present work. There are three books of ours on that subject, written in the early time of our conversion, which he who can and will read, and who understands them, will doubtless not be much moved by any of the many arguments which they have found out against the discovery of truth. For whereas there are two kinds of knowable things,—one, of those things which the mind perceives by the bodily senses; the other, of those which it perceives by itself,—these philosophers have babbled much against the bodily senses, but have never been able to throw doubt upon those most certain perceptions of things true, which the mind knows by itself, such as is that which I have mentioned, I know that I am alive. But far be it from us to doubt the truth of what we have learned by the bodily senses; since by them we have learned to know the heaven and the earth, and those things in them which are known to us, so far as He who created both us and them has willed them to be within our knowledge. Far be it from us too to deny, that we know what we have learned by the testimony of others: otherwise we know not that there is an ocean; we know not that the lands and cities exist which most copious report commends to us; we know not that those men were, and their works, which we have learned by reading history; we know not the news that is daily brought us from this quarter or that, and confirmed by consistent and conspiring evidence; lastly, we know not at what place or from whom we have been born: since in all these things we have believed the testimony of others. And if it is most absurd to say this, then we must confess, that not only our own senses, but those of other persons also, have added very much indeed to our knowledge.

22. All these things, then, both those which the human mind knows by itself, and those which it knows by the bodily senses, and those which it has received and knows by the testimony of others, are laid up and retained in the storehouse of the memory; and from these is begotten a word that is true when we speak what we know, but a word that is before all sound, before all thought of a sound. For the word is then most like to the thing known, from which also its image is begotten, since the sight of thinking arises from the sight of knowledge; when it is a word belonging to no tongue, but is a true word concerning a true thing, having nothing of its own, but wholly derived from that knowledge from which it is born. Nor does it signify when he learned it, who speaks what he knows; for sometimes he says it immediately upon learning it; provided only that the word is true, i.e. sprung from things that are known.

CHAPTER 13

STILL FURTHER OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE KNOWLEDGE AND WORD OF OUR MIND, AND THE KNOWLEDGE AND WORD OF GOD

But is it so, that God the Father, from whom is born the Word that is God of God,—is it so, then, that God the Father, in respect to that wisdom which He is to Himself, has learned some things by His bodily senses, and others by Himself? Who could say this, who thinks of God, not as a rational animal, but as One above the rational soul? So far at least as He can be thought of, by those who place Him above all animals and all souls, although they see Him by conjecture through a glass and in an enigma, not yet face to face as He is. Is it that God the Father has learned those very things which He knows, not by the body, for He has none, but by Himself, from elsewhere from some one? or has stood in need of messengers or witnesses that He might know them? Certainly not; since His own perfection enables Him to know all things that He knows. No doubt He has messengers, viz. the angels; but not to announce to Him things that He knows not, for there is nothing He does not know. But their good lies in consulting the truth about their own works. And this it is which is meant by saying that they bring Him word of some things, not that He may learn of them, but they of Him by His word without bodily sound. They bring Him word, too, of that which He wills, being sent by Him to whomever He wills, and hearing all from Him by that word of His, i.e. finding in His truth what themselves are to do: what, to whom, and when, they are to bring word. For we too pray to Him, yet do not inform Him what our necessities are. “For your Father knoweth,” says His Word, “what things ye have need of, before you ask Him.” Nor did He become acquainted with them, so as to know them, at any definite time; but He knew beforehand, without any beginning, all things to come in time, and among them also both what we should ask of Him, and when; and to whom He would either listen or not listen, and on what subjects. And with respect to all His creatures, both spiritual and corporeal, He does not know them because they are, but they are because He knows them. For He was not ignorant of what He was about to create; therefore He created because He knew; He did not know because He created. Nor did He know them when created in any other way than He knew them when still to be created, for nothing accrued to His wisdom from them; but that wisdom remained as it was, while they came into existence as it was fitting and when it was fitting. So, too, it is written in the book of Ecclesiasticus: “All things are known to Him ere ever they were created: so also after they were perfected.” “So,” he says, not otherwise; so were they known to Him, both ere ever they were created, and after they were perfected. This knowledge, therefore, is far unlike our knowledge. And the knowledge of God is itself also His wisdom, and His wisdom is itself His essence or substance. Because in the marvellous simplicity of that nature, it is not one thing to be wise and another to be, but to be wise is to be; as we have often said already also in the earlier books. But our knowledge is in most things capable both of being lost and of being recovered, because to us to be is not the same as to know or to be wise; since it is possible for us to be, even although we know not, neither are wise in that which we have learned from elsewhere. Therefore, as our knowledge is unlike that knowledge of God, so is our word also, which is born from our knowledge, unlike that Word of God which is born from the essence of the Father. And this is as if I should say, born from the Father’s knowledge, from the Father’s wisdom; or still more exactly, from the Father who is knowledge, from the Father who is wisdom.

CHAPTER 14

THE WORD OF GOD IS IN ALL THINGS EQUAL TO THE FATHER, FROM WHOM IT IS

23. The Word of God, then, the only-begotten Son of the Father, in all things like and equal to the Father, God of God, Light of Light, Wisdom of Wisdom, Essence of Essence, is altogether that which the Father is, yet is not the Father, because the one is Son, the other is Father. And hence He knows all that the Father knows; but to Him to know, as to be, is from the Father, for to know and to be is there one. And therefore, as to be is not to the Father from the Son, so neither is to know. Accordingly, as though uttering Himself, the Father begat the Word equal to Himself in all things; for He would not have uttered Himself wholly and perfectly, if there were in His Word anything more or less than in Himself. And here that is recognized in the highest sense, “Yea, yea; nay, nay.” And therefore this Word is truly truth, since whatever is in that knowledge from which it is born is also in itself and whatever is not in that knowledge is not in the

Word. And this Word can never have anything false, because it is unchangeable, as He is from whom it is. For “the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do.” Through power He cannot do this; nor is it infirmity, but strength, by which truth cannot be false. Therefore God the Father knows all things in Himself, knows all things in the Son; but in Himself as though Himself, in the Son as though His own Word which Word is spoken concerning all those things that are in Himself. Similarly the Son knows all things, viz. in Himself, as things which are born of those which the Father knows in Himself, and in the Father, as those of which they are born, which the Son Himself knows in Himself. The Father then, and the Son know mutually; but the one by begetting, the other by being born. And each of them sees simultaneously all things that are in their knowledge, in their wisdom, in their essence: not by parts or singly, as though by alternately looking from this side to that, and from that side to this, and again from this or that object to this or that object, so as not to be able to see some things without at the same time not seeing others; but, as I said, sees all things simultaneously, whereof there is not one that He does not always see.

24. And that word, then, of ours which has neither sound nor thought of sound, but is of that thing in seeing which we speak inwardly, and which therefore belongs to no tongue; and hence is in some sort like, in this enigma, to that Word of God which is also God; since this too is born of our knowledge, in such manner as that also is born of the knowledge of the Father: such a word, I say, of ours, which we find to be in some way like that Word, let us not be slow to consider how unlike also it is, as it may be in our power to utter it.

CHAPTER 15

HOW GREAT IS THE UNLIKENESS BETWEEN OUR WORD AND THE DIVINE WORD. OUR WORD CANNOT BE OR BE CALLED ETERNAL

Is our word, then, born of our knowledge only? Do we not say many things also that we do not know? And say them not with doubt, but thinking them to be true; while if perchance they are true in respect to the things themselves of which we speak, they are yet not true in respect to our word, because a word is not true unless it is born of a thing that is known. In this sense, then, our word is false, not when we lie, but when we are deceived. And when we doubt, our word is not yet of the thing of which we doubt, but it is a word concerning the doubt itself. For although we do not know whether that is true of which we doubt, yet we do know that we doubt; and hence, when we say we doubt, we say a word that is true, for we say what we know. And what, too, of its being possible for us to lie? And when we do, certainly we both willingly and knowingly have a word that is false, wherein there is a word that is true, viz. that we lie, for this we know. And when we confess that we have lied, we speak that which is true; for we say what we know, for we know that we lied. But that Word which is God, and can do more than we, cannot do this. For it "can do nothing except what it sees the Father do;" and it "speaks not of itself," but it has from the Father all that it speaks, since the Father speaks it in a special way; and the great might of that Word is that it cannot lie, because there cannot be there "yea and nay," but "yea yea, nay nay." Well, but that is not even to be called a word, which is not true. I willingly assent, if so it be. What, then, if our word is true and therefore is rightly called a word? Is it the case that, as we can speak of sight of sight, and knowledge of knowledge, so we can speak of essence of essence, as that Word of God is especially spoken of, and is especially to be spoken of? Why so? Because to us, to be is not the same as to know; since we know many things which in some sense live by memory, and so in some sense die by being forgotten: and so, when those things are no longer in our knowledge, yet we still are: and while our knowledge has slipped away and perished out of our mind, we are still alive.

25. In respect to those things also which are so known that they can never escape the memory, because they are present, and belong to the nature of the mind itself,—as, e.g., the knowing that we are alive (for this continues so long as the mind continues; and because the mind continues always, this also continues always);—I say, in respect to this and to any other like instances, in which we are the rather to contemplate the image of God, it is difficult to make out in what way, although they are always known, yet because they are not always also thought of, an eternal word can be spoken respecting them, when our word is spoken in our thought. For it is eternal to the soul to live; it is eternal to know that it lives. Yet it is not eternal to it to

be thinking of its own life, or to be thinking of its own knowledge of its own life; since, in entering upon this or that occupation, it will cease to think of this, although it does not cease from knowing it. And hence it comes to pass, that if there can be in the mind any knowledge that is eternal, while the thought of that knowledge cannot be eternal, and any inner and true word of ours is only said by our thought, then God alone can be understood to have a Word that is eternal, and co-eternal with Himself. Unless, perhaps, we are to say that the very possibility of thought—since that which is known is capable of being truly thought, even at the time when it is not being thought—constitutes a word as perpetual as the knowledge itself is perpetual. But how is that a word which is not yet formed in the vision of the thought? How will it be like the knowledge of which it is born, if it has not the form of that knowledge, and is only now called a word because it can have it? For it is much as if one were to say that a word is to be so called because it can be a word. But what is this that can be a word, and is therefore already held worthy of the name of a word? What, I say, is this thing that is formable, but not yet formed, except a something in our mind, which we toss to and fro by revolving it this way or that, while we think of first one thing and then another, according as they are found by or occur to us? And the true word then comes into being, when, as I said, that which we toss to and fro by revolving it arrives at that which we know, and is formed by that, in taking its entire likeness; so that in what manner each thing is known, in that manner also it is thought, i.e. is said in this manner in the heart, without articulate sound, without thought of articulate sound, such as no doubt belongs to some particular tongue. And hence if we even admit, in order not to dispute laboriously about a name, that this something of our mind, which can be formed from our knowledge, is to be already called a word, even before it is so formed, because it is, so to say, already formable, who would not see how great would be the unlikeness between it and that Word of God, which is so in the form of God, as not to have been formable before it was formed, or to have been capable at any time of being formless, but is a simple form, and simply equal to Him from whom it is, and with whom it is wonderfully co-eternal?

CHAPTER 16

OUR WORD IS NEVER TO BE EQUALLED TO THE DIVINE WORD, NOT EVEN WHEN WE SHALL BE LIKE GOD

Wherefore that Word of God is in such wise so called, as not to be called a thought of God, lest we believe that there is anything in God which can be revolved, so that it at one time receives and at another recovers a form, so as to be a word, and again can lose that form and be revolved in some sense formlessly. Certainly that excellent master of speech knew well the force of words, and had looked into the nature of thought, who said in his poem, “And revolves with himself the varying issues of war,” i.e. thinks of them. That Son of God, then, is not called the Thought of God, but the Word of God. For our own thought, attaining to what we know, and formed thereby, is our true word. And so the Word of God ought to be understood without any thought on the part of God, so that it be understood as the simple form itself, but containing nothing formable that can be also unformed. There are, indeed, passages of Holy Scripture that speak of God’s thoughts; but this is after the same mode of speech by which the forgetfulness of God is also there spoken of, whereas in strict propriety of language there is in Him certainly no forgetfulness.

26. Wherefore, since we have found now in this enigma so great an unlikeness to God and the Word of God, wherein yet there was found before some likeness, this, too, must be admitted, that even when we shall be like Him, when “we shall see Him as He is” (and certainly he who said this was aware beyond doubt of our present unlikeness), not even then shall we be equal to Him in nature. For that nature which is made is ever less than that which makes. And at that time our word will not indeed be false, because we shall neither lie nor be deceived. Perhaps, too, our thoughts will no longer revolve by passing and repassing from one thing to another, but we shall see all our knowledge at once, and at one glance. Still, when even this shall have come to pass, if indeed it shall come to pass, the creature which was formable will indeed have been formed, so that nothing will be wanting of that form to which it ought to attain; yet nevertheless it will not be to be equalled to that simplicity wherein there is not anything formable, which

has been formed or reformed, but only form; and which being neither formless nor formed, itself is eternal and unchangeable substance.

CHAPTER 17

HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT IS CALLED LOVE, AND WHETHER HE ALONE IS SO CALLED. THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS IN THE SCRIPTURES PROPERLY CALLED BY THE NAME OF LOVE

27. We have sufficiently spoken of the Father and of the Son, so far as was possible for us to see through this glass and in this enigma. We must now treat of the Holy Spirit, so far as by God’s gift it is permitted to see Him. And the Holy Spirit, according to the Holy Scriptures, is neither of the Father alone, nor of the Son alone, but of both; and so intimates to us a mutual love, wherewith the Father and the Son reciprocally love one another. But the language of the Word of God, in order to exercise us, has caused those things to be sought into with the greater zeal, which do not lie on the surface, but are to be scrutinized in hidden depths, and to be drawn out from thence. The Scriptures, accordingly, have not said, The Holy Spirit is Love. If they had said so, they would have done away with no small part of this inquiry. But they have said, “God is love;” so that it is uncertain and remains to be inquired whether God the Father is love, or God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost, or the Trinity itself which is God. For we are not going to say that God is called Love because love itself is a substance worthy of the name of God, but because it is a gift of God, as it is said to God, “Thou art my patience.” For this is not said because our patience is God’s substance, but in that He Himself gives it to us; as it is elsewhere read, “Since from Him is my patience.” For the usage of words itself in Scripture sufficiently refutes this interpretation; for “Thou art my patience” is of the same kind as “Thou, Lord, art my hope,” and “The Lord my God is my mercy,” and many like texts. And it is not said, O Lord my love, or, Thou art my love, or, God my love; but it is said thus, “God is love,” as it is said, “God is a Spirit.” And he who does not discern this, must ask understanding from the Lord, not an explanation from us; for we cannot say anything more clearly.

28. “God,” then, “is love;” but the question is, whether the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, or the Trinity itself: because the Trinity is not three

Gods, but one God. But I have already argued above in this book, that the Trinity, which is God, is not so to be understood from those three things which have been set forth in the trinity of our mind, as that the Father should be the memory of all three, and the Son the understanding of all three, and the Holy Spirit the love of all three; as though the Father should neither understand nor love for Himself, but the Son should understand for Him, and the Holy Spirit love for Him, but He Himself should remember only both for Himself and for them; nor the Son remember nor love for Himself, but the Father should remember for Him, and the Holy Spirit love for Him, but He Himself understand only both for Himself and them; nor likewise that the Holy Spirit should neither remember nor understand for Himself, but the Father should remember for Him, and the Son understand for Him, while He Himself should love only both for Himself and for them; but rather in this way, that both all and each have all three each in His own nature. Nor that these things should differ in them, as in us memory is one thing, understanding another, love or charity another, but should be some one thing that is equivalent to all, as wisdom itself; and should be so contained in the nature of each, as that He who has it is that which He has, as being an unchangeable and simple substance. If all this, then, has been understood, and so far as is granted to us to see or conjecture in things so great, has been made patently true, I know not why both the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit should not be called Love, and all together one love, just as both the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit is called Wisdom, and all together not three, but one wisdom. For so also both the Father is God, and the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, and all three together one God.

29. And yet it is not to no purpose that in this Trinity the Son and none other is called the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit and none other the Gift of God, and God the Father alone is He from whom the Word is born, and from whom the Holy Spirit principally proceeds. And therefore I have added the word principally, because we find that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son also. But the Father gave Him this too, not as to one already existing, and not yet having it; but whatever He gave to the only-begotten Word, He gave by begetting Him. Therefore He so begat Him as that the common Gift should proceed from Him also, and the Holy Spirit should be

the Spirit of both. This distinction, then, of the inseparable Trinity is not to be merely accepted in passing, but to be carefully considered; for hence it was that the Word of God was specially called also the Wisdom of God, although both Father and Holy Spirit are wisdom. If, then, any one of the three is to be specially called Love, what more fitting than that it should be the Holy Spirit?—namely, that in that simple and highest nature, substance should not be one thing and love another, but that substance itself should be love, and love itself should be substance, whether in the Father, or in the Son, or in the Holy Spirit; and yet that the Holy Spirit should be specially called Love.

30. Just as sometimes all the utterances of the Old Testament together in the Holy Scriptures are signified by the name of the Law. For the apostle, in citing a text from the prophet Isaiah, where he says, “With divers tongues and with divers lips will I speak to this people,” yet prefaced it by, “It is written in the Law.” And the Lord Himself says, “It is written in their Law, They hated me without a cause,” whereas this is read in the Psalm. And sometimes that which was given by Moses is specially called the Law: as it is said, “The Law and the Prophets were until John;” and, “On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” Here, certainly, that is specially called the Law which was from Mount Sinai. And the Psalms, too, are signified under the name of the Prophets; and yet in another place the Saviour Himself says, “All things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the Law, and the Prophets, and the Psalms concerning me.” Here, on the other side, He meant the name of Prophets to be taken as not including the Psalms. Therefore the Law with the Prophets and the Psalms taken together is called the Law universally, and the Law is also specially so called which was given by Moses. Likewise the Prophets are so called in common together with the Psalms, and they are also specially so called exclusive of the Psalms. And many other instances might be adduced to teach us, that many names of things are both put universally, and also specially applied to particular things, were it not that a long discourse is to be avoided in a plain case. I have said so much, lest any one should think that it was therefore unsuitable for us to call the Holy Spirit Love, because both God the Father and God the Son can be called Love.

31. As, then, we call the only Word of God specially by the name of Wisdom, although universally both the Holy Spirit and the Father Himself is wisdom; so the Holy Spirit is specially called by the name of Love, although universally both the Father and the Son are love. But the Word of God, i.e. the only-begotten Son of God, is expressly called the Wisdom of God by the mouth of the apostle, where he says, “Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” But where the Holy Spirit is called Love, is to be found by careful scrutiny of the language of John the apostle, who, after saying, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God,” has gone on to say, “And every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love.” Here, manifestly, he has called that love God, which he said was of God; therefore God of God is love. But because both the Son is born of God the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Father, it is rightly asked which of them we ought here to think is the rather called the love that is God. For the Father only is so God as not to be of God; and hence the love that is so God as to be of God, is either the Son or the Holy Spirit. But when, in what follows, the apostle had mentioned the love of God, not that by which we love Him, but that by which He “loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiator for our sins,” and thereupon had exhorted us also to love one another, and that so God would abide in us,—because, namely, he had called God Love; immediately, in his wish to speak yet more expressly on the subject, “Hereby,” he says, “know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.” Therefore the Holy Spirit, of whom He hath given us, makes us to abide in God, and Him in us; and this it is that love does. Therefore He is the God that is love. Lastly, a little after, when he had repeated the same thing, and had said “God is love,” he immediately subjoined, “And he who abideth in love, abideth in God, and God abideth in him;” whence he had said above, “Hereby we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.” He therefore is signified, where we read that God is love. Therefore God the Holy Spirit, who proceedeth from the Father, when He has been given to man, inflames him to the love of God and of his neighbor, and is Himself love. For man has not whence to love God, unless from God; and therefore he says a little after, “Let us love Him, because He first loved us.” The Apostle Paul, too,

says, “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.”

CHAPTER 18

NO GIFT OF GOD IS MORE EXCELLENT THAN LOVE

32. There is no gift of God more excellent than this. It alone distinguishes the sons of the eternal kingdom and the sons of eternal perdition. Other gifts, too, are given by the Holy Spirit; but without love they profit nothing. Unless, therefore, the Holy Spirit is so far imparted to each, as to make him one who loves God and his neighbor, he is not removed from the left hand to the right. Nor is the Spirit specially called the Gift, unless on account of love. And he who has not this love, “though he speak with the tongues of men and angels, is sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal; and though he have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and though he have all faith, so that he can remove mountains, he is nothing; and though he bestow all his goods to feed the poor, and though he give his body to be burned, it profiteth him nothing.” How great a good, then, is that without which goods so great bring no one to eternal life! But love or charity itself,—for they are two names for one thing,—if he have it that does not speak with tongues, nor has the gift of prophecy, nor knows all mysteries and all knowledge, nor gives all his goods to the poor, either because he has none to give or because some necessity hinders, nor delivers his body to be burned, if no trial of such a suffering overtakes him, brings that man to the kingdom, so that faith itself is only rendered profitable by love, since faith without love can indeed exist, but cannot profit. And therefore also the Apostle Paul says, “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love:” so distinguishing it from that faith by which even “the devils believe and tremble.” Love, therefore, which is of God and is God, is specially the Holy Spirit, by whom the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by which love the whole Trinity dwells in us. And therefore most rightly is the Holy Spirit, although He is God, called also the gift of God. And by that gift what else can properly be understood except love, which brings to God, and without which any other gift of God whatsoever does not bring to God?

CHAPTER 19

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS CALLED THE GIFT OF GOD IN THE SCRIPTURES. BY THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS MEANT THE GIFT WHICH IS THE HOLY SPIRIT. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SPECIALLY CALLED LOVE, ALTHOUGH NOT ONLY THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE TRINITY IS LOVE

33. Is this too to be proved, that the Holy Spirit is called in the sacred books the gift of God? If people look for this too, we have in the Gospel according to John the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, who says, “If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink: he that believeth on me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” And the evangelist has gone on further to add, “And this He spake of the Spirit, which they should receive who believe in Him.” And hence Paul the apostle also says, “And we have all been made to drink into one Spirit.” The question then is, whether that water is called the gift of God which is the Holy Spirit. But as we find here that this water is the Holy Spirit, so we find elsewhere in the Gospel itself that this water is called the gift of God. For when the same Lord was talking with the woman of Samaria at the well, to whom He had said, “Give me to drink,” and she had answered that the Jews “have no dealings” with the Samaritans, Jesus answered and said unto her, “If thou hadst known the gift of God, and who it is that says to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto Him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast thou this living water, etc.? Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whose shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a fountain of water springing up unto eternal life.” Because this living water, then, as the evangelist has explained to us, is the Holy Spirit, without doubt the Spirit is the gift of God, of which the Lord says here, “If thou hadst known the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.” For that which is in the one passage, “Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water,” is in the other, “shall be in him a fountain of water springing up unto eternal life.”

34. Paul the apostle also says, “To each of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ;” and then, that he might show that by the gift of Christ he meant the Holy Spirit, he has gone on to add, “Wherefore He saith, He hath ascended up on high, He hath led captivity captive, and hath given gifts to men.” And every one knows that the Lord Jesus, when He had ascended into heaven after the resurrection from the dead, gave the Holy Spirit, with whom they who believed were filled, and spake with the tongues of all nations. And let no one object that he says gifts, not gift: for he quoted the text from the Psalm. And in the Psalm it is read thus, “Thou hast ascended up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, Thou hast received gifts in men.” For so it stands in many mss., especially in the Greek mss., and so we have it translated from the Hebrew. The apostle therefore said gifts, as the prophet did, not gift. But whereas the prophet said, “Thou hast received gifts in men,” the apostle has preferred saying, “He gave gifts to men:” and this in order that the fullest sense may be gathered from both expressions, the one prophetic, the other apostolic; because both possess the authority of a divine utterance. For both are true, as well that He gave to men, as that He received in men. He gave to men, as the head to His own members: He Himself that gave, received in men, no doubt as in His own members; on account of which, namely, His own members, He cried from heaven, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” And of which, namely, His own members, He says, “Since ye have done it to one of the least of these that are mine, ye have done it unto me.” Christ Himself, therefore, both gave from heaven and received on earth. And further, both prophet and apostle have said gifts for this reason, because many gifts, which are proper to each, are divided in common to all the members of Christ, by the Gift, which is the Holy Spirit. For each severally has not all, but some have these and some have those; although all have the Gift itself by which that which is proper to each is divided to Him, i.e. the Holy Spirit. For elsewhere also, when he had mentioned many gifts, “All these,” he says, “worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to each severally as He will.” And this word is found also in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where it is written, “God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.” And so here, when he had said, “He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, He gave gifts to men,” he says further, “But that He ascended, what is it but

that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. And He gave some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and doctors.” (This we see is the reason why gifts are spoken of; because, as he says elsewhere, “Are all apostles? are all prophets?” etc.) And here he has added, “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ.” This is the house which, as the Psalm sings, is built up after the captivity; since the house of Christ, which house is called His Church, is built up of those who have been rescued from the devil, by whom they were held captive. But He Himself led this captivity captive, who conquered the devil. And that he might not draw with him into eternal punishment those who were to become the members of the Holy Head, He bound him first by the bonds of righteousness, and then by those of might. The devil himself, therefore, is called captivity, which He led captive who ascended up on high, and gave gifts to men, or received gifts in men.

35. And Peter the apostle, as we read in that canonical book, wherein the Acts of the Apostles are recorded,—when the hearts of the Jews were troubled as he spake of Christ, and they said, “Brethren, what shall we do? tell us,”—said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins: and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” And we read likewise in the same book, that Simon Magus desired to give money to the apostles, that he might receive power from them, whereby the Holy Spirit might be given by the laying on of his hands. And the same Peter said to him, “Thy money perish with thee: because thou hast thought to purchase for money the gift of God.” And in another place of the same book, when Peter was speaking to Cornelius, and to those who were with him, and was announcing and preaching Christ, the Scripture says, “While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all them that heard the word; and they of the circumcision that believed, as many as came with Peter, were astonished, because that upon the Gentiles also the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.” And when Peter afterwards was giving an account to the brethren that were at Jerusalem of this act of his, that he had baptized those who

were not circumcised, because the Holy Spirit, to cut the knot of the question, had come upon them before they were baptized, and the brethren at Jerusalem were moved when they heard it, he says, after the rest of his words, "And when I began to speak to them, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us in the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, that John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. If, therefore, He gave a like gift to them, as also to us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could hinder God from giving to them the Holy Spirit?" And there are many other testimonies of the Scriptures, which unanimously attest that the Holy Spirit is the gift of God, in so far as He is given to those who by Him love God. But it is too long a task to collect them all. And what is enough to satisfy those who are not satisfied with those we have alleged?

36. Certainly they must be warned, since they now see that the Holy Spirit is called the gift of God, that when they hear of "the gift of the Holy Spirit," they should recognize therein that mode of speech which is found in the words, "In the spoiling of the body of the flesh." For as the body of the flesh is nothing else but the flesh, so the gift of the Holy Spirit is nothing else but the Holy Spirit. He is then the gift of God, so far as He is given to those to whom He is given. But in Himself He is God, although He were given to no one, because He was God co-eternal with the Father and the Son before He was given to any one. Nor is He less than they, because they give, and He is given. For He is given as a gift of God in such way that He Himself also gives Himself as being God. For He cannot be said not to be in His own power, of whom it is said, "The Spirit bloweth where it listeth;" and the apostle says, as I have already mentioned above, "All these things worketh that selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." We have not here the creating of Him that is given, and the rule of them that give, but the concord of the given and the givers.

37. Wherefore, if Holy Scripture proclaims that God is love, and that love is of God, and works this in us that we abide in God and He in us, and that hereby we know this, because He has given us of His Spirit, then the Spirit Himself is God, who is love. Next, if there be among the gifts of God none greater than love, and there is no greater gift of God than the Holy Spirit,

what follows more naturally than that He is Himself love, who is called both God and of God? And if the love by which the Father loves the Son, and the Son loves the Father, ineffably demonstrates the communion of both, what is more suitable than that He should be specially called love, who is the Spirit common to both? For this is the sounder thing both to believe and to understand, that the Holy Spirit is not alone love in that Trinity, yet is not specially called love to no purpose, for the reasons we have alleged; just as He is not alone in that Trinity either a Spirit or holy, since both the Father is a Spirit, and the Son is a Spirit; and both the Father is holy, and the Son is holy,—as piety doubts not. And yet it is not to no purpose that He is specially called the Holy Spirit; for because He is common to both, He is specially called that which both are in common. Otherwise, if in that Trinity the Holy Spirit alone is love, then doubtless the Son too turns out to be the Son, not of the Father only, but also of the Holy Spirit. For He is both said and read in countless places to be so,—the only-begotten Son of God the Father; as that what the apostle says of God the Father is true too: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His own love.” He did not say, “of His own Son.” If He had so said, He would have said it most truly, just as He did say it most truly, because He has often said it; but He says, “the Son of His own love.” Therefore He is the Son also of the Holy Spirit, if there is in that Trinity no love in God except the Holy Spirit. And if this is most absurd, it remains that the Holy Spirit is not alone therein love, but is specially so called for the reasons I have sufficiently set forth; and that the words, “Son of His own love,” mean nothing else than His own beloved Son,—the Son, in short, of His own substance. For the love in the Father, which is in His ineffably simple nature, is nothing else than His very nature and substance itself,—as we have already often said, and are not ashamed of often repeating. And hence the “Son of His love,” is none other than He who is born of His substance.

CHAPTER 20

AGAINST EUNOMIUS, SAYING THAT THE SON OF GOD IS THE SON, NOT OF HIS NATURE, BUT OF HIS WILL. EPILOGUE TO WHAT HAS BEEN SAID ALREADY

38. Wherefore the logic of Eunomius, from whom the Eunomian heretics sprang, is ridiculous. For when he could not understand, and would not believe, that the only-begotten Word of God, by which all things were made is the Son of God by nature,—i.e. born of the substance of the Father,—he alleged that He was not the Son of His own nature or substance or essence, but the Son of the will of God; so as to mean to assert that the will by which he begot the Son was something accidental [and optional] to God,—to wit, in that way that we ourselves sometimes will something which before we did not will, as though it was not for these very things that our nature is perceived to be changeable,—a thing which far be it from us to believe of God. For it is written, "Many are the thoughts in the heart of man, but the counsel of the Lord abideth for ever," for no other reason except that we may understand or believe that as God is eternal, so is His counsel for eternity, and therefore unchangeable, as He himself is. And what is said of thoughts can most truly be said also of the will: there are many wills in the heart of man, but the will of the Lord abideth for ever. Some, again, to escape saying that the only-begotten Word is the Son of the counsel or will of God, have affirmed the same Word to be the counsel or will itself of the Father. But it is better in my judgment to say counsel of counsel, and will of will, as substance of substance, wisdom of wisdom, that we may not be led into that absurdity, which we have refuted already, and say that the Son makes the Father wise or willing, if the Father has not in His own substance either counsel or will. It was certainly a sharp answer that somebody gave to the heretic, who most subtly asked him whether God begat the Son willingly or unwillingly, in order that if he said unwillingly, it would follow most absurdly that God was miserable; but if willingly, he would forthwith infer, as though by an invincible reason, that at which he was aiming, viz. that He was the Son, not of His nature, but of His will. But that other, with great wakefulness, demanded of him in turn, whether God the Father was God willingly or unwillingly; in order that if he answered unwillingly, that misery would follow, which to believe of God is sheer madness; and if he said willingly, it would be replied to him, Then He is God too by His own will, not by His nature. What remained, then, except that he should hold his peace, and discern that he was himself bound by his own question in an insoluble bond? But if any person in the Trinity is also to be specially called

the will of God, this name, like love, is better suited to the Holy Spirit; for what else is love, except will?

39. I see that my argument in this book respecting the Holy Spirit, according to the Holy Scripture, is quite enough for faithful men who know already that the Holy Spirit is God, and not of another substance, nor less than the Father and the Son,—as we have shown to be true in the former books, according to the same Scriptures. We have reasoned also from the creature which God made, and, as far as we could, have warned those who demand a reason on such subjects to behold and understand His invisible things, so far as they could, by those things which are made and especially by the rational or intellectual creature which is made after the image of God; through which glass, so to say, they might discern as far as they could, if they could, the Trinity which is God, in our own memory, understanding, will. Which three things, if any one intelligently regards as by nature divinely appointed in his own mind, and remembers by memory, contemplates by understanding, embraces by love, how great a thing that is in the mind, whereby even the eternal and unchangeable nature can be recollected, beheld, desired, doubtless that man finds an image of that highest Trinity. And he ought to refer the whole of his life to the remembering, seeing, loving that highest Trinity, in order that he may recollect, contemplate, be delighted by it. But I have warned him, so far as seemed sufficient, that he must not so compare this image thus wrought by that Trinity, and by his own fault changed for the worse, to that same Trinity as to think it in all points like to it, but rather that he should discern in that likeness, of whatever sort it be, a great unlikeness also.

CHAPTER 21

OF THE LIKENESS OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON ALLEGED TO BE IN OUR MEMORY AND UNDERSTANDING. OF THE LIKENESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR WILL OR LOVE

40. I have undoubtedly taken pains so far as I could, not indeed so that the thing might be seen face to face, but that it might be seen by this likeness in an enigma, in how small a degree soever, by conjecture, in our memory and understanding, to intimate God the Father and God the Son: i.e. God the begetter, who has in some way spoken by His own co-eternal Word all

things that He has in His substance; and God His Word Himself, who Himself has nothing either more or less in substance than is in Him, who, not lyingly but truly, hath begotten the Word; and I have assigned to memory everything that we know, even if we were not thinking of it, but to understanding the formation after a certain special mode of the thought. For we are usually said to understand what, by thinking of it, we have found to be true; and this it is again that we leave in the memory. But that is a still more hidden depth of our memory, wherein we found this also first when we thought of it, and wherein an inner word is begotten such as belongs to no tongue,—as it were, knowledge of knowledge, vision of vision, and understanding which appears in [reflective] thought; of understanding which had indeed existed before in the memory, but was latent there, although, unless the thought itself had also some sort of memory of its own, it would not return to those things which it had left in the memory while it turned to think of other things.

41. But I have shown nothing in this enigma respecting the Holy Spirit such as might appear to be like Him, except our own will, or love, or affection, which is a stronger will, since our will which we have naturally is variously affected, according as various objects are adjacent or occur to it, by which we are attracted or offended. What, then, is this? Are we to say that our will, when it is right, knows not what to desire, what to avoid? Further, if it knows, doubtless then it has a kind of knowledge of its own, such as cannot be without memory and understanding. Or are we to listen to any one who should say that love knows not what it does, which does not do wrongly? As, then, there are both understanding and love in that primary memory wherein we find provided and stored up that to which we can come in thought, because we find also those two things there, when we find by thinking that we both understand and love anything; which things were there too when we were not thinking of them: and as there are memory and love in that understanding, which is formed by thought, which true word we say inwardly without the tongue of any nation when we say what we know; for the gaze of our thought does not return to anything except by remembering it, and does not care to return unless by loving it: so love, which combines the vision brought about in the memory, and the vision of the thought formed thereby, as if parent and offspring, would not know

what to love rightly unless it had a knowledge of what it desired, which it cannot have without memory and understanding.

CHAPTER 22

HOW GREAT THE UNLIKENESS IS BETWEEN THE IMAGE OF THE TRINITY WHICH WE HAVE FOUND IN OURSELVES, AND THE TRINITY ITSELF

42. But since these are in one person, as man is, some one may say to us, These three things, memory, understanding, and love, are mine, not their own; neither do they do that which they do for themselves, but for me, or rather I do it by them. For it is I who remember by memory, and understand by understanding, and love by love: and when I direct the mind’s eye to my memory, and so say in my heart the thing I know, and a true word is begotten of my knowledge, both are mine, both the knowledge certainly and the word. For it is I who know, and it is I who say in my heart the thing I know. And when I come to find in my memory by thinking that I understand and love anything, which understanding and love were there also before I thought thereon, it is my own understanding and my own love that I find in my own memory, whereby it is I that understand, and I that love, not those things themselves. Likewise, when my thought is mindful, and wills to return to those things which it had left in the memory, and to understand and behold them, and say them inwardly, it is my own memory that is mindful, and it is my own, not its will, wherewith it wills. When my very love itself, too, remembers and understands what it ought to desire and what to avoid, it remembers by my, not by its own memory; and understands that which it intelligently loves by my, not by its own, understanding. In brief, by all these three things, it is I that remember, I that understand, I that love, who am neither memory, nor understanding, nor love, but who have them. These things, then, can be said by a single person, which has these three, but is not these three. But in the simplicity of that Highest Nature, which is God, although there is one God, there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 23

AUGUSTIN DWELLS STILL FURTHER ON THE DISPARITY BETWEEN THE TRINITY WHICH IS IN MAN, AND THE TRINITY WHICH IS GOD. THE TRINITY IS NOW SEEN THROUGH A GLASS BY THE HELP OF FAITH, THAT IT MAY HEREAFTER BE MORE CLEARLY SEEN IN THE PROMISED SIGHT FACE TO FACE

43. A thing itself, then, which is a trinity is different from the image of a trinity in some other thing; by reason of which image, at the same time that also in which these three things are is called an image; just as both the panel, and the picture painted on it, are at the same time called an image; but by reason of the picture painted on it, the panel also is called by the name of image. But in that Highest Trinity, which is incomparably above all things, there is so great an indivisibility, that whereas a trinity of men cannot be called one man, in that, there both is said to be and is one God, nor is that Trinity in one God, but it is one God. Nor, again, as that image in the case of man has these three things but is one person, so is it with the Trinity; but therein are three persons, the Father of the Son, and the Son of the Father, and the Spirit of both Father and Son. For although the memory in the case of man, and especially that memory which beasts have not—viz. the memory by which things intelligible are so contained as that they have not entered that memory through the bodily senses—has in this image of the Trinity, in proportion to its own small measure, a likeness of the Father, incomparably unequal, yet of some sort, whatever it be: and likewise the understanding in the case of man, which by the purpose of the thought is formed thereby, when that which is known is said, and there is a word of the heart belonging to no tongue, has in its own great disparity some likeness of the Son; and love in the case of man proceeding from knowledge, and combining memory and understanding, as though common to parent and offspring, whereby it is understood to be neither parent nor offspring, has in that image, some, however exceedingly unequal, likeness of the Holy Spirit: it is nevertheless not the case, that, as in that image of the Trinity, these three are not one man, but belong to one man, so in the Highest Trinity itself, of which this is an image, these three belong to one God, but they are one God, and these are three persons, not one. A thing certainly wonderfully ineffable, or ineffably wonderful, that while this image of the Trinity is one person, but the Highest Trinity itself is three persons, yet that

Trinity of three persons is more indivisible than this of one. For that [Trinity], in the nature of the Divinity, or perhaps better Deity, is that which it is, and is mutually and always unchangeably equal: and there was no time when it was not, or when it was otherwise; and there will be no time when it will not be, or when it will be otherwise. But these three that are in the inadequate image, although they are not separate in place, for they are not bodies, yet are now in this life mutually separate in magnitude. For that there are therein no several bulks, does not hinder our seeing that memory is greater than understanding in one man, but the contrary in another; and that in yet another these two are overpassed by the greatness of love; and this whether the two themselves are or are not equal to one another. And so each two by each one, and each one by each two, and each one by each one: the less are surpassed by the greater. And when they have been healed of all infirmity, and are mutually equal, not even then will that thing which by grace will not be changed, be made equal to that which by nature cannot change, because the creature cannot be equalled to the Creator, and when it shall be healed from all infirmity, will be changed.

44. But when the sight shall have come which is promised anew to us face to face, we shall see this not only incorporeal but also absolutely indivisible and truly unchangeable Trinity far more clearly and certainly than we now see its image which we ourselves are: and yet they who see through this glass and in this enigma, as it is permitted in this life to see, are not those who behold in their own mind the things which we have set in order and pressed upon them; but those who see this as if an image, so as to be able to refer what they see, in some way be it what it may, to Him whose image it is, and to see that also by conjecturing, which they see through the image by beholding, since they cannot yet see face to face. For the apostle does not say, We see now a glass, but, We see now through a glass.

CHAPTER 24

THE INFIRMITY OF THE HUMAN MIND

They, then, who see their own mind, in whatever way that is possible, and in it that Trinity of which I have treated as I could in many ways, and yet do not believe or understand it to be an image of God, see indeed a glass, but do not so far see through the glass Him who is now to be seen through the glass, that they do not even know the glass itself which they see to be a glass, i.e. an image. And if they knew this, perhaps they would feel that He too whose glass this is, should by it be sought, and somehow provisionally be seen, an unfeigned faith purging their hearts, that He who is now seen through a glass may be able to be seen face to face. And if they despise this faith that purifies the heart, what do they accomplish by understanding the most subtle disputes concerning the nature of the human mind, unless that they be condemned also by the witness of their own understanding? And they would certainly not so fail in understanding, and hardly arrive at anything certain, were they not involved in penal darkness, and burdened with the corruptible body that presses down the soul. And for what demerit save that of sin is this evil inflicted on them? Wherefore, being warned by the magnitude of so great an evil, they ought to follow the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world.

CHAPTER 25

THE QUESTION WHY THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT BEGOTTEN, AND HOW HE PROCEEDS FROM THE FATHER AND THE SON, WILL ONLY BE UNDERSTOOD WHEN WE ARE IN BLISS

For if any belong to Him, although far duller in intellect than those, yet when they are freed from the body at the end of this life, the envious powers have no right to hold them. For that Lamb that was slain by them without any debt of sin has conquered them; but not by the might of power before He had done so by the righteousness of blood. And free accordingly from the power of the devil, they are borne up by holy angels, being set free from all evils by the mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Since by the harmonious testimony of the Divine Scriptures, both Old and New, both those by which Christ was foretold, and those by which He was announced, there is no other name under heaven whereby men must be saved. And when purged from all contagion of corruption, they are placed in peaceful abodes until they take their bodies again, their own, but now incorruptible, to adorn, not to burden them. For this is the will of the best and most wise Creator, that the spirit of a man, when piously subject to

God, should have a body happily subject, and that this happiness should last for ever.

45. There we shall see the truth without any difficulty, and shall enjoy it to the full, most clear and most certain. Nor shall we be inquiring into anything by a mind that reasons, but shall discern by a mind that contemplates, why the Holy Spirit is not a Son, although He proceeds from the Father. In that light there will be no place for inquiry: but here, by experience itself it has appeared to me so difficult,—as beyond doubt it will likewise appear to them also who shall carefully and intelligently read what I have written,—that although in the second book I promised that I would speak thereof in another place, yet as often as I have desired to illustrate it by the creaturely image of it which we ourselves are, so often, let my meaning be of what sort it might, did adequate utterance entirely fail me; nay, even in my very meaning I felt that I had attained to endeavor rather than accomplishment. I had indeed found in one person, such as is a man, an image of that Highest Trinity, and had desired, especially in the ninth book, to illustrate and render more intelligible the relation of the Three Persons by that which is subject to time and change. But three things belonging to one person cannot suit those Three Persons, as man's purpose demands; and this we have demonstrated in this fifteenth book.

CHAPTER 26

THE HOLY SPIRIT TWICE GIVEN BY CHRIST. THE PROCESSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT FROM THE FATHER AND FROM THE SON IS APART FROM TIME, NOR CAN HE BE CALLED THE SON OF BOTH

Further, in that Highest Trinity which is God, there are no intervals of time, by which it could be shown, or at least inquired, whether the Son was born of the Father first and then afterwards the Holy Spirit proceeded from both; since Holy Scripture calls Him the Spirit of both. For it is He of whom the apostle says, “But because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts:” and it is He of whom the same Son says, “For it is not ye who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaketh in you.” And it is proved by many other testimonies of the Divine Word, that the Spirit, who is specially called in the Trinity the Holy Spirit, is of the Father and of the Son: of whom likewise the Son Himself says, “Whom I will send unto you from the Father;" and in another place, "Whom the Father will send in my name." And we are so taught that He proceeds from both, because the Son Himself says, He proceeds from the Father. And when He had risen from the dead, and had appeared to His disciples, "He breathed upon them, and said, Receive the Holy Ghost," so as to show that He proceeded also from Himself. And Itself is that very "power that went out from Him," as we read in the Gospel, "and healed them all."

46. But the reason why, after His resurrection, He both gave the Holy Spirit, first on earth, and afterwards sent Him from heaven, is in my judgment this: that "love is shed abroad in our hearts," by that Gift itself, whereby we love God and our neighbors, according to those two commandments, "on which hang all the law and the prophets." And Jesus Christ, in order to signify this, gave to them the Holy Spirit, once upon earth, on account of the love of our neighbor, and a second time from heaven, on account of the love of God. And if some other reason may perhaps be given for this double gift of the Holy Spirit, at any rate we ought not to doubt that the same Holy Spirit was given when Jesus breathed upon them, of whom He by and by says, "Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," where this Trinity is especially commended to us. It is therefore He who was also given from heaven on the day of Pentecost, i.e. ten days after the Lord ascended into heaven. How, therefore, is He not God, who gives the Holy Spirit? Nay, how great a God is He who gives God! For no one of His disciples gave the Holy Spirit, since they prayed that He might come upon those upon whom they laid their hands: they did not give Him themselves. And the Church preserves this custom even now in the case of her rulers. Lastly, Simon Magus also, when he offered the apostles money, does not say, "Give me also this power, that I may give" the Holy Spirit; but, "that on whomsoever I may lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit." Because neither had the Scriptures said before, And Simon, seeing that the apostles gave the Holy Spirit; but it had said, "And Simon, seeing that the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the apostles' hands." Therefore also the Lord Jesus Christ Himself not only gave the Holy Spirit as God, but also received it as man, and therefore He is said to be full of grace, and of the Holy Spirit. And in the Acts of the Apostles it is more plainly written of Him, "Because God anointed Him

with the Holy Spirit.” Certainly not with visible oil but with the gift of grace which is signified by the visible ointment wherewith the Church anoints the baptized. And Christ was certainly not then anointed with the Holy Spirit, when He, as a dove, descended upon Him at His baptism. For at that time He deigned to prefigure His body, i.e. His Church, in which especially the baptized receive the Holy Spirit. But He is to be understood to have been then anointed with that mystical and invisible unction, when the Word of God was made flesh, i.e. when human nature, without any precedent merits of good works, was joined to God the Word in the womb of the Virgin, so that with it it became one person. Therefore it is that we confess Him to have been born of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary. For it is most absurd to believe Him to have received the Holy Spirit when He was near thirty years old: for at that age He was baptized by John; but that He came to baptism as without any sin at all, so not without the Holy Spirit. For if it was written of His servant and forerunner John himself, “He shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb,” because, although generated by his father, yet he received the Holy Spirit when formed in the womb; what must be understood and believed of the man Christ, of whose flesh the very conception was not carnal, but spiritual? Both natures, too, as well the human as the divine, are shown in that also that is written of Him, that He received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, and shed forth the Holy Spirit: seeing that He received as man, and shed forth as God. And we indeed can receive that gift according to our small measure, but assuredly we cannot shed it forth upon others; but, that this may be done, we invoke over them God, by whom this is accomplished.

47. Are we therefore able to ask whether the Holy Spirit had already proceeded from the Father when the Son was born, or had not yet proceeded; and when He was born, proceeded from both, wherein there is no such thing as distinct times: just as we have been able to ask, in a case where we do find times, that the will proceeds from the human mind first, in order that that may be sought which, when found, may be called offspring; which offspring being already brought forth or born, that will is made perfect, resting in this end, so that what had been its desire when seeking, is its love when enjoying; which love now proceeds from both, i.e.

from the mind that begets, and from the notion that is begotten, as if from parent and offspring? These things it is absolutely impossible to ask in this case, where nothing is begun in time, so as to be perfected in a time following. Wherefore let him who can understand the generation of the Son from the Father without time, understand also the procession of the Holy Spirit from both without time. And let him who can understand, in that which the Son says, “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself,” not that the Father gave life to the Son already existing without life, but that He so begat Him apart from time, that the life which the Father gave to the Son by begetting Him is co-eternal with the life of the Father who gave it: let him, I say, understand, that as the Father has in Himself that the Holy Spirit should proceed from Him, so has He given to the Son that the same Holy Spirit should proceed from Him, and be both apart from time: and that the Holy Spirit is so said to proceed from the Father as that it be understood that His proceeding also from the Son, is a property derived by the Son from the Father. For if the Son has of the Father whatever He has, then certainly He has of the Father, that the Holy Spirit proceeds also from Him. But let no one think of any times therein which imply a sooner and a later; because these things are not there at all. How, then, would it not be most absurd to call Him the Son of both: when, just as generation from the Father, without any changeableness of nature, gives to the Son essence, without beginning of time; so procession from both, without any changeableness of nature, gives to the Holy Spirit essence without beginning of time? For while we do not say that the Holy Spirit is begotten, yet we do not therefore dare to say that He is unbegotten, lest any one suspect in this word either two Fathers in that Trinity, or two who are not from another. For the Father alone is not from another, and therefore He alone is called unbegotten, not indeed in the Scriptures, but in the usage of disputants, who employ such language as they can on so great a subject. And the Son is born of the Father; and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father principally, the Father giving the procession without any interval of time, yet in common from both [Father and Son]. But He would be called the Son of the Father and of the Son, if—a thing abhorrent to the feeling of all sound minds—both had begotten Him. Therefore the Spirit of both is not begotten of both, but proceeds from both.

CHAPTER 27

WHAT IT IS THAT SUFFICES HERE TO SOLVE THE QUESTION WHY THE SPIRIT IS NOT SAID TO BE BEGOTTEN, AND WHY THE FATHER ALONE IS UNBEGOTTEN. WHAT THEY OUGHT TO DO WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND THESE THINGS

48. But because it is most difficult to distinguish generation from procession in that co-eternal, and equal, and incorporeal, and ineffably unchangeable and indivisible Trinity, let it suffice meanwhile to put before those who are not able to be drawn on further, what we said upon this subject in a sermon to be delivered in the ears of Christian people, and after saying wrote it down. For when, among other things, I had taught them by testimonies of the Holy Scriptures that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both, I continue: “If, then, the Holy Spirit proceeds both from the Father and from the Son, why did the Son say, He proceedeth from the Father?’ Why, think you, except as He is wont to refer to Him, that also which is His own, from whom also He Himself is? Whence also is that which He saith, My doctrine is not mine own, but His that sent me?’ If, therefore, it is His doctrine that is here understood, which yet He said was not His own, but His that sent Him, how much more is it there to be understood that the Holy Spirit proceeds also from Himself, where He so says, He proceedeth from the Father, as not to say, He proceedeth not from me? From Him, certainly, from whom the Son had his Divine nature, for He is God of God, He has also, that from Him too proceeds the Holy Spirit; and hence the Holy Spirit has from the Father Himself, that He should proceed from the Son also, as He proceeds from the Father. Here, too, in some way may this also be understood, so far as it can be understood by such as we are, why the Holy Spirit is not said to be born, but rather to proceed; since if He, too, was called a Son, He would certainly be called the Son of both, which is most absurd, since no one is son of two, save of father and mother. But far be it from us to surmise any such thing as this between God the Father and God the Son. Because not even the son of men proceeds at the same time from both father and mother; but when he proceeds from the father into the mother, he does not at that time proceed from the mother; and when he proceeds from the mother into this present light, he does not at that time proceed from the father. But the Holy Spirit does not proceed from the Father into the Son, and from the Son proceed to sanctify the creature, but proceeds at once from both; although

the Father has given this to the Son, that He should proceed, as from Himself, so also from Him. For we cannot say that the Holy Spirit is not life, while the Father is life, and the Son is life: and hence as the Father, while He has life in Himself, has given also to the Son to have life in Himself; so has He given also to Him that life should proceed from Him, as it also proceeds from Himself." I have transferred this from that sermon into this book, but I was speaking to believers, not to unbelievers.

49. But if they are not competent to gaze upon this image, and to see how true these things are which are in their mind, and yet which are not so three as to be three persons, but all three belong to a man who is one person; why do they not believe what they find in the sacred books respecting that highest Trinity which is God, rather than insist on the clearest reason being rendered them, which cannot be comprehended by the human mind, dull and infirm as it is? And to be sure, when they have steadfastly believed the Holy Scriptures as most true witnesses, let them strive, by praying and seeking and living well, that they may understand, i.e. that so far as it can be seen, that may be seen by the mind which is held fast by faith. Who would forbid this? Nay, who would not rather exhort them to it? But if they think they ought to deny that these things are, because they, with their blind minds, cannot discern them, they, too, who are blind from their birth, ought to deny that there is a sun. The light then shineth in darkness; but if the darkness comprehend it not, let them first be illuminated by the gift of God, that they may be believers, and let them begin to be light in comparison with the unbelievers; and when this foundation is first laid, let them be built up to see what they believe, that at some time they may be able to see. For some things are so believed, that they cannot be seen at all. For Christ is not to be seen a second time on the cross; but unless this be believed which has been so done and seen, that it is not now to be hoped for as about to be and to be seen, there is no coming to Christ, such as without end He is to be seen. But as far as relates to the discerning in some way by the understanding that highest, ineffable, incorporeal, and unchangeable nature the sight of the human mind can nowhere better exercise itself, so only that the rule of faith govern it, than in that which man himself has in his own nature better than the other animals, better also than the other parts of his own soul, which is the mind itself, to which has been assigned a certain

sight of things invisible, and to which, as though honorably presiding in a higher and inner place, the bodily senses also bring word of all things, that they may be judged, and than which there is no higher, to which it is to be subject, and by which it is to be governed, except God.

50. But among these many things which I have now said, and of which there is nothing that I dare to profess myself to have said worthy of the ineffableness of that highest Trinity, but rather to confess that the wonderful knowledge of Him is too great for me, and that I cannot attain to it: O thou, my soul, where dost thou feel thyself to be? where dost thou lie? where dost thou stand? until all thy infirmities be healed by Him who has forgiven all thy iniquities. Thou perceivest thyself assuredly to be in that inn whither that Samaritan brought him whom he found with many wounds inflicted by thieves, half-dead. And yet thou hast seen many things that are true, not by those eyes by which colored objects are seen, but by those for which he prayed who said, "Let mine eyes behold the things that are equal." Certainly, then, thou hast seen many things that are true, and hast distinguished them from that light by the light of which thou hast seen them. Lift up thine eyes to the light itself, and fix them upon it if thou canst. For so thou wilt see how the birth of the Word of God differs from the procession of the Gift of God, on account of which the only-begotten Son did not say that the Holy Spirit is begotten of the Father, otherwise He would be His brother, but that he proceeds from Him. Whence, since the Spirit of both is a kind of consubstantial communion of Father and Son, He is not called, far be it from us to say so, the Son of both. But thou canst not fix thy sight there, so as to discern this lucidly and clearly; I know thou canst not. I say the truth, I say to myself, I know what I cannot do; yet that light itself shows to thee these three things in thyself, wherein thou mayest recognize an image of the highest Trinity itself, which thou canst not yet contemplate with steady eye. Itself shows to thee that there is in thee a true word, when it is born of thy knowledge, i.e. when we say what we know: although we neither utter nor think of any articulate word that is significant in any tongue of any nation, but our thought is formed by that which we know; and there is in the mind's eye of the thinker an image resembling that thought which the memory contained, will or love as a third combining these two as parent and offspring. And he who can, sees and discerns that

this will proceeds indeed from thought (for no one wills that of which he is absolutely ignorant what or of what sort it is), yet is not an image of the thought: and so that there is insinuated in this intelligible thing a sort of difference between birth and procession, since to behold by thought is not the same as to desire, or even to enjoy will. Thou, too, hast been able [to discern this], although thou hast not been, neither art, able to unfold with adequate speech what, amidst the clouds of bodily likenesses, which cease not to flit up and down before human thoughts, thou hast scarcely seen. But that light which is not thyself shows thee this too, that these incorporeal likenesses of bodies are different from the truth, which, by rejecting them, we contemplate with the understanding. These, and other things similarly certain, that light hath shown to thine inner eyes. What reason, then, is there why thou canst not see that light itself with steady eye, except certainly infirmity? And what has produced this in thee, except iniquity? Who, then, is it that healeth all thine infirmities, unless it be He that forgiveth all thine iniquities? And therefore I will now at length finish this book by a prayer better than by an argument.

CHAPTER 28

THE CONCLUSION OF THE BOOK WITH A PRAYER, AND AN APOLOGY FOR MULTITUDE OF WORDS

51. O Lord our God, we believe in Thee, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. For the Truth would not say, Go, baptize all nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, unless Thou wast a Trinity. Nor wouldest thou, O Lord God, bid us to be baptized in the name of Him who is not the Lord God. Nor would the divine voice have said, Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God, unless Thou wert so a Trinity as to be one Lord God. And if Thou, O God, wert Thyself the Father, and wert Thyself the Son, Thy Word Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit your gift, we should not read in the book of truth, “God sent His Son;” nor wouldest Thou, O Only-begotten, say of the Holy Spirit, “Whom the Father will send in my name;” and, “Whom I will send to you from the Father.” Directing my purpose by this rule of faith, so far as I have been able, so far as Thou hast made me to be able, I have sought Thee, and have desired to see with my understanding what I believed; and I have argued and labored much. O

Lord my God, my one hope, hearken to me, lest through weariness I be unwilling to seek Thee, "but that I may always ardently seek Thy face." Do Thou give strength to seek, who hast made me find Thee, and hast given the hope of finding Thee more and more. My strength and my infirmity are in Thy sight: preserve the one, and heal the other. My knowledge and my ignorance are in Thy sight; where Thou hast opened to me, receive me as I enter; where Thou hast closed, open to me as I knock. May I remember Thee, understand Thee, love Thee. Increase these things in me, until Thou renewest me wholly. I know it is written, "In the multitude of speech, thou shalt not escape sin." But O that I might speak only in preaching Thy word, and in praising Thee! Not only should I so flee from sin, but I should earn good desert, however much I so spake. For a man blessed of Thee would not enjoin a sin upon his own true son in the faith, to whom he wrote, "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season." Are we to say that he has not spoken much, who was not silent about Thy word, O Lord, not only in season, but out of season? But therefore it was not much, because it was only what was necessary. Set me free, O God, from that multitude of speech which I suffer inwardly in my soul, wretched as it is in Thy sight, and flying for refuge to Thy mercy; for I am not silent in thoughts, even when silent in words. And if, indeed, I thought of nothing save what pleased Thee, certainly I would not ask Thee to set me free from such multitude of speech. But many are my thoughts, such as Thou knowest, "thoughts of man, since they are vain." Grant to me not to consent to them; and if ever they delight me, nevertheless to condemn them, and not to dwell in them, as though I slumbered. Nor let them so prevail in me, as that anything in my acts should proceed from them; but at least let my opinions, let my conscience, be safe from them, under Thy protection. When the wise man spake of Thee in his book, which is now called by the special name of Ecclesiasticus, "We speak," he said, "much, and yet come short; and in sum of words, He is all." When, therefore, we shall have come to Thee, these very many things that we speak, and yet come short, will cease; and Thou, as One, wilt remain "all in all." And we shall say one thing without end, in praising Thee in One, ourselves also made one in Thee. O Lord the one God, God the Trinity, whatever I have said in these books that is of Thine, may they acknowledge who are Thine; if anything of my own, may it be pardoned both by Thee and by those who are Thine. Amen.

ON TWO SOULS, AGAINST THE MANICHAEANS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE DUABUS ANIMABUS, CONTRA MANICHAEOS)

A.D. 391.

ST. AUGUSTIN.

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Concerning Two Souls, Against the Manichaeans

ONE BOOK.

CHAPTER 1

BY WHAT COURSE OF REASONING THE ERROR OF THE MANICHAEANS CONCERNING TWO SOULS, ONE OF WHICH IS NOT FROM GOD, IS REFUTED. EVERY SOUL, INASMUCH AS IT IS A CERTAIN LIFE, CAN HAVE ITS EXISTENCE ONLY FROM GOD THE SOURCE OF LIFE

1. Through the assisting mercy of God, the snares of the Manichaeans having been broken to pieces and left behind, having been restored at length to the bosom of the Catholic Church, I am disposed now at least to consider and to deplore my recent wretchedness. For there were many things that I ought to have done to prevent the seeds of the most true religion wholesomely implanted in me from boyhood, from being banished from my mind, having been uprooted by the error and fraud of false and deceitful men. For, in the first place, if I had soberly and diligently considered, with prayerful and pious mind, those two kinds of souls to which they attributed natures and properties so distinct that they wished one to be regarded as of the very substance of God, but were not even willing that God should be accepted as the author of the other; perhaps it would have appeared to me, intent on learning, that there is no life whatsoever, which, by the very fact of its being life and in so far as it is life at all, does not pertain to the supreme source and beginning of life, which we must acknowledge to be nothing else than the supreme and only and true God. Wherefore there is no reason why we should not confess, that those souls which the Manichaeans call evil are either devoid of life and so not souls, neither will anything positively or negatively, neither follow after nor flee from anything; or, if they live so that they can be souls, and act as the Manichaeans suppose, in no way do they live unless by life, and if it be an established fact, as it is, that Christ has said: “I am the life,” that all souls seeing that they cannot be

souls except by living were created and fashioned by Christ, that is, by the Life.

CHAPTER 2

IF THE LIGHT THAT IS PERCEIVED BY SENSE HAS GOD FOR ITS AUTHOR, AS THE MANICHAEANS ACKNOWLEDGE, MUCH MORE THE SOUL WHICH IS PERCEIVED BY INTELLECT ALONE

2. But if at that time my thought was not able to bear and sustain the question concerning life and partaking of life, which is truly a great question, and one that requires much calm discussion among the learned, I might perchance have had power to discover that which to every man considering himself, without a study of the individual parts, is perfectly evident, namely, that everything we are said to know and to understand, we comprehend either by bodily sense or by mental operation. That the five bodily senses are commonly enumerated as sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, than all of which intellect is immeasurably more noble and excellent, who would have been so ungrateful and impious as not to concede to me; which being established and confirmed, we should have seen how it follows, that whatsoever things are perceived by touch or sight or in any bodily manner at all, are by so much inferior to those things that we comprehend intellectually as the senses are inferior to the intellect. Wherefore, since all life, and so every soul, can be perceived by no bodily sense, but by the intellect alone, whereas while yonder sun and moon and every luminary that is beheld by these mortal eyes, the Manichaeans themselves also say must be attributed to the true and good God, it is the height of madness to claim that that belongs to God which we observe bodily; but, on the other hand, to think that what we receive not only by the mind, but by the highest form of mind, namely, reason and intellect, that is life, whatsoever it may be called, nevertheless life, should be deprived and bereft of the same God as its author. For if having invoked God, I had asked myself what living is, how inscrutable it is to every bodily sense, how absolutely incorporeal it is, could not I have answered? Or would not the Manichaeans also confess not only that the souls they detest live, but that they live also immortally? and that Christ’s saying: “Send the dead to bury their dead,” was uttered not with reference to those not living at all, but

with reference to sinners, which is the only death of the immortal soul; as when Paul writes: “The widow that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth,” he says that she at the same time is dead, and alive. Wherefore I should have directed attention not to the great degree of contamination in which the sinful soul lives, but only to the fact itself that it lives. But if I cannot perceive except by an act of intelligence, I believe it would have come into the mind, that by as much as any mind whatever is to be preferred to the light which we see through these eyes, by so much we should give to intellect the preference over the eyes themselves.

CHAPTER 3

HOW IT IS PROVED THAT EVERY BODY ALSO IS FROM GOD. THAT THE SOUL WHICH IS CALLED EVIL BY THE MANICHAEANS IS BETTER THAN LIGHT

They also affirm that the light is from the Father of Christ: should I then have doubted that every soul is from Him? But not even then, as a man forsooth so inexperienced and so youthful as I was, should I have been in doubt as to the derivation not only of the soul, but also of the body, nay of everything whatsoever, from Him, if I had reverently and cautiously reflected on what form is, or what has been formed, what shape is and what has been endued with shape.

3. But not to speak at present concerning the body, I lament concerning the soul, concerning spontaneous and vivid movement, concerning action, concerning life, concerning immortality; in fine, I lament that I, miserable, should have believed that anything could have all these properties apart from the goodness of God, which properties, great as they are, I sadly neglected to consider; this I think, should be to me a matter of groaning and of weeping. I should have inwardly pondered these things, I should have discussed them with myself, I should have referred them to others, I should have propounded the inquiry, what the power of knowing is, seeing there is nothing in man that we can compare to this excellency? And as men, if only they had been men, would have granted me this, I should have inquired whether seeing with these eyes is knowing? In case they had answered negatively, I should first have concluded, that mental intelligence is vastly inferior to ocular sensation; then I should have added, that what we perceive

by means of a better thing must needs be judged to be itself better. Who would not grant this? I should have gone on to inquire, whether that soul which they call evil is an object of ocular sensation or of mental intelligence? They would have acknowledged that the latter is the case. All which things having been agreed upon and confirmed between us, I should have shown how it follows, that that soul forsooth which they execrate, is better than that light which they venerate, since the former is an object of mental knowledge, the latter an object of corporeal sense perception. But here perhaps they would have halted, and would have refused to follow the lead of reason, so great is the power of inveterate opinion and of falsehood long defended and believed. But I should have pressed yet more upon them halting, not harshly, not in puerile fashion, not obstinately; I should have repeated the things that had been conceded, and have shown how they must be conceded. I should have exhorted that they consult in common, that they may see clearly what must be denied to us; whether they think it false that intellectual perception is to be preferred to these carnal organs of sight, or that what is known by means of the excellency of the mind is more excellent than what is known by vile corporeal sensation; whether they would be unwilling to confess that those souls which they think heterogenous, can be known only by intellectual perception, that is, by the excellency itself of the mind; whether they would wish to deny that the sun and the moon are made known to us only by means of these eyes. But if they had replied that no one of these things could be denied otherwise than most absurdly and most impudently, I should have urged that they ought not to doubt but that the light whose worthiness of worship they proclaim, is viler than that soul which they admonish men to flee.

CHAPTER 4

EVEN THE SOUL OF A FLY IS MORE EXCELLENT THAN THE LIGHT

4. And here, if perchance in their confusion they had inquired of me whether I thought that the soul even of a fly surpasses that light, I should have replied, yes, nor should it have troubled me that the fly is little, but it should have confirmed me that it is alive. For it is inquired, what causes those members so diminutive to grow, what leads so minute a body here and there according to its natural appetite, what moves its feet in numerical

order when it is running, what regulates and gives vibration to its wings when flying? This thing whatever it is in so small a creature towers up so prominently to one well considering, that it excels any lightning flashing upon the eyes.

CHAPTER 5

HOW VICIOUS SOULS, HOWEVER WORTHY OF CONDEMNATION THEY MAY BE, EXCEL THE LIGHT WHICH IS PRAISEWORTHY IN ITS KIND

Certainly nobody doubts that whatever is an object of intellectual perception, by virtue of divine laws surpasses in excellence every sensible object and consequently also this light. For what, I ask, do we perceive by thought, if not that it is one thing to know with the mind, and another thing to experience bodily sensations, and that the former is incomparably more sublime than the latter, and so that intelligible things must needs be preferred to sensible things, since the intellect itself is so highly exalted above the senses?

5. Hence this also I should perchance have known, which manifestly follows, since injustice and intemperance and other vices of the mind are not objects of sense, but of intellect, how it comes about that these too which we detest and consider condemnable, yet in as much as they are objects of intellect, can outrank this light however praiseworthy it may be in its kind. For it is borne in upon the mind subjecting itself well to God, that, first of all, not everything that we praise is to be preferred to everything that we find fault with. For in praising the purest lead, I do not therefore put a higher value upon it than upon the gold that I find fault with. For everything must be considered in its kind. I disapprove of a lawyer ignorant of many statutes, yet I so prefer him to the most approved tailor, that I should think him incomparably superior. But I praise the tailor because he is thoroughly skilled in his own craft, while I rightly blame the lawyer because he imperfectly fulfills the functions of his profession. Wherefore I should have found out that the light which in its own kind is perfect, is rightly to be praised; yet because it is included in the number of sensible things, which class must needs yield to the class of intelligible things, it must be ranked below unjust and intemperate souls, since these are intelligible; although we

may without injustice judge these to be most worthy of condemnation. For in the case of these we ask that they be reconciled to God, not that they be preferred to that lightning. Wherefore, if any one had contended that this luminary is from God, I should not have opposed; but rather I should have said, that souls, even vicious ones, not in so far as they are vicious, but in so far as they are souls, must be acknowledged to be creatures of God.

CHAPTER 6

WHETHER EVEN VICES THEMSELVES AS OBJECTS OF INTELLECTUAL APPREHENSION ARE TO BE PREFERRED TO LIGHT AS AN OBJECT OF SENSE PERCEPTION, AND ARE TO BE ATTRIBUTED TO GOD AS THEIR AUTHOR. VICE OF THE MIND AND CERTAIN DEFECTS ARE NOT RIGHTLY TO BE COUNTED AMONG INTELLIGIBLE THINGS. DEFECTS THEMSELVES EVEN IF THEY SHOULD BE COUNTED AMONG INTELLIGIBLE THINGS SHOULD NEVER BE PUT BEFORE SENSIBLE THINGS. IF LIGHT IS VISIBLE BY GOD, MUCH MORE IS THE SOUL, EVEN IF VICIOUS, WHICH IN SO FAR AS IT LIVES IS AN INTELLIGIBLE THING. PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE ARE ADDUCED BY THE MANICHAEANS TO THE CONTRARY

At this point, in case some one of them, cautious and watchful, now also more studious than pertinacious, had admonished me that the inquiry is not about vicious souls but about vices themselves, which, seeing that they are not known by corporeal sense, and yet are known, can only be received as objects of intellectual apprehension, which if they excel all objects of sense, why can we not agree in attributing light to God as its author, but only a sacrilegious person would say that God is the author of vices; I should have replied to the man, if either on the spur of the moment, as is customary to the worshippers of the good God, a solution of this question had darted like lightning from on high, or a solution had been previously prepared. If I had not deserved or was unable to avail myself of either of these methods, I should have deferred the undertaking, and should have confessed that the thing propounded was difficult to discern and arduous. I should have withdrawn to myself, prostrated myself before God, groaned aloud asking Him not to suffer me to halt in mid space, when I should have moved forward with assured arguments, asking Him that I might not be compelled by a doubtful question either to subordinate intelligible things to sensible, and to yield, or to call Himself the author of vices; since either of these alternatives would have been absolutely full of falsehood and impiety. I can by no means suppose that He would have deserted me in such a frame of mind. Rather, in His own ineffable way, He would have admonished me to consider again and again whether vices of mind concerning which I was so troubled should be reckoned among intelligible things. But that I might find out, on account of the weakness of my inner eye, which rightly befell me on account of my sins, I should have devised some sort of stage for gazing upon spiritual things in visible things themselves, of which we have by no means a surer knowledge, but a more confident familiarity. Therefore I should straightway have inquired, what properly pertains to the sensation of the eyes. I should have found that it is the color, the dominion of which the light holds. For these are the things that no other sense touches, for the motions and magnitudes and intervals and figures of bodies, although they also can be perceived by the eyes, yet to perceive such is not their peculiar function, but belongs also to touch. Whence I should have gathered that by as much as yonder light excels other corporeal and sensible things, by so much is sight more noble than the other senses. The light therefore having been selected from all the things that are perceived by bodily sense, by this [light] I should have striven, and in this of necessity I should have placed that stage of my inquiry. I should have gone on to consider what might be done in this way, and thus I should have reasoned with myself: If yonder sun, conspicuous by its brightness and sufficing for day by its light, should little by little decline in our sight into the likeness of the moon, would we perceive anything else with our eyes than light however refulgent, yet seeking light by reason of not seeing what had been, and using it for seeing what was present? Therefore we should not see the decline, but the light that should survive the decline. But since we should not see, we should not perceive; for whatever we perceive by sight must necessarily be seen; wherefore if that decline were perceived neither by sight nor by any other sense, it cannot be reckoned among objects of sense. For nothing is an object of sense that cannot be perceived by sense. Let us apply now the consideration to virtue, by whose intellectual light we most fittingly say the mind shines. Again, a certain decline from this light of virtue, not destroying the soul, but obscuring it, is called vice. Therefore also vice can by no means be reckoned among objects of intellectual perception, as that decline of light is rightly excluded from the number of objects of sense perception. Yet what remains of soul, that is that which lives and is soul is just as much an object of intellectual perception as that is an object of sense perception which should shine in this visible luminary after any imaginable degree of decline. And so the soul, in so far as it is soul and partakes of life, without which it can in no way be soul, is most correctly to be preferred to all objects of sense perception. Wherefore it is most erroneous to say that any soul is not from God, from whom you boast that the sun and moon have their existence.

7. But if now it should be thought fit to designate as objects of sense perception not only all those things that we perceive by the senses, but also all those things that though not perceiving by the senses we judge of by means of the body, as of darkness through the eyes, of silence through the ears,—for not by seeing darkness and not by hearing silence do we know of their existence,—and again, in the case of objects of intellectual perception, not those things only which we see illuminated by the mind, as is wisdom itself, but also those things which by the illumination itself we avoid, such as foolishness, which I might fittingly designate mental darkness; I should have made no controversy about a word, but should have dissolved the whole question by an easy division, and straightway I should have proved to those giving good attention, that by the divine law of truth intelligible subsistences are to be preferred to sensible subsistences, not the decline of these subsistences, even though we should choose to call these intelligible, those sensible. Wherefore, that those who acknowledge that these visible luminaries and those intelligible souls are subsistences, are in every way compelled to grant and to attribute the sublimer part to souls; but that defects of either kind cannot be preferred the one to the other, for they are only privative and indicate nonexistence, and therefore have precisely the same force as negations themselves. For when we say, It is not gold, and, It is not virtue, although there is the greatest possible difference between gold and virtue, yet there is no difference between the negations that we adjoin to them. But that it is worse indeed not to be virtue than not to be gold, no sane man doubts. Who does not know that the difference lies not in the negations themselves, but in the things to which they are adjoined? For by as much as virtue is more excellent than gold, by so much is it more wretched to be in want of virtue than of gold. Wherefore, since intelligible things excel sensible things, we rightly feel greater repugnance towards defect in intelligible than in sensible things, esteeming not the defects, but

the things that are deficient more or less precious. From which now it appears, that defect of light, which is intelligible, is far more wretched than defect of the sensible light, because, forsooth, life which is known is by far more precious than yonder light which is seen.

8. This being the case, who will dare, while attributing sun and moon, and whatever is refulgent in the stars, nay in this fire of ours and in this visible earthly life, to God, to decline to grant that any souls whatsoever, which are not souls except by the fact of their being perfectly alive, since in this fact alone life has the precedence of light, are from God. And since he speaks truth who says, In as far as a thing shines it is from God, would I speak falsely, mighty God, if I should say, In so far as a thing lives it is from God? Let not, I beseech thee, blindness of intellect and perversions of mind be increased to such an extent that men may fail to know these things. But however great their error and pertinacity might have been, trusting in these arguments and armed therewith, I believe that when I should have laid the matter before them thus considered and canvassed, and should have calmly conferred with them, I should have feared lest any one of them should have seemed to me to be of any consequence, should he endeavor to subordinate or even to compare to bodily sense, or to those things that pertain to bodily sense as objects of knowledge, either intellect or those things that are perceived (not by way of defect) by the intellect. Which point having been settled, how would he or any other have dared to deny that such souls as he would consider evil, yet since they are souls, are to be reckoned in the number of intelligible things, nor are objects of intellectual perception by way of defect? This is on the supposition that souls are souls only by being alive. For if they were intellectually perceived as vicious through defect, being vicious by lack of virtue, yet they are perceived as souls not through defect, for they are souls by reason of being alive. Nor can it be maintained that presence of life is a cause of defect, for by as much as anything is defective, by so much is it severed from life.

9. Since therefore it would have been every way evident that no souls can be separated from that Author from whom yonder light is not separated, whatever they might have now adduced I should not have accepted, and should rather have admonished them that they should choose with me to

follow those who maintain that whatever is, since it is, and in whatever degree it is, has its existence from the one God.

CHAPTER 7

HOW EVIL MEN ARE OF GOD, AND NOT OF GOD

They might have cited against me those words of the gospel: “Ye therefore do not hear, because ye are not of God;” “Ye are of your father the devil.” I also should have cited: “All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made,” and this of the Apostle: “One God of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom are all things,” and again from the same Apostle: “Of whom are all things, through whom are all things, in whom are all things, to Him be glory.” I should have exhorted those men (if indeed I had found them men), that we should presume upon nothing as if we had found it out, but should rather inquire of the masters who would demonstrate the agreement and harmony of those passages that seem to be discordant. For when in one and the same Scriptural authority we read: “All things are of God,” and elsewhere: “Ye are not of God,” since it is wrong rashly to condemn books of Scripture, who would not have seen that a skilled teacher should be found who would know a solution of this problem, from whom assuredly if endowed with good intellectual powers, and a “spiritual man,” as is said by divine inspiration (for he would necessarily have favored the true arguments concerning the intelligible and sensible nature, which, as far as I can, I have conducted and handled, nay he would have disclosed them far better and more convincingly); we should have heard nothing else concerning this problem, except, as might happen, that there is no class of souls but has its existence from God, and that it is yet rightly said to sinners and unbelievers: “Ye are not of God.” For we also, perchance, Divine aid having been implored, should have been able easily to see, that it is one thing to live and another to sin, and (although life in sin may be called death in comparison with just life, and while in one man it may be found, that he is at the same time alive and a sinner) that so far as he is alive, he is of God, so far as he is a sinner he is not of God. In which division we use that alternative that suits our sentiment; so that when we wish to insist upon the omnipotence of God as Creator, we may say even to sinners that they are of God. For we are speaking to those who are contained in some class, we are speaking to those having animal life, we are speaking to rational beings, we are speaking lastly—and this applies especially to the matter in hand—to living beings, all which things are essentially divine functions. But when our purpose is to convict evil men, we rightly say: “Ye are not of God.” For we speak to them as averse to truth, unbelieving, criminal, infamous, and, to sum up all in one term—sinners, all of which things are undoubtedly not of God. Therefore what wonder is it, if Christ says to sinners, convicting them of this very thing that they were sinners and did not believe in Him: “Ye are not of God;” and on the other hand, without prejudice to the former statement: “All things were made through Him,” and “All things are of God?” For if not to believe Christ, to repudiate Christ’s advent, not to accept Christ, was a sure mark of souls that are not of God; and so it was said: “Ye therefore hear not, because ye are not of God;” how would that saying of the apostle be true that occurs in the memorable beginning of the gospel: “He came unto his own things, and his own people did not receive him?” Whence his own if they did not receive him; or whence therefore not his own because they did not receive him, unless that sinners by virtue of being men belong to God, but by virtue of being sinners belong to the devil? He who says: “His own people received him not” had reference to nature; but he who says: “Ye are not of God.” had reference to will; for the evangelist was commending the works of God, Christ was censuring the sins of men.

CHAPTER 8

THE MANICHAEANS INQUIRE WHENCE IS EVIL AND BY THIS QUESTION THINK THEY HAVE TRIUMPHED. LET THEM FIRST KNOW, WHICH IS MOST EASY TO DO, THAT NOTHING CAN LIVE WITHOUT GOD. CONSUMMATE EVIL CANNOT BE KNOWN EXCEPT BY THE KNOWLEDGE OF CONSUMMATE GOOD, WHICH IS GOD

Here perchance some one may say: Whence are sins themselves, and whence is evil in general? If from man, whence is man? if from an angel, whence is the angel? When it is said, however truly and rightly, that these are from God, it nevertheless seems to those unskillful and possessed of little power to look into recondite matters, that evils and sins are thereby connected, as by a sort of chain, to God. By this question they think themselves triumphant, as if forsooth to ask were to know;—would it were so, for in that case no one would be more knowing than myself. Yet very often in controversy the propounder of a great question, while impersonating the great teacher, is himself more ignorant in the matter concerning which he would frighten his opponent, than he whom he would frighten.

These therefore suppose that they are superior to the common run, because the former ask questions that the latter cannot answer. If therefore when I most unfortunately was associated with them, not in the position in which I have now for some time been, they had raised these objections when I had brought forward this argument, I should have said: I ask that you meanwhile agree with me, which is most easy, that if nothing can shine without God, much less can anything live without God. Let us not persist in such monstrous opinions as to maintain that any souls whatsoever have life apart from God. For perchance it may so happen that with me you are ignorant as to this thing, namely whence is evil, let us then learn either simultaneously or in any order, I care not what. For what if knowledge of the perfection of evil is impossible to man without knowledge of the perfection of good? For we should not know darkness if we were always in darkness. But the notion of light does not allow its opposite to be unknown. But the highest good is that than which there is nothing higher. But God is good and than Him nothing can be higher. God therefore is the highest good. Let us therefore together so recognize God, and thus what we seek too hastily will not be hidden from us. Do you suppose then that the knowledge of God is a matter of small account or desert. For what other reward is there for us than life eternal, which is to know God? For God the Master says: “But this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only and true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” For the soul, although it is immortal, yet because aversion from the knowledge of God is rightly called its death, when it is converted to God, the reward of eternal life to be attained is that knowledge; so that this is, as has been said, eternal life. But no one can be converted to God, except he turn himself away from this world. This for myself I feel to be arduous and exceedingly difficult, whether it is easy to you, God Himself would have seen. I should have been inclined to think it easy to you, had I not been moved by the fact, that, since the world from which we are commanded to turn away is visible, and the apostle says: “The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are unseen are eternal,” you ascribe more importance to the judgment of these eyes than to that of the mind, asserting and believing as you do that there is no shining feather that does not shine from God; and that there are living souls that do not live from God. These and like things I should either have said to them or considered with myself, for even then, supplicating God with all my bowels, so to speak, and examining as attentively as possible the Scriptures, I should perchance have been able either to say such things or to think them, so far as was necessary for my salvation.

CHAPTER 9

AUGUSTIN DECEIVED BY FAMILIARITY WITH THE MANICHAEANS, AND BY THE SUCCESSION OF VICTORIES OVER IGNORANT CHRISTIANS REPORTED BY THEM. THE MANICHAEANS ARE LIKEWISE EASILY REFUTED FROM THE KNOWLEDGE OF SIN AND THE WILL

But two things especially, which easily lay hold upon that unwary age, urged me through wonderful circuits. One of these was familiarity, suddenly, by a certain false semblance of goodness, wrapped many times around my neck as a certain sinuous chain. The other was, that I was almost always noxiously victorious in arguing with ignorant Christians who yet eagerly attempted, each as he could, to defend their faith. By which frequent success the ardor of youth was kindled, and by its own impulse rashly verged upon the great evil of stubbornness. For this kind of wrangling, after I had become an auditor among them, whatever I was able to do either by my own genius, such as it was, or by reading the works of others, I most gladly devoted to them alone. Accordingly from their speeches ardor in disputations was daily increased, from success in disputations love for them [the Manichaeans]. Whence it resulted that whatever they said, as if affected by certain strange disorders, I approved of as true, not because I knew it to be true, but because I wished it to be. So it came about that, however slowly and cautiously, yet for a long time I followed men that preferred a sleek straw to a living soul.

12. So be it, I was not able at that time to distinguish and discern sensible from intelligible things, carnal forsooth from spiritual. It did not belong to age, nor to discipline, nor even to any habit, nor, finally, to any deserts; for

it is a matter of no small joy and felicitation: had I not thus been able at length even to grasp that which in the judgment of all men nature itself by the laws of the most High God has established?

CHAPTER 10

SIN IS ONLY FROM THE WILL. HIS OWN LIFE AND WILL BEST KNOWN TO EACH INDIVIDUAL. WHAT WILL IS

For let any men whatever, if only no madness has broken them loose from the common sense of the human race, bring whatever zeal they like for judging, whatever ignorance, nay whatever slowness of mind, I should like to find out what they would have replied to me had I asked, whether a man would seem to them to have sinned by whose hand while he was asleep another should have written something disgraceful? Who doubts that they would have denied that it is a sin, and have exclaimed against it so vehemently that they might perchance have been enraged that I should have thought them proper objects of such a question? Of whom reconciled and restored to equanimity, as best I could do it, I should have begged that they would not take it amiss if I asked them another thing just as manifest, just as completely within the knowledge of all. Then I should have asked, if some stronger person had done some evil thing by the hand of one not sleeping but conscious, yet with the rest of his members bound and in constraint, whether because he knew it, though absolutely unwilling, he should be held guilty of any sin? And here all marvelling that I should ask such questions, would reply without hesitation, that he had absolutely not sinned at all. Why so? Because whoever has done anything evil by means of one unconscious or unable to resist, the latter can by no means be justly condemned. And precisely why this is so, if I should inquire of the human nature in these men, I should easily bring out the desired answer, by asking in this manner: Suppose that the sleeper already knew what the other would do with his hand, and of purpose aforethought, having drunk so much as would prevent his being awakened, should go to sleep, in order to deceive some one with an oath. Would any amount of sleep suffice to prove his innocence? What else than a guilty man would one pronounce him? But if he has also willingly been bound that he may deceive some one by this pretext, in what respect then would those chains profit as a means of relieving him of sin? Although bound by these he was really not able to resist, as in the other case the sleeper was absolutely ignorant of what he was then doing. Is there therefore any possibility of doubting that both should be judged to have sinned? Which things having been conceded, I should have argued, that sin is indeed nowhere but in the will, since this consideration also would have helped me, that justice holds guilty those sinning by evil will alone, although they may have been unable to accomplish what they willed.

13. For who could have said that, in adducing these considerations, I was dwelling upon obscure and recondite things, where on account of the fewness of those able to understand, either fraud or suspicion of ostentation is accustomed to arise? Let that distinction between intelligible and sensible things withdraw for a little: let me not be found fault with for following up slow minds with the stimuli of subtle disputations. Permit me to know that I live, permit me to know that I will to live. If in this the human race agrees, as our life is known to us, so also is our will. Nor when we become possessed of this knowledge, is there any occasion to fear lest any one should convince us that we may be deceived; for no one can be deceived as to whether he does not live, or wishes nothing. I do not think that I have adduced anything obscure, and my concern is rather lest some should find fault with me for dwelling on things that are too manifest. But let us consider the bearing of these things.

14. Sinning therefore takes place only by exercise of will. But our will is very well known to us; for neither should I know that I will, if I did not know what will itself is. Accordingly, it is thus defined: will is a movement of mind, no one compelling, either for not losing or for obtaining something. Why therefore could not I have so defined it then? Was it difficult to see that one unwilling is contrary to one willing, just as the left hand is contrary to the right, not as black to white? For the same thing cannot be at the same time black and white. But whoever is placed between two men is on the left hand with reference to one, on the right with reference to the other. One man is both on the right hand and on the left hand at the same time, but by no means both to the one man. So indeed one mind may be at the same time unwilling and willing, but it cannot be at the

same time unwilling and willing with reference to one and the same thing. For when any one unwillingly does anything; if you ask him whether he wished to do it, he says that he did not. Likewise if you ask whether he wished not to do it, he replies that he did. So you will find him unwilling with reference to doing, willing with reference to not doing, that is to say, one mind at the same time having both attitudes, but each referring to different things. Why do I say this? Because if we should again ask wherefore though unwilling he does this, he will say that he is compelled. For every one also who does a thing unwillingly is compelled, and every one who is compelled, if he does a thing, does it only unwillingly. It follows that he that is willing is free from compulsion, even if any one thinks himself compelled. And in this manner every one who willingly does a thing is not compelled, and whoever is not compelled, either does it willingly or not at all. Since nature itself proclaims these things in all men whom we can interrogate without absurdity, from the boy even to the old man, from literary sport even to the throne of the wise, why then should I not have seen that in the definition of will should be put, "no one compelling," which now as if with greater experience most cautiously I have done. But if this is everywhere manifest, and promptly occurs to all not by instruction but by nature, what is there left that seems obscure, unless perchance it be concealed from some one, that when we wish for something, we will, and our mind is moved towards it, and we either have it or do not have it, and if we have it we will to retain it, if we have it not, to acquire it? Wherefore everyone who wills, wills either not to lose something or to obtain it. Hence if all these things are clearer than day, as they are, nor are they given to my conception alone, but by the liberality of truth itself to the whole human race, why could I not have said even at that time: Will is a movement of the mind, no one compelling, either for not losing or for obtaining something?

CHAPTER 11

WHAT SIN IS

Some one will say: What assistance would this have furnished you against the Manichaeans? Wait a moment; permit me first also to define sin, which, every mind reads divinely written in itself, cannot exist apart from will. Sin therefore is the will to retain and follow after what justice forbids, and from which it is free to abstain. Although if it be not free, it is not will. But I have preferred to define more roughly than precisely. Should I not also have carefully examined those obscure books, whence I might have learned that no one is worthy of blame or punishment who either wills what justice does not prohibit him from willing, or does not do what he is not able to do? Do not shepherds on mountains, poets in theatres, unlearned in social intercourse, learned in libraries, masters in schools, priests in consecrated places, and the human race throughout the whole world, sing out these things? But if no one is worthy of blame and condemnation, who either does not act against the prohibition of justice, or who does not do what he cannot do, yet every sin is blameworthy and condemnable, who doubts then that it is sin, when willing is unjust, and not willing is free. And hence that definition is both true and easy to understand, and not only now but then also could have been spoken by me: Sin is the will of retaining or of obtaining, what justice forbids, and whence it is free to abstain?

CHAPTER 12

FROM THE DEFINITIONS GIVEN OF SIN AND WILL, HE OVERTHROWS THE ENTIRE HERESY OF THE MANICHAEANS. LIKEWISE FROM THE JUST CONDEMNATION OF EVIL SOULS IT FOLLOWS THAT THEY ARE EVIL NOT BY NATURE BUT BY WILL. THAT SOULS ARE GOOD BY NATURE, TO WHICH THE PARDON OF SINS IS GRANTED

16. Come now, let us see in what respect these things would have aided us. Much every way, so that I should have desired nothing more; for they end the whole cause; for whoever consulting in the inner mind, where they are more pronounced and assured, the secrets of his own conscience, and the divine laws absolutely imposed upon nature, grants that these two definitions of will and sin are true, condemns without any hesitation by the fewest and the briefest, but plainly the most invincible reasons, the whole heresy of the Manichaeans. Which can be thus considered. They say that there are two kinds of souls, the one good, which is in such a way from God, that it is said not to have been made by Him out of any material or out of nothing, but to have proceeded as a certain part from the very substance itself of God; the other evil, which they believe and strive to get others to believe pertains to God in no way whatever; and so they maintain that the

one is the perfection of good, but the other the perfection of evil, and that these two classes were at one time distinct but are now commingled. The character and the cause of this commingling I had not yet heard; but nevertheless I could have inquired whether that evil kind of souls, before it was mingled with the good, had any will. For if not, it was without sin and innocent, and so by no means evil. But if evil in such a way, that though without will, as fire, yet if it should touch the good it would violate and corrupt it; how impious it is to believe that the nature of evil is powerful enough to change any part of God, and that the Highest Good is corruptible and violable! But if the will was present, assuredly there was present, no one compelling, a movement of the mind either towards not losing something or obtaining something. But this something was either good, or was thought to be good, for not otherwise could it be earnestly desired. But in supreme evil, before the commingling which they maintain, there never was any good. Whence then could there be in it either the knowledge or the thought of good? Did they wish for nothing that was in themselves, and earnestly desire that true good which was without? That will must truly be declared worthy of distinguished and great praise by which is earnestly desired the supreme and true good. Whence then in supreme evil was this movement of mind most worthy of so great praise? Did they seek it for the sake of injuring it? In the first place, the argument comes to the same thing. For he who wishes to injure, wishes to deprive another of some good for the sake of some good of his own. There was therefore in them either a knowledge of good or an opinion of good, which ought by no means to belong to supreme evil. In the second place, whence had they known, that good placed outside of themselves, which they designed to injure, existed at all. If they had intellectually perceived it, what is more excellent than such a mind? Is there anything else for which the whole energy of good men is put forth except the knowledge of that supreme and sincere good? What therefore is now scarcely conceded to a few good and just men, was mere evil, no good assisting, then able to accomplish? But if those souls bore bodies and saw the supreme good with their eyes, what tongues, what hearts, what intellects suffice for lauding and proclaiming those eyes, with which the minds of just men can scarcely be compared? How great good things we find in supreme evil! For if to see God is evil, God is not a good; but God is a good; therefore to see God is good; and I know not what can be compared to this good. Since to see anything is good, whence can it be made out that to be able to see is evil? Therefore whatever in those eyes or in those minds brought it about, that the divine essence could be seen by them, brought about a great thing and a good thing most worthy of ineffable praise. But if it was not brought about, but it was such in itself and eternal, it is difficult to find anything better than this evil.

17. Lastly, that these souls may have nothing of these praiseworthy things which by the reasonings of the Manichaeans they are compelled to have, I should have asked, whether God condemns any or no souls. If none, there is no judgment of rewards and punishments, no providence, and the world is administered by chance rather than by reason, or rather is not administered at all. For the name administration must not be given to chances. But if it is impious for all those that are bound by any religion to believe this, it remains either that there is condemnation of some souls, or that there are no sins. But if there are no sins, neither is there any evil. Which if the Manichaeans should say, they would slay their heresy with a single blow. Therefore they and I agree that some souls are condemned by divine law and judgment. But if these souls are good, what is that justice? If evil, are they so by nature, or by will? But by nature souls can in no way be evil. Whence do we teach this. From the above definitions of will and sin. For to speak of souls, and that they are evil, and that they do not sin, is full of madness; but to say that they sin without will, is great craziness, and to hold any one guilty of sin for not doing what he could not do, belongs to the height of iniquity and insanity. Wherefore whatever these souls do, if they do it by nature not by will, that is, if they are wanting in a movement of mind free both for doing and not doing, if finally no power of abstaining from their work is conceded to them; we cannot hold that the sin is theirs. But all confess both that evil souls are justly, and souls that have not sinned are unjustly condemned; therefore they confess that those souls are evil that sin. But these, as reason teaches, do not sin. Therefore the extraneous class of evil souls of the Manichaeans, whatever it may be, is a non-entity.

18. Let us now look at that good class of souls, which again they exalt to such a degree as to say that it is the very substance of God. But how much better it is that each one should recognize his own rank and merit, nor be so

puffed up with sacrilegious pride as to believe that as often as he experiences a change in himself it is the substance of that supreme good, which devout reason holds and teaches to be unchangeable! For behold! since it is manifest that souls do not sin in not being such as they cannot be; it follows that these supposititious souls, whatever they may be, do not sin at all, and moreover that they are absolutely non-existent; it remains that since there are sins, they find none to whom to attribute them except the good class of souls and the substance of God. But especially are they pressed by Christian authority; for never have they denied that forgiveness of sins is granted when any one has been converted to God; never have they said (as they have said of many other passages) that some corrupter has interpolated this into the divine Scriptures. To whom then are sins attributed? If to those evil souls of the alien class, these also can become good, can possess the kingdom of God with Christ. Which denying, they [the Manichaeans] have no other class except those souls which they maintain are of the substance of God. It remains that they acknowledge that not only these latter also, but these alone sin. But I make no contention about their being alone in sinning; yet they sin. But are they compelled to sin by being commingled with evil? If so compelled that there was no power of resisting, they do not sin. If it is in their power to resist, and they voluntarily consent, we are compelled to find out through their [the Manichaean] teaching, why so great good things in supreme evil, why this evil in supreme good, unless it be that neither is that which they bring into suspicion evil, nor is that which they pervert by superstition supreme good?

CHAPTER 13

FROM DELIBERATION ON THE EVIL AND ON THE GOOD PART IT RESULTS THAT TWO CLASSES OF SOULS ARE NOT TO BE HELD TO. A CLASS OF SOULS ENTICING TO SHAMEFUL DEEDS HAVING BEEN CONCEDED, IT DOES NOT FOLLOW THAT THESE ARE EVIL BY NATURE, THAT THE OTHERS ARE SUPREME GOOD

19. But if I had taught, or at any rate had myself learned, that they rave and err regarding those two classes of souls, why should I have thenceforth thought them worthy of being heard or consulted about anything? That I might learn hence, that these two kinds of souls are pointed out, which in the course of deliberation assent puts now on the evil side, now on the

good? Why is not this rather the sign of one soul which by free will can be borne here and there, swayed hither and thither? For it was my own experience to feel that I am one, considering evil and good and choosing one or the other, but for the most part the one pleases, the other is fitting, placed in the midst of which we fluctuate. Nor is it to be wondered at, for we are now so constituted that through the flesh we can be affected by sensual pleasure, and through the spirit by honorable considerations. Am I not therefore compelled to acknowledge two souls? Nay, we can better and with far less difficulty recognize two classes of good things, of which neither is alien from God as its author, one soul acted upon from diverse directions, the lower and the higher, or to speak more correctly, the external and the internal. These are the two classes which a little while ago we considered under the names sensible and intelligible, which we now prefer to call more familiarly carnal and spiritual. But it has been made difficult for us to abstain from carnal things, since our truest bread is spiritual. For with great labor we now eat this bread. For neither without punishment for the sin of transgression have we been changed from immortal into mortal. So it happens, that when we strive after better things, habit formed by connection with the flesh and our sins in some way begin to militate against us and to put obstacles in our way, some foolish persons with most obtuse superstition suspect that there is another kind of souls which is not of God.

20. However even if it be conceded to them that we are enticed to shameful deeds by another inferior kind of souls, they do not thence make it evident that those enticing are evil by nature, or those enticed, supremely good. For it may be, the former of their own will, by striving after what was not lawful, that is, by sinning, from being good have become evil; and again they may be made good, but in such manner that for a long time they remain in sin, and by a certain occult suasion traduce to themselves other souls. Then, they may not be absolutely evil, but in their own kind, however inferior, they may exercise their own functions without any sin. But those superior souls to whom justice, the directress of things, has assigned a far more excellent activity, if they should wish to follow and to imitate those inferior ones, become evil, not because they imitate evil souls, but because they imitate in an evil way. By the evil souls is done what is proper to them, by the good what is alien to them is striven after. Hence the former remain

in their own grade, the latter are plunged into a lower. It is as when men copy after beasts. For the four-footed horse walks beautifully, but if a man on all fours should imitate him, who would think him worthy even of chaff for food? Rightly therefore we generally disapprove of one who imitates, while we approve of him whom he imitates. But we disapprove not because he has not succeeded, but for wishing to succeed at all. For in the horse we approve of that to which by as much as we prefer man, by so much are we offended that he copies after inferior creatures. So among men, however well the crier may do in sending forth his voice, would not the senator be insane, if he should do it even more clearly and better than the crier? Take an illustration from the heavenly bodies: The moon when shining is praised, and by its course and its changes is quite pleasing to those that pay attention to such things. But if the sun should wish to imitate it (for we may feign that it has desires of this sort), who would not be greatly and rightly displeased. From which illustrations I wish it to be understood, that even if there are souls (which meanwhile is left an open question) devoted to bodily offices not by sin but by nature, and even if they are related to us, however inferior they may be, by some inner affinity, they should not be esteemed evil simply because we are evil ourselves in following them and in loving corporeal things. For we sin by loving corporeal things, because by justice we are required and by nature we are able to love spiritual things, and when we do this we are, in our kind, the best and the happiest.

21. Wherefore what proof does deliberation, violently urged in both directions, now prone to sin, now borne on toward right conduct, furnish, that we are compelled to accept two kinds of souls, the nature of one of which is from God, of the other not; when we are free to conjecture so many other causes of alternating states of mind? But that these things are obscure and are to no purpose pried into by blear-eyed minds, whoever is a good judge of things sees. Wherefore those things rather which have been said regarding the will and sin, those things, I say, that supreme justice permits no man using his reason to be ignorant of, those things which if they were taken from us, there is nothing whence the discipline of virtue may begin, nothing whence it may rise from the death of vices, those things I say considered again and again with sufficient clearness and lucidity convince us that the heresy of the Manichaeans is false.

CHAPTER 14

AGAIN IT IS SHOWN FROM THE UTILITY OF REPENTING THAT SOULS ARE NOT BY NATURE EVIL. SO SURE A DEMONSTRATION IS NOT CONTRADICTED EXCEPT FROM THE HABIT OF ERRING

22. Like the foregoing considerations is what I shall now say about repenting. For as among all sane people it is agreed, and this the Manichaeans themselves not only confess but also teach, that to repent of sin is useful. Why shall I now, in this matter, collect the testimonies of the divine Scriptures, which are scattered throughout their pages? It is also the voice of nature; notice of this thing has escaped no fool. We should be undone, if this were not deeply imbedded in our nature. Some one may say that he does not sin; but no barbarity will dare to say, that if one sins he should not repent of it. This being the case, I ask to which of the two kinds of souls does repenting pertain? I know indeed that it can pertain neither to him who does ill nor to him who cannot do well. Wherefore, that I may use the words of the Manichaeans, if a soul of darkness repent of sin, it is not of the substance of supreme evil, if a soul of light, it is not of the substance of supreme good; that disposition of repenting which is profitable testifies alike that the penitent has done ill, and that he could have done well. How, therefore, is there from me nothing of evil, if I have acted unadvisedly, or how can I rightly repent if I have not so done? Hear the other part. How is there from me nothing of good, if in me there is good will, or how do I rightly repent if there is not? Wherefore, either let them deny that there is great utility in repenting, so that they may be driven not only from the Christian name, but from every even imaginary argument for their views, or let them cease to say and to teach that there are two kinds of souls, one of which has nothing of evil, the other nothing of good; for that whole sect is propped up by this two-headed or rather headlong variety of souls.

23. And to me indeed it is sufficient thus to know that the Manichaeans err, that I know that sin must be repented of; and yet if now by right of friendship I should accost some one of my friends who still thinks that they are worthy of being listened to, and should say to him: Do you not know that it is useful, when any one has sinned, to repent? Without hesitation he will swear that he knows. If then I shall have convinced you that Manichaeism is false, will you not desire anything more? Let him reply

what more he can desire in this matter. Very well, so far. But when I shall have begun to show the sure and necessary arguments which, bound to it with adamantine chains, as the saying is, follow that proposition, and shall have conducted to its conclusion the whole process by which that sect is overthrown, he will deny perhaps that he knows the utility of repenting, which no learned man, no unlearned, is ignorant of, and will rather contend, when we hesitate and deliberate, that two souls in us furnish each its own proper help to the solution of the different parts of the question. O habit of sin! O accompanying penalty of sin! Then you turned me away from the consideration of things so manifest, but you injured me when I did not discern. But now, among my most familiar acquaintances who do not discern, you wound and torment me discerning.

CHAPTER 15

HE PRAYS FOR HIS FRIENDS WHOM HE HAS HAD AS ASSOCIATES IN ERROR

24. Give heed to these things, I beseech you, dearly beloved. Your dispositions I have well known. If you now concede to me the mind and the reason of any sort of man, these things are far more certain than the things that we seemed to learn or rather were compelled to believe. Great God, God omnipotent, God of supreme goodness, whose right it is to be believed and known to be inviolable and unchangeable. Trinal Unity, whom the Catholic Church worships, as one who have experienced in myself Thy mercy, I supplicate Thee, that Thou wilt not permit those with whom from boyhood I have lived most harmoniously in every relation to dissent from me in Thy worship. I see how it was especially to be expected in this place that I should either even then have defended the Catholic Scriptures attacked by the Manichaeans, if as I say, I had been cautious; or I should now show that they can be defended. But in other volumes God will aid my purpose, for the moderate length of this, as I suppose, already asks to be spared.

OUR LORD'S SERMON ON THE MOUNT

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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DE SERMONE DOMINI IN MONTE SECUNDUM MATTHAEUM.

ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

ST. AUGUSTIN.

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Book I

Explanation of the first part of the sermon delivered by our Lord on the mount, as contained in the fifth chapter of Matthew

CHAPTER I

1. If any one will piously and soberly consider the sermon which our Lord Jesus Christ spoke on the mount, as we read it in the Gospel according to Matthew, I think that he will find in it, so far as regards the highest morals, a perfect standard of the Christian life: and this we do not rashly venture to promise, but gather it from the very words of the Lord Himself. For the sermon itself is brought to a close in such a way, that it is clear there are in it all the precepts which go to mould the life. For thus He speaks: “Therefore, whosoever heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, I will liken unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.” Since, therefore, He has not simply said, “Whosoever heareth my words,” but has made an addition, saying, “Whosoever heareth these words of mine,” He has sufficiently indicated, as I think, that these sayings which He uttered on the mount so perfectly guide the life of those who may be willing to live according to them, that they may justly be compared to one building upon a rock. I have said this merely that it may be clear that the sermon before us is perfect in all the precepts by which the Christian life is moulded; for as regards this particular section a more careful treatment will be given in its own place.

2. The beginning, then, of this sermon is introduced as follows: “And when He saw the great multitudes, He went up into a mountain: and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him: and He opened His mouth, and taught them, saying.” If it is asked what the “mountain” means, it may well be understood as meaning the greater precepts of righteousness; for there were lesser ones which were given to the Jews. Yet it is one God who, through His holy prophets and servants, according to a thoroughly arranged distribution of times, gave the lesser precepts to a people who as yet required to be bound by fear; and who, through His Son, gave the greater ones to a people whom it had now become suitable to set free by love. Moreover, when the lesser are given to the lesser, and the greater to the greater, they are given by Him who alone knows how to present to the human race the medicine suited to the occasion. Nor is it surprising that the greater precepts are given for the kingdom of heaven, and the lesser for an earthly kingdom, by that one and the same God, who made heaven and earth. With respect, therefore, to that righteousness which is the greater, it is said through the prophet, “Thy righteousness is like the mountains of God:” and this may well mean that the one Master alone fit to teach matters of so great importance teaches on a mountain. Then He teaches sitting, as behooves the dignity of the instructor’s office; and His disciples come to Him, in order that they might be nearer in body for hearing His words, as they also approached in spirit to fulfil His precepts. “And He opened His mouth, and taught them, saying.” The circumlocution before us, which runs, “And He opened His mouth,” perhaps gracefully intimates by the mere pause that the sermon will be somewhat longer than usual, unless, perchance, it should not be without meaning, that now He is said to have opened His own mouth, whereas under the old law He was accustomed to open the mouths of the prophets.

3. What, then, does He say? “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” We read in Scripture concerning the striving after temporal things, “All is vanity and presumption of spirit;” but presumption of spirit means audacity and pride: usually also the proud are said to have great spirits; and rightly, inasmuch as the wind also is called spirit. And hence it is written, “Fire, hail, snow, ice, spirit of tempest.” But, indeed, who does not know that the proud are spoken of as puffed up, as if swelled

out with wind? And hence also that expression of the apostle, “Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.” And “the poor in spirit” are rightly understood here, as meaning the humble and God-fearing, i.e. those who have not the spirit which puffeth up. Nor ought blessedness to begin at any other point whatever, if indeed it is to attain unto the highest wisdom; “but the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;” for, on the other hand also, “pride” is entitled “the beginning of all sin.” Let the proud, therefore, seek after and love the kingdoms of the earth; but “blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

CHAPTER II

4. “Blessed are the meek, for they shall by inheritance possess the earth:” that earth, I suppose, of which it is said in the Psalm, “Thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.” For it signifies a certain firmness and stability of the perpetual inheritance, where the soul, by means of a good disposition, rests, as it were, in its own place, just as the body rests on the earth, and is nourished from it with its own food, as the body from the earth. This is the very rest and life of the saints. Then, the meek are those who yield to acts of wickedness, and do not resist evil, but overcome evil with good. Let those, then, who are not meek quarrel and fight for earthly and temporal things; but “blessed are the meek, for they shall by inheritance possess the earth,” from which they cannot be driven out.

5. “Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.” Mourning is sorrow arising from the loss of things held dear; but those who are converted to God lose those things which they were accustomed to embrace as dear in this world: for they do not rejoice in those things in which they formerly rejoiced; and until the love of eternal things be in them, they are wounded by some measure of grief. Therefore they will be comforted by the Holy Spirit, who on this account chiefly is called the Paraclete, i.e. the Comforter, in order that, while losing the temporal joy, they may enjoy to the full that which is eternal.

6. “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” Now He calls those parties, lovers of a true and indestructible good. They will therefore be filled with that food of which

the Lord Himself says, “My meat is to do the will of my Father,” which is righteousness; and with that water, of which whosoever “drinketh,” as he also says, it “shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.”

7. “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.” He says that they are blessed who relieve the miserable, for it is paid back to them in such a way that they are freed from misery.

8. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” How foolish, therefore, are those who seek God with these outward eyes, since He is seen with the heart! as it is written elsewhere, “And in singleness of heart seek Him.” For that is a pure heart which is a single heart: and just as this light cannot be seen, except with pure eyes; so neither is God seen, unless that is pure by which He can be seen.

9. “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.” It is the perfection of peace, where nothing offers opposition; and the children of God are peacemakers, because nothing resists God, and surely children ought to have the likeness of their father. Now, they are peacemakers in themselves who, by bringing in order all the motions of their soul, and subjecting them to reason—i.e. to the mind and spirit—and by having their carnal lusts thoroughly subdued, become a kingdom of God: in which all things are so arranged, that that which is chief and pre-eminent in man rules without resistance over the other elements, which are common to us with the beasts; and that very element which is pre-eminent in man, i.e. mind and reason, is brought under subjection to something better still, which is the truth itself, the only-begotten Son of God. For a man is not able to rule over things which are inferior, unless he subjects himself to what is superior. And this is the peace which is given on earth to men of goodwill; this the life of the fully developed and perfect wise man. From a kingdom of this sort brought to a condition of thorough peace and order, the prince of this world is cast out, who rules where there is perversity and disorder. When this peace has been inwardly established and confirmed, whatever persecutions he who has been cast out shall stir up from without, he only increases the glory which is according to God; being unable to shake anything in that edifice, but by the failure of his machinations making it to

be known with how great strength it has been built from within outwardly. Hence there follows: “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

CHAPTER III

10. There are in all, then, these eight sentences. For now in what remains He speaks in the way of direct address to those who were present, saying: “Blessed shall ye be when men shall revile you and persecute you.” But the former sentences He addressed in a general way: for He did not say, Blessed are ye poor in spirit, for yours is the kingdom of heaven; but He says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:” nor, Blessed are ye meek, for ye shall inherit the earth; but, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” And so the others up to the eighth sentence, where He says: “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” After that He now begins to speak in the way of direct address to those present, although what has been said before referred also to His present audience; and that which follows, and which seems to be spoken specially to those present, refers also to those who were absent, or who would afterwards come into existence.

For this reason the number of sentences before us is to be carefully considered. For the beatitudes begin with humility: “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” i.e. those not puffed up, while the soul submits itself to divine authority, fearing lest after this life it go away to punishment, although perhaps in this life it might seem to itself to be happy. Then it (the soul) comes to the knowledge of the divine Scriptures, where it must show itself meek in its piety, lest it should venture to condemn that which seems absurd to the unlearned, and should itself be rendered unteachable by obstinate disputations. After that, it now begins to know in what entanglements of this world it is held by reason of carnal custom and sins: and so in this third stage, in which there is knowledge, the loss of the highest good is mourned over, because it sticks fast in what is lowest. Then, in the fourth stage there is labour, where vehement exertion is put forth, in order that the mind may wrench itself away from those things in which, by reason of their pestilential sweetness, it is entangled: here therefore righteousness is hungered and thirsted after, and fortitude is very necessary; because what is retained with delight is not abandoned without pain. Then, at the fifth stage, to those persevering in labour, counsel for getting rid of it is given; for unless each one is assisted by a superior, in no way is he fit in his own case to extricate himself from so great entanglements of miseries. But it is a just counsel, that he who wishes to be assisted by a stronger should assist him who is weaker in that in which he himself is stronger: therefore "blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." At the sixth stage there is purity of heart, able from a good conscience of good works to contemplate that highest good, which can be discerned by the pure and tranquil intellect alone. Lastly is the seventh, wisdom itself—i.e. the contemplation of the truth, tranquillizing the whole man, and assuming the likeness of God, which is thus summed up: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." The eighth, as it were, returns to the starting-point, because it shows and commends what is complete and perfect: therefore in the first and in the eighth the kingdom of heaven is named, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" and, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:" as it is now said, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Seven in number, therefore, are the things which bring perfection: for the eighth brings into light and shows what is perfect, so that starting, as it were, from the beginning again, the others also are perfected by means of these stages.

CHAPTER IV

11. Hence also the sevenfold operation of the Holy Ghost, of which Isaiah speaks, seems to me to correspond to these stages and sentences. But there is a difference of order: for there the enumeration begins with the more excellent, but here with the inferior. For there it begins with wisdom, and closes with the fear of God: but "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." And therefore, if we reckon as it were in a gradually ascending series, there the fear of God is first, piety second, knowledge third, fortitude fourth, counsel fifth, understanding sixth, wisdom seventh. The fear of God corresponds to the humble, of whom it is here said, "Blessed are the poor in

spirit,” i.e. those not puffed up, not proud: to whom the apostle says, “Be not high-minded, but fear;” i.e. be not lifted up. Piety corresponds to the meek: for he who inquires piously honours Holy Scripture, and does not censure what he does not yet understand, and on this account does not offer resistance; and this is to be meek: whence it is here said, “Blessed are the meek.” Knowledge corresponds to those that mourn who already have found out in the Scriptures by what evils they are held chained which they ignorantly have coveted as though they were good and useful. Fortitude corresponds to those hungering and thirsting: for they labour in earnestly desiring joy from things that are truly good, and in eagerly seeking to turn away their love from earthly and corporeal things: and of them it is here said, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness.” Counsel corresponds to the merciful: for this is the one remedy for escaping from so great evils, that we forgive, as we wish to be ourselves forgiven; and that we assist others so far as we are able, as we ourselves desire to be assisted where we are not able: and of them it is here said, “Blessed are the merciful.” Understanding corresponds to the pure in heart, the eye being as it were purged, by which that may be beheld which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and what hath not entered into the heart of man: and of them it is here said, “Blessed are the pure in heart.” Wisdom corresponds to the peacemakers, in whom all things are now brought into order, and no passion is in a state of rebellion against reason, but all things together obey the spirit of man, while he himself also obeys God: and of them it is here said, “Blessed are the peacemakers.”

12. Moreover, the one reward, which is the kingdom of heaven, is variously named according to these stages. In the first, just as ought to be the case, is placed the kingdom of heaven, which is the perfect and highest wisdom of the rational soul. Thus, therefore, it is said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven:” as if it were said, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” To the meek an inheritance is given, as it were the testament of a father to those dutifully seeking it: “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” To the mourners comfort, as to those who know what they have lost, and in what evils they are sunk: “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” To those hungering and thirsting, a full supply, as it were a refreshment to those labouring and

bravely contending for salvation: “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” To the merciful mercy, as to those following a true and excellent counsel, so that this same treatment is extended toward them by one who is stronger, which they extend toward the weaker: “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” To the pure in heart is given the power of seeing God, as to those bearing about with them a pure eye for discerning eternal things: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” To the peacemakers the likeness of God is given, as being perfectly wise, and formed after the image of God by means of the regeneration of the renewed man: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.” And those promises can indeed be fulfilled in this life, as we believe them to have been fulfilled in the case of the apostles. For that all-embracing change into the angelic form, which is promised after this life, cannot be explained in any words. “Blessed,” therefore, “are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” This eighth sentence, which goes back to the starting-point, and makes manifest the perfect man, is perhaps set forth in its meaning both by the circumcision on the eighth day in the Old Testament, and by the resurrection of the Lord after the Sabbath, the day which is certainly the eighth, and at the same time the first day; and by the celebration of the eight festival days which we celebrate in the case of the regeneration of the new man; and by the very number of Pentecost. For to the number seven, seven times multiplied, by which we make forty-nine, as it were an eighth is added, so that fifty may be made up, and we, as it were, return to the starting-point: on which day the Holy Spirit was sent, by whom we are led into the kingdom of heaven, and receive the inheritance, and are comforted; and are fed, and obtain mercy, and are purified, and are made peacemakers; and being thus perfect, we bear all troubles brought upon us from without for the sake of truth and righteousness.

CHAPTER V

13. “Blessed are ye,” says He, “when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.” Let any one who is seeking after the delights of this world and the riches of

temporal things under the Christian name, consider that our blessedness is within; as it is said of the soul of the Church by the mouth of the prophet, “All the beauty of the king’s daughter is within;” for outwardly revilings, and persecutions, and disparagements are promised; and yet, from these things there is a great reward in heaven, which is felt in the heart of those who endure, those who can now say, “We glory in tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” For it is not simply the enduring of such things that is advantageous, but the bearing of such things for the name of Christ not only with tranquil mind, but even with exultation. For many heretics, deceiving souls under the Christian name, endure many such things; but they are excluded from that reward on this account, that it is not said merely, “Blessed are they which endure persecution;” but it is added, “for righteousness’ sake.” Now, where there is no sound faith, there can be no righteousness, for the just [righteous] man lives by faith. Neither let schismatics promise themselves anything of that reward; for similarly, where there is no love, there cannot be righteousness, for “love worketh no ill to his neighbour;” and if they had it, they would not tear in pieces Christ’s body, which is the Church.

14. But it may be asked, What is the difference when He says, “when men shall revile you,” and “when they shall say all manner of evil against you,” since to revile is just this, to say evil against? But it is one thing when the reviling word is hurled with contumely in presence of him who is reviled, as it was said to our Lord, “Say we not the truth that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?” and another thing, when our reputation is injured in our absence, as it is also written of Him, “Some said, He is a prophet; others said, Nay, but He deceiveth the people.” Then, further, to persecute is to inflict violence, or to assail with snares, as was done by him who betrayed Him, and by them who crucified Him. Certainly, as for the fact that this also is not put in a bare form, so that it should be said, “and shall say all manner of evil against you,” but there is added the word “falsely,” and also the expression “for my sake;” I think that the addition is made for the sake of those who wish to glory in persecutions, and in the baseness of their reputation; and to say that Christ belongs to them for this reason, that many

bad things are said about them; while, on the one hand, the things said are true, when they are said respecting their error; and, on the other hand, if sometimes also some false charges are thrown out, which frequently happens from the rashness of men, yet they do not suffer such things for Christ’s sake. For he is not a follower of Christ who is not called a Christian according to the true faith and the catholic discipline.

15. “Rejoice,” says He, “and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.” I do not think that it is the higher parts of this visible world that are here called heaven. For our reward, which ought to be immoveable and eternal, is not to be placed in things fleeting and temporal. But I think the expression “in heaven” means in the spiritual firmament, where dwells everlasting righteousness: in comparison with which a wicked soul is called earth, to which it is said when it sins, “Earth thou art, and unto earth thou shalt return.” Of this heaven the apostle says, “For our conversation is in heaven.” Hence they who rejoice in spiritual good are conscious of that reward now; but then it will be perfected in every part, when this mortal also shall have put on immortality. “For,” says He, “so persecuted they the prophets also which were before you.” In the present case He has used “persecution” in a general sense, as applying alike to abusive words and to the tearing in pieces of one’s reputation; and has well encouraged them by an example, because they who speak true things are wont to suffer persecution: nevertheless did not the ancient prophets on this account, through fear of persecution, give over the preaching of the truth.

CHAPTER VI

16. Hence there follows most justly the statement, “Ye are the salt of the earth;” showing that those parties are to be judged insipid, who, either in the eager pursuit after abundance of earthly blessings, or through the dread of want, lose the eternal things which can neither be given nor taken away by men. “But if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?” i.e., If ye, by means of whom the nations in a measure are to be preserved [from corruption], through the dread of temporal persecutions shall lose the kingdom of heaven, where will be the men through whom error may be removed from you, since God has chosen you, in order that through you He might remove the error of others? Hence the savourless salt is “good for

nothing, but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men.” It is not therefore he who suffers persecution, but he who is rendered savourless by the fear of persecution, that is trodden under foot of men. For it is only one who is undermost that can be trodden under foot; but he is not undermost, who, however many things he may suffer in his body on the earth, yet has his heart fixed in heaven.

17. “Ye are the light of the world.” In the same way as He said above, “the salt of the earth,” so now He says, “the light of the world.” For in the former case that earth is not to be understood which we tread with our bodily feet, but the men who dwell upon the earth, or even the sinners, for the preserving of whom and for the extinguishing of whose corruptions the Lord sent the apostolic salt. And here, by the world must be understood not the heavens and the earth, but the men who are in the world or love the world, for the enlightening of whom the apostles were sent. “A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid,” i.e. [a city] founded upon great and distinguished righteousness, which is also the meaning of the mountain itself on which our Lord is discoursing. “Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel measure.” What view are we to take? That the expression “under a bushel measure” is so used that only the concealment of the candle is to be understood, as if He were saying, No one lights a candle and conceals it? Or does the bushel measure also mean something, so that to place a candle under a bushel is this, to place the comforts of the body higher than the preaching of the truth; so that one does not preach the truth so long as he is afraid of suffering any annoyance in corporeal and temporal things? And it is well said a bushel measure, whether on account of the recompense of measure, for each one receives the things done in his body,—”that every one,” says the apostle, “may there receive the things done in his body;” and it is said in another place, as if of this bushel measure of the body, “For with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again:”—or because temporal good things, which are carried to completion in the body, are both begun and come to an end in a certain definite number of days, which is perhaps meant by the “bushel measure;” while eternal and spiritual things are confined within no such limit, “for God giveth not the Spirit by measure.” Every one, therefore, who obscures and covers up the light of good doctrine by means of temporal comforts,

places his candle under a bushel measure. “But on a candlestick.” Now it is placed on a candlestick by him who subordinates his body to the service of God, so that the preaching of the truth is the higher, and the serving of the body the lower; yet by means even of the service of the body the doctrine shines more conspicuously, inasmuch as it is insinuated into those who learn by means of bodily functions, i.e. by means of the voice and tongue, and the other movements of the body in good works. The apostle therefore puts his candle on a candlestick, when he says, “So fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I preach to others, I myself should be found a castaway.” When He says, however, “that it may give light to all who are in the house,” I am of opinion that it is the abode of men which is called a house, i.e. the world itself, on account of what He says before, “Ye are the light of the world;” or if any one chooses to understand the house as being the Church, this, too, is not out of place.

CHAPTER VII

18. “Let your light,” says He, “so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” If He had merely said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,” He would seem to have fixed an end in the praises of men, which hypocrites seek, and those who canvass for honours and covet glory of the emptiest kind. Against such parties it is said, “If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ;” and, by the prophet, “They who please men are put to shame, because God hath despised them;” and again, “God hath broken the bones of those who please men;” and again the apostle, “Let us not be desirous of vainglory;” and still another time, “But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.” Hence our Lord has not said merely, “that they may see your good works,” but has added, “and glorify your Father who is in heaven:” so that the mere fact that a man by means of good works pleases men, does not there set it up as an end that he should please men; but let him subordinate this to the praise of God, and for this reason please men, that God may be glorified in him. For this is expedient for them who offer praise, that they should honour, not man, but God; as our Lord showed in

the case of the man who was carried, where, on the paralytic being healed, the multitude, marvelling at His powers, as it is written in the Gospel, “feared and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.” And His imitator, the Apostle Paul, says, “But they had heard only, that he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed; and they glorified God in me.”

19. And therefore, after He has exhorted His hearers that they should prepare themselves to bear all things for truth and righteousness, and that they should not hide the good which they were about to receive, but should learn with such benevolence as to teach others, aiming in their good works not at their own praise, but at the glory of God, He begins now to inform and to teach them what they are to teach; as if they were asking Him, saying: Lo, we are willing both to bear all things for Thy name, and not to hide Thy doctrine; but what precisely is this which Thou forbiddest us to hide, and for which Thou commandest us to bear all things? Art Thou about to mention other things contrary to those which are written in the law? “No,” says He; “for think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”

CHAPTER VIII

20. In this sentence the meaning is twofold. We must deal with it in both ways. For He who says, “I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil,” means it either in the way of adding what is wanting, or of doing what is in it. Let us then consider that first which I have put first: for he who adds what is wanting does not surely destroy what he finds, but rather confirms it by perfecting it; and accordingly He follows up with the statement, “Verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one iota or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” For, if even those things which are added for completion are fulfilled, much more are those things fulfilled which are sent in advance as a commencement. Then, as to what He says, “One iota or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law,” nothing else can be understood but a strong expression of perfection, since it is pointed out by means of single letters, among which letters “iota” is smaller than the others, for it is made by a single stroke; while a “tittle” is but a particle of some sort at the top of even that. And by these words He shows

that in the law all the smallest particulars even are to be carried into effect. After that He subjoins: “Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.” Hence it is the least commandments that are meant by “one iota” and “one tittle.” And therefore, “whosoever shall break and shall teach [men] so,”—i.e. in accordance with what he breaks, not in accordance with what he finds and reads,—”shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven;” and therefore, perhaps, he will not be in the kingdom of heaven at all, where only the great can be. “But whosoever shall do and teach [men] so,”—i.e. who shall not break, and shall teach men so, in accordance with what he does not break,—”shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” But in regard to him who shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven, it follows that he is also in the kingdom of heaven, into which the great are admitted: for to this what follows refers.

CHAPTER IX

21. “For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven;” i.e., unless ye shall fulfil not only those least precepts of the law which begin the man, but also those which are added by me, who am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. But you say to me: If, when He was speaking above of those least commandments, He said that whosoever shall break one of them, and shall teach in accordance with his transgression, is called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but that whosoever shall do them, and shall teach [men] so, is called great, and hence will be already in the kingdom of heaven, because he is great: what need is there for additions to the least precepts of the law, if he can be already in the kingdom of heaven, because whosoever shall do them, and shall so teach, is great? For this reason that sentence is to be understood thus: “But whosoever shall do and teach men so, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven,”—i.e. not in accordance with those least commandments, but in accordance with those which I am about to mention. Now what are they? “That your righteousness,” says He, “may exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees;” for unless it shall exceed theirs, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever, therefore, shall break those least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least; but whosoever shall do those least commandments, and shall teach men so, is not necessarily to be reckoned great and meet for the kingdom of heaven; but yet he is not so much the least as the man who breaks them. But in order that he may be great and fit for that kingdom, he ought to do and teach as Christ now teaches, i.e. in order that his righteousness may exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. The righteousness of the Pharisees is, that they shall not kill; the righteousness of those who are destined to enter into the kingdom of God, that they be not angry without a cause. The least commandment, therefore, is not to kill; and whosoever shall break that, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall fulfil that commandment not to kill, will not, as a necessary consequence, be great and meet for the kingdom of heaven, but yet he ascends a certain step. He will be perfected, however, if he be not angry without a cause; and if he shall do this, he will be much further removed from murder. For this reason he who teaches that we should not be angry, does not break the law not to kill, but rather fulfils it; so that we preserve our innocence both outwardly when we do not kill, and in heart when we are not angry.

22. “Ye have heard” therefore, says He, “that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the gehenna of fire.” What is the difference between being in danger of the judgment, and being in danger of the council, and being in danger of the gehenna of fire? For this last sounds most weighty, and reminds us that certain stages were passed over from lighter to more weighty, until the gehenna of fire was reached. And, therefore, if it is a lighter thing to be in danger of the judgment than to be in danger of the council, and if it is also a lighter thing to be in danger of the council than to be in danger of the gehenna of fire, we must understand it to be a lighter thing to be angry with a brother without a cause than to say “Raca;” and again, to be a lighter thing to say “Raca” than to say “Thou

fool.” For the danger would not have gradations, unless the sins also were mentioned in gradation.

23. But here one obscure word has found a place, for “Raca” is neither Latin nor Greek. The others, however, are current in our language. Now, some have wished to derive the interpretation of this expression from the Greek, supposing that a ragged person is called “Raca,” because a rag is called in Greek rhakos; yet, when one asks them what a ragged person is called in Greek, they do not answer “Raca;” and further, the Latin translator might have put the word ragged where he has placed “Raca,” and not have used a word which, on the one hand, has no existence in the Latin language, and, on the other, is rare in the Greek. Hence the view is more probable which I heard from a certain Hebrew whom I had asked about it; for he said that the word does not mean anything, but merely expresses the emotion of an angry mind. Grammarians call those particles of speech which express an affection of an agitated mind interjections; as when it is said by one who is grieved, “Alas,” or by one who is angry, “Hah.” And these words in all languages are proper names, and are not easily translated into another language; and this cause certainly compelled alike the Greek and the Latin translators to put the word itself, inasmuch as they could find no way of translating it.

24. There is therefore a gradation in the sins referred to, so that first one is angry, and keeps that feeling as a conception in his heart; but if now that emotion shall draw forth an expression of anger not having any definite meaning, but giving evidence of that feeling of the mind by the very fact of the outbreak wherewith he is assailed with whom one is angry, this is certainly more than if the rising anger were restrained by silence; but if there is heard not merely an expression of anger, but also a word by which the party using it now indicates and signifies a distinct censure of him against whom it is directed, who doubts but that this is something more than if merely an exclamation of anger were uttered? Hence in the first there is one thing, i.e. anger alone; in the second two things, both anger and a word that expresses anger; in the third three things, anger and a word that expresses anger, and in that word the utterance of distinct censure. Look now also at the three degrees of liability,—the judgment, the council, the

gehenna of fire. For in the judgment an opportunity is still given for defence; in the council, however, although there is also wont to be a judgment, yet because the very distinction compels us to acknowledge that there is a certain difference in this place, the production of the sentence seems to belong to the council, inasmuch as it is not now the case of the accused himself that is in question, whether he is to be condemned or not, but they who judge confer with one another to what punishment they ought to condemn him, who, it is clear, is to be condemned; but the gehenna of fire does not treat as a doubtful matter either the condemnation, like the judgment, or the punishment of him who is condemned, like the council; for in the gehenna of fire both the condemnation and the punishment of him who is condemned are certain. Thus there are seen certain degrees in the sins and in the liability to punishment; but who can tell in what ways they are invisibly shown in the punishments of souls? We are therefore to learn how great the difference is between the righteousness of the Pharisees and that greater righteousness which introduces into the kingdom of heaven, because while it is a more serious crime to kill than to inflict reproach by means of a word, in the one case killing exposes one to the judgment, but in the other anger exposes one to the judgment, which is the least of those three sins; for in the former case they were discussing the question of murder among men, but in the latter all things are disposed of by means of a divine judgment, where the end of the condemned is the gehenna of fire. But whoever shall say that murder is punished by a more severe penalty under the greater righteousness if a reproach is punished by the gehenna of fire, compels us to understand that there are differences of gehennas.

25. Indeed, in the three statements before us, we must observe that some words are understood. For the first statement has all the words that are necessary. “Whosoever,” says He, “is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment.” But in the second, when He says, “and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca,” there is understood the expression without cause, and thus there is subjoined, “shall be in danger of the council.” In the third, now, where He says, “but whosoever shall say, Thou fool,” two things are understood, both to his brother and without cause. And in this way we defend the apostle when he calls the Galatians fools, to whom he also gives the name of brethren; for he does not do it

without cause. And here the word brother is to be understood for this reason, that the case of an enemy is spoken of afterwards, and how he also is to be treated under the greater righteousness.

CHAPTER X

26. Next there follows here: “Therefore, if thou hast brought thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” From this surely it is clear that what is said above is said of a brother: inasmuch as the sentence which follows is connected by such a conjunction that it confirms the preceding one; for He does not say, But if thou bring thy gift to the altar; but He says, “Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar.” For if it is not lawful to be angry with one’s brother without a cause, or to say “Raca,” or to say “Thou fool,” much less is it lawful so to retain anything in one’s mind, as that indignation may be turned into hatred. And to this belongs also what is said in another passage: “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” We are therefore commanded, when about to bring our gift to the altar, if we remember that our brother hath ought against us, to leave the gift before the altar, and to go and be reconciled to our brother, and then to come and offer the gift. But if this is to be understood literally, one might perhaps suppose that such a thing ought to be done if the brother is present; for it cannot be delayed too long, since you are commanded to leave your gift before the altar. If, therefore, such a thing should come into your mind respecting one who is absent, and, as may happen, even settled down beyond the sea, it is absurd to suppose that your gift is to be left before the altar until you may offer it to God after having traversed both lands and seas. And therefore we are compelled to have recourse to an altogether internal and spiritual interpretation, in order that what has been said may be understood without absurdity.

27. And so we may interpret the altar spiritually, as being faith itself in the inner temple of God, whose emblem is the visible altar. For whatever offering we present to God, whether prophecy, or teaching, or prayer, or a psalm, or a hymn, and whatever other such like spiritual gift occurs to the mind, it cannot be acceptable to God, unless it be sustained by sincerity of

faith, and, as it were, placed on that fixedly and immoveably, so that what we utter may remain whole and uninjured. For many heretics, not having the altar, i.e. true faith, have spoken blasphemies for praise; being weighed down, to wit, with earthly opinions, and thus, as it were, throwing down their offering on the ground. But there ought also to be purity of intention on the part of the offerer. And therefore, when we are about to present any such offering in our heart, i.e. in the inner temple of God ("For," as it is said, "the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are;" and, "That Christ may dwell in the inner man by faith in your hearts") if it occur to our mind that a brother hath ought against us, i.e. if we have injured him in anything (for then he has something against us whereas we have something against him if he has injured us, and in that case it is not necessary to proceed to reconciliation: for you will not ask pardon of one who has done you an injury, but merely forgive him, as you desire to be forgiven by the Lord what you have committed against Him), we are therefore to proceed to reconciliation, when it has occurred to our mind that we have perhaps injured our brother in something; but this is to be done not with the bodily feet, but with the emotions of the mind, so that you are to prostrate yourself with humble disposition before your brother, to whom you have hastened in affectionate thought, in the presence of Him to whom you are about to present your offering. For thus, even if he should be present, you will be able to soften him by a mind free from dissimulation, and to recall him to goodwill by asking pardon, if first you have done this before God, going to him not with the slow movement of the body, but with the very swift impulse of love; and then coming, i.e. recalling your attention to that which you were beginning to do, you will offer your gift.

28. But who acts in a way that he is neither angry with his brother without a cause, nor says "Raca" without a cause, nor calls him a fool without a cause, all of which are most proudly committed; or so, that, if perchance he has fallen into any of these, he asks pardon with suppliant mind, which is the only remedy; who but just the man that is not puffed up with the spirit of empty boasting? "Blessed" therefore "are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Let us look now at what follows.

CHAPTER XI

29. “Be kindly disposed,” says he, “toward thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.” I understand who the judge is: “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” I understand who the officer is: “And angels,” it is said, “ministered unto Him:” and we believe that He will come with His angels to judge the quick and the dead. I understand what is meant by the prison: evidently the punishments of darkness, which He calls in another passage the outer darkness: for this reason, I believe, that the joy of the divine rewards is something internal in the mind itself, or even if anything more hidden can be thought of, that joy of which it is said to the servant who deserved well, “Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord;” just as also, under this republican government, one who is thrust into prison is sent out from the council chamber, or from the palace of the judge.

30. But now, with respect to paying the uttermost farthing, it may be understood without absurdity either as standing for this, that nothing is left unpunished; just as in common speech we also say “to the very dregs,” when we wish to express that something is so drained out that nothing is left: or by the expression “the uttermost farthing” earthly sins may be meant. For as a fourth part of the separate component parts of this world, and in fact as the last, the earth is found; so that you begin with the heavens, you reckon the air the second, water the third, the earth the fourth. It may therefore seem to be suitably said, “till thou hast paid the last fourth,” in the sense of “till thou hast expiated thy earthly sins:” for this the sinner also heard, “Earth thou art, and unto earth shall thou return.” Then, as to the expression “till thou hast paid,” I wonder if it does not mean that punishment which is called eternal. For whence is that debt paid where there is now no opportunity given of repenting and of leading a more correct life? For perhaps the expression “till thou hast paid” stands here in the same sense as in that passage where it is said, “Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool;” for not even when the enemies have been put under His feet, will He cease to sit at the right hand: or that statement of the apostle, “For He must reign, till He hath put all

enemies under His feet;” for not even when they have been put under His feet, will He cease to reign. Hence, as it is there understood of Him respecting whom it is said, “He must reign, till He hath put His enemies under His feet,” that He will reign for ever, inasmuch as they will be for ever under His feet: so here it may be understood of him respecting whom it is said, “Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing,” that he will never come out; for he is always paying the uttermost farthing, so long as he is suffering the everlasting punishment of his earthly sins. Nor would I say this in such a way as that I should seem to prevent a more careful discussion respecting the punishment of sins, as to how in the Scriptures it is called eternal; although in all possible ways it is to be avoided rather than known.

31. But let us now see who the adversary himself is, with whom we are enjoined to agree quickly, whiles we are in the way with him. For he is either the devil, or a man, or the flesh, or God, or His commandment. But I do not see how we should be enjoined to be on terms of goodwill, i.e. to be of one heart or of one mind, with the devil. For some have rendered the Greek word which is found here “of one heart,” others “of one mind:” but neither are we enjoined to show goodwill to the devil (for where there is goodwill there is friendship: and no one would say that we are to make friends with the devil); nor is it expedient to come to an agreement with him, against whom we have declared war by once for all renouncing him, and on conquering whom we shall be crowned; nor ought we now to yield to him, for if we had never yielded to him, we should never have fallen into such miseries. Again, as to the adversary being a man, although we are enjoined to live peaceably with all men, as far as lieth in us, where certainly goodwill, and concord, and consent may be understood; yet I do not see how I can accept the view, that we are delivered to the judge by a man, in a case where I understand Christ to be the judge, “before” whose “judgment-seat we must all appear,” as the apostle says: how then is he to deliver me to the judge, who will appear equally with me before the judge? Or if any one is delivered to the judge because he has injured a man, although the party who has been injured does not deliver him, it is a much more suitable view, that the guilty party is delivered to the judge by that law against which he acted when he injured the man. And this for the additional reason, that if

any one has injured a man by killing him, there will be no time now in which to agree with him; for he is not now in the way with him, i.e. in this life: and yet a remedy will not on that account be excluded, if one repents and flees for refuge with the sacrifice of a broken heart to the mercy of Him who forgives the sins of those who turn to Him, and who rejoices more over one penitent than over ninety-nine just persons. But much less do I see how we are enjoined to bear goodwill towards, or to agree with, or to yield to, the flesh. For it is sinners rather who love their flesh, and agree with it, and yield to it; but those who bring it into subjection are not the parties who yield to it, but rather they compel it to yield to them.

32. Perhaps, therefore, we are enjoined to yield to God, and to be well-disposed towards Him, in order that we may be reconciled to Him, from whom by sinning we have turned away, so that He can be called our adversary. For He is rightly called the adversary of those whom He resists, for "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble;" and "pride is the beginning of all sin, but the beginning of man's pride is to become apostate from God;" and the apostle says, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." And from this it may be perceived that no nature [as being] bad is an enemy to God, inasmuch as the very parties who were enemies are being reconciled. Whoever, therefore, while in this way, i.e. in this life, shall not have been reconciled to God by the death of His Son, will be delivered to the judge by Him, for "the Father judgeth no man, but hath delivered all judgment to the Son;" and so the other things which are described in this section follow, which we have already discussed. There is only one thing which creates a difficulty as regards this interpretation, viz. how it can be rightly said that we are in the way with God, if in this passage He Himself is to be understood as the adversary of the wicked, with whom we are enjoined to be reconciled quickly; unless, perchance, because He is everywhere, we also, while we are in this way, are certainly with Him. For as it is said, "If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." Or if the view is not accepted, that the wicked are said to be with God, although

there is nowhere where God is not present,—just as we do not say that the blind are with the light, although the light surrounds their eyes,—there is one resource remaining: that we should understand the adversary here as being the commandment of God. For what is so much an adversary to those who wish to sin as the commandment of God, i.e. His law and divine Scripture, which has been given us for this life, that it may be with us in the way, which we must not contradict, lest it deliver us to the judge, but which we ought to submit to quickly? For no one knows when he may depart out of this life. Now, who is it that submits to divine Scripture, save he who reads or hears it piously, deferring to it as of supreme authority; so that what he understands he does not hate on this account, that he feels it to be opposed to his sins, but rather loves being reproved by it, and rejoices that his maladies are not spared until they are healed; and so that even in respect to what seems to him obscure or absurd, he does not therefore raise contentious contradictions, but prays that he may understand, yet remembering that goodwill and reverence are to be manifested towards so great an authority? But who does this, unless just the man who has come, not harshly threatening, but in the meekness of piety, for the purpose of opening and ascertaining the contents of his father's will? "Blessed," therefore, "are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Let us see what follows.

CHAPTER XII

33. "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." The lesser righteousness, therefore, is not to commit adultery by carnal connection; but the greater righteousness of the kingdom of God is not to commit adultery in the heart. Now, the man who does not commit adultery in the heart, much more easily guards against committing adultery in actual fact. Hence He who gave the later precept confirmed the earlier; for He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. It is well worthy of consideration that He did not say, Whosoever lusteth after a woman, but," Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her," i.e. turneth toward her with this aim and this intent, that he may lust after her; which, in fact, is not

merely to be tickled by fleshly delight, but fully to consent to lust; so that the forbidden appetite is not restrained, but satisfied if opportunity should be given.

34. For there are three things which go to complete sin: the suggestion of, the taking pleasure in, and the consenting to. Suggestion takes place either by means of memory, or by means of the bodily senses, when we see, or hear, or smell, or taste, or touch anything. And if it give us pleasure to enjoy this, this pleasure, if illicit, must be restrained. Just as when we are fasting, and on seeing food the appetite of the palate is stirred up, this does not happen without pleasure; but we do not consent to this liking, and we repress it by the right of reason, which has the supremacy. But if consent shall take place, the sin will be complete, known to God in our heart, although it may not become known to men by deed. There are, then, these steps: the suggestion is made, as it were, by a serpent, that is to say, by a fleeting and rapid, i.e. a temporary, movement of bodies: for if there are also any such images moving about in the soul, they have been derived from without from the body; and if any hidden sensation of the body besides those five senses touches the soul, that also is temporary and fleeting; and therefore the more clandestinely it glides in, so as to affect the process of thinking, the more aptly is it compared to a serpent. Hence these three stages, as I was beginning to say, resemble that transaction which is described in Genesis, so that the suggestion and a certain measure of suasion is put forth, as it were, by the serpent; but the taking pleasure in it lies in the carnal appetite, as it were in Eve; and the consent lies in the reason, as it were in the man: and these things having been acted through, the man is driven forth, as it were, from paradise, i.e. from the most blessed light of righteousness, into death—in all respects most righteously. For he who puts forth suasion does not compel. And all natures are beautiful in their order, according to their gradations; but we must not descend from the higher, among which the rational mind has its place assigned, to the lower. Nor is any one compelled to do this; and therefore, if he does it, he is punished by the just law of God, for he is not guilty of this unwillingly. But yet, previous to habit, either there is no pleasure, or it is so slight that there is hardly any; and to yield to it is a great sin, as such pleasure is unlawful. Now, when any one does yield, he commits sin in the heart. If, however, he

also proceeds to action, the desire seems to be satisfied and extinguished; but afterwards, when the suggestion is repeated, a greater pleasure is kindled, which, however, is as yet much less than that which by continuous practice is converted into habit. For it is very difficult to overcome this; and yet even habit itself, if one does not prove untrue to himself, and does not shrink back in dread from the Christian warfare, he will get the better of under His (i.e. Christ's) leadership and assistance; and thus, in accordance with primitive peace and order, both the man is subject to Christ, and the woman is subject to the man.

35. Hence, just as we arrive at sin by three steps,—suggestion, pleasure, consent,—so of sin itself there are three varieties,—in heart, in deed, in habit,—as it were, three deaths: one, as it were, in the house, i.e. when we consent to lust in the heart; a second now, as it were, brought forth outside the gate, when assent goes forward into action; a third, when the mind is pressed down by the force of bad habit, as if by a mound of earth, and is now, as it were, rotting in the sepulchre. And whoever reads the Gospel perceives that our Lord raised to life these three varieties of the dead. And perhaps he reflects what differences may be found in the very word of Him who raises them, when He says on one occasion, “Damsel, arise;” on another, “Young man, I say unto thee, Arise;” and when on another occasion He groaned in the spirit, and wept, and again groaned, and then afterwards “cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.”

36. And therefore, under the category of the adultery mentioned in this section, we must understand all fleshly and sensual lust. For when Scripture so constantly speaks of idolatry as fornication, and the Apostle Paul calls avarice by the name of idolatry, who doubts but that every evil lust is rightly called fornication, since the soul, neglecting the higher law by which it is ruled, and prostituting itself for the base pleasure of the lower nature as its reward (so to speak), is thereby corrupted? And therefore let every one who feels carnal pleasure rebelling against right inclination in his own case through the habit of sinning, by whose unsubdued violence he is dragged into captivity, recall to mind as much as he can what kind of peace he has lost by sinning, and let him cry out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ.”

For in this way, when he cries out that he is wretched, in the act of bewailing he implores the help of a comforter. Nor is it a small approach to blessedness, when he has come to know his wretchedness; and therefore “blessed” also “are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

CHAPTER XIII

37. In the next place, He goes on to say: “And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should go into hell.” Here, certainly, there is need of great courage in order to cut off one’s members. For whatever it is that is meant by the “eye,” undoubtedly it is such a thing as is ardently loved. For those who wish to express their affection strongly are wont to speak thus: I love him as my own eyes, or even more than my own eyes. Then, when the word “right” is added, it is meant perhaps to intensify the strength of the affection. For although these bodily eyes of ours are turned in a common direction for the purpose of seeing, and if both are turned they have equal power, yet men are more afraid of losing the right one. So that the sense in this case is: Whatever it is which thou so lovest that thou reckonest it as a right eye, if it offends thee, i.e. if it proves a hindrance to thee on the way to true happiness, pluck it out and cast it from thee. For it is profitable for thee, that one of these which thou so lovest that they cleave to thee as if they were members, should perish, rather than that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

38. But since He follows it up with a similar statement respecting the right hand, “If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should go into hell,” He compels us to inquire more carefully what He has spoken of as an eye. And as regards this inquiry, nothing occurs to me as a more suitable explanation than a greatly beloved friend: for this, certainly, is something which we may rightly call a member which we ardently love; and this friend a counsellor, for it is an eye, as it were, pointing out the road; and that in divine things, for it is the right eye: so that the left is indeed a beloved counsellor, but in earthly matters, pertaining to the necessities of the body; concerning which as a cause of stumbling it was superfluous to speak, inasmuch as not even the right was to be spared. Now,

a counsellor in divine things is a cause of stumbling, if he endeavours to lead one into any dangerous heresy under the guise of religion and doctrine. Hence also let the right hand be taken in the sense of a beloved helper and assistant in divine works: for in like manner as contemplation is rightly understood as having its seat in the eye, so action in the right hand; so that the left hand may be understood in reference to works which are necessary for this life, and for the body.

CHAPTER XIV

39. “It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.” This is the lesser righteousness of the Pharisees, which is not opposed by what our Lord says: “But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is loosed from her husband committeth adultery.” For He who gave the commandment that a writing of divorcement should be given, did not give the commandment that a wife should be put away; but “whosoever shall put away,” says He, “let him give her a writing of divorcement,” in order that the thought of such a writing might moderate the rash anger of him who was getting rid of his wife. And, therefore, He who sought to interpose a delay in putting away, indicated as far as He could to hard-hearted men that He did not wish separation. And accordingly the Lord Himself in another passage, when a question was asked Him as to this matter, gave this reply: “Moses did so because of the hardness of your hearts.” For however hard-hearted a man may be who wishes to put away his wife, when he reflects that, on a writing of divorcement being given her, she could then without risk marry another, he would be easily appeased. Our Lord, therefore, in order to confirm that principle, that a wife should not lightly be put away, made the single exception of fornication; but enjoins that all other annoyances, if any such should happen to spring up, be borne with fortitude for the sake of conjugal fidelity and for the sake of chastity; and he also calls that man an adulterer who should marry her that has been divorced by her husband. And the Apostle Paul shows the limit of this state of affairs, for he says it is to be observed as long as her husband liveth; but on the husband’s death he gives permission to marry. For he himself also held by

this rule, and therein brings forward not his own advice, as in the case of some of his admonitions, but a command by the Lord when he says: “And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.” I believe that, according to a similar rule, if he shall put her away, he is to remain unmarried, or be reconciled to his wife. For it may happen that he puts away his wife for the cause of fornication, which our Lord wished to make an exception of. But now, if she is not allowed to marry while the husband is living from whom she has departed, nor he to take another while the wife is living whom he has put away, much less is it right to commit unlawful acts of fornication with any parties whomsoever. More blessed indeed are those marriages to be reckoned, where the parties concerned, whether after the procreation of children, or even through contempt of such an earthly progeny, have been able with common consent to practise self-restraint toward each other: both because nothing is done contrary to that precept whereby the Lord forbids a spouse to be put away (for he does not put her away who lives with her not carnally, but spiritually), and because that principle is observed to which the apostle gives expression, “It remaineth, that they that have wives be as though they had none.”

CHAPTER XV

40. But it is rather that statement which the Lord Himself makes in another passage which is wont to disturb the minds of the little ones, who nevertheless earnestly desire to live now according to the precepts of Christ: “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.” For it may seem a contradiction to the less intelligent, that here He forbids the putting away of a wife saving for the cause of fornication, but that elsewhere He affirms that no one can be a disciple of His who does not hate his wife. But if He were speaking with reference to sexual intercourse, He would not place father, and mother, and brothers in the same category. But how true it is, that “the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and they that use violence take it by force!” For how great violence is necessary, in order that a man may love his enemies, and hate

his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers! For He commands both things who calls us to the kingdom of heaven. And how these things do not contradict each other, it is easy to show under His guidance; but after they have been understood, it is difficult to carry them out, although this too is very easy when He Himself assists us. For in that eternal kingdom to which He has vouchsafed to call His disciples, to whom He also gives the name of brothers, there are no temporal relationships of this sort. For "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female;" "but Christ is all, and in all." And the Lord Himself says: "For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Hence it is necessary that whoever wishes here and now to aim after the life of that kingdom, should hate not the persons themselves, but those temporal relationships by which this life of ours, which is transitory and is comprised in being born and dying, is upheld; because he who does not hate them, does not yet love that life where there is no condition of being born and dying, which unites parties in earthly wedlock.

41. Therefore, if I were to ask any good Christian who has a wife, and even though he may still be having children by her, whether he would like to have his wife in that kingdom; mindful in any case of the promises of God, and of that life where this incorruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; though at present hesitating from the greatness, or at least from a certain degree of love, he would reply with execration that he is strongly averse to it. Were I to ask him again, whether he would like his wife to live with him there, after the resurrection, when she had undergone that angelic change which is promised to the saints, he would reply that he desired this as strongly as he reprobated the other. Thus a good Christian is found in one and the same woman to love the creature of God, whom he desires to be transformed and renewed; but to hate the corruptible and mortal conjugal connection and sexual intercourse: i.e. to love in her what is characteristic of a human being, to hate what belongs to her as a wife. So also he loves his enemy, not in as far as he is an enemy, but in as far as he is a man; so that he wishes the same prosperity to come to him as to himself, viz. that he may reach the kingdom of heaven rectified and renewed. This is to be understood both of father and mother and the

other ties of blood, that we hate in them what has fallen to the lot of the human race in being born and dying, but that we love what can be carried along with us to those realms where no one says, My Father; but all say to the one God, “Our Father:” and no one says, My mother; but all say to that other Jerusalem, Our mother: and no one says, My brother; but each says respecting every other, Our brother. But in fact there will be a marriage on our part as of one spouse (when we have been brought together into unity), with Him who hath delivered us from the pollution of this world by the shedding of His own blood. It is necessary, therefore, that the disciple of Christ should hate these things which pass away, in those whom he desires along with himself to reach those things which shall for ever remain; and that he should the more hate these things in them, the more he loves themselves.

42. A Christian may therefore live in concord with his wife, whether with her providing for a fleshly craving, a thing which the apostle speaks by permission, not by commandment; or providing for the procreation of children, which may be at present in some degree praiseworthy; or providing for a brotherly and sisterly fellowship, without any corporeal connection, having his wife as though he had her not, as is most excellent and sublime in the marriage of Christians: yet so that in her he hates the name of temporal relationship, and loves the hope of everlasting blessedness. For we hate, without doubt, that respecting which we wish at least, that at some time hereafter it should not exist; as, for instance, this same life of ours in the present world, which if we were not to hate as being temporal, we would not long for the future life, which is not conditioned by time. For as a substitute for this life the soul is put, respecting which it is said in that passage, “If a man hate not his own soul also, he cannot be my disciple.” For that corruptible meat is necessary for this life, of which the Lord Himself says, “Is not the soul more than meat?” i.e. this life to which meat is necessary. And when He says that He would lay down His soul for His sheep, He undoubtedly means this life, as He is declaring that He is going to die for us.

CHAPTER XVI

43. Here there arises a second question, when the Lord allows a wife to be put away for the cause of fornication, in what latitude of meaning fornication is to be understood in this passage,—whether in the sense understood by all, viz. that we are to understand that fornication to be meant which is committed in acts of uncleanness; or whether, in accordance with the usage of Scripture in speaking of fornication (as has been mentioned above), as meaning all unlawful corruption, such as idolatry or covetousness, and therefore, of course, every transgression of the law on account of the unlawful lust [involved in it]. But let us consult the apostle, that we may not say rashly. “And unto the married I command,” says he, “yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband.” For it may happen that she departs for that cause for which the Lord gives permission to do so. Or, if a woman is at liberty to put away her husband for other causes besides that of fornication, and the husband is not at liberty, what answer shall we give respecting this statement which he has made afterwards, “And let not the husband put away his wife”? Wherefore did he not add, saving for the cause of fornication, which the Lord permits, unless because he wishes a similar rule to be understood, that if he shall put away his wife (which he is permitted to do for the cause of fornication), he is to remain without a wife, or be reconciled to his wife? For it would not be a bad thing for a husband to be reconciled to such a woman as that to whom, when nobody had dared to stone her, the Lord said, “Go, and sin no more.” And for this reason also, because He who says, It is not lawful to put away one’s wife saving for the cause of fornication, forces him to retain his wife, if there should be no cause of fornication: but if there should be, He does not force him to put her away, but permits him, just as when it is said, Let it not be lawful for a woman to marry another, unless her husband be dead; if she shall marry before the death of her husband, she is guilty; if she shall not marry after the death of her husband, she is not guilty, for she is not commanded to marry, but merely permitted. If, therefore, there is a like rule in the said law of marriage between man and woman, to such an extent that not merely of the woman has the same apostle said, “The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband;” but he has not been silent respecting him, saying, “And likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife;”—if, then, the rule is similar, there is no

necessity for understanding that it is lawful for a woman to put away her husband, saving for the cause of fornication, as is the case also with the husband.

44. It is therefore to be considered in what latitude of meaning we ought to understand the word fornication, and the apostle is to be consulted, as we were beginning to do. For he goes on to say, “But to the rest speak I, not the Lord.” Here, first, we must see who are “the rest,” for he was speaking before on the part of the Lord to those who are married, but now, as from himself, he speaks to “the rest:” hence perhaps to the unmarried, but this does not follow. For thus he continues: “If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away.” Hence, even now he is speaking to those who are married. What, then, is his object in saying “to the rest,” unless that he was speaking before to those who were so united, that they were alike as to their faith in Christ; but that now he is speaking to “the rest,” i.e. to those who are so united, that they are not both believers? But what does he say to them? “If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not put him away.” If, therefore, he does not give a command as from the Lord, but advises as from himself, then this good result springs from it, that if any one act otherwise, he is not a transgressor of a command, just as he says a little after respecting virgins, that he has no command of the Lord, but that he gives his advice; and he so praises virginity, that whoever will may avail himself of it; yet if he shall not do so, he may not be judged to have acted contrary to a command. For there is one thing which is commanded, another respecting which advice is given, another still which is allowed. A wife is commanded not to depart from her husband; and if she depart, to remain unmarried, or to be reconciled to her husband: therefore it is not allowable for her to act otherwise. But a believing husband is advised, if he has an unbelieving wife who is pleased to dwell with him, not to put her away: therefore it is allowable also to put her away, because it is no command of the Lord that he should not put her away, but an advice of the apostle: just as a virgin is advised not to marry; but if she shall marry, she will not indeed adhere to the advice, but she will not act in opposition to a

command. Allowance is given when it is said, “But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.” And therefore, if it is allowable that an unbelieving wife should be put away, although it is better not to put her away, and yet not allowable, according to the commandment of the Lord, that a wife should be put away, saving for the cause of fornication, [then] unbelief itself also is fornication.

45. For what sayest thou, O apostle? Surely, that a believing husband who has an unbelieving wife pleased to dwell with him is not to put her away? Just so, says he. When, therefore, the Lord also gives this command, that a man should not put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, why dost thou say here, “I speak, not the Lord”? For this reason, viz. that the idolatry which unbelievers follow, and every other noxious superstition, is fornication. Now, the Lord permitted a wife to be put away for the cause of fornication; but in permitting, He did not command it: He gave opportunity to the apostle for advising that whoever wished should not put away an unbelieving wife, in order that, perchance, in this way she might become a believer. “For,” says he, “the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother.” I suppose it had already occurred that some wives were embracing the faith by means of their believing husbands, and husbands by means of their believing wives; and although not mentioning names, he yet urged his case by examples, in order to strengthen his counsel. Then he goes on to say, “Else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.” For now the children were Christians, who were sanctified at the instance of one of the parents, or with the consent of both; which would not take place unless the marriage were broken up by one of the parties becoming a believer, and unless the unbelief of the spouse were borne with so far as to give an opportunity of believing. This, therefore, is the counsel of Him whom I regard as having spoken the words, “Whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.”

46. Moreover, if unbelief is fornication, and idolatry unbelief, and covetousness idolatry, it is not to be doubted that covetousness also is fornication. Who, then, in that case can rightly separate any unlawful lust whatever from the category of fornication, if covetousness is fornication?

And from this we perceive, that because of unlawful lusts, not only those of which one is guilty in acts of uncleanness with another’s husband or wife, but any unlawful lusts whatever, which cause the soul making a bad use of the body to wander from the law of God, and to be ruinously and basely corrupted, a man may, without crime, put away his wife, and a wife her husband, because the Lord makes the cause of fornication an exception; which fornication, in accordance with the above considerations, we are compelled to understand as being general and universal.

47. But when He says, “saving for the cause of fornication,” He has not said of which of them, whether the man or the woman. For not only is it allowed to put away a wife who commits fornication; but whoever puts away that wife even by whom he is himself compelled to commit fornication, puts her away undoubtedly for the cause of fornication. As, for instance, if a wife should compel one to sacrifice to idols, the man who puts away such an one puts her away for the cause of fornication, not only on her part, but on his own also: on her part, because she commits fornication; on his own, that he may not commit fornication. Nothing, however, is more unjust than for a man to put away his wife because of fornication, if he himself also is convicted of committing fornication. For that passage occurs to one: “For wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.” And for this reason, whosoever wishes to put away his wife because of fornication, ought first to be cleared of fornication; and a like remark I would make respecting the woman also.

48. But in reference to what He says, “Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery,” it may be asked whether she also who is married commits adultery in the same way as he does who marries her. For she also is commanded to remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband; but this in the case of her departing from her husband. There is, however, a great difference whether she put away or be put away. For if she put away her husband, and marry another, she seems to have left her former husband from a desire of changing her marriage connection, which is, without doubt, an adulterous thought. But if she be put away by the husband, with whom she desired to be, he indeed who marries her commits adultery, according to the Lord’s declaration; but whether she also be

involved in a like crime is uncertain,—although it is much less easy to discover how, when a man and woman have intercourse one with another with equal consent, one of them should be an adulterer, and the other not. To this is to be added the consideration, that if he commits adultery by marrying her who is divorced from her husband (although she does not put away, but is put away), she causes him to commit adultery, which nevertheless the Lord forbids. And hence we infer that, whether she has been put away, or has put away her husband, it is necessary for her to remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband.

49. Again, it is asked whether, if, with a wife's permission, either a barren one, or one who does not wish to submit to intercourse, a man shall take to himself another woman, not another man's wife, nor one separated from her husband, he can do so without being chargeable with fornication? And an example is found in the Old Testament history; but now there are greater precepts which the human race has reached after having passed that stage; and those matters are to be investigated for the purpose of distinguishing the ages of the dispensation of that divine providence which assists the human race in the most orderly way; but not for the purpose of making use of the rules of living. But yet it may be asked whether what the apostle says, "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife," can be carried so far, that, with the permission of a wife, who possesses the power over her husband's body, a man can have intercourse with another woman, who is neither another man's wife nor divorced from her husband; but such an opinion is not to be entertained, lest it should seem that a woman also, with her husband's permission, could do such a thing, which the instinctive feeling of every one prevents.

50. And yet some occasions may arise, where a wife also, with the consent of her husband, may seem under obligation to do this for the sake of that husband himself; as, for instance, is said to have happened at Antioch about fifty years ago, in the times of Constantius. For Acyndinus, at that time prefect and at one time also consul, when he demanded of a certain public debtor the payment of a poundweight of gold, impelled by I know not what motive, did a thing which is often dangerous in the case of those

magistrates to whom anything whatever is lawful, or rather is thought to be lawful, viz. threatened with an oath and with a vehement affirmation, that if he did not pay the foresaid gold on a certain day which he had fixed, he would be put to death. Accordingly, while he was being kept in cruel confinement, and was unable to rid himself of that debt, the dread day began to impend and to draw near. He happened, however, to have a very beautiful wife, but one who had no money wherewith to come to the relief of her husband; and when a certain rich man had had his desires inflamed by the beauty of this woman, and had learned that her husband was placed in that critical situation, he sent to her, promising in return for a single night, if she would consent to hold intercourse with him, that he would give her the pound of gold. Then she, knowing that she herself had not power over her body, but her husband, conveyed the intelligence to him, telling him that she was prepared to do it for the sake of her husband, but only if he himself, the lord by marriage of her body, to whom all that chastity was due, should wish it to be done, as if disposing of his own property for the sake of his life. He thanked her, and commanded that it should be done, in no wise judging that it was an adulterous embrace, because it was no lust, but great love for her husband, that demanded it, at his own bidding and will. The woman came to the villa of that rich man, did what the lewd man wished; but she gave her body only to her husband, who desired not, as was usual, his marriage rights, but life. She received the gold; but he who gave it took away stealthily what he had given, and substituted a similar bag with earth in it. When the woman, however, on reaching her home, discovered it, she rushed forth in public in order to proclaim the deed she had done, animated by the same tender affection for her husband by which she had been forced to do it; she goes to the prefect, confesses everything, shows the fraud that had been practised upon her. Then indeed the prefect first pronounces himself guilty, because the matter had come to this by means of his threats, and, as if pronouncing sentence upon another, decided that a pound of gold should be brought into the treasury from the property of Acyndinus; but that she (the woman) be installed as mistress of that piece of land whence she had received the earth instead of the gold. I offer no opinion either way from this story: let each one form a judgment as he pleases, for the history is not drawn from divinely authoritative sources; but yet, when the story is related, man's instinctive sense does not so revolt against what was done in the case of this woman, at her husband's bidding, as we formerly shuddered when the thing itself was set forth without any example. But in this section of the Gospel nothing is to be more steadily kept in view, than that so great is the evil of fornication, that, while married people are bound to one another by so strong a bond, this one cause of divorce is excepted; but as to what fornication is, that we have already discussed.

CHAPTER XVII

51. "Again," says He, "ye have heard that it hath been said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oath: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." The righteousness of the Pharisees is not to forswear oneself; and this is confirmed by Him who gives the command not to swear, so far as relates to the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven. For just as he who does not speak at all cannot speak falsely, so he who does not swear at all cannot swear falsely. But yet, since he who takes God to witness swears, this section must be carefully considered, lest the apostle should seem to have acted contrary to the Lord's precept, who often swore in this way, when he says, "Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God I lie not;" and again, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not." Of like nature also is that asseveration, "For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers." Unless, perchance, one were to say that it is to be reckoned swearing only when something is spoken of by which one swears; so that he has not used an oath, because he has not said, by God; but has said, "God is witness." It is ridiculous to think so; yet because of the contentious, or those very slow of apprehension, lest any one should think there is a difference, let him know that the apostle has used an oath in this way also, saying, "By your rejoicing, I die daily." And let no one think that this is so expressed as

if it were said, Your rejoicing makes me die daily; just as it is said, By his teaching he became learned, i.e. by his teaching it came about that he was perfectly instructed: the Greek copies decide the matter, where we find it written, Ne ten kauchesin humeteran, an expression which is used only by one taking an oath. Thus, then, it is understood that the Lord gave the command not to swear in this sense, lest any one should eagerly seek after an oath as a good thing, and by the constant use of oaths sink down through force of habit into perjury. And therefore let him who understands that swearing is to be reckoned not among things that are good, but among things that are necessary, refrain as far as he can from indulging in it, unless by necessity, when he sees men slow to believe what it is useful for them to believe, except they be assured by an oath. To this, accordingly, reference is made when it is said, "Let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay;" this is good, and what is to be desired. "For whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil;" i.e., if you are compelled to swear, know that it comes of a necessity arising from the infirmity of those whom you are trying to persuade of something; which infirmity is certainly an evil, from which we daily pray to be delivered, when we say, "Deliver us from evil." Hence He has not said, Whatsoever is more than these is evil; for you are not doing what is evil when you make a good use of an oath, which, although not in itself good, is yet necessary in order to persuade another that you are trying to move him for some useful end; but it "cometh of evil" on his part by whose infirmity you are compelled to swear. But no one learns, unless he has had experience, how difficult it is both to get rid of a habit of swearing, and never to do rashly what necessity sometimes compels him to do.

52. But it may be asked why, when it was said, "But I say unto you, Swear not at all," it was added, "neither by heaven, for it is God's throne," etc., up to "neither by thy head." I suppose it was for this reason, that the Jews did not think they were bound by the oath, if they had sworn by such things: and since they had heard it said, "Thou shalt perform unto the Lord thine oath," they did not think an oath brought them under obligation to the Lord, if they swore by heaven, or earth, or by Jerusalem, or by their head; and this happened not from the fault of Him who gave the command, but because they did not rightly understand it. Hence the Lord teaches that there is nothing so worthless among the creatures of God, as that any one should

think that he may swear falsely by it; since created things, from the highest down to the lowest, beginning with the throne of God and going down to a white or black hair, are ruled by divine providence. “Neither by heaven,” says He, “for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool:” i.e., when you swear by heaven or the earth, do not imagine that your oath does not bring you under obligation to the Lord; for you are convicted of swearing by Him who has heaven for His throne, and the earth for His footstool. “Neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King;” a better expression than if He had said, “My [city];” although, however, we understand Him to have meant this. And, because He is undoubtedly the Lord, the man who swears by Jerusalem is bound by his oath to the Lord. “Neither shall thou swear by thy head.” Now, what could any one suppose to belong more to himself than his own head? But how is it ours, when we have not the power of making one hair white or black? Hence, whoever should wish to swear even by his own head, is bound by his oath to God, who in an ineffable way keeps all things in His power, and is everywhere present. And here also all other things are understood, which could not of course be enumerated; just as that saying of the apostle we have mentioned, “By your rejoicing, I die daily.” And to show that he was bound by this oath to the Lord, he has added, “which I have in Christ Jesus.”

53. But yet (I make the remark for the sake of the carnal) we must not think that heaven is called God’s throne, and the earth His footstool, because God has members placed in heaven and in earth, in some such way as we have when we sit down; but that seat means judgment. And since, in this organic whole of the universe, heaven has the greatest appearance, and earth the least,—as if the divine power were more present where the beauty excels, but still were regulating the least degree of it in the most distant and in the lowest regions,—He is said to sit in heaven, and to tread upon the earth. But spiritually the expression heaven means holy souls, and earth sinful ones: and since the spiritual man judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man, he is suitably spoken of as the seat of God; but the sinner to whom it is said, “Earth thou art, and unto earth shall thou return,” because, in accordance with that justice which assigns what is suitable to men’s deserts, he is placed among things that are lowest, and he who would not remain in the law is punished under the law, is suitably taken as His footstool.

CHAPTER XVIII

54. But now, to conclude by summing up this passage, what can be named or thought of more laborious and toilsome, where the believing soul is straining every nerve of its industry, than the subduing of vicious habit? Let such an one cut off the members which obstruct the kingdom of heaven, and not be overwhelmed by the pain: in conjugal fidelity let him bear with everything which, however grievously annoying it may be, is still free from the guilt of unlawful corruption, i.e. of fornication: as, for instance, if any one should have a wife either barren, or misshapen in body, or faulty in her members,—either blind, or deaf, or lame, or having any other defect,—or worn out by diseases and pains and weaknesses, and whatever else may be thought of exceeding horrible, fornication excepted, let him endure it for the sake of his plighted love and conjugal union; and let him not only not put away such a wife, but even if he have her not, let him not marry one who has been divorced by her husband, though beautiful, healthy, rich, fruitful. And if it is not lawful to do such things, much less is it to be deemed lawful for him to come near any other unlawful embrace; and let him so flee from fornication, as to withdraw himself from base corruption of every sort. Let him speak the truth, and let him commend it not by frequent oaths, but by the probity of his morals; and with respect to the innumerable crowds of all bad habits rising up in rebellion against him, of which, in order that all may be understood, a few have been mentioned, let him betake himself to the citadel of Christian warfare, and let him lay them prostrate, as if from a higher ground. But who would venture to enter upon labours so great, unless one who is so inflamed with the love of righteousness, that, as it were utterly consumed with hunger and thirst, and thinking there is no life for him till that is satisfied, he puts forth violence to obtain the kingdom of heaven? For otherwise he will not be able bravely to endure all those things which the lovers of this world reckon toilsome and arduous, and altogether difficult in getting rid of bad habits. “Blessed,” therefore, “are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”

55. But yet, when any one encounters difficulty in these toils, and advancing through hardships and roughnesses surrounded with various temptations, and perceiving the troubles of his past life rise up on this side and on that, becomes afraid lest he should not be able to carry through what

he has undertaken, let him eagerly avail himself of the counsel that he may obtain assistance. But what other counsel is there than this, that he who desires to have divine help for his own infirmity should bear that of others, and should assist it as much as possible? And so, therefore, let us look at the precepts of mercy. The meek and the merciful man, however, seem to be one and the same: but there is this difference, that the meek man, of whom we have spoken above, from piety does not gainsay the divine sentences which are brought forward against his sins, nor those statements of God which he does not yet understand; but he confers no benefit on him whom he does not gainsay or resist. But the merciful man in such a way offers no resistance, that he does it for the purpose of correcting him whom he would render worse by resisting.

CHAPTER XIX

56. Hence the Lord goes on to say: “Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat [tunic, undergarment], let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.” It is the lesser righteousness of the Pharisees not to go beyond measure in revenge, that no one should give back more than he has received: and this is a great step. For it is not easy to find any one who, when he has received a blow, wishes merely to return the blow; and who, on hearing one word from a man who reviles him, is content to return only one, and that just an equivalent; but he avenges it more immoderately, either under the disturbing influence of anger, or because he thinks it just, that he who first inflicted injury should suffer more severe injury than he suffered who had not inflicted injury. Such a spirit was in great measure restrained by the law, where it was written, “An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;” by which expressions a certain measure is intended, so that the vengeance should not exceed the injury. And this is the beginning of peace: but perfect peace is to have no wish at all for such vengeance.

57. Hence, between that first course which goes beyond the law, that a greater evil should be inflicted in return for a lesser, and this to which the Lord has given expression for the purpose of perfecting the disciples, that no evil at all should be inflicted in return for evil, a middle course holds a certain place, viz. that as much be paid back as has been received; by means of which enactment the transition is made from the highest discord to the highest concord, according to the distribution of times. See, therefore, at how great a distance any one who is the first to do harm to another, with the desire of injuring and hurting him, stands from him who, even when injured, does not pay back the injury. That man, however, who is not the first to do harm to any one, but who yet, when injured, inflicts a greater injury in return, either in will or in deed, has so far withdrawn himself from the highest injustice, and made so far an advance to the highest righteousness; but still he does not yet hold by what the law given by Moses commanded. And therefore he who pays back just as much as he has received already forgives something: for the party who injures does not deserve merely as much punishment as the man who was injured by him has innocently suffered. And accordingly this incomplete, by no means severe, but [rather] merciful justice, is carried to perfection by Him who came to fulfil the law, not to destroy it. Hence there are still two intervening steps which He has left to be understood, while He has chosen rather to speak of the very highest development of mercy. For there is still what one may do who does not come fully up to that magnitude of the precept which belongs to the kingdom of heaven; acting in such a way that he does not pay back as much, but less; as, for instance, one blow instead of two, or that he cuts off an ear for an eye that has been plucked out. He who, rising above this, pays back nothing at all, approaches the Lord’s precept, but yet he does not reach it. For still it seems to the Lord not enough, if, for the evil which you may have received, you should inflict no evil in return, unless you be prepared to receive even more. And therefore He does not say, “But I say unto you,” that you are not to return evil for evil; although even this would be a great precept: but He says, “that ye resist not evil;” so that not only are you not to pay back what may have been inflicted on you, but you are not even to resist other inflictions. For this is what He also goes on to explain: “But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also:” for He does not say, If any man smite thee, do not wish to smite him;

but, Offer thyself further to him if he should go on to smite thee. As regards compassion, they feel it most who minister to those whom they greatly love as if they were their children, or some very dear friends in sickness, or little children, or insane persons, at whose hands they often endure many things; and if their welfare demand it, they even show themselves ready to endure more, until the weakness either of age or of disease pass away. And so, as regards those whom the Lord, the Physician of souls, was instructing to take care of their neighbours, what else could He teach them, than that they endure quietly the infirmities of those whose welfare they wish to consult? For all wickedness arises from infirmity of mind: because nothing is more harmless than the man who is perfect in virtue.

58. But it may be asked what the right cheek means. For this is the reading we find in the Greek copies, which are most worthy of confidence; though many Latin ones have only the word “cheek,” without the addition of “right.” Now the face is that by which any one is recognised; and we read in the apostle’s writings, “For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face:” then immediately he adds, “I speak as concerning reproach;” so that he explains what striking on the face is, viz. to be contemned and despised. Nor is this indeed said by the apostle for this reason, that they should not bear with those parties; but that they should bear with himself rather, who so loved them, that he was willing that he himself should be spent for them. But since the face cannot be called right and left, and yet there may be a worth according to the estimate of God and according to the estimate of this world, it is so distributed as it were into the right and left cheek that whatever disciple of Christ might have to bear reproach for being a Christian, he should be much more ready to bear reproach in himself, if he possesses any of the honours of this world. Thus this same apostle, if he had kept silence respecting the dignity which he had in the world, when men were persecuting in him the Christian name, would not have presented the other cheek to those that were smiting the right one. For when he said, I am a Roman citizen, he was not unprepared to submit to be despised, in that which he reckoned as least, by those who had despised in him so precious and life-giving a name. For did he at all the less on that account afterwards submit to the chains, which it was not lawful to put on

Roman citizens, or did he wish to accuse any one of this injury? And if any spared him on account of the name of Roman citizenship, yet he did not on that account refrain from offering an object they might strike at, since he wished by his patience to cure of so great perversity those whom he saw honouring in him what belonged to the left members rather than the right. For that point only is to be attended to, in what spirit he did everything, how benevolently and mildly he acted toward those from whom he was suffering such things. For when he was smitten with the hand by order of the high priest, what he seemed to say contumeliously when he affirms, “God shall smite thee, thou whited wall,” sounds like an insult to those who do not understand it; but to those who do, it is a prophecy. For a whited wall is hypocrisy, i.e. pretence holding forth the sacerdotal dignity before itself, and under this name, as under a white covering, concealing an inner and as it were sordid baseness. For what belonged to humility he wonderfully preserved, when, on its being said to him, “Revilest thou the high priest?” he replied, “I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, Thou shall not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.” And here he showed with what calmness he had spoken that which he seemed to have spoken in anger, because he answered so quickly and so mildly, which cannot be done by those who are indignant and thrown into confusion. And in that very statement he spoke the truth to those who understood him, “I wist not that he was the high priest:” as if he said, I know another High Priest, for whose name I bear such things, whom it is not lawful to revile, and whom ye revile, since in me it is nothing else but His name that ye hate. Thus, therefore, it is necessary for one not to boast of such things in a hypocritical way, but to be prepared in the heart itself for all things, so that he can sing that prophetic word, “My heart is prepared, O God, my heart is prepared.” For many have learned how to offer the other cheek, but do not know how to love him by whom they are struck. But in truth, the Lord Himself, who certainly was the first to fulfil the precepts which He taught, did not offer the other cheek to the servant of the high priest when smiting Him thereon; but, so far from that, said, “If I have spoken evil, hear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?” Yet was He not on that account unprepared in heart, for the salvation of all, not merely to be smitten on the other cheek, but even to have His whole body crucified.

59. Hence also what follows, “And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also,” is rightly understood as a precept having reference to the preparation of heart, not to a vain show of outward deed. But what is said with respect to the coat and cloak is to be carried out not merely in such things, but in the case of everything which on any ground of right we speak of as being ours for time. For if this command is given with respect to what is necessary, how much more does it become us to contemn what is superfluous! But still, those things which I have called ours are to be included in that category under which the Lord Himself gives the precept, when He says, “If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat.” Let all these things therefore be understood for which we may be sued at the law, so that the right to them may pass from us to him who sues, or for whom he sues; such, for instance, as clothing, a house, an estate, a beast of burden, and in general all kinds of property. But whether it is to be understood of slaves also is a great question. For a Christian ought not to possess a slave in the same way as a horse or money: although it may happen that a horse is valued at a greater price than a slave, and some article of gold or silver at much more. But with respect to that slave, if he is being educated and ruled by time as his master, in a way more upright, and more honourable, and more conducing to the fear of God, than can be done by him who desires to take him away, I do not know whether any one would dare to say that he ought to be despised like a garment. For a man ought to love a fellow-man as himself, inasmuch as he is commanded by the Lord of all (as is shown by what follows) even to love his enemies.

60. It is carefully to be observed that every tunic is a garment, but that every garment is not a tunic. Hence the word garment means more than the word tunic. And therefore I think it is so expressed, “And if any one will sue thee at the law, and take away thy tunic, let him have thy garment also,” as if He had said, Whoever wishes to take away thy tunic, give over to him whatever other clothing thou hast. And so some have interpreted the word pallium, which in the Greek as used here is himation.

61. “And whosoever,” says He, “shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him other two.” And this, certainly, not so much in the sense that thou

shouldest do it on foot, as that thou shouldest be prepared in mind to do it. For in the Christian history itself, which is authoritative, you will find no such thing done by the saints, or by the Lord Himself when in His human nature, which He condescended to assume, He was showing us an example of how to live; while at the same time, in almost all places, you will find them prepared to bear with equanimity whatever may have been wickedly forced upon them. But are we to suppose it is said for the sake of the mere expression, “Go with him other two;” or did He rather wish that three should be completed,—the number which has the meaning of perfection; so that every one should remember when he does this, that he is fulfilling perfect righteousness by compassionately bearing the infirmities of those whom he wishes to be made whole? It may seem for this reason also that He has recommended these precepts by three examples: of which the first is, if any one shall smite thee on the cheek; the second, if any one shall wish to take away thy coat; the third, if any one shall compel thee to go a mile: in which third example twice as much is added to the original unit, so that in this way the triplet is completed. And if this number in the passage before us does not, as has been said, mean perfection, let this be understood, that in laying down His precepts, as it were beginning with what is more tolerable, He has gradually gone on, until He has reached as far as the enduring of twice as much more. For, in the first place, He wished the other cheek to be presented when the right had been smitten, so that you may be prepared to bear less than you have borne. For whatever the right means, it is at least something more dear than that which is meant by the left; and if one who has borne with something in what is more dear, bears with it in what is less dear, it is something less. Then, secondly, in the case of one who wishes to take away a coat, He enjoins that the garment also should be given up to him: which is either just as much, or not much more; not, however, twice as much. In the third place, with respect to the mile, to which He says that two miles are to be added, He enjoins that you should bear with even twice as much more: thus signifying that whether it be somewhat less than the original demand, or just as much, or more, that any wicked man shall wish to take from thee, it is to be borne with tranquil mind.

CHAPTER XX

62. And, indeed, in these three classes of examples, I see that no class of injury is passed over. For all matters in which we suffer any injustice are divided into two classes: of which the one is, where restitution cannot be made; the other, where it can. But in that case where restitution cannot be made, a compensation in revenge is usually sought. For what does it profit, that on being struck you strike in return? Is that part of the body which was injured for that reason restored to its original condition? But an excited mind desires such alleviations. Things of that sort, however, afford no pleasure to a healthy and firm one; nay, such an one judges rather that the other's infirmity is to be compassionately borne with, than that his own (which has no existence) should be soothed by the punishment of another.

63. Nor are we thus precluded from inflicting such punishment [requital] as avails for correction, and as compassion itself dictates; nor does it stand in the way of that course proposed, where one is prepared to endure more at the hand of him whom he wishes to set right. But no one is fit for inflicting this punishment except the man who, by the greatness of his love, has overcome that hatred wherewith those are wont to be inflamed who wish to avenge themselves. For it is not to be feared that parents would seem to hate a little son when, on committing an offence, he is beaten by them that he may not go on offending. And certainly the perfection of love is set before us by the imitation of God the Father Himself when it is said in what follows: "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which persecute you;" and yet it is said of Him by the prophet, "For whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; yea, He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." The Lord also says, "The servant that knows not his Lord's will, and does things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; but the servant that knows his Lord's will, and does things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with many stripes." No more, therefore, is sought for, except that he should punish to whom, in the natural order of things, the power is given; and that he should punish with the same goodwill which a father has towards his little son, whom by reason of his youth he cannot yet hate. For from this source the most suitable example is drawn, in order that it may be sufficiently manifest that sin can be punished in love rather than be left unpunished; so that one may wish him on whom he inflicts it not to be miserable by means of punishment, but to be happy by means of correction,

yet be prepared, if need be, to endure with equanimity more injuries inflicted by him whom he wishes to be corrected, whether he may have the power of putting restraint upon him or not.

64. But great and holy men, although they at the time knew excellently well that that death which separates the soul from the body is not to be dreaded, yet, in accordance with the sentiment of those who might fear it, punished some sins with death, both because the living were struck with a salutary fear, and because it was not death itself that would injure those who were being punished with death, but sin, which might be increased if they continued to live. They did not judge rashly on whom God had bestowed such a power of judging. Hence it is that Elijah inflicted death on many, both with his own hand and by calling down fire from heaven; as was done also without rashness by many other great and godlike men, in the same spirit of concern for the good of humanity. And when the disciples had quoted an example from this Elias, mentioning to the Lord what had been done by him, in order that He might give to themselves also the power of calling down fire from heaven to consume those who would not show Him hospitality, the Lord reproved in them, not the example of the holy prophet, but their ignorance in respect to taking vengeance, their knowledge being as yet elementary; perceiving that they did not in love desire correction, but in hated desired revenge. Accordingly, after He had taught them what it was to love one's neighbour as oneself, and when the Holy Spirit had been poured out, whom, at the end of ten days after His ascension, He sent from above, as He had promised, there were not wanting such acts of vengeance, although much more rarely than in the Old Testament. For there, for the most part, as servants they were kept down by fear; but here mostly as free they were nourished by love. For at the words of the Apostle Peter also, Ananias and his wife, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, fell down dead, and were not raised to life again, but buried.

65. But if the heretics who are opposed to the Old Testament will not credit this book, let them contemplate the Apostle Paul, whose writings they read along with us, saying with respect to a certain sinner whom he delivered over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, "that the spirit may be saved." And if they will not here understand death (for perhaps it is uncertain), let

them acknowledge that punishment [requital] of some kind or other was inflicted by the apostle through the instrumentality of Satan; and that he did this not in hatred, but in love, is made plain by that addition, “that the spirit may be saved.” Or let them notice what we say in those books to which they themselves attribute great authority, where it is written that the Apostle Thomas imprecated on a certain man, by whom he had been struck with the palm of the hand, the punishment of death in a very cruel form, while yet commending his soul to God, that it might be spared in the world to come,—whose hand, torn from the rest of his body after he had been killed by a lion, a dog brought to the table at which the apostle was feasting. It is allowable for us not to credit this writing, for it is not in the catholic canon; yet they both read it, and honour it as being thoroughly uncorrupted and thoroughly truthful, who rage very fiercely (with I know not what blindness) against the corporeal punishments which are in the Old Testament, being altogether ignorant in what spirit and at what stage in the orderly distribution of times they were inflicted.

66. Hence, in this class of injuries which is atoned for by punishment, such a measure will be preserved by Christians, that, on an injury being received, the mind will not mount up into hatred, but will be ready, in compassion for the infirmity, to endure even more; nor will it neglect the correction, which it can employ either by advice, or by authority, or by [the exercise of] power. There is another class of injuries, where complete restitution is possible, of which there are two species: the one referring to money, the other to labour. And therefore examples are subjoined: of the former in the case of the coat and cloak, of the latter in the case of the compulsory service of one and two miles; for a garment may be given back, and he whom you have assisted by labour may also assist you, if it should be necessary. Unless, perhaps, the distinction should rather be drawn in this way: that the first case which is supposed, in reference to the cheek being struck, means all injuries that are inflicted by the wicked in such a way that restitution cannot be made except by punishment; and that the second case which is supposed, in reference to the garment, means all injuries where restitution can be made without punishment; and therefore, perhaps, it is added, “if any man will sue thee at the law,” because what is taken away by means of a judicial sentence is not supposed to be taken away with such a degree of

violence as that punishment is due; but that the third case is composed of both, so that restitution may be made both without punishment and with it. For the man who violently exacts labour to which he has no claim, without any judicial process, as he does who wickedly compels a man to go with him, and forces in an unlawful way assistance to be rendered to himself by one who is unwilling, is able both to pay the penalty of his wickedness and to repay the labour, if he who endured the wrong should ask it again. In all these classes of injuries, therefore, the Lord teaches that the disposition of a Christian ought to be most patient and compassionate, and thoroughly prepared to endure more.

67. But since it is a small matter merely to abstain from injuring, unless you also confer a benefit as far as you can, He therefore goes on to say, “Give to every one that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.” “To every one that asketh,” says He; not, Everything to him that asketh: so that you are to give that which you can honestly and justly give. For what if he should ask money, wherewith he may endeavour to oppress an innocent man? what if, in short, he should ask something unchaste? But not to recount many examples, which are in fact innumerable, that certainly is to be given which may hurt neither thyself nor the other party, as far as can be known or supposed by man; and in the case of him to whom you have justly denied what he asks, justice itself is to be made known, so that you may not send him away empty. Thus you will give to every one that asketh you, although you will not always give what he asks; and you will sometimes give something better, when you have set him right who was making unjust requests.

68. Then, as to what He says, “From him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away,” it is to be referred to the mind; for God loveth a cheerful giver. Moreover, every one who accepts anything borrows, even if he himself is not going to pay it; for inasmuch as God pays back more to the merciful, whosoever does a kindness lends at interest. Or if it does not seem good to understand the borrower in any other sense than of him who accepts of anything with the intention of repaying it, we must understand the Lord to have included those two methods of doing a favour. For we either give in a present what we give in the exercise of benevolence, or we lend to one who

will repay us. And frequently men who, setting before them the divine reward, are prepared to give away in a present, become slow to give what is asked in loan, as if they were destined to get nothing in return from God, inasmuch as he who receives pays back the thing which is given him. Rightly, therefore, does the divine authority exhort us to this mode of bestowing a favour, saying, “And from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away:” i.e., do not alienate your goodwill from him who asks it, both because your money will be useless, and because God will not pay you back, inasmuch as the man has done so; but when you do that from a regard to God’s precept, it cannot be unfruitful with Him who gives these commands.

CHAPTER XXI

69. In the next place, He goes on to say, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: But I say unto you, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He commandeth His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the Gentiles the very same? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.” For without this love, wherewith we are commanded to love even our enemies and persecutors, who can fully carry out those things which are mentioned above? Moreover, the perfection of that mercy, wherewith most of all the soul that is in distress is cared for, cannot be stretched beyond the love of an enemy; and therefore the closing words are: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.” Yet in such a way that God is understood to be perfect as God, and the soul to be perfect as a soul.

70. That there is, however, a certain step [in advance] in the righteousness of the Pharisees, which belongs to the old law, is perceived from this consideration, that many men hate even those by whom they are loved; as, for instance, luxurious children hate their parents for restraining them in their luxury. That man therefore rises a certain step, who loves his

neighbour, although as yet he hates his enemy. But in the kingdom of Him who came to fulfil the law, not to destroy it, he will bring benevolence and kindness to perfection, when he has carried it out so far as to love an enemy. For the former stage, although it is something, is yet so little that it may be reached even by the publicans as well. And as to what is said in the law, “Thou shalt hate thine enemy,” it is not to be understood as the voice of command addressed to a righteous man, but rather as the voice of permission to a weak man.

71. Here indeed arises a question in no way to be blinked, that to this precept of the Lord, wherein He exhorts us to love our enemies, and to do good to those who hate us, and to pray for those who persecute us, many other parts of Scripture seem to those who consider them less diligently and soberly to stand opposed; for in the prophets there are found many imprecations against enemies, which are thought to be curses: as, for instance, that one, “Let their table become a snare,” and the other things which are said there; and that one, “Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow,” and the other statements which are made either before or afterwards in the same Psalm by the prophet, as bearing on the case of Judas. Many other statements are found in all parts of Scripture, which may seem contrary both to this precept of the Lord, and to that apostolic one, where it is said, “Bless; and curse not;” while it is both written of the Lord, that He cursed the cities which received not His word; and the above-mentioned apostle thus spoke respecting a certain man, “The Lord will reward him according to his works.”

72. But these difficulties are easily solved, for the prophet predicted by means of imprecation what was about to happen, not as praying for what he wished, but in the spirit of one who saw it beforehand. So also the Lord, so also the apostle; although even in the words of these we do not find what they have wished, but what they have foretold. For when the Lord says, “Woe unto thee, Capernaum,” He does not utter anything else than that some evil will happen to her as a punishment of her unbelief; and that this would happen the Lord did not malevolently wish, but saw by means of His divinity. And the apostle does not say, May [the Lord] reward; but, “The Lord will reward him according to his work;” which is the word of one who

foretells, not of one uttering an imprecation. Just as also, in regard to that hypocrisy of the Jews of which we have already spoken, whose destruction he saw to be impending, he said,” God shall smite thee, thou whited wall.” But the prophets especially are accustomed to predict future events under the figure of one uttering an imprecation, just as they have often foretold those things which were to come under the figure of past time: as is the case, for example, in that passage, “Why have the nations raged, and the peoples imagined vain things?” For he has not said, Why will the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? although he was not mentioning those things as if they were already past, but was looking forward to them as yet to come. Such also is that passage, “They have parted my garments among them, and have cast lots upon my vesture:” for here also he has not said, They will part my garments among them, and will cast lots upon my vesture. And yet no one finds fault with these words, except the man who does not perceive that variety of figures in speaking in no degree lessens the truth of facts, and adds very much to the impressions on our minds.

CHAPTER XXII

73. But the question before us is rendered more urgent by what the Apostle John says: “If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and the Lord shall give him life for him who sinneth not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.” For he manifestly shows that there are certain brethren for whom we are not commanded to pray, although the Lord bids us pray even for our persecutors. Nor can the question in hand be solved, unless we acknowledge that there are certain sins in brethren which are more heinous than the persecution of enemies. Moreover, that brethren mean Christians can be proved by many examples from the divine Scriptures. Yet that one is plainest which the apostle thus states: “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother.” For he has not added the word our; but has thought it plain, as he wished a Christian who had an unbelieving wife to be understood by the expression brother. And therefore he says a little after, “But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart: a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases.” Hence I am of opinion that the sin of a brother is unto death, when any one,

after coming to the knowledge of God through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, makes an assault on the brotherhood, and is impelled by the fires of envy to oppose that grace itself by which he is reconciled to God. But the sin is not unto death, if any one has not withdrawn his love from a brother, but through some infirmity of disposition has failed to perform the incumbent duties of brotherhood. And on this account our Lord also on the cross says, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do:” for, not yet having become partakers of the grace of the Holy Spirit, they had not yet entered the fellowship of the holy brotherhood. And the blessed Stephen in the Acts of the Apostles prays for those by whom he is being stoned, because they had not yet believed on Christ, and were not fighting against that common grace. And the Apostle Paul on this account, I believe, does not pray for Alexander, because he was already a brother, and had sinned unto death, viz. by making an assault on the brotherhood through envy. But for those who had not broken off their love, but had given way through fear, he prays that they may be pardoned. For thus he expresses it: “Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord will reward him according to his works. Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.” Then he adds for whom he prays, thus expressing it: “At my first defence no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.”

74. It is this difference in their sins which separates Judas the betrayer from Peter the denier: not that a penitent is not to be pardoned, for we must not come into collision with that declaration of our Lord, where He enjoins that a brother is to be pardoned, when he asks his brother to pardon him; but that the ruin connected with that sin is so great, that he cannot endure the humiliation of asking for it, even if he should be compelled by a bad conscience both to acknowledge and divulge his sin. For when Judas had said, “I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood,” yet it was easier for him in despair to run and hang himself, than in humility to ask for pardon. And therefore it is of much consequence to know what sort of repentance God pardons. For many much more readily confess that they have sinned, and are so angry with themselves that they vehemently wish they had not sinned; but yet they do not condescend to humble the heart and to make it contrite, and to implore pardon: and this disposition of mind we

must suppose them to have, as feeling themselves already condemned because of the greatness of their sin.

75. And this is perhaps the sin against the Holy Ghost, i.e. through malice and envy to act in opposition to brotherly love after receiving the grace of the Holy Ghost,—a sin which our Lord says is not forgiven either in this world or in the world to come. And hence it may be asked whether the Jews sinned against the Holy Ghost, when they said that our Lord was casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils: whether we are to understand this as said against our Lord Himself, because He says of Himself in another passage, “If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household!” or whether, inasmuch as they had spoken from great envy, being ungrateful for so manifest benefits, although they were not yet Christians, they are, from the very greatness of their envy, to be supposed to have sinned against the Holy Ghost? This latter is certainly not to be gathered from our Lord’s words. For although He has said in the same passage, “And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come;” yet it may seem that He admonished them for this purpose, that they should come to His grace, and after accepting of it should not so sin as they have now sinned. For now they have spoken a word against the Son of man, and it may be forgiven them, if they be converted, and believe on Him, and receive the Holy Ghost; but if, after receiving Him, they should choose to envy the brotherhood, and to assail the grace they have received, it cannot be forgiven them, neither in this world nor in the world to come. For if He reckoned them so condemned, that there was no hope left for them, He would not judge that they ought still to be admonished, as He did by adding the statement, “Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt.”

76. Let it be understood, therefore, that we are to love our enemies, and to do good to those who hate us, and to pray for those who persecute us, in such a way, that it is at the same time understood that there are certain sins of brethren for which we are not commanded to pray; lest, through

unskilfulness on our part, divine Scripture should seem to contradict itself (a thing which cannot happen). But whether, as we are not to pray for certain parties, so we are also to pray against some, has not yet become sufficiently evident. For it is said in general, “Bless, and curse not;” and again, “Recompense to no man evil for evil.” Moreover, while you do not pray for one, you do not therefore pray against him: for you may see that his punishment is certain, and his salvation altogether hopeless; and you do not pray for him, not because you hate him, but because you feel you can profit him nothing, and you do not wish your prayer to be rejected by the most righteous Judge. But what are we to think respecting those parties against whom we have it revealed that prayers were offered by the saints, not that they might be turned from their error (for in this way prayer is offered rather for them), but that final condemnation might come upon them: not as it was offered against the betrayer of our Lord by the prophet; for that, as has been said, was a prediction of things to come, not a wish for punishment: nor as it was offered by the apostle against Alexander; for respecting that also enough has been already said: but as we read in the Apocalypse of John of the martyrs praying that they may be avenged; while the well-known first martyr prayed that those who stoned him should be pardoned.

77. But we need not be moved by this circumstance. For who would venture to affirm, in regard to those white-robed saints, when they pleaded that they should be avenged, whether they pleaded against the men themselves or against the dominion of sin? For of itself it is a genuine avenging of the martyrs, and one full of righteousness and mercy, that the dominion of sin should be overthrown, under which dominion they were subjected to so great sufferings. And for its overthrow the apostle strives, saying, “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body.” But the dominion of sin is destroyed and overthrown, partly by the amendment of men, so that the flesh is brought under subjection to the spirit; partly by the condemnation of those who persevere in sin, so that they are righteously disposed of in such a way that they cannot be troublesome to the righteous who reign with Christ. Look at the Apostle Paul; does it not seem to you that he avenges the martyr Stephen in his own person, when he says: “So fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring

it into subjection”? For he was certainly laying prostrate, and weakening, and bringing into subjection, and regulating that principle in himself whence he had persecuted Stephen and the other Christians. Who then can demonstrate that the holy martyrs were not asking from the Lord such an avenging of themselves, when at the same time, in order to their being avenged, they might lawfully wish for the end of this world, in which they had endured such martyrdoms? And they who pray for this, on the one hand pray for their enemies who are curable, and on the other hand do not pray against those who have chosen to be incurable: because God also, in punishing them, is not a malevolent Torturer, but a most righteous Disposer. Without any hesitation, therefore, let us love our enemies, let us do good to those that hate us, and let us pray for those who persecute us.

CHAPTER XXIII

78. Then, as to the statement which follows, “that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven,” it is to be understood according to that rule in virtue of which John also says, “He gave them power to become the sons of God.” For one is a Son by nature, who knows nothing at all of sin; but we, by receiving power, are made sons, in as far as we perform those things which are commanded us by Him. And hence the apostolic teaching gives the name of adoption to that by which we are called to an eternal inheritance, that we may be joint-heirs with Christ. We are therefore made sons by a spiritual regeneration, and we are adopted into the kingdom of God, not as aliens, but as being made and created by Him: so that it is one benefit, His having brought us into being through His omnipotence, when before we were nothing; another, His having adopted us, so that, as being sons, we might enjoy along with Him eternal life for our participation. Therefore He does not say, Do those things, because ye are sons; but, Do those things, that ye may be sons.

79. But when He calls us to this by the Only-begotten Himself, He calls us to His own likeness. For He, as is said in what follows, “maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Whether you are to understand His sun as being not that which is visible to the fleshly eyes, but that wisdom of which it is said, “She is the brightness of the everlasting light;” of which it is also said, “The Sun of

righteousness has arisen upon me;” and again, “But unto you that fear the name of the Lord shall the Sun of righteousness arise:” so that you would also understand the rain as being the watering with the doctrine of truth, because Christ hath appeared to the good and the evil, and is preached to the good and the evil. Or whether you choose rather to understand that sun which is set forth before the bodily eyes not only of men, but also of cattle; and that rain by which the fruits are brought forth, which have been given for the refreshment of the body, which I think is the more probable interpretation: so that that spiritual sun does not rise except on the good and holy; for it is this very thing which the wicked bewail in that book which is called the Wisdom of Solomon, “And the sun rose not upon us:” and that spiritual rain does not water any except the good; for the wicked were meant by the vineyard of which it is said, “I will also command my clouds that they rain no rain upon it.” But whether you understand the one or the other, it takes place by the great goodness of God, which we are commanded to imitate, if we wish to be the children of God. For who is there so ungrateful as not to feel how great the comfort, so far as this life is concerned, which that visible light and the material rain bring? And this comfort we see bestowed in this life alike upon the righteous and upon sinners in common. But He does not say, “who maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good;” but He has added the word “His,” i.e. which He Himself made and established, and for the making of which He took nothing from any one, as it is written in Genesis respecting all the luminaries; and He can properly say that all the things which He has created out of nothing are His own: so that we are hence admonished with how great liberality we ought, according to His precept, to give to our enemies those things which we have not created, but have received from His gifts.

80. But who can either be prepared to bear injuries from the weak, in as far as it is profitable for their salvation; and to choose rather to suffer more injustice from another than to repay what he has suffered; to give to every one that asketh anything from him, either what he asks, if it is in his possession, and if it can rightly be given, or good advice, or to manifest a benevolent disposition, and not to turn away from him who desires to borrow; to love his enemies, to do good to those who hate him, to pray for those who persecute him;—who, I say, does these things, but the man who

is fully and perfectly merciful? And with that counsel misery is avoided, by the assistance of Him who says, “I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.” “Blessed,” therefore, “are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.” But now I think it will be more convenient, that at this point the reader, fatigued with so long a volume, should breathe a little, and recruit himself for considering what remains in another book.

Book II

On the latter part of our Lord’s Sermon on the Mount, contained in the sixth and seventh chapters of Matthew

CHAPTER I

1. The subject of mercy, with the treatment of which the first book came to a close, is followed by that of the cleansing of the heart, with which the present one begins. The cleansing of the heart, then, is as it were the cleansing of the eye by which God is seen; and in keeping that single, there ought to be as great care as the dignity of the object demands, which can be beheld by such an eye. But even when this eye is in great part cleansed, it is difficult to prevent certain defilements from creeping insensibly over it, from those things which are wont to accompany even our good actions,—as, for instance, the praise of men. If, indeed, not to live uprightly is hurtful; yet to live uprightly, and not to wish to be praised, what else is this than to be an enemy to the affairs of men, which are certainly so much the more miserable, the less an upright life on the part of men gives pleasure? If, therefore, those among whom you live shall not praise you when living uprightly, they are in error: but if they shall praise you, you are in danger; unless you have a heart so single and pure, that in those things in which you act uprightly you do not so act because of the praises of men; and that you rather congratulate those who praise what is right, as having pleasure in what is good, than yourself; because you would live uprightly even if no one were to praise you: and that you understand this very praise of you to be useful to those who praise you, only when it is not yourself whom they honour in your good life, but God, whose most holy temple every man is who lives well; so that what David says finds its fulfilment, “In the Lord shall my soul be praised; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.” It

belongs therefore to the pure eye not to look at the praises of men in acting rightly, nor to have reference to these while you are acting rightly, i.e. to do anything rightly with the very design of pleasing men. For thus you will be disposed also to counterfeit what is good, if nothing is kept in view except the praise of man; who, inasmuch as he cannot see the heart, may also praise things that are false. And they who do this, i.e. who counterfeit goodness, are of a double heart. No one therefore has a single, i.e. a pure heart, except the man who rises above the praises of men; and when he lives well, looks at Him only, and strives to please Him who is the only Searcher of the conscience. And whatever proceeds from the purity of that conscience is so much the more praiseworthy, the less it desires the praises of men.

2. "Take heed, therefore," says He, "that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them:" i.e., take heed that ye do not live righteously with this intent, and that ye do not place your happiness in this, that men may see you. "Otherwise ye have no reward of your Father who is in heaven:" not if ye should be seen by men; but if ye should live righteously with the intent of being seen by men. For, [were it the former], what would become of the statement made in the beginning of this sermon, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works"? But He did not set up this as the end; for He has added, "and glorify your Father who is in heaven." But here, because he is finding fault with this, if the end of our right actions is there, i.e. if we act rightly with this design, only of being seen of men; after He has said, "Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men," He has added nothing. And hereby it is evident that He has said this, not to prevent us from acting rightly before men, but lest perchance we should act rightly before men for the purpose of being seen by them, i.e. should fix our eye on this, and make it the end of what we have set before us.

3. For the apostle also says, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ;" while he says in another place, "Please all men in all

things, even as I also please all men in all things.” And they who do not understand this think it a contradiction; while the explanation is, that he has said he does not please men, because he was accustomed to act rightly, not with the express design of pleasing men, but of pleasing God, to the love of whom he wished to turn men’s hearts by that very thing in which he was pleasing men. Therefore he was both right in saying that he did not please men, because in that very thing he aimed at pleasing God: and right in authoritatively teaching that we ought to please men, not in order that this should be sought for as the reward of our good deeds; but because the man who would not offer himself for imitation to those whom he wished to be saved, could not please God; but no man possibly can imitate one who has not pleased him. As, therefore, that man would not speak absurdly who should say, In this work of seeking a ship, it is not a ship, but my native country, that I seek: so the apostle also might fitly say, In this work of pleasing men, it is not men, but God, that I please; because I do not aim at pleasing men, but have it as my object, that those whom I wish to be saved may imitate me. Just as he says of an offering that is made for the saints, “Not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit;” i.e., In seeking your gift, I seek not it, but your fruit. For by this proof it could appear how far they had advanced Godward, when they offered that willingly which was sought from them not for the sake of his own joy over their gifts, but for the sake of the fellowship of love.

4. Although when He also goes on to say, “Otherwise ye have no reward of your Father who is in heaven,” He points out nothing else but that we ought to be on our guard against seeking man’s praise as the reward of our deeds, i.e. against thinking we thereby attain to blessedness.

CHAPTER II

5. “Therefore, when thou doest thine alms,” says He, “do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men.” Do not, says He, desire to become known in the same way as the hypocrites. Now it is manifest that hypocrites have not that in their heart also which they hold forth before the eyes of men. For hypocrites are pretenders, as it were setters forth of other characters, just as in the plays of the theatre. For he who acts the part of

Agamemnon in tragedy, for example, or of any other person belonging to the history or legend which is acted, is not really the person himself, but personates him, and is called a hypocrite. In like manner, in the Church, or in any phase of human life, whoever wishes to seem what he is not is a hypocrite. For he pretends, but does not show himself, to be a righteous man; because he places the whole fruit [of his acting] in the praise of men, which even pretenders may receive, while they deceive those to whom they seem good, and are praised by them. But such do not receive a reward from God the Searcher of the heart, unless it be the punishment of their deceit: from men, however, says He, "They have received their reward;" and most righteously will it be said to them, Depart from me, ye workers of deceit; ye had my name, but ye did not my works. Hence they have received their reward, who do their alms for no other reason than that they may have glory of men; not if they have glory of men, but if they do them for the express purpose of having this glory, as has been discussed above. For the praise of men ought not to be sought by him who acts rightly, but ought to follow him who acts rightly, so that they may profit who can also imitate what they praise, not that he whom they praise may think that they are profiting him anything.

6. "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." If you should understand unbelievers to be meant by the left hand, then it will seem to be no fault to wish to please believers; while nevertheless we are altogether prohibited from placing the fruit and end of our good deed in the praise of any men whatever. But as regards this point, that those who have been pleased with your good deeds should imitate you, we are to act before the eyes not only of believers, but also of unbelievers, so that by our good works, which are to be praised, they may honour God, and may come to salvation. But if you should be of opinion that the left hand means an enemy, so that your enemy is not to know when you do alms, why did the Lord Himself, when His enemies the Jews were standing round, mercifully heal men? why did the Apostle Peter, by healing the lame man whom he pitied at the gate Beautiful, bring also the wrath of the enemy upon himself, and upon the other disciples of Christ? Then, further, if it is necessary that the enemy should not know when we do our alms, how shall

we do with the enemy himself so as to fulfil that precept, “If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink”?

7. A third opinion is wont to be held by carnal people, so absurd and ridiculous, that I would not mention it had I not found that not a few are entangled in that error, who say that by the expression left hand a wife is meant; so that, inasmuch as in family affairs women are wont to be more tenacious of money, it is to be kept hid from them when their husbands compassionately spend anything upon the needy, for fear of domestic quarrels. As if, forsooth, men alone were Christians, and this precept were not addressed to women also! From what left hand, then, is a woman enjoined to conceal her deed of mercy? Is a husband also the left hand of his wife? A statement most absurd. Or if any one thinks that they are left hands to each other; if any part of the family property be expended by the one party in such a way as to be contrary to the will of the other party, such a marriage will not be a Christian one; but whichever of them should choose to do alms according to the command of God, whomsoever he should find opposed, would inevitably be an enemy to the command of God, and therefore reckoned among unbelievers,—the command with respect to such parties being, that a believing husband should win his wife, and a believing wife her husband, by their good conversation and conduct; and therefore they ought not to conceal their good works from each other, by which they are to be mutually attracted, so that the one may be able to attract the other to communion in the Christian faith. Nor are thefts to be perpetrated in order that God may be rendered propitious. But if anything is to be concealed as long as the infirmity of the other party is unable to bear with equanimity what nevertheless is not done unjustly and unlawfully; yet, that the left hand is not meant in such a sense on the present occasion, readily appears from a consideration of the whole section, whereby it will at the same time be discovered what He calls the left hand.

8. “Take heed,” says He, “that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.” Here He has mentioned righteousness generally, then He follows it up in detail. For a deed which is done in the way of alms is a certain part of righteousness, and therefore He connects the two by saying, “Therefore,

when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men.” In this there is a reference to what He says before, “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them.” But what follows, “Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward,” refers to that other statement which He has made above, “Otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.” Then follows, “But when thou doest alms.” When He says, “But thou,” what else does He mean but, Not in the same manner as they? What, then, does He bid me do? “But when thou doest alms,” says He, “let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.” Hence those other parties so act, that their left hand knoweth what their right hand doeth. What, therefore, is blamed in them, this thou art forbidden to do. But this is what is blamed in them, that they act in such a way as to seek the praises of men. And therefore the left hand seems to have no more suitable meaning than just this delight in praise. But the right hand means the intention of fulfilling the divine commands. When, therefore, with the consciousness of him who does alms is mixed up the desire of man’s praise, the left hand becomes conscious of the work of the right hand: “Let not, therefore, thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth;” i.e. Let there not be mixed up in thy consciousness the desire of man’s praise, when in doing alms thou art striving to fulfil a divine command.

9. “That thine alms may be in secret.” What else is meant by “in secret,” but just in a good conscience, which cannot be shown to human eyes, nor revealed by words? since, indeed, the mass of men tell many lies. And therefore, if the right hand acts inwardly in secret, all outward things, which are visible and temporal, belong to the left hand. Let thine alms, therefore, be in thine own consciousness, where many do alms by their good intention, even if they have no money or anything else which is to be bestowed on one who is needy. But many give alms outwardly, and not inwardly, who either from ambition, or for the sake of some temporal object, wish to appear merciful, in whom the left hand only is to be reckoned as working. Others again hold, as it were, a middle place between the two; so that, with a design which is directed Godward, they do their alms, and yet there insinuates itself into this excellent wish also some desire

after praise, or after a perishable and temporal object of some sort or other. But our Lord much more strongly prohibits the left hand alone being at work in us, when He even forbids its being mixed up with the works of the right hand: that is to say, that we are not only to beware of doing alms from the desire of temporal objects alone; but that in this work we are not even to have regard to God in such a way as that there should be mingled up or united therewith the grasping after outward advantages. For the question under discussion is the cleansing of the heart, which, unless it be single, will not be clean. But how will it be single, if it serves two masters, and does not purge its vision by the striving after eternal things alone, but clouds it by the love of mortal and perishable things as well? "Let thine alms," therefore, "be in secret; and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee." Altogether most righteously and most truly. For if you expect a reward from Him who is the only Searcher of the conscience, let conscience itself suffice thee for meriting a reward. Many Latin copies have it thus, "And thy Father who seeth in secret shall reward thee openly;" but because we have not found the word "openly" in the Greek copies, which are earlier, we have not thought that anything was to be said about it.

CHAPTER III

10. "And when ye pray," says He, "ye shall not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men." And here also it is not the being seen of men that is wrong, but doing these things for the purpose of being seen of men; and it is superfluous to make the same remark so often, since there is just one rule to be kept, from which we learn that what we should dread and avoid is not that men know these things, but that they be done with this intent, that the fruit of pleasing men should be sought after in them. Our Lord Himself, too, preserves the same words, when He adds similarly, "Verily I say unto you, They have received their reward;" hereby showing that He forbids this,—the striving after that reward in which fools delight when they are praised by men.

11. "But when ye pray," says He, "enter into your bed-chambers." What are those bed-chambers but just our hearts themselves, as is meant also in the Psalm, when it is said, "What ye say in your hearts, have remorse for even

in your beds”? “And when ye have shut the doors,” says He, “pray to your Father who is in secret.” It is a small matter to enter into our bed-chambers if the door stand open to the unmannerly, through which the things that are outside profanely rush in and assail our inner man. Now we have said that outside are all temporal and visible things, which make their way through the door, i.e. through the fleshly sense into our thoughts, and clamorously interrupt those who are praying by a crowd of vain phantoms. Hence the door is to be shut, i.e. the fleshly sense is to be resisted, so that spiritual prayer may be directed to the Father, which is done in the inmost heart, where prayer is offered to the Father which is in secret. “And your Father,” says He, “who seeth in secret, shall reward you.” And this had to be wound up with a closing statement of such a kind; for here at the present stage the admonition is not that we should pray, but as to how we should pray. Nor is what goes before an admonition that we should give alms, but as to the spirit in which we should do so, inasmuch as He is giving instructions with regard to the cleansing of the heart, which nothing cleanses but the undivided and single-minded striving after eternal life from the pure love of wisdom alone.

12. “But when ye pray,” says He, “do not speak much, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.” As it is characteristic of the hypocrites to exhibit themselves to be gazed at when praying, and their fruit is to please men, so it is characteristic of the heathen, i.e. of the Gentiles, to think they are heard for their much speaking. And in reality, every kind of much speaking comes from the Gentiles, who make it their endeavour to exercise the tongue rather than to cleanse the heart. And this kind of useless exertion they endeavour to transfer even to the influencing of God by prayer, supposing that the Judge, just like man, is brought over by words to a certain way of thinking. “Be not ye, therefore, like unto them,” says the only true Master. “For your Father knoweth what things are necessary for you, before ye ask Him.” For if many words are made use of with the intent that one who is ignorant may be instructed and taught, what need is there of them for Him who knows all things, to whom all things which exist, by the very fact of their existence, speak, and show themselves as having been brought into existence; and those things which are future do not remain concealed from His knowledge and wisdom, in

which both those things which are past, and those things which will yet come to pass, are all present and cannot pass away?

13. But since, however few they may be, yet there are words which He Himself also is about to speak, by which He would teach us to pray; it may be asked why even these few words are necessary for Him who knows all things before they take place, and is acquainted, as has been said, with what is necessary for us before we ask Him? Here, in the first place, the answer is, that we ought to urge our case with God, in order to obtain what we wish, not by words, but by the ideas which we cherish in our mind, and by the direction of our thought, with pure love and sincere desire; but that our Lord has taught us the very ideas in words, that by committing them to memory we may recollect those ideas at the time we pray.

14. But again, it may be asked (whether we are to pray in ideas or in words) what need there is for prayer itself, if God already knows what is necessary for us; unless it be that the very effort involved in prayer calms and purifies our heart, and makes it more capacious for receiving the divine gifts, which are poured into us spiritually. For it is not on account of the urgency of our prayers that God hears us, who is always ready to give us His light, not of a material kind, but that which is intellectual and spiritual: but we are not always ready to receive, since we are inclined towards other things, and are involved in darkness through our desire for temporal things. Hence there is brought about in prayer a turning of the heart to Him, who is ever ready to give, if we will but take what He has given; and in the very act of turning there is effected a purging of the inner eye, inasmuch as those things of a temporal kind which were desired are excluded, so that the vision of the pure heart may be able to bear the pure light, divinely shining, without any setting or change: and not only to bear it, but also to remain in it; not merely without annoyance, but also with ineffable joy, in which a life truly and sincerely blessed is perfected.

CHAPTER IV

15. But now we have to consider what things we are taught to pray for by Him through whom we both learn what we are to pray for, and obtain what we pray for. “After this manner, therefore, pray ye,” says He: “Our Father

who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” Seeing that in all prayer we have to conciliate the goodwill of him to whom we pray, then to say what we pray for; goodwill is usually conciliated by our offering praise to him to whom the prayer is directed, and this is usually put in the beginning of the prayer: and in this particular our Lord has bidden us say nothing else but “Our Father who art in heaven.” For many things are said in praise of God, which, being scattered variously and widely over all the Holy Scriptures, every one will be able to consider when he reads them: yet nowhere is there found a precept for the people of Israel, that they should say “Our Father,” or that they should pray to God as a Father; but as Lord He was made known to them, as being yet servants, i.e. still living according to the flesh. I say this, however, inasmuch as they received the commands of the law, which they were ordered to observe: for the prophets often show that this same Lord of ours might have been their Father also, if they had not strayed from His commandments: as, for instance, we have that statement, “I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me;” and that other, “I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High;” and this again, “If then I be a Father, where is mine honour? and if I be a Master, where is my fear?” and very many other statements, where the Jews are accused of showing by their sin that they did not wish to become sons: those things being left out of account which are said in prophecy of a future Christian people, that they would have God as a Father, according to that gospel statement, “To them gave He power to become the sons of God.” The Apostle Paul, again, says, “The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant;” and mentions that we have received the Spirit of adoption, “whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

16. And since the fact that we are called to an eternal inheritance, that we might be fellow-heirs with Christ and attain to the adoption of sons, is not of our deserts, but of God’s grace; we put this very same grace in the beginning of our prayer, when we say “Our Father.” And by that appellation both love is stirred up—for what ought to be dearer to sons than a father?—and a suppliant disposition, when men say to God, “Our Father:” and a

certain presumption of obtaining what we are about to ask; since, before we ask anything, we have received so great a gift as to be allowed to call God “Our Father.” For what would He not now give to sons when they ask, when He has already granted this very thing, namely, that they might be sons? Lastly, how great solicitude takes hold of the mind, that he who says “Our Father,” should not prove unworthy of so great a Father! For if any plebeian should be permitted by the party himself to call a senator of more advanced age father; without doubt he would tremble, and would not readily venture to do it, reflecting on the humbleness of his origin, and the scantiness of his resources, and the worthlessness of his plebeian person: how much more, therefore, ought we to tremble to call God Father, if there is so great a stain and so much baseness in our character, that God might much more justly drive forth these from contact with Himself, than that senator might the poverty of any beggar whatever! Since, indeed, he (the senator) despises that in the beggar to which even he himself may be reduced by the vicissitude of human affairs: but God never falls into baseness of character. And thanks be to the mercy of Him who requires this of us, that He should be our Father,—a relationship which can be brought about by no expenditure of ours, but solely by God’s goodwill. Here also there is an admonition to the rich and to those of noble birth, so far as this world is concerned, that when they have become Christians they should not comport themselves proudly towards the poor and the low of birth; since together with them they call God “Our Father,”—an expression which they cannot truly and piously use, unless they recognise that they themselves are brethren.

CHAPTER V

17. Let the new people, therefore, who are called to an eternal inheritance, use the word of the New Testament, and say, “Our Father who art in heaven,” i.e. in the holy and the just. For God is not contained in space. For the heavens are indeed the higher material bodies of the world, but yet material, and therefore cannot exist except in some definite place; but if God’s place is believed to be in the heavens, as meaning the higher parts of the world, the birds are of greater value than we, for their life is nearer to God. But it is not written, The Lord is nigh unto tall men, or unto those who

dwell on mountains; but it is written, “The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart,” which refers rather to humility. But as a sinner is called earth, when it is said to him, “Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return;” so, on the other hand, a righteous man may be called heaven. For it is said to the righteous, “For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” And therefore, if God dwells in His temple, and the saints are His temple, the expression “which art in heaven” is rightly used in the sense, which art in the saints. And most suitable is such a similitude, so that spiritually there may be seen to be as great a difference between the righteous and sinners, as there is materially between heaven and earth.

18. And for the purpose of showing this, when we stand at prayer, we turn to the east, whence the heaven rises: not as if God also were dwelling there, in the sense that He who is everywhere present, not as occupying space, but by the power of His majesty, had forsaken the other parts of the world; but in order that the mind may be admonished to turn to a more excellent nature, i.e. to God, when its own body, which is earthly, is turned to a more excellent body, i.e. to a heavenly one. It is also suitable for the different stages of religion, and expedient in the highest degree, that in the minds of all, both small and great, there should be cherished worthy conceptions of God. And therefore, as regards those who as yet are taken up with the beauties that are seen, and cannot think of anything incorporeal, inasmuch as they must necessarily prefer heaven to earth, their opinion is more tolerable, if they believe God, whom as yet they think of after a corporeal fashion, to be in heaven rather than upon earth: so that when at any future time they have learned that the dignity of the soul exceeds even a celestial body, they may seek Him in the soul rather than in a celestial body even; and when they have learned how great a distance there is between the souls of sinners and of the righteous, just as they did not venture, when as yet they were wise only after a carnal fashion, to place Him on earth, but in heaven, so afterwards with better faith or intelligence they may seek Him again in the souls of the righteous rather than in those of sinners. Hence, when it is said, “Our Father which art in heaven,” it is rightly understood to mean in the hearts of the righteous, as it were in His holy temple. And at the same time, in such a way that he who prays wishes Him whom he invokes to dwell in himself also; and when he strives after this, practises

righteousness,—a kind of service by which God is attracted to dwell in the soul.

19. Let us see now what things are to be prayed for. For it has been stated who it is that is prayed to, and where He dwells. First of all, then, of those things which are prayed for comes this petition, “Hallowed be Thy name.” And this is prayed for, not as if the name of God were not holy already, but that it may be held holy by men; i.e., that God may so become known to them, that they shall reckon nothing more holy, and which they are more afraid of offending. For, because it is said, “In Judah is God known; His name is great in Israel,” we are not to understand the statement in this way, as if God were less in one place, greater in another; but there His name is great, where He is named according to the greatness of His majesty. And so there His name is said to be holy, where He is named with veneration and the fear of offending Him. And this is what is now going on, while the gospel, by becoming known everywhere throughout the different nations, commends the name of the one God by means of the administration of His Son.

CHAPTER VI

20. In the next place there follows, “Thy kingdom come.” Just as the Lord Himself teaches in the Gospel that the day of judgment will take place at the very time when the gospel shall have been preached among all nations: a thing which belongs to the hallowing of God’s name. For here also the expression “Thy kingdom come” is not used in such a way as if God were not now reigning. But some one perhaps might say the expression “come” meant upon earth; as if, indeed, He were not even now really reigning upon earth, and had not always reigned upon it from the foundation of the world. “Come,” therefore, is to be understood in the sense of “manifested to men.” For in the same way also as a light which is present is absent to the blind, and to those who shut their eyes; so the kingdom of God, though it never departs from the earth, is yet absent to those who are ignorant of it. But no one will be allowed to be ignorant of the kingdom of God, when His Only-begotten shall come from heaven, not only in a way to be apprehended by the understanding, but also visibly in the person of the Divine Man, in order to judge the quick and the dead. And after that judgment, i.e. when the

process of distinguishing and separating the righteous from the unrighteous has taken place, God will so dwell in the righteous, that there will be no need for any one being taught by man, but all will be, as it is written, “taught of God.” Then will the blessed life in all its parts be perfected in the saints unto eternity, just as now the most holy and blessed heavenly angels are wise and blessed, from the fact that God alone is their light; because the Lord hath promised this also to His own: “In the resurrection,” says He, “they will be as the angels in heaven.”

21. And therefore, after that petition where we say, “Thy kingdom come,” there follows, “Thy will be done, as in heaven so in earth:” i.e., just as Thy will is in the angels who are in heaven, so that they wholly cleave to Thee, and thoroughly enjoy Thee, no error beclouding their wisdom, no misery hindering their blessedness; so let it be done in Thy saints who are on earth, and made from the earth, so far as the body is concerned, and who, although it is into a heavenly habitation and exchange, are yet to be taken from the earth. To this there is a reference also in that doxology of the angels, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of goodwill:” so that when our goodwill has gone before, which follows Him that calleth, the will of God is perfected in us, as it is in the heavenly angels; so that no antagonism stands in the way of our blessedness: and this is peace. “Thy will be done” is also rightly understood in the sense of, Let obedience be rendered to Thy precepts: “as in heaven so on earth,” i.e. as by the angels so by men. For, that the will of God is done when His precepts are obeyed, the Lord Himself says, when He affirms, “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me;” and often, “I came, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me;” and when He says, “Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” And therefore, in those at least who do the will of God, the will of God is accomplished; not because they cause God to will, but because they do what He wills, i.e. they do according to His will.

22. There is also that other interpretation, “Thy will be done as in heaven so on earth,”—as in the holy and just, so also in sinners. And this, besides, may be understood in two ways: either that we should pray even for our enemies (for what else are they to be reckoned, in spite of whose will the

Christian and Catholic name still spreads?), so that it is said, “Thy will be done as in heaven so on earth,”—as if the meaning were, As the righteous do Thy will, in like manner let sinners also do it, so that they may be converted unto Thee; or in this sense, “Let Thy will be done as in heaven so on earth,” so that every one may get his own; which will take place at the last judgment, the righteous being requited with a reward, sinners with condemnation—when the sheep shall be separated from the goats.

23. That other interpretation also is not absurd, nay, it is thoroughly accordant with both our faith and hope, that we are to take heaven and earth in the sense of spirit and flesh. And since the apostle says, “With the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin,” we see that the will of God is done in the mind, i.e. in the spirit. But when death shall have been swallowed up in victory, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, which will happen at the resurrection of the flesh, and at that change which is promised to the righteous, according to the prediction of the same apostle, let the will of God be done on earth, as it is in heaven; i.e., in such a way that, in like manner as the spirit does not resist God, but follows and does His will, so the body also may not resist the spirit or soul, which at present is harassed by the weakness of the body, and is prone to fleshly habit: and this will be an element of the perfect peace in the life eternal, that not only will the will be present with us, but also the performance of that which is good. “For to will,” says he, “is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not:” for not yet in earth as in heaven, i.e. not yet in the flesh as in the spirit, is the will of God done. For even in our misery the will of God is done, when we suffer those things through the flesh which are due to us in virtue of our mortality, which our nature has deserved because of its sin. But we are to pray for this, that the will of God may be done as in heaven so in earth; that in like manner as with the heart we delight in the law after the inward man, so also, when the change in our body has taken place, no part of us may, on account of earthly griefs or pleasures, stand opposed to this our delight.

24. Nor is that view inconsistent with truth, that we are to understand the words, “Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth,” as in our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, so also in the Church: as if one were to say, As in the man

who fulfilled the will of the Father, so also in the woman who is betrothed to him. For heaven and earth are suitably understood as if they were man and wife; since the earth is fruitful from the heaven fertilizing it.

CHAPTER VII

25. The fourth petition is, “Give us this day our daily bread.” Daily bread is put either for all those things which meet the wants of this life, in reference to which He says in His teaching, “Take no thought for the morrow:” so that on this account there is added, “Give us this day:” or, it is put for the sacrament of the body of Christ, which we daily receive: or, for the spiritual food, of which the same Lord says, “Labour for the meat which perisheth not;” and again, “I am the bread of life, which came down from heaven.” But which of these three views is the more probable, is a question for consideration. For perhaps some one may wonder why we should pray that we may obtain the things which are necessary for this life,—such, for instance, as food and clothing,—when the Lord Himself says, “Be not anxious what ye shall eat, or what ye shall put on.” Can any one not be anxious for a thing which he prays that he may obtain; when prayer is to be offered with so great earnestness of mind, that to this refers all that has been said about shutting our closets, and also the command, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”? Certainly He does not say, Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and then seek those other things; but “all these things,” says He, “shall be added unto you,” that is to say, even though ye are not seeking them. But I know not whether it can be found out, how one is rightly said not to seek what he most earnestly pleads with God that he may receive.

26. But with respect to the sacrament of the Lord’s body (in order that they may not start a question, who, the most of them being in Eastern parts, do not partake of the Lord’s supper daily, while this bread is called daily bread: in order, therefore, that they may be silent, and not defend their way of thinking about this matter even by the very authority of the Church, because they do such things without scandal, and are not prevented from doing them by those who preside over their churches, and when they do not obey are not condemned; whence it is proved that this is not understood as daily bread in these parts: for, if this were the case, they would be charged with

the commission of a great sin, who do not on that account receive it daily; but, as has been said, not to argue at all to any extent from the case of such parties), this consideration at least ought to occur to those who reflect, that we have received a rule for prayer from the Lord, which we ought not to transgress, either by adding or omitting anything. And since this is the case, who is there who would venture to say that we ought only once to use the Lord's Prayer, or at least that, even if we have used it a second or a third time before the hour at which we partake of the Lord's body, afterwards we are assuredly not so to pray during the remaining hours of the day? For we shall no longer be able to say, "Give us this day," respecting what we have already received; or every one will be able to compel us to celebrate that sacrament at the very last hour of the day.

27. It remains, therefore, that we should understand the daily bread as spiritual, that is to say, divine precepts, which we ought daily to meditate and to labour after. For just with respect to these the Lord says, "Labour for the meat which perisheth not." That food, moreover, is called daily food at present, so long as this temporal life is measured off by means of days that depart and return. And, in truth, so long as the desire of the soul is directed by turns, now to what is higher, now to what is lower, i.e. now to spiritual things, now to carnal, as is the case with him who at one time is nourished with food, at another time suffers hunger; bread is daily necessary, in order that the hungry man may be recruited, and he who is falling down may be raised up. As, therefore, our body in this life, that is to say, before that great change, is recruited with food, because it feels loss; so may the soul also, since by means of temporal desires it sustains as it were a loss in its striving after God, be reinvigorated by the food of the precepts. Moreover, it is said, "Give us this day," as long as it is called to-day, i.e. in this temporal life. For we shall be so abundantly provided with spiritual food after this life unto eternity, that it will not then be called daily bread; because there the flight of time, which causes days to succeed days, whence it may be called to-day, will not exist. But as it is said, "To-day, if ye will hear His voice," which the apostle interprets in the Epistle to the Hebrews, As long as it is called to-day; so here also the expression is to be understood, "Give us this day." But if any one wishes to understand the sentence before us also of food necessary for the body, or of the sacrament of the Lord's body, we

must take all three meanings conjointly; that is to say, that we are to ask for all at once as daily bread, both the bread necessary for the body, and the visible hallowed bread, and the invisible bread of the word of God.

CHAPTER VIII

28. The fifth petition follows: “And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” It is manifest that by debts are meant sins, either from that statement which the Lord Himself makes, “Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing;” or from the fact that He called those men debtors who were reported to Him as having been killed, either those on whom the tower fell, or those whose blood Herod had mingled with the sacrifice. For He said that men supposed it was because they were debtors above measure, i.e. sinners, and added “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise die.” Here, therefore, it is not a money claim that one is pressed to remit, but whatever sins another may have committed against him. For we are enjoined to remit a money claim by that precept rather which has been given above, “If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also;” nor is it necessary to remit a debt to every money debtor; but only to him who is unwilling to pay, to such an extent that he wishes even to go to law. “Now the servant of the Lord,” as says the apostle, “must not go to law.” And therefore to him who shall be unwilling, either spontaneously or when requested, to pay the money which he owes, it is to be remitted. For his unwillingness to pay will arise from one of two causes, either that he has it not, or that he is avaricious and covetous of the property of another; and both of these belong to a state of poverty: for the former is poverty of substance, the latter poverty of disposition. Whoever, therefore, remits a debt to such an one, remits it to one who is poor, and performs a Christian work; while that rule remains in force, that he should be prepared in mind to lose what is owing to him. For if he has used exertion in every way, quietly and gently, to have it restored to him, not so much aiming at a money profit, as that he may bring the man round to what is right, to whom without doubt it is hurtful to have the means of paying, and yet not to pay; not only will he not sin, but he will even do a very great service, in trying to prevent that other, who is wishing to make gain of another’s money, from making

shipwreck of the faith; which is so much more serious a thing, that there is no comparison. And hence it is understood that in this fifth petition also, where we say, “Forgive us our debts,” the words are spoken not indeed in reference to money, but in reference to all ways in which any one sins against us, and by consequence in reference to money also. For the man who refuses to pay you the money which he owes, when he has the means of doing so, sins against you. And if you do not forgive this sin, you will not be able to say, “Forgive us, as we also forgive;” but if you pardon it, you see how he who is enjoined to offer such a prayer is admonished also with respect to forgiving a money debt.

29. That may indeed be construed in this way, that when we say, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive,” then only are we convicted of having acted contrary to this rule, if we do not forgive them who ask pardon, because we also wish to be forgiven by our most gracious Father when we ask His pardon. But, on the other hand, by that precept whereby we are enjoined to pray for our enemies, it is not for those who ask pardon that we are enjoined to pray. For those who are already in such a state of mind are no longer enemies. By no possibility, however, could one truthfully say that he prays for one whom he has not pardoned. And therefore we must confess that all sins which are committed against us are to be forgiven, if we wish those to be forgiven by our Father which we commit against Him. For the subject of revenge has been sufficiently discussed already, as I think.

CHAPTER IX

30. The sixth petition is, “And bring us not into temptation.” Some manuscripts have the word “lead,” which is, I judge, equivalent in meaning: for both translations have arisen from the one Greek word which is used. But many parties in prayer express themselves thus, “Suffer us not to be led into temptation;” that is to say, explaining in what sense the word “lead” is used. For God does not Himself lead, but suffers that man to be led into temptation whom He has deprived of His assistance, in accordance with a most hidden arrangement, and with his deserts. Often, also, for manifest reasons, He judges him worthy of being so deprived, and allowed to be led into temptation. But it is one thing to be led into temptation, another to be tempted. For without temptation no one can be proved, whether to himself,

as it is written, “He that hath not been tempted, what manner of things doth he know?” or to another, as the apostle says, “And your temptation in my flesh ye despised not:” for from this circumstance he learnt that they were stedfast, because they were not turned aside from charity by those tribulations which had happened to the apostle according to the flesh. For even before all temptations we are known to God, who knows all things before they happen.

31. When, therefore, it is said, “The Lord your God tempteth (proveth) you, that He may know if ye love Him,” the words “that He may know” are employed for what is the real state of the case, that He may make you know: just as we speak of a joyful day, because it makes us joyful; of a sluggish frost, because it makes us sluggish; and of innumerable things of the same sort, which are found either in ordinary speech, or in the discourse of learned men, or in the Holy Scriptures. And the heretics who are opposed to the Old Testament, not understanding this, think that the brand of ignorance, as it were, is to be placed upon Him of whom it is said, “The Lord your God tempteth you:” as if in the Gospel it were not written of the Lord, “And this He said to tempt (prove) him, for He Himself knew what He would do.” For if He knew the heart of him whom He was tempting, what is it that He wished to see by tempting him? But in reality, that was done in order that he who was tempted might become known to himself, and that he might condemn his own despair, on the multitudes being filled with the Lord’s bread, while he had thought they had not enough to eat.

32. Here, therefore, the prayer is not, that we should not be tempted, but that we should not be brought into temptation: as if, were it necessary that any one should be examined by fire, he should pray, not that he should not be touched by the fire, but that he should not be consumed. For “the furnace proveth the potter’s vessels, and the trial of tribulation righteous men.” Joseph therefore was tempted with the allurement of debauchery, but he was not brought into temptation. Susanna was tempted, but she was not led or brought into temptation; and many others of both sexes: but Job most of all, in regard to whose admirable stedfastness in the Lord his God, those heretical enemies of the Old Testament, when they wish to mock at it with sacrilegious mouth, brandish this above other weapons, that Satan begged

that he should be tempted. For they put the question to unskilful men by no means able to understand such things, how Satan could speak with God: not understanding (for they cannot, inasmuch as they are blinded by superstition and controversy) that God does not occupy space by the mass of His corporeity; and thus exist in one place, and not in another, or at least have one part here, and another elsewhere: but that He is everywhere present in His majesty, not divided by parts, but everywhere complete. But if they take a fleshly view of what is said, "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool,"—to which passage our Lord also bears testimony, when He says, "Swear not at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool,"—what wonder if the devil, being placed on earth, stood before the feet of God, and spoke something in His presence? For when will they be able to understand that there is no soul, however wicked, which can yet reason in any way, in whose conscience God does not speak? For who but God has written the law of nature in the hearts of men?—that law concerning which the apostle says: "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing them witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another, in the day when the Lord shall judge the secrets of men." And therefore, as in the case of every rational soul, which thinks and reasons, even though blinded by passion, we attribute whatever in its reasoning is true, not to itself but to the very light of truth by which, however faintly, it is according to its capacity illuminated, so as to perceive some measure of truth by its reasoning; what wonder if the depraved spirit of the devil, perverted though it be by lust, should be represented as having heard from the voice of God Himself, i.e. from the voice of the very Truth, whatever true thought it has entertained about a righteous man whom it was proposing to tempt? But whatever is false is to be attributed to that lust from which he has received the name of devil. Although it is also the case that God has often spoken by means of a corporeal and visible creature whether to good or bad, as being Lord and Governor of all, and Disposer according to the merits of every deed: as, for instance, by means of angels, who appeared also under the aspect of men; and by means of the prophets, saying, Thus saith the Lord. What wonder then, if, though not in mere thought, at least by means of some creature fitted for such a work, God is said to have spoken with the devil?

33. And let them not imagine it unworthy of His dignity, and as it were of His righteousness, that God spoke with him: inasmuch as He spoke with an angelic spirit, although one foolish and lustful, just as if He were speaking with a foolish and lustful human spirit. Or let such parties themselves tell us how He spoke with that rich man, whose most foolish covetousness He wished to censure, saying: “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?” Certainly the Lord Himself says so in the Gospel, to which those heretics, whether they will or no, bend their necks. But if they are puzzled by this circumstance, that Satan asks from God that a righteous man should be tempted; I do not explain how it happened, but I compel them to explain why it is said in the Gospel by the Lord Himself to the disciples, “Behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat;” and He says to Peter, “But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.” And when they explain this to me, they explain to themselves at the same time that which they question me about. But if they should not be able to explain this, let them not dare with rashness to blame in any book what they read in the Gospel without offence.

34. Temptations, therefore, take place by means of Satan not by his power, but by the Lord’s permission, either for the purpose of punishing men for their sins, or of proving and exercising them in accordance with the Lord’s compassion. And there is a very great difference in the nature of the temptations into which each one may fall. For Judas, who sold his Lord, did not fall into one of the same nature as Peter fell into, when, under the influence of terror, he denied his Lord. There are also temptations common to man, I believe, when every one, though well disposed, yet yielding to human frailty, falls into error in some plan, or is irritated against a brother, in the earnest endeavour to bring him round to what is right, yet a little more than Christian calmness demands: concerning which temptations the apostle says, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man;” while he says at the same time, “But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation

also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." And in that sentence he makes it sufficiently evident that we are not to pray that we may not be tempted, but that we may not be led into temptation. For we are led into temptation, if such temptations have happened to us as we are not able to bear. But when dangerous temptations, into which it is ruinous for us to be brought and led, arise either from prosperous or adverse temporal circumstances, no one is broken down by the irksomeness of adversity, who is not led captive by the delight of prosperity.

35. The seventh and last petition is, "But deliver us from evil." For we are to pray not only that we may not be led into the evil from which we are free, which is asked in the sixth place; but that we may also be delivered from that into which we have been already led. And when this has been done, nothing will remain terrible, nor will any temptation at all have to be feared. And yet in this life, so long as we carry about our present mortality, into which we were led by the persuasion of the serpent, it is not to be hoped that this can be the case; but yet we are to hope that at some future time it will take place: and this is the hope which is not seen, of which the apostle, when speaking, said, "But hope which is seen is not hope." But yet the wisdom which is granted in this life also, is not to be despaired of by the faithful servants of God. And it is this, that we should with the most wary vigilance shun what we have understood, from the Lord's revealing it, is to be shunned; and that we should with the most ardent love seek after what we have understood, from the Lord's revealing it, is to be sought after. For thus, after the remaining burden of this mortality has been laid down in the act of dying, there shall be perfected in every part of man at the fit time, the blessedness which has been begun in this life, and which we have from time to time strained every nerve to lay hold of and secure.

CHAPTER X

36. But the distinction among these seven petitions is to be considered and commended. For inasmuch as our temporal life is being spent now, and that which is eternal hoped for, and inasmuch as eternal things are superior in point of dignity, albeit it is only when we have done with temporal things that we pass to the other; although the three first petitions begin to be answered in this life, which is being spent in the present world (for both the

hallowing of God’s name begins to be carried on just with the coming of the lord of humility; and the coming of His kingdom, to which He will come in splendour, will be manifested, not after the end of the world, but in the end of the world; and the perfect doing of His will in earth as in heaven, whether you understand by heaven and earth the righteous and sinners, or spirit and flesh, or the Lord and the Church, or all these things together, will be brought to completion just with the perfecting of our blessedness, and therefore at the close of the world), yet all three will remain to eternity. For both the hallowing of God’s name will go on for ever, and there is no end of His kingdom, and eternal life is promised to our perfected blessedness. Hence those three things will remain consummated and thoroughly completed in that life which is promised us.

37. But the other four things which we ask seem to me to belong to this temporal life. And the first of them is, “Give us this day our daily bread.” For whether by this same thing which is called daily bread be meant spiritual bread, or that which is visible in the sacrament or in this sustenance of ours, it belongs to the present time, which He has called “to-day,” not because spiritual food is not everlasting, but because that which is called daily food in the Scriptures is represented to the soul either by the sound of the expression or by temporal signs of any kind: things all of which will certainly no more have existence when all shall be taught of God, and thus shall no longer be making known to others by movement of their bodies, but drinking in each one for himself by the purity of his mind the ineffable light of truth itself. For perhaps for this reason also it is called bread, not drink, because bread is converted into aliment by breaking and masticating it, just as the Scriptures feed the soul by being opened up and made the subject of discourse; but drink, when prepared, passes as it is into the body: so that at present the truth is bread, when it is called daily bread; but then it will be drink, when there will be no need of the labour of discussing and discoursing, as it were of breaking and masticating, but merely of drinking unmingled and transparent truth. And sins are at present forgiven us, and at present we forgive them; which is the second petition of these four that remain: but then there will be no pardon of sins, because there will be no sins. And temptations molest this temporal life; but they will have no existence when these words shall be fully realized, “Thou shall

hide them in the secret of Thy presence.” And the evil from which we wish to be delivered, and the deliverance from evil itself, belong certainly to this life, which as being mortal we have deserved at the hand of God’s justice, and from which we are delivered by His mercy.

CHAPTER XI

38. The sevenfold number of these petitions also seems to me to correspond to that sevenfold number out of which the whole sermon before us has had its rise. For if it is the fear of God through which the poor in spirit are blessed, inasmuch as theirs is the kingdom of heaven; let us ask that the name of God may be hallowed among men through that “fear which is clean, enduring for ever.” If it is piety through which the meek are blessed, inasmuch as they shall inherit the earth; let us ask that His kingdom may come, whether it be over ourselves, that we may become meek, and not resist Him, or whether it be from heaven to earth in the splendour of the Lord’s advent, in which we shall rejoice, and shall be praised, when He says, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” For “in the Lord,” says the prophet, “shall my soul be praised; the meek shall hear thereof, and be glad.” If it is knowledge through which those who mourn are blessed, inasmuch as they shall be comforted; let us pray that His will may be done as in heaven so in earth, because when the body, which is as it were the earth, shall agree in a final and complete peace with the soul, which is as it were heaven, we shall not mourn: for there is no other mourning belonging to this present time, except when these contend against each other, and compel us to say, “I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind;” and to testify our grief with tearful voice, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” If it is fortitude through which those are blessed who hunger and thirst after righteousness, inasmuch as they shall be filled; let us pray that our daily bread may be given to us to-day, by which, supported and sustained, we may be able to reach that most abundant fulness. If it is prudence through which the merciful are blessed, inasmuch as they shall obtain mercy; let us forgive their debts to our debtors, and let us pray that ours may be forgiven to us. If it is understanding through which the pure in heart are blessed, inasmuch as

they shall see God; let us pray not to be led into temptation, lest we should have a double heart, in not seeking after a single good, to which we may refer all our actings, but at the same time pursuing things temporal and earthly. For temptations arising from those things which seem to men burdensome and calamitous, have no power over us, if those other temptations have no power which befall us through the enticements of such things as men count good and cause for rejoicing. If it is wisdom through which the peacemakers are blessed, inasmuch as they shall be called the children of God; let us pray that we may be freed from evil, for that very freedom will make us free, i.e. sons of God, so that we may cry in the spirit of adoption, “Abba, Father.”

39. Nor are we indeed carelessly to pass by the circumstance, that of all those sentences in which the Lord has taught us to pray, He has judged that that one is chiefly to be commended which has reference to the forgiveness of sins: in which He would have us to be merciful, because it is the only wisdom for escaping misery. For in no other sentence do we pray in such a way that we, as it were, enter into a compact with God: for we say, “Forgive us, as we also forgive.” And if we lie in that compact, the whole prayer is fruitless. For He speaks thus: “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

CHAPTER XII

40. There follows a precept concerning fasting, having reference to that same purification of heart which is at present under discussion. For in this work also we must be on our guard, lest there should creep in a certain ostentation and hankering after the praise of man, which would make the heart double, and not allow it to be pure and single for apprehending God. “Moreover, when ye fast,” says He, “be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But ye, when ye fast, anoint your head, and wash your face; that ye appear not unto men to fast, but unto your Father which is in secret: and your Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward you.” It is manifest from these precepts that all our effort is to be directed towards inward joys, lest, seeking a reward from

without, we should be conformed to this world, and should lose the promise of a blessedness so much the more solid and firm, as it is inward, in which God has chosen that we should become conformed to the image of His Son.

41. But in this section it is chiefly to be noticed, that there may be ostentatious display not merely in the splendour and pomp of things pertaining to the booty, but also in doleful squalor itself; and the more dangerous on this account, that it deceives under the name of serving God. And therefore he who is very conspicuous by immoderate attention to the body, and by the splendour of his clothing or other things, is easily convicted by the things themselves of being a follower of the pomps of the world, and misleads no one by a cunning semblance of sanctity; but in regard to him who under a profession of Christianity, fixes the eyes of men upon himself by unusual squalor and filth, when he does it voluntarily, and not under the pressure of necessity, it may be conjectured from the rest of his actings whether he does this from contempt of superfluous attention to the body, or from a certain ambition: for the Lord has enjoined us to beware of wolves under a sheep's skin; but "by their fruits," says He, "shall ye know them." For when by temptations of any kind those very things begin to be withdrawn from them or refused to them, which under that veil they either have obtained or desire to obtain, then of necessity it appears whether it is a wolf in a sheep's skin or a sheep in its own. For a Christian ought not to delight the eyes of men by superfluous ornament on this account, because pretenders also too often assume that frugal and merely necessary dress, that they may deceive those who are not on their guard: for those sheep also ought not to lay aside their own skins, if at any time wolves cover themselves there with.

42. It is usual, therefore, to ask what He means, when He says: "But ye, when ye fast, anoint your head, and wash your faces, that ye appear not unto men to fast." For it would not be right in any one to teach (although we may wash our face according to daily custom) that we ought also to have our heads anointed when we fast. If, then, all admit this to be most unseemly, we must understand this precept with respect to anointing the head and washing the face as referring to the inner man. Hence, to anoint the head refers to joy; to wash the face, on the other hand, refers to purity:

and therefore that man anoints his head who rejoices inwardly in his mind and reason. For we rightly understand that as being the head which has the pre-eminence in the soul, and by which it is evident that the other parts of man are ruled and governed. And this is done by him who does not seek his joy from without, so as to draw his delight in a fleshly way from the praises of men. For the flesh, which ought to be subject, is in no way the head of the whole nature of man. “No man,” indeed, “ever yet hated his own flesh,” as the apostle says, when giving the precept as to loving one’s wife; but the man is the head of the woman, and Christ is the head of the man. Let him, therefore, rejoice inwardly in his fasting in this very circumstance, that by his fasting he so turns away from the pleasure of the world as to be subject to Christ, who according to this precept desires to have the head anointed. For thus also he will wash his face, i.e. cleanse his heart, with which he shall see God, no veil being interposed on account of the infirmity contracted from squalor; but being firm and stedfast, inasmuch as he is pure and guileless. “Wash you,” says He, “make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes.” From the squalor, therefore, by which the eye of God is offended, our face is to be washed. For we, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image.

43. Often also the thought of things necessary belonging to this life wounds and defiles our inner eye; and frequently it makes the heart double, so that in regard to those things in which we seem to act rightly with our fellowmen, we do not act with that heart wherewith the Lord enjoins us; i.e., it is not because we love them, but because we wish to obtain some advantage from them for the necessity of the present life. But we ought to do them good for their eternal salvation, not for our own temporal advantage. May God, therefore, incline our heart to His testimonies, and not to covetousness. For “the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” But he who looks after his brother from a regard to his own necessities in this life, does not certainly do so from love, because he does not look after him whom he ought to love as himself, but after himself; or rather not even after himself, seeing that in this way he makes his own heart double, by which he is

hindered from seeing God, in the vision of whom alone there is certain and lasting blessedness.

CHAPTER XIII

44. Rightly, therefore, does he who is intent on cleansing our heart follow up what He has said with a precept, where He says: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” If, therefore, the heart be on earth, i.e. if one perform anything with a heart bent on obtaining earthly advantage, how will that heart be clean which wallows on earth? But if it be in heaven, it will be clean, because whatever things are heavenly are clean. For anything becomes polluted when it is mixed with a nature that is inferior, although not polluted of its kind; for gold is polluted even by pure silver, if it be mixed with it: so also our mind becomes polluted by the desire after earthly things, although the earth itself be pure of its kind and order. But we would not understand heaven in this passage as anything corporeal, because everything corporeal is to be reckoned as earth. For he who lays up treasure for himself in heaven ought to despise the whole world. Hence it is in that heaven of which it is said, “The heaven of heavens is the Lord’s, i.e. in the spiritual firmament: for it is not in that which is to pass away that we ought to fix and place our treasure and our heart, but in that which ever abideth; but heaven and earth shall pass away.

45. And here He makes it manifest that He gives all these precepts with a view to the cleansing of the heart, when He says: “The candle of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light [lamp] that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” And this passage we are to understand in such a way as to learn from it that all our works are pure and well-pleasing in the sight of God, when they are done with a single heart, i.e. with a heavenly intent, having that end of love in view; for love is also the fulfilling of the law. Hence we ought to take the eye here in the sense of the intent itself, wherewith we do

whatever we are doing; and if this be pure and right, and looking at that which ought to be looked at, all our works which we perform in accordance therewith are necessarily good. And all those works He has called the whole body; for the apostle also speaks of certain works of which he disapproves as our members, and teaches that they are to be mortified, saying, “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, covetousness,” and all other such things.

46. It is not, therefore, what one does, but the intent with which he does it, that is to be considered. For this is the light in us, because it is a thing manifest to ourselves that we do with a good intent what we are doing; for everything which is made manifest is light. For the deeds themselves which go forth from us to human society, have an uncertain issue; and therefore He has called them darkness. For I do not know, when I present money to a poor man who asks it, either what he is to do with it, or what he is to suffer from it; and it may happen that he does some evil with it, or suffers some evil on account of it, a thing I did not wish to happen when I gave it to him, nor would I have given it with such an intention. If, therefore, I did it with a good intention,—a thing which was known to me when I was doing it, and is therefore called light,—my deed also is lighted up, whatever issue it shall have; but that issue, inasmuch as it is uncertain and unknown, is called darkness. But if I have done it with a bad intent, the light itself even is darkness. For it is spoken of as light, because every one knows with what intent he acts, even when he acts with a bad intent; but the light itself is darkness, because the aim is not directed singly to things above, but is turned downwards to things beneath, and makes, as it were, a shadow by means of a double heart. “If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” i.e., if the very intent of the heart with which you do what you are doing (which is known to you) is polluted by the hunger after earthly and temporal things, and blinded, how much more is the deed itself, whose issue is uncertain, polluted and full of darkness! Because, although what you do with an intent which is neither upright nor pure, may turn out for some one’s good, it is the way in which you have done it, not how it has turned out for him, that is reckoned to you.

CHAPTER XIV

47. Then, further, the statement which follows, “No man can serve two masters,” is to be referred to this very intent, as He goes on to explain, saying: “For either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will submit to the one, and despise the other.” And these words are to be carefully considered; for who the two masters are he forthwith shows, when He says, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” Riches are said to be called mammon among the Hebrews. The Punic name also corresponds: for gain is called mammon in Punic. But he who serves mammon certainly serves him who, as being set over those earthly things in virtue of his perversity, is called by our Lord the prince of this world. A man will therefore “either hate” this one, “and love the other,” i.e. God; “or he will submit to the one, and despise the other.” For whoever serves mammon submits to a hard and ruinous master: for, being entangled by his own lust, he becomes a subject of the devil, and he does not love him; for who is there who loves the devil? But yet he submits to him; as in any large house he who is connected with another man’s maid servant submits to hard bondage on account of his passion. even though he does not love him whose maid-servant he loves.

48. But “he will despise the other,” He has said; not, he will hate. For almost no one’s conscience can hate God; but he despises, i.e. he does not fear Him, as if feeling himself secure in consideration of His goodness. From this carelessness and ruinous security the Holy Spirit recalls us, when He says by the prophet, “My son, do not add sin upon sin, and say, The mercy of God is great ;” and, “Knowest thou not that the patience of God inviteth thee to repentance?” For whose mercy can be mentioned as being so great as His, who pardons all the sins of those who return, and makes the wild olive a partaker of the fatness of the olive? and whose severity as being so great as His, who spared not the natural branches, but broke them off because of unbelief? But let not any one who wishes to love God, and to beware of offending Him, suppose that he can serve two masters; and let him disentangle the upright intention of his heart from all doubleness: for thus he will think of the Lord with a good heart, and in simplicity of heart will seek Him.

CHAPTER XV

49. “Therefore,” says He, “I say unto you, Have not anxiety for your life, what ye shall eat; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.” Lest perchance, although it is not now superfluities that are sought after, the heart should be made double by reason of necessaries themselves, and the aim should be wrenched aside to seek after those things of our own, when we are doing something as it were from compassion; i.e. so that when we wish to appear to be consulting for some one’s good, we are in that matter looking after our own profit rather than his advantage: and we do not seem to ourselves to be sinning for this reason, that it is not superfluities, but necessaries, which we wish to obtain. But the Lord admonishes us that we should remember that God, when He made and compounded us of body and soul, gave us much more than food and clothing, through care for which He would not have us make our hearts double. “Is not,” says He, “the soul more than the meat?” So that you are to understand that He who gave the soul will much more easily give meat. “And the body than the raiment,” i.e. is more than raiment: so that similarly you are to understand, that He who gave the body will much more easily give raiment.

50. And in this passage the question is wont to be raised, whether the food spoken of has reference to the soul, since the soul is incorporeal, and the food in question is corporeal food. But let us admit that the soul in this passage stands for the present life, whose support is that corporeal nourishment. In accordance with this signification we have also that statement: “He that loveth his soul shall lose it.” And here, unless we understand the expression of this present life, which we ought to lose for the kingdom of God, as it is clear the martyrs were able to do, this precept will be in contradiction to that sentence where it is said: “What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

51. “Behold,” says He, “the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them: are ye not much better than they?” i.e. ye are of more value. For surely a rational being such as man has a higher rank in the nature of things than irrational ones, such as birds. “Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment?” That is to say, the providence of Him by whose power and sovereignty it has come

about that your body was brought up to its present stature, can also clothe you; but that it is not by your care that it has come about that your body should arrive at this stature, may be understood from this circumstance, that if you should take thought, and should wish to add one cubit to this stature, you cannot. Leave, therefore, the care of protecting the body to Him by whose care you see it has come about that you have a body of such a stature.

52. But an example was to be given for the clothing too, just as one is given for the food. Hence He goes on to say, “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” But these examples are not to be treated as allegories, so that we should inquire what the fowls of heaven or the lilies of the field mean: for they stand here, in order that from smaller matters we may be persuaded respecting greater ones; just as is the case in regard to the judge who neither feared God nor regarded man, and yet yielded to the widow who often importuned him to consider her case, not from piety or humanity, but that he might be saved annoyance. For that unjust judge does not in any way allegorically represent the person of God; but yet as to how far God, who is good and just, cares for those who supplicate Him, our Lord wished the inference to be drawn from this circumstance, that not even an unjust man can despise those who assail him with unceasing petitions, even were his motive merely to avoid annoyance.

CHAPTER XVI

53. “Therefore be not anxious,” says He,” saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Here He shows most manifestly that these things are not to be sought as if they were our blessings in such sort, that on account of them we ought to do well in all our actings, but yet that they are necessary. For what the difference is between a

blessing which is to be sought, and a necessary which is to be taken for use, He has made plain by this sentence, when He says, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” The kingdom and the righteousness of God therefore are our good; and this is to be sought, and there the end is to be set up, on account of which we are to do everything which we do. But because we serve as soldiers in this life, in order that we may be able to reach that kingdom, and because our life cannot be spent without these necessaries, “These things shall be added unto you,” says He; “but seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” For in using that word “first,” He has indicated that this is to be sought later, not in point of time, but in point of importance: the one as being our good, the other as being something necessary for us; but the necessary on account of that good.

54. For neither ought we, for example, to preach the gospel with this object, that we may eat; but to eat with this object, that we may preach the gospel: for if we preach the gospel for this cause, that we may eat, we reckon the gospel of less value than food; and in that case our good will be in eating, but that which is necessary for us in preaching the gospel. And this the apostle also forbids, when he says it is lawful for himself even, and permitted by the Lord, that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, i.e. should have from the gospel the necessaries of this life; but yet that he has not made use of this power. For there were many who were desirous of having an occasion for getting and selling the gospel, from whom the apostle wished to cut off this occasion, and therefore he submitted to a way of living by his own hands. For concerning these parties he says in another passage, “That I may cut off occasion from them which seek occasion.” Although even if, like the rest of the good apostles, by the permission of the Lord he should live of the gospel, he would not on that account place the end of preaching the gospel in that living, but would rather make the gospel the end of his living; i.e., as I have said above, he would not preach the gospel with this object, that he might get his food and all other necessaries; but he would take such things for this purpose, in order that he might carry out that other object, viz. that willingly, and not of necessity, he should preach the gospel. For this he disapproves of when he says, “Do ye not know, that they which minister in the temple eat the things

which are of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used none of these things.” Hence he shows that it was permitted, not commanded; otherwise he will be held to have acted contrary to the precept of the Lord. Then he goes on to say: “Neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.” This he said, as he had already resolved, because of some who were seeking occasion, to gain a living by his own hands. “For if I preach the gospel,” says he, “I have nothing to glory of:” i.e., if I preach the gospel in order that such things may be done in my case, or, if I preach with this object, in order that I may obtain those things, and if I thus place the end of the gospel in meat and drink and clothing. But wherefore has he nothing to glory of? “Necessity,” says he,” is laid upon me;” i.e. so that I should preach the gospel for this reason, because I have not the means of living, or so that I should acquire temporal fruit from the preaching of eternal things; for thus, consequently, the preaching of the gospel will be a matter of necessity, not of free choice. “For woe is unto me,” says he, “if I preach not the gospel!” But how ought he to preach the gospel? Evidently in such a way as to place the reward in the gospel itself, and in the kingdom of God: for thus he can preach the gospel, not of constraint, but willingly. “For if I do this thing willingly,” says he, “I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me;” if, constrained by the want of those things which are necessary for temporal life, I preach the gospel, others will have through me the reward of the gospel, who love the gospel itself when I preach it; but I shall not have it, because it is not the gospel itself I love, but its price lying in those temporal things. And this is something sinful, that any one should minister the gospel not as a son, but as a servant to whom a stewardship of it has been committed; that he should, as it were, pay out what belongs to another, but should himself receive nothing from it except victuals, which are given not in consideration of his sharing in the kingdom, but from without, for the support of a miserable bondage. Although in another passage he calls himself also a steward. For a servant also, when adopted into the number of the children, is able faithfully to dispense to those who share with him that property in which he has acquired the lot of a fellow-heir. But in the present case, where he says, “But if against my will, a dispensation (stewardship) is committed unto me,” he wished such a steward to be understood as dispenses what belongs to another, and from it gets nothing himself.

55. Hence anything whatever that is sought for the sake of something else, is doubtless inferior to that for the sake of which it is sought; and therefore that is first for the sake of which you seek such a thing, not the thing which you seek for the sake of that other. And for this reason, if we seek the gospel and the kingdom of God for the sake of food, we place food first, and the kingdom of God last; so that if food were not to fail us, we would not seek the kingdom of God: this is to seek food first, and then the kingdom of God. But if we seek food for this end, that we may gain the kingdom of God, we do what is said, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

CHAPTER XVII

56. For in the case of those who are seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, i.e. who are preferring this to all other things, so that for its sake they are seeking the other things, there ought not to remain behind the anxiety lest those things should fail which are necessary to this life for the sake of the kingdom of God. For He has said above, “Your Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” And therefore, when He had said, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,” He did not say, Then seek such things (although they are necessary), but He affirms “all these things shall be added unto you,” i.e. will follow, if ye seek the former, without any hindrance on your part: lest while ye seek such things, ye should be turned away from the other; or lest ye should set up two things to be aimed at, so as to seek both the kingdom of God for its own sake, and such necessaries: but these rather for the sake of that other; so shall they not be wanting to you. For ye cannot serve two masters. But the man is attempting to serve two masters, who seeks both the kingdom of God as a great good, and these temporal things. He will not, however, be able to have a single eye, and to serve the Lord God alone, unless he take all other things, so far as they are necessary, for the sake of this one thing, i.e. for the sake of the kingdom of God. But as all who serve as soldiers receive provisions and pay, so all who preach the gospel receive food and clothing.

But all do not serve as soldiers for the welfare of the republic, but some do so for what they get: so also all do not minister to God for the welfare of the Church, but some do so for the sake of these temporal things, which they are to obtain in the shape as it were of provisions and pay; or both for the one thing and for the other. But it has been already said above, “Ye cannot serve two masters.” Hence it is with a single heart and only for the sake of the kingdom of God that we ought to do good to all; and we ought not in doing so to think either of the temporal reward alone, or of that along with the kingdom of God: all which temporal things He has placed under the category of to-morrow, saying, “Take no thought for to-morrow.” For to-morrow is not spoken of except in time, where the future succeeds the past. Therefore, when we do anything good, let us not think of what is temporal, but of what is eternal; then will that be a good and perfect work. “For the morrow,” says He, “will be anxious for the things of itself;” i.e., so that, when you ought, you will take food, or drink, or clothing, that is to say, when necessity itself begins to urge you. For these things will be within reach, because our Father knoweth that we have need of all these things. For “sufficient unto the day,” says He, “is the evil thereof;” i.e. it is sufficient that necessity itself will urge us to take such things. And for this reason, I suppose, it is called evil, because for us it is penal: for it belongs to this frailty and mortality which we have earned by sinning. Do not add, therefore, to this punishment of temporal necessity anything more burdensome, so that you should not only suffer the want of such things, but should also for the purpose of satisfying this want enlist as a soldier for God.

57. In the use of this passage, however, we must be very specially on our guard, lest perchance, when we see any servant of God making provision that such necessaries shall not be wanting either to himself or to those with whose care he has been entrusted, we should decide that he is acting contrary to the Lord’s precept, and is anxious for the morrow. For the Lord Himself also, although angels ministered to Him, yet for the sake of example, that no one might afterwards be scandalized when he observed any of His servants procuring such necessaries, condescended to have money bags, out of which whatever might be required for necessary uses might be provided; of which bags, as it is written, Judas, who betrayed Him,

was the keeper and the thief. In like manner, the Apostle Paul also may seem to have taken thought for the morrow, when he said: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the saints of Galatia, even so do ye: upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store what shall seem good unto him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me. Now I will come unto you when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I shall pass through Macedonia. And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go. For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit. But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.” In the Acts of the Apostles also it is written, that such things as are necessary for food were provided for the future, on account of an impending famine. For we thus read: “And in these days came prophets down from Jerusalem to Antioch, and there was great rejoicing. And when we were gathered together, there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every one according to his ability, determined to send relief to the elders for the brethren which dwelt in Judaea, which also they did by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.” And in the case of the necessaries presented to him, wherewith the same Apostle Paul when setting sail was laden, food seems to have been furnished for more than a single day. And when the same apostle writes, “Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth;” to those who misunderstand him he does not seem to keep the Lord’s precept, which runs, “Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns;” and, “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin;” while he enjoins the parties in question to labour, working with their hands, that they may have something which they may be able to give to others also. And in what he often says of himself, that he wrought with his hands that he might not be burdensome; and in what is written of him, that he joined himself to Aquila on account of the similarity of their occupation, in order that they might work together at that from which they might make a living; he does not seem to have imitated the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. From these and such like passages of Scripture, it is sufficiently apparent that our Lord does not disapprove of it, when one looks after such things in the ordinary way that men do; but only when one enlists as a soldier of God for the sake of such things, so that in what he does he fixes his eye not on the kingdom of God, but on the acquisition of such things.

58. Hence this whole precept is reduced to the following rule, that even in looking after such things we should think of the kingdom of God, but in the service of the kingdom of God we should not think of such things. For in this way, although they should sometimes be wanting (a thing which God often permits for the purpose of exercising us), they not only do not weaken our proposition, but even strengthen it, when it is examined and tested. For, says He, “we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope: And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Now, in the mention of his tribulations and labours, the same apostle mentions that he has had to endure not only prisons and shipwrecks and many such like annoyances, but also hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness. But when we read this, let us not imagine that the promises of God have wavered, so that the apostle suffered hunger and thirst and nakedness while seeking the kingdom and righteousness of God, although it is said to us, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you:” since that Physician to whom we have once for all entrusted ourselves wholly, and from whom we have the promise of life present and future, knows such things just as helps, when He sets them before us, when He takes them away, just as He judges it expedient for us; whom He rules and directs as parties who require both to be comforted and exercised in this life, and after this life to be established and confirmed in perpetual rest. For man also, when he frequently takes away the fodder from his beast of burden, is not depriving it of his care, but rather does what he is doing in the exercise of care.

CHAPTER XVIII

59. And inasmuch as when such things are either provided against the time to come, or reserved, if there is no cause wherefore you should expend them, it is uncertain with what intention it is done, since it may be done with a single heart, and also with a double one, He has seasonably added in this passage: “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” In this passage, I am of opinion that we are taught nothing else, but that in the case of those actions respecting which it is doubtful with what intention they are done, we are to put the better construction on them. For when it is written, “By their fruits ye shall know them,” the statement has reference to things which manifestly cannot be done with a good intention; such as debaucheries, or blasphemies, or thefts, or drunkenness, and all such things, of which we are permitted to judge, according to the apostle’s statement: “For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?” But concerning the kind of food, because every kind of human food can be taken indiscriminately with a good intention and a single heart, without the vice of concupiscence, the same apostle forbids that they who ate flesh and drank wine be judged by those who abstained from such kinds of sustenance: “Let not him that eateth,” says he, “despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth.” There also he says: “Who art thou that judges another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.” For in reference to such matters as can be done with a good and single and noble intention, although they may also be done with an intention the reverse of good, those parties wished, howbeit they were [mere] men, to pronounce judgment upon the secrets of the heart, of which God alone is Judge.

60. To this category belongs also what he says in another passage: “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the thoughts of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.” There are therefore certain ambiguous actions, respecting which we are ignorant with what intention they are performed, because they may be done both with a good or with an evil one, of which it is rash to judge, especially for the purpose of condemning. Now the time will come for these to be judged,

when the Lord “will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts.” In another passage also the same apostle says: “Some men’s aims are manifest beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after.” He calls those sins manifest, with regard to which it is clear with what intention they are done; these go before to judgment, because if a judgment shall follow, it is not rash. But those which are concealed follow, because neither shall they remain hid in their own time. So we must understand with respect to good works also. For he adds to this effect: “Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.” Let us judge, therefore, with respect to those which are manifest; but respecting those which are concealed, let us leave the judgment to God: for they also cannot be hid, whether they be good or evil, when the time shall come for them to be manifested.

61. There are two things, moreover, in which we ought to beware of rash judgment; when it is uncertain with what intention any thing is done; or when it is uncertain what sort of a person he is going to be, who at preset is manifestly either good or bad. If, therefore, any one, for example, complaining of his stomach, would not fast, and you, not believing this, were to attribute it to the vice of gluttony, you would judge rashly. Likewise, if you were to come to know the gluttony and drunkenness as being manifest, and were so to administer reproof as if the man could never be amended and changed, you would nevertheless judge rashly. Let us not therefore reprove those things about which we do not know with what intention they are done; nor let us so reprove those things which are manifest, as that we should despair of a return to a right state of mind; and thus we shall avoid the judgment of which in the present instance it is said, “Judge not, that ye be not judged.”

62. But what He says may cause perplexity: “For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” Is it the case, then, that if we shall judge any thing with a rash judgment, God will also judge rashly with respect to us? or if we shall measure any thing with an unjust measure, is there with God also an unjust measure, according to which it shall be measured to us again? (for

by the expression measure also, I suppose the judgment itself is meant.) By no means does God either judge rashly, or recompense to any one with an unjust measure; but it is so expressed, inasmuch as that very same rashness wherewith you punish another must necessarily punish yourself. Unless, perchance, it is to be imagined that injustice does harm in some way to him against whom it goes forth, but in no way to him from whom it goes forth; but nay, it often does no harm to him who suffers the injury, but it must necessarily do harm to him who inflicts it. For what harm did the injustice of the persecutors do to the martyrs? None; but very much to the persecutors themselves. For although some of them were turned from the error of their ways, yet at the time at which they were acting as persecutors, their wickedness was blinding them. So also a rash judgment frequently does no harm to him who is the object of the rash judgment; but to him who judges rashly, the rashness itself must necessarily do harm. According to such a rule, I judge of that saying also: “Every one that strikes with the sword shall perish with the sword.” For how many take the sword, and yet do not perish with the sword, Peter himself being an instance! But lest any should think that he escaped such punishment by the pardon of his sins (although nothing could be more absurd than to think that the punishment of the sword, which did not befall Peter, could have been greater than that of the cross, which actually befell him), yet what would they say of the malefactors who were crucified with our Lord; for both he who got pardon, got it after he was crucified, and the other did not get it at all? Or had they perhaps crucified all whom they had slain; and did they therefore themselves too deserve to suffer the same thing? It is ridiculous to think so. For what else is meant by the statement, “For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword,” but that the soul dies by that very sin, whatever it may be, which it has committed?

CHAPTER XIX

63. And inasmuch as the Lord is admonishing us in this passage with respect to rash and unjust judgment,—for He wishes that whatever we do, we should do it with a heart that is single and directed toward God alone; and inasmuch as, with respect to many things, it is uncertain with what intention they are done, regarding which it is rash to judge; inasmuch,

moreover, as those parties especially judge rashly respecting things that are uncertain, and readily find fault, who love rather to censure and to condemn than to amend and to improve, which is a fault arising either from pride or from envy; therefore He has subjoined the statement: “And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?” So that if perchance, for example, he has transgressed in anger, you should find fault in hatred; there being, as it were, as much difference between anger and hatred as between a mote and a beam. For hatred is inveterate anger, which, as it were simply by its long duration, has acquired so great strength as to be justly called a beam. Now, it may happen that, though you are angry with a man, you wish him to be turned from his error; but if you hate a man, you cannot wish to convert him.

64. “Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye;” i.e., first cast the hatred away from thee, and then, but not before, shalt thou be able to amend him whom thou lovest. And He well says, “Thou hypocrite.” For to make complaint against vices is the duty of good and benevolent men; and when bad men do it, they are acting a part which does not belong to them; just like hypocrites, who conceal under a mask what they are, and show themselves off in a mask what they are not. Under the designation hypocrites, therefore, you are to understand pretenders. And there is, in fact, a class of pretenders much to be guarded against, and troublesome, who, while they take up complaints against all kinds of faults from hatred and spite, also wish to appear counsellors. And therefore we must piously and cautiously watch, so that when necessity shall compel us to find fault with or rebuke any one, we may reflect first whether the fault is such as we have never had, or one from which we have now become free; and if we have never had it, let us reflect that we are men, and might have had it; but if we have had it, and are now free from it, let the common infirmity touch the memory, that not hatred but pity may go before that fault-finding or administering of rebuke: so that whether it shall serve for the conversion of him on whose account we do it, or for his perversion (for the issue is uncertain), we at least from the singleness of our eye may be free from care. If, however, on reflection, we

find ourselves involved in the same fault as he is whom we were preparing to censure, let us not censure nor rebuke; but yet let us mourn deeply over the case, and let us invite him not to obey us, but to join us in a common effort.

65. For in regard also to what the apostle says,—”Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law (not being under the law), that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ), that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might gain all,”—he did not certainly so act in the way of pretence, as some wish it to be understood, in order that their detestable pretence may be fortified by the authority of so great an example; but he did so from love, under the influence of which he thought of the infirmity of him whom he wished to help as if it were his own. For this he also lays as the foundation beforehand, when he says: “For although I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.” And that you may understand this as being done not in pretence, but in love, under the influence of which we have compassion for men who are weak as if we were they, he thus admonishes us in another passage, saying, “Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” And this cannot be done, unless each one reckon the infirmity of another as his own, so as to bear it with equanimity, until the party for whose welfare he is solicitous is freed from it.

66. Rarely, therefore, and in a case of great necessity, are rebukes to be administered; yet in such a way that even in these very rebukes we may make it our earnest endeavour, not that we, but that God, should be served. For He, and none else, is the end: so that we are to do nothing with a double heart, removing from our own eye the beam of envy, or malice, or pretence, in order that we may see to cast the mote out of a brother’s eye. For we shall see it with the dove’s eyes,—such eyes as are declared to belong to the spouse of Christ, whom God hath chosen for Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, i.e. pure and guileless.

CHAPTER XX

67. But inasmuch as the word “guileless” may mislead some who are desirous of obeying God’s precepts, so that they may think it wrong, at times, to conceal the truth, just as it is wrong at times to speak a falsehood, and inasmuch as in this way,—by disclosing things which the parties to whom they are disclosed are unable to bear,—they may do more harm than if they were to conceal them altogether and always, He very rightly adds: “Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.” For the Lord Himself, although He never told a lie, yet showed that He was concealing certain truths, when He said, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.” And the Apostle Paul, too, says: “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal.”

68. Now, in this precept by which we are forbidden to give what is holy to the dogs, and to cast our pearls before swine, we must carefully require what is meant by holy, what by pearls, what by dogs, what by swine. A holy thing is something which it is impious to violate and to corrupt; and the very attempt and wish to commit that crime is held to be criminal, although that holy thing should remain in its nature inviolable and incorruptible. By pearls, again, are meant whatever spiritual things we ought to set a high value upon, both because they lie hid in a secret place, are as it were brought up out of the deep, and are found in wrappings of allegory, as it were in shells that have been opened. We may therefore legitimately understand that one and the same thing may be called both holy and a pearl: but it gets the name of holy for this reason, that it ought not to be corrupted; of a pearl for this reason, that it ought not to be despised. Every one, however, endeavours to corrupt what he does not wish to remain uninjured: but he despises what he thinks worthless, and reckons to be as it were beneath himself; and therefore whatever is despised is said to be trampled on. And hence, inasmuch as dogs spring at a thing in order to tear it in pieces, and do not allow what they are tearing in pieces to remain in its original condition, “Give not,” says He, “that which is holy unto the dogs:”

for although it cannot be torn in pieces and corrupted, and remains unharmed and inviolable, yet we must think of what is the wish of those parties who bitterly and in a most unfriendly spirit resist, and, as far as in them lies, endeavour, if it were possible, to destroy the truth. But swine, although they do not, like dogs, fall upon an object with their teeth, yet by recklessly trampling on it defile it: "Do not therefore cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." We may therefore not unsuitably understand dogs as used to designate the assailants of the truth, swine the despisers of it.

69. But when He says, "they turn again and rend you," He does not say, they rend the pearls themselves. For by trampling on them, just when they turn in order that they may hear something more, they yet rend him by whom the pearls have just been cast before them which they have trampled on. For you would not easily find out what pleasure the man could have who has trampled pearls under foot, i.e. has despised divine things whose discovery is the result of great labour. But in regard to him who teaches such parties, I do not see how he would escape being rent in pieces through their anger and wrathfulness. Moreover, both animals are unclean, the dog as well as the swine. We must therefore be on our guard, lest anything should be opened up to him who does not receive it: for it is better that he should seek for what is hidden, than that he should either attack or slight at what is open. Neither, in fact, is any other cause found why they do not receive those things which are manifest and of importance, except hatred and contempt, the one of which gets them the name of dogs, the other that of swine. And all this impurity is generated by the love of temporal things, i.e. by the love of this world, which we are commanded to renounce, in order that we may be able to be pure. The man, therefore, who desires to have a pure and single heart, ought not to appear to himself blameworthy, if he conceals anything from him who is unable to receive it. Nor is it to be supposed from this that it is allowable to lie: for it does not follow that when truth is concealed, falsehood is uttered. Hence, steps are to be taken first, that the hindrances which prevent his receiving it may be removed; for certainly if pollution is the reason he does not receive it, he is to be cleansed either by word or by deed, as far as we can possibly do it.

70. Then, further, when our Lord is found to have made certain statements which many who were present did not accept, but either resisted or despised, He is not to be thought to have given that which is holy to the dogs, or to have cast pearls before swine: for He did not give such things to those who were not able to receive them, but to those who were able, and were at the same time present; whom it was not meet that He should neglect on account of the impurity of others. And when tempters put questions to Him, and He answered them, so that they might have nothing to gainsay, although they might pine away from the effects of their own poisons, rather than be filled with His food, yet others, who were able to receive His teaching, heard to their profit many things in consequence of the opportunity created by these parties. I have said this, lest any one, perhaps, when he is not able to reply to one who puts a question to him, should seem to himself excused, if he should say that he is unwilling to give that which is holy to the dogs, or to cast pearls before swine. For he who knows what to answer ought to do it, even for the sake of others, in whose minds despair arises, if they believe that the question proposed cannot be answered: and this in reference to matters that are useful, and that belong to saving instruction. For many things which may be the subject of inquiry on the part of idle people are needless and vain, and often hurtful, respecting which, however, something must be said; but this very point is to be opened up and explained, viz. why such things ought not to form the subject of inquiry. In reference, therefore, to things that are useful, we ought sometimes to give a reply to what is asked of us: just as the Lord did, when the Sadducees had asked Him about the woman who had seven husbands, to which of them she would belong in the resurrection. For He answered that in the resurrection they will neither marry, nor be given in marriage, but will be as the angels in heaven. But sometimes, he who asks is to be asked something else, by telling which he would answer himself as to the matter he asked about; but if he should refuse to make a statement, it would not seem to those who are present unfair, if he himself should not hear anything as to the matter he inquired about. For those who put the question, tempting Him, whether tribute was to be paid, were asked another question, viz. whose image the money bore which was brought forward by themselves; and because they told what they had been asked, i.e. that the money bore the image of Caesar, they gave a kind of answer to themselves in reference to the question they

had asked the Lord: and accordingly from their answer He drew this inference, “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s.” When, however, the chief priests and elders of the people had asked by what authority He was doing those things, He asked them about the baptism of John: and when they would not make a statement which they saw to be against themselves, and yet would not venture to say anything bad about John, on account of the bystanders, “Neither tell I you,” says He, “by what authority I do these things;” a refusal which appeared most just to the bystanders. For they said they were ignorant of that which they really knew, but did not wish to tell. And, in truth, it was right that they who wished to have an answer to what they asked, should themselves first do what they required to be done toward them; and if they had done this, they would certainly have answered themselves. For they themselves had sent to John, asking who he was; or rather they themselves, being priests and Levites, had been sent, supposing that he was the very Christ, but he said that he was not, and gave forth a testimony concerning the Lord: a testimony respecting which if they chose to make a confession, they would teach themselves by what authority as the Christ He was doing those things; which as if ignorant of they had asked, in order that they might find an avenue for calumny.

CHAPTER XXI

71. Since, therefore, a command had been given that what is holy should not be given to dogs, and pearls should not be cast before swine, a hearer might object and say, conscious of his own ignorance and weakness, and hearing a command addressed to him, that he should not give what he felt that he himself had not yet received,—might (I say) object and say, What holy thing do you forbid me to give to the dogs, and what pearls do you forbid me to cast before swine, while as yet I do not see that I possess such things? Most opportunely He has added the statement: “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” The asking refers to the obtaining by request soundness and strength of mind, so that we may be able to discharge those duties which are commanded; the seeking, on the other hand, refers to

the finding of the truth. For inasmuch as the blessed life is summed up in action and knowledge, action wishes for itself a supply of strength, contemplation desiderates that matters should be made clear: of these therefore the first is to be asked, the second is to be sought; so that the one may be given, the other found. But knowledge in this life belongs rather to the way than to the possession itself: but whoever has found the true way, will arrive at the possession itself which, however, is opened to him that knocks.

72. In order, therefore, that these three things—viz. asking, seeking, knocking—may be made clear, let us suppose, for example, the case of one weak in his limbs, who cannot walk: in the first place, he is to be healed and strengthened so as to be able to walk; and to this refers the expression He has used, “Ask.” But what advantage is it that he is now able to walk, or even run, if he should go astray by devious paths? A second thing therefore is, that he should find the road that leads to the place at which he wishes to arrive; and when he has kept that road, and arrived at the very place where he wishes to dwell, if he find it closed, it will be of no use either that he has been able to walk, or that he has walked and arrived, unless it be opened to him; to this, therefore, the expression refers which has been used, “Knock.”

73. Moreover, great hope has been given, and is given, by Him who does not deceive when He promises: for He says, “Every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.” Hence there is need of perseverance, in order that we may receive what we ask, and find what we seek, and that what we knock at may be opened. Now, just as He talked of the fowls of heaven and of the lilies of the field, that we might not despair of food and clothing being provided for us, so that our hopes might rise from lesser things to greater; so also in this passage, “Or what man is there of you,” says He, “whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?” How do the evil give good things? Now, He has called those evil who are as yet the lovers of this world and sinners. And, in fact, the good things are to be called good according to their

feeling, because they reckon these to be good things. Although in the nature of things also such things are good, but temporal, and pertaining to this feeble life: and whoever that is evil gives them, does not give of his own; for the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof, who made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is. How much reason, therefore, there is for the hope that God will give us good things when we ask Him, and that we cannot be deceived, so that we should get one thing instead of another, when we ask Him; since we even, although we are evil, know how to give that for which we are asked? For we do not deceive our children; and whatever good things we give are not given of our own, but of what is His.

CHAPTER XXII

74. Moreover, a certain strength and vigour in walking along the path of wisdom ties in good morals, which are made to extend as far as to purification and singleness of heart,—a subject on which He has now been speaking long, and thus concludes: “Therefore all good things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” In the Greek copies we find the passage runs thus: “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” But I think the word “good” has been added by the Latins to make the sentence clear. For the thought occurred, that if any one should wish something wicked to be done to him, and should refer this clause to that,—as, for instance, if one should wish to be challenged to drink immoderately, and to get drunk over his cups, and should first do this to the party by whom he wishes it to be done to himself,—it would be ridiculous to imagine that he had fulfilled this clause. Inasmuch, therefore, as they were influenced by this consideration, as I suppose, one word was added to make the matter clear; so that in the statement, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you,” there was inserted the word “good.” But if this is wanting in the Greek copies, they also ought to be corrected: but who would venture to do this? It is to be understood, therefore, that the clause is complete and altogether perfect, even if this word be not added. For the expression used, “whatsoever ye would,” ought to be understood as used not in a customary and random, but in a strict sense. For there is no will except in the good: for in the case of bad and

wicked deeds, desire is strictly spoken of, not will. Not that the Scriptures always speak in a strict sense; but where it is necessary, they so keep a word to its perfectly strict meaning, that they do not allow anything else to be understood.

75. Moreover, this precept seems to refer to the love of our neighbour, and not to the love of God also, seeing that in another passage He says that there are two precepts on which “hang all the law and the prophets.” For if He had said, All things whatsoever ye would should be done to you, do ye even so; in this one sentence He would have embraced both those precepts: for it would soon be said that every one wishes that he himself should be loved both by God and by men; and so, when this precept was given to him, that what he wished done to himself he should himself do, that certainly would be equivalent to the precept that he should love God and men. But when it is said more expressly of men, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,” nothing else seems to be meant than, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” But we must carefully attend to what He has added here: “for this is the law and the prophets.” Now, in the case of these two precepts, He not merely says, The law and the prophets hang; but He has also added, “all the law and the prophets,” which is the same as the whole of prophecy: and in not making the same addition here, He has kept a place for the other precept, which refers to the love of God. Here, then, inasmuch as He is following out the precepts with respect to a single heart, and it is to be dreaded lest any one should have a double heart toward those from whom the heart can be hid, i.e. toward men, a precept with respect to that very thing was to be given. For there is almost nobody that would wish that any one of double heart should have dealings with himself. But no one can bestow anything upon a fellowman with a single heart, unless he so bestow it that he expects no temporal advantage from him, and does it with the intention which we have sufficiently discussed above, when we were speaking of the single eye.

76. The eye, therefore, being cleansed and rendered single, will be adapted and suited to behold and contemplate its own inner light. For the eye in question is the eye of the heart. Now, such an eye is possessed by him who, in order that his works may be truly good, does not make it the aim of his

good works that he should please men; but even if it should turn out that he pleases them, he makes this tend rather to their salvation and to the glory of God, not to his own empty boasting; nor does he do anything that is good tending to his neighbour's salvation for the purpose of gaining by it those things that are necessary for getting through this present life; nor does he rashly condemn a man's intention and wish in that action in which it is not apparent with what intention and wish it has been done; and whatever kindnesses he shows to a man, he shows them with the same intention with which he wishes them shown to himself, viz. as not expecting any temporal advantage from him: thus will the heart be single and pure in which God is sought. "Blessed," therefore, "are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

CHAPTER XXIII

77. But because this belongs to few, He now begins to speak of searching for and possessing wisdom, which is a tree of life; and certainly, in searching for and possessing, i.e. contemplating this wisdom, such an eye is led through all that precedes to a point where there may now be seen the narrow way and the strait gate. When, therefore, He says in continuation, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; He does not say so for this reason, that the Lord's yoke is rough, or His burden heavy; but because few are willing to bring their labours to an end, giving too little credit to Him who cries, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (hence, moreover, the sermon before us took as its starting-point the lowly and meek in heart): and this easy yoke and light burden which many spurn, few submit to; and on that account the way becomes narrow which leadeth unto life, and the gate strait by which it is entered.

CHAPTER XXIV

78. Here, therefore, those who promise a wisdom and a knowledge of the truth which they do not possess, are especially to be guarded against; as, for instance, heretics, who frequently commend themselves on account of their

fewness. And hence, when He had said that there are few who find the strait gate and the narrow way, lest they [the heretics] should falsely substitute themselves under the pretext of their fewness, He immediately added, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” But such parties do not deceive the single eye, which knows how to distinguish a tree by its fruits. For He says: “Ye shall know them by their fruits.” Then He adds the similitudes: “Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

79. And in [the interpretation of] this passage we must be very much on our guard against the error of those who judge from these same two trees that there are two original natures, the one of which belongs to God, but the other neither belongs to God nor springs from Him. And this error has both been already discussed in other books [of ours] very copiously, and if that is still too little, will be discussed again; but at present we have merely to show that the two trees before us do not help them. In the first place, because it is so clear that He is speaking of men, that whoever reads what goes before and what follows will wonder at their blindness. Secondly, they fix their attention on what is said, “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit,” and therefore think that neither can it happen that an evil soul should be changed into something better, nor a good one into something worse; as if it were said, A good tree cannot become evil, nor an evil tree good. But it is said, “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.” For the tree is certainly the soul itself, i.e. the man himself, but the fruits are the works of the man; an evil man, therefore, cannot perform good works, nor a good man evil works. If an evil man, therefore, wishes to perform good works, let him first become good. So the Lord Himself says in another passage more plainly: “Either make the tree good, or make the tree bad.” But if He were figuratively representing the two natures of such parties by these two trees, He would not say, “Make:” for who of the sons of men can make a nature? Then also in that passage, when He had made

mention of these two trees, He added, “Ye hypocrites, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?” As long, therefore, as any one is evil, he cannot bring forth good fruits; for if he were to bring forth good fruits, he would no longer be evil. So it might most truly have been said, snow cannot be warm; for when it begins to be warm, we no longer call it snow, but water. It may therefore come about, that what was snow is no longer so; but it cannot happen that snow should be warm. So it may come about, that he who was evil is no longer evil; it cannot, however, happen that an evil man should do good. And although he is sometimes useful, this is not the man’s own doing; but it is done through him, in virtue of the arrangements of divine providence: as, for instance, it is said of the Pharisees, “What they bid you, do; but what they do, do not consent to do.” This very circumstance, that they spoke things that were good, and that the things which they spoke were usefully listened to and done, was not a matter belonging to them: for, says He, “they sit in Moses’ seat.” It was, therefore, when engaged through divine providence in preaching the law of God, that they were able to be useful to their hearers, although they were not so to themselves. Respecting such it is said in another place by the prophet, “They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns;” because they teach what is good, and do what is evil. Those, therefore, who listened to them, and did what was said by them, did not gather grapes of thorns, but through the thorns gathered grapes of the vine: just as, were any one to thrust his hand through a hedge, or were at least to gather a grape from a vine which was entangled in a hedge, that would not be the fruit of the thorns, but of the vine.

80. The question, indeed, is most rightly put, What are the fruits He would wish us to attend to, whereby we might know the tree? For many reckon among the fruits certain things which belong to the sheep’s clothing, and in this way are deceived by wolves: as, for instance, either fastings, or prayers, or almsgivings; but unless all of these things could be done even by hypocrites, He would not say above, “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them.” And after prefixing this sentence, He goes on to speak of those very three things, almsgiving, prayer, fasting. For many give largely to the poor, not from compassion, but from vanity; and many pray, or rather seem to pray, while not keeping God in view, but desiring to please men; and many fast, and make a wonderful

show of abstinence before those to whom such things appear difficult, and by whom they are reckoned worthy of honour: and catch them with artifices of this sort, while they hold up to view one thing for the purpose of deceiving, and put forth another for the purpose of preying upon or killing those who cannot see the wolves under that sheep's clothing. These, therefore, are not the fruits by which He admonishes us that the tree is known. For such things, when they are done with a good intention in sincerity, are the appropriate clothing of sheep; but when they are done in wicked deception, they cover nothing else but wolves. But the sheep ought not on this account to hate their own clothing, because the wolves often conceal themselves therein.

81. What the fruits are by the finding of which we may know an evil tree, the apostle tells us: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adulteries, fornications, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatreds, variances, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." And what the fruits are by which we may know a good tree, the very same apostle goes on to tell us: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." It must be known, indeed, that "joy" stands here in a strict and proper sense; for bad men are, strictly speaking, not said to rejoice, but to make extravagant demonstrations of joy: just as we have said above, that "will" which the wicked do not possess, stands in a strict sense where it is said, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." In accordance with that strict sense of the word, in virtue of which joy is spoken of only in the good, the prophet also speaks, saying: "Rejoicing is not for the wicked, saith the Lord." So also "faith" stands, not certainly as meaning any kind of it, but true faith: and the other things which find a place here have certain resemblances of their own in bad men and deceivers; so that they entirely mislead, unless one has the pure and single eye by which he may know such things. It is accordingly the best arrangement, that the cleansing of the eye is first discussed, and then mention is made of what things were to be guarded against.

CHAPTER XXV

82. But seeing that, however pure an eye one may have, i.e. with however single and sincere a heart one may live, he yet cannot look into the heart of another: whatever things could not have become apparent in deeds or words, are disclosed by trials. Now trial is twofold; either in the hope of obtaining some temporal advantage, or in the terror of losing it. And especially must we be on our guard, lest, when striving after wisdom, which can be found in Christ alone, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;—we must be on our guard, I say, lest, under the very name of Christ, we be deceived by heretics, or by any parties whatever defective in intelligence, and lovers of this world. For on this account He adds a warning, saying, “Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven:” lest we should think that the mere fact of one saying to our Lord, “Lord, Lord,” belongs to those fruits; and from that he should seem to us to be a good tree. But those are the fruits, to do the will of the Father who is in heaven, in the doing of which He has condescended to exhibit Himself as an example.

83. But the question may fairly be started, how with this sentence the statement of the apostle is to be reconciled, where he says, “No man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost:” for neither can we say that any who have the Holy Spirit will not enter into the kingdom of heaven, if they persevere onwards to the end; nor can we affirm that those who say, “Lord, Lord,” and yet do not enter into the kingdom of heaven, have the Holy Spirit. How then does no one say “that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,” unless it is because the apostle has used the word “say” here in a strict and proper sense, so that it implies the will and understanding of him who says? But the Lord has used the word which He employs in a general sense: “Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.” For he also who neither wishes nor understands what he says, seems to say it; but he properly says it, who gives expression to his will and mind by the sound of his voice: just as, a little before, what is called “joy” among the fruits of the Spirit is called so in a strict and proper sense, not in the way in which the same apostle elsewhere

uses the expression, “Rejoiceth not in iniquity:” as if any one could rejoice in iniquity: for that transport of a mind making confused and boisterous demonstrations of joy is not joy; for this latter is possessed by the good alone. Hence those also seem to say it, who neither perceive with the understanding nor engage with the deliberate consent of the will in this which they utter, but utter it with the voice merely; and after this manner the Lord says, “Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.” But truly and properly those parties say it whose utterance in speech really represents their will and intention; and it is in accordance with this signification that the apostle has said, “No one can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.”

84. And besides, it belongs especially to the matter in hand, that, in striving after the contemplation of the truth, we should not only not be deceived by the name of Christ, by means of those who have the name and have not the deeds; but also not by certain deeds and miracles, for when the Lord performed of the same kind for the sake of unbelievers, He has warned us not to be deceived by such things, thinking that an invisible wisdom is present where we see a visible miracle. Hence He annexes the statement: “Many will say to Me on that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and in Thy name have cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I say unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.” He will not, therefore, recognise any but the man that worketh righteousness. For He forbade also His own disciples themselves to rejoice in such things, viz. that the spirits were subject unto them: “But rejoice,” says He, “because your names are written in heaven;” I suppose, in that city of Jerusalem which is in heaven, in which only the righteous and holy shall reign. “Know ye not,” says the apostle, “that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?”

85. But perhaps some one may say that the unrighteous cannot perform those visible miracles, and may believe rather that those parties are telling a lie, who will be found saying, “We have prophesied in Thy name, and have cast out devils in Thy name, and have done many wonderful works.” Let him therefore read what great things the magi of the Egyptians did who resisted Moses, the servant of God; or if he will not read this, because they

did not do them in the name of Christ, let him read what the Lord Himself says of the false prophets, speaking thus: “Then, if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that the very elect shall be deceived. Behold, I have told you before.”

86. How much need, therefore, is there of the pure and single eye, in order that the way of wisdom may be found, against which there is the clamour of so great deceptions and errors on the part of wicked and perverse men, to escape from all of which is indeed to arrive at the most certain peace, and the immoveable stability of wisdom! For it is greatly to be feared, lest, by eagerness in quarrelling and controversy, one should not see what can be seen by few, that small is the disturbance of gainsayers, unless one also disturbs himself. And in this direction, too, runs that statement of the apostle: “And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that think differently; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.” “Blessed,” therefore, “are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”

87. Hence we must take special notice how terribly the conclusion of the whole sermon is introduced: “Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, is like unto a wise man, which built his house upon the rock.” For no one confirms what he hears or understands, unless by doing. And if Christ is the rock, as many Scripture testimonies proclaim that man builds in Christ who does what he hears from Him. “The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.” Such an one, therefore, is not afraid of any gloomy superstitions (for what else is understood by rain, when it is put in the sense of anything bad?), or of turnouts of men, which I think are compared to winds; or of the river of this life, as it were flowing over the earth in carnal lusts. For it is the man who is seduced by the prosperity that is broken down by the adversities arising from these three things; none of which is feared by him who has his house founded upon a rock, i.e. who not only hears, but also does, the Lord’s

commands. And the man who hears and does them not is in dangerous proximity to all these, for he has no stable foundation; but by hearing and not doing, he builds a ruin. For He goes on to say: “And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be like unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.” This is what I said before was meant by the prophet in the Psalms, when he says: “I will act confidently in regard of him. The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried and proved in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.” And from this number, I am admonished to trace back those precepts also to the seven sentences which He has placed in the beginning of this sermon, when He was speaking of those who are blessed; and to those seven operations of the Holy Spirit, which the prophet Isaiah mentions; but whether the order before us, or some other, is to be considered in these, the things we have heard from the Lord are to be done, if we wish to build upon a rock.

REPLY TO FAUSTUS THE MANICHAEAN

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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A.D. 400.

ST. AUGUSTIN

TRANSLATED BY

REV. RICHARD STOTHERT, M.A.,

BOMBAY

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Preface

Written about the year 400. [Faustus was undoubtedly the acutest, most determined and most unscrupulous opponent of orthodox Christianity in the age of Augustin. The occasion of Augustin's great writing against him was the publication of Faustus' attack on the Old Testament Scriptures, and on the New Testament so far as it was at variance with Manichaean error. Faustus seems to have followed in the footsteps of Adimantus, against whom Augustin had written some years before, but to have gone considerably beyond Adimantus in the recklessness of his statements. The incarnation of Christ, involving his birth from a woman, is one of the main points of attack. He makes the variations in the genealogical records of the Gospels a ground for rejecting the whole as spurious. He supposed the Gospels, in their present form, to be not the works of the Apostles, but rather of later Judaizing falsifiers. The entire Old Testament system he treats with the utmost contempt, blaspheming the Patriarchs, Moses, the Prophets, etc., on the ground of their private lives and their teachings. Most of the objections to the morality of the Old Testament that are now current were already familiarly used in the time of Augustin. Augustin's answers are only partially satisfactory, owing to his imperfect view of the relation of the old dispensation to the new; but in the age in which they were written they were doubtless very effective. The writing is interesting from the point of view of Biblical criticism, as well as from that of polemics against Manichaeism.—A.H.N.]

BOOK I

Who Faustus was. Faustus's object in writing the polemical treatise that forms the basis of Augustin's reply. Augustin's remarks thereon.

1. Faustus was an African by race, a citizen of Mileum; he was eloquent and clever, but had adopted the shocking tenets of the Manichaean heresy. He is mentioned in my Confessions, where there is an account of my acquaintance with him. This man published a certain volume against the

true Christian faith and the Catholic truth. A copy reached us, and was read by the brethren, who called for an answer from me, as part of the service of love which I owe to them. Now, therefore, in the name and with the help of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I undertake the task, that all my readers may know that acuteness of mind and elegance of style are of no use to a man unless the Lord directs his steps. In the mysterious equity of divine mercy, God often bestows His help on the slow and the feeble; while from the want of this help, the most acute and eloquent run into error only with greater rapidity and willfulness. I will give the opinions of Faustus as if stated by himself, and mine as if in reply to him.

2. Faustus said: As the learned Adimantus, the only teacher since the sainted Manichaeus deserving of our attention, has plentifully exposed and thoroughly refuted the errors of Judaism and of semi-Christianity, I think it not amiss that you should be supplied in writing with brief and pointed replies to the captious objections of our adversaries, that when, like children of the wily serpent, they try to bewilder you with their quibbles, you may be prepared to give intelligent answers. In this way they will be kept to the subject, instead of wandering from one thing to another. And I have placed our opinions and those of our opponent over against one another, as plainly and briefly as possible, so as not to perplex the reader with a long and intricate discourse.

3. Augustin replies: You warn against semi-Christians, which you say we are; but we warn against pseudo-Christians, which we have shown you to be. Semi-Christianity may be imperfect without being false. So, then, if the faith of those whom you try to mislead is imperfect, would it not be better to supply what is lacking than to rob them of what they have? It was to imperfect Christians that the apostle wrote, “joying and beholding your conversation,” and “the deficiency in your faith in Christ.” The apostle had in view a spiritual structure, as he says elsewhere, “Ye are God’s building;” and in this structure he found both a reason for joy and a reason for exertion. He rejoiced to see part already finished; and the necessity of bringing the edifice to perfection called for exertion. Imperfect Christians as we are, you pursue us with the desire to pervert what you call our semi-Christianity by false doctrine; while even those who are so deficient in faith

as to be unable to reply to all your sophisms, are wise enough at least to know that they must not have anything at all to do with you. You look for semi-Christians to deceive: we wish to prove you pseudo-Christians, that Christians may learn something from your refutation, and that the less advanced may learn to avoid you. Do you call us children of the serpent? You have surely forgotten how often you have found fault with the prohibition in Paradise, and have praised the serpent for opening Adam’s eyes. You have the better claim to the title which you give us. The serpent owns you as well when you blame him as when you praise him.

BOOK II

Faustus claims to believe the Gospel, yet refuses to accept the genealogical tables on various grounds which Augustin seeks to set aside.

1. Faustus said: Do I believe the gospel? Certainly. Do I therefore believe that Christ was born? Certainly not. It does not follow that because I believe the gospel, as I do, I must therefore believe that Christ was born. This I do not believe; because Christ does not say that He was born of men, and the gospel, both in name and in fact, begins with Christ’s preaching. As for the genealogy, the author himself does not venture to call it the gospel. For what did he write? “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ the Son of David.” The book of the generation is not the book of the gospel. It is more like a birth-register, the star confirming the event. Mark, on the other hand, who recorded the preaching of the Son of God, without any genealogy, begins most suitably with the words, “The gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God.” It is plain that the genealogy is not the gospel. Matthew himself says, that after John was put in prison, Jesus began to preach the gospel of the kingdom; so that what is mentioned before this is the genealogy, and not the gospel. Why did not Matthew begin with, “The gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God,” but because he thought it sinful to call the genealogy the gospel? Understand, then, what you have hitherto overlooked—the distinction between the genealogy and the gospel. Do I then admit the truth of the gospel? Yes; understanding by the gospel the preaching of Christ. I have plenty to say about the generations too, if you wish. But you seem to me now to wish to know not whether I accept the gospel, but whether I accept the generations.

2. Augustin replied: Well, in answer to your own questions, you tell us first that you believe the gospel, and next, that you do not believe in the birth of Christ; and your reason is, that the birth of Christ is not in the gospel. What, then, will you answer the apostle when he says, “Remember that Christ Jesus rose from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel?” You surely are ignorant, or pretend to be ignorant, what the gospel is. You use the word, not as the apostle teaches, but as suits your own errors. What the apostles call the gospel you depart from; for you do not believe that Christ was of the seed of David. This was Paul’s gospel; and it was also the gospel of the other apostles, and of all faithful stewards of so great a mystery. For Paul says elsewhere, “Whether, therefore, I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.” They did not all write the gospel, but they all preached it. The name evangelist is properly given to the narrators of the birth, the actions, the words, the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ. The word gospel means good news, and might be used of any good news, but is properly applied to the narrative of the Saviour. If, then, you teach something different, you must have departed from the gospel. Assuredly those babes whom you despise as semi-Christians will oppose you, when they hear their mother Charity declaring by the mouth of the apostle, “If any one preach another gospel than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.” Since, then, Paul, according to his gospel, preached that Christ was of the seed of David, and you deny this and preach something else, may you be accursed! And what can you mean by saying that Christ never declares Himself to have been born of men, when on every occasion He calls Himself the Son of man?

3. You learned men, forsooth, dress up for our benefit some wonderful First Man, who came down from the race of light to war with the race of darkness, armed with his waters against the waters of the enemy, and with his fire against their fire, and with his winds against their winds. And why not with his smoke against their smoke, and with his darkness against their darkness? According to you, he was armed against smoke with air, and against darkness with light. So it appears that smoke and darkness are bad, since they could not belong to his goodness. The other three, again—water, wind, and fire—are good. How, then, could these belong to the evil of the enemy? You reply that the water of the race of darkness was evil, while that

which the First Man brought was good; and so, too, his good wind and fire fought against the evil wind and fire of the adversary. But why could he not bring good smoke against evil smoke? Your falsehoods seem to vanish in smoke. Well, your First Man warred against an opposite nature. And yet only one of the five things he brought was the opposite of what the hostile race had. The light was opposed to the darkness, but the four others are not opposed to one another. Air is not the opposite of smoke, and still less is water the opposite of water, or wind of wind, or fire of fire.

4. One is shocked at your wild fancies about this First Man changing the elements which he brought, that he might conquer his enemies by pleasing them. So you make what you call the kingdom of falsehood keep honestly to its own nature, while truth is changeable in order to deceive. Jesus Christ, according to you, is the son of this First Man. Truth springs, forsooth, from your fiction. You praise this First Man for using changeable and delusive forms in the contest. If you, then, speak the truth, you do not imitate him. If you imitate him, you deceive as he did. But our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the true and truthful Son of God, the true and truthful Son of man, both of which He testifies of Himself, derived the eternity of His godhead from true God, and His incarnation from true man. Your First Man is not the first man of the apostle. “The first man,” he says, “was of the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven, heavenly. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. As we have borne the image of the earthy, let us also bear the image of the heavenly.” The first man of the earth, earthy, is Adam, who was made of dust. The second man from heaven, heavenly, is the Lord Jesus Christ; for, being the Son of God, He became flesh that He might be a man outwardly, while He remained God within; that He might be both the true Son of God, by whom we were made, and the true Son of man, by whom we are made anew. Why do you conjure up this fabulous First Man of yours, and refuse to acknowledge the first man of the apostle? Is this not a fulfillment of what the apostle says: “Turning away their ears from the truth, they will give heed to fables?” According to Paul, the first man is of the earth, earthy; according to Manichaeus, he is not earthy, and is equipped with five elements of some unreal, unintelligible kind. Paul says: “If any one should have announced to you differently from what we have

announced let him be accursed.” Therefore lest Paul be a liar, let Manichaeus be accursed.

5. Again, you find fault with the star by which the Magi were led to worship the infant Christ, which you should be ashamed of doing, when you represent your fabulous Christ, the son of your fabulous First Man not as announced by a star, but as bound up in all the stars. For you say that he mingled with the principles of darkness in his conflict with the race of darkness, that by capturing these principles the world might be made out of the mixture. So that, by your profane fancies, Christ is not only mingled with heaven and all the stars, but conjoined and compounded with the earth and all its productions,—a Saviour no more, but needing to be saved by you, by your eating and disgorging Him.

This foolish custom of making your disciples bring you food, that your teeth and stomach may be the means of relieving Christ, who is bound up in it, is a consequence of your profane fancies. You declare that Christ is liberated in this way—not, however, entirely; for you hold that some tiny particles of no value still remain in the excrement, to be mixed up and compounded again and again in various material forms, and to be released and purified at any rate by the fire in which the world will be burned up, if not before. Nay, even then, you say, Christ is not entirely liberated; but some extreme particles of His good and divine nature, which have been so defiled that they cannot be cleansed, are condemned to stay for ever in the horrid mass of darkness. And these people pretend to be offended with our saying that a star announced the birth of the Son of God, as if this were placing His birth under the influence of a constellation; while they subject Him not to stars only, but to such polluting contact with all material things, with the juices of all vegetables, and with the decay of all flesh, and with the decomposition of all food, in which He is bound up, that the only way of releasing Him, at least one great means, is that men, that is the Elect of the Manichaeans, should succeed in digesting their dinner.

We, too, deny the influence of the stars upon the birth of any man; for we maintain that, by the just law of God, the free-will of man, which chooses good or evil, is under no constraint of necessity. How much less do we subject to any constellation the incarnation of the eternal Creator and Lord of all! When Christ was born after the flesh, the star which the Magi saw had no power as governing, but attended as a witness. Instead of assuming control over Him, it acknowledged Him by the homage it did. Besides, this star was not one of those which from the beginning of the world continue in the course ordained by the Creator. Along with the new birth from the Virgin appeared a new star, which served as a guide to the Magi who were themselves seeking for Christ; for it went before them till they reached the place where they found the Word of God in the form of a child. But what astrologer ever thought of making a star leave its course, and come down to the child that is born, as they imagine, under it? They think that the stars affect the birth, not that the birth changes the course of the stars; so, if the star in the Gospel was one of those heavenly bodies, how could it determine Christ's action, when it was compelled to change its own action at Christ's birth? But if, as is more likely, a star which did not exist before appeared to point out Christ, it was the effect of Christ's birth, and not the cause of it. Christ was not born because the star was there; but the star was there because Christ was born. If there was any fate, it was in the birth, and not in the star. The word fate is derived from a word which means to speak; and since Christ is the Word of God by which all things were spoken before they were, the conjunction of stars is not the fate of Christ, but Christ is the fate of the stars. The same will that made the heavens took our earthly nature. The same power that ruled the stars laid down His life and took it again.

6. Why, then, should the narrative of the birth not be the gospel, since it conveys such good news as heals our malady? Is it because Matthew begins, not like Mark, with the words, “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ,” but, “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ?” In this way, John, too, might be said not to have written the gospel, for he has not the words, Beginning of the gospel, or Book of the gospel, but, “In the beginning was the Word.” Perhaps the clever word-maker Faustus will call the introduction in John a Verbidium, as he called that in Matthew a Genesidium. The wonder is, that you are so impudent as to give the name of gospel to your silly stories. What good news is there in telling us that, in the conflict against some strange hostile nation, God could protect His own kingdom only by sending part of His own nature into the greedy jaws of the

former, and to be so defiled, that after all those toils and tortures it cannot all be purged? Is this bad news the gospel? Every one who has even a slender knowledge of Greek knows that gospel means good news. But where is your good news, when your God himself is said to weep as under eclipse till the darkness and defilement are removed from his members? And when he ceases to weep, it seems he becomes cruel. For what has that part of him which is to be involved in the mass done to deserve this condemnation? This part must go on weeping for ever. But no; whoever examines this news will not weep because it is bad, but will laugh because it is not true.

BOOK III

Faustus objects to the incarnation of God on the ground that the evangelists are at variance with each other, and that incarnation is unsuitable to deity. Augustin attempts to remove the critical and theological difficulties.

1. Faustus said: Do I believe in the incarnation? For my part, this is the very thing I long tried to persuade myself of, that God was born; but the discrepancy in the genealogies of Luke and Matthew stumbled me, as I knew not which to follow. For I thought it might happen that, from not being omniscient, I might take the true for false, and the false for true. So, in despair of settling this dispute, I betook myself to Mark and John, two authorities still, and evangelists as much as the others. I approved with good reason of the beginning of Mark and John, for they have nothing of David, or Mary, or Joseph. John says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” meaning Christ. Mark says, “The gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God,” as if correcting Matthew, who calls him the Son of David. Perhaps, however, the Jesus of Matthew is a different person from the Jesus of Mark. This is my reason for not believing in the birth of Christ.

Remove this difficulty, if you can, by harmonizing the accounts, and I am ready to yield. In any case, however, it is hardly consistent to believe that God, the God of Christians, was born from the womb.

2. Augustin replied: Had you read the Gospel with care, and inquired into those places where you found opposition, instead of rashly condemning them, you would have seen that the recognition of the authority of the evangelists by so many learned men all over the world, in spite of this most obvious discrepancy, proves that there is more in it than appears at first sight. Any one can see, as well as you, that the ancestors of Christ in Matthew and Luke are different; while Joseph appears in both, at the end in Matthew and at the beginning in Luke. Joseph, it is plain, might be called the father of Christ, on account of his being in a certain sense the husband of the mother of Christ; and so his name, as the male representative, appears at the beginning or end of the genealogies. Any one can see as well as you that Joseph has one father in Matthew and another in Luke, and so with the grandfather and with all the rest up to David. Did all the able and learned men, not many Latin writers certainly, but innumerable Greek, who have examined most attentively the sacred Scriptures, overlook this manifest difference? Of course they saw it. No one can help seeing it. But with a due regard to the high authority of Scripture, they believed that there was something here which would be given to those that ask, and denied to those that snarl; would be found by those that seek, and taken away from those that criticise; would be open to those that knock, and shut against those that contradict. They asked, sought, and knocked; they received, found, and entered in.

3. The whole question is how Joseph had two fathers. Supposing this possible, both genealogies may be correct. With two fathers, why not two grandfathers, and two great-grandfathers, and so on, up to David, who was the father both of Solomon, who is mentioned in Matthew’s list, and of Nathan, who occurs in Luke? This is the difficulty with many people who think it impossible that two men should have one and the same son, forgetting the very obvious fact that a man may be called the son of the person who adopted him as well as of the person who begot him.

Adoption, we know, was familiar to the ancients; for even women adopted the children of other women, as Sarah adopted Ishmael, and Leah her handmaid’s son, and Pharaoh’s daughter Moses. Jacob, too, adopted his grandsons, the children of Joseph. Moreover, the word adoption is of great importance in the system of our faith, as is seen from the apostolic writings. For the Apostle Paul, speaking of the advantages of the Jews, says: “Whose are the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law; whose are the fathers, and of whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.” And again: “We ourselves also groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, even the redemption of the body.” Again, elsewhere: “But in the fullness of time, God sent His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” These passages show clearly that adoption is a significant symbol. God has an only Son, whom He begot from His own substance, of whom it is said, “Being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal to God.” Us He begot not of His own substance, for we belong to the creation which is not begotten, but made; but that He might make us the brothers of Christ, He adopted us. That act, then, by which God, when we were not born of Him, but created and formed, begot us by His word and grace, is called adoption. So John says, “He gave them power to become the sons of God.”

Since, therefore; the practice of adoption is common among our fathers, and in Scripture, is there not irrational profanity in the hasty condemnation of the evangelists as false because the genealogies are different, as if both could not be true, instead of considering calmly the simple fact that frequently in human life one man may have two fathers, one of whose flesh he is born, and another of whose will he is afterwards made a son by adoption? If the second is not rightly called father, neither are we right in saying, “Our Father which art in heaven,” to Him of whose substance we were not born, but of whose grace and most merciful will we were adopted, according to apostolic doctrine, and truth most sure. For one is to us God, and Lord, and Father: God, for by Him we are created, though of human parents; Lord, for we are His subjects; Father, for by His adoption we are born again. Careful students of sacred Scripture easily saw, from a little consideration, how, in the different genealogies of the two evangelists, Joseph had two fathers, and consequently two lists of ancestors. You might have seen this too, if you had not been blinded by the love of contradiction. Other things far beyond your understanding have been discovered in the careful investigation of all parts of these narratives. The familiar occurrence of one man begetting a son and another adopting him, so that one man has two fathers, you might, in spite of Manichaean error, have thought of as an explanation, if you had not been reading in a hostile spirit.

4. But why Matthew begins with Abraham and descends to Joseph, while Luke begins with Joseph and ascends, not to Abraham, but to God, who made man, and, by giving a commandment, gave him power to become, by believing, a son of God; and why Matthew records the generations at the commencement of his book, Luke after the baptism of the Saviour by John; and what is the meaning of the number of the generations in Matthew, who divides them into three sections of fourteen each, though in the whole sum there appears to be one wanting; while in Luke the number of generations recorded after the baptism amount to seventy-seven, which number the Lord Himself enjoins in connection with the forgiveness of sins, saying, “Not only seven times, but seventy-seven times;”—these things you will never understand, unless either you are taught by some Catholic of superior stamp, who has studied the sacred Scriptures, and has made all the progress possible, or you yourselves turn from your error, and in a Christian spirit ask that you may receive, seek that you may find, and knock that it may be opened to you.

5. Since, then, this double fatherhood of nature and adoption removes the difficulty arising from the discrepancy of the genealogies, there is no occasion for Faustus to leave the two evangelists and betake himself to the other two, which would be a greater affront to those he betook himself to than to those he left. For the sacred writers do not desire to be favored at the expense of their brethren. For their joy is in union, and they are one in Christ; and if one says one thing, and another another, or one in one way and another in another, still they all speak truth, and in no way contradict one another; only let the reader be reverent and humble, not in an heretical spirit seeking occasion for strife, but with a believing heart desiring edification. Now, in this opinion that the evangelists give the ancestors of different fathers, as it is quite possible for a man to have two fathers, there is nothing inconsistent with truth. So the evangelists are harmonized, and you, by Faustus’s promise are bound to yield at once.

6. You may perhaps be troubled by that additional remark which he makes: “In any case, however, it is hardly consistent to believe that God, the God of Christians, was born from the womb.” As if we believed that the divine nature came from the womb of a woman. Have I not just quoted the testimony of the apostle, speaking of the Jews: “Whose are the fathers, and of whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is God over all, blessed for ever?” Christ, therefore, our Lord and Saviour, true Son of God in His divinity, and true son of man according to the flesh, not as He is God over all was born of a woman, but in that feeble nature which He took of us, that in it He might die for us, and heal it in us: not as in the form of God, in which He thought it not robbery to be equal to God, was He born of a woman, but in the form of a servant, in taking which He emptied Himself. He is therefore said to have emptied Himself because He took the form of a servant, not because He lost the form of God. For in the unchangeable possession of that nature by which in the form of God He is equal to the Father, He took our changeable nature, by which He might be born of a virgin. You, while you protest against putting the flesh of Christ in a virgin’s womb, place the very divinity of God in the womb not only of human beings, but of dogs and swine. You refuse to believe that the flesh of Christ was conceived in the Virgin’s womb, in which God was not found nor even changed; while you assert that in all men and beasts, in the seed of male and in the womb of female, in all conceptions on land or in water, an actual part of God and the divine nature is continually bound, and shut up, and contaminated, never to be wholly set free.

BOOK IV

Faustus’s reasons for rejecting the Old Testament, and Augustin’s animadversions thereon.

1. Faustus said: Do I believe the Old Testament? If it bequeaths anything to me, I believe it; if not, I reject it. It would be an excess of forwardness to take the documents of others which pronounce me disinherited. Remember that the promise of Canaan in the Old Testament is made to Jews, that is, to the circumcised, who offer sacrifice, and abstain from swine’s flesh, and from the other animals which Moses pronounces unclean, and observe Sabbaths, and the feast of unleavened bread, and other things of the same

kind which the author of the Testament enjoined. Christians have not adopted these observances, and no one keeps them; so that if we will not take the inheritance, we should surrender the documents. This is my first reason for rejecting the Old Testament, unless you teach me better. My second reason is, that this inheritance is such a poor fleshly thing, without any spiritual blessings, that after the New Testament, and its glorious promise of the kingdom of heaven and eternal life, I think it not worth the taking.

2. Augustin replied: No one doubts that promises of temporal things are contained in the Old Testament, for which reason it is called the Old Testament; or that the kingdom of heaven and the promise of eternal life belong to the New Testament. But that in these temporal things were figures of future things which should be fulfilled in us upon whom the ends of the ages are come, is not my fancy, but the judgment of the apostle, when he says of such things, “These things were our examples;” and again, “These things happened to them for an example, and they are written for us on whom the ends of the ages are come.” We receive the Old Testament, therefore, not in order to obtain the fulfillment of these promises, but to see in them predictions of the New Testament; for the Old bears witness to the New. Whence the Lord, after He rose from the dead, and allowed His disciples not only to see but to handle Him, still, lest they should doubt their mortal and fleshly senses, gave them further confirmation from the testimony of the ancient books, saying, “It was necessary that all things should be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets and Psalms, concerning me.” Our hope, therefore, rests not on the promise of temporal things. Nor do we believe that the holy and spiritual men of these times—the patriarchs and prophets—were taken up with earthly things. For they understood, by the revelation of the Spirit of God, what was suitable for that time, and how God appointed all these sayings and actions as types and predictions of the future. Their great desire was for the New Testament; but they had a personal duty to perform in those predictions, by which the new things of the future were foretold. So the life as well as the tongue of these men was prophetic. The carnal people, indeed, thought only of present blessings, though even in connection with the people there were prophecies of the future.

These things you do not understand, because, as the prophet said, “Unless you believe, you shall not understand.” For you are not instructed in the kingdom of heaven,—that is, in the true Catholic Church of Christ. If you were, you would bring forth from the treasure of the sacred Scriptures things old as well as new. For the Lord Himself says, “Therefore every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like an householder who brings forth from his treasure things new and old.” And so, while you profess to receive only the new promises of God, you have retained the oldness of the flesh, adding only the novelty of error; of which novelty the apostle says, “Shun profane novelties of words, for they increase unto more ungodliness, and their speech eats like a cancer. Of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the faith have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and have overthrown the faith of some.” Here you see the source of your false doctrine, in teaching that the resurrection is only of souls by the preaching of the truth, and that there will be no resurrection of the body. But how can you understand spiritual things of the inner man, who is renewed in the knowledge of God, when in the oldness of the flesh, if you do not possess temporal things, you concoct fanciful notions about them in those images of carnal things of which the whole of your false doctrine consists? You boast of despising as worthless the land of Canaan, which was an actual thing, and actually given to the Jews; and yet you tell of a land of light cut asunder on one side, as by a narrow wedge, by the land of the race of darkness,—a thing which does not exist, and which you believe from the delusion of your minds; so that your life is not supported by having it, and your mind is wasted in desiring it.

BOOK V

Faustus claims that the Manichaeans and not the Catholics are consistent believers in the Gospel, and seeks to establish this claim by comparing Manichaean and Catholic obedience to the precepts of the Gospel. Augustin exposes the hypocrisy of the Manichaeans and praises the asceticism of Catholics.

1. Faustus said: Do I believe the gospel? You ask me if I believe it, though my obedience to its commands shows that I do. I should rather ask you if you believe it, since you give no proof of your belief. I have left my father,

mother, wife, and children, and all else that the gospel requires; and do you ask if I believe the gospel? Perhaps you do not know what is called the gospel. The gospel is nothing else than the preaching and the precept of Christ. I have parted with all gold and silver, and have left off carrying money in my purse; content with daily food; without anxiety for tomorrow; and without solicitude about how I shall be fed, or where-withal I shall be clothed: and do you ask if I believe the gospel? You see in me the blessings of the gospel; and do you ask if I believe the gospel? You see me poor, meek, a peacemaker, pure in heart, mourning, hungering, thirsting, bearing persecutions and enmity for righteousness' sake; and do you doubt my belief in the gospel? One can understand now how John the Baptist, after seeing Jesus, and also hearing of His works, yet asked whether He was Christ. Jesus properly and justly did not deign to reply that He was; but reminded him of the works of which he had already heard: "The blind see, the deaf hear, the dead are raised." In the same way, I might very well reply to your question whether I believe the gospel, by saying, I have left all, father, mother, wife, children, gold, silver, eating, drinking, luxuries, pleasures; take this as a sufficient answer to your questions, and believe that you will be blessed if you are not offended in me.

2. But, according to you, to believe the gospel is not only to obey its commands, but also to believe in all that is written in it; and, first of all, that God was born. But neither is believing the gospel only to believe that Jesus was born, but also to do what He commands. So, if you say that I do not believe the gospel because I disbelieve the incarnation, much more do you not believe because you disregard the commandments. At any rate, we are on a par till these questions are settled. If your disregard of the precepts does not prevent you from professing faith in the gospel, why should my rejection of the genealogy prevent me? And if, as you say, to believe the gospel includes both faith in the genealogies and obedience to the precepts, why do you condemn me, since we both are imperfect? What one wants the other has. But if, as there can be no doubt, belief in the gospel consists solely in obedience to the commands of God, your sin is twofold. As the proverb says, the deserter accuses the soldier. But suppose, since you will have it so, that there are these two parts of perfect faith, one consisting in word, or the confession that Christ was born, the other in deed or the

observance of the precepts; it is plain that my part is hard and painful, yours light and easy. It is natural that the multitude should flock to you and away from me, for they know not that the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. Why, then, do you blame me for taking the harder part, and leaving to you, as to a weak brother, the easy part? You have the idea that your part of faith, or confessing that Christ was born, has more power to save the soul than the other parts.

3. Let us then ask Christ Himself, and learn from His own mouth, what is the chief means of our salvation. Who shall enter, O Christ, into Thy kingdom? He that doeth the will of my Father in heaven, is His reply; not, "He that confesses that I was born." And again, He says to His disciples, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things which I have commanded you." It is not, "teaching them that I was born," but, "to observe my commandments." Again, "Ye are my friends if ye do what I command you;" not, "if you believe that I was born." Again, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love," and in many other places. Also in the sermon on the mount, when He taught, "Blessed are the poor, blessed are the meek, blessed are the peacemakers, blessed are the pure in heart, blessed are they that mourn, blessed are they that hunger, blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake," He nowhere says, "Blessed are they that confess that I was born." And in the separation of the sheep from the goats in the judgment, He says that He will say to them on the right hand, "I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink," and so on; therefore "inherit the kingdom." Not, "Because ye believe that I was born, inherit the kingdom." Again, to the rich man seeking for eternal life, He says, "Go, sell all that thou hast, and follow me;" not, "Believe that I was born, that you may have eternal life." You see, the kingdom, life, happiness, are everywhere promised to the part I have chosen of what you call the two parts of faith, and nowhere to your part. Show, if you can, a place where it is written that whoso confesses that Christ was born of a woman is blessed, or shall inherit the kingdom, or have eternal life. Even supposing, then, that there are two parts of faith, your part has no blessing. But what if we prove that your part is not a part of faith at all? It will follow that you are foolish, which indeed will be proved beyond

a doubt. At present, it is enough to have shown that our part is crowned with the beatitudes. Besides, we have also a beatitude for a confession in words: for we confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God; and Jesus declares with His own lips that this confession has a benediction, when He says to Peter, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” So that we have not one, but both these parts of faith, and in both alike are we pronounced blessed by Christ; for in one we reduce faith to practice, while in the other our confession is unmixed with blasphemy.

4. Augustin replied: I have already said that the Lord Jesus Christ repeatedly calls Himself the Son of man, and that the Manichaeans have contrived a silly story about some fabulous First Man, who figures in their impious heresy, not earthly, but combined with spurious elements, in opposition to the apostle, who says, “The first man is of the earth, earthy;” and that the apostle carefully warns us, “If any one preaches to you differently from what we have preached, let him be accursed.” So that we must believe Christ to be the Son of man according to apostolic truth, not according to Manichaean error. And since the evangelists assert that Christ was born of a woman, of the seed of David, and Paul writing to Timothy says, “Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel,” it is clear what sense we must believe Christ to be the Son of man; for being the Son of God by whom we were made, He also by His incarnation became the Son of man, that He might die for our sins, and rise again for our justification. Accordingly He calls Himself both Son of God and Son of man. To take only one instance out of many, in the Gospel of John it is written, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so He hath given to the Son to have life in Himself; and hath given Him power to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.” He says, “They shall hear the voice of the Son of God;” and He says, “because He is the Son of man.” As the Son of man, He has received power to execute judgment, because He will come to judgment in human form, that He may be seen by the good and the wicked. In this form He ascended into heaven, and that voice was heard by His disciples, “He shall so come as ye have

seen Him go into heaven.” As the Son of God, as God equal to and one with the Father, He will not be seen by the wicked; for “blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Since, then, He promises eternal life to those that believe in Him, and since to believe in Him is to believe in the true Christ, such as He declares Himself and His apostles declare Him to be, true Son of God and true Son of man; you, Manichaeans, who believe on a false and spurious son of a false and spurious man, and teach that God Himself, from fear of the assault of the hostile race, gave up His own members to be tortured, and after all not to be wholly liberated, are plainly far from that eternal life which Christ promises to those who believe in Him. It is true, He said to Peter when he confessed Him to be the Son of God, “Blessed art thou, Simon. Barjona.” But does He promise nothing to those who believe Him to be the Son of man, when the Son of God and the Son of man are the same? Besides, eternal life is expressly promised to those who believe in the Son of man. “As Moses,” He says, “lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” What more do you wish? Believe then in the Son of man, that you may have eternal life; for He is also the Son of God, who can give eternal life: for He is “the true God and eternal life,” as the same John says in his epistle. John also adds, that he is antichrist who denies that Christ has come in the flesh.

5. There is no need, then that you should extol so much the perfection of Christ’s commands, because you obey the precepts of the gospel. For the precepts, supposing you really to fulfill them, would not profit you without true faith. Do you not know that the apostle says, “If I distribute all my goods to the poor, and give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing?” Why do you boast of having Christian poverty, when you are destitute of Christian charity? Robbers have a kind of charity to one another, arising from a mutual consciousness of guilt and crime; but this is not the charity commended by the apostle. In another passage he distinguishes true charity from all base and vicious affections, by saying, “Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.” How then can you have true charity from a fictitious faith? You persist in a faith corrupted by falsehood: for your First Man, according to you, used deceit in the conflict by changing

his form, while his enemies remained in their own nature; and, besides, you maintain that Christ, who says, “I am the truth,” feigned His incarnation, His death on the cross, the wounds of His passion, the marks shown after His resurrection. If you speak the truth, and your Christ speaks falsehood, you must be better than he. But if you really follow your own Christ, your truthfulness may be doubted, and your obedience to the precepts you speak of may be only a pretence. Is it true, as Faustus says, that you have no money in your purses? He means, probably, that your money is in boxes and bags; nor would we blame you for this, if you did not profess one thing and practise another. Constantius, who is still alive, and is now our brother in Catholic Christianity, once gathered many of your sect into his house at Rome, to keep these precepts of Manichaeus, which you think so much of, though they are very silly and childish. The precepts proved too much for your weakness, and the gathering was entirely broken up. Those who persevered separated from your communion, and are called Mattarians, because they sleep on mats,—a very different bed from the feathers of Faustus and his goatskin coverlets, and all the grandeur that made him despise not only the Mattarians, but also the house of his poor father in Mileum. Away, then, with this accursed hypocrisy from your writing, if not from your conduct; or else your language will conflict with your life by your deceitful words, as your First Man with the race of darkness by his deceitful elements.

6. I am, however, addressing not merely men who fail to do what they are commanded, but the members of a deluded sect. For the precepts of Manichaeus are such that, if you do not keep them, you are deceivers; if you do keep them, you are deceived. Christ never taught you that you should not pluck a vegetable for fear of committing homicide; for when His disciples were hungry when passing through a field of corn, He did not forbid them to pluck the ears on the Sabbath-day; which was a rebuke to the Jews of the time since the action was on Sabbath; and a rebuke in the action itself to the future Manichaeans. The precept of Manichaeus, however, only requires you to do nothing while others commit homicide for you; though the real homicide is that of ruining miserable souls by such doctrines of devils.

7. The language of Faustus has the typhus of heresy in it, and is the language of overweening arrogance. “You see in me” he says, “the beatitudes of the gospel; and do you ask if I believe the gospel? You see me poor, meek, a peacemaker, pure in heart, mourning, hungering, thirsting, bearing persecution and enmity for righteousness’ sake; and do you doubt my belief in the gospel?” If to justify oneself were to be just, Faustus would have flown to heaven while uttering these words. I say nothing of the luxurious habits of Faustus, known to all the followers of the Manichaeans, and especially to those at Rome. I shall suppose a Manichaean such as Constantius sought for, when he enforced the observance of these precepts with the sincere desire to see them observed. How can I see him to be poor in spirit, when he is so proud as to believe that his own soul is God, and is not ashamed to speak of God as in bondage? How can I see him meek, when he affronts all the authority of the evangelists rather than believe? How a peacemaker, when he holds that the divine nature itself by which God is whatever is, and is the only true existence, could not remain in lasting peace? How pure in heart, when his heart is filled with so many impious notions? How mourning, unless it is for his God captive and bound till he be freed and escape, with the loss, however, of a part which is to be united by the Father to the mass of darkness, and is not to be mourned for? How hungering and thirsting for righteousness, which Faustus omits in his writings lest, no doubt, he should be thought destitute of righteousness? But how can they hunger and thirst after righteousness, whose perfect righteousness will consist in exulting over their brethren condemned to darkness, not for any fault of their own, but for being irremediably contaminated by the pollution against which they were sent by the Father to contend?

8. How do you suffer persecution and enmity for righteousness’ sake, when, according to you, it is righteous to preach and teach these impieties? The wonder is, that the gentleness of Christian times allows such perverse iniquity to pass wholly or almost unpunished. And yet, as if we were blind or silly, you tell us that your suffering reproach and persecution is a great proof of your righteousness. If people are just according to the amount of their suffering, atrocious criminals of all kinds suffer much more than you. But, at any rate, if we are to grant that suffering endured on account of any

sort of profession of Christianity proves the sufferer to be in possession of true faith and righteousness, you must admit that any case of greater suffering that we can show proves the possession of truer faith and greater righteousness. Of such cases you know many among our martyrs, and chiefly Cyprian himself, whose writings also bear witness to his belief that Christ was born of the Virgin Mary. For this faith, which you abhor, he suffered and died along with many Christian believers of that day, who suffered as much, or more. Faustus, when shown to be a Manichaean by evidence, or by his own confession, on the intercession of the Christians themselves, who brought him before the proconsul, was, along with some others, only banished to an island, which can hardly be called a punishment at all, for it is what God’s servants do of their own accord every day when they wish to retire from the tumult of the world. Besides, earthly sovereigns often by a public decree give release from this banishment as an act of mercy. And in this way all were afterwards released at once. Confess, then, that they were in possession of a truer faith and a more righteous life, who were accounted worthy to suffer for it much more than you ever suffered. Or else, cease boasting of the abhorrence which many feel for you, and learn to distinguish between suffering for blasphemy and suffering for righteousness. What it is you suffer for, your own books will show in a way that deserves your most particular attention.

9. Those evangelical precepts of peculiar sublimity which you make people who know no better believe that you obey, are really obeyed by multitudes in our communion. Are there not among us many of both sexes who have entirely refrained from sexual intercourse, and many formerly married who practise continence? Are there not many others who give largely of their property, or give it up altogether, and many who keep the body in subjection by fasts, either frequent or daily, or protracted beyond belief? Then there are fraternities whose members have no property of their own, but all things common, including only things necessary for food and clothing, living with one soul and one heart towards God, inflamed with a common feeling of charity. In all such professions many turn out to be deceivers and reprobates, while many who are so are never discovered; many, too, who at first walk well, fall away rapidly from willfulness. Many are found in times of trial to have adopted this kind of life with another intention than they

professed; and again, many in humility and steadfastness persevere in their course to the end, and are saved. There are apparent diversities in these societies; but one charity unites all who, from some necessity, in obedience to the apostle’s injunction, have their wives as if they had them not, and buy as if they bought not, and use this world as if they used it not. With these are joined, in the abundant riches of God’s mercy, the inferior class of those to whom it is said, “Defraud not one another, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency. But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.” To such the same apostle also says, “Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, that ye go to law one with another;” while, in consideration of their infirmity, he adds, “If ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the Church.” For in the kingdom of heaven there are not only those who, that they may be perfect, sell or leave all they have and follow the Lord; but others in the partnership of charity are joined like a mercenary force to the Christian army, to whom it will be said at last, “I was hungry, and ye gave me meat,” and so on. Otherwise, there would be no salvation for those to whom the apostle gives so many anxious and particular directions about their families, telling the wives to be obedient to their husbands, and husbands to love their wives; children to obey their parents, and parents to bring up their children in the instruction and admonition of the Lord; servants to obey with fear their masters according to the flesh, and masters to render to their servants what is just and equal. The apostle is far from condemning such people as regardless of gospel precepts, or unworthy of eternal life. For where the Lord exhorts the strong to attain perfection, saying, “If any man take not up his cross and follow me, he cannot be my disciple,” He immediately adds, for the consolation of the weak, “Whoso receiveth a just man in the name of a just man shall receive a just man’s reward; and whoso receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet’s reward.” So that not only he who gives Timothy a little wine for his stomach’s sake, and his frequent infirmities, but he who gives to a strong man a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward.

10. If it is true that a man cannot receive the gospel without giving up everything, why do you delude your followers, by allowing them to keep in your service their wives, and children, and households, and houses, and fields? Indeed, you may well allow them to disregard the precepts of the gospel: for all you promise them is not a resurrection, but a change to another mortal existence, in which they shall live the silly, childish, impious life of those you call the Elect, the life you live yourself, and are so much praised for; or if they possess greater merit, they shall enter into melons or cucumbers, or some eatables which you will masticate, that they may be quickly purified by your digestion. Least of all should you who teach such doctrines profess any regard for the gospel. For if the faith of the gospel had any connection with such nonsense, the Lord should have said, not, "I was hungry, and ye gave me meat;" but, "Ye were hungry, and ye ate me," or, "I was hungry, and I ate you." For, by your absurdities, a man will not be received into the kingdom of God for the service of giving food to the saints, but, because he has eaten them and belched them out, or has himself been eaten and belched into heaven. Instead of saying, "Lord, when saw we Thee hungry, and fed Thee?" the righteous must say, "When saw we Thee hungry, and were eaten by Thee?" And He must answer, not, "When ye gave food to one of the least of these my brethren, you gave to me;" but, "When you were eaten by one of the least of these my brethren, you were eaten by me."

11. Believing and teaching such monstrosities, and living accordingly, you yet have the boldness to say that you obey the precepts of the gospel, and to decry the Catholic Church, which includes many weak as well as strong, both of whom the Lord blesses, because both according to their measure obey the precepts of the gospel and hope in its promises. The blindness of hostility makes you see only the tares in our harvest: for you might easily see wheat too, if you were willing that there should be any. But among you, those who are pretended Manichaeans are wicked, and those who are really Manichaeans are silly. For where the faith itself is false, he who hypocritically professes it acts deceitfully, while he who truly believes is deceived. Such a faith cannot produce a good life, for every man's life is good or bad according as his heart is engaged. If your affections were set upon spiritual and intellectual good, instead of material forms, you would

not pay homage to the material sun as a divine substance, and as the light of wisdom, which every one knows you do, though I now only mention it in passing.

BOOK VI

Faustus avows his disbelief in the Old Testament and his disregard of its precepts, and accuses Catholics of inconsistency in neglecting its ordinances, while claiming to accept it as authoritative. Augustin explains the Catholic view of the relation of the Old Testament to the New.

1. Faustus said: You ask if I believe the Old Testament. Of course not, for I do not keep its precepts. Neither, I imagine, do you. I reject circumcision as disgusting; and if I mistake not, so do you. I reject the observance of Sabbaths as superfluous: I suppose you do the same. I reject sacrifice as idolatry, as doubtless you also do. Swine's flesh is not the only flesh I abstain from; nor is it the only flesh you eat. I think all flesh unclean: you think none unclean. Both alike, in these opinions, throw over the Old Testament. We both look upon the weeks of unleavened bread and the feast of tabernacles as unnecessary and useless. Not to patch linen garments with purple; to count it adultery to make a garment of linen and wool; to call it sacrilege to yoke together an ox and an ass when necessary; not to appoint as priest a bald man, or a man with red hair, or any similar peculiarity, as being unclean in the sight of God, are things which we both despise and laugh at, and rank as of neither first nor second importance; and yet they are all precepts and judgments of the Old Testament. You cannot blame me for rejecting the Old Testament; for whether it is right or wrong to do so, you do it as much as I. As for the difference between your faith and mine, it is this, that while you choose to act deceitfully, and meanly to praise in words what in your heart you hate, I, not having learned the art of deception, frankly declare that I hate both these abominable precepts and their authors.

2. Augustin replied: How and for what purpose the Old Testament is received by the heirs of the New Testament has been already explained. But as the remarks of Faustus were then about the promises of the Old Testament, and now he speaks of the precepts, I reply that he displays ignorance of the difference between moral and symbolical precepts. For

example, “Thou shalt not covet” is a moral precept; “Thou shalt circumcise every male on the eighth day” is a symbolical precept. From not making this distinction, the Manichaeans, and all who find fault with the writings of the Old Testament, not seeing that whatever observance God appointed for the former dispensation was a shadow of future things, because these observances are now discontinued, condemn them, though no doubt what is unsuitable now was perfectly suitable then as prefiguring the things now revealed. In this they contradict the apostle who says, “All these things happened to them for an example, and they were written for our learning, on whom the end of the world is come.” The apostle here explains why these writings are to be received, and why it is no longer necessary to continue the symbolical observances. For when he says, “They were written for our learning,” he clearly shows that we should be very diligent in reading and in discovering the meaning of the Old Testament Scriptures, and that we should have great veneration for them, since it was for us that they were written. Again, when he says, “They are our examples,” and “these things happened to them for an example,” he shows that, now that the things themselves are clearly revealed, the observance of the actions by which these things were prefigured is no longer binding. So he says elsewhere, “Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon or of the sabbath-days, which are a shadow of things to come.” Here also, when he says, “Let no one judge you” in these things, he shows that we are no longer bound to observe them. And when he says, “which are a shadow of things to come,” he explains how these observances were binding at the time when the things fully disclosed to us were symbolized by these shadows of future things.

3. Assuredly, if the Manichaeans were justified by the resurrection of the Lord,—the day of whose resurrection, the third after His passion, was the eighth day, coming after the Sabbath, that is, after the seventh day,—their carnal minds would be delivered from the darkness of earthly passions which rests on them; and rejoicing in the circumcision of the heart, they would not ridicule it as prefigured in the Old Testament by circumcision in the flesh, although they should not enforce this observance under the New Testament. But, as the apostle says, “To the pure all things are pure. But to the impure and unbelieving nothing is pure, but both their mind and

conscience are defiled.” So these people, who are so pure in their own eyes, that they regard, or pretend to regard, as impure these members of their bodies, are so defiled with unbelief and error, that, while they abhor the circumcision of the flesh,—which the apostle calls a seal of the righteousness of faith,—they believe that the divine members of their God are subjected to restraint and contamination in these very carnal members of theirs. For they say that flesh is unclean; and it follows that God, in the part which is detained by the flesh, is made unclean: for they declare that He must be cleansed, and that till this is done, as far as it can be done, He undergoes all the passions to which flesh is subject, not only in suffering pain and distress, but also in sensual gratification. For it is for His sake, they say, that they abstain from sexual intercourse, that He may not be bound more closely in the bondage of the flesh, nor suffer more defilement. The apostle says, “To the pure all things are pure.” And if this is true of men, who may be led into evil by a perverse will, how much more must all things be pure to God, who remains for ever immutable and immaculate! In those books which you defile with your violent reproaches, it is said of the divine wisdom, that “no defiled thing falleth into it, and it goeth everywhere by reason of its pureness.” It is mere prurient absurdity to find fault with the sign of human regeneration appointed by that God, to whom all things are pure, to be put on the organ of human generation, while you hold that your God, to whom nothing is pure, is in a part of his nature subjected to taint and corruption by the vicious actions in which impure men employ the members of their body. For if you think there is pollution in conjugal intercourse, what must there be in all the practices of the licentious? If you ask, then, as you often do, whether God could not find some other way of sealing the righteousness of faith, the answer is, Why not this way, since all things are pure to the pure, much more to God? And we have the authority of the apostle for saying that circumcision was the seal of the righteousness of the faith of Abraham. As for you, you must try not to blush when you are asked whether your God had nothing better to do than to entangle part of his nature with these members that you revile so much. These are delicate subjects to speak of, on account of the penal corruption attending the propagation of man. They are things which call into exercise the modesty of the chaste, the passions of the impure, and the justice of God.

4. The rest of the Sabbath we consider no longer binding as an observance, now that the hope of our eternal rest has been revealed. But it is a very useful thing to read of, and to reflect on. In prophetic times, when things now manifested were prefigured and predicted by actions as well as words, this sign of which we read was a presage of the reality which we possess. But I wish to know why you observe a sort of partial rest. The Jews, on their Sabbath, which they still keep in a carnal manner, neither gather any fruit in the field, nor dress and cook it at home. But you, in your rest, wait till one of your followers takes his knife or hook to the garden, to get food for you by murdering the vegetables, and brings back, strange to say, living corpses. For if cutting plants is not murder, why are you afraid to do it? And yet, if the plants are murdered, what becomes of the life which is to obtain release and restoration from your mastication and digestion? Well, you take the living vegetables, and certainly you ought, if it could be done to swallow them whole; so that after the one wound your follower has been guilty of inflicting in pulling them, of which you will no doubt consent to absolve him, they may reach without loss or injury your private laboratory, where your God may be healed of his wound. Instead of this, you not only tear them with your teeth, but, if it pleases your taste, mince them, inflicting a multitude of wounds in the most criminal manner. Plainly it would be a most advantageous thing if you would rest at home too, and not only once a week, like the Jews, but every day of the week. The cucumbers suffer while you are cooking them, without any benefit to the life that is in them: for a boiling pot cannot be compared to a saintly stomach. And yet you ridicule as superfluous the rest of the Sabbath. Would it not be better, not only to refrain from finding fault with the fathers for this observance, in whose case it was not superfluous, but, even now that it is superfluous, to observe this rest yourselves instead of your own, which has no symbolical use, and is condemned as grounded on falsehood? According to your own foolish opinions, you are guilty of a defective observance of your own rest, though the observance itself is foolish in the judgment of truth. You maintain that the fruit suffers when it is pulled from the tree, when it is cut and scraped, and cooked, and eaten. So you are wrong in eating anything that can not be swallowed raw and unhurt, so that the wound inflicted might not be from you, but from your follower in pulling them. You declare that you could not give release to so great a quantity of life, if you were to eat only things

which could be swallowed without cooking or mastication. But if this release compensates for all the pains you inflict, why is it unlawful for you to pull the fruit? Fruit may be eaten raw, as some of your sect make a point of eating raw vegetables of all kinds. But before it can be eaten at all, it must be pulled or fall off, or be taken in some way from the ground or from the tree. You might well be pardoned for pulling it, since nothing can be done without that, but not for torturing the members of your God to the extent you do in dressing your food. One of your silly notions is that the tree weeps when the fruit is pulled. Doubtless the life in the tree knows all things, and perceives who it is that comes to it. If the elect were to come and pull the fruit, would not the tree rejoice to escape the misery of having its fruit plucked by others, and to gain felicity by enduring a little momentary pain? And yet, while you multiply the pains and troubles of the fruit after it is plucked, you will not pluck it. Explain that, if you can! Fasting itself is a mistake in your case. There should be no intermission in the task of purging away the dross of the excrements from the spiritual gold, and of releasing the divine members from confinement. The most merciful man among you is he who keeps himself always in good health, takes raw food, and eats a great deal. But you are cruel when you eat, in making your food undergo so much suffering; and you are cruel when you fast, in desisting from the work of liberating the divine members.

5. With all this, you venture to denounce the sacrifices of the Old Testament, and to call them idolatry, and to attribute to us the same impious notion. To answer for ourselves in the first place, while we consider it no longer a duty to offer sacrifices, we recognize sacrifices as part of the mysteries of Revelation, by which the things prophesied were foreshadowed. For they were our examples, and in many and various ways they all pointed to the one sacrifice which we now commemorate. Now that this sacrifice has been revealed, and has been offered in due time, sacrifice is no longer binding as an act of worship, while it retains its symbolical authority. For these things “were written for our learning, upon whom the end of the world is come.” What you object to in sacrifice is the slaughter of animals, though the whole animal creation is intended conditionally in some way for the use of man. You are merciful to beasts, believing them to contain the souls of human beings, while you refuse a piece of bread to a

hungry beggar. The Lord Jesus, on the other hand, was cruel to the swine when He granted the request of the devils to be allowed to enter into them. The same Lord Jesus, before the sacrifice of His passion, said to a leper whom He had cured, “Go, show thyself to the priest, and give the offering, as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.” When God, by the prophets, repeatedly declares that He needs no offering, as indeed reason teaches us that offerings cannot be needed by Him who stands in need of nothing, the human mind is led to inquire what God wished to teach us by these sacrifices. For, assuredly, He would not have required offerings of which He had no need, except to teach us something that it would profit us to know, and which was suitably set forth by means of these symbols. How much better and more honorable it would be for you to be still bound by these sacrifices, which have an instructive meaning, though they are not now necessary, than to require your followers to offer to you as food what you believe to be living victims. The Apostle Paul says most appropriately of some who preached the gospel to gratify their appetite, that their “god was their belly.” But the arrogance of your impiety goes much beyond this; for, instead of making your belly your god, you do what is far worse in making your belly the purifier of God. Surely it is great madness to make a pretence of piety in not slaughtering animals, while you hold that the souls of animals inhabit all the food you eat, and yet make what you call living creatures suffer such torture from your hands and teeth.

6. If you will not eat flesh why should you not slay animals in sacrifice to your God, in order that their souls, which you hold to be not only human, but so divine as to be members of God Himself, may be released from the confinement of flesh, and be saved from returning by the efficacy of your prayers? Perhaps, however, your stomach gives more effectual aid than your intellect, and that part of divinity which has had the advantage of passing through your bowels is more likely to be saved than that which has only the benefit of your prayers. Your objection to eating flesh will be that you cannot eat animals alive, and so the operation of your stomach will not avail for the liberation of their souls. Happy vegetables, that, torn up with the hand, cut with knives, tortured in fire, ground by teeth, yet reach alive the altars of your intestines! Unhappy sheep and oxen, that are not so tenacious of life, and therefore are refused entrance into your bodies! Such

is the absurdity of your notions. And you persist in making out an opposition in us to the Old Testament, because we consider no flesh unclean: according to the opinion of the apostle, “To the pure all things are pure;” and according to the saying of our Lord Himself, “Not that which goeth into your mouth defileth you, but that which cometh out.” This was not said to the crowd only, as your Adimantus, whom Faustus, in his attack on the Old Testament, praises as second only to Manichaeus, wishes us to understand; but when retired from the crowd, the Lord repeated this still more plainly and pointedly to His disciples. Adimantus quotes this saying of our Lord in opposition to the Old Testament, where the people are prohibited from eating some animals which are pronounced unclean; and doubtless he was afraid that he should be asked why, since he quotes a passage from the Gospel about man not being defiled by what enters into his mouth and passes into his belly, and out into the draft, he yet considers not some only, but all flesh unclean, and abstains from eating it. It is in order to escape from this strait, when the plain truth is too much for his error, that he makes the Lord say this to the crowd; as if the Lord were in the habit of speaking the truth only in small companies, while He blurted out falsehoods in public. To speak of the Lord in this way is blasphemy. And all who read the passage can see that the Lord said the same thing more plainly to His disciples in private. Since Faustus praises Adimantus so much at the beginning of this book of his, placing him next to Manichaeus, let him say in a word whether it is true or false that a man is not defiled by what enters into his mouth. If it is false, why does this great teacher Adimantus quote it against the Old Testament? If it is true, why, in spite of this, do you believe that eating any flesh will defile you? It is true, if you choose this explanation, that the apostle does not say that all things are pure to heretics, but, “to the pure all things are pure.” The apostle also goes on to explain why all things are not pure to heretics: “To the impure and unbelieving nothing is pure, but both their mind and conscience are defiled.” So to the Manichaeans there is absolutely nothing pure; for they hold that the very substance or nature of God not only may be, but has actually been defiled, and so defiled that it can never be wholly restored and purified. What do they mean when they call animals unclean, and refrain from eating them, when it is impossible for them to think anything, whether food or whatever it may be, clean? According to them, vegetables too, fruits, all kinds of crops, the earth and sky, are defiled by mixture with the race of darkness. Why do they not act up to their opinions about other things as well as about animals? Why do they not abstain altogether, and starve themselves to death, instead of persisting in their blasphemies? If they will not repent and reform, this is evidently the best thing that they could do.

7. The saying of the apostle, that “to the pure all things are pure,” and that “every creature of God is good,” is not opposed to the prohibitions of the Old Testament; and the explanation, if they can understand it, is this. The apostle speaks of the natures of the things, while the Old Testament calls some animals unclean, not in their nature, but symbolically, on account of the prefigurative character of that dispensation. For instance, a pig and a lamb are both clean in their nature, for every creature of God is good; but symbolically, a lamb is clean, and a pig unclean. So the words wise and fool are both clean in their nature, as words composed of letters but fool may be called symbolically unclean, because it means an unclean thing. Perhaps a pig is the same among symbols as a fool is among real things. The animal, and the four letters which compose the word, may mean the same thing. No doubt the animal is pronounced unclean by the law, because it does not chew the cud; which is not a fault but its nature. But the men of whom this animal is a symbol are unclean, not by nature, but from their own fault; because, though they gladly hear the words of wisdom, they never reflect on them afterwards. For to recall, in quiet repose, some useful instruction from the stomach of memory to the mouth of reflection, is a kind of spiritual rumination. The animals above mentioned are a symbol of those people who do not do this. And the prohibition of the flesh of these animals is a warning against this fault. Another passage of Scripture speaks of the precious treasure of wisdom, and describes ruminating as clean, and not ruminating as unclean: “A precious treasure resteth in the mouth of a wise man; but a foolish man swallows it up.” Symbols of this kind, either in words or in things, give useful and pleasant exercise to intelligent minds in the way of inquiry and comparison. But formerly people were required not only to hear, but to practise many such things. For at that time it was necessary that, by deeds as well as by words, those things should be foreshadowed which were in after times to be revealed. After the revelation

by Christ and in Christ, the community of believers is not burdened with the practice of the observances, but is admonished to give heed to the prophecy. This is our reason for accounting no animals unclean, in accordance with the saying of the Lord and of the apostle, while we are not opposed to the Old Testament, where some animals are pronounced unclean. Now let us hear why you consider all animal food unclean.

8. One of your false doctrines is, that flesh is unclean on account of mixture with the race of darkness. But this would make not only flesh unclean, but your God himself, in that part which he sent to become subject to absorption and contamination, in order that the enemy might be conquered and taken captive. Besides, on account of this mixture, all that you eat must be unclean. But you say flesh is especially unclean. It requires patience to listen to all their absurd reasons for this peculiar impurity of flesh. I will mention only what will suffice to show the inveterate folly of these critics of the Old Testament, who, while they denounce flesh, savor only fleshly things, and have no sort of spiritual perception. And a lengthy discussion of this question may perhaps enable us to dispense with saying much on some other points. The following, then, is an account of their vain delusions in this matter:—In that battle, when the First Man ensnared the race of darkness by deceitful elements, princes of both sexes belonging to this race were taken. By means of these princes the world was constructed; and among those used in the formation of the heavenly bodies, were some pregnant females. When the sky began to rotate, the rapid circular motion made these females give birth to abortions, which, being of both sexes, fell on the earth, and lived, and grew, and came together, and produced offspring. Hence sprang all animal life in earth, air, and sea. Now if the origin of flesh is from heaven, that is no reason for thinking it especially unclean. Indeed, in this construction of the world, they hold that these principles of darkness were arranged higher or lower, according to the greater or less amount of good mixed with them in the construction of the various parts of the world. So flesh ought to be cleaner than vegetables which come out of the earth, for it comes from heaven. And how irrational to suppose that the abortions, before becoming animate, were so lively, though in an abortive state, that after falling from the sky, they could live and multiply; whereas, after becoming animate, they die if brought forth

prematurely, and a fall from a very moderate height is enough to kill them! The kingdom of life in contest with the kingdom of death ought to have improved them, by giving them life instead of making them more perishable than before. If the perishableness is a consequence of a change of nature, it is wrong to say that there is a bad nature. The change is the only cause of the perishableness. Both natures are good, though one is better than the other. Whence then comes the peculiar impurity of flesh as it exists in this world, sprung, as they say, from heaven? They tell us, indeed, of the first bodies of these principles of darkness being generated like worms from trees of darkness; and the trees, they say, are produced from the five elements. But supposing that the bodies of animals come in the first place from trees, and afterwards from heaven, why should they be more unclean than the fruit of trees? Perhaps it will be said that what remains after death is unclean, because the life is no longer there. For the same reason fruits and vegetables must be unclean, for they die when they are pulled or cut. As we saw before, the elect get others to bring their food to them, that they may not be guilty of murder. Perhaps, since they say that every living being has two souls, one of the race of light, and the other of the race of darkness, the good soul leaves at death, and the bad soul remains. But, in that case, the animal would be as much alive as it was in the kingdom of darkness, when it had only the soul of its own race, with which it had rebelled against the kingdom of God. So, since both souls leave at death, why call the flesh unclean, as if only the good soul had left? Any life that remains must be of both kinds; for some remains of the members of God are found, we are told, even in filth. There is therefore no reason for making flesh more unclean than fruits. The truth is, they pretend to great chastity in holding flesh unclean because it is generated. But if the divine body is more grossly shut in by flesh, there is all the more reason that they should liberate it by eating. And there are innumerable kinds of worms not produced from sexual intercourse; some in the neighborhood of Venice come from trees, which they should eat, since there is not the same reason for their being unclean. Besides, there are the frogs produced by the earth after a shower of rain. Let them liberate the members of their God from these. Let them rebuke the mistake of mankind in preferring fowls and pigeons produced from males and females to the pure frogs, daughters of heaven and earth. By this theory, the first principles of darkness produced from trees must be purer than

Manichaeus, who was produced by generation; and his followers, for the same reason, must be less pure than the lice which spring from the perspiration of their bodies. But if everything that comes from flesh is unclean, because the origin of flesh itself is unclean, fruits and vegetables must also be unclean, because they are manured with dung. After this, what becomes of the notion that fruits are cleaner than flesh? Dung is the most unclean product of flesh, and also the most fertilizing manure. Their doctrine is, that the life escapes in the mastication and digestion of the food, so that only a particle remains in the excrement. How is it, then, that this particle of life has such an effect on the growth and the quality of your favorite food? Flesh is nourished by the productions of the earth, not by its excrements; while the earth is nourished by the excrements of flesh, not by its productions. Let them say which is the cleaner. Or let them turn from being unbelieving and impure to whom nothing is clean, and join with us in embracing the doctrine of the apostle, that to the pure all things are pure; that the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof; that every creature of God is good. All things in nature are good in their own order; and no one sins in using them, unless, by disobedience to God, he transgresses his own order, and disturbs their order by using them amiss.

9. The elders who pleased God kept their own order by their obedience, in observing, according to God’s arrangement, what was appointed as suitable to certain times. So, although all animals intended for food are by nature clean, they abstained from some which had then a symbolical uncleanness, in preparation for the future revelation of the things signified. And so with regard to unleavened bread and all such things, in which the apostle says there was a shadow of future things, neglect of their observance under the old dispensation, when this observance was enjoined, and was employed to prefigure what was afterwards to be revealed, would have been as criminal, as it would now be foolish in us, after the light of the New Testament has arisen, to think that these predictive observances could be of any use to us. On the other hand, since the Old Testament teaches us that the things now revealed were so long ago prefigured, that we may be firm and faithful in our adherence to them, it would be blasphemy and impiety to discard these books, simply because the Lord requires of us now not a literal, but a spiritual and intelligent regard to their contents. They were written, as the

apostle says, for our admonition, on whom the end of the world is come. “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.” Not to eat unleavened bread in the appointed seven days was a sin in the time of the Old Testament; in the time of the New Testament it is not a sin. But having the hope of a future world through Christ, who makes us altogether new by clothing our souls with righteousness and our bodies with immortality, to believe that the bondage and infirmity of our original corruption will prevail over us or over our actions, must continue to be a sin, till the seven days of the course of time are accomplished. In the time of the Old Testament, this, under the disguise of a type, was perceived by some saints. In the time of the New Testament it is fully declared and publicly preached.

What was then a precept of Scripture is now a testimony. Formerly, not to keep the feast of tabernacles was a sin, which is not the case now. But not to form part of the building of God’s tabernacle, which is the Church, is always a sin. Formerly this was acted in a figure; now the record serves as testimony. The ancient tabernacle, indeed, would not have been called the tabernacle of the testimony, unless as an appropriate symbol it had borne testimony to some truth which was to be revealed in its own time. To patch linen garments with purple, or to wear a garment of woollen and linen together, is not a sin now. But to live intemperately, and to wish to combine opposite modes of life,—as when a woman devoted to religion wears the ornaments of married women, or when one who has not abstained from marriage dresses like a virgin,—is always sin. So it is sin whenever inconsistent things are combined in any man’s life. This, which is now a moral truth, was then symbolized in dress. What was then a type is now revealed truth. So the same Scripture which then required symbolical actions, now testifies to the things signified. The prefigurative observance is now a record for the confirmation of our faith. Formerly it was unlawful to plough with an ox and an ass together; now it is lawful. The apostle explains this when he quotes the text about not muzzling the ox that is treading out the corn. He says, “Does God care for oxen?” What, then, have we to do with an obsolete prohibition? The apostle teaches us in the following words, “For our sakes it is written.” It must be impiety in us not to read what was written for our sakes; for it is more for our sakes, to whom the revelation belongs, than for theirs who had only the figure. There is no harm in joining an ox with an ass where it is required. But to put a wise man and a fool together, not that one should teach and the other obey, but that both with equal authority should declare the word of God, cannot be done without causing offence. So the same Scripture which was once a command enjoining the shadow in which future things were veiled, is now an authoritative witness to the unveiled truth.

In what he says of the uncleanness of a man that is bald or has red hair, Faustus is inaccurate, or the manuscript he has used is incorrect. Would that Faustus were not ashamed to bear on his forehead the cross of Christ, the want of which is baldness, instead of maintaining that Christ, who says, "I am the truth," showed unreal marks, after His resurrection, of unreal wounds! Faustus says he has not learned the art of deceiving, and speaks what he thinks. He cannot therefore be a disciple of his Christ, whom he madly declares to have shown false marks of wounds to his disciples when they doubted. Are we to believe Faustus, not only in his other absurdities, but also when he tells us that he does not deceive us in calling Christ a deceiver? Is he better than Christ? Is he not a deceiver, while Christ is? Or does he prove himself to be a disciple not of the truthful Christ, but of the deceiver Manichaeus, by this very falsehood, when he boasts that he has not learned the art of deceiving?

BOOK VII

The genealogical question is again taken up and argued on both sides.

1. Faustus said: You ask why I do not believe in the genealogy of Jesus. There are many reasons; but the principal is, that He never declares with His own lips that He had an earthly father or descent, but on the contrary, that he is not of this world, that He came forth from God the Father, that He descended from heaven, that He has no mother or brethren except those who do the will of His Father in heaven. Besides, the framers of these genealogies do not seem to have known Jesus before His birth or soon after it, so as to have the credibility of eye-witnesses of what they narrate. They became acquainted with Jesus as a young man of about thirty years of age, if it is not blasphemy to speak of the age of a divine being. Now the

question regarding a witness is always whether he has seen or heard what he testifies to. But the writers of these genealogies never assert that they heard the account from Jesus Himself, nor even the fact of His birth; nor did they see Him till they came to know Him after his baptism, many years after the time of His birth. To me, therefore, and to every sensible man, it appears as foolish to believe this account, as it would be to call into court a blind and deaf witness.

2. Augustin replied: As regards what Faustus calls his principal reason for not receiving the genealogy of Jesus Christ, a complete refutation is found in the passages formerly quoted, where Christ declares Himself to be the Son of man, and in what we have said of the identity of the Son of man with the Son of God: that in His Godhead He has no earthly descent, while after the flesh He is of the seed of David, as the apostle teaches. We are to believe, therefore, that He came forth from the Father, that He descended from heaven, and also that the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst men. If the words, “Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?” are quoted to show that Christ had no earthly mother or descent, it follows that we must believe that His disciples, whom He here teaches by His own example to set no value on earthly relationship, as compared with the kingdom of heaven, had no fathers, because Christ says to them, “Call no man father upon earth; for one is your Father, even God.” What He taught them to do with reference to their fathers, He Himself first did in reference to His own mother and brethren; as in many other things He condescended to set us an example, and to go before that we might follow in His footsteps. Faustus’ principal objection to the genealogy fails completely; and after the defeat of this invincible force, the rest is easily routed. He says that the apostles who declared Christ to be the Son of man as well as the Son of God are not to be believed, because they were not present at the birth of Christ, whom they joined when He had reached manhood, nor heard of it from Christ Himself. Why then do they believe John when he says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made,” and such passages, which they agree to, without understanding them? Where did John see this, or did he ever hear it from the Lord Himself? In whatever way John learned this,

those who narrate the nativity may have learned also. Again, how do they know that the Lord said, “Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?” If on the authority of the evangelist, why do they not also believe that the mother and the brethren of Christ were seeking for Him? They believe that Christ said these words, which they misunderstand, while they deny a fact resting on the same authority. Once more, if Matthew could not know that Christ was born, because he knew Him only in His manhood, how could Manichaeus, who lived so long after, know that He was not born? They will say that Manichaeus knew this from the Holy Spirit which was in him. Certainly the Holy Spirit would make him speak the truth. But why not rather believe what Christ’s own disciples tell us, who were personally acquainted with Him, and who not only had the gift of inspiration to supply defects in their knowledge, but in a purely natural way obtained information of the birth of Christ, and of His descent, when the event was fresh in memory? And yet he dares to call the apostles deaf and blind. Why were you not deaf and blind, to prevent you from learning such profane nonsense, and dumb too, to prevent you from uttering it?

BOOK VIII

Faustus maintains that to hold to the Old Testament after the giving of the New is putting new cloth on an old garment. Augustin further explains the relation of the Old Testament to the New, and reproaches the Manichaeans with carnality.

1. Faustus said: Another reason for not receiving the Old Testament is, that I am provided with the New; and Scripture says that old and new do not agree. For “no one putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, otherwise the rent is made worse.” To avoid making a worse rent, as you have done, I do not mix Christian newness with Hebrew oldness. Every one accounts it mean, when a man has got a new dress, not to give the old one to his inferiors. So, even if I were a Jew by birth, as the apostles were, it would be proper for me, on receiving the New Testament, to discard the Old, as the apostles did. And having the advantage of being born free from the yoke of bondage, and being early introduced into the full liberty of Christ, what a foolish and ungrateful wretch I should be to put myself again under the yoke! This is what Paul blames the Galatians for; because, going

back to circumcision, they turned again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto they desired again to be in bondage. Why should I do what I see another blamed for doing? My going into bondage would be worse than their returning to it.

2. Augustin replied: We have already shown sufficiently why and how we maintain the authority of the Old Testament, not for the imitation of Jewish bondage, but for the confirmation of Christian liberty. It is not I, but the apostle, who says, “All these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.” We do not therefore, as bondmen, observe what was enjoined as predictive of us; but as free, we read what was written to confirm us. So any one may see that the apostle remonstrates with the Galatians not for devoutly reading what Scripture says of circumcision, but for superstitiously desiring to be circumcised. We do not put a new cloth to an old garment, but we are instructed in the kingdom of heaven, like the householder, whom the Lord describes as bringing out of his treasure things new and old. He who puts a new cloth to an old garment is the man who attempts spiritual self-denial before he has renounced fleshly hope. Examine the passage, and you will see that, when the Lord was asked about fasting, He replied, “No man putteth a new cloth to an old garment.” The disciples had still a carnal affection for the Lord; for they were afraid that, if He died, they would lose Him. So He calls Peter Satan for dissuading Him from suffering, because he understood not the things of God, but the things of men. The fleshly character of your hope is evident from your fancies about the kingdom of God, and from your paying homage and devotion to the light of the sun, which the carnal eye perceives, as if it were an image of heaven. So your carnal mind is the old garment to which you join your fasts. Moreover, if a new cloth and an old garment do not agree, how do the members of your God come to be not only joined or fastened, but to be united far more intimately by mixture and coherence to the principles of darkness? Perhaps both are old, because both are false, and both of the carnal mind. Or perhaps you wish to prove that one was new and the other old, by the rent being made worse, in tearing away the unhappy piece of the kingdom of light, to be doomed to eternal imprisonment in the mass of darkness. So this pretended artist in the fashions of the sacred Scriptures is

found stitching together absurdities, and dressing himself in the rags of his own invention.

BOOK IX

Faustus argues that if the apostles born under the old covenant could lawfully depart from it, much more can he having been born a Gentile. Augustin explains the relation of Jews and Gentiles alike to the Gospel.

1. Faustus said: Another reason for not receiving the Old Testament is, that if it was allowable for the apostles, who were born under it, to abandon it, much more may I, who was not born under it, be excused for not thrusting myself into it. We Gentiles are not born Jews, nor Christians either. Out of the same Gentile world some are induced by the Old Testament to become Jews, and some by the New Testament to become Christians. It is as if two trees, a sweet and a bitter, drew from one soil the sap which each assimilates to its own nature. The apostle passed from the bitter to the sweet; it would be madness in me to change from the sweet to the bitter.

2. Augustin replied: You say that the apostle, in leaving Judaism, passed from the bitter to the sweet. But the apostle himself says that the Jews, who would not believe in Christ, were branches broken off, and that the Gentiles, a wild olive tree, were grafted into the good olive, that is, the holy stock of the Hebrews, that they might partake of the fatness of the olive. For, in warning the Gentiles not to be proud on account of the fall of the Jews, he says: “For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles. I magnify my office; if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches are broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches: but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear; for if

God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery (lest ye should be wise in your own conceits), that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved." It appears from this, that you, who do not wish to be graffed into this root, though you are not broken off, like the carnal unbelieving Jews, remain still in the bitterness of the wild olive. Your worship of the sun and moon has the true Gentile flavor. You are none the less in the wild olive of the Gentiles, because you have added thorns of a new kind, and worship along with the sun and moon a false Christ, the fabrication not of your hands, but of your perverse heart. Come, then, and be grafted into the root of the olive tree, in his return to which the apostle rejoices, after by unbelief he had been among the broken branches. He speaks of himself as set free, when he made the happy transition from Judaism to Christianity. For Christ was always preached in the olive tree, and those who did not believe on Him when He came were broken off, while those who believed were grafted in. These are thus warned against pride: "Be not high-minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will He spare thee." And to prevent despair of those broken off, he adds: "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree." The apostle rejoices in being delivered from the condition of a broken branch, and in being restored to the fatness of the olive tree. So you who have been broken off by error should return and be grafted in again. Those who are still in the wild olive should separate themselves from its barrenness, and become partakers of fertility.

BOOK X

Faustus insists that the Old Testament promises are radically different from those of the New. Augustin admits a difference, but maintains that the moral precepts are the same in both.

1. Faustus said: Another reason for not receiving the Old Testament is, that both the Old and the New teach us not to covet what belongs to others. Everything in the Old Testament is of this kind. It promises riches, and plenty, and children, and children's children, and long life, and withal the land of Canaan; but only to the circumcised, the Sabbath observers, those offering sacrifices, and abstaining from swine's flesh. Now I, like every other Christian, pay no attention to these things, as being trifling and useless for the salvation of the soul. I conclude, therefore, that the promises do not belong to me. And mindful of the commandment, Thou shall not covet, I gladly leave to the Jews their own property, and content myself with the gospel, and with the bright inheritance of the kingdom of heaven. If a Jew were to claim part in the gospel, I should justly reproach him with claiming what he had no right to, because he does not obey its precepts. And a Jew might say the same to me if I professed to receive the Old Testament while I disregard its requirements.

2. Augustin replied: Faustus is not ashamed to repeat the same nonsense again and again. But it is tiresome to repeat the same answers, though it is to repeat truth. What Faustus says here has already been answered. But if a Jew asks me why I profess to believe the Old Testament while I do not observe its precepts, my reply is this: The moral precepts of the law are observed by Christians; the symbolical precepts were properly observed during the time that the things now revealed were prefigured. Accordingly, those observances, which I regard as no longer binding, I still look upon as a testimony, as I do also the carnal promises from which the Old Testament derives its name. For although the gospel teaches me to hope for eternal blessings, I also find a confirmation of the gospel in those things which "happened to them for an example, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come." So much for our answer to the Jews. And now we have something to say to the Manichaeans.

3. By showing the way in which we regard the authority of the Old Testament we have answered the Jews, by whose question about our not observing the precepts Faustus thought we would be puzzled. But what answer can you give to the question, why you deceive simple-minded people by professing to believe in the New Testament, while you not only do not believe it, but assail it with all your force? It will be more difficult for you to answer this than it was for us to answer the Jews. We hold all that is written in the Old Testament to be true, and enjoined by God for suitable times. But in your inability to find a reason for not receiving what is written in the New Testament, you are obliged, as a last resource, to pretend that the passages are not genuine. This is the last gasp of a heretic in the clutches of truth; or rather it is the breath of corruption itself. Faustus, however, confesses that the Old Testament as well as the New teaches him not to covet. His own God could never have taught him this. For if this God did not covet what belonged to another, why did he construct new worlds in the region of darkness? Perhaps the race of darkness first coveted his kingdom. But this would be to imitate their bad example. Perhaps the kingdom of light was previously of small extent, and war was desirable in order to enlarge it by conquest. In that case, no doubt, there was covetousness, though the hostile race was allowed to begin the wars to justify the conquest. If there had been no such desire, there was no necessity to extend the kingdom beyond its old limits into the region of the conquered foe. If the Manichaeans would only learn from these Scriptures the moral precepts, one of which is, Do not covet, instead of taking offence at the symbolical precept, they would acknowledge in meekness and candor that they suited the time then present. We do not covet what belongs to another, when we read in the Old Testament what "happened to them for examples, and was written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come." It is surely not coveting when a man reads what is written for his benefit.

BOOK XI

Faustus quotes passages to show that the Apostle Paul abandoned belief in the incarnation, to which he earlier held. Augustin shows that the apostle was consistent with himself in the utterances quoted.

1. Faustus said: Assuredly I believe the apostle. And yet I do not believe that the Son of God was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, because I do not believe that God’s apostle could contradict himself, and have one opinion about our Lord at one time, and another at another. But, granting that he wrote this,—since you will not hear of anything being spurious in his writings,—it is not against us. For this seems to be Paul’s old belief about Jesus, when he thought, like everybody else, that Jesus was the son of David. Afterwards, when he learned that this was false, he corrects himself; and in his Epistle to the Corinthians he says: “We know no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more.” Observe the difference between these two verses. In one he asserts that Jesus was the son of David after the flesh; in the other he says that now he knows no man after the flesh. If Paul wrote both, it can only have been in the way I have stated. In the next verse he adds: “Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” The belief that Jesus was born of the seed of David according to the flesh is of this old transitory kind; whereas the faith which knows no man after the flesh is new and permanent. So, he says elsewhere: “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.” We are thus warranted in preferring the new and amended confession of Paul to his old and faulty one. And if you hold by what is said in the Epistle to the Romans, why should not we hold by what is said to the Corinthians? But it is only by your insisting on the correctness of the text that we are made to represent Paul as building again the things which he destroyed, in spite of his own repudiation of such prevarication. If the verse is Paul’s, he has corrected himself. If Paul should not be supposed to have written anything requiring correction, the verse is not his.

2. Augustin replied: As I said a little ago, when these men are beset by clear testimonies of Scripture, and cannot escape from their grasp, they declare that the passage is spurious. The declaration only shows their aversion to the truth, and their obstinacy in error. Unable to answer these statements of Scripture, they deny their genuineness. But if this answer is admitted, or allowed to have any weight, it will be useless to quote any book or any

passage against your errors. It is one thing to reject the books themselves, and to profess no regard for their authority, as the Pagans reject our Scriptures, and the Jews the New Testament, and as we reject any books peculiar to your sect, or any other heretical sect, and also the apocryphal books, which are so called, not because of any mysterious regard paid to them, but because they are mysterious in their origin, and in the absence of clear evidence, have only some obscure presumption to rest upon; and it is another thing to say, This holy man wrote only the truth, and this is his epistle, but some verses are his, and some are not. And then, when you are asked for a proof, instead of referring to more correct or more ancient manuscripts, or to a greater number, or to the original text, your reply is, This verse is his, because it makes for me; and this is not his, because it is against me. Are you, then, the rule of truth? Can nothing be true that is against you? But what answer could you give to an opponent as insane as yourself, if he confronts you by saying, The passage in your favor is spurious, and that against you is genuine? Perhaps you will produce a book, all of which can be explained so as to support you. Then, instead of rejecting a passage, he will reply by condemning the whole book as spurious. You have no resource against such an opponent. For all the testimony you can bring in favor of your book from antiquity or tradition will avail nothing. In this respect the testimony of the Catholic Church is conspicuous, as supported by a succession of bishops from the original seats of the apostles up to the present time, and by the consent of so many nations. Accordingly, should there be a question about the text of some passage, as there are a few passages with various readings well known to students of the sacred Scriptures, we should first consult the manuscripts of the country where the religion was first taught; and if these still varied, we should take the text of the greater number, or of the more ancient. And if any uncertainty remained, we should consult the original text. This is the method employed by those who, in any question about the Scriptures, do not lose sight of the regard due to their authority, and inquire with the view of gaining information, not of raising disputes.

3. As regards the passage from Paul’s epistle which teaches, in opposition to your heresy, that the Son of God was born of the seed of David, it is found in all manuscripts both new and old of all Churches, and in all

languages. So the profession which Faustus makes of believing the apostle is hypocritical. Instead of saying, “Assuredly I believe,” he should have said, Assuredly I do not believe, as he would have said if he had not wished to deceive people. What part of his belief does he get from the apostle? Not the first man, of whom the apostle says that he is of the earth, earthy; and again, “The first man Adam was made a living soul.” Faustus’ First Man is neither of the earth, earthy, nor made a living soul, but of the substance of God, and the same in essence as God; and this being is said to have mixed up with the race of darkness his members, or vesture, or weapons, that is, the five elements, which also are part of the substance of God, so that they became subject to confinement and pollution. Nor does Faustus get from Paul his Second Man, of whom Paul says that He is from heaven, and that He is the last Adam, and a quickening spirit; and also that He was born of the seed of David after the flesh, that He was made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law. Of Him Paul says to Timothy: “Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel.” And this resurrection he quotes as an example of our resurrection: “I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.” And a little further on he draws an inference from this doctrine: “Now, if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?” Our professed believer in Paul believes nothing of all this. He denies that Jesus was born of the seed of David, that He was made of a woman (by the word woman is not meant a wife in the common sense of the word, but merely one of the female sex, as in the book of Genesis, where it is said that God made a woman before she was brought to Adam); he denies His death, His burial, and His resurrection. He holds that Christ had not a mortal body, and therefore could not really die; and that the marks of His wounds which He showed to His disciples when He appeared to them alive after His resurrection, which Paul also mentions, were not real. He denies, too, that our mortal body will be raised again, changed into a spiritual body; as Paul teaches: “It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.” To illustrate this distinction between the natural and the spiritual body, the apostle adds what I have quoted already about the first and the last Adam. Then he goes on: “But this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” And to explain what he means by flesh and blood, that it is not the bodily substance, but corruption, which will not enter into the resurrection of the just, he immediately says, “Neither shall corruption inherit incorruption.” And in case any one should still suppose that it is not what is buried that is to rise again, but that it is as if one garment were laid aside and a better taken instead, he proceeds to show distinctly that the same body will be changed for the better, as the garments of Christ on the mount were not displaced, but transfigured: “Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all be changed, but we shall all rise.” Then he shows who are to be changed: “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” And if it should be said that it is not as regards our mortal and corruptible body, but as regards our soul, that we are to be changed, it should be observed that the apostle is not speaking of the soul, but of the body, as is evident from the question he starts with: “But some one will say, How are the dead raised, and with what body do they come?” So also, in the conclusion of his argument, he leaves no doubt of what he is speaking: “This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” Faustus denies this; and the God whom Paul declares to be “immortal, incorruptible, to whom alone is glory and honor,” he makes corruptible. For in this monstrous and horrible fiction of theirs, the substance and nature of God was in danger of being wholly corrupted by the race of darkness, and to save the rest part actually was corrupted. And to crown all this, he tries to deceive the ignorant who are not learned in the sacred Scriptures, by making this profession: I assuredly believe the Apostle Paul; when he ought to have said, I assuredly do not believe.

4. But Faustus has a proof to show that Paul changed his mind, and, in writing to the Corinthians, corrected what he had written to the Romans; or else that he never wrote the passage which appears as his, about Jesus Christ being born of the seed of David according to the flesh. And what is this proof? If the passage, he says, in the Epistle to the Romans is true, “the Son of God, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh,” what he says to the Corinthians cannot be true, “Henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet

now henceforth know we Him no more.” We must therefore show that both these passages are true, and not opposed to one another. The agreement of the manuscripts proves both to be genuine. In some Latin versions the word “born” is used instead of “made,” which is not so literal a rendering, but gives the same meaning. For both these translations, as well as the original, teach that Christ was of the seed of David after the flesh. We must not for a moment suppose that Paul corrected himself on account of a change of opinion. Faustus himself felt the impropriety and impiety of such an explanation, and preferred to say that the passage was spurious, instead of that Paul was mistaken.

5. As regards our writings, which are not a rule of faith or practice, but only a help to edification, we may suppose that they contain some things falling short of the truth in obscure and recondite matters, and that these mistakes may or may not be corrected in subsequent treatises. For we are of those of whom the apostle says: “And if ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.” Such writings are read with the right of judgment, and without any obligation to believe. In order to leave room for such profitable discussions of difficult questions, there is a distinct boundary line separating all productions subsequent to apostolic times from the authoritative canonical books of the Old and New Testaments. The authority of these books has come down to us from the apostles through the successions of bishops and the extension of the Church, and, from a position of lofty supremacy, claims the submission of every faithful and pious mind. If we are perplexed by an apparent contradiction in Scripture, it is not allowable to say, The author of this book is mistaken; but either the manuscript is faulty, or the translation is wrong, or you have not understood. In the innumerable books that have been written latterly we may sometimes find the same truth as in Scripture, but there is not the same authority. Scripture has a sacredness peculiar to itself. In other books the reader may form his own opinion, and perhaps, from not understanding the writer, may differ from him, and may pronounce in favor of what pleases him, or against what he dislikes. In such cases, a man is at liberty to withhold his belief, unless there is some clear demonstration or some canonical authority to show that the doctrine or statement either must or may be true. But in consequence of the distinctive peculiarity of the sacred

writings, we are bound to receive as true whatever the canon shows to have been said by even one prophet, or apostle, or evangelist. Otherwise, not a single page will be left for the guidance of human fallibility, if contempt for the wholesome authority of the canonical books either puts an end to that authority altogether, or involves it in hopeless confusion.

6. With regard, then, to this apparent contradiction between the passage which speaks of the Son of God being of the seed of David, to the words, “Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more,” even though both quotations were not from the writings of one apostle,—though one were from Paul, and the other from Peter, or Isaiah, or any other apostle or prophet,—such is the equality of canonical authority, that it would not be allowable to doubt of either. For the utterances of Scripture, harmonious as if from the mouth of one man, commend themselves to the belief of the most accurate and clear-sighted piety, and demand for their discovery and confirmation the calmest intelligence and the most ingenious research. In the case before us both quotations are from the canonical, that is, the genuine epistles of Paul. We cannot say that the manuscript is faulty, for the best Latin translations substantially agree; or that the translations are wrong, for the best texts have the same reading. So that, if any one is perplexed by the apparent contradiction, the only conclusion is that he does not understand. Accordingly it remains for me to explain how both passages, instead of being contradictory, may be harmonized by one rule of sound faith. The pious inquirer will find all perplexity removed by a careful examination.

7. That the Son of God was made man of the seed of David, is not only said in other places by Paul, but is taught elsewhere in sacred Scripture. As regards the words, “Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more,” the context shows what is the apostle’s meaning. Here, or elsewhere, he views with an assured hope, as if it were already present and in actual possession, our future life, which is now fulfilled in our risen Head and Mediator, the man Christ Jesus. This life will certainly not be after the flesh, even as Christ’s life is now not after the flesh. For by flesh the apostle here means not the substance of our bodies, in which sense the Lord used the word when, after His resurrection, He

said, “Handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have,” but the corruption and mortality of flesh, which will then not be in us, as now it is not in Christ. The apostle uses the word flesh in the sense of corruption in the passage about the resurrection quoted before: “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither shall corruption inherit incorruption.” So, after the event described in the next verse, “Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall all rise, but we shall not all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump (for the trumpet shall sound); and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality,”—then flesh, in the sense of the substance of the body, will, after this change, no longer have flesh, in the sense of the corruption of mortality; and yet, as regards its own nature, it will be the same flesh, the same which rises and which is changed. What the Lord said after His resurrection is true, “Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have;” and what the apostle says is true, “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” The first is said of the bodily substance, which exists as the subject of the change: the second is said of the corruption of the flesh, which will cease to exist, for, after its change, flesh will not be corrupted. So, “we have known Christ after the flesh,” that is, after the mortality of flesh, before His resurrection; “now henceforth we know Him no more,” because, as the same apostle says, “Christ being risen from the dead, dieth no more, and death hath no more dominion over Him.” The words, “we have known Christ after the flesh,” strictly speaking, imply that Christ was after the flesh, for what never was cannot be known. And it is not “we have supposed,” but “we have known.” But not to insist on a word, in case some one should say that known is used in the sense of supposed, it is astonishing, if one could be surprised at want of sight in a blind man, that these blind people do not perceive that if what the apostle says about not knowing Christ after the flesh proves that Christ had not flesh, then what he says in the same place of not knowing any one henceforth after the flesh proves that all those here referred to had not flesh. For when he speaks of not knowing any one, he cannot intend to speak only of Christ; but in his realization of the future life with those who are to be changed at the resurrection, he says, “Henceforth we know no man after the flesh;” that is, we have such an assured hope of our future incorruption and immortality, that the thought of it makes us rejoice even now. So he says elsewhere: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections upon things above, and not on things on the earth.” It is true we have not yet risen as Christ has, but we are said to have risen with Him on account of the hope which we have in Him. So again he says: “According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration.” Evidently what we obtain in the washing of regeneration is not the salvation itself, but the hope of it. And yet, because this hope is certain, we are said to be saved, as if the salvation were already bestowed. Elsewhere it is said explicitly: “We groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, even the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope. But hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for what we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” The apostle says not, “we are to be saved,” but, “We are now saved,” that is, in hope, though not yet in reality. And in the same way it is in hope, though not yet in reality, that we now know no man after the flesh. This hope is in Christ, in whom what we hope for as promised to us has already been fulfilled. He is risen, and death has no more dominion over Him. Though we have known Him after the flesh, before His death, when there was in His body that mortality which the apostle properly calls flesh, now henceforth know we Him no more; for that mortal of His has now put on immortality, and His flesh, in the sense of mortality, no longer exists.

8. The context of the passage containing this clause of which our adversaries make such a bad use, brings out its real meaning. “The love of Christ,” we read, “constrains us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but to Him who died for them, and rose again. Therefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; and though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more.” The words, “that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again,” show plainly that the resurrection of Christ is the ground of the apostle’s statement. To live not to themselves, but to Him, must mean to live not after the flesh, in the hope of earthly and perishable goods, but after the spirit, in the hope of

resurrection,—a resurrection already accomplished in Christ. Of those, then, for whom Christ died and rose again, and who live henceforth not to themselves, but to Him, the Apostle says that he knows no one after the flesh, on account of the hope of future immortality to which they were looking forward,—a hope which in Christ was already a reality. So, though he has known Christ after the flesh, before His death, now he knows Him no more; for he knows that He has risen, and that death has no more dominion over Him. And because in Christ we all are even now in hope, though not in reality, what Christ is, he adds: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself by Christ." What the new creature—that is, the people renewed by faith—hopes for regarding itself, it has already in Christ; and the hope will also hereafter be actually realized. And, as regards this hope, old things have passed away, because we are no longer in the times of the Old Testament, expecting a temporal and carnal kingdom of God; and all things are become new, making the promise of the kingdom of heaven, where there shall be no death or corruption, the ground of our confidence. But in the resurrection of the dead it will not be as a matter of hope, but in reality, that old things shall pass away, when the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed; and all things shall become new when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality. This has already taken place in Christ, whom Paul accordingly, in reality, knew no longer after the flesh. But not yet in reality, but only in hope, did he know no one after the flesh of those for whom Christ died and rose again. For, as he says to the Ephesians, we are already saved by grace. The whole passage is to the purpose: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by whose grace we have been saved." The words, "hath quickened us together with Christ," correspond to what he said to the Corinthians, "that they which live should no longer live to themselves, but to Him that died for them and rose again." And in the words, "by whose grace we have been saved," he speaks of the thing hoped for as already accomplished. So, in the passage quoted above, he says explicitly, "We have been saved by hope." And here he proceeds to specify future events as if already accomplished. "And has raised us up together," he says, "and has made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Christ is certainly already seated in heavenly places, but we not yet. But as in an assured hope we already possess the future, he says that we sit in heavenly places, not in ourselves, but in Him. And to show that it is still future, in case it should be thought that what is spoken of as accomplished in hope has been accomplished in reality, he adds, “that He might show in the ages to come the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.” So also we must understand the following passage: “For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” He says, “when we were in the flesh,” as if they were no longer in the flesh. He means to say, when we were in the hope of fleshly things, referring to the time when the law, which can be fulfilled only by spiritual love, was in force, in order that by transgression the offence might abound, that after the revelation of the New Testament, grace and the gift by grace might much more abound. And to the same effect he says elsewhere, “They which are in the flesh cannot please God;” and then, to show that he does not mean those not yet dead, he adds, “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.” The meaning is, those who are in the hope of fleshly good cannot please God; but you are not in the hope of fleshly things, but in the hope of spiritual things, that is, of the kingdom of heaven, where the body itself, which now is natural, will, by the change in the resurrection, be, according to the capacity of its nature, a spiritual body. For “it is sown a natural body, it will be raised a spiritual body.” If, then, the apostle knew no one after the flesh of those who were said to be not in the flesh, because they were not in the hope of fleshly things, although they still were burdened with corruptible and mortal flesh; how much more significantly could he say of Christ that he no longer knew Him after the flesh, seeing that in the body of Christ what they hoped for had already been accomplished! Surely it is better and more reverential to examine the passages of sacred Scripture so as to discover their agreement with one another, than to accept some as true, and condemn others as false, whenever any difficulty occurs beyond the power of our weak intellect to solve. As to the apostle in his childhood understanding as a child, this is said merely as an illustration. And when he was a child he was not a spiritual man, as he was when he produced for the edification of the churches those writings which are not, as other books, merely a profitable study, but which authoritatively claim our belief as part of the ecclesiastical canon.

BOOK XII

Faustus denies that the prophets predicted Christ. Augustin proves such prediction from the New Testament, and expounds at length the principal types of Christ in the Old Testament.

1. Faustus said: Why do I not believe the prophets? Rather why do you believe them? On account, you will reply, of their prophecies about Christ. For my part, I have read the prophets with the most eager attention, and have found no such prophecies. And surely it shows a weak faith not to believe in Christ without proofs and testimonies. Indeed, you yourselves are accustomed to teach that Christian faith is so simple and absolute as not to admit of laborious investigations. Why, then, should you destroy the simplicity of faith by buttressing it with evidences, and Jewish evidences too? Or if you are changing your opinion about evidences, what more trustworthy witness could you have than God Himself testifying to His own Son when He sent Him on earth,—not by a prophet or an interpreter,—by a voice immediately from heaven: “This is my beloved Son, believe Him?” And again He testifies of Himself: “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world;” and in many similar passages. When the Jews quarrelled with this testimony, saying “Thou bearest witness of thyself, thy witness is not true,” He replied: “Although I bear witness of myself, my witness is true. It is written in your law, The witness of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father who sent me beareth witness of me.” He does not mention the prophets. Again He appeals to the testimony of His own works, saying, “If ye believe not me, believe the works;” not, “If ye believe not me, believe the prophets.” Accordingly we require no testimonies concerning our Saviour. All we look for in the prophets is prudence and virtue, and a good example, which, you are well aware, are not to be found in the Jewish prophets. This, no doubt, explains your referring me at once to their predictions as a reason for believing them, without a word about their actions. This may be good policy, but it is not in harmony with the declaration of Scripture, that it is impossible to gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles. This may serve meanwhile as a

brief and sufficient reply to the question, why we do not believe the prophets. The fact that they did not prophesy of Christ is abundantly proved in the writings of our fathers. I shall only add this, that if the Hebrew prophets knew and preached Christ, and yet lived such vicious lives, what Paul says of the wise men among the Gentiles might be applied to them: “Though they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, nor were thankful; but they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” You see the knowledge of great things is worth little, unless the life corresponds.

2. Augustin replied: The meaning of all this is, that the Hebrew prophets foretold nothing of Christ, and that, if they did, their predictions are of no use to us, and they themselves did not live suitably to the dignity of such prophecies. We must therefore prove the fact of the prophecies; and their use for the truth and steadfastness of our faith; and that the lives of the prophets were in harmony with their words. In this threefold discussion, it would take a long time under the first head to quote from all the books the passages in which Christ may be shown to have been predicted. Faustus’ frivolity may be met effectually by the weight of one great authority. Although Faustus does not believe the prophets, he professes to believe the apostles. Above, as if to satisfy the doubts of some opponent, he declares that he assuredly believes the Apostle Paul. Let us then hear what Paul says of the prophets. His words are: “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which He had promised before by His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.” What more does Faustus wish? Will he maintain that the apostle is speaking of some other prophets, and not of the Hebrew prophets? In any case, the gospel spoken of as promised was concerning the Son of God, who was made for Him of the seed of David according to the flesh: and to this gospel the apostle says that he was separated. So that the Manichaean heresy is opposed to faith in the gospel, which teaches that the Son of God was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. Besides, there are many passages where the apostle plainly testifies in behalf of the Hebrew prophets, with an authority by which the necks of these proud Manichaeans are broken.

3. “I speak the truth in Christ,” says the apostle, “I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.” Here is the most abundant and express testimony and the most solemn commendation. The adoption here spoken of is evidently through the Son of God; as the apostle says to the Galatians: “In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” And the glory spoken of is chiefly that of which he says in the same Epistle to the Romans: “What advantage hath the Jew? or what profit is there in circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because unto them were committed the oracles of God.” Can the Manichaeans tell us of any oracles of God committed to the Jews besides those of the Hebrew prophets? And why are the covenants said to belong especially to the Israelites, but because not only was the Old Testament given to them, but also the New was prefigured in the Old? Our opponents often display much ignorant ferocity in attacking the dispensation of the law given to the Israelites, not understanding that God wishes us to be not under the law, but under grace. They are here answered by the apostle himself, who, in speaking of the advantages of the Jews, mentions this as one, that they had the giving of the law. If the law had been bad, the apostle would not have referred to it in praise of the Jews. And if Christ had not been preached by the law, the Lord Himself would not have said, “If ye believe Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me;” nor would He have borne the testimony He did after His resurrection, saying, “All things must needs be fulfilled that were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.”

4. But because the Manichaeans preach another Christ, and not Him whom the apostles preached, but a false Christ of their own false contrivance, in imitation of whose falsehood they themselves speak lies, though they may perhaps be believed when they are not ashamed to profess to be the

followers of a deceiver, that has befallen them which the apostle asserts of the unbelieving Jews: “When Moses is read, a veil is upon their heart.” Neither will this veil which keeps them from understanding Moses be taken away from them till they turn to Christ; not a Christ of their own making, but the Christ of the Hebrew prophets. For, as the apostle says, “When thou shalt turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.” We cannot wonder that they do not believe in the Christ who rose from the dead, and who said, “All things must needs be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me;” for this Christ has Himself told us what Abraham said to a hard-hearted rich man when he was in torment in hell, and asked Abraham to send some one to his brothers to teach them, that they might not come too into that place of torment. Abraham’s reply was: “They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.” And when the rich man said that they would not believe unless some one rose from the dead, he received this most truthful answer: “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe even though one rose from the dead.” Wherefore, the Manichaeans will not hear Moses and the prophets, and so they do not believe Christ, though He rose from the dead. Indeed, they do not even believe that Christ rose from the dead. For how can they believe that He rose, when they do not believe that He died? For, again, how can they believe that He died, when they deny that He had a mortal body?

5. But we reject those false teachers whose Christ is false, or rather, whose Christ never existed. For we have a Christ true and truthful, foretold by the prophets, preached by the apostles, who in innumerable places refer to the testimonies of the law and the prophets in support of their preaching. Paul, in one short sentence, gives the right view of this subject. “Now,” he says, “the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.” What prophets, if not of Israel, to whom, as he expressly says, pertain the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the promises? And what promises, but about Christ? Elsewhere, speaking of Christ, he says concisely: “All the promises of God are in Him yea.” Paul tells me that the giving of the law pertained to the Israelites. He also tells me that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. He also tells me that all the promises of God are in Christ yea.

And you tell me that the prophets of Israel foretold nothing of Christ. Shall I believe the absurdities of Manichaeus relating a vain and long fable in opposition to Paul? or shall I believe Paul when he forewarns us: “If any man preach to you another gospel than that which we have preached, let him be accursed?”

6. Our opponents may perhaps ask us to point out passages where Christ is predicted by the prophets of Israel. One would think they might be satisfied with the authority of the apostles, who declare that what we read in the writings of the Hebrew prophets was fulfilled in Christ, or with that of Christ Himself, who says that these things were written of Him. Whoever is unable to point out the passages should lay the blame on his own ignorance; for the apostles and Christ and the sacred Scriptures are not chargeable with falsehood. However, one instance out of many may be adduced. The apostle, in the verses following the passage quoted above, says: “The word of God cannot fail. For they are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of promise are counted for the seed.” What can our opponent say against this, in view of the declaration made to Abraham: “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed?” At the time when the apostle gave the following exposition of this promise, “To Abraham and to his seed were the promises made. He saith not, To seed, as of many, but as of one, To thy seed, which is Christ,” a doubt on this point might then have been less inexcusable, for at that time all nations had not yet believed on Christ, who is preached as of the seed of Abraham. But now that we see the fulfillment of what we read in the ancient prophecy,—now that all nations are actually blessed in the seed of Abraham, to whom it was said thousands of years ago, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed,”—it is mere obstinate folly to try to bring in another Christ, not of the seed of Abraham, or to hold that there are no predictions of Christ in the prophetical books of the children of Abraham.

7. To enumerate all the passages in the Hebrew prophets referring to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, would exceed the limits of a volume, not to speak of the brief replies of which this treatise consists. The whole contents

of these Scriptures are either directly or indirectly about Christ. Often the reference is allegorical or enigmatical, perhaps in a verbal allusion, or in a historical narrative, requiring diligence in the student, and rewarding him with the pleasure of discovery. Other passages, again, are plain; for, without the help of what is clear, we could not understand what is obscure. And even the figurative passages, when brought together, will be found so harmonious in their testimony to Christ as to put to shame the obtuseness of the sceptic.

8. In the creation God finished His works in six days, and rested on the seventh. The history of the world contains six periods marked by the dealings of God with men. The first period is from Adam to Noah; the second, from Noah to Abraham; the third, from Abraham to David; the fourth, from David to the captivity in Babylon; the fifth, from the captivity to the advent of lowliness of our Lord Jesus Christ; the sixth is now in progress, and will end in the coming of the exalted Saviour to judgment. What answers to the seventh day is the rest of the saints,—not in this life, but in another, where the rich man saw Lazarus at rest while he was tormented in hell; where there is no evening, because there is no decay. On the sixth day, in Genesis, man is formed after the image of God; in the sixth period of the world there is the clear discovery of our transformation in the renewing of our mind, according to the image of Him who created us, as the apostle says. As a wife was made for Adam from his side while he slept, the Church becomes the property of her dying Saviour, by the sacrament of the blood which flowed from His side after His death. The woman made out of her husband’s side is called Eve, or Life, and the mother of living beings; and the Lord says in the Gospel: “Except a man eat my flesh and drink my blood, he has no life in him.” The whole narrative of Genesis, in the most minute details, is a prophecy of Christ and of the Church with reference either to the good Christians or to the bad. There is a significance in the words of the apostle when he calls Adam “the figure of Him that was to come;” and when he says, “A man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.” This points most obviously to the way in which Christ left His Father; for “though He was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, He

emptied Himself, and took upon Him the form of a servant.” And so, too, He left His mother, the synagogue of the Jews which cleaved to the carnality of the Old Testament, and was united to the Church His holy bride, that in the peace of the New Testament they two might be one flesh. For though with the Father He was God, by whom we were made, He became in the flesh partaker of our nature, that we might become the body of which He is the head.

9. As Cain’s sacrifice of the fruit of the ground is rejected, while Abel’s sacrifice of his sheep and the fat thereof is accepted, so the faith of the New Testament praising God in the harmless service of grace is preferred to the earthly observances of the Old Testament. For though the Jews were right in practising these things, they were guilty of unbelief in not distinguishing the time of the New Testament when Christ came, from the time of the Old Testament. God said to Cain, “If thou offerest well, yet if thou dividest not well, thou hast sinned.” If Cain had obeyed God when He said, “Be content, for to thee shall be its reference, and thou shalt rule over it,” he would have referred his sin to himself, by taking the blame of it, and confessing it to God; and so assisted by supplies of grace, he would have ruled over his sin, instead of acting as the servant of sin in killing his innocent brother. So also the Jews, of whom all these things are a figure, if they had been content, instead of being turbulent, and had acknowledged the time of salvation through the pardon of sins by grace, and heard Christ saying, “They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;” and, “Every one that committeth sin is the servant of sin;” and, “If the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed,”—they would in confession have referred their sin to themselves, saying to the Physician, as it is written in the Psalm, “I said, Lord, be merciful to me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.” And being made free by the hope of grace, they would have ruled over sin as long as it continued in their mortal body. But now, being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and wishing to establish a righteousness of their own, proud of the works of the law, instead of being humbled on account of their sins, they have not been content; and in subjection to sin reigning in their mortal body, so as to make them obey it in the lusts thereof, they have stumbled on the stone of stumbling, and have been inflamed with hatred against him

whose works they grieved to see accepted by God. The man who was born blind, and had been made to see, said to them, “We know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man serve Him, and do His will, him He heareth;” as if he had said, God regardeth not the sacrifice of Cain, but he regards the sacrifice of Abel. Abel, the younger brother, is killed by the elder brother; Christ, the head of the younger people, is killed by the elder people of the Jews. Abel dies in the field; Christ dies on Calvary.

10. God asks Cain where his brother is, not as if He did not know, but as a judge asks a guilty criminal. Cain replies that he knows not, and that he is not his brother’s keeper. And what answer can the Jews give at this day, when we ask them with the voice of God, that is, of the sacred Scriptures, about Christ, except that they do not know the Christ that we speak of? Cain’s ignorance was pretended, and the Jews are deceived in their refusal of Christ. Moreover, they would have been in a sense keepers of Christ, if they had been willing to receive and keep the Christian faith. For the man who keeps Christ in his heart does not ask, like Cain, Am I my brother’s keeper? Then God says to Cain, “What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.” So the voice of God in the Holy Scriptures accuses the Jews. For the blood of Christ has a loud voice on the earth, when the responsive Amen of those who believe in Him comes from all nations. This is the voice of Christ’s blood, because the clear voice of the faithful redeemed by His blood is the voice of the blood itself.

11. Then God says to Cain: “Thou art cursed from the earth, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother’s blood at thy hand. For thou shalt till the earth, and it shall no longer yield unto thee its strength. A mourner and an abject shalt thou be on the earth.” It is not, Cursed is the earth, but, Cursed art thou from the earth, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother’s blood at thy hand. So the unbelieving people of the Jews is cursed from the earth, that is, from the Church, which in the confession of sins has opened its mouth to receive the blood shed for the remission of sins by the hand of the people that would not be under grace, but under the law. And this murderer is cursed by the Church; that is, the Church admits and avows the curse pronounced by the apostle: “Whoever are of the works of the law are under the curse of the law.” Then, after saying, Cursed art thou from the

earth, which has opened its mouth to receive thy brother’s blood at thy hand, what follows is not, For thou shalt till it, but, Thou shalt till the earth, and it shall not yield to thee its strength. The earth he is to till is not necessarily the same as that which opened its mouth to receive his brother’s blood at his hand. From this earth he is cursed, and so he tills an earth which shall no longer yield to him its strength. That is, the Church admits and avows the Jewish people to be cursed, because after killing Christ they continue to till the ground of an earthly circumcision, an earthly Sabbath, an earthly passover, while the hidden strength or virtue of making known Christ, which this tilling contains, is not yielded to the Jews while they continue in impiety and unbelief, for it is revealed in the New Testament. While they will not turn to God, the veil which is on their minds in reading the Old Testament is not taken away. This veil is taken away only by Christ, who does not do away with the reading of the Old Testament, but with the covering which hides its virtue. So, at the crucifixion of Christ, the veil was rent in twain, that by the passion of Christ hidden mysteries might be revealed to believers who turn to Him with a mouth opened in confession to drink His blood. In this way the Jewish people, like Cain, continue tilling the ground, in the carnal observance of the law, which does not yield to them its strength, because they do not perceive in it the grace of Christ. So too, the flesh of Christ was the ground from which by crucifying Him the Jews produced our salvation, for He died for our offences. But this ground did not yield to them its strength, for they were not justified by the virtue of His resurrection, for He arose again for our justification. As the apostle says: “He was crucified in weakness, but He liveth by the power of God.” This is the power of that ground which is unknown to the ungodly and unbelieving. When Christ rose, He did not appear to those who had crucified Him. So Cain was not allowed to see the strength of the ground which he tilled to sow his seed in it; as God said, “Thou shalt till the ground, and it shall no longer yield unto thee its strength.”

12. “Groaning and trembling shalt thou be on the earth.” Here no one can fail to see that in every land where the Jews are scattered they mourn for the loss of their kingdom, and are in terrified subjection to the immensely superior number of Christians. So Cain answered, and said: “My case is worse, if Thou drivest me out this day from the face of the earth, and from

Thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a mourner and an outcast on the earth; and it shall be that every one that findeth me shall slay me.” Here he groans indeed in terror, lest after losing his earthly possession he should suffer the death of the body. This he calls a worse case than that of the ground not yielding to him its strength, or than that of spiritual death. For his mind is carnal; for he thinks little of being hid from the face of God, that is, of being under the anger of God, were it not that he may be found and slain. This is the carnal mind that tills the ground, but does not obtain its strength. To be carnally minded is death; but he, in ignorance of this, mourns for the loss of his earthly possession, and is in terror of bodily death. But what does God reply? “Not so,” He says; “but whosoever shall kill Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” That is, It is not as thou sayest; not by bodily death shall the ungodly race of carnal Jews perish. For whoever destroys them in this way shall suffer sevenfold vengeance, that is, shall bring upon himself the sevenfold penalty under which the Jews lie for the crucifixion of Christ. So to the end of the seven days of time, the continued preservation of the Jews will be a proof to believing Christians of the subjection merited by those who, in the pride of their kingdom, put the Lord to death.

13. “And the Lord God set a mark upon Cain, lest any one finding him should slay him.” It is a most notable fact, that all the nations subjugated by Rome adopted the heathenish ceremonies of the Roman worship; while the Jewish nation, whether under Pagan or Christian monarchs, has never lost the sign of their law, by which they are distinguished from all other nations and peoples. No emperor or monarch who finds under his government the people with this mark kills them, that is, makes them cease to be Jews, and as Jews to be separate in their observances, and unlike the rest of the world. Only when a Jew comes over to Christ, he is no longer Cain, nor goes out from the presence of God, nor dwells in the land of Nod, which is said to mean commotion. Against this evil of commotion the Psalmist prays, “Suffer not my feet to be moved;” and again, “Let not the hands of the wicked remove me;” and, “Those that trouble me will rejoice when I am moved:” and, “The Lord is at my right hand, that I should not be moved;” and so in innumerable places. This evil comes upon those who leave the presence of God, that is, His loving-kindness. Thus the Psalmist says, “I

said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved." But observe what follows, "Lord, by Thy favor Thou hast given strength to my honor; Thou didst hide Thy face, and I was troubled;" which teaches us that not in itself, but by participation in the light of God, can any soul possess beauty, or honor, or strength. The Manichaeans should think of this, to keep them from the blasphemy of identifying themselves with the nature and substance of God. But they cannot think, because they are not content. The Sabbath of the heart they are strangers to. If they were content, as Cain was told to be, they would refer their sin to themselves; that is, they would lay the blame on themselves, and not on a race of darkness that no one ever heard of, and so by the grace of God they would prevail over their sin. But now the Manichaeans, and all who oppose the truth by their various heresies, leave the presence of God, like Cain and the scattered Jews, and inhabit the land of commotion, that is, of carnal disquietude, instead of the enjoyment of God, that is instead of Eden, which is interpreted Feasting, where Paradise was planted. But not to depart too much from the argument of this treatise I must limit myself to a few, short remarks under this head.

14. Omitting therefore many passages in these Books where Christ may be found, but which require longer explanation and proof, although the most hidden meanings are the sweetest, convincing testimony may be obtained from the enumeration of such things as the following:—That Enoch, the seventh from Adam, pleased God, and was translated, as there is to be a seventh day of rest into which all will be translated who, during the sixth day of the world's history, are created anew by the incarnate Word. That Noah, with his family is saved by water and wood, as the family of Christ is saved by baptism, as representing the suffering of the cross. That this ark is made of beams formed in a square, as the Church is constructed of saints prepared unto every good work: for a square stands firm on any side. That the length is six times the breadth, and ten times the height, like a human body, to show that Christ appeared in a human body. That the breadth reaches to fifty cubits; as the apostle says, "Our heart is enlarged," that is, with spiritual love, of which he says again, "The love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." For in the fiftieth day after His resurrection, Christ sent His Holy Spirit to enlarge the hearts of His disciples. That it is three hundred cubits long, to make up six times

fifty; as there are six periods in the history of the world during which Christ has never ceased to be preached,—in five foretold by the prophets, and in the sixth proclaimed in the gospel. That it is thirty cubits high, a tenth part of the length; because Christ is our height, who in his thirtieth year gave His sanction to the doctrine of the gospel, by declaring that He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. Now the ten commandments are to be the heart of the law; and so the length of the ark is ten times thirty. Noah himself, too, was the tenth from Adam. That the beams of the ark are fastened within and without with pitch, to signify by compact union the forbearance of love, which keeps the brotherly connection from being impaired, and the bond of peace from being broken by the offences which try the Church either from without or from within. For pitch is a glutinous substance, of great energy and force, to represent the ardor of love which, with great power of endurance, beareth all things in the maintenance of spiritual communion.

15. That all kinds of animals are inclosed in the ark; as the Church contains all nations, which was also set forth in the vessel shown to Peter. That clean and unclean animals are in the ark; as good and bad take part in the sacraments of the Church. That the clean are in sevens, and the unclean in twos; not because the bad are fewer than the good, but because the good preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; and the Spirit is spoken of in Scripture as having a sevenfold operation, as being “the Holy Spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and might, of knowledge and piety, and of the fear of God.” So also the number fifty, which is connected with the advent of the Holy Spirit, is made up of seven times seven, and one over; whence it is said, “Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” The bad, again, are in twos, as being easily divided, from their tendency to schism. That Noah, counting his family, was the eighth; because the hope of our resurrection has appeared in Christ, who rose from the dead on the eighth day, that is, on the day after the seventh, or Sabbath day. This day was the third from His passion; but in the ordinary reckoning of days, it is both the eighth and the first.

16. That the whole ark together is finished in a cubit above; as the Church, the body of Christ gathered into unity, is raised to perfection. So Christ says

in the Gospel: “He that gathereth not with me, scattereth.” That the entrance is on the side; as no man enters the Church except by the sacrament of the remission of sins which flowed from Christ’s opened side. That the lower spaces of the ark are divided into two and three chambers: as the multitude of all nations in the Church is divided into two, as circumcised and uncircumcised; or into three, as descended from the three sons of Noah. And these parts of the ark are called lower, because in this earthly state there is a difference of races, and above we are completed in one. Above there is no diversity; for Christ is all and in all, finishing us, as it were, in one cubit above with heavenly unity.

17. That the flood came seven days after Noah entered the ark; as we are baptized in the hope of the future rest, which was denoted by the seventh day. That all flesh on the face of the earth, outside the ark, was destroyed by the flood; as, beyond the communion of the Church, though the water of baptism is the same, it is efficacious only for destruction, and not for salvation. That it rained for forty days and forty nights; as the sacrament of heavenly baptism washes away all the guilt of the sins against the ten commandments throughout all the four quarters of the world (four times ten is forty), whether that guilt has been contracted in the day of prosperity or in the night of adversity.

18. That Noah was five hundred years old when God told him to make the ark, and six hundred when he entered the ark; which shows that the ark was made during one hundred years, which seem to correspond to the years of an age of the world. So the sixth age is occupied with the construction of the Church by the preaching of the gospel. The man who avails himself of the offer of salvation is made like a square beam, fitted for every good work, and forms part of the sacred fabric. Again, it was the second month of the six hundredth year when Noah entered the ark, and in two months there are sixty days; so that here, as in every multiple of six, we have the number denoting the sixth age.

19. That mention is made of the twenty seventh day of the month; as we have already seen the significance of the square in the beams. Here especially it is significant; for as twenty-seven is the cube of three, there is a trinity in the means by which we are, as it were, squared, or fitted for every

good work. By the memory we remember God; by the understanding we know Him; by the will we love Him. That in the seventh month the ark rested; reminding us again of the seventh day of rest. And here again, to denote the perfection of those at rest, the twenty-seventh day of the month is mentioned for the second time. So what is promised in hope is realized in experience. There is here a combination of seven and eight; for the water rose fifteen cubits above the mountains, pointing to a profound mystery in baptism,—the sacrament of our regeneration. For the seventh day of rest is connected with the eighth of resurrection. For when the saints receive again their bodies after the rest of the intermediate state, the rest will not cease; but rather the whole man, body and soul united, renewed in the immortal health, will attain to the realization of his hope in the enjoyment of eternal life. Thus the sacrament of baptism, like the waters of Noah, rises above all the wisdom of the proud. Seven and eight are also combined in the number of one hundred and fifty, made up of seventy and eighty, which was the number of days during which the water prevailed, pointing out the deep import of baptism in consecrating the new man to hold the faith of rest and resurrection.

20. That the raven sent out after forty days did not return, being either prevented by the water or attracted by some floating carcase; as men defiled by impure desire, and therefore eager for things outside in the world, are either baptized, or are led astray into the company of those to whom, as they are outside the ark, that is, outside the Church, baptism is destructive. That the dove when sent forth found no rest, and returned; as in the New Testament rest is not promised to the saints in this world. The dove was sent forth after forty days, a period denoting the length of human life. When again sent forth after seven days, denoting the sevenfold operation of the Spirit, the dove brought back a fruitful olive branch; as some even who are baptized outside of the Church, if not destitute of the fatness of charity, may come after all, as it were in the evening, and be brought into the one communion by the mouth of the dove in the kiss of peace. That, when again sent forth after seven days, the dove did not return; as, at the end of the world, the rest of the saints shall no longer be in the sacrament of hope, as now, while in the communion of the Church, they drink what flowed from the side of Christ, but in the perfection of eternal safety, when the kingdom

shall be delivered up to God and the Father, and when, in that unclouded contemplation of unchangeable truth, we shall no longer need natural symbols.

21. There are many other points which we cannot take notice of even in this cursory manner. Why in the six hundred and first year of Noah's life—that is, after six hundred years were completed—the covering of the ark is removed, and the hidden mystery, as it were, disclosed. Why the earth is said to have dried on the twenty-seventh day of the second month; as if the number fifty-seven denoted the completion of the rite of baptism. For the twenty-seventh day of the second month is the fifty-seventh day of the year; and the number fifty-seven is seven times eight, which are the numbers of the spirit and the body, with one over, to denote the bond of unity. Why they leave the ark together, though they entered separately. For it is said: "Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark;" the men and the women being spoken of separately; which denotes the time when the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. But they go forth, Noah and his wife, and his sons and their wives,—the men and women together. For in the end of the world, and in the resurrection of the just, the body will be united to the spirit in perfect harmony, undisturbed by the wants and the passions of mortality. Why, after leaving the ark, only clean animals are offered in sacrifice to God, though both clean and unclean were in the ark.

22. Then, again, it is significant that when God speaks to Noah, and begins anew, as it were, in order, by repetition in various forms, to draw attention to the figure of the Church, the sons of Noah are blessed, and told to replenish the earth, and all animals are given to them for food; as was said to Peter of the vessel, "Kill and eat." That they are told to pour out the blood when they eat; that the former life may not be kept shut up in the conscience, but may be, as it were, poured out in confession. That God makes the bow, which appears in the clouds only when the sun shines, the sign of His covenant with men, and with every living thing, that He will not destroy them with a flood; as those do not perish by the flood, in separation from the Church, who in the clouds of God—that is, in the prophets and in all the sacred Scriptures—discern the glory of Christ, instead of seeking

their own glory. The worshippers of the sun, however, need not pride themselves on this; for they must understand that the sun, as also a lion, a lamb, and a stone, are used as types of Christ because they have some resemblance, not because they are of the same substance.

23. Again, the sufferings of Christ from His own nation are evidently denoted by Noah being drunk with the wine of the vineyard he planted, and his being uncovered in his tent. For the mortality of Christ's flesh was uncovered, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, both Shem and Japhet, the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Moreover, the two sons, the eldest and the youngest, carrying the garment backwards, are a figure of the two peoples, and the sacrament of the past and completed passions of the Lord. They do not see the nakedness of their father, because they do not consent to Christ's death; and yet they honor it with a covering, as knowing whence they were born. The middle son is the Jewish people, for they neither held the first place with the apostles, nor believed subsequently with the Gentiles. They saw the nakedness of their father, because they consented to Christ's death; and they told it to their brethren outside, for what was hidden in the prophets was disclosed by the Jews. And thus they are the servants of their brethren. For what else is this nation now but a desk for the Christians, bearing the law and the prophets, and testifying to the doctrine of the Church, so that we honor in the sacrament what they disclose in the letter?

24. Again, every one must be impressed, and be either enlightened or confirmed in the faith, by the blessing of the two sons who honored the nakedness of their father, though they turned away their faces, as displeased with the evil done by the vine. "Blessed," he says, "be the Lord God of Shem." For although God is the God of all nations, even the Gentiles acknowledge Him to be in a peculiar sense the God of Israel. And how is this to be explained but by the blessing of Japhet? The occupation of all the world by the Church among the Gentiles was exactly foretold in the words: "Let God enlarge Japhet, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem." That is for the Manichaean to attend to. You see what the state of the world actually

is. The very thing that you are astonished and grieved at in us is this, that God is enlarging Japhet. Is He not dwelling in the tents of Shem?—that is, in the churches built by the apostles, the sons of the prophets. Hear what Paul says to the believing Gentiles: “Ye were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants; having no hope of the promise, and without God in the world.” In these words there is a description of the state of Japhet before he dwelt in the tents of Shem. But observe what follows: “Now then;” he says, “ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone.” Here we have Japhet enlarged, and dwelling in the tents of Shem. These testimonies are taken from the epistles of the apostles, which you yourselves acknowledge, and read, and profess to follow. You occupy an unhappy middle position in a building of which Christ is not the chief corner-stone. For you do not belong to the wall of those who, like the apostles, being of the circumcision, believed in Christ; nor to the wall of those who, being of the uncircumcision, like all the Gentiles, are joined in the unity of faith, as in the fellowship of the corner-stone. However, all who accept and read any books of our canon in which Christ is spoken of as having been born and having suffered in the flesh, and who do not unite with us in a common veiling with the sacrament of the mortality, uncovered by the passion, but without the knowledge of piety and charity make known that from which we all are born,—although they differ among themselves, whether as Jews and heretics, or as heretics of one kind or other,—are still all useful to the Church, as being all alike servants, either in bearing witness to or in proving some truth. For of heretics it is said: “There must be heresies, that those who are approved among you may be manifested.” Go on, then, with your objections to the Old Testament Scriptures! Go on, ye servants of Ham! You have despised the flesh from which you were born when uncovered. For you could not have called yourselves Christians unless Christ had come into the world, as foretold by the prophets, and had drunk of His own vine that cup which could not pass from Him, and had slept in His passion, as in the drunkenness of the folly which is wiser than men; and so, in the hidden counsel of God, the disclosure had been made of that infirmity of mortal flesh which is stronger than men. For unless the Word of God had taken on

Himself this infirmity, the name of Christian, in which you also glory, would not exist in the earth. Go on, then, as I have said. Declare in mockery what we may honor with reverence. Let the Church use you as her servants to make manifest those members who are approved. So particular are the predictions of the prophets regarding the state and the sufferings of the Church, that we can find a place even for you in what is said of the destructive error by which the reprobate are to perish, while the approved are to be manifested.

25. You say that Christ was not foretold by the prophets of Israel, when, in fact, their Scriptures teem with such predictions, if you would only examine them carefully, instead of treating them with levity. Who in Abraham leaves his country and kindred that he may become rich and prosperous among strangers, but He who, leaving the land and country of the Jews, of whom He was born in the flesh, is now extending His power, as we see, among the Gentiles? Who in Isaac carried the wood for His own sacrifice, but He who carried His own cross? Who is the ram for sacrifice, caught by the horns in a. bush, but He who was fastened to the cross as an offering for us?

26. Who in the angel striving with Jacob, on the one hand is constrained to give him a blessing, as the weaker to the stronger, the conquered to the conqueror, and on the other hand puts his thigh-bone out of joint, but He who, when He suffered the people of Israel to prevail against Him, blessed those among them who believed, while the multitude, like Jacob's thigh-bone, halted in their carnality? Who is the stone placed under Jacob's head, but Christ the head of man? And in its anointing the very name of Christ is expressed, for, as all know, Christ means anointed. Christ refers to this in the Gospel, and declares it to be a type of Himself, when He said of Nathanael that he was an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile, and when Nathanael, resting his head, as it were, on this Stone, or on Christ, confessed Him as the Son of God and the King of Israel anointing the Stone by his confession, in which he acknowledged Jesus to be Christ. On this occasion the Lord made appropriate mention of what Jacob saw in his dream "Verily I say unto you, Ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." This Jacob saw, who in the blessing was called Israel, when he had the stone for a pillow, and

had the vision of the ladder reaching from earth to heaven, on which the angels of God were ascending and descending. The angels denote the evangelists, or preachers of Christ. They ascend when they rise above the created universe to describe the supreme majesty of the divine nature of Christ as being in the beginning God with God, by whom all things were made. They descend to tell of His being made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law. Christ is the ladder reaching from earth to heaven, or from the carnal to the spiritual: for by His assistance the carnal ascend to spirituality; and the spiritual may be said to descend to nourish the carnal with milk when they cannot speak to them as to spiritual, but as to carnal. There is thus both an ascent and a descent upon the Son of man. For the Son of man is above as our head, being Himself the Saviour; and He is below in His body, the Church. He is the ladder, for He says, “I am the way.” We ascend to Him to see Him in heavenly places; we descend to Him for the nourishment of His weak members. And the ascent and descent are by Him as well as to Him. Following His example, those who preach Him not only rise to behold Him exalted, but let themselves down to give a plain announcement of the truth. So the apostle ascends, “Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God;” and descends, “Whether we be sober, it is for your sake.” And by whom did he ascend and descend? “For the love of Christ constraineth us: for we thus judge, that if one died for all, then all died; and that He died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them, and rose again.”

27. The man who does not find pleasure in these views of sacred Scripture is turned away to fables, because he cannot bear sound doctrine. The fables have an attraction for childish minds in people of all ages; but we who are of the body of Christ should say with the Psalmist; “O Lord, the wicked have spoken to me pleasing things, but they are not after Thy law.” In every page of these Scriptures, while I pursue my search as a son of Adam in the sweat of my brow, Christ either openly or covertly meets and refreshes me. Where the discovery is laborious my ardor is increased, and the spoil obtained is eagerly devoured, and is hidden in my heart for my nourishment.

28. Christ appears to me in Joseph, who was persecuted and sold by his brethren, and after his troubles obtained honor in Egypt. We have seen the troubles of Christ in the world, of which Egypt was a figure, in the sufferings of the martyrs. And now we see the honor of Christ in the same world which He subdues to Himself, in exchange for the food which He bestows. Christ appears to me in the rod of Moses, which became a serpent when cast on the earth as a figure of His death, which came from the serpent. Again, when caught by the tail it became a rod, as a figure of His return after the accomplishment of His work in His resurrection to what He was before, destroying death by His new life, so as to leave no trace of the serpent. We, too, who are His body, glide along in the same mortality through the folds of time; but when at last the tail of this course of things is laid hold of by the hand of judgment that it shall go no further, we shall be renewed, and rising from the destruction of death, the last enemy, we shall be the sceptre of government in the right hand of God.

29. Of the departure of Israel from Egypt, let us hear what the apostle himself says: “I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink of the same spiritual drink. For they drank of the spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ.” The explanation of one thing is a key to the rest. For if the rock is Christ from its stability, is not the manna Christ, the living bread which came down from heaven, which gives spiritual life to those who truly feed on it? The Israelites died because they received the figure only in its carnal sense. The apostle, by calling it spiritual food, shows its reference to Christ, as the spiritual drink is explained by the words, “That rock was Christ,” which explain the whole. Then is not the cloud and the pillar Christ, who by His uprightness and strength supports our feebleness; who shines by night and not by day, that they who see not may see, and that they who see may be made blind? In the clouds and the Red Sea there is the baptism consecrated by the blood of Christ. The enemies following behind perish, as past sins are put away.

30. The Israelites are led through the wilderness, as those who are baptized are in the wilderness while on the way to the promised land, hoping and patiently waiting for that which they see not. In the wilderness are severe trials, lest they should in heart return to Egypt. Still Christ does not leave them; the pillar does not go away. The bitter waters are sweetened by wood, as hostile people become friendly by learning to honor the cross of Christ. The twelve fountains watering the seventy palm trees are a figure of apostolic grace watering the nations. As seven is multiplied by ten, so the decalogue is fulfilled in the sevenfold operation of the Spirit. The enemy attempting to stop them in their way is overcome by Moses stretching out his hands in the figure of the cross. The deadly bites of serpents are healed by the brazen serpent, which was lifted up that they might look at it. The Lord Himself gives the explanation of this: “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but have everlasting life.” So in many other things we may find a protest against the obstinacy of unbelieving hearts. In the passover a lamb is killed, representing Christ, of whom it is said in the Gospel, “Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!” In the passover the bones of the lamb were not to be broken; and on the cross the bones of the Lord were not broken. The evangelist, in reference to this, quotes the words, “A bone of Him shall not be broken.” The posts were marked with blood to keep away destruction, as people are marked on their foreheads with the sign of the Lord’s passion for their salvation. The law was given on the fiftieth day after the passover; so the Holy Spirit came on the fiftieth day after the passion of the Lord. The law is said to have been written with the finger of God; and the Lord says of the Holy Spirit, “With the finger of God I cast out devils.” Such are the Scriptures in which Faustus, after shutting his eyes, declares that he can see no prediction of Christ. But we need not wonder that he should have eyes to read and yet no heart to understand, since, instead of knocking in devout faith at the door of the heavenly secret, he dares to act in profane hostility. So let it be, for so it ought to be. Let the gate of salvation be shut to the proud. The meek, to whom God teaches His ways, will find all these things in the Scriptures, and those things which he does not see he will believe from what he sees.

31. He will see Jesus leading the people into the land of promise; for this name was given to the leader of Israel, not at first, or by chance, but on account of the work to which he was called. He will see the cluster from the land of promise hanging from a wooden pole. He will see in Jericho, as in this perishing world, an harlot, one of those of whom the Lord says that they go before the proud into the kingdom of heaven, putting out of her window a scarlet line symbolical of blood, as confession is made with the mouth for the remission of sins. He will see the walls of Jericho, like the frail defences of the world, fall when compassed seven times by the ark of the covenant; as now in the course of the seven days of time the covenant of God compasses the whole globe, that in the end, death, the last enemy, may be destroyed, and the Church, like one single house, be saved from the destruction of the ungodly, purified from the defilement of fornication by the window of confession in the blood of remission.

32. He will see the times of the judges precede those of the kings, as the judgment will precede the kingdom. And under both the judges and the kings he will see Christ and the Church repeatedly prefigured in many and various ways. Who was in Samson, when he killed the lion that met him as he went to get a wife among strangers, but He who, when going to call His Church from among the Gentiles, said, “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world?” What means the hive in the mouth of the slain lion, but that, as we see, the very laws of the earthly kingdom which once raged against Christ have now lost their fierceness, and have become a protection for the preaching of gospel sweetness? What is that woman boldly piercing the temples of the enemy with a wooden nail, but the faith of the Church casting down the kingdom of the devil by the cross of Christ? What is the fleece wet while the ground was dry, and again the fleece dry while the ground was wet, but the Hebrew nation at first possessing alone in its typical institution Christ the mystery of God, while the whole world was in ignorance? And now the whole world has this mystery revealed, while the Jews are destitute of it.

33. To mention only a few things in the times of the kings, at the very outset does not the change in the priesthood when Eli was rejected and Samuel chosen, and in the kingdom when Saul was rejected and David chosen,

clearly predict the new priesthood and kingdom to come in our Lord Jesus Christ, when the old, which was a shadow of the new, was rejected? Did not David, when he ate the shew-bread, which it was not lawful for any but the priests to eat, prefigure the union of the kingdom and priesthood in one person, Jesus Christ? In the separation of the ten tribes from the temple while two were left, is there not a figure of what the apostle asserts of the whole nation: “A remnant is saved by the election of grace.”?

34. In the time of famine, Elijah is fed by ravens bringing bread in the morning and flesh in the evening; but the Manichaeans cannot in this perceive Christ, who, as it were, hungers for our salvation, and to whom sinners come in confession, having now the first-fruits of the Spirit, while in the end, that is to say in the evening of the age, they will have the resurrection of their bodies also. Elijah is sent to be fed by a widow woman of another nation, who was going to gather two sticks before she died, denoting the two wooden beams of the cross. Her meal and oil are blessed, as the fruit and cheerfulness of charity do not diminish by expenditure, for God loveth a cheerful giver.

35. The children that mocked Elisha by calling out Baldhead, are devoured by wild beasts, as those who in childish folly scoff at Christ crucified on Calvary are destroyed by devils. Elisha sends his servants to lay his staff on the dead body, but it does not revive; he comes himself, and lays himself exactly upon the dead body, and it revives: as the Word of God sent the law by His servant, without any profit to mankind dead in sins; and yet it was not sent without purpose by Him who knew the necessity of its being first sent. Then He Himself came, conformed Himself to us by participation in our death, and we were revived. When they were cutting down wood with axes, the iron, flying off the wood, sank to the bottom of the river, and came up again when the wood was thrown in by Elisha. So, when Christ’s bodily presence was cutting down the unfruitful trees among the unbelieving Jews, according to the saying of John, “Behold, the axe is laid to the roots of the tree,” by the death they inflicted, Christ was separated from His body, and descended to the depths of the infernal world; and then, when His body was laid in the tomb, like the wood on the water, His spirit returned, like the iron

to the handle, and He rose. The reader will observe how many things of this kind are omitted for the sake of brevity.

36. As regards the departure to Babylon, where the Spirit of God by the prophet Jeremiah enjoins them to go, telling them to pray for the people in whose land they dwell as strangers, because in their peace they would find peace, and to build houses, and plant vineyards and gardens,—the figurative meaning is plain, when we consider that the true Israelites, in whom is no guile, passed over in the ministry of the apostles with the ordinances of the gospel into the kingdom of the Gentiles. So the apostle, like an echo of Jeremiah, says to us, “I will first of all that prayer, supplications, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men, and for those in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and charity; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” Accordingly the basilicas of Christian congregations have been built by believers as abodes of peace, and vineyards of the faithful have been renewed, and gardens planted, where chief among the plants is the mustard tree, in whose wide-spreading branches the pride of the Gentiles, like the birds of heaven, in its soaring ambition, takes shelter. Again, in the return from captivity after seventy years, according to Jeremiah’s prophecy, and in the restoration of the temple, every believer in Christ must see a figure of our return as the Church of God from the exile of this world to the heavenly Jerusalem, after the seven days of time have fulfilled their course. Joshua the high priest, after the captivity, who rebuilt the temple, was a figure of Jesus Christ, the true High Priest of our restoration. The prophet Zechariah saw this Joshua in a filthy garment; and after the devil who stood by to accuse him was defeated, the filthy garment was taken from him, and a dress of honor and glory given him. So the body of Jesus Christ, which is the Church, when the adversary is conquered in the judgment at the end of the world, will pass from the pains of exile to the glory of everlasting safety. This is the song of the Psalmist at the dedication of his house: “Thou hast turned for me my mourning into gladness; Thou hast removed my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness, that my glory may sing praise unto Thee, and not be silent.”

37. It is impossible, in a digression like this, to refer, however briefly, to all the figurative predictions of Christ which are to be found in the law and the prophets. Will it be said that these things happened in the regular course of things, and that it is a mere ingenious fancy to make them typical of Christ? Such an objection might come from Jews and Pagans; but those who wish to be considered Christians must yield to the authority of the apostle when he says, “All these things happened to them for an example;” and again, “These things are our examples.” For if two men, Ishmael and Isaac, are types of the two covenants, can it be supposed that there is no significance in the vast number of particulars which have no historical or natural value? Suppose we were to see some Hebrew characters written on the wall of a noble building, should we be so foolish as to conclude that, because we cannot understand the characters, they are not intended to be read, and are mere painting, without any meaning? So, whoever with a candid mind reads all these things that are contained in the Old Testament Scriptures, must feel constrained to acknowledge that they have a meaning.

38. As an example of those particulars which have no meaning at all if not a symbolical one: Granting that it was necessary that woman should be made as an help meet for man, what natural reason can be assigned for her being taken from his side while he slept? Granting that an ark was required in order to escape from the flood, why should it have precisely these dimensions, and why should they be recorded for the devout study of future generations? Granting that the animals were brought into the ark to preserve the various races, why should there be seven clean and two unclean? Granting that the ark must have a door, why should it be in the side, and why should this fact be committed to writing? Abraham is commanded to sacrifice his son: we may allow that this proof of his obedience was required in order to make it conspicuous in all ages; we may allow, too, that it was a proper thing for the son to carry the wood instead of the aged father, and that in the end the fatal stroke was forbidden, lest the father should be left childless. But what had the shedding of the ram’s blood to do with Abraham’s trial? or if it was necessary to complete the sacrifice, was the ram any the better of being caught by the horns in a bush? The human mind, that is to say, a rational mind, is led by the consideration of the way in which these apparently superfluous things are blended with what is

necessary, first to acknowledge their significance, and then to try to discover it.

39. The Jews themselves, who scoff at the crucified Saviour in whom we believe, and who consequently will not allow that Christ is predicted in the sayings and actions recorded in the Old Testament, are compelled to come to us for an explanation of those things which, if not explained, must appear trifling and ridiculous. This led Philo, a Jew of great learning, whom the Greeks speak of as rivalling Plato in eloquence, to attempt to explain some things without any reference to Christ, in whom he did not believe. His attempt only shows the inferiority of all ingenious speculations, when made without keeping Christ in view, to whom all the predictions really point. So true is that saying of the apostle: “When they shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.” For instance, Noah’s ark is, according to Philo, a type of the human body, member by member: with this view, he shows that the numerical proportions agree perfectly. For there is no reason why a type of Christ should not be a type of the human body, too, since the Saviour of mankind appeared in a human body, though what is typical of a human body is not necessarily typical of Christ. Philo’s explanation fails, however, as regards the door in the side of the ark. He actually, for the sake of saying something, makes this door represent the lower apertures of the body. He has the hardihood to put this in words, and on paper. Indeed, he knew not the door and could not understand the symbol. Had he turned to Christ the veil would have been taken away, and he would have found the sacraments of the Church flowing from the side of Christ’s human body. For, according to the announcement, “They two shall be one flesh,” some things in the ark which is a type of Christ, refer to Christ, and some to the Church. This contrast between the explanations which keep Christ in view, and all other ingenious perversions, is the same in every particular of all the figures in Scripture.

40. The Pagans, too, cannot deny our right to give a figurative meaning to both words and things, especially as we can point to the fulfillment of the types and figures. For the Pagans themselves try to find in their own fables figures of natural and religious truth. Sometimes they give clear explanations, while at other times they disguise their meaning, and what is

sacred in the temples becomes a jest in the theatres. They unite a disgraceful licentiousness to a degrading superstition.

41. Besides this wonderful agreement between the types and the things typified, the adversary may be convinced by plain prophetic intimations, such as this: “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” This was said to Abraham, and again to Isaac, and again to Jacob. Hence the significance of the words “I am the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.” God fulfills His promise to their seed in blessing all nations. With a like significance, Abraham himself, when he made his servant swear, told him to put his hand under his thigh; for he knew that thence would come the flesh of Christ, in whom we have now, not the promise of blessing to all nations, but the promise fulfilled.

42. I should like to know, or rather, it would be well not to know, with what blindness of mind Faustus reads the passage where Jacob calls his sons, and says, “Assemble, that I may tell you the things that are to happen in the last day. Assemble and hear, ye sons of Jacob; give ear to Israel, your father.” Surely these are the words of a prophet. What, then, does he say of his son Judah, of whose tribe Christ came of the seed of David according to the flesh, as the apostle teaches? “Judah,” he says, “thy brethren shall praise thee: thy hand shall be upon the backs of thine enemies; the sons of thy father shall bow down to thee. Judah is a lion’s whelp; my son and offspring: bowing down, thou hast gone up: thou sleepest as a lion, and as a young lion, who will rouse him up? A prince shall not depart from Judah, nor a leader from his loins, till those things come which have been laid up for him. He also is the desire of nations: binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass’s colt with sackcloth, he shall wash his garment in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: his eyes are bright with wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.” There is no falsehood or obscurity in these words when we read them in the clear light of Christ. We see His brethren the apostles and all His joint-heirs praising Him, seeking, not their own glory, but His. We see His hands on the backs of His enemies, who are bent and bowed to the earth by the growth of the Christian communities in spite of their opposition. We see Him worshipped by the sons of Jacob, the remnant saved according to the election of grace. Christ, who was born as an infant,

is the lion’s whelp, as it is added, My son and offspring, to show why this whelp, in whose praise it is said, “The lion’s whelp is stronger than the herd,” is even in infancy stronger than its elders. We see Christ ascending the cross, and bowing down when He gave up His spirit. We see Him sleeping as a lion, because in death itself He was not the conquered, but the conqueror, and as a lion’s whelp; for the reason of His birth and of His death was the same. And He is raised from the dead by Him whom no man hath seen or can see; for the words, “Who will raise Him up?” point to an unknown power. A prince did not depart from Judah, nor a leader from his loins, till in due time those things came which had been laid up in the promise. For we learn from the authentic history of the Jews themselves, that Herod, under whom Christ was born, was their first foreign king. So the sceptre did not depart from the seed of Judah till the things laid up for him came. Then, as the promise is not only to the believing Jews, it is added: “He is the desire of the nations.” Christ bound His foal—that is, His people—to the vine, when He preached in sackcloth, crying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” The Gentiles made subject to Him are represented by the ass’s colt, on which He also sat, leading it into Jerusalem, that is, the vision of peace teaching the meek His ways. We see Him washing His garments in wine; for He is one with the glorious Church, which He presents to Himself, not having spot or wrinkle; to whom also it is said by Isaiah: “Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow.” How is this done but by the remission of sins? And the wine is none other than that of which it is said that it is “shed for many, for the remission of sins.” Christ is the cluster that hung on the pole. So it is added, “and His clothes in the blood of the grape.” Again, what is said of His eyes being bright with wine, is understood by those members of His body who are enabled, in holy aberration of mind from the current of earthly things, to gaze on the eternal light of wisdom. So Paul says in a passage quoted before: “If we be beside ourselves, it is to God.” Those are the eyes bright with wine. But he adds: “If we be sober, it is for your sakes.” The babes needing to be fed with milk are not forgotten, as is denoted by the words, “His teeth are whiter than milk.”

43. What can our deluded adversaries say to such plain examples, which leave no room for perverse denial, or even for sceptical uncertainty? I call

on the Manichaeans to begin to inquire into these subjects, and to admit the force of these evidences, on which I have no time to dwell; nor do I wish to make a selection, in case the ignorant reader should think there are no others, while the Christian student might blame me for the omission of many points more striking than those which occur to me at the moment. You will find many passages which require no such explanation as has been given here of Jacob's prophecy. For instance, every reader can understand the words, "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter," and the whole of that plain prophecy, "With His stripes we are healed"—"He bore our sins." We have a poetical gospel in the words: "They pierced my hands and feet. They have told all my bones. They look and stare upon me. They divided my garments among them, and cast lots on my vesture." The blind even may now see the fulfillment of the words: "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all kingdoms of the nations shall worship before Him." The words in the Gospel, "My soul is sorrowful, even unto death," "My soul is troubled," are a repetition of the words in the Psalm, "I slept in trouble." And who made Him sleep? Whose voices cried, Crucify him, crucify him? The Psalm tells us: "The sons of men, their teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword." But they could not prevent His resurrection, or His ascension above the heavens, or His filling the earth with the glory of His name; for the Psalm says: "Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let Thy glory be above all the earth." Every one must apply these words to Christ: "The Lord said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." And what Jeremiah says of wisdom plainly applies to Christ: "Jacob delivered it to his son, and Israel to his chosen one. Afterwards He appeared on earth, and conversed with men."

44. The same Saviour is spoken of in Daniel, where the Son of man appears before the Ancient of days, and receives a kingdom without end, that all nations may serve Him. In the passage quoted from Daniel by the Lord Himself, "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, let him that readeth understand," the number of weeks points not only to Christ, but to the very time of His advent. With the Jews, who look to Christ for salvation as we

do, but deny that He has come and suffered, we can argue from actual events. Besides the conversion of the heathen, now so universal, as prophesied of Christ in their own Scriptures, there are the events in the history of the Jews themselves. Their holy place is thrown down, the sacrifice has ceased, and the priest, and the ancient anointing; which was all clearly foretold by Daniel when he prophesied of the anointing of the Most Holy. Now, that all these things have taken place, we ask the Jews for the anointed Most Holy, and they have no answer to give. But it is from the Old Testament that the Jews derive all the knowledge they have of Christ and His advent. Why do they ask John whether he is Christ? Why do they say to the Lord, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly." Why do Peter and Andrew and Philip say to Nathanael, "We have found Messias, which is interpreted Christ," but because this name was known to them from the prophecies of their Scriptures? In no other nation were the kings and priests anointed, and called Anointed or Christs. Nor could this symbolical anointing be discontinued till the coming of Him who was thus prefigured. For among all their anointed ones the Jews looked for one who was to save them. But in the mysterious justice of God they were blinded; and thinking only of the power of the Messiah, they did not understand His weakness, in which He died for us. In the book of Wisdom it is prophesied of the Jews: "Let us condemn him to an ignominious death; for he will be proved in his words. If he is truly the Son of God, He will aid him; and deliver him from the hand of his enemies. Thus they thought, and erred; for their wickedness blinded them." These words apply also to those who, in spite of all these evidences, in spite of such a series of prophecies, and of their fulfillment, still deny that Christ is foretold in the Scriptures. As often as they repeat this denial, we can produce fresh proofs, with the help of Him who has made such provision against human perversity, that proofs already given need not be repeated.

45. Faustus has an evasive objection, which he no doubt thinks a most ingenious way of eluding the force of the clearest evidence of prophecy, but of which one is unwilling to take any notice, because answering it may give it an appearance of importance which it does not really possess. What could be more irrational than to say that it is weak faith which will not believe in Christ without evidence? Do our adversaries, then, believe in testimony

about Christ? Faustus wishes us to believe the voice from heaven as distinguished from human testimony. But did they hear this voice? Has not the knowledge of it come to us through human testimony? The apostle describes the transmission of this knowledge, when he says: “How shall they call on Him on whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe on Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of them who publish peace, who bring good tidings!” Clearly, in the preaching of the apostles there was a reference to prophetic testimony. The apostles quoted the predictions of the prophets, to prove the truth and importance of their doctrines. For although their preaching was accompanied with the power of working miracles, the miracles would have been ascribed to magic, as some even now venture to insinuate, unless the apostles had shown that the authority of the prophets was in their favor. The testimony of prophets who lived so long before could not be ascribed to magical arts. Perhaps the reason why Faustus will not have us believe the Hebrew prophets as witnesses of the true Christ, is because he believes Persian heresies about a false Christ.

46. According to the teaching of the Catholic Church, the Christian mind must first be nourished in simple faith, in order that it may become capable of understanding things heavenly and eternal. Thus it is said by the prophet: “Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand.” Simple faith is that by which, before we attain to the height of the knowledge of the love of Christ, that we may be filled with all the fullness of God, we believe that not without reason was the dispensation of Christ’s humiliation, in which He was born and suffered as man, foretold so long before by the prophets through a prophetic race, a prophetic people, a prophetic kingdom. This faith teaches us, that in the foolishness which is wiser than men, and in the weakness which is stronger than men, is contained the hidden means of our justification and glorification. There are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which are opened to no one who despises the nourishment transmitted through the breast of his mother that is, the milk of apostolic and prophetic instruction; or who, thinking himself too old for infantile nourishment, devours heretical poison instead of the food of wisdom, for which he rashly thought himself prepared. To require simple faith is quite

consistent with requiring faith in the prophets. The very use of simple faith is to believe the prophets at the outset, while the understanding of the person who speaks in the prophets is attained after the mind has been purified and strengthened.

47. But, it is said, if the prophets foretold Christ, they did not live in a way becoming their office. How can you tell whether they did or not? You are bad judges of what it is to live well or ill, whose justice consists in giving relief to an inanimate melon by eating it, instead of giving food to the starving beggar. It is enough for the babes in the Catholic Church, who do not yet know the perfect justice of the human soul, and the difference between the justice aimed at and that actually attained, to think of those men according to the wholesome doctrine of the apostles, that the just lives by faith. “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. For the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” These are the words of the apostle. If you would, at his clear well-known voice, wake up from your unprofitable dreams, you would follow in the footsteps of our father Abraham, and would be blessed, along with all nations, in his seed. For, as the apostle says, “He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all that believe in uncircumcision; that he might be the father of circumcision not only to those who are of the circumcision, but also to those who follow the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham in uncircumcision.” Since the righteousness of Abraham’s faith is thus set forth as an example to us, that we too, being justified by faith, may have peace with God, we ought to understand his manner of life, without finding fault with it; lest, by a premature separation from mother-Church, we prove abortions, instead of being brought forth in due time, when the conception has arrived at completeness.

48. This is a brief reply to Faustus in behalf of the character of the patriarchs and prophets. It is the reply of the babes of our faith, among whom I would reckon myself, inasmuch as I would not find fault with the life of the ancient saints, even if I did not understand its mystical character.

Their life is proclaimed to us with approval by the apostles in their Gospel, as they themselves in their prophecy foretold the future apostles, that the two Testaments, like the seraphim, might cry to one another, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts.” When Faustus, instead of the vague general accusation which he makes here, condemns particular actions in the lives of the patriarchs and the prophets, the Lord their God, and ours also, will assist me to reply suitably and appropriately to the separate charges. For the present, the reader must choose whether to believe the commendation of the Apostle Paul or the accusations of Faustus the Manichaean.

BOOK XIII

Faustus asserts that even if the Old Testament could be shown to contain predictions, it would be of interest only to the Jews, pagan literature subserving the same purpose for Gentiles. Augustin shows the value of prophesy for Gentiles and Jews alike.

1. Faustus said: We are asked how we worship Christ when we reject the prophets, who declared the promise of His advent. It is doubtful whether, on examination, it can be shown that the Hebrew prophets foretold our Christ, that is, the Son of God. But were it so, what does it matter to us? If these testimonies of the prophets that you speak of were the means of converting any one from Judaism to Christianity, and if he should afterwards neglect these prophets, he would certainly be in the wrong, and would be chargeable with ingratitude. But we are by nature Gentiles, of the uncircumcision; as Paul says, born under another law. Those whom the Gentiles call poets were our first religious teachers, and from them we were afterwards converted to Christianity. We did not first become Jews, so as to reach Christianity through faith in their prophets; but were attracted solely by the fame, and the virtues, and the wisdom of our liberator Jesus Christ. If I were still in the religion of my fathers, and a preacher were to come using the prophets as evidence in favor of Christianity, I should think him mad for attempting to support what is doubtful by what is still more doubtful to a Gentile of another religion altogether. He would require first to persuade me to believe the prophets, and then through the prophets to believe Christ. And to prove the truth of the prophets, other prophets would be necessary. For if the prophets bear witness to Christ, who bears witness to the

prophets? You will perhaps say that Christ and the prophets mutually support each other. But a Pagan, who has nothing to do with either, would believe neither the evidence of Christ to the prophets, nor that of the prophets to Christ. If the Pagan becomes a Christian, he has to thank his own faith, and nothing else. Let us, for the sake of illustration, suppose ourselves conversing with a Gentile inquirer. We tell him to believe in Christ, because He is God. He asks for proof. We refer him to the prophets. He asks, What prophets? We reply, The Hebrew. He smiles, and says that he does not believe them. We remind him that Christ testifies to them. He replies, laughing, that we must first make him believe in Christ. The result of such a conversation is that we are silenced, and the inquirer departs, thinking us more zealous than wise. Again, I say, the Christian Church, which consists more of Gentiles than of Jews, can owe nothing to Hebrew witnesses. If, as is said, any prophecies of Christ are to be found in the Sibyl, or in Hermes, called Trismegistus, or Orpheus, or any heathen poet, they might aid the faith of those who, like us, are converts from heathenism to Christianity. But the testimony of the Hebrews is useless to us before conversion, for then we cannot believe them; and superfluous after, for we believe without them.

2. Augustin replied: After the long reply of last book, a short answer may suffice here. To one who has read that reply, it must seem insanity in Faustus to persist in denying that Christ was foretold by the Hebrew prophets, when the Hebrew nation was the only one in which the name Christ had a peculiar sacredness as applied to kings and priests; in which sense it continued to be applied till the coming of Him whom those kings and priests typified. Where did the Manichaean learn the name of Christ? If from Manichaeus, it is very strange that Africans, not to speak of others, should believe the Persian Manichaeus, since Faustus finds fault with the Romans and Greeks, and other Gentiles, for believing the Hebrew prophets as belonging to another race. According to Faustus, the predictions of the Sibyl, or Orpheus, or any heathen poet, are more suitable for leading Gentiles to believe in Christ. He forgets that none of these are read in the churches, whereas the voice of the Hebrew prophets, sounding everywhere, draws swarms of people to Christianity. When it is so evident that men are

everywhere led to Christ by the Hebrew prophets, it is great absurdity to say that those prophets are not suitable for the Gentiles.

3. Christ as foretold by the Hebrew prophets does not please you; but this is the Christ in whom the Gentile nations believe, with whom, according to you, Hebrew prophecy should have no weight. They receive the gospel which, as Paul says, “God had promised before by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures of His Son, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.” So we read in Isaiah: “There shall be a Root of Jesse, which shall rise to reign in the nations; in Him shall the Gentiles trust.” And again: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel,” which is, being interpreted, God with us. Nor let the Manichaean think that Christ is foretold only as a man by the Hebrew prophets; for this is what Faustus seems to insinuate when he says, “Our Christ is the Son of God,” as if the Christ of the Hebrews was not the Son of God. We can prove Christ the virgin’s son of Hebrew prophecy to be God. For the Lord Himself teaches the carnal Jews not to think that, because He is foretold as the son of David, He is therefore no more than that. He asks: “What think ye of Christ? Whose son is He?” They reply: “Of David.” Then, to remind them of the name Emmanuel, God with us, He says: “How does David in the Spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?” Here, then, Christ appears as God in Hebrew prophecy. What prophecy can the Manichaeans show with the name of Christ in it?

4. Manichaeus indeed was not a prophet of Christ, but calls himself an apostle, which is a shameless falsehood; for it is well known that this heresy began not only after Tertullian, but after Cyprian. In all his letters Manichaeus begins thus: “Manichaeus, an apostle of Jesus Christ.” Why do you believe what Manichaeus says of Christ? What evidence does he give of his apostleship? This very name of Christ is known to us only from the Jews, who, in their application of it to their kings and priests, were not individually, but nationally, prophets of Christ and Christ’s kingdom. What right has he to use this name, who forbids you to believe the Hebrew prophets, that he may make you the heretical disciples of a false Christ, as he himself is a false and heretical apostle? And if Faustus quotes as

evidence in his own support some prophets who, according to him, foretell Christ, how will he satisfy his supposed inquirer, who will not believe either the prophets or Faustus? Will he take our apostles as witnesses? Unless he can find some apostles in life, he must read their writings; and these are all against him. They teach our doctrine that Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, that He was the Son of God, of the seed of David according to the flesh. He cannot pretend that the writings have been tampered with, for that would be to attack the credit of his own witnesses. Or if he produces his own manuscripts of the apostolic writings, he must also obtain for them the authority of the churches founded by the apostles themselves, by showing that they have been preserved and transmitted with their sanction. It will be difficult for a man to make me believe him on the evidence of writings which derive all their authority from his own word, which I do not believe.

5. But perhaps you believe the common report about Christ. Faustus makes a feeble suggestion of this kind as a last resource, to escape being obliged either to produce his worthless authorities, or to come under the power of those opposed to him. Well, if report is your authority, you should consider the consequences of trusting to such evidence. There are many bad things reported of you which you do not wish people to believe. Is it reasonable to make the same evidence true about Christ and false about yourselves? In fact, you deny the common report about Christ. For the report most widely spread, and which every one has heard repeated, is that which distinctly asserts that Christ was born of the seed of David, according to the promise made in the Hebrew Scriptures to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob: “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” You will not admit this Hebrew testimony, but you do not seem to have any other. The authority of our books, which is confirmed by the agreement of so many nations, supported by a succession of apostles, bishops, and councils, is against you. Your books have no authority, for it is an authority maintained by only a few, and these the worshippers of an untruthful God and Christ. If they are not following the example of the beings they worship, their testimony must be against their own false doctrine. And, once more, common report gives a very bad account of you, and invariably asserts, in opposition to you, that Christ was of the seed of David. You did not hear the voice of the Father from heaven. You did not see the works by which Christ bore witness to

Himself. The books which tell of these things you profess to receive, that you may maintain a delusive appearance of Christianity; but when anything is quoted against you, you say that the books have been tampered with. You quote the passage where Christ says, “If ye believe not me, believe the works;” and again, “I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me;” but you will not let us quote in reply such passages as these: “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think that ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me;” “If ye believed Moses, ye would believe me, for he wrote of me;” “They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them;” “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe though one rose from the dead.” What have you to say for yourselves? Where is your authority? If you reject these passages of Scripture, in spite of the weighty authority in their favor, what miracles can you show? However, if you did work miracles, we should be on our guard against receiving their evidence in your case; for the Lord has forewarned us: “Many false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and shall do many signs and wonders, that they may deceive, if it were possible, the very elect: behold, I have told you before.” This shows that the established authority of Scripture must outweigh every other; for it derives new confirmation from the progress of events which happen, as Scripture proves, in fulfillment of the predictions made so long before their occurrence.

6. Are, then, your doctrines so manifestly true, that they require no support from miracles or from any testimony? Show us these self-evident truths, if you have anything of the kind to show. Your legends, as we have already seen, are long and silly, old wives fables for the amusement of women and children. The beginning is detached from the rest, the middle is unsound, and the end is a miserable failure. If you begin with the immortal, invisible, incorruptible God, what need was there of His fighting with the race of darkness? And as for the middle of your theory, what becomes of the incorruptibility and unchangeableness of God, when His members in fruits and vegetables are purified by your mastication and digestion? And for the end, is it just that the wretched soul should be punished with lasting confinement in the mass of darkness, because its God is unable to cleanse it of the defilement contracted from evil external to itself in the fulfillment of His own commission? You are at a loss for a reply. See the worthlessness of

your boasted manuscripts, numerous and valuable as you say they are! Alas for the toils of the antiquaries! Alas for the property of the unhappy owners! Alas for the food of the deluded followers! Destitute as you are of Scripture authority, of the power of miracles, of moral excellence, and of sound doctrine, depart ashamed, and return penitent, confessing that true Christ, who is the Saviour of all who believe in Him, whose name and whose Church are now displayed as they were of old foretold, not by some being issuing from subterranean darkness, but by a nation in a distinct kingdom established for this purpose, that there those things might be figuratively predicted of Christ which are now in reality fulfilled, and the prophets might foretell in writing what the apostles now exhibit in their preaching.

7. Let us suppose, then, a conversation with a heathen inquirer, in which Faustus described us as making a poor appearance, though his own appearance was much more deplorable. If we say to the heathen, Believe in Christ, for He is God, and, on his asking for evidence, produce the authority of the prophets, if he says that he does not believe the prophets, because they are Hebrew and he is a Gentile, we can prove the truth of the prophets from the actual fulfillment of their prophecies. He could scarcely be ignorant of the persecutions suffered by the early Christians from the kings of this world; or if he was ignorant, he could be informed from history and the records of imperial laws. But this is what we find foretold long ago by the prophet, saying, “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the princes take counsel together against the Lord, and against His Christ.” The rest of the Psalm shows that this is not said of David. For what follows might convince the most stubborn unbeliever: “The Lord said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Thy possession.” This never happened to the Jews, whose king, David was, but is now plainly fulfilled in the subjection of all nations to the name of Christ. This and many similar prophecies, which it would take too long to quote, would surely impress the mind of the inquirer. He would see these very kings of the earth now happily subdued by Christ, and all nations serving Him; and he would hear the words of the Psalm in which this was so long before predicted: “All the kings of the earth shall bow down to Him; all nations

shall serve Him.” And if he were to read the whole of that Psalm, which is figuratively applied to Solomon, he would find that Christ is the true King of peace, for Solomon means peaceful; and he would find many things in the Psalm applicable to Christ, which have no reference at all to the literal King Solomon. Then there is that other Psalm where God is spoken of as anointed by God, the very word anointed pointing to Christ, showing that Christ is God, for God is represented as being anointed. In reading what is said in this Psalm of Christ and of the Church, he would find that what is there foretold is fulfilled in the present state of the world. He would see the idols of the nations perishing from off the earth, and he would find that this is predicted by the prophets, as in Jeremiah, “Then shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth shall perish from the earth, and from under heaven;” and again, “O Lord, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto Thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit. Shall a man make gods unto himself, and they are no gods? Therefore, behold, I will at that time cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that I am the Lord.” Hearing these prophecies, and seeing their actual fulfillment, I need not say that he would be affected; for we know by experience how the hearts of believers are confirmed by seeing ancient predictions now receiving their accomplishment.

8. In the same prophet the inquirer would find clear proof that Christ is not merely one of the great men that have appeared in the world. For Jeremiah goes on to say: “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord: for he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places of the wilderness, in a salt land not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is: for he shall be as a tree beside the water, that spreadeth out its roots by the river: he shall not fear when heat cometh, but his leaf shall be green; he shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.” On hearing this curse pronounced in the figurative language of prophecy on him that trusts in man, and the blessing in similar style on him that trusts in God, the inquirer might have doubts about our doctrine, in which we teach

not only that Christ is God, so that our trust is not in man, but also that He is man because He took our nature. So some err by denying Christ’s humanity, while they allow His divinity. Others, again, assert His humanity, but deny His divinity, and so either become infidels or incur the guilt of trusting in man. The inquirer, then, might say that the prophet says only that Christ is God, without any reference to His human nature; whereas, in our apostolic doctrine, Christ is not only God in whom we may safely trust, but the Mediator between God and man—the man Jesus. The prophet explains this in the words in which he seems to check himself, and to supply the omission: “His heart,” he says “is sorrowful throughout; and He is man, and who shall know Him?” He is man, in order that in the form of a servant He might heal the hard in heart, and that they might acknowledge as God Him who became man for their sakes, that their trust might be not in man, but in God-man. He is man taking the form of a servant. And who shall know Him? For “He was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal to God.” He is man, for “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” And who shall know Him? For “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” And truly His heart was sorrowful throughout. For even as regards His own disciples His heart was sorrowful, when He said, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet have ye not known me?” “Have I been so long time with you” answers to the words “He is man,” and “Have ye not known me?” to “Who shall know Him?” And the person is none other but He who says, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” So that our trust is not in man, to be under the curse of the prophet, but in God-man, that is, in the Son of God, the Saviour Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and man. In the form of a servant the Father is greater than He; in the form of God He is equal with the Father.

9. In Isaiah we read: “The pride of man shall be brought low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And they shall hide the workmanship of their hands in the clefts of the rocks, and in dens and caves of the earth, from fear of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, when He shall arise to shake terribly the earth. For in that day a man shall cast away his idols of gold and silver, which they have made to worship, as useless and hurtful.” Perhaps the inquirer himself, who, as Faustus supposes, would laugh and

say that he does not believe the Hebrew prophets, has hid idols made with hands in some cleft, or cave, or den. Or he may know a friend, or neighbor, or fellow-citizen who has done this from the fear of the Lord, who by the severe prohibition of the kings of the earth, now serving and bowing down to him, as the prophet predicted, shakes the earth, that is, breaks the stubborn heart of worldly men. The inquirer is not likely to disbelieve the Hebrew prophets, when he finds their predictions fulfilled, perhaps in his own person.

10. One might rather fear that the inquirer, in the midst of such copious evidence, would say that the Christians composed those writings when the events described had already begun to take place, in order that those occurrences might appear to be not due to a merely human purpose, but as if divinely foretold. One might fear this, were it not for the widely spread and widely known people of the Jews; that Cain, with the mark that he should not be killed by any one; that Ham, the servant of his brethren, carrying as a load the books for their instruction. From the Jewish manuscripts we prove that these things were not written by us to suit the event, but were long ago published and preserved as prophecies in the Jewish nation. These prophecies are now explained in their accomplishment: for even what is obscure in them—because these things happened to them as an example, and were written for our benefit, on whom the ends of the world are come—is now made plain; and what was hidden in the shadows of the future is now visible in the light of actual experience.

11. The inquirer might bring forward as a difficulty the fact that those in whose books these prophecies are found are not united with us in the gospel. But when convinced that this also is foretold, he would feel how strong the evidence is. The prophecies of the unbelief of the Jews no one can avoid seeing, no one can pretend to be blind to them. No one can doubt that Isaiah spoke of the Jews when he said, “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib; but Israel hath not known, and my people hath not considered;” or again, in the words quoted by the apostle, “I have stretched out my hands all the day to a wicked and gainsaying people;” and especially where he says, “God has given them the spirit of remorse, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, and should not

understand,” and many similar passages. If the inquirer objected that it was not the fault of the Jews if God blinded them so that they did not know Christ, we should try in the simplest manner possible to make him understand that this blindness is the just punishment of other secret sins known to God. We should prove that the apostle recognizes this principle when he says of some persons, “God gave them up to the lusts of their own hearts, and to a reprobate mind, to do things not convenient;” and that the prophets themselves speak of this. For, to revert to the words of Jeremiah, “He is man, and who shall know Him?” lest it should be an excuse for the Jews that they did not know,—for if they had known, as the apostle says, “they would not have crucified the Lord of glory,”—the prophet goes on to show that their ignorance was the result of secret criminality; for he says: “I the Lord search the heart and try the reins, to give to every one according to his ways, and according to the fruits of his doings.”

12. If the next difficulty in the mind of the inquirer arose from the divisions and heresies among those called Christians, he would learn that this too is taken notice of by the prophets. For, as if it was natural that, after being satisfied about the blindness of the Jews, this objection from the divisions among Christians should occur, Jeremiah, observing this order in his prophecy, immediately adds in the passage already quoted: “The partridge is clamorous, gathering what it has not brought forth, making riches without judgment.” For the partridge is notoriously quarrelsome, and is often caught from its eagerness in quarreling. So the heretics discuss not to find the truth, but with a dogged determination to gain the victory one way or another, that they may gather, as the prophet says, what they have not brought forth. For those whom they lead astray are Christians already born of the gospel, whom the Christian profession of the heretics misleads. Thus they make riches not with judgment, but with inconsiderate haste. For they do not consider that the followers whom they gather as their riches are taken from the genuine original Christian society, and deprived of its benefits; and as the apostle describes these heretics in the words: “As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so they also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest to all men, as theirs also was.” So the prophet goes on to say of the partridge, which gathers what it has not brought forth: “In

the midst of his days they shall leave him, and in the end he shall be a fool;" that is, he who at first misled people by a promising display of superior wisdom, shall be a fool, that is, shall be seen to be a fool. He will be seen when his folly is manifest to all men, and to those to whom he was at first a wise man he will then be a fool.

13. As if anticipating that the inquirer would ask next by what plain mark a young disciple, not yet able to distinguish the truth among so many errors, might find the true Church of Christ, since the clear fulfillment of so many predictions compelled him to believe in Christ, the prophet answers this question in what follows, and teaches that the Church of Christ, which he describes prophetically, is conspicuously visible. His words are: "A glorious high throne is our sanctuary." This glorious throne is the Church of which the apostle says: "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." The Lord also, foreseeing the conspicuousness of the Church as a help to young disciples who might be misled, says, "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." Since, then, a glorious high throne is our sanctuary, no attention is to be paid to those who would lead us into sectarianism, saying, "Lo, here is Christ," or "Lo there." Lo here, lo there, speaks of division; but the true city is on a mountain, and the mountain is that which, as we read in the prophet Daniel, grew from a little stone till it filled the whole earth. And no attention should be paid to those who, professing some hidden mystery confined to a small number, say, Behold, He is in the chamber; behold, in the desert: for a city set on an hill cannot be hid, and a glorious high throne is our sanctuary.

14. After considering these instances of the fulfillment of prophecy about kings and people acting as persecutors, and then becoming believers, about the destruction of idols, about the blindness of the Jews, about their testimony to the writings which they have preserved, about the folly of heretics, about the dignity of the Church of true and genuine Christians, the inquirer would most reasonably receive the testimony of these prophets about the divinity of Christ. No doubt, if we were to begin by urging him to believe prophecies yet unfulfilled, he might justly answer, What have I to do with these prophets, of whose truth I have no evidence? But, in view of the manifest accomplishment of so many remarkable predictions, no candid

person would despise either the things which were thought worthy of being predicted in those early times with so much solemnity, or those who made the predictions. To none can we trust more safely, as regards either events long past or those still future, than to men whose words are supported by the evidence of so many notable predictions having been fulfilled.

15. If any truth about God or the Son of God is taught or predicted in the Sibyl or Sibyls, or in Orpheus, or in Hermes, if there ever was such a person, or in any other heathen poets, or theologians, or sages, or philosophers, it may be useful for the refutation of Pagan error, but cannot lead us to believe in these writers. For while they spoke, because they could not help it, of the God whom we worship, they either taught their fellow-countrymen to worship idols and demons, or allowed them to do so without daring to protest against it. But our sacred writers, with the authority and assistance of God, were the means of establishing and preserving among their people a government under which heathen customs were condemned as sacrilege. If any among this people fell into idolatry or demon-worship, they were either punished by the laws, or met by the awful denunciations of the prophets. They worshipped one God, the maker of heaven and earth. They had rites; but these rites were prophetic, or symbolical of things to come, and were to cease on the appearance of the things signified. The whole state was one great prophet, with its king and priest symbolically anointed which was discontinued, not by the wish of the Jews themselves, who were in ignorance through unbelief, but only on the coming of Him who was God, anointed with spiritual grace above His fellows, the holy of holies, the true King who should govern us, the true Priest who should offer Himself for us. In a word, the predictions of heathen ingenuity regarding Christ’s coming are as different from sacred prophecy as the confession of devils from the proclamation of angels.

16. By such arguments, which might be expanded if we were discussing with one brought up in heathenism, and might be supported by proofs in still greater number, the inquirer whom Faustus has brought before us would certainly be led to believe, unless he preferred his sins to his salvation. As a believer, he would be taken to be cherished in the bosom of the Catholic Church, and would be taught in due course the conduct

required of him. He would see many who do not practise the required duties; but this would not shake his faith, even though these people should belong to the same Church and partake of the same sacraments as himself. He would understand that few share in the inheritance of God, while many partake in its outward signs; that few are united in holiness of life, and in the gift of love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us, which is a hidden spring that no stranger can approach; and that many join in the solemnity of the sacrament, which he that eats and drinks unworthily eats and drinks judgment to himself, while he who neglects to eat it shall not have life in him, and so shall never reach eternal life. He will understand, too, that the good are called few as compared with the multitude of the evil, but that as scattered over the world there are very many growing among the tares, and mixed with the chaff, till the day of harvest and of purging. As this is taught in the Gospel, so is it foretold by the prophets. We read, “As a lily among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters;” and again, “I have dwelt in the tabernacles of Kedar; peaceful among them that hated peace;” and again, “Mark in the forehead those who sigh and cry for the iniquities of my people, which are done in the midst of them.” The inquirer would be confirmed by such passages; and being now a fellow-citizen with the saints and of the household of God, no longer an alien from Israel, but an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile, would learn to utter from a guileless heart the words which follow in the passage of Jeremiah already quoted, “O Lord, the patience of Israel: let all that forsake Thee be dismayed.” After speaking of the partridge that is clamorous, and gathers what it has not brought forth; and after extolling the city set on an hill which cannot be hid, to prevent heretics from drawing men away from the Catholic Church; after the words, “A glorious high throne is our sanctuary,” he seems to ask himself, What do we make of all those evil men who are found mixed with the Church, and who become more numerous as the Church extends, and as all nations are united in Christ? And then follow the words, “O Lord, the patience of Israel.” Patience is necessary to obey the command, “Suffer both to grow together till the harvest.” Impatience towards the evil might lead to forsaking the good, who in the strict sense are the body of Christ, and to forsake them would be to forsake Him. So the prophet goes on to say, “Let all that forsake Thee be dismayed; let those who have departed to the earth be confounded.” The earth is man trusting in himself, and inducing others to trust in him. So the prophet adds: “Let them be overthrown, for they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of life.” This is the cry of the partridge, that it has got the fountain of life, and will give it; and so men are gathered to it, and depart from Christ, as if Christ, whose name they had professed, had not fulfilled His promise. The partridge gathers those whom it has not brought forth. And in order to do this, it declares, The salvation which Christ promises is with me; I will give it. In opposition to this the prophet says: “Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved.” So we read in the apostle, “Let no man glory in men;” or in the words of the prophet, “Thou art my praise.” Such is a specimen of instruction in apostolic and prophetic doctrine, by which a man may be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

17. Faustus has not told us how he would prove the divinity of Christ to the heathen, whom he makes to say: I believe neither the prophets in support of Christ, nor Christ in support of the prophets. It would be absurd to suppose that such a man would believe what Christ says of Himself, when he disbelieves what He says of others. For if he thinks Him unworthy of credit in one case, he must think Him so in all, or at least more so when speaking of Himself than when speaking of others. Perhaps, failing this, Faustus would read to him the Sibyls and Orpheus, and any heathen prophecies about Christ that he could find. But how could he do this, when he confesses that he knows none? His words are: “If, as is said, any prophecies of Christ are to be found in the Sibyl, or in Hermes, called Trismegistus, or Orpheus, or any heathen poet.” How could he read writings of which he knows nothing, and which he supposes to exist only from report, to one who will not believe either the prophets or Christ? What, then, would he do? Would he bring forward Manichaeus as a witness to Christ? The opposite of this is what the Manichaeans do. They take advantage of the widespread fragrance of the name of Christ to gain acceptance for Manichaeus, that the edge of their poisoned cup may be sweetened with this honey. Taking hold of the promises of Christ to His disciples that He would send the Paraclete, that is, the Comforter or Advocate, they say that this Paraclete is Manichaeus, or in Manichaeus, and so steal an entrance into the minds of men who do not know when He who was promised by Christ really came. Those who have read the canonical book called the Acts of the

Apostles find a reference to Christ’s promise, and an account of its fulfillment. Faustus, then, has no proof to give to the inquirer. It is not likely that any one will be so infatuated as to take the authority of Manichaeus when he rejects that of Christ. Would he not reply in derision, if not in anger, Why do you ask me to believe Persian books, when you forbid me to believe Hebrew books? The Manichaean has no hold on the inquirer, unless he is already in some way convinced of the truth of Christianity. When he finds him willing to believe Christ, then he deludes him with the representation of Christ given by Manichaeus. So the partridge gathers what it has not brought forth. When will you whom he gathers leave him? When will you see him to be a fool, who tells you that Hebrew testimony is worthless in the case of unbelievers, and superfluous to believers?

18. If believers are to throw away all the books which have led them to believe, I see no reason why they should continue reading the Gospel itself. The Gospel, too, must be worthless to this inquirer, who, according to Faustus’ pitiful supposition, rejects with ridicule the authority of Christ. And to the believer it must be superfluous, if true notices of Christ are superfluous to believers. And if the Gospel should be read by the believer, that he may not forget what he has believed, so should the prophets, that he may not forget why he believed. For if he forgets this his faith cannot be firm. By this principle, you should throw away the books of Manichaeus, on the authority of which you already believe that light—that is, God—fought with darkness, and that, in order to bind darkness, the light was first swallowed up and bound, and polluted and mangled by darkness, to be restored, and liberated, and purified, and healed by your eating, for which you are rewarded by not being condemned to the mass of darkness for ever, along with that part of the light which cannot be extricated. This fiction is sufficiently published by your practice and your words. Why do you seek for the testimony of books, and add to the embarrassment of your God by the consumption of strength in the needless task of writing manuscripts? Burn all your parchments, with their finely-ornamented binding; so you will be rid of a useless burden, and your God who suffers confinement in the volume will be set free. What a mercy it would be to the members of your God, if you could boil your books and eat them! There might be a difficulty, however, from the prohibition of animal food. Then the writing must share

in the impurity of the sheepskin. Indeed, you are to blame for this, for, like what you say was done in the first war between light and darkness, you brought what was clean in the pen in contact with the uncleanness of the parchment. Or perhaps, for the sake of the colors, we may put it the other way; and so the darkness would be yours, in the ink which you brought against the light of the white pages. If these remarks irritate you, you should rather be angry with yourselves for believing doctrines of which these are the necessary consequences. As for the books of the apostles and prophets, we read them as a record of our faith, to encourage our hope and animate our love. These books are in perfect harmony with one another; and their harmony, like the music of a heavenly trumpet, wakens us from the torpor of worldliness, and urges us on to the prize of our high calling. The apostle, after quoting from the prophets the words, "The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on me," goes on to speak of the benefit of reading the prophets: "For whatsoever things were written beforetime were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." If Faustus denies this, we can only say with Paul, "If any one shall preach to you another doctrine than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

BOOK XIV

Faustus abhors Moses for the awful curse he has pronounced upon Christ. Augustin expounds the Christian doctrine of the suffering Saviour by comparing Old and New Testament passages.

1. Faustus said: If you ask why we do not believe Moses, it is on account of our love and reverence for Christ. The most reckless man cannot regard with pleasure a person who has cursed his father. So we abhor Moses, not so much for his blasphemy of everything human and divine, as for the awful curse he has pronounced upon Christ the Son of God, who for our salvation hung on the tree. Whether Moses did this intentionally or not is your concern. Either way, he cannot be excused, or considered worthy of belief. His words are, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." You tell me to believe this man, though, if he was inspired, he must have cursed Christ knowingly and intentionally; and if he did it in ignorance, he cannot have been divine. Take either alternative. Moses was no prophet, and while

cursing in his usual manner, he fell ignorantly into the sin of blasphemy against God. Or he was indeed divine, and foresaw the future; and from ill-will to our salvation, he directs the venom of his malediction against Him who was to accomplish that salvation on a tree. He who thus injures the Son cannot surely have seen or known the Father. He who knew nothing of the final ascension of the Son, cannot surely have foretold His advent. Moreover, the extent of the injury inflicted by this curse is to be considered. For it denounces all the righteous men and martyrs, and sufferers of every kind, who have died in this way, as Peter and Andrew, and the rest. Such a cruel denunciation could never have come from Moses if he had been a prophet, unless he was a bitter enemy of these sufferers. For he pronounces them cursed not only of men but of God. What hope, then, of blessing remains to Christ, or his apostles, or to us if we happen to be crucified for Christ's sake? It indicates great thoughtlessness in Moses, and the want of all divine inspiration, that he overlooked the fact that men are hung on a tree for very different reasons, some for their crimes, and others who suffer in the cause of God and of righteousness. In this thoughtless way lie heaps all together without distinction under the same curse; whereas if he had had any sense, not to say inspiration, if he wished to single out the punishment of the cross from all others as specially detestable, he would have said, Cursed is every guilty and impious person that hangeth on a tree. This would have made a distinction between the guilty and the innocent. And yet even this would have been incorrect, for Christ took the malefactor from the cross along with himself into the Paradise of his Father. What becomes of the curse on every one that hangeth on a tree? Was Barabbas, the notorious robber, who certainly was not hung on a tree, but was set free from prison at the request of the Jews, more blessed than the thief who accompanied Christ from the cross to heaven? Again, there is a curse on the man that worships the sun or the moon. Now if under a heathen monarch I am forced to worship the sun, and if from fear of this curse I refuse, shall I incur this other curse by suffering the punishment of crucifixion? Perhaps Moses was in the habit of cursing everything good. We think no more of his denunciation than of an old wife's scolding. So we find him pronouncing a curse on all youths of both sexes, when he says: "Cursed is every one that raiseth not up a seed in Israel." This is aimed directly at Jesus, who, according to you, was born among the Jews, and raised up no seed to continue his family. It points too at his disciples, some of whom he took from the wives they had married, and some who were unmarried he forbade to take wives. We have good reason, you see, for expressing our abhorrence of the daring style in which Moses hurls his maledictions against Christ, against light, against chastity, against everything divine. You cannot make much of the distinction between hanging on a tree and being crucified, as you often try to do by way of apology; for Paul repudiates such a distinction when he says, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”

2. Augustin replied: The pious Faustus is pained because Christ is cursed by Moses. His love for Christ makes him hate Moses. Before explaining the sacred import and the piety of the words, “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,” I would ask these pious people why they are angry with Moses, since his curse does not affect their Christ. If Christ hung on the tree, He must have been fastened to it with nails, the marks of which He showed to His doubting disciple after His resurrection. Accordingly He must have had a vulnerable and mortal body, which the Manichaeans deny. Call the wounds and the marks false, and it follows that His hanging on the tree was false. This Christ is not affected by the curse, and there is no occasion for this indignation against the person uttering the curse. If they pretend to be angry with Moses for cursing what they call the false death of Christ, what are we to think of themselves, who do not curse Christ, but, what is much worse, make Him a liar? If it is wrong to curse mortality, it is a much more heinous offense to sully the purity of truth. But let us make these heretical cavils an occasion for explaining this mystery to believers.

3. Death comes upon man as the punishment of sin, and so is itself called sin; not that a man sins in dying, but because sin is the cause of his death. So the word tongue, which properly means the fleshy substance between the teeth and the palate, is applied in a secondary sense to the result of the tongue’s action. In this sense we speak of a Latin tongue and a Greek tongue. The word hand, too, means both the members of the body we use in working, and the writing which is done with the hand. In this sense we speak of writing as being proved to be the hand of a certain person, or of

recognizing the hand of a friend. The writing is certainly not a member of the body, but the name hand is given to it because it is the hand that does it. So sin means both a bad action deserving punishment, and death the consequence of sin. Christ has no sin in the sense of deserving death, but He bore for our sakes sin in the sense of death as brought on human nature by sin. This is what hung on the tree; this is what was cursed by Moses. Thus was death condemned that its reign might cease, and cursed that it might be destroyed. By Christ's taking our sin in this sense, its condemnation is our deliverance, while to remain in subjection to sin is to be condemned.

4. What does Faustus find strange in the curse pronounced on sin, on death, and on human mortality, which Christ had on account of man's sin, though He Himself was sinless? Christ's body was derived from Adam, for His mother the Virgin Mary was a child of Adam. But God said in Paradise, "On the day that ye eat, ye shall surely die." This is the curse which hung on the tree. A man may deny that Christ was cursed who denies that He died. But the man who believes that Christ died, and acknowledges that death is the fruit of sin, and is itself called sin, will understand who it is that is cursed by Moses, when he hears the apostle saying "For our old man is crucified with Him." The apostle boldly says of Christ, "He was made a curse for us;" for he could also venture to say, "He died for all." "He died," and "He was cursed," are the same. Death is the effect of the curse; and all sin is cursed, whether it means the action which merits punishment, or the punishment which follows. Christ, though guiltless, took our punishment, that He might cancel our guilt, and do away with our punishment.

5. These things are not my conjectures, but are affirmed constantly by the apostle, with an emphasis sufficient to rouse the careless and to silence the gainsayers. "God," he says, "sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that by sin He might condemn sin in the flesh." Christ's flesh was not sinful, because it was not born of Mary by ordinary generation; but because death is the effect of sin, this flesh, in being mortal, had the likeness of sinful flesh. This is called sin in the following words, "that by sin He might condemn sin in the flesh." Again he says: "He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in

Him.” Why should not Moses call accursed what Paul calls sin? In this prediction the prophet claims a share with the apostle in the reproach of the heretics. For whoever finds fault with the word cursed in the prophet, must find fault with the word sin in the apostle; for curse and sin go together.

6. If we read, “Cursed of God is every one that hangeth on a tree,” the addition of the words “of God” creates no difficulty. For had not God hated sin and our death, He would not have sent His Son to bear and to abolish it. And there is nothing strange in God’s cursing what He hates. For His readiness to give us the immortality which will be had at the coming of Christ, is in proportion to the compassion with which He hated our death when it hung on the cross at the death of Christ. And if Moses curses every one that hangeth on a tree, it is certainly not because he did not foresee that righteous men would be crucified, but rather because He foresaw that heretics would deny the death of the Lord to be real, and would try to disprove the application of this curse to Christ, in order that they might disprove the reality of His death. For if Christ’s death was not real, nothing cursed hung on the cross when He was crucified, for the crucifixion cannot have been real. Moses cries from the distant past to these heretics: Your evasion in denying the reality of the death of Christ is useless. Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; not this one or that, but absolutely every one. What! the Son of God? Yes, assuredly. This is the very thing you object to, and that you are so anxious to evade. You will not allow that He was cursed for us, because you will not allow that He died for us. Exemption from Adam’s curse implies exemption from his death. But as Christ endured death as man, and for man; so also, Son of God as He was, ever living in His own righteousness, but dying for our offences, He submitted as man, and for man, to bear the curse which accompanies death. And as He died in the flesh which He took in bearing our punishment, so also, while ever blessed in His own righteousness, He was cursed for our offences, in the death which He suffered in bearing our punishment. And these words “every one” are intended to check the ignorant officiousness which would deny the reference of the curse to Christ, and so, because the curse goes along with death, would lead to the denial of the true death of Christ.

7. The believer in the true doctrine of the gospel will understand that Christ is not reproached by Moses when he speaks of Him as cursed, not in His divine majesty, but as hanging on the tree as our substitute, bearing our punishment, any more than He is praised by the Manichaeans when they deny that He had a mortal body, so as to suffer real death. In the curse of the prophet there is praise of Christ’s humility, while in the pretended regard of the heretics there is a charge of falsehood. If, then, you deny that Christ was cursed, you must deny that He died; and then you have to meet, not Moses, but the apostles. Confess that He died, and you may also confess that He, without taking our sin, took its punishment. Now the punishment of sin cannot be blessed, or else it would be a thing to be desired. The curse is pronounced by divine justice, and it will be well for us if we are redeemed from it. Confess then that Christ died, and you may confess that He bore the curse for us; and that when Moses said, “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,” he said in fact, To hang on a tree is to be mortal, or actually to die. He might have said, “Cursed is every one that is mortal,” or “Cursed is every one dying;” but the prophet knew that Christ would suffer on the cross, and that heretics would say that He hung on the tree only in appearance, without really dying. So he exclaims, Cursed; meaning that He really died. He knew that the death of sinful man, which Christ though sinless bore, came from that curse, “If ye touch it, ye shall surely die.” Thus also, the serpent hung on the pole was intended to show that Christ did not feign death, but that the real death into which the serpent by his fatal counsel cast mankind was hung on the cross of Christ’s passion. The Manichaeans turn away from the view of this real death, and so they are not healed of the poison of the serpent, as we read that in the wilderness as many as looked were healed.

8. It is true, some ignorantly distinguish between hanging on a tree and being crucified. So some explain this passage as referring to Judas. But how do they know whether he hung himself from wood or from stone? Faustus is right in saying that the apostle obliges us to refer the words to Christ. Such ignorant Catholics are the prey of the Manichaeans. Such they get hold of and entangle in their sophistry. Such were we when we fell into this heresy, and adhered to it. Such were we, when, not by our own strength, but by the mercy of God, we were rescued.

9. What attacks on divine things does Faustus speak of when he charges Moses with sparing nothing human or divine? He makes the charge without stopping to prove it. We know, on the contrary, that Moses gave due praise to everything really divine, and in human affairs was a just ruler, considering his times and the grace of his dispensation. It will be time to prove this when we see any proof of Faustus' charges. It may be clever to make such charges cautiously, but there is great incaution in the cleverness which ruins its possessor. It is good to be clever on the side of truth, but it is a poor thing to be clever in opposition to the truth. Faustus says that Moses spared nothing human or divine; not that he spared no god or man. If he said that Moses did not spare God, it could easily be shown in reply that Moses everywhere does honor to the true God, whom he declares to be the Maker of heaven and earth. Again, if he said that Moses spared none of the gods, he would betray himself to Christians as a worshipper of the false gods that Moses denounces; and so he would be prevented from gathering what he has not brought forth, by the brood taking refuge under the wings of the Mother Church. Faustus tries to ensnare the babes, by saying that Moses spared nothing divine, wishing not to frighten Christians with a profession of belief in the gods, which would be plainly opposed to Christianity, and at the same time appearing to take the side of the Pagans against us; for they know that Moses has said many plain and pointed things against the idols and gods of the heathen, which are devils.

10. If the Manichaeans disapprove of Moses on this account, let them confess that they are worshippers of idols and devils. This, indeed, may be the case without their being aware of it. The apostle tells us that "in the last days some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and to doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy." Whence but from devils, who are fond of falsehood, could the idea have come that Christ's sufferings and death were unreal, and that the marks which He showed of His wounds were unreal? Are these not the doctrines of lying devils, which teach that Christ, the Truth itself, was a deceiver? Besides, the Manichaeans openly teach the worship, if not of devils, still of created things, which the apostle condemns in the words, "They worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator."

11. As there is an unconscious worship of idols and devils in the fanciful legends of the Manichaeans, so they knowingly serve the creature in their worship of the sun and moon. And in what they call their service of the Creator they really serve their own fancy, and not the Creator at all. For they deny that God created those things which the apostle plainly declares to be the creatures of God, when he says of food, “Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it is received with thanksgiving.” This is sound doctrine, which you cannot bear, and so turn to fables. The apostle praises the creature of God, but forbids the worship of it; and in the same way Moses gives due praise to the sun and moon, while at the same time he states the fact of their having been made by God, and placed by Him in their courses,—the sun to rule the day, and the moon to rule the night. Probably you think Moses spared nothing divine, simply because he forbade the worship of the sun and moon, whereas you turn towards them in all directions in your worship. But the sun and moon take no pleasure in your false praises. It is the devil, the transgressor, that delights in false praises. The powers of heaven, who have not fallen by sin, wish their Creator to be praised in them; and their true praise is that which does no wrong to their Creator. He is wronged when they are said to be His members, or parts of His substance. For He is perfect and independent, underived, not divided or scattered in space, but unchangeably self-existent, self-sufficient, and blessed in Himself. In the abundance of His goodness, He by His word spoke, and they were made: He commanded, and they were created. And if earthly bodies are good, of which the apostle spoke when he said that no food is unclean, because every creature of God is good, much more the heavenly bodies, of which the sun and moon are the chief; for the apostle says again, “The glory of the terrestrial is one, and the glory of the celestial is another.”

12. Moses, then, casts no reproach on the sun and moon when he prohibits their worship. He praises them as heavenly bodies; while he also praises God as the Creator of both heavenly and earthly, and will not allow of His being insulted by giving the worship due to Him to those who are praised only as dependent upon Him. Faustus prides himself on the ingenuity of his objection to the curse pronounced by Moses on the worship of the sun and moon. He says, “If under a heathen monarch I am forced to worship the

sun, and if from fear of this curse I refuse, shall I incur this other curse by suffering the punishment of crucifixion?” No heathen monarch is forcing you to worship the sun: nor would the sun itself force you, if it were reigning on the earth, as neither does it now wish to be worshipped. As the Creator bears with blasphemers till the judgment, so these celestial bodies bear with their deluded worshippers till the judgment of the Creator. It should be observed that no Christian monarch could enforce the worship of the sun. Faustus instances a heathen monarch, for he knows that their worship of the sun is a heathen custom. Yet, in spite of this opposition to Christianity, the partridge takes the name of Christ, that it may gather what it has not brought forth. The answer to this objection is easy, and the force of truth will soon break the horns of this dilemma. Suppose, then, a Christian threatened by royal authority with being hung on a tree if he will not worship the sun. If I avoid, you say, the curse pronounced by the law on the worshipper of the sun, I incur the curse pronounced by the same law on him that hangs on a tree. So you will be in a difficulty; only that you worship the sun without being forced by anybody. But a true Christian, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, distinguishes the curses, and the reasons of them. He sees that one refers to the mortal body which is hung on the tree, and the other to the mind which worships the sun. For though the body bows in worship,—which also is a heinous offence,—the belief or imagination of the object worshipped is an act of the mind. The death implied in both curses is in one case the death of the body, and in the other the death of the soul. It is better to have the curse in bodily death,—which will be removed in the resurrection,—than the curse in the death of the soul, condemning it along with the body to eternal fire. The Lord solves this difficulty in the words: “Fear not them that kill the body, but cannot kill the soul; but fear him who has power to cast both soul and body into hell-fire.” In other words, fear not the curse of bodily death, which in time is removed; but fear the curse of spiritual death, which leads to the eternal torment of both soul and body. Be assured, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree is no old wife’s railing, but a prophetical utterance. Christ, by the curse, takes the curse away, as He takes away death by death, and sin by sin. In the words, “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,” there is no more blasphemy than in the words of the apostle, “He died,” or, “Our old man was crucified along with Him,” or, “By sin He condemned sin,” or, "He made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin," and in many similar passages. Confess, then, that when you exclaim against the curse of Christ, you exclaim against His death. If this is not an old wife's railing on your part, it is devilish delusion, which makes you deny the death of Christ because your own souls are dead. You teach people that Christ's death was feigned, making Christ your leader in the falsehood with which you use the name of Christian to mislead men.

13. If Faustus thinks Moses an enemy of continence or virginity because he says, "Cursed is everyone that raiseth not up seed in Israel," let them hear the words of Isaiah: "Thus saith the Lord to all eunuchs; To them who keep my precepts, and choose the things that please me, and regard my covenant, will I give in my house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off." Though our adversaries disagree with Moses, if they agree with Isaiah it is something gained. It is enough for us to know that the same God spoke by both Moses and Isaiah, and that every one is cursed who raiseth not up seed in Israel, both then when begetting children in marriage (for the continuation of the people was a civil duty), and now because no one spiritually born should rest content without seeking spiritual increase in the production of Christians by preaching Christ, each one according to his ability. So that the times of both Testaments are briefly described in the words, "Cursed is every one that raiseth not up seed in Israel."

BOOK XV

Faustus rejects the Old Testament because it leaves no room for Christ. Christ the one Bridegroom suffices for His Bride the Church. Augustin answers as well as he can, and reproves the Manichaeans with presumption in claiming to be the Bride of Christ.

1. Faustus said: Why do we not receive the Old Testament? Because when a vessel is full, what is poured on it is not received, but allowed to run over; and a full stomach rejects what it cannot hold. So the Jews, satisfied with the Old Testament, reject the New; and we who have received the New Testament from Christ, reject the Old. You receive both because you are only half filled with each, and the one is not completed, but corrupted by

the other. For vessels half filled should not be filled up with anything of a different nature from what they already contain. If it contains wine, it should be filled up with wine, honey with honey, vinegar with vinegar. For to pour gall on honey, or water on wine, or alkalies on vinegar, is not addition, but adulteration. This is why we do not receive the Old Testament. Our Church, the bride of Christ, the poor bride of a rich bridegroom, is content with the possession of her husband, and scorns the wealth of inferior lovers, and despises the gifts of the Old Testament and of its author, and from regard to her own character, receives only the letters of her husband. We leave the Old Testament to your Church, that, like a bride faithless to her spouse, delights in the letters and gifts of another. This lover who corrupts your chastity, the God of the Hebrews in his stone tablets promises you gold and silver, and abundance of food, and the land of Canaan. Such low rewards have tempted you to be unfaithful to Christ, after all the rich dowry bestowed by him. By such attractions the God of the Hebrews gains over the bride of Christ. You must know that you are cheated, and that these promises are false. This God is in poverty and beggary, and cannot do what he promises. For if he cannot give these things to the synagogue, his proper wife, who obeys him in all things like a servant, how can he bestow them on you who are strangers, and who proudly throw off his yoke from your necks? Go on, then, as you have begun, join the new cloth to the old garment, put the new wine in old bottles, serve two masters without pleasing either, make Christianity a monster, half horse and half man; but allow us to serve only Christ, content with his immortal dower, and imitating the apostle who says, “Our sufficiency is of God, who has made us able ministers of the New Testament.” In the God of the Hebrews we have no interest whatever; for neither can he perform his promises, nor do we desire that he should. The liberality of Christ has made us indifferent to the flatteries of this stranger. This figure of the relation of the wife to her husband is sanctioned by Paul, who says: “The woman that has a husband is bound to her husband as long as he liveth; but if her husband die, she is freed from the law of her husband. So, then, if while her husband liveth she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is not an adulteress, though she be married to another man.” Here he shows that there is a spiritual adultery in being united to Christ before repudiating the author of the law, and counting him, as it were, as dead. This applies chiefly to the Jews who believe in Christ, and who ought to forget their former superstition. We who have been converted to Christ from heathenism, look upon the God of the Hebrews not merely as dead, but as never having existed, and do not need to be told to forget him. A Jew, when he believes, should regard Adonai as dead; a Gentile should regard his idol as dead; and so with everything that has been held sacred before conversion. One who, after giving up idolatry, worships both the God of the Hebrews and Christ, is like an abandoned woman, who after the death of one husband marries two others.

2. Augustin replied: Let all who have given their hearts to Christ say whether they can listen patiently to these things, unless Christ Himself enable them. Faustus, full of the new honey, rejects the old vinegar; and Paul, full of the old vinegar, has poured out half that the new honey may be poured in, not to be kept, but to be corrupted. When the apostle calls himself a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, this is the new honey. But when he adds, “which He promised before by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures of His Son, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh,” this is the old vinegar. Who could bear to hear this, unless the apostle himself consoled us by saying: “There must be heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you?” Why should we repeat what we said already?—that the new cloth and the old garment, the new wine and the old bottles, mean not two Testaments, but two lives and two hopes,—that the relation of the two Testaments is figuratively described by the Lord when He says: “Therefore every scribe instructed in the kingdom of God is like an householder bringing out of his treasure things new and old.” The reader may remember this as said before, or he may find it on looking back. For if any one tries to serve God with two hopes, one of earthly felicity, and the other of the kingdom of heaven, the two hopes cannot agree; and when the latter is shaken by some affliction, the former will be lost too. Thus it is said, No man can serve two masters; which Christ explains thus: “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.” But to those who rightly understand it, the Old Testament is a prophecy of the New. Even in that ancient people, the holy patriarchs and prophets, who understood the part they performed, or which

they were instrumental in performing, had this hope of eternal life in the New Testament. They belonged to the New Testament, because they understood and loved it, though revealed only in figure. Those belonging to the Old Testament were the people who cared for nothing else but the temporal promises, without understanding them as significant of eternal things. But all this has already been more than enough insisted on.

3. It is amazingly bold in the impious and impure sect of the Manichaeans to boast of being the chaste bride of Christ. All the effect of such a boast on the really chaste members of the holy Church is to remind them of the apostle’s warning against deceivers: “I have joined you to one husband, to present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear lest, as the serpent deceived Eve by his guile, so your minds also should be corrupted from the purity which is in Christ.” What else do those preachers of another gospel than that which we have received try to do, but to corrupt us from the purity which we preserve for Christ, when they stigmatize the law of God as old, and praise their own falsehoods as new, as if all that is new must be good, and all that is old bad? The Apostle John, however, praises the old commandment, and the Apostle Paul bids us avoid novelties in doctrine. As an unworthy son and servant of the Catholic Church, the true bride of the true Christ, I too, as appointed to give out food to my fellow-servants, would speak to her a word of counsel. Continue ever to shun the profane errors of the Manichaeans, which have been tried by the experience of thine own children, and condemned by their recovery. By that heresy I was once separated from thy fellowship, and after running into danger which ought to have been avoided, I escaped. Restored to thy service, my experience may perhaps be profitable to thee. Unless thy true and truthful Bridegroom, from whose side thou wert made, had obtained the remission of sins through His own real blood, the gulf of error would have swallowed me up; I should have become dust, and been devoured by the serpent. Be not misled by the name of truth. The truth is in thine own milk, and in thine own bread. They have the name only, and not the thing. Thy full-grown children, indeed, are secure; but I speak to thy babes, my brothers, and sons, and masters, whom thou, the virgin mother, fertile as pure, dost cherish into life under thine anxious wings, or dost nourish with the milk of infancy. I call upon these, thy tender offspring, not to be seduced by noisy vanities, but rather to

pronounce accursed any one that preaches to them another gospel than that which they have received in thee. I call upon these not to leave the true and truthful Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; not to forsake the abundance of His goodness which He has laid up for them that fear Him, and has wrought for them that trust in Him. How can they expect to find truthful words in one who preaches an untruthful Christ? Scorn the reproaches cast on thee, for thou knowest well that the gift which thou desirest from thy Bridegroom is eternal life, for He Himself is eternal life.

4. It is a silly falsehood that thou hast been seduced to another God, who promises abundance of food and the land of Canaan. For thou canst perceive how the saints of old, who were also thy children, were enlightened by these figures which were prophecies of thee. Thou needest not regard the poor jest against the stone tablets, for the stony heart of which they were in old times a figure is not in thee. For thou art an epistle of the apostles, “written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but on the fleshy tables of the heart.” Our opponents ignorantly think that these words are in their favor, and that the apostle finds fault with the dispensation of the Old Testament, whereas they are the words of the prophet. This utterance of the apostles was a fulfillment of the long anterior utterances of the prophet whom the Manichaeans reject, for they believe the apostles without understanding them. The prophet says: “I will take away from them the stony heart, and I will give them a heart of flesh.” What is this but “Not on tables of stones but on the fleshy tables of the heart”? For by the heart of flesh and the fleshy tables is not meant a carnal understanding: but as flesh feels, whereas a stone cannot, the insensibility of stone signifies an unintelligent heart, and the sensibility of flesh signifies an intelligent heart. Instead, then, of scoffing at thee, they deserve to be ridiculed who say that earth, and wood, and stones have sense, and that their life is more intelligent than animal life. So, not to speak of the truth, even their own fiction obliges them to confess that the law written on tables of stone was purer than their sacred parchments. Or perhaps they prefer sheepskin to stone, because their legends make stones the bones of princes. In any case, the ark of the Old Testament was a cleaner covering for the tables of stone than the goatskin of their

manuscripts. Laugh at these things, while pitying them, to show their falsehood and absurdity. With a heart no longer stony, thou canst see in these stone tablets a suitableness to that hard-hearted people; and at the same time thou canst find even there the stone, thy Bridegroom, described by Peter as “a living stone, rejected by men, but chosen of God, and precious.” To them He was “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence;” but to thee, “the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.” This is all explained by Peter, and is quoted from the prophets, with whom these heretics have nothing to do. Fear not, then, to read these tablets—they are from thy Husband; to others the stone was a sign of insensibility, but to thee of strength and stability. With the finger of God these tablets were written; with the finger of God thy Lord cast out devils; with the finger of God drive thou away the doctrines of lying devils which sear the conscience. With these tablets thou canst confound the seducer who calls himself the Paraclete, that he may impose upon thee by a sacred name. For on the fiftieth day after the passover the tables were given; and on the fiftieth day after the passion of thy Bride-groom—of whom the passover was a type—the finger of God, the Holy Spirit, the promised Paraclete, was given. Fear not the tablets which convey to thee ancient writings now made plain. Only be not under the law, lest fear prevent thy fulfilling it; but be under grace, that love, which is the fulfilling of the law, may be in thee. For it was in a review of these very tablets that the friend of thy Bridegroom said: “For thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not murder, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is contained in this word, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” One table contains the precept of love to God, and the other of love to man. And He who first sent these tablets Himself came to enjoin those precepts on which hang the law and the prophets. In the first precept is the chastity of thy espousals; in the second is the unity of thy members. In the one thou art united to divinity; in the other thou dost gather a society. And these two precepts are identical with the ten, of which three relate to God, and seven to our neighbor. Such is the chaste tablet in which thy Lover and thy Beloved of old prefigured to thee the new song on a psaltery of ten strings; Himself to be extended on the cross for thee, that by sin He might condemn sin in the flesh, and that the righteouness of the law might be fulfilled in thee. Such is the conjugal tablet, which may well be hated by the unfaithful wife.

5. I turn now to thee, thou deluded and deluding congregation of Manichaeus,—wedded to so many elements, or rather prostituted to so many devils, and impregnated with blasphemous falsehoods,—dost thou dare to slander as unchaste the marriage of the Catholic Church with thy Lord? Behold thy lovers, one balancing creation, and the other bearing it up like Atlas. For one, by thy account, holds the sources of the elements, and hangs the world in space; while the other keeps him up by kneeling down and carrying the weight on his shoulders. Where are those beings? And if they are so occupied, how can they come to visit thee, to spend an idle hour in getting their shoulders or their fingers relieved by thy soft, soothing touch? But thou art deceived by evil spirits which commit adultery with thee, that thou mayest conceive falsehoods and bring forth vanities. Well mayest thou reject the message of the true God, as opposed to thy parchments, where in the vain imaginations of a wanton mind thou hast gone after so many false gods. The fictions of the poets are more respectable than thine, in this at least, that they deceive no one; while the fables in thy books, by assuming an appearance of truth, mislead the childish, both young and old, and pervert their minds. As the apostle says, they have itching ears, and turn away from hearing the truth to listen to fables. How shouldest thou bear the sound doctrine of these tables, where the first commandment is, “Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord,” when thy corrupt affections find shameful delight in so many false deities? Dost thou not remember thy love-song, where thou describest the chief ruler in perennial majesty, crowned with flowers, and of fiery countenance? To have even one such lover is shameful; for a chaste wife seeks not a husband crowned with flowers. And thou canst not say that this description or representation has a typical meaning, for thou art wont to praise Manichaeus for nothing more than for speaking to thee the simple naked truth without the disguise of figures. So the God of thy song is a real king, bearing a sceptre and crowned with flowers. When he wears a crown of flowers, he ought to put aside his sceptre; for effeminacy and majesty are incongruous. And then he is not thy only lover; for the song goes on to tell of twelve seasons clothed in flowers, and filled with song, throwing their

flowers at their father's face. These are twelve great gods of thine, three in each of the four regions surrounding the first deity. How this deity can be infinite, when he is thus circumscribed, no one can say. Besides, there are countless principalities, and hosts of gods, and troops of angels, which thou sayest were not created by God, but produced from His substance.

6. Thou art thus convicted of worshipping gods without number; for thou canst not bear the sound doctrine which teaches that there is one Son of one God, and one Spirit of both. And these, instead of being without number, are not three Gods; for not only is their substance one and the same, but their operation by means of this substance is also one and the same, while they have a separate manifestation in the material creation. These things thou dost not understand, and canst not receive. Thou art full, as thou sayest, for thou art steeped in blasphemous absurdities. Will thou continue burying thyself under such crudities? Sing on, then, and open thine eyes, if thou canst, to thine own shame. In this doctrine of lying devils thou art invited to fabulous dwellings of angels in a happy clime, and to fragrant fields where nectar flows for ever from trees and hills, in seas and rivers. These are the fictions of thy foolish heart, which revels in such idle fancies. Such expressions are sometimes used as figurative descriptions of the abundance of spiritual enjoyments; and they lead the mind of the student to inquire into their hidden meaning. Sometimes there is a material representation to the bodily senses, as the fire in the bush, the rod becoming a serpent, and the serpent a rod, the garment of the Lord not divided by His persecutors, the anointing of His feet or of His head by a devout woman, the branches of the multitude preceding and following Him when riding on the ass. Sometimes, either in sleep or in a trance, the spirit is informed by means of figures taken from material things, as Jacob's ladder, and the stone in Daniel cut out without hands and growing into a mountain, and Peter's vessel, and all that John saw. Sometimes the figures are only in the language; as in the Song of Songs, and in the parable of a householder making a marriage for his son, or that of the prodigal son, or that of the man who planted a vineyard and let it out to husbandmen. Thou boastest of Manichaeus as having come last, not to use figures, but to explain them. His expositions throw light on ancient types, and leave no problem unsolved. This idea is supported by the assertion that the ancient types, in vision or in

action or in words, had in view the coming of Manichaeus, by whom they were all to be explained; while he, knowing that no one is to follow him, makes use of a style free from all figurative expressions. What, then, are those fields, and shady hills, and crowns of flowers, and fragrant odors, in which the desires of thy fleshly mind take pleasure? If they are not significant figures, they are either idle fancies or delirious dreams. If they are figures, away with the impostor who seduces thee with the promise of naked truth, and then mocks thee with idle tales. His ministers and his wretched deluded followers are wont to bait their hook with that saying of the apostle, “Now we see through a glass in a figure, but then face to face.” As if, forsooth, the Apostle Paul knew in part, and prophesied in part, and saw through a glass in a figure; whereas all this is removed at the coming of Manichaeus, who brings that which is perfect, and reveals the truth face to face. O fallen and shameless! still to continue uttering such folly, still feeding on the wind, still embracing the idols of thine own heart. Hast thou, then, seen face to face the king with the sceptre, and the crown of flowers, and the hosts of gods, and the great worldholder with six faces and radiant with light, and that other exalted ruler surrounded with troops of angels, and the invincible warrior with a spear in his right hand and a shield in his left, and the famous sovereign who moves the three wheels of fire, water, and wind, and Atlas, chief of all, bearing the world on his shoulders, and supporting himself on his arms? These, and a thousand other marvels, hast thou seen face to face, or are thy songs doctrines learned from lying devils, though thou knowest it not? Alas! miserable prostitute to these dreams, such are the vanities which thou drinkest up instead of the truth; and, drunk with this deadly poison, thou darest with this jest of the tablets to affront the matronly purity of the spouse of the only Son of God; because no longer under the tutorship of the law, but under the control of grace, neither proud in activity nor crouching in fear, she lives by faith, and hope, and love, the Israel in whom there is no guile, who hears what is written: “The Lord thy God is one God.” This thou hearest not, and art gone a whoring after a multitude of false gods.

7. Of necessity these tables are against thee, for the second commandment is, “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;” whereas thou dost attribute the vanity of falsehood to Christ Himself, who, to

remove the vanity of the fleshly mind, rose in a true body, visible to the bodily eye. So also the third commandment about the rest of the Sabbath is against thee, for thou art tossed about by a multitude of restless fancies. How these three commandments relate to the love of God, thou hast neither the power nor the will to understand. Shamefully headstrong and turbulent, thou hast reached the height of folly, vanity, and worthlessness; thy beauty is spoiled, and thine order perished. I know thee, for I was once the same. How shall I now teach thee that these three precepts relate to the love of God, of whom, and by whom, and in whom are all things? How canst thou understand this, when thy pernicious doctrines prevent thee from understanding and from obeying the seven precepts relating to the love of our neighbor, which is the bond of human society? The first of these precepts is, “Honor thy father and mother;” which Paul quotes as the first commandment with promise, and himself repeats the injunction. But thou art taught by thy doctrine of devils to regard thy parents as thine enemies, because their union brought thee into the bonds of flesh, and laid impure fetters even on thy god. The doctrine that the production of children is an evil, directly opposes the next precept, “Thou shall not commit adultery;” for those who believe this doctrine, in order that their wives may not conceive, are led to commit adultery even in marriage. They take wives, as the law declares, for the procreation of children; but from this erroneous fear of polluting the substance of the deity, their intercourse with their wives is not of a lawful character; and the production of children, which is the proper end of marriage, they seek to avoid. As the apostle long ago predicted of thee, thou dost indeed forbid to marry, for thou seekest to destroy the purpose of marriage. Thy doctrine turns marriage into an adulterous connection, and the bed-chamber into a brothel. This false doctrine leads in a similar way to the transgression of the commandment, “Thou shall not kill.” For thou dost not give bread to the hungry, from fear of imprisoning in flesh the member of thy God. From fear of fancied murder, thou dost actually commit murder. For if thou wast to meet a beggar starving for want of food, by the law of God to refuse him food would be murder; while to give food would be murder by the law of Manichaeus. Not one commandment in the decalogue dost thou observe. If thou wert to abstain from theft, thou wouldst be guilty of allowing bread or food, whatever it might be, to undergo the misery of being devoured by a man of no merit, instead of running off with it to the laboratory of the stomach of thine elect; and so by theft saving thy god from the imprisonment with which he is threatened, and also from that from which he already suffers. Then, if thou art caught in the theft, wilt thou not swear by this god that thou art not guilty? For what will he do to thee when thou sayest to him, I swore by thee falsely, but it was for thy benefit; a regard for thine honor would have been fatal to thee? So the precept, Thou shall not bear false witness, will be broken, not only in thy testimony, but in thine oath, for the sake of the liberation of the members of thy god. The commandment, “Thou shall not covet thy neighbor’s wife,” is the only one which thy false doctrine does not oblige thee to break. But if it is unlawful to covet our neighbor’s wife, what must it be to excite covetousness in others? Remember thy beautiful gods and goddesses presenting themselves with the purpose of exciting desire in the male and female leaders of darkness, in order that the gratification of this passion might effect the liberation of this god, who is in confinement everywhere, and who requires the assistance of such self-degradation. The last commandment, “Thou shall not covet the possessions of thy neighbor,” it is wholly impossible for thee to obey. Does not this god of thine delude thee with the promise of making new worlds in a region belonging to another, to be the scene of thine imaginary triumph after thine imaginary conquest? In the desire for the accomplishment of these wild fancies, while at the same time thou believest that this land of darkness is in the closest neighborhood with thine own substance, thou certainly covetest the possessions of thy neighbor. Well indeed mayest thou dislike the tables which contain such good precepts in opposition to thy false doctrine. The three relating to the love of God thou dost entirely set aside. The seven by which human society is preserved thou keepest only from a regard to the opinion of men, or from fear of human laws; or good customs make thee averse to some crimes; or thou art restrained by the natural principle of not doing to another what thou wouldst not have done to thyself. But whether thou doest what thou wouldst not have done to thyself, or refrainest from doing what thou wouldst not have done to thyself, thou seest the opposition of the heresy to the law, whether thou actest according to it or not.

8. The true bride of Christ, whom thou hast the audacity to taunt with the stone tablets, knows the difference between the letter and the spirit, or in other words, between law and grace; and serving God no longer in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit, she is not under the law, but under grace. She is not blinded by a spirit of controversy, but learns meekly from the apostle what is this law which we are not to be under; for “it was given,” he says, “on account of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.” And again: “It entered, that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace has much more abounded.” Not that the law is sin, though it cannot give life without grace, but rather increases the guilt; for “where there is no law, there is no transgression.” The letter without the spirit, the law without grace, can only condemn. So the apostle explains his meaning, in case any should not understand: “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. For I had not known sin but by the law. For I had not known lust unless the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death in me by that which is good.” She at whom thou scoffest knows what this means; for she asks earnestly, and seeks humbly, and knocks meekly. She sees that no fault is found with the law, when it is said, “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life,” any more than with knowledge, when it is said, “Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth.” The passage runs thus: “We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth.” The apostle certainly had no desire to be puffed up; but he had knowledge, because knowledge joined with love not only does not puff up, but strengthens. So the letter when joined with the spirit, and the law when joined with grace, is no longer the letter and the law in the same sense as when by itself it kills by abounding sin. In this sense the law is even called the strength of sin, because its strict prohibitions increase the fatal pleasure of sin. Even thus, however, the law is not evil; but “sin, that it may appear sin, works death by that which is good.” So things that are not evil may often be hurtful to certain people. The Manichaeans, when they have sore eyes, will shut out their god the sun. The bride of Christ, then, is dead to the law, that is, to sin, which abounds more from the prohibition of the law; for the law apart from

grace commands, but does not enable. Being dead to the law in this sense, that she may be married to another who rose from the dead, she makes this distinction without any reproach to the law, which would be blasphemy against its author. This is thy crime; for though the apostle tells thee that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good, thou dost not acknowledge it as the production of a good being. Its author thou makest to be one of the princes of darkness. Here the truth confronts thee. They are the words of the Apostle Paul: “The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” Such is the law given by Him who appointed for a great symbolical use the tablets which thou foolishly deridest. The same law which was given by Moses becomes through Jesus Christ grace and truth; for the spirit is joined to the letter, that the righteousness of the law might begin to be fulfilled, which when unfulfilled only added the guilt of transgression. The law which is holy, and just, and good, is the same law by which sin works death, and to which we must die, that we may be married to another who rose from the dead. Hear what the apostle adds: “But sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death in me by that which is good, that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.” Deaf and blind, dost thou not now hear and see? “Sin wrought death in me,” he says, “by that which is good.” The law is always good: whether it hurts those who are destitute of grace, or benefits those who are filled with grace, itself is always good; as the sun is always good, for every creature of God is good, whether it hurts weak eyes or gladdens the sight of the healthy. Grace fits the mind for keeping the law, as health fits the eyes for seeing the sun. And as healthy eyes die not to the pleasure of seeing the sun, but to that painful effect of the rays which beat upon the eye so as to increase the darkness; so the mind, healed by the love of the spirit, dies not to the justice of the law, but to the guilt and transgression which followed on the law in the absence of grace. So it is said “The law is good, if used lawfully;” and immediately after of the same law, “Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man.” The man who delights in righteousness itself, does not require the restraint of the letter.

9. The bride of Christ rejoices in the hope of full salvation, and desires for thee a happy conversion from fables to truth. She desires that the fear of Adoneus, as if he were a strange lover, may not prevent thy escape from the

seductions of the wily serpent. Adonai is a Hebrew word, meaning Lord, as applied only to God. In the same way the Greek word latria means service, in the sense of the service of God; and Amen means true, in a special sacred sense. This is to be learned only from the Hebrew Scriptures, or from a translation. The Church of Christ understands and loves these names, without regarding the evils of those who scoff because they are ignorant. What she does not yet understand, she believes may be explained, as similar things have already been explained to her. If she is charged with loving Emmanuel, she laughs at the ignorance of the accuser, and holds fast by the truth of this name. If she is charged with loving Messiah, she scorns her powerless adversary, and clings to her anointed Master. Her prayer for thee is, that thou also mayest be cured of thy errors, and be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The monstrosity with which thou ignorantly chargest the true doctrine, is really to be found in the world which, according to thy fanciful stories, is made partly of thy god and partly of the world of darkness. This world, half savage and half divine, is worse than monstrous. The view of such follies should make thee humble and penitent, and should lead thee to shun the serpent, who seduces thee into such errors. If thou dost not believe what Moses says of the guile of the serpent, thou mayest be warned by Paul, who, when speaking of presenting the Church as a chaste virgin to Christ, says, “I fear lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his craftiness, your minds also should be corrupted from the simplicity and purity which is in Christ.” In spite of this warning, thou hast been so misled, so infatuated by the serpent’s fatal enchantments, that while he has persuaded other heretics to believe various falsehoods, he has persuaded thee to believe that he is Christ. Others, though fallen into the maze of manifold error, still admit the truth of the apostle’s warning. But thou art so far gone in corruption, and so lost to shame, that thou holdest as Christ the very being by whom the apostle declares that Eve was beguiled, and against whom he thus seeks to put the virgin bride of Christ on her guard. Thy heart is darkened by the deceiver, who intoxicates thee with dreams of glittering groves. What are these promises but dreams? What reason is there to believe them true? O drunken, but not with wine!

10. Thou hast the impious audacity to accuse the God of the prophets of not fulfilling His promises even to His servants the Jews. Thou dost not

mention, however, any promise that is unfulfilled; otherwise it might be shown, either that the promise has been fulfilled, and so that thou dost not understand it, or that it is yet to be fulfilled, and so that thou dost not believe it. What promise has been fulfilled to thee, to make it probable that thou wilt obtain new worlds gained from the region of darkness? If there are prophets who predict the Manichaeans with praise, and if it is said that the existence of the sect is a fulfillment of this prediction, it must first be proved that these predictions were not forged by Manichaeus in order to gain followers. He does not consider falsehood sinful. If he declares in praise of Christ that He showed false marks of wounds in His body, he can have no scruple about showing false predictions in his sheepskin volumes. Assuredly there are predictions of the Manichaeans, less clear in the prophets, and most explicit in the apostle. For example: “The Spirit,” he says, “speaketh expressly, that in the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and to doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared, forbidding to marry, abstaining from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving by believers, and those who know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.” The fulfillment of this in the Manichaeans is as clear as day to all that know them, and has already been proved as fully as time permits.

11. She whom the apostle warns against the guile of the serpent by which thou hast been corrupted, that he may present her as a chaste virgin to Christ, her only husband, acknowledges the God of the prophets as the true God, and her own God. So many of His promises have already been fulfilled to her, that she looks confidently for the fulfillment of the rest. Nor can any one say that these prophecies have been forged to suit the present time, for they are found in the books of the Jews. What could be more unlikely than that all nations should be blessed in Abraham’s seed, as it was promised? And yet how plainly is this promise now fulfilled! The last promise is made in the following short prophecy: “Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they shall ever praise Thee.” When trial is past, and death, the last enemy, is destroyed, there will be rest in the constant occupation of praising God, where there shall be no arrivals and no departures. So the prophet says elsewhere: “Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem;

celebrate thy God, O Zion: for He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; He hath blessed thy children within thee.” The gates are shut, so that none can go in or out. The Bridegroom Himself says in the Gospel, that He will not open to the foolish virgins though they knock. This Jerusalem, the holy Church, the bride of Christ, is described fully in the Revelation of John. And that which commends the promises of future bliss to the belief of this chaste virgin is, that now she is in possession of what was foretold of her by the same prophets. For she is thus described: “Hearken, O daughter, and regard, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house. For the King hath greatly desired thy beauty; and He is thy God. The daughters of Tyre shall worship Him with gifts; the rich among the people shall entreat thy favor. The daughter of the King is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. The virgins following her shall be brought unto the King: her companions shall be brought unto thee; with gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought into the temple of the King. Instead of thy fathers, children shall be born to thee, whom thou shall make princes over all the earth. Thy name shall be remembered to all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.” Unhappy victim of the serpent’s guile, the inward beauty of the daughter of the King is not for thee even to think of. For this purity of mind is that which thou hast lost in opening thine eyes to love and worship the sun and moon. And so by the just judgment of God thou art estranged from the tree of life, which is eternal and internal wisdom; and with thee nothing is called or accounted truth or wisdom but that light which enters the eyes opened to evil, and which in thy impure mind expands and shapes itself into fanciful images. These are thy abominable whoredoms. Still the truth calls on thee to reflect and return. Return to me, and thou shall be cleansed and restored, if thy shame leads thee to repentance. Hear these words of the true Truth, who neither with feigned shapes fought against the race of darkness, nor with feigned blood redeemed thee.

BOOK XVI

Faustus willing to believe not only that the Jewish but that all Gentile prophets wrote of Christ, if it should be proved; but he would none the less insist upon rejecting their superstitions. Augustin maintains that all Moses wrote is of Christ, and that his writings must be either accepted or rejected as a whole.

1. Faustus said: You ask why we do not believe Moses, when Christ says, “Moses wrote of me; and if ye believed Moses, ye would also believe me.” I should be glad if not only Moses, but all prophets, Jew and Gentile, had written of Christ. It would be no hindrance, but a help to our faith, if we could cull testimonies from all hands agreeing in favor of our God. You could extract the prophecies of Christ out of the superstition which we should hate as much as ever. I am quite willing to believe that Moses, though so much the opposite of Christ, may seem to have written of Him. No one but would gladly find a flower in every thorn, and food in every plant, and honey in every insect, although we would not feed on insects or on grass, nor wear thorns as a crown. No one but would wish pearls to be found in every deep, and gems in every land, and fruit on every tree. We may eat fish from the sea without drinking the water. We may take the useful, and reject what is hurtful. And why may we not take the prophecies of Christ from a religion the rites of which we condemn as useless? This need not make us liable to be led into the bondage of the errors; for we do not hate the unclean spirits less because they confessed plainly and openly that Jesus was the Son of God. If any similar testimony is found in Moses, I will accept it. But I will not on this account be brought into subjection to his law, which to my mind is pure Paganism. There is no reason whatever for thinking that I can have any objections to receiving prophecies of Christ from every spirit.

2. Since you have proved that Christ declared that Moses wrote of him, I should be very grateful if you would show me what he has written. I have searched the Scriptures, as we are told to do, and have found no prophecies of Christ, either because there are none, or because I could not understand them. The only escape from this perplexity was in one or other of two conclusions. Either this verse must be spurious, or Jesus a liar. As it is not consistent with piety to suppose God a liar, I preferred to attribute falsehood to the writers, rather than to the Author, of truth. Moreover, He Himself tells that those who came before him were thieves and robbers, which applies first of all to Moses. And when, on the occasion of His speaking of

His own majesty, and calling Himself the light of the world, the Jews angrily rejoined, “Thou bearest witness of thyself, thy witness is not true,” I do not find that He appealed to the prophecies of Moses, as might have been expected. Instead of this, as having no connection with the Jews, and receiving no testimony from their fathers, He replied: “It is written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one who bear witness of myself, and the Father who sent me beareth witness of me.” He referred to the voice from heaven which all had heard: “This is my beloved Son, believe Him.” I think it likely that if Christ had said that Moses wrote of Him, the ingenious hostility of the Jews would have led them at once to ask what He supposed Moses to have written. The silence of the Jews is a proof that Jesus never made such a statement.

3. My chief reason, however, for suspecting the genuineness of this verse is what I said before, that in all my search of the writings of Moses I have found no prophecy of Christ. But now that I have found in you a reader of superior intelligence, I hope to learn something; and I promise to be grateful if no feeling of ill-will prevents you from giving me the benefit of your higher attainments, as your lofty style of reproof entitles me to expect from you. I ask for instruction in whatever the writings of Moses contain about our God and Lord which has escaped me in reading. I beseech you not to use the ignorant argument that Christ affirms Moses to have written of Him. For suppose you had not to deal with me, as in my case there is an obligation to believe Him whom I profess to follow, but with a Jew or a Gentile, in reply to the statement that Moses wrote of Christ, they will ask for proofs. What shall we say to them? We cannot quote Christ’s authority, for they do not believe in Him. We must point out what Moses wrote.

4. What, then, shall we point to? Shall it be that passage which you often quote where the God of Moses says to him: “I will raise up unto them from among their brethren a prophet like unto thee?” But the Jew can see that this does not refer to Christ, and there is every reason against our thinking that it does. Christ was not a prophet, nor was He like Moses: for Moses was a man, and Christ was God; Moses was a sinner, and Christ sinless; Moses was born by ordinary generation, and Christ of a virgin according to you, or, as I hold, not born at all: Moses, for offending his God, was put to

death on the mountain; and Christ suffered voluntarily, and the Father was well pleased in Him. If we were to assert that Christ was a prophet like Moses, the Jew would either deride us as ignorant or pronounce us untruthful.

5. Or shall we take another favorite passage of yours: “They shall see their life hanging, and shall not believe their life?” You insert the words “on a tree,” which are not in the original. Nothing can be easier than to show that this has no reference to Christ. Moses is uttering dire threatenings in case the people should depart from his law, and says among other things that they would be taken captive by their enemies, and would be expecting death day and night, having no confidence in the life allowed them by their conquerors, so that their life would hang in uncertainty from fear of impending danger. This passage will not do, we must try others. I cannot admit that the words, “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,” refer to Christ, or when it is said that the prince or prophet must be killed who should try to turn away the people from their God, or should break any of the commandments. That Christ did this I am obliged to grant. But if you assert that these things were written of Christ, it may be asked in reply, What spirit dictated these prophecies in which Moses curses Christ and orders him to be killed? If he had the Spirit of God, these things are not written of Christ; if they are written of Christ, he had not the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God would not curse Christ, or order Him to be killed. To vindicate Moses, you must confess that these passages too have no reference to Christ. So, if you have no others to show, there are none. If there are none, Christ could not have said that there were; and if Christ did not say so, that verse is spurious.

6. The next verse too is suspicious, “If ye believed Moses, ye would also believe me;” for the religion of Moses is so entirely different from that of Christ, that if the Jews believed one, they could not believe the other. Moses strictly forbids any work to be done on Sabbath, and gives as a reason for this prohibition that God made the world and all that is therein in six days, and rested on the seventh day, which is Sabbath; and therefore blessed or sanctified it as His haven of repose after toil, and commanded that breaking the Sabbath should be punished with death. The Jews, in obedience to

Moses, insisted strongly on this, and so would not even listen to Christ when He told them that God always works, and that no day is appointed for the intermission of His pure and unwearied energy, and that accordingly He Himself had to work incessantly even on Sabbath. “My Father,” he says, “worketh always, and I too must work.” Again, Moses places circumcision among the rites pleasing to God, and commands every male to be circumcised in the foreskin of his flesh, and declares that this is a necessary sign of the covenant which God made with Abraham, and that every male not circumcised would be cut off from his tribe, and from his part in the inheritance promised to Abraham and to his seed. In this observance, too, the Jews were very zealous, and consequently could not believe in Christ, who made light of these things, and declared that a man when circumcised became twofold a child of hell. Again, Moses is very particular about the distinction in animal foods, and discourses like an epicure on the merits of fish, and birds, and quadrupeds, and orders some to be eaten as clean, and others which are unclean not to be touched. Among the unclean he reckons the swine and the hare, and fish without scales, and quadrupeds that neither divide the hoof nor chew the cud. In this also the Jews carefully obeyed Moses, and so could not believe in Christ, who taught that all food is alike, and though he allowed no animal food to his own disciples, gave full liberty to the laity to eat whatever they pleased, and taught that men are polluted not by what goes into the mouth, but by the evil things which come out of it. In these and many other things the doctrine of Jesus, as everybody knows, contradicts that of Moses.

7. Not to enumerate all the points of difference, it is enough to mention this one fact, that most Christian sects, and, as is well known, the Catholics, pay no regard to what is prescribed in the writings of Moses. If this does not originate in some error, but in the doctrine correctly transmitted from Christ and His disciples, you surely must acknowledge that the teaching of Jesus is opposed to that of Moses, and that the Jews did not believe in Christ on account of their attachment to Moses. How can it be otherwise than false that Jesus said to the Jews, “If ye believed Moses, ye would believe me also,” when it is perfectly clear that their belief in Moses prevented them from believing in Jesus, which they might have done if they had left off

believing in Moses? Again I ask you to show me anything that Moses wrote of Christ.

8. Elsewhere Faustus says: When you find no passage to point to, you use this weak and inappropriate argument, that a Christian is bound to believe Christ when he says that Moses wrote of Him, and that whoever does not believe this is not a Christian. It would be far better to confess at once that you cannot find any passage. This argument might be used with me, because my reverence for Christ compels me to believe what He says. Still it may be a question whether this is Christ's own declaration, requiring absolute belief, or only the writer's, to be carefully examined. And disbelief in falsehood is no offence to Christ, but to impostors. But of whatever use this argument may be with Christians, it is wholly inapplicable in the case of the Jew or Gentile, with whom we are supposed to be discussing. And even with Christians the argument is objectionable. When the Apostle Thomas was in doubt, Christ did not spurn him from Him. Instead of saying, "Believe, if thou art a disciple; whoever does not believe is not a disciple," Christ sought to heal the wounds of his mind by showing him the marks of the wounds in His own body. Does it become you then to tell me that I am not a Christian because I am in doubt, not about Christ, but about the genuineness of a remark attributed to Christ? But, you say, He calls those especially blessed, who have not seen, and yet have believed. If you think that this refers to believing without the use of judgment and reason, you are welcome to this blind blessedness. I shall be content with rational blessedness.

9. Augustin replied: Your idea of taking any prophecies of Christ to be found in Moses, as a fish out of the sea, while you throw away the water from which the fish is taken, is a clever one. But since all that Moses wrote is of Christ, or relates to Christ, either as predicting Him by words and actions, or as illustrating His grace and glory, you, with your faith in the untrue and untruthful Christ from the writings of Manichaeus, and your unbelief in Moses, will not even eat the fish. Moreover, though you are sincere in your hostility to Moses, you are hypocritical in your praise of fish. For how can you say that there is no harm in eating a fish taken out of the sea, when your doctrine is that such food is so hurtful, that you would

rather starve than make use of it? If all flesh is unclean, as you say it is, and if the wretched life of your god is confined in all water or plants, from which it is liberated by your using them for food, according to your own vile superstition, you must throw away the fish you have praised, and drink the water and eat the thistles you speak of as useless. As for your comparison of the servant of God to devils, as if his prophecies of Christ resembled their confession, the servant does not refuse to bear the reproach of his master. If the Master of the house was called Beelzebub, how much more they of His household! You have learned this reproach from Christ's enemies; and you are worse than they were. They did not believe that Jesus was Christ, and therefore thought Him an impostor. But the only doctrine you believe in is that which dares to make Christ a liar.

10. What reason have you for saying that the law of Moses is pure Paganism? Is it because it speaks of a temple, and an altar of sacrifices, and priests? But all these names are found also in the New Testament. "Destroy," Christ says, "this temple, and in three days I will raise it up;" and again, "When thou offerest thy gift at the altar;" and again, "Go, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thyself a sacrifice as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." What these things prefigured the Lord Himself partly tells us, when He calls His own body the temple; and we learn also from the apostle, who says, "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are;" and again, "I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God;" and in similar passages. As the same apostle says, in words which cannot be too often quoted, these things were our examples, for they were not the work of devils, but of the one true God who made heaven and earth, and who, though not needing such things, yet, suiting His requirements to the time, made ancient observances significant of future realities. Since you pretend to abhor Paganism, though it is only that you may lead astray by your deception unlearned Christians or those not established in the faith, show us any authority in Christian books for your worship and service of the sun and moon. Your heresy is liker Paganism than the law of Moses is. For you do not worship Christ, but only something that you call Christ, a fiction of your own fancy; and the gods you serve are either the bodies visible in the heavens, or hosts of your own contrivance. If you do not build shrines for

these worthless idols, the creatures of the imagination, you make your hearts their temple.

11. You ask me to show what Moses wrote of Christ. Many passages have already been pointed out. But who could point out all? Besides, when any quotation is made, you are ready perversely to try to give the words another meaning; or if the evidence is too strong to be resisted, you will say that you take the passage as a sweet fish out of the salt water, and that you will not therefore consent to drink all the brine of the books of Moses. It will be enough, then, to take those passages in the Hebrew law which Faustus has chosen for criticism, and to show that, when rightly understood, they apply to Christ. For if the things which our adversary ridicules and condemns are made to prove that he himself is condemned by Christian truth, it will be evident that either the mere quotation or the careful examination of the other passages will be enough to show their agreement with Christian faith. Well, then, O thou full of all subtilty, when the Lord in the Gospel says, "If ye believed Moses, ye would believe me also, for he wrote of me," there is no occasion for the great perplexity you pretend to be in, or for the alternative of either pronouncing this verse spurious or calling Jesus a liar. The verse is as genuine as its words are true. I preferred, says Faustus, to attribute falsehood to the writers, rather than to the Author of truth. What sort of faith can you have in Christ as the author of truth, when your doctrine is that His flesh and His death, His wounds and their marks, were feigned? And where is your authority for saying that Christ is the author of truth, if you dare to attribute falsehood to those who wrote of Him, whose testimony has come down to us with the confirmation of those immediately succeeding them? You have not seen Christ, nor has He conversed with you as with the apostles, nor called you from heaven as He did Saul. What knowledge or belief can we have of Christ, but on the authority of Scripture? Or if there is falsehood in the Gospel which has been widely published among all nations, and has been held in such high sacredness in all churches since the name of Christ was first preached, where shall we find a trustworthy record of Christ? If the Gospel is called in question in spite of the general consent regarding it, there can be no writing which a man may not call spurious if he does not wish to believe it.

12. You go on to quote Christ's words, that all who came before Him were thieves and robbers. How do you know that these were Christ's words, but from the Gospel? You profess faith in these words, as if you had heard them from the mouth of the Lord Himself. But if any one declares the verse to be spurious, and denies that Christ said this, you will have, in reply, to exert yourself in vindication of the authority of the Gospel. Unhappy being! what you refuse to believe is written in the same place as that which you quote as spoken by the Lord Himself. We believe both, for we believe the sacred narrative in which both are contained. We believe both that Moses wrote of Christ, and that all that came before Christ were thieves and robbers. By their coming He means their not being sent. Those who were sent, as Moses and the holy prophets, came not before Him, but with Him. They did not proudly wish to precede Him, but were the humble bearers of the message which He uttered by them. According to the meaning which you give to the Lord's words, it is plain that with you there can be no prophets. And so you have made a Christ for yourselves who should prophesy a Christ to come. If you have any prophets of your own, they will have, of course, no authority, as not being recognized by any others; but if there are any that you dare to quote as prophesying that Christ would come in an unreal body, and would suffer an unreal death, and would show to His doubting disciples unreal marks of wounds, not to speak of the abominable nature of such prophecies, and of the evident untruthfulness of those who commend falsehood in Christ, by your own interpretation those prophets must have been thieves and robbers, for they could not have spoken of Christ as coming in any manner unless they had come before Him. If by those who came before Christ we understand those who would not come with Him,—that is, with the Word of God,—but without being sent by God brought their own falsehoods to men, you yourselves, although you are born in this world after the death and the resurrection of Christ, are thieves and robbers. For, without waiting for His illumination that you might preach His truth, you have come before Him to preach up your own deceits.

13. In the passage where we read of the Jews saying to Christ, Thou bearest witness of thyself, thy witness is not true, you do not see that Christ replies by saying that Moses wrote of Him, simply because you have not got the eye of piety to see with. The answer of Christ is this: "It is written in your

law, that the testimony of two men is true; I am one who bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.” What does this mean, if rightly understood, but that this number of witnesses required by the law was fixed upon and consecrated in the spirit of prophecy, that even thus might be prefigured the future revelation of the Father and Son, whose spirit is the Holy Spirit of the inseparable Trinity? So it is written: “In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.” As a matter of fact, one witness generally speaks the truth, while a number tell lies. And the world, in its conversion to Christianity, believed one apostle preaching the gospel rather than the mistaken multitude who persecuted him. There was a special reason for requiring this number of witnesses, and in His answer the Lord implied that Moses prophesied of Him. Do you carp at His saying your law instead of the law of God? But, as every one knows, this is the common expression in Scripture. Your law means the law given to you. So the apostle speaks of his gospel, while at the same time he declares that he received it not from man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. You might as well say that Christ denies God to be His Father, when He uses the words your Father instead of our Father. Again, you should refuse to believe the voice which you allude to as having come from heaven, This is my beloved Son, believe Him, because you did not hear it. But if you believe this because you find it in the sacred Scriptures, you will also find there what you deny, that Moses wrote of Christ, besides many other things that you do not acknowledge as true. Do you not see that your own mischievous argument may be used to prove that this voice never came from heaven? To your own destruction, and to the detriment of the welfare of mankind, you try to weaken the authority of the gospel, by arguing that it cannot be true that Christ said that Moses wrote of Him; because if He had said this, the ingenious hostility of the Jews would have led them at once to ask what He supposed Moses to have written of Him. In the same way, it might be impiously argued that if that voice had really come from heaven, all the Jews who heard it would have believed. Why are you so unreasonable as not to consider that, as it was possible for the Jews to remain hardened in unbelief after hearing the voice from heaven, so it was possible for them, when Christ said that Moses wrote of Him, to refrain from asking what Moses wrote, because in their ingenious hostility they were afraid of being proved to be in the wrong?

14. Besides that this argument is an impious assault on the gospel, Faustus himself is aware of its feebleness, and therefore insists more on what he calls his chief difficulty,—that in all his search of the writings of Moses he has found no prophecies of Christ. The obvious reply is, that he does not understand. And if any one asks why he does not understand, the answer is that he reads with a hostile, unbelieving mind; he does not search in order to know, but thinks he knows when he is ignorant. This vainglorious presumption either blinds the eye of his understanding so as to prevent his seeing anything, or distorts his vision, so that his remarks of approval or disapproval are misdirected. I ask, he says, for instruction in whatever the writings of Moses contain about our God and Lord, which has escaped me in reading. I reply at once that it has all escaped him, for all is written of Christ. As we cannot go through the whole, I will, with the help of God, comply with your request, to the extent I have already promised, by showing that the passages which you specially criticise refer to Christ. You tell me not to use the ignorant argument that Christ affirms Moses to have written of Him. But if I use this argument, it is not because I am ignorant, but because I am a believer. I acknowledge that this argument will not convince a Gentile or a Jew. But, in spite of all your evasions, you are obliged to confess that it tells against you, who boast of possessing a kind of Christianity. You say, Suppose you had not to deal with me, as in my case there is an obligation to believe Him whom I profess to follow, but with a Jew or a Gentile. This is as much as to say that you, at any rate, with whom I have at present to do, are satisfied that Moses wrote of Christ; for you are not bold enough to discard altogether the well-grounded authority of the Gospel where Christ’s own declaration is recorded. Even when you attack this authority indirectly, you feel that you are attacking your own position. You are aware that if you refuse to believe the Gospel, which is so generally known and received, you must fail utterly in the attempt to substitute for it any trustworthy record of the sayings and doings of Christ. You are afraid that the loss of the Christian name might lead to the exposure of your absurdities to universal scorn and condemnation. Accordingly you try to recover yourself, by saying that your profession of Christianity obliges you to believe these words of the Gospel. So you, at any rate, which is all that we need care for just now, are caught and slain in this death blow to your errors. You are forced to confess that Moses wrote of Christ,

because the Gospel, which your profession obliges you to believe, states that Christ said so. As regards a discussion with a Jew or a Gentile, I have already shown as well as I could how I think it should be conducted.

15. I still hold that there is a reference to Christ in the passage which you select for refutation, where God says to Moses, “I will raise up unto them from among their brethren a prophet like unto thee.” The string of showy antitheses with which you try to ornament your dull discourse does not at all affect my belief of this truth. You attempt to prove, by a comparison of Christ and Moses, that they are unlike, and that therefore the words, “I will raise up a prophet like unto thee,” cannot be understood of Christ. You specify a number of particulars in which you find a diversity: that the one is man, and the other God; that one is a sinner, the other sinless; that one is born of ordinary generation, the other, as we hold, of a virgin, and, as you hold, not even of a virgin; the one incurs God’s anger, and is put to death on a mountain, the other suffers voluntarily, having throughout the approval of His Father. But surely things may be said to be like, although they are not like in every respect. Besides the resemblance between things of the same nature, as between two men, or between parents and children, or between men in general, or any species of animals, or in trees, between one olive and another, or one laurel and another, there is often a resemblance in things of a different nature, as between a wild and a tame olive, or between wheat and barley. These things are to some extent allied. But there is the greatest possible distance between the Son of God, by whom all things were made, and a beast or a stone. And yet in the Gospel we read, “Behold the Lamb of God,” and in the apostle, “That rock was Christ.” This could not be said except on the supposition of some resemblance. What wonder, then, if Christ condescended to become like Moses, when He was made like the lamb which God by Moses commanded His people to eat as a type of Christ, enjoining that its blood should be used as a means of protection, and that it should be called the Passover, which every one must admit to be fulfilled in Christ? The Scripture, I acknowledge, shows points of difference; and the Scripture also, as I call on you to acknowledge, shows points of resemblance. There are points of both kinds, and one can be proved as well as the other. Christ is unlike man, for He is God; and it is written of Him that He is “over all, God blessed for ever.” Christ is also like

man, for He is man; and it is likewise written of Him, that He is the “Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” Christ is unlike a sinner, for He is ever holy; and He is like a sinner, for “God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that by sin He might condemn sin in the flesh.” Christ is unlike a man born in ordinary generation, for He was born of a virgin; and yet He is like, for He too was born of a woman, to whom it was said, “That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” Christ is unlike a man, who dies on account of his own sin, for He died without sin, and of His own free-will; and again, He is like, for He too died a real death of the body.

16. You ought not to say, in disparagement of Moses, that he was a sinner, and that he was put to death on a mountain because his God was angry with him. For Moses could glory in the Lord as his Saviour, who is also the Saviour of him who says, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” Moses, indeed, is accused by the voice of God, because his faith showed signs of weakness when he was commanded to draw water out of the rock. In this he may have sinned as Peter did, when from the weakness of his faith he became afraid in the midst of the waves. But we cannot think from this, that he who, as the Gospel tells us, was counted worthy to be present with the Lord along with holy Elias on the mount of transfiguration, was separated from the eternal fellowship of the saints. The sacred history shows in what favor he was with God even after his sin. But since you may ask why God speaks of this sin as deserving the punishment of death, and as I have promised to point out prophecies of Christ in those passages which you select for criticism, I will try, with the Lord’s help, to show that what you object to in the death of Moses is, when rightly understood, prophetical of Christ.

17. We often find in the symbolical passages of Scripture, that the same person appears in different characters on different occasions. So, on this occasion, Moses represents and prefigures the Jewish people as placed under the law. As, then, Moses, when he struck the rock with his rod, doubted the power of God, so the people who were under the law given by Moses, when they nailed Christ to the cross, did not believe Him to be the power of God. And as water flowed from the smitten rock for those that

were athirst, so life comes to believers from the stroke of the Lord’s passion. The testimony of the apostle is clear and decisive on this point, when he says, “This rock was Christ.” In the command of God, that the death of the flesh of Moses should take place on the mountain, we see the divine appointment that the carnal doubt of the divinity of Christ should die on Christ’s exaltation. As the rock is Christ, so is the mountain. The rock is the fortitude of His humiliation; the mountain the height of His exaltation. For as the apostle says, “This rock was Christ,” so Christ Himself says, “A city set upon an hill cannot be hid,” showing that He is the hill, and believers the city built upon the glory of His name. The carnal mind lives when, like the smitten rock, the humiliation of Christ on the cross is despised. For Christ crucified is to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. And the carnal mind dies when, like the mountain-top, Christ is seen in His exaltation. “For to them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” Moses therefore ascended the mount, that in the death of the flesh he might be received by the living spirit. If Faustus had ascended, he would not have uttered carnal objections from a dead mind. It was the carnal mind that made Peter dread the smiting of the rock, when, on the occasion of the Lord’s foretelling His passion, he said, “Be it far from Thee, Lord; spare Thyself.” And this sin too was severely rebuked, when the Lord replied, “Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things which be of God, but those which be of men.” And where did this carnal distrust die but in the glorification of Christ, as on a mountain height? If it was alive when Peter timidly denied Christ, it was dead when he fearlessly preached Him. It was alive in Saul, when, in his aversion to the offense of the cross, he made havoc of the Christian faith, and where but on this mountain had it died, when Paul was able to say, “I live no longer, but Christ liveth in me?”

18. What other reason has your heretical folly to give for thinking that there is no prophecy of Christ in the words, “I will raise up unto them a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee?” Your showing Christ to be unlike Moses is no reason; for we can show that in other respects He is like. How can you object to Christ’s being called a prophet, since He condescended to be a man, and actually foretold many future events? What

is a prophet, but one who predicts events beyond human foresight? So Christ says of Himself: “A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country.” But, turning from you, since you have already acknowledged that your profession of Christianity obliges you to believe the Gospel, I address myself to the Jew, who enjoys the poor privilege of liberty from the yoke of Christ, and who therefore thinks it allowable to say: Your Christ spoke falsely; Moses wrote nothing of him.

19. Let the Jews say what prophet is meant in this promise of God to Moses: “I will raise up unto them a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee.” Many prophets appeared after Moses; but one in particular is here pointed out. The Jews will perhaps naturally think of the successor of Moses, who led into the promised land the people that Moses had brought out of Egypt. Having this successor of Moses in his mind, he may perhaps laugh at me for asking to what prophet the words of the promise refer, since it is recorded who followed Moses in ruling and leading the people. When he has laughed at my ignorance, as Faustus supposes him to do, I will still continue my inquiries, and will desire my laughing opponent to give me a serious answer to the question why Moses changed the name of this successor, who was preferred to himself as the leader of the people into the promised land, to show that the law given by Moses not to save, but to convince the sinner, cannot lead us into heaven, but only the grace and truth which are by Jesus Christ. This successor was called Osea, and Moses gave him the name of Jesus. Why then did he give him this name when he sent him from the valley of Pharan into the land into which he was to lead the people? The true Jesus says, “If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself.” I will ask the Jew if the prophet does not show the prophetical meaning of these things when he says, “God shall come from Africa, and the Holy One from Pharan.” Does this not mean that the holy God would come with the name of him who came from Africa by Pharan, that is, with the name of Jesus? Then, again, it is the Word of God Himself who speaks when He promises to provide this successor to Moses, speaking of him as an angel,—a name commonly given in Scripture to those carrying any message. The words are: “Behold I send my angel before thy face, to preserve thee in the way, and to bring thee into the land which I have sworn to give thee. Take heed unto him, and obey,

and beware of unbelief in him; for he will not take anything from thee wrongfully, for my name is in him.” Consider these words. Let the Jew, not to speak of the Manichaean, say what other angel he can find in Scripture to whom these words apply, but this leader who was to bring the people into the land of promise. Then let him inquire who it was that succeeded Moses, and brought in the people. He will find that it was Jesus, and that this was not his name at first, but after his name was changed. It follows that He who said, “My name is in him,” is the true Jesus, the leader who brings His people into the inheritance of eternal life, according to the New Testament, of which the Old was a figure. No event or action could have a more distinctly prophetical character than this, where the very name is a prediction.

20. It follows that this Jew, if he wishes to be a Jew inwardly, in the spirit, and not in the letter, if he wishes to be thought a true Israelite, in whom is no guile, will recognize in this dead Jesus, who led the people into the land of mortality, a figure of the true living Jesus, whom he may follow into the land of life. In this way, he will no longer in a hostile spirit resist so plain a prophecy, but, influenced by the allusion to the Jesus of the Old Testament, he will be prepared to listen meekly to Him whose name he bore, and who leads to the true land of promise; for He says, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the land.” The Gentile also, if his heart is not too stony, if he is one of those stones from which God raises up children unto Abraham, must allow it to be wonderful that in the ancient books of the people of whom Jesus was born, so plain a prophecy, including His very name, is found recorded; and must remark at the same time, that it is not any man of the name of Jesus who is prophesied of, but a divine person, because God said that His name was in that man who was appointed to rule the people, and to lead them into the kingdom, and who by a change of name was called Jesus. In His being sent with this new name, He brings a great and divine message, and is therefore called an Angel, which, as every tyro in Greek knows, means messenger. No Gentile, therefore, if he were not perverse and obstinate, would despise these books merely because he is not subject to the law of the Hebrews, to whom the books belong; but would think highly of the books, no matter whose they were, on finding in them prophecies of such ancient date, and of what he sees now taking place.

Instead of despising Christ Jesus because He is foretold in the Hebrew Scriptures, he would conclude that one thought worthy of being the subject of prophetic description, whoever the writers might be, for so many ages before His coming into the world,—sometimes in plain announcements, sometimes in figure by symbolic actions and utterances,—must claim to be regarded with profound admiration and reverence, and to be followed with implicit reliance. Thus the facts of Christian history would prove the truth of the prophecy, and the prophecy would prove the claims of Christ. Call this fancy, if it is not actually the case that men all over the world have been led, and are now led, to believe in Christ by reading these books.

21. In view of the multitudes from all nations who have become zealous believers in these books, it is laughably absurd to tell us that it is impossible to persuade a Gentile to learn the Christian faith from Jewish books. Indeed, it is a great confirmation of our faith that such important testimony is borne by enemies. The believing Gentiles cannot suppose these testimonies to Christ to be recent forgeries; for they find them in books held sacred for so many ages by those who crucified Christ, and still regarded with the highest veneration by those who every day blaspheme Christ. If the prophecies of Christ were the production of the preachers of Christ, we might suspect their genuineness. But now the preacher expounds the text of the blasphemer. In this way the Most High God orders the blindness of the ungodly for the profit of the saint, in His righteous government bringing good out of evil, that those who by their own choice live wickedly may be, in His just judgment, made the instruments of His will. So, lest those that were to preach Christ to the world should be thought to have forged the prophecies which speak of Christ as to be born, to work miracles, to suffer unjustly, to die, to rise again, to ascend to heaven, to publish the gospel of eternal life among all nations, the unbelief of the Jews has been made of signal benefit to us; so that those who do not receive in their heart for their own good these truths, carry, in their hands for our benefit the writings in which these truths are contained. And the unbelief of the Jews increases rather than lessens the authority of the books, for this blindness is itself foretold. They testify to the truth by their not understanding it. By not understanding the books which predict that they would not understand, they prove these books to be true.

22. In the passage, “Thou shalt see thy life hanging, and shalt not believe thy life,” Faustus is deceived by the ambiguity of the words. The words may be differently interpreted; but that they cannot be understood of Christ is not said by Faustus, nor can be said by anyone who does not deny that Christ is life, or that He was seen by the Jews hanging on the cross, or that they did not believe Him. Since Christ Himself says, “I am the life,” and since there is no doubt that He was seen hanging by the unbelieving Jews, I see no reason for doubting that this was written of Christ; for, as Christ says, Moses wrote of Him. Since we have already refuted Faustus’ arguments by which he tries to show that the words, “I will raise up from among their brethren a prophet like unto thee,” do not apply to Christ, because Christ is not like Moses, we need not insist on this other prophecy. Since, in the one case, his argument is that Christ is unlike Moses, so here he ought to argue that Christ is not the life, or that He was not seen hanging by the unbelieving Jews. But as he has not said this, and as no one will now venture to say so, there should be no difficulty in accepting this too as a prophecy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, uttered by His servant. These words, says Faustus, occur in a chapter of curses. But why should it be the less a prophecy because it occurs in the midst of prophecies? Or why should it not be a prophecy of Christ, although the context does not seem to refer to Christ? Indeed, among all the curses which the Jews brought on themselves by their sinful pride, nothing could be worse than this, that they should see their Life—that is, the Son of God—hanging, and should not believe their Life. For the curses of prophecy are not hostile imprecations, but announcements of coming judgment. Hostile imprecations are forbidden, for it is said, “Bless, and curse not.” But prophetic announcements are often found in the writings of the saints, as when the Apostle Paul says: “Alexander the coppersmith has done me much evil; the Lord shall reward him according to his works.” So it might be thought that the apostle was prompted by angry feeling to utter this imprecation: “I would that they were even made eunuchs that trouble you.” But if we remember who the writer is, we may see in this ambiguous expression an ingenious style of benediction. For there are eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. If Faustus had a pious appetite for Christian food, he would have found a similar ambiguity in the words of Moses. By the Jews the declaration, “Thou shalt see thy life

hanging, and shalt not believe thy life," may have been understood to mean that they would see their life to be in danger from the threats and plots of their enemies, and would not expect to live. But the child of the Gospel, who has heard Christ say, "He wrote of me," distinguishes in the ambiguity of the prophecy between what is thrown to swine and what is addressed to man. To his mind the thought immediately suggests itself of Christ hanging as the life of man, and of the Jews not believing in Him for this very reason, that they saw Him hanging. As to the objection that these words, "Thou shalt see thy life hanging, and shalt not believe thy life," are the only words referring to Christ in a passage containing maledictions not applicable to Christ, some might grant that this is true. For this prophecy might very well occur among the curses pronounced by the prophet upon the ungodly people, for these curses are of different kinds. But I, and those who with me consider more closely the saying of the Lord in His Gospel, which is not, He wrote also of me, as admitting that Moses wrote other things not referring to Christ, but, "He wrote of me," as teaching that in searching the Scriptures we should view them as intended solely to illustrate the grace of Christ, see a reference to Christ in the rest of the passage also. But it would take too much time to explain this here.

23. So far from these words of Faustus' quotation being proved not to refer to Christ by their occurring among the other curses, these curses cannot be rightly understood except as prophecies of the glory of Christ, in which lies the happiness of man. And what is true of these curses is still more true of this quotation. If it could be said of Moses that his words have a different meaning from what was in his mind, I would rather suppose him to have prophesied without knowing it, than allow that the words, "Thou shalt see thy life hanging, and shalt not believe thy life," are not applicable to Christ. So the words of Caiaphas had a different meaning from what he intended, when, in his hostility to Christ, he said that it was expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish, where the Evangelist added that he said this not of himself, but, since he was high priest, he prophesied. But Moses was not Caiaphas; and therefore when Moses said to the Hebrew people, "Thou shalt see thy life hanging, and shalt not believe thy life," he not only spoke of Christ, as he certainly did, even though he spoke without knowing the meaning of what he said,

but he knew that he spoke of Christ. For he was a most faithful steward of the prophetic mystery, that is, of the priestly unction which gives the knowledge of the name of Christ; and in this mystery even Caiaphas, wicked as he was, was able to prophesy without knowing it. The prophetic unction enabled him to prophesy, though his wicked life prevented him from knowing it. Who then can say that there are no prophecies of Christ in Moses, with whom began that unction to which we owe the knowledge of Christ's name, and by which even Caiaphas, the persecutor of Christ, prophesied of Christ without knowing it?

24. We have already said as much as appeared desirable of the curse pronounced on every one that hangs on a tree. Enough has been said to show that the command to kill any prophet or prince who tried to turn away the children of Israel from their God, or to break any commandment, is not directed against Christ. The more we consider the words and actions of our Lord Jesus Christ, the more clearly will this appear; for Christ never tried to turn away any of the Israelites from their God. The God whom Moses taught the people to love and serve, is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, whom the Lord Jesus Christ speaks of by this name, using the name in refutation of the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead. He says, "Of the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read what God said from the bush to Moses, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto Him." In the same words with which Christ answered the Sadducees we may answer the Manichaeans, for they too deny the resurrection, though in a different way. Again, when Christ said, in praise of the centurion's faith, "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," He added, "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall go into outer darkness." If, then, as Faustus must admit, the God of whom Moses spoke was the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, of whom Christ also spoke, as these passages prove, it follows that Christ did not try to turn away the people from their God. On the contrary, He warned them that they would go into outer darkness, because He saw that they were turned away from their God, in whose kingdom He says the Gentiles called from the whole world

will sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; implying that they would believe in the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob. So the apostle also says: “The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” It is implied that those who are blessed in the seed of Abraham shall imitate the faith of Abraham. Christ, then, did not try to turn away the Israelites from their God, but rather charged them with being turned away. The idea that Christ broke one of the commandments given by Moses is not a new one, for the Jews thought so; but it is a mistake, for the Jews were in the wrong. Let Faustus mention the commandment which he supposes the Lord to have broken, and we will point out his mistake, as we have done already, when it was required. Meanwhile it is enough to say, that if the Lord had broken any commandment, He could not have found fault with the Jews for doing so. For when the Jews blamed His disciples for eating with unwashen hands, in which they transgressed not a commandment of God, but the traditions of the elders, Christ said, “Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God, that ye may observe your traditions?” He then quotes a commandment of God, which we know to have been given by Moses. “For God said,” He adds, “Honor thy father and mother, and he that curseth father or mother shall die the death. But ye say, Whoever shall say to his father or mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, is not obliged to honor his father. So ye make the word of God of none effect by your traditions.” From this several things maybe learned: that Christ did not turn away the Jews from their God; that He not only did not Himself break God’s commandments, but found fault with those who did so; and that it was God Himself who gave these commandments by Moses.

25. In fulfillment of our promise that we would prove the reference to Christ in those passages selected by Faustus from the writings of Moses for adverse criticism, since we cannot here point out the reference to Christ which we believe to exist in all the writings of Moses, it becomes our duty to show that this commandment of Moses, that every prophet or prince should be killed who tried to turn away the people from their God, or to break any commandment, refers to the preservation of the faith which is taught in the Church of Christ. Moses no doubt knew in the spirit of

prophecy, and from what he himself heard from God, that many heretics would arise to teach errors of all kinds against the doctrine of Christ, and to preach another Christ than the true Christ. For the true Christ is He that was foretold in the prophecies uttered by Moses himself, and by the other holy men of that nation. Moses accordingly commanded that whoever tried to teach another Christ should be put to death. In obedience to this command, the voice of the Catholic Church, as with the spiritual two-edged sword of both Testaments, puts to death all who try to turn us away from our God, or to break any of the commandments. And chief among these is Manichaeus himself; for the truth of the law and the prophets convinces him of error as trying to turn us away from our God, the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, whom Christ acknowledges, and as trying to break the commandments of the law, which, even when they are only figurative, we regard as prophetic of Christ.

26. Faustus uses an argument which is either very deceitful or very stupid. And as Faustus is not stupid, it is probable that he used the argument intentionally, with the design of misleading the careless reader. He says: If these things are not written of Christ, and if you cannot show any others, it follows that there are none at all. The proposition is true; but it remains to be proved, both that these things are not written of Christ, and that no other can be shown. Faustus has not proved this; for we have shown both how these things are to be understood of Christ, and that there are many other things which have no meaning but as applied to Christ. So it does not follow, as Faustus says, that nothing was written by Moses of Christ. Let us repeat Faustus' argument: If these things are not written of Christ, and if you cannot show any others, it follows that there are none at all. Perfectly so. But as both these things and many others have been shown to be written of Christ, or with reference to Christ, the true conclusion is that Faustus' argument is worthless. In the passages quoted by Faustus, he has tried, though without success, to show that they were not written of Christ. But in order to draw the conclusion that there are none at all, he should first have proved that no others can be shown. Instead of this, he takes for granted that the readers of his book will be blind, or the hearers deaf, so that the omission will be overlooked, and runs on thus: If there are none, Christ could not have asserted that there were any. And if Christ did not make this

assertion, it follows that this verse is spurious. Here is a man who thinks so much of what he says himself, that he does not consider the possibility of another person saying the opposite. Where is your wit? Is this all you could say for a bad cause? But if the badness of the cause made you utter folly, the bad cause was your own choice. To prove your antecedent false, we have only to show some other things written of Christ. If there are some, it will not be true that there are none. And if there are some, Christ may have asserted that there were. And if Christ may have asserted this, it follows that this verse of the Gospel is not spurious. Coming back, then, to Faustus' proposition, If you cannot show any other, it follows that there are none at all, it requires to be proved that we cannot show any other. We need only refer to what we showed before, as sufficient to prove the truth of the text in the Gospel, in which Christ says, "If ye believed Moses, ye would also believe me; for he wrote of me." And even though from dullness of mind we could find nothing written of Christ by Moses, still, so strong is the evidence in support of the authority of the Gospel, that it would be incumbent on us to believe that not only some things, but everything written by Moses, refers to Christ; for He says not, He wrote also of me, but, He wrote of me. The truth then is this, that even though there were doubts, which God forbid, of the genuineness of this verse, the doubt would be removed by the number of testimonies to Christ which we find in Moses; while, on the other hand, even if we could find none, we should still be bound to believe that these are to be found, because no doubts can be admitted regarding any verse in the Gospel.

27. As to your argument that the doctrine of Moses was unlike that of Christ, and that therefore it was improbable that if they believed Moses, they would believe Christ too; and that it would rather follow that their belief in one would imply of necessity opposition to the other,—you could not have said this if you had turned your mind's eye for a moment to see men all the world over, when they are not blinded by a contentious spirit, learned and unlearned, Greek and barbarian, wise and unwise, to whom the apostle called himself a debtor, believing in both Christ and Moses. If it was improbable that the Jews would believe both Christ and Moses, it is still more improbable that all the world would do so. But as we see all nations believing both, and in a common and well-grounded faith holding the

agreement of the prophecy of the one with the gospel of the other, it was no impossible thing to which this one nation was called, when Christ said to them, “If ye believed Moses, ye would also believe me.” Rather we should be amazed at the guilty obstinacy of the Jews, who refused to do what we see the whole world has done.

28. Regarding the Sabbath and circumcision, and the distinction in foods, in which you say the teaching of Moses differs from what Christians are taught by Christ, we have already shown that, as the apostle says, “all those things were our examples.” The difference is not in the doctrine, but in the time. There was a time when it was proper that these things should be figuratively predicted; and there is now a different time when it is proper that they should be openly declared and fully accomplished. It is not surprising that the Jews, who understood the Sabbath in a carnal sense, should oppose Christ, who began to open up its spiritual meaning. Reply, if you can, to the apostle, who declares that the rest of the Sabbath was a shadow of something future. If the Jews opposed Christ because they did not understand what the true Sabbath is, there is no reason why you should oppose Him, or refuse to learn what true innocence is. For on that occasion when Jesus appears especially to set aside the Sabbath, when His disciples were hungry, and pulled the ears of corn through which they were passing, and ate them, Jesus, in replying to the Jews, declared His disciples to be innocent. “If you knew,” He said “what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the innocent.” They should rather have pitied the wants of the disciples, for hunger forced them to do what they did. But pulling ears of corn, which is innocence in the teaching of Christ, is murder in the teaching of Manichaeus. Or was it an act of charity in the apostles to pull the ears of corn, that they might in eating set free the members of God, as in your foolish notions? Then it must be cruelty in you not to do the same. Faustus’ reason for setting aside the Sabbath is because he knows that God’s power is exercised without cessation, and without weariness. It is for those to say this, who believe that all times are the production of an eternal act of God’s will. But you will find it difficult to reconcile this with your doctrine, that the rebellion of the race of darkness broke your god’s rest, which was also disturbed by a sudden attack of the enemy; or perhaps God never had rest, as he foresaw this from

eternity, and could not feel at ease in the prospect of so dire a conflict, with such loss and disaster to his members.

29. Unless Christ had considered this Sabbath—which in your want of knowledge and of piety you laugh at—one of the prophecies written of Himself, He would not have borne such a testimony to it as He did. For when, as you say in praise of Christ, He suffered voluntarily, and so could choose His own time for suffering and for resurrection, He brought it about that His body rested from all its works on Sabbath in the tomb, and that His resurrection on the third day, which we call the Lord's day, the day after the Sabbath, and therefore the eighth, proved the circumcision of the eighth day to be also prophetical of Him. For what does circumcision mean, but the eradication of the mortality which comes from our carnal generation? So the apostle says: "Putting off from Himself His flesh, He made a show of principalities and powers, triumphing over them in Himself." The flesh here said to be put off is that mortality of flesh on account of which the body is properly called flesh. The flesh is the mortality, for in the immortality of the resurrection there will be no flesh; as it is written, "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God." You are accustomed to argue from these words against our faith in the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, which has already taken place in the Lord Himself. You keep out of view the following words, in which the apostle explains his meaning. To show what he here means by flesh, he adds, "Neither shall corruption inherit incorruption." For this body, which from its mortality is properly called flesh, is changed in the resurrection, so as to be no longer corruptible and mortal. This is the apostle's statement, and not a supposition of ours, as his next words prove. "Lo" he says, "I show you a mystery: we shall all rise again, but we shall not all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the last trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." To put on immortality, the body puts off mortality. This is the mystery of circumcision, which by the law took place on the eighth day; and on the eighth day, the Lord's day, the day after the Sabbath, was fulfilled in its true meaning by the Lord. Hence it is said, "Putting off His flesh, He made a show of principalities and powers." For by means of this mortality the

hostile powers of hell ruled over us. Christ is said to have made a show or example of these, because in Himself, our Head, He gave an example which will be fully realized in the liberation of His whole body, the Church, from the power of the devil at the last resurrection. This is our faith. And according to the prophetic declaration quoted by Paul, “The just shall live by faith.” This is our justification. Even Pagans believe that Christ died. But only Christians believe that Christ rose again. “If thou confess with thy mouth,” says the apostle, “that Jesus is the Lord, and believest in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Again, because we are justified by faith in Christ’s resurrection, the apostle says, “He died for our offenses, and rose again for our justification.” And because this resurrection by faith in which we are justified was prefigured by the circumcision of the eighth day, the apostle says of Abraham, with whom the observance began, “He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith.” Circumcision, then, is one of the prophecies of Christ, written by Moses, of whom Christ said, “He wrote of me.” In the words of the Lord, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves,” it is not the circumcision of the proselyte which is meant, but his imitation of the conduct of the scribes and Pharisees, which the Lord forbids His disciples to imitate, when He says: “The scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat: what they say unto you, do; but do not after their works; for they say, and do not.” These words of the Lord teach us both the honor due to the teaching of Moses, in whose seat even bad men were obliged to teach good things, and the reason of the proselyte becoming a child of hell, which was not that he heard from the Pharisees the words of the law, but that he copied their example. Such a circumcised proselyte might have been addressed in the words of Paul: “Circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law.” His imitation of the Pharisees in not keeping the law made him a child of hell. And he was twofold more than they, probably because of his neglecting to fulfill what he voluntarily undertook, when, not being born a Jew, he chose to become a Jew.

30. Your scoff is very inappropriate, when you say that Moses discusses like a glutton what should be eaten, and commands some things to be freely

used as clean, and other things as unclean to be not even touched. A glutton makes no distinction, except in choosing the sweetest food. Perhaps you wish to commend to the admiration of the uninitiated the innocence of your abstemious habits, by appearing not to know, or to have forgotten, that swine's flesh tastes better than mutton. But as this too was written by Moses of Christ in figurative prophecy, in which the flesh of animals signifies those who are to be united to the body of Christ, which is the Church, or who are to be cast out, you are typified by the unclean animals; for your disagreement with the Catholic faith shows that you do not ruminate on the word of wisdom, and that you do not divide the hoof, in the sense of making a correct distinction between the Old Testament and the New. But you show still more audacity in adopting the erroneous opinions of your Adimantus.

31. You follow Adimantus in saying that Christ made no distinction in food, except in entirely prohibiting the use of animal food to His disciples, while He allowed the laity to eat anything that is eatable; and declared that they were not polluted by what enters into the mouth, but that the unseemly things which come out of the mouth are the things which defile a man. These words of yours are unseemly indeed, for they express notorious falsehood. If Christ taught that the evil things which come out of the mouth are the only things that defile a man, why should they not be the only things to defile His disciples, so as to make it unnecessary that any food should be forbidden or unclean? Is it only the laity that are not polluted by what goes into the mouth, but by what comes out of it? In that case, they are better protected from impurity than the saints, who are polluted both by what goes in and by what comes out. But as Christ, comparing Himself with John, who came neither eating nor drinking, says that He came eating and drinking, I should like to know what He ate and drank. When exposing the perversity which found fault with both, He says: "John came neither eating nor drinking; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man cometh eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a glutton and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." We know what John ate and drank. For it is not said that he drank nothing, but that he drank no wine or strong drink; so he must have drunk water. He did not live without food, but his food was locusts and wild honey. When Christ says that John did not eat or drink, He means

that he did not use the food which the Jews used. And because the Lord used this food, He is spoken of, in contrast with John, as eating and drinking. Will it be said that it was bread and vegetables which the Lord ate, and which John did not eat? It would be strange if one was said not to eat, because he used locusts and honey, while the other is said to eat simply because he used bread and vegetables. But whatever may be thought of the eating, certainly no one could be called a wine-bibber unless he used wine. Why then do you call wine unclean? It is not in order to subdue the body by abstinence that you prohibit these things, but because they are unclean, for you say that they are the poisonous filth of the race of darkness; whereas the apostle says, “To the pure all things are pure.” Christ, according to this doctrine, taught that all food was alike, but forbade His disciples to use what the Manichaeans call unclean. Where do you find this prohibition? You are not afraid to deceive men by falsehood; but in God’s righteous providence, you are so blinded that you provide us with the means of refuting you. For I cannot resist quoting for examination the whole of that passage of the Gospel which Faustus uses against Moses; that we may see from it the falsehood of what was said first by Adimantus, and here by Faustus, that the Lord Jesus forbade the use of animal food to His disciples, and allowed it to the laity. After Christ’s reply to the accusation that His disciples ate with unwashen hands, we read in the Gospel as follows: “And He called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear and understand. Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man: but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came His disciples, and said unto Him, Knowest Thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?” Here, when addressed by His disciples, He ought certainly, according to the Manichaeans, to have given them special instructions to abstain from animal food, and to show that His words, “Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which goeth out of the mouth,” applied to the multitude only. Let us hear, then, what, according to the evangelist, the Lord replied, not to the multitude, but to His disciples: “But He answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” The reason of this was, that in their desire to observe their own traditions, they did not understand the commandments of God. As yet the disciples had not asked the Master how they were to understand what He had said to the multitude. But now they do so; for the evangelist adds: “Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Declare unto us this parable.” This shows that Peter thought that when the Lord said, “Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which goeth out of the mouth,” He did not speak plainly and literally, but, as usual, wished to convey some instruction under the guise of a parable. When His disciples, then, put this question in private, does He tell them, as the Manichaeans say, that all animal food is unclean, and that they must never touch it? Instead of this, He rebukes them for not understanding His plain language, and for thinking it a parable when it was not. We read: “And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the drought? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.”

32. Here we have a complete exposure of the falsehood of the Manichaeans: for it is plain that the Lord did not in this matter teach one thing to the multitude, and another in private to His disciples. Here is abundant evidence that the error and deceit are in the Manichaeans, and not in Moses, nor in Christ, nor in the doctrine taught figuratively in one Testament and plainly in the other,—prophesied in one, and fulfilled in the other. How can the Manichaeans say that the Catholics regard none of the things that Moses wrote, when in fact they observe them all, not now in the figures, but in what the figures were intended to foretell? No one would say that one who reads the Scripture subsequently to its being written does not observe it because he does not form the letters which he reads. The letters are the figures of the sounds which he utters; and though he does not form the letters, he cannot read without examining them. The reason why the Jews did not believe in Christ, was because they did not observe even the plain literal precepts of Moses. So Christ says to them: “Ye pay tithe of mint and cummin, and omit the weightier matters of the law, mercy and judgment. Ye strain out a gnat and swallow a camel. These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” So also He told them that by their traditions they

made of none effect the commandment of God to give honor to parents. On account of this pride and perversity in neglecting what they understood, they were justly blinded, so that they could not understand the other things.

33. You see, my argument is not that if you are a Christian you must believe Christ when He says that Moses wrote of Him, and that if you do not believe this you are no Christian. The account you give of yourself in asking to be dealt with as a Jew or a Gentile is your own affair. My endeavor is to leave no avenue of error open to you. I have shut you out, too, from that precipice to which you rush as a last resort, when you say that these are spurious passages in the Gospel; so that, freed from the pernicious influence of this opinion, you may be reduced to the necessity of believing in Christ. You say you wish to be taught like the Christian Thomas, whom Christ did not spurn from Him because he doubted of Him, but, in order to heal the wounds of his mind, showed him the marks of the wounds in His own body. These are your own words. It is well that you desire to be taught as Thomas was. I feared you would make out this passage too to be spurious. Believe, then, the marks of Christ’s wounds. For if the marks were real, the wounds must have been real. And the wounds could not have been real, unless His body had been capable of real wounds; which upsets at once the whole error of the Manichaeans. If you say that the marks were unreal which Christ showed to His doubting disciple, it follows that He must be a deceitful teacher, and that you wish to be deceived in being taught by Him. But as no one wishes to be deceived, while many wish to deceive, it is probable that you would rather imitate the teaching which you ascribe to Christ than the learning you ascribe to Thomas. If, then, you believe that Christ deceived a doubting inquirer by false marks of wounds, you must yourself be regarded, not as a safe teacher, but as a dangerous impostor. On the other hand, if Thomas touched the real marks of Christ’s wounds, you must confess that Christ had a real body. So, if you believe as Thomas did, you are no more a Manichaean. If you do not believe even with Thomas, you must be left to your infidelity.

BOOK XVII

Faustus rejects Christ’s declaration that He came not to destroy the law and the prophets but to fulfill them, on the ground that it is found only in

Matthew, who was not present when the words purport to have been spoken. Augustin rebukes the folly of refusing to believe Matthew and yet believing Manichaeus, and shows what the passage of scripture really means.

1. Faustus said: You ask why we do not receive the law and the prophets, when Christ said that he came not to destroy them, but to fulfill them. Where do we learn that Jesus said this? From Matthew, who declares that he said it on the mount. In whose presence was it said? In the presence of Peter, Andrew, James, and John—only these four; for the rest, including Matthew himself, were not yet chosen. Is it not the case that one of these four—John, namely—wrote a Gospel? It is. Does he mention this saying of Jesus? No. How, then, does it happen that what is not recorded by John, who was on the mount, is recorded by Matthew, who became a follower of Christ long after He came down from the mount? In the first place, then, we must doubt whether Jesus ever said these words, since the proper witness is silent on the matter, and we have only the authority of a less trustworthy witness. But, besides this, we shall find that it is not Matthew that has imposed upon us, but some one else under his name, as is evident from the indirect style of the narrative. Thus we read: “As Jesus passed by, He saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom, and called him; and he immediately rose up, and followed Him.” No one writing of himself would say, He saw a man, and called him; and he followed Him; but, He saw me, and called me, and I followed Him. Evidently this was written not by Matthew himself, but by some one else under his name. Since, then, the passage already quoted would not be true even if it had been written by Matthew, since he was not present when Jesus spoke on the mount; much more is its falsehood evident from the fact that the writer was not Matthew himself, but some one borrowing the names both of Jesus and of Matthew.

2. The passage itself, in which Christ tells the Jews not to think that He came to destroy the law, is rather designed to show that He did destroy it. For, had He not done something of the kind, the Jews would not have suspected Him. His words are: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law.” Suppose the Jews had replied, What actions of thine might lead us to suspect this? Is it because thou exposest circumcision, breakest the Sabbath,

discardest sacrifices, makest no distinction in foods? this would be the natural answer to the words, Think not. The Jews had the best possible reason for thinking that Jesus destroyed the law. If this was not to destroy the law, what is? But, indeed, the law and the prophets consider themselves already so faultlessly perfect, that they have no desire to be fulfilled. Their author and father condemns adding to them as much as taking away anything from them; as we read in Deuteronomy: “These precepts which I deliver unto thee this day, O Israel, thou shalt observe to do; thou shalt not turn aside from them to the right hand or to the left; thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it, that thy God may bless thee.” Whether, therefore, Jesus turned aside to the right by adding to the law and the prophets in order to fulfill them, or to the left in taking away from them to destroy them, either way he offended the author of the law. So this verse must either have some other meaning, or be spurious.

3. Augustin replied: What amazing folly, to disbelieve what Matthew records of Christ, while you believe Manichaeus! If Matthew is not to be believed because he was not present when Christ said, “I came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill,” was Manichaeus present, was he even born, when Christ appeared among men? According, then, to your rule, you should not believe anything that Manichaeus says of Christ. On the other hand, we refuse to believe what Manichaeus says of Christ; not because he was not present as a witness of Christ’s words and actions, but because he contradicts Christ’s disciples, and the Gospel which rests on their authority. The apostle, speaking in the Holy Spirit, tells us that such teachers would arise. With reference to such, he says to believers: “If any man preaches to you another gospel than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” If no one can say what is true of Christ unless he has himself seen and heard Him, no one now can be trusted. But if believers can now say what is true of Christ because the truth has been handed down in word or writing by those who saw and heard, why might not Matthew have heard the truth from his fellow-disciple John, if John was present and he himself was not, as from the writings of John both we who are born so long after and those who shall be born after us can learn the truth about Christ? In this way, the Gospels of Luke and Mark, who were companions of the disciples, as well as the Gospel of Matthew, have the same authority as that of John.

Besides, the Lord Himself might have told Matthew what those called before him had already been witnesses of. Your idea is, that John should have recorded this saying of the Lord, as he was present on the occasion. As if it might not happen that, since it was impossible to write all that be heard from the Lord, he set himself to write some, omitting this among others. Does he not say at the close of his Gospel: “And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written”? This proves that he omitted many things intentionally. But if you choose John as an authority regarding the law and the prophets, I ask you only to believe his testimony to them. It is John who writes that Isaiah saw the glory of Christ. It is in his Gospel we find the text already treated of: “If ye believed Moses, ye would also believe me; for he wrote of me.” Your evasions are met on every side. You ought to say plainly that you do not believe the gospel of Christ. For to believe what you please, and not to believe what you please, is to believe yourselves, and not the gospel.

4. Faustus thinks himself wonderfully clever in proving that Matthew was not the writer of this Gospel, because, when speaking of his own election, he says not, He saw me, and said to me, Follow me; but, He saw him, and said to him, Follow me. This must have been said either in ignorance or from a design to mislead. Faustus can hardly be so ignorant as not to have read or heard that narrators, when speaking of themselves, often use a construction as if speaking of another. It is more probable that Faustus wished to bewilder those more ignorant than himself, in the hope of getting hold on not a few unacquainted with these things. It is needless to resort to other writings to quote examples of this construction from profane authors for the information of our friends, and for the refutation of Faustus. We find examples in passages quoted above from Moses by Faustus himself, without any denial, or rather with the assertion, that they were written by Moses, only not written of Christ. When Moses, then, writes of himself, does he say, I said this, or I did that, and not rather, Moses said, and Moses did? Or does he say, The Lord called me, The Lord said to me, and not rather, The Lord called Moses, The Lord said to Moses, and so on? So Matthew, too, speaks of himself in the third person. And John does the same; for towards the end of his book he says: “Peter, turning, saw the

disciple whom Jesus loved, who also lay on His breast at supper, and who said to the Lord, Who is it that shall betray Thee?” Does he say, Peter, turning, saw me? Or will you argue from this that John did not write this Gospel? But he adds a little after: “This is the disciple that testifies of Jesus, and has written these things; and we know that his testimony is true.” Does he say, I am the disciple who testify of Jesus, and who have written these things, and we know that my testimony is true? Evidently this style is common in writers of narratives. There are innumerable instances in which the Lord Himself uses it. “When the Son of man,” He says, “cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?” Not, When I come, shall I find? Again, “The Son of man came eating and drinking;” not, I came. Again, “The hour shall come, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live;” not, My voice. And so in many other places. This may suffice to satisfy inquirers and to refute scoffers.

5. Every one can see the weakness of the argument that Christ could not have said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill,” unless He had done something to create a suspicion of this kind. Of course, we grant that the unenlightened Jews may have looked upon Christ as the destroyer of the law and the prophets; but their very suspicion makes it certain that the true and truthful One, in saying that He came not to destroy the law and the prophets, referred to no other law than that of the Jews. This is proved by the words that follow: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But whosoever shall do and teach them, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” This applied to the Pharisees, who taught the law in word, while they broke it in deed. Christ says of the Pharisees in another place, “What they say, that do; but do not after their works: for they say, and do not.” So here also He adds, “For I say unto you, Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;” that is, Unless ye shall both do and teach what they teach without doing, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. This law, therefore, which the Pharisees taught without keeping it, Christ says

He came not to destroy, but to fulfill; for this was the law connected with the seat of Moses in which the Pharisees sat, who because they said without doing, are to be heard, but not to be imitated.

6. Faustus does not understand, or pretends not to understand, what it is to fulfill the law. He supposes the expression to mean the addition of words to the law, regarding which it is written that nothing is to be added to or taken away from the Scriptures of God. From this Faustus argues that there can be no fulfillment of what is spoken of as so perfect that nothing can be added to it or taken from it. Faustus requires to be told that the law is fulfilled by living as it enjoins. “Love is the fulfilling of the law,” as the apostle says. The Lord has vouchsafed both to manifest and to impart this love, by sending the Holy Spirit to His believing people. So it is said by the same apostle: “The love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.” And the Lord Himself says: “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” The law, then, is fulfilled both by the observance of its precepts and by the accomplishment of its prophecies. For “the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” The law itself, by being fulfilled, becomes grace and truth. Grace is the fulfillment of love, and truth is the accomplishment of the prophecies. And as both grace and truth are by Christ, it follows that He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it; not by supplying any defects in the law, but by obedience to what is written in the law. Christ’s own words declare this. For He does not say, One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till its defects are supplied, but “till all be fulfilled.”

BOOK XVIII

The relation of Christ to prophecy, continued.

1. Faustus said: “I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it.” If these are Christ’s words, unless they have some other meaning, they are as much against you as against me. Your Christianity as well as mine is based on the belief that Christ came to destroy the law and the prophets. Your actions prove this, even though in words you deny it. It is on this ground that you disregard the precepts of the law and the prophets. It is on this ground that

we both acknowledge Jesus as the founder of the New Testament, in which is implied the acknowledgment that the Old Testament is destroyed. How, then, can we believe that Christ said these words without first confessing that hitherto we have been wholly in error, and without showing our repentance by entering on a course of obedience to the law and the prophets, and of careful observance of their requirements, whatever they may be? This done, we may honestly believe that Jesus said that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. As it is, you accuse me of not believing what you do not believe yourself, and what therefore is false.

2. But grant that we have been in the wrong hitherto. What is to be done now? Shall we come under the law, since Christ has not destroyed, but fulfilled it? Shall we by circumcision add shame to shame, and believe that God is pleased with such sacraments? Shall we observe the rest of the Sabbath, and bind ourselves in the fetters of Saturn? Shall we glut the demon of the Jews, for he is not God, with the slaughter of bulls, rams, and goats, not to say of men; and adopt, only with greater cruelty, in obedience to the law and the prophets, the practices on account of which we abandoned idolatry? Shall we, in fine, call the flesh of some animals clean, and that of others unclean, among which, according to the law and the prophets, swine's flesh has a particular defilement? Of course you will allow that as Christians we must not do any of these things, for you remember that Christ says that a man when circumcised becomes twofold a child of hell. It is plain also that Christ neither observed the Sabbath himself, nor commanded it to be observed. And regarding foods, he says expressly that man is not defiled by anything that goes into his mouth, but rather by the things which come out of it. Regarding sacrifices, too, he often says that God desires mercy, and not sacrifice. What becomes, then, of the statement that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it? If Christ said this, he must have meant something else, or, what is not to be thought of, he told a lie, or he never said it. No Christian will allow that Jesus spoke falsely; therefore he must either not have said this, or said it with another meaning.

3. For my part, as a Manichaean, this verse has little difficulty for me, for at the outset I am taught to believe that many things which pass in Scripture

under the name of the Saviour are spurious, and that they must therefore be tested to find whether they are true, and sound, and genuine; for the enemy who comes by night has corrupted almost every passage by sowing tares among the wheat. So I am not alarmed by these words, notwithstanding the sacred name affixed to them; for I still claim the liberty to examine whether this comes from the hand of the good sower, who sows in the day-time, or of the evil one, who sows in the night. But what escape from this difficulty can there be for you, who receive everything without examination, condemning the use of reason, which is the prerogative of human nature, and thinking it impiety to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and as much afraid of separating between what is good and what is not as children are of ghosts? For suppose a Jew or any one acquainted with these words should ask you why you do not keep the precepts of the law and the prophets, since Christ says that he came not to destroy but to fulfill them: you will be obliged either to join in the superstitious follies of the Jews, or to declare this verse false, or to deny that you are a follower of Christ.

4. Augustin replied: Since you continue repeating what has been so often exposed and refuted, we must be content to repeat the refutation. The things in the law and the prophets which Christians do not observe, are only the types of what they do observe. These types were figures of things to come, and are necessarily removed when the things themselves are fully revealed by Christ, that in this very removal the law and the prophets may be fulfilled. So it is written in the prophets that God would give a new covenant, “not as I gave to their fathers.” Such was the hardness of heart of the people under the Old Testament, that many precepts were given to them, not so much because they were good, as because they suited the people. Still, in all these things the future was foretold and prefigured, although the people did not understand the meaning of their own observances. After the manifest appearance of the things thus signified, we are not required to observe the types; but we read them to see their meaning. So, again, it is foretold in the prophets, “I will take away their stony heart, and will give them a heart of flesh,”—that is, a sensible heart, instead of an insensible one. To this the apostle alludes in the words: “Not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart.” The fleshy tables of the heart are the same as the heart of flesh. Since, then, the removal of these observances is foretold,

the law and the prophets could not have been fulfilled but by this removal. Now, however, the prediction is accomplished, and the fulfillment of the law and the prophets is found in what at first sight seems the very opposite.

5. We are not afraid to meet your scoff at the Sabbath, when you call it the fetters of Saturn. It is a silly and unmeaning expression, which occurred to you only because you are in the habit of worshipping the sun on what you call Sunday. What you call Sunday we call the Lord's day, and on it we do not worship the sun, but the Lord's resurrection. And in the same way, the fathers observed the rest of the Sabbath, not because they worshipped Saturn, but because it was incumbent at that time, for it was a shadow of things to come, as the apostle testifies. The Gentiles, of whom the apostle says that they "worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator," gave the names of their gods to the days of the week. And so far you do the same, except that you worship only the two brightest luminaries, and not the rest of the stars, as the Gentiles did. Besides, the Gentiles gave the names of their gods to the months. In honor of Romulus, whom they believed to be the son of Mars, they dedicated the first month to Mars, and called it March. The next month, April, is named not from any god, but from the word for opening, because the buds generally open in this month. The third month is called May, in honor of Maia the mother of Mercury. The fourth is called June, from Juno. The rest to December used to be named according to their number. The fifth and sixth, however, got the names of July and August from men to whom divine honors were decreed; while the others, from September to December, continued to be named from their number. January, again, is named from Janus, and February from the rites of the Luperci called Februae. Must we say that you worship the god Mars in the month of March? But that is the month in which you hold the feast you call Bema with great pomp. But if you think it allowable to observe the month of March without thinking of Mars, why do you try to bring in the name of Saturn in connection with the rest of the seventh day enjoined in Scripture, merely because the Gentiles call the day Saturday? The Scripture name for the day is Sabbath, which means rest. Your scoff is as unreasonable as it is profane.

6. As regards animal sacrifices, every Christian knows that they were enjoined as suitable to a perverse people, and not because God had any pleasure in them. Still, even in these sacrifices there were types of what we enjoy; for we cannot obtain purification or the propitiation of God without blood. The fulfillment of these types is in Christ, by whose blood we are purified and redeemed. In these figures of the divine oracles, the bull represents Christ, because with the horns of His cross He scatters the wicked; the lamb, from His matchless innocence; the goat, from His being made in the likeness of sinful flesh, that by sin He might condemn sin. Whatever kind of sacrifice you choose to specify, I will show you a prophecy of Christ in it. Thus we have shown regarding circumcision, and the Sabbath, and the distinction of food, and the sacrifice of animals, that all these things were our examples, and our prophecies, which Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfill, by fulfilling what was thus foretold. Your opponent is the apostle, whose opinion I give in his own words: “All these things were our examples.”

7. If you have learned from Manichaeus the willful impiety of admitting only those parts of the Gospel which do not contradict your errors, while you reject the rest, we have learned from the apostle the pious caution of looking on every one as accursed that preaches to us another gospel than that which we have received. Hence Catholic Christians look upon you as among the tares; for, in the Lord’s exposition of the meaning of the tares, they are not falsehood mixed with truth in the Scriptures, but children of the wicked one—that is, people who imitate the deceitfulness of the devil. It is not true that Catholic Christians believe everything; for they do not believe Manichaeus or any of the heretics. Nor do they condemn the use of human reason; but what you call reasoning they prove to be fallacious. Nor do they think it profane to distinguish truth from falsehood; for they distinguish between the truth of the Catholic faith and the falsehood of your doctrines. Nor do they fear to separate good from evil; but they contend that evil, instead of being natural, is unnatural. They know nothing of your race of darkness, which, you say, is produced from a principle of its own, and fights against the kingdom of God, and of which your god seems really to be more frightened than children are of ghosts; for, according to you, he covered himself with a veil, that he might not see his own members taken and

plundered by the assault of the enemy. To conclude, Catholic Christians are in no difficulty regarding the words of Christ, though in one sense they may be said not to observe the law and the prophets; for by the grace of Christ they keep the law by their love to God and man; and on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Besides, they see in Christ and the Church the fulfillment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament, whether in the form of actions, or of symbolic rites, or of figurative language. So we neither join in superstitious follies, nor declare this verse false; nor deny that we are followers of Christ; for on those principles which I have set forth to the best of my power, the law and the prophets which Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfill, are no other than those recognized by the Church.

BOOK XIX

Faustus is willing to admit that Christ may have said that He came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them; but if He did, it was to pacify the Jews and in a modified sense. Augustin replies, and still further elaborates the Catholic view of prophecy and its fulfillment.

1. Faustus said: I will grant that Christ said that he came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them. But why did Jesus say this? Was it to pacify the Jews, who were enraged at seeing their sacred institutions trampled upon by Christ, and regarded him as a wild blasphemer, not to be listened to, much less to be followed? Or was it for our instruction as Gentile believers, that we might learn meekly and patiently to bear the yoke of commandment laid on our necks by the law and the prophets of the Jews? You yourself can hardly suppose that Christ’s words were intended to bring us under the authority of the law and the prophets of the Hebrews. So that the other explanation which I have given of the words must be the true one. Every one knows that the Jews were always ready to attack Christ, both with words and with actual violence. Naturally, then, they would be enraged at the idea that Christ was destroying their law and their prophets; and, to appease them, Christ might very well tell them not to think that he came to destroy the law, but that he came to fulfill it. There was no falsehood or deceit in this, for he used the word law in a general sense, not of any particular law.

2. There are three laws. One is that of the Hebrews, which the apostle calls the law of sin and death. The second is that of the Gentiles, which he calls the law of nature. “For the Gentiles,” he says, “do by nature the things contained in the law; and, not having the law, they are a law into themselves; who show the work of the law written on their hearts.” The third law is the truth of which the apostle speaks when he says, “The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Since, then, there are three laws, we must carefully inquire which of the three Christ spoke of when He said that He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. In the same way, there are prophets of the Jews, and prophets of the Gentiles, and prophets of truth. With the prophets of the Jews, of course, every one is acquainted. If any one is in doubt about the prophets of the Gentiles, let him hear what Paul says when writing of the Cretans to Titus: “A prophet of their own has said, The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.” This proves that the Gentiles also had their prophets. The truth also has its prophets, as we learn from Jesus as well as from Paul. Jesus says: “Behold, I send unto you wise men and prophets, and some of them ye shall kill in divers places.” And Paul says: “The Lord Himself appointed first apostles, and then prophets.”

3. As “the law and the prophets” may have three different meanings, it is uncertain in what sense the words are used by Jesus, though we may form a conjecture from what follows. For if Jesus had gone on to speak of circumcision, and Sabbaths, and sacrifices, and the observances of the Hebrews, and had added something as a fulfillment, there could have been no doubt that it was the law and the prophets of the Jews of which He said that He came not to destroy, but to fulfill them. But Christ, without any allusion to these, speaks only of commandments which date from the earliest times: “Thou shall not kill; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not bear false witness.” These, it can be proved, were of old promulgated in the world by Enoch and Seth, and the other righteous men, to whom the precepts were delivered by angels of lofty rank, in order to tame the savage nature of men. From this it appears that Jesus spoke of the law and the prophets of truth. And so we find him giving a fulfillment of those precepts already quoted. “Ye have heard,” He says, “that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; but I say unto you, Be not even

angry.” This is the fulfillment. Again: “Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, Do not lust even.” This is the fulfillment. Again: “It has been said, Thou shalt not bear false witness; but I say unto you, Swear not.” This too is the fulfillment. He thus both confirms the old precepts and supplies their defects. Where He seems to speak of some Jewish precepts, instead of fulfilling them, He substitutes for them precepts of an opposite tendency. He proceeds thus: “Ye have heard that it has been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.” This is not fulfillment, but destruction. Again: “It has been said, Thou shall love thy friend, and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for your persecutors.” This too is destruction. Again: “It has been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement; but I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery, and is himself an adulterer if he afterwards marries another woman.” These precepts are evidently destroyed because they are the precepts of Moses; while the others are fulfilled because they are the precepts of the righteous men of antiquity. If you agree to this explanation, we may allow that Jesus said that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. If you disapprove of this explanation, give one of your own. Only beware of making Jesus a liar, and of making yourself a Jew, by binding yourself to fulfill the law because Christ did not destroy it.

4. If one of the Nazareans, or Symmachians, as they are sometimes called, were arguing with me from these words of Jesus that he came not to destroy the law, I should find some difficulty in answering him. For it is undeniable that, at his coming, Jesus was both in body and mind subject to the influence of the law and the prophets. Those people, moreover, whom I allude to, practise circumcision, and keep the Sabbath, and abstain from swine’s flesh and such like things, according to the law, although they profess to be Christians. They are evidently misled as well as you, by this verse in which Christ says that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. It would not be easy to reply to such opponents without first getting rid of this troublesome verse. But with you I have no difficulty, for you have nothing to go upon; and instead of using arguments, you seem disposed, in

mere mischief, to induce me to believe that Christ said what you evidently do not yourself believe him to have said. On the strength of this verse you accuse me of dullness and evasiveness, without yourself giving any indication of keeping the law instead of destroying it. Do you too, like a Jew or a Nazarean, glory in the obscene distinction of being circumcised? Do you pride yourself in the observance of the Sabbath? Can you congratulate yourself on being innocent of swine's flesh? Or can you boast of having gratified the appetite of the Deity by the blood of sacrifices and the incense of Jewish offerings? If not, why do you contend that Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it?

5. I give unceasing thanks to my teacher, who prevented me from falling into this error, so that I am still a Christian. For I, like you, from reading this verse without sufficient consideration, had almost resolved to become a Jew. And with reason; for if Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, and as a vessel in order to be filled full must not be empty, but partly filled already, I concluded that no one could become a Christian but an Israelite, nearly filled already with the law and the prophets, and coming to Christ to be filled to the full extent of his capacity. I concluded, too, that in thus coming he must not destroy what he already possesses; otherwise it would be a case, not of fulfilling, but of emptying. Then it appeared that I, as a Gentile, could get nothing by coming to Christ, for I brought nothing that he could fill up by his additions. This preparatory supply is found, on inquiry, to consist of Sabbaths, circumcision, sacrifices, new moons, baptisms, feasts of unleavened bread, distinctions of foods, drink, and clothes, and other things, too many to specify. This, then, it appeared, was what Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfill. Naturally it must appear so: for what is a law without precepts, or prophets without predictions? Besides, there is that terrible curse pronounced upon those who abide not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them. With the fear of this curse appearing to come from God on the one side, and with Christ on the other side, seeming, as the Son of God, to say that he came not to destroy these things, but to fulfill them, what was to prevent me from becoming a Jew? The wise instruction of Manichaeus saved me from this danger.

6. But how can you venture to quote this verse against me? Or why should it be against me only, when it is as much against yourself? If Christ does not destroy the law and the prophets, neither must Christians do so. Why then do you destroy them? Do you begin to perceive that you are no Christian? How can you profane with all kinds of work the day pronounced sacred in the law and in all the prophets, on which they say that God, the maker of the world, himself rested, without dreading the penalty of death pronounced against Sabbath-breakers, or the curse on the transgressor? How can you refuse to receive in your person the unseemly mark of circumcision, which the law and all the prophets declare to be honorable, especially in the case of Abraham, after what was thought to be his faith; for does not the God of the Jews proclaim that whosoever is without this mark of infamy shall perish from his people? How can you neglect the appointed sacrifices, which were made so much of both by Moses and the prophets under the law, and by Abraham in his faith? And how can you defile your souls by making no distinction in foods, if you believe that Christ came not to destroy these things, but to fulfill them? Why do you discard the annual feast of unleavened bread, and the appointed sacrifice of the lamb, which, according to the law and the prophets, is to be observed for ever? Why, in a word, do you treat so lightly the new moons, the baptisms, and the feast of tabernacles, and all the other carnal ordinances of the law and the prophets, if Christ did not destroy them? I have therefore good reason for saying that, in order to justify your neglect of these things, you must either abandon your profession of being Christ’s disciple, or acknowledge that Christ himself has already destroyed them; and from this acknowledgment it must follow, either that this text is spurious in which Christ is made to say that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, or that the words have an entirely different meaning from what you suppose.

7. Augustin replied: If you allow, in consideration of the authority of the Gospel, that Christ said that He came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them, you should show the same consideration to the authority of the apostle, when he says, “All these things were our examples;” and again of Christ, “He was not yea and nay, but in Him was yea; for all the promises of God are in Him yea;” that is, they are set forth and fulfilled in Him. In this way you will see in the clearest light both what

law Christ fulfilled, and how He fulfilled it. It is a vain attempt that you make to escape by your three kinds of law and your three kinds of prophets. It is quite plain, and the New Testament leaves no doubt on the matter, what law and what prophets Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfill. The law given by Moses is that which by Jesus Christ became grace and truth. The law given by Moses is that of which Christ says, "He wrote of me." For undoubtedly this is the law which entered that the offence might abound; words which you often ignorantly quote as a reproach to the law. Read what is there said of this law: "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death in me by that which is good." The entrance of the law made the offense abound, not because the law required what was wrong, but because the proud and self-confident incurred additional guilt as transgressors after their acquaintance with the holy, and just, and good commandments of the law; so that, being thus humbled, they might learn that only by grace through faith could they be freed from subjection to the law as transgressors, and be reconciled to the law as righteous. So the same apostle says: "For before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which was afterwards revealed. Therefore the law was our schoolmaster in Christ Jesus; but after faith came, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." That is, we are no longer subject to the penalty of the law, because we are set free by grace. Before we received in humility the grace of the Spirit, the letter was only death to us, for it required obedience which we could not render. Thus Paul also says: "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Again, he says: "For if a law had been given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; but the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." And once more: "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, that by sin He might condemn sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Here we see Christ coming not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. As the law brought the proud under the guilt of transgression, increasing their sin by commandments which they could not obey, so the righteousness of the same law is fulfilled by the grace of the Spirit in those who learn from

Christ to be meek and lowly in heart; for Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. Moreover, because even for those who are under grace it is difficult in this mortal life perfectly to keep what is written in the law, Thou shall not covet, Christ, by the sacrifice of His flesh, as our Priest obtains pardon for us. And in this also He fulfills the law; for what we fail in through weakness is supplied by His perfection, who is the Head, while we are His members. Thus John says: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not; and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: He is the propitiation for our sins."

8. Christ also fulfilled the prophecies, because the promises of God were made good in Him. As the apostle says in the verse quoted above, "The promises of God are in Him yea." Again, he says: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." Whatever, then, was promised in the prophets, whether expressly or in figure, whether by words or by actions, was fulfilled in Him who came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them. You do not perceive that if Christians were to continue in the use of acts and observances by which things to come were prefigured, the only meaning would be that the things prefigured had not yet come. Either the thing prefigured has not come, or if it has, the figure becomes superfluous or misleading. Therefore, if Christians do not practise some things enjoined in the Hebrews by the prophets, this, so far from showing, as you think, that Christ did not fulfill the prophets, rather shows that He did. So completely did Christ fulfill what these types prefigured, that it is no longer prefigured. So the Lord Himself says: "The law and the prophets were until John." For the law which shut up transgressors in increased guilt, and to the faith which was afterwards revealed, became grace through Jesus Christ, by whom grace superabounded. Thus the law, which was not fulfilled in the requirement of the letter, was fulfilled in the liberty of grace. In the same way, everything in the law that was prophetic of the Saviour's advent, whether in words or in typical actions, became truth in Jesus Christ. For "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." At Christ's advent the kingdom of God began to be preached; for the law and the prophets were until John: the law, that its transgressors might desire salvation; the prophets, that they might foretell the Saviour. No

doubt there have been prophets in the Church since the ascension of Christ. Of these prophets Paul says: “God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers,” and so on. It is not of these prophets that it was said, “The law and the prophets were until John,” but of those who prophesied the first coming of Christ, which evidently cannot be prophesied now that it has taken place.

9. Accordingly, when you ask why a Christian is not circumcised if Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, my reply is, that a Christian is not circumcised precisely for this reason, that what was prefigured by circumcision is fulfilled in Christ. Circumcision was the type of the removal of our fleshly nature, which was fulfilled in the resurrection of Christ, and which the sacrament of baptism teaches us to look forward to in our own resurrection. The sacrament of the new life is not wholly discontinued, for our resurrection from the dead is still to come; but this sacrament has been improved by the substitution of baptism for circumcision, because now a pattern of the eternal life which is to come is afforded us in the resurrection of Christ, whereas formerly there was nothing of the kind. So, when you ask why a Christian does not keep the Sabbath, if Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, my reply is, that a Christian does not keep the Sabbath precisely because what was prefigured in the Sabbath is fulfilled in Christ. For we have our Sabbath in Him who said, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

10. When you ask why a Christian does not observe the distinction in food as enjoined in the law, if Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, I reply, that a Christian does not observe this distinction precisely because what was thus prefigured is now fulfilled in Christ, who admits into His body, which in His saints He has predestined to eternal life, nothing which in human conduct corresponds to the characteristics of the forbidden animals. When you ask, again, why a Christian does not offer sacrifices to God of the flesh and blood of slain animals, if Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, I reply, that it would be improper for a Christian to offer such sacrifices, now that what was thus prefigured has been fulfilled

in Christ's offering of His own body and blood. When you ask why a Christian does not keep the feast of unleavened bread as the Jews did, if Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, I reply, that a Christian does not keep this feast precisely because what was thus prefigured is fulfilled in Christ, who leads us to a new life by purging out the leaven of the old life. When you ask why a Christian does not keep the feast of the paschal lamb, if Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, my reply is, that he does not keep it precisely because what was thus prefigured has been fulfilled in the sufferings of Christ, the Lamb without spot. When you ask why a Christian does not keep the feasts of the new moon appointed in the law, if Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, I reply, that he does not keep them precisely because what was thus prefigured is fulfilled in Christ. For the feast of the new moon prefigured the new creature, of which the apostle says: "If therefore there is any new creature in Christ Jesus, the old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new." When you ask why a Christian does not observe the baptisms for various kinds of uncleanness according to the law, if Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, I reply, that he does not observe them precisely because they were figures of things to come, which Christ has fulfilled. For He came to bury us with Himself by baptism into death, that as Christ rose again from the dead, so we also should walk in newness of life. When you ask why Christians do not keep the feast of tabernacles, if the law is not destroyed, but fulfilled by Christ, I reply that believers are God's tabernacle, in whom, as they are united and built together in love, God condescends to dwell, so that Christians do not keep this feast precisely because what was thus prefigured is now fulfilled by Christ in His Church.

11. I touch upon these things merely in passing with the utmost brevity, rather than omit them altogether. The subjects, taken separately, have filled many large volumes, written to prove that these observances were typical of Christ. So it appears that all the things in the Old Testament which you think are not observed by Christians because Christ destroyed the law, are in fact not observed because Christ fulfilled the law. The very intention of the observances was to prefigure Christ. Now that Christ has come, instead of its being strange or absurd that what was done to prefigure His advent should not be done any more, it is perfectly right and reasonable. The

typical observances intended to prefigure the coming of Christ would be observed still, had they not been fulfilled by the coming of Christ; so far is it from being the case that our not observing them now is any proof of their not being fulfilled by Christ's coming. There can be no religious society, whether the religion be true or false, without some sacrament or visible symbol to serve as a bond of union. The importance of these sacraments cannot be overstated, and only scoffers will treat them lightly. For if piety requires them, it must be impiety to neglect them.

12. It is true, the ungodly may partake in the visible sacraments of godliness, as we read that Simon Magus received holy baptism. Such are they of whom the apostle says that "they have the form of godliness, but deny the power of it." The power of godliness is the end of the commandment, that is, love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. So the Apostle Peter, speaking of the sacrament of the ark, in which the family of Noah was saved from the deluge, says, "So by a similar figure baptism also saves you." And lest they should rest content with the visible sacrament, by which they had the form of godliness, and should deny its power in their lives by profligate conduct, he immediately adds, "Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience."

13. Thus the sacraments of the Old Testament, which were celebrated in obedience to the law, were types of Christ who was to come; and when Christ fulfilled them by His advent they were done away, and were done away because they were fulfilled. For Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfill. And now that the righteousness of faith is revealed, and the children of God are called into liberty, and the yoke of bondage which was required for a carnal and stiffnecked people is taken away, other sacraments are instituted, greater in efficacy, more beneficial in their use, easier in performance, and fewer in number.

14. And if the righteous men of old, who saw in the sacraments of their time the promise of a future revelation of faith, which even then their piety enabled them to discern in the dim light of prophecy, and by which they lived, for the just can live only by faith; if, then, these righteous men of old were ready to suffer, as many actually did suffer, all trials and tortures for

the sake of those typical sacraments which prefigured things in the future; if we praise the three children and Daniel, because they refused to be defiled by meat from the king’s table, from their regard for the sacrament of their day; if we feel the strongest admiration for the Maccabees, who refused to touch food which Christians lawfully use; how much more should a Christian in our day be ready to suffer all things for Christ’s baptism, for Christ’s Eucharist, for Christ’s sacred sign, since these are proofs of the accomplishment of what the former sacraments only pointed forward to in the future! For what is still promised to the Church, the body of Christ, is both clearly made known, and in the Saviour Himself, the Head of the body, the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, has already been accomplished. Is not the promise of eternal life by resurrection from the dead? This we see fulfilled in the flesh of Him of whom it is said, that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. In former days faith was dim, for the saints and righteous men of those times all believed and hoped for the same things, and all these sacraments and ceremonies pointed to the future; but now we have the revelation of the faith to which the people were shut up under the law; and what is now promised to believers in the judgment is already accomplished in the example of Him who came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them.

15. It is a question among the students of the sacred Scriptures, whether the faith in Christ before His passion and resurrection, which the righteous men of old learned by revelation or gathered from prophecy, had the same efficacy as faith has now that Christ has suffered and risen; or whether the actual shedding of the blood of the Lamb of God, which was, as He Himself says, for many for the remission of sins, conferred any benefit in the way of purifying or adding to the purity of those who looked forward in faith to the death of Christ, but left the world before it took place; whether, in fact, Christ’s death reached to the dead, so as to effect their liberation. To discuss this question here, or to prove what has been ascertained on the subject, would take too long, besides being foreign from our present purpose.

16. Meanwhile it is sufficient to prove, in opposition to Faustus’ ignorant cavils, how greatly they mistake who conclude, from the change in signs and sacraments, that there must be a difference in the things which were

prefigured in the rites of a prophetic dispensation, and which are declared to be accomplished in the rites of the gospel; or those, on the other hand, who think that as the things are the same, the sacraments which announce their accomplishment should not differ from the sacraments which foretold that accomplishment. For if in language the form of the verb changes in the number of letters and syllables according to the tense, as done signifies the past, and to be done the future, why should not the symbols which declare Christ's death and resurrection to be accomplished, differ from those which predicted their accomplishment, as we see a difference in the form and sound of the words, past and future, suffered and to suffer, risen and to rise? For material symbols are nothing else than visible speech, which, though sacred, is changeable and transitory. For while God is eternal, the water of baptism, and all that is material in the sacrament, is transitory: the very word "God," which must be pronounced in the consecration, is a sound which passes in a moment. The actions and sounds pass away, but their efficacy remains the same, and the spiritual gift thus communicated is eternal. To say, therefore, that if Christ had not destroyed the law and the prophets, the sacraments of the law and the prophets would continue to be observed in the congregations of the Christian Church, is the same as to say that if Christ had not destroyed the law and the prophets, He would still be predicted as about to be born, to suffer, and to rise again; whereas, in fact, it is proved that He did not destroy, but fulfill those things, because the prophecies of His birth, and passion, and resurrection, which were represented in these ancient sacraments, have ceased, and the sacraments now observed by Christians contain the announcement that He has been born, has suffered, has risen. He who came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them, by this fulfillment did away with those things which foretold the accomplishment of what is thus shown to be now accomplished. Precisely in the same way, he might substitute for the expressions, "He is to be born, is to suffer, is to rise," which were in these times appropriate, the expressions, "He has been born, has suffered, has risen," which are appropriate now that the others are accomplished, and so done away.

17. Corresponding to this change in words is the change which naturally took place in the substitution of new sacraments instead of those of the Old

Testament. In the case of the first Christians, who came to the faith as Jews, it was by degrees that they were brought to change their customs, and to have a clear perception of the truth; and permission was given them by the apostle to preserve their hereditary worship and belief, in which they had been born and brought up; and those who had to do with them were required to make allowance for this reluctance to accept new customs. So the apostle circumcised Timothy, the son of a Jewish mother and a Greek father, when they went among people of this kind; and he himself accommodated his practice to theirs, not hypocritically, but for a wise purpose. For these practices were harmless in the case of those born and brought up in them, though they were no longer required to prefigure things to come. It would have done more harm to condemn them as hurtful in the case of those to whose time it was intended that they should continue. Christ, who came to fulfill all these prophecies, found those people trained in their own religion. But in the case of those who had no such training, but were brought to Christ, the corner-stone, from the opposite wall of circumcision, there was no obligation to adopt Jewish customs. If, indeed, like Timothy, they chose to accommodate themselves to the views of those of the circumcision who were still wedded to their old sacraments, they were free to do so. But if they supposed that their hope and salvation depended on these works of the law, they were warned against them as a fatal danger. So the apostle says: “Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing;” that is, if they were circumcised, as they were intending to be, in compliance with some corrupt teachers, who told them that without these works of the law they could not be saved. For when, chiefly through the preaching of the Apostle Paul, the Gentiles were coming to the faith of Christ, as it was proper that they should come, without being burdened with Jewish observances—for those who were grown up were deterred from the faith by fear of ceremonies to which they were not accustomed, especially of circumcision; and if they who had not been trained from their birth to such observances had been made proselytes in the usual way, it would have implied that the coming of Christ still required to be predicted as a future event;—when, then, the Gentiles were admitted without these ceremonies, those of the circumcision who believed, not understanding why the Gentiles were not required to adopt their customs, nor why they themselves were still allowed to retain them, began to disturb the Church with carnal contentions, because the Gentiles were admitted into the people of God without being made proselytes in the usual way by circumcision and the other legal observances. Some also of the converted Gentiles were bent on these ceremonies, from fear of the Jews among whom they lived. Against these Gentiles the Apostle Paul often wrote, and when Peter was carried away by their hypocrisy, he corrected him with a brotherly rebuke. Afterwards, when the apostles met in council, decreed that these works of the law were not obligatory in the case of the Gentiles, some Christians of the circumcision were displeased, because they failed to understand that these observances were permissible only in those who had been trained in them before the revelation of faith, to bring to a close the prophetic life in those who were engaged in it before the prophecy was fulfilled, lest by a compulsory abandonment it should seem to be condemned rather than closed; while to lay these things on the Gentiles would imply either that they were not instituted to prefigure Christ, or that Christ was still to be prefigured. The ancient people of God, before Christ came to fulfill the law and the prophets, were required to observe all these things by which Christ was prefigured. It was freedom to those who understood the meaning of the observance, but it was bondage to those who did not. But the people in those latter times who come to believe in Christ as having already come, and suffered, and risen, in the case of those whom this faith found trained to those sacraments, are neither required to observe them, nor prohibited from doing so; while there is a prohibition in the case of those who were not bound by the ties of custom, or by any necessity, to accommodate themselves to the practice of others, so that it might become manifest that these things were instituted to prefigure Christ, and that after His coming they were to cease, because the promises had been fulfilled. Some believers of the circumcision who did not understand this were displeased with this tolerant arrangement which the Holy Spirit effected through the apostles, and stubbornly insisted on the Gentiles becoming Jews. These are the people of whom Faustus speaks under the name of Symmachians or Nazareans. Their number is now very small, but the sect still continues.

18. The Manichaeans, therefore have no ground for saying, in disparagement of the law and the prophets, that Christ came to destroy

rather than to fulfill them, because Christians do not observe what is there enjoined: for the only things which they do not observe are those that prefigured Christ, and these are not observed because their fulfillment is in Christ, and what is fulfilled is no longer prefigured; the typical observances having properly come to a close in the time of those who, after being trained in such things, had come to believe in Christ as their fulfillment. Do not Christians observe the precept of Scripture "Hear, O Israel; the Lord thy God is one God;" "Thou shalt not make unto thee an image," and so on? Do make Christians not observe the precept, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain?" Do Christians not observe the Sabbath, even in the sense of a true rest? Do Christians not honor their parents, according to the commandment? Do Christians not abstain from fornication, and murder, and theft, and false witness, from coveting their neighbor's wife, and from coveting his property,—all of which things are written in the law? These moral precepts are distinct from typical sacraments: the former are fulfilled by the aid of divine grace, the latter by the accomplishment of what they promise. Both are fulfilled in Christ, who has ever been the bestower of this grace, which is also now revealed in Him, and who now makes manifest the accomplishment of what He in former times promised; for "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Again, these things which concern the keeping of a good conscience are fulfilled in the faith which worketh by love; while types of the future pass away when they are accomplished. But even the types are not destroyed, but fulfilled; for Christ, in bringing to light what the types signified, does not prove them vain or illusory.

19. Faustus, therefore, is wrong in supposing that the Lord Jesus fulfilled some precepts of righteous men who lived before the law of Moses, such as, "Thou shall not kill," which Christ did not oppose, but rather confirmed by His prohibition of anger and abuse; and that He destroyed some things apparently peculiar to the Hebrew law, such as, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," which Christ seems rather to abolish than to confirm, when He says, "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but if any one smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," and so on. But we say that even these things which Faustus thinks Christ destroyed by

enjoining the opposite, were suitable to the times of the Old Testament, and were not destroyed, but fulfilled by Christ.

20. In the first place let me ask our opponents if these ancient righteous men, Enoch and Seth, whom Faustus mentions particularly, and any others who lived before Moses, or even, if you choose, before Abraham, were angry with their brother without a cause, or said to their brother, Thou fool. If not, why may they not have taught these things as well as preached them? And if they taught these things, how can Christ be said to have fulfilled their righteousness or their teaching, any more than that of Moses, by adding, “But I say unto you, if any man is angry with his brother, or if he says Racha, or if he says, Thou fool, he shall be in danger of the judgment, or of the council, or of hell-fire,” since these men did these very things themselves, and enjoined them upon others? Will it be said that they were ignorant of its being the duty of a righteous man to restrain his passion, and not to provoke his brother with angry abuse; or that, knowing this, they were unable to act accordingly? In that case, they deserved the punishment of hell, and could not have been righteous. But no one will venture to say that in their righteousness there was such ignorance of duty, and such a want of self-control, as to make them liable to the punishment of hell. How, then, can Christ be said to have fulfilled the law, by which these men lived by means of adding things without which they could have had no righteousness at all? Will it be said that a hasty temper and bad language are sinful only since the time of Christ, while formerly such qualities of the heart and speech were allowable; as we find some institutions vary according to the times, so that what is proper at one time is improper at another, and vice versa? You will not be so foolish as to make this assertion. But even were you to do so, the reply will be that, according to this idea, Christ came not to fulfill what was defective in the old law, but to institute a law which did not previously exist; if it is true that with the righteous men of old it was not a sin to say to their brother, Thou fool, which Christ pronounces so sinful, that whoever does so is in danger of hell. So, then, you have not succeeded in finding any law of which it can be said that Christ supplied its defect by these additions.

21. Will it be said that the law in these early times was incomplete as regards not committing adultery, till it was completed by the Lord, who added that no one should look on a woman to lust after her? This is what you imply in the way you quote the words, “Ye have heard that it has been said, Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, Do not lust even.” “Here,” you say, “is the fulfillment.” But let us take the words as they stand in the Gospel, without any of your modifications, and see what character you give to those righteous men of antiquity. The words are: “Ye have heard that it has been said, thou shall not commit adultery; but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” In your opinion, then, Enoch and Seth, and the rest, committed adultery in their hearts; and either their heart was not the temple of God, or they committed adultery in the temple of God. But if you dare not say this, how can you say that Christ, when He came, fulfilled the law, which was already in the time of those men complete?

22. As regards not swearing, in which also you say that Christ completed the law given to these righteous men of antiquity, I cannot be certain that they did not swear, for we find that Paul the apostle swore. With you, swearing is still a common practice, for you swear by the light, which you love as flies do; for the light of the mind which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, as distinct from mere natural light, you know nothing of. You swear, too, by your master Manichaeus, whose name in his own tongue was Manes. As the name Manes seemed to be connected with the Greek word for madness, you have changed it by adding a suffix, which only makes matters worse, by giving the new meaning of pouring forth madness. One of your own sect told me that the name Manichaeus was intended to be derived from the Greek words for pouring forth manna; for cheein means to pour. But, as it is, you only express the idea of madness with greater emphasis. For by adding the two syllables, while you have forgotten to insert another letter in the beginning of the word, you make it not Mannichaeus, but Manichaeus; which must mean that he pours forth madness in his long unprofitable discourses. Again, you often swear by the Paraclete,—not the Paraclete promised and sent by Christ to His disciples, but this same madness-pourer himself. Since, then, you are constantly swearing, I should like to know in what sense you make Christ to have

fulfilled this part of the law, which is one you mention as belonging to the earliest times. And what do you make of the oaths of the apostle? For as to your authority, it cannot weigh much with yourselves, not to speak of me or any other person. It is therefore evident that Christ's words, "I am come not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it," have not the meaning which you give them. Christ makes no reference in these words to His comments on the ancient sayings which He quotes, and of which His discourse was an explanation, but not a fulfillment.

23. Thus, as regards murder, which was understood to mean merely the destruction of the body, by which a man is deprived of life, the Lord explained that every unjust disposition to injure our brother is a kind of murder. So John also says, "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." And as it was thought that adultery meant only the act of unlawful intercourse with a woman, the Master showed that the lust He describes is also adultery. Again, because perjury is a heinous sin, while there is no sin either in not swearing at all or in swearing truly, the Lord wished to secure us from departing from the truth by not swearing at all, rather than that we should be in danger of perjury by being in the habit of swearing truly. For one who never swears is less in danger of swearing falsely than one who is in the habit of swearing truly. So, in the discourses of the apostle which are recorded, he never used an oath, lest he should ever fall unawares into perjury from being in the habit of swearing. In his writings, on the other hand, where he had more leisure and opportunity for caution, we find him using oaths in several places, to teach us that there is no sin in swearing truly, but that, on account of the infirmity of human nature, we are best preserved from perjury by not swearing at all. These considerations will also make it evident that the things which Faustus supposes to be peculiar to Moses were not destroyed by Christ, as he says they were.

24. To take, for instance, this saying of the ancients, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy," how does Faustus make out that this is peculiar to Moses? Does not the Apostle Paul speak of some men as hateful to God? And, indeed, in connection with this saying, the Lord enjoins on us that we should imitate God. His words are: "That ye may be the children of your Father in heaven, who maketh the sun to rise upon the evil and the

good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.” In one sense we must hate our enemies, after the example of God, to whom Paul says some men are hateful; while, at the same time, we must also love our enemies after the example of God, who makes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. If we understand this, we shall find that the Lord, in explaining to those who did not rightly understand the saying, Thou shalt hate thine enemy, made use of it to show that they should love their enemy, which was a new idea to them. It would take too long to show the consistency of the two things here. But when the Manichaeans condemn without exception the precept, Thou shall hate thine enemy, they may easily be met with the question whether their god loves the race of darkness. Or, if we should love our enemies now, because they have a part of good, should we not also hate them as having a part of evil? So even in this way it would appear that there is no opposition between the saying of ancient times, Thou shall hate thine enemy, and that of the Gospel, Love your enemies. For every wicked man should be hated as far as he is wicked; while he should be loved as a man. The vice which we rightly hate in him is to be condemned, that by its removal the human nature which we rightly love in him may be amended. This is precisely the principle we maintain, that we should hate our enemy for what is evil in him, that is, for his wickedness; while we also love our enemy for that which is good in him, that is, for his nature as a social and rational being. The difference between us and the Manichaeans is, that we prove the man to be wicked, not by nature, either his own or any other, but by his own will; whereas they think that a man is evil on account of the nature of the race of darkness, which, according to them, was an object of dread to God when he existed entire, and by which also he was partly conquered, so that he cannot be entirely set free. The intention of the Lord, then, is to correct those who, from knowing without understanding what was said by them of old time, Thou shalt hate thine enemy, hated their fellow-men instead of only hating their wickedness; and for this purpose He says, Love your enemies. Instead of destroying what is written about hatred of enemies in the law, of which He said, “I am come not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it,” He would have us learn, from the duty of loving our enemies, how it is possible in the case of one and the same person, both to hate him for his sin, and to love him for his nature. It is too much to expect our perverse opponents to understand this. But we can silence them, by showing that by their irrational objection they condemn their own god, of whom they cannot say that he loves the race of darkness; so that in enjoining on every one to love his enemy, they cannot quote his example. There would appear to be more love of their enemy in the race of darkness than in the god of the Manichaeans. The story is, that the race of darkness coveted the domain of light bordering on their territory, and, from a desire to possess it, formed the plan of invading it. Nor is there any sin in desiring true goodness and blessedness. For the Lord says, “The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.” This fabulous race of darkness, then, wished to take by force the good they desired, for its beautiful and attractive appearance. But God, instead of returning the love of those who wished to possess Him, hated it so as to endeavor to annihilate them. If, therefore, the evil love the good in the desire to possess it, while the good hate the evil in fear of being defiled, I ask the Manichaeans, which of these obeys the precept of the Lord, “Love your enemies”? If you insist on making these precepts opposed to one another, it will follow that your god obeyed what is written in the law of Moses, “Thou shall hate thine enemy”; while the race of darkness obeyed what is written in the Gospel, “Love your enemies.” However, you have never succeeded in explaining the difference between the flies that fly in the day-time and the moths that fly at night; for both, according to you, belong to the race of darkness. How is it that one kind love the light, contrary to their nature; while the other kind avoid it, and prefer the darkness from which they sprung? Strange, that filthy sewers should breed a cleaner sort than dark closets!

25. Nor, again, is there any opposition between that which was said by them of old time, “An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,” and what the Lord says, “But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but if any one smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also,” and so on. The old precept as well as the new is intended to check the vehemence of hatred, and to curb the impetuosity of angry passion. For who will of his own accord be satisfied with a revenge equal to the injury? Do we not see men, only slightly hurt, eager for slaughter, thirsting for blood, as if they could never make their enemy suffer enough? If a man receives a blow, does he not summon his assailant, that he may be condemned in the court of law? Or if

he prefers to return the blow, does he not fall upon the man with hand and heel, or perhaps with a weapon, if he can get hold of one? To put a restraint upon a revenge so unjust from its excess, the law established the principle of compensation, that the penalty should correspond to the injury inflicted. So the precept, “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,” instead of being a brand to kindle a fire that was quenched, was rather a covering to prevent the fire already kindled from spreading. For there is a just revenge due to the injured person from his assailant; so that when we pardon, we give up what we might justly claim. Thus, in the Lord’s prayer, we are taught to forgive others their debts that God may forgive us our debts. There is no injustice in asking back a debt, though there is kindness in forgiving it. But as, in swearing, one who swears, even though truly, is in danger of perjury, of which one is in no danger who never swears; and while swearing truly is not a sin, we are further from sin by not swearing; so that the command not to swear is a guard against perjury: in the same way since it is sinful to wish to be revenged with an unjust excess, though there is no sin in wishing for revenge within the limits of justice, the man who wishes for no revenge at all is further from the sin of an unjust revenge. It is sin to demand more than is due, though it is no sin to demand a debt. And the best security against the sin of making an unjust demand is to demand nothing, especially considering the danger of being compelled to pay the debt to Him who is indebted to none. Thus, I would explain the passage as follows: It has been said by them of old time, Thou shall not take unjust revenge; but I say, Take no revenge at all: here is the fulfillment. It is thus that Faustus, after quoting, “It has been said, Thou shall not swear falsely; but I say unto you, swear not at all,” adds: here is the fulfillment. I might use the same expression if I thought that by the addition of these words Christ supplied a defect in the law, and not rather that the intention of the law to prevent unjust revenge is best secured by not taking revenge at all, in the same way as the intention to prevent perjury is best secured by not swearing at all. For if “an eye for an eye” is opposed to “If any one smite thee on the cheek, turn to him the other also,” is there not as much opposition between “Thou shalt perform unto the Lord thine oath,” and “Swear not at all?” If Faustus thinks that there is not destruction, but fulfillment, in the one case, he ought to think the same of the other. For if “Swear not” is the fulfillment of

“Swear truly,” why should not “Take no revenge” be the fulfillment of “Take revenge justly”?

So, according to my interpretation, there is in both cases a guard against sin, either of false swearing or of unjust revenge; though, as regards giving up the right to revenge, there is the additional consideration that, by forgiving such debts, we shall obtain the forgiveness of our debts. The old precept was required in the case of a self-willed people, to teach them not to be extravagant in their demands. Thus, when the rage eager for unrestrained vengeance, was subdued, there would be leisure for any one so disposed to consider the desirableness of having his own debt cancelled by the Lord, and so to be led by this consideration to forgive the debt of his fellow-servant.

26. Again, we shall find on examination, that there is no opposition between the precept of the Lord about not putting away a wife, and what was said by them of old time: “Whosoever putteth away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.” The Lord explains the intention of the law, which required a bill of divorce in every case where a wife was put away. The precept not to put away a wife is the opposite of saying that a man may put away his wife if he pleases; which is not what the law says. On the contrary, to prevent the wife from being put away, the law required this intermediate step, that the eagerness for separation might be checked by the writing of the bill, and the man might have time to think of the evil of putting away his wife; especially since, as it is said, among the Hebrews it was unlawful for any but the scribes to write Hebrew: for the scribes claimed the possession of superior wisdom; and if they were men of upright and pious character, their pursuits might justly entitle them to make this claim. In requiring, therefore, that in putting away his wife, a man should give her a writing of divorcement, the design was that he should be obliged to have recourse to those from whom he might expect to receive a cautious interpretation of the law, and suitable advice against separation. Having no other way of getting the bill written, the man should be obliged to submit to their direction, and to allow of their endeavors to restore peace and harmony between him and his wife. In a case where the hatred could not be overcome or checked, the bill would of course be written. A wife might

with reason be put away when wise counsel failed to restore the proper feeling and affection in the mind of her husband. If the wife is not loved, she is to be put away. And that she may not be put away, it is the husband's duty to love her. Now, while a man cannot be forced to love against his will, he may be influenced by advice and persuasion. This was the duty of the scribe, as a wise and upright man; and the law gave him the opportunity, by requiring the husband in all cases of quarrel to go to him, to get the bill of divorcement written. No good or prudent man would write the bill unless it were a case of such obstinate aversion as to make reconciliation impossible. But according to your impious notions, there can be nothing in putting away a wife; for matrimony, according to you, is a criminal indulgence. The word "matrimony" shows that a man takes a wife in order that she may become a mother, which would be an evil in your estimation. According to you, this would imply that part of your god is overcome and captured by the race of darkness, and bound in the fetters of flesh.

27. But, to explain the point in hand: If Christ, in adding the words, "But I say unto you," to the quotations He makes of ancient sayings, neither fulfilled the law of primitive times by His additions, nor destroyed the law given to Moses by opposite precepts, but rather paid such deference to the Hebrew law in all the quotations He made from it, as to make His own remarks chiefly explanatory of what the law stated less distinctly, or a means of securing the design intended by the law, it follows that from the words, "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it" we are not to understand that Christ by His precepts filled up what was wanting in the law; but that what the literal command failed in doing from the pride and disobedience of men, is accomplished by grace in those who are brought to repentance and humility. The fulfillment is not in additional words, but in acts of obedience. So the apostle says "Faith worketh by love;" and again, He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." This love, by which also the righteousness of the law can be fulfilled was bestowed in its significance by Christ in His coming, through the spirit which He sent according to His promise; and therefore He said, "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it." This is the New Testament in which the promise of the kingdom of heaven is made to this love; which was typified in the Old Testament,

suitably to the times of that dispensation. So Christ says again; “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.”

28. So we find in the Old Testament all or nearly all the counsels and precepts which Christ introduces with the words “But I say unto you.” Against anger it is written, “Mine eyes troubled because of anger;” and again, “Better is he that conquers his anger, than he that taketh a city.” Against hard words, “The stroke of a whip maketh a wound; but the stroke of the tongue breaketh the bones.” Against adultery in the heart, “Thou shall not covet thy neighbor’s wife.” It is not, “Thou shall not commit adultery;” but, “Thou shall not covet.” The apostle, in quoting this, says: “I had not known lust, unless the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” Regarding patience in not offering resistance, a man is praised who “giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him, and who is filled full with reproach.” Of love to enemies it is said: “If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink.” This also is quoted by the apostle. In the Psalm, too, it is said, “I was a peace maker among them that hated peace;” and in many similar passages. In connection also with our imitating God in refraining from taking revenge, and in loving even the wicked, there is a passage containing a full description of God in this character; for it is written: “To Thee alone ever belongeth great strength, and who can withstand the power of Thine arm? For the whole world before Thee is as a little grain of the balance; yea, as a drop of the morning dew that falleth down upon the earth. But Thou hast mercy upon all, for Thou canst do all things, and winkest at the sins of men, because of repentance. For Thou lovest all things that are, and abhorrest nothing which Thou hast made; for never wouldest Thou have made anything if Thou hadst hated it. And how could anything have endured, if it had not been Thy will? or been preserved, if not called by Thee? But Thou sparest all; for they are Thine, O Lord, Thou lover of souls. For Thy good Spirit is in all things; therefore chastenest Thou them by little and little that offend, and warnest them by putting them in remembrance wherein they have offended, that learning their wickedness, they may believe in Thee, O Lord.” Christ exhorts us to imitate this long-suffering goodness of God, who maketh the sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust; that we may not be careful to revenge, but may do good to them that hate us, and so may be perfect, even

as our Father in heaven is perfect. From another passage in these ancient books we learn that, by not exacting the vengeance due to us, we obtain the remission of our own sins; and that by not forgiving the debts of others, we incur the danger of being refused forgiveness when we pray for the remission of our own debts: “He that revengeth shall find vengeance from the Lord, and He will surely keep his sin in remembrance. Forgive thy neighbor the hurt that he hath done to thee; so shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest. One man beareth hatred against another, and doth he seek pardon of the Lord? He showeth no mercy to a man who is like himself; and doth he ask forgiveness of his own sins? If he that is but flesh nourishes hatred, and asks for favor from the Lord, who will entreat for the pardon of his sins?”

29. As regards not putting away a wife, there is no need to quote any other passage of the Old Testament than that referred to most appropriately in the Lord’s reply to the Jews when they questioned Him on this subject. For when they asked whether it is lawful for a man to put away his wife for any reason, the Lord answered: “Have ye not read, that He that made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh? Therefore they are no longer twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined, let no man put asunder.” Here the Jews, who thought that they acted according to the intention of the law of Moses in putting away their wives, are made to see from the book of Moses that a wife should not be put away. And, by the way, we learn here, from Christ’s own declaration, that God made and joined male and female; so that by denying this, the Manichaeans are guilty of opposing the gospel of Christ as well as the writings of Moses. And supposing their doctrine to be true, that the devil made and joined male and female, we see the diabolical cunning of Faustus in finding fault with Moses for dissolving marriages by granting a bill of divorce, and praising Christ for strengthening the union by the precept in the Gospel. Instead of this, Faustus, consistently with his own foolish and impious notions, should have praised Moses for separating what was made and joined by the devil, and should have blamed Christ for ratifying a bond of the devil’s workmanship. To return, let us hear the good Master explain how Moses, who wrote of the conjugal chastity in the first

union of male and female as so holy and inviolable, afterwards allowed the people to put away their wives. For when the Jews replied, “Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?” Christ said unto them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your heart, suffered you to put away your wives.” This passage we have already explained. The hardness must have been great indeed which could not be induced to admit the restoration of wedded love, even though by means of the writing an opportunity was afforded for advice to be given to this effect by wise and upright men. Then the Lord quoted the same law, to show both what was enjoined on the good and what was permitted to the hard; for, from what is written of the union of male and female, He proved that a wife must not be put away, and pointed out the divine authority for the union; and shows from the same Scriptures that a bill of divorcement was to be given because of the hardness of the heart, which might be subdued or might not.

30. Since, then, all these excellent precepts of the Lord, which Faustus tries to prove to be contrary to the old books of the Hebrews, are found in these very books, the only sense in which the Lord came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it, is this, that besides the fulfillment of the prophetic types, which are set aside by their actual accomplishment, the precepts also, in which the law is holy, and just, and good, are fulfilled in us, not by the oldness of the letter which commands, and increases the offence of the proud by the additional guilt of transgression, but by the newness of the Spirit, who aids us, and by the obedience of the humble, through the saving grace which sets us free. For, while all these sublime precepts are found in the ancient books, still the end to which they point is not there revealed; although the holy men who foresaw the revelation lived in accordance with it, either veiling it in prophecy as suited the time, or themselves discovering the truth thus veiled.

31. I am disposed, after careful examination, to doubt whether the expression so often used by the Lord, “the kingdom of heaven,” can be found in these books. It is said, indeed, “Love wisdom, that ye may reign for ever.” And if eternal life had not been clearly made known in the Old Testament, the Lord would not have said, as He did even to the unbelieving

Jews: “Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think that ye have eternal life, and they are they that testify of me.” And to the same effect are the words of the Psalmist: “I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.” And again: “Enlighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.” Again, we read, “The souls of the righteous are in the hand of the Lord, and pain shall not touch them;” and immediately following: “They are in peace; and if they have suffered torture from men, their hope is full of immortality; and after a few trouble, they shall enjoy many rewards.” Again, in another place: “The righteous shall live for ever, and their reward is with the Lord, and their concern with the Highest; therefore shall they receive from the hand of the Lord a kingdom of glory and a crown of beauty.” These and many similar declarations of eternal life, in more or less explicit terms, are found in these writings. Even the resurrection of the body is spoken of by the prophets. The Pharisees, accordingly, were fierce opponents of the Sadducees, who disbelieved the resurrection. This we learn not only from the canonical Acts of the Apostles, which the Manichaeans reject, because it tells of the advent of the Paraclete promised by the Lord, but also from the Gospel, when the Sadducees question the Lord about the woman who married seven brothers, one dying after the other, whose wife she would be in the resurrection. As regards, then, eternal life and the resurrection of the dead, numerous testimonies are to be found in these Scriptures. But I do not find there the expression, “the kingdom of heaven.” This expression belongs properly to the revelation of the New Testament, because in the resurrection our earthly bodies shall, by that change which Paul fully describes, become spiritual bodies, and so heavenly, that thus we may possess the kingdom of heaven. And this expression was reserved for Him whose advent as King to govern and Priest to sanctify His believing people, was ushered in by all the symbolism of the old covenant, in its genealogies, its typical acts and words, its sacrifices and ceremonies and feasts, and in all its prophetic utterances and events and figures. He came full of grace and truth, in His grace helping us to obey the precepts, and in His truth securing the accomplishment of the promises. He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it.

BOOK XX

Faustus repels the charge of sun-worship, and maintains that while the Manichaeans believe that God’s power dwells in the sun and his wisdom in the moon, they yet worship one deity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are not a schism of the Gentiles, nor a sect. Augustin emphasizes the charge of polytheism, and goes into an elaborate comparison of Manichaean and pagan mythology.

1. Faustus said: You ask why we worship the sun, if we are a sect or separate religion, and not Pagans, or merely a schism of the Gentiles. It may therefore be as well to inquire into the matter, that we may see whether the name of Gentiles is more applicable to you or to us. Perhaps, in giving you in a friendly way this simple account of my faith, I shall appear to be making an apology for it, as if I were ashamed, which God forbid, of doing homage to the divine luminaries. You may take it as you please; but I shall not regret what I have done if I succeed in conveying to some at least this much knowledge, that our religion has nothing in common with that of the Gentiles.

2. We worship, then, one deity under the threefold appellation of the Almighty God the Father, and his son Christ, and the Holy Spirit. While these are one and the same, we believe also that the Father properly dwells in the highest or principal light, which Paul calls “light inaccessible,” and the Son in his second or visible light. And as the Son is himself twofold, according to the apostle, who speaks of Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God, we believe that His power dwells in the sun, and His wisdom in the moon. We also believe that the Holy Spirit, the third majesty, has His seat and His home in the whole circle of the atmosphere. By His influence and spiritual infusion, the earth conceives and brings forth the mortal Jesus, who, as hanging from every tree, is the life and salvation of men. Though you oppose these doctrines so violently, your religion resembles ours in attaching the same sacredness to the bread and wine that we do to everything. This is our belief, which you will have an opportunity of hearing more of, if you wish to do so. Meanwhile there is some force in the consideration that you or any one that is asked where his God dwells, will say that he dwells in light; so that the testimony in favor of my worship is almost universal.

3. As to your calling us a schism of the Gentiles, and not a sect, I suppose the word schism applies to those who have the same doctrines and worship as other people, and only choose to meet separately. The word sect, again, applies to those whose doctrine is quite unlike that of others, and who have made a form of divine worship peculiar to themselves. If this is what the words mean, in the first place, in our doctrine and worship we have no resemblance to the Pagans. We shall see presently whether you have. The Pagan doctrine is, that all things good and evil, mean and glorious, fading and unfading, changeable and unchangeable, material and divine, have only one principle. In opposition to this, my belief is that God is the principle of all good things, and Hyle [matters] of the opposite. Hyle is the name given by our master in divinity to the principle or nature of evil. The Pagans accordingly think it right to worship God with altars, and shrines, and images, and sacrifices, and incense. Here also my practice differs entirely from theirs: for I look upon myself as a reasonable temple of God, if I am worthy to be so; and I consider Christ his Son as the living image of his living majesty; and I hold a mind well cultivated to be the true altar, and pure and simple prayers to be the true way of paying divine honors and of offering sacrifices. Is this being a schism of the Pagans?

4. As regards the worship of the Almighty God, you might call us a schism of the Jews, for all Jews are bold enough to profess this worship, were it not for the difference in the form of our worship, though it may be questioned whether the Jews really worship the Almighty. But the doctrine I have mentioned is common to the Pagans in their worship of the sun, and to the Jews in their worship of the Almighty. Even in relation to you, we are not properly a schism, though we acknowledge Christ and worship Him; for our worship and doctrine are different from yours. In a schism, little or no change is made from the original; as, for instance, you, in your schism from the Gentiles, have brought with you the doctrine of a single principle, for you believe that all things are of God. The sacrifices you change into love-feasts, the idols into martyrs, to whom you pray as they do to their idols. You appease the shades of the departed with wine and food. You keep the same holidays as the Gentiles; for example, the calends and the solstices. In your way of living you have made no change. Plainly you are a mere schism; for the only difference from the original is that you meet separately.

In this you have followed the Jews, who separated from the Gentiles, but differed only in not having images. For they used temples, and sacrifices, and altars, and a priesthood, and the whole round of ceremonies the same as those of the Gentiles, only more superstitious. Like the Pagans, they believe in a single principle; so that both you and the Jews are schisms of the Gentiles, for you have the same faith, and nearly the same worship, and you call yourselves sects only because you meet separately. The fact is, there are only two sects, the Gentiles and ourselves. We and the Gentiles are as contrary in our belief as truth and falsehood, day and night, poverty and wealth, health and sickness. You, again, are not a sect in relation either to truth or to error. You are merely a schism and a schism not of truth, but of error.

5. Augustin replied: O hateful mixture of ignorance and cunning! Why do you put arguments in the mouth of your opponent, which no one that knows you would use? We do not call you Pagans, or a schism of Pagans; but we say that you resemble them in worshipping many gods. But you are far worse than Pagans, for they worship things which exist, though they should not be worshipped: for idols have an existence, though for salvation they are nought. So, to worship a tree with prayers, instead of improving it by cultivation, is not to worship nothing, but to worship in a wrong way. When the apostle says that “the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God,” he means that these demons exist to whom the sacrifices are made, and with whom he wishes us not to be partakers. So, too, heaven and earth, the sea and air, the sun and moon, and the other heavenly bodies, are all objects which have a sensible existence. When the Pagans worship these as gods, or as parts of one great God (for some of them identify the universe with the Supreme Deity), they worship things which have an existence. In arguing with Pagans, we do not deny the existence of these things, but we say that they should not be worshipped; and we recommend the worship of the invisible Creator of all these things, in whom alone man can find the happiness which all allow that he desires. To those, again, who worship what is invisible and immaterial, but still is created, as the soul or mind of man, we say that happiness is not to be found in the creature even under this form, and that we must worship the true God, who is not only invisible, but unchangeable; for He alone is to be

worshipped, in the enjoyment of whom the worshipper finds happiness, and without whom the soul must be wretched, whatever else it possesses. You, on the other hand, who worship things which have no existence at all except in your fictitious legends, would be nearer true piety and religion if you were Pagans, or if you were worshippers of what has an existence, though not a proper object of worship. In fact, you do not properly worship the sun, though he carries your prayers with him in his course round the heavens.

6. Your statements about the sun himself are so false and absurd, that if he were to repay you for the injury done to him, he would scorch you to death. First of all, you call the sun a ship, so that you are not only astray worlds off, as the saying is, but adrift. Next, while every one sees that the sun is round, which is the form corresponding from its perfection to his position among the heavenly bodies, you maintain that he is triangular, that is, that his light shines on the earth through a triangular window in heaven. Hence it is that you bend and bow your heads to the sun, while you worship not this visible sun, but some imaginary ship which you suppose to be shining through a triangular opening. Assuredly this ship would never have been heard of, if the words required for the composition of heretical fictions had to be paid for, like the wood required for the beams of a ship. All this is comparatively harmless, however ridiculous or pitiable. Very different is your wicked fancy about youths of both sexes proceeding from this ship, whose beauty excites eager desire in the princes and princesses of darkness; and so the members of your god are released from this humiliating confinement in the members of the race of darkness, by means of sinful passion and sensual appetite. And to these filthy rags of yours you would unite the mystery of the Trinity; for you say that the Father dwells in a secret light, the power of the Son in the sun, and His wisdom in the moon, and the Holy Spirit in the air.

7. As for this threefold or rather fourfold fiction, what shall I say of the secret light of the Father, but that you can think of no light except what you have seen? From your knowledge of visible light, with which beasts and insects as well as men are familiar, you form some vague idea in your mind, and call it the light in which God the Father dwells with His subjects. How can you distinguish between the light by which we see, and that by which

we understand, when, according to your ideas, to understand truth is nothing else than to form the conception of material forms, either finite or in some cases infinite; and you actually believe in these wild fancies? It is manifest that the act of my mind in thinking of your region of light which has no existence, is entirely different from my conception of Alexandria, which exists, though I have not seen it. And, again, the act of forming a conception of Alexandria, which I have never seen, is very different from thinking of Carthage, which I know. But this difference is insignificant as compared with that between my thinking of material things which I know from seeing them, and my understanding justice, chastity, faith, truth, love, goodness, and things of this nature. Can you describe this intellectual light, which gives us a clear perception of the distinction between itself and other things, as well as of the distinction between those things themselves? And yet even this is not the sense in which it can be said that God is light, for this light is created, whereas God is the Creator; the light is made, and He is the Maker; the light is changeable. For the intellect changes from dislike to desire, from ignorance to knowledge, from forgetfulness to recollection; whereas God remains the same in will, in truth, and in eternity. From God we derive the beginning of existence, the principle of knowledge, the law of affection. From God all animals, rational and irrational, derive the nature of their life, the capacity of sensation, the faculty of emotion. From God all bodies derive their subsistence in extension, their beauty in number, and their order in weight. This light is one divine being, in an inseparable triune existence; and yet, without supposing the assumption of any bodily form, you assign to separate places parts of the immaterial, spiritual, and unchangeable substance. And instead of three places for the Trinity, you have four: one, the light inaccessible, which you know nothing about, for the Father; two, the sun and moon, for the Son; and again one, the circle of the atmosphere, for the Holy Spirit. Of the inaccessible light of the Father I shall say nothing further at present, for orthodox believers do not separate the Son and the Spirit from the Father in relation to this light.

8. It is difficult to understand how you have been taken with the absurd idea of placing the power of the Son in the sun, and His wisdom in the moon. For, as the Son remains inseparably in the Father, His wisdom and power cannot be separated from one another, so that one should be in the sun and

the other in the moon. Only material things can be thus assigned to separate places. If you only understood this, it would have prevented you from taking the productions of a diseased fancy as the material for so many fictions. But there is inconsistency and improbability as well as falsehood in your ideas. For, according to you, the seat of wisdom is inferior in brightness to the seat of power. Now energy and productiveness are the qualities of power, whereas light teaches and manifests; so that if the sun had the greater heat, and the moon the greater light, these absurdities might appear to have some likelihood to men of carnal minds, who know nothing except through material conceptions. From the connection between great heat and motion, they might identify power with heat; while light from its brightness, and as making things discernible, they might represent wisdom. But what folly as well as profanity, in placing power in the sun, which excels so much in light, and wisdom in the moon, which is so inferior in brightness! And while you separate Christ from Himself, you do not distinguish between Christ and the Holy Spirit; whereas Christ is one, the power of God, and the wisdom of God, and the Spirit is a distinct person. But according to you, the air, which you make the seat of the Spirit, fills and pervades the universe. So the sun and moon in their course are always united to the air. But the moon approaches the sun at one time, and recedes from it at another. So that, if we may believe you, or rather, if we may allow ourselves to be imposed on by you, wisdom recedes from power by half the circumference of a circle, and again approaches it by the other half. And when wisdom is full, it is at a distance from power. For when the moon is full, the distance between the two bodies is so great, that the moon rises in the east while the sun is setting in the west. But as the loss of power produces weakness, the fuller the moon is, the weaker must wisdom be. If, as is certainly true, the wisdom of God is unchangeable in power, and the power of God unchangeable in wisdom, how can you separate them so as to assign them to different places? And how can the place be different when the substance is the same? Is this not the infatuation of subjection to material fancies; showing such a want of power and wisdom that your wisdom is as weak as your power is foolish? This execrable absurdity would divide Christ between the sun and the moon,—His power in one, and His wisdom in the other; so that He would be incomplete in both, lacking wisdom in the sun, and power in the moon, while in both He supplies youths, male and female, to excite the affection of the princes and princesses of darkness. Such are the tenets which you learn and profess. Such is the faith which directs your conduct. And can you wonder that you are regarded with abhorrence?

9. But besides your errors regarding these conspicuous and familiar luminaries, which you worship not for what they are, but for what your wild fancy makes them to be, your other absurdities are still worse than this. Your illustrious World-bearer, and Atlas who helps to hold him up, are unreal beings. Like innumerable other creatures of your fancy, they have no existence, and yet you worship them. For this reason we say that you are worse than Pagans, while you resemble them in worshipping many gods. You are worse, because, while they worship things which exist though they are not gods, you worship things which are neither gods nor anything else, for they have no existence. The Pagans, too, have fables, but they know them to be fables; and either look upon them as amusing poetical fancies, or try to explain them as representing the nature of things, or the life of man. Thus they say that Vulcan is lame, because flame in common fire has an irregular motion: that Fortune is blind, because of the uncertainty of what are called fortuitous occurrences: that there are three Fates, with distaff, and spindle, and fingers spinning wool into thread, because there are three times,—the past, already spun and wound on the spindle; the present, which is passing through the fingers of the spinner; and the future, still in wool bound to the distaff, and soon to pass through the fingers to the spindle, that is, through the present into the future: and that Venus is the wife of Vulcan, because pleasure has a natural connection with heat; and that she is the mistress of Mars, because pleasure is not properly the companion of warriors: and that Cupid is a boy with wings and a bow, from the wounds inflicted by thoughtless, inconstant passion in the hearts of unhappy beings: and so with many other fables. The great absurdity is in their continuing to worship these beings, after giving such explanations; for the worship without the explanations, though criminal, would be a less heinous crime. The very explanations prove that they do not worship that God, the enjoyment of whom can alone give happiness, but things which He has created. And even in the creature they worship not only the virtues, as in Minerva, who sprang from the head of Jupiter, and who represents

prudence,—a quality of reason which, according to Plato, has its seat in the head,—but their vices, too, as in Cupid. Thus one of their dramatic poets says, “Sinful passion, in favor of vice, made Love a god.” Even bodily evils had temples in Rome, as in the case of pallor and fever. Not to dwell on the sin of the worshippers of these idols, who are in a way affected by the bodily forms, so that they pay homage to them as deities, when they see them set up in some lofty place, and treated with great honor and reverence, there is greater sin in the very explanations which are intended as apologies for these dumb, and deaf, and blind, and lifeless objects. Still, though, as I have said, these things are nothing in the way of salvation or of usefulness, both they and the things they are said to represent are real existences. But your First Man, warring with the five elements; and your Mighty Spirit, who constructs the world from the captive bodies of the race of darkness, or rather from the members of your god in subjection and bondage; and your World-holder, who has in his hand the remains of these members, and who bewails the capture and bondage and pollution of the rest; and your giant Atlas, who keeps up the World-holder on his shoulders, lest he should from weariness throw away his burden, and so prevent the completion of the final imitation of the mass of darkness, which is to be the last scene in your drama;—these and countless other absurdities are not represented in painting or sculpture, or in any explanation; and yet you believe and worship things which have no existence, while you taunt the Christians with being credulous for believing in realities with a faith which pacifies the mind under its influence. The objects of your worship can be shown to have no existence by many proofs, which I do not bring forward here, because, though I could without difficulty discourse philosophically on the construction of the world, it would take too long to do so here. One proof suffices. If these things are real, God must be subject to change, and corruption, and contamination; a supposition as blasphemous as it is irrational. All these things, therefore, are vain, and false, and unreal. Thus you are much worse than those Pagans, with whom all are familiar, and who still preserve traces of their old customs, of which they themselves are ashamed; for while they worship things which are not gods, you worship things which do not exist.

10. If you think that your doctrines are true because they are unlike the errors of the Pagans, and that we are in error because we perhaps differ more from you than from them, you might as well say that a dead man is in good health because he is not sick; or that good health is undesirable, because it differs less from sickness than from death. Or if the Pagans should be viewed in many cases as rather dead than sick, you might as well praise the ashes in the tomb because they have no longer the human shape, as compared with the living body, which does not differ so much from a corpse as from ashes. It is thus we are reproached for having more resemblance to the dead body of Paganism than to the ashes of Manichaeism. But in division, it often happens that a thing is placed in different classes, according to the point of resemblance on which the division proceeds. For instance, if animals are divided into those that fly and those that cannot fly, in this division men and beasts are classed together as distinct from birds, because they are both unable to fly. But if they are divided into rational and irrational, beasts and birds are classed together as distinct from men, for they are both destitute of reason. Faustus did not think of this when he said: There are in fact only two sects, the Gentiles and ourselves, for we are directly opposed to them in our belief. The opposition he means is this, that the Gentiles believe in a single principle, whereas the Manichaeans believe also in the principle of the race of darkness. Certainly, according to this division we agree in general with the Pagans. But if we divide all who have a religion into those who worship one God and those who worship many gods, the Manichaeans must be classed along with the Pagans, and we along with the Jews. This is another distinction, which may be said to make only two sects. Perhaps you will say that you hold all your gods to be of one substance, which the Pagans do not. But you at least resemble them in assigning to your gods different powers, and functions, and employments. One does battle with the race of darkness; another constructs the world from the part which is captured; another, standing above, has the world in his hand; another holds him up from below; another turns the wheels of the fires and winds and waters beneath; another, in his circuit of the heavens, gathers with his beams the members of your god from cesspools. Indeed, your gods have innumerable occupations, according to your fabulous descriptions, which you neither explain nor represent in a visible form. But again, if men were divided into

those who believe that God takes an interest in human affairs and those who do not, the Pagans and Jews, and you and all heretics that have anything of Christianity, will be classed together, as opposed to the Epicureans, and any others holding similar views. As this is a principle of importance, here again we may say that there are only two sects, and you belong to the same sect as we do. You will hardly venture to dissent from us in the opinion that God is concerned in human affairs, so that in this matter your opposition to the Epicureans makes you side with us. Thus, according to the nature of the division, what is in one class at one time, is in another at another time: things joined here are separated there: in some things we are classed with others, and they with us; in other things we are classed separately, and stand alone. If Faustus thought of this, he would not talk such eloquent nonsense.

11. But what are we to make of these words of Faustus: The Holy Spirit, by his influence and spiritual infusion, makes the earth conceive and bring forth the mortal Jesus, who, as hanging from every tree, is the life and salvation of men? Letting pass for a moment the absurdity of this statement, we observe the folly of believing that the mortal Jesus can be conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit by the earth, but not by the Virgin Mary. Dare you compare the holiness of that chaste virgin's womb with any piece of ground where trees and plants grow? Do you pretend to look with abhorrence upon a pure virgin, while you do not shrink from believing that Jesus is produced in gardens watered by the filthy drains of a city? For plants of all kinds spring up and are nourished in such moisture. You will have Jesus to be born in this way, while you cry out against the idea of His being born of a virgin. Do you think flesh more unclean than the excrements which its nature rejects? Is the filth cleaner than the flesh which expels it? Are you not aware how fields are manured in order to make them productive? Your folly comes to this, that the Holy Spirit, who, according to you, despised the womb of Mary, makes the earth conceive more fruitfully in proportion as it is carefully enriched with animal off-scourings. Do you reply that the Holy Spirit preserves His incorruptible purity everywhere? I ask again, Why not also in the virgin's womb? Passing from the conception, you maintain in regard to the mortal Jesus—who, as you say, is born from the earth, which has conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit—that He hangs in the shape of fruit from every tree: so that, besides this pollution,

He suffers additional defilement from the flesh of the countless animals that eat the fruit; except, indeed, the small amount that is purified by your eating it. While we believe and confess Christ the Son of God, and the Word of God, to have become flesh without suffering defilement, because the divine substance is not defiled by flesh, as it is not defiled by anything, your fanciful notions would make Jesus to be defiled even as hanging on the tree, before entering the flesh of any animal; for if He were not defiled, there would be no need of His being purified by your eating Him. And if all trees are the cross of Christ, as Faustus seems to imply when he says that Jesus hangs from every tree, why do you not pluck the fruit, and so take Jesus down from hanging on the tree to bury Him in your stomach, which would correspond to the good deed of Joseph of Arimathea, when he took down the true Jesus from the cross to bury Him? Why should it be impious to take Christ from the tree, while it is pious to lay Him in the tomb? Perhaps you wish to apply to yourselves the words quoted from the prophet by Paul, “Their throat is an open sepulchre:” and so you wait with open mouth till some one comes to use your throat as the best sepulchre for Christ. Once more, how many Christs do you make? Is there one whom you call the mortal Christ, whom the earth conceives and brings forth by the power of the Holy Spirit; and another crucified by the Jews under Pontius Pilate; and a third whom you divide between the sun and the moon? Or is it one and the same person, part of whom is confined in the trees, to be released by the help of the other part which is not confined? If this is the case, and you allow that Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate, though it is difficult to see how he could have suffered without flesh, as you say he did, the great question is, with whom he left those ships you speak of, that he might come down and suffer these things, which he certainly could not have suffered without having a body of some kind. A mere spiritual presence could not have made him liable to these sufferings, and in his bodily presence he could not be at the same time in the sun, in the moon, and on the cross. So, then, if he had not a body, he was not crucified; and if he had a body, the question is, where he got it: for, according to you, all bodies belong to the race of darkness, though you cannot think of the divine substance except as being material. Thus you must say either that Christ was crucified without a body; which is utterly absurd; or that he was crucified in appearance and not in reality, which is blasphemy; or that all bodies do not belong to the race of darkness, but that the divine substance has also a body, and that not an immortal body, but liable to crucifixion and death, which, again, is altogether erroneous; or that Christ had a mortal body from the race of darkness, so that, while you will not allow that Christ's body came from the Virgin Mary, you derive it from the race of demons. Finally, as in Faustus' statement, in which he alludes in the briefest manner possible to the lengthy stories of Manichaean invention, the earth by the power of the Holy Spirit conceives and brings forth the mortal Jesus, who, hanging from every tree, is the life and salvation of men, why should this Saviour be represented by whatever is hanging, because he hung on the tree, and not by whatever is born, because he was born? But if you mean that the Jesus on the trees, and the Jesus crucified under Pontius Pilate, and the Jesus divided between the sun and the moon, are all one and the same substance, why do you not give the name of Jesus to your whole host of deities? Why should not your World-holder be Jesus too, and Atlas, and the King of Honour, and the Mighty Spirit, and the First Man, and all the rest, with their various names and occupations?

12. So, with regard to the Holy Spirit, how can you say that he is the third person, when the persons you mention are innumerable? Or why is he not Jesus himself? And why does Faustus mislead people, in trying to make out an agreement between himself and true Christians, from whom he differs only too widely, by saying, We worship one God under the threefold appellation of the Almighty God the Father, Christ his Son, and the Holy Spirit? Why is the appellation only threefold, instead of being manifold? And why is the distinction in appellation only, and not in reality, if there are as many persons as there are names? For it is not as if you gave three names to the same thing, as the same weapon may be called a short sword, a dagger, or a dirk; or as you give the name of moon, and the lesser ship, and the luminary of night, and so on, to the same thing. For you cannot say that the First Man is the same as the Mighty Spirit, or as the World-Holder, or as the giant Atlas. They are all distinct persons, and you do not call any of them Christ. How can there be one Deity with opposite functions? Or why should not Christ himself be the single person, if in one substance Christ hangs on the trees, and was persecuted by the Jews, and exists in the sun

and moon? The fact is, your fancies are all astray, and are no better than the dreams of insanity.

13. How can Faustus think that we resemble the Manichaeans in attaching sacredness to bread and wine, when they consider it sacrilege to taste wine? They acknowledge their god in the grape, but not in the cup; perhaps they are shocked at his being trampled on and bottled. It is not any bread and wine that we hold sacred as a natural production, as if Christ were confined in corn or in vines, as the Manichaeans fancy, but what is truly consecrated as a symbol. What is not consecrated, though it is bread and wine, is only nourishment or refreshment, with no sacredness about it; although we bless and thank God for every gift, bodily as well as spiritual. According to your notion, Christ is confined in everything you eat, and is released by digestion from the additional confinement of your intestines. So, when you eat, your god suffers; and when you digest, you suffer from his recovery. When he fills you, your gain is his loss. This might be considered kindness on his part, because he suffers in you for your benefit, were it not that he gains freedom by escaping and leaving you empty. There is not the least resemblance between our reverence for the bread and wine, and your doctrines, which have no truth in them. To compare the two is even more foolish than to say, as some do, that in the bread and wine we worship Ceres and Bacchus. I refer to this now, to show where you got your silly idea that our fathers kept the Sabbath in honor of Saturn. For as there is no connection with the worship of the Pagan deities Ceres and Bacchus in our observance of the sacrament of the bread and wine, which you approve so highly that you wish to resemble us in it, so there was no subjection to Saturn in the case of our fathers, who observed the rest of the Sabbath in a manner suitable to prophetic times.

14. You might have found a resemblance in your religion to that of the Pagans as regards Hyle [matter], which the Pagans often speak of. You, on the contrary, maintain that you are directly opposed to them in your belief in the evil principle which your teacher in theology calls Hyle. But here you only show your ignorance, and, with an affectation of learning, use this word without knowing what it means. The Greeks, when speaking of nature, give the name Hyle to the subject-matter of things, which has no

form of its own, but admits of all bodily forms, and is known only through these changeable phenomena, not being itself an object of sensation or perception. Some Gentiles, indeed, erroneously make this matter co-eternal with God, as not being derived from Him, though the bodily forms are. In this manifest error you resemble the Pagans, for you hold that Hyle has a principle of its own, and does not come from God. It is only ignorance that leads you to deny this resemblance. In saying that Hyle has no form of its own, and can take its forms only from God, the Pagans come near to the truth which we believe in contradistinction from your errors. Not knowing what Hyle or the subject-matter of things is, you make it the race of darkness, in which you place not only innumerable bodily forms of five different kinds, but also a formative mind. Such, indeed, is your ignorance or insanity, that you call this mind Hyle, and make it give forms instead of taking them. If there were such a formative mind as you speak of, and bodily elements capable of form, the word Hyle would properly be applicable to the bodily elements, which would be the matter to be formed by the mind, which you make the principle of evil. Even this would not be a quite accurate use of the word Hyle, which has no form of any kind; whereas these elements, although capable of new forms, have already the form of elements, and belong to different kinds. Still this use of the word would not be so much amiss, notwithstanding your ignorance; for it would thus be applied, as it properly is, to that which takes form, and not to that which gives it. Even here, however, your folly and impiety would appear in tracing so much that is good to the evil principle, from your not knowing that all natures of every kind, all forms in their proportion, and all weights in their order, can come only from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. As it is, you know neither what Hyle is, nor what evil is. Would that I could persuade you to refrain from misleading people still more ignorant than yourselves!

15. Every one must see the folly of your boasting of superiority to the Pagans because they use altars and temples, images and sacrifices and incense, in the worship of God, which you do not. As if it were not better to build an altar and offer sacrifice to a stone, which has some kind of existence, than to employ a heated imagination in worshipping things which have no existence at all. And what do you mean by saying that you are a

rational temple of God? Can that be God’s temple which is partly the construction of the devil? And is this not true of you, as you say that all your members and your whole body were formed by the evil principle which you call Hyle, and that part of this formative mind dwells in the body along with part of your god? And as this part of your god is bound and confined, you should be called the prison of God rather than his temple. Perhaps it is your soul that is the temple of God, as you have it from the region of light. But you generally call your soul not a temple, but a part or member of God. So, when you say you are the temple of God, it must be in your body, which, you say, was formed by the devil. Thus you blaspheme the temple of God, calling it not only the workmanship of Satan, but the prison-house of God. The apostle, on the other hand, says: “The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” And to show that this refers not merely to the soul, he says expressly: “Know ye not that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?” You call the workmanship of devils the temple of God, and there, to use Faustus’ words, you place Christ, the Son of God, the living image of living majesty. Your impiety may well contrive a fabulous temple for a fabulous Christ. The image you speak of must be so called, because it is the creature of your imagination.

16. If your mind is an altar, you see whose altar it is. You may see from the very doctrines and duties in which you say you are trained. You are taught not to give food to a beggar; and so your altar smokes with the sacrifice of cruelty. Such altars the Lord destroys; for in words quoted from the law He tells us what offering pleases God: “I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.” Observe on what occasion the Lord uses these words. It was when, in passing through a field, the disciples plucked the ears of corn because they were hungry. Your doctrine would lead you to call this murder. Your mind is an altar, not of God, but of lying devils, by whose doctrines the evil conscience is seared as with a hot iron, calling murder what the truth calls innocence. For in His words to the Jews, Christ by anticipation deals a fatal blow to you: “If ye had known what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.”

17. Nor can you say that you honor God with sacrifices in the shape of pure and simple prayers: for, in your low, dishonoring notions about the divine nature and substance, you make your god to be the victim in the sacrifices of Pagans; so far are you from pleasing the true God with your sacrifices. For you hold that God is confined not only in trees and plants, or in the human body, but also in the flesh of animals, which contaminates Him with its impurity. And how can your soul give praise to God, when you actually reproach Him by calling your soul a particle of His substance taken captive by the race of darkness; as if God could not maintain the conflict except by this corruption of His members, and this dishonorable captivity? Instead of honoring God in your prayers, you insult Him. For what sin did you commit, when you belonged to Him, that you should be thus punished by the god you cry to, not because you left Him sinfully of your own choice; for he himself gave you to His enemies, to obtain peace for His kingdom? You are not even given as hostages to be honorably guarded. Nor is it as when a shepherd lays a snare to catch a wild beast: for he does not put one of his own members in the snare, but some animal from his flock; and generally, so that the wild beast is caught before the animal is hurt. You, though you are the members of your god, are given to the enemy, whose ferocity you keep off from your god only by being contaminated with their impurity, infected with their corruptions, without any fault of your own. You cannot in your prayers use the words: “Free us, O Lord, for the glory of Thy name; and for Thy name’s sake pardon our sins.” Your prayer is: “Free us by Thy skill, for we suffer here oppression, and torture, and pollution, only that Thou mayest mourn unmolested in Thy kingdom.” These are words of reproach, not of entreaty. Nor can you use the words taught us by the Master of truth: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” For who are the debtors who have sinned against you? If it is the race of darkness, you do not forgive their debts, but make them be utterly cast out and shut up in eternal imprisonment. And how can God forgive your debts, when He rather sinned against you by sending you into such a state, than you against Him, whom you obeyed by going? If this was not a sin in Him, because He was compelled to do it, this excuse must apply you, now that you have been overthrown in the conflict, more than to Him before the conflict began. You suffer now from the mixture of evil, which was not the case with Him when nevertheless He was compelled to send you. So either

He requires that you should forgive Him his debt; or, if He is not in debt to you, still less are you to Him. It appears that your sacrifices and your pure and simple prayers are false and vile blasphemies.

18. How is it, by the way, that you use the words temple, altar, sacrifice, for the purpose of commending your own practices? If such things can be spoken of as properly belonging to true religion, they must constitute the true worship of the true God. And if there is such a thing as true sacrifice to the true God, which is implied in the expression divine honors, there must be some one true sacrifice of which the rest are imitations. On the one hand, we have the spurious imitations in the case of false and lying gods, that is, of devils, who proudly demand divine honors from their deluded votaries, as is or was the case in the temples and idols of the Gentiles. On the other hand, we have the prophetic intimations of one most true sacrifice to be offered for the sins of all believers, as in the sacrifices enjoined by God on our fathers; along with which there was also the symbolical anointing typical of Christ, as the name Christ itself means anointed. The animal sacrifices, therefore, presumptuously claimed by devils, were an imitation of the true sacrifice which is due only to the one true God, and which Christ alone offered on His altar. Thus the apostle says: “The sacrifices which the Gentiles offer, they offer to devils, and not to God.” He does not find fault with sacrifices, but with offering to devils. The Hebrews, again, in their animal sacrifices, which they offered to God in many varied forms, suitably to the significance of the institution, typified the sacrifice offered by Christ. This sacrifice is also commemorated by Christians, in the sacred offering and participation of the body and blood of Christ. The Manichaeans understand neither the sinfulness of the Gentile sacrifices, nor the importance of the Hebrew sacrifices, nor the use of the ordinance of the Christian sacrifice. Their own errors are the offering they present to the devil who has deceived them. And thus they depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and to doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy.

19. It may be well that Faustus, or at least that those who are charmed with Faustus’ writings, should know that the doctrine of a single principle did not come to us from the Gentiles; for the belief in one true God, from whom

every kind of nature is derived, is a part of the original truth retained among the Gentiles, notwithstanding their having fallen away to many false gods. For the Gentile philosophers had the knowledge of God, because, as the apostle says, “the invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” But, as the apostle adds, “when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.” These are the idols of the Gentiles, which they cannot explain except by referring to the creatures made by God; so that this very explanation of their idolatry, on which the more enlightened Gentiles were wont to pride themselves as a proof of their superiority, shows the truth of the following words of the apostle: “They worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.” Where you differ from the Gentiles, you are in error; where you resemble them, you are worse than they. You do not believe, as they do, in a single principle; and so you fall into the impiety of believing the substance of the one true God to be liable to subjugation and corruption. As regards the worship of a plurality of gods, the doctrine of lying devils has led the Gentiles to worship many idols, and you to worship many phantasms.

20. We do not turn the sacrifices of the Gentiles into love-feasts, as Faustus says we do. Our love-feasts are rather a substitute for the sacrifice spoken of by the Lord, in the words already quoted: “I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.” At our love-feasts the poor obtain vegetable or animal food; and so the creature of God is used, as far as it is suitable, for the nourishment of man, who is also God’s creature. You have been led by lying devils, not in self-denial, but in blasphemous error, “to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.” In return for the bounties of the Creator, you ungratefully insult Him with your impiety; and because in our love-feasts flesh is often given to the poor, you compare Christian

charity to Pagan sacrifices. This indeed, is another point in which you resemble some Pagans. You consider it a crime to kill animals, because you think that the souls of men pass into them; which is an idea found in the writings of some Gentile philosophers, although their successors appear to have thought differently. But here again you are most in error: for they dreaded slaughtering a relative in the animal; but you dread the slaughter of your god, for you hold even the souls of animals to be his members.

21. As to our paying honor to the memory of the martyrs, and the accusation of Faustus, that we worship them instead of idols, I should not care to answer such a charge, were it not for the sake of showing how Faustus, in his desire to cast reproach on us, has overstepped the Manichaean inventions, and has fallen heedlessly into a popular notion found in Pagan poetry, although he is so anxious to be distinguished from the Pagans. For in saying that we have turned the idols into martyrs, he speaks of our worshipping them with similar rites, and appeasing the shades of the departed with wine and food. Do you, then, believe in shades? We never heard you speak of such things, nor have we read of them in your books. In fact, you generally oppose such ideas: for you tell us that the souls of the dead, if they are wicked, or not purified, are made to pass through various changes, or suffer punishment still more severe; while the good souls are placed in ships, and sail through heaven to that imaginary region of light which they died fighting for. According to you, then, no souls remain near the burying-place of the body; and how can there be any shades of the departed? What and where are they? Faustus' love of evil-speaking has made him forget his own creed; or perhaps he spoke in his sleep about ghosts, and did not wake up even when he saw his words in writing. It is true that Christians pay religious honor to the memory of the martyrs, both to excite us to imitate them and to obtain a share in their merits, and the assistance of their prayers. But we build altars not to any martyr, but to the God of martyrs, although it is to the memory of the martyrs. No one officiating at the altar in the saints' burying-place ever says, We bring an offering to thee, O Peter! or O Paul! or O Cyprian! The offering is made to God, who gave the crown of martyrdom, while it is in memory of those thus crowned. The emotion is increased by the associations of the place, and love is excited both towards those who are

our examples, and towards Him by whose help we may follow such examples. We regard the martyrs with the same affectionate intimacy that we feel towards holy men of God in this life, when we know that their hearts are prepared to endure the same suffering for the truth of the gospel. There is more devotion in our feeling towards the martyrs, because we know that their conflict is over; and we can speak with greater confidence in praise of those already victors in heaven, than of those still combating here. What is properly divine worship, which the Greeks call latria, and for which there is no word in Latin, both in doctrine and in practice, we give only to God. To this worship belongs the offering of sacrifices; as we see in the word idolatry, which means the giving of this worship to idols. Accordingly we never offer, or require any one to offer, sacrifice to a martyr, or to a holy soul, or to any angel. Any one falling into this error is instructed by doctrine, either in the way of correction or of caution. For holy beings themselves, whether saints or angels, refuse to accept what they know to be due to God alone. We see this in Paul and Barnabas, when the men of Lycaonia wished to sacrifice to them as gods, on account of the miracles they performed. They rent their clothes, and restrained the people, crying out to them, and persuading them that they were not gods. We see it also in the angels, as we read in the Apocalypse that an angel would not allow himself to be worshipped, and said to his worshipper, “I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethen.” Those who claim this worship are proud spirits, the devil and his angels, as we see in all the temples and rites of the Gentiles. Some proud men, too, have copied their example; as is related of some kings of Babylon. Thus the holy Daniel was accused and persecuted, because when the king made a decree that no petition should be made to any god, but only to the king, he was found worshipping and praying to his own God, that is, the one true God. As for those who drink to excess at the feasts of the martyrs, we of course condemn their conduct; for to do so even in their own houses would be contrary to sound doctrine. But we must try to amend what is bad as well as prescribe what is good, and must of necessity bear for a time with some things that are not according to our teaching. The rules of Christian conduct are not to be taken from the indulgences of the intemperate or the infirmities of the weak. Still, even in this, the guilt of intemperance is much less than that of impiety. To sacrifice to the martyrs, even fasting, is worse than to go home intoxicated from their feast: to sacrifice to the martyrs, I say, which is a different thing from sacrificing to God in memory of the martyrs, as we do constantly, in the manner required since the revelation of the New Testament, for this belongs to the worship or latria which is due to God alone. But it is vain to try to make these heretics understand the full meaning of these words of the Psalmist: “He that offereth the sacrifice of praise glorifieth me, and in this way will I show him my salvation.” Before the coming of Christ, the flesh and blood of this sacrifice were foreshadowed in the animals slain; in the passion of Christ the types were fulfilled by the true sacrifice; after the ascension of Christ, this sacrifice is commemorated in the sacrament. Between the sacrifices of the Pagans and of the Hebrews there is all the difference that there is between a false imitation and a typical anticipation. We do not despise or denounce the virginity of holy women because there were vestal virgins. And, in the same way, it is no reproach to the sacrifices of our fathers that the Gentiles also had sacrifices. The difference between the Christian and vestal virginity is great, yet it consists wholly in the being to whom the vow is made and paid; and so the difference in the being to whom the sacrifices of the Pagans and Hebrews are made and offered makes a wide difference between them. In the one case they are offered to devils, who presumptuously make this claim in order to be held as gods, because sacrifice is a divine honor. In the other case they are offered to the one true God, as a type of the true sacrifice, which also was to be offered to Him in the passion of the body and blood of Christ.

22. Faustus is wrong in saying that our Jewish forefathers, in their separation from the Gentiles, retained the temple, and sacrifices, and altars, and priesthood, and abandoned only graven images or idols, for they might have sacrificed, as some do, without any graven image, to trees and mountains, or even to the sun and moon and the stars. If they had thus rendered to these objects the worship called latria, they would have served the creature instead of the Creator, and so would have fallen into the serious error of heathenish superstition; and even without idols, they would have found devils ready to take advantage of their error, and to accept their offerings. For these proud and wicked spirits feed not, as some foolishly suppose, on the smell of the sacrifice, and the smoke, but on the errors of men. They enjoy not bodily refreshment, but a malevolent gratification,

when they in any way deceive people, or when, with a bold assumption of borrowed majesty, they boast of receiving divine honors. It was not, therefore, only the idols of the Gentiles that our Jewish forefathers abandoned. They sacrificed neither to the earth nor to any earthly thing, nor to the sea, nor to heaven, nor to the hosts of heaven, but laid the victims on the altar of the one God, Creator of all, who required these offerings as a means of foreshadowing the true victim, by whom He has reconciled us to Himself in the remission of sins through our Lord Jesus Christ. So Paul, addressing believers, who are made the body of which Christ is the Head, says: “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.” The Manichaeans, on the other hand, say that human bodies are the workmanship of the race of darkness, and the prison in which the captive deity is confined. Thus Faustus’ doctrine is very different from Paul’s. But since whosover preaches to you another gospel than that ye have received must be accursed, what Christ says in Paul is the truth, while Manichaeus in Faustus is accursed.

23. Faustus says also, without knowing what he says, that we have retained the manners of the Gentiles. But seeing that the just lives by faith, and that the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned, and that these three, faith, hope, and love, abide to form the life of believers, it is impossible that there should be similarity in the manners of those who differ in these three things. Those who believe differently, and hope differently, and love differently, must also live differently. And if we resemble the Gentiles in our use of such things as food and drink, and houses and clothes and baths, and those of us who marry, in taking and keeping wives, and in begetting and bringing up children as our heirs, there is still a great difference between the man who uses these things for some end of his own, and the man who, in using them, gives thanks to God, having no unworthy or erroneous ideas about God. For as you, according to your own heresy, though you eat the same bread as other men, and live upon the produce of the same plants and the water of the same fountain, and are clothed like others in wool and linen, yet lead a different life, not because you eat or drink, or dress differently, but because you differ from others in your ideas and in your faith, and in all these things

have in view an end of your own—the end, namely, set forth in your false doctrines; in the same way we, though we resemble the Gentiles in the use of this and other things, do not resemble them in our life; for while the things are the same, the end is different: for the end we have in view is, according to the just commandment of God, love out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned; from which some having erred, are turned to vain jangling. In this vain jangling you bear the palm, for you do not attend to the fact that so great is the difference of life produced by a different faith, even when the things in possession and use are the same, that though your followers have wives, and in spite of themselves get children, for whom they gather and store up wealth; though they eat flesh, drink wine, bathe, reap harvests, gather vintages, engage in trade, and occupy high official positions, you nevertheless reckon them as belonging to you, and not to the Gentiles, though in their actions they approach nearer to the Gentiles than to you. And though some of the Gentiles in some things resemble you more than your own followers,—those, for instance, who in superstitious devotion abstain from flesh, and wine, and marriage,—you still count your own followers, even though they use all these things, and so are unlike you, as belonging to the flock of Manichaeus rather than those who resemble you in their practices. You consider as belonging to you a woman that believes in Manichaeus, though she is a mother, rather than a Sibyl, though she never marries. But you will say that many who are called Catholic Christians are adulterers, robbers, misers, drunkards, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine. I ask if none such are to be found in your company, which is almost too small to be called a company. And because there are some among the Pagans who are not of this character, do you consider them as better than yourselves? And yet, in fact, your heresy is so blasphemous, that even your followers who are not of such a character are worse than the Pagans who are. It is therefore no impeachment to sound doctrine, which alone is Catholic, that many wish to take its name, who will not yield to its beneficial influence. We must bear in mind the true meaning of the contrast which the Lord makes between the little company and the mass of mankind, as spread over all the world; for the company of saints and believers is small, as the amount of grain is small when compared with the heap of chaff; and yet the good grain is quite sufficient far to outnumber you, good and bad together, for good and bad are both strangers to the truth.

In a word, we are not a schism of the Gentiles, for we differ from them greatly for the better; nor are you, for you differ from them greatly for the worse.

BOOK XXI

Faustus denies that Manichaeans believe in two gods. Hyle no god. Augustin discusses at large the doctrine of God and Hyle, and fixes the charge of dualism upon the Manichaeans.

1. Faustus said: Do we believe in one God or in two? In one, of course. If we are accused of making two gods, I reply that it cannot be shown that we ever said anything of the kind. Why do you suspect us of this? Because, you say, you believe in two principles, good and evil. It is true, we believe in two principles; but one we call God, and the other Hyle, or, to use common popular language, the devil. If you think this means two gods, you may as well think that the health and sickness of which doctors speak are two kinds of health, or that good and evil are two kinds of good, or that wealth and poverty are two kinds of wealth. If I were describing two things, one white and the other black, or one hot and the other cold, or one sweet and the other bitter, it would appear like idiocy or insanity in you to say that I was describing two white things, or two hot things, or two sweet things. So, when I assert that there are two principles, God and Hyle, you have no reason for saying that I believe in two gods. Do you think that we must call them both gods because we attribute, as is proper, all the power of evil to Hyle, and all the power of good to God? If so, you may as well say that a poison and the antidote must both be called antidotes, because each has a power of its own, and certain effects follow from the action of both. So also, you may say that a physician and a poisoner are both physicians; or that a just and an unjust man are both just, because both do something. If this is absurd, it is still more absurd to say that God and Hyle must both be gods, because they both produce certain effects. It is a very childish and impotent way of arguing, when you cannot refute my statements, to make a quarrel about names. I grant that we, too, sometimes call the hostile nature God; not that we believe it to be God, but that this name is already adopted by the worshippers of this nature, who in their error suppose it to be God. Thus the apostle says: “The god of this world has blinded the minds of them

that believe not.” He calls him God, because he would be so called by his worshippers; adding that he blinds their minds, to show that he is not the true God.

2. Augustin replied: You often speak in your discourses of two gods, as indeed you acknowledge, though at first you denied it. And you give as a reason for thus speaking the words of the apostle: “The god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not.” Most of us punctuate this sentence differently, and explain it as meaning that the true God has blinded the minds of unbelievers. They put a stop after the word God, and read the following words together. Or without this punctuation you may, for the sake of exposition, change the order of the words, and read, “In whom God has blinded the minds of unbelievers of this world,” which gives the same sense. The act of blinding the minds of unbelievers may in one sense be ascribed to God, as the effect not of malice, but of justice. Thus Paul himself says elsewhere, “Is God unjust, who taketh vengeance?” and again, “What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For Moses saith, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” Observe what he adds, after asserting the undeniable truth that there is no unrighteousness with God: “But what if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, and that He might manifest the riches of His grace towards the vessels of mercy, which He hath before prepared unto glory?” etc. Here it evidently cannot be said that it is one God who shows his wrath, and makes known his power in the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, and another God who shows his riches in the vessels of mercy. According to the apostle’s doctrine, it is one and the same God who does both. Hence he says again, “For this cause God gave them up to the lusts of their own heart, to uncleanness, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves;” and immediately after, “For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections;” and again, “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.” Here we see how the true and just God blinds the minds of unbelievers. For in all these words quoted from the apostle no other God is understood than He whose Son, sent by Him, came saying, “For judgment am I come into this world, that they

which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind." Here, again, it is plain to the minds of believers how God blinds the minds of unbelievers. For among the secret things, which contain the righteous principles of God's judgment, there is a secret which determines that the minds of some shall be blinded, and the minds of some enlightened. Regarding this, it is well said of God, "Thy judgments are a great deep." The apostle, in admiration of the unfathomable depth of this abyss, exclaims: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

3. You cannot distinguish between what God does in mercy and what He does in judgment, because you can neither understand nor use the words of our Psalter: "I will sing of mercy and judgment unto Thee, O Lord." Accordingly, whatever in the feebleness of your frail humanity seems amiss to you, you separate entirely from the will and judgment of God: for you are provided with another evil god, not by a discovery of truth, but by an invention of folly; and to this god you attribute not only what you do unjustly, but also what you suffer justly. Thus you assign to God the bestowal of blessings, and take from Him the infliction of judgments, as if He of whom Christ says that He has prepared everlasting fire for the wicked were a different being from Him who makes His sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. Why do you not understand that this great goodness and great severity belong to one God, but because you have not learned to sing of mercy and judgment? Is not He who causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust, the same who also breaks off the natural branches, and engrafts contrary to nature the wild olive tree? Does not the apostle, in reference to this, say of this one God: "Thou seest, then, the goodness and severity of God: to them which were broken off, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness?" Here it is to be observed how the apostle takes away neither judicial severity from God, nor free-will from man. It is a profound mystery, impenetrable by human thought, how God both condemns the ungodly and justifies the ungodly; for both these things are said of Him in the truth of the Holy Scriptures. But is the mysteriousness of the divine judgments any reason for taking pleasure in

cavilling against them? How much more becoming, and more suitable to the limitation of our powers, to feel the same awe which the apostle felt, and to exclaim, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” How much better thus to admire what you cannot explain, than to try to make an evil god in addition to the true God, simply because you cannot understand the one good God! For it is not a question of names, but of actions.

4. Faustus glibly defends himself by saying, “We speak not of two gods, but of God and Hyle.” But when you ask for the meaning of Hyle, you find that it is in fact another god. If the Manichaeans gave the name of Hyle, as the ancients did, to the unformed matter which is susceptible of bodily forms, we should not accuse them of making two gods. But it is pure folly and madness to give to matter the power of forming bodies, or to deny that what has this power is God. When you give to some other being the power which belongs to the true God of making the qualities and forms, by which bodies, elements, and animals exist, according to their respective modes, whatever name you choose to give to this being, you are chargeable with making another god. There are indeed two errors in this blasphemous doctrine. In the first place, you ascribe the act of God to a being whom you are ashamed to call god; though you must call him god as long as you make him do things which only God can do. In the second place, the good things done by a good God you call bad, and ascribe to an evil god, because you feel a childish horror of whatever shocks the frailty of fallen humanity, and a childish pleasure in the opposite. So you think snakes are made by an evil being; while you consider the sun so great a good, that you believe it to be not the creature of God, but an emission from His substance. You must know that the true God, in whom, alas, you have not yet come to believe, made both the snake along with the lower creatures, and the sun along with other exalted creatures. Moreover, among still more exalted creatures, not heavenly bodies, but spiritual beings, He has made what far surpasses the light of the sun, and what no carnal man can perceive, much less you, who, in your condemnation of flesh, condemn the very principle by which you determine good and evil. For your only idea of evil is from the

disagreeableness of some things to the fleshly sense; and your only idea of good is from sensual gratification.

5. When I consider the things lowest in the scale of nature, which are within our view, and which, though earthly, and feeble, and mortal, are still the works of God, I am lost in admiration of the Creator, who is so great, in the great works and no less great in the small. For the divine skill seen in the formation of all creatures in heaven and earth is always like itself, even in those things that differ from one another; for it is everywhere perfect, in the perfection which it gives to everything in its own kind. We see each creature made not as a whole by itself, but in relation to the rest of the creation; so that the whole divine skill is displayed in the formation of each, arranging each in its proper place and order, and providing what is suitable for all, both separately and unitedly. See here, lowest in the scale, the animals which fly, and swim, and walk, and creep. These are mortal creatures, whose life, as it is written, "is as a vapor which appeareth for a little time." Each of these, according to the capacity of its kind, contributes the measure appointed in the goodness of the Creator to the completeness of the whole, so that the lowest partake in the good which the highest possess in a greater degree. Show me, if you can, any animal, however despicable, whose soul hates its own flesh, and does not rather nourish and cherish it, by its vital motion minister to its growth and direct its activity, and exercise a sort of management over a little universe of its own, which it makes subservient to its own preservation. Even in the discipline of his own body by a rational being, who brings his body under, that earthly passion may not hinder his perception of wisdom, there is love for his own flesh, which he then reduces to obedience, which is its proper condition. Indeed, you yourselves, although your heresy teaches you a fleshly abhorrence of the flesh, cannot help loving your own flesh, and caring for its safety and comfort, both by avoiding all injury from blows, and falls, and inclement weather, and by seeking for the means of keeping it in health. Thus the law of nature is too strong for your false doctrine.

6. Looking at the flesh itself, do we not see in the construction of its vital parts, in the symmetry of form, in the position and arrangement of the limbs of action and the organs of sensation, all acting in harmony; do we not see

in the adjustment of measures, in the proportion of numbers, in the order of weights, the handiwork of the true God, of whom it is truly said, “Thou hast ordered all things in measure, and number, and weight”? If your heart was not hardened and corrupted by falsehood, you would understand the invisible things of God from the things which He has made, even in these feeble creatures of flesh. For who is the author of the things I have mentioned, but He whose unity is the standard of all measure, whose wisdom is the model of all beauty, and whose law is the rule of all order? If you are blind to these things, hear at least the words of the apostle.

7. For the apostle, in speaking of the love which husbands ought to have for their wives gives, as an example, the love of the soul for the body. The words are: “He that loveth his wife, loveth himself: for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ the Church.” Look at the whole animal creation, and you find in the instinctive self-preservation of every animal this natural principle of love to its own flesh. It is so not only with men, who, when they live aright, both provide for the safety of their flesh, and keep their carnal appetites in subjection to the use of reason; the brutes also avoid pain, and shrink from death, and escape as rapidly as they can from whatever might break up the construction of their bodies, or dissolve the connection of spirit and flesh; for the brutes, too, nourish and cherish their own flesh. “For no one ever yet,” says the apostle, “hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ the Church.” See where the apostle begins, and to what he ascends. Consider, if you can, the greatness which creation derives from its Creator, embracing as it does the whole extent from the host of heaven down to flesh and blood, with the beauty of manifold form, and the order of successive gradations.

8. The same apostle again, when speaking of spiritual gifts as diverse, and yet tending to harmonious action, to illustrate a matter so great, and divine, and mysterious, makes a comparison with the human body,—thus plainly intimating that this flesh is the handiwork of God. The whole passage, as found in the Epistle to the Corinthians, is so much to the point, that though it is long, I think it not amiss to insert it all: “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that ye were Gentiles,

carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary; and those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need; but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.” Apart altogether from Christian faith, which would lead you to believe the apostle, if you have common sense to perceive what is self-evident, let each examine and see for himself the plain truth regarding those things of which the apostle speaks,—what greatness belongs to the least, and what goodness to the lowest; for these are the things which the apostle extols, in order to illustrate by means of these common and visible bodily objects, unseen spiritual realities of the most exalted nature.

9. Whoever, then, denies that our body and its members, which the apostle so approves and extols, are the handiwork of God, you see whom he contradicts, preaching contrary to what you have received. So, instead of refuting his opinions, I may leave him to be accursed of all Christians. The apostle says, God tempered the body. Faustus says, Not God, but Hyle. Anathemas are more suitable than arguments to such contradictions. You cannot say that God is here called the God of this world. And if any one understands the passage where this expression does occur to mean that the devil blinds the minds of unbelievers, we grant that he does so by his evil suggestions, from yielding to which, men lose the light of righteousness in God's righteous retribution. This is all in accordance with sacred Scripture. The apostle himself speaks of temptation from without: "I fear lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and purity that is in Christ." To the same purpose are the words, "Evil communications corrupt good manners;" and when he speaks of a man deceiving himself, "Whoever thinketh himself to be anything, when he is nothing, deceiveth himself;" or again, in the passage already quoted of the judgment of God, "God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." Similarly, in the Old Testament, after the words, "God did not create death, nor hath He pleasure in the destruction of the living," we read, "By the envy of the devil death entered into the world." And again of death, that men may not put the blame from themselves, "The wicked invite her with hands and voice; and thinking her a friend, they are drawn down." Elsewhere, however, it is said, "Good and evil, life and death, riches and poverty, are from the Lord God." This seems perplexing to people who do not understand that, apart from the manifest judgment to follow hereafter upon every evil work, there is an actual judgment at the time; so that in one action, besides the craft of the deceiver and the wickedness of the voluntary agent, there is also the just

penalty of the judge: for while the devil suggests, and man consents, God abandons. So, if you join the words, God of this world, and understand that the devil blinds unbelievers by his mischievous delusions, the meaning is not a bad one. For the word God is not used by itself, but with the qualification of this world, that is, of wicked men, who seek to prosper only in this age. In this sense the world is also called evil, where it is written, "that He might deliver us from this present evil age." In the same way, in the expression, "whose god is their belly," it is only in connection with the word whose that the belly is called god. So also, in the Psalms, the devils would not be called gods without adding "of the nations." But in the passage we are now considering it is not said, The god of this world, or, Whose god is their belly, or, The gods of the nations are devils; but simply, God has tempered the body, which can be understood only of the true God, the Creator of all. There is no disparaging addition here, as in the other cases. But perhaps Faustus will say that God tempered the body, not as the maker of it, in the arrangement of its members, but by mixing His light with it. Thus Faustus would attribute to some other being than God the construction of the body, and the arrangement of its members, while God tempered the evil of the construction by the mixture of His goodness. Such are the inventions with which the Manichaeans cram feeble minds. But God, in aid of the feeble, by the mouth of the sacred writers rebukes this opinion. For we read a few verses before: "God has placed the members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased Him." Evidently, God is said to have tempered the body, because He has constructed it of many members, which in their union preserve the variety of their respective functions.

10. Do the Manichaeans suppose that the animals which, according to their wild notions, were constructed by Hyle in the race of darkness, had not this harmonious action of their members, commended by the apostle, before God mixed His light with them; so that then the head did say to the feet, or the eye to the hand, I have no need of thee? This is not and cannot be the Manichaean doctrine, for they describe the animals as using all these members, and speak of them as creeping, walking, swimming, flying, each in its own kind. They could all see, too, and hear, and use the other senses, and nourish and cherish their own bodies with appropriate means and

appliances. Hence, moreover, they had the power of reproduction, for they are spoken of as having offspring. All these things, of which Faust speaks disparagingly as the works of Hyle, could not be done without that harmonious arrangement which the apostle praises and ascribes to God. Is it not now plain who is to be followed, and who is to be pronounced accursed? Indeed, the Manichaeans tell us of animals that could speak; and their speeches were heard and understood and approved of by all creatures, whether creeping things, or quadrupeds, or birds, or fish. Amazing and supernatural eloquence! Especially as they had no grammarian or elocutionist to teach them, and had not passed through the painful experience of the cane and the birch. Why, Faustus himself began late in life to learn oratory, that he might discourse eloquently on these absurdities; and with all his cleverness, after ruining his health by study, his preaching has gained a mere handful of followers. What a pity that he was born in the light, and not in that region of darkness! If he had discoursed there against the light, the whole animal creation, from the biped to the centipede, from the dragon to the shell-fish, would have listened eagerly, and obeyed at once; whereas, when he discourses here against the race of darkness, he is oftener called eloquent than learned, and oftener still a false teacher of the worst kind. And among the few Manichaeans who extol him as a great teacher, he has none of the lower animals as his disciples; and not even his horse is any the wiser for his master’s instructions, so that the mixture of a part of deity seems only to make the animals more stupid. What absurdity is this! When will these deluded beings have the sense to compare the description in the Manichaean fiction of what the animals were formerly in their own region, with what they are now in this world? Then their bodies were strong, now they are feeble; then their power of vision was such that they were induced to invade the region of God on account of the beauty which they saw, now it is too weak to face the rays of the sun; then they had intelligence sufficient to understand a discourse addressed to them, now they have no ability of the kind; then this astonishing and effective eloquence was natural, now eloquence of the most meagre kind requires diligent study and preparation. How many good things did the race of darkness lose by the mixture of good!

11. Faustus has displayed his ingenuity, in the remarks to which I am now replying, by making for himself a long list of opposites—health and sickness, riches and poverty, white and black, cold and hot, sweet and bitter. We need not say much about black and white. Or, if there is a character for good or evil in colors, so that white must be ascribed to God and black to Hyle; if God threw a white color on the wings of birds, when Hyle, as the Manichaeans say, created them, where had the crows gone to when the swans got whitened? Nor need we discuss heat and cold, for both are good in moderation, and dangerous in excess. With regard to the rest, Faustus probably intended that good and evil, which he might as well have put first, should be understood as including the rest, so that health, riches, white, hot, sweet, should belong to good; and sickness, poverty, black, cold, bitter, to evil. The ignorance and folly of this is obvious. It might look like reviling if I were to take up separately white and black, hot and cold, sweet and bitter, health and sickness. For if white and sweet are both good, and black and bitter evil, how is it that most grapes and all olives become black as they become sweet, and so get good by getting evil? And if heat and health are both good, and cold and sickness evil, why do bodies become sick when heated? Is it healthy to have fever? But I let these things pass, for they may have been put down hastily, or they may have been given as merely instances of opposition, and not as being good and bad, especially as it is nowhere stated that the fire among the race of darkness is cold, so that heat in this case must unquestionably be evil.

12. We pass on, then, to health, riches, sweetness, which Faustus evidently accounts good in his contrasts. Was there no health of body in the race of darkness where animals were born and grew up and brought forth, and had such vitality, that when some that were with child were taken, as the story is, and were put in bonds in heaven, even the abortive offspring of a premature birth, falling from heaven to earth, nevertheless lived, and grew, and produced the innumerable kinds of animals which now exist? Or were there no riches where trees could grow not only in water and wind, but in smoke and fire, and could bear such a rich produce, that animals, according to their several kinds, sprang from the fruit, and were provided with the means of subsistence from those fertile trees, and showed how well fed they were by a numerous progeny? And all this where there was no toil in

cultivation, and no inclement change from summer to winter, for there was no sun to give variety to the seasons by his annual course. There must have been perennial productiveness where the trees were not only born in their own element, but had a supply of appropriate nourishment to make them constantly fertile; as we see orange-trees bearing fruit all the year round if they are well watered. The riches must have been abundant, and they must have been secure from harm; for there could be no fear of hailstorms when there were no light-gatherers who, in your fable, set the thunder in motion.

13. Nor would the beings in this race of darkness have sought for food if it had not been sweet and pleasant, so that they would have died from want. For we find that all bodies have their peculiar wants, according to which food is either agreeable or offensive. If it is agreeable, it is said to be sweet or pleasant; if it is offensive, it is said to be bitter or sour, or in some way disagreeable. In human beings we find that one desires food which another dislikes, from a difference in constitution or habit or state of health. Still more, animals of quite different make can find pleasure in food which is disagreeable to us. Why else should the goats feed so eagerly on the wild olives? This food is sweet to them, as in some sicknesses honey tastes bitter to us. To a thoughtful inquirer these things suggest the beauty of the arrangement in which each finds what suits it, and the greatness of the good which extends from the lowest to the highest, and from the material to the spiritual. As for the race of darkness, if an animal sprung from any element fed on what was produced by that element, doubtless the food must have been sweet from its appropriateness. Again, if this animal had found food of another element, the want of appropriateness would have appeared in its offensiveness to the taste. Such offensiveness is called sourness, or bitterness, or disagreeableness, or something of the kind; or if its adverse nature is such as to destroy the harmony of the bodily constitution, and so take away life or reduce the strength, it is called poison, simply on account of this want of appropriateness, while it may nourish the kind of life to which it is appropriate. So, if a hawk eat the bread which is our daily food, it dies; and we die if we eat hellebore, which cattle often feed on, and which may itself in a certain form be used as a medicine. If Faustus had known or thought of this, he would not have given poison and antidote as an example of the two natures of good and evil, as if God were the antidote and Hyle

the poison. For the same thing, of one and the same nature, kills or cures, as it is used appropriately or inappropriately. In the Manichaean legends, their god might be said to have been poison to the race of darkness; for he so injured their bodies, that from being strong, they became utterly feeble. But then again, as the light was itself taken, and subjected to loss and injury, it may be said to have been poison to itself.

14. Instead of one good and one evil principle, you seem to make both good or both evil, or rather two good and two evil; for they are good in themselves, and evil to one another. We may see afterwards which is the better or the worse; but meanwhile we may think of them as both good in themselves. Thus God reigned in one region, while Hyle reigned in the other. There was health in both kingdoms, and rich produce in both; both had a numerous progeny, and both tasted the sweetness of pleasures suitable to their respective natures. But the race of darkness, say the Manichaeans, excepting the part which was evil to the light which it bordered on, was also evil to itself. As, however, I have already pointed out many good things in it, if you can point out its evils, there will still be two good kingdoms, though the one where there are no evils will be the better of the two. What, then, do you call its evils? They plundered, and killed, and devoured one another, according to Faustus. But if they did nothing else than this, how could such numerous hosts be born and grow up to maturity? They must have enjoyed peace and tranquillity too. But, allowing the kingdom where there is no discord to be the better of the two, still they should both be called good, rather than one good and the other bad. Thus the better kingdom will be that where they killed neither themselves nor one another; and the worse, or less good, where, though they fought with one another, each separate animal preserved its own nature in health and safety. But we cannot make much difference between your god and the prince of darkness, whom no one opposed, whose reign was acknowledged by all, and whose proposals were unanimously agreed to. All this implies great peace and harmony. Those kingdoms are happy where all agree heartily in obedience to the king. Moreover, the rule of this prince extended not only to his own species, or to bipeds whom you make the parents of mankind, but to all kinds of animals, who waited in his presence, obeying his commands, and believing his declarations. Do you think people are so stupid as not to

recognize the attributes of deity in your description of this prince, or to think it possible that you can have another? If the authority of this prince rested on his resources, he must have been very powerful; if on his fame, he must have been renowned; if on love, the regard must have been universal; if on fear, he must have kept the strictest order. If some evils, then, were mixed with so many good things, who that knows the meaning of words would call this the nature of evil? Besides, if you call this the nature of evil, because it was not only evil to the other nature, but was also evil in itself, was there no evil, think you, in the dire necessity to which your god was subjected before the mixture with the opposite nature, so that he was compelled to fight with it, and to send his own members to be swallowed up so mercilessly as to be beyond the hope of complete recovery? This was a great evil in that nature before its mixture with the only thing you allow to be evil. Your god must either have had it in his power not to be injured and sullied by the race of darkness, in which case his own folly must have brought him into trouble; or if his substance was liable to corruption, the object of your worship is not the incorruptible God of whom the apostle speaks. Does not, then this liability to corruption, even apart from the actual experience, seem to you to be an evil in your god?

15. It is plain, moreover, that either he must have been destitute of prescience,—a great defect, surely, in the Deity, not to know what is coming; or if he had prescience, he can never have felt secure, but must have been in constant terror, which you must allow to be a serious evil. There must have been the fear at every moment, that the time might be come for that conflict in which his members suffered such loss and contamination, that to liberate and purify them costs infinite labor, and, after all, can be done only partially. If it is going too far to attribute this state of alarm to the Deity himself, his members at least must have dreaded the prospect of suffering all these evils. Then, again, if they were ignorant of what was to happen, the substance of your god must have been so far wanting in prescience. How many evils do you reckon in your chief good? Perhaps you will say that they had no fear, because they foresaw, along with the suffering, their liberation and triumph. But still they must have feared for their companions, if they knew that they were to be cut off from their kingdom, and bound for ever in the mass of darkness.

16. Had they not the charity to feel a kindly sympathy for those who were doomed to suffer eternal punishment, without having committed any sin? These souls that were to be bound up with the mass, were not they too part of your god? Were they not of the same origin, the same substance? They at least must have felt grief or fear in the prospect of their own eternal bondage. To say that they did not know what was to happen, while the others did, is to make one and the same substance partly acquainted with the future, and partly ignorant. How can you call this substance the pure, and perfect, and supreme good, if there were such evils in it, even before its mixture with the evil principle? You will have to confess your two principles either both good or both evil. If you make two evils, you may make either of them the worse, as you please. But if you make two goods, we shall have to inquire which you make the better. Meanwhile there is an end to your doctrine of two principles, one good and the other evil, which are in fact two gods, one good and the other evil. But if hurting another is evil, they both hurt one another. Perhaps the greater evil was in the principle that first began the attack. But if one began the injury, the other returned it; and not by the law of compensation, an eye for an eye, which you are foolish enough to find fault with, but with far greater severity. You must choose which you will call the worse,—the one that began the injury, or the one that had the will and the power to do still greater injury. The one tried to get a share in the enjoyment of light; the other effected the entire overthrow of its opponent. If the one had got what it desired, it would certainly have done no harm to itself. But the other, in the discomfiture of its adversary, did great mischief to part of itself; reminding us of the well-known passionate exclamation, which is on record as having been actually used, “Perish our friends, if that will rid us of our enemies.” For part of your god was sent to suffer hopeless contamination, that there might be a covering for the mass in which the enemy is to be buried for ever alive. So much will he continue to be dreaded even when conquered and bound, that the security, such as it is, of one part of the deity must be purchased by the eternal misery of the other parts. Such is the harmlessness of the good principle! Your god, it appears, is guilty of the crime with which you charge the race of darkness—of injuring both friends and enemies. The charge is proved in the case of your god, by that final mass in which his enemies are confined, while his own subjects are involved in it. In fact, the principle that

you call god is the more injurious of the two, both to friends and to enemies. In the case of Hyle, there was no desire to destroy the opposite kingdom, but only to possess it; and though some of its subjects were put to death by the violence of others, they appeared again in other forms, so that in the alternation of life and death they had intervals of enjoyment in their history. But your god, with all the omnipotence and perfect excellence that you ascribe to him, dooms his enemies to eternal destruction, and his friends to eternal punishment. And the height of insanity is in believing that while internal contest occasions the injury of the members of Hyle, victory brings punishment to the members of God. What means this folly? To use Faustus' comparison of God and Hyle to the antidote and poison, the antidote seems to be more mischievous than the poison. We do not hear of Hyle shutting up God for ever in a mass of darkness, or driving its own members into it; or, which is worst of all, slandering this unfortunate remnant, as an excuse for not effecting its purification. For Manichaeus, in his Fundamental Epistle, says that these souls deserved to be thus punished, because they allowed themselves to be led away from their original brightness, and became enemies of holy light; whereas it was God himself that sent them to lose themselves in the region of darkness, that light might be opposed to light: which was unjust, if he forced them against their will; while, if they went willingly, he is ungrateful in punishing them. These souls can never have been happy, if they were tormented with fear before the conflict, from knowing that they were to become enemies to their original principle, and then in the conflict were hopelessly contaminated, and afterwards eternally condemned. On the other hand, they can never have been divine, if before the conflict they were unaware of what was coming, from want of prescience, and then showed feebleness in the conflict, and suffered misery afterwards. And what is true of them must be true of God, since they are of the same substance. Is there any hope of your seeing the folly of these blasphemies? You attempt, indeed, to vindicate the goodness of God, by asserting that Hyle when shut up is prevented from doing any more injury to itself. Hyle, it seems, is to get some good, when it has no longer any good mixed with it. Perhaps, as God before the conflict had the evil of necessity, when the good was unmixed with evil, so Hyle after the conflict is to have the good of rest, when the evil is unmixed with good. Your principles are thus either two evils, one worse than the other; or two goods, both imperfect, but one better than the other. The better, however, is the more miserable; for if the issue of this great conflict is that the enemy gets some good by the cessation of mutual injuries in Hyle, while God’s own subjects suffer the serious evil of being driven into the mass of darkness, we may ask who has got the victory. The poison, we are to understand, is Hyle, where, nevertheless, animal life found a plentiful supply of the means of growth and productiveness; while the antidote is God, who could condemn his own members, but could not restore them. In reality, it is as absurd to call the one Hyle, as it is to call the other God. These are the follies of men who turn to fables because they cannot bear sound doctrine.

BOOK XXII

Faustus states his objections to the morality of the law and the prophets, and Augustin seeks by the application of the type and the allegory to explain away the moral difficulties of the Old Testament.

1. Faustus said: You ask why we blaspheme the law and the prophets. We are so far from professing or feeling any hostility to the law and the prophets, that we are ready, if you will allow us, to declare the falsehood of all the writings which make the law and the prophets appear objectionable. But this you refuse to admit, and by maintaining the authority of your writers, you bring a perhaps unmerited reproach upon the prophets; you slander the patriarchs, and dishonor the law. You are so unreasonable as to deny that your writers are false, while you uphold the piety and sanctity of those who are described in these writings as guilty of the worst crimes, and as leading wicked lives. These opinions are inconsistent; for either these were bad characters, or the writers were untruthful.

2. Supposing, then, that we agree in condemning the writers, we may succeed in vindicating the law and the prophets. By the law must be understood not circumcision, or Sabbaths, or sacrifices, or the other Jewish observances, but the true law, viz., Thou shall not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not bear false witness, and so on. To this law, promulgated throughout the world, that is, at the commencement of the present constitution of the world, the Hebrew writers did violence, by

infecting it with the pollution of their disgusting precepts about circumcision and sacrifice. As a friend of the law, you should join with me in condemning the Jews for injuring the law by this mixture of unsuitable precepts. Plainly, you must be aware that these precepts are not the law, or any part of the law, since you claim to be righteous, though you make no attempt to keep the precepts. In seeking to lead a righteous life, you pay great regard to the commandments which forbid sinful actions, while you take no notice of the Jewish observances; which would be unjustifiable if they were one and the same law. You resent as a foul reproach being called negligent of the precept, "Thou shalt not kill," or "Thou shall not commit adultery." And if you showed the same resentment at being called uncircumcised, or negligent of the Sabbath, it would be evident that you considered both to be the law and the commandment of God. In fact, however, you consider the honor and glory of keeping the one no way endangered by disregard of the other. It is plain, as I have said, that these observances are not the law, but a disfigurement of the law. If we condemn them, it is not as being genuine, but as spurious. In this condemnation there is no reproach of the law, or of God its author, but only of those who published their shocking superstitions under these names. If we sometimes abuse the venerable name of law in attacking the Jewish precepts, the fault is yours, for refusing to distinguish between Hebrew observances and the law. Only restore to the law its proper dignity, by removing these foul Israelitish blots; grant that these writers are guilty of disfiguring the law, and you will see at once that we are the enemies not of the law, but of Judaism. You are misled by the word law; for you do not know to what that name properly belongs.

3. For my part, I see no reason for your thinking that we blaspheme your prophets and patriarchs. There would indeed be some ground for the charge, if we had been directly or remotely the authors of the account given of their actions. But as this account is written either by themselves, in a criminal desire to be famous for their misdeeds, or by their companions and coevals, why should you blame us? You condemn them in abhorrence of the wicked actions of which they have voluntarily declared themselves guilty, though there was no occasion for such a confession. Or if the narrative is only a malicious fiction, let its authors be punished, let the books be condemned,

let the prophetic name be cleared from this foul reproach, let the patriarchs recover the respect due to their simplicity and purity of managers.

4. These books, moreover, contain shocking calumnies against God himself. We are told that he existed from eternity in darkness, and admired the light when he saw it; that he was so ignorant of the future, that he gave Adam a command, not foreseeing that it would be broken; that his perception was so limited that he could not see Adam when, from the knowledge of his nakedness, he hid himself in a corner of Paradise; that envy made him afraid lest his creature man should taste of the tree of life, and live for ever; that afterwards he was greedy for blood, and fat from all kinds of sacrifices, and jealous if they were offered to any one but himself; that he was enraged sometimes against his enemies, sometimes against his friends; that he destroyed thousands of men for a slight offense, or for nothing; that he threatened to come with a sword and spare nobody, righteous or wicked. The authors of such bold libels against God might very well slander the men of God. You must join with us in laying the blame on the writers if you wish to vindicate the prophets.

5. Again, we are not responsible for what is said of Abraham, that in his irrational craving to have children, and not believing God, who promised that his wife Sara should have a son, he defiled himself with a mistress, with the knowledge of his wife, which only made it worse; or that, in sacrilegious profanation of his marriage, he on different occasions, from avarice and greed, sold his wife Sara for the gratification of the kings Abimelech and Pharas, telling them that she was his sister, because she was very fair. The narrative is not ours, which tells how Lot, Abraham’s brother, after his escape from Sodom, lay with his two daughters on the mountain (better for him to have perished in the conflagration of Sodom, than to have burned with incestuous passion); or how Isaac imitated his father’s conduct, and called his wife Rebecca his sister, that he might gain a shameful livelihood by her; or how his son Jacob, husband of four wives—two full sisters, Rachel and Leah, and their handmaids—led the life of a goat among them, so that there was a daily strife among his women who should be the first to lay hold of him when he came from the field, ending sometimes in their hiring him from one another for the night; or, again, how his son Judah

slept with his daughter-in-law Tamar, after she had been married to two of his sons, deceived, we are told, by the harlot’s dress which Tamar put on, knowing that her father-in-law was in the habit of associating with such characters; or how David, after having a number of wives, seduced the wife of his soldier Uriah, and caused Uriah himself to be killed in the battle; or how his son Solomon had three hundred wives, and seven hundred concubines, and princesses without number; or how the first prophet Hosea got children from a prostitute, and, what is worse, it is said that this disgraceful conduct was enjoined by God; or how Moses committed murder, and plundered Egypt, and waged wars, and commanded, or himself perpetrated, many cruelties. And he too was not content with one wife. We are neither directly nor remotely the authors of these and similar narratives, which are found in the books of the patriarchs and the prophets. Either your writers forged these things, or the fathers are really guilty. Choose which you please; the crime in either case is detestable, for vicious conduct and falsehood are equally hateful.

6. Augustin replied: You understand neither the symbols of the law nor the acts of the prophets, because you do not know what holiness or righteousness means. We have repeatedly shown at great length, that the precepts and symbols of the Old Testament contained both what was to be fulfilled in obedience through the grace bestowed in the New Testament, and what was to be set aside as a proof of its having been fulfilled in the truth now made manifest. For in the love of God and of our neighbor is secured the accomplishment of the precepts of the law, while the accomplishment of its promises is shown in the abolition of circumcision, and of other typical observances formerly practised. By the precept men were led, through a sense of guilt to desire salvation; by the promise they were led to find in the typical observances the assurance that the Saviour would come. The salvation desired was to be obtained through the grace bestowed on the appearance of the New Testament; and the fulfillment of the expectation rendered the types no longer necessary. The same law that was given by Moses became grace and truth in Jesus Christ. By the grace in the pardon of sin, the precept is kept in force in the case of those supported by divine help. By the truth the symbolic rites are set aside, that the promise might, in those who trust in the divine faithfulness, be brought to pass.

7. Those, accordingly, who, finding fault with what they do not understand, call the typical institutions of the law disfigurements and excrescences, are like men displeased with things of which they do not know the use. As if a deaf man, seeing others move their lips in speaking, were to find fault with the motion of the mouth as needless and unsightly; or as if a blind man, on hearing a house commended, were to test the truth of what he heard by passing his hand over the surface of the wall, and on coming to the windows were to cry out against them as flaws in the level, or were to suppose that the wall had fallen in.

8. How shall I make those whose minds are full of vanity understand that the actions of the prophets were also mystical and prophetic? The vanity of their minds is shown in their thinking that we believe God to have once existed in darkness, because it is written, “Darkness was over the deep.” As if we called the deep God, where there was darkness, because the light did not exist there before God made it by His word. From their not distinguishing between the light which is God, and the light which God made, they imagine that God must have been in darkness before He made light, because darkness was over the deep before God said, “Let there be light, and there was light.” In the New Testament both these things are ascribed to God. For we read, “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all;” and again, “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts.” So also, in the Old Testament, the name “Brightness of eternal light” is given to the wisdom of God, which certainly was not created, for by it all things were made; and of the light which exists only as the production of this wisdom it is said, “Thou wilt light my candle, O Lord; my God, Thou wilt enlighten my darkness.” In the same way, in the beginning, when darkness was over the deep, God said, “Let there be light, and there was light,” which only the light-giving light, which is God Himself, could have made.

9. For as God is His own eternal happiness, and is besides the bestower of happiness, so He is His own eternal light, and is also the bestower of light. He envies the good of none, for He is Himself the source of happiness to all good beings; He fears the evil of none, for the loss of all evil beings is in their being abandoned by Him. He can neither be benefited by those on

whom He Himself bestows happiness, nor is He afraid of those whose misery is the doom awarded by His own judgment. Very different, O Manichaeus, is the object of your worship. You have departed from God in the pursuit of your own fancies, which of all kinds have increased and multiplied in your foolish roving hearts, drinking in through the sense of sight the light of the heavenly bodies. This light, though it too is made by God, is not to be compared to the light created in the minds of the pious, whom God brings out of darkness into light, as He brings them out of sinfulness into righteousness. Still less can it be compared to that inaccessible light from which all kinds of light are derived. Nor is this light inaccessible to all; for “blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all;” but the wicked shall not see light, as is said in Isaiah. To them the light-giving light is inaccessible. From the light comes not only the spiritual light in the minds of the pious, but also the material light, which is not denied to the wicked, but is made to rise on the evil and on the good.

10. So, when darkness was over the deep, He who was light said, “Let there be light.” From what light this light came is clear; for the words are, “God said.” What light is that which was made, is not so clear. For there has been a friendly discussion among students of the sacred Scriptures, whether God then made the light in the minds of the angels, or, in other words, these rational spirits themselves, or some material light which exists in the higher regions of the universe beyond our ken. For on the fourth day He made the visible luminaries of heaven. And it is also a question whether these bodies were made at the same time as their light, or were somehow kindled from the light made already. But whoever reads the sacred writings in the pious spirit which is required to understand them, must be convinced that whatever the light was which was made when, at the time that darkness was over the deep, God said, “Let there be light,” it was created light, and the creating Light was the maker of it.

11. Nor does it follow that God, before He made light, abode in darkness, because it is said that darkness was over the deep, and then that the Spirit of God moved on the waters. The deep is the unfathomable abyss of the waters. And the carnal mind might suppose that the Spirit abode in the

darkness which was over the deep, because it is said that He moved on the waters. This is from not understanding how the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not, till by the word of God those who were darkness are made light, and it is said to them, “Ye were once darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.” But if rational minds which are in darkness through a sinful will cannot comprehend the light of the wisdom of God, though it is present everywhere, because they are separated from it not in place, but in disposition: why may not the Spirit of God have moved on the darkness of the waters, when He moved on the waters, though at an immeasurable distance from it, not in place, but in nature?

12. In all this I know I am singing to deaf ears; but the Lord, from whom is the truth which we speak, can open some ears to catch the strain. But what shall we say of those critics of the Holy Scriptures who object to God’s being pleased with His own works, and find fault with the words, “God saw the light that it was good,” as if this meant that God admired the light as something new? God’s seeing His works that they were good, means that the Creator approved of His own works as pleasing to Himself. For God cannot be forced to do anything against His will, so that He should not be pleased with His own work; nor can He do anything by mistake, so that He should regret having done it. Why should the Manichaeans object to our God seeing His work that it was good, when their god placed a covering before himself when he mingled his own members with the darkness? For instead of seeing his work that it is good, he refuses to look at it because it is evil.

13. Faustus speaks of our God as astonished, which is not said in Scripture; nor does it follow that one must be astonished when he sees anything to be good. There are many good things which we see without being astonished, as if they were better than we expected; we merely approve of them as being what they ought to be. We can, however, give an instance of God being astonished, not from the Old Testament, which the Manichaeans assail with undeserved reproach, but from the New Testament, which they profess to believe in order to entrap the unwary. For they acknowledge Christ as God, and use this as a bait to entice Christ’s followers into their snares. God, then, was astonished when Christ was astonished. For we read

in the Gospel, that when Christ heard the faith of a certain centurion, He was astonished, and said to His disciples, “Verily I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.” We have already given our explanation of the words, “God saw that it was good.” Better men may give a better explanation. Meanwhile let the Manichaeans explain Christ’s being astonished at what He foresaw before it happened, and knew before He heard it. For though seeing a thing to be good is quite different from being astonished at it, in this case there is some resemblance, for Jesus was astonished at the light of faith which He Himself had created in the heart of the centurion; for Jesus is the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world.

14. Thus an irreligious Pagan might bring the same reproaches against Christ in the Gospel, as Faustus brings against God in the Old Testament. He might say that Christ lacked foresight, not only because He was astonished at the faith of the centurion, but because He chose Judas as a disciple who proved disobedient to His commands; as Faustus objects to the precept given in Paradise, which, as it turned out, was not obeyed. He might also cavil at Christ’s not knowing who touched Him, when the woman suffering from an issue of blood touched the hem of His garment; as Faustus blames God for not knowing where Adam had hid himself. If this ignorance is implied in God’s saying, “Where art thou, Adam?” the same may be said of Christ’s asking, “Who touched me?” The Pagans also might call Christ timid and envious, in not wishing five of the ten virgins to gain eternal life by entering into His kingdom, and in shutting them out, so that they knocked in vain in their entreaty to have the door opened, as if forgetful of His own promise, “Knock, and it shall be opened unto you;” as Faustus charges God with fear and envy in not admitting man after his sin to eternal life. Again, he might call Christ greedy of the blood, not of beasts, but of men, because he said, “He that loseth his life for my sake, shall keep it unto life eternal;” as Faustus reproaches God in reference to those animal sacrifices which prefigured the sacrifice of blood-shedding by which we are redeemed. He might also accuse Christ of jealousy, because in narrating His driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, the evangelist quotes as applicable to Him the words, “The jealousy of Thine house hath eaten me up;” as Faustus accuses God of jealousy in forbidding sacrifices to

be offered to other gods. He might say that Christ was angry with both His friends and His enemies: with His friends, because He said, “The servant that knows his lord’s will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes;” and with His enemies, because He said, “If any one shall not receive you, shake off against him the dust of your shoes; verily I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for that city;” as Faustus accuses God of being angry at one time with His friends, and at another with His enemies; both of whom are spoken of thus by the apostle: “They that have sinned without law shall perish without law, and they that have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.” Or he might say that Christ shed the blood of many without mercy, for a slight offense or for nothing. For to a Pagan there would appear to be little or no harm in not having a wedding garment at the marriage feast, for which our King in the Gospel commanded a man to be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness; or in not wishing to have Christ for a king, which is the sin of which Christ says, “Those that would not have me to reign over them, bring hither and slay before me;” as Faustus blames God in the Old Testament for slaughtering thousands of human beings for slight offenses, as Faustus calls them, or for nothing. Again, if Faustus finds fault with God’s threatening to come with the sword, and to spare neither the righteous nor the wicked, might not the Pagan find as much fault with the words of the Apostle Paul, when he says of our God,” He spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all;” or of Peter, when, in exhorting the saints to be patient in the midst of persecution and slaughter, he says, “It is time that judgment begin from the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that believe not the gospel of the Lord? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?” What can be more righteous than the Only-Begotten, whom nevertheless the Father did not spare? And what can be plainer than that the righteous also are not spared, but chastised with manifold afflictions, as is clearly implied in the words, “If the righteous scarcely are saved”? As it is said in the Old Testament, “Whom the Lord loveth He correcteth, and chastiseth every son whom He receiveth;” and, “If we receive good at the hand of the Lord, shall we not also receive evil?” So we read also in the New Testament, “Whom I love I rebuke and chasten;” and, “If we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged of the Lord; but when we are judged, we are corrected of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world." If a Pagan were to make such objections to the New Testament, would not the Manichaeans try to answer them, though they themselves make similar objections to the Old Testament? But supposing them able to answer the Pagan, how absurd it would be to defend in the one Testament what they find fault with in the other! But if they could not answer the objections of the Pagan, why should they not allow in both Testaments, instead of in one only, that what appears wrong to unbelievers, from their ignorance, should be believed to be right by pious readers even when they also are ignorant?

15. Perhaps our opponents will maintain that these parallel passages quoted from the New Testament are themselves neither authoritative nor true: for they claim the impious liberty of holding and teaching, that whatever they deem favorable to their heresy was said by Christ and the apostles; while they have the profane boldness to say, that whatever in the same writings is unfavorable to them is a spurious interpolation. I have already at some length, as far as the intention of the present work required, exposed the unreasonableness of this assault upon the authority of the whole of Scripture.

16. At present I would call attention to the fact, that when the Manichaeans, although they disguise their blasphemous absurdities under the name of Christianity, bring such objections against the Christian Scriptures, we have to defend the authority of the divine record in both Testaments against the Manichaeans as much as against the Pagans. A Pagan might find fault with passages in the New Testament in the same way as Faustus does with what he calls unworthy representations of God in the Old Testament; and the Pagan might be answered by the quotation of similar passages from his own authors, as in Paul's speech at Athens. Even in Pagan writings we might find the doctrine that God created and constructed the world, and that He is the giver of light, which does not imply that before light was made He abode in darkness; and that when His work was finished He was elated with joy, which is more than saying that He saw that it was good; and that He made a law with rewards for obedience, and punishments for disobedience, by which they do not mean to say that God was ignorant of the future, because He gave a law to those by whom it was to be broken. Nor could

they make asking questions a proof of a want of foresight even in a human being; for in their books many questions are asked only for the purpose of using the answers for the conviction of the persons addressed: for the questioner knows not only what answer he desires, but what will actually be given. Again, if the Pagan tried to make out God to be envious of any one, because He will not give happiness to the wicked, he would find many passages in the writings of his own authors in support of this principle of the divine government.

17. The only objection that a Pagan would make on the subject of sacrifice would refer to our reason for finding fault with Pagan sacrifices, when in the Old Testament God is described as requiring men to offer sacrifice to Him. If I were to reply at length on this subject, I might prove to him that sacrifice is due only to the one true God, and that this sacrifice was offered by the one true Priest, the Mediator of God and man; and that it was proper that this sacrifice should be pre-figured by animal sacrifices, in order to foreshadow the flesh and blood of the one sacrifice for the remission of sins contracted by flesh and blood, which shall not inherit the kingdom of God: for the natural body will be endowed with heavenly attributes, as the fire in the sacrifice typified the swallowing up of death in victory. Those observances properly belonged to the people whose kingdom and priesthood were prophetic of the King and Priest who should come to govern and to consecrate believers in all nations, and to lead them into the kingdom of heaven, and the holy society of angels and eternal life. And as this true sacrifice was piously set forth in the Hebrew observances, so it was impiously caricatured by the Pagans, because, as the apostle says, what they offer they offer to devils, and not to God. The typical rite of blood-shedding in sacrifice dates from the earliest ages, pointing forward from the outset of human history to the passion of the Mediator. For Abel is mentioned in the sacred Scripture as the first who offered such sacrifices. We need not therefore wonder that fallen angels who occupy the air, and whose chief sins are pride and falsehood, should demand from their worshippers by whom they wished to be considered as gods what they knew to be due to God only. This deception was favored by the folly of the human heart, especially when regret for the dead led to the making of likenesses, and so to the use of images. By the increase of this homage, divine honors came to

be paid to the dead as dwelling in heaven, while devils took their place on earth as the objects of worship, and required that their deluded and degraded votaries should present sacrifices to them. Thus the nature of sacrifice as due only to God appears not only when God righteously claims it, but also when a false god proudly arrogates it. If the Pagan was slow to believe these things, I should argue from the prophecies, and point out that, though uttered long ago, they are now fulfilled. If he still remained in unbelief, this is rather to be expected than to be wondered at; for the prophecy itself intimates that all would not believe.

18. If the Pagan, in the next place, were to find fault with both Testaments as attributing jealousy to God and Christ, he would only show his own ignorance of literature, or his forgetfulness. For though their philosophers distinguish between desire and passion, joy and gratification, caution and fear, gentleness and tender-heartedness, prudence and cunning, boldness and daring, and so on, giving the first name in each pair to what is good, and the second to what is bad, their books are notwithstanding full of instances in which, by the abuse of these words, virtues are called by the names which properly belong to vices; as passion is used for desire, gratification for joy, fear for caution, tender-heartedness for gentleness, cunning for prudence, daring for boldness. The cases are innumerable in which speech exhibits similar inaccuracies. Moreover, each language has its own idioms. For in religious writings I remember no instance of the word tender-heartedness being used in a bad sense. And common usage affords examples of similar peculiarities in the use of words. In Greek, one word stands for two distinct things, labor and pain; while we have a separate name for each. Again, we use the word in two senses, as when we say of what is not dead, that it has life; and again, of any one that he is a man of good life, whereas in Greek each of these meanings has a word of its own. So that, apart from the abuse of words which prevails in all languages, it may be an Hebrew idiom to use jealousy in two senses, as a man is called jealous when he suffers from a diseased state of mind caused by distress on account of the faithlessness of his wife, in which sense the word cannot be applied to God; or as when diligence is manifested in guarding conjugal chastity, in which sense it is profitable for us not only unhesitatingly to admit, but thankfully to assert, that God is jealous of His people when He

calls them His wife, and warns them against committing adultery with a multitude of false gods. The same may be said of the anger of God. For God does not suffer perturbation when He visits men in anger; but either by an abuse of the word, or by a peculiarity of idiom, anger is used in the sense of punishment.

19. The slaughter of multitudes would not seem strange to the Pagan, unless he denied the judgment of God, which Pagans do not; for they allow that all things in the universe, from the highest to the lowest, are governed by God’s providence. But if he would not allow this, he would be convinced either by the authority of Pagan writers, or by the more tedious method of demonstration; and if still obstinate and perverse, he would be left to the judgment which he denies. Then, if he were to give instances of the destruction of men for no offense, or for a very slight one, we should show that these were offenses, and that they were not slight. For instance, to take the case already referred to of the wedding garment, we should prove that it was a great crime in a man to attend the sacred feast, seeking not the bridegroom’s glory, but his own, or whatever the garment may be found on better interpretation to signify. And in the case of the slaughter before the king of those who would not have him to reign over them, we might perhaps easily prove that, though it may be no sin in a man to refuse to obey his fellow-man, it is both a fault and a great one to reject the reign of Him in whose reign alone is there righteousness, and happiness, and continuance.

20. Lastly, as regards Faustus’ crafty insinuation, that the Old Testament misrepresents God as threatening to come with a sword which will spare neither the righteous nor the wicked, if the words were explained to the Pagan, he would perhaps disagree neither with the Old Testament nor with the New; and he might see the beauty of the parable in the Gospel, which people who pretend to be Christians either misunderstand from their blindness, or reject from their perversity. The great husbandman of the vine uses his pruning-hook differently in the fruitful and in the unfruitful branches; yet he spares neither good nor bad, pruning one and cutting off the other. There is no man so just as not to require to be tried by affliction to advance, or to establish, or to prove his virtue. Do the Manichaeans not

reckon Paul as righteous, who, while confessing humbly and honestly his past sins, still gives thanks for being justified by faith in Jesus Christ? Was Paul then spared by Him whom fools misunderstand, when He says, “I will spare neither the righteous nor the sinner”? Hear the apostle himself: “Lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelation, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me. For this I besought the Lord thrice, that He would remove it from me; and He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for strength is perfected in weakness.” Here a just man is not spared that his strength might be perfected in weakness by Him who had given him an angel of Satan to buffet him. If you say that the devil gave this angel, it follows that the devil sought to prevent Paul’s being exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelation, and to perfect his strength. This is impossible. Therefore He who gave up this righteous man to be buffeted by the messenger of Satan, is the same as He who, through Paul, gave up to Satan himself the wicked persons of whom Paul says: “I have delivered them to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.” Do you see now how the Most High spares neither the righteous nor the wicked? Or is it the sword that frightens you? For to be buffeted is not so bad as to be put to death. But did not the thousands of martyrs suffer death in various forms? And could their persecutors have had this power against them except it had been given them by God, who thus spared neither the righteous nor the wicked? For the Lord Himself, the chief martyr, says expressly to Pilate: “Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.” Paul also, besides recording his own experience, says that the afflictions and persecutions of the righteous exhibit the judgment of God. This truth is set forth at length by the Apostle Peter in the passage already quoted, where he says: “It is time that judgment should begin at the house of the Lord. And if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of those that believe not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely are saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” Peter also explains how the wicked are not spared, for they are branches broken off to be burnt; while the righteous are not spared, because their purification is to be brought to perfection. He ascribes these things to the will of Him who says in the Old Testament, I will spare neither the righteous nor the wicked; for he says: “It is better, if the will of the Spirit of God be so, that we suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.” So, when by the will of the

Spirit of God men suffer for well-doing, the righteous are not spared; when they suffer for evil-doing, the wicked are not spared. In both cases it is according to the will of Him who says: I will spare neither the righteous nor the wicked; correcting the one as a son, and punishing the other as a transgressor.

21. I have thus shown, to the best of my power, that the God we worship did not abide from eternity in darkness, but is Himself light, and in Him is no darkness at all; and in Himself dwells in light inaccessible; and the brightness of this light is His coeternal wisdom. From what we have said, it appears that God was not taken by surprise by the unexpected appearance of light, but that light owes its existence to Him as its Creator, as its owes its continued existence to His approval. Neither was God ignorant of the future, but the author of the precept as well as the punisher of disobedience; that by showing His righteous anger against transgression, He might provide a restraint for the time, and a warning for the future. Nor does He ask questions from ignorance, but by His very inquiry declares His judgment. Nor is He curious or timid, but excludes the transgressor from eternal life, which is the just reward of obedience. Nor is He greedy for blood and fat; but by requiring from a carnal people sacrifices, suited to their character, He by certain types prefigures the true sacrifice. Nor is His jealousy an emotion of pale anxiety, but of quiet benevolence, in desire to keep the soul, which owes chastity to the one true God, from being defiled and prostituted by serving many false gods. Nor is He enraged with a passion similar to human anger, but is angry, not in the sense of desiring vengeance, but in the peculiar sense of giving full effect to the sentence of a righteous retribution. Nor does He destroy thousands of men for trifling offenses, or for nothing, but manifests to the world the benefit to be obtained from fearing Him, by the temporal death of those already mortal. Nor does He punish the righteous and sinners indiscriminately, but chastises the righteous for their good, in order to perfect them, and gives to sinners the punishment justly due to them. Thus, ye Manichaeans, do your suspicions lead you astray, when, by misunderstanding our Scriptures, or by hearing bad interpreters, you form a mistaken judgment of Catholics. Hence you leave sound doctrine, and turn to impious fables; and in your perversity and estrangement from the society of saints, you reject the instruction of the

New Testament, which, as we have shown, contains statements similar to those which you condemn in the Old Testament. So we are obliged to defend both Testaments against you as well as against the Pagans.

22. But supposing that there is some one so deluded by carnality as to worship not the God whom we worship, who is one and true, but the fiction of your suspicions or your slanders, whom you say we worship, is not even this god better than yours? Observe, I beseech you, what must be plain to the feeblest understanding; for here there is no need of great perspicacity. I address all, wise and unwise. I appeal to the common sense and judgment of all alike. Hear, consider, judge. Would it not have been better for your god to have remained in darkness from eternity, than to have plunged the light coeternal with him and cognate to him into darkness? Would it not have been better to have expressed admiration in surprise at the appearance of a new light coming to scatter the darkness, than to have been unable to baffle the assault of darkness except by the concession of his own light? Unhappy if he did this in alarm, and cruel if there was no need of it. Surely it would have been better to see light, made by himself, and to admire it as good, than to make the light begotten by himself evil; better than that his own light should become hostile to himself in repelling the forces of darkness. For this will be the accusation against those who will be condemned for ever to the mass of darkness, that they suffered themselves to lose their original brightness, and became the enemies of sacred light. If they did not know from eternity that they would be thus condemned, they must have suffered the darkness of eternal ignorance; or if they did know, the darkness of eternal fear. Thus part of the substance of your god really did remain from eternity in its own darkness; and instead of admiring new light on its appearance, it only met with another and a hostile darkness, of which it had always been in fear. Indeed, God himself must have been in the darkness of fear for this part of himself, if he was dreading the evil coming upon it. If he did not foresee the evil, he must have been in the darkness of ignorance. If he foresaw it, and was not in fear, the darkness of such cruelty is worse than the darkness either of ignorance or of fear. Your god appears to be destitute of the quality which the apostle commends in the body, which you insanely believe to be made not by God, but by Hyle: “If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it.” But suppose he did suffer; he

foresaw, he feared, he suffered, but he could not help himself. Thus he remained from eternity in the darkness of his own misery; and then, instead of admiring a new light which was to drive away the darkness, he came in contact, to the injury of his own light, with another darkness which he had always dreaded. Again, would it not have been much better, I say, not to have given a commandment like God, but even to have received a commandment like Adam, which he would be rewarded for keeping and punished for breaking, acting either way by his own free-will, than to be forced by inevitable necessity to admit darkness into his light in spite of himself? Surely it would have been better to have given a precept to human nature, not knowing that it would become sinful, than to have been driven by necessity to sin contrary to his own divine nature. Think for a moment, and say how darkness could be conquered by one who was himself conquered by necessity. Conquered already by this greater enemy, he fought under his conqueror's orders against a less formidable opponent. Would it not have been better not to know where Adam had hid himself, than to have been himself destitute of any means of escape, first from a hard and hateful necessity, and then from a dissimilar and hostile race? Would it not have been better to grudge eternal life to human nature, than to consign to misery the divine nature; to desire the blood and fat of sacrifices, than to be himself slaughtered in so many forms, on account of his mixture with the blood and fat of every victim; to be disturbed by jealousy at these sacrifices being offered to other gods as well as to himself, than to be himself offered on all altars to all devils, as mixed up not only with all fruits, but also with all animals? Would it not have been much better to be affected even with human anger, so as to be enraged against both his friends and his enemies for their sins, than to be himself influenced by fear as well as by anger wherever these passions exist, or than to share in all the sin that is committed, and in all punishment that is suffered? For this is the doom of that part of your god which is in confinement everywhere, condemned to this by himself, not as guilty, but in order to conquer his dreaded enemy. Doomed himself to such a fatal necessity, the part of himself which he has given over to condemnation might pardon him, if he were as humble as he is miserable. But how can you pretend to find fault with God for His anger against both friends and enemies when they sin, when the god of your fancies first under compulsion compels his own members to go to be devoured by sin, and then condemns them to remain in darkness? Though he does this, you say that it will not be in anger. But will he not be ashamed to punish, or to appear to punish, those from whom he should ask pardon in words such as these: “Forgive me, I beseech you. You are my members; could I treat you thus, except from necessity? You know yourselves, that you were sent here because a formidable enemy had arisen; and now you must remain here to prevent his rising again”? Again, is it not better to slay thousands of men for trifling faults, or for nothing, than to cast into the abyss of sin, and to condemn to the punishment of eternal imprisonment, God’s own members, his substance—in fact, God himself? It cannot properly be said of the real substance of God that it has the choice of sinning or not sinning, for God’s substance is absolutely unchangeable. God cannot sin, as He cannot deny Himself. Man, on the contrary, can sin and deny God, or he can choose not to do so. But suppose the members of your god had, like a rational human soul, the choice of sinning or not sinning; they might perhaps be justly punished for heinous offenses by confinement in the mass of darkness. But you cannot attribute to these parts a liberty which you deny to God himself. For if God had not given them up to sin, he would have been forced to sin himself, by the prevalence of the race of darkness. But if there was no danger of being thus forced, it was a sin to send these parts to a place where they incurred this danger. To do so, indeed, from free choice is a crime deserving the torment which your god unnaturally inflicts upon his own parts, more than the conduct of these parts in going by his command to a place where they lost the power of living in righteousness. But if God himself was in danger of being forced to sin by invasion and capture, unless he had secured himself first by the misconduct and then by the punishment of his own parts, there can have been no free-will either in your god or in his parts. Let him not set himself up as judge, but confess himself a criminal. For though he was forced against his own will, he professes to pass a righteous sentence in condemning those whom he knows to have suffered evil rather than done it; making this profession that he may not be thought of as having been conquered; as if it could do a beggar any good to be called prosperous and happy. Surely it would have been better for your god to have spared neither righteous nor wicked in indiscriminate punishment (which is Faustus’ last charge against our God), than to have been so cruel to his own members,—first giving them up to incurable contamination, and then, as if that was not enough, accusing them falsely of misconduct. Faustus declares that they justly suffer this severe and eternal punishment, because they allowed themselves to be led astray from their original brightness, and became hostile to sacred light. But the reason of this, as Faustus says, was that they were so greedily devoured in the first assault of the princes of darkness, that they were unable to recover themselves, or to separate themselves from the hostile principle. These souls, therefore, did no evil themselves, but in all this were innocent sufferers. The real agent was he who sent them away from himself into this wretchedness. They suffered more from their father than from their enemy. Their father sent them into all this misery; while their enemy desired them as something good, wishing not to hurt them, but to enjoy them. The one injured them knowingly, the other in ignorance. This god was so weak and helpless that he could not otherwise secure himself first against an enemy threatening attack, and then against the same enemy in confinement. Let him, then, not condemn those parts whose obedience defended him, and whose death secures his safety. If he could not avoid the conflict, why slander his defenders? When these parts allowed themselves to be led astray from their original brightness, and became hostile to sacred light, this must have been from the force of the enemy; and if they were forced against their will, they are innocent; while, if they could have resisted had they chosen, there is no need of the origin of evil in an imaginary evil nature, since it is to be found in free-will. Their not resisting, when they could have done so, is plainly their own fault, and not owing to any force from without. For, supposing them able to do a thing, to do which is right, while not to do it is great and heinous sin, their not doing it is their own choice. So, then, if they choose not to do it, the fault is in their will not in necessity. The origin of sin is in the will; therefore in the will is also the origin of evil, both in the sense of acting against a just precept, and in the sense of suffering under a just sentence. There is thus no reason why, in your search for the origin of evil, you should fall into so great an evil as that of calling a nature so rich in good things the nature of evil, and of attributing the terrible evil of necessity to the nature of perfect good, before any commixture with evil. The cause of this erroneous belief is your pride, which you need not have unless you choose; but in your wish to defend at all hazards the error into which you have fallen, you take away the origin of evil from free-will, and place it in a fabulous nature of evil. And thus you come at last to say, that the souls which are to be doomed to eternal confinement in the mass of darkness became enemies to sacred light not from choice, but by necessity; and to make your god a judge with whom it is of no use to prove, in behalf of your clients. that they were under compulsion, and a king who will make no allowance for your brethren, his own sons and members, whose hostility against you and against himself you ascribe not to choice, but to necessity. What shocking cruelty! unless you proceed in the next place to defend your god, as also acting not from choice, but by necessity. So, if there could be found another judge free from necessity, who could decide the question on the principles of equity, he would sentence your god to be bound to this mass, not by being fastened on the outside, but by being shut up inside along with the formidable enemy. The first in the guilt of necessity ought to be first in the sentence of condemnation. Would it not be much better, then, in comparison with such a god as this, to choose the god whom we indeed do not worship, but whom you think or pretend to think we worship? Though he spares not his servants, whether righteous or sinful, making no proper separation, and not distinguishing between punishment and discipline, is he not better than the god who spares not his own members though innocent, if necessity is no crime, or guilty from their obedience to him, if necessity itself is criminal; so that they are condemned eternally by him, along with whom they should have been released, if any liberty was recovered by the victory, while he should have been condemned along with them if the victory reduced the force of necessity even so far as to give this small amount of force to justice? Thus the god whom you represent us as worshipping, though he is not the one true God whom we really worship, is far better than your god. Neither, indeed, has any existence; but both are the creatures of your imaginations. But, according to your own representations, the one whom you call ours, and find fault with, is better than the one whom you call your own, and whom you worship.

23. So also the patriarchs and prophets whom you cry out against are not the men whom we honor, but men whose characters are drawn from your fancy, prompted by ill-will. And yet even thus as you paint them, I will not be content with showing them to be superior to your elect, who keep all the precepts of Manichaeus, but will prove their superiority to your god

himself. Before proving this, however, I must, with the help of God, defend our holy fathers the patriarchs and prophets against your accusations, by a clear exposition of the truth as opposed to the carnality of your hearts. As for you Manichaeans, it would be enough to say that the faults you impute to our fathers are preferable to what you praise in your own, and to complete your shame by adding that your god can be proved far inferior to our fathers as you describe them. This would be a sufficient reply for you. But as, even apart from your perversities, some minds are of themselves disturbed when comparing the life of the prophets in the Old Testament with that of the apostles in the New,—not discerning between the manner of the time when the promise was under a veil, and that of the time when the promise is revealed,—I must first of all reply to those who either have the boldness to pride themselves as superior in temperance to the prophets, or quote the prophets in defence of their own bad conduct.

24. First of all, then, not only the speech of these men, but their life also, was prophetic; and the whole kingdom of the Hebrews was like a great prophet, corresponding to the greatness of the Person prophesied. So, as regards those Hebrews who were made wise in heart by divine instruction, we may discover a prophecy of the coming of Christ and of the Church, both in what they said and in what they did; and the same is true as regards the divine procedure towards the whole nation as a body. For, as the apostle says, "all these things were our examples."

25. Those who find fault with the prophets, accusing them of adultery for instance, in actions which are above their comprehension, are like those Pagans who profanely charge Christ with folly or madness because He looked for fruit from a tree out of the season; or with childishness, because He stooped down and wrote on the ground, and, after answering the people who were questioning Him, began writing again. Such critics are incapable of understanding that certain virtues in great minds resemble closely the vices of little minds, not in reality, but in appearance. Such criticism of the great is like that of boys at school, whose learning consists in the important rule, that if the nominative is in the singular, the verb must also be in the singular; and so they find fault with the best Latin author, because he says, Pars in frusta secant. He should have written, say they, secat. And again,

knowing that religio is spelt with one l, they blame him for writing relligio, when he says, Relligione patrum. Hence it may with reason be said, that as the poetical usage of words differs from the solecisms and barbarisms of the unlearned, so, in their own way, the figurative actions of the prophets differ from the impure actions of the vicious. Accordingly, as a boy guilty of a barbarism would be whipped if he pled the usage of Virgil; so any one quoting the example of Abraham begetting a son from Hagar, in defence of his own sinful passion for his wife's handmaid, ought to be corrected not by caning only, but by severe scourging, that he may not suffer the doom of adulterers in eternal punishment. This indeed is a comparison of great and important subjects with trifles; and it is not intended that a peculiar usage in speech should be put on a level with a sacrament, or a solecism with adultery. Still, allowing for the difference in the character of the subjects, what is called learning or ignorance in the proprieties and improprieties of speech, resembles wisdom or the want of it in reference to the grand moral distinction between virtue and vice.

26. Instead of entering on the distinctions between the praiseworthy and the blameworthy, the criminal and the innocent, the dangerous and the harmless, the guilty and the guiltless, the desirable and the undesirable, which are all illustrations of the distinction between sin and righteousness, we must first consider what sin is, and then examine the actions of the saints as recorded in the holy books, that, if we find these saints described as sinning, we may if possible discover the true reason for keeping these sins in memory by putting them on record. Again, if we find things recorded which, though they are not sins, appear so to the foolish and the malevolent, and in fact do not exhibit any virtues, here also we have to see why these things are put into the Scriptures which we believe to contain wholesome doctrine as a guide in the present life, and a title to the inheritance of the future. As regards the examples of righteousness found among the acts of the saints, the propriety of recording these must be plain even to the ignorant. The question is about those actions the mention of which may seem useless if they are neither righteous nor sinful, or even dangerous if the actions are really sinful, as leading people to imitate them, because they are not condemned in these books, and so may be supposed

not to be sinful, or because, though they are condemned, men may copy them from the idea that they must be venial if saints did them.

27. Sin, then, is any transgression in deed, or word, or desire, of the eternal law. And the eternal law is the divine order or will of God, which requires the preservation of natural order, and forbids the breach of it. But what is this natural order in man? Man, we know, consists of soul and body; but so does a beast. Again, it is plain that in the order of nature the soul is superior to the body. Moreover, in the soul of man there is reason, which is not in a beast. Therefore, as the soul is superior to the body, so in the soul itself the reason is superior by the law of nature to the other parts which are found also in beasts; and in reason itself, which is partly contemplation and partly action, contemplation is unquestionably the superior part. The object of contemplation is the image of God, by which we are renewed through faith to sight. Rational action ought therefore to be subject to the control of contemplation, which is exercised through faith while we are absent from the Lord, as it will be hereafter through sight, when we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Then in a spiritual body we shall by His grace be made equal to angels, when we put on the garment of immortality and incorruption, with which this mortal and corruptible shall be clothed, that death may be swallowed up of victory, when righteousness is perfected through grace. For the holy and lofty angels have also their contemplation and action. They require of themselves the performance of the commands of Him whom they contemplate, whose eternal government they freely because sweetly obey. We, on the other hand, whose body is dead because of sin, till God quicken also our mortal bodies by His Spirit dwelling in us, live righteously in our feeble measure, according to the eternal law in which the law of nature is preserved, when we live by that faith unfeigned which works by love, having in a good conscience a hope of immortality and incorruption laid up in heaven, and of the perfecting of righteousness to the measure of an inexpressible satisfaction, for which in our pilgrimage we must hunger and thirst, while we walk by faith and not by sight.

28. A man, therefore, who acts in obedience to the faith which obeys God, restrains all mortal affections, and keeps them within the natural limit, regulating his desires so as to put the higher before the lower. If there was

no pleasure in what is unlawful, no one would sin. To sin is to indulge this pleasure instead of restraining it. And by unlawful is meant what is forbidden by the law in which the order of nature is preserved. It is a great question whether there is any rational creature for which there is no pleasure in what is unlawful. If there is such a class of creatures, it does not include man, nor that angelic nature which abode not in the truth. These rational creatures were so made, that they had the potentiality of restraining their desires from the unlawful; and in not doing this they sinned. Great, then, is the creature man, for he is restored by this potentiality, by which, if he had so chosen, he would not have fallen. And great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, who created man. For He created also inferior natures which cannot sin, and superior natures which will not sin. Beasts do not sin, for their nature agrees with the eternal law from being subject to it, without being in possession of it. And again, angels do not sin, because their heavenly nature is so in possession of the eternal law that God is the only object of its desire, and they obey His will without any experience of temptation. But man, whose life on this earth is a trial on account of sin, subdues to himself what he has in common with beasts, and subdues to God what he has in common with angels; till, when righteousness is perfected and immortality attained, he shall be raised from among beasts and ranked with angels.

29. The exercise or indulgence of the bodily appetites is intended to secure the continued existence and the invigoration of the individual or of the species. If the appetites go beyond this, and carry the man, no longer master of himself, beyond the limits of temperance, they become unlawful and shameful lusts, which severe discipline must subdue. But if this unbridled course ends in plunging the man into such a depth of evil habits that he supposes that there will be no punishment of his sinful passions, and so refuses the wholesome discipline of confession and repentance by which he might be rescued; or, from a still worse insensibility, justifies his own indulgences in profane opposition to the eternal law of Providence; and if he dies in this state, that unerring law sentences him now not to correction, but to damnation.

30. Referring, then, to the eternal law which enjoins the preservation of natural order and forbids the breach of it, let us see how our father Abraham sinned, that is, how he broke this law, in the things which Faustus has charged him with as highly criminal. In his irrational craving to have children, says Faustus, and not believing God, who promised that his wife Sara should have a son, he defiled himself with a mistress. But here Faustus, in his irrational desire to find fault, both discloses the impiety of his heresy, and in his error and ignorance praises Abraham's intercourse with the handmaid. For as the eternal law—that is, the will of God the Creator of all—for the preservation of the natural order, permits the indulgence of the bodily appetite under the guidance of reason in sexual intercourse, not for the gratification of passion, but for the continuance of the race through the procreation of children; so, on the contrary, the unrighteous law of the Manichaeans, in order to prevent their god, whom they bewail as confined in all seeds, from suffering still closer confinement in the womb, requires married people not on any account to have children, their great desire being to liberate their god. Instead, therefore, of an irrational craving in Abraham to have children, we find in Manichaeus an irrational fancy against having children. So the one preserved the natural order by seeking in marriage only the production of a child; while the other, influenced by his heretical notions, thought no evil could be greater than the confinement of his god.

31. So, again, when Faustus says that the wife's being privy to her husband's conduct made the matter worse, while he is prompted only by the uncharitable wish to reproach Abraham and his wife, he really, without intending it, speaks in praise of both. For Sara did not connive at any criminal action in her husband for the gratification of his unlawful passions; but from the same natural desire for children that he had, and knowing her own barrenness, she warrantably claimed as her own the fertility of her handmaid; not consenting with sinful desires in her husband, but requesting of him what it was proper in him to grant. Nor was it the request of proud assumption; for every one knows that the duty of a wife is to obey her husband. But in reference to the body, we are told by the apostle that the wife has power over her husband's body, as he has over hers; so that, while in all other social matters the wife ought to obey her husband, in this one

matter of their bodily connection as man and wife their power over one another is mutual,—the man over the woman, and the woman over the man. So, when Sara could not have children of her own, she wished to have them by her handmaid, and of the same seed from which she herself would have had them, if that had been possible. No woman would do this if her love for her husband were merely an animal passion; she would rather be jealous of a mistress than make her a mother. So here the pious desire for the procreation of children was an indication of the absence of criminal indulgence.

32. Abraham, indeed, cannot be defended, if, as Faustus says, he wished to get children by Hagar, because he had no faith in God, who promised that he should have children by Sara. But this is an entire mistake: this promise had not yet been made. Any one who reads the preceding chapters will find that Abraham had already got the promise of the land with a countless number of inhabitants, but that it had not yet been made known to him how the seed spoken of was to be produced, whether by generation from his own body, or from his choice in the adoption of a son, or, in the case of its being from his own body, whether it would be by Sara or another. Whoever examines into this will find that Faustus has made either an imprudent mistake or an impudent misrepresentation. Abraham, then, when he saw that he had no children, though the promise was to his seed, thought first of adoption. This appears from his saying of his slave, when speaking to God, “This is mine heir;” as much as to say, As Thou hast not given me a seed of my own, fulfill Thy promise in this man. For the word seed may be applied to what has not come out of a man’s own body, else the apostle could not call us the seed of Abraham: for we certainly are not his descendants in the flesh; but we are his seed in following his faith, by believing in Christ, whose flesh did spring from the flesh of Abraham. Then Abraham was told by the Lord “This shall not be thine heir; but he that cometh out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.” The thought of adoption was thus removed; but it still remained uncertain whether the seed which was to come from himself would be by Sara or another. And this God was pleased to keep concealed, till a figure of the Old Testament had been supplied in the handmaid. We may thus easily understand how Abraham, seeing that his wife was barren, and that she desired to obtain from her husband and her

handmaid the offspring which she herself could not produce, acted not in compliance with carnal appetite, but in obedience to conjugal authority, believing that Sara had the sanction of God for her wish; because God had already promised him an heir from his own body, but had not foretold who was to be the mother. Thus, when Faustus shows his own infidelity in accusing Abraham of unbelief, his groundless accusation only proves the madness of the assailant. In other cases, Faustus' infidelity has prevented him from understanding; but here, in his love of slander, he has not even taken time to read.

33. Again, when Faustus accuses a righteous and faithful man of a shameless profanation of his marriage from avarice and greed, by selling his wife Sara at different times to the two kings Abimelech and Pharaoh, telling them that she was his sister, because she was very fair, he does not distinguish justly between right and wrong, but unjustly condemns the whole transaction. Those who think that Abraham sold his wife cannot discern in the light of the eternal law the difference between sin and righteousness; and so they call perseverance obstinacy, and confidence presumption, as in these and similar cases men of wrong judgment are wont to blame what they suppose to be wrong actions. Abraham did not become partner in crime with his wife by selling her to others: but as she gave her handmaid to her husband, not to gratify his passion, but for the sake of offspring, in the authority she had consistently with the order of nature, requiring the performance of a duty, not complying with a sinful desire; so in this case, the husband, in perfect assurance of the chaste attachment of his wife to himself, and knowing her mind to be the abode of modest and virtuous affection, called her his sister, without saying that she was his wife, lest he himself should be killed, and his wife fall into the hands of strangers and evil-doers: for he was assured by his God that He would not allow her to suffer violence or disgrace. Nor was he disappointed in his faith and hope; for Pharaoh, terrified by strange occurrences, and after enduring many evils on account of her, when he was informed by God that Sara was Abraham's wife, restored her with honor uninjured. Abimelech also did the same, after learning the truth in a dream.

34. Some people, not scoffers and evil-speakers like Faustus, but men who pay due honor to the Scriptures, which Faustus finds fault with because he does not understand them, or which he fails to understand because of his fault-finding, in commenting on this act of Abraham, are of opinion that he stumbled from weakness of faith, and denied his wife from fear of death, as Peter denied the Lord. If this is the correct view, we must allow that Abraham sinned; but the sin should not cancel or obliterate all his merits, any more than in the case of the apostle. Besides, to deny his wife is not the same as to deny the Saviour. But when there is another explanation, why not abide by it, instead of giving blame without cause, since there is no proof that Abraham told a lie from fear? He did not deny that Sara was his wife in answer to any question on the subject; but when asked who she was, he said she was his sister, without denying her to be his wife: he concealed part of the truth, but said nothing false.

35. It is waste of time to observe Faustus' remark, that Abraham falsely called Sara his sister; as if Faustus had discovered the family of Sara, though it is not mentioned in Scripture. In a matter which Abraham knew, and we do not, it is surely better to believe the patriarch when he says what he knows, than to believe Manichaeus when he finds fault with what he knows nothing about. Since, then, Abraham lived at that period in human history, when, though marriage had become unlawful between children of the same parents, or of the same father or mother, no law or authority interfered with the custom of marriage between the children of brothers, or any less degree of consanguinity, why should he not have had as wife his sister, that is, a woman descended from his father? For he himself told the king, when he restored Sara, that she was his sister by his father, and not by his mother. And on this occasion he could not have been led to tell a falsehood from fear, for the king knew that she was his wife, and was restoring her with honor, because he had been warned by God. We learn from Scripture that, among the ancients, it was customary to call cousins brothers and sisters. Thus Tobias says in his prayer to God, before having intercourse with his wife, "And now, O Lord, Thou knowest that not in wantonness I take to wife my sister;" though she was not sprung immediately from the same father or the same mother, but only belonged to the same family. And Lot is called the brother of Abraham, though

Abraham was his uncle. And, by the same use of the word, those called in the Gospel the Lord’s brothers are certainly not children of the Virgin Mary, but all the blood relations of the Lord.

36. Some may say, Why did not Abraham’s confidence in God prevent his being afraid to confess his wife? God could have warded off from him the death which he feared, and could have protected both him and his wife while among strangers, so that Sara, although very fair, should not have been desired by any one, nor Abraham killed on account of her. Of course, God could have done this; it would be absurd to deny it. But if, in reply to the people, Abraham had told them that Sara was his wife, his trust in God would have included both his own life and the chastity of Sara. Now it is part of sound doctrine, that when a man has any means in his power, he should not tempt the Lord his God. So it was not because the Saviour was unable to protect His disciples that He told them, “When ye are persecuted in one city, flee to another.” And He Himself set the example. For though He had the power of laying down His own life, and did not lay it down till He chose to do so, still when an infant He fled to Egypt, carried by His parents; and when He went up to the feast, He went not openly, but secretly, though at other times He spoke openly to the Jews, who in spite of their rage and hostility could not lay hands on Him, because His hour was not come,—not the hour when He would be obliged to die, but the hour when He would consider it seasonable to be put to death. Thus He who displayed divine power by teaching and reproving openly, without allowing the rage of his enemies to hurt Him, did also, by escaping and concealing Himself, exhibit the conduct becoming the feebleness of men, that they should not tempt God when they have any means in their power of escaping threatened danger. So also in the apostle, it was not from despair of divine assistance and protection, or from loss of faith, that he was let down over the wall in a basket, in order to escape being taken by his enemies: not from want of faith in God did he thus escape, but because not to escape, when this escape was possible, would have been tempting God. Accordingly, when Abraham was among strangers, and when, on account of the remarkable beauty of Sara, both his life and her chastity were in danger, since it was in his power to protect not both of these, but one only,—his life, namely,—to avoid tempting God he did what he could; and in what he could not do, he trusted

to God. Unable to conceal his being a man, he concealed his being a husband, lest he should be put to death; trusting to God to preserve his wife's purity.

37. There might also be a difference of opinion on the nice point whether Sara's chastity would have been violated even if some one had intercourse with her, since she submitted to this to save her husband's life, both with his knowledge and by his authority. In this there would be no desertion of conjugal fidelity or rebellion against her husband's authority; in the same way as Abraham was not an adulterer, when, in submission to the lawful authority of his wife, he consented to be made a father by his wife's handmaid. But, from the nature of the relationship, for a wife to have two husbands, both in life, is not the same thing as for a man to have two wives: so that we regard the explanation already given of Abraham's conduct as the most correct and unobjectionable; that our father Abraham avoided tempting God by taking what measures he could for the preservation of his own life, and that he showed his hope in God by entrusting to Him the chastity of his wife.

38. But a pleasure which all must feel is obtained from this narrative so faithfully recorded in the Holy Scriptures, when we examine into the prophetic character of the action, and knock with pious faith and diligence at the door of the mystery, that the Lord may open, and show us who was prefigured in the ancient personage, and whose wife this is, who, while in a foreign land and among strangers, is not allowed to be stained or defiled, that she may be brought to her own husband without spot or wrinkle. Thus we find that the righteous life of the Church is for the glory of Christ, that her beauty may bring honor to her husband, as Abraham was honored on account of the beauty of Sara among the inhabitants of that foreign land. To the Church, to whom it is said in the Song of Songs, "O thou fairest among women," kings offer gifts in acknowledgment of her beauty; as king Abimelech offered gifts to Sara, admiring the grace of her appearance; all the more that, while he loved, he was not allowed to profane it. The holy Church, too is in secret the spouse of the Lord Jesus Christ. For it is secretly, and in the hidden depths of the Spirit, that the soul of man is joined to the word of God, so that they two are one flesh; of which the apostle

speaks as a great mystery in marriage, as referring to Christ and the Church. Again, the earthly kingdom of this world, typified by the kings which were not allowed to defile Sara, had no knowledge or experience of the Church as the spouse of Christ, that is, of how faithfully she maintained her relation to her Husband, till it tried to violate her, and was compelled to yield to the divine testimony borne by the faith of the martyrs, and in the person of later monarchs was brought humbly to honor with gifts the Bride whom their predecessors had not been able to humble by subduing her to themselves. What, in the type, happened in the reign of one and the same king, is fulfilled in the earlier monarchs of this era and their successors.

39. Again, when it is said that the Church is the sister of Christ, not by the mother but by the father, we learn the excellence of the relation, which is not of the temporary nature of earthly descent, but of divine grace, which is everlasting. By this grace we shall no longer be a race of mortals when we receive power to be called and to become sons of God. This grace we obtain not from the synagogue, which is the mother of Christ after the flesh, but from God the Father. And when Christ calls us into another life where there is no death, He teaches us, instead of acknowledging, to deny the earthly relationship, where death soon follows upon birth; for He says to His disciples, “Call no man your father upon earth; for you have one Father, who is in heaven.” And He set us an example of this when He said, “Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? And stretching forth His hand to His disciples, He said, These are my brethren.” And lest any one should think that He referred to an earthly relationship, He added, “Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother;” as much as to say, I derive this relationship from God my Father, not from the Synagogue my mother; I call you to eternal life, where I have an immortal birth, not to earthly life, for to call you away from this life I have taken mortality.

40. As for the reason why, though it is concealed among strangers whose wife the Church is, it is not hidden whose sister she is, it is plainly because it is obscure and hard to understand how the human soul and the Word of God are united or mingled, or whatever word may be used to express this connection between God and the creature. It is from this connection that

Christ and the Church are called bridegroom and bride, or husband and wife. The other relationship, in which Christ and all the saints are brethren by divine grace and not by earthly consanguinity, or by the father and not by the mother, is more easily expressed in words, and more easily understood. For the same grace makes all the saints to be also brethren of one another; while in their society no one is the bridegroom of all the rest. So also, notwithstanding the surpassing justice and wisdom of Christ, His manhood was much more plainly and readily recognized by strangers, who, indeed, were not wrong in believing Him to be man, but they did not understand His being God as well as man. Hence Jeremiah says: "He is both a man, and who shall know Him?" He is a man, for it is made manifest that He is a brother. And who shall know Him? for it is concealed that He is a husband. This must suffice as a defense of our father Abraham against Faustus' impudence and ignorance and malice.

41. Lot also, the brother of Abraham, was just and hospitable in Sodom, and was found worthy to escape the conflagration which prefigured the future judgment; for he was free from all participation in the corruption of the people of Sodom. He was a type of the body of Christ, which in the person of all the saints both groans now among the ungodly and wicked, to whose evil deeds it does not consent, and will at the end of the world be rescued from their society, when they are doomed to the punishment of eternal fire. Lot's wife was the type of a different class of men,—of those, namely, who, when called by the grace of God, look back, instead of, like Paul, forgetting the things that are behind, and looking forward to the things that are before. The Lord Himself says: "No man that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is fit for the kingdom of Heaven." Nor did He omit to mention the case of Lot's wife; for she, for our warning, was turned into a pillar of salt, that being thus seasoned we might not trifle thoughtlessly with this danger, but be on our guard against it. So, when the Lord was admonishing every one to get rid of the things that are behind by the most strenuous endeavor to reach the things that are before, He said, "Remember Lot's wife." And, in addition to these, there is still a third type in Lot, when his daughters lay with him. For here Lot seems to prefigure the future law; for those who spring from the law, and are placed under the law, by misunderstanding it, stupefy it, as it were, and bring forth the works

of unbelief by an unlawful use of the law. “The law is good” says the apostle, “if a man use it lawfully.”

42. It is no excuse for this action of Lot or of his daughters that it represented the perversity which was afterwards in certain cases to be displayed. The purpose of Lot’s daughters is one thing, and the purpose of God is another, in allowing this to happen that He might make some truth manifest; for God both pronounces judgment on the actions of the people of those times, and arranges in His providence for the prefigurement of the future. As a part of Scripture, this action is a prophecy; as part of the history of those concerned, it is a crime.

43. At the same time there is in this transaction no reason for the torrent of abuse which Faustus’ blind hostility discharges on it. By the eternal law which requires the preservation of the order of nature and condemns its violation, the judgment in this case is not what it would have been if Lot had been prompted by a criminal passion to commit incest with his daughters, or if they had been inflamed with unnatural desires. In justice, we must ask not only what was done, but with what motive, in order to obtain a fair view of the action as the effect of that motive. The resolution of Lot’s daughters to lie with their father was the effect of the natural desire for offspring in order to preserve the race; for they supposed that there were no other men to be found, thinking that the whole world had been consumed in that conflagration, which, for all they knew, had left no one alive but themselves. It would have been better for them never to have been mothers, than to have become mothers by their own father. But still, the fulfillment of a desire like this is very different from the accursed gratification of lust.

44. Knowing that their father would condemn their design, Lot’s daughters thought it necessary to fulfill it without his knowledge. We are told that they made him drunk, so that he was unaware of what happened. His guilt therefore is not that of incest, but of drunkenness. This, too, is condemned by the eternal law, which allows meat and drink only as required by nature for the preservation of health. There is, indeed, a great difference between a drunk man and an habitual drunkard; for the drunkard is not always drunk, and a man may be drunk on one occasion without being a drunkard.

However, in the case of a righteous man, we require to account for even one instance of drunkenness. What can have made Lot consent to receive from his daughters all the cups of wine which they went on mixing for him, or perhaps giving him unmixed? Did they feign excessive grief, and did he resort to this consolation in their loneliness, and in the loss of their mother, thinking that they were drinking too, while they only pretended to drink? But this does not seem a proper method for a righteous man to take in consoling his friends when in trouble. Had the daughters learned in Sodom some vile art which enabled them to intoxicate their father with a few cups, so that in his ignorance he might sin, or rather be sinned against? But it is not likely that the Scripture would have omitted all notice of this, or that God would have allowed His servant to be thus abused without any fault of his own.

45. But we are defending the sacred Scriptures, not man’s sins. Nor are we concerned to justify this action, as if our God had either commanded it or approved of it; or as if, when men are called just in Scripture, it meant that they could not sin if they chose. And as, in the books which those critics find fault with, God nowhere expresses approval of this action, what thoughtless folly it is to bring a charge from this narrative against these writings, when in other places such actions are condemned by express prohibitions! In the story of Lot’s daughters the action is related, not commended. And it is proper that the judgment of God should be declared in some cases, and concealed in others, that by its manifestation our ignorance may be enlightened, and that by its concealment our minds may be improved by the exercise of recalling what we already know, or our indolence stimulated to seek for an explanation. Here, then, God, who can bring good out of evil, made nations arise from this origin, as He saw good, but did not bring upon His own Scriptures the guilt of man’s sin. It is God’s writing, but not His doing; He does not propose these things for our imitation, but holds them up for our warning.

46. Faustus’ effrontery appears notably in his accusing Isaac also, the son of Abraham of pretending that his wife Rebecca was his sister. For as regards the family of Rebecca Scripture is not silent, and it appears that she was his sister in the well-known sense of the word. His concealing that she was his

wife is not surprising, nor is it insignificant, if he did it in imitation of his father, so that he can be justified on the same grounds. We need only refer to the answer already given to Faustus' charge against Abraham, as being equally applicable to Isaac. Perhaps, however some inquirer will ask what typical significance there is in the foreign king discovering Rebecca to be the wife of Isaac by seeing him playing with her; for he would not have known, had he not seen Isaac playing with Rebecca as it would have been improper to do with a woman not his wife. When holy men act thus as husbands, they do it not foolishly, but designedly: for they accommodate themselves to the nature of the weaker sex in words and actions of gentle playfulness; not in effeminacy, but in subdued manliness. But such behavior towards any woman except a wife would be disgraceful. This is a question in good manners, which is referred to only in case some stern advocate of insensibility should find fault with the holy man even for playing with his wife. For if these men without humanity see a sedate man chatting playfully with children that he may adapt himself to the childish understanding with kindly sympathy, they think that he is insane; forgetting that they themselves were once children, or unthankful for their maturity. The typical meaning, as regards Christ and His Church, which is to be found in this great patriarch playing with his wife, and in the conjugal relation being thus discovered, will be seen by every one who, to avoid offending the Church by erroneous doctrine, carefully studies in Scripture the secret of the Church's Bridegroom. He will find that the Husband of the Church concealed for a time in the form of a servant the majesty in which He was equal to the Father, as being in the form of God, that feeble humanity might be capable of union with Him, and that so He might accommodate Himself to His spouse. So far from being absurd, it has a symbolic suitableness that the prophet of God should use a playfulness which is of the flesh to meet the affection of his wife, as the Word of God Himself became flesh that He might dwell among us.

47. Again, Jacob the son of Isaac is charged with having committed a great crime because he had four wives. But here there is no ground for a criminal accusation: for a plurality of wives was no crime when it was the custom; and it is a crime now, because it is no longer the custom. There are sins against nature, and sins against custom, and sins against the laws. In which,

then, of these senses did Jacob sin in having a plurality of wives? As regards nature, he used the women not for sensual gratification, but for the procreation of children. For custom, this was the common practice at that time in those countries. And for the laws, no prohibition existed. The only reason of its being a crime now to do this, is because custom and the laws forbid it. Whoever despises these restraints, even though he uses his wives only to get children, still commits sin, and does an injury to human society itself, for the sake of which it is that the procreation of children is required. In the present altered state of customs and laws, men can have no pleasure in a plurality of wives, except from an excess of lust; and so the mistake arises of supposing that no one could ever have had many wives but from sensuality and the vehemence of sinful desires. Unable to form an idea of men whose force of mind is beyond their conception, they compare themselves with themselves, as the apostle says, and so make mistakes. Conscious that, in their intercourse though with one wife only, they are often influenced by mere animal passion instead of an intelligent motive, they think it an obvious inference that, if the limits of moderation are not observed where there is only one wife, the infirmity must be aggravated where there are more than one.

48. But those who have not the virtues of temperance must not be allowed to judge of the conduct of holy men, any more than those in fever of the sweetness and wholesomeness of food. Nourishment must be provided not by the dictates of the sickly taste, but rather by the judgment and direction of health, so as to cure the sickness. If our critics, then, wish to attain not a spurious and affected, but a genuine and sound moral health, let them find a cure in believing the Scripture record, that the honorable name of saint is given not without reason to men who had several wives; and that the reason is this, that the mind can exercise such control over the flesh as not to allow the appetite implanted in our nature by Providence to go beyond the limits of deliberate intention. By a similar misunderstanding, this criticism, which consists rather in dishonest slander than in honest judgment, might accuse the holy apostles too of preaching the gospel to so many people, not from the desire of begetting children to eternal life, but from the love of human praise. There was no lack of renown to these our fathers in the gospel, for their praise was spread in numerous tongues through the churches of Christ.

In fact, no greater honor and glory could have been paid by men to their fellow-creatures. It was the sinful desire for this glory in the Church which led the reprobate Simon in his blindness to wish to purchase for money what was freely bestowed on the apostles by divine grace. There must have been this desire of glory in the man whom the Lord in the Gospel checks in his desire to follow Him, saying, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His Head.” The Lord saw that his mind was darkened by false appearances and elated by sudden emotion, and that there was no ground of faith to afford a lodging to the Teacher of humility; for in Christ’s discipleship the man sought not Christ’s grace, but his own glory. By this love of glory those were led away whom the Apostle Paul characterizes as preaching Christ not sincerely, but of contention and envy; and yet the apostle rejoices in their preaching, knowing that it might happen that, while the preachers gratified their desire for human praise, believers might be born among their hearers,—not as the result of the envious feeling which made them wish to rival or surpass the fame of the apostles, but by means of the gospel which they preached, though not sincerely; so that God might bring good out of their evil. So a man may be induced to marry by sensual desire, and not to beget children; and yet a child may be born, a good work of God, due to the natural power, not to the misconduct of the parent. As, therefore, the holy apostles were gratified when their doctrine met with acceptance from their hearers, not because they were greedy for praise, but because they desired to spread the truth; so the holy patriarchs in their conjugal intercourse were actuated not by the love of pleasure, but by the intelligent desire for the continuance of their family. Thus the number of their hearers did not make the apostles ambitious; nor did the number of their wives make the patriarchs licentious. But why defend the husbands, to whose character the divine word bears the highest testimony, when it appears that the wives themselves looked upon their connection with their husbands only as a means of getting sons? So, when they found themselves barren, they gave their handmaids to their husbands; so that while the handmaids had the fleshly motherhood, the wives were mothers in intention.

49. Faustus makes a most groundless statement when he accuses the four women of quarreling like abandoned characters for the possession of their

husband. Where Faustus read this I know not, unless it was in his own heart, as in a book of impious delusions, in which Faustus himself is seduced by that serpent with regard to whom the apostle feared for the Church, which he desired to present as a chaste virgin to Christ; lest, as the serpent had deceived Eve by his subtlety, so he should also corrupt their minds by turning them away from the simplicity of Christ. The Manichaeans are so fond of this serpent, that they assert that he did more good than harm. From him Faustus must have got his mind corrupted with the lies instilled into it, which he now reproduces in these infamous calumnies, and is even bold enough to put down in writing. It is not true that one of the handmaids carried off Jacob from the other, or that they quarreled about possessing him. There was arrangement, because there was no licentious passion; and the law of conjugal authority was all the stronger that there was none of the lawlessness of fleshly desire. His being hired by one of his wives proves what is here said, in plain opposition to the libels of the Manichaeans. Why should one have hired him, unless by the arrangement he was to have gone in to the other? It does not follow that he would never have gone in to Leah unless she had hired him. He must have gone to her always in her turn, for he had many children by her; and in obedience to her he had children by her hand-maid, and afterwards, without any hiring, by herself. On this occasion it was Rachel’s turn, so that she had the power so expressly mentioned in the New Testament by the apostle, “The husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife.” Rachel had a bargain with her sister, and, being in her sister’s debt, she referred her to Jacob, her own debtor. For the apostle uses this figure when he says, “Let the husband render unto the wife what is due.” Rachel gave what was in her power as due from her husband, in return for what she had chosen to take from her sister.

50. If Jacob had been of such a character as Faustus in his incurable blindness supposes, and not a servant of righteousness rather than of concupiscence, would he not have been looking forward eagerly all day to the pleasure of passing the night with the more beautiful of his wives, whom he certainly loved more than the other, and for whom he paid the price of twice seven years of gratuitous service? How, then, at the close of the day, on his way to his beloved, could he have consented to be turned

aside, if he had been such as the ignorant Manichaeans represent him? Would he not have disregarded the wish of the women, and insisted upon going to the fair Rachel, who belonged to him that night not only as his lawful wife, but also as coming in regular order? He would thus have used his power as a husband, for the wife also has not power over her own body, but the husband; and having on this occasion the arrangement in their obedience in favor of the gratification of his love of beauty, he might have enforced his authority the more successfully. In that case it would be to the credit of the women, that while he thought of his own pleasure they contended about having a son. As it was, this virtuous man, in manly control of sensual appetite, thought more of what was due from him than to him, and instead of using his power for his own pleasure, consented to be only the debtor in this mutual obligation. So he consented to pay the debt to the person to whom she to whom it was due wished him to pay it. When, by this private bargain of his wives, Jacob was suddenly and unexpectedly forced to turn from the beautiful wife to the plain one, he did not give way either to anger or to disappointment, nor did he try to persuade his wives to let him have his own way; but, like a just husband and an intelligent parent, seeing his wives concerned about the production of children, which was all he himself desired in marriage, he thought it best to yield to their authority, in desiring that each should have a child: for, since all the children were his, his own authority was not impaired. As if he had said to them: Arrange as you please among yourselves which is to be the mother; it matters not to me, since in any case I am the father. This control over the appetites, and simple desire to beget children, Faustus would have been clever enough to see and approve, unless his mind had been corrupted by the shocking tenets of his sect, which lead him to find fault with everything in the Scripture, and, moreover, teach him to condemn as the greatest crime the procreation of children, which is the proper design of marriage.

51. Now, having defended the character of the patriarch, and refuted an accusation arising from these detestable errors, let us avail ourselves of the opportunity of searching out the symbolical meaning, and let us knock with the reverence of faith, that the Lord may open to us the typical significance of the four wives of Jacob, of whom two were free, and two slaves. We see that, in the wife and bond-slaves of Abraham, the apostle understands the

two Testaments. But there, one represents each; here, the application does not suit so well, as there are two and two. There, also, the son of the bond-slave is disinherited; but here the sons of the slaves receive the land of promise along with the sons of the free women: so that this type must have a different meaning.

52. Supposing that the two free wives point to the New Testament, by which we are called to liberty, what is the meaning of there being two? Perhaps because in Scripture, as the attentive reader will find, we are said to have two lives in the body of Christ,—one temporal, in which we suffer pain, and one eternal, in which we shall behold the blessedness of God. We see the one in the Lord’s passion, and the other in His resurrection. The names of the women point to this meaning: It is said that Leah means Suffering, and Rachel the First Principle made visible, or the Word which makes the First Principle visible. The action, then, of our mortal human life, in which we live by faith, doing many painful tasks without knowing what benefit may result from them to those in whom we are interested, is Leah, Jacob’s first wife. And thus she is said to have had weak eyes. For the purposes of mortals are timid, and our plans uncertain. Again, the hope of the eternal contemplation of God, accompanied with a sure and delightful perception of truth, is Rachel. And on this account she is described as fair and well-formed. This is the beloved of every pious student, and for this he serves the grace of God, by which our sins, though like scarlet, are made white as snow. For Laban means making white; and we read that Jacob served Laban for Rachel. No man turns to serve righteousness, in subjection to the grace of forgiveness, but that he may live in peace in the Word which makes visible the First Principle, or God; that is, he serves for Rachel, not for Leah. For what a man loves in the works of righteousness is not the toil of doing and suffering. No one desires this life for its own sake; as Jacob desired not Leah, who yet was brought to him, and became his wife, and the mother of children. Though she could not be loved of herself, the Lord made her be borne with as a step to Rachel; and then she came to be approved of on account of her children. Thus every useful servant of God, brought into His grace by which his sins are made white, has in his mind, and heart, and affection, when he thus turns to God, nothing but the knowledge of wisdom. This we often expect to attain as a reward for

practising the seven precepts of the law which concern the love of our neighbor, that we injure no one: namely, Honor thy father and mother; Thou shall not commit adultery; Thou shall not kill; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shall not bear false witness; Thou shalt not desire thy neighbor's wife; Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's property. When a man has obeyed these to the best of his ability, and, instead of the bright joys of truth which he desired and hoped for, finds in the darkness of the manifold trials of this world that he is bound to painful endurance, or has embraced Leah instead of Rachel, if there is perseverance in his love, he bears with the one in order to attain the other; and as if it were said to him, Serve seven other years for Rachel, he hears seven new commands,—to be poor in spirit, to be meek, to be a mourner, to hunger and thirst after righteousness, to be merciful, pure, and a peacemaker. A man would desire, if it were possible, to obtain at once the joys of lovely and perfect wisdom, without the endurance of toil in action and suffering; but this is impossible in mortal life. This seems to be meant, when it is said to Jacob: "It is not the custom in our country to marry the younger before the elder." The elder may very well mean the first in order of time. So, in the discipline of man, the toil of doing the work of righteousness precedes the delight of understanding the truth.

53. To this purpose it is written: "Thou hast desired wisdom; keep the commandments, and the Lord shall give it thee." The commandments are those concerning righteousness, and the righteousness is that which is by faith, surrounded with the uncertainty of temptations; so that understanding is the reward of a pious belief of what is not yet understood. The meaning I have given to these words, "Thou hast desired wisdom; keep the commandments, and the Lord shall give it thee," I find also in the passage, "Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand;" showing that as righteousness is by faith, understanding comes by wisdom. Accordingly, in the case of those who eagerly demand evident truth, we must not condemn the desire, but regulate it, so that beginning with faith it may proceed to the desired end through good works. The life of virtue is one of toil; the end desired is unclouded wisdom. Why should I believe, says one, what is not clearly proved? Let me hear some word which will disclose the first principle of all things. This is the one great craving of the rational soul in the pursuit of truth. And the answer is, What you desire is excellent, and well worthy of

your love; but Leah is to be married first, and then Rachel. The proper effect of your eagerness is to lead you to submit to the right method, instead of rebelling against it; for without this method you cannot attain what you so eagerly long for. And when it is attained, the possession of the lovely form of knowledge will be in this world accompanied with the toils of righteousness. For however clear and true our perception in this life may be of the unchangeable good, the mortal body is still a weight on the mind and the earthly tabernacle is a clog on the intellect in its manifold activity. The end then, is one, but many things must be gone through for the sake of it.

54. Thus Jacob has two free wives; for both are daughters of the remission of sins, or of whitening, that is, of Laban. One is loved, the other is borne. But she that is borne is the most and the soonest fruitful, that she may be loved, if not for herself, at least for her children. For the toil of the righteous is specially fruitful in those whom they beget for the kingdom of God, by preaching the gospel amid many trials and temptations; and they call those their joy and crown for whom they are in labors more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths often,—for whom they have fightings without and fears within. Such births result most easily and plentifully from the word of faith, the preaching of Christ crucified, which speaks also of His human nature as far as it can be easily understood, so as not to hurt the weak eyes of Leah. Rachel, again, with clear eye, is beside herself to God, and sees in the beginning the Word of God with God, and wishes to bring forth, but cannot; for who shall declare His generation? So the life devoted to contemplation, in order to see with no feeble mental eye things invisible to flesh, but understood by the things that are made, and to discern the ineffable manifestation of the eternal power and divinity of God, seeks leisure from all occupation, and is therefore barren. In this habit of retirement, where the fire of meditation burns bright, there is a want of sympathy with human weakness, and with the need men have of our help in their calamities. This life also burns with the desire for children (for it wishes to teach what it knows, and not to go with the corruption of envy), and sees its sister-life fully occupied with work and with bringing forth; and it grieves that men run after that virtue which cares for their wants and weaknesses, instead of that which has a divine imperishable lesson to impart. This is what is meant when it is said, “Rachel envied her sister.”

Moreover, as the pure intellectual perception of that which is not matter, and so is not the object of the bodliy sense, cannot be expressed in words which spring from the flesh, the doctrine of wisdom prefers to get some lodging for divine truth in the mind by whatever material figures and illustrations occur, rather than to give up teaching these things; and thus Rachel preferred that her husband should have children by her handmaid, rather than that she should be without any children. Bilhah, the name of her handmaid, is said to mean old; and so, even when we speak of the spiritual and unchangeable nature of God, ideas are suggested relating to the old life of the bodily senses.

55. Leah, too, got children by her handmaid, from the desire of having a numerous family. Zilpah, her handmaid, is, interpreted, an open mouth. So Leah's handmaid represents those who are spoken of in Scripture as engaging in the preaching of the gospel with open mouth, but not with open heart. Thus it is written of some: "This people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." To such the apostle says: "Thou that preachest that a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?" But that even by this arrangement the free wife of Jacob, the type of labor or endurance, might obtain children to be heirs of the kingdom, the Lord says: "What they say, do; but do not after their works." And again, the apostolic life, when enduring imprisonment, says: "Whether Christ is preached in pretence or in truth, I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." It is the joy of the mother over her numerous family, though born of her handmaid.

56. In one instance Leah owed her becoming a mother to Rachel, who, in return for some mandrakes, allowed her husband to give her night to her sister. Some, I know, think that eating this fruit has the effect of making barren women productive, and that Rachel, from her desire for children, was thus bent on getting the fruit from her sister. But I should not agree to this, even had Rachel conceived at the time. As Leah then conceived, and, besides, had two other children before God opened Rachel's womb, there is no reason for supposing any such quality in the mandrake, without any experience to prove it. I will give my explanation; those better able than I may give a better. Though this fruit is not often met with, I had once, to my

great satisfaction, on account of its connection with this passage of Scripture, an opportunity of seeing it. I examined the fruit as carefully as I could, not with the help of any recondite knowledge of the nature of roots or the virtues of plants, but only as to what I or any one might learn from the sight, and smell, and taste. I thought it a nice-looking fruit, and sweet-smelling, but insipid; and I confess it is hard to say why Rachel desired it so much, unless it was for its rarity and its sweet smell. Why the incident should be narrated in Scripture, in which the fancies of women would not be mentioned as important unless it was intended that we should learn some important lesson from them, the only thing I can think of is the very simple idea that the fruit represents a good character; not the praise given a man by a few just and wise people, but popular report, which bestows greatness and renown on a man, and which is not desirable for its own sake, but is essential to the success of good men in their endeavors to benefit their fellow-men. So the apostle says, that it is proper to have a good report of those that are without; for though they are not infallible, the lustre of their praise and the odor of their good opinion are a great help to the efforts of those who seek to benefit them. And this popular renown is not obtained by those that are highest in the Church, unless they expose themselves to the toils and hazards of an active life. Thus the son of Leah found the mandrakes when he went out into the field, that is, when walking honestly towards those that are without. The pursuit of wisdom, on the other hand, retired from the busy crowd, and lost in calm meditation, could never obtain a particle of this public approval, except through those who take the management of public business, not for the sake of being leaders, but in order to be useful. These men of action and business exert themselves for the public benefit, and by a popular use of their influence gain the approval of the people even for the quiet life of the student and inquirer after truth; and thus through Leah the mandrakes come into the hands of Rachel. Leah herself got them from her first-born son, that is, in honor of her fertility, which represents all the useful result of a laborious life exposed to the common vicissitudes; a life which many avoid on account of its troublesome engagements, because, although they might be able to take the lead, they are bent on study, and devote all their powers to the quiet pursuit of knowledge, in love with the beauty of Rachel.

57. But as it is right that this studious life should gain public approval by letting itself be known, while it cannot rightly gain this approval if it keeps its follower in retirement, instead of using his powers for the management of ecclesiastical affairs, and so prevents his being generally useful; to this purpose Leah says to her sister, “Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son’s mandrakes also?” The husband represents all those who, though fit for active life, and able to govern the Church, in administering to believers the mystery of the faith, from their love of learning and of the pursuit of wisdom, desire to relinquish all troublesome occupations, and to bury themselves in the classroom. Thus the words, “Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son’s mandrakes also?” mean, “Is it a small matter that the life of study keeps in retirement men required for the toils of public life? and does it ask for popular renown as well?”

58. To get this renown justly, Rachel gives her husband to her sister for the night; that is, those who, by a talent for business, are fitted for government, must for the public benefit consent to bear the burden and suffer the hardships of public life; lest the pursuit of wisdom, to which their leisure is devoted, should be evil spoken of, and should not gain from the multitude the good opinion, represented by the fruit, which is necessary for the encouragement of their pupils. But the life of business must be forced upon them. This is clearly shown by Leah’s meeting Jacob when coming from the field, and laying hold of him, saying, “Thou shalt come in to me; for I have hired thee with my son’s mandrakes.” As if she said, Dost thou wish the knowledge which thou lovest to be well thought of? Do not shirk the toil of business. The same thing happens constantly in the Church. What we read is explained by what we meet with in our own experience. Do we not everywhere see men coming from secular employments, to seek leisure for the study and contemplation of truth, their beloved Rachel, and intercepted mid-way by ecclesiastical affairs, which require them to be set to work, as if Leah said to them, You must come in to me? When such men minister in sincerity the mystery of God, so as in the night of this world to beget sons in the faith, popular approval is gained also for that life, in love for which they were led to abandon worldly pursuits, and from the adoption of which they were called away to undertake the benevolent task of government. In

all their labors they aim chiefly at this, that their chosen way of life may have greater and wider renown, as having supplied the people with such leaders; as Jacob consents to go with Leah, that Rachel may obtain the sweet-smelling and good-looking fruit. Rachel, too, in course of time, by the mercy of God, brings forth a child herself, but not till after some time; for it seldom happens that there is a sound, though only partial, apprehension, without fleshly ideas, of such sacred lessons of wisdom as this: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

59. This must suffice as a reply to the false accusations brought by Faustus against the three fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from whom the God whom the Catholic Church worship was pleased to take His name. This is not the place to discourse on the merits and piety of these three men, or on the dignity of their prophetic character, which is beyond the comprehension of carnal minds. It is enough in this treatise to defend them against the calumnious attacks of malevolence and falsehood, in case those who read the Scriptures in a carping and hostile spirit should fancy that they have proved anything against the sacredness and the profitableness of these books, by their attempts to blacken the character of men who are there mentioned so honorably.

60. It should be added that Lot, the brother, that is the blood relation, of Abraham, is not to be ranked as equal to those of whom God says, “I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob;” nor does he belong to those testified to in Scripture as having continued righteous to the end, although in Sodom he lived a pious and virtuous life, and showed a praiseworthy hospitality, so that he was rescued from the fire, and a land was given by God to his seed to dwell in, for the sake of his uncle Abraham. On these accounts he is commended in Scripture—not for intemperance or incest. But when we find bad and good actions recorded of the same person, we must take warning from the one, and example from the other. As, then, the sin of Lot, of whom we are told that he was righteous previous to this sin, instead of bringing a stain on the character of God, or the truth of Scripture, rather calls on us to approve and admire the record in its resemblance to a faithful mirror, which reflects not only the beauties and perfections, but also

the faults and deformities, of those who approach it; still more, in the case of Judah, who lay with his daughter-in-law, we may see how groundless are the reproaches cast on the narrative. The sacred record has an authority which raises it far above not merely the cavils of a handful of Manichaeans, but the determined enmity of the whole Gentile world; for, in confirmation of its claims, we see that already it has brought nearly all people from their idolatrous superstitions to the worship of one God, according to the rule of Christianity. It has conquered the world, not by violence and warfare, but by the resistless force of truth. Where, then, is Judah praised in Scripture? Where is anything good said of him, except that in the blessing pronounced by his father he is distinguished above the rest, because of the prophecy that Christ would come in the flesh from his tribe?

61. Judah, as Faustus says, committed fornication; and besides that, we can accuse him of selling his brother into Egypt. Is it any disparagement to light, that in revealing all things it discloses what is unsightly? So neither is the character of Scripture affected by the evil deeds of which we are informed by the record itself. Undoubtedly, by the eternal law, which requires the preservation of natural order, and forbids the transgression of it, conjugal intercourse should take place only for the procreation of children, and after the celebration of marriage, so as to maintain the bond of peace. Therefore, the prostitution of women, merely for the gratification of sinful passion, is condemned by the divine and eternal law. To purchase the degradation of another, disgraces the purchaser; so that, though the sin would have been greater if Judah had knowingly lain with his daughter-in-law (for if, as the Lord says, man and wife are no more two, but one flesh, a daughter-in-law is the same as a daughter); still, it is plain that, as regards his own intention, he was disgraced by his intercourse with an harlot. The woman, on the other hand, who deceived her father-in-law, sinned not from wantonness, or because she loved the gains of iniquity, but from her desire to have children of this particular family. So, being disappointed in two of the brothers, and not obtaining the third, she succeeded by craft in getting a child by their father; and the reward which she got was kept, not as an ornament, but as a pledge. It would certainly have been better to have remained childless than to become a mother without marriage. Still, her desire to have her father-in-law as the father of her children was very

different from having a criminal affection for him. And when, by his order, she was brought out to be killed, on her producing the staff and necklace and ring, saying that the father of the child was the man who had given her those pledges, Judah acknowledged them, and said, “She hath been more righteous than I”—not praising her, but condemning himself. He blamed her desire to have children less than his own unlawful passion, which had led him to one whom he thought to be an harlot. In a similar sense, it is said of some that they justified Sodom; that is, their sin was so great, that Sodom seemed righteous in comparison. And even allowing that this woman is not spoken of as comparatively less guilty, but is actually praised by her father-in-law, while, on account of her not observing the established rites of marriage, she is a criminal in the eye of the eternal law of right, which forbids the transgression of natural order, both as regards the body, and first and chiefly as regards the mind, what wonder though one sinner should praise another?

62. The mistake of Faustus and of Manichaeism generally, is in supposing that these objections prove anything against us, as if our reverence for Scripture, and our profession of regard for its authority, bound us to approve of all the evil actions mentioned in it; whereas the greater our homage for the Scripture, the more decided must be our condemnation of what the truth of Scripture itself teaches us to condemn. In Scripture, all fornication and adultery are condemned by the divine law; accordingly, when actions of this kind are narrated, without being expressly condemned, it is intended not that we should praise them, but that we should pass judgment on them ourselves. Every one execrates the cruelty of Herod in the Gospel, when, in his uneasiness on hearing of the birth of Christ, he commanded the slaughter of so many infants. But this is merely narrated without being condemned. Or if Manichaean absurdity is bold enough to deny the truth of this narrative, since they do not admit the birth of Christ, which was what troubled Herod, let them read the account of the blind fury of the Jews, which is related without any expression of reproach, although the feeling of abhorrence is the same in all.

63. But, it is said, Judah, who lay with his daughter-in-law, is reckoned as one of the twelve patriarchs. And was not Judas, who betrayed the Lord,

reckoned among the twelve apostles? And was not this one of them, who was a devil, sent along with them to preach the gospel? In reply to this, it will be said that after his crime Judas hanged himself, and was removed from the number of the apostles; while Judah, after his evil conduct, was not only blessed along with his brethren, but got special honor and approval from his father, who is so highly spoken of in Scripture. But the main lesson to be learned from this is, that this prophecy refers not to Judah, but to Christ, who was foretold as to come in the flesh from his tribe; and the very reason for the mention of this crime of Judah is to be found in the desirableness of teaching us to look for another meaning in the words of his father, which are seen not to be applicable to him in his misconduct, from the praise which they express.

64. Doubtless, the intention of Faustus' calumnies is to damage this very assertion, that Christ was born of the tribe of Judah. Especially, as in the genealogy given by Matthew we find the name of Zara, whom this woman Tamar bore to Judah. Had Faustus wished to reproach Jacob's family merely, and not Christ's birth, he might have taken the case of Reuben the first-born, who committed the unnatural crime of defiling his father's bed, of which fornication the apostle says, that it was not so much as named among the Gentiles. Jacob also mentions this in his blessing, charging his son with the infamous deed. Faustus might have brought up this, as Reuben seems to have been guilty of deliberate incest, and there was no harlot's disguise in this case, were it not that Tamar's conduct in desiring nothing but to have children is more odious to Faustus than if she had acted from criminal passion, and did he not wish to discredit the incarnation, by bringing reproach on Christ's progenitors. Faustus unhappily is not aware that the most true and truthful Saviour is a teacher, not only in His words, but also in His birth. In His fleshly origin there is this lesson for those who should believe on Him from all nations, that the sins of their fathers need be no hindrance to them. Besides, the Bridegroom, who was to call good and bad to His marriage, was pleased to assimilate Himself to His guests, in being born of good and bad. He thus confirms as typical of Himself the symbol of the Passover, in which it was commanded that the lamb to be eaten should be taken from the sheep or from the goats—that is, from the righteous or the wicked. Preserving throughout the indication of divinity

and humanity, as man He consented to have both bad and good as His parents, while as God He chose the miraculous birth from a virgin.

65. The impiety, therefore, of Faustus' attacks on Scripture can injure no one but himself; for what he thus assails is now deservedly the object of universal reverence. As has been said already, the sacred record, like a faithful mirror, has no flattery in its portraits, and either itself passes sentence upon human actions as worthy of approval or disapproval, or leaves the reader to do so. And not only does it distinguish men as blameworthy or praiseworthy, but it also takes notice of cases where the blameworthy deserve praise, and the praiseworthy blame. Thus, although Saul was blameworthy, it was not the less praiseworthy in him to examine so carefully who had eaten food during the curse, and to pronounce the stern sentence in obedience to the commandment of God. So, too, he was right in banishing those that had familiar spirits and wizards out of the land. And although David was praiseworthy, we are not called on to approve or imitate his sins, which God rebukes by the prophet. And so Pontius Pilate was not wrong in pronouncing the Lord innocent, in spite of the accusations of the Jews; nor was it praiseworthy in Peter to deny the Lord thrice; nor, again, was he praiseworthy on that occasion when Christ called him Satan because, not understanding the things of God, he wished to withhold Christ from his passion, that is, from our salvation. Here Peter, immediately after being called blessed, is called Satan. Which character most truly belonged to him, we may see from his apostleship, and from his crown of martyrdom.

66. In the case of David also, we read of both good and bad actions. But where David's strength lay, and what was the secret of his success, is sufficiently plain, not to the blind malevolence with which Faustus assails holy writings and holy men, but to pious discernment, which bows to the divine authority, and at the same time judges correctly of human conduct. The Manichaeans will find, if they read the Scriptures, that God rebukes David more than Faustus does. But they will read also of the sacrifice of his penitence, of his surpassing gentleness to his merciless and bloodthirsty enemy, whom David, pious as he was brave, dismissed unhurt when now and again he fell into his hands. They will read of his memorable humility under divine chastisement, when the kingly neck was so bowed under the

Master’s yoke, that he bore with perfect patience bitter taunts from his enemy, though he was armed, and had armed men with him. And when his companion was enraged at such things being said to the king, and was on the point of requiting the insult on the head of the scoffer, he mildly restrained him, appealing to the fear of God in support of his own royal order, and saying that this bad happened to him as a punishment from God, who had sent the man to curse him. They will read how, with the love of a shepherd for the flock entrusted to him, he was willing to die for them, when, after he had numbered the people, God saw good to punish his sinful pride by lessening the number he boasted of. In this destruction, God, with whom there is no iniquity, in His secret judgment, both took away the lives of those whom He knew to be unworthy of life, and by this diminution cured the vainglory which had prided itself on the number of the people. They will read of that scrupulous fear of God in his regard for the emblem of Christ in the sacred anointing, which made David’s heart smite him with regret for having secretly cut off a small piece of Saul’s garment, that he might prove to him that he had no wish to kill him, when he might have done it. They will read of his judicious behavior as regards his children, and also of his tenderness toward them—how, when one was sick, he entreated the Lord for him with many tears and with much self-abasement, but when he died, an innocent child, he did not mourn for him; and again, how, when his youthful son was carried away with unnatural hostility to an infamous violation of his father’s bed, and in a parricidal war, he wished him to live, and wept for him when he was killed; for he thought of the eternal doom of a soul guilty of such crimes, and desired that he should live to escape this doom by being brought to submission and repentance. These, and many other praiseworthy and exemplary things, may be seen in this holy man by a candid examination of the Scripture narrative, especially if in humble piety and unfeigned faith we regard the judgment of God, who knew the secrets of David’s heart, and who, in His infallible inspection, so approves of David as to commend him as a pattern to his sons.

67. It must have been on account of this inspection of the depths of David’s heart by the Spirit of God that, when on being reproved by the prophet, he said, I have sinned, he was considered worthy to be told, immediately after this brief confession, that he was pardoned—that is, that he was admitted to

eternal salvation. For he did not escape the correction of the fatherly rod, of which God spoke in His threatening, that, while by his confession he obtained eternal exemption, he might be tried by temporal chastisement. And it is a remarkable evidence of the strength of David's faith, and of his meek and submissive spirit, that, when he had been told by the prophet that God had forgiven him, although the threatened consequences were still permitted to follow, he did not accuse the prophet of having deluded him, or murmur against God as having mocked him with a declaration of forgiveness. This deeply holy man, whose soul was lifted up unto God, and not against God, knew that had not the Lord mercifully accepted his confession and repentance, his sins would have deserved eternal punishment. So when, instead of this, he was made to smart under temporal correction, he saw that, while the pardon remained good, wholesome discipline was also provided. Saul, too, when he was reproved by Samuel, said, I have sinned. Why, then, was he not considered fit to be told, as David was, that the Lord had pardoned his sin? Is there acceptance of persons with God? Far from it. While to the human ear the words were the same, the divine eye saw a difference in the heart. The lesson for us to learn from these things is, that the kingdom of heaven is within us, and that we must worship God from our inmost feelings, that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth may speak, instead of honoring Him with our lips, like the people of old, while our hearts are far from Him. We may learn also to judge of men, whose hearts we cannot see, only as God judges, who sees what we cannot, and who cannot be biased or misled. Having, on the high authority of sacred Scripture, the plainest announcement of God's opinion of David, we may regard as absurd or deplorable the rashness of men who hold a different opinion. The authority of Scripture, as regards the character of these men of ancient times, is supported by the evidence from the prophecies which they contain, and which are now receiving their fulfillment.

68. We see the same thing in the Gospel, where the devils confess that Christ is the Son of God in the words used by Peter, but with a very different heart. So, though the words were the same, Peter is praised for his faith, while the impiety of the devils is checked. For Christ, not by human sense, but by divine knowledge, could inspect and infallibly discriminate

the sources from which the words came. Besides, there are multitudes who confess that Christ is the Son of the living God, without meriting the same approval as Peter—not only of those who shall say in that day, “Lord, Lord,” and shall receive the sentence, “Depart from me,” but also of those who shall be placed on the right hand. They may probably never have denied Christ even once; they may never have opposed His suffering for our salvation; they may never have forced the Gentiles to do as the Jews; and yet they shall not be honored equally with Peter, who, though he did all these things, will sit on one of the twelve thrones, and judge not only the twelve tribes, but the angels. So, again, many who have never desired another man’s wife, or procured the death of the husband, as David did, will never reach the place which David nevertheless held in the divine favor. There is a vast difference between what is in itself so undesirable that it must be utterly rejected, and the rich and plenteous harvest which may afterwards appear. For farmers are best pleased with the fields from which, after weeding them, it may be, of great thistles, they receive an hundred-fold; not with fields which have never had any thistles, and hardly bear thirty-fold.

69. So Moses, too, who was so faithful a servant of God in all his house; the minister of the holy, just, and good law; of whose character the apostle speaks in the words here quoted; the minister also of the symbols which, though not conferring salvation, promised the Saviour, as the Saviour Himself shows, when He says, “If ye believed Moses, ye would also believe me, for he wrote of me,”—from which passage we have already sufficiently answered the presumptuous cavils of the Manichaeans;—this Moses, the servant of the living, the true, the most high God, that made heaven and earth, not of a foreign substance, but of nothing—not from the pressure of necessity, but from plenitude of goodness—not by the suffering of His members, but by the power of His word;—this Moses, who humbly put from him this high ministry, but obediently accepted it, and faithfully kept it, and diligently fulfilled it; who ruled the people with vigilance, reproved them with vehemence, loved them with fervor, and bore with them in patience, standing for his subjects before God to receive His counsel, and to appease His wrath;—this great and good man is not to be judged of from Faustus’ malicious representations, but from what is said by God, whose

word is a true expression of His true opinion of this man, whom He knew because He made him. For the sins of men are also known to God, though He is not their author; but He takes notice of them as a judge in those who refuse to own them, and pardons them as a father in those who make confession. His servant Moses, as thus described, we love and admire and to the best of our power imitate, coming indeed far short of his merits, though we have killed no Egyptian, nor plundered any one, nor carried on any war; which actions of Moses were in one case prompted by the zeal of the future champion of his people, and in the other cases commanded by God.

70. It might be shown that, though Moses slew the Egyptian, without being commanded by God, the action was divinely permitted, as, from the prophetic character of Moses, it prefigured something in the future. Now however, I do not use this argument, but view the action as having no symbolical meaning. In the light, then, of the eternal law, it was wrong for one who had no legal authority to kill the man, even though he was a bad character, besides being the aggressor. But in minds where great virtue is to come, there is often an early crop of vices, in which we may still discern a disposition for some particular virtue, which will come when the mind is duly cultivated. For as farmers, when they see land bringing forth huge crops, though of weeds, pronounce it good for corn; or when they see wild creepers, which have to be rooted out, still consider the land good for useful vines; and when they see a hill covered with wild olives, conclude that with culture it will produce good fruit: so the disposition of mind which led Moses to take the law into his own hands, to prevent the wrong done to his brother, living among strangers, by a wicked citizen of the country from being unrequited, was not unfit for the production of virtue, but from want of culture gave signs of its productiveness in an unjustifiable manner. He who afterwards, by His angel, called Moses on Mount Sinai, with the divine commission to liberate the people of Israel from Egypt, and who trained him to obedience by the miraculous appearance in the bush burning but not consumed, and by instructing him in his ministry, was the same who, by the call addressed from heaven to Saul when persecuting the Church, humbled him, raised him up, and animated him; or in figurative words, by this stroke He cut off the branch, grafted it, and made it fruitful. For the fierce energy

of Paul, when in his zeal for hereditary traditions he persecuted the Church, thinking that he was doing God service, was like a crop of weeds showing great signs of productiveness. It was the same in Peter, when he took his sword out of its sheath to defend the Lord, and cut off the right ear of an assailant, when the Lord rebuked him with something like a threat, saying, “Put up thy sword into its sheath; for he that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword.” To take the sword is to use weapons against a man’s life, without the sanction of the constituted authority. The Lord, indeed, had told His disciples to carry a sword; but He did not tell them to use it. But that after this sin Peter should become a pastor of the Church was no more improper than that Moses, after smiting the Egyptian, should become the leader of the congregation. In both cases the trespass originated not in inveterate cruelty, but in a hasty zeal which admitted of correction. In both cases there was resentment against injury, accompanied in one case by love for a brother, and in the other by love, though still carnal, of the Lord. Here was evil to be subdued or rooted out; but the heart with such capacities needed only, like good soil, to be cultivated to make it fruitful in virtue.

71. Then, as for Faustus’ objection to the spoiling of the Egyptians, he knows not what he says. In this Moses not only did not sin, but it would have been sin not to do it. It was by the command of God, who, from His knowledge both of the actions and of the hearts of men, can decide on what every one should be made to suffer, and through whose agency. The people at that time were still carnal, and engrossed with earthly affections; while the Egyptians were in open rebellion against God, for they used the gold, God’s creature, in the service of idols, to the dishonor of the Creator, and they had grievously oppressed strangers by making them work without pay. Thus the Egyptians deserved the punishment, and the Israelites were suitably employed in inflicting it. Perhaps, indeed, it was not so much a command as a permission to the Hebrews to act in the matter according to their own inclinations; and God, in sending the message by Moses, only wished that they should thus be informed of His permission. There may also have been mysterious reasons for what God said to the people on this matter. At any rate, God’s commands are to be submissively received, not to be argued against. The apostle says, “Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?” Whether, then, the reason was

what I have said, or whether in the secret appointment of God, there was some unknown reason for His telling the people by Moses to borrow things from the Egyptians, and to take them away with them, this remains certain, that this was said for some good reason, and that Moses could not lawfully have done otherwise than God told him, leaving to God the reason of the command, while the servant's duty is to obey.

72. But, says Faustus, it cannot be admitted that the true God, who is also good, ever gave such a command. I answer, such a command can be rightly given by no other than the true and good God, who alone knows the suitable command in every case, and who alone is incapable of inflicting unmerited suffering on any one. This ignorant and spurious goodness of the human heart may as well deny what Christ says, and object to the wicked being made to suffer by the good God, when He shall say to the angels, "Gather first the tares into bundles to burn them." The servants, however, were stopped when they wished to do this prematurely: "Lest by chance, when ye would gather the tares, ye root up the wheat also with them." Thus the true and good God alone knows when, to whom, and by whom to order anything, or to permit anything. In the same way, this human goodness, or folly rather, might object to the Lord's permitting the devils to enter the swine, which they asked to be allowed to do with a mischievous intent, especially as the Manichaeans believe that not only pigs, but the vilest insects, have human souls. But setting aside these absurd notions, this is undeniable, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the only son of God, and therefore the true and good God, permitted the destruction of swine belonging to strangers, implying loss of life and of a great amount of property, at the request of devils. No one can be so insane as to suppose that Christ could not have driven the devils out of the men without gratifying their malice by the destruction of the swine. If, then, the Creator and Governor of all natures, in His superintendence, which, though mysterious, is ever just, indulged the violent and unjust inclination of those lost spirits already doomed to eternal fire, why should not the Egyptians, who were unrighteous oppressors, be spoiled by the Hebrews, a free people, who would claim payment for their enforced and painful toil, especially as the earthly possessions which they thus lost were used by the Egyptians in their impious rites, to the dishonor of the Creator? Still, if Moses had originated

this order, or if the people had done it spontaneously, undoubtedly it would have been sinful; and perhaps the people did sin, not in doing what God commanded or permitted, but in some desire of their own for what they took. The permission given to this action by divine authority was in accordance with the just and good counsel of Him who uses punishments both to restrain the wicked and to educate His own people; who knows also how to give more advanced precepts to those able to bear them, while He begins on a lower scale in the treatment of the feeble. As for Moses, he can be blamed neither for coveting the property, nor for disputing, in any instance, the divine authority.

73. According to the eternal law, which requires the preservation of natural order, and forbids the transgression of it, some actions have an indifferent character, so that men are blamed for presumption if they do them without being called upon, while they are deservedly praised for doing them when required. The act, the agent, and the authority for the action are all of great importance in the order of nature. For Abraham to sacrifice his son of his own accord is shocking madness. His doing so at the command of God proves him faithful and submissive. This is so loudly proclaimed by the very voice of truth, that Faustus, eagerly rummaging for some fault, and reduced at last to slanderous charges, has not the boldness to attack this action. It is scarcely possible that he can have forgotten a deed so famous, that it recurs to the mind of itself without any study or reflection, and is in fact repeated by so many tongues, and portrayed in so many places, that no one can pretend to shut his eyes or his ears to it. If, therefore, while Abraham’s killing his son of his own accord would have been unnatural, his doing it at the command of God shows not only guiltless but praiseworthy compliance, why does Faustus blame Moses for spoiling the Egyptians? Your feeling of disapproval for the mere human action should be restrained by a regard for the divine sanction. Will you venture to blame God Himself for desiring such actions? Then “Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou understandest not the things which be of God, but those which be of men.” Would that this rebuke might accomplish in you what it did in Peter, and that you might hereafter preach the truth concerning God, which you now, judging by feeble sense, find fault with! as Peter became a zealous

messenger to announce to the Gentiles what he objected to at first, when the Lord spoke of it as His intention.

74. Now, if this explanation suffices to satisfy human obstinacy and perverse misinterpretation of right actions of the vast difference between the indulgence of passion and presumption on the part of men, and obedience to the command of God, who knows what to permit or to order, and also the time and the persons, and the due action or suffering in each case, the account of the wars of Moses will not excite surprise or abhorrence, for in wars carried on by divine command, he showed not ferocity but obedience; and God in giving the command, acted not in cruelty, but in righteous retribution, giving to all what they deserved, and warning those who needed warning. What is the evil in war? Is it the death of some who will soon die in any case, that others may live in peaceful subjection? This is mere cowardly dislike, not any religious feeling. The real evils in war are love of violence, revengeful cruelty, fierce and implacable enmity, wild resistance, and the lust of power, and such like; and it is generally to punish these things, when force is required to inflict the punishment, that, in obedience to God or some lawful authority, good men undertake wars, when they find themselves in such a position as regards the conduct of human affairs, that right conduct requires them to act, or to make others act in this way. Otherwise John, when the soldiers who came to be baptized asked, What shall we do? would have replied, Throw away your arms; give up the service; never strike, or wound, or disable any one. But knowing that such actions in battle were not murderous but authorized by law, and that the soldiers did not thus avenge themselves, but defend the public safety, he replied, “Do violence to no man, accuse no man falsely, and be content with your wages.” But as the Manichaeans are in the habit of speaking evil of John, let them hear the Lord Jesus Christ Himself ordering this money to be given to Caesar, which John tells the soldiers to be content with. “Give,” He says, “to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s.” For tribute-money is given on purpose to pay the soldiers for war. Again, in the case of the centurion who said, “I am a man under authority, and have soldiers under me: and I say to one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it,” Christ gave due praise to his faith; He did

not tell him to leave the service. But there is no need here to enter on the long discussion of just and unjust ways.

75. A great deal depends on the causes for which men undertake wars, and on the authority they have for doing so; for the natural order which seeks the peace of mankind, ordains that the monarch should have the power of undertaking war if he thinks it advisable, and that the soldiers should perform their military duties in behalf of the peace and safety of the community. When war is undertaken in obedience to God, who would rebuke, or humble, or crush the pride of man, it must be allowed to be a righteous war; for even the wars which arise from human passion cannot harm the eternal well-being of God, nor even hurt His saints; for in the trial of their patience, and the chastening of their spirit, and in bearing fatherly correction, they are rather benefited than injured. No one can have any power against them but what is given him from above. For there is no power but of God, who either orders or permits. Since, therefore, a righteous man, serving it may be under an ungodly king, may do the duty belonging to his position in the State in fighting by the order of his sovereign,—for in some cases it is plainly the will of God that he should fight, and in others, where this is not so plain, it may be an unrighteous command on the part of the king, while the soldier is innocent, because his position makes obedience a duty,—how much more must the man be blameless who carries on war on the authority of God, of whom every one who serves Him knows that He can never require what is wrong?

76. If it is supposed that God could not enjoin warfare, because in after times it was said by the Lord Jesus Christ, “I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but if any one strike thee on the right cheek, turn to him the left also,” the answer is, that what is here required is not a bodily action, but an inward disposition. The sacred seat of virtue is the heart, and such were the hearts of our fathers, the righteous men of old. But order required such a regulation of events, and such a distinction of times, as to show first of all that even earthly blessings (for so temporal kingdoms and victory over enemies are considered to be, and these are the things which the community of the ungodly all over the world are continually begging from idols and devils) are entirely under the control and at the disposal of the one true God.

Thus, under the Old Testament, the secret of the kingdom of heaven, which was to be disclosed in due time, was veiled, and so far obscured, in the disguise of earthly promises. But when the fullness of time came for the revelation of the New Testament, which was hidden under the types of the Old, clear testimony was to be borne to the truth, that there is another life for which this life ought to be disregarded, and another kingdom for which the opposition of all earthly kingdoms should be patiently borne. Thus the name martyrs, which means witnesses, was given to those who, by the will of God, bore this testimony, by their confessions, their sufferings, and their death. The number of such witnesses is so great, that if it pleased Christ—who called Saul by a voice from heaven, and having changed him from a wolf to a sheep, sent him into the midst of wolves—to unite them all in one army, and to give them success in battle, as He gave to the Hebrews, what nation could withstand them? what kingdom would remain unsubdued? But as the doctrine of the New Testament is, that we must serve God not for temporal happiness in this life, but for eternal felicity hereafter, this truth was most strikingly confirmed by the patient endurance of what is commonly called adversity for the sake of that felicity. So in fullness of time the Son of God, made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, made of the seed of David according to the flesh sends His disciples as sheep into the midst of wolves, and bids them not fear those that can kill the body, but cannot kill the soul, and promises that even the body will be entirely restored, so that not a hair shall be lost. Peter’s sword He orders back into its sheath, restoring as it was before the ear of His enemy that had been cut off. He says that He could obtain legions of angels to destroy His enemies, but that He must drink the cup which His Father’s will had given Him. He sets the example of drinking this cup, then hands it to His followers, manifesting thus, both in word and deed, the grace of patience. Therefore God raised Him from the dead, and has given Him a name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and of things in earth, and of things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. The patriarchs and prophets, then, have a kingdom in this world, to show that these kingdoms, too, are given and taken away by God: the apostles and martyrs had no kingdom here, to show the superior desirableness of the kingdom of heaven. The prophets, however, could even in those times die for the truth, as the Lord Himself says, “From the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharia; and in these days, since the commencement of the fulfillment of what is prophesied in the psalm of Christ, under the figure of Solomon, which means the peacemaker, as Christ is our peace, “All kings of the earth shall bow to Him, all nations shall serve Him,” we have seen Christian emperors, who have put all their confidence in Christ, gaining splendid victories over ungodly enemies, whose hope was in the rites of idolatry and devil-worship. There are public and undeniable proofs of the fact, that on one side the prognostications of devils were found to be fallacious, and on the other, the predictions of saints were a means of support; and we have now writings in which those facts are recorded.

77. If our foolish opponents are surprised at the difference between the precepts given by God to the ministers of the Old Testament, at a time when the grace of the New was still undisclosed, and those given to the preachers of the New Testament, now that the obscurity of the Old is removed, they will find Christ Himself saying one thing at one time, and another at another. “When I sent you,” He says, “without scrip, or purse, or shoes, did ye lack anything? And they said, Nothing. Then saith He to them, But now, he that hath a scrip, let him take it, and also a purse; and he that hath not a sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.” If the Manichaeans found passages in the Old and New Testaments differing in this way, they would proclaim it as a proof that the Testaments are opposed to each other. But here the difference is in the utterances of one and the same person. At one time He says, “I sent you without scrip, or purse, or shoes, and ye lacked nothing;” at another, “Now let him that hath a scrip take it, and also a purse; and he that hath a tunic, let him sell it and buy a sword.” Does not this show how, without any inconsistency, precepts and counsels and permissions may be changed, as different times require different arrangements? If it is said that there was a symbolical meaning in the command to take a scrip and purse, and to buy a sword, why may there not be a symbolical meaning in the fact, that one and the same God commanded the prophets in old times to make war, and forbade the apostles? And we find in the passage that we have quoted from the Gospel, that the words spoken by the Lord were carried into effect by His disciples. For, besides going at first without scrip

or purse, and yet lacking nothing, as from the Lord's question and their answer it is plain they did, now that He speaks of buying a sword, they say, "Lo, here are two swords;" and He replied, "It is enough." Hence we find Peter with a weapon when he cut off the assailant's ear, on which occasion his spontaneous boldness was checked, because, although he had been told to take a sword, he had not been told to use it. Doubtless, it was mysterious that the Lord should require them to carry weapons, and forbid the use of them. But it was His part to give the suitable precepts, and it was their part to obey without reserve.

78. It is therefore mere groundless calumny to charge Moses with making war, for there would have been less harm in making war of his own accord, than in not doing it when God commanded him. And to dare to find fault with God Himself for giving such a command, or not to believe it possible that a just and good God did so, shows, to say the least, an inability to consider that in the view of divine providence, which pervades all things from the highest to the lowest, time can neither add anything nor take away; but all things go, or come, or remain according to the order of nature or desert in each separate case, while in men a right will is in union with the divine law, and ungoverned passion is restrained by the order of divine law; so that a good man wills only what is commanded, and a bad man can do only what he is permitted, at the same time that he is punished for what he wills to do unjustly. Thus, in all the things which appear shocking and terrible to human feebleness, the real evil is the injustice; the rest is only the result of natural properties or of moral demerit. This injustice is seen in every case where a man loves for their own sake things which are desirable only as means to an end, and seeks for the sake of something else things which ought to be loved for themselves. For thus, as far as he can, he disturbs in himself the natural order which the eternal law requires us to observe. Again, a man is just when he seeks to use things only for the end for which God appointed them, and to enjoy God as the end of all, while he enjoys himself and his friend in God and for God. For to love in a friend the love of God is to love the friend for God. Now both justice and injustice, to be acts at all, must be voluntary; otherwise, there can be no just rewards or punishments; which no man in his senses will assert. The ignorance and infirmity which prevent a man from knowing his duty, or from doing all he

wishes to do, belong to God's secret penal arrangement, and to His unfathomable judgments, for with Him there is no iniquity. Thus we are informed by the sure word of God of Adam's sin; and Scripture truly declares that in him all die, and that by him sin entered into the world, and death by sin. And our experience gives abundant evidence, that in punishment for this sin our body is corrupted, and weighs down the soul, and the clay tabernacle clogs the mind in its manifold activity; and we know that we can be freed from this punishment only by gracious interposition. So the apostle cries out in distress, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." So much we know; but the reasons for the distribution of divine judgment and mercy, why one is in this condition, and another in that, though just, are unknown. Still, we are sure that all these things are due either to the mercy or the judgment of God, while the measures and numbers and weights by which the Creator of all natural productions arranges all things are concealed from our view. For God is not the author, but He is the controller of sin; so that sinful actions, which are sinful because they are against nature, are judged and controlled, and assigned to their proper place and condition, in order that they may not bring discord and disgrace on universal nature. This being the case, and as the judgments of God and the movements of man's will contain the hidden reason why the same prosperous circumstances which some make a right use of are the ruin of others, and the same afflictions under which some give way are profitable to others, and since the whole mortal life of man upon earth is a trial, who can tell whether it may be good or bad in any particular case—in time of peace, to reign or to serve, or to be at ease or to die—or in time of war, to command or to fight, or to conquer or to be killed? At the same time, it remains true, that whatever is good is so by the divine blessing, and whatever is bad is so by the divine judgment.

79. Let no one, then, be so daring as to make rash charges against men, not to say against God. If the service of the ministers of the Old Testament, who were also heralds of the New, consisted in putting sinners to death, and that of the ministers of the New Testament, who are also interpreters of the Old, in being put to death by sinners, the service in both cases is rendered to one God, who, varying the lesson to suit the times, teaches both that temporal

blessings are to be sought from Him, and that they are to be forsaken for Him, and that temporal distress is both sent by Him and should be endured for Him. There was, therefore, no cruelty in the command, or in the action of Moses, when, in his holy jealousy for his people, whom he wished to be subject to the one true God, on learning that they had fallen away to the worship of an idol made by their own hands, he impressed their minds at the time with a wholesome fear, and gave them a warning for the future, by using the sword in the punishment of a few, whose just punishment God, against whom they had sinned, appointed in the depth of His secret judgment to be immediately inflicted. That Moses acted as he did, not in cruelty, but in great love, may be seen from the words in which he prayed for the sins of the people: "If Thou wilt forgive their sin, forgive it; and if not, blot me out of Thy book." The pious inquirer who compares the slaughter with the prayer will find in this the clearest evidence of the awful nature of the injury done to the soul by prostitution to the images of devils, since such love is roused to such anger. We see the same in the apostle, who, not in cruelty, but in love, delivered a man up to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Others, too, he delivered up, that they might learn not to blaspheme. In the apocryphal books of the Manichaeans there is a collection of fables, published by some unknown authors under the name of the apostles. The books would no doubt have been sanctioned by the Church at the time of their publication, if holy and learned men then in life, and competent to determine the matter, had thought the contents to be true. One of the stories is, that the Apostle Thomas was once at a marriage feast in a country where he was unknown, when one of the servants struck him, and that he forthwith by his curse brought a terrible punishment on this man. For when he went out to the fountain to provide water for the guests, a lion fell on him and killed him, and the hand with which he had given a slight blow to the apostle was torn off, in fulfillment of the imprecation, and brought by a dog to the table at which the apostle was reclining. What could be more cruel than this? And yet, if I mistake not, the story goes on to say, that the apostle made up for the cruelty by obtaining for the man the blessing of pardon in the next world; so that, while the people of this strange country learned to fear the apostle as being so dear to God, the man's eternal welfare was secured in exchange for the loss of this mortal life. It matters not whether the story is true or false. At any rate, the Manichaeans, who regard as genuine and authentic books which the canon of the Church rejects, must allow, as shown in the story, that the virtue of patience, which the Lord enjoins when He says, “If any one smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him thy left also,” may be in the inward disposition, though it is not exhibited in bodily action or in words. For when the apostle was struck, instead of turning his other side to the man, or telling him to repeat the blow, he prayed to God to pardon his assailant in the next world, but not to leave the injury unpunished at the time. Inwardly he preserved a kindly feeling, while outwardly he wished the man to be punished as an example. As the Manichaeans believe this, rightly or wrongly, they may also believe that such was the intention of Moses, the servant of God, when he cut down with the sword the makers and worshippers of the idol; for his own words show that he so entreated for pardon for their sin of idolatry as to ask to be blotted out of God’s book if his prayer was not heard. There is no comparison between a stranger being struck with the hand, and the dishonor done to God by forsaking Him for an idol, when He had brought the people out of the bondage of Egypt, had led them through the sea, and had covered with the waters the enemy pursuing them. Nor, as regards the punishment, is there any comparison between being killed with the sword and being torn in pieces by wild beasts. For judges in administering the law condemn to exposure to wild beasts worse criminals than are condemned to be put to death by the sword.

80. Another of Faustus’ malicious and impious charges which has to be answered, is about the Lord’s saying to the prophet Hosea, “Take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms.” As regards this passage, the impure mind of our adversaries is so blinded that they do not understand the plain words of the Lord in His gospel, when He says to the Jews, “The publicans and harlots shall go into the kingdom of heaven before you.” There is nothing contrary to the mercifulness of truth, or inconsistent with Christian faith, in a harlot leaving fornication, and becoming a chaste wife. Indeed, nothing could be more unbecoming in one professing to be a prophet than not to believe that all the sins of the fallen woman were pardoned when she changed for the better. So when the prophet took the harlot as his wife, it was both good for the woman to have her life amended,

and the action symbolized a truth of which we shall speak presently. But it is plain what offends the Manichaeans in this case; for their great anxiety is to prevent harlots from being with child. It would have pleased them better that the woman should continue a prostitute, so as not to bring their god into confinement, than that she should become the wife of one man, and have children.

81. As regards Solomon, it need only be said that the condemnation of his conduct in the faithful narrative of holy Scripture is much more serious than the childish vehemence of Faustus' attacks. The Scripture tells us with faithful accuracy both the good that Solomon had at first, and the evil actions by which he lost the good he began with; while Faustus, in his attacks, like a man closing his eyes, or with no eyes at all, seeks no guidance from the light, but is prompted only by violent animosity. To pious and discerning readers of the sacred Scriptures evidence of the chastity of the holy men who are said to have had several wives is found in this, that Solomon, who by his polygamy gratified his passions, instead of seeking for offspring, is expressly noted as chargeable with being a lover of women. This, as we are informed by the truth which accepts no man's person, led him down into the abyss of idolatry.

82. Having now gone over all the cases in which Faustus finds fault with the Old Testament, and having attended to the merit of each, either defending men of God against the calumnies of carnal heretics, or, where the men were at fault, showing the excellence and the majesty of Scripture, let us again take the cases in the order of Faustus' accusations, and see the meaning of the actions recorded, what they typify, and what they foretell. This we have already done in the case of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of whom God said that He was their God, as if the God of universal nature were the God of none besides them; not honoring them with an unmeaning title, but because He, who could alone have a full and perfect knowledge, knew the sincere and remarkable charity of these men; and because these three patriarchs united formed a notable type of the future people of God, in not only having free children by free women, as by Sarah, and Rebecca, and Leah, and Rachel, but also bond children, as of this same Rebecca was born Esau, to whom it was said, "Thou shalt serve thy brother;" and in having by

bond women not only bond children, as by Hagar, but also free children, as by Bilhah and Zilphah. Thus also in the people of God, those spiritually free not only have children born into the enjoyment of liberty, like those to whom it is said, "Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ," but they have also children born into guilty bondage, as Simon was born of Philip. Again, from carnal bondmen are born not only children of guilty bondage, who imitate them, but also children of happy liberty, to whom it is said, "What they say, do; but do not after their works." Whoever rightly observes the fulfillment of this type in the people of God, keeps the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, by continuing to the end in union with some, and in patient endurance of others. Of Lot, also, we have already spoken, and have shown what the Scripture mentions as praiseworthy in him, and what as blameworthy and the meaning of the whole narrative.

83. We have next to consider the prophetic significance of the action of Judah in lying with his daughter-in-law. But, for the sake of those whose understanding is feeble, we shall begin with observing, that in sacred Scripture evil actions are sometimes prophetic not of evil, but of good. Divine providence preserves throughout its essential goodness, so that, as in the example given above, from adulterous intercourse a man-child is born, a good work of God from the evil of man, by the power of nature, and not due to the misconduct of the parents; so in the prophetic Scriptures, where both good and evil actions are recorded, the narrative being itself prophetic, foretells something good even by the record of what is evil, the credit being due not to the evil-doer, but to the writer. Judah, when, to gratify his sinful passion, he went in to Tamar, had no intention by his licentious conduct to typify anything connected with the salvation of men, any more than Judas, who betrayed the Lord, intended to produce any result connected with the salvation of men. So then if from the evil deed of Judas the Lord brought the good work of our redemption by His own passion, why should not His prophet, of whom He Himself says "He wrote of me," for the sake of instructing us make the evil action of Judah significant of something good? Under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the prophet has compiled a narrative of actions so as to make a continuous prophecy of the things he designed to foretell. In foretelling good, it is of no consequence whether the typical actions are good or bad. If it is written in red ink that the

Ethiopians are black, or in black ink that the Gauls are white, this circumstance does not affect the information which the writing conveys. No doubt, if it was a painting instead of a writing, the wrong color would be a fault; so when human actions are represented for example or for warning much depends on whether they are good or bad. But when actions are related or recorded as types, the merit or demerit of the agents is a matter of no importance, as long as there is a true typical relation between the action and the thing signified. So in the case of Caiaphas in the Gospel as regards his iniquitous and mischievous intention, and even as regards his words in the sense in which he used them, that a just man should be put to death unjustly, assuredly they were bad; and yet there was a good meaning in his words which he did not know of when he said, “It is expedient that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation perish not.” So it is written of Him, “This he spake not of himself; but being the high priest, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the people.” In the same way the action of Judah was bad as regards his sinful passion, but it typified a great good he knew nothing of. Of himself he did evil while it was not of himself that he typified good. These introductory remarks apply not only to Judah, but also to all the other cases where in the narrative of bad actions is contained a prophecy of good.

84. In Tamar, then, the daughter-in-law of Judah, we see the people of the kingdom of Judah, whose kings, answering to Tamar’s husbands, were taken from this tribe. Tamar means bitterness; and the meaning is suitable, for this people gave the cup of gall to the Lord. The two sons of Judah represent two classes of kings who governed ill—those who did harm and those who did no good. One of these sons was evil or cruel before the Lord; the other spilled the seed on the ground that Tamar might not become a mother. There are only those two kinds of useless people in the world—the injurious and those who will not give the good they have but lose it or spill it on the ground. And as injury is worse than not doing good, the evil-doer is called the elder and the other the younger. Er, the name of the elder, means a preparer of skins, which were the coats given to our first parents when they were punished with expulsion from paradise. Onan, the name of the younger, means, their grief; that is, the grief of those to whom he does no good, wasting the good he has on the earth. The loss of life implied in

the name of the elder is a greater evil than the want of help implied in the name of the younger. Both being killed by God typifies the removal of the kingdom from men of this character. The meaning of the third son of Judah not being joined to the woman, is that for a time the kings of Judah were not of that tribe. So this third son did not become the husband of Tamar; as Tamar represents the tribe of Judah, which continued to exist, although the people received no king from it. Hence the name of this son, Selom, means, his dismission. None of those types apply to the holy and righteous men who, like David, though they lived in those times, belong properly to the New Testament, which they served by their enlightened predictions. Again, in the time when Judah ceased to have a king of its own tribe, the elder Herod does not count as one of the kings typified by the husbands of Tamar; for he was a foreigner, and his union with the people was never consecrated with the holy oil. His was the power of a stranger, given him by the Romans and by Caesar. And it was the same with his sons, the tetrarchs, one of whom, called Herod, like his father, agreed with Pilate at the time of the Lord's passion. So plainly were these foreigners considered as distinct from the sacred monarchy of Judah, that the Jews themselves, when raging against Christ, exclaimed openly, "We have no king but Caesar." Nor was Caesar properly their king, except in the sense that all the world was subject to Rome. The Jews thus condemned themselves, only to express their rejection of Christ, and to flatter Caesar.

85. The time when the kingdom was removed from the tribe of Judah was the time appointed for the coming of Christ our Lord, the true Saviour, who should come not for harm, but for great good. Thus was it prophesied, "A prince shall not fail from Judah, nor a leader from his loins, till He come for whom it is reserved: He is the desire of nations." Not only the kingdom, but all government, of the Jews had ceased, and also, as prophesied by Daniel, the sacred anointing from which the name Christ or Anointed is derived. Then came He for whom it was reserved, the desire of nations; and the holy of holies was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. Christ was born in the time of the elder Herod, and suffered in the time of Herod the tetrarch. He who thus came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel was typified by Judah when he went to shear his sheep in Thamna, which means, failing. For then the prince had failed from Judah, with all the

government and anointing of the Jews, that He might come for whom it was reserved. Judah, we are told, came with his Adullamite shepherd, whose name was Iras; and Adullamite means, a testimony in water. So it was with this testimony that the Lord came, having indeed greater testimony than that of John; but for the sake of his feeble sheep he made use of the testimony in water. The name Iras, too, means, vision of my brother. So John saw his brother, a brother in the family of Abraham, and from the relationship of Mary and Elisabeth; and the same person he recognised as his Lord and his God, for, as he himself says, he received of His fullness. On account of this vision, among those born of woman, there has arisen no greater than he; because, of all who foretold Christ, he alone saw what many righteous men and prophets desired to see and saw not. He saluted Christ from the womb; he knew Him more certainly from seeing the dove; and therefore, as the Adullamite, he gave testimony by water. The Lord came to shear His sheep, in releasing them from painful burdens, as it is said in praise of the Church in the Song of Songs, that her teeth are like a flock of sheep after shearing.

86. Next, we have Tamar changing her dress; for Tamar also means changing. Still, the name of bitterness must be retained—not that bitterness in which gall was given to the Lord, but that in which Peter wept bitterly. For Judah means confession; and bitterness is mingled with confession as a type of true repentance. It is this repentance which gives fruitfulness to the Church established among all nations. For “it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead, and that repentance and the remission of sins be preached among all nations in His name, beginning at Jerusalem.” In the dress Tamar put on there is a confession of sins; and Tamar sitting in this dress at the gate of AEnan or AEnaim, which means fountain, is a type of the Church called from among the nations. She ran as a hart to the springs of water, to meet with the seed of Abraham; and there she is made fruitful by one who knows her not, as it is foretold, “A people whom I have not known shall serve me.” Tamar received under her disguise a ring, a bracelet, a staff; she is sealed in her calling, adorned in her justification, raised in her glorification. For “whom He predestinated, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” This was while she was still disguised, as I have said; and in the same state she conceives, and becomes fruitful in holiness.

Also the kid promised is sent to her as to a harlot. The kid represents rebuke for sin, and it is sent by the Adullamite already mentioned, who, as it were, uses the reproachful words, “O generation of vipers!” But this rebuke for sin does not reach her, for she has been changed by the bitterness of confession. Afterwards, by exhibiting the pledges of the ring and bracelet and staff, she prevails over the Jews, in their hasty judgment of her, who are now represented by Judah himself; as at this day we hear the Jews saying that we are not the people of Christ, and have not the seed of Abraham. But when we exhibit the sure tokens of our calling and justification and glorification, they will immediately be confounded, and will acknowledge that we are justified rather than they. I should enter into this more particularly, taking, as it were, each limb and joint separately, as the Lord might enable me, were it not that such minute inquiry is prevented by the necessity of bringing this work to a close, for it is already longer than is desirable.

87. As regards the prophetic significance of David’s sin, a single word must suffice. The names occurring in the narrative show what it typifies. David means, strong of hand, or desirable; and what can be stronger than the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who has conquered the world, or more desirable than He of whom the prophet says, “The desire of all nations shall come?” Bersabee means, well of satisfaction, or seventh well: either of these interpretations will suit our purpose. So, in the Song of Songs, the spouse, who is the Church, is called a well of living water; or again, the number seven represents the Holy Spirit, as in the number of days in Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came from heaven. We learn also from the book of Tobit, that Pentecost was the feast of seven weeks. To forty-nine, which is seven times seven, one is added to denote unity. To this effect is the saying of the apostle: “Bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” The Church becomes a well of satisfaction by this gift of the Spirit, the number seven denoting its spirituality; for it is in her a fountain of living water springing up unto everlasting life, and he who has it shall never thirst. Uriah, Bersabee’s husband, must, from the meaning of his name, be understood as representing the devil. It is in union to the devil that all are bound whom the grace of God sets free, that the Church without spot or wrinkle may be

married to her true Saviour. Uriah means, my light of God; and Hittite means, cut off, referring either to his not abiding in the truth, when he was cut off on account of his pride from the celestial light which he had of God, or to his transforming himself into an angel of light, because after losing his real strength by his fall, he still dares to say, My light is of God. The literal David, then, was guilty of a heinous crime, which God by the prophet condemned in the rebuke addressed to David, and which David atoned for by his repentance. On the other hand, He who is the desire of all nations loved the Church when washing herself on the roof, that is, when cleansing herself from the pollution of the world, and in spiritual contemplation mounting above her house of clay, and trampling upon it; and after commencing an acquaintance, He puts to death the devil, whom He first entirely removes from her, and joins her to Himself in perpetual union. While we hate the sin, we must not overlook the prophetical significance; and while we love, as is His due, that David who in His mercy has freed us from the devil, we may also love the David who by the humility of his repentance healed the wound made by his transgression.

88. Little need be said of Solomon, who is spoken of in Holy Scripture in terms of the strongest disapproval and condemnation, while nothing is said of his repentance and restoration to the divine favor. Nor can I find in his lamentable fall even a symbolical connection with anything good. Perhaps the strange women he lusted after may be thought to represent the Churches chosen from among the Gentiles. This idea might have been admissible, if the women had left their gods for Solomon’s sake to worship his God. But as he for their sakes offended his God and worshipped their gods, it seems impossible to think of any good meaning. Doubtless, something is typified, but it is something bad, as in the case already explained of Lot’s wife and daughters. We see in Solomon a notable pre-eminence and a notable fall. Now, this good and evil which we see in him at different periods, first good and then evil, are in our day found together in the Church. What is good in Solomon represents, I think, the good members of the Church; and what was bad in him represents the bad members. Both are in one man, as the bad and the good are in the chaff and grain of one floor, or in the tares and wheat of one field. A closer inquiry into what is said of Solomon in Scripture might disclose, either to me or to others of greater learning and

greater worth, some more probable interpretation. But as we are now engaged on a different subject, we must not allow this matter to break the connection of our discourse.

89. As regards the prophet Hosea, it is unnecessary for me to explain the meaning of the command, or of the prophet's conduct, when God said to him, "Go and take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and produce children of whoredoms," for the Scripture itself informs us of the origin and purpose of this direction. It proceeds thus: "For the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord. So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son. And the Lord said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Judah, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel. And it shall come to pass at that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel. And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name No-mercy: for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away. But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen. Now when she had weaned No-mercy, she conceived, and bare a son. Then said God, Call his name Not-my-people: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God. Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured for multitude; and it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Israel and the children of Judah be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel. Say ye unto your brethren, My people; and to your sister, She hath found mercy." Since the typical meaning of the command and of the prophet's conduct is thus explained in the same book by the Lord Himself, and since the writings of the apostles declare the fulfillment of this prophecy in the preaching of the New Testament, every one must accept the explanation thus given of the command and of the action of the prophet as the true explanation. Thus it is said by the Apostle Paul, "That He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had

afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom He hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. As He saith also in Hosea, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called the children of the living God." Here Paul applies the prophecy to the Gentiles. So also Peter, writing to the Gentiles, without naming the prophet, borrows his expressions when he says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye might show forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." From this it is plain that the words of the prophet, "And the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured for multitude," and the words immediately following, "And it shall be that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there they shall be called the children of the living God," do not apply to that Israel which is after the flesh, but to that of which the apostle says to the Gentiles, "Ye therefore are the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise." But, as many Jews who were of the Israel after the flesh have believed, and will yet believe; for of these were the apostles, and all the thousands in Jerusalem of the company of the apostles, as also the churches of which Paul speaks, when he says to the Galatians, "I was unknown by face to the churches of Judaea which were in Christ;" and again, he explains the passage in the Psalms, where the Lord is called the cornerstone, as referring to His uniting in Himself the two walls of circumcision and uncircumcision, "that He might make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and that He might come and preach peace to them that are far off, and to them that are nigh," that is, to the Gentiles and to the Jews; "for He is our peace, who hath made of both one;" to the same purpose we find the prophet speaking of the Jews as the children of Judah, and of the Gentiles as children of Israel, where he says, "The children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and shall make to themselves one head, and shall go up from the land." Therefore, to speak against a prophecy thus confirmed by actual events, is to speak against the writings of the apostles as well as those of the prophets; and not only to speak against writings, but to impugn in the most reckless manner the evidence clear as noonday of established facts. In the case of the narrative of Judah, it is perhaps not so easy to recognize, under the disguise of the woman called Tamar, the harlot representing the Church gathered from among the corruption of Gentile superstition; but here, where Scripture explains itself, and where the explanation is confirmed by the writings of the apostles, instead of dwelling longer on this, we may proceed at once to inquire into the meaning of the very things to which Faustus objects in Moses the servant of God.

90. Moses killing the Egyptian in defending one of his brethren reminds us naturally of the destruction of the devil, our assailant in this land of strangers, by our defender the Lord Christ. And as Moses hid the dead body in the sand, even so the devil, though slain, remains concealed in those who are not firmly settled. The Lord, we know, builds the Church on a rock; and those who hear His word and do it, He compares to a wise man who builds his house upon a rock, and who does not yield or give way before temptation; and those who hear and do not, He compares to a foolish man who builds on the sand, and when his house is tried its ruin is great.

91. Of the prophetic significance of the spoiling of the Egyptians, which was done by Moses at the command of the Lord his God, who commands nothing but what is most just, I remember to have set down what occurred to me at the time in my book entitled On Christian Doctrine; to the effect that the gold and silver and garments of the Egyptians typified certain branches of learning which may be profitably learned or taught among the Gentiles. This may be the true explanation; or we may suppose that the vessels of gold and silver represent the precious souls, and the garments the bodies, of those from among the Gentiles who join themselves to the people of God, that along with them they may be freed from the Egypt of this world. Whatever the true interpretation may be, the pious student of the Scriptures will feel certain that in the command, in the action, and in the narrative there is a purpose and a symbolic meaning.

92. It would take too long to go through all the wars of Moses. It is enough to refer to what has already been said, as sufficient for the purpose in this

reply to Faustus of the prophetic and symbolic character of the war with Amalek. There is also the charge of cruelty made against Moses by the enemies of Scriptures, or by those who have never read anything. Faustus does not make any specific charge, but speaks of Moses as commanding and doing many cruel things. But, knowing the things they are in the habit of bringing forward and of misrepresenting, I have already taken a particular case and have defended it, so that any Manichaeans who are willing to be corrected, and all other ignorant and irreligious people, may see that there is no ground for their accusations. We must now inquire into the prophetic significance of the command, that many of those who, while Moses was absent, made an idol for themselves should be slain without regard to relationship. It is easy to see that the slaughter of these men represents the warfare against the evil principles which led the people into the same idolatry. Against such evil we are commanded to wage war in the words of the psalm, "Be ye angry and sin not." And a similar command is given by the apostle, when he says, "Mortify your members which are on earth fornication, uncleanness, luxury, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

93. It requires closer examination to see the meaning of the first action of Moses in burning the calf in fire, and grinding it to powder, and sprinkling it in the water for the people to drink. The tables given to him, written with the finger of God, that is, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, he may have broken, because he judged the people unworthy of having them read to them; and he may have burned the calf, and ground it, and scattered it so as to be carried away by the water, in order to let nothing of it remain among the people. But why should he have made them drink it? Every one must feel anxious to discover the typical significance of this action. Pursuing the inquiry, we may find that in the calf there was an embodiment of the devil, as there is in men of all nations who have the devil as their head or leader in their impious rites. The calf is gold, because there is a semblance of wisdom in the institution of idolatrous worship. Of this the apostle says, "Knowing God, they glorified Him not as God, nor were thankful; but they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became foolish, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of corruptible man, and of birds, and of

four-footed beasts, and of creeping things.” From this so-called wisdom came the golden calf, which was one of the forms of idolatry among the chief men and professed sages of Egypt. The calf, then, represents every body or society of Gentile idolaters. This impious society the Lord Christ burns with that fire of which He says in the Gospel, “I am come to send fire on the earth;” for, as there is nothing hid from His heat, when the Gentiles believe in Him they lose the form of the devil in the fire of divine influence. Then all the body is ground, that is, after the dissolution of the combination in the membership of iniquity comes humiliation under the word of truth. Then the dust is sprinkled in the water, that the Israelites, that is, the preachers of the gospel, may in baptism admit those formerly idolaters into their own body, that is, the body of Christ. To Peter, who was one of those Israelites, it was said of the Gentiles, “Kill, and eat.” To kill and eat is much the same as to grind and drink. So this calf, by the fire of zeal, and the keen penetration of the word, and the water of baptism, was swallowed up by the people, instead of their being swallowed up by it.

94. Thus, when the very passages on which the heretics found their objections to the Scriptures are studied and examined, the more obscure they are the more wonderful are the secrets which we discover in reply to our questions; so that the mouths of blasphemers are completely stopped, and the evidence of the truth so stifles them that they cannot even utter a sound. The unhappy men who will not receive into their hearts the sweetness of the truth must feel its force as a gag in their mouths. All those passages speak of Christ. The head now ascended into heaven along with the body still suffering on earth is the full development of the whole purpose of the authors of Scripture, which is well called Sacred Scripture. Every part of the narrative in the prophetical books should be viewed as having a figurative meaning, except what serves merely as a framework for the literal or figurative predictions of this king and of his people. For as in harps and other musical instruments the musical sound does not come from all parts of the instrument, but from the strings, and the rest is only for fastening and stretching the strings so as to tune them, that when they are struck by the musician they may give a pleasant sound; so in these prophetical narratives the circumstances selected by the prophetic spirit

either predict some future event, or if they have no voice of their own, they serve to connect together other significant utterances.

95. Should the heretics reject our exposition of those allegorical narratives, or even insist on understanding them only in a literal sense, to dispute about such a difference of understanding would be as useless as to dispute about a difference of taste. Only, the fact that the divine precepts have either a moral and religious character or a prophetic meaning must be believed, whether intelligently or not. Moreover, the figurative interpretations must all be in the interest of morality and religion. So, if the Manichaeans or any others disagree with our interpretation, or differ from us in method or in any particular opinion, suffice it that the character of the fathers whom God commends for their conduct and obedience to His precepts is vindicated on a principle which all but those inveterate in their hostility will acknowledge to be true; and that the purity and dignity of the Scriptures are maintained in reference to those passages which the enemies of the truth find fault with, where certain actions are either praised or blamed, or merely narrated for us to form a judgment of them.

96. In fact, nothing could have been devised more likely to instruct and benefit the pious reader of sacred Scripture than that, besides describing praiseworthy characters as examples, and blameworthy characters as warnings, it should also narrate cases where good men have gone back and fallen into evil, whether they are restored to the right path or continue irreclaimable; and also where bad men have changed, and have attained to goodness, whether they persevere in it or relapse into evil; in order that the righteous may be not lifted up in the pride of security, nor the wicked hardened in despair of cure. And even those passages in Scripture which contain no examples or warnings are either required for connection, so as to pass on to essential matters, or, from their very appearance of superfluity, indicate the presence of some secret symbolical meaning. For in the books we speak of, so far from there being a want or a scarcity of prophetical announcements, such announcements are numerous and distinct; and now that the fulfillment has actually taken place, the testimony thus borne to the divine authority of the books is irresistibly strong, so that it is mere madness to suppose that there can be any useless or unmeaning passages in

books to which all classes of men and of minds do homage, and which themselves predict what we see thus actually coming to pass.

97. If, then, any one reading of the action of David, of which he repented when the Lord rebuked and threatened him, find in the narrative an encouragement to sin, is Scripture to be blamed for this? Is not the man's own guilt in proportion to the abuse which he makes for his own injury or destruction of what was written for his recovery and release? David is set forth as a great example of repentance, because men who fall into sin either proudly disregard the cure of repentance, or lose themselves in despair of obtaining salvation or of meriting pardon. The example is for the benefit of the sick, not for the injury of those in health. If madmen destroy themselves, or if evil-doers destroy others, with surgical instruments, it is not the fault of surgery.

98. Even supposing that our fathers the patriarchs and prophets, of whose devout and religious habits so good a report is given in that Scripture which every one who knows it, and has not lost entirely the use of his reason, must admit to have been provided by God for the salvation of men, were as lustful and cruel as the Manichaeans falsely and fanatically allege, they might still be shown to be superior not only to those whom the Manichaeans call the Elect, but also to their god himself. Is there in the licentious intercourse of man with woman anything so bad as the self-abasement of unclouded light by mixture with darkness? Here, is a man prompted by avarice and greed to pass off his wife as his sister and sell her to her lover; but worse still and more shocking, that one should disguise his own nature to gratify criminal passion, and submit gratuitously to pollution and degradation. Why, even one who knowingly lies with his own daughters is not equally criminal with one who lets his members share in the defilement of all sensuality as gross as this, or grosser. And is not the Manichaean god a partaker in the contamination of the most atrocious acts of uncleanness? Again, if it were true, as Faustus says, that Jacob went from one to another of his four wives, not desiring offspring, but resembling a he-goat in licentiousness, he would still not be sunk so low as your god, who must not only have shared in this degradation, from his being confined in the bodies of Jacob and his wives so as to be mixed up with all their

movements, but also, in union with this very he-goat of Faustus’ coarse comparison, must have endured all the pains of animal appetite, incurring fresh defilement at every step, as partaking in the passion of the male, the conception of the female, and the birth of the kid. And, in the same way, supposing Judah to have been guilty not only of fornication, but of incest, a share in the heats and impurities of this incestuous passion would also belong to your god. David repented of his sin in loving the wife of another, and in ordering the death of her husband; but when will your god repent of giving up his members to the wanton passion of the male and female chiefs of the race of darkness, and of putting to death not the husband of his mistress, but his own children, whom he confines in the members of the very demons who were his own lovers? Even if David had not repented, nor been thus restored to righteousness, he would still have been better than your god. David may have been defiled by this one act, or to the extent to which one man is capable of such defilement; but your god suffers the pollution of his members in all such actions by whomsoever committed. The prophet Hosea, too, is accused by Faustus: and, supposing him to have taken the harlot to wife because he had a criminal affection for her, if he is licentious and she a prostitute, their souls, according to your own assertion, are parts and members of your god and of his nature. In plain language, the harlot herself must be your god. You cannot pretend that your god is not confined in the contaminated body, or that he is only present, while preserving entire the purity of his own nature; and you acknowledge that the members of your god are so defiled as to require a special purification. This harlot, then, for whom you venture to find fault with the man of God, even if she had not been changed for the better by becoming a chaste wife, would still have been your god; at least you must admit her soul to have been a part, however small, of your god. But one single harlot is not so bad as your god, for he on account of his mixture with the race of darkness shares in every act of prostitution; and wherever such impurities are perpetrated, he goes through the corresponding experiences of abandonment, of release, and of confinement, and this from generation to generation, till this most corrupt part reaches its final state in the mass of darkness, like an irreclaimable harlot. Such are the evils and such the shameful abominations which your god could not ward off from his members, and to which he was brought irresistibly by his merciless enemy;

for only by the sacrifice of his own subjects, or rather his own parts, could he effect the destruction of his formidable assailant. Surely, there was nothing so bad as this in killing an Egyptian so as to preserve uninjured a fellow-countryman. Yet Faustus finds fault with this most absurdly, while with amazing infatuation he overlooks the case of his own god. Would it not have been better for him to have carried off the gold and silver vessels of the Egyptians, than to let his members be carried off by the race of darkness? And yet the worshippers of this unfortunate god find fault with the servant of our God for carrying on wars, in which he with his followers were always victorious, so that, under the leadership of Moses, the children of Israel carried captive their enemies, men and women, as your god would have done too, if he had been able. You profess to accuse Moses of doing wrong, while in fact you envy his success. There was no cruelty in punishing with the sword those who had sinned grievously against God. Indeed, Moses entreated pardon for this sin, even offering to bear himself in their stead the divine anger. But even had he been cruel instead of compassionate, he would still have been better than your god. For if any of his followers had been sent to break the force of the enemy and had been taken captive, he would never, if victorious, have condemned him when he had done no wrong, but acted in obedience to orders. And yet this is what your god is to do with the part of himself which is to be fastened in the mass of darkness, because it obeyed orders, and advanced at the risk of its own life in defence of his kingdom against the body of the enemy. But, says the Manichaean, this part, after mixture and combination with evil during the course of ages, has not been obedient. But why? If the obedience was voluntary, the guilt is real, and the punishment just. But from this it would follow that there is no nature opposed to sin; otherwise it would not sin voluntarily; and so the whole system of Manichaeism falls at once. If, again, this part suffers from the power of this enemy against whom it was sent, and is subdued by a force it was unable to resist, the punishment is unjust, and flagrantly cruel. The god who is defended on the plea of necessity is a fit object of worship to those who refuse to worship the one true God. Still, it must be allowed that, however debasing the worship of this god may be, the worshippers are so far better than their deity, that they have an existence, while he is nothing more than a fabulous invention. Proceed we now to the rest of Faustus’ vagaries.

BOOK XXIII

Faustus recurs to the genealogical difficulty and insists that even according to Matthew Jesus was not Son of God until His baptism. Augustin sets forth the Catholic view of the relation of the divine and the human in the person of Christ.

1. Faustus said: On one occasion, when addressing a large audience, I was asked by one of the crowd, Do you believe that Jesus was born of Mary? I replied, Which Jesus do you mean? for in the Hebrew it is the name of several people. One was the son of Nun, the follower of Moses; another was the son of Josedech the high priest; again, another is spoken of as the son of David; and another is the Son of God. Of which of these do you ask whether I believe him to have been born of Mary? His answer was, The Son of God, of course. On what evidence, said I, oral or written, am I to believe this? He replied, On the authority of Matthew. What, said I, did Matthew write? He replied, “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Matt. i. 1). Then said I, I was afraid you were going to say, The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and I was prepared to correct you. Now that you have quoted the verse accurately, you must nevertheless be advised to pay attention to the words. Matthew does not profess to give an account of the generation of the Son of God, but of the son of David.

2. I will, for the present, suppose that this person was right in saying that the son of David was born of Mary. It still remains true, that in this whole passage of the generation no mention is made of the Son of God till we come to the baptism; so that it is an injurious misrepresentation on your part to speak of this writer as making the Son of God the inmate of a womb. The writer, indeed, seems to cry out against such an idea, and in the very title of his book to clear himself of such blasphemy, asserting that the person whose birth he describes is the son of David, not the Son of God. And if you attend to the writer’s meaning and purpose, you will see that what he wishes us to believe of Jesus the Son of God is not so much that He was born of Mary, as that He became the Son of God by baptism at the river Jordan. He tells us that the person of whom he spoke at the outset as the son of David was baptized by John, and became the Son of God on this

particular occasion, when about thirty years old, according to Luke, when also the voice was heard saying to Him, “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee.” It appears from this, that what was born, as is supposed, of Mary thirty years before, was not the Son of God, but what was afterwards made so by baptism at Jordan, that is, the new man, the same as in us when we were converted from Gentile error, and believe in God. This doctrine may or may not agree with what you call the Catholic faith; at all events, it is what Matthew says, if Matthew is the real author. The words, Thou art my Son, this day I have begotten Thee, or, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, do not occur in connection with the story of Mary’s motherhood, but with the putting away of sin at Jordan. This is what is written; and if you believe this doctrine, you must be called a Matthaean, for you will no longer be a Catholic. The Catholic doctrine is well known; and it is as unlike Matthew’s representations as it is unlike the truth. In the words of your creed, you declare that you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was born of the Virgin Mary. According to you, therefore, the Son of God comes from Mary; according to Matthew, from the Jordan; while we believe Him to come from God. Thus the doctrine of Matthew, if we are right in assigning the authorship to him, is as different from yours as from ours; only we acknowledge that he is more cautious than you in ascribing the being born of a woman to the son of David, and not to the Son of God. As for you, your only alternative is to deny that those statements were made, as they appear to be, by Matthew, or to allow that you have abandoned the faith of the apostles.

3. For our part, while no one can alter our conviction that the Son of God comes from God, we might indulge a credulous disposition, to the extent of admitting the fiction, that Jesus became the Son of God at Jordan, but not that the Son of God was born of a woman. Then, again, the son said to have been born of Mary cannot properly be called the son of David, unless it is ascertained that he was begotten by Joseph. You say he was not, and therefore you must allow him not to have been the son of David, even though he were the son of Mary. The genealogy proceeds in the line of Hebrew fathers from Abraham to David, and from David to Joseph; and as we are told that Joseph was not the real father of Jesus, Jesus cannot be said to be the son of David. To begin with calling Jesus the son of David, and

then to go on to tell of his being born of Mary before the consummation of her marriage with Joseph, is pure madness. And if the son of Mary cannot be called the son of David, on account of his not being the son of Joseph, still less can the name be given to the Son of God.

4. Moreover, the Virgin herself appears to have belonged not to the tribe of Judah, to which the Jewish kings belonged, and which all agree was David's tribe, but to the priestly tribe of Levi. This appears from the fact that the Virgin's father Joachim was a priest; and his name does not occur in the genealogy. How, then, can Mary be brought within the pale of relationship to David, when she has neither father nor husband belonging to it? Consequently, Mary's son cannot possibly be the son of David, unless you can bring the mother into some connection with Joseph, so as to be either his wife or his daughter.

5. Augustin replied: The Catholic, which is also the apostolic, doctrine, is, that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is both the Son of God in His divine nature, and the Son of David after the flesh. This we prove from the writings of the evangelists and apostles, so that no one can reject our proofs without also rejecting these writings. Faustus' plan is to represent some one as saying a few words, without bringing forward any evidence in answer to Faustus' fertile sophistry. But with all his ingenuity, the proofs I have to give will leave Faustus no reply, but that these passages are spurious interpolations in the sacred record,—a reply which serves as a means of escaping, or of trying to escape, the force of the plainest statements in Holy Scripture. We have already in this treatise sufficiently exposed the irrational absurdity, as well as the daring profanity, of such criticism; and not to exceed all limits, we must avoid repetition. It cannot be necessary that we should bring together all the passages scattered throughout Scripture, which show, in answer to Faustus, that in the books of the highest and most sacred authority He who is called the only-begotten Son of God, even God with God, is also called the Son of David, on account of His taking the form of a servant from the Virgin Mary, the wife of Joseph. To instance only Matthew, since Faustus' argument refers to this Gospel, as the whole book cannot be quoted here, let whoever choose read it, and see how Matthew carries on to the passion and the resurrection the narrative of Him whom He

calls the Son of David in the introduction to the genealogy. Of this same Son of David he speaks as being conceived and born of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost. He also applies to this the declaration of the prophet, “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which is being interpreted, God with us.” Again, He who was called, even from the Virgin’s womb, God-with-us, is said to have heard, when He was baptized by John, a voice from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Will Faustus say that to be called God is less than to be called the Son of God? He seems to think so, for he tries to prove that because this voice came from heaven at the time of the baptism, therefore, according to Matthew, He must then have become the Son of God; whereas the same evangelist, in a previous passage, quotes the sacred announcement made by the prophet, in which the child born of the Virgin is called God-with-us.

6. It is remarkable how, amid his wild irrelevancies, this wretched trifler loses no available opportunity of darkening the declarations of Scripture by the fabulous creations of his own fancy. Thus he says of Abraham, that when he took his handmaid to wife he disbelieved God’s promise that he should have a child by Sarah; whereas, in fact, this promise had not at that time been given. Then he accuses Abraham of falsehood in calling Sarah his sister, not having read what may be learned on the authority of Scripture about the family of Sarah. Abraham’s son Isaac also he accuses of falsely calling his wife his sister, though a distinct account is given of her family. Then he accuses Jacob of there being a daily quarrel among his four wives, which should be the first to appropriate him on his return from the field, while nothing of this is said in Scripture. And this is the man who pretends to hate the writers of the sacred books for their falsehood, and who has the effrontery so to misrepresent even the gospel record, though its authority is admitted by all as possessing the most abundant confirmation, as to try to make it appear, not indeed that Matthew himself,—for in that case he would have been forced to yield to apostolic authority,—but that some one under the name of Matthew, has written about Christ what he refuses to believe, and attempts to refute with a contumelious ingenuity!

7. The voice from heaven at the Jordan should be compared with the voice heard on the Mount. In neither case do the words, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” imply that He was not the Son of God before; for He who from the Virgin’s womb took the form of a servant “was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God.” And the same Apostle Paul himself says distinctly elsewhere, “But in the fullness of time, God sent His Son, made of a woman, made under the law;” that is, a woman in the Hebrew sense, not a wife, but one of the female sex. The Son of God is both Lord of David in His divine nature, and Son of David as being of the seed of David after the flesh. And if it were not profitable for us to believe this, the same apostle would not have made it so prominent as he does, when he says to Timothy, “Remember that Christ Jesus, of the seed of David, rose from the dead, according to my gospel.” And he carefully enjoins believers to regard as accursed whoever preaches another gospel contrary to this.

8. This assailant of the holy Gospel need find no difficulty in the fact that Christ is called the Son of David, though He was born of a virgin, and though Joseph was not His real father; while the genealogy is brought down by the evangelist Matthew, not to Mary, but to Joseph. First of all, the husband, as the man, is the more honorable; and Joseph was Mary’s husband, though she did not live with him, for Matthew himself mentions that she was called Joseph’s wife by the angel; as it is also from Matthew that we learn that Mary conceived not by Joseph, but by the Holy Spirit. But if this, instead of being a true narrative written by Matthew the apostle, was a false narrative written by some one else under his name, is it likely that he would have contradicted himself in such an apparent manner, and in passages so immediately connected, as to speak of the Son of David as born of Mary without conjugal intercourse, and then, in giving His genealogy, to bring it down to the very man with whom the Virgin is expressly said not to have had intercourse, unless he had some reason for doing so? Even supposing there were two writers, one calling Christ the Son of David, and giving an account of Christ’s progenitors from David down to Joseph; while the other does not call Christ the Son of David, and says that He was born of the Virgin Mary without intercourse with any man; those statements are not irreconcilable, so as to prove that one or both writers must be false. It

will appear on reflection that both accounts might be true; for Joseph might be called the husband of Mary, though she was his wife only in affection, and in the intercourse of the mind, which is more intimate than that of the body. In this way it might be proper that the husband of the virgin-mother of Christ should have a place in the list of Christ's ancestors. It might also be the case that some of David's blood flowed in Mary herself, so that the flesh of Christ, although produced from a virgin, still owed its origin to David's seed. But as, in fact, both statements are made by one and the same writer, who informs us both that Joseph was the husband of Mary and that the mother of Christ was a virgin, and that Christ was of the seed of David, and that Joseph is in the list of Christ's progenitors in the line of David, those who prefer the authority of the sacred Gospel to that of heretical fiction must conclude that Mary was not unconnected with the family of David, and that she was properly called the wife of Joseph, because being a woman she was in spiritual alliance with him, though there was no bodily connection. Joseph, too, it is plain, could not be omitted in the genealogy; for, from the superiority of his sex, such an omission would be equivalent to a denial of his relation to the woman with whom he was inwardly united; and believers in Christ are taught not to think carnal connection the chief thing in marriage, as if without this they could not be man and wife, but to imitate in Christian wedlock as closely as possible the parents of Christ, that so they may have the more intimate union with the members of Christ.

9. We believe that Mary, as well as Joseph, was of the family of David, because we believe the Scriptures, which assert both that Christ was of the seed of David after the flesh, and that His mother was the Virgin Mary, He having no human father. Therefore, whoever denies the relationship of Mary to David, evidently opposes the pre-eminent authority of these passages of Scripture; and to maintain this opposition he must bring evidence in support of his statement from writings acknowledged by the Church as canonical and catholic, not from any writings he pleases. In the matters of which we are now treating, only the canonical writings have any weight with us; for they only are received and acknowledged by the Church spread over all the world, which is itself a fulfillment of the prophecies regarding it contained in these writings. Accordingly, I am not bound to admit the uncanonical account of Mary's birth which Faustus adopts, that

her father was a priest of the tribe of Levi, of the name of Joachim. But even were I to admit this account, I should still contend that Joachim must have in some way belonged to the family of David, and had somehow been adopted from the tribe of Judah into that of Levi; or if not he, one of his ancestors; or, at least, that while born in the tribe of Levi, he had still some relation to the line of David; as Faustus himself acknowledges that Mary, though belonging to the tribe of Levi, could be given to a husband of the tribe of Judah; and he expressly says that if Mary were Joseph's daughter, the name Son of David would be applicable to Christ. In this way, by the marriage of Joseph's daughter in the tribe of Levi, her son, though born in the tribe of Levi, might not improperly be called the Son of David. And so, if the mother of that Joachim, who in the passage quoted by Faustus is called the father of Mary, married in the tribe of Levi while she belonged to the tribe of Judah and to the family of David, there would thus be a sufficient reason for speaking of Joachim and Mary and Mary's son as belonging to the seed of David. If I felt obliged to pay any regard to the apocryphal scripture in which Joachim is called the father of Mary, I should adopt some such explanation as the above, rather than admit any falsehood in the Gospel, where it is written both that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and our Saviour, was of the seed of David after the flesh, and that He was born of the Virgin Mary. It is enough for us that the enemies of these Scriptures, which record these truths and which we believe, cannot prove against them any charge of falsehood.

10. Faustus cannot pretend then I am unable to prove that Mary was of the family of David, as I have shown him unable to prove that she was not. I produce the strongest evidence from Scriptures of established authority, which declare that Christ was of the seed of David, and that He was born without a father of the Virgin Mary. Faustus expresses what he considers a most becoming indignation against impropriety when he says, It is an injurious misrepresentation of the writer to make him speak of the Son of God as the inmate of a womb. Of course, the Catholic doctrine which teaches that Christ the Son of God was born in the flesh of a virgin, does not make the Son of God the inmate of her womb in the sense of having no existence beyond it, as if He had abandoned the government of heaven and earth, or as if He had left the presence of the Father. The mistake is with the

Manichaeans, whose understanding is so incapable of forming a conception of anything except what is material, that they cannot comprehend how the Word of God, who is the virtue and wisdom of God, while remaining in Himself and with the Father, and while governing the universe, reaches from end to end in strength, and sweetly orders all things. In the faultless procedure of this adorable providence, He appointed for Himself an earthly mother; and to free His servants from the bondage of corruption He took in this mother the form of a servant, that is, a mortal body; and this body which He took He showed openly, and when it had been exposed, even to suffering and death, He raised it again from the dead, and built again the temple which had been destroyed. You who shrink from this doctrine as blasphemous, make the members of your god to be confined not in a virgin's womb, but in the wombs of all female animals, from elephants down to flies. Perhaps you think the less of the true Christ, because the Word is said so to have become incarnate in the Virgin's womb as to provide a temple for Himself in human nature, while His own nature continued unaltered in its integrity; and, on the other hand, you think the more of your god, because in the bonds and pollution of his confinement in flesh, in the part which is to be made fast to the mass of darkness, he seeks for help to no purpose, or is even rendered powerless to ask for help.

BOOK XXIV

Faustus explains the Manichaean denial that man was made by God as applying to the fleshly man not to the spiritual. Augustin elucidates the Apostle Paul's contrasts between flesh and spirit so as to exclude the Manichaean view.

1. Faustus said: We are asked the reason for our denial that man is made by God. But we do not assert that man is in no sense made by God; we only ask in what sense, and when, and how. For, according to the apostle, there are two men, one of whom he calls sometimes the outer man, generally the earthy, sometimes, too, the old man: the other he calls the inner or heavenly or new man. The question is, Which of these is made by God? For there are likewise two times of our nativity; one when nature brought us forth into this light, binding us in the bonds of flesh; and the other, when the truth regenerated us on our conversion from error and our entrance into the faith.

It is this second birth of which Jesus speaks in the Gospel, when He says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus, not knowing what Christ meant, was at a loss, and inquired how this could be, for an old man could not enter into his mother's womb and be born a second time. Jesus said in reply, "Except a man be born of water and of the Holy Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Then He adds, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Hence, as the birth in which our bodies originate is not the only birth, but there is another in which we are born again in spirit, an important question arises from this distinction as to which of those births it is in which God makes us. The manner of birth also is twofold. In the humiliating process of ordinary generation, we spring from the heat of animal passion; but when we are brought into the faith, we are formed under good instruction in honor and purity in Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit. For this reason, in all religion, and especially in the Christian religion, young children are invited to membership. This is hinted at in the words of His apostle: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." The question, then, is not whether God makes man, but what man He makes, and when, and how. For if it is when we are fashioned in the womb that God forms us after His own image, which is the common belief of Gentiles and Jews, and which is also your belief, then God makes the old man, and produces us by means of sensual passion, which does not seem suitable to His divine nature. But if it is when we are converted and brought to a better life that we are formed by God, which is the general doctrine of Christ and His apostles, and which is also our doctrine, in this case God makes us new men, and produces us in honor and purity, which would agree perfectly with His sacred and adorable majesty. If you do not reject Paul's authority, we will prove to you from him what man God makes, and when, and how. He says to the Ephesians, "That ye put off according to your former conversation the old man, which is corrupt through deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of truth." This shows that in the creation of man after the image of God, it is another man that is spoken of, and another birth, and another manner of birth. The putting off and putting on of which he speaks, point to the time of the reception of the truth; and the assertion that the new man is created by God implies that the old man is created neither by God nor after God. And when he adds, that this new man is made in holiness and righteousness and truth, he thus points to another manner of birth of which this is the character, and which, as I have said, differs widely from the manner in which bodily generation is effected. And as he declares that only the former is of God, it follows that the latter is not. Again, writing to the Colossians, he uses words to the same effect: “Put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in the knowledge of God according to the image of Him who created Him in you.” Here he not only shows that it is the new man that God makes, but he declares the time and manner of the formation, for the words in the knowledge of God point to the time of believing. Then he adds, according to the image of Him who created him, to make it clear that the old man is not the image of God, nor formed by God. Moreover, the following words, “Where there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, Barbarian nor Scythian,” show more plainly still that the birth by which we are made male and female, Greeks and Jews, Scythians and Barbarians, is not the birth in which God effects the formation of man; but that the birth with which God has to do is that in which we lose the difference of nation and sex and condition, and become one like Him who is one, that is, Christ. So the same apostle says again, “As many as have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ: there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither male nor female, there is neither bond nor free; but all are one in Christ.” Man, then, is made by God, not when from one he is divided into many, but when from many he becomes one. The division is in the first birth, or that of the body; union comes by the second, which is immaterial and divine. This affords sufficient ground for our opinion, that the birth of the body should be ascribed to nature, and the second birth to the Supernal Majesty. So the same apostle says again to the Corinthians, “I have begotten you in Christ Jesus by the gospel;” and, speaking of himself, to the Galatians, “When it pleased Him, who separated me from my mother’s womb, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.” It is plain that everywhere he speaks of the second or spiritual birth as that in which we are made by God, as distinct from the indecency of the first birth, in which we are on a level with other animals as regards dignity and purity, as we are conceived in the maternal womb, and are formed, and brought forth. You may observe that in this matter the dispute between us is not so much about a question of doctrine as of interpretation. For you think that it is the old or outer or earthy man that is said to have been made by God; while we apply this to the heavenly man, giving the superiority to the inner or new man. And our opinion is not rash or groundless, for we have learned it from Christ and His apostles, who are proved to have been the first in the world who thus taught.

2. Augustin replied: The Apostle Paul certainly uses the expression the inner man for the spirit of the mind, and the outer man for the body and for this mortal life; but we nowhere find him making these two different men, but one, which is all made by God, both the inner and the outer. However, it is made in the image of God only as regards the inner, which, besides being immaterial, is rational, and is not possessed by the lower animals. God, then, did not make one man after His own image, and another man not after that image; but the one man, which includes both the inner and the outer, He made after His own image, not as regards the possession of a body and of mortal life, but as regards the rational mind with the power of knowing God, and with the superiority as compared with all irrational creatures which the possession of reason implies. Faustus allows that the inner man is made by God, when, as he says, it is renewed in the knowledge of God after the image of Him that created him. I readily admit this on the apostle’s authority. Why does not Faustus admit on the same authority that “God has placed the members every one in the body, as it has pleased Him”? Here we learn from the same apostle that God is the framer of the outer man too. Why does Faustus take only what he thinks to be in his own favor, while he leaves out or rejects what upsets the follies of the Manichaeans? Moreover, in treating of the earthy and the heavenly man, and making the distinction between the mortal and the immortal, between that which we are in Adam and that which we shall be in Christ, the apostle quotes the declaration of the law regarding the earthy or natural body, referring to the very book and the very passage where it is written that God made the earthy man too. Speaking of the manner in which the dead shall rise again, and of the body with which they shall come, after using the similitude of the seeds of corn, that they are sown bare grain, and that God gives them a body as it pleases Him, and to every seed his own body,—thus, by the way, overthrowing the

error of the Manichaeans, who say that grains and plants, and all roots and shoots, are created by the race of darkness, and not by God, who, according to them, instead of exerting power in the production of these objects, is Himself subject to confinement in them,—he goes on, after this refutation of Manichaean impieties, to describe the different kinds of flesh. “All flesh,” he says, “is not the same flesh.” Then he speaks of celestial and terrestrial bodies, and then of the change of our body by which it will become spiritual and heavenly. “It is sown,” he says, “in dishonor, it shall rise in glory; it is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power; it is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body.” Then, in order to show the origin of the animal body, he says, “There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body; as it is written, The first man, Adam, was made a living soul.” Now this is written in Genesis, where it is related how God made man, and animated the body which He had formed of the earth. By the old man the apostle simply means the old life, which is a life in sin, and is after the manner of Adam, of whom it is said, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in that all have sinned.” Thus the whole of this man, both the inner and the outer part, has become old because of sin, and liable to the punishment of mortality. There is, however, a restoration of the inner man, when it is renewed after the image of its Creator, in the putting off of unrighteousness—that is, the old man, and putting on righteousness—that is, the new man. But when that which is sown a natural body shall rise a spiritual body, the outer man too shall attain the dignity of a celestial character; so that all that has been created may be created anew, and all that has been made be remade by the Creator and Maker Himself. This is briefly explained in the words: “The body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead will also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit dwelling in you.” No one instructed in the Catholic doctrine but knows that it is in the body that some are male and some female, not in the spirit of the mind, in which we are renewed after the image of God. But elsewhere the apostle teaches that God is the Maker of both; for he says, “Neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman, in the Lord; for as the woman is of the man, so is the man by the woman; but all things are of God.” The only reply given to this, by the perverse stupidity of those who are alienated from the life of God by the ignorance which is in them, on account of the blindness of their heart, is, that whatever pleases them in the apostolic writings is true, and whatever displeases them is false. This is the insanity of the Manichaeans, who will be wise if they cease to be Manichaeans. As it is, if they are asked whether it is He that remakes and renews the inner man (which they acknowledge to be renewed after the image of God, and they themselves quote the passage in support of this; and, according to Faustus, God makes man when the inner man is renewed in the image of God), they will answer, yes. And if we then go on to ask when God made what He now renews, they must devise some subterfuge to prevent the exposure of their absurdities. For, according to them, the inner man is not formed or created or originated by God, but is part of His own substance sent against His enemies; and instead of becoming old by sin, it is through necessity captured and damaged by the enemy. Not to repeat all the nonsense they talk, the first man they speak of is not the man of the earth earthy that the apostle speaks of, but an invention proceeding from their own magazine of untruths. Faustus, though he chooses man as a subject for discussion, says not a word of this first man; for he is afraid that his opponents in the discussion might come to know something about him.

BOOK XXV

Faustus seeks to bring into ridicule the orthodox claim to believe in the infinity of God by caricaturing the anthropomorphic representations of the Old Testament. Augustin expresses his despair of being able to induce the Manichaeans to adopt right views of the infinitude of God so long as they continue to regard the soul and God as extended in space.

1. Faustus said: Is God finite or infinite? He must be finite unless you are mistaken in addressing Him as the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob; unless, indeed, the being thus addressed is different from the God you call infinite. In the case of the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the mark of circumcision, which separated these men from fellowship with other people, marked also the limit of God’s power as extending only to them. And a being whose power is finite cannot himself be infinite. Moreover, in this address, you do not mention even the ancients before Abraham, such as

Enoch, Noah, and Shem, and others like them, whom you allow to have been righteous though in uncircumcision; but because they lacked this distinguishing mark, you will not call God their God, but only of Abraham and his seed. Now, if God is one and infinite, what need of such careful particularity in addressing Him, as if it was not enough to name God, without adding whose God He is—Abraham's, namely, and Isaac's and Jacob's; as if Abraham were a landmark to steer by in your invocation, to escape shipwreck among a shoal of deities? The Jews, who are circumcised, may very properly address this deity, as having a reason for it, because they call God the God of circumcision, in contrast to the gods of uncircumcision. But why you should do the same, it is difficult to understand; for you do not pretend to have Abraham's sign, though you invoke his God. If we understand the matter rightly, the Jews and their God seem to have set marks upon one another for the purpose of recognition, that they might not lose each other. So God gave them the disgusting mark of circumcision, that, in whatever land or among whatever people they might be, they might by being circumcised be known to be His. They again marked God by calling Him the God of their fathers, that, wherever He might be, though among a crowd of gods, He might, on hearing the name God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, know at once that He was addressed. So we often see, in a number of people of the same name, that no one answers till called by his surname. In the same way the shepherd or herdsman makes use of a brand to prevent his property being taken by others. In thus marking God by calling Him the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, you show not only that He is finite, but also that you have no connection with Him, because you have not the mark of circumcision by which He recognizes His own. Therefore, if this is the God you worship, there can be no doubt of His being finite. But if you say that God is infinite, you must first of all give up this finite deity, and by altering your invocation, show your penitence for your past errors. We have thus proved God to be finite, taking you on your own ground. But to determine whether the supreme and true God is infinite or not, we need only refer to the opposition between good and evil. If evil does not exist, then certainly God is infinite; otherwise He must be finite. Evil, however, undoubtedly exists; therefore God is not infinite. It is where good stops that evil begins.

2. Augustin replied: No one that knows you would dream of asking you about the infinitude of God, or of discussing the matter with you. For, before there can be any degree of spirituality in any of your conceptions, you must first have your minds cleared by simple faith, and by some elementary knowledge, from the illusions of carnal and material ideas. This your heresy prevents you from doing, for it invariably represents the body and the soul and God as extended in space, either finite or infinite, while the idea of space is applicable only to the body. As long as this is the case, it will be better for you to leave this matter alone; for you can teach no truth regarding it, any more than in other matters; and in this you are unfit for learning, as you might do in other things, if you were not proud and quarrelsome. For in such questions as how God can be finite, when no space can contain Him; how He can be infinite, when the Son knows Him perfectly; how He can be finite, and yet unbounded; how He can be infinite, and yet perfect; how He can be finite, who is without measure; how He can be infinite, who is the measure of all things—all carnal ideas go for nothing; and if the carnality is to be removed, it must first become ashamed of itself. Accordingly, your best way of ending the matter you have brought forward of God as finite or infinite, is to say no more about it till you cease going so far astray from Christ, who is the end of the law. Of the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob we have already said enough to show why He who is the true God of all creatures wished to be familiarly known by His people under this name. On circumcision, too, we have already spoken in several places in answer to ignorant reproaches. The Manichaeans would find nothing to ridicule in this sign if they would view it as appointed by God, to be an appropriate symbol of the putting off of the flesh. They ought thus to consider the rite with a Christian instead of a heretical mind; as it is written, “To the pure all things are pure.” But, considering the truth of the following words, “To the unclean and unbelieving nothing is pure, but even their mind and conscience are defiled,” we must remind our witty opponents, that if circumcision is indecent, as they say it is, they should rather weep than laugh at it; for their god is exposed to restraint and contamination in conjunction both with the skin which is cut and with the blood which is shed.

BOOK XXVI

Faustus insists that Jesus might have died though not born, by the exercise of divine power, yet he rejects birth and death alike. Augustin maintains that there are some things that even God cannot do, one of which is to die. He refutes the docetism of the Manichaeans.

1. Faustus said: You ask, If Jesus was not born, how did He die? Well this is a probability, such as one makes use of in want of proofs. We will, however, answer the question by examples taken from what you generally believe. If they are true, they will prove our case; if they are false, they will help you no more than they will us. You say then, How could Jesus die, if He were not man? In return, I ask you, How did Elias not die, though he was a man? Could a mortal encroach upon the limits of immortality, and could not Christ add to His immortality whatever experience of death was required? If Elias, contrary to nature, lives for ever, why not allow that Jesus, with no greater contrariety to nature, could remain in death for three days? Besides that, it is not only Elias, but Moses and Enoch you believe to be immortal, and to have been taken up with their bodies to heaven. Accordingly, if it is a good argument that Jesus was a man because He died, it is an equally good argument that Elias was not a man because he did not die. But as it is false that Elias was not a man, notwithstanding his supposed immortality, so it is false that Jesus was a man, though He is considered to have died. The truth is, if you will believe it, that the Hebrews were in a mistake regarding both the death of Jesus and the immortality of Elias. For it is equally untrue that Jesus died and that Elias did not die. But you believe whatever you please; and for the rest, you appeal to nature. And, allowing this appeal, nature is against both the death of the immortal and the immortality of the mortal. And if we refer to the power of effecting their purpose as possessed by God and by man, it seems more possible for Jesus to die than for Elias not to die; for the power of Jesus is greater than that of Elias. But if you exalt the weaker to heaven, though nature is against it, and, forgetting his condition as a mortal, endow him with eternal felicity, why should I not admit that Jesus could die if He pleased, even though I were to grant His death to have been real, and not a mere semblance? For, as from the outset of His taking the likeness of man He underwent in appearance all the experiences of humanity, it was quite consistent that He should complete the system by appearing to die.

2. Moreover, it is to be remembered that this reference to what nature grants as possible, should be made in connection with all the history of Jesus, and not only with His death. According to nature, it is impossible that a man blind from his birth should see the light; and yet Jesus appears to have performed a miracle of this kind, so that the Jews themselves exclaimed that from the beginning of the world it was not seen that one opened the eyes of a man born blind. So also healing a withered hand, giving the power of utterance and expression to those born dumb, restoring animation to the dead, with the recovery of their bodily frame after dissolution had begun, produce a feeling of amazement, and must seem utterly incredible in view of what is naturally possible and impossible. And yet, as Christians, we believe all the things to have been done by the same person; for we regard not the law of nature, but the powerful operation of God. There is a story, too, of Jesus having been cast from the brow of a hill, and having escaped unhurt. If, then, when thrown down from a height He did not die, simply because He chose not to die, why should He not have had the power to die when He pleased? We take this way of answering you because you have a fancy for discussion, and affect to use logical weapons not properly belonging to you. As regards our own belief, it is no more true that Jesus died than that Elias is immortal.

3. Augustin replied: As to Enoch and Elias and Moses, our belief is determined not by Faustus' suppositions, but by the declarations of Scripture, resting as they do on foundations of the strongest and surest evidence. People in error, as you are, are unfit to decide what is natural, and what contrary to nature. We admit that what is contrary to the ordinary course of human experience is commonly spoken of as contrary to nature. Thus the apostle uses the words, "If thou art cut out of the wild olive, and engrafted contrary to nature in the good olive." Contrary to nature is here used in the sense of contrary to human experience of the course of nature; as that a wild olive engrafted in a good olive should bring forth the fatness of the olive instead of wild berries. But God, the Author and Creator of all natures, does nothing contrary to nature; for whatever is done by Him who appoints all natural order and measure and proportion must be natural in every case. And man himself acts contrary to nature only when he sins; and then by punishment he is brought back to nature again. The natural order of

justice requires either that sin should not be committed or that it should not go unpunished. In either case, the natural order is preserved, if not by the soul, at least by God. For sin pains the conscience, and brings grief on the mind of the sinner, by the loss of the light of justice, even should no physical sufferings follow, which are inflicted for correction, or are reserved for the incorrigible. There is, however, no impropriety in saying that God does a thing contrary to nature, when it is contrary to what we know of nature. For we give the name nature to the usual common course of nature; and whatever God does contrary to this, we call a prodigy, or a miracle. But against the supreme law of nature, which is beyond the knowledge both of the ungodly and of weak believers, God never acts, any more than He acts against Himself. As regards spiritual and rational beings, to which class the human soul belongs, the more they partake of this unchangeable law and light, the more clearly they see what is possible, and what impossible; and again, the greater their distance from it, the less their perception of the future, and the more frequent their surprise at strange occurrences.

4. Thus of what happened to Elias we are ignorant; but still we believe the truthful declarations of Scripture regarding him. Of one thing we are certain, that what God willed happened, and that except by God’s will nothing can happen to any one. So, if I am told that it is possible that the flesh of a certain man shall be changed into a celestial body, I allow the possibility, but I cannot tell whether it will be done; and the reason of my ignorance is, that I am not acquainted with the will of God in the matter. That it will be done if it is God’s will, is perfectly clear and indubitable. Again, if I am told that something would happen if God did not prevent it from happening, I reply confidently that what is to happen is the action of God, not the event which might otherwise have happened. For God knows His own future action, and therefore He knows also the effect of that action in preventing the happening of what would otherwise have happened; and, beyond all question, what God knows is more certain than what man thinks. Hence it is as impossible for what is future not to happen, as for what is past not to have happened; for it can never be God’s will that anything should, in the same sense, be both true and false. Therefore all that is properly future cannot but happen; what does not happen never was future; even as all things which are properly in the past did indubitably take place.

5. Accordingly, to say, if God is almighty, let Him make what has been done to be undone, is in fact to say, if God is almighty, let Him make a thing to be in the same sense both true and false. God can put an end to the existence of anything, when the thing to be put an end to has a present existence; as when He puts an end by death to the existence of any one who has been brought into existence in birth; for in this case there is an actual existence which may be put a stop to. But when a thing does not exist, the existence cannot be put a stop to. Now, what is past no longer exists and whatever has an existence which can be put an end to cannot be past. What is truly past is no longer present; and the truth of its past existence is in our judgment, not in the thing itself which no longer exists. The proposition asserting anything to be past is true when the thing no longer exists. God cannot make such a proposition false, because He cannot contradict the truth. The truth in this case, or the true judgment, is first of all in our own mind, when we know and give expression to it. But should it disappear from our minds by our forgetting it, it would still remain as truth. It will always be true that the past thing which is no longer present had an existence; and the truth of its past existence after it has stopped is the same as the truth of its future existence before it began to be. This truth cannot be contradicted by God, in whom abides the supreme and unchangeable truth, and whose illumination is the source of all the truth to be found in any mind or understanding. Now God is not omnipotent in the sense of being able to die; nor does this inability prevent His being omnipotent. True omnipotence belongs to Him who truly exists, and who alone is the source of all existence, both spiritual and corporeal. The Creator makes what use He pleases of all His creatures; and His pleasure is in harmony with true and unchangeable justice, by which, as by His own nature, He, Himself unchangeable, brings to pass the changes of all changeable things according to the desert of their natures or of their actions. No one, therefore, would be so foolish as to deny that Elias being a creature of God could be changed either for the worse or for the better; or that by the will of the omnipotent God he could be changed in a manner unusual among men. So we can have no reason for doubting what on the high authority of Scripture is related of him, unless we limit the power of God to things which we are familiar with.

6. Faustus' argument is, If Elias who was a man could escape death, why might not Christ have the power of dying, since He was more than man? This is the same as to say, If human nature can be changed for the better, why should not the divine nature be changed for the worse?—a weak argument, seeing that human nature is changeable, while the divine nature is not. Such a method of inference would lead to the glaring absurdity, that if God can bestow eternal glory on man, He must also have the power of consigning Himself to eternal misery. Faustus will reply that his argument refers only to three days of death for God, as compared with eternal life for man. Well, if you understood the three days of death in the sense of the death of the flesh which God took as a part of our mortal nature, you would be quite correct; for the truth of the gospel makes known that the death of Christ for three days was for the eternal life of men. But in arguing that there is no impropriety in asserting a death of three days of the divine nature itself, without any assumption of mortality, because human nature can be endowed with immortality, you display the folly of one who knows neither God nor the gifts of God. And indeed, since you make part of your god to be fastened to the mass of darkness for ever, how can you escape the absurd conclusion already mentioned, that God consigns Himself to eternal misery? You will then require to prove that part of light is light, while part of God is not God. To give you in a word, without argument, the true reason of our faith, as regards Elias having been caught up to heaven from the earth, though only a man, and as regards Christ being truly born of a virgin, and truly dying on the cross, our belief in both cases is grounded on the declaration of Holy Scripture, which it is piety to believe, and impiety to disbelieve. What is said of Elias you pretend to deny, for you will pretend anything. Regarding Christ, although even you do not go the length of saying that He could not die, though He could be born, still you deny His birth from a virgin, and assert His death on the cross to have been feigned, which is equivalent to denying it too, except as a mockery for the delusion of men; and you allow so much merely to obtain indulgence for your own falsehoods from the believers in these fictions.

7. The question which Faustus makes it appear that he is asked by a Catholic, If Jesus was not born, how could He die? could be asked only by one who overlooked the fact that Adam died, though he was not born. Who

will venture to say that the Son of God could not, if He had pleased, have made for Himself a true human body in the same way as He did for Adam; for all things were made by Him? or who will deny that He who is the Almighty Son of the Almighty could, if He had chosen, have taken a body from a heavenly substance, or from air or vapor, and have so changed it into the precise character of a human body, as that He might have lived as a man, and have died in it? Or, once more, if He had chosen to take a body of none of the material substances which He had made, but to create for Himself from nothing real flesh, as all things were created by Him from nothing, none of us will oppose this by saying that He could not have done it. The reason of our believing Him to have been born of the Virgin Mary, is not that He could not otherwise have appeared among men in a true body, but because it is so written in the Scripture, which we must believe in order to be Christians, or to be saved. We believe, then, that Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, because it is so written in the Gospel; we believe that He died on the cross, because it is so written in the Gospel; we believe that both His birth and death were real, because the Gospel is no fiction. Why He chose to suffer all these things in a body taken from a woman is a matter known only to Himself. Perhaps He took this way of giving importance and honor to both the sexes which He had created, taking the form of a man, and being born of a woman; or there may have been some other reason, we cannot tell. But this may be confidently affirmed, that what took place was exactly as we are told in the Gospel narrative, and that what the wisdom of God determined upon was exactly what ought to have happened. We place the authority of the Gospel above all heretical discussions; and we admire the counsel of divine wisdom more than any counsel of any creature.

8. Faustus calls upon us to believe him, and says, The truth is, if you will believe it, that the Hebrews were in a mistake regarding both the death of Jesus and the immortality of Elias. And a little after he adds, As from the outset of His taking the likeness of man He underwent in appearance all the experiences of humanity, it was quite consistent that He should seal the dispensation by appearing to die. How can this infamous liar, who declares that Christ feigned death, expect to be believed? Did Christ utter falsehood when He said, “It behoves the Son of man to be killed, and to rise the third day?” And do you tell us to believe what you say, as if you utter no

falsehoods? In that case, Peter was more truthful than Christ when he said to Him, “Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee;” for which it was said to him, “Get thee behind me, Satan.” This rebuke was not lost upon Peter, for, after his correction and full preparation, he preached even to his own death the truth of the death of Christ. But if Peter deserved to be called Satan for thinking that Christ would not die, what should you be called, when you not only deny that Christ died, but assert that He feigned death? You give, as a reason for Christ’s appearing to die, that He underwent in appearance all the experiences of humanity. But that He feigned all the experiences of humanity is only your opinion in opposition to the Gospel. In reality, when the evangelist says that Jesus slept, that He was hungry, that He was thirsty, that He was sorrowful, or glad, and so on,—these things are all true in the senseof not being feigned, but actual experiences; only that they were undergone, not from a mere natural necessity, but in the exercise of a controlling will, and of divine power. In the case of a man, anger, sorrow, sleeping, being hungry and thirsty, are often involuntary; in Christ they were acts of His own will. So also men are born without any act of their own will, and suffer against their will; while Christ was born and suffered by His own will. Still, the things are true; and the accurate narrative of them is intended to instruct whoever believes in Christ’s gospel in the truth, not to delude him with falsehoods.

BOOK XXVII

Faustus warns against pressing too far the argument, that if Jesus was not born He cannot have suffered. Augustin accepts the birth and death alike on the testimony of the Gospel narrative, which is higher authority than the falsehood of Manichaeus.

1. Faustus said: If Jesus was not born, He cannot have suffered; but since He did suffer, He must have been born. I advise you not to have recourse to logical inference in these matters, or else your whole faith will be shaken. For, even according to you, Jesus was born miraculously of a virgin; which the argument from consequents to antecedents shows to be false. For your argument might thus be turned against you: If Jesus was born of a woman, He must have been begotten by a man; but He was not begotten by a man, therefore He was not born of a woman. If, as you believe, He could be born

without being begotten, why could He not also suffer without being brought forth?

2. Augustin replied: The argument which you here reply to is one which could be used only by such ignorant people as you succeed in misleading, not by those who know enough to refute you. Jesus could both be born without being begotten and suffer without being brought forth. His being one and not the other was the effect of His own will. He chose to be born without being begotten, and not to suffer without being brought forth. And if you ask how I know that He was brought forth, and that He suffered, I read this in the faithful Gospel narrative. If I ask how you know what you state, you bring forward the authority of Manichaeus, and charge the Gospel with falsehood. Even if Manichaeus did not set forth falsehood as an excellence in Christ, I should not believe his statements. His praise of falsehood comes from nothing that he found in Christ, but from his own moral character.

BOOK XXVIII

Faustus recurs to the genealogy and insists upon examining it as regards its consistency with itself. Augustin takes his stand on Scripture authority and maintains that Matthew’s statements as to the birth of Christ must be accepted as final.

1. Faustus said: Christ, you say, could not have died, had He not been born. I reply, If He was born, He cannot have been God; or if He could both be God and be born, why could He not both be born and die? Plainly, arguments and necessary consequences are not applicable to those matters, where the question is of the account to be given of Jesus. The answer must be obtained from His own statements, or from the statements of His apostles regarding Him. The genealogy must be examined as regards its consistency with itself, instead of arguing from the supposition of Christ’s death to the fact of His birth; for He might have suffered without having been born, or He might have been born, and yet never have suffered; for you yourselves acknowledge that with God nothing is impossible, which is inconsistent with the denial that Christ could have suffered without having been born.

2. Augustin replied: You are always answering arguments which no one uses, instead of our real arguments, which you cannot answer. No one says that Christ could not die if He had not been born; for Adam died though he had not been born. What we say is, Christ was born, because this is said not by this or that heretic, but in the holy Gospel; and He died, for this too is written, not in some heretical production, but in the holy Gospel. You set aside argument on the question of the true account to be given of Jesus, and refer to what He says of Himself, and what His apostles say of Him; and yet, when I begin to quote the Gospel of His apostle Matthew, where we have the whole narrative of Christ's birth, you forthwith deny that Matthew wrote the narrative, though this is affirmed by the continuous testimony of the whole Church, from the days of apostolic presidency to the bishops of our own time. What authority will you quote against this? Perhaps some book of Manichaeus, where it is denied that Jesus was born of a virgin. As, then, I believe your book to be the production of Manichaeus, since it has been kept and handed down among the disciples of Manichaeus, from the time when he lived to the present time, by a regular succession of your presidents, so I ask you to believe the book which I quote to have been written by Matthew, since it has been handed down from the days of Matthew in the Church, without any break in the connection between that time and the present. The question then is, whether we are to believe the statements of an apostle who was in the company of Christ while He was on earth, or of a man away in Persia, born long after Christ. But perhaps you will quote some other book bearing the name of an apostle known to have been chosen by Christ; and you will find there that Christ was not born of Mary. Since, then, one of the books must be false, the question in this case is, whether we are to yield our belief to a book acknowledged and approved as handed down from the beginning in the Church founded by Christ Himself, and maintained through the apostles and their successors in an unbroken connection all over the world to the present day; or to a book which this Church condemns as unknown, and which, moreover, is brought forward by men who prove their veracity by praising Christ for falsehood.

3. Here you will say, Examine the genealogy as given in the two Gospels, and see if it is consistent with itself. The answer to this has been given already. Your difficulty is how Joseph could have two fathers. But even if

you could not have thought of the explanation, that one was his own father, and the other adopted, you should not have been so ready to put yourself in opposition to such high authority. Now that this explanation has been given you, I call upon you to acknowledge the truth of the Gospel, and above all to cease your mischievous and unreasonable attacks upon the truth.

4. Faustus most plausibly refers to what Jesus said of Himself. But how is this to be known except from the narratives of His disciples? And if we do not believe them when they tell us that Christ was born of a virgin, how shall we believe what they record as said by Christ of Himself? For, as regards any writing professing to come immediately from Christ Himself, if it were really His, how is it not read and acknowledged and regarded as of supreme authority in the Church, which, beginning with Christ Himself, and continued by His apostles, who were succeeded by the bishops, has been maintained and extended to our own day, and in which is found the fulfillment of many former predictions, while those concerning the last days are sure to be accomplished in the future? In regard to the appearance of such a writing, it would require to be considered from what quarter it issued. Supposing it to have issued from Christ Himself, those in immediate connection with Him might very well have received it, and have transmitted it to others. In this case, the authority of the writing would be fully established by the traditions of various communities, and of their presidents, as I have already said. Who, then, is so infatuated as in our day to believe that the Epistle of Christ issued by Manichaeus is genuine, or to disbelieve Matthew's narrative of Christ's words and actions? Or, if the question is of Matthew being the real author, who would not, in this also, believe what he finds in the Church, which has a distinct history in unbroken connection from the days of Matthew to the present time, rather than a Persian interloper, who comes more than two hundred years after, and wishes us to believe his account of Christ's words and actions rather than that of Matthew; whereas, even in the case of the Apostle Paul, who was called from heaven after the Lord's ascension, the Church would not have believed him, had there not been apostles in life with whom he might communicate, and compare his gospel with theirs, so as to be recognized as belonging to the same society? When it was ascertained that Paul preached what the apostles preached, and that he lived in fellowship and harmony

with them, and when God’s testimony was added by Paul’s working miracles like those done by the apostles, his authority became so great, that his words are now received in the Church, as if, to use his own appropriate words, Christ were speaking in him. Manichaeus, on the other hand, thinks that the Church of Christ should believe what he says in opposition to the Scriptures, which are supported by such strong and continuous evidence, and in which the Church finds an emphatic injunction, that whoever preaches to her differently from what she has received must be anathema.

5. Faustus tells us that he has good grounds for concluding that these Scriptures are unworthy of credit. And yet he speaks of not using arguments. But the argument too shall be refuted. The end of the whole argument is to bring the soul to believe that the reason of its misery in this world is, that it is the means of preventing God from being deprived of His kingdom, and that God’s substance and nature is so exposed to change, corruption, injury, and contamination, that part of it is incurably defiled, and is consigned by Himself to eternal punishment in the mass of darkness, though, when it was in harmless union with Himself, and guilty of no crime, He knowingly sent it where it was to suffer defilement. This is the end of all your arguments and fictions; and would that there were an end of them as regards your heart and your lips, that you might sometime desist from believing and uttering those execrable blasphemies! But, says Faustus, I prove from the writings themselves that they cannot be in all points trustworthy, for they contradict one another. Why not say, then, that they are wholly untrustworthy, if their testimony is inconsistent and self-contradictory? But, says Faustus, I say what I think to be in accordance with truth. With what truth? The truth is only your own fiction, which begins with God’s battle, goes on to His contamination, and ends with His damnation. No one, says Faustus, believes writings which contradict themselves. But if you think they do this, it is because you do not understand them; for your ignorance has been manifested in regard to the passages you have quoted in support of your opinion, and the same will appear in regard to any quotations you may still make. So there is no reason for our not believing these writings, supported as they are by such weighty testimony; and this is itself the best reason for pronouncing accursed those whose preaching differs from what is there written.

BOOK XXIX

Faustus seeks to justify the docetism of the Manichaeans. Augustin insists that there is nothing disgraceful in being born.

1. Faustus said: If Christ was visible, and suffered without having been born, this was sorcery. This argument of yours may be turned against you, by replying that it was sorcery if He was conceived or brought forth without being begotten. It is not in accordance with the law of nature that a virgin should bring forth, and still less that she should still be a virgin after bringing forth. Why, then, do you refuse to admit that Christ, in a preternatural manner, suffered without submitting to the condition of birth? Believe me: in substance, both our beliefs are contrary to nature; but our belief is decent, and yours is not. We give an explanation of Christ's passion which is at least probable, while the only explanation you give of His birth is false. In fine, we hold that He suffered in appearance, and did not really die; you believe in an actual birth, and conception in the womb. If it is not so, you have only to acknowledge that the birth too was a delusion, and our whole dispute will be at an end. As to what you frequently allege, that Christ could not have appeared or spoken to men without having been born, it is absurd; for, as our teachers have shown, angels have often appeared and spoken to men.

2. Augustin replied: We do not say that to die without having been born is sorcery; for, as we have said already, this happened in the case of Adam. But, though it had never happened, who will venture to say that Christ could not, if He had so pleased, have come without taking His body from a virgin, and yet appearing in a true body to redeem us by a true death? However, it was better that He should be, as He actually was, born of a virgin, and, by His condescension, do honor to both sexes, for whose deliverance He was to die, by taking a man's body born of a woman. In this He testifies emphatically against you, and refutes your doctrine, which makes the sexes the work of the devil. What we call sorcery in your doctrine is your making Christ's passion and death to have been only in appearance, so that, by a spectral illusion, He seemed to die when He did not. Hence you must also make His resurrection spectral and illusory and false; for if there was no true death, there could not be a real resurrection.

Hence also the marks which He showed to His doubting disciples must have been false; and Thomas was not assured by truth, but cheated by a lie, when he exclaimed, “My Lord, and my God.” And yet you would have us believe that your tongue utters truth, though Christ’s whole body was a falsehood. Our argument against you is, that the Christ you make is such that you cannot be His true disciples unless you too practise deceit. The fact that Christ’s body was the only one born of a virgin does not prove that there was sorcery in His birth, any more than there is sorcery in its being the only body to rise again on the third day, never to die any more. Will you say that there was sorcery in all the Lord’s miracles because they were unusual? They really happened, and their appearance, as seen by men, was true, and not an illusion; and when they are said to be contrary to nature, it is not that they oppose nature, but that they transcend the method of nature to which we are accustomed. May God keep the minds of His people who are still babes in Christ from being influenced by Faustus, when he recommends as a duty that we should acknowledge Christ’s birth to have been illusory and not real, that so we may end our dispute! Nay, verily, rather let us continue to contend for the truth against them, than agree with them in falsehood.

3. But if we are to end the controversy by saying this, why do not our opponents themselves say it? While they assert the death of Christ to have been not real but feigned, why do they make out that He had no birth at all, not even of the same kind as His death? If they had so much regard for the authority of the evangelist as to oblige them to admit that Christ suffered, at least in appearance, it is the same authority which testifies to His birth. Two evangelists, indeed, give the story of the birth; but in all we read of Jesus having a mother. Perhaps Faustus was unwilling to make the birth an illusion, because the difference of the genealogies given in Matthew and Luke causes an apparent discrepancy. But, supposing a man ignorant, there are many things also relating to the passion of Christ in which he will think the evangelists disagree; suppose him instructed, he finds entire agreement. Can it be right to feign death, and wrong to feign birth? And yet Faustus will have us acknowledge the birth to be feigned, in order to put an end to the dispute. It will appear presently in our reply to another objection what

we think to be the reason why Faustus will not admit of any birth, even a feigned one.

4. We deny that there is anything disgraceful in the bodies of saints. Some members, indeed, are called uncomely, because they have not so pleasing an appearance as those constantly in view. But attend to what the apostle says, when from the unity and harmony of the body he enjoins charity on the Church: “Much more those members of the body, which seem to be feeble, are necessary: and those members of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body.” The licentious and intemperate use of those members is disgraceful, but not the members themselves; for they are preserved in purity not only by the unmarried, but also by wedded fathers and mothers of holy life, in whose case the natural appetite, as serving not lust, but an intelligent purpose in the production of children, is in no way disgraceful. Still more, in the holy Virgin Mary, who by faith conceived the body of Christ, there was nothing disgraceful in the members which served not for a common natural conception, but for a miraculous birth. In order that we might conceive Christ in sincere hearts, and, as it were, produce Him in confession, it was meet that His body should come from the substance of His mother without injury to her bodily purity. We cannot suppose that the mother of Christ suffered loss by His birth, or that the gift of productiveness displaced the grace of virginity. If these occurrences, which were real and no illusion, are new and strange, and contrary to the common course of nature, the reason is, that they are great, and amazing, and divine; and all the more on this account are they true, and firm, and sure. Angels, says Faustus, appeared and spoke without having been born. As if we held that Christ could not have appeared or spoken without having been born of a woman! He could, but He chose not; and what He chose was best. And that He chose to do what He did is plain, because He acted, not like your god, from necessity, but voluntarily. That He was born we know, because we put faith not in a heretic, but in Christ’s gospel.

BOOK XXX

Faustus repels the insinuation that the prophecy of Paul with reference to those that should forbid to marry, abstain from meats, etc., applies to the Manichaeans more than to the Catholic ascetics, who are held in the highest esteem in the Church. Augustin justifies this application of the prophecy, and shows the difference between Manichaean and Christian asceticism.

1. Faustus said: You apply to us the words of Paul: “Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to lying spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their consciences seared as with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, abstaining from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving by believers.” I refuse to admit that the apostle said this, unless you first acknowledge that Moses and the prophets taught doctrines of devils, and were the interpreters of a lying and malignant spirit; since they enjoin with great emphasis abstinence from swine’s flesh and other meats, which they call unclean. This case must first be settled; and you must consider long and carefully how their teaching is to be viewed: whether they said these things from God, or from the devil. As regards these matters, either Moses and the prophets must be condemned along with us; or we must be acquitted along with them. You are unjust in condemning us, as you do now, as followers of the doctrine of devils, because we require the priestly class to abstain from animal food; for we limit the prohibition to the priesthood, while you hold that your prophets, and Moses himself, who forbade all classes of men to eat the flesh of swine, and hares, and conies, besides all varieties of cuttle-fish, and all fish wanting scales, said this not in a lying spirit, nor in the doctrine of devils, but from God, and in the Holy Spirit. Even supposing, then, that Paul said these words, you can convince me only by condemning Moses and the prophets; and so, though you will not do it for reason or truth, you will contradict Moses for the sake of your belly.

2. Besides, you have in your Book of Daniel the account of the three youths, which you will find it difficult to reconcile with the opinion that to abstain from meats is the doctrine of devils. For we are told that they abstained not only from what the law forbade, but even from what it allowed; and you are wont to praise them, and count them as martyrs;

though they too followed the doctrine of devils, if this is to be taken as the apostle's opinion. And Daniel himself declares that he fasted for three weeks, not eating flesh or drinking wine, while he prayed for his people. How is it that he boasts of this doctrine of devils, and glories in the falsehood of a lying spirit?

3. Again, what are we to think of you, or of the better class of Christians among you, some of whom abstain from swine's flesh, some from the flesh of quadrupeds, and some from all animal food, while all the Church admires them for it, and regards them with profound veneration, as only not gods? You obstinately refuse to consider that if the words quoted from the apostle are true and genuine, these people too are misled by doctrines of devils. And there is another observance which no one will venture to explain away or to deny, for it is known to all, and is practised yearly with particular attention in the congregation of Catholics all over the world—I mean the fast of forty days, in the due observance of which a man must abstain from all the things which, according to this verse, were created by God that we might receive them, while at the same time he calls this abstinence a doctrine of devils. So, my dear friends, shall we say that you too, during this fast, while celebrating the mysteries of Christ's passion, live after the manner of devils, and are deluded by a seducing spirit, and speak lies in hypocrisy, and have your conscience seared with a hot iron? If this does not apply to you, neither does it apply to us. What is to be thought of this verse, or its author; or to whom does it apply, since it agrees neither with the traditions of the Old Testament, nor with the institutions of the New? As regards the New Testament, the proof is from your own practice; and though the Old requires abstinence only from certain things, still it requires abstinence. On the other hand, this opinion of yours makes all abstinence from animal food a doctrine of devils. If this is your belief, once more I say it, you must condemn Moses, and reject the prophets, and pass the same sentence on yourselves; for, as they always abstained from certain kinds of food, so you sometimes abstain from all food.

4. But if you think that in making a distinction in food, Moses and the prophets established a divine ordinance, and not a doctrine of devils; if Daniel in the Holy Spirit observed a fast of three weeks; if the youths

Ananias, Azarias, and Mishael, under divine guidance, chose to live on cabbage or pulse; if, again, those among you who abstain, do it not at the instigation of devils; if your abstinence from wine and flesh for forty days is not superstitious, but by divine command,—consider, I beseech you, if it is not perfect madness to suppose these words to be Paul's that abstinence from food and forbidding to marry are doctrines of devils. Paul cannot have said that to dedicate virgins to Christ is a doctrine of devils. But you read the words, and inconsiderately, as usual, apply them to us, without seeing that this stamps your virgins too as led away by the doctrine of devils, and that you are the functionaries of the devils in your constant endeavors to induce virgins to make this profession, so that in all your churches the virgins nearly outnumber the married women. Why do you still adhere to such practises? Why do you ensnare wretched young women, if it is the will of devils, and not of Christ, that they fulfill? But, first of all, I wish to know if making virgins is, in all cases, the doctrine of devils, or only the prohibition of marriage. If it is the prohibition, it does not apply to us, for we too hold it equally foolish to prevent one who wishes, as it is criminal and impious to force one who has some reluctance. But if you say that to encourage the proposal, and not to resist such a desire, is all the doctrine of devils, to say nothing of the consequence as regards you, the apostle himself will be thus brought into danger, if he must be considered as having introduced the doctrines of devils into Iconium, when Thecla, after having been betrothed, was by his discourse inflamed with the desire of perpetual virginity. And what shall we say of Jesus, the Master Himself, and the source of all sanctity, who is the unwedded spouse of the virgins who make this profession, and who, when specifying in the Gospel three kinds of eunuchs, natural, artificial, and voluntary, gives the palm to those who have "made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven," meaning the youths of both sexes who have extirpated from their hearts the desire of marriage, and who in the Church act as eunuchs of the King's palace? Is this also the doctrine of devils? Are those words, too, spoken in a seducing spirit? And if Paul and Christ are proved to be priests of devils, is not their spirit the same that speaks in God? I do not mention the other apostles of our Lord, Peter, Andrew, Thomas, and the example of celibacy, the blessed John, who in various ways commended to young men and maidens the excellence of this profession, leaving to us, and to you too, the form for making virgins. I do not mention them, because you do not admit them into the canon, and so you will not scruple impiously to impute to them doctrines of devils. But will you say the same of Christ, or of the Apostle Paul, who, we know, everywhere expressed the same preference for unmarried women to the married, and gave an example of it in the case of the saintly Thecla? But if the doctrine preached by Paul to Thecla, and which the other apostles also preached, was not the doctrine of devils, how can we believe that Paul left on record his opinion, that the very exhortation to sanctity is the injunction and the doctrine of devils? To make virgins simply by exhortation, without forbidding to marry, is not peculiar to you. That is our principle too; and he must be not only a fool, but a madman, who thinks that a private law can forbid what the public law allows. As regards marriage, therefore, we too encourage virgins to remain as they are when they are willing to do so; we do not make them virgins against their will. For we know the force of will and of natural appetite when opposed by public law; much more when the law is only private, and every one is at liberty to disobey it. If, then, it is no crime to make virgins in this manner, we are guiltless as well as you. If it is wrong to make virgins in any way, you are guilty as well as we. So that what you mean, or intend, by quoting this verse against us, it is impossible to say.

5. Augustin replied: Listen, and you shall hear what we mean and intend by quoting this verse against you, since you say that you do not know. It is not that you abstain from animal food; for, as you observe, our ancient fathers abstained from some kinds of food, not, however, as condemning them, but with a typical meaning, which you do not understand, and of which I have said already in this work all that appeared necessary. Besides, Christians, not heretics, but Catholics, in order to subdue the body, that the soul may be more humbled in prayer, abstain not only from animal food, but also from some vegetable productions, without, however, believing them to be unclean. A few do this always; and at certain seasons or days, as in Lent, almost all, more or less, according to the choice or ability of individuals. You, on the other hand, deny that the creature is good, and call it unclean, saying that animals are made by the devil of the worst impurities in the substance of evil and so you reject them with horror, as being the most cruel and loathsome places of confinement of your god. You, as a concession,

allow your followers, as distinct from the priests, to eat animal food; as the apostle allows, in certain cases, not marriage in the general sense, but the indulgence of passion in marriage. It is only sin which is thus made allowance for. This is the feeling you have toward all animal food; you have learned it from your heresy, and you teach it to your followers. You make allowance for your followers, because, as I said before, they supply you with necessaries; but you grant them indulgence without saying that it is not sinful. For yourselves, you shun contact with this evil and impurity; and hence our reason for quoting this verse against you is found in the words of the apostle which follow those with which you end the quotation. Perhaps it was for this reason that you left out the words, and then say that you do not know what we mean or intend by the quotation; for it suited you better to omit the account of our intention than to express it. For, after speaking of abstaining from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving by believers, the apostle goes on, “And by them who know the truth; for every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.” This you deny; for your idea, and motive, and belief in abstaining from such food is, that they are not typically, but naturally, evil and impure. In this assuredly you blaspheme the Creator; and in this is the doctrine of devils. You need not be surprised that, so long before the event, this prediction regarding you was made by the Holy Spirit.

6. So, again, if your exhortations to virginity resembled the teaching of the apostle, “He who giveth in marriage doeth well, and he who giveth not in marriage doeth better;” if you taught that marriage is good, and virginity better, as the Church teaches which is truly Christ’s Church, you would not have been described in the Spirit’s prediction as forbidding to marry. What a man forbids he makes evil; but a good thing may be placed second to a better thing without being forbidden. Moreover, the only honorable kind of marriage, or marriage entered into for its proper and legitimate purpose, is precisely that you hate most. So, though you may not forbid sexual intercourse, you forbid marriage; for the peculiarity of marriage is, that it is not merely for the gratification of passion, but, as is written in the contract, for the procreation of children. And, though you allow many of your followers to retain their connection with you in spite of their refusal, or

their inability, to obey you, you cannot deny that you make the prohibition. The prohibition is part of your false doctrine, while the toleration is only for the interests of the society. And here we see the reason, which I have delayed till now to mention, for your making not the birth but only the death of Christ feigned and illusory. Death being the separation of the soul, that is, of the nature of your god, from the body which belongs to his enemies, for it is the work of the devil, you uphold and approve of it; and thus, according to your creed, it was meet that Christ, though He did not die, should commend death by appearing to die. In birth, again, you believe your god to be bound instead of released; and so you will not allow that Christ was born even in this illusory fashion. You would have thought better of Mary had she ceased to be a virgin without being a mother, than as being a mother without ceasing to be a virgin. You see, then, that there is a great difference between exhorting to virginity as the better of two good things, and forbidding to marry by denouncing the true purpose of marriage; between abstaining from food as a symbolic observance, or for the mortification of the body, and abstaining from food which God has created for the reason that God did not create it. In one case, we have the doctrine of the prophets and apostles; in the other, the doctrine of lying devils.

BOOK XXXI

The scripture passage: “To the pure all things are pure, but to the impure and defiled is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled,” is discussed from both the Manichaean and the Catholic points of view, Faustus objecting to its application to his party and Augustin insisting on its application.

1. Faustus said: “To the pure all things are pure. But to the impure and defiled is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled.” As regards this verse, too, it is very doubtful whether, for your own sake, you should believe it to have been written by Paul. For it would follow that Moses and the prophets were not only influenced by devils in making so much in their laws of the distinctions in food, but also that they themselves were impure and defiled in their mind and conscience, so that the following words also might properly be applied to them: “They profess to know God, but in works deny Him.” This is applicable to no one more than to Moses

and the prophets, who are known to have lived very differently from what was becoming in men knowing God. Up to this time I have thought only of adulteries and frauds and murders as defiling the conscience of Moses and the prophets; but now, from what this verse says, it is plain that they were also defiled, because they looked upon something as defiled. How, then, can you persist in thinking that the vision of the divine majesty can have been bestowed on such men, when it is written that only the pure in heart can see God? Even supposing that they had been pure from unlawful crimes, this superstitious abstinence from certain kinds of food, if it defiles the mind, is enough to debar them from the sight of deity. Gone for ever, too, is the boast of Daniel, and of the three youths, who, till now that we are told that nothing is unclean, have been regarded among the Jews as persons of great purity and excellence of character, because, in observance of hereditary customs, they carefully avoided defiling themselves with Gentile food, especially that of sacrifices. Now it appears that they were defiled in mind and conscience most of all when they were closing their mouth against blood and idol-feasts.

2. But perhaps their ignorance may excuse them; for, as this Christian doctrine of all things being pure to the pure had not then appeared, they may have thought some things impure. But there can be no excuse for you in the face of Paul’s announcement, that there is nothing which is not pure, and that abstinence from certain food is the doctrine of devils, and that those who think anything defiled are polluted in their mind, if you not only abstain, as we have said, but make a merit of it, and believe that you become more acceptable to Christ in proportion as you are more abstemious, or, according to this new doctrine, as your minds are defiled and your conscience polluted. It should also be observed that, while there are three religions in the world which, though in a very different manner, appoint chastity and abstinence as the means of purification of the mind, the religions, namely, of the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Christians, the opinion that everything is pure cannot have come from any one of the three. It is certainly not from Judaism, nor from Paganism, which also makes a distinction of food; the only difference being, that the Hebrew classification of animals does not harmonize with the Pagan. Then as to the Christian faith, if you think it peculiar to Christianity to consider nothing defiled, you

must first of all confess that there are no Christians among you. For things offered to idols, and what dies of itself, to mention nothing else, are regarded by you all as great defilement. If, again, this is a Christian practice, on your part, the doctrine which is opposed to all abstinence from impurities cannot be traced to Christianity either. How, then, could Paul have said what is not in keeping with any religion? In fact, when the apostle from a Jew became a Christian, it was a change of customs more than of religion. As for the writer of this verse, there seems to be no religion which favors his opinion.

3. Be sure, then, whenever you discover anything else in Scripture to assail our faith with, to see, in the first place, that it is not against you, before you commence your attack on us. For instance, there is the passage you continually quote about Peter, that he once saw a vessel let down from heaven in which were all kinds of animals and serpents, and that, when he was surprised and astonished, a voice was heard, saying to him, Peter, kill and eat whatsoever thou seest in the vessel, and that he replied, Lord I will not touch what is common or unclean. On this the voice spoke again, What I have cleansed, call not unclean. This, indeed, seems to have an allegorical meaning, and not to refer to the absence of distinction in food. But as you choose to give it this meaning, you are bound to feed upon all wild animals, and scorpions, and snakes, and reptiles in general, in compliance with this vision of Peter's. In this way, you will show that you are really obedient to the voice which Peter is said to have heard. But you must never forget that you at the same time condemn Moses and the prophets, who considered many things polluted which, according to this utterance, God has sanctified.

4. Augustin replied: When the apostle says, "To the pure all things are pure," he refers to the natures which God had created,—as it is written by Moses in Genesis, "And God made all things; and behold they were very good,"—not to the typical meanings, according to which God, by the same Moses, distinguished the clean from the unclean. Of this we have already spoken at length more than once, and need not dwell on it here. It is clear that the apostle called those impure who, after the revelation of the New Testament, still advocated the observance of the shadows of things to come, as if without them the Gentiles could not obtain the salvation which is in

Christ, because in this they were carnally minded; and he called them unbelieving, because they did not distinguish between the time of the law and the time of grace. To them, he says, nothing is pure, because they made an erroneous and sinful use both of what they received and of what they rejected; which is true of all unbelievers, but especially of you Manichaeans, for to you nothing whatever is pure. For, although you take great care to keep the food which you use separate from the contamination of flesh, still it is not pure to you, for the only creator of it you allow is the devil. And you hold, that, by eating it, you release your god, who suffers confinement and pollution in it. One would think you might consider yourselves pure, since your stomach is the proper place for purifying your god. But even your own bodies, in your opinion, are of the nature and handiwork of the race of darkness; while your souls are still affected by the pollution of your bodies. What, then, is pure to you? Not the things you eat; not the receptacle of your food; not yourselves, by whom it is purified. Thus you see against whom the words of the apostle are directed; he expresses himself so as to include all who are impure and unbelieving, but first and chiefly to condemn you. To the pure, therefore, all things are pure, in the nature in which they were created; but to the ancient Jewish people all things were not pure in their typical significance; and, as regards bodily health, or the customs of society, all things are not suitable to us. But when things are in their proper places, and the order of nature is preserved, to the pure all things are pure; but to the impure and unbelieving, among whom you stand first, nothing is pure. You might make a wholesome application to yourselves of the following words of the apostle, if you desired a cure for your seared consciences. The words are: “Their very mind and conscience are defiled.”

BOOK XXXII

Faustus fails to understand why he should be required either to accept or reject the New Testament as a whole, while the Catholics accept or reject the various parts of the Old Testament at pleasure. Augustin denies that the Catholics treat the Old Testament arbitrarily, and explains their attitude towards it.

1. Faustus said: You say, that if we believe the Gospel, we must believe everything that is written in it. Why, then, since you believe the Old Testament, do you not believe all that is found in any part of it? Instead of that, you cull out only the prophecies telling of a future King of the Jews, for you suppose this to be Jesus, along with a few precepts of common morality, such as, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery; and all the rest you pass over, thinking of the other things as Paul thought of the things which he held to be dung. Why, then, should it seem strange or singular in me that I select from the New Testament whatever is purest, and helpful for my salvation, while I set aside the interpolations of your predecessors, which impair its dignity and grace?

2. If there are parts of the Testament of the Father which we are not bound to observe (for you attribute the Jewish law to the Father, and it is well known that many things in it shock you, and make you ashamed, so that in heart you no longer regard it as free from corruption, though, as you believe, the Father Himself partly wrote it for you with His own finger while part was written by Moses, who was faithful and trustworthy), the Testament of the Son must be equally liable to corruption, and may equally well contain objectionable things; especially as it is allowed not to have been written by the Son Himself, nor by His apostles, but long after, by some unknown men, who, lest they should be suspected of writing of things they knew nothing of, gave to their books the names of the apostles, or of those who were thought to have followed the apostles, declaring the contents to be according to these originals. In this, I think, they do grievous wrong to the disciples of Christ, by quoting their authority for the discordant and contradictory statements in these writings, saying that it was according to them that they wrote the Gospels, which are so full of errors and discrepancies, both in facts and in opinions, that they can be harmonized neither with themselves nor with one another. This is nothing else than to slander good men, and to bring the charge of dissension on the brotherhood of the disciples. In reading the Gospels, the clear intention of our heart perceives the errors, and, to avoid all injustice, we accept whatever is useful, in the way of building up our faith, and promoting the glory of the Lord Christ, and of the Almighty God, His Father, while we

reject the rest as unbecoming the majesty of God and Christ, and inconsistent with our belief.

3. To return to what I said of your not accepting everything in the Old Testament. You do not admit carnal circumcision, though that is what is written; nor resting from all occupation on the Sabbath, though that is enjoined; and instead of propitiating God, as Moses recommends, by offerings and sacrifices, you cast these things aside as utterly out of keeping with Christian worship, and as having nothing at all to recommend them. In some cases, however, you make a division, and while you accept one part, you reject the other. Thus, in the Passover, which is also the annual feast of the Old Testament, while it is written that in this observance you must slay a lamb to be eaten in the evening, and that you must abstain from leaven for seven days, and be content with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, you accept the feast, but pay no attention to the rules for its observance. It is the same with the feast of Pentecost, or seven weeks, and the accompaniment of a certain kind and number of sacrifices which Moses enjoins: you observe the feast, but you condemn the propitiatory rites, which are part of it, because they are not in harmony with Christianity. As regards the command to abstain from Gentile food, you are zealous believers in the uncleanness of things offered to idols, and of what has died of itself; but you are not so ready to believe the prohibition of swine's flesh, and hares, and conies, and mullets, and cuttle-fish, and all the fish that you have a relish for, although Moses pronounces them all unclean.

4. I do not suppose that you will consent, or even listen, to such things as that a father-in-law should lie with his daughter-in-law, as Judah did; or a father with his daughters, like Lot; or prophets with harlots, like Hosea; or that a husband should sell his wife for a night to her lover, like Abraham; or that a man should marry two sisters, like Jacob; or that the rulers of the people and the men you consider as most inspired should keep their mistresses by hundreds and thousands; or, according to the provision made in Deuteronomy about wives, that the wife of one brother, if he dies without children, should marry the surviving brother, and that he should raise up seed from her instead of his brother; and that if the man refuses to do this, the fair plaintiff should bring her case before the elders, that the brother

may be called and admonished to perform this religious duty; and that, if he persists in his refusal, he must not go unpunished, but the woman must loose his shoe from his right foot, and strike him in the face, and send him away, spat upon and accursed, to perpetuate the reproach in his family. These, and such as these, are the examples and precepts of the Old Testament. If they are good, why do you not practise them? If they are bad, why do you not condemn the Old Testament, in which they are found? But if you think that these are spurious interpolations, that is precisely what we think of the New Testament. You have no right to claim from us an acknowledgment for the New Testament which you yourselves do not make for the Old.

5. Since you hold to the divine authorship of the Old as well as of the New Testament, it would surely be more consistent and more becoming, as you do not obey its precepts, to confess that it has been corrupted by improper additions, than to treat it so contemptuously, if it is genuine and uncorrupted. Accordingly, my explanation of your neglect of the requirements of the Old Testament has always been, and still is, that you are either wise enough to reject them as spurious, or that you have the boldness and irreverence to disregard them if they are true. At any rate, when you would oblige me to believe everything contained in the documents of the New Testament because I receive the Testament itself, you should consider that, though you profess to receive the Old Testament, you in your heart disbelieve many things in it. Thus, you do not admit as true or authoritative the declaration of the Old Testament, that every one that hangeth on a tree is accursed, for this would apply to Jesus; or that every man is accursed who does not raise up seed in Israel, for that would include all of both sexes devoted to God; or that whoever is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin will be cut off from among his people, for that would apply to all Christians; or that whoever breaks the Sabbath must be stoned to death; or that no mercy should be shown to the man who breaks a single precept of the Old Testament. If you really believe these things as certainly enjoined by God, you would, in the time of Christ, have been the first to assail Him, and you would now have no quarrel with the Jews, who, in persecuting Christ with heart and soul, acted in obedience to their own God.

6. I am aware that instead of boldly pronouncing these passages spurious, you make out that these things were required of the Jews till the coming of Jesus; and that now that He is come, according, as you say, to the predictions of this Old Testament, He Himself teaches what we should receive, and what we should set aside as obsolete. Whether the prophets predicted the coming of Jesus we shall see presently. Meanwhile, I need say no more than that if Jesus, after being predicted in the Old Testament, now subjects it to this sweeping criticism, and teaches us to receive a few things and to throw over many things, in the same way the Paraclete who is promised in the New Testament teaches us what part of it to receive, and what to reject; as Jesus Himself says in the Gospel, when promising the Paraclete, “He shall guide you into all truth, and shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance.” So then, with the help of the Paraclete, we may take the same liberties with the New Testament as Jesus enables you to take with the Old, unless you suppose that the Testament of the Son is of greater value than that of the Father, if it is really the Father’s; so that while many parts of the one are to be condemned, the other must be exempted from all disapproval; and that, too, when we know, as I said before, that it was not written by Christ or by His apostles.

7. Hence, as you receive nothing in the Old Testament except the prophecies and the common precepts of practical morality, which we quoted above, while you set aside circumcision, and sacrifices, and the Sabbath and its observance, and the feast of unleavened bread, why should not we receive nothing in the New Testament but what we find said in honor and praise of the majesty of the Son, either by Himself or by His apostles, with the proviso, in the case of the apostles, that it was said by them after reaching perfection, and when no longer in unbelief; while we take no notice of the rest, which, if said at the time, was the utterance of ignorance or inexperience, or, if not, was added by crafty opponents with a malicious intention, or was stated by the writers without due consideration, and so handed down as authentic? Take as examples, the shameful birth of Jesus from a woman, His being circumcised like the Jews, His offering sacrifice like the Gentiles, His being baptized in a humiliating manner, His being led about by the devil in the wilderness, and His being tempted by him in the most distressing way. With these exceptions, besides whatever has been

inserted under the pretence of being a quotation from the Old Testament, we believe the whole, especially the mystic nailing to the cross, emblematic of the wounds of the soul in its passion; as also the sound moral precepts of Jesus, and His parables, and the whole of His immortal discourse, which sets forth especially the distinction of the two natures, and therefore must undoubtedly be His. There is, then, no reason for your thinking it obligatory in me to believe all the contents of the Gospels; for you, as has been proved, take so dainty a sip from the Old Testament, that you hardly, so to speak, wet your lips with it.

8. Augustin replied: We give to the whole Old Testament Scriptures their due praise as true and divine; you impugn the Scriptures of the New Testament as having been tampered with and corrupted. Those things in the Old Testament which we do not observe we hold to have been suitable appointments for the time and the people of that dispensation, besides being symbolical to us of truths in which they have still a spiritual use, though the outward observance is abolished; and this opinion is proved to be the doctrine of the apostolic writings. You, on the other hand, find fault with everything in the New Testament which you do not receive, and assert that these passages were not spoken or written by Christ or His apostles. In these respects there is a manifest difference between us. When, therefore, you are asked why you do not receive all the contents of the New Testament, but, while you approve of some things, reject a great many in the very same books as false and spurious interpolations, you must not pretend to imitate us in the distinction which we make, reverently and in faith, but must give account of your own presumption.

9. If we are asked why we do not worship God as the Hebrew fathers of the Old Testament worshipped Him, we reply that God has taught us differently by the New Testament fathers, and yet in no opposition to the Old Testament, but as that Testament itself predicted. For it is thus foretold by the prophet: “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt.” Thus it was foretold that that covenant would not continue, but that there would be a new one.

And to the objection that we do not belong to the house of Israel or to the house of Judah, we answer according to the teaching of the apostle, who calls Christ the seed of Abraham, and says to us, as belonging to Christ's body, "Therefore ye are Abraham's seed." Again, if we are asked why we regard that Testament as authoritative when we do not observe its ordinances, we find the answer to this also in the apostolic writings; for the apostle says, "Let no man judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of a holiday, or a new moon, or of Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come." Here we learn both that we ought to read of these observances, and acknowledge them to be of divine institution, in order to preserve the memory of the prophecy, for they were shadows of things to come; and also that we need pay no regard to those who would judge us for not continuing the outward observance; as the apostle says elsewhere to the same purpose, "These things happened to them for an example; and they are written for our admonition, on whom the end of the ages are come." So, when we read anything in the books of the Old Testament which we are not required to observe in the New Testament, or which is even forbidden, instead of finding fault with it, we should ask what it means; for the very discontinuance of the observance proves it to be, not condemned, but fulfilled. On this head we have already spoken repeatedly.

10. To take, for example, this requirement on which Faustus ignorantly grounds his charge against the Old Testament, that a man should take his brother's wife to raise up seed for his brother, to be called by his name; what does this prefigure, but that every preacher of the gospel should so labor in the Church as to raise up seed to his deceased brother, that is, Christ, who died for us, and that this seed should bear His name? Moreover, the apostle fulfills this requirement not now in the typical observance, but in the spiritual reality, when he reproves those of whom he says that he had begotten them in Christ Jesus by the gospel, and points out to them their error in wishing to be of Paul. "Was Paul," he says, "crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" As if he should say, I have begotten you for my deceased brother; your name is Christian, not Paulian. Then, too, whoever refuses the ministry of the gospel when chosen by the Church, justly deserves the contempt of the Church. So we see that the spitting in the face is accompanied with a sign of reproach in loosing a shoe from one

foot, to exclude the man from the company of those to whom the apostle says, “Let your feet be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;” and of whom the prophet thus speaks, “How beautiful are the feet of them who publish peace, who bring good tidings of good!” The man who holds the faith of the gospel so as both to profit himself and to be ready when called to serve the Church, is properly represented as shod on both feet. But the man who thinks it enough to secure his own safety by believing, and shirks the duty of benefiting others, has the reproach of being unshod, not in type, but in reality.

11. Faustus needlessly objects to our observance of the passover, taunting us with differing from the Jewish observance: for in the gospel we have the true Lamb, not in shadow, but in substance; and instead of prefiguring the death, we commemorate it daily, and especially in the yearly festival. Thus also the day of our paschal feast does not correspond with the Jewish observance, for we take in the Lord’s day, on which Christ rose. And as to the feast of unleavened bread, all Christians sound in the faith keep it, not in the leaven of the old life, that is, of wickedness, but in the truth and sincerity of the faith; not for seven days, but always, as was typified by the number seven, for days are always counted by sevens. And if this observance is somewhat difficult in this world since the way which leads to life is strait and narrow, the future reward is sure; and this difficulty is typified in the bitter herbs, which are a little distasteful.

12. The Pentecost, too, we observe, that is, the fiftieth day from the passion and resurrection of the Lord, for on that day He sent to us the Holy Paraclete whom He had promised; as was prefigured in the Jewish passover, for on the fiftieth day after the slaying of the lamb, Moses on the mount received the law written with the finger of God. If you read the Gospel, you will see that the Spirit is there called the finger of God. Remarkable events which happened on certain days are annually commemorated in the Church, that the recurrence of this festival may preserve the recollection of things so important and salutary. If you ask, then, why we keep the passover, it is because Christ was then sacrificed for us. If you ask why we do not retain the Jewish ceremonies, it is because they prefigured future realities which we commemorate as past; and the difference between the future and the past

is seen in the different words we use for them. Of this we have already said enough.

13. Again, if you ask why, of all the kinds of food prohibited in the former typical dispensation, we abstain only from food offered to idols and from what dies of itself, you shall hear, if for once you will prefer the truth to idle calumnies. The reason why it is not expedient for a Christian to eat food offered to idols is given by the apostle: “I would not,” he says, “that ye should have fellowship with demons.” Not that he finds fault with sacrifice itself, as offered by the fathers to typify the blood of the sacrifice with which Christ has redeemed us. For he first says, “The things which the Gentiles offer, they offer to demons, and not to God;” and then adds these words: “I would not that ye should have fellowship with demons.” If the uncleanness were in the nature of sacrificial flesh, it would necessarily pollute even when eaten in ignorance. But the reason for not partaking knowingly is not in the nature of the food, but, for conscience sake, not to seem to have fellowship with demons. As regards what dies of itself, I suppose the reason why such food was prohibited was that the flesh of animals which have died of themselves is diseased, and is not likely to be wholesome, which is the chief thing in food. The observance of pouring out the blood which was enjoined in ancient times upon Noah himself after the deluge, the meaning of which we have already explained, is thought by many to be what is meant in the Acts of the Apostles, where we read that the Gentiles were required to abstain from fornication, and from things sacrificed, and from blood, that is, from flesh of which the blood has not been poured out. Others give a different meaning to the words, and think that to abstain from blood means not to be polluted with the crime of murder. It would take too long to settle this question, and it is not necessary. For, allowing that the apostles did on that occasion require Christians to abstain from the blood of animals, and not to eat of things strangled, they seem to me to have consulted the time in choosing an easy observance that could not be burdensome to any one, and which the Gentiles might have in common with the Israelities, for the sake of the Corner-stone, who makes both one in Himself; while at the same time they would be reminded how the Church of all nations was prefigured by the ark of Noah, when God gave this command,—a type which began to be fulfilled in the time of the

apostles by the accession of the Gentiles to the faith. But since the close of that period during which the two walls of the circumcision and the uncircumcision, although united in the Corner-stone, still retained some distinctive peculiarities, and now that the Church has become so entirely Gentile that none who are outwardly Israelites are to be found in it, no Christian feels bound to abstain from thrushes or small birds because their blood has not been poured out, or from hares because they are killed by a stroke on the neck without shedding their blood. Any who still are afraid to touch these things are laughed at by the rest: so general is the conviction of the truth, that "not what entereth into the mouth defileth you, but what cometh out of it;" that evil lies in the commission of sin, and not in the nature of any food in ordinary use.

14. As regards the deeds of the ancients, both those which seem sinful to foolish and ignorant people, when they are not so, and those which really are sinful, we have already explained why they have been written, and how this rather adds to than impairs the dignity of Scripture. So, too, about the curse on him who hangeth on a tree, and on him who raises not up seed in Israel, our reply has already been given in the proper place, when meeting Faustus' objections. And in reply to all objections whatsoever, whether we have already answered them separately, or whether they are contained in the remarks of Faustus which we are now considering, we appeal to our established principles, on which we maintain the authority of sacred Scripture. The principle is this, that all things written in the books of the Old Testament are to be received with approval and admiration, as most true and most profitable to eternal life; and that those precepts which are no longer observed outwardly are to be understood as having been most suitable in those times, and are to be viewed as having been shadows of things to come, of which we may now perceive the fulfillments. Accordingly, whoever in those times neglected the observance of these symbolical precepts was righteously condemned to suffer the punishment required by the divine statute, as any one would be now if he were impiously to profane the sacraments of the New Testament, which differ from the old observances only as this time differs from that. For as praise is due to the righteous men of old who refused not to die for the Old Testament sacraments, so it is due to the martyrs of the New Testament.

And as a sick man should not find fault with the medical treatment, because one thing is prescribed to-day and another to-morrow, and what was at first required is afterwards forbidden, since the method of cure depends on this; so the human race, sick and sore as it is from Adam to the end of the world, as long as the corrupted body weighs down the mind, should not find fault with the divine prescriptions, if sometimes the same observances are enjoined, and sometimes an old observance is exchanged for one of a different kind; especially as there was a promise of a change in the appointments.

15. Hence there is no force in the analogy which Faustus institutes between Christ’s pointing out to us what to believe and what to reject in the Old Testament, in which He Himself is predicted, and the Paraclete’s doing the same to you as regards the New Testament, where there is a similar prediction of Him. There might have been some plausibility in this, had there been anything in the Old Testament which we denounced as a mistake, or as not of divine authority, or as untrue. We do nothing of the kind; we receive everything, both what we observe as rules of conduct, and what we no longer observe, but still recognize as having been prophetical observances, once enjoined and now fulfilled. And besides, the promise of the Paraclete is found in those books, all the contents of which you do not accept; and His mission is recorded in the book which you shrink from even naming. For, as is stated above, and has been said repeatedly, there is a distinct narrative in the Acts of the Apostles of the mission of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and the effect produced showed who it was. For all who first received Him spoke with tongues; and in this sign there was a promise that in all tongues, or in all nations, the Church of after times would faithfully proclaim the doctrine of the Spirit as well as of the Father and of the Son.

16. Why, then, do you not accept everything in the New Testament? Is it because the books have not the authority of Christ’s apostles, or because the apostles taught what was wrong? You reply that the books have not the authority of the apostles. That the apostles were wrong in their teaching is what Pagans say. But what can you say to prove that the publication of these books cannot be traced to the apostles? You reply that in many things

they contradict themselves and one another. Nothing could be more untrue; the fact is, you do not understand. In every case where Faustus has brought forward what you think a discrepancy, we have shown that there was none; and we will do the same in every other case. It is intolerable that the reader or learner should dare to lay the blame on Scriptures of such high authority, instead of confessing his own stupidity. Did the Paraclete teach you that these writings are not of the apostles' authorship, but written by others under their names? But where is the proof that it was the Paraclete from whom you learned this? If you say that the Paraclete was promised and sent by Christ, we reply that your Paraclete was neither promised nor sent by Christ; and we also show you when He sent the Paraclete whom He promised. What proof have you that Christ sent your Paraclete? Where do you get the evidence in support of your informant, or rather misinformant? You reply that you find the proof in the Gospel. In what Gospel? You do not accept all the Gospel, and you say that it has been tampered with. Will you first accuse your witness of corruption, and then call for his evidence? To believe him when you wish it, and then disbelieve him when you wish it, is to believe nobody but yourself. If we were prepared to believe you, there would be no need of a witness at all. Moreover, in the promise of the Holy Spirit as the Paraclete, it is said, "He shall lead you into all truth;" but how can you be led into all truth by one who teaches you that Christ was a deceiver? And again, if you were to prove that all that is said in the Gospel of the promise of the Paraclete could apply to no one but Manichaeus, as the predictions of the prophets are applicable to Christ; and if you quoted passages from those manuscripts which you say are genuine, we might say that on this very point, as proving Manichaeus to be the only person intended, the passages have been altered in the interest of your sect. Your only answer to this would be, that you could not possibly alter documents already in the possession of all Christians; for at the very outset of such an attempt, it would be met by an appeal to older copies. But if this proves that the books could not be corrupted by you, it also proves that they could not be corrupted by any one. The first person who ventured to do such a thing would be convicted by a comparison of older manuscripts; especially as the Scripture is to be found not in one language only, but in many. As it is, false readings are sometimes corrected by comparing older copies or the original language. Hence you must either acknowledge these documents as genuine, and then your heresy cannot stand a moment; or if they are spurious, you cannot use their authority in support of your doctrine of the Paraclete, and so you refute yourselves.

17. Further, what is said in the promise of the Paraclete shows that it cannot possibly refer to Manichaeus, who came so many years after. For it is distinctly said by John, that the Holy Spirit was to come immediately after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord: “For the Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” Now, if the reason why the Spirit was not given was, that Jesus was not glorified, He would necessarily be given immediately on the glorification of Jesus. In the same way, the Cataphrygians said that they had received the promised Paraclete; and so they fell away from the Catholic faith, forbidding what Paul allowed, and condemning second marriages, which he made lawful. They turned to their own use the words spoken of the Spirit, “He shall lead you into all truth,” as if, forsooth, Paul and the other apostles had not taught all the truth, but had left room for the Paraclete of the Cataphrygians. The same meaning they forced from the words of Paul: “We know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away;” making out that the apostle knew and prophesied in part, when he said, “Let him do what he will; if he marries, he sinneth not,” and that this is done away by the perfection of the Phrygian Paraclete. And if they are told that they are condemned by the authority of the Church, which is the subject of such ancient promises, and is spread all over the world, they reply that this is in exact fulfillment of what is said of the Paraclete, that the world cannot receive Him. And are not those passages, “He shall lead you into all truth,” and, “When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away,” and, “The world cannot receive Him,” precisely those in which you find a prediction of Manichaeus? And so every heresy arising under the name of the Paraclete will have the boldness to make an equally plausible application to itself of such texts. For there is no heresy but will call itself the truth; and the prouder it is, the more likely it will be to call itself perfect truth: and so it will profess to lead into all truth; and since that which is perfect has come by it, it will try to do away with the doctrine of the apostles, to which its own errors are opposed. And as the Church holds by the earnest admonition of the apostle, that “whoever

preaches another gospel to you than that which ye have received, let him be accursed;” when the heretical preacher begins to be pronounced accursed by all the world, will he not forthwith exclaim, This is what is written, “The world cannot receive Him”?

18. Where, then, will you find the proof required to show that it is from the Paraclete that you have learned that the Gospels were not written by the apostles? On the other hand, we have proof that the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, came immediately after the glorification of Jesus. For “He was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” We have proof also that He leads into all truth, for the only way to truth is by love, and “the love of God,” says the apostle, “is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given unto us.” We show, too, that in the words, “when that which is perfect is come,” Paul spoke of the perfection in the enjoyment of eternal life. For in the same place he says: “Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.” You cannot reasonably maintain that we see God face to face here. Therefore that which is perfect has not come to you. It is thus clear what the apostle thought on this subject. This perfection will not come to the saints till the accomplishment of what John speaks of: “Now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when it shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” Then we shall be led into all truth by the Holy Spirit, of which we have now received the pledge. Again, the words, “The world cannot receive Him,” plainly point to those who are usually called the world in Scripture—the lovers of the world, the wicked, or carnal; of whom the apostle says: “The natural man perceiveth not the things which are of the Spirit of God.” Those are said to be of this world who can understand nothing beyond material things, which are the objects of sense in this world; as is the case with you, when, in your admiration of the sun and moon, you suppose all divine things to resemble them. Deceivers, and being deceived, you call the author of this silly theory the Paraclete. But as you have no proof of his being the Paraclete, you have no reliable ground for the statement that the Gospel writings, which you receive only in part, are not of apostolic authorship. Thus your only remaining argument is, that these writings contain things disparaging to the glory of Christ; such as, that He was born of a virgin, that He was circumcised, that the customary sacrifice

was offered for Him, that He was baptized, that He was tempted of the devil.

19. With those exceptions, including also the testimonies quoted from the Old Testament, you profess, to use the words of Faustus, to receive all the rest, especially the mystic nailing to the cross, emblematic of the wounds of the soul in its passion; as also the sound moral precepts of Jesus, and the whole of His immortal discourse, which sets forth especially the distinction of the two natures, and therefore must undoubtedly be His. Your design clearly is to deprive Scripture of all authority, and to make every man's mind the judge what passage of Scripture he is to approve of, and what to disapprove of. This is not to be subject to Scripture in matters of faith, but to make Scripture subject to you. Instead of making the high authority of Scripture the reason of approval, every man makes his approval the reason for thinking a passage correct. If, then, you discard authority, to what, poor feeble soul, darkened by the mists of carnality, to what, I beseech you, will you betake yourself? Set aside authority, and let us hear the reason of your beliefs. Is it by a logical process that your long story about the nature of God concludes necessarily with this startling announcement, that this nature is subject to injury and corruption? And how do you know that there are eight continents and ten heavens, and that Atlas bears up the world, and that it hangs from the great world-holder, and innumerable things of the same kind? Who is your authority? Manichaeus, of course, you will say. But, unhappy being, this is not sight, but faith. If, then, you submit to receive a load of endless fictions at the bidding of an obscure and irrational authority, so that you believe all those things because they are written in the books which your misguided judgment pronounces trustworthy, though there is no evidence of their truth, why not rather submit to the authority of the Gospel, which is so well founded, so confirmed, so generally acknowledged and admired, and which has an unbroken series of testimonies from the apostles down to our own day, that so you may have an intelligent belief, and may come to know that all your objections are the fruit of folly and perversity; and that there is more truth in the opinion that the unchangeable nature of God should take part of mortality, so as, without injury to itself from this union, to do and to suffer not feignedly, but really, whatever it behoved the mortal nature to do and to suffer for the salvation of the human race from

which it was taken, than in the belief that the nature of God is subject to injury and corruption, and that, after suffering pollution and captivity, it cannot be wholly freed and purified, but is condemned by a supreme divine necessity to eternal punishment in the mass of darkness?

20. You say, in reply, that you believe in what Manichaeus has not proved, because he has so clearly proved the existence of two natures, good and evil, in this world. But here is the very source of your unhappy delusion; for as in the Gospels, so in the world, your idea of what is evil is derived entirely from the effect on your senses of such disagreeable things as serpents, fire, poison, and so on; and the only good you know of is what has an agreeable effect on your senses, as pleasant flavors, and sweet smells, and sunlight, and whatever else recommends itself strongly to your eyes, or your nostrils, or your palate, or any other organ of sensation. But had you begun with looking on the book of nature as the production of the Creator of all, and had you believed that your own finite understanding might be at fault wherever anything seemed to be amiss, instead of venturing to find fault with the works of God, you would not have been led into these impious follies and blasphemous fancies with which, in your ignorance of what evil really is, you heap all evils upon God.

21. We can now answer the question, how we know that these books were written by the apostles. In a word, we know this in the same way that you know that the books whose authority you are so deluded as to prefer were written by Manichaeus. For, suppose some one should raise a question on this point, and should contend, in arguing with you, that the books which you attribute to Manichaeus are not of his authorship; your only reply would be, to ridicule the absurdity of thus gratuitously calling in question a matter confirmed by successive testimonies of such wide extent. As, then, it is certain that these books are the production of Manichaeus, and as it is ridiculous in one born so many years after to start objections of his own, and so raise a discussion on the point; with equal certainty may we pronounce it absurd, or rather pitiable, in Manichaeus or his followers to bring such objections against writings originally well authenticated, and carefully handed down from the times of the apostles to our own day through a constant succession of custodians.

22. We have now only to compare the authority of Manichaeus with that of the apostles. The genuineness of the writings is equally certain in both cases. But no one will compare Manichaeus to the apostles, unless he ceases to be a follower of Christ, who sent the apostles. Who that did not misunderstand Christ’s words ever found in them the doctrine of two natures opposed to one another, and having each its own principle? Again, the apostles, as becomes the disciples of truth, declare the birth and passion of Christ to have been real events; while Manichaeus, who boasts that he leads into all truth, would lead us to a Christ whose very passion he declares to have been an illusion. The apostles say that Christ was circumcised in the flesh which He took of the seed of Abraham; Manichaeus says that God, in his own nature, was cut in pieces by the race of darkness. The apostles say that a sacrifice was offered for Christ as an infant in our nature, according to the institutions of the time; Manichaeus, that a member, not of humanity, but of the divine substance itself, must be sacrificed to the whole host of demons by being introduced into the nature of the hostile race. The apostles say that Christ, to set us an example, was baptized in the Jordan; Manichaeus, that God immersed himself in the pollution of darkness, and that he will never wholly emerge, but that the part which cannot be purified will be condemned to eternal punishment. The apostles say that Christ, in our nature, was tempted by the chief of the demons; Manichaeus, that part of God was taken captive by the race of demons. And in the temptation of Christ He resists the tempter; while in the captivity of God, the part taken captive cannot be restored to its origin even after victory. To conclude, Manichaeus, under the guise of an improvement, preaches another gospel, which is the doctrine of devils; and the apostles, after the doctrine of Christ, enjoin that whoever preaches another gospel shall be accursed.

BOOK XXXIII

Faustus does not think it would be a great honor to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, whose moral characters as set forth in the Old Testament he detests. He justifies his subjective criticism of Scripture. Augustin sums up the argument, claims the victory, and exhorts the Manichaeans to abandon their opposition to the Old Testament notwithstanding the difficulties that it presents, and to recognize the authority of the Catholic Church.

1. Faustus said: You quote from the Gospel the words, “Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven,” and ask why we do not acknowledge the patriarchs. Now, we should be the last to grudge to any human being that God should have compassion on him, and bring him out of perdition to salvation. At the same time, we should acknowledge in such a case the clemency shown in this act of compassion, and not the merit of the person whose life is undeniably blameworthy. Thus, in the case of the Jewish fathers, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, who are mentioned by Christ in this verse, supposing it to be genuine, although they led wicked lives, as we may learn from their descendant Moses, or whoever was the author of the history called Genesis, which describes their conduct as having been most shocking and detestable; we are ready to allow that they may, after all, be in the kingdom of heaven, in the place which they neither believed in, nor hoped for, as is plain enough from their books. But then it must be kept in mind that, as you yourselves confess, if they did attain to what is spoken of in this verse, it was something very different from the nether dungeons of woe to which their own deserts consigned them, and that their deliverance was the work of our Lord Christ, and the result of His mystic passion. Who would grudge to the thief on the cross that deliverance was granted to him by the same Lord, and that Christ said that on that very day he should be with Him in the paradise of His Father? Who is so hard-hearted as to disapprove of this act of benevolence? Still, it does not follow that, because Jesus pardoned a thief, we must approve of the habits and practices of thieves; any more than of the publicans and harlots, whose faults Jesus pardoned, declaring that they would go into the kingdom of heaven before those who behaved proudly. For, when He acquitted the woman accused by the Jews as sinful, and as having been caught in adultery, He told her to sin no more. If, then, He has done something of the same kind in the case of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, all the praise is His; for such actions towards souls are becoming in Him who maketh His sun to rise upon the evil and upon the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. One thing perplexes me in your doctrine: why you limit your statements to the

fathers of the Jews, and are not of opinion that the Gentile patriarchs had also a share in this grace of our Redeemer; especially as the Christian Church consists of their children more than of the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You will say that the Gentiles worshipped idols, and the Jews the Almighty God, and that therefore Jesus had regard only to the Jews. It would seem from this that the worship of the Almighty God is the sure way to hell, and that the Son must come to the aid of the worshipper of the Father. That is as you please. For my part, I am ready to join you in the belief that the fathers reached heaven, not by any merit of their own, but by that divine mercy which is stronger than sin.

2. However, there is a difficulty in deciding as regards this verse too, whether the words were really spoken to Christ, for there is a discrepancy in the narratives. For while two evangelists, Matthew and Luke, both alike tell of the centurion whose servant was sick, and to whom these words of Jesus are supposed to have applied, that He had not seen so great faith, no, not in Israel, as in this man, though a Gentile and a Pagan, because he said that he was not worthy that Jesus should come under his roof, but wished Him only to speak the word, and his servant should be healed; Matthew alone adds that Jesus went on to say, “Verily I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness.” By the many who should come are meant the Pagans, on account of the centurion, in whom, although he was a Gentile, so great faith was found; and the children of the kingdom are the Jews, in whom there was no faith found. Luke, again, though he too mentions the occurrence in his Gospel as part of the narrative of the miracles of Christ, says nothing of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. If it is said that he omitted it because it had been already said by Matthew, why does he tell the story at all of the centurion and his servant, since that, too, has the advantage of being recorded at length in Matthew’s ingenious narrative? But the passage is corrupt. For, in describing the centurion’s application to Jesus, Matthew says that he came himself to ask for a cure; while Luke says he did not, but sent elders of the Jews, and that they, in case Jesus should despise the centurion as a Gentile (for they will have Jesus to be a thorough Jew), set about persuading Him, by saying that he was worthy for whom He should

do this, because he loved their nation, and had built them a synagogue; here again taking for granted that the Son of God was concerned in a pagan centurion having thought it proper to build a synagogue for the Jews. The words in question are, indeed, found in Luke also, perhaps because on reflection he thought they might be genuine; but they are found in another place, and in a connection altogether different. The passage is where Jesus says to His disciples, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall come seeking to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house has entered in, and has shut to the door, ye shall begin to stand without, and to knock, saying Lord, open to us. And He shall answer and say, I know you not. Then ye shall begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in Thy presence, and Thou hast taught in our streets and synagogues; but He shall say unto you, I know not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, entering into the kingdom of God, and you yourselves cast out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." The part where it is said that many shall be shut out of the kingdom of God, who have only borne the name of Christ, without doing His works, is not left out by Matthew; but he makes no mention here of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. In the same way, Luke mentions the centurion and his servant, without alluding in that connection to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. Since it is uncertain when the words were spoken, we are at liberty to doubt whether they were spoken at all.

3. It is not without reason that we bring a critical judgment to the study of Scriptures where there are such discrepancies and contradictions. By thus examining everything, and comparing one passage with another, we determine which contains Christ's actual words, and what may or may not be genuine. For your predecessors have made many interpolations in the words of our Lord, which thus appear under His name, while they disagree with His doctrine. Besides, as we have proved again and again, the writings are not the production of Christ or of His apostles, but a compilation of rumors and beliefs, made, long after their departure, by some obscure semi-Jews, not in harmony even with one another, and published by them under

the name of the apostles, or of those considered the followers of the apostles, so as to give the appearance of apostolic authority to all these blunders and falsehoods. But whatever you make of that, as regards this verse, I repeat that I do not insist on rejecting it. It is enough for my position, that, as I said before, and as you are obliged to confess, before the coming of our Lord all the patriarchs and prophets of Israel lay in infernal darkness for their sins. Even though they may have been restored to light and liberty by Christ, that has nothing to do with the hateful character of their lives. We hate and eschew not their persons, but their characters; not as they are now, when they are purified, but as they were, when impure. So, whatever you think of this verse, it does not affect us: for if it is genuine, it only illustrates Christ's goodness and compassion; and if it is spurious, those who wrote it are to blame. Our cause is as safe as it always is.

4. Augustin replied: Poor safety, indeed! when you contradict yourself by hating the patriarchs as impure, at the same time that you grieve for your impure god. You allow that, since the advent of the Saviour, the patriarchs have had purity restored, and have enjoyed the rest of the blessed; while your god, even after the Saviour's advent, still lies in darkness, is still sunk in the ocean of iniquity, still wallows in the mire of all uncleanness. These men, therefore, were not only better than your god in their lives, but also happier in their death. Where was the abode of the just who departed from this life before Christ's coming in the flesh, and whether their condition also was improved by the passion of Christ, in whom they had believed as to come, and to suffer, and to rise again, and had, moreover, foretold this in suitable language under the guidance of the Spirit of prophecy, is to be discovered from the Holy Scriptures, if any clear discovery in this matter is possible; we are not called on to adopt the crude notions of all and sundry, still less the heretical opinions of men who have gone astray into such egregious error. There is a vain attempt here on the part of Faustus to introduce by a side-door the idea that we may obtain something after this life besides the due reward of our conduct in this life. It will be better for you to abandon your error while you are still alive, and to embrace and hold the truths of the Catholic faith. Otherwise the expectations of the unrighteous will be sadly disappointed when God begins to fulfill His threatenings to the unrighteous.

5. I have already given what I considered a sufficient answer to Faustus' calumnies of the lives of the patriarchs. That they were punished at their death, or that they were justified after the Lord's passion, is not what we learn from His commendation of them, when He admonished the Jews that, if they were Abraham's children, they should do the works of Abraham, and said that Abraham desired to see His day, and was glad when he saw it; and that it was into his bosom, that is, some deep recess of blissful repose, that the angels carried the poor sufferer who was despised by the proud rich man. And what are we to make of the Apostle Paul? Is there any idea of justification after death in his praise of Abraham, when he says that before he was circumcised he believed God, and that it was counted to him for righteousness? And so much importance does he attach to this, that the single ground which he specifies for our becoming Abraham's children, though not descended from him in the flesh, is, that we follow the footsteps of his faith.

6. You are so hardened in your errors against the testimonies of Scripture, that nothing can be made of you; for whenever anything is quoted against you, you have the boldness to say that it is written not by the apostle, but by some pretender under his name. The doctrine of demons which you preach is so opposed to Christian doctrine, that you could not continue, as professing Christians, to maintain it, unless you denied the truth of the apostolic writings. How can you thus do injury to your own souls? Where will you find any authority, if not in the Gospel and apostolic writings? How can we be sure of the authorship of any book, if we doubt the apostolic origin of those books which are attributed to the apostles by the Church which the apostles themselves founded, and which occupies so conspicuous a place in all lands, and if at the same time we acknowledge as the undoubted production of the apostles what is brought forward by heretics in opposition to the Church, whose authors, from whom they derive their name, lived long after the apostles? And do we not see in profane literature that there are well-known authors under whose names many things have been published after their time which have been rejected, either from inconsistency with their ascertained writings, or from their not having been known in the lifetime of the authors, so as to be banded down with the confirmatory statement of the authors themselves, or of their friends? To

give a single example, were not some books published lately under the name of the distinguished physician Hippocrates, which were not received as authoritative by physicians? And this decision remained unaltered in spite of some similarity in style and matter: for, when compared to the genuine writings of Hippocrates, these books were found to be inferior; besides that they were not recognized as his at the time when his authorship of his genuine productions was ascertained. Those books, again, from a comparison with which the productions of questionable origin were rejected, are with certainty attributed to Hippocrates; and any one who denies their authorship is answered only by ridicule, simply because there is a succession of testimonies to the books from the time of Hippocrates to the present day, which makes it unreasonable either now or hereafter to have any doubt on the subject. How do we know the authorship of the works of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Varro, and other similar writers, but by the unbroken chain of evidence? So also with the numerous commentaries on the ecclesiastical books, which have no canonical authority, and yet show a desire of usefulness and a spirit of inquiry. How is the authorship ascertained in each case, except by the author's having brought his work into public notice as much as possible in his own lifetime, and, by the transmission of the information from one to another in continuous order, the belief becoming more certain as it becomes more general, up to our own day; so that, when we are questioned as to the authorship of any book, we have no difficulty in answering? But why speak of old books? Take the books now before us: should any one, after some years, deny that this book was written by me, or that Faustus' was written by him, where is evidence for the fact to be found but in the information possessed by some at the present time, and transmitted by them through successive generations even to distant times? From all this it follows, that no one who has not yielded to the malicious and deceitful suggestions of lying devils, can be so blinded by passion as to deny the ability of the Church of the apostles—a community of brethren as numerous as they were faithful—to transmit their writings unaltered to posterity, as the original seats of the apostles have been occupied by a continuous succession of bishops to the present day, especially when we are accustomed to see this happen in the case of ordinary writings both in the Church and out of it.

7. But Faustus finds contradictions in the Gospels. Say, rather, that Faustus reads the Gospels in a wrong spirit, that he is too foolish to understand, and too blind to see. If you were animated with piety instead of being misled by party spirit, you might easily, by examining these passages, discover a wonderful and most instructive harmony among the writers. Who, in reading two narratives of the same event, would think of charging one or both of the authors with error or falsehood, because one omits what the other mentions, or one tells concisely, but with substantial agreement, what the other relates in detail, so as to indicate not only what was done, but also how it was done? This is what Faustus does in his attempt to impeach the truth of the Gospels; as if Luke's omitting some saying of Christ recorded in Matthew implied a denial on the part of Luke of Matthew's statement. There is no real difficulty in the case; and to make a difficulty shows want of thought, or of the ability to think. There is, indeed, a point in the narrative of the centurion which is discussed among believers, and on which objections are raised by unbelievers of no great learning, who prove their quarrelsomeness, when, after being instructed, they do not give up their errors. The point is, that Matthew says that the centurion came to Jesus "beseeching Him, and saying;" while Luke says that he sent to Jesus the elders of the Jews with this same request, that He would heal his servant who was sick; and that when He came near the house he sent others, through whom he said that he was not worthy that Jesus should come into his house, and that he was not worthy to come himself to Jesus. How, then, do we read in Matthew, "He came to Him, beseeching Him, and saying, My servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, and grievously tormented?" The explanation is, that Matthew's narrative is correct, but brief, mentioning the centurion's coming to Jesus, without saying whether he came himself or by others, or whether the words about his servant were spoken by himself or through others. But is it not common to speak of a person as coming near to a thing, although he may not reach it? And even the word reach, which is the strongest form of expression, is frequently used in cases where the person spoken of acts through others, as when we say he took his case to court, he reached the presence of the judge; or, again, he reached the presence of some man in power, although it may probably have been through his friends, and the person may not have seen him whose presence he is said to have reached. And from the word for to reach we give the

name of Perventors to those who by ambitious arts gain access, either personally or through friends, to the, so to speak, inaccessible minds of the great. Are we, then, in reading to forget the common usage of speech? Or must the sacred Scripture have a language of its own? The cavils of forward critics are thus met by a reference to the usual forms of speech.

8. Those who examine this matter not in a disputatious but in a calm believing spirit are invited to come to Jesus, not outwardly but in heart, not in bodily presence but in the power of faith, as the centurion did, and then they will better understand Matthew’s narrative. To such it is said in the Psalm “Come unto Him, and be enlightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed.” Hence we learn that the centurion, whose faith was so highly spoken of, came to Christ more truly than the people who carried his message. We find an analogous case in the woman with the issue of blood, who was healed by touching the hem of Christ’s garment, when Christ said, “Some one hath touched me.” The disciples wondered what Christ meant by saying, “Who hath touched me?” “Some one hath touched me,” when the crowd was thronging Him. In fact, they made this reply: “The crowd throngeth Thee, and sayest Thou, Who hath touched me?” Now, as the people thronged Christ while the woman touched Him, so the messengers were sent to Christ, but the centurion really came to Him. In Matthew we have a not infrequent form of expression, and at the same time a symbolical import; while in Luke there is a simple narrative of the whole event, such as to draw our attention to the manner in which Matthew has recorded it. I wish one of those people who found their silly objections to the Gospels on such trifling difficulties would himself tell a story twice over, honestly giving a true account of what happened, and that his words were written down and read over to him. We should then see whether he would not say more or less at one time than at another; and whether the order would not be changed, not only of words, but of things; and whether he would not put some opinion of his own into the mouth of another, because, though he never heard him say it, he knew it perfectly well to be in his mind; and whether he would not sometimes put in a few words what he had before related at length. In these and other ways, which might perhaps be reduced to rule, the narratives of the same thing by two persons, or two narratives by the same person, might differ in many things without being opposed, might

be unlike without being contradictory. Thus are undone all the bandages with which poor Manichaeans stifle themselves to keep in the spirit of error, and to keep out all that might lead to their salvation.

9. Now that all Faustus’ calumnies have been refuted, those at least on the subjects here treated of at large and explained fully as the Lord has enabled me, I close with a word of counsel to you who are implicated in those shocking and damnable errors, that, if you acknowledge the supreme authority of Scripture, you should recognise that authority which from the time of Christ Himself, through the ministry of His apostles, and through a regular succession of bishops in the seats of the apostles, has been preserved to our own day throughout the whole world, with a reputation known to all. There the Old Testament too has its difficulties solved, and its predictions fulfilled. If you ask for demonstration, consider first what you are, how unfit for comprehending the nature of your own soul, not to speak of God; I mean an intelligent comprehension, such as you profess to desire, or to have once desired, and not the notions of a credulous fancy. Admitting this incompetency, which must continue while you remain as you are, you may at least be referred to the natural conviction of every human mind, unless it is corrupted by error, of the perfect unchangeableness and incorruptibility of the nature and substance of God. Admit this, or believe it, and you will no longer be Manichaeans, so that in course of time you may become Catholics.

SERMONS ON SELECTED LESSONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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On the same words, John i. “In the beginning was the word,” etc

Sermon LXX
On the same words of John i., “In the beginning was the word,” etc

Sermon LXXI
On the words of the Gospel, John i. 10, “The world was made through him,” etc

Sermon LXXII
On the words of the Gospel, John i. 48,”When thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee,” etc

Sermon LXXIII
On the words of the Gospel, John ii. 2, “and Jesus also was bidden, and his disciples, to the marriage.”

Sermon LXXIV
On the words of the Gospel, John v. 2, “Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool,” etc

Sermon LXXV
Again in John v. 2, etc., on the five porches, where lay a great multitude of impotent folk, and of the pool of Siloa

Sermon LXXVI
On the words of the Gospel, John v. 19, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing.”

Sermon LXXVII
On the words of the Gospel, John v. 25,”Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the son of God; and they that hear shall live,”etc.; and on the words of the apostle, “things which eye saw not,” etc., 1 Cor. ii. 9

Sermon LXXVIII
On the words of the Gospel, John v. 31,”If I bear witness of myself,” etc.; and on the words of the apostle, Galatians v. 16, “Walk by the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth,” etc

Sermon LXXIX
On the words of the Gospel, John v. 39, “Ye search the Scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life,” etc. Against the Donatists

Sermon LXXX
On the words of the Gospel, John vi. 9, where the miracle of the five loaves and the two fishes is related

Sermon LXXXI
On the words of the Gospel, John vi. 53, “Except ye eat the flesh,” etc., and on the words of the apostles. And the Psalms. Against the Pelagians

Sermon LXXXII
On the words of the Gospel, John vi. 55,”For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh,” etc

Sermon LXXXIII
On the words of the Gospel of John vii. 6, etc., where Jesus said that He was not going up unto the feast, and notwithstanding went up

Sermon LXXXIV
On the words of the Gospel, John viii. 31, “If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples,” etc

Sermon LXXXV
On the words of the Gospel, John ix. 4 and 31, “We must work the works of him that sent me,” etc. Against the Arians. And of that which the man who was born blind and received his sight said, “We know that God heareth not sinners.”

Sermon LXXXVI
On the same lesson of the Gospel, John ix., on the giving sight to the man that was born blind

Sermon LXXXVII
The tenth chapter of the Gospel of John. Of the shepherd, and the hireling, and the thief

Sermon LXXXVIII
On the words of the Gospel, John x. 14, “I am the good shepherd,” etc. Against the Donatists

Sermon LXXXIX
On the words of the Gospel, John x. 30, “I and the Father are one.”

Sermon XC
On the words of the Gospel, John xii. 44, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.” Against a certain expression of Maximinus, a bishop of the Arians, who spread his blasphemy in Africa where he was with the Count Segisvult

Sermon XCI
On the words of the Gospel, John xiv. 6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”

Sermon XCII
On the same words of the Gospel, John xiv. 6, “I am the way,” etc

Sermon XCIII
On the words of the Gospel, John xvi. 7, “I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away,” etc

Sermon XCIV
On the same words of the Gospel, John xvi. 8, “He will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement.”

Sermon XCV
On the words of the Gospel, John xvi. 24, “Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name;” and on the words of Luke x. 17, “Lord, even the demons are subject unto us in thy name.”

Sermon XCVI
On the words of the Gospel, John. xxi. 16, “Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?” etc

Sermon XCVII
On the same words of the Gospel of John. xxi. 15, “Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these?” etc

SERMONS ON SELECTED LESSONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

SERMON I

OF THE AGREEMENT OF THE EVANGELISTS MATTHEW AND LUKE IN THE GENERATIONS OF THE LORD

LI. BENEDICTINE EDITION.

1. May He, beloved, fulfil your expectation who hath awakened it: for though I feel confident that what I have to say is not my own, but God’s, yet with far more reason do I say, what the Apostle in his humility saith, “We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.” I do not doubt accordingly that you remember my promise; in Him I made it through whom I now fulfil it, for both when I made the promise, did I ask of the Lord, and now when I fulfil it, do I receive of Him. Now you will remember, beloved, that it was in the matins of the festival of the Lord’s Nativity, that I put off the question which I had proposed for resolution, because many came with us to the celebration of the accustomed solemnities of that day to whom the word of God is usually burdensome; but now I imagine that none have come here, but they who desire to hear, and so I am not speaking to hearts that are deaf, and to minds that will disdain the word, but this your longing expectation is a prayer for me. There is a further consideration; for the day of the public shows has dispersed many from hence, for whose salvation I exhort you to share my great anxiety, and do you with all earnestness of mind, entreat God for those who are not yet intent upon the spectacles of the truth, but are wholly given up to the spectacles of the flesh; for I know and am well assured, that there are now among you those who have this day despised them, and have burst the bonds of their inveterate habits; for men are changed both for the better and the worse. By daily instances of this kind are we alternately made joyful and sad; we joy over the reformed, are sad over the corrupted; and

therefore the Lord doth not say that he who beginneth, shall be saved, “But he that endureth unto the end shall be saved.”

2. Now what more marvellous, what more magnificent thing could our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and also the Son of man (for this also He vouchsafed to be), grant to us, than the gathering into His fold not only of the spectators of these foolish shows, but even some of the actors in them; for He hath combated unto salvation not only the lovers of the combats of men with beasts, but even the combatants themselves, for He also was made a spectacle Himself. Hear how. He hath told us Himself, and foretold it before He was made a spectacle, and in the words of prophecy announced beforehand what was to come to pass, as if it were already done, saying in the Psalms, “They pierced My hands and My feet, they told all My bones.” Lo! how He was made a spectacle, for His bones to be told! and this spectacle He expresseth more plainly, “they observed and looked upon Me.” He was made a spectacle and an object of derision, made a spectacle by them who were to show Him no favour indeed in that spectacle, but who were to be furious against Him, just as at first He made His martyrs spectacles; as saith the Apostle, “We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.” Now two sorts of men are spectators of such spectacles; the one, carnal, the other, spiritual men. The carnal look on, as thinking those martyrs who are thrown to the beasts, or beheaded, or burnt in the flames, to be wretched men, and they detest and abhor them; but others look on, like the holy Angels, not regarding the laceration of their bodies, but admiring the unimpaired purity of their faith. A grand spectacle to the eyes of the heart doth a whole mind in a mangled body exhibit! When these things are read of in the church, you behold them with pleasure with these eyes of the heart, for if you were to behold nothing, you would hear nothing; so you see you have not neglected the spectacles to-day, but have made a choice of spectacles. May God then be with you, and give you grace with gentle persuasiveness to report your spectacles to your friends, whom you have been pained to see this day running to the amphitheatre, and unwilling to come to the church; that so they too may begin to contemn those things, by the love of which themselves have become contemptible, and may, with you, love God, of whom none who love Him can ever be ashamed, for that they love Him who cannot be overcome: let them, as you

do, love Christ, who by that very thing wherein He seemed to be overcome, overcame the whole world. For He hath overcome the whole world as we see, my brethren; He hath subjected all powers, He hath subjugated kings, not with the pride of soldiery, but by the ignominy of the Cross: not by the fury of the sword, but by hanging on the Wood, by suffering in the body, by working in the Spirit. His body was lifted up on the Cross, and so He subdued souls to the Cross; and now what jewel in their diadem is more precious than the Cross of Christ on the foreheads of kings? In loving Him you will never be ashamed. Whereas from the amphitheatre how many return conquered, because those are conquered, for whom they are so madly interested! still more would they be conquered were they to conquer. For so would they be enslaved to the vain joy, to the exultation of a depraved desire, who are conquered by the very circumstance of running to these shows. For how many, my brethren, do you think have this day been in hesitation whether they would go here or there? And they who in this hesitation, turning their thoughts to Christ, have run to the church, have overcome, not any man, but the devil himself, him that hunteth after the souls of the whole world. But they who in that hesitation have chosen rather to run to the amphitheatre, have assuredly been overcome by him whom the others overcame—overcame in Him who saith, “Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” For the Captain suffered Himself to be tried, only that He might teach His soldiers to fight.

3. That our Lord Jesus Christ might do this He became the Son of man by being born of a woman. But now, “would He have been any less a man, if He had not been born of the Virgin Mary” one may say. “He willed to be a man; well and good; He might have so been, and yet not be born of a woman; for neither did He make the first man whom He made, of a woman.” Now see what answer I make to this. You say, Why did He choose to be born of a woman? I answer, Why should He avoid being born of a woman? Granted that I could not show that He chose to be born of a woman; do you show why He need have avoided it. But I have already said at other times, that if He had avoided the womb of a woman, it might have betokened, as it were, that He could have contracted defilement from her; but by how much He was in His own substance more incapable of defilement, by so much less had He cause to fear the woman’s womb, as

though He could contract defilement from it. But by being born of a woman, He purposed to show to us some high mystery. For of a truth, brethren, we grant too, that if the Lord had willed to become man without being born of a woman, it were easy to His sovereign Majesty. For as He could be born of a woman without a man, so could He also have been born without the woman. But this hath He shown us, that mankind of neither sex might despair of its salvation, for the human sexes are male and female. If therefore being a man, which it behoved Him assuredly to be, He had not been born of a woman, women might have despaired of themselves, as mindful of their first sin, because by a woman was the first man deceived, and would have thought that they had no hope at all in Christ. He came therefore as a man to make special choice of that sex, and was born of a woman to console the female sex, as though He would address them and say; "That ye may know that no creature of God is bad, but that unregulated pleasure perverteth it, when in the beginning I made man, I made them male and female. I do not condemn the creature which I made. See I have been born a Man, and born of a woman; it is not then the creature which I made that I condemn, but the sins which I made not." Let each sex then at once see its honour, and confess its iniquity, and let them both hope for salvation. The poison to deceive man was presented him by woman, through woman let salvation for man's recovery be presented; so let the woman make amends for the sin by which she deceived the man, by giving birth to Christ. For the same reason again, women were the first who announced to the Apostles the Resurrection of God. The woman in Paradise announced death to her husband, and the women in the Church announced salvation to the men; the Apostles were to announce to the nations the Resurrection of Christ, the women announced it to the Apostles. Let no one then reproach Christ with His birth of a woman, by which sex the Deliverer could not be defiled, and to which it was in the purpose of the Creator to do honour.

4. But, say they, "how are we to believe that Christ was born of a woman?" I would answer, by the Gospel which hath been preached and is still preached to all the world. But these men, blind themselves, and aiming to blind others, seeing not what they ought to see, whilst they try to shake what ought to be believed, endeavour to obtrude a question on a matter which is now believed through all the earth. For they answer and say: "Do

not think to overwhelm us with the authority of the whole world—let us look to Scripture itself, urge not arguments of mere numbers against us, for the seduced multitude favours you.” To this I answer, in the first place, “Does the seduced multitude favour me?” This multitude was once a scantling. Whence grew this multitude, which in this increase was announced so long before? For this which hath been seen to increase, is none other than the same which was seen beforehand. I need not have said, it was a scantling; once it was Abraham only. Consider, brethren; it was Abraham alone throughout all the world at that time; throughout the whole world, among all men, and all nations; Abraham alone to whom it was said, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed;” and what he alone believed of his own single person, is exhibited as present now to many in the multitude of his seed. Then it was not seen, and was believed; now it is seen, and it is contested; and what was then said to one man, and was by that one believed, is disputed now by some few, when in many it is made good. He who made His disciples fishers of men, inclosed within His nets every kind of authority. If great numbers are to be believed, what more widely diffused over the whole world than the Church? If the rich are to be believed, let them consider how many rich He hath taken; if the poor, let them consider the thousands of poor; if nobles, almost all the nobility are within the Church; if kings, let them see all of them subjected to Christ; if the more eloquent, and wise, and learned, let them see how many orators, and scientific men, and philosophers of this world, have been caught by those fishermen, to be drawn from the depth to salvation; let them think of Him who, coming down to heal by the example of His own humility that great evil of man’s soul, pride, “chose the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and the foolish things of the world to confound the wise” (not the really wise, but who seemed so to be), “and chose the base things of the world, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.”

5. “Whatever you may choose to say,” they say, “we find that in the place where we read that Christ was born, the Gospels disagree with one another, and two things which disagree cannot both be true;” for, says one, “when I have proved this disagreement, I may rightly disallow belief in it, or, at least, do you who accept the belief in it, shew the agreement.” And what

disagreement, I ask, will you prove? “A plain one,” says he, “which none can gainsay.” With what security, brethren, do you hear all this, because ye are believers! Attend, dearly beloved, and see what wholesome advice the Apostle gives, who says, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus our Lord, so walk ye in Him, rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith;” for with this simple and assured faith ought we to abide stedfastly in Him, that He may Himself open to the faithful what is hidden in Him; for as the same Apostle saith, “In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge;” and He does not hide them to refuse them, but to stir up desire for those hidden things. This is the advantage of their secrecy. Honour in Him then what as yet thou understandest not, and so much the more as the veils which thou seest are more in number: for the higher in honour any one is, the more veils are suspended in his palace. The veils make that which is kept secret honoured, and to those who honour it, the veils are lifted up; but as for those who mock at the veils, they are driven away from even approaching them. Because then we “turn unto Christ, the veil is taken away.”

6. They bring forward then their cavillings, and say, “You allow Matthew is an Evangelist.” We answer: Yes indeed, with a godly confession, and a heart devout, in neither having any doubt at all, we answer plainly, Matthew is an Evangelist. “Do you believe him?” they say. Who will not answer, I do? How clear an assent doth that your godly murmur convey! So, brethren, you believe it in all assurance; you have no cause to blush for it. I am speaking to you, who was once deceived, when as in my early boyhood I chose to bring to the divine Scriptures a subtlety of criticising before the godly temper of one who was seeking truth: by my irregular life I shut the gate of my Lord against myself: when I should have knocked for it to be opened, I went on so as to make it more closely shut, for I dared to search in pride for that which none but the humble can discover. How much more blessed now are you, with what sure confidence do you learn, and in what safety, who are still young ones in the nest of faith, and receive the spiritual food; whereas I, wretch that I was, as thinking myself fit to fly, left the nest, and fell down before I flew: but the Lord of mercy raised me up, that I might not be trodden down to death by passers by, and put me in the nest

again; for those same things then troubled me, which now in quiet security I am proposing and explaining to you in the Name of the Lord.

7. As then I had begun to say, thus do they cavil. “Matthew,” say they, “is an Evangelist, and you believe him?” Immediately that we acknowledge him to be an Evangelist, we necessarily believe him. Attend then to the generations of Christ, which Matthew has set down. “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the son of Abraham.” How the Son of David, and the Son of Abraham? He could not be shown to be so, but by the succession of generations; for certain it is that when the Lord was born of the Virgin Mary, neither Abraham nor David was in this world, and dost thou say that the same man is both the Son of David, and the Son of Abraham? Let us, as it were, say to Matthew, Prove thy word, for I am waiting for the succession of the generations of Christ. “Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; and Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; and Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; and Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; and Jesse begat David the king.” Now observe how from this point the genealogy is brought down from David to Christ, who is called the Son of Abraham, and the Son of David. “And David begat Solomon, of her that had been the wife of Urias; and Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; and Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; and Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias; and Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias; and Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon; and after the carrying away into Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; and Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; and Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; and Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.” Thus then by the order and succession of fathers and forefathers, Christ is found to be the Son of David, and the Son of Abraham.

8. Now upon this thus faithfully narrated, the first cavil they bring is, that the same Matthew goes on to say, “All the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.” Then in order to tell us how Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, he went on and said, “Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise;” for by the line of the generations he had showed why Christ is called the Son of David, and the Son of Abraham. But now it needed to be shown how He was born and appeared among men: and so there follows immediately that narrative, by means of which we believe that our Lord Jesus Christ was not only born of the everlasting God, coeternal with Him who begat Him before all times, before all creation, by whom all things were made; but was also now born from the Holy Ghost, of the Virgin Mary, which we confess equally with the other; for you remember and know (for I am speaking to Catholics, to my brethren), that this is our faith, that this we profess and confess; for this faith thousands of martyrs have been slain in all the world.

9. This also which follows they like to laugh at, whose wish it is to destroy the authority of the Evangelical books, that they may show as it were that we have without any good reason believed what is said, “When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with Child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily;” for because he knew that she was not with child by him, he thought that she was so to say necessarily an adulteress. “Being a just man,” as the Scripture saith, “and not willing to make her a public example,” (that is, to divulge the matter, for so it is in many copies), “he was minded to put her away privily.” The husband indeed was in trouble, but as being a just man he deals not severely; for so great justice is ascribed to this man, as that he neither wished to keep an adulterous wife, nor could bring himself to punish and expose her. “He was minded to put her away privily,” because he was not only unwilling to punish, but even to betray her; and mark his genuine justice; for he did not wish to spare her, because he had a desire to keep her; for many spare their adulterous wives through a carnal love, choosing to keep them even though adulterous, that they may enjoy them

through a carnal desire. But this just man has no wish to keep her, and so does not love in any carnal sort; and yet he does not wish to punish her; and so in his mercy he spares her. How truly just a man is this! He would neither keep an adulteress, lest he should seem to spare her because of an impure affection, and yet he would not punish or betray her. Deservedly indeed was he chosen for the witness of his wife's virginity: and so he who was in trouble through human infirmity, was assured by Divine authority.

10. For the Evangelist goes on to say, "While he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in sleep, saying, Joseph, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus." Why Jesus? "for He shall save His people from their sins." It is well known then, that "Jesus" in the Hebrew tongue is in Latin interpreted "Saviour," which we see from this very explanation of the name; for as if it had been asked, "Why Jesus?" he subjoined immediately as explaining the reason of the word, "for He shall save His people from their sins." This then we religiously believe, this most firmly hold fast, that Christ was born by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary.

11. What then do our adversaries say? "If," says one, "I shall discover a lie, surely you will not then believe it all; and such I have discovered." Let us see: I will reckon up the generations; for by their slanderous cavillings they invite and bring us to this. Yes, if we live religiously, if we believe Christ, if we do not desire to fly out of the nest before the time, they only bring us to this—to the knowledge of mysteries. Mark then, holy brethren, the usefulness of heretics; their usefulness, that is, in respect of the designs of God, who makes a good use even of those that are bad; whereas, as regards themselves, the fruit of their own designs is rendered to them, and not that good which God brings out of them. Just as in the case of Judas; what great good did he! By the Lord's Passion all nations are saved; but that the Lord might suffer, Judas betrayed Him. God then both delivers the nations by the Passion of His Son, and punishes Judas for his own wickedness. For the mysteries which lie hid in Scripture, no one who is content with the simplicity of the faith would curiously sift them, and therefore as no one would sift them, no one would discover them but for cavillers who force us.

For when heretics cavil, the little ones are disturbed; when disturbed, they make search, and their search is, so to say, a beating of the head at the mother's breasts, that they may yield as much milk as is sufficient for these little ones. They search then, because they are troubled; but they who know and have learnt these things, because they have investigated them, and God hath opened to their knocking, they in their turn open to those who are in trouble. And so it happens that heretics serve usefully for the discovery of the truth, whilst they cavil to seduce men into error. For with less carefulness would truth be sought out, if it had not lying adversaries; "For there must be also heresies among you," and as though we should enquire the cause, he immediately subjoined, "that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."

12. What then is it that they say? "See; Matthew enumerates the generations, and says, that "from Abraham to David are fourteen generations, and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations, and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations." Now three times fourteen make forty-two; yet they number them, and find them forty-one generations, and immediately they bring up their cavilling and their insulting mockery, and say, "What means it, when in the Gospel it is said that there are three times fourteen generations, yet when they are numbered all together, they are found to be not forty-two, but forty-one?" Doubtless there is a great mystery here: and glad are we, and we give thanks unto the Lord, that by the occasion of cavillers we have discovered something which gives us in the discovery the more pleasure, in proportion to its obscurity when it was the object of search; for, as I have said before, we are exhibiting a spectacle to your minds. From Abraham then to David are fourteen generations: after that, the enumeration begins with Solomon, for David begat Solomon; the enumeration, I say, begins with Solomon, and reaches to Jechonias, during whose life the carrying away into Babylon took place; and so are there other fourteen generations, by reckoning in Solomon at the head of the second division, and Jechonias also, with whom that enumeration closes to fill up the number fourteen; and the third division begins with this same Jechonias.

13. Give attention, holy brethren, to this circumstance, at once mysterious and pleasant; for I confess to you the feeling of my own heart, whereby I believe that when I have brought it forth, and you have got taste of it, you will give the same report of it. Attend then. In the third division, beginning from this Jechonias unto the Lord Jesus Christ, are found fourteen generations; for this Jechonias is reckoned twice, as the last of the former, and the first of the following division. “But why is Jechonias,” one may say, “reckoned twice?” Nothing took place of old among the people of Israel, which was not a mysterious figure of things to come: and indeed it is not without good reason that Jechonias is reckoned twice, because if there be a boundary between two fields, be it a stone, or any dividing wall, both he who is on the one side measures up to that same wall, and he who is on the other takes the beginning of his measurement again from the same. But why this was not done in the first connecting link of the divisions, when we number from Abraham to David fourteen generations, and begin to reckon the fourteen others, not from David over again, but from Solomon, a reason must be given which contains an important mystery. Attend then. The carrying away into Babylon took place when Jechonias was appointed king in the room of his deceased father. The kingdom was taken from him, and another appointed in his room; still the carrying away unto the Gentiles took place during the lifetime of Jechonias, for no fault of Jechonias is mentioned for which he was deprived of the kingdom; but the sins rather of those who succeeded him are marked out. So then there follows the Captivity and the passing away into Babylon; and the wicked do not go alone, but the saints also go with them: for in that Captivity were the prophets Ezekiel and Daniel, and the Three Children who were cast into the flames, and so made famous. They all went according to the prophecy of the prophet Jeremiah.

14. Remember then, that Jechonias, rejected without any fault of his, ceased to reign, and passed over unto the Gentiles, when the carrying away unto Babylon took place. Now observe the figure hereby manifested beforehand, of things to come in the Lord Jesus Christ. For the Jews would not that our Lord Jesus Christ should reign over them, yet found they no fault in Him. He was rejected in His own person, and in that of His servants also, and so they passed over unto the Gentiles as into Babylon in a figure. For this also

did Jeremiah prophesy, that the Lord commanded them to go into Babylon: and whatever other prophets told the people not to go into Babylon, them he reproved as false prophets. Let those who read the Scriptures, remember this as we do; and let those who do not, give us credit. Jeremiah then on the part of God threatened those who would not go into Babylon, whereas to them who should go he promised rest there, and a sort of happiness in the cultivation of their vines, and planting of their gardens, and the abundance of their fruits. How then does the people of Israel, not now in figure but in verity, pass over unto Babylon? Whence came the Apostles? Were they not of the nation of the Jews? Whence came Paul himself? for he saith, “I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.” Many of the Jews then believed in the Lord; from them were the Apostles chosen; of them were the more than five hundred brethren, to whom it was vouchsafed to see the Lord after His resurrection; of them were the hundred and twenty in the house, when the Holy Ghost came down. But what saith the Apostle in the Acts of the Apostles, when the Jews refused the word of truth? “We were sent unto you, but seeing ye have rejected the word of God, lo! we turn unto the Gentiles.” The true passing over then into Babylon, which was then prefigured in the time of Jeremiah, took place in the spiritual dispensation of the time of the Lord’s Incarnation. But what saith Jeremiah of these Babylonians, to those who were passing over to them? “For in their peace shall be your peace.” When Israel then passed over also into Babylon by Christ and the Apostles, that is, when the Gospel came unto the Gentiles, what saith the Apostle, as though by the mouth of Jeremiah of old? “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men. For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” For they were not yet Christian kings, yet he prayed for them. Israel then praying in Babylon hath been heard; the prayers of the Church have been heard, and the kings have become Christian, and you see now fulfilled what was then spoken in figure; “In their peace shall be your peace,” for they have received the peace of Christ, and have left off to persecute Christians, that now in the secure quiet of peace, the Churches might be built up, and peoples planted in the garden of God, and that all nations might bring forth fruit in faith, and hope, and love, which is in Christ.

15. The carrying away into Babylon took place of old by Jechonias, who was not permitted to reign in the nation of the Jews, as a type of Christ, whom the Jews would not have reign over them. Israel passed over unto the Gentiles, that is, the preachers of the Gospel passed over unto the people of the Gentiles. What marvel then, that Jechonias is reckoned twice? for if he were a figure of Christ passing over from the Jews unto the Gentiles, consider only what Christ is between the Jews and Gentiles. Is He not that Corner-stone? In a corner-stone you see the end of one wall, and the beginning of another; up to that stone you measure one wall, and another from it; therefore the corner-stone which connects both walls is reckoned twice. Jechonias then as prefiguring the Lord was, as it were, a type of the corner-stone; and as Jechonias was not permitted to reign over the Jews, but they went unto Babylon, so Christ, "the stone which the builders rejected, is made the head of the corner," that the Gospel might reach unto the Gentiles. Hesitate not then to reckon the head of the corner twice, and you have at once the number written: and so there are fourteen in each of the three divisions, yet altogether the generations are not forty-two, but forty-one; for as when the order of the stones runs in a straight line, they are all reckoned but once, but when there is a deviation from the straight line to make an angle, that stone at which the deviation begins must be reckoned twice, because it belongs at once to that line which is finished at it, and to that other line which begins from it; so as long as the order of the generations continued in the Jewish people, it made no angle in the regular division of fourteen; but when the line was turned that the people might pass over into Babylon, a sort of angle as it were was made at Jechonias, so that it was necessary to reckon him twice, as the type of that adorable Corner-stone.

16. They have another cavil. "The generations of Christ," say they, "are numbered through Joseph, and not through Mary." Attend awhile, holy brethren. "It ought not to be," they say, "through Joseph." And why not? Was not Joseph the husband of Mary? "No," they say. Who says so? For the Scripture saith by the authority of the Angel that he was her husband. "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Again, he was commanded to name the Child, though He was not born of his seed; "She shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus." Now the Scripture is intent on showing, that He was not

born of Joseph’s seed, when he is told in his trouble as to her being with child, “He is of the Holy Ghost;” and yet his paternal authority is not taken from him, forasmuch as he is commanded to name the Child; and again the Virgin Mary herself, who was well aware that it was not by him that she conceived Christ, yet calls him the father of Christ.

17. Consider when this was. When the Lord Jesus, as to His Human Nature, was twelve years old (for as to His Divine Nature He is before all times, and without time), He tarried behind them in the temple, and disputed with the elders, and they wondered at His doctrine; and His parents who were returning from Jerusalem sought Him among their company, among those, that is, who were journeying with them, and when they found Him not, they returned in trouble to Jerusalem, and found Him disputing in the temple with the elders, when He was, as I said, twelve years old. But what wonder? The Word of God is never silent, though it is not always heard. He is found then in the temple, and His mother saith to Him, “Why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing;” and He said, “Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s service?” This He said for that the Son of God was in the temple of God, for that temple was not Joseph’s, but God’s. See, says some one, “He did not allow that He was the Son of Joseph.” Wait, brethren, with a little patience, because of the press of time, that it may be long enough for what I have to say. When Mary had said, “Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing,” He answered, “Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s service?” for He would not be their Son in such a sense, as not to be understood to be also the Son of God. For the Son of God He was—ever the Son of God—Creator even of themselves who spake to Him; but the Son of Man in time; born of a Virgin without the operation of her husband, yet the Son of both parents. Whence prove we this? Already have we proved it by the words of Mary, “Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing.”

18. Now in the first place for the instruction of the women, our sisters, such saintly modesty of the Virgin Mary must not be passed over, brethren. She had given birth to Christ—the Angel had come to her, and said, “Behold, thou shall conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest.”

She had been thought worthy to give birth to the Son of the Highest, yet was she most humble; nor did she put herself before her husband, even in the order of naming him, so as to say, “I and Thy father,” but she saith, “Thy father and I.” She regarded not the high honour of her womb, but the order of wedlock did she regard, for Christ the humble would not have taught His mother to be proud. “Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing.” Thy father and I, she saith, “for the husband is the head of the woman.” How much less then ought other women to be proud! for Mary herself also is called a woman, not from the loss of virginity, but by a form of expression peculiar to her country; for of the Lord Jesus the Apostle also said, “made of a woman,” yet there is no interruption hence to the order and connection of our Creed wherein we confess “that He was born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary.” For as a virgin she conceived Him, as a virgin brought Him forth, and a virgin she continued; but all females they called “women,” by a peculiarity of the Hebrew tongue. Hear a most plain example of this. The first woman whom God made, having taken her out of the side of a man, was called a woman before she “knew” her husband, which we are told was not till after they went out of Paradise, for the Scripture saith, “He made her a woman.”

19. The answer then of the Lord Jesus Christ, “I must be about My Father’s service,” does not in such sense declare God to be His Father, as to deny that Joseph was His father also; And whence prove we this? By the Scripture, which saith on this wise, “And He said unto them, Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s service; but they understood not what He spake to them: and when He went down with them, He came to Nazareth, and was subject to them.” It did not say, “He was subject to His mother,” or was “subject to her,” but “He was subject to them.” To whom was He subject? was it not to His parents? It was to both His parents that He was subject, by the same condescension by which He was the Son of Man. A little way back women received their precepts. Now let children receive theirs—to obey their parents, and to be subject to them. The world was subject unto Christ, and Christ was subject to His parents.

20. You see then, brethren, that He did not say, “I must needs be about My Father’s service,” in any such sense as that we should understand Him

thereby to have said, “You are not My parents.” They were His parents in time, God was His Father eternally. They were the parents of the Son of Man—”He,” the Father of His Word, and Wisdom, and Power, by whom He made all things. But if all things were made by that Wisdom, “which reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly ordereth all things,” then were they also made by the Son of God to whom He Himself as Son of Man was afterwards to be subject; and the Apostle says that He is the Son of David, “who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.” But yet the Lord Himself proposes a question to the Jews, which the Apostle solves in these very words; for when he said, “who was made of the seed of David,” he added, “according to the flesh,” that it might be understood that He is not the Son of David according to His Divinity, but that the Son of God is David’s Lord; for thus in another place, when He is setting forth the privileges of the Jewish people, the Apostle saith, “Whose are the fathers, of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever.” As, “according to the flesh,” He is David’s Son; but as being “God over all, blessed for ever,” He is David’s Lord. The Lord then saith to the Jews, “Whose Son say ye that Christ is?” They answered, “The Son of David.” For this they knew, as they had learnt it easily from the preaching of the Prophets; and in truth, He was of the seed of David, “but according to the flesh,” by the Virgin Mary, who was espoused to Joseph. When they answered then that Christ was David’s Son, Jesus said to them, “How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I put Thine enemies under Thy feet. If David then in spirit call Him Lord, how is He his Son?” And the Jews could not answer Him. So we have it in the Gospel. He did not deny that He was David’s Son, so that they could not understand that He was also David’s Lord. For they acknowledged in Christ that which He became in time, but they did not understand in Him what He was in all eternity. Wherefore wishing to teach them His Divinity, He proposed a question touching His Humanity; as though He would say, “You know that Christ is David’s Son, answer Me, how He is also David’s Lord?” And that they might not say, “He is not David’s Lord,” He introduced the testimony of David himself. And what doth he say? He saith indeed the truth. For you find God in the Psalms saying to David, “Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy seat.” Here then He is the Son of David. But how is He the Lord of David, who is

David’s Son? “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand.” Can you wonder that David’s Son is his Lord, when you see that Mary was the mother of her Lord? He is David’s Lord then as being God. David’s Lord, as being Lord of all; and David’s Son, as being the Son of Man. At once Lord and Son. David’s Lord, “who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;” and David’s Son, in that “He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant.”

21. Joseph then was not the less His father, because he knew not the mother of our Lord, as though concupiscence and not conjugal affection constitutes the marriage bond. Attend, holy brethren; Christ’s Apostle was some time after this to say in the Church, “It remaineth that they that have wives be as though they had none.” And we know many of our brethren bringing forth fruit through grace, who for the Name of Christ practise an entire restraint by mutual consent, who yet suffer no restraint of true conjugal affection. Yea, the more the former is repressed, the more is the other strengthened and confirmed. Are they then not married people who thus live, not requiring from each other any carnal gratification, or exacting the satisfaction of any bodily desire? And yet the wife is subject to the husband, because it is fitting that she should be, and so much the more in subjection is she, in proportion to her greater chastity; and the husband for his part loveth his wife truly, as it is written, “In honour and sanctification,” as a coheir of grace: as “Christ,” saith the Apostle, “loved the Church.” If then this be a union, and a marriage; if it be not the less a marriage because nothing of that kind passes between them, which even with unmarried persons may take place, but then unlawfully; (O that all could live so, but many have not the power!) let them at least not separate those who have the power, and deny that the man is a husband or the woman a wife, because there is no fleshly intercourse, but only the union of hearts between them.

22. Hence, my brethren, understand the sense of Scripture concerning those our ancient fathers, whose sole design in their marriage was to have children by their wives. For those even who, according to the custom of their time and nation, had a plurality of wives, lived in such chastity with them, as not to approach their bed, but for the cause I have mentioned, thus treating them indeed with honour. But he who exceeds the limits which this

rule prescribes for the fulfilment of this end of marriage, acts contrary to the very contract by which he took his wife. The contract is read, read in the presence of all the attesting witnesses; and an express clause is there that they marry “for the procreation of children;” and this is called the marriage contract. If it was not for this that wives were given and taken to wife, what father could without blushing give up his daughter to the lust of any man? But now, that the parents may not blush, and that they may give their daughters in honourable marriage, not to shame, the contract is read out. And what is read from it?—the clause, “for the sake of the procreation of children.” And when this is heard, the brow of the parent is cleared up and calmed. Let us consider again the feelings of the husband who takes his wife. The husband himself would blush to receive her with any other view, if the father would blush with any other view to give her. Nevertheless, if they cannot contain (as I have said on other occasions), let them require what is due, and let them not go to any others than those from whom it is due. Let both the woman and the man seek relief for their infirmity in themselves. Let not the husband go to any other woman, nor the woman to any other man, for from this adultery gets its name, as though it were “a going to another.” And if they exceed the bounds of the marriage contract, let them not at least exceed those of conjugal fidelity. Is it not a sin in married persons to exact from one another more than this design of the “procreation of children” renders necessary? It is doubtless a sin, though a venial one. The Apostle saith, “But I speak this of allowance,” when he was treating the matter thus. “Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.” What does this mean? That you do not impose upon yourselves any thing beyond your strength, that you do not by your mutual continence fall into adultery. “That Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.” And that he might not seem to enjoin what he only allowed (for it is one thing to give precepts to strength of virtue, and another to make allowance to infirmity), he immediately subjoined; “But this I speak of allowance, not of commandment. For I would that all men were even as I myself.” As though he would say, I do not command you to do this; but I pardon you if you do.

23. So then, my brethren, give heed. Those famous men who marry wives only for the procreation of children, such as we read the Patriarchs to have been, and know it, by many proofs, by the clear and unequivocal testimony of the sacred books; whoever, I say, they are who marry wives for this purpose only, if the means could be given them of having children without intercourse with their wives, would they not with joy unspeakable embrace so great a blessing? would they not with great delight accept it? For there are two carnal operations by which mankind is preserved, to both of which the wise and holy descend as matter of duty, but the unwise rush headlong into them through lust; and these are very different things. Now what are these two things by which mankind is preserved? The first which is confined to ourselves and relates to taking nourishment (which cannot of course be taken without some gratification of the flesh), is eating and drinking; if you do not this you will die. By this one support then of eating and drinking does the race of man subsist, by a law of its nature. But by this men are only supported as far as themselves are concerned; for they do not provide for any succession by eating and drinking, but by marrying wives. For so is the race of man preserved; first, by the means of life; but because whatever care they exercise they cannot of course live for ever, there is a second provision made, that those who are newly born may replace those who die. For the race of man is, as it is written, like the leaves on a tree, or an olive, that is, or a laurel, or some tree of this sort, which is never without foliage, yet whose leaves are not always the same. For, as it is written, “it shooteth forth some, and casteth others,” because those which sprout afresh replace the others as they fall, for the tree is ever casting its leaves, yet is ever clothed with leaves. So also the race of man feels not the loss of those who die day by day, because of the supply of those who are newly born; and thus the whole race of mankind is according to its own laws sustained, and as leaves are ever seen on the trees, so is the earth seen to be full of men. Whereas if they were only to die, and no fresh ones be born, the earth would be stripped of all its inhabitants, as certain trees are of all their leaves.

24. Seeing then that the human race subsists in such sort, as that those two supports, of which enough has now been said, are necessary to it, the wise, and understanding, and the faithful man descends to both as matter of duty,

and does not fall into them through lust. But how many are there who rush greedily to their eating and drinking, and make their whole life to consist in them, as if they were the very reason for living. For whereas men really eat to live, they think that they live to eat. These will every wise man condemn, and holy Scripture especially, all gluttons, drunkards, gormandizers, “whose god is their belly.” Nothing but the lust of the flesh, and not the need of refreshment, carries them to the table. These then fall upon their meat and drink. But they who descend to them from the duty of maintaining life, do not live to eat, but eat to live. Accordingly, if the offer were made to these wise and temperate persons that they should live without food or drink, with what great joy would they embrace the boon! that now they might not even be forced to descend to that into which it had never been their custom to fall, but that they might be lifted up always in the Lord, and no necessity of repairing the wastings of their body might make them lay aside their fixed attention towards Him. How think ye that the holy Elias received the cruse of water, and the cake of bread, to satisfy him for forty days? With great joy no doubt, because he eat and drank to live, and not to serve his lust. But try to bring this about, if you could, for a man who, like the beast in his stall, places his whole blessedness and happiness in the table. He would hate your boon, and thrust it from him, and look upon it as a punishment. And so in that other duty of marriage, sensual men seek for wives only to satisfy their sensuality, and therefore at length are scarce contented even with their wives. And oh! I would that if they cannot or will not cure their sensuality, they would not suffer it to go beyond that limit which conjugal duty prescribes, I mean even that which is granted to infirmity. Nevertheless, if you were to say to such a man, “why do you marry?” he would answer perhaps for very shame, “for the sake of children.” But if any one in whom he could have unhesitating credit were to say to him, “God is able to give, and yea, and will give you children without your having any intercourse with your wife;” he would assuredly be driven to confess that it was not for the sake of children that he was seeking for a wife. Let him then acknowledge his infirmity, and so receive that which he pretended to receive only as matter of duty.

25. It was thus those holy men of former times, those men of God sought and wished for children. For this one end—the procreation of children, was

their intercourse and union with their wives. It is for this reason that they were allowed to have a plurality of wives. For if immoderateness in these desires could be well-pleasing to God, it would have been as much allowed at that time for one woman to have many husbands, as one husband many wives. Why then had all chaste women no more than one husband, but one man had many wives, except that for one man to have many wives is a means to the multiplication of a family, whereas a woman would not give birth to more children, how many soever more husbands she might have. Wherefore, brethren, if our fathers' union and intercourse with their wives, was for no other end but the procreation of children, it had been great matter of joy to them, if they could have had children without that intercourse, since for the sake of having them they descended to that intercourse only through duty, and did not rush into it through lust. So then was Joseph not a father because he had gotten a son without any lust of the flesh? God forbid that Christian chastity should entertain a thought, which even Jewish chastity entertained not! Love your wives then, but love them chastely. In your intercourse with them keep yourselves within the bounds necessary for the procreation of children. And inasmuch as you cannot otherwise have them, descend to it with regret. For this necessity is the punishment of that Adam from whom we are sprung. Let us not make a pride of our punishment. It is his punishment who because he was made mortal by sin, was condemned to bring forth only a mortal posterity. This punishment God has not withdrawn, that man might remember from what state he is called away, and to what state he is called, and might seek for that union, in which there can be no corruption.

26. Among that people then, because it was necessary that there should be an abundant increase until Christ came, by the multiplication of that people in whom were to be prefigured all that was to be prefigured as instruction for the Church, it was a duty to marry wives, by means of whom that people in whom the Church should be foreshown might increase. But when the King of all nations Himself was born, then began the honour of virginity with the mother of the Lord, who had the privilege of bearing a Son without any loss of her virgin purity. As that then was a true marriage, and a marriage free from all corruption, so why should not the husband chastely receive what his wife had chastely brought forth? For as she was a wife in

chastity, so was he in chastity a husband; and as she was in chastity a mother, so was he in chastity a father. Whoso then says that he ought not to be called father, because he did not beget his Son in the usual way, looks rather to the satisfaction of passion in the procreation of children, and not the natural feeling of affection. What others desire to fulfil in the flesh, he in a more excellent way fulfilled in the spirit. For thus they who adopt children, beget them by the heart in greater chastity, whom they cannot by the flesh beget. Consider, brethren, the laws of adoption; how a man comes to be the son of another, of whom he was not born, so that the choice of the person who adopts has more right in him than the nature of him who begets him has. Not only then must Joseph be a father, but in a most excellent manner a father. For men beget children of women also who are not their wives, and they are called natural children, and the children of the lawful marriage are placed above them. Now as to the manner of their birth, they are born alike; why then are the latter set above the other, but because the love of a wife, of whom children are born, is the more pure. The union of the sexes is not regarded in this case, for this is the same in both women. Where has the wife the pre-eminence but in her fidelity, her wedded love, her more true and pure affection? If then a man could have children by his wife without this intercourse, should he not have so much the more joy thereby, in proportion to the greater chastity of her whom he loves the most?

27. See too by this how it may happen, that one man may have not two sons only, but two fathers also. For by the mention of adoption, it may occur to your thoughts that so it may be. For it is said; A man can have two sons, but two fathers he cannot have. But the truth is, it is found that he can have two fathers also, if one have begotten him of his body, and another adopted him in love. If one man then can have two fathers, Joseph could have two fathers also; might be begotten by one, and adopted by another. And if this be so, what do their cavillings mean, who insist that Matthew has followed one set of generations, and Luke another? And in fact we find that so it is, for Matthew has given Jacob as the father of Joseph, and Luke Heli. Now it is true it might seem, as if one and the same man, whose son Joseph was, had two names. But inasmuch as the grandfathers, and all the other progenitors which they enumerate, are different, and in the very number of

the generations, the one has more, and the other fewer, Joseph is plainly shown hereby to have had two fathers. Now having disposed of the cavil of this question, forasmuch as clear reason has shown that it may happen that he who has begotten a child may be one father, and he who has adopted him another: supposing two fathers, it is nothing strange if the grandfathers and the great grandfathers, and the rest in the line upwards which are enumerated, should be different as coming from different fathers.

28. And let not the law of adoption seem to you to be foreign to our Scriptures, and that, as if it were recognised only in the practice of human laws, it cannot fall in with the authority of the divine books. For it is a thing established of old time, and frequently heard of in the Ecclesiastical books—that not only the natural way of birth, but the free choice of the will also, should give birth to a child. For women, if they had no children of their own, used to adopt children born of their husbands by their hand-maids, and even oblige their husbands to give them children in this way; as Sarah, Rachel, and Leah. And in doing this the husbands did not commit adultery, in that they obeyed their wives in that matter which had regard to conjugal duty, according to what the Apostle saith: “The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife.” Moses too, who was born of a Hebrew mother and was exposed, was adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter. There were not then indeed the same forms of law as now, but the choice of the will was taken for the rule of law, as the Apostle saith also in another place, “The Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law.” But if it is permitted to women to make those their children to whom they have not given birth, why should it not be allowed men to do so too with those whom they have not begotten of their body, but of the love of adoption. For we read that the patriarch Jacob even, the father of so many children, made his grandchildren, the sons of Joseph, his own children, in these words: “These too shall be mine, and they shall receive the land with their brethren, and those which thou begettest after them shall be thine.” But it will be said, perhaps, that this word “adoption” is not found in the Holy Scriptures. As though it were of any importance by what name it is called, when the thing itself is there—for a woman to have a child to whom she has not given birth, or a man a child whom he has not begotten. And he

may, without any opposition from me, refuse to call Joseph adopted, provided he grant that he may have been the son of a man of whose body he was not born. Yet the Apostle Paul does continually use this very word "adoption," and that to express a great mystery. For though Scripture testifies that our Lord Jesus Christ is the only Son of God, it says, that the brethren and coheirs whom He hath vouchsafed to have, are made so by a kind of adoption through Divine grace. "When," saith he, "the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." And in another place: "We groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." And again, when he was speaking of the Jews, "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh; who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the testaments, and the giving of the law; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever." Where he shows, that the word "adoption," or at least the thing which it signifies, was of ancient use among the Jews, just as was the Testament and the giving of the Law, which he mentions together with it.

29. Added to this; there is another way peculiar to the Jews, in which a man might be the son of another of whom he was not born according to the flesh. For kinsmen used to marry the wives of their next of kin, who died without children, to raise up seed to him that was deceased. So then he who was thus born was both his son of whom he was born, and his in whose line of succession he was born. All this has been said, lest any one, thinking it impossible for two fathers to be mentioned properly for one man, should imagine that either of the Evangelists who have narrated the generations of the Lord are to be, by an impious calumny, charged so to say with a lie; especially when we may see that we are warned against this by their very words. For Matthew, who is understood to make mention of that father of whom Joseph was born, enumerates the generations thus: "This one begat the other," so as to come to what he says at the end, "Jacob begat Joseph." But Luke—because he cannot properly be said to be begotten who is made a child either by adoption, or who is born in the succession of the deceased, of her who was his wife—did not say, "Heli begat Joseph," or "Joseph

whom Heli begat," but "Who was the son of Heli," whether by adoption, or as being born of the next of kin in the succession of one deceased.

30. Enough has now been said to show that the question, why the generations are reckoned through Joseph and not through Mary, ought not to perplex us; for as she was a mother without carnal desire, so was he a father without any carnal intercourse. Let then the generations ascend and descend through him. And let us not exclude him from being a father, because he had none of this carnal desire. Let his greater purity only confirm rather his relationship of father, lest the holy Mary herself reproach us. For she would not put her own name before her husband; but said, "Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing." Let not then these perverse murmurers do that which the chaste spouse of Joseph did not. Let us reckon then through Joseph, because as he is in chastity a husband, so is he in chastity a father. And let us put the man before the woman, according to the order of nature and the law of God. For if we should cast him aside and leave her, he would say, and say with reason, "Why have you excluded me? Why do not the generations ascend and descend through me?" Shall we say to him, "Because thou didst not beget Him by the operation of thy flesh?" Surely he will answer, "And is it by the operation of the flesh that the Virgin bare Him? What the Holy Spirit wrought, He wrought for both." "Being a just man," saith the Gospel. The husband then was just and the woman just. The Holy Spirit reposing in the justice of them both, gave to both a Son. In that sex which is by nature fitted to give birth, He wrought that birth which was for the husband also. And therefore doth the Angel bid them both give the Child a name, and hereby is the authority of both parents established. For when Zacharias was yet dumb, the mother gave a name to her newborn son. And when they who were present "made signs to his father what he would have him called, he took a writing-table and wrote" the name which she had already pronounced. So to Mary too the Angel saith, "Behold, thou shalt conceive a Son, and shalt call His name Jesus." And to Joseph also he saith, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." Again it is said, "And she brought forth a Son to him," by which he is established to be a father, not in

the flesh indeed, but in love. Let us then acknowledge him to be a father, as in truth he is. For most advisedly and most wisely do the Evangelists reckon through him, whether Matthew in descending from Abraham down to Christ, or Luke in ascending from Christ through Abraham up to God. The one reckons in a descending, the other in an ascending order; but both through Joseph. And why? Because he is the father. How the father? Because he is the more undeniably a father in proportion as he is more chastely so. He was thought, it is true, to be the father of our Lord Jesus Christ in another way: that is, as other parents are according to a fleshly birth, and not through the fruitfulness of a wholly spiritual love. For Luke said, “Who was supposed to be the father of Jesus.” Why supposed? Because men’s thoughts and suppositions were directed to what is usually the case with men. The Lord then was not of the seed of Joseph, though He was supposed to be; yet nevertheless the Son of the Virgin Mary, who is also the Son of God, was born to Joseph, the fruit of his piety and love.

31. But why does St Matthew reckon in a descending, and Luke in an ascending order? I pray you give attentive ear to what the Lord may help me to say on this matter; with your minds now at ease, and disembarrassed from all the perplexity of these cavillings. Matthew descends through his generations, to signify our Lord Jesus Christ descending to bear our sins, that in the seed of Abraham all nations might be blessed. Wherefore, he does not begin with Adam, for from him is the whole race of mankind. Nor with Noe, because from his family again, after the flood, descended the whole human race. Nor could the man Christ Jesus, as descended from Adam, from whom all men are descended, bear upon the fulfilment of prophecy; nor, again, as descended from Noe, from whom also all men are descended; but only as descended from Abraham, who at that time was chosen, that all nations should be blessed in his seed, when the earth was now full of nations. But Luke reckons in an ascending order, and does not begin to enumerate the generations from the beginning of the account of our Lord’s birth, but from that place, where he relates His Baptism by John. Now, as in the incarnation of the Lord, the sins of the human race are taken upon Him to be borne, so in the consecration of His Baptism are they taken on Him to be expiated. Accordingly, St. Matthew, as representing His descent to bear our sins, enumerates the generations in a descending order;

but the other, as representing the expiation of sins, not His own, of course, but our sins, enumerates them in an ascending order. Again, St. Matthew descends through Solomon, by whose mother David sinned; St. Luke ascends through Nathan another son of the same David, through whom he was purged from his sin. For we read, that Nathan was sent to him to reprove him, and that he might through repentance be healed. Both Evangelists meet together in David; the one in descending, the other in ascending; and from David to Abraham, or from Abraham to David, there is no difference in any one generation. And so Christ, both the Son of David and the Son of Abraham, comes up to God. For to God must we be brought back, when renewed in Baptism, from the abolition of sins.

32. Now, in the generations which Matthew enumerates, the predominant number is forty. For it is a custom of the Holy Scriptures, not to reckon what is over and above certain round numbers. For thus it is said to be four hundred years, after which the people of Israel went out of Egypt, whereas it is four hundred and thirty. And so here the one generation, which exceeds the fortieth, does not take away the predominance of that number. Now this number signifies the life wherein we labour in this world, as long as we are absent from the Lord, during which the temporal dispensation of the preaching of the truth is necessary. For the number ten, by which the perfection of blessedness is signified, multiplied four times, because of the fourfold divisions of the seasons, and the fourfold divisions of the world, will make the number forty. Wherefore Moses and Elias, and the Mediator Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, fasted forty days, because in the time of this life, continence from the enticements of the body is necessary. Forty years also did the people wander in the wilderness. Forty days the waters of the flood lasted. Forty days after His resurrection did the Lord converse with the disciples, persuading them of the reality of His risen body, whereby He showed that in this life, “wherein we are absent from the Lord” (which the number forty, as has been already said, mystically figures), we have need to celebrate the memory of the Lord’s Body, which we do in the Church, till He come. Forasmuch, then as our Lord descended to this life, and “the Word was made flesh, that He might be delivered for our sins, and rise again for our justification,” Matthew followed the number forty; so that the one generation which there exceeds that number, either does not hinder its

predominance—just as those thirty years do not hinder the perfect number of four hundred—or that it even has this further meaning, that the Lord Himself, by the addition of whom the forty-one is made up, so descended to this life to bear our sins, as yet, by a peculiar and especial excellency, whereby He is in such sense man, as to be also God, to be found to be excepted from this life. For of Him only is that said, which never has been or shall be able to be said of any holy man, however perfected in wisdom and righteousness, "The Word was made Flesh."

33. But Luke, who ascends up through the generations from the baptism of the Lord, makes up the number seventy-seven, beginning to ascend from our Lord Jesus Christ Himself through Joseph, and coming through Adam up to God. And that is, because by this number is signified the abolition of all sins, which takes place in Baptism. Not that the Lord Himself had any thing to be forgiven Him in baptism, but that by His humility He set forth its usefulness to us. And though that was only the baptism of John, yet there appeared in it to outward sense the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and hereby was consecrated the Baptism of Christ Himself, whereby Christians were to be baptized. The Father in the voice which came from heaven, the Son in the person of the Mediator Himself, the Holy Ghost in the dove.

34. Now, why the number seventy-seven should contain all sins which are remitted in Baptism, there occurs this probable reason, for that the number ten implies the perfection of all righteousness, and blessedness, when the creature denoted by seven cleaves to the Trinity of the Creator; whence also the Decalogue of the Law was consecrated in ten precepts. Now the "transgression" of the number ten is signified by the number eleven; and sin is known to be transgression, when a man, in seeking something "more," exceeds the rule of justice. And hence the Apostle calls avarice "the root of all evils." And to the soul which goes a-whoring from God, it is said, in the Person of the same Lord, "Thou wast in hope, if thou didst depart from Me, that thou wouldest have something more." Because the sinner then has in his transgression, that is, in his sin, regard to himself alone—in that he wishes to gratify himself by some private good of his own (whence they are blamed "who seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's;" and

charity is commended, “which seeketh not her own”); therefore, this number eleven, by which transgression is signified, is multiplied, not ten times, but seven, and so makes up seventy-seven. For transgression looks not to the Trinity of the Creator, but to the creature, that is, to the man himself, which creature the number seven denotes. Three, because of the soul, in which there is a kind of image of the Trinity of the Creator (for it is in the soul that man has been made after the image of God); and four, because of the body. For the four elements of which the body is made up are known by all. And if any one know them not, he may easily remember, that this body of the world, in which our bodies move along, has, so to say, four principal parts, which even Holy Scripture is constantly making mention of, East, and West, and North, and South. And forasmuch as sins are committed either by the mind, as in the will only, or by the works of the body also, and so visibly; therefore the Prophet Amos continually introduces God as threatening, and saying, “For three and four iniquities I will not turn away,” that is,” I will not dissemble My wrath.” Three, because of the nature of the soul; four, because of that of the body; of which two, man consists.

35. So, then, seven times eleven, that is, as has been explained, the transgression of righteousness, which has regard only to the sinner himself, make up the number seventy-seven, in which it is signified, that all sins which are remitted in Baptism are contained. And hence it is that Luke ascends up through seventy-seven generations unto God, as showing that man is reconciled unto God by the abolition of all sin. Hence the Lord Himself saith to Peter, who asked Him how oft he ought to forgive a brother, “I say not unto thee seven times, but until seventy times and seven.” Now, whatever else can be drawn out of these recesses and treasures of God’s mysteries by those who are more diligent and more worthy than I, receive. Yet have I spoken according to my poor ability, as the Lord hath aided and given me power, and as I best could, considering also the little time I had. If any one of you be capable of anything further, let him knock at Him from whom I too receive what I am able to receive and speak. But, above all things, remember this; not to be disturbed by the Scriptures, which you do not yet understand, nor be puffed up by what you

do understand; but what you do not understand, with submission wait for, and what you do understand, hold fast with charity.

SERMON II

OF THE WORDS OF ST. MATTHEW'S GOSPEL, CHAP. III. 13, "THEN JESUS COMETH FROM GALILEE TO THE JORDAN UNTO JOHN, TO BE BAPTIZED OF HIM." CONCERNING THE TRINITY

1. The lesson of the Gospel hath set before me a subject whereof to speak to you, beloved, as though by the Lord's command, and by His command in very deed. For my heart hath waited for an order as it were from Him to speak, that I might understand thereby that it is His wish that I should speak on that which He hath also willed should be read to you. Let your zeal and devotion then give ear, and before the Lord our God Himself aid ye my labour. For we behold and see as it were in a divine spectacle exhibited to us, the notice of our God in Trinity, conveyed to us at the river Jordan. For when Jesus came and was baptized by John, the Lord by His servant (and this He did for an example of humility; for He showeth that in this same humility is righteousness fulfilled, when as John said to Him, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?" He answered, "Suffer it to be so now, that all righteousness may be fulfilled"), when He was baptized then, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit came down upon Him in the form of a Dove: and then a Voice from on high followed, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here then we have the Trinity in a certain sort distinguished. The Father in the Voice,—the Son in the Man,—the Holy Spirit in the Dove. It was only needful just to mention this, for most obvious is it to see. For the notice of the Trinity is here conveyed to us plainly and without leaving room for doubt or hesitation. For the Lord Christ Himself coming in the form of a servant to John, is doubtlessly the Son: for it cannot be said that it was the Father, or the Holy Spirit. "Jesus," it is said, "cometh;" that is, the Son of God. And who hath any doubt about the Dove? or who saith, "What is the Dove?" when the Gospel itself most plainly testifieth, "The Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove." And in like manner as to that voice there can be no doubt that it is the Father's, when He saith, "Thou art My Son." Thus then we have the Trinity distinguished.

2. And if we consider the places, I say with confidence (though in fear I say it), that the Trinity is in a manner separable. When Jesus came to the river, He came from one place to another; and the Dove descended from heaven to earth, from one place to another; and the very Voice of the Father sounded neither from the earth, nor from the water, but from heaven; these three are as it were separated in places, in offices, and in works. But one may say to me, "Show the Trinity to be inseparable rather. Remember that thou who art speaking art a Catholic, and to Catholics art thou speaking." For thus doth our faith teach, that is, the true, the right Catholic faith, gathered not by the opinion of private judgment, but by the witness of the Scriptures, not subject to the fluctuations of heretical rashness, but grounded on Apostolic truth: this we know, this we believe. This though we see it not with our eyes, nor as yet with the heart, so long as we are being purified by faith, yet by this faith we most lightly and most strenuously maintain—That the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are a Trinity inseparable; One God, not three Gods. But yet so One God, as that the Son is not the Father, and the Father is not the Son, and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son, but the Spirit of the Father and of the Son. This ineffable Divinity, abiding ever in itself, making all things new, creating, creating anew, sending, recalling, judging, delivering, this Trinity, I say, we know to be at once ineffable and inseparable.

3. What am I then about? See: The Son came separately in the Man; The Holy Spirit descended separately from heaven in the form of a Dove; The Voice of the Father sounded separately out of heaven, "This is My Son." Where then is this inseparable Trinity? God hath made you attentive by my words. Pray for me, and open, as it were, the folds of your hearts, and may He grant you wherewith your hearts so opened may be filled. Share my travail with me. For you see what I have undertaken; and not only what, but who I am that have undertaken it, and of what I wish to speak, and where and what my position is, even in that "body which is corruptible, and presseth down the soul, and the earthly habitation weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things." When therefore I abstract my mind from the multiplicity of things, and gather it up into the One God, the inseparable Trinity, that so I may see something which I may say of it, think ye that in this "body which presseth down the soul," I shall be able to say (in order

that I may speak to you something worthy of the subject), “O Lord, I have lifted up my soul unto Thee.” May He assist me, may He lift it up with me. For I am too infirm in respect of Him, and He in respect of me is too mighty.

4. Now this is a question which is often proposed by the most earnest brethren, and often has place in the conversation of the lovers of God’s word; for this much knocking is wont to be made unto God, while men say, “Doeth the Father anything which the Son doeth not? or doeth the Son anything which the Father doeth not?” Let us first speak of the Father and the Son. And when He to Whom we say, “Be Thou my helper, leave me not,” shall have given good success to this essay of ours, then shall we understand how that the Holy Spirit also is in no way separated from the operation of the Father and the Son. As concerning the Father and the Son, then, brethren, give ear. Doeth the Father anything without the Son? We answer, No. Do you doubt it? For what doeth He without Him “by Whom all things were made? All things,” saith the Scripture, “were made by Him.” And to inculcate it fully upon the slow, and hard, and disputatious it added, And without Him was not anything made.”

5. What then, brethren? “All things were made by Him.” We understand then by this that the whole creation which was made by the Son, the Father made by His Word—God, by His Power and Wisdom. Shall we then say, “All things” indeed when they were created, “were made by Him,” but now the Father doeth not all things by Him? God forbid! Be such a thought as this far from the hearts of believers; be it driven away from the mind of the devout; from the understanding of the godly! It cannot be that He created by Him, and doth not govern by Him. God forbid that what existeth should be governed without Him, when by Him it was made, that it might have existence! But let us show by the testimony of the same Scripture that not only were all things created and made by Him as we have quoted from the Gospel, “All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made,” but that the things which were made are also governed and ordered by Him. You acknowledge Christ then to be the Power and Wisdom of God; acknowledge too what is said of Wisdom, “She reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth she order all things.” Let us not then

doubt that by Him are all things ruled, by whom all things were made. So then the Father doeth nothing without the Son, nor the Son without the Father.

6. But so a difficulty meets us, which we have undertaken to solve in the Name of the Lord, and by His will. If the Father doeth nothing without the Son, nor the Son without the Father, will it not follow, that we must say that the Father also was born of the Virgin Mary, the Father suffered under Pontius Pilate, the Father rose again and ascended into heaven? God forbid! We do not say this, because we do not believe it. “For I believed, therefore have I spoken: we also believe, and therefore speak.” What is in the Creed? That the Son was born of a Virgin, not the Father. What is in the Creed? That the Son suffered under Pontius Pilate and was dead, not the Father. Have we forgotten, that some, misunderstanding this, are called “Patripassians,” who say that the Father Himself was born of a woman, that the Father Himself suffered, that the Father is the same as the Son, that they are two names, not two things? And these hath the Church Catholic separated from the communion of saints, that they might not deceive any, but dispute in separation from her.

7. Let us then recall the difficulty of the question to your minds. One may say to me, “You have said that the Father doeth nothing without the Son, nor the Son without the Father, and testimonies you have adduced out of the Scriptures, that the Father doeth nothing without the Son, for that all things were made by Him;’ and again, that that which was made is not governed without the Son, for that He is the Wisdom of the Father, reaching from one end to another mightily, and sweetly ordering all things.’ And now you tell me, as if contradicting yourself, that the Son was born of a Virgin, and not the Father; the Son suffered, not the Father; the Son rose again, not the Father. See then, here I see the Son doing something which the Father doeth not. Do you therefore either confess that the Son doeth something without the Father, or else that the Father also was born and suffered, and died and rose again. Say one or the other of these, choose one of the two.” No: I will choose neither, I will say neither the one nor the other. I will neither say the Son doeth anything without the Father, for I should lie were I to say so; nor that the Father was born, suffered, and died, and rose again, for I should

equally lie were I to say this. “How then, saith he, will you disentangle yourself from these straits?”

8. The proposing of the question pleases you. May God grant His aid, that its solution may please you too. See, what I am asking Him, that He would free both me and you. For in one faith do we stand in the Name of Christ; and in one house do we live under one Lord, and in one body are we members under One Head, and by One Spirit are we quickened. That the Lord then may set both me who speak, and you who hear, free from the straits of this most perplexing question, I say as follows: The Son indeed and not the Father was born of the Virgin Mary; but this very birth of the Son, not of the Father, was the work both of the Father and the Son. The Father indeed suffered not, but the Son, yet the suffering of the Son was the work of the Father and the Son. The Father did not rise again, but the Son, yet the resurrection of the Son was the work of the Father and the Son. We seem then to be already quit of this question, but peradventure it is only by words of my own; let us see whether it is not as well by words divine. It is my place then to prove by testimonies of the sacred books, that the birth, and passion, and resurrection of the Son were in such sort the works of the Father and the Son, that whereas it is the birth, and passion, and resurrection of the Son only, yet these three things which belong to the Son only, were wrought neither by the Father alone, nor by the Son alone, but by the Father and the Son. Let us prove each several point, you hear as judges; the case has been already laid open; now let the witnesses come forth. Let your judgment say to me, as is wont to be said to pleaders in a cause, “Establish what you promise.” I will do so assuredly, with the Lord’s assistance, and will cite the books of heavenly law. Ye have listened to me attentively while proposing the question, listen now with still more attention while I prove my point.

9. I must first teach you concerning the birth of Christ, how it is the work of the Father and the Son, though what the Father and the Son did work pertains only to the Son. I will quote Paul; one competently versed in the divine law. That Paul, I say, will I quote, who prescribes the laws of peace, not of litigation, for lawyers at this day also have a Paul who prescribes the laws of the courts, not the Christian’s laws. Let the holy Apostle show us

then how the birth of the Son was the work of the Father. “But,” saith he, “when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law.” Thus have ye heard him, and because it is plain and express, have understood. See, the Father made the Son to be born of a Virgin. For “when the fulness of time was come, God sent His Son;” the Father sent His Christ. How sent He Him? “made of a woman, made under the Law.” The Father then made Him of a woman under the Law.

10. Doth this peradventure perplex you, that I said of a virgin, and Paul saith of a woman? Let not this perplex you; let us not stop here, for I am not speaking to persons without instruction. The Scripture saith both, both “of a virgin,” and “of a woman.” Where saith it, “of a virgin? Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son.” And “of a woman,” as you have just heard; here there is no contradiction. For the peculiarity of the Hebrew tongue gives the name of “women” not to such as have lost their virgin estate, but to females generally. You have a plain passage in Genesis, when Eve herself was first made, “He made her a woman.” Scripture also in another place saith, that God ordered “the women” to be separated “which had not known man by lying with him.” This then ought now to be well established, and should not detain us, that so we may be able to explain, by the Lord’s assistance, what will deservedly detain us.

11. We have then proved that the birth of the Son was the work of the Father; now let us prove that it was the work of the Son also. Now what is the birth of the Son of the Virgin Mary? Surely it is His assumption of the form of a servant in the Virgin’s womb. Is the birth of the Son ought else, but the taking of the form of a servant in the womb of the Virgin? Now hear how that this was the work of the Son also. “Who when He was in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant.” “When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman,” who was “made His Son of the seed of David according to the flesh.” In this then we see that the birth of the Son was the work of the Father; but in that the Son Himself “emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant,” we see that the birth of the Son was the work also of the Son Himself. This then has been proved; so let

us pass on from this point, and receive ye with attention that which comes next in order.

12. Let us prove that the Passion also of the Son was the work of the Father and the Son. We may see that the Passion of the Son is the work of the Father, since it is written, “Who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all;” and that the Passion of the Son was His own work also, “Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” The Father delivered up the Son, and the Son delivered up Himself. This Passion was wrought out for one, but by both. As therefore the birth, so the Passion, of Christ, was not the work of the Son without the Father, nor of the Father without the Son. The Father delivered up the Son, and the Son delivered up Himself. What did Judas in it, but his own sin? Let us then pass on from this point also, and come we to the resurrection.

13. Let us see the Son indeed, and not the Father, rising again, but both the Father and the Son working the resurrection of the Son. The resurrection of the Son is the work of the Father; for it is written, “Wherefore He exalted Him, and gave Him a name which is above every name.” The Father therefore raised the Son to life again, in exalting, and awakening Him from the dead. And did the Son also raise Himself? Assuredly He did. For He said of the temple, as the figure of His own body, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it again.” Lastly, as the laying down of life has reference to the Passion, so the taking it again has reference to the resurrection. Let us see then if the Son laid down His life indeed, and the Father restored His life to Him, and not He to Himself. For that the Father restored it is plain. For so saith the Psalm, “Raise Thou Me up, and I will requite them.” But why do ye wait for a proof from me that the Son also restored life to Himself? Let Him speak Himself; “I have power to lay down My life.” I have not yet said what I promised. I have said, “to lay it down;” and you are crying out already, for you are flying past me. For well-instructed as ye are in the school of your heavenly teacher, as attentively listening to, and in pious affection rehearsing, what is read, ye are not ignorant of what comes next. “I have power,” saith He,”to lay down My life, and I have power to take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself, and take it again.”

14. I have made good what I promised; I have established my propositions with, as I think, the strongest proofs and testimonies. Hold fast then what you have heard. I will recapitulate it briefly, and entrust it to be stored up in your minds as a thing, to my thinking, of the greatest usefulness. The Father was not born of the Virgin; yet this birth of the Son from the Virgin was the work both of the Father and the Son. The Father suffered not on the Cross; yet the Passion of the Son was the work both of the Father and the Son. The Father rose not again from the dead; yet the resurrection of the Son was the work both of the Father and the Son. You see then a distinction of Persons, and an inseparableness of operation. Let us not say therefore that the Father doeth any thing without the Son, or the Son any thing without the Father. But perhaps you have a difficulty as to the miracles which Jesus did, lest peradventure He did some which the Father did not! Where then is that saying, “The Father who dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works?” All that I have now said was plain; it needed to be barely mentioned; there was no necessity for much labour to make it understood, but only that care should be taken, that it might be brought to your remembrance.

15. I wish to say something further, and here ask sincerely both for your more earnest attention, and your devotion to Godward. For none but bodies are held or contained in places suited to the nature of bodies. The Divinity is beyond all such places: let no one seek for it as though it were in space. It is everywhere invisible and inseparably present; not in one part greater, and another smaller; but whole everywhere, and nowhere divided. Who can see? Who can comprehend this? Let us restrain ourselves: let us remember who we are; and of Whom we speak. Let this and that, or whatever appertains to the nature of God, be with a pious faith embraced, with a holy respect entertained, and as far as is allowed us, as far as is possible for us, in an unspeakable sort understood. Let words be hushed: let the tongue be silent, let the heart be aroused, let the heart be lifted up thither. For it is not of such a nature as that it can ascend into the heart of man; but the heart of man must itself ascend to it. Let us consider the creatures (“for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made”), if haply in the things which God hath made, with which we have some familiarity of intercourse, we may find some resemblance, whereby we may prove that there are some three

things which may be exhibited as three separably, yet whose operation is inseparable.

16. Come, brethren, give me your whole attention. But first of all consider what it is that I promise; if haply I can find any resemblance in the creature, for the Creator is too high above us. And peradventure some one of us, whose mind the glare of truth hath, as it were, stricken with sparks of its brightness, can say those words, “I said in my ecstasy.”—What saidst thou in thine ecstasy?—”I am cast away from the sight of Thine eyes.” For it seems to me as if he who said this had lifted up his soul unto God, and had been carried beyond himself, while they said daily unto him, “Where is thy God?”—had reached by a kind of spiritual contact to that unchangeable Light, and through the weakness of his sight had been unable to endure it, and so had fallen back again into his own, as it were, sick and languid state, and had compared himself with that Light, and had felt that the eye of his mind could not yet be attempered to the light of God’s wisdom. And because he had done this in ecstasy, hurried away from his bodily senses, and taken up into God, when he was recalled in a manner from God to man, he said, “I said in my ecstasy.” For I saw in ecstasy I know not what, which I could not long endure, and being restored to my mortal estate, and the manifold thoughts of mortal things from the body which presseth down the soul, I said, what? “I am cast away from the sight of Thine eyes.” Thou art far above, and I am far below. What then, brethren, shall we say of God? For if thou hast been able to comprehend what thou wouldest say, it is not God; if thou hast been able to comprehend it, thou hast comprehended something else instead of God. If thou hast been able to comprehend Him as thou thinkest, by so thinking thou hast deceived thyself. This then is not God, if thou hast comprehended it; but if it be God, thou hast not comprehended it. How therefore wouldest thou speak of that which thou canst not comprehend?

17. Let us see then, if haply we cannot find something in the creature whereby we may prove that some three things are exhibited separately whose operation is yet inseparable. But whither shall we go? To the heaven, to dispute of the sun and moon and stars? To the earth, to dispute of shrubs, and trees, and animals which fill the earth? Or of the heaven and the earth

itself, which contain all the things that are in heaven and earth? How long, O man, wilt thou roam over the creation? Return unto thyself, see, consider, examine thine own self. Thou art searching among the creatures for some three things which are separately exhibited, whose operation is yet inseparable; if then thou art searching for this among the creatures, search for it first in thine own self. For thou art not other than a creature. It is a resemblance thou art searching for. Wouldest thou search for it among the cattle? For of God it was thou wast speaking, when thou wast in search for this resemblance. Thou wast speaking of the Trinity of Majesty ineffable, and because thou didst fail in contemplating the Divine Nature, and with becoming humility didst confess thine infirmity, thou didst come down to human nature; there then pursue thine enquiry. Wilt thou make thy search among the cattle, in the sun, or the stars? What of these was made after the image and likeness of God? Thou mayest search in thine own self for something more familiar to thee, and more excellent than all these. For God made man after His own image and likeness. Search then in thine own self, if haply the image of the Trinity bear not some vestige of the Trinity. And what is this image? It is an image very different from its model; yet different as it is, it is an image and a likeness notwithstanding, not indeed in the same way as the Son is the Image, being the Same Which the Father is. For an image is in one sort in a son, and in another in a mirror. There is great difference between them. Thine image in thy son is thine own self, for the son is by nature what thou art. In substance the same as thou, in person other than thou. Man then is not an image as the Only-begotten Son is, but made after a sort of image and likeness. Let him then search for something in himself, if so be he may find it, even for some three things which are exhibited separately, whose operation is yet inseparable. I will search, and do ye search with me. I will not search in you, but do ye search in yourselves, and I in myself. Let us search in concert, and in concert discuss our common nature and substance.

18. See, O man, and consider whether what I am saying be true. Hast thou a body and flesh? I have, you say. For how am I in this place that I now occupy, and how do I move from place to place? How do I hear the words of one who is speaking, but by the ears of my body? How do I see the mouth of him who is speaking, but by the eyes of my body? It is plain then

that thou hast a body, no need is there to trouble one's self about so plain a matter. Consider then another point, consider what it is that acts through this body. For thou hearest by means of the ear, but it is not the ear that hears. There is something else within which hears by means of the ear. Thou seest by means of the eye—examine this eye. What! hast thou acknowledged the house, and paid no regard to him that inhabiteth it? Doth the eye see by itself? Is it not another that sees by means of the eye? I will not say, that the eye of a dead man, from whose body it is plain the inhabitant hath departed, sees not, but any man's eye who is only thinking of something else, sees not the form of the object that is before him. Look then into thine inner man. For there it is rather that the resemblance must be sought for of some three things which are exhibited separately, whose operation is yet inseparable. What then is in thy mind? Peradventure if I search, I find many things there, but there is something very nigh at hand, which is understood more easily. What then is in thy soul? Call it to mind, reflect upon it. For I do not require that credit should be given me in what I am about to say; if thou find it not in thyself, admit it not. Look inward then; but first let us see what had escaped me, whether man be not the image, not of the Son only, or of the Father only, but of the Father and the Son, and so consequently of course of the Holy Ghost also. The words in Genesis are, "Let Us make man after Our own image and likeness." So then the Father doth not act without the Son, nor the Son without the Father. "Let Us make man after Our own image and likeness. Let us make," not, "I will make," or "Make thou," or "Let him make," but, "Let Us make after," not "thine image," or "mine," but, "after Our image."

19. I am asking, I am speaking remember of a distant resemblance. So let no one say, See what he has compared to God! I have advertised you of this already, and by anticipation have both put you on your guard, and have guarded myself. The two are indeed very far removed from each other, as the lowest from the Highest, as the changeable from the Unchangeable, the created from the Creator, the human nature from the Divine. Lo! I apprise you of this at first, that no one may say ought against me, because there is so great a difference in the things whereof I am about to speak. Lest then while I am asking for your ears, ye should any of you be getting ready your teeth, remember I have undertaken merely to show, that there are some

three things which are separately exhibited, whose operation is yet inseparable. How like or how unlike these things are to the Almighty Trinity is no concern of mine at present; but in the very creatures of the lowest order, and subject to change, we do find three things which may be separately exhibited, whose operation is yet inseparable. O carnal imagination! obstinate, unbelieving conscience! Why as concerning that ineffable Majesty dost thou doubt as to that thing, which thou canst discover in thine own self? For I ask thee, O man, hast thou memory? If not, how hast thou retained what I have said? But perhaps thou hast forgotten already what I said but a little while ago. Yet these very words, “I said”—these two syllables, thou couldest not retain except by memory. For how shouldest thou know they were two, if as the second sounded, thou hadst forgotten the first? But why do I dwell longer on this? Why am I so urgent? Why do I so press conviction? For thou hast memory; it is plain. I am searching then for something else. Hast thou understanding? “I have,” you will say. For hadst thou not memory, thou couldest not retain what I said; and hadst thou not understanding, thou couldest not comprehend what thou hast retained. Thou hast then this as well as the other. Thou recallest thine understanding unto that which thou dost retain within, and so thou seest it, and by seeing art fashioned into that state as to be said to know. But I am searching for a third thing. Memory thou hast, whereby to retain what is said; and understanding thou hast, whereby to understand what is retained; but as touching these two, I ask again of thee, Hast thou not with thy will retained and understood? Undoubtedly, with my will, you will say. So then thou hast will.

These are the three things which I promised I would bring home to your ears and minds. These three things are in thee, which thou canst number, but canst not separate. These three then, memory, understanding, and will—these three, I say, consider how they are separately exhibited, yet is their operation inseparable.

20. The Lord will be my present help, and I see that He is present to help me; by your understanding what I say, I see that He is present to help me. For I perceive by these your voices how that you have understood me, and I surely trust that He will still assist us, that you may comprehend the whole.

I promised to show you three things which are separately exhibited whose operation is yet inseparable. See then; I did not know what was in thy mind, and thou showedest me by saying, “Memory.” This word, this sound, this expression came forth from thy mind to mine ears. For before that, thou hadst the silent idea of this memory, but thou didst not express it. It was in thee, but it had not yet come to me. But in order that that which was in thee might be passed on to me, thou didst express the very word, that is, “Memory.” I heard it, I heard these three syllables in the word, “Memory.” It is a noun, a word of three syllables, it sounded, and came to my ear, and impressed a certain idea on my mind. The sound has passed away, but the word whereby the idea was conveyed, and the idea itself, remains. But I ask, when thou didst pronounce this word, “Memory,” thou seest certainly that it has reference to the memory only. For the other two things have their own proper names. For one is called “the understanding,” and the other, “the will,” not the “memory,” but that one alone is called “memory.” Nevertheless, whereby didst thou work in order to express this, in order to produce these three syllables? This word which has reference to the memory only, both memory was engaged in producing in thee, that thou mightest retain what thou saidst, and understanding, that thou mightest know what thou retainedst, and will, that thou mightest give expression to what thou knewest. Thanks be to the Lord our God! He hath helped us, both you and me. For I tell you the truth, beloved, that I undertook the examination and explanation of this subject with exceeding fear. For I was afraid lest haply I might gladden the spirit of the more enlarged in mind, and inflict on the slower capacities an afflictive weariness. But now I see both by the attention with which you have heard, and the quickness with which you have understood me, that you have not only caught what I have said, but that you have anticipated my words. Thanks be to the Lord!

21. See then, henceforth I speak in all security of that which you have already understood; I am inculcating no unknown lesson, but am only conveying to you by recapitulation what you have already received. Now, of these three things, one only has been yet named and expressed; “Memory” is the name of one only of those three, yet all the three concurred in producing the name of this single one of the three. The single word “memory” could not be expressed, but by the operation of the will,

and the understanding, and the memory. The single word "understanding" could not be expressed, but by the operation of the memory, the will, and the understanding; and the single word "will" could not be expressed, but by the operation of the memory and the understanding and the will. What I promised, then, I think has been explained, that which I have pronounced separately, I conceived inseparably. The three together have produced each one of these, but yet this one which the three have produced has reference not to the three, but to one. The three together have produced the word "memory," but this word has reference to none but the memory only. The three together have produced the word "understanding," but it has reference to none but the understanding only. The three together have produced the word "will," but it has reference to none but the will only. So the Trinity concurred in the formation of the Body of Christ, but it belongs to none but Christ only. The Trinity concurred in the formation of the Dove from heaven; but it belongs to none but the Holy Spirit only. The Trinity formed the Voice from heaven, but this Voice belongs to none but the Father only.

22. Let no one then say to me, no one with unfair cavils try to press upon my infirmity, saying, "Which then of these three, which you have shown to be in our mind or soul, which of them answers to the Father, that is, so to say, to the likeness of the Father, which of them to that of the Son, and which of them to that of the Holy Ghost?" I cannot say—I cannot explain this. Let us leave somewhat to meditation and to silence. Enter into thine own self; separate thyself from all tumult. Look into thine inner self; see if thou have there some sweet retiring place of conscience, where there may be no noise, no disputation, no strife, or debatings; where there will be not a thought of dissensions, and obstinate contention. Be meek to hear the word, that so thou mayest understand. Perhaps thou mayest soon have to say, "Thou wilt make me hear of joy and gladness, and my bones shall rejoice;" the bones, that is, which are humbled, not those that are lifted up.

23. It is enough, then, that I have shown that there are some three things which are exhibited separately, whose operation is yet inseparable. If thou hast discovered this in thine own self; if thou hast discovered it in man; if thou hast discovered it in a being that walketh on the earth, and beareth about a frail "body, which weigheth down the soul;" believe that the Father,

Son, and Holy Spirit may be exhibited separately, by certain visible symbols, by certain forms borrowed from the creatures, and still their operation be inseparable. This is enough. I do not say that “memory” is the Father,—the “understanding” the Son,—and “will” the Spirit; I do not say this; let men understand it how they will. I do not venture to say this. Let us reserve the greater truths for those who are capable of them: but, infirm as I am myself, I convey to the infirm only what is according to our powers. I do not say that these things are in any sort to be equalled with the Holy Trinity, to be squared after an analogy; that is, a kind of exact rule of comparison. This I do not say. But what do I say? See. I have discovered in thee three things, which are exhibited separately, whose operation is inseparable; and of these three, every single name is produced by the three together; yet does not this name belong to the three, but to some one of the three. Believe then in the Trinity, what thou canst not see, if in thyself thou hast heard, and seen, and retained it. For what is in thine own self thou canst know: but what is in Him who made thee, whatever it be, how canst thou know? And if thou shalt be ever able, thou art not able yet. And even when thou shalt be able, wilt thou be able so to know God, as He knoweth Himself? Let then this suffice you, beloved: I have said all I could; I have made good my promise as ye required. As to the rest which must be added, that your understanding may make advancement, this seek from the Lord.

SERMON III

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. CHAP. V. 3 AND 8, “BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT:” ETC., BUT ESPECIALLY ON THAT, “BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART: FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD.”

1. By the return of the commemoration of a holy virgin, who gave her testimony to Christ, and was found worthy of a testimony from Christ, who was put to death openly, and crowned invisibly, I am reminded to speak to you, beloved, on that exhortation which the Lord hath just now uttered out of the Gospel, assuring us that there are many sources of a blessed life, which there is not a man that does not wish for. There is not a man surely can be found, who does not wish to be blessed. But oh! if as men desire the reward, so they would not decline the work that leads to it! Who would not run with all alacrity, were it told him, “Thou shalt be blessed”? Let him then

also give a glad and ready ear when it is said, “Blessed, if thou shalt do thus.” Let not the contest be declined, if the reward be loved; and let the mind be enkindled to an eager execution of the work, by the setting forth of the reward. What we desire, and wish for, and seek, will be hereafter; but what we are ordered to do for the sake of that which will be hereafter, must be now. Begin now, then, to recall to mind the divine sayings, and the precepts and rewards of the Gospel. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” The kingdom of heaven shall be thine hereafter; be poor in spirit now. Wouldest thou that the kingdom of heaven should be thine hereafter? Look well to thyself whose thou art now. Be poor in spirit. You ask me, perhaps, “What is to be poor in spirit?” No one who is puffed up is poor in spirit; therefore he that is lowly is poor in spirit. The kingdom of heaven is exalted; but “he who humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

2. Mark what follows: “Blessed,” saith He, “are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” Thou wishest to possess the earth now; take heed lest thou be possessed by it. If thou be meek, thou wilt possess it; if ungentle, thou wilt be possessed by it. And when thou hearest of the proposed reward, do not, in order that thou mayest possess the earth, unfold the lap of covetousness, whereby thou wouldest at present possess the earth, to the exclusion even of thy neighbour by whatever means; let no such imagination deceive thee. Then wilt thou truly possess the earth, when thou dost cleave to Him who made heaven and earth. For this is to be meek, not to resist thy God, that in that thou doest well He may be well-pleasing to thee, not thou to thyself; and in that thou sufferest ill justly, He may not be unpleasing to thee, but thou to thyself. For no small matter is it that thou shalt be well-pleasing to Him, when thou art displeased with thyself; whereas if thou art well-pleased with thine own self, thou wilt be displeasing to Him.

3. Attend to the third lesson, “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” The work consisteth in mourning, the reward in consolation; for they who mourn in a carnal sort, what consolations have they? Miserable consolations, objects rather of fear. There the mourner is comforted by things which make him fear lest he have to mourn again. For

instance, the death of a son causes the father sorrow, and the birth of a son joy. The one he has carried out to his burial, the other he has brought into the world; in the former is occasion of sadness, in the latter of fear: and so in neither is there consolation. That therefore will be the true consolation, wherein shall be given that which may not be lost, so that they may rejoice for their after consolation, who mourn that they are in exile now.

4. Let us come to the fourth work and its reward, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Dost thou desire to be filled? Whereby? If the flesh long for fulness, after digestion thou wilt suffer hunger again. So He saith, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." If the remedy which is applied to a wound heal it, there is no more pain; but that which is applied against hunger, food that is, is so applied as to give relief only for a little while. For when the fulness is past, hunger returns. This remedy of fulness is applied day by day, yet the wound of weakness is not healed. Let us therefore "hunger and thirst after righteousness, that we may be filled" with that righteousness after which we now hunger and thirst. For filled we shall be with that for which we hunger and thirst. Let our inner man then hunger and thirst, for it hath its own proper meat and drink. "I," saith He, "am the Bread which came down from heaven." Here is the bread of the hungry; long also for the drink of the thirsty, "For with Thee is the well of life.")

5. Mark what comes next: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." Do this, and so shall it be done to thee; deal so with others, that God may so deal with thee. For thou art at once in abundance and in want—in abundance of temporal things, in want of things eternal. The man whom thou hearest is a beggar, and thou art thyself God's beggar. Petition is made to thee, and thou makest thy petition. As thou hast dealt with thy petitioner, so shall God deal with His. Thou art at once full and empty; fill the empty with thy fulness, that thy emptiness may be filled with the fulness of God.

6. Mark what comes next: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." This is the end of our love; an end whereby we are perfected, and not consumed. For there is an end of food, and an end of a garment; of food when it is consumed by the eating; of a garment when it is perfected in the weaving. Both the one and the other have an end; but the one is an end of

consumption, the other of perfection. Whatsoever we now do, whatsoever we now do well, whatsoever we now strive for, or are in laudable sort eager for, or blamelessly desire, when we come to the vision of God, we shall require no more. For what need he seek for, with whom God is present? or what shall suffice him, whom God sufficeth not? We wish to see God, we seek, we kindle with desire to see Him. Who doth not? But mark what is said: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Provide thyself then with that whereby thou mayest see Him. For (to speak after the flesh) how with weak eyes desirest thou the rising of the sun? Let the eye be sound, and that light will be a rejoicing, if it be not sound, it will be but a torment. For it is not permitted with a heart impure to see that which is seen only by the pure heart. Thou wilt be repelled, driven back from it, and wilt not see it. For “blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” How often already hath he enumerated the blessed, and the causes of their blessedness, and their works and recompenses, their merits and rewards! But nowhere hath it been said, “They shall see God.” “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, they shall be filled.” “Blessed are the merciful, they shall obtain mercy.” In none of these hath it been said, “They shall see God.” When we come to the “pure in heart,” there is the vision of God promised. And not without good cause; for there, in the heart, are the eyes, by which God is seen. Speaking of these eyes, the Apostle Paul saith, “The eyes of your heart being enlightened.” At present then these eyes are enlightened, as is suitable to their infirmity, by faith; hereafter as shall be suited to their strength, they shall be enlightened by sight. “For as long as we are in the body we are absent from the Lord; For we walk by faith, not by sight.” Now as long as we are in this state of faith, what is said of us? “We see now through a glass darkly; but then face to face.”

7. Let no thought be entertained here of a bodily face. For if enkindled by the desire of seeing God, thou hast made ready thy bodily face to see Him, thou wilt be looking also for such a face in God. But if now thy conceptions of God are at least so spiritual as not to imagine Him to be corporeal (of which subject I treated yesterday at considerable length, if yet it was not in

vain), if I have succeeded in breaking down in your heart, as in God’s temple, that image of human form; if the words in which the Apostle expresses his detestation of those, “who, professing themselves to be wise became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man,” have entered deep into your minds, and taken possession of your inmost heart; if ye do now detest and abhor such impiety, if ye keep clean for the Creator His own temple, if ye would that He should come and make His abode with you, “Think of the Lord with a good heart, and in simplicity of heart seek for Him.” Mark well who it is to whom ye say, if so be ye do say it, and say it in sincerity, “My heart said to Thee, I will seek Thy face.” Let thine heart also say, and add, “Thy face, Lord, will I seek.” For so wilt thou seek it well, because thou seekest with thine heart. Scripture speaks of the “face of God, the arm of God, the hands of God, the feet of God, the seat of God,” and His footstool; but think not in all this of human members. If thou wouldest be a temple of truth, break down the idol of falsehood. The hand of God is His power. The face of God is the knowledge of God. The feet of God are His presence. The seat of God, if thou art so minded, is thine own self. But perhaps thou wilt venture to deny that Christ is God! “Not so,” you say. Dost thou grant this too, that “Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God? “I grant it,” you say. Hear then, “The soul of the righteous is the seat of wisdom.” “Yes.” For where hath God His seat, but where He dwelleth? And where doth He dwell, but in His temple? “For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” Take heed therefore how thou dost receive God. “God is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.” Let the ark of testimony enter now into thy heart, if thou art so minded, and let Dagon fall. Now therefore give ear at once, and learn to long for God; learn to make ready that whereby thou mayest see God. “Blessed,” saith He, “are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Why dost thou make ready the eyes of the body? If He should be seen by them, that which should be so seen would be contained in space. But He who is wholly everywhere is not contained in space. Cleanse that whereby He may be seen.

8. Hear and understand, if haply through His help I shall be able to explain it; and may He help us to the understanding of all the above-named works and rewards, how suitable rewards are apportioned to their corresponding

duties. For where is there anything said of a reward which does not suit, and harmonize with its work? Because the lowly seem as it were aliens from a kingdom, He saith, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Because meek men are easily despoiled of their land, He saith, “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the land.” Now the rest are plain at once; they are understood of themselves, and require no one to treat of them at length; they need only one to mention them. “Blessed are they that mourn.” Now what mourner does not desire consolation? “They,” saith He, “shall be comforted.” “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness.” What hungry and thirsty man does not seek to be filled? “And they,” saith He, “shall be filled.” “Blessed are the merciful.” What merciful man but wishes that a return should be rendered him by God of His own work, that it may be so done to him, as he doeth to the poor? “Blessed,” saith He, “are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” How in each case hath every duty its appropriate reward: and nothing is introduced in the reward which doth not suit the precept! For the precept is, that thou be “poor in spirit;” the reward, that thou shalt have the “kingdom of heaven.” The precept is, that thou be “meek;” the reward, that thou shalt “possess the earth.” The percept is, that thou “mourn;” the reward, that thou shalt be “comforted.” The precept is, that thou “hunger and thirst after righteousness;” the reward, that thou shalt “be filled.” The precept is, that thou be “merciful;” the reward, that thou shalt “obtain mercy.” And so the precept is, that thou cleanse the heart; the reward, that thou shalt see God.

9. But do not so conceive of these precepts and rewards, as to think when thou dost hear, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,” that the poor in spirit, or the meek, or they that mourn, or they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, or the merciful, will not see Him. Think not of those that are pure in heart, that they only will see Him, whilst the others will be excluded from the sight of Him. For all these several characters are the self-same persons. They shall all see; but they shall not see in that they are poor in spirit, or meek, or in that they mourn, and hunger and thirst after righteousness, or are merciful, but in that they are pure in heart. Just as if bodily works were duly assigned to the several members of the body, and one were to say for example, Blessed are they who have feet, for they shall walk; blessed are they that have hands, for they shall work; blessed are they

that have a voice, for they shall cry aloud; blessed are they who have a mouth and tongue, for they shall speak; blessed are they that have eyes, for they shall see. Even so our Lord arranging in their order the members as it were of the soul, hath taught what is proper to each. Humility qualifies for the possession of the kingdom of heaven; meekness qualifies for possessing the earth; mourning for consolation; hunger and thirst after righteousness for being filled; mercy for the obtaining mercy; a pure heart for seeing God.

10. If then we desire to see God, whereby shall our eye be purified? For who would not care for, and diligently seek the means of purifying that eye whereby he may see Him whom he longeth after with an entire affection? The Divine record has expressly mentioned this when it says, "purifying their hearts by faith." The faith of God then purifies the heart, the pure heart sees God. But because this faith is sometimes so defined by men who deceive themselves, as though it were enough only to believe (for some promise themselves even the sight of God and the kingdom of heaven, who believe and live evilly); against these, the Apostle James, incensed and indignant as it were with a holy charity, saith in his Epistle, "Thou believest there is one God." Thou applaudest thyself for thy faith, for thou markest how that many ungodly men think there are gods many, and thou rejoicest in thyself because thou dost believe that there is but one God; "Thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." Shall they also see God? They shall see Him who are pure in heart. But who can say that unclean spirits are pure in heart? And yet they also "believe and tremble."

11. Our faith then must be different from the faith of devils. For our faith purifies the heart; but their faith makes them guilty. For they do wickedly, and therefore say they to the Lord, "What have we to do with Thee?" When thou hearest the devils say this, thinkest thou that they do not acknowledge Him? "We know," they say, "who Thou art: Thou art the Son of God." This Peter says, and is commended; the devil says it, and is condemned. Whence cometh this, but that though the words be the same, the heart is different? Let us then make a distinction in our faith, and not be content to believe. This is no such faith as purifieth the heart. "Purifying their hearts," it is said, "by faith." But by what, and what kind of faith, save that which the Apostle Paul defines when he says, "Faith which worketh by love." That

faith distinguishes us from the faith of devils, and from the infamous and abandoned conduct of men. “Faith,” he says. What faith? “That which worketh by love,” and which hopeth for what God doth promise. Nothing is more exact or perfect than this definition. There are then in faith these three things. He in whom that faith is which worketh by love, must necessarily hope for that which God doth promise. Hope therefore is the associate of faith. For hope is necessary as long as we see not what we believe, lest perhaps through not seeing, and by despairing to see, we fail. That we see not, doth make us sad; but that we hope we shall see, comforteth us. Hope then is here, and she is the associate of faith. And then charity also, by which we long, and strive to attain, and glow with desire, and hunger and thirst. This then is taken in also; and so there will be faith, hope, and charity. For how shall there not be charity there, since charity is nothing else but love? And this faith is itself defined as that “which worketh by love.” Take away faith, and all thou believest perisheth; take away charity, and all that thou dost perisheth. For it is the province of faith to believe, of charity to do. For if thou believest without love, thou dost not apply thyself to good works; or if thou dost, it is as a servant, not as a son, through fear of punishment, not through love of righteousness. Therefore I say, that faith purifieth the heart, which worketh by love.

12. And what does this faith effect at present? What does it by so many testimonies of Scripture, by its manifold lessons, its various and plentiful exhortations, but make us “see now through a glass darkly, and hereafter face to face.” But return not now in thought again to this thy bodily face. Think only of the face of the heart. Force, compel, press thine heart to think of things divine. Whatsoever occurs to thy mind that is like to a body, throw it off from thee. If thou canst not yet say, “It is this,” yet at least say, “It is not this.” For when wilt thou be able to say, “This is God”? Not even then, when thou shall see Him; for what thou shalt then see is ineffable. Thus the Apostle says, that he “was caught up into the third heaven, and heard ineffable words.” If the words are ineffable, what is He whose words they are? Therefore as thou dost think of God, perchance there is presented to thee the idea of some human figure of marvellous and exceeding greatness, and thou hast set it before the eyesof thy mind as something very great, and grand, and of vast extension. Still somewhere thou hast set bounds to it. If

thou hast, it is not God. But if thou hast not set bounds to it, where can the face be? Thou art fancying to thyself some huge body, and in order to distinguish the members in it, thou must needs set bounds to it. For in no other way but by setting bounds to this large body, canst thou distinguish the members. But what art thou about, O foolish and carnal imagination! Thou hast made a large bulky body, and so much the larger, as thou hast thought the more to honour God. Another adds one cubit to it, and makes it greater than before.

13. But "I have read," you will say. What hast thou read, who hast understood nothing? Yet tell me, what hast thou read? Let us not thrust back the babe in understanding with his play. Tell me, what hast thou read? "Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool." I hear thee; I have read it also: but it may be that thou thinkest thyself to have the advantage, in that thou hast both read and believed. But I also believe what thou hast just said. Let us then believe it together. What do I say? Let us search it out together. Lo! hold fast what thou hast so read and believed; "Heaven is My throne (that is, "my seat," for "throne," in Greek, is "seat," in Latin), and the earth is My footstool." But hast thou not read these words as well, "Who has meted out the heaven with the palm of His hand?" I conclude that thou hast read them; thou dost acknowledge them, and confess that thou believest them; for in that book we read both the one and the other, and believe both. But now think a while, and teach me. I make thee my teacher, and myself the little one. Teach me, I pray thee, "Who is He that sitteth on the palm of His hand?"

14. See, thou hast drawn the figure and lineaments of the members of God from a human body. And perhaps it has occurred to thee to think, that it is according to the body that we were made after the Image of God. I will admit this idea for a time to be considered, and canvassed, and examined, and by disputation to be thoroughly sifted. Now then, if it please thee, hear me; for I heard thee in what thou wast pleased to say. God sitteth in heaven, and meteth out the heaven with His palm. What! doth the same heaven become broad when it is God's seat, and narrow, when He meteth it out? Or is God when sitting, limited to the measure of His palm? If this be so, God did not make us after His likeness, for the palm of our hand is much

narrower than that part of the body whereon we sit. But if He be as broad in His palm as in His sitting, He hath made our members quite unlike His. There is no resemblance here. Let the Christian then blush to set up such an idol in his heart as this. Wherefore take heaven for all saints. For the earth also is spoken of all who are in the earth, “Let all the earth worship Thee.” If we may properly say with regard to those who dwell on the earth, “Let all the earth worship Thee,” we may with the same propriety say also as to those who dwell in heaven, “Let all the heaven bear Thee.” For even the Saints who dwell on earth, though in their body they tread the earth, in heart dwell in heaven. For it is not in vain that they are reminded to “lift up their hearts,” and when they are so reminded, they answer, “that they lift them up:” nor in vain is it said, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.” In so far therefore as they have their conversation there, they do bear God, and they are heaven; because they are the seat of God; and when they declare the words of God, “The heavens declare the glory of God.”

15. Return then with me to the face of the heart, and make it ready. That to which God speaketh is within. The ears, and eyes, and all the rest of the visible members, are either the dwelling place or the instrument of some thing within. It is the inner man where Christ doth dwell, now by faith, and hereafter He will dwell in it, by the presence of His Divinity, when we shall have known “what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height; when we shall have known also the love of Christ that surpasseth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God.” Now then if thou wouldest enter into the meaning of these words, summon all thy powers to comprehend the breadth, and length, and height, and depth. Wander not in the imagination of the thoughts through the spaces of the world, and the yet comprehensible extent of this so vast a body. Look for what I am speaking of in thine own self. The “breadth” is in good works; the “length” is in long-suffering and perseverance in well-doing; the “height” is in the expectation of rewards above, for which height’s sake thou art bidden “to lift up thy heart.” Do well, and persevere in well-doing, because of God’s reward. Esteem earthly things as nothing, lest, when this earth shall be smitten with any scourge of that wise One, thou say that thou hast

worshipped God in vain, hast done good works in vain, hast persevered in good works in vain. For by doing good works thou hadst as it were the “breadth,” by persevering in them thou hadst as it were the “length;” but by seeking earthly things thou hast not had the “height.” Now observe the “depth;” it is the grace of God in the secret dispensation of His will. “For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?” and, “Thy judgments are as a great depth.”

16. This conversation of well-doing, of perseverance in well-doing, of hoping for rewards above, of the secret dispensation of the grace of God, in wisdom not in foolishness, nor yet in finding fault, because one man is after this manner and another after that; for “there is no iniquity with God;” apply this, I say, if you think good, also to the Cross of thy Lord. For it was not without a meaning that He chose this kind of death, in whose power it was even either to die or not. Now if it was in His power to die or not, why was it not in His power also to die in this or the other manner! Not without a meaning then did He select the Cross, whereby to crucify thee to this world. For the “breadth” is the transverse beam in the cross where the hands are fastened, to signify good works. The “length” is in that part of the wood which reaches from this transverse beam to the ground. For there the body is crucified and in a manner stands, and this standing signifies perseverance. Now “the height” is in that part, which from the same transverse beam projects upward to the head, and hereby is signified the expectation of things above. And where is the “depth” but in that part which is fixed in the ground? For so is the dispensation of grace, hidden and in secret. It is not seen itself, but from thence is projected all that is seen. After this, when thou shalt have comprehended all these things, not in the mere understanding but in action also (“for a good understanding have all they that do hereafter),” then if thou canst, stretch out thyself to attain to the knowledge of the “love of Christ which passeth knowledge.” When thou hast attained to it, thou “wilt be filled with all the fulness of God.” Then will be fulfilled the “face to face.” Now thou wilt be filled with all the fulness of God, not as if God should be full of thee, but so that thou shalt be full of God. Seek there, if thou canst, for any bodily face. Away with such trifles from the eye of the mind. Let the child cast away his playthings, and learn to handle more serious matters. And in many things we are but

children; and when we were more so than we are, we were borne with by our betters. “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God.” For by this is the heart purified; for that in it is that faith “which worketh by love.” Hence, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

SERMON IV

ON THAT WHICH IS WRITTEN IN THE GOSPEL, MATT. V. 16, “EVEN SO LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE MEN, THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS, AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN:” AND CONTRARIWISE, CHAP. VI., “TAKE HEED THAT YE DO NOT YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BEFORE MEN, TO BE SEEN OF THEM.”

1. It is wont to perplex many persons, Dearly beloved, that our Lord Jesus Christ in His Evangelical Sermon, after He had first said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven;” said afterwards, “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them.” For so the mind of him who is weak in understanding is disturbed, is desirous to obey both precepts, and distracted by diverse, and contradictory commandments. For a man can as little obey but one master, if he give contradictory orders, as he can serve two masters, which the Saviour Himself hath testified in the same Sermon to be impossible. What then must the mind that is in this hesitation do, when it thinks that it cannot, and yet is afraid not to obey? For if he set his good works in the light to be seen of men, that he may fulfil the command, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven;” he will think himself involved in guilt because he has done contrary to the other precept which says, “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them.” And again, if fearing and avoiding this, he conceal his good works, he will think that he is not obeying Him who commands, saying, “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works.”

2. But he who is of a right understanding, fulfils both, and will obey in both the Universal Lord of all, who would not condemn the slothful servant, if he commanded those things which could by no means be done. For give ear to “Paul, the servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God,” both doing and teaching both duties. See how his “light

shineth before men, that they may see his good works. We commend ourselves," saith he, "to every man's conscience in the sight of God." And again, "For we provide things honest, not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of men." And again, "Please all men in all things, even as I please all men in all things." See, on the other hand, how he takes heed, that he "do not his righteousness before men to be seen of them. Let every man," saith he, "prove his own work, and then shall he have glorying in himself, and not in another." And again, "For our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience." And that, than which nothing is plainer, "If," saith he, "I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." But lest any of those who are perplexed about the precepts of our Lord Himself as contradictory, should much more raise a question against His Apostle and say, How sayest thou, "Please all men in all things, even as I also please all men in all things:" and yet also sayest, "If I yet pleased men; I should not be the servant of Christ"? May the Lord Himself be with us, who spake also in His servant and Apostle, and open to us His will, and give us the means of obeying it.

3. The very words of the Gospel carry with them their own explanation; nor do they shut the mouths of those who hunger, seeing they feed the hearts of them that knock. The intention of a man's heart, its direction and its aim, is what is to be regarded. For if he who wishes his good works to be seen of men, sets before men his own glory and advantage, and seeks for this in the sight of men, he does not fulfil either of those precepts which the Lord has given as touching this matter; because He has at once looked to "doing his righteousness before men to be seen of them;" and his light has not so shined before men that they should see his good works, and glorify His Father which is in heaven. It was himself he wished to be glorified, not God; he sought his own advantage, and loved not the Lord's will. Of such the Apostle says, "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." Accordingly, the sentence was not finished at the words, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works;" but there was immediately subjoined why this was to be done; "that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven;" that when a man who does good works is seen of men, he may have only the intention of the good work in his own conscience, but may have no intention of being known, save for the

praise of God, for their advantage-sake to whom he is thus made known; for to them this advantage comes, that God who has given this power to man begins to be well-pleasing to them; and so they do not despair, but that the same power might be vouchsafed to themselves also if they would. And so He did not conclude the other precept, “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men,” otherwise than in the words, “to be seen of them;” nor did He add in this case, “that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven,” but rather, “otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.” For by this He shows us, that they who are such, as He will not have His faithful ones to be, seek a reward in this very thing, that they are seen of men—that it is in this they place their good—in this that they delight the vanity of their heart—in this is their emptiness, and inflation, their swelling, and wasting away. For why was it not sufficient to say, “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men,” but that he added, “that ye may be seen of them,” except because there are some who do their “righteousness before men;” not that they may be seen of them, but that the works themselves may be seen; and the Father which is in heaven, who hath vouchsafed to endow with these gifts the ungodly whom He had justified, may be glorified?

4. They who are such, neither do they account their righteousness as their own, but His, by the faith of whom they live (whence also the Apostle says, “That I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith;” and in another place, “That we may be the righteousness of God in Him.” Whence also he finds fault with the Jews in these words, “Being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and wishing to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God”). Whosoever then wish their good works to be so seen of men, that He may be glorified from whom they have received those things which are seen in them, and that thereby those very persons who see them, may through the dutifulness of faith be provoked to imitate the good, their light shines truly before men, because there beams forth from them the light of charity; theirs is no mere empty fume of pride; and in the very act they take precautions, that they do not their righteousness before men to be seen of them, in that they do not reckon that

righteousness as their own, nor do they therefore do it that they may be seen; but that He may be made known, who is praised in them that are justified, that so He may bring to pass in him that praises that which is praised in others, that is, that He may make him that praises to be himself the object of praise. Observe the Apostle too, how that when he had said, “Please all men in all things, as I also please all men in all things;” he did not stop there, as if he had placed in that, namely, the pleasing men, the end of his intention; for else he would have said falsely, “If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ;” but he subjoined immediately why it was that he pleased men; “Not seeking,” saith he, “mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.” So he at once did not please men for his own profit, lest he should not be “the servant of Christ;” and he did please men for their salvation’s sake, that he might be a faithful Minister of Christ; because for him his own conscience in the sight of God was enough, and from him there shined forth in the sight of men something which they might imitate.

SERMON V

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. V. 22, “WHOSOEVER SHALL SAY TO HIS BROTHER, THOU FOOL, SHALL BE IN DANGER OF THE HELL OF FIRE.”

1. The section of the Holy Gospel which we just now heard when it was read, must have sorely alarmed us, if we have faith; but those who have not faith, it alarmed not. And because it does not alarm them, they are minded to continue in their false security, as knowing not how to divide and distinguish the proper times of security and fear. Let him then who is leading now that life which has an end, fear, that in that life which is without end, he may have security. Therefore were we alarmed. For who would not fear Him who speaketh the truth, and saith, “Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.” Yet “the tongue can no man tame.” Man tames the wild beast, yet he tames not his tongue; he tames the lion, yet he bridles not his own speech; he tames all else, yet he tames not himself; he tames what he was afraid of, and what he ought to be afraid of, in order that he may tame himself, that he does not fear. But how is this? It is a true sentence, and came forth from an oracle of truth, “But the tongue can no man tame.”

2. What shall we do then, my brethren? I see that I am speaking indeed to a large assembly, yet, seeing that we are one in Christ, let us take counsel as it were in secret. No stranger heareth us, we are all one, because we are all united in one. What shall we do then? “Whosoever saith to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire: But the tongue can no man tame.” Shall all men go into hell fire? God forbid! “Lord, Thou art our refuge from generation to generation:” Thy wrath is just: Thou sendest no man into hell unjustly. “Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?” and whither shall I flee from Thee, but to Thee? Let us then understand, Dearly beloved, that if no man can tame the tongue, we must have recourse to God, that He may tame it. For if thou shouldest wish to tame it, thou canst not, because thou art a man. “The tongue can no man tame.” Observe a like instance to this in the case of those beasts which we do tame. The horse does not tame himself; the camel does not tame himself; the elephant does not tame himself; the viper does not tame himself; the lion does not tame himself; and so also man does not tame himself. But that the horse, and ox, and camel, and elephant, and lion, and viper, may be tamed, man is sought for. Therefore let God be sought to, that man may be tamed.

3. Therefore, “O Lord, art Thou become our refuge.” To Thee do we betake ourselves, and with Thy help it will be well with us. For ill is it with us by ourselves. Because we have left Thee, Thou hast left us to ourselves. Be we then found in Thee, for in ourselves were we lost. “Lord, Thou art become our refuge.” Why then, brethren, should we doubt that the Lord will make us gentle, if we give up ourselves to be tamed by him? Thou hast tamed the lion which thou madest not; shall not He tame thee, who made thee? For from whence didst thou get the power to tame such savage beasts? Art thou their equal in bodily strength? By what power then hast thou been able to tame great beasts? The very beasts of burden, as they are called, are by their nature wild. For in their untamed state they are unserviceable. But because custom has never known them except as in the hands and under the bridle and power of men, dost thou imagine that they could have been born in this tame state? But now at all events mark the beasts which are unquestionably of savage kind. “The lion roareth, who doth not fear?” And yet wherein is it that thou dost find thyself to be stronger than he? Not in strength of body, but in the interior reason of the mind. Thou art stronger than the lion, in that

wherein thou wast made after the image of God. What! Shall the image of God tame a wild beast; and shall not God tame His own image?

4. In Him is our hope; let us submit ourselves to Him, and entreat His mercy. In Him let us place our hope, and until we are tamed, and tamed thoroughly, that is, are perfected, let us bear our Tamer. For oftentimes does our Tamer bring forth His scourge too. For if thou dost bring forth the whip to tame thy beasts, shall not God do so to tame His beasts (which we are), who of His beasts will make us His sons? Thou tamest thine horse; and what wilt thou give thy horse, when he shall have begun to carry thee gently, to bear thy discipline, to obey thy rule, to be thy faithful, useful beast? How dost thou repay him, who wilt not so much as bury him when he is dead, but cast him forth to be torn by the birds of prey? Whereas when thou art tamed, God reserveth for thee an inheritance, which is God Himself, and though dead for a little time, He will raise thee to life again. He will restore to thee thy body, even to the full number of thy hairs; and will set thee with the Angels for ever, where thou wilt need no more His taming hand, but only to be possessed by His exceeding mercy. For God will then be “all in all;” neither will there be any unhappiness to exercise us, but happiness alone to feed us. Our God will be Himself our Shepherd; our God will be Himself our Cup; our God will be Himself our glory; our God will be Himself our wealth. What multiplicity of things soever thou seekest here, He alone will be Himself all these things to thee.

5. Unto this hope is man tamed, and shall his Tamer then be deemed intolerable? Unto this hope is man tamed, and shall he murmur against his beneficent Tamer, if He chance to use the scourge? Ye have heard the exhortation of the Apostle, “If ye are without chastening, ye are bastards, and not sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? Furthermore,” he says, “we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?” For what could thy father do for thee, that he corrected and chastised thee, brought out the scourge and beat thee? Could he make thee live for ever? What he could not do for himself, how should he do for thee? For some paltry sum of money which he had gathered together by usury and travail, did he discipline thee by the scourge,

that the fruit of his labour when left to thee might not be squandered by thy evil living. Yes, he beats his son, as fearing lest his labours should be lost; forasmuch as he left to thee what he could neither retain here, nor carry away. For he did not leave thee anything here which could be his own; he went off, that so thou mightest come on. But thy God, thy Redeemer, thy Tamer, thy Chastiser, thy Father, instructeth thee. To what end? That thou mayest receive an inheritance, when thou shalt not have to carry thy father to his grave, but shall have thy Father Himself for thine inheritance. Unto this hope art thou instructed, and dost thou murmur? and if any sad chance befall thee, dost thou (it may be) blaspheme? Whither wilt thou go from His Spirit? But now He letteth thee alone, and doth not scourge thee; or He abandoneth thee in thy blaspheming; shalt thou not experience His judgment? Is it not better that He should scourge thee and receive thee, than that He should spare thee and abandon thee?

6. Let us say then to the Lord our God, “Lord, Thou art become our refuge from generation to generation.” In the first and second generations Thou art become our refuge. Thou wast our refuge, that we might be born, who before were not. Thou wast our refuge, that we might be born anew, who were evil. Thou wast a refuge to feed those that forsake Thee. Thou art a refuge to raise up and direct Thy children. “Thou art become our refuge.” We will not go back from Thee, when Thou hast delivered us from all our evils, and filled us with Thine own good things. Thou givest good things now, Thou dealest softly with us, that we be not wearied in the way; Thou dost correct, and chastise, and smite, and direct us, that we may not wander from the way. Whether therefore Thou dealest softly with us, that we be not wearied in the way, or chastisest us, that we wander not from the way, “Thou art become our refuge, O Lord.”

SERMON VI

ON THE LORD’S PRAYER IN ST. MATTHEW’S GOSPEL, CHAP. VI. 9, ETC. TO THE COMPETENTES

1. The blessed Apostle, to show that those times when it should come to pass that all the nations should believe in Christ had been foretold by the Prophets, produced this testimony where it is written, “And it shall be, that

whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved.” For before time the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth was called upon amongst the Israelites only; the rest of the nations called upon dumb and deaf idols, by whom they were not heard, or by devils, by whom they were heard to their harm. “But when the fulness of time came,” that was fulfilled which had been foretold, “And it shall be, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved.” Moreover, because the Jews, even those who believed in Christ, grudged the Gospel to the Gentiles, and said that the Gospel ought not to be preached to them who were not circumcised; because against these the Apostle Paul alleged this testimony, “And it shall be, that whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved;” he immediately subjoined, to convince those who were unwilling that the Gospel should be preached to the Gentiles, the words, “But how shall they call upon Him, in whom they have not believed? or how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? or how shall they hear without a preacher? or how shall they preach except they be sent?” Because then he said, “how shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed?” ye have not first learnt the Lord’s Prayer, and after that the Creed; but first the Creed, where ye might know what to believe, and afterwards the Prayer, where ye might know whom to call upon. The Creed then has respect to the faith, the Lord’s Prayer to prayer; because it is he who believeth, that is heard when he calleth.

2. But many ask for what they ought not to ask, not knowing what is expedient for them. Two things therefore must he that prays beware of; that he ask not what he ought not; and that he ask not from whom he ought not. From the devil, from idols, from evil spirits, must nothing be asked. From the Lord our God Jesus Christ, God the Father of Prophets, and Apostles, and Martyrs, from the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from God who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all things in them, from Him must we ask whatsoever we have to ask. But we must beware that we ask not of Him that which we ought not to ask. If because we ought to ask for life, thou ask it of dumb and deaf idols, what doth it profit thee? So if from God the Father, who is in heaven, thou dost wish for the death of thine enemies, what doth it profit thee? Hast thou not heard or read in the Psalm, in which the damnable end of the traitor Judas is foretold, how the prophecy spake of

him, “Let his prayer be turned into sin?” If then thou risest up, and prayest for evil on thine enemies, thy “prayer will be turned into sin.”

3. You have read in the Holy Psalms, how that he who speaks in them imprecates, as it would seem, many curses upon his enemies. And surely, one may say, he who speaks in the Psalms is a righteous man; wherefore then does he so wish evil upon his enemies? He does not wish, but he foresees, it is a prophecy of one who is telling things to come, not a vow of malediction; for the prophets knew by the Spirit to whom evil was appointed to happen, and to whom good; and by prophecy they spake as if they wished for what they did foresee. But how canst thou know whether he for whom today thou art asking evil, may not to-morrow be a better man than thyself? But you will say, I know him to be a wicked man. Well: thou must know that thou art wicked too. Although it may be thou takest upon thyself to judge of another’s heart what thou dost not know; but as for thine own self thou knowest that thou art wicked. Hearest thou not the Apostle saying, “Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief?” Now when the Apostle Paul persecuted the Christians, binding them wherever he found them, and drew them to the Chief Priests to be questioned and punished, what think ye, brethren, did the Church pray against him, or for him? Surely the Church of God which had learnt instruction from her Lord, who said as He hung upon the Cross, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,” so prayed for Paul (or rather as yet Saul), that that might be wrought in him which was wrought. For in that he says, “But I was unknown by face to the churches of Judaea which are in Christ: only they heard that he who persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed; and they magnified God in me;” why did they magnify God, but because they asked this of God, before it came to pass?

4. Our Lord then first of all cut off “much speaking,” that thou mightest not bring a multitude of words unto God, as though by thy many words thou wouldest teach Him. Therefore when thou prayest thou hast need of piety, not of wordiness. “For your Father knoweth what is needful for you, before ye ask Him.” Be ye loth then to use many words, for He knoweth what is needful for you. But lest peradventure any should say here, If He know

what is needful for us, why should we use so much as a few words? why should we pray at all? He knoweth Himself; let Him then give what He knoweth to be needful for us. Yes, but it is His will that thou shouldest pray, that He may give to thy longings, that His gifts may not be lightly esteemed; seeing He hath Himself formed this longing desire in us. The words therefore which our Lord Jesus Christ hath taught us in His prayer, are the rule and standard of our desires. Thou mayest not ask for anything but what is written there.

5. “Do ye therefore say,” saith he, “Our Father, which art in heaven.” Where ye see ye have begun to have God for your Father. Ye will have Him, when ye are new born. Although even now before ye are born, ye have been conceived of His seed, as being on the eve of being brought forth in the font, the womb as it were of the Church. “Our Father, which art in heaven.” Remember then, that ye have a Father in heaven. Remember that ye were born of your father Adam unto death, that ye are to be born anew of God the Father unto life. And what ye say, say in your hearts. Only let there be the earnest affection of prayer, and there will be the effectual answer of Him who heareth prayer. “Hallowed be thy Name.” Why dost thou ask, that God’s Name may be hallowed? It is holy. Why then askest thou for that which is already holy? And then when thou dost ask that His Name may be hallowed, dost thou not as it were pray to Him for Him, and not for thyself? No. Understand it aright, and it is for thine own self thou askest. For this thou askest, that what is always in itself holy, may be hallowed in thee. What is “be hallowed?” “Be accounted holy,” be not despised. So then you see, that the good thou dost wish, thou wishest for thine own self. For if thou despise the Name of God, for thyself it will be ill, and not for God.

6. “Thy kingdom come.” To whom do we speak? and will not God’s kingdom come, if we ask it not. For of that kingdom do we speak which will be after the end of the world. For God hath a kingdom always; neither is He ever without a kingdom, whom the whole creation serveth. But what kingdom then dost thou wish for? That of which it is written in the Gospel, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which is prepared for you from the beginning of the world.” Lo here is the kingdom whereof we say, “Thy kingdom come.” We pray that it may come in us; we pray that we

may be found in it. For come it certainly will; but what will it profit thee, if it shall find thee at the left hand? Therefore, here again it is for thine own self that thou wishest well; for thyself thou prayest. This it is that thou dost long for; this desire in thy prayer, that thou mayest so live, that thou mayest have a part in the kingdom of God, which is to be given to all saints. Therefore when thou dost say, “Thy kingdom come,” thou dost pray for thyself, that thou mayest live well. Let us have part in Thy kingdom: let that come even to us, which is to come to Thy saints and righteous ones.

7. “Thy will be done.” What! if thou say not this, will not God do His will? Remember what thou hast repeated in the Creed, “I believe in God the Father Almighty.” If He be Almighty, why prayest thou that His will may be done? What is this then, “Thy will be done”? May it be done in me, that I may not resist Thy will. Therefore here again it is for thyself thou prayest, and not for God. For the will of God will be done in thee, though it be not done by thee. For both in them to whom He shall say, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world;” shall the will of God be done, that the saints and righteous may receive the kingdom; and in them to whom He shall say, “Depart ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,” shall the will of God be done, that the wicked may be condemned to everlasting fire. That His will may be done by thee is another thing. It is not then without a cause, but that it may be well with thee, that thou dost pray that His will may be done in thee. But whether it be well or ill with thee, it will still be done in thee: but O that it may be done by thee also. Why do I say then, “Thy will be done in heaven and in earth,” and do not say, “Thy will be done by heaven and earth?” Because what is done by thee, He Himself doeth in thee. Never is anything done by thee which He Himself doeth not in thee. Sometimes, indeed, He doeth in thee what is not done by thee; but never is anything done by thee, if He do it not in thee.

8. But what is “in heaven and in earth,” or, “as in heaven so in earth?” The Angels do Thy will; may we do it also. “Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth.” The mind is heaven, the flesh is earth. When thou dost say (if so be thou do say it) with the Apostle, “With my mind I serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin;” the will of God is done in heaven, but not yet

in earth. But when the flesh shall be in harmony with the mind, and “death shall be swallowed up in victory,” so that no carnal desires shall remain for the mind to be in conflict with, when strife in the earth shall have passed away, the war of the heart be over, and that be gone by which is spoken, “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would;” when this war, I say, shall be over, and all concupiscence shall have been changed into charity, nothing shall remain in the body to oppose the spirit, nothing to be tamed, nothing to be bridled, nothing to be trodden down; but the whole shall go on through concord unto righteousness, and the will of God will be done in heaven and in earth. “Thy will be done in heaven and in earth.” We wish for perfection, when we pray for this. “Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth.” In the Church the spiritual are heaven, the carnal are earth. So then, “Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth;” that as the spiritual do serve Thee, so the carnal being reformed may serve Thee also. “Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth.” There is yet another very spiritual meaning of it. For we are admonished to pray for our enemies. The Church is heaven, the enemies of the Church are earth. What then is, “Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth”? May our enemies believe, as we also believe in Thee! may they become friends, and end their enmities! They are earth, therefore are they against us; may they become heaven, and they will be with us.

9. “Give us this day our daily bread.” Now here it is manifest, that it is for ourselves we pray. When thou sayest, “Hallowed be Thy Name,” it requires explanation how it is that it is for thyself thou prayest, not for God. When thou sayest, “Thy will be done;” here again is there need of explanation, lest thou think that thou art wishing well to God in this prayer, that His will may be done, and not rather that thou art praying for thyself. When thou sayest, “Thy kingdom come;” this again must be explained, lest thou think that thou art wishing well to God in this prayer that He may reign. But from this place and onwards to the end of the Prayer, it is plain that we are praying to God for our own selves. When thou sayest, “Give us this day our daily bread,” thou dost profess thyself to be God’s beggar. But be not ashamed at this; how rich soever any man be on earth, he is still God’s beggar. The beggar takes his stand before the rich man’s house; but the rich man himself

stands before the door of the great rich One. Petition is made to him, and he maketh his petition. If he were not in need, he would not knock at the ears of God in prayer. And what doth the rich man need? I am bold to say, the rich man needeth even daily bread. For how is it that he hath abundance of all things? whence but because God hath given it him? What should he have, if God withdrew His hand? Have not many laid down to sleep in wealth, and risen up in beggary? And that he doth not want, is due to God's mercy, not to his own power.

10. But this bread, Dearly beloved, by which our body is filled, by which the flesh is recruited day by day; this bread, I say, God giveth not to those only who praise, but to those also who blaspheme Him; "Who maketh His sun to rise upon the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and on the unjust." Thou praisest Him, and He feedeth thee; thou dost blaspheme Him, He feedeth thee. He waiteth for thee to repent; but if thou wilt not change thyself, He will condemn thee. Because then both good and bad receive this bread from God, thinkest thou there is no other bread for which the children ask, of which the Lord said in the Gospel, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs?" Yes, surely there is. What then is that bread? and why is it called daily? Because this is necessary as the other; for without it we cannot live; without bread we cannot live. It is shamelessness to ask for wealth from God; it is no shamelessness to ask for daily bread. That which ministereth to pride is one thing, that which ministereth to life another. Nevertheless, because this bread which may be seen and handled, is given both to the good and bad; there is a daily bread, for which the children pray. That is the word of God, which is dealt out to us day by day. Our bread is daily bread; and by it live not our bodies, but our souls. It is necessary for us who are even now labourers in the vineyard,—it is our food, not our hire. For he that hires the labourer into the vineyard owes him two things; food, that he faint not, and his hire, wherewith he may rejoice. Our daily food then in this earth is the word of God, which is dealt out always in the Churches: our hire after labour is called eternal life. Again, if by this our daily bread thou understand what the faithful receive, what ye shall receive, when ye have been baptized, it is with good reason that we ask and say, "Give us this day

our daily bread;” that we may live in such sort, as that we be not separated from the Holy Altar.

11. “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” Touching this petition again we need no explanation, that it is for ourselves that we pray. For we beg that our debts may be forgiven us. For debtors are we, not in money, but in sins. Thou art saying perchance at this moment, And you too. We answer, Yes, we too. What, ye Holy Bishops, are ye debtors? Yes, we are debtors too. What you! My Lord. Be it far from thee, do not thyself this wrong. I do myself no wrong, but I say the truth; we are debtors: “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” We have been baptized, and yet are we debtors. Not that anything then remained, which was not remitted to us in Baptism, but because in our lives we are contracting ever what needs daily forgiveness. They who are baptized, and forthwith depart out of this life, come up from the font without any debt; without any debt they leave the world. But they who are baptized and are still kept in this life, contract defilements by reason of their mortal frailty, by which though the ship be not sunk, yet have they need of recourse to the pump. For otherwise by little and little will that enter in by which the whole ship will be sunk. And to offer this prayer, is to have recourse to the pump. But we ought not only to pray, but to do alms also, because when the pump is used to prevent the ship from sinking, both the voices and hands are at work. Now we are at work with our voices, when we say, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” And we are at work with our hands when we do this, “Break thy bread to the hungry, and bring the houseless poor into thine house. Shut up alms in the heart of a poor man, and it shall intercede for thee unto the Lord.”

12. Although therefore all our sins were forgiven in the “laver of regeneration,” we should be driven into great straits, if there were not given to us the daily cleansing of the Holy Prayer. Alms and prayers purge away sins; only let not such sins be committed, for which we must necessarily be separated from our daily Bread; avoid we all such debts to which a severe and certain condemnation is due. Call not yourselves righteous, as though ye had no cause to say, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” Though ye abstain from idolatry, from the consolations of

astrologers, from the cures of enchanters, though ye abstain from the seductions of heretics, from the divisions of schismatics; though ye abstain from murders, from adulteries and fornications, from thefts and plunderings, from false witnessings, and all such other sins which I do not name, as have a ruinous consequence, for which it is necessary that the sinner be cut off from the altar, and be so bound in earth, as to be bound in heaven, to his great and deadly danger, unless again he be so loosed in earth, as to be loosed in heaven; yet after all these are excepted, still there is no want of occasions whereby a man may sin. A man sins in seeing with pleasure what he ought not to see. Yet who can hold in the quickness of the eye? For from this the eye is said to have received its very name, from its quickness. Who can restrain the ear or eye? The eyes may be shut when thou wilt, and are shut in a moment, but the ears thou canst only with an effort close: thou must raise the hand and reach them, and if any one hold thy hand, they are kept open, nor canst thou close them against reviling, impure, or flattering, and seducing words. And when thou hearest any things thou oughtest not to hear, though thou do it not, dost thou not sin with the ear? for thou hearest something that is bad with pleasure? How great sins doth the deadly tongue commit! Yea, sometimes sins of such a nature, that a man is separated from the altar for them. To the tongue pertains the whole matter of blasphemies, and many idle words again are spoken, which are not convenient. But let the hand do nothing wrong, let the feet run not to any evil, nor the eye be directed to immodesty; let not the ear be open with pleasure to filthy talk; nor the tongue move to indecent speech; yet tell me, who can restrain the thoughts? How often do we pray, my brethren, and our thoughts are elsewhere, as though we forgot before whom we are standing, or before whom we are prostrating ourselves! If all these things be collected together against us, will they not therefore not overwhelm us, because they are small faults? What matter is it whether lead or sand overwhelm us? The lead is all one mass, the sand is small grains, but by their great number they overwhelm thee. So thy sins are small. Seest thou not how the rivers are filled, and the lands are wasted by small drops? They are small, but they are many.

13. Let us therefore say every day; and say it in sincerity of heart, and do what we say, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” It is an

engagement, a covenant, an agreement that we make with God. The Lord thy God saith to thee, Forgive, and I will forgive. Thou hast not forgiven; thou retainest thy sins against thyself, not I. I pray thee, my dearly beloved children, since I know what is expedient for you in the Lord's Prayer, and most of all in that sentence of it, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors;" hear me. Ye are about to be baptized, forgive everything; whatsoever any man have in his heart against any other, let him from his heart forgive it. So enter in, and be sure, that all your sins which ye have contracted, whether from your birth of your parents after Adam with original sin, for which sins' sake ye run with babes to the Saviour's grace, or whatever after sins ye have contracted in your lives, by word, or deed, or thought, all are forgiven; and you will go out of the water as from before the presence of your Lord, with the sure discharge of all debts.

14. Now because by reason of those daily sins of which I have spoken, it is necessary for you to say, in that daily prayer of cleansing as it were, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors;" what will ye do? Ye have enemies. For who can live on this earth without them? Take heed to yourselves, love them. In no way can thine enemy so hurt thee by his violence, as thou dost hurt thyself if thou love him not. For he may injure thy estate, or flocks, or house, or thy man-servant, or thy maid-servant, or thy son, or thy wife; or at most, if such power be given him, thy body. But can he injure thy soul, as thou canst thyself? Reach forward, dearly beloved, I beseech you, to this perfection. But have I given you this power? He only hath given it to whom ye say, "Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth. Yet let it not seem impossible to you. I know, I have known by experience, that there are Christian men who do love their enemies. If it seem to you impossible, ye will not do it. Believe then first that it can be done, and pray that the will of God may be done in you. For what good can thy neighbour's ill do thee? If he had no ill, he would not even be thine enemy. Wish him well then, that he may end his ill, and he will be thine enemy no longer. For it is not the human nature in him that is at enmity with thee, but his sin. Is he therefore thine enemy, because he hath a soul and body? In this he is as thou art: thou hast a soul, and so hath he: thou hast a body, and so hath he. He is of the same substance as thou art; ye were made both out of the same earth, and quickened by the same Lord. In all this he is as thou art.

Acknowledge in him then thy brother. The first pair, Adam and Eve, were our parents; the one our father, the other our mother; and therefore we are brethren. But let us leave the consideration of our first origin. God is our Father, the Church our Mother, and therefore are we brethren. But you will say, my enemy is a heathen, a Jew, a heretic, of whom I spake some time ago on the words, "Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth." O Church, thy enemy is the heathen, the Jew, the heretic; he is the earth. If thou art heaven, call on thy Father which is in heaven, and pray for thine enemies: for so was Saul an enemy of the Church; thus was prayer made for him, and he became her friend. He not only ceased from being her persecutor, but he laboured to be her helper. And yet, to say the truth, prayer was made against him; but against his malice, not against his nature. So let thy prayer be against the malice of thine enemy, that it may die, and he may live. For if thine enemy were dead, thou hast lost it might seem an enemy, yet hast thou not found a friend. But if his malice die, thou hast at once lost an enemy and found a friend.

15. But still ye are saying, Who can do, who has ever done this? May God bring it to effect in your hearts! I know as well as you, there are but few who do it; great men are they and spiritual who do so. Are all the faithful in the Church who approach the altar, and take the Body and Blood of Christ, are they all such? And yet they all say, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors." What, if God should answer them, "Why do ye ask me to do what I have promised, when ye do not what I have commanded?" What have I promised? "To forgive your debts." What have I commanded? "That ye also forgive your debtors." How can ye do this, if ye do not love your enemies? What then must we do, brethren? Is the flock of Christ reduced to such a scanty number? If they only ought to say, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors," who love their enemies; I know not what to do, I know not what to say. For must I say to you, If ye do not love your enemies, do not pray; I dare not say so; yea, pray rather that ye may love them. But must I say to you, If ye do not love your enemies, say not in the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors"? Suppose that I were to say, Do not use these words. If ye do not, your debts are not forgiven; and if ye do use them, and do not act thereafter, they are

not forgiven. In order therefore that they may be forgiven, ye must both use the prayer, and do thereafter.

16. I see some ground on which I may comfort not some few only, but the multitude of Christians: and I know that ye are longing to hear it. Christ hath said, “Forgive, that ye may be forgiven.” And what do ye say in the Prayer which we have now been discussing? “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” So, Lord, forgive, as we forgive. This thou sayest, “O Father, which art in heaven, so forgive our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” For this ye ought to do, and if ye do it not, ye will perish. When your enemy asks pardon, at once forgive him. And is this much for you to do? Though it were much for thee to love thine enemy when violent against thee, is it much to love a man who is a supplicant before thee? What hast thou to say? He was before violent, and then thou hatedst him. I had rather thou hadst not hated him even then: I had rather then when thou wert suffering from his violence, thou hadst remembered the Lord, saying, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” I would have then much wished that even at that time when thine enemy was violent against thee, thou hadst had regard to the Lord thy God speaking thus. But perhaps you will say, He did it, but then He did it as being the Lord, as the Christ, as the Son of God, as the Only-Begotten, as the Word made flesh. But what can I, an infirm and sinful man, do? If thy Lord be too high an example for thee, turn thy thoughts upon thy fellow-servant. The holy Stephen was being stoned, and as they stoned him, on bended knees did he pray for his enemies, and say, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.” They were casting stones, not asking pardon, yet did he pray for them. I would thou wert like him; reach forth. Why art thou for ever trailing thy heart along the earth? Hear, “Lift up thy heart,” reach forward, love thine enemies. If thou canst not love him in his violence, love him at least when he asks pardon. Love the man who saith to thee, “Brother, I have sinned, forgive me.” If thou then forgive him not, I say not merely, that thou dost blot this prayer out of thine heart, but thou shall be blotted thyself out of the book of God.

17. But if thou then at least forgive him, or let go hatred from thy heart, it is hatred from the heart I bid thee forego, and not proper discipline. What if one who asks my pardon, be one who ought to be chastised by me! Do what

thou wilt, for I suppose that thou dost love thy child even when thou dost chastise him. Thou regardest not his cries under the rod, because thou art reserving for him his inheritance. This I say then, that thou forego from thy heart all hatred, when thine enemy asks pardon of thee. But perhaps you will say, “he is playing false, he is pretending.” O thou judge of another’s heart, tell me thine own father’s thoughts, tell me thine own thoughts yesterday. He asks and petitions for pardon; forgive, by all means forgive him. If thou wilt not forgive him, it is thyself thou dost hurt, not him, for he knows what he has to do. Thou art not willing to forgive thine own fellow-servant; he will go then to thy Lord, and say to Him, “Lord, I have prayed my fellow-servant to forgive me, and he would not; do Thou forgive me.” Hath not the Lord power to release his servant’s debts? So he, having obtained pardon from his Lord, returns loosed, whilst thou remainest bound. How bound? The time of prayer will come, the time must come for thee to say, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors;” and the Lord will answer thee, Thou wicked servant, when thou didst owe Me so great a debt, thou didst ask Me, and I forgave thee; “shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?” These words are out of the Gospel, not of my own heart. But if on being asked, thou shall forgive him who begs for pardon, then thou canst say this prayer. And if thou hast not as yet the strength to love him in his violence, still thou mayest offer this prayer, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” Let us pass on to the rest.

18. “And lead us not into temptation. Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors,” we say because of past sins, which we cannot undo, that they should not have been done. Thou canst labour not to do what thou hast done before, but how canst thou bring about, that that which thou hast done should not be done? As regards those things which have been done already, that sentence of the prayer is thy help, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” As regards those into which thou mayest fall, what wilt thou do? “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,” that is, from temptation itself.

19. Now these three first petitions, “Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth,” these three regard the life eternal, for God’s Name ought to be hallowed in us always, we ought to be in His kingdom always, we ought to do His will always. This will be to all eternity. But “daily bread” is necessary now. All the rest that we pray for from this article, regards the necessities of the present life. Daily bread is necessary in this life; the forgiveness of our debts is necessary in this life. For when we shall arrive at the other life, there will be an end of all debts. In this life there is temptation, in this life the sailing is dangerous, in this life something is ever stealing its way in through the chinks of our frailties, which must be pumped out. But when we shall be made equal to the Angels of God; no more need to say and pray to God to forgive us our debts, when there will be none. Here then is the “daily bread;” here the prayer that our “debts may be forgiven;” here that we “enter not into temptation;” for in that life temptation does not enter; here that we may be “delivered from evil;” for in that life there will be no evil, but eternal and abiding good.

SERMON VII

AGAIN, ON MATT. VI. ON THE LORD’S PRAYER. TO THE COMPETENTES

1. The order established for your edification requires that ye learn first what to believe, and afterwards what to ask. For so saith the Apostle, “Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved.” This testimony blessed Paul cited out of the Prophet; for by the Prophet were those times foretold, when all men should call upon God; “Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord, shall be saved.” And he added, “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? Or how shall they hear without a preacher? Or how shall they preach except they be sent?” Therefore were preachers sent. They preached Christ. As they preached, the people heard, by hearing they believed, and by believing called upon Him. Because then it was most rightly and most truly said, “How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?” therefore have ye first learned what to believe: and to-day have learnt to call on Him in whom ye have believed.

2. The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, hath taught us a Prayer; and though He be the Lord Himself, as ye have heard and repeated in the Creed, the Only Son of God, yet He would not be alone. He is the Only Son, and yet would not be alone; He hath vouchsafed to have brethren. For to whom doth He say, “Say, Our Father, which art in heaven?” Whom did He wish us to call our Father, save His own Father? Did He grudge us this? Parents sometimes when they have gotten one, or two, or three children, fear to give birth to any more, lest they reduce the rest to beggary. But because the inheritance which He promiseth us is such as many may possess, and no one be straitened; therefore hath He called into His brotherhood the peoples of the nations; and the Only Son hath numberless brethren; who say, “Our Father, which art in heaven.” So said they who have been before us; and so shall say those who will come after us. See how many brethren the Only Son hath in His grace, sharing His inheritance with those for whom He suffered death. We had a father and mother on earth, that we might be born to labours and to death: but we have found other parents, God our Father, and the Church our Mother, by whom we are born unto life eternal. Let us then consider, beloved, whose children we have begun to be; and let us live so as becomes those who have such a Father. See, how that our Creator hath condescended to be our Father!

3. We have heard whom we ought to call upon, and with what hope of an eternal inheritance we have begun to have a Father in heaven; let us now hear what we must ask of Him. Of such a Father what shall we ask? Do we not ask rain of Him, to-day, and yesterday, and the day before? This is no great thing to have asked of such a Father, and yet ye see with what sighings, and with what great desire we ask for rain, when death is feared, when that is feared which none can escape. For sooner or later every man must die, and we groan, and pray, and travail in pain, and cry to God, that we may die a little later. How much more ought we to cry to Him, that we may come to that place where we shall never die!

4. Therefore is it said, “Hallowed be Thy Name.” This we also ask of Him that his Name may be hallowed in us; for Holy is it always. And how is His Name hallowed in us, except while it makes us holy. For once we were not holy, and we are made holy by His Name; but He is always Holy, and His

Name always Holy. It is for ourselves, not for God, that we pray. For we do not wish well to God, to whom no ill can ever happen. But we wish what is good for ourselves, that His Holy Name may be hallowed, that that which is always Holy, may be hallowed in us.

5. “Thy kingdom come.” Come it surely will, whether we ask or no. Indeed, God hath an eternal kingdom. For when did He not reign? When did He begin to reign? For His kingdom hath no beginning, neither shall it have any end. But that we may know that in this prayer also we pray for ourselves, and not for God (for we do not say, “Thy kingdom come,” as though we were asking that God may reign); we shall be ourselves His kingdom, if believing in Him we make progress in this faith. All the faithful, redeemed by the Blood of His Only Son, will be His kingdom. And this His kingdom will come, when the resurrection of the dead shall have taken place; for then He will come Himself. And when the dead are risen, He will divide them, as He Himself saith, “and He shall set some on the right hand, and some on the left.” To those who shall be on the right hand He will say, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom.” This is what we wish and pray for when we say, “Thy kingdom come;” that it may come to us. For if we shall be reprobates, that kingdom will come to others, but not to us. But if we shall be of that number, who belong to the members of His Only-begotten Son, His kingdom will come to us, and will not tarry. For are there as many ages yet remaining, as have already passed away? The Apostle John hath said, “My little children, it is the last hour.” But it is a long hour proportioned to this long day; and see how many years this last hour lasteth. But nevertheless, be ye as those who watch, and so sleep, and rise again, and reign. Let us watch now, let us sleep in death; at the end we shall rise again, and shall reign without end.

6. “Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth.” The third thing we pray for is, that His will may be done as in heaven so in earth. And in this too we wish well for ourselves. For the will of God must necessarily be done. It is the will of God that the good should reign, and the wicked be damned. Is it possible that this will should not be done? But what good do we wish for ourselves, when we say, “Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth”? Give ear. For this petition may be understood in many ways, and many things are

to be in our thoughts in this petition, when we pray God, “Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth.” As Thy Angels offend Thee not, so may we also not offend Thee. Again, how is “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth,” understood? All the holy Patriarchs, all the Prophets, all the Apostles, all the spiritual are as it were God’s heaven; and we in comparison of them are earth. “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth;” as in them, so in us also. Again, “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth;” the Church of God is heaven, His enemies are earth. So we wish well for our enemies, that they too may believe and become Christians, and so the will of God be done, as in heaven, so also in earth. Again, “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.” Our spirit is heaven, and the flesh earth. As our spirit is renewed by believing, so may our flesh be renewed by rising again; and “the will of God be done, as in heaven, so in earth.” Again, our mind whereby we see truth, and delight in this truth, is heaven; as, “I delight in the law of God, after the inward man.” What is the earth? “I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind?” When this strife shall have passed away, and a full concord brought about of the flesh and spirit, the will of God will be done as in heaven, so also in earth. When we repeat this petition, let us think of all these things, and ask them all of the Father. Now all these things which we have mentioned, these three petitions, beloved, have respect to the life eternal. For if the Name of our God is sanctified in us, it will be for eternity. If His kingdom come, where we shall live for ever, it will be for eternity. If His will be done as in heaven, so in earth, in all the ways which I have explained, it will be for eternity.

7. There remain now the petitions for this life of our pilgrimage; therefore follows, “Give us this day our daily bread.” Give us eternal things, give us things temporal. Thou hast promised a kingdom, deny us not the means of subsistence. Thou wilt give everlasting glory with Thyself hereafter, give us in this earth temporal support. Therefore is it “day by day,” and “to-day,” that is, in this present time. For when this life shall have passed away, shall we ask for daily bread then? For then it will not be called, “day by day,” but “to-day.” Now it is called, “day by day,” when one day passes away, and another day succeeds. Will it be called “day by day,” when there will be one eternal day? This petition for daily bread is doubtless to be understood in

two ways, both for the necessary supply of our bodily food, and for the necessities of our spiritual support. There is a necessary supply of bodily food, for the preservation of our daily life, without which we cannot live. This is food and clothing, but the whole is understood in a part. When we ask for bread, we thereby understand all things. There is a spiritual food also which the faithful know, which ye too will know, when ye shall receive it at the altar of God. This also is “daily Bread,” necessary only for this life. For shall we receive the Eucharist when we shall have come to Christ Himself, and begun to reign with Him for ever? So then the Eucharist is our daily bread; but let us in such wise receive it, that we be not refreshed in our bodies only, but in our souls. For the virtue which is apprehended there, is unity, that gathered together into His body, and made His members, we may be what we receive. Then will it be indeed our daily bread. Again, what I am handling before you now is “daily bread;” and the daily lessons which ye hear in church, are daily bread, and the hymns ye hear and repeat are daily bread. For all these are necessary in our state of pilgrimage. But when we shall have got to heaven, shall we hear the word, we who shall see the Word Himself, and hear the Word Himself, and eat and drink Him as the angels do now? Do the angels need books, and interpreters, and readers? Surely not. They read in seeing, for the Truth Itself they see, and are abundantly satisfied from that fountain, from which we obtain some few drops. Therefore has it been said touching our daily bread, that this petition is necessary for us in this life.

8. “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” Is this necessary except in this life? For in the other we shall have no debts. For what are debts, but sins? See, ye are on the point of being baptized, then all your sins will be blotted out, none whatever will remain. Whatever evil ye have ever done, in deed, or word, or desire, or thought, all will be blotted out. And yet if in the life which is after Baptism there were security from sin, we should not learn such a prayer as this, “Forgive us our debts.” Only let us by all means do what comes next, “As we forgive our debtors.” Do ye then who are about to enter in to receive a plenary and entire remission of your debts, do ye above all things see that ye have nothing in your hearts against any other, so as to come forth from Baptism secure, as it were free and discharged of all debts, and then begin to purpose to avenge yourselves on

your enemies, who in time past have done you wrong. Forgive, as ye are forgiven. God can do no one wrong, and yet He forgiveth who oweth nothing. How then ought he to forgive, who is himself forgiven, when He forgiveth all, who oweth nothing that can be forgiven Him?

9. “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” Will this again be necessary in the life to come? “Lead us not into temptation,” will not be said, except where there can be temptation. We read in the book of holy Job, “Is not the life of man upon earth a temptation?” What then do we pray for? Hear what. The Apostle James saith, “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God.” He spoke of those evil temptations, whereby men are deceived, and brought under the yoke of the devil. This is the kind of temptation he spoke of. For there is another sort of temptation which is called a proving; of this kind of temptation it is written, “The Lord your God tempteth (proveth) you to know whether ye love Him.” What means “to know”? “To make you know,” for He knoweth already. With that kind of temptation, whereby we are deceived and seduced, God tempteth no man. But undoubtedly in His deep and hidden judgment He abandons some. And when He hath abandoned them, the tempter finds his opportunity. For he finds in him no resistance against his power, but forthwith presents himself to him as his possessor, if God abandon him. Therefore that He may not abandon us, do we say, “Lead us not into temptation.” “For every one is tempted,” says the same Apostle James, “when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” What then has he hereby taught us? To fight against our lusts. For ye are about to put away your sins in Holy Baptism; but lusts will still remain, wherewith ye must fight after that ye are regenerate. For a conflict with your own selves still remains. Let no enemy from without be feared: conquer thine own self, and the whole world is conquered. What can any tempter from without, whether the devil or the devil’s minister, do against thee? Whosoever sets the hope of gain before thee to seduce thee, let him only find no covetousness in thee; and what can he who would tempt thee by gain effect? Whereas if covetousness be found in thee, thou takest fire at the sight of gain, and art taken by the bait of this corrupt food. But if he find no covetousness in thee, the trap remains spread in vain. Or should the tempter set before thee some woman

of surpassing beauty; if chastity be within, iniquity from without is overcome. Therefore that he may not take thee with the bait of a strange woman’s beauty, fight with thine own lust within; thou hast no sensible perception of thine enemy, but of thine own concupiscence thou hast. Thou dost not see the devil, but the object that engageth thee thou dost see. Get the mastery then over that of which thou art sensible within. Fight valiantly, for He who hath regenerated thee is thy Judge; He hath arranged the lists, He is making ready the crown. But because thou wilt without doubt be conquered, if thou have not Him to aid thee, if He abandon thee: therefore dost thou say in the prayer, “Lead us not into temptation.” The Judge’s wrath hath given over some to their own lusts; and the Apostle says, “God gave them over to the lusts of their hearts.” How did He give them up? Not by forcing, but by forsaking them.

10. “Deliver us from evil,” may belong to the same sentence. Therefore, that thou mayest understand it to be all one sentence, it runs thus, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” Therefore he added “but,” to show that all this belongs to one sentence, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” How is this? I will propose them singly. “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” By delivering us from evil, He leadeth us not into temptation; by not leading us into temptation, He delivereth us from evil.

11. And truly it is a great temptation, dearly beloved, it is a great temptation in this life, when that in us is the subject of temptation, whereby we attain pardon, if in any of our temptations we have fallen. It is a frightful temptation, when that is taken from us, whereby we may be healed from the wounds of other temptations. I know that ye have not yet understood me. Give me your attention, that ye may understand. Suppose avarice tempts a man, and he is conquered in any single temptation (for sometimes even a good wrestler and fighter may get roughly handled): avarice then has got the better of a man, good wrestler though he be, and he has done some avaricious act. Or there has been a passing lust; it has not brought the man to fornication, nor reached unto adultery, for when this does take place, the man must at all events be kept back from the criminal act. But he “hath seen a woman to lust after her;” he has let his thoughts dwell on her with more

pleasure than was right; he has admitted the attack; excellent combatant though he be, he has been wounded, but he has not consented to it; he has beaten back the motion of his lust, has chastised it with the bitterness of grief, he has beaten it back; and has prevailed. Still in the very fact that he had slipped, has he ground for saying, “Forgive us our debts.” And so of all other temptations, it is a hard matter that in them all there should not be occasion for saying, “Forgive us our debts.” What then is that frightful temptation which I have mentioned, that grievous, that tremendous temptation, which must be avoided with all our strength, with all our resolution; what is it? When we go about to avenge ourselves. Anger is kindled, and the man burns to be avenged. O frightful temptation! Thou art losing that, whereby thou hadst to attain pardon for other faults. If thou hadst committed any sin as to other senses, and other lusts, hence mightest thou have had thy cure, in that thou mightest say, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” But whoso instigateth thee to take vengeance, will lose for thee the power thou hadst to say, “As we also forgive our debtors.” When that power is lost, all sins will be retained; nothing at all is remitted.

12. Our Lord and Master, and Saviour, knowing this dangerous temptation in this life, when He taught us six or seven petitions in this Prayer, took none of them for Himself to treat of, and to commend to us with greater earnestness, than this one. Have we not said, “Our Father, which art in heaven;” and the rest which follows? Why after the conclusion of the Prayer, did He not enlarge upon it to us, either as to what He had laid down in the beginning, or concluded with at the end, or placed in the middle? For why said He not, if the Name of God be not hallowed in you, or if ye have no part in the kingdom of God, or if the will of God be not done in you, as in heaven, or if God guard you not, that ye enter not into temptation; why none of all these? but what saith He? “Verily I say unto you, that if ye forgive men their trespasses;” in reference to that petition, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” Having passed over all the other petitions which He taught us, this He taught us with an especial force. There was no need of insisting so much upon those sins in which if a man offend, he may know the means whereby he may be cured: need of it there was, with regard to that sin in which if thou sin, there is no means whereby the

rest can be cured. For this thou oughtest to be ever saying, “Forgive us our debts.” What debts? There is no lack of them; for we are but men; I have talked somewhat more than I ought, have said something I ought not, have laughed more than I ought, have eaten more than I ought, have listened with pleasure to what I ought not, have drunk more than I ought, have seen with pleasure what I ought not, have thought with pleasure on what I ought not; “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” This if thou hast lost, thou art lost thyself.

13. Take heed, my brethren, my sons, sons of God, take heed, I beseech you, in that I am saying to you. Fight to the uttermost of your powers with your own hearts. And if ye shall see your anger making a stand against you, pray to God against it, that God may make thee conqueror of thyself, that God may make thee conqueror, I say, not of thine enemy without, but of thine own soul within. For He will give thee His present help, and will do it. He would rather that we ask this of Him, than rain. For ye see, beloved, how many petitions the Lord Christ hath taught us; and there is scarce found among them one which speaks of daily bread, that all our thoughts may be moulded after the life to come? For what can we fear that He will not give us, who hath promised and said, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you; for your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things before ye ask Him. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” For many have been tried even with hunger, and have been found gold, and have not been forsaken by God. They would have perished with hunger, if the daily inward bread were to leave their heart. After this let us chiefly hunger. For, “Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” But He can in mercy look upon our infirmity, and see us, as it is said, “Remember that we are dust.” He who from the dust made and quickened man, for that His work of clay’s sake, gave His Only Son to death. Who can explain, who can worthily so much as conceive, how much He loveth us?

SERMON VIII

AGAIN ON THE LORD’S PRAYER, MATT. VI. TO THE COMPETENTES

1. You have just repeated the Creed, where in brief summary is contained the Faith. I have already before now told you what the Apostle Paul says, “How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?” Because then you have both heard, and learnt, and repeated how you must believe in God; hear to-day how He must be called upon. The Son Himself, as you heard when the Gospel was read, taught His disciples and His faithful ones this Prayer. Good hope have we of obtaining our cause, when such an Advocate hath dictated our suit. The Assessor of the Father, as you have confessed, who sitteth on the right hand of the Father; He is our Advocate who is to be our Judge. For from thence will He come to judge the quick and dead. Learn then, this Prayer also which you will have to repeat in eight days time. But whosoever of you have not repeated the Creed well, have yet time enough, let them learn it; because on the Sabbath day in the hearing of all who shall be present, you will have to repeat it: on the last Sabbath day, when you will be here to be baptized. But in eight days from to-day will you have to repeat this Prayer, which you have heard to-day.

2. Of which the first clause is, “Our Father, which art in heaven.” We have found then a Father in heaven; let us take good heed how we live on earth. For he who hath found such a Father, ought so to live that he may be worthy to come to his inheritance. But we say all in common, “Our Father.” How great a condescension! This the emperor says, and this says the beggar: this says the slave, and this his lord. They say all together, “Our Father, which art in heaven.” Therefore do they understand that they are brethren, seeing they have one Father. Now let not the lord disdain to have his slave for a brother, seeing the Lord Christ has vouch-safed to have him for a brother.

3. “Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come.” This hallowing of God’s Name is that whereby we are made holy. For His Name is always Holy. We wish also for His kingdom to come; come it will, though we wish it not; but to wish and pray that His kingdom may come, is nothing else than to wish of Him, that He would make us worthy of His kingdom, lest haply, which God forbid, it should come, and not come to us. For to many that will never come, which nevertheless must come. For to them will it come, to whom it shall be said, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom

prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” But it will not come to them to whom it shall be said, “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.” Therefore when we say, “Thy kingdom come,” we pray that it may come to us. What is, “may come to us”? May find us good. This we pray for then, that He would make us good; for then to us will His kingdom come.

4. We go on, “Thy will be done as in heaven so in earth.” The Angels serve Thee in heaven, may we serve Thee in earth! The Angels do not offend Thee in heaven, may we not offend Thee in earth! As they do Thy will, so may we do it also! And here what do we pray for, but that we may be good? For when we do God’s will (for He without doubt doeth His own will), then is His will done in us. And we may understand in another and a right sense these words, “Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth.” We receive the commandment of God, and it is well-pleasing to us, well-pleasing to our mind. “For we delight in the law of God after the inward man.” Then is His will done in heaven. For our spirit is compared to heaven, but to the earth our flesh. What then is “Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth”? That as Thy command is well-pleasing to our mind, so may our flesh consent thereto; and so that strife be ended which is described by the Apostle, “for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.” When the Spirit lusteth against the flesh, His will is even now done in heaven; when the flesh lusteth not against the Spirit, His will is now done in earth. There will be harmony complete when He will; be then the contest now, that there may be victory hereafter. Thus again, “Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth,” may be well understood, by making “heaven” to be the Church, because it is the throne of God; and “earth” the unbelievers, to whom it is said, “Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou go.” When therefore we pray for our enemies, for the enemies of the Church, the enemies of the Christian name, we pray that His will may be done “as in heaven, so in earth,” that is, as in Thy faithful ones, so in Thy blasphemers also, that they all may become “heaven.”

5. There follows next, “Give us this day our daily bread.” It may be understood simply that we pour forth this prayer for daily sustenance, that we may have abundance: or if not that, that we may have no want. Now he said “daily,” for as long as it is called “to-day.” Daily we live, and daily

rise, and are daily fed, and daily hunger. May He then give us daily bread. Why did He not say "covering" too, for the support of our life is in meat and drink, our covering in raiment and lodging. Man should desire nothing more than these. Forasmuch as the Apostle saith, "We brought nothing into this world, neither can we carry anything out: having food and covering, let us be therewith content." Perish covetousness, and nature is rich. Therefore if this prayer have reference to our daily sustenance, since this is a good understanding of the words, "Give us this day our daily bread;" let us not marvel, if under the name of bread other necessary things are also understood. As when Joseph invited his brethren, "These men," saith he, "will eat bread with me to-day." Why, were they to eat bread only? No, but in the mention of bread only, all the rest was understood. So when we pray for daily bread, we ask for whatever is necessary for us in earth for our bodies' sake. But what saith the Lord Jesus? "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Again, this is a very good sense of, "Give us this day our daily bread," thy Eucharist, our daily food. For the faithful know what they receive, and good for them it is to receive that daily bread which is necessary for this time present. They pray then for themselves, that they may become good, that they may persevere in goodness, and faith, and a holy life. This do they wish, this they pray for; for if they persevere not in this good life, they will be separated from that Bread. Therefore, "Give us this day our daily bread." What is this? Let us live so, that we be not separated from Thy altar. Again, the Word of God which is laid open to us, and in a manner broken day by day, is "daily bread." And as our bodies hunger after that other, so do our souls after this bread. And so we both ask for this bread simply, and whatsoever is in this life needful both for our souls and bodies, is included in "daily bread."

6. "Forgive us our debts," we say, and we may well say so; for we say the truth. For who is he that lives here in the flesh, and hath no debts? What man is there that lives so, that this prayer is not necessary for him? He may puff himself up, justify himself he cannot. It were well for him to imitate the Publican, and not swell as the Pharisee, "who went up into the temple," and boasted of his deserts, and covered up his wounds. Whereas he who said, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner," knew wherefore he went up. This

prayer the Lord Jesus, consider, my brethren, this prayer the Lord Jesus taught His disciples to offer, those great first Apostles of His, the leaders of our flock. If the leaders of the flock then pray for the remission of their sins, what ought the lambs to do, of whom it is said, "Bring young rams unto the Lord"? You knew then that you have repeated this in the Creed, because amongst the rest you have mentioned there "the remission of sins." There is one remission of sins which is given once for all; another which is given day by day. There is one remission of sins which is given once for all in Holy Baptism; another which is given as long as we live here in the Lord's Prayer. Wherefore we say, "Forgive us our debts."

7. And God has brought us into a covenant, and agreement, and a firm bond with Him, in that we say, "as we also forgive our debtors." He who would say it effectually, "Forgive us our debts," must say truly, "as we also forgive our debtors." If this which is last he either say not, or say deceitfully, the other which is first he says in vain. We say to you then especially who are approaching to Holy Baptism, from your hearts forgive everything. And ye faithful, who taking advantage of this occasion are listening to this prayer, and our exposition of it, do ye wholly and from your hearts forgive whatsoever ye have against any. Forgive it there where God seeth. For sometimes a man remitteth with the mouth, and in the heart retaineth; he remitteth with the mouth for men's sake, and retaineth in the heart, as not fearing the eyes of God. But do ye remit entirely. Whatever ye have retained up to these holy days, in these holy days at least remit. "The sun ought not to go down upon your wrath," yet many suns have passed. Let then your wrath at length pass away also, now that we are celebrating the days of the great Sun, of that Sun of which Scripture saith, "Unto you shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings." What is, "in His wings"? In His protection. Whence it is said in the Psalms, "Keep me under the shadow of Thy wings." But as to others who in the day of judgment shall repent, but all too late, and who shall mourn, yet unavailingly, it hath been foretold by Wisdom what they shall then say as they repent and groan for anguish of spirit, "What hath pride profited us, or what good hath riches with our vaunting brought us? All these things are passed away like a shadow." And, "Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined unto us, and the Sun of righteousness

rose not upon us.” That Sun riseth upon the righteous only; but this sun which we see, God “maketh,” daily “to rise upon the good and evil.” The righteous attain to the seeing of that Sun; and that Sun dwelleth now in our hearts by faith. If then thou art angry, let not this sun go down in thine heart upon thy wrath; “Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath;” lest haply thou be angry, and so the Sun of righteousness go down upon thee, and thou abide in darkness.

8. Now do not think that anger is nothing. “Mine eye was disordered because of anger,” saith the Prophet. Surely he whose eye is disordered cannot see the sun; and if he should try to see it, it were pain, and no pleasure to him. And what is anger? The lust of vengeance. A man lusteth to be avenged, and Christ is not yet avenged, the holy martyrs are not yet avenged. Still doth the patience of God wait, that the enemies of Christ, the enemies of the martyrs, may be converted. And who are we, that we should seek for vengeance? If God should seek it at our hands, where should we abide? He who hath never in any matter done us harm, doth not wish to avenge Himself of us; and do we seek to be avenged, who are almost daily offending God? Forgive therefore; from the heart forgive. If thou art angry, yet sin not. “Be ye angry, and sin not.” Be ye angry as being but men, if so be ye are overcome by it; yet sin not, so as to retain anger in your heart (for if ye do retain it, ye retain it against yourselves), lest ye enter not into that Light. Therefore forgive. What then is anger? The lust of vengeance. And what is hatred? Inveterate anger. If anger become inveterate, it is then called hatred. And this he seems to acknowledge, who when he had said, “Mine eye is disordered because of anger;” added, “I have become inveterate among all mine enemies.” What was anger when it was new, became hatred when it was turned into long continuance. Anger is a “mote,” hatred, a “beam.” We sometimes find fault with one who is angry, yet we retain hatred in our own hearts; and so Christ saith to us, “Thou seest the mote in thy brother’s eye, and seest not the beam in thine own eye.” How grew the mote into a beam? Because it was not at once plucked out. Because thou didst suffer the sun to rise and go down so often upon thy wrath, and madest it inveterate, because thou contractedst evil suspicions, and wateredst the mote, and by watering hast nourished it, and by nourishing it, hast made it a beam. Tremble then at least when it is said, “Whosoever hateth his brother

is a murderer.” Thou hast not drawn the sword, nor inflicted any bodily wound, nor by any blow killed another; the thought only of hatred is in thy heart, and hereby art thou held to be a murderer, guilty art thou before the eyes of God. The other man is alive, and yet thou hast killed him. As far as thou art concerned, thou hast killed the man whom thou hatest. Reform then, and amend thyself. If scorpions or adders were in your houses, how would ye toil to purify them, that ye might be able to dwell in safety? Yet are ye angry, yea inveterate anger is in your hearts, and there grow so many hatreds, so many beams, so many scorpions, so many vipers, and will ye not then purify the house of God, your heart? Do then what is said, “As we also forgive our debtors;” and so say securely, “Forgive us our debts.” For without debts in this earth ye cannot live; but those great crimes which it is your blessing to have been forgiven in Baptism, and from which we ought to be ever free, are of one sort, and of another are those daily sins, without which a man cannot live in this world, by reason of which this daily prayer with its covenant and agreement is necessary; that as we say with all cheerfulness, “Forgive us our debts;” so we may say with all truth, “As we also forgive our debtors.” So much then have we said as touching past sins; what now for the future?

9. “Lead us not into temptation:” forgive what we have done already, and grant that we may not commit any more sins. For whosoever is overcome by temptation, committeth sin. Thus the Apostle James saith, “Let no man say when he is tempted, he is tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” Therefore that thou be not drawn away by thy lust; consent not to it. It hath no means of conceiving, but by thee. Thou hast consented, hast as it were in thine heart admitted her embrace. Lust has risen up, deny thyself to her, follow her not. It is a lust unlawful, impure, and shameful, it will alienate thee from God. Give it not then the embrace of thy consent, lest thou have to bewail the birth; for if thou consent, that is, when thou hast embraced her, she conceives, “and when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.” Dost thou not yet fear? “Sin bringeth forth death;” at least, fear death. If thou fear not sin, yet fear that whereunto it leads. Sin is sweet; but

death is bitter. This is the infelicity of men; that for which they sin, they leave here when they die, and the sin themselves they carry with them. Thou dost sin for money, it must be left here: or for a country seat; it must be left here: or for some woman’s sake; she must be left here; and whatsoever it be for which thou dost sin, when thou shalt have closed thine eyes in death, thou must leave it here; yet the sin itself which thou committest, thou carriest with thee.

10. May sins then be forgiven; the past forgiven, and the future cease. But without them here below thou canst not live; be they either lesser sins, or small, or trivial. Yet let not even these small and trivial sins be despised. With little drops is the river filled. Let not even the lesser sins be despised. Through narrow chinks in the ship the water oozes in, the hold keeps filling, and if it be disregarded the ship is sunk. But the sailors are not idle; their hands are active,—active that the water may be drained off from day to day. So be thy hands active, that thou mayest pump from day to day. What is the meaning of “be thy hands active”? Let them give, do good works, so be thy hands engaged. “Break thy bread to the hungry, and bring the poor and houseless into thine house; if thou seest the naked, clothe him.” Do all thou canst, do it with the means thou canst command, do it cheerfully, and so put up thy prayer with confidence. It will have two wings, a double alms. What is “a double alms”? “Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. Give, and it shall be given unto you.” The one alms is that which is done from the heart, when thou forgivest thy brother his sin. The other alms is that which is done out of thy substance, when thou dealest bread to the poor. Offer both, lest without either wing thy prayer remain motionless.

11. Therefore when we have said, “Lead us not into temptation,” there follows, “But deliver us from evil.” Now whoso wishes to be delivered from evil, bears witness that he is in evil. And thus saith the Apostle, “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” But who is there “that wisheth for life, and loveth to see good days”? Seeing that all men in this flesh have only evil days; who doth not wish it? Do thou what follows, “Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile: depart from evil, and do good, seek peace, and ensue it;” and then thou hast got rid of evil days, and thy prayer, “deliver us from evil,” is fulfilled.

12. Therefore the three first petitions, “Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth,” are for eternity. But the four following relate to this life, “Give us this day our daily bread.” Shall we ask day by day for daily bread, when we shall have come to that fulness of blessing? “Forgive us our debts.” Shall we say this in that kingdom, when we shall have no debts? “Lead us not into temptation.” Shall we be able to say this then, when there will be no temptation? “Deliver us from evil.” Shall we say this, when there shall be nothing from which to be delivered? Therefore these four are necessary, because of our daily life, but the three first in reference to the life eternal. But all things let us ask, with a view of attaining to that life, and let us pray here, that we be not separated from it. Every day must this prayer be said by you, when you are baptized. For the Lord’s Prayer is said daily in the Church before the Altar of God, and the faithful hear it. We have no fear therefore as to your not learning it carefully, because even if any of you should be unable to get it perfectly, he will learn it by hearing it day by day.

13. Therefore on the Saturday when by the grace of God you will keep the Vigil, you will have to repeat not the Prayer, but the Creed. For if you do not know the Creed now, you will not hear that every day in the Church, and among the people. But when you have learnt it, that you may not forget it, say it every day when you rise; when you are preparing for sleep, rehearse your Creed, to the Lord rehearse it, remind yourselves of it, and be not weary of repeating it. For repetition is useful, lest forgetfulness steal over you. Do not say, “I said it yesterday, I have said it today, I say it every day, I know it perfectly well.” Call thy faith to mind, look into thyself, let thy Creed be as it were a mirror to thee. Therein see thyself, whether thou dost believe all which thou professest to believe, and so rejoice day by day in thy faith. Let it be thy wealth, let it be in a sort the daily clothing of thy soul. Dost thou not always dress thyself when thou risest? So by the daily repetition of thy Creed dress thy soul, lest haply forgetfulness make it bare, and thou remain naked, and that take place which the Apostle saith, (may it be far from thee!) “If so be that being unclothed, we shall not be found naked.” For we shall be clothed by our faith: and this faith is at once a garment and a breastplate; a garment against shame, a breastplate against adversity. But when we shall have arrived at that place where we shall

reign, no need will there be to say the Creed. We shall see God; God Himself will be our vision; the vision of God will be the reward of our present faith.

SERMON IX

AGAIN, ON THE LORD’S PRAYER, MATT. VI. TO THE COMPETENTES

1. You have rehearsed what you believe, hear now what you are to pray for. Forasmuch as you would not be able to call on Him, in whom you should not first have believed; as saith the Apostle, “How shall they call on Him, in whom they have not believed?” Therefore have you first learned the Creed, where is a brief and sublime rule of your faith; brief in the number of its words, sublime in the weight of its contents. But the prayer which you receive to-day to be learned by heart, and to be repeated eight days hence, was dictated (as you heard when the Gospel was being read) by the Lord Himself to His disciples, and came from them unto us, since “their sound went into all the earth.”

2. Ye then who have found a Father in heaven, be loth to cleave to the things of earth. For ye are about to say, “Our Father, which art in heaven.” You have begun to belong to a great family. Under this Father the lord and the slave are brethren; under this Father the general and the common soldier are brethren; under this Father the rich man and the poor are brethren. All Christian believers have divers fathers in earth, some noble, some obscure; but they all call upon one Father which is in heaven. If our Father be there, there is the inheritance prepared for us. But He is such a Father, that we can possess with Him what He giveth. For He giveth an inheritance; but He doth not leave it to us by dying. For He doth not depart Himself, but He abideth ever, that we may come to Him. Seeing then we have heard of Whom we are to ask, let us know also what to ask for, lest haply we offend such a Father by asking amiss.

3. What then hath the Lord Jesus Christ taught us to ask of the Father which is in heaven? “Hallowed be Thy Name.” What kind of blessing is this that we ask of God, that His Name may be hallowed? The Name of God is always Holy; why then do we pray that it may be hallowed, except that we

may be hallowed by it? We pray then that that which is Holy always, may be hallowed in us. The Name of God is hallowed in you when ye are baptized. Why will ye offer this prayer after ye have been baptized, but that that which ye shall then receive may abide ever in you?

4. Another petition follows, “Thy kingdom come.” God’s kingdom will come, whether we ask it or not. Why then do we ask it, but that that which will come to all saints may also come to us; that God may count us also in the number of His saints, to whom His kingdom is to come?

5. We say in the third petition, “Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth.” What is this? That as the Angels serve Thee in heaven, so we may serve Thee in earth. For His holy Angels obey Him; they do not offend Him; they do His commands through the love of Him. This we pray for then, that we too may do the commands of God in love. Again, these words are understood in another way, “Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth.” Heaven in us is the soul, earth in us is the body. What then is, “Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth”? As we hear Thy precepts, so may our flesh consent unto us; lest, whilst flesh and spirit strive together, we be not able to fulfil the commands of God.

6. “Give us this day our daily bread,” comes next in the Prayer. Whether we ask here of the Father support necessary for the body, by “bread” signifying whatever is needful for us; or whether we understand that daily Bread, which ye are soon to receive from the Altar; well it is that we pray that He would give it us. For what is it we pray for, but that we may commit no evil, for which we should be separated from that holy Bread. And the word of God which is preached daily is daily bread. For because it is not bread for the body, it is not on that account not bread for the soul. But when this life shall have passed away, we shall neither seek that bread which hunger seeks; nor shall we have to receive the Sacrament of the Altar, because we shall be there with Christ, whose Body we do now receive; nor will those words which we are now speaking, need to be said to you, nor the sacred volume to be read, when we shall see Him who is Himself the Word of God, by whom all things were made, by whom the Angels are fed, by whom the Angels are enlightened, by whom the Angels become wise; not requiring words of circuitous discourse; but drinking in the Only Word,

filled with whom they burst forth and never fail in praise. For, “Blessed,” saith the Psalm, “are they who dwell in Thy house; they will be always praising Thee.”

7. Therefore in this present life, do we ask what comes next, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” In Baptism, all debts, that is, all sins, are entirely forgiven us. But because no one can live without sin here below, and if without any great crime which entails separation from the Altar, yet altogether without sins can no one live on this earth, and we can only receive the one Baptism once for all; in this Prayer we hear how we may day by day be washed, that our sins may day by day be forgiven us; but only if we do what follows, “As we also forgive our debtors.” Accordingly, my Brethren, I advise you, who are in the grace of God my sons, yet my Brethren under that heavenly Father; I advise you, whenever any one offends and sins against you, and comes, and confesses, and asks your pardon, that ye do pardon him, and forthwith from the heart forgive him; lest ye keep off from your own selves that pardon, which comes from God. For if ye forgive not, neither will He forgive you. Therefore it is in this life that we make this petition, for that it is in this life that sins can be forgiven, where they can be done. But in the life to come they are not forgiven, because they are not done.

8. Next after this we pray, saying, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” This also, that we be not led into temptation, it is necessary for us to ask in this life, because in this life there are temptations; and that “we may be delivered from evil,” because there is evil here. And thus of all these seven petitions, three have respect to the life eternal, and four to the present life. “Hallowed be Thy name.” This will be for ever. “Thy kingdom come.” This kingdom will be for ever. “Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth.” This will be for ever. “Give us this day our daily bread.” This will not be for ever. “Forgive us our debts.” This will not be for ever. “Lead us not into temptation.” This will not be for ever. “But deliver us from evil.” This will not be for ever: but where there is temptation, and where there is evil, there is it necessary that we make this petition.

SERMON X

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. VI. 19, "LAY NOT UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES UPON EARTH," ETC. AN EXHORTATION TO ALMS-DEEDS

1. Every man who is in any trouble, and his own resources fail him, looks out for some prudent person from whom he may take counsel, and so know what to do. Let us suppose then the whole world to be as it were one single man. He seeks to escape evil, yet is slow in doing good; and as in this way tribulations thicken, and his own resources fail, whom can he find more prudent to receive counsel from than Christ? By all means, at least, let him find a better, and do what he will. But if he cannot find a better, let him come to Him whom he may find everywhere: let him consult, and take advice from Him, keep the good commandment, escape the great evil. For present temporal ills of which men are so sore afraid, under which they murmur exceedingly, and by their murmuring offend Him who is correcting them, so that they find not His saving Help; present ills I say without a doubt are but passing; either they pass through us, or we pass through them; either they pass away whilst we live, or they are left behind us when we die. Now that is not in the matter of tribulation great, which in duration is short. Whosoever thou art that art thinking of to-morrow, thou dost not recall the remembrance of yesterday. When the day after to-morrow comes, this to-morrow also will be yesterday. But now if men are so disquieted with anxiety to escape temporal tribulations which pass, or rather fly over, what thought ought they to take that they may escape those which abide and endure without end?

2. A hard condition is the life of man. What else is it to be born, but to enter on a life of toil? Of our toil that is to be, the infant's very cry is witness. From this cup of sorrow no one may be excused. The cup that Adam hath pledged, must be drunk. We were made, it is true, by the hands of Truth, but because of sin we were cast forth upon days of vanity. "We were made after the image of God," but we disfigured it by sinful transgression. Therefore does the Psalm remind us how we were made, and to what a state we have come. For it says, "Though a man walk in the image of God." See, what he was made. Whither hath he come? Hearken to what follows, "Yet will he be disquieted in vain." He walks in the image of truth, and will be disquieted

in the counsel of vanity. Finally, see his disquiet, see it, and as it were in a glass, be displeased with thyself. “Though,” he says, “man walk in the image of God,” and therefore be something great, “yet will he be disquieted in vain;” and as though we might ask, How I pray thee, how is man disquieted in vain? “He heapeth up treasure,” saith he, “and knoweth not for whom he doth gather it.” See then, this man, that is the whole human race represented as one man, who is without resource in his own case, and hath lost counsel and wandered out of the way of a sound mind; “Heapeth up treasure, and knoweth not for whom he doth gather it.” What is more mad, what more unhappy? But surely he is doing it for himself? Not so. Why not for himself? Because he must die, because the life of man is short, because the treasure lasts, but he who gathereth it, quickly passeth away. As pitying therefore the man who “walketh in the image of God,” who confesseth things that are true, yet followeth after vain things, he saith, “He will be disquieted in vain.” I grieve for him; “he heapeth up treasure, and knoweth not for whom he doth gather it.” Doth he gather it for himself? No. Because the man dies whilst the treasure endures. For whom then? If thou hast any good counsel, give it to me. But counsel hast thou none to give me, and so thou hast none for thyself. Wherefore if we are both without it, let us both seek it, let us both receive it, and both consider the matter together. He is disquieted, he heapeth up treasure, he thinks, and toils, and is kept awake by anxiety. All day long art thou harassed by labour, all night agitated by fear. That thy coffer may be filled with money, thy soul is in a fever of anxiety.

3. I see it, I am grieved for thee; thou art disquieted, and as He who cannot deceive, assures us, “Thou art disquieted in vain.” For thou art heaping up treasures: supposing that all thy undertakings succeed, to say nothing of losses, of so great perils and deaths in the prosecution of every several kind of gain (I speak not of deaths of the body, but of evil thoughts, for that gold may come in, uprightness goeth out; that thou mayest be clothed outwardly, thou art made naked within), but to pass over these, and other such things in silence, to pass by all the things that are against thee, let us think only of the favourable circumstances. See, thou art laying up treasures, gains flow into thee from every quarter, and thy money runs like fountains; everywhere where want presseth, there doth abundance flow. Hast thou not heard, “If riches increase, set not your heart upon them?” Lo, thou art getting, thou art

disquieted, not fruitlessly indeed, still in vain. “How,” thou wilt ask “am I disquieted in vain? I am filling my coffers, my walls will scarce hold what I get, how then am I disquieted in vain?” “Thou art heaping up treasure, and dost not know for whom thou gatherest it.” Or if thou dost know, I pray thee tell me. I will listen to thee. For whom is it? If thou art not disquieted in vain, tell me for whom thou art heaping up thy treasure? “For myself,” thou sayest. Dost thou dare say so, who must so soon die? “For my children.” Dost thou dare say this of them who must so soon die? It is a great duty of natural affection (it will be said) for a father to lay up for his sons; rather it is a great vanity, one who must soon die is laying up for those who must soon die also. If it is for thyself, why dost thou gather, seeing thou leavest all when thou diest. This is the case also with thy children; they will succeed thee, but not to abide long. I say nothing about what sort of children they may be, whether haply debauchery may not waste what covetousness hath amassed. So another by dissoluteness squanders what thou by much toil hast gathered together. But I pass over this. It may be they will be good children, they will not be dissolute, they will keep what thou hast left, will increase what thou hast kept, and will not dissipate what thou hast heaped together. Then will thy children be equally vain with thyself, if they do so, if in this they imitate thee their father. I would say to them what I said just now to thee. I would say to thy son, to him for whom thou art saving I would say, “Thou art heaping up treasure, and knowest not for whom thou dost gather it.” For as thou knewest not, so neither doth he know. If the vanity hath continued in him, hath the truth lost its power with respect to him?

4. I forbear to urge, that it may be even during thy life thou art but laying up for thieves. In one night may they come and find all ready the gathering of so many days and nights. It may be thou art laying up for a robber, or a highwayman. I will say no more on this, lest I call to mind and re-open the wound of past sufferings. How many things which an empty vanity hath heaped together, hath the cruelty of an enemy found ready to its hand. It is not my place to wish for this: but it is the concern of all to fear it. May God avert it! May His own scourges be sufficient. May He to whom we pray, spare us! But if He ask thee for whom are we laying by, what shall we answer? How then, O man, whosoever thou art, that are heaping up treasure

in vain, how wilt thou answer me, as I handle this matter with thee, and with thee seek counsel in a common cause? For thou didst speak and make answer, "I am laying up for myself, for my children, for my posterity." I have said already how many grounds of fear there are, even as to those children themselves. But I pass over the consideration, that thy children may so live as to be a curse to thee, and as thine enemy would wish them; grant that they live as the father himself would have them. Yet how many have fallen into those mischances, I have declared, and reminded you of already. Thou didst shudder at them, though thou didst not amend thyself. For what hast thou to answer but this, "Perhaps it may not be so"? Well, I said so too; perhaps I say thou art but laying up for the thief, or robber, or highwayman. I did not say certainly, but perhaps. Where there is a perhaps, there is a perhaps-not; so then thou knowest not what will be, and therefore thou "art disquieted in vain." Thou seest now how truly spake the Truth, how vainly vanity is disquieted. Thou hast heard and at length learnt wisdom, because when thou sayest, "Perhaps it is for my children," but dost not dare to say, "I am sure that it is for my children," thou dost not in fact know for whom thou art gathering riches. So then, as I see, and have said already, thou art thyself without resource; thou findest nothing wherewith to answer me, nor can I to answer thee.

5. Let us both therefore seek and ask for counsel. We have opportunity of consulting not any wise man, but Wisdom Herself. Let us then both give ear to Jesus Christ, "to the Jews a stumbling stone, and to the Gentiles foolishness, but to them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God." Why art thou preparing a strong defence for thy riches? Hear the Power of God, nothing is more strong than He. Why art thou preparing wise counsel to protect thy riches? Hear the Wisdom of God, nothing is more Wise than He. Peradventure when I say what I have to say, thou wilt be offended, and so thou wilt be a Jew, "because to the Jews is Christ an offence." Or peradventure, when I have spoken, it will appear foolish to thee, and so wilt thou be a Gentile, "for to the Gentiles is Christ foolishness." Yet thou art a Christian, thou hast been called. "But to them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the Power of God and the Wisdom of God." Be not sad then when I have said what I have to say; be not offended; mock not my folly, as you deem it, with

an air of disdain. Let us give ear. For what I am about to say, Christ hath said. If thou despise the herald, yet fear the Judge. What shall I say then? The reader of the Gospel has but just now relieved me from this embarrassment. I will not read anything fresh, but will recall only to your recollection what has just been read. Thou wast seeking counsel, as failing in thine own resources; see then what the Fountain of right counsel saith, the Fountain from whose streams is no fear of poison, fill from It what thou mayest.

6. “Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth destroy, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where no thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” What more dost thou wait for? The thing is plain. The counsel is open, but evil desire lies hid; nay, not so, but what is worse, it too lies open. For plunder does not cease its ravages; avarice does not cease to defraud; maliciousness does not cease to swear falsely. And all for what? that treasure may be heaped together. To be laid up where? In the earth, and rightly indeed, by earth for earth. For to the man who sinned and who pledged us, as I have said, our cup of toil, was it said, “Earth thou art, and to earth shalt thou return.” With good reason is the treasure in earth, because the heart is there. Where then is that, “we lift them up unto the Lord?” Sorrow for your case, ye who have understood me; and if ye sorrow truly, amend yourselves. How long will ye be applauding and not doing? What ye have heard is true, nothing truer. Let that then which is true be done. One God we praise, yet we change not, that we may not in this very praise be disquieted in vain.

7. Therefore, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth;” whether ye have found by experience how what is laid up in the earth is lost, or whether ye have not so experienced it, yet do ye too fear lest ye should do so. Let experience reform him whom words will not reform. One cannot rise up now, one cannot go out, but all together with one voice are crying, “Woe to us, the world is falling.” If it be falling, why dost thou not remove? If an architect were to tell thee, that thy house would soon fall, wouldest thou not remove before thou didst indulge in thy vain lamentations? The Builder of the world telleth thee the world will soon fall, and wilt thou not

believe it? Hear the voice of Him who foretelleth it, hear the counsel of Him who giveth thee warning. The voice of prediction is, “Heaven and earth shall pass away.” The voice of warning is, “Lay not up for yourselves treasure on earth.” If then thou dost believe God in His prediction; if thou despise not His warning, let what He says be done. He who has given thee such counsel doth not deceive thee. Thou shalt not lose what thou hast given away, but shalt follow what thou hast only sent before thee. Therefore my counsel is, “Give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.” Thou shalt not remain without treasure; but what thou hast on earth with anxiety, thou shalt possess in heaven free from care. Transport thy goods then. I am giving thee counsel for keeping, not for losing. “Thou shalt have,” saith He, “treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me,” that I may bring thee to thy treasure. This is not a wasting, but a saving. Why do men keep silence? Let them hear, and having at last by experience found what to fear, let them do that which will give them no cause of fear, let them transport their goods to heaven. Thou puttest wheat in the low ground; and thy friend comes, who knows the nature of the corn and the land, and instructs thy unskilfulness, and says to thee, “What hast thou done?” Thou hast put the corn in the flat soil, in the lower land; the soil is moist; it will all rot, and thou wilt lose thy labour. Thou answerest, What then must I do? Remove it, he says, into the higher ground. Dost thou then give ear to a friend who gives thee counsel about thy corn, and despisest thou God who gives thee counsel about thine heart? Thou fearest to put thy corn in the low earth, and wilt thou lose thy heart in the earth? Behold the Lord thy God when He giveth thee counsel touching thine heart, saith, “Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also.” Lift up, saith He, thine heart to heaven, that it rot not in the earth. It is His counsel, who wisheth to preserve thy heart, not to destroy it.

8. If then this be so, what must be their repentance who have not done thereafter? How must they now reproach themselves! We might have had in heaven what we have now lost in earth. The enemy has broken up our house; but could he break heaven open? He has killed the servant who was set to guard; but could he kill the Lord who would have kept them, “where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.” How many now are saying, “There we might have had, and hid our treasures safe, where after a little

while we might have followed them securely. Why have we not hearkened to our Lord? Why have we despised the admonitions of the Father, and so have experienced the invasion of the enemy?” If then this be good counsel, let us not be slow in taking heed to it; and if what we have must be transported, let us transfer it into that place, from whence we cannot lose it. What are the poor to whom we give, but our carriers, by whom we convey our goods from earth to heaven? Give then: thou art but giving to thy carrier, he carrieth what thou givest to heaven. How, sayest thou, does he carry it to heaven? For I see that he makes an end of it by eating. No doubt, he carries it, not by keeping it, but by making it his food. What? Hast thou forgotten, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom; for I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat:” and,” Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of Mine, ye did it to Me.” If thou hast not despised the beggar that standeth before thee, consider to Whom what thou gavest him hath come. “Inasmuch,” saith he, “as ye did it to one of the least of Mine, ye did it to Me.” He hath received it, who gave thee wherewith to give. He hath received it, who in the end will give His Own Self to thee.

9. For this have I at divers times called to your remembrance, Beloved, and I confess to you it astonishes me much in the Scriptures of God, and I ought repeatedly to call your attention to it. I pray you to think of what our Lord Jesus Christ Himself saith, that at the end of the world, when He shall come to judgment, He will gather together all nations before Him, and will divide men into two parts; that He will place some at His right hand, and others on His left; and will say to those on the right hand, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” But to those on the left, “Depart ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Search out the reasons either for so great a reward, or so great a punishment. “Receive the kingdom,” and “Go into everlasting fire.” Why shall the first receive the kingdom? “For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat.” Why shall the other depart into everlasting fire? “For I was hungry, and ye gave Me no meat.” What meaneth this, I ask? I see touching those who are to receive the kingdom, that they gave as good and faithful Christians, not despising the words of the Lord, and with sure trust hoping for the promises they did accordingly; because had they not done so, this very barrenness would not surely have accorded with their

good life. For it may be they were chaste, no cheats, nor drunkards, and kept themselves from evil works. Yet if they had not added good works, they would have remained barren. For they would have kept, “Depart from evil,” but they would not have kept, “and do good.” Notwithstanding, even to them He doth not say, “Come, receive the kingdom,” for ye have lived in chastity; ye have defrauded no man, ye have not oppressed any poor man, ye have invaded no one’s landmark, ye have deceived no one by oath. He said not this, but, “Receive the kingdom, because I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat.” How excellent is this above all, when the Lord made no mention of the rest, but named this only! And again to the others, “Depart ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. How many things could He urge against the ungodly, were they to ask, “Why are we going into everlasting fire!” Why? Do ye ask, ye adulterers, menslayers, cheats, sacrilegious blasphemers, unbelievers. Yet none of these did He name, but, “Because I was hungry, and ye gave Me no meat.”

10. I see that you are surprised as I am. And indeed it is a marvellous thing. But I gather as best I can the reason of this thing so strange, and I will not conceal it from you. It is written, “As water quencheth fire, so alms quencheth sin.” Again it is written, “Shut up alms in the heart of a poor man, and it shall make supplication for thee before the Lord.” Again it is written, “Hear, O king, my counsel, and redeem thy sins by alms.” And many other testimonies of the Divine oracles are there, whereby it is shown that alms avail much to the quenching and effacing of sins. Wherefore to those whom He is about to condemn, yea, rather to those whom He is about to crown, He will impute alms only, as though He would say, “It were a hard matter for me not to find occasion to condemn you, were I to examine and weigh you accurately and with much exactness to scrutinize your deeds; but, “Go into the kingdom, for I was hungry, and ye gave Me meat.” Ye shall therefore go into the kingdom, not because ye have not sinned, but because ye have redeemed your sins by alms. And again to the others, “Go ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” They too, guilty as they are, old in their sins, late in their fear for them, in what respect, when they turn their sins over in their mind, could they dare to say that they are undeservedly condemned, that this sentence is pronounced against them undeservedly by so righteous a Judge? In considering their

consciences, and all the wounds of their souls, in what respect could they dare to say, We are unjustly condemned. Of whom it was said before in Wisdom, “Their own iniquities shall convince them to their face.” Without doubt they will see that they are justly condemned for their sins and wickednesses; yet it will be as though He said to them, “It is not in consequence of this that ye think, but because I was hungry, and ye gave Me no meat.’“ For if turning away from all these your deeds, and turning to Me, ye had redeemed all those crimes and sins by alms, those alms would now deliver you, and absolve you from the guilt of so great offences; for, “Blessed are the merciful, for to them shall be shown mercy.” But now go away into everlasting fire. “He shall have judgment without mercy, who hath showed no mercy.”

11. O that I may have induced you, my brethren, to give away your earthly bread, and to knock for the heavenly! The Lord is that Bread. He saith, “I am the Bread of life.” But how shall He give to thee, who givest not to him that is in need? One is in need before thee, and thou art in need before Another, and since thou art in need before Another, and another is in need before thee, that other is in need before him who is in need himself. For He before whom thou art in need, needeth nothing. Do then to others as thou wouldest have done to thee. For it is not in this case as with those friends who are wont to upbraid in a way one another with their kindnesses; as, “I did this for thee,” and the other answers, “and I this for thee,” that He wishes us to do Him some good office, because He has first done such an office for us. He is in want of nothing, and therefore is He the very Lord. I said unto the Lord, “Thou art my God, for Thou needest not my goods.” Notwithstanding though He be the Lord, and the Very Lord, and needeth not our goods, yet that we might do something even for Him, hath He vouchsafed to be hungry in His poor. “I was hungry,” saith He, “and ye gave Me meat. Lord, when saw we Thee hungry? Forasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of Mine, ye did it to Me.” To be brief then, let men hear, and consider as they ought, how great a merit it is to have fed Christ when He hungereth, and how great a crime it is to have despised Christ when He hungereth.

12. Repentance for sins changes men, it is true, for the better; but it does not appear as if even it would profit ought, if it should be barren of works of mercy. This the Truth testifieth by the mouth of John, who said to them that came to him, “O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance; And say not we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. For now is the axe laid unto the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be cut down, and cast into the fire.” Touching this fruit he said above, “Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance.” Whoso then bringeth not forth these fruits, hath no cause to think that he shall attain pardon for his sins by a barren repentance. Now what these fruits are, he showeth afterwards himself. For after these his words the multitude asked him, saying, “What shall we do then?” That is, what are these fruits, which thou exhortest us with such alarming force to bring forth? “But he answering said unto them, he that hath two coats, let him give to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.” My brethren, what is more plain, what more certain, or express than this? What other meaning then can that have which he said above, “Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and cast into the fire;” but that same which they on the left shall hear, “Go ye into everlasting fire, for I was hungry, and ye gave Me no meat.” So then it is but a small matter to depart from sins, if thou shalt neglect to cure what is past, as it is written, “Son, thou hast sinned, do so no more.” And that he might not think to be secure by this only, he saith, “And for thy former sins pray that they may be forgiven thee.” But what will it profit thee to pray for forgiveness, if thou shalt not make thyself meet to be heard, by not bringing forth fruits meet for repentance, that thou shouldest be cut down as a barren tree, and be cast into the fire? If then ye will be heard when ye pray for pardon of your sins, “Forgive, and it shall be forgiven you; Give, and it shall be given you.”

SERMON XI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. VII. 7, “ASK, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU;” ETC. AN EXHORTATION TO ALMS-DEEDS

1. In the lesson of the Holy Gospel the Lord hath exhorted us to prayer. “Ask,” saith He, “and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? Or if he ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then,” saith He, “though ye be evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him? Though ye be evil,” He saith, “ye know how to give good gifts unto your children.” A marvellous thing, Brethren! we are evil: yet have we a good Father. What is more evident? We have heard our proper name: “Though ye be evil, ye know how to give good gifts unto your children.” And now see what kind of Father He showeth them, whom he called evil. “How much more shall your Father?” Father of whom? undoubtedly of the evil. And what kind of Father? “None is good but God only.”

2. For this cause have we who are evil a good Father, that we may not always continue evil. No evil man can make another man good. If no evil man can make another good, how can an evil man make himself good? He only can make of an evil man a good man, who is good eternally. “Heal me, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved.” Why then do those vain ones say to me in words vain as themselves, “Thou canst save thyself if thou wilt”? “Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed.” We were created good by The Good; for “God made man upright,” but by our own free will, we became evil. We had power from being good to become evil, and we shall have power from being evil to become good. But it is He who is ever Good, who maketh the good out of the evil; for man by his own will had no power to heal himself. Thou dost not look out for a physician to wound thyself; but when thou hast wounded thyself, thou lookest out for one to cure thee. Good things then after the time present, temporal good things, such as are concerned with the body and flesh, we do know how to give to our children, even though we are evil. For even these are good things, who would doubt it? A fish, an egg, bread, fruit, wheat, the light we see, the air we breathe, all these are good; the very riches by which men are lifted up, and which make them loth to acknowledge other men to be their equals; by

which, I say, men are lifted up rather in love of their dazzling clothing, than with any thought of their common nature, even these riches, I repeat, are good; but all these goods which I have now mentioned may be possessed by good and bad alike; and though they be good themselves, yet cannot they make their owners good.

3. A good then there is which maketh good, and a good there is whereby thou mayest do good. The Good which maketh good is God. For none can make man good, save He who is Good eternally. Therefore that thou mayest be good, call upon God. But there is another good whereby thou mayest do good, and that is, whatever thou mayest possess. There is gold, there is silver; they are good, not such as can make thee good, but whereby thou mayest do good. Thou hast gold and silver, and thou desirest more gold and silver. Thou both hast, and desirest to have; thou art at once full, and thirsty. This is a disease, not opulence. When men are in the dropsy, they are full of water, and yet are always thirsty. They are full of water, and yet they thirst for water. How then canst thou take pleasure in opulence, who hast thereby this dropsical desire? Gold then thou hast, it is good; yet thou hast not whereby thou canst be made good, but whereby thou canst do good. Dost thou ask, What good can I do with gold? Hast thou not heard in the Psalm, “He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness remaineth for ever.” This is good, this is the good whereby thou art made good; righteousness. If thou have the good whereby thou art made good, do good with that good which cannot make thee good. Thou hast money, deal it out freely. By dealing it out freely, thou increasest righteousness. “For he hath dispersed abroad, hath distributed, hath given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth for ever.” See what is diminished and what increased. Thy money is diminished, thy righteousness increased. That is diminished which thou must soon have lost, that diminished which thou must soon have left behind thee; that increased which thou shalt possess for ever.

4. It is then a secret of gainful dealing I am giving; learn so to trade. For thou dost commend the merchant who selleth lead and getteth gold, and wilt thou not commend the merchant, who layeth out money, and getteth righteousness? But thou wilt say, I do not lay out my money, because I have

not righteousness. Let him who has righteousness lay his money out; I have not righteousness, so at least let me have my money. Dost thou not then wish to lay out thy money, because thou hast not righteousness? Yea, lay it out then rather that thou mayest have righteousness. For from whence shalt thou have righteousness but from God, the Fountain of righteousness? Therefore, if thou wilt have righteousness, be God's beggar, who just now out of the Gospel urged thee to ask, and seek, and knock. He knew His beggar, and lo the Householder, the mighty rich One, rich, to wit, in riches spiritual and eternal, exhorteth thee and saith, "Ask, seek, knock; he that asketh receiveth, he that seeketh findeth, to him that knocketh it shall be opened." He exhorteth thee to ask, and will he refuse thee what thou askest?

5. Consider a similitude or comparison drawn from a contrary case (as of that unjust judge), which is an encouragement to us to prayer. "There was," saith the Lord, "in a city a certain judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man." A certain widow importuned him daily, and said, "Avenge me." He would not for a long time; but she ceased not to petition, and he did through her importunity what he would not of his own good will. For thus by a contrary case hath He recommended us to pray.

6. Again, He saith, "A certain man to whom some guest had come, went to his friend, and began to knock and say, A guest is come to me, lend me three loaves." He answered, "I am already in bed, and my servants with me." The other does not leave off, but stands and presses his case, and knocks and begs as one friend of another. And what saith He? "I say unto you that he riseth, and not because of his friendship," but "because of the other's importunity he giveth him as many as he wanted. Not because of his friendship," though he is his friend, but "because of his importunity." What is the meaning of "because of his importunity?" Because he did not leave off knocking; because even when his request was refused, he did not turn away. He who was not willing to give, gave what was asked, because the other fainted not in asking. How much more then shall that Good One give who exhorteth us to ask, who is displeased if we ask not? But when at times He giveth somewhat slowly, it is that He is showing us the value of His good things; not that He refuses them. Things which have been long desired, are obtained with the greater pleasure, whereas those which are

given quickly, are held cheap. Ask then, seek, be instant. By the very asking and seeking thou dost grow so as to contain the more. God is keeping in reserve for thee, what it is not His will to give thee quickly, that thou mayest learn for great things to long with great desire. Therefore "ought we always to pray, and not to faint."

7. If then God hath made us His beggars by admonishing, and exhorting, and commanding us to ask, and seek, and knock, let us for our part pay regard to those who ask from us. We ask, and from whom do we ask? Who are we that ask? What do we ask? From whom, or who are we, or what is it that we ask? We ask of the Good God; and we that ask are evil men; but we ask for righteousness, whereby we may be good. We ask then for that which we may have for ever, wherewith when we shall be filled, we shall want no more. But in order that we may be filled, let us hunger and thirst; hungering and thirsting, let us ask, and seek, and knock. "For blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness." Wherefore are they blessed? They do hunger and thirst, and are they blessed? Is want ever a blessing? They are not blessed in that they hunger and thirst, but in that they will be filled. There will there be blessedness, in the fulness, not in the hunger. But hunger must go before the fulness, that no loathing attach to the bread.

8. We have said then, from whom it is that we ask, and who we are that ask, and what we ask. But we also are asked ourselves. For we are God's mendicants; that He may acknowledge His mendicants, let us on our part acknowledge ours. But let us think in this case again, when anything is asked of us, who they are that ask, from whom they ask, and what they ask? Who then are they that ask? Men. From whom do they ask? From men. Who are they that ask? Mortals. From whom? From mortals. Who are they that ask? Frail beings. From whom? From frail beings. Who are they that ask? Wretches. And from whom? From wretches. Excepting in the matter of wealth, they that ask are as they of whom they ask. With what face canst thou ask before thy lord, who dost not acknowledge thine own equal? "I am not," he will say, "as he is," far be it from me to be such as he. It is thus that one clad in silk, and puffed up with pride, speaks of one who is wrapped in rags. But I ask you when you both are stripped. I ask you not as you are now when clothed, but as you were when you were first born. Both were

naked, both weak, beginning a life of misery, and therefore beginning it with cries.

9. See then, recall, O rich man, to mind thy first beginnings; see whether thou broughtest anything into the world. Now thou hast come indeed, and hast found so great abundance. But tell me, I pray thee, what didst thou bring hither? Tell me, or if thou art ashamed to say, hear the Apostle. “We brought nothing into this world.” He saith, “We brought nothing into this world.” But perhaps because thou broughtest in nothing, but yet hast found much here, thou wilt take away something hence? This too, peradventure through love of riches, thou art afraid to confess. Hear this also, and let the Apostle who will not flatter, tell thee. “We brought nothing into this world,” to wit when we were born; “neither can we carry anything out,” to wit when we shall depart out of the world. Thou broughtest in nothing, and thou shalt carry nothing away. Why then dost thou puff up thyself against the poor man? When infants first are born, let only the parents, servants, dependants, and the crowds of obsequious attendants, get out of the way; and then let the wealthy children with their cries be recognised. Let the rich woman and the poor give birth together; let them take no notice of their children, let them go away for a little while; then let them return, and recognise them if they can. See then, O rich man, “thou broughtest nothing into this world; neither canst thou carry anything out.” What I have said of them at their birth, I may say of them in death. If it be not so, when by any chance old sepulchres are broken up, let the bones of the rich be recognised if they can. Therefore, thou rich man, give ear to the Apostle, “We brought nothing into this world.” Acknowledge it, true it is. “Neither can we carry anything out.” Acknowledge it, this is true also.

10. What follows then? “Having food and covering, let us be therewith content; for they who wish to be rich fall into temptation, and many and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For avarice is the root of all evil, which some following after, have erred from the faith.” Now consider what they have abandoned. Grieved thou art that they have abandoned this, but see now in what they have entangled themselves. Hear; “They have erred from the faith, and entangled themselves in many sorrows.” But who? “They who wish to be rich.” It is one thing to be rich,

another to wish to become rich. He is rich, who is born of rich parents, and he is rich not because he wished it, but because many left him their inheritances. His wealth I see, I make no question as to the pleasure he takes in it. In this Scripture it is covetousness that is condemned, not gold, or silver, or riches, but covetousness. For they who do not wish to become rich, or do not care about it, who do not burn with covetous desires, nor are inflamed by the fires of avarice, but who yet are rich, let them hear the Apostle (it has been read to-day), "Charge them that are rich in this world." Charge them what? Charge them before all things, not to be proud in their conceits, for there is nothing which riches do so much generate as pride. Each several fruit, each several grain of corn, each several tree, has its peculiar worm, and the worm of the apple is of one kind, and of the pear another, and of the bean another, and of the wheat another. The worm of riches is pride.

11. "Charge therefore the rich of this world that they be not proud in their conceits." He hath shut out the abuse, let him teach now the proper use. "That they be not proud in their conceits." But whence cometh the defence against pride? From that which follows: "Nor trust in the uncertainty of riches." They who trust not in the uncertainty of riches, are not proud in their conceits. If they be not proud in their conceits, let them fear. If they fear, they are not proud in their conceits. How many are they who were rich yesterday, and are poor to-day? How many go to sleep rich, and through robbers coming and taking all away, wake up poor? Therefore "charge them not to trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the Living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy," things temporal, and things eternal. But things eternal more for enjoyment, the things temporal for use. Things temporal as for travellers, things eternal as for inhabitants. Things temporal, whereby we may do good; things eternal, whereby we may be made good. Therefore let the rich do this, "Let them not be proud in their conceits, nor trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the Living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy." Let them do this. But what can they do with what they have? Hear what. "Let them be rich in good works, let them easily distribute." For they have wherewithal. Why then do they not do it? Poverty is a hard estate. But they may give easily, for they have the means. "Let them communicate," that is, let them acknowledge their fellow-mortals as their

equals. “Let them communicate, let them lay up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come.” For, saith he, when I say, “Let them distribute easily, let them communicate,” I have no wish to spoil, or strip them, or leave them empty. It is a painful lesson I teach; I show them a place to put their goods, “let them lay up in store for themselves.” For I have no wish that they should remain in poverty. “Let them lay up for themselves in store.” I do not bid them lose their goods, but I show them whither to remove them. “Let them lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may hold on the true life.” The present then is a false life; let them lay hold on the true life. “For it is vanity of vanities, and all is vanity. What so great abundance hath man in all his labour, wherewith he laboureth under the sun?” Therefore the true life must be laid hold upon, our riches must be removed to the place of the true life, that we may find there what we give here. He maketh this exchange of our goods who also changeth ourselves.

12. Give then, my brethren, to the poor, “Having food and covering, let us be therewith content.” The rich man has nothing from his riches, but what the poor man begs of him, food and covering. What more hast thou from all that thou possessest? Thou hast got food and necessary covering. Necessary I say, not useless, not superfluous. What more dost thou get from thy riches? Tell me. Assuredly all thou hast more will be superfluous. Let thy superfluities then be the poor man’s necessaries. But thou wilt say, I get costly banquets, I feed on costly meats. But the poor man, what does he feed on? On cheap food; the poor man feeds on cheap, and I, says he, on costly meats. Well, I ask you, when you both are filled, the costly enters into thee, but when it is once entered, what does it become? If we had but looking-glasses within us, should we not be put to shame for all the costly meat whereby thou hast been filled? The poor man hungers, and so does the rich; the poor man seeks to be filled, so does the rich. The poor man is filled with inexpensive, the rich with costly meats. Both are filled alike, the object whither both wish to attain is one and the same, only the one reaches it by a short, the other by a circuitous way. But thou wilt say, I relish better my costly food. True, and it is hard for thee to be satisfied, dainty as thou art. Thou knowest not the relish of that which hunger seasons. Not that I have said this to force the rich to feed on the meat and drink of the poor. Let the

rich use what their infirmity has accustomed them to; but let them be sorry, that they are not able to do otherwise. For it would be better for them if they could. If then the poor man be not puffed up for his poverty, why shouldest thou for thine infirmity? Use then choice, and costly meats, because thou art so accustomed, because thou canst not do otherwise, because if thou dost change thy custom, thou art made ill. I grant thee this, make use of superfluities, but give to the poor necessaries; make use of costly meats, but give to the poor inexpensive food. He is looking to receive from thee, and thou art looking to receive from God; he is looking to the hand which was made as he was, and thou art looking to the hand that made thee, and made not thee only, but the poor man with thee. He set you both one and the same journey, this present life: you have found yourselves companions in it, you are walking one way: he is carrying nothing, thou art loaded excessively: he is carrying nothing with him, thou art carrying with thee more than thou dost need. Thou art loaded: give him of that thou hast; so shalt thou at once feed him, and lessen thine own burden.

13. Give then to the poor; I beg, I advise, I charge, I command you. Give to the poor whatever ye will. For I will not conceal from you, Beloved, why it is that I have deemed it necessary to deliver this discourse to you. As I am going to and from the Church, the poor importune me, and beg me to speak to you, that they may receive something of you. They have urged me to speak to you; and when they see that they receive nothing from you, they suppose that all my labour among you is in vain. Something also they expect from me. I give them all I can; but have I the means sufficient to supply all their necessities? Forasmuch then as I have not means sufficient to supply all their necessity, I am at least their ambassador to you. You have heard and applauded; God be thanked. You have received the seed, you have returned an answer. But these your commendations weigh me down rather, and expose me to danger. I bear them, and tremble whilst I bear them. Nevertheless, my brethren, these your commendations are but the tree’s leaves; it is the fruit I am in quest of.

SERMON XII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. VIII. 8, "I AM NOT WORTHY THAT THOU SHOULDEST COME UNDER MY ROOF," ETC., AND OF THE WORDS OF THE APOSTLE, 1 COR. VIII. 10, "FOR IF A MAN SEE THEE WHO HAST KNOWLEDGE SITTING AT MEAT IN AN IDOL'S TEMPLE," ETC

1. We have heard, as the Gospel was being read, the praise of our faith as manifested in humility. For when the Lord Jesus promised that He would go to the Centurion's house to heal His servant, He answered, "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and he shall be healed." By calling himself unworthy, he showed himself worthy for Christ to come not into his house, but into his heart. Nor would he have said this with so great faith and humility, had he not borne Him in his heart, of whose coming into his house he was afraid. For it were no great happiness for the Lord Jesus to enter into his house, and yet not to be in his heart. For this Master of humility both by word and example, sat down even in the house of a certain proud Pharisee, by name Simon; and though He sat down in his house, there was no place in this heart, "where the Son of Man could lay His Head."

2. For so, as we may understand from the words of the Lord Himself, did He call back from His discipleship a certain proud man, who of his own accord was desirous to go with Him. "Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." And the Lord seeing in his heart what was invisible, said, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His Head." That is, in thee, guile like the fox doth dwell, and pride as the birds of heaven. But the Son of Man simple as opposed to guile, lowly as opposed to pride, hath not where to lay His Head; and this very laying, not the raising up of the head, teaches humility. Therefore doth He call back this one who was desirous to go, and another who refused He draweth onward. For in the same place He saith to a certain man, "Follow Me." And he said, "I will follow Thee, Lord, but let me first go and bury my father." His excuse was indeed a dutiful one: and therefore was he the more worthy to have his excuse removed, and his calling confirmed. What he wished to do was an act of dutifulness; but the Master taught him what he ought to prefer. For He wished him to be a preacher of the living word, to make others live. But there were others by

whom that first necessary office might be fulfilled. “Let the dead,” He saith, “bury their dead.” When unbelievers bury a dead body, the dead bury the dead. The body of the one hath lost its soul, the soul of the others hath lost God. For as the soul is the life of the body; so is God the life of the soul. As the body expires when it loses the soul, so doth the soul expire when it loses God. The loss of God is the death of the soul: the loss of the soul the death of the body. The death of the body is necessary; the death of the soul voluntary.

3. The Lord then sat down in the house of a certain proud Pharisee. He was in his house, as I have said, and was not in his heart. But into this centurion’s house He entered not, yet He possessed his heart. Zacchaeus again received the Lord both in house and heart. Yet the centurion’s faith is praised for its humility. For he said, “I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof;” and the Lord said, “Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel;” according to the flesh, that is. For he too was an Israelite undoubtedly according to the spirit. The Lord had come to fleshly Israel, that is, to the Jews, there to seek first for the lost sheep, among this people, and of this people also He had assumed His Body. “I have not found there so great faith,” He saith. We can but measure the faith of men, as men can judge of it; but He who saw the inward parts, He whom no man can deceive, gave His testimony to this man’s heart, hearing words of lowliness, and pronouncing a sentence of healing.

4. But whence did he get such confidence? “I also,” saith he, “am a man set under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh: and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.” I am an authority to certain who are placed under me, being myself placed under a certain authority above me. If then I a man under authority have the power of commanding, what power must Thou have, whom all powers serve? Now this man was of the Gentiles, for he was a centurion. At that time the Jewish nation had soldiers of the Roman empire among them. There he was engaged in a military life, according to the extent of a centurion’s authority, both under authority himself, and having authority over others; as a subject obedient, ruling others who were under him. But the Lord (and mark this especially, Beloved, as need there is

you should), though He was among the Jewish people only, even now announced beforehand that the Church should be in the whole world, for the establishment of which He would send Apostles; Himself not seen, yet believed on by the Gentiles: by the Jews seen, and put to death. For as the Lord did not in body enter into this man’s house, and still, though in body absent, yet present in majesty, healed his faith, and his house; so the same Lord also was in body among the Jewish people only: among the other nations He was neither born of a Virgin, nor suffered, nor walked, nor endured His human sufferings, nor wrought His divine miracles. None of all this took place in the rest of the nations, and yet was that fulfilled which was spoken of Him, “A people whom I have not known, hath served Me.” And how if it did not know Him? “Hath obeyed Me by the hearing of the ear.” The Jewish nation knew, and crucified Him; the whole world besides heard and believed.

5. This absence, so to say, of His body, and presence of His power among all nations, He signified also in the instance of that woman who had touched the edge of His garment, when He asketh, saying, “Who touched Me?” He asketh, as though He were absent; as though present, He healeth. “The multitude,” say the disciples, “press Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me?” For as if He were so walking as not to be touched by anybody at all, He said, “Who touched Me?” And they answer, “The multitude press Thee.” And the Lord would seem to say, I am asking for one who touched, not for one who pressed Me. In this case also is His Body now, that is, His Church. The faith of the few “touches” it, the throng of the many “press” it. For ye have heard, as being her children, that Christ’s Body is the Church, and if ye will, ye yourselves are so. This the Apostle says in many places, “For His body’s sake, which is the Church;” and again, “But ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” If then we are His body, what His body then suffered in the crowd, that doth His Church suffer now. It is pressed by many, touched by few. The flesh presses it, faith touches it. Lift up therefore your eyes, I beseech you, ye who have wherewithal to see. For ye have before you something to see. Lift up the eyes of faith, touch but the extreme border of His garment, it will be sufficient for saving health.

6. See ye how that which ye have heard out of the Gospel was at that time to come is now present. Therefore, said He, on occasion of the commendation of the Centurion’s faith, as in the flesh an alien, but of the household in heart, “Therefore I say unto you, Many shall come from the east and west.” Not all, but “many;” yet they shall “come from the East and West;” the whole world is denoted by these two parts. “Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness.” “But the children of the kingdom,” the Jews, namely. And how “the children of the kingdom”? Because they received the Law; to them the Prophets were sent, with them was the temple and the Priesthood; they celebrated the figures of all the things to come. Yet of what things they celebrated the figures, they acknowledged not the presence. And, “Therefore the children of the kingdom,” He saith, shall go into outer darkness, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” And so we see the Jews reprobate, and Christians called from the East and West, to the heavenly banquet, to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, where the bread is righteousness, and the cup wisdom.

7. Consider then, brethren, for of these are ye; ye are of this people, even then foretold, and now exhibited. Yes, verily, ye are of those who have been called from the East and West, to sit down in the kingdom of heaven, not in the temple of idols. Be ye then the Body of Christ, not the pressure of His Body. Ye have the border of His garment to touch, that ye may be healed of the issue of blood, that is, of carnal pleasures. Ye have, I say, the border of the garment to touch. Look upon the Apostles as the garment, by the texture of unity clinging closely to the sides of Christ. Among these Apostles was Paul, as it were the border, the least and last; as he saith himself, “I am the least of the Apostles.” In a garment the last and least thing is the border. The border is in appearance contemptible, yet is it touched with saving efficacy. “Even to this hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked and buffeted.” What state so low, so contemptible as this! Touch then, if thou art suffering from a bloody flux. There will go power out of Him whose garment it is, and it will heal thee. The border was proposed to you just now to be touched, when out of the same Apostle there was read, “For if any one see him which hath knowledge sit at meat in an idol’s temple, shall not the

conscience of him who is weak, be emboldened to eat things offered to idols? And through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died!” How think ye may men be deceived by idols, which they suppose are honoured by Christians? A man may say, “God knows my heart.” Yes, but thy brother did not know thy heart. If thou art weak, beware of a still greater weakness; if thou art strong, have a care of thy brother’s weakness. They who see what you do, are emboldened to do more, so as to desire not only to eat, but also to sacrifice there. And lo, “Through thy knowledge the weak brother perisheth.” Hear then, my brother; if thou didst disregard the weak, wouldest thou disregard a brother also? Awake. What if so thou sin against Christ Himself? For attend to what thou canst not by any means disregard. “But,” saith he, “when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.” Let them who disregard these words, go now, and sit at meat in the idol’s temple; will they not be of those who press, and do not touch? And when they have been at meat in the idol’s temple, let them come and fill the Church; not to receive saving health, but to make a pressure there.

8. But thou wilt say, I am afraid lest I offend those above me. By all means be afraid of offending them, and so thou wilt not offend God. For thou who art afraid lest thou offend those above thee, see whether there be not One above him whom thou art afraid of offending. By all means then be loth to offend those above thee. This is an established rule with thee. But then is it not plain, that he must on no account be offended, who is above all others? Run over now the list of those above thee. First are thy father and mother, if they are educating thee aright; if they are bringing thee up for Christ; they are to be heard in all things, they must be obeyed in every command; let them enjoin nothing against one above themselves, and so let them be obeyed. And who, thou wilt say, is above him who begat me? He who created thee. For man begets, but God creates. How it is that man begets, he does not know; and what he shall beget, he does not know. But He who saw thee that He might make thee, before that he whom He made existed, is surely above thy father. Thy country again should be above thy very parents; so that whereinsoever thy parents enjoin aught against thy country, they are not to be listened to. And whatsoever thy country enjoin against God, it is not to be listened to. For if thou wilt be healed, if after the issue of

blood, if after twelve years' continuance in that disease, if after having spent thine all upon physicians, and not having received health, thou dost wish at length to be made whole; O woman, whom I am addressing as a figure of the Church, thy father enjoineth thee this, and thy people that. But thy Lord saith to thee, "Forget thine own people, and thy father's house." For what good? for what advantage? with what useful result? "Because the King hath desired thy beauty." He hath desired what He made, since when deformed He loved thee, that He might make thee beautiful. For thee unbelieving, and deformed, He shed His Blood, and He made thee faithful and beauteous, He hath loved His own gifts in thee. For what didst thou bring to thy spouse? What didst thou receive for dowry from thy former father, and former people? Was it not the excesses and the rags of sins? Thy rags He cast away, thy robe impure He tore asunder. He pitied thee that He might adorn thee. He adorned thee, that He might love thee.

9. What need of more, Brethren. Ye are Christians, and have heard, that "If ye sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ." Do not disregard it, if ye would not be wiped out of the book of life. How long shall I go about to speak in bright and pleasing terms to you, what my grief forceth me to speak in some sort, and will not suffer me to keep secret? Whosoever they are who are minded to disregard these things, and sin against Christ, let them only consider what they are doing. We wish the rest of the Heathen to be gathered in; and ye are stones in their way: they have a wish to come; they stumble, and so return. For they say in their hearts, Why should we leave the gods whom the very Christians worship as we do? God forbid, thou wilt say, that I should worship the gods of the Gentiles. I know, I understand, I believe thee. But what account art thou making of the consciences of the weak which thou art wounding? What account art thou making of their price, if thou disregard the purchase? Consider for how great a price was the purchase made. "Through thy knowledge," saith the Apostle, "shall the weak brother perish;" that knowledge which thou professest to have, in that thou knowest that an idol is nothing, and that in thy mind thou art thinking only of God, and so sittest down in the idol's temple. In this knowledge the weak brother perisheth. And lest thou shouldest pay no regard to the weak brother, he added, "for whom Christ died." If thou wouldest disregard him, yet consider his Price,

and weigh the whole world in the balance with the Blood of Christ. And lest thou shouldest still think that thou art sinning against a weak brother, and so esteem it after that he had heard that he was "Peter," a trivial fault, and of small account, he saith, "Ye sin against Christ." For men are in the habit of saying, I sin against man; am I sinning against God?" Deny then that Christ is God. Dost thou dare deny that Christ is God? Hast thou learned this other doctrine, when thou didst sit at meat in the idol's temple? The school of Christ doth not admit that doctrine. I ask; Where learnedst thou that Christ is not God? The Pagans are wont to say so. Seest thou what bad associations do? Seest thou, "that evil communications corrupt good manners?" There thou canst not speak of the Gospel, and thou dost hear others talking of idols. There thou losest the truth that Christ is God; and what thou dost drink in there, thou vomitest out in the Church. It may be thou art bold enough to speak here; bold enough to mutter among the crowds; "Was not then Christ a man? Was He not crucified?" This hast thou learned of the Pagans. Thou hast lost thy soul's health, thou hast not touched the border. On this point then touch again the border, and receive health. As I taught thee to touch it in this that is written, "Whoso seeth a brother sit at meat in the idol's temple;" touch it also concerning the Divinity of Christ. The same border said of the Jews, "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." Behold, against Whom, even the Very God, thou dost sin, when thou sittest down with false gods.

10. It is no god, you will say; because it is the tutelary genius of Carthage. As though if it were Mars or Mercury, it would be a god. But consider in what light it is esteemed by them; not what it is in itself. For I know also as well as thou, that it is but a stone. If this "genius" be any ornament, let the citizens of Carthage live well; and they themselves will be this "genius" of Carthage. But if the "genius" be a devil, ye have heard in that same Scripture, "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils." We know well that it is no God; would that they knew it too! but because of those weak ones who do not know it, their conscience ought not to be wounded. It is this that the Apostle warns us of. For that they regard that statue as something divine, and take it for a god, the altar is witness.

What does the altar there, if it be not accounted a god? Let no one tell me; it is no deity, it is no God. I have said already, “Would that they only knew this, as we all do.” But how they regard it, for what they take it, and what they do about it, that altar is witness. It is convincing against the intentions of all who worship there, grant that it may not be convincing also against those who sit at meat with them!

11. Yes, let not Christians press the Church, if the Pagans do. She is the Body of Christ. Were we not saying, that the Body of Christ was pressed, and not touched. He endured those who pressed Him; and was looking out for those who “touched” Him. And, Brethren, I would that if the Body of Christ be pressed by Pagans, by whom it is wont to be pressed; that at least Christians would not press the Body of Christ. Brethren, it is my business to speak to you, my business it is to speak to Christians; “For what have I to do to judge them that are without?” the Apostle himself saith. Them we address in another way, as being weak. With them we must deal softly, that they may hear the truth; in you the corruption must be cut out. If ye ask whereby the Pagans are to be gained over, whereby they are to be illuminated, and called to salvation; forsake their solemnities, forsake their trifling shows; and then if they do not consent to our truth, let them blush at their own scantiness.

12. If he who is over thee be a good man, he is thy nourisher; if a bad man, he is thy tempter. Receive the nourishment in the one case with gladness, and in the temptation show thyself approved. Be thou gold. Regard this world as the furnace of the goldsmith; in one narrow place are there things, gold, chaff, fire. To the two former the fire is applied, the chaff is burned, and the gold purified. A man has yielded to threats, and been led away to the idol’s temple: Alas! I bewail the chaff; I see the ashes. Another has not yet yielded to threats nor terrors; has been brought before the judge, and stood firm in his confession, and has not bent down to the idol image: what does the flame with him? Does it not purify the gold? Stand, fast then, Brethren, in the Lord; greater in power, is He who hath called you. Be not afraid of the threats of the ungodly. Bear with your enemies; in them ye have those for whom ye may pray; let them by no means terrify you. This is saving health, draw out in this feast here from this source; here drink that

wherewith ye may be satisfied, and not in those other feasts, that only whereby ye may be maddened. Stand fast in the Lord. Ye are silver, ye shall be gold. This similitude is not our own, it is out of Holy Scripture. Ye have read and heard, "As gold in the furnace hath He tried them, and received them as a burnt-offering." See what ye shall be among the treasures of God. Be ye rich as touching God, not as if to make Him rich, but as to become rich from Him. Let Him replenish you; admit nought else into your heart.

13. Do we lift up ourselves unto pride, or tell you to be despisers against the powers ordained? Not so. Do ye again who are sick on this point, touch also that border of the garment? The Apostle himself saith, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God. He then who resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." But what if it enjoin what thou oughtest not to do? In this case by all means disregard the power through fear of Power. Consider these several grades of human powers. If the magistrate enjoin anything, must it not be done? Yet if his order be in opposition to the Proconsul, thou dost not surely despise the power, but choosest to obey a greater power. Nor in this case ought the less to be angry, if the greater be preferred. Again, if the Proconsul himself enjoin anything, and the Emperor another thing, is there any doubt, that disregarding the former, we ought to obey the latter? So then if the Emperor enjoin one thing, and God another, what judge ye? Pay me tribute, submit thyself to my allegiance. Right, but not in an idol's temple. In an idol's temple He forbids it. Who forbids it? A greater Power. Pardon me then: thou threatenest a prison, He threateneth hell. Here must thou at once take to thee thy "faith as a shield, whereby thou mayest be able to quench all the fiery darts of the enemy."

14. But one of these powers is plotting, and contriving evil designs against thee. Well: he is but sharpening the razor wherewith to shave the hair, but not to cut the head. Ye have but just now heard this that I have said in the Psalm, "Thou hast worked deceit like a sharp razor." Why did He compare the deceit of a wicked man in power to a razor? Because it does not reach, save to our superfluous parts. As hairs on our body seem as it were superfluous, and are shaven off without any loss of the flesh; so whatsoever an angry man in power can take from thee, count only among thy

superfluities. He takes away thy poverty; can he take away thy wealth? Thy poverty is thy wealth in thy heart. Thy superfluous things only hath he power to take away, these only hath he power to injure, even though he had license given him so far as to hurt the body. Yea even this life itself to those whose thoughts are of another life, this present life, I say, may be reckoned among the things superfluous. For so the Martyrs have despised it. They did not lose life, but they gained Life.

15. Be sure, Brethren, that enemies have no power against the faithful, except so far as it profiteth them to be tempted and proved. Of this be sure, Brethren, let no one say ought against it. Cast all your care upon the Lord, throw yourselves wholly and entirely upon Him. He will not withdraw Himself that ye should fall. He who created us, hath given us security touching our very hairs. "Verily I say unto you, even the hairs of your head are all numbered." Our hairs are numbered by God; how much more is our conduct known to Him to whom our hairs are thus known? See then, how that God doth not disregard our least things. For if He disregarded them, He would not create them. For He verily both created our hairs, and still taketh count of them. But thou wilt say, though they are preserved at present, perhaps they will perish. On this point also hear His word, "Verily I say unto you, there shall not an hair of your head perish." Why art thou afraid of man, O man, whose place is in the Bosom of God? Fall not out of His Bosom; whatsoever thou shall suffer there, will avail to thy salvation, not to thy destruction. Martyrs have endured the tearing of their limbs, and shall Christians fear the injuries of Christian times? He who would do thee an injury now, can only do it in fear. He does not say openly, come to the idol-feast; he does not say openly, come to my altars, and banquet there. And if he should say so, and thou wast to refuse, let him make a complaint of it, let him bring it as an accusation and charge against thee: "He would not come to my altars, he would not come to my temple, where I worship." Let him say this. He does not dare; but in his guile he contrives another attack. Make ready thy hair; he is sharpening the razor; he is about to take off thy superfluous things, to shave what thou must soon leave behind thee. Let him take off what shall endure, if he can. This powerful enemy, what has he taken away? what great thing has he taken away? That which a thief or housebreaker could take: in his utmost rage, he can but take what a robber

can. Even if he should have license given him to the slaying of the very body, what does he take away, but what the robber can take? I did him too much honour, when I said, “a robber.” For be the robber who and what he may, he is a man. He takes from thee what a fever, or an adder, or a poisonous mushroom can take. Here lies the whole power of the rage of men, to do what a mushroom can! Men eat a poisonous mushroom, and they die. Lo! in what frail estate is the life of man; which sooner or later thou must abandon; do not struggle then in such wise for it, as that thou shouldest be abandoned thyself.

16. Christ is our Life; think then of Christ. He came to suffer, but also to be glorified; to be despised, but to be exalted also; to die; but also to rise again. If the labour alarm thee, see its reward. Why dost thou wish to arrive by softness at that to which nothing but hard labour can lead? Now thou art afraid, lest thou shouldest lose thy money; because thou earnest thy money with great labour. If thou didst not attain to thy money, which thou must some time or other lose, at all events when thou diest, without labour, wouldest thou desire without labour to attain to the Life eternal? Let that be of higher value in thine eyes, to which after all thy labours thou shalt in such sort attain as never more to lose it. If this money, to which thou hast attained after all thy labours on such condition as that thou must some time lose it, be of high value with thee; how much more ought we to long after those things which are everlasting!

17. Give no credit to their words, neither be afraid of them. They say that we are enemies of their idols. May God so grant, and give all into our power, as He hath already given us that which we have broken down. For this I say, Beloved, that ye may not attempt to do it, when it is not lawfully in your power to do it; for it is the way of ill-regulated men, and the mad Circumcelliones, both to be violent when they have no power, and to be ever eager in their wishes to die without a cause. Ye heard what we read to you, all of you who were present in the Mappalia. “When the land shall have been given into your power” (he saith first, “into your power,” and so enjoined what was to be done); “then,” saith he, “ye shall destroy their altars, and break in pieces their groves, and hew down all their images.” When we shall have got the power, do this. When the power has not been

given us, we do not do it; when it is given, we do not neglect it. Many Pagans have these abominations on their own estates; do we go and break them in pieces? No, for our first efforts are that the idols in their hearts should be broken down. When they too are made Christians themselves, they either invite us to so good a work, or anticipate us. At present we must pray for them, not be angry with them. If very painful feelings excite us, it is rather against Christians, it is against our brethren, who will enter into the Church in such a mind, as to have their body there, and their heart anywhere else. The whole ought to be within. If that which man seeth is within, why is that which God seeth without?

18. Now ye may know, Dearly Beloved, that these unite their murmurings with Heretics and with Jews. Heretics, Jews, and Heathens have made a unity against Unity. Because it has happened, that in some places the Jews have received chastisement because of their wickednesses; they charge and suspect us, or pretend, that we are always seeking the like treatment for them. Again, because it has happened that the heretics in some places have suffered the penalty of the laws for the impiety and fury of their deeds of violence; they say immediately that we are seeking by every means some harm for their destruction. Again, because it has been resolved that laws should be passed against the Heathen, yea for them rather, if they were only wise. (For as when silly boys are playing with the mud, and dirtying their hands, the strict master comes, shakes the mud out of their hands, and holds out their book; so has it pleased God by the hands of princes His subjects to alarm their childish, foolish hearts, that they may throw away the dirt from their hands, and set about something useful. And what is this something useful with the hands, but, “Break thy bread to the hungry, and bring the houseless poor into thy house”? But nevertheless these children escape from their master’s sight, and return stealthily to their mud, and when they are discovered they hide their hands that they may not be seen.) Because then it has so pleased God, they think that we are looking out for the idols everywhere, and that we break them down in all places where we have discovered them. How so? Are there not places before our very eyes in which they are? Or are we indeed ignorant where they are? And yet we do not break them down, because God has not given them into our power. When does God give them into our power? When the masters of these

things shall become Christians. The master of a certain place has just lately wished this to be done. If he had not been minded to give the place itself to the Church, and only had given orders that there should be no idols on his property; I think that it ought to have been executed with the greatest devotion, that the soul of the absent Christian brother, who wishes on his land to return thanks to God, and would not that there should be anything there to God's dishonour, might be assisted by his fellow-Christians. Added to this, that in this case he gave the place itself to the Church. And shall there be idols in the Church's estate? Brethren, see then what it is that displeases the Heathens. It is but a little matter with them that we do not take them away from their estates, that we do not break them down: they would have them kept up even in our own places. We preach against idols, we take them away from the hearts of men; we are persecutors of idols; we openly profess it. Are we then to be the preservers of them? I do not touch them when I have not the power; I do not touch them when the lord of the property complains of it; but when he wishes it to be done, and gives thanks for it, I should incur guilt if I did it not.

SERMON XIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. VIII. 23, "AND WHEN HE WAS ENTERED INTO A BOAT," ETC

1. By the Lord's blessing, I will address you upon the lesson of the Holy Gospel which has just been read, and take occasion thereby to exhort you, that against the tempest and waves of this world, faith sleep not in your hearts. "For the Lord Christ had not indeed death nor sleep in His power, and peradventure sleep overcame the Almighty One as He was sailing against His will?" If ye believe this, He is asleep in you; but if Christ be awake in you, your faith is awake. The Apostle saith, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." This sleep then of Christ is a sign of a high mystery. The sailors are the souls passing over the world in wood. That ship also was a figure of the Church. And all, individually indeed are temples of God, and his own heart is the vessel in which each sails; nor can he suffer shipwreck, if his thoughts are only good.

2. Thou hast heard an insult, it is the wind; thou art angry, it is a wave. When therefore the wind blows, and the wave swells, the ship is endangered, the heart is in jeopardy, the heart is tossed to and fro. When thou hast heard an insult, thou longest to be avenged; and, lo, avenged thou hast been, and so rejoicing in another's harm thou hast suffered shipwreck. And why is this? Because Christ is asleep in thee. What does this mean, Christ is asleep in thee? Thou hast forgotten Christ. Rouse Him up then, call Christ to mind, let Christ awake in thee, give heed to Him. What didst thou wish? To be avenged. Hast thou forgotten, that when He was being crucified, He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do?" He who was asleep in thy heart did not wish to be avenged. Awake Him up then, call Him to remembrance. The remembrance of Him is His word; the remembrance of Him is His command. And then wilt thou say if Christ, awake in thee, What manner of man am I, who wish to be avenged! Who am I, who deal out threatenings against another man? I may die perhaps before I am avenged. And when at my last breath, inflamed with rage, and thirsting for vengeance, I shall depart out of this body, He will not receive me, who did not wish to be avenged; He will not receive me, who said, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; forgive, and it shall be forgiven you." Therefore will I refrain myself from my wrath, and return to the repose of my heart. Christ hath commanded the sea, tranquillity is restored.

3. Now what I have said as to anger, hold fast as a rule in all your temptations. A temptation has sprung up; it is the wind; thou art disturbed; it is a wave. Awake up Christ then, let Him speak with thee. "Who is this, since the winds and the sea obey Him?" Who is this, whom the sea obeyeth? "The sea is His, and He made it." "All things were made by Him." Imitate the winds then, and the sea rather; obey the Creator. At Christ's command the sea giveth ear; and art thou deaf? The sea heareth, and the wind ceaseth: and dost thou still blow on? What! I say, I do, I devise; what is all this, but to be blowing on, and to be unwilling to stop in obedience to the word of Christ? Let not the wave master you in this troubled state of your heart. Yet since we are but men, if the wind should drive us on, and stir up the affections of our souls, let us not despair; let us awake Christ, that we may sail on a tranquil sea, and so come to our country. "Let us turn to the Lord," etc.

SERMON XIV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. X. 16, "BEHOLD, I SEND YOU FORTH AS SHEEP IN THE MIDST OF WOLVES," ETC. DELIVERED ON A FESTIVAL OF MARTYRS

1. When the Holy Gospel was read, Brethren, ye heard how our Lord Jesus Christ strengthened His Martyrs by His teaching, saying, "Behold, I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves." Now consider, my Brethren, what he does. If but one wolf come among many sheep, be they ever so many thousands, they will all be put to confusion by one wolf in the midst of them: and though all may not be torn, yet all are frightened. What manner of design is this then, what manner of counsel, what manner of power, not to let in a wolf amongst the sheep, but to send the sheep against the wolves! "I send you," saith He, "as sheep in the midst of wolves;" not to the neighbourhood of wolves, but "in the midst of wolves." There was then at that time a herd of wolves, and but few sheep. For when the many wolves killed the few sheep, the wolves were changed and became sheep.

2. Let us hear then what advice He hath given, who hath promised the crown, but hath first appointed the combat; who is a spectator of the combatants, and assisteth them in their toil. What manner of conflict hath He prescribed? "Be ye," saith He, "wise as serpents, and simple as doves." Whoso understandeth, and holdeth to this, may die in assurance that he will not really die. For no one ought to die in this assurance, but he who knows that he shall in such sort die, as that death only shall die in him, and life be crowned.

3. Wherefore, Beloved, I must explain to you, though I have often spoken already on this subject, what it is to be "simple as doves, and wise as serpents." Now if the simplicity of doves be enjoined us, what hath the wisdom of the serpent to do in the simplicity of the dove? This in the dove I love, that she has no gall; this I fear in the serpent, that he has poison. But now do not fear the serpent altogether; something he has for thee to hate, and something for thee to imitate. For when the serpent is weighed down with age, and he feels the burden of his many years, he contracts and forces himself into a hole, and lays aside his old coat of skin, that he may spring forth into new life. Imitate him in this, thou Christian, who dost hear Christ saying, "Enter ye in at the strait gate." And the Apostle Paul saith to thee,

“Put ye off the old man with his deeds, and put ye on the new man.” Thou hast then something to imitate in the serpent. Die not for the “old man,” but for the truth. Whoso dies for any temporal good dies “for the old man.” But when thou hast stripped thyself of all “that old man,” thou hast imitated the wisdom of the serpent. Imitate him in this again; “keep thy head safe.” And what does this mean, keep thy head safe? Keep Christ with thee. Have not some of you, it may be, observed, on occasions when you have wished to kill an adder, how to save his head, he will expose his whole body to the strokes of his assailant? He would not that that part of him should be struck, where he knows that his life resides. And our Life is Christ, for He hath said Himself, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” Here the Apostle also; “The Head of the man is Christ.” Whoso then keepeth Christ in him, keepeth his head for his protection.

4. Now what need is there to commend to you in many words the simplicity of the dove? For the serpent’s poison had need to be guarded against: there, there was a danger in imitation; there, there was something to be feared; but the dove may you imitate securely. Mark how the doves rejoice in society; everywhere do they fly and feed together; they do not love to be alone, they delight in communion, they preserve affection; their cooings are the plaintive cries of love, with kissings they beget their young. Yea even when doves, as we have often noticed, dispute about their holes, it is as it were but a peaceful strife. Do they separate, because of their contentions? Nay, still do they fly and feed together, and their very strife is peaceful. See this strife of doves, in what the Apostle saith, “If any man obey not our word by this epistle, mark that man, and have no company with him.” Behold the strife; but observe now how it is the strife of doves, not of wolves. He subjoined immediately, “Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.” The dove loves even when she is in strife; and the wolf even when he caresses, hates. Therefore having the simplicity of doves, and the wisdom of serpents, celebrate the solemnities of the Martyrs in sobriety of mind, not in bodily excess, sing lauds to God. For He who is the Martyrs’ God, is our Lord God also, He it is who will crown us. If we shall have wrestled well, we shall be crowned by Him, who hath crowned already those whom we desire to imitate.

SERMON XV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. X. 28, “BE NOT AFRAID OF THEM THAT KILL THE BODY.” DELIVERED ON A FESTIVAL OF MARTYRS

1. The Divine oracles which have just been read teach us in fearing not to fear, and in not fearing to fear. Ye observed when the Holy Gospel was being read, that our Lord God before He died for us, would have us to be firm; and this by admonishing us “not” to fear, and withal to fear. For he said, “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.” See where He advised us not to fear. See now where He advised us to fear. “But,” saith he, “fear Him who hath power to destroy both body and soul in hell.” Let us fear therefore, that we may not fear. Fear seems to be allied to cowardice: seems to be the character of the weak, not the strong. But see what saith the Scripture, “The fear of the Lord is the hope of strength.” Let us then fear, that we may not fear; that is, let us fear prudently, that we may not fear vainly. The holy Martyrs on the occasion of whose solemnity this lesson was read out of the Gospel, in fearing, feared not; because in fearing God, they did not regard men.

2. For what need a man fear from man? And what is that whereby one man should cause another fear, since both of them are men? One threatens and says, “I will kill thee;” and does not fear, lest after his threat he die before he have fulfilled it. “I will kill thee,” he says. Who says it, and to whom? I hear two men, the one threatening, and the other alarmed: of whom the one is powerful, and the other weak, yet both are mortal. Why then does he so stretch out himself, he, in honour, a somewhat more inflated power, in body, equal weakness? Let him securely threaten death who does not fear death. But if he fear that whereby he causes fear; let him think of himself, and compare himself with him whom he is threatening. Let him see in him whom he threateneth a likeness of condition, and so together with him let him seek like pity from the Lord. For he is but a man, and he threatens another man, a creature, another creature; only the one puffed up under his Creator’s eye, and the other fleeing for refuge to the same Creator.

3. Let the stout Martyr then, as he stands a man before another man, say; “I do not fear, because I fear.” Thou canst not do what thou art threatening, unless He will; but what He threateneth, none can hinder Him from doing.

And then again, what dost thou threaten, and what canst thou do, if thou art permitted? Thy violence extends but to the flesh, the soul is safe from thee. Thou canst not kill what thou dost not see: visible thyself, thou threatenest that which is visible in me. But we have both an invisible Creator, whom we ought both to fear; who of that which was both visible and invisible created man. He made Him visible out of the earth, and with His Breath He breathed into Him an invisible Spirit. Therefore the invisible substance, that is, the soul, which has raised from the earth the earth as it lay, does not fear, when thou assaultest the earth. Thou canst strike the habitation, but canst thou strike him who dwells there? When the chain is broken, he escapes who before was bound, and he will now be crowned in secret. Why then dost thou threaten me, who canst do nothing to my soul? Through the desert of that to which thou canst do nothing, will that to which thy power extends rise again. For through the soul's desert, will the flesh also rise again; and will be restored to its inhabitant, now no more to fail, but to endure for ever. Behold (I am using the words of a Martyr), behold, I say, not even on account of my body do I fear thy threats. My body indeed is subject to thy power; but even the hairs of my head are numbered by my Creator. Why should I fear lest I lose my body, who cannot even lose a hair? How shall he not have a care of my body, to whom my meanest things are so well known? This body which may be wounded and slain will for a time be ashes, but it will be for ever immortal. But to whom shall this be? To whom shall the body be restored for life eternal, even though it have been slain, destroyed, and scattered to the winds? to whom shall it be so restored? To him who has not been afraid to lay down his own life, since he does not fear, lest his body should be slain.

4. For, Brethren, the soul is said to be immortal, and immortal it is according to a certain manner of its own: for it is a kind of life which is able to give life to the body by its presence. For by the soul doth the body live. This life cannot die, and therefore is the soul immortal. Why then said I according to a certain manner of its own? Hear why. Because there is a true immortality, an immortality which is an entire unchangeableness; of which the Apostle saith, speaking of God, “Who only hath immortality, dwelling in that light which no man may approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see, to whom be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” If then

God only hath immortality, the soul must needs be mortal. See then why it was that I said that the soul is immortal after a certain manner of its own. For in fact it may also die. Understand this, Beloved, and there will remain no difficulty. I venture to say then that the soul can die, can be slain also. Yet it is undoubtedly immortal. See, I venture to say, it is at once immortal, and it may be slain; and therefore I said that there is a kind of immortality, an entire unchangeableness, that is, which God Only hath, of whom it is said, “Who Only hath immortality;” for if the soul cannot be slain, how did the Lord Himself say, when He would make us fear, “Fear Him who hath power to slay both body and soul in hell”?

5. Hitherto I have confirmed, not solved, the difficulty. I have proved that the soul can be slain. The Gospel cannot be gainsaid but by the ungodly soul. Lo, something occurs to me here, and comes into my mind to speak. Life cannot be gainsaid, but by a dead soul. The Gospel is life, impiety and infidelity are the death of the soul. See then, it can die, and yet it is immortal. How then is it immortal? Because there is always a sort of life which is never extinguished in it. And how does it die? Not in ceasing to be life, but by losing its life. For the soul is both life to something else, and it has its own proper life. Consider the order of the creatures. The soul is the life of the body: God is the life of the soul. As the life, that is the soul, is present with the body, that the body die not; so ought the life of the soul, that is God, to be with it that the soul die not. How does the body die? By the soul’s leaving it. I say, by the soul’s leaving it the body dies; and it lies along a mere carcass, what was a little before a desirable, now a contemptible, object. There are in it still its several members, the eyes, and ears; but these are but the windows of the house, its inhabitant is gone. They who bewail the dead, cry in vain at the windows of the house; there is none within to hear. How many things does the fond affection of the mourner give utterance to, how many enumerate and call to mind; and with what a madness of sorrow, so to say, does he speak, as with one who was sensible of what was doing, when he is really speaking with one who is no longer there? He recounts his good qualities, and the tokens of his goodness towards himself. It was thou that didst give me this; and did this and that for me; it was thou who didst thus and thus dearly love me. But if thou wouldest only consider and understand, and restrain the madness of thy

grief, he who once loved thee, is gone; in vain does the house receive thy knockings, in which thou canst not find a dweller.

6. Let us return to the subject I was speaking of a little while since. The body is dead. Why? Because its life, that is the soul, is gone. Again, the body is alive, and the man is impious, unbelieving, hard of belief, incorrigible; in this case whilst the body is alive, the soul by which the body lives is dead. For the soul is so excellent a thing, that it has power even though dead to give life to the body. So excellent a thing, I say, is the soul, so excellent a creature, that even though dead itself, it has power to quicken the body. For the soul of the impious, unbelieving, unregulated man is dead, and yet by it though dead the body lives. And therefore is it in the body; it sets on the hands to work, and the feet to walk; it directs the eye to see, it disposes the ears to hear, it discriminates tastes, avoids pains, seeks after pleasures. All these are tokens of the life of the body; but they are from the presence of the soul. If I were to ask a body whether it were alive; it would answer me, You see me walking, you see me working, you hear me talking, you perceive that I have certain aims and aversions, and do you not understand that the body is alive? By these works then of the soul which is placed within, I understand that the body is alive. I ask the soul also whether it is alive? It also has its proper works, by which it manifests its life. The feet walk. I understand by this that the body lives, but by the presence of the soul. I ask now, does the soul live? These feet walk. (To speak only of this one movement.) I am questioning both body and soul, as touching their life. The feet walk, I understand that the body lives. But whither do they walk? To adultery, it is said. Then is the soul dead. For so hath unerring Scripture said, “The widow who liveth in pleasure is dead.” Now since the difference is great between “pleasure” and adultery, how can the soul which is said to be dead in pleasure, live in adultery? It is surely dead. But it is dead even though it be not in this case. I hear a man speaking; the body then lives. For the tongue could not move itself in the mouth, and by its several motions give utterance to articulate sounds, were there not an inhabitant within; and a musician as it were to this instrument, to make use of his tongue. I understand it perfectly. Thus the body speaks; the body then lives. But I ask, is the soul alive also? Lo, the body speaks, and so is alive. But what does it speak? As I said concerning the feet; they

walk, and so the body is alive, and I then asked, whither do they walk? that I might understand whether the soul was alive also. So also when I hear a man speak, I understand that the body is alive; I ask what does he speak, that I may know whether the soul is alive also. He speaks a lie. If so, then is the soul dead. How do we prove this? Let us ask the truth itself, which saith, “The mouth that lieth, slayeth the soul.” I ask, why is the soul dead? I ask as I did just now, why is the body dead? Because the soul, its life, was gone. Why is the soul dead? Because God, its life, hath forsaken it.

7. After this brief examination then, know and hold for certain that the body is dead without the soul, and that the soul is dead without God. Every man without God hath a dead soul. Thou dost bewail the dead: bewail the sinner rather, bewail rather the ungodly man, bewail the unbeliever. It is written, “The mourning for the dead is seven days; for a fool and an ungodly man all the days of his life.” What! are there no bowels of Christian compassion in thee; that thou mournest for a body from which the soul is gone, and mournest not for the soul, from which God is departed? Let the Martyr remembering this make answer to him that threatens him, “Why dost thou force me to deny Christ?” Wouldest thou then force me to deny the truth? And if I will not, what wilt thou do? Thou wilt assault my body, that my soul shall depart from it; but this same soul of mine has its body only for the soul’s sake. It is not so foolish or unwise. Thou wouldest wound my body; but wouldest thou, that through fear lest thou shouldest wound my body, and my soul should depart from it, I should wound mine own soul, and my God should depart from it? Fear not then, O Martyr, the sword of thy executioner; fear only thine own tongue, lest thou do execution upon thine own self, and slay, not thy body, but thy soul. Fear for thy soul, lest it die in hell-fire.

8. Therefore said the Lord, “Who hath power to slay both body and soul in hell-fire.” How? when the ungodly shall be cast into hell-fire, will his body and his soul burn there? Everlasting punishment will be the death of the body; the absence of God will be the death of the soul. Wouldest thou know what the death of the soul is? Understand the Prophet who saith, “Let the ungodly be taken away, that he may not see the glory of the Lord.” Let the soul then fear its proper death, and not fear the death of its body. Because if

it fear its own death, and so live in its God, by not offending and thrusting Him away from him, it will be found worthy to receive its body again at the end; not unto everlasting punishment, as the ungodly, but unto life eternal, as the righteous. By fearing this death, and loving that life, did the Martyrs, in hope of the promises of God, and in contempt of the threats of persecutors, attain themselves to be crowned with God, and have left to us the celebration of these solemnities.

SERMON XVI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XI. 2, "NOW WHEN JOHN HEARD IN THE PRISON THE WORKS OF THE CHRIST, HE SENT BY HIS DISCIPLES, AND SAID UNTO HIM, ART THOU HE THAT COMETH, OR LOOK WE FOR ANOTHER?" ETC

1. The lesson of the Holy Gospel has set before us a question touching John the Baptist. May the Lord assist me to resolve it to you, as He hath resolved it to us. John was commended, as ye have heard, by the testimony of Christ, and in such terms commended, as that there had not risen a greater among those who were born of women. But a greater than he had been born of a Virgin. How much greater? Let the herald himself declare, how great the difference is between himself and his Judge, whose herald he is. For John went before Christ both in his birth and preaching; but it was in obedience that he went before Him; not in preferring himself before Him. For so the whole train of attendants walks before the judge; yet they who walk before, are really after him. How signal a testimony then did John give to Christ? Even to saying that he "was not worthy to loose the latchet of His shoes." And what more? "Of His fulness," saith he, "have all we received." He confessed that he was but a lamp lighted at His Light, and so he took refuge at His feet, lest venturing on high, he should be extinguished by the wind of pride. So great indeed was he, that he was taken for Christ; and if he had not himself testified that he was not He, the mistake would have continued, and he would have been reputed to be the Christ. What striking humility! Honour was proffered him by the people, and he himself refused it. Men were at fault in his greatness, and he humbled himself. He had no wish to increase by the words of men, seeing he had comprehended the Word of God.

2. This then did John say concerning Christ. And what said Christ of John? We have just now heard. “He began to say to the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?” Surely not; for John was not “blown about by every wind of doctrine.” “But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment?” No, for John was clothed in rough apparel; he had his raiment of camel’s hair, not of down. “But what went ye out for to see? A Prophet? yea, and more than a Prophet.” Why “more than a Prophet”? The Prophets foretold that the Lord would come, whom they desired to see, and saw not; but to him was vouchsafed what they sought. John saw the Lord; he saw Him, pointed his finger toward Him, and said, “Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world;” behold, here He is. Now had He come and was not acknowledged; and so a mistake was made also as to John himself. Behold then here is He whom the Patriarchs desired to see, whom the Prophets foretold, whom the Law prefigured. “Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.” And he gave a goodly testimony to the Lord, and the Lord to him. “Among them that are born of women,” saith the Lord, “there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is less in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he;” less in time, but greater in majesty. This He said, meaning Himself to be understood. Now exceedingly great among men is John the Baptist, than whom among men Christ alone is greater. It may also be thus stated and explained, “Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.” Not in the sense that I have before explained it. “Notwithstanding, he that is the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he;” the kingdom of heaven he meant where the Angels are; he then that is the least among the Angels, is greater than John. Thus He set forth to us the excellence of that kingdom which we should long for; set before us a city, of which we should desire to be citizens. What sort of citizens are there? how great are they! Whoso is the least there, is greater than John. Than what John? “Than whom there hath not risen a greater among them that are born of women.”

3. Thus have we heard the true and good record both of John concerning Christ, and of Christ concerning John. What then is the meaning of this; that

John sent his disciples to Him when He was shut up in prison, on the eve of being put to death, and said to them, “Go, say to Him, Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?” Is this then all that praise? That praise is it turned to doubting? What sayest thou, John. To Whom art thou speaking? What sayest thou? Thou speakest to thy Judge, thyself the herald. Thou stretchedst out the finger, and pointedst Him out; thou saidst, “Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world.” Thou saidst, “Of His fulness have we all received.” Thou saidst, “I am not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoes.” And dost thou now say, “Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?” Is not this the same Christ? And who art thou? Art thou not His forerunner? Art thou not he of whom it was foretold, “Behold, I send my messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before thee?” How dost thou prepare the way, and thou art thyself straying from the way? So then the disciples of John came; and the Lord said to them, “Go, tell John, the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the poor have the Gospel preached to them; and blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me.” Do not suspect that John was offended in Christ. And yet his words do sound so; “Art Thou He that should come?” Ask my works; “The blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised, the poor have the Gospel preached to them;” and dost thou ask whether I am He? My works, saith He, are My words. “Go, show him again. And as they departed.” Lest haply any one should say, John was good at first, and the Spirit of God forsook him; therefore after their departure, he spake these words; after their departure whom John had sent, Christ commended John.

4. What is the meaning then of this obscure question? May that Sun shine upon us, from which that lamp derived its flame. And so the resolution of it is altogether plain. John had separate disciples of his own; not as in separation from Christ, but prepared as a witness to him. For meet it was that such an one should give his testimony to Christ, who was himself also gathering disciples, and who might have been envious of Him, for that he could not see Him. Therefore because John’s disciples highly esteemed their master, they heard from John his record concerning Christ, and marvelled; and as he was about to die, it was his wish that they should be confirmed by him. For no doubt they were saying among themselves; Such

great things doth he say of Him, but none such of himself. “Go then, ask Him;” not because I doubt, but that ye may be instructed. “Go, ask Him,” hear from Himself what I am in the habit of telling you; ye have heard the herald, be confirmed by the Judge. “Go, ask Him, Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?” They went accordingly and asked; not for John’s sake, but for their own. And for their sakes did Christ say, “The blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised, the poor have the Gospel preached to them.” Ye see Me, acknowledge Me then; ye see the works, acknowledge the Doer. “And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me.” But it is of you I speak, not of John. For that we might know that He spake not this of John, as they departed, “He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John;” the True, the Truth Himself, proclaimed his true praises.

5. I think this question has been sufficiently explained. Let it suffice then to have prolonged my address thus far. Now keep the poor in mind. Give, ye who have not given hitherto; believe me, ye will not lose it. Yes, truly, that only it seems ye lose, which ye do not carry to the circus. Now must we render unto the poor the offerings of such of you as have offered anything, and the amount which we have is much less than your usual offerings. Shake off this sloth. I am become a beggar for beggars; what is that to me? I would be a beggar for beggars, that ye may be reckoned among the number of children.

SERMON XVII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XI. 25, “I THANK THEE, O FATHER, LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, THAT THOU DIDST HIDE THESE THINGS FROM THE WISE AND UNDERSTANDING,” ETC

1. When the Holy Gospel was being read, we heard that the Lord Jesus exulted in Spirit, and said, “I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” Thus much to begin with, we find before we pass on further, if we consider the words of the Lord with due attention, with diligence, and above all with piety, that we ought not invariably to understand when we read of “confession” in the Scriptures, the confession of a sinner. Now especial need there was of saying this, and of reminding

you, Beloved, of this, because as soon as this word was uttered by the reader’s voice, there followed upon it the sound of the beating of your breasts, when ye had heard, I mean, what the Lord said, “I confess to Thee, O Father.” At the uttering of these words, “I confess,” ye beat your breasts. Now what means this beating of the breast, but to show that which lies hid within the breast, and to chastise by the visible beating the secret sin? And why did ye this, but because ye heard, “I confess to Thee, O Father.” Ye heard the words “I confess,” but ye did not consider, who it is that confesses. But consider now. If Christ, from whom all sin is far removed, said, “I confess:” confession does not belong to the sinner only, but sometimes to him also that praiseth God. We confess then, whether in praising God, or accusing ourselves. In either case it is a godly confession, either when thou blamest thyself, who art not without sin, or when thou praisest Him who can have no sin.

2. But if we consider it well: thine own blame is His praise. For why is it that thou dost now confess in accusing thyself for thy sin? in accusing thyself why dost thou confess? but because thou art become alive from the dead? for the Scripture saith, “Confession perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not.” If confession perisheth from the dead, he who confesseth must be alive; and if he confesseth sin he hath undoubtedly risen again from death. Now if he that confesseth sin hath risen again from the dead, who hath raised him? No dead man can raise himself. He only was able to raise Himself, who though His Body was dead, was not dead. For He raised up that which was dead. He raised up Himself, who in Himself was alive, but in His Body that was to be raised was dead. For not the Father only, of whom it was said by the Apostle, “Wherefore God also hath exalted Him,” raised the Son, but the Lord also raised Himself, that is, His Body. Whence He said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it again.” But the sinner is dead, especially he whom the load of sinful habit presseth down, who is buried as it were like Lazarus. For he was not merely dead, he was buried also. Whosoever then is oppressed by the load of evil habit, of a wicked life, of earthly lusts, I mean, so that that in his case is true which is piteously described in a certain Psalm, “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God,” he is such an one, of whom it is said, “Confession perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not.” And who shall raise him

up, but He who when the stone was removed, cried out, and said, “Lazarus, Come forth?” Now what is to “come forth,” but to bring forth what was hidden? He then who confesseth “cometh forth.” “Come forth” he could not were he not alive; he could not be alive, had he not been raised again. And therefore in confession the accusing of one’s self, is the praise of God.

3. Now one may say, what profit then is the Church, if he that confesseth comes forth, at once raised to life again by the voice of the Lord? What profit to Him that confesseth, is the Church, to which the Lord said, “Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven.” Consider this very case of Lazarus: he comes forth, but with his bands. He was alive already through confession, but he did not yet walk free, entangled as he was in his bands. What then doth the Church to which it was said, “Whatsoever ye shall loose, shall be loosed;” but what the Lord said forthwith to His disciples, “Loose him, and let him go”?

4. Whether then we accuse ourselves, or directly praise God, in both ways do we praise God. If with a pious intention we accuse ourselves, by so doing we praise God. When we praise God directly, we do as it were celebrate His Holiness, who is without sin: but when we accuse ourselves, we give Him glory, by whom we have risen again. This if thou shalt do, the enemy will find none occasion whereby to overreach thee before the judge. For when thou shall be thine own accuser, and the Lord thy Deliverer, what shall he be but a mere calumniator? With good reason hath the Christian hereby provided protection for himself against his enemies, not those that may be seen, flesh and blood, to be pitied, rather than to be feared, but against those against whom the Apostle exhorts us to arm ourselves: “We wrestle not against flesh and blood;” that is, against men whom ye see raging against you. They are but vessels, which another uses, they are but instruments which another handles. “The devil,” saith the Scripture, “entered into the heart of Judas, that he should betray the Lord.” One may say then, what have I done? Hear the Apostle, “Give not place to the devil.” Thou hast given him place by an evil will: he entered, and possessed, and now uses thee. He had not possessed thee, hadst thou not given him place.

5. Therefore doth he warn and say, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers.” Any one might suppose this meant

against the kings of the earth, against the powers of this world. How so? are they not flesh and blood? And once for all it is said, “not against flesh and blood.” Turn thy attention from all men. What enemies then remain? “Against principalities and powers of spiritual wickedness, the rulers of the world.” It might seem as though he gave the devil and his angels more than they have. It is so, he has called them the “rulers of the world.” But to prevent misunderstanding, he explains what this world is, of which they are the rulers. “The rulers of the world, of this darkness.” What is, “of the world, of this darkness?” The world is full of those who love it, and of unbelievers, over whom he is ruler. This the Apostle calls darkness. This darkness the devil and his angels are the rulers of. This is not the natural, and unchangeable darkness: this darkness changes, and becomes light; it believes, and by believing is enlightened. When this takes place in it, it will hear the words, “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.” For when ye were darkness, ye were not in the Lord: again, when ye are light, ye are light not in yourselves, but in the Lord. “For what hast thou which thou hast not received?” Inasmuch then as they are invisible enemies, by invisible means must they be subdued. A visible enemy indeed thou mayest overcome by blows; thy invisible enemy thou conquerest by belief. A man is a visible enemy; to strike a blow is visible also. The devil is an invisible enemy; to believe is invisible also. Against invisible enemies then there is an invisible fight.

6. From these enemies how can any man say that he is safe? For this I had begun to speak of, but I thought it necessary to treat of these enemies at some little length. But now that we know our enemies, let us see to our defence against them. “In praising I will call upon the Lord, so shall I be safe from mine enemies.” Thou seest what thou hast to do. “In praising call;” that is, “in praising the Lord, call.” For thou wilt not be safe from thine enemies, if thou praise thyself. “In praising call upon the Lord, and thou shalt be safe from thine enemies.” For what doth the Lord Himself say? “The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me, and there is the way, in which I will show him My salvation.” Where is the way? In the sacrifice of praise. Let not your foot then wander out of this way. Keep in the way; depart not from it; from the praise of the Lord depart not a foot, nay, not a nail’s breadth. For if thou wilt deviate from this way, and praise thyself instead of

the Lord, thou wilt not be safe from thine enemies; for it is said of them, “They have laid stumbling-blocks for me by the way.” Therefore in whatever measure thou thinkest that thou hast good of thine own self, thou hast deviated from the praise of God. Why dost thou marvel then, if thine enemy seduce thee, when thou art thine own seducer? Hear the Apostle, “For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he seduceth himself.”

7. Give heed then to the Lord confessing; “I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth.” I confess to Thee, that is, I praise Thee. I praise Thee, not I accuse myself. Now as far as the taking of very man is concerned, all is grace, singular and perfect grace. What merit had that man who is Christ, if thou take away the grace, even that so pre-eminent grace, whereby it behoved that there should be One Christ, and that He whom we acknowledge should be He? Take away this grace, and what is Christ but a mere man? what but the same as thou art thyself? He took a Soul, He took a Body, He took a perfect Man; He uniteth him to Himself, the Lord maketh one Person with the servant. What pre-eminent grace is this! Christ in heaven, Christ on earth; Christ at once both in heaven and earth; not two Christs, but the same Christ, both in heaven and earth. Christ with the Father, Christ in the Virgin’s womb; Christ on the Cross, Christ succouring some souls in hell; and on the self-same day Christ in paradise with the robber who confessed. And how did the robber attain to this blessedness, but because he held on that way, in which “He showeth His salvation”? That way, from which let not thy foot wander. For in that he accused himself, he praised God, and made his own life blessed. He looked in hope for this from the Lord, and said to Him, “Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.” For he considered his own wicked deeds, and thought it much, if mercy should be shown him even at the last. But the Lord immediately after He had said, “Remember me”—when? “when Thou comest into Thy kingdom,” saith, “Verily I say unto thee, Today shall thou be with Me in paradise.” Mercy offered at once, what misery deferred.

8. Hear then the Lord confessing; “I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth.” What do I confess? Wherein do I praise thee? For this confession, as I have said before, signifieth praise. “Because Thou hast hid

these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." What is this, Brethren? Understand by that which is opposed to them. "Thou hast hid these things," saith he, "from the wise and prudent;" and he did not say, thou hast revealed them to the foolish and imprudent, but "Thou hast hid these things" indeed "from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." To these wise and prudent, who are really objects of derision, to the arrogant who in false pretence are great, yet in truth are only swollen up, he opposed not the foolish, nor the imprudent, but babes. Who are babes? The humble. Therefore "Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent." Under the name of the wise and prudent, He hath Himself explained that the proud are understood, when He said, "Thou hast revealed them unto babes." Therefore from those who are not babes Thou hast hidden them. What is from those who are not babes? From those who are not humble. And who are they but the proud? O way of the Lord! Either there was none, or it lay hid, that it might be revealed to us. Why did the Lord exult? "Because it was revealed unto babes." We must be little babes; for if we would wish to be great, "wise and prudent" as it were, it is not revealed unto us. Who are these great ones? The wise and prudent. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." Here then thou hast a remedy suggested from its opposite. For if by "professing thyself wise, thou art become a fool; profess thyself a fool, and thou wilt be wise." But profess it in truth, profess it from the heart, for it is really so as thou professest. If thou profess it, do not profess it before men, and forbear to profess it before God. As to thyself, and all that is thine, thou art altogether dark. For what else is it to be a fool, but to be dark in heart? He saith of them at last, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." Before they professed this, what do we find? "And their foolish heart was darkened." Acknowledge then that thou art not to thyself a light. At best thou art but an eye, thou art not the light. And what good is even an open and a sound eye, if the light be wanting? Acknowledge therefore that of thine own self thou art no light to thyself; and cry out as it is written, "Thou, Lord, wilt light my candle: Thou wilt enlighten, O Lord, my darkness with Thy Light." For myself I was all darkness; but Thou art the Light that scattereth the darkness, and enlighteneth me; of myself I am no light to myself, yea I have no portion of light but in Thee.

9. So John also, the friend of the Bridegroom, was thought to be the Christ, was thought to be the Light. “He was not that Light, but that he might bear witness of the Light.” But what was the Light? It was the true Light. What is the true Light? “That which lighteneth every man.” If that be the true Light which lighteneth every man, then it lightened John also, who professed and confessed rightly, “Of His fulness have all we received.” See if he said ought else, but “Thou, O Lord, shalt lighten my candle.” Finally, being now enlightened, He gave His testimony. For the benefit of the blind the lamp gave witness to the Day. See how that He is a lamp; “Ye sent,” He said, “unto John, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light; he was a burning and a shining lamp.” He, the lamp, that is, a thing enlightened, was lighted that it might shine. That which can be lighted can be extinguished also. Now that it may not be extinguished, let it not expose itself to the wind of pride. Therefore, “I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent,” from those who thought themselves to be light, and were darkness; and who because they were darkness, and thought themselves to be light, could not even be enlightened. But they who were darkness, and confessed that they were darkness, were little babes, not great; were humble, not proud. Rightly therefore did they say, “O Lord, Thou wilt lighten my candle.” They knew themselves, they praised the Lord. They did not stray from the way of salvation; “They in praise called upon the Lord, and they were saved from their enemies.”

10. Turning then to the Lord our God, the Father Almighty, in purity of heart, let us render unto Him, as our frailty best can, our highest and abundant thanks, with our whole mind praying His singular goodness, that in His good pleasure He would vouchsafe to hear our prayers, that by His Power He would drive out the enemy from our deeds and thoughts, would enlarge our faith, direct our minds, grant us spiritual thoughts, and bring us safe to His endless blessedness, through His Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

SERMON XVIII

AGAIN ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XI. 25, “I THANK THEE, O FATHER, LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH,” ETC

1. We have heard the Son of God saying, “I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth.” What doth he confess to Him? Wherein doth he praise Him? “Because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” Who are the “wise and prudent”? Who the “babes”? What hath He hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes? By the “wise and prudent,” He signifieth those of whom St. Paul speaks; “Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” Yet perhaps thou still askest who they are. They are they peradventure who in their much disputation concerning God, have spoken falsely of Him; who, puffed up by their own doctrines, could in no wise find out and know God, and who for the God whose substance is incomprehensible and invisible, have thought the air and sky to be God, or the sun to be God, or anything which holds high place among the creatures to be God. For observing the grandeur and beauty and powers of the creatures, they rested in them, and found not the Creator.

2. These men does the Book of wisdom reprove, where it is said, “For if they were able to know so much as to aim at the world, how did they not sooner find out the Lord thereof?” They are accused as wasting their time and their busy disputes in investigating and measuring as it were the creature; they sought out the courses of the stars, the intervals of the planets, the movements of the heavenly bodies, so as to arrive by certain calculations to that degree of knowledge as to foretell the eclipses of the sun and moon; and that as they had foretold, so should the event be according to the day and hour, and to the portion of the bodies which should be eclipsed. Great industry, great activity of mind. But in these things they sought after the Creator, who was not far off from them, and they found Him not. Whom if they could have found, they might have had within them. With the best reason then, and very rightly were they accused, who could investigate the numbers of the stars, and their varied movements, and know and foretell the eclipses of the luminaries: rightly accused, I say, in that they found not Him by whom these had been created and ordained, because they neglected to seek Him. But be not thou much disquieted, if thou art ignorant of the courses of the stars, and the proportions of the celestial and terrestrial bodies. Behold the fair beauty of the world, and praise its Creator’s counsel.

Behold what He has made, and love Him who made it: be this thy greatest care. Love Him who made it; for He made thee also after His own image, that thou mightest love Him.

3. If then it is strange that those things of which Christ said, “Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent,” were hidden from such wise men as these, who, occupied wholly about the creatures, chose to seek the Creator carelessly, and could not find Him; still more strange is it that there should even be found some “wise and prudent” men who were able to know Him. “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness.” Perhaps thou dost ask, what truth do they hold in unrighteousness? “Because that which may be known of God is manifest among them.” How is it manifest? He goes on to say, “For God hath manifested it to them.” Dost thou still enquire how He manifested it to them to whom He gave not the law? How? “For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.” There were then some such, not as Moses the servant of God, not as many Prophets who had an insight into and knowledge of these things, and were aided by the Spirit of God, which they drew in by faith, and drank with the throat of godliness, and poured forth again by the mouth of the interior man. Not such as these were they; but far unlike them, who by means of this visible creation were able to attain to the understanding of the Creator, and to say of these things which God hath made; Behold what things He hath made, He governeth and containeth also. He who hath made them, Himself filleth what He hath made with His own presence. Thus much they were enabled to say. For these Paul also made mention of in the Acts of the Apostles, where, when he had said of God, “For in Him we live and move and have our being” (forasmuch as he was speaking to the Athenians among whom those learned men had existed); he subjoined immediately; “As certain also of your own have said.” Now it was no trivial thing they said; “That in Him we live and move and have our being.”

4. In what then were they unlike the others? why were they blamed? why rightly accused? Hear the words of the Apostle which I had begun to quote; “The wrath of God,” saith he, “is revealed from heaven against all

ungodliness" (even of those, namely, who had not received the law); "against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." What truth? "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them." By whose manifestation of it? "For God hath manifested it to them." How? "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His Eternal Power and Godhead." Why did He manifest it? "That they might be without excuse." Wherein then are they to be blamed? "Because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God."

5. What mean these words, "Glorified Him not as God?" They did not give Him thanks. Is this then to glorify God; to give God thanks? Yes, verily. For what can be worse, if having been created after the image of God, and having come to know God, thou shalt not be thankful to Him? This surely, this is to glorify God, to give God thanks. The faithful know where and when it is said, "Let us give thanks unto our Lord God." But who gives thanks to God, save he who "lifts up his heart unto the Lord?" Therefore are they blameable and without excuse, "Because when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, nor gave Him thanks. But"—what? "But they became vain in their imaginations." Whence did they become vain, but because they were proud? Thus smoke vanishes away by rising up aloft, and a flame burns the more brightly and strongly in proportion as it is kept low; "They became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." So smoke, though it rise higher than the flame, is dark.

6. Finally, mark what follows, and see the point on which the whole matter depends. "For professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." For arrogating to themselves what God had given, God took away what He had given. Therefore from the proud He hid Himself, who conveyed the knowledge of Himself only to those who through the creature sought diligently after the Creator. Well then did our Lord say, "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent;" whether from those who in their manifold disputations, and most busy search, have reached to the full investigation of the creature, but knew nothing of the Creator, or from them who when they knew God, glorified Him not as God, nor gave Him thanks, and who could not see perfectly or healthfully because they were proud.

“Therefore Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” What babes? To the lowly. Say on whom doth My Spirit rest? “Upon him that is lowly and quiet, and who trembleth at My words.” At these words Peter trembled; Plato trembled not. Let the fisherman hold fast what that most famous philosopher has lost. “Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” Thou hast hid them from the proud, and revealed them to the humble. What things are these? For when He said this, He did not intend the heaven and earth, or point them out as it were with His hand as He spake. For these who does not see? The good see them, the bad see them; for He “maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good.” What then are these things? “All things are delivered unto Me of My Father.”

SERMON XIX

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XIX. 28, “COME UNTO ME, ALL YE THAT LABOUR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN,” ETC

1. We heard in the Gospel that the Lord, rejoicing greatly in Spirit, said unto God the Father, “I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight. All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.” I have labour in talking, you in hearing: let us then both give ear to Him who goes on to say, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour.” For why do we labour all, except that we are mortal men, frail creatures and infirm, bearing about vessels of clay which crowd and straiten one another. But if these vessels of flesh are straitened, let the open expanse of charity be enlarged. What then does He mean by, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour,” but that ye may labour no more? In a word, His promise is clear enough; forasmuch as He called those who were in labour, they might perchance enquire, for what profit they were called: “and,” saith He, “I will refresh you.”

2. “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me;” not to raise the fabric of the world, not to create all things visible and invisible, not in the world so

created to work miracles and raise the dead; but, “that I am meek and lowly in heart.” Thou wishest to be great, begin from the least. Thou art thinking to construct some mighty fabric in height; first think of the foundation of humility. And how great soever a mass of building one may wish and design to place above it, the greater the building is to be, the deeper does he dig his foundation. The building in the course of its erection, rises up on high, but he who digs its foundation, must first go down very low. So then you see even a building is low before it is high, and the top is raised only after humiliation.

3. What is the top in the erection of that building which we are constructing? Whither will the highest point of this building reach? I say at once, even to the Vision of God. Ye see how high, how great a thing it is to see God. Whoso longeth after it, understands both what I say and what he hears. The Vision of God is promised to us, of the very God, the Supreme God. For this is good, to see Him who seeth. For they who worship false gods, see them easily; but they see them “who have eyes and see not.” But to us is promised the Vision of the Living and the Seeing God, that we may desire eagerly to see that God of whom Scripture saith, “He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, doth he not consider?” Doth He then not hear, who hath made for thee that whereby thou hearest? and doth not He see, who hath created that whereby thou seest? Well therefore in the foregoing words of this very Psalm doth He say, “Understand therefore ye unwise among the people, and ye fools at length be wise.” For many men commit evil deeds whilst they think they are not seen by God. And it is difficult indeed for them to believe that He cannot see them; but they think that He will not. Few are found of such great impiety, that that should be fulfilled in them which is written, “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.” This is but the madness of a few. For as great piety belongs but to the few, no less also does great impiety. But the multitude of men speak thus: What! is God thinking now upon this, that He should know what I am doing in my house, and does God care for what I may choose to do upon my bed? Who says this? “Understand, ye unwise among the people, and ye fools at length be wise.” Because as being a man, it is a labour for thee to know all that takes place in thy house, and for all the doings and words of thy servants to reach thee; thinkest thou that it is a like

labour for God to observe thee, who did not labour to create thee? Doth not He fix His eye upon thee, who made thine eye? Thou wast not, and He created thee and gave thee being; and doth not He care for thee now that thou art, who “calleth those things which be not as though they were”? Do not then promise thyself this. Whether thou wilt or no, He seeth thee, and there is no place whither thou canst hide thyself from His eyes. “For if thou goest up into heaven, He is there; if thou goest down into hell, He is there also.” Great is thy labour, whilst unwilling to depart from evil deeds: yet wishest not to be seen by God. Hard labour truly! Daily art thou wishing to do evil, and dost thou suspect that thou art not seen? Hear the Scripture which saith, “He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, doth not He consider?” Where canst thou hide thy evil deeds from the eyes of God? If thou wilt not depart from them, thy labour is great indeed.

4. Hear Him then who saith, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour.” Thou canst not end thy labour by flying. Dost thou choose to fly from Him, and not rather to Him? Find out then whither thou canst escape, and so fly. But if thou canst not fly from Him, for that He is everywhere present; fly (it is quite nigh) to God, who is present where thou art standing. Fly. Lo in thy flight thou hast passed the heavens, He is there; thou hast descended into hell, He is there; whatever deserts of the earth thou shalt choose, there is He, who hath said, “I fill heaven and earth.” If then He fills heaven and earth, and there is no place whither thou canst fly from Him; cease this thy labour, and fly to His presence, lest thou feel His coming. Take courage from the hope that thou shalt by well-living see Him, by whom even in thy evil living thou art seen. For in evil living thou canst be seen, thou canst not see; but by well-living thou art both seen and seest. For with how much more tender nearness will He who crowneth the worthy look on thee, who in His pity saw thee that He might call thee when unworthy? Nathanael said to the Lord whom as yet he did not know, “Whence knewest thou me?” The Lord said unto him, “When thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee.” Christ saw thee in thine own shade; and will He not see thee in His Light? For what is, “When thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee”? What does it mean? Call to mind the original sin of Adam, in whom we all die. When he first sinned, he made himself aprons of fig-leaves, signifying by these leaves the irritations of lust to which he had been reduced by sinning.

Hence are we born; in this condition are we born; born in sinful flesh, which “the likeness of sinful flesh” alone can cure. Therefore “God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.” He came of this flesh, but He came not as other men. For the Virgin conceived Him not by lust, but by faith. He came into the Virgin, who was before the Virgin. He made choice of her whom He created, He created her whom He designed to choose. He brought to the Virgin fruitfulness: He took not away her unimpaired purity. He then who came to thee without the irritation of the leaves of the fig-tree, “when thou wast under the fig-tree,” saw thee. Make ready then to see Him in His height of glory, by whom in His pity thou wast seen. But because the top is high, think of the foundation. What foundation? dost thou say? “Learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly in heart.” Dig this foundation of lowliness deep in thee, and so wilt thou attain to the crowning top of charity. “Turning to the Lord,” etc.

SERMON XX

AGAIN ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XI. 28, “COME UNTO ME, ALL YE THAT LABOUR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST,” ETC

1. It seems strange to some, Brethren, when they hear the Lord say, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” And they consider that they who have fearlessly bowed their necks to this yoke, and have with much submission taken this burden upon their shoulders, are tossed about and exercised by so great difficulties in the world, that they seem not to be called from labour to rest, but from rest to labour rather; since the Apostle also saith, “All who will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.” So one will say, “How is the yoke easy, and the burden light,” when to bear this yoke and burden is nothing else, but to live godly in Christ? And how is it said, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you”? and not rather said, “Come ye who are at ease and idle, that ye may labour.” For so he found those men idle and at ease, whom he hired into the vineyard, that they might bear the heat of the day. And we hear the Apostle under that easy yoke and light burden say, “In all things approving ourselves as the

ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes," etc., and in another place of the same Epistle, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice have I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep:" and the rest of the perils, which may be enumerated indeed, but endured they cannot be but by the help of the Holy Spirit.

2. All these grievous and heavy trials which he mentioned, did he very frequently and abundantly sustain; but in very deed the Holy Spirit was with him in the wasting of the outward man, to renew the inner man from day to day, and by the taste of spiritual rest in the affluence of the delights of God to soften down by the hope of future blessedness all present hardships, and to alleviate all heavy trials. Lo, how sweet a yoke of Christ did he bear, and how light a burden; so that he could say that all those hard and grievous sufferings at the recital of which as just above every hearer shudders, were a "light tribulation;" as he beheld with the inward eyes, the eyes of faith, at how great a price of things temporal must be purchased the life to come, the escape from the everlasting pains of the ungodly, the full enjoyment, free from all anxiety, of the eternal happiness of the righteous. Men suffer themselves to be cut and burnt, that the pains not of eternity, but of some more lasting sore than usual, may be bought off at the priceof severer pain. For a languid and uncertain period of a very short repose, and that too at the end of life, the soldier is worn down by all the hard trials of war, restless it may be for more years in his labours, than he will have to enjoy his rest in ease. To what storms and tempests, to what a fearful and tremendous raging of sky and sea, do the busy merchantmen expose themselves, that they may acquire riches inconstant as the wind, and full of perils and tempests, greater even than those by which they were acquired! What heats, and colds, what perils, from horses, from ditches, from precipices, from rivers, from wild beasts, do huntsmen undergo, what pain of hunger and thirst, what straitened allowances of the cheapest and meanest meat and drink, that they may catch a beast! and sometimes after all, the flesh of the beast for which they endure all this is of no use for the table. And although a boar or a stag be caught, it is more sweet to the hunter's mind because it has been caught, than it is to the eater's palate

because it is dressed. By what sharp corrections of almost daily stripes is the tender age of boys brought under! By what great pains even of watching and abstinence in the schools are they exercised, not to learn true wisdom, but for the sake of riches, and the honours of an empty show, that they may learn arithmetic, and other literature, and the deceits of eloquence!

3. Now in all these instances, they who do not love these things feel them as great severities; whereas they who love them endure the same, it is true, but they do not seem to feel them severe. For love makes all, the hardest and most distressing things, altogether easy, and almost nothing. How much more surely then and easily will charity do with a view to true blessedness, that which mere desire does as it can, with a view to what is but misery? How easily is any temporal adversity endured, if it be that eternal punishment may be avoided, and eternal rest procured! Not without good reason did that vessel of election say with exceeding joy, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." See then how it is that that "yoke is easy, and that burden light." And if it be strait to the few who choose it, yet is it easy to all who love it. The Psalmist saith, "Because of the words of Thy lips I have kept hard ways." But the things which are hard to those who labour, lose their roughness to those same men when they love. Wherefore it has been so arranged by the dispensation of the Divine goodness, that to "the inner man who is renewed from day to day," placed no longer under the Law but under Grace, and freed from the burdens of numberless observances which were indeed a heavy yoke, but meetly imposed on a stubborn neck, every grievous trouble which that prince who is cast forth could inflict from without on the outward man, should through the easiness of a simple faith, and a good hope, and a holy charity, become light through the joy within. For to a good will nothing is so easy, as this good will to itself, and this is enough for God. How much soever therefore this world may rage, most truly did the angels exclaim when the Lord was born in the flesh, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will;" because "His yoke," who was then born, "is easy, and His burden light." And as the Apostle saith, "God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it."

SERMON XXI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XII. 32, “WHOSOEVER SHALL SPEAK A WORD AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT, IT SHALL NOT BE FORGIVEN HIM, NEITHER IN THIS WORLD, NOR IN THAT WHICH IS TO COME.” OR, “ON THE BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.”

1. There has been a great question raised touching the late lesson of the Gospel, to the solution of which I am unequal by any power of mine own; but “our sufficiency is of God,” to whatever degree we are capable of receiving His aid. First then consider the magnitude of the question; that when ye see the weight of it laid upon my shoulders, ye may pray in aid of my labours, and in the assistance which is vouchsafed to me, may find edification for your own souls. When “one possessed with a devil was brought to the Lord, blind and dumb, and He had healed him so that he could speak and see, and all the people were amazed and said, Is not this the Son of David? the Pharisees hearing it said, This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?” In these words He wished it to be understood from their own confession, that, through their not believing in Him they had chosen to belong to the kingdom of the devil, which as being divided against itself could accordingly not stand. Let then the Pharisees make choice of which they will. If Satan cannot cast out Satan, they can find nothing to say against the Lord; but if he can, then let them much more look to themselves, and depart out of his kingdom, which as being divided against itself cannot stand.

2. But now that they may not think that it is the prince of the devils in whom the Lord Jesus Christ casteth out devils, let them attend to what follows; “And if I,” He saith, “by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore shall they be your judges.” He spoke this undoubtedly of his disciples, the “children” of that people; who as being the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ were well conscious that they had learnt no evil arts from their Good Master, that through the prince of the devils they should cast out devils. “Therefore,” He saith, “shall they be your

judges.” They, He saith, the base and contemptible things of this world, in whom none of this artificial malice, but the holy simplicity of My power is seen; they shall be My witnesses, they shall be your judges. Then He subjoins, “But if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.” What is this? “If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils,” He saith, and your children, to whom I have given no hurtful and deceitful doctrine but a simple faith, can in no other way cast them out; no doubt the kingdom of God is come unto you; whereby the kingdom of the devil is subverted, and ye also are subverted with it.

3. And after that He had said, “By whom do your children cast them out?” to show that in them it was His grace, not their own desert; He saith, “Or else how can one enter into a strong man’s house and spoil his goods, except He first bind the strong man, and then He will spoil his house?” Your children, saith He, who either have already believed in Me, or who shall yet believe, and cast out devils, not through the prince of the devils, but through the simplicity of holiness, who assuredly either once were, or still are what ye are also, sinners and ungodly; and so in the house of the devil, and the vessels of the devil, how could they be rescued from him whom he held so firmly through the iniquity which reigned over them, unless he were bound by the chains of My justice, that I might take away from him his vessels which once were vessels of wrath, and make them vessels of mercy? This it is which the blessed Apostle also says when he rebukes the proud, and those who boast as it were of their own deserts, “For who maketh thee to differ?” That is, who maketh thee to differ from the mass of perdition derived from Adam and from the vessels of wrath. And that no man might say, “My own righteousness,” he says, “What hast thou, that thou didst not receive?” And on this point he says of himself also, “We also once were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” So then he himself was a vessel in the house of that strong one, strong in evil, when he was a persecutor of the Church, a “blasphemer, injurious, living in malice and envy,” as he confesses. But He who bound the strong one, took away from him this vessel of perdition, and made it a vessel of election.

4. Afterwards, that the unbelievers and ungodly, the enemies of the Christian name, might not suppose by reason of the divers heresies and

schisms of those who under the Christian name gather together flocks of lost sheep, that the kingdom of Christ also is divided against itself, He next adds, “He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me, scattereth abroad.” He does not say, he who is under the outward profession of My Name; or the form of My Sacrament; but “he who is not with Me is against Me.” Nor doth He say, he who gathereth not under the outward profession of My Name; but “he who gathereth not with Me, scattereth abroad.” Christ’s kingdom then is not divided against itself; but men try to divide that which was bought with the price of the Blood of Christ. “For the Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity.” For if he depart not from iniquity, he belongeth not to the kingdom of Christ, even though he name the Name of Christ. To give then some illustrations for example’s sake, the spirit of covetousness, and the spirit of luxuriousness, because the one heaps together, and the other lavishes, are divided against themselves; yet they belong both to the kingdom of the devil. Among idolaters the spirit of Juno and the spirit of Hercules, are divided against themselves; and both belong to the kingdom of the devil. The heathen Christ’s enemy, and the Jew Christ’s enemy, are divided against themselves; and both belong to the kingdom of the devil. Arianus and Photinianus both are heretics, and both are divided against themselves. The Donatist and Maximianist both are heretics, and both divided against themselves. All men’s vices and errors that are contrary to each other are divided against themselves, and all belong to the kingdom of the devil; therefore his kingdom shall not stand. But the righteous and the ungodly, the believer and the unbeliever, the Catholic and the heretic, are indeed divided against themselves, but they do not belong all to the kingdom of Christ. “The Lord knoweth them that are His.” Let no one flatter himself upon a mere name. If he would that the Name of the Lord should profit him, let “him that calleth upon the Name of the Lord depart from iniquity.”

5. But these words of the Gospel, though they had some obscurity, which I think by the Lord’s assistance I have explained, were yet not so difficult, as that which follows would seem to be. “Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men. And

whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” What then will become of those whom the Church desires to gain? When they have been reformed and come into the Church from whatsoever error, is the hope in the remission of all sins that is promised them a false hope? For who is not convicted of having spoken a word against the Holy Ghost, before he became a Christian or a Catholic? In the first place, are not they who are called Pagans, the worshippers of many and false gods, and the adorers of idols, forasmuch as they say that the Lord Christ wrought miracles by magical arts, are not they like these who said that He cast out devils through the prince of the devils? And again, when day by day they blaspheme our sanctification, what else blaspheme they but the Holy Ghost? What? Do not the Jews—they who spoke concerning our Lord what gave occasion to this very discourse—do they not even to the present day speak a word against the Holy Ghost, by denying that He is now in Christians, just as the others denied Him to be in Christ? For not even did they revile the Holy Ghost, by asserting either that He existed not, or that though He existed, yet that He was not God, but a creature; or that He had no power to cast out devils; they did not speak thus unworthily, or anything like it, of the Holy Ghost. For the Sadducees indeed denied the Holy Ghost; but the Pharisees maintained His existence against their heresy, but they denied that He was in the Lord Jesus Christ, who they thought cast out devils through the prince of the devils, whereas He did cast them out through the Holy Ghost. And hence, both Jews and whatsoever heretics there are who confess the Holy Ghost, but deny that He is in the Body of Christ, which is His One Only Church, none other than the One Catholic Church, are without doubt like the Pharisees who at that time although they confessed the existence of the Holy Ghost, yet denied that He was in Christ, whose works in casting out devils they attributed to the prince of devils. I say nothing of the fact that some heretics either boldly maintain that the Holy Ghost is not the Creator but a creature, as the Arians, and Eunomians, and Macedonians, or so entirely deny His existence, as to deny that God is Trinity, but assert that He is God the Father only, and that He is sometimes called the Son, and sometimes the Holy Ghost; as the Sabellians, whom some call Patripassians, because they hold that the Father suffered; and forasmuch as they deny that He has any Son, without doubt they deny His Holy Spirit also. The Photinians again who say that the Father only is God, and the Son a mere man, deny altogether that there is any third Person of the Holy Ghost.

6. It is plain then that the Holy Ghost is blasphemed both by Pagans, and by Jews, and by heretics. Are they then to be left, and accounted without all hope, since the sentence is fixed, "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come"? and are they only to be deemed free from the guilt of this most grievous sin who are Catholics from infancy? For all those who have believed the word of God, that they might become Catholics, came surely into the grace and peace of Christ, either from among the Pagans, or Jews, or heretics: and if there be no pardon for them for the word which they have spoken against the Holy Ghost, in vain do we promise and preach to men, to turn to God, and receive peace and remission of sins, whether in Baptism or in the Church. For it is not said, "It shall not be forgiven him except in baptism;" but, "it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

7. Some think that they only sin against the Holy Ghost, who having been washed in the laver of regeneration in the Church, and having received the Holy Spirit, as though unthankful for so great a gift of the Saviour, have plunged themselves afterwards into any deadly sin; as adultery, or murder, or an absolute apostasy, either altogether from the Christian name, or from the Catholic Church. But how this sense of it may be proved, I know not; since the place of repentance is not denied in the Church to any sins whatever; and the Apostle says that heretics themselves are to be reproved to this end, "If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." For what is the advantage of amendment without any hope of forgiveness? Finally, The Lord did not say, "the baptized Catholic who shall speak a word against the Holy Ghost;" but "he who," that is whosoever speaketh, be he who he may, "it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Whether then he be a heathen, or a Jew, or a Christian, or a heretic

from among Jews or Christians, or whatsoever other title of error he have, it is not said, this man, or that man; but “whosoever speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost,” that is who blasphemeth the Holy Ghost, “it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” But moreover if every error contrary to truth, and inimical to Christian peace, as we have shown before, “speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost;” and yet the Church doth not cease to reform and gather out of every error those who shall receive remission of sins, and the Holy Ghost Himself, whom they have blasphemed; I think I have discovered an important secret for the clearing up this so great a question. Let us seek then from the Lord the light of explanation.

8. Lift up then, Brethren, lift up unto me your ears, and your hearts unto the Lord. I tell you, my Beloved; perhaps there is not in all holy Scripture found a more important or more difficult question. Wherefore (that I may make you a confession about myself), I have always in my discourses to the people avoided the difficulty and embarrassment of this question; not because I had no ideas of any sort on the subject, for in a matter of such great importance, I would not be negligent in “asking,” and “seeking,” and “knocking;” but because I did not think I could do justice to that understanding of it which was in some degree opened to me, by words suggested at the moment. But as I listened to to-day’s lesson, upon which it was my duty to discourse to you, as the Gospel was being read, there was such a beating at my heart, that I believed that it was God’s will that you should hear something on the subject by my ministry.

9. First then, I pray you to consider and understand that the Lord did not say, “No blasphemy of the Spirit shall be forgiven,” or, “whosoever speaketh any word whatsoever against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him;” but “whosoever speaketh a word;” for had he said the former, there would have remained to us no subject of disputation at all. Since if no blasphemy, and no word which is spoken against the Holy Ghost, shall be forgiven unto men; the Church could not gain any one out of all the classes of ungodly sinners who gainsay the gift of Christ, and the sanctification of the Church, whether Jews, or heathens, or heretics of whatsoever sort, and some even of little knowledge in the Catholic Church

itself. But God forbid that the Lord should say this: God forbid, I say, that the Truth should say that every blasphemy and every word which should be spoken against the Holy Ghost, hath no forgiveness neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

10. His will indeed was to exercise us by the difficulty of the question, not to deceive us by a false decision. Wherefore there is no necessity for any one to think, that every blasphemy or every word which is spoken against the Holy Ghost hath no remission; but necessary it plainly is, that there should be some certain blasphemy, and some word which if it be spoken against the Holy Ghost can never attain to pardon and forgiveness. For if we take it to mean “every word,” who then can be saved? But if again we think there is no such “word,” we contradict the Saviour. There is then without doubt some certain blasphemy and some word which if it be spoken against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven. Now what this word is, it is the Lord’s will we should enquire; and therefore He hath not expressed it. His will, I say, was that it should be enquired into, not denied. For the style of the Scriptures is often such, that when anything is so expressed as not to be limited either to a universal or particular signification, it is not necessary that it should be understood universally, and not particularly. This proposition then would be expressed in its whole extent, that is, universally, if it were said, “All blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven;” or, “Whosoever speaketh any word whatsoever against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” But it would be expressed partially, that is, particularly, if it were said, “Some certain blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven.” But because this proposition is laid down neither in a universal, nor a particular form (for it is not said, “Every blasphemy;” or some certain blasphemy of the Spirit; but only indefinitely, “blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven;” neither is it said, “Whosoever speaketh any word whatever,” or “whosoever speaketh some certain word,” but indefinitely, “whosoever speaketh a word”), there is no necessity that we should understand “every blasphemy and every word;” but necessary it plainly is that the Lord designed some kind of blasphemy, and some word to be understood; though He would not express it, that, if we should receive any right understanding of it by asking, and seeking, and knocking, we might not entertain a low esteem of it.

11. In order to seeing this more plainly, consider that which the same Lord also saith of the Jews, “If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin.” For this again was not said with any such meaning, as if He intended it to be understood that the Jews would have been without any sin at all, if He had not come and spoken to them. For indeed He found them full of and laden with sins. Wherefore He saith, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden.” Laden! with what, but with the burdens of sins and transgressions of the Law? “For the Law entered that sin might abound.” Since then He saith Himself in another place, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;” how would “they not have had sin if He had not come”? if it be not that this proposition being expressed neither universally, nor particularly, but indefinitely, does not constrain us to understand it of all sin? But certainly unless we understand that there was some sin which they would not have had if Christ had not come and spoken unto them, we must say that the proposition was false, which God forbid. He doth not say then, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had had no sin;” lest the Truth should lie. Nor again did He say definitely, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had some certain sin;” lest our devout earnestness should not be exercised. For in the full abundance of the Holy Scriptures we feed upon the plain parts, we are exercised by the obscure: by the one, hunger is driven away, and daintiness by the other. Seeing then that it is not said, “they had had no sin,” we need not be disturbed, though we acknowledge that the Jews would have been sinners, even if the Lord had not come. But yet because it is said, “If I had not come, they had not had sin;” it must needs be that they contracted, though not all, yet some sin which they had not before, from the coming of the Lord. And this verily is that sin, that they believed not in Him who was present with and spake to them, and that counting Him as an enemy because He spake the truth, they put Him besides to death. This sin so great and terrible it is clear they had not had if He had not come and spoken to them. As then when we hear the words, “They had not had sin;” we do not understand all, but some, sin; so when we hear in to-day’s lesson, “Blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven;” we understand not all, but a certain kind of blasphemy; and when we hear, “Whosoever speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him;” we ought not to understand every, but some certain word.

12. For in that He saith also in this very text, “But blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven;” surely we must needs understand not blasphemy of every spirit, but the Holy Spirit. And though He had not expressed this anywhere else more plainly, who could be so silly as to understand it in any other way? According to the same rule of speech is this expression also understood, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit.” For He doth not say in that place, and of the Holy Spirit; yet this is understood. Nor because He said of water and of the Spirit, is any one forced to understand it of every spirit. Wherefore when you hear, “But the blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven;” as you must not understand it of every spirit, so not of every blasphemy against the Spirit.

13. I see that you are now wishing to hear, since it is not every blasphemy of the Spirit, what that blasphemy is which shall not be forgiven, and what that word is, since it is not every word which if it shall be spoken against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven neither in this world, neither in the world to come. And for my part I should be willing to tell you at once, what you are so very intently waiting to hear; but bear for a while the delay which a more careful diligence requires, till by the Lord’s assistance I shall unfold the whole meaning of the passage before us. Now the other two Evangelists, Mark and Luke, when they spake of the same thing, did not say “blasphemy” or “a word,” that we might understand it not of every blasphemy, but of some sort of blasphemy; not every word, but some certain word. What then did they say? In Mark it is thus written, “Verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies, where-withsoever they shall blaspheme. But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but shall be held guilty of an eternal offence.” In Luke it is thus: “And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.” Is there any departure from the truth of the same proposition because of some diversity in the expression? For indeed there is no other reason why the Evangelists do not relate the same things in the same way, but that we may learn thereby to prefer things to words, not words to things, and to seek for nothing else in the speaker, but for his intention, to convey which only the words are used. For what real difference is there whether it is said,

“Blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven;” or “he that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him.” Except perhaps that the same thing is declared more plainly in this last than in the other form; and so one Evangelist does not overthrow, but explains the other. Now “blasphemy of the Spirit” is an unevident expression; because it is not directly said what spirit; for every spirit is not the Holy Spirit. Thus it might be called “blasphemy of the spirit,” when a man blasphemes with the spirit; as that may be called “prayer of the spirit,” when one prays with the spirit. Whence the Apostle says, “I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also.” But when it is said, “he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost,” these ambiguities are removed. So the expression, “hath never forgiveness, but shall be held guilty of an eternal offence;” what is it, but what according to Matthew is expressed, “it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come”? The very same idea is expressed in different words and different forms of speech. And what is in Matthew, “Whosoever speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost,” that we might not understand it of anything but blasphemy, others have more clearly expressed, “He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost.” Yet the same thing is said by all; nor did any one of them depart from the intention of the Speaker, for the sake of understanding which only are words spoken, and written, and read, and heard.

14. But one may say, See I have admitted and understood that where the word “blasphemy” is used, and neither all, nor some certain blasphemy expressed, it may be understood either of all, or of some certain blasphemy, but not necessarily of all; but again if it be not understood of some, that that which is said would be untrue: so again if it is not said every or some certain word, it is not necessary that every word should be understood, but unless some word be understood, in no way can what is said be true. But when we read, “He that shall blaspheme,” how can I understand any certain blasphemy, when the word “blasphemy” is not used, or any certain word, when the word “word” is not used, but it seems to be said as it were generally, “He that shall blaspheme.” To this objection I reply thus. If it were said in this passage also, “He that shall blaspheme with any kind of blasphemy whatever against the Holy Ghost,” there would be no reason why we should think that some particular blasphemy was to be sought for,

when we ought rather to understand all blasphemy; but because all blasphemy could not be meant, lest the hope of forgiveness in case of their amendment should be taken away from heathens, and Jews, and heretics, and all kinds of men, who by their divers errors and contradictions blaspheme against the Holy Ghost; it remains without a doubt, that in the passage where it is written, “He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness,” he must be meant, not who hath in any way whatever blasphemed; but he who hath blasphemed in such a particular way, that he can never be pardoned.

15. For as in that it is said, “God tempteth no man,” it is not to be understood that God tempteth no man with any kind, but only not with some certain kind of temptation; lest that be false, which is written, “The Lord your God tempteth you;” and lest we deny that Christ is God, or say that the Gospel is false, when we read that He asked His disciple “tempting him; but He Himself knew what He would do.” For there is a temptation which induces to sin, with which “God tempteth no man,” and there is a temptation which only proves our faith, with which even God vouchsafes to tempt. So when we hear, “He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost,” we must not take it of every kind of blasphemy, as neither in the other place, of every kind of temptation.

16. So again when we hear, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;” we do not of course understand it of one who believes in such a way “as the devils believe and tremble;” nor of those who receive baptism in such sort as Simon Magus, who though he could be baptized, could not be saved. As then when He said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,” He had not in his view all who believe and are baptized, but some only; those, to wit, who are settled in that faith, which, according to the Apostle’s distinction, “worketh by love:” so when he said, “He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness,” he did not intend every kind, but a specific sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, by which whosoever shall be bound, he shall never by any remission be loosed.

17. That expression also of His, “He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood dwelleth in Me, and I in him,” how must we understand? Can we

include in these words those even of whom the Apostle says, “that they eat and drink judgment to themselves;” when they eat this flesh and drink this blood? What! did Judas the impious seller and betrayer of his Master (though, as Luke the Evangelist declares more plainly, he ate and drank with the rest of His disciples this first Sacrament of His body and blood, consecrated by the Lord’s hands), did he “dwell in Christ and Christ in him”? Do so many, in fine, who either in hypocrisy eat that flesh and drink that blood, or who after they have eaten and drunk become apostate, do they “dwell in Christ or Christ in them”? Yet assuredly there is a certain manner of eating that Flesh and drinking that Blood, in which whosoever eateth and drinketh, “he dwelleth in Christ and Christ in him.” As then he doth not “dwell in Christ and Christ in him,” who “eateth the Flesh and drinketh the Blood of Christ” in any manner whatsoever, but only in some certain manner, to which He doubtless had regard when He spake these words. So in this expression also, “He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness,” he is not guilty of this unpardonable sin, who shall blaspheme in any way whatever, but in that particular way, which it is His will, who uttered this true and terrible sentence, that we should seek out and understand.

18. Now as to what that mode, or immoderateness rather, of blasphemy is, what that particular blasphemy, and what that word against the Holy Ghost, the order of my discourse requires me to say what I think, and not to put off any longer your expectation which has been so long but so necessarily deferred. Ye know, Dearly beloved, that in that invisible and incorruptible Trinity, which our faith and the Church Catholic maintains and preaches, God the Father is not the Father of the Holy Spirit, but of the Son; and that God the Son is not the Son of the Holy Spirit, but of the Father; but that God the Holy Spirit is the Spirit not of the Father only, or of the Son only, but of the Father and the Son. And that this Trinity, although the Property and particular Subsistence of each person is preserved, is yet, because of the undivided and inseparable Essence or Nature of Eternity, Truth, and Goodness, not three Gods but One God. And by this means, according to our capacity, and as far as it is granted us to see these things “through a glass darkly,” especially being such as we now are, there is conveyed to us the idea of Origination in the Father, Nativity in the Son, and the

Communion of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit, and in the Three Equality. By That then which is the Bond of communion between the Father and the Son, it is Their pleasure that we should have communion both among ourselves and with Them, and to gather us together in one by that same Gift, which One They both have, that is, by the Holy Spirit, at once God and the Gift of God. For in This are we reconciled to the Divinity, and take delight in It. For what would the knowledge of whatever good we know profit us, unless we also loved it? But as it is by the truth that we learn, so is it by charity that we love, that so we may attain also to a fuller knowledge, and enjoy in blessedness what we know. "Love moreover is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." And because it is through sin that we are alienated from the possession of true good, "Love covereth a multitude of sins." So then the Father is Himself the True Origin to the Son, who is the Truth, and the Son is the Truth, originating from the True Father, and the Holy Spirit is Goodness, shed abroad from the Good Father and the Good Son; but in all Three the Divinity is equal, and the Unity Inseparable.

19. First then in order to our receiving eternal life which shall be given at the last, there comes to us a gift from God's goodness from the beginning of our faith, to wit, the remission of sins. For while they remain, there remains in some sort enmity against God, and alienation from Him, which comes from what is evil in us; since Scripture does not speak falsely, which says, "Your sins separate between you and God." He does not then bestow on us His good things, except He take away our evil things. And the former increase in proportion as the latter are diminished; nor will the one be perfected, till the other be brought to an end. But now that the Lord Jesus forgives sins by the Holy Ghost, just as by the Holy Ghost He casts out devils, may be understood by this, that after His Resurrection from the dead, when He had said to His disciples, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," He immediately subjoined, "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they shall be remitted unto them, and whosesoever sins ye retain, they shall be retained." For that regeneration also, in which there is a remission of all past sins, is wrought by the Holy Ghost, as the Lord saith, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." But it is one thing to be born of the Spirit, another to be nourished by the Spirit; just as it is one

thing to be born of the flesh, which happens when the mother is delivered of her child; another to be nourished by the flesh, which happens when she gives suck to her infant, who turns himself that he may drink with pleasure thither whence he was born, to have life; that he may receive the support of life from thence, whence he received the beginning of his birth. We must believe then that the first blessing of God's goodness in the Holy Ghost is the remission of sins. Whence the preaching of John the Baptist, who was sent as the forerunner of the Lord, also begins with it. For thus it is written, "In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Hence too the beginning of our Lord's preaching, as we read, "From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Now John, amongst the other things which he spake to those who came to be baptized by him, said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The Lord also said, "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence," even at Pentecost. Now as to John's expression, "with fire," though tribulation also might be understood, which believers were to suffer for the name of Christ; yet may we reasonably think that the same Holy Spirit is signified also under the name of "fire." Wherefore when He came it is said, "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." Hence also the Lord Himself said, "I am come to send fire on the earth." Hence also the Apostle saith, "Fervent in the spirit;" for from Him comes the fervour of love. "For it is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." And the contrary to this fervour is what the Lord said, "The love of many shall wax cold." Now perfect love is the perfect gift of the Holy Spirit. But the first "gift" is that which is concerned with the remission of sins; by which blessing "we are delivered from the power of darkness;" and the prince of this world, who worketh in the children of disobedience" by no other power than the fellowship and the bond of sin, is "cast out" by our faith. For by the Holy Spirit, by whom the people of God are gathered together into one, is the unclean spirit who is divided against himself cast out.

20. Against this gratuitous gift, against this grace of God, does the impenitent heart speak. This impenitence then is “the blasphemy of the Spirit, which shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” For against the Holy Spirit, by whom they whose sins are all forgiven are baptized, and whom the Church hath received, that “whosesoever sins she remits, they may be remitted,” does he speak, whether in the thought only, or also in the tongue, a very heinous and exceedingly ungodly word, who “when the patience of God leadeth him to repentance, after his hardness and impenitent heart treasureth up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds.” This impenitence then, for so by some one general name may we call both this blasphemy and the word against the Holy Ghost which hath no forgiveness for ever; this impenitence, I say, against which both the herald and the Judge cried out, saying, “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;” against which the Lord first opened the mouth of the Gospel preaching, and against which He foretold that the same Gospel was to be preached in all the world, when He said to His disciples after His resurrection from the dead, “it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem:” this impenitence, in one word, hath no forgiveness “neither in this world, nor in the world to come;” for that repentance only obtaineth forgiveness in this world, that it may have its effect in the world to come.

21. But this impenitence or impenitent heart may not be pronounced upon, as long as a man lives in the flesh. For we are not to despair of any so long as “the patience of God leadeth the ungodly to repentance,” and doth not hurry him out of this life; “God, who willeth not the death of a sinner, but that he should return from his ways and live.” He is a heathen today; but how knowest thou whether he may not be a Christian to-morrow? He is a heretic to-day; but what if to-morrow he follow the Catholic truth? He is a schismatic to-day; but what if to-morrow he embrace Catholic peace? What if they, whom thou observest now in any kind of error that can be, and whom thou condemnest as in most desperate case, what if before they end this life, they repent and find the true life in that which is to come?

Wherefore, Brethren, let also what the Apostle says urge you to this. “Judge nothing before the time.” For this blasphemy of the Spirit, for which there is no forgiveness (which I have understood to be not every kind of blasphemy, but a particular sort, and that as I have said or discovered, or even as I think clearly shown to be the case, the persevering hardness of an impenitent heart), cannot be taken hold of in any one, I repeat it, as long as he is still in this life.

22. And let it not seem absurd, that whereas a man who perseveres in hardened impenitence even to the end of this life, speaks long and much against this grace of the Holy Spirit; yet the Gospel has called this so long contradiction of an impenitent heart, as though it were something of short duration, “a word,” saying, “Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” For though this blasphemy be long continued, and made up of, and drawn out at length in very many words, yet it is the manner of Scripture to call even many words “a word.” For no prophet ever spoke one word only; yet we read, “the word which came to such and such a prophet.” And the Apostle says, “Let the elders be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.” He does not say, “in words,” but, “in the word.” And St. James, “Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only.” He again does not say, “of the words,” but, “of the word;” although so many words out of the Holy Scriptures are read, and spoken, and heard in the Church at her celebrations and solemnities. As therefore, how long a time soever any of us have laboured in preaching the Gospel, he is not called a preacher of the words, but of the word; and how long time soever any of you may have attentively and diligently listened to our preaching, he is called a most earnest “hearer” not of the words, but “of the word;” so after the style of the Scripture and the custom of the Church, whoso throughout his whole life in the flesh, to whatever length it may be extended, shall have spoken no matter how many words, whether by mouth, or the thought only with an impenitent heart, against that remission of sins which is granted in the Church, he speaks “a word” against the Holy Ghost.

23. Therefore not only every word spoken against the Son of Man, but, in fact, every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; because where there is not this sin of an impenitent heart against the Holy Ghost, by whom sins are remitted in the Church, all other sins are forgiven. But how shall that sin be forgiven, which hinders the forgiveness of other sins also? All sins then are forgiven to them in whom is not this sin, which shall never be forgiven; but to him in whom it is, since this sin is never forgiven, neither are other sins forgiven; because the remission of all is hindered by the bond of this one. It is not then that "whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man shall be forgiven," but "whoso speaketh against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven," for that in the Trinity the Holy Ghost is greater than the Son, which no heretic even has ever maintained; but since whosoever he be that resisteth the truth and blasphemeth the Truth, which is Christ, even after such a manifestation of Himself among men, as that the Word who is the Son of Man and very Christ, "became flesh and dwelt among us;" if he have not also spoken that word of the impenitent heart against the Holy Ghost, of whom it is said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit;" and again, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosesoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them;" that is, if he shall repent, he shall thereby receive the gift of the remission of all his sins, and of this also, that he "hath spoken a word against the Son of Man," because to the sin of ignorance, or obstinacy, or blasphemy of whatever kind, he hath not added the sin of impenitence against the gift of God, and the grace of regeneration or reconciliation, which is conferred in the Church by the Holy Spirit.

24. Wherefore, neither must we imagine, as some do, that the word which is spoken against the Son of Man is forgiven, but that which is spoken against the Holy Ghost is not forgiven, because Christ became the Son of Man by reason of His assuming flesh, in which respect the Holy Ghost of course is greater, who in His Own Substance is equal to the Father and the Only-begotten Son according to His Divinity, according to which also the Only-begotten Son Himself is equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit. For if this were the reason, surely nothing would have been said of any other kind of blasphemy, that that only might appear capable of forgiveness, which is spoken against the Son of Man, regarded only as man. But forasmuch as it is first said, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men;"

which in another Evangelist is also thus expressed, “All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme;” without doubt, that blasphemy also which is spoken against the Father is included in that general expression; and yet that alone is laid down as unpardonable, which is spoken against the Holy Ghost. What! did the Father also take the form of a servant, that in this respect the Holy Ghost should be greater than He? No surely: but after the universal mention of all sins and of all blasphemy, He wished to express more prominently the blasphemy which is spoken against the Son of Man for this reason, because although men should be even bound in that sin which He mentioned when He said, “If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin:” which sin also in the Gospel according to John He shows to be a very grievous one, when He says of the Holy Spirit Himself, when He promised that He would send Him, “He shall reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believed not on Me:” yet if that hardness of the impenitent heart have not spoken a word against the Holy Ghost, even this which is spoken against the Son of Man shall be forgiven.

25. Here perhaps some one may ask, “whether the Holy Ghost only forgiveth sins, and not the Father and the Son also?” I answer, Both the Father and the Son forgive them. For the Son Himself saith of the Father, “If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” And we say to Him in the Lord’s Prayer, “Our Father, which art in heaven.” And amongst the other petitions we ask this, saying, “Forgive us our debts.” And again of Himself He saith, “That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins.” “If then,” you will say, “The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit forgive sins, why is that impenitence which shall never be forgiven, said to relate only to the blasphemy of the Spirit, as though he who should be bound in this sin of impenitence should seem to resist the gift of the Holy Spirit, because by that gift is wrought the remission of sins?” Now on this point, I will also ask, Whether Christ only cast out devils, or the Father and the Holy Spirit also? For if Christ only, what means His saying, “The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.” For so it is said, “He doeth the works,” as if the Son doeth them not, but the Father who dwelleth in the Son. Why then in another place doth

He say, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” And a little after, “For what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.” But when in another place He says, “If I had not done amongst them the works which none other man did,” He speaks as if He did them alone. Now if these things are so expressed, as that nevertheless the works of the Father and the Son are inseparable, what must we believe of the Holy Spirit, but that He also worketh equally with them? For in that very place, from which this question arose which we are discussing, when the Son was casting out devils, He yet said, “If I in the Holy Spirit cast out devils, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.”

26. And here perhaps one may say, “That the Holy Spirit is rather given by the Father and the Son, than that He worketh anything by His own will, and that this is the scope of the words, “In the Holy Spirit I cast out devils,” because not the Spirit Himself, but Christ in the Spirit, did it; so that the expression, “I cast out in the Holy Spirit,” might be understood as if it were said, “I cast out by the Holy Spirit.” For this is the usual style of the Scriptures, “They killed in the sword,” that is, by the sword. They “burnt in the fire,” that is, by the fire. “And Joshua took knives of flints, in which to circumcise,” that is, by which to circumcise, “the children of Israel.” But let those who on this account take from the Holy Spirit His proper power, look to that which we read to have been spoken by the Lord, “The Spirit bloweth where It listeth.” And as to what the Apostle says, “But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will;” it might be feared, lest one imagine that the Father and the Son do not work them: whereas amongst these works he has expressly mentioned both the “gifts of healings,” and the “workings of miracles,” in which surely is included also the driving out of devils. But when he adds the words, “Dividing to every man severally as He will;” does he not clearly show also the Power of the Holy Spirit, yet as plainly inseparable from the Father and the Son? If then these things are so expressed, as that notwithstanding the operation of the Trinity is understood to be inseparable: so that when the operation of the Father is spoken of, it is understood that He does not exercise it without the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and when the operation of the Son is spoken of, it is not without the Father and the Holy Spirit; and when the operation of the Holy Spirit is spoken of, it is not without the

Father and the Son; it is sufficiently clear to those who have a sound faith, or who even understand as they best can, both that the words, “He doeth the works,” are spoken of the Father, in that from Him is also the first principle of the works, from whom is the existence of the Persons who co-operate in working: for that both the Son is born of Him, and the Holy Spirit proceedeth from Him, as the First Beginning, of whom the Son is born, and with whom He hath one Spirit in common; and again that when the Lord said, “If I had not done among them the works which none other did,” He did not speak in reference to the Father and the Spirit, as that They did not co-operate with Him in those works; but to men by whom we read of many miracles having been done, but by none such miracles as the Son did. And what the Apostle says of the Holy Spirit, “But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will,” is not said, because the Father and the Son do not co-operate with Him; but because in these works there are not many spirits, but One Spirit, and in His divers operations He is not diverse from Himself.

27. And yet it is not without cause, but with reason and with truth said, that the Father, and not the Son and the Holy Spirit, said, “Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Nevertheless, we do not deny that the Son and the Holy Spirit co-operated in working this miracle of the voice sounding from heaven, though we know that it belongs to the Person of the Father only. For though the Son bearing flesh, was there conversing with men on earth, He was not the less on that account in the Bosom of the Father also as the Only-Begotten Word, when that Voice came out of the cloud; nor could it be either wisely and through the Spirit believed, that God the Father separated the operation of these audible and passing words from the co-operation of His Wisdom and His Spirit. In the same way when we say most rightly, that not the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, but the Son walked upon the sea, who only had that flesh and those feet which rested on the waves; yet who would deny that the Father and the Holy Spirit co-operated in the work of so great a miracle? For so again we say most truly that the Son only took this our flesh, not the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, and yet he hath no true wisdom who denies that the Father, or the Holy Spirit co-operated in the work of His Incarnation which belongeth only to the Son. So also we say that neither the Father, nor the Son, but the Holy Spirit only

appeared both in the “form of a dove,” and in “tongues as it were of fire;” and gave to those to whom He came the power to tell in many and various tongues “the wonderful works of God;” and yet from this miracle which regards the Holy Spirit only, we cannot separate the co-operation of the Father and the Only-Begotten Word. So also the Whole Trinity work the works of each several Person in the Trinity, the Two co-operating in the work of the Other, through a perfect harmony of operation in the Three, and not through any deficiency of the power to work effectually in One. And since this is so, hence it is that the Lord Jesus cast out devils in the Holy Spirit. Not that He was not able to accomplish this alone, or that He assumed that aid as being insufficient for this work; but it was meet that the spirit who is divided against himself should be driven out by that Spirit, which the Father and the Son who are not divided in themselves have in common.

28. And thus sins, because they are not forgiven out of the Church, must be forgiven by that Spirit, by whom the Church is gathered together into one. In fact, if any one out of the Church repent him of his sins, and for this so great sin whereby he is an alien from the Church of God, has an heart impenitent, what doth that other repentance profit him? seeing by this alone he speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost, whereby he is alienated from the Church, which hath received this gift, that in her remission of sins should be given in the Holy Ghost? Which remission though it be the work of the Whole Trinity, is yet understood specially to belong to the Holy Spirit. For He is the Spirit of the adoption of sons, “in whom we cry Abba, Father;” that we may be able to say to Him, “Forgive us our debts.” And, “Hereby we know” as the Apostle John says, “that Christ dwelleth in us, by His Spirit which He hath given us.” “The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.” For to Him appertains the fellowship, by which we are made the one body of the One only Son of God. Whence it is written, “If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit.” With a view to this fellowship they to whom He first came spake with the tongues of all nations. Because as by tongues the fellowship of mankind is more closely united; so it behoved that this fellowship of the sons of God and members of Christ which was to be among all nations should be signified by the

tongues of all nations; that as at that time he was known to have received the Holy Ghost, who spake with the tongues of all nations; so now he should acknowledge that he has received the Holy Ghost, who is held by the bond of the peace of the Church, which is spread throughout all nations. Whence the Apostle says, "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

29. Now that He is the Spirit of the Father, the Son Himself saith, "He proceedeth from the Father." And in another place, "For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." And that He is the Spirit of the Son also the Apostle saith, "God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father;" that is, making you cry. For it is we that cry; but in Him, that is, by His shedding abroad love in our hearts, without which whoso crieth, crieth in vain. Whence he says again, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." To which Person then in the Trinity could the communion of this fellowship peculiarly appertain, but to that Spirit which is common to the Father and the Son?

30. That they who have separated from the Church have not this Spirit, the Apostle Jude has declared most plainly, saying, "Who separate themselves, natural, having not the Spirit." Whence the Apostle Paul reproving those even in the Church itself, who by the names of men, though having a place in her unity, were raising a kind of schism, says amongst other things, "But the natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." This shows his meaning, "doth not perceive," that is doth not receive the word of knowledge. These as having a place in the Church, he speaks of as babes, not yet spiritual, but still carnal, and such as are to be fed with milk, not with meat. "Even," he says, "as unto babes in Christ, have I given you milk and not meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." When we say, "not yet," we must not despair, if that which is "not yet" tends to be. For he says, "ye are yet carnal." And showing how it is that they are carnal, he says, "For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" And again more plainly, "For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I of Apollos, are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is

Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed?” These then, that is, Paul and Apollos, agreed together in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace; and yet because the Corinthians began to divide them among themselves, and “to be puffed up for one against another,” they are said to be men—carnal and natural men, not able to receive the things of the Spirit of God; and yet because they are not separated from the Church, they are called “babes in Christ;” for indeed he desired that they should be either Angels, or even Gods, whom he reproved because they were men, that is, in those contentions, “They savoured not the things which be of God, but the things which be of men.” But of those who are separated from the Church it is not merely said, “perceiving not the things of the Spirit of God,” lest it should be referred to the perception of knowledge; but it is said, “Having not the Spirit.” For it does not follow, that he who hath it, should also by knowledge perceive what he hath.

31. The “babes” then “in Christ” who have yet place in the Church, who are still natural and carnal, and cannot “perceive,” that is, understand and know what they have, have this Spirit. For how could they be babes in Christ except they were born anew of the Holy Spirit? Nor ought it to seem any wonder that one may have something, and yet not know what he hath. For to say nothing of the Divinity of the Almighty, and the Unity of the Unchangeable Trinity, who can easily perceive by knowledge what the soul is; and yet who is there that hath not a soul? Finally, that we may know most certainly that “babes in Christ,” who do not “perceive the things of the Spirit of God,” have notwithstanding the Spirit of God; let us look how the Apostle Paul, when a little while after he is rebuking them, saith, “Know ye not that ye are the temples of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” This surely he would in no wise say to those who are separated from the Church, who are described as “having not the Spirit.”

32. But neither can he be said to be in the Church, and to belong to that fellowship of the Spirit, who is mixed up with Christ’s sheep by a bodily intercourse only in deceitfulness of heart. For the “Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit.” Wherefore whosoever are baptized in the congregations or separations rather of schismatics or heretics, although they have not been born again of the Spirit, like as it were to Ishmael, who was Abraham’s son

after the flesh; not like Isaac, who was his son after the Spirit, because by promise; yet when they come to the Catholic Church, and are joined to the fellowship of the Spirit which without the Church they beyond doubt had not, the washing of the flesh is not repeated in their case. For “this form of godliness” was not wanting to them even when they were without; but there is added to them “the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,” which cannot be given but within. Before they were Catholics indeed, they were as they of whom the Apostle says, “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” For the visible form of the branch may exist even when separated from the vine; but the invisible life of the root cannot be had, but in the vine. Wherefore the bodily sacraments, which even they who are separated from the Unity of Christ’s Body bear and celebrate, may give “the form of godliness;” but the invisible and spiritual power of godliness cannot in any wise be in them, just as sensation does not accompany a man’s limb, when it is amputated from the body.

33. And since this is so, remission of sins, seeing it is not given but by the Holy Spirit, can only be given in that Church which hath the Holy Spirit. For this is the effect of the remission of sins, that the prince of sin, the spirit who is divided against himself, should no more reign in us, and that being delivered from the power of the unclean spirit, we should thenceforward be made the temple of the Holy Spirit, and receive Him, by whom we are cleansed through receiving pardon, to dwell in us, to work, increase, and perfect righteousness. For at His first coming, when they who had received Him spake with the tongues of all nations, and the Apostle Peter addressed those who were present in amazement, they were pricked in heart, and said to Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” show us. “And Peter said to them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” In the Church truly in which was the Holy Ghost, were both brought to pass, that is, both the remission of sins, and the receiving of this gift. And therefore was it “In the Name of Jesus Christ;” because when He promised the same Holy Ghost; He said, “Whom the Father will send in My Name.” For the Spirit dwelleth in no man without the Father and the Son; as neither doth the Son without the Father and the Holy Spirit, nor the Father without them. Their indwelling is

inseparable, as their operation is inseparable; but sometimes they manifest themselves separately by symbols borrowed from the creatures, not in their own substance; just as they are pronounced separately by the voice in syllables which occupy separately their own spaces, and yet they are not separated from each other by any intervals, or moments of time. For they never can be pronounced together, whereas they can never exist, except together. But as I have already said, and not once only, the remission of sins, whereby the kingdom of the spirit which is divided against himself is overthrown and driven out, and the fellowship of the unity of the Church of God, out of which this remission of sins is not, are regarded as the peculiar work of the Holy Spirit, with the cooperation doubtless of the Father and the Son, because the Holy Spirit is Himself in some sort the fellowship of the Father and the Son. For the Father is not possessed as Father by the Son and the Holy Spirit in common; because He is not the Father of Both. And the Son is not possessed as Son by the Father and the Holy Spirit in common; because He is not the Son of Both. But the Holy Spirit is possessed as the Spirit by the Father and the Son in common, because He is the One Spirit of Both.

34. Whosoever therefore shall be guilty of impenitence against the Spirit, in whom the unity and fellowship of the communion of the Church is gathered together, shall never have forgiveness; because he has stopped the source of forgiveness against himself, and deservedly shall he be condemned with the spirit, which is divided against himself, who is himself also divided against the Holy Spirit which is not divided against Himself. And of this the very testimonies of the Gospel warn us, would we with good attention search them. For according to Luke the Lord does not say, “That he who blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven:” in that place where He is answering those who said that He cast out devils by the prince of the devils. Whence it would seem that this was not said once only by the Lord; but we must not carelessly pass over the consideration of the occasion on which this last also was spoken. For He was speaking of those who should have confessed or denied Him before men, when He said, “Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the Angels of God. But he that denieth Me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God.” And lest from this the

salvation of the Apostle Peter should be despaired of, he immediately subjoined, “And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven; blasphemeth,” that is, with that blasphemy of an impenitent heart, by which resistance is made to remission of sins which is granted in the Church by the Holy Ghost. And this blasphemy Peter had not, who presently repented, when “he wept bitterly,” and who after he had overcome the spirit who is divided against himself, and who had desired to “have him to harass him,” and against whom the “Lord prayed for him that his faith might not fail,” even received the Very Holy Spirit whom he resisted not, that not only his sin might be forgiven him, but that through him remission of sins might be preached and dispensed.

35. And in the narrative of the two other Evangelists, the occasion of speaking out this sentence of the blasphemy of the Spirit arose from the mention of the unclean spirit, who is divided against himself. For it had been said of the Lord, that “He cast out devils by the prince of the devils.” In that place the Lord says, that “by the Holy Spirit He casteth out devils,” that so the spirit who is not divided against Himself may overcome and cast out him who is divided against himself; but that that man would abide in his perdition, who refuses through impenitence to pass over into His peace, who is not divided against Himself. For thus runs the narrative of Mark; “Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but shall be held guilty of an eternal offence.” When he had delivered these words of the Lord, he then subjoined his own, saying, “Because they said He hath an unclean spirit;” that He might show that the cause of His saying this arose hence, because they had said that “He cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.” Not that this was a blasphemy which shall not be forgiven, forasmuch as even this shall be forgiven, if a right repentance follow it; but because, as I have said, there arose hence a cause for that sentence to be delivered by the Lord, since mention had been made of the unclean spirit whom the Lord shows to be divided against himself, because of the Holy Spirit who is not only not divided against Himself, but who also makes those whom He gathers together undivided, by forgiving those sins

which are divided against themselves, and by inhabiting those who are cleansed, that it may be with them, as it is written in the Acts of the Apostles, “The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.” And this gift of forgiveness none resists, but he who has the hardness of an impenitent heart. For in another place also the Jews said of the Lord that He had a devil, yet He spake nothing there of the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit; because they did not so bring forward the mention of the unclean spirit as that he could be shown out of their own mouths to be divided against himself, as Beelzebub, by whom they said that devils could be cast out.

36. But in this passage according to Matthew, the Lord far more plainly explained what he intended to be understood here; namely, that he it is who speaks a word against the Holy Ghost, who with an impenitent heart resists the Unity of the Church, where in the Holy Spirit is given the remission of sins. For this spirit they have not, as has been said already, who even though they bear and handle the sacraments of Christ, are separated from His congregation. For when He spoke of the division of Satan against Satan, and how that He Himself cast out devils by the Holy Spirit, that Spirit, namely, which is not, as the other, divided against Himself; lest any one should think because of those who gather together their irregular assemblies under the Name of Christ, but without His fold, that the kingdom of Christ also was divided against itself, He immediately added, “He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad,” that He might show that they did not belong to Him who by gathering “without” wished not to “gather” but “to scatter abroad.” And afterwards He subjoined, “Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven.” What is this “wherefore?” Shall the blasphemy of the Spirit only not be forgiven, because “he who is not with Christ is against Him, and he who gathereth not with Him scattereth abroad?” Even so, doubtless. For he that gathereth not with Him, howsoever he may gather under His name, hath not the Holy Ghost.

37. Thus then hath He altogether forced us to understand that the remission of no sin nor blasphemy can be effected anywhere else, save in the

gathering together of Christ, which scattereth not abroad. For it is gathered together in the Holy Spirit, which is not as that unclean spirit, divided against Himself. And therefore all congregations, or dispersions rather, which call themselves Churches of Christ, and are divided against themselves and contrary one to the other, and hostile to the congregation of Unity, which is His True Church, do not therefore belong to His congregation, because they seem to have His Name. But they might belong to it, if the Holy Spirit in whom this congregation is joined together, were divided against Himself. But because this is not so (“for he that is not with Christ is against Him, and he that gathereth not with Him scattereth abroad”); therefore all manner of sin and all blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men in this congregation, which Christ gathereth together in the Holy Spirit, who is not divided against Himself. But that blasphemy of the Spirit Himself, whereby in an impenitent heart resistance is made to this so great gift of God even to the end of this present life, shall not be forgiven. For though a man so oppose himself to the truth, as to resist God speaking, not in the Prophets, but in His Only Son (since for our sakes He was pleased that He should be the Son of Man, that He might speak to us in Him), yet shall he be forgiven when in repentance he shall have recourse to the goodness of God, who forasmuch as He “willeth not the death of the wicked, but rather that he should turn from his way and live,” hath given the Holy Spirit to His Church, that whosoever forgiveth sins in the Spirit, they should be forgiven. But whoso stands out as an enemy to this gift, so as not in repentance to seek it, but by impenitence to gainsay it, his sin becomes unpardonable; not sin of any one specific kind, but the contempt, or even opposing of the remission of sins itself. And so a word is spoken against the Holy Spirit, when men never come from the dispersion to the congregation which has received the Holy Spirit for the remission of sins. Unto which congregation if any come without hypocrisy, though it be through the ministry of a wicked clergyman, a reprobate and a hypocrite, so he be a Catholic minister, he shall receive remission of sins in this Holy Spirit. For such is the working of this Spirit in the Holy Church, even in this present time, when the corn is as it were being threshed with the chaff, that he despises no man’s sincere confession, and is deceived by no man’s false pretences, and so flies from the reprobate, as yet by their ministry to gather together those that are approved. One refuge then there is against unpardonable blasphemy, that we take heed of an impenitent heart; and that it be not thought that repentance can avail ought, unless the Church be kept to, in which remission of sins is given, and the fellowship of the Spirit is preserved in the bond of peace.

38. I have through the mercy and assistance of the Lord handled, as I best was able, this most difficult question, if indeed I have been able to do it in any measure. Nevertheless, whatever I have not been able to apprehend in the difficulties of it, let it not be imputed to the truth itself, which is a healthful exercise to the godly, even when it is hidden, but to my infirmity, who either could not see what others might have understood, or could not explain what I did understand. But for that which perhaps I have been able to discover by force of meditation, and to develop in words, to Him must the thanks be given, from whom I have sought, from whom I have asked, unto whom I have knocked, that I might have wherewithal to be nourished myself in meditation, and to minister to you in speaking.

SERMON XXII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XII. 33, "EITHER MAKE THE TREE GOOD, AND ITS FRUIT GOOD," ETC

1. The Lord Jesus hath admonished us, that we be good trees, and that so we may be able to bear good fruits. For He saith, "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt, for the tree is known by his fruit." When He says, "Make the tree good, and his fruit good;" this of course is not an admonition, but a wholesome precept, to which obedience is necessary. But when He saith, "Make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt;" this is not a precept that thou shouldest do it; but an admonition, that thou shouldest beware of it. For He spoke against those, who thought that although they were evil, they could speak good things or have good works. This the Lord Jesus saith is impossible. For the man himself must first be changed, in order that his works may be changed. For if a man abide in his evil state, he cannot have good works; if he abide in his good state, he cannot have evil works.

2. But who was found good by the Lord, since "Christ died for the ungodly"? He found them all corrupt trees, but to those who "believed in

His Name, He gave power to become the sons of God.” Whosoever then now is a good man, that is, a good tree, was found corrupt, and made good. And if when He came He had chosen to root up the corrupt trees, what tree would have remained which did not deserve to be rooted up? But He came first to impart mercy, that He might afterwards exercise judgment, to whom it is said, “I will sing unto Thee O Lord, of mercy and judgment.” He gave then remission of sins to those who believed in Him, He would not even take account with them of past reckonings. He gave remission of sins, He made them good trees. He delayed the ax, He gave security.

3. Of this ax does John speak, saying, “Now is the ax laid unto the root of the trees; every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire.” With this ax does the Householder in the Gospel threaten, saying, “Behold these three years I come to this tree, and find no fruit on it.” Now I must clear the ground; wherefore let it be cut down. And the husbandman intercedes, saying, “Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then Thou shalt come and cut it down.” So the Lord hath visited mankind as it were three years, that is, at three several times. The first time was before the Law; the second under the Law; the third is now, which is the time of grace. For if He did not visit mankind before the Law, whence was Abel, and Enoch, and Noe, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, whose Lord He was pleased to be called? And He to whom all nations belonged, as though He were the God of three men only, said, “I am the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.” But if He did not visit under the Law, He would not have given the Law itself. After the Law, came the very Master of the house in person; He suffered, and died, and rose again; He gave the Holy Spirit, He made the Gospel to be preached throughout all the world, and yet a certain tree remained unfruitful. Still is there a certain portion of mankind, which doth not yet amend itself. The husbandman intercedes; the Apostle prays for the people; “I bow my knees,” he saith, “unto the Father for you, that being rooted and grounded in love, ye may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” By bowing the knees, he intercedes with the Master of the house for us, that we be not rooted up. Therefore since He must

necessarily come, let us take care that He find us fruitful. The digging about the tree is the lowliness of the penitent. For every ditch is low. The dunging it, is the filthy robe of repentance. For what is more filthy than dung; yet if well used, what more profitable?

4. Let each one then be a good tree; let him not suppose that he can bear good fruit, if he remain a corrupt tree. There will be no good fruit, but from the good tree. Change the heart, and the work will be changed. Root out desire, plant in charity. “For as desire is the root of all evil,” so is charity the root of all good. Why then do men fret and contend one with another, saying, “What is good?” O that thou knewest what good is! What thou dost wish to have is not very good; this is good which thou dost not wish to be. For thou dost wish to have health of body; it is good indeed; yet thou canst not think that to be any great good, which the wicked have as well. Thou dost wish to have gold and silver; I grant that these also are good things, but then only if thou make a good use of them; and a good use of them thou wilt not make, if thou art evil thyself. And hence gold and silver are to the evil evil; to the good are good, not because gold and silver make them good; but because they find them good, they are turned to a good use. Again, thou dost wish to have honour, it is good; but this too only if thou make a good use of it. To how many has honour been the occasion of destruction! And again, to how many has honour been the instrument of good works!

5. Let us then, if we can, make a distinction as to these goods; for it is of good trees that we are speaking. And here there is nothing, which every one ought so much to think of, as to turn his eyes upon himself, to learn in himself, examine himself, inspect himself, search into himself, and find out himself; and kill what is displeasing; and long for and plant in that which is well-pleasing (to God). For when a man finds himself so empty of better goods, why is he greedy of external goods? And what profit is there in a coffer full of goods, with an empty conscience? Thou wishest to have good things, and dost thou not then wish to be good thyself? Seest thou not that thou oughtest rather to blush for thy good things, if thy house is full of good things, and thou its owner art evil? For what is there, tell me, thou wouldest wish to have that is bad. Not any one thing I am sure; neither wife; nor son;

nor daughter; nor manservant; nor maidservant; nor country seat; nor a coat; nay nor a shoe; and yet thou art willing to have a bad life. I pray thee prefer thy way of life to thy shoes. All things which encompass thy sight, as being of elegance and beauty, are highly prized by thee; and art thou so lightly esteemed by thyself, and so devoid of beauty? If the good things of which thine house is full, which thou hast longed to possess, and feared to lose, could make answer to thee, would they not cry out to thee, As thou wishest to have us good, so do we also wish to have a good owner? And now in speechless accents do they address thy Lord against thee: "Lo! thou hast given him so many good things, and he himself is evil. What profit is there to him in that he hath, when he hath not Him who hath given him all!"

6. One then who has been admonished, and it may be moved to compunction by these words, may ask what is good? what is the nature of good? and whence it comes? Well is it that thou hast understood that it is thy duty to ask this. I will answer thy enquiries, and will say, "That is good which thou canst not lose against thy will." For gold thou mayest lose even against thy will; and so thou canst a house; and honours, and even the health of the body; but the good whereby thou art truly good, thou dost neither receive against thy will, nor against thy will dost lose it. I enquire then, "What is the nature of this good?" One of the Psalms teaches us an important matter, perchance it is even this that we are seeking for. For it says, "O ye sons of men, how long will ye be heavy in heart?" How long will that tree be in its three years fruitlessness? "O ye sons of men, how long will ye be heavy in heart?" What is "heavy in heart"? "Why do ye love vanity, and seek after leasing?" And then it goes on to say what we must really seek after; "Know ye that the Lord hath magnified His Holy One?" Now Christ hath come, now hath He been magnified, now hath He risen again, and ascended into heaven, now is His Name preached through the world: "How long will ye be heavy in heart?" Let the times past suffice; now that that Holy One hath been magnified, "How long will ye be heavy in heart?" After the three years, what remains but the ax? "How long will ye be heavy in heart? Why do ye love vanity, and seek after leasing?" Vain, useless, frivolous, fleeting things are these still sought after, now that Christ the Holy One hath been so magnified? Truth now is crying aloud, and is vanity still sought after? "How long will ye be heavy in heart?"

7. With good reason is this world severely scourged; for the world hath known now its Master’s words. “And the servant,” He saith, “that knew not his Master’s will, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.” Why? That he may seek after his Master’s will. The servant then who knew not His will, this was the world, before “He magnified His Holy One;” it was “the servant who knew not his Master’s will,” and therefore “shall be beaten with few stripes.” But the servant who now knoweth his Master’s will, that is now, since the Godhead “sanctified His Holy One,” and “doeth not His will, shall be beaten with many stripes.” What marvel then, if the world be now much beaten? “It is the servant which knew his Master’s will, and did commit things worthy of stripes.” Let him then not refuse to be beaten with many stripes; since if in unrighteousness he will not hear his teacher, in righteousness must he feel his avenger. At least, let him not murmur against Him that chasteneth him, when he sees that he is worthy of stripes, that so he may attain mercy; through Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth, with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON XXIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XIII. 19, ETC., WHERE THE LORD JESUS EXPLAINETH THE PARABLES OF THE SOWER

1. Both yesterday and to-day ye have heard the parables of the sower, in the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. Do ye who were present yesterday, recollect to-day. Yesterday we read of that sower, who when he scattered seed, “some fell by the way side,” which the birds picked up; “some in stony places,” which dried up from the heat; “some among thorns, which were choked,” and could not bring forth fruit; and “other some into good ground, and it brought forth fruit, a hundred, sixty, thirty fold.” But to-day the Lord hath again spoken another parable of the sower, “who sowed good seed in his field. While men slept the enemy came, and sowed tares upon it.” As long as it was only in the blade, it did not appear; but when the fruit of the good seed began to appear, “then appeared the tares also.” The servants of the householder were offended, when they saw a quantity of tares among the good wheat, and wished to root them out, but they were not suffered to do so; but it was said to them, “Let both grow together until the

harvest.” Now the Lord Jesus Christ explained this parable also; and said that He was the sower of the good seed, and He showed how that the enemy who sowed the tares was the devil; the time of harvest, the end of the world; His field the whole world. And what saith He? “In the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, to burn them, but gather the wheat into My barn.” Why are ye so hasty, He says, ye servants full of zeal? Ye see tares among the wheat, ye see evil Christians among the good; and ye wish to root up the evil ones; be quiet, it is not the time of harvest. That time will come, may it only find you wheat! Why do ye vex yourselves? Why bear impatiently the mixture of the evil with the good? In the field they may be with you, but they will not be so in the barn.

2. Now ye know that those three places mentioned yesterday where the seed did not grow, “the way side,” “the stony ground,” and “the thorny places,” are the same as these “tares.” They received only a different name under a different similitude. For when similitudes are used, or the literal meaning of a term is not expressed, not the truth but a similitude of the truth is conveyed by them. I see that but few have understood my meaning; yet it is for the benefit of all that I speak. In things visible, a way side is a way side, stony ground is stony ground, thorny places are thorny places; they are simply what they are, because the names are used in their literal sense. But in parables and similitudes one thing may be called by many names; therefore there is nothing inconsistent in my telling you that that “way side,” that “stony ground,” those “thorny places,” are bad Christians, and that they too are the “tares.” Is not Christ called “the Lamb”? Is not Christ “the Lion” too? Among wild beasts, and cattle, a lamb is simply a lamb, and a lion, a lion: but Christ is both. The first are respectively what they are in propriety of expression; the Latter both together in a figurative sense. Nay much more; besides this it may happen that under a figure, things very different from one another may be called by one and the same name. For what is so different as Christ and the devil? yet both Christ and the devil are called “a lion.” Christ is called “a lion:” “The Lion hath prevailed of the tribe of Judah;” and the devil is called a lion: “Know ye not that your adversary the Devil walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour?” Both the one and the other then is a lion; the one a lion by reason of His strength; the other for his savageness; the one a lion for His

“prevailing;” the other for his injuring. The devil again is a serpent, “that old serpent;” are we commanded then to imitate the devil, when our Shepherd told us, “Be ye wise as serpents, and simple as doves”?

3. Accordingly I yesterday addressed “the way side,” I addressed the “stony ground,” I addressed the “thorny places;” and I said, Be ye changed whilst ye may: turn up with the plough the hard ground, cast the stones out of the field, pluck up the thorns out of it. Be loth to retain that hard heart, from which the word of God may quickly pass away and be lost. Be loth to have that lightness of soil, where the root of charity can take no deep hold. Be loth to choke the good seed which is sown in you by my labours, with the lusts and the cares of this world. For it is the Lord who sows; and we are only His labourers. But be ye the “good ground.” I said yesterday, and I say again today to all, Let one bring forth “a hundred, another sixty, another thirty fold.” In one the fruit is more, in another less; but all will have a place in the barn. Yesterday I said all this, to-day I am addressing the tares; but the sheep themselves are the tares. O evil Christians, O ye, who in filling only press the Church by your evil lives; amend yourselves before the harvest come. “Say not, I have sinned, and what hath befallen me?” God hath not lost His power; but He is requiring repentance from thee. I say this to the evil, who yet are Christians; I say this to the tares. For they are in the field; and it may so be, that they who to-day are tares, may to-morrow be wheat. And so I will address the wheat also.

4. O ye Christians, whose lives are good, ye sigh and groan as being few among many, few among very many. The winter will pass away, the summer will come; lo! the harvest will soon be here. The angels will come who can make the separation, and who cannot make mistakes. We in this time present are like those servants of whom it was said, “Wilt Thou that we go and gather them up?” for we were wishing, if it might be so, that no evil ones should remain among the good. But it has been told us, “Let both grow together until the harvest.” Why? For ye are such as may be deceived. Hear finally; “Lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.” What good are ye doing? Will ye by your eagerness make a waste of My harvest? The reapers will come, and who the reapers are He hath explained, “And the reapers are the angels.” We are but men, the reapers are

the angels. We too indeed, if we finish our course, shall be equal to the angels of God; but now when we chafe against the wicked, we are as yet but men. And we ought now to give ear to the words, “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.” For do ye think, my Brethren, that these tares we read of do not get up into this seat? Think ye that they are all below, and none above up here? God grant we may not be so. “But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you.” I tell you of a truth, my Beloved, even in these high seats there is both wheat, and tares, and among the laity there is wheat, and tares. Let the good tolerate the bad; let the bad change themselves, and imitate the good. Let us all, if it may be so, attain to God; let us all through His mercy escape the evil of this world. Let us seek after good days, for we are now in evil days; but in the evil days let us not blaspheme, that so we may be able to arrive at the good days.

SERMON XXIV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XIII. 52, “THEREFORE EVERY SCRIBE WHO HATH BEEN MADE A DISCIPLE TO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN,” ETC

1. The lesson of the Gospel reminds me to seek out, and to explain to you, Beloved, as the Lord shall give me power, who is “that Scribe instructed in the kingdom of God, who is “like unto an householder bringing out of his treasure things new and old.” For here the lesson ended. “What are the new and old things of an instructed Scribe?” Now it is well known who they were, whom the ancients, after the custom of our Scriptures, called Scribes, those, namely, who professed the knowledge of the Law. For such were called Scribes among the Jewish people, not such as are so called now in the service of judges, or the custom of states. For we must not enter school to no purpose, but we must know in what signification to take the words of Scripture; lest when anything is mentioned out of it, which is usually understood in another secular use of the term, the hearer mistake it, and by thinking of its customary meaning, understand not what he has heard. The Scribes then were they who professed the knowledge of the Law, and to them belonged both the keeping and the studying, as well as also the transcribing and the expounding, of the books of the Law.

2. Such were they whom our Lord Jesus Christ rebukes, because they have the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and “would neither enter in themselves, nor suffer others to enter in;” in these words finding fault with the Pharisees and Scribes, the teachers of the law of the Jews. Of whom in another place He says, “Whatsoever they say, do, but do not ye after their works, for they say and do not.” Why is it said to you, “For they say and do not?” but that there are some of whom what the Apostle says, is clearly exemplified, “Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the Law, through breaking the Law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you.” It is surely plain that the Lord speaks of these, “For they say and do not.” They then are Scribes, but not “instructed in the kingdom of God.”

3. Peradventure some of you may say, “And how can a bad man speak what is good, when it is written, in the words of the Lord Himself, A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things. Ye hypocrites, how can ye being evil speak good things?’“ In the one place He says, “How can ye being evil speak good things?” in the other He says, “What they say, do, but do ye not after their works. For they say, and do not.” If “they say and do not,” they are evil; if they are evil, they cannot “speak good things;” how then are we to do what we hear from them, when we cannot hear from them what is good? Now take heed, Holy and Beloved, how this question may be solved. Whatever an evil man brings forth from himself, is evil; whatever an evil man brings forth out of his own heart, is evil; for there is the evil treasure. But whatever a good man brings forth out of his heart, is good; for there is the good treasure. Whence then did those evil men bring forth good things? “Because they sat in Moses’ seat.” Had He not first said, “They sit in Moses’ seat;” He would never have enjoined that evil men should be heard. For what they brought forth out of the evil treasure of their own heart, was one thing; another what they gave utterance to out of the seat of Moses, the criers so to say of the judge. What the crier says, will never be attributed to him if he speak in the presence of the judge. What the crier says in his own house is one thing,

what the crier says as hearing it from the judge is another. For whether he will or no, the crier must proclaim the sentence of punishment even of his own friend. And so whether he will or no, must he proclaim the sentence of the acquittal even of his own enemy. Suppose him to speak from his heart; he acquits his friend, and punishes his enemy. Suppose him to speak from the judge's chair; he punishes his friend, and acquits his enemy. So with the Scribes; suppose them to speak out of their own heart; thou wilt hear, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die." Suppose them to speak from Moses' seat; thou wilt hear, "Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shall not steal, Thou shall not bear false witness. Honour thy father and mother; thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself." Do then this which the official seat proclaims by the mouth of the Scribes; not that which their heart utters. For so embracing both judgments of the Lord, thou wilt not be obedient in the one, and guilty of disobedience in the other; but wilt understand that both agree together, and wilt regard both that as true, "that a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things;" and that other also, that those Scribes did not speak good things out of the evil treasure of their heart, but that they were able to speak good things out of the treasure of Moses' seat.

4. So then those words of the Lord will not disturb you, when He says, "Every tree is known by his own fruit. Do men gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles?" The Scribes and Pharisees of the Jews therefore were thorns and thistles, and notwithstanding, "what they say do, but do ye not after their works." So then the grape is gathered from thorns, and the fig from thistles, as He has given thee to understand according to the method I have just laid down. For so sometimes in the vineyard's thorny hedge, the vines get entangled, and clusters of grapes hang from the brambles. Thou hadst no sooner heard the name of thorns, than thou wert on the point of disregarding the grape. But seek for the root of the thorns, and thou wilt see where to find it. Follow too the root of the hanging cluster, and thou wilt see where to find it. So understand that the one refers to the Pharisee's heart, the other to Moses' seat.

5. But why were they such as they were? “Because,” says St. Paul, “the vail is upon their heart. And they do not see that the old things are passed away, and all things are become new.” Hence it is that they were such, and all others who even now are like them. Why are they old things? Because they have been a long while published. Why new? Because they relate to the kingdom of God. How the vail then is taken away, the Apostle himself tells us. “But when thou shalt turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.” So then the Jew who does not turn to the Lord, does not carry on his mind’s eye to the end. Just as at that time the children of Israel in this figure did not carry on the gaze of their eyes “to the end,” that is, to the face of Moses. For the shining face of Moses contained a figure of the truth; the vail was interposed because the children of Israel could not yet behold the glory of his countenance. “Which figure is done away.” For so said the Apostle; “which is done away.” Why done away? Because when the emperor comes, the images of him are taken away. The image is looked upon, when the emperor is not present; but where he is, whose image it is, there the image is removed. There were then images borne before Him, before that our Emperor the Lord Jesus Christ came. When the images were taken away, the glory of the Emperor’s presence is seen. Therefore, “When any one turneth to the Lord, the vail is taken away.” For the voice of Moses sounded through the vail, but the face of Moses was not seen. And so now the voice of Christ sounds to the Jews by the voice of the old Scriptures: they hear their voice, but they see not the face of Him that speaketh. Would they then that the vail should be taken away? “Let them turn to the Lord.” For then the old things are not taken away, but laid up in a treasury, that the Scribe may henceforth be “instructed in the kingdom of God, bringing forth out of his treasure” not “new things” only, nor “old things” only. For if he bring forth “new things” only or “old things” only; he is not “a scribe instructed in the kingdom of God, bringing forth out of his treasure things new and old.” If he say and do them not; he brings forth from the official seat, not from the treasure of his heart. And (we speak the truth, Holy Brethren) what things are brought out of the old, are illustrated by the new. Therefore do “we turn to the Lord, that the vail may be taken away.”

SERMON XXV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XIV. 24, “BUT THE BOAT WAS NOW IN THE MIDST OF THE SEA, DISTRESSED BY THE WAVES.”

1. The lesson of the Gospel which we have just heard is a lesson of humility to us all, that we may see and know where we are, and whither we must tend and hasten. For that ship which carries the disciples, which was tossed in the waves by a contrary wind, is not without its meaning. Nor without a meaning did the Lord after He had left the multitudes, go up into a mountain to pray alone; and then coming to His disciples found them in danger, walking on the sea, and getting up into the ship strengthened them, and appeased the waves. But what marvel if He can appease all things who created all? Nevertheless after He was come up into the ship, they who were being borne in her, came saying, “Of a truth Thou art the Son of God.” But before this plain discovery of Himself they were troubled, saying, “It is a phantom.” But He coming up into the ship took away the fluctuation of mind from their hearts, when they were now more endangered in their souls by doubting, than before in their bodies by the waves.

2. Yet in all this that the Lord did, He instructs us as to the nature of our life here. In this world there is not a man who is not a stranger; though all do not desire to return to their own country. Now by this very journey we are exposed to waves and tempests; but we must needs be at least in the ship. For if there be perils in the ship, without the ship there is certain destruction. For whatever strength of arm he may have who swims in the open sea, yet in time he is carried away and sunk, mastered by the greatness of its waves. Need then there is that we be in the ship, that is, that we be carried in the wood, that we may be able to cross this sea. Now this Wood in which our weakness is carried is the Cross of the Lord, by which we are signed, and delivered from the dangerous tempests of this world. We are exposed to the violence of the waves; but He who helpeth us is God.

3. For in that when the Lord had left the multitudes, “He went up alone into a mountain to pray;” that mountain signifies the height of heaven. For having left the multitudes, the Lord after His Resurrection ascended Alone into heaven, and “there,” as the Apostle says, “He maketh intercession for us.” There is some meaning then in His “leaving the multitudes, and going

up into a mountain to pray Alone.” For He Alone is as yet the First-begotten from the dead, after the resurrection of His Body, unto the right hand of the Father, the High Priest and Advocate of our prayers. The Head of the Church is above, that the rest of the members may follow at the end. If then “He maketh intercession for us,” above the height of all creatures, as it were on the mountain top, “He prayeth Alone.”

4. Meanwhile the ship which carries the disciples, that is, the Church, is tossed and shaken by the tempests of temptation; and the contrary wind, that is, the devil her adversary, rests not, and strives to hinder her from arriving at rest. But greater is “He who maketh intercession for us.” For in this our tossing to and fro in which we toil, He giveth us confidence in coming to us, and strengthening us; only let us not in our trouble throw ourselves out of the ship, and cast ourselves into the sea. For though the ship be in trouble, still it is the ship. She alone carrieth the disciples, and receiveth Christ. There is danger, it is true, in the sea; but without her there is instant perishing. Keep thyself therefore in the ship, and pray to God. For when all counsels fail, when even the rudder is unserviceable, and the very spreading of the sails is rather dangerous than useful, when all human help and strength is gone, there remains only for the sailors the earnest cry of entreaty, and pouring out of prayer to God. He then who grants to sailors to reach the haven, shall He so forsake His own Church, as not to bring it on to rest?

5. Yet, Brethren, this exceeding trouble is not in this ship, save only in the absence of the Lord. What! can he who is in the Church, have his Lord absent from him? When has he his Lord absent from him? When he is overcome by any lust. For as we find it said in a certain place in a figure, “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil:” and this is understood not of this visible sun which holds as it were the zenith of glory among the rest of the visible creation, and which can be seen equally by us and by the beasts; but of that Light which none but the pure hearts of the faithful see; as it is written, “That was the true Light, which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world.” For this light of the visible sun “lighteneth” even the minutest and smallest animals. Righteousness then and wisdom is that true light, which the mind ceases to

see, when it is overcome by the disordering of anger as by a cloud; and then, as it were, the sun goes down upon a man's wrath. So also in this ship, when Christ is absent, every one is shaken by his own storms, and iniquities, and evil desires. For, for example, the law tells thee, “Thou shall not bear false witness.” If thou observe the truth of witness, thou hast light in the soul; but if overcome by the desire of filthy lucre, thou hast determined in thy mind to speak false witness, thou wilt at once begin through Christ's absence to be troubled by the tempest, thou wilt be tossed to and fro by the waves of thy covetousness, thou wilt be endangered by the violent storm of thy lusts, and as it were through Christ's absence be well nigh sunk.

6. What cause of fear is there, lest the ship be diverted from her course, and take a backward direction; which happens when, abandoning the hope of heavenly rewards, desire turneth the helm, and a man is turned to those things which are seen and pass away! For whosoever is disturbed by the temptations of lusts, and nevertheless still looks into those things which are within, is not so utterly in a desperate state, if he beg pardon for his faults, and exert himself to overcome and surmount the fury of the raging sea. But he who is so turned aside from what he was, as to say in his heart, “God does not see me; for He does not think of me, nor care whether I sin;” he hath turned the helm, borne away by the storm, and driven back to the point he came from. For there are many thoughts in the hearts of men; and when Christ is absent, the ship is tossed by the waves of this world, and by tempests manifold.

7. Now the fourth watch of the night, is the end of the night; for each watch consists of three hours. It signifies then, that now in the end of the world the Lord is come to help, and is seen to walk upon the waters. For though this ship be tossed about by the storms of temptations, yet she sees her Glorified God walking above all the swellings of the sea; that is, above all the principalities of this world. For before it was said by an expression suited to the time of His Passion, when according to the flesh He showed forth an example of humility, that the waves of the sea vainly raged against Him, to which He yielded voluntarily for our sakes, that that prophecy, “I am come into the depths of the sea, and the floods overflow Me,” might be fulfilled.

For He did not repel the false witnesses, nor the savage shout of those that said, “Let Him be crucified.” He did not by His power repress the savage hearts and words of those furious men, but in patience endured them all. They did unto Him whatsoever they listed; because He “became obedient to death, even the death of the Cross.” But after that He was risen from the dead, that He might pray alone for His disciples placed in the Church as in a ship, and borne on in the faith of His Cross, as in wood, and in peril through this world’s temptations as through the waves of the sea; His Name began to be honoured even in this world in which He was despised, accused, and slain; that He who in the dispensation of His suffering in the flesh, “had come into the depths of the sea, and the floods had overwhelmed Him,” might now through the glory of His Name tread upon the necks of the proud as on the foaming waters. Just as we now see the Lord walking as it were upon the sea, under whose feet we behold the whole madness of this world subjected.

8. But to the perils of tempests are added also the errors of heretics; and there are not wanting those who so try the minds of them that are in the ship, as to say that Christ was not born of a Virgin, nor had a real body, but seemed to the eyes what He was not. And these opinions of heretics have sprung up now, when the Name of Christ is already glorified throughout all nations; when Christ, that is, is as it were now walking on the sea. The disciples in their trial said, “It is a phantom.” But He giveth us strength against these pestilent opinions by His own voice, “Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid.” For men in vain fear have conceived these opinions concerning Christ, looking at his Honour and Majesty; and they think that He could not be so born, who hath deserved to be so Glorified, fearing Him as it were “walking on the sea.” For by this action the excellency of His honour is figured; and so they think that He was a phantom. But when he saith, “It is I;” what else doth He say but that there is nothing in Him which does not really exist? Accordingly if He showeth His flesh, it is flesh; if bones, they are bones; if scars, they are scars. For “there was not in Him yea and nay, but in Him was yea,” as the Apostle says. Hence that expression, “Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid.” That is, do not so stand in awe of My Majesty, as to wish to take away the reality of My Being from Me. Though I walk upon the sea, though I have under My feet the elation

and the pride of this world, as the raging waves, yet have I appeared as very Man, yet does My Gospel proclaim the very truth concerning Me, that I was born of a Virgin, that I am the Word made flesh; that I said truly, “Handle Me, and see, for a spirit hath not bones as ye see Me have,” that they were true impresses of My wounds which the hands of the doubting Apostle handled. And therefore “It is I; be not afraid.”

9. But this, that the disciples thought He was a phantom, does not represent these only, does not designate them only who deny that the Lord had human flesh, and who sometimes by their blind perverseness disturb even those who are in the ship; but those also who think that the Lord has in anything spoken falsely, and who do not believe that the things which He has threatened the ungodly will come to pass. As though He were partly true, and partly false, appearing like a phantom in His words, as though He were something which is “yea and nay.” But they who understand His voice aright, who saith, “It is I; be not afraid;” believe at once all the words of the Lord, so that as they hope for the rewards He promises, so do they fear the punishments He threatens. For as that is true which He will say to those who are set on the right hand, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;” so is that true, which they on the left hand will hear, “Depart ye into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his Angels.” For this very opinion, by which men think that Christ’s threatenings against the unrighteous and the abandoned are not true, has arisen from this, that they see many nations and multitudes innumerable subject to His Name; so that hence Christ appears to them to be a phantom, because He walked upon the sea; that is, He seems to speak falsely in His threats of punishment, because, as it were, He cannot destroy such numberless people who are subject to His Name and honour. But let them hear Him, saying, “It is I;” let them not therefore “be afraid,” who believing Christ to be true in all things, not only seek after what He hath promised, but avoid also what He hath threatened; because though He walk upon the sea, that is, though all the nations of men in this world are subject unto Him; yet is He no phantom, and therefore He doth not speak falsely, when He saith, “Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

10. What then does Peter’s daring to come to Him on the waters also signify? For Peter generally stands for a figure of the Church. What else then do we think is meant by, “Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water;” but, Lord, if Thou art true, and in nothing speakest falsely, let Thy Church also be glorified in this world, because prophecy hath proclaimed this concerning Thee. Let her walk then on the waters, and so let her come to Thee, to whom it is said, “The rich among the people shall entreat Thy favour.” But since to the Lord the praise of men is no temptation, but men are ofttimes in the Church disordered by human praises and honours, and well nigh sunk by them; therefore did Peter tremble in the sea, terrified at the great violence of the storm. For who does not fear those words, “They who call thee blessed cause thee to err, and disturb the ways of thy feet?” And because the soul hath much wrestling against the eager desire of human praise, good is it in such peril to betake one’s self to prayer and earnest entreaty: lest haply he who is charmed with praise, be overwhelmed and sunk by blame. Let Peter cry out as he totters in the water, and say, “Lord, save me.” For the Lord will reach forth His hand, and though He chide, saying, “O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” wherefore didst thou not look straight forward upon Him to whom thou wast making thy way, and glory only in the Lord? Nevertheless He will snatch him from the waves, and will not suffer Him to perish, who confesses his own infirmity, and begs His help. But when they had received the Lord into the ship, and their faith was strengthened and all doubt removed, and the tempests of the sea assuaged, so that they were come to a firm and secure landing, they all worship Him, saying, “Of a truth Thou art the Son of God.” For this is that everlasting joy, where Truth made manifest, and the Word of God, and the Wisdom by which all things were made, and the exceeding height of His Mercy, are both known and loved.

SERMON XXVI

AGAIN ON MATT. XIV. 25: OF THE LORD WALKING ON THE WAVES OF THE SEA, AND OF PETER TOTTERING

1. The Gospel which has just been read touching the Lord Christ, who walked on the waters of the sea; and the Apostle Peter, who as he was walking, tottered through fear, and sinking in distrust, rose again by

confession, gives us to understand that the sea is the present world, and the Apostle Peter the type of the One Church. For Peter in the order of Apostles first, and in the love of Christ most forward, answers oftentimes alone for all the rest. Again, when the Lord Jesus Christ asked, whom men said that He was, and when the disciples gave the various opinions of men, and the Lord asked again and said, “But whom say ye that I am?” Peter answered, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” One for many gave the answer, Unity in many. Then said the Lord to Him, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonas: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven.” Then He added, “and I say unto thee.” As if He had said, “Because thou hast said unto Me, Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God;’ I also say unto thee, Thou art Peter.’“ For before he was called Simon. Now this name of Peter was given him by the Lord, and that in a figure, that he should signify the Church. For seeing that Christ is the rock (Petra), Peter is the Christian people. For the rock (Petra) is the original name. Therefore Peter is so called from the rock; not the rock from Peter; as Christ is not called Christ from the Christian, but the Christian from Christ. “Therefore,” he saith, “Thou art Peter; and upon this Rock” which thou hast confessed, upon this Rock which thou hast acknowledged, saying, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, will I build My Church;” that is upon Myself, the Son of the living God, “will I build My Church.” I will build thee upon Myself, not Myself upon thee.

2. For men who wished to be built upon men, said, “I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas,” who is Peter. But others who did not wish to be built upon Peter, but upon the Rock, said, “But I am of Christ.” And when the Apostle Paul ascertained that he was chosen, and Christ despised, he said, “Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” And, as not in the name of Paul, so neither in the name of Peter; but in the name of Christ: that Peter might be built upon the Rock, not the Rock upon Peter.

3. This same Peter therefore who had been by the Rock pronounced “blessed,” bearing the figure of the Church, holding the chief place in the Apostleship, a very little while after that he had heard that he was “blessed,” a very little while after that he had heard that he was “Peter,” a

very little while after that he had heard that he was to be "built upon the Rock," displeased the Lord when He had heard of His future Passion, for He had foretold His disciples that it was soon to be. He feared lest he should by death, lose Him whom he had confessed as the fountain of life. He was troubled, and said, "Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be to Thee." Spare Thyself, O God, I am not willing that Thou shouldest die. Peter said to Christ, I am not willing that Thou shouldest die; but Christ far better said, I am willing to die for thee. And then He forthwith rebuked him, whom He had a little before commended; and calleth him Satan, whom he had pronounced "blessed." "Get thee behind Me, Satan," he saith, "thou art an offence unto Me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." What would He have us do in our present state, who thus findeth fault because we are men? Would you know what He would have us do? Give ear to the Psalm; "I have said, Ye are gods, and ye are all the children of the Most High." But by savouring the things of men; "ye shall die like men." The very same Peter a little while before blessed, afterwards Satan, in one moment, within a few words! Thou wonderest at the difference of the names, mark the difference of the reasons of them. Why wonderest thou that he who was a little before blessed, is afterwards Satan? Mark the reason wherefore he is blessed. "Because flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." Therefore blessed, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee. For if flesh and blood revealed this to thee, it were of thine own; but because flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven, it is of Mine, not of thine own. Why of Mine? "Because all things that the Father hath are Mine." So then thou hast heard the cause, why he is "blessed," and why he is "Peter." But why was he that which we shudder at, and are loth to repeat, why, but because it was of thine own? "For thou savourest not the things which be of God, but those that be of men."

4. Let us, looking at ourselves in this member of the Church, distinguish what is of God, and what of ourselves. For then we shall not totter, then shall we be founded on the Rock, shall be fixed and firm against the winds, and storms, and streams, the temptations, I mean, of this present world. Yet see this Peter, who was then our figure; now he trusts, and now he totters; now he confesses the Undying, and now he fears lest He should die.

Wherefore? because the Church of Christ hath both strong and weak ones; and cannot be without either strong or weak; whence the Apostle Paul says, “Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.” In that Peter said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” he represents the strong: but in that he totters, and would not that Christ should suffer, in fearing death for Him, and not acknowledging the Life, he represents the weak ones of the Church. In that one Apostle then, that is, Peter, in the order of Apostles first and chiefest, in whom the Church was figured, both sorts were to be represented, that is, both the strong and weak; because the Church doth not exist without them both.

5. And hence also is that which was just now read, “Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water.” For I cannot do this in myself, but in Thee. He acknowledged what he had of himself, and what of Him, by whose will he believed that he could do that, which no human weakness could do. Therefore, “if it be Thou, bid me;” because when thou biddest, it will be done. What I cannot do by taking it upon myself, Thou canst do by bidding me. And the Lord said “Come.” And without any doubting, at the word of Him who bade him, at the presence of Him who sustained, at the presence of Him who guided him, without any delay, Peter leaped down into the water, and began to walk. He was able to do what the Lord was doing, not in himself, but in the Lord. “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.” What no one can do in Paul, no one in Peter, no one in any other of the Apostles, this can he do in the Lord. Therefore well said Paul by a wholesome despising of himself, and commending of Him; “Was Paul crucified for you, or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” So then, ye are not in me, but together with me; not under me, but under Him.

6. Therefore Peter walked on the water by the bidding of the Lord, knowing that he could not have this power of himself. By faith he had strength to do what human weakness could not do. These are the strong ones of the Church. Mark this, hear, understand, and act accordingly. For we must not deal with the strong on any other principle than this, that so they should become weak; but thus we must deal with the weak, that they may become strong. But the presuming on their own strength keeps many back from

strength. No one will have strength from God, but he who feels himself weak of himself. “God setteth apart a spontaneous rain for His inheritance.” Why do you, who know what I was about to say, anticipate me? Let your quickness be moderated, that the slowness of the rest may follow. This I said, and I say it again; hear it, receive it, and act on this principle. No one is made strong by God, but he who feels himself weak of his own self. And therefore a “spontaneous rain,” as the Psalm says, “spontaneous;” not of our deserts, but “spontaneous.” “A spontaneous rain” therefore “God setteth apart for his inheritance;” for “it was weak; but Thou hast perfected it.” Because Thou “hast set apart for it a spontaneous rain,” not looking to men’s deserts, but to Thine own grace and mercy. This inheritance then was weakened, and acknowledged its own weakness in itself, that it might be strong in Thee. It would not be strengthened, if it were not weak, that by Thee it might be “perfected” in Thee.

7. See Paul a small portion of this inheritance, see him in weakness, who said, “I am not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.” Why then art thou an Apostle? “By the grace of God I am what I am. I am not meet, but by the grace of God I am what I am.” Paul was “weak,” but Thou hast “perfected” him. But now because by “the grace of God he is what he is,” look what follows; “And His grace in me was not in vain, but I laboured more abundantly than they all.” Take heed lest thou lose by presumption what thou hast attained through weakness. This is well, very well; that “I am not meet to be called an Apostle. By His grace I am what I am, and His grace in me was not in vain:” all most excellent. But, “I laboured more abundantly than they all;” thou hast begun, it would seem, to ascribe to thyself what a little before thou hadst given to God. Attend and follow on; “Yet not I, but the grace of God with me.” Well! thou weak one; thou shalt be exalted in exceeding strength, seeing thou art not unthankful. Thou art the very same Paul, little in thyself; and great in the Lord. Thou art he who didst thrice beseech the Lord, that “the thorn of the flesh, the messenger of Satan, by whom thou wast buffeted, might be taken away from thee.” And what was said to thee? what didst thou hear when thou madest this petition? “My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” For he was “weak,” but Thou didst “perfect” him.

8. So Peter also said, “Bid me come unto Thee on the water.” I who dare this am but a man, but it is no man whom I beseech. Let the God-man bid, that man may be able to do what man cannot do. “Come,” said He. And He went down, and began to walk on the water; and Peter was able, because the Rock had bidden him. Lo, what Peter was in the Lord; what was he in himself? “When he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried out, Lord, I perish, save me.” When he looked for strength from the Lord, he had strength from the Lord; as a man he tottered, but he returned to the Lord. “If I said, my foot hath slipped” (they are the words of a Psalm, the notes of a holy song; and if we acknowledge them they are our words too; yea, if we will, they are ours also). “If I said my foot hath slipped.” How slipped, except because it was mine own. And what follows? “Thy mercy, Lord, helped me.” Not mine own strength, but Thy mercy. For will God forsake him as he totters, whom He heard when calling upon Him? Where then is that, “Who hath called upon God, and hath been forsaken by Him?” where again is that, “Whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord, shall be delivered.” Immediately reaching forth the help of His right hand, He lifted him up as he was sinking, and rebuked his distrust; “O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” Once thou didst trust in Me, hast thou now doubted of Me?

9. Well, brethren, my sermon must be ended. Consider the world to be the sea; the wind is boisterous, and there is a mighty tempest. Each man’s peculiar lust is his tempest. Thou dost love God; thou walkest upon the sea, and under thy feet is the swelling of the world. Thou dost love the world, it will swallow thee up. It skilleth only how to devour its lovers, not to carry them. But when thy heart is tossed about by lust, in order that thou mayest get the better of thy lust, call upon the Divinity of Christ. Think ye that the wind is then contrary, when there is this life’s adversity? For so when there are wars, when there is tumult, when there is famine, when there is pestilence, when even to every individual man his private calamity arriveth, then the wind is thought to be contrary, then it is thought that God must be called upon. But when the world wears her smile of temporal happiness, it is as if there were no contrary wind. But do not ask upon this matter the tranquil state of the times: ask only your own lust. See if there be tranquillity within thee: see if there be no inner wind which overturns thee;

see to this. There needs great virtue to struggle with happiness, lest this very happiness allure, corrupt, and overthrow thee. There needs, I say, great virtue to struggle with happiness, and great happiness not to be overcome by happiness. Learn then to tread upon the world; remember to trust in Christ. And "if thy foot have slipped;" if thou totter, if some things there are which thou canst not overcome, if thou begin to sink, say, "Lord, I perish, save me." Say, "I perish," that thou perish not. For He only can deliver thee from the death of the body, who died in the body for thee. Let us turn to the Lord, etc.

SERMON XXVII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XV. 21,"JESUS WENT OUT THENCE, AND WITHDREW INTO THE PARTS OF TYRE AND SIDON. AND BEHOLD, A CANAANITISH WOMAN," ETC

1. This woman of Canaan, who has just now been brought before us in the lesson of the Gospel, shows us an example of humility, and the way of godliness; shows us how to rise from humility unto exaltation. Now she was, as it appears, not of the people of Israel, of whom came the Patriarchs, and Prophets, and the parents of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh; of whom the Virgin Mary herself was, who was the Mother of Christ. This woman then was not of this people; but of the Gentiles. For, as we have heard, the Lord "departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts," and with the greatest earnestness begged of Him the mercy to heal her daughter, "who was grievously vexed with a devil." Tyre and Sidon were not cities of the people of Israel, but of the Gentiles; though they bordered on that people. So then, as being eager to obtain mercy she cried out, and boldly knocked; and He made as though He heard her not, not to the end that mercy might be refused her, but that her desire might be enkindled; and not only that her desire might be enkindled, but that, as I have said before, her humility might be set forth. Therefore did she cry, while the Lord was as though He heard her not, but was ordering in silence what He was about to do. The disciples besought the Lord for her, and said, "Send her away; for she crieth after us." And He said, "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

2. Here arises a question out of these words; “If He was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, how came we from among the Gentiles into Christ’s fold? What is the meaning of the so deep economy of this mystery, that whereas the Lord knew the purpose of His coming—that He might have a Church in all nations, He said that He was not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel’?” We understand then by this that it behoved Him to manifest His Bodily presence, His Birth, the exhibition of His miracles, and the power of His Resurrection, among that people: that so it had been ordained, so set forth from the beginning, so predicted, and so fulfilled; that Christ Jesus was to come to the nation of the Jews, to be seen and slain, and to gain from among them those whom He foreknew. For that people was not wholly condemned, but sifted. There was among them a great quantity of chaff, but there was also the hidden worth of the grain; there was among them that which was to be burnt, there was among them also that wherewith the barn was to be filled. For whence came the Apostles? whence came Peter? whence the rest?

3. Whence was Paul himself, who was first called Saul? That is, first proud, afterwards humble? For when he was Saul, his name was derived from Saul: now Saul was a proud king; and in his reign he persecuted the humble David. So when he who was afterwards Paul, was Saul, he was proud, at that time a persecutor of the innocent, at that time a waster of the Church. For he had received letters from the chief priests (burning as he was with zeal for the synagogue, and persecuting the Christian name), that he might show up whatever Christians he should find, to be punished. While he is on his way, while he is breathing out slaughter, while he is thirsting for blood, he is thrown to the ground by the voice of Christ from heaven the persecutor, he is raised up the preacher. In him was fulfilled that which is written in the Prophet, “I will wound and I will heal.” For that only in man doth God wound, which lifteth itself up against God. He is no unkind physician who opens the swelling, who cuts, or cauterizes the corrupted part. He gives pain, it is true; but he only gives pain, that he may bring the patient on to health. He gives pain; but if he did not, he would do no good. Christ then by one word laid Saul low, and raised up Paul; that is, He laid low the proud, and raised up the humble. For what was the reason of his change of name, that whereas he was afore called Saul, he chose afterwards

to be called Paul; but that he acknowledged in himself that the name of Saul when he was a persecutor, had been a name of pride? He chose therefore a humble name; to be called Paul, that is, the least. For Paul is, “the least.” Paul is nothing else but little. And now glorying in this name, and giving us a lesson of humility, he says, “I am the least of the Apostles.” Whence then, whence was he, but of the people of the Jews? Of them were the other Apostles, of them was Paul, of them were they whom the same Paul mentions, as having seen the Lord after His resurrection. For he says, “That He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.”

4. Of this people too, of the people of the Jews, were they, who when Peter was speaking, setting forth the Passion, and Resurrection, and Divinity of Christ (after that the Holy Ghost had been received, when all they on whom the Holy Ghost had come, spake with the tongues of all nations), being pricked in spirit as they heard him, sought counsel for their salvation, understanding as they did that they were guilty of the Blood of Christ; because they had crucified, and slain Him, in whose name though slain by them they saw such great miracles wrought; and saw the presence of the Holy Ghost. And so seeking counsel they received for answer; “Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and your sins shall be forgiven you.” Who should despair of the forgiveness of his sins, when the crime of killing Christ was forgiven to those who were guilty of it? They were converted from among this people of the Jews; were converted, and baptized. They came to the Lord’s table, and in faith drank that Blood, which in their fury they had shed. Now in what sort they were converted, how decidedly, and how perfectly, the Acts of the Apostles show. “For they sold all that they possessed, and laid the prices of their things at the Apostles’ feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need; and no man said that ought was his own, but they had all things common.” And, “They were,” as it is written, “of one heart and of one soul.” Lo here are the sheep of whom He said, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” For to them He exhibited His Presence, for them in the midst of their violence against Him He prayed as He was being crucified, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” The Physician understood how those frenzied men were in their

madness putting the Physician to death, and in putting their Physician to death, though they knew it not, were preparing a medicine for themselves. For by the Lord so put to death are all we cured, by His Blood redeemed, by the Bread of His Body delivered from famine. This Presence then did Christ exhibit to the Jews. And so He said, “I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel;” that to them He might exhibit the Presence of His body; not that He might disregard, and pass over the sheep which He had among the Gentiles.

5. For to the Gentiles He went not Himself, but sent His disciples. And in this was fulfilled what the Prophet said; “A people whom I have not known hath served Me.” See how deep, how clear, how express the prophecy is; “a people whom I have not known,” that is, to whom I have not exhibited My Presence, “hath served Me.” How? It goes on to say, “By the hearing of the ear they have obeyed Me:” that is, they have believed, not by seeing, but by hearing. Therefore have the Gentiles the greater praise. For the others saw and slew Him; the Gentiles heard and believed. Now it was to call and gather together the Gentiles, that that might be fulfilled which we have just now chanted, “Gather us from among the Gentiles, that we may confess to Thy Name, and glory in Thy praise,” that the Apostle Paul was sent. He, the least, made great, not by himself, but by Him whom he once persecuted, was sent to the Gentiles, from a robber become a shepherd, from a wolf a sheep. He, the least Apostle, was sent to the Gentiles, and laboured much among the Gentiles, and through him the Gentiles believed. His Epistles are the witnesses.

6. Of this you have a very sacred figure in the Gospel also. A daughter of a ruler of the synagogue was really dead, and her father besought the Lord, that He would go to her; he had left her sick, and in extreme danger. The Lord set out to visit and heal the sick; in the mean time it was announced that she was dead, and it was told the father; “Thy daughter is dead, trouble not the Master.” But the Lord who knew that He could raise the dead, did not deprive the despairing father of hope, and said to him, “Fear not: only believe.” So he set out to the maiden; and in the way a certain woman, who had suffered from an issue of blood, and in her lengthened illness had spent to no purpose all that she had upon physicians, pressed herself in, how she

could, amongst the crowds. When she touched the border of His garment, she was made whole. And the Lord said, “Who touched Me?” The disciples who knew not what had taken place, and saw that He was thronged by the multitudes, and that He was troubling Himself about one single woman who had touched Him gently, answered in astonishment, “The multitudes press Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me? And He said, Somebody hath touched Me? for the other press, she hath touched. The many then rudely press the Body of Christ, few touch it healthfully. “Somebody,” saith He, “hath touched Me, for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she fell down at His feet,” and confessed what had taken place. After this He set out again, and arrived whither He was going, and raised to life the young daughter of the ruler of the synagogue who was found to be dead.

7. This was a literal fact, and was fulfilled as it is related; but nevertheless these very things which were done by the Lord had some further signification, being (if we may so say) a sort of visible and significative words. And this is especially plain, in that place where He sought fruit on the tree out of season, and because He found none, dried up the tree by His curse. Unless this action be regarded as a figure, there is no good meaning in it; first to have sought fruit on that tree when it was not the season for fruit on any tree; and then even if it were now the time of fruit, what fault in the tree was it to have none? But because it signified, that He seeketh not for leaves only, but for fruit also, that is, not for the words only, but for the deeds of men, by drying up that tree whereon he found only leaves, he signified their punishment who can speak good things, but will not do them. And so it is in this place also. For surely there is a mystery in it. He who foreknoweth all things saith, “Who touched Me?” The Creator maketh Himself like one who is ignorant; and He asketh, who not only knew this, but who even foreknew all other things. Doubtless there is something which Christ would speak to us in this significant mystery.

8. That daughter of the ruler of the synagogue was a figure of the people of the Jews, for whose sake Christ had come, who said, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But the woman who suffered from the issue of blood, figured the Church from among the Gentiles, to which

Christ was not sent in His bodily presence. He was going to the former, He was intent on her recovery; meanwhile the latter runs to meet Him, touches His border as though He knew it not; that is, she is healed by Him who is in some sense absent. He saith, “Who touched Me?” as though He would say; I do not know this people; “A people whom I have not known hath served Me. Some one hath touched Me. For I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me;” that is, that My Gospel hath gone out and filled the whole world. Now it is the border that is touched, a small and outside part of the garment. Consider the Apostles as it were the garment of Christ. Among them Paul was the border; that is, the last and least. For he said of himself that he was both; “I am the least of the Apostles.” For he was called after them all, he believed after them all, he healed more than they all. The Lord was not sent but “unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But because a “people whom He had not known, was also to serve Him, and to obey Him in the hearing of the ear,” He made mention of them too when He was among the others. For the same Lord said in a certain place, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, that there may be one fold and one shepherd.”

9. Of these was this woman; therefore she was not refused, but only put off. “I am not sent,” saith He, “but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” And she was instant in her cries: she persevered, she knocked, as if she had already heard, “Ask, and receive; seek, and thou shalt find; knock, and it shall be opened unto thee.” She kept on, she knocked. For so the Lord when He spake these words, “Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;” had also said before, “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you;” that is, lest after despising your pearls, they should even ill use you. Cast not therefore before them what they despise.

10. And how distinguish we (as might be answered) who are “swine,” and who are “dogs”? This has been shown in the case of this woman. For He only answered to her entreaties, “It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs.” Thou art a dog, thou art one of the Gentiles, thou worshippest idols. But for dogs what is so proper as to lick stones? “It is

not” therefore “meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs.” Had she retired after these words, she had gone away as she had come, a dog; but by knocking she was made of a dog one of human kind. For she persevered in asking, and from that reproach as it were she manifested her humility, and obtained mercy. For she was not excited, nor incensed, because she was called a dog, as she asked the blessing, and prayed for mercy, but she said, “Truth, Lord;” “Thou hast called me a dog, and truly a dog I am, I acknowledge my name: it is the Truth that speaks: but I ought not on that account to be refused this blessing. Verily I am a dog; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.’ It is but a moderate and a small blessing I desire; I do not press to the table, I only seek for the crumbs.”

11. See, Brethren, how the value of humility is set before us! The Lord had called her a dog; and she did not say, “I am not,” but she said, “I am.” And because she acknowledged herself to be a dog, immediately the Lord said, “Woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou hast asked.” Thou hast acknowledged thyself to be a dog, I now acknowledge thee to be of human kind. “O woman, great is thy faith;” thou hast asked, and sought, and knocked; receive, find, be it opened unto thee. See, Brethren, how in this woman who was a Canaanite, that is, who came from among the Gentiles, and was a type, that is a figure, of the Church, the grace of humility has been eminently set before us. For the Jewish nation, to the end that it might be deprived of the grace of the Gospel, was puffed up with pride, because to them it had been vouchsafed to receive the Law, because out of this nation the Patriarchs had proceeded, the Prophets had sprung, Moses, the servant of God, had done the great miracles in Egypt which we have heard of in the Psalm, had led the people through the Red Sea, when the waters retired, and had received the Law, which he gave to this people. This was that whereupon the Jewish nation was lifted up, and through this very pride it happened that they were not willing to humble themselves to Christ the author of humility, and the restrainer of proud swelling, to God the Physician, who, being God, for this cause became Man, that man might know himself to be but man. O mighty remedy! If this remedy cure not pride, I know not what can cure it. He is God, and is made Man; He lays aside His Divinity, that is, in a manner sequestrates, hides, that is, what was

His Own, and appears only in that He had taken to Him. Being God He is made man: and man will not acknowledge himself to be man, that is, will not acknowledge himself to be mortal, will not acknowledge himself to be frail, will not acknowledge himself to be a sinner, will not acknowledge himself to be sick, that so at least as sick he may seek the physician; but what is more perilous still, he fancies himself in sound health.

12. So then for this reason that people did not come to Him, that is by reason of pride; and the natural branches are said to be broken off from the olive tree, that is from that people founded by the Patriarchs; in other words, the Jews are for their punishment justly barren through the spirit of pride; and the wild olive is grafted into that olive tree. The wild olive tree is the people of the Gentiles. So says the Apostle, “that the wild olive tree is grafted into the good olive tree, but the natural branches are broken off.” Because of pride they were broken off: and the wild olive tree grafted in because of humility. This humility did the woman show forth when she said, “Truth, Lord,” “I am a dog, I desire only the crumbs.” In this humility also did the Centurion please Him; who when he desired that his servant might be healed by the Lord, and the Lord said, “I will come and heal him,” answered, “Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof, but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof.” He did not receive Him into his house, but he had received Him already in his heart. The more humble, the more capacious, and the more full. For the hills drive back the water, but the valleys are filled by it. And what then, what said the Lord to those who followed Him after that he had said, “I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof”? “Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel;” that is, in that people to whom I came, “I have not found so great faith.” And whence great? Great from being the least, that is, great from humility. “I have not found so great faith;” like a grain of mustard seed, which by how much smaller it is, by so much the more burning is it. Therefore did the Lord at once graft the wild olive into the good olive tree. He did it then when He said, “Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.”

13. Lastly, mark what follows. “Therefore,”—that is, because “I have not found so great faith in Israel,” that is, so great humility with faith, —”Therefore I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.” “Shall sit,” that is, “shall rest.” For we must not form notions of carnal banquets there, or desire any such thing in that kingdom, as to change not vices for virtues, but only to make an exchange of vices. For it is one thing to desire the kingdom of heaven for the sake of wisdom and life eternal; another, for the sake of earthly felicity, as though there we should have it in more abundant and greater measure. If thou think to be rich in that kingdom, thou dost not cut off, but only changest desire; and yet rich thou wilt really be, and in none other place but there wilt thou be rich; for here thy want gathers together the abundance of things. Why have rich men much? Because they want much. A greater want heaps together as it were greater means; there want itself shall die. Then thou shalt be truly rich, when thou shalt be in want of nothing. For now thou art not surely rich, and an Angel poor, who has not horses, and carriages, and servants. Why? Because he does not want any of these: because in proportion to his greater strength, is his want the less. Therefore there there are riches, and the true riches. Figure not to yourselves then banquets of this earth in that place. For the banquets of this world are daily medicines; they are necessary for a kind of sickness we have, wherewith we are born. This sickness every one is sensible of, when the hour for refreshment is passed. Wouldest thou see how great a sickness this is, that as an acute fever would be fatal in seven days? Do not fancy thyself then to be in health. Immortality will be health. For this present is only one long sickness. Because thou dost support thy disease by daily medicines; thou fanciest thyself in health; take away the medicines, and then see what thou canst do.

14. For from the moment we are born, we must needs be dying. This disease must needs bring us to death. This indeed physicians say when they examine their patients. For instance, “This man has the dropsy, he is dying; this disease cannot be cured. This man has the leprosy: this disease too cannot be cured. He is in a consumption. Who can cure this? He must needs die, he must perish.” See, the physician has now pronounced that he is in a consumption; that he cannot but die; and yet sometimes the dropsical

patient does not die of his disease, and the leprous does not die of his, nor the consumptive patient of his; but now it is absolutely necessary that every one who is born should die of this. He dies of it, he cannot do otherwise. This the physician and the unskilled both pronounce upon; and though he die somewhat more slowly, does he on that account not die? Where then is there true health, except where there is true immortality? But if it be true immortality, and no corruption, no wasting, what need will there be there of nourishment? Therefore, when you hear it said, “They shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;” get not your body, but your soul in order. There shall thou be filled; and this inner man has its proper food. In relation to it is it said, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” And so truly filled shall they be that they shall hunger no more.

15. Therefore did the Lord graft in at once the wild olive tree, when He said, “Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven;” that is, they shall be grafted into the good olive tree. For Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, are the roots of this olive tree; “but the children of the kingdom,” that is, the unbelieving Jews, “shall go away into outer darkness.” The “natural branches shall be broken off,” that the “wild olive tree may be grafted in.” Now why did the natural branches deserve to be cut off, except for pride? why the wild olive tree to be grafted in, except for humility? Whence also that woman said, “Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.” And thereupon she hears, “O woman, great is thy faith.” And so again that centurion, “I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof.” “Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.” Let us then learn, or let us hold fast, humility. If we have it not yet, let us learn it; if we have it, let us not lose it. If we have it not yet, let us have it, that we may be grafted in; if we have it already, let us hold it fast, that we may not be cut off.

SERMON XXVIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XVII. 1, “AFTER SIX DAYS JESUS TAKETH WITH HIM PETER, AND JAMES, AND JOHN HIS BROTHER,” ETC

1. We must now look into and treat of that vision which the Lord showed on the mount. For it is this of which He had said, “Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man in His Kingdom.” Then began the passage which has just been read. “When He had said this, after six days He took three disciples, Peter, and James, and John, and went up into a mountain.” These three were those “some,” of whom He had said, “There be some here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man in His kingdom.” There is no small difficulty here. For that mount was not the whole extent of His kingdom. What is a mountain to Him who possesseth the heavens? Which we not only read He doth, but in some sort see it with the eyes of the heart. He calleth that His kingdom, which in many places He calleth the “kingdom of heaven.” Now the kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of the saints. “For the heavens declare the glory of God.” And of these heavens it is immediately said in the Psalm, “There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their sound is gone out through all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.” Whose words, but of the heavens? And of the Apostles, and all faithful preachers of the word of God. These heavens therefore shall reign together with Him who made the heavens. Now consider what was done, that this might be made manifest.

2. The Lord Jesus Himself shone bright as the sun; His raiment became white as the snow; and Moses and Elias talked with Him. Jesus Himself indeed shone as the sun, signifying that “He is the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” What this sun is to the eyes of the flesh, that is He to the eyes of the heart; and what that is to the flesh of men, that is He to their hearts. Now His raiment is His Church. For if the raiment be not held together by him who puts it on, it will fall off. Of this raiment, Paul was as it were a sort of last border. For he says himself, “I am the least of the Apostles.” And in another place, “I am the last of the Apostles.” Now in a garment the border is the last and least part. Wherefore as that woman which suffered from an issue of blood, when she had touched the Lord’s border was made whole, so the Church which came from out of the Gentiles, was made whole by the preaching of Paul. What wonder if the Church is signified by white raiment, when you hear the Prophet Isaiah saying, “Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow”?

Moses and Elias, that is, the Law and the Prophets, what avail they, except they converse with the Lord? Except they give witness to the Lord, who would read the Law or the Prophets? Mark how briefly the Apostle expresses this; “For by the Law is the knowledge of sin; but now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested:” behold the sun; “being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,” behold the shining of the Sun.

3. Peter sees this, and as a man savouring the things of men says, “Lord, it is good for us to be here.” He had been wearied with the multitude, he had found now the mountain’s solitude; there he had Christ the Bread of the soul. What! should he depart thence again to travail and pains, possessed of a holy love to Godward, and thereby of a good conversation? He wished well for himself; and so he added, “If Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.” To this the Lord made no answer; but notwithstanding Peter was answered. “For while he yet spake, a bright cloud came, and overshadowed them.” He desired three tabernacles; the heavenly answer showed him that we have One, which human judgment desired to divide. Christ, the Word of God, the Word of God in the Law, the Word in the Prophets. Why, Peter, dost thou seek to divide them? It were more fitting for thee to join them. Thou seekest three; understand that they are but One.

4. As the cloud then overshadowed them, and in a way made one tabernacle for them, “a voice also sounded out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son.” Moses was there; Elias was there; yet it was not said, “These are My beloved sons.” For the Only Son is one thing; adopted sons another. He was singled out in whom the Law and the prophets glorified. “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear Him!” Because ye have heard Him in the Prophets, and ye have heard Him in the Law. And where have ye not heard Him? “When they heard this, they fell” to the earth. See then in the Church is exhibited to us the Kingdom of God. Here is the Lord, here the Law and the Prophets; but the Lord as the Lord; the Law in Moses, Prophecy in Elias; only they as servants and as ministers. They as vessels: He as the fountain: Moses and the Prophets spake, and wrote; but when they poured out, they were filled from Him.

5. But the Lord stretched out His hand, and raised them as they lay. And then “they saw no man, save Jesus only.” What does this mean? When the Apostle was being read, you heard, “For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.” And “tongues shall cease,” when that which we now hope for and believe shall come. In then that they fell to the earth, they signified that we die, for it was said to the flesh, “Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return.” But when the Lord raised them up, He signified the resurrection. After the resurrection, what is the Law to thee? what Prophecy? Therefore neither Moses nor Elias is seen. He only remaineth to thee, “Who in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” He remaineth to thee, “that God may be all in all.” Moses will be there; but now no more the Law. We shall see Elias there too; but now no more the Prophet. For the Law and the Prophets have only given witness to Christ, that it behoved Him to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day, and to enter into His glory. And in this glory is fulfilled what He hath promised to them that love Him, “He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him.” And as if it were said, What wilt Thou give him, seeing Thou wilt love him? “And I will manifest Myself unto him.” Great gift! great promise! God doth not reserve for thee as a reward anything of His own, but Himself. O thou covetous one; why doth not what Christ promiseth suffice thee? Thou dost seem to thyself to be rich; yet if thou have not God, what hast thou? Another is poor, yet if he hath God, what hath he not?

6. Come down, Peter: thou wast desiring to rest on the mount; come down, “preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” Endure, labour hard, bear thy measure of torture; that thou mayest possess what is meant by the white raiment of the Lord, through the brightness and the beauty of an upright labouring in charity. For when the Apostle was being read we heard in praise of charity, “She seeketh not her own. She seeketh not her own;” since she gives what she possesses. In another place there is more danger in the expression, if you do not understand it right. For the Apostle, charging the faithful members of Christ after this rule of charity, says, “Let no man seek his own, but another’s.” For on hearing this, covetousness is ready with its deceits, that in a matter of business under pretence of seeking another’s, it

may defraud a man, and so, “seek not his own, but another’s.” But let covetousness restrain itself, let justice come forth; so let us hear and understand. It is to charity that it is said, “Let no man seek his own, but another’s.” Now, O thou covetous one, if thou wilt still resist, and twist the precept rather to this point, that thou shouldest covet what is another’s; then lose what is thine own. But as I know thee well, thou dost wish to have both thine own and another’s. Thou wilt commit fraud that thou mayest have what is another’s; submit then to robbery that thou mayest lose thine own. Thou dost not wish to seek thine own, but then thou takest away what is another’s. Now this if thou do, thou doest not well. Hear and listen, thou covetous one: the Apostle explains to thee in another place more clearly this that he said, “Let no man seek his own, but another’s.” He says of himself, “Not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.” This Peter understood not yet when he desired to live on the mount with Christ. He was reserving this for thee, Peter, after death. But now He saith Himself, “Come down, to labour in the earth; in the earth to serve, to be despised, and crucified in the earth. The Life came down, that He might be slain; the Bread came down, that He might hunger; the Way came down, that life might be wearied in the way; the Fountain came down, that He might thirst; and dost thou refuse to labour? Seek not thine own.’ Have charity, preach the truth; so shall thou come to eternity, where thou shalt find security.”

SERMON XXIX

AGAIN ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XVII., WHERE JESUS SHOWED HIMSELF ON THE MOUNT TO HIS THREE DISCIPLES

1. We heard when the Holy Gospel was being read of the great vision on the mount, in which Jesus showed Himself to the three disciples, Peter, James, and John. “His face did shine as the sun:” this is a figure of the shining of the Gospel. “His raiment was white as the snow:” this is a figure of the purity of the Church, to which it was said by the Prophet, “Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow.” Elias and Moses were talking with Him; because the grace of the Gospel receives witness from the Law and the Prophets. The Law is represented in Moses, the Prophets in Elias; to speak briefly. For there are the mercies of God vouchsafed through

a holy Martyr to be rehearsed. Let us give ear. Peter desired three tabernacles to be made, one for Moses, one for Elias, and one for Christ. The solitude of the mountain had charms for him; he had been wearied with the tumult of the world's business. But why sought he three tabernacles, but because he knew not as yet the unity of the Law, and of Prophecy, and of the Gospel? Lastly, he was corrected by the cloud, "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them." Lo, the cloud hath made one tabernacle; wherefore didst thou seek for three? "And a voice came out of the cloud, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him." Elias speaketh; but "hear Him;" "Moses speaketh; but "hear Him." The Prophets speak, the Law speaketh; but "hear Him," who is the voice of the Law, and the tongue of the Prophets. He spake in them, and when He vouchsafed so to do, He appeared in His own person. "Hear ye Him:" let us then hear Him. When the Gospel spake, think it was the cloud: from thence hath the voice sounded out to us. Let us hear Him; that is, let us do what He saith, let us hope for what He hath promised.

SERMON XXX

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XVII. 19, "WHY COULD NOT WE CAST IT OUT"? ETC., AND ON PRAYER

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ reproved unbelief even in His own disciples, as we heard just now when the Gospel was being read. For when they had said, "Why could not we cast him out?" He answered, "Because of your unbelief." If the Apostles were unbelievers, who is a believer? What must the lambs do, if the rams totter? Yet the mercy of the Lord did not disdain them in their unbelief; but reproved, nourished, perfected, crowned them. For they themselves, as mindful of their own weakness, said to Him, as we read in a certain place in the Gospel, "Lord, increase our faith. Lord," say they, "increase our faith." The knowing that they had a deficiency, was the first advantage; a greater happiness still, to know who it was of whom they were asking. "Lord," say they, "increase our faith." See, if they did not bring their hearts as it were to the fountain, and knocked that that might be opened to them, out of which they might fill them. For He would that men should knock at Him, not that He might repel those that knock, but that He might exercise those who long.

2. For do you think, Brethren, that God doth not know what is needful for you? He knoweth and preventeth our desires, who knoweth our want. And so when He taught His disciples to pray, and warned them not to use many words in prayer, He saith, “Use not many words; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him.” Now the Lord saith something different from this. What is this? Because He misliked that we should use many words in prayer, He said to us, “When ye pray, use not many words; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him.” If our “Father knoweth what things we have need of before we ask Him,” why do we use even few words? What is the use of prayer at all, if “our Father knoweth” already “what things we have need of”? He saith to one, Do not make thy prayer to Me at great length; for I know what is needful for thee. If so, Lord, why should I so much as pray at all? Thou wouldest not that I should use long prayers, yea rather Thou dost even bid me to use near none at all. And then what meaneth that precept in another place? For He who saith, “Use not many words in prayer,” saith in another place, “Ask, and it shall be given you.” And that thou mightest not think that this first precept to ask was given cursorily, He added, “Seek, and ye shall find.” And that thou mightest not think that this too was cursorily given, see what He added further, see with what He finished. “Knock, and it shall be opened unto you:” see what He added. He would have thee ask that thou mayest receive, and seek that thou mayest find, and knock that thou mayest enter in. Seeing then that our Father knoweth already what is needful for us, how and why do we ask? why seek? why knock? why weary ourselves in asking, and seeking, and knocking, to instruct Him who knoweth already? And in another place the words of the Lord are, “Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” If men “ought always to pray,” how doth He say, “Use not many words”? How can I always pray, if I so quickly make an end? Here Thou biddest me to finish quickly; there “always to pray and not to faint:” what doth this mean? Now that thou mayest understand this, “ask, seek, knock.” For for this cause is it closed, not to shut thee out, but to exercise thee. Therefore, brethren, ought we to exhort to prayer, both ourselves and you. For other hope have we none amid the manifold evils of this present world, than to knock in prayer, to believe and to maintain the belief firm in the heart, that thy Father only doth not give thee what He knoweth is not expedient for thee. For thou knowest what thou dost desire;

He knoweth what is good for thee. Imagine thyself under a physician, and in weak health, as is the very truth; for all this life of ours is a weakness; and a long life is nothing else but a prolonged weakness. Imagine thyself then to be sick under the physician’s hand. Thou hast a desire to ask thy physician leave to drink a draught of fresh wine. Thou art not prohibited from asking, for it may chance to do thee no harm, or even good to receive it. Do not then hesitate to ask; ask, hesitate not; but if thou receive not, do not take it to heart. Now if thou wouldest act thus in the hands of a man, the physician of the body, how much more in the hands of God, who is the Physician, the Creator, and Restorer, both of thy body and soul?

3. Wherefore, see how the Lord in this passage exhorted His disciples to prayer, when He said, “Ye could not cast out this devil because of your unbelief.” For then exhorting them to prayer He ended thus; “this kind is not cast out but by prayer and fasting.” If a man must pray, to cast out devils from another, how much more to cast out his own covetousness? how much more to cast out his own drunkenness? how much more to cast out his own luxuriousness? how much more to cast out his own uncleanness? How many things in a man are there, which if they are persevered in, allow of no admission into the kingdom of heaven! Consider, Brethren, how a physician is entreated for the preservation of temporal health, how, if any one is desperately ill, is he ashamed or slow to throw himself at a man’s feet? to bathe in tears the footsteps of any very able chief physician? And what if the physician say to him, “Thou canst not else be cured, except I bind thee, and use the fire and knife”? He will answer,” Do what thou wilt, only cure me.” With what eagerness does he long for the health of a few days, fleeting as a vapour, that for it he is content to be bound, and submit to the fire, and knife, and to be watched, that he neither eat nor drink what, or when, he pleases! All this he will endure, that he may die a little later; and yet he will not endure ever so little, that he may never die. If God, who is the Heavenly Physician over us, saith to thee, “Wilt thou be cured?” what wouldest thou say but “Yes.” Or it may be thou wouldest not say so, because thou fanciest thyself to be in health, that is, because thou art more grievously sick.

4. For if we suppose two sick persons, one who implores the physician with tears, the other, who in his sickness with infatuation derides him; he will

hold out hope to the one that weeps, and will deplore the case of the other that laughs. Why? but because the sounder in health he thinks himself, the more dangerous his sickness is! This was the case with the Jews. Christ came to them that were sick; He found them all sick. Let no one then flatter himself on his healthful state, lest the physician give him up. He found all sick; it is the Apostle’s judgment, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Though He found them all sick, yet were there two sorts of sick folk. The one came to the Physician, clave to Christ, heard, honoured, followed Him, were converted. He received all without disdaining any, for to heal them, who healed of free favour, who cured by Almighty power. When then He received them, and joined them to Himself to be healed, they rejoiced. But there was another sort of sick, who had already become infatuated through the sickness of iniquity, and did not know themselves to be sick; they mocked Him, because He received the sick, and said to His disciples, “Lo, what manner of man is your Master, who eateth with publicans and sinners.” And He who knew what and who they were answered them, “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.” And He showed them who the “whole” were, and who the “sick.” “I am not come,” He saith, “to call the righteous, but sinners.” If sinners, He would say, do not come to Me, wherefore am I come? for whose sake am I come? If all are whole, wherefore hath so great a Physician come down from heaven? why hath He prepared for us a medicine not out of His stores, but of His own blood? That sort of sick then who had a milder sickness, who felt themselves to be sick, clave to the Physician, that they might be healed. But they whose sickness was more dangerous mocked the Physician, and abused the sick. Whither did their frenzy proceed at last? To seize the Physician, bind, scourge, crown Him with thorns, hang Him upon a Tree, kill Him on the Cross! Why dost thou marvel? The sick slew the Physician; but the Physician by being slain healed the frantic patient.

5. For first, not forgetting on the Cross His own character, and manifesting forth His patience to us, and giving us an example of love to our enemies; as He saw them raging round Him, who had known their disease, seeing He was the Physician, who had known the frenzy by which they had become infatuated, He said at once to the Father, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” Now suppose ye that those Jews were not

malignant, cruel, bloody, turbulent, and enemies of the Son of God? Suppose ye that that cry, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,” was ineffectual and in vain? He saw them all, but He knew amongst them those that should one day be His. In a word, He died, because it was so expedient, that by His Death He might kill death. God died, that an exchange might be effected by a kind of heavenly contract, that man might not see death. For Christ is God, but He died not in that Nature in which He is God. For the same Person is God and man; for God and man is one Christ. The human nature was assumed, that we might be changed for the better; He did not degrade the Divine Nature down to the lower. For He assumed that which He was not, He did not lose that which He was. Forasmuch then as He is both God and man, being pleased that we should live by that which was His, He died in that which was ours. For He had nothing Himself, whereby He could die; nor had we anything whereby we could live. For what was He who had nothing whereby He could die? “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” If thou seek for anything in God whereby He may die, thou wilt not find it. But we all die, who are flesh; men bearing about sinful flesh. Seek out for that whereby sin may live; it hath it not. So then neither could He have death in that which was His own, nor we life in that which was our own; but we have life from that which is His, He death from what is ours. What an exchange! What hath He given, and what received? Men who trade enter into commercial intercourse for exchange of things. For ancient commerce was only an exchange of things. A man gave what he had, and received what he had not. For example, he had wheat, but had no barley; another had barley, but no wheat; the former gave the wheat which he had, and received the barley which he had not. How simple it was that the larger quantity should make up for the cheaper sort! So then another man gives barley, to receive wheat; lastly, another gives lead, to receive silver, only he gives much lead against a little silver; another gives wool, to receive a ready-made garment. And who can enumerate all these exchanges? But no one gives life to receive death. Not in vain then was the voice of the Physician as He hung upon the tree. For in order that He might die for us because the Word could not die, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” He hung upon the Cross, but in the flesh. There was the meanness, which the Jews despised; there the dearness, by which the Jews were delivered. For for them was it said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And that voice was not in vain. He died, was buried, rose again, having passed forty days with His disciples, He ascended into heaven, He sent the Holy Ghost on them, who waited for the promise. They were filled with the Holy Ghost, whom they had received, and began to speak with the tongues of all nations. Then the Jews who were present, amazed that unlearned and ignorant men, whom they had known as brought up among them with one tongue, should in the Name of Christ speak in all tongues, were in astonishment, and learnt from Peter’s words whence this gift came. He gave it, who hung upon the tree. He gave it, who was derided as He hung upon the tree, that from His seat in heaven He might give the Holy Spirit. They of whom He had said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,” heard, believed. They believed, were baptized, and their conversion was effected. What conversion? In faith they drank the Blood of Christ, which in fury they had shed.

6. Therefore, to finish this discourse with that with which we began it, let us pray, and let us rely on God; let us live as He enjoineth; and when we totter in this life, let us call upon Him as the disciples called, saying, “Lord, increase our faith.” Peter both put his trust in Him, and tottered; but notwithstanding he was not disregarded and left to sink, but was lifted up and raised. For his trust whence was it? Not from anything of his own; but from what was the Lord’s. How? “Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water.” For on the water was the Lord walking. “If it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water.” For I know that if it be Thou, Thou biddest, and it is done. “And He saith, Come.” He went down at His bidding, but in his own weakness he was afraid. Nevertheless when he was afraid, he cried out, “Lord, save me.” Then the Lord took him by the hand, and said, “O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?” He first invited him, He delivered him, as he tottered, and stumbled; that it might be fulfilled which was said in the Psalm, “If I said my foot hath slipped, Thy mercy, O Lord, aided me.”

7. There are then two kinds of blessings, temporal and eternal. Temporal blessings are health, substance, honour, friends, a home, children, a wife, and the other things of this life in which we are sojourners. Put we up then

in the hostelry of this life as travellers passing on, and not as owners intending to remain. But eternal blessings are, first, eternal life itself, the incorruption and immortality of body and soul, the society of Angels, the heavenly city, glory unfailing, Father and father-land, the former without death, the latter without a foe. These blessings let us desire with all eagerness, let us ask with all perseverance, not with length of words, but with the witness of groans. Longing desire prayeth always, though the tongue be silent. If thou art ever longing, thou art ever praying. When sleepeth prayer? When desire groweth cold. So then let us beg for these eternal blessings with all eager desire, let us seek for those good things with an entire earnestness, let us ask for those good things with all assurance. For those good things do profit him that hath them, they cannot harm him. But those other temporal good things sometimes profit, and sometimes harm. Poverty hath profited many, and wealth hath harmed many; a private life hath profited many, and exalted honour hath harmed many. And again, money hath profiled some, honourable distinction hath profited some; profited them who use them well; but from those who use them ill, the not withdrawing them hath harmed them more. And so, Brethren, let us ask for those temporal blessings too, but in moderation, being sure that if we do receive them, He giveth them, who knoweth what is expedient for us. Thou hast asked, and what thou hast asked, hath not been given thee? Trust thy Father, who would give it thee, were it expedient for thee. Lo! judge in this case by thine own self. For such as thy son who knows not the ways of men is in regard to thee, such in regard to the Lord art thou thyself, who knowest not the things of God. Lo, thy son cries a whole day before thee, that thou wouldest give him a knife, or a sword; thou dost refuse to give it him, thou wilt not give it, thou disregardest his tears, lest thou shouldest have to bewail his death. Let him cry, and beat himself, or throw himself upon the ground, that thou mayest set him on horseback; thou wilt not do it, because he does not know how to govern the horse, he may throw and kill him. To whom thou refusest a part, thou art reserving the whole. But that he may grow up, and possess the whole in safety, thou givest him not that little thing which is full of peril to him.

8. And so, Brethren, we say, pray as much as ye are able. Evils abound, and God hath willed that evils should abound. Would that evil men did not

abound, and then evils would not abound. Bad times! troublesome times! this men are saying. Let our lives be good; and the times are good. We make our times; such as we are, such are the times. But what can we do? We cannot, it may be, convert the mass of men to a good life. But let the few who do give ear live well; let the few who live well endure the many who live ill. They are the corn, they are in the floor; in the floor they can have the chaff with them, they will not have them in the barn. Let them endure what they would not, that they may come to what they would. Wherefore are we sad, and blame we God? Evils abound in the world, in order that the world may not engage our love. Great men, faithful saints were they who have despised the world with all its attractions; we are not able to despise it even disfigured as it is. The world is evil, lo, it is evil, and yet it is loved as though it were good. But what is this evil world? For the heavens and the earth, and the waters, and the things that are therein, the fish, and birds, and trees, are not evil. All these are good: but it is evil men who make this evil world. Yet as we cannot be without evil men, let us, as I have said, whilst we live pour out our groans before the Lord our God, and endure the evils, that we may attain to the things that are good. Let us not find fault with the Master of the household; for He is loving to us. He beareth us, and not we him. He knoweth how to govern what He made; do what He hath bidden, and hope for what He hath promised.

SERMON XXXI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XVIII. 7, WHERE WE ARE ADMONISHED TO BEWARE OF THE OFFENCES OF THE WORLD

1. The divine lessons, which we have just heard as they were being read, warn us to gather in a stock of virtues, to fortify a Christian heart, against the offences which were predicted to come, and this from the mercy of the Lord. “For what is man,” saith Scripture, “saving that Thou art mindful of him?” “Woe unto the world because of offences,” saith the Lord; the Truth says so; He alarmeth and warneth us, He would not have us to be off our guard; for surely He would not make us desperate. Against this “woe,” against this evil, that is, which is to be feared, and dreaded, and guarded against, Scripture counsels, and exhorts, and instructs us in that place, where it is said, “Great praise have they who love Thy law, and nothing is

an offence to them.” He hath shown us an enemy to be guarded against, but He hath not omitted to show us also a wall of defence. Thou wast thinking, as thou heardest, “Woe unto the world because of offences,” whither thou mightest go beyond the world, that thou mightest not be exposed to offences. Therefore to avoid offences, whither wilt thou go beyond the world, unless thou fly to Him who made the world? And how shall we be able to fly to Him who made the world, unless we give ear to His law which is preached everywhere? And to give ear to it is but a small matter, unless we love it. For divine Scripture in making thee secure against offences doth not say, “Great peace have they who” hear “Thy law. For not the hearers of the law are just before God. But” because “the doers of the law shall be justified,” and, “faith worketh by love:” it saith, “Great peace have they who love Thy law, and nothing is an offence to them.” To this sentiment also agrees the passage which we have chanted in course; “But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” Because, “great peace have they who love Thy law.” For these “meek” ones are they who “love the law of God.” For, “Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy law, that Thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the sinner.” How diverse seem those words of Scripture, yet into one meaning do they so flow and meet together, that whatsoever out of that most rich fountain thou canst hear, so that thou acquiesce therein, and art in loving harmony with the truth, thou will be at once filled with peace; glowing with love, and fortified against offences.

2. It is our place then to see, or seek, or learn, how we must be “meek;” and we are guided by that which I have just brought forward out of the Scriptures, to find what we are in quest of. Be attentive then, Beloved, for a little while; it is a weighty matter that is in hand, that we may be meek; a necessary thing in the adversities of life. But it is not the adverse circumstances of this life which are called offences; but mark what “offences” are. A man, for instance, under some hard necessity is weighed down by a press of trouble. That he is weighed down with a press of trouble, is no offence. By such pressure were even Martyrs pressed, but not oppressed. Of an offence beware, but of a press of trouble not so much. The last presseth thee, an offence oppresseth thee. What then is the difference

between the two? In the press of trouble thou didst make ready to maintain patience, to hold fast constancy, not to abandon faith, not to consent to sin. This if thou maintain, or shall have maintained, the trouble that presseth thee shall not be thy fall; but that press of trouble shall avail to the same end as in the oil press, not to destroy the olive, but to extract the oil. In a word, if in this trouble that presseth thee thou ascribe praise unto God, how useful will the press be to thee, whereby such oil is pressed out! Under such a press the Apostles sat in chains, and in that press they sang a hymn to God. What precious oil was this that was pressed and forced out! Beneath a heavy press did Job sit on the dunghill, without resource, without help, without substance, without children; full, but of worms only, as far, that is, as concerned the outward man, but because he too was full of God within, he praised God, and that press was no “offence” to him. Where then was the “offence”? When his wife came to him and said, “Speak a word against God, and die.” When all had been taken from him by the devil, an Eve was reserved for the exercised sufferer, not to console but to tempt her husband. See then where the offence was. She exaggerated his miseries, and her miseries too with his, and began to persuade him to blaspheme. But he who was “meek,” because “God had taught him out of His law, and given him rest from the days of adversity;” had “great peace” in his heart as “loving the law of God, and nothing was an offence to him.” She was an offence, but not to him. In a word, behold the meek man, behold one taught in the law of God, the eternal law of God I mean. For that law on tables was not yet given to the Jews in the time of Job, but in the hearts of the godly there remained still the eternal law, from which that which was given to the people was copied. Because then by the law of God he had “rest given him from the days of adversity,” and “had great peace as loving the law of God,” behold how “meek” he is, and what he answers. Learn hereby what I propose to enquire; who are the meek. “Thou speakest,” he says, “as one of the foolish women speaketh. If we have received good from the hand of the Lord, shall we not bear the evil?”

3. We have heard by an example who the meek are: let us, if we can, define them in words. The meek are they, to whom in all their good deeds, in all the things they do well, nothing is pleasing but God; to whom in all the evils they suffer, God is not displeasing. Now, Brethren, attend to this rule,

to this pattern; let us stretch ourselves out to it, let us seek for increase, that we may fill it. For what does it profit, that we plant, and water, except God shall give the increase? “For neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.” Give ear, whosoever thou art, that wouldest be “meek,” who wouldest have “rest from the days of adversity, who lovest the law of God,” that there may be “no offence unto thee,” and that thou mayest “have great peace,” that thou mayest “possess the earth, and delight in the multitude of peace;” give ear, whosoever thou art that wouldest be “meek.” Whatsoever good thou doest, be not pleased with thyself. “For God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.” So then whatever good thou doest, let nought but God be pleasing to thee; whatever evil thou sufferest, let not God be displeasing to thee. What needest thou more? Do this, and thou shalt live. The days of adversity shall not overwhelm thee; thou shall escape that which is said, “Woe unto the world because of offences.” For to what world is there woe because of offences, but to that of which it is said, “And the world knew Him not?” Not to that world of which it is said, “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.” There is an evil world, and there is a good world; the evil world, are all the evil men in this world; and the good world, all the good in this world. As we observe frequently with a field. This field is full: of what? Of wheat. Yet we say also, and say truly too, This field is full of chaff. So with a tree, it is full of fruit. Another says, it is full of leaves. And both he who says it is full of fruit, says true; and he who says it is full of leaves, says true. Neither has the full display of leaves taken away the room for the fruit, nor the full display of the fruit driven off the abundance of leaves. It is full of both; but the one the wind searcheth out, the other the husbandman gathereth in. So therefore when thou dost hear, “Woe unto the world because of offences,” be not afraid; “love the law of God, nothing shall be an offence to thee.”

4. But thy wife comes to thee advising thee to some evil thing. Thou dost love her as a wife should be loved; she is one of thy members. “But if thine eye offend thee, if thine hand offend thee, if thy foot offend thee,” thou hast just heard the Gospel, “cut them off, and cast them from thee.” Whosoever he be that is dear to thee, whosoever he be that is held in high estimation by thee, let him be so long of high esteem with thee, so long thy beloved

member, as he shall not begin to offend thee, that is, to advise thee to any evil. Hear now how that this is the meaning of "offence." I have brought forward the example of Job and his wife; but there the word "offence" did not occur. Hear the Gospel: when the Lord prophesied of His Passion, Peter began to persuade him not to suffer. "Get thee behind Me, Satan, thou art an offence to Me." Here undoubtedly the Lord who hath given thee an example of life, hath taught thee both what an "offence" is, and how an offence is to be avoided. Him to whom He had a little while before said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona;" He had shown to be His member. But when he begins to be an offence, He cuts off the member; only He restored the member, and put it into its place again. He then will be an "offence" to thee, who shall begin to persuade thee to any evil thing. And here, Beloved, take heed; this takes place for the most part not through any evil will, but through a mistaken good will. Thy friend who loves thee, and is loved by thee again, thy father, thy brother, thy child, thy wife, sees thee in an evil case, and would have thee do what is evil. What do I mean by "sees thee in an evil case"? Sees thee in some press of trouble. This pressure it may be thou art suffering for righteousness' sake; art suffering it because thou will not give false witness. I would speak merely by way of illustration. Examples abound; for "woe to the world, because of offences." See, for instance, some powerful person, to cover his rapine and plunder, asks of you the service of a false witness. You refuse: refuse the false oath, lest thou shouldest deny Him that is true. That I may not dwell long on this, he is angry, he is powerful, he oppresses thee: a friend comes who would not have thee in this press of trouble, in this evil case; "I pray thee, do what is told thee; what great matter is it?" And then perhaps as Satan with the Lord, "It is written of Thee, He shall give His Angels charge concerning Thee, that Thou dash not Thy foot against a stone." Perhaps too this friend of thine, because he sees thou art a Christian, wishes to persuade thee out of the Law to do what he thinks you ought to do. "Do what the other tells." "What? Do what the other wishes." "But it is a lie, it is false." "Well, have you not read, All men are liars'?" Now is he an "offence." He is a friend, what will you do? He is an eye, he is a hand: "Cut it off, and cast it from thee." What is, "cut it off, and cast it from thee"? Consent not to him. For members in our body make up unity by consent, by consent they live, by consent are joined together one with the other. Where there is dissent, there is disease, or a sore. He is then one of thy members; thou wilt love him. But he is an offence to thee; “Cut him off, and cast him from thee.” Consent not to him; drive him off from thine ears, it may be he will return amended.

5. And how wilt thou do this that I say, “Cut him off, and cast him from thee,” and so, it may be, amend him? answer me, how thou art going to do it? He wished to persuade thee out of the Law to tell a lie. For he said, “speak.” And perhaps he did not dare to say, “speak a lie;” but thus, “speak what the other wishes.” Thou sayest, “But it is a lie.” And he to excuse it, says, “All men are liars.” Then do thou, my brother, say against this, “The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul.” Mark, it is no light thing thou hast heard, “The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul.” What can that powerful enemy, who oppresseth me, do to me, that thou pitiest me, and my condition, and wouldest not have me be in this evil case; whereas thou wouldest that I should be evil? What can that powerful man do to me, and what can he oppress? The flesh. He can oppress thy body, thou wilt say: I grant he may oppress it to destruction. Still how much more mildly does he deal with me, than I should with myself were I to lie! He kills my flesh; I kill my soul. He in his power and anger slays the body; “the mouth that lieth slayeth the soul.” He slays the body; and die it must, though it should not be slain; but the soul which iniquity slayeth not, the truth receiveth for ever. Preserve then what thou canst preserve; and let that perish which must perish sometime or other. Thou hast given an answer then, but thou hast not solved the “All men are liars.” Make answer to him to this too, that he may not fancy that he has said anything to persuade to lying, in bringing a testimony out of the Law; so urging thee out of the Law against the Law. For it is written in the Law, “Thou shalt not bear false witness;” and it is written in the Law, “All men are liars.” Recur then to that which I just lately suggested, when I defined in words as best I could the “meek” man. He is “meek” to whom in all things that he does well, nothing but God is pleasing, and in all the evils which he suffers, God is not displeasing. Make answer then to him who says, Lie, for it is written, “All men are liars:” I will not lie, for it is written, “The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul.” I will not lie, because it is written, “Thou shalt destroy them that speak lying.” I will not lie, because it is written, “Thou shalt not bear false witness.”

Though he whom I displease by the truth harass my body with oppressions, I will give ear to my Lord, “Fear not them which kill the body.”

6. “How then are all men liars? What! Thou art not a man, I suppose?” Answer quickly and truly. “And O that I may not be a man, that so I may not be a liar.” For see; “God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are all together become unprofitable: there is none that doeth good, no not even one.” Why? Because they wished to be sons of men. But in order that he might deliver them from these iniquities, cure, heal, change, the sons of men; “he gave them power to become the sons of God.” What marvel then! Ye were men, if we were the sons of men; ye were all men, and were liars, for, “All men are liars.” The grace of God came to you, and “gave you power to become the sons of God.” Hear the voice of My Father saying, “I have said, Ye are gods; and ye are all the children of the Most High.” Since then they are men, and the sons of men, if they are not the children of the Most High, they are liars, for, “all men are liars.” If they are the sons of God, if they have been redeemed by the Saviour’s grace, if purchased with His precious Blood, if born again of water and of the Spirit, if predestinated to the inheritance of heaven, then indeed are they children of God. And so thereby are gods. What then would a lie have to do with thee? For Adam was a mere man, Christ, man and God; God, the Creator of all creation. Adam a mere man, the Man Christ, the Mediator with God, the Only Son of the Father, the God-man. Lo, thou, O man, art far from God, and God is far above man; between them the God-man placed Himself. Acknowledge Christ, and by Him as Man ascend up to God.

7. Being then now reformed, and, if my words have been so blessed, “meek,” let us “hold fast our profession without wavering.” Let us love the law of God, that we may escape that which is written, “Woe unto the world because of offences.” Now I would say a few words about “offences,” of which the world is full, and how it is that offences thicken, pressing troubles abound. The world is laid waste, the winepress is trodden. Ah! Christians, heavenly shoot, ye strangers on the earth, who seek a city in heaven, who long to be associated with the holy Angels; understand that ye

have come here on this condition only, that ye should soon depart. Ye are passing on through the world, endeavouring to reach Him who created it. Let not the lovers of the world, who wish to remain in the world, and yet, whether they will or no, are compelled to move from it; let them not disturb you, let them not deceive nor seduce you. These pressing troubles are not offences. Be ye righteous, and they will be only exercises. Tribulation comes; it will be as ye choose it, either an exercise, or a condemnation. Such as it shall find you to be, will it be. Tribulation is a fire; does it find thee gold? it takes away the filth: does it find thee chaff? it turns it into ashes. The pressing troubles then which abound are not "offences." But what are "offences"? Those expressions, those words in which we are thus addressed. "See what Christian times bring about;" lo, these are the true offences. For this is said to thee, to this end, that if thou love the world, thou mayest blaspheme Christ. And this he saith to thee who is thy friend, and counsellor; and so "thine eye." This he saith to thee who ministereth to thee, and shareth thy labours, and so "thine hand." This he saith to thee it may be who supporteth thee, who lifteth thee up from a low earthly state; and so "thy foot." Cast them all aside, cut them off, throw them all away from thee; consent not unto them. Answer such men, as he who was advised to give false witness answered. So do thou answer too; say to the man who saith to thee, "See, it is in Christian times that there are such pressing troubles; that the whole world is laid waste;" answer him, "And this Christ foretold me, before it came to pass."

8. For wherefore art thou disturbed? Thine heart is disturbed by the pressing troubles of the world, as that ship was, in which Christ was asleep. Lo! what is the cause, stout-hearted man, that thy heart is disturbed? That ship in which Christ is asleep, is the heart in which faith is asleep. For what new thing, what new thing, I ask, is told thee, Christian? "In Christian times is the world laid waste, the world is failing." Did not thy Lord tell thee, the world shall be laid waste? Did not thy Lord tell thee, the world shall fail? Why when the promise was made, didst thou believe, and art disturbed now, when it is being completed? So then the tempest beats furiously against thine heart; beware of shipwreck, awake up Christ. The Apostle says, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Christ dwelleth in thee by faith. Present faith, is Christ present; waking faith, is Christ awake; slumbering

faith, is Christ asleep. Arise and stir thyself; say, “Lord, we perish.” See what the Heathen say to us; and what is worse, what evil Christians say! Awake up, O Lord, we perish. Let thy faith awake, and Christ begins to speak to thee. “Why art thou troubled?’ I told thee beforehand of all these things. I foretold them, that when evils came, thou mightest hope for good things, that thou mightest not faint in the evil.” Wonderest thou that the world is failing? Wonder that the world is grown old. It is as a man who is born, and grows up, and waxes old. There are many complaints in old age; the cough, the rheum, the weakness of the eyes, fretfulness, and weariness. So then as when a man is old; he is full of complaints; so is the world old; and is full of troubles. Is it a little thing that God hath done for thee, in that in the world’s old age, He hath sent Christ unto thee, that He may renew thee then, when all is failing? Dost thou not know that He notified this in the seed of Abraham? “The seed of Abraham,” says the Apostle, “which is Christ. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of One, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” Therefore was there a son born to Abraham in his old age, because in the old age of this world was Christ to come. He came when all things were growing old, and made them new. As a made, created, perishing thing, the world was now declining to its fall. It could not but be that it should abound in troubles; He came both to console thee in the midst of present troubles, and to promise thee everlasting rest. Choose not then to cleave to this aged world, and to be unwilling to grow young in Christ, who telleth thee, “The world is perishing, the world is waxing old, the world is failing; is distressed by the heavy breathing of old age. But do not fear, “Thy youth shall be renewed as the eagle’s.”

9. See, they say, in Christian times it is that Rome perishes. Perhaps Rome is not perishing; perhaps she is only scourged, not utterly destroyed; perhaps she is chastened, not brought to nought. It may be so; Rome will not perish, if the Romans do not perish. And perish they will not if they praise God; perish they will if they blaspheme Him. For what is Rome, but the Romans? For the question is not of her wood and stones, of her lofty insulated palaces, and all her spacious walls. All this was made only on this condition that it should fall some other day. When man built it, he laid stone on stone; and when man destroyed it, he removed stone from stone. Man made it, man destroyed it. Is any injury done to Rome, because it is said,

“She is falling”? No, not to Rome, but to her builder perhaps. Do we then its builder any injury, because we say, Rome is falling, which Romulus built? This world itself will be burnt with fire, which God built. But neither does what man has made fall to ruin, except when God wills it; nor what God has made, except when He wills. For if the work of man fall not without God’s will, how can God’s work fall by the will of man? Yet God both made the world that was one day to fall for thee; and therefore made He thee as one who was one day to die. Man himself, the city’s ornament, man himself, the city’s inhabitant, ruler, governor, comes on this condition that he may go, is born on this condition that he may die, entered into the world on this condition that he may pass away; “Heaven and earth shall pass away:” what wonder then if some time or other there should be an end of a single city? And yet peradventure the city’s end is not come now; yet some time or other come it will. But why does Rome perish amid the sacrifices of Christians? Why was her mother Troy burnt amid the sacrifices of Heathens? The gods in whom the Romans have placed all their hope, yea the Roman gods in whom the Heathen Romans placed their hope, removed from the flames of Troy to found Rome. These very gods of Rome were originally the gods of Troy. Troy was burnt, and AEneas took the fugitive gods; yea rather himself a fugitive he took away these senseless gods. For they could be carried by the fugitive; but they could not flee away themselves. And coming with these gods into Italy, with these false gods, he founded Rome. It is too long to go through the whole story; yet would I briefly mention what their own writings contain. An author of theirs well known to all speaks thus; “As I have received the account, the Trojans who under the guidance of AEneas were wandering about as fugitives without any settled abode, originally built and inhabited Rome.” So they had their gods with them, they builded Rome in Latium, and there they placed the gods to be worshipped, which before were worshipped in Troy. Juno is introduced by their poet, incensed against AEneas and the fugitive Trojans, saying,

“A race of wandering slaves abhorred by me,

With prosperous passage cuts the Tuscan sea,

To fruitful Italy their course they steer, And for their vanquished gods, design new temples

there.”

Now when these vanquished gods were carried into Italy, was it as a protecting deity, or as a presage of their future fall? “Love” therefore “the law of God, and nothing shall be an offence to you.” We pray you, we beseech you, we exhort you; be meek, sympathize with the suffering, bear the weak; and on this occasion of the concourse of so many strangers, and needy, and suffering people, let your hospitality and your good works abound. Let but Christians do what Christ enjoineth, and so will the Heathen blaspheme only to their own hurt.

SERMON XXXII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XVIII. 15, “IF THY BROTHER SIN AGAINST THEE, GO, SHEW HIM HIS FAULT BETWEEN THEE AND HIM ALONE;” AND OF THE WORDS OF SOLOMON, HE THAT WINKETH WITH THE EYES DECEITFULLY, HEAPETH SORROW UPON MEN; BUT HE THAT REPROVETH OPENLY, MAKETH PEACE

1. Our Lord warns us not to neglect one another’s sins, not by searching out what to find fault with, but by looking out for what to amend. For He said that his eye is sharp to cast out a mote out of his brother’s eye, who has not a beam in his own eye. Now what this means, I will briefly convey to you, Beloved. A mote in the eye is anger; a beam in the eye is hatred. When therefore one who has hatred finds fault with one who is angry, he wishes to take a mote out of his brother’s eye, but is hindered by the beam which he carries in his own eye. A mote is the beginning of a beam. For a beam in the course of its growth, is first a mote. By watering the mote, you bring it to a beam; by nourishing anger with evil suspicions, you bring it on to hatred.

2. Now there is a great difference between the sin of one who is angry, and the cruelty of one who holds another in hatred. For even with our children are we angry; but who is ever found to hate his children? Among the very cattle too, the cow in a sort of weariness will sometimes in anger drive away her sucking calf; but anon she embraces it with all the affection of a mother. She is in a way disgusted with it, when she butts at it; yet when she misses it, she will seek after it. Nor do we discipline our children otherwise, than with a degree of anger and indignation; yet we should not discipline

them at all, but in love to them. So far then is every one who is angry from hating; that sometimes one would be rather convicted of hating, if he were not angry. For suppose a child wishes to play in some river's stream, by whose force he would be like to perish; if you see this, and patiently suffer it, this would be hating; your patient suffering him, is his death. How far better is it to be angry and correct him, than by not being angry to suffer him to perish! Above all things then is hatred to be avoided, and the beam to be cast out of the eye. Great is the difference indeed between one's exceeding due limits in some words through anger, which he afterwards wipes off by repenting of it; and the keeping an insidious purpose shut up in the heart. Great, lastly, the difference between these words of Scripture; "Mine eye is disordered because of anger." Whereas of the other it is said, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." Great is the difference between an eye disordered, and clean put out. A mote disorders, a beam puts clean out.

3. In order then that we may be able well to do and to fulfil what we have been admonished of to-day, let us first persuade ourselves to this, above all things to have no hate. For when there is no beam in thine own eye, thou seest rightly whatever may be in thy brother's eye; and art uneasy, till thou cast out of thy brother's eye what thou seest to hurt it. The light that is in thee, doth not allow thee to neglect thy brother's light. Whereas if thou hate, and wouldest correct him, how dost thou improve his light, when thou hast lost thine own light? For the same Scripture, where it is written, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer," hath expressly told us this also. "He that hateth his brother is in darkness even until now." Hatred then is darkness. Now it cannot but be, that he who hateth another, should first injure himself. For him he endeavours to hurt outwardly, he lays himself waste inwardly. Now in proportion as our soul is of more value than our body, so much the more ought we to provide for it, that it be not hurt. But he that hateth another, doth hurt his own soul. And what would he do to him whom he hateth? What would he do? He takes away his money, can he take his faith away? he wounds his good fame, can he wound his conscience? Whatever injury he does, is but external; now observe what his injury to himself is? For he who hateth another is an enemy to himself within. But because he is not sensible of what harm he is doing to himself, he is violent

against another, and that the more dangerously, that he is not sensible of the evil he is doing to himself; because by this very violence he has lost the power of perception. Thou art violent against thine enemy; by this violence of thine he is spoiled, and thou art wicked. Great is the difference between the two. He hath lost his money, thou thine innocence. Ask which hath suffered the heavier loss? He hath lost a thing that was sure to perish, and thou art become one who must now perish thyself.

4. Therefore ought we to rebuke in love; not with any eager desire to injure, but with an earnest care to amend. If we be so minded, most excellently do we practise that which we have been recommended to-day; "If thy brother shall sin against thee, rebuke him between thee and him alone." Why dost thou rebuke him? Because thou art grieved, that he should have sinned against thee? God forbid. If from love of thyself thou do it, thou doest nothing. If from love to him thou do it, thou doest excellently. In fact, observe in these words themselves, for the love of whom thou oughtest to do it, whether of thyself or him. "If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." Do it for his sake then, that thou mayest "gain" him. If by so doing thou "gain" him, hadst thou not done it, he would have been lost. How is it then that most men disregard these sins, and say, "What great thing have I done? I have only sinned against man." Disregard them not. Thou hast sinned against man; but wouldest thou know that in sinning against man thou art lost. If he, against whom thou hast sinned, have "rebuked thee between thee and him alone," and thou hast listened to him, he hath "gained" thee. What can "hath gained thee," mean; but that thou hadst been lost, if he had not gained thee. For if thou wouldest not have been lost, how hath he gained thee? Let no man then disregard it, when he sins against a brother. For the Apostle saith in a certain place, "But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ;" for this reason, because we have been all made members of Christ. How dost thou not sin against Christ, who sinnest against a member of Christ?

5. Let no one therefore say, "I have not sinned against God, but against a brother. I have sinned against a man, it is a trifling sin, or no sin at all." It may be, thou sayest it is a trifling sin, because it is soon cured. Thou hast sinned against a brother; give him satisfaction, and thou art made whole.

Thou didst a deadly thing quickly, but quickly too hast thou found a remedy. Who of us, my Brethren, can hope for the kingdom of heaven, when the Gospel says, “Whosoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire?” Exceeding terror! but behold in the same place the remedy: “If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar.” God is not angry that thou deferrest to lay thy gift upon the Altar. It is thee that God seeketh more than thy gift. For if thou come with a gift to thy God, bearing an evil mind against thy brother, He will answer thee, “Thou art lost, what hast thou brought Me? Thou bringest thy gift, and thou art thyself no proper gift for God. Christ seeketh him whom He hath redeemed with His Blood, more than what thou hast found in thy barn.” So then, “Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and so thou shalt come and offer thy gift.” Lo that “danger of hell fire,” how quickly dissolved it is! When thou wast not yet reconciled, thou wast “in danger of hell fire;” once reconciled, thou offerest thy gift before the altar in all security.

6. But men are easy and ready enough to inflict injuries, and hard to seek for reconciliation. Ask pardon, says one, of him whom thou hast offended, of him whom thou hast injured. He answers, “I will not so humble myself.” But now if thou despise thy brother, at least give ear to thy God. “He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Wilt thou refuse to humble thyself, who hast already fallen? Great is the difference between one who humbleth himself, and one who lieth on the ground. Already dost thou lie on the ground, and wilt thou then not humble thyself? Thou mightest well say, I will not descend; if thou hadst first been unwilling to fall.

7. This then ought one to do who hath done an injury. And he who hath suffered one, what ought he to do? What we have heard to-day, “If thy brother shall sin against thee, rebuke him between thee and him alone.” If thou shall neglect this, thou art worse than he. He hath done an injury, and by doing an injury, hath stricken himself with a grievous wound; wilt thou disregard thy brother’s wound? Wilt thou see him perishing, or already lost, and disregard his case? Thou art worse in keeping silence, than he in his reviling. Therefore when any one sins against us, let us take great care, not

for ourselves, for it is a glorious thing to forget injuries; only forget thine own injury, not thy brother's wound. Therefore "rebuke him between thee and him alone," intent upon his amendment, but sparing his shame. For it may be that through shame-facedness he will begin to defend his sin, and so thou wilt make him whom thou desirest to amend, still worse. "Rebuke him" therefore "between him and thee alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother;" because he would have been lost, hadst thou not done it. But "if he will not hear thee," that is, if he will defend his sin as if it were a just action, "take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established; and if he will not hear them, refer it to the Church; but if he will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Reckon him no more amongst the number of thy brethren. But yet neither is his salvation on that account to be neglected. For the very heathen, that is, the Gentiles and Pagans, we do not reckon among the number of brethren; but yet are we ever seeking their salvation. This then have we heard the Lord so advising, and with such great carefulness enjoining, that He even added this immediately, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Thou hast begun to hold thy brother for a publican; "thou bindest him on earth;" but see that thou bind him justly. For unjust bonds justice doth burst asunder. But when thou hast corrected, and been "reconciled to thy brother," thou hast "loosed him on earth." And when "thou shalt have loosed him on earth, he shall be loosed in heaven also." Thus thou doest a great thing, not for thyself, but for him; for a great injury had he done, not to thee, but to himself.

8. But since this is so, what is that which Solomon says, and which we heard first to-day out of another lesson, "He that winketh with the eyes deceitfully, heapeth sorrow upon men; but he that reproveth openly, maketh peace"? If then "he that reproveth openly, maketh peace;" how "rebuke him between him and thee alone"? We must fear, lest the divine precepts should be contrary to one another. But no: let us understand that there is the most perfect agreement in them, let us not follow the conceits of certain vain ones, who in their error think that the two Testaments in the Old and New Books are contrary to each other; that so we should think that there is any

contradiction here, because one is in the book of Solomon, and the other in the Gospel. For if any one unskilful in, and a reviler of the divine Scriptures, were to say, “See where the two Testaments contradict each other. The Lord saith, Rebuke him between him and thee alone.’ Solomon saith, He that reproveth openly maketh peace.’“ Doth not the Lord then know what He hath commanded? Solomon would have the sinners’ hard forehead bruised: Christ spareth his shame who blushes for his sins. For in the one place it is written, “He that reproveth openly maketh peace;” but in the other, “Rebuke him between him and thee alone;” not “openly,” but apart and secretly. But wouldest thou know, whosoever thou art that thinkest such things, that the two Testaments are not opposed to each other, because the first of these passages is found in the book of Solomon, and the other in the Gospel? Hear the Apostle. And surely the Apostle is a Minister of the New Testament. Hear the Apostle Paul then, charging Timothy, and saying, “Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.” So then not the book of Solomon, but an Epistle of Paul the Apostle seems to be at issue with the Gospel. Let us then without any prejudice to his honour lay aside Solomon for a while; let us hear the Lord Christ and His servant Paul. What sayest Thou, O Lord? “If thy brother sin against thee, rebuke him between him and thee alone.” What sayest thou, O Apostle? “Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.” What are we about? Are we listening to this controversy as judges? That be far from us. Yea, rather as those whose place is under the Judge, let us knock, that we may obtain, that it be opened to us; let us fly beneath the wings of our Lord God. For He did not speak in contradiction to His Apostle, seeing that He Himself spoke “in” him also, as he says, “Would ye receive a proof of Christ, who speaketh in me?” Christ in the Gospel, Christ in the Apostle: Christ therefore spake both; one by His own Mouth, the other by the mouth of His herald. For when the herald pronounces anything from the tribunal, it is not written in the records, “the herald said it;” but he is written as having said it, who commanded the herald what to say.

9. Let us then so give ear to these two precepts, Brethren, as that we may understand them, and let us settle ourselves in peace between them both. Let us but be in agreement with our own heart, and Holy Scripture will in no part disagree with itself. It is entirely true, both precepts are true; but we

must make a distinction, that sometimes the one, sometimes the other must be done; that sometimes a brother must be “reproved between him and thee alone,” sometimes a brother “must be reproved before all, that others also may fear.” If we do sometimes the one, and sometimes the other, we shall hold fast the harmony of the Scriptures, and shall not err in fulfilling and obeying them. But a man will say to me, “When am I to do this one, and when the other? lest I reprove between me and him alone,’ when I ought to reprove before all;’ or reprove before all,’ when I ought to reprove in secret.”

10. You will soon see, Beloved, what we ought to do, and when; only I would we may not be slow to practise it. Attend and see: “If thy brother sin against thee, rebuke him between him and thee alone.” Why? Because it is against thee that he hath sinned. What is that, “hath sinned against thee”? Thou knowest that he hath sinned. For because it was secret when he sinned against thee, seek for secresy, when thou dost correct his sin. For if thou only know that he hath sinned against thee, and thou wouldest “rebuke him before all,” thou art not a reprover, but a betrayer. Consider how that “just man” Joseph spared his wife with such exceeding kindness, in so great a crime as he had suspected her of, before he knew by whom she had conceived; because he perceived that she was with child, and he knew that he had not come in unto her. There remained then an unavoidable suspicion of adultery, and yet because he only had perceived, he only knew it, what does the Gospel say of him? “Then Joseph being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example.” The husband’s grief sought no revenge; he wished to profit, not to punish the sinner. “And not willing to make her a public example, he was minded to put her away privily.” But while he thought on these things, “behold, the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him,” in sleep; and told him how it was, that she had not defiled her husband’s bed, but that she had conceived of the Holy Ghost the Lord of them both. Thy brother then hath sinned against thee; if thou alone know it, then hath he really sinned against thee alone. For if in the hearing of many he hath done thee an injury, he hath sinned against them also whom he hath made witnesses of his iniquity. For I tell you, my dearly beloved Brethren, what you can yourselves recognise in your own case. When any one does my brother an injury in my hearing, God forbid that I should think that injury

unconnected with myself. Certainly he has done it to me also; yea to me the rather, to whom he thought what he did was pleasing. Therefore those sins are to be reproved before all, which are committed before all; they are to be reproved with more secresy, which are committed more secretly. Distinguish times, and Scripture is in harmony with itself.

11. So let us act; and so must we act not only when the sin is committed against ourselves, but when the sin is so committed by any one as that it is unknown by the other. In secret ought we to rebuke, in secret to reprove him; lest if we would reprove him publicly, we should betray the man. We wish to rebuke and reform him; but what if his enemy is looking out to hear something that he may punish? For example, a Bishop knows of some one who has killed another, and no one else knows of him. I wish to reprove him publicly; but thou art seeking to prosecute him. Decidedly then I will neither betray him, nor neglect him; I will reprove him in secret; I will set the judgment of God before his eyes; I will alarm his bloodstained conscience; I will persuade him to repentance. With this charity ought we to be endued. And hence men sometimes find fault with us, as if we do not reprove; or they think that we know what we do not know, or that we hush up what we know. And it may be that what thou knowest, I know also but I will not reprove in thy presence I because I wish to cure, not to act informer. There are men who commit adultery in their own houses, they sin in secret, sometimes they are discovered to us by their own wives, generally through jealousy, sometimes as seeking their husband’s salvation; in such cases we do not betray them openly, but reprove them in secret. Where the evil has happened, there let the evil die. Yet do we not neglect that wound; above all things showing the man who is in such a sinful state, and bears such a wounded conscience, that that is a deadly wound which they who suffer from, sometimes by an unaccountable perverseness despise; and seek out testimonies in their favour, I know not whence, null certainly and void, saying, “God careth not for sins of the flesh.” Where is that then which we have heard to-day, “Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge”? Lo! whosoever thou art that labourest under such a disease attend. Hear what God saith; not what thine own mind, in indulgence to thine own sins, may say, or what thy friend, thine enemy rather and his own too, bound in the same bond of iniquity with thee may say. Hear then what the Apostle saith;

“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled. But whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.”

12. Come then, Brother, be reformed. Thou art afraid lest thine enemy should prosecute thee; and art thou not afraid lest God should judge thee? Where is thy faith? Fear whilst there is the time for fear. Far off indeed is the day of judgment; but every man’s last day cannot be far off; for life is short. And since this shortness is ever uncertain, thou knowest not when thy last day may be. Reform thyself today, because of to-morrow. Let the reproof in secret be of service to thee now. For I am speaking openly, yet do I reprove in secret. I knock at the ears of all; but I accost the consciences of some. If I were to say, “Thou adulterer, reform thyself;” perhaps in the first place I might say what I had no knowledge of; perhaps suspect on a rash hearsay report. I do not then say, “Thou adulterer, reform thyself;” but “whosoever thou art among this people who art an adulterer, reform thyself.” So the reproof is public; the reformation secret. This I know, that whoso feareth, will reform himself.

13. Let no one say in his heart, “God careth not for sins of the flesh.” “Know ye not,” saith the Apostle, “that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy.” “Let no man deceive himself.” But perhaps a man will say, “My soul is the temple of God, not my body,” and will add this testimony also, “All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.” Unhappy interpretation! conceit meet for punishment! The flesh is called grass, because it dies; but take thou heed that that which dies for a time, rise not again with guilt. Wouldest thou ascertain a plain judgment on this point also? “Know ye not,” says the same Apostle, “that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God?” Do not then any longer disregard sins of the body; seeing that your “bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God.” If thou didst disregard a sin of the body, wilt thou disregard a sin which thou committest against a temple? Thy very body is a temple of the Spirit of God within thee. Now take heed what thou doest with the temple of God. If thou wert to choose to commit adultery in the Church within these walls, what wickedness could be greater? But now thou art thyself the temple of God.

In thy going out, in thy coming in, as thou abidest in thy house, as thou risest up, in all thou art a temple. Take heed then what thou doest, take heed that thou offend not the Indweller of the temple, lest He forsake thee, and thou fall into ruins. “Know ye not,” he says, “that your bodies” (and this the Apostle spake touching fornication, that they might not think lightly of sins of the body) “are the temples of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” For “ye have been bought with a great price.” If thou think so lightly of thine own body, have some consideration for thy price.

14. I know, and as I do every one knows, who has used a little more than ordinary consideration, that no man who has any fear of God omits to reform himself in obedience to His words, but he who thinks that he has longer time to live. This it is which kills so many, while they are saying, “To-morrow, To-morrow;” and suddenly the door is shut. He remains outside with the raven’s croak, because he had not the moaning of the dove. “To-morrow, To-morrow;” is the raven’s croak. Moan plaintively as the dove, and beat thy breast; but whilst thou art inflicting blows on thy breast, be the better for the beating; lest thou seem not to beat thy conscience, but rather with blows to harden it, and make an evil conscience more unyielding instead of better. Moan with no fruitless moaning. For it may be thou art saying to thyself, “God hath promised me forgiveness, whenever I reform myself I am secure; I read the divine Scripture, “In the day that the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right, I will forget all his iniquities.” I am secure then, whenever I reform myself, God will give me pardon for my evil deeds.” What can I say to this? Shall I lift up my voice against God? Shall I say to God, Do not give him pardon? Shall I say, This is not written, God hath not promised this? If I should say ought of this, I should say falsely. Thou speakest well and truly; God hath promised pardon on thy amendment, I cannot deny it; but tell me, I pray thee; see, I consent, I grant, I acknowledge that God hath promised thee pardon, but who hath promised thee a to-morrow? Where thou dost read to me that thou shalt receive pardon, if thou reform thyself; there read to me how long thou hast to live. Thou dost confess, “I cannot read it there.” Thou knowest not then how long thou hast to live. Reform thyself, and so be always ready. Be not afraid of the last day, as a thief, who

will break up thy house as thou sleepest; but awake and reform thyself to-day. Why dost thou put it off till to-morrow? If thy life is to be a long one, let it be both long and good. No one puts off a good dinner, because it is to be a long one, and dost thou wish to have a long evil life? Surely if it is to be long, it will be all the better if it be good; if it is to be short, it is well that its good be as long as possible. But men neglect their life to such a degree, as that they are unwilling to have anything bad except it. You buy a farm, and you look out for a good one; you wish to marry a wife, you choose a good one; you wish for the birth of children, and you long for good ones; you bargain for shoes, and you do not wish for bad ones; and yet a bad life you do love. How hath thy life offended thee, that thou art willing to have it only bad; that amid all thy good things thou shouldest thyself alone be evil?

15. So then, my Brethren, if I should wish to reprove any of you individually in secret, perhaps he would listen to me. I reprove many of you now in public; all praise me; may some give attentive heed to me! I have no love for him who praises me with his voice, and with his heart despises me. For when thou dost praise, and not reform thyself, thou art a witness against thyself. If thou art evil, and thou art pleased with what I say, be displeased with thyself; because if thou art displeased with thyself as being evil, when thou dost reform, thou wilt be well pleased with thyself, which if I mistake not I said the day before yesterday. In all my words I set a mirror before you. Nor are they my words, but I speak at the bidding of the Lord, by whose terrors I refrain from keeping silence. For who would not rather choose to keep silence, and not to give account for you? But now I have undertaken the burden, and I cannot, and I ought not to shake it off my shoulders. When the Epistle to the Hebrews was being read, my Brethren, ye heard, “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.” When do we it with joy? When we see man making progress in the words of God. When does the labourer in the field work with joy? When he looks at the tree, and sees the fruit; when he looks at the crop, and sees the prospect of abundance of corn in the floor; when he sees that he has not laboured in vain, has not bowed his back, and bruised his hands, and endured the cold and heat in vain. This is what he says, “That they may do it with joy, and

not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.” Did he say, “unprofitable for them”? No. He said, “unprofitable for you.” For when those who are set over you are saddened at your evil deeds, it is profitable for them; their very sadness is profitable for them; but it is unprofitable for you. But we do not wish that anything should be profitable for us, which for you is unprofitable. Let us then, Brethren, do good together in the Lord’s field; that at the reward we may rejoice together.

SERMON XXXIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XVII. 21, “HOW OFT SHALL MY BROTHER SIN AGAINST ME,” ETC

1. Yesterday the holy Gospel warned us not to neglect the sins of our brethren: “But if thy brother shall sin against thee, rebuke him between him and thee alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he shall refuse to hear thee, take with thee two or three more; that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them too, tell it to the Church. But if he shall neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” To-day also the section which follows, and which we heard when it was read, relates to the same subject. For when the Lord Jesus had said this to Peter, he went on to ask his Master, how often he should forgive a brother who had sinned against him; and he enquired whether seven times would be enough. “The Lord answered him, Not only seven times, but seventy times seven.” Then he added a parable very full of terror: That the “kingdom of heaven is like unto an householder, which took account with his servants; among whom he found one that owed ten thousand talents. And when he commanded all that he had, and all his family, and himself to be sold, and the debt to be paid, he fell down at his lord’s feet,” and prayed for delay, and obtained entire remission. For as we have heard, “His lord was moved with compassion, and forgave him all the debt.” Then that man free from his debt, but a bondslave of iniquity, after he had gone out from the presence of his lord, found in his turn a debtor of his own, who owed him, not ten thousand talents, the sum which had been remitted to him, but a hundred denarii; and “he began to drag him by the throat, and say, Pay me that thou owest.” Then he besought his fellow-servant as he had done his

lord; but he did not find his fellow-servant such a man as the other had found his lord. He not only would not forgive him the debt; but he did not even grant him a delay. He hurried him along with great violence to make him pay, he who had been but just now set free from his debt to his lord. His fellow-servants were displeased; and "went and told their lord what was done;" and the lord summoned his servant to his presence, and said to him, "O thou wicked servant, when thou didst owe me so great a debt, in pity to thee I forgave thee all. Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?" And he commanded that all which he had forgiven him should be paid.

2. It is then for our instruction that He put forth this parable, and by this warning He would save us from perishing. "So," said He, "shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Lo, Brethren, the thing is plain, useful is the admonition, and a wholesome obedience is by all means due, that what hath been bidden may be fulfilled. For every man is at once God's debtor, and hath also some brother a debtor to himself. For who is there who is not God's debtor, but he in whom there can be found no sin? And who is there who hath not a brother his debtor, but he against whom no one hath sinned? Think you that any one among mankind can be found, who is not himself bounden to his brother by some sin? So then every man is a debtor, yet having himself his own debtors too. The righteous God therefore appointeth a rule for thee toward thy debtor, which He also will observe with His. For two works of mercy are there, which deliver us, which the Lord hath Himself briefly laid down in the Gospel: "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: give, and it shall be given unto you." "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven," relates to pardoning. "Give, and it shall be given unto you," relates to doing kindnesses. As to what He saith of pardoning, thou both wishest thy sin to be pardoned thee, and thou hast another whom thou mayest pardon. Again, as to the doing kindnesses; a beggar asks of thee, and thou art God's beggar. For we are all when we pray God's beggars; we stand, yea rather we fall prostrate before the door of the Great Householder, we groan in supplication wishing to receive something; and this something is God Himself. What does the beggar ask of thee? Bread. And what dost thou ask of God, but Christ, who saith, "I am the living Bread which came down

from heaven”? Would you be forgiven? Forgive. “Forgive, and it shall be forgiven you.” Would you receive? “Give, and it shall be given unto you.”

3. But now hear what in so plain a precept I may cause a difficulty. In this question of forgiveness when pardon is asked, and it is due from him who should grant it, it may be a difficulty to us as it was to Peter. “How often ought I to forgive? Is up to seven times sufficient?” “It is not sufficient,” saith the Lord, “I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.” Now reckon up how often thy brother hath sinned against thee. If thou canst reach the seventy-eighth fault, so as to get beyond the seventy times seven, then set about revenge. Is this then what He really means, and is it really so, that if he shall sin “seventy times seven,” thou shouldest forgive him; but if he shall sin seventy times and eight, it should then be lawful for thee not to forgive? Nay I am bold to say, that if he should even sin seventy-eight times, thou must forgive. Yea, as I have said, if he shall sin seventy-eight times, forgive. And if he sin a hundred times, forgive. And why need I say, so and so often? In one word, as often as he shall sin, forgive him. Have I then taken upon me to overpass the measure of my Lord? He fixed the limit of forgiveness in the number seventy-seven; shall I presume to overleap this limit? It is not so, I have not presumed to go at all beyond. I have heard the Lord Himself speaking in His Apostle where there is no measure or number fixed. For He says, “Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, as God in Christ hath forgiven you.” Here you have the rule. If Christ have forgiven thee thy sins “seventy times and seven” only, if He have pardoned up to this point, and refused to pardon beyond it; then do thou also fix this limit, and be loth to forgive beyond it. But if Christ hath found thousands of sins upon sins, and hath yet forgiven all; withdraw not then thy mercy, but ask the forgiveness of that large number. For it was not without a meaning that the Lord said “seventy times seven;” forasmuch as there is no trespass whatever which thou oughtest not to forgive. See this servant in the parable, who being a debtor was found to have a debtor, owed ten thousand talents. And I suppose that ten thousand talents are at least ten thousand sins. For I will not say how but one talent will include all sins. But how much did the other servant owe him? He owed a hundred denarii. Now is not this more than “seventy and seven”? And yet the Lord was wroth, because he did not forgive him. For not only is

a hundred more than “seventy-seven;” but a hundred denarii, perhaps are a thousand” asses.” But what was this to ten thousand talents?

4. And so let us be ready to forgive all the trespasses which are committed against us, if we desire to be forgiven. For if we consider our sins, and reckon up what we do in deed, what by the eye, what by the ear, what by thought, what by numberless movements; I know not whether we so much as sleep without a talent. And therefore do we daily beg, daily knock at the ears of God by prayer, daily prostrate ourselves and say, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” What debts of thine? All, or a certain part? Thou wilt answer, All. So then do thou with thy debtor. This then is the rule thou layest down, this the condition thou speakest of; this the covenant and agreement thou dost mention when thou prayest, saying, “Forgive us, as we forgive our debtors.”

5. What then, Brethren, is the meaning of “seventy times seven”? Hear, for it is a great mystery, a wonderful sacrament. When the Lord was baptized, the Evangelist St. Luke has in that place commemorated His generations in the regular order, series, and line in which they had come down to that generation in which Christ was born. Matthew begins at Abraham, and comes down to Joseph in a descending order; but Luke begins to reckon in an ascending order. Why does the one reckon in a descending, and the other in an ascending order? Because Matthew set forth the generation of Christ by which He came down to us; and so he began to reckon when Christ was born in a descending order. Whereas, because Luke begins to reckon when Christ was baptized; in this is the beginning of ascension, he begins to reckon in an ascending order, and in his reckoning he has completed seventy-seven generations. With whom did he begin his reckoning? Observe with whom? He began to reckon from Christ up to Adam himself, who was the first sinner, and who begat us with the bond of sin. He reckoned up to Adam, and so there are reckoned seventy-seven generations; that is, from Christ up to Adam and from Adam up to Christ are the aforesaid seventy-seven generations. So then if no generation was omitted, there is no exemption of any trespass which ought not to be forgiven. For therefore did he reckon up his seventy-seven generations, which number the

Lord mentioned as to the forgiveness of sins; since he begins to reckon from the baptism, wherein all sins are remitted.

6. And, Brethren, observe in this a yet greater mystery. In the number seventy-seven is a mystery of the remission of sins. So many are the generations found to be from Christ to Adam. Now then, ask with somewhat more careful diligence for the secret meaning of this number, and enquire into its hidden meaning; with more careful diligence knock, that it may be opened unto thee. Righteousness consists in the observance of the Law of God: true. For the Law is set forth in ten precepts. Therefore it was that the servant in the parable "owed ten thousand talents." This is that memorable Decalogue written by the finger of God, and delivered to the people by Moses, the servant of God. He "owed" then "ten thousand talents;" which signifies all sins, with reference to the number of the Law. And the other "owed a hundred denarii;" derived equally from the same number. For a hundred times a hundred make ten thousand; and ten times ten make a hundred. And the one "owed ten thousand talents," and the other ten times ten denarii. For there was no departure from the number of the law, and in both numbers you will find every kind of sin included. Both are debtors, and both implore and beg for pardon; but the wicked, ungrateful servant would not repay what he had received, would not grant the mercy which had been undeservedly accorded to him.

7. Consider then, Brethren; every man begins from Baptism; he goes out free, the "ten thousand talents" are forgiven him; and when he goes out, he will soon find some fellow-servant his debtor. Let him note then, what sin itself is; for the number eleven is the transgression of the law. For the law is ten, sin eleven. For the law is denoted by ten, sin by eleven. Why is sin denoted by eleven? Because to get to eleven, there is the transgression of the ten. But the due limit is fixed in the law; and the transgression of it is sin. Now when you have passed beyond the ten, you come to eleven. This high mystery was figured out when the tabernacle was commanded to be built. There are many things mentioned there in number, which are a great mystery. Among the rest, curtains of haircloth were ordered to be made not ten, but eleven; because by haircloth is signified the confession of sins. Now what do you require more? Would you know how that all sins are

contained in this number “seventy-seven”? Seven then is usually put for a whole; because in seven days the revolution of time is completed, and when the seventh is ended, it returns to the first again, that the same revolution may be continued. In such revolutions whole ages pass away: yet there is no departure from the number seven. For He spoke of all sins, when He said “seventy times seven;” for multiply that eleven seven times, and it makes seventy-seven. Therefore would He have all sins forgiven, for He marked them out by the number” seventy-seven.” Let no one then retain against himself by refusing to forgive, lest it be retained against him, when he prayeth. For God saith, “Forgive, and thou shalt be forgiven.” For I have forgiven thee first; do thou at least forgive after that. For if thou wilt not forgive, I will call thee back, and put upon thee again all that I had remitted to thee. For the Truth doth not speak falsely; Christ neither deceiveth, nor is deceived, and He hath said at the close of the parable, “So likewise shall your Father which is in heaven do unto you.” Thou findest a Father, imitate thy Father. For if thou wilt not imitate Him, thou art devising to be disinherited. “So likewise” then “shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.” Say not with the tongue, “I forgive,” and put off to forgive in the heart; for by His threat of vengeance God showeth thee thy punishment. God knoweth where thou speakest. Man can hear thy voice; God looketh into thy conscience. If thou sayest, I forgive; forgive. Better is it that thou shouldest be violent in words, and forgive in the heart, than in words be soft, and in the heart relentless.

8. Now then unruly boys will beg, and take it hard to be beat taking exception against us when we wish to chastise them after this fashion. “I have sinned, but forgive me.” Well, I have forgiven, and he sins again. “Forgive me,” he cries, and I have forgiven him. He sins a third time. “Forgive me,” he cries, and a third time I have forgiven him. Now then the fourth time let him be beat. And he will say, “What! have I tired you out to seventy-seven times?” Now if by such exceptions the severity of discipline sleep, upon the suppression of discipline wickedness will rage with impunity. What then is to be done? Let us reprove with words, and if need be with scourges; but let us withal forgive the sin, and cast away the remembrance of it from the heart. For therefore did the Lord add, “from

your hearts," that though through affection discipline be exercised, gentleness might not depart out of the heart. For what is so kind and gentle as the surgeon with his knife? He that is to be cut cries, yet cut he is; he that is to be cauterized cries, but cauterized he is. This is not cruelty; on no account let that surgeon's treatment be called cruelty. Cruel he is against the wounded part that the patient may be cured; for if the wound be softly dealt with, the man is lost. Thus then would I advise, my Brethren, that we love our brethren, howsoever they may have sinned against us; that we let not affection toward them depart out of our hearts, and that when need is, we exercise discipline toward them; lest by the relaxation of discipline, wickedness increase, and we begin to be accused on God's behalf, for it has been read to us, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." Certainly, if one, as is the only true way, distinguishes the times, and so solves the question, all is true. If the sin be in secret, rebuke it in secret. If the sin be public and open, rebuke it publicly that the sinner may be reformed; and "that others also may fear."

SERMON XXXIV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XIX. 17, "IF THOU WOULDEST ENTER INTO LIFE, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS."

1. The Lord said to a certain young man, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." He did not say, "If thou wilt enter into life eternal," but "If thou wilt enter into life;" laying down that as life, which is to be life eternal. Let us first then set forth the value of the love of this life. For even this present life, under whatever circumstances, is loved; and men fear and dread to end it of whatever kind it be; however full of trouble and misery. Hence may we see, hence consider, how the life eternal should be loved; when this life so miserable, and which must sometime come to an end, is loved so much. Consider, Brethren, how greatly should that life be loved, where thou wilt never end life. Thou dost love, it seems, this present life, where thou dost labour so much, hastest to and fro, art busy, sufferest fatigue; yea scarcely to be enumerated are the necessities of this miserable life; sowing, ploughing, clearing the ground, sailing, grinding, cooking, weaving; and after all these things thou hast to end thy life. See the evils thou dost suffer in this miserable life, which thou lovest; and dost thou think

that thou shalt always live, and never die? Temples, stones, marbles, joined so strongly together with iron and lead, fall into ruin for all their strength; and does a man suppose that he shall never die? Learn then, Brethren, to seek for eternal life, where you will not endure all this, but will reign with God for ever. “For he who wisheth life,” as the Prophet says, “loveth to see good days.” For in evil days death is rather wished for than life. Do we not hear and see men when they are involved in some tribulations and distresses, in law-suits or sicknesses and they see that they are in travail, do we not hear them saying nothing else but, “O God, send me death, hasten my days”? Yet when sickness comes, they run about, and physicians are fetched, and money and rewards are promised. Death himself says to thee, “Lo, here I am, whom but a little while ago thou wert asking of the Lord, why wouldest thou fly from me now? I have found thee to be a self-deceiver, and a lover of this miserable life.”

2. But as concerning these days which we are passing now, the Apostle says, “Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” Are not these days indeed evil which we spend in this corruptible flesh, in or under so heavy a load of the corruptible body, amid so great temptations, amid so great difficulties, where there is but false pleasure, no security of joy, a tormenting fear, a greedy covetousness, a withering sadness? Lo, what evil days! yet no one is willing to end these same evil days, and hence men earnestly pray God that they may live long. Yet what is it to live long, but to be long tormented? What is it to live long, but to add evil days to evil days? When boys are growing up, it is as if days are being added to them; whereas they do not know that they are being diminished; and their very reckoning is false. For as we grow in up, the number of our days rather diminishes than increases. Appoint for any man at his birth, for instance, eighty years; every day he lives, he diminishes somewhat of that sum. Yet silly men rejoice at the oft-recurring birthdays, both of themselves and their children. O sensible man! If the wine in thy bottle is diminished, thou art sad; days art thou losing, and art thou glad? These days then are evil; and so much the more evil, in that they are loved. This world is so alluring, that no one is willing to finish a life of sorrow. For the true, the blessed life is this, when we shall rise again, and reign with Christ. For the ungodly too shall rise again but to go into the fire. Life then is there again, but that which is

blessed. And blessed life there can be none but that which is eternal, where are “good days;” and those not many days, but one day. They are called “days” after the custom of this life. That day knows no rising, it knows no setting. To that day there succeeds no to-morrow; because no yesterday precedes it. This day, or these days, and this life, this true life, have we in promise. It is then the reward of a certain work. So if we love the reward, let us not fail in the work; and so shall we reign with Christ for ever.

SERMON XXXV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XIX. 17, “IF THOU WOULDEST ENTER INTO LIFE, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.”

1. The Gospel lesson which has now sounded in our ears, Brethren, requires rather an attentive hearer and a doer, than an expositor. What is more clear than this light, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments”? What then have I to say but, “If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments”? Who is there that does not wish for life? and yet who is there that does wish to keep the commandments? If thou dost not wish to keep the commandments, why seekest thou after life? If thou art slow to the work, why dost thou hasten to the reward? The rich young man in the Gospel said that he had kept the commandments; then he heard the greater precepts, “If thou wilt be perfect, one thing is lacking to thee, go sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor;” thou shalt not lose them, but “thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow Me.” For what shall it profit thee, if thou shalt do all the rest, and yet not follow Me?” But as ye have heard, “he went away” sad and “sorrowful; for he had great riches.” What he heard, have we heard also. The Gospel is Christ’s voice. He sitteth in heaven; but He doth not cease to speak on earth. Let us not be deaf, for He is crying out. Let us not be dead; for He is thundering. If thou wilt not do the greater things, do at least the less. If the burden of the greater be too much for thee, at least take up the less. Why art thou slow to both? why settest thyself against both? The greater are, “Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and follow Me.” The less are, “Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shall not bear false witness. Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” These do; why do I call to thee, to sell thy

possessions, from whom I cannot gain, that thou wouldest keep from plundering what is another’s? Thou hast heard, “Thou shalt not steal;” yet thou dost plunder. Before the eyes of so great a Judge, I find thee not a thief only, but a plunderer. Spare thyself, have pity on thyself. This life yet allows thee respite, do not refuse correction. Yesterday thou wast a thief; be not so to-day too. Or if peradventure thou hast been so to-day already, be not so to-morrow. Put a stop sometime to thy evil doing, and so require good for a reward. Thou wouldest have good things, and wouldest not be good; thy life is a contradiction to thy desires. If to have a good country-seat, is a great good: how great an evil must it be to have an evil soul!

2. The rich man “went away sorrowful;” and the Lord said, “How hardly shall he that hath riches enter into the kingdom of heaven!” And by putting forth a comparison He showed the difficulty to be such that it was absolutely impossible. For every impossible thing is difficult; but not every difficult thing is impossible. As to how difficult it is, take heed to the comparison; “Verily I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.” A camel to go through the eye of a needle! If He had said a gnat, it would be impossible. And then when His disciples heard it, they were grieved and said, “If this be so, who then can be saved?” What rich man? Give ear then to Christ, ye poor, I am speaking to the people of God. Ye are more of you poor than rich, do ye then at least receive what I say, yet give heed. Whosoever of you boast of your poverty, beware of pride, lest the humble rich surpass you; beware of impiety, lest the pious rich surpass you; beware of drunkenness, lest the sober rich surpass you. Do not glory of your poverty, if they must not glory of their riches.

3. And let the rich give ear, if indeed they are rich; let them give ear to the Apostle, “Charge the rich of this world,” for there are who are the rich of another world. The poor are the rich of another world. The Apostles are the rich of another world, who said, “As having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” So that ye may know of what poor he is speaking he added, “of this world.” Let the “rich” then “of this world” give ear to the Apostle, “Charge,” he says, “the rich of this world, that they be not proud in their conceits.” The first worm of riches is pride. A consuming moth, which

gnaws the whole, and reduces it even to dust. “Charge them,” therefore, “not to be proud in their conceits, nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches” (they are the Apostle’s words), “but in the living God.” A thief may take away thy gold; who can take away thy God? What hath the rich man, if he hath not God? What hath the poor man not, if he have God? Therefore he says, “Nor to trust in riches, but in the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy;” with which all things He giveth also Himself.

4. If then they ought not to “trust in riches,” not to confide in them, “but in the living God;” what are they to do with their riches? Hear what: “Let them be rich in good works.” What does this mean? Explain, O Apostle. For many are loth to understand what they are loth to practise. Explain, O Apostle; give none occasion to evil works by the obscurity of thy words. Tell us what thou dost mean by, “let them be rich in good works.” Let them hear and understand; let them not be suffered to excuse themselves; but rather let them begin to accuse themselves, and to say what we have just heard in the Psalm, “For I acknowledge my sin.” Tell us what this is, “let them be rich in good works. Let them easily distribute.” And what is “let them easily distribute”? What! is this too not understood? “Let them easily distribute, let them communicate.” Thou hast, another hath not: communicate, that God may communicate to thee. Communicate here, and thou shalt communicate there. Communicate thy bread here, and thou shalt receive Bread there. What bread here? That which thou dost gather with sweat and toil, according to the curse upon the first man. What Bread there? Even Him who said, “I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven.” Here thou art rich, but thou art poor there. Gold thou hast, but thou hast not yet the Presence of Christ. Lay out what thou hast, that thou mayest receive what thou hast not. “Let them be rich in good works, let them easily distribute, let them communicate.”

5. Must they then lose all they have? He said, “Let them communicate,” not “Let them give the whole.” Let them keep for themselves as much as is sufficient for them, let them keep more than is sufficient. Let us give a certain portion of it. What portion? A tenth? The Scribes and Pharisees gave tithes for whom Christ had not yet shed His Blood. The Scribes and Pharisees gave tithes; lest haply thou shouldest think thou art doing any

great thing in breaking thy bread to the poor; and this is scarcely a thousandth part of thy means. And yet I am not finding fault with this; do even this. So hungry and thirsty am I, that I am glad even of these crumbs. But yet I cannot keep back what He who died for us said whilst He was alive. “Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” He does not deal softly with us; for He is a physician, He cuts to the quick. “Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” The Scribes and Pharisees gave the tenth. How is it with you? Ask yourselves. Consider what you do, and with what means you do it; how much you give, how much you leave for yourselves; what you spend on mercy, what you reserve for luxury. So then, “Let them distribute easily, let them communicate, let them lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may hold on eternal life.”

6. I have admonished the rich; now hear, ye poor. Ye rich, lay out your money; ye poor, refrain from plundering. Ye rich, distribute your means; ye poor, bridle your desires. Hear, ye poor, this same Apostle; “Godliness with sufficiency is a great getting.” Getting is the acquiring of gain. The world is yours in common with the rich; ye have not a house in common with the rich, but ye have the heaven in common, the light in common. Seek only for a sufficiency, seek for what is enough, and do not wish for more. All the rest is a weight, rather than a help; a burden, rather than an honour. “Godliness with sufficiency is great gain.” First is Godliness. Godliness is the worship of God. “Godliness with sufficiency. For we brought nothing into this world.” Didst thou bring anything hither? Nay, not even did ye rich bring anything. Ye found all here, ye were born naked as the poor. In both alike is the same bodily infirmity; the same infant crying, the witness of our misery. “For we brought nothing into this world” (he is speaking to the poor), “neither can we carry anything out. And having food and covering, let us be therewith content.” “For they who wish to be rich.” “Who wish to be,” not who are. For they who are so, well and good. They have heard their lesson, that they be “rich in good works, that they distribute easily, that they communicate.” They have heard already. Do ye now hear who are not yet rich. “They who wish to be rich, fall into temptation and a snare, and into

many hurtful and foolish lusts.” Do ye not fear? Hear what follows; “which drown men in destruction and perdition.” Dost thou not now fear? “for avarice is the root of all evil”? Avarice is the wishing to be rich, not the being rich already. This is avarice. Dost thou not fear to be “drowned in destruction and perdition”? Dost thou not fear “avarice the root of all evil”? Thou pluckest up out of thy field the root of thorns, and wilt thou not pluck up out of thy heart the root of evil desires? Thou cleansest thy field from which thy body gets its fruit, and wilt thou not cleanse thy heart where thy God indwelleth? “For avarice is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and entangled themselves in many sorrows.”

7. Ye have now heard what ye must do, ye have heard what ye must fear, ye have heard how the kingdom of heaven may be purchased, ye have heard by what the kingdom of heaven may be hindered. Be ye all of one mind in obeying the word of God. God made both the rich and poor. Scripture says, “The rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the Maker of them both.” The rich and the poor meet together. In what way, except in this present life? The rich and the poor are born alike. Ye meet one another as ye walk on the way together. Do not thou oppress, nor thou defraud. The one hath need, the other hath plenty. But “the Lord is the Maker of them both.” By him who hath, He helpeth him that needeth; by him who hath not, He proveth him that hath. We have heard, we have spoken; let us fear, let us take heed, let us pray, let us attain.

SERMON XXXVI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XIX. 21,”GO, SELL THAT THOU HAST, AND GIVE TO THE POOR,” ETC

1. The Gospel by the present lesson has reminded me to speak to you, Beloved, of the heavenly treasure. For our God hath not, as unbelieving covetous men suppose, wished us to lose what we have: if what hath been enjoined us be properly understood, and piously believed, and devoutly received; He hath not enjoined us to lose, but rather shown a place where we may lay up. For no man can help thinking of his treasure, and following his riches in a kind of journeying of the heart. If then they are buried in the

earth, his heart will seek the lowest earth; but if they are reserved in heaven, his heart will be above. If Christians therefore have the will to do what they know that they also make open profession of (not that all who hear know this; and I would that they who have known it, knew it not in vain); if then they have the will to "lift up the heart" above, let them lay up there, what they love; and though yet in the flesh on earth, let them dwell with Christ in heart; and as her Head went before the Church, so let the heart of the Christian go before him. As the members are to go where Christ the Head hath gone before, so shall each man at his rising again go where his heart hath now gone before. Let us go hence then by that part of us which we may; our whole man will follow whither one part of us is gone before. Our earthly house must fall to ruin; our heavenly house is eternal. Let us move our goods beforehand, whither we are ourselves getting ready to come.

2. We have just heard a certain rich man seeking counsel from the "Good Master" as to the means of obtaining eternal life. Great was the thing he loved, and of little value was that he was unwilling to renounce. And so in perverseness of heart, on hearing Him whom he had but now called "Good Master," through the overpowering love of what was valueless, he lost the possession of what was of great price. If he had not wished to obtain eternal life, he would not have asked counsel how to obtain eternal life. How is it then, Brethren, that he rejected the words of Him whom he had called "Good Master," drawn out for him as they were from the doctrine of the faith? What? Is He a Good Master before He teacheth, and when He hath taught, a bad one? Before He taught, He was called "Good." He did not hear what he wished, but he did hear what was proper for him; he had come with longing, but he went away in sadness. What if He had told him, "Lose what thou hast"? when he went away sad, because it was said, "Keep what thou hast securely." "Go," saith He, "sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor." Art thou afraid, it may be, lest thou shouldest lose it. See what follows; "And thou shall have treasure in heaven." Before now it may be thou hast set some young slave to guard thy treasures; thy God will be the guardian of thy gold. He who gave them on earth, will Himself keep them in heaven. Perhaps he would not have hesitated to commit what he had to Christ, and was only sad because it was told him, "Give to the poor;" as though he would say in his heart, "Hadst Thou said, Give it to Me, I will

keep it in heaven for thee; I would not hesitate to give it to my Lord, the Good Master;’ but now thou hast said, Give to the poor.’“

3. Let no one fear to lay out upon the poor, let no one think that he is the receiver whose hand he sees. He receives it Who bade thee give it. And this I say not out of mine own heart, or by any human conjecture; hear Him Himself, who at once exhorteth thee, and giveth thee a title of security. “I was an hungred,” saith He, and ye gave Me meat.” And when after the enumeration of all their kind offices, they answered, “When saw we Thee an hungred?” He answered, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these of Mine, ye have done it unto Me.” It is the poor man who begs, but He that is Rich receives. Thou givest to one who will make away with it, He receiveth it Who will restore it. Nor will He restore only what He receiveth; He is pleased to borrow upon interest, He promiseth more than thou hast given. Give the rein now to thy avarice, imagine thyself an usurer. If thou wert an usurer indeed, thou wouldest be rebuked by the Church, confuted by the word of God, all thy brethren would execrate thee, as a cruel usurer, desiring to wring gain from other’s tears. But now be an usurer, no one will hinder thee. Thou art willing to lend to a poor man, who whenever he may repay thee will do it with grief; but lend now to a debtor who is well able to pay, and who even exhorteth thee to receive what he promiseth.

4. Give to God, and press God for payment. Yea rather give to God, and thou wilt be pressed to receive payment. On earth indeed thou hadst to seek thy debtor; and he sought too, but only to find where he might hide himself from thy face. Thou hadst gone to the judge, and said, “Bid that my debtor be summoned;” and he on hearing this gets away, and cares not even to wish thee well, though to him perhaps in his need thou hadst given wealth by thy loan. Thou hast one then on whom thou mayest well lay out thy money. Give to Christ; He will of His own accord press thee to receive, whilst thou wilt even wonder that He hath received ought of thee. For to them who are placed on His right hand He will first say, “Come, ye blessed of My Father.” “Come” whither? “Receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” For what? “For I was an hundred, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye

took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me; I was sick and in prison, and ye visited Me." And they will say, "Lord, when saw we Thee?" What doth this mean? The debtor presses to pay, and the creditors make excuses. But the trusty debtor will not let them suffer loss thereby. "Do ye hesitate to receive? I have received, and are ye ignorant of it?" and He makes answer how He has received; "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these of Mine, ye have done it unto Me." "I received it not by Myself; but by Mine. What was given to them came to Me; be secure, ye have not lost it. Ye looked to those who were little able to pay on earth; ye have One who is well able to pay in heaven. I," He saith, "have received, I will repay."

5. And what have I received, and what do I repay? "I was an hungred,' He saith, and ye gave Me meat;' and the rest. I received earth, I will give heaven; I received temporal things, I will restore eternal; I received bread, I will give life." Yea, we may even say thus, "I have received bread, I will give Bread; I have received drink, I will give Drink; I have received houseroom, I will give a House; I was visited in sickness, I will give Health; I was visited in prison, I will give Liberty. The bread which ye gave to My poor is consumed; the Bread which I will give both recruiteth the failing and doth not fail." May He then give us Bread, He who is the living Bread which came down from heaven. When He shall give Bread, He will give Himself. For what didst thou intend when thou didst lend on usury? To give money, and to receive money; but to give a smaller sum, and to receive a larger. "I," saith God, "will give thee an exchange for the better for all that thou hast given Me. For if thou wert to give a pound of silver, and to receive a pound of gold, with how great joy wouldest thou be possessed? Examine and question avarice. "I have given a pound of silver, I receive a pound of gold!" What proportion is there between silver and gold! Much more then, what proportion is there between earth and heaven! And thy silver and gold thou wert to leave here below; whereas thou wilt not abide thyself for ever here. "And I will give thee something else, and I will give thee something more, and I will give thee something better; I will give thee even that which will last for ever." So then, Brethren, be our avarice restrained, that another, which is holy, may be enkindled. Evil altogether is her counsel, who hinders you from doing good. Ye are willing to serve an evil mistress, not owning a Good Lord. And sometimes two mistresses

occupy the heart, and tear the slave asunder who deserves to be in slavery to such a double yoke.

6. Yes, sometimes two opposing mistresses have possession of a man, avarice and luxuriousness. Avarice says, “Keep;” luxuriousness, says, “Spend.” Under two mistresses bidding and exacting diverse things what canst thou do? They have both their mode of address. And when thou dost begin to be unwilling to obey them, and to take a step towards thy liberty; because they have no power to command, they use caresses. And their caresses are more to be guarded against than their commands. What says avarice? “Keep for thyself, keep for thy children. If thou shouldest be in want, no one will give to thee. Live not for the time present only; consult for the future.” On the other hand is luxuriousness. Live whilst thou mayest. Do good to thine own soul. Die thou must, and thou knowest not when; thou knowest not to whom thou shalt leave what thou hast, or who shall possess it. Thou art taking the bread out of thine own mouth, and perhaps after thy death thine heir will not so much as place a cup of wine upon thy tomb; or if so be he place a cup, he will drink himself drunk with it, not a drop will come down to thee. Do well therefore to thine own soul, when and whilst thou canst.” Thus avarice did enjoin one thing; “Keep for thyself, consult for the future.” Luxuriousness another, “Do well to thine own soul.”

7. But O free man, called unto liberty, be weary, be weary of thy servitude to such mistresses as these. Acknowledge thy Redeemer, thy Deliverer. Serve Him, He enjoineth easier things, He enjoineth not things contrary one to another. I am bold further to say; avarice and luxuriousness did enjoin upon thee contrary things, so that thou couldest not obey them both; and one said, “Keep for thyself, and consult for the future;” the other said, “Spend freely, do well to thine own soul.” Now let thy Lord and thy Redeemer come forth, and He shall say the same, and yet no contrary things. If thou wilt not, His house hath no need of an unwilling servant. Consider thy Redeemer, consider thy Ransom. He came to redeem thee, He shed His Blood. Dear He held thee whom He purchased at so dear a price. Thou dost acknowledge Him who bought thee, consider from what He redeemeth thee. I say nothing of the other sins which lord it proudly over

thee; for thou wast serving innumerable masters. I speak only of these two, luxuriousness and avarice, giving thee contrary injunctions, hurrying thee into different things. Deliver thyself from them, come to thy God. If thou wast the servant of iniquity, be now the servant of righteousness. The words which they spake to thee, and the contrary injunctions they gave thee, the very same thou hearest now from thy Lord, yet are His injunctions not contrary. He doth not take away their words, but he taketh away their power. What did avarice say to thee? “Keep for thyself, consult for the future.” The word is not changed, but the man is changed. Now, if thou wilt, compare the counsellors. The one is avarice, the other righteousness.

8. Examine these contrary injunctions. “Keep for thyself,” says avarice. Suppose thou art willing to obey her, ask her where thou art to keep? Some well-defended place she will show thee, walled chamber, or iron chest. Well, use all precautions; yet peradventure some thief in the house will burst open the secret places; and whilst thou art taking precautions for thy money, thou wilt be in fear of thy life. It may be whilst thou art keeping up thy store, he whose mind is set to plunder them, has it even in his thoughts to kill thee. Lastly, even though by various precautions thou shouldest defend thy treasure and thy clothes against thieves; defend them still against the rust and moth. What canst thou do then? Here is no enemy without to take away thy goods, but one within consuming them.

9. No good counsel then has avarice given. See she has enjoined thee to keep, yet has not found a place where thou mayest keep. Let her give also her next advice, “Consult for the future.” For what future? for a few and those uncertain days. She says, “Consult for the future,” to a man who, it may be, will not live even till to-morrow. But suppose him to live as long as avarice thinks he will, not as long as she can prove, or assure him, or have any confidence about, but suppose him to live as long as she thinks, that he grow old and so come to his end: when he is even now bent double with old age, and leaning on his stick for support, still is he seeking gain, and hears avarice saying still, “Consult for the future.” For what future? When he is even at his last breath she speaks. She says, “for thy children’s sake.” Would that at least we did not find the old men who had no children avaricious. Yet to these even, to such as these even, who cannot even

excuse their iniquity by any empty show of natural affection, she ceases not to say, “Consult for the future.” But it may be that these will soon blush for themselves; so let us look to those who have children, whether they are certain that their children will possess what they shall leave? Let them observe in their lifetime the children of other men, some losing what they had by the unjust violence of others, others by their own wickedness consuming what they possessed; and they remain in poor estate, who were the children of rich men. Cease then to be the home-born slaves of avarice. But a man will say, “My children will possess this.” It is uncertain; I do not say, it is false, but at best, it is uncertain. But now suppose it to be certain, what dost thou wish to leave them? What thou hast gotten for thyself. Assuredly what thou hast gotten was not left thee, yet thou hast it. If thou hast been able to get possession of what was not left to thee, then will they also be able to get what thou shalt not leave to them.

10. Thus have the counsels of avarice been refuted; but now let the Lord say the same words, now let righteousness speak: the words will be the same, but not the same the meaning. “Keep for thyself,” saith the Lord, “consult for the future.” Now ask Him, “Where shall I keep?” “Thou shalt have treasure in heaven, where no thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth.” Against what an enduring future shalt thou keep it! “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” And of how many days this kingdom is, the end of the passage shows. For after He had said of those on the left hand, “So these shall go away into everlasting burning;” of those on the right hand He saith, “but the righteous into life eternal.” This is “consulting for the future.” A future which has no future beyond it. Those days without an end are called both “days,” and “a day.” For one when he was speaking of those days, saith, “That I may dwell in the house of the Lord for length of days.” And they are called a day, “This day have I begotten thee.” Now those days are one day; because there is no time, in it; that day is neither preceded by a yesterday, nor succeeded by a to-morrow. So then let us “consult for the future:” the words indeed which avarice said to thee are not different in terms from this, yet by them is avarice overthrown.

11. One thing may yet be said, "But what am I to do about my children?" Hear on this point also the counsel of thy Lord. If thy Lord should say to thee, "The thoughts of them concern Me more who did create, than thee who didst beget them," peradventure thou couldest have nothing to say. Yet thou wilt look upon that rich man who went away sorrowful, and was rebuked in the Gospel, and wilt say to thyself perhaps, "That rich man did evil in not selling all and giving to the poor, because he had no children; but I have children; I have those for whom I should be keeping something. In this weakness too the Lord is ready to advise with thee. I would be bold to speak through His mercy; I would be bold to say something, not of mine own imagining, but of His pity. Keep then for thy children too, but hear me. Suppose (such is man's condition) any one should lose one of his children; mark, Brethren, mark how that avarice has no excuse, either as respects this world or the world to come. Such, I say, is man's condition; for it is not that I wish it, but we see instances. Some Christian child has been lost: thou hast lost a Christian child; not that thou hast indeed lost him, but hast sent him before thee. For he is not gone quite away, but gone before. Ask thine own faith: surely thou too wilt go thither presently, where he hath gone before. It is but a short question I ask, which yet I suppose no one will answer. Does thy son live? Ask thy faith. If he live then, why is his portion seized upon by his brothers? But thou wilt say, What, will he return and possess it? Let it then be sent to him whither he is gone before; he cannot come to his goods, his goods can go to him. Consider only with Whom he is. If any son were serving at the Court, and became the Emperor's friend, and were to say to thee, "Sell my portion, which is there, and send it to me;" wouldest thou find what to answer him? Well, thy son is now with the Emperor of all emperors, with the King of all kings, with the Lord of all lords; send to Him. I do not say thy son is in need himself; but his Lord with whom he is, is in need upon the earth. He vouchsafes to receive here, what He gives in heaven. Do what some avaricious men are wont to do, make out a conveyance, bestow upon those who are in pilgrimage, what thou mayest receive in thine own country.

12. But now I am not speaking at all of thyself, but of thy child. Thou art hesitating to give what is thine own, yea, rather art hesitating to restore what is another's; surely thou art hereby convicted, that it was not for thy

children that thou wast laying up. See, thou dost not give to thy children, seeing thou wilt even take away from thy children. From this child at all events wilt thou take away. Why is he unworthy to receive his part, because he is living with One worthier than all? There would be reason in it, if he with whom thy son is living, were unwilling to receive it. Rich shalt thou now be for thine house, but that the house of God. So far it is then from me to say to thee, “Give what thou hast;” that I am saying to thee, “Pay that thou owest.” But thou wilt say, “His brothers will have it.” O evil maxim, which may teach thy children to wish for their brother’s death. If they shall be enriched by the property of their deceased brother, take heed how they may watch for one another in thine house. What then wilt thou do? Wilt thou divide his patrimony, and so give lessons of parricide?

13. But I am unwilling to speak of the loss of a child, lest I seem to threaten calamities, which do befall men. Let us speak in some more happy and auspicious tone. I do not say then, thou wilt have one less; reckon rather that thou hast one more. Give Christ a place with thy children, be thy Lord added to thy family; be thy Creator added to thy offspring, be thy Brother added to the number of thy children. For though there is so great a distance, yet hath He condescended to be a Brother. And though He be the Father’s Only Son, He hath vouchsafed to have coheirs. Lo, how bountifully hath He given! why wilt thou give in such barren sort? Thou hast two children; reckon Him a third: thou hast three, let Him be reckoned as a fourth: thou hast five, let Him be called a sixth; thou hast ten, let Him be the eleventh. I will say no more; keep the place of one child for thy Lord. For what thou shalt give to thy Lord, will profit both thee and thy children; whereas, what thou dost keep for thy children wrongly, will hurt both thee and them. Now thou wilt give one portion, which thou hast reckoned as one child’s portion. Reckon that thou hast got one child more.

14. What great demand is this, my Brethren? I give you counsel only; do I use violence? As saith the Apostle, “This I speak for your own profit, not that I may cast a snare upon you.” I imagine, Brethren, that it is a light and easy thought for a father of children to suppose that he has one child more, and thereby to procure such an inheritance as thou mayest possess for ever, both thou and thy children. Avarice can say nothing against it. Ye have cried

out in acclamation at these words. Turn your words rather against her; let her not overcome you; let her not have greater power in your hearts, than your Redeemer. Let her not have greater power in your hearts, than He who exhorteth us to “lift up our hearts.” And so now let us dismiss her.

15. What says luxuriousness? What? “Do well to thine own soul.” See also the Lord says the same, “Do well to thine own soul.” What luxuriousness was saying to thee, the same saith Righteousness to thee. But consider here again in what sense the words are used. If thou wouldest do well to thine own soul, consider that rich man who wished to do well to his soul, after the counsel of luxuriousness and avarice. His “ground brought forth plentifully, and he had no room where to bestow his fruits; and he said, What shall I do?” I have no room where to bestow my fruits; I have found out what to do; “I will pull down my” old “barns, and build new,” and will fill them, “and say to my soul, Thou hast much goods; take thy pleasure.” Hear the counsel against luxuriousness; “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; and whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?” And whither must that soul which shall be required of him go? This night it shall be required, and shall go he knows not whither.

16. Consider that other luxurious, proud, rich man. He “feasted sumptuously every day, and was clothed in purple and fine linen;” and “the poor man laid at his gate full of sores, and desired” in vain “the crumbs from the rich man’s table;” he fed the dogs with his sores, but he was not fed by the rich man. They both died; one of them was buried; of the other what is said? “He was carried by the Angels into Abraham’s bosom.” The rich man sees the poor man; yea rather it is now the poor man sees the rich; he longs for a drop of water on his tongue from his finger, from him who once longed for a crumb from his table. Indeed their lot was changed. The dead rich man asks for this in vain: O let not us who are alive hear it in vain. For he wished to return again to the world, and was not permitted; he wished one of the dead to be sent to his brethren, neither was this granted him. But what was said to him? “They have Moses and the Prophets;” and he said, “They will not hear except one go from the dead.” Abraham said to him, “If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe though one go from the dead.”

17. What luxuriousness then said in a perverted sense concerning the giving of alms, and procuring rest for our souls against the time to come, that so we may “do well to our souls,” Moses also and the Prophets have spoken. Let us give ear while we are alive. Because there he will desire in vain to hear, who has despised these words when he heard them here. Are we expecting that one should rise even from the dead, and tell us to do well to our own souls? It has been done already: thy father hath not risen again, but thy Lord hath risen. Hear Him, and accept good counsel. Spare not thy treasures, spend as freely as thou canst. This was the voice of luxuriousness: it has become the Lord’s Voice. Spend as freely as thou canst, do well to thy soul, lest this night thy soul be required. Here then ye have in Christ’s Name a discourse as I think on the duty of almsgiving. This your voice now applauding, is then only well-pleasing to the Lord, if He see withal your hands active in works of mercy.

SERMON XXXVII

DELIVERED ON THE LORD’S DAY, ON THAT WHICH IS WRITTEN IN THE GOSPEL, MATT. XX. 1, “THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE UNTO A MAN THAT WAS A HOUSEHOLDER, WHO WENT OUT EARLY IN THE MORNING TO HIRE LABOURERS INTO HIS VINEYARD.”

1. Ye have heard out of the Holy Gospel a parable well suited to the present season, concerning the labourers in the vineyard. For now is the time of the material vintage. Now there is also a spiritual vintage, wherein God rejoiceth in the fruit of His vineyard. For we cultivate God, and God cultivateth us. But we do not so cultivate God as to make Him any better thereby. For our cultivation is the labour of the heart, not of the hands. He cultivateth us as the husbandman doth his field. In then that He cultivateth us, He maketh us better; because so doth the husbandman make his field better by cultivating it, and the very fruit He seeketh in us is, that we may cultivate Him. The culture He exerciseth on us is, that He ceaseth not to root out by His Word the evil seeds from our hearts, to open our heart, as it were, by the plough of His Word, to plant the seed of His precepts, to wait for the fruit of piety. For when we have so received that culture into our heart, as to cultivate Him well, we are not ungrateful to our Husbandman,

but render the fruit wherein He rejoiceth. And our fruit doth not make Him the richer, but us the happier.

2. See then; hear how, as I have said, “God cultivateth us.” For that we cultivate God, there is no need to be proved to you. For all men have this on their tongue, that men cultivate God, but the hearer feels a kind of awe, when he hears that God cultivates man; because it is not after the ordinary usage of men to say, that God cultivateth men, but that men cultivate God. We ought therefore to prove to you, that God also doth cultivate men; lest perchance we be thought to have spoken a word contrary to sound doctrine, and men dispute in their heart against us, and as not knowing our meaning, find fault with us. I have determined therefore to show you, that God doth also cultivate us; but as I have said already, as a field, that He may make us better. Thus the Lord saith in the Gospel, “I am the Vine, ye are the branches, My Father is the Husbandman.” What doth the Husbandman do? I ask you who are husbandmen. I suppose he cultivates his field. If then God the Father be a Husbandman, He hath a field; and His field He cultivateth, and from it He expecteth fruit.

3. Again, He “planted a vineyard,” as the Lord Jesus Christ Himself saith, “and let it out to husbandmen, who should render Him the fruit in the proper season. And He sent His servants to them to ask for the hire of the vineyard. But they treated them despitefully, and killed some,” and contemptuously refused to render the fruits. “He sent others also,” they suffered the like treatment. And then the Householder, the Cultivator of His field, and the Planter, and Letter out of His vineyard, said; “I will send Mine Only Son, it may be they will at least reverence Him.” And so He saith, “He sent His Own Son also. They said among themselves, This is the heir, come, let us kill Him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they killed Him, and cast Him out of the vineyard. When the Lord of the vineyard cometh, what will He do to those wicked husbandmen? They answered, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out His vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render Him the fruits in their seasons.” The vineyard was planted when the law was given in the hearts of the Jews. The Prophets were sent, seeking fruit, even their good life: the Prophets were treated despitefully by them, and were killed. Christ also was sent, the Only

Son of the Householder; and they killed Him who was the Heir, and so lost the inheritance. Their evil counsel turned out contrary to their designs. They killed Him that they might possess the inheritance; and because they killed Him, they lost it.

4. Ye have just heard too the parable out of the Holy Gospel; that “the kingdom of heaven is like unto a householder, which went out to hire labourers into His vineyard. He went out in the morning,” and hired those whom he found, and agreed with them for a denarius as their hire. He “went out again at the third hour, and found others,” and brought them to the labour of the vineyard. “And the sixth and ninth hour he did likewise. He went out also at the eleventh hour,” near the end of the day, “and found some idle and standing still, and he said to them, Why stand ye here?” Why do ye not work in the vineyard? They answered, “Because no man hath hired us.” “Go ye also,” said He, “and whatsoever is right I will give you.” His pleasure was to fix their hire at a denarius. How could they who had only to work one hour dare hope for a denarius? Yet they congratulated themselves in the hope that they should receive something. So then these were brought in even for one hour. At the end of the day he ordered the hire to be paid to all, from the last to the first. Then he began to pay at those who had come in at the eleventh hour, and he commanded a denarius to be given them. When they who had come at the first hour saw that the others had received a denarius, which he had agreed for with themselves “they hoped that they should have received more:” and when their turn came, they also received a denarius. “They murmured against the good man of the house, saying, Behold, thou hast made us who have borne the burning and heat of the day, equal and like to those who have laboured but one hour in the vineyard.” And “the good man,” returning a most just answer to one of them, said, “Friend, I do thee no wrong;” that is, “I have not defrauded thee, I have paid thee what I agreed for with thee. “I have done thee no wrong,” for I have paid thee what I agreed for. To this other it is my will not to render a payment, but to bestow a gift. “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?” If I had taken from any one what did not belong to me, rightly I might be blamed, as fraudulent and unjust: if I had not paid any one his due, rightly might I be blamed as fraudulent, and as withholding what belonged to another; but

when I pay what is due, and give besides to whom I will, neither can he to whom I owed find fault, and he to whom I gave ought to rejoice the more.” They had nothing to answer; and all were made equal; “and the last became first, and the first last;” by equality of treatment, not by inverting their order. For what is the meaning of, “the last were first, and the first last”? That both the first and last received the same.

5. How is it that he began to pay at the last? Are not all, as we read, to receive together? For we read in another place of the Gospel, that He will say to those whom He shall set on the right hand, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.” If all then are to receive together, how do we understand in this place, that they received first who began to work at the eleventh hour, and they last who were hired at the first hour? If I shall be able so to speak, as to reach your understanding, God be thanked. For to Him ought ye to render thanks, who distributeth to you by me; for nought of my own do I distribute. If ye ask me, for example, which of the two has received first, he who has received after one hour, or he who after twelve hours; every man would answer that he who has received after one hour, has received before him who received after twelve hours. So then though they all received at the same hour, yet because some received after one hour, others after twelve hours, they who received after so short a time are said to have received first. The first righteous men, as Abel, and Noe, called as it were at the first hour, will receive together with us the blessedness of the resurrection. Other righteous men after them, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all of their age, called as it were at the third hour, will receive together with us the blessedness of the resurrection. Other righteous men, as Moses, and Aaron, and whosoever with them were called as it were at the sixth hour, will receive together with us the blessedness of the resurrection. After them the Holy Prophets, called as it were at the ninth hour, will receive together with us the same blessedness. In the end of the world all Christians, called as it were at the eleventh hour, will receive with the rest the blessedness of that resurrection. All will receive together; but consider those first men, after how long a time do they receive it? If then those first receive after a long time, we after a short time; though we all receive together, yet we seem to have received first, because our hire will not tarry long in coming.

6. In that hire then shall we be all equal, and the first as the last, and the last as the first; because that denarius is life eternal, and in the life eternal all will be equal. For although through diversity of attainments the saints will shine, some more, some less; yet as to this respect, the gift of eternal life, it will be equal to all. For that will not be longer to one, and shorter to another, which is alike everlasting; that which hath no end will have no end either for thee or me. After one sort in that life will be wedded chastity, after another virgin purity; in one sort there will be the fruit of good works, in another sort the crown of martyrdom. One in one sort, and another in another; yet in respect to the living for ever, this man will not live more than that, nor that than this. For alike without end will they live, though each shall live in his own brightness: and the denarius in the parable is that life eternal. Let not him then who has received after a long time murmur against him who has received after a short time. To the first, it is a payment; to the other, a free gift; yet the same thing is given alike to both.

7. There is also something like this in this present life, and besides that solution of the parable, by which they who were called at the first hour are understood of Abel and the righteous men of his age, and they at the third, of Abraham and the righteous men of his age, and they at the sixth, of Moses and Aaron and the righteous men of their age, and they at the eleventh, as in the end of the world, of all Christians; besides this solution of the parable, the parable may be seen to have an explanation in respect even of this present life. For they are as it were called at the first hour, who begin to be Christians fresh from their mother’s womb; boys are called as it were at the third, young men at the sixth, they who are verging toward old age, at the ninth hour, and they who are called as if at the eleventh hour, are they who are altogether decrepit; yet all these are to receive the one and the same denarius of eternal life.

8. But, Brethren, hearken ye and understand, lest any put off to come into the vineyard, because he is sure, that, come when he will, he shall receive this denarius. And sure indeed he is that the denarius is promised him; but this is no injunction to put off. For did they who were hired into the vineyard, when the householder came out to them to hire whom he might find, at the third hour for instance, and did hire them, did they say to him,

“Wait, we are not going thither till the sixth hour”? or they whom he found at the sixth hour, did they say, “We are not going till the ninth hour”? or they whom he found at the ninth hour, did they say, “We are not going till the eleventh? For he will give to all alike; why should we fatigue ourselves more than we need?” What He was to give, and what He was to do, was in the secret of His own counsel: do thou come when thou art called. For an equal reward is promised to all; but as to this appointed hour of working, there is an important question. For if, for instance, they who are called at the sixth hour, at that age of life that is, in which as in the full heat of noon, is felt the glow of manhood’s years; if they, called thus in manhood, were to say, “Wait, for we have heard in the Gospel that all are to receive the same reward, we will come at the eleventh hour, when we shall have grown old, and shall still receive the same. Why should we add to our labour?” it would be answered them thus, “Art not thou willing to labour now, who dost not know whether thou shalt live to old age? Thou art called at the sixth hour; come. The Householder hath it is true promised thee a denarius, if thou come at the eleventh hour, but whether thou shalt live even to the seventh, no one hath promised thee. I say not to the eleventh, but even to the seventh hour. Why then dost thou put off him that calleth thee, certain as thou art of the reward, but uncertain of the day? Take heed then lest peradventure what he is to give thee by promise, thou take from thyself by delay.” Now if this may rightly be said of infants as belonging to the first hour, if it may be rightly said of boys as belonging to the third, if it may be rightly said of men in the vigour of life, as in the full-day heat of the sixth hour; how much more rightly may it be said of the decrepit? Lo, already is it the eleventh hour, and dost thou yet stand still, and art thou yet slow to come?

9. But perhaps the Householder hath not gone out to call thee? If he hath not gone out, what mean our addresses to you? For we are servants of his household, we are sent to hire labourers. Why standest thou still then? Thou hast now ended the number of thy years; hasten after the denarius. For this is the “going out” of the Householder, the making himself known; forasmuch as he that is in the house is hidden, he is not seen by those who are without; but when he “goeth out” of the house, he is seen by those without. So Christ is in secret, as long as He is not known and

acknowledged; but when He is acknowledged, He hath gone out to hire labourers. For now He hath come forth from a hidden place, to be known of men: everywhere Christ is known, Christ is preached; all places whatsoever under the heaven proclaim aloud the glory of Christ. He was in a manner the object of derision and contempt among the Jews, He appeared in low estate and was despised. For He hid His Majesty, and manifested His infirmity. That in Him which was manifested was despised, and that which was hidden was not known. “For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” But is He still to be despised now that He sitteth in heaven, if He were despised when He was hanging on the tree? They who crucified Him wagged their head, and standing before His Cross, as though they had attained the fruit of their cruel rage, they said in mockery, “If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross. He saved others, Himself He cannot save.” He came not down, because He lay hid. For with far greater ease could He have come down from the Cross, who had power to rise again from the grave. He showed forth an example of patience for our instruction. He delayed His power, and was not acknowledged. For He had not then gone out to hire labourers, He had gone out, He had not made Himself known. On the third day He rose again, He showed Himself to His disciples, ascended into heaven, and sent the Holy Ghost on the fiftieth day after the resurrection, the tenth after the ascension. The Holy Ghost who was sent filled all who were in one room, one hundred and twenty men. They “were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with the tongues of all nations;” now was the calling manifest, now He went out to hire. For now the power of truth began to be made known to all. For then even one man having received the Holy Ghost, spake by himself with the tongues of all nations. But now in the Church oneness itself, as one man speaks in the tongues of all nations. For what tongue has not the Christian religion reached? to what limits does it not extend? Now is there no one “who hideth himself from the heat thereof;” and delay is still ventured by him who stands still at the eleventh hour.

10. It is plain then, my Brethren, it is plain to all, do ye hold it fast, and be sure of it, that whensoever any one turns himself to the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, from a useless or abandoned way of life, all that is past is forgiven him, and as though all his debts were cancelled, a new account is

entered into with him. All is entirely forgiven. Let no one be anxious in the thought that there remains anything which is not forgiven him. But on the other hand, let no one rest in a perverse security. For these two things are the death of souls, despair, and perverse hope. For as a good and right hope saveth, so doth a perverse hope deceive. First, consider how despair deceiveth. There are men, who when they begin to reflect on the evils they have done, think they cannot be forgiven; and whilst they think they cannot be forgiven, forthwith they give up their souls to ruin, and perish through despair, saying in their thoughts, "Now there is no hope for us; for such great sins as we have committed cannot be remitted or pardoned us; why then should we not satisfy our lusts? Let us at least fill up the pleasure of the time present, seeing we have no reward in that which is to come. Let us do what we list, though it be not lawful; that we may at least have a temporal enjoyment, because we cannot attain to the receiving an eternal." In saying such things they perish through despair, either before they believe at all, or when Christians already, they have fallen by evil living into any sins and wickednesses. The Lord of the vineyard goeth forth to them, and by the Prophet Ezekial knocketh, and calleth to them in their despair, and as they turn their backs to Him that calleth them. "In whatsoever day a man shall turn from his most wicked way, I will forget all his iniquities." If they hear and believe this voice, they are recovered from despair, and rise up again from that very deep and bottomless gulf, wherein they had been sunk.

11. But these must fear, lest they fall into another gulf, and they die through a perverse hope, who could not die through despair. For they change their thoughts, which are far different indeed from what they were before, but not less pernicious, and begin again to say in their hearts, "If in whatever day I turn from my most evil way, the merciful God, as He truly promiseth by the Prophet, will forget all my iniquities, why should I turn to-day and not to-morrow? Let this day pass as yesterday, in excess of guilty pleasure, in the full flow of licentiousness, let it wallow in deadly delights; to-morrow I shall turn myself,' and there will be an end to it." One may answer thee, An end of what? Of mine iniquities, thou wilt say. Well, rejoice indeed, that to-morrow there will be an end of thine iniquities. But what if before to-morrow thine own end shall be? So then thou dost well indeed to rejoice that God hath promised thee forgiveness for thine iniquities, if thou art

converted; but no one has promised thee to-morrow. Or if perchance some astrologer hath promised it, it is a far different thing from God’s promise. Many have these astrologers deceived, in that they have promised themselves advantages, and have found only losses. Therefore for the sake of these again whose hope is wrong, doth the Householder go forth. As He went forth to those who had despaired wrongly, and were lost in their despair, and called them back to hope; so doth He go forth to these also who would perish through an evil hope; and by another book He saith to them, “Make no tarrying to turn to the Lord.” As He had said to the others, “In whatsoever day a man shall turn from his most wicked way, I will forget all his iniquities,” and took despair away from them, because they had now given up their soul to perdition, despairing of forgiveness by any means; so doth He go forth to these also who have a mind to perish through hope and delay; and speaketh to them, and chideth them, “Make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, and put not off from day to day; for suddenly shall the wrath of the Lord come forth, and in the day of vengeance He will destroy thee.” Therefore put not off, shut not against thyself what now is open. Lo, the Giver of forgiveness openeth the door to thee; why dost thou delay? Thou oughtest to rejoice, were He to open after ever so long a time to thy knocking; thou hast not knocked, yet doth He open, and dost thou remain outside? Put not off then. Scripture saith in a certain place, as touching works of mercy, “Say not, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give; when thou canst do the kindness at once; for thou knowest not what may happen on the morrow.” Here then is a precept of not putting off being merciful to another, and wilt thou by putting off be cruel against thine own self? Thou oughtest not to put off to give bread, and wilt thou put off to receive forgiveness? If thou dost not put off in showing pity towards another, “pity thine own soul also in pleasing God.” Give alms to thine own soul also. Nay I do not say, give to it, but thrust not back His Hand that would give to thee.

12. But men continually injure themselves exceedingly in their fear to offend others. For good friends have much influence for good, and evil friends for evil. Therefore it was not the Lord’s will to choose first senators, but fishermen, to teach us for our own salvation to disregard the friendship of the powerful. O signal mercy of the Creator! For He knew that had He

chosen the senator, he would say, “My rank has been chosen.” If He had first made choice of the rich man, he would say, “My wealth has been chosen.” If He had first made choice of an emperor, he would say, “My power has been chosen.” If the orator he would say, “My eloquence has been chosen.” If of the philosopher, he would say, “My wisdom has been chosen.” Meanwhile He says, let these proud ones be put off awhile, they swell too much. Now there is much difference between substantial size and swelling; both indeed are large, but both are not alike sound. Let them then, He says, be put off, these proud ones, they must be cured by something solid. First give Me, He says, this fisherman. “Come, thou poor one, follow Me; thou hast nothing, thou knowest nothing, follow Me. Thou poor and ignorant one, follow Me. There is nothing in thee to inspire awe, but there is much in thee to be filled.” To so copious a fountain an empty vessel should be brought. So the fisherman left his nets, the fisherman received grace, and became a divine orator. See what the Lord did, of whom the Apostle says, “God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, as if they were, that those things which are may be brought to nought.” And so now the fishermen’s words are read, and the necks of orators are brought down. Let all empty winds then be taken away, let the smoke be taken away which vanishes as it mounts; let them be utterly despised when the question is of this salvation.

13. If any one in a city had some bodily sickness, and there was in that place some very skilful physician who was an enemy to the sick man’s powerful friends; if any one, I say, in a city were labouring under some dangerous bodily sickness; and there was in the same city a very skilful physician, an enemy as I said, of the sick man’s powerful friends, and they were to say to their friend, “Do not call him in, he knows nothing;” and they were to say this not from any judgment of their mind, but through dislike of him; would he not for his own safety’s sake remove from him the groundless assertions of his powerful friends, and with whatever offence to them, in order that he might live but a few days longer, call that physician in, whom common report had given out as most skilful to drive away the disease of his body? Well, the whole race of mankind is sick, not with diseases of the body, but with sin. There lies one great patient from East to

West throughout the world. To cure this great patient came the Almighty Physician down. He humbled Himself even to mortal flesh, as it were to the sick man's bed. Precepts of health He gives, and is despised; they who do observe them are delivered. He is despised, when powerful friends say, "He knows nothing." If He knew nothing, His power would not fill the nations. If He knew nothing, He would not have been, before He was with us. If He knew nothing, He would not have sent the Prophets before Him. Are not those things which were foretold of old, fulfilled now? Does not this Physician prove the power of His art by the accomplishment of His promises? Are not deadly errors overturned throughout the whole world; and by the threshing of the world lusts subdued? Let no one say, "The world was better aforetime than now; ever since that Physician began to exercise His art, many dreadful things we witness here." Marvel not at this? Before that any were in course of healing, the Physician's residence seemed clean of blood; but now rather as seeing what thou dost, shake off all vain delights, and come to the Physician, it is the time of healing, not of pleasure.

14. Let us then think, Brethren, of being cured. If we do not yet know the Physician, yet let us not like frenzied men be violent against Him, or as men in a lethargy turn away from Him. For many through this violence have perished, and many have perished through sleep. The frenzied are they who are made mad for want of sleep. The lethargic are they who are weighed down by excessive sleep. Men are to be found of both these kinds. Against this Physician it is the will of some to be violent, and forasmuch as He is Himself sitting in heaven, they persecute His faithful ones on earth. Yet even such as these He cureth. Many of them having been converted from enemies have become friends, from persecutors have become preachers. Such as these were the Jews, whom, though violent as men in frenzy against Him while He was here, He healed, and prayed for them as He hung upon the Cross. For He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Yet many of them when their fury was calmed, their frenzy as it were got under, came to know God, and Christ. When the Holy Ghost was sent after the Ascension, they were converted to Him whom they crucified, and as believers drunk in the Sacrament His Blood, which in their violence they shed.

15. Of this we have examples. Saul persecuted the members of Jesus Christ, who is now sitting in heaven; grievously did he persecute them in his frenzy, in the loss of his reason, in the transport of his madness. But He with one word, calling to him out of heaven, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” struck down the frantic one, raised him up whole, killed the persecutor, quickened the preacher. And so again many lethargic ones are healed. For to such are they like, who are not violent against Christ, nor malicious against Christians, but who in their delay are only dull and heavy with drowsy words, are slow to open their eyes to the light, and are annoyed with those who would arouse them. “Get away from me,” says the heavy, lethargic man, “I pray thee, get away from me.” Why? “I wish to sleep.” But you will die in consequence. He through love of sleep will answer, “I wish to die.” And Love from above calls out “I do not wish it.” Often does the son exhibit this loving affection to an aged father, though he must needs die in a few days; and is now in extreme old age. If he sees that he is lethargic, and knows from the physician that he is oppressed with a lethargic complaint, who tells him “Arouse your father, do not let him sleep, if you would save his life”! Then will the son come to the old man, and beat, and squeeze, or pinch, or prick him, or give him any uneasiness, and all through his dutiful affection to him; and will not allow him to die at once, die though he soon must from very age; and if his life is thus saved, the son rejoices that he has now to live some few days more with him who must soon depart to make way for him. With how much greater affection then ought we to be importunate with our friends, with whom we may live not a few days in this world, but in God’s presence for ever! Let them then love us, and do what they hear us say, and worship Him, whom we also worship, that they may receive what we also hope for. “Let us turn to the Lord,” etc.

SERMON XXXVIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XX. 30, ABOUT THE TWO BLIND MEN SITTING BY THE WAY SIDE, AND CRYING OUT, “LORD, HAVE MERCY ON US, THOU SON OF DAVID.”

1. Ye know, Holy Brethren, full well as we do, that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the Physician of our eternal health; and that to this end He

took the weakness of our nature, that our weakness might not last for ever. For He assumed a mortal body, wherein to kill death. And, “though He was crucified through weakness,” as the Apostle saith, “yet He liveth by the power of God.” They are the words too of the same Apostle; “He dieth no more, and death shall have no more dominion over Him.” These things, I say, are well known to your faith. And there is also this which follows from it, that we should know that all the miracles which He did on the body, avail to our instruction, that we may from them perceive that which is not to pass away, nor to have any end. He restored to the blind those eyes which death was sure sometime to close; He raised Lazarus to life who was to die again. And whatever He did for the health of bodies, He did it not to this end that they should be for ever; whereas at the last He will give eternal health even to the body itself. But because those things which were not seen, were not believed; by means of these temporal things which were seen, He built up faith in those things which were not seen.

2. Let no one then, Brethren, say that our Lord Jesus Christ doeth not those things now, and on this account prefer the former to the present ages of the Church. In a certain place indeed the same Lord prefers those who “do not see, and yet believe,” to them who see and therefore believe. For even at that time so irresolute was the infirmity of His disciples, that they thought that He whom they saw to have risen again must be handled, in order that they might believe. It was not enough for their eyes that they had seen Him, unless their hands also were applied to His limbs, and the scars of His recent wounds were touched; that that disciple who was in doubt, might cry out suddenly when he had touched and recognised the scars, “My Lord and my God.” The scars manifested Him who had healed all wounds in others. Could not the Lord have risen again without the scars? Yes, but He knew the wounds which were in the hearts of His disciples, and to heal them He had preserved the scars on His own Body. And what said the Lord to him who now confessed and said, “My Lord and my God”? “Because thou hast seen,” He said, “thou hast believed; blessed are they who do not see, and yet believe.” Of whom spake He, Brethren, but of us? Not that He spake only of us, but of those also who shall come after us. For after a little while when He had departed from the sight of men, that faith might be established in their hearts, whosoever believed, believed, though they saw Him not, and

great has been the merit of their faith; for the procuring of which faith they brought only the movement of a pious heart, and not the touching of their hands.

3. These things then the Lord did to invite us to the faith. This faith reigneth now in the Church, which is spread throughout the whole world. And now He worketh greater cures, on account of which He disdained not then to exhibit those lesser ones. For as the soul is better than the body, so is the saving health of the soul better than the health of the body. The blind body doth not now open its eyes by a miracle of the Lord, but the blinded heart openeth its eyes to the word of the Lord. The mortal corpse doth not now rise again, but the soul doth rise again which lay dead in a living body. The deaf ears of the body are not now opened; but how many have the ears of their heart closed, which yet fly open at the penetrating word of God, so that they believe who did not believe, and they live well, who did live evilly, and they obey, who did not obey; and we say, “Such a man is become a believer;” and we wonder when we hear of them whom once we had known as hardened. Why then dost thou marvel at one who now believes, who is living innocently, and serving God; but because thou dost behold him seeing, whom thou hadst known to be blind; dost behold him living, whom thou hadst known to be dead; dost behold him hearing, whom thou hadst known to be deaf? For consider that there are who are dead in another than the ordinary sense, of whom the Lord spake to a certain man who delayed to follow the Lord, because he wished to bury his father; “Let the dead,” said He, “bury their dead.” Surely these dead buriers are not dead in body; for if this were so, they could not bury dead bodies. Yet doth he call them dead; where, but in the soul within? For as we may often see in a household, itself sound and well, the master of the same house lying dead; so in a sound body do many carry a dead soul within; and these the Apostle arouses thus, “Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” It is the Same who giveth light to the blind, that awakeneth the dead. For it is with His voice that the cry is made by the Apostle to the dead, “Awake, thou that sleepest.” And the blind will be enlightened with light, when he shall have risen again. And how many deaf men did the Lord see before His eyes, when He said, “He that hath ears to

hear, let him hear.” For who was standing before Him without his bodily ears? What other ears then did He seek for, but those of the inner man?

4. Again, what eyes did He look for when He spake to those who saw indeed, but who saw only with the eyes of the flesh? For when Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us;” he understood indeed that if the Father were shown him, it might well suffice him; but how would the Father suffice him whom He that was equal to the Father sufficed not? And why did He not suffice? Because He was not seen. And why was He not seen? Because the eye whereby He might be seen was not yet whole. For this, namely, that the Lord was seen in the flesh with the outward eyes, not only the disciples who honoured Him saw, but also the Jews who crucified Him. He then who wished to be seen in another way, sought for other eyes. And therefore it was that to him who said, “Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us;” He answered, “Have I been so long time with you; and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He who hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also.” And that He might in the mean while heal the eyes of faith, he has first of all instructions given him regarding faith, that so he might attain to sight. And lest Philip should think that he was to conceive of God under the same form in which he then saw the Lord Jesus Christ in the body, he immediately subjoined; “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?” He had already said, “He who hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also.” But Philip’s eye was not yet sound enough to see the Father, nor consequently to see the Son who is Himself Coequal with the Father. And so Jesus Christ took in hand to cure, and with the medicines and salve of faith to strengthen the eyes of his mind, which as yet were weak and unable to behold so great a light, and He said, “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?” Let not him then who cannot yet see what the Lord will one day show him, seek first to see what he is to believe; but let him first believe that the eye by which he is to see may be healed. For it was only the form of the servant which was exhibited to the eyes of servants; because if “He who thought it not robbery to be equal with God,” could have been now seen as equal with God by those whom He wished to be healed, He would not have needed to “empty Himself, and to take the form of a servant.” But because there was no way whereby God could be seen, but whereby man could be seen, there was;

therefore He who was God was made man, that that which was seen might heal that whereby He was not seen. For He saith Himself in another place, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Philip might of course have answered and said, “Lord, lo, I see Thee; is the Father such as I see Thee to be? forasmuch as Thou hast said, He who hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also’?” But before Philip answered thus, or perhaps before he so much as thought it, when the Lord had said, “He who hath seen Me, hath seen the Father also;” He immediately added, “Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?” For with that eye he could, not yet see either the Father, or the Son who is equal with the Father; but that his eye might be healed for seeing, he was to be anointed unto believing. So then before thou seest what thou canst not now see, believe what as yet thou seest not. “Walk by faith,” that thou mayest attain to sight. Sight will not gladden him in his home whom faith consoleth not by the way. For so says the Apostle, “As long as we are in the body, we are in pilgrimage from the Lord.” And he subjoins immediately why we are still “in pilgrimage,” though we have now believed; “For we walk by faith,” He says, “not by sight.”

5. Our whole business then, Brethren, in this life is to heal this eye of the heart whereby God may be seen. To this end are celebrated the Holy Mysteries; to this end is preached the word of God; to this end are the moral exhortations of the Church, those, that is, that relate to the correction of manners, to the amendment of carnal lusts, to the renouncing the world, not in word only, but in a change of life: to this end is directed the whole aim of the Divine and Holy Scriptures, that that inner man may be purged of that which hinders us from the sight of God. For as the eye which is formed to see this temporal light, a light though heavenly, yet corporeal, and manifest, not to men only, but even to the meanest animals (for for this the eye is formed, to see this light); if anything be thrown or fall into it, whereby it is disordered, is shut out from this light; and though it encompass the eye with its presence, yet the eye turns itself away from, and is absent from it; and through its disordered condition is not only rendered absent from the light which is present, but the light to see which it was formed, is even painful to it. So the eye of the heart too when it is disordered and wounded turns away from the light of righteousness, and dares not and cannot contemplate it.

6. And what is it that disorders the eye of the heart? Evil desire, covetousness, injustice, worldly concupiscence, these disorder, close, blind the eye of the heart. And yet when the eye of the body is out of order, how is the physician sought out, what an absence of all delay to open and cleanse it, that that may be healed whereby this outward light is seen! There is running to and fro, no one is still, no one loiters, if even the smallest straw fall into the eye. And God it must be allowed made the sun which we desire to see with sound eyes. Much brighter assuredly is He who made it; nor is the light with which the eye of the mind is concerned of this kind at all. That light is eternal Wisdom. God made thee, O man, after His own image. Would He give thee wherewithal to see the sun which He made, and not give thee wherewithal to see Him who made thee, when He made thee after His own image? He hath given thee this also; both hath He given thee. But much thou dost love these outward eyes, and despisest much that interior eye; it thou dost carry about bruised and wounded. Yea, it would be a punishment to thee, if thy Maker should wish to manifest Himself unto thee; it would be a punishment to thine eye, before that it is cured and healed. For so Adam in paradise sinned, and hid himself from the face of God. As long then as he had the sound heart of a pure conscience, he rejoiced at the presence of God; when that eye was wounded by sin, he began to dread the Divine light, he fled back into the darkness, and the thick covert of the trees, flying from the truth, and anxious for the shade.

7. Therefore, my Brethren, since we too are born of him, and as the Apostle says, “In Adam all die;” for we were all at first two persons if we were loth to obey the physician, that we might not be sick; let us obey Him now, that we may be delivered from sickness. The physician gave us precepts, when we were whole; He gave us precepts that we might not need a physician. “They that are whole,” He saith, “need not a physician, but they that are sick.” When whole we despised these precepts, and by experience have felt how to our own destruction we despised His precepts. Now we are sick, we are in distress, we are on the bed of weakness; yet let us not despair. For because we could not come to the Physician, He hath vouchsafed to come Himself to us. Though despised by man when he was whole, He did not despise him when he was stricken. He did not leave off to give other precepts to the weak, who would not keep the first precepts, that he might

not be weak; as though He would say, “Assuredly thou hast by experience felt that I spake the truth when I said, Touch not this. Be healed then now at length, and recover the life thou hast lost. Lo, I am bearing thine infirmity; drink thou the bitter cup. For thou hast of thine own self made those my so sweet precepts which were given to thee when whole, so toilsome. They were despised and so thy distress began; cured thou canst not be, except thou drink the bitter cup, the cup of temptations, wherein this life abounds, the cup of tribulation, anguish, and sufferings. Drink then,” He says, “drink, that thou mayest live.” And that the sick man may not make answer, “I cannot, I cannot bear it, I will not drink;” the Physician, all whole though he be, drinketh first, that the sick man may not hesitate to drink. For what bitterness is there in this cup, which He hath not drunk? If it be contumely; He heard it first when He drove out the devils, “He hath a devil, and by Beelzebub He casteth out devils.” Whereupon in order to comfort the sick, He saith, “If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household?” If pains are this bitter cup, He was bound and scourged and crucified. If death be this bitter cup, He died also. If infirmity shrink with horror from any particular kind of death, none was at that time more ignominious than the death of the cross. For it was not in vain that the Apostle, when setting forth His obedience, added, “Made obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

8. But because He designed to honour His faithful ones at the end of the world, He hath first honoured the cross in this world; in such wise that the princes of the earth who believe in Him have prohibited any criminal from being crucified; and that cross which the Jewish persecutors with great mockery prepared for the Lord, even kings His servants at this day bear with great confidence on their foreheads. Only the shameful nature of the death which our Lord vouchsafed to undergo for us is not now so apparent, Who, as the Apostle says, “was made a curse for us.” And when as He hung, the blindness of the Jews mocked Him, surely He could have come down from the Cross, who if He had not so willed, had not been on the Cross; but it was a greater thing to rise from the grave than to come down from the Cross. Our Lord then in doing these Divine, and in suffering these human things, instructs us by His Bodily miracles and Bodily patience, that we may believe, and be made whole to behold those things invisible which

the eye of the body hath no knowledge of. With this intent then He cured these blind men of whom the account has just now been read in the Gospel. And consider what instruction He has by their cure conveyed to the man who is sick within.

9. Consider the issue of the thing, and the order of the circumstances. Those two blind men sitting by the way side cried out as the Lord passed by, that He would have mercy upon them. But they were restrained from crying out by the multitude which was with the Lord. Now do not suppose that this circumstance is left without a mysterious meaning. But they overcame the crowd who kept them back by the great perseverance of their cry, that their voice might reach the Lord's ears; as though He had not already anticipated their thoughts. So then the two blind men cried out that they might be heard by the Lord, and could not be restrained by the multitudes. The Lord "was passing by," and they cried out. The Lord "stood still," and they were healed. For "the Lord Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto Him, That our eyes may be opened." The Lord did according to their faith, He recovered their eyes. If we have now understood by the sick, the deaf, the dead, the sick, and deaf, and dead, within; let us look out in this place also for the blind within. The eyes of the heart are clossd; "Jesus passeth by" that we may cry out. What is, "Jesus passeth by"? Jesus is doing things which last but for a time. What is "Jesus passeth by"? Jesus doeth things which pass by. Mark and see how many things of His have "passed by." He was born of the Virgin Mary; is He being born always? As an infant was He suckled; is He suckled always? He ran through the successive ages of life unto man's full estate; doth He grow in body always? Boyhood succeeded to infancy, to boyhood youth, to youth man's full stature in several passing successions. Even the very miracles which He did are "passed by," they are read and believed. For because these miracles are written that so they might be read, they "passed by" when they were being done. In a word, not to dwell long on this, He was Crucified: is He hanging on the Cross always? He was Buried, He Rose again, He Ascended into heaven; "now He dieth no more, death shall no more have dominion over Him." And His Divinity abideth ever, yea, the Immortality of His Body now shall never fail. But nevertheless all those things which were wrought by Him in time have "passed by;" and they are

written to be read, and they are preached to be believed. In all these things then, “Jesus passeth by.”

10. And what are “the two blind men by the way side,” but the two people to cure whom Jesus came? Let us show those two people in the Holy Scriptures. It is written in the Gospel, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also must I bring, that there may be one fold and One Shepherd.” Who then are the two people? One the people of the Jews, and the other of the Gentiles. “I am not sent,” He saith, “but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” To whom did He say this? To the disciples; when that woman of Canaan who confessed herself to be a dog, cried out that she might be found worthy of the crumbs from the master’s table. And because she was found worthy, now were the two people to whom He had come made manifest: the Jewish people, to wit, of whom He said, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel;” and the people of the Gentiles, whose type this woman exhibited whom He had first rejected, saying, “It is not meet to cast the children’s bread to the dogs;” and to whom when she said, “Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master’s table;” He answered, “O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt.” For of this people also was that centurion of whom the same Lord saith, “Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.” Because he had said, “I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof, but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.” So then the Lord even before His Passion and Glorification pointed out two people, the one to whom He had come because of the promises to the Fathers; and the other whom for His mercy’s sake He did not reject; that it might be fulfilled which had been promised to Abraham, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” Wherefore also the Apostle after the Lord’s Resurrection and Ascension, when He was despised by the Jews, went to the Gentiles. Not that he was silent however towards the Churches which consisted of Jewish believers; “I was unknown,” he says, “by face unto the Churches of Judaea which were in Christ. But they heard only that he which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed, and they glorified God in me.” So again Christ is called the “Corner Stone who made both one.” For a corner joins two walls which come from different sides together. And what

was so different as the circumcision and uncircumcision, having one wall from Judaea, the other from the Gentiles? But they are joined together by the corner stone. “For the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner.” There is no corner in a building, except when two walls coming from different directions meet together, and are joined in a kind of unity. The “two blind men” then crying out unto the Lord were these two walls according to the figure.

11. Attend now, dearly Beloved. The Lord was “passing by,” and the blind men “cried out.” What is “was passing by”? As we have already said, He was doing works which “passed by.” Now upon these passing works is our faith built up. For we believe on the Son of God, not only in that He is the word of God, by whom all things were made; for if He had always continued “in the form of God, equal with God,” and had not “emptied Himself in taking the form of a servant,” the blind men would not even have perceived Him, that they might be able to cry out. But when He wrought passing works, that is, “when He humbled Himself, having become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,” the “two blind men cried out, Have mercy on us, thou Son of David.” For this very thing that He David’s Lord and Creator, willed also to be David’s Son, He wrought in time, He wrought “passing by.”

12. Now what is it, Brethren, “to cry out” unto Christ, but to correspond to the grace of Christ by good works? This I say, Brethren, lest haply we cry aloud with our voices, and in our lives be dumb. Who is he that crieth out to Christ, that his inward blindness may be driven away by Christ as He is “passing by,” that is, as He is dispensing to us those temporal sacraments, whereby we are instructed to receive the things which are eternal? Who is he that crieth out unto Christ? Whoso despiseth the world, crieth out unto Christ. Whoso despiseth the pleasures of the world, crieth out unto Christ. Whoso saith not with his tongue, but with his life, “The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world,” crieth out unto Christ. Whoso “disperseth abroad and giveth to the poor, that his righteousness may endure for ever,” crieth out unto Christ. For let him that hears, and is not deaf to the sound, “sell that ye have, and give to the poor; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not;” let him as he hears the

sound as it were of Christ’s footsteps “passing by,” cry out in response to this in his blindness, that is, let him do these things. Let his voice be in his actions. Let him begin to despise the world, to distribute to the poor his goods, to esteem as nothing worth what other men love, let him disregard injuries, not seek to be avenged, let him give his “cheek to the smiter,” let him pray for his enemies; if any “one have taken away his goods,” let “him not ask for them again;” if he “have taken anything from any man, let him restore fourfold.”

13. When he shall begin to do all this, all his kinsmen, relations, and friends will be in commotion. They who love this world, will oppose him. What madness this! you are too extreme: what! are not other men Christians? This is folly, this is madness. And other such like things do the multitude cry out to prevent the blind from crying out. The multitude rebuked them as they cried out; but did not overcome their cries. Let them who wish to be healed understand what they have to do. Jesus is now also “passing by;” let them who are by the way side cry out. These are they “who know God with their lips, but their heart is far from Him.” These are by the way side, to whom as blinded in heart Jesus gives His precepts. For when those passing things which Jesus did are recounted, Jesus is always represented to us as “passing by.” For even unto the end of the world there will not be wanting “blind men sitting by the way side.” Need then there is that they who sit by the way side should cry out. The multitude that was with the Lord would repress the crying of those who were seeking for recovery. Brethren, do ye see my meaning? For I know not how to speak, but still less do I know how to be silent. I will speak then, and speak plainly. For I fear “Jesus passing by” and “Jesus standing still;” and therefore I cannot keep silence. Evil and lukewarm Christians hinder good Christians who are truly earnest, and wish to do the commandments of God which are written in the Gospel. This multitude which is with the Lord hinders those who are crying out, hinders those that is who are doing well, that they may not by perseverance be healed. But let them cry out, and not faint; let them not be led away as if by the authority of numbers; let them not imitate those who became Christians before them, who live evil lives themselves, and are jealous of the good deeds of others. Let them not say, “Let us live as these so many live.” Why not rather as the Gospel ordains? Why dost thou wish to live according to

the remonstrances of the multitude who would hinder thee, and not after the steps of the Lord, “who passeth by”? They will mock, and abuse, and call thee back; do thou cry out till thou reach the ears of Jesus. For they who shall persevere in doing such things as Christ hath enjoined, and regard not the multitudes that hinder them, nor think much of their appearing to follow Christ, that is of their being called Christians; but who love the light which Christ is about to restore to them, more than they fear the uproar of those who are hindering them; they shall on no account be separated from Him, and Jesus will “stand still,” and make them whole.

14. For how are our eyes made whole? That as by faith we perceive Christ “passing by” in the temporal economy, so we may attain to the knowledge of Him as “standing still” in His unchangeable Eternity. For then is the eye made whole when the knowledge of Christ’s Divinity is attained. Let your love apprehend this; attend ye to the great mystery which I am to speak of. All the things which were done by our Lord Jesus Christ in time, graft faith in us. We believe on the Son of God, not on the Word only, “by which all things were made;” but on this very Word, “made flesh that He might dwell among us,” who was born of the Virgin Mary, and the rest which the Faith contains, and which are represented to us that Christ might “pass by,” and that the blind, hearing His footsteps as He “passeth by,” might by their works “cry out,” by their life exemplifying the profession of their faith. But now in order that they who cry out may be made whole, “Jesus standeth still.” For he saw Jesus now “standing still” who says, “Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more.” For he saw Christ’s Divinity as far as in this life is possible. There is then in Christ the Divinity and the Humanity. The Divinity “standeth still,” the Humanity “passeth by.” What means, The Divinity “standeth still”? It changeth not, is not shaken, doth not depart away. For He did not so come to us, as to depart from the Father; nor did He so ascend as to change His place. When He assumed Flesh, it changed place; but God assuming Flesh, seeing He is not in place, doth not change His place. Let us then be touched by Christ “standing still,” and so our eyes be made whole. But whose eyes? The eyes of those who “cry out” when He is “passing by;” that is, who do good works through that faith, which hath been dispensed in time, to instruct us in our infancy.

15. Now what thing more precious can we have than the eye made whole? They rejoice who see this created light which shines from heaven, or even that which is given out from a lamp. And how wretched do they seem, who cannot see this light? But wherefore do I speak, and talk of all these things, but to exhort you all to “cry out,” when Jesus “passeth by.” I hold up this light which perhaps ye do not see as an object of love to you, Holy Brethren. Believe, whilst as yet ye see not; and “cry out” that ye may see. How great is thought to be the unhappiness of men, who do not see this bodily light? Does any one become blind; immediately it is said; “God is angry with him, he has committed some wicked deed.” So said Tobias’ wife to her husband. He cried out because of the kid, lest it had come of theft; he did not like to hear the sound of any stolen thing in his house; and she, maintaining what she had done, reproached her husband; and when he said, “Restore it if it be stolen;” she answered insultingly, “Where are thy righteous deeds?” How great was her blindness who maintained the theft; and how clear a light he saw, who commanded the stolen thing to be restored! She rejoiced outwardly in the light of the sun; he inwardly in the light of Righteousness. Which of them was in the better light?

16. It is to the love of this light that I would exhort you, Beloved; that ye would cry out by your works, when the Lord “passeth by;” let the voice of faith sound out, that “Jesus standing still,” that is, the Unchangeable, Abiding Wisdom of God, and the Majesty of the Word of God, “by which all things were made,” may open your eyes. The same Tobias in giving advice to his son, instructed him to this, to cry out; that is, he instructed him to good works. He told him to give to the poor, charged him to give alms to the needy, and taught him, saying, “My son, alms suffereth not to come into darkness.” The blind gave counsel for receiving and gaining light. “Alms,” saith he, “suffereth not to come into darkness.” Had his son in astonishment answered him, “What then, father, hast thou not given alms, that thou now speakest to me in blindness; art not thou in darkness, and yet thou dost say to me, “Alms suffereth not to come into darkness.” But no, he knew well what the light was, concerning which he gave his son instruction, he knew well what he saw in the inner man. The son held out his hand to his father, to enable him to walk on earth; and the father to the son, to enable him to dwell in heaven.

17. To be brief; that I may conclude this Sermon, Brethren, with a matter which touches me very nearly, and gives me much pain, see what crowds there are which “rebuke the blind as they cry out.” But let them not deter you, whosoever among this crowd desire to be healed; for there are many Christians in name, and in works ungodly; let them not deter you from good works. Cry out amid the crowds that are restraining you, and calling you back, and insulting you, whose lives are evil. For not only by their voices, but by evil works, do wicked Christians repress the good. A good Christian has no wish to attend the public shows. In this very thing, that he bridles his desire of going to the theatre, he cries out after Christ, cries out to be healed. Others run together thither, but perhaps they are heathens or Jews? Ah! indeed, if Christians went not to the theatres, there would be so few people there, that they would go away for very shame. So then Christians run thither also, bearing the Holy Name only to their condemnation. Cry out then by abstaining from going, by repressing in thy heart this worldly concupiscence; hold on with a strong and persevering cry unto the ears of the Saviour, that Jesus may “stand still” and heal thee. Cry out amidst the very crowds, despair not of reaching the ears of the Lord. For the blind men in the Gospel did not cry out in that quarter, where no crowd was, that so they might be heard in that direction, where there was no impediment from persons hindering them. Amidst the very crowds they cried out; and yet the Lord heard them. And so also do ye even amidst sinners, and sensual then, amidst the lovers of the vanities of the world, there cry out that the Lord may heal you. Go not to another quarter to cry out unto the Lord, go not to heretics, and cry out unto Him there. Consider, Brethren, how in that crowd which was hindering them from crying out, even there were they who cried out made whole.

18. For observe this too, Holy Brethren, what it is to persevere in crying out. I will speak of what many as well as myself have experienced in Christ’s name; for the Church does not cease to give birth to such as these. When any Christian has begun to live well, to be fervent in good works, and to despise the world; in this newness of his life he is exposed to the animadversions and contradictions of cold Christians. But if he persevere, and get the better of them by his endurance, and faint not in good works; those very same persons who before hindered will now respect him. For

they rebuke, and hinder, and withstand him so long as they have any hope that he will yield to them. But if they shall be overcome by their perseverance who make progress, they turn round and begin to say, “He is a great man, a holy man, happy he to whom God hath given such grace.” Now do they honour him, they congratulate and bless and laud him; just as that multitude did which was with the Lord. They first hindered the blind men that they might not cry out; but when they continued to cry so as to attain to be heard, and to obtain the Lord’s mercy, that same multitude now says, “Jesus calleth you.” And they who a little before “rebuked them that they should hold their peace,” use now the voice of exhortation. Now he only is not called by the Lord who is not in labour in this world. But who is there in this life who is not in labour through his sins and iniquities? But if all labour, it is said to all, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour.” Now if this is said to all, why ascribest thou thy miscarriage to Him that so inviteth thee? Come. His house is not too narrow for thee; the kingdom of God is possessed equally by all, and wholly by each one; it is not diminished by the increasing number of those who possess it, because it is not divided. And that which is possessed by many with one heart, is whole and entire for each one.

19. Yet in the mysterious sense of this passage, Brethren, we recognise what is expressed most plainly in other places of the sacred books, that there are within the Church both good and bad, as I often express it, wheat and chaff. Let no one leave the floor before the time, let him bear with the chaff in the time of threshing, let him bear with it in the floor. For in the barn he will have none of it to bear with. The Winnower will come, who shall divide the bad from the good. There will then be a bodily separation too, which a spiritual separation now precedes. In heart be always separated from the bad, in body be united with them for a time, only with caution. Yet be not negligent in correcting those who belong to you, who in any way appertain to your charge, by admonition, or instruction, by exhortation, or by threats. Do it, in whatsoever way ye can. And because ye find in Scripture and in the examples of Saints, whether of those who lived before or after the coming of the Lord in this life, that the bad do not defile the good in unity with them, do not on this account become slow in the correction of the bad. In two ways the bad will not defile thee; if thou consent not to him, and if

thou reprove him; this is, not to communicate with him, not to consent to him. For there is a communication, when an agreement either of the will or of the approbation is joined to his deed. This the Apostle teaches us, when he says, “Have no communication with the unfruitful works of darkness.” And because it was a small matter not to consent, if negligence in correction accompanied it, he says, “But rather reprove them.” See how he comprehended both at once, “Have no communication, but rather reprove them.” What is, “Have no communication”? Do not consent to them, do not praise them, do not approve them. What is, “But rather reprove them”? Find fault with, rebuke, repress them.

20. But then in the correction and repressing of other men’s sins, one must take heed, that in rebuking another he do not lift up himself; and that sentence of the Apostle must be thought of, “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.” Let the voice of chiding sound outwardly in tones of terror, let the spirit of love and gentleness be maintained within. “If a man be overtaken in a fault,” as the same Apostle says, “ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so shall ye fulfil the law of Christ.” And again in another place, “The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are held captive by him at his will.” So then be neither consenting to evil, so as to approve of it; nor negligent so as not to reprove it; nor proud so as to reprove it in a tone of insult.

21. But whoso forsaketh unity, violateth charity; and whosoever violateth charity, how great gifts soever he have, he is nothing. “If he speak with the tongues of men and of angels; if he knew all mysteries, if he have all faith, so as to remove mountains, if he distribute all his goods to the poor, if he give his body to be burned, and have not charity; it is nothing; it profiteth him nothing.” He possesseth all things to no useful end, who hath not that one thing by which he may use all these things well. So then let us embrace charity, “studying to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Let

not those seduce us who understand the Scriptures in a carnal manner, and who in making a bodily separation, are separated themselves by a spiritual sacrilege from the good corn of the Church which is spread over the whole world. For throughout the whole world hath the good seed been sown. That good Sower, the Son of Man, hath scattered the good seed not in Africa only, but everywhere. But the enemy hath sown tares upon it. Yet what saith the Householder? "Let both grow together until the harvest." Grow where? In the field, of course. What is the field? Is it Africa? No! What is it then? Let us not interpret it ourselves, let the Lord speak; let us not suffer any one to make his guess at his own pleasure. For the disciples said to the Master, "Declare unto us the parable of the tares." And the Lord declared it: "The good seed," said He, "are the children of the Kingdom. But the tares are the children of the wicked one." Who sowed them? "The enemy that sowed them," said He," is the devil." What is the field? "The field," said He, "is this world." What is the harvest? "The harvest," said He, "is the end of the world." Who are the reapers? "The reapers," said He, "are the Angels." Is Africa the world? Is this present time the harvest? Is Donatus the reaper? Look then for the harvest throughout the whole world, throughout the whole world "grow unto the harvest," throughout the whole world bear with the tares even until the harvest. Let not perverse men seduce you, that chaff so light, which flies out of the floor before the coming of the Winnower; let them not seduce you. Hold them fast even to this single parable of the tares, and suffer them not to speak of anything else. This man, one will say, surrendered the Scriptures; no, not so: but this other man surrendered them. Whosoever it might be who has surrendered them, has their faithlessness made void the faithfulness of God? What is "the faithfulness of God"? That which He promised to Abraham, saying, "In thy seed shall all nations be blessed." What is the faithfulness of God? "Let both grow together until the harvest." Grow where? Throughout the field. What is throughout the field? Throughout the world.

22. Here they say; "It is true both kinds did once grow throughout the world, but the good wheat is diminished, and confined to this our country, and our small communion." But the Lord doth not allow thee to interpret as thou wilt. He who explaineth this parable Himself, shutteth thy mouth, thy sacrilegious, profane, and ungodly mouth, that is counter to thine own

interests, while thou runnest counter to the testator, even as he calleth thee to the inheritance. How doth He shut thy mouth? by saying, “Let both grow together until the harvest.” If the harvest hath come already, let us believe that the wheat has been diminished. Though not even then shall it be diminished, but gathered up into the barn. For so He saith, “Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into My barn.” If then they grow until the harvest, and after the harvest are gathered in, how are they diminished, thou wicked, thou ungodly one? I grant that in comparison with the tares and chaff the wheat is less in quantity; still “both grow together until the harvest.” For “when iniquity aboundeth, the love of many waxeth cold;” the tares and the chaff multiply. But because throughout the whole world wheat cannot be wanting, which “by enduring unto the end shall be saved, both grow together until the harvest.” And if because of the abundance of the wicked it is said, “When the Son of Man cometh, thinkest thou, shall He find faith on the earth?” and by this denomination are signified all those who by transgression of the law imitate him to whom it was said,” Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return;” yet because of the abundance of the good also, and because of him to whom it was said, “Thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven, and as the sand of the sea;” is that also written, “Many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, in the kingdom of God.” “Both” then “grow together until the harvest,” and both the tares or chaff have their passages in the Scriptures, and the wheat theirs. And they who do not understand them, confound them and are themselves confounded; and in their blind desire they make such an uproar, that they will not be silenced even by the clear manifestation of the truth.

23. See, they say, the Prophet says, “Depart ye, go ye out from thence, and touch no unclean thing;” how then for peace sake should we bear with the wicked, from whom we are commanded to “go out and depart that we touch not the unclean thing”? We understand that “departure” spiritually, they corporally. For I also cry out with the Prophet (for however mean a vessel I am, God maketh use of me to minister to you); I also cry out and say to you, “Depart ye, go ye out from thence, and touch not the unclean thing;” but with the touch of the heart, not of the body. For what is it to “touch the unclean thing,” but to consent to sin. And what is it to “go out from

thence," but to do what appertaineth to the rebuking of the wicked, as far as can be done, according to each one's grade and condition, with the maintenance of peace? Thou art displeased at a man's sin, thou hast not "touched the unclean thing." Thou hast reproved, rebuked, admonished him, hast administered, if the case required it, a suitable discipline, and such as doth not violate unity; then thou hast "gone out from thence." Now consider the actions of the Saints, lest perhaps this should seem to be an interpretation of my own. As Saints have understood these words, so surely ought they to be understood. "Go ye out from them," says the Prophet. I will first maintain this meaning of the words from their customary use, and will afterwards show that that meaning is not my own. It often happens that men are accused; and when they are accused they defend themselves, and when the accused defends himself with good reason and justice, the hearers say, "He has got out of this." Got out; whither has he gone? He abides still in the place where he was, yet has he "got out of this." How has he got out of it? By the good account he has rendered, and by his most satisfactory defence. This is what the holy Apostles did when they "shook off the dust from their feet" against those who did not receive the message of peace which was sent to them. That watchman, "got out from thence," to whom it was I said, "I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel." For it was told him "If thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his way, that wicked one shall die in his iniquity, and thou shalt deliver thy soul." This if he do, he "goes out from him," not by a bodily separation, but by the defence of his own work. For he did what it was his duty to do; though the other, whose duty it was to obey, obeyed not. This then is that, "Go ye out from thence."

24. So cried Moses and Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Let us see then if they acted thus, if they left the people of God, and betook themselves to other nations. How many and vehement rebukes did Jeremiah utter against the sinners, and wicked ones of his people. Yet he lived amongst them, he entered into the same temple with them, celebrated the same mysteries; he lived in that congregation of wicked men, but by his crying out "he went out from them." This is "to go out from them;" this is not "to touch the unclean thing," the not consenting to them in will, and the not sparing them in word. What shall I say of Jeremiah, of Isaiah, of Daniel, and Ezekiel, and

the rest of the prophets, who did not retire from the wicked people, lest they should desert the good who were mingled with that people, among whom themselves were able to be such as they were? When Moses himself, Brethren, was receiving the law in the mount, the people below made an idol. The people of God, the people who had been led through the waves of the Red Sea which gave way to them, and overwhelmed their enemies who followed after, after so many signs and miracles displayed in plagues upon the Egyptians even unto death, and for “their” protection unto deliverance, yet demanded an idol, obtained an idol by force, made an idol, adored an idol, sacrificed unto an idol. God showeth His servant what the people had done, and saith that He will destroy them from before His Face. Moses maketh intercession for them as he was about to return to this people; yet had he a good opportunity of retiring and “going out from them,” as these persons understand it, that he might “not touch the unclean thing,” might not live among them; but he did not so. And that he might not seem to have acted thus from necessity rather than from love, God offered him another people; so that He might destroy these: “I will make of thee,” He said, “a great nation.” But he did not accept it; he cleaveth to the sinners, he prayeth for the sinners. And how does he pray? O signal proof of love, my Brethren! How does he pray? Mark that, as it were, mother’s fondness, of which I have often spoken. When God threatened the sacrilegious people, Moses’ tender heart trembled, and on their behalf he opposed himself to the wrath of God. “Lord,” he says, “if Thou wilt forgive their sin, forgive; but if not, blot me out of Thy book which Thou hast written.” With what a father’s and mother’s fondness, yet with what assurance said he this, as he considered at once the justice and the mercy of God; that in that He is just, He would not destroy the righteous man; and that in that He is merciful, He would pardon the sinners.

25. It is now surely plain to your discernment, in what manner all such testimonies of the Scriptures are to be received; so that when Scripture says, that we must depart from the wicked, we are bid to understand this in no other sense, but that we depart in heart; lest by the separation from the good, we commit a greater evil than we shrink from in the union of the wicked, as these Donatists have done. But if they were truly good, and so had reproved the wicked, and not rather being themselves wicked, had

defamed the good, they would for peace sake bear with any, be they who they might, seeing they have received the Maximianists as sound, whom they condemned before as lost. Undoubtedly the Prophet has said plainly, “Depart ye, go ye out from thence, and touch not the unclean thing.” But that I may understand what he said, I pay attention to what he did. By his own deeds he explains his words. He said, “Depart ye.” To whom did he say so? To the righteous of course. From whom did he bid them depart? From sinners and wicked men of course. I ask then, did he depart from such himself? I find that he did not. So then he understood it in another sense. For surely he would be the first to do what he enjoined. He departed from them in heart, he rebuked and reproved them. By keeping himself from consenting to them, he “did not touch the unclean thing;” but by rebuking them he “went out” free in the sight of God; and to him God neither imputeth his own sins, because he sinned not; nor the sins of others, because he approved them not; nor negligence, because he kept not silence; nor pride, because he continued in unity. So then, my Brethren, how many soever ye have among you, who are still weighed down by the love of the world, covetous, or perjured persons, adulterers, spectacle hunters, consulters of astrologers, of fanatics, of soothsayers, of augurs and diviners, drunkards, sensualists, whatever there is of bad that ye know ye have among you; show your disapprobation of it all as far as ye are able, that ye may in heart “depart;” and reprove them, that ye may “go out from them;” and consent not to them, that “ye touch not the unclean thing.”

SERMON XXXIX

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XXI. 19, WHERE JESUS DRIED UP THE FIG-TREE; AND ON THE WORDS, LUKE XXIV. 28, WHERE HE MADE A PRETENCE AS THOUGH HE WOULD GO FURTHER

1. The lesson of the Holy Gospel which has just been read, has given us an alarming warning, lest we have leaves only, and have no fruit. That is, in few words, lest words be present and deeds be wanting. Very terrible! Who does not fear when in this lesson he sees with the eyes of the heart the withered tree, withered at that word being spoken to it, “Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever”? Let the fear work amendment, and the amendment bring forth fruit. For without doubt, the Lord Christ foresaw

that a certain tree would deservedly become withered, because it would have leaves, and would have no fruit. That tree is the synagogue, not that which was called, but that which was reprobate. For out of it also was called the people of God, who in sincerity and truth waited in the Prophets for the salvation of God, Jesus Christ. And forasmuch as it waited in faith, it was thought worthy to know Him when He was present. For out of it came the Apostles, out of it came the whole multitude of those who went before the ass of the Lord, and said, "Hosanna to the Son of David, blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord." There was a great company then of believing Jews, a great company of those who believed in Christ before He shed His Blood for them. For it was not in vain that the Lord Himself had come to none "but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But in others, after He was crucified, and was now exalted into heaven, He found the fruit of repentance; and these He did not make to wither, but cultivated them in His field, and watered them with His word. Of this number were those four thousand Jews who believed, after that the disciples and those who were with them, filled with the Holy Ghost, spake with the tongues of all nations, and in that diversity of tongues announced in a way beforehand, that the Church should be throughout all nations. They believed at that time, and "they were the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" but because "the Son of Man had come to seek and to save that which was lost," He found these also. But they lay hid here and there among thorns, as though wasted and dispersed by the wolves; and because they lay hid among thorns, He did not come to find them, save when torn by the thorns of His Passion; yet come He did, He found, He redeemed them. They had slain, not Him so much, as themselves. They were saved by Him who was slain for them. For, as the Apostles spake, they were pricked; they were pricked in conscience, who had pricked Him with the spear; and being pricked they sought for counsel, received it when it was given, repented, found grace, and believing drunk that Blood which in their fury they had shed. But they who have remained in this bad and barren race, even unto this day, and shall remain unto the end, were figured in that tree. You come to them at this day, and find with them all the writings of the Prophets. But these are but leaves; Christ is an hungred, and He seeketh for fruit; but findeth no fruit among them, because He doth not find Himself among them. For He hath no fruit, who hath not Christ. And he hath not Christ, who holdeth not to Christ's unity, who hath not charity. And so by this chain he hath no fruit who hath not charity. Hear the Apostle, “Now the fruit of the Spirit is charity;” so setting forth the praise of this cluster, that is, of this fruit; “The fruit of the Spirit,” he says, “is charity, joy, peace, long-suffering.” Do not wonder at what follows, when charity leads the way.

2. Accordingly, when the disciples marvelled at the withering of the tree, He set forth to them the value of faith, and said to them, “If ye have faith, and doubt not;” that is, if in all things ye have trust in God; and do not say, “God can do this, this He cannot do;” but rely on the omnipotence of the Almighty; “ye shall not only do this, but also if ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done. And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” Now we read that miracles were wrought by the disciples, yea rather by the Lord through the disciples; for, “without Me,” He says, “ye can do nothing.” The Lord could do many things without the disciples, but the disciples nothing without the Lord. He who could make even the disciples themselves, was not certainly assisted by them to make them. We read then of the Apostles’ miracles, but we nowhere read of a tree being withered by them, nor of a mountain removed into the sea. Let us enquire therefore where this was done. For the words of the Lord could not be without effect. If ye are thinking of “trees” and “mountains” in their ordinary and familiar sense, it has not been done. But if ye think of that tree of which He spake, and of that mountain of the Lord of which the Prophet said, “In the last days the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be manifest;” if ye think of it, and understand it thus, it has been done, and done by the Apostles. The tree is the Jewish nation, but I say again, that part of it which was reprobate, not that which was called; that tree which we have spoken of is the Jewish nation. The mountain, as the prophetic testimony hath taught us, is the Lord Himself. The withered tree is the Jewish nation reft of the honour of Christ; the sea is this world with all the nations. Now see the Apostles speaking to this tree which was about to be withered away, and casting the mountain into the sea. In the Acts of the Apostles they speak to the Jews who gainsay and resist the word of truth, that is, who have leaves and have no fruit, and they say to them, “It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye have put it from

you” (for ye use the words of the Prophets, yet do not acknowledge Him whom the Prophets foretold, that is, ye have leaves only), “lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” For this also was foretold by the Prophets; “Behold, I have given Thee for a light of the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth.” See then, the tree hath withered away; and Christ hath been removed unto the Gentiles, the mountain into the sea. For how should not the tree wither away which is planted in that vineyard, of which it was said, “I will command my clouds that they rain no rain upon it”?

3. Now that in order to convey this truth the Lord acted prophetically, I mean that, as concerning this tree, it was not His will merely to exhibit a miracle, but that by the miracle He conveyed the intimation of something to come, there are many things which teach and persuade us, yea even against our wills force us to believe. In the first place, what fault in the tree was it that it had no fruit, when even if it had no fruit at the proper season, that is, the season of its fruit, it would not assuredly be any fault in the tree; for the tree as being without sense and reason could not be to blame. But to this is added, that as we read it in the narrative of the other Evangelist who expressly mentions this, “it was not the time for that fruit.” For that was the time when the fig-tree shoots forth its tender leaves, which come, we know, before the fruit; and this we prove, because the day of the Lord’s Passion was at hand, and we know at what time He suffered; and if we did not know it, we ought of course to give credit to the Evangelist who says, “The time of figs was not yet.” So then if it was only a miracle that was to have been set forth, and not something to be prophetically figured, it would have been much more worthy of the clemency and mercy of the Lord, to have made green again any tree He might find withered; as He healed the sick, as He cleansed the lepers, as He raised the dead. But then contrariwise, as though against the ordinary rule of His clemency, He found a green tree, not yet bearing fruit out of its proper season, but still not refusing the hope of fruit to its dresser, and He withered it away; as though He would say to us, “I have no delight in the withering away of this tree, but thus I would convey to you, that I have not designed to do this without any cause for it, but only because I desired thereby to convey to you a lesson you might the more regard. It is not this tree that I have cursed, it is not on a tree without sense that I have inflicted punishment, but I have made thee fear, whosoever thou

art that dost consider the matter, that thou mightest not despise Christ when He is an hungered, that thou mightest love rather to be enriched with fruit, than to be overshadowed by leaves."

4. This one thing is that which the Lord intimates that He designed to signify by what He did. What else is there? He cometh to the tree being hungry, and seeketh fruit. Did He not know that it was not the time for it? What the cultivator of the tree knew, did not its Creator know? He seeketh on the tree then for fruit which it had not yet. Doth He really seek for it, or rather make a pretence of seeking it? For if He really sought it, He was mistaken. But this be far from Him, to be mistaken! He made then a pretence of seeking it. Fearing to allow this, that he maketh a pretence, thou dost confess that He was mistaken. Again, thou dost turn away from the idea of His being mistaken, and so run into that of His making a pretence. We are parched up between the two. If we are parched, let us beg for rain, that we may grow green, lest in saying anything unworthy of the Lord, we rather wither away. The Evangelist indeed says, "He came to the tree, and found no fruit on it." "He found none," would not be said of Him, unless He had either really sought for it, or made a pretence of seeking, though He knew that there was none there. Wherefore we do not hesitate, let us by no means say that Christ was mistaken. What then? shall we say He made a pretence? Shall we say this? How shall we get out of this difficulty? Let us say what, if the Evangelist had not said of the Lord in another place, we should not of ourselves dare to say. Let us say what the Evangelist has written, and when we have said, let us understand it. But in order that we may understand it, let us first believe. For, "unless ye believe," says the Prophet, "ye shall not understand." The Lord Christ after His Resurrection, was walking in the way with two of His disciples, by whom He was not yet recognised, and with whom He joined company as a third traveller. They came to the place whither they were going, and the Evangelist says, "But He made a pretence as though He would have gone further." But they kept Him, saying, in the spirit of a courteous kindness, that it was already drawing toward evening, and praying Him to tarry there with them; being received and entertained by them, He breaketh Bread, and is known of them in blessing and breaking of the Bread. So then, let us not now fear to say, that He made a pretence of seeking, if He made a pretence of going further.

But here there arises another question. Yesterday I insisted at some length on the truth which is in the Apostles; how then do we find any “pretence” in the Lord Himself? Therefore, Brethren, I must tell you, and teach you according to my poor abilities, which the Lord giveth me for your benefit, and must convey to you what ye may hold as a rule in the interpretation of all Scripture. Everything that is said or done is to be understood either in its literal signification, or else it signifies something figuratively; or at least contains both of these at once, both its own literal interpretation, and a figurative signification also. Thus I have set forth three things, examples of them must now be given; and from whence, but from the Holy Scriptures? It is said in its literal acceptation, that the Lord suffered, that He rose again, and ascended into heaven; that we shall rise again at the end of the world, that we shall reign with Him for ever, if we do not despise Him. Take all this as spoken literally, and look not out for figures; as it is expressed, so it really is. And so also with divers actions. The Apostle went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, the Apostle actually did this, it actually took place, it was an action peculiar to himself. It is a fact which he tells you; a simple fact according to its literal meaning. “The stone which the builders refused, is become the Head of the corner,” is spoken in a figure. If we take “the stone” literally, what “stone did the builders refuse, which became the Head of the corner”? If we take “the stone” literally, of what corner is this “stone” become the Head? If we admit that it was figuratively expressed, and take it figuratively, the Corner-stone is Christ: the head of the corner, is the Head of the Church. Why is the Church the Corner? Because she has called the Jews from one side, and the Gentiles from another, and these two walls as it were coming from different quarters, and meeting together in one, she has bound together by the grace of her peace. For, “He is our peace, who hath made both one.”

5. Ye have heard instances of a literal expression, and a literal action, and of a figurative expression; ye are waiting for an instance of a figurative action. There are many such, but meanwhile, as is suggested by this mention of the corner-stone, when Jacob anointed the stone which he had placed at his head as he slept, and in his sleep saw a mysterious dream, ladders rising from the earth to heaven, and Angels ascending and descending, and the Lord standing upon the ladder, he understood what it was designed to

figure, and took the stone for a figure of Christ, to prove to us thereby that he was no stranger to the understanding of that vision and revelation. Do not wonder then that he anointed it, for Christ received His Name from “the anointing.” Now this Jacob was said in the Scripture to be “a man without guile.” And this Jacob ye know was called Israel. Accordingly in the Gospel, when the Lord saw Nathanael, He said, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” And that Israelite not yet knowing who it was that talked with him, answered, “Whence knewest Thou me?” And the Lord said to him, “When thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee;” as though he would say, When thou wast in the shadow of sin, I predestinated thee. And Nathanael, because he remembered that he had been under the fig-tree, where the Lord was not, acknowledged His Divinity, and answered, “Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel.” He who had been under the fig-tree was not made a withered fig-tree; he acknowledged Christ. And the Lord said unto him, “Because I said, When thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee, believest thou? thou shall see greater things than these.” What are these “greater things”? “Verily I say unto you” (for he “is an Israelite in whom is no guile;” remember Jacob in whom was no guile; and recollect of what he is speaking, the stone at his head, the vision in his sleep, the ladder from earth to heaven, the Angels ascending and descending; and so see what it is that the Lord would say to “the Israelite without guile”); “Verily I say unto you, Ye shall see heaven opened” (hear, thou guileless Nathanael, what guileless Jacob saw); “ye shall see heaven opened, and Angels ascending and descending” (unto whom?) “unto the Son of Man.” Therefore was He, as the Son of Man, anointed on the head; for “the head of the woman is the man, and the Head of the man is Christ.” Now observe, He did not say, “ascending from the Son of Man, and descending to the Son of Man,” as if He were only above; but “ascending and descending unto the Son of Man.” Hear the Son of Man crying out from above, “Saul, Saul.” Hear the Son of Man from below, “Why persecutest thou Me?”

6. Ye have heard an instance of a literal expression, as “that we shall rise again;” of a literal action, as that, according as it is said, “Paul went up to Jerusalem to see Peter.” “The stone which the builders refused,” is a figurative expression; “the anointed stone” which was at Jacob’s head, is a figurative action. There is now due to your expectation an example made

out of both together, something which is at once a literal fact, and which also signifies something else figured by it. “We know that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free-woman;” this was literally a fact, not only a story, but a fact; are ye looking for that which was figured in it? “These are the two Testaments.” That then which is spoken figuratively, is a sort of fiction. But since it has some real event represented by it, and the very figure itself has its ground of truth, it escapes all imputation of falsehood. “The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell by the way side, some fell upon stony places, some fell among thorns, and some fell upon good ground.” Who went out “to sow,” or when went he out, or upon what “thorns,” or “stones” or “way side” or in what field did he sow? If we receive this as a fictitious story, we understand it in a figurative sense; it is fictitious. For if any sower really went out, and did cast the seed in these different places, as we have heard, it were no fiction, and so no falsehood. But now though it be a fiction, yet it is no falsehood. Why? Because the fiction has some further signification, it deceives thee not. It requires only one to understand it, and does not lead any one into error. And thus Christ wishing to convey this lesson to us, sought for fruit, and hereby set forth to us a figurative, and no deceiving fiction; a fiction therefore worthy of praise, not of blame; not one by the examination of which we might run into what was false; but by the diligent investigation of which we might discover what is true.

7. I see that one may say, Explain to me; what did that signify, that “He made a pretence of going further”? For if it had no further meaning, it is a deceit, a lie. We must then according to our rules of exposition, and distinctions, tell you what this “pretence of going further,” signified; “He made a pretence of going further,” and is kept back from going further. In so far then as the Lord Christ being as they supposed absent in respect of His Bodily presence, was thought to be really absent, He will as it were “go further.” But hold Him fast by faith, hold Him fast at the breaking of Bread. What shall I say more? Have ye recognised Him? If so, then have ye found Christ. I must not speak any longer on this Sacrament. They who put off the knowledge of this Sacrament, Christ goeth further from them. Let them then hold It fast, let them not let Him go; let them invite Him to their home, and so they are invited to heaven.

SERMON XL

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XXII. 2, ETC., ABOUT THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING’S SON; AGAINST THE DONATISTS, ON CHARITY. DELIVERED AT CARTHAGE IN THE RESTITUTA

1. All the faithful know the marriage of the king’s son, and his feast, and the spreading of the Lord’s Table is open to them all who will. But it is of importance to each one to see how he approaches, even when he is not forbidden to approach It. For the Holy Scriptures teach us that there are two feasts of the Lord; one to which the good and evil come, the other to which the evil come not. So then the feast, of which we have just now heard when the Gospel was being read, has both good and evil guests. All who excused themselves from this feast are evil; but not all those who entered in are good. You therefore who are the good guests at this feast do I address, who have in your minds the words, “He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself.” All you who are such do I address, that ye look not for the good without, that ye bear with the evil within.

2. I do not doubt that ye wish to hear, Beloved, who they are of whom I have spoken in my address, that they should not look for the good without, and should bear with the evil within. If all within are evil, whom do I address? If all within are good, whom did I advise them to bear with being evil? Let me first then with the Lord’s assistance get out of this difficulty as best I can. If you consider good perfectly and strictly speaking, none is good but God Alone. Ye have the Lord saying most plainly, “Why callest thou Me good? there is none Good but One, that is, God.” How then can that marriage feast have good and bad guests, if “none is good but God Alone”? In the first place ye ought to know, that after a certain sort we are all evil. Yes, doubtless after a certain sort are we all evil; but after no sort are we all good. For can we compare ourselves with the Apostles, to whom the Lord Himself said, “If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children?” If we consider the Scriptures, there was but one evil one among the twelve Apostles, with reference to whom the Lord said in a certain place, “And ye are clean, but not all.” But yet in addressing them all together, He said, “If ye being evil.” Peter heard this, John heard this, Andrew heard this, all the rest of the eleven Apostles heard it. What did

they hear? “If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?” When they heard that they were evil, they were in despair; but when they heard that God in heaven was their Father, they revived. “Ye being evil;” what then is due to the evil, but punishment? “How much more shall your Father which is in heaven?” What is due to children but reward. In the name of “evil” is the dread of punishment; in the name of “children” is the hope of heirs.

3. According to a certain respect then they were evil, who after another respect were good. For to them to whom it is said, “Ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children;” is added immediately, “How much more shall your Father which is in heaven?” He is then the Father of the evil, but not of those who are to be left so; because He is the Physician of them who are to be cured. According to a certain sort then they were evil. And yet those guests of the Householder at the King’s marriage, were not I suppose of that number of whom it was said, “they invited good and bad,” that they should be reckoned among the number of the bad, who we have heard were shut out in his person who was found not to have a wedding garment. According to a certain respect, I repeat they were bad, who yet were good; and according to a certain respect they were good, who yet were bad. Hear John according to what respect they were bad: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” Behold after what respect they were bad: because they had sin. According to what respect were they good? “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” If then we should say, on the principle of this interpretation which ye have now heard me bring, as I think, out of the sacred Scriptures, viz. that the same men are both after a certain manner, good, and after a certain manner bad; if we should wish to receive according to this sense the words, “they invited good and bad,” the same persons, that is, at once good and bad; if we should wish so to receive them, we are not permitted so to do, by reason of that one who was found “not having a wedding garment,” and who was not merely “cast forth,” so as to be deprived of that feast, but so as to be condemned in the punishment of everlasting darkness.

4. But one will say, What of one man? what strange, what great matter is it, if one among the crowd “not having a wedding garment” crept in unperceived to the servants of the Householder? Could it be said because of that one, “they invited good and bad”? Attend therefore, my Brethren, and understand. That one man represented one class; for they were many. Here some diligent hearer may answer me, and say, “I have no wish for you to tell me your guesses; I wish to have it proved to me that that one represented many.” By the Lord’s present help, I will prove it clearly; nor will I search far, that I may be able to prove it. God will assist me in His own words in this place, and will furnish you by my ministry with a plain proof of it. “The Master of the house came in to see the guests.” See, my Brethren, the servants’ business was only to invite and bring in the good and bad; see that it is not said, that the servants took notice of the guests, and found among them a man which had not on a wedding garment, and spoke to him. This is not written. The Master of the house saw him, the Master of the house discovered, the Master of the house inspected, the Master of the house separated him out. It was not right to pass over this. But I have undertaken to establish another point, how that that one signifies many. “The Master of the house” then “came in to see the guests, and He found there a man which had not on a wedding garment. And He saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.” For He who questioned him was One, to whom he could give no feigned reply. The garment that was looked for is in the heart, not on the body; for had it been put on externally, it could not have been concealed even from the servants. Where that wedding garment must be put on, hear in the words, “Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness.” Of that garment the Apostle speaks, “If so be that we shall be found clothed, and not naked.” Therefore was he discovered by the Lord, who escaped the notice of the servants. Being questioned, he is speechless: he is bound, cast out, and condemned one by many. I have said, Lord, that Thou teachest us that in this Thou dost give warning to all. Recollect then with me, my Brethren, the words which ye have heard, and ye will at once discover, at once determine, that that one was many. True it was one man whom the Lord questioned, to one He said, “Friend, how camest thou in hither?” It was one who was speechless, and of that same one was it said, “Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and

gnashing of teeth.” Why? “For many are called, but few chosen.” How can any one gainsay this manifestation of the truth? “Cast him,” He saith, “into outer darkness.” “Him,” that one man assuredly, of whom the Lord saith, “for many are called, but few chosen.” So then it is the few who are not cast out. He was it is true but one man “who had not the wedding garment. Cast him out.” But why is he cast out? “For many are called, but few chosen.” Leave alone the few, cast out the many. It is true, that man was but one. Yet undoubtedly that one not only was many, but those many in numbers far surpassed the number of the good. For the good are many also; but in comparison of the bad, they are few. In the crop there is much wheat; compare it with the chaff, and the grains of corn are few. The same persons considered in themselves are many, in comparison with the bad are few. How do we prove that in themselves they are many? “Many shall come from the East and from the West.” Whither shall they come? To that feast, into which both good and bad enter. But speaking of another feast, He subjoined, “and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.” That is the feast to which the bad shall not approach. Be that feast which now is, received worthily, that we may attain to the other. The same then are many, who are also few; in themselves many; in comparison with the bad few. Therefore what saith the Lord? He found one, and said, “Let the many be cast out, the few remain.” For to say, “many are called, but few chosen,” is nothing else than to show plainly who in this present feast are accounted to be such, as to be brought to that other feast, where no bad men shall come.

5. What is it then? I would not that ye all who approach the Lord’s Table which is in this life, should be with the many who are to be shut out, but with the few who are to be reserved. And how shall ye be able to attain to this? Take “the wedding garment.” Ye will say, “Explain this wedding garment’ to us.” Without a doubt, that is the garment which none but the good have, who are to be left at the feast, reserved unto that other feast to which no bad man approaches, who are to be brought safely thither by the grace of the Lord; these have “the wedding garment.” Let us then, my Brethren, seek for those among the faithful who have something which bad men have not, and this will be “the wedding garment.” If we speak of sacraments, ye see how that these are common to the bad and good. Is it

Baptism? Without Baptism it is true no one attaineth to God; but not every one that hath Baptism attaineth to Him. I cannot therefore understand Baptism, the Sacrament itself that is, to be “the wedding garment;” for this garment I see in the good, I see in the bad. Peradventure it is the Altar, or That which is received at the Altar. But no; we see that many eat, and “eat and drink judgment to themselves.” What is it then? Is it fasting? The wicked fast also. Is it running together to the Church? The wicked run thither also. Lastly, is it miracles? Not only do the good and bad perform them, but sometimes the good perform them not. See, among the ancient people Pharaoh’s magicians wrought miracles, the Israelites did not; among the Israelites, Moses only and Aaron wrought them; the rest did not, but saw, and feared, and believed. Were the magicians of Pharaoh who did miracles, better men than the people of Israel who could not do them, and yet that people were the people of God. In the Church itself, hear the Apostle, “Are all prophets? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues?”

6. What is that “wedding garment” then? This is the wedding garment: “Now the end of the commandment,” says the Apostle, “is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” This is “the wedding garment.” Not charity of any kind whatever; for very often they who are partakers together of an evil conscience seem to love one another. They who commit robberies together, who love the hurtful arts of sorceries, and the stage together, who join together in the shout of the chariot race, or the wild beast fight; these very often love one another; but in these there is no “charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. The wedding garment” is such charity as this. “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, and a tinkling cymbal.” Tongues have come in alone, and it is said to them, “How came ye in hither not having a wedding garment?” “Though,” said he, “I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.” See, these are the miracles of men who very often have not “the wedding garment.” “Though,” he says, “I have all these, and have not Christ, I am nothing.” Is then “the gift of prophecy” nothing? is then “the knowledge of mysteries”

nothing? It is not that these are nothing; but “I,” if I have them, “and have not charity, am nothing.” How many good things profit nothing without this one good thing! If then I have not charity, though I bestow alms freely upon the poor, though I have come to the confession of Christ’s Name even unto blood and fire, these things may be done even through the love of glory, and so are vain. Because then they may be done even from the love of glory, and so be vain, and not through the rich charity of a godly affection, he names them all also in express terms, and do thou give ear to them; “though I distribute all my goods for the use of the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” This then is “the wedding garment.” Question yourselves; if ye have it, ye may be without fear in the Feast of the Lord. In one and the same man there exist two things, charity and desire. Let charity be born in thee, if it be yet unborn, and if it be born, be it nourished, fostered, increased. But as to that desire, though in this life it cannot be utterly extinguished; “for if we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;” but in so far as desire is in us, so far we are not without sin: let charity increase, desire decrease; that the one, that is, charity, may one day be perfected, and desire be consumed. Put on “the wedding garment:” you I address, who as yet have it not. Ye are already within, already do ye approach to the Feast, and still have ye not yet the garment to do honour to the Bridegroom; “Ye are yet seeking your own things, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.” For “the wedding garment” is taken in honour of the union, the union, that is, of the Bridegroom to the Bride. Ye know the Bridegroom; it is Christ. Ye know the Bride; it is the Church. Pay honour to the Bride, pay honour to the Bridegroom. If ye pay due honour to them both, ye will be their children. Therefore in this make progress. Love the Lord, and so learn to love yourselves; that when by loving the Lord ye shall have loved yourselves, ye may securely love your neighbour as yourselves. For when I find a man that does not love himself, how shall I commit his neighbour whom he should love as himself to him? And who is there, you will say, who does not love himself? Who is there? See, “He that loveth iniquity hateth his own soul.” Does he love himself, who loves his body, and hates his soul to his own hurt, to the hurt of both his body and soul? And who loves his own soul? He that loveth God with all his heart and with all his mind. To such an one I would at once entrust his neighbour. “Love your neighbour as yourselves.”

7. One may say, “Who is my neighbour?” Every man is your neighbour. Had we not all the same two parents? Animals of every species are neighbours one to the other, the dove to the dove, the leopard to the leopard, the asp to the asp, the sheep to the sheep, and is not man neighbour to man? Call to mind the ordering of the creation. God spake, the waters brought forth swimming creatures, great whales, fish, birds, and such like things. Did all the birds come of one bird? Did all vultures come of one vulture? Did all doves come of one dove? Did all snakes come of one snake? or all gilt-heads of one gilt-head? or all sheep of one sheep? No, the earth assuredly brought forth all these kinds together. But when it came to man, the earth did not bring forth man. One father was made for us; not even two, father and mother: one father, I say, was made for us, not even two, father and mother; but out of the one father came the one mother; the one father came from none, but was made by God, and the one mother came out of him. Mark then the nature of our race: we flowed out of one fountain; and because that one was turned to bitterness, we all became from a good, a wild olive tree. And so grace came also. One begat us unto sin and death, yet as one race, yet as neighbours one to another, yet as not merely like, but related to each other. There came One against one; against the one who scattered, One who gathereth. Thus against the one who slayeth, is the One who maketh alive. “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Now as whosoever is born of the first, dieth; so whosoever believeth in Christ is made alive. Provided, that is, that he have “the wedding garment,” and be invited as one who is to remain, and not to be cast out.

8. So then, my Brethren, have charity. I have explained it to be this garment, this “wedding garment.” Faith is praised, it is plain, it is praised: but what kind of faith this is, the Apostle distinguishes. For certain who boasted of faith, and had not a good conversation, the Apostle James rebukes and says, “Thou believest there is one God, thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble.” Call to mind with me whereupon Peter was praised, whereupon called blessed. Was it because he said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”? He who pronounced Him blessed, regarded not the sound of the words, but the affection of the heart. For would ye know that Peter’s blessedness lay not in these words? The devils also said the same.

“We know Thee who Thou art, the Son of God.” Peter confessed Him to be “the Son of God;” the devils confessed Him to be “the Son of God.” “Distinguish, my lord, distinguish between the two.” I do make a plain distinction. Peter spake in love, the devils from fear. And again Peter says, “I am with Thee, even unto death.” The devils say, “What have we to do with Thee?” So then thou who art come to the feast, glory not of faith only. Distinguish well the nature of this faith; and then in thee is recognised “the wedding garment.” Let the Apostle make the distinction, let him teach us; “neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith.” Tell us, what faith? do not even the devils believe and tremble? I will tell thee, he says, and listen, I will now draw the distinction, “But faith which worketh by love.” What faith, then, and of what kind? “That which worketh by love.” “Though I have all knowledge,” he says, “and all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.” Have faith with love; for love without faith ye cannot have. This I warn, this I exhort, this in the name of the Lord I teach you, Beloved, that ye have faith with love; for ye may possibly have faith without love. I do not exhort you to have faith, but love. For ye cannot have love without faith; the love I mean of God and your neighbour; whence can it come without faith? How doth he love God, who doth not believe on God? How doth the fool love God, “who saith in his heart, there is no God”? Possible it is that ye may believe that Christ hath come and not love Christ. But it is not possible that ye should love Christ, and yet say that Christ hath not come.

9. So then, have faith with love. This is the “wedding garment.” Ye who love Christ, love one another, love your friends, love your enemies. Let not this be hard to you. What then do ye lose thereby, when ye gain so much? What? dost thou ask of God as some great favour, that thine enemy may die? This is not “the wedding garment.” Turn thy thoughts to the Bridegroom Himself hanging upon the Cross for thee, and praying to His Father for His enemies; “Father,” saith He, “forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Thou hast seen the Bridegroom speaking thus; see too the friend of the Bridegroom, a guest “with the wedding garment.” Look at the blessed Stephen, how he rebukes the Jews as though in rage and resentment, “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye have resisted the Holy Ghost. Which of the Prophets have not your fathers

killed?” Thou hast heard how severe he is with his tongue. And at once thou art prepared to speak against any one; and I would it were against him who offendeth God, and not who offendeth thee. One offendeth God, and thou dost not rebuke him; he offendeth thee, and thou criest out; where is that “wedding garment”? Ye have heard therefore how Stephen was severe; now hear how he loved. He offended those whom he was rebuking, and was stoned by them. And as he was being overwhelmed and bruised to death by the hands of his furious persecutors on every side, and the blows of the stones, he first said, “Lord Jesus Christ, receive my spirit.” Then after he had prayed for himself standing, he bent the knee for them who were stoning him, and said, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge; let me die in my body, but let not these die in their souls. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.” After these words he added no more; he spake them and departed; his last prayer was for his enemies. Learn ye hereby to have “the wedding garment.” So do thou too bend the knee, and beat thy forehead against the ground, and as thou art about to approach the Table of the Lord, the Feast of the Holy Scriptures, do not say, “O that mine enemy might die! Lord, if I have deserved ought of Thee, slay mine enemy.” Because if so be that thou sayest so, dost thou not fear lest He should answer thee, “If I should choose to slay thine enemy, I should first slay thee. What! dost thou glory because thou hast now come invited hither? Think only what thou wast but a little while ago. Hast thou not blasphemed Me? hast thou not derided Me? didst thou not wish to wipe out My Name from off the earth? Yet now thou dost applaud thyself because thou hast come invited hither! If I had slain thee when thou wast Mine enemy, how could I have made thee My friend? Why, by thy wicked prayers dost thou teach Me to do, what I did not in thine own case?” Yea rather God saith to thee, “Let me teach thee to imitate Me. When I was hanging on the Cross, I said, Forgive them, for they know not what they do.’ This lesson I taught My brave soldier. Be thou My recruit against the devil. In no other way wilt thou fight at all unconquerably, unless thou dost pray for thine enemies. Yet by all means ask this, yea ask this very thing, ask that thou mayest persecute thine enemy; but ask it with discernment; distinguish well what thou askest. See, a man is thine enemy; answer me, what is it in him which is at enmity with thee? Is it in this, that he is a man, that he is at enmity with thee? No. What then? That he is evil. In that he is a man, in that he is that I made him, he is not at enmity with thee.” He saith to thee, “I did not make man evil; he became evil by disobedience, who obeyed the devil rather than God. What he has made himself, is at enmity with thee; in that he is evil, he is thine enemy; not in that he is a man. For I hear the word “man,” and “evil;” the one is the name of nature, the other of sin; the sin I cure; and the nature I preserve.” And so thy God saith to thee, “See, I do avenge thee, I do slay thine enemy; I take away that which makes him evil, I preserve that which constitutes him a man: now if I shall have made him a good man, have I not slain thine enemy, and made him thy friend?” So ask on what thou art asking, not that the men may perish, but that these their enmities may perish. For if thou pray for this, that the man may die; it is the prayer of one wicked man against another; and when thou dost say, “Slay the wicked one,” God answereth thee, “Which of you?”

10. Extend your love then, and limit it not to your wives and children. Such love is found even in beasts and sparrows. Ye know the sparrows and the swallows how they love their mates, how together they hatch their eggs, and nourish their young together, by a sort of free and natural kindliness, and with no thought of a return. For the sparrow does not say, “I will nourish my young, that when I am grown old, they may feed me.” He has no such thought; he loves and feeds them, for the love of them; displays the affection of a parent, and looks for no return. And so, I know, I am sure, do ye love your children. “For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.” Yea upon this plea it is that many of you excuse your covetousness, that ye are getting for your children, and are laying by for them. But I say, extend your love, let this love grow; for to love wives and children, is not yet that “wedding garment.” Have faith to Godward. First love God. Extend yourselves out to God; and whomsoever ye shall be able, draw on to God. There is thine enemy: let him be drawn to God. There is a son, a wife, a servant; let them be all drawn to God. There is a stranger; let him be drawn to God. There is an enemy; let him be drawn to God. Draw, draw on thine enemy; by drawing him on he shall cease to be thine enemy. So let charity be advanced, so be it nourished, that being nourished it may be perfected; so be “the wedding garment” put on; so be the image of God, after which we were created, by this our advancing, engraven anew in us. For by sin was it bruised, and worn away. How is it

bruised? how worn away? When it is rubbed against the earth? And what is, “When it is rubbed against the earth”? When it is worn by earthly lusts. For “though man walketh in this image, yet is he disquieted in vain.” Truth is looked for in God’s image, not vanity. By the love of the truth then be that image, after which we were created, engraven anew, and His Own tribute rendered to our Caesar. For so ye have heard from the Lord’s answer, when the Jews tempted Him, as He said, “Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites; show Me the tribute money,” that is, the impress and superscription of the image. Show me what ye pay, what ye get ready, what is exacted of you. And “they showed Him a denarius;” and “He asked whose image and superscription it had.” They answered, “Caesar’s.” So Caesar looks for his own image. It is not Caesar’s will that what he ordered to be made should be lost to him, and it is not surely God’s will that what He hath made should be lost to Him. Caesar, my Brethren, did not make the money; the masters of the mint make it; the workmen have their orders, he issues his commands to his ministers. His image was stamped upon the money; on the money was Caesar’s image. And yet he requires what others have stamped; he puts it in his treasures; he will not have it refused him. Christ’s coin is man. In him is Christ’s image, in him Christ’s Name, Christ’s gifts, Christ’s rules of duty.

SERMON XLI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XXII. 42, WHERE THE LORD ASKS THE JEWS WHOSE SON THEY SAID DAVID WAS

1. When the Jews were asked (as we have just now heard out of the Gospel when it was being read), how our Lord Jesus Christ, whom David himself called his Lord was David’s Son, they were not able to answer. For what they saw in the Lord, that they knew. For He appeared to them as the Son of man; but as the Son of God He was hidden. Hence it was, that they believed that He could be overcome, and that they derided Him as He hung upon the Tree, saying, “If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross, and we will believe on Him.” They saw one part of what He was, they knew not the other, “For had they known Him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” Yet they knew that the Christ was to be the Son of David. For even now they hope that He will come. They know not that He is come already, but this their ignorance is voluntary. For even if they did not

acknowledge Him on the tree, they ought not to have failed to acknowledge Him on His Throne. For in whose Name are all nations called and blessed, but in His whom they think not to have been the Christ? For this Son of David, that is, "of the seed of David according to the flesh," is the Son of Abraham. Now if it was said to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all nations be blessed;" and they see now that in our Christ are all nations blessed, why wait they for what is already come, and fear not that which is yet to come? for our Lord Jesus Christ, making use of a prophetic testimony to assert His authority, called Himself "the Stone." Yea such a stone, "that whosoever shall stumble against it shall be shaken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder." For when this stone is stumbled against, it lieth low; by lying low, it "shaketh" him that stumbleth against it; being lifted on high, by its coming down it "grindeth" the proud "to powder." Already therefore are the Jews "shaken" by that stumbling; it yet remains that by His Glorious Advent they should be "ground to powder" also, unless peradventure whilst they are yet alive, they acknowledge Him that they die not. For God is patient, and inviteth them day by day to the Faith.

2. But when the Jews could not answer the Lord proposing a question, and asking "whose Son they said Christ was;" and they answered, "the Son of David;" He goes on with the further question put to them, "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on My right hand till I make Thine enemies My footstool. If David then," He saith, "in spirit call Him Lord, how is He his Son?" He did not say, "He is not his Son, but how is He his son?" When he saith "How," it is a word not of negation, but of enquiry; as though He should say to them, "Ye say well indeed that Christ is David's Son, but David himself doth call Him Lord; whom he then calleth Lord, how is He his Son?" Had the Jews been instructed in the Christian faith, which we hold; had they not closed their hearts against the Gospel, had they wished to have spiritual life in them, they would, as instructed in the faith of the Church, have made answer to this question and said, "Because in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God:" see how He is David's Lord. But because "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us;" see how He is David's Son. But as being ignorant, they were silent, nor when they shut

their mouths did they open their ears, that what they could not answer when questioned, they might after instruction know.

3. But seeing that is a great thing to know the mystery how He is David’s Son and David’s Lord: how one Person is both Man and God; how in the form of Man He is less than the Father, in the form of God equal with the Father; how again He saith, on the one hand, “The Father is greater than I;” and on the other, “I and My Father are one;” seeing this is a great mystery, our conduct must be fashioned, that it may be comprehended. For to the unworthy is it closed up, it is opened to those who are meet for it. It is not with stones, or clubs, or the fist, or the heel, that we knock unto the Lord. It is the life which knocks, it is to the life that it is opened. The seeking is with the heart, the asking is with the heart, the knocking is with the heart, the opening is to the heart. Now that heart which asks rightly, and knocks and seeks rightly, must be godly. Must first love God for His Own sake (for this is godliness); and not propose to itself any reward which it looks for from Him other than God Himself. For than Him is there nothing better. And what precious thing can he ask of God, in whose sight God Himself is lightly esteemed? He giveth earth, and thou rejoicest, thou lover of the earth, who art thyself become earth. If when He giveth earthly goods, thou dost rejoice, how much more oughtest thou to rejoice when He giveth thee Himself, who made heaven and earth? So then God must be loved for His own sake. For the Devil not knowing what was passing in the heart of holy Job, brought this as a great charge against him, saying, “Doth Job worship God for His Own sake.”

4. So then if the adversary brought this charge, we ought to fear lest it be brought against us. For with a very slanderous accuser have we to deal. If he seek to invent what is not, how much more will he seek to object what really is. Nevertheless let us rejoice, that ours is such a Judge, as cannot be deceived by our accuser. For if we had a man for our judge, the enemy might invent for him what he would. For none is more subtle in invention than the devil. For he it is who at this time also invents all false accusations against the saints. He knows his accusations can have no avail with God, and so He scatters them among men. Yet what does this profit him, seeing the Apostle says, “Our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience?”

Yet think ye that he does not invent these false charges with aught of subtlety? Yes, well he knows what evil he shall work thereby, if the watchfulness of faith resist him not. For for this reason scatters he his evil charges against the good, that the weak may think that there are no good, and so may give themselves up to be hurried along, and made a prey of by their lusts, whilst they say within themselves, “For who is there that keeps the commandments of God, or who is there that preserves chastity?” and whilst he thinks that no one does, he himself becomes that no one. This then is the devil’s art. But such a man was Job, that he could not invent any such charge against him; for his life was too well known and manifest. But because he had great riches, he brought that against him, which if it had any existence, might lie in the heart, and not appear in the conduct. He worshipped God, he gave alms; and with what heart he did this none knew, no not the Devil himself; but God had known. God giveth His testimony to His own servant; the Devil calumniates the servant of God. He is allowed to be tried, Job is proved, the Devil is confounded. Job is found to worship God for His Own sake, to love Him for His Own sake; not because He gave him ought, but because He did not take away Himself. For he said, “The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; as it seemed good to the Lord, so is it done, blessed be the Name of the Lord.” The fire of temptation approached him; but it found him gold, not stubble; it cleared away the dross from it, but did not reduce it to ashes.

5. Because then, in order to understand the mystery of God, how Christ is both man and God, the heart must be cleansed: and it is cleansed by a good conversation, by a pure life, by chastity, and sanctity, and love, and by “faith, which worketh by love” (now all this that I am speaking of, is, as it were, the tree which hath its root in the heart; for it is only from the root of the heart that actions proceed; in which if thou plant desire, thorns spring forth; if thou plant charity, good fruit): the Lord, after that question which He had proposed to the Jews, when they were not able to answer it, immediately went on to speak of good actions, that He might show why they were unworthy to understand what He asked them. For when those proud and wretched men were not able to answer, they ought of course to have said, “we do not know; Master, tell us.” But no: they were speechless at the proposing of the question, and they opened not their mouth to seek

instruction. And so the Lord in reference to their pride said immediately, “Beware of the Scribes which love the chief seats in the synagogues, and the first rooms at feasts.” Not because they hold them, but because they love them. For in these words he accused their heart. Now none can accuse the heart, but He who can inspect it. For meet it is that to the servant of God, who holds some post of honour in the Church, the first place should be assigned; because if it were not given him, it were evil for him who refuses to give it; but yet it is no good to him to whom it is given. It is meet and right then that in the congregation of Christians their Prelates should sit in eminent place, that by their very seat they may be distinguished, and that their office may be duly marked; yet not so that they should be puffed up for their seat; but that they should esteem it a burden, for which they are to render an account. But who knows whether they love this, or do not love it? This is a matter of the heart, it can have no other judge but God. Now the Lord Himself warned His disciples, that they should not fall into this leaven; as He calls it in another place, “Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.” And when they supposed that He said this to them because they had brought no bread; He answered them, “Have ye forgotten how many thousands were filled with the five loaves? Then understood they,” it is said, “that He called their doctrine leaven.” For these present temporal good things they loved, but they neither feared the evil things eternal, nor loved the good things eternal. And so their hearts being closed, they could not understand what the Lord asked them.

6. But what then has the Church of God to do, that it may be able to understand what it has first obtained grace to believe? It must make the mind capacious for receiving what shall be given it. And that this may be done, that the mind, that is, may be capacious, our Lord God suspends His promises, He has not taken them away. Therefore does He suspend them, that we may stretch out ourselves; and therefore do we stretch ourselves out, that we may grow; and therefore do we grow, that we may reach them. Behold the Apostle Paul stretching himself out unto these suspended promises: “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and stretching forth unto those things which are before, I press earnestly toward the mark for the prize of

the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” He was running on the earth; the prize hung suspended from heaven. He ran then on the earth; but in spirit he ascended. Behold him thus stretching himself out, behold him hanging forth after the suspended prize. “I press on,” he says, “for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

7. We must journey on then, yet for this no need of anointing the feet, or looking out for beasts, or providing a vessel. Run with the heart’s affection, journey on with love, ascend by charity. Why seekest thou for the way? Cleave unto Christ, who by Descending and Ascending hath made Himself the Way. Dost thou wish to ascend? Hold fast to Him that ascendeth. For by thine own self thou canst not rise. “For no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven.” If no one ascendeth but He that descended, that is, the Son of Man, our Lord Jesus, dost thou wish to ascend also? Be then a member of Him who Only hath ascended. For He the Head, with all the members, is but One Man. And since no one can ascend, but he who in His Body is made a member of Him; that is fulfilled, “that no man hath ascended, but He that descended.” For thou canst not say, “Lo, why hath Peter, for instance, ascended, why hath Paul ascended, why have the Apostles ascended, if no one hath ascended, but He that descended?” The answer to this is, “What do Peter, and Paul, and the rest of the Apostles, and all the faithful, what do they hear from the Apostle? Now ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular.’ If then the Body of Christ and His members belong to One, do not thou make two of them. For He left father and mother, and clave to his wife, that two might be one flesh.’ He left His Father, in that here He did not show Himself as equal with the Father; but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant.’ He left His mother also, the synagogue of which He was born after the flesh. He clave to His Wife, that is, to His Church. Now in the place where Christ Himself brought forward this testimony, He showed that the marriage bond might not be dissolved: Have ye not read,’ said He, that God which made them at the beginning, made them male and female; and said, They twain shall be in one flesh? What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.’ And what is the meaning of They twain shall be in one flesh’? He goes on to

say; Wherefore they are no more twain but one flesh.’ Thus no man hath ascended, but He that descended.’“

8. For that ye may know, that the Bridegroom and the Bride are One according to the Flesh of Christ, not according to His Divinity (for according to His Divinity we cannot be what He is; seeing that He is the Creator, we the creature; He the Maker, we His work; He the Framer, we framed by Him; but in order that we might be one with Him in Him, He vouchsafed to be our Head, by taking of us flesh wherein to die for us); that ye may know then that this whole is One Christ, He said by Isaiah, “He hath bound a mitre on me as a bridegroom, and clothed me with ornaments as a bride.” He is then at once the Bridegroom and the Bride. That is, the Bridegroom in Himself as the Head, the Bride in the body. “For they twain,” saith He, “shall be in one flesh; so now they are no more twain, but one flesh.”

9. Seeing then that we are of His members, in order that we may understand this mystery as I have said, Brethren, let us live holily, let us love God for His Own sake. Now He who showeth to us while in our pilgrimage the form of a servant, reserveth for those that reach their country the form of God. With the form of a servant hath He laid down the way, with the form of God He hath prepared the home. Seeing then that it is a hard matter for us to comprehend this, but no hard matter to believe it; for Isaiah says, “Unless ye believe ye shall not understand;” let us “walk by faith as long as we are in pilgrimage from the Lord, till we come to sight where we shall see face to face.” As walking by faith, let us do good works. In these good works, let there be a free love of God for His Own sake, and an active love of our neighbour. For we have nothing we can do for God; but because we have something we may do for our neighbour, we shall by our good offices to the needy, gain His favour who is the source of all abundance. Let every one then do what he can for others; let him freely bestow upon the needy of his superfluity. One has money; let him feed the poor, let him clothe the naked, let him build a church, let him do with his money all the good he can. Another has good counsel; let him guide his neighbour, let him by the light of holiness drive away the darkness of doubting. Another has learning; let him draw out of this store of the Lord, let him minister food to his fellow-

servants, strengthen the faithful, recall the wandering, seek the lost, do all the good he can. Something there is, which even the poor may deal out to one another; let one lend feet to the lame, another give his own eyes to guide the blind; another visit the sick, another bury the dead. These are things which all may do, so that in a word it would be hard to find one who has not some means of doing good to others. And last of all comes that important duty which the Apostle speaks of; “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so shall ye fulfil the law of Christ.”

SERMON XLII

ON THE SAME WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XXII. 42

1. The question which was proposed to the Jews, Christians ought to solve. For the Lord Jesus Christ, who proposed it to the Jews, did not solve it Himself, to the Jews, I mean, He did not, but to us He hath solved it. I will put you in remembrance, Beloved, and ye will find that He hath solved it. But first consider the knot of the question. He asked the Jews what they “thought of Christ, whose Son He was to be;” for they too look for the Christ. They read of Him in the Prophets, they expected Him to come, when He was come they killed Him; for where they read that Christ would come, there did they read that they should kill Christ. But His future coming they hoped for in the Prophets; for they did not see their future crime. He therefore so questioned them about the Christ, not as if about One who was unknown to them, or whose Name they had never heard, or whose coming they had never hoped for. For they err in that even yet they hope for Him. And we indeed hope for Him too; but we hope for Him as One who is to come as Judge, not to be judged. For the Holy Prophets prophesied both, that He should come first to be judged unrighteously, that He should come afterwards to judge with righteousness. “What think ye,” then, saith he, “of Christ? whose Son is He? They answered Him, The Son of David.” And this was entirely according to the Scriptures. But He said, “How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. If David then in spirit call Him Lord, how is He his Son?”

2. Here then is need of a caution, lest Christ be thought to have denied that He was the Son of David. He did not deny that He was the Son of David, but He enquired the way. “Ye have said that Christ is the Son of David, I do not deny it; but David calls Him Lord; tell me how is He his Son, who is also his Lord; tell me how?” They did not tell Him, but were silent. Let us then tell by the explanation of Christ Himself. Where? By His Apostle. But first, whereby do we prove that Christ hath Himself explained it? The Apostle says, “Would ye receive a proof of Christ who speaketh in me?” So then in the Apostle hath He vouchsafed to solve this question. In the first place, what said Christ speaking by the Apostle to Timothy? “Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my Gospel.” See, Christ is the Son of David. How is He also David’s Lord? Tell us, O Apostle: “who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Acknowledge David’s Lord. If thou acknowledge David’s Lord, our Lord, the Lord of heaven and earth, the Lord of the Angels, equal with God, in the form of God, how is He David’s Son? Mark what follows. The Apostle shows thee David’s Lord by saying, “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” And how is He David’s Son? “But He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, having become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him.” Christ “of the seed of David,” the Son of David, rose again because “He emptied Himself.” How did He “empty Himself”? By taking that which He was not, not by losing that which He was. He “emptied Himself,” He “humbled himself.” Though He was God, He appeared as man. He was despised as He walked on earth, He who made the heaven. He was despised as though a mere man, as though of no power. Yea, not despised only, but slain moreover. He was that stone that lay on the ground, the Jews stumbled against it, and were shaken. And what doth He Himself say? “Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be shaken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.” First, He lay low, and they stumbled against Him; He shall come from above, and He will “grind” them that have been shaken “to powder.”

3. Thus have ye heard that Christ is both David’s Son, and David’s Lord: David’s Lord always, David’s Son in time: David’s Lord, born of the

substance of His Father, David's Son, born of the Virgin Mary, conceived by the Holy Ghost. Let us hold fast both. The one of them will be our eternal habitation, the other is our deliverance from our present exile. For unless our Lord Jesus Christ had vouchsafed to become man, man had perished. He was made that which He made, that what He made might not perish. Very Man, Very God; God and man whole Christ. This is the Catholic faith. Whoso denieth that Christ is God is a Photinian; whoso denieth that Christ is man is a Manichaean. Whoso confesseth that Christ is God equal with the Father and very man, that He truly suffered, truly shed His blood (for the Truth would not have set us free, if He had given a false price for us); whoso confesseth both, is a Catholic. He hath the country, he hath the way. He hath the country, "In the beginning was the Word;" He hath the country, "Being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God." He hath the way, "The Word was made flesh;" He hath the way, "He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant." He is the home whither we are going, He is the way whereby we go. Let us by Him go unto Him, and we shall not go astray.

SERMON XLIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XXV. 1, "THEN SHALL THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN BE LIKENED UNTO TEN VIRGINS."

1. Ye who were present yesterday remember my promise; which with the Lord's assistance is to be made good to-day, not to you only, but to the many others also who have come together. It is no easy question, who the ten virgins are, of whom five are wise, and five foolish. Nevertheless, according to the context of this passage which I have wished should be read again to you to-day, Beloved, I do not think, as far as the Lord vouchsafes to give me understanding, that this parable or similitude relates to those women only who by a peculiar and more excellent sanctity are called Virgins in the Church, whom by a more usual term we are wont also to call, "The Religious;" but if I mistake not this parable relates to the whole Church. But though we should understand it of those only who are called "the Religious," are they but ten? God forbid that so great a company of virgins should be reduced to so small a number! But perhaps one may say, "But what if though they be so many in outward profession, yet in truth

they are so few, that scarce ten can be found!” It is not so. For if he had meant that the good virgins only should be understood by the ten, He would not have represented five foolish ones among them. For if this is the number of the virgins which are called, why are the doors of the great house shut against five?

2. So then let us understand, dearly Beloved, that this parable relates to us all, that is, to the whole Church together, not to the Clergy only of whom we spoke yesterday; nor to the laity only; but generally to all. Why then are the Virgins five and five? These five and five virgins are all Christian souls together. But that I may tell you what by the Lord’s inspiration I think, it is not souls of every sort, but such souls as have the Catholic faith, and seem to have good works in the Church of God; and yet even of them, “five are wise, and five are foolish.” First then let us see why they are called “five,” and why “virgins,” and then let us consider the rest. Every soul in the body is therefore denoted by the number five, because it makes use of five senses. For there is nothing of which we have perception by the body, but by the five folded gate, either by the sight, or the hearing, or the smelling, or the tasting, or the touching. Whoso then abstaineth from unlawful seeing, unlawful hearing, unlawful smelling, unlawful tasting, and unlawful touching, by reason of his uncorruptness hath gotten the name of virgin.

3. But if it be good to abstain from the unlawful excitements of the senses, and on that account every Christian soul has gotten the name of virgin; why are five admitted and five rejected? They are both virgins, and yet are rejected. It is not enough that they are virgins; and that they have lamps. They are virgins, by reason of abstinence from unlawful indulgence of the senses; they have lamps, by reason of good works. Of which good works the Lord saith, “Let your works shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Again He saith to His disciples, “Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning.” In the “girded loins” is virginity; in the “burning lamps” good works.

4. The title of virginity is not usually applied to married persons: yet even in them there is a virginity of faith, which produces wedded chastity. For that you may know, Holy Brethren, that every one, every soul, as touching the soul, and that uncorruptness of faith by which abstinence from things

unlawful is practised, and by which good works are done, is not unsuitably called “a virgin;” the whole Church which consists of virgins, and boys, and married men and married women, is by one name called a Virgin. Whence prove we this? Hear the Apostle saying, not to the religious women only but to the whole Church together; “I have espoused you to One Husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” And because the devil, the corrupter of this virginity, is to be guarded against, after the Apostle had said, “I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ;” he subjoined, “But I fear, lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” Few have virginity in the body; in the heart all ought to have it. If then abstinence from what is unlawful be good, whereby it has received the name of virginity, and good works are praiseworthy, which are signified by the lamps; why are five admitted and five rejected? If there be a virgin, and one who carries lamps, who yet is not admitted; where shall he see himself, who neither preserveth a virginity from things unlawful, and who not wishing to have good works walketh in darkness?

5. Of these then, my Brethren, yea, of these let us the rather treat. He who will not see what is evil, he who will not hear what is evil, he that turneth away his smell from the unlawful fumes, and his taste from the unlawful food of the sacrifices, he who refuseth the embrace of another man’s wife, breaketh his bread to the hungry, bringeth the stranger into his house, clotheth the naked, reconcileth the litigious, visiteth the sick, burieth the dead; he surely is a virgin, surely he hath lamps. What seek we more? Something yet I seek. What seekest thou yet, one will say? Something yet I seek; the Holy Gospel hath set me on the search. It hath said that even of these, virgins, and carrying lamps, some are wise and some foolish. By what do we see this? By what make the distinction? By the oil. Some great, some exceedingly great thing doth this oil signify. Thinkest thou that it is not charity? This we say as searching out what it is; we hazard no precipitate judgment. I will tell you why charity seems to be signified by the oil. The Apostle says, “I show unto you a way above the rest.” Though I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” This, that is “charity,” is

“that way above the rest,” which is with good reason signified by the oil. For oil swims above all liquids. Pour in water, and pour in oil upon it, the oil will swim above. Pour in oil, pour in water upon it, the oil will swim above. If you keep the usual order, it will be uppermost; if you change the order, it will be uppermost. “Charity never falleth.”

6. What is it then, Brethren? Let us treat now of the five wise and the five foolish virgins. They wished to go to meet the Bridegroom. What is the meaning of “to go and meet the Bridegroom”? To go with the heart, to be waiting for his coming. But he tarried. “While he tarries, they all slept.” What is “all”? Both the foolish and the wise, “all slumbered and slept.” Think we is this sleep good? What is this sleep? Is it that at the tarrying of the Bridegroom, “because iniquity aboundeth, the love of many waxeth cold”? Are we to understand this sleep so? I like it not. I will tell you why. Because among them are the wise virgins; and certainly when the Lord said, “Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold;” He went on to say, “But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.” Where would ye have those wise virgins be? Are they not among those that “shall endure unto the end”? They would not be admitted within at all, Brethren, for any other reason, than because they have “endured unto the end.” No coldness of love then crept over them, in them love did not wax cold; but preserves its glow even unto the end. And because it glows even unto the end, therefore are the gates of the Bridegroom opened to them; therefore are they told to enter in, as that excellent servant, “Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” What then is the meaning of they “all slept”? There is another sleep which no one escapes. Remember ye not the Apostle saying, “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep,” that is, concerning them which are dead? For why are they called “they which are asleep,” but because they are in their own day? Therefore “they all slept.” Thinkest thou that because one is wise, he has not therefore to die? Be the virgin foolish, or be she wise, all suffer equally the sleep of death.

7. But men continually say to themselves, “Lo, the day of judgment is coming now, so many evils are happening, so many tribulations thicken; behold all things which the Prophets have spoken, are well-nigh fulfilled;

the day of judgment is already at hand.” They who speak thus, and speak in faith, go out as it were with such thoughts to “meet the Bridegroom.” But, lo! war upon war, tribulation upon tribulation, earthquake upon earthquake, famine upon famine, nation against nation, and still the Bridegroom comes not yet. Whilst then He is expected to come, all they who are saying, “Lo, He is coming, and the Day of Judgment will find us here,” fall asleep. Whilst they are saying this, they fall asleep. Let each one then have an eye to this his sleep, and persevere even unto his sleep in love; let sleep find him so waiting. For suppose that he has fallen asleep. “Will not He who falls asleep afterwards rise again?” Therefore “they all slept;” both of the wise and the foolish virgins in the parable, it is said, “they all slept.”

8. “Lo, at midnight there was a cry made.” What is, “at midnight”? When there is no expectation, no belief at all of it. Night is put for ignorance. A man makes as it were a calculation with himself: “Lo, so many years have passed since Adam, and the six thousand years are being completed, and then immediately according to the computation of certain expositors, the Day of Judgment will come;” yet these calculations come and pass away, and still the coming of the Bridegroom is delayed, and the virgins who had gone to meet him sleep. And, lo, when He is not looked for, when men are saying, “The six thousand years were waited for, and, lo, they are gone by, how then shall we know when He will come?” He will come at midnight. What is, “will come at midnight”? Will come when thou art not aware. Why will He come when thou art not aware of it? Hear the Lord Himself, “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Lord hath put in His own power.” “The day of the Lord,” says the Apostle, “will come as a thief in the night.” Therefore watch thou by night that thou be not surprised by the thief. For the sleep of death—will ye, or nill ye—it will come.

9. “But when that cry was made at midnight.” What cry was this, but that of which the Apostle says, “In the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump”? “For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed”? And so when the cry was made at midnight, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh;” what follows? “Then all those virgins arose.” What is, “they” all arose? “The hour will come,” said the Lord Himself, “when all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth.”

Therefore at the last trumpet they all arose. “Now those wise virgins had brought oil with them in their vessels; but the foolish brought no oil with them.” What is the meaning of “brought no oil with them in their vessels”? What is “in their vessels”? In their hearts. Whence the Apostle says, “Our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience.” There is the oil, the precious oil; this oil is of the gift of God. Men can put oil into their vessels, but they cannot create the olive. See, I have oil; but didst thou create the oil? It is of the gift of God. Thou hast oil. Carry it with thee. What is “carry it with thee”? Have it within, there please thou God.

10. For, lo, those “foolish virgins, who brought no oil with them,” wish to please men by that abstinence of theirs whereby they are called virgins, and by their good works, when they seem to carry lamps. And if they wish to please men, and on that account do all these praiseworthy works, they do not carry oil with them. Do you then carry it with thee, carry it within where God seeth; there carry the testimony of thy conscience. For he who walks to gain the testimony of another, does not carry oil with him. If thou abstain from things unlawful, and doest good works to be praised of men; there is no oil within. And so when men begin to leave off their praises, the lamps fail. Observe then, Beloved, before those virgins slept, it is not said that their lamps were extinguished. The lamps of the wise virgins burned with an inward oil, with the assurance of a good conscience, with an inner glory, with an inmost charity. Yet the lamps of the foolish virgins burned also. Why burnt they then? Because there was yet no want of the praises of men. But after that they arose, that is in the resurrection from the dead, they began to trim their lamps, that is, began to prepare to render unto God an account of their works. And because there is then no one to praise, every man is wholly employed in his own cause, there is no one then who is not thinking of himself, therefore were there none to sell them oil; so their lamps began to fail, and the foolish betook themselves to the five wise, “give us of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” They sought for what they had been wont to seek for, to shine that is with others’ oil, to walk after others’ praises. “Give us of your oil, for our lamps are going out.”

11. But they say, “Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you, but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.” This was not the answer of

those who give advice, but of those who mock. And why mock they? Because they were wise, because wisdom was in them. For they were not wise by ought of their own; but that wisdom was in them, of which it is written in a certain book, she shall say to those that despised her, when they have fallen upon the evils which she threatened them; "I will laugh over your destruction." What wonder then is it, that the wise mock the foolish virgins? And what is this mocking?

12. "Go ye to them that sell, and buy for yourselves:" ye who never were wont to live well, but because men praised you, who sold you oil. What means this, "sold you oil"? "Sold praises." Who sell praises, but flatterers? How much better had it been for you not to have acquiesced in flatterers, and to have carried oil within, and for a good conscience-sake to have done all good works; then might ye say, "The righteous shall correct me in mercy, and reprove me, but the oil of the sinner shall not fatten my head." Rather, he says, let the righteous correct me, let the righteous reprove me, let the righteous buffet me, let the righteous correct me, than the "oil of the sinner fatten mine head." What is the oil of the sinner, but the blandishments of the flatterer?

13. "Go ye" then "to them that sell," this have ye been accustomed to do. But we will not give to you. Why? "Lest there be not enough for us and you." What is, "lest there be not enough"? This was not spoken in any lack of hope, but in a sober and godly humility. For though the good man have a good conscience; how knows he, how He may judge who is deceived by no one? He hath a good conscience, no sins conceived in the heart solicit him, yet, though his conscience be good, because of the daily sins of human life, he saith to God, "forgive us our debts;" seeing he hath done what comes next, "as we also forgive our debtors." He hath broken his bread to the hungry from the heart, from the heart hath clothed the naked; out of that inward oil he hath done good works, and yet in that judgment even his good conscience trembleth.

14. See then what this, "Give us oil," is. They were told "Go ye rather to them that sell." In that ye have been used to live upon the praises of men, ye do not carry oil with you; but we can give you none; "lest there be not enough for us and you." For scarcely do we judge of ourselves, how much

less can we judge of you? What is “scarcely do we judge of ourselves”? Because, “When the righteous King sitteth on the throne, who will glory that his heart is pure?” It may be thou dost not discover anything in thine own conscience; but He who seeth better, whose Divine glance penetrateth into deeper things, discovereth it may be something, He seeth it may be something, He discovereth something. How much better mayest thou say to Him, “Enter not into judgment with Thy servant”? Yea, how much better, “Forgive us our debts”? Because it shall be also said to thee because of those torches, because of those lamps; “I was hungry, and ye gave Me meat.” What then? did not the foolish virgins do so too? Yea, but they did it not before Him. How then did they do it? As the Lord forbiddeth, who said, “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them, otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven: and when ye pray, be not as the hypocrites, for they love to pray, standing in the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have received their reward.” They have bought oil, they have given the price; they have bought it, they have not been defrauded of men’s praises, they have sought men’s praises, and have had them. These praises of men aid them not in the judgment day. But the other virgins, how have they done? “Let your works shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” He did not say, “may glorify you.” For thou hast no oil of thine own self. Boast thyself and say, I have it; but from Him, “for what hast thou that thou hast not received?” So then in this way acted the one, and in that the other.

15. Now it is no wonder, that “while they are going to buy,” while they are seeking for persons by whom to be praised, and find none; while they are seeking for persons by whom to be comforted, and find none; that the door is opened, that “the Bridegroom cometh,” and the Bride, the Church, glorified then with Christ, that the several members may be gathered together into their whole. “And they went in with Him into the marriage, and the door was shut.” Then the foolish virgins came afterwards; but had they bought any oil, or found any from whom they might buy it? Therefore they found the doors shut; they began to knock, but too late.

16. It is said, and it is true, and no deceiving saying, “Knock, and it shall be opened unto you;” but now when it is the time of mercy, not when it is the time of judgment. For these times cannot be confounded, since the Church sings to her Lord of “mercy and judgment.” It is the time of mercy; repent. Canst thou repent in the time of judgment? Thou wilt be then as those virgins, against whom the door was shut. “Lord, Lord, open to us.” What! did they not repent, that they had brought no oil with them? Yes, but what profiteth them their late repentance, when the true wisdom mocked them? Therefore “the door was shut.” And what was said to them? “I know you not.” Did not He know them, who knoweth all things? What then is, “I know you not?” I refuse, I reject you. In my art I do not acknowledge you, my art knoweth not vice; now this is a marvellous thing, it doth not know vice, and it judgeth vice. It doth not know it in the practice of it; it judgeth by reproving it. Thus then, “I know you not.”

17. The five wise virgins came, and “went in.” How many are ye, my Brethren, in the profession of Christ’s Name! let there be among you the five wise, but be not five such persons only. Let there be among you the five wise, belonging to this wisdom of the number five. For the hour will come, and come when we know not. It will come at midnight, Watch ye. Thus did the Gospel close; “Watch, for ye know neither the day nor the hour.” But if we are all to sleep, how shall we watch? Watch with the heart, watch with faith, watch with hope, watch with charity, watch with good works; and then, when thou shalt sleep in thy body, the time will come that thou shalt rise. And when thou shalt have risen, make ready the lamps. Then shall they go out no more, then shall they be renewed with the inner oil of conscience; then shall that Bridegroom fold thee in His spiritual embrace, then shall He bring thee into His House where thou shall never sleep, where thy lamp can never be extinguished. But at present we are in labour, and our lamps flicker amid the winds and temptations of this life; but only let our flame burn strongly, that the wind of temptation may increase the fire, rather than put it out.

SERMON XLIV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MATT. XXV. 24, ETC., WHERE THE SLOTHFUL SERVANT WHO WOULD NOT PUT OUT THE TALENT HE HAD RECEIVED, IS CONDEMNED

1. My lords, my brethren, and fellow bishops have deigned to visit us and gladden us by their presence; but I know not why they are unwilling to assist me, when wearied. I have said this to you, Beloved, in their hearing, that your hearing may in a manner intercede for me with them, that when I ask them they also may discourse unto you in their turn. Let them dispense what they have received, let them vouchsafe to work rather than excuse themselves. Be pleased, however, to hear from me, fatigued though I be and have difficulty in speaking, a few words only. For we have besides a record of God's mercies vouchsafed through a holy Martyr, which we must give willing audience to altogether. What is it then? what shall I say unto you? Ye have heard in the Gospel both the due recompense of the good servants, and the punishment of the bad. And the whole wickedness of that servant who was reprobate and severely condemned, was that he would not put out his money to use. He kept the entire sum he had received; but the Lord looked for profit from it. God is coveteous with regard to our salvation. If he who did not put out to use is so condemned, what must they look for who lose what they have received? We then are the dispensers, we put out, ye receive. We look for profit; do ye live well. For this is the profit in our dealings with you. But do not think that this office of putting out to use does not belong to you also. Ye cannot execute it indeed from this elevated seat, but ye can wherever ye chance to be. Wherever Christ is attacked, defend Him; answer murmurers, rebuke blasphemers, from their fellowship keep yourselves apart. So do ye put out to use, if ye make gain of any. Discharge our office in your own houses. A bishop is called from hence, because he superintends, because he takes care and attends to others. To every man then, if he is the head of his own house, ought the office of the Episcopate to belong, to take care how his household believe, that none of them fall into heresy, neither wife, nor son, nor daughter, nor even his slave, because he has been bought at so great a price. The Apostolic teaching has set the master over the slave, and put the slave under the master; nevertheless Christ gave the same price for both. Do not neglect then the least of those

belonging to you, look after the salvation of all your household with all vigilance. This if ye do, ye put out to use; ye will not be slothful servants, ye will not have to fear so horrible a condemnation.

SERMON XLV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MARK VIII. 5, ETC., WHERE THE MIRACLE OF THE SEVEN LOAVES IS RELATED

1. In expounding to you the Holy Scriptures, I as it were break bread for you. Do ye in hunger receive it, and break forth with a fulness of phrase from the heart; and ye who are rich in your banquet, be not meagre in good works and deeds. What I deal out to you is not mine own. What ye eat, I eat; what ye live upon, I live upon. We have in heaven a common storehouse; for from thence comes the Word of God.

2. The "seven loaves" signify the seven-fold operation of the Holy Spirit; the "four thousand men," the Church established on the four Gospels; "the seven baskets of fragments," the perfection of the Church. For by this number very constantly is perfection figured. For whence is that which is said, "seven times in a day will I praise thee"? Does a man sin who does not praise the Lord so often? What then is "seven times will I praise," but "I will never cease from praise"? For he who says "seven times," signifies all time. Whence in this world there are continual revolutions of seven days. What then is "seven times in a day will I praise Thee," but what is said in another place, "His praise shall always be in my mouth"? With reference to this perfection, John writes to seven Churches. The Apocalypse is a book of St. John the Evangelist; and he writes "to seven Churches." Be ye hungered; own ye these baskets. For those fragments were not lost; but seeing that ye too belong to the Church, they have surely profited you. In that I explain this to you, I minister to Christ; and when ye hear peaceably, ye "sit down." I in my body sit, but in my heart I am standing, and ministering to you in anxiety; lest peradventure, not the food, but the vessel offend any of you. Ye know the feast of God, ye have often heard it, that it is for the heart, not for the belly.

3. Of a truth four thousand men were filled by seven loaves; what is more wonderful than this! Yet even this were not enough, had not seven baskets

also been filled with the fragments that remained. O great mysteries! they were works, and the works spake. If thou understand these doings, they are words. And ye too belong to the four thousand, because ye live under the fourfold Gospel. To this number the children and women did not belong. For so it is said, “And they that did eat were four thousand men, excepting women and children.” As though the void of understanding, and the effeminate were without number. Yet let even these eat. Let them eat: it may be the children will grow, and will be children no more; it may be the effeminate will be amended, and become chaste. Let them eat; we dispense, we deal out to them. But who these are, God inspecteth His feast, and if they do not amend themselves, He who knew how to invite them thither, knoweth also how to separate them from the rest.

4. Ye know it, dearly Beloved; call to mind the parable of the Gospel, how that the Lord came in to inspect the guests at a certain feast of His. The Master of the house who had invited them, as it is written, “found there a man which had not on a wedding garment.” For to the marriage had that Bridegroom invited them who is “fair in beauty above the children of men.” That Bridegroom became deformed because of His deformed spouse, that he might make her fair. How did the Fair One become deformed? If I do not prove it, I am blaspheming. The testimony of his fair beauty the Prophet gives me, who saith, “Thou art fair in beauty above the children of men.” The testimony of his deformity another Prophet gives me, who saith, “We saw Him, and He had no grace, nor beauty; but His countenance was marred, and His whole look deformed.” O Prophet, who saidst, “Thou art fair in beauty above the children of men;” thou art contradicted; another Prophet cometh out against thee, and saith, “Thou speakest falsely. We have seen Him. What is this that thou sayest, Thou art fair in beauty above the children of men? We have seen Him, and He had no grace nor beauty.’“ Are then these two Prophets at disagreement in the Corner-stone of peace? Both spake of Christ, both spake of the Cornerstone. In the corner the walls unite. If they do not unite, it is not a building, but a ruin. No, the Prophets agree, let us not leave them in strife. Yea, rather let us understand their peace; for they know not how to strive. O Prophet, who saidst, “Thou art fair in beauty above the children of men;” where didst thou see Him? Answer me, answer where didst thou see Him? “Being in the form of God, He thought it not

robbery to be equal with God.” There I saw Him. Dost thou doubt that He who is “equal with God” is “fair in beauty above the children of men”? Thou hast answered; now let him answer who said, “We saw Him, and He had no grace, nor beauty.” Thou hast said so; tell us where didst thou see Him? He begins from the other’s words; where the other ended, there he begins. Where did he end? “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Lo, where he saw Him who was “fair in beauty above the children of men;” do thou tell us, where thou sawest that “He had no grace nor beauty. But He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man.” Of His deformity he still further says; “He humbled Himself, having become obedient unto death even the death of the cross.” Lo, where I saw Him. Therefore are they both in peaceful concord, both are at peace together. What is more “fair” than God? What more “deformed” than the Crucified?

5. So then this Bridegroom, “fair in beauty above the children of men,” became deformed that He might make His Spouse fair to whom it is said, “O thou beauteous among women,” of whom it is said, “Who is this that cometh up, whitened” with the brightness of light, not the colouring of falsehood! He then who called them to the wedding, found a man who had not a wedding garment, and He said unto him, “Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.” For he found not what to answer. And the Master of the house Who had invited him said, “Bind him hands and feet, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” For so small a fault, so great a punishment? For great it is. It is called a small fault not to have “the wedding garment;” small, but only by those who do not understand. How would He have been so incensed, how would He have so judged, to cast him, on account of the wedding garment which he had not, “bound hands and feet into outer darkness, where was weeping and gnashing of teeth,” unless it had been a very grievous fault, not to have “the wedding garment”? I say this; seeing ye have been invited through me; for though He invited you, He invited you by my ministry. Ye are all at the feast, have the wedding garment. I will explain what it is, that ye may all have it, and if any one now hears me who has it not, let him, before the Master of the

house comes and inspects His guests, be changed for the better, let him receive “the wedding garment,” and so sit down in all assurance.

6. For in truth, dearly Beloved, he who was cast forth from the feast, does not signify one man; far from it. They are many. And the Lord Himself who put forth this parable, the Bridegroom Himself, who calleth together to the feast, and quickeneth whom He calleth, He hath Himself explained to us, that that man does not denote one man, but many, there, in that very place, in the same parable. I do not go far for this, I find the explanation there, there I break the bread, and set it before you to be eaten. For He said, when he who had not “the wedding garment was cast out thence into outer darkness,” He said and added immediately, “for many are called, but few chosen.” Thou hast cast forth one man from hence, and Thou sayest, “for many are called, but few chosen.” Without doubt the chosen are not cast forth; and they were the few guests who remained; and the “many” were represented in that one, because that one who hath not “the wedding garment” is the body of the wicked.

7. What is “the wedding garment”? Let us search for it in the Holy Scriptures. What is “the wedding garment”? Without doubt it is something which the bad and good have not in common; let us discover this, and we shall discover “the wedding garment.” Among the gifts of God, what have not the good and bad in common? That we are men and not beasts, is a gift of God; but this is common to good and bad. That the light from heaven rises upon us, that the rain descends from the cloud, the fountains flow, the fields yield their fruit; these are gifts, but common to the good and bad. Let us go to the marriage feast, let us leave the others without, who being called come not. Let us consider the guests themselves, that is, Christians. Baptism is a gift of God, the good and bad have it. The Sacraments of the Altar the good and bad receive together. Saul prophesied for all his wickedness, and in his rage against a holy and most righteous man, even while he was persecuting him, he prophesied. Are the good only said to believe? “The devils also believe and tremble.” What shall I do? I have sifted all, and have not yet come to “the wedding garment.” I have unfolded my envelopings, I have considered all, or almost all, and have not yet come to that garment. The Apostle Paul in a certain place has brought me a great collection of

excellent things; he has laid them open before me, and I have said to him, “Show me, if so be thou hast found among them that wedding garment.’“ He begins to unfold them one by one, and to say, “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels, though I have all knowledge, and the gift of prophecy, and all faith, so that I could remove mountains; though I distribute all my goods to the poor, and give my body to be burned.” Precious garments! nevertheless, there is not yet here that “wedding garment.” Now bring out to us “the wedding garment.” Why dost thou keep us in suspense, O Apostle? Peradventure prophecy is a gift of God which both good and bad have not. “If,” says He, “I have not charity, nothing profiteth me.” See “the wedding garment;” put it on, ye guests, that ye may sit down securely. Do not say; “we are too poor to have that garment.” Clothe others, and ye are clothed yourselves. It is winter, clothe the naked. Christ is naked; and He will give you that “wedding garment” whosoever have it not. Run to Him, beseech Him; He knoweth how to sanctify His faithful ones, He knoweth how to clothe His naked ones. That ye may be able as having “the wedding garment” to be free from the fear of the outer darkness, and the binding of your members and hands and feet; let not your works fail. If they fail, with hands bound what canst thou do? with feet bound, whither wilt thou fly? Keep then that “wedding garment,” put it on, and so sit down in security, when He comes to inspect. The Day of Judgment will come; He is now giving a long space, let him who erewhile was naked now be clothed.

SERMON XLVI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MARK VIII. 34, “IF ANY MAN WOULD COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF,” ETC. AND ON THE WORDS 1 JOHN II. 15, “IF ANY MAN LOVE THE WORLD, THE LOVE OF THE FATHER IS NOT IN HIM.”

1. Hard and grievous does that appear which the Lord hath enjoined, that “whosoever will come after Him, must deny himself.” But what He enjoineth is not hard or grievous, who aideth us that what He enjoineth may be done. For both is that true which is said to Him in the Psalm, “Because of the words of Thy lips I have kept hard ways.” And that is true which He said Himself, “My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.” For whatsoever is hard in what is enjoined us, charity makes easy. We know what great things

love itself can do. Very often is this love even abominable and impure; but how great hardships have men suffered, what indignities and intolerable things have they endured, to attain to the object of their love? whether it be a lover of money who is called covetous; or a lover of honour, who is called ambitious; or a lover of beautiful women, who is called voluptuous. And who could enumerate all sorts of loves? Yet consider what labour all lovers undergo, and are not conscious of their labours; and then does any such one most feel labour, when he is hindered from labour. Since then the majority of men are such as their loves are, and that there ought to be no other care for the regulation of our lives, than the choice of that which we ought to love; why dost thou wonder, if he who loves Christ, and who wishes to follow Christ, for the love of Him denies himself? For if by loving himself man is lost, surely by denying himself he is found.

2. The first destruction of man, was the love of himself. For if he had not loved himself, if he had preferred God to himself, he would have been willing to be ever subject unto God; and would not have been turned to the neglect of His will, and the doing his own will. For this is to love one’s self, to wish to do one’s own will. Prefer to this God’s will; learn to love thyself by not loving thyself. For that ye may know that it is a vice to love one’s self, the Apostle speaks thus, “For men shall be lovers of their own selves.” And can he who loves himself have any sure trust in himself? No; for he begins to love himself by forsaking God, and is driven away from himself to love those things which are beyond himself; to such a degree that when the aforesaid Apostle had said,” Men shall be lovers of their own selves,” he subjoined immediately, “lovers of money.” Already thou seest that thou art without. Thou hast begun to love thyself: stand in thyself if thou canst. Why goest thou without? Hast thou, as being rich in money, become a lover of money? Thou hast begun to love what is without thee, thou hast lost thyself. When a man’s love then goes even away from himself to those things which are without, he begins to share the vanity of his vain desires, and prodigal as it were to spend his strength. He is dissipated, exhausted, without resource or strength, he feeds swine; and wearied with this office of feeding swine, he at last remembers what he was, and says, “How many hired servants of my Father’s are eating bread, and I here perish with hunger!” But when the son in the parable says this, what is said of him, who

had squandered all he had on harlots, who wished to have in his own power what was being well kept for him with his father; he wished to have it at his own disposal, he squandered all, he was reduced to indigence: what is said of him? “And when he returned to himself.” If “he returned to himself,” he had gone away from himself. Because he had fallen from himself, had gone away from himself, he returns first to himself, that he may return to that state from which he had fallen away by falling from himself. For as by falling away from himself, he remained in himself; so by returning to himself, he ought not to remain in himself, lest he again go away from himself. Returning then to himself, that he might not remain in himself, what did he say? “I will arise and go to my Father.” See, whence he had fallen away from himself, he had fallen away from his Father; he had fallen away from himself, he had gone away from himself to those things which are without. He returns to himself, and goes to his Father, where he may keep himself in all security. If then he had gone away from himself, let him also in returning to himself, from whom he had gone away, that he may “go to his Father,” deny himself. What is “deny himself”? Let him not trust in himself, let him feel that he is a man, and have respect to the words of the prophet, “Cursed is every one that putteth his hope in man.” Let him withdraw himself from himself, but not towards things below. Let him withdraw himself from himself, that he may cleave unto God. Whatever of good he has, let him commit to Him by whom he was made; whatever of evil he has, he has made it for himself. The evil that is in him God made not; let him destroy what himself has done, who has been thereby undone. “Let him deny himself,” He saith, “and take up his cross, and follow Me.”

3. And whither must the Lord be followed? Whither He is gone, we know; but a very few days since we celebrated the solemn memorial of it. For He has risen again, and ascended into heaven; thither must He be followed. Undoubtedly we must not despair of it, because He hath Himself promised us, not because man can do anything. Heaven was far away from us, before that our Head had gone into heaven. But now why should we despair, if we are members of that Head? Thither then must He be followed. And who would be unwilling to follow Him to such an abode? Especially seeing that we are in so great travail on earth with fears and pains. Who would be unwilling to follow Christ thither, where is supreme felicity, supreme peace,

perpetual security? Good is it to follow Him thither: but we must see by what way we are to follow. For the Lord Jesus did not say the words we are engaged in, when He had now risen from the dead. He had not yet suffered, He had still to come to the Cross, had to come to His dishonouring, to the outrages, the scourging, the thorns, the wounds, the mockeries, the insults, Death. Rough as it were is the way; it makes thee to be slow; thou hast no mind to follow. But follow on. Rough is the way which man has made for himself, but what Christ hath trodden in His passage is worn smooth. For who would not wish to go to exaltation? Elevation is pleasing to all; but humility is the step to it. Why dost thou put out thy foot beyond thee? Thou hast a mind to fall, not to ascend. Begin by the step, and so thou hast ascended. This step of humility those two disciples were loth to have an eye to, who said, “Lord, bid that one of us may sit at Thy right hand, and the other at the left in Thy kingdom.” They sought for exaltation, they did not see the step. But the Lord showed them the step. For what did He answer them? “Ye who seek the hill of exaltation, can ye drink the cup of humiliation?” And therefore He does not say simply, “Let him deny himself, and follow Me” howsoever: but He said more, “Let him take up his cross, and follow Me.”

4. What is, “Let him take up his cross”? Let him bear whatever trouble he has; so let him follow Me. For when he shall begin to follow Me in conformity to My life and precepts, he will have many to contradict him, he will have many to hinder him, he will have many to dissuade him, and that from among those who are even as it were Christ’s companions. They who hindered the blind men from crying out were walking with Christ. Whether therefore they be threats or caresses, or whatsoever hindrances there be, if thou wish to follow, turn them into thy cross, bear it, carry it, do not give way beneath it. There seems to be an exhortation to martyrdom in these words of the Lord. If there be persecution, ought not all things to be despised in consideration of Christ? The world is loved; but let Him be preferred by whom the world was made. Great is the world; but greater is He by whom the world was made. Fair is the world; but fairer is He by whom the world was made. Sweet is the world; but sweeter is He by whom the world was made. Evil is the world; and good is He by whom the world was made. How shall I be able to explain and unravel what I have said?

May God help me? For what have I said? what have ye applauded? See, it is but a question, and yet ye have already applauded. How is the world evil, if He by whom the world was made is good? Did not God make all things, “and behold they were very good”? Does not Scripture at each several work of creation testify that God made it good, by saying, “And God saw that it was good,” and at the end summed them all up together thus how that God had made them, “And behold they were very good”?

5. How then is the world evil, and He good by whom the world was made? How? “Since the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.” The world was made by Him, the heaven and earth and all things that are in them: “the world knew Him not,” the lovers of the world; the lovers of the world and the despisers of God; this “world knew Him not.” So then the world is evil, because they are evil who prefer the world to God. And He is good who made the world, the heaven, and earth, and sea, and themselves who love the world. For this only, that they love the world and do not love God, He made not in them. But themselves, all that appertains to their nature He made; what appertains to guiltiness, He made not. This is that I said a little while ago, “Let man efface what he has made, and so will he be well-pleasing to Him who made Him.”

6. For there is among men themselves a good world also; but one that has been made good from being evil. For the whole world if you take the word “world” for men, putting aside (what we call the world) the heaven and earth and all things that in them are; if you take the world for men, the whole world did he who first sinned make evil. The whole mass was corrupted in the root. God made man good; so runs the Scripture, “God made man upright; and men themselves found out many cogitations.” Run from these “many” to One, gather up thy scattered things into one: flow on together, fence thyself in, abide with One; go not to many things. There is blessedness. But we have flowed away, have gone on to perdition: we were all born with sin, and to that sin wherein we were born have we too added by our evil living, and the whole world has become evil. But Christ came, and He chose that which He made, not what He found; for He found all evil, and by His grace He made them good. And so was made another “world;” and the “world” now persecutes the “world.”

7. What is the “world” which persecutes? That of which it is said to us, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever,” even as God abideth for ever. Lo! I have spoken of two “worlds,” the “world” which persecutes, and that which it persecutes. What is the “world” which persecutes? “All that is the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but of the world;” and “the world passeth away.” Lo, this is the “world” which persecutes. What is the “world” which it persecutes? “He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever,” even as God abideth for ever.

8. But see, that which persecutes is called the “world;” let us prove whether that also which suffers persecution is called “the world.” What! Art thou deaf to the voice of Christ who speaketh, or rather to Holy Scripture which testifieth, “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.” “If the world hate you, know ye that it first hated Me.” See, the “world” hates. What does it hate but the “world”? What “world”? “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.” The condemned “world” persecutes; the reconciled “world” suffers persecution. The condemned “world” is all that is without the Church; the reconciled “world” is the Church. For He says, “The Son of Man came not to judge the world, but that the world through Him may be saved.”

9. Now in this world, holy, good, reconciled, saved, or rather to be saved, and now saved in hope, “for we are saved in hope;” in this world, I say, that is in the Church which wholly follows Christ, He hath said as of universal application, “Whosoever will follow Me, let him deny himself.” For it is not that the virgins ought to give ear to this, and the married women ought not; or that the widows ought, and the women who still have their husbands ought not; or that monks ought, and the married men ought not; or that the clergy ought, and the laymen ought not: but let the whole Church, the whole body, all the members, distinguished and distributed throughout their several offices, follow Christ. Let the whole Church follow Him, that only

Church, let the dove follow Him, let the spouse follow Him, let her who has been redeemed and endowed with the Bridegroom’s blood, follow Him. There virgin purity hath its place; there widowed continence hath its place; married chastity there hath its place; but adultery hath no place of its own there; and no place there hath lasciviousness, unlawful and meet for punishment. But let these several members which have their place there, in their kind and place and measure, “follow Christ;” let them “deny themselves;” that is, let them presume nothing of themselves: let them “take up their cross,” that is, let them in the world endure for Christ’s sake whatever the world may bring upon them. Let them love Him, who Alone doth not deceive, who Alone is not deceived, Alone deceiveth not; let them love Him, for that is true which He doth promise. But because He doth not give at once, faith wavers. Hold on, persevere, endure, bear delay and thou hast borne the cross.

10. Let not the virgin say, “I shall alone be there.” For Mary shall not be there alone but the widow Anna shall be there also. Let not the woman which hath an husband say, “The widow will be there, not I;” for it is not that Anna will be there, and Susanna not be there. But by all means let them who would be there prove themselves hereby, that they who have here a lower place envy not, but love in others the better place. For, for instance, my Brethren, that ye may understand me; one man has chosen a married life, another a life of continence; if he who has chosen the married life, has adulterous lusts, he has “looked back;” he has lusted after that which is unlawful. He too who would wish afterwards to return from continence to a married life, has “looked back;” he has chosen what is in itself lawful, yet he has “looked back.” Is marriage then to be condemned? No. Marriage is not to be condemned; but see whither he had come who has chosen it. He had already got before it. When he was living as a young man in voluptuousness, marriage was before him; he was making his way towards it; but when he had chosen continence, marriage was behind him. “Remember,” saith the Lord, “Lot’s wife.” Lot’s wife, by looking behind, remained motionless. To whatever point then any one has been able to reach, let him fear to “look back” from thence; and let him walk in the way, let him “follow Christ.” “Forgetting those things which are behind, and stretching forth unto those things which are before, let him by an earnest

inward intention press on toward the prize of the calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Let those that are married regard the unmarried as above themselves; let them acknowledge that they are better; let them in them love what themselves have not; and let them in them love Christ.

SERMON XLVII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, MARK XIII. 32, “BUT OF THAT DAY OR THAT HOUR KNOWETH NO ONE, NOT EVEN THE ANGELS IN HEAVEN, NEITHER THE SON, BUT THE FATHER.”

1. The advice, Brethren, which ye have just heard Scripture give, when it tells us to watch for the last day, every one should think of as concerning his own last day; lest haply when ye judge or think the last day of the world to be far distant, ye slumber with respect to your own last day. Ye have heard what Jesus said concerning the last day of this world, “That neither the Angels of heaven, nor the Son knew it, but the Father.” Where indeed there is a great difficulty, lest understanding this in a carnal way, we think that the Father knoweth anything which the Son knoweth not. For indeed when He said, “the Father knoweth it;” He said this because in the Father the Son also knoweth it. For what is there in a day which was not made by the Word, by whom the day was made? Let no one then search out for the last Day, when it is to be; but let us watch all by our good lives, lest the last day of any one of us find us unprepared, and such as any one shall depart hence on his last day, such he be found in the last day of the world. Nothing will then assist thee which thou shalt not have done here. His own works will succour, or his own works will overwhelm every one.

2. And how have we in the Psalm sung unto the Lord, “Lord, have mercy on me, for man hath trodden me down”? He is called a man who lives after the manner of men. For it is said to them who live after God, “Ye are gods, and ye are all the children of the Most High.” But to the reprobate, who were called to be the sons of God, and who wished rather to be men, that is, to live after the manner of men, he says, “But ye shall die like men, and fall as one of the princes.” For that man is mortal, ought to avail for his instruction, not for boasting. Whereupon does a worm that is to die on the morrow boast himself? I speak to your love, Brethren; proud mortals ought to be made blush by the devil. For he, though proud, is yet immortal; he is a

spirit, though a malignant one. The last day is kept in store for him at the end as his punishment; nevertheless he is not subject to the death to which we are subject. But man heard the sentence, "Thou shalt surely die." Let him make a good use of his punishment. What is that I have said, "Let him make a good use of his punishment"? Let him not by that from which he received his punishment fall into pride; let him acknowledge that he is mortal, and let it break down his elation. Let him hear it said to him, "Why is earth and ashes proud?" Even if the devil is proud, he is not "earth and ashes." Therefore was it said, "But ye shall die like men, and shall fall as one of the princes." Ye do not consider that ye are mortals, and ye are proud as the devil. Let man then make a good use of his punishment, Brethren; let him make a good use of his evil, that he may make advancement to his good. Who does not know, that the necessity of our dying is a punishment; and the more grievous, that we know not when? The punishment is certain, the hour uncertain; and of that punishment alone are we certain in the ordinary course of human affairs.

3. All else of ours, both good and evil, is uncertain; death alone is certain. What is this that I say? A child is conceived, perhaps it will be born, perhaps it will be an untimely birth. So it is uncertain: Perhaps he will grow up, perhaps he will not grow up; perhaps he will grow old, perhaps he will not grow old; perhaps he will be rich, perhaps poor; perhaps he will be distinguished, perhaps abased; perhaps he will have children, perhaps he will not; perhaps he will marry, perhaps not; and so on, whatever else among good things you may name. Now look too at the evils of life: Perhaps he will have sickness, perhaps he will have not; perhaps he will be stung by a serpent, perhaps not; perhap he will be devoured by a wild beast, perhaps he will not. And so look at all evils; everywhere is there a "perhaps it will be," and "perhaps it will not." But canst thou say, "Perhaps he will die," and "perhaps he will not die"? As when medical men examine an illness, and ascertain that it is fatal, they make this announcement; "He will die, he will not get over this." So from the moment of a man's birth, it may be said, "He will not get over this." When he is born he begins to be ailing. When he dies, he ends indeed this ailment: but he knows not whether he does not fall into a worse. The rich man in the Gospel had ended his voluptuous ailment, he came to a tormenting one. But the poor man ended

his ailment, and arrived at perfect health. But he made choice in this life of what he was to have hereafter; and what he reaped there, he sowed here. Therefore while we live we ought to watch, and to make choice of that which we may possess in the world to come.

4. Let us not love the world. It overwhelms its lovers, it conducts them to no good. We must rather labour in it that it seduce us not, than fear lest it should fall. Lo, the world falleth; the Christian standeth firm; because Christ doth not fall. For wherefore saith the Lord, “Rejoice, for that I have overcome the world”? We might answer Him if we pleased, “Rejoice,’ yes do Thou rejoice. If Thou hast overcome,’ do thou rejoice. Why should we?” Why doth He say to us, “Rejoice;” but because it is for us that He hath overcome, for us hath fought? For wherein fought He? In that He took man’s nature upon Him. Take away His birth of a virgin, take away that He emptied Himself, “taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man;” take away this, and where is the combat, where the contest? where the trial? where the victory, which no battle has preceded? “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.” Could the Jews have crucified this Word? Could those impious men have mocked this Word? Could this Word have been buffeted? Could this Word have been crowned with thorns? But that He might suffer all this, “the Word was made flesh;” and after He had suffered all this, by rising again He “overcame.” So then He hath “overcome” for us, to whom He hath shown the assurance of His resurrection. Thou sayest then to God, “Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down.” Do not “tread down” thyself, and man will not overcome thee. For, lo, some powerful man alarms thee. By what does he alarm thee? “I will spoil thee, will condemn, will torture, will kill thee.” And thou criest, “Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for man hath trodden me down.” If thou say the truth, and mark thyself well, one dead “treads thee down,” because thou art afraid of the threats of a man; and man “treads thee down,” because thou wouldest not be afraid, unless thou wert a man. What is the remedy then? O man, cleave to God, by whom thou wast made a man; cleave fast to Him, put thy affiance in Him, call upon Him, let Him be thy strength. Say to Him, “In Thee, O Lord, is my strength.” And then thou

shalt sing at the threatenings of men; and what thou shalt sing hereafter, the Lord Himself telleth thee, “I will hope in God, I will not fear what man can do unto me.”

SERMON XLVIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE VII. 2, ETC.; ON THE THREE DEAD PERSONS WHOM THE LORD RAISED

1. The miracles of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ make indeed an impression on all who hear of, and believe them; but on different men in different ways. For some amazed at His miracles done on the bodies of men, have no knowledge to discern the greater; whereas some admire the more ample fulfilment in the souls of men at the present time of those things which they hear of as having been wrought on their bodies. The Lord Himself saith, “For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.” Not of course that the Son “quickeneth” some, the Father others; but the Father and the Son “quicken” the same; for the Father doeth all things by the Son. Let no one then who is a Christian doubt, that even at the present time the dead are raised. Now all men have eyes, wherewith they can see the dead rise again in such sort, as the son of that widow rose, of whom we have just read out of the Gospel; but those eyes wherewith men see the dead in heart rise again, all men have not, save those who have risen already in heart themselves. It is a greater miracle to raise again one who is to live for ever, than to raise one who must die again.

2. The widowed mother rejoiced at the raising again of that young man; of men raised again in spirit day by day does Mother Church rejoice. He indeed was dead in the body but they in soul. His visible death was bewailed visibly; their death invisible was neither enquired into nor perceived. He sought them out who had known them to be dead; He Alone knew them to be dead, who was able to make them alive. For if the Lord had not come to raise the dead, the Apostle would not have said, “Rise, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” You hear of one asleep in the words, “Rise, thou that sleepest;” but understand it of one dead when you hear, “And arise from the dead.” Thus they who are

even dead in the body are often said to be asleep. And certainly they all are but asleep, in respect of Him who is able to awaken them. For in respect of thee, a dead man is dead indeed, seeing he will not awake, beat or prick or tear him as thou wilt. But in respect of Christ, he was but asleep to whom it was said, “Arise,” and he arose forthwith. No one can as easily awaken another in bed, as Christ can in the tomb.

3. Now we find that three dead persons were raised by the Lord “visibly,” thousands “invisibly.” Nay, who knows even how many dead He raised visibly? For all the things that He did are not written. John tells us this, “Many other things Jesus did, the which if they should be written, I suppose that the whole world could not contain the books.” So then there were without doubt many others raised: but it is not without a meaning that the three are expressly recorded. For our Lord Jesus Christ would that those things which He did on the body should be also spiritually understood. For He did not merely do miracles for the miracles’ sake; but in order that the things which He did should inspire wonder in those who saw them, and convey truth to them who understand. As he who sees letters in an excellently written manuscript, and knows not how to read, praises indeed the transcriber’s hand, and admires the beauty of the characters; but what those characters mean or signify he does not know; and by the sight of his eyes he is a praiser of the work, but in his mind has no comprehension of it; whereas another man both praises the work, and is capable of understanding it; such an one, I mean, who is not only able to see what is common to all, but who can read also; which he who has never learned cannot. So they who saw Christ’s miracles, and understood not what they meant, and what they in a manner conveyed to those who had understanding, wondered only at the miracles themselves; whereas others both wondered at the miracles, and attained to the meaning of them. Such ought we to be in the school of Christ. For he who says that Christ only worked miracles, for the miracles’ sake, may say too that He was ignorant that it was not the time for fruit, when He sought figs upon the fig-tree. For it was not the time for that fruit, as the Evangelist testifies; and yet being hungry He sought for fruit upon the tree. Did not Christ know, what any peasant knew? What the dresser of the tree knew, did not the tree’s Creator know? So then when being hungry He sought fruit on the tree, He signified that He was hungry, and seeking

after something else than this; and He found that tree without fruit, but full of leaves, and He cursed it, and it withered away. What had the tree done in not bearing fruit? What fault of the tree was its fruitlessness? No; but there are those who through their own will are not able to yield fruit. And barrenness is “their” fault, whose fruitfulness is their will. The Jews then who had the words of the Law, and had not the deeds, were full of leaves, and bare no fruit. This have I said to persuade you, that our Lord Jesus Christ performed miracles with this view, that by those miracles He might signify something further, that besides that they were wonderful and great, and divine in themselves, we might learn also something from them.

4. Let us then see what He would have us learn in those three dead persons whom He raised. He raised again the dead daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, for whom when she was sick petition was made to Him, that He would deliver her from her sickness. And as He is going, it is announced that she is dead; and as though He would now be only wearying Himself in vain, word was brought to her father, “Thy daughter is dead, why weariest thou the Master any further?” But He went on, and said to the father of the damsel, “Be not afraid, only believe.” He comes to the house, and finds the customary funeral obsequies already prepared, and He says to them, “Weep not, for the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.” He spake the truth; she was asleep; asleep, that is, in respect of Him, by whom she could be awakened. So awakening her, He restored her alive to her parents. So again He awakened that young man, the widow’s son, by whose case I have been now reminded to speak with you, Beloved, on this subject, as He Himself shall vouchsafe to give me power. Ye have just heard how he was awakened. The Lord “came nigh to the city; and behold there was a dead man being carried out” already beyond the gate. Moved with compassion, for that the mother, a widow and bereaved of her only son, was weeping, He did what ye have heard, saying, “Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. He that was dead arose, and began to speak, and He restored him to his mother.” He awakened Lazarus likewise from the tomb. And in that case when the disciples with whom He was speaking knew that he was sick, He said (now “Jesus loved him”), “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.” They thinking of the sick man’s healthful sleep; say, “Lord, if he sleep he is well.” “Then said Jesus,” speaking now more plainly, I tell you, “our friend Lazarus is dead.”

And in both He said the truth; “He is dead in respect of you, he is asleep in respect of Me.”

5. These three kinds of dead persons, are three kinds of sinners whom even at this day Christ doth raise. For that dead daughter of the ruler of the synagogue was within in the house, she had not yet been carried out from the secresy of its walls into public view. There within was she raised, and restored alive to her parents. But the second was not now indeed in the house, but still not yet in the tomb, he had been carried out of the walls, but not committed to the ground. He who raised the dead maiden who was not yet carried out, raised this dead man who was now carried out, but not yet buried. There remained a third case, that He should raise one who was also buried; and this He did in Lazarus. There are then those who have sin inwardly in the heart, but have it not yet in overt act. A man, for instance, is disturbed by any lust. For the Lord Himself saith, “Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” He has not yet in body approached her, but in heart he has consented; he has one dead within, he has not yet carried him out. And as it often happens, as we know, as men daily experience in themselves, when they hear the word of God, as it were the Lord saying, “Arise;” the consent unto sin is condemned, they breathe again unto saving health and righteousness. The dead man in the house arises, the heart revives in the secret of the thoughts. This resurrection of a dead soul takes place within, in the retirement of the conscience, as it were within the walls of the house. Others after consent proceed to overt act, carrying out the dead as it were, that that which was concealed in secret, may appear in public. Are these now, who have advanced to the outward act, past hope? Was it not said to the young man in the Gospel also, “I say unto thee, Arise”? Was he not also restored to his mother? So then he too who has committed the open act, if haply admonished and aroused by the word of truth, he rise again at the Voice of Christ, is restored alive. Go so far he could, perish for ever he could not. But they who by doing what is evil, involve themselves even in evil habit, so that this very habit of evil suffers them not to see that it is evil, become defenders of their evil deeds; are angry when they are found fault with; to such a degree, that the men of Sodom of old said to the righteous man who reproved their abominable design, “Thou art come to sojourn, not

to give laws.” So powerful in that place was the habit of abominable filthiness, that profligacy now passed for righteousness, and the hinderer of it was found fault with rather than the doer. Such as these pressed down by a malignant habit, are as it were buried. Yea, what shall I say, Brethren? In such sort buried, as was said of Lazarus, “By this time he stinketh.” That heap placed upon the grave, is this stubborn force of habit, whereby the soul is pressed down, and is not suffered either to rise, or breathe again.

6. Now it was said, “He hath been dead four days.” So in truth the soul arrives at that habit, of which I am speaking by a kind of four-fold progress. For there is first the provocation as it were of pleasure in the heart, secondly consent, thirdly the overt act, fourthly the habit. For there are those who so entirely throw off things unlawful from their thoughts, as not even to feel any pleasure in them. There are those who do feel the pleasure, and do not consent to them; death is not yet perfected, but in a certain sort begun. To the feeling of pleasure is added consent; now at once is that condemnation incurred. After the consent, progress is made unto the open act; the act changes into a habit; and a sort of desperate condition is produced, so as that it may be said, “He hath been dead four days, by this time he stinketh.” Therefore, the Lord came, to whom of course all things were easy; yet He found in that case as it were a kind of difficulty. He “groaned” in the spirit, He showed that there is need of much and loud remonstrance to raise up those who have grown hard by habit. Yet at the voice of the Lord’s cry, the bands of necessity were burst asunder. The powers of hell trembled, and Lazarus is restored alive. For the Lord delivers even from evil habits those who “have been dead four days;” for this man in the Gospel, “who had been dead four days,” was asleep only in respect of Christ whose will it was to raise him again. But what said He? Observe the manner of his arising again. He came forth from the tomb alive, but he could not walk. And the Lord said to the disciples; “Loose him, and let him go.” “He” raised him from death, “they” loosed him from his bonds. Observe how there is something which appertaineth to the special Majesty of God who raiseth up. A man involved in an evil habit is rebuked by the word of truth. How many are rebuked, and give no ear! Who is it then who deals within with him who does give ear? Who breathes life into him within? Who is it who drives away the unseen death, gives the life unseen? After rebukes, after

remonstrances, are not men left alone to their own thoughts, do they not begin to turn over in their minds how evil a life they are living, with how very bad a habit they are weighed down? Then displeased with themselves, they determine to change their life. Such have risen again; they to whom what they have been is displeasing have revived: but though reviving, they are not able to walk. These are the bands of their guilt. Need then there is, that whoso has returned to life should be loosed, and let go. This office hath He given to the disciples to whom He said, “Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven also.”

7. Let us then, dearly Beloved, in such wise hear these things, that they who are alive may live; they who are dead may live again. Whether it be that as yet the sin has been conceived in the heart, and not come forth into open act; let the thought be repented of, and corrected, let the dead within the house of conscience arise. Or whether he has actually committed what he thought of; let not even thus his case be despaired of. The dead within has not arisen, let him arise when “he is carried out.” Let him repent him of his deed, let him at once return to life; let him not go to the depth of the grave, let him not receive the load of habit upon him. But peradventure I am now speaking to one who is already pressed down by this hard stone of his own habit, who is already laden with the weight of custom, who “has been in the grave four days already, and who stinketh.” Yet let not even him despair; he is dead in the depth below, but Christ is exalted on high. He knows how by His cry to burst asunder the burdens of earth, He knows how to restore life within by Himself, and to deliver him to the disciples to be loosed. Let even such as these repent. For when Lazarus had been raised again after the four days, no foul smell remained in him when he was alive. So then let them who are alive, still live; and let them who are dead, whosoever they be, in which kind soever of these three deaths they find themselves, see to it that they rise again at once with all speed.

SERMON XLIX

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE VII. 37, “AND BEHOLD, A WOMAN WHO WAS IN THE CITY, A SINNER,” ETC. ON THE REMISSION OF SINS, AGAINST THE DONATISTS

1. Since I believe that it is the will of God that I should speak to you on the subject whereof we are now reminded by the words of the Lord out of the Holy Scriptures, I will by His assistance deliver to you, Beloved, a Sermon touching the remission of sins. For when the Gospel was being read, ye gave most earnest heed, and the story was reported, and represented before the eyes of your heart. For ye saw, not with the body, but with the mind, the Lord Jesus Christ "sitting at meat in the Pharisee's house," and when invited by him, not disdaining to go. Ye saw too a "woman" famous in the city, famous indeed in ill fame, "who was a sinner," without invitation force her way into the feast, where her Physician was at meat, and with an holy shamelessness seek for health. She forced her way then, as it were unseasonably as regarded the feast, but seasonably as regarded her expected blessing; for she well knew under how severe a disease she was labouring, and she knew that He to whom she had come was able to make her whole; she approached then, not to the Head of the Lord, but to His Feet; and she who had walked long in evil, sought now the steps of Uprightness. First she shed tears, the heart's blood; and washed the Lord's Feet with the duty of confession. She wiped them with her hair, she kissed, she anointed them: she spake by her silence; she uttered not a word, but she manifested her devotion.

2. So then because she touched the Lord, in watering, kissing, washing, anointing His feet; the Pharisee who had invited the Lord Jesus Christ, seeing He was of that kind of proud men of whom the Prophet Isaiah says, "Who say, Depart far from me, touch me not, for I am clean;" thought that the Lord did not know the woman. This he was thinking with himself, and saying in his heart, "This man if He were a prophet, would have known what woman this is that" hath approached His feet. He supposed that He did not know her, because He repelled her not, because He did not forbid her to approach Him, because He suffered Himself to be touched by her, sinner as she was. For whence knew he, that He did not know her? But what if He did know, O thou Pharisee, inviter and yet derider of the Lord! Thou dost feed the Lord, yet by whom thou art to be fed thyself, thou dost not understand. Whereby knowest thou, that the Lord did not know what that woman had been, save because she was permitted to approach Him, save because by His sufferance she kissed His Feet, save because she washed,

save because she anointed them? For these things a woman unclean ought not to be permitted to do with the Feet that are clean? So then had such a woman approached that Pharisee’s feet, he would have been sure to say what Isaiah says of such; “Depart from me, touch me not, for I am clean.” But she approached the Lord in her uncleanness, that she might return clean: she approached sick, that she might return whole: she approached Him, confessing, that she might return professing Him.

3. For the Lord heard the thoughts of the Pharisee. Let now the Pharisee understand even by this, whether He was not able to see her sins, who could hear his thoughts. So then He put forth to the man a parable concerning two men, who owed to the same creditor. For He was desirous to heal the Pharisee also, that He might not eat bread at his house for nought; He hungered after him who was feeding Him, He wished to reform him, to slay, to eat him, to pass him over into His Own Body; just as to that woman of Samaria, He said, “I thirst.” What is, “I thirst”? I long for thy faith. Therefore are the words of the Lord in this parable spoken; and there is this double object in them, both that that inviter might be cured together with those who ate at the table with Him, who alike saw the Lord Jesus Christ, and were alike ignorant of Him, and that that woman might have the assurance her confession merited, and not be pricked any more with the stings of her conscience. “One,” said He, “owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty; He forgave them both: which loved him most?” He to whom the parable was proposed answered, what of course common reason obliged him to answer. “I suppose, Lord, he to whom he forgave most. Then turning to the woman he said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet: she hath washed My feet with tears, and wiped them with her hairs. Thou gavest Me no kiss: this woman since the time she came in, hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed My feet with ointment. Therefore I say, her many sins are forgiven her, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”

4. Here arises a difficulty which must in real truth be resolved, and which requires your fixed attention, Beloved, lest haply my words may not be equal to the removing and clearing of the whole obscurity of it by reason of

the stress of time; especially as this flesh of mine exhausted by its heat, now longs to be recruited, and demanding its due, and clogging the eagerness of the soul gives proof of that which is said, “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Cause there is for fear, yea great cause for fear, lest by these words of the Lord, there steal over the minds of those who understand them not aright, who indulge their fleshly lusts, and are loth to be brought away from them into liberty, that sentiment which, even as the Apostles preached, sprung up in the tongues of slanderous men, of whom the Apostle Paul says, “And as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come.” For a man may say, “If he to whom little is forgiven, loveth little;’ and he to whom more is forgiven, loveth more; and it is better to love more, than to love less; it is right that we should sin much, and owe much which we may desire to be forgiven us, that so we may love Him the more who forgiveth us our large debts. For that woman in the Gospel who was a sinner, in the same proportion as she owed more, loved the more Him who forgave her her debts, as the Lord Himself saith, Her many sins are forgiven her, for she loved much.’ Now why did she love much, but because she owed much? And afterwards He added and subjoined, But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.’ Is it not better,” he may say, “that much should be forgiven me, than less, that thereupon I may love my Lord the more”? Ye see no doubt the great depth of this difficulty; ye see it, I am sure. Ye see too my stress of time; yes, this also do ye see and feel.

5. Accept then a few words. If I shall not do justice to the magnitude of the question, lay up for a time what I shall say at present, and hold me a debtor for some future time. Suppose now two men, that by the clearer force of examples ye may think upon what I have proposed to you. One of them is full of sins, has lived most wickedly for a length of time; the other of them has committed but few sins; they come both to grace, are both baptized, they enter debtors, they go out free; more has been forgiven to one, less to the other. I ask, how much does each love? If I shall find that he loves most, to whom the most sins have been forgiven, it is to his greater advantage that he has sinned much, his much iniquity was to his greater advantage, that so his love might not be lukewarm. I ask the other how much he loves, I find less; for if I find that he too loves, as much as the other, to whom much has been forgiven, how shall I make answer to the words of the Lord, how shall

that be true which the Truth hath said, "To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little"? "See," a man says, "but little has been forgiven me, I have not sinned much; yet I love as much as he, to whom much has been forgiven." Dost thou speak truth, or Christ? Has thy lie been forgiven thee to this end, that thou shouldest fix the charge of lying on Him who forgave thee? If little has been forgiven thee, thou lovest little. For if but little has been forgiven thee, and thou lovest very much, thou contradictest Him who said, "To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." Therefore I give the more credit to Him, who knoweth thee better than thou dost know thyself. If thou dost suppose that but little hath been forgiven thee, it is certain that thou lovest but little. "What then," says he, "ought I to do? Ought I to commit many sins, that there may be many which He shall be able to forgive me, that I may be able to love more?" It presses me sore, but may the Lord, who hath proposed this saying of truth to us, deliver me out of this strait.

6. This was spoken on account of that Pharisee who thought that he had either no sins, or but few. Now unless he had had some love, he would not have invited the Lord. But how little was it! He gave Him no kiss, not so much as water for His Feet, much less tears; he did not honour Him with any of those offices of respect, with which that woman did, who well knew what need she had of being cured, and by whom she might be cured. O Pharisee, therefore dost thou love but little, because thou dost fondly think that but little is forgiven thee; not because little really is forgiven thee, but because thou thinkest that that which is forgiven is but little. "What then?" he says; "Am I who have never committed murder, to be reckoned a murderer? Am I who have never been guilty of adultery, to be punished for adultery? Or are these things to be forgiven me, which I have never committed?" See: once more suppose two persons, and let us speak to them. One comes with supplication, a sinner covered over with thorns as a hedgehog, and timid exceedingly as a hare. But the rock is the hedgehog's and the hare's refuge. He comes then to the Rock, he finds refuge, he receives succour. The other has not committed many sins; what shall we do for him that he may love much? what shall we persuade him? Shall we go against the words of the Lord, "To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little"? Yes, most truly so, to whom little is really forgiven. But O thou who

sayest that thou hast not committed many sins: why hast thou not? by whose guidance? God be thanked, that by your movement and voice ye have made signs that ye have understood me. Now then, as I think, the difficulty has been solved. The one has committed many sins, and so is made a debtor for many; the other through God's guidance has committed but few. To Him to whom the one ascribes what He hath forgiven, does the other also ascribe what he hath not committed. Thou hast not been an adulterer in that past life of thine, which was full of ignorance, when as yet thou wast not enlightened, as yet discerned not good and evil, as yet believed not on Him, who was guiding thee though thou didst not know Him. Thus doth thy God speak to thee: "I was guiding thee for Myself, I was keeping thee for Myself. That thou mightest not commit adultery, no enticers were near thee; that no enticers were near thee, was My doing. Place and time were wanting; that they were wanting again, was My doing. Or enticers were nigh thee, and neither place nor time was wanting; that thou mightest not consent, it was I who alarmed thee. Acknowledge then His grace, to whom thou also owest it, that thou hast not committed the sin. The other owes me what was done, and thou hast seen forgiven him; and thou owest to me what thou hast not done." For there is no sin which one man commits, which another man may not commit also, if He be wanting as a Director, by whom man was made.

7. Now then seeing I have resolved this profound difficulty, as best I could in so short a space of time (or if I have not resolved it yet, let me be held, as I have already said, a debtor for the rest); let us now rather consider briefly that question of the remission of sins. Christ was supposed to be but a man both by him who invited Him, and by them who sat as guests at the table with Him. But that woman who was a sinner had seen something more than this in the Lord. For why did she all those things, but that her sins might be forgiven her? She knew then that He was able to forgive sins; and they knew that no man was able to forgive them. And we must believe that they all, they who were at the table, that is, and that woman who approached to the Feet of the Lord, all knew that no man could forgive sins. Forasmuch then as they all knew this; she who believed that He could forgive sins, understood Him to be more than man. So when He had said to the woman, "Thy sins are forgiven thee;" they immediately said, "Who is this that

forgiveth sins also?” Who is this, whom the woman who was a sinner already knew? Thou who sittest at the table as if in sound health, knowest not thy Physician; because it may be through a stronger fever thou hast even lost thy reason. For thus the frantic patient as he laughs is bewailed by those who are in health. Nevertheless, ye do well to know, and hold fast that truth; yea, hold it fast, that no man is able to forgive sins. This woman who believed that she could be forgiven by Christ, believed Christ not to be man only, but God also. “Who,” say they, “is this that forgiveth sins also?” And the Lord did not tell them as they said, “Who is this?” “It is the Son of God, the Word of God;” He did not tell them this, but suffering them to abide for a while still in their former opinion, He really solved the question which had excited them. For He who saw them at the table, heard their thoughts, and turning to the woman, He said, “Thy faith hath made thee whole.” Let these who say, “Who is this that forgiveth sins also?” who think me to be but a man, think me but a man. For thee “thy faith hath made thee whole.”

8. The Good Physician not only cured the sick then present, but provided also for them who were to be hereafter. There were to be men in after times, who should say, “It is I who forgive sins, I who justify, I who sanctify, I who cure whomsoever I baptize.” Of this number are they who say, “Touch me not.” Yes, so thoroughly are they of this number, that lately, in our conference, as ye may read in the records of it, when a place was offered them by the commissary, that they should sit with us, they thought it right to answer, “It is told us in Scripture with such not to sit,” lest of course by the contact of the seats, our contagion (as they think) should reach to them. See if this is not, “Touch me not, for I am clean.” But on another day, when I had a better opportunity, I represented to them this most wretched vanity, when there was a question concerning the Church, how that the evil in it do not contaminate the good: I answered them, because they would not on this account sit with us, and said that they had been so advised by the Scripture of God, seeing forsooth that it is written, “I have not sat in the council of vanity;” I said, “If ye will not sit with us, because it is written, I have not sat in the council of vanity;’ why have ye entered this place with us, since it is written in the following words, And with them that do iniquity I will not enter in’?” So then in that they say, “Touch me not, for I am clean,” they are like to that Pharisee, who had invited the Lord, and who thought that He did

not know the woman, simply because He did not hinder her from touching His Feet. But in another respect the Pharisee was better, because whereas he supposed Christ to be but a man, he did not believe that by a man sins could be forgiven. There was shown then a better understanding in Jews than heretics. What said the Jews? “Who is this that forgiveth sins also?’ Does any man dare to usurp this to himself?” What on the other hand says the heretic? “It is I who forgive, I cleanse, I sanctify.” Let not me, but Christ, answer him: “O man, when I was thought by the Jews to be but a man, I gave forgiveness of sins to faith. (It is not I, but Christ who answereth thee.) And thou, O heretic, mere man as thou art, dost say, “Come, O woman, I will make thee whole.” Whereas when I was thought to be but a man, I said, “Go, woman, thy faith hath made thee whole.”

9. They answer, “knowing not,” as the Apostle says, “either what they speak, or whereof they affirm:” they answer and say, “If men do not forgive sins, then that is false which Christ saith, Whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven also.’“ But thou dost not know why this is said, and in what sense this is said. The Lord was about to give to men the Holy Spirit, and He wished it to be understood that sins are forgiven to His faithful by His Holy Spirit, and not by men’s deserts. For what art thou, O man, but an invalid who hast need of healing. Wouldest thou make thyself my physician? Together with me, seek the Physician. For that the Lord might show this more plainly, that sins are forgiven by the Holy Spirit, which He hath given to His faithful ones, and not by men’s deserts, after He had risen from the dead, He saith in a certain place, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost;” and when He had said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,” He subjoined immediately, “Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them;” that is, the Spirit remits them, not ye. Now the Spirit is God. God therefore remits, not ye. But what are ye in regard to the Spirit? “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” And again, “Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God?” So then God dwelleth in His holy temple, that is in His holy faithful ones, in His Church; by them doth He remit sins; because they are living temples.

10. But He who remitteth by man, can also remit even without man. For He who is able to give by another, hath no less the power to give by Himself. To some He gave by the ministry of John. By whom did He give to John himself? With good reason, as God wished to show this, and to attest this truth, when certain in Samaria had had the Gospel preached to them, and had been baptized, and baptized by Philip the Evangelist, one of the seven deacons that were first chosen, they did not receive the Holy Ghost, though they had been baptized. Tidings were brought to the disciples who were at Jerusalem, and they came to Samaria, in order that they who had been baptized, might by imposition of their hands receive the Holy Ghost. And so it was; “They came and laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.” For the Holy Ghost was at that time given in such sort, that He even visibly showed Himself to have been given. For they who received Him spake with the tongues of all nations; to signify that the Church among the nations was to speak in the tongues of all. So then they received the Holy Ghost, and He appeared evidently to be in them. Which when Simon saw, supposing that this power was of men, he wished it might be his also. What he thought to be of men, he wished to buy of men. “How much money,” says he, “will ye take of me, that by imposition of my hands the Holy Ghost may be given?” Then Peter says to him with execration, “Thou hast neither part nor lot in this faith. For thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thy money perish with thee; and the rest which he spake in the same place suitably to the occasion.

11. Now why I have wished to bring this subject before you, give heed, Dearly Beloved. It was meet that God should first show that He worketh by the ministry of men; but afterwards by Himself, lest men should think, as Simon thought, that it was man’s gift, and not God’s. Though the disciples themselves knew this well already. For there were one hundred and twenty men collected together, when without the imposition of any hand the Holy Ghost came upon them. For who had laid hands on them at that time? And yet He came, and filled them first. After that offence of Simon, what did God do? See Him teaching, not by words but by things. That same Philip, who had baptized the men, and the Holy Ghost had not come upon them, unless the Apostles had met together and laid their hands upon them, baptized the officer, that is, the eunuch of queen Candace, who had

worshipped in Jerusalem, and returning thence was reading in his chariot Isaiah the Prophet, and understood it not. Philip being admonished went up to his chariot, explained the Scripture, unfolded the faith, preached Christ. The eunuch believed on Christ, and said when they came unto a certain water, “See water, who doth hinder me to be baptized? Philip said to him, Dost thou believe on Jesus Christ? He answered, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Immediately he went down with him into the water.” When the mystery and sacrament of Baptism had been accomplished, that the gift of the Holy Ghost might not be thought to be of men, there was no waiting, as in the other case, for the Apostles to come, but the Holy Ghost came forthwith. Thus was Simon’s thought destroyed, lest in such a thought he might have followers.

12. Again, another more wonderful example. Peter came to Cornelius the centurion, to a Gentile man, uncircumcised: he began to preach Christ Jesus both to him, and to those who were with him. “While Peter was yet speaking,” I do not say, when as yet he had not laid on his hands, but when he had not even yet baptized them, and when they who were with Peter were in doubt whether the uncircumcised ought to be baptized (for there had arisen an offence between the Jews who believed, and those who had been brought to the faith from among the Gentiles, between the Jews, that is, and the Christians who were baptized though uncircumcised), that God might take away this question, “while Peter was speaking, the Holy Ghost came,” filled Cornelius, filled them who were with him. And by this very attestation of so great a thing, as it were a loud voice came to Peter, “Why dost thou doubt of water? Already I am here.”

13. So then let every soul which is to be delivered from her manifold wickedness by the grace of the Lord, to be cleansed as it were in the Church from her filthy prostitution, believe with all assurance, approach the Feet of the Lord, seek His Footsteps, confess in pouring out tears upon them, and wipe them with her hair. The Feet of the Lord are the preachers of the Gospel. The woman’s hair is all superfluous possessions. Let her wipe the Feet with her hair, yea by all means wipe them, let her do works of mercy; and when she has wiped them, let her kiss them, let her receive peace, that she may have love. She has approached to such an one, has been baptized

by such an one as the Apostle Paul: from him let her hear, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” But she has been baptized by another, by one “who seeks his own things, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s:” let her hear from the Lord, “Do what they say, but do not what they do.” So let her assurance be in Him, whether she meet with a good Evangelist, or with one who acts not as he speaks. For she hears from the Lord with firm assurance, “O woman, go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole.”

SERMON L

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE IX. 57, ETC., WHERE THE CASE OF THE THREE PERSONS IS TREATED OF, OF WHOM ONE SAID, “I WILL FOLLOW THEE WHITHERSOEVER THOU GOEST,” AND WAS DISALLOWED: ANOTHER DID NOT DARE TO OFFER HIMSELF, AND WAS AROUSED; THE THIRD WISHED TO DELAY, AND WAS BLAMED

1. Give ye ear to that which the Lord hath given me to speak on the lesson of the Gospel. For we have read, that the Lord Jesus acted differently, when one man offered himself to follow Him, and was disallowed; another did not dare this, and was aroused; a third put off, and was blamed. For the words, “Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest,” what is so prompt, what so active, what so ready, and what so fitly disposed to so great a good, as this “following the Lord whithersoever He should go”? Thou wonderest at this, saying, “How is this, that one so ready found no favour with the Good Master and Lord Jesus Christ, though He was inviting disciples to give them the kingdom of Heaven?” But inasmuch as He was such a Master as could see beforehand things to come, we understand, Brethren, that this man, if he had followed Christ, would have been sure to “seek his own things, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.” For He hath said Himself, “Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.” And of such was this man, nor did he know himself so well as the Physician knew him. For if he saw himself to be a dissembler now, if he had known himself at this time to be full of duplicity and guile, then he did not know with Whom he was speaking. For He it is of whom the Evangelist says, “He had no need that any one should testify to Him of man, for He Himself knew what was in man.” What then did He answer? “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His Head.” But where hath He not? In thy

faith. For in thy heart foxes have holes, thou art full of guile; in thy heart birds of the air have nests; thou art lifted up. Full of guile and self-elation as thou art, thou shalt not follow Me. How can a guileful man follow Simplicity?

2. And then forthwith to another who was silent, and said nothing, and promised nothing, He saith, “Follow Me!” As much evil as He saw in the other, so much good saw He in this man. “Follow Me,” Thou sayest to one who hath no wish for it. Lo, here is a man quite ready, “I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest;” and yet Thou sayest to another who hath no such wish, “Follow thou Me.” “The first,” saith He, “I decline, because I see in him holes, I see nests.” “But then why dost Thou press this other, whom Thou dost challenge to follow Thee, and he makes excuses? Lo, Thou dost even force him, and he doth not come; Thou dost exhort him, and he doth not follow. For what doth he say? I will go first to bury my father.’“ The faith of his heart showed itself to the Lord; but his dutiful affection made him delay. But the Lord Christ when He is preparing men for the Gospel, will have no excuse from this carnal and temporal affection interfere. It is true that both the law of God prescribes these duties, and the Lord Himself reproves the Jews, because they destroyed this very commandment of God. And the Apostle Paul has in his Epistle laid it down, and said, “This is the first commandment with promise.” What? “Honour thy father and thy mother.” God of a surety spake it. This young man then wished to obey God, and to bury his father; but it is place, and time, and circumstance, which is in this case to give way to place, and time, and circumstance. A father must be honoured, but God must be obeyed. He that begat us must be loved, but He that created us must be preferred. “I am calling thee,” saith He, “to My Gospel; I have need of thee for another work: this is a greater work than that which thou wishest to be doing. Let the dead bury their dead.’ Thy father is dead: there are other dead men to bury the dead.” Who are the dead who bury the dead? Can a dead man be buried by dead men? How can they lay him out, if they are dead? How can they carry him, if they are dead? How can they bewail him, if they are dead? Yet they do lay him out, and carry, and bewail him, and they are dead; because they are unbelievers. That which is written in the Song of Songs is a lesson to us, when the Church says, “Set in order love in me.”

What is, “Set in order love in me”? Make the proper degrees, and render to each what is his due. Do not put what should come before, below that which should come after it. Love your parents, but prefer God to them. Mark the mother of the Maccabees, “My sons, I know not how ye appeared in my womb.’ Conceive you I could, give you birth I could; but form you I could not:’ hear Him therefore, prefer Him to me: trouble not yourselves, that I must remain here without you.” Thus she commanded them, and they followed her. What this mother taught her children, did the Lord Jesus Christ teach him to whom He said, “Follow Me.”

3. See now how another disciple presented himself, to whom no one said anything: he said, “Lord, I will follow Thee, but I will first go to bid them farewell which are at my house.” I suppose this is his meaning, “Let me tell my friends, lest haply they seek me as usual.” And the Lord said, “No man putting his hand on the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” The East calls thee, and thou art looking toward the west. In this lesson we learn this, that the Lord chooses whom He will. But He chooses them, as the Apostle says, both according to His Own grace, and according to their righteousness. For such are the words of the Apostle; “Attend,” he says, “to what Elias saith: Lord, they have killed Thy Prophets, they have overthrown Thine altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God to him? I have reserved to Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee before Baal.” Thou thinkest that thou art the only servant who is working faithfully: there are others too who fear Me, and they not few. For I have “seven thousand” there. And then he added, “Even so then at this present time also.” For some Jews believed, though the most were reprobate; like him who carried holes for foxes in his heart. “Even so then,” saith he, “at this present time also, there is a remnant saved through the election of grace:” that is, there is the same Christ even now, as then, who also then said to that Elias, “I have reserved to Myself.” What is, “I have reserved to Myself”? I have chosen them, because I saw their hearts that they trusted in Me, and not in themselves, nor in Baal. They are not changed, they are as they were made by Me. And thou who art speaking, except thou hadst placed thy trust in Me, where wouldest thou be? Except thou wert replenished by My grace, wouldest not thou too be bowing the knee before Baal? But thou art replenished by My

grace; because thou hast not put thy trust at all in thine own strength, but wholly in My grace. Do not therefore glory in this, as to suppose thou hast no fellow-servants in thy service; there are others whom I have chosen, as I have chosen thee, those, namely, who put their trust in Me; as the Apostle says, “Even now also a remnant is saved through the election of grace.”

4. Beware, O Christian, beware of pride. For though thou art a follower of the saints, ascribe it always wholly to grace; for that there should be any “remnant” in thee, the grace of God hath brought to pass, not thine own deserts. For the Prophet Isaiah again having this remnant in view, had said already, “Except the Lord of Hosts had left us a seed, we should have become as Sodom, and should have been like unto Gomorrah.” “So then,” says the Apostle, “at this present time also a remnant is saved through the election of grace. But if by grace,” says he, “then is it no more of works” (that is, “be now no more lifted up upon thine own deserts”); “otherwise grace is no more grace.” For if thou dost build on thine own work; then is a reward rendered unto thee, not grace freely bestowed. But if it be grace, it is gratuitously given. I ask thee then, O sinner, “Dost thou believe in Christ?” Thou sayest, “I do believe.” “What dost thou believe? That all thy sins may be forgiven thee freely through Him?” Then hast thou what thou hast believed. O grace gratuitously given! And thou, righteous man, what dost thou believe, that thou canst not keep thy righteousness without God? That thou art righteous then, impute it wholly to His mercy; but that thou art a sinner, ascribe it to thine own iniquity. Be thou thine own accuser, and He will be thy gracious Deliverer. For every crime, wickedness, or sin comes of our own negligence, and all virtue and holiness come of God’s gracious goodness. “Let us turn to the Lord.”

SERMON LI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE X. 2, “THE HARVEST TRULY IS PLENTEOUS,” ETC

1. By the lesson of the Gospel which has just been read, we are reminded to search what that harvest is of which the Lord says, “The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest.” Then to His twelve disciples,

whom He also named Apostles, He added other seventy-two, and sent them all, as appears from His words, to the harvest then ready. What then was that harvest? For that harvest was not among these Gentiles, among whom there had been nothing sown. It remains therefore that we understand that this harvest was among the people of the Jews. It was to that harvest that the Lord of the harvest came, to that harvest He sent reapers; but to the Gentiles He sent not reapers, but sowers. Understand we then that it was harvest among the people of the Jews, sowing time among the peoples of the Gentiles. For out of that harvest were the Apostles chosen, where now that the harvest was, the corn was already ripe; for there had the Prophets sown. Delightful it is to take a view of God's husbandry, and to feel delight in His gifts, and the labourers in His field. For in this husbandry did he labour, who said, "I laboured more than they all." But the strength to labour was given him by the Lord of the harvest. Therefore he added, "Yet it is not I, but the grace of God which is with me." For that he was employed in this husbandry he clearly enough shows, where he says, "I have planted, Apollos watered." But this Apostle, from Saul, becoming Paul, that is, from being proud, the least of all (for the name of Saul is derived from Saul; but Paul is little; whence in a way interpreting his own name, he says, "I am the least of the Apostles" : this Paul I say, the little, and the least, sent unto the Gentiles, says that he was sent particularly to the Gentiles. He himself so writes, we read, believe, preach it. He then in his Epistle to the Galatians says, that having been now called by the Lord Jesus, he came to Jerusalem, and "communicated the Gospel" unto the Apostles, that their right hands were given to him, the sign of harmony, the sign of agreement, that what they had learnt from him differed in no respect from them. Afterwards he says that it was agreed between him and them, that he should go to the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision, he as a sower, they as reapers. So also with good reason, though they knew it not, did the Athenians give him his name. For as they heard the word from him, they said, "Who is this sower of words?"

2. Attend then and be it your delight with me to take a view of the husbandry of God and the two harvests in it, the one already past, the other yet to come; the one already past among the people of the Jews, the one yet to come among the peoples of the Gentiles. Let us prove this; and whereby,

but by the Scripture of God, the Lord of the harvest? See we have it said there in this present lesson, “The harvest is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest.” But because in that harvest there were to be gainsaying and persecuting Jews, He says, “Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.” Let us show something clearer still touching this harvest in the Gospel according to John, where the Lord sat as He was wearied at the well, great mysteries indeed were transacted, but the time is too short to treat of them all. But give ye ear to that which relates to the present subject. For we have undertaken to show a harvest among the people, among whom the Prophets preached; for therefore were they sowers, that the Apostles might be reapers. A woman of Samaria talks with the Lord Jesus, and when the Lord among other things had told her how God ought to be worshipped, she says, “We know that Messias cometh who is called Christ, and He will teach us all things. And the Lord saith to her, I that speak with thee am He.” Believe what thou hearest; why dost thou make search for what thou seest? “I that speak with thee am He.” But as to what she had said, “We know that the Messias will come,” whom Moses and the Prophets have announced, “who is called Christ.” The harvest was already in the ear. When it had yet to grow it had received the Prophets as sowers, now that it was come to ripeness it waited for the Apostles as reapers. Presently as she heard this she believed and left her water-pot, and ran in haste, and began to announce the Lord. The disciples at that time had gone to buy bread; who on their return found the Lord talking with the woman, and they marvelled. Yet did they not dare to say to Him, “What or why talkest Thou with her?” They had astonishment in themselves, they repressed their boldness in their heart. To this Samaritan woman then the Name of Christ was nothing new, she was already waiting for His coming, already did she believe that He would come. Whence had she believed it, if Moses had not sown? But hear this more expressly noted. The Lord then said to His disciples, “Ye say that the summer is yet far distant, lift up your eyes, and see the fields white already to harvest” And then He adds, “Others have laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.” Abraham laboured, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the Prophets laboured in sowing; at the Lord’s coming the harvest was found ripe. The reapers sent with the scythe of the Gospel, carried the sheaves into the Lord’s floor, where Stephen was to be threshed.

3. But here comes in that Paul, and he is sent to the Gentiles. And this he does not conceal in setting forth the grace, which he had specially and peculiarly received. For he says in his Scriptures, that he was sent to preach the Gospel where Christ had not been named. But because that first harvest was past already, and all the Jews who remained are no harvest, let us consider that harvest which we ourselves are. For it has been sown by Apostles and Prophets. The Lord Himself sowed it. For He was in the Apostles, seeing that Christ also Himself reaped it. For they are nothing without Him; He is perfect without them. For He saith Himself to them, "For without Me, ye can do nothing." What then doth Christ from henceforth sowing among the Gentiles say? "A sower went out to sow." "There" are reapers "sent out" to reap, "here" an unwearied sower "went out" to sow. For what fear did it cause him, that "some seed fell on the way side, and some on rocky places, and some among thorns"? If he had been afraid of these unmanageable grounds, he would never have got to the good ground. What is it to us, what affair of ours is it to be disputing now of the Jews, and talking of the chaff? this only concerns us, that we be not "the way side," nor "the rock," nor "the thorns," but "the good ground." Be our heart well-prepared, that from it may come the "thirty," or the "sixty fold," or the thousand, and the "hundred fold;" some more, some less; but all is wheat. Let it not be "the way side," where the enemy as a bird may take away the seed trodden down by the passers by. Let it not be "the rock," where the shallow soil makes it spring up immediately, so that it cannot bear the sun. Let it not be the "thorns," the lusts of this world, the anxieties of an ill-ordered life. For what is worse than that anxiety of life, which doth not suffer one to attain unto Life? What more miserable, than by caring for life, to lose Life? What more unhappy, than by fearing death, to fall into death? Let the thorns be rooted up, the field prepared, the seeds put in, let them grow unto the harvest, let the barn be longed for, not the fire feared.

4. My place accordingly it is, whom with all my unworthiness the Lord hath appointed to be a labourer in His field, to say these things to you, to sow, to plant, to water, yea to dig round about some trees, and to apply the basket of dung; belongeth it to me to do these things faithfully; to you to receive them faithfully; to the Lord to aid me in my labour, and you in your belief, all of us labouring, but in Him overcoming the world. What then belongs to your

place I have already said; now I wish to say what belongs to ours. But peradventure it seems to some of you, that it is something superfluous which I have declared that I wish to say, and speaking within themselves they are saying in thought, “O that he would now let us go! He has said already what belongs to our place, as to that which belongs to his, what is that to us?” I think it is better that in a reciprocal and mutual love, we should belong to you. Ye are now indeed of one family, we of the same family are dispensers, it is true, but we all belong to one Lord. Nor what I give, do I give of mine own; but of His from whom I also receive. For if I should give of mine own, I shall give a lie. “For he that speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own.” So then ye ought to give ear to that which belongs to the duty of the dispenser, whether it be that ye may have joy in yourselves, if ye find yourselves to be such, or whether it be that ye may be even in this very thing instructed. For how many are there among this people who shall some day be dispensers! I too was once where ye now are; and I who am seen now to be measuring out to my fellowservants their food from this higher place, a few years since in a lower place was receiving food with my fellow-servants. I am speaking now a Bishop to lay-men; but I know that in speaking to them I am speaking to many who will some day be bishops also.

5. Let us see then how we must understand what the Lord enjoined on them whom He sent to preach the Gospel, and let us consider in our mind this prepared harvest. “Carry,” He saith, “neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes; and salute no man by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, say, Peace be to this house. If the Son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall return to you again.” If it hath “rested,” hath the other lost it? This be far from the mind of Saints! So then this is not to be taken in a carnal sense; and hence it may be neither are the “purse,” nor “shoes,” nor “scrip;” nor above all that, where if we take it simply without examination, pride seems to be enjoined us, that we “salute no man by the way.”

6. Let us give heed to our Lord, our True Example and Succour. Let us prove that He is our Succour; “Without Me ye can do nothing.” Let us prove that He is our Example; “Christ,” says Peter, “suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps.” Our Lord Himself had bags

in the way, and these bags He entrusted to Judas. It is true He suffered from the thief; but I as desiring to learn of my Lord say, “O Lord, Thou didst suffer from the thief, whence hadst Thou that of which he could take away? Me, a wretched and infirm man Thou hast admonished not even to carry a purse; Thou didst carry bags, and hadst that in which Thou couldest suffer from the thief. If Thou hadst not carried them, neither could he have found anything to take away.” What remains, but that he here saith to me, “Understand what that thou hearest, Carry no purse,’ means? What is a purse? Money shut up, that is, concealed wisdom. What is, Carry no purse? Be not wise within your own selves only. Receive ye the Holy Ghost.’ It should be a fountain in thee, not a purse; from whence distribution is made to others, not where it is itself shut in.” And the scrip is the same as the purse.

7. What are “the shoes”? The shoes which we use, are the skins of dead beasts, the coverings of our feet. By this then are we bidden to renounce dead works. This Moses was admonished of in a figure, when the Lord speaking to him said, “Loose thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place wherein thou standest is holy ground.” What ground is so holy as the Church of God? In it therefore let us stand, let us loose our shoes, let us, that is, renounce dead works. For as touching these shoes, wherewith we walk, the same my Lord again assures me. For if He had not been shod Himself, John would not have said of Him, “I am not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoes.” Be there obedience then, let not a haughty severity steal over us. “I,” says one, “fulfil the Gospel, because I walk with naked feet.” Well, thou canst do it, I cannot. But let us both keep that which we both receive together. How? Let us glow with charity, let us love one another; and so it shall be, that I will love your strength, and thou shall bear my weakness.

8. But what thinkest thou, who dost not choose to understand in what sense these words are used, and who art forced by thy perverse interpretation to slander even the Lord Himself as to the “bags” and “shoes;” what thinkest thou? Does it please thee then, that as we meet our friends in the way, we should neither pay them our salutations if they are our betters, nor return the salutations of our inferiors? What, dost thou fulfil the Gospel, because thou

art saluted, and art silent? But thus thou wilt not be like to the traveller going on the way, but to the milestone pointing out the way. Let us then lay aside this coarse interpretation, and understand aright the words of the Lord, “and salute no man by the way.” For it is not without a cause that we are enjoined this, nor would He mislike us to do what He enjoined. What then is, “Salute no man by the way”? It might indeed be even simply taken thus, that He has commanded us to do what He enjoins with all speed; and that His words “Salute no man by the way,” are as though He had said, “Put all other things by, till ye accomplish what has been enjoined you;” according to that style of speaking by which expressions are wont to be exaggerated in the custom of conversation. Nor need we go far; in the same discourse a little while afterwards He says, “And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shall be thrust down to hell.” What is, “exalted to heaven”? Did the walls of that city touch the clouds, or reach to the stars? But what is “exalted to heaven”? Thou seemest thyself to be surpassing happy, surpassing powerful, thou art exceeding proud. As then for the sake of exaggeration this was said, “Thou art exalted unto heaven” to that city, which was not exalted, nor rose up unto heaven; so to express haste hyperbolically was it said, “So run, so do what I have enjoined you, that travellers by the way may not in the least retard you; but disregarding all things else, hasten to the end set before you.”

9. But there is another more recondite meaning in these words which it is not difficult to understand, which respects more particularly myself and all dispensers, and you too who are hearers. He that salutes, wishes salvation. For so the ancients in their letters wrote thus, “Such a one sends salvation to another.” Salutation derives its name from this salvation. What then is, “Salute no man by the way”? They who “salute by the way,” do so “by occasion.” I see that ye have quickly understood me, yet for all that I must not finish yet. For ye have not all understood so quickly. I have seen that some understand by their voice, I see more asking for something further by their silence. But seeing that we are talking of the way, let us walk as it were in the way: ye quick ones, wait for the slow, and walk evenly. What then did I say, He “who salutes by the way,” salutes only by occasion? He was not going to him whom he salutes. He was about one thing, another came in his way; he was seeking one thing, he found across his path some

other thing to do. What then is it to “salute by occasion”? “By occasion” to announce salvation. Now what else is it to announce salvation, but to preach the Gospel? If then thou dost preach, do it by love, and not “by occasion.” There are men then, who though “they seek their own things,” yet preach no other Gospel; of whom the Apostle says with sighing, “For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.” And these “saluted,” that is announced salvation, they preached the Gospel; but they sought some other thing, and therefore they saluted only “by occasion.” And what is this? If thou art such an one, whosoever thou art, thou doest it; nay not all of you who do it are such, but it may be that some of you who do it are. But if thou art such, it is not that thou doest it, but it is done by thee.

10. For such as these did the Apostle suffer; yet did he not enjoin them so to be. And these do something, or something is done by them; they seek something else, yet they preach the word. Care not what the preacher seeks after; be it thy will to hold fast what he preaches; but let his intention be no concern of thine. Hear the word of salvation from his mouth, from his mouth hold fast this salvation. Be not thou the judge of his heart. If thou seest that he is seeking after other things, what is that to thee? Hear Him who is Salvation; “What they say, do.” He has given thee assurance who hath said, “What they say, do.” Do they evil? “Do not what they do.” Do they good. They do not “salute by the way,” they do not preach the Gospel by occasion; “be ye followers of them, even as they also are of Christ.” A good man preaches to thee; pluck the grape from the vine. A bad man preaches to thee, pluck the grape as it hangs in the hedge. The cluster has grown on the vine-branch entangled among the thorns, but it has not grown from the thorns. By all means when thou seest any such thing as this and art hungry, be careful as thou pluckest it, lest when thou puttest forth thy hand to the grape, thou be torn by the thorns. This is what I say; in such wise hear what is good, as that thou imitate not the evil of the character. Let him preach “by occasion,” salute by the way; it will injure him because he has not given ear to the precept of Christ, “Salute no man by the way;” it will not injure thee, who, whether thou dost hear of salvation from a passer by, or from one who comes direct to thee, dost hold fast that salvation. Hear the Apostle, who as I have said already gives us to understand this. “What

then?” “So that in every way, whether by occasion or in truth, Christ is preached; and herein I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer.”

11. Let then such as these, the Apostles of Christ, the preachers of the Gospel, who “salute not by the way,” that is, who do not seek or do any other thing, but who in genuine charity preach the Gospel, let them come into the house, and say, “Peace to this house.” They speak not with the mouth only; they pour out that of which they are full; they preach peace, and they have peace. They are not as those of whom it was said, “Peace, Peace, and there is no peace.” What is, “Peace, Peace, and there is no peace”? They preach it, but they have it not; they praise it and they love it not; they say, and do not. But yet do thou receive the peace, “whether by occasion or in truth Christ be preached.” Whoso then is full of peace, and salutes, saying, “Peace to this house, if the son of peace be there, his peace shall rest upon him; if not,” for peradventure there is no one of peace there, yet he who saluted has lost nothing, “it shall return,” says he, “to you again.” It shall return to thee, though it never departed from thee. For this He would mean to say, It profiteth thee that thou hast declared it, it hath not profited him at all who hath not received it; thou hast not lost thy reward, because he hath remained empty; it is rendered thee for thy good will, it is rendered thee for the charity which thou hast bestowed, He will render it to thee who hath given thee assurance of it by that Angelic voice, “Peace on earth to men of good will.”

SERMON LII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE X. 16, “HE THAT REJECTETH YOU REJECTETH ME.”

1. What our Lord Jesus Crist at that time spake to His disciples was put in writing, and prepared for us to hear. And so we have heard His words. For what profit would it be to us if He were seen, and were not heard? And now it is no hurt, that He is not seen, and yet is heard. He saith then, “He that despiseth you, despiseth Me.” If to the Apostles only He said, “He that despiseth you, despiseth Me;” do ye despise us. But if His word reach to us, and He hath called us, and set us in their place, see that ye despise not us,

lest the wrong ye shall do unto us reach to Him. For if ye fear not us, fear Him who said, “He that despiseth you, despiseth Me.” But why do we, who are unwilling to be despised by you, speak to you, except that we may have joy of your good conversation? Let your good works be the solace of our perils. Live well, that ye may not die ill.

2. And in these words which I have spoken, “Live well, that ye may not die ill,” do not think of those who it may be have lived evilly, and have died in their beds; and the pomp of their funeral has been displayed, and they have been laid in costly coffins, in sepulchres prepared with exceeding beauty and labour; nor because each one of you perhaps is saying, “I should wish so to die,” do ye think that it is a vain thing I have chosen to say; when I said that I would that ye should live well, that ye may not die ill? On the other hand, the case of some one, it may be, occurs to you, who has both lived well, and according to the opinion of men has died ill; perhaps he has died from the fall of a house, has died by shipwreck, has died by wild beasts; and each carnal man is saying in his heart, “What good is it to live well? See this man has so lived, and in this wise has he died.” “Return therefore to your heart;” and if ye are faithful ones, ye will find Christ there; He speaketh to you there. For I cry aloud, but He in silence giveth more instruction. I speak by the sound of words; He speaketh within by the fear of the thoughts. May He then engraft my word in your heart; for I have taken upon me to say, “Live well, that ye may not die ill.” See, for faith is in your hearts, and Christ dwelleth there, and it is His place to teach what I desire to give utterance to.

3. Remember that rich and that poor man in the Gospel; “the rich man clothed in purple and fine linen,” and crammed with daily feastings; and the poor man “lying before” the rich man’s gate, hungry, and looking for “the crumbs from his table, full of sores, licked” by “dogs.” Remember, I say; and whence do ye remember, but because Christ is there in your hearts? Tell me, what have ye asked Him within, and what hath He answered. For he goes on to say, “It came to pass that that poor man died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried in hell. And being in torments he lifted up his eyes, and saw Lazarus resting in Abraham’s bosom. Then he cried, saying, Father Abraham, have mercy

on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip his finger in water, and drop it on my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.” Proud in the world, in hell a beggar! For that poor man did attain to his crumbs; but the other attained not to the drop of water. Of these two then, tell me, which died well, and which died ill? Do not ask the eyes, return to the heart. For if ye ask the eyes, they will answer you falsely. For vastly splendid, and disguised with much worldly show, are the honours which could be paid to that rich man in his death. What crowds of mourning slaves and handmaids might there be! what pompous train of dependants! what splendid funeral obsequies! what costliness of burial! I suppose he was overwhelmed with spices. What shall we say then, Brethren, that he died well, or died ill? If ye ask the eyes, he died very well; if ye enquire of your inner Master, he died most ill.

4. If then those haughty men who keep their own goods to themselves, and bestow none of them upon the poor, die in this way; how do they die who plunder the goods of others? Therefore have I said with true reason, “Live well, that ye die not ill,” that ye die not as that rich man died. Nothing proves an evil death, but the time after death. On the other hand, look at that poor man; not with the eyes, for so ye will err; let faith look at him, let the heart see him. Set him before your eyes lying on the ground, “full of sores, and the dogs” coming and “licking his sores.” Now when ye recall him before your eyes in this guise, immediately ye loathe him, ye turn your face away, and stop your nostrils: see then with the eyes of the heart. “He died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham’s bosom.” The rich man’s family was seen bewailing him; the Angels were not seen rejoicing. What then did Abraham answer the rich man? “Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst good things.” Thou thoughtest nothing good, but what thou hadst in this life. Thou hast received them; but those days are past; and thou hast lost the whole; and thou hast remained behind to be tormented in hell.”

5. Opportune then was it, Brethren, that those words should be spoken to you. Have respect unto the poor, whether lying on the ground, or walking; have respect unto the poor, do good works. Ye who are wont so to do, do it still and ye who are not wont to do so, do it now. Let the number of those who do good works increase; since the number of the faithful increases

also. Ye do not yet see how great is the good ye do; for so the husbandman also sees not the crop when he sows, but he trusts the ground. Wherefore dost thou not trust God? Our harvest will come. Think, that we are busy in travail now, are working in travail now, but sure to receive, as it is written, “They went on and wept as they cast their seed; but they shall surely come with exultation, bringing their sheaves with them.”

SERMON LIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE X. 38, “AND A CERTAIN WOMAN NAMED MARTHA RECEIVED HIM INTO HER HOUSE,” ETC

1. The words of our Lord Jesus Christ which have just been read out of the Gospel, give us to understand, that there is some one thing for which we must be making, when we toil amid the manifold engagements of this life. Now we make for this as being yet in pilgrimage, and not in our abiding place; as yet in the way, not yet in our country; as yet in longing, not yet in enjoyment. Yet let us make for it, and that without sloth and without intermission, that we may some time be able to reach it.

2. Martha and Mary were two sisters, true kinswomen both, not only in blood, but in religion also; both clave to the Lord, both with one heart served the Lord when He was present in the flesh. Martha received Him, as strangers are usually received. Yet it was the handmaid received her Lord, the sick her Saviour, the creature her Creator. And she received Him to be fed in the body, herself to be fed in spirit. For the Lord was pleased to “take on Him the form of a servant,” and “having taken the form of a servant” in it to be fed by servants, by reason of His condescension, not His condition. For this truly was condescension, to allow Himself to be fed by others. He had a body, wherein He might hunger indeed and thirst; but do ye not know that when He hungered in the wilderness Angels ministered to Him? So then, in that He was pleased to be fed, He showed favour to them that fed Him. And what marvel is this, seeing He showed this same favour to the widow as touching the Holy Elias, whom He had before fed by the ministry of a raven? Did He fail in His power of feeding him, when He sent him to the widow? By no means. He did not fail in His power of feeding him, when He sent him to the widow; but He designed to bless the religious

widow, by means of her pious office paid to His servant. Thus then was the Lord received as a guest, “who came unto His own, and His own received Him not: but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God:” adopting servants, and making them brethren; redeeming captives, and making them co-heirs. Yet let none of you, as perhaps may be the case, say, “O blessed they who obtained the grace to receive Christ into their own house!” Do not grieve, do not murmur, that thou wert born in times when thou seest the Lord no more in the flesh; He has not taken this blessedness from thee. “Forasmuch,” says He, “as ye have done it unto the least of Mine, ye have done unto Me.”

3. These few words, as the shortness of the time allowed me, would I speak concerning the Lord who was pleased to be fed in the flesh, while He feedeth in the spirit: let us now come to the subject which I have proposed concerning unity. Martha, who was arranging and preparing to feed the Lord, was occupied about much serving. Mary her sister chose rather to be fed by the Lord. She in a manner deserted her sister who was toiling about much serving, and she sat herself at the Lord’s feet, and in stillness heard His word. Her most faithful ear had heard already; “Be still, and see that I am the Lord.” Martha was troubled, Mary was feasting; the one was arranging many things, the other had her eyes upon the One. Both occupations were good; but yet as to which was the better, what shall we say? We have One whom we may ask, let us give ear together. Which was the better, we heard now when the lesson was read, and let us hear again as I repeat it. Martha appeals to her Guest, lays the request of her pious complaints before the Judge, that her sister had deserted her, and neglected to assist her when she was so busied in her serving. Without any answer from Mary, yet in her presence, the Lord gives judgment. Mary preferred as in repose to commit her cause to the Judge, and had no mind to busy herself in making answer. For if she were to be getting ready words to answer, she must remit her earnest attention to hear. Therefore the Lord answered, who was in no difficulty for words, in that He was the Word. What then did He say? “Martha, Martha.” The repetition of the name is a token of love, or perhaps of exciting attention; she is named twice, that she might give the more attentive heed. “Martha, Martha,” hear: “Thou art occupied about many things: but one thing is needful;” for so meaneth unum opus est, not

“one work,” that is, one single work, but one is needful, is expedient, is necessary, which one thing Mary had chosen.

4. Consider, Brethren, this “one thing,” and see if even in multitude itself anything pleases, but “this oneness.” See how great a number, through God’s mercy, ye are: who could bear you, if ye did not mind “one thing”? Whence in this many is this quiet? Give oneness, and it is a people; take oneness away, and it is a crowd. For what is a crowd, but a disordered multitude? But give ear to the Apostle: “Now I beseech you, brethren.” He was speaking to a multitude; but he wished to make them all “one.” “Now I beseech you, brethren, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you; but that ye be perfected in the same mind, and in the same knowledge.” And in another place, “That ye be of one mind, thinking one thing, doing nothing through strife or vainglory.” And the Lord prays to the Father touching them that are His: “that they may be one even as We are One.” And in the Acts of the Apostles; “And the multitude of them that believed were of one soul, and of one heart.” Therefore, “Magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His Name in one together.” For one thing is necessary, that celestial Oneness, the Oneness in which the Father, and the Son, and Holy Spirit are One. See how the praise of Unity is commended to us. Undoubtedly our God is Trinity. The Father is not the Son the Son is not the Father, the Holy Spirit is neither the Father, nor the Son, but the Spirit of both; and yet these Three are not Three Gods, nor Three Almighties; but One God, Almighty, the whole Trinity is one God; because One thing is necessary. To this one thing nothing brings us, except being many we have one heart.

5. Good are ministrations done to the poor, and especially the due services and the religious offices done to the saints of God. For they are a payment, not a gift, as the Apostle says, “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?” Good are they, we exhort you to them, yea by the word of the Lord we build you up, “be not slow to entertain” the saints. Sometimes, they who were not aware of it, by entertaining those whom they knew not, have entertained angels. These things are good; yet better is that thing which Mary hath chosen. For the one thing hath manifold trouble from necessity; the other hath sweetness

from charity. A man wishes when he is serving, to meet with something; and sometimes he is not able: that which is lacking is sought for, that which is at hand is got ready; and the mind is distracted. For if Martha had been sufficient for these things, she would not have demanded her sister's help. These things are manifold, are diverse, because they are carnal, because they are temporal; good though they be, they are transitory. But what said theLord to Martha? "Mary hath chosen that better part." Not thou a bad, but she a better. Hear, how better; "which shall not be taken away from her." Some time or other, the burden of these necessary duties shall be taken from thee: the sweetness of truth is everlasting. "That which she hath chosen shall not be taken away from her." It is not taken away, but yet it is increased. In this life, that is, is it increased, in the other life it will be perfected, never shall it be "taken away."

6. Yea, Martha, blessed in thy good serving, even thou (with thy leave would I say it) seekest this reward for all thy labour—quiet. Now thou art occupied about much serving, thou hast pleasure in feeding bodies which are mortal, though they be the bodies of Saints; but when thou shalt have got to that country, wilt thou find there any stranger whom thou mayest receive into thine house? wilt thou find the hungry, to whom thou mayest break thy bread? or the thirsty, to whom thou mayest hold out thy cup? the sick whom thou mayest visit? the litigious, whom thou mayest set at one? the dead, whom thou mayest bury? None of all these will be there, but what will be there? What Mary hath chosen; there shall we be fed, and shall not feed others. Therefore there will that be in fulness and perfection which Mary hath chosen here; from that rich table, from the word of the Lord did she gather up some crumbs. For would ye know what will be there? The Lord Himself saith of His servants: "Verily I say unto you, that He will make them to sit down to meat, and will pass by and serve them." What is "to sit down to meat," but to "be still"? What is, "to sit down to meat," but to rest? What is, "He will pass by and serve them"? First, He passeth by, and so serveth. And where? In that heavenly Banquet, of which he saith, "Verily I say unto you, Many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." There will the Lord feed us, but first He passeth on from hence. For (as ye should know) the Pasch is by interpretation Passing-over. The Lord came,

He did divine things, He suffered human things. Is He still spit upon? Is He still struck with the palm of the hand? Is He still crowned with thorns? Is He still scourged? Is He still crucified? Is He still wounded with a spear? “He hath passed by.” And so too the Gospel tells us, when He kept the Paschal feast with His disciples. What says the Gospel? “But when the hour was come that Jesus should pass out of this world unto the Father.” Therefore did He pass, that He might feed us; let us follow, that we may be fed.

SERMON LIV

AGAIN, ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE X. 38, ETC., ABOUT MARTHA AND MARY

1. When the holy Gospel was being read, we heard that the Lord was received by a religious woman into her house, and her name was Martha. And while she was occupied in the care of serving, her sister Mary was sitting at the Lord’s Feet, and hearing His Word. The one was busy, the other was still; one was giving out, the other was being filled. Yet Martha, all busy as she was in that occupation and toil of serving, appealed to the Lord, and complained of her sister, that she did not help her in her labour. But the Lord answered Martha for Mary; and He became her Advocate, who had been appealed to as Judge. “Martha,” He saith, “thou art occupied about many things, when one thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the better part, which shall not be taken from her.” For we have heard both the appeal of the appellant, and the sentence of the Judge. Which sentence answered the appellant, defended the other’s cause. For Mary was intent on the sweetness of the Lord’s word. Martha was intent, how she might feed the Lord; Mary intent how she might be fed by the Lord. By Martha a feast was being prepared for the Lord, in whose feast Mary was even now delighting herself. As Mary then was listening with sweet pleasure to His most sweet word, and was feeding with the most earnest affection, when the Lord was appealed to by her sister, how, think we, did she fear, lest the Lord should say to her, “Rise and help thy sister”? For by a wondrous sweetness was she held; a sweetness of the mind which is doubtless greater than that of the senses. She was excused, she sat in greater confidence. And how

excused? Let us consider, examine, investigate it thoroughly as we can, that we may be fed also.

2. For what, do we imagine that Martha's serving was blamed, whom the cares of hospitality had engaged, who had received the Lord Himself into her house? How could she be rightly blamed, who was gladdened by so great a guest? If this be true, let men give over their ministrations to the needy; let them choose for themselves "the better part, which shall not be taken from" them; let them give themselves wholly to the word, let them long after the sweetness of doctrine; be occupied about the saving knowledge; let it be no care to them, what stranger is in the street, who there is that wants bread, or clothing, or to be visited, to be redeemed, to be buried; let works of mercy cease, earnest heed be given to knowledge only. If this be "the better part," why do not all do this, when we have the Lord Himself for our defender in this behalf? For we do not fear in this matter, lest we should offend His justice, when we have the support of His judgment.

3. And yet it is not so; but as the Lord spake so it is. It is not as thou understandest; but it is as thou oughtest to understand it. So mark; "Thou art occupied about many things, when one thing is needful. Mary hath chosen the better part." Thou hast not chosen a bad part; but she a better. And how better? Because thou art "about many things," she about "one thing." One is preferred to many. For one does not come from many, but many from one.

The things which were made, are many, He who made them is One. The heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that in them are, how many are they! Who could enumerate them? who conceive their vast number? Who made all these? God made them all. Behold, "they are very good." Very good are the things He made; how much better is He who made them! Let us consider then our "occupations about many things." Much serving is necessary for the refreshment of our bodies. Wherefore is this? Because we hunger, and thirst. Mercy is necessary for the miserable. Thou breakest bread to the hungry; because thou hast found an hungry man; take hunger away; to whom dost thou break bread? Take houseless wandering away; to whom dost thou show hospitality? Take nakedness away; to whom dost thou furnish clothes? Let there be no sickness; whom dost thou visit? No captivity; whom dost thou redeem? No quarrelling; whom dost thou reconcile? No death; whom dost thou bury? In that world to come, these evils will not be; therefore these services will not be either. Well then did Martha, as touching the bodily—what shall I call it, want, or will, of the Lord?—minister to His mortal flesh. But who was He in that mortal flesh? "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God:" see what Mary was listening to! "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us:" see to whom Martha was ministering! Therefore "hath Mary chosen the better part, which shall not be taken from her." For she chose that which shall abide for ever; "it shall not be taken from her." She wished to be occupied about "one thing." She understood already, "But it is good for me to cleave to the Lord." She sat at the feet of our Head. The more lowlily she sat, the more amply did she receive. For the water flows together to the low hollows of the valley, runs down from the risings of the hill. The Lord then did not blame Martha's work, but distinguished between their services. "Thou art occupied about many things; yet one thing is needful." Already hath Mary chosen this for herself. The labour of manifoldness passeth away, and the love of unity abideth. Therefore what she hath chosen, "shall not be taken from her." But from thee, that which thou hast chosen (of course this follows, of course this is understood) from thee, that which thou hast chosen shall be taken away. But to thy blessedness shall it be taken away, that that which is better may be given. For labour shall be taken away from thee, that rest may be given. Thou art still on the sea, she is already in port.

4. Ye see then, dearly Beloved, and, as I suppose, ye understand already, that in these two women, who were both well pleasing to the Lord, both objects of His love, both disciples; ye see, I say (and an important thing it is which whosoever understand, understand hereby, a thing which, even those of you who do not understand ought to give ear to, and to know), that in these two women the two lives are figured, the life present, and the life to come, the life of labour, and the life of quiet, the life of sorrow, and the life of blessedness, the life temporal, and the life eternal. These are the two lives: do ye think of them more fully. What this life contains, I speak not of a life of evil, or iniquity, or wickedness, or luxuriousness, or ungodliness; but of labour, and full of sorrows, by fears subdued, by temptations

disquieted: even this harmless life I mean, such as was suitable for Martha: this life I say, examine as best ye can; and as I have said, think of it more fully than I speak. But a wicked life was far from that house, and was neither with Martha nor with Mary; and if it ever had been, it fled at the Lord's entrance. There remained then in that house, which had received the Lord, in the two women the two lives, both harmless, both praiseworthy; the one of labour, the other of ease; neither vicious, neither slothful. Both harmless, both, I say, praiseworthy: but one of labour, the other of ease: neither vicious, which the life of labour must beware of; neither slothful, which the life of ease must beware of. There were then in that house these two lives, and Himself, the Fountain of life. In Martha was the image of things present, in Mary of things to come. What Martha was doing, that we are now; what Mary was doing, that we hope for. Let us do the first well, that we may have the second fully. For what of it have we now? How far have we it? As long as we are here, how much of it is there that we have? For in some measure are we employed in it now, and ye too when removed from business, and laying aside domestic cares, ye meet together, stand, listen. In so far as ye do this, ye are like Mary. And with greater facility do ye do that which Mary doeth, than I who have to distribute. Yet if I say ought, it is Christ's; therefore doth it feed you, because it is Christ's. For the Bread is common to us all, of which I too live as well as you. "But now we live, if ye, Brethren, stand fast in the Lord." I would not that ye should stand fast in us, but in the Lord. "For neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

SERMON LV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XI. 5, "WHICH OF YOU SHALL HAVE A FRIEND, AND SHALL GO UNTO HIM AT MIDNIGHT," ETC

1. We have heard our Lord, the Heavenly Master, and most faithful Counsellor exhorting us, who at once exhorteth us to ask, and giveth when we ask. We have heard Him in the Gospel exhorting us to ask instantly, and to knock even after the likeness of intrusive importunity. For He has set before us, for the sake of example, "If any of you had a friend, and were to ask of him at night for three loaves, when a friend out of his way had come to him, and he had nothing to set before him; and he were to answer that he

was now at rest, and his servants with him, and that he must not be disturbed by his entreaties; but the other were to be instant and persevering in knocking, and not being alarmed in modesty to depart, but compelled by necessity to continue on; that he would rise, though not for friendship's sake, at least for the other's importunity, and would give him as many as he wished." And how many did he wish? He wished for no more than three. To this parable then, the Lord adjoined an exhortation, and urged us earnestly to ask, seek, knock, till we receive what we ask, and seek, and knock for, making use of an example from a contrary case; as of that "judge who neither feared God, nor regarded man," and yet when a certain widow besought him day by day, overcome by her importunity, he gave her that which he could not in kindness give her, against his will. But our Lord Jesus Christ, who is in the midst of us a Petitioner, with God a Giver, would not surely exhort us so strongly to ask, if He were not willing to give. Let then the slothfulness of men be put to shame; He is more willing to give, than we to receive; He is more willing to show mercy, than we to be delivered from misery; and doubtless if we shall not be delivered, we shall abide in misery. For the exhortation He giveth us, He giveth only for our own sakes.

2. Let us awake, and believe Him who exhorteth us, obey Him who promiseth us, and rejoice in Him who giveth unto us. For peradventure, some time or other some friend out of his way has come to us too, and we have found nothing to set before him; and under the experience of this necessity, we have received both for ourselves and him. For it cannot be, but that some one of us hath fallen in with a friend who asked him something, which he could not answer; and then he has discovered that he has it not, when he is pressed to give it. A friend has come to thee "out of the way," out, that is, of the life of this world, in which all men are passing along as strangers, and no one abides here as possessor; but to every man it is said, "Thou hast been refreshed, pass on, go on thy way, give place to the next comer." Or perhaps from an evil "way," that is, from an evil life, some friend of thine wearied out, and not finding the truth, by the hearing and perceiving of which he may be made happy, but exhausted amid all the lust and poverty of the world, comes to thee, as to a Christian, and says, "Give me an account of this, make me a Christian." And he asks what it may be thou didst not know through the simplicity of thy faith; and so thou hast not

whereby to recruit him in his hunger, and reminded thus thou discoverest thine own indigence; and when thou wishest to teach thou art forced to learn; and whilst thou dost blush before him who asked thee, as not finding in thyself what he was seeking for, thou art compelled to seek, that thou mayest be thought worthy to find.

3. And where shouldest thou seek. Where but in the books of the Lord? Peradventure what he has asked is contained in the book, but it is obscure. Perhaps the Apostle has declared it in some Epistle: declared it in such wise, that thou canst read, but canst not understand it: thou art not permitted to pass on. For the interrogator urges thee; Paul himself, or Peter, or any of the Prophets thou art not allowed to ask. For this family is now at rest with their Lord, and intense is the ignorance of this life, that is, it is midnight, and thy hungry friend is urgent upon thee. A simple faith haply sufficed thee, him it suffices not. Is he then to be abandoned? Is he to be cast out of thy house? Therefore unto the Lord Himself, unto Him with whom the family is at rest, knock by prayer, ask, be instant. He will not, as that friend in the parable, arise and give thee as overcome by importunity. He wisheth to give; thou for thy knocking hast not yet received; knock on; He wisheth to give. And what He wisheth to give, He deferreth, that thou mayest long the more for it when deferred, lest if given quickly it should be lightly esteemed.

4. But when thou hast gotten the three loaves, that is, to feed on and understand the Trinity, thou hast that whereby thou mayest both live thyself, and feed others. Now thou needest not fear the stranger who comes out of his way to thee, but by taking him in mayest make him a citizen of the household: nor needest thou fear lest thou come to the end of it. That Bread will not come to an end, but it will put an end to thine indigence. It is Bread, God the Father, and it is Bread, God the Son, and it is Bread, God the Holy Ghost. The Father Eternal, the Son Coeternal with Him, and the Holy Ghost Coeternal. The Father Unchangeable, the Son Unchangeable, the Holy Ghost Unchangeable. The Father Creator, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Father the Shepherd and the Giver of life, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Father the Food and Bread eternal, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Learn, and teach; live thyself, and feed others. God who

giveth to thee, giveth thee nothing better than Himself. O thou greedy one, what else wast thou seeking for? Or if thou seek for aught else, what will suffice thee whom God doth suffice not?

5. But necessary it is that thou have charity, that thou have faith, that thou have hope; that that which is given may be sweet unto thee. And these same, faith, hope, charity, are three. And these too are gifts of God. For faith we have received from Him; “As God,” saith he, “hath distributed to every one the measure of faith.” And hope we have received from Him, to whom it is said, “Wherein Thou hast caused me to hope.” And charity we have received from Him, of whom it is said, “The charity of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which hath been given to us.” Now these three are likewise in some measure different; but all gifts of God. For “there abide these three, faith, hope, charity; but the greatest of these is charity.” In those loaves it is not said that any one loaf was greater than the others; but simply that three loaves were asked for, and were given.

6. See other three things: “Who is there of you, whom if his son ask a loaf, will he give him a stone? Or who is there of you of whom if his son ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? or if he ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him!” Let us then again consider these three things, if haply there be not here those three, “faith, hope, charity; but the greatest of these is charity.” Set down then these three things, a loaf, a fish, an egg; the greatest of these is a loaf. Therefore in these three things do we well understand charity by “the loaf.” On which account He has opposed a stone to a loaf; because hardness is contrary to charity. By “a fish” we understand faith. A certain holy man has said, and we are glad to say it too; “The good fish’ is a godly faith.” It lives amidst the waves, and is not broken or dissolved by the waves. Amidst the temptations and tempests of this world, liveth godly faith; the world rages, yet it is uninjured. Observe only that serpent is contrary to faith. For My faith is she betrothed to whom it is said in the Song of Songs, “Come from Lebanon, My spouse, coming and passing over to Me from the beginning of faith.” Therefore betrothed too, because faith is the beginning of betrothal. For something is promised by

the bridegroom, and by this plighted faith is he held bound. Now to the fish the Lord opposed the serpent, to faith the devil. Wherefore to this betrothed one does the Apostle say, “I have betrothed you to One Husband, to present you a chaste virgin to Christ.” And, “I fear lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds also should be corrupted from the purity which is in Christ;” that is, which is in the faith of Christ. For he says, “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.” Therefore let not the devil corrupt our faith, let him not devour the fish.

7. There remains hope, which, as I think, is compared to an egg. For hope has not yet arrived at attainment; and an egg is something, but not yet the chicken. So then quadrupeds give birth to young ones, but birds to the hope of young. Hope therefore exhorts us to this, to despise things present, to wait for things to come; “forgetting those things which are behind,” let us, with the Apostle,” reach forth unto those things which are before.” For so he says; “But one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, reaching forth unto those things which are before, I follow on earnestly unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” Nothing then is so hostile to hope, as to “look back,” to place hope, that is, in those things which flit by and pass away; but in those things should we place it, which are not yet given, but which sometime will be given, and will never pass away. But when the world is deluged by trials, as it were the sulphureous rain of Sodom, the example of Lot’s wife must be feared. For she “looked behind;” and in the spot where she looked behind, there did she remain. She was turned into salt, that she might season the wise by her example. Of this hope the Apostle Paul speaketh thus; “For we are saved in hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for: but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for.” It is an egg, and not as yet the chicken. And it is covered with a shell; it is not seen because it is covered; let it be with patience waited for; let it feel the warmth, that it may come to life. Press on, “reach forth unto the things which are before, forget the past. For the things which are seen, are temporal. Not looking back,” says he, “at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” Unto those things which are not seen then extend thy hope, wait,

endure. Look not back. Fear “the scorpion” for thine “egg.” See how he wounds with the tail, which he has behind him. Let not then the “scorpion” crush thine “egg,” let not this world crush thy hope (so to say) with its poison, therefore against thee, because behind. How loudly does the world talk to thee, what an uproar does it make behind thy back, that thou mayest look back! that is, that thou mayest place thy hope in present things (and yet not even present, for they cannot be called present which have no fixedness), and mayest turn thy mind away from that which Christ hath promised, and not yet given, but who, seeing He is faithful, will give it, and mayest be content to look for rest in a perishing world.

8. For this cause does God mingle bitternesses with the felicities of earth, that another felicity may be sought, in whose sweetness there is no deceit; yet by these very bitternesses does the world endeavour to turn thee away from thy longing pursuit after the things “which are before,” and to turn thee back. For these bitternesses, for these tribulations dost thou murmur and say, “See, all things are perishing in Christian times.” What complaint is this! God hath not promised me that these things shall not perish; Christ hath not promised me this. The Eternal hath promised things eternal: if I believe, from a mortal, I shall be made eternal. What noise is this, O world impure! what murmuring is this! Why art thou trying to turn me back? Perishing as thou art, thou wishest to detain me; what wouldest thou do, if thou hadst any permanence? Whom wouldest thou not beguile by thy sweetness, if with all thy bitternesses thou dost impose thy false nourishment upon us? For me, if I have hope, if I hold fast my hope, my “egg” has not been wounded by the “scorpion.” “I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall be ever in my mouth.” Be the world prosperous, or be the world turned upside down; “I will bless the Lord,” who made the world. Yes, verily, I will bless Him. Be it well with me according to the flesh, or be it ill according to the flesh, “I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall be ever in my mouth.” For if I bless when it is well, and blaspheme when it is ill with me; I have received the “scorpion’s” sting, being pricked “I have looked back;” which be far from us. “The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away: it is done, as the Lord pleased; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

9. The city which has given us birth according to the flesh still abideth, God be thanked. O that it may receive a spiritual birth, and together with us pass over unto eternity! If the city which has given us birth according to the flesh abide not, yet that which has given us birth according to the Spirit abides for ever. “The Lord doth build up Jerusalem.” Has He by sleeping brought His building to ruin, or by not keeping it, let the enemy into it? “Except the Lord keep the city, he that keepeth it waketh but in vain.” And what “city”? “He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.” What is Israel, but the seed of Abraham? What the seed of Abraham, but Christ? “And to thy seed,” he says, “which is Christ.” And to us what says he? “But ye are Christ’s, therefore Abraham’s seed, heirs according to the promise.” “In thy seed,” saith He, “shall all nations be blessed.” The holy city, the faithful city, the city on earth a sojourner, hath its foundation in heaven. O faithful one, do not corrupt thy hope, do not lose thy charity, “gird up thy loins,” light, and hold out thy lamps before thee; “wait for the Lord, when He will return from the wedding.” Why art thou alarmed, because the kingdoms of the earth are perishing? Therefore hath a heavenly kingdom been promised thee, that thou mightest not perish with the kingdoms of the earth. For it was foretold, foretold distinctly, that they should perish. For we cannot deny that it was foretold. Thy Lord for whom thou art waiting, hath told thee, “Nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.” The kingdoms of the earth have their changes; He will come of whom it is said, “and of His kingdom there shall be no end.”

10. They who have promised this to earthly kingdoms have not been guided by truth, but have lied through flattery. A certain poet of theirs has introduced Jupiter speaking, and he says of the Romans;

To them no bounds of empire I assign,

Nor term of years to their immortal line.

Most certainly truth makes no such answer. This empire which thou hast given “without term of years,” is it on earth, or in heaven? On earth assuredly. And even if it were in heaven, yet “heaven and earth shall pass away.” Those things shall pass away which God hath Himself made; how much more rapidly shall that pass away which Romulus founded! Perhaps if we had a mind to press Virgil on this point, and tauntingly to ask him why he said it; he would take us aside privately, and say to us, “I know this as well as you, but what could I do who was selling words to the Romans, if by this kind of flattery I did not promise something which was false? And yet even in this very instance I have been cautious, when I said, I assigned to them an empire without term of years,’ I introduced their Jupiter to say it. I did not utter this falsehood in my own person, but put upon Jupiter the character of untruthfulness: as the god was false, the poet was false. For would ye know that I well knew the truth of it? In another place, when I did not introduce this stone, called Jupiter, but spoke in my own person, I said,

Th’ impending ruin of the Roman state.’

See how I spoke of the impending ruin of the state. I spoke of its impending ruin. I did not suppress it.” When he spoke in truth he was not silent as to its ruin; when in flattery, he promised that it should abide for ever.

11. Let us not then faint, my Brethren: an end there will be to all earthly kingdoms. If that end be now, God knoweth. For peradventure it is not yet, and we, through some infirmity, or mercifulness, or misery, are wishing that it may not be yet; nevertheless will it not therefore some day be? Fix your hope in God, desire the things eternal, wait for the things eternal. Ye are Christians, Brethren, we are all Christians. Christ did not come down into the flesh that we might live softly; let us endure rather than love the things present; manifest is the harm of adversity, deceitful is the soft blandishment of prosperity. Fear the sea, even when it is a calm. On no account let us hear in vain, “Let us lift up our hearts.” Why place we our hearts in the earth, when we see that the earth is being turned upside down? We cannot but exhort you, that ye may have something to say and answer in defence of your hope against the deriders and blasphemers of the Christian name. Let no one by his murmuring turn you back from waiting for the things to come. All who by reason of these adversities blaspheme our Christ, are the “scorpion’s” tail. Let us put our egg under the wings of that Hen of the Gospel, which crieth out to that false and abandoned city, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen her chickens, and thou wouldest not!” Let it not be said to us, “How often would I, and thou wouldest not!” For that hen is the Divine Wisdom;

but assumed flesh to accommodate Itself to its chickens. See the hen with feathers bristling, with wings hanging down, with voice broken, and tremulous, and faint, and languid, accommodating herself to her little ones. Our egg then, that is, our hope, let us place beneath the wings of this Hen.

12. Ye have noticed, it may be, how a hen will tear a scorpion in pieces. O then that the Hen of the Gospel would tear in pieces and devour these blasphemers, creeping out of their holes, and inflicting hurtful stings, would pass them over into Her Body, and turn them into an egg. Let them not be angry; we seem to be excited; but we do not return curses for curses. “We are cursed, and we bless, being defamed, we entreat.” But “let him not speak of Rome, it is said of me: O that he would hold his tongue about Rome;” as though I were insulting it, and not rather entreating the Lord for it, and exhorting you all, unworthy as I am. Be it far from me to insult it! The Lord avert this from my heart, and from the grief of my conscience. Have we not had many brethren there? have we not still? Does not a large portion of the pilgrim city Jerusalem live there? has it not endured there temporal afflictions? but it has not lost the things eternal. What can I say then, when I speak of Rome, but that is false, which they say of our Christ, that He is Rome’s destroyer, and that the gods of wood and stone were her defenders? Add what is more costly, “gods of brass.” Add what is costlier still, “of silver and gold:” the “idols of the nations are silver and gold.” He did not say, “stone;” he did not say, “wood;” he did not say, “clay;” but, what they value highly, “silver and gold.” Yet these silver and golden idols “have eyes, and see not.” The gods of gold, of wood, are as regards their costliness unequal; but as to “having eyes, and seeing not,” they are equal. See to what sort of guardians learned men have entrusted Rome, to those “who have eyes, and see not.” Or if they were able to preserve Rome, why did they first perish themselves? They say; “Rome perished at the same time.” Nevertheless they perished. “No,” they say, “they did not perish themselves, but their statues.” Well, how then could they keep your houses, who were not able to keep their own statues? Alexandria once lost such gods as these. Constantinople some time since, ever since it was made a grand city, for it was made so by a Christian Emperor, lost its false gods; and yet it has increased, and still increases, and remains. And remain it will, as long as God pleases. For we do not to this city either promise an eternal

duration because we say this. Carthage remains now in its possession of the Name of Christ, yet once on a time its goddess Caelestis was overthrown; because celestial she was not, but terrestrial.

13. And that which they say is not true, that immediately on losing her gods Rome has been taken and ruined. It is not true at all; their images were overthrown before; and even so were the Goths with Rhadagaisus conquered. Remember, my Brethren, remember; it is no long time since, but a few years, call it to mind. When all the images in the city of Rome had been overthrown, Rhadagaisus king of the Goths came with a large army, much more numerous than that of Alaric was. Rhadagaisus was a Pagan; he sacrificed to Jupiter every day. Everywhere it was announced, that Rhadagaisus did not cease from sacrificing. Then said they all, “Lo, we do not sacrifice, he does sacrifice, we, who are not allowed to sacrifice must be conquered by him who does sacrifice.” But God making proof that not even temporal deliverance, nor the preservation of these earthly kingdoms, consist in these sacrifices, Rhadagaisus, by the Lord’s help, was marvellously overcome. Afterwards came other Goths who did not sacrifice, they came, who though they were not Catholics in the Christian faith, were yet hostile and opposed to idols, and they took Rome; they conquered those who put their trust in idols, who were still seeking after the idols they had lost, and desiring still to sacrifice to the lost gods. And amongst them too were some of our brethren, and these were afflicted also: but they had learnt to say, “I will bless the Lord at all times.” They were involved in the afflictions of their earthly kingdom: but they lost not the kingdom of heaven; yea, rather, they were made the better for obtaining it through the exercise of tribulations. And if they did not in their tribulations blaspheme, they came out as sound vessels from the furnace, and were filled with the blessing of the Lord. Whereas those blasphemers, who follow and long after earthly things, who place their hope in earthly things, when these they have lost, whether they will or no, what shall they retain? where shall they abide? Nothing without, nothing within; an empty coffer, an emptier conscience. Where is their rest? where their salvation? where their hope? Let them then come, let them give over blaspheming, let them learn to adore; let the scorpions with their stings be devoured by the Hen,

let them be turned into His body who makes them pass over into it; let them on earth be exercised, in heaven be crowned.

SERMON LVI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XI. 39, “NOW DO YE PHARISEES CLEANSE THE OUTSIDE OF THE CUP AND THE PLATTER,” ETC

1. Ye have heard the holy Gospel, how the Lord Jesus in that which He said to the Pharisees, conveyed doubtless a lesson to His own disciples, that they should not think that righteousness consists in the cleansing of the body. For every day did the Pharisees wash themselves in water before they dined; as if a daily washing could be a cleansing of the heart. Then He showed what sort of persons they were. He told them who saw them; for He saw not their faces only but their inward parts. For that ye may know this, that Pharisee, to whom Christ made answer, thought within himself, he uttered nothing aloud, yet the Lord heard him. For within himself he blamed the Lord Christ, because He had so come to his feast without having washed. He was thinking, the Lord heard, therefore He answered. What then did He answer? “Now do ye Pharisees wash the outside of the platter; but within ye are full of guile and ravening.” What! is this to come to a feast! how did He not spare the man by whom He had been invited? Yea rather by rebuking He did spare him, that being reformed He might spare him in the judgment. And what is it that He showeth to us? That Baptism also which is conferred once for all, cleanses by faith. Now faith is within, not without. Wherefore it is said and read in the Acts of the Apostles, “Cleansing their hearts by faith.” And the Apostle Peter thus speaks in his Epistle; “So too hath He given you a similitude from Noah’s ark, how that eight souls were saved by water.” And then he added, “So also in a like figure will baptism save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience.” “This answer of a good conscience” did the Pharisees despise, and washed “that which was without;” within they continued full of pollution.

2. And what did He say to them after this? “But rather give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you.” See the praise of alms, do, and prove it. But mark awhile; this was said to the Pharisees. These Pharisees were

Jews, the choice men as it were of the Jews. For those of most consideration and learning were then called Pharisees. They had not been washed by Christ’s Baptism; they had not yet believed on Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, who walked among them, yet was not acknowledged by them. How then doth He say to them, “Give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you”? If the Pharisees had paid heed to Him, and given alms, at once according to His word “all things would have been clean to them;” what need then was there for them to believe on Him? But if they could not be cleansed, except by believing on Him, who “cleanseth the heart by faith;” what means, “Give alms, and behold all things are clean unto you”? Let us carefully consider this, and peradventure He Himself explains it.

3. When He had spoken thus, doubtless they thought that they did give alms. And how did they give them? They tithed all they had, they took away a tenth of all their produce, and gave it. It is no easy matter to find a Christian who doth as much. See what the Jews did. Not wheat only, but wine, and oil; nor this only, but even the most trifling things, cummin, rue, mint, and anise, in obedience to God’s precept, they tithed all; put aside, that is, a tenth part, and gave alms of it. I suppose then that they recalled this to mind, and thought that the Lord Christ was speaking to no purpose, as if to those who did not give alms; whereas they knew their own doings, how that they tithed, and gave alms of the minutest and most trifling of their produce. They mocked Him within themselves as He spake thus, as if to men who did not give alms. The Lord knowing this, immediately subjoined, “But woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, who tithe mint, and cummin, and rue, and all herbs.” That ye may know, I am aware of your alms. Doubtless these tithes are your alms; yea even the minutest and most trifling of your fruits do ye tithe; “Yet ye leave the weightier matters of the law, judgment and charity.” Mark. Ye have “left judgment and charity,” and ye tithe herbs. This is not to do alms. “These,” saith He, “ought ye to do, and not to leave the other undone.” Do what? “Judgment and charity, justice and mercy;” and “not to leave the other undone.” Do these; but give the preference to the others.

4. If this be so, why did He say to them, “Do alms, and behold all things are clean unto you”? What is, “Do alms”? Do mercy. What is, “Do mercy”? If

thou understand, begin with thine own self. For how shouldest thou be merciful to another, if thou art cruel to thyself? “Give alms, and all things are clean unto you.” Do true alms. What is alms? Mercy. Hear the Scripture; “Have mercy on thine own soul, pleasing God.” Do alms, “Have mercy on thine own soul, pleasing God.” Thine own soul is a beggar before thee, return to thy conscience. Whosoever thou art, who art living in wickedness or unbelief, return to thy conscience; and there thou findest thy soul in beggary, thou findest it needy, thou findest it poor, thou findest it in sorrow, nay perhaps thou dost not find it in need, but dumb through its neediness. For if it beg, it “hungereth after righteousness.” Now when thou findest thy soul in such a state (all this is within, in thy heart), first do alms, give it bread. What bread? If the Pharisee had asked this question, the Lord would have said to him, “Give alms to thine own soul.” For this He did say to him; but he did not understand it, when He enumerated to them the alms which they were used to do, and which they thought were unknown to Christ; and He saith to them, “I know that ye do this, ye tithe mint and anise, cummin and rue;’ but I am speaking of other alms; ye despise judgment and charity.’ In judgment and charity give alms to thine own soul.” What is “in judgment”? Look back, and discover thyself; mislike thyself, pronounce a judgment against thyself. And what is charity? “Love the Lord God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; love thy neighbour as thyself:” and thou hast done alms first to thine own soul, within thy conscience. Whereas if thou neglect this alms, give what thou wilt, give how much thou wilt; reserve of thy goods not a tenth, but a half; give nine parts, and leave but one for thine own self: thou doest nothing, when thou doest not alms to thine own soul, and art poor in thyself. Let thy soul have its food, that it perish not by famine. Give her bread. What bread, thou wilt say? He speaketh with thee Himself. If thou wouldest hear, and understand, and believe the Lord, He would say to thee Himself, “I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven. Wouldest thou not first give this Bread to thine own soul, and do alms unto it? If then thou believest, thou oughtest so to do, that thou mayest first feed thine own soul. Believe in Christ, and the things which are within shall be cleansed; and what is without shall be clean also. “Let us turn to the Lord,” etc.

SERMON LVII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XII. 15, “AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, TAKE HEED, AND KEEP YOURSELVES FROM ALL COVETOUSNESS.”

1. I doubt not but that ye who fear God, do hear His word with awe, and execute it with cheerfulness; that what He hath promised, ye may at present hope for, hereafter receive. We have just now heard the Lord Christ Jesus, the Son of God, giving us a precept. The Truth, who neither deceiveth, nor is deceived, hath given us a precept; let us hear, fear, beware. What is this precept then: “I say unto you, Beware of all covetousness”? What is, “of all covetousness”? What is, “of all”? Why did He add, “of all”? For He might have spoken thus, “Beware of covetousness.” It suited Him to add, “of all;” and to say, “Beware of all covetousness.”

2. Why He said this, the occasion as it were out of which these words arose, is shown to us in the holy Gospel. A certain man appealed to Him against his brother, who had taken away all his patrimony, and gave not back his proper portion to his brother. Ye see then how good a case this appellant had. For he was not seeking to take by violence another’s, but was seeking only for his own which had been left him by his parents; these was he demanding back by his appeal to the judgment of the Lord. He had an unrighteous brother; but against an unrighteous brother had he found a righteous Judge. Ought he then in so good a cause to lose that opportunity? Or who would say to his brother, “Restore to thy brother his portion,” if Christ would not say it? Would that judge be likely to say it, whom perhaps his richer and extortionate brother might corrupt by a bribe? Forlorn then as he was, and despoiled of his father’s goods, when he had found such and so great a Judge he goes up to Him, he appeals to, he beseeches Him, he lays his cause before Him in few words. For what occasion was there to set forth his cause at length, when he was speaking to Him who could even see the heart? “Master,” he says, “speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.” The Lord did not say to him, “Let thy brother come.” No, He neither sent for him to be present, nor in his presence did He say to him who had appealed to Him, “Prove what thou wast saying.” He asked for half an inheritance, he asked for half an inheritance on earth; the Lord

offered him a whole inheritance in heaven. The Lord gave more than asked for.

3. “Speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.” Just case, short case. But let us hear Him who at once gives judgment and instruction. “Man,” He saith. “O man;” for seeing thou valuest this inheritance so highly, what art thou but a man? He wished to make him something more than man. What more did He wish to make him, from whom He wished to take covetousness away? What more did He wish to make him? I will tell you, “I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High.” Lo, what He wished to make him, to reckon him that hath no covetousness among the “gods.” “Man, who made Me a divider among you?” So the Apostle Paul His servant, when he said, “I beseech you, brethren, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you,” was unwilling to be a divider. And afterwards he thus admonished them who were running after his name, and dividing Christ: “Every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” Judge then, how wicked are those men, who would have Him to be divided, who would not be a divider. “Who,” saith He, “hath made Me a divider among you?”

4. Thou hast petitioned for a kindness; hear counsel. “I say unto you, Beware of all covetousness.” “Perhaps,” he would say, “thou wouldest call him covetous and greedy, if he were seeking another’s goods; but I say, seek not even thine own greedily or covetously.” This is “Of all, beware of all covetousness.” A heavy burden this! If by any chance this burden be imposed on them that are weak; let Him be sought unto, that He who imposes it, may vouchsafe to give us strength. For it is not a thing to be lightly regarded, my Brethren, when our Lord, our Redeemer, our Saviour, who died for us, who gave His Own Blood as our ransom, to redeem us, our Advocate and Judge; it is no light matter when He saith, “Beware.” He knoweth well how great the evil is; we know it not, let us believe Him. “Beware,” saith He. Wherefore? of what? “of all covetousness.” I am but keeping what is mine own, I am not taking away another’s; “Beware of all covetousness.” Not only is he covetous, who plunders the goods of others;

but he is covetous too, who greedily keeps his own. But if he is so blamed who greedily keeps his own; how is he condemned who plunders what is another's! "Beware," He saith, "of all covetousness: For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." He that stores up great abundance, how much does he take therefrom to live? When he has taken it, and in a way separated in thought sufficient to live upon from it, let him consider for whom the rest remains; lest haply when thou keepest wherewith to live, thou art gathering only wherewith to die. Behold Christ, behold truth, behold severity. "Beware," saith truth: "Beware," saith severity. If thou love not the truth, fear severity. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Believe Him, He doth not deceive thee. On the other hand, thou sayest, "Yea, a man's life' does consist in the abundance of the things which he possesses.'" He doth not deceive thee; thou deceivest thyself.

5. Out of this occasion then, when that appellant was seeking his own portion, not desiring to plunder another's, arose that sentence of the Lord, wherein He said not, "Beware of covetousness;" but added, "of all covetousness." Nor was this all: He giveth another example of a certain rich man, "whose ground had turned out well." "There was," He saith, "a certain rich man, whose ground had turned out well." What is, "had turned out well"? The ground which he possessed had brought forth a great produce. How great? So that he could not find where to bestow it: suddenly, through his abundance he became straitened—this old covetous man. For how many years had already passed away, and yet those barns had been enough? So great then was the produce, that the accustomed places were not sufficient. And the wretched man sought counsel, not as to how he should lay the additional produce out, but how he should store it up; and in thinking he discovered an expedient. He seemed as it were wise in his own eyes, by the discovery of this expedient. Knowingly did he think of it, wisely hit upon it. What was this he wisely hit upon? "I will destroy," he says, "my" old "barns, and will build new ones greater, and will fill them; and I will say to my soul." What wilt thou say to thy soul? "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry." This did the wise discoverer of this expedient say to his soul.

6. “And God,” who doth not disdain to speak even with fools, “said unto him.” Some of you may peradventure say, And how did God speak with a fool? O, my Brethren, with how many fools does He speak here, when the Gospel is read! When it is read, are not they who hear and do not, fools? What then did the Lord say? For he, I repeat, thought himself wise by the discovery of his expedient. “Thou fool,” He saith; “Thou fool,” who seemest wise unto thyself; “Thou fool,” who hast said to thy soul, “Thou hast much goods laid up for many years: to-day is thy soul required of thee!” Thy soul to which thou hast said, “Thou hast much goods,” to-day is “required,” and hath no good at all. Let it then despise these goods, and be herself good, that when she is “required,” she may depart in assured hope. For what is more perverse than a man who wishes to have “much goods,” and does not wish to be good himself? Unworthy art thou to have them, who dost not wish to be what thou dost wish to have. For dost thou wish to have a bad country house? No indeed, but a good one. Or a bad wife? No, but a good one. Or a bad hood? Or even a bad shoe? And why a bad soul only? He did not in this place say to this fool who was thinking on vain things, building barns, and who had no regard to the wants of the poor; He did not say to him, “To-day shall thy soul be hurried away to hell:” He said no such thing as this, but “is required of thee.” “I do not tell thee whither thy soul shall go; yet hence, where thou art laying up for it such store of things, must it depart, whether thou wilt or no.” Lo, “thou fool,” thou hast thought to fill thy new and greater barns, as if there was nothing to be done with what thou hast.

7. But peradventure he was not yet a Christian. Let us hear then, Brethren, to whom as believers the Gospel is read, by whom He who spake these things, is worshipped, whose mark is borne by us on our forehead, and is held in the heart. For of very great concernment is it where a man hath the mark of Christ, whether in the forehead, or both in the forehead and the heart. Ye have heard to-day the words of the holy prophet Ezekiel, how that before God sent one to destroy the ungodly people, He first sent one to mark them, and said to him, “Go and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and moan for the sins of my people that are done in the midst of them.” He did not say, “which are done without them;” but “in the midst of them.” Yet they “sigh and moan;” and therefore are they “marked on the

forehead:” in the forehead of the inner man, not the outer. For there is a forehead in the face, there is a forehead in the conscience. So it happens that when the inner forehead is stricken, the outer grows red; either red with shame, or pale with fear. So then there is a forehead of the inner man. There were they “marked” that they might not be destroyed; because though they did not correct the sins which were “done in the midst of them,” yet they sorrowed for them, and by that very sorrow separated themselves; and though separated in God’s sight, they were mixed with them in the eyes of men. They are “marked” secretly, are not hurt openly. Afterwards the Destroyer is sent, and to him it is said, “Go, lay waste, spare neither young nor old, male nor female, but come not near those who have the mark on their forehead.” How great security is granted to you, my Brethren, who among this people are sighing, and moaning for the iniquities which are being done in the midst of you, and who do them not!

8. But that ye may not commit iniquities, “beware of all covetousness.” I will tell you in its full extent, what is “of all covetousness.” In matter of lust he is covetous, whom his own wife suffices not. And idolatry itself is called covetousness; because again in matter of divine worship he is covetous, whom the one and true God suffices not. What but the covetous soul makes for itself many gods? What but the covetous soul makes to itself false martyrs? “Beware of all covetousness.” Lo, thou lovest thine own goods, and dost boast thyself in that thou seekest not the goods of others; see what evil thou doest in not hearing Christ, who saith, “Beware of all covetousness.” See thou dost love thine own goods, thou dost not take away the goods of others; thou hast the fruits of thy labour, they are justly thine; thou hast been left an heir, some one whose good graces thou hast attained has given it to thee; thou hast been on the sea, and in its perils, hast committed no fraud, hast sworn no lie, hast acquired what it hath pleased God thou shouldest; and thou art keeping it greedily as in a good conscience, because thou dost not possess it from evil sources, and dost not seek what is another’s. Yet if thou give not heed to Him who hath said, “Beware of all covetousness,” hear how great evils thou wilt be ready to do for thine own goods’ sake. Lo, for example, it hath chanced to thee to be made a judge. Thou wilt not be corrupted, because thou dost not seek the goods of others; no one giveth thee a bribe and says, “Give judgment

against my adversary.” This be far from thee, a man, who seekest not the things of others, how couldest thou be persuaded to do this? Yet see what evil thou wilt be ready to do for thine own goods’ sake. Peradventure he that wishes thee to judge evilly, and pronounce sentence for him against his adversary is a powerful man, and able to bring up false accusation against thee, that thou mayest lose what thou hast. Thou dost reflect, and think upon his power, think of thine own goods thou art keeping, which thou dost love: not which thou hast possessed, but in whose power rather thou art thyself unhappily fixed. This thy bird-lime, by reason of which thou hast not the wings of virtue free, thou dost look to; and thou sayest within thine own self, “I am offending this man, he has much influence in the world; he will suggest evil accusations against me, and I shall be outlawed, and lose all I have.” Thus thou wilt give unrighteous judgment, not when thou seekest another’s, but when thou keepest thine own.

9. Give me a man who has given ear to Christ, give me a man who has heard with fear “Beware of all covetousness;” and let him not say to me, “I am a poor man, a plebeian of mean estate, one of the common people, how can I hope ever to be a judge? I am in no fear of this temptation, the peril of which thou hast placed before mine eyes.” Yet lo, even this poor man I will tell what he ought to fear. Some rich and powerful person calls thee to give false witness for him. What wilt thou be doing now? Tell me. Thou hast a good little property of thine own; thou hast laboured for it, hast acquired, and kept it. That person requires of thee; “Give false witness for me, and I will give thee so and so much.” Thou who seekest not the things of others, sayest, “That be far from me: I do not seek for what it has not pleased God to give me, I will not receive it; depart from me.” “Hast thou no wish to receive what I give? I will take away what thou hast already.” See now prove thyself, question now thine own self. Why dost thou look at me? Look inward on thine own self, look at thine own self within, examine thine own self within; sit down before thine own self, and summon thine own self before thee, and stretch thyself upon the rack of God’s commandment, and torment thyself with His fear, and deal not softly with thyself; answer thine own self. Lo, if any one were to threaten thee with this, what wouldest thou do? “I will take away from thee what with so great labour thou hast acquired, if thou wilt not give false witness for me.” Give him that;

“Beware of all covetousness.” “O my servant,” He will say to thee, “whom I have redeemed and made free, whom from a servant I have adopted to be a brother, whom I have set as a member in My Body, give ear to Me: He may take away what thou hast acquired, Me he shall not take away from thee. Art thou keeping thine own goods, that thou mayest not perish? What, have I not said unto thee, Beware of all covetousness’?”

10. Lo, thou art in confusion, tossed to and fro; thy heart as a ship is shaken about by tempests. Christ is asleep: awake Him, that sleepeth, and thou shalt be exposed no more to the raging of the storm. Awake Him, who was pleased to have nothing here, and thou hast all, who came even to the Cross for thee, whose “Bones” as He was naked and hanging “were numbered” by them that mocked Him; and “beware of all covetousness.” Covetousness of money is not all; “beware of covetousness” of life. A dreadful covetousness, covetousness much to be feared. Sometimes a man will despise what he has, and say, “I will not give false witness; I will not. You tell me, I will take away what thou hast. Take away what I have; you do not take away what I have within. For he was not left a poor man, who said, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; it is done as it pleased the Lord; blessed’ therefore be the Name of the Lord. Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, naked shall I return to the earth.’ Naked outwardly, well-clothed within. Naked as regards these rags, these corruptible rags outwardly, clothed within. With what? Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness.’“ But what if he say to thee, when thou hast despised the things which thou possessest, what if he say to thee, “I will kill thee”? If thou have given ear to Christ, answer him, “Wilt Thou kill me? Better that thou shouldest kill my body, than that I by a false tongue should kill my soul! What canst thou do to me? Thou wilt kill my body; my soul will depart at liberty, to receive again at the end of the world even this very body she hath despised. What canst thou do to me then? Whereas if I should give false witness for thee, with thy tongue do I kill myself; and not in my body do I kill myself; For the mouth that lieth killeth the soul.’“ But peradventure thou dost not say so. And why dost thou not say so? Thou wishest to live; thou wishest to live longer than God hath appointed for thee? Dost thou then “beware of all covetousness”? So long was it God’s will that thou shouldest live, till this person came to thee. It may be that he will kill thee,

to make a martyr of thee. Entertain then no undue desire of life; and so thou wilt not have an eternity of death. Ye see how that covetousness everywhere, when we wish for more than is necessary, causes us to sin. Beware we of all covetousness, if we would enjoy eternal wisdom.

SERMON LVIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XII. 35, “LET YOUR LOINS BE GIRDED ABOUT, AND YOUR LAMPS BURNING; AND BE YE YOURSELVES LIKE,” ETC. AND ON THE WORDS OF THE 34TH PSALM, V. 12, “WHAT MAN IS HE THAT DESIRETH LIFE,” ETC

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ both came to men, and went away from men, and is to come to men. And yet He was here when He came, nor did He depart when He went away, and He is to come to them to whom He said, “Lo, I am with you, even unto the end of the world.” According to the “form of a servant” then, which He took for our sakes, was He born at a certain time, and was slain, and rose again, and now “dieth no more, neither shall death have any more dominion over Him;” but according to His Divinity, wherein He was equal to the Father, was He already in this world, and “the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.” On this point ye have just heard the Gospel, what admonition it has given us, putting us on our guard, and wishing us to be unencumbered and prepared to await the end; that after these last things, which are to be feared in this world, that rest may succeed which hath no end. Blessed are they who shall be partakers of it. For then shall they be in security, who are not in security now; and again then shall they fear, who will not fear now. Unto this waiting, and for this hope’s sake, have we been made Christians. Is not our hope not of this world? Let us then not love the world. From the love of this world have we been called away, that we may hope for and love another. In this world ought we to abstain from all unlawful desires, to have, that is, “our loins girded;” and to be fervent and to shine in good works, that is, to have “our lights burning.” For the Lord Himself said to His disciples in another place of the Gospel, “No man lighteth a candle and putteth it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that it may give light unto all that are in the house.” And to show of what He was speaking, He subjoined and said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

2. Therefore He would that “our loins should be girded, and our lights burning.” What is, “our loins girded”? “Depart from evil.” What is to “burn”? What is to have our “lights burning”? It is this, “And do good.” What is that which He said afterwards, “And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding:” except that which follows in that Psalm, “Seek after peace, and ensue it”? These three things, that is, “abstaining from evil, and doing good,” and the hope of everlasting reward, are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, where it is written, that Paul taught them of “temperance and righteousness,” and the hope of eternal life. To temperance belongs, “let your loins be girded.” To righteousness, “and your lights burning.” To the hope of eternal life, the waiting for the Lord. So then, “depart from evil,” this is temperance, these are the loins girded: “and do good,” this is righteousness, these are the “lights burning;” “seek peace, and ensue it,” this is the waiting for the world to come: therefore, “Be ye like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will come from the wedding.”

3. Having then these precepts and promises, why seek we on earth for “good days,” where we cannot find them? For I know that ye do seek them, when ye are either sick, or in any of the tribulations, which in this world abound. For when life draws towards its close, the old man is full of complaints, and with no joys. Amid all the tribulations by which mankind is worn away, men seek for nothing but “good days,” and wish for a long life, which here they cannot have. For even a man’s long life is narrowed within so short a span to the wide extent of all ages, as if it were but one drop to the whole sea. What then is man’s life, even that which is called a long one? They call that a long life, which even in this world’s course is short; and as I have said, groans abound even unto the decrepitude of old age. This at the most is but brief, and of short duration; and yet how eagerly is it sought by men, with how great diligence, with how great toil, with how great carefulness, with how great watchfulness, with how great labour do men seek to live here for a long time, and to grow old. And yet this very living long, what is it but running to the end? Thou hadst yesterday, and thou dost wish also to have to-morrow. But when this day and to-morrow are passed, thou hast them not. Therefore thou dost wish for the day to break, that that may draw near to thee whither thou hast no wish to come. Thou makest

some annual festival with thy friends, and hearest it there said to thee by thy well-wishers, “Mayest thou live many years,” thou dost wish that what they have said, may come to pass. What? Dost thou wish that years and years may come, and the end of these years come not? Thy wishes are contrary to one another; thou dost wish to walk on, and dost not wish to reach the end.

4. But if, as I have said, there is so great care in men, as to desire with daily, great and perpetual labours, to die somewhat later: with how great cause ought they to strive, that they may never die? Of this, no one will think. Day by day “good days” are sought for in this world, where they are not found; yet no one wishes so to live, that he may arrive there where they are found. Therefore the same Scripture admonishes us, and says, “Who is the man that wisheth for life, and loveth to see good days?” Scripture so asked the question, as that It knew well what answer would be given It; knowing that all men would “seek for life and good days.” In accordance with their desire It asked the question, as if the answer would be given It from the heart of all, “I wish it;” It said thus, “Who is the man that wisheth for life, and loveth to see good days?” Just as even at this very hour in which I am speaking to you, when ye heard me say, “Who is the man that wisheth for life, and loveth to see good days?” ye all answered in your heart, “I.” For so do I too, who am speaking with you, “wish for life and good days;” what ye seek, that do I seek also.

5. Just as if gold were necessary for us all, and we all, I as well as you, were wishing to get at the gold, and there was some anywhere in a field of yours, in a place subject to your power, and I were to see you searching for it, and were to say to you, “What are ye searching for?” ye were to answer me, “Gold.” And I were to say to you, “Ye are searching for gold, and I am searching for gold too: what ye are searching for, I am searching for; but ye are not searching for it where we can find it. Listen to me then, where we can find it; I am not taking it away from you, I am showing you the spot;” yea, let us all follow Him, who knows where what we are seeking for, is. So now too seeing that ye desire “life and good days,” we cannot say to you, “Do not desire life and good days;’“ but this we say, “Do not seek for life and good days’ here in this world, where good days’ cannot be.” Is not this life itself like unto death? Now these days here hasten and pass away: for

to-day has shut out yesterday; tomorrow only rises that it may shut out to-day. These days themselves have no abiding; wherefore wouldest thou abide with them? Your desire then whereby ye wish for "life and good days," I not only do not repress, but I even more strongly inflame. By all means "seek" for "life, seek for good days;" but let them be sought there, where they can be found.

6. For would ye with me hear His counsel, who knoweth where "good days" and where "life" is? Hear it not from me, but together with me. For One says to us, "Come, ye children, hearken unto Me." And let us run together, and stand, and prick up our ears, and with our hearts understand the Father, who hath said, "Come, ye children, hearken unto Me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord." And then follows what he would teach us, and to what end the fear of the Lord is useful. "Who is the man that wisheth life, and loveth to see good days?" We all answer, "We wish it." Let us listen then to what follows, "Refrain thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile." Now say, "I wish it." Just now when I said, "Who is the man that wisheth for life, and loveth to see good days?" we all answered, "I." Come then, let some one now answer "I." So then, "Refrain thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile." Now say, "I." Wouldest thou then have "good days" and "life," and wouldest thou not "refrain thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile"? Alert to the reward, slow to the work! And to whom if he does not work is the reward rendered? I would that in thy house thou wouldest render the reward even to him that does work! For to him that works not, I am sure thou dost not render it. And why? Because thou owest nothing to him that does not work! And God hath a reward proposed. What reward? "Life and good days," which life we all desire, and unto which days we all strive to come. The promised reward He will give us. What reward? "Life and good days." And what are "good days"? Life without end, rest without labour.

7. Great is the reward He hath set before us: in so great a reward as is set before us, let us see what He hath commanded us. For enkindled by the reward of so great a promise, and by the love of the reward, let us make ready at once our strength, our sides, our arms, to do His bidding. Is it as if He were to command us to carry heavy burdens, to dig something it may

be, or to raise up some machine? No, no such laborious thing hath He enjoined thee, but hath enjoined thee only to “refrain” that member which amongst all thy members thou dost move so quickly. “Refrain thy tongue from evil.” It is no labour to erect a building, and is it a labour to hold in the tongue? “Refrain thy tongue from evil.” Speak no lie, speak no revilings, speak no slanders, speak no false witnesses, speak no blasphemies. “Refrain thy tongue from evil.” See how angry thou art, if any one speaks evil of thee. As thou art angry with another, when he speaks evil of thee; so be thou angry with thyself, when thou speakest evil of another. “Let thy lips speak no guile.” What is in thine heart within, be that spoken out. Let not thy breast conceal one thing, and thy tongue utter another. “Depart from evil, and do good.” For how should I say, “Clothe the naked,” to him who up to this time would strip him that is clothed? For he that oppresses his fellow-citizen, how can he take in the stranger? So then in proper order, first “depart from evil,” and “do good;” first “gird up thy loins,” and then “light the lamp.” And when thou hast done this, wait in assured hope for “life and good days.” “Seek peace, and ensue it;” and then with a good face wilt thou say unto the Lord, “I have done what Thou hast bidden, render me what Thou hast promised.”

SERMON LIX

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XII. 56, 58, “YE KNOW HOW TO INTERPRET THE FACE OF THE EARTH AND THE HEAVEN,” ETC.; AND OF THE WORDS, “FOR AS THOU ART GOING WITH THINE ADVERSARY BEFORE THE MAGISTRATE, ON THE WAY GIVE DILIGENCE TO BE QUIT OF HIM,” ETC

1. We have heard the Gospel, and in it the Lord reproving those who knew how to discern the face of the sky, and know not how to discover the time of faith, the kingdom of heaven which is at hand. Now this He said to the Jews; but His words reach even unto us. Now the Lord Jesus Christ Himself began the preaching of His Gospel in this way; “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” In like manner too John the Baptist and His forerunner began thus; “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” And now the Lord rebuketh those who would not repent, when “the kingdom of heaven was at hand.” “The kingdom of heaven,” as He saith Himself, “will not come with observation.” And again He saith, “The

kingdom of heaven is within you.” Let every one then wisely receive the admonitions of the Master, that he may not lose the season of the mercy of the Saviour, which is now being dealt out, as long as the human race is spared. For to this end is man spared, that he may be converted, and that he may not be to be condemned. God only knoweth when the end of the world shall come: nevertheless now is the time of faith. Whether the end of the world shall find any of us here, I know not; and perhaps it will not find us. Our time is very near to each one of us, seeing we are mortal. We walk in the midst of chances. If we were made of glass, we should have to fear chances less than we have. What is more fragile than a vessel of glass? And yet it is kept, and lasts for ages. For though the chances of a fall are feared for the vessel of glass, yet there is no fear of fever or old age for it. We then are more fragile and more infirm; because all the chances which are incessant in human things, we doubtless through our frailness are in daily dread of; and if these chances come not, yet time goes on; a man avoids this stroke, can he avoid his end? he avoids accidents which happen from without, can that which is born within be driven away? Again, now the entrails engender worms, now some other disease attacks on a sudden; lastly, let a man be spared ever so long, at last when old age comes, there is no way of putting off that.

2. Wherefore let us give ear to the Lord, let us do within ourselves what He hath enjoined. Let us see who that adversary is, of whom He hath put us in fear, saying, “If thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, give diligence in the way to be delivered from him; lest haply he deliver thee to the magistrate, and the magistrate to the officer, and thou be cast into prison, from whence thou shalt not come out, till thou payest the very last farthing.” Who is this “adversary”? If the devil; we have been delivered from him already. What a price was given for us that we might be redeemed from him! Of which the Apostle says, speaking of this our redemption, “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love.” We have been redeemed, we have renounced the devil; how shall we “give diligence to be delivered from him,” that he make us not, as sinners, his captives again? But this is not the “adversary” of whom the Lord gives us warning. For in another place another Evangelist has so expressed it, that if we join both expressions

together, and compare both expressions of the two Evangelists with each other, we shall soon understand who this adversary is. For see, what did Luke say here? “When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, give diligence in the way to be delivered from him.” But the other Evangelist has expressed this same thing thus: “Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him.” All the rest is alike: “Lest haply the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.” Both Evangelists have explained this alike. One said, “Give diligence in the way to be delivered from him;” the other said, “Agree with him.” For thou wilt not be able to “be delivered from him,” unless thou “agree with him.” Wouldest thou “be delivered from him? Agree with him.” But what? is it the devil with whom the Christian ought to “agree”?

3. Let us then seek out this “adversary,” with whom we ought to “agree, lest he deliver us to the judge, and the judge to the officer;” let us seek him out, “and agree with him.” If thou sin, the word of God is thine adversary. For example, it is a delight to thee perchance to be drunken; it says to thee, “Do it not.” It is a delight to thee to frequent the spectacles, and such triflings; it says to thee, “Do it not.” It is a delight to thee to commit adultery; the word of God saith to thee, “Do it not.” In what sins soever thou wouldest do thine own will, it saith to thee, “Do it not.” It is the adversary of thy will, till it become the author of thy salvation. O how goodly, how useful an “adversary”! It does not seek our will, but our advantage. It is our “adversary,” as long as we are our own adversaries. As long as thou art thine own enemy, thou hast the word of God thine enemy; be thine own friend, and thou art in agreement with it. “Thou shalt do no murder;” give ear, and thou hast “agreed” with it. “Thou shalt not steal;” give ear, and thou hast “agreed” with it. “Thou shalt not commit adultery;” give ear, and thou hast “agreed” with it. “Thou shalt not give false witness;” give ear, and thou hast “agreed” with it. “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife;” give ear, and thou hast agreed with it. “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s goods;” give ear, and thou hast “agreed” with it. In all these things thou hast agreed with this “thine adversary,” and what hast thou lost to thyself? Not only hast thou lost nothing; but thou hast even found thyself, who hadst been lost. “The way,” is this life; if we shall “agree with the adversary,” if

we shall come to terms with him; when “the way” is ended, we shall not fear the “judge, the officer, the prison.

4. When is “the way” ended? It is not ended at the same hour to all. Each several man hath his hour when he shall end his “way.” This life is called “the way;” when thou hast ended this life, thou hast ended “the way.” We are going on, and the very living is advancing. Unless peradventure ye imagine that time advances, and we stand still! It cannot be. As time advances, we too advance; and years do not come to us, but rather go away. Greatly are men mistaken when they say, “This boy has little good sense yet, but years will come on him, and he will be wise.” Consider what thou sayest. “Will come on him,” thou hast said; “I will show that they go away,” whereas thou sayest, “they come on.” And hear how easily I prove it. Let us suppose that we have known the number of his years from his birth; for instance (that we may wish him well) he has to live fourscore years, he is to arrive at old age. Write down fourscore years. One year he has lived; how many hast thou in the total? how many hast thou down? Fourscore! Deduct one. He has lived ten; seventy remain. He has lived twenty; sixty remain. Yet surely, it will be said, they did come; what can this mean? Our years come that they may depart; they come, I say that they may go. For they do not come, that they may abide with us, but as they pass through us, they wear us out, and make us less and less strong. Such is “the way” into which we have come. What then have we to do with that “adversary,” that is, with the word of God? “Agree with him.” For thou knowest not when “the way” may be ended. When “the way” is ended, there remain “the judge,” and “the officer,” and “the prison.” But if thou maintain a good will to “thine adversary,” and “agree with him;” instead of a “judge,” shalt thou find a father, instead of a cruel “officer,” an Angel taking thee away into Abraham’s bosom, instead of a “prison,” paradise. How rapidly hast thou changed all things “in the way,” because thou hast “agreed with thine adversary”!

SERMON LX

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XIII. 6, WHERE WE ARE TOLD OF THE FIG-TREE, WHICH BARE NO FRUIT FOR THREE YEARS; AND OF THE WOMAN WHICH WAS IN AN INFIRMITY EIGHTEEN YEARS; AND ON THE WORDS OF THE NINTH PSALM, V. 19, “ARISE, O LORD; LET NOT MAN PREVAIL: LET THE NATIONS BE JUDGED IN THY SIGHT.”

1. Touching “the fig-tree” which had its three years’ trial, and bare no fruit, and “the woman which was in an infirmity eighteen years,” hearken to what the Lord may grant me to say. The fig-tree is the human race. And the three years are the three times; one before the Law, the second under the Law, the third under grace. Now there is nothing unsuitable in understanding by “the fig-tree” the human race. For when the first man sinned, he covered his nakedness with fig-leaves; covered those members, from which we derive our birth. For what before his sin should have been his glory, after sin became his shame. So before that, “they were naked, and were not ashamed.” For they had no reason to blush, when no sin had gone before; nor could they blush for their Creator’s works, because they had not yet mingled any evil work of their own with the good works of their Creator. For they had not yet eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, of which they had been forbidden to eat. After then that they had eaten and sinned, the human race sprang from them; that is, man from man, debtor from debtor, mortal from mortal, sinner from sinner. In this “tree” then he entitles those, who through the whole range of time would not bear fruit; and for this cause the axe was hanging over the unfruitful tree. The gardener intercedes for it, punishment is deferred, that help may be administered. Now the gardener who intercedes, is every saint who within the Church prays for those who are without the Church. And what does he pray? “Lord, let it alone this year also;” that is, in this time of grace, spare the sinners, spare the unbelievers, spare the barren, spare the unfruitful. “I will dig about it, and put a basket of dung about it; if it bear fruit, well; but if not, thou shalt come and cut it down.” “Thou shalt come:” When? Thou shalt come in judgment, when Thou shalt come to judge the quick and dead. Meanwhile they are spared. But what is the “digging”? What is the “digging about it,” but the teaching lowliness and repentance? For a ditch is low ground. The basket of dung understand in its good effects. It is filthy, but it produces fruit. The gardener’s filth is the sinner’s sorrows. They who

repent, repent in filthy robes; if, that is, they understand aright, and repent in truth. To this tree then is it said, “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

2. What is that “woman who was in an infirmity eighteen years”? In six days God finished His works. Three times six are eighteen. What the “three years” then in “the tree” signified, that do the “eighteen years” in this woman. She was bent down, she could not look up; because in vain did she hear, “Up with your hearts.” But the Lord made her straight. There is hope then, for the children, that is, even until the day of judgment come. Man ascribes much to himself. Yet what is man? A righteous man is something great. But yet a righteous man is righteous only by the grace of God. “For what is man, save that thou art mindful of him?” Wouldest thou see what man is? “All men are liars.” We have chanted, “Arise, Lord; let not man prevail.” What is, “let not man prevail”? Were not the Apostles men? Were not Martyrs men? The Lord Jesus Himself, without ceasing to be God, vouchsafed to be Man. What then is, “Arise, Lord; let not man prevail”? If “all men are liars; arise,” Truth, “let not” falsehood “prevail.” If man then would be anything good, it must not be of anything of his own. For if he should wish to be anything of his own he will be “a liar.” If he would wish to be true, he must be so of that which is from God, not of anything of his own.

3. Therefore, “Arise, Lord; let not man prevail.” So much did lying prevail before the flood, that after the flood only eight men remained. By them the earth was again replenished with lying men, and out of them was elected the people of God. Many miracles were wrought, divine benefits imparted. They were brought right through to the land of promise, delivered from Egyptian bondage: Prophets were raised up among them, they received the temple, they received the priesthood, they received the anointing, they received the Law. Yet of this very people was it said afterwards, “The strange children have lied unto me.” At last He was sent who had been promised afore by the Prophets. “Let not man prevail,” even the more, because that God was made Man. But even He, though He did divine works, was despised, though He showed forth so many acts of mercy, He was apprehended, He was scourged, He was hanged. Thus far “did man

prevail,” to apprehend the Son of God, to scourge the Son of God, to crown the Son of God with thorns, to hang the Son of God upon the tree. So far “did man prevail:” how far, but up to the time that having been taken down from the tree, He was laid in the sepulchre? If He had remained there, man would have “prevailed” indeed. But this prophecy addresses the very Lord Jesus Himself, saying, “Arise, Lord, let not man prevail.” O Lord, Thou hast vouchsafed to come in the flesh, the Word made Flesh. The Word above us, the Flesh among us, the Word-flesh between God and Man: Thou didst choose a virgin to be born from according to the flesh, when Thou wast to be conceived, Thou didst find a Virgin; when Thou wast born, Thou didst leave a Virgin. But Thou wast not acknowledged; Thou wast Seen, and yet wast hidden. Infirmity was seen, Power was hidden. All this was done, that Thou mightest shed that Blood, which is our Price. Thou didst so great miracles, didst give health to the weaknesses of the sick, didst show forth many acts of mercy, and receivedst evil for good. They mocked Thee, Thou didst hang upon the tree; the ungodly wagged their heads before Thee, and said, “If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.” Hadst Thou then lost Thy power, or rather wast Thou showing forth Thy Patience? and yet they mocked Thee, and yet they derided Thee, yet, when Thou wast slain, they went away as if victorious. Lo, Thou art laid in the sepulchre: “Arise, Lord, let not man prevail.” “Let not” the ungodly enemy “prevail, let not” the blind Jew “prevail.” For when Thou wert crucified, the Jew in his blindness seemed to himself to have “prevailed.” “Arise, Lord, let not man prevail.” It is done, yea, it is done. And now what remains, but that “the nations be judged in thy sight”? For He hath risen again, as ye know, and ascended into heaven; and from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

4. Ah! unfruitful tree, mock not, because thou art yet spared; the axe is delayed, be not thou secure; He will come and thou shalt be cut down. Believe that He will come. All these things which now ye see, once were not. Once the Christian people were not over the whole world. It was read of in prophecy, not seen in the earth; now it is both read and seen. Thus was the Church herself completed. It was not said to her, “See, O daughter, and hear;” but, “Hear and see.” Hear the predictions, see the completions. As then, my beloved Brethren, Christ had once not been born of a Virgin, but

His birth was promised, and He was born; He had once not done His miracles, they were promised, and He did them: He had not yet suffered, it was promised, and so it came to pass: He had not risen again, it was foretold, and so fulfilled: His Name was not throughout the world, it was foretold, and so fulfilled: the idols were not destroyed and broken down, it was foretold, and so fulfilled: heretics had not assailed the Church, it was foretold, and so fulfilled. So also the Day of Judgment is not yet, but seeing it hath been foretold, it shall be fulfilled. Can it be that He who in so many things hath shown Himself true, should be false touching the Day of Judgment? He hath given us a bond of His promises. For God hath made Himself a debtor, not by owing ought, that is, not by borrowing; but by promising. We cannot therefore say to Him, "Give back what Thou hast received." Since "who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?" We cannot say to Him, "Give what Thou hast received;" but we say without scruple, "Give what Thou hast promised."

5. For hence it is that we are bold to say, day by day, "Thy kingdom come;" that when His kingdom comes, we too may reign with Him. Which hath been promised to us in these words; "Then will I say unto them, Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world." But assuredly only if we shall have done what follows in that place. "For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat," etc. He made these promises to our fathers; but He hath given us a security, for us too to read. If He who hath vouchsafed to give us this security, were to make a reckoning with us and say, "Read my debts, the debts, that is, of my promises, and reckon up what I have already paid, and reckon also what I still owe; see how many I have paid already; and what I owe is but little; will ye for that little that remains, think Me an untrustworthy promiser?" What should we have to answer against this most evident truth? Let him then who is barren repent, and bear "fruit worthy of repentance." He that is bent down, who looks only on the earth, rejoices in earthly happiness, who thinks this the only happy life, where he may be happy, and who believes no other can be; whosoever he be that is so bent down, let him be made straight; if he cannot by himself, let him call upon God. For was that woman made straight by herself? Woe had it been for her, if He had not stretched out His Hand.

SERMON LXI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XIII. 21 AND 23, WHERE THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS SAID TO BE "LIKE UNTO LEAVEN, WHICH A WOMAN TOOK AND HID IN THREE MEASURES OF MEAL;" AND OF THAT WHICH IS WRITTEN IN THE SAME CHAPTER, "LORD, ARE THEY FEW THAT ARE SAVED?"

1. "The three measures of meal" of which the Lord spake, is the human race. Recollect the deluge; three only remained, from whom the rest were to be re-peopled. Noe had three sons, by them was repaired the human race. That holy "woman who hid the leaven," is Wisdom. Lo, the whole world crieth out in the Church of God, "I know that the Lord is great." Yet doubtless there are but few who are saved. Ye remember a question which was lately set before us out of the Gospel, "Lord," it was said, "are there few that be saved?" What said the Lord to this? He did not say, "Not few, but many are they who are saved." He did not say this. But what said He, when He had heard, "Are there few that be saved? Strive to enter by the strait gate." When thou hearest then, "Are there few that be saved?" the Lord confirmed what He heard. Through the "strait gate" but "few" can "enter." In another place He saith Himself, "Strait and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that go thereby: but broad and spacious is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which walk thereby." Why rejoice we in great numbers? Give ear to me, ye "few." I know that ye are "many," who hear me, yet but "few" of you hear to obey. I see the floor, I look for the corn. And hardly is the corn seen, when the floor is being threshed; but the time is coming, that it shall be winnowed. But few then are saved in comparison of the many that shall perish. For these same "few" will constitute in themselves a great mass. When the Winnower shall come with His fan in His Hand, "He will cleanse His floor, and lay up the wheat into the garner; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." Let not the chaff scoff at the wheat; in this He speaketh truth, and deceiveth no one. Be ye then in yourselves among many a many, few though ye be in comparison of a certain many. So large a mass is to come out of this floor, as to fill the garner of heaven. For the Lord Christ would not contradict Himself, who hath said, "Many there are who enter in by the narrow gate, many who go to ruin through the wide gate;" contradict Himself, who hath in another place said, "Many shall come from the East

and West.” “Many” then are the “few;” both “few” and “many.” Are the “few” one sort, and the “many” another? No. But the “few” are themselves the “many;” “few” in comparison of the lost, “many in the society of the Angels. Hearken, dearly Beloved. The Apocalypse hath this written; “After this I beheld of all languages, and nations, and tribes, a great multitude, which no man can number, coming with white robes and palms.” This is the mass of the saints. With how much clearer voice will the floor say, when it has been fanned, separated from the crowd of ungodly, and evil, and false Christians, when those who “press” and do not “touch” (for a certain woman in the Gospel “touched,” the crowd “pressed” Christ), shall have been severed unto everlasting fire; when all they then, who are to be damned shall have been separated off, with how great assurance will the purified mass, standing at the Right Hand, fearing now for itself the admixture of no evil men, nor the loss of any of the good, now about to reign with Christ, say, “I know that the Lord is great”!

2. If then, my Brethren (I am speaking to the corn), if they acknowledge what I say, predestined unto life eternal, let them speak by their works, not by their voices. I am constrained to speak to you, what I ought not. For I ought to find in you matter of praise, not to seek subjects for admonition. Yet see I will say but a few words, I will not dwell upon it. Acknowledge the duty of hospitality, thereby some have attained unto God. Thou takest in some stranger, whose companion in the way thou thyself also art; for strangers are we all. He is a Christian who, even in his own house and in his own country, acknowledges himself to be a stranger. For our country is above, there we shall not be strangers. For every one here below, even in his own house, is a stranger. If he be not a stranger, let him not pass on from hence. If pass on he must, he is a stranger. Let him not deceive himself, a stranger he is; whether he will or not, he is a stranger. And he leaves that house to his children, one stranger to other strangers. Why? If thou wert at an inn, wouldest thou not depart when another comes? The same thou doest even in thine own house. Thy father left a place to thee, thou wilt some day leave it to thy children. Neither dost thou abide here, as one who is to abide always, nor to those who are so to abide, wilt thou leave it. If we are all passing away, let us do something which cannot pass away, that when we shall have passed away, and have come thither whence we may not pass

away, we may find our good works there. Christ is the keeper, why dost thou fear lest thou shouldest lose what thou spendest on the poor? “Let us turn to the Lord,” etc.

And after the Sermon.

I suggest to you, Beloved, what ye know already. To-morrow breaks the anniversary day of the venerable lord Aurelius’ ordination; he asks and admonishes you, dear Brethren, by my humble ministry, that ye would be so good as to meet together with all devotion at the basilica of Faustus. Thanks be to God.

SERMON LXII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XIV. 16, “A CERTAIN MAN MADE A GREAT SUPPER,” ETC

Delivered in the basilica Restituta.

1. Holy lessons have been set forth before us, to which we should both give ear, and upon which by the Lord’s help I would deliver some observations. In the Apostolic lesson thanks are rendered unto the Lord for the faith of the Gentiles, of course, because it was His work. In the Psalm we have said, “O God of hosts, turn us, and show us Thy Face, and we shall be saved.” In the Gospel we have been called to a supper; yea, rather others have been called, we not called, but led; not only led, but even forced. For so have we heard, that “a certain Man made a great supper.” Who is this Man, but “the Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus”? He sent that those who had been invited might come, for the hour was now come, that they should come. Who are they who had been invited, but those who had been called by the Prophets who were sent before? When? Of old, ever since the Prophets were sent, they invited to Christ’s supper. They were sent then to the people of Israel. Often were they sent, often did they call men, to come at the hour of supper. But they received those who invited them, refused the supper. What means “they received those who invited them, refused the supper”? They read the Prophets and killed Christ. But when they killed Him, then though they knew it not, they prepared a Supper for us. When the Supper was now prepared, when Christ had been offered up, when the

Supper of the Lord, which the faithful know, had been set forth after the resurrection of Christ, and established by His Hands and Mouth, were the Apostles sent to them, to whom the Prophets had been sent before. “Come ye to the supper.”

2. They who would not come made excuses. And how did they excuse themselves? There were three excuses: “One said, I have bought a farm, and I go to see it; have me excused. Another said, I have bought five pairs of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. A third said, I have married a wife, have me excused; I cannot come.” Do we suppose that these are not the excuses, which hinder all men, who decline to come to this supper? Let us look into them, discuss, find them out; but only that we may beware. In the purchase of the farm, the spirit of domination is marked out; therefore pride is rebuked. For men are delighted to have a farm, to hold, to possess it, to have men in it under them, to have dominion. An evil vice, the first vice. For the first man wished to have dominion, in that he would not that any should have dominion over him. What is to have dominion, but to take pleasure in one’s own power? There is a greater power, let us submit ourselves to it, that we may be able to be safe. “I have bought a farm, have me excused.” Having discovered pride, he would not come.

3. “Another said, I have bought five pairs of oxen.” Would it not have been enough, “I have bought oxen”? Something beyond doubt there is, which by its very obscurity challenges us to seek out, and understand; and in that it is shut, He exhorteth us to knock. The five pairs of oxen are the senses of this body. There are numbered five senses of this body, as is known to all; and they who, it may be, do not consider it, will doubtless perceive it on being reminded of it. There are then found to be five senses of this body. In the eyes is the sight, the hearing in the ears, the smell in the nose, the taste in the mouth, the touch in all the members. We have perception of white and black, and things coloured in whatever way, light and dark, by the sight. Harsh and musical sounds, we have perception of by the hearing. Of sweet and offensive smells, we have perception by the smell. Of things sweet and bitter by the taste. Of things hard and soft, smooth and rough, warm and cold, heavy and light, by the touch. They are five, and they are pairs. Now

that they are pairs, is seen most easily in the case of the three first senses. There are two eyes, two ears, two nostrils; see three pairs. In the mouth, that is in the sense of taste, a certain doubling is found, because nothing affects the taste, unless it is touched by the tongue and the palate. The pleasure of the flesh which pertains to the touch, has this doubling in a less obvious way. For there is both an outer and an inner touch. And so it too is double. Why are they called pairs of oxen? Because by these senses of the body, earthly things are sought for. For oxen turn up the earth. So there are men far off from faith, given up to earthly things, occupied in the things of the flesh; who will not believe anything but what they attain to by the five senses of their body. In those five senses do they lay down for themselves the rules of their whole will. "I will not believe," says one, "anything but what I see. See, here is what I know, and am sure of. Such a thing is white, or black, or round, or square, or coloured so and so; this I know, am sensible of, have a hold of; nature itself teaches it me. I am not forced to believe what you cannot show me. Or it is a voice: I perceive that it is a voice; it sings well, it sings ill, it is sweet, it is harsh. I know, I know this, it has come to me. There is a good or a bad smell: I know, I perceive it. This is sweet, this is bitter; this is salt, this insipid. I know not what you would tell me more. By the touch I know what is hard, what is soft; what is smooth, what is rough; what is warm, and what cold. What more would you show me?"

4. By such an impediment was our Apostle Thomas held back, who as to the Lord Christ, the resurrection that is of Christ, would not believe even his own eyes only. "Unless," says he, "I put my fingers into the places of the nails and wounds, and unless I put my hand into His side, I will not believe." And the Lord who could have risen again without any vestige of a wound, kept the scars, that they might be touched by the doubting Apostle, and the wounds of his heart be healed. And yet as designing to call to His supper others, against the excuse of "the five pairs of oxen," He said, "Blessed they who do not see, and believe." We, my Brethren, who have been called to this supper, have not been kept back by "these five pairs." For we have not in this age desired to see the Face of the Lord's Body, nor have we longed to hear the Voice proceeding out of the mouth of that Body; we have not sought in Him for any passing odour. A certain "woman

anointed Him with most costly ointment,” that “house was filled with the odour;” but we were not there; lo, we did not smell, yet we believe. He gave to the disciples the Supper consecrated by His Own Hands; but we did not sit down at that Feast, and yet we daily eat this same Supper by faith. And do not think it strange that in that supper which He gave with His Own Hand, one was present without faith: the faith that appeared, afterwards was more than a compensation for that faithlessness then. Paul was not there who believed, Judas was there who betrayed. How many now too in this same Supper, though they saw not then that table, nor beheld with their eyes, nor tasted with their mouths, the bread which the Lord took in His Hands, yet because it is the same as is now prepared, how many now also in this same Supper, “eat and drink judgment to themselves”?

5. But whence arose an occasion, so to say, to the Lord, to speak of this supper? One of them that sat at meat with Him (for He was at a feast, whither He had been invited), had said, “Blessed are they who eat bread in the kingdom of God.” He sighed as though after distant things, and the Bread Himself was sitting down before him. Who is the Bread of the kingdom of God, but He who saith, “I am the Living Bread which came down from heaven”? Do not get thy mouth ready, but thine heart. On this occasion it was that the parable of this supper was set forth. Lo, we believe in Christ, we receive Him with faith. In receiving Him we know what to think of. We receive but little, and we are nourished in heart. It is not then what is seen, but what is believed, that feeds us. Therefore we too have not sought for that outward sense; nor have we said, “Let them believe who have seen with their eyes, and handled with their hands the Lord Himself after His resurrection, if what is said be true; we do not touch Him, why should we believe?” If we were to entertain such thoughts, we should be kept back from the supper by those “five pairs of oxen.” That ye may know, Brethren, that not the gratification of these five senses, which softens and ministers pleasure, but a kind of curiosity was denoted, He did not say, “I have bought five pairs of oxen,’ and I go to feed them;” but, “I go to prove them.” He who wishes to “prove” by “the pairs of oxen,” does not wish to be in doubt, just as St. Thomas by these “pairs” did not wish to be in doubt. “Let me see, let me touch, let me put in my fingers.” “Behold,’ saith the Lord, put in thy fingers along My Side, and be not unbelieving.’ For thy

sake have I been slain; at the place which thou wishest to touch, have I shed My Blood, that I might redeem thee; and dost thou still doubt of Me, unless thou touch Me? Behold, this too I grant; behold, this too I show thee; touch, and believe; find out the place of My wound, heal the wound of thy doubting.”

6. “The third said, I have married a wife.” This is the pleasure of the flesh, which is a hindrance to many: and I would that it were so only without, and not within! There are men who say, “There is no happiness for a man, if he have not the pleasures of the flesh.” These are they whom the Apostle censures, saying, “Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die.’ Who hath risen to this life from the other? Who hath ever told us what goes on there? We take away with us, what in the time present makes our happiness.” He that speaks thus, “has married a wife,” attaches himself to the flesh, places his delight in the pleasures of the flesh, excuses himself from the supper; let him look well to it that he die not by an inward famine. Attend to John, the holy Apostle and Evangelist; “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.” O ye who come to the Supper of the Lord, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.” He did not say, “Have not;” but, “Love not.” Thou hast had, possessed, loved. The love of earthly things, is the bird-lime of the spirit’s wings. Lo, thou hast desired, thou hast stuck fast. “Who will give thee wings as of a dove?” When wilt thou fly, whither thou mayest in deed, seeing thou hast perversely wished to rest here, where thou hast to thy hurt stuck fast? “Love not the world,” is the divine trumpet. By the voice of this trumpet unceasingly is it proclaimed to the compass of the earth, and to the whole world, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. Whosoever loveth the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the ambition of life.” He begins at the last with which the Gospel ends. He begins at that, at which the Gospel made an end. “The lust of the flesh, I have married a wife. The lust of the eyes, I have bought five pairs of oxen. The ambition of life, I have bought a farm.”

7. Now these senses are denoted by the mention of the eyes only, the whole by a part, because the pre-eminence in the five senses belongs to the eyes.

Wherefore though sight belongs peculiarly to the eyes, we are accustomed to use the word “seeing” through all the five senses. How? In the first place, in relation to the eyes themselves we say; “See how white it is, look and see how white it is:” this has relation to the eyes. Hear and see how musical it is! Could we say conversely, “Hear and see how white it is”? This expression, “see,” runs through all the senses; whereas the distinguishing expression of the other senses does not in its turn run through it. “Mark and see how musical; smell and see how agreeable it is; taste and see how sweet it is; touch and see how soft it is.” And yet surely since they are senses, we should rather say thus; “Hear and be sensible how musical it is; smell and be sensible how agreeable it is; taste and be sensible how sweet it is; touch and be sensible how hot it is; handle and be sensible how smooth it is; handle and be sensible how soft it is.” But we say none of these. For thus the Lord Himself after His resurrection when He appeared to His disciples, and when though they saw Him they still wavered in faith supposing that they saw a spirit, said, “Why do ye doubt, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See My Hands and My Feet.” It is not enough to say, “See;” He saith, “Touch, and handle, and see.” “Look and see, handle and see; with the eyes alone see, and see by all the senses.” Because He was looking for the inner sense of faith, He offered Himself to the outward senses of the body. We have made no attainment in the Lord by these outward senses, we have heard with our ears, have believed with our heart; and this hearing not from His mouth, but from the mouth of His preachers, from their mouths who were already at the supper, and who by the pouring forth of what they there drunk in invited us.

8. Let us away then with vain and evil excuses, and come we to the supper by which we may be made fat within. Let not the puffing up of pride keep us back, let it not lift us up, nor unlawful curiosity scare us, and turn us away from God; let not the pleasure of the flesh hinder us from the pleasure of the heart. Let us come, and be filled. And who came but the beggars, the “maimed,” the “halt,” the “blind”? But there came not thither the rich, and the whole, who walked, as they thought, well, and saw acutely; who had great confidence in themselves, and were therefore in the more desperate case, in proportion as they were more proud. Let the beggars come, for He inviteth them, “who, though He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that

we beggars through His poverty might be enriched." Let the maimed come, "for they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are in evil case." Let the halt come who may say to Him, "Set in order my steps in Thy paths." Let the blind come who may say, "Enlighten mine eyes, that I may never sleep in death." Such as these came at the hour, when those who had been first invited, had been rejected for their own excuses: they came at the hour, they entered in from the streets and lanes of the city. And the servant "who had been sent," brought answer, "Lord, it is done as Thou hast commanded, and yet there is room." "Go out," saith He, "into the highways and hedges, and compel those whom thou shalt find to come in." Whom thou shalt find wait not till they choose to come, compel them to come in. I have prepared a great supper, a great house, I cannot suffer any place to be vacant in it. The Gentiles came from the streets and lanes: let the heretics come from the hedges, here they shall find peace. For those who make hedges, their object is to make divisions. Let them be drawn away from the hedges, let them be plucked up from among the thorns. They have stuck fast in the hedges, they are unwilling to be compelled. Let us come in, they say, of our own good will. This is not the Lord's order, "Compel them," saith he, "to come in." Let compulsion be found outside, the will arise within.

SERMON LXIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XVI. 9, "MAKE TO YOURSELVES FRIENDS BY MEANS OF THE MAMMON OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS," ETC

1. Our duty is to give to others the admonitions we have received ourselves. The recent lesson of the Gospel has admonished us to make friends of the mammon of iniquity, that they too may "receive" those who do so "into everlasting habitations." But who are they that shall have everlasting habitations, but the Saints of God? And who are they who are to be received by them into everlasting habitations, but they who serve their need, and minister cheerfully to their necessities? Accordingly let us remember, that in the last judgment the Lord will say to those who shall stand on His right hand, "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat;" and the rest which ye know. And upon their enquiring when they had afforded these good offices to Him, He answered, "When ye did it to one of the least of Mine, ye did it unto Me." These least are they who receive into everlasting habitations.

This He said to them on the right hand, because they did so: and the contrary He said to them on the left, because they would not. But what have they on the right hand who did so, received, or rather, what are they to receive? "Come," says He, "ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat. When ye did it to one of the least of Mine, ye did it unto Me." Who then are these least ones of Christ? They are those who have left all they had, and followed Him, and have distributed whatever they had to the poor; that unencumbered and without any worldly fetter they might serve God, and might lift their shoulders free from the burdens of the world, and winged as it were aloft. These are the least. And why the least? Because lowly, because not puffed up, not proud. Yet weigh them in the scales, these least ones, and thou wilt find them a heavy weight.

2. But what means it, that He says they are "friends of the mammon of iniquity"? What is "the mammon of iniquity"? First, what is "mammon"? For it is not a Latin word. It is a Hebrew word, and cognate to the Punic language. For these languages are allied to one another by a kind of nearness of signification. What the Punics call mammon, is called in Latin, "lucre." What the Hebrews call mammon, is called in Latin, "riches." That we may express the whole then in Latin, our Lord Jesus Christ says this, "Make to yourselves friends of the riches of iniquity." Some, by a bad understanding of this, plunder the goods of others, and bestow some of that upon the poor, and so think that they do what is enjoined them. For they say, "To plunder the goods of others, is the mammon of iniquity; to spend some of it, especially on the poor saints, this is to make friends with the mammon of iniquity. This understanding of it must be corrected, yea, must be utterly effaced from the tablets of your heart. I would not that ye should so understand it. Give alms of your righteous labours: give out of that which ye possess rightfully. For ye cannot corrupt Christ your Judge, that He should not hear you together with the poor, from whom ye take away. For if thou wert to despoil any one who was weak, thyself being stronger and of greater power, and he were to come with thee to the judge, any man you please on this earth, who had any power of judging, and he were to wish to plead his cause with thee; if thou wert to give anything of the spoil and plunder of that poor man to the judge, that he might pronounce

judgment in thy favour; would that judge please even thee? True, he has pronounced judgment in thy favour, and yet so great is the force of justice, that he would displease even thee. Do not then represent God to thyself as such an one as this. Do not set up such an idol in the temple of thine heart. Thy God is not such as thou oughtest not to be thyself. If thou wouldest not judge so, but wouldest judge justly; even so thy God is better than thou: He is not inferior to thee: He is more just, He is the fountain of justice. Whatsoever good thou hast done, thou hast gotten from Him; and whatsoever good thou hast given vent to, thou hast drunk in from Him. Dost thou praise the vessel, because it hath something from Him, and blame the fountain? Do not give alms out of usury and increase. I am speaking to the faithful, am speaking to those to whom we distribute the body of Christ. Be in fear and amend yourselves: that I may not have hereafter to say, Thou doest so, and thou too doest so. Yet I trow, that if I should do so, ye ought not to be angry with me, but with yourselves, that ye may amend yourselves. For this is the meaning of the expression in the Psalm, “Be ye angry, and sin not.” I would have you be angry, but only that ye may not sin. Now in order that ye may not sin, with whom ought ye to be angry but with yourselves? For what is a penitent man, but a man who is angry with himself? That he may obtain pardon, he exacts punishment from himself; and so with good right says to God, “Turn Thine eyes from my sins, for I acknowledge my sin.” If thou acknowledgest it, then He will pardon it. Ye then who have done so wrongly, do so no more: it is not lawful.

3. But if ye have done so already, and have such money in your possession, and have filled your coffers thereby, and were heaping up treasure by these means: what ye have comes of evil, now then add not evil to it, and make to yourselves friends of the mammon of iniquity. Had Zacchaeus what he had from good sources? Read and see. He was the chief of the publicans, that is, he was one to whom the public taxes were paid in: by this he had his wealth. He had oppressed many, had taken from many, and so had heaped much together. Christ entered into his house, and salvation came upon his house; for so said the Lord Himself, “This day is salvation come to this house.” Now mark the method of this salvation. First he was longing to see the Lord, because he was little in stature: but when the crowd hindered him, he got up into a sycamore tree, and saw Him as He passed by. But Jesus

saw him, and said, “Zacchaeus, come down, I must abide at thy house.” Thou art hanging there, but I will not keep thee in suspense. I will not, that is, put thee off. Thou didst wish to see Me as I passed by, to-day shalt thou find Me dwelling at thy house. So the Lord went in unto him, and he, filled with joy, said, “The half of my goods I give to the poor.” Lo, how swiftly he runs, who runs to make friends of the mammon of iniquity. And lest he should be held guilty on any other account, he said, “If I have taken anything from any man, I” will “restore fourfold.” He inflicted sentence of condemnation on himself, that he might not incur damnation. So then, ye who have anything from evil sources, do good therewith. Ye who have not, wish not to acquire by evil means. Be thou good thyself, who doest good with what is evilly acquired: and when with this evil thou beginnest to do any good, do not remain evil thyself. Thy money is being converted to good, and dost thou thyself continue evil?

4. There is indeed another way of understanding it; and I will not withhold it too. The mammon of iniquity is all the riches of this world, from whatever source they come. For howsoever they be heaped together, they are the mammon of iniquity, that is, the riches of iniquity. What is, “they are the riches of iniquity”? It is money which iniquity calls by the name of riches. For if we seek for the true riches, they are different from these. In these Job abounded, naked as he was, when he had a heart full to Godward, and poured out praises like most costly gems to his God, when he had lost all he had. And from what treasure did he this, if he had nothing? These then are the true riches. But the other sort are called riches by iniquity. Thou dost possess these riches. I blame it not: an inheritance has come to thee, thy father was rich, and he left it to thee. Or thou hast honestly acquired them: thou hast a house full of the fruit of just labour; I blame it not. Yet even thus do not call them riches. For if thou dost call them riches, thou wilt love them: and if thou love them, thou wilt perish with them. Lose, that thou be not lost: give, that thou mayest gain: sow, that thou mayest reap. Call not these riches, for “the true” they are not. They are full of poverty, and liable ever to accidents. What sort of riches are those, for whose sake thou art afraid of the robber, for whose sake thou art afraid of thine own servant, lest he should kill thee, and take them away, and fly? If they were true riches, they would give thee security.

5. So then those are the true riches, which when we have them, we cannot lose. And lest haply thou shouldest fear a thief because of them, they will be there where none can take them away. Hear thy Lord, “Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where no thief approacheth.” Then will they be riches, when thou hast removed them hence. As long as they are in the earth, they are not riches. But the world calls them riches, iniquity calls them so. God calls them therefore the mammon of iniquity, because iniquity calls them riches. Hear the Psalm, “O Lord, deliver me out of the hand of strange children, whose mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity. Whose sons are as new plants, firmly rooted from their youth. Their daughters decked out, adorned round about after the similitude of a temple. Their storehouses full, flowing out from this into that. Their oxen fat, their sheep fruitful, multiplying in their goings forth. There is no breach of wall, nor going forth, no crying out in their streets.” Lo, what sort of happiness the Psalmist has described: but hear what is the case with them whom he has set forth as children of iniquity. “Whose mouth hath spoken vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity.” Thus has he set them forth, and said that their happiness is only upon the earth. And what did he add? “They are happy the people that hath these things.” But who called them so? “Strange children,” aliens from the race, and belonging not to the seed of Abraham: they “called the people happy that hath these things.” Who called them so? “They whose mouth hath spoken vanity.” It is a vain thing then to call them happy who have these things. And yet they are called so by them, “whose mouth hath spoken vanity.” By them the “mammon of iniquity” of the Gospel is called riches.

6. But what sayest thou? Seeing that these “strange children” that they “whose mouth hath spoken vanity,” have “called the people happy that hath these things,” what sayest thou? These are false riches, show me the true. Thou findest fault with these, show me what thou praisest. Thou wishest me to despise these, show me what to prefer. Let the Psalmist speak himself. For he who said, “they called the people happy that hath these things,” gives us such an answer, as if we had said to him, that is, to the Psalmist himself, “Lo, this thou hast taken away from us, and nothing hast thou given us: lo, these, lo, these we despise; whereby shall we live, whereby shall we be happy? For they who have spoken, they will undertake to

answer for themselves. For they have called’ men who have’ riches happy.’ But what sayest thou?” As if he had been thus questioned, he makes answer and says, They call the rich happy: but I say, “Happy are the people whose is the Lord their God.” Thus then thou hast heard of the true riches, make friends of the mammon of iniquity, and thou shalt be “a happy people, whose is the Lord their God.” At times we go along the way, and see very pleasant and productive estates, and we say, “Whose estate is that?” We are told, “such a man’s;” and we say, “Happy man!” We “speak vanity.” Happy he whose is that house, happy he whose that estate, happy he whose that flock, happy he whose that servant, happy he whose is that household. Take away vanity if Thou wouldest hear the truth. “Happy he whose is the Lord” his “God.” For not he who has that estate is happy: but he whose is that “God.” But in order to declare most plainly the happiness of possessions, thou sayest that thy estate has made thee happy. And why? Because thou livest by it. For when thou dost highly praise thine estate, thou sayest thus, “It finds me food, I live by it.” Consider whereby thou dost really live. He by whom thou livest, is He to whom thou sayest, “With Thee is the fountain of life.” “Happy is the people whose God is the Lord.” O Lord my God, O Lord our God, make us happy by Thee, that we may come unto Thee. We wish not to be happy from gold, or silver, or land, from these earthly, and most vain, and transitory goods of this perishable life. Let not “our mouth speak vanity.” Make us happy by Thee, seeing that we shall never lose Thee. When we shall once have gotten Thee, we shall neither lose Thee, nor be lost ourselves. Make us happy by Thee, because “Happy is the people whose is the Lord their God.” Nor will God be angry if we shall say of Him, He is our estate. For we read that “the Lord is the portion of my inheritance.” Grand thing, Brethren, we are both His inheritance, and He is ours, seeing that we both cultivate His service and He cultivateth us. It is no derogation to His honour that He cultivateth us. Because if we cultivate Him as our God, He cultivateth us as His field. And, (that ye may know that He doth cultivate us) hear Him whom He hath sent to us: “I,” saith He, “am the vine, ye are the branches, My Father is the Husbandman.” Therefore He doth cultivate us. But if we yield fruit, He prepares for us His garner. But if under the attention of so great a hand we will be barren, and for good fruit bring forth thorns, I am loth to say what follows. Let us make an end with a theme of joy. “Let us turn then to the Lord,” etc.

SERMON LXIV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XVII. 3, “IF THY BROTHER SIN, REBUKE HIM,” ETC., TOUCHING THE REMISSION OF SINS

Delivered at the Table of St. Cyprian, in the presence of Count Boniface.

1. The Holy Gospel which we heard just now as it was being read, has admonished touching the remission of sins. And on this subject must ye be admonished now by my discourse. For we are ministers of the word, not our own word, but the word of our God and Lord, whom no one serves without glory, whom no one despises without punishment. He then the Lord our God, who abiding with the Father made us, and having been made for us, re-made us, He the Lord our God Jesus Christ Himself says to us what we have heard just now in the Gospel. “If,” He saith, “thy brother shall sin against thee, rebuke him, and if he shall repent, forgive him; and if he shall sin against time seven times in a day, and shall come and say, I repent, forgive him.” He would not have “seven times in a day” otherwise understood than “as often as may be,” lest haply he sin eight times, and thou be unwilling to forgive. What then is “seven times”? Always, as often as he shall sin and repent. For this, “Seven times in a day will I praise thee,” is the same as in another Psalm, “His praise shall always be in my mouth.” And there is the strongest reason why seven times should be put for that which is always: for the whole course of time revolves in a circle of seven coming and returning days.

2. Whosoever then thou art that hast thy thoughts on Christ, and desirest to receive what He hath promised, be not slow to do that which He hath enjoined. Now what hath He promised? “Eternal life.” And what hath He enjoined? That pardon be given to thy brother. As if He had said to thee, “Do thou, O man, give pardon to a man, that I, who am God, may come unto thee.” But that I may pass over, or rather pass by for a while, those more exalted divine promises in which our Creator engages to make us equal with His Angels, that we may with Him, and in Him, and by Him, live without end; not to speak of this just now, dost thou not wish to receive of thy God this very thing, which thou art commanded to give thy brother? This very thing, I say, which thou art commanded to give thy brother, dost thou not wish to receive from thy Lord? Tell me if thou wishest it not; and

so give it not. What is this, but that thou shouldest forgive him that asks thee, if thou require to be forgiven? But if thou have nothing to be forgiven thee, I dare to say, be unwilling to forgive. Though I ought not even to say this. Though thou have nothing to be forgiven thee, forgive.

3. Thou art just on the point of saying to me, “But I am not God, I am a man, a sinner.” God be thanked that thou dost confess thou hast sins. Forgive then, that they may be forgiven thee. Yet the Lord Himself our God exhorteth us to imitate Him. In the first place God Himself, Christ, exhorteth us, of whom the Apostle Peter said, “Christ hath suffered for us, leaving you an example that ye should follow His steps, who did no sin, neither was guile, found in His mouth.” He then verily had no sin, yet did He die for our sins, and shed His Blood for the remission of sins. He took upon Him for our sakes what was not His due, that He might deliver us from what was due to us. Death was not due to Him, nor life to us. Why? Because we were sinners. Death was not due to Him, nor life to us; He received what was not due to Him, He gave what was not due to us. But since we are speaking of the remission of sins, lest ye should think it too high a thing to imitate Christ, hear the Apostle saying, “Forgiving one another, even as God in Christ hath forgiven you.” “Be ye therefore imitators of God.” They are the Apostle’s words, not mine. Is it indeed a proud thing to imitate God? Hear the Apostle, “Be ye imitators of God as dearly beloved children.” Thou art called a child: if thou refuse to imitate Him, why seekest thou His inheritance?

4. This would I say even if thou hadst no sin which thou mightest desire to be forgiven thee. But as it is, whosoever thou art, thou art a man; though thou be righteous, thou art a man; be thou layman, or monk, or clerk, or Bishop, or Apostle, thou art a man. Hear the Apostle’s voice, “If we shall say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.” He, that famous John and an Evangelist, he whom the Lord Christ loved beyond all the rest, who lay on His breast, he says, “If we shall say.” He did not say, “If ye shall say that ye have no sin,” but “if we shall say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” He joined himself in the guilt, that he might be joined in the pardon also. “If we shall say.” Consider who it is that says, “If we shall say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the

truth is not in us. But if we shall confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity.” How does He cleanse? By forgiving, not as though He found nothing to punish, but as finding something to forgive. So then, Brethren, if we have sins, let us forgive them that ask us. Let us not retain enmities in our heart against another. For the retaining of enmities more than anything corrupts this heart of ours.

5. I would then that thou shouldest forgive, seeing that I find thee asking forgiveness. Thou art asked, forgive: thou art asked, and thou wilt ask thyself; thou art asked, forgive; thou wilt ask to be forgiven; for, lo, the time of prayer will come: I have thee fast in the words thou wilt have to speak. Thou wilt say, “Our Father, which art in heaven.” For thou wilt not be in the number of children, if thou shalt not say, “Our Father.” So then thou wilt say, “Our Father, which art in heaven.” Follow on; “Hallowed be Thy Name.” Say on, “Thy kingdom come.” Follow still on, “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.” See what thou addest next, “Give us this day our daily bread.” Where are thy riches? So thou art a beggar. Nevertheless in the mean while (it is the point I am speaking of), say what is next after, “Give us this day our daily bread.” Say what follows this: “Forgive us our debts.” Now thou hast come to my words, “Forgive us our debts.” By what right? by what covenant? on what condition? on what express stipulation? “As we also forgive our debtors.” It is but a small thing that thou dost not forgive; yea thou dost more, thou liest unto God. The condition is laid down, the law fixed. “Forgive as I forgive.” Therefore He does not forgive, unless thou forgivest. “Forgive as I forgive.” Thou wishest to be forgiven when thou askest, forgive him that asks of thee. He that is skilled in heaven’s laws has dictated these prayers: He does not deceive thee; ask according to the tenor of His heavenly voice: say, “Forgive us, as we also forgive,” and do what thou sayest. He that lies in his prayers, loses the benefit he seeks: he that lies in his prayers, both loses his cause, and finds his punishment. And if any one lies to the emperor, he is convicted of his lie at his coming: but when thou liest in prayer, thou by thy very prayer art convicted. For God does not seek for witness as regards thee to convict thee. He who dictated the prayers to thee, is thine Advocate: if thou liest, He is a witness against thee: if thou dost not amend thyself, He will be thy

Judge. So then both say it, and do. For if thou say it not, thou wilt not obtain making thy requests contrary to the law; but if thou say it and do it not, thou wilt be further guilty of lying. There is no means of evading that verse, save by fulfilling what we say. Can we blot this verse out of our prayer? Would ye that clause, “Forgive us our debts,” should be there, and that we should blot out what follows, “As we also forgive our debtors”? Thou shalt not blot it out, lest thou be first blotted out thyself. So then in this prayer thou sayest, “Give,” and thou sayest, “Forgive:” that thou mayest receive what thou hast not, and may be forgiven what thou hast done amiss. So then thou wishest to receive, give; thou wishest to be forgiven, forgive. It is a brief summary. Hear Christ Himself in another place, “Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.” What will ye forgive? What others have sinned against you. What shall ye be forgiven? What ye have sinned yourselves. “Forgive.” “Give, and there shall be given you what ye desire,” eternal life. Support the temporal life of the poor man, sustain the poor man’s present life, and for this so small and earthly seed ye shall receive for harvest life eternal. Amen.

SERMON LXV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XVIII. 1,”THEY OUGHT ALWAYS TO PRAY, AND NOT TO FAINT,” ETC. AND ON THE TWO WHO WENT UP INTO THE TEMPLE TO PRAY: AND OF THE LITTLE CHILDREN WHO WERE PRESENTED UNTO CHRIST

1. The lesson of the Holy Gospel builds us up unto the duty of praying and believing, and of not putting our trust in ourselves, but in the Lord. What greater encouragement to prayer than the parable which is proposed to us of the unjust judge? For an unjust judge, who feared not God, nor regarded man, yet gave ear to a widow who besought him, overcome by her importunity, not inclined thereto by kindness. If he then heard her prayer, who hated to be asked, how must He hear who exhorts us to ask? When therefore by this comparison from a contrary case the Lord had taught that “men ought always to pray and not to faint,” He added and said, “Nevertheless, when the Son of Man shall come, thinkest thou that He shall find faith on the earth?” If faith fail, prayer perishes. For who prays for that which he does not believe? Whence also the blessed Apostle, when he exhorted to prayer, said, “Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord,

shall be saved.” And in order to show that faith is the fountain of prayer, he went on and said, “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?” So then that we may pray, let us believe; and that this same faith whereby we pray fail not, let us pray. Faith pours out prayer, and the pouring out of prayer obtains the strengthening of faith. Faith, I say, pours out prayer, the pouring out of prayer obtains strengthening even for faith itself. For that faith might not fail in temptations, therefore did the Lord say,” Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.” “Watch,” He saith, “and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.” What is to “enter into temptation,” but to depart from faith? For so far temptation advances as faith gives way: and so far temptation gives way, as faith advances. For that you may know, Beloved, more plainly, that the Lord said, “Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation,” as touching faith lest it should fail and perish; He said in the same place of the Gospel, “This night hath Satan desired to sift you as wheat, and I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not.” He that defendeth prayeth, and shall not he pray who is in peril? For in the words of the Lord, “when the Son of Man shall come, thinkest thou that He shall find faith on the earth?” He spoke of that faith, which is perfect. For it is scarce found on the earth. Lo! this Church of God is full: and who would come hither, if there were no faith? But who would not remove mountains, if there were full faith? Look at the very Apostles: they would not have left all they had, have trodden under foot this world’s hope, and followed the Lord, if they had not had great faith; and yet if they had full faith, they would not have said to the Lord, “Increase our faith.” See again, that man confessing both of himself (behold faith, yet not full faith), who when he had presented to the Lord his son to be cured of an evil spirit, and was asked whether he believed, answered and said, “Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief.” “Lord,” says he, “I believe,” I believe; therefore there was faith. But “help Thou mine unbelief,” therefore there was not full faith.

2. But inasmuch as faith belongs not to the proud, but to the humble, “He spake this parable unto certain who seemed to themselves to be righteous, and despised others. Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee said, God, I thank Thee that I am not as the rest of men.” He might at least have said, “as many men.” What does, “as the rest of men,” mean, but all except himself? “I,” he

says, “am just, the rest are sinners.” “I am not as the rest of men, unjust, extortioners, adulterers.” And, lo, from thy neighbour, the publican, thou takest occasion of greater pride. “As,” he says, “this publican.” “I,” he says, “am alone, he is of the rest.” “I am not,” says he, “such as he is, through my righteous deeds, whereby I have no unrighteousness.” “I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.” In all his words seek out for any one thing that he asked of God, and thou wilt find nothing. He went up to pray: he had no mind to pray to God, but to laud himself. Nay, it is but a small part of it, that he prayed not to God, but lauded himself. More than this he even mocked him that did pray. “But the Publican stood afar off;” and yet he was in deed near to God. The consciousness of his heart kept him off, piety brought him close. “But the Publican stood afar off:” yet the Lord regarded him near. “For the Lord is high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly.” But “those that are high” as was this Pharisee, “He knoweth afar off.” “The high” indeed “God knoweth afar off,” but He doth not pardon them. Hear still more the humility of the Publican. It is but a small matter that he stood afar off; “he did not even lift up his eyes unto heaven.” He looked not, that he might be looked upon. He did not dare to look upwards, his conscience pressed him down: but hope lifted him up. Hear again, “he smote his breast.” He punished himself: wherefore the Lord spared him for his confession. “He smote his breast, saying, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.” See who he is that prays. Why dost thou marvel that God should pardon, when he acknowledges his own sin? Thus thou hast heard the case of the Pharisee and Publican; now hear the sentence; thou hast heard the proud accuser, thou hast heard the humble criminal; hear now the Judge. “Verily I say unto you.” The Truth saith, God saith, the Judge saith it. “Verily I say unto you, That Publican went down from the temple justified rather than that Pharisee.” Tell us, Lord, the cause. Lo! I see that the publican goes down from the temple justified rather than the Pharisee. I ask why? Dost thou ask why? Hear why. “Because every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Thou hast heard the sentence, beware of its evil cause. In other words, thou hast heard the sentence, beware of pride.

3. Let now those ungodly babblers, whosoever they be, who presume on their own strength, let them hear and see these things: let them hear who

say, God made me a man, I make myself just. O thou who art worse and more detestable than the Pharisee! The Pharisee in the Gospel did indeed call himself just, but yet he gave thanks to God for it. He called himself just, but yet he gave God thanks. “I thank Thee, O God, that I am not as the rest of men.” “I thank Thee, O God.” He gives God thanks, that he is not as the rest of men: and yet he is blamed as being proud and puffed up; not in that he gave God thanks, but in that he desired as it were no more to be added unto him. “I thank thee that I am not as the rest of men, unjust.” So then thou art just; so then thou askest for nothing; so then thou art full already; so then the life of man is not a trial upon earth; so then thou art full already; so then thou aboundest already, so then thou hast no ground for saying, “Forgive us our debts!” What must his case be then who impiously impugns grace, if he is blamed who give thanks proudly?

4. And, lo, after the case had been stated, and the sentence pronounced, little children also came forth, yea, rather, are carried and presented to be touched. To be touched by whom, but the Physician? Surely, it will be said, they must be whole. To whom are the infants presented to be touched? To whom? To the Saviour. If to the Saviour, they are brought to be saved. To whom, but to Him “who came to seek and to save what was lost.” How were they lost? As far as concerns them personally, I see that they are without fault, I am seeking for their guiltiness. Whence is it? I listen to the Apostle, “By one man sin entered into the world. By one man,” he says, “sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men by him in whom all sinned.” Let then the little children come, let them come: let the Lord be heard. “Suffer little children to come unto Me.” Let the little ones come, let the sick come to the Physician, the lost to their Redeemer: let them come, let no man hinder them. In the branch they have not yet committed any evil, but they are ruined in their root. “Let the Lord bless the small with the great.” Let the Physician touch both small and great. The cause of the little ones we commend to their elders. Speak ye for them who are mute, pray for them who weep. If ye are not their elders to no purpose, be ye their guardians: defend them who are not able yet to manage their own cause. Common is the loss, let the finding be common: we were lost all together, together be we found in Christ. Uneven is the desert, but common is the grace. They have no evil but what they have drawn from the

source: they have no evil but what they have derived from the first original. Let not them keep them off from salvation, who to what they have so derived have added much more evil. The elder in age is the elder in iniquity too. But the grace of God effaces what thou hast derived, effaces too what thou hast added. For, “where sin abounded, grace hath superabounded.”

SERMON LXVI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, LUKE XXIV. 36, “HE HIMSELF STOOD IN THE MIDST OF THEM, AND SAITH UNTO THEM, PEACE BE UNTO YOU,” ETC

1. The Lord appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, as ye have heard, and saluted them, saying, “Peace be unto you.” This is peace indeed, and the salutation of salvation: for the very word salutation has received its name from salvation. And what can be better than that Salvation Itself should salute man? For Christ is our Salvation. He is our Salvation, who was wounded for us, and fixed by nails to the tree, and being taken down from the tree, was laid in the sepulchre. And from the sepulchre He arose, with His wounds healed, His scars kept. For this He judged expedient for His disciples, that His scars should be kept, where by the wounds of their hearts might be healed. What wounds? The wounds of unbelief. For He appeared to their eyes, exhibiting real flesh, and they thought they saw a spirit. It is no light wound, this wound of the heart. Yea, they have made a malignant heresy who have abided in this wound. But do we suppose that the disciples had not been wounded, because they were so quickly healed? Only, Beloved, suppose, if they had continued in this wound, to think that the Body which had been buried, could not rise again, but that a spirit in the image of a body, deceived the eyes of men: if they had continued in this belief, yea, rather in this unbelief, not their wounds, but their death would have had to be bewailed.

2. But what said the Lord Jesus? “Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts ascend into your hearts?” If thoughts ascend into your heart, the thoughts come from the earth. But it is good for a man, not that a thought should ascend into his heart, but that his heart should itself ascend upwards, where the Apostle would have believers place their hearts, to whom he said, “If ye be risen with Christ, mind those things which are above, where Christ

is sitting at the right hand of God. Seek those things which are above, not the things which are upon the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.” In what glory? The glory of the resurrection. In what glory? Hear the Apostle saying of this body, “It is sown in dishonour, it shall rise in glory.” This glory the Apostles were unwilling to assign to their Master, their Christ, their Lord: they did not believe that His Body could rise from the sepulchre: they thought Him to be a Spirit, though they saw His flesh, and they believed not their very eyes. Yet we believe them who preach but do not show Him. Lo, they believed not Christ who showed Himself to them. Malignant wound! Let the remedies for these scars come forth. “Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts ascend into your hearts? See My hands and My feet,” where I was fixed with the nails. “Handle and see.” But ye see, and yet do not see. “Handle and see.” What? “That a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. When He had thus spoken,” so it is written, “He showed them His hands and His feet.”

3. “And while they were yet in hesitation, and wondered for joy.” Now there was joy already, and yet hesitation continued. For a thing incredible had taken place, yet taken place it had. Is it at this day a thing incredible, that the Body of the Lord rose again from the sepulchre? The whole cleansed world has believed it; whoso has not believed it, has remained in his uncleanness. Yet at that time it was incredible: and persuasion was addressed not to the eyes only, but to the hands also, that by the bodily senses faith might descend into their heart, and that faith so descending into their heart might be preached throughout the world to them who neither saw nor touched, and yet without doubting believed. “Have ye,” saith He, “anything to eat?” How much doeth the good Builder still to build up the edifice of faith? He did not hunger, yet He asked to eat. And He ate by an act of His power, not through necessity. So then let the disciples acknowledge the verity of His body, which the world has acknowledged at their preaching.

4. If haply there be any heretics who still in their hearts maintain that Christ exhibited Himself to sight, but that Christ’s was not very flesh; let them now lay aside that error, and let the Gospel persuade them. We do but blame

them for entertaining this conceit: He will damn them if they shall persevere in it. Who art thou who dost not believe that a body laid in the sepulchre could rise again? If thou art a Manichee, who dost not believe that He was crucified either, because thou dost not believe that He was even born, thou declarest that all that He showed was false. He showed what was false, and dost thou speak the truth? Thou dost not lie with thy mouth, and did He lie in His body? Lo thou dost suppose that He appeared unto the eyes of men what He really was not, that He was a spirit, not flesh. Hear Him: He loves thee, let Him not condemn thee. Hear Him speaking: lo, He speaks to thee, thou unhappy one, He speaks to thee, “Why art thou troubled, and why do thoughts ascend into thine heart?” “See,” saith He, “My hands and My feet. Handle and see, because a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have.” This spake the Truth, and did He deceive? It was a body then, it was flesh; that which had been buried, appeared. Let doubting perish, and meet praise ensue.

5. He showed himself then to the disciples. What is “Himself”? The Head of His Church. The Church was foreseen by Him as in thee to be throughout the world, by the disciples it was not yet seen. He showed the Head, He promised the Body. For what did He add next? “These are the words which I spake to you, while I was yet with you.” What is this, “While I was yet with you”? Was He not with them then when He was speaking to them? What is, “when I was yet with you”? was with you as mortal, which now I am not. I was with you when I had yet to die. What is, “with you”? With you who were to die, Myself to die. Now I am no more with you: for I am with those who are to die, Myself to die no more for ever. This then is what I said to you. What? “That all things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me.” I told you that all things must be fulfilled. “Then opened He their understanding.” Come then, O Lord, employ Thy keys, open, that we may understand. Lo, Thou dost tell all things, and yet are not believed. Thou art thought to be a spirit, art touched, art rudely handled, and yet they who touch Thee hesitate. Thou dost admonish them out of the Scriptures, and yet they understand Thee not. Their hearts are closed, open, and enter in. He did so. “Then opened He their understanding.” Open, O Lord, yea, open the heart of him who is in doubt concerning Christ. Open “his” understanding who believes

that Christ was a phantom. “Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.”

6. And “He said unto them.” What? “That thus it behoved. That thus it is written, and thus it behoved.” What? “That Christ should suffer, and rise from the dead the third day.” And this they saw, they saw Him suffering, they saw Him hanging, they saw Him with them alive after His resurrection. What then did they not see? The Body, that is, the Church. Him they saw, her they saw not. They saw the Bridegroom, the Bride yet lay hid. Let him promise her too. “Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.” This is the Bridegroom, what of the Bride? “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” This the disciples did not yet see: they did not yet see the Church throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. They saw the Head, and they believed the Head touching the Body. By this which they saw, they believed that which they saw not. We too are like to them: we see something which they saw not, and something we do not see which they did see. What do we see, which they saw not? The Church throughout all nations. What do we not see, which they saw? Christ present in the flesh. As they saw Him, and believed concerning the Body, so do we see the Body; let us believe concerning the Head. Let what we have respectively seen help us. The sight of Christ helped them to believe the future Church: the sight of the Church helps us to believe that Christ has risen. Their faith was made complete, and ours is made complete also. Their faith was made complete from the sight of the Head, ours is made complete by the sight of the Body. Christ was made known to them “wholly,” and to us is He so made known: but He was not seen “wholly” by them, nor by us has He been “wholly” seen. By them the Head was seen, the Body believed. By us the Body has been seen, the Head believed. Yet to none is Christ lacking: in all He is complete, though to this day His Body remains imperfect. The Apostles believed; through them many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem believed; Judaea believed. Samaria believed. Let the members be added on, the building added on to the foundation. “For no other foundation can any man lay,” says the Apostle, “than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus.” Let the Jews rage madly, and be filled with jealousy: Stephen be stoned,

Saul keep the raiment of them who stone him, Saul, one day to be the Apostle Paul. Let Stephen be killed, the Church of Jerusalem dispersed in confusion: out of it go forth burning brands, and spread themselves and spread their flame. For in the Church of Jerusalem, as it were burning brands were set on fire by the Holy Spirit, when they had all one soul, and one heart to God-ward. When Stephen was stoned, that pile suffered persecution: the brands were dispersed, and the world was set on fire.

7. And then intent on his furious schemes, that Saul received letters from the chief of the priests, and began his journey in his cruel rage, breathing out slaughter, thirsting for blood, to drag bound and to hurry off to punishment whomsoever he could, and from every quarter that he could, and to satiate himself with the shedding of their blood. But where was God, where was Christ, where He that had crowned Stephen? Where, but in heaven? Let Him now look on Saul, and mock him in his fury, and call from heaven, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?’ I am in heaven, and thou in earth, and yet thou persecutest Me. Thou dost not touch the body, but my members thou art treading down. Yet what art thou doing? What art thou gaining? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.’ Kick as thou wilt, thou only distressest thyself. Lay aside thy fury then, recover soundness. Lay aside evil counsel, seek after good succour.” By that voice he was struck to the earth. Who was struck to the earth? The persecutor. Lo, by that one word was he overcome. After what wast thou going, after what was thy fury carrying thee? Those whom thou wast seeking out, now thou followest; whom thou wast persecuting, now for them thou sufferest persecution. He rises up the preacher, who was struck to the earth, the persecutor. He heard the Lord’s voice. He was blinded, but in the body only, that he might be enlightened in heart. He was brought to Ananias, catechised on sundry points, baptized, and so came forth an Apostle. Speak then, preach, preach Christ, spread His doctrine, O thou goodly leader of the flock, but lately a wolf. See him, mark him, who once was raging. “But for me, God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.” Spread the Gospel: scatter with thy mouth what thou hast conceived in thine heart. Let the nations hear, let the nations believe; let the nations multiply, let the Lord’s empurpled spouse spring forth from the blood of Martyrs. And from her

how many have come already, how many members have cleaved to the Head, and cleave to Him still and believe! They were baptized, and others shall be baptized, and after them shall others come. Then I say, at the end of the world shall the stones be joined to the foundation, living stones, holy stones, that at the end the whole edifice may be built by that Church, yea by this very Church which now sings the new song, while the house is in building. For so the Psalm itself says, "When the house was in building after the captivity;" and what says it, "Sing unto the Lord a new song, sing unto the Lord all the earth." How great a house is this! But when does it sing the new song? When it is in building. When is it dedicated? At the end of the world. Its foundation has been already dedicated, because He hath ascended into heaven, and dieth no more. When we too shall have risen to die no more, then shall we be dedicated.

SERMON LXVII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN I. 1, "IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD," ETC. AGAINST THE ARIANS

1. The section of the Gospel which has been read, most dearly beloved brethren, looketh for the pure eye of the heart. For from John's Gospel we have understood our Lord Jesus Christ according to His Divinity for the creating of the whole creation, and according to His Humanity for the recovery of the creature fallen. Now in this same Gospel we find what sort and how great a man was John, that from the dignity of the dispenser it may be understood of how great a price is the Word which could be announced by such a man; yea, rather how without price is That which surpasseth all things. For any purchasable thing is either equal to the price, or it is below it, or it exceeds it. When any one procures a thing for as much as it is worth, the price is equal to the thing which is procured; when for less, it is below it; when for more, it exceeds it. But to the Word of God nothing can either be equalled, or to exchange can anything be below It, or above It. For all things can be below the Word of God, for that "all things were made by Him;" yet are they not in such wise below, as if they were the price of the Word, that any one should give something to receive That. Yet if we may say so, and if any principle or custom of speaking admit this expression, the price for procuring the Word, is the procurer himself, who will have given

himself for himself to This Word. Accordingly when we buy anything we look out for something to give, that for the price we give we may have the thing we wish to buy. And that which we give is without us; and if it was with us before, what we give becomes without us, that that which we procure may be with us. Whatever price the purchaser may find it, it must needs be such as that he gives what he has, and receives what he has not; yet so that he from whom the price goes himself remains, and that for which he gives the price is added to him. But whoso would procure this Word, whoso would have it, let him not seek for anything without himself to give, let him give himself. And when he shall have done this, he doth not lose himself, as he loseth the price when he buys anything.

2. The Word of God then is set forth before all men; let them who can, procure It, and they can who have a godly will. For in That Word is peace; and “peace on earth is to men of good will.” So then whoso will procure it, let him give himself. This is as it were the price of the Word, if so it may in any way be said, when he that giveth doth not lose himself, and gaineth the Word for which he giveth himself, and gaineth himself too in the Word to whom he giveth himself. And what giveth he to the Word? Not ought that is any other’s than His, for whom he giveth himself; but what by the Same Word was made, that is given back to Him to be remade; “All things were made by Him.” If all things, then of course man too. If the heaven, and earth, and sea, and all things that are therein, if the whole creation; of course more manifestly he, who being made after the image of God by the Word was made man.

3. I am not now, brethren, discussing how the words, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” can be understood. After an ineffable sort it may be understood; it cannot by the words of man he made to be understood. I am treating of the Word of God, and telling you why It is not understood. I am not now speaking to make It understood, but I tell you what hinders It from being understood. For He is a certain Form, a Form not formed, but the Form of all things formed; a Form unchangeable, without failure, without decay, without thee, without place, surpassing all things, being in all things, as at once a kind of foundation in which they are, and a Head-stone under which they are. If you

say that all things are in Him, you lie not. For This Word is called the Wisdom of God; and we have it written, “In Wisdom hast Thou made all things.” Lo, then in Him are all things: and yet in that He is God, under Him are all things. I am showing how incomprehensible is what has been read; yet it has been read, not that it should be comprehended by man, but that man should sorrow that he comprehends it not, and find out whereby he is hindered from comprehending, and remove those hindrances, and, himself changed from worse to better, aspire after the perception of the unchangeable Word. For the Word doth not advance or increase by the addition of those who know It; but is Entire, if thou abide; Entire, if thou depart; Entire, when thou dost return; abiding in Itself, and renewing all things. It is then the Form of all things, the Form unfashioned, without thee, as I have said, and without space. For whatsoever is contained in space, is circumscribed. Every form is circumscribed by bounds; it hath limits wherefrom and whereunto it reaches. Again, what is contained in place, and has extension in a sort of bulk and space, is less in its parts than in the whole. God grant that ye may understand.

4. Now from the bodies which are day by day before our eyes, which we see, which we touch, among which we live, we are able to judge how that every body hath a form in space. Now everything which occupies a certain space, is less in its parts than in its whole. The arm, for instance, is a part of the human body; of course the arm is less than the whole body. And if the arm be less, it occupies a smaller space. So again the head, in that it is a part of the body, is contained in less space, and is less than the whole body of which it is the head. So all things which are in space, are less in their several parts than in the whole. Let us entertain no such idea, no such thought concerning That Word. Let us not form our conceptions of spiritual things from the suggestion of the flesh. That Word, That God, is not less in part than in the whole.

5. But thou art not able to conceive of any such thing. Such ignorance is more pious than presumptuous knowledge. For we are speaking of God. It is said, “And the Word was God.” We are speaking of God; what marvel, if thou do not comprehend? For if thou comprehend, He is not God. Be there a pious confession of ignorance, rather than a rash profession of knowledge.

To reach to God in any measure by the mind, is a great blessedness; but to comprehend Him, is altogether impossible. God is an object for the mind, He is to be understood; a body is for the eyes, it is to be seen. But thinkest thou that thou comprehendest a body by the eye? Thou canst not at all. For whatever thou lookest at, thou dost not see the whole. If thou seest a man's face, thou dost not see his back at the time thou seest the face; and when thou seest the back, thou dost not at that time see the face. Thou dost not then so see, as to comprehend; but when thou seest another part which thou hadst not seen before, unless memory aid thee to remember that thou hast seen that from which thou dost withdraw, thou couldest never say that thou hadst comprehended anything even on the surface. Thou handlest what thou seest, turnest it about on this side and that, or thyself dost go round it to see the whole. In one view then thou canst not see the whole. And as long as thou turnest it about to see it, thou art but seeing the parts; and by putting together that thou hast seen the other parts, thou dost fancy that thou seest the whole. But this must not be understood as the sight of the eyes, but the activity of the memory. What then can be said, Brethren, of that Word? Lo, of the bodies which are before our eyes we say they cannot comprehend them by a glance; what eye of the heart then comprehendeth God? Enough that it reach to Him if the eye be pure. But if it reach, it reacheth by a sort of incorporeal and spiritual touch, yet it doth not comprehend; and that, only if it be pure. And a man is made blessed by touching with the heart That which ever abideth Blessed; and that is this Very Everlasting Blessedness, and that Everlasting Life, whereby man is made to live; that Perfect Wisdom, whereby man is made wise; that Everlasting Light, whereby man becomes enlightened. And see how by this touch thou art made what thou wast not, thou dost not make that thou touchest be what it was not before. I repeat it, there grows no increase to God from them that know Him, but to them that know Him, from the knowledge of God. Let us not suppose, dearly beloved Brethren, that we confer any benefit on God, because I have said that we give Him in a manner a price. For we do not give Him aught whereby He can be increased, Who when thou fallest away, is Entire, and when thou returnest, abideth Entire, ready to make Himself seen that He may bless those who turn to Him, and punish those with blindness who turn away. For by this blindness, as the beginning of punishment, doth He first execute vengeance on the soul that turns away from Him. For whoso turns away from the True Light, that is from God, is at once made blind. He is not yet sensible of his punishment, but he hath it already.

6. Accordingly, dearly beloved brethren, let us understand that the Word of God is incorporeally, inviolably, unchangeably, without temporal nativity, yet born of God. Do we think that we can any how persuade certain unbelievers that that is not it, consistent with the truth, which is said by us according to the Catholic faith, which is contrary to the Arians, by whom the Church of God hath been often tried, forasmuch as carnal men receive with greater ease what they have been accustomed to see? For some have dared to say, "The Father is greater than the Son, and precedes Him in thee;" that is, the Father is greater than the Son, and the Son is less than the Father, and is preceded by the Father in thee. And they argue thus; "If He was born, of course the Father was before His Son was born to Him." Attend; may He be with me, whilst your prayers assist me, and with godly heed desire to receive what He may give, what He may suggest to me; may He be with me, that I may be able in some sort to explain what I have begun. Yet, brethren, I tell you before I begin, if I shall not be able to explain it, do not suppose that it is the failure of the proof, but of the man. Accordingly I exhort and entreat you to pray; that the mercy of God may be with me, and make the matter be so explained by me, as is meet for you to hear, and for me to speak. They then say thus; "If He be the Son of God, He was born." This we confess. For He would not be a Son, if He were not born. It is plain, the faith admits it, the Catholic Church approves it, it is truth. They then go on; "If the Son was born to the Father, the Father was before the Son was born to Him." This the faith rejects, Catholic ears reject it, it is anathematized, whoso entertains this conceit is without, he belongs not to the fellowship and society of the saints. Then says he, "Give me an explanation, how the Son could be born to the Father, and yet be coeval with Him of whom He was born?"

7. And what can we do, brethren, when we are conveying lessons of spiritual things to carnal men; even if so be we ourselves too are not carnal, when we intimate these spiritual truths to carnal men, to men accustomed to the idea of earthly nativities, and seeing the order of these creatures, where succession and departure separates off in age them that beget and them that

are begotten? For after the father the son is born, to succeed the father, who in time of course must die. This do we find in men, this in other animals, that the parents are first, the children after them in time. Through this custom of observation they desire to transfer carnal things to spiritual, and by their intentness on carnal things are more easily led into error. For it is not the reason of the hearers which follows those who preach such things, but custom which even entangles themselves, that they do preach such things. And what shall we do? Shall we keep silence? Would that we might! For perchance by silence something might be thought of worthy of the unspeakable subject. For whatsoever cannot be spoken, is unspeakable. Now God is unspeakable. For if the Apostle Paul saith, that he "was caught up even unto the third heaven, and that he heard unspeakable words;" how much more unspeakable is He, who showed such things, which could not be spoken by him to whom they were shown? So then, brethren, it were better if we could keep silence, and say, "This the faith contains; so we believe; thou art not able to receive it, thou art but a babe; thou must patiently endure till thy wings be grown, lest when thou wouldest fly without wings, it should not be the free course of liberty, but the fall of temerity." What do they say against this? "O if he had anything to say, he would say it to me. This is the mere excuse of one who is at fault. He is overcome by the truth, who does not choose to answer." He to whom this is said, if he make no answer, though he be not conquered in himself is yet conquered in the wavering brethren. For the weak brethren hear it, and they think that there is really nothing to be said; and perhaps they think right that there is nothing to be said, yet not that there is nothing to be felt. For a man can express nothing which he cannot also feel; but he may feel something which he cannot express.

8. Nevertheless, saving the unspeakableness of that Sovereign Majesty, lest when we shall have produced certain similitudes against them, any one should think that we have by them arrived at that which cannot be expressed or conceived by babes (and if it can be at all even by the more advanced, it can only be in part, only in a riddle, only "through a glass;" but not as yet, "face to face"), let us too produce certain similitudes against them, whereby they may be refuted, not "it" comprehended. For when we say that it may very possibly happen, that it may be understood, that He

may both be born, and yet Coeternal with Him of whom He was born, in order to refute this, and prove it as it were to be false, they bring forth similitudes against us. From whence? From the creatures, and they say to us, “Every man of course was before he begat a son, he is greater in age than his son; and so a horse was before he begat his foal, and a sheep, and the other animals.” Thus do they bring similitudes from the creatures.

9. What! must we labour too, that we may find resemblances of those things which we are establishing? And what if I should not find any, might I not rightly say, “The Nativity of the Creator hath, it may be, no resemblance of itself among the creatures? For as far as He surpasseth the things which are here, in that He is there, so far doth He surpass the things which are born here, in that He was born there. All things here have their being from God; and yet what is to be compared with God? So all things which are born here, are born by His agency. And so perhaps there is no resemblance of His Nativity found, as there is none found whether of His Substance, Unchangeableness, Divinity, Majesty. For what can be found here like these? If then it chance that no resemblance of His Nativity either be found, am I therefore overwhelmed, because I have not found resemblances to the Creator of all things, when desiring to find in the creature what is like the Creator?”

10. And in very truth, Brethren, I am not likely to discover any temporal resemblances which I can compare to eternity. But as to those which thou hast discovered, what are they? What hast thou discovered? That a father is greater in time than his son; and therefore thou wouldest have the Son of God to be less in time than the Eternal Father, because thou hast found that a son is less than a father born in time. Find me an eternal father here, and thou hast found a resemblance. Thou findest a son less than a father in time, a temporal son less than a temporal father. Hast thou found me a temporal son younger than eternal father? Seeing then that in Eternity is stability, but in time variety; in Eternity all things stand still, in time one thing comes, another succeeds; thou canst find a son of lesser age succeeding his father in the variety of time, for that he himself succeeded to his father also, not a son born in time to a father eternal. How then, Brethren, can we find in the creature aught coeternal, when in the creature we find nothing eternal? Do

thou find an eternal father in the creature, and I will find a coeternal son. But if thou find not an eternal father, and the one surpasses the other in thee; it is sufficient, that for a resemblance I find something coeval. For what is coeternal is one thing what is coeval another. Every day we call them coeval who have the same measure of times; the one is not preceded by the other in time, yet they both whom we call coeval once began to "be." Now if I shall be able to discover something which is born coeval with that of which it is born; if two coeval things can be discovered, that which begets, and that which is begotten; we discover in this case things coeval, let us understand in the other things coeternal. If here I shall find that a thing begotten hath begun to be ever since that which begets began to be, we may understand at least that the Son of God did not begin to be, ever since He that begat Him did not begin to be. Lo, brethren, perhaps we may discover something in the creature, which is born of something else, and which yet began to be at the same time as that of which it is born began to be. In the latter case, the one began to be when the other began to be; in the former the one did not begin to be, ever since the other began not to be. The first then is coeval, the second coeternal.

11. I suppose that your holiness has understood already what I am saying, that temporal things cannot be compared to eternal; but that by some slight and small resemblance, things coeval may be with things coeternal. Let us find accordingly two coeval things; and let us get our hints as to these resemblances from the Scriptures. We read in the Scriptures of Wisdom, "For she is the Brightness of the Everlasting Light." Again we read, "The unspotted Mirror of the Majesty of God." Wisdom Herself is called, "The Brightness of the Everlasting Light," is called, "The Image of the Father;" from hence let us take a resemblance, that we may find two coeval things, from which we may understand things coeternal. O thou Arian, if I shall find that something that begets does not precede in time that which it begat, that a thing begotten is not less in time than that of which it is begotten; it is but just that thou concede to me, that these coeternals may be found in the Creator, when coevals can be found in the creature. I think that this indeed occurs already to some brethren. For some anticipated me as soon as I said, "For She is the Brightness of the Everlasting Light." For the fire throws out light, light is thrown out from the fire. If we ask which comes from which,

every day when we light a candle are we reminded of some invisible and indescribable thing, that the candle as it were of our understanding may be lighted in this night of the world. Observe him who lights a candle. While the candle is not lighted, there is as yet no fire, nor any brightness which proceedeth from the fire. But I ask, saying, “Does the brightness come from the fire, or the fire from the brightness?” Every soul answers me (for it has pleased God to sow the beginnings of understanding and wisdom in every soul); every soul answers me, and no one doubts, that that brightness comes from the fire, not the fire from the brightness. Let us then look at the fire as the father of that brightness; for I have said before that we are looking for things coeval, not coeternal. If I desire to light a candle, there is as yet no fire there, nor yet that brightness; but immediately that I have lighted it, together with the fire comes forth the brightness also. Give me then here a fire without brightness, and I believe you that the Father ever was without the Son.

12. Attend; The matter has been explained by me as so great a matter could be, by the Lord helping the earnestness of your prayers, and the preparation of your heart, ye have taken in as much as ye were able to receive. Yet these things are ineffable. Do not suppose that anything worthy of the subject has been spoken, if it only be for that things carnal are compared with coeternal, things temporal with things abiding ever, things subject to extinction to things immortal. But inasmuch as the Son is said also to be the Image of the Father, let us take from this too a sort of resemblance, though in things very different, as I have said before. The image of a man looking into a glass is thrown out from the glass. But this cannot assist us for the clearing of that which we are endeavouring in some sort to explain. For it is said to me, “A man who looks into a glass of course, was’ already, and was born before that. The image came out only as soon as he looked at himself. For a man who looks in a glass, was’ before he came to the glass.” What then shall we find, from which we may be able to draw out such a resemblance, as we did from the fire and the brightness? Let us find one from a very little thing. You know without any difficulty how water often throws out the images of bodies. I mean, when any one is passing, or standing still along the water, he sees his own image there. Let us suppose then something born on the water’s side, as a shrub, or an herb, is it not born together with its image?

As soon as ever it begins to be, its image begins to be with it, it does not precede in its birth its own image; it cannot be showed to me that anything is born upon the water’s side, and that its image has appeared afterwards, whereas it first appeared without its image; but it is born together with its image; and yet the image comes from it, not it from the image. It is born then together with its image, and the shrub and its image begin to be together. Dost thou not confess that the image is begotten of that shrub, not the shrub of the image? So then thou dost confess that the image is from that shrub. Accordingly that which begets and that which is begotten began to “be” together. Therefore they are coeval. If the shrub had been always, the image from the shrub would have been always too. Now that which has its being from something else, is of course born of it. It is possible then that one that begets might always be, and always be together with that which was born of him. For here it was that we were in perplexity and trouble, how the Eternal Nativity might be understood. So then the Son of God is so called on this principle, that there is the Father also, that He hath One from whom He derives His Being; not on this, that the Father is first in time, and the Son after. The Father always was, the Son always from the Father. And because whatever “is” from another thing, is born, therefore the Son was always born. The Father always was, the image from Him always was; as that image of the shrub was born of the shrub, and if the shrub had always been, the image would also have always been born from the shrub. Thou couldest not find things begotten coeternal with the eternal begetters, but thou hast found things born coeval with those that begat them in time. I understand the Son coeternal with the Eternal who begat Him. For what with regard to things of time is coeval, with regard to things eternal is coeternal.

13. Here there is somewhat for you to consider, Brethren, as a protection against blasphemies. For it is constantly said, “See thou hast produced certain resemblances; but the brightness which is thrown out from the fire, shines less brilliantly than the fire itself, and the image of the shrub has less proper subsistence, than that shrub of which it is the image. These instances have a resemblance, but they have not a thorough equality: wherefore they do not seem to be of the same substance.” What then shall we say, if any one say, “The Father then is to the Son, such as the brightness is to the fire,

and the image to the shrub”? See I have understood the Father to be eternal; and the Son to be coeternal with Him; nevertheless say we that He is as the brightness which is thrown out from and is less brilliant than the fire, or as the image which is reflected from and has less real existence than the shrub? No, but there is a thorough equality. “I do not believe it,” he will say, “because thou hast not discovered a resemblance.” Well then, believe the Apostle, because he was able to see what I have said. For he says, “He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Equality is perfect likeness in every way. And what said he? “Not robbery.” Why? Because that is robbery which belongs to another.

14. Yet from these two comparisons, these two kinds, we may perhaps find in the creature a resemblance whereby we may understand how the Son is both coeternal with the Father, and in no respect less than He. But this we cannot find in one kind of resemblances singly: let us join both kinds together. How both kinds? One, of which they themselves give instances of resemblances, and the other, of which we gave. For they gave instances of resemblances from those things which are born in time, and are preceded in time by them of whom they are born, as man of man. He that is born first is greater in time; but yet man and man, that is of the same substance. For man begets a man, and a horse a horse, and a sheep a sheep. These beget after the same substance, but not after the same time. They are diverse in time, but not in nature diverse. What then do we praise here in this nativity? The equality of nature surely. But what is wanting? The equality of time. Let us retain the one thing which is praised here, that is, the equality of nature. But in the other kind of resemblances, which we gave from the brightness of the fire and the image of the shrub, you find not an equality of nature, you do find an equality of time. What do we praise here? Equality of time. What is wanting? Equality of nature. Join the things which you praise together. For in the creatures there is wanting something which you praise, in the Creator nothing can be wanting: because what you find in the creature, came forth from the Hand of the Creator. What then is there in things coeval? Must not that be given to God which you praise here in? But what is wanting must not be attributed to that Sovereign Majesty, in the which there is no defect. See I offer to you things begetting coeval with things begotten: in these you praise the equality of time, but find fault with the inequality of nature. What

you find fault with, do not attribute to God; what you praise, attribute to Him; so from this kind of resemblances you attribute to Him instead of a cotemporaneousness a coeternity, that the Son may be coeternal with Him of whom He was born. But from the other kind of resemblances, which itself too is a creature of God, and ought to praise the Creator, what do you praise in them? Equality of nature. You had before assigned coeternity by reason of the first distinction; by reason of this last, assign equality; and the nativity of the same substance is complete. For what is more mad, my brethren, than that I should praise the creature in anything which does not exist in the Creator? In man I praise equality of nature, shall I not believe it in Him who made man? That which is born of man is man; shall not that which is born of God, be That which He is of whom He was born? Converse have I none with works which God hath not made. Let then all the works of the Creator praise Him. I find in the one case a cotemporaneousness, I get at the knowledge of a coeternity in the other. In the first I find an equality of nature, I understand an equality of substance in the other. In this then that is "wholly," which in the other case is found in the several parts, and several things. It is then "wholly" here altogether, and not only what is in the creature; I find it wholly here, but as being in the Creator, in so much higher a way, in that the one is visible, the Other Invisible; the one temporal, the Other Eternal; the one changeable, the Other Unchangeable; the one corruptible, the Other Incorruptible. Lastly, in the case of men themselves, what we find, man and man, are two men; here the Father and the Son are One God.

15. I render unspeakable thanks to our Lord God, that He hath vouchsafed, at your prayers, to deliver my infirmity from this most perplexed and difficult place. Yet above all things remember this, that the Creator transcends indescribably whatever we could gather from the creature, whether by the bodily senses, or the thought of the mind. But wouldest thou with the mind reach Him? Purify thy mind, purify thine heart. Make clean the eye whereby That, whatever It be, may be reached. For "blessed are the clean in heart, for they shall see God." But whilst the heart was not cleansed, what could be provided and granted more mercifully by Him, than that That Word of whom we have spoken so great and so many things, and yet have spoken nothing worthy of Him; that That Word, "by whom all

things were made,” should become that which we are, that we might be able to attain to That which we are not? For we are not God; but with the mind or the interior eye of the heart we can see God. Our eyes dulled by sins, blinded, enfeebled by infirmity, desire to see; but we are in hope, not yet in possession. We are the children of God. This saith John, who says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;” he who lay on the Lord’s Breast, who drew in these secrets from the Bosom of His Heart; he says, “Dearly beloved, we are the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” This is promised us.

16. But in order that we may attain, if we cannot yet see God the Word, let us hear the Word made Flesh; seeing we are carnal, let us hear the Word Incarnate. For for this cause came He, for this cause took upon Him our infirmity, that thou mightest be able to receive the strong words of a God bearing thy weakness. And He is truly called “milk.” For He giveth milk to infants, that He may give the meat of wisdom to them of riper years. Suck then now with patience, that thou mayest be fed to thy heart’s most eager wish. For how is even the milk, wherewith infants are suckled, made? Was it not solid meat on the table? But the infant is not strong enough to eat the meat which is on the table; what does the mother do? She turns the meat into the substance of her flesh, and makes milk of it. Makes for us what we may be able to take. So the Word was made Flesh, that we little ones, who were indeed as infants with respect to food, might be nourished by milk. But there is this difference; that when the mother makes the food turned into flesh milk, the food is turned into milk; whereas the Word abiding Itself unchangeably assumed Flesh, that there might be, as it were, a tissue of the two. What He is, He did not corrupt or change, that in thy fashion, He might speak to thee, not transformed and turned into man. For abiding unalterable, unchangeable, and altogether inviolable, He became what thou art in respect of thee, what He is in Himself in respect of the Father.

17. For what doth He say Himself to the infirm, to the end that recovering that sight, they may be able in some measure to reach the Word by whom all things were made? “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy

laden, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, that I am meek and lowly in heart.” What doth the Master, the Son of God, the Wisdom of God, by whom all things were made, proclaim? He calleth the human race, and saith, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and learn of Me.” Thou wast thinking haply that the Wisdom of God would say, “Learn how I have made the heavens and the stars; how all things also were numbered in Me before they were made, how by virtue of unchangeable principles your very hairs were numbered.” Didst thou think that Wisdom would say these things, and such as these? No. But first that. “That I am meek and lowly in heart.” Lo, see here what ye can comprehend, brethren; it is surely a little thing. We are making our way to great things, let us receive the little things, and we shall be great. Wouldest thou comprehend the height of God? First comprehend the lowliness of God. Condescend to be humble for thine own sake, seeing that God condescended to be humble for thy sake too; for it was not for His own. Comprehend then the lowliness of Christ, learn to be humble, be loth to be proud. Confess thine infirmity, lie patiently before the Physician; when thou shalt have comprehended His lowliness, thou risest with Him; not as though He should rise Himself in that He is the Word; but thou rather, that He may be more and more comprehended by thee. At first thou didst understand falteringly and hesitatingly; afterwards thou wilt understand more surely and more clearly. He doth not increase, but thou makest progress, and He seemeth as it were to rise with thee. So it is, brethren. Believe the commandments of God, and do them, and He will give you the strength of understanding. Do not put the last first, and, as it were, prefer knowledge to the commandments of God; lest ye be only the lower, and none the more firmly rooted. Consider a tree; first it strikes downwards, that it may grow up on high; fixes its root low in the ground, that it may extend its top to heaven. Does it make an effort to grow except from humiliation? And wouldest thou without charity comprehend these transcendent matters, shoot toward the heaven without a root? This were a ruin, not a growing. With “Christ” then “dwelling in your hearts by faith, be ye rooted and grounded in charity, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God.”

SERMON LXVIII

ON THE SAME WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN I., "IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD," ETC

1. All ye who are looking for a man's many words, understand the One Word of God, "In the beginning was the Word." Now, "In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth." But, "The Word was," since we have heard, "In the beginning God made." Acknowledge we in Him the Creator; for Creator is He who made; and the creature what He made. For no creature which was made "was," as God the Word "was," by whom it was made, always. Now when we heard "The Word was," with whom was It? We understand the Father who did not make nor create the Same Word, but begat Him. For, "In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth." Whereby made He them? "The Word was, and the Word was with God;" but what kind of Word? Did it sound and so pass away? Was it a mere thought, and motion of the mind? No. Was it suggested by memory, and uttered? No. What kind of Word then? Why dost thou look for many words from me? "The Word was God." When we hear, "The Word was God," we do not make a second God; but we understand the Son. For the Word is the Son of God. Lo, the Son, and What but God? For "The Word was God." What the Father? God of course. If the Father is God and the Son God, do we make two Gods? God forbid. The Father is God, the Son God; but the Father and the Son One God. For the Only Son of God was not made, but born. "In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth;" but the Word was of the Father. Was the Word therefore made by the Father? No. "All things were made by Him." If by Him all things were made, was He too made by Himself? Do not imagine that He by whom thou hearest all things were made was Himself made among all things. For if He were made Himself, all things were not made by Him, but Himself was made among the rest. You say, "He was made;" what, by Himself? Who can make himself? If then He was made, how by Him were all things made? See, Himself too was made, as you say, not I, for that He was begotten, I do not deny. If then you say that He was made, I ask by what, by whom? By Himself? Then He "was," before He was made, that He might make Himself. But if all things were made by Him, understand that He was not Himself made. If thou art not able to understand, believe, that thou mayest

understand. Faith goes before; understanding follows after; since the Prophet says, “Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand. The Word was.” Look not for time in Him, by whom times were made. “The Word was.” But you say, “There was a time that the Word was not.” You say falsely; nowhere do you read this. But I do read for you, “In the beginning was the Word.” What look you for before the beginning? But if you should be able to find anything before the beginning, this will be the beginning. He is mad who looks for anything before the beginning. What then doth he say was before the beginning? “In the beginning was the Word.”

2. But you will say, “The Father both was,’ and was before the Word.” What are you looking for? “In the beginning was the Word.” What you find, understand; seek not for what you are not able to find. Nothing is before the beginning. “In the beginning was the Word.” The Son is the Brightness of the Father. Of the Wisdom of the Father, which is the Son, it is said, “For He is the brightness of the Everlasting Light.” Are you seeking for a Son without a Father? Give me a light without brightness. If there was a time when the Son was not, the Father was a light obscure. For how was He not an obscure Light, if It had no brightness? So then the Father always, the Son always. If the Father always, the Son always. Do you ask of me, whether the Son were born? I answer, “born.” For He would not be a Son if not born. So when I say, the Son always was, I say in fact was always born. And who understands, “Was always born”? Give me an eternal fire, and I will give thee an eternal brightness. We bless God who hath given to us the holy Scriptures. Be ye not blind in the brightness of the light. Brightness is engendered of the Light, and yet the Brightness is Coeternal with the Light that engenders It. The Light always, its Brightness always. It begat Its Own Brightness; but was it ever without Its Brightness? Let God be allowed to beget an eternal Son. I pray you hear of whom we are speaking; hear, mark, believe, understand. Of God are we speaking. We confess and believe the Son coeternal with the Father. But you will say, “When a man begets a Son, he that begets is the elder, and he that is begotten the younger.” It is true; in the case of men, he that begets is the elder, and he that is begotten, the younger, and he arrives in time to his father’s strength. But why, save that whilst the one grows, the other grows old? Let the father stand still a while, and in his growing the son will follow on him, and you will see him equal.

But see, I give you whereby to understand this. Fire engenders a coeval brightness. Among men you only find sons younger, fathers older; you do not find them coeval: but as I have said, I show you brightness coeval with its parent fire. For fire begets brightness, yet is it never without brightness. Since then you see that the brightness is coeval with its fire, suffer God to beget a Coeternal Son. Whoso understandeth, let him rejoice: but whoso understandeth not, let him believe. For the word of the Prophet cannot be disannulled; “Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand.”

SERMON LXIX

ON THE SAME WORDS, JOHN I. “IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD,” ETC

1. That our Lord Jesus Christ in seeking lost man was made Man, our preaching has never withholden, and your faith has ever retained; and moreover, that this our Lord, who for our sakes was made Man, was always God with the Father, and always will be, yea rather always Is; for where there is no succession of time, there is no “hath been” and “will be.” For that of which it is said, “it hath been,” is now no more; that of which it is said, “it will be,” is not yet; but He always is, because He truly “is,” that is, is unchangeable. For the Gospel lesson has just now taught us a high and divine mystery. For this beginning of the Gospel St. John poured forth for that he drank it in from the Lord’s Breast. For ye remember, that it has been very lately read to you, how that this St. John the Evangelist lay in the Lord’s Bosom. And wishing to explain this clearly, he says, “On the Lord’s Breast;” that we might understand what he meant, by “in the Lord’s bosom.” For what, think we, did he drink in who was lying on the Lord’s Breast? Nay, let us not think, but drink; for we too have just now heard what we may drink in.

2. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” O glorious preaching! O the result of the full feast of the Lord’s Breast! “In the beginning was the Word.” Why seekest thou for what was before It? “In the beginning was the Word.” If the Word had been made (for made indeed that was not by which all things were made); if the Word had been made, the Scripture would have said, “In the beginning God made the Word;” as it is said in Genesis, “In the beginning God made the heaven

and the earth.” God then did not in the beginning make the Word; because, “In the beginning was the Word.” This Word which was in the beginning, where was It? Follow on, “And the Word was with God.” But from our daily hearing the words of men we are wont to think lightly of this name of “Word.” In this case do not think lightly of the Name of “Word;” “The Word was God. The same,” that is the Word, “was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.”

3. Extend your hearts, help the poverty of my words. What I shall be able to express, give ear to; on what I shall not be able to express, meditate. Who can comprehend the abiding Word? All our words sound, and pass away. Who can comprehend the abiding Word, save He who abideth in Him? Wouldest thou comprehend the abiding Word? Do not follow the current of the flesh. For this flesh is indeed a current; for it has none abiding. As it were from a kind of secret fount of nature men are born, they live, they die; or whence they come, or whither they go, we know not. It is a hidden water, till it issue from its source; it flows on, and is seen in its course; and again it is hidden in the sea. Let us despise this stream flowing on, running, disappearing, let us despise it. “All flesh is grass, and all the glory of flesh is as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, the flower falleth away.” Wouldest thou endure? “But the word of the Lord endureth for ever.”

4. But in order to succour us, “The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us.” What is, “The Word was made Flesh”? The gold became grass. It became grass for to be burned; the grass was burned, but the gold remained; in the grass It perisheth not, yea, It changed the grass. How did It change it? It raised it up, quickened it, lifted it up to heaven, and placed it at the right Hand of the Father. But that it might be said, “And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us,” let us recollect awhile what went before. “He came unto His Own, and His Own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.” “To become,” for they “were” not; but He “was” Himself in the beginning. “He gave them” then “power to become the sons of God, to them that believe in His Name; who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” Lo, born they are, in whatever age of the flesh

they may be; ye see infants; see and rejoice. Lo, they are born; but they are born of God. Their mother’s womb is the water of baptism.

5. Let no man in poorness of soul entertain this conceit, and turn over such most beggarly thoughts in his mind, and say to himself, “How in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: all things were made by Him;’ and lo, the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us?’“ Hear why it was done. “To those” we know “who believed on Him He hath given power to become the sons of God.” Let not those then to whom He hath given power to become the sons of God, think it impossible to become the sons of God. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” Do not imagine that it is too great a thing for you to become the sons of God; for your sakes He became the Son of man, who was the Son of God. If He was made, that He might be less, who was more; can He not bring it to pass, that of that less which we were, we may be something more? He descended to us, and shall not we ascend to Him? For us He accepted our death, and shall He not give us His Life? For thee He suffered thy evil things, and shall He not give thee His good things?

6. “But how,” one will say, “can it be, that the Word of God, by whom the world is governed, by whom all things both were, and are created, should contract Himself into the womb of a Virgin; should abandon the world, and leave the Angels, and be shut up in one woman’s womb?” Thou skillest not to conceive of things divine. The Word of God (I am speaking to thee, O man, I am speaking to thee of the omnipotence of the Word of God) could surely do all, seeing that the Word of God is omnipotent, at once remain with the Father, and come to us; at once in the flesh come forth to us, and lay concealed in Him. For He would not the less have been, if He had not been born of flesh. He “was” before His own flesh; He created His Own mother. He chose her in whom He should be conceived, He created her of whom He should be created. Why marvellest thou? It is God of whom I am speaking to thee: “The Word was God.”

7. I am treating of the Word, and perchance the word of men may furnish somewhat like; though very unequal, far distant, in no way comparable, yet something which may convey a hint to you by way of resemblance. Lo, the word which I am speaking to you, I have had previously in my heart: it

came forth to thee, yet it has not departed from me; that began to be in thee, which was not in thee; it continued with me when it went forth to thee. As then my word was brought forth to thy sense, yet did not depart from my heart; so That Word came forth to our senses, yet departed not from His Father. My word was with me, and it came forth into a voice: the Word of God was with the Father, and came forth into Flesh. But can I do with my voice that which He could do with His Flesh? For I am not master of my voice as it flies; He is not only master of His Flesh, that It should be born, live, act; but even when dead He raised It up, and exalted unto the Father the Vehicle as it were in which He came forth to us. You may call the Flesh of Christ a Garment, you may call It a Vehicle, and as perchance Himself vouchsafed to teach us, you may call It His Beast; for on this beast He raised him who had been wounded by robbers; lastly, as He said Himself more expressly, you may call It a Temple; This Temple knows death no more, Its seat is at the right Hand of the Father: in This Temple shall He come to judge the quick and dead. What He hath by precept taught, He hath by example manifested. What He hath in His own Flesh shown, that oughtest thou to hope for in thy flesh. This is faith; hold fast what as yet thou seest not. Need there is, that by believing thou abide firm in that thou seest not; lest when thou shalt see, thou be put to shame.

SERMON LXX

ON THE SAME WORDS OF JOHN I., “IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD,” ETC

1. The beginning of John’s Gospel, “In the beginning was the Word.” Thus he begins, this he saw, and transcending the whole creation, mountains, air, the heavens, the stars, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, all Angels, and Archangels, transcending all; he saw the Word in the beginning, and drank It in. He saw above every creature, he drank in from the Lord’s breast. For this same St. John the Evangelist is he whom Jesus specially loved; insomuch that he lay on His Breast at supper. There was this secret, that therefrom might be drunk in, what in the Gospel was to be poured forth. Happy they who hear and understand. Of the next degree of blessedness are they who though they understand not, believe. For how great a thing it is to see This Word of God, who can explain in human words?

2. Lift up your hearts, my Brethren, lift them up as best ye can; whatsoever occurs to you from the idea of any body whatsoever, reject. If the Word of God occurs to you under the idea of the light of this sun, expand, extend how you will, set no bounds in your thought to that light; it is nothing to the Word of God. Whatsoever of this sort the mind conceives, is less in one part than in the whole. Of theWord conceive as Whole everywhere. Understand ye what I say; because of my stress of time I am limiting myself as much as I can for your sakes. Understand ye what I say. Lo, this light from heaven, which is called by the name of the sun, when it comes forth, it enlightens the earth, unfolds the day, develops forms, distinguishes colours. Great blessing it is, great gift of God to all mortal men; let His works magnify Him. If the sun is so beauteous, what more beauteous than the sun's Maker? And yet look, Brethren; lo, he pours his rays through the whole earth; penetrates open places, the closed resist him; he sends his light through windows; can he also through a wall? To the Word of God all is open, from the Word of God nothing is hid. Observe another difference, how far from the Creator is the creature, especially the bodily creature. When the sun is in the East, it is not in the West. Its light indeed shed from that vast body reaches even to the West; but itself is not there. When it begins to set, then it will be there. When it rises, it is in the East; when it sets it is in the West. By these operations of his, it has given name to those quarters. Because it is in the East when it rises at the East, it has made it be called the Rising Sun; because it is at the West when it sets at the West, it has made it be called the Setting Sun. At night it is nowhere seen. Is the Word of God so? When It is in the East, is It not in the West; or when It is in the West, is It not in the East? or does It ever leave the earth, and go under or behind the earth? It is Whole everywhere. Who can in words explain this? Who see it? By what means of proof shall I establish to you what I say? I am speaking as a man, it is to men I speak; I am speaking as one weak, to men weaker am I speaking. And yet, my brethren, I am bold to say that I do in some sort see what I am saying to you, though "through a glass," or "darkly," I do in some sort understand even within my heart a word touching this thing. But it seeks to go forth to you, and finds no meet vehicle. The vehicle of the word is the sound of the voice. What I am saying within mine own self I seek to say to you, and words fail. For I wish to speak of the Word of God. How great a Word, what kind of Word? "All things were made by Him."

See the works, and stand in awe of the Worker. “All things were made by Him.”

3. Return with me, O human infirmity, return, I say. Let us comprehend these human things if we can. We are men, I who speak, I am a man, and to men I speak, and utter the sound of my voice. I convey the sound of my voice to men’s ears, and by the sound of my voice I somehow through the ear lay up understanding also in the heart. Let us then speak on this point what and how we can, let us comprehend it. But if we have not ability to comprehend even this, in respect of the Other what are we? Lo, ye are listening to me; I am speaking a word. If any one goes out from us, and is asked outside what is being done here, he answers, “The Bishop is speaking a word.” I am speaking a word of the Word. But what a word, of what a Word? A mortal word, of the Word Immortal; a changeable word, of the Word Unchangeable; a passing word of the Word Eternal. Nevertheless, consider my word. For I have told you already, the Word of God is Whole everywhere. See, I am speaking a word to you; what I say reaches to all. Now that what I am saying might come to you all, did ye divide what I say? If I , were to feed you, to wish to fill not your minds, but your bodies, and to set loaves before you to be satisfied therewith; would ye not divide my loaves among you? Could my loaves come to every one of you? If they came to one only, the rest would have none. But now see, I am speaking, and ye all receive. Nay, not only all receive, but all receive it whole. It comes whole to all, to each whole. O the marvels of my word! What then is the Word of God? Hear again. I have spoken; what I have spoken, has gone forth to you, and has not gone away from me. It has reached to you, and has not been separated from me. Before I spake, I had it, and ye had not; I spake, and ye began to have, and I lost nothing. O the marvel of my word! What then is the Word of God? From little things form conjectures of things great. Consider earthly things, laud the heavenly. I am a creature, ye are creatures; and such great miracles are done with my word in my heart, in my mouth, in my voice, in your ears, in your hearts. What then is the Creator? O Lord, hear us. Make us, for that Thou hast made us. Make us good, for that Thou hast made us enlightened men. These white-robed, enlightened ones hear Thy word by me. For enlightened by Thy grace they stand before Thee. “This is the day which the Lord hath made.” Only let

them labour, let them pray for this, that when these days shall have gone by, they may not become darkness, who have been made the light of the wonders and the blessings of God.

SERMON LXXI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN I. 10, "THE WORLD WAS MADE THROUGH HIM," ETC

1. By the Lord "was the world made, and the world knew Him not." What world was made by Him, what world knew Him not? For it is not the same world that was made by Him, which knew Him not. What is the world that was made by Him? The heaven and earth. How did not the heaven know Him, when at His Passion the sun was darkened? How did not the earth know Him, when as He hung upon the Cross, it quaked? But "the world knew Him not," whose Prince he is, of whom it is said, "Behold, the prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in me." Wicked men are called the world; unbelieving men are called the world. They have gotten their name from that they love. By the love of God we are made gods; so by the love of the world, we are called the world. But "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." "The world" then "knew Him not." What? "all men?"

2. "He came unto His Own, and His Own received Him not." All things are His, but they are called His Own, from among whom His mother was, among whom He had taken Flesh, to whom He had sent before the heralds of His advent, to whom He had given the law, whom He had delivered from the Egyptian bondage, whose father Abraham according to the flesh He elected. For He said truth, "Before Abraham was, I am." He did not say, "Before Abraham was," or "before Abraham was made, I was made." For "in the beginning the Word was," not, "was made." So then "He came unto His Own," He came to the Jews. "And His Own received Him not."

3. "But as many as received Him." For of course the Apostles were there, who "received Him." There were they who carried branches before His beast. They went before and followed after, and spread their garments, and cried with a loud voice, "Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is He That cometh in the Name of the Lord." Then said the Pharisees unto Him,

“Restrain the children, that they cry not out so unto Thee.” And He said, “If these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.” Us He saw when He spake these words; “If these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.” Who are stones, but they who worship stones? If the Jewish children shall hold their peace, the elder and the younger Gentiles shall cry out. Who are the stones, but they of whom speaketh that very John, who came “to bear witness of the Light”? For when he saw these self-same Jews priding themselves on their birth from Abraham, he said to them, “O generation of vipers.” They called themselves the children of Abraham; and he addressed them, “O generation of vipers.” Did he do Abraham wrong? God forbid! He gave them a name from their character. For that if they were the children of Abraham, they would imitate Abraham; as He too telleth them who say to Him, “We be free, and were never in bondage to any man; we have Abraham for our father.” And He said, “If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the deeds of Abraham. Ye wish to kill Me, because I tell you the truth. This did not Abraham.” Ye were of his stock, but ye are a degenerate stock. So then what said John? “O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?” Because they came to be baptized with the baptism of John unto repentance. “Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance. And say not in your hearts, We have Abraham to our father. For God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” For God is able of these stones which he saw in the Spirit; to them he spake; he foresaw us; “For God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” Of what stones? “If these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out.” Ye have just now heard, and cried out. It is fulfilled, “The stones shall cry out.” For from among the Gentiles we came, in our forefathers we worshipped stones. Therefore are we called dogs too. Call to mind what that woman heard who cried out after the Lord, for she was a Canaanitish woman, a worshipper of idols, the handmaid of devils. What said Jesus to her? “It is not good to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs.” Have ye never noticed, how dogs will lick the greasy stones? So are all the worshippers of images. But grace has come to you. “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.” See ye have here some just now born: to them hath He “given power to become the sons of God.” To whom hath He given it? “To them that believe in His Name.”

4. And how do they become the sons of God? “Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God.” Having received power to become the sons of God, they are born of God. Mark then: They are born of God, “not of blood,” like their first birth, like that wretched birth, issuing out of wretchedness. But they who are born of God, what were they? whereby were they first born? Of blood; of the joint blood of the male and female, of the carnal union of male and female, from this were they born. From whence now? They are born of God. The first birth of the male and female; the second birth of God and the Church.

5. Lo, they are born of God; whereby is it brought to pass that they should be born of God, who were first born of men? Whereby is it brought to pass, whereby? “And the Word was made Flesh, that It might dwell among us.” Wondrous exchange; He made Flesh, they spirit. What is this? What condescension is here, my brethren! Lift up your minds to the hope and comprehension of better things. Give not yourselves up to worldly desires. “Ye have been bought with a Price;” for your sakes the Word was made Flesh; for your sakes He who was the Son of God, was made the Son of man: that ye who were the sons of men, might be made sons of God. What was He, what was He made? What were ye, what were ye made? He was the Son of God. What was He made? The Son of man. Ye were the sons of men. What were ye made? The sons of God. He shared with us our evil things, to give us His good things. But even in that He was made the Son of man, He is different much from us. We are the sons of men by the lust of the flesh; He the Son of man by the faith of a virgin. The mother of any other man whatever conceives by a carnal union; and every one is born of human parents, his father and his mother. But Christ was born of the Holy Ghost, and the Virgin Mary. He came to us, but from Himself departed not far; yea from Himself as God He departed never; but added what He was to our nature. For He came to that which He was not, He did not lose what He was. He was made the Son of man; but did not cease to be the Son of God. Hereby the Mediator, in the middle. What is, “in the middle”? Neither up above, nor down below. How neither up above, nor down below? Not above, since He is Flesh; not below, since He is not a sinner. But yet in so far as He is God, above always. For He did not so come to us, as to leave

the Father. From us He went, and did not leave us; to us will He come again, and will not leave Him.

SERMON LXXII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN I. 48,”WHEN THOU WAST UNDER THE FIG TREE, I SAW THEE,” ETC

1. What we have heard said by the Lord Jesus Christ to Nathanael, if we understand it aright, does not concern him only. For our Lord Jesus saw the whole human race under the fig-tree. For in this place it is understood that by the fig-tree He signified sin. Not that it always signifies this, but as I have said in this place, in that fitness of significancy, in which ye know that the first man, when he sinned, covered himself with fig leaves. For with these leaves they covered their nakedness when they blushed for their sin; and what God had made them for members, they made for themselves occasions of shame. For they had no need to blush for the work of God; but the cause of sin preceded shame. If iniquity had not gone before, nakedness would never have been put to the blush. For “they were naked, and were not ashamed.” For they had committed nothing to be ashamed for. But why have I said all this? That we may understand that by the fig-tree sin is signified. What then is, “when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee”? When thou wast under sin, I saw thee. And Nathanael looking back upon what had occurred, remembered that he had been under a fig-tree, where Christ was not. He was not there, that is, by His Bodily Presence; but by His knowledge in the Spirit where is He not? And because he knew that he was under the fig-tree alone, where the Lord Christ was not; when He said to him, “When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee;” he both acknowledged the Divinity in Him, and cried out, “Thou art the King of Israel.”

2. The Lord said, “Because I said unto thee, I saw thee when thou wast under the fig-tree, marvellest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.” What are these greater things? And He said, “Ye shall see heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.” Let us call to mind the old story written in the sacred Book. I mean in Genesis. When Jacob slept at a certain place, he put a stone at his head; and in his

sleep he saw a ladder reaching from earth even unto heaven; and the Lord was resting upon it; and Angels were ascending and descending by it. This did Jacob see. A man's dream would not have been recorded, had not some great mystery been figured in it, had not some great prophecy been to be understood in that vision. Accordingly, Jacob himself, because he understood what he had seen, placed a stone there, and anointed it with oil. Now ye recognise the anointing; recognise The Anointed also. For He is "the Stone which the builders rejected; He was made the Head of the corner." He is the Stone of which Himself said, "Whosoever shall stumble against This Stone shall be shaken; but on whomsoever That Stone shall fall, It will crush him." It is stumbled against as It lies on the earth; but It will fall on him, when He shall come from on high to judge the quick and dead. Woe to the Jews, for that when Christ lay low in His humility, they stumbled against Him. "This Man," say they, "is not of God, because He breaketh the sabbath day." "If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the cross." Madman, the Stone lies on the ground, and so thou deridest It. But since thou dost deride It, thou art blind; since thou art blind, thou stumblest; since thou stumblest, thou art shaken; since thou hast been shaken by It as It now lies on the ground, hereafter shall thou be crushed by It as It fails from above. Therefore Jacob anointed the stone. Did he make an idol of it? He showed a meaning in it, but did not adore it. Now then give ear, attend to this Nathanael, by the occasion of whom the Lord Jesus hath been pleased to explain to us Jacob's vision.

3. Ye that are well instructed in the school of Christ, know that this Jacob is Israel too. They are two names; for they are one man. His first name Jacob, which is by interpretation supplanter, he received when he was born. For when those twins were born, his brother Esau was born first; and the hand of the younger was found on the elder's foot. He held his brother's foot who preceded him in his birth, and himself came after. And because of this occurrence, because he held his brother's heel, he was called Jacob, that is, Supplanter. And afterwards, when he was returning from Mesopotamia, the Angel wrestled with him in the way. What comparison can there be between an Angel's and a man's strength? Therefore it is a mystery, a sacrament, a prophecy, a figure; let us therefore understand it. For consider the manner of the struggle too. While he wrestleth, Jacob prevailed against the Angel.

Some high meaning is here. And when the man had prevailed against the Angel, he kept hold of Him; yes, the man kept hold of Him whom he had conquered. And said to Him, “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.” When the conqueror was blessed by the Conquered, Christ was figured. So then that Angel, who is understood to be the Lord Jesus, saith to Jacob, “Thou shalt not be any more called Jacob, but Israel shall thy name be,” which is by interpretation, “Seeing God.” After this He touched the sinew of his thigh, the broad part, that is, of the thigh, and it dried up; and Jacob became lame. Such was He who was conquered. So great power had this Conquered One, as to touch the thigh, and make lame. It was then with His Own will that He was conquered. For He “had power to lay down” His strength, “and He had power to take It up.” He is not angry at being conquered, for He is not angry at being crucified. For He even blessed him, saying, “Thou shalt not be called Jacob, but Israel.” Then the “supplanter” was made “the seer of God.” And He touched, as I have said, his thigh, and made him lame. Observe in Jacob the people of the Jews, those thousands who followed and went before the Lord’s beast, who in concert with the Apostles worshipped the Lord, and cried out, “Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.” Behold Jacob blessed. He has continued lame until now in them who are at this day Jews. For the broad part of the thigh signifies the multitude of increase. Of whom the Psalm, when it prophesied that the Nations should believe, speaketh, saying, “A people whom I have not known, hath served Me; by the hearing of the ear it hath obeyed Me.” I was not there, and I was heard; here I was, and I was killed. “A people whom I have not known, hath served Me; by the hearing of the ear it hath obeyed Me.” Therefore, “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” And it goes on, “The strange children have lied unto Me;” concerning the Jews. “The strange children have lied unto Me, the strange children have faded away and have halted from their paths.” I have pointed out Jacob to you, Jacob blessed and Jacob lame.

4. But as arising out of this occasion, this must not be passed over, which may haply of itself perplex some of you; with what design is it, that when this Jacob’s grandfather Abraham’s name was changed (for he too was first called Abram, and God changed his name, and said, “Thou shall not be

called Abram, but Abraham”); from that time he was not called Abram. Search in the Scriptures, and you will see that before he received another name, he was called only Abram; after he received it, he was called only Abraham. But this Jacob, when he received another name, heard the same words, “Thou shalt not be called Jacob, but Israel shalt thou be called.” Search the Scriptures, and see how that he was always called both, both Jacob and Israel. Abram after he had received another name, was called only Abraham. Jacob after he had received another name, was called both Jacob and Israel. The name of Abraham was to be developed in this world; for here he was made the father of many nations, whence he received his name. But the name of Israel relates to another world, where we shall see God. Therefore the people of God, the Christian people in this present time, is both Jacob and Israel, Jacob in fact, Israel in hope. For the younger people is called the Supplanter of its brother the elder people. What! have we supplanted the Jews? No, but we are said to be their supplanters, for that for our sakes they were supplanted. If they had not been blinded, Christ would not have been crucified; His precious Blood would not have been shed; if that Blood had not been shed, the world would not have been redeemed. Because then their blindness hath profited us, therefore hath the elder brother been supplanted by the younger, and the younger is called the Supplanter. But how long shall this be?

5. The time will come, the end of the world will come, and all Israel shall believe; not they who now are, but their children who shall then be. For these present walking in their own ways, will go to their own place, will pass on to everlasting damnation. But when they shall have been made all one people, that shall come to pass which we sing, “I shall be satisfied when Thy glory shall be manifested.” When the promise which is made to us, that we “see face to face,” shall come. “Now we see through a glass darkly,” and “in part;” but when both people, now purified, now raised again, now crowned, now changed into an immortal form, and into everlasting incorruption, shall see God face to face, and Jacob shall be no more, but there shall be Israel only; then shall the Lord see him in the person of this holy Nathanael, and shall say, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” When thou dost hear, “Behold an Israelite indeed;” let Israel come into thy mind; when Israel shall come into thy mind, let his

dream come into thy mind, in which he saw a ladder from earth even to heaven, the Lord standing upon it, the Angels of God ascending and descending. This dream did Jacob see. But after this he was called Israel; that is, some little time after as he came from Mesopotamia, and on his journey. If then Jacob saw the ladder, and he is also called Israel; and this Nathanael is an “Israelite indeed in whom is no guile;” therefore when he wondered because the Lord. said to him, “I saw thee under the fig-tree;” did He say to him, “Thou shalt see greater things than these.” And so He announced to him Jacob’s dream. To whom did He announce it? To him whom He called “an Israelite, in whom was no guile.” As if He had said, “His dream, by whose name I have called thee, shall be manifested in thee; make no haste to wonder, “thou shalt see greater things than these. Ye shall see heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending unto the Son of Man.” See what Jacob saw; see why Jacob anointed the stone with oil; see why Jacob prophetically signified and prefigured the Anointed One. For that action was a prophecy.

6. Now I know what you are waiting for; I understand what you would hear from me. This too will I briefly declare, as the Lord enableth me; “ascending and descending unto the Son of Man.” How—if they descend to Him, He is here; if they ascend to Him, He is above. But if they ascend to Him, and descend toHim, He is at once above and here. It cannot any way possibly be, that they should ascend to Him, and descend to Him, unless He be both there whither they ascend, and here whither they descend—How do we prove that He is both there, and that He is here? Let Paul, who was first Saul, answer us. He found it by experience, when he was first a persecutor, and afterwards became a preacher; first Jacob, afterwards Israel; who was himself too “of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin.” In him let us see Christ above, Christ below. First, the very Voice of the Lord from heaven shows this; “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” What! had Paul ascended into heaven? Had Paul so much as cast a stone into heaven? He was persecuting the Christians, binding them, haling them to be put to death, searching them out in every place where they lay hid, when they were found on no consideration sparing them. To whom the Lord Christ saith, “Saul, Saul.” Whence crieth He? From heaven. Therefore He is above. “Why persecutest thou Me?” Therefore He is below. Thus have I

explained all, though briefly, yet as well as I could to you, Beloved. I have ministered to you according to my duty, and now for your duty, do ye think upon the poor. Let us turn to the Lord, etc.

SERMON LXXIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN II. 2, "AND JESUS ALSO WAS BIDDEN, AND HIS DISCIPLES, TO THE MARRIAGE."

1. Ye know, Brethren, for ye have learnt it as believing in Christ, and continually too do we by our ministry impress it upon you, that the humility of Christ is the medicine of man's swollen pride. For man would not have perished, had he not been swollen up through pride. For "pride," as saith the Scripture, "is the beginning of all sin." Against the beginning of sin, the beginning of righteousness was necessary. If then pride be the beginning of all sin, whereby should the swelling of pride be cured, had not God vouchsafed to humble Himself? Let man blush to be proud, seeing that God hath humbled Himself. For when man is told to humble himself, he disdains it; and when men are injured, it is pride that makes them wish to be avenged. Forasmuch as they disdain to humble themselves, they wish to be avenged; as if another's punishment could be any profit to any man. One who has been hurt and suffered wrong wishes to be avenged; he seeks his own remedy from another's punishment, and gains a great torment. The Lord Christ therefore vouchsafed to humble Himself in all things, showing us the way; if we but think meet to walk thereby.

2. Among His other acts, lo, the Virgin's Son comes to the marriage; who being with the Father instituted marriage. As the first woman, by whom came sin, was made of a man without a woman; so the Man by whom sin was done away, was made of a woman without a man. By the first we fell, by the other we rise. And what did He at this marriage? Of water He made wine. What greater sign of power? He who had power to do such things, vouchsafed to be in need. He who made of water wine could also have of stones made bread. The power was the same; but then the devil tempted Him, therefore Christ did it not. For ye know that when the Lord Christ was tempted, the devil suggested this to Him. For He was an hungred, since this too He vouchsafed to be, since this too made part of His Humiliation. The

Bread was hungry, as the Way fainted, as saving Health was wounded, as the Life died. When then He was an hungred as ye know, the tempter said to Him, “If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” And He made answer to the tempter, teaching thee to answer the tempter. For to this end does the general fight, that the soldiers may learn. What answer did He make? “Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.” And He did not make bread of the stones, who of course could as easily have done it, as He made of water wine. For it is an exercise of the same power to make bread of stone; but He did it not, that He might despise the tempter’s will. For no otherwise is the tempter overcome, but by being despised. And when He had overcome the devil’s temptation, “Angels came and ministered to Him.” He then who had so great power, why did He not do the one, and do the other? Read, yea, recollect what thou hast just heard, when He did this, when, that is, He made of the water wine; what did the Evangelist add? “And His disciples believed on Him.” Would the devil on the other occasion have believed on Him?

3. He then who could do so great things, was hungry, and athirst, was wearied, slept, was apprehended, beaten, crucified, slain. This is the way; walk by humility, that thou mayest come to eternity. Christ-God is the Country whither we go; Christ-Man is the Way whereby we go. To Him we go, by Him we go; why fear we lest we go astray? He departed not from the Father; and came to us. He sucked the breasts, and He contained the world. He lay in the manger, and He fed the Angels. God and Man, the same God who is Man, the same Man who is God. But not God in that wherein He is Man, God, in that He is the Word; Man, in that the Word was made Flesh; by at once continuing to be God, and by assuming man’s Flesh; by adding what He was not, not losing what He was. Therefore henceforward, having now suffered in this His humiliation, dead, and buried, He has now risen again, and ascended into heaven, there He is, and sitteth at the right Hand of the Father: and here He is needy in His poor. Yesterday too I set this forth to your Affection by occasion of what He said to Nathanael, “Thou shalt see a greater thing than this. For I say unto you, Ye shall see Heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending and descending unto the Son of Man.” We searched out what this meant, and spake at some length; must we

recapitulate the same to-day? Let those who were present remember; yet I will briefly run over it.

4. He would not say, “ascending unto the Son of Man,” unless He were above; He would not say, “descending unto the Son of Man,” unless He were also below. He is at once above, and below; above in Himself, below in His; above with the Father, below in us. Whence also was that Voice to Saul, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” He would not say, “Saul, Saul,” unless that He was above. But Saul was not persecuting Him above. He then who was above would not have said, “Why persecutest thou me?” unless He were below also. Fear Christ above; recognise Him below. Have Christ above bestowing His bounty, recognise Him here in need. Here He is poor, there He is rich. That Christ is poor here, He tells us Himself for me, “I was an hungred, I was thirsty, I was naked, I was a stranger, I was in prison.” And to some He said, “Ye have ministered unto Me,” and to some He said, “Ye have not ministered unto Me.” Lo, we have proved Christ poor; that Christ is Rich, who knows not? And even here it was a property of these riches to turn the water into wine. If he who has wine is rich, how rich is He who maketh wine? So then Christ is rich and poor; as God, rich; as Man, poor. Yea rich too now as Very Man He hath ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right Hand of the Father; yet still He is poor and hungry here, thirsty, and naked.

5. What art thou? Rich, or poor? Many tell me, I am poor; and they tell the truth. I recognise some poor having something, and some having want. But some have much gold and silver. O that they would acknowledge themselves poor! Poor they will acknowledge themselves, if they acknowledge the poor about them. For how is it? How much soever thou hast, thou rich man whosoever thou art, thou art God’s beggar. The hour of prayer comes, and there I prove thee. Thou makest thy petition. How art thou not poor, who makest thy petition? I say more, Thou makest petition for bread. Wilt thou not have to say, “Give us our daily bread”? Thou, who askest for daily bread, art thou poor, or rich? And yet Christ saith to thee, “Give Me of that which I have given thee. For what didst thou bring here, when thou camest hither? All things that I created, thyself created hast found here; nothing didst thou bring, nothing shalt thou take away. Why

wilt thou not give Me of Mine Own? For thou art full, and the poor man is empty. Look at your first origin; naked were ye both born. Thou too then wast born naked. Great store hast thou found here; didst thou bring ought with thee? I ask for Mine Own; give, and I will repay. Thou hast found Me a bountiful giver, make Me at once thy debtor. It is not enough to say, Thou hast found Me a bountiful giver, make Me at once thy debtor;' let Me regard thee as lending upon interest. Thou givest me but little, I will repay more. Thou givest me earthly things, I will repay heavenly. Thou givest me temporal things, I will restore eternal. I will restore thee to thyself, when I shall have restored thee unto Me."

SERMON LXXIV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN V. 2, "NOW THERE IS IN JERUSALEM BY THE SHEEP GATE A POOL," ETC

1. The lesson of the Gospel has just sounded in our ears, and made us intent to know what is the meaning of what has been read. This, I suppose, is looked for from me, this I promise, by the Lord's assistance, to explain as well as I can. For without doubt it is not without a meaning, that those miracles were done, and something they figured out to us bearing on eternal saving health. For the health of the body which was restored to this man, of how long duration was it? "For what is your life?" saith Holy Scripture; "it is a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." Therefore in that health was restored to this man's body for a time, some enduringness was restored to a vapour. So then this is not to be valued much; "Vain is the health of man." And, brethren, recollect that Prophetical and Evangelical testimony, for it is read in the Gospel; "All flesh is grass, and all the glory of flesh as the flower of grass; the grass withereth, the flower falleth away, the Word of the Lord endureth for ever." The Word of the Lord communicateth glory even to the grass, and no transitory glory; for even to flesh He giveth immortality.

2. But first passeth away the tribulation of this life, out of which He giveth us help, to whom we have said, "Give us help from tribulation." And all this life is indeed a tribulation to the understanding. For there are two tormentors of the soul, torturing it not at once, but alternating their tortures.

These two tormentors’ names are, Fear and Sorrow. When it is well with thee, thou art in fear; when it is ill, thou art in sorrow. This world’s prosperity, whom doth it not deceive, its adversity not break? In this grass, and in the days of grass, the surer way must be kept to, the Word of God. For when it had been said, “All flesh is grass, and all the glory of flesh as the flower of grass, the grass withereth, the flower falleth away;” as though we should ask, “What hope has grass? what stability the flower of grass?” it is said, “but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever.” And whence, you will say, is that Word to me? “The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us.” For the Word of the Lord saith to thee, “Do not reject My promise, for I have not rejected thy grass.” This then that the Word of the Lord hath granted to us, that we might hold to Him, that we might not pass away with the flower of grass; this, I say, that He hath granted to us, that the Word should be made Flesh, taking Flesh, not changed into flesh, abiding, and assuming, abiding what He was, assuming what He was not; this, I say, that He hath granted to us, that pool also signifies.

3. I am speaking briefly. That water was the Jewish people; the five porches were the Law. For Moses wrote five books. Therefore was the water enclosed by five porches as that people was held in by the Law. The troubling of the water is the Lord’s Passion among that people. He who descended was healed, and only one; for this is unity. Whosoever are offended at the Passion of Christ are proud; they will not descend, they are not healed. And, say they, “Am I to believe that God was Incarnate, that God was born of a woman, that God was crucified, scourged, dead, wounded, buried?” Be it far from me to believe this of God, it is unworthy of Him. Let the heart speak, not the neck. To the proud the humiliation of the Lord seems unworthy of Him, therefore is saving health from such far off. Lift not thyself up; if thou wouldest be made whole, descend. Well might piety be alarmed, if Christ in the flesh subject to change were only spoken of. But now the truth sets forth to thee, Christ Unchangeable in His Nature as the Word. For, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God;” not a word to sound, and so pass away; for “the Word was God.” So then thy God endureth unchangeable. O true piety; thy God endureth, fear not; He doth not perish, and through Him, thou too dost not perish. He endureth, He is born of a woman, but in the Flesh. The Word

made even His Mother. He who was before He was made, made her in whom He was to be made Himself. He was an infant, but in the Flesh. He sucked, He grew, He took nourishment, He ran through the several stages of life, He came to man’s estate, but in the Flesh. He was wearied, and He slept, but in the Flesh. He suffered hunger and thirst, but in the Flesh. He was apprehended, bound, scourged, assailed with railings, crucified finally, and killed, but in the Flesh. Why art thou alarmed? “The Word of the Lord endureth for ever.” Whoso rejecteth this humiliation of God, doth not wish for healing from the deadly swelling of pride.

4. So then by His Flesh did the Lord Jesus Christ grant hope to our flesh. For He took on Him what we knew well in this earth, what aboundeth here, to be born, and to die. To be born and to die, abounded here; to rise again and to live for ever, was not here. Poor earthly merchandize found He here, He brought here strange and heavenly. If thou art alarmed at death, love the resurrection. He hath given thee help out of tribulation; for vain thy health had ever been. Let us acknowledge therefore and love the saving health in this world strange, that is, health everlasting, and live we in this world as strangers. Let us think that we are but passing away, so shall we be sinning less. Let us rather give thanks to our Lord God, that He hath been pleased that the last day of this life should be both near and uncertain. From the earliest infancy even to decrepit old age, it is but a short span. If Adam had died to-day, what would it have profited him, that he had lived so long? What “long time” is there in that in which there is an end? No one recalleth yesterday; to-day is pressed on by to-morrow, that it may pass away. In this little span let us live well, that we may go whence we may not pass away. And now even as we are talking, we are indeed passing away. Our words run on, and the hours fly by; so does our age, so our actions, so our honours, so our misery, so our happiness here below. All passeth away, but let us not be alarmed; “The Word of God endureth for ever.” Let us turn to the Lord, etc.

SERMON LXXV

AGAIN IN JOHN V. 2, ETC., ON THE FIVE PORCHES, WHERE LAY A GREAT MULTITUDE OF IMPOTENT FOLK, AND OF THE POOL OF SILOA

1. Subjects strange neither to your ears nor hearts are now repeated: yet do they revive the affections of the hearer, and by repetition in some sort renew us: nor is it wearisome to hear what is well known already, for the words of the Lord are always sweet. The exposition of the sacred Scriptures is as the sacred Scriptures themselves: though they be well known, yet are they read to impress the remembrance of them. And so the exposition of them, though it be well known, is nevertheless to be repeated, that they who have forgotten it may be reminded, or they who chanced not to hear it may hear; and that with those who do retain what they are used to hear, it may by the repetition be brought to pass that they shall not be able to forget it. For I remember that I have already spoken to you, Beloved, on this lesson of the Gospel. Yet to repeat the same explanation to you is not wearisome, even as it was not wearisome to repeat the same Lesson to you. The Apostle Paul saith in a certain Epistle, "To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not wearisome, but for you it is necessary." So too with myself to say the same things to you, to me is not wearisome, but for you it is safe.

2. The five porches in which the infirm folk lay signify the Law, which was first given to the Jews and to the people of Israel by Moses the servant of God. For this Moses the minister of the Law wrote five books. In relation therefore to the number of the books which he wrote, the five porches figured the Law. But because the Law was not given to heal the infirm, but to discover and to manifest them; for so saith the Apostle, "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law; But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe;" therefore in those porches the sick folk lay, but were not cured. For what saith he? "If there had been a law given which could have given life." Therefore those porches which figured the Law could not cure the sick. Some one will say to me, "Why then was it given?" The Apostle Paul hath himself explained: "Scripture," saith he, "hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." For these folk who were sick, thought themselves to be whole. They received the Law, which they were not able to fulfil; they learnt in what disease they were, and they implored the Physician's aid; they wished to be cured because they came to know they were in distress, which they would

not have known if they had not been unable to fulfil the Law which had been given. For man thought himself innocent, and from this very pride of false innocence became more mad. To tame this pride then and to lay it bare, the Law was given; not to deliver the sick, but to convince the proud. Attend then, Beloved; to this end was the Law given, to discover diseases, not to take them away. And so then those sick folk who might have been sick in their own houses with greater privacy, if those five porches had not existed, were in those porches set forth to the eyes of all men, but were not by the porches cured. The Law therefore was useful to discover sins, because that man being made more abundantly guilty by the transgression of the Law, might, having tamed his pride, implore the help of Him That pitieth. Attend to the Apostle; "The Law entered that sin might abound; but where sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded." What is, "The Law entered that sin might abound"? As in another place he saith, "For where there is no law, there is no transgression." Man may be called a sinner before the Law, a transgressor he cannot. But when he hath sinned, after that he hath received the Law, he is found not only a sinner, but a transgressor. Forasmuch then as to sin is added transgression, therefore "hath sin abounded." And when sin abounds, human pride learns at length to submit itself, and to confess to God, and to say "I am weak." To say to those words of the Psalm which none but the humbled soul saith, "I said, Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee." Let the weak soul then say this that is at least convinced by transgression, and not cured, but manifested by the Law. Hear too Paul himself showing thee, both that the Law is good, and yet that nothing but the grace of Christ delivereth from sin. For the Law can prohibit and command; apply the medicine, that that which doth not allow a man to fulfil the Law, may be cured, it cannot, but grace only doeth that. For the Apostle saith, "For I delight in the Law of God after the inner man." That is, I see now that what the Law blames is evil, and what the Law commands is good. "For I delight in the Law of God after the inner man. I see another law in my members resisting the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity in the law of sin." This derived from the punishment of sin, from the propagation of death, from the condemnation of Adam, "resists the law of the mind, and brings it into captivity in the law of sin which is in the members." He was convinced; he received the Law, that he might be convinced: see now what profit it was to him that he was convinced. Hear the following words, “Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

3. Give heed then. Those five porches were significative of the Law, bearing the sick, not healing them; discovering, not curing them. But who did cure the sick? He that descended into the pool. And when did the sick man descend into the pool? When the Angel gave the sign by the moving of the water. For thus was that pool sanctified, for that the Angel came down and moved the water. Men saw the water; and from the motion of the troubled water they understood the presence of the Angel. If any one then went down, he was cured. Why then was not that sick man cured? Let us consider his own words; “I have no man,” he says, “when the water is moved, to put me into the pool, but while I am coming, another steppeth down.” Couldest not thou then step down afterwards, if another step down before thee? Here it is shown us, that only one was cured at the moving of the water. Whosoever stepped down first, he alone was cured: but whoever stepped down afterwards, at that moving of the water was not cured, but waited till it was moved again. What then does this mystery mean? For it is not without a meaning. Attend, Beloved. Waters are put in the Apocalypse for a figure of peoples. For when in the Apocalypse John saw many waters, he asked what it meant, and it was told him that they were peoples. The water then of the pool signified the people of the Jews. For as that people was held in by the five books of Moses in the Law, so that water too was enclosed by five porches. When was the water troubled? When the people of the Jews was troubled. And when was the people of the Jews troubled, but when the Lord Jesus Christ came? The Lord’s Passion was the troubling of the water. For the Jews were troubled when the Lord suffered. See, what was just now read had relation to this troubling. “The Jews wished to kill Him, not only because He did these things on the sabbaths, but because He called Himself the Son of God, making Himself equal with God.” For Christ called Himself the Son after one manner, in another was it said to men, “I said, Ye are Gods, and ye are all children of the Most High.” For if He had made Himself the Son of God in such sort as any man whatever may be called the son of God (for by the grace of God men are called sons of God); the Jews would not have been enraged. But because they

understand Him to call Himself the Son of God in another way, according to that, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;” and according to what the Apostle saith, “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;” they saw a man, and they were enraged, because He made Himself equal with God. But He well knew that He was equal, but wherein they saw not. For that which they saw they wished to crucify; by That which they saw not, they were judged. What did the Jews see? What the Apostles also saw, when Philip said, “Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.” But what did the Jews not see? What not even the Apostles saw, when the Lord answered, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet have ye not known Me? He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also.” Because then the Jews were not able to see This in Him, they held Him for a proud and ungodly man, making Himself equal with God. Here was a troubling, the water was troubled, the Angel had come. For the Lord is called also the “Angel of the Great Counsel,” in that He is the messenger of the Father’s will. For Angel in Greek is in Latin “messenger.” So you have the Lord saying that He announces to us the kingdom of Heaven. He then had come, the “Angel of the Great Counsel,” but the Lord of all the Angels. “Angel” on this account, because He took Flesh; the “Lord of Angels,” in that by “Him all things were made, and without Him was nothing made.” For if all things, Angels too. And therefore Himself was not made, because by Him all things were made. Now what was made, was not made without the operation of the Word. But the flesh which became the mother of Christ, could not have been born, if it had not been created by the Word, which was afterwards born of it.

4. The Jews then were troubled. What is this? “Why doeth He these things on the sabbath days?” And especially at those words of the Lord, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” Their carnal understanding of this, that God rested on the seventh day from all His works, “troubled them.” For this is written in Genesis, and most excellently written it is, and on the best reasons. But they thinking that God as it were rested from fatigue on the seventh day after all, and that He therefore blessed it, because on it He was refreshed from His weariness, did not in their foolishness understand, that He who made all things by the Word, could not be wearied. Let them read, and tell me how could God be wearied, who said, “Let it be made, and it

was made.” To-day if a man could so do, as God did, how would he be wearied? He said, “Let there be light, and the light was made.” Again, “Let there be a firmament, and it was made:” if indeed He said, and it was not done, He was wearied. In another place briefly, “He spake, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created.” He then who worketh thus, how doth He labour? But if He labour not, how doth He rest? But in that sabbath, in which it is said that God rested from all His works, in the Rest of God our rest was signified; because the sabbath of this world shall be, when the six ages shall have passed away. The six days as it were of the world are passing away. One day hath passed away, from Adam unto Noe; another from the deluge unto Abraham; the third from Abraham unto David; the fourth from David unto the carrying away into Babylon; the fifth from the carrying away into Babylon unto the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now the sixth day is in passing. We are in the sixth age, in the sixth day. Let us then be reformed after the image of God, because that on the sixth day man was made after the image of God. What formation did then, let reformation do in us, and what creation did there, let creating-anew do in us. After this day in which we now are, after this age, the rest which is promised to the saints and prefigured in those days, shall come. Because in very truth too, after all things which He made in the world, He hath made nothing new in creation afterwards. The creatures themselves shall be transformed and changed. For since the creatures were fashioned, nothing more has been added. But nevertheless, if He who made did not rule the world, what is made would fall to ruin: He cannot but administer that which He hath made. Because then nothing hath been added to the creation, He is said to have rested from all His works; but because He doth not cease to govern what He made, rightly did the Lord say, “My Father worketh even hitherto.” Attend, Beloved. He finished, He is said to have rested; for He finished His works, and hath added no more. He governeth what He hath made; therefore He doth not cease to work. But with the same facility that He made, with the same doth He govern. For do not suppose, brethren, that when He created He did not labour, and that He laboureth in that He governeth: as in a ship, they labour who build the ship, and they who manage it labour too; for they are men. For with the same facility wherewith “He spake and they were made,” with the same facility and judgment doth He govern all things by the Word.

5. Let us not, because human affairs seem to be in disorder, fancy that there is no governance of human affairs. For all men are ordered in their proper places; but to every man it seems as though they have no order. Do thou only look to what thou wouldest wish to be; for as thou shalt wish to be, the Master knoweth where to place thee. Look at a painter. Before him are placed various colours, and he knows where to set each colour on. Questionless the sinner hath chosen to be the black colour; does not then the Artist know where to place him? How many parts does the painter finish off with the colour of black? how many ornaments does he make of it? With it he makes the hair, the beard, the eye-brows; he makes the face of white only. Look then to that which thou wouldest wish to be; take no care where He may order thee who cannot err, He knoweth where to place thee. For so we see it happen by the common laws of the world. Some man, for instance, has chosen to be a house-breaker: the law of the judge knows that he has acted contrary to the law: the law of the judge knows where to place him; and orders him most properly. He indeed has lived evilly; but not evilly has the law ordered him. From a house-breaker he will be sentenced to the mines; from the labour of such how great works are constructed? That condemned man’s punishment is the city’s ornament. So then God knoweth where to place thee. Do not think that thou art disturbing the counsel of God, if thou art minded to be disorderly. Doth not He who knew how to create, know how to order thee? Good were it for thee to strive for this, to be set in a good place. What was said of Judas by the Apostle? “He went unto his own place.” By the operation of course of Divine Providence, because by an evil will he chose to be evil, but God did not by ordering evil make it. But because that evil man himself chose to be a sinner, he did what he would, and suffered what he would not. In that he did what he would, his sin is discovered; in that he suffered what he would not, the order of God is praised.

6. Wherefore have I said all this? That ye, brethren, may understand what was most excellently said by the Lord Jesus Christ, “My Father worketh even hitherto.” In that He doth not abandon the creature which He made. And He said, “As He worketh, so do I also work.” In this He at once signified that He was equal with God. “My Father,” saith He, “worketh hitherto, and I work.” Their carnal sense touching the rest was troubled. For

they thought that the Lord being wearied rested, that He should work no more. They hear, “My Father worketh even hitherto:” they are troubled. “And I work:” He hath made Himself equal with God: they are troubled. But be not alarmed. The water is troubled, now the sick man is to be cured. What meaneth this? Therefore are they troubled, that the Lord may suffer. The Lord doth suffer, the precious Blood is shed, the sinner is redeemed, grace is given to the sinner, to him that saith, “Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” But how is he cured? If he step down. For that pool was so made, that men should go down, and not come up to it. For there might be pools of such a kind, so constructed, that men must go up to them. But why was this made in such a way that men must go down to it? Because the Lord’s Passion searches for the humble. Let the humble go down, let him not be proud, if he wishes to be cured. But why was it but “one”? Because the Church is only One throughout the world, unity is saved. When then one is made whole, unity is signified. By one understand unity. Depart not then from unity, if thou wouldest not be without a part in this saving cure.

7. What then does it mean that the man was in infirmity thirty-eight years? I know, brethren, that I have spoken of this already; but even those who read forget, how much more they who hear but seldom? Attend therefore for a little while, Beloved. In the number forty, the accomplishment of righteousness is figured. The accomplishment of righteousness, in that we live here in labour, in toil, in self-restraint, in fastings, in watchings, in tribulations; this is the exercise of righteousness, to bear this present time, and to fast as it were from this world; not from the food of the body, which we do but seldom; but from the love of the world, which we ought to do always. He then fulfils the law who abstains from this world. For he cannot love that which is eternal, unless he shall cease to love that which is temporal. Consider a man’s love: think of it as, so to say, the hand of the soul. If it is holding anything, it cannot hold anything else. But that it may be able to hold what is given to it, it must leave go what it holds already. This I say, see how expressly I say it; “Whoso loveth the world cannot love God; he hath his hand engaged.” God saith to him, “Hold what I give.” He will not leave go what he was holding; he cannot receive what is offered.

Have I said a man should not possess ought? If he is able, if perfection require this of him, let him not possess. If hindered by any necessity he is not able, let him possess, not be possessed; let him hold, not be held; let him be the lord of his possessions, not the slave; as saith the Apostle "However, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth that both they that have wives, be as though they had not; and they who buy, as though they possessed not; and they who rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they who weep, as though they wept not; and they who use this world, as though they used it not; for the fashion of this world passeth away. I would have you be without carefulness." What is, "Do not love what thou dost possess in this world"? Let it not hold thine hand fast, by which God must be held. Let not thy love be engaged, whereby thou canst make thy way to God, and cleave to Him who created thee.

8. Thou wilt say and make answer to me, "Yea, God knows that I possess innocently what I have." Temptation proves thee. There is a troubling of thy possessions, and thou dost blaspheme. It is but lately we were in such a case. There is a troubling of thy possessions, and thou art not found what thou wast, and dost show that there is one thing in thy mouth to-day, and another in thy mouth yesterday. And I would that thou wouldest only defend thine own even with vehemence; and not try to usurp with audacity another's; and what is worse, to escape reprehension, maintain that what is another's is thine own. But why need I say more? This I advise, this I say, Brethren, and as a brother advise; God bids, and I admonish because I am admonished. He alarmeth me, who doth not allow me to keep silence. He exacteth of me what He hath given. For He hath given it to be laid out, not to be kept up. And if I should keep it and hide it, He saith to me, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, wherefore gavest thou not My money to the exchangers, that at My coming I might require it with usury?" And what will it profit me that I have lost nothing of that which I received? That is not enough for my Lord, He is covetous; but God's covetousness is our salvation. He is covetous, He looketh for His own money, He gathereth in His Own image. "Thou shouldest have given," saith He, "the money to the exchangers, that at My coming I might require it with usury." And if by any chance forgetfulness should make me fail of admonishing you, the temptations and tribulations at least which we are suffering, would be an

admonition to you. Ye have heard at least the word of God. Blessed be the Lord and His glory. For ye are here gathered together, and are hanging on the word of God's minister. Turn not your attention to our flesh, by which the word is given out to you; for hungry men regard not the meanness of the dish, but the preciousness of the food. God is proving you. Ye are gathered together, ye praise the word of God; temptation will prove in what manner ye hear it: ye will have the active business of life whereby your true character will be shown. For so he who to-day is shouting with railings, was yesterday a ready listener. Therefore I forewarn; therefore I tell you, therefore I do not withhold it, my Brethren, that the time of questioning will come. For the Lord maketh question of the righteous and of the ungodly. This you know ye have sung, this have we sung together; "The Lord maketh question of the righteous and the ungodly." And what follows? "But he that loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul." And in another place, "Into the thoughts of the ungodly there shall be questioning made." God doth not make question of thee there, where I question thee. I question thy tongue, God questioneth thy thoughts. For He knoweth how thou dost hear, and He knoweth how to require, Who ordereth me to give. He hath wished me to be a dispenser, the requiring He hath reserved to Himself. To admonish, to teach, to rebuke, is ours; but to save, and to crown, or to condemn, and to cast into hell, is not ours; "But the Judge shall deliver to the officer, and the officer to the prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt not go out thence, till thou payest the last farthing."

9. Let us then return to our subject. The perfection of righteousness is shown by the number forty. What is it to fulfil the number forty? To restrain one's self from the love of this world. Restraint from temporal things, that they be not loved to our destruction, is, as it were, fasting from this world. Therefore the Lord fasted forty days, and Moses, and Elias. He then who gave His servants the power to fast forty days, could He not fast eighty or a hundred? Why then did He not will to fast more than He had given His servants to do, but because in this number forty is the mystery of fasting, the restraint from this world? What is this to say? What the Apostle says; "The world is crucified to me, and I to the world." He then fulfils the number forty. And what doth the Lord show? That because Moses did this, this Elias, this Christ, that this both the Law, and the Prophets, and the

Gospel, teach; that thou mayest not think that there is one thing in the Law, another in the Prophets, another in the Gospel. All Scripture teacheth thee nothing else, but restraint from the love of the world, that thy love may speed on to God. As a figure that the Law teaches this, Moses fasted forty days. As a figure that the Prophets teach it, Elias fasted forty days. As a figure that the Gospel teaches it, the Lord fasted forty days. And therefore in the mount too these three appeared, the Lord in the middle, Moses and Elias at the sides. Wherefore? Because the Gospel itself receives testimony from the Law and the Prophets. But why in the number forty is the perfection of righteousness? In the Psalter it is said, "O God, I will sing a new song unto Thee, upon a psaltery of ten strings will I sing praises unto Thee." Which signifies the ten precepts of the Law, which the Lord came not to destroy, but to fulfil. And the Law itself throughout the whole world, it is evident, hath four quarters, the East, and West, South, and North, as the Scripture saith. And hence the vessel which bare all the emblematic animals, which was exhibited to Peter, when he was told, "Kill and eat," that it might be shown that the Gentiles should believe and enter into the body of the Church, just as what we eat entereth into our body, and which was let down from heaven by four corners (these are the four quarters of the world), showed that the whole world should believe. Therefore in the number forty is restraint from the world. This is the fulfilling of the Law: now the fulfilling of the Law is charity. And therefore before the Pasch we fast forty days. For this time before the Pasch is the sign of this our toilsome life, wherein, in toils, and cares, and continence, we fulfil the Law. But afterwards we celebrate the Pasch, that is, the days of the Lord's resurrection signifying our own resurrection. Therefore fifty days are celebrated; because the reward of the denarius is added to the forty, and it becomes fifty. Why is the reward a denarius? Have ye not read, how that they who were hired into the vineyard, whether at the first, or sixth, or the last hour, could only receive the denarius? When to our righteousness shall be added its reward, we shall be in the number fifty. Yea, and then shall we have none other occupation, save to praise God. And therefore throughout those days we say, "Hallelujah." For Halleluiah is the praise of God. In this frail estate of mortality, in this fortieth number here, as though before the resurrection, let us groan in prayers, that we may sing praises then. Now is the time of longing, then will be the time of embracing and enjoying. Let us not faint in the time of forty, that we may joy in the time of fifty.

10. Now who is he that fulfilleth the Law, but he that hath charity? Ask the Apostle, “Charity is the fulfilling of the Law. For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, in that which is written, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” But the commandment of charity is twofold; “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great commandment. The other is like it; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” They are the words of the Lord in the Gospel: “On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” Without this twofold love the Law cannot be fulfilled. As long as the Law is not fulfilled, there is infirmity. Therefore he had two short, who was infirm thirty and eight years. What means, “had two short”? He did not fulfil these two commandments. What doth it profit that the rest is fulfilled, if those are not fulfilled? Hast thou thirty-eight? If thou have not those two, the rest will profit thee nothing. Thou hast two short, without which the rest avail not, if thou have not the two commandments which conduct unto salvation. “If I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And if I know all mysteries, and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I distribute all my substance, and if I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” They are the Apostle’s words. All those things therefore which he mentioned are as it were the thirty-eight years; but because charity was not there, there was infirmity. From that infirmity who then shall make whole, but He who came to give charity? “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.” And because He came to give charity, and charity fulfilleth the Law, with good reason said He, “I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil.” He cured the sick man, and told him to carry his couch, and go unto his house. And so too He said to the sick of the palsy whom He cured. What is it to carry our couch? The pleasure of our flesh. Where we lie in infirmity, is as it were our bed. But they who are cured master and carry it, are not by this flesh mastered. So then, thou whole one, master the frailness of thy flesh, that in the sign of the forty days’ fast from this world, thou mayest fulfill the number forty, for

that He hath made that sick man whole, “Who came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil.”

11. Having heard this, direct your heart to Godward. Do not deceive yourselves. Ask yourselves then when it is well with you in the world ; then ask yourselves, whether ye love the world, or whether ye love it not; learn to let it go before ye are let go yourselves. What is to let it go? Not heartily to love it. Whilst there is yet something with thee which thou must one day lose, and either in life or death let it go, it cannot be with thee always; whilst I say it is yet with thee, loosen thy love; be prepared for the will of God, hang upon God. Hold thee fast to Him, whom thou canst not lose against thy will, that if it chance thee to lose these temporal things, thou mayest say, “The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done, blessed be the Name of the Lord.” But if it chance, and God so wills it, that the things thou hast be with thee even to the last: for thy detachment from this life thou receivest the denarius, the fifty, and the perfection of blessedness cometh to pass in thee, when thou shalt sing Hallelujah. Having these things which I have now brought forward in your memory, may they avail to overthrowing your love of the world. Evil is its friendship, deceitful, it makes a man the enemy of God. Soon, in one single temptation, a man offendeth God, and becometh His enemy. Nay not then becometh His enemy; but is then discovered to have been His enemy. For when he was loving and praising Him, he was an enemy; but he neither knew it himself, nor did others. Temptation came, the pulse is touched, and the fever discovered. So then brethren, the love of the world, and the friendship of the world, make men the enemies of God. And it does not make good what it promises, it is a liar, and deceiveth. Therefore men never cease hoping in this world, and who attains to all he hopes for? But whereunto soever he attains, what he has attained to is forthwith disesteemed by him. Other things begin to be desired, other fond things are hoped for; and when they come, whatsoever it is that comes to thee, is disesteemed. Hold thee fast then to God, for He can never be of light esteem, for nothing is more beautiful than He. For for this cause are these things disesteemed, because they cannot stand, because they are not what He is. For nought, O soul, sufficeth thee, save He who created thee. Whatsoever else thou apprehendest is wretched; for He Alone can suffice

thee who made thee after His Own likeness. Thus it was expressly said, “Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.” There only can there be security; and where security can be, there in a certain sort will be insatiable satiety. For thou wilt neither be so satiated, as to wish to depart; nor will anything be wanting, as though thou couldest suffer want.

SERMON LXXVI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN V. 19, “THE SON CAN DO NOTHING OF HIMSELF, BUT WHAT HE SEETH THE FATHER DOING.”

1. The mysteries and secrets of the kingdom of God first seek for believing men, that they may make them understanding. For faith is understanding’s step; and understanding faith’s attainment. This the Prophet expressly says to all who prematurely and in undue order look for understanding, and neglect faith. For he says, “Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand.” Faith itself then also hath a certain light of its own in the Scriptures, in Prophecy, in the Gospel, in the Lessons of the Apostles. For all these things which are read to us in this present time, are lights in a dark place, that we may be nourished up unto the day. The Apostle Peter says, “We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.”

2. Ye see then, Brethren, how exceedingly unregulated and disordered in their haste are they who like immature conceptions seek an untimely birth before the birth; who say to us, “Why dost thou bid me believe what I do not see? Let me see something that I may believe. Thou biddest me believe whilst yet I see not; I wish to see, and by seeing to believe, not by hearing.” Let the Prophet speak. “Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand.” Thou wishest to ascend, and dost forget the steps. Surely, out of all order. O man, if I could show thee already what thou mightest see, I should not exhort thee to believe.

3. Faith then, as it has been elsewhere defined, is “the firm support of those who hope, the evidence of things which are not seen.” If they are not seen, how are they evidenced to be? What! Whence are these things which thou seest, but from That which thou seest not? To be sure thou dost see

somewhat that thou mayest believe somewhat, and from that thou seest, mayest believe what thou seest not. Be not ungrateful to Him who hath made thee see, whereby thou mayest be able to believe what as yet thou canst not see. God hath given thee eyes in the body, reason in the heart; arouse the reason of the heart, wake up the interior inhabitant of thine interior eyes, let it take to its windows, examine the creature of God. For there is one within who sees by the eyes. For when thy thoughts within thee are on any other subject, and the inhabitant within is turned away, the things which are before thine eyes thou seest not. For to no purpose are the windows open, when he who looks through them is away. It is not then the eyes that see, but some one sees by the eyes; awake him, arouse him. For this hath not been denied thee; God hath made thee a rational animal, set thee over the cattle, formed thee after His Own image. Oughtest thou to use them as the cattle do; only to see what to add to thy belly, not to thy soul? Stir up, I say, the eye of reason, use thine eyes as a man should, consider the heaven and earth, the ornaments of the heaven, the fruitfulness of the earth, the flight of the birds, the swimming of the fish, the virtue of the seeds, the order of the seasons; consider the works, and seek for the Author; take a view of what thou seest, and seek Him whom thou seest not. Believe on Him whom thou seest not, because of these things which thou seest. And lest thou think that it is with mine own words that I have exhorted thee; hear the Apostle saying, “For the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen by those things which are made.”

4. These things thou disregardedst, nor didst look upon them as a man, but as an irrational animal. The Prophet cried out to thee, and cried in vain. “Be ye not like to horse and mule, which have no understanding.” These things I say thou didst see, and disregard. God’s daily miracles were disesteemed, not for their easiness, but their constant repetition. For what is more difficult to understand than a man’s birth, that one who was in existence should by dying depart into darkness, and that one who was not, by being born should come forth to light? What so marvellous, what so difficult to comprehend? But with God easy to be done. Marvel at these things, awake; at His unusual works, thou canst wonder, are they greater than those which thou art accustomed to see? Men wondered that our Lord God Jesus Christ filled so many thousands with five loaves; and they do not wonder that

through a few grains the whole earth is filled with crops. When the water was made wine, men saw it, and were amazed; what else takes place with the rain along the root of the vine? He did the one, He does the other; the one that thou mayest be fed, the other that thou mayest wonder. But both are wonderful, for both are the works of God. Man sees unusual things, and wonders; whence is the man himself who wonders? where was he? whence came he forth? whence the fashion of his body? whence the distinction of his limbs? whence that beautiful form? from what beginnings? what contemptible beginnings? And he wonders at other things, when he the wonderer is himself a great wonder. Whence then are these things which thou seest but from Him whom thou seest not? But as I had begun to say, because these things were disesteemed by thee, He came Himself to do unusual things, that in these usual ones too thou mightest acknowledge thy Creator. He came to Whom it is said, “Renew signs.” To Whom it is said, “Show forth Thy marvellous mercies.” For dispensing them He ever was; He dispensed them, and no one marvelled. Therefore came He a Little one to the little, He came a Physician to the sick, who was able to come when He would, to return when He would, to do whatsoever He would, to judge as He would. And this, His will, is very righteousness; yea what He willeth, I say, is very righteousness. For that is not unrighteous which He willeth, nor can that be right which He willeth not. He came to raise the dead, men marvelling that He restored a man to the light who was in light already, He who day by day bringeth forth to the light those who were not.

5. These things He did, yet was He despised by the many, who considered not so much what great things He did, as how small He was; as though they said within themselves, “These are divine things, but He is a man.” Two things then thou seest, divine works, and a man. If divine works cannot be wrought but by God, take heed lest in This Man God lie concealed. Attend, I say, to what thou seest, believe what thou seest not. He hath not abandoned thee, who hath called thee to believe; though He enjoin thee to believe that which thou canst not see: yet hath He not given thee up to see nothing whereby thou mayest be able to believe what thou dost not see. Is the creation itself a small sign, a small indication of the Creator? He also came, He did miracles. Thou couldest not see God, a man thou couldest; so God was made Man, that in One thou mightest have both what to see, and

what to believe. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Thus thou hearest, and as yet seest not. Lo, He comes, lo, He is born, lo, He comes forth of a woman, who made man and woman. He who made man and woman was not made by man and woman. For thou wouldest peradventure have been likely to despise Him for being born, the manner of His birth canst thou not despise; for He ever was before that He was born. Lo, I say, He took a Body, He was clothed in Flesh, He came forth from the womb. Dost thou now see? seest thou now, I say? I ask as to the Flesh, but I point out as to That Flesh; something thou seest, and something thou seest not. Lo, in this very Birth, there are at once two things, one which thou mayest see, and another thou mayest not see; but so that by this which thou seest, thou mayest believe that which thou seest not. Thou hadst begun to despise, because thou seest Him who was born; believe what thou dost not see, that He was born of a virgin. “How trifling a person,” says one, “is he who was born!” But how great is He who was of a virgin born! And He who was born of a virgin brought thee a temporal miracle; He was not born of a father, of any man, I mean, His father, yet was He born of the flesh. But let it not seem impossible to thee, that He was born by His mother only, Who made man before father and mother.

6. He brought thee then a temporal miracle, that thou mayest seek and admire Him who is Eternal. For He “who came forth as a Bridegroom out of His chamber,” that is, out of the virgin’s womb, where the holy nuptials were celebrated of the Word and the Flesh: He brought, I say, a temporal miracle; but He is Himself eternal, He is coeternal with the Father, He it is, who “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” He did for thee whereby thou mightest be cured, that thou mightest be able to see what thou didst not see. What thou despisest in Christ, is not yet the contemplation of him that is made whole, but the medicine of the sick. Do not hasten to the vision of the whole. The Angels see, the Angels rejoice, the Angels feed Thereon and live; Whereon they feed faileth not, nor is their food minished. In the thrones of glory, in the regions of the heavens, in the parts which are above the heavens, the Word is seen by the Angels, and is their Joy; is their Food, and endureth. But in

order that man might eat Angel’s Bread, the Lord of Angels became Man. This is our Salvation, the Medicine of the infirm, the Food of the whole.

7. And He spake to men, and said what ye have now heard, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do.” Is there now any one, think we, that understandeth this? Is there any one, think we, in whom the eye-salve of the flesh hath now its effect to the discerning in any fashion the brightness of the Divinity? He hath spoken, let us speak too; He, because the Word; we, because of the Word. And why speak we, howsoever we do it, of the Word? Because we were made by the Word after the likeness of the Word. As far then as we are capable of, as far as we can be partakers of that ineffableness, let us also speak, and let us not be contradicted. For our faith hath gone before, so that we may say, “I believed, therefore have I spoken.” I speak then that which I believe; whether or no I also see, or howsoever I see; He seeth rather; ye cannot see it. But when I shall have spoken, whether he who sees what I speak of, believe that I see too what I have spoken of, or whether he believe it not, what is that to me? Let him only really see, and let him believe what he will of me.

8. “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do.” Here rises up an error of the Arians; but it rises up that it may fall; because it is not humbled, that it may rise. What is it which hath set thee off? Thou wouldest say that the Son is less than the Father. For thou hast heard, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do.” From this thou wouldest have the Son called less; it is this I know, I know it is this hath set thee off; believe that He is not less, thou canst not as yet see it, believe, this is what I was saying a little while ago. “But how,” you will say, “am I to believe against His own words”? He saith Himself, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do.” Attend too to that which follows; “For what things soever the Father doeth, the same also doeth the Son likewise;” He did not say, “such things,” Beloved, consider a while, that ye cause not confusion to yourselves. There is need of a tranquil heart, a godly and devout faith, a religious earnest attention; attend, not to me the poor vessel, but to Him who putteth the bread in the vessel. Attend then a while. For in all that I have said above in exhorting you to faith, that

the mind imbued with faith may be capable of understanding, all that has been said has had a pleasing, glad, and easy sound, has cheered your minds, ye have followed it, ye have understood what I said. But what I am now about to say I hope there are some who will understand; yet I fear that all will not understand. And seeing that God hath by the lesson of the Gospel proposed to us a subject to speak upon, and we cannot avoid that which the Master hath proposed; I fear lest haply they who will not understand, who perhaps will be the greater number, should think that I have spoken to them in vain; but yet because of those who will understand, I do not speak in vain. Let him who understandeth rejoice, let him who doth not understand bear it patiently; what he doth not understand, let him bear, and that he may understand, let him bear delay.

9. He doth not say then, “What things soever the Father doeth, such doeth the Son:” as if the Father doeth some things, and the Son others. For it did seem as though He had meant this when He said above, “The Son doeth nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do.” Mark; He did not there either say, “But what He heareth the Father enjoin;” but, “what He seeth the Father do.” If then we consult the carnal understanding, or sense rather, He hath set before Him as it were two workmen, the Father and the Son, the Father working without seeing any, the Son working from seeing the Father. This is still a carnal view. Nevertheless, in order to understand those things which are higher, let us not decline these lower and mean things. First, let us set something before our eyes in this way; let us suppose there are two workmen, father and son. The father has made a chest, which the son could not make, unless he saw the father making it: he keeps his mind on the chest which the father has made, and makes another chest like it, not the same. I put off for a while the words which follow, and now I ask the Arian; “Dost thou understand it in the sense of this supposition? Hath the Father done something, which when the Son saw Him do, He too hath done something like it? For do the words by which thou art perplexed seem to have this meaning?” Now He doth not say, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He heareth the Father enjoin.” But He saith, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do.” See, if thou understand it thus; the Father hath done something, and the Son attendeth that He may see what He Himself too hath to do; and that, some other thing

like that which the Father had done. This which the Father hath done, by whom hath He done it? If not by the Son, if not by the Word, thou hast incurred the charge of blasphemy against the Gospel. "For all things were made by Him." So then what the Father had done, He had done by the Word; if by the Word He had done it, He had done it by the Son. Who then is that other who attends, that He may do some other thing which he seeth the Father do? Ye have not been wont to say that the Father hath two sons: there is One, One Only-Begotten of Him. But through His mercy, Alone as regards His Divinity and not Alone as regards the inheritance. The Father hath made coheirs with His Only Son; not begotten them like Him of His Own Substance, but adopted them by Him out of His Own family. For "we have been called," as Holy Scripture testifieth, "into the adoption of sons."

10. What then sayest thou? It is the Only Son Himself That speaketh; the Only-Begotten Son speaketh in the Gospel: the Word Himself hath given us the words, we have heard Himself saying, "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do." Now then the Father doeth that the Son may see what to do; and nevertheless the Father doeth nothing but by the Son. Assuredly thou art confused, thou heretic, assuredly thou art confused; but thy confusion is as from taking hellebore, that thou mayest be cured. Even now thou canst not find thine own self, thou dost even thyself condemn thine own judgment and thy carnal view, I think. Put behind thee the eyes of the flesh, raise up what eyes thou hast in thine heart, behold things divine. They are men's words it is true thou hearest, and by a man, by the Evangelist, by the Gospel thou hearest men's words, as a man; but it is of the Word of God thou hearest, that thou mayest hear what is human, come to know what is Divine. The Master hath given trouble, that He might instruct; hath sown a difficulty, that He might excite an earnest attention. "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do." It might follow that He should say, "For what things soever the Father doeth, the like doeth the Son." This He doth not say; but, "What things soever the Father doeth, the same doeth the Son likewise." The Father doeth not some things, the Son other things; because all things that the Father doeth, He doeth by the Son. The Son raised Lazarus; did not the Father raise him? The Son gave sight to the blind man; did not the Father give him sight? The Father by the Son in the Holy Ghost. It is the Trinity; but the Operation of

the Trinity is One, the Majesty One, the Eternity One, the Coeternity One, and the Works the Same. The Father doth not create some men, the Son others, the Holy Ghost others; the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost create one and the same man; and the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, One God, createth him.

11. You observe a Plurality of Persons, but acknowledge the Unity of the Divinity. For because of the Plurality of Persons it was said, “Let Us make man after Our image and likeness.” He did not say, “I will make man, and do Thou attend when I am making him, that Thou too mayest be able to make another.” “Let Us make,” He saith; I hear the Plurality; “after Our image;” again I hear the Plurality. Where then is the Singularity of the Divinity? Read what follows, “And God made man.” It is said, “Let Us make man;” and it is not said, “The Gods made man.” The Unity is understood in that it was said, “God made man.”

12. Where then is that carnal view? Be it confounded, hidden, brought to nought; let the Word of God speak to us. Even now as godly men, as believing already, as already imbued with faith, and having gotten some attainment of understanding, turn we to the Word Himself, to the Fountain of light, and let us say together, “O Lord, the Father doeth ever the same things as Thou; for that whatsoever the Father doeth, by Thee He doeth it. We have heard that Thou art the Word in the beginning; we have not seen, but believed. There too have we heard what follows, that all things were made by Thee.’ All things then that the Father doeth, He doeth by Thee. Therefore Thou doest the same things as the Father. Why then didst Thou wish to say, The Son can do nothing of Himself’? For I see a certain equality in Thee with the Father, in that I hear, What things soever the Father doeth, the same doeth the Son;’ I recognise an equality, hereby I understand, and comprehend as far as I am able, I and My Father are One.’ What meaneth it, that Thou canst do nothing, but what Thou seest the Father do? What meaneth this?”

13. Peradventure He would say to me, yea say to us all: “Now as to this that I have said, The Son can do nothing, but what He seeth the Father do;’ My Seeing’ how dost thou understand? My Seeing,’ what is it? Put aside for a while the form of the servant which He took for thy sake. For in that

servant’s form our Lord had eyes and ears in the Flesh, and that human form was the same figure of a Body, such as we bear, the same outlines of members. That Flesh had come from Adam: but He was not as Adam. So then the Lord walking whether on the earth or in the sea, as it pleased Him, as He would, for whatever He would, He could; looked at what He would; He fixed His eyes, He saw; He turned away His eyes, and did not see; who followed was behind Him, whoso could be seen, before Him; with the eyes of His Body, He saw only what was before Him. But from His Divinity nothing was hid. Put aside, put aside, I say, for a while the form of the servant, look at the Form of God in which He was before the world was made; in which He was equal to the Father; hereby receive and understand what He saith to thee, Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.’ There see Him if thou canst, that thou mayest be able to see what His Seeing’ is.” “In the beginning was the Word.” How doth the Word see? Hath the Word eyes, or are our eyes found in Him, the eyes not of the flesh, but the eyes of godly hearts? For, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

14. Christ thou seest Man and God; He doth manifest to thee the Man, God He reserveth for thee. Now see how He reserveth God for thee, who doth manifest Himself to thee as Man. “Whoso loveth Me,” saith He, “keepeth My commandments; whoso loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him.” And as if it were asked, “What wilt Thou give to him whom Thou lovest?” “And I will manifest Myself,” saith He, “to him.” What meaneth this, Brethren? He whom they saw already, promised that He would manifest Himself to them. To whom? Those by whom He was seen, or those also by whom He was not seen? Thus speaking to a certain Apostle, who asked to see the Father, that it might suffice him, and said, “Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us”—Then He standing before this servant’s eyes, in the form of a servant, reserving for his eyes when deified the Form of God, saith to him, “Have I been so long time with you, and have ye not known Me? He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also.” Thou askest to see the Father; see Me, thou seest Me, and dost not see Me. Thou seest what for thee I have assumed, thou dost not see What I have reserved for thee. Give ear to My commandments, purify thine eyes. “For whoso loveth Me, keepeth My commandments, and I will love him.” To him as

keeping My commandments, and by My commandments made whole will I manifest Myself.

15. If then, Brethren, we are not able to see what the “Seeing” of the Word is, whither are we going? what Vision it may be with too great haste are we requiring? why are we wishing to have shown us what we are not able to see? These things accordingly are spoken of which we desire to see, not as what we are able already to comprehend. For if thou seest the “Seeing” of the Word, peradventure in that thou seest the “Seeing” of the Word, thou wilt see the Word Himself; that the Word may not be one thing, the “Seeing” of the Word another, lest there be Therein anything joined, and coupled, and double, and compacted. For It is something Simple, of a Simplicity ineffable. Not as with a man, the man is one thing, the man’s seeing another. For sometimes a man’s seeing is extinguished, and the man remains. This it is of which I said that I was about to say something which all would not be able to understand; the Lord even grant that some may have understood. My Brethren, to this end doth He exhort us, that we may see, that the “Seeing” of the Word is beyond our powers; for they are small; be they nourished, perfected. Whereby? By the commandments. What commandments? “He that loveth Me, keepeth My commandments.” What commandments? For already do we wish to increase, to be strengthened, perfected, that we may see the “Seeing” of the Word. Tell us, Lord, now what commandments? “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.” This charity then, Brethren, let us draw from the plentifulness of the Fountain, let us receive it; be nourished by it. Receive thou that whereby thou mayest be able to receive. Let charity give thee birth, let charity nourish thee; charity bring thee to perfection, charity strengthen thee; that thou mayest see this “Seeing” of the Word, that the Word is not one thing and His “Seeing” another, but that the “Seeing” of the Word is the Very Word Himself; and so perhaps thou wilt soon understand that that which is said, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do,” is as if He had said, “The Son would not be, if He had not been born of the Father.” Let this suffice, Brethren; I know that I have said that which perhaps, if meditated upon, may develop itself to many, which oftentimes when expressed in words may chance to be obscured.

SERMON LXXVII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN V. 25,"VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, THE HOUR COMETH, AND NOW IS, WHEN THE DEAD SHALL HEAR THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD; AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE,"ETC.; AND ON THE WORDS OF THE APOSTLE, "THINGS WHICH EYE SAW NOT," ETC., 1 COR. II. 9

1. Our hope, Brethren, is not of this present time, nor of this world, nor in that happiness whereby men are blinded that forget God. This ought we above all things to know, and in a Christian heart hold fast, that we were not made Christians for the good things of the present time, but for something else which God at once promiseth, and man doth not yet comprehend. For of this good it is said, "That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him." Because then this good, so great, so excellent, so ineffable, fell not in with man's understanding, it required God's promise. For what hath been promised him, man blind of heart doth not now comprehend; nor can it be shown to him at present, what he will one day be to whom the promise is given. For so an infant child, if he could understand the words of one speaking, when himself could neither speak, nor walk, nor do anything, but feeble as we see he is, unable to stand, requiring the assistance of others, were able only to understand him who should speak to him and tell him, "Lo, as thou seest me walking, working, speaking, after a few years thou shall be as I am;" as he considered himself and the other, though he would see what was promised; yet considering his own feebleness, would not believe, and yet he would see what was promised. But with us infants, as it were, lying in this flesh and feebleness, that which is promised is at once great and is not seen; and so faith is aroused whereby we believe that we do not see that we may attain to see what we believe. Whosoever derideth this faith, so as to think that he is not to believe in that he doth not see; when that shall come which he believed not, is put to shame: being confounded is separated, being separated, is condemned. But whoso shall have believed, is put aside at the right hand, and shall stand with great confidence and joy among those to whom it shall be said, "Come, blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which hath been prepared for you from the beginning of the world." But the Lord made an end when He spake these words, thus,

“These shall go into everlasting burning, but the righteous into life eternal.” This is the life eternal which is promised us.

2. Because men love to live on this earth, life is promised them; and because they exceedingly fear to die, eternal life is promised them. What dost thou love? To live. This shalt thou have. What dost thou fear? To die. Thou shalt not suffer it. This seemed to be enough for human infirmity, that it should be said, “Thou shalt have eternal life.” This the mind of man can comprehend, by its present condition it can in some sort comprehend what is to be. But by the imperfection of its present condition how far can it comprehend it? Because he lives, and does not wish to die; he loves eternal life, he wishes to live always, never to die. But they who shall be tormented in punishments, have even a wish to die, and cannot. It is no great thing then to live long, or to live for ever; but to live blessedly is a great thing. Let us love eternal life, and hereby may we know how greatly we ought to labour for eternal life, when we see men who love the present life, which lasts but for a time and must be brought to an end, labour so for it, that when the fear of death comes, they will do whatever they can, not to put away, but to put off death. How does a man labour, when death threatens, by flight, by concealment, by giving all he has, and redeeming himself, by toil, by endurance of torments and uneasinesses, by calling in physicians, and whatever else a man can do? See, how that after exhausting all his labour and his means, he is but able to contrive to live a little longer; to live always, he is not able. If then men strive with so great labour, with so great efforts, so great a cost, such earnestness, such watchfulness, such carefulness, that they may live a little longer; how should they strive that they may live for ever? And if they are called wise, who by all means strive to put off death, and live a few days, that they lose not a few days: how foolish are they who so live as to lose the day eternal!

3. This then only can be promised us, that this gift of God may in whatever measure be sweet to us, from this which we have at present; seeing that it is of His gift we have it, that we live, that we are in health. When then eternal life is promised, let us set before our eyes a life of such a kind, as to remove from it everything unpleasant which we suffer here. For it is easier for us to find what is not there, than what is there. Lo, here we live; we shall live

there also. Here we are in health when we are not sick, and there is no pain in the body; there we shall be in health also. And when it is well with us in this life, we suffer no scourge; we shall suffer none there also. Suppose then a man here below living, in sound health, suffering no scourge; if any one were to grant him that he should be for ever so, and that this good estate should never cease, how greatly would he rejoice? how greatly be transported? how would he not contain himself in joy without pain, without torment, without end of life? If God had promised us this only, which I have mentioned, which I have just now in such words as I was able, described and set forth; at what a price ought it to be purchased if it were to be sold, how great a sum ought to be given to buy it? Would all that thou hadst suffice, even though thou shouldest possess the whole world? And yet it is to be sold; buy it if thou wilt. And be not much disquieted for a thing so great, because of the largeness of the price. Its price is no more than what thou hast. Now to procure any great and precious thing, thou wouldest get ready gold, or silver, or money, or any increase of cattle, or fruits, which might be produced in thy possessions, to buy this I know not what great and excellent thing, whereby to live in this earth happily. Buy this too, if thou wilt. Do not look for what thou hast, but for what thou art. The price of this thing is thyself. Its price is what thou art thyself. Give thine own self, and thou shalt have it. Why art thou troubled? why disquieted? What? Art thou going to seek for thine own self, or to buy thyself? Lo, give thine own self as thou art, such as thou art to that thing, and thou shalt have it. But you will say, “I am wicked, and perhaps it will not accept me.” By giving thyself to it, thou wilt be good. The giving thyself to this faith and promise, this is to be good. And when thou shalt be good, thou wilt be the price of this thing; and shalt have, not only what I have mentioned, health, safety, life, and life without end; thou shalt not only have this, I will take away other things yet. There shall there be no weariness, and sleeping; there shall there be no hunger, and thirst; there shall there be no growing, and growing old; because there shall be no birth either where the numbers remain entire. The number that is there is entire; nor is there any need for it to be increased, seeing there is no chance of diminution there. Lo, how many things have I taken away, and I have not yet said what shall be there. Lo, already there is life, and safety; no scourge, no hunger, no thirst, no failing, none of these; and yet I have not said, “what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath ascended into the heart of man.” For if I have said it, it is false that is written, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it ascended into the heart of man.” For whence should it ascend into my heart, that I should say “that which hath not ascended into the heart of man”? It is believed, and not seen; not only not seen, but not even expressed. How then is it believed, if it is not expressed? Who believes what he doth not hear? But if he hear it that he may believe, it is expressed; if expressed, it is thought of; if thought of and expressed, then it entereth into the ears of men. And because it would not be expressed if it were not thought of, it hath ascended also into the heart of man. Lo, already the mere proposing of so great a thing disturbs us, that we cannot put it forth clearly in words. Who then can explain the thing itself?

4. Let us attend to the Gospel; just now the Lord was speaking, and let us do what He said. “He that believeth in Me,” saith He, “passeth from death unto life, and cometh not into judgment. Verily I say unto you, that the hour shall come, and now is, when the dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” By begetting Him He gave it; in that He begat, He gave it. For the Son is of the Father, not the Father of the Son; but the Father is the Father of the Son, and the Son is the Son of the Father. I say the Son is begotten of the Father, not the Father of the Son; and the Son was always, always therefore begotten. Who can comprehend this “always begotten”? For when any man hears of one begotten, it occurs to him; “Therefore there was a time, when he who was begotten was not.” What say we then? Not so; there was no time before the Son, for that “all things were made by Him.” If all things were made by Him, times also were made by Him; how could times be before the Son, by whom times were made? Take away then all times, the Son was with the Father always. If the Son were with the Father always, and yet the Son, He was begotten always; if begotten always, He who was begotten was always with Him That begat Him.

5. You will say, “This have I never seen, one begetting, and always with him whom he begat; but he that begat came first, and he that was begotten followed in time.” You say well, “I have never seen this;” for this appertains

to “that which eye hath not seen.” Do you ask how it may be expressed? It cannot be expressed; “For the ear hath not heard, neither hath it ascended unto the heart of man.” Be it believed and adored, when we believe, we adore; when we adore, we grow; when we grow, we comprehend. For as yet whilst we are in this flesh, as long as we are absent from the Lord, we are, with respect to the Holy Angels who see these things, infants to be suckled by faith, hereafter to be fed by sight. For so saith the Apostle, “As long as we are in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight.” We shall some day come to sight, which is thus promised us by John in his Epistle; “Dearly beloved, we are the sons of God, and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be.” We are the sons of God now by grace, by faith, by the Sacrament, by the Blood of Christ, by the redemption of the Saviour; “We are the sons of God, and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

6. Lo, unto the comprehending of what are we being nourished up; lo, unto the embracing and the feeding on what are we being nourished up; yet so as that that which is fed on is not diminished, and he that feedeth is supported. For now food supports us by eating it; but the food which is eaten, is diminished; but when we shall begin to feed on Righteousness, to feed on Wisdom, to feed on that Food Immortal, we are at once supported, and That Food is not diminished. For if the eye knows how to feed on light, and yet doth not diminish the light; for the light will be no less because it is seen by more; it feeds the eyes of more, and yet is as great as it was before: both they are fed, and it is not diminished; if God hath granted this to the light which He hath made for the eyes of the flesh, what is He Himself, the Light for the eyes of the heart? If then any choice food were praised to thee, on which thou wast to dine, thou wouldest prepare the stomach; God is praised to thee, prepare the heart.

7. Behold what thy Lord saith to thee: “The hour shall come,” saith He, “and now is.” “The hour shall come,” yea, that very hour, “now is, when”—what? “when the dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God, and they that shall hear shall live.” They then that shall not hear, shall not live. What is, “They that shall hear”? They that shall obey. What is, “They that shall

hear”? They that shall believe and obey, they shall live. So then before they believed and obeyed, they lay dead; they walked, and were dead. What availed it to them, that they walked, being dead? And yet if any among them were to die a bodily death, they would run, get ready the grave, wrap him up, carry him out, bury him, the dead, the dead; of whom it is said, “Let the dead bury their dead.” Such dead as these are in such wise raised by the Word of God, as to live in faith. They who were dead in unbelief, are aroused by the Word. Of this hour said the Lord, “The hour shall come, and now is.” For with His Own Word did He raise them that were dead in unbelief; of whom the Apostle says, “Arise thou that sleepest, and rise up from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” This is the resurrection of hearts, this is the resurrection of the inner man, this is the resurrection of the soul.

8. But this is not the only resurrection, there remains a resurrection of the body also. Whoso riseth again in soul, riseth again in body to his blessedness. For in soul all do not rise again; in body all are to rise again. In soul, I say, all do not rise again; but they that believe and, obey; for, “They that shall hear shall live.” But as the Apostle says, “All men have not faith.” If then all men have not faith, all men do not rise again in soul. When thy hour of the resurrection of the body shall come, all shall rise again; be they good or bad, all shall rise again. But whoso first riseth again in soul, to his blessedness riseth again in body; whoso doth not first rise again in soul, riseth again in body to his curse. Whoso riseth again in soul, riseth again in body unto life; whoso riseth not again in soul, riseth again in body unto punishment. Seeing then that the Lord hath impressed upon us this resurrection of souls, unto which we ought all to hasten, and to labour that we may live therein, and living persevere even unto the end, it remained for Him to impress upon us the resurrection of bodies also, which is to be at the end of the world. Now hear how He hath impressed this too.

9. When He had said, “Verily I say unto you, The hour shall come, and now is, when the dead,” that is, the unbelievers, “shall hear the Voice of the Son of God,” that is, the Gospel, “and they that shall hear,” that is, that shall obey, “shall live,” that is, shall be justified, and shall be unbelievers no longer; when, I say, He had said this, forasmuch as He saw that we had

need to be instructed as to the resurrection of the flesh also, and were not to be left thus, He went on and said, “For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” This refers to the resurrection of souls, to the quickening of souls. Then He added, “And hath given Him power to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.” This Son of God, is Son of Man. For if the Son of God had continued the Son of God, and had not been made the Son of Man, He would not have delivered the sons of men. He who had made man, was Himself made that which He made, that what He made might not perish. But He was in such wise made the Son of Man, as to continue the Son of God. For He was made Man by assuming that which He was not, not by losing That which He was; continuing God, He was made Man. He took thee, He was not consumed in thee. As such then came He to us, the Son of God, and Son of Man, the Maker and the Made, the Creator and the Created; the Creator of His mother, Created of His mother; such came He to us. In respect of His being the Son of God, He saith, “The hour shall come, and now is, when the dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God.” He did not say, “Of the Son of Man;” for He was impressing the truth, wherein He is equal to the Father. “And they that shall hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;” not by participation, but in our God. But He, the Father, hath life in Himself; and He begat such a Son as should have life in Himself; not be made a partaker of life, but Himself be Life, of which life we should be partakers; that is, should have life in Himself, and Himself be Life. But that He should be made the Son of Man, He took from us. Son of God in Himself; that He should be the Son of Man, He took from us. Son of God of That which is His Own, Son of Man of ours. That which is the less, took He from us; That which is the more, gave He to us. For thus He died in that He is the Son of Man, not in that He is the Son of God. Yet the Son of God died; but He died in respect to the flesh, not in respect to “the Word which was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” So then in that He died, He died of that which was ours; in that we live, we live of That which is His. He could not die of That which was His own, nor could we live of that which is our own. As God then, as the Only-Begotten, as equal with Him who begat Him, did the Lord Jesus impress this upon us, that if we hear, we shall live.

10. But, saith He, “He hath given Him power to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.” So then that Form is to come to judgment. The Form of Man is to come to judgment; therefore He said, “He hath given Him power to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.” The Judge here shall be the Son of Man; here shall That Form judge which was judged. Hear and understand: the Prophet had said this already, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced.” That Very Form shall they see which they smote with a spear. He shall sit as Judge, Who stood at the judge’s seat. He shall condemn the real criminals, Who was made a criminal falsely. He shall come Himself, That Form shall come. This you find in the Gospel too; when before the eyes of His disciples He was going into heaven, they stood and looked on, and the Angelic voice spake, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye,” etc. “This Jesus shall come in like manner as ye see Him going into heaven.” What is, “shall come in like manner”? Shall come in this Very Form. For “He hath given Him power to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.” Now see on what principle this was behoveful and right, that they who were to be judged might see the Judge. For they who were to be judged were both good and bad. “But blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” It remained that in the Judgment the Form of the servant should be manifested both to good and bad, the Form of God be reserved for the good alone.

11. For what is it that the good are to receive? Behold I am now expressing that which I did not express a little above; and yet in expressing I do not express it. For I said that there we shall be in sound health, shall be safe, shall be living, shall be without scourges, without hunger and thirst, without failing, without loss of our eyes. All this I said; but what we shall have more, I said not. We shall see God. Now this will be so great, yea so great a thing will it be, that in comparison of it, all the rest is nothing. I said that we shall be living, that we shall be safe and sound, that we shall suffer no hunger and thirst, that we shall not fall into weariness, that sleep will not oppress us. All this, what is it to that happiness, whereby we shall see God? Because then God cannot be now manifested as He is, whom nevertheless we shall see; therefore, “what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,” this the good shall see, this shall the godly see, this the merciful shall see, this shall the faithful see, this shall they see who shall have a good lot in the

resurrection of the body, for that they have had a good obedience in the resurrection of the heart.

12. Shall then the wicked man see God too? of whom Isaiah saith, “Let the ungodly be taken away, that he see not the Glory of God.” Both the ungodly and the godly then shall see that Form; and when the sentence, “Let the ungodly be taken away that he see not the Glory of God,” shall have been pronounced; it remains that as to the godly and the good, that be fulfilled which the Lord Himself promised, when He was here in the flesh, and seen not by the good only, but by the evil also. He spake amongst the good and evil, and was seen of all, as God, hidden, as Man, manifested; as God ruling men, as Man appearing among men: He spake, I say, among them, and said, “Whoso loveth Me, keepeth My commandments; and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him.” And as if it were said to Him, And what wilt Thou give him? And “I will,” He saith, “manifest Myself to him.” When did He say this? When He was seen by men. When did He say this? When He was seen even by them, by whom He was not loved. How then was He to manifest Himself to them that loved Him, save in Such a Form, as they who loved Him then saw not? Therefore, seeing that the Form of God was being reserved, the Form of man manifested; by the Form of man, speaking to men, conspicuous and visible, He manifested Himself to all, both good and bad, He reserved Himself for them that loved Him.

13. When is He to manifest Himself to them that love Him? After the resurrection of the body, when “the ungodly shall be taken away that he see not the Glory of God.” For then “when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” This is life eternal. For all that we said before is nothing to that life. That we live, what is it? That we are in health, what is it? That we shall see God, is a great thing. This is life eternal; this Himself hath said, “But this is life eternal, that they may know Thee the Only True God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” This is life eternal, that they may know, see, comprehend, acquaint themselves with what they had believed, may perceive that which they were not yet able to comprehend. Then may the mind see what “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it ascended into the heart of man;” this shall be said to

them at the end, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which hath been prepared for you from the beginning of the world.” Those wicked ones then shall go into everlasting burning. But the righteous, whither? Into life eternal? What is life eternal? “This is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the Only True God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.”

14. Speaking then of the future resurrection of the body, and not leaving us thus, He saith, “He hath given Him power to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Marvel not at this, for the hour shall come.” He did not add in this place, “and now is;” because this hour shall be hereafter, because this hour shall be at the end of the world, because this shall be the last hour, shall be at the last trump. “Marvel not at this,” because I have said, “He hath given Him power to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Marvel not.” For this reason have I said this, because it behoves Him as Man to be judged by men. And what men shall He judge? Those whom He finds alive? Not only those, but what? “The hour shall come, when they that are in the graves.” How did He express those that are dead in the flesh? “They who are in the graves,” whose corpses lie buried, whose ashes are covered up, whose bones are dispersed, whose flesh is flesh no more, and yet is entire to God. “The hour shall come, when all that are in the graves shall hear His Voice, and shall come forth.” Be they good or bad, they shall hear the Voice, and shall come forth. All the bands of the grave shall be burst asunder; all that was lost, yea rather was thought to be lost shall be restored. For if God made man who was not, can He not re-fashion that which was?

15. I suppose when it is said, “God shall raise the dead again,” no incredible thing is said for it is of God, not of man, that it is said. It is a great thing which shall be done, yea, an incredible thing that shall be done. But let it not be incredible, for see, who It is That doeth it. He it is said shall raise thee, Who created thee. Thou wast not, and thou art; and once made, shalt thou not be? God forbid thou shouldest think so! God did something more marvellous when He made that which was not; and nevertheless He did make that which was not; and shall it be disbelieved that He is able to re-fashion that which was, by those very persons whom He made what they

were not? Is this the return we make to God, we who were not, and were made? Is this the return we make Him, that we will not believe that He is able to raise again what He hath made? Is this the return which His creature renders Him? "Have I therefore," God saith to thee, "made thee, O man, before thou wast, that thou shouldest not believe Me, that thou shalt be what thou wast, who hast been able to be what thou wast not?" But you will say, "Lo, what I see in the tomb, is dust, ashes, bones; and shall this receive life again, skin, substance, flesh, and rise again? what? these ashes, these bones, which I see in the tomb?" Well. At least thou seest ashes, thou seest bones in the tomb; in thy mother's womb there was nothing. This thou seest, ashes at least there are, and bones; before that thou wast, there was neither ashes, nor bones; and yet thou wast made, when thou wast not at all; and dost thou not believe that these bones (for in whatever state, of whatever kind they are, yet they are), shall receive the form again which they had, when thou hast received what thou hadst not? Believe; for if thou shalt believe this, then shall thy soul be raised up. And thy soul shall be raised up "now;" "The hour shall come, and now is;" then to thy blessing shall thy flesh rise again, "when the hour shall come, that all that are in the graves shall hear His Voice, and shall come forth." For thou must not at once rejoice, because thou dost hear "and come forth;" hear what follows, "They that have done good unto the resurrection of life; but they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." Turning to the Lord, etc.

SERMON LXXVIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN V. 31,"IF I BEAR WITNESS OF MYSELF," ETC.; AND ON THE WORDS OF THE APOSTLE, GALATIANS V. 16, "WALK BY THE SPIRIT, AND YE SHALL NOT FULFIL THE LUST OF THE FLESH. FOR THE FLESH LUSTETH," ETC

1. We have heard the words of the holy Gospel; and this that the Lord Jesus saith, "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true," may perplex some. How then is not the witness of the Truth true? Is it not Himself who hath said, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life"? Whom then are we to believe, if we must not believe the Truth? For of a surety he is minded to believe nothing but falsehood, who does not choose to believe the truth. So then this was spoken on their principles, that you should understand it thus, and gather this meaning from these words; "If I bear witness of Myself, My

witness is not true," that is, as ye think. For He knew well that His Own witness of Himself was true; but for the sake of the weak, and hard of belief, and without understanding, the Sun looked out for lamps. For their weakness of sight could not bear the dazzling brightness of the Sun.

2. Therefore was John sought for to bear witness to the Truth; and ye have heard what He said; "Ye came unto John; he was a burning and a shining lamp, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." This lamp was prepared for their confusion, for of this was it said so long time before in the Psalms, "I have prepared a lamp for Mine Anointed." What! a lamp for the Sun! "His enemies will I clothe with confusion: but upon Himself shall my sanctification flourish." And hence they were in a certain place confounded by means of this very John, when the Jews said to the Lord, "By what authority doest Thou these things? Tell us." To whom He answered, "Do ye tell Me too, The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" They heard, and held their peace. For they thought at once with themselves. "If we shall say, Of men: the people will stone us; for they hold John as a prophet. If we shall say, From heaven; He will say to us, Why then have ye not believed him?" For John bare witness to Christ. So straitened in their hearts by their own questions, and taken in their own snares, they answered, "We do not know." What else could the voice of darkness be? It is right indeed for a man when he does not know, to say, "I know not." But when he does know, and says, "I know not;" he is a witness against himself. Now they knew well John's excellency, and that his baptism was from heaven; but they were unwilling to acquiesce in Him to whom John bare witness. But when they said, "We do not know;" Jesus answered them. "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things." And they were confounded; and so was fulfilled, "I have prepared a lamp for Mine Anointed, His enemies will I clothe with confusion."

3. Are not Martyrs witnesses of Christ, and do they not bear witness to the truth? But if we think more carefully, when those Martyrs bear witness, He beareth witness to Himself. For He dwelleth in the Martyrs, that they may bear witness to the truth. Hear one of the Martyrs, even the Apostle Paul; "Would ye receive a proof of Christ, who speaketh in Me?" When John then beareth witness, Christ, who dwelleth in John, beareth witness to Himself.

Let Peter bear witness, let Paul bear witness, let the rest of the Apostles bear witness, let Stephen bear witness, it is He who dwelleth in them all that beareth witness to Himself. For He without them is God, they without Him, what are they?

4. Of Him it is said, “He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, He gave gifts unto men.” What is, “He led captivity captive”? He conquered death. What is, “He led captivity captive”? The devil was the author of death, and the devil was himself by the Death of Christ led captive. “He ascended up on high.” What do we know higher than heaven? Visibly and before the eyes of His disciples He ascended into heaven. This we know, this we believe, this we confess. “He gave gifts unto men.” What gifts? The Holy Spirit. He who giveth such a Gift, what is He Himself? For great is God’s mercy; He giveth a Gift equal to Himself; for His Gift is the Holy Spirit, and the Whole Trinity, Father and Son and Holy Spirit, is One God. What hath the Holy Spirit brought us? Hear the Apostle; “The love of God,” saith he, “hath been shed abroad in our hearts.” Whence, thou beggar, hath the love of God been shed abroad in thine heart? How, or wherein hath the love of God been shed abroad in the heart of man? “We have,” saith he, “this treasure in earthen vessels.” Why in earthen vessels? “That the excellency of the power may be of God?” Finally, when he had said, “The love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts;” that no man might think that he hath this love of God of himself, he added immediately, “By the Holy Spirit, who hath been given to us.” Therefore, that thou mayest love God, let God dwell in thee, and love Himself in thee, that is, to His love let Him move thee, enkindle, enlighten, arouse thee.

5. For in this body of ours there is a struggle; as long as we live, we are in combat; as long as we are in combat, we are in peril; but, “in all these things we are conquerors through Him who loved us.” Our combat ye heard of just now when the Apostle was being read. “All the law,” saith he, “is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” This love is from the Holy Spirit. “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” First see, if thou knowest yet how to love thyself; and then will I commit to thee the neighbour whom thou art to love as thyself. But if thou dost not yet know how to love thyself; I fear lest thou shouldest deceive thy

neighbour as thyself. For if thou lovest iniquity, thou dost not love thyself. The Psalm is witness; “But whoso loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul.” Now if thou hate thine own soul, what doth it profit thee that thou dost love thy flesh? If thou hate thine own soul and lovest thy flesh, thy flesh shall rise again; but only that thy soul may be tormented. Therefore the soul must first be loved, which is to be subdued unto God, that this service may maintain its due order, the soul to God, the flesh to the soul. Wouldest thou that thy flesh should serve thy soul? Let thy soul serve God. Thou oughtest to be ruled, that thou mayest be able to rule. For so perilous is this struggle, that if thy Ruler forsake thee, ruin must ensue.

6. What struggle? “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. But I say, Walk in the Spirit.” I am quoting the words of the Apostle, which have been just read out of his Epistle. “But I say, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.” “But I say, Walk in the Spirit, and the lusts of the flesh,” he did not say, “Ye shall not have;” nor did he say, “Ye shall not do;” but, “Ye shall not fulfil.” Now what this is, with the Lord’s assistance, I will declare as I shall be able; give attention, that ye may understand, if ye are walking in the Spirit. “But I say, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.” Let him follow on; if haply anything, as this which is here obscure, may be understood more easily by the sequel of his words. For I said, that it was not without a meaning that the Apostle would not say, “Ye shall not have the lusts of the flesh;” nor again would even say,” Ye shall not do the lusts of the flesh;” but said, “Ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.” He hath set forth this struggle before us. In this battle are we occupied, if we are in God’s service. What then follows? “For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. For these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye do not the things that ye would.” This, if it be not understood, is with exceeding peril heard. And therefore anxious as I am lest men by an evil interpretation should perish, I have undertaken with the Lord’s assistance to explain these words to your affection. We have leisure enough, we have begun early in the morning, the hour of dinner does not press; on this day, the sabbath that is, they that hunger after the word of God are wont especially to meet together. Hear and attend, I will speak with what carefulness I can.

7. What then is that which I said, “Is heard with peril if it be not understood”? Many overcome by carnal and damnable lusts, commit all sorts of crimes and impurities, and wallow in such abominable uncleanness, as it is a shame even to mention; and say to themselves these words of the Apostle. See what the Apostle has said, “So that we cannot do the things that ye would.” I would not do them, I am forced, I am compelled, I am overcome, “I do the things that I would not,” as the Apostle says. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” You see with what peril this is heard, if it be not understood. You see how it concerns the pastor’s office, to open the closed fountains, and to minister to the thirsty sheep the pure, harmless water.

8. Be not willing then to be overcome when thou fightest. See what kind of war, what kind of battle, what kind of strife he hath set forth, within, within thine own self. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit.” If the Spirit lust not also against the flesh, commit adultery. But if the Spirit lust against the flesh, I see a struggle, I do not see a victory, it is a contest. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit.” Adultery has its pleasure. I confess that it has its pleasure. But, “The Spirit lusteth against the flesh:” Chastity too has its pleasure. Therefore let the Spirit overcome the flesh; or by all means not be overcome by the flesh. Adultery seeks the darkness, chastity desires the light. As thou wouldest wish to appear to others, so live; as thou wouldest wish to appear to men, even when beyond the eyes of men so live; for He who made thee, even in the darkness seeth thee. Why is chastity praised publicly by all? Why do not even adulterers praise adultery? “Whoso” then “seeketh the truth, cometh to the light.” But adultery has its pleasure. Be it contradicted, resisted, opposed. For it is not so that thou hast nothing wherewith to fight. Thy God is in thee, the good Spirit hath been given to thee. And notwithstanding this flesh of ours is permitted to lust against the spirit by evil suggestions and real delights. Be that secured which the Apostle saith, “Let not sin reign in your mortal body.” He did not say, “Let it not be there.” It is there already. And this is called sin, because it has befallen us through the wages of sin. For in Paradise the flesh did not lust against the spirit, nor was there this struggle there, where was peace only; but after the transgression, after that man was loth to serve God and was

given up to himself; yet not so given up to himself as that he could so much as possess himself; but possessed by him, by whom deceived; the flesh began to lust against the Spirit. Now it is in the good that it lusteth against the Spirit; for in the bad it has nothing to lust against. For there doth it lust against the Spirit, where the Spirit is.

9. For when he says, “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh;” do not suppose that so much hath been attributed to the spirit of man. It is the Spirit of God who fighteth in thee against thyself, against that which in thee is against thee. For thou wouldest not stand to Godward; thou didst fall, wast broken; as a vessel when it falls from a man’s hand to the ground, wast thou broken. And because thou wast broken, therefore art thou turned against thyself; therefore art thou contrary to thine own self. Let there be nought in thee contrary to thyself, and thou shalt stand in thine integrity. For that thou mayest know that this office appertaineth to the Holy Spirit; the Apostle saith in another place, “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.” From these words man was at once uplifting himself, as though by his own spirit he were able to mortify the deeds of the flesh. “If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if through the Spirit ye do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.” Explain to us, Apostle, through what spirit? For man also hath a spirit appertaining to his proper nature, whereby he is man. For man consists of body and spirit. And of this spirit of man it is said, “No man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him.” I see then that man himself hath his own spirit appertaining to his proper nature, and I hear thee saying, “But if through the Spirit ye do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.” I ask, through what spirit; my own, or God’s? For I hear thy words, and am still perplexed by this ambiguity. For when the word “spirit” is used, it is used sometimes of the spirit of a man, and of cattle, as it is written, that “all flesh which had in itself the spirit of life, died by the flood.” And so the word spirit is spoken of cattle, and spoken of man too. Sometimes even the wind is called spirit; as it is in the Psalm, “Fire, hail, snow, frost, the spirit of the tempest.” For as much then as the word “spirit” is used in many ways, by what spirit, O Apostle, hast thou said that the deeds of the flesh are to be mortified; by mine own, or by the Spirit of God? Hear what follows, and

understand. The difficulty is removed by the following words. For when he had said, “But if through the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live;” he added immediately, “For as many as are acted upon by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Thou dost act, if thou art acted upon, and actest well, if thou art acted upon by the Good. So then when he said to thee, “If through the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live;” and it was doubtful with thee of what spirit he had spoken, in the words following understand the Master, acknowledge the Redeemer. For That Redeemer hath given thee the Spirit Whereby thou mayest mortify the deeds of the flesh. “For as many as are acted upon by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” They are not the sons of God if they are not acted upon by the Spirit of God. But if they are acted upon by the Spirit of God, they fight; because they have a mighty Helper. For God doth not look on at our combattings as the people do at the gladiators. The people may favour the gladiator, help him they cannot when he is in peril.

10. So then here to; “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.” And what means, “So that ye cannot do the things that ye would”? For here is the peril with one who understands it amiss. Be it now my office to explain it, howsoever incompetent. “So that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” Attend, ye holy ones, whosoever ye are that are fighting. To them that are battling do I speak. They who are fighting, understand; he that is not fighting, understands me not. Yea, he that is fighting, I will not say understands me, but anticipates me. What is the chaste man’s wish? That no lust should rise up in his members at all opposed to chastity. He wisheth for peace, but as yet he hath it not. For when we shall have come to that state, where there shall rise up no lust at all to be opposed, there will be no enemy for us to struggle with; nor is victory a matter for expectation there, for that there is triumphing over the now vanquished foe. Hear of this victory, in the Apostle’s own words; “This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Now when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” Hear the voices of them that triumph; “O death, where is thy contention? O death, where is thy sting?” Thou hast smitten, thou hast wounded, thou hast thrown down; but

He hath been wounded for me who made me. O death, death, He who made me hath been wounded for me, and by His Death hath overcome thee. And then in triumph shall they say, “O death, where is thy contention? O death, where is thy sting?”

11. But now, when “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh,” is the contention of death; we do not what we would. Why? Because we would that there should be no lusts, but we cannot hinder it. Whether we will or not, we have them; whether we will or not, they solicit, they allure, they sting, they disturb us, they will be rising. They are repressed, not yet extinguished. How long does the flesh lust against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh? Will it be so, even when the man is dead? God forbid! Thou puttest off the flesh, how then shall thou draw the lusts of the flesh along with thee? Nay, if thou hast fought well, thou shall be received into rest. And from this rest, thou passest to be crowned, not condemned; that thou mayest after it be brought to the Kingdom. As long then as we live here, my brethren, so it is; so is it with us even who have grown old in this warfare, less mighty enemies it is true we have, but yet we have them. Our enemies are in a measure wearied out even now by age; but nevertheless, wearied though they be, they do not cease to harass by such excitements as they can the quiet of old age. Sharper is the fight of the young; we know it well, we have passed through it: “The flesh” then “lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” For what would ye, O holy men, and good warriors, and brave soldiers of Christ? what would ye? That there should be no evil lusts at all. But ye cannot help it. Sustain the war, hope for triumph. For now in the meanwhile ye must fight. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would;” that is, that there should be no lusts of the flesh at all.

12. But do what ye are able; what the Apostle himself says in another place, which I had already begun to repeat; “Let not sin reign in your mortal body, to obey the desires thereof.” Lo, what I would not; evil desires arise; but obey them not. Arm thyself, assume the weapons of war. The precepts of God are thy arms. If thou listen to me as thou shouldest, thou art armed even by that which I am speaking. “Let not sin,’ he says, reign in your

mortal body.’ For as long as ye bear a mortal body, sin doth fight against you; but let it not reign.” What is, “Let it not reign”? That is, “to obey the desires thereof.” If ye begin to obey, it reigns. And what is it to obey, but to “yield your members as instruments of iniquity unto sin”? Nothing more excellent than this teacher. What wouldest thou that I should yet explain to thee? Do what thou hast heard. Yield not thy members instruments of iniquity unto sin. God hath given thee power by His Spirit to restrain thy members. Lust riseth up, restrain thy members; what can it do now that it hath risen? Restrain thou thy members; yield not thy members instruments of iniquity unto sin; arm not thine adversary against thyself. Restrain thy feet, that they go not after unlawful things. Lust hath risen up, restrain thy members; restrain thine hands from all wickedness; restrain the eyes, that they wander not astray; restrain the ears, that they hear not the words of lust with pleasure; restrain the whole body, restrain the sides, restrain its highest and lowest parts. What can lust do? How to rise up, it knoweth. How to conquer, it knoweth not. By rising up constantly without effect, it learns not even to rise.

13. Let us then return to the words, which I had set forth out of the Apostle as obscure, and we shall now see them to be plain. For this I had set forth, that the Apostle did not say, “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not have the lusts of the flesh;” because we must necessarily have them. Why then did he not say, “Ye shall not do the lusts of the flesh”? Because we do them; for we do lust. The very lusting, is doing. But the Apostle says, “Now it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” What then hast thou to beware of? This doubtless, that thou fulfil them not. A damnable lust hath risen up, it hath risen, made its suggestion; let it not be heard. It burneth, and is not quieted, and thou wouldest that it should not burn. Where then is, “So that ye cannot do the things that ye would”? Do not give it thy members. Let it burn without effect, and it will spend itself. In thee then these lusts are done. It must be confessed, they are done. And therefore he said, “Ye shall not fulfil.” Let them not then be fulfilled. Thou hast determined to do, thou hast fulfilled. For thou hast fulfilled it, if thou determinest upon committing adultery, and dost not commit it, because no place hath been found, because no opportunity is given, because, it may be, she for whom thou seemest to be disturbed is chaste; lo, now she is chaste,

and thou art an adulterer. Why? Because thou hast fulfilled lusts. What is, “hast fulfilled”? Hast determined in thy mind upon committing adultery. If now, which God forbid, thy members too have wrought, thou hast fallen down headlong into death.

14. Christ raised up the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue who was dead in the house. She was in the house, she had not yet been carried out. So is the man who hath determined on some wickedness in his heart; he is dead, but he lies within. But if he has come as far as to the action of the members, he has been carried out of the house. But the Lord raised also the young man, the widow’s son, when he was being carried out dead beyond the gate of the city. So then I venture to say, Thou hast determined in thine heart, if thou call thyself back from thy deed, thou wilt be cured before thou put it into action. For if thou repent in thine heart, that thou hast determined on some bad and wicked and abominable and damnable thing; there where thou wast lying dead, within, so within hast thou arisen. But if thou have fulfilled, now hast thou been carried out; but thou hast One to say to thee, “Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.” Even though thou have perpetrated it, repent thee, return at once, come not to the sepulchre. But even here I find a third one dead, who was brought even to the sepulchre. He has now upon him the weight of habit, a mass of earth presses him down exceedingly. For he has been practised much in unclean deeds, and is weighed down exceedingly by his immoderate habit. Here too Christ crieth, “Lazarus, come forth.” For a man of very evil habit “now stinketh.” With good reason did Christ in that case cry out; and not cry out only, but with a loud Voice cried out. For at Christ’s Cry even such as these, dead though they be, buried though they be, stinking though they be, yet even these shall rise again, they shall rise again. For of none that lieth dead need we despair under such a Raiser up. Turn we to the Lord, etc.

SERMON LXXIX

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN V. 39, “YE SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES, BECAUSE YE THINK THAT IN THEM YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE,” ETC. AGAINST THE DONATISTS

1. Give heed, Beloved, to the lesson of the Gospel which has just sounded in our ears, whilst I speak a few words as God shall vouchsafe to me. The

Lord Jesus was speaking to the Jews, and said to them, “Search the Scriptures, in which ye think ye have eternal life, they testify of me.” Then a little after He said, “I am come in My Father’s Name, and ye have not received Me; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.” Then a little after; “How can ye believe, who look for glory one from another, and seek not the glory which is of God only?” At last He saith, “I do not accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuseth you, Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would haply believe Me also, for he wrote of Me. But seeing ye believe not his words, how can ye believe Me?” At these sayings which have been set before us from divine inspiration, out of the reader’s mouth, but by the Saviour’s ministry, give ear to a few words, not to be estimated by their number, but to be duly weighed.

2. For all these things it is easy to understand as touching the Jews. But we must beware, lest, when we give too much attention to them, we withdraw our eyes from ourselves. For the Lord was speaking to His disciples; and assuredly what He spake to them, He spake to us too their posterity. Nor to them only does what He said, “Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world,” apply, but even to all Christians that should be after them, and succeed them even unto the end of the world. Speaking then to them He said, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.” They at that time thought that the Lord had said this, because they had brought no bread; they did not understand that “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees” meant, “beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees.” What was the doctrine of the Pharisees, but that which ye have now heard? “Seeking glory one of another, looking for glory one from another, and not seeking the glory which is of God only.” Of these the Apostle Paul thus speaks; “I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.” “They have,” he says, “a zeal of God;” I know it, I am sure of it; I was once among them, I was such as they. “They have,” he says, “a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.” What is this, O Apostle, “not according to knowledge”? Explain to us what the knowledge is thou dost set forth, which thou dost grieve is not in them, and wouldest should be in us? He went on and subjoined and developed what he had set forth closed. What is, “They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge? For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness,

and wishing to establish their own, have not submitted themselves into the righteousness of God.” To be ignorant then of God’s righteousness, and to wish to establish one’s own, this is to “look for glory one from another, and not to seek the glory which is of God only.” This is the leaven of the Pharisees. Of this the Lord bids beware. If it is servants that He bids, and the Lord that bids, let us beware; lest we hear, “Why say ye to Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”

3. Let us then leave a while the Jews to whom the Lord was then speaking. They are without, they will not listen to us, they hate the Gospel itself, they procured false witness against the Lord, that they might condemn Him when alive; other witness they bought with money against Him when dead. When we say to them, “Believe on Jesus,” they answer us, “Are we to believe on a dead man?” But when we add, “But He rose again;” they answer, “Not at all;” His disciples stole Him away from the sepulchre. The Jewish buyers love falsehood and despise the truth of the Lord, the Redeemer. What thou art saying, O Jew, thy parents bought for money; and this which they bought hath continued in thee. Give heed rather to Him That bought thee, not to him who bought a lie for thee.

4. But as I have said, let us leave these, and attend rather to these our brethren, with whom we have to do. For Christ is the Head of the Body. The Head is in Heaven, the Body is on earth; the Head is the Lord, the Body His Church. But ye remember it is said, “They shall be two in one flesh.” “This is a great mystery,” says the Apostle, “but I speak in Christ and in the Church.” If then they are two in one flesh, they are two in one voice. Our Head the Lord Christ spake to the Jews these things which we heard, when the Gospel was being read, The Head to His enemies; let the Body too, that is, the Church, speak to its enemies. Ye know to whom it should speak. What has it to say? It is not of myself that I have said, that the voice is one; because the flesh is one, the voice is one. Let us then say this to them; I am speaking with the voice of the Church. “O Brethren, dispersed children, wandering sheep, branches cut off, why do ye calumniate me? Why do ye not acknowledge me? “Search the Scriptures, in which ye think ye have eternal life, they testify of me;” to the Jews our Head saith, what the Body

saith to you; “Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me.” Why? Because ye do not “search the Scriptures, which testify of me.”

5. A testimony for the Head; “To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” A testimony for the body unto Abraham, which the Apostle hath brought forward. “To Abraham were the promises made. As I live, saith the Lord, I swear by Myself, because thou hast obeyed My Voice, and hast not spared thine own beloved son for Me, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand of the sea, and in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed.” Thou hast here a testimony for the Head, and one for the Body. Hear another, short, and almost in one sentence including a testimony for the Head and for the Body. The Psalm was speaking of the Resurrection of Christ; “Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens.” And immediately for the Body; “And Thy glory above all the earth.” Hear a testimony for the Head; “They digged My Hands and My Feet, they numbered all My Bones; and they looked and stared upon Me; they divided My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture.” Hear immediately a testimony for the Body, a few words after, “All the ends of the world shall remember themselves and be turned unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship in His sight; for the kingdom is the Lord’s, and He shall have dominion over the nations.” Hear for the Head; And “He is as a bridegroom coming forth out of His bride-chamber.” And in this same Psalm hear for the Body; “Their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.”

6. These passages are for the Jews, and for these of our own brethren. Why so? Because these Scriptures of the Old Testament both the Jews receive, and these our brethren receive. But Christ Himself, whom the others do not receive, let us see if these last receive. Let Him speak Himself, speak both for Himself who is the Head, and for His Body which is the Church; for so in us the head speaks for the body. Hear for the Head; He was risen from the dead, He found the disciples hesitating, doubting, not believing for joy; He “opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, and said to them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and

to rise again from the dead the third day.” Thus for the Head; let Him speak for the Body too; “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” Let the Church then speak to her enemies, let her speak. She does speak clearly, she is not silent: only let them give ear. Brethren, ye have heard the testimonies, now acknowledge me. “Search the Scriptures, in which ye hope ye have eternal life: they testify of me.” What I have said is not of mine own, but of my Lord’s; and notwithstanding, ye still turn away, still turn your backs. “How can ye believe me, who look for glory one from another, and seek not the glory which is of God only? For being ignorant of God’s righteousness, ye have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and wishing to establish your own, ye have not submitted yourselves to the righteousness of God.” What else is it to be ignorant of God’s righteousness, and to wish to establish your own, but to say, “It is I who sanctify, it is I who justify; what I may have given is holy”? Leave to God what is God’s; recognise, O man, what is man’s. Thou art ignorant of God’s righteousness, and wishest to establish thine own. Thou dost wish to justify me; it is enough for thee that thou be justified with me.

7. It is said of Antichrist, and all understand of him what the Lord said, “I am come in My Father’s Name, and ye have not received Me; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.” But let us hear John too; “Ye have heard that Antichrist cometh, and even now are there many Antichrists.” What is it in Antichrist that we are in horror of, but that he is to honour his own name, and to despise the Name of the Lord? What else doeth he that saith, “It is I that justify”? We answer him, “I came to Christ, not with my feet, but with my heart I came; where I heard the Gospel, there did I believe, there was I baptized; because I believed on Christ, I believed on God.” Yet says he, “Thou art not clean.” “Why?” “Because I was not there.” “Tell me why am not I cleansed, a man who was baptized in Jerusalem, who was baptized, for instance, among the Ephesians, to whom an Epistle you read was written, and whose peace you despise? Lo, to the Ephesians the Apostle wrote; a Church was founded, and remains even to this day; yea, remains in greater fruitfulness, remains in greater numbers, holds fast that which it received of the Apostle, If any man preach ought to

you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.’ What now? what dost thou say to me? Am I not clean? There was I baptized, am I not clean?” “No, even thou art not.” “Why?” “Because I was not there.” “But He who is everywhere was there. He who is everywhere was there, in whose Name I believed. Thou coming I know not whence, yea, rather not coming, but wishing that I should come to thee, fixed in this place, sayest to me, Thou wast not baptized duly, seeing I was not there.’ Consider who was there. What was said to John? Upon whom thou shall see the Spirit descending like a dove, this is He which baptizeth.’ Him hast thou seeking for thee; nay, for that thou hast grudged me who was baptized by Him, thou hast lost Him rather.”

8. Understand then, my Brethren, our language and theirs, and look which ye would choose. This is what we say; “Be we holy, God knoweth it; be we unrighteous, this again He knoweth better; place not your hope in us, whatsoever we be. If we be good, do as is written, Be ye imitators of me, as I also am of Christ.’ But if we be bad, not even thus are ye abandoned, not even thus have ye remained without counsel: give ear to Him, saying, Do what they say; but do not what they do.’“ Whereas they on the contrary say, “If we were not good, ye were lost.” Lo, here is “another that shall come in his own name.” Shall my life then depend on thee, and my salvation be tied up in thee? Have I so forgotten my foundation? Was not Christ the Rock? Is it not that he that buildeth upon the rock, neither the wind nor the floods overthrow him? Come then, if thou wilt, with me upon the Rock, and do not wish to be to me for the rock.

9. Let the Church then say those last words also, “If ye had believed Moses, ye would believe me also; for he wrote of me;” for that I am His body of whom he wrote. And of the Church did Moses write. For I have quoted the words of Moses “In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed.” Moses wrote this in the first book. If ye believed Moses, ye would also believe Christ. Because ye despise Moses’ words, it must needs be that ye despise the words of Christ. “They have” there, saith He, “Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them. Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead,” him they will hear. “And He said, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe, if one rise again from the

dead.” This was said of the Jews: was it therefore not said of heretics? He had risen from the dead, who said, “It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day.” This I believe. I believe it, he says. Dost thou believe? Wherefore believest thou not what follows? In that thou believest, “It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day;” this was spoken of the Head; believe also that which follows concerning the Church, “That repentance and remission of sins should be preached throughout all nations.” Wherefore dost thou believe as touching the Head, and believest not as touching the Body? What hath the Church done to thee, that thou wouldest so to say behead her? Thou wouldest take away the Church’s Head, and believe the Head, leave the Body as it were a lifeless trunk. It is all to no purpose that thou dost caress the Head, like any devoted servant. He that would take off the head, doth his best to kill both the head and the body. They are ashamed to deny Christ, yet are they not ashamed to deny Christ’s words. Christ neither we nor ye have seen with our eyes. The Jews saw, and slew Him. We have not seen Him, and believe; His words are with us. Compare yourselves with the Jews: they despised Him hanging upon the Tree, ye despise Him sitting in heaven; at their suggestion Christ’s title was set up, by your setting yourselves up, Christ’s Baptism is effaced. But what remains, Brethren, but that we pray even for the proud, that we pray even for the puffed up, who so extol themselves? Let us say to God on their behalf, “Let them know that the Lord is Thy Name; and” not “that” men, but “Thou Only art the Most High over all the earth.” Let us turn to the Lord, etc.

SERMON LXXX

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN VI. 9, WHERE THE MIRACLE OF THE FIVE LOAVES AND THE TWO FISHES IS RELATED

1. It was a great miracle that was wrought, dearly beloved, for five thousand men to be filled with five loaves and two fishes, and the remnants of the fragments to fill twelve baskets. A great miracle: but we shall not wonder much at what was done, if we give heed to Him That did it. He multiplied the five loaves in the hands of them that brake them, who multiplieth the seeds that grow in the earth, so as that a few grains are sown, and whole barns are filled. But, because he doth this every year, no one marvels. Not

the inconsiderableness of what is done, but its constancy takes away admiration of it. But when the Lord did these things, He spake to them that had understanding, not by words only, but even by the miracles themselves. The five loaves signified the five books of Moses' Law. The old Law is barley compared to the Gospel wheat. In those books are great mysteries concerning Christ contained. Whence He saith Himself, "If ye had believed Moses, ye would believe Me also; for he wrote of Me." But as in barley the marrow is hid under the chaff, so in the veil of the mysteries of the Law is Christ hidden. As those mysteries of the Law are developed and unfolded; so too those loaves increased when they were broken. And in this that I have explained to you, I have broken bread unto you. The five thousand men signify the people ordered under the five books of the Law. The twelve baskets are the twelve Apostles, who themselves too were filled with the fragments of the Law. The two fishes are either the two precepts of the love of God and our neighbour, or the two people of the circumcision and uncircumcision, or those two sacred personages of the king and the priest. As these things are explained, they are broken; when they are understood, they are eaten.

2. Let us turn to Him who did these things. He is Himself "The Bread which came down from heaven;" but Bread which refresheth the failing, and doth not fail; Bread which can be tasted, cannot be wasted. This Bread did the manna also figure. Wherefore it is said, "He gave them the Bread of heaven, man ate Angels' Bread." Who is the Bread of heaven, but Christ? But in order that man might eat Angels' Bread, the Lord of Angels was made Man. For if He had not been made Man, we should not have His Flesh; if we had not His Flesh, we should not eat the Bread of the Altar. Let us hasten to the inheritance, seeing we have hereby received a great earnest of it. My brethren, let us long for the life of Christ, seeing we hold as an earnest the Death of Christ. How shall He not give us His good things, who hath suffered our evil things? In this our earth, in this evil world, what abounds, but to be born, to labour, and to die? Examine thoroughly man's estate, convict me if I lie: consider all men whether they are in this world for any other end than to be born, to labour, and to die? This is the merchandize of our country: these things here abound. To such merchandize did that Merchantman descend. And forasmuch as every merchant gives

and receives; gives what he has, and receives what he has not; when he procures anything, he gives money, and receives what he buys: so Christ too in this His traffic gave and received. But what received He? That which aboundeth here, to be born, to labour, and to die. And what did He give? To be born again, to rise again, and to reign for ever. O Good Merchant, buy us. Why should I say buy us, when we ought to give Thee thanks that Thou hast bought us? Thou dost deal out our Price to us, we drink Thy Blood; so dost thou deal out to us our Price. And we read the Gospel, our title deed. We are Thy servants, we are Thy creatures: Thou hast made us, Thou hast redeemed us. Any one can buy his servant, create him he cannot; but the Lord hath both created and redeemed His servants; created them, that they might be; redeemed them, that they might not be captives ever. For we fell into the hands of the prince of this world, who seduced Adam, and made him his servant, and began to possess us as his slaves. But the Redeemer came, and the seducer was overcome. And what did our Redeemer to him who held us captive? For our ransom he held out His Cross as a trap; he placed in It as a bait His Blood. He indeed had power to shed His Blood, he did not attain to drink it. And in that he shed the Blood of Him who was no debtor, he was commanded to render up the debtors; he shed the Blood of the Innocent, he was commanded to withdraw from the guilty. He verily shed His Blood to this end, that He might wipe out our sins. That then whereby he held us fast was effaced by the Redeemer's Blood. For he only held us fast by the bonds of our own sins. They were the captive's chains. He came, He bound the strong one with the bonds of His Passion; He entered into his house into the hearts, that is, of those where he did dwell, and took away his vessels. We are his vessels. He had filled them with his own bitterness. This bitterness too he pledged to our Redeemer in the gall. He had filled us then as his vessels; but our Lord spoiling his vessels, and making them His Own, poured out the bitterness, filled them with sweetness.

3. Let us then love Him, for He is sweet. "Taste and see that the Lord is sweet." He is to be feared, but to be loved still more. He is Man and God; the One Christ is Man and God; as one man is soul and body: but God and Man are not two Persons. In Christ indeed there are two substances, God and Man; but one Person, that the Trinity may remain, and that there be not

a quaternity introduced by the addition of the human nature. How then can it be that God should not have mercy upon us, for whose sake God was made Man? Much is that which He hath done already; more wonderful is that which He hath done, than what He hath promised; and by that which He hath done, ought we to believe what He hath promised. For that which He hath done, we should scarcely believe, unless we also saw it. Where do we see it? In the peoples that believe, in the multitude that has been brought unto Him. For that hath been fulfilled which was promised to Abraham; and from these things which we see, we believe what we do not see. Abraham was one single man, and to him was it said, "In thy seed shall all nations be blessed." If he had looked to himself, when would he have believed? He was one single man, and was now old; and he had a barren wife, and one who was so far advanced in age, that she could not conceive, even though she had not been barren. There was nothing at all from which any hope could be drawn. But he looked to Him That gave the promise, and believed what he did not see. Lo, what he believed, we see. Therefore from these things which we see, we ought to believe what we see not. He begat Isaac, we saw it not; and Isaac begat Jacob, and this we did not see; and Jacob begat twelve sons, and them we saw not; and his twelve sons begat the people of Israel; this great people we see. I have now begun to mention those things which we do see. Of the people of Israel was born the Virgin Mary, and she gave birth to Christ; and, lo, in Christ all nations are blessed. What more true? more certain? more plain? Together with me, long after the world to come, ye who have been gathered together out of the nations. In this world hath God fulfilled His promise concerning the seed of Abraham. How shall He not give us His eternal promises, whom He hath made to be Abraham's seed? For this the Apostle saith: "But if ye be Christ's" (they are the Apostle's words), "then are ye Abraham's seed."

4. We have begun to be some great thing; let no man despise himself: we were once nothing; but we are something. We have said unto the Lord, "Remember that we are dust;" but out of the dust He made man, and to dust He gave life, and in Christ our Lord hath He already brought this same dust to the Kingdom of Heaven. For from this dust took He flesh, from this took earth, and hath raised earth to heaven, He who made heaven and earth. If then these two new things, not yet done, were set before us, and it were

asked of us, “Which is the most wonderful, that He who is God should be made Man, or he who is man should be made a man of God? which is the more wonderful? which the more difficult?” What hath Christ promised us? That which as yet we see not; that is, that we should be His men, and reign with Him, and never die? This is so to say with difficulty believed, that a man once born should arrive at that life, where he shall never die. This is what we believe with a heart well cleansed, cleansed, I mean, of the world’s dust; that this dust close not up our eye of faith. This it is that we are bid believe, that after we have been dead, we shall be even with our dead bodies in life, where we shall never die. Wonderful it is; but more wonderful is that which Christ hath done. For which is the more incredible, that man should live for ever, or that God should ever die? That men should receive life from God is the more credible; that God should receive death from men I suppose is the more incredible. Yet this hath been brought to pass already: let us then believe that which is to be. If that which is the more incredible hath been brought to pass, shall He not give us that which is the more credible? For God hath power to make of men Angels, who hath made of earthy and filthy spawn, men. What shall we be? Angels. What have we been? I am ashamed to call it to mind; I am forced to consider it, yet I blush to tell it. What have we been? Whence did God make men? What were we before we were at all? We were nothing. When we were in our mother’s wombs, what were we? It is enough that ye remember. Withdraw your minds from the whence ye were made, and think of what ye are. Ye live; but so do herbs and trees live. Ye have sensation, and so have cattle sensation. Ye are men, ye have got beyond the cattle, ye are superior to the cattle; for that ye understand how great things He hath done for you. Ye have life, ye have sensation, ye have understanding, ye are men. Now to this benefit what can be compared? Ye are Christians. For if we had not received this, what would it profit us, that we were men! So then we are Christians, we belong to Christ. For all the world’s rage, it doth not break us; because we belong to Christ. For all the world’s caresses, it doth not seduce us; we belong to Christ.

5. A great Patron have we found, Brethren. Ye know that men depend much upon their patrons. A dependent of a man in power will make answer to any one who threatens him. “Thou canst do nothing to me, as long as my lord’s

head is safe.” How much more boldly and surely may we say, “Thou canst do nothing to us, whilst our Head is safe.” Forasmuch as our Patron is our Head. Whosoever depend upon any man as patron, are his dependents; we are the members of our Patron. Let Him bear us in Himself, and let no man tear us away from Him. Since what labours soever we shall have endured in this world, all that passeth away, is nothing. The good things shall come which shall not pass away; by labours we arrive at them. But when we have arrived, no one teareth us away from them. The gates of Jerusalem are shut; they receive the bolts too, that to that city it may be said, “Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem, praise thy God, O Sion. For He hath strengthened the bolts of thy gates; He hath blessed thy children within thee. Who hath made thy borders peace.” When the gates are shut, and the bolts drawn, no friend goeth out, no enemy entereth in. There shall we have true and assured security, if here we shall not have abandoned the truth.

SERMON LXXXI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN VI. 53, “EXCEPT YE EAT THE FLESH,” ETC., AND ON THE WORDS OF THE APOSTLES. AND THE PSALMS. AGAINST THE PELAGIANS

Delivered at the Table of the Martyr St. Cyprian, the 9th

of the Calends of October,—23 Sept., on the Lord’s day.

1. We have heard the True Master, the Divine Redeemer, the human Saviour, commending to us our Ransom, His Blood. For He spake to us of His Body and Blood; He called His Body Meat, His Blood Drink. The faithful recognise the Sacrament of the faithful. But the hearers what else do they but hear? When therefore commending such Meat and such Drink He said, “Except ye shall eat My Flesh and drink My Blood, ye shall have no life in you;” (and this that He said concerning life, who else said it but the Life Itself? But that man shall have death, not life, who shall think that the Life is false), His disciples were offended, not all of them indeed, but very many, saying within themselves, “This is an hard saying, who can hear it?” But when the Lord knew this in Himself, and heard the murmurings of their thought, He answered them, thinking though uttering nothing, that they might understand that they were heard, and might cease to entertain such

thoughts. What then did He answer? “Doth this offend you?” “What then if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?” What meaneth this? “Doth this offend you?” “Do ye imagine that I am about to make divisions of this My Body which ye see; and to cut up My Members, and give them to you? What then if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?’“ Assuredly, He who could ascend Whole could not be consumed. So then He both gave us of His Body and Blood a healthful refreshment, and briefly solved so great a question as to His Own Entireness. Let them then who eat, eat on, and them that drink, drink; let them hunger and thirst; eat Life, drink Life. That eating, is to be refreshed; but thou art in such wise refreshed, as that that whereby thou art refreshed, faileth not. That drinking, what is it but to live? Eat Life, drink Life; thou shalt have life, and the Life is Entire. But then this shall be, that is, the Body and the Blood of Christ shall be each man’s Life; if what is taken in the Sacrament visibly is in the truth itself eaten spiritually, drunk spiritually. For we have heard the Lord Himself saying, “It is the Spirit That quickeneth, but the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken unto you, are Spirit and Life. But there are some of you,” saith He, “that believe not.” Such were they who said, “This is a hard saying, who can hear it?” It is hard, but only to the hard; that is, it is incredible, but only to the incredulous.

2. But in order to teach us that this very believing is matter of gift, not of desert, He saith, “As I have said unto you, no man cometh unto Me, except it were given him of My Father.” Now as to where the Lord said this, if we call to mind the foregoing words of the Gospel, we shall find that He had said, “No man cometh unto Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him.” He did not lead, but draw. This violence is done to the heart, not the body. Why then dost thou marvel? Believe, and thou comest; love, and thou art drawn. Do not suppose here any rough and uneasy violence; it is gentle, it is sweet; it is the very sweetness that draweth thee. Is not a sheep drawn, when fresh grass is shown to it in its hunger? Yet I imagine that it is not bodily driven on, but fast bound by desire. In such wise do thou come too to Christ; do not conceive of long journeyings; where thou believest, there thou comest. For unto Him, who is everywhere we come by love, not by sailing. But forasmuch as even in this kind of voyage, waves and tempests

of divers temptations abound; believe on the Crucified; that thy faith may be able to ascend the Wood. Thou shalt not sink, but shalt be borne upon the Wood. Thus, even thus, amid the waves of this world did he sail, who said, “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

3. But wonderful it is, that when Christ Crucified is preached, two hear, one despiseth, the other ascendeth. Let him that despiseth, impute it to himself; let not him that ascendeth, arrogate it to himself. For he hath heard from the True Master; “No man cometh unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father.” Let him joy, that it hath been given; let him render thanks to Him who giveth it, with a humble, not an arrogant heart; lest what he hath attained through humility, he lose through pride. For even they who are already walking in this way of righteousness, if they attribute it to themselves, and to their own strength, perish out of it. And therefore Holy Scripture teaching us humility saith by the Apostle, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” And lest hereupon they should attribute ought to themselves, because he said, “Work,” he subjoined immediately, “For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” “It is God who worketh in you;” therefore “with fear and trembling,” make a valley, receive the rain. Low grounds are filled, high grounds are dried up. Grace is rain. Why dost thou marvel then, if “God resist the proud, and giveth grace unto the lowly”? Therefore, “with fear and trembling;” that is, with humility. “Be not high-minded, but fear.” Fear that thou mayest be filled; be not high-minded, lest thou be dried up.

4. But you will say, “I am walking in this way already; once there was need for me to learn, there was need for me to know by the teaching of the law what I had to do: now I have the free choice of the will; who shall withdraw me from this way?” If thou read carefully, thou wilt find that a certain man began to uplift himself, on a certain abundance of his, which he had nevertheless received; but that the Lord in mercy, to teach him humility, took away what He had given; and he was on a sudden reduced to poverty, and confessing the mercy of God in his recollection, he said, “In my abundance I said, I shall never be moved.” “In my abundance I said.” But I said it, I who am a man said it; “All men are liars, I said.” Therefore, “in my

abundance I said;” so great was the abundance, that I dared to say, “I shall never be moved.” What next? “O Lord, in Thy favour Thou gavest strength to my beauty.” But “Thou turnedst away Thy Face from me, and I was troubled.” “Thou hast shown me,” saith he, “that that wherein I did abound, was of Thee. Thou hast shown me Whence I should seek, to Whom attribute what I had received, to Whom I ought to render thanks, to Whom I should run in my thirst, Whereby be filled, and with Whom keep that whereby I should be filled. For my strength will I keep to Thee;’ whereby I am by Thy bounty filled, through Thy safe keeping I will not lose. My strength will I keep to Thee.’ That Thou mightest show me this, Thou turnedst away Thy Face from me, and I was troubled.’ Troubled,’ because dried up; dried up, because exalted. Say then thou dry and parched one, that thou mayest be filled again; My soul is as earth without water unto Thee.’ Say, My soul is as earth without water unto Thee.’ For Thou hast said, not the Lord, I shall never be moved.’ Thou hast said it, presuming on thine own strength; but it was not of thyself, and thou didst think as if it were.”

5. What then doth the Lord say? “Serve ye the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling.” So the Apostle too, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who worketh in you.” Therefore rejoice with trembling: “Lest at any time the Lord be angry.” I see that you anticipate me by your crying out. For you know what I am about to say, you anticipate it by crying out. And whence have ye this, but that He taught you to whom ye have by believing come? This then He saith; hear what ye know already; I am not teaching, but in preaching am calling to your remembrance; nay, I am neither teaching, seeing that ye know already, nor calling to remembrance, seeing that ye remember, but let us say all together what together with us ye retain. “Embrace discipline, and rejoice,” but, “with trembling,” that, humble ye may ever hold fast that which ye have received. “Lest at any time the Lord be angry;” with the proud of course, attributing to themselves what they have, not rendering thanks to Him, from whom they have. “Lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye perish from the righteous way.” Did he say, Lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye come not into the righteous way”? Did he say, “Lest the Lord be angry, and He bring you not to the righteous way”? or “admit you not into the righteous way? Ye are walking in it already, be not proud, lest ye even

perish from it. And ye perish,’ saith he, from the righteous way.’“ “When His wrath shall be kindled in a short time” against you. At no distant time. As soon as thou art proud, thou losest at once what thou hadst received. As though man terrified by all this were to say, “What shall I do then?” It follows, “Blessed are all they that trust in Him:” not in themselves, but in Him. “By grace are we saved, not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God.”

6. Peradventure ye are saying, “What does he mean, that he is so often saying this? A second and a third time he says it; and scarcely ever speaks, but when he says it.” Would that I may not say it in vain! For men there are unthankful to grace, attributing much to poor and disabled nature. True it is, when man was created he received great power of free-will; but he lost it by sin. He fell into death, became infirm, was left in the way by the robbers half dead; the Samaritan, which is by interpretation keeper, passing by lifted him up on his own beast; he is still being brought to the inn. Why is he lifted up? He is still in process of curing. “But,” he will say, “it is enough for me that in baptism I received remission of all sins.” Because iniquity was blotted out, was therefore infirmity brought to an end? “I received,” says he, “remission of all sins.” It is quite true. All sins were blotted out in the Sacrament of Baptism, all entirely, of words, deeds, thoughts, all were blotted out. But this is the “oil and wine” which was poured in by the way. Ye remember, beloved Brethren, that man who was wounded by the robbers, and half dead by the way, how he was strengthened, by receiving oil and wine for his wounds. His error indeed was already pardoned, and yet his weakness is in process of healing in the inn. The inn, if ye recognise it, is the Church. In the time present, an inn, because in life we are passing by: it will be a home, whence we shall never remove, when we shall have got in perfect health unto the kingdom of heaven. Meanwhile receive we gladly our treatment in the inn, and weak as we still are, glory we not of sound health: lest through our pride we gain nothing else, but never for all our treatment to be cured.

7. “Bless the Lord, O my soul.” Say, yea say to thy soul, “Thou art still in this life, still bearest about a frail flesh, still “doth the corruptible body press down the soul;” still after the entireness of remission hast thou received the remedy of prayer; for still, whilst thy weaknesses are being healed, dost

thou say, “Forgive us our debts.” Say then to thy soul, thou lowly valley, not an exalted hill; say to thy soul, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.” What benefits? Tell them, enumerate them, render thanks. What benefits? “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities.” This took place in baptism. What takes place now? “Who healeth all thy weaknesses.” This takes place now; I acknowledge. But as long as I am here, “the corruptible body presseth down the soul.” Say then also that which comes next, “Who redeemeth thy life from corruption.” After redemption from corruption, what remaineth? “When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is thy contention?” There rightly, “O death, where is thy sting?” Thou seekest its place, and findest it not. What is “the sting of death”? What is, “O death, where is thy sting?” Where is sin? Thou seekest, and it is nowhere. For “the sting of death is sin.” They are the Apostle’s words, not mine. Then shall it be said, “O death, where is thy sting?” Sin shall nowhere be, neither to surprise thee, nor to assault thee, nor to inflame thy conscience. Then it shall not be said, “Forgive us our debts.” But what shall be said? “O Lord our God, give us peace: for Thou hast rendered all things unto us.”

8. Finally, after the redemption from all corruption, what remaineth but the crown of righteousness? This at least remaineth, but even in it, or under it, let not the head be swollen that it may receive the crown. Hear, mark well the Psalm, how that crown will not have a swollen head. After he had said, “Who redeemeth thy life from corruption;” he saith, “Who crowneth thee.” Here thou wert ready at once to say, “Crowneth thee,’ is an acknowledgment of my merits, my own excellence hath done it; it is the payment of a debt, not a gift.” Give ear rather to the Psalm. For it is thou again that sayest this; and “all men are liars.” Hear what God saith; “Who crowneth thee with mercy and pity.” Of His mercy He crowneth thee, of His pity He crowneth thee. For thou hadst no worthiness that He should call thee, and being called should justify thee, being justified glorify thee. “The remnant is saved by the election of grace. But if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. For to him that worketh, the reward shall not be reckoned according to grace, but according to debt.” The Apostle saith, “Not according to grace, but according to debt.” But

“thee He crowneth with pity and mercy;” and if thy own merits have gone before, God saith to thee, “Examine well thy merits, and thou shalt see that they are My gifts.”

9. This then is the righteousness of God. As it is called, “The Lord’s salvation,” not whereby the Lord is saved, but which He giveth to them whom He saveth; so too the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord is called the righteousness of God, not as that whereby the Lord is righteous, but whereby He justifieth those whom of ungodly He maketh righteous. But some, as the Jews in former times, both wish to be called Christians, and still ignorant of God’s righteousness, desire to establish their own, even in our own times, in the times of open grace, the times of the full revelation of grace which before was hidden; in the times of grace now manifested in the floor, which once lay hid in the fleece. I see that a few have understood me, that more have not understood, whom I will by no means defraud by keeping silence. Gideon, one of the righteous men of old, asked for a sign from the Lord, and said, “I pray, Lord, that this fleece which I put in the floor be bedewed, and that the floor be dry.” And it was so; the fleece was bedewed, the whole floor was dry. In the morning he wrung out the fleece in a basin; forasmuch as to the humble is grace given; and in a basin, ye know what the Lord did to His disciples. Again, he asked for another sign; “O Lord, I would,” saith he, “that the fleece be dry, the floor bedewed.” And it was so. Call to mind the time of the Old Testament, grace was hidden in a cloud, as the rain in the fleece. Mark now the time of the New Testament, consider well the nation of the Jews, thou wilt find it as a dry fleece; whereas the whole world, like that floor, is full of grace, not hidden, but manifested. Wherefore we are forced exceedingly to bewail our brethren, who strive not against hidden, but against open and manifested grace. There is allowance for the Jews. What shall we say of Christians? Wherefore are ye enemies to the grace of Christ? Why rely ye on yourselves? Why unthankful? For why did Christ come? Was not nature here before? Was not nature here, which ye only deceive by your excessive praise? Was not the Law here? But the Apostle says, “If righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.” What the Apostle says of the Law, that say we of nature to these men. “If righteousness come by nature, then Christ is dead in vain.”

10. What then was said of the Jews, the same altogether do we see in these men now. “They have a zeal of God: I hear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.” What is, “not according to knowledge”? “For being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and wishing to establish their own, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” My Brethren, share with me in my sorrow. When ye find such as these, do not hide them; be there no such misdirected mercy in you; by all means, when ye find such, hide them not. Convince the gainsayers, and those who resist, bring to us. For already have two councils on this question been sent to the Apostolic see; and rescripts also have come from thence. The question has been brought to an issue; would that their error may sometime be brought to an issue too! Therefore do we advise that they may take heed, we teach that they may be instructed, we pray that they may be changed. Let us turn to the Lord, etc.

SERMON LXXXII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN VI. 55,”FOR MY FLESH IS MEAT INDEED, AND MY BLOOD IS DRINK INDEED. HE THAT EATETH MY FLESH,” ETC

1. As we heard when the Holy Gospel was being read, the Lord Jesus Christ exhorted us by the promise of eternal life to eat His Flesh and drink His Blood. Ye that heard these words, have not all as yet understood them. For those of you who have been baptized and the faithful do know what He meant. But those among you who are yet called Catechumens, or Hearers, could be hearers, when it was being read, could they be understanders too? Accordingly our discourse is directed to both. Let them who already eat the Flesh of the Lord and drink His Blood, think What it is they eat and drink, lest, as the Apostle says, “They eat and drink judgment to themselves.” But they who do not yet eat and drink, let them hasten when invited to such a Banquet. Throughout these days the teachers feed you. Christ daily feedeth you, That His Table is ever ordered before you. What is the reason. O Hearers, that ye see the Table, and come not to the Banquet? And peradventure, just now when the Gospel was being read, ye said in your hearts, “We are thinking what it is that He saith, My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed.’ How is the Flesh of the Lord eaten, and the Blood of the Lord drunk? We are thinking what He saith.” Who hath closed

it against thee, that thou dost not know this? There is a veil over it; but if thou wilt, the veil shall be taken away. Come to the profession, and thou hast resolved the difficulty. For what the Lord Jesus said, the faithful know well already. But thou art called a Catechumen, art called a Hearer, and art deaf. For the ears of the booty thou hast open, seeing that thou hearest the words which were spoken; but the ears of the heart thou hast still closed, seeing thou understandest not what was spoken. I plead, I do not discuss it. Lo, Easter is at hand, give in thy name for baptism. If the festivity arouse thee not, let the very curiosity induce thee: that thou mayest know the meaning of, Whoso eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood dwelleth in Me, and I in him." That thou mayest know with me what is meant, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto thee:" and as I say to thee, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto thee," so do I too knock, open thou to me. When I speak aloud to the ears, I knock at the breast.

2. But if the Catechumens, my Brethren, are to be exhorted not to delay to approach to this so great grace of regeneration; what great care ought we to have in building up the faithful, that their approaching may profit them, and that they eat and drink not such a Banquet unto their own judgment? Now that they may not eat and drink unto judgment, let them live well. Be ye exhorters, not by words, but by your conduct; that they who have not been baptized, may in such wise hasten to follow you, that they perish not by imitating you. Do ye who are married keep the fidelity of the marriage-bed with your wives. Render what you require. As a husband thou requirest chastity from thy wife; give her an example, not words. Thou art the head, look where thou goest. For thou oughtest to go where it may not be dangerous for her to follow: yea, thou oughtest to walk thyself where thou wouldest have her follow. Thou requirest strength from the weaker sex; the lust of the flesh ye have both of you: let him that is the stronger, be the first to conquer. And yet, which is to be lamented, many men are conquered by the women. Women preserve chastity, which men will not preserve; and in that they preserve it not, would wish to appear men: as though he was in sex the stronger, only that the enemy might more easily subdue him. There is a struggle, a war, a combat. The man is stronger than the woman, the "man is the head of the woman." The woman combats and overcomes; dost thou succumb to the enemy? The body stands firm, and does the head lie low?

But those of you who have not yet wives, and who yet already approach to the Lord’s Table, and eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink His Blood, if ye are about to marry, keep yourselves for your wives. As ye would have them come to you, such ought they also to find you. What young man is there who would not wish to marry a chaste wife? And if he were to espouse a virgin who would not desire she should be unpolluted? Thou lookest for one unpolluted, be unpolluted thyself. Thou lookest for one pure, be not thyself impure. For it is not that she is able, and thou art not able. If it were not possible, then could not she be so. But, seeing that she can, let this teach thee, that it is possible. And that she may have this power, God is her ruler. But thou wilt have greater glory if thou shalt do it. Why greater glory? The vigilance of parents is a check to her, the very modesty of the weaker sex is a bridle to her; lastly, she is in fear of the laws of which thou art not afraid. Therefore it is then that thou wilt have greater glory if thou shalt do it; because if thou do it, thou fearest God. She has many things to fear besides God, thou fearest God alone. But He whom thou fearest is greater than all. He is to be feared in public, He in secret. Thou goest out, thou art seen; thou goest in, thou art seen; the lamp is lighted, He seeth thee; the lamp is extinguished, He seeth thee; thou enterest into thy closet, He seeth thee; in the retirement of thine own heart, He seeth thee. Fear Him, Him whose care it is to see thee; and even by this fear be chaste. Or if thou wilt sin, seek for some place where He may not see thee, and do what thou wouldest.

3. But ye who have taken the vow already, chasten your bodies more strictly, and suffer not yourselves to loosen the reins of concupiscence even after those things which are permitted; that ye may not only turn away from an unlawful connection, but may despise even a lawful look. Remember, in whichever sex ye are, whether men or women, that ye are leading on earth the life of Angels: “For the Angels are neither given in marriage, nor marry.” This shall we be, when we shall have risen again. How much better are ye, who before death begin to be what men will be after the resurrection! Keep your proper degrees, for God keepeth for you your honours. The resurrection of the dead is compared to the stars that are set in heaven. “For star differeth from star in glory,” as the Apostle says; “so also is the resurrection of the dead.” For after one manner virginity shall shine there, after another shall wedded chastity shine there, after another shall

holy widowhood shine there. They shall shine diversely, but all shall be there. The brilliancy unequal, the heaven the same.

4. With your thoughts then on your degrees, and keeping your professions, approach ye to the Flesh of the Lord, approach to the Blood of the Lord. Whoso knoweth himself to be otherwise, let him not approach. Be moved to compunction rather by my words. For they who know that they are keeping for their wives, what from their wives they require, they who know that they are in every way keeping continence, if this they have vowed to God, feel joy at my words; but they who hear me say, “Whosoever of you are not keeping chastity, approach not to that Bread,” are saddened. And I should have no wish to say this; but what can I do? Shall I fear man, so as to suppress the truth? What, if those servants do not fear the Lord, shall I therefore too not fear? as if I do not know that it is said, “Thou wicked and slothful servant,’ thou shouldest dispense, and I require.” Lo, I have dispensed, O Lord my God; lo, in Thy Sight, and in the sight of Thy Holy Angels, and of this Thy people, I have laid out Thy money; for I am afraid of Thy judgment. I have dispensed, do Thou require. Though I should not say it, Thou wouldest do it. Therefore I rather say, I have dispensed, do Thou convert, do Thou spare. Make them chaste who have been unchaste, that in Thy Sight we may rejoice together when the judgment shall come, both he who hath dispensed and he to whom it hath been dispensed. Doth this please you? May it do so! Whosoever of you are unchaste, amend yourselves, whilst ye are alive. For I have power to speak the word of God, but to deliver the unchaste, who persevere in wickedness, from the judgment and condemnation of God, have I no power.

SERMON LXXXIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN VII. 6, ETC., WHERE JESUS SAID THAT HE WAS NOT GOING UP UNTO THE FEAST, AND NOTWITHSTANDING WENT UP

1. I Purpose by the Lord’s assistance to treat of this section of the Gospel which has just been read; nor is there a little difficulty here, lest the truth be endangered, and falsehood glory. Not that either the truth can perish, nor falsehood triumph. Now hearken for a while what difficulty this lesson has; and being made attentive by the propounding of the difficulty, pray that I

may be sufficient for its solution. “The Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand;” these it seems are the days which they observe even to this day, when they build huts. For this solemnity of theirs is called from the building of tabernacles; since skene means a “tabernacle,” skenopegia is the building of a tabernacle. These days were kept as feast days among the Jews; and it was called one feast day, not because it was over in one day, but because it was kept up by a continued festivity; just as the feast day of the Passover, and the feast day of unleavened bread, and notwithstanding, as is manifest, that feast is kept throughout many days. This anniversary then was at hand in Judaea, the Lord Jesus was in Galilee, where He had also been brought up, where too He had relations and kinsfolk, whom Scripture calls “His brethren.” “His brethren, therefore,” as we have heard it read, “said unto Him, Pass from hence, and go into Judaea; that Thy disciples also may see Thy works that Thou doest. For no man doeth anything in secret, and himself seeketh to be known openly. If Thou do these things, manifest Thyself to the world.” Then the Evangelist subjoins, “For neither did His brethren believe in Him.” If then they did not believe in Him, the words they threw out were of envy. “Jesus answered them, My time is not yet come; but your time is alway ready. The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up to this feast day. I go not up to this feast day, for My time is not yet accomplished.” Then follows the Evangelist; “When He had said these words, He Himself stayed in Galilee. But when His brethren were gone up, then went He also up to the feast day, not openly, but as it were in secret.” Thus far is the extent of the difficulty, all the rest is clear.

2. What then is the difficulty? what makes the perplexity? what is in peril? Lest the Lord, yea, to speak more plainly, lest the Truth Itself should be thought to have lied. For if we would have it thought that He lied, the weak will receive an authority for lying. We have heard say that He lied. For those who think that He lied, speak thus, “He said that He should not go up to the feast day, and He went up.” In the first place then, let us, as far as in the press of time we can, see whether he does lie, who says a thing and does it not. For example, I have told a friend, “I will see you to-morrow;” some greater necessity occurs to hinder me; I have not on that account spoken falsely. For when I made the promise, I meant what I said. But when some

greater matter occurred, which hindered the accomplishment of my promise, I had no design to lie, but I was not able to fulfil the promise. Lo, to my thinking I have used no labour to persuade you, but have merely suggested to your good sense, that he who promises something, and doeth it not, does not lie, if, that he do it not, something has occurred to hinder the fulfilment of his promise, not to be any proof of falsehood.

3. But some one who hears me will say, “Canst thou then say this of Christ, that He either was not able to fulfil what He would, or that He did not know things to come?” Thou doest well, good is thy suggestion, right thy hint; but, O man, share with me my anxiety. Dare we to say that He lies, Who we do not dare to say is weak in power? I for my part, to the best of my thinking, as far as according to my infirmity I am able to judge, would choose that a man should be deceived in any matter rather than lie in any. For to be deceived is the portion of infirmity, to lie of iniquity. “Thou hatest, O Lord,” saith he, “all them that work iniquity.” And immediately after, “Thou shalt destroy all them that speak a lie.” Either “iniquity” and “a lie” are upon a level; or, “Thou shalt destroy,” is more than “Thou hatest.” For he who is held in hatred, is not immediately punished by destruction. But let that question be, whether there be ever a necessity to lie; for I am not now discussing that; it is a dark question, and has many lappings; I have not time to cut them, and to come to the quick. Therefore let the treatment of it be deferred to some other time; for peradventure it will be cured by the Divine assistance without any words of mine. But attend and distinguish between what I have deferred, and what I wish to treat of to-day. Whether on any occasion one may lie, this difficult and most obscure question I defer. But whether Christ lied, whether the Truth spake anything false, this, being reminded of it by the Gospel lesson, have I undertaken to-day.

4. Now what the difference is between being deceived, and lying, I will briefly state. He is deceived who thinks what he says to be true, and therefore says it, because he thinks it true. Now if this which he that is deceived says, were true, he would not be deceived; if it were not only true, but he also knew it to be true, he would not lie. He is deceived then, in that it is false, and he thinks it true; but he only says it because he thinks it true. The error lies in human infirmity, not in the soundness of the conscience.

But whosoever thinks it to be false, and asserts it as true, he lies. See, my Brethren, draw the distinction, ye who have been brought up in the Church, instructed in the Lord's Scriptures, not uninformed, nor simple, nor ignorant men. For there are among you men learned and erudite, and not indifferently instructed in all kinds of literature; and with those of you who have not learnt that literature which is called liberal, it is more that ye have been nourished up in the word of God. If I labour in explaining what I mean, do ye aid me both by the attention of your hearing, and the thoughtfulness of your meditations. Nor will ye aid, unless ye are aided. Wherefore pray we mutually for one another, and look equally for our common Succour. He is deceived, who whereas what he says is false, thinks it to be true; but he lies, who thinks a thing to be false, and gives it out as true, whether it be true or false. Observe what I have added, "whether it be true or false;" yet he who thinks it to be false, and asserts it as true, lies; he aims to deceive. For what good is it to him, that it is true? He all the while thinks it false, and says it as if it were true. What he says is true in itself, it is in itself true; with regard to him it is false, his conscience does not hold that which he is saying; he thinks in himself one thing to be true, he gives out another for truth. His is a double heart, not single; he does not bring out that which he has in it. The double heart has long since been condemned. "With deceitful lips in a heart and a heart have they spoken evil things." Had it been enough to say, "in the heart have they spoken evil things," where is the "deceitful lips"? What is deceit? When one thing is done, another pretended. Deceitful lips are not a single heart; and because not a single heart, therefore "in a heart and a heart;" therefore "in a heart" twice, because the heart is double.

5. How then think we of the Lord Jesus Christ, that He lied? If it is a less evil to be deceived than to lie, dare we to say that He lies who we dare not to say is deceived? But He is neither deceived, nor doth He lie; but in very deed as it is written (for of Him is it understood, of Him ought it to be understood), "Nothing false is said unto the King, and nothing false shall proceed out of His mouth." If by King here he meant any man, let us prefer Christ the King, to a man-king. But if, which is the truer understanding of it, it is Christ of whom he spake, if I say, as is the truer understanding of it, it is Christ of whom he spake (for to Him indeed nothing false is said, in

that He is not deceived; from His Mouth nothing false proceedeth, in that He doth not lie); let us look how we are to understand the section of the Gospel, and let us not make the pitfall of a lie, as it were, on heavenly authority. But it is most absurd to be seeking to explain the truth, and to prepare a place for a lie. What art thou teaching me, I ask thee, who art explaining this text to me, what wouldest thou teach me? I do not know whether you would dare to say, “Falsehood.” For if you should dare to say this, I turn away mine ears, and fasten them up with thorns, that if you should try to force your way, I might through their very pricking make away without the explanation of the Gospel. Tell me what thou wouldest wish to teach me, and thou hast resolved the difficulty. Tell me, I pray thee; lo, here I am; mine ears are open, my heart is ready, teach me. But I ask, what? I will not travel through many things. What art thou going to teach me? Whatsoever learning thou art about to bring forward, whatsoever strength to show in disputation, tell me this one thing only, one of two things I ask; art thou going to teach me truth or falsehood? What do we suppose he will answer lest one depart; lest while he is open-mouthed and making an effort to bring out his words, I forthwith leave him: what will he promise but truth? I am listening, standing, expecting, most earnestly expecting. See here, he who promised that he will teach me truth, insinuates falsehood concerning Christ. How then shall he teach truth, who would say that Christ is false? If Christ is false, can I hope that thou wilt tell me the truth?

6. Consider again. What does he say? Hath Christ spoken falsely? Where, I ask thee? “Where He says, I go not up to the feast day;’ and went up.” For my part, I should wish thoroughly to examine this place, if so be we may see that Christ did not speak falsely. Yea rather, seeing that I have no doubt that Christ did not speak falsely, I will either thoroughly examine this passage and understand it, or, not understanding it, I will defer it. Yet that Christ spoke falsely will I never say. Grant that I have not understood it; I will depart in my ignorance. For better is it with piety to be ignorant, than with madness to pronounce judgment. Notwithstanding we are trying to examine, if so be by His assistance, who is the Truth, we may find something, and be found something ourselves, and this something will not be in the Truth a lie. For if in searching I find a lie, I find not a something

but a nothing. Let us then look where it is thou sayest that Christ lied. He will say, “In that He said, I go not up to this feast,’ and went up.” Whence dost thou know that He said so? What if I were to say, nay, not I, but any one, for God forbid that I should say it; what if another were to say, “Christ did not say this;” whereby dost thou refute him, whereby wilt thou prove it? Thou wouldest open the book, find the passage, point it out to the man, yea with great confidence force the book upon him if he resisted, “Hold it, mark, read, it is the Gospel you have in your hands.” But why, I ask thee, why dost thou so rudely accost this feeble one? Do not be so eager; speak more composedly, more tranquilly. See, it is the Gospel I have in my hands; and what is there in it? He answers: “The Gospel declares that Christ said what thou deniest.” And wilt thou believe that Christ said it, because the Gospel declares it? “Decidedly for that reason,” says he. I marvel exceedingly how thou shouldest say that Christ lieth, and the Gospel doth not lie. But lest haply when I speak of the Gospel, thou shouldest think of the book itself, and imagine the parchment and ink to be the Gospel, see what the Greek word means; Gospel is “a good messenger,” or “a good message.” The messenger then doth not lie, and doth He who sent him, lie? This messenger, the Evangelist to wit, to give his name also, this John who wrote this, did he lie concerning Christ, or say the truth? Choose which you will, I am ready to hear you on either side. If he spake falsely, you have no means of proving that Christ spake those words. If he said the truth, truth cannot flow from the fountain of falsehood. Who is the Fountain? Christ: let John be the stream. The stream comes to me, and you say to me, “Drink securely;” yea, whereas you alarm me as to the Fountain Himself, whereas you tell me there is falsehood in the Fountain, you say to me, “Drink securely.” What do I drink? What said John, that Christ spake falsely? Whence came John? From Christ. Is he who came from Him, to tell me truth, when He from whom he came lied? I have read in the Gospel plainly, “John lay on the Lord’s Breast;” but I conclude that he drank in truth. What saw he as he lay on the Lord’s Breast? What drank he in? what, but that which he poured forth? “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made. That which was made in Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men; And the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended It not;”

nevertheless It shineth, and though I chance to have some obscurity, and cannot thoroughly comprehend It, still It shineth. “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John; he came to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not the Light:” who? John: who? John the Baptist. For of him saith John the Evangelist, “He was not the Light;” of whom the Lord saith, “He was a burning, and a shining lamp.” But a lamp can be lighted, and extinguished. What then? whence drawest thou the distinction? of what place art thou enquiring? He to whom the lamp bare witness, “was the True Light.” Where John added, “the True,” there art thou looking out for a lie. But hear still the same Evangelist John pouring forth what he had drunk in; “And we beheld,” saith he, “His glory.” What did he behold? what glory beheld he? “The glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” See then, see, if we ought not haply to restrain weak or rash disputings, and to presume nothing false of the truth, to give to the Lord what is His due; let us give glory to the Fountain, that we may fill ourselves securely. “Now God is true, but every man a liar.” What is this? God is full; every man is empty; if he will be filled, let him come to Him That is full. “Come unto Him, and be enlightened.” Moreover, if man is empty, in that he is a liar, and he seeks to be filled, and with haste and eagerness runs to the fountain, he wishes to be filled, he is empty. But thou sayest, “Beware of the fountain, there is falsehood there.” What else sayest thou, but “there is poison there”?

7. “You have already,” he says, “said all, already have you checked, already chastened me. But tell me how He did not speak falsely who said, I go not up,’ and went up?” I will tell you, if I can; but think it no little matter, that if I have not established you in the truth, I have yet kept you back from rashness. I will nevertheless tell you, what I imagine you know even already, if you remember the words which I have set forth to you. The words themselves solve the difficulty. That feast was kept for many days. On this, that is this present feast day, saith He, this day, that is when they hoped, He went not up; but when He Himself resolved to go. Now mark what follows, “When He had said these words, He Himself stayed in Galilee.” So then He did not go up on that feast day. For His brethren wished that He should go first; therefore had they said, “Pass from hence into Judaea.” They did not say, “Let us pass,” as though they would be His

companions; or, “Follow us into Judaea,” as though they would go first; but as though they would send Him before them. He wished that they should go before; He avoided this snare, impressing His infirmity as Man, hiding the Divinity; this He avoided, as when He fled into Egypt. For this was no effect of want of power, but even of truth, that He might give an example of caution; that no servant of His might say, “I do not fly, because it is disgraceful;” when haply it might be expedient to fly. As He was going to say to His disciples, “When they have persecuted you in this city, flee ye into another;” He gave them Himself this example. For He was apprehended, when He willed; He was born, when He willed. That they might not anticipate Him then, and announce that He was coming, and plots be prepared; He said, “I go not up to this feast day.” He said, “I go not up,” that He might be hid; He added “this,” that He might not lie. Something He expressed, something He suppressed, something He repressed; yet said He nothing false, for “nothing false proceedeth out of His Mouth.” Finally, after He had said these words, “When His brethren were gone up;” the Gospel declares it, attend, read what you have objected to me; see if the passage itself do not solve the difficulty, see if I have taken from anywhere else what to say. This then the Lord was waiting for, that they should go up first, that they might not announce beforehand that He was coming, “When His brethren were gone up, then went He also up to the feast day, not openly, but as it were in secret.” What is, “as it were in secret”? He acts there as if in secret. What is, “as it were in secret”? Because neither was this really in secret. For He did not really make an effort to be concealed, who had it in His Own power when He would be taken. But in that concealment, as I have said, He gave His weak disciples, who had not the power to prevent being taken when they would not, an example of being on their guard against the snares of enemies. For He went up afterwards even openly, and taught them in the temple; and some said, “ Lo, this is He; lo, He is teaching.’ Certainly our rulers said that they wished to apprehend Him: Lo, He speaketh openly, and no one layeth hands on Him.’“

8. But now if we turn our attention to ourselves, if we think of His Body, how that we are even He. For if we were not He, “Forasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me,” would not be true. If we were not He, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” would

not be true. So then we are He, in that we are His members, in that we are His Body, in that He is our Head, in that Whole Christ is both Head and Body. Peradventure then He foresaw us that we were not to keep the feast days of the Jews, and this is, “I go not up to this feast day.” See neither Christ nor the Evangelist lied; of the which two if one must needs choose one, the Evangelist would pardon me, I would by no means put him that is true before the Truth Himself; I would not prefer him that was sent to Him by whom he was sent. But God be thanked, in my judgment what was obscure has been laid open. Your piety will aid me before God. Behold, I have, as I was best able, resolved the question, both concerning Christ and the Evangelist. Hold fast the truth with me as men who love it, embrace charity without contention.

SERMON LXXXIV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN VIII. 31, “IF YE ABIDE IN MY WORD, THEN ARE YE TRULY MY DISCIPLES,” ETC

1. Ye know well, Beloved, that we all have One Master, and are fellow disciples under Him. Nor are we your masters, because we speak to you from this higher spot; but He is the Master of all, who dwelleth in us all. He just now spake to us all in the Gospel, and said to us, what I also am saying to you; but He saith it of us, as well of us as of you. “If ye shall continue in My word,” not of course in my word who am now speaking to you; but in His who spake just now out of the Gospel. “If ye shall continue in My word,” saith He, “ye are My disciples indeed.” To be a disciple, it is not enough to come, but to continue. He doth not therefore say, “If ye shall hear My word;” or, “If ye shall come to My word;” or, “If ye shall praise My word;” but observe what He said, “If ye shall continue in My word, ye are My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall free you.” What shall we say, Brethren? To continue in the word of God, is it toilsome, or is it not? If it be toilsome, look at the great reward; if it be not toilsome, thou receivest the reward for nought. Continue we then in Him who continueth in us. We, if we continue not in Him, fall; but He if He continue not in us, hath not on that account lost an habitation. For He skilleth to continue in Himself, who never leaveth Himself. But for man, God forbid that he should continue in himself who hath lost himself. So

then we continue in Him through indigence; He continueth in us through mercy.

2. Now then seeing it hath been set forth what we ought to do, let us see what we are to receive. For He hath appointed a work, and promised a reward. What is the work? “If ye shall continue in Me.” A short work; short in description, great in execution. “If ye shall build on the Rock.” O how great a thing is this, Brethren, to build on the Rock, how great is it! “The floods came, the winds blew, the rain descended, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock.” What then is to continue in the word of God, but not to yield to any temptations? The reward, what is it? “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall free you.” Bear with me, for ye perceive that my voice is feeble; assist me by your calm attention. Glorious reward! “Ye shall know the truth.” Here one may haply say, “And what doth it profit me to know the truth?” “And the truth shall free you.” If the truth have no charms for you, let freedom have its charms. In the usage of the Latin tongue, the expression, “to be free,” is used in two senses; and chiefly we are accustomed to hear this word in this sense, that whosoever is free may be understood to escape some danger, to be rid of some embarrassment. But the proper signification of “to be free,” is “to be made free;” just as “to be saved,” is “to be made safe;” “to be healed,” is, “to be made whole;” so “to be freed,” is “to be made free.” Therefore I said, “If the truth have no charms for you, let freedom have its charms.” This is expressed more evidently in the Greek language, nor can it be there understood in any other sense. And that ye may know that in no other sense can it be understood; when the Lord spake, the Jews answered, “We were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou the Truth shall free you?” That is, “the Truth shall make you free,” how sayest thou to us, who were never in bondage to any man? “How,” say they, “dost Thou promise them freedom, who as Thou seest never bare the hard yoke of bondage?”

3. They heard what they ought; but they did not what they ought. What did they hear? Because I said, “The truth shall free you;” ye turned your thoughts upon yourselves, that ye are not in bondage to man, and ye said, “We were never in bondage to any man. Every one,” Jew and Greek, rich and poor, the man in authority and private station, the emperor and the

beggar, “Every one that committeth sin is the servant of sin.” “Every one,” saith He, “that committeth sin is the servant of sin.” If men but acknowledge their bondage, they will see from whence they may obtain freedom. Some free-born man has been taken captive by the barbarians, from a free man is made a slave; another hears, and pities him, considers how that he has money, becomes his ransomer, goes to the barbarians, gives money, ransoms the man. And he has indeed restored freedom, if he have taken away iniquity. But what man has ever taken away iniquity from another man? He who was in bondage with the barbarians, has been redeemed by his ransomer; and great difference there is between the ransomer and the ransomed; yet haply are they fellow-slaves under the lordship of iniquity. I ask him that was ransomed, “Hast thou sin?” “I have,” he says. I ask the ransomer, “Hast thou sin?” “I have,” he says. So then neither do thou boast thyself that thou hast been ransomed, nor thou uplift thyself that thou art his ransomer; but fly both of you to the True Deliverer. It is but a small part of it, that they who are under sin, are called servants; they are even called dead; what a man is afraid of captivity bringing upon him, iniquity has brought on him already. For what? because they seem to be alive, was He then mistaken who said, “Let the dead bury their dead”? So then all under sin are dead, dead servants, dead in their service, servants in their death.

4. Who then freeth from death and from bondage, save He, who is “Free among the dead”? Who is “Free among the dead,” save He who among sinners is without sin? “Lo, the prince of the world cometh,” saith our Redeemer Himself, our Deliverer, “Lo, the prince of the world cometh, and shall find nothing in Me.” He holds fast those whom he hath deceived, whom he hath seduced, whom he hath persuaded to sin and death; “in Me shall he find nothing.” Come, Lord, Redeemer come, come; let the captive acknowledge thee, him that leadeth captive flee thee; be Thou my Deliverer. Lost as I was, He hath found me in Whom the devil findeth nothing that cometh of the flesh. The prince of this world findeth in Him Flesh, he findeth it but what kind of Flesh? A mortal Flesh, which he can seize, which he can crucify, which he can kill. Thou art mistaken, O deceiver, the Redeemer is not deceived; thou art mistaken. Thou seest in the Lord a mortal Flesh, it is not flesh of sin, it is the likeness of flesh of sin. “For God

sent His Son in the likeness of flesh of sin.” True Flesh, mortal Flesh; but not flesh of sin. “For God sent His Son in the likeness of flesh of sin, that by sin He might condemn sin in the Flesh.” “For God sent His Son in the likeness of flesh of sin;” in Flesh, but not in flesh of sin; but “in the likeness of flesh of sin.” For what purpose? “That by sin,” of which assuredly there was none in Him, “He might condemn sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

5. If then it was “the likeness of flesh of sin,” not flesh of sin, how, “That by sin He might condemn sin in the flesh”? So a likeness is wont to receive the name of that thing of which it is a likeness. The word man is used for a real man; but if you show a man painted on the wall, and enquire what it is, it is answered, “A man.” So then Flesh having the likeness of flesh of sin, that it might be a sacrifice for sin, is called “sin.” The same Apostle says in another place, “He made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.” “Him who knew no sin:” Who is He who knew no sin, but He That said, “Behold the prince of the world cometh, and shall find nothing in me? Him who knew no sin, made He sin for us;” even Christ Himself, who knew no sin, God made sin for us. What does this mean, Brethren? If it were said, “He made sin upon Him,” or, “He made Him to have sin;” it would seem intolerable; how do we tolerate what is said, “He made Him sin,” that Christ Himself should be sin? They who are acquainted with the Scriptures of the Old Testament recognise what I am saying. For it is not an expression once used, but repeatedly, very constantly, sacrifices for sins are called “sins.” A goat, for instance, was offered for sin, a ram, anything; the victim itself which was offered for sin was called “sin.” A sacrifice for sin then was called “sin;” so that in one place the Law says, “That the Priests are to lay their hands upon the sin.” “Him” then, “who knew no sin, He made sin for us;” that is, “He was made a sacrifice for sin.” Sin was offered, and sin was cancelled. The Blood of the Redeemer was shed, and the debtor’s bond was cancelled. This is the “Blood, That was shed for many for the remission of sins.”

6. What meaneth this then thy senseless exultation, O thou that didst hold me captive, for that my Deliverer had mortal Flesh? See, if He had sin; if

thou hast found anything of thine in Him, hold Him fast. “The Word was made Flesh.” The Word is the Creator, the Flesh His creature. What is there here of thine, O enemy? And the Word is God, and His Human Soul is His creature, and His Human Flesh His creature, and the Mortal Flesh of God is His creature. Seek for sin here. But what art thou seeking? The Truth saith, “The prince of this world shall come, and shall find nothing in Me.” He did not therefore not find Flesh, but nothing of his own, that is, no sin. Thou didst deceive the innocent, thou madest them guilty. Thou didst slay the Innocent; thou destroyedst Him from whom thou hadst nothing due, render back what thou didst hold fast. Why then didst thou exult for a short hour, because thou didst find in Christ mortal Flesh? It was thy trap: whereupon thou didst rejoice, thereby hast thou been taken. Wherein thou didst exult that thou hadst found something, therein thou sorrowest now that thou hast lost what thou didst possess. Therefore, brethren, let us who believe in Christ, continue in His word. For if we shall continue in His word, we are His disciples indeed. For not those twelve only, but all we who continue in His word are His disciples indeed. And “we shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall free us;” that is, Christ the Son of God who hath said, “I am the Truth,” shall make you free, that is, shall free you, not from barbarians, but from the devil; not from the captivity of the body, but from the iniquity of the soul. It is He Only who freeth in such wise. Let no one call himself free, lest he remain a slave. Our soul shall not remain in bondage, for that day by day our debts are forgiven.

SERMON LXXXV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN IX. 4 AND 31, “WE MUST WORK THE WORKS OF HIM THAT SENT ME,” ETC. AGAINST THE ARIANS. AND OF THAT WHICH THE MAN WHO WAS BORN BLIND AND RECEIVED HIS SIGHT SAID, “WE KNOW THAT GOD HEARETH NOT SINNERS.”

1. The Lord Jesus, as we heard when the Holy Gospel was being read, opened the eyes of a man who was born blind. Brethren, if we consider our hereditary punishment, the whole world is blind. And therefore came Christ the Enlightener, because the devil had been the Blinder. He made all men to be born blind, who seduced the first man. Let them run to the Enlightener, let them run, believe, receive the clay made of the spittle. The Word is as it

were the spittle, the Flesh is the earth. Let them wash the face in the pool of Siloa. Now it was the Evangelist’s place to explain to us what Siloa means, and he said, “which is by interpretation, Sent.” Who is This That is Sent, but He who in this very Lesson said, “I am come to do the works of Him That sent Me.” Lo, Siloa, wash the face, be baptized, that ye may be enlightened, and that ye who before saw not, may see.

2. Lo, first open your eyes to that which is said; “I am come,” saith He, “to do the works of Him That sent Me.” Now here at once stands forth the Arian, and says, “Here you see that Christ did not His Own works, but the Father’s who sent Him.” Would he say this, if he saw, that is, if he had washed his face in Him who was sent, as it were in Siloa? What then dost thou say? “Lo,” says he, “Himself said it.” What said He? “I am come to do the works of Him That sent Me.” Are they not then His Own? No. What then is that which the Siloa Himself saith, the Sent Himself, the Son Himself, the Only Son Himself, whom thou complainest of as degenerate? What is that He saith, “All things that the Father hath are Mine.” You say that He did the works of Another, in that He said, “I must do the works of Him That sent Me.” I say that the Father had the things of another: I am speaking according to your principles. Why would you object to me that Christ said, “I am come to do His works” as if, “not Mine own but His That sent Me’“?

3. I ask Thee, O Lord Christ, resolve the difficulty, put an end to the contention. “All things,” saith He, “that the Father hath are Mine.” Are they then not the Father’s, if they are Thine? For He doth not say, “All things that the Father hath He hath given unto Me;” although, if He had said even this, He would have shown His equality. But the difficulty is that He said, “All things that the Father hath are Mine.” If you understand it aright, All things that the Father hath, are the Son’s; all things that the Son hath, are the Father’s. Hear Him in another place; “All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine.” The question is finished, as to the things which the Father and the Son have: they have them with one consent, do not thou introduce dissension. What He calleth the works of the Father, are His Own works; for, “Thine too are Mine,” for He speaketh of the works of That Father, to whom He said, “All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine.” So then, My

works are Thine, and Thy works are Mine. “For what things soever the Father doeth;” Himself hath said, the Lord hath said, the Only-Begotten hath said, the Son hath said, the Truth hath said. What hath He said? “What things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son in like manner.” Signal expression! signal truth! signal equality. “All things that the Father doeth, these doeth the Son also.” Were it enough to say, “All things that the Father doeth, these doeth the Son also”? It is not enough; I add, “in like manner.” Why do I add, “in like manner”? Because they who do not understand, and who walk with eyes not yet open, are wont to say, “The Father doeth them by way of command, the Son of obedience, therefore not in like manner.” But if in like manner, as the One, so the Other; so what things the One, the same the Other.

4. “But,” says he, “the Father commands, that the Son may execute.” Carnal indeed is thy conceit, but without prejudice to the truth, I grant it to you. Lo, the Father commands, the Son obeys; is the Son therefore not of the same Nature, because the One commands, and the Other obeys? Give me two men, father and son; they are two men: he that commands is a man; he that obeys is a man; he that commands and he that obeys have one and the same nature. Does not he that commands, beget a son of his own nature? Does he who obeys, by obeying lose his nature? Now take for the present, as you thus take two men, the Father commanding, the Son obeying, yet God and God. But the first two together are two men, the Latter together is but One God; this is a divine miracle. Meanwhile if you would that with you I acknowledge the obedience, do you first with me acknowledge the Nature. The Father begat That which Himself is. If the Father begat ought else than what Himself is, He did not beget a true Son. The Father saith to the Son, “From the womb before the day-star, I begat Thee.” What is, “before the day-star”? By the day-star times are signified. So then before times, before all that is called “before;” before all that is not, or before all that is. For the Gospel does not say, “In the beginning God made the Word;” as it is said, “In the beginning God made the Heaven and the earth;” or, “In the beginning was the Word born;” or, “In the beginning God begat the Word.” But what says it? “He was, He was, He was.” You hear, “He was;” believe. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” So often do ye hear, “Was:” seek not for time, for that He always

"was." He then who always was, and was always with the Son, for that God is able to beget without thee; He said to the Son, "From the womb before the day-star I begat Thee." What is from the womb? Had God a womb? Shall we imagine that God was fashioned with bodily members? God forbid! And why said He, "From the womb," but that it might be understood that He begat Him of His Own Substance? So then from the womb came forth That which Himself was who begat. For if He who begat was one thing, and another came forth out of the womb; it were a monster, not a Son.

5. Therefore let the Son do the works of Him That sent Him, and the Father also do the works of the Son. "At all events," you say, "the Father wills, the Son executes." Lo, I show, that the Son willeth, and the Father executeth. Do you say, "where dost thou show this?" I show it at once. "Father, I will." Now here if I had a mind to cavil, lo, the Son commandeth, and the Father executeth. What wilt Thou? "That where I am, they may be also with Me." We have escaped, there shall we be, where He is; there shall we be, we have escaped. Who can undo the "I Will" of the Almighty? You hear the will of His power, hear now the power of His will. "As the Father" saith He "raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will." "Whom He will." Say not, The Son quickeneth them, whom the Father commandeth Him to quicken. "He quickeneth whom He will." So then whom the Father will, and whom Himself will: because where there is One Power, there is One Will. Let us then in a heart blind no more hold fast that the Nature of the Father and the Son is One and the Same; because the Father is very Father, the Son is very Son. What He is, That did He beget: because the Begotten was not degenerate.

6. There is a something in the words of that man who was blind, which may cause perplexity, and peradventure make many who understand them not aright despair. For he said amongst the rest of his words, the same man whose eyes were opened, "We know that God heareth not sinners." What shall we do, if God heareth not sinners? Dare we pray to God if He heareth not sinners? Give me one who may pray: lo, here is One to hear. Give me one who may pray, sift thoroughly the human race from the imperfect to the perfect. Mount up from the spring to the summer; for this we have just

chanted. “Thou hast made summer and spring;” that is, “Those who are already spiritual, and those who are still carnal hast Thou made;” for so the Son Himself saith, “Thine Eyes have seen My imperfect being.” That which is imperfect in My Body, Thine Eyes have seen. And what then? Have they who are imperfect hope? Undoubtedly they have. Hear what follows; “And in Thy Book shall all be written.” But perhaps, Brethren, the spiritual pray and are heard, because they are not sinners? What then must the carnal do? What must they do? Shall they perish? Shall they not pray to God? God forbid! Give me that publican in the Gospel. Come, thou publican, stand forth, show thy hope, that the weak may not lose hope. For behold the publican went up with the Pharisee to pray, and with face cast down upon the ground, standing afar off, beating his breast, he said, “Lord, be merciful to me a sinner. And he went down justified rather than the Pharisee.” Said he true or false, who said, “Be merciful to me a sinner”? If he said true, he was a sinner; yet was he heard and justified. What then is that, that thou whose eyes the Lord opened didst say, “We know that God heareth not sinners”? Lo, God doth hear sinners. But wash thou thy inferior face, let that be done in thy heart, which hath been done in thy face; and thou wilt see that God doth hear sinners. The imagination of thine heart hath deceived thee. There is still something for Him to do to thee. We see that this man was cast out of the synagogue; Jesus heard of it, came to him, and said to him, “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” And He said, “Who is He, Lord, that I should believe on Him?” He saw, and did not see; he saw with the eyes, but as yet with the heart he saw not. The Lord said to him, “Thou both seest Him,” that is, with the eyes; “and He that talketh with thee is He. He then fell down, and worshipped Him.” Then washed he the face of his heart.

7. Apply yourselves then earnestly to prayer, ye sinners: confess your sins, pray that they may be blotted out, pray that they may be diminished, pray that as ye increase, they may decrease: yet do not despair, and sinners though ye be, pray. For who hath not sinned? Begin with the priests. To the priests it is said, “First offer sacrifices for your own sins, and so for the people.” The sacrifices convicted the priests that if any one should call himself righteous and without sin, it might be answered him, “I look not at what thou sayest, but at what thou offerest; thine own victim convicteth

thee. Wherefore dost thou offer for thine own sins, if thou have no sins? Dost thou in thy sacrifice lie unto God?” But peradventure the priests of the ancient people were sinners; of the new people are not sinners. Of a truth, Brethren, for that God hath so willed, I am His priest; I am a sinner; with you do I beat the breast, with you I ask for pardon, with you I hope that God will be merciful. But peradventure the Holy Apostles, those first and highest leaders of the flock, shepherds, members of The Shepherd, these peradventure had no sin. Yes, indeed, even they had, they had indeed; they are not angry at this, for they confess it. I should not dare. First hear the Lord Himself saying to the Apostles, “In this manner pray ye.” As those other priests were convicted by the sacrifices, so these by prayer. And amongst the other things which He commanded them to pray for, He appointed this also, “Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” What do the Apostles say? Every day they pray for their debts to be forgiven them. They come in debtors, they go out absolved, and return debtors to prayer. This life is not without sin, that as often as prayer is made, so often should sins be forgiven.

8. But what shall I say? Peradventure when they learnt the prayer, they were still weak. Some one, perhaps, will say this. When the Lord Jesus taught them that prayer, they were yet babes, weak, carnal; they were not yet spiritual, who have no sin. What then, Brethren? When they became spiritual, did they cease to pray? Then Christ ought to have said, “Pray in such wise now;” and to have given them, when spiritual, another prayer. It is one and the same. He who gave it is One and the Same; use it then in prayer in the Church. But we will take away all controversy, when you say the Holy Apostles were spiritual, up to the time of the Lord’s Passion they were carnal; this you must say. And indeed, the truth is, as He was hanging, they were in alarm, and the Apostles then despaired when the robber believed. Peter dared to follow, when the Lord was led to suffering, he dared to follow, who came to the house, and was wearied in the palace, and stood at the fire, and was cold; he stood at the fire, he was frozen with a chilling fear. Being questioned by the maid-servant, he denied Christ once; being questioned a second time, he denied Him; being questioned a third time, he denied Him. God be thanked, that the questioning ceased; if the questioning had not ceased, long would the denial have been repeated. So

then after He rose again, then He confirmed them, then did they become spiritual. Had they at that time then no sin? The Apostles spiritual, wrote spiritual epistles, they sent them to the Churches; “they had no sin.” This you say. I do not believe you, I ask themselves. Tell us, O holy Apostles, after the Lord rose again, and confirmed you with the Holy Ghost sent from heaven; did ye cease to have sin? Tell us, I pray you. Let us hear, that sinners may not despair, that they may not leave off to pray to God, because they are not without sin. Tell us. One of them saith. And who? He whom the Lord loved the most, and who lay on the Lord’s Breast, and drank in the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven which he was to pour forth again. Him I ask; “Have ye sin or not?” He maketh answer and saith, “If we shall say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” Now it is the same John who said, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” See ye what heights he had passed, that he could reach to the Word! Such an one, and so great, who like an eagle soared above the clouds, who in the serene clearness of his mind saw, “In the beginning was the Word;” he hath said, “If we shall say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we shall confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Therefore pray ye.

SERMON LXXXVI

ON THE SAME LESSON OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN IX., ON THE GIVING SIGHT TO THE MAN THAT WAS BORN BLIND

1. We have heard the lesson of the Holy Gospel which we are in the habit of hearing; but it is a good thing to be reminded: good to refresh the memory from the lethargy of forgetfulness. And in fact this very old lesson has given us as much pleasure as if it were new. Christ gave sight to one blind from his birth; why do we marvel? Christ is the Saviour; by an act of mercy He made up that which He had not given in the womb. Now when He gave that man no eyes, it was no mistake of His surely; but a delay with a view to a miracle. You are saying, it may be, “Whence knowest thou this?” From Himself I have heard it; He just now said it; we heard it all together. For when His disciples asked Him, and said, “Lord, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” What answer He made, ye, as I did, heard.

“Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” Lo then wherefore it was that He delayed when He gave him no eyes. He did not give what He could give, He did not give what He knew He should give, when need was. Yet do not suppose, Brethren, that this man’s parents had no sin, or that he himself had not, when he was born, contracted original sin, for the remission of which sin infants are baptized unto remission of sins. But that blindness was not because of his parents’ sin, nor because of his own sin; “but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” For we all when we were born contracted original sin: and yet we were not born blind. However enquire carefully, And we were born blind. For who was not born blind? blind, that is, in heart. But the Lord Jesus, for that He had created both, cured both.

2. With the eyes of faith ye have seen this man blind, ye have seen him too of blind seeing; but ye have heard him erring. Wherein this blind man erred, I will tell you; first, in that he thought Christ a prophet, and knew not that He was the Son of God. And then we have heard an answer of his entirely false; for he said, “We know that God heareth not sinners.” If God heareth not sinners, what hope have we? If God heareth not sinners, why do we pray, and publish the record of our sin by the beating of the breast? Where again is that Publican, who went up with the Pharisee into the temple and while the Pharisee was boasting, parading his own merits, he standing afar off, and with his eyes fastened on the ground, and beating his breast, was confessing his sins? And this man, who confessed his sins, went down from the temple justified rather than the other Pharisee. Assuredly then God doth hear sinners. But he who spake these words had not yet washed the face of the heart in Siloa. The sacrament had gone before on his eyes; but in the heart had not been yet effected the blessing of the grace. When did this blind man wash the face of his heart? When the Lord admitted him into Himself after he had been cast out by the Jews. For He found him, and said to him as we have heard; “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” And he, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe on Him?” With the eyes, it is true, he saw already; did he see already in the heart? No, not yet. Wait; he will see presently. Jesus answered him, “I that speak with thee am He.” Did he doubt? No, forthwith he washed his face. For he was speaking with That Siloa, “which is by interpretation, Sent.” Who is the Sent, but Christ? Who

often bare witness, saying, “I do the will of My Father That sent Me.” He then was Himself the Siloa. The man approached blind in heart, he heard, believed, adored; washed the face, saw.

3. But they who cast him out continued blind, forasmuch as they cavilled at the Lord, that it was the sabbath when He made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the blind man. For when the Lord cured with a word, the Jews openly cavilled. For He did no work on the sabbath day, when He spake, and it was done. It was a manifest cavil; they cavilled at Him merely commanding, they cavilled at Him speaking; as if they did not themselves speak all the sabbath day. I might say that they do not speak not only on the sabbath, but on no day, forasmuch as they have kept back from the praises of the True God. Nevertheless, as I have said, brethren, it was a manifest cavil. The Lord said to a certain man, “Stretch forth thine hand;” he was made whole, and they cavilled for that He healed on the sabbath day. What did He do? what work did He do? what burden did He bear? But in this instance, the spitting on the ground, the making clay, and anointing the man’s eyes, is doing some work. Let no one doubt it, it was doing a work. The Lord did break the sabbath; but was not therefore guilty. What is that I have said, “He brake the sabbath”? He, the Light had come, He was removing the shadows. For the sabbath was enjoined by the Lord God, enjoined by Christ Himself, who was with the Father, when that Law was given; it was enjoined by Him, but in shadow of what was to come. “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come.” He had now come whose coming these things announced. Why do the shadows delight us? Open your eyes, ye Jews; the Sun is present. “We know.” What do ye know, ye blind in heart? what know ye? “That this man is not of God, because he thus breaketh the sabbath day.” The sabbath, unhappy men, this very sabbath did Christ ordain, who ye say is not of God. Ye observe the sabbath in a carnal manner, ye have not the spittle of Christ. In this earth of the sabbath look also for the spittle of Christ, and ye will understand that by the sabbath Christ was prophesied. But ye, because ye have not the spittle of Christ in the earth upon your eyes, ye have not come unto Siloa, and have not washed the face, and have continued blind, blind to the good of this blind man, yea now no longer blind either in body or heart.

He received clay with the spittle, his eyes were anointed, he came to Siloa, he washed his face, he believed on Christ, he saw, he continued not in that exceedingly fearful judgment; “For judgment I came into this world, that they which see not may see, and that they which see may be made blind.”

4. Exceeding alarm! “That they which see not may see:” Good. It is a Saviour’s office, a profession of healing power, “That they which see not may see.” But what, Lord, is that Thou hast added, “That they which see may be made blind”? If we understand, it is most true, most righteous. Yet what is, “They which see”? They are the Jews. Do they then see? According to their own words, they see; according to the truth, they do not see. What then is, “they see”? They think they see, they believe they see. For they believed they did see, when they maintained the Law against Christ. “We know;” therefore they see. What is “We know,” but we see? What is, “this Man is not of God, because He thus breaketh the sabbath day”? They see; they read what the Law said. For it was enjoined that whosoever should break the sabbath day, should be stoned. Therefore said they that He was not of God; but though seeing, they were blind to this, that for judgment He came into the world who is to be the Judge of quick and dead; why came He? “That they which see not may see:” that they who confess that they do not see, may be enlightened. “And that they which see may be made blind;” that is, that they who confess not their own blindness, may be the more hardened. And, in fact, “That they which see may be made blind,” has been fulfilled; the defenders of the Law, Doctors of the Law, the teachers of the Law, the understanders of the Law, crucified the Author of the Law. O blindness, this is that which “in part hath happened to Israel.” That Christ might be crucified, and the fulness of the Gentiles might come in, “blindness in part hath happened to Israel.” What is, “that they which see not may see”? That the fulness of the Gentiles might come in, “blindness in part hath happened to Israel.” The whole world lay in blindness; but He came, “that they which see not may see, and that they which see may be made blind.” He was disowned by the Jews, He was crucified by the Jews; of His Blood He made an eye-salve for the blind. They who boasted that they saw the light, being more hardened, being made blind, crucified the Light. What great blindness? They killed the Light, but the Light Crucified enlightened the blind.

5. Hear one seeing, who once was blind. Behold, against what a cross they have miserably stumbled, who would not confess their blindness to the Physician! The Law had continued with them. What serveth the Law without grace? Unhappy men, what can the Law do without grace? What doeth the earth without the spittle of Christ? What doeth the Law without grace, but make them more guilty? Why? Because hearers of the Law and not doers, and hereby sinners, transgressors. The son of the hostess of the man of God was dead, and his staff was sent by his servant, and laid upon his face, but he did not revive. What doeth the Law without grace? What saith the Apostle, now seeing, now of blind, enlightened? "For if there had been a Law given which could give life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law." Take heed; let us answer and say; what is this that he hath said? "If there had been a Law given which could give life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law." If it could not give life, why was it given? He went on and added, "But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by the faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." That the promise of illumination, the promise of love by the faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe, that Scripture, that is the Law, hath concluded all under sin. What is, "hath concluded all under sin"? "I had not known concupiscence, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not lust." What is, "hath concluded all under sin"? Hath made the sinner a transgressor also. For it could not heal the sinner. "It hath concluded all under sin;" but with what hope? The hope of grace, the hope of mercy. Thou hast received the Law: thou didst wish to keep it, thou wast not able; thou hast fallen from pride, hast seen thy weakness. Run to the Physician, wash the face. Long for Christ, confess Christ, believe on Christ; the Spirit is added to the letter, and thou wilt be saved. For if thou take away the Spirit from the letter, "the letter killeth;" if it kill, where is hope? "But the Spirit giveth life."

6. Let then Gehazi, Elisha's servant, receive the staff, as Moses the servant of God received the Law. Let him receive the staff, receive it, run, go before, anticipate him, lay the staff upon the face of the dead child. And so it was; he did receive it, he ran, he laid the staff upon the face of the dead child. But to what purpose? what serveth the staff? "If there had been a Law given which could give life," the boy might have been raised to life by the

staff; but seeing that "the Scripture hath concluded all under sin," he still lies dead. But why hath it concluded all under sin? "That the promise by the faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Let then Elisha come, who sent the staff by the servant to prove that he was dead; let him come himself, come in his own person, himself enter into the woman's house, go up to the child, find him dead, conform himself to the members of the dead child, himself not dead, but living. For this he did; he laid his face upon his face, his eyes upon his eyes, his hands upon his hands, his feet upon his feet, he straitened, he contracted himself, being great, he made himself little. He contracted himself; so to say, he lessened himself. "For being in the Form of God, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant." What is He conformed Himself, alive to the dead? Do ye ask, what this is? Hear the Apostle; "God sent His Son." What is, he conformed himself to the dead? Let him tell this, let him go on and declare it again; "In the likeness of flesh of sin." This is to conform Himself Alive to the dead; to come to us in the likeness of flesh of sin, not in the flesh of sin. Man lay dead in a flesh of sin, the likeness of flesh of sin conformed Himself to him. For He died who had not wherefore to die. He died, Alone "Free among the dead;" forasmuch as the whole flesh of men was indeed a flesh of sin. And how should it rise again, had not He who had no sin, conforming Himself to the dead, come in the likeness of flesh of sin? O Lord Jesus, who hast suffered for us, not for Thyself, who hadst no guilt, and didst endure its punishment, that thou mightest dissolve at once the guilt and punishment.

SERMON LXXXVII

THE TENTH CHAPTER OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN. OF THE SHEPHERD, AND THE HIRELING, AND THE THIEF

1. Your faith, dearly beloved, is not ignorant, and I know that ye have so learnt by the teaching of that Master from heaven, in whom ye have placed your hope, that our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath now suffered for us and risen again, is the Head of the Church, and the Church is His Body, and that in His Body the unity of the members and the bond of charity is, as it were, its sound health. But whosoever groweth cold in charity, is become enfeebled in the Body of Christ. But He who hath already exalted our Head, is able also to make even the feeble members whole; provided, that is, that

they be not cut off by excessive impiety, but adhere to the Body until they be made whole. For whatsoever yet adhereth to the body, is not beyond hope of healing; whereas that which hath been cut off, can neither be in process of curing, nor be healed. Since then He is the Head of the Church, and the Church is His Body, Whole Christ is both the Head and the Body. He hath already risen again. We have therefore the Head in heaven. Our Head intercedeth for us. Our Head without sin and without death, now propitiateth God for our sins; that we too at the end rising again, and changed into heavenly glory, may follow our Head. For where the Head is, there are the rest of the members also. But whilst we are here, we are members; let us not despair, for we shall follow our Head.

2. For consider, Brethren, the love of this our Head. He is now in heaven, yet doth He suffer here, as long as His Church suffereth here. Here Christ is hungered, here He is athirst, is naked, is a stranger, is sick, is in prison. For whatsoever His Body suffereth here, He hath said that Himself suffereth; and at the end, severing off this His Body to the right hand, and severing the rest by whom He is now trodden under foot to the left, He will say to those on the right hand, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, receive the kingdom which hath been prepared for you from the beginning of the world.” For what deservings? “For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat;” and so He goes over the rest, as if He had Himself received; to such a degree that they, not understanding it, make answer and say, “Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, a stranger, and in prison?” And He saith to them, “Forasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of Mine, ye have done it unto Me.” So also in our own body, the head is above, the feet are on the earth; yet in any crowding and throng of men, when any one treads on your foot, does not the head say, “You are treading upon me?” No one has trodden on your head, or on your tongue; it is above, in safety, no harm has happened unto it; and yet because by the bond of charity there is unity from the head even to the feet, the tongue does not separate itself therefrom, but says, “You are treading upon me;” when no one has touched it. As then the tongue, which no one has touched, says, “You are treading upon me;” so Christ, the Head, which no one treadeth on, said, “I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat.” And to them who did not so, He said, “I was an hungred, and ye gave Me

no meat.” And how did He finish? Thus; “These shall go into everlasting burning, but the righteous into life eternal.”

3. When our Lord then was speaking on this occasion, He said, that He is “the Shepherd,” He said also that He is “the Door.” You find them both in that place, both “I am the Door” and “I am the Shepherd.” In the Head He is the Door, the Shepherd in the Body. For He saith to Peter, in whom singly He formeth the Church; “Peter, lovest thou Me?” He answered, “Lord, I do love Thee.” “Feed My sheep.” And a third time, “Peter, lovest thou Me?” “Peter was grieved because He asked him the third time;” as though He who saw the conscience of the denier, saw not the confessor’s faith. He had known him always, had known him even when Peter had not known himself. For he did not know himself at that time when he said, “I will be with Thee even unto death;” and how infirm he was he knew not. Just as it constantly happens in fact to invalids, that the sick man knows not what is going on within him, but the physician knows; when yet the former is suffering from the very sickness, and the physician is not. The physician can better tell what is going on in another, than he who is sick what is going on in himself. Peter then was at that time the invalid, and the Lord the Physician. The former declared that he had strength, when he had not; but the Lord touching the pulse of his heart, declared that he should deny Him thrice. And so it came to pass, as the Physician foretold, not as the sick presumed. Therefore, after His resurrection the Lord questioned him, not as being ignorant with what a heart he would confess the love of Christ, but that he might by a threefold confession of love, efface the threefold denial of fear.

4. Therefore doth the Lord require this of Peter, “Peter, lovest thou Me?” As though, “What wilt thou give Me, what wilt thou do for Me, seeing that thou lovest Me?” What was Peter to do for his Lord risen again, and going into heaven, and sitting on the right hand of the Father? As if He had said, “This shalt thou give Me, this shalt thou do for Me, if thou lovest Me, feed My sheep; enter in by the Door, not go up by another way.” Ye heard when the Gospel was being read, “He that entereth in by Door, is the shepherd; but he that goeth up another way, is a thief and a robber; and he seeketh to disperse, and to scatter, and to spoil.” Who is he that entereth in by the

Door? He that entereth in by Christ. Who is he? He who imitateth the Passion of Christ, who acknowledgeth the Humility of Christ; that whereas God was made Man for us, man may acknowledge himself to be, not God, but man. For whoso wisheth to appear God, when he is man, doth not imitate Him, who, being God, was made Man. But to thee it is not said, Be anything less than thou art; but acknowledge what thou art. Acknowledge thyself feeble, acknowledge thyself man, acknowledge thyself a sinner; acknowledge that it is He That justifieth, acknowledge that thou art full of stains. Let the stain of thine heart appear in thy confession, and thou shalt belong to Christ's flock. For the confession of sins invites the physician's healing; as in sickness, he that says, "I am well," seeketh not the physician. Did not the Pharisee and the Publican go up to the temple? The one boasted of his sound estate, the other showed his wounds to the Physician. For the Pharisee said, "I thank Thee, O God, that I am not as this publican." He gloried over the other. So then if that publican had been whole, the Pharisee would have grudged it him; for that he would not have had any one over whom to extol himself. In what state then had he come, who had this envious spirit? Surely he was not whole; and whereas he called himself whole, he went not down cured. But the other casting his eyes down to the ground, and not daring to lift them up unto heaven, smote his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And what saith the Lord? "Verily I say unto you, that the publican went down from the temple justified rather than the Pharisee. For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." They then who exalt themselves, would go up into the sheepfold by another way; but they who humble themselves, enter in by the Door into the sheepfold. Therefore said He of the one, "he entereth in;" of the other, "he goeth up." He that goeth up, you see, who seeks exaltation, does not enter in, but falls. Whereas he that abases himself, that he may enter in by the Door, falls not, but is the shepherd.

5. But the Lord mentioned three characters, and our duty is to search them out in the Gospel, that of the shepherd, the hireling, and the thief. I suppose you took notice when the lesson was being read, that He marked out the shepherd, the hireling, and the thief. "The Shepherd," said He, "layeth down His life for the sheep," and entereth in by the door. The thief and the robber, said He, go up by another way. "The hireling," He said, if he seeth a

wolf or even a thief, “fleeth; because he careth not for the sheep;” for he is an hireling, not a shepherd. The one entereth in by the door, because he is the shepherd; the second goeth up another way, because he is a thief; the third seeing them who wish to spoil the sheep feareth and fleeth, because he is an hireling, because he careth not for the sheep; for he is an hireling. If we shall find these three characters, ye have found, holy brethren, both those whom ye should love, and those whom ye should tolerate, and those of whom ye must beware. The Shepherd is to be loved, the hireling is to be tolerated, of the robber must we beware. There are men in the Church of whom the Apostle speaks, who preach the Gospel by occasion, seeking of men their own advantage, whether of money, or of honour, or human praise. They preach the Gospel, wishing to receive rewards in whatsoever way they can, and seek not so much his salvation to whom they preach, as their own advantage. But he who heareth the word of salvation from him who hath not salvation, if he believe Him whom he preacheth, and put not his hope in him, by whom salvation is preached to him; he that preacheth shall have loss; he to whom he preacheth shall have gain.

6. You have the Lord saying of the Pharisees, “They sit in Moses’ seat.” The Lord did not mean them only; as if He would send those who should believe on Christ to the school of the Jews, that they might learn there wherein is the way to the kingdom of heaven. Did not the Lord come for this end, that He might establish a Church, and separate those Jews who had a good faith, and a good hope, and a good love, as wheat from the chaff, and might make them one wall of the circumcision, to which should be joined another wall from the uncircumcision of the Gentiles, of which two walls coming from different directions, Himself should be the Corner-Stone? Did not the same Lord therefore say of these two people who were to be one, “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold”? Now He was speaking to the Jews; “Them also,” said He, “must I bring, that there may be one fold, and One Shepherd.” Therefore there were two ships out of which He had called His disciples. They figured these two people, when they let down their nets, and took up so great a draught and so large a number of fishes, that the nets were almost broken. “And they laded,” it is said, “both the ships.” The two ships figured the One Church, but made out of two peoples, joined together in Christ, though coming from different

parts. Of this too the two wives, who had one husband Jacob, Leah and Rachel, are a figure. Of these two, the two blind men also are a figure, who sat by the way side, to whom the Lord gave sight. And if ye pay attention to the Scriptures, ye will find the two Churches, which are not two but One, figured out in many places. For to this end the Corner-Stone serveth, for to make of two One. To this end serveth That Shepherd, for to make of two flocks One. So then the Lord who was to teach the Church, and to have a school of His Own beyond the Jews, as we see at present, would He be likely to send those who believe on Him unto the Jews, to learn? But under the name of the Scribes and Pharisees He intimated that there would be some in His Church who would say and not do; but, in the person of Moses He designated Himself. For Moses represented Him, and for this reason did he put a vail before him, when he was speaking to the people; because as long as they were in the law given up to carnal joys and pleasures, and looking for an earthly kingdom, a vail was put upon their face, that they should not see Christ in the Scriptures. For when the vail was taken away, after that the Lord had suffered, the secrets of the temple were discovered. Accordingly when He was hanging on the Cross, the vail of the temple was rent from the top even to the bottom; and the Apostle Paul says expressly, “But when thou shalt turn to Christ, the vail shall be taken away.” Whereas with him who turneth not to Christ, though he read the law of Moses, the vail is laid upon his heart, as the Apostle says. When the Lord then would signify beforehand that there would be some such in His Church, what did He say? “The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. What they say, do; but do not what they do.”

7. When wicked clerics hear this which is said against them, they would pervert it. For I have heard that some do wish to pervert this sentence. Would they not, if they might, efface it from the Gospel? But because they cannot efface it, they go about to pervert it. But the grace and mercy of the Lord is present, and allows them not to do so; for He hath hedged round all His declarations with His truth, and in such wise balanced them; that if any one would wish to cut off anything from them, or to introduce anything by a bad reading or interpretation, any right hearted man may join to the Scripture what has been cut off from the Scripture, and read what went above or below, and he will find the sense which the other wished to

interpret wrongly. What then, think ye, do they say of whom it is said, “Do what they say”? That it is (and in truth it is so) addressed to laymen. For what does the layman who wishes to live well say to himself, when he takes notice of a wicked cleric? “The Lord said, What they say, do; what they do, do not.’ Let me walk in the way of the Lord, not follow this man’s conversation. Let me hear from him not his words, but God’s. I will follow God, let him follow his own lust. For if I should wish to defend myself in such wise before God as to say, Lord, I saw that thy cleric living evilly, and therefore I lived evilly;’ would He not say to me, Thou wicked servant, hadst thou not heard from Me, “What they say, do, but what they do, do not”?’ But a wicked layman, an unbeliever, who belongs not to Christ’s flock, who belongs not to Christ’s wheat, who as chaff is only borne with in the floor, what does he say to himself when the word of God begins to reprove him? “Away; why talkest thou to me? The very Bishops and Clergy do not do it, and dost thou force me to do it?” Thus he seeks for himself not a patron for his bad cause, but a companion for punishment. For will that wicked one whosoever he be that he has chosen to imitate, will he ever defend him in the day of judgment? For as with all whom the devil seduces, he seduces them not to be partakers of a kingdom, but of his damnation; so all who follow the wicked, seek companions for themselves to hell, not protection unto the kingdom of heaven.

8. How then do they pervert this declaration when it is said to them in their wicked lives, “With good reason was it said by the Lord ,What they say, do; what they do, do not’“? “It was well said,” say they. “For it was said to you, that ye should do what we say; but that ye should not do what we do. For we offer sacrifice, you may not.” See the cunning craftiness of these men; what shall I call them? hirelings. For if they were shepherds, they would not say such things. Therefore the Lord, that He might shut their mouths, went on, and said, “They sit in Moses’ seat; what they say, do; but what they do, do not; for they say, and do not.” What is it then, Brethren? If He had spoken of offering sacrifice; would He have said, “For they say, and do not”? For they do offer sacrifice, they do offer unto God. What is it that they say, and do not? Hear what follows; “For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders, and they themselves will not touch them with one of their fingers.” So openly did He rebuke,

describe, and point them out. But those men when they thus wish to pervert the passage, show plainly that they seek nothing in the Church but their own advantage; and that they have not read the Gospel; for had they known but this very page, and read the whole, they would never have dared to say this.

9. But attend to a more clear proof that the Church hath such as these. Lest any one should say to us, “He spake entirely of the Pharisees, He spake of the Scribes, He spake of the Jews; for the Church hath none such.” Who then are they of whom the Lord saith, “Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven”? And He added, “Many shall say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name, and in Thy Name done many mighty works, and in Thy Name have eaten and drunken?” What! do the Jews do these things in Christ’s name? Assuredly it is manifest, that He speaks of them who have the Name of Christ. But what follows? “Then will I say to them, I never knew you; depart from Me, all ye that work iniquity.” Hear the Apostle sighing concerning such as these. He says that some preach the Gospel “through charity,” others “by occasion;” of whom he says, “They do not preach the Gospel rightly.” A right thing, but themselves not right. What they preach is right; but they who preach it are not right. Why is he not right? Because he seeketh something else in the Church, seeketh not God. If he sought God, he would be chaste; for the soul hath in God her lawful husband. Whosoever seeketh from God ought besides God, doth not seek God chastely. Consider, Brethren; if a wife love her husband because he is rich, she is not chaste. For she loves not her husband, but her husband’s gold. Whereas if she love her husband, she loves him both in nakedness and poverty. For if she love him because he is rich; what if (as human chances are) he be outlawed and all on a sudden be reduced to need? She gives him up, mayhap; because what she loved was not her husband, but his property. But if she love her husband indeed, she loves him even more when poor; for that she loves with pity too.

10. And yet, Brethren, our God never can be poor. He is rich, He made all things, heaven and earth, the sea and Angels. In the heaven, whatsoever we see, whatsoever we see not, He made it. But notwithstanding, we ought not

to love these riches, but Him who made them. For He hath promised thee nothing but Himself. Find anything more precious, and He will give thee this. Beauteous is the earth, the heaven, and the Angels; but more beauteous is He who made them. They then who preach God, as loving God; who preach God, for God's sake, feed the sheep, and are no hirelings. This chastity did our Lord Jesus Christ require of the soul, when He said to Peter, "Peter, lovest thou Me"? What is "Lovest thou Me"? Art thou chaste? Is not thine heart adulterous? Dost thou seek not thine own things in the Church, but Mine? If then thou be such an one, and lovest Me, "feed My sheep." For thou shalt be no hireling, but thou shalt be a shepherd.

11. But they did not preach chastely, concerning whom the Apostle sighs. But what doth he say? "What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether by occasion or in truth, Christ is preached." He suffers then that hirelings there should be. The shepherd preacheth Christ in truth, the hireling by occasion preacheth Christ, seeking something else. Notwithstanding, both the one and the other preacheth Christ. Hear the voice of the shepherd Paul; "Whether by occasion or in truth, Christ is preached." Himself a shepherd, he was pleased to have the hireling. For they act where they are able, they are useful as far as they are able. But when the Apostle for other uses sought for those whose ways the weak ones might imitate; he saith, "I have sent unto you Timotheus, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways." And what doth he say? "I have sent unto you a shepherd, to bring you into remembrance of my ways;" that is, who himself also walketh as I walk. And in sending this shepherd, what doth he say? "For I have no one so likeminded, who with sincere affection is anxious for you." Were there not many with him? But what follows? "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's;" that is, "I have wished to send unto you a shepherd; for there are many hirelings; but it were not meet for an hireling to be sent." An hireling is sent for the transaction of other affairs and business; but for those which Paul then desired, a shepherd was necessary. And he scarcely found one shepherd among many hirelings; for the shepherds are few, the hirelings many. But what is said of the hirelings? "Verily I say unto you, they have received their reward." Of the shepherd, what saith the Apostle? "But whosoever shall cleanse himself from such as these shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and useful to the Lord,

prepared always unto every good work.” Not unto certain things prepared, and unto certain not prepared, but “unto every good work prepared.” So much have I said, concerning the shepherds.

12. But we will now speak of the hirelings. “The hireling when he seeth the wolf lying in wait for the sheep, fleeth.” This the Lord said. Why? “Because he careth not for the sheep.” So long then is the hireling of use, as he seeth not the wolf coming, as he seeth not the thief and the robber; but when he seeth them, he fleeth. And who is there of the hirelings, who fleeth not from the Church, when he seeth the wolf and the robber? And wolves and robbers abound. They are they who go up by another way. Who are these who go up? They who of Donatus’ way wish to make havoc of Christ’s sheep, they go up by another way. They do not enter in by Christ, because they are not humble. Because they are proud, they go up. What is, “they go up”? They are lifted up. Whereby do they go up? By another way: whence they wish to be named from their way. They who are not in unity are of another way, and by this way they go up, that is, are lifted up, and wish to spoil the sheep. Now mark how they go up. “It is we,” they say, “who sanctify, we justify, we make righteous.” See whither they have got up. “But he that exalteth himself, shall be abased.” Our Lord God is able to abase them. Now the wolf is the devil, he lieth in wait to deceive, and they that follow him; for it is said that “they are clothed indeed with the skins of sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.” If the hireling observe anyone indulging in wicked talking, or in sentiments to the deadly hurt of his soul, or doing ought that is abominable and unclean, and notwithstanding that he seems to bear a character of some importance in the Church (from which if he hopes for advantage he is an hireling); says nothing, and when he sees the man perishing in his sin, sees the wolf following him, sees his throat dragged by his teeth to punishment; says not to him, “Thou sinnest;” does not chide him, lest he lose his own advantage. This I say is, “When he seeth the wolf, he fleeth;” he does not say to him, “Thou art doing wickedly.” This is no flight of the body, but of the soul. He whom thou seest standing still in body flies in heart, when he sees a sinner, and does not say to him, “Thou sinnest;” yea when he even is in concert with him.

13. My Brethren, does ever either Presbyter or Bishop come up here, and say anything from this higher place, but that the property of others must not be plundered, that there must be no fraud committed, no wickedness done? They cannot say ought else who sit in Moses' seat, and it is it that speaks by them, not they themselves. What then is, "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" and, "Every tree is known by his fruit"? Can a Pharisee speak good things? A Pharisee is a thorn; how from a thorn do I gather grapes? Because Thou, Lord, hast said, "What they say, do; but what they do, do not." Dost Thou bid me gather grapes of thorns when Thou sayest, "Do men gather grapes of thorns"? The Lord answereth thee, "I have not bidden thee gather grapes of thorns: but look, mark well, if haply, as is often the case, the vine when it trails all along upon the ground, be not entangled in thorns." For we sometimes find this, my Brethren, a vine planted over sedge, how it has there a thorny hedge, and throws out its branches, and entangles them in the thorny hedge, and the grape hangs among the thorns; and he that sees it plucks the grape, yet not from the thorns, but from the vine which is entangled in the thorns. In like manner then the Pharisees are thorny; but by sitting in Moses' seat, the vine wraps them round, and grapes, that is, good words, good precepts, hang from them. Do thou pick the grape, the thorn will not prick thee, when thou readest, "What they say, do; but what they do, do not." But the thorn will prick thee, if thou do what they do. So then that thou mayest gather the grape, and not be caught in the thorns, "What they say, do; but what they do, do not." Their deeds are the thorns, their words are the grapes, but from the vine, that is, from Moses' seat.

14. These then flee, when they see the wolf, when they see the robber. Now this it was that I had began to say, that from this higher place they can say nothing, but, "Do well," "do not forswear yourselves," "defraud not," "cheat not any." But sometimes men's lives are so bad, that counsel is asked of a Bishop on the taking away of another man's estate, and from him is such counsel sought. It has sometimes happened to ourselves, we speak from experience: for we should not have believed it. Many men require from us evil counsels, counsels of lying, of fraud; thinking that they please us thereby. But by the Name of Christ, if what we are saying is pleasing to the Lord, no such man has tempted us, and found what he wished in us. For

with the good pleasure of Him who hath called us, we are shepherds, not hirelings. But as saith the Apostle, “But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s day; yea, I judge not even mine own self. For I am conscious of nothing by myself, but I am not hereby justified. But He That judgeth me is the Lord.” My conscience is not therefore good, because ye praise it. For how praise ye what ye do not see? Let Him praise, who seeth; yea let Him correct, if He seeth ought there which offendeth His Eyes. For I too do not say that I am perfectly whole; but I beat my breast, and say to God, “Be merciful, that I sin not.” Yet I do think, for I speak in His Presence, that I seek nothing from you, but your salvation; and constantly do I groan over the sins of my brethren, and I suffer distress, and am tormented in mind, and often do I reprove them; yea, I never cease reproving them. All who remember what I say are witnesses, how often my brethren who sin have been reproved, and earnestly reproved, by me.

15. I am now treating of my counsel with you, holy Brethren. In Christ’s Name ye are the people of God, ye are a Catholic people, ye are members of Christ; ye are not divided from unity. Ye are in communion with the members of the Apostles, ye are in communion with the memories of the Holy Martyrs, who are spread over the whole world, and ye belong to my cure, that I may render a good account of you. Now my whole account, what it is ye know. “Lord, Thou knowest that I have spoken, Thou knowest that I have not kept silence, Thou knowest in what spirit I have spoken, Thou knowest that I have wept before Thee, when I spake, and was not heard.” This I imagine is my whole account. For the Holy Spirit by the prophet Ezekiel hath given me sure hope. Ye know this passage concerning the watchman; “O son of man,” saith He, “I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; if when I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt die the death, thou dost not speak;” that is (for I speak to thee that thou mayest speak), “if thou dost not announce it, and the sword,” that is, what I have threatened on the sinner, “come, and take him away; that wicked man indeed shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman’s hand.” Why? Because he did not speak. “But if the watchman see the sword coming, and blow the trumpet,” that he may fly, and he took not to himself, that is, amend not himself, that it find him not in the punishment which God threateneth, and “the sword shall come and take any

one away; that wicked man indeed shall die in his iniquity; but thou," saith He, "hast delivered thine own soul." And in that place of the Gospel, what else saith He to the servant? when he said, "Lord, I knew Thee to be a" difficult or "hard Man, in that Thou reapest where Thou hast not sowed, and gatherest where Thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid Thy talent in the earth, lo, Thou hast that is Thine." And He said, "Thou wicked and slothful servant,' because thou knewest Me to be a difficult and hard Man, to reap where I have not sown, and to gather where I have not strawed, My very covetousness ought the more to teach thee, that I look for profit from My money. Thou oughtest therefore to have given My money to the exchangers, and at My coming I should have required Mine own with usury.'" Did He say, "Thou oughtest to give, and require"? It is we then, Brethren, who give, He will come to require. Pray ye, that He may find us prepared.

SERMON LXXXVIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN X. 14, "I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD," ETC. AGAINST THE DONATISTS

1. We have heard the Lord Jesus setting forth to us the office of a good shepherd. And herein He hath doubtless given us to know, as we may understand it, that there are good shepherds. And yet that the multitude of shepherds might not be understood in a wrong sense; He saith, "I am the good Shepherd." And wherein He is the good Shepherd, He showeth in the words following; "The good Shepherd," saith He, "layeth down His life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, seeth the wolf coming, and fleeth; because he careth not for the sheep, for he is an hireling." Christ then is the good Shepherd. What was Peter? was he not a good shepherd? Did not he too lay down his life for the sheep? What was Paul? what the rest of the Apostles? what the blessed Bishops, Martyrs, who followed close upon their times? What again our holy Cyprian? Were they not all good shepherds, not hirelings, of whom it is said, "Verily I say unto you, they have received their reward"? All these then were good shepherds, not simply for that they shed their blood, but that they shed it for the sheep. For not in pride, but in charity they shed it.

2. For even among the heretics, they who for their iniquities and errors have suffered any trouble, vaunt themselves in the name of martyrdom, that with this fair covering disguised they may plunder the more easily, for wolves they are. Now if ye would know in what rank they are to be held, hear that good shepherd, the Apostle Paul, that not all who even give up their bodies in suffering to the flames, are to be accounted to have shed their blood for the sheep, but rather against the sheep. “If,” saith he, “I speak with the tongues of men, and angels, but have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. If I should know all mysteries, and have all prophecy, and all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not charity, I am nothing.” Now a great thing truly is this faith that removes mountains. They are indeed all great things; but if I have them without charity, saith he, not they, but I am nothing. But up to this point he hath not touched them, who glory in sufferings under the false name of martyrdom. Hear how he toucheth, yea rather pierceth them through and through. “If I should distribute,” saith he, “all my goods to the poor, and deliver my body to be burned.” Now here they are. But mark what follows; “but have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” Lo, they have come to suffering, come even to the shedding of blood, yea come to the burning of the body; and yet it profiteth them nothing, because charity is lacking. Add charity, they all profit; take charity away, all the rest profit nothing.

3. What a good is this charity, Brethren! What more precious? what yieldeth greater light? or strength? or profit? or security? Many are the gifts of God, which even the wicked have, who shall say, “Lord, we have prophesied in Thy Name, in Thy Name have cast out devils, in Thy Name done many mighty works.” And He will not answer, “Ye have not done them.” For in the Presence of so great a Judge, they will not dare to lie or boast of things they have not done. But for that they had not charity, He answereth them all, “I know you not.” Now how can he have so much as the smallest charity, who when even convicted, loves not unity? It was then as impressing on good shepherds this unity, that our Lord was unwilling to mention many shepherds. For it is not, as I have said already, that Peter was not a good shepherd, and Paul, the rest of the Apostles, and the holy Bishops who were after them, and blessed Cyprian. All these were good shepherds; and notwithstanding to good shepherds, He commended not

good shepherds, but a good Shepherd. “I,” saith He, “am the good Shepherd.”

4. Let us question the Lord with such little understanding as we have, and in most humble discourse hold converse with so great a Master. What sayest Thou, O Lord, Thou good Shepherd? For Thou art the good Shepherd, who art also the good Lamb; at once Pastor and Pasturage, at once Lamb and Lion. What sayest Thou? Let us give ear and aid us, that we may understand. “I,” saith He, “am the good Shepherd.” What is Peter? is he either not a shepherd, or a bad one? Let us see, if he be not a shepherd. “Lovest thou Me?” Thou saidst to Him Lord, “Lovest thou Me?” And he answered, “I do love Thee.” And Thou to him, “Feed My sheep.” Thou, Thou, Lord, by Thine Own questioning, by the strong assurance of Thine Own words, madest of the lover a shepherd. He is a shepherd then to whom Thou didst commit Thy sheep to be fed. Thou didst Thyself entrust them, he is a shepherd. Let us now see whether he be not a good one. This we find by the very question, and his answer. Thou didst ask, whether he loved Thee; he answered, “I do love Thee.” Thou sawest his heart, that he answered truth. Is he not then good, who loveth so great a Good? Whence that answer drawn from his inmost heart? Wherefore was this Peter, who had Thine eyes in his heart for witnesses, sad because Thou askedst him not once only, but a second and a third time, that by a threefold confession of love, he might efface the threefold sin of denial; wherefore, I say, being sad that he was asked repeatedly by Him who knew what He was asking, and had given what He heard; wherefore being sad, did he return such an answer, “Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thyself knowest that I love Thee”? What! in making such a confession, such a profession rather, would he lie? In truth then, he made answer of his love to Thee, and from his inmost heart he gave utterance to a lover’s words. Now Thou hast said, “A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things.” So then he is both a shepherd, and a good shepherd; nothing it is true to the power and goodness of the Shepherd of shepherds; but nevertheless even he is both a shepherd, and a good one; and all other such are good shepherds.

5. What means it then, that to good shepherds Thou dost set forth One Only Shepherd, but that in One Shepherd Thou teachest unity? and the Lord

Himself explains this more clearly by my ministry, putting you, beloved, in remembrance by this Gospel, and saying, “Hear ye what I have set forth; I have said, I am the good Shepherd;’ because all the rest, all the good shepherds, are My members.” One Head, One Body, One Christ. So then both the Shepherd of shepherds, and the shepherds of the Shepherd, and the sheep with their shepherds under The Shepherd. What is all this, but what the Apostle says? “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.” Therefore if Christ be even so, with good reason doth Christ in Himself containing all good shepherds, set forth One, saying, “I am the good Shepherd.’ I am,’ I Alone am, all the rest with Me are one in unity. Whoso feedeth without Me, feedeth against Me. He that gathereth not with Me, scattereth.’“ Hear then this unity more forcibly set forth; “Other sheep,” saith He, “I have which are not of this fold.” For He was speaking to the first fold of the stock of the fleshly Israel. But there were others of the stock of the faith of this Israel, and they were yet without, were among the Gentiles, predestinated, not yet gathered in. These He knew who had predestinated them; He knew, who had come to redeem them with the shedding of His Own Blood. He saw them who did not yet see Him; He knew them who yet believed not on Him. “Other sheep,” saith He, “I have which are not of this fold;” because they are not of the stock of the flesh of Israel. But nevertheless they shall not be outside of this fold, “for them also I must bring, that there may be One Fold, and One Shepherd.”

6. With good reason then to This Shepherd of shepherds, doth His Beloved, His Spouse, His Fair One, but by Him made fair, before by sin deformed, beautiful afterward through pardon and grace, speak in her love and ardour after Him, and say to Him, “Where feedest Thou?” And observe how, by what transport this spiritual love is here animated. And far better are they by this transport delighted, who have tasted ought of the sweetness of this love. They hear this properly, who love Christ. For in them, and of them, doth the Church sing this in the Song of Songs; who love Christ, as it seemed without beauty, yet the Only Beautiful One. “For we saw Him,” it is said, “and He had neither beauty nor comeliness.” Such He appeared on the Cross, such when crowned with thorns did He exhibit Himself, disfigured, and without comeliness, as if He had lost His power, as if not the Son of

God. Such seemed He to the blind. For it is in the person of the Jews that Isaiah said this, “We saw Him, and He had no beauty nor comeliness.” When it was said, “If He be the Son of God, let Him come down from the Cross. He saved others, Himself He cannot save.” And smiting Him on the head with a reed, they said, “Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who smote Thee?” Because “He had neither beauty nor comeliness.” As such did ye Jews see Him. For “blindness hath happened in part to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles enter in,” until the other sheep come. Because then blindness hath happened, therefore did ye see the Comely One without comeliness. “For had ye known Him, ye would never have crucified the Lord of Glory.” But ye did it, because ye knew Him not. And yet He who as though without beauty bare with you, all Beauteous as He was, prayed for you; “Father,” saith He, “forgive them, for they know not what they do.” For if He were without comeliness, how is it that she loveth Him, who saith, “Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth”? How is it that she loveth Him? how is it that she burneth for Him? how is it that she feareth so much to stray from Him? How is it that she hath so great delight in Him, that her only punishment is to be without Him? What would there be for which He should be loved, if He were not beautiful? But how could she love Him so, if He appeared to her as He did to those blind men persecuting Him, and knowing not what they do? As what then did she love Him? As “comely in form above the sons of men. Comely in form above the sons of men, grace is poured abroad in Thy Lips.” So then from these Thy Lips, “Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth. Tell me,” says she, “O Thou whom,” not my flesh, but, “my soul loveth. Tell me where Thou feedest, where Thou liest down in the midday; lest haply I light, as one veiled, upon the flocks of Thy companions.”

7. It seems obscure, obscure it is; for it is a mystery of the sacred marriage bed. For she says, “The King hath brought me into His chamber.” Of such a chamber is this a mystery. But ye who are not as profane kept off from this chamber, hear ye what ye are, and say with her, if with her ye love (and ye do love with her, if ye are in her); say all, and yet let one say, for unity saith; “Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth. For they had one soul to Godward, and one heart. Tell me where Thou feedest, where Thou liest down in the midday?” What does the midday signify? “Great heat, and great

brightness.” So then, “make known to me who are Thy wise ones,” fervent in spirit, and brilliant in doctrine. “Make known to me Thy Right Hand, and men learned in heart, in wisdom.” To them may I cleave in Thy Body, to them be united, with them enjoy Thee. Tell me then, “tell me, where Thou feedest, where Thou liest down in the midday;” lest I fall upon them who say other things of Thee, entertain other sentiments of Thee; believe other things of Thee, preach other things of Thee; and have their own flocks, and are Thy companions; for that they live of Thy table, and handle the sacraments of Thy table. For companions are so called, because they eat together, messmates as it were. Such are reproved in the Psalm; “For if Mine enemy had spoken great things against Me, I would surely have hidden Myself from him; and if he that hated Me had spoken great things against Me, I would surely have hidden Myself from him; but thou a man of one mind with Me, My guide, and My familiar, who didst take sweet meats together with Me, in the house of God we walked with consent.” Why then now against the house of the Lord with dissent, but that “they have gone out from us, but they were not of us?” Therefore, “O Thou whom my soul loveth,” that I may not fall upon such, Thy companions, but companions such as Samson’s were, who kept not faith with their friend, but wished to corrupt his wife. Therefore, that I may not fall upon such as these, “that I may not light upon them,” that is, fall upon them, “as one that is veiled,” as one that is concealed, that is, and obscure, not as established upon the mountain. “Tell me” then, “O thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou liest down in the midday;” who are the wise and faithful in whom Thou dost specially rest, lest by chance as in blindness I fall upon the flocks, not Thy flocks, but the flocks of Thy companions. For thou didst not say to Peter, “Feed thy sheep,” but, “Feed My sheep.”

8. Let then the “good Shepherd,” and, “the Comely in form above the sons of men,” make answer to this beloved one; make answer to her whom He hath made beautiful from among the children of men. Hear ye what He answereth, and understand, beware of that wherewith He alarmeth, love that which He adviseth. What then doth He answer? How free from soft caresses, yea, to her caresses He returneth severity! He is sharp that He may bind her closely, that He may keep her. “If thou know not thyself,” saith He, “O thou fair one among women:” for however fair others may be by the

gifts of thy Spouse, they are heresies, fair in outward ornament, not within: fair are they without, and outwardly they shine, they disguise themselves by the name of righteousness; “but all the beauty of the King’s daughter is within.” “If” then “thou know not thyself;” that thou art one, that thou art throughout all nations, that thou art chaste, that thou oughtest not to corrupt thyself with the disordered converse of evil companions. “If thou know not thyself,” that in uprightness, “he hath espoused thee to Me, to present you a chaste Virgin to Christ;” and that in uprightness thou shouldest present thine own self to Me, lest by evil converse, “as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds too should be corrupted from my purity.” “If,” I say, “thou know not thyself” to be such, “go thy way; go thy way.” For to others I shall say, “Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” To thee I shall not say, “Enter in;” but, “Go thy way;” that thou mayest be among those, who “went out from us.” “Go thy way.” That is, “if thou know not thyself,” then, “go thy way.” But if thou know thyself, enter in. But, “if thou know not thyself, go thy way by the footsteps of the flocks, and feed thy kids in the tents of the shepherds. Go thy way by the footsteps,” not “of the Flock,” but, “of the flocks, and feed,” not as Peter, “My sheep,” but, “thy kids; in the tents,” not “of the Shepherd,” but, “of the shepherds;” not of unity, but of dissension; not established there, where there is One flock and One Shepherd. The beloved one was confirmed, edified, made stronger, prepared to die for her Spouse and to live with her Spouse.

9. These words which I have quoted out of the Holy Song of Songs, of a kind of bridal song of the Bridegroom and the Bride (for it is a spiritual wedding, wherein we must live in great purity, for Christ hath granted to the Church in spirit that which His Mother had in body, to be at once a Mother and a Virgin); these words, I say, the Donatists accommodate to their own perverted sense in a very different meaning. And how I will not conceal from you, and what ye may answer them, I will, by the Lord’s help, as well as I shall be able, briefly recommend. When then we begin to press them with the light of the Church’s unity spread over the whole world, and demand of them to show us any testimony out of the Scriptures, where God hath foretold that the Church should be in Africa, as if all the rest of the nations were lost; they are in the habit of taking this testimony in their mouths, and saying; “Africa is under the midday sun; the Church then” they

say, “asking the Lord where He feedeth, where He lieth down; He answereth, Under the midday sun;’“ as if the voice of her who put the question, were, “Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou liest down;” and the Voice of Him who answereth, were, “Under the midday sun;” that is, in Africa. If then it be the Church which asketh, and the Lord maketh answer where he feedeth, in Africa, because the Church was in Africa; then she who asketh was not in Africa. “Tell me,” she saith, “O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou liest down;” and He maketh answer to some Church out of Africa, “Under the midday sun,” in Africa I lie down, in Africa I feed, as if it were, “I do not feed in thee.” I repeat, if she who asketh is the Church, which no one disputes, which not even themselves gainsay; and they hear something about Africa; then she who asketh is out of Africa; and because it is the Church, the Church is out of Africa.

10. But see, I admit that Africa is under the midday sun; although Egypt is rather under the meridian, under the midday sun than Africa. Now after what fashion This Shepherd is there in Egypt, they who know, will acknowledge; and for them that know not, let them enquire how large a flock lie gathereth there, how great a multitude He hath of holy men and women who utterly despise the world. That flock hath so increased, that it hath expelled superstitions even thence. To pass over how it hath in its increase banished thence the whole superstition of idols, which had been firmly fixed there; I admit what you say, O evil companions; I admit it altogether, I agree that Africa is in the South, and that Africa is signified in that which is said, “Where feedest Thou, where dost Thou lie down under the midday sun?” But do ye too equally observe how that up to this point these are the words of the Bride, and not yet of the Bridegroom. Hitherto it is the Bride that saith, “Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou dost lie down in the midday, lest by chance I light, as one veiled.” O thou deaf, and blind one, if in the “midday” thou seest Africa, why in her that is “veiled” dost thou not see the Bride? “Tell me,” she said, “O Thou whom my soul loveth.” Without doubt she addresses her Spouse, when she says, “whom” [in the masculine] “my soul loveth.” Just as if it were said, “Tell me, O thou whom [in the feminine] “my soul loveth;” we should understand that the Bridegroom spake these words to

His Bride; so when you hear, “Tell me, O thou whom” (in the masculine) “my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou liest down;” add to this, to her words belongs also what follows, “In the midday.” I am asking, “where Thou feedest in the midday, lest by chance I light as one veiled upon the flocks of Thy companions.” I consent entirely, I admit what you understand of Africa; it is signified by “the midday.” But then as you understand it, the Church of Christ beyond the sea is addressing her Spouse, in fear of falling into the African error, “O Thou whom my soul, loveth, tell me,” teach me. For I hear that “in the midday,” that is in Africa, there are two parties, yea rather many schisms. “Tell me,” then, “where Thou feedest,” what sheep belong to Thee, what fold Thou biddest me love there, whereunto ought I to unite myself. “Lest by chance I light as one veiled.” For they mock me as if I were concealed, they mock me as destroyed, as though I existed nowhere else. “Lest,” then, “as one veiled,” as if concealed, “I light upon the flocks,” that is, upon the congregarious of the heretics, “thy companions; the Donatists, the Maximinianists, the Rogatists and all the other pests who gather without, and who therefore scatter; “Tell me,” I pray Thee, if I must seek my Shepherd there, that I fall not into the gulf of re-baptizing. I exhort you, I beseech you by the sanctity of such nuptials, love this Church, be ye in this holy Church, be ye this Church; love the good Shepherd, the Spouse so fair, who deceiveth no one, who desireth no one to perish. Pray too for the scattered sheep; that they too may come, that they too may acknowledge Him, that they too may love Him; that there may be One Flock and One Shepherd. Let us turn to the Lord, etc.

SERMON LXXXIX

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN X. 30, “I AND THE FATHER ARE ONE.”

1. Ye have heard what the Lord God, Jesus Christ, the Only Son of God, born of God the Father without any mother, and born of a Virgin mother without any human father, said, “I and My Father are One.” Receive ye this, believe it in such wise that ye may attain to understand it. For faith ought to go before understanding, that understanding may be the reward of faith. For the Prophet hath said most expressly, “Unless ye believe, ye shall not understand.” What then is simply preached is to be believed; what is with exactness discussed, is to be understood. At first then to imbue your minds

with faith we preach to you Christ, the Only Son of God the Father. Why is added, “The Only Son”? Because He whose Only Son He is, hath many sons by grace. All the rest then, all saints are sons of God by grace, He Alone by Nature. They who are sons of God by grace are not What the Father is. And no saint hath ever dared to say, what that Only Son saith, “I and My Father are One.” Is He not then our Father too? If He be not our Father, how say we when we pray, “Our Father, which art in heaven”? But we are sons whom He hath made sons by His Own will, not begotten as sons of His Own Nature. And in truth He hath begotten us too, but as it is said, as adopted ones, begotten by the favour of His adoption, not by Nature. And this too are we called, for that “God hath called us into the adoption of sons;” we are though adopted, men. He is called the Only Son, the Only Begotten, in that, He is That which the Father is; but we are men, The Father is God. In then that He is That which the Father is; He said, and said truly, “I and My Father are One.” What is, “are One”? Are of one Nature. What is, “are One”? Are of one Substance.

2. Peradventure, ye but imperfectly understand what “of one Substance” is. Take we pains that ye may understand it; may God assist both me who speak, and you that hear; me, that I may speak such things as are true and fit for you; and you, that before and above all things ye may believe; and then that ye may understand as best ye can. What then is “of One Substance”? Let me make use of similitudes to you, that what is imperfectly understood may be made clear by example. As, suppose, God is gold. His Son is gold also. If similitudes ought not to be given for heavenly things from things earthly, how is it written, “Now the Rock was Christ”? So then, Whatsoever the Father is, This is the Son also; as I have said, for example, “The Father is gold, the Son is gold.” For he who says, “The Son is not of the Very Substance which the Father is;” what else says he but, “The Father is gold, the Son is silver”? If the Father be gold, and the Son silver; the Only Son hath degenerated from the Father. A man begets a man; of what substance the father is who begets, of the same substance is the Son who is begotten. What is, “of the same substance”? The one is a man, and the other is a man; the one hath a soul; so hath the other a soul; the one hath a body, so hath the other a body; what one is, that is the other.

3. But the Arian heresy makes answer, and says. What says it to me? “Mark what thou hast said”? What have I said? “That the Son of a man may be compared to the Son of God.” Certainly he may be compared; but not as you suppose, in strictness of expression; but for a similitude. But tell me now what you would make of this. “Do you not see,” says he, “that the father who begets is greater in age, and the son who is begotten less? How then say ye? tell me; how then say ye, that the Father and the Son, God and Christ, are equal; when ye see that when a man begets a son, the son is less, and the father greater?” Thou wise one, in eternity thou art looking for times; where there are no times, thou art looking for differences of age! When the father is greater in age, and the son less, both are in time; the one groweth, for that the other groweth old. For by nature, the man, the father, did not beget one less, by nature, as I said, but by age. Wouldest thou know, how that by nature he did not beget one less? Wait, let him grow, and he will be equal to his father. For a little boy even by growing attains to his father’s full size. Whereas you assert that the Son of God is in such wise born less, as never to grow, and by growing even to attain to His Father’s size. Now then a man’s son born of a man, is born in a better condition than the Son of God. How? Because the former grows, and attains to his father’s size. But Christ, if it is as ye say, is in such wise born less, as that He must ever remain less, and no growth of years at least is to be looked for here. Thus then you say that there is a diversity in nature. But why say you so, but because you will not believe the Son to be of the Same Substance which the Father is? Finally, first acknowledge that He is of the Same Substance, and so call Him less. Consider the case of a man, he is a man. What is his substance? He is a man. What is he whom he begets? He is less, but he is a man. The age is unequal, the nature equal. Do you then say too, “What the Father is, That is the Son, but the Son is less”? Say so, make a step forward, say, “of the Same Substance, only less;” and you will get to His being equal. For it is not a little step you take, it is not a little approach you make to the truth, of acknowledging Him equal, if you shall acknowledge Him to be of the Same Substance, though less. “But He is not of the Same Substance,” this you say. So then in that you say this, here is gold and silver; what you say is as if a man were to beget a horse. For a man is of one substance, a horse of another. If then the Son is of another substance than the Father, the Father hath begotten a monster. For when a creature,

that is a woman, gives birth to anything that is not a man, it is called a monster. But that it be not a monster, he that is born is that which he is that begat him, that is, a man and a man, a horse and a horse, a dove and a dove, a sparrow and a sparrow.

4. To His creatures hath He given to beget that which they are. To His creatures, to mortal, earthly creatures, hath God given, hath granted to beget that which they are; and thinkest thou that He hath not been able to reserve this for Himself, He who is before all ages? Should He who hath no beginning of time, beget a son, different from That which Himself is, beget a degenerate son? Hear ye how great a blasphemy it is to say, that the Only Son of God is of another substance. Most certainly if He is so, He is degenerate. If you should say to any child of man, “Thou art degenerate,” how great an offence is it! And yet in what sense is any child of man said to be degenerate? As, for example, his father is brave, he is a poltroon and a coward. If any one sees him, and would rebuke him, as he thinks of his brave father, what does he say to him? “Get thee hence, thou degenerate one!” What is “degenerate one”? “Thy father was a brave man, and thou tremblest through fear.” He to whom this is said, is degenerate by some fault, by nature he is equal. What is, “by nature he is equal”? He is a man, which his father also is. But the one brave, the other a coward; the one bold, the other timid; yet both men. By some fault then he is degenerate, not by nature. But when you say, that the Only Son, the One Son of the Father, is degenerate, you say nought else, but that He is not What the Father is; and you do not say, that having been already born, He has become degenerate; but He was begotten so. Who can endure this blasphemy? If they could in any sort whatever see this blasphemy, they would fly from it, and become catholics.

5. But what shall I say, Brethren? Let us not be angry with them; but pray we for them, that God would give them understanding; for peradventure they were born so. What is, were born so? They receive what they hold from their parents. They prefer their birth to the truth. Let them become what they are not, that they may be able to keep what they are; that is, let them become catholics, that they may keep their nature as men; that the creation of God in them perish not, let the grace of God be added to them.

For they imagine that by their outrage of the Son they honour the Father. When you say to him, “Thou blasphemest;” he answers, “Why do I blaspheme?” “In that thou sayest that the Son is not what the Father is.” And he answers me, “Yea, it is thou who blasphemest.” Why? “Because thou wouldest make the Son equal to the Father.” “I do wish to make the Son equal with the Father, but is this to make a stranger equal? The Father rejoiceth when I equal with Him His Only Son; He rejoiceth because He is not envious. And because God is not envious of His Only Son, therefore did He beget Him Such as He is Himself. Thou doest wrong both to the Son, and to the Father Himself, for whose honour thou wouldest do outrage to the Son. For in truth for this reason dost thou say that the Son is not of the Same Substance, lest thou shouldest do wrong to His Father. I will soon show thee, that thou doest wrong to both.” “How?” saith he. “If I say to any man’s son, Thou art degenerate, thou art not like thy father; degenerate, thou art not what thy father is. The son hears it, and is angry, and says, Was I then born degenerate?’ The father hears it, and is more angry still. And in his anger what says he? Have I then begotten a degenerate son? If I then be one thing, and I have begotten another, I have begotten a monster.’ What is it then, that whereas thou wishest to pay honour to the One by doing outrage to the Other, thou doest outrage to Both? Thou offendest the Son, but thou wilt not propitiate the Father. When thou honourest the Father by outraging the Son, thou offendest both the Son and the Father. From whom wilt thou fly? to whom wilt thou fly? When the Father is angry with thee, dost thou fly to the Son? What doth He say to thee? To whom dost thou fly, to Me, whom thou hast made degenerate?’ When the Son is offended, dost thou run to the Father? He too saith to thee; To whom dost thou fly, to Me who, thou hast said, have begotten a degenerate Son?’“ Let this suffice for you; hold it fast, commit it to memory, inscribe it in your faith. But that ye may understand it, pour out your prayers to God, the Father and the Son, who are One.

SERMON XC

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN XII. 44, “HE THAT BELIEVETH ON ME, BELIEVETH NOT ON ME, BUT ON HIM THAT SENT ME.” AGAINST A CERTAIN EXPRESSION OF MAXIMINUS, A BISHOP OF THE ARIANS, WHO SPREAD HIS BLASPHEMY IN AFRICA WHERE HE WAS WITH THE COUNT SEGISVULT

1. What is it, Brethren, which we have heard the Lord saying, “He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me”? It is good for us to believe on Christ, especially seeing that He hath also Himself expressly said this which ye have now heard, that is, that “He had come a Light into the world, and whosoever believeth on Him shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” Good then it is to believe on Christ; and a great evil it is not to believe on Christ. But because Christ the Son is, Whatsoever He is, of the Father, but the Father is not of the Son, but is the Father of the Son; He recommends to us indeed faith in Himself, but refers the honour to His Original.

2. For hold this fast as a firm and settled truth, if ye would continue Catholics, that God the Father begat God the Son without time, and made Him of a Virgin in time. The first nativity exceedeth times; the second nativity enlighteneth times. Yet both nativities are marvellous; the one without a mother, the other without a father. When God begat the Son, He begat Him of Himself, not of a mother; when the Mother gave birth to her Son, she gave Him birth as a Virgin, not by man. He was born of the Father without a beginning; He was born of a mother, as to-day at an appointed beginning. Born of the Father He made us; born of a mother He re-made us. He was born of the Father, that we might be; He was born of a mother, that we might not be lost. But the Father begat Him equal to Himself, and All Whatsoever the Son is, He hath of the Father. But What God the Father is, He hath not of the Son. Accordingly we say that the Father is God, of none; the Son, God of God. Wherefore all that the Son doeth marvellously, all that He saith truly, He attributeth to Him of whom He is; yet can He not be ought else than He of whom He is. Adam was made a man; he had power to become something other than he was made. For he was made righteous, and he had power to become unrighteous. But the Only-Begotten Son of God, What He is, This cannot be changed; He cannot be changed into anything else, cannot be diminished, What He was He cannot but be, He cannot but be equal to the Father. But undoubtedly He who gave all things to the Son by His Birth, gave it to One not needing ought; without doubt this very equality too with the Father, the Father gave to the Son. How did the Father give It? did He beget Him less, and add to Him to complete His Form, that He might make Him equal? If he had done this, He would have given it to

one in need. But I have told you already what ye ought most firmly to hold fast, that is, that All That the Son is, the Father gave Him, gave Him, that is, by His Birth, not as in need of ought. If He gave it to Him by His Birth, and not as in need, then doubtless He both gave Him equality, and in giving Him equality, begat Him equal. And although the One be One Person, and the Other Another; yet is not the One one thing, and the Other another; but What the One is, That the Other also. He who is the One, is not the Other; but What the One, That too the Other.

3. “He Who sent Me,” saith He, ye have heard it; “He Who sent Me,” saith He, “He gave Me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak; and I know that His commandment is life everlasting.” It is John’s Gospel, hold it fast. “He Who sent Me, He gave Me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak; and I know that His commandment is life everlasting.” O that He would grant me to say what I wish! For my poverty and His abundance straiteneth me. “He,” saith He, “gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak; and I know that His commandment is life everlasting.” Search in the Epistle of this John the Evangelist for what he hath said of Christ. “Let us believe,” he says, “His True Son Jesus Christ. This is the True God and Everlasting Life.” What is, “The True God, and Everlasting Life”? The True Son of God is the “the True God, and Everlasting Life.” Why did He say, “On His True Son”? Because God hath many sons, therefore was He to be distinguished, by adding that He was the True Son. Not by simply saying that He is the Son; but by adding, as I have said, that He is the True Son; therefore He was to be distinguished, because of the many sons which God hath. For we are sons by grace, He by Nature. We made by the Father through Him; He Himself That Which the Father is; are we too That Which God is?

4. But some man coming across us, knowing not what he is saying, says, “For this reason was it said, “I and My Father are One; for that They have with One Another an agreement of will, not because the Nature of the Son is the Very Same as the Nature of the Father. For the Apostles too (now this is what he said, not I), for the Apostles too are one with the Father and the Son.” Horrible blasphemy! “And the Apostles,” says he, “are one with the Father and the Son, in that they obey the will of the Father and the Son.”

Has he dared to say this? Let Paul then say, “I and God are one.” Let Peter say it, let every one of the Prophets say, “I and God are one.” They do not say it; God forbid they should. They know that they are a different nature, a nature that needeth to be saved; they know that they are a different nature, a nature that needeth to be enlightened. No one says, “I and God are one.” Whatsoever progress he may make, howsoever he may surpass others in holiness, with how great eminence soever of virtue he may excel, he never saith, “I and God are one;” for if he have excellence, and therefore saith it; by saying it, he loseth what he had.

5. Believe then that the Son is equal with the Father; but yet that the Son is of the Father; but the Father not of the Son. The Original is with the Father, equality with the Son. For if He be not equal, He is not a true Son. For what are we saying, Brethren? If He is not equal, He is less; if He is less, I ask the nature that needeth to be saved, in its misbelief, “how is He born less?” Answer, Doth He as being less grow or not? If He groweth, then the Father groweth old. But if He will ever be what He was born; if He was born less, He will continue less; with this His loss He will be perfect; born perfect with this loss of the Father’s Form, He is never to attain to the Father’s Form. Thus do ye ungodly assail the Son; thus do ye heretics blaspheme the Son. What then saith the Catholic faith? The Son is God, of God the Father; God the Father, not God of the Son. But God the Son equal with the Father, Born equal; not Born less, not made equal, but Born equal. What the Father is, That is He also who was born. Was the Father ever without the Son? God forbid! Take away your “ever,” where there is no time. The Father always, the Son always. The Father without beginning of time, the Son without beginning of time; the Father never before the Son, the Father never without the Son. But yet because the Son is God of God the Father, and the Father God, but not of God the Son; let not the honouring of the Son in the Father displease us. For the honouring of the Son giveth honour to the Father, it diminisheth not His Own Divinity.

6. Because then I was speaking of what I had brought forward, “And I knew,” saith He, “that His commandment is everlasting life.” Mark, Brethren, what I am saying; “I know that His commandment is everlasting life.” And we read in the same John concerning Christ, “He is The True

God and Everlasting Life.” If the Father’s commandment is “everlasting Life,” and Christ the Son Himself is “everlasting Life;” the Son is Himself the Father’s Commandment. For how is not That the Father’s Commandment, which is the Father’s Word? Or if you take the commandment given to the Son by the Father in a carnal sense, as if the Father said to the Son, “I command Thee this, I wish Thee to do that;” in what words spake He to the Only Word? When He gave commandment to the Word, did He look for words? That the Father’s Commandment then is “Life everlasting,” and that the Son Himself is “Life everlasting,” believe ye and receive, believe and understand, for the Prophet saith, “Unless ye believe ye shall not understand.” Do ye not comprehend? Be enlarged. Hear the Apostle: “Be ye enlarged, bear not the yoke with unbelievers.” They who will not believe this before they comprehend, are unbelievers. And because they have determined to be unbelievers, they will remain in their ignorance. Let them believe then that they may understand. Most certainly the Father’s Commandment is “everlasting Life.” Therefore the Father’s Commandment is the Very Son who was born this day; a Commandment not given in time but a Commandment Born. The Gospel of John exercises our minds, refines and uncarnalizes them, that of God we may think not after a carnal but a spiritual manner. Let so much then, Brethren, suffice you; lest in length of disputation, the sleep of forgetfulness steal over you.

SERMON XCI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN XIV. 6, “I AM THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.”

1. Amongst other things, when the Holy Gospel was being read, ye heard what the Lord Jesus said, “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.” Truth and life doth every man desire; but not every man doth find the way. That God is a certain Life Eternal, Unchangeable, Intelligible, Intelligent, Wise, Making wise, some philosophers even of this world have seen. The fixed, settled, unwavering truth, wherein are all the principles of all things created, they saw indeed, but afar off; they saw, but amid the error in which they were placed; and therefore what way to attain to that so great, and ineffable, and beatific a possession they formed not. For that even they saw (as far as can be seen by man) the Creator by means of the creature, the Worker by

His work, the Framer of the world by the world, the Apostle Paul is witness, whom Christians ought surely to believe. For he said when he was speaking of such; “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness.” These are, as ye recognise, the words of the Apostle Paul; “The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men; who detain the truth in unrighteousness.” Did he say that they do not detain truth? No: but, “They detained the truth in unrighteousness.” What they detain, is good; but wherein they detain it, is bad. “They detain the truth in unrighteousness.”

2. Now it occurred to him that it might be said to him, “Whence do these ungodly men detain the truth? Hath God spoken to any one of them? Have they received the Law as the people of the Israelites by Moses? Whence then do they detain the truth, though it be even in this unrighteousness?” Hear what follows, and he shows. “Because that which can be known of God,” he says, “is manifest in them; for God hath manifested it unto them.” Manifested it unto them to whom He hath not given the Law? Hear how He hath manifested it. “For the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.” Ask the world, the beauty of the heaven, the brilliancy and ordering of the stars, the sun, that sufficeth for the day, the moon, the solace of the night; ask the earth fruitful in herbs, and trees, full of animals, adorned with men; ask the sea, with how great and what kind of fishes filled; ask the air, with how great birds stocked; ask all things, and see if they do not as if it were by a language of their own make answer to thee, “God made us.” These things have illustrious philosophers sought out, and by the art have come to know the Artificer. What then? Why is the wrath of God revealed against this ungodliness? “Because they detain the truth in unrighteousness?” Let him come, let him show how. For how they came to know Him, he hath said already. “The invisible things of Him,” that is God, “are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; His eternal Power also and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. Because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” They are the Apostle’s words, not mine: “And their foolish heart was darkened; for professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” What by curious search they found, by pride they lost. “Professing

themselves to be wise," attributing, that is, the gift of God to themselves, "they became fools." They are the Apostle's words, I say; "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."

3. Show, prove their foolishness. Show, O Apostle, and as thou hast shown us whereby they were able to attain to the knowledge of God, for that "the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being understood by those things that are made;" so now show how, "professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." Hear; Because "they changed," he says, "the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things." For of figures of these animals, the Pagans made themselves gods. Thou hast found out God, and thou worshippest an idol. Thou hast found out the truth, and this very truth dost thou detain in unrighteousness. And what by the works of God thou hast come to know, by the works of man thou losest. Thou hast considered the universe, hast collected the order of the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all the elements; thou wilt not take heed to this, that the world is the work of God, an idol is the work of a carpenter. If the carpenter as he has given the figure, could also give a heart, the carpenter would be worshipped by his own idol. For, O man, as God is thy Framer, so the idol's framer is a man. Who is thy God? He That made thee. Who is the carpenter's god? He That made him. Who is the idol's god? He that made it. If then the idol had a heart, would he not worship the carpenter who made it? See in what unrighteousness they detained the truth, and found not the way that leadeth to that possession which they saw.

4. But Christ, for that He is with the Father, the Truth, and Life, the Word of God, of whom it is said, "The Life was the Light of men;" for that I say He is with the Father, the Truth, and Life, and we had no way whereby to go to the Truth, the Son of God, who is ever in the Father the Truth and Life, by assuming man's nature became the Way. Walk by Him as Man, and thou comest to God. By Him thou goest, to Him thou goest. Look not out for any way whereby to come to Him, besides Himself. For if He had not vouchsafed to be the Way, we should have always gone astray. He then became the Way Whereby thou shouldest come; I do not say to thee, seek the Way. The Way Itself hath come to thee, arise and walk. Walk, with the

life, not with the feet. For many walk well with the feet, and with their lives walk ill. For sometimes even those who walk well, run outside the way. Thus you will find men living well, and not Christians. They run well; but they run not in the way. The more they run, the more they go astray; because they are out of the Way. But if such men as these come to the Way, and hold on the Way, O how great is their security, because they both walk well, and do not go astray! But if they do not hold on the Way, however well they walk, alas! how are they to be bewailed! For better is it to halt in the way, than to walk on stoutly outside the way. Let this suffice for you, Beloved. Turn we to the Lord, etc.

SERMON XCII

ON THE SAME WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN XIV. 6, “I AM THE WAY,” ETC

1. The divine lessons raise us up, that we be not broken by despair; and terrify us again, that we be not tossed to and fro by pride. But to hold the middle, the true, the strait way, as it were between the left hand of despair, and the right hand of presumption, would be most difficult for us, had not Christ said, “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.” As if He had said, “By what way wouldest thou go? I am the Way.’ Whither wouldest thou go? I am the Truth.’ Where wouldest thou abide? I am the Life.’“ Let us then walk with all assurance in the Way; but let us fear snares by the way side. The enemy does not dare to lay his snares in the way; because Christ is the Way; but most certainly by the way side he ceases not to do so. Whence too it is said in the Psalm, “They have laid stumblingblocks for me by the way side.” And another Scripture saith, “Remember that thou walkest in the midst of snares.” These snares among which we walk are not in the way; but yet they are “by the way side.” What fearest thou, what art thou alarmed at, so thou walk in the Way? Fear then, if thou forsake the Way. For for this reason is the enemy even permitted to lay snares by the way side, lest through the security of exultation the Way be forsaken, and ye fall into the snares.

2. Christ Humbled is the Way; Christ the Truth and the Life, Christ Highly Exalted and God. If thou walk in the Humbled, thou shalt attain to the Exalted. If infirm as thou art, thou despise not the Humbled, thou shalt

abide exceeding strong in the Exalted. For what cause was there of Christ’s Humiliation, save thine infirmity? For solely and irremediably did thine infirmity press thee in, and this circumstance it was that made so great a Physician come to thee. For if thy sickness had been even such, that thou couldest have gone to the Physician, this infirmity might have seemed endurable. But because thou couldest not go to Him, He came to thee. He came teaching humility, whereby we might return; for that pride allowed us not to return to life; yea had even made us depart from life. For the heart of man being lifted up against God, and neglecting in its sound state His saving precepts, the soul fell away into infirmity; let her in her infirmity learn to hear Him whom in her strength she despised. Let her hear Him that she may rise, whom she despised, that she might fall. Let her at length, taught by experience, give ear to what she had no mind, when taught by precept, to obtain. For her misery hath taught her, how evil a thing it is to go a whoring from the Lord. For to fall away from that Simple and Singular Good, into this multitude of pleasures, into the love of the world, and earthly corruption, is to go a whoring from the Lord. And He hath addressed her as in a sense a harlot, to warn her to return: very often by the Prophets doth He reproach her as a harlot, but yet not despaired of, for that He who reproacheth the harlot hath in His Hands the cleansing of the harlot too.

3. For He doth not so reproach as to insult her; but He would bring her to confusion of face to heal her. Vehement are the exclamations of Scripture, nor doth it deal softly by flattery with those whom it would by healing recover. “Ye adulterers, know ye not that the friend of this world is constituted the enemy of God?” The love of the world maketh the soul adulterous, the love of the Framer of the world maketh the soul chaste; but unless she blush for her corruption, she hath no desire to return to that chaste embrace. Be she confounded that she may return, who was vaunting herself that she should not return. It was pride then that hindered the soul’s return. But whoso reproacheth doth not cause the sin, but showeth the sin. What the soul was loth to see, is placed before her eyes; and what she desired to have behind her back, is brought before her face. See thyself in thyself. “Why seest thou the mote in thy brother’s eye, but perceivest not the beam in thine own eye?” The soul which went away from herself, is

recalled to herself. As she had gone away from herself, so went she away from her Lord. For she had respect to herself, and pleased herself, and became enamoured of her own power. She withdrew from him, and abode not in herself; and from her own self she is repelled, and from herself shut out, and she falleth away unto things without her. She loves the world, loves the things of time, loves earthly things; who if she but loved herself to the neglect of Him by whom she was made, would at once be less, at once fail by loving that which is less. For she is less than God; yea less by far, and by so much less as the thing made is less than the Maker. It was God then That ought to have been loved, yea in such wise ought God to be loved, that if it might be so, we should forget ourselves. What then is this change? The soul hath forgotten herself, but by loving the world; let her now forget herself, but by loving the world's Maker. Driven away even from herself, I say, she hath in a manner lost herself, and hath not skilled to see her own actions, she justifies her iniquities; she is puffed up, and prides herself in insolence, in voluptuousness, in honours, in posts of authority, in riches, in the power of vanity. She is reproved, rebuked, is shown to herself, mislikes herself, confesses her deformity, longs for her first beauty, and she who went away in profusion returns in confusion.

4. Seemeth he to pray against her, or for her, who says, "Fill their faces with shame"? It seems to be an adversary, it seems an enemy. Hear what follows, and see whether a friend can offer this prayer. "Fill," says he, "their faces with shame, and they shall seek Thy Name, O Lord." Did he hate them whose faces he desired to be filled with shame? See how he loves them whom he would have seek the Name of the Lord. Does he love only, or hate only? or does he both hate, and love? Yea, he both hates, and loves. He hates what is thine, he loves thee. What is, "He hates what is thine, he loves thee"? He hates what thou hast made, he loves what God hath made. For what are thine own things but sins? And what art thou but what God made thee, a man after His Own image and likeness? Thou dost neglect what thou wast made, love what thou hast made. Thou dost love thine own works without thee, dost neglect the work of God within thee. Deservedly dost thou go away, deservedly fall off, yea, deservedly even from thine own self depart; deservedly hear the words, "A spirit that goeth and returneth not." Hear rather Him That calleth and saith, "Turn ye unto Me, and I will turn

unto you.” For God doth not really turn away, and turn again; Abiding the Same He rebuketh, Unchangeable He rebuketh. He hath turned away, in that thou hast turned thyself away. Thou hast fallen from Him, He hath not fallen away from thee. Hear Him then saying to thee, “Turn ye unto Me, and I will turn unto you.” For this is, “I turn unto you, in that ye turn unto Me.” He followeth on the back of him that flieth, He enlighteneth the face of him that returneth. For whither wilt thou fly in flying from God? Whither wilt thou fly in flying from Him who is contained in no place, and is nowhere absent? He That delivereth him that turneth to him, punisheth him that turneth away. Thou hast a Judge by flying; have a Father by returning.

5. But he had been swollen up by pride, and by this swelling could not return by the strait way. He who became the Way, crieth out, “Enter ye in by the strait gate.” He tries to enter in, the swelling impedes him; and his trying is so much the more hurtful, in proportion as the swelling is a greater impediment. For the straitness irritates his swelling; and being irritated he will swell the more; and swelling more, when will he enter in? So then let him bring down the swelling. And how? Let him take the medicine of humility; let him against the swelling drink the bitter but wholesome cup; drink the cup of humility. Why doth he squeeze himself? The bulk, not for its size, but for its swelling, doth not allow him. For size hath solidity, swelling inflation. Let not him that is swollen fancy himself of great size; that he may be great, and substantial, and solid, let him bring down his swelling. Let him not long after these present things, let him not glory in this pomp of things failing and corruptible; let him hearken to Him who said, “Enter in by the strait gate,” saying also, “I am the Way.” For as if some swollen one had asked, “How shall I enter in?” He saith, “I am the Way.’ Enter in by Me; Thou walkest only by Me, to enter in by the door.” For as He said, “I am the Way;” so also, “I am the Door.” Why seekest thou whereby to return, whither to return, whereby to enter in? Lest thou shouldest in any respect go astray, He became all for thee. Therefore in brief He saith, “Be humble, be meek.” Let us hear Him saying this most plainly, that thou mayest see whereby is the way, what is the way, whither is the way. Whither wouldest thou come? But peradventure in covetousness thou wouldest possess all things. “All things are delivered unto Me of My Father,” saith He. It may be thou wilt say, “They were delivered to Christ:

but are they to me?” Hear the Apostle speak; hear, as I said some time ago, lest thou be broken by despair; hear how thou wert loved when thou hadst nothing to be loved for, hear how thou wert loved when unsightly, deformed, before there was ought in thee which was meet to be loved. Thou wast first loved, that thou mightest be made meet to be loved. For Christ, as the Apostle says, “died for the ungodly.” What! will you say that the ungodly deserved to be loved? I ask, what did the ungodly deserve? To be damned. Here you will answer, Yet, “Christ died for the ungodly.” Lo, what was done for thee when ungodly; what is reserved for thee now godly? “Christ died for the ungodly.” Thou didst desire to possess all things; desire it not through covetousness, seek it through piety, seek it through humility. For if thou seek thus, thou shalt possess. For thou shalt have Him by whom all things were made, and with Him shalt possess all things.

6. I do not say this as though the result of reasoning. Hear the Apostle himself saying, “He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all; how hath He also not with Him given us all things?” Lo, covetous one, thou hast all things. All things that thou lovest, despise, that thou be not kept back from Christ, and hold to Him in whom thou mayest possess all things. The Physician Himself then needing no such medicine, yet that He might encourage the sick, drank what He had no need of; addressing him as it were refusing it, and raising him up in his fear, He drank first. “The Cup,” saith He, “which I shall drink of;” “I who have nothing in Me to be cured by that Cup, am yet to drink it, that thou who needest to drink it, may not disdain to drink.” Now consider, Brethren, ought the human race to be any longer sick after having received such a medicine? God hath been now Humbled, and is man still proud? Let him hear, let him learn. “All things,” saith He, have been delivered unto Me of My Father.” If thou desirest all things, thou shalt have them with Me; if thou desirest the Father, by Me and in Me thou shalt have Him. “No man knoweth the Father but the Son.” Do not despair; come to the Son. Hear what follows, “And he to whom the Son will reveal Him.” Thou saidst, “I am not able. Thou callest me through a strait way; I am not able to enter in by a strait way.” “Come,” saith He, “unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden.” Your burden is your swelling. “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me.”

7. The Master of the Angels crieth out, the Word of God, by whom all reasonable souls are without failing fed, the Food That refresheth, and abideth Entire, crieth out and saith, “Learn of Me.” Let the people hear Him, saying, “Learn of Me.” Let them make answer, “What do we learn of Thee?” For we must be going to hear I know not what from the Great Artificer, when He saith, “Learn of Me.” Who is it that saith, “Learn of Me”? He who formed the earth, who divided the sea and the dry land, who created the fowls, who created the animals of the earth, who created all things that swim, who set the stars in the heaven, who distinguished the day and the night, who established the firmament, who separated the light from the darkness, He it is who saith, “Learn of Me.” Is He haply about to tell us this, that we should do these things with Him? Who can do this? God Only doeth them. “Fear not,” He saith, “I am not laying any burden on thee. Learn of Me,’ this which for thy sake I was made. Learn of Me,’“ saith He, “not to form the creature which by Me was made. Neither do I tell you indeed, to learn those things which I have granted to some, to whom I would, not to all, to raise the dead, to give sight to the blind, to open the ears of the deaf; nor to wish as for some great thing to learn these things of Me.” The disciples returned with joy and exultation, saying, “Lo, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy Name.” And the Lord said to them, “In this rejoice not, that the devils are subject unto you; rejoice rather, because your names are written in heaven.” To whom He would, He gave the power to cast out devils, to whom He would, He gave the power to raise the dead. Such miracles were done even before the Incarnation of the Lord; the dead were raised, lepers were cleansed; we read of these things. And who did them then, but He who in after time was the Man-Christ after David, but God-Christ before Abraham? He gave the power for all these things, He did them Himself by men; yet gave He not that power to all. Ought they to whom He gave it not to despair, and say that they have no part in Him because they have not been thought worthy to receive these gifts? In the body are divers members: this member can do one thing, that another. God hath compacted the body together, He hath not given to the ear to see, nor to the eye to hear, nor to the forehead to smell, nor to the hand to taste; He hath not given them these functions; but to all the members hath He given soundness, hath given union, hath given unity, hath by His Spirit quickened and united all alike. And so here He hath not given to some to

raise the dead, to others He hath not given the power of disputation; yet to all what hath He given? “Learn of Me, that I am meek and lowly in heart.” Forasmuch as we have heard Him say, “I am meek and lowly in heart;” here, my Brethren, is our whole remedy, “Learn of Me, that I am meek and lowly in heart.” What doth it profit a man if he do miracles, and is proud, is not meek and lowly in heart? Will he not be reckoned in the number of those who shall come at the last day, and say, “Have we not prophesied in Thy Name, and in Thy Name have done many mighty works?” But what shall they hear? “I know you not, Depart from Me, all ye that work iniquity.”

8. What then doth it profit us to learn? “That I am meek,” saith He, “and lowly in heart.” He engrafteth charity, and that most genuine charity, without confusion, without inflation, without elation, without deceit; this doth He engraft, who saith, “Learn of Me, that I am meek and lowly in heart.” How can one proud and puffed up have any genuine charity? He must needs be envious. And mayhap one who is envious, loves, and we are mistaken? God forbid that any one should be so mistaken, as to say that an envious man hath charity. And so what saith the Apostle? “Charity envieth not.” Why doth it not envy? “It is not puffed up;” he immediately annexed the cause for which he took away envying from charity. Because it is not puffed up, it envieth not. It is true, he said first, “Charity envieth not;” but as though thou didst ask, “Why doth it not envy?” he added, “It is not puffed up. If then it envieth because it is puffed up; if it be not puffed up, it envieth not. If charity is not puffed up, and therefore envieth not; then doth He engraft charity who saith, “Learn of Me, that I am meek and lowly in heart.”

9. Let any man have then what he will, let him boast himself of what he will. “If I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels, but, have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.” What is more sublime than the gift of divers tongues? It is “brass,” it is “a tinkling cymbal,” if thou take charity away. Hear other gifts; “If I should know all mysteries.” What more excellent? what more magnificent? Hear yet another; “if I should have all prophecy, and all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not charity, I am nothing.” He comes to still greater

things, Brethren. What else has he said? “If I should distribute all my goods to the poor.” What more perfect thing can be done? When indeed the Lord commanded the rich man this for perfection’s sake, saying, “If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor.” Was he then at once perfect, because he sold all his goods and gave them to the poor? No; and therefore He added, “And come, follow Me.” “Sell all,” saith He, “give to the poor, and come, follow Me.” “Why should I follow Thee? Now that I have sold all, and distributed to the poor, am I not perfect? What need is there that I should follow Thee?” “Follow Me,” that thou mayest learn that “I am meek and lowly in heart.” For what? can any man sell all he hath, and give to the poor, who is not yet meek, not yet lowly in heart? Assuredly he can. “For if I should distribute all my goods to the poor.” And hear still further. For some, who had left all they had and had already followed the Lord, but not yet followed Him perfectly (for to follow Him perfectly is to imitate Him), could not bear the trial of suffering. Peter, Brethren, was already one of those who had left all and followed the Lord. For as that rich man went away in sadness, when the disciples bring troubled, asked how then any one could be perfect, and the Lord consoled them, they said to the Lord, “Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?” And the Lord told them what He would give them here, what He would reserve for them hereafter. Now Peter was already of the number of those who had so done. But when it came to the crisis of suffering, at the voice of a maid-servant he denied Him thrice with whom he had promised that he was ready to die.

10. Take good heed then, Beloved: “Go,” saith He, “sell all that thou hast, give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me.” Peter is perfect, now that the Lord sitteth in heaven at the right Hand of the Father, then did he attain perfection and maturity. For when he followed the Lord to His Passion, he was not perfect; but when there began to be no one on earth for him to follow, then was he perfected. But thou truly hast always One before thee to follow; the Lord hath set up an example on earth, when He left the Gospel with thee, in the Gospel He is with thee. For He did not speak falsely when He said, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” Therefore follow the Lord. What is, “Follow the Lord”? Imitate the Lord. What is, “Imitate the Lord”? “Learn

of Me, that I am meek and lowly in heart.” Because if I should distribute all my goods to the poor, and give up my body to be burned, but not have charity, it profiteth me nothing. To this charity then I exhort your Charity; now I should not exhort to charity, but with some charity. I exhort then that what is commenced may be filled up; and pray that what is begun may be perfected. And I beg that ye would offer this prayer for me, that what I advise may be perfected in me also. For we are all now imperfect, and there shall we be perfected, where all things are perfect. The Apostle Paul says, “Brethren, I do not reckon myself to have apprehended.” He says, “Not that I have already attained, either am already perfect.” And shall any man dare to vaunt himself on perfection? Yea rather let us acknowledge our imperfection, that we may attain perfection.

SERMON XCIII

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN XVI. 7, “I TELL YOU THE TRUTH; IT IS EXPEDIENT FOR YOU THAT I GO AWAY,” ETC

1. The medicine for all the wounds of the soul, and the one propitiation for the offences of men, is to believe on Christ; nor can any one be cleansed at all, whether from original sin which he derived from Adam, in whom all men have sinned, and become by nature children of wrath; or from the sins which they have themselves added, by not resisting the concupiscence of the flesh, but by following and serving it in unclean and injurious deeds: unless by faith they are united and compacted into His Body, who was conceived without any enticement of the flesh and deadly pleasure, and whom His Mother nourished in her womb without sin, and “Who did no sin, neither was deceit found in His Mouth.” They verily who believe on Him, become the children of God; because they are born of God by the grace of adoption, which is by the faith of Jesus Christ our Lord. Wherefore, dearly Beloved, it is with good reason that the same Lord and our Saviour mentions this one sin only, of which the Holy Ghost convinces the world, that it believeth not on Him. “I tell you the truth,” He saith, “It is expedient for you that I go away. For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He shall come, He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on Me. Of righteousness,

because I go to the Father, and ye shall see Me no more. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is already judged.”

2. Of this one only sin then He would have the world to be convinced, that they believe not on Him; to wit, because by believing on Him all sins are loosed, He would have this one imputed by which the rest are bound. And because by believing they are born of God, and become children of God; “For,” saith he, “to them gave He power to become the sons of God, to them that believe on Him.” Whoso then believeth on the Son of God, in so far as he adhereth to Him, and becometh himself also by adoption a son and heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ, in so far he sinneth not. Whence John saith, “Whosoever is born of God sinneth not.” And therefore the sin of which the world is convinced is this, that they believe not on Him. This is the sin of which He also saith, “If I had not come, they had not had sin.” For what! had they not innumerable other sins? But by His coming this one sin was added to them that believed not, by which the rest should be retained. Whereas in them that believe, because this one was wanting, it was brought to pass that all should be remitted to them that believe. Nor is it with any other view that the Apostle Paul saith, “All have sinned, and have need of the glory of God; that “whosoever believeth on Him, should not be confounded;” as the Psalm also saith “Come ye unto Him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be confounded.” Whoso then glorieth in himself shall be confounded; for he shall not be found without sins. Accordingly he only shall not be confounded who glorieth in the Lord. “For all have sinned, and have need of the glory of God.” And so when he was speaking of the infidelity of the Jews, he did not say, “For if some of them have sinned, shall their sin make the faith of God of none effect?” For how should he say, “If some of them have sinned;” when he said himself, “For all have sinned”? But he said, “If some of them believed not, shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect?” That he might point out more expressly this sin, by which alone the door is closed against the rest that they by the grace of God should not be remitted. Of which one sin by the coming of the Holy Ghost, that is by the gift of His grace, which is granted to the faithful, the world is convinced, in the Lord’s words, “Of sin, because they believed not on Me.”

3. Now there would be no great merit and glorious blessedness in believing, if the Lord had always appeared in His Risen Body to the eyes of men. The Holy Ghost then hath brought this great gift to them that should believe, that Him whom they should not see with the eyes of flesh, they might with a mind sobered from carnal desires, and inebriated with spiritual longings, sigh after. Whence it was that when that disciple who had said that he would not believe, unless he touched with the hands His Scars, after he had handled the Lord's Body, cried out as though awaking from sleep, "My Lord and my God;" the Lord said to him, "Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." This blessedness hath the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, brought to us, that the form of a servant which He took from the Virgin's womb, being removed from the eyes of flesh, the purified eye of the mind might be directed to This Form of God, in which He continued equal with the Father, even when He vouchsafed to appear in the Flesh; so as that with the Same Spirit filled the Apostle might say, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh; yet now we know Him so no longer." Because even the Flesh of Christ he knew not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, who, not by touching in curiosity, but in believing assured, acknowledgeth the power of His Resurrection; not saying in his heart, "Who hath ascended into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down; or, Who hath descended into the deep? that is, to bring back Christ from the dead." "But," saith he, "the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, that Jesus is the Lord; and if thou shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." These, Brethren, are the words of the Apostle, pouring them forth with the holy inebriation of the Holy Ghost Himself.

4. Forasmuch then as we could in no way have had this blessedness by which we see not and yet believe, unless we received it of the Holy Ghost; it is with good reason said, "It is expedient for you that I go away. For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." By His Divinity indeed He is with us always; but unless He had in Body gone away from us, we had always seen His Body after the flesh. and never believed after a spiritual sort; by the which belief justified and blessed we might attain with cleansed hearts to contemplate

the Very Word, God with God, “by whom all things were made,” and “who was made Flesh, that He might dwell among us.” And if not with the contact of the hand, but “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;” with good reason is the world, which will not believe save what it sees, convinced of our righteousness. Now that we might have that righteousness of faith of which the unbelieving world should be convinced, therefore said the Lord, “Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye shall see Me no more.” As if He had said, “This shall be your righteousness, that ye believe on Me, the Mediator, of whom ye shall be most fully assured that He is risen again and gone to the Father, though ye see Him not after the Flesh; that by Him reconciled, ye may be able to see God after the Spirit.” Whence He saith to the woman who represents the Church, when she fell at His Feet after His Resurrection, “Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to the Father.” Which expression is understood mystically, thus. “Believe not in Me after a carnal manner by means of bodily contact; but thou shalt believe after a spiritual manner; that is, with a spiritual faith shalt touch Me, when I shall have ascended to the Father.” For, “blessed are they who do not see, and believe.” And this is the righteousness of faith, of which the world, which hath it not, is convinced of us who are not without it; for “the just liveth by faith.” Whether it be then that as rising again in Him, and in Him coming to the Father, we are invisibly and in justification perfected; or that as not seeing and yet believing we live by faith, for that “the just liveth by faith;” with these meanings said He, “Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye shall see Me no more.”

5. Nor let the world excuse itself by this, that it is hindered by the devil from believing on Christ. For to believers the prince of the world is cast out, that he work no more in the hearts of men whom Christ hath begun to possess by faith; as he worketh in the children of unbelief; whom he is constantly stirring up to tempt and disturb the righteous. For because he is cast out, who once had dominion interiorly he wageth war exteriorly. Although then by means of his persecutions, “the Lord doth direct the meek in judgment;” nevertheless in this very fact of his being cast out, is he “judged already.” And of this, “judgment” is the world convinced; for in vain doth he who will not believe on Christ complain of the devil whom, judged, that is, cast out, and for the exercising of us allowed to attack us

from without, not only men, but even women, and boys, and girls, Martyrs have overcome. Now in whom have they overcome, but in Him on whom they have believed, and whom seeing not, they loved, and by whose dominion in their hearts they have got rid of a most oppressive lord. And all this by grace, by the gift, that is, of the Holy Ghost. Rightly then doth the Same Spirit convince the world, both of "sin," because it believeth not on Christ; "and of righteousness," because they who have had the will have believed, though Him on whom they believed they saw not; and by His Resurrection have hoped that themselves also should be in the resurrection perfected; "and of judgment," because if they had had the will to believe, they could be hindered by none, "for that the prince of this world hath been judged already."

SERMON XCIV

ON THE SAME WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN XVI. 8, "HE WILL CONVICT THE WORLD IN RESPECT OF SIN, AND OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND OF JUDGEMENT."

1. When our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was speaking at length of the coming of the Holy Ghost, He said among the rest, "He shall convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Nor when He had said this, did He pass on to another subject; but vouchsafed to convey a somewhat more explicit notice of this same truth. "Of sin," said He, "because they believed not on Me. Of righteousness, because I go to the Father. Of judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged already." There arises therefore within us a desire of understanding, why as if it were men's only sin, not to believe on Christ, He said it of this alone, that the Holy Ghost should convince the world; but if it is plain that besides this unbelief there are manifold other sins of men, why of this alone should the Holy Ghost convince the world? Is it because all sins are by unbelief retained, by faith remitted; that therefore God imputeth this one above all the rest, by which it comes to pass that the rest are not loosed, so long as proud man believes not in an Humbled God? For so it is written; "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." Now this grace of God is a gift of God. But the greatest gift is the Holy Ghost Himself; and therefore is it called grace. For forasmuch "as all had sinned, and needed the glory of God; because by one man sin entered into the world, and death

by his sin in whom all have sinned;” therefore is it grace because given gratuitously. And therefore is it given gratuitously, because it is not rendered as a reward after a strict scrutiny of deserts, but given as a gift after the pardon of sins.

2. Therefore of sin are unbelievers, that is, the lovers of the world, convinced; for they are signified by the name of the world. For when it is said, “He will convince the world of sin;” it is of none other sin than that they have not believed on Christ. For if this sin exist not, no sins will remain, because when the just man lives by faith, all are loosed. Now the difference is great as to whether one believe that Jesus is Christ, or whether he believe on Christ. For that Jesus is Christ even the devils believed, and yet the devils believed not on Christ. For he believeth on Christ, who both hopeth in Christ and loveth Christ. For if he have faith without hope and love, he believeth that Christ is, but he doth not believe on Christ. Whoso then believeth on Christ, by believing on Christ, Christ cometh unto him, and in a manner uniteth Himself to him, and he is made a member in His Body. Which cannot be, but by the accession of hope and love.

3. What mean again His words, “Of righteousness, because I go to the Father”? And first must we enquire, if the world is convinced of sin, why it is also of righteousness? For who can rightly be convinced of righteousness? Is it indeed that the world is convinced of its own sin, but of Christ’s righteousness? I do not see what else can be understood; since He saith, “Of sin, because they believed not on Me. Of righteousness, because I go to the Father.” They believed not, He goeth to the Father. Their sin therefore, and His righteousness. But why would He name righteousness in this only, that He goeth to the Father? Is it not righteousness also that He came hither from the Father? Or is that rather mercy, that He came from the Father to us, and righteousness, that He goeth to the Father?

4. So, Brethren, I think it expedient, that in so profound a depth of Scripture, in words, wherein peradventure there lies some hidden truth which may in due season be laid open, we should as it were together enquire faithfully, that we may attain to find healthfully. Why then doth He call this righteousness, in that He goeth to the Father, and not also in that He came from the Father? Is it that in that it is mercy that He came,

therefore it is righteousness that He goeth? that so in our own case too we may learn that righteousness cannot be fulfilled in us, if we are slow to give a place first to mercy, “not seeking our own things, but the things of others also.” Which advice when the Apostle had given, he immediately joined to it the example of our Lord Himself; “Doing nothing,” saith he, “through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind, each esteeming the other better than themselves. Not looking every man on his own things, but also on the things of others.” Then he added immediately, “Let this mind be in each of you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the Form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man; He humbled Himself, having become obedient even unto death, yea the death of the cross.” This is the mercy whereby He came from the Father. What then is the righteousness whereby He goeth to the Father? He goes on and says; “Wherefore God also hath exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the Glory of God the Father.” This is the righteousness whereby He goeth to the Father.

5. But if He Alone goeth to the Father, what doth it profit us? Why is the world convinced by the Holy Ghost of this righteousness? And yet if He did not Alone go to the Father, He would not say in another place, “No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He That descended from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven.” But the Apostle Paul also says, “For our conversation is in heaven.” And why is this? Because he also says, “If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Mind the things which are above, not those which are upon the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” How then is He Alone? Is He therefore Alone because Christ with all His members is One, as the Head with His Body? Now what is His Body, but the Church? As the same teacher says, “Now ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular.” Forasmuch then as we have fallen, and He descended for our sakes, what is, “No man hath ascended, but He That descended;” but that no man hath ascended, except as made one with Him,

and as a member fastened into His Body who descended? And thus He saith to His disciples, “Without Me ye can do nothing.” For in one way is He One with the Father, and in another one with us. He is One with the Father, in that the Substance of the Father and the Son is One; He is One with the Father, in that, “Being in the Form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” But He was made One with us, in that “He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant;” He was made one with us, according to the seed of Abraham, “in whom all nations shall be blessed.” Which place when the Apostle had brought forward, he said, “He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.” And for that we too belong to that which is Christ, by our incorporation together, and coherence to That Head, It is One Christ. And also for that he says to us too, “Therefore are ye Abraham’s seed, heirs according to the promise.” For if the seed of Abraham be One, and That One Seed of Abraham can only be understood of Christ; but this seed of Abraham we also are; therefore This Whole, that is, the Head and the Body, is One Christ.

6. And therefore we ought not to deem ourselves separated from that righteousness, which the Lord Himself makes mention of, saying, “Of righteousness, because I go to the Father.” For we too have risen with Christ, and we are with Christ our Head, now for a while by faith and hope; but our hope will be completed in the last resurrection of the dead. But when our hope shall be completed, then shall our justification be completed also. And the Lord who was to complete it showed us in His Own Flesh (that is, in our Head), Wherein He rose again and ascended to the Father, what we ought to hope for. For that thus it is written, “He was delivered for our sins, and rose again for our justification.” The world then is convinced “of sin” in those who believe not on Christ; “and of righteousness,” in those who rise again in the members of Christ. Whence it is said, “That we may be the righteousness of God in him.” For if not in Him, in no way righteousness. But if in Him, He goeth with us Whole to the Father, and this perfect righteousness will be fulfilled in us. And therefore “of judgment” too is the world convinced, “because the prince of this world hath been judged already;” that is, the devil, the prince of the unrighteous, who in heart inhabit only in this world which they love, and therefore are called “the world;” as our conversation is in heaven, if we have risen again with

Christ. Therefore as Christ together with us, that is His Body, is One; so the devil with all the ungodly whose head he is, with as it were his own body, is one. Wherefore as we are not separated from the righteousness, of which the Lord said, “Because I go to the Father;” so the ungodly are not separated from that judgment, of which He said, “Because the prince of this world hath been judged already.”

SERMON XCV

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN XVI. 24, “HITHERTO HAVE YE ASKED NOTHING IN MY NAME;” AND ON THE WORDS OF LUKE X. 17, “LORD, EVEN THE DEMONS ARE SUBJECT UNTO US IN THY NAME.”

1. When the Holy Gospel was being read, we heard what in truth ought at once to put every earnest soul in motion to seek, not to faint. For whoso is not moved, is not changed. But there is a dangerous movement, of which it is written, “Suffer not my feet to be moved.” But there is another movement of him who seeketh, knocketh, asketh. What then has been read we have all heard; but I suppose we have not all understood. It makes mention of that which together with me ye should seek, with me ask, for the receiving of which ye should with me knock. For as I hope the grace of the Lord will be with us, that whereas I wish to minister to you, I too may be thought worthy to receive. What is it, I pray you, that we have just heard that the Lord said to His disciples? “Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name.” Is He not speaking to those disciples, who, after He had sent them, having given them power to preach the Gospel, and to do mighty works, returned with joy, and said to Him, “Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy Name”? Ye recognise, ye recollect this which I have quoted from the Gospel, which in every passage and every sentence speaketh truth, nowhere false, nowhere deceiveth. How then is it true, “Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name”? and, “Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name”? Of a surety this puts the mind in motion to ascertain the secret of this difficulty. Therefore ask we, seek, knock. Be there in us faithful godliness, not a restlessness of the flesh, but a submission of the mind, that He who seeth us knocking may open unto us.

2. What the Lord then may give to be ministered unto you, do ye with earnest attention, that is, with hunger, receive; and when I shall have spoken

it, ye will doubtless with sound taste approve what is placed before you out of the Lord's store. The Lord Jesus knew whereby the soul of man, that is, the rational mind, made after the image of God, could be satisfied: only, that is, by Himself. This He knew, and knew that it was as yet without that fulness. He knew that He was manifest, and He knew that He was hidden. He knew what in Him was exhibited, what concealed. He knew all this. "How great," says the Psalm, "is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord, which Thou hast hidden to them that fear Thee; which Thou hast wrought for them that hope in Thee!" "Thy sweetness" both great and manifold "hast Thou hidden to them that fear Thee." If thou hidest it to them that fear Thee, to whom dost Thou open it? "Thou hast wrought it for them that hope in Thee." A twofold question has arisen, but either is solved by the other. If any one inquires after the other, what is this, "Thou hast hidden it to them that fear Thee; wrought it for them that hope in Thee"? Are they that fear, and they that hope, different? Do not the very same who fear God, hope in God? Who hopeth on Him who doth not fear Him? Who in a godly sort feareth Him, and hath not hope in Him? Let this then first be solved. Somewhat would I say concerning those who hope and those who fear.

3. The Law hath fear, Grace hope. But what difference is there between the Law and Grace, since the Giver both of the Law and Grace is One? The Law alarmeth him who relieth on himself, Grace assisteth him who trusteth in God. The Law, I say, alarmeth; do not make light of this because it is brief; weigh it well, and it is considerable. Look well at what I have said, take what we minister, prove wherefrom we take it. The Law alarmeth him who relieth on himself, Grace assisteth him who trusteth in God. What saith the Law? Many things: and who can enumerate them? I bring forward one small and short precept from it which the Apostle hath brought forward, a very small one; let us see who is sufficient for it. "Thou shalt not lust." What is this, Brethren? We have heard the Law; if there be no grace, thou hast heard thy punishment. Why dost thou boast to me whosoever thou art that hearing this dost rely upon thyself, why dost thou boast to me of innocence? Why dost thou flatter thyself thereupon? Thou canst say, "I have not plundered the goods of others;" I hear, I believe, perhaps I even see it, thou dost not plunder the goods of others. Thou hast heard, "Thou shalt not lust." "I do not go in to another man's wife;" this again I hear, believe, see.

Thou hast heard, “Thou shalt not lust.” Why dost thou inspect thyself all round without, and dost not inspect within? Look in, and thou wilt see another law in thy members. Look in, why dost thou pass over thyself? Descend into thine own self. Thou wilt “see another law in thy members resisting the law of thy mind, and bringing thee into captivity in the law of sin which is in thy members.” With good reason then is the sweetness of God hidden to thee. The law placed in thy members, resisting the law of thy mind, bringeth thee into captivity. Of that sweetness which to thee is hidden, the holy Angels drink; thou canst not drink and taste that sweetness, captive as thou art. “Thou hadst not known concupiscence, unless the Law had said, Thou shalt not lust.” Thou heardest, fearedst, didst try to fight, couldest not overcome. For “sin taking occasion by the commandment wrought death.” Surely ye recognise them, they are the Apostle’s words. “Sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence.” Why didst thou vaunt thyself in thy pride? Lo, with thine own arms hath the enemy conquered thee. Thou verily, didst look for a commandment as a defence: and, lo, by the commandment the enemy hath found an occasion of entering in. “For sin taking occasion by the commandment,” he saith, “deceived me, and by it slew me.” What means what I said, “With thine own arms hath the enemy conquered thee”? Hear the same Apostle going on, and saying; “Wherefore the Law indeed is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” Make answer now to the revilers of the Law: make answer on the Apostle’s authority, “The commandment is holy, the Law holy, the commandment just and good. Was then that which is good, made death unto me? God forbid! But sin that it might appear sin, by that which is good wrought death in me.” Why is this but because on receiving the commandment thou didst fear, not love? Thou fearedst punishment, thou didst not love righteousness. Whoso feareth punishment, wisheth, if it were possible, to do what pleaseth him, and not to have what he feareth. God forbiddeth adultery, thou hast coveted another’s wife, thou dost not go in unto her, thou dost not do so, opportunity is given thee, thou hast time, a favourable place is open, witnesses are absent, yet thou dost not do it, wherefore? Because thou fearest the punishment. But no one will know it. Will not God know it? So it is clear, because God knoweth what thou art about to do, thou doest it not; but here thou fearest the threatenings of God, not lovest His commandments. Why dost thou not do it? Because if thou do, thou wilt be cast into hell fire. It is the fire thou fearest. O if thou didst love chastity, thou wouldest not do it, even though thou mightest be altogether unpunished. If God were to say to thee, “Lo, do it, I will not condemn thee, I will not condemn thee to hell fire, but I will withhold My Face from thee.” If thou did it not because of this threat, it would be from the love of God that thou didst not do it, not from the fear of judgment. But thou wouldest do it, perhaps I mean thou wouldest do so; for it is not my place to judge. If thou do it not on this principle because thou abhorrest the contamination of adultery, because thou lovest His precepts, that thou mayest obtain His promises, and not because thou fearest His condemnation, it is the grace which maketh saints that aideth thee; it is all of grace, ascribe it not to thine own self, attribute it not to thine own strength. Thou actest from delight in it, well; thou actest in charity, well; I assent, I agree. Charity worketh by thee, when thou actest with thy will. At once dost thou taste sweetness, if thou hope on the Lord.

4. But whence hast thou this charity, if yet thou hast it? for I am afraid lest even yet it is through fear thou doest it not, and lest thou seem great in thine own eyes. Now if it is through charity that thou doest it not, thou art truly great. Hast thou charity? “I have,” you say. Whence? “From myself.” Far art thou from sweetness, if thou hast it from thine own self. Thou wilt love thine own self, because thou wilt love that from which thou hast it. But I will convict thee that thou hast it not. For in that thou dost think that thou hast so great a thing from thine own self, by that very fact I do not believe thou hast it. For if thou hadst, thou wouldest know from whence thou hadst it. Hast thou charity from thyself, as if it were some light, some little thing? “If thou shouldest speak with the tongues of men and Angels, but have not charity, thou wouldest be a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. If thou shouldest know all mysteries, and have all knowledge, and all prophecy, and all faith so that thou couldest remove mountains, but not have charity,” these things could not profit thee. “If thou shouldest distribute all thy goods to the poor, and deliver up thy body to be burned, but not have charity, thou wouldest be nothing.” How great is this charity, which if it be wanting, all things profit nothing! Compare it not to thy faith, not to thy knowledge, not to thy gift of tongues, to lesser things, to the eye of thy body, the hand, the foot, the belly, to any one lowest member compare charity, are these least

things to be in any way compared to charity? So then the eye and nose thou hast from God, and hast thou charity from thine own self? If thou hast given thyself charity which surpasseth all things, thou hast made God of light account with thee. What more can God give thee? Whatever He may have given, is less. Charity which thou hast given thyself, surpasseth all things. But if thou hast it, thou hast not given it to thyself. "For what hast thou which thou hast not received?" Who gave to me, who gave to thee? God. Acknowledge Him in His gifts, that thou feel not His condemnation. By believing the Scriptures, God hath given thee charity, a great boon, charity, which surpasseth all things. God gave it thee, "because the charity of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts;" by thine own self, perhaps? God forbid; "by the Holy Ghost, who hath been given us."

5. Return with me to that captive, return with me to my proposition. "The Law alarmeth him that relieth on himself, grace assisteth him who trusteth in God." For look at that captive. "He seeth another law in his members resisting the law of his mind, and leading him captive in the law of sin, which is in his members." Lo, he is bound, lo, he is dragged along, lo, he is led captive, lo, he is subjected. What hath that profited him, "Thou shalt not lust"? He hath heard, "Thou shalt not lust;" that he might know his enemy, not that he might overcome him. "For he had not known concupiscence," that is, his enemy, "unless the Law had said, Thou shalt not lust." Now thou hast seen the enemy, fight, deliver thyself, make good thy liberty, let the suggestions of pleasure be kept down, unlawful delight be utterly destroyed. Arm thyself, thou hast the Law, march on, conquer if thou canst. For what good is it that through the little portion of God's grace thou hast already, thou "delightest in the Law of God after the inward man? But thou seest another law in thy members resisting the law of thy mind;" not "resisting" yet powerless for aught, but "leading thee captive in the law of sin." Behold, whence to thee who fearest that "plentifulness of sweetness is hidden!" to him that feareth it "is hidden," how is it" wrought" out for him that "trusteth"? Cry out under thine enemy, for that thou hast an assailant, thou hast an Helper too, who looketh upon thee as thou fightest, who helpeth thee in difficulty; but only if He find thee "trusting;" for the proud He hateth. What then wilt thou cry under this enemy? "Wretched man that I am!" Ye see it already, for ye have cried out. Be this your cry, when haply

thou art distressed under the enemy, say ye, in your inmost heart say, in sound faith say, “Wretched man that I am!” Wretched that I am! “Therefore wretched,” because “I.” “Wretched man that I am,” both because “I,” and because “man.” For “he is disquieted in vain.” For though “man walketh in the Image;” yet, “wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Wilt thou thyself? where is thy strength, where is thy confidence? Of a surety thou both criest out, and art silent; silent, that is, from extolling thyself, not from calling upon God. Be silent, and cry out. For God Himself too is both silent, and crieth aloud; He is silent from judgment, He is not silent from precept; so be thou too silent from elation, not from invocation; lest God say to thee, “I have been silent, shall I be silent always?” Cry out therefore, “O wretched man that I am!” Acknowledge thyself conquered, put thine own strength to shame, and say, “Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” What did I say above? The Law alarmeth him that relieth upon himself. Behold, man relied upon himself, he attempted to fight, he could not get the better, he was conquered, prostrated, subjugated, led captive. He learnt to rely upon God, and it remaineth that him whom the Law alarmed while he relied upon himself, grace should assist now that he trusteth in God. In this confidence he saith, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Now see the sweetness, taste it, relish it; hear the Psalm, “Taste and see that the Lord is sweet.” He hath become sweet to thee, for that He hath delivered thee. Thou wast bitter to thine own self, when thou didst rely upon thyself. Drink sweetness, receive the earnest of so great abundance.

6. The disciples then of the Lord Jesus Christ while yet under the Law had to be cleansed still, to be nourished still, to be corrected still, to be directed still. For they still had concupiscence; whereas the Law saith, “Thou shalt not lust.” Without offence to those holy rams, the leaders of the flock, without offence to them I would say it, for I say the truth: the Gospel relates, that they contended which of them should be the greatest, and whilst the Lord was yet on earth, they were agitated by a dissension about pre-eminence. Whence was this, but from the old leaven? whence, but from the law in the members, resisting the law of the mind? They sought for eminence; yea, they desired it; they thought which should be the greatest;

therefore is their pride put to shame by a little child. Jesus calleth unto him the age of humility to tame the swelling desire. With good reason then when they returned too, and said, “Lord, behold even the devils are subject unto us through Thy Name.” (It was for a nothing that they rejoiced; of what importance was it compared to that which God promised?) The Lord, the Good Master, quieting fear, and building up a firm support, said to them, “In this rejoice not that the devils are subject unto you.” Why so? Because “many will come in My Name, saying, Behold, in Thy Name we have cast out devils; and I will say to them, I know you not. In this rejoice not, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” Ye cannot yet be there, yet notwithstanding ye are already written there. Therefore “rejoice.” So that place again, “Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name.” For what ye have asked, in comparison with that which I am willing to give, is nothing. For what have ye asked in My Name? That the devils should be subject unto you? “In this rejoice not,” that is, what ye have asked is nothing; for if it were anything, He would bid them rejoice. So then it was not absolutely nothing, but that it was little in comparison of that greatness of God’s rewards. For the Apostle Paul was not really not anything; and yet in comparison of God, “Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth.” And so I say to you, and I say to myself, both to myself and you I say, when we ask in Christ’s Name for these temporal things. For ye have asked undoubtedly. For who doth not ask? One asketh for health, if he is sick; another asketh for deliverance, if he is in prison; another asketh for the port, if he is tossed about at sea; another asketh for victory, if he is in conflict with an enemy; and in the Name of Christ he asketh all, and what he asketh is nothing. What then must be asked for? “Ask in My Name.” And He said not what, but by the very words we understand what we ought to ask. “Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. Ask, and ye shall receive, in My Name.” But what? Not nothing; but what? “That your joy may be full;” that is, ask what may suffice you. For when thou askest for temporal things, thou askest for nothing. “Whoso shall drink of this water, shall thirst again.” He letteth down the watering pot of desire into the well, he taketh up whereof to drink, only that he may thirst again. “Ask, that your joy may be full;” that is, that ye may be satisfied, not feel delight only for a time. Ask what may suffice you; speak Philip’s language, “Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.” The Lord saith to you, “Have I been so long time with you, and have ye not known Me? Philip, he that seeth Me, seeth the Father also.” Render then thanks to Christ, made weak for you that are weak, and make ready your desires for Christ’s Divinity, to be satisfied therewith. Turn we to the Lord, etc.

SERMON XCVI

ON THE WORDS OF THE GOSPEL, JOHN. XXI. 16, “SIMON, SON OF JOHN, LOVEST THOU ME?” ETC

1. Ye have observed, beloved, that in to-day’s lesson it was said by the Lord to Peter in a question, “Lovest thou Me?” To whom he answered, “Thou knowest, Lord, that I love thee.” This was done a second, and a third time; and at each several reply, the Lord said, “Feed My lambs.” To Peter did Christ commend His lambs to be fed, who fed even Peter himself. For what could Peter do for the Lord, especially now that He had an Immortal Body, and was about to ascend into heaven? As though He had said to him, “Lovest thou Me?’ Herein show that thou lovest Me, Feed my sheep.’“ So then, Brethren, do ye with obedience hear that ye are Christ’s sheep; seeing that we on our part with fear hear, Feed My sheep”? If we feed with fear, and fear for the sheep; these sheep how ought they to fear for themselves? Let then carefulness be our portion, obedience yours; pastoral watchfulness our portion, the humility of the flock yours. Although we too who seem to speak to you from a higher place, are with fear beneath your feet; forasmuch as we know how perilous an account must be rendered of this as it were exalted seat. Wherefore, dearly beloved, Catholic plants, Members of Christ, think What a Head ye have! Children of God, think What a Father ye have found. Christians, think What an Inheritance is promised you. Not such as on earth cannot be possessed by children, save when their parents are dead. For no one on earth possesses a father’s inheritance, save when he is dead. But we whilst our Father liveth shall possess what He shall give; for that our Father cannot die. I add more, I say more, and say the truth; our Father will Himself be our Inheritance.

2. Live consistently, especially ye candidates of Christ, recently baptized, just regenerated, as I have admonished you before, so say I now, and give expression to my solicitude; for the present lesson of the Gospel hath forced

upon me a greater fear: take heed to yourselves, do not imitate evil Christians. Say not I will do this, for many of the faithful do it. This is not to procure a defence for the soul; but to look out for companions unto hell. Grow ye in this floor of the Lord; herein ye will find good men to please you, if ye yourselves are good. For are ye our private property? Heretics and schismatics have made their own private property out of what they have stolen from the Lord, and would feed, not Christ's flocks, but their own against Christ. It is true indeed, they place His title on these their spoils, that their robberies may be as it were maintained by the title of His Power. What doeth Christ when such as these are converted, who have received the title of His Baptism out of the Church? He casteth out the spoiler, He doth not efface the title, and taketh possession of the house; because He hath found His title there. What need is there that He should change His Own Name? Do they take heed to what the Lord said to Peter, "Feed My lambs, feed My sheep"? Did He say to him, "Feed thy lambs;" or, "Feed thy sheep"? But for them who are shut out, what said He in the Song of Songs, unto the Church? The Spouse speaking to the Bride, saith, "If thou know not thyself, O thou fair one among women, go forth." As though He said, "I do not cast thee out, go forth, if thou know not thyself, O thou fair one among women,' if thou know not thyself in the mirror of divine Scripture, if thou give not heed, O thou fair woman, to the mirror which with no false lustre deceiveth thee; if thou know not that of thee it is said, Thy glory shall be above all earth;' that of thee it is said, I will give thee nations for thine inheritance, and the limits of the earth for thy possession;' and other innumerable testimonies which set forth the Catholic Church. If then thou know not these, thou hast no part in Me, thou canst not make thyself My heir. Go forth then in the footsteps of the flocks' not in the fellowship of the flock; and feed thy goats, not as it was said to Peter, My sheep.'" To Peter it was said, "My sheep;" to schismatics it is said," thy goats." In the one place "sheep," in the other "goats;" in the one place "Mine," in the other "thine." Recollect the right Hand and the left of our Judge; recollect where the goats shall stand, and where the sheep; and it will be plain to you where is the right hand, where the left, the white and the black, the lightsome, and the darksome, the fair and the deformed, that which is about to receive the kingdom, and that which is to find everlasting punishment.

SERMON XCVII

ON THE SAME WORDS OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN. XXI. 15, “SIMON, SON OF JOHN, LOVEST THOU ME MORE THAN THESE?” ETC

1. Ye remember that the Apostle Peter, the first of all the Apostles, was disturbed at the Lord’s Passion. Of his own self disturbed, but by Christ renewed. For he was first a bold presumer, and became afterwards a timid denier. He had promised that he would die for the Lord, when the Lord was first to die for him. When he said then, “I will be with Thee even unto death,” and “I will lay down my life for Thee;” the Lord answered him, “Wilt thou lay down thy life for Me? Verily I say unto thee, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice.” They came to the hour; and because that Christ was God, and Peter a man, the Scripture was fulfilled, “I said in my panic, Every man is a liar.” And the Apostle says, “For God is true, and every man a liar.” Christ true, Peter a liar.

2. But what now? The Lord asketh him as ye heard when the Gospel was being read, and saith to him, “Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these?” He answered and said, “Yea Lord Thou knowest that I love Thee.” And again the Lord asked this question, and a third time He asked it. And when he asserted in reply his love, He commended to him the flock. For each several time the Lord Jesus said to Peter, as he said, “I love thee;” “Feed My lambs,” feed My “little sheep.” In this one Peter was figured the unity of all pastors, of good pastors, that is, who know that they feed Christ’s sheep for Christ, not for themselves. Was Peter at this time a liar, or did he answer untruly that he loved the Lord? He made this answer truly; for he made answer of that which he saw in his own heart. Whereas when he said, “I will lay down my life for Thee,” he would presume on future strength. Now every man knows it may be what sort of man he is at the time when he is speaking; what he shall be on the morrow, who knows? So then Peter turned back his eyes to his own heart, when he was asked by the Lord, and in confidence made answer of what he saw there: “Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.’ What I tell Thee, Thou knowest; what I see here in my heart, Thou seest also.” Nevertheless, he did not venture to say what the Lord had asked. For the Lord had not simply said, “Lovest Thou me?” but had added, “Lovest thou Me more than these?” that is, “Lovest thou Me

more than these here do?” He was speaking of the other disciples; Peter could not say ought but, “I love Thee;” he did not venture to say, “more than these.” He would not be a liar a second time. It were enough for him to bear testimony to his own heart; it was no duty of his to be judge of the heart of others.

3. Peter then was true; or rather was Christ true in Peter? Now when the Lord Jesus Christ would, He abandoned Peter, and Peter was found a man; but when it so pleased the Lord Jesus Christ, He filled Peter, and Peter was found true. The Rock (Petra) made Peter true, for the Rock was Christ. And what did He announce to him, when he answered a third time that he loved Christ, and a third time the Lord commended His little sheep to Peter? He announced to him beforehand his suffering. “When thou wast young,” saith He, “thou girdedst thyself, and wentest whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thine hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.” The Evangelist hath explained to us Christ’s meaning. “This spake He,” saith he, “signifying by what death he should glorify God;” that is that he was crucified for Christ; for this is, “Thou shalt stretch forth thine hands.” Where now is that denier? Then after this the Lord Christ said, “Follow Me.” Not in the same sense as before, when he called the disciples. For then too He said, “Follow Me;” but then to instruction, now to a crown. Was he not afraid to be put to death when he denied Christ? He was afraid to suffer that which Christ suffered. But now he must be afraid no more. For he saw Him now Alive in the Flesh, whom he had seen hanging on the Tree. By His Resurrection Christ took away the fear of death; and forasmuch as He had taken away the fear of death, with good reason did He enquire of Peter’s love. Fear had thrice denied, love thrice confessed. The threefoldness of denial, the forsaking of the Truth; the threefoldness of confession, the testimony of love.

TEN HOMILIES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN TO THE PARTHIANS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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Introduction

This first Epistle of John, probably written at Ephesus near the close of the first century, the last utterance of the Spirit of inspiration, breathes the calmness of an assured hope, and that fullness of joy of which the Apostle would have his readers to be made partakers. While strongly refuting error, it is not so much an argument as an intuition, an open vision of the divine truths announced.

It was evidently written in a time of external quiet for the Church, but of special exposure to errors and perils from within. The nature of the principal error is plain,—the denial that Jesus is the Christ (1 John ii: 22). Precisely this heresy was taught at Ephesus by Cerinthus in the old age of the Apostle; he alleged that Jesus was a man eminent for wisdom and holiness; that after his baptism Christ descended into him, and before the crucifixion left Jesus and returned to heaven. Over against this cardinal error, the Apostle announces the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh,—the Incarnation of that Eternal Life which was with God from the beginning. This divine fact is shown in its own self-evidencing light, and is so presented as to render the epistle a “possession forever,” of incalculable value to the Church. In our day, also, by separating Jesus the Son of Man from Christ the Son of God, the one Divine-Human Lord and Saviour of man is denied and rejected. The great words, fellowship, light, life, love, so often recurring in the Epistle, are filled with new meanings as vehicles of the message of God, as conveying the thoughts of God.

As regards the plan of the Epistle, it has been often asserted till lately that it was supposed to be but fragmentary, a series of aphorisms. Augustin, however, without formally announcing a plan as discovered by him in the Epistle, not only frequently affirms in his exposition that charity or love is the Apostle’s main theme, but so conducts the discussion, gathering his arguments and illustrations around this central thought, as to render it evident that in his view the purpose and plan of the Apostle is to set forth love in its essence and its scope, and that he intends to make this thought dominant in every part. Westcott, in his admirable commentary (2nd edition, 1886), does not draw out a plan, but gives striking and comprehensive views of the object and scope of the Epistle.

Braune, in Lange's commentary, makes two main divisions, besides the introduction and conclusion: chief topic for the first division: i. 5-ii. 28, God is Light; for the second part: Whosoever is born of God doeth righteousness.

Huther (4th edition, 1880) suggests a three-fold division, first: i. 5-ii. 12–28, against indifference to truth and love of the world; second: ii. 29-iii. 22, a life of brotherly love alone is in agreement with the nature of the child of God; third: iii. 23-v. 17, pointing to faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the foundation of the Christian Life. As thus distributed (by Huther) "the conclusion of each part points to the joy of which the Christian partakes in fellowship with God."

Objections have been urged to any division proposed, as being inadequate; but the great divine facts of fellowship with God, fullness of joy in Him, and an Eternal Life of love through the Son of God, are leading topics. This is obvious; they are often recurred to, are frequently conjoined, and in their grandeur surpass our range and reach of thought, while satisfying the aspirations of the soul.

In these discourses of Augustin, on the first Epistle of John, we have a nearly complete text of the Epistle,—the exposition of the last 18 verses not being extant. He followed the old Itala, one of the most ancient (Latin) versions of the New Testament. Variations between the text on which he comments and the best Greek text (as given by Westcott and Hort), when of importance, are indicated in this revised edition of the translation of his homilies. In comparing the Oxford translation, word by word, with the original,—Benedictine (Migne's) edition,—several omissions, twelve at least, have been discovered; and though brief, some of them are of considerable importance: these are supplied in the present edition.

The translator copied, only too faithfully, the very form of the Latin sentences: to change them throughout and to remove all the archaisms in his

English, might have seemed an undue reflection on a work executed for the most part with extraordinary fidelity.

After many alterations in phraseology, probably enough still remains in the translation of the original antique flavor to satisfy the taste of those who are ever disposed to say: “the old is better.”

As regards any allegorizing tendency here and there manifested in the exposition, it may suffice to say that it is small in Augustin, as compared with very many of great fame.

If now and then he seems to mistake in interpretation (as in Homily VII.), not considering that in the Greek such propositions as “God is love,” are not convertible, the subject ho theos being marked by the article, and the predicate indicated by not having the article, let it be remembered that some exegetical canons of the kind were unknown in his time.

These expository discourses by the most illustrious of the Fathers of the Western Church, while often exhibiting great critical acumen, were not intended to be models in exegesis. They are familiar, homiletical talks, racy and vivid in style, couched in the plainest and most pointed language, and all aglow with the most fervent love.

Whatever St. John was in this respect, Augustin was clearly a polemic; but where can be found a more ardent lover of the brethren, nay of all men, even the worst? Not the least striking and touching of his utterances are those in which he discloses the breadth and depth of his charity toward enemies, and affirms such principles and such conduct to be necessarily and invariably found in all those who are Christians indeed.—J.H.M.

THE PROLOGUE

Ye remember, holy brethren, that the Gospel according to John, read in orderly course of lessons, is the subject on which we usually discourse: but because of the now intervening solemnity of the holy days, on which there must be certain lessons recited in the Church, which so come every year that they cannot be other than they are: the order which we had undertaken is of necessity for a little while intermitted, not wholly omitted. But when I was thinking what matter of discourse upon the Scriptures, agreeable with the cheerfulness of these days, I might undertake with you, as the Lord shall vouchsafe to grant, during the present week, being such an one as might be finished in these seven or eight days; the Epistle of blessed John occurred to me: that whereas we have for a while intermitted the reading of his Gospel, we may in discoursing upon his Epistle not go from his side: the rather, as in this same Epistle, which is very sweet to all who have a healthy taste of the heart to relish the Bread of God, and very meet to be had in remembrance in God's Holy Church, charity is above all commended. He has spoken many words, and nearly all are about charity. He that hath in himself that which he is to hear, must needs rejoice at that which he heareth. For so shall this reading be to that man, as oil upon flame; if that be there which may be nourished, it is nourished and groweth and abideth. Again, to some it ought to be as flame to fuel; that if he did not burn, by added discourse he may be set on fire. For in some that which is there, is nourished: in some it is kindled, if it be not there: that we all may rejoice in one charity. But where charity, there peace; and where humility, there charity. Now let us hear himself: and at his words, what the Lord suggests, that let us speak also to you, that ye may well understand.

HOMILY I

1 JOHN I. 1-II. 11

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, and which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life: and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us: the things which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and that our fellowship may be with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son shall cleanse us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And in this we do know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith he knoweth Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. In this we know that we are in Him, if in Him we be perfect. He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked. Beloved, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. For he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes."

1. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, and our hands have handled, of the word of life." Who is he that with hands doth handle the Word, except because "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us"? Now this Word which was made flesh that it might be handled, began to be flesh, of the Virgin Mary: but not then began the Word, for the Apostle saith, "That which was from the beginning." See whether his epistle does not bear witness to his gospel, where ye lately heard, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God." Perchance, "Concerning the word of life" one may take as a sort of expression concerning Christ, not the very body of Christ which was handled with hands. See what follows: "And the Life was manifested." Christ therefore is "the word of life." And whereby manifested? For it was "from the beginning," only not manifested to men: but it was manifested to angels, who saw it and fed on it as their bread. But what saith the Scripture?

“Man did eat angels’ bread.” Well then “the Life was manifested” in the flesh; because it exhibited in manifestation, that that which can be seen by the heart only, should be seen by the eyes also, that it might heal the hearts. For only by the heart is the Word seen: but the flesh is seen by the bodily eyes also. We had wherewith to see the flesh, but had not wherewith to see the Word: “the Word was made flesh,” which we might see, that so that in us might be healed wherewith we might see the Word.

2. “And we have seen and are witnesses.” Perhaps some of the brethren who are not acquainted with the Greek do not know what the word “witnesses” is in Greek: and yet it is a term much used by all, and had in religious reverence; for what in our tongue we call “witnesses,” in Greek are “martyrs.” Now where is the man that has not heard of martyrs, or where the Christian in whose mouth the name of martyrs dwelleth not every day and would that it so dwelt in the heart also, that we should imitate the sufferings of the martyrs, not persecute them with our cups! Well then, “We have seen and are witnesses,” is as much as to say, We have seen and are martyrs. For it was for bearing witness of that which they had seen, and bearing witness of that which they had heard from them who had seen, that, while their testimony itself displeased the men against whom it was delivered, the martyrs suffered all that they did suffer. The martyrs are God’s witnesses. It pleased God to have men for His witnesses, that men also may have God to be their witness. “We have seen,” saith he, “and are witnesses.” Where have they seen? In the manifestation. What meaneth, in the manifestation? In the sun, that is, in this light of day. And how should He be seen in the sun who made the sun, except as “in the sun He hath set His tabernacle; and Himself as a bridegroom going forth out of his chamber, exulted as a giant to run His course?” He before the sun, who made the sun, He before the day-star, before all the stars, before all angels, the true Creator, (“for all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made,”) that He might be seen by eyes of flesh which see the sun, set His very tabernacle in the sun, that is, showed His flesh in manifestation of this light of day: and that Bridegroom’s chamber was the Virgin’s womb, because in that virginal womb were joined the two, the Bridegroom and the bride, the Bridegroom the Word, and the bride the flesh; because it is written, “And they twain shall be one flesh;” and the Lord saith in the

Gospel, “Therefore they are no more twain but one flesh. And Esaias remembers right well that they are two: for speaking in the person of Christ he saith, “He hath set a mitre upon me as upon a bridegroom, and adorned me with an ornament as a bride.” One seems to speak, yet makes Himself at once Bridegroom and Bride; because “not two, but one flesh:” because “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us.” To that flesh the Church is joined, and so there is made the whole Christ, Head and body.

3. “And we are witnesses, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us:” i.e., manifested among us: which might be more plainly expressed, manifested to us. “The things,” therefore, “which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you.” Those saw the Lord Himself present in the flesh, and heard words from the mouth of the Lord, and told them to us. Consequently we also have heard, but have not seen. Are we then less happy than those who saw and heard? And how does he add, “That ye also may have fellowship with us”? Those saw, we have not seen, and yet we are fellows; because we hold the faith in common. For there was one who did not believe even upon seeing, and would needs handle, and so believe, and said, “I will not believe except I thrust my fingers into the place of the nails, and touch His scars.” And He did give Himself for a time to be handled by the hands of men, who always giveth Himself to be seen by the sight of the angels; and that disciple did handle, and exclaimed, “My Lord, and my God!” Because he touched the Man, he confessed the God. And the Lord, to console us who, now that He sitteth in heaven, cannot touch Him with the hand, but only reach Him with faith, said to him, “Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet believe.” We are here described, we designated. Then let the blessedness take place in us, of which the Lord predicted that it should take place; let us firmly hold that which we see not; because those tell us who have seen. “That ye also,” saith he, “may have fellowship with us.” And what great matter is it to have fellowship with men? Do not despise it; see what he adds: “and our fellowship may be with God the Father, and Jesus Christ His Son. And these things,” saith he, “we write unto you, that your joy may be full.” Full joy he means in that fellowship, in that charity, in that unity.

4. “And this is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you.” What is this? Those same have seen, have handled with their hands, the Word of life: He “was from the beginning,” and for a time was made visible and palpable, the Only-begotten Son of God. For what thing did He come, or what new thing did He tell us? What was it His will to teach? Wherefore did He this which He did, that the Word should be made flesh, that “God over all things” should suffer indignities from men, that He should endure to be smitten upon the face by the hands which Himself had made? What would He teach? What would He show? What would He declare? Let us hear: for without the fruit of the precept the hearing of the story, how Christ was born, and how Christ suffered, is a mere pastime of the mind, not a strengthening of it. What great thing hearest thou? With what fruit thou hearest, see to that. What would He teach? What declare? Hear. That “God is light,” saith he, “and there is no darkness in Him at all.” Hitherto, he hath named indeed the light, but the words are dark: good is it for us that the very light which he hath named should enlighten our hearts, and we should see what he hath said. This it is that we declare, that “God is light, and there is no darkness in Him at all.” Who would dare to say that there is darkness in God? Or what is the light? Or what darkness? Lest haply he speaks of such things as pertain to these eyes of ours. “God is light.” Saith some man, “The sun also is light, and the moon also is light, and a candle is light.” It ought to be something far greater than these, far more excellent, and far more surpassing. How much God is distant from the creature, how much the Maker from the making, how much Wisdom from that which is made by Wisdom, far beyond all things must this light needs be. And haply we shall be near to it, if we get to know what this light is, and apply ourselves unto it, that by it we may be enlightened; because in ourselves we are darkness, and only when enlightened by it can we become light, and not be put to confusion by it, being put to confusion by ourselves. Who is he that is put to confusion by himself? He that knows himself to be a sinner. Who is he that by it is not put to confusion? He who by it is enlightened. What is it to be enlightened by it? He that now sees himself to be darkened by sins, and desires to be enlightened by it, draws near to it: whence the Psalm saith, “Draw near unto Him, and be ye enlightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed.” But thou shalt not be shamed by it, if, when it shall show thee to thyself that thou art foul, thine own foulness shall

displease thee, that thou mayest perceive its beauty. This it is that He would teach.

5. And may it be that we say this over-hastily? Let the apostle himself make this plain in what follows. Remember what was said at the outset of our discourse, that the present epistle commendeth charity: “God is light,” saith he, “and in Him is no dark ness at all.” And what said he above? “That ye may have fellowship with us, and our fellowship may be with God the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.” But moreover, if “God be light, and in Him is no darkness at all, and we must have fellowship with Him,” then from us also must the darkness be driven away, that there may be light created in us, for darkness cannot have fellowship with light. To this end, see what follows: “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie.” Thou hast also the Apostle Paul saying, “Or what fellowship hath light with darkness?” Thou sayest thou hast fellowship with God, and thou walkest in darkness; “and God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all:” then how should there be fellowship between light and darkness? At this point therefore a man may say to himself, What shall I do? how shall I be light? I live in sins and iniquities. There steals upon him, as it were, a desperation and sadness. There is no salvation save in the fellowship of God. “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” But sins are darkness, as the Apostle saith of the devil and his angels, that they are “rulers of this darkness.” He would not call them of darkness, save as rulers of sins, having lordship over the wicked. Then what are we to do, my brethren? Fellowship with God must be had, other hope of life eternal is none; now “God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all:” now iniquities are darkness; by iniquities we are pressed down, that we cannot have fellowship with God: what hope have we then? Did I not promise to speak something during these days, that shall cause gladness? Which if I make not good, this is sadness. “God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all;” sins are darkness: what shall become of us? Let us hear, whether peradventure He will console, lift up, give hope, that we faint not by the way. For we are running, and running to our own country; and if we despair of attaining, by that very despair we fail. But He whose will it is that we attain, that He may keep us safe in our own land, feedeth us in the way. Hear we then: “If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do

not the truth.” Let us not say that we have fellowship with Him, if we walk in darkness. “If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.” Let us walk in the light, as He is in the light, that we may be able to have fellowship with Him. And what are we to do about our sins? Hear what follows, “And the blood of Jesus Christ His Son shall purge us from all sin.” Great assurance hath God given! Well may we celebrate the Passover, wherein was shed the blood of the Lord, by which we are cleansed “from all sin!” Let us be assured: the “handwriting which was against us,” the bond of our slavery, the devil held, but by the blood of Christ it is blotted out. “The blood,” saith he, “of His Son shall purge us from all sin.” What meaneth, “from all sin”? Mark: lo even now, in the name of Christ whom these here have now confessed, who are called infants, have all their sins been cleansed. They came in old, they went out new. How, came in old, went out new? Old men they came in, infants they went out. For the old life is old age with all its dotage, but the new life is the infancy of regeneration. But what are we to do? The past sins are pardoned, not only to these but to us; and after the pardon and abolition of all sins, by living in this world in the midst of temptations, some haply have been contracted. Therefore what he can, let man do; let him confess himself to be what he is, that he may be cured by Him who always is what He is: for He always was and is; we were not and are.

6. For see what He saith; “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” Consequently, if thou hast confessed thyself a sinner, the truth is in thee: for the Truth itself is light. Thy life hath not yet shone in perfect brightness, because there are sins in thee; but yet thou hast already begun to be enlightened, because there is in thee the confession of sins. For see what follows: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to purge us from all iniquity.” Not only the past, but haply if we have contracted any from this life; because a man, so long as he bears the flesh, cannot but have some at any rate light sins. But these which we call light, do not thou make light of. If thou make light of them when thou weighest them, be afraid when thou countest them. Many light make one huge sin: many drops fill the river; many grains make the lump. And what hope is there? Before all, confession: lest any think himself righteous, and, before the eyes of God

who seeth that which is, man, that was not and is, lift up the neck. Before all, then, confession; then, love: for of charity what is said? “Charity covereth a multitude of sins.” Now let us see whether he commendeth charity in regard of the sins which subsequently overtake us: because charity alone extinguisheth sins. Pride extinguisheth charity: therefore humility strengtheneth charity; charity extinguisheth sins. Humility goes along with confession, the humility by which we confess ourselves sinners: this is humility, not to say it with the tongue, as if only to avoid arrogancy, lest we should displease men if we should say that we are righteous. This do the ungodly and insane: “I know indeed that I am righteous, but what shall I say before men? If I shall call myself righteous, who will bear it, who tolerate? let my righteousness be known unto God: I however will say that I am a sinner, but only that I may not be found odious for arrogancy.” Tell men what thou art, tell God what thou art. Because if thou tell not God what thou art, God condemneth what He shall find in thee. Wouldest thou not that He condemn thee? Condemn thou. Wouldest thou that He forgive? do thou acknowledge, that thou mayest be able to say unto God, “Turn Thy face from my sins.” Say also to Him those words in the same Psalm, “For I acknowledge mine iniquity.” “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to purge us from all iniquity. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” If thou shalt say, I have not sinned, thou makest Him a liar, while thou wishest to make thyself true. How is it possible that God should be a liar, and man true, when the Scripture saith the contrary, “Every man a liar, God alone true”? Consequently, God true through Himself, thou true through God; because through thyself, a liar.

7. And lest haply he should seem to have given impunity for sins, in that he said, “He is faithful and just to cleanse us from all iniquity;” and men henceforth should say to themselves, Let us sin, let us do securely what we will, Christ purgeth us, is faithful and just, purgeth us from all iniquity: He taketh from thee an evil security, and putteth in an useful fear. To thine own hurt thou wouldest be secure; thou must be solicitous. For “He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,” provided thou always displease thyself, and be changing until thou be perfected. Accordingly, what follows? “My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not.” But perchance sin

overtakes us from our mortal life: what shall be done then? What? shall there be now despair? Hear: “And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiator for our sins.” He then is the advocate; do thou thine endeavor not to sin: if from the infirmity of this life sin shall overtake thee, see to it straightway, straightway be displeased, straightway condemn it; and when thou hast condemned, thou shalt come assured unto the Judge. There hast thou the advocate: fear not to lose thy cause in thy confession. For if oft-times in this life a man commits his cause to an eloquent tongue, and is not lost; thou committest thyself to the Word, and shalt thou be lost? Cry, “We have an advocate with the Father.”

8. See John himself observing humility. Assuredly he was a righteous and a great man, who from the Lord’s bosom drank in the secrets of His mysteries; he, the man who by drinking from the Lord’s bosom indited of His Godhead, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God:” he, being such a man as this, saith not, Ye have an advocate with the Father; but, “If any man sin, an advocate,” saith he, “have we.” He saith not, ye have; nor saith, ye have me; nor saith, ye have Christ Himself: but he puts Christ, not himself, and saith, also, “We have,” not, ye have. He chose rather to put himself in the number of sinners that he might have Christ for his advocate, than to put himself in Christ’s stead as advocate, and to be found among the proud that shall be condemned. Brethren, Jesus Christ the righteous, even Him have we for our advocate with the Father; “He,” even He, “is the propitiation for our sins.” This whoso hath held fast, hath made no heresy; this whoso hath held fast, hath made no schism. For whence came schisms? When men say, “we” are righteous, when men say, “we” sanctify the unclean, “we” justify the ungodly; “we” ask, “we” obtain. But what saith John? “And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” But some man will say: then do the saints not ask for us? Then do bishops and rulers not ask for the people? Yea, but mark the Scriptures, and see that rulers also commend themselves to the prayers of the people. Thus the apostle saith to the congregation, “Praying withal for us also.” The apostle prayeth for the people, the people prayeth for the apostle. We pray for you, brethren: but do ye also pray for us. Let all the members pray one for another; let the Head intercede for all.

Therefore it is no marvel that he here goes on and shuts the mouths of them that divide the Church of God. For he that has said, “We have Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins:” having an eye to those who would divide themselves, and would say, “Lo, here is Christ, lo, there;” and would show Him in a part who bought the whole and possesses the whole, he forthwith goes on to say, “Not our sins only, but also the sins of the whole world.” What is this, brethren? Certainly “we have found it in the fields of the woods,” we have found the Church in all nations. Behold, Christ “is the propitiation for our sins; not ours only, but also the sins of the whole world.” Behold, thou hast the Church throughout the whole world; do not follow false justifiers who in truth are cutters off. Be thou in that mountain which hath filled the whole earth: because “Christ is the propitiation for our sins; not only ours, but also the sins of the whole world,” which He hath bought with His blood.

9. “And in this,” saith he, “we do know Him, if we keep His commandments.” What commandments? “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” But still thou askest, What commandments? “But whoso,” saith he, “keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.” Let us see whether this same commandment be not called love. For we were asking, what commandments, and he saith, “But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.” Mark the Gospel, whether this be not the commandment: “A new commandment,” saith the Lord, “give I unto you, that ye love one another.—In this we know that we are in Him, if in Him we be perfected.” Perfected in love, he calls them: what is perfection of love? To love even enemies, and love them for this end, that they may be brethren. For not a carnal love ought ours to be. To wish a man temporal weal, is good; but though that fail, let the soul be safe. Dost thou wish life to any that is thy friend? Thou doest well. Dost thou rejoice at the death of thine enemy? Thou doest ill. But haply both to thy friend the life thou wishest him is not for his good, and to thine enemy the death thou rejoicest at hath been for his good. It is uncertain whether this present life be profitable to any man or unprofitable: but the life which is with God without doubt is profitable. So love thine enemies as to wish them to become thy brethren; so love thine enemies as that they may be called into

thy fellowship. For so loved He who, hanging on the cross, said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” For he did not say, Father let them live long, me indeed they kill, but let them live. He was casting out from them the death which is for ever and ever, by His most merciful prayer, and by His most surpassing might. Many of them believed, and the shedding of the blood of Christ was forgiven them. At first they shed it while they raged; now they drank it while they believed. “In this we know that we are in Him, if in Him we be made perfect.” Touching the very perfection of love of enemies, the Lord admonishing, saith, “Be ye therefore perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect. He,” therefore, “that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.” How, brethren? what doth he advise us? “He that saith he abideth in Him,” i.e., in Christ, “ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.” Haply the advice is this, that we should walk on the sea? That be far from us! It is this then, that we walk in the way of righteousness. In what way? I have already mentioned it. He was fixed upon the cross, and yet was He walking in this very way: this way is the way of charity, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” If, therefore, thou have learned to pray for thine enemy, thou walkest in the way of the Lord.

10. “Dearly beloved, I write unto you no new commandment, but the old commandment which ye had from the beginning.” What commandment calls he “old? Which ye had,” saith he, “from the beginning. Old” then, in this regard, that ye have already heard it: otherwise he will contradict the Lord, where He saith, “A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another.” But why an “old” commandment? Not as pertaining to the old man. But why? “Which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard.” Old then, in this regard, that ye have already heard it. And the selfsame he showeth to be new, saying, “Again, a new commandment write I unto you.” Not another, but the selfsame which he hath called old, the same is also new. Why? “Which thing is true in Him and in you.” Why old, ye have already heard: i.e., because ye knew it already. But why new? “Because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.” Lo, whence it is new: because the darkness pertains to the old man, but the light to the new man. What saith the Apostle Paul? “Put ye off

the old man, and put ye on the new.” And again what saith he? “Ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord.”

11. “He that saith he is in the light”—now he is making all clear that he has been saying—”he that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.” What! my brethren, how long shall we say to you, “Love your enemies”? See whether, what is worse, ye do not hate your brethren. If ye loved only your brethren, ye would be not yet perfect: but if ye hate your brethren, what are ye, where are ye? Let each look to his own heart: let him not keep hatred against his brother for any hard word; on account of earthly contention let him not become earth. For whoso hates his brother, let him not say that he walks in the light. “He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.” Thus, some man who was a pagan has become a Christian; mark well: behold he was in darkness, while he was a pagan: now is he made henceforth a Christian; thanks be to God, say all joyfully; the apostle is read, where he saith joyfully, “For ye were sometime darkness, but now light in the Lord.” Once he worshipped idols, now he worships God; once he worshipped the things he made, now he worships Him that made him. He is changed: thanks be to God, say all Christians with joyful greeting. Why? Because henceforth he is one that adores the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost; one that detests demons and idols. Yet still is John solicitous about our convert: while many greet him with joy, by him he is still looked upon with apprehension. Brethren, let us gladly welcome a mother’s solicitude. Not without cause is the mother solicitous about us when others rejoice: by the mother, I mean charity: for she dwelt in the heart of John, when he spake these words. Wherefore, but because there is something he fears in us, even when men now hail us with joy? What is it that he fears? “He that saith he is in the light”—What is this? He that saith now he is a Christian,—”and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.” Which there is no need to expound: but to be glad of it, if it be not so, or to bewail it, if it be.

12. “He that loveth his brother abideth (manet) in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.”—I beseech you by Christ: God is feeding us, we are about to refresh our bodies in the name of Christ; they both are in some good measure refreshed, and are to be refreshed: let the

mind be fed. Not that I am going to speak for a long time, do I say this; for behold, the lesson is now coming to an end: but lest haply of weariness we should hear less attentively than we ought that which is most necessary.—”He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is no scandal,” or “none occasion of stumbling, in him.” Who are they that take scandal or make scandal? They that are offended in Christ, and in the Church. They that are offended in Christ, are as if burnt by the sun, those in the Church as by the moon. But the Psalm saith, “The sun shall not burn thee by day, neither the moon by night: i.e., if thou hold fast charity, neither in Christ shalt thou have occasion of falling, nor in the Church; neither Christ shalt thou forsake, nor the Church. For he that forsakes the Church, how is he in Christ who is not in the members of Christ? How is he in Christ who is not in the body of Christ? Those therefore take scandal, or, occasion of falling, who forsake Christ or the Church. Whence do we understand that the Psalm in saying, “By day shall the sun not burn thee, nor the moon by night,” saith it of this, that the burning means scandal, or occasion of stumbling? In the first place mark the similitude itself. Just as the person whom something is burning saith, I cannot bear it, I cannot away with it, and draws back; so those persons who cannot bear some things in the Church, and withdraw themselves either from the name of Christ or from the Church, are taking scandal. For see how those took scandal as from the sun, those carnal ones to whom Christ preached of His flesh, saying, “He that eateth not the flesh of the Son of Man and drinketh His blood, shall have no life in him.” Some seventy persons said, “This is an hard saying,” and went back from Him, and there remained the twelve. All those the sun burnt, and they went back, not being able to bear the force of the Word. There remained therefore the twelve. And lest haply men should imagine that they confer a benefit upon Christ by believing on Christ, and not that the benefit is conferred by Him upon them; when the twelve were left, the Lord said to them, “Will ye also go?” That ye may know that I am necessary to you, not ye to me. But those whom the sun had not burnt, answered by the voice of Peter: “Lord, Thou hast the word of eternal life; whither shall we go?” But who are they that the Church as the moon burneth by night? They that have made schisms. Hear the very word used in the apostle: “Who is offended, and I burn not?” In what sense then is it, that there is no scandal or occasion of stumbling in him that loveth his brother? Because he that loveth his brother, beareth all things for unity’s sake; because it is in the unity of charity that brotherly love exists. Some one, I know not who, offendeth thee: whether it be a bad man, or as thou supposest a bad man, or as thou pretendest a bad man: and dost thou desert so many good men? What sort of brotherly love is that which hath appeared in these persons? While they accuse the Africans, they have deserted the whole world! What, were there no saints in the whole world? Or was it possible they should be condemned by you unheard? But oh! if ye loved your brethren, there would be none occasion of stumbling in you. Hear thou the Psalm, what it saith: “Great peace have they that love Thy law, and there is to them none occasion of stumbling.” Great peace it saith there is for them that love the law of God, and that is why there is to them none occasion of stumbling. Those then who take scandal, or, occasion of stumbling, destroy peace. And of whom saith he that they take not and make not occasion of stumbling? They that love God’s law. Consequently they are in charity. But some man will say, “He said it of them that love God’s law, not of the brethren.” Hear thou what the Lord saith: “A new commandment give I unto you that ye love one another.” What is the Law but commandment? Moreover, how is it they do not take occasion of stumbling, but because they forbear one another? As Paul saith, “Forbearing one another in love, studying to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” And to show that this is the law of Christ, hear the same apostle commending this very law. “Bear ye one another’s burdens,” saith he, “and so shall ye fulfill the law of Christ.”

13. “For he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth.” A great thing, my brethren: mark it, we beseech you. “He that hateth his brother walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes.” What so blind as these who hate their brethren? For that ye may know that they are blind, they have stumbled at a Mountain. I say the same things often, that they may not slip out of your memory. The Stone which was “cut out of the Mountain without hands,” is it not Christ, who came of the kingdom of the Jews, without the work of man? Has not that Stone broken in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth, that is, all the dominations of idols and demons? Has not that Stone grown, and become a great mountain, and filled the whole earth? Do we point with the finger to this Mountain in like manner as the

moon on its third day is pointed out to men? For example, when they wish people to see the new moon, they say, Lo, the moon! lo, where it is! and if there be some there who are not sharp-sighted, and say, Where? then the finger is put forth that they may see it. Sometimes when they are ashamed to be thought blind, they say they have seen what they have not seen. Do we in this way point out the Church, my brethren? Is it not open? Is it not manifest? Has it not possessed all nations? Is not that fulfilled which so many years before was promised to Abraham, that in his seed should all nations be blessed? It was promised to one believer, and the world is filled with thousands of believers. Behold here the mountain filling the whole face of the earth! Behold the city of which it is said, “A city set upon a mountain cannot be hid!” But those stumble at the mountain, and when it is said to them, Go up; “There is no mountain,” say they, and dash their heads against it sooner than seek a habitation there. Esaias was read yesterday; whosoever of you was awake not with his eyes only but with his ear, and not the ear of the body but the ear of the heart, noted this; “In the last days shall the mountain of the house of the Lord be manifest, prepared upon the top of the mountains.” What so manifest as a mountain? But there are even mountains unknown, because they are situated in one part of the earth. Which of you knows Mount Olympus? Just as the people who dwell there do not know our Giddaba. These mountains are in different parts of the earth. But not so that Mountain, for it hath filled the whole face of the earth, and of it is said, “Prepared upon the top of the mountains.” It is a Mountain above the tops of all mountains. “And,” saith he, “to it shall be gathered all nations.” Who can fail to be aware of this Mountain? Who breaks his head by stumbling against it? Who is ignorant of the city set upon a mountain? But marvel not that it is unknown by these who hate the brethren, because they walk in darkness and know not whither they go, because the darkness hath blinded their eyes. They do not see the Mountain: I would not have thee marvel; they have no eyes. How is it they have no eyes? Because the darkness hath blinded them. How do we prove this? Because they hate the brethren, in that, while they are offended at Africans, they separate themselves from the whole earth: in that they do not tolerate for the peace of Christ those whom they defame, and do tolerate for the sake of Donatus those whom they condemn.

HOMILY II

1 JOHN II. 12–17

“I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven through His name. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, children, because ye have known the Father. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever (even as God also abideth for ever).

1. All things that are read from the Holy Scriptures in order to our instruction and salvation, it behoves us to hear with earnest heed. Yet most of all must those things be commended to our memory, which are of most force against heretics; whose insidious designs cease not to circumvent all that are weaker and more negligent. Remember that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ both died for us, and rose again; died, to wit, for our offenses, rose again for our justification. Even as ye have just heard concerning the two disciples whom He met with in the way, how “their eyes were holden that they should not know Him:” and He found them despairing of the redemption that was in Christ, and deeming that now He had suffered and was dead as a man, not accounting that as Son of God He ever liveth; and deeming too that He was so dead in the flesh as not to come to life again, but just as one of the prophets: as those of you who were attentive have just now heard their own words. Then “He opened to them the Scriptures, beginning at Moses,” and going through all the prophets, showing them that all He had suffered had been foretold, lest they should be more staggered if the Lord should rise again, and the more fail to believe Him, if these things had not been told before concerning Him. For the firmness of faith is in this, that all things which came to pass in Christ were foretold. The

disciples, then, knew Him not, save “in the breaking of bread.” And truly he that eateth and drinketh not judgment to himself in the breaking of bread doth know Christ. Afterward also those eleven “thought they saw a spirit.” He gave Himself to be handled by them, who also gave Himself to be crucified; to be crucified by enemies, to be handled by friends: yet the Physician of all, both of the ungodliness of those, and of the unbelief of these. For ye heard when the Acts of the Apostles were read, how many thousands of Christ’s slayers believed. If those believed afterwards who had killed, should not those believe who for a little while doubted? And yet even in regard of them, (a thing which ye ought especially to observe, and to commit to your memory, because that which shall make us strong against insidious errors, God has been pleased to put in the Scriptures, against which no man dares to speak, who in any sort wishes to seem a Christian), when He had given Himself to be handled by them, that did not suffice Him, but He would also confirm by means of the Scriptures the heart of them that believe: for He looked forward to us who should be afterwards; seeing that in Him we have nothing that we can handle, but have that which we may read. For if those believed only because they held and handled, what shall we do? Now, Christ is ascended into heaven; He is not to come save at the end, to judge the quick and the dead. Whereby shall we believe, but by that whereby it was His will that even those who handled Him should be confirmed? For He opened to them the Scriptures and showed them that it behoved Christ to suffer, and that all things should be fulfilled which were written of Him in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms. He embraced in His discourse the whole ancient text of the Scriptures. All that there is of those former Scriptures tells of Christ; but only if it find ears. He also “opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures.” Whence we also must pray for this, that He would open our understanding.

2. But what did the Lord show written of Him in the Law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms? What did He show? Let Himself say. The evangelist has put this briefly, that we might know what in all that great compass of the Scriptures we ought to believe and to understand. Certainly there are many pages, and many books; the contents of them all is this which the Lord briefly spake to His disciples. What is this? That “it

behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again the third day.” Thou hast it now concerning the Bridegroom, that “it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again:” the Bridegroom has been set forth to us. Concerning the Bride, let us see what He saith; that thou, when thou knowest the Bridegroom and the Bride, mayest not without reason come to the marriage. For every celebration is a celebration of marriage: the Church’s nuptials are celebrated. The King’s Son is about to marry a wife, and that King’s Son is Himself a King: and the guests frequenting the marriage are themselves the Bride. Not, as in a carnal marriage, some are guests, and another is she that is married; in the Church they that come as guests, if they come to good purpose, become the Bride. For all the Church is Christ’s Bride, of which the beginning and first fruits is the flesh of Christ: there was the Bride joined to the Bridegroom in the flesh. With good reason when He would betoken that same flesh, He brake bread, and with good reason “in the breaking of bread,” the eyes “of the disciples were opened, and they knew Him.” Well then, what did the Lord say was written of Him in the Law and Prophets and Psalms? That “it behoved Christ to suffer.” Had He not added, “and to rise again,” well might those mourn whose eyes were holden; but “to rise again” is also foretold. And wherefore this? Why did it behove Christ to suffer and to rise again? Because of that Psalm which we especially commended to your attention on the fourth day, the first station, of last week. Why did it behove Christ to suffer and to rise again? For this reason: “All the ends of the earth shall be reminded and converted unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him.” For that ye may know that it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise again; in this place also what hath He added, that after setting forth the Bridegroom He might also set forth the Bride? “And that there be preached,” saith He, “in His name, repentance and remission of sins throughout all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” Ye have heard, brethren; hold it fast. Let no man doubt concerning the Church, that it is “throughout all nations:” let no man doubt that it began at Jerusalem, and hath filled all nations. We know the field where the Vine is planted: but when it is grown we know it not, because it has taken up the whole. Whence did it begin? “At Jerusalem.” Whither has it come? To “all nations.” A few remain: it shall possess all. In the mean time, while it is taking possession of all, it has seemed good to the Husbandman to cut off some unprofitable branches, and they have made heresies and schisms. Let not the branches that are cut off induce you to be cut off: rather exhort ye them that are cut off that they be grafted in again. It is manifest that Christ hath suffered, is risen again, and is ascended into heaven: made manifest also is the Church, because there is “preached in His name repentance and remission of sins throughout all nations.” Whence did it begin? “Beginning at Jerusalem.” The man hears this; foolish and vain, and (how, shall I express it?) worse than blind! so great a mountain, and he does not see it; a candle set upon a candlestick, and he shuts his eyes against it!

3. When we say to them, If ye be Catholic Christians, communicate with that Church from which the Gospel is spread abroad over the whole earth: communicate with that Jerusalem: when this we say to them, they make answer to us, we do not communicate with that city where our King was slain, where our Lord was slain: as though they hate the city where our Lord was slain. The Jews slew Him whom they found on earth, these scorn Him that sitteth in heaven! Which are the worse; those who despised Him because they thought Him man, or those who scorn the sacraments of Him whom now they confess to be God? But they hate, forsooth, the city in which their Lord was slain! Pious men, and merciful! they much grieve that Christ was slain, and in men they slay Christ! But He loved that city, and pitied it: from it He bade the preaching of Him begin, “beginning at Jerusalem.” He made there the beginning of the preaching of His name: and thou shrinkest back with horror from having communion with that city! No marvel that being cut off thou hatest the root. What said He to His disciples? “Sit ye still in the city, because I send my promise upon you.” Behold what the city is that they hate! Haply they would love it, if Christ’s murderers dwelt in it. For it is manifest that all Christ’s murderers, i.e., the Jews, are expelled from that city. That which had in it them that were fierce against Christ, hath now them that adore Christ. Therefore do these men hate it, because Christians are in it. There was it His will that His disciples should tarry, and there that He should send to them the Holy Ghost. Where had the Church its commencement, but where the Holy Ghost came from heaven, and filled the hundred and twenty sitting in one place? That number twelve was made tenfold. They sat, an hundred and twenty persons, and the Holy Ghost came, “and filled the whole place, and there came a sound, as it

were the rushing of a mighty wind, and there were cloven tongues like as of fire.” Ye have heard the Acts of the Apostles: this was the lesson read today: “They began to speak with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” And all who were on the spot, Jews who were come from divers nations, recognised each his own tongue, and marvelled that those unlearned and ignorant men had on the sudden learned not one or two tongues, but the tongues of all nations whatsoever. There, then, where all tongues sounded, there was it betokened that all tongues should believe. But these men, who much love Christ, and therefore refuse to communicate with the city which killed Christ, so honor Christ as to affirm that He is left to two tongues, the Latin and the Punic, i.e. African. Christ possess only two tongues! For there are but these two tongues on the side of Donatus, more they have not. Let us awake, my brethren, let us rather see the gift of the Spirit of God, and let us believe the things spoken before concerning Him, and let us see fulfilled the things spoken before in the Psalm: “There are neither speeches nor discourses, but their voices are heard among them.” And lest haply the case be so that the tongues themselves came to one place, and not rather that the gift of Christ came to all tongues, hear what follows: “Into all the earth is their sound gone out, and unto the ends of the world their words.” Wherefore this? Because “in the sun hath He set His tabernacle,” i.e., in the open light. His tabernacle, His flesh: His tabernacle, His Church: “in the sun” it is set; not in the night, but in the day. But why do those not acknowledge it? Return to the lesson at the place where it ended yesterday, and see why they do not acknowledge it: “He that hateth his brother, walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes.” For us then, let us see what follows, and not be in darkness. How shall we not be in darkness? If we love the brethren. How is it proved that we love the brotherhood? By this, that we do not rend unity, that we hold fast charity.

4. “I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you through His name.” Therefore, “little children,” because in forgiveness of sins ye have your birth. But through whose name are sins forgiven? Through Augustin’s? No, therefore neither through the name of Donatus. Be it thy concern to see who is Augustin, or who Donatus: no, not through the name of Paul, not through the name of Peter. For to them that divided

unto themselves the Church, and out of unity essayed to make parties, the mother charity in the apostle travailing in birth with her little ones, exposeth her own bowels, with words doth as it were rend her breasts, bewaileth her children whom she seeth borne out dead, recalleth unto the one Name them that would needs make them many names, repelleth them from the love of her that Christ may be loved, and saith, “Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” What saith he? “I would not that ye be mine, that so ye may be with me: be ye with me; all we are His who died for us, who was crucified for us”: whence here also it is said, “Your sins are forgiven you through His name,” not through the name of any man.

5. “I write unto you, fathers.” Why first sons? “Because your sins are forgiven you through His name,” and ye are regenerated into a new life, therefore sons. Why fathers? “Because ye have known Him that is from the beginning:” for the beginning hath relation unto fatherhood. Christ new in flesh, but ancient in Godhead. How ancient think we? how many years old? Think we, of greater age than His mother? Assuredly of greater age than His mother, for “all things were made by Him.” If all things, then did the Ancient make the very mother of whom the New should be born. Was He, think we, before His mother only? Yea, and before His mother’s ancestors is His antiquity. The ancestor of His mother was Abraham; and the Lord saith, “Before Abraham I am.” Before Abraham, say we? The heaven and earth, ere man was, were made. Before these was the Lord, nay rather also is. For right well He saith, not, Before Abraham I was, but, “Before Abraham I Am.” For that of which one says, “was,” is not; and that of which one says, “will be,” is not yet: He knoweth not other than to be. As God, He knoweth “to be:” “was,” and “will be,” He knoweth not. It is one day there, but a day that is for ever and ever. That day yesterday and tomorrow do not set in the midst between them: for when the yesterday’ is ended, the to-day’ begins, to be finished by the coming tomorrow.’ That one day there is a day without darkness, without night, without spaces, without measure, without hours. Call it what thou wilt: if thou wilt, it is a day; if thou wilt, a year; if thou wilt, years. For it is said of this same, “And thy years shall not fail.” But when is it called a day? When it is said to the Lord, “To-day have I begotten Thee.” From the eternal Father begotten, from eternity begotten, in eternity begotten: with no beginning, no bound, no

space of breadth; because He is what is, because Himself is “He that Is.” This His name He told to Moses: “Thou shalt say unto them, He that Is hath sent me unto you.” Why speak then of “before Abraham”? why, before Noe? why, before Adam? Hear the Scripture: “Before the day-star have I begotten Thee.” In fine, before heaven and earth. Wherefore? Because “all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made.” By this know ye the “fathers:” for they become fathers by acknowledging “That which is from the beginning.”

6. “I write unto you, young men.” There are sons, are fathers, are young men: sons, because begotten; fathers, because they acknowledge the Beginning; why young men? “Because ye have overcome the wicked one.” In the sons, birth: in the fathers, antiquity: in the young men, strength. If the wicked one is “overcome” by the young men, he fights with us. Fights, but not conquers. Wherefore? Because we are strong, or because He is strong in us who in the hands of the persecutors was found weak? He hath made us strong, who resisted not His persecutors. “For He was crucified of weakness, but He liveth by the power of God.”

7. “I write unto you, children.” Whence children? “Because ye have known the Father. I write unto you fathers:” he enforceth this, and repeateth, “Because ye have known Him that is from the beginning.” Remember that ye are fathers: if ye forget “Him that is from the beginning,” ye have lost your fatherhood. “I write unto you, young men.” Again and again consider that ye are young men: fight, that ye may overcome: overcome, that ye may be crowned: be lowly, that ye fall not in the fight. “I write unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.”

8. All these things, my brethren,—”because we have known That which is from the beginning, because we are strong, because we have known the Father,”—do all these, while they in a manner commend knowledge, not commend charity? If we have known, let us love: for knowledge without charity saveth not. “Knowledge puffeth up, charity edifieth.” If ye have a mind to confess and not love, ye begin to be like the demons. The demons confessed the Son of God, and said, “What have we to do with Thee?” and were repulsed. Confess and embrace. For those feared for their iniquities;

love ye Him that forgiveth your iniquities. But how can we love God, if we love the world? He prepareth us therefore to be inhabited by charity. There are two loves: of the world, and of God: if the love of the world inhabit, there is no way for the love of God to enter in: let the love of the world make way, and the love of God inhabit; let the better have place. Thou lovedst the world: love not the world: when thou hast emptied thine heart of earthly love, thou shalt drink in love Divine: and thenceforth beginneth charity to inhabit thee, from which can nothing of evil proceed. Hear ye therefore his words, how he goes to work in the manner of one that makes a clearance. He comes upon the hearts of men as a field that he would occupy: but in what state does he find it? If he finds a wood, he roots it up; if he finds the field cleared, he plants it. He would plant a tree there, charity. And what is the wood he would root up? Love of the world. Hear him, the rooter up of the wood! "Love not the world," (for this comes next,) "neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

9. Ye have heard that "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Let not any say in his heart that this is false, brethren: God saith it; by the Apostle the Holy Ghost hath spoken; nothing more true: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Wouldest thou have the Father's love, that thou mayest be joint-heir with the Son? Love not the world. Shut out the evil love of the world, that thou mayest be filled with the love of God. Thou art a vessel; but as yet thou art full. Pour out what thou hast, that thou mayest receive what thou hast not. Certainly, our brethren are now born again of water and of the Spirit: we also some years ago were born again of water and of the Spirit. Good is it for us that we love not the world, lest the sacraments remain in us unto damnation, not as means of strengthening unto salvation. That which strengthens unto salvation is, to have the root of charity, to have the "power of godliness," not "the form" only. Good is the form, holy the form: but what avails the form, if it hold not the root? The branch that is cut off, is it not cast into the fire? Have the form, but in the root. But in what way are ye rooted so that ye be not rooted up? By holding charity, as saith the Apostle Paul, "rooted and grounded in charity." How shall charity be rooted there, amid the overgrown wilderness of the love of the world? Make clear riddance of the

woods. A mighty seed ye are about to put in: let there not be that in the field which shall choke the seed. These are the uprooting words which he hath said: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

10. “For all that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,” three things he hath said, which are not of the Father, but are of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever, even as He abideth for ever.” Why am I not to love what God made? What wilt thou? Whether wilt thou love the things of time, and pass away with time; or not love the world, and live to eternity with God? The river of temporal things hurries one along: but like a tree sprung up beside the river is our Lord Jesus Christ. He assumed flesh, died, rose again, ascended into heaven. It was His will to plant Himself, in a manner, beside the river of the things of time. Art thou rushing down the stream to the headlong deep? Hold fast the tree. Is love of the world whirling thee on? Hold fast Christ. For thee He became temporal, that thou mightest become eternal; because He also in such sort became temporal, that He remained still eternal. Something was added to Him from time, not anything went from His eternity. But thou wast born temporal, and by sin wast made temporal: thou wast made temporal by sin, He was made temporal by mercy in remitting sins. How great the difference, when two are in a prison, between the criminal and him that visits him! For upon a time a person comes to his friend and enters in to visit him, and both seem to be in prison; but they differ by a wide distinction. The one, his cause presses down: the other, humanity has brought thither. So in this our mortal state, we were held fast by our guiltiness, He in mercy came down: He entered in unto the captive, a Redeemer not an oppressor. The Lord for us shed His blood, redeemed us, changed our hope. As yet we bear the mortality of the flesh, and take the future immortality upon trust: and on the sea we are tossed by the waves, but we have the anchor of hope already fixed upon the land.

11. But let us “not love the world, neither the things that are in the world. For the things that are in the world, are the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.” These three are they: lest haply any man say,

“The things that are in the world, God made: i.e. heaven and earth, the sea: the sun, the moon, the stars, all the garniture of the heavens. What is the garniture of the sea? all creeping things. What of the earth? animals, trees, flying creatures. These are in the world,’ God made them. Why then am I not to love what God hath made?” Let the Spirit of God be in thee, that thou mayest see that all these things are good: but woe to thee if thou love the things made, and forsake the Maker of them! Fair are they to thee: but how much fairer He that formed them! Mark well, beloved. For by similitudes ye may be instructed: lest Satan steal upon you, saying what he is wont to say, Take your enjoyment in the creature of God; wherefore made He those things but for your enjoyment? And men drink themselves drunken, and perish, and forget their own Creator: while not temperately but lustfully they use the things created, the Creator is despised. Of such saith the apostle: “They worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever.” God doth not forbid thee to love these things, howbeit, not to set thine affections upon them for blessedness, but to approve and praise them to this end, that thou mayest love thy Creator. In the same manner, my brethren, as if a bridegroom should make a ring for his bride, and she having received the ring, should love it more than she loves the bridegroom who made the ring for her: would not her soul be found guilty of adultery in the very gift of the bridegroom, albeit she did but love what the bridegroom gave her? By all means let her love what the bridegroom gave: yet should she say, “This ring is enough for me, I do not wish to see his face now:” what sort of woman would she be? Who would not detest such folly? who not pronounce her guilty of an adulterous mind? Thou lovest gold in place of the man, lovest a ring in place of the bridegroom: if this be in thee, that thou lovest a ring in place of thy bridegroom, and hast no wish to see thy bridegroom; that he has given thee an earnest, serves not to pledge thee to him, but to turn away thy heart from him! For this the bridegroom gives earnest, that in his earnest he may himself be loved. Well then, God gave thee all these things: love Him that made them. There is more that He would fain give thee, that is, His very Self that made these things. But if thou love these—what though God made them—and neglect the Creator and love the world; shall not thy love be accounted adulterous?

12. For “the world” is the appellation given not only to this fabric which God made heaven and earth, the sea, things visible and invisible: but the inhabitants of the world are called the world, just as we call a “house” both the walls and them that inhabit therein. And sometimes we praise a house, and find fault with the inhabitants. For we say, A good house; because it is marbled and beautifully ceiled: and in another sense we say, A good house: no man there suffers wrong, no acts of plunder, no acts of oppression, are done there. Now we praise not the building, but those who dwell within the building: yet we call it “house,” both this and that. For all lovers of the world, because by love they inhabit the world, just as those inhabit heaven, whose heart is on high while in the flesh they walk on earth: I say then, all lovers of the world are called the world. The same have only these three things, “lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, vain glory of life.” For they lust to eat, drink, cohabit: to use these pleasures. Not surely, that there is no allowed measure in these things, or that when it is said, Love not these things, it means that ye are not to eat, or not to drink, or not to beget children? This is not the thing said. Only, let there be measure, because of the Creator, that these things may not bind you by your loving of them: lest ye love that for enjoyment, which ye ought to have for use. But ye are not put to the proof except when two things are propounded to you, this or that: Will thou righteousness or gains? I have not wherewithal to live, have not wherewithal to eat, have not wherewithal to drink. But what if thou canst not have these but by iniquity? Is it not better to love that which thou losest not, than to lose thyself by iniquity? Thou seest the gain of gold, the loss of faith thou seest not. This then, saith he to us, is “the lust of the flesh,” i.e. the lusting after those things which pertain to the flesh, such as food, and carnal cohabitation, and all other such like.

13. “And the lust of the eyes:” by “the lust of the eyes,” he means all curiosity. Now how wide is the scope of curiosity! This it is that works in spectacles, in theatres, in sacraments of the devil, in magical arts, in dealings with darkness: none other than curiosity. Sometimes it tempts even the servants of God, so that they wish as it were to work a miracle, to tempt God whether He will hear their prayers in working of miracles; it is curiosity: this is “lust of the eyes;” it “is not of the Father.” If God hath given the power, do the miracle, for He hath put it in thy way to do it: for

think not that those who have not done miracles shall not pertain to the kingdom of God. When the apostles were rejoicing that the demons were subject to them, what said the Lord to them? “Rejoice not in this, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” In that would He have the apostles to rejoice, wherein thou also rejoicest. Woe to thee truly if thy name be not written in heaven! Is it woe to thee if thou raise not the dead? is it woe to thee if thou walk not on the sea? is it woe to thee if thou cast not out demons? If thou hast received power to do them, use it humbly, not proudly. For even of certain false prophets the Lord hath said that “they shall do signs and prodigies.” Therefore let there be no “ambition of the world:” Ambitio saeculi, is Pride. The man wishes to make much of himself in his honors: he thinks himself great, whether because of riches, or because of some power.

14. These three there are, and thou canst find nothing whereby human cupidity can be tempted, but either by the lust of the flesh, or the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life. By these three was the Lord tempted of the devil. By the lust of the flesh He was tempted when it was said to Him, “If thou be the Son of God, speak to these stones that they become bread,” when He hungered after His fast. But in what way repelled He the tempter, and taught his soldier how to fight? Mark what He said to him: “Not by bread alone doth man live, but by every word of God.” He was tempted also by the lust of the eyes concerning a miracle, when he said to Him, “Cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.” He resisted the tempter, for to do the miracle, would only have been to seem either to have yielded, or to have done it from curiosity; for He wrought when He would, as God, howbeit as healing the weak. For if He had done it then, He might have been thought to wish only to do a miracle. But lest men should think this, mark what He answered; and when the like temptation shall happen to thee, say thou also the same: “Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God:” that is, if I do this I shall tempt God. He said what He would have thee to say. When the enemy suggests to thee, “What sort of man, what sort of Christian, art thou? As yet hast thou done one miracle, or by thy prayers have the dead been raised, or hast thou healed the fevered? if thou wert

truly of any moment, thou wouldest do some miracle:” answer and say: “It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God:” therefore I will not tempt God, as if I should belong to God if I do a miracle, and not belong if I do none: and what becomes then of His words, “Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven”? By “pride of life” how was the Lord tempted? When he carried Him up to an high place, and said to Him, “All these will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.” By the loftiness of an earthly kingdom he wished to tempt the King of all worlds: but the Lord who made heaven and earth trod the devil under foot. What great matter for the devil to be conquered by the Lord? Then what did He in the answer He made to the devil but teach thee the answer He would have thee to make? “It is, written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.” Holding these things fast, ye shall not have the concupiscence of the world: by not having concupiscence of the world, neither shall the lust of the flesh, nor the lust of the eyes, nor the pride of life, subjugate you: and ye shall make place for Charity when she cometh, that ye may love God. Because if love of the world be there, love of God will not be there. Hold fast rather the love of God, that as God is for ever and ever, so ye also may remain for ever and ever: because such is each one as is his love. Lovest thou earth, thou shalt be earth. Lovest thou God, what shall I say? thou shalt be a god? I darenot say it of myself, let us hear the Scriptures: “I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High.” If then ye would be gods and sons of the Most High, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all the things that are in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world:” i.e. of men, lovers of the world. “And the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever, even as God also abideth for ever.”

HOMILY III

1 JOHN II. 18–27

“Children, it is the last hour: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us: if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things. I write unto you, not because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? [He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.] Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath neither the Father nor the Son: and he that acknowledgeth the Son hath both the Father and the Son. Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life. These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you; that ye may know that ye have an unction, and that the unction which ye have received of him may abide in you. And ye need not that any man teach you; because His unction teacheth you of all things."

1. "Children, it is the last hour." In this lesson he addresses the children that they may make haste to grow, because "it is the last hour." Age or stature of the body is not at one's own will. A man does not grow in respect of the flesh when he will, any more than he is born when he will: but where the being born rests with the will, the growth also rests with the will. No man is "born of water and the Spirit," except he be willing. Consequently if he will, he grows or makes increase: if he will, he decreases. What is it to grow? To go onward by proficiency. What is it to decrease? To go backward by deficiency. Whoso knows that he is born, let him hear that he is an infant; let him eagerly cling to the breasts of his mother, and he grows apace. Now his mother is the Church; and her breasts are the two Testaments of the Divine Scriptures. Hence let him suck the milk of all the things that as signs of spiritual truths were done in time for our eternal salvation, that being nourished and strengthened, he may attain to the eating of solid meat, which is, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Our milk is Christ in His humility; our meat, the selfsame Christ equal with the Father. With milk He nourisheth thee, that He may feed thee with bread: for with the heart spiritually to touch Christ is to know that He is equal with the Father.

2. Therefore it was that He forbade Mary to touch Him, and said to her, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father.” What is this? He gave Himself to be handled by the disciples, and did He shun Mary’s touch? Is not He the same that said to the doubting disciple, “Reach hither thy fingers, and feel the scars”? Was He at that time ascended to the Father? Then why doth He forbid Mary, and saith, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to the Father?” Or are we to say, that He feared not to be touched by men, and feared to be touched by women? The touch of Him cleanseth all flesh. To whom He willed first to be manifested, by them feared He to be handled? Was not His resurrection announced by women to the men, that so the serpent should by a sort of counterplot be overcome? For because he first by the woman announced death to man, therefore to men was also life announced by a woman. Then why was He unwilling to be touched, but because He would have it to be understood of that spiritual touch? The spiritual touch takes place from a pure heart. That person does of a pure heart reach Christ with his touch who understands Him coequal with the Father. But whoso does not yet understand Christ’s Godhead, that person reaches but unto the flesh, reaches not unto the Godhead. Now what great matter is it, to reach only unto that which the persecutors reached unto, who crucified Him? But that is the great thing, to understand the Word God with God, in the beginning, by whom all things were made: such as He would have Himself to be known when He said to Philip, “Am I so long time with you, and have ye not known me, Philip? He that seeth me, seeth also the Father.”

3. But lest any be sluggish to go forward, let him hear: “Children, it is the last hour.” Go forward, run, grow; “it is the last hour.” This same last hour is long; yet it is the last. For he has put “hour” for “the last time;” because it is in the last times that our Lord Jesus Christ is to come. But some will say, How the last times? how the last hour? Certainly antichrist will first come, and then will come the day of judgment. John perceived these thoughts: lest people should in a manner become secure, and think it was not the last hour because antichrist was to come, he said to them, “And as ye have heard that antichrist is to come, now are there come many antichrists.” Could it have many antichrists, except it were “the last hour”?

4. Whom has he called antichrists? He goes on and expounds. “Whereby we know that it is the last hour.” By what? Because “many antichrists are come. They went out from us;” see the antichrists! “They went out from us:” therefore we bewail the loss. Hear the consolation. “But they were not of us.” All heretics, all schismatics went out from us, that is, they go out from the Church; but they would not go out, if they were of us. Therefore, before they went out they were not of us. If before they went out they were not of us, many are within, are not gone out, but yet are antichrists. We dare to say this: and why, but that each one while he is within may not be an antichrist? For he is about to describe and mark the antichrists, and we shall see them now. And each person ought to question his own conscience, whether he be an antichrist. For antichrist in our tongue means, contrary to Christ. Not, as some take it, that antichrist is to be so called because he is to come ante Christum, before Christ, i.e. Christ to come after him: it does not mean this, neither is it thus written, but Antichristus, i.e. contrary to Christ. Now who is contrary to Christ ye already perceive from the apostle’s own exposition, and understand that none can go out but antichrists; whereas those who are not contrary to Christ, can in no wise go out. For he that is not contrary to Christ holds fast in His body, and is counted therewith as a member. The members are never contrary one to another. The entire body consists of all the members. And what saith the apostle concerning the agreement of the members? “If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; and if one member be glorified, all the members rejoice with it.” If then in the glorifying of a member the other members rejoice with it, and in its suffering all the members suffer, the agreement of the members hath no antichrist. And there are those who inwardly are in such sort in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ—seeing His body is yet under cure, and the soundness will not be perfect save in the resurrection of the dead—are in such wise in the body of Christ, as bad humors. When these are vomited up, the body is relieved: so too when bad men go out, then the Church is relieved. And one says, when the body vomits and casts them out, These humors went out of me, but they were not of me. How were not of me? Were not cut out of my flesh, but oppressed my breast while they were in me.

5. “They went out from us; but,” be not sad, “they were not of us.” How provest thou this? If they had been of us, they would doubtless have continued with us. Hence therefore ye may see, that many who are not of us, receive with us the Sacraments, receive with us baptism. receive with us what the faithful know they receive, Benediction, the Eucharist, and whatever there is in Holy Sacraments: the communion of the very altar they receive with us, and are not of us. Temptation proves that they are not of us. When temptation comes to them as if blown by a wind they fly abroad; because they were not grain. But all of them will fly abroad, as we must often tell you, when once the fanning of the Lord’s threshing-floor shall begin in the day of judgment. “They went out from us, but they were not of us; if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.” For would ye know, beloved, how most certain this saying is, that they who haply have gone out and return, are not antichrists, are not contrary to Christ? Whoso are not antichrists, it cannot be that they should continue without. But of his own will is each either an antichrist or in Christ. Either we are among the members, or among the bad humors. He that changeth himself for the better, is in the body, a member: but he that continues in his badness, is a bad humor; and when he is gone out, then they who were oppressed will be relieved. “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but (they went out), that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” That he has added, “that they might be made manifest,” is, because even when they are within they are not of us; yet they are not manifest, but by going out are made manifest. “And ye have an unction from the Holy One, that ye may be manifest to your own selves.” The spiritual unction is the Holy Spirit Himself, of which the Sacrament is in the visible unction. Of this unction of Christ he saith, that all who have it know the bad and the good; and they need not to be taught, because the unction itself teacheth them.

6. “I write unto you not because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.” Behold, we are admonished how we may know antichrist. What is Christ? Truth. Himself hath said “I am the Truth.” But “no lie is of the truth.” Consequently, all who lie are not yet of Christ. He hath not said that some lie is of the truth, and some lie not of the truth.

Mark the sentence. Do not fondle yourselves, do not flatter yourselves, do not deceive yourselves, do not cheat yourselves: “No lie is of the truth.” Let us see then how antichrists lie, because there is more than one kind of lying. “Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?” One is the meaning of the word “Jesus,” another the meaning of the word “Christ:” though it be one Jesus Christ our Saviour, yet “Jesus” is His proper name. Just as Moses was so called by his proper name, as Elias, as Abraham: so as His proper name our Lord hath the name “Jesus:” but “Christ” is the name of His sacred character. As when we say, Prophet, as when we say, Priest; so by the name Christ we are given to understand the Anointed, in whom should be the redemption of the whole people. The coming of this Christ was hoped for by the people of the Jews: and because He came in lowliness, He was not acknowledged; because the stone was small, they stumbled at it and were broken. But “the stone grew, and became a great mountain;” and what saith the Scripture? “Whosoever shall stumble at this stone shall be broken; and on whomsoever this stone shall come, it will grind him to powder.” We must mark the difference of the words: it saith, he that stumbleth shall be broken; but he on whom it shall come, shall be ground to powder. At the first, because He came lowly, men stumbled at Him: because He shall come lofty to judgment, on whomsoever He shall come, He will grind him to powder. But not that man will He grind to powder at His future coming, whom He broke not when He came. He that stumbled not at the lowly, shall not dread the lofty. Briefly ye have heard it, brethren: he that stumbled not at the lowly, shall not dread the lofty. For to all bad men is Christ a stone of stumbling; whatever Christ saith is bitter to them.

7. For hear and see. Certainly all who go out from the Church, and are cut off from the unity of the Church, are antichrists; let no man doubt it: for the apostle himself hath marked them, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.” Therefore, whoso continue not with us, but go out from us, it is manifest that they are antichrists. And how are they proved to be antichrists? By lying. “And who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?” Let us ask the heretics: where do you find a heretic that denies that Jesus is the Christ? See now, my beloved, a great mystery. Mark what the Lord God may have inspired us withal, and what I would fain work into

your minds. Behold, they went out from us, and turned Donatists: we ask them whether Jesus be the Christ; they instantly confess that Jesus is the Christ. If then that person is an antichrist, who denies that Jesus is the Christ, neither can they call us antichrists, nor we them; therefore, neither they went out from us, nor we from them. If then we have not gone out one from another, we are in unity: if we be in unity, what means it that there are two altars in this city? what, that there are divided houses, divided marriages? that there is a common bed, and a divided Christ? He admonishes us, he would have us confess what is the truth:—either they went out from us, or we from them. But let it not be imagined that we have gone out from them. For we have the testament of the Lord’s inheritance, we recite it, and there we find, “I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and for Thy possessions the ends of the earth.” We hold fast Christ’s inheritance; they hold it not, for they do not communicate with the whole earth, do not communicate with the universal body redeemed by the blood of the Lord. We have the Lord Himself rising from the dead, who presented Himself to be felt by the hands of the doubting disciples: and while they yet doubted, He said to them, “It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name”—Where? which way? to what persons?—”through all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” Our minds are set at rest concerning the unity of the inheritance! Whoso does not communicate with this inheritance, is gone out.

8. But let us not be made sad: “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.” If then they went out from us, they are antichrists; if they are antichrists, they are liars; if they are liars, they deny that Jesus is the Christ. Once more we come back to the difficulty of the question. Ask them one by one; they confess that Jesus is the Christ. The difficulty that hampers us comes of our taking what is said in the Epistle in too narrow a sense. At any rate ye see the question; this question puts both us and them to a stand, if it be not understood. Either we are antichrists, or they are antichrists; they call us antichrists, and say that we went out from them; we say the like of them. But now this epistle has marked out the antichrists by this cognizance: “Whosoever denies that Jesus is the Christ,” that same “is an antichrist.”

Now therefore let us enquire who denies; and let us mark not the tongue, but the deeds. For if all be asked, all with one mouth confess that Jesus is the Christ. Let the tongue keep still for a little while, ask the life. If we shall find this, if the Scripture itself shall tell us that denial is a thing done not only with the tongue, but also with the deeds, then assuredly we find many antichrists, who with the mouth profess Christ, and in their manners dissent from Christ. Where find we this in Scripture? Hear Paul the Apostle; speaking of such, he saith, "For they confess that they know God, but in their deeds deny Him." We find these also to be antichrists: whosoever in his deeds denies Christ, is an antichrist. I listen not to what he says, but I look what life he leads. Works speak, and do we require words? For where is the bad man that does not wish to talk well? But what saith the Lord to such? "Ye hypocrites, how can ye speak good things, while ye are evil?" Your voices ye bring into mine ears: I look into your thoughts. I see an evil will there, and ye make a show of false fruits. I know what I must gather, and whence; I do not "gather figs of thistles," I do not gather "grapes of thorns;" for "every tree is known by its fruit." A more lying antichrist is he who with his mouth professes that Jesus is the Christ, and with his deeds denies Him. A liar in this, that he speaks one thing, and does another.

9. Now therefore, brethren, if deeds are to be questioned, not only do we find many antichrists gone out; but many not yet maninfest, who have not gone out at all. For as many as the Church hath within it that are perjured, defrauders, addicted to black arts, consulters of fortune-tellers, adulterers, drunkards, usurers, boy-stealers, and all the other vices that we are not able to enumerate; these things are contrary to the doctrine of Christ, are contrary to the word of God. Now the Word of God is Christ: whatever is contrary to the Word of God is in Antichrist. For Antichrist means, "contrary to Christ." And would ye know how openly these resist Christ? Sometimes it happens that they do some evil, and one begins to reprove them; because they dare not blaspheme Christ, they blaspheme His ministers by whom they are reproved: but if thou show them that thou speakest Christ's words, not thine own, they endeavor all they can to convict thee of speaking thine own words, not Christ's: if however it is manifest that thou speakest Christ's words, they go even against Christ, they begin to find fault with Christ: "How," say they, "and why did He make us

such as we are?” Do not persons say this every day, when they are convicted of their deeds? Perverted by a depraved will, they accuse their Maker. Their Maker cries to them from heaven, (for the same made us, who new-made us:) What made I thee? I made man, not avarice; I made man, not robbery; I made man, not adultery. Thou hast heard that my works praise me. Out of the mouth of the Three Children, it was the hymn itself that kept them from the fires.” The works of the Lord praise the Lord, the heaven, the earth, the sea, praise Him; praise Him all things that are in the heaven, praise Him angels, praise Him stars, praise Him lights, praise Him whatever swims, whatever flies, whatever walks, whatever creeps; all these praise the Lord. Hast thou heard there that avarice praises the Lord? Hast thou heard that drunkenness praises the Lord? That luxury praises, that frivolity praises Him? Whatever thou hearest not in that hymn give praise to the Lord, the Lord made not that thing. Correct what thou hast made, that what God made in thee may be saved. But if thou wilt not, and lovest and embracest thy sins, thou art contrary to Christ. Be thou within, be thou without, thou art an antichrist; be thou within, be thou without, thou art chaff. But why art thou not without? Because thou hast not fallen in with a wind to carry thee away.

10. These things are now manifest, my brethren. Let no man say, I do not worship Christ, but I worship God His Father. “Every one that denieth the Son, hath neither the Son nor the Father; and he that confesseth the Son, hath both the Son and the Father.” He speaks to you that are grain: and let those who were chaff, hear, and become grain. Let each one, looking well to his own conscience, if he be a lover of the world, be changed; let him become a lover of Christ, that he be not an antichrist. If one shall tell him that he is an antichrist, he is wroth, he thinks it a wrong done to him; perchance, if he is told by him that strives with him that he is an antichrist, he threatens an action at law. Christ saith to him, Be patient; if thou hast been falsely spoken of, rejoice with me, because I also am falsely spoken of by the antichrists: but if thou art truly spoken of, come to an understanding with thine own conscience; and if thou fear to be called this, fear more to be it.

11. “Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall abide in you, ye also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that He hath promised us.” For haply thou mightest ask about the wages, and say, Behold, “that which I have heard from the beginning I keep safe in me, I comply therewith; perils, labors, temptations, for the sake of this continuance, I bear up against them all: with what fruit? what wages? what will He hereafter give me, since in this world I see that I labor among temptations? I see not here that there is any rest: mere mortality weigheth down the soul, and the corruptible body presseth it down to lower things: but I bear all things, that “that which I have heard from the beginning” may “remain” in me; and that I may say to my God, “Because of the words of Thy lips have I kept hard ways.” Unto what wages then? Hear, and faint not. If thou wast fainting in the labors, upon the promised wages be strong. Where is the man that shall work in a vineyard, and shall let slip out of his heart the reward he is to receive? Suppose him to have forgotten, his hands fail. The remembrance of the promised wages makes him persevering in the work: and yet he that promised it is a man who can deceive thine expectation. How much more strong oughtest thou to be in God’s field, when He that promised is the Truth, Who can neither have any successor, nor die, nor deceive him to whom the promise was made! And what is the promise? Let us see what He hath promised. Is it gold which men here love much, or silver? Or possessions, for which men lavish gold, however much they love gold? Or pleasant lands, spacious houses, many slaves, numerous beasts? Not these are the wages, so to say, for which he exhorts us to endure in labor. What are these wages called? “eternal life.” Ye have heard, and in your joy ye have cried out: love that which ye have heard, and ye are delivered from your labors into the rest of eternal life. Lo, this is what God promises; “eternal life.” Lo, this what God threatens; eternal fire. What to those set on the right hand? “Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.” To those on the left, what? “Go into eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Thou dost not yet love that: at least fear this.

12. Remember then, my brethren, that Christ hath promised us eternal life: “This,” saith he, “is the promise which He hath promised us, even eternal

life. These things have I written to you concerning them which seduce you.” Let none seduce you unto death: desire the promise of eternal life. What can the world promise? Let it promise what you will, it makes the promise perchance to one that tomorrow shall die. And with what face wilt thou go hence to Him that abideth for ever? “But a powerful man threatens me, so that I must do some evil.” What does he threaten? Prisons, chains, fires, torments, wild beasts: aye, but not eternal fire? Dread that which One Almighty threatens; love that which One Almighty promises; and all the world becomes vile in our regard, whether it promise or terrify. “These things have I written unto you concerning them which seduce you; that ye may know that ye have an unction, and the unction which we have received from Him may abide in you.” In the unction we have the sacramental sign [of a thing unseen], the virtue itself is invisible; the invisible unction is the Holy Ghost; the invisible unction is that charity, which, in whomsoever it be, shall be as a root to him: however burning the sun, he cannot wither. All that is rooted is nourished by the sun’s warmth, not withered.

13. “And ye have no need that any man teach you, because His unction teacheth you concerning all things.” Then to what purpose is it that “we,” my brethren, teach you? If “His unction teacheth you concerning all things,” it seems we labor without a cause. And what mean we, to cry out as we do? Let us leave you to His unction, and let His unction teach you. But this is putting the question only to myself: I put it also to that same apostle: let him deign to hear a babe that asks of him: to John himself I say, Had those the unction to whom thou wast speaking? Thou hast said, “His unction teacheth you concerning all things.” To what purpose hast thou written an Epistle like this? what teaching didst “thou” give them? what instruction? what edification? See here now, brethren, see a mighty mystery. The sound of our words strikes the ears, the Master is within. Do not suppose that any man learns ought from man. We can admonish by the sound of our voice; if there be not One within that shall teach, vain is the noise we make. Aye, brethren, have ye a mind to know it? Have ye not all heard this present discourse? and yet how many will go from this place untaught! I, for my part, have spoken to all; but they to whom that Unction within speaketh not, they whom the Holy Ghost within teacheth not, those go back untaught. The teachings of the master from without are a sort of

aids and admonitions. He that teacheth the hearts, hath His chair in heaven. Therefore saith He also Himself in the Gospel: “Call no man your master upon earth; One is your Master, even Christ.” Let Him therefore Himself speak to you within, when not one of mankind is there: for though there be some one at thy side, there is none in thine heart. Yet let there not be none in thine heart: let Christ be in thine heart: let His unction be in the heart, lest it be a heart thirsting in the wilderness, and having no fountains to be watered withal. There is then, I say, a Master within that teacheth: Christ teacheth; His inspiration teacheth. Where His inspiration and His unction is not, in vain do words make a noise from without. So are the words, brethren, which we speak from without, as is the husbandman to the tree: from without he worketh, applieth water and diligence of culture; let him from without apply what he will, does he form the apples? does he clothe the nakedness of the wood with a shady covering of leaves? does he do any thing like this from within? But whose doing is this? Hear the husbandman, the apostle: both see what we are, and hear the Master within: “I have planted, Apollos hath watered; but God gave the increase: neither he that planteth is any thing, neither he that watereth, but He that giveth the increase, even God.” This then we say to you: whether we plant, or whether we water, by speaking we are not any thing; but He that giveth the increase, even God: that is, “His unction which teacheth you concerning all things.”

HOMILY IV

1 JOHN II. 27-III. 8

“And it is true, and lieth not. Even as it hath taught you, abide in it. And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be put to shame by Him at His coming. If ye know that He is righteous, know ye that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him. Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called and should be the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew not Him, us also the world knoweth not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it is not yet manifested what we shall be. We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure. Whosoever committeth sin committeth also iniquity. Sin is iniquity. And ye know that He was manifested to take away sin; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him. Little children, let no man seduce you. He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested; that He might destroy the works of the devil."

1. Ye remember, brethren, that yesterday's lesson was brought to a close at this point, that "ye have no need that any man teach you, but the unction itself teacheth you concerning all things." Now this, as I am sure ye remember, we so expounded to you, that we who from without speak to your ears, are as workmen applying culture from without to a tree, but we cannot give the increase nor form the fruits: but only He that created and redeemed and called you, He, dwelling in you by faith and the Spirit, must speak to you within, else vain is all our noise of words. Whence does this appear? From this: that while many hear, not all are persuaded of that which is said, but only they to whom God speaks within. Now they to whom He speaks within, are those who give place to Him: and those give place to God, who "give not place to the devil." For the devil wishes to inhabit the hearts of men, and speak there the things which are able to seduce. But what saith the Lord Jesus? "The prince of this world is cast out." Whence cast? out of heaven and earth? out of the fabric of the world? Nay, but out of the hearts of the believing. The invader being cast out, let the Redeemer dwell within: because the same redeemed, who created. And the devil now assaults from without, not conquers Him that hath possession within. And he assaults from without, by casting in various temptations: but that person consents not thereto, to whom God speaks within, and the unction of which ye have heard.

2. "And it is true," namely, this same unction; i.e. the very Spirit of the Lord which teacheth men, cannot lie: "and is not false. Even as it hath taught you, abide ye in the same. And now, little children, abide ye in Him, that when He shall be manifested, we may have boldness in His sight, that we be not put to shame by Him at His coming." Ye see, brethren: we believe on Jesus whom we have not seen: they announced Him, that saw, that handled,

that heard the word out of His own mouth; and that they might persuade all mankind of the truth thereof, they were sent by Him, not dared to go of themselves. And whither were they sent? Ye heard while the Gospel was read, “Go, preach the Gospel to the whole creation which is under heaven.” Consequently, the disciples were sent “every where:” with signs and wonders to attest that what they spake, they had seen. And we believe on Him whom we have not seen, and we look for Him to come. Whoso look for Him by faith, shall rejoice when He cometh: those who are without faith, when that which now they see not is come, shall be ashamed. And that confusion of face shall not be for a single day and so pass away, in such sort as those are wont to be confounded, who are found out in some fault, and are scoffed at by their fellowmen. That confusion shall carry them that are confounded to the left hand, that to them it may be said, “Go into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Let us abide then in His words, that we be not confounded when He cometh. For Himself saith in the Gospel to them that had believed on Him: “If ye shall abide in my word, then are ye verily my disciples.” And, as if they had asked, With what fruit? “And,” saith He, “ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” For as yet our salvation is in hope, not in deed: for we do not already possess that which is promised, but we hope for it to come. And “faithful is He that promised;” He deceiveth not thee: only do thou not faint, but wait for the promise. For He, the Truth, cannot deceive. Be not thou a liar, to profess one thing and do another; keep thou the faith, and He keeps His promise. But if thou keep not the faith, thine own self, not He that promised, hath defrauded thee.

3. “If ye know that He is righteous, know ye that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him.” The righteousness which at present is ours is of faith. Perfect righteousness is not, save only in the angels: and scarce in angels, if they be compared with God: yet if there be any perfect righteousness of souls and spirits which God hath created, it is in the angels, holy, just, good, by no lapse turned aside, by no pride falling, but remaining ever in the contemplation of the Word of God, and having nothing else sweet unto them save Him by whom they were created; in them is perfect righteousness: but in us it has begun to be, of faith, by the Spirit. Ye heard when the Psalm was read, “Begin ye to the Lord in confession.” “Begin,”

saith it; the beginning of our righteousness is the confession of sins. Thou hast begun not to defend thy sin; now hast thou made a beginning of righteousness: but it shall be perfected in thee when to do nothing else shall delight thee, when "death shall be swallowed up in victory," when there shall be no itching of lust, when there shall be no struggling with flesh and blood, when there shall be the palm of victory, the triumph over the enemy; then shall there be perfect righteousness. At present we are still fighting: if we fight we are in the lists; we smite and are smitten; but who shall conquer, remains to be seen. And that man conquers, who even when he smites presumes not on his own strength, but relies upon God that cheers him on. The devil is alone when he fights against us. If we are with God, we overcome the devil: for if thou fight alone with the devil, thou wilt be overcome. He is a skillful enemy: how may palms has he won! Consider to what he has cast us down! That we are born mortal, comes of this, that he in the first place cast down from Paradise our very original. What then is to be done, seeing he is so well practised? Let the Almighty be invoked to thine aid against the devices of the devil. Let Him dwell in thee, who cannot be overcome, and thou shalt securely overcome him who is wont to overcome. But to overcome whom? Those in whom God dwelleth not. For, that ye may know it, brethren; Adam being in Paradise despised the commandment of God, and lifted up the neck, as if he desired to be his own master, and were loath to be subject to the will of God: so he fell from that immortality, from that blessedness. But there was a certain man, a man now well skilled, though a mortal born, who even as he sat on the dunghill, putrifying with worms, overcame the devil: yea, Adam himself then overcame: even he, in Job; because Job was of his race. So then, Adam, overcome in Paradise, overcame on the dunghill. Being in Paradise, he gave ear to the persuasion of the woman which the devil had put into her: but being on the dunghill he said to Eve, "Thou hast spoken as one of the foolish women." There he lent an ear, here he gave an answer: when he was glad, he listened, when he was scourged, he overcame. Therefore, see what follows, my brethren, in the Epistle: because this is what it would have us lay to heart, that we may overcome the devil indeed, but not of ourselves. "If ye know that He is righteous," saith it, "know ye that every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him:" of God, of Christ. And in that he hath said, "Is born of Him," he cheers us on. Already therefore, in that we are born of Him, we are perfect.

4. Hear. “Behold what manner of love the Father hath given us, that we should be called sons of God, and be (such).” For whoso are called sons, and are not sons, what profiteth them the name where the thing is not? How many are called physicians, who know not how to heal! how many are called watchers, who sleep all night long! So, many are called Christians, and yet in deeds are not found such; because they are not this which they are called, that is, in life, in manners, in faith, in hope, in charity. But what have ye heard here, brethren? “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and should be, the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it hath not known Him, us also the world knoweth not.” There is a whole world Christian, and a whole world ungodly; because throughout the whole world there are ungodly, and throughout the whole world there are godly: those know not these. In what sense, think we, do they not know them? They deride them that live good lives. Mark well and see: for haply there are such also among you. Each one of you who now lives godly, who despises worldly things, who does not choose to go to spectacles, who does not choose to make himself drunken as it were by solemn custom, yea, what is worse, under countenance of holy days to make himself unclean: the man who does not choose to do these things, how is he derided by those who do them! Would he be scoffed at if he were known? But why is he not known? “The world knoweth Him not.” Who is “the world”? Those inhabiters of the world. Just as we say, “a house;” meaning, its inhabitants. These things have been said to you again and again, and we forbear to repeat them to your disgust. By this time, when ye hear the word “world,” in a bad signification, ye know that ye must understand it to mean only lovers of the world because through love they inhabit, and by inhabiting have become entitled to the name. Therefore the world hath not known us, because it hath not known Him. He walked here Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh; He was God, He was latent in weakness. And wherefore was He not known? Because He reproved all sins in men. They, through loving the delights of sins, did not acknowledge the God: through loving that which the fever prompted, they did wrong to the Physician.

5. For us then, what are we? Already we are begotten of Him; but because we are such in hope, he saith, “Beloved, now are we sons of God.” Now already? Then what is it we look for, if already we are sons of God? “And not yet,” saith he, “is it manifested what we shall be.” But what else shall we be than sons of God? Hear what follows: “We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is.” Understand, my beloved. It is a great matter: “We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.” In the first place mark, what is called “Is.” Ye know what it is that is so called. That which is called “Is,” and not only is called but is so, is unchangeable: It ever remaineth, It cannot be changed, It is in no part corruptible: It hath neither proficiency, for It is perfect; nor hath deficiency, for It is eternal. And what is this? “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” And what is this? “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” To see Christ in this sort, Christ in the form of God, Word of God, Only-Begotten of the Father, equal with the Father, is to the bad impossible. But in regard that the Word was made flesh, the bad also shall have power to see Him: because in the day of judgment the bad also will see Him; for He shall so come to judge, as He came to be judged. In the selfsame form, a man, but yet God: for “cursed is every one that putteth his trust in man.” A man, He came to be judged, a man, He will come to judge. And if He shall not be seen, what is this that is written, “They shall look on Him whom they pierced?” For of the ungodly it is said, that they shall see and be confounded. How shall the ungodly not see, when He shall set some on the right hand, others on the left? To those on the right hand He will say, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom:” to those on the left He will say, “Go into everlasting fire.” They will see but the form of a servant, the form of God they will not see. Why? because they were ungodly; and the Lord Himself saith, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Therefore, we are to see a certain vision, my brethren, “which neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man:” a certain vision, a vision surpassing all earthly beautifulness, of gold, of silver, of groves and fields; the beautifulness of sea and air, the beautifulness of sun and moon, the beautifulness of the stars, the beautifulness of angels: surpassing all things: because from it are all things beautiful.

6. What then shall "we" be, when we shall see this? What is promised to us? "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." The tongue hath done what it could, hath sounded the words: let the rest be thought by the heart. For what hath even John himself said in comparison of That which Is, or what can be said by us men, who are so far from being equal to his merits? Return we therefore to that unction of Him, return we to that unction which inwardly teacheth that which we cannot speak: and because ye cannot at present see, let your part and duty be in desire. The whole life of a good Christian is an holy desire. Now what thou longest for, thou dost not yet see: howbeit by longing, thou art made capable, so that when that is come which thou mayest see, thou shall be filled. For just as, if thou wouldest fill a bag, and knowest how great the thing is that shall be given, thou stretchest the opening of the sack or the skin, or whatever else it be; thou knowest how much thou wouldest put in, and seest that the bag is narrow; by stretching thou makest it capable of holding more: so God, by deferring our hope, stretches our desire; by the desiring, stretches the mind; by stretching, makes it more capacious. Let us desire therefore, my brethren, for we shall be filled. See Paul widening, as it were, his bosom, that it may be able to receive that which is to come. He saith, namely, "Not that I have already received, or am already perfect: brethren, I deem not myself to have apprehended." Then what art thou doing in this life, if thou have not yet apprehended? "But this one thing [I do]; forgetting the things that are behind, reaching forth to the things that are before, upon the strain I follow on unto the prize of the high calling." He says he reaches forth, or stretches himself, and says that he follows "upon the strain." He felt himself too little to take in that "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man." This is our life, that by longing we should be exercised. But holy longing exercises us just so much as we prune off our longings from the love of the world. We have already said, "Empty out that which is to be filled." With good thou art to be filled: pour out the bad. Suppose that God would fill thee with honey: if thou art full of vinegar, where wilt thou put the honey? That which the vessel bore in it must be poured out: the vessel itself must be cleansed; must be cleansed, albeit with labor, albeit with hard rubbing, that it may become fit for that thing, whatever it be. Let us say honey, say gold, say wine; whatever we say it is, being that which cannot be said, whatever we would fain say, It is called—

God. And when we say “God,” what have we said? Is that one syllable the whole of that we look for? So then, whatever we have had power to say is beneath Him: let us stretch ourselves unto Him, that when He shall come, He may fill us. For “we shall be like Him; because we shall see Him as He is.”

7. “And every one that hath this hope in Him.” Ye see how he hath set us our place, in “hope.” Ye see how the Apostle Paul agreeth with his fellow-apostle, “By hope we are saved. But hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he hope for? For if what we see not, we hope for, by patience we wait for it.” This very patience exerciseth desire. Continue thou, for He continueth: and persevere thou in walking, that thou mayest reach the goal: for that to which thou tendest will not remove. See: “And every one that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself even as He is pure.” See how he has not taken away free-will, in that he saith, “purifieth himself.” Who purifieth us but God? Yea, but God doth not purify thee if thou be unwilling. Therefore, in that thou joinest thy will to God, in that thou purifiest thyself. Thou purifiest thyself, not by thyself, but by Him who cometh to inhabit thee. Still, because thou doest somewhat therein by the will, therefore is somewhat attributed to thee. But it is attributed to thee only to the end thou shouldest say, as in the Psalm, “Be thou my helper, forsake me not.” If thou sayest, “Be thou my helper,” thou doest somewhat: for if thou be doing nothing, how should He be said to “help” thee?

8. “Every one that doeth sin, doeth also iniquity.” Let no man say, Sin is one thing, iniquity another: let no man say, I am a sinful man, but not a doer of iniquity. For, “Every one that doeth sin, doeth also iniquity. Sin is iniquity.” Well then, what are we to do concerning sins and iniquities? Hear what He saith: “And ye know that He was manifested to take away sin; and sin in Him is not.” He, in Whom sin is not, the same is come to take away sin. For were there sin in Him, it must be taken away from Him, not He take it away Himself. “Whosoever abideth in Him, sinneth not.” In so far as he abideth in Him, in so far sinneth not. “Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him.” A great question this: “Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him.” No marvel. We have not seen Him, but are to see; have not known Him, but are to know: we believe on One we have

not known. Or haply, by faith we have known, and by actual beholding have not yet known? But then in faith we have both seen and known. For if faith doth not yet see, why are we said to have been enlightened? There is an enlightening by faith, and an enlightening by sight. At present, while we are on pilgrimage, “we walk by faith, not by sight,” or, actually beholding. Therefore also our righteousness is “by faith, not by sight.” Our righteousness shall be perfect, when we shall see by actual beholding. Only, in the meanwhile, let us not leave that righteousness which is of faith, since “the just doth live by faith,” as saith the apostle. “Whosoever abideth in Him, sinneth not.” For, “whosoever sinneth, hath not seen Him, neither known Him.” That man who sins, believes not: but if a man believes, so far as pertains to his faith, he sinneth not.

9. “Little children, let no man seduce you. He that doeth righteousness is righteous, as He is righteous.” What, on hearing that we are “righteous as He is righteous,” are we to think ourselves equal with God? Ye must know what means that “as:” thus he said a while ago, “Purifieth himself even as He is pure.” Then is our purity like and equal to the purity of God, and our righteousness to God’s righteousness? Who can say this? But the word “as,” is not always wont to be used in the sense of equality. As, for example, if, having seen this large church, a person should wish to build a smaller church, but with the same relative dimensions: as, for example, if this be one measure in width and two measures in length, he too should build his church one measure in width and two measures in length: in that case one sees that he has built it “as” this is built. But this church has, say, a hundred cubits in length, the other thirty: it is at once “as” this, and yet unequal. Ye see that this “as” is not always referred to parity and equality. For example, see what a difference there is between the face of a man and its image from a mirror: there is a face in the image, a face in the body: the image exists in imitation, the body in reality. And what do we say? Why, “as” there are eyes here, so also there; “as” ears here, so ears also there. The thing is different, but the “as” is said of the resemblance. Well then, we also have in us the image of God; but not that which the Son equal with the Father hath: yet except we also, according to our measure, were “as” He, we should in no respect be said to be like Him. “He purifieth us,” then, “even as He is pure:” but He is pure from eternity, we pure by faith. We are “righteous

even as He is righteous;" but He is so in His immutable perpetuity, we righteous by believing on One we do not see, that so we may one day see Him. Even when our righteousness shall be perfect, when we shall be equal to the angels, not even then shall it be equalled with Him. How far then is it from Him now, when not even then it shall be equal!

10. "He that doeth sin, is of the devil, because the devil sinneth from the beginning." "Is of the devil:" ye know what he means: by imitating the devil. For the devil made no man, begat no man, created no man: but whoso imitates the devil, that person, as if begotten of him, becomes a child of the devil; by imitating him, not literally by being begotten of him. In what sense art thou a child of Abraham, not that Abraham begat thee? In the same sense as the Jews, the children of Abraham, not imitating the faith of Abraham, are become children of the devil: of the flesh of Abraham they were begotten, and the faith of Abraham they have not imitated. If then those who were thence begotten were put out of the inheritance, because they did not imitate, thou, who art not begotten of him, art made a child, and in this way shall be a child of him by imitating him. And if thou imitate the devil, in such wise as he became proud and impious against God, thou wilt be a child of the devil: by imitating, not that he created thee or begat thee.

11. "Unto this end was the Son of God manifested." Now then, brethren, mark! All sinners are begotten of the devil, as sinners. Adam was made by God: but when he consented to the devil, he was begotten of the devil; and he begat all men such as he was himself. With lust itself we were born; even before we add our sins, from that condemnation we have our birth. For if we are born without any sin, wherefore this running with infants to baptism that they may be released? Then mark well, brethren, the two birth-stocks, Adam and Christ: two men are; but one of them, a man that is man; the other, a Man that is God. By the man that is man we are sinners; by the Man that is God we are justified. That birth hath cast down unto death; this birth hath raised up unto life: that birth brings with it sin; this birth setteth free from sin. For to this end came Christ as Man, to undo the sins of men. "Unto this end was the Son of God manifested, that He may undo the works of the devil."

12. The rest I commend to your thoughts, my beloved, that I may not burden you. For the question we labor to solve is even this—that we call ourselves sinners: for if any man shall say that he is without sin, he is a liar. And in the Epistle of this same John we have found it written, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.” For ye should remember what went before: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” And yet, on the other hand, in what follows thou art told, “He that is begotten of God sinneth not: he that doeth sin hath not seen Him, neither known Him.—Every one that doeth sin is of the devil:” sin is not of God: this affrights us again. In what sense are we begotten of God, and in what sense do we confess ourselves sinners? Shall we say, because we are not begotten of God? And what do these Sacraments in regard to infants? What hath John said? “He that is begotten of God, sinneth not.” And yet again the same John hath said, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us!” A great question it is, and an embarrassing one; and may I have made you intent upon having it solved, my beloved. Tomorrow, in the name of the Lord, what He will give, we will discourse thereof.

HOMILY V

1 JOHN III. 9–18

“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever is not righteous is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of the wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate us. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. In this we know love, that He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how can the love of God dwell in him? My little children, let us not love only in word and in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

1. Hear intently, I do beseech you, because it is no small matter that we have to cope withal: and I doubt not, because ye were intent upon it yesterday, that ye have with even greater intentness of purpose come together to-day. For it is no slight question, how he saith in this Epistle, "Whosoever is born of God, sinneth not," and how in the same Epistle he hath said above, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." What shall the man do, who is pressed by both sayings out of the same Epistle? If he shall confess himself a sinner, he fears lest it be said to him, Then art thou not born of God; because it is written, "Whosoever is born of God, sinneth not." But if he shall say that he is just and that he hath no sin, he receives on the other side a blow from the same Epistle, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Placed then as he is in the midst, what he can say and what confess, or what profess, he cannot find. To profess himself to be without sin, is full of peril; and not only full of peril, but also full of error: "We deceive ourselves," saith he, "and the truth is not in us, if we say that we have no sin." But oh that thou hadst none, and saidst this! for then wouldest thou say truly, and in uttering the truth wouldest have not so much as a vestige of wrong to be afraid of. But, that thou doest ill if thou say so, is because it is a lie that thou sayest. "The truth," saith he, "is not in us, if we say that we have no sin." He saith not, "Have not had;" lest haply it should seem to be spoken of the past life. For the man here hath had sins: but from the time that he was born of God, he has begun not to have sins. If it were so, there would be no question to embarrass us. For we should say, We have been sinners, but now we are justified: we have had sin, but now we have none. He saith not this: but what saith he? "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And then after a while he says on the other hand, "Whosoever is born of God sinneth not." Was John himself not born of God? If John was not born of God, John, of whom ye have heard that he lay in the Lord's bosom; does any man dare engage for himself that in him has taken place that regeneration which it was not granted to that man to have, to whom it was granted to lie in the

bosom of the Lord? The man whom the Lord loved more than the rest, him alone had He not begotten of the Spirit?

2. Mark now these words. As yet, I am urging it upon you, what straits we are put to that by putting your minds on the stretch, that is, by your praying for us and for yourselves, God may make enlargement, and give us an outlet: lest some man find in His word an occasion of his own perdition, that word which was preached and put in writing only for healing and salvation. “Every man,” saith he, “that doeth sin, doeth also iniquity.” Lest haply thou make a distinction, “Sin is iniquity.” Lest thou say, A sinner I am, but not a doer of iniquity, “Sin is iniquity. And ye know that to this end was He manifested, that He should take away sin; and there is no sin in Him.” And what doth it profit us, that He came without sin? “Every one that sinneth not, abideth in Him: and every one that sinneth, hath not seen Him, neither known Him. Little children, let no man seduce you. He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.” This we have already said, that the word “as” is wont to be used of a certain resemblance, not of equality. “He that doeth sin is of the devil, because the devil sinneth from the beginning.” This too we have already said, that the devil created no man, nor begat any, but his imitators are, as it were, born of him. “To this end was the Son of God manifested, that He should undo the works of the devil.” Consequently, to undo (or loose) sins, He that hath no sin. And then follows: “Every one that is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God:” he has drawn the cord tight!—Belike, it is in regard of some one sin that he hath said, “Doth not sin,” not in regard of all sin: that in this that he saith, “Whoso is born of God, doth not sin,” thou mayest understand some one particular sin, which that man who is born of God cannot commit: and such is that sin that, if one commit it, it confirms the rest. What is this sin? To do contrary to the commandment. What is the commandment? “A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another.” Mark well! This commandment of Christ is called, “love.” By this love sins are loosed. If this love be not kept, the not holding it is at once a grievous sin, and the root of all sins.

3. Mark well, brethren; we have brought forward somewhat in which, to them that have good understanding, the question is solved. But do we only walk in the way with them that run more swiftly? Those that walk more slowly must not be left behind. Let us turn the matter every way, in such words as we can, in order that it may be brought within reach of all. For I suppose, brethren, that every man is concerned for his own soul, who does not come to Church without cause, who does not seek temporal things in the Church, who does not come here to transact secular business; but comes here in order that he may lay hold upon some eternal thing, promised unto him, whereunto he may attain: he must needs consider how he shall walk in the way, lest he be left behind, lest he go back, lest he go astray, lest by halting he do not attain. Whoever therefore is in earnest, let him be slow, let him be swift, yet let him not leave the way. This then I have said, that in saying, “Whosoever is born of God sinneth not,” it is probable he meant it of some particular sin: for else it will be contrary to that place: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” In this way then the question may be solved. There is a certain sin, which he that is born of God cannot commit; a sin, which not being committed, other sins are loosed, and being committed, other sins are confirmed. What is this sin? To do contrary to the commandment of Christ, contrary to the New Testament. What is the new commandment? “A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another.” Whoso doeth contrary to charity and contrary to brotherly love, let him not dare to glory and say that he is born of God: but whoso is in brotherly love, there are certain sins which he cannot commit, and this above all, that he should hate his brother. And how fares it with him concerning his other sins, of which it is said, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?” Let him hear that which shall set his mind at rest from another place of Scripture; “Charity covereth a multitude of sins.”

4. Charity therefore we commend; charity this Epistle commendeth. The Lord, after His resurrection, what question put He to Peter, but, “Lovest thou me?” And it was not enough to ask it once; a second time also He put none other question, a third time also none other. Although when it came to the third time, Peter, as one who knew not what was the drift of this, was grieved because it seemed as if the Lord did not believe him; nevertheless

both a first time and a second, and a third He put this question. Thrice fear denied, thrice love confessed. Behold Peter loveth the Lord. What is he to do for the Lord? For think not that he in the Psalm did not feel himself at a loss what to do: “What shall I render unto the Lord for all the benefits He hath done unto me?” He that said this in the Psalm, marked what great things had been done for him by God; and sought what he should render to God, and could find nothing. For whatever thou wouldest render, from Him didst thou receive it to render. And what did he find to offer in return? That which, as we said, my brethren, he had received from Him, that only found he to offer in return. “I will receive the cup of salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord.” For who had given him the cup of salvation, but He to whom he wished to offer in return? Now to receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord, is to be filled with charity; and so filled, that not only thou shalt not hate thy brother, but shall be prepared to die for thy brother. This is perfect charity, that thou be prepared to die for thy brother. This the Lord exhibited in Himself, who died for all, praying for them by whom He was crucified, and saying, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” But if He alone hath done this, He was not a Master, if He had no disciples. Disciples who came after Him have done this. Men were stoning Stephen, and he knelt down and said, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.” He loved them that were killing him; since for them also he was dying. Hear also the Apostle Paul: “And I myself,” saith he, “will be spent for your souls.” For he was among those for whom Stephen, when by their hands he was dying, besought forgiveness. This then is perfect charity. If any man shall have so great charity that he is prepared even to die for his brethren, in that man is perfect charity. But as soon as it is born, is it already quite perfect? That it may be made perfect, it is born; when born, it is nourished; when nourished, it is strengthened; when strengthened, it is perfected; when it has come to perfection, what saith it? “To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. I wished to be dissolved, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is needful for you.” For their sakes he was willing to live, for whose sakes he was prepared to die.

5. And that ye may know that it is this perfect charity which that man violates not, and against which that man sins not, who is born of God; this

is what the Lord saith to Peter; “Peter lovest thou me?” And he answers, “I love.” He saith not, If thou love me, shew kindness to me. For when the Lord was in mortal flesh, He hungered, He thirsted: at that time when He hungered and thirsted, He was taken in as a guest; those who had the means, ministered unto Him of their substance, as we read in the Gospel. Zacchaeus entertained Him as his guest: he was saved from his disease by entertaining the Physician. From what disease? The disease of avarice. For he was very rich, and the chief of the publicans. Mark the man made whole from the disease of avarice: “The half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man, I will restore him fourfold.” That he kept the other half, was not to enjoy it, but to pay his debts. Well, he at that time entertained the Physician as his guest, because there was infirmity of the flesh in the Lord, to which men might show this kindness; and this, because it was His will to grant this very thing to them that did Him kind service; for the benefit was to them that did the service, not to Him. For, could He to whom angels ministered require these men’s kindness? Not even His servant Elias, to whom He sent bread and flesh by the ravens upon a certain occasion had need of this; and yet that a religious widow might be blessed, the servant of God is sent, and he whom God in secret did feed, is fed by the widow. But still, although by the means of these servants of God, those who consider their need get good to themselves, in respect of that reward most manifestly set forth by the Lord in the Gospel: “He that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward: and he that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward: and whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, He shall in no wise lose his reward:” although, then, they that do this, do it to their own good: yet neither could this kind office be done to Him when about to ascend into Heaven. What could Peter, who loved Him, render unto Him? Hear what. “Feed my sheep:” i.e. do for the brethren, that which I have done for thee. I redeemed all with my blood: hesitate not to die for confession of the truth, that the rest may imitate you.

6. But this, as we have said, brethren, is perfect charity. He that is born of God hath it. Mark, my beloved, see what I say. Behold, a man has received

the Sacrament of that birth, being baptized; he hath the Sacrament, and a great Sacrament, divine, holy, ineffable. Consider what a Sacrament! To make him a new man by remission of all sins! Nevertheless, let him look well to the heart, whether that be thoroughly done there, which is done in the body; let him see whether he have charity, and then say, I am born of God. If however he have it not, he has indeed the soldier's mark upon him, but he roams as a deserter. Let him have charity; otherwise let him not say that he is born of God. But he says, I have the Sacrament. Hear the Apostle: "If I know all mysteries, and have all faith, so that I can remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing."

7. This, if ye remember, we gave you to understand in beginning to read this Epistle, that nothing in it is so commended as charity. Even if it seems to speak of various other things, to this it makes its way back, and whatever it says, it will needs bring all to bear upon charity. Let us see whether it does so here. Mark: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." We ask, what sin? because if thou understand all sin, it will be contrary to that place, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Then let him say what sin; let him teach us; lest haply I may have rashly said that the sin here is the violation of charity, because he said above, "He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes." But perhaps he has said something in what comes afterwards, and has mentioned charity by name? See that this circuit of words hath this end, hath this issue. "Whosoever is born of God, sinneth not, because His seed remaineth in him." The "seed" of God, i.e. the word of God: whence the apostle saith, "I have begotten you through the Gospel. And he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Let him tell us this, let us see in what we cannot sin. "In this are manifested the children of God and the children of the devil. Whosoever is not righteous is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." Aye, now indeed it is manifest of what he speaks: "Neither he that loveth not his brother." Therefore, love alone puts the difference between the children of God and the children of the devil. Let them all sign themselves with the sign of the cross of Christ; let them all respond, Amen; let all sing Alleluia; let all be baptized, let all come to church, let all build the walls of churches: there is no discerning of the children of God from the

children of the devil, but only by charity. They that have charity are born of God: they that have it not, are not born of God. A mighty token, a mighty distinction! Have what thou wilt; if this alone thou have not, it profiteth thee nothing: other things if thou have not, have this, and thou hast fulfilled the law. “For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law,” saith the apostle: and, “Charity is the fulfilling of the law.” I take this to be the pearl which the merchant man in the Gospel is described to have been seeking, who “found one pearl, and sold all that he had, and bought it.” This is the pearl of price, Charity, without which whatever thou mayest have, profiteth thee nothing: which if alone thou have, it sufficeth thee. Now, with faith thou seest, then with actual beholding thou shalt see. For if we love when we see not, how shall we embrace it when we see! But wherein must we exercise ourselves? In brotherly love. Thou mayest say to me, I have not seen God: canst thou say to me, I have not seen man? Love thy brother. For if thou love thy brother whom thou seest, at the same time thou shalt see God also; because thou shalt see Charity itself, and within dwelleth God.

8. “Whosoever is not righteous is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.” “For this is the message:” mark how he confirms it: “For this is the message which we heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.” He has made it manifest to us that it is of this he speaks; whoso acts against this commandment, is in that accursed sin, into which those fall who are not born of God. “Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.” Therefore, where envy is, brotherly love cannot be. Mark, my beloved. He that envieth, loveth not. The sin of the devil is in that man; because the devil through envy cast man down. For he fell, and envied him that stood. He did not wish to cast man down that he himself might stand, but only that he might not fall alone. Hold fast in your mind from this that he has subjoined, that envy cannot exist in charity. Thou hast it openly, when charity was praised, “Charity envieth not.” There was no charity in Cain; and had there been no charity in Abel, God would not have accepted his sacrifice. For when they had both offered, the one of the fruits of the earth, the other of the offspring of the flock; what think ye, brethren, that God slighted the fruits of the earth, and loved the offspring of the flock? God had not regard to the hands, but saw in the heart: and whom

He saw offer with charity, to his sacrifice He had respect; whom He saw offer with envy, from his sacrifice He turned away His eyes. By the good works, then, of Abel, he means only charity: by the evil works of Cain he means only his hatred of his brother. It was not enough that he hated his brother and envied his good works; because he would not imitate, he would kill. And hence it appeared that he was a child of the devil, and hence also that the other was God's righteous one. Hence then are men discerned, my brethren. Let no man mark the tongue, but the deeds and the heart. If any do not good for his brethren, he shews what he has in him. By temptations are men proved.

9. "Marvel not, brethren, if the world hate us." Must one often be telling you what "the world" means? Not the heaven, not the earth, nor these visible works which God made; but lovers of the world. By often saying these things, to some I am burdensome: but I am so far from saying it without a cause, that some may be questioned whether I said it, and they cannot answer. Let then, even by thrusting it upon them, something stick fast in the hearts of them that hear. What is "the world"? The world, when put in a bad sense, is, lovers of the world: the world, when the word is used in praise, is heaven and earth, and the works of God that are in them; whence it is said, "And the world was made by Him." Also, the world is the fullness of the earth, as John himself hath said, "Not only for our sins is He the propitiator, but (for the sins) of the whole world:" he means, "of the world," of all the faithful scattered throughout the whole earth. But the world in a bad sense, is, lovers of the world. They that love the world, cannot love their brother.

10. "If the world hate us: we know"—What do we know?—"that we have passed from death unto life"—How do we know? "Because we love the brethren." Let none ask man: let each return to his own heart: if he find there brotherly love, let him set his mind at rest, because he is "passed from death unto life." Already he is on the right hand: let him not regard that at present his glory is hidden: when the Lord shall come, then shall he appear in glory. For he has life in him, but as yet in winter; the root is alive, but the branches, so to say, are dry: within is the substance that has the life in it, within are the leaves of trees, within are the fruits: but they wait for the

summer. Well then, “we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not, abideth in death.” Lest ye should think it a light matter, brethren, to hate, or, not to love, hear what follows: “Every one that hateth his brother, is a murderer.” How now, if any made light of hating his brother, will he also in his heart make light of murder? He does not stir his hands to kill a man; yet he is already held by God a murderer; the other lives, and yet this man is already judged as his slayer! “Every one that hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.”

11. “In this know we love:” he means, perfection of love, that perfection which we have bidden you lay to heart: “In this know we love, that He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” Lo here, whence that came: “Peter, lovest thou me? Feed My sheep.” For, that ye may know that He would have His sheep to be so fed by him, as that he should lay down his life for the sheep, straightway said He this to him: “When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake He,” saith the evangelist, “signifying by what death he should glorify God;” so that to whom He had said, Feed my sheep,” the same He might teach to lay down his life for His sheep.

12. Whence beginneth charity, brethren? Attend a little: to what it is perfected, ye have heard; the very end of it, and the very measure of it is what the Lord hath put before us in the Gospel: “Greater love hath no man,” saith He, “than that one lay down his life for his friends.” Its perfection, therefore, He hath put before us in the Gospel, and here also it is its perfection that is put before us: but ye ask yourselves, and say to yourselves, When shall it be possible for us to have “this” charity? Do not too soon despair of thyself. Haply, it is born and is not yet perfect; nourish it, that it be not choked. But thou wilt say to me, And by what am I to know it? For to what it is perfected, we have heard; whence it begins, let us hear. He goes on to say: “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have hunger, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how can the love of God dwell in him?” Lo, whence charity begins withal! If thou

art not yet equal to the dying for thy brother, be thou even now equal to the giving of thy means to thy brother. Even now let charity smite thy bowels, that not of vainglory thou shouldest do it, but of the innermost marrow of mercy; that thou consider him, now in want. For if thy superfluities thou canst not give to thy brother, canst thou lay down thy life for thy brother? There lies thy money in thy bosom, which thieves may take from thee; and though thieves do not take it, by dying thou wilt leave it, even if it leave not thee while living: what wilt thou do with it? Thy brother hungers, he is in necessity: belike he is in suspense, is distressed by his creditor: he is thy brother, alike ye are bought, one is the price paid for you, ye are both redeemed by the blood of Christ: see whether thou have mercy, if thou have this world's means. Perchance thou sayest, "What concerns it me? Am I to give my money, that he may not suffer trouble?" If this be the answer thy heart makes to thee, the love of the Father abideth not in thee. If the love of the Father abide not in thee, thou art not born of God. How boastest thou to be a Christian? Thou hast the name, and hast not the deeds. But if the work shall follow the name, let any call thee pagan, show thou by deeds that thou art a Christian. For if by deeds thou dost not show thyself a Christian, all men may call thee a Christian yet; what doth the name profit thee where the thing is not forthcoming? "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how can the love of God dwell in him?" And then he goes on: "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue but in deed and in truth."

13. I suppose the thing is now made manifest to you my brethren: this great and most concerning secret and mystery. What is the force of charity, all Scripture doth set forth; but I know not whether any where it be more largely set forth than in this Epistle. We pray you and beseech you in the Lord, that both what ye have heard ye will keep in memory, and to that which is yet to be said, until the epistle be finished, will come with earnestness, and with earnestness hear the same. But open ye your heart for the good seed: root out the thorns, that that which we are sowing in you be not choked, but rather that the harvest may grow, and that the Husbandman may rejoice and make ready the barn for you as for grain, not the fire as for the chaff.

HOMILY VI

1 JOHN III. 19–4. 3

“And herein we know that we are of the truth, and assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart think ill of us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart think not ill of us, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we shall receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do in His sight those things that please Him. And this is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment. And he that keepeth His commandments shall dwell in Him, and He in him. And herein we know that He abideth in us, by the Holy Spirit which He hath given us. Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into this world. In this is known the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the antichrist, of whom ye have heard that he should come; and even now already is he in this world.”

1. If ye remember, brethren, yesterday we closed our sermon at this sentence, which without doubt behooved and does behoove to abide in your heart, seeing it was the last ye heard. “My little children, let us not love only in word and in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” Then he goes on: “And herein we know that we are of the truth, and assure our hearts before Him.” “For if our heart think ill of us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.” He had said, “Let us not love only in word and in tongue, but in work and in truth:” we are asked, In what work, or in what truth, is he known that loveth God, or loveth his brother? Above he had said up to what point charity is perfected: what the Lord saith in the Gospel, “Greater love than this hath no man, that one lay down his life for his friends,” this same had the apostle also said: “As He laid down His life for us, we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren.” This is the perfection of charity, and greater can not at all be found. But because it is not perfect in all, and that man ought not to despair in whom it is not perfect, if that be already born which may be perfected: and of course if

born, it must be nourished, and by certain nourishments of its own must be brought unto its proper perfection: therefore, we have asked concerning the commencement of charity, where it begins, and there have straightway found: “But whoso hath this world’s goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of the Father in him?” Here then hath this charity, my brethren, its beginning: to give of one’s superfluities to him that hath need to him that is in any distress; of one’s temporal abundance to deliver his brother from temporal tribulation. Here is the first rise of charity. This, being thus begun, if thou shalt nourish with the word of God and hope of the life to come, thou wilt come at last unto that perfection, that thou shalt be ready to lay down thy life for thy brethren.

2. But, because many such things are done by men who seek other objects, and who love not the brethren; let us come back to the tes timony of conscience. How do we prove that many such things are done by men who love not the brethren? How many in heresies and schisms call themselves martyrs! They seem to themselves to lay down their lives for their brethren. If for the brethren they laid down their lives, they would not separate themselves from the whole brotherhood. Again, how many there are who for the sake of vainglory bestow much, give much, and seek therein but the praise of men and popular glory, which is full of windiness, and possesses no stability! Seeing, then, there are such, where shall be the proof of brotherly charity? Seeing he wished it to be proved, and hath said by way of admonition, “My little children, let us not love only in word and in tongue; but in deed and in truth;” we ask, in what work, in what truth? Can there be a more manifest work than to give to the poor? Many do this of vainglory, not of love. Can there be a greater work than to die for the brethren? This also, many would fain be thought to do, who do it of vainglory to get a name, not from bowels of love. It remains, that that man loves his brother, who before God, where God alone seeth, assures his own heart, and questions his heart whether he does this indeed for love of the brethren; and his witness is that eye which penetrates the heart, where man cannot look. Therefore Paul the Apostle, because he was ready to die for the brethren, and said, “I will myself be spent for your souls,” yet, because God only saw this in his heart, not the mortal men to whom he spake, he saith to them,

“But to me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or at man’s bar.” And the same apostle shows also in a certain place, that these things are oft done of empty vainglory, not upon the solid ground of love: for speaking of the praises of charity he saith, “If I distribute all my goods to the poor, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” Is it possible for a man to do this without charity? It is. For they that have divided unity, are persons that have not charity. Seek there, and ye shall see many giving much to the poor; shall see others prepared to welcome death, insomuch that where there is no persecutor they cast themselves headlong: these doubtless without charity do this. Let us come back then to conscience, of which the apostle saith: “For our glorying is this, the testimony of our conscience.” Let us come back to conscience, of which the same saith, “But let each prove his own work, and then he shall have glorying in himself and not in another.” Therefore, let each one of us “prove his own work,” whether it flow forth from the vein of charity, whether it be from charity as the root that his good works sprout forth as branches. “But let each prove his own work, and then he shall have glorying in himself and not in another,” not when another’s tongue bears witness to him, but when his own conscience bears it.

3. This it is then that he enforces here. “In this we know that we are of the truth, when in deed and in truth” we love, “not only in words and in tongue: and assure our heart before Him.” What meaneth, “before Him?” Where He seeth. Whence the Lord Himself in the Gospel saith: “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward with your Father which is in heaven.” And what meaneth, “Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:” except that the right hand means a pure conscience, the left hand the lust of the world? Many through lust of the world do many wonderful things: the left hand worketh, not the right. The right hand ought to work, and without knowledge of the left hand, so that lust of the world may not even mix itself therewith when by love we work aught that is good. And where do we get to know this? Thou art before God: question thine heart, see what thou hast done, and what therein was thine aim; thy salvation, or the windy praise of men. Look within, for man cannot judge whom he cannot see. If “we assure our heart,” let it be “before Him.” Because “if our heart think ill of us,” i.e. accuse us

within, that we do not the thing with that mind it ought to be done withal, "greater is God than our heart, and knoweth all things." Thou hidest thine heart from man: hide it from God if thou canst! How shalt thou hide it from Him, to whom it is said by a sinner, fearing and confessing, "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? and from Thy face whither shall I flee?" He sought a way to flee, to escape the judgment of God, and found none. For where is God not? "If I shall ascend," saith he, "into heaven, Thou art there: if I shall descend into hell, Thou art there." Whither wilt thou go? whither wilt thou flee? Wilt thou hear counsel? If thou wouldest flee from Him, flee to Him. Flee to Him by confessing, not from Him by hiding: hide thou canst not, but confess thou canst. Say unto Him, "Thou art my place to flee unto;" and let love be nourished in thee, which alone leadeth unto life. Let thy conscience bear thee witness that thy love is of God. If it be of God, do not wish to display it before men; because neither men's praises lift thee unto heaven, nor their censures put thee down from thence. Let Him see, who crowneth thee: be He thy witness, by whom as judge thou art crowned. "Greater is God than our heart, and knoweth all things."

4. "Beloved, if our heart think not ill of us, we have confidence towards God:"—What meaneth, "If our heart think not ill"? If it make true answer to us, that we love and that there is genuine love in us: not feigned but sincere; seeking a brother's salvation, expecting no emolument from a brother, but only his salvation—"we have confidence toward God: and whatsoever we ask, we shall receive of Him, because we keep His commandments."—Therefore, not in the sight of men, but where God Himself seeth, in the heart—"we have confidence," then, "towards God: and whatsoever we ask, we shall receive of Him:" howbeit, because we keep His commandments. What are "His commandments"? Must we be always repeating? "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." It is charity itself that he speaks of, it is this that he enforces. Whoso then shall have brotherly charity, and have it before God, where God seeth, and his heart being interrogated under righteous examination make him none other answer than that the genuine root of charity is there for good fruits to come from; that man hath confidence with God, and whatsoever he shall ask, he shall receive of Him, because he keepeth His commandments.

5. Here a question meets us: for it is not this or that man, or thou or I that come in question,—for if I have asked any thing of God and receive it not, any person may easily say of me, “He hath not charity:” and of any man soever of this present time, this may easily be said; and let any think what he will, a man of man:—not we, but those come more in question, those men of whom it is on all hands known that they were saints when they wrote, and that they are now with God. Where is the man that hath charity, if Paul had it not, who said, “Our mouth is open unto you, O ye Corinthians, our heart is enlarged; ye are not straitened in us:” who said, “I will myself be spent for your souls:” and so great grace was in him, that it was manifested that he had charity. And yet we find that he asked and did not receive. What say we, brethren? It is a question: look attentively to God: it is a great question, this also. Just as, where it was said of sin, “He that is born of God sinneth not:” we found this sin to be the violating of charity, and that this was the thing strictly intended in that place: so too we ask now what it is that he would say. For if thou look but to the words, it seems plain: if thou take the examples into the account, it is obscure. Than the words here nothing can be plainer. “And whatsoever we ask, we shall receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” “Whatsoever we ask,” saith he, “we shall receive of Him.” He hath put us sorely to straits. In the other place also he would put us to straits, if he meant all sin: but then we found room to expound it in this, that he meant it of a certain sin, not of all sin; howbeit of a sin which “whosoever is born of God committeth not:” and we found that this same sin is none other than the violation of charity. We have also a manifest example from the Gospel, when the Lord saith, “If I had not come, they had not had sin.” How? Were the Jews innocent when He came to them, because He so speaks? Then if He had not come, would they have had no sin? Then did the Physician’s presence make one sick, not take away the fever? What madman even would say this? He came not but to cure and heal the sick. Therefore when He said, “If I had not come, they had not had sin,” what would He have to be understood, but a certain sin in particular? For there was a sin which the Jews would not have had. What sin? That they believed not on Him, that when he had come they despised Him. As then He there said “sin,” and it does not follow that we are to understand all sin, but a certain sin: so here also not all sin, lest it be contrary to that place

where he saith, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us:” but a certain sin in particular, that is, the violation of charity. But in this place he hath bound us more tightly: “If we shall ask,” he hath said, “if our heart accuse us not, and tell us in answer, in the sight of God, that true love is in us;” “Whatsoever we ask, we shall receive of Him.”

6. Well now: I have already told you, my, beloved brethren, let no man turn toward us. For what are we? or what are ye? What, but the Church of God which is known to all? And, if it please Him, in that Church are we; and those of us who by love abide in it, there let us persevere, if we would show the love we have. But then the apostle Paul, what evil are we to think of him? He not love the brethren! He not have within himself the testimony of his conscience in the sight of God! Paul not have within him that root of charity whence all good fruits proceeded! What madman would say this? Well then: where find we that the apostle asked and did not receive? He saith himself: “Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me. For which thing I besought the Lord thrice, that He would take it from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for strength is made perfect in weakness.” Lo, he was not heard in his prayer that the “angel of Satan” should be taken from him. But wherefore? Because it was not good for him. He was heard, then, for salvation, when he was not heard according to his wish. Know, my beloved, a great mystery: which we urge upon your consideration on purpose that it may not slip from you in your temptations. The saints are in all things heard unto salvation: they are always heard in that which respects their eternal salvation; it is this that they desire: because in regard of this, their prayers are always heard.

7. But let us distinguish God’s different ways of hearing prayer. For we find some not heard for their wish, heard for salvation: and again some we find heard for their wish, not heard for salvation. Mark this difference, hold fast this example of a man not heard for his wish but heard for salvation. Hear the apostle Paul; for what is the hearing of prayer unto salvation, God Himself showed him: “Sufficient for thee,” saith He, “is my grace; for strength is perfected in weakness.” Thou hast besought, hast cried, hast thrice cried: the very cry thou didst raise once for all I heard, I turned not

away mine ears from thee; I know what I should do: thou wouldest have it taken away, the healing thing by which thou art burned; I know the infirmity by which thou art burdened. Well then: here is a man who was heard for salvation, while as to his will he was not heard. Where find we persons heard for their will, not heard for salvation? Do we find, think we, some wicked, some impious man, heard of God for his will, not heard for salvation? If I put to you the instance of some man, perchance thou wilt say to me, “It is thou that callest him wicked, for he was righteous; had he not been righteous, his prayer would not have been heard by God.” The instance I am about to allege is of one, of whose iniquity and impiety none can doubt. The devil himself: he asked for Job, and received. Have ye not here also heard concerning the devil, that “he that committeth sin is of the devil”? Not that the devil created, but that the sinner imitates. Is it not said of him, “He stood not in the truth”? Is not even he “that old serpent,” who, through the woman pledged the first man in the drink of poison? Who even in the case of Job, kept for him his wife, that by her the husband might be, not comforted, but tempted? The devil asked for a holy man, to tempt him; and he received: the apostle asked that the thorn in the flesh might be taken from him, and he received not. But the apostle was more heard than the devil. For the apostle was heard for salvation, though not for his wish: the devil was heard for his wish, but for damnation. For that Job was yielded up to him to be tempted, was in order that by his standing the proof the devil should be tormented. But this, my brethren, we find not only in the Old Testament books, but also in the Gospel. The demons besought the Lord, when He expelled them from the man, that they might be permitted to go into the swine. Should the Lord not have power to tell them not to approach even those creatures? For, had it not been His will to permit this, they were not about to rebel against the King of heaven and earth. But with a view to a certain mystery, with a certain ulterior meaning, He let the demons go into the swine: to show that the devil hath dominion in them that lead the life of swine. Demons then were heard in their request; was the apostle not heard? Or rather (what is truer) shall we say, The apostle was heard, the demons not heard? Their will was effected; his weal was perfected.

8. Agreeably with this, we ought to understand that God, though He give not to our will, doth give for our salvation. For sup pose the thing thou have

asked be to thine hurt, and the Physician knows that it is to thine hurt; what then? It is not to be said that the physician does not give ear to thee, when, perhaps, thou askest for cold water, and if it is good for thee, he gives it immediately, if not good, he gives it not. Had he no ears for thy request, or rather, did he give ear for thy weal, even when he gainsaid thy will? Then let there be in you charity, my brethren; let it be in you, and then set your minds at rest: even when the thing ye ask for is not given you, your prayer is granted, only, ye know it not. Many have been given into their own hands, to their own hurt: of whom the apostle saith, "God gave them up to their own hearts' lusts." Some man hath asked for a great sum of money; he hath received, to his hurt. When he had it not, he had little to fear; no sooner did he come to have it, than he became a prey to the more powerful. Was not that man's request granted to his own hurt, who would needs have that for which he should be sought after by the robber, whereas, being poor, none sought after him? Learn to beseech God that ye may commit it to the Physician to do what He knows best. Do thou confess the disease, let Him apply the means of healing. Do thou only hold fast charity. For He will needs cut, will needs burn; what if thou criest out, and art not spared for thy crying under the cutting, under the burning and the tribulation, yet He knows how far the rottenness reaches. Thou wouldest have Him even now take off His hands, and He considers only the deepness of the sore; He knows how far to go. He does not attend to thee for thy will, but he does attend to thee for thy healing. Be ye sure, then, my brethren, that what the apostle saith is true: "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered: for He maketh intercession for the saints." How is it said, "The Spirit itself intercedeth for the saints," but as meaning the charity which is wrought in thee by the Spirit? For therefore saith the same apostle: "The charity of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us." It is charity that groans, it is charity that prays: against it He who gave it cannot shut His ears. Set your minds at rest: let charity ask, and the ears of God are there. Not that which thou wishest is done, but that is done which is advantageous. Therefore, "whatever we ask," saith he, "we shall receive of Him," I have already said, If thou understand it to mean, "for salvation," there is no question: if not for salvation, there is a question, and a great one, a question that makes thee an accuser of the apostle Paul.

“Whatever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do these things that are pleasing in His sight:” within, where He seeth.

9. And what are those commandments? “This,” saith he, “is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another.” Ye see that this is the commandment: ye see that whoso doeth aught against this commandment, doeth the sin from which “every one that is born of God” is free. “As He gave us commandment:” that we love one another. “And he that keepeth His commandment”—ye see that none other thing is bidden us than that we love one another—”And he that keepeth His commandment shall abide in Him, and He in him.” “And in this we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us. Is it not manifest that this is what the Holy Ghost works in man, that there should be in him love and charity? Is it not manifest, as the Apostle Paul saith, that “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us”? For [our apostle] was speaking of charity, and was saying that we ought in the sight of God to interrogate our own heart. “But if our heart think not ill of us:” i.e. if it confess that from the love of our brother is done in us whatever is done in any good work. And then besides, in speaking of the commandment, he says this: “This is His commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment.” “And he that doeth His commandment abideth in Him, and He in him. In this we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.” If in truth thou find that thou hast charity, thou hast the Spirit of God in order to understand: for a very necessary thing it is.

10. In the earliest times, “the Holy Ghost fell upon them that believed: and they spake with tongues,” which they had not learned, “as the Spirit gave them utterance.” These were signs adapted to the time. For there behooved to be that betokening of the Holy Spirit in all tongues, to shew that the Gospel of God was to run through all tongues over the whole earth. That thing was done for a betokening, and it passed away. In the laying on of hands now, that persons may receive the Holy Ghost, do we look that they should speak with tongues? Or when we laid the hand on these infants, did

each one of you look to see whether they would speak with tongues, and, when he saw that they did not speak with tongues, was any of you so wrong-minded as to say, These have not received the Holy Ghost; for, had they received, they would speak with tongues as was the case in those times? If then the witness of the presence of the Holy Ghost be not now given through these miracles, by what is it given, by what does one get to know that he has received the Holy Ghost? Let him question his own heart. If he love his brother the Spirit of God dwelleth in him. Let him see, let him prove himself before the eyes of God, let him see whether there be in him the love of peace and unity, the love of the Church that is spread over the whole earth. Let him not rest only in his loving the brother whom he has before his eyes, for we have many brethren whom we do not see, and in the unity of the Spirit we are joined to them. What marvel that they are not with us? We are in one body, we have one Head, in heaven. Brethren, our two eyes do not see each other; as one may say, they do not know each other. But in the charity of the bodily frame do they not know each other? For, to shew you that in the charity which knits them together they do know each other; when both eyes are open, the right may not rest on some object, on which the left shall not rest likewise. Direct the glance of the right eye without the other, if thou canst. Together they meet in one object, together they are directed to one object: their aim is one, their places diverse. If then all who with thee love God have one aim with thee, heed not that in the body thou are separated in place; the eyesight of the heart ye have alike fixed on the light of truth. Then if thou wouldest know that thou hast received the Spirit, question thine heart: lest haply thou have the sacrament, and have not the virtue of the sacrament. Question thine heart. If love of thy brethren be there, set thy mind at rest. There cannot be love without the Spirit of God: since Paul cries, “The love of God is shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.”

11. “Beloved, believe not every spirit.” Because he had said, “In this we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.” But how this same Spirit is known, mark this: “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits whether they be from God.” And who is he that proves the spirits? A hard matter has he put to us, my brethren! It is well for us that he should tell us himself how we are to discern them. He is about to tell us:

fear not: but first see; mark: see that hereby is expressed the very thing that vain heretics taunt us withal. Mark, see what he says, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits whether they be from God.” The Holy Spirit is spoken of in the Gospel by the name of water; where the Lord “cried and said, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” But the evangelist has expounded of what He said this: for he goes on to say, “But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him should receive.” Wherefore did not the Lord baptize many? But what saith he? “For the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” Then seeing those had baptism, and had not yet received the Holy Ghost, whom on the day of Pentecost the Lord sent from heaven, the glorifying of the Lord was first waited for, so that the Spirit might be given. Even before He was glorified, and before He sent the Spirit, He yet invited men to prepare themselves for the receiving of the water of which He said, “Whoso thirsteth, let him come and drink;” and, “He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” What meaneth, “Rivers of living water”? What is that water? Let no man ask me; ask the Gospel. “But this,” saith it, “He said of the Spirit, which they should receive that should believe on Him.” Consequently, the water of the sacrament is one thing: another, the water which betokens the Spirit of God. The water of the sacrament is visible: the water of the Spirit invisible. That washes the body, and betokens that which is done in the soul. By this Spirit the soul itself is cleansed and fed. This is the Spirit of God, which heretics and all that cut themselves off from the Church, cannot have. And whosoever do not openly cut themselves off, but by iniquity are cut off, and being within, whirl about as chaff and are not grain; these have not this Spirit. This Spirit is denoted by the Lord under the name of water: and we have heard from this epistle, “Believe not every spirit;” and those words of Solomon bear witness, “From strange water keep thee far.” What meaneth, “water”? Spirit. Does water always signify spirit? Not always: but in some places it signifies the Spirit, in some places it signifies baptism, in some places signifies peoples, in some places signifies counsel: thus thou findest it said in a certain place, “Counsel is a fountain of life to them that possess it.” So then, in divers places of the Scriptures, the term “water” signifies divers things. Now however by the term water ye have heard the Holy Spirit spoken of, not by an interpretation of ours but by witness of the Gospel, where it saith, “But this said He of the Spirit, which they should receive that should believe on Him.” If then by the name of water is signified the Holy Spirit, and this epistle saith to us, “Believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they be of God;” let us understand that of this it is said, “From strange water keep thee far, and from a strange fountain drink thou not.” What meaneth, “From a strange fountain drink thou not”? A strange spirit believe thou not.

12. There remains then the test by which it is to be proved to be the Spirit of God. He has indeed set down a sign, and this, belike, difficult: let us see, however. We are to recur to that charity; it is that which teacheth us, because it is the unction. However, what saith he here? “Prove the spirits, whether they be from God: because many false prophets have gone out into this world.” Now there are all heretics and all schismatics. How then am I to prove the spirit? He goes on: “In this is known the Spirit of God.” Wake up the ears of your heart. We were at a loss; we were saying, Who knows? who discerns? Behold, he is about to tell the sign. “Hereby is known the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the antichrist, of whom ye have heard that he should come; and even now already is he in this world.” Our ears, so to say, are on the alert for discerning of the spirits; and we have been told something, such that thereby we discern not a whit the more. For what saith he? “Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, is of God.” Then is the spirit that is among the heretics, of God, seeing they “confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh”? Aye, here perchance they lift themselves up against us, and say: Ye have not the Spirit from God; but we confess “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh:” but the apostle here hath said that those have not the Spirit of God, who confess not “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh.” Ask the Arians: they confess “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh:” ask the Eunomians; they confess “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh:” ask the Macedonians; they confess “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh:” put the question to the Cataphryges; they confess “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh:” put it to the Novatians; they confess “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh.” Then have all these heresies the Spirit

of God? Are they then no false prophets? Is there then no deception there, no seduction there? Assuredly they are antichrists; for "they went out from us, but were not of us."

13. What are we to do then? By what to discern them? Be very attentive; let us go together in heart, and knock. Charity herself keeps watch; for it is none other than she that shall knock, she also that shall open: anon ye shall understand in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Already ye have heard that it was said above, "Whoso denieth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, the same is an antichrist." There also we asked, Who denies? because neither do we deny, nor do those deny. And we found that some do in their deeds deny; and we brought testimony from the apostle, who saith, "For they confess that they know God, but in their deeds deny Him." Thus then let us now also make the enquiry in the deeds not in the tongue. What is the spirit that is not from God? That "which denieth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." And what is the spirit that is from God? That "which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." Who is he that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh? Now, brethren, to the mark! let us look to the works, not stop at the noise of the tongue. Let us ask why Christ came in the flesh, so we get at the persons who deny that He is come in the flesh. If thou stop at tongues, why, thou shalt hear many a heresy confessing that Christ is come in the flesh: but the truth convicteth those men. Wherefore came Christ in the flesh? Was He not God? Is it not written of Him, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God?" Was it not He that did feed angels, is it not He that doth feed angels? Did He not in such sort come hither, that He departed not thence? Did He not in such sort ascend, that He forsook not us? Wherefore then came He in the flesh? Because it behooved us to have the hope of resurrection shown unto us. God He was, and in flesh He came; for God could not die, flesh could die; He came then in the flesh, that He might die for us. But how died He for us? "Greater charity than this hath no man, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Charity therefore brought Him to the flesh. Whoever therefore has not charity denies that Christ is come in the flesh. Here then do thou now question all heretics. Did Christ come in the flesh? "He did come; this I believe, this I confess." Nay, this thou deniest. "How do I deny? Thou hearest that I say it!" Nay, I convict thee of denying it. Thou

sayest with the voice, deniest with the heart; sayest in words, deniest in deeds. “How,” sayest thou, “do I deny in deeds?” Because the end for which Christ came in the flesh, was, that He might die for us. He died for us, because therein He taught much charity. “Greater charity than this hath no man, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Thou hast not charity, seeing thou for thine own honor dividest unity. Therefore by this understand ye the spirit that is from God. Give the earthen vessels a tap, put them to the proof, whether haply they be cracked and give a dull sound: see whether they ring full and clear, see whether charity be there. Thou takest thyself away from the unity of the whole earth, thou dividest the Church by schisms, thou rendest the Body of Christ. He came in the flesh, to gather in one, thou makest an outcry to scatter abroad. This then is the Spirit of God, which saith that Jesus is come in the flesh, which saith, not in tongue but in deeds, which saith, not by making a noise but by loving. And that spirit is not of God, which denies that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; denies, here also, not in tongue but in life; not in words but in deeds. It is manifest therefore by what we may know the brethren. Many within are in a sort within; but none without except he be indeed without.

14. Nay, and that ye may know that he has referred the matter to deeds, he saith, “And every spirit, qui solvit Christum, which does away with Christ that He came in the flesh, is not of God.” A doing away in deeds is meant. What has he shown thee? “That denieth:” in that he saith, “doeth away” (or, “unmaketh”). He came to gather in one, thou comest to unmake. Thou wouldest pull Christ’s members asunder. How can it be said that thou deniest not that Christ is come in the flesh, who rendest assunder the Church of God which He hath gathered together? Therefore thou goest against Christ; thou art an antichrist. Be thou within, or be thou without, thou art an antichrist: only, when thou art within, thou art hidden; when thou art without, thou art made manifest. Thou unmakest Jesus and deniest that He came in the flesh; thou art not of God. Therefore He saith in the Gospel: “Whoso shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.” What is this breaking? What this teaching? A breaking in the deeds and a teaching as it were in words. “Thou that preachest men should not steal, dost thou steal?” Therefore he that steals breaks or undoes the commandment in his deed,

and as it were teaches so: “he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven,” i.e. in the Church of this present time. Of him it is said, “What they say do ye; but what they do, that do not ye. But he that shall do, and shall teach so, shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” From this, that He has here said, fecerit, “shall do,” while in opposition to this He has there said solverit, meaning non fecerit, “shall not do, and shall teach so”—to break, then, is, not to do—what doth He teach us, but that we should interrogate men’s deeds, not take their words upon trust? The obscurity of the things compels us to speak much at length, chiefly that that which the Lord deigns to reveal may be brought within reach even of the brethren of slower understanding, because all were bought by the blood of Christ. And I am afraid the epistle itself will not be finished during these days as I promised: but as the Lord will, it is better to reserve the remainder, than to overload your hearts with too much food.

HOMILY VII

1 JOHN IV. 4–12

“Now are ye of God, little children, and have overcome him: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in this world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. From this know we the spirit of truth, and [the spirit] of error. Dearly, beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God in us, that God sent His only-begotten Son into this world, that we may live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the Atoner for our sins. Dearly beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time.”

1. So is this world to all the faithful seeking their own country, as was the desert to the people Israel. They wandered indeed as yet, and were seeking their own country: but with God for their guide they could not wander astray. Their way was God’s bidding. For where they went about during forty years, the journey itself is made up of a very few stations, and is

known to all. They were retarded because they were in training, not because they were forsaken. That therefore which God promiseth us is ineffable sweetness and a good, as the Scripture saith, and as ye have often heard by us rehearsed, which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man." But by temporal labors we are exercised, and by temptations of this present life are trained. Howbeit, if ye would not die of thirst in this wilderness, drink charity. It is the fountain which God has been pleased to place here that we faint not in the way: and we shall more abundantly drink thereof, when we are come to our own land. The Gospel has just been read; now to speak of the very words with which the lesson ended, what other thing heard ye but concerning charity? For we have made an agreement with our God in prayer, that if we would that He should forgive us our sins, we also should forgive the sins which may have been committed against us. Now that which forgiveth is none other than charity. Take away charity from the heart; hatred possesseth it, it knows not how to forgive. Let charity be there, and she fearlessly forgiveth, not being straitened. And this whole epistle which we have undertaken to expound to you, see whether it commendeth aught else than this one thing, charity. Nor need we fear lest by much speaking thereof it come to be hateful. For what is there to love, if charity come to be hateful? It is by charity that other things come to be rightly loved; then how must itself be loved! Let not that then which ought never to depart from the heart, depart from the tongue.

2. "Now," saith he, "are ye of God little children, and have overcome him:" whom but Antichrist? For above he had said, "Whosoever unmaketh Jesus Christ and denieth that He is come in the flesh is not of God." Now we expounded, if ye remember, that all those who violate charity deny Jesus Christ to have come in the flesh. For Jesus had no need to come but because of charity: as indeed the charity we are commending is that which the Lord Himself commendeth in the Gospel, "Greater love than this can no man have, that a man lay down his life for his friends." How was it possible for the Son of God to lay down His life for us without putting on flesh in which He might die? Whosoever therefore violates charity, let him say what he will with his tongue, his life denies that Christ is come in the flesh; and this is an antichrist, wherever he may be, whithersoever he have come in. But what saith the apostle to them who are citizens of that country for which we

sigh? “Ye have overcome him.” And whereby have they overcome? “Because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in this world.” Lest they should attribute the victory to their own strength, and by arrogance of pride should be overcome, (for whomsoever the devil makes proud, he overcomes,) wishing them to keep humility, what saith he? “Ye have overcome him.” Every man now, at hearing this saying, “Ye have overcome,” lifts up the head, lifts up the neck, wishes himself to be praised. Do not extol thyself; see who it is that in thee hath overcome. Why hast thou overcome? “Because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.” Be humble, bear thy Lord; be thou the beast for Him to sit on. Good is it for thee that He should rule, and He guide. For if thou have not Him to sit on thee, thou mayest lift up the neck, mayest strike out the heels: but woe to thee without a ruler, for this liberty sendeth thee among the wild beasts to be devoured!

3. “These are of the world.” Who? The antichrists. Ye have already heard who they be. And if ye be not such, ye know them, but whosoever is such, knows not. “These are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.” Who are they that “speak of the world”? Mark who are against charity. Behold, ye have heard the Lord saying, “If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your trespasses. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” It is the sentence of Truth: or if it be not Truth that speaks, gainsay it. If thou art a Christian and believest Christ, He hath said, “I am the truth.” This sentence is true, is firm. Now hear men that “speak of the world.” “And wilt thou not avenge thyself? And wilt thou let him say that he has done this to thee? Nay: let him feel that he has to do with a man.” Every day are such things said, They that say such things, “of the world speak they, and the world heareth them.” None say such things but those that love the world, and by none are such things heard but by those who love the world. And ye have heard that to love the world and neglect charity is to deny that Jesus came in the flesh. Or say if the Lord Himself in the flesh did that? if, being buffeted, He willed to be avenged? if, hanging on the cross, He did not say, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”? But if He threatened not, who had power; why dost thou threaten, why art thou inflated with anger, who art under power of

another? He died because it was His will to die, yet He threatened not; thou knowest not when thou shalt die, and dost thou threaten?

4. “We are of God.” Let us see why; see whether it be for any other thing than charity. “We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and of error:” namely by this, that he that heareth us hath the spirit of truth; he that heareth not us, hath the spirit of error. Let us see what he adviseth, and let us choose rather to hear him advising in the spirit of truth, and not antichrists, not lovers of the world, not the world. If we are born of God, “beloved,” he goes on—see above from what: “We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and of error:” aye, now, he makes us eagerly attentive: to be told that he who knows God, hears; but he who knows not, hears not; and that this is the discerning between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error: well then, let us see what he is about to advise; in what we must hear him—”Beloved, let us love one another.” Why? because a man adviseth? “Because love is of God.” Much hath he commended love, in that he hath said, “Is of God:” but he is going to say more; let us eagerly hear. At present he hath said, “Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God.” Why? “For God is love” [Love is God]. What more could be said, brethren? If nothing were said in praise of love throughout the pages of this epistle, if nothing whatever throughout the other pages of the Scriptures, and this one only thing were all we were told by the voice of the Spirit of God, “For Love is God;” nothing more ought we to require.

5. Now see that to act against love is to act against God. Let no man say, “I sin against man when I do not love my brother, (mark it!) and sin against man is a thing to be taken easily; only let me not sin against God.” How sinnest thou not against God, when thou sinnest against love? “Love is God.” Do “we” say this? If we said, “Love is God,” haply some one of you might be offended and say, What hath he said? What meant he to say, that “Love is God”? God “gave” love, as a gift God bestowed love. “Love is of God: Love IS God.” Look, here have ye, brethren, the Scriptures of God: this epistle is canonical; throughout all nations it is recited, it is held by the

authority of the whole earth, it hath edified the whole earth. Thou art here told by the Spirit of God, “Love is God.” Now if thou dare, go against God, and refuse to love thy brother!

6. In what sense then was it said a while ago, “Love is of God;” and now, “Love IS God?” For God is Father and Son and Holy Ghost: the Son, God of God, the Holy Ghost, God of God; and these three, one God, not three Gods. If the Son be God, and the Holy Ghost God, and that person loveth in whom dwelleth the Holy Ghost: therefore “Love is God;” but “IS God,” because “Of God.” For thou hast both in the epistle; both, “Love is of God,” and, “Love is God.” Of the Father alone the Scripture hath it not to say, that He is “of God:” but when thou hearest that expression, “Of God,” either the Son is meant, or the Holy Ghost. Because while the apostle saith, “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us:” let us understand that He who subsisteth in love is the Holy Ghost. For it is even this Holy Spirit, whom the bad cannot receive, even He is that Fountain of which the Scripture saith, “Let the fountain of thy water be thine own, and let no stranger partake with thee.” For all who love not God, are strangers, are antichrists. And though they come to the churches, they cannot be numbered among the children of God; not to them belongeth that Fountain of life. To have baptism is possible even for a bad man; to have prophecy is possible even for a bad man. We find that king Saul had prophecy: he was persecuting holy David, yet was he filled with the spirit of prophecy, and began to prophesy. To receive the sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord is possible even for a bad man: for of such it is said, “He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself.” To have the name of Christ is possible even for a bad man; i.e. even a bad man can be called a Christian: as they of whom it is said, “They polluted the name of their God.” I say, to have all these sacraments is possible even for a bad man; but to have charity, and to be a bad man, is not possible. This then is the peculiar gift, this the “Fountain” that is singly one’s “own.” To drink of this the Spirit of God exhorteth you, to drink of Himself the Spirit of God exhorteth you.

7. “In this was manifested the love of God in us.” Behold, in order that we may love God, we have exhortation. Could we love Him, unless He first

loved us? If we were slow to love, let us not be slow to love in return. He first loved us; not even so do we love. He loved the unrighteous, but He did away the unrighteousness: He loved the unrighteous, but not unto unrighteousness did He gather them together: He loved the sick, but He visited them to make them whole. “Love,” then, “is God.” “In this was manifested the love of God in us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we may live through Him.” As the Lord Himself saith: “Greater love than this can no man have, that a man lay down his life for his friends:” and there was proved the love of Christ towards us, in that He died for us: how is the love of the Father towards us proved? In that He “sent His only Son” to die for us: so also the apostle Paul saith: “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how hath He not with Him also freely given us all things?” Behold the Father delivered up Christ; Judas delivered Him up; does it not seem as if the thing done were of the same sort? Judas is “traditor,” one that delivered up, [or, a traitor]: is God the Father that? God forbid! sayest thou. I do not say it, but the apostle saith, “He that spared not His own Son, but “tradidit Eum” delivered Him up for us all.” Both the Father delivered Him up, and He delivered up Himself. The same apostle saith: “Who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.” If the Father delivered up the Son; and the Son delivered up Himself, what has Judas done? There was a “traditio” (delivering up) by the Father; there was a “traditio” by the Son; there was a “traditio” by Judas: the thing done is the same, but what is it that distinguishes the Father delivering up the Son, the Son delivering up Himself, and Judas the disciple delivering up his Master? This: that the Father and the Son did it in love, but Judas did this in treacherous betrayal. Ye see that not what the man does is the thing to be considered; but with what mind and will he does it. We find God the Father in the same deed in which we find Judas; the Father we bless, Judas we detest. Why do we bless the Father, and detest Judas? We bless charity, detest iniquity. How great a good was conferred upon mankind by the delivering up of Christ! Had Judas this in his thoughts, that therefore he delivered Him up? God had in His thoughts our salvation by which we were redeemed; Judas had in his thoughts the price for which he sold the Lord. The Son Himself had in His thoughts the price He gave for us, Judas in his the price he received to sell Him. The diverse intention therefore makes the things done diverse. Though the thing be one, yet if we measure it by the diverse intentions, we find the one a thing to be loved, the other to be condemned; the one we find a thing to be glorified, the other to be detested. Such is the force of charity. See that it alone discriminates, it alone distinguishes the doings of men.

8. This we have said in the case where the things done are similar. In the case where they are diverse, we find a man by charity made fierce; and by iniquity made winningly gentle. A father beats a boy, and a boy-stealer caresses. If thou name the two things, blows and caresses, who would not choose the caresses, and decline the blows? If thou mark the persons, it is charity that beats, iniquity that caresses. See what we are insisting upon; that the deeds of men are only discerned by the root of charity. For many things may be done that have a good appearance, and yet proceed not from the root of charity. For thorns also have flowers: some actions truly seem rough, seem savage; howbeit they are done for discipline at the bidding of charity. Once for all, then, a short precept is given thee: Love, and do what thou wilt: whether thou hold thy peace, through love hold thy peace; whether thou cry out, through love cry out; whether thou correct, through love correct; whether thou spare, through love do thou spare: let the root of love be within, of this root can nothing spring but what is good.

9. “In this is love—in this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into this world, that we may live through Him.—In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us:” we did not love Him first: for to this end loved He us, that we may love Him: “And sent His Son to be the Atoner for our sins: “litatorem,” i.e. one that sacrifices. He sacrificed for our sins. Where did He find the sacrifice? Where did He find the victim which he would offer pure? Other He found none; His own self He offered. “Beloved, if God so loved us we ought also to love one another. Peter,” saith He, “lovest thou me?” And he said, “I love.” “Feed my sheep.”

10. “No man hath seen God at any time:” He is a thing invisible; not with the eye but with the heart must He be sought. But just as if we wished to see the sun, we should purge the eye of the body; wishing to see God, let us purge the eye by which God can be seen. Where is this eye? Hear the Gospel: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” But let no

man imagine God to himself according to the lust of his eyes. For so he makes unto himself either a huge form, or a certain incalculable magnitude which, like the light which he sees with the bodily eyes, he makes extend through all directions; field after field of space he gives it all the bigness he can; or, he represents to himself like as it were an old man of venerable form. None of these things do thou imagine. There is something thou mayest imagine, if thou wouldest see God; “God is love.” What sort of face hath love? what form hath it? what stature? what feet? what hands hath it? no man can say. And yet it hath feet, for these carry men to church: it hath hands; for these reach forth to the poor: it hath eyes; for thereby we consider the needy: “Blessed is the man,” it is said, “who considereth the needy and the poor.” It hath ears, of which the Lord saith, “He that hath ears to hear let him hear.” These are not members distinct by place, but with the understanding he that hath charity sees the whole at once. Inhabit, and thou shalt be inhabited; dwell, and thou shalt be dwelt in. For how say you, my brethren? who loves what he does not see? Now why, when charity is praised, do ye lift up your hands, make acclaim, praise? What have I shown you? What I produced, was it a gleam of colors? What I propounded, was it gold and silver? Have I dug out jewels from hid treasures? What of this sort have I shown to your eyes? Is my face changed while I speak? I am in the flesh; I am in the same form in which I came forth to you; ye are in the same form in which ye came hither: charity is praised, and ye shout applause. Certainly ye see nothing. But as it pleases you when ye praise, so let it please you that ye may keep it in your heart. For mark well what I say brethren; I exhort you all, as God enables me, unto a great treasure. If there were shown you a beautiful little vase, embossed, inlaid with gold, curiously wrought, and it charmed your eyes, and drew towards it the eager desire of your heart, and you were pleased with the hand of the artificer, and the weight of the silver, and the splendor of the metal; would not each one of you say, “O, if I had that vase!” And to no purpose ye would say it, for it would not rest with you to have it. Or if one should wish to have it, he might think of stealing it from another’s house. Charity is praised to you; if it please you, have it, possess it: no need that ye should rob any man, no need that ye should think of buying it; it is to be had freely, without cost. Take it, clasp it; there is nothing sweeter. If such it be when it is but spoken of, what must it be when one has it?

11. If any of you perchance wish to keep charity, brethren, above all things do not imagine it to be an abject and sluggish thing; nor that charity is to be preserved by a sort of gentleness, nay not gentleness, but tameness and listlessness. Not so is it preserved. Do not imagine that thou then lovest thy servant when thou dost not beat him, or that thou then lovest thy son when thou givest him not discipline, or that thou then lovest thy neighbor when thou dost not rebuke him: this is not charity, but mere feebleness. Let charity be fervent to correct, to amend: but if there be good manners, let them delight thee; if bad, let them be amended, let them be corrected. Love not in the man his error, but the man: for the man God made, the error the man himself made. Love that which God made, love not that which the man himself made. When thou lovest that, thou takest away this: when thou esteemest that, thou amendest this. But even if thou be severe at any time, let it be because of love, for correction. For this cause was charity betokened by the Dove which descended upon the Lord. That likeness of a dove, the likeness in which came the Holy Ghost, by whom charity should be shed forth into us: wherefore was this? The dove hath no gall: yet with beak and wings she fights for her young; hers is a fierceness without bitterness. And so does also a father; when he chastises his son, for discipline he chastises him. As I said, the kidnapper, in order that he may sell, inveigles the child with bitter endearments; a father, that he may correct, does without gall chastise. Such be ye to all men. See here, brethren, a great lesson, a great rule: each one of you has children, or wishes to have; or if he has altogether determined to have no children after the flesh, at least spiritually he desires to have children:—what father does not correct his son? what son does not his father discipline? And yet he seems to be fierce with him. It is the fierceness of love, the fierceness of charity: a sort of fierceness without gall after the manner of the dove, not of the raven. Whence it came into my mind, my brethren, to tell you, that those violaters of charity are they that have made the schism: as they hate charity itself, so they hate also the dove. But the dove convicts them: it comes forth from heaven, the heavens open, and it abideth on the head of the Lord. Wherefore this? That John may hear, “This is He that baptizeth.” Away, ye robbers; away, ye invaders of the possession of Christ! On your own possessions, where ye will needs be lords, ye have dared to fix the titles of the great Owner. He recognizes His own titles; He vindicates to

Himself His own possession. He does not cancel the titles, but enters in and takes possession. So in one that comes to the Catholic Church, his baptism is not cancelled, that the title of the commander be not cancelled: but what is done in the Catholic Church? The title is acknowledged; the Owner enters in under His own titles, where the robber was entering in under titles not his own.

HOMILY VIII

1 JOHN IV. 12–16

“If we love one another, God abideth in us, and His love will be perfected in us. In this know we that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and are witnesses that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour ofthe world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him.”

1. Love is a sweet word, but sweeter the deed. To be always speaking of it, is not in our power: for we have many things to do, and divers businesses draw us different ways, so that our tongue has not leisure to be always speaking of love: as indeed our tongue could have nothing better to do. But though we may not always be speaking of it, we may always keep it. Just as it is with the Alleluia which we sing at this present time, are we always doing this? Not one hour, I do not say for the whole space of it, do we sing Alleluia, but barely during a few moments of one hour, and then give ourselves to something else. Now Alleluia, as ye already know, means, Praise ye the Lord. He that praises God with his tongue, cannot be always doing this: he that by his life and conduct praises God, can be doing it always. Works of mercy, affections of charity, sanctity of piety, incorruptness of chastity, modesty of sobriety, these things are always to be practiced: whether we are in public, or at home; whether before men, or in our chamber; whether speaking, or holding our peace; whether occupied upon something, or free from occupation: these are always to be kept, because all these virtues which I have named are within. But who is sufficient to name them all? There is as it were the army of an emperor

seated within in thy mind. For as an emperor by his army does what he will, so the Lord Jesus Christ, once beginning to dwell in our inner man, (i.e. in the mind through faith), uses these virtues as His ministers. And by these virtues which cannot be seen with eyes, and yet when they are named are praised—and they would not be praised except they were loved, not loved except they were seen; and if not loved except seen, they are seen with another eye, that is, with the inward beholding of the heart—by these invisible virtues, the members are visibly put in motion: the feet to walk, but whither? whither they are moved by the good will which as a soldier serves the good emperor: the hands to work; but what? that which is bidden by charity which is inspired within by the Holy Ghost. The members then are seen when they are put in motion; He that orders them within is not seen: and who He is that orders them within is known almost alone to Him that orders, and to him who within is ordered.

2. For, brethren, ye heard just now when the Gospel was read, at least if ye had for it the ear not only of the body but also of the heart. What said it? “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them.” Did He mean to say this, that whatever good things we do, we should hide them from the eyes of men, and fear to be seen? If thou fearest spectators thou wilt not have imitators: thou oughtest therefore to be seen. But thou must not do it to the end thou mayest be seen. Not there should be the end of thy joy, not there the goal of thy rejoicing, that thou shouldest account thyself to have gotten the whole fruit of thy good work, when thou art seen and praised. This is nothing. Despise thyself when thou art praised, let Him be praised in thee who worketh by thee. Therefore do not for thine own praise work the good thou doest: but to the praise of Him from whom thou hast the power to do good. From thy self thou hast the ill doing, from God thou hast the well doing. On the other hand, see perverse men, how preposterous they are. What they do well, they will needs ascribe to themselves; if they do ill, they will needs accuse God. Reverse this distorted and preposterous proceeding, which puts the thing, as one may say, head downwards, which makes that undermost which is uppermost, and that upwards which is downwards. Dost thou want to make God undermost and thyself uppermost? Thou goest headlong, not elevatest thyself; for He is always above. What then? thou well, and God ill? nay rather, say this, if

thou wouldest speak more truly, I ill, He well; and what I do well from Him is the well-doing: for from myself whatever I do is ill. This confession strengthens the heart, and makes a firm foundation of love. For if we ought to hide our good works lest they be seen of men, what becomes of that sentence of the Lord in the sermon which He delivered on the mount? Where He said this, there He also said a little before, “Let your good works shine before men.” And He did not stop there, did not there make an end, but added, “And glorify your Father which is in Heaven.” And what saith the apostle? “And I was unknown by face unto the Churches of Judea which were in Christ: but they heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And in me they glorified God.” See how he also, in regard that he became so widely known did not set the good in his own praise, but in the praise of God. And as for him, in his own person, that he was one who laid waste the Church, a persecutor, envious, malignant, it is himself that confesses this, not we that reproach him therewith. Paul loves to have his sins spoken of by us, that He may be glorified who healed such a disease. For it was the hand of the Physician that cut and healed the greatness of the sore. That voice from heaven prostrated the persecutor, and raised up the preacher; killed Saul, and quickened Paul. For Saul was the persecutor of a holy man; thence had this man his name, when he persecuted the Christians: afterward of Saul he became Paul. What does the name Paulus mean? Little. Therefore when he was Saul, he was proud, lifted up; when he was Paul, he was lowly, little. Thus we say, I will see thee “paulo post,” i.e. after a little while. Hear that he was made little: “For I am the least of the apostles; and, To me the least of all saints,” he saith in another place. So was he among the apostles as the hem of the garment: but the Church of the Gentiles touched it, as did the woman which had the flux, and was made whole.

3. Then, brethren, this I would say, this I do say, this if I might I would not leave unsaid: Let there be in you now these works, now those, according to the time, according to the hours, according to the days. Are you always to be speaking? always to keep silence? always to be refreshing the body? always to be fasting? always to be giving bread to the needy? always to be clothing the naked? always to be visiting the sick? always to be bringing into agreement them that disagree? always to be burying the dead? No: but

now this, now that. These things are taken in hand, and they stop: but that which as emperor commands all the forces within neither hath beginning nor ought to stop. Let charity within have no intermission: let the offices of charity be exhibited according to the time. Let "brotherly love" then, as it is written, let "brotherly love continue."

4. But perchance it will have struck some of you all along, while we have been expounding to you this epistle of blessed John, why it is only "brotherly" love that he so emphatically commends. "He that loveth his brother," saith he: and, "a commandment is given us that we love one another." Again and again it is of brotherly love that he speaks: but the love of God, i.e. the love with which we ought to love God, he has not so constantly named; howbeit, he has not altogether left it unspoken. But concerning love of an enemy, almost throughout the epistle, he has said nothing. Although he vehemently preaches up and commends charity to us, he does not tell us to love our enemies, but tells us to love our brethren. But just now, when the Gospel was read, we heard, "For if ye love them that love you, what reward shall ye have? Do not even the publicans this?" How is it then that John the apostle, as the thing of great concern to us in order to a certain perfection, commends brotherly love; whereas the Lord saith it is not enough that we love our brethren, but that we ought to extend that love so that we may reach even to enemies? He that reaches even unto enemies does not overleap the brethren. It must needs, like fire, first seize upon what is nearest, and so extend to what is further off. A brother is nearer to thee than any chance person. Again, that person has more hold upon thee whom thou knowest not, who yet is not against thee, than an enemy who is also against thee. Extend thy love to them that are nearest, yet do not call this an extending: for it is almost loving thyself, to love them that are close to thee. Extend it to the unknown, who have done thee no ill. Pass even them: reach on to love thine enemies. This at least the Lord commands. Why has the apostle here said nothing about loving an enemy.

5. All love, whether that which is called carnal, which is wont to be called not "dilectio" but "amor:" (for the word "dilectio" is wont to be used of better objects, and to be understood of better objects:) yet all love, dear brethren, hath in it a wishing well to those who are loved. For we ought not

so to love, nor are we able so to love, (whether “diligere” or “amare:” for this latter word the Lord used when He said, “Petra, amas me?” “Peter, lovest thou me?”) we ought not so to love men, as we hear gluttons say, I love thrushes. Thou askest why he loves them? That he may kill, that he may consume. He says he loves, and to this end loves he them, that they may cease to be; to this end loves he them, that he may make away with them. And whatever we love in the way of food, to this end love we it, that it may be consumed and we recruited. Are men to be so loved as to be consumed? But there is a certain friendliness of well wishing, by which we desire at some time or other to do good to those whom we love. How if there be no good that we can do? The benevolence, the wishing well, of itself sufficeth him that loves. For we ought not to wish men to be wretched, that we may be enabled to practise works of mercy. Thou givest bread to the hungry: but better it were that none hungered, and thou hadst none to give to. Thou clothest the naked: oh that all were clothed, and this need existed not! Thou buriest the dead: oh that it were come at last, that life where none shall die! Thou reconcilest the quarrelling: oh that it were here at last, that eternal peace of Jerusalem, where none shall disagree! For all these are offices done to necessities. Take away the wretched; there will be an end to works of mercy. The works of mercy will be at an end: shall the ardor of charity be quenched? With a truer touch of love thou lovest the happy man, to whom there is no good office thou canst do; purer will that love be, and far more unalloyed. For if thou have done a kindness to the wretched, perchance thou desirest to lift up thyself over against him, and wishest him to be subject to thee, who hast done the kindness to him. He was in need, thou didst bestow; thou seemest to thyself greater because thou didst bestow, than he upon whom it was bestowed. Wish him thine equal, that ye both may be under the One Lord, on whom nothing can be bestowed.

6. For in this the proud soul has passed bounds, and, in a manner, become avaricious. For, “The root of all evils is avarice;” and again it is said, “The beginning of all sin is pride.” And we ask, it may be, how these two sentences agree: “The root of all evils is avarice;” and, “The beginning of all sin is pride.” If pride is the beginning of all sin, then is pride the root of all evils. Now certainly, “the root of all evils is avarice.” We find that in pride there is also avarice, (or grasping;) for man has passed bounds: and

what is it to be avaricious to go beyond that which sufficeth. Adam fell by pride: “the beginning of all sin is pride,” saith it: did he fall by grasping? What more grasping, than he whom God could not suffice? In fact, my brethren, we read how man was made after the image and likeness of God: and what said God of him? “And let him have power over the fishes of the sea, and over the fowl of the heaven, and over all cattle which move upon the earth.” Said He, Have power over men? “Have power,” saith He: He hath given him natural power: “have power” over what? “over the fishes of the sea, the fowl of the heaven, and all moving things which move upon the earth.” Why is this power over these things a natural power? Because man hath the power from this; that he was made after the image of God. And in what was he made after God’s image? In the intellect, in the mind, in the inner man; in that he understands truth, distinguishes between right and wrong, knows by whom he was made, is able to understand his Creator, to praise his Creator: he hath this intelligence, who hath prudence. Therefore when many by evil lusts wore out in themselves the image of God, and by perversity of their manners extinguished the very flame, so to say, of intelligence, the Scripture cried aloud to them, “Become not ye as the horse and mule which have no understanding.” That is to say, I have set thee above the horse and mule; thee, I made after mine image, I have given thee power over these. Why? Because they have not the rational mind: but thou by the rational mind art capable of truth, understandest what is above thee: be subject to Him that is above thee, and beneath thee shall those things be over which thou was set. But because by sin man deserted Him whom he ought to be under, he is made subject to the things which he ought to be above.

7. Mark what I say: God, man, beasts: to wit, above thee, God; beneath thee, the beasts. Acknowledge Him that is above thee, that those that are beneath thee may acknowledge thee. Thus, because Daniel acknowledged God above him, the lions acknowledged him above them. But if thou acknowledge not Him that is above thee, thou despisest thy superior, thou becomest subject to thine inferior. Accordingly, how was the pride of the Egyptians quelled? By the means of frogs and flies. God might have sent lions: but a great man may be scared by a lion. The prouder they were, the more by the means of things contemptible and feeble was their wicked neck

broken. But Daniel, lions acknowledge, because he was subject to God. What the martyrs who were cast to the wild beasts to fight with them, and were torn by the teeth of savage creatures, were they not under God? or were those three men servants of God, and the Maccabees not servants of God? The fire acknowledged as God's servants the three men, whom it burned not, neither hurt their garments; and did it not acknowledge the Maccabees? It acknowledged the Maccabees; it did, my brethren, acknowledge them also. But there was need of a scourge, by the Lord's permission: He hath said in Scripture, "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." For think ye, my brethren, the iron would have pierced into the vitals of the Lord unless He had permitted it, or that He would have hung fastened to the tree, unless it had been His will? Did not His own creature acknowledge Him? Or did He set an ensample of patience to His faithful ones? Ye see then, God delivered some visibly, some He delivered not visibly: yet all He spiritually delivered, spiritually deserted none. Visibly He seemed to have deserted some, some He seemed to have rescued. Therefore rescued He some, that thou mayest not think that He had not power to rescue. He has given proof that He has the power, to the end that where he doth it not, thou mayest understand a more secret will, not surmise difficulty of doing. But what, brethren? When we shall have come out of all these snares of mortality, when the times of temptation shall have passed away, when the river of this world shall have fleeted by, and we shall have received again that "first robe," that immortality which by sinning we have lost, "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption," that is, this flesh shall have put on incorruption, "and this mortal shall have put on immortality;" the now perfected sons of God, in whom is no more need to be tempted, neither to be scourged, shall all creatures acknowledge: subjected to us shall all things be, if we here be subjected to God.

8. So then ought the Christian to be, that he glory not over other "men." For God hath given it thee to be over the beasts, i.e. to be better than the beasts. This hast thou by nature; thou shalt always be better than a beast. If thou wish to be better than another man, thou wilt begrudge him when thou shalt see him to be thine equal. Thou oughtest to wish all men to be thine equals; and if by wisdom thou surpass any, thou oughtest to wish that he also may be wise. As long as he is slow, he learns from thee; as long as he is

untaught, he hath need of thee; and thou art seen to be the teacher, he the learner; therefore thou seemest to be the superior, because thou art the teacher; he the inferior, because the learner. Except thou wish him thine equal, thou wishest to have him always a learner. But if thou wish to have him always a learner, thou wilt be an envious teacher. If an envious teacher, how wilt thou be a teacher? I pray thee, do not teach him thine enviousness. Hear the apostle speaking of the bowels of charity: “I would that all were even as I.” In what sense did he wish all to be his equals? In this was he superior to all, that by charity he wished all to be his equals. I say then, man has past bounds; he would needs be greedy of more than his due, would be above men, he that was made above the beasts: and this is pride.

9. And see what great works pride does. Lay it up in your hearts, how much alike, how much as it were upon a par, are the works it doeth, and the works of charity. Charity feeds the hungry, and so does pride: charity, that God may be praised; pride, that itself may be praised. Charity clothes the naked, so does pride: charity fasts, so does pride: charity buries the dead, so does pride. All good works which charity wishes to do, and does; pride, on the other hand, drives at the same, and, so to say, keeps her horses up to the mark. But charity is between her and it, and leaves not place for ill-driven pride; not ill-driving, but ill-driven. Woe to the man whose charioteer is pride, for he must needs go headlong! But that, in the good that is done, it may not be pride that sets us on, who knows? who sees it? where is it? the works we see: mercy feeds, pride also feeds; mercy takes in the stranger, pride also takes in the stranger; mercy intercedes for the poor, pride also intercedes. How is this? In the works we see no difference. I dare to say somewhat, but not I; Paul hath said it: charity dies, that is, a man having charity confesses the name of Christ, suffers martyrdom: pride also confesses, suffers also martyrdom. The one hath charity, the other hath not charity. But let him that hath not charity hear from the apostle: “If I distribute all my goods to the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” So then the divine Scripture calls us off from the display of the face outwardly to that which is within; from this surface which is vaunted before men, it calls us off to that which is within. Return to thy own conscience, question it. Do not consider what blossoms outwardly, but what root there is in the ground. Is lust rooted

there? A show there may be of good deeds, truly good works there cannot be. Is charity rooted there? Have no fear: nothing evil can come of that. The proud caresses, love is severe. The one clothes, the other smites. For the one clothes in order to please men, the other smites in order to correct by discipline. More accepted is the blow of charity than the alms of pride. Come then within, brethren; and in all things, whatsoever ye do, look unto God your witness. See, if He seeth, with what mind ye do it. If your heart accuse you not that ye do it for the sake of display, it is well: fear ye not. But when ye do good, fear not lest another see you. Fear thou lest thou do it to the end that thou mayest be praised: let the other see it, that God may be praised. For if thou hidest it from the eyes of man, thou hidest it from the imitation of man, thou withdrawest from God His praise. Two are there to whom thou doest the alms: two hunger; one for bread, the other for righteousness. Between these two famishing souls:—as it is written, “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled:”—between these two famishing persons thou the doer of the good work art set; if charity does the work by occasion of the one, therein it hath pity on both, it would succor both. For the one craves what he may eat, the other craves what he may imitate. Thou feedest the one, give thyself as a pattern to the other; so hast thou given alms to both: the one thou hast caused to thank thee for killing his hunger, the other thou hast made to imitate thee by setting him an example.

10. Shew mercy then, as men of merciful hearts; because in loving enemies also, ye love brethren. Think not that John has given no precept concerning love of our enemy, because he has not ceased to speak of brotherly love. Ye love brethren. “How,” sayest thou, “do we love brethren?” I ask wherefore thou lovest an enemy. Wherefore dost thou love him? That he may be whole in this life? what if it be not expedient for him? That he may be rich? what if by his very riches he shall be blinded? That he may marry a wife? what if he shall have a bitter life of it? That he may have children? what if they shall be bad? Uncertain therefore are these things which thou seemest to wish for thine enemy, in that thou lovest him; they are uncertain. Wish for him that he may have with thee eternal life; wish for him that he may be thy brother: when thou lovest him, thou lovest a brother. For thou lovest in him not what he is, but what thou wishest that he may be. I once said to

you, my beloved, if I mistake not: There is a log of timber lying in sight; a good workman has seen the log, not yet planed, just as it was hewn from the forest, he has taken a liking to it, he would make something out of it. For indeed he did not love it to this end that it should always remain thus. In his art he has seen what it shall be, not in his liking what it is; and his liking is for the thing he will make of it, not for the thing it is. So God loved us sinners. We say that God loved sinners: for He saith, “They that are whole need not the Physician, but they that are sick.” Did He love us sinners to the end we should still remain sinners? As timber from the wood our Carpenter saw us, and had in His thoughts the building He would make thereof, not the unwrought timber that it was. So too thou seest thine enemy striving against thee, raging, biting with words, exasperating with contumelies, harassing with hatred: thou hast regard to this in him, that he is a man. Thou seest all these things that are against thee, that they were done by man; and thou seest in him that he was made by God. Now that he was made man, was God’s doing: but that he hates thee, is his doing; that he has ill-will at thee, is his doing. And what sayest thou in thy mind? Lord, be merciful to him, forgive him his sins, strike terror into him, change him. Thou lovest not in him what he is, but what thou wishest him to be. Consequently, when thou lovest an enemy, thou lovest a brother. Wherefore, perfect love is the loving an enemy: which perfect love is in brotherly love. And let no man say that John the apostle has admonished us somewhat less, and the Lord Christ somewhat more. John has admonished us to love the brethren; Christ has admonished us to love even enemies. Mark to what end Christ hath bidden thee to love thine enemies. That they may remain always enemies? If He bade it for this end, that they should remain enemies, thou hatest, not lovest. Mark how He Himself loved, i.e. because He would not that they should be still the persecutors they were, He said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Whom He willed to be forgiven, them He willed to be changed: whom He willed to be changed, of enemies He deigned to make brethren, and did in truth make them so. He was killed, was buried, rose again, ascended into heaven: sent the Holy Ghost to His disciples: they began with boldness to preach His name, they did miracles in the name of Him that was crucified and slain: those slayers of the Lord saw them; and they who in rage had shed His blood, by believing drank it.

11. These things have I said, brethren, and somewhat at length: yet because charity was to be more earnestly commended to you, beloved, in this way was it to be commended. For if there be no charity in you, we have said nothing. But if it be in you, we have as it were cast oil upon the flames. And in whom it was not, perchance by words it hath been kindled. In one; that which was there hath grown; in another, that hath begun to be, which was not. To this end therefore have we said these things, that ye be not slow to love your enemies. Does any man rage against thee? he rages, pray thou; he hates, pity thou. It is the fever of his soul that hates thee: he will be whole, and will thank thee. How do physicians love them that are sick? Is it the sick that they love? If they love them as sick, they wish them to be always sick. To this end love they the sick; not that they should still be sick, but that from being sick they should be made whole. And how much have they very often to suffer from the frenzied! What contumelious language! Very often they are even struck by them. He attacks the fever, forgives the man. And what shall I say, brethren? does he love his enemy? Nay, he hates his enemy, the disease; for it is this that he hates, and loves the man by whom he is struck: he hates the fever. For by whom or by what is he struck? by the disease, by the sickness, by the fever. He takes away that which strives against him, that there may remain that from which he shall have thanks. So do thou. If thine enemy hate thee, and unjustly hate thee; know that the lust of the world reigns in him, therefore he hates thee. If thou also hate him, thou on the other hand renderest evil for evil. What does it, to render evil for evil? I wept for one sick man who hated thee; now bewail I thee, if thou also hatest. But he attacks thy property; he takes from thee I know not what things which thou hast on earth: therefore hatest thou him, because he puts thee to straits on earth. Be not thou straitened, remove thee to heaven above; there shalt thou have thine heart where there is wide room, so that thou mayest not be straitened in the hope of life eternal. Consider what the things are that he takes from thee: not even them would he take from thee, but by permission of Him who “scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” He, this same enemy of thine, is in a manner the instrument in the hands of God, by which thou mayest be healed. If God knows it to be good for thee that he should despoil thee, He permits him; if He knows it to be good for thee that thou shouldest receive blows, He permits him to smite thee: by the means of Him He careth for thee: wish thou that he may be made whole.

12. “No man hath seen God at any time.” See, beloved: “If we love one another, God will dwell in us, and His love will be perfected in us.” Begin to love; thou shalt be perfected. Hast thou begun to love? God has begun to dwell in thee: love Him that has begun to dwell in thee, that by more perfect indwelling He may make thee perfect. “In this we know that we dwell in Him and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.” It is well: thanks be to God! We come to know that He dwelleth in us. And whence come we to know this very thing, to wit, that we do know that He dwelleth in us? Because John himself has said this: “Because He hath given us of His Spirit.” Whence know we that He hath given us of His Spirit? This very thing, that He hath given thee of His Spirit, whence comest thou to know it? Ask thine own bowels: if they are full of charity, thou hast the Spirit of God. Whence know we that by this thou knowest that the Spirit of God dwelleth in thee? “Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.”

13. “And we have seen, and are witnesses, that God hath sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world.” Set your minds at rest, ye that are sick: such a Physician is come, and do ye despair? Great were the diseases, incurable were the wounds, desperate was the sickness. Dost thou note the greatness of thine ill, and not note the omnipotence of the Physician? Thou art desperate, but He is omnipotent; Whose witnesses are these that first were healed, and that announce the Physician: yet even they are made whole in hope rather than in the reality. For so saith the apostle: “For by hope we are saved.” We have begun therefore to be made whole in faith: but our wholeness shall be perfected “when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality.” This is hope, not the reality. But he that rejoiceth in hope shall hold the reality also: whereas he that hath not the hope, shall not be able to attain unto the reality.

14. “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God.” Now we may say it in not many words; “Whosoever shall confess;” not in word but in deed, not with tongue but with the life. For many confess in words, but in deeds deny: “And we have known and believed the love which God hath in us.” And again, by what hast thou come to know this? “Love is God.” He hath already said it above, behold he

saith it again. Love could not be more exceedingly commended to thee than that it should be called God. Haply thou wast ready to despise a gift of God. And dost thou despise God? “Love is God: and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him.” Each mutually inhabiteth the other; He that holdeth, and he that is holden. Thou dwellest in God, but that thou mayest be holden: God inhabiteth thee, but that He may hold thee, lest thou fall. Lest haply thou imagine that thou becomest an house of God in such sort as thine house supports thy flesh: if the house in which thou art withdraw itself from under thee, thou fallest; but if thou withdraw thyself, God falleth not. When thou forsakest Him, He is none the less; when thou hast returned unto Him, He is none the greater. Thou art healed, on Him thou wilt bestow nothing; thou art made clean, thou art new-made, thou art set right: He is a medicine to the unhealthy, is a rule for the crooked, is light for the bedarkened, is an habitation for the deserted. All therefore is conferred on thee: see thou imagine not that ought is conferred upon God by thy coming unto Him: no, not so much as a slave. Shall God, forsooth, not have servants if thou like not, if all like not? God needs not the servants, but the servants need God: therefore saith the Psalm, “I have said unto the Lord, thou art my God.” He is the true Lord. And what saith it? “For of my goods Thou hast no need.” Thou needest the good thou hast by thy servant. Thy servant needeth the good he hath by thee, that thou mayest feed him; thou also needest the good thou hast by thy servant, that he may help thee. Thou canst not draw water for thyself, canst not cook for thyself, canst not run before thy horse, canst not tend thy beast. Thou seest that thou needest the good thou hast by thy servant, thou needest his attendance. Therefore thou art not a true lord, while thou hast need of an inferior. He is the true Lord, who seeks nothing from us; and woe to us if we seek not Him! He seeks nothing from us: yet He sought us, when we sought not Him. One sheep had strayed; He found it, He brought it back on His shoulders rejoicing. And was the sheep necessary for the Shepherd, and not rather the Shepherd necessary for the sheep?—The more I love to speak of charity, the less willing am I that this epistle should be finished. None is more ardent in the commending of charity. Nothing more sweet is preached to you, nothing more wholesome drunk by you: but only thus if by godly living ye confirm in you the gift of God. Be not ungrateful for His so great grace, who, though He had one Only Son, would not that He should be alone a Son; but, that He might have brethren, adopted unto Him those who should with Him possess life eternal.

HOMILY IX

1 JOHN IV. 17–21

“Herein is love made perfect in us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. Let us love Him, because He first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.”

1. Ye remember, beloved, that of the epistles of John the apostle the last past remains to be handled by us and expounded to you, as the Lord vouchsafes. Of this debt then we are mindful: and ye ought to be mindful of your claim. For indeed this same charity, which in this epistle is chiefly and almost alone commended, at once maketh us most faithful in paying our debts, and you most sweet in exacting your rights. I have said, most sweet in exacting, because where charity is not, he that exacts is bitter: but where charity is, both he that exacts is sweet, and he of whom it is exacted, although he undertakes some labor, yet charity makes the very labor to be almost no labor, and light. Do we not see how, even in dumb and irrational animals, where the love is not spiritual but carnal and natural, with great affection the mother yields herself to her young ones when they will have the milk which is their right: and however impetuously the suckling rushes at the teats, yet that is better for the mother than that it should not suck nor exact that which of love is due? Often we see great calves driving their heads at the cow’s udders with a force that almost lifts up the mother’s body, yet does she not kick them off; nay, if the young one be not there to suck, the lowing of the dam calls for it to come to the teats. If then there be in us that spiritual charity of which the apostle saith, “I became small in the midst of you even as a nurse cherishing her young ones;” we love you the more when ye are exacting. We like not the sluggish, because for the

languid ones we are afraid. We have been obliged, however, to intermit the continuous reading of this epistle, because of certain stated lessons coming between, which must needs be read on their holy days, and the same preached upon. Let us now come back to the order which was interrupted; and what remains, holy brethren, receive ye with all attention. I know not whether charity could be more magnificently commended to us, than that it should be said, “Charity is God.” Brief praise, yet mighty praise: brief in utterance, mighty in meaning! How soon is it said, “Love is God!” This also is short: if thou count it, it is one: if thou weigh it, how great is it! “Love is God, and he that dwelleth,” saith he, “in love, dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him.” Let God be thy house, and be thou an house of God; dwell in God, and let God dwell in thee. God dwelleth in thee, that He may hold thee: thou dwellest in God, that thou mayest not fall; for thus saith the apostle of this same charity, “Charity never falleth.” How should He fall whom God holdeth?

2. “Herein is our love made perfect in us that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world.” He tells how each may prove himself, what progress charity has made in him or rather what progress he has made in charity. For if charity is God, God is capable neither of proficiency nor of deficiency: that charity is said to be making proficiency in thee, means only that thou makest proficiency in it. Ask therefore what proficiency thou hast made in charity, and what thine heart will answer thee, that thou mayest know the measure of thy profiting. For he has promised to show us in what we may know Him, and hath said, “In this is love made perfect in us.” Ask, in what? “That we have boldness in the day of judgment.” Whoso hath boldness in the day of judgment, in that man is charity made perfect. What is it to have boldness in the day of judgment? Not to fear lest the day of judgment should come. There are men who do not believe in a day of judgment; these cannot have boldness in a day which they do not believe will come. Let us pass these: may God awaken them, that they may live; why speak we of the dead? They do not believe that there will be a day of judgment; they neither fear nor desire what they do not believe. Some man has begun to believe in a day of judgment: if he has begun to believe, he has also begun to fear. But because he fears as yet, because he hath not yet boldness in the day of judgment, not

yet is charity in that man made perfect. But for all that, is one to despair? In whom thou seest the beginning, why despairest thou of the end? What beginning do I see? (sayest thou.) That very fear. Hear the Scripture: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Well then, he has begun to fear the day of judgment: by fearing let him correct himself, let him watch against his enemies, i.e. his sins; let him begin to come to life again inwardly, and to mortify his members which are upon the earth, as the apostle saith, “Mortify your members which are upon the earth.” By the members upon earth he means spiritual wickedness: for he goes on to expound it, “Covetousness, uncleanness,” and the rest which he there follows out. Now in proportion as this man who has begun to fear the day of judgment, mortifies his members which are upon the earth, in that proportion the heavenly members rise up and are strengthened. But the heavenly members are all good works. As the heavenly members rise up, he begins to desire that which once he feared. Once he feared lest Christ should come and find in him the impious whom He must condemn; now he longs for Him to come, because He shall find the pious man whom He may crown. Having now begun to desire Christ’s coming, the chaste soul which desires the embrace of the Bridegroom renounces the adulterer, becomes a virgin within by faith, hope, and charity. Now hath the man boldness in the day of judgment: he fights not against himself when he prays, “Thy kingdom come.” For he that fears lest the kingdom of God should come, fears lest his prayer be heard. How can he be said to pray, who fears lest his prayer be heard? But he that prays with boldness of charity, wishes now that He may come. Of this same desire said one in the Psalm, “And thou, Lord, how long? Turn, Lord, and deliver my soul.” He groaned at being so put off. For there are men who with patience submit to die; but there are some perfect who with patience endure to live. What do I mean? When a person still desires this life, that person, when the day of death comes, patiently endures death: he struggles against himself that he may follow the will of God, and in his mind desires that which God chooseth, not what man’s will chooseth: from desire of the present life there comes a reluctance against death, but yet he takes to him patience and fortitude, that he may with an even mind meet death; he dies patiently. But when a man desires, as the apostle saith, “to be dissolved and to be with Christ,” that person, not patiently dies, but patiently lives, delightedly dies. See the apostle patiently living, i.e. how with patience he here, not loves life, but endures it. “To be dissolved,” saith he, “and to be with Christ, is far better: but to continue in the flesh is necessary for your sakes.” Therefore, brethren, do your endeavor, settle it inwardly with yourselves to make this your concern, that ye may desire the day of judgment. No otherwise is charity proved to be perfect, but only when one has begun to desire that day. But that man desires it, who hath boldness in it, whose conscience feels no alarm in perfect and sincere charity.

3. “In this is His love perfected in us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment.” Why shall we have boldness? “Because as He is are we also in this world.” Thou hast heard the ground of thy boldness: “Because as He is,” saith the apostle, “are we also in this world.” Does he not seem to have said something impossible? For is it possible for man to be as God? I have already expounded to you that “as” is not always said of equality, but is said of a certain resemblance. For how sayest thou, As I have ears, so has my image? Is it quite so? and yet thou sayest “so, as.” If then we were made after God’s image, why are we not so as God? Not unto equality, but relatively to our measure. Whence then are we given boldness in the day of judgment? “Because as He is, are we also in this world.” We must refer this to the same charity, and understand what is meant. The Lord in the Gospel saith, “If ye love them that love you, what reward shall ye have? do not the publicans this?” Then what would He have us do? “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you.” If then He bids us love our enemies, whence brings He an example to set before us? From God Himself: for He saith, “That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.” How doth God this? He loveth His enemies, “Who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust.” If this then be the perfection unto which God inviteth us, that we love our enemies as He loved His; this is our boldness in the day of judgment, that “as He is, so are we also in this world:” because, as He loveth His enemies in making His sun to rise upon good and bad, and in sending rain upon the just and unjust, so we, since we cannot bestow upon them sun and rain, bestow upon them our tears when we pray for them.

4. Now therefore concerning this same boldness, let us see what he says. Whence do we understand that charity is perfect? “There is no fear in charity.” Then what say we of him that has begun to fear the day of judgment? If charity in him were perfect, he would not fear. For perfect charity would make perfect righteousness, and he would have nothing to fear: nay rather he would have something to desire; that iniquity may pass away, and God’s kingdom come. So then, “there is no fear in charity.” But in what charity? Not in charity begun: in what then? “But perfect charity,” saith he, “casteth out fear.” Then let fear make the beginning, because “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Fear, so to say, prepares a place for charity. But when once charity has begun to inhabit, the fear which prepared the place for it is cast out. For in proportion as this increases, that decreases: and the more this comes to be within, is the fear cast out. Greater charity, less fear; less charity, greater fear. But if no fear, there is no way for charity to come in. As we see in sewing, the thread is introduced by means of the bristle; the bristle first enters, but except it come out the thread does not come into its place: so fear first occupies the mind, but the fear does not remain there, because it enters only in order to introduce charity. When once there is the sense of security in the mind, what joy have we both in this world and in the world to come! Even in this world, who shall hurt us, being full of charity? See how the apostle exults concerning this very charity: “Who shall separate us from the charity of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” And Peter saith: “And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?—There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment.” The consciousness of sins torments the heart: justification has not yet taken place. There is that in it which itches, which pricks. Accordingly in the Psalm what saith he concerning this same perfection of righteousness? “Thou hast turned for me my mourning into joy: Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; to the end that my glory may sing to thee, and that I be not pricked.” What is this, “That I be not pricked?” That there be not that which shall goad my conscience. Fear doth goad: but fear not thou: charity enters in, and she heals the wound that fear inflicts. The fear of God so wounds as doth the leech’s knife; it takes away the rottenness, and seems to make the wound greater. Behold, when the rottenness was in the body, the wound was

less, but perilous: then comes the knife; the wound smarted less than it smarts now while the leech is cutting it. It smarts more while he is operating upon it than it would if it were not operated upon; it smarts more under the healing operation, but only that it may never smart when the healing is effected. Then let fear occupy thine heart, that it may bring in charity; let the cicatrice succeed to the leech's knife. He is such an Healer, that the cicatrices do not even appear: only do thou put thyself under His hand. For if thou be without fear, thou canst not be justified. It is a sentence pronounced by the Scriptures; "For he that is without fear, cannot be justified." Needs then must fear first enter in, that by it charity may come. Fear is the healing operation: charity, the sound condition. "But he that feareth is not made perfect in love." Why? "Because fear hath torment;" just as the cutting of the surgeon's knife hath torment.

5. But there is another sentence, which seems contrary to this if it have not one that understands. Namely, it is said in a certain place of the Psalms, "The fear of the Lord is chaste, enduring forever." He shows us an eternal fear, but a chaste. But if he there shows us an eternal fear, does this epistle perchance contradict him, when it saith, "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear?" Let us interrogate both utterances of God. One is the Spirit, though the books two, though the mouths two, though the tongues two. For this is said by the mouth of John, that by the mouth of David: but think not that the Spirit is more than one. If one breath fills two pipes [of the double-flute], cannot one Spirit fill two hearts, move two tongues? But if two pipes filled by one breathing sound in unison, can two tongues filled with the Spirit or Breathing of God make a dissonance? There is then an unison there, there is a harmony, only it requires one that can hear. Behold, this Spirit of God hath breathed into and filled two hearts, hath moved two tongues: and we have heard from the one tongue, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear;" we have heard from the other, "The fear of the Lord is chaste, enduring for ever." How is this? The notes seem to jar. Not so: rouse thine ears: mark the melody. It is not without cause that in the one place there is added that word, chaste, in the other it is not added: but because there is one fear which is called chaste, and there is another fear which is not called chaste. Let us mark the difference between these two fears, and so understand the harmony of the

flutes. How are we to understand, or how to distinguish? Mark, my beloved. There are men who fear God, lest they be cast into hell, lest haply they burn with the devil in everlasting fire. This is the fear which introduces charity: but it comes that it may depart. For if thou as yet fearest God because of punishments, not yet dost thou love Him whom thou in such sort fearest. Thou dost not desire the good things, but art afraid of the evil things. Yet because thou art afraid of the evil things, thou correctest thyself and beginnest to desire the good things. When once thou hast begun to desire the good, there shall be in thee the chaste fear. What is the chaste fear? The fear lest thou lose the good things themselves. Mark! It is one thing to fear God lest He cast thee into hell with the devil, and another thing to fear God lest He forsake thee. The fear by which thou fearest lest thou be cast into hell with the devil, is not yet chaste; for it comes not from the love of God, but from the fear of punishment: but when thou fearest God lest His presence forsake thee, thou embracest Him, thou longest to enjoy God Himself.

6. One cannot better explain the difference between these two fears, the one which charity casteth out, the other chaste, which endureth for ever, than by putting the case of two married women, one of whom, you may suppose, is willing to commit adultery, delights in wickedness, only fears lest she be condemned by her husband. She fears her husband: but because she yet loves wickedness, that is the reason why she fears her husband. To this woman, the presence of her husband is not grateful but burdensome; and if it chance she live wickedly, she fears her husband, lest he should come. Such are they that fear the coming of the day of judgment. Put the case that the other loves her husband, that she feels that she owes him chaste embraces, that she stains herself with no uncleanness of adultery; she wishes for the presence of her husband. And how are these two fears distinguished? The one woman fears, the other also fears. Question them: they seem to make one answer: question the one, Dost thou fear thine husband? she answers, I do. Question the other, whether she fears her husband; she answers, I do fear him. The voice is one, the mind diverse. Now then let them be questioned, Why? The one saith, I fear my husband, lest he should come: the other saith, I fear my husband, lest he depart from me. The one saith, I fear to be condemned: the other, I fear to be forsaken.

Let the like have place in the mind of Christians, and thou findest a fear which love casteth out, and another fear, chaste, enduring for ever.

7. Let us speak then first to these who fear God, just in the manner of that woman who delights in wickedness; namely, she fears her husband lest he condemn her; to such let us first speak. O soul, which fearest God lest He condemn thee, just as the woman fears, who delights in wickedness: fears her husband, lest she be condemned by her husband: as thou art displeased at this woman, so be displeased at thyself. If perchance thou hast a wife, wouldest thou have thy wife fear thee thus, that she be not condemned by thee? that delighting in wickedness, she should be repressed only by the weight of the fear of thee, not by the condemnation of her iniquity? Thou wouldest have her chaste, that she may love thee, not that she may fear thee. Show thyself such to God, as thou wouldest have thy wife be to thee. And if thou hast not yet a wife, and wishest to have one, thou wouldest have her such. And yet what are we saying, brethren? That woman, whose fear of her husband is to be condemned by her husband, perhaps does not commit adultery, lest by some means or other it come to her husband's knowledge, and he deprive her of this temporal light of life: now the husband can be deceived and kept in ignorance; for he is but human, as she is who can deceive him. She fears him, from whose eyes she can be hid: and dost thou not fear the face ever upon thee of thine Husband? "The countenance of the Lord is against them that do evil." She catches at her husband's absence, and haply is incited by the delight of adultery; and yet she saith to herself, I will not do it: he indeed is absent, but it is hard to keep it from coming in some way to his knowledge. She restrains herself, lest it come to the knowledge of a mortal man, one who, it is also possible, may never know it, who, it is also possible, may be deceived, so that he shall esteem a bad woman to be good, esteem her to be chaste who is an adulteress: and dost thou not fear the eyes of Him whom no man can deceive? thou not fear the presence of Him who cannot be turned away from thee? Pray God to look upon thee, and to turn His face away from thy sins; "Turn away Thy face from my sins." But whereby dost thou merit that He should turn away His face from thy sins, if thou turn not away thine own face from thy sins? For the same voice saith in the Psalm: "For I acknowledge mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me." Acknowledge thou, and He forgives.

8. We have addressed that soul which hath as yet the fear which endureth not for ever, but which love shuts out and casts forth: let us address that also which hath now the fear which is chaste, enduring for ever. Shall we find that soul, think you, that we may address it? think you, is it here in this congregation? is it, think you, here in this chancel? think you, is it here on earth? It cannot but be, only it is hidden. Now is the winter: within is the greenness in the root. Haply we may get at the ears of that soul. But wherever that soul is, oh that I could find it, and instead of its giving ear to me, might myself give ear to it! It should teach me something, rather than learn of me! An holy soul, a soul of fire, and longing for the kingdom of God: that soul, not I address, but God Himself doth address, and thus consoleth while patiently it endures to live here on earth: "Thou wouldest that I should even now come, and I know that thou wishest I should even now come: I know what thou art, such that without fear thou mayest wait for mine advent; I know that is a trouble to thee: but do thou even longer wait, endure; I come, and come quickly." But to the loving soul the time moves slowly. Hear her singing, like a lily as she is from amid the thorns; hear her sighing and saying, "I will sing, and will understand in a faultless way: when will thou come unto me?" But in a faultless way well may she not fear; because "perfect love casteth out fear." And when He is come to her embrace, still she fears, but in the manner of one that feels secure. What does she fear? She will beware and take heed to herself against her own iniquity, that she sin not again: not lest she be cast into the fire, but lest she be forsaken by Him. And there shall be in in her—what? the "chaste fear, enduring for ever." We have heard the two flutes sounding in unison. That speaks of fear, and this speaks of fear: but that, of the fear with which the soul fears lest she be condemned; this, of the fear with which the soul fears lest she be forsaken. That is the fear which charity casteth out: this, the fear that endureth for ever.

9. "Let us love, because He first loved us." For how should we love, except He had first loved us? By loving we became friends: but He loved us as enemies, that we might be made friends. He first loved us, and gave us the gift of loving Him. We did not yet love Him: by loving we are made beautiful. If a man deformed and ill-featured love a beautiful woman, what shall he do? Or what shall a woman do, if, being deformed and ill-featured

and black-complexioned, she love a beautiful man? By loving can she become beautiful? Can he by loving become handsome? He loves a beautiful woman, and when he sees himself in a mirror, he is ashamed to lift up his face to her his lovely one of whom he is enamored. What shall he do that he may be beautiful? Does he wait for good looks to come? Nay rather, by waiting old age is added to him, and makes him uglier. There is nothing then to do, there is no way to advise him, but only that he should restrain himself, and not presume to love unequally: or if perchance he does love her, and wishes to take her to wife, in her let him love chastity, not the face of flesh. But our soul, my brethren, is unlovely by reason of iniquity: by loving God it becomes lovely. What a love must that be that makes the lover beautiful! But God is always lovely, never unlovely, never changeable. Who is always lovely first loved us; and what were we when He loved us but foul and unlovely? But not to leave us foul; no, but to change us, and of unlovely make us lovely. How shall we become lovely? By loving Him who is always lovely. As the love increases in thee, so the loveliness increases: for love is itself the beauty of the soul. “Let us love, because He first loved us.” Hear the apostle Paul: “But God showed His love in us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us:” the just for the unjust, the beautiful for the foul. How find we Jesus beautiful? “Thou art beauteous in loveliness surpassing the sons of men; grace is poured upon thy lips.” Why so? Again see why it is that He is fair; “Beauteous in loveliness surpassing the sons of men:” because “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” But in that He took flesh, He took upon Him, as it were, thy foulness, i.e. thy mortality, that He might adapt Himself to thee, and become suited to thee, and stir thee up to the love of the beauteousness within. Where then in Scripture do we find Jesus uncomely and deformed, as we have found Him comely and “beauteous in loveliness surpassing the sons of men?” where find we Him also deformed? Ask Esaias: “And we saw Him, and He had no form nor comeliness.” There now are two flutes which seem to make discordant sounds: howbeit one Spirit breathes into both. By this it is said, “Beauteous in loveliness surpassing the sons of men:” by that it is said in Esaias, “We saw Him, and He had no form nor comeliness.” By one Spirit are both flutes filled, they make no dissonance. Turn not away thine ears, apply the understanding. Let us ask the apostle Paul, and let him expound to us the unison of the two flutes. Let him sound to us the note, “Beauteous in loveliness surpassing the sons of men.—Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Let him sound to us also the note, “We saw Him, and He had no form nor comeliness.—He made Himself of no reputation, taking upon Him the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men, and in fashion found as man. He had no form nor comeliness,” that He might give thee form and comeliness. What form? what comeliness? The love which is in charity: that loving, thou mayest run; running, mayest love. Thou art fair now: but stay not thy regard upon thyself, lest thou lose what thou hast received; let thy regards terminate in Him by whom thou wast made fair. Be thou fair only to the end He may love thee. But do thou direct thy whole aim to Him, run thou to Him, seek His embraces, fear to depart from Him; that there may be in thee the chaste fear, which endureth for ever. “Let us love, because He first loved us.”

10. “If any man say, I love God.” What God? wherefore love we? “Because He first loved us,” and gave us to love. He loved us ungodly, to make us godly; loved us unrighteous, to make us righteous; loved us sick, to make us whole. Ask each several man; let him tell thee if he love God. He cries out, he confesses: I love, God knoweth. There is another question to be asked. “If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar.” By what provest thou that he is a liar? Hear. “For he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not?” What then? does he that loves a brother, love God also? He must of necessity love God, must of necessity love Him that is Love itself. Can one love his brother, and not love Love? Of necessity he must love Love. What then? because he loves Love, does it follow that he loves God? Certainly it does follow. In loving Love, he loves God. Or hast thou forgotten what thou saidst a little while ago, “Love is God”? If “Love is God,” whoso loveth Love, loveth God. Love then thy brother, and feel thyself assured. Thou canst not say, “I love my brother, but I do not love God.” As thou liest, if thou sayest “I love God,” when thou lovest not thy brother, so thou art deceived when thou sayest, I love my brother, if thou think that thou lovest not God. Of necessity must thou who lovest thy brother, love Love itself: but “Love is God:” therefore of necessity must he love God, whoso loveth his brother. But if thou love not the brother whom thou seest, how canst thou love God

whom thou seest not? Why does he not see God? Because he has not Love itself. That he does not see God, is, because he has not love: that he has not love, is, because he loves not his brother. The reason then why he does not see God, is, that he has not Love. For if he have Love, he sees God, for "Love is God:" and that eye is becoming more and more purged by love, to see that Unchangeable Substance, in the presence of which he shall always rejoice, which he shall enjoy to everlasting, when he is joined with the angels. Only, let him run now, that he may at last have gladness in his own country. Let him not love his pilgrimage, not love the way: let all be bitter save Him that calleth us, until we hold Him fast, and say what is said in the Psalm: "Thou hast destroyed all that go a-whoring from Thee"—and who are they that go a-whoring? they that go away and love the world: but what shalt thou do? he goes on and says:—"but for me it is good to cleave to God." All my good is, to cling unto God, freely. For if thou question him and say, For what dost thou cling to Him? and he should say, That He may give me—Give thee what? It is He that made the heaven, He that made the earth: what shall He give thee? Already thou are cleaving to Him: find something better, and He shall give it thee.

11. "For he that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." Marvellous fine talk it was, that thou didst say, "I love God," and hatest thy brother! O murderer, how lovest thou God? Hast thou not heard above in this very epistle, "He that hateth his brother is a murderer"? Yea, but I do verily love God, however I hate my brother. Thou dost verily not love God, if thou hate thy brother. And now I make it good by another proof. This same apostle hath said, "He gave us commandment that we should love one another." How canst thou be said to love Him whose commandment thou hatest? Who shall say, I love the emperor, but I hate his laws? In this the emperor understands whether thou love him, that his laws be observed throughout the provinces. Our Emperor's law, what is it? "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." Thou sayest then, that thou lovest Christ: keep His commandment, and love thy brother. But if thou love not thy brother, how canst thou be said to love Him whose commandment thou despisest? Brethren, I am never satiated in speaking of charity in the name of the Lord.

In what proportion ye have an insatiable desire of this thing, in that proportion we hope the thing itself is growing in you, and casting out fear, that so there may remain that chaste fear which is for ever permanent. Let us endure the world, endure tribulations, endure the stumbling-blocks of temptations. Let us not depart from the way; let us hold the unity of the Church, hold Christ, hold charity. Let us not be plucked away from the members of His Spouse, not be plucked away from faith, that we may glory in His coming: and we shall securely abide in Him, now by faith, then by sight, of whom we have so great earnest, even the gift of the Holy Spirit.

HOMILY X

1 JOHN V. 1–3

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat Him, loveth Him also that is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, because we love God, and do His commandments. For this is the love of God that we keep His commandments.”

1. I Suppose ye remember, those of you who were present yesterday, to what place in the course of this epistle our exposition has reached: namely, “He that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God, love his brother also.” Thus far we discoursed. Let us see then what comes next in order. “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” Who is he that believeth not that Jesus is the Christ? He that does not so live as Christ commanded. For many say, “I believe:” but faith without works saveth not. Now the work of faith is Love, as Paul the apostle saith, “And faith which worketh by love.” Thy past works indeed, before thou didst believe, were either none, or if they seemed good, were nothing worth. For if they were none, thou wast as a man without feet, or with sore feet unable to walk: but if they seemed good, before thou didst believe, thou didst run indeed, but by running aside from the way thou wentest astray instead of coming to the goal. It is for us, then, both to run, and to run in the way. He that runs aside from the way, runs to no purpose, or rather runs but to toil. He goes the more astray, the more he runs aside

from the way. What is the way by which we run? Christ hath told us, “I am the Way.” What the home to which we run? “I am the Truth.” By Him thou runnest, to Him thou runnest, in Him thou restest. But, that we might run by Him, He reached even unto us: for we were afar off, foreigners in a far country. Not enough that we were in a far country, we were feeble also that we could not stir. A Physician, He came to the sick: a Way, He extended Himself to them that were in a far country. Let us be saved by Him, let us walk in Him. This it is to “believe that Jesus is the Christ,” as Christians believe, who are not Christians only in name, but in deeds and in life, not as the devils believe. For “the devils also believe and tremble,” as the Scripture tells us. What more could the devils believe, than that they should say, “We know who thou art, the Son of God?” What the devils said, the same said Peter also. When the Lord asked them who He was, and whom did men say that He was, the disciples made answer to Him, “Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” And this he heard from the Lord: “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” See what praises follow this faith. “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.” What meaneth, “Upon this rock I will build my Church”? Upon this faith; upon this that has been said, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Upon this rock,” saith He, “I will build my Church.” Mighty praise! So then, Peter saith, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God:” the devils also say, “We know who thou art, the Son of God, the Holy One of God.” This Peter said, this also the devils: the words the same, the mind not the same. And how is it clear that Peter said this with love? Because a Christian’s faith is with love, but a devil’s without love. How without love? Peter said this, that he might embrace Christ; the devils said it, that Christ might depart from them. For before they said, “We know who thou art, the Son of God,” they said, “What have we to do with thee? Why art thou come to destroy us before the time?” It is one thing then to confess Christ that thou mayest hold Christ, another thing to confess Christ that thou mayest drive Christ from thee. So then ye see, that in the sense in which he here saith, “Whoso believeth,” it is a faith of one’s own, not as one has a faith in common with many. Therefore, brethren, let none of the heretics say to you, “We also believe.” For to this end have I given you an instance from the case of devils, that ye may not rejoice in the words of believing, but search well the deeds of the life.

2. Let us see then what it is to believe in Christ; what to believe that Jesus, He is the Christ. He proceeds: “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.” But what is it to believe that? “And every one that loveth Him that begat Him, loveth Him also that is begotten of Him.” To faith he hath straightway joined love, because faith without love is nothing worth. With love, the faith of a Christian; without love, the faith of a devil: but those who believe not, are worse than devils, more stupid than devils. Some man will not believe in Christ: so far, he is not even upon a par with devils. A person does now believe in Christ, but hates Christ: he hath the confession of faith in the fear of punishment, not in love of the crown: thus the devils also feared to be punished. Add to this faith love, that it may become a faith such as the Apostle Paul speaks of, a “faith which worketh by love:” thou hast found a Christian, found a citizen of Jerusalem, found a fellow-citizen of the angels, found a pilgrim sighing in the way: join thyself to him, he is thy fellow-traveller, run with him, if indeed thou also art this. “Every one that loveth Him that begat Him, loveth Him also that is begotten of Him.” Who “begat”? The Father. Who “is begotten”? The Son. What saith he then? “Every one that loveth the Father, loveth the Son.”

3. “In this we know that we love the sons of God.” What is this, brethren? Just now he was speaking of the Son of God, not of sons of God: lo, here one Christ was set before us to contemplate, and we were told, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat,” i.e. the Father, “loveth Him also that is begotten of Him,” i.e. the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. And he goes on: “In this we know that we love the sons of God;” as if he had been about to say, “In this we know that we love the Son of God.” He has said, “the sons of God,” whereas he was speaking just before of the Son of God—because the sons of God are the Body of the Only Son of God, and when He is the Head, we the members, it is one Son of God. Therefore, he that loves the sons of God, loves the Son of God, and he that loves the Son of God, loves the Father; nor can any love the Father except he love the Son, and he that loves the

sons, loves also the Son of God. What sons of God? The members of the Son of God. And by loving he becomes himself a member, and comes through love to be in the frame of the body of Christ, so there shall be one Christ, loving Himself. For when the members love one another, the body loves itself. “And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.” And then he goes on to say, “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members.” John was speaking just before of brotherly love, and said, “He that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not?” But if thou lovest thy brother, haply thou lovest thy brother and lovest not Christ? How should that be, when thou lovest members of Christ? When therefore thou lovest members of Christ, thou lovest Christ; when thou lovest Christ, thou lovest the Son of God; when thou lovest the Son of God, thou lovest also the Father. The love therefore cannot be separated into parts. Choose what thou wilt love; the rest follow thee. Suppose thou say, I love God alone, God the Father. Thou liest: if thou lovest, thou lovest Him not alone; but if thou lovest the Father, thou lovest also the Son. Behold, sayest thou, I love the Father, and I love the Son: but this only, the Father God and the Son God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, that Word by which all things were made, and “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us:” this alone I love. Thou liest; for if thou lovest the Head, thou lovest also the members; but if thou lovest not the members, neither lovest thou the Head. Dost thou not quake at the voice uttered by the Head from Heaven on behalf of His members, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?” The persecutor of His members He called His persecutor: His lover, the lover of His members. Now what are His members, ye know, brethren: none other than the Church of God. “In this we know that we love the sons of God, in that we love God.” And how? Are not the sons of God one thing, God Himself another? But he that loves God, loves His precepts. And what are the precepts of God? “A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another.” Let none excuse himself by another love, for another love; so and so only is it with this love: as the love itself is compacted in one, so all that hang by it doth it make one, and as fire melts them down into one. It is gold: the lump is molten and becomes some one thing. But unless the fervor of charity be applied, of many there can be no melting down into one. “That we love God,” by this “know we that we love the sons of God.”

4. And by what do we know that we love the sons of God? By this, “that we love God, and do His commandments.” We sigh here, by reason of the hardness of doing the commandments of God. Hear what follows. O man, at what toilest thou in loving? In loving avarice. With toil is that loved which thou lovest: there is no toil in loving God. Avarice will enjoin thee labors, perils, sore hardships and tribulations; and thou wilt do its bidding. To what end? That thou mayest have that with which thou shalt fill thy chest, and lose thy peace of mind. Thou didst feel thyself haply more secure before thou hadst it, than since thou didst begin to have. See what avarice has enjoined thee. Thou hast filled thine house, and art in dread of robbers; hast gotten gold, lost thy sleep. See what avarice has enjoined thee. Do, and thou didst. What does God enjoin thee! Love me. Thou lovest gold, thou wilt seek gold, and perchance not find it: whoso seeks me, I am with him. Thou wilt love honor, and perchance not attain unto it: who ever loved me, and did not attain? God saith to thee, thou wouldest make thee a patron, or a powerful friend: thou seekest a way to his favor by means of another inferior. Love me, saith God to thee: favor with me is not had by making interest with some other: thy love itself makes me present to thee. What sweeter than this love, brethren? It is not without reason that ye heard just now in the Psalm, “The unrighteous told me of delights, but not as is Thy law, O Lord.” What is the Law of God? The commandment of God. What is the commandment of God? That “new commandment,” which is called new because it maketh new: “A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another.” Hear because this is the law of God. The apostle saith, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so shall ye fulfill the law of Christ.” This, even this, is the consummation of all our works; Love. In it is the end: for this we run: to it we run; when we are come to it, we shall rest.

5. Ye have heard in the Psalm, “I have seen the end of all perfection.” He hath said, I have seen the end of all perfection: what had he seen? Think we, had he ascended to the peak of some very high and pointed mountain, and looked out thence and seen the compass of the earth, and the circles of the round world, and therefore said, “I have seen the end of all perfection”? If

this be a thing to be praised, let us ask of the Lord eyes of the flesh so sharp-sighted, that we shall but require some exceeding high mountain on earth, that from its summit we may see the end of all perfection. Go not far: lo, I say to thee, it is here; ascend the mountain, and see the end. Christ is the Mountain; come to Christ: thou seest thence the end of all perfection. What is this end? Ask Paul: “But the end of the commandment is charity, from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned:” and in another place, “Charity is the fullness,” or fulfillment, “of the law.” What so finished and terminated as “fullness”? For, brethren, the apostle here uses end in a way of praise. Think not of consumption, but of consummation. For it is in one sense that one says, I have finished my bread, in another, I have finished my coat. I have finished the bread, by eating it: the coat, by making it. In both places the word is “end,” “finish:” but the bread is finished by its being consumed, the coat is finished by being made: the bread, so as to be no more; the coat, so as to be complete. Therefore in this sense take ye also this word, end, when the Psalm is read and ye hear it said, “On the end, a Psalm of David.” Ye are for ever hearing this in the Psalms, and ye should know what ye hear. What meaneth, “On the end”?—”For Christ is the end of the law unto every one that believeth.” And what meaneth, “Christ is the end”? Because Christ is God, and “the end of the commandment is charity,” and “Charity is God:” because Father and Son and Holy Ghost are One. There is He the End to thee; elsewhere He is the Way. Do not stick fast in the way, and so never come to the end. Whatever else thou come to, pass beyond it, until thou come to the end. What is the end? It is good for me to “hold me fast in God.” Hast thou laid fast hold on God? thou hast finished the way: thou shalt abide in thine own country. Mark well! Some man seeks money: let not it be the end to thee: pass on, as a traveller in a strange land. But if thou love it, thou art entangled by avarice; avarice will be shackles to thy feet: thou canst make no more progress. Pass therefore this also: seek the end. Thou seekest health of the body: still do not stop there. For what is it, this health of the body, which death makes an end of, which sickness debilitates, a feeble, mortal, fleeting thing? Seek that, indeed, lest haply ill-health hinder thy good works: but for that very reason, the end is not there, for it is sought in order to something else. Whatever is sought in order to something else, the end is not there: whatever is loved for its own sake, and freely, the end is there. Thou seekest honors; perchance seekest them in order to do something, that thou mayest accomplish something, and so please God: love not the honor itself, lest thou stop there. Seekest thou praise? If thou seek God's, thou doest well; if thou seek thine own, thou doest ill; thou stoppest short in the way. But behold, thou art loved, art praised: think it not joy when in thyself thou art praised; be thou praised in the Lord, that thou mayest sing, "In the Lord shall my soul be praised." Thou deliverest some good discourse, and thy discourse is praised. Let it not be praised as thine, the end is not there. If thou set the end there, there is an end of thee: but an end, not that thou be perfected, but that thou be consumed. Then let not thy discourse be praised as coming from thee, as being thine. But how praised? As the Psalm saith, "In God will I praise the discourse, in God will I praise the word." Hereby shall that which there follows come to pass in thee: "In God have I hoped, I will not fear what man can do unto me." For when all things that are thine are praised in God, no fear lest thy praise be lost, since God faileth not. Pass therefore this also.

6. See, brethren, how many things we pass, in which is not the end. These we use as by the way; we take as it were our refreshment at the halting places on our journey, and pass on. Where then is the end? "Beloved, we are sons of God, and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be;" here is this said, in this epistle. As yet then, we are on the way; as yet, wherever we come, we must pass on, until we attain unto some end. "We know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. That is the end; there perpetual praising, there Alleluia always without fail. This, then is the end he has spoken of in the Psalm: "I have seen the end of all perfection:" and as though it were said to him, What is the end thou hast seen? "Thy commandment, exceeding broad." This is the end: the breadth of the commandment. The breadth of the commandment is charity, because where charity is, there are no straits. In this breadth, this wide room, was the apostle when he said, "Our mouth is open to you, O ye Corinthians, our heart is enlarged: ye are not straitened in us." In this, then, is "Thy commandment exceeding broad." What is the broad commandment? "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." Charity, then, is not straitened. Wouldest thou not be straitened here on earth? Dwell in the broad room. For whatever man may do to thee, he shall not straiten

thee; because thou lovest that which man cannot hurt: lovest God, lovest the brotherhood, lovest the law of God, lovest the Church of God: it shall be for ever. Thou laborest here on earth, but thou shalt come to the promised enjoyment. Who can take from thee that which thou lovest? If no man can take from thee that which thou lovest, secure thou sleepest: or rather secure thou watchest, lest by sleeping thou lose that which thou lovest. For not without reason is it said, "Enlighten mine eyes, lest at any time I sleep in death." They that shut their eyes against charity, fall asleep in the lusts of carnal delights. Be wakeful, therefore. For then are the delights, to eat, to drink, to wanton in luxury, to play, to hunt; these vain pomps all evils follow. Are we ignorant that they are delights? who can deny that they delight? But more beloved is the law of God. Cry against such persuaders: "The unrighteous have told me of delights: but not so as is thy law, O Lord." This delight remaineth. Not only remaineth as the goal to which thou mayest come, but also calleth thee back when thou fleest.

7. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments." Already ye have heard, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." See how He would not have thee divide thyself over a multitude of pages: "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." On what two commandments? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. And, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." See here of what commandments this whole epis tle talks. Therefore hold fast love, and set your minds at rest. Why fearest thou lest thou do evil to some man? Who does evil to the man he loves? Love thou: it is impossible to do this without doing good. But it may be, thou rebukest? Kindness does it, not fierceness. But it may be thou beatest? For discipline thou dost this; because thy kindness of love will not let thee leave him undisciplined. And indeed there come somehow these different and contrary results, that sometimes hatred uses winning ways, and charity shows itself fierce. A person hates his enemy, and feigns friendship for him: he sees him doing some evil, he praises him: he wishes him to go headlong, wishes him to go blind over the precipice of his lusts, haply never to return; he praises him, "For the sinner is praised in the desires of his soul;" he applies to him the unction of adulation; behold, he hates, and praises. Another sees his

friend doing something of the same sort; he calls him back; if he will not hear, he uses words even of castigation, he scolds, he quarrels: there are times when it comes to this, that one must even quarrel! Behold, hatred shows itself winningly gentle, and charity quarrels! Stay not thy regard upon the words of seeming kindness, or the seeming cruelty of the rebuke; look into the vein they come from; seek the root whence they proceed. The one is gentle and bland that he may deceive, the other quarrels that he may correct. Well then, it is not for us, brethren, to enlarge your heart: obtain from God the gift to love one another. Love all men, even your enemies, not because they are your brethren, but that they may be your brethren; that ye may be at all times on fire with brotherly love, whether toward him that is become thy brother, or towards thine enemy, so that, by being beloved, he may become thy brother. Wheresoever ye love a brother, ye love a friend. Now is he with thee, now is he knit to thee in unity, yea catholic unity. If thou art living aright, thou lovest a brother made out of an enemy. But thou lovest some man who has not yet believed Christ, or, if he have believed, believes as do the devils: thou rebukest his vanity. Do thou love, and that with a brotherly love: he is not yet a brother, but thou lovest to the end he may be a brother. Well then, all our love is a brotherly love, towards Christians, towards all His members. The discipline of charity, my brethren, its strength, flowers, fruit, beauty, pleasantness, food, drink, meat, embracing, hath in it no satiety. If it so delight us while in a strange land, in our own country how shall we rejoice!

8. Let us run then, my brethren, let us run, and love Christ. What Christ? Jesus Christ. Who is He? The Word of God. And how came He to the sick? “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt in us.” It is complete then, which the Scripture foretold, “Christ must suffer, and rise again the third day from the dead.” His body, where is it? His members, where toil they? Where must thou be, that thou mayest be under thine Head? “And that repentance and remission of sins be preached in His name through all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” There let thy charity be spread abroad. Christ saith, and the Psalm, i.e. the Spirit of God, “Thy commandment is exceeding broad:” and forsooth some man will have charity to be confined to Africa! Extend thy charity over the whole earth if thou wilt love Christ, for Christ’s members are over all the earth. If thou lovest but a part, thou art divided: if thou art

divided, thou art not in the body; if thou art not in the body, thou art not under the Head. What profiteth it thee that thou believest and blasphemest? Thou adorest Him in the Head, blasphemest Him in the Body. He loves His Body. If thou hast cut thyself off from His Body, the Head hath not cut itself off from its Body. To no purpose dost thou honor me, cries thine Head to thee from on high, to no purpose dost thou honor me. It is all one as if a man would kiss thine head and tread upon thy feet: perchance with nailed boots he would crush thy feet, while he will clasp thy head and kiss it: wouldest thou not cry out in the midst of the words with which he honors thee, and say, What art thou doing, man? thou treadest on me. Thou wouldest not mean, Thou treadest on my head; for the head he honored; but more would the head cry out for the members trodden upon, than for itself because it was honored. Does not the head itself cry out, I will none of thine honor; do not tread on me? Now say if thou canst, How have I trodden upon thee? say that to the head: I wanted to kiss thee, I wanted to embrace thee. But seest thou not, O fool, that what thou wouldest embrace does in virtue of a certain unity, which knits the whole frame together, reach to that which thou treadest upon? Above thou honorest me, beneath thou treadest upon me. That on which thou treadest pains more than that which thou honorest rejoiceth. In what sort does the tongue cry out? “It hurts me.” It saith not, “It hurts my foot,” but, “It hurts me,” saith it. O tongue, who has touched thee? who has struck? who has goaded? who has pricked? No man, but I am knit together with the parts that are trodden upon. How wouldest thou have me not be pained, when I am not separate?

9. Our Lord Jesus Christ, then, ascending into heaven on the fortieth day, did for this reason commend to us His Body where it would continue to lie, because He saw that many would honor Him for that He is ascended into heaven: and saw that their honoring Him is useless if they trample upon His members here on earth. And lest any one should err, and, while he adored the Head in heaven should trample upon the feet on earth, He told us where would be His members. For being about to ascend, He spake His last words on earth: after those same words He spake no more on earth. The Head about to ascend into heaven commended to us His members on earth and departed. Thenceforth thou findest not Christ speaking on earth; thou findest Him speaking, but from heaven. And even from heaven, why?

Because His members on earth were trodden upon. For to the persecutor Saul He said from on high, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” I am ascended into heaven, but still I lie on earth: here I sit at the right hand of the Father, but there I yet hunger, thirst, and am a stranger. In what manner then did He commend to us His Body, when about to ascend into heaven? When the disciples asked Him, saying, “Lord, wilt thou at this time present thyself, and when shall be the kingdom of Israel?” He made answer, now at the point to depart, “It is not for you to know the time which the Father hath put in His own power: but ye shall receive strength of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and ye shall be witnesses to me.” See where His Body is spread abroad, see where He will not be trodden upon: “Ye shall be witnesses to me, unto Jerusalem, and unto Judea, and even unto all the earth.” Lo, where I lie that am ascending! For I ascend, because I am the Head: my Body lies yet beneath. Where lies? Throughout the whole earth. Beware thou strike not, beware thou hurt not, beware thou trample not: these be the last words of Christ about to go into heaven. Look at a sick man languishing on his bed, lying in his house, and worn out with sickness, at death’s door, his soul as it were even now between his teeth: who, anxious, it may be, about something that is dear to him, which he greatly loves, and it comes into his mind, calls his heirs, and says to them, I pray you, do this. He, as it were, detains his soul by a violent effort, that it may not depart ere those words be made sure. When he has dictated those last words, he breathes out his soul, he is borne a corpse to the sepulchre. His heirs, how do they remember the last words of the dying man? How, if one should stand up and say to them, Do it not: what would they say? “What? shall I not do that which my father, in the act of breathing out his soul, commanded me with his last breath, the last word of his that sounded in my ears when my father was departing this life? Whatever other words of his I may not regard, his last have a stronger hold upon me: since which I never saw him more, never more heard speech of his.” Brethren, think with Christian hearts; if to the heirs of a man, his words spoken when about to go to the tomb are so sweet, so grateful, so weighty, what must we account of the last words of Christ, spoken not when about to go back to the tomb, but to ascend into heaven! As for the man who lived and is dead, his soul is hurried off to other places, his body is laid in the earth, and whether these words of his be done or not, makes no difference to him: he has now something else to do, or something else to suffer: either in Abraham's bosom he rejoices, or in eternal fire he longs for a drop of water, while his corpse lies there senseless in the sepulchre; and yet the last words of the dying man are kept. What have those to look for, who keep not the last words of Him that sitteth in heaven, who seeth from on high whether they be despised or not despised? The words of Him, who said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" who keeps account, unto the judgment, of all that He seeth His members suffer?

10. And what have we done, say they? We are the persecuted, not the persecutors. Ye are the persecutors, O wretched men. In the first place, in that ye have divided the Church. Mightier the sword of the tongue than the sword of steel. Agar, Sarah's maid, was proud, and she was afflicted by her mistress for her pride. That was discipline, not punishment. Accordingly, when she had gone away from her mistress, what said the angel to her? "Return to thy mistress." Then, O carnal soul, like a proud bond-woman, suppose thou have suffered any trouble for discipline' sake, why ravest thou? "Return to thy mistress," hold fast the peace of the Church. Lo, the gospels are pro duced, we read where the Church is spread abroad: men dispute against us, and say to us, "Betrayers!" Betrayers of what? Christ commendeth to us His Church, and thou believest not: shall I believe thee, when thou revilest my parents? Wouldest thou that I should believe thee about the "betrayers"? Do thou first believe Christ. What is worth believing? Christ is God, thou art man: which ought to be believed first? Christ has spread His Church abroad over all the earth: I say it—despise me: the gospel speaks—beware. What saith the gospel? "It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name." Where remission of sins, there the Church is. How the Church? Why, to her it was said, "To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." Where is this remission of sins spread abroad? "Through all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Lo, believe Christ! But, because thou art well aware that if thou shalt believe Christ, thou wilt not have anything to say about "betrayers,"

thou wilt needs have me to believe thee when thou speakest evil against my parents, rather than thyself believe what Christ foretold!

* * * * * * * * *

[The remainder of the Homily is wanting in all the manuscripts. It seems also that St. Augustin was hindered from completing the exposition of the entire epistle, as he had undertaken to do: at least Possidius specifies this work under the title, “In Epist. Joannis ad Parthos Tractatus decem,” and it is scarcely likely that the whole of the fifth chapter was expounded in this tenth Homily.—Of the “Sermons,” there are none upon the remaining part of this epistle: the following extracts from other works of St. Augustin will supply what will be most desiderated: namely, his exposition of the text on “the Three Witnesses,” of “the sin unto death,” and of the twentieth verse].

Contra Maximinum, lib. ii. c. 22 S:. 3.

1 Joann. v. 7, 8. Tres sunt testes; spiritus, et aqua, et sanguis; et tres unum sunt.

I would not have thee mistake that place in the epistle of John the apostle where he saith, “There are three witnesses: the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and the three are one.” Lest haply thou say that the Spirit and the water and the blood are diverse substances, and yet it is said, “the three are one:” for this cause I have admonished thee, that thou mistake not the matter. For these are mystical expressions, in which the point always to be considered is, not what the actual things are, but what they denote as signs: since they are signs of things, and what they are in their essence is one thing, what they are in their signification another. If then we understand the things signified, we do find these things to be of one substance. Thus, if we should say, the rock and the water are one, meaning by the Rock, Christ; by the water, the Holy Ghost: who doubts that rock and water are two different substances? yet because Christ and the Holy Spirit are of one and the same nature, therefore when one says, the rock and the water are one, this can be rightly taken in this behalf, that these two things of which the nature is diverse, are signs of other things of which the nature is one. Three things then we know to have issued from the Body of the Lord when He hung upon the tree: first, the spirit: of which it is written, “And He bowed the head and gave up the spirit:” then, as His side was pierced by the spear, “blood and water.” Which three things if we look at as they are in themselves, they are in substance several and distinct, and therefore they are not one. But if we will inquire into the things signified by these, there not unreasonably comes into our thoughts the Trinity itself, which is the One, Only, True, Supreme God, Father and Son and Holy Ghost, of whom it could most truly be said, “There are Three Witnesses, and the Three are One:” so that by the term Spirit we should understand God the Father to be signified; as indeed it was concerning the worshipping of Him that the Lord was speaking, when He said, “God is a Spirit:” by the term, blood, the Son; because “the Word was made flesh:” and by the term water, the Holy Ghost; as, when Jesus spake of the water which He would give to them that thirst, the evangelist saith, “But this said He of the Spirit which they that believed on Him were to receive.” Moreover, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are “Witnesses,” who that believes the Gospel can doubt, when the Son saith, “I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me, He beareth witness of me.” Where, though the Holy Ghost is not men tioned, yet He is not to be thought separated from them. Howbeit neither concerning the Spirit hath He kept silence elsewhere, and that He too is a witness hath been sufficiently and openly shown. For in promising Him He said, “He shall bear witness of me.” These are the “Three Witnesses,” and the Three are One, because of one substance. But whereas, the signs by which they were signified came forth from the Body of the Lord, herein they figured the Church preaching the Trinity, that it hath one and the same nature: since these Three in threefold manner signified are One, and the Church that preacheth them is the Body of Christ. In this manner then the three things by which they are signified came out from the Body of the Lord: like as from the Body of the Lord sounded forth the command to “baptize the nations in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.” “In the name:” not, In the names: for “these Three are One,” and One God is these Three. And if in any other way this depth of mystery which we read in John’s epistle can be expounded and understood agreeably with the Catholic faith, which neither confounds nor divides the Trinity, neither believes the substances diverse nor denies that the persons are three, it is on no account to be rejected. For whenever in Holy Scriptures in order to exercise the minds of the faithful any thing is put darkly, it is to be joyfully welcomed if it can be in many ways but not unwisely expounded.

De Sermone Domini in Monte, lib. i. 22, S: 73.

1 Joann. v. 16. Si quis scit peccare fratrem suum peccatum non ad mortem, postulabit, et dabit illi Dominus vitam qui peccat non ad mortem; est autem peccatum ad mortem; non pro illo dico ut roget.

But what presses harder upon the present question [in the Lord’s command of praying for enemies and persecutors] is that saying of the apostle John, “If any man know that his brother sinneth a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and the Lord will give life to that man who sinneth not unto death: but there is a sin unto death: not for that do I say that he should ask.” For it manifestly shows that there are some “brethren” whom we are not commanded to pray for, whereas the Lord bids us pray even for our persecutors. Nor can this question be solved except we acknowledge, that there are some sins in brethren that are worse than the sin of enemies in persecuting. That “brethren” mean Christians, may be proved by many texts of Holy Writ; the plainest, however, is that of the apostle which he puts thus: “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother.” For he has not added our; but thought it plain enough, when by the term brother he spake of the Christian that should have an unbelieving wife. And accordingly he says just afterwards, “But if the unbelieving depart, let her depart: but a brother or sister is not put under servitude in a matter of this sort.” The “sin,” therefore, of a brother, “unto death,” I suppose to be when, after the acknowledging of God through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, one fights against the brotherhood, and is set on by the fire-brands of hatred against the very grace through which he was reconciled to God. But “a sin not unto death” is when a person, not having alienated his love from his brother, yet through some infirmity of mind may have failed to exhibit the due offices of brotherhood. Wherefore, on the one hand, the Lord on the cross said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,” since they had not yet, by being made partakers of the grace of the Holy Spirit, entered into the fellowship of holy brotherhood; and blessed Stephen in the Acts of the Apostles prays for them who are stoning him; because they had not yet believed Christ, and were not fighting against that grace of communion. On the other hand, the apostle Paul does not pray for Alexander, and the reason I suppose, is, that this man was a brother, and had sinned “unto death,” i.e. by opposing the brotherhood in a spirit of hatred. Whereas for such as had not broken off the bonds of love, but had given way through fear, he prays that they may be forgiven. For so he says: “Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.” Then he subjoins for whom he prays, saying, “At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.” This difference of sins it is that distinguishes Judas with his treason from Peter with his denial. Not that to him who repenteth there is to be no forgiveness: lest we go against that sentence of the Lord, in which He commands always to forgive the brother who asks his brother’s forgiveness: but that the mischief of that sin is, that the man cannot submit to the humiliation of begging for pardon, even when he is forced by his evil conscience both to acknowledge and to publish his sin. For when Judas had said, “I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood,” he went and hanged himself in desperation, rather than pray for forgiveness in humiliation. Wherefore it makes a great difference, what sort of repentance God forgives. For many are much quicker than others to confess that they have sinned, and are angry with themselves in such sort that they vehemently wish they had not sinned, while yet they cannot lay down their pride, and submit to have the heart humbled and broken so as to implore pardon: a state of mind which one may well believe to be, for the greatness of their sin, a part of their already begun damnation.

And this, perhaps, it is “to sin against the Holy Ghost:” i.e. through malice and envy to fight against brotherly charity after receiving the grace of the Holy Spirit: that sin which the Lord saith hath no forgiveness, either here or in the world to come. . . . For the Lord in saying to the Pharisees, “Whosoever shall speak an evil word against the Son of Man,” &c., may have meant to warn them to come to the grace of God, and having received it, not to sin as they have now sinned. For now they have spoken an evil word against the Son of Man, and it may be forgiven them, if they be converted and believe and receive the Holy Spirit: which when they have received, if they will then have ill-will against the brotherhood and oppose the grace they have received, there is no forgiveness for them, either in this world or in the world to come.

Liber de Correptione et Gratia, S: 35.

By this grace such is the liberty they receive, that although as long as they live here they have to fight against the lusts of sins, and are overtaken by some sins for which they must daily pray, “Forgive us our debts,” yet they no longer serve the sin which is unto death, of which the apostle John saith, “There is a sin unto death, I do not say that he shall ask for that.” Concerning which sin (since it is not expressed) many different opinions may be formed: but I affirm that sin to be the forsaking until death the “faith which worketh by love.”

Contra Maximinum. lib. ii. c. 14, S: 2, 3.

1 Joann. v. 20. “Ut simus in vero Filio ejus Jesu Christo; ipse est verus Deus et vita aeterna.”

When ye read, “That we may be in His true Son Jesus Christ,” think of the “true Son” of God. But this Son ye in no wise think to be the true Son of God, if ye deny Him to be begotten of the substance of the Father. For was He already Son of Man and by gift of God became Son of God, begotten indeed of God, but by grace, not by nature? Or, though not Son of Man, yet was He some sort of creature which, by God’s changing it, was converted into Son of God? If you mean nothing of this sort, then was He either begotten of nothing, or of some substance. But thou hast relieved us from all fear of having to suppose that you affirm the Son of God to be of nothing, for thou hast declared that this is not your meaning. Therefore, He is of some substance. If not of the substance of the Father, then of what? Tell me. But ye cannot find any other . . . Consequently, the Father and the Son are of one and the same substance. This is the Homoeusion. . . . In the Scriptures both you and we read, “That we may be in His true Son Jesus Christ; He is the true God and Eternal Life.” Let both parties yield to such weighty evidence. Tell us then, whether this “true Son” of God, discriminated as He is by the property of this name from those who are sons by grace, be of no substance or of some substance. Thou sayest, “I do not say that He is of no substance, lest I should say that He is of nothing.” He is therefore of some substance: I ask, of what? If not of the substance of the Father, seek another. If thou findest not another, as indeed thou canst find none at all, then acknowledge it to be the Father’s, and confess the Son Homoeusios, “of one substance with the Father.” Flesh is begotten of flesh, the Son of flesh is begotten of the substance of the flesh. Set aside corruption, reject from the eye of the mind all carnal passions, and behold “the invisible things of God understood by the means of the things that are made.” Believe that the Creator who hath given flesh power to beget flesh, who hath given parents power of the substance of the flesh to generate “true sons” of flesh, much more had power to beget a “true Son” of His own substance, and to have one substance with the true Son, the spiritual incorruption remaining and carnal corruption being altogether alien therefrom.

Collatio cum Maximino, S: 14.

If He is begotten, He is Son: if He is Son, He is the “true Son,” because Only-Begotten. For we also are called sons: He Son by nature, we sons by grace . . . To say that because He is begotten, He is of another nature, is to deny that He is the “true Son.” Now we have the Scripture: “That we may be in His true Son Jesus Christ; He is the true God and Eternal Life.” Why “true God”? because “true Son” of God. For if He has given to animals this property, that what they beget shall be none other than what they themselves are: man begets man, dog begets dog, and should God not beget God? If then He is of the same substance, why callest thou Him less? Is it because when a human father begets a son, though human beget human, yet greater begets less? If so, then let us wait for Christ to grow as human beings grow whom human beings beget! But if Christ, ever since He was begotten (and this was not in time but from eternity), is what He is, and yet is less than the Father, at that rate the human condition is the better of the two: for a human being at any rate can grow, and has the property of sooner or later attaining to the age, to the strength of the father; but He never: then how is He a “true Son”?

De Trinitate, lib. i. 6, S: 9.

And if the Son be not of the same substance as the Father, then is He a made substance: if a made substance, then not “all things were made by Him:” but, “all things were made by Him;” therefore, He is of one and the same substance with the Father. And therefore, not only God, but True (or, Very) God. Which the same John doth most openly affirm in his epistle: “Scimus quod Filius Dei venerit et dederit nobis intellectum ut cognoscamus verum Deum, et simus in vero Filio ejus Jesu Christo. Hic est verus Deus et vita aeterna.” “We know that the Son of God is come; and hath given us an understanding that we may (learn to) know the True God, and may be in His true Son Jesus Christ. This is the True God and Eternal Life.”

10. Hence also by consequence we understand, that what the apostle Paul saith, “Who only hath immortality,” he saith not merely of the Father, but of the One and Only God, which the Trinity itself is. For neither is the “Eternal Life” itself mortal in respect of any mutability: and consequently, since the Son of God “is Eternal Life,” He also is to be understood together with the Father, where it is said, “Who only hath immortality.”

THE CITY OF GOD

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Book I

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PREFACE, EXPLAINING HIS DESIGN IN UNDERTAKING THIS WORK

The glorious city of God is my theme in this work, which you, my dearest son Marcellinus, suggested, and which is due to you by my promise. I have undertaken its defence against those who prefer their own gods to the Founder of this city,—a city surpassingly glorious, whether we view it as it still lives by faith in this fleeting course of time, and sojourns as a stranger in the midst of the ungodly, or as it shall dwell in the fixed stability of its eternal seat, which it now with patience waits for, expecting until "righteousness shall return unto judgment," and it obtain, by virtue of its excellence, final victory and perfect peace. A great work this, and an arduous; but God is my helper. For I am aware what ability is requisite to persuade the proud how great is the virtue of humility, which raises us, not by a quite human arrogance, but by a divine grace, above all earthly dignities that totter on this shifting scene. For the King and Founder of this city of which we speak, has in Scripture uttered to His people a dictum of the divine law in these words: "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." But this, which is God's prerogative, the inflated ambition of a proud spirit also affects, and dearly loves that this be numbered among its attributes, to

"Show pity to the humbled soul,

And crush the sons of pride."

And therefore, as the plan of this work we have undertaken requires, and as occasion offers, we must speak also of the earthly city, which, though it be mistress of the nations, is itself ruled by its lust of rule.

CHAPTER 1

OF THE ADVERSARIES OF THE NAME OF CHRIST, WHOM THE BARBARIANS FOR CHRIST'S SAKE SPARED WHEN THEY STORMED THE CITY

For to this earthly city belong the enemies against whom I have to defend the city of God. Many of them, indeed, being reclaimed from their ungodly error, have become sufficiently creditable citizens of this city; but many are so inflamed with hatred against it, and are so ungrateful to its Redeemer for His signal benefits, as to forget that they would now be unable to utter a single word to its prejudice, had they not found in its sacred places, as they fled from the enemy's steel, that life in which they now boast themselves. Are not those very Romans, who were spared by the barbarians through their respect for Christ, become enemies to the name of Christ? The reliquaries of the martyrs and the churches of the apostles bear witness to this; for in the sack of the city they were open sanctuary for all who fled to them, whether Christian or Pagan. To their very threshold the blood-thirsty enemy raged; there his murderous fury owned a limit. Thither did such of the enemy as had any pity convey those to whom they had given quarter, lest any less mercifully disposed might fall upon them. And, indeed, when even those murderers who everywhere else showed themselves pitiless came to those spots where that was forbidden which the license of war permitted in every other place, their furious rage for slaughter was bridled, and their eagerness to take prisoners was quenched. Thus escaped multitudes who now reproach the Christian religion, and impute to Christ the ills that have befallen their city; but the preservation of their own life—a boon which they owe to the respect entertained for Christ by the barbarians—they attribute not to our Christ, but to their own good luck. They ought rather, had they any right perceptions, to attribute the severities and hardships inflicted by their enemies, to that divine providence which is wont to reform the depraved manners of men by chastisement, and which exercises with similar afflictions the righteous and praiseworthy,—either translating them, when they have passed through the trial, to a better world, or detaining them still on earth for ulterior purposes. And they ought to attribute it to the spirit of these Christian times, that, contrary to the custom of war, these bloodthirsty barbarians spared them, and spared them for Christ's sake, whether this mercy was actually shown in promiscuous places, or in those places specially dedicated to Christ's name, and of which the very largest were selected as sanctuaries, that full scope might thus be given to the expansive compassion which desired that a large multitude might find shelter there. Therefore ought they to give God thanks, and with sincere confession flee for refuge to His name, that so they may escape the punishment of eternal fire—they who with lying lips took upon them this name, that they might escape the punishment of present destruction. For of those whom you see insolently and shamelessly insulting the servants of Christ, there are numbers who would not have escaped that destruction and slaughter had they not pretended that they themselves were Christ's servants. Yet now, in ungrateful pride and most impious madness, and at the risk of being punished in everlasting darkness, they perversely oppose that name under which they fraudulently protected themselves for the sake of enjoying the light of this brief life.

CHAPTER 2

THAT IT IS QUITE CONTRARY TO THE USAGE OF WAR, THAT THE VICTORS SHOULD SPARE THE VANQUISHED FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR GODS

There are histories of numberless wars, both before the building of Rome and since its rise and the extension of its dominion; let these be read, and let one instance be cited in which, when a city had been taken by foreigners, the victors spared those who were found to have fled for sanctuary to the temples of their gods; or one instance in which a barbarian general gave orders that none should be put to the sword who had been found in this or that temple. Did not AEneas see

"Dying Priam at the shrine,

Staining the hearth he made divine?"

Did not Diomede and Ulysses

"Drag with red hands, the sentry slain,

Her fateful image from your fane,

Her chaste locks touch, and stain with gore

The virgin coronal she wore?”

Neither is that true which follows, that

“Thenceforth the tide of fortune changed,

And Greece grew weak.”

For after this they conquered and destroyed Troy with fire and sword; after this they beheaded Priam as he fled to the altars. Neither did Troy perish because it lost Minerva. For what had Minerva herself first lost, that she should perish? Her guards perhaps? No doubt; just her guards. For as soon as they were slain, she could be stolen. It was not, in fact, the men who were preserved by the image, but the image by the men. How, then, was she invoked to defend the city and the citizens, she who could not defend her own defenders?

CHAPTER 3

THAT THE ROMANS DID NOT SHOW THEIR USUAL SAGACITY WHEN THEY TRUSTED THAT THEY WOULD BE BENEFITED BY THE GODS WHO HAD BEEN UNABLE TO DEFEND TROY

And these be the gods to whose protecting care the Romans were delighted to entrust their city! O too, too piteous mistake! And they are enraged at us when we speak thus about their gods, though, so far from being enraged at their own writers, they part with money to learn what they say; and, indeed, the very teachers of these authors are reckoned worthy of a salary from the public purse, and of other honors. There is Virgil, who is read by boys, in order that this great poet, this most famous and approved of all poets, may impregnate their virgin minds, and may not readily be forgotten by them, according to that saying of Horace,

“The fresh cask long keeps its first tang.”

Well, in this Virgil, I say, Juno is introduced as hostile to the Trojans, and stirring up AEolus, the king of the winds, against them in the words, “A race I hate now ploughs the sea,

Transporting Troy to Italy,

And home-gods conquered” . . .

And ought prudent men to have entrusted the defence of Rome to these conquered gods? But it will be said, this was only the saying of Juno, who, like an angry woman, did not know what she was saying. What, then, says AEneas himself,—AEneas who is so often designated “pious?” Does he not say,

“Lo! Panthus, ‘scaped from death by flight,

Priest of Apollo on the height,

His conquered gods with trembling hands

He bears, and shelter swift demands?”

Is it not clear that the gods (whom he does not scruple to call “conquered”) were rather entrusted to AEneas than he to them, when it is said to him,

“The gods of her domestic shrines

Your country to your care consigns?”

If, then, Virgil says that the gods were such as these, and were conquered, and that when conquered they could not escape except under the protection of a man, what a madness is it to suppose that Rome had been wisely entrusted to these guardians, and could not have been taken unless it had lost them! Indeed, to worship conquered gods as protectors and champions, what is this but to worship, not good divinities, but evil omens? Would it not be wiser to believe, not that Rome would never have fallen into so great a calamity had not they first perished, but rather that they would have perished long since had not Rome preserved them as long as she could? For who does not see, when he thinks of it, what a foolish assumption it is that they could not be vanquished under vanquished defenders, and that they only perished because they had lost their guardian gods, when, indeed, the only cause of their perishing was that they chose for their protectors gods condemned to perish? The poets, therefore, when they composed and sang these things about the conquered gods, had no intention to invent falsehoods, but uttered, as honest men, what the truth extorted from them. This, however, will be carefully and copiously discussed in another and more fitting place. Meanwhile I will briefly, and to the best of my ability, explain what I meant to say about these ungrateful men who blasphemously impute to Christ the calamities which they deservedly suffer in consequence of their own wicked ways, while that which is for Christ's sake spared them in spite of their wickedness they do not even take the trouble to notice; and in their mad and blasphemous insolence, they use against His name those very lips wherewith they falsely claimed that same name that their lives might be spared. In the places consecrated to Christ, where for His sake no enemy would injure them, they restrained their tongues that they might be safe and protected; but no sooner do they emerge from these sanctuaries, than they unbridle these tongues to hurl against Him curses full of hate.

CHAPTER 4

OF THE ASYLUM OF JUNO IN TROY, WHICH SAVED NO ONE FROM THE GREEKS; AND OF THE CHURCHES OF THE APOSTLES, WHICH PROTECTED FROM THE BARBARIANS ALL WHO FLED TO THEM

Troy itself, the mother of the Roman people, was not able, as I have said, to protect its own citizens in the sacred places of their gods from the fire and sword of the Greeks, though the Greeks worshipped the same gods. Not only so, but

“Phoenix and Ulysses fell

In the void courts by Juno's cell

Were set the spoils to keep;

Snatched from the burning shrines away,

There Ilium's mighty treasure lay,

Rich altars, bowls of massy gold,

And captive raiment, rudely rolled

In one promiscuous heap;

While boys and matrons, wild with fear,

In long array were standing near.”

In other words, the place consecrated to so great a goddess was chosen, not that from it none might be led out a captive, but that in it all the captives might be immured. Compare now this “asylum”—the asylum not of an ordinary god, not of one of the rank and file of gods, but of Jove’s own sister and wife, the queen of all the gods—with the churches built in memory of the apostles. Into it were collected the spoils rescued from the blazing temples and snatched from the gods, not that they might be restored to the vanquished, but divided among the victors; while into these was carried back, with the most religious observance and respect, everything which belonged to them, even though found elsewhere. There liberty was lost; here preserved. There bondage was strict; here strictly excluded. Into that temple men were driven to become the chattels of their enemies, now lording it over them; into these churches men were led by their relenting foes, that they might be at liberty. In fine, the gentle Greeks appropriated that temple of Juno to the purposes of their own avarice and pride; while these churches of Christ were chosen even by the savage barbarians as the fit scenes for humility and mercy. But perhaps, after all, the Greeks did in that victory of theirs spare the temples of those gods whom they worshipped in common with the Trojans, and did not dare to put to the sword or make captive the wretched and vanquished Trojans who fled thither; and perhaps Virgil, in the manner of poets, has depicted what never really happened? But there is no question that he depicted the usual custom of an enemy when sacking a city.

CHAPTER 5

CAESAR’S STATEMENT REGARDING THE UNIVERSAL CUSTOM OF AN ENEMY WHEN SACKING A CITY

Even Caesar himself gives us positive testimony regarding this custom; for, in his deliverance in the senate about the conspirators, he says (as Sallust, a historian of distinguished veracity, writes) “that virgins and boys are violated, children torn from the embrace of their parents, matrons subjected to whatever should be the pleasure of the conquerors, temples and houses plundered, slaughter and burning rife; in fine, all things filled with arms, corpses, blood, and wailing.” If he had not mentioned temples here, we might suppose that enemies were in the habit of sparing the dwellings of the gods. And the Roman temples were in danger of these disasters, not from foreign foes, but from Catiline and his associates, the most noble senators and citizens of Rome. But these, it may be said, were abandoned men, and the parricides of their fatherland.

CHAPTER 6

THAT NOT EVEN THE ROMANS, WHEN THEY TOOK CITIES, SPARED THE CONQUERED IN THEIR TEMPLES

Why, then, need our argument take note of the many nations who have waged wars with one another, and have nowhere spared the conquered in the temples of their gods? Let us look at the practice of the Romans themselves; let us, I say, recall and review the Romans, whose chief praise it has been “to spare the vanquished and subdue the proud,” and that they preferred “rather to forgive than to revenge an injury;” and among so many and great cities which they have stormed, taken, and overthrown for the extension of their dominion, let us be told what temples they were accustomed to exempt, so that whoever took refuge in them was free. Or have they really done this, and has the fact been suppressed by the historians of these events? Is it to be believed, that men who sought out with the greatest eagerness points they could praise, would omit those which, in their own estimation, are the most signal proofs of piety? Marcus Marcellus, a distinguished Roman, who took Syracuse, a most splendidly adorned city, is reported to have bewailed its coming ruin, and to have shed his own tears over it before he spilt its blood. He took steps also to preserve the chastity even of his enemy. For before he gave orders for the storming of the city, he issued an edict forbidding the violation of any free person. Yet the city was sacked according to the custom of war; nor do we anywhere read, that even by so chaste and gentle a commander orders were given that no one should be injured who had fled to this or that temple. And this certainly would by no means have been omitted, when neither his weeping nor his edict preservative of chastity could be passed in silence. Fabius, the conqueror of the city of Tarentum, is praised for abstaining from making booty of the images. For when his secretary proposed the question to him, what he wished done with the statues of the gods, which had been taken in large numbers, he veiled his moderation under a joke. For he asked of what sort they were; and when they reported to him that there were not only many large images, but some of them armed, “Oh,” says he, “let us leave with the Tarentines their angry gods.” Seeing, then, that the writers of Roman history could not pass in silence, neither the weeping of the one general nor the laughing of the other, neither the chaste pity of the one nor the facetious moderation of the other, on what occasion would it be omitted, if, for the honor of any of their enemy’s gods, they had shown this particular form of leniency, that in any temple slaughter or captivity was prohibited?

CHAPTER 7

THAT THE CRUELTIES WHICH OCCURRED IN THE SACK OF ROME WERE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CUSTOM OF WAR, WHEREAS THE ACTS OF CLEMENCY RESULTED FROM THE INFLUENCE OF CHRIST’S NAME

All the spoiling, then, which Rome was exposed to in the recent calamity—all the slaughter, plundering, burning, and misery—was the result of the custom of war. But what was novel, was that savage barbarians showed themselves in so gentle a guise, that the largest churches were chosen and set apart for the purpose of being filled with the people to whom quarter was given, and that in them none were slain, from them none forcibly dragged; that into them many were led by their relenting enemies to be set at liberty, and that from them none were led into slavery by merciless foes. Whoever does not see that this is to be attributed to the name of Christ, and to the Christian temper, is blind; whoever sees this, and gives no praise, is ungrateful; whoever hinders any one from praising it, is mad. Far be it from any prudent man to impute this clemency to the barbarians. Their fierce and bloody minds were awed, and bridled, and marvellously tempered by Him who so long before said by His prophet, “I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes; nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from them.”

CHAPTER 8

OF THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES WHICH OFTEN INDISCRIMINATELY ACCRUE TO GOOD AND WICKED MEN

Will some one say, Why, then, was this divine compassion extended even to the ungodly and ungrateful? Why, but because it was the mercy of Him who daily “maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” For though some of these men, taking thought of this, repent of their wickedness and reform, some, as the apostle says, “despising the riches of His goodness and long-suffering, after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds:” nevertheless does the patience of God still invite the wicked to repentance, even as the scourge of God educates the good to patience. And so, too, does the mercy of God embrace the good that it may cherish them, as the severity of God arrests the wicked to punish them. To the divine providence it has seemed good to prepare in the world to come for the righteous good things, which the unrighteous shall not enjoy; and for the wicked evil things, by which the good shall not be tormented. But as for the good things of this life, and its ills, God has willed that these should be common to both; that we might not too eagerly covet the things which wicked men are seen equally to enjoy, nor shrink with an unseemly fear from the ills which even good men often suffer.

There is, too, a very great difference in the purpose served both by those events which we call adverse and those called prosperous. For the good man is neither uplifted with the good things of time, nor broken by its ills; but the wicked man, because he is corrupted by this world’s happiness, feels himself punished by its unhappiness. Yet often, even in the present distribution of temporal things, does God plainly evince His own interference. For if every sin were now visited with manifest punishment, nothing would seem to be reserved for the final judgment; on the other hand, if no sin received now a plainly divine punishment, it would be concluded that there is no divine providence at all. And so of the good things of this life: if God did not by a very visible liberality confer these on some of those persons who ask for them, we should say that these good things were not at His disposal; and if He gave them to all who sought them, we should suppose that such were the only rewards of His service; and such a service would make us not godly, but greedy rather, and covetous. Wherefore, though good and bad men suffer alike, we must not suppose that there is no difference between the men themselves, because there is no difference in what they both suffer. For even in the likeness of the sufferings, there remains an unlikeness in the sufferers; and though exposed to the same anguish, virtue and vice are not the same thing. For as the same fire causes gold to glow brightly, and chaff to smoke; and under the same flail the straw is beaten small, while the grain is cleansed; and as the lees are not mixed with the oil, though squeezed out of the vat by the same pressure, so the same violence of affliction proves, purges, clarifies the good, but damns, ruins, exterminates the wicked. And thus it is that in the same affliction the wicked detest God and blaspheme, while the good pray and praise. So material a difference does it make, not what ills are suffered, but what kind of man suffers them. For, stirred up with the same movement, mud exhales a horrible stench, and ointment emits a fragrant odor.

CHAPTER 9

OF THE REASONS FOR ADMINISTERING CORRECTION TO BAD AND GOOD TOGETHER

What, then, have the Christians suffered in that calamitous period, which would not profit every one who duly and faithfully considered the following circumstances? First of all, they must humbly consider those very sins which have provoked God to fill the world with such terrible disasters; for although they be far from the excesses of wicked, immoral, and ungodly men, yet they do not judge themselves so clean removed from all faults as to be too good to suffer for these even temporal ills. For every man, however laudably he lives, yet yields in some points to the lust of the flesh. Though he do not fall into gross enormity of wickedness, and abandoned viciousness, and abominable profanity, yet he slips into some sins, either rarely or so much the more frequently as the sins seem of less account. But not to mention this, where can we readily find a man who holds in fit and just estimation those persons on account of whose revolting pride, luxury, and avarice, and cursed iniquities and impiety, God now smites the earth as

His predictions threatened? Where is the man who lives with them in the style in which it becomes us to live with them? For often we wickedly blind ourselves to the occasions of teaching and admonishing them, sometimes even of reprimanding and chiding them, either because we shrink from the labor or are ashamed to offend them, or because we fear to lose good friendships, lest this should stand in the way of our advancement, or injure us in some worldly matter, which either our covetous disposition desires to obtain, or our weakness shrinks from losing. So that, although the conduct of wicked men is distasteful to the good, and therefore they do not fall with them into that damnation which in the next life awaits such persons, yet, because they spare their damnable sins through fear, therefore, even though their own sins be slight and venial, they are justly scourged with the wicked in this world, though in eternity they quite escape punishment. Justly, when God afflicts them in common with the wicked, do they find this life bitter, through love of whose sweetness they declined to be bitter to these sinners.

If any one forbears to reprove and find fault with those who are doing wrong, because he seeks a more seasonable opportunity, or because he fears they may be made worse by his rebuke, or that other weak persons may be disheartened from endeavoring to lead a good and pious life, and may be driven from the faith; this man’s omission seems to be occasioned not by covetousness, but by a charitable consideration. But what is blame-worthy is, that they who themselves revolt from the conduct of the wicked, and live in quite another fashion, yet spare those faults in other men which they ought to reprehend and wean them from; and spare them because they fear to give offence, lest they should injure their interests in those things which good men may innocently and legitimately use,—though they use them more greedily than becomes persons who are strangers in this world, and profess the hope of a heavenly country. For not only the weaker brethren who enjoy married life, and have children (or desire to have them), and own houses and establishments, whom the apostle addresses in the churches, warning and instructing them how they should live, both the wives with their husbands, and the husbands with their wives, the children with their parents, and parents with their children, and servants with their masters, and masters with their servants,—not only do these weaker brethren gladly obtain and grudgingly lose many earthly and temporal things on account of which they dare not offend men whose polluted and wicked life greatly displeases them; but those also who live at a higher level, who are not entangled in the meshes of married life, but use meagre food and raiment, do often take thought of their own safety and good name, and abstain from finding fault with the wicked, because they fear their wiles and violence. And although they do not fear them to such an extent as to be drawn to the commission of like iniquities, nay, not by any threats or violence soever; yet those very deeds which they refuse to share in the commission of they often decline to find fault with, when possibly they might by finding fault prevent their commission. They abstain from interference, because they fear that, if it fail of good effect, their own safety or reputation may be damaged or destroyed; not because they see that their preservation and good name are needful, that they may be able to influence those who need their instruction, but rather because they weakly relish the flattery and respect of men, and fear the judgments of the people, and the pain or death of the body; that is to say, their non-intervention is the result of selfishness, and not of love.

Accordingly this seems to me to be one principal reason why the good are chastised along with the wicked, when God is pleased to visit with temporal punishments the profligate manners of a community. They are punished together, not because they have spent an equally corrupt life, but because the good as well as the wicked, though not equally with them, love this present life; while they ought to hold it cheap, that the wicked, being admonished and reformed by their example, might lay hold of life eternal. And if they will not be the companions of the good in seeking life everlasting, they should be loved as enemies, and be dealt with patiently. For so long as they live, it remains uncertain whether they may not come to a better mind. These selfish persons have more cause to fear than those to whom it was said through the prophet, “He is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman’s hand.” For watchmen or overseers of the people are appointed in churches, that they may unsparingly rebuke sin. Nor is that man guiltless of the sin we speak of, who, though he be not a watchman, yet sees in the conduct of those with whom the relationships of this life bring him into contact, many things that should be blamed, and yet overlooks them, fearing to give offence, and lose such worldly blessings as may legitimately be desired, but which he too eagerly grasps. Then, lastly, there is another reason why the good are afflicted with temporal calamities—the reason which Job's case exemplifies: that the human spirit may be proved, and that it may be manifested with what fortitude of pious trust, and with how unmercenary a love, it cleaves to God.

CHAPTER 10

THAT THE SAINTS LOSE NOTHING IN LOSING TEMPORAL GOODS

These are the considerations which one must keep in view, that he may answer the question whether any evil happens to the faithful and godly which cannot be turned to profit. Or shall we say that the question is needless, and that the apostle is vaporing when he says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God?"

They lost all they had. Their faith? Their godliness? The possessions of the hidden man of the heart, which in the sight of God are of great price? Did they lose these? For these are the wealth of Christians, to whom the wealthy apostle said, "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

They, then, who lost their worldly all in the sack of Rome, if they owned their possessions as they had been taught by the apostle, who himself was poor without, but rich within,—that is to say, if they used the world as not using it,—could say in the words of Job, heavily tried, but not overcome: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; as it pleased the Lord, so has it come to pass: blessed be the name of the Lord." Like a good servant, Job counted the will of his Lord his great possession, by obedience to which his soul was enriched; nor did it grieve him to lose, while yet living, those goods which he must shortly leave at his death. But as to those feebler spirits who, though they cannot be said to prefer earthly possessions to Christ, do yet cleave to them with a somewhat immoderate attachment, they have discovered by the pain of losing these things how much they were sinning in loving them. For their grief is of their own making; in the words of the apostle quoted above, “they have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” For it was well that they who had so long despised these verbal admonitions should receive the teaching of experience. For when the apostle says, “They that will be rich fall into temptation,” and so on, what he blames in riches is not the possession of them, but the desire of them. For elsewhere he says, “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” They who were making such a use of their property have been consoled for light losses by great gains, and have had more pleasure in those possessions which they have securely laid past, by freely giving them away, than grief in those which they entirely lost by an anxious and selfish hoarding of them. For nothing could perish on earth save what they would be ashamed to carry away from earth. Our Lord’s injunction runs, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” And they who have listened to this injunction have proved in the time of tribulation how well they were advised in not despising this most trustworthy teacher, and most faithful and mighty guardian of their treasure. For if many were glad that their treasure was stored in places which the enemy chanced not to light upon, how much better founded was the joy of those who, by the counsel of their God, had fled with their treasure to a citadel which no enemy can possibly reach! Thus our Paulinus, bishop of Nola, who voluntarily abandoned vast wealth and became quite poor, though abundantly rich in holiness, when the barbarians sacked Nola, and took him prisoner, used silently to pray, as he afterwards told me, “O Lord, let me not be troubled for gold and silver, for where all my treasure is Thou knowest.” For all his treasure was where he had been taught to hide and store it by Him who had also foretold that these calamities would happen in the world. Consequently those persons who obeyed their Lord when He warned them where and how to lay up treasure, did not lose even their earthly possessions in the invasion of the barbarians; while those who are now repenting that they did not obey Him have learnt the right use of earthly goods, if not by the wisdom which would have prevented their loss, at least by the experience which follows it.

But some good and Christian men have been put to the torture, that they might be forced to deliver up their goods to the enemy. They could indeed neither deliver nor lose that good which made themselves good. If, however, they preferred torture to the surrender of the mammon of iniquity, then I say they were not good men. Rather they should have been reminded that, if they suffered so severely for the sake of money, they should endure all torment, if need be, for Christ's sake; that they might be taught to love Him rather who enriches with eternal felicity all who suffer for Him, and not silver and gold, for which it was pitiable to suffer, whether they preserved it by telling a lie or lost it by telling the truth. For under these tortures no one lost Christ by confessing Him, no one preserved wealth save by denying its existence. So that possibly the torture which taught them that they should set their affections on a possession they could not lose, was more useful than those possessions which, without any useful fruit at all, disquieted and tormented their anxious owners. But then we are reminded that some were tortured who had no wealth to surrender, but who were not believed when they said so. These too, however, had perhaps some craving for wealth, and were not willingly poor with a holy resignation; and to such it had to be made plain, that not the actual possession alone, but also the desire of wealth, deserved such excruciating pains. And even if they were destitute of any hidden stores of gold and silver, because they were living in hopes of a better life,—I know not indeed if any such person was tortured on the supposition that he had wealth; but if so, then certainly in confessing, when put to the question, a holy poverty, he confessed Christ. And though it was scarcely to be expected that the barbarians should believe him, yet no confessor of a holy poverty could be tortured without receiving a heavenly reward.

Again, they say that the long famine laid many a Christian low. But this, too, the faithful turned to good uses by a pious endurance of it. For those whom famine killed outright it rescued from the ills of this life, as a kindly disease would have done; and those who were only hunger-bitten were taught to live more sparingly, and inured to longer fasts.

CHAPTER 11

OF THE END OF THIS LIFE, WHETHER IT IS MATERIAL THAT IT BE LONG DELAYED

But, it is added, many Christians were slaughtered, and were put to death in a hideous variety of cruel ways. Well, if this be hard to bear, it is assuredly the common lot of all who are born into this life. Of this at least I am certain, that no one has ever died who was not destined to die some time. Now the end of life puts the longest life on a par with the shortest. For of two things which have alike ceased to be, the one is not better, the other worse—the one greater, the other less. And of what consequence is it what kind of death puts an end to life, since he who has died once is not forced to go through the same ordeal a second time? And as in the daily casualties of life every man is, as it were, threatened with numberless deaths, so long as it remains uncertain which of them is his fate, I would ask whether it is not better to suffer one and die, than to live in fear of all? I am not unaware of the poor-spirited fear which prompts us to choose rather to live long in fear of so many deaths, than to die once and so escape them all; but the weak and cowardly shrinking of the flesh is one thing, and the well-considered and reasonable persuasion of the soul quite another. That death is not to be judged an evil which is the end of a good life; for death becomes evil only by the retribution which follows it. They, then, who are destined to die, need not be careful to inquire what death they are to die, but into what place death will usher them. And since Christians are well aware that the death of the godly pauper whose sores the dogs licked was far better than of the wicked rich man who lay in purple and fine linen, what harm could these terrific deaths do to the dead who had lived well?

CHAPTER 12

OF THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD: THAT THE DENIAL OF IT TO CHRISTIANS DOES THEM NO INJURY

Further still, we are reminded that in such a carnage as then occurred, the bodies could not even be buried. But godly confidence is not appalled by so ill-omened a circumstance; for the faithful bear in mind that assurance has been given that not a hair of their head shall perish, and that, therefore, though they even be devoured by beasts, their blessed resurrection will not hereby be hindered. The Truth would nowise have said, “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul,” if anything whatever that an enemy could do to the body of the slain could be detrimental to the future life. Or will some one perhaps take so absurd a position as to contend that those who kill the body are not to be feared before death, and lest they kill the body, but after death, lest they deprive it of burial? If this be so, then that is false which Christ says, “Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do;” for it seems they can do great injury to the dead body. Far be it from us to suppose that the Truth can be thus false. They who kill the body are said “to do something,” because the deathblow is felt, the body still having sensation; but after that, they have no more that they can do, for in the slain body there is no sensation. And so there are indeed many bodies of Christians lying unburied; but no one has separated them from heaven, nor from that earth which is all filled with the presence of Him who knows whence He will raise again what He created. It is said, indeed, in the Psalm: “The dead bodies of Thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of Thy saints unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem; and there was none to bury them.” But this was said rather to exhibit the cruelty of those who did these things, than the misery of those who suffered them. To the eyes of men this appears a harsh and doleful lot, yet “precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” Wherefore all these last offices and ceremonies that concern the dead, the careful funeral arrangements, and the equipment of the tomb, and the pomp of obsequies, are rather the solace of the living than the comfort of the dead. If a costly burial does any good to a wicked man, a squalid burial, or none at all, may harm the godly. His crowd of domestics furnished the purple-clad

Dives with a funeral gorgeous in the eye of man; but in the sight of God that was a more sumptuous funeral which the ulcerous pauper received at the hands of the angels, who did not carry him out to a marble tomb, but bore him aloft to Abraham’s bosom.

The men against whom I have undertaken to defend the city of God laugh at all this. But even their own philosophers have despised a careful burial; and often whole armies have fought and fallen for their earthly country without caring to inquire whether they would be left exposed on the field of battle, or become the food of wild beasts. Of this noble disregard of sepulture poetry has well said: “He who has no tomb has the sky for his vault.” How much less ought they to insult over the unburied bodies of Christians, to whom it has been promised that the flesh itself shall be restored, and the body formed anew, all the members of it being gathered not only from the earth, but from the most secret recesses of any other of the elements in which the dead bodies of men have lain hid!

CHAPTER 13

REASONS FOR BURYING THE BODIES OF THE SAINTS

Nevertheless the bodies of the dead are not on this account to be despised and left unburied; least of all the bodies of the righteous and faithful, which have been used by the Holy Spirit as His organs and instruments for all good works. For if the dress of a father, or his ring, or anything he wore, be precious to his children, in proportion to the love they bore him, with how much more reason ought we to care for the bodies of those we love, which they wore far more closely and intimately than any clothing! For the body is not an extraneous ornament or aid, but a part of man’s very nature. And therefore to the righteous of ancient times the last offices were piously rendered, and sepulchres provided for them, and obsequies celebrated; and they themselves, while yet alive, gave commandment to their sons about the burial, and, on occasion, even about the removal of their bodies to some favorite place. And Tobit, according to the angel’s testimony, is commended, and is said to have pleased God by burying the dead. Our Lord Himself, too, though He was to rise again the third day, applauds, and commends to our applause, the good work of the religious woman who poured precious ointment over His limbs, and did it against His burial. And the Gospel speaks with commendation of those who were careful to take down His body from the cross, and wrap it lovingly in costly cerements, and see to its burial. These instances certainly do not prove that corpses have any feeling; but they show that God's providence extends even to the bodies of the dead, and that such pious offices are pleasing to Him, as cherishing faith in the resurrection. And we may also draw from them this wholesome lesson, that if God does not forget even any kind office which loving care pays to the unconscious dead, much more does He reward the charity we exercise towards the living. Other things, indeed, which the holy patriarchs said of the burial and removal of their bodies, they meant to be taken in a prophetic sense; but of these we need not here speak at large, what we have already said being sufficient. But if the want of those things which are necessary for the support of the living, as food and clothing, though painful and trying, does not break down the fortitude and virtuous endurance of good men, nor eradicate piety from their souls, but rather renders it more fruitful, how much less can the absence of the funeral, and of the other customary attentions paid to the dead, render those wretched who are already reposing in the hidden abodes of the blessed! Consequently, though in the sack of Rome and of other towns the dead bodies of the Christians were deprived of these last offices, this is neither the fault of the living, for they could not render them; nor an infliction to the dead, for they cannot feel the loss.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE CAPTIVITY OF THE SAINTS, AND THAT DIVINE CONSOLATION NEVER FAILED THEM THEREIN

But, say they, many Christians were even led away captive. This indeed were a most pitiable fate, if they could be led away to any place where they could not find their God. But for this calamity also sacred Scripture affords great consolation. The three youths were captives; Daniel was a captive; so were other prophets: and God, the comforter, did not fail them. And in like manner He has not failed His own people in the power of a nation which, though barbarous, is yet human,—He who did not abandon the prophet in the belly of a monster. These things, indeed, are turned to ridicule rather than credited by those with whom we are debating; though they believe what they read in their own books, that Arion of Methymna, the famous lyrist, when he was thrown overboard, was received on a dolphin's back and carried to land. But that story of ours about the prophet Jonah is far more incredible,—more incredible because more marvellous, and more marvellous because a greater exhibition of power.

CHAPTER 15

OF REGULUS, IN WHOM WE HAVE AN EXAMPLE OF THE VOLUNTARY ENDURANCE OF CAPTIVITY FOR THE SAKE OF RELIGION; WHICH YET DID NOT PROFIT HIM, THOUGH HE WAS A WORSHIPPER OF THE GODS

But among their own famous men they have a very noble example of the voluntary endurance of captivity in obedience to a religious scruple. Marcus Attilius Regulus, a Roman general, was a prisoner in the hands of the Carthaginians. But they, being more anxious to exchange their prisoners with the Romans than to keep them, sent Regulus as a special envoy with their own embassadors to negotiate this exchange, but bound him first with an oath, that if he failed to accomplish their wish, he would return to Carthage. He went and persuaded the senate to the opposite course, because he believed it was not for the advantage of the Roman republic to make an exchange of prisoners. After he had thus exerted his influence, the Romans did not compel him to return to the enemy; but what he had sworn he voluntarily performed. But the Carthaginians put him to death with refined, elaborate, and horrible tortures. They shut him up in a narrow box, in which he was compelled to stand, and in which finely sharpened nails were fixed all round about him, so that he could not lean upon any part of it without intense pain; and so they killed him by depriving him of sleep. With justice, indeed, do they applaud the virtue which rose superior to so frightful a fate. However, the gods he swore by were those who are now supposed to avenge the prohibition of their worship, by inflicting these present calamities on the human race. But if these gods, who were worshipped specially in this behalf, that they might confer happiness in this life, either willed or permitted these punishments to be inflicted on one who kept his oath to them, what more cruel punishment could they in their anger have inflicted on a perjured person? But why may I not draw from my reasoning a double inference? Regulus certainly had such reverence for the gods, that for his oath's sake he would neither remain in his own land nor go elsewhere, but without hesitation returned to his bitterest enemies. If he thought that this course would be advantageous with respect to this present life, he was certainly much deceived, for it brought his life to a frightful termination. By his own example, in fact, he taught that the gods do not secure the temporal happiness of their worshippers; since he himself, who was devoted to their worship, as both conquered in battle and taken prisoner, and then, because he refused to act in violation of the oath he had sworn by them, was tortured and put to death by a new, and hitherto unheard of, and all too horrible kind of punishment. And on the supposition that the worshippers of the gods are rewarded by felicity in the life to come, why, then, do they calumniate the influence of Christianity? why do they assert that this disaster has overtaken the city because it has ceased to worship its gods, since, worship them as assiduously as it may, it may yet be as unfortunate as Regulus was? Or will some one carry so wonderful a blindness to the extent of wildly attempting, in the face of the evident truth, to contend that though one man might be unfortunate, though a worshipper of the gods, yet a whole city could not be so? That is to say, the power of their gods is better adapted to preserve multitudes than individuals,—as if a multitude were not composed of individuals.

But if they say that M. Regulus, even while a prisoner and enduring these bodily torments, might yet enjoy the blessedness of a virtuous soul, then let them recognize that true virtue by which a city also may be blessed. For the blessedness of a community and of an individual flow from the same source; for a community is nothing else than a harmonious collection of individuals. So that I am not concerned meantime to discuss what kind of virtue Regulus possessed; enough, that by his very noble example they are forced to own that the gods are to be worshipped not for the sake of bodily comforts or external advantages; for he preferred to lose all such things rather than offend the gods by whom he had sworn. But what can we make of men who glory in having such a citizen, but dread having a city like him? If they do not dread this, then let them acknowledge that some such calamity as befell Regulus may also befall a community, though they be worshipping their gods as diligently as he; and let them no longer throw the blame of their misfortunes on Christianity. But as our present concern is with those Christians who were taken prisoners, let those who take occasion from this calamity to revile our most wholesome religion in a fashion not less imprudent than impudent, consider this and hold their peace; for if it was no reproach to their gods that a most punctilious worshipper of theirs should, for the sake of keeping his oath to them, be deprived of his native land without hope of finding another, and fall into the hands of his enemies, and be put to death by a long-drawn and exquisite torture, much less ought the Christian name to be charged with the captivity of those who believe in its power, since they, in confident expectation of a heavenly country, know that they are pilgrims even in their own homes.

CHAPTER 16

OF THE VIOLATION OF THE CONSECRATED AND OTHER CHRISTIAN VIRGINS, TO WHICH THEY WERE SUBJECTED IN CAPTIVITY AND TO WHICH THEIR OWN WILL GAVE NO CONSENT; AND WHETHER THIS CONTAMINATED THEIR SOULS

But they fancy they bring a conclusive charge against Christianity, when they aggravate the horror of captivity by adding that not only wives and unmarried maidens, but even consecrated virgins, were violated. But truly, with respect to this, it is not Christian faith, nor piety, nor even the virtue of chastity, which is hemmed into any difficulty; the only difficulty is so to treat the subject as to satisfy at once modesty and reason. And in discussing it we shall not be so careful to reply to our accusers as to comfort our friends. Let this, therefore, in the first place, be laid down as an unassailable position, that the virtue which makes the life good has its throne in the soul, and thence rules the members of the body, which becomes holy in virtue of the holiness of the will; and that while the will remains firm and unshaken, nothing that another person does with the body, or upon the body, is any fault of the person who suffers it, so long as he cannot escape it without sin. But as not only pain may be inflicted, but lust gratified on the body of another, whenever anything of this latter kind takes place, shame invades even a thoroughly pure spirit from which modesty has not departed,—shame, lest that act which could not be suffered without some sensual pleasure, should be believed to have been committed also with some assent of the will.

CHAPTER 17

OF SUICIDE COMMITTED THROUGH FEAR OF PUNISHMENT OR DISHONOR

And consequently, even if some of these virgins killed themselves to avoid such disgrace, who that has any human feeling would refuse to forgive them? And as for those who would not put an end to their lives, lest they might seem to escape the crime of another by a sin of their own, he who lays this to their charge as a great wickedness is himself not guiltless of the fault of folly. For if it is not lawful to take the law into our own hands, and slay even a guilty person, whose death no public sentence has warranted, then certainly he who kills himself is a homicide, and so much the guiltier of his own death, as he was more innocent of that offence for which he doomed himself to die. Do we justly execrate the deed of Judas, and does truth itself pronounce that by hanging himself he rather aggravated than expiated the guilt of that most iniquitous betrayal, since, by despairing of God’s mercy in his sorrow that wrought death, he left to himself no place for a healing penitence? How much more ought he to abstain from laying violent hands on himself who has done nothing worthy of such a punishment! For Judas, when he killed himself, killed a wicked man; but he passed from this life chargeable not only with the death of Christ, but with his own: for though he killed himself on account of his crime, his killing himself was another crime. Why, then, should a man who has done no ill do ill to himself, and by killing himself kill the innocent to escape another’s guilty act, and perpetrate upon himself a sin of his own, that the sin of another may not be perpetrated on him?

CHAPTER 18

OF THE VIOLENCE WHICH MAY BE DONE TO THE BODY BY ANOTHER’S LUST, WHILE THE MIND REMAINS INVIOLATE

But is there a fear that even another’s lust may pollute the violated? It will not pollute, if it be another’s: if it pollute, it is not another’s, but is shared also by the polluted. But since purity is a virtue of the soul, and has for its companion virtue, the fortitude which will rather endure all ills than consent to evil; and since no one, however magnanimous and pure, has always the disposal of his own body, but can control only the consent and refusal of his will, what sane man can suppose that, if his body be seized and forcibly made use of to satisfy the lust of another, he thereby loses his purity? For if purity can be thus destroyed, then assuredly purity is no virtue of the soul; nor can it be numbered among those good things by which the life is made good, but among the good things of the body, in the same category as strength, beauty, sound and unbroken health, and, in short, all such good things as may be diminished without at all diminishing the goodness and rectitude of our life. But if purity be nothing better than these, why should the body be perilled that it may be preserved? If, on the other hand, it belongs to the soul, then not even when the body is violated is it lost. Nay more, the virtue of holy continence, when it resists the uncleanness of carnal lust, sanctifies even the body, and therefore when this continence remains unsubdued, even the sanctity of the body is preserved, because the will to use it holily remains, and, so far as lies in the body itself, the power also.

For the sanctity of the body does not consist in the integrity of its members, nor in their exemption from all touch; for they are exposed to various accidents which do violence to and wound them, and the surgeons who administer relief often perform operations that sicken the spectator. A midwife, suppose, has (whether maliciously or accidentally, or through unskillfulness) destroyed the virginity of some girl, while endeavoring to ascertain it: I suppose no one is so foolish as to believe that, by this destruction of the integrity of one organ, the virgin has lost anything even of her bodily sanctity. And thus, so long as the soul keeps this firmness of purpose which sanctifies even the body, the violence done by another’s lust makes no impression on this bodily sanctity, which is preserved intact by one’s own persistent continence. Suppose a virgin violates the oath she has sworn to God, and goes to meet her seducer with the intention of yielding to him, shall we say that as she goes she is possessed even of bodily sanctity, when already she has lost and destroyed that sanctity of soul which sanctifies the body? Far be it from us to so misapply words. Let us rather draw this conclusion, that while the sanctity of the soul remains even when the body is violated, the sanctity of the body is not lost; and that, in like manner, the sanctity of the body is lost when the sanctity of the soul is violated, though the body itself remains intact. And therefore a woman who has been violated by the sin of another, and without any consent of her own, has no cause to put herself to death; much less has she cause to commit suicide in order to avoid such violation, for in that case she commits certain homicide to prevent a crime which is uncertain as yet, and not her own.

CHAPTER 19

OF LUCRETIA, WHO PUT AN END TO HER LIFE BECAUSE OF THE OUTRAGE DONE HER

This, then, is our position, and it seems sufficiently lucid. We maintain that when a woman is violated while her soul admits no consent to the iniquity, but remains inviolably chaste, the sin is not hers, but his who violates her. But do they against whom we have to defend not only the souls, but the sacred bodies too of these outraged Christian captives,—do they, perhaps, dare to dispute our position? But all know how loudly they extol the purity of Lucretia, that noble matron of ancient Rome. When King Tarquin’s son had violated her body, she made known the wickedness of this young profligate to her husband Collatinus, and to Brutus her kinsman, men of high rank and full of courage, and bound them by an oath to avenge it. Then, heart-sick, and unable to bear the shame, she put an end to her life. What shall we call her? An adulteress, or chaste? There is no question which she was. Not more happily than truly did a declaimer say of this sad occurrence: “Here was a marvel: there were two, and only one committed adultery.” Most forcibly and truly spoken. For this declaimer, seeing in the union of the two bodies the foul lust of the one, and the chaste will of the other, and giving heed not to the contact of the bodily members, but to the wide diversity of their souls, says: “There were two, but the adultery was committed only by one.”

But how is it, that she who was no partner to the crime bears the heavier punishment of the two? For the adulterer was only banished along with his father; she suffered the extreme penalty. If that was not impurity by which she was unwillingly ravished, then this is not justice by which she, being chaste, is punished. To you I appeal, ye laws and judges of Rome. Even after the perpetration of great enormities, you do not suffer the criminal to be slain untried. If, then, one were to bring to your bar this case, and were to prove to you that a woman not only untried, but chaste and innocent, had been killed, would you not visit the murderer with punishment proportionably severe? This crime was committed by Lucretia; that Lucretia so celebrated and lauded slew the innocent, chaste, outraged Lucretia. Pronounce sentence. But if you cannot, because there does not appear any one whom you can punish, why do you extol with such unmeasured laudation her who slew an innocent and chaste woman? Assuredly you will find it impossible to defend her before the judges of the realms below, if they be such as your poets are fond of representing them; for she is among those

“Who guiltless sent themselves to doom,

And all for loathing of the day,

In madness threw their lives away.”

And if she with the others wishes to return,

“Fate bars the way: around their keep

The slow unlovely waters creep,

And bind with ninefold chain.”

Or perhaps she is not there, because she slew herself conscious of guilt, not of innocence? She herself alone knows her reason; but what if she was betrayed by the pleasure of the act, and gave some consent to Sextus, though so violently abusing her, and then was so affected with remorse, that she thought death alone could expiate her sin? Even though this were the case, she ought still to have held her hand from suicide, if she could with her false gods have accomplished a fruitful repentance. However, if such were the state of the case, and if it were false that there were two, but one only committed adultery; if the truth were that both were involved in it, one by open assault, the other by secret consent, then she did not kill an innocent woman; and therefore her erudite defenders may maintain that she is not among that class of the dwellers below “who guiltless sent themselves to doom.” But this case of Lucretia is in such a dilemma, that if you extenuate the homicide, you confirm the adultery: if you acquit her of adultery, you make the charge of homicide heavier; and there is no way out of the dilemma, when one asks, If she was adulterous, why praise her? if chaste, why slay her?

Nevertheless, for our purpose of refuting those who are unable to comprehend what true sanctity is, and who therefore insult over our outraged Christian women, it is enough that in the instance of this noble Roman matron it was said in her praise, “There were two, but the adultery was the crime of only one.” For Lucretia was confidently believed to be superior to the contamination of any consenting thought to the adultery. And accordingly, since she killed herself for being subjected to an outrage in which she had no guilty part, it is obvious that this act of hers was prompted not by the love of purity, but by the overwhelming burden of her shame. She was ashamed that so foul a crime had been perpetrated upon her, though without her abetting; and this matron, with the Roman love of glory in her veins, was seized with a proud dread that, if she continued to live, it would be supposed she willingly did not resent the wrong that had been done her. She could not exhibit to men her conscience but she judged that her self-inflicted punishment would testify her state of mind; and she burned with shame at the thought that her patient endurance of the foul affront that another had done her, should be construed into complicity with him. Not such was the decision of the Christian women who suffered as she did, and yet survive. They declined to avenge upon themselves the guilt of others, and so add crimes of their own to those crimes in which they had no share. For this they would have done had their shame driven them to homicide, as the lust of their enemies had driven them to adultery. Within their own souls, in the witness of their own conscience, they enjoy the glory of chastity. In the sight of God, too, they are esteemed pure, and this contents them; they ask no more: it suffices them to have opportunity of doing good, and they decline to evade the distress of human suspicion, lest they thereby deviate from the divine law.

CHAPTER 20

THAT CHRISTIANS HAVE NO AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTING SUICIDE IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCES WHATEVER

It is not without significance, that in no passage of the holy canonical books there can be found either divine precept or permission to take away our own life, whether for the sake of entering on the enjoyment of immortality, or of shunning, or ridding ourselves of anything whatever. Nay, the law, rightly interpreted, even prohibits suicide, where it says, “Thou shalt not kill.” This is proved especially by the omission of the words “thy neighbor,” which are inserted when false witness is forbidden: “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.” Nor yet should any one on this account suppose he has not broken this commandment if he has borne false witness only against himself. For the love of our neighbor is regulated by the love of ourselves, as it is written, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” If, then, he who makes false statements about himself is not less guilty of bearing false witness than if he had made them to the injury of his neighbor; although in the commandment prohibiting false witness only his neighbor is mentioned, and persons taking no pains to understand it might suppose that a man was allowed to be a false witness to his own hurt; how much greater reason have we to understand that a man may not kill himself, since in the commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” there is no limitation added nor any exception made in favor of any one, and least of all in favor of him on whom the command is laid! And so some attempt to extend this command even to beasts and cattle, as if it forbade us to take life from any creature. But if so, why not extend it also to the plants, and all that is rooted in and nourished by the earth? For though this class of creatures have no sensation, yet they also are said to live, and consequently they can die; and therefore, if violence be done them, can be killed. So, too, the apostle, when speaking of the seeds of such things as these, says, “That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die;” and in the Psalm it is said, “He killed their vines with hail.” Must we therefore reckon it a breaking of this commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” to pull a flower? Are we thus insanely to countenance the foolish error of the Manichaeans? Putting aside, then, these ravings, if, when we say, Thou shalt not kill, we do not understand this of the plants, since they have no sensation, nor of the irrational animals that fly, swim, walk, or creep, since they are dissociated from us by their want of reason, and are therefore by the just appointment of the Creator subjected to us to kill or keep alive for our own uses; if so, then it remains that we understand that commandment simply of man. The commandment is, “Thou shall not kill man;” therefore neither another nor yourself, for he who kills himself still kills nothing else than man.

CHAPTER 21

OF THE CASES IN WHICH WE MAY PUT MEN TO DEATH WITHOUT INCURRING THE GUILT OF MURDER

However, there are some exceptions made by the divine authority to its own law, that men may not be put to death. These exceptions are of two kinds, being justified either by a general law, or by a special commission granted for a time to some individual. And in this latter case, he to whom authority is delegated, and who is but the sword in the hand of him who uses it, is not himself responsible for the death he deals. And, accordingly, they who have waged war in obedience to the divine command, or in conformity with His laws, have represented in their persons the public justice or the wisdom of government, and in this capacity have put to death wicked men; such persons have by no means violated the commandment, “Thou shalt not kill.” Abraham indeed was not merely deemed guiltless of cruelty, but was even applauded for his piety, because he was ready to slay his son in obedience to God, not to his own passion. And it is reasonably enough made a question, whether we are to esteem it to have been in compliance with a command of God that Jephthah killed his daughter, because she met him when he had vowed that he would sacrifice to God whatever first met him as he returned victorious from battle. Samson, too, who drew down the house on himself and his foes together, is justified only on this ground, that the Spirit who wrought wonders by him had given him secret instructions to do this. With the exception, then, of these two classes of cases, which are justified either by a just law that applies generally, or by a special intimation from God Himself, the fountain of all justice, whoever kills a man, either himself or another, is implicated in the guilt of murder.

CHAPTER 22

THAT SUICIDE CAN NEVER BE PROMPTED BY MAGNANIMITY

But they who have laid violent hands on themselves are perhaps to be admired for their greatness of soul, though they cannot be applauded for the soundness of their judgment. However, if you look at the matter more closely, you will scarcely call it greatness of soul, which prompts a man to kill himself rather than bear up against some hardships of fortune, or sins in which he is not implicated. Is it not rather proof of a feeble mind, to be unable to bear either the pains of bodily servitude or the foolish opinion of the vulgar? And is not that to be pronounced the greater mind, which rather faces than flees the ills of life, and which, in comparison of the light and purity of conscience, holds in small esteem the judgment of men, and specially of the vulgar, which is frequently involved in a mist of error? And, therefore, if suicide is to be esteemed a magnanimous act, none can take higher rank for magnanimity than that Cleombrotus, who (as the story goes), when he had read Plato's book in which he treats of the immortality of the soul, threw himself from a wall, and so passed from this life to that which he believed to be better. For he was not hard pressed by calamity, nor by any accusation, false or true, which he could not very well have lived down; there was, in short, no motive but only magnanimity urging him to seek death, and break away from the sweet detention of this life. And yet that this was a magnanimous rather than a justifiable action, Plato himself, whom he had read, would have told him; for he would certainly have been forward to commit, or at least to recommend suicide, had not the same bright intellect which saw that the soul was immortal, discerned also that to seek immortality by suicide was to be prohibited rather than encouraged.

Again, it is said many have killed themselves to prevent an enemy doing so. But we are not inquiring whether it has been done, but whether it ought to have been done. Sound judgment is to be preferred even to examples, and indeed examples harmonize with the voice of reason; but not all examples, but those only which are distinguished by their piety, and are proportionately worthy of imitation. For suicide we cannot cite the example of patriarchs, prophets, or apostles; though our Lord Jesus Christ, when He admonished them to flee from city to city if they were persecuted, might very well have taken that occasion to advise them to lay violent hands on themselves, and so escape their persecutors. But seeing He did not do this, nor proposed this mode of departing this life, though He were addressing His own friends for whom He had promised to prepare everlasting mansions, it is obvious that such examples as are produced from the “nations that forget God,” give no warrant of imitation to the worshippers of the one true God.

CHAPTER 23

WHAT WE ARE TO THINK OF THE EXAMPLE OF CATO, WHO SLEW HIMSELF BECAUSE UNABLE TO ENDURE CAESAR’S VICTORY

Besides Lucretia, of whom enough has already been said, our advocates of suicide have some difficulty in finding any other prescriptive example, unless it be that of Cato, who killed himself at Utica. His example is appealed to, not because he was the only man who did so, but because he was so esteemed as a learned and excellent man, that it could plausibly be maintained that what he did was and is a good thing to do. But of this action of his, what can I say but that his own friends, enlightened men as he, prudently dissuaded him, and therefore judged his act to be that of a feeble rather than a strong spirit, and dictated not by honorable feeling forestalling shame, but by weakness shrinking from hardships? Indeed, Cato condemns himself by the advice he gave to his dearly loved son. For if it was a disgrace to live under Caesar’s rule, why did the father urge the son to this disgrace, by encouraging him to trust absolutely to Caesar’s generosity? Why did he not persuade him to die along with himself? If Torquatus was applauded for putting his son to death, when contrary to orders he had engaged, and engaged successfully, with the enemy, why did conquered Cato spare his conquered son, though he did not spare himself? Was it more disgraceful to be a victor contrary to orders, than to submit to a victor contrary to the received ideas of honor? Cato, then, cannot have deemed it to be shameful to live under Caesar’s rule; for had he done so, the father’s sword would have delivered his son from this disgrace. The truth is, that his son, whom he both hoped and desired would be spared by Caesar, was not more loved by him than Caesar was envied the glory of pardoning him (as indeed Caesar himself is reported to have said); or if envy is too strong a word, let us say he was ashamed that this glory should be his.

CHAPTER 24

THAT IN THAT VIRTUE IN WHICH REGULUS EXCELS CATO, CHRISTIANS ARE PRE-EMINENTLY DISTINGUISHED

Our opponents are offended at our preferring to Cato the saintly Job, who endured dreadful evils in his body rather than deliver himself from all torment by self-inflicted death; or other saints, of whom it is recorded in our authoritative and trustworthy books that they bore captivity and the oppression of their enemies rather than commit suicide. But their own books authorize us to prefer to Marcus Cato, Marcus Regulus. For Cato had never conquered Caesar; and when conquered by him, disdained to submit himself to him, and that he might escape this submission put himself to death. Regulus, on the contrary, had formerly conquered the Carthaginians, and in command of the army of Rome had won for the Roman republic a victory which no citizen could bewail, and which the enemy himself was constrained to admire; yet afterwards, when he in his turn was defeated by them, he preferred to be their captive rather than to put himself beyond their reach by suicide. Patient under the domination of the Carthaginians, and constant in his love of the Romans, he neither deprived the one of his conquered body, nor the other of his unconquered spirit. Neither was it love of life that prevented him from killing himself. This was plainly enough indicated by his unhesitatingly returning, on account of his promise and oath, to the same enemies whom he had more grievously provoked by his words in the senate than even by his arms in battle. Having such a contempt of life, and preferring to end it by whatever torments excited enemies might contrive, rather than terminate it by his own hand, he could not more distinctly have declared how great a crime he judged suicide to be. Among all their famous and remarkable citizens, the Romans have no better man to boast of than this, who was neither corrupted by prosperity, for he remained a very poor man after winning such victories; nor broken by adversity, for he returned intrepidly to the most miserable end. But if the bravest and most renowned heroes, who had but an earthly country to defend, and who, though they had but false gods, yet rendered them a true worship, and carefully kept their oath to them; if these men, who by the custom and right of war put conquered enemies to the sword, yet shrank from putting an end to their own lives even when conquered by their enemies; if, though they had no fear at all of death, they would yet rather suffer slavery than commit suicide, how much rather must Christians, the worshippers of the true God, the aspirants to a heavenly citizenship, shrink from this act, if in God’s providence they have been for a season delivered into the hands of their enemies to prove or to correct them! And certainly, Christians subjected to this humiliating condition will not be deserted by the Most High, who for their sakes humbled Himself. Neither should they forget that they are bound by no laws of war, nor military orders, to put even a conquered enemy to the sword; and if a man may not put to death the enemy who has sinned, or may yet sin against him, who is so infatuated as to maintain that he may kill himself because an enemy has sinned, or is going to sin, against him?

CHAPTER 25

THAT WE SHOULD NOT ENDEAVOR BY SIN TO OBVIATE SIN

But, we are told, there is ground to fear that, when the body is subjected to the enemy’s lust, the insidious pleasure of sense may entice the soul to consent to the sin, and steps must be taken to prevent so disastrous a result. And is not suicide the proper mode of preventing not only the enemy’s sin, but the sin of the Christian so allured? Now, in the first place, the soul which is led by God and His wisdom, rather than by bodily concupiscence, will certainly never consent to the desire aroused in its own flesh by another’s lust. And, at all events, if it be true, as the truth plainly declares, that suicide is a detestable and damnable wickedness, who is such a fool as to say, Let us sin now, that we may obviate a possible future sin; let us now commit murder, lest we perhaps afterwards should commit adultery? If we are so controlled by iniquity that innocence is out of the question, and we can at best but make a choice of sins, is not a future and uncertain adultery preferable to a present and certain murder? Is it not better to commit a wickedness which penitence may heal, than a crime which leaves no place for healing contrition? I say this for the sake of those men or women who fear they may be enticed into consenting to their violator’s lust, and think they should lay violent hands on themselves, and so prevent, not another’s sin, but their own. But far be it from the mind of a Christian confiding in God, and resting in the hope of His aid; far be it, I say, from such a mind to yield a shameful consent to pleasures of the flesh, howsoever presented. And if that lustful disobedience, which still dwells in our mortal members, follows its own law irrespective of our will, surely its motions in the body of one who rebels against them are as blameless as its motions in the body of one who sleeps.

CHAPTER 26

THAT IN CERTAIN PECULIAR CASES THE EXAMPLES OF THE SAINTS ARE NOT TO BE FOLLOWED

But, they say, in the time of persecution some holy women escaped those who menaced them with outrage, by casting themselves into rivers which they knew would drown them; and having died in this manner, they are venerated in the church catholic as martyrs. Of such persons I do not presume to speak rashly. I cannot tell whether there may not have been vouchsafed to the church some divine authority, proved by trustworthy evidences, for so honoring their memory: it may be that it is so. It may be they were not deceived by human judgment, but prompted by divine wisdom, to their act of self-destruction. We know that this was the case with Samson. And when God enjoins any act, and intimates by plain evidence that He has enjoined it, who will call obedience criminal? Who will accuse so religious a submission? But then every man is not justified in sacrificing his son to God, because Abraham was commendable in so doing. The soldier who has slain a man in obedience to the authority under which he is lawfully commissioned, is not accused of murder by any law of his state; nay, if he has not slain him, it is then he is accused of treason to the state, and of despising the law. But if he has been acting on his own authority, and at his own impulse, he has in this case incurred the crime of shedding human blood. And thus he is punished for doing without orders the very thing he is punished for neglecting to do when he has been ordered. If the commands of a general make so great a difference, shall the commands of God make none? He, then, who knows it is unlawful to kill himself, may nevertheless do so if he is ordered by Him whose commands we may not neglect. Only let him be very sure that the divine command has been signified. As for us, we can become privy to the secrets of conscience only in so far as these are disclosed to us, and so far only do we judge: “No one knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him.” But this we affirm, this we maintain, this we every way pronounce to be right, that no man ought to inflict on himself voluntary death, for this is to escape the ills of time by plunging into those of eternity; that no man ought to do so on account of another man’s sins, for this were to escape a guilt which could not pollute him, by incurring great guilt of his own; that no man ought to do so on account of his own past sins, for he has all the more need of this life that these sins may be healed by repentance; that no man should put an end to this life to obtain that better life we look for after death, for those who die by their own hand have no better life after death.

CHAPTER 27

WHETHER VOLUNTARY DEATH SHOULD BE SOUGHT IN ORDER TO AVOID SIN

There remains one reason for suicide which I mentioned before, and which is thought a sound one,—namely, to prevent one's falling into sin either through the blandishments of pleasure or the violence of pain. If this reason were a good one, then we should be impelled to exhort men at once to destroy themselves, as soon as they have been washed in the laver of regeneration, and have received the forgiveness of all sin. Then is the time to escape all future sin, when all past sin is blotted out. And if this escape be lawfully secured by suicide, why not then specially? Why does any baptized person hold his hand from taking his own life? Why does any person who is freed from the hazards of this life again expose himself to them, when he has power so easily to rid himself of them all, and when it is written, "He who loveth danger shall fall into it?" Why does he love, or at least face, so many serious dangers, by remaining in this life from which he may legitimately depart? But is any one so blinded and twisted in his moral nature, and so far astray from the truth, as to think that, though a man ought to make away with himself for fear of being led into sin by the oppression of one man, his master, he ought yet to live, and so expose himself to the hourly temptations of this world, both to all those evils which the oppression of one master involves, and to numberless other miseries in which this life inevitably implicates us? What reason, then, is there for our consuming time in those exhortations by which we seek to animate the baptized, either to virginal chastity, or vidual continence, or matrimonial fidelity, when we have so much more simple and compendious a method of deliverance from sin, by persuading those who are fresh from baptism to put an end to their lives, and so pass to their Lord pure and well-conditioned? If any one thinks that such persuasion should be attempted, I say not he is foolish, but mad. With what face, then, can he say to any man, "Kill yourself, lest to your small sins you add a heinous sin, while you live under an unchaste master, whose conduct is that of a barbarian?” How can he say this, if he cannot without wickedness say, “Kill yourself, now that you are washed from all your sins, lest you fall again into similar or even aggravated sins, while you live in a world which has such power to allure by its unclean pleasures, to torment by its horrible cruelties, to overcome by its errors and terrors?” It is wicked to say this; it is therefore wicked to kill oneself. For if there could be any just cause of suicide, this were so. And since not even this is so, there is none.

CHAPTER 28

BY WHAT JUDGMENT OF GOD THE ENEMY WAS PERMITTED TO INDULGE HIS LUST ON THE BODIES OF CONTINENT CHRISTIANS

Let not your life, then, be a burden to you, ye faithful servants of Christ, though your chastity was made the sport of your enemies. You have a grand and true consolation, if you maintain a good conscience, and know that you did not consent to the sins of those who were permitted to commit sinful outrage upon you. And if you should ask why this permission was granted, indeed it is a deep providence of the Creator and Governor of the world; and “unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out.” Nevertheless, faithfully interrogate your own souls, whether ye have not been unduly puffed up by your integrity, and continence, and chastity; and whether ye have not been so desirous of the human praise that is accorded to these virtues, that ye have envied some who possessed them. I, for my part, do not know your hearts, and therefore I make no accusation; I do not even hear what your hearts answer when you question them. And yet, if they answer that it is as I have supposed it might be, do not marvel that you have lost that by which you can win men’s praise, and retain that which cannot be exhibited to men. If you did not consent to sin, it was because God added His aid to His grace that it might not be lost, and because shame before men succeeded to human glory that it might not be loved. But in both respects even the faint-hearted among you have a consolation, approved by the one experience, chastened by the other; justified by the one, corrected by the other. As to those whose hearts, when interrogated, reply that they have never been proud of the virtue of virginity, widowhood, or matrimonial chastity, but, condescending to those of low estate, rejoiced with trembling in these gifts of God, and that they have never envied any one the like excellences of sanctity and purity, but rose superior to human applause, which is wont to be abundant in proportion to the rarity of the virtue applauded, and rather desired that their own number be increased, than that by the smallness of their numbers each of them should be conspicuous;—even such faithful women, I say, must not complain that permission was given to the barbarians so grossly to outrage them; nor must they allow themselves to believe that God overlooked their character when He permitted acts which no one with impunity commits. For some most flagrant and wicked desires are allowed free play at present by the secret judgment of God, and are reserved to the public and final judgment. Moreover, it is possible that those Christian women, who are unconscious of any undue pride on account of their virtuous chastity, whereby they sinlessly suffered the violence of their captors, had yet some lurking infirmity which might have betrayed them into a proud and contemptuous bearing, had they not been subjected to the humiliation that befell them in the taking of the city. As, therefore, some men were removed by death, that no wickedness might change their disposition, so these women were outraged lest prosperity should corrupt their modesty. Neither those women then, who were already puffed up by the circumstance that they were still virgins, nor those who might have been so puffed up had they not been exposed to the violence of the enemy, lost their chastity, but rather gained humility; the former were saved from pride already cherished, the latter from pride that would shortly have grown upon them.

We must further notice that some of those sufferers may have conceived that continence is a bodily good, and abides so long as the body is inviolate, and did not understand that the purity both of the body and the soul rests on the steadfastness of the will strengthened by God’s grace, and cannot be forcibly taken from an unwilling person. From this error they are probably now delivered. For when they reflect how conscientiously they served God, and when they settle again to the firm persuasion that He can in nowise desert those who so serve Him, and so invoke His aid and when they consider, what they cannot doubt, how pleasing to Him is chastity, they are shut up to the conclusion that He could never have permitted these disasters to befall His saints, if by them that saintliness could be destroyed which He Himself had bestowed upon them, and delights to see in them.

CHAPTER 29

WHAT THE SERVANTS OF CHRIST SHOULD SAY IN REPLY TO THE UNBELIEVERS WHO CAST IN THEIR TEETH THAT CHRIST DID NOT RESCUE THEM FROM THE FURY OF THEIR ENEMIES

The whole family of God, most high and most true, has therefore a consolation of its own,—a consolation which cannot deceive, and which has in it a surer hope than the tottering and falling affairs of earth can afford. They will not refuse the discipline of this temporal life, in which they are schooled for life eternal; nor will they lament their experience of it, for the good things of earth they use as pilgrims who are not detained by them, and its ills either prove or improve them. As for those who insult over them in their trials, and when ills befall them say, “Where is thy God?” we may ask them where their gods are when they suffer the very calamities for the sake of avoiding which they worship their gods, or maintain they ought to be worshipped; for the family of Christ is furnished with its reply: our God is everywhere present, wholly everywhere; not confined to any place. He can be present unperceived, and be absent without moving; when He exposes us to adversities, it is either to prove our perfections or correct our imperfections; and in return for our patient endurance of the sufferings of time, He reserves for us an everlasting reward. But who are you, that we should deign to speak with you even about your own gods, much less about our God, who is “to be feared above all gods? For all the gods of the nations are idols; but the Lord made the heavens.”

CHAPTER 30

THAT THOSE WHO COMPLAIN OF CHRISTIANITY REALLY DESIRE TO LIVE WITHOUT RESTRAINT IN SHAMEFUL LUXURY

If the famous Scipio Nasica were now alive, who was once your pontiff, and was unanimously chosen by the senate, when, in the panic created by the Punic war, they sought for the best citizen to entertain the Phrygian goddess, he would curb this shamelessness of yours, though you would perhaps scarcely dare to look upon the countenance of such a man. For why in your calamities do you complain of Christianity, unless because you desire to enjoy your luxurious license unrestrained, and to lead an abandoned and profligate life without the interruption of any uneasiness or disaster? For certainly your desire for peace, and prosperity, and plenty is not prompted by any purpose of using these blessings honestly, that is to say, with moderation, sobriety, temperance, and piety; for your purpose rather is to run riot in an endless variety of sottish pleasures, and thus to generate from your prosperity a moral pestilence which will prove a thousandfold more disastrous than the fiercest enemies. It was such a calamity as this that Scipio, your chief pontiff, your best man in the judgment of the whole senate, feared when he refused to agree to the destruction of Carthage, Rome's rival and opposed Cato, who advised its destruction. He feared security, that enemy of weak minds, and he perceived that a wholesome fear would be a fit guardian for the citizens. And he was not mistaken; the event proved how wisely he had spoken. For when Carthage was destroyed, and the Roman republic delivered from its great cause of anxiety, a crowd of disastrous evils forthwith resulted from the prosperous condition of things. First concord was weakened, and destroyed by fierce and bloody seditions; then followed, by a concatenation of baleful causes, civil wars, which brought in their train such massacres, such bloodshed, such lawless and cruel proscription and plunder, that those Romans who, in the days of their virtue, had expected injury only at the hands of their enemies, now that their virtue was lost, suffered greater cruelties at the hands of their fellow-citizens. The lust of rule, which with other vices existed among the Romans in more unmitigated intensity than among any other people, after it had taken possession of the more powerful few, subdued under its yoke the rest, worn and wearied.

CHAPTER 31

BY WHAT STEPS THE PASSION FOR GOVERNING INCREASED AMONG THE ROMANS

For at what stage would that passion rest when once it has lodged in a proud spirit, until by a succession of advances it has reached even the throne. And to obtain such advances nothing avails but unscrupulous ambition. But unscrupulous ambition has nothing to work upon, save in a nation corrupted by avarice and luxury. Moreover, a people becomes avaricious and luxurious by prosperity; and it was this which that very prudent man Nasica was endeavouring to avoid when he opposed the destruction of the greatest, strongest, wealthiest city of Rome’s enemy. He thought that thus fear would act as a curb on lust, and that lust being curbed would not run riot in luxury, and that luxury being prevented avarice would be at an end; and that these vices being banished, virtue would flourish and increase the great profit of the state; and liberty, the fit companion of virtue, would abide unfettered. For similar reasons, and animated by the same considerate patriotism, that same chief pontiff of yours—I still refer to him who was adjudged Rome’s best man without one dissentient voice—threw cold water on the proposal of the senate to build a circle of seats round the theatre, and in a very weighty speech warned them against allowing the luxurious manners of Greece to sap the Roman manliness, and persuaded them not to yield to the enervating and emasculating influence of foreign licentiousness. So authoritative and forcible were his words, that the senate was moved to prohibit the use even of those benches which hitherto had been customarily brought to the theatre for the temporary use of the citizens. How eagerly would such a man as this have banished from Rome the scenic exhibitions themselves, had he dared to oppose the authority of those whom he supposed to be gods! For he did not know that they were malicious devils; or if he did, he supposed they should rather be propitiated than despised. For there had not yet been revealed to the Gentiles the heavenly doctrine which should purify their hearts by faith, and transform their natural disposition by humble godliness, and turn them from the service of proud devils to seek the things that are in heaven, or even above the heavens.

CHAPTER 32

OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SCENIC ENTERTAINMENTS

Know then, ye who are ignorant of this, and ye who feign ignorance be reminded, while you murmur against Him who has freed you from such rulers, that the scenic games, exhibitions of shameless folly and license, were established at Rome, not by men’s vicious cravings, but by the appointment of your gods. Much more pardonably might you have rendered divine honors to Scipio than to such gods as these. The gods were not so moral as their pontiff. But give me now your attention, if your mind, inebriated by its deep potations of error, can take in any sober truth. The gods enjoined that games be exhibited in their honor to stay a physical pestilence; their pontiff prohibited the theatre from being constructed, to prevent a moral pestilence. If, then, there remains in you sufficient mental enlightenment to prefer the soul to the body, choose whom you will worship. Besides, though the pestilence was stayed, this was not because the voluptuous madness of stage-plays had taken possession of a warlike people hitherto accustomed only to the games of the circus; but these astute and wicked spirits, foreseeing that in due course the pestilence would shortly cease, took occasion to infect, not the bodies, but the morals of their worshippers, with a far more serious disease. And in this pestilence these gods find great enjoyment, because it benighted the minds of men with so gross a darkness and dishonored them with so foul a deformity, that even quite recently (will posterity be able to credit it?) some of those who fled from the sack of Rome and found refuge in Carthage, were so infected with this disease, that day after day they seemed to contend with one another who should most madly run after the actors in the theatres.

CHAPTER 33

THAT THE OVERTHROW OF ROME HAS NOT CORRECTED THE VICES OF THE ROMANS

Oh infatuated men, what is this blindness, or rather madness, which possesses you? How is it that while, as we hear, even the eastern nations are bewailing your ruin, and while powerful states in the most remote parts of the earth are mourning your fall as a public calamity, ye yourselves should be crowding to the theatres, should be pouring into them and filling them; and, in short, be playing a madder part now than ever before? This was the foul plague-spot, this the wreck of virtue and honor that Scipio sought to preserve you from when he prohibited the construction of theatres; this was his reason for desiring that you might still have an enemy to fear, seeing as he did how easily prosperity would corrupt and destroy you. He did not consider that republic flourishing whose walls stand, but whose morals are in ruins. But the seductions of evil-minded devils had more influence with you than the precautions of prudent men. Hence the injuries you do, you will not permit to be imputed to you: but the injuries you suffer, you impute to Christianity. Depraved by good fortune, and not chastened by adversity, what you desire in the restoration of a peaceful and secure state, is not the tranquillity of the commonwealth, but the impunity of your own vicious luxury. Scipio wished you to be hard pressed by an enemy, that you might not abandon yourselves to luxurious manners; but so abandoned are you, that not even when crushed by the enemy is your luxury repressed. You have missed the profit of your calamity; you have been made most wretched, and have remained most profligate.

CHAPTER 34

OF GOD'S CLEMENCY IN MODERATING THE RUIN OF THE CITY

And that you are yet alive is due to God, who spares you that you may be admonished to repent and reform your lives. It is He who has permitted you, ungrateful as you are, to escape the sword of the enemy, by calling yourselves His servants, or by finding asylum in the sacred places of the martyrs.

It is said that Romulus and Remus, in order to increase the population of the city they founded, opened a sanctuary in which every man might find asylum and absolution of all crime,—a remarkable foreshadowing of what has recently occurred in honor of Christ. The destroyers of Rome followed the example of its founders. But it was not greatly to their credit that the latter, for the sake of increasing the number of their citizens, did that which the former have done, lest the number of their enemies should be diminished.

CHAPTER 35

OF THE SONS OF THE CHURCH WHO ARE HIDDEN AMONG THE WICKED, AND OF FALSE CHRISTIANS WITHIN THE CHURCH

Let these and similar answers (if any fuller and fitter answers can be found) be given to their enemies by the redeemed family of the Lord Christ, and by the pilgrim city of King Christ. But let this city bear in mind, that among her enemies lie hid those who are destined to be fellow-citizens, that she may not think it a fruitless labor to bear what they inflict as enemies until they become confessors of the faith. So, too, as long as she is a stranger in the world, the city of God has in her communion, and bound to her by the sacraments, some who shall not eternally dwell in the lot of the saints. Of these, some are not now recognized; others declare themselves, and do not hesitate to make common cause with our enemies in murmuring against God, whose sacramental badge they wear. These men you may to-day see thronging the churches with us, to-morrow crowding the theatres with the godless. But we have the less reason to despair of the reclamation even of such persons, if among our most declared enemies there are now some, unknown to themselves, who are destined to become our friends. In truth, these two cities are entangled together in this world, and intermixed until the last judgment effects their separation. I now proceed to speak, as God shall help me, of the rise, progress, and end of these two cities; and what I write, I write for the glory of the city of God, that, being placed in comparison with the other, it may shine with a brighter lustre.

CHAPTER 36

WHAT SUBJECTS ARE TO BE HANDLED IN THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSE

But I have still some things to say in confutation of those who refer the disasters of the Roman republic to our religion, because it prohibits the offering of sacrifices to the gods. For this end I must recount all, or as many as may seem sufficient, of the disasters which befell that city and its subject provinces, before these sacrifices were prohibited; for all these disasters they would doubtless have attributed to us, if at that time our religion had shed its light upon them, and had prohibited their sacrifices. I must then go on to show what social well-being the true God, in whose hand are all kingdoms, vouchsafed to grant to them that their empire might increase. I must show why He did so, and how their false gods, instead of at all aiding them, greatly injured them by guile and deceit. And, lastly, I must meet those who, when on this point convinced and confuted by irrefragable proofs, endeavor to maintain that they worship the gods, not hoping for the present advantages of this life, but for those which are to be enjoyed after death. And this, if I am not mistaken, will be the most difficult part of my task, and will be worthy of the loftiest argument; for we must then enter the lists with the philosophers, not the mere common herd of philosophers, but the most renowned, who in many points agree with ourselves, as regarding the immortality of the soul, and that the true God created the world, and by His providence rules all He has created. But as they differ from us on other points, we must not shrink from the task of exposing their errors, that, having refuted the gainsaying of the wicked with such ability as God may vouchsafe, we may assert the city of God, and true piety, and the worship of God, to which alone the promise of true and everlasting felicity is attached. Here, then, let us conclude, that we may enter on these subjects in a fresh book.

Book II

Argument—In this book Augustin reviews those calamities which the Romans suffered before the time of Christ, and while the worship of the false gods was universally practised; and demonstrates that, far from being preserved from misfortune by the gods, the Romans have been by them overwhelmed with the only, or at least the greatest, of all calamities—the corruption of manners, and the vices of the soul.

CHAPTER 1

OF THE LIMITS WHICH MUST BE PUT TO THE NECESSITY OF REPLYING TO AN ADVERSARY

If the feeble mind of man did not presume to resist the clear evidence of truth, but yielded its infirmity to wholesome doctrines, as to a health-giving medicine, until it obtained from God, by its faith and piety, the grace needed to heal it, they who have just ideas, and express them in suitable language, would need to use no long discourse to refute the errors of empty conjecture. But this mental infirmity is now more prevalent and hurtful than ever, to such an extent that even after the truth has been as fully demonstrated as man can prove it to man, they hold for the very truth their own unreasonable fancies, either on account of their great blindness, which prevents them from seeing what is plainly set before them, or on account of their opinionative obstinacy, which prevents them from acknowledging the force of what they do see. There therefore frequently arises a necessity of speaking more fully on those points which are already clear, that we may, as it were, present them not to the eye, but even to the touch, so that they may be felt even by those who close their eyes against them. And yet to what end shall we ever bring our discussions, or what bounds can be set to our discourse, if we proceed on the principle that we must always reply to those who reply to us? For those who are either unable to understand our arguments, or are so hardened by the habit of contradiction, that though they understand they cannot yield to them, reply to us, and, as it is written, “speak hard things,” and are incorrigibly vain. Now, if we were to propose to confute their objections as often as they with brazen face chose to disregard our arguments, and so often as they could by any means contradict our statements, you see how endless, and fruitless, and painful a task we should be undertaking. And therefore I do not wish my writings to be judged even by you, my son Marcellinus, nor by any of those others at whose service this work of mine is freely and in all Christian charity put, if at least you intend always to require a reply to every exception which you hear taken to what you read in it; for so you would become like those silly women of whom the apostle says that they are “always learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

CHAPTER 2

RECAPITULATION OF THE CONTENTS OF THE FIRST BOOK

In the foregoing book, having begun to speak of the city of God, to which I have resolved, Heaven helping me, to consecrate the whole of this work, it was my first endeavor to reply to those who attribute the wars by which the world is being devastated, and especially the recent sack of Rome by the barbarians, to the religion of Christ, which prohibits the offering of abominable sacrifices to devils. I have shown that they ought rather to attribute it to Christ, that for His name’s sake the barbarians, in contravention of all custom and law of war, threw open as sanctuaries the largest churches, and in many instances showed such reverence to Christ, that not only His genuine servants, but even those who in their terror feigned themselves to be so, were exempted from all those hardships which by the custom of war may lawfully be inflicted. Then out of this there arose the question, why wicked and ungrateful men were permitted to share in these benefits; and why, too, the hardships and calamities of war were inflicted on the godly as well as on the ungodly. And in giving a suitably full answer to this large question, I occupied some considerable space, partly that I might relieve the anxieties which disturb many when they observe that the blessings of God, and the common and daily human casualties, fall to the lot of bad men and good without distinction; but mainly that I might minister some consolation to those holy and chaste women who were outraged by the enemy, in such a way as to shock their modesty, though not to sully their purity, and that I might preserve them from being ashamed of life, though they have no guilt to be ashamed of. And then I briefly spoke against those who with a most shameless wantonness insult over those poor Christians who were subjected to those calamities, and especially over those broken-hearted and humiliated, though chaste and holy women; these fellows themselves being most depraved and unmanly profligates, quite degenerate from the genuine Romans, whose famous deeds are abundantly recorded in history, and everywhere celebrated, but who have found in their descendants the greatest enemies of their glory. In truth, Rome, which was founded and increased by the labors of these ancient heroes, was more shamefully ruined by their descendants, while its walls were still standing, than it is now by the razing of them. For in this ruin there fell stones and timbers; but in the ruin those profligates effected, there fell, not the mural, but the moral bulwarks and ornaments of the city, and their hearts burned with passions more destructive than the flames which consumed their houses. Thus I brought my first book to a close. And now I go on to speak of those calamities which that city itself, or its subject provinces, have suffered since its foundation; all of which they would equally have attributed to the Christian religion, if at that early period the doctrine of the gospel against their false and deceiving gods had been as largely and freely proclaimed as now.

CHAPTER 3

THAT WE NEED ONLY TO READ HISTORY IN ORDER TO SEE WHAT CALAMITIES THE ROMANS SUFFERED BEFORE THE RELIGION OF CHRIST BEGAN TO COMPETE WITH THE WORSHIP OF THE GODS

But remember that, in recounting these things, I have still to address myself to ignorant men; so ignorant, indeed, as to give birth to the common saying, “Drought and Christianity go hand in hand.” There are indeed some among them who are thoroughly well-educated men, and have a taste for history, in which the things I speak of are open to their observation; but in order to irritate the uneducated masses against us, they feign ignorance of these events, and do what they can to make the vulgar believe that those disasters, which in certain places and at certain times uniformly befall mankind, are the result of Christianity, which is being everywhere diffused, and is possessed of a renown and brilliancy which quite eclipse their own gods. Let them then, along with us, call to mind with what various and repeated disasters the prosperity of Rome was blighted, before ever Christ had come in the flesh, and before His name had been blazoned among the nations with that glory which they vainly grudge. Let them, if they can, defend their gods in this article, since they maintain that they worship them in order to be preserved from these disasters, which they now impute to us if they suffer in the least degree. For why did these gods permit the disasters I am to speak of to fall on their worshippers before the preaching of Christ's name offended them, and put an end to their sacrifices?

CHAPTER 4

THAT THE WORSHIPPERS OF THE GODS NEVER RECEIVED FROM THEM ANY HEALTHY MORAL PRECEPTS, AND THAT IN CELEBRATING THEIR WORSHIP ALL SORTS OF IMPURITIES WERE PRACTICED

First of all, we would ask why their gods took no steps to improve the morals of their worshippers. That the true God should neglect those who did not seek His help, that was but justice; but why did those gods, from whose worship ungrateful men are now complaining that they are prohibited, issue no laws which might have guided their devotees to a virtuous life? Surely it was but just, that such care as men showed to the worship of the gods, the gods on their part should have to the conduct of men. But, it is replied, it is by his own will a man goes astray. Who denies it? But none the less was it incumbent on these gods, who were men's guardians, to publish in plain terms the laws of a good life, and not to conceal them from their worshippers. It was their part to send prophets to reach and convict such as broke these laws, and publicly to proclaim the punishments which await evil-doers, and the rewards which may be looked for by those that do well. Did ever the walls of any of their temples echo to any such warning voice? I myself, when I was a young man, used sometimes to go to the sacrilegious entertainments and spectacles; I saw the priests raving in religious excitement, and heard the choristers; I took pleasure in the shameful games which were celebrated in honor of gods and goddesses, of the virgin Coelestis, and Berecynthia, the mother of all the gods. And on the holy day consecrated to her purification, there were sung before her couch productions so obscene and filthy for the ear—I do not say of the mother of the gods, but of the mother of any senator or honest man—nay, so impure, that not even the mother of the foul-mouthed players themselves could have formed one of the audience. For natural reverence for parents is a bond which the most abandoned cannot ignore. And, accordingly, the lewd actions and filthy words with which these players honored the mother of the gods, in presence of a vast assemblage and audience of both sexes, they could not for very shame have rehearsed at home in presence of their own mothers. And the crowds that were gathered from all quarters by curiosity, offended modesty must, I should suppose, have scattered in the confusion of shame. If these are sacred rites, what is sacrilege? If this is purification, what is pollution? This festivity was called the Tables, as if a banquet were being given at which unclean devils might find suitable refreshment. For it is not difficult to see what kind of spirits they must be who are delighted with such obscenities, unless, indeed, a man be blinded by these evil spirits passing themselves off under the name of gods, and either disbelieves in their existence, or leads such a life as prompts him rather to propitiate and fear them than the true God.

CHAPTER 5

OF THE OBSCENITIES PRACTICED IN HONOR OF THE MOTHER OF THE GODS

In this matter I would prefer to have as my assessors in judgment, not those men who rather take pleasure in these infamous customs than take pains to put an end to them, but that same Scipio Nasica who was chosen by the senate as the citizen most worthy to receive in his hands the image of that demon Cybele, and convey it into the city. He would tell us whether he would be proud to see his own mother so highly esteemed by the state as to have divine honors adjudged to her; as the Greeks and Romans and other nations have decreed divine honors to men who had been of material service to them, and have believed that their mortal benefactors were thus made immortal, and enrolled among the gods. Surely he would desire that his mother should enjoy such felicity were it possible. But if we proceeded to ask him whether, among the honors paid to her, he would wish such shameful rites as these to be celebrated, would he not at once exclaim that he would rather his mother lay stone-dead, than survive as a goddess to lend her ear to these obscenities? Is it possible that he who was of so severe a morality, that he used his influence as a Roman senator to prevent the building of a theatre in that city dedicated to the manly virtues, would wish his mother to be propitiated as a goddess with words which would have brought the blush to her cheek when a Roman matron? Could he possibly believe that the modesty of an estimable woman would be so transformed by her promotion to divinity, that she would suffer herself to be invoked and celebrated in terms so gross and immodest, that if she had heard the like while alive upon earth, and had listened without stopping her ears and hurrying from the spot, her relatives, her husband, and her children would have blushed for her? Therefore, the mother of the gods being such a character as the most profligate man would be ashamed to have for his mother, and meaning to enthral the minds of the Romans, demanded for her service their best citizen, not to ripen him still more in virtue by her helpful counsel, but to entangle him by her deceit, like her of whom it is written, “The adulteress will hunt for the precious soul.” Her intent was to puff up this high- souled man by an apparently divine testimony to his excellence, in order that he might rely upon his own eminence in virtue, and make no further efforts after true piety and religion, without which natural genius, however brilliant, vapors into pride and comes to nothing. For what but a guileful purpose could that goddess demand the best man seeing that in her own sacred festivals she requires such obscenities as the best men would be covered with shame to hear at their own tables?

CHAPTER 6

THAT THE GODS OF THE PAGANS NEVER INCULCATED HOLINESS OF LIFE

This is the reason why those divinities quite neglected the lives and morals of the cities and nations who worshipped them, and threw no dreadful prohibition in their way to hinder them from becoming utterly corrupt, and to preserve them from those terrible and detestable evils which visit not harvests and vintages, not house and possessions, not the body which is subject to the soul, but the soul itself, the spirit that rules the whole man. If there was any such prohibition, let it be produced, let it be proved. They will tell us that purity and probity were inculcated upon those who were initiated in the mysteries of religion, and that secret incitements to virtue were whispered in the ear of the elite; but this is an idle boast. Let them show or name to us the places which were at any time consecrated to assemblages in which, instead of the obscene songs and licentious acting of players, instead of the celebration of those most filthy and shameless Fugalia (well called Fugalia, since they banish modesty and right feeling), the people were commanded in the name of the gods to restrain avarice, bridle impurity, and conquer ambition; where, in short, they might learn in that school which Persius vehemently lashes them to, when he says: "Be taught, ye abandoned creatures, and ascertain the causes of things; what we are, and for what end we are born; what is the law of our success in life; and by what art we may turn the goal without making shipwreck; what limit we should put to our wealth, what we may lawfully desire, and what uses filthy lucre serves; how much we should bestow upon our country and our family; learn, in short, what God meant thee to be, and what place He has ordered you to fill." Let them name to us the places where such instructions were wont to be communicated from the gods, and where the people who worshipped them were accustomed to resort to hear them, as we can point to our churches built for this purpose in every land where the Christian religion is received.

CHAPTER 7

THAT THE SUGGESTIONS OF PHILOSOPHERS ARE PRECLUDED FROM HAVING ANY MORAL EFFECT, BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT THE AUTHORITY WHICH BELONGS TO DIVINE INSTRUCTION, AND BECAUSE MAN'S NATURAL BIAS TO EVIL INDUCES HIM RATHER TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLES OF THE GODS THAN TO OBEY THE PRECEPTS OF MEN

But will they perhaps remind us of the schools of the philosophers, and their disputations? In the first place, these belong not to Rome, but to Greece; and even if we yield to them that they are now Roman, because Greece itself has become a Roman province, still the teachings of the philosophers are not the commandments of the gods, but the discoveries of men, who, at the prompting of their own speculative ability, made efforts to discover the hidden laws of nature, and the right and wrong in ethics, and in dialectic what was consequent according to the rules of logic, and what was inconsequent and erroneous. And some of them, by God's help, made great discoveries; but when left to themselves they were betrayed by human infirmity, and fell into mistakes. And this was ordered by divine providence, that their pride might be restrained, and that by their example it might be pointed out that it is humility which has access to the highest regions. But of this we shall have more to say, if the Lord God of truth permit, in its own place. However, if the philosophers have made any discoveries which are sufficient to guide men to virtue and blessedness, would it not have been greater justice to vote divine honors to them? Were it not more accordant with every virtuous sentiment to read Plato's writings in a "Temple of Plato," than to be present in the temples of devils to witness the priests of Cybele mutilating themselves, the effeminate being consecrated, the raving fanatics cutting themselves, and whatever other cruel or shameful, or shamefully cruel or cruelly shameful, ceremony is enjoined by the ritual of such gods as these? Were it not a more suitable education, and more likely to prompt the youth to virtue, if they heard public recitals of the laws of the gods, instead of the vain laudation of the customs and laws of their ancestors? Certainly all the worshippers of the Roman gods, when once they are possessed by what Persius calls "the burning poison of lust," prefer to witness the deeds of Jupiter rather than to hear what Plato taught or Cato censured. Hence the young profligate in Terence, when he sees on the wall a fresco representing the fabled descent of Jupiter into the lap of Danae in the form of a golden shower, accepts this as authoritative precedent for his own licentiousness, and boasts that he is an imitator of God. "And what God?" he says. "He who with His thunder shakes the loftiest temples. And was I, a poor creature compared to Him, to make bones of it? No; I did it, and with all my heart."

CHAPTER 8

THAT THE THEATRICAL EXHIBITIONS PUBLISHING THE SHAMEFUL ACTIONS OF THE GODS, PROPITIATED RATHER THAN OFFENDED THEM

But, some one will interpose, these are the fables of poets, not the deliverances of the gods themselves. Well, I have no mind to arbitrate between the lewdness of theatrical entertainments and of mystic rites; only this I say, and history bears me out in making the assertion, that those same entertainments, in which the fictions of poets are the main attraction, were not introduced in the festivals of the gods by the ignorant devotion of the

Romans, but that the gods themselves gave the most urgent commands to this effect, and indeed extorted from the Romans these solemnities and celebrations in their honor. I touched on this in the preceding book, and mentioned that dramatic entertainments were first inaugurated at Rome on occasion of a pestilence, and by authority of the pontiff. And what man is there who is not more likely to adopt, for the regulation of his own life, the examples that are represented in plays which have a divine sanction, rather than the precepts written and promulgated with no more than human authority? If the poets gave a false representation of Jove in describing him as adulterous, then it were to be expected that the chaste gods should in anger avenge so wicked a fiction, in place of encouraging the games which circulated it. Of these plays, the most inoffensive are comedies and tragedies, that is to say, the dramas which poets write for the stage, and which, though they often handle impure subjects, yet do so without the filthiness of language which characterizes many other performances; and it is these dramas which boys are obliged by their seniors to read and learn as a part of what is called a liberal and gentlemanly education.

CHAPTER 9

THAT THE POETICAL LICENSE WHICH THE GREEKS, IN OBEDIENCE TO THEIR GODS, ALLOWED, WAS RESTRAINED BY THE ANCIENT ROMANS

The opinion of the ancient Romans on this matter is attested by Cicero in his work De Republica, in which Scipio, one of the interlocutors, says, “The lewdness of comedy could never have been suffered by audiences, unless the customs of society had previously sanctioned the same lewdness.” And in the earlier days the Greeks preserved a certain reasonableness in their license, and made it a law, that whatever comedy wished to say of any one, it must say it of him by name. And so in the same work of Cicero’s, Scipio says, “Whom has it not aspersed? Nay, whom has it not worried? Whom has it spared? Allow that it may assail demagogues and factions, men injurious to the commonwealth—a Cleon, a Cleophon, a Hyperbolus. That is tolerable, though it had been more seemly for the public censor to brand such men, than for a poet to lampoon them; but to blacken the fame of Pericles with scurrilous verse, after he had with the utmost dignity presided over their state alike in war and in peace, was as unworthy of a poet, as if our own Plautus or Naevius were to bring Publius and Cneius Scipio on the comic stage, or as if Caecilius were to caricature Cato.” And then a little after he goes on: “Though our Twelve Tables attached the penalty of death only to a very few offences, yet among these few this was one: if any man should have sung a pasquinade, or have composed a satire calculated to bring infamy or disgrace on another person. Wisely decreed. For it is by the decisions of magistrates, and by a well-informed justice, that our lives ought to be judged, and not by the flighty fancies of poets; neither ought we to be exposed to hear calumnies, save where we have the liberty of replying, and defending ourselves before an adequate tribunal.” This much I have judged it advisable to quote from the fourth book of Cicero’s De Republica; and I have made the quotation word for word, with the exception of some words omitted, and some slightly transposed, for the sake of giving the sense more readily. And certainly the extract is pertinent to the matter I am endeavoring to explain. Cicero makes some further remarks, and concludes the passage by showing that the ancient Romans did not permit any living man to be either praised or blamed on the stage. But the Greeks, as I said, though not so moral, were more logical in allowing this license which the Romans forbade; for they saw that their gods approved and enjoyed the scurrilous language of low comedy when directed not only against men, but even against themselves; and this, whether the infamous actions imputed to them were the fictions of poets, or were their actual iniquities commemorated and acted in the theatres. And would that the spectators had judged them worthy only of laughter, and not of imitation! Manifestly it had been a stretch of pride to spare the good name of the leading men and the common citizens, when the very deities did not grudge that their own reputation should be blemished.

CHAPTER 10

THAT THE DEVILS, IN SUFFERING EITHER FALSE OR TRUE CRIMES TO BE LAID TO THEIR CHARGE, MEANT TO DO MEN A MISCHIEF

It is alleged, in excuse of this practice, that the stories told of the gods are not true, but false, and mere inventions, but this only makes matters worse, if we form our estimate by the morality our religion teaches; and if we consider the malice of the devils, what more wily and astute artifice could they practise upon men? When a slander is uttered against a leading statesman of upright and useful life, is it not reprehensible in proportion to its untruth and groundlessness? What punishment, then, shall be sufficient when the gods are the objects of so wicked and outrageous an injustice? But the devils, whom these men repute gods, are content that even iniquities they are guiltless of should be ascribed to them, so long as they may entangle men's minds in the meshes of these opinions, and draw them on along with themselves to their predestinated punishment: whether such things were actually committed by the men whom these devils, delighting in human infatuation, cause to be worshipped as gods, and in whose stead they, by a thousand malign and deceitful artifices, substitute themselves, and so receive worship; or whether, though they were really the crimes of men, these wicked spirits gladly allowed them to be attributed to higher beings, that there might seem to be conveyed from heaven itself a sufficient sanction for the perpetration of shameful wickedness. The Greeks, therefore, seeing the character of the gods they served, thought that the poets should certainly not refrain from showing up human vices on the stage, either because they desired to be like their gods in this, or because they were afraid that, if they required for themselves a more unblemished reputation than they asserted for the gods, they might provoke them to anger.

CHAPTER 11

THAT THE GREEKS ADMITTED PLAYERS TO OFFICES OF STATE, ON THE GROUND THAT MEN WHO PLEASED THE GODS SHOULD NOT BE CONTEMPTUOUSLY TREATED BY THEIR FELLOWS

It was a part of this same reasonableness of the Greeks which induced them to bestow upon the actors of these same plays no inconsiderable civic honors. In the above-mentioned book of the De Republica, it is mentioned that Aeschines, a very eloquent Athenian, who had been a tragic actor in his youth, became a statesman, and that the Athenians again and again sent another tragedian, Aristodemus, as their plenipotentiary to Philip. For they judged it unbecoming to condemn and treat as infamous persons those who were the chief actors in the scenic entertainments which they saw to be so pleasing to the gods. No doubt this was immoral of the Greeks, but there can be as little doubt they acted in conformity with the character of their gods; for how could they have presumed to protect the conduct of the citizens from being cut to pieces by the tongues of poets and players, who were allowed, and even enjoined by the gods, to tear their divine reputation to tatters? And how could they hold in contempt the men who acted in the theatres those dramas which, as they had ascertained, gave pleasure to the gods whom they worshipped? Nay, how could they but grant to them the highest civic honors? On what plea could they honor the priests who offered for them acceptable sacrifices to the gods, if they branded with infamy the actors who in behalf of the people gave to the gods that pleasure or honour which they demanded, and which, according to the account of the priests, they were angry at not receiving. Labeo, whose learning makes him an authority on such points, is of opinion that the distinction between good and evil deities should find expression in a difference of worship; that the evil should be propitiated by bloody sacrifices and doleful rites, but the good with a joyful and pleasant observance, as, e.g. (as he says himself), with plays, festivals, and banquets. All this we shall, with God’s help, hereafter discuss. At present, and speaking to the subject on hand, whether all kinds of offerings are made indiscriminately to all the gods, as if all were good (and it is an unseemly thing to conceive that there are evil gods; but these gods of the pagans are all evil, because they are not gods, but evil spirits), or whether, as Labeo thinks, a distinction is made between the offerings presented to the different gods the Greeks are equally justified in honoring alike the priests by whom the sacrifices are offered, and the players by whom the dramas are acted, that they may not be open to the charge of doing an injury to all their gods, if the plays are pleasing to all of them, or (which were still worse) to their good gods, if the plays are relished only by them.

CHAPTER 12

THAT THE ROMANS, BY REFUSING TO THE POETS THE SAME LICENSE IN RESPECT OF MEN WHICH THEY ALLOWED THEM IN THE CASE OF THE GODS, SHOWED A MORE DELICATE SENSITIVENESS REGARDING THEMSELVES THAN REGARDING THE GODS

The Romans, however, as Scipio boasts in that same discussion, declined having their conduct and good name subjected to the assaults and slanders of the poets, and went so far as to make it a capital crime if any one should dare to compose such verses. This was a very honorable course to pursue, so far as they themselves were concerned, but in respect of the gods it was proud and irreligious: for they knew that the gods not only tolerated, but relished, being lashed by the injurious expressions of the poets, and yet they themselves would not suffer this same handling; and what their ritual prescribed as acceptable to the gods, their law prohibited as injurious to themselves. How then, Scipio, do you praise the Romans for refusing this license to the poets, so that no citizen could be calumniated, while you know that the gods were not included under this protection? Do you count your senate-house worthy of so much higher a regard than the Capitol? Is the one city of Rome more valuable in your eyes than the whole heaven of gods, that you prohibit your poets from uttering any injurious words against a citizen, though they may with impunity cast what imputations they please upon the gods, without the interference of senator, censor, prince, or pontiff? It was, forsooth, intolerable that Plautus or Naevus should attack Publius and Cneius Scipio, insufferable that Caecilius should lampoon Cato; but quite proper that your Terence should encourage youthful lust by the wicked example of supreme Jove.

CHAPTER 13

THAT THE ROMANS SHOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD THAT GODS WHO DESIRED TO BE WORSHIPPED IN LICENTIOUS ENTERTAINMENTS WERE UNWORTHY OF DIVINE HONOR

But Scipio, were he alive, would possibly reply: “How could we attach a penalty to that which the gods themselves have consecrated? For the theatrical entertainments in which such things are said, and acted, and performed, were introduced into Roman society by the gods, who ordered that they should be dedicated and exhibited in their honor.” But was not this, then, the plainest proof that they were no true gods, nor in any respect worthy of receiving divine honours from the republic? Suppose they had required that in their honor the citizens of Rome should be held up to ridicule, every Roman would have resented the hateful proposal. How then, I would ask, can they be esteemed worthy of worship, when they propose that their own crimes be used as material for celebrating their praises? Does not this artifice expose them, and prove that they are detestable devils? Thus the Romans, though they were superstitious enough to serve as gods those who made no secret of their desire to be worshipped in licentious plays, yet had sufficient regard to their hereditary dignity and virtue, to prompt them to refuse to players any such rewards as the Greeks accorded them. On this point we have this testimony of Scipio, recorded in Cicero: “They [the Romans] considered comedy and all theatrical performances as disgraceful, and therefore not only debarred players from offices and honors open to ordinary citizens, but also decreed that their names should be branded by the censor, and erased from the roll of their tribe.” An excellent decree, and another testimony to the sagacity of Rome; but I could wish their prudence had been more thorough-going and consistent. For when I hear that if any Roman citizen chose the stage as his profession, he not only closed to himself every laudable career, but even became an outcast from his own tribe, I cannot but exclaim: This is the true Roman spirit, this is worthy of a state jealous of its reputation. But then some one interrupts my rapture, by inquiring with what consistency players are debarred from all honors, while plays are counted among the honors due to the gods? For a long while the virtue of Rome was uncontaminated by theatrical exhibitions; and if they had been adopted for the sake of gratifying the taste of the citizens, they would have been introduced hand in hand with the relaxation of manners. But the fact is, that it was the gods who demanded that they should be exhibited to gratify them. With what justice, then, is the player excommunicated by whom God is worshipped? On what pretext can you at once adore him who exacts, and brand him who acts these plays? This, then, is the controversy in which the Greeks and Romans are engaged. The Greeks think they justly honor players, because they worship the gods who demand plays; the Romans, on the other hand, do not suffer an actor to disgrace by his name his own plebeian tribe, far less the senatorial order. And the whole of this discussion may be summed up in the following syllogism. The Greeks give us the major premise: If such gods are to be worshipped, then certainly such men may be honored. The Romans add the minor: But such men must by no means be honoured. The Christians draw the conclusion: Therefore such gods must by no means be worshipped.

CHAPTER 14

THAT PLATO, WHO EXCLUDED POETS FROM A WELL-ORDERED CITY, WAS BETTER THAN THESE GODS WHO DESIRE TO BE HONOURED BY THEATRICAL PLAYS

We have still to inquire why the poets who write the plays, and who by the law of the twelve tables are prohibited from injuring the good name of the citizens, are reckoned more estimable than the actors, though they so shamefully asperse the character of the gods? Is it right that the actors of these poetical and God-dishonoring effusions be branded, while their authors are honored? Must we not here award the palm to a Greek, Plato, who, in framing his ideal republic, conceived that poets should be banished from the city as enemies of the state? He could not brook that the gods be brought into disrepute, nor that the minds of the citizens be depraved and besotted, by the fictions of the poets. Compare now human nature as you see it in Plato, expelling poets from the city that the citizens be uninjured, with the divine nature as you see it in these gods exacting plays in their own honor. Plato strove, though unsuccessfully, to persuade the light-minded and lascivious Greeks to abstain from so much as writing such plays; the gods used their authority to extort the acting of the same from the dignified and sober-minded Romans. And not content with having them acted, they had them dedicated to themselves, consecrated to themselves, solemnly celebrated in their own honor. To which, then, would it be more becoming in a state to decree divine honors,—to Plato, who prohibited these wicked and licentious plays, or to the demons who delighted in blinding men to the truth of what Plato unsuccessfully sought to inculcate?

This philosopher, Plato, has been elevated by Labeo to the rank of a demigod, and set thus upon a level with such as Hercules and Romulus. Labeo ranks demigods higher than heroes, but both he counts among the deities. But I have no doubt that he thinks this man whom he reckons a demigod worthy of greater respect not only than the heroes, but also than the gods themselves. The laws of the Romans and the speculations of Plato have this resemblance, that the latter pronounce a wholesale condemnation of poetical fictions, while the former restrain the license of satire, at least so far as men are the objects of it. Plato will not suffer poets even to dwell in his city: the laws of Rome prohibit actors from being enrolled as citizens;

and if they had not feared to offend the gods who had asked the services of the players, they would in all likelihood have banished them altogether. It is obvious, therefore, that the Romans could not receive, nor reasonably expect to receive, laws for the regulation of their conduct from their gods, since the laws they themselves enacted far surpassed and put to shame the morality of the gods. The gods demand stageplays in their own honor; the Romans exclude the players from all civic honors; the former commanded that they should be celebrated by the scenic representation of their own disgrace; the latter commanded that no poet should dare to blemish the reputation of any citizen. But that demigod Plato resisted the lust of such gods as these, and showed the Romans what their genius had left incomplete; for he absolutely excluded poets from his ideal state, whether they composed fictions with no regard to truth, or set the worst possible examples before wretched men under the guise of divine actions. We for our part, indeed, reckon Plato neither a god nor a demigod; we would not even compare him to any of God's holy angels; nor to the truth-speaking prophets, nor to any of the apostles or martyrs of Christ, nay, not to any faithful Christian man. The reason of this opinion of ours we will, God prospering us, render in its own place. Nevertheless, since they wish him to be considered a demigod, we think he certainly is more entitled to that rank, and is every way superior, if not to Hercules and Romulus (though no historian could ever narrate nor any poet sing of him that he had killed his brother, or committed any crime), yet certainly to Priapus, or a Cynocephalus, or the Fever,—divinities whom the Romans have partly received from foreigners, and partly consecrated by home-grown rites. How, then, could gods such as these be expected to promulgate good and wholesome laws, either for the prevention of moral and social evils, or for their eradication where they had already sprung up?—gods who used their influence even to sow and cherish profligacy, by appointing that deeds truly or falsely ascribed to them should be published to the people by means of theatrical exhibitions, and by thus gratuitously fanning the flame of human lust with the breath of a seemingly divine approbation. In vain does Cicero, speaking of poets, exclaim against this state of things in these words: "When the plaudits and acclamation of the people, who sit as infallible judges, are won by the poets, what darkness benights the mind, what fears invade, what passions inflame it!"

CHAPTER 15

THAT IT WAS VANITY, NOT REASON, WHICH CREATED SOME OF THE ROMAN GODS

But is it not manifest that vanity rather than reason regulated the choice of some of their false gods? This Plato, whom they reckon a demigod, and who used all his eloquence to preserve men from the most dangerous spiritual calamities, has yet not been counted worthy even of a little shrine; but Romulus, because they can call him their own, they have esteemed more highly than many gods, though their secret doctrine can allow him the rank only of a demigod. To him they allotted a flamen, that is to say, a priest of a class so highly esteemed in their religion (distinguished, too, by their conical mitres), that for only three of their gods were flamens appointed,—the Flamen Dialis for Jupiter, Martialis for Mars, and Quirinalis for Romulus (for when the ardor of his fellow-citizens had given Romulus a seat among the gods, they gave him this new name Quirinus). And thus by this honor Romulus has been preferred to Neptune and Pluto, Jupiter's brothers, and to Saturn himself, their father. They have assigned the same priesthood to serve him as to serve Jove; and in giving Mars (the reputed father of Romulus) the same honor, is this not rather for Romulus' sake than to honor Mars?

CHAPTER 16

THAT IF THE GODS HAD REALLY POSSESSED ANY REGARD FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS, THE ROMANS SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED GOOD LAWS FROM THEM, INSTEAD OF HAVING TO BORROW THEM FROM OTHER NATIONS

Moreover, if the Romans had been able to receive a rule of life from their gods, they would not have borrowed Solon's laws from the Athenians, as they did some years after Rome was founded; and yet they did not keep them as they received them, but endeavored to improve and amend them. Although Lycurgus pretended that he was authorized by Apollo to give laws to the Lacedemonians, the sensible Romans did not choose to believe this, and were not induced to borrow laws from Sparta. Numa Pompilius, who succeeded Romulus in the kingdom, is said to have framed some laws, which, however, were not sufficient for the regulation of civic affairs. Among these regulations were many pertaining to religious observances, and yet he is not reported to have received even these from the gods. With respect, then, to moral evils, evils of life and conduct,—evils which are so mighty, that, according to the wisest pagans, by them states are ruined while their cities stand uninjured,—their gods made not the smallest provision for preserving their worshippers from these evils, but, on the contrary, took special pains to increase them, as we have previously endeavored to prove.

CHAPTER 17

OF THE RAPE OF THE SABINE WOMEN, AND OTHER INIQUITIES PERPETRATED IN ROME'S PALMIEST DAYS

But possibly we are to find the reason for this neglect of the Romans by their gods, in the saying of Sallust, that "equity and virtue prevailed among the Romans not more by force of laws than of nature." I presume it is to this inborn equity and goodness of disposition we are to ascribe the rape of the Sabine women. What, indeed, could be more equitable and virtuous, than to carry off by force, as each man was fit, and without their parents' consent, girls who were strangers and guests, and who had been decoyed and entrapped by the pretence of a spectacle! If the Sabines were wrong to deny their daughters when the Romans asked for them, was it not a greater wrong in the Romans to carry them off after that denial? The Romans might more justly have waged war against the neighboring nation for having refused their daughters in marriage when they first sought them, than for having demanded them back when they had stolen them. War should have been proclaimed at first; it was then that Mars should have helped his warlike son, that he might by force of arms avenge the injury done him by the refusal of marriage, and might also thus win the women he desired. There might have been some appearance of "right of war" in a victor carrying off, in virtue of this right, the virgins who had been without any show of right denied him; whereas there was no "right of peace" entitling him to carry off those who were not given to him, and to wage an unjust war with their justly enraged parents. One happy circumstance was indeed connected with this act of violence, viz., that though it was commemorated by the games of the circus, yet even this did not constitute it a precedent in the city or realm of Rome. If one would find fault with the results of this act, it must rather be on the ground that the Romans made Romulus a god in spite of his perpetrating this iniquity; for one cannot reproach them with making this deed any kind of precedent for the rape of women.

Again, I presume it was due to this natural equity and virtue, that after the expulsion of King Tarquin, whose son had violated Lucretia, Junius Brutus the consul forced Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus, Lucretia’s husband and his own colleague, a good and innocent man, to resign his office and go into banishment, on the one sole charge that he was of the name and blood of the Tarquins. This injustice was perpetrated with the approval, or at least connivance, of the people, who had themselves raised to the consular office both Collatinus and Brutus. Another instance of this equity and virtue is found in their treatment of Marcus Camillus. This eminent man, after he had rapidly conquered the Veians, at that time the most formidable of Rome’s enemies, and who had maintained a ten years’ war, in which the Roman army had suffered the usual calamities attendant on bad generalship, after he had restored security to Rome, which had begun to tremble for its safety, and after he had taken the wealthiest city of the enemy, had charges brought against him by the malice of those that envied his success, and by the insolence of the tribunes of the people; and seeing that the city bore him no gratitude for preserving it, and that he would certainly be condemned, he went into exile, and even in his absence was fined 10,000 asses. Shortly after, however, his ungrateful country had again to seek his protection from the Gauls. But I cannot now mention all the shameful and iniquitous acts with which Rome was agitated, when the aristocracy attempted to subject the people, and the people resented their encroachments, and the advocates of either party were actuated rather by the love of victory than by any equitable or virtuous consideration.

CHAPTER 18

WHAT THE HISTORY OF SALLUST REVEALS REGARDING THE LIFE OF THE ROMANS, EITHER WHEN STRAITENED BY ANXIETY OR RELAXED IN SECURITY

I will therefore pause, and adduce the testimony of Sallust himself, whose words in praise of the Romans (that “equity and virtue prevailed among them not more by force of laws than of nature”) have given occasion to this discussion. He was referring to that period immediately after the expulsion of the kings, in which the city became great in an incredibly short space of time. And yet this same writer acknowledges in the first book of his history, in the very exordium of his work, that even at that time, when a very brief interval had elapsed after the government had passed from kings to consuls, the more powerful men began to act unjustly, and occasioned the defection of the people from the patricians, and other disorders in the city. For after Sallust had stated that the Romans enjoyed greater harmony and a purer state of society between the second and third Punic wars than at any other time, and that the cause of this was not their love of good order, but their fear lest the peace they had with Carthage might be broken (this also, as we mentioned, Nasica contemplated when he opposed the destruction of Carthage, for he supposed that fear would tend to repress wickedness, and to preserve wholesome ways of living), he then goes on to say: “Yet, after the destruction of Carthage, discord, avarice, ambition, and the other vices which are commonly generated by prosperity, more than ever increased.” If they “increased,” and that “more than ever,” then already they had appeared, and had been increasing. And so Sallust adds this reason for what he said. “For,” he says, “the oppressive measures of the powerful, and the consequent secessions of the plebs from the patricians, and other civil dissensions, had existed from the first, and affairs were administered with equity and well-tempered justice for no longer a period than the short time after the expulsion of the kings, while the city was occupied with the serious Tuscan war and Tarquin’s vengeance.” You see how, even in that brief period after the expulsion of the kings, fear, he acknowledges, was the cause of the interval of equity and good order. They were afraid, in fact, of the war which Tarquin waged against them, after he had been driven from the throne and the city, and had allied himself with the Tuscans. But observe what he adds: “After that, the patricians treated the people as their slaves, ordering them to be scourged or beheaded just as the kings had done, driving them from their holdings, and harshly tyrannizing over those who had no property to lose. The people, overwhelmed by these oppressive measures, and most of all by exorbitant usury, and obliged to contribute both money and personal service to the constant wars, at length took arms and seceded to Mount Aventine and Mount Sacer, and thus obtained for themselves tribunes and protective laws. But it was only the second Punic war that put an end on both sides to discord and strife.” You see what kind of men the Romans were, even so early as a few years after the expulsion of the kings; and it is of these men he says, that “equity and virtue prevailed among them not more by force of law than of nature.”

Now, if these were the days in which the Roman republic shows fairest and best, what are we to say or think of the succeeding age, when, to use the words of the same historian, “changing little by little from the fair and virtuous city it was, it became utterly wicked and dissolute?” This was, as he mentions, after the destruction of Carthage. Sallust’s brief sum and sketch of this period may be read in his own history, in which he shows how the profligate manners which were propagated by prosperity resulted at last even in civil wars. He says: “And from this time the primitive manners, instead of undergoing an insensible alteration as hitherto they had done, were swept away as by a torrent: the young men were so depraved by luxury and avarice, that it may justly be said that no father had a son who could either preserve his own patrimony, or keep his hands off other men’s.” Sallust adds a number of particulars about the vices of Sylla, and the debased condition of the republic in general; and other writers make similar observations, though in much less striking language.

However, I suppose you now see, or at least any one who gives his attention has the means of seeing, in what a sink of iniquity that city was plunged before the advent of our heavenly King. For these things happened not only before Christ had begun to teach, but before He was even born of the Virgin. If, then, they dare not impute to their gods the grievous evils of those former times, more tolerable before the destruction of Carthage, but intolerable and dreadful after it, although it was the gods who by their malign craft instilled into the minds of men the conceptions from which such dreadful vices branched out on all sides, why do they impute these present calamities to Christ, who teaches life-giving truth, and forbids us to worship false and deceitful gods, and who, abominating and condemning with His divine authority those wicked and hurtful lusts of men, gradually withdraws His own people from a world that is corrupted by these vices, and is falling into ruins, to make of them an eternal city, whose glory rests not on the acclamations of vanity, but on the judgment of truth?

CHAPTER 19

OF THE CORRUPTION WHICH HAD GROWN UPON THE ROMAN REPUBLIC BEFORE CHRIST ABOLISHED THE WORSHIP OF THE GODS

Here, then, is this Roman republic, “which has changed little by little from the fair and virtuous city it was, and has become utterly wicked and dissolute.” It is not I who am the first to say this, but their own authors, from whom we learned it for a fee, and who wrote it long before the coming of Christ. You see how, before the coming of Christ, and after the destruction of Carthage, “the primitive manners, instead of undergoing insensible alteration, as hitherto they had done, were swept away as by a torrent; and how depraved by luxury and avarice the youth were.” Let them now, on their part, read to us any laws given by their gods to the Roman people, and directed against luxury and avarice. And would that they had only been silent on the subjects of chastity and modesty, and had not demanded from the people indecent and shameful practices, to which they lent a pernicious patronage by their so-called divinity. Let them read our commandments in the Prophets, Gospels, Acts of the Apostles or Epistles; let them peruse the large number of precepts against avarice and luxury which are everywhere read to the congregations that meet for this purpose, and which strike the ear, not with the uncertain sound of a philosophical discussion, but with the thunder of God’s own oracle pealing from the clouds. And yet they do not impute to their gods the luxury and avarice, the cruel and dissolute manners, that had rendered the republic utterly wicked and corrupt, even before the coming of Christ; but whatever affliction their pride and effeminacy have exposed them to in these latter days, they furiously impute to our religion. If the kings of the earth and all their subjects, if all princes and judges of the earth, if young men and maidens, old and young, every age, and both sexes; if they whom the Baptist addressed, the publicans and the soldiers, were all together to hearken to and observe the precepts of the Christian religion regarding a just and virtuous life, then should the republic adorn the whole earth with its own felicity, and attain in life everlasting to the pinnacle of kingly glory. But because this man listens and that man scoffs, and most are enamored of the blandishments of vice rather than the wholesome severity of virtue, the people of Christ, whatever be their condition—whether they be kings, princes, judges, soldiers, or provincials, rich or poor, bond or free, male or female—are enjoined to endure this earthly republic, wicked and dissolute as it is, that so they may by this endurance win for themselves an eminent place in that most holy and august assembly of angels and republic of heaven, in which the will of God is the law.

CHAPTER 20

OF THE KIND OF HAPPINESS AND LIFE TRULY DELIGHTED IN BY THOSE WHO INVEIGH AGAINST THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

But the worshippers and admirers of these gods delight in imitating their scandalous iniquities, and are nowise concerned that the republic be less depraved and licentious. Only let it remain undefeated, they say, only let it flourish and abound in resources; let it be glorious by its victories, or still better, secure in peace; and what matters it to us? This is our concern, that every man be able to increase his wealth so as to supply his daily prodigalities, and so that the powerful may subject the weak for their own purposes. Let the poor court the rich for a living, and that under their protection they may enjoy a sluggish tranquillity; and let the rich abuse the poor as their dependants, to minister to their pride. Let the people applaud not those who protect their interests, but those who provide them with pleasure. Let no severe duty be commanded, no impurity forbidden. Let kings estimate their prosperity, not by the righteousness, but by the servility of their subjects. Let the provinces stand loyal to the kings, not as moral guides, but as lords of their possessions and purveyors of their pleasures; not with a hearty reverence, but a crooked and servile fear. Let the laws take cognizance rather of the injury done to another man’s property, than of that done to one’s own person. If a man be a nuisance to his neighbor, or injure his property, family, or person, let him be actionable; but in his own affairs let everyone with impunity do what he will in company with his own family, and with those who willingly join him. Let there be a plentiful supply of public prostitutes for every one who wishes to use them, but specially for those who are too poor to keep one for their private use. Let there be erected houses of the largest and most ornate description: in these let there be provided the most sumptuous banquets, where every one who pleases may, by day or night, play, drink, vomit, dissipate. Let there be everywhere heard the rustling of dancers, the loud, immodest laughter of the theatre; let a succession of the most cruel and the most voluptuous pleasures maintain a perpetual excitement. If such happiness is distasteful to any, let him be branded as a public enemy; and if any attempt to modify or put an end to it let him be silenced, banished, put an end to. Let these be reckoned the true gods, who procure for the people this condition of things, and preserve it when once possessed. Let them be worshipped as they wish; let them demand whatever games they please, from or with their own worshippers; only let them secure that such felicity be not imperilled by foe, plague, or disaster of any kind. What sane man would compare a republic such as this, I will not say to the Roman empire, but to the palace of Sardanapalus, the ancient king who was so abandoned to pleasures, that he caused it to be inscribed on his tomb, that now that he was dead, he possessed only those things which he had swallowed and consumed by his appetites while alive? If these men had such a king as this, who, while self-indulgent, should lay no severe restraint on them, they would more enthusiastically consecrate to him a temple and a flamen than the ancient Romans did to Romulus.

CHAPTER 21

CICERO’S OPINION OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

But if our adversaries do not care how foully and disgracefully the Roman republic be stained by corrupt practices, so long only as it holds together and continues in being, and if they therefore pooh-pooh the testimony of Sallust to its “utterly wicked and profligate” condition, what will they make of Cicero’s statement, that even in his time it had become entirely extinct, and that there remained extant no Roman republic at all? He introduces Scipio (the Scipio who had destroyed Carthage) discussing the republic, at a time when already there were presentiments of its speedy ruin by that corruption which Sallust describes. In fact, at the time when the discussion took place, one of the Gracchi, who, according to Sallust, was the first great instigator of seditions, had already been put to death. His death, indeed, is mentioned in the same book. Now Scipio, at the end of the second book, says: “As among the different sounds which proceed from lyres, flutes, and the human voice, there must be maintained a certain harmony which a cultivated ear cannot endure to hear disturbed or jarring, but which may be elicited in full and absolute concord by the modulation even of voices very unlike one another; so, where reason is allowed to modulate the diverse elements of the state, there is obtained a perfect concord from the upper, lower, and middle classes as from various sounds; and what musicians call harmony in singing, is concord in matters of state, which is the strictest bond and best security of any republic, and which by no ingenuity can be retained where justice has become extinct.” Then, when he had expatiated somewhat more fully, and had more copiously illustrated the benefits of its presence and the ruinous effects of its absence upon a state, Pilus, one of the company present at the discussion, struck in and demanded that the question should be more thoroughly sifted, and that the subject of justice should be freely discussed for the sake of ascertaining what truth there was in the maxim which was then becoming daily more current, that “the republic cannot be governed without injustice.” Scipio expressed his willingness to have this maxim discussed and sifted, and gave it as his opinion that it was baseless, and that no progress could be made in discussing the republic unless it was established, not only that this maxim, that “the republic cannot be governed without injustice,” was false, but also that the truth is, that it cannot be governed without the most absolute justice. And the discussion of this question, being deferred till the next day, is carried on in the third book with great animation. For Pilus himself undertook to defend the position that the republic cannot be governed without injustice, at the same time being at special pains to clear himself of any real participation in that opinion. He advocated with great keenness the cause of injustice against justice, and endeavored by plausible reasons and examples to demonstrate that the former is beneficial, the latter useless, to the republic. Then, at the request of the company, Laelius attempted to defend justice, and strained every nerve to prove that nothing is so hurtful to a state as injustice; and that without justice a republic can neither be governed, nor even continue to exist.

When this question has been handled to the satisfaction of the company, Scipio reverts to the original thread of discourse, and repeats with commendation his own brief definition of a republic, that it is the weal of the people. “The people” he defines as being not every assemblage or mob, but an assemblage associated by a common acknowledgment of law, and by a community of interests. Then he shows the use of definition in debate; and from these definitions of his own he gathers that a republic, or “weal of the people,” then exists only when it is well and justly governed, whether by a monarch, or an aristocracy, or by the whole people. But when the monarch is unjust, or, as the Greeks say, a tyrant; or the aristocrats are unjust, and form a faction; or the people themselves are unjust, and become, as Scipio for want of a better name calls them, themselves the tyrant, then the republic is not only blemished (as had been proved the day before), but by legitimate deduction from those definitions, it altogether ceases to be. For it could not be the people’s weal when a tyrant factiously lorded it over the state; neither would the people be any longer a people if it were unjust, since it would no longer answer the definition of a people—”an assemblage associated by a common acknowledgment of law, and by a community of interests.”

When, therefore, the Roman republic was such as Sallust described it, it was not “utterly wicked and profligate,” as he says, but had altogether ceased to exist, if we are to admit the reasoning of that debate maintained on the subject of the republic by its best representatives. Tully himself, too, speaking not in the person of Scipio or any one else, but uttering his own sentiments, uses the following language in the beginning of the fifth book, after quoting a line from the poet Ennius, in which he said, “Rome’s severe morality and her citizens are her safeguard.” “This verse,” says Cicero, “seems to me to have all the sententious truthfulness of an oracle. For neither would the citizens have availed without the morality of the community, nor would the morality of the commons without outstanding men have availed either to establish or so long to maintain in vigor so grand a republic with so wide and just an empire. Accordingly, before our day, the hereditary usages formed our foremost men, and they on their part retained the usages and institutions of their fathers. But our age, receiving the republic as a chef-d’oeuvre of another age which has already begun to grow old, has not merely neglected to restore the colors of the original, but has not even been at the pains to preserve so much as the general outline and most outstanding features. For what survives of that primitive morality which the poet called Rome’s safeguard? It is so obsolete and forgotten, that, far from practising it, one does not even know it. And of the citizens what shall I say? Morality has perished through poverty of great men; a poverty for which we must not only assign a reason, but for the guilt of which we must answer as criminals charged with a capital crime. For it is through our vices, and not by any mishap, that we retain only the name of a republic, and have long since lost the reality.”

This is the confession of Cicero, long indeed after the death of Africanus, whom he introduced as an interlocutor in his work De Republica, but still before the coming of Christ. Yet, if the disasters he bewails had been lamented after the Christian religion had been diffused, and had begun to prevail, is there a man of our adversaries who would not have thought that they were to be imputed to the Christians? Why, then, did their gods not take steps then to prevent the decay and extinction of that republic, over the loss of which Cicero, long before Christ had come in the flesh, sings so lugubrious a dirge? Its admirers have need to inquire whether, even in the days of primitive men and morals, true justice flourished in it; or was it not perhaps even then, to use the casual expression of Cicero, rather a colored painting than the living reality? But, if God will, we shall consider this elsewhere. For I mean in its own place to show that—according to the definitions in which Cicero himself, using Scipio as his mouthpiece, briefly propounded what a republic is, and what a people is, and according to many testimonies, both of his own lips and of those who took part in that same debate—Rome never was a republic, because true justice had never a place in it. But accepting the more feasible definitions of a republic, I grant there was a republic of a certain kind, and certainly much better administered by the more ancient Romans than by their modern representatives. But the fact is, true justice has no existence save in that republic whose founder and ruler is Christ, if at least any choose to call this a republic; and indeed we cannot deny that it is the people’s weal. But if perchance this name, which has become familiar in other connections, be considered alien to our common parlance, we may at all events say that in this city is true justice; the city of which Holy Scripture says, “Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God.”

CHAPTER 22

THAT THE ROMAN GODS NEVER TOOK ANY STEPS TO PREVENT THE REPUBLIC FROM BEING RUINED BY IMMORALITY

But what is relevant to the present question is this, that however admirable our adversaries say the republic was or is, it is certain that by the testimony of their own most learned writers it had become, long before the coming of Christ, utterly wicked and dissolute, and indeed had no existence, but had been destroyed by profligacy. To prevent this, surely these guardian gods ought to have given precepts of morals and a rule of life to the people by whom they were worshipped in so many temples, with so great a variety of priests and sacrifices, with such numberless and diverse rites, so many festal solemnities, so many celebrations of magnificent games. But in all this the demons only looked after their own interest, and cared not at all how their worshippers lived, or rather were at pains to induce them to lead an abandoned life, so long as they paid these tributes to their honor, and regarded them with fear. If any one denies this, let him produce, let him point to, let him read the laws which the gods had given against sedition, and which the Gracchi transgressed when they threw everything into confusion; or those Marius, and Cinna, and Carbo broke when they involved their country in civil wars, most iniquitous and unjustifiable in their causes, cruelly conducted, and yet more cruelly terminated; or those which Sylla scorned, whose life, character, and deeds, as described by Sallust and other historians, are the abhorrence of all mankind. Who will deny that at that time the republic had become extinct?

Possibly they will be bold enough to suggest in defence of the gods, that they abandoned the city on account of the profligacy of the citizens, according to the lines of Virgil:

“Gone from each fane, each sacred shrine,

Are those who made this realm divine.”

But, firstly, if it be so, then they cannot complain against the Christian religion, as if it were that which gave offence to the gods and caused them to abandon Rome, since the Roman immorality had long ago driven from the altars of the city a cloud of little gods, like as many flies. And yet where was this host of divinities, when, long before the corruption of the primitive morality, Rome was taken and burnt by the Gauls? Perhaps they were present, but asleep? For at that time the whole city fell into the hands of the enemy, with the single exception of the Capitoline hill; and this too would have been taken, had not—the watchful geese aroused the sleeping gods! And this gave occasion to the festival of the goose, in which Rome sank nearly to the superstition of the Egyptians, who worship beasts and birds. But of these adventitious evils which are inflicted by hostile armies or by some disaster, and which attach rather to the body than the soul, I am not meanwhile disputing. At present I speak of the decay of morality, which at first almost imperceptibly lost its brilliant hue, but afterwards was wholly obliterated, was swept away as by a torrent, and involved the republic in such disastrous ruin, that though the houses and walls remained standing the leading writers do not scruple to say that the republic was destroyed. Now, the departure of the gods "from each fane, each sacred shrine," and their abandonment of the city to destruction, was an act of justice, if their laws inculcating justice and a moral life had been held in contempt by that city. But what kind of gods were these, pray, who declined to live with a people who worshipped them, and whose corrupt life they had done nothing to reform?

CHAPTER 23

THAT THE VICISSITUDES OF THIS LIFE ARE DEPENDENT NOT ON THE FAVOR OR HOSTILITY OF DEMONS, BUT ON THE WILL OF THE TRUE GOD

But, further, is it not obvious that the gods have abetted the fulfilment of men's desires, instead of authoritatively bridling them? For Marius, a low-born and self-made man, who ruthlessly provoked and conducted civil wars, was so effectually aided by them, that he was seven times consul, and died full of years in his seventh consulship, escaping the hands of Sylla, who immediately afterwards came into power. Why, then, did they not also aid him, so as to restrain him from so many enormities? For if it is said that the gods had no hand in his success, this is no trivial admission that a man can attain the dearly coveted felicity of this life even though his own gods be not propitious; that men can be loaded with the gifts of fortune as Marius was, can enjoy health, power, wealth, honours, dignity, length of days, though the gods be hostile to him; and that, on the other hand, men can be tormented as Regulus was, with captivity, bondage, destitution, watchings, pain, and cruel death, though the gods be his friends. To concede this is to make a compendious confession that the gods are useless, and their worship superfluous. If the gods have taught the people rather what goes clean counter to the virtues of the soul, and that integrity of life which meets a reward after death; if even in respect of temporal and transitory blessings they neither hurt those whom they hate nor profit whom they love, why are they worshipped, why are they invoked with such eager homage? Why do men murmur in difficult and sad emergencies, as if the gods had retired in anger? and why, on their account, is the Christian religion injured by the most unworthy calumnies? If in temporal matters they have power either for good or for evil, why did they stand by Marius, the worst of Rome's citizens, and abandon Regulus, the best? Does this not prove themselves to be most unjust and wicked? And even if it be supposed that for this very reason they are the rather to be feared and worshipped, this is a mistake; for we do not read that Regulus worshipped them less assiduously than Marius. Neither is it apparent that a wicked life is to be chosen, on the ground that the gods are supposed to have favored Marius more than Regulus. For Metellus, the most highly esteemed of all the Romans, who had five sons in the consulship, was prosperous even in this life; and Catiline, the worst of men, reduced to poverty and defeated in the war his own guilt had aroused, lived and perished miserably. Real and secure felicity is the peculiar possession of those who worship that God by whom alone it can be conferred.

It is thus apparent, that when the republic was being destroyed by profligate manners, its gods did nothing to hinder its destruction by the direction or correction of its manners, but rather accelerated its destruction by increasing the demoralization and corruption that already existed. They need not pretend that their goodness was shocked by the iniquity of the city, and that they withdrew in anger. For they were there, sure enough; they are detected, convicted: they were equally unable to break silence so as to guide others, and to keep silence so as to conceal themselves. I do not dwell on the fact that the inhabitants of Minturnae took pity on Marius, and commended him to the goddess Marica in her grove, that she might give him success in all things, and that from the abyss of despair in which he then lay he forthwith returned unhurt to Rome, and entered the city the ruthless leader of a ruthless army; and they who wish to know how bloody was his victory, how unlike a citizen, and how much more relentlessly than any foreign foe he acted, let them read the histories. But this, as I said, I do not dwell upon; nor do I attribute the bloody bliss of Marius to, I know not what Minturnian goddess [Marica], but rather to the secret providence of God, that the mouths of our adversaries might be shut, and that they who are not led by passion, but by prudent consideration of events, might be delivered from error. And even if the demons have any power in these matters, they have only that power which the secret decree of the Almighty allots to them, in order that we may not set too great store by earthly prosperity, seeing it is oftentimes vouchsafed even to wicked men like Marius; and that we may not, on the other hand, regard it as an evil, since we see that many good and pious worshippers of the one true God are, in spite of the demons pre-eminently successful; and, finally, that we may not suppose that these unclean spirits are either to be propitiated or feared for the sake of earthly blessings or calamities: for as wicked men on earth cannot do all they would, so neither can these demons, but only in so far as they are permitted by the decree of Him whose judgments are fully comprehensible, justly reprehensible by none.

CHAPTER 24

OF THE DEEDS OF SYLLA, IN WHICH THE DEMONS BOASTED THAT HE HAD THEIR HELP

It is certain that Sylla—whose rule was so cruel that, in comparison with it, the preceding state of things which he came to avenge was regretted—when first he advanced towards Rome to give battle to Marius, found the auspices so favourable when he sacrificed, that, according to Livy’s account, the augur Postumius expressed his willingness to lose his head if Sylla did not, with the help of the gods, accomplish what he designed. The gods, you see, had not departed from “every fane and sacred shrine,” since they were still predicting the issue of these affairs, and yet were taking no steps to correct Sylla himself. Their presages promised him great prosperity but no threatenings of theirs subdued his evil passions. And then, when he was in

Asia conducting the war against Mithridates, a message from Jupiter was delivered to him by Lucius Titius, to the effect that he would conquer Mithridates; and so it came to pass. And afterwards, when he was meditating a return to Rome for the purpose of avenging in the blood of the citizens injuries done to himself and his friends, a second message from Jupiter was delivered to him by a soldier of the sixth legion, to the effect that it was he who had predicted the victory over Mithridates, and that now he promised to give him power to recover the republic from his enemies, though with great bloodshed. Sylla at once inquired of the soldier what form had appeared to him; and, on his reply, recognized that it was the same as Jupiter had formerly employed to convey to him the assurance regarding the victory over Mithridates. How, then, can the gods be justified in this matter for the care they took to predict these shadowy successes, and for their negligence in correcting Sylla, and restraining him from stirring up a civil war so lamentable and atrocious, that it not merely disfigured, but extinguished, the republic? The truth is, as I have often said, and as Scripture informs us, and as the facts themselves sufficiently indicate, the demons are found to look after their own ends only, that they may be regarded and worshipped as gods, and that men may be induced to offer to them a worship which associates them with their crimes, and involves them in one common wickedness and judgment of God.

Afterwards, when Sylla had come to Tarentum, and had sacrificed there, he saw on the head of the victim’s liver the likeness of a golden crown. Thereupon the same soothsayer Postumius interpreted this to signify a signal victory, and ordered that he only should eat of the entrails. A little afterwards, the slave of a certain Lucius Pontius cried out, “I am Bellona’s messenger; the victory is yours, Sylla!” Then he added that the Capitol should be burned. As soon as he had uttered this prediction he left the camp, but returned the following day more excited than ever, and shouted, “The Capitol is fired!” And fired indeed it was. This it was easy for a demon both to foresee and quickly to announce. But observe, as relevant to our subject, what kind of gods they are under whom these men desire to live, who blaspheme the Saviour that delivers the wills of the faithful from the dominion of devils. The man cried out in prophetic rapture, “The victory is yours, Sylla!” And to certify that he spoke by a divine spirit, he predicted also an event which was shortly to happen, and which indeed did fall out, in a place from which he in whom this spirit was speaking was far distant. But he never cried, “Forbear thy villanies, Sylla!”—the villanies which were committed at Rome by that victor to whom a golden crown on the calf’s liver had been shown as the divine evidence of his victory. If such signs as this were customarily sent by just gods, and not by wicked demons, then certainly the entrails he consulted should rather have given Sylla intimation of the cruel disasters that were to befall the city and himself. For that victory was not so conducive to his exaltation to power, as it was fatal to his ambition; for by it he became so insatiable in his desires, and was rendered so arrogant and reckless by prosperity, that he may be said rather to have inflicted a moral destruction on himself than corporal destruction on his enemies. But these truely woeful and deplorable calamities the gods gave him no previous hint of, neither by entrails, augury, dream, nor prediction. For they feared his amendment more than his defeat. Yea, they took good care that this glorious conqueror of his own fellow-citizens should be conquered and led captive by his own infamous vices, and should thus be the more submissive slave of the demons themselves.

CHAPTER 25

HOW POWERFULLY THE EVIL SPIRITS INCITE MEN TO WICKED ACTIONS, BY GIVING THEM THE QUASI-DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THEIR EXAMPLE

Now, who does not hereby comprehend,—unless he has preferred to imitate such gods rather than by divine grace to withdraw himself from their fellowship,—who does not see how eagerly these evil spirits strive by their example to lend, as it were, divine authority to crime? Is not this proved by the fact that they were seen in a wide plain in Campania rehearsing among themselves the battle which shortly after took place there with great bloodshed between the armies of Rome? For at first there were heard loud crashing noises, and afterwards many reported that they had seen for some days together two armies engaged. And when this battle ceased, they found the ground all indented with just such footprints of men and horses as a great conflict would leave. If, then, the deities were veritably fighting with one another, the civil wars of men are sufficiently justified; yet, by the way, let it be observed that such pugnacious gods must be very wicked or very wretched. If, however, it was but a sham-fight, what did they intend by this, but that the civil wars of the Romans should seem no wickedness, but an imitation of the gods? For already the civil wars had begun; and before this, some lamentable battles and execrable massacres had occurred. Already many had been moved by the story of the soldier, who, on stripping the spoils of his slain foe, recognized in the stripped corpse his own brother, and, with deep curses on civil wars, slew himself there and then on his brother's body. To disguise the bitterness of such tragedies, and kindle increasing ardor in this monstrous warfare, these malign demons, who were reputed and worshipped as gods, fell upon this plan of revealing themselves in a state of civil war, that no compunction for fellow-citizens might cause the Romans to shrink from such battles, but that the human criminality might be justified by the divine example. By a like craft, too, did these evil spirits command that scenic entertainments, of which I have already spoken, should be instituted and dedicated to them. And in these entertainments the poetical compositions and actions of the drama ascribed such iniquities to the gods, that every one might safely imitate them, whether he believed the gods had actually done such things, or, not believing this, yet perceived that they most eagerly desired to be represented as having done them. And that no one might suppose, that in representing the gods as fighting with one another, the poets had slandered them, and imputed to them unworthy actions, the gods themselves, to complete the deception, confirmed the compositions of the poets by exhibiting their own battles to the eyes of men, not only through actions in the theatres, but in their own persons on the actual field.

We have been forced to bring forward these facts, because their authors have not scrupled to say and to write that the Roman republic had already been ruined by the depraved moral habits of the citizens, and had ceased to exist before the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now this ruin they do not impute to their own gods, though they impute to our Christ the evils of this life, which cannot ruin good men, be they alive or dead. And this they do, though our Christ has issued so many precepts inculcating virtue and restraining vice; while their own gods have done nothing whatever to preserve that republic that served them, and to restrain it from ruin by such precepts, but have rather hastened its destruction, by corrupting its morality through their pestilent example. No one, I fancy, will now be bold enough to say that the republic was then ruined because of the departure of the gods "from each fane, each sacred shrine," as if they were the friends of virtue, and were offended by the vices of men. No, there are too many presages from entrails, auguries, soothsayings, whereby they boastingly proclaimed themselves prescient of future events and controllers of the fortune of war,—all which prove them to have been present. And had they been indeed absent the Romans would never in these civil wars have been so far transported by their own passions as they were by the instigations of these gods.

CHAPTER 26

THAT THE DEMONS GAVE IN SECRET CERTAIN OBSCURE INSTRUCTIONS IN MORALS, WHILE IN PUBLIC THEIR OWN SOLEMNITIES INCULCATED ALL WICKEDNESS

Seeing that this is so,—seeing that the filthy and cruel deeds, the disgraceful and criminal actions of the gods, whether real or feigned, were at their own request published, and were consecrated, and dedicated in their honor as sacred and stated solemnities; seeing they vowed vengeance on those who refused to exhibit them to the eyes of all, that they might be proposed as deeds worthy of imitation, why is it that these same demons, who by taking pleasure in such obscenities, acknowledge themselves to be unclean spirits, and by delighting in their own villanies and iniquities, real or imaginary, and by requesting from the immodest, and extorting from the modest, the celebration of these licentious acts, proclaim themselves instigators to a criminal and lewd life;—why, I ask, are they represented as giving some good moral precepts to a few of their own elect, initiated in the secrecy of their shrines? If it be so, this very thing only serves further to demonstrate the malicious craft of these pestilent spirits. For so great is the influence of probity and chastity, that all men, or almost all men, are moved by the praise of these virtues; nor is any man so depraved by vice, but he hath some feeling of honor left in him. So that, unless the devil sometimes transformed himself, as Scripture says, into an angel of light, he could not compass his deceitful purpose. Accordingly, in public, a bold impurity fills the ear of the people with noisy clamor; in private, a feigned chastity speaks in scarce audible whispers to a few: an open stage is provided for shameful things, but on the praiseworthy the curtain falls: grace hides disgrace flaunts: a wicked deed draws an overflowing house, a virtuous speech finds scarce a hearer, as though purity were to be blushed at, impurity boasted of. Where else can such confusion reign, but in devils' temples? Where, but in the haunts of deceit? For the secret precepts are given as a sop to the virtuous, who are few in number; the wicked examples are exhibited to encourage the vicious, who are countless.

Where and when those initiated in the mysteries of Coelestis received any good instructions, we know not. What we do know is, that before her shrine, in which her image is set, and amidst a vast crowd gathering from all quarters, and standing closely packed together, we were intensely interested spectators of the games which were going on, and saw, as we pleased to turn the eye, on this side a grand display of harlots, on the other the virgin goddess; we saw this virgin worshipped with prayer and with obscene rites. There we saw no shame-faced mimes, no actress overburdened with modesty; all that the obscene rites demanded was fully complied with. We were plainly shown what was pleasing to the virgin deity, and the matron who witnessed the spectacle returned home from the temple a wiser woman. Some, indeed, of the more prudent women turned their faces from the immodest movements of the players, and learned the art of wickedness by a furtive regard. For they were restrained, by the modest demeanor due to men, from looking boldly at the immodest gestures; but much more were they restrained from condemning with chaste heart the sacred rites of her whom they adored. And yet this licentiousness—which, if practised in one's home, could only be done there in secret—was practised as a public lesson in the temple; and if any modesty remained in men, it was occupied in marvelling that wickedness which men could not unrestrainedly commit should be part of the religious teaching of the gods, and that to omit its exhibition should incur the anger of the gods. What spirit can that be, which by a hidden inspiration stirs men's corruption, and goads them to adultery, and feeds on the full-fledged iniquity, unless it be the same that finds pleasure in such religious ceremonies, sets in the temples images of devils, and loves to see in play the images of vices; that whispers in secret some righteous sayings to deceive the few who are good, and scatters in public invitations to profligacy, to gain possession of the millions who are wicked?

CHAPTER 27

THAT THE OBSCENITIES OF THOSE PLAYS WHICH THE ROMANS CONSECRATED IN ORDER TO PROPITIATE THEIR GODS, CONTRIBUTED LARGELY TO THE OVERTHROW OF PUBLIC ORDER

Cicero, a weighty man, and a philosopher in his way, when about to be made edile, wished the citizens to understand that, among the other duties of his magistracy, he must propitiate Flora by the celebration of games. And these games are reckoned devout in proportion to their lewdness. In another place, and when he was now consul, and the state in great peril, he says that games had been celebrated for ten days together, and that nothing had been omitted which could pacify the gods: as if it had not been more satisfactory to irritate the gods by temperance, than to pacify them by debauchery; and to provoke their hate by honest living, than soothe it by such unseemly grossness. For no matter how cruel was the ferocity of those men who were threatening the state, and on whose account the gods were being propitiated, it could not have been more hurtful than the alliance of gods who were won with the foulest vices. To avert the danger which threatened men’s bodies, the gods were conciliated in a fashion that drove virtue from their spirits; and the gods did not enrol themselves as defenders of the battlements against the besiegers, until they had first stormed and sacked the morality of the citizens. This propitiation of such divinities,—a propitiation so wanton, so impure, so immodest, so wicked, so filthy, whose actors the innate and praiseworthy virtue of the Romans disabled from civic honors, erased from their tribe, recognized as polluted and made infamous;—this propitiation, I say, so foul, so detestable, and alien from every religious feeling, these fabulous and ensnaring accounts of the criminal actions of the gods, these scandalous actions which they either shamefully and wickedly committed, or more shamefully and wickedly feigned, all this the whole city learned in public both by the words and gestures of the actors. They saw that the gods delighted in the commission of these things, and therefore believed that they wished them not only to be exhibited to them, but to be imitated by themselves. But as for that good and honest instruction which they speak of, it was given in such secrecy, and to so few (if indeed given at all), that they seemed rather to fear it might be divulged, than that it might not be practised.

CHAPTER 28

THAT THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION IS HEALTH-GIVING

They, then, are but abandoned and ungrateful wretches, in deep and fast bondage to that malign spirit, who complain and murmur that men are rescued by the name of Christ from the hellish thraldom of these unclean spirits, and from a participation in their punishment, and are brought out of the night of pestilential ungodliness into the light of most healthful piety. Only such men could murmur that the masses flock to the churches and their chaste acts of worship, where a seemly separation of the sexes is observed; where they learn how they may so spend this earthly life, as to merit a blessed eternity hereafter; where Holy Scripture and instruction in righteousness are proclaimed from a raised platform in presence of all, that both they who do the word may hear to their salvation, and they who do it not may hear to judgment. And though some enter who scoff at such precepts, all their petulance is either quenched by a sudden change, or is restrained through fear or shame. For no filthy and wicked action is there set forth to be gazed at or to be imitated; but either the precepts of the true God are recommended, His miracles narrated, His gifts praised, or His benefits implored.

CHAPTER 29

AN EXHORTATION TO THE ROMANS TO RENOUNCE PAGANISM

This, rather, is the religion worthy of your desires, O admirable Roman race,—the progeny of your Scaevolas and Scipios, of Regulus, and of Fabricius. This rather covet, this distinguish from that foul vanity and crafty malice of the devils. If there is in your nature any eminent virtue, only by true piety is it purged and perfected, while by impiety it is wrecked and punished. Choose now what you will pursue, that your praise may be not in yourself, but in the true God, in whom is no error. For of popular glory you have had your share; but by the secret providence of God, the true religion was not offered to your choice. Awake, it is now day; as you have already awaked in the persons of some in whose perfect virtue and sufferings for the true faith we glory: for they, contending on all sides with hostile powers, and conquering them all by bravely dying, have purchased for us this country of ours with their blood; to which country we invite you, and exhort you to add yourselves to the number of the citizens of this city, which also has a sanctuary of its own in the true remission of sins. Do not listen to those degenerate sons of thine who slander Christ and Christians, and impute to them these disastrous times, though they desire times in which they may enjoy rather impunity for their wickedness than a peaceful life. Such has never been Rome's ambition even in regard to her earthly country. Lay hold now on the celestial country, which is easily won, and in which you will reign truly and for ever. For there shall thou find no vestal fire, no Capitoline stone, but the one true God.

"No date, no goal will here ordain:

But grant an endless, boundless reign."

No longer, then, follow after false and deceitful gods; abjure them rather, and despise them, bursting forth into true liberty. Gods they are not, but malignant spirits, to whom your eternal happiness will be a sore punishment. Juno, from whom you deduce your origin according to the flesh, did not so bitterly grudge Rome's citadels to the Trojans, as these devils whom yet ye repute gods, grudge an everlasting seat to the race of mankind. And thou thyself hast in no wavering voice passed judgment on them, when thou didst pacify them with games, and yet didst account as infamous the men by whom the plays were acted. Suffer us, then, to assert thy freedom against the unclean spirits who had imposed on thy neck the yoke of celebrating their own shame and filthiness. The actors of these divine crimes thou hast removed from offices of honor; supplicate the true God, that He may remove from thee those gods who delight in their crimes,—a most disgraceful thing if the crimes are really theirs, and a most malicious invention if the crimes are feigned. Well done, in that thou hast spontaneously banished from the number of your citizens all actors and players. Awake more fully: the majesty of God cannot be propitiated by that which defiles the dignity of man. How, then, can you believe that gods who take pleasure in such lewd plays, belong to the number of the holy powers of heaven, when the men by whom these plays are acted are by yourselves refused admission into the number of Roman citizens even of the lowest grade? Incomparably more glorious than Rome, is that heavenly city in which for victory you have truth; for dignity, holiness; for peace, felicity; for life, eternity. Much less does it admit into its society such gods, if thou dost blush to admit into thine such men. Wherefore, if thou wouldst attain to the blessed city, shun the society of devils. They who are propitiated by deeds of shame, are unworthy of the worship of right-hearted men. Let these, then, be obliterated from your worship by the cleansing of the Christian religion, as those men were blotted from your citizenship by the censor’s mark.

But, so far as regards carnal benefits, which are the only blessings the wicked desire to enjoy, and carnal miseries, which alone they shrink from enduring, we will show in the following book that the demons have not the power they are supposed to have; and although they had it, we ought rather on that account to despise these blessings, than for the sake of them to worship those gods, and by worshipping them to miss the attainment of these blessings they grudge us. But that they have not even this power which is ascribed to them by those who worship them for the sake of temporal advantages, this, I say, I will prove in the following book; so let us here close the present argument.

Book III

Argument—As in the foregoing book Augustin has proved regarding moral and spiritual calamities, so in this book he proves regarding external and bodily disasters, that since the foundation of the city the Romans have been continually subject to them; and that even when the false gods were worshipped without a rival, before the advent of Christ, they afforded no relief from such calamities.

CHAPTER 1

OF THE ILLS WHICH ALONE THE WICKED FEAR, AND WHICH THE WORLD CONTINUALLY SUFFERED, EVEN WHEN THE GODS WERE WORSHIPPED

Of moral and spiritual evils, which are above all others to be deprecated, I think enough has already been said to show that the false gods took no steps to prevent the people who worshipped them from being overwhelmed by such calamities, but rather aggravated the ruin. I see I must now speak of those evils which alone are dreaded by the heathen—famine, pestilence, war, pillage, captivity, massacre, and the like calamities, already enumerated in the first book. For evil men account those things alone evil which do not make men evil; neither do they blush to praise good things, and yet to remain evil among the good things they praise. It grieves them more to own a bad house than a bad life, as if it were man’s greatest good to have everything good but himself. But not even such evils as were alone dreaded by the heathen were warded off by their gods, even when they were most unrestrictedly worshipped. For in various times and places before the advent of our Redeemer, the human race was crushed with numberless and sometimes incredible calamities; and at that time what gods but those did the world worship, if you except the one nation of the Hebrews, and, beyond them, such individuals as the most secret and most just judgment of God counted worthy of divine grace? But that I may not be prolix, I will be silent regarding the heavy calamities that have been suffered by any other nations, and will speak only of what happened to Rome and the Roman empire, by which I mean Rome properly so called, and those lands which already, before the coming of Christ, had by alliance or conquest become, as it were, members of the body of the state.

CHAPTER 2

WHETHER THE GODS, WHOM THE GREEKS AND ROMANS WORSHIPPED IN COMMON, WERE JUSTIFIED IN PERMITTING THE DESTRUCTION OF ILIUM

First, then, why was Troy or Ilium, the cradle of the Roman people (for I must not overlook nor disguise what I touched upon in the first book), conquered, taken and destroyed by the Greeks, though it esteemed and worshipped the same gods as they? Priam, some answer, paid the penalty of the perjury of his father Laomedon. Then it is true that Laomedon hired Apollo and Neptune as his workmen. For the story goes that he promised them wages, and then broke his bargain. I wonder that famous diviner Apollo toiled at so huge a work, and never suspected Laomedon was going to cheat him of his pay. And Neptune too, his uncle, brother of Jupiter, king of the sea, it really was not seemly that he should be ignorant of what was to happen. For he is introduced by Homer (who lived and wrote before the building of Rome) as predicting something great of the posterity of AEneas, who in fact founded Rome. And as Homer says, Nep tune also rescued AEneas in a cloud from the wrath of Achilles, though (according to Virgil)

“All his will was to destroy

His own creation, perjured Troy.”

Gods, then, so great as Apollo and Neptune, in ignorance of the cheat that was to defraud them of their wages, built the walls of Troy for nothing but thanks and thankless people. There may be some doubt whether it is not a worse crime to believe such persons to be gods, than to cheat such gods. Even Homer himself did not give full credence to the story for while he represents Neptune, indeed, as hostile to the Trojans, he introduces Apollo as their champion, though the story implies that both were offended by that fraud. If, therefore, they believe their fables, let them blush to worship such gods; if they discredit the fables, let no more be said of the “Trojan perjury;” or let them explain how the gods hated Trojan, but loved Roman perjury. For how did the conspiracy of Catiline, even in so large and corrupt a city, find so abundant a supply of men whose hands and tongues found them a living by perjury and civic broils? What else but perjury corrupted the judgments pronounced by so many of the senators? What else corrupted the people's votes and decisions of all causes tried before them? For it seems that the ancient practice of taking oaths has been preserved even in the midst of the greatest corruption, not for the sake of restraining wickedness by religious fear, but to complete the tale of crimes by adding that of perjury.

CHAPTER 3

THAT THE GODS COULD NOT BE OFFENDED BY THE ADULTERY OF PARIS, THIS CRIME BEING SO COMMON AMONG THEMSELVES

There is no ground, then, for representing the gods (by whom, as they say, that empire stood, though they are proved to have been conquered by the Greeks) as being enraged at the Trojan perjury. Neither, as others again plead in their defence, was it indignation at the adultery of Paris that caused them to withdraw their protection from Troy. For their habit is to be instigators and instructors in vice, not its avengers. "The city of Rome," says Sallust, "was first built and inhabited, as I have heard, by the Trojans, who, flying their country, under the conduct of AEneas, wandered about without making any settlement." If, then, the gods were of opinion that the adultery of Paris should be punished, it was chiefly the Romans, or at least the Romans also, who should have suffered; for the adultery was brought about by AEneas' mother. But how could they hate in Paris a crime which they made no objection to in their own sister Venus, who (not to mention any other instance) committed adultery with Anchises, and so became the mother of AEneas? Is it because in the one case Menelaus was aggrieved, while in the other Vulcan connived at the crime? For the gods, I fancy, are so little jealous of their wives, that they make no scruple of sharing them with men. But perhaps I may be suspected of turning the myths into ridicule, and not handling so weighty a subject with sufficient gravity. Well, then, let us say that AEneas is not the son of Venus. I am willing to admit it; but is Romulus any more the son of Mars? For why not the one as well as the other? Or is it lawful for gods to have intercourse with women, unlawful for men to have intercourse with goddesses? A hard, or rather an incredible condition, that what was allowed to Mars by the law of Venus, should not be allowed to Venus herself by her own law. However, both cases have the authority of Rome; for Caesar in modern times believed no less that he was descended from Venus, than the ancient Romulus believed himself the son of Mars.

CHAPTER 4

OF VARRO’S OPINION, THAT IT IS USEFUL FOR MEN TO FEIGN THEMSELVES THE OFFSPRING OF THE GODS

Some one will say, But do you believe all this? Not I indeed. For even Varro, a very learned heathen, all but admits that these stories are false, though he does not boldly and confidently say so. But he maintains it is useful for states that brave men believe, though falsely, that they are descended from the gods; for that thus the human spirit, cherishing the belief of its divine descent, will both more boldly venture into great enterprises, and will carry them out more energetically, and will therefore by its very confidence secure more abundant success. You see how wide a field is opened to falsehood by this opinion of Varro’s, which I have expressed as well as I could in my own words; and how comprehensible it is, that many of the religions and sacred legends should be feigned in a community in which it was judged profitable for the citizens that lies should be told even about the gods themselves.

CHAPTER 5

THAT IT IS NOT CREDIBLE THAT THE GODS SHOULD HAVE PUNISHED THE ADULTERY OF PARIS, SEEING THEY SHOWED NO INDIGNATION AT THE ADULTERY OF THE MOTHER OF ROMULUS

But whether Venus could bear AEneas to a human father Anchises, or Mars beget Romulus of the daughter of Numitor, we leave as unsettled questions. For our own Scriptures suggest the very similar question, whether the fallen angels had sexual intercourse with the daughters of men, by which the earth was at that time filled with giants, that is, with enormously large and strong men. At present, then, I will limit my discussion to this dilemma: If that which their books relate about the mother of AEneas and the father of Romulus be true, how can the gods be displeased with men for adulteries which, when committed by themselves, excite no displeasure? If it is false, not even in this case can the gods be angry that men should really commit adulteries, which, even when falsely attributed to the gods, they delight in. Moreover, if the adultery of Mars be discredited, that Venus also may be freed from the imputation, then the mother of Romulus is left unshielded by the pretext of a divine seduction. For Sylvia was a vestal priestess, and the gods ought to avenge this sacrilege on the Romans with greater severity than Paris' adultery on the Trojans. For even the Romans themselves in primitive times used to go so far as to bury alive any vestal who was detected in adultery, while women unconsecrated, though they were punished, were never punished with death for that crime; and thus they more earnestly vindicated the purity of shrines they esteemed divine, than of the human bed.

CHAPTER 6

THAT THE GODS EXACTED NO PENALTY FOR THE FRATRICIDAL ACT OF ROMULUS

I add another instance: If the sins of men so greatly incensed those divinities, that they abandoned Troy to fire and sword to punish the crime of Paris, the murder of Romulus' brother ought to have incensed them more against the Romans than the cajoling of a Greek husband moved them against the Trojans: fratricide in a newly-born city should have provoked them more than adultery in a city already flourishing. It makes no difference to the question we now discuss, whether Romulus ordered his brother to be slain, or slew him with his own hand; it is a crime which many shamelessly deny, many through shame doubt, many in grief disguise. And we shall not pause to examine and weigh the testimonies of historical writers on the subject. All agree that the brother of Romulus was slain, not by enemies, not by strangers. If it was Romulus who either commanded or perpetrated this crime; Romulus was more truly the head of the Romans than Paris of the Trojans; why then did he who carried off another man's wife bring down the anger of the gods on the Trojans, while he who took his brother's life obtained the guardianship of those same gods? If, on the other hand, that crime was not wrought either by the hand or will of

Romulus, then the whole city is chargeable with it, because it did not see to its punishment, and thus committed, not fratricide, but parricide, which is worse. For both brothers were the founders of that city, of which the one was by villainy prevented from being a ruler. So far as I see, then, no evil can be ascribed to Troy which warranted the gods in abandoning it to destruction, nor any good to Rome which accounts for the gods visiting it with prosperity; unless the truth be, that they fled from Troy because they were vanquished, and betook themselves to Rome to practise their characteristic deceptions there. Nevertheless they kept a footing for themselves in Troy, that they might deceive future inhabitants who re-peopled these lands; while at Rome, by a wider exercise of their malignant arts, they exulted in more abundant honors.

CHAPTER 7

OF THE DESTRUCTION OF ILIUM BY FIMBRIA, A LIEUTENANT OF MARIUS

And surely we may ask what wrong poor Ilium had done, that, in the first heat of the civil wars of Rome, it should suffer at the hand of Fimbria, the veriest villain among Marius' partisans, a more fierce and cruel destruction than the Grecian sack. For when the Greeks took it many escaped, and many who did not escape were suffered to live, though in captivity. But Fimbria from the first gave orders that not a life should be spared, and burnt up together the city and all its inhabitants. Thus was Ilium requited, not by the Greeks, whom she had provoked by wrong-doing; but by the Romans, who had been built out of her ruins; while the gods, adored alike of both sides, did simply nothing, or, to speak more correctly, could do nothing. Is it then true, that at this time also, after Troy had repaired the damage done by the Grecian fire, all the gods by whose help the kingdom stood, "forsook each fane, each sacred shrine?"

But if so, I ask the reason; for in my judgment, the conduct of the gods was as much to be reprobated as that of the townsmen to be applauded. For these closed their gates against Fimbria, that they might preserve the city for Sylla, and were therefore burnt and consumed by the enraged general. Now, up to this time, Sylla's cause was the more worthy of the two; for till now he used arms to restore the republic, and as yet his good intentions had met with no reverses. What better thing, then, could the Trojans have done? What more honorable, what more faithful to Rome, or more worthy of her relationship, than to preserve their city for the better part of the Romans, and to shut their gates against a parricide of his country? It is for the defenders of the gods to consider the ruin which this conduct brought on Troy. The gods deserted an adulterous people, and abandoned Troy to the fires of the Greeks, that out of her ashes a chaster Rome might arise. But why did they a second time abandon this same town, allied now to Rome, and not making war upon her noble daughter, but preserving a most steadfast and pious fidelity to Rome's most justifiable faction? Why did they give her up to be destroyed, not by the Greek heroes, but by the basest of the Romans? Or, if the gods did not favor Sylla's cause, for which the unhappy Trojans maintained their city, why did they themselves predict and promise Sylla such successes? Must we call them flatterers of the fortunate, rather than helpers of the wretched? Troy was not destroyed, then, because the gods deserted it. For the demons, always watchful to deceive, did what they could. For, when all the statues were overthrown and burnt together with the town, Livy tells us that only the image of Minerva is said to have been found standing uninjured amidst the ruins of her temple; not that it might be said in their praise, "The gods who made this realm divine," but that it might not be said in their defence, They are "gone from each fane, each sacred shrine:" for that marvel was permitted to them, not that they might be proved to be powerful, but that they might be convicted of being present.

CHAPTER 8

WHETHER ROME OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED TO THE TROJAN GODS

Where, then, was the wisdom of entrusting Rome to the Trojan gods, who had demonstrated their weakness in the loss of Troy? Will some one say that, when Fimbria stormed Troy, the gods were already resident in Rome? How, then, did the image of Minerva remain standing? Besides, if they were at Rome when Fimbria destroyed Troy, perhaps they were at Troy when Rome itself was taken and set on fire by the Gauls. But as they are very acute in hearing, and very swift in their movements, they came quickly at the cackling of the goose to defend at least the Capitol, though to defend the rest of the city they were too long in being warned.

CHAPTER 9

WHETHER IT IS CREDIBLE THAT THE PEACE DURING THE REIGN OF NUMA WAS BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE GODS

It is also believed that it was by the help of the gods that the successor of Romulus, Numa Pompilius, enjoyed peace during his entire reign, and shut the gates of Janus, which are customarily kept open during war. And it is supposed he was thus requited for appointing many religious observances among the Romans. Certainly that king would have commanded our congratulations for so rare a leisure, had he been wise enough to spend it on wholesome pursuits, and, subduing a pernicious curiosity, had sought out the true God with true piety. But as it was, the gods were not the authors of his leisure; but possibly they would have deceived him less had they found him busier. For the more disengaged they found him, the more they themselves occupied his attention. Varro informs us of all his efforts, and of the arts he employed to associate these gods with himself and the city; and in its own place, if God will, I shall discuss these matters. Meanwhile, as we are speaking of the benefits conferred by the gods, I readily admit that peace is a great benefit; but it is a benefit of the true God, which, like the sun, the rain, and other supports of life, is frequently conferred on the ungrateful and wicked. But if this great boon was conferred on Rome and Pompilius by their gods, why did they never afterwards grant it to the Roman empire during even more meritorious periods? Were the sacred rites more efficient at their first institution than during their subsequent celebration? But they had no existence in Numa's time, until he added them to the ritual; whereas afterwards they had already been celebrated and preserved, that benefit might arise from them. How, then, is it that those forty-three, or as others prefer it, thirty-nine years of Numa's reign, were passed in unbroken peace, and yet that afterwards, when the worship was established, and the gods themselves, who were invoked by it, were the recognized guardians and pa trons of the city, we can with difficulty find during the whole period, from the building of the city to the reign of Augustus, one year—that, viz., which followed the close of the first Punic war—in which, for a marvel, the Romans were able to shut the gates of war?

CHAPTER 10

WHETHER IT WAS DESIRABLE THAT THE ROMAN EMPIRE SHOULD BE INCREASED BY SUCH A FURIOUS SUCCESSION OF WARS, WHEN IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN QUIET AND SAFE BY FOLLOWING IN THE PEACEFUL WAYS OF NUMA

Do they reply that the Roman empire could never have been so widely extended, nor so glorious, save by constant and unintermitting wars? A fit argument, truly! Why must a kingdom be distracted in order to be great? In this little world of man's body, is it not better to have a moderate stature, and health with it, than to attain the huge dimensions of a giant by unnatural torments, and when you attain it to find no rest, but to be pained the more in proportion to the size of your members? What evil would have resulted, or rather what good would not have resulted, had those times continued which Sallust sketched, when he says, "At first the kings (for that was the first title of empire in the world) were divided in their sentiments: part cultivated the mind, others the body: at that time the life of men was led without coveteousness; every one was sufficiently satisfied with his own!" Was it requisite, then, for Rome's prosperity, that the state of things which Virgil reprobates should succeed:

"At length stole on a baser age

And war's indomitable rage,

And greedy lust of gain?"

But obviously the Romans have a plausible defence for undertaking and carrying on such disastrous wars,—to wit, that the pressure of their enemies forced them to resist, so that they were compelled to fight, not by any greed of human applause, but by the necessity of protecting life and liberty. Well, let that pass. Here is Sallust's account of the matter: "For when their state, enriched with laws, institutions, territory, seemed abundantly prosperous and sufficiently powerful, according to the ordinary law of human nature, opulence gave birth to envy. Accordingly, the neighboring kings and states took arms and assaulted them. A few allies lent assistance; the rest, struck with fear, kept aloof from dangers. But the Romans, watchful at home and in war, were active, made preparations, encouraged one another, marched to meet their enemies,—protected by arms their liberty, country, parents. Afterwards, when they had repelled the dangers by their bravery, they carried help to their allies and friends, and procured alliances more by conferring than by receiving favors." This was to build up Rome's greatness by honorable means. But, in Numa's reign, I would know whether the long peace was maintained in spite of the incursions of wicked neighbors, or if these incursions were discontinued that the peace might be maintained? For if even then Rome was harassed by wars, and yet did not meet force with force, the same means she then used to quiet her enemies without conquering them in war, or terrifying them with the onset of battle, she might have used always, and have reigned in peace with the gates of Janus shut. And if this was not in her power, then Rome enjoyed peace not at the will of her gods, but at the will of her neighbors round about, and only so long as they cared to provoke her with no war, unless perhaps these pitiful gods will dare to sell to one man as their favor what lies not in their power to bestow, but in the will of another man. These demons, indeed, in so far as they are permitted, can terrify or incite the minds of wicked men by their own peculiar wickedness. But if they always had this power, and if no action were taken against their efforts by a more secret and higher power, they would be supreme to give peace or the victories of war, which almost always fall out through some human emotion, and frequently in opposition to the will of the gods, as is proved not only by lying legends, which scarcely hint or signify any grain of truth, but even by Roman history itself.

CHAPTER 11

OF THE STATUE OF APOLLO AT CUMAE, WHOSE TEARS ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE PORTENDED DISASTER TO THE GREEKS, WHOM THE GOD WAS UNABLE TO SUCCOR

And it is still this weakness of the gods which is confessed in the story of the Cuman Apollo, who is said to have wept for four days during the war with the Achaeans and King Aristonicus. And when the augurs were alarmed at the portent, and had determined to cast the statue into the sea, the old men of Cumae interposed, and related that a similar prodigy had occurred to the same image during the wars against Antiochus and against

Perseus, and that by a decree of the senate, gifts had been presented to Apollo, because the event had proved favorable to the Romans. Then soothsayers were summoned who were supposed to have greater professional skill, and they pronounced that the weeping of Apollo's image was propitious to the Romans, because Cumae was a Greek colony, and that Apollo was bewailing (and thereby presaging) the grief and calamity that was about to light upon his own land of Greece, from which he had been brought. Shortly afterwards it was reported that King Aristonicus was defeated and made prisoner,—a defeat certainly opposed to the will of Apollo; and this he indicated by even shedding tears from his marble image. And this shows us that, though the verses of the poets are mythical, they are not altogether devoid of truth, but describe the manners of the demons in a sufficiently fit style. For in Virgil, Diana mourned for Camilla, and Hercules wept for Pallas doomed to die. This is perhaps the reason why Numa Pompilius, too, when, enjoying prolonged peace, but without knowing or inquiring from whom he received it, he began in his leisure to consider to what gods he should entrust the safe keeping and conduct of Rome, and not dreaming that the true, almighty, and most high God cares for earthly affairs, but recollecting only that the Trojan gods which AEneas had brought to Italy had been able to preserve neither the Trojan nor Lavinian kingdom rounded by AEneas himself, concluded that he must provide other gods as guardians of fugitives and helpers of the weak, and add them to those earlier divinities who had either come over to Rome with Romulus, or when Alba was destroyed.

CHAPTER 12

THAT THE ROMANS ADDED A VAST NUMBER OF GODS TO THOSE INTRODUCED BY NUMA, AND THAT THEIR NUMBERS HELPED THEM NOT AT ALL

But though Pompilius introduced so ample a ritual, yet did not Rome see fit to be content with it. For as yet Jupiter himself had not his chief temple,—it being King Tarquin who built the Capitol. And AEsculapius left Epidaurus for Rome, that in this foremost city he might have a finer field for the exercise of his great medical skill. The mother of the gods, too, came I know not whence from Pessinuns; it being unseemly that, while her son presided on the Capitoline hill, she herself should lie hid in obscurity. But if she is the mother of all the gods, she not only followed some of her children to Rome, but left others to follow her. I wonder, indeed, if she were the mother of Cynocephalus, who a long while afterwards came from Egypt. Whether also the goddess Fever was her offspring, is a matter for her grandson AEsculapius to decide. But of whatever breed she be, the foreign gods will not presume, I trust, to call a goddess base-born who is a Roman citizen. Who can number the deities to whom the guardianship of Rome was entrusted? Indigenous and imported, both of heaven, earth, hell, seas, fountains, rivers; and, as Varro says, gods certain and uncertain, male and female: for, as among animals, so among all kinds of gods are there these distinctions. Rome, then, enjoying the protection of such a cloud of deities, might surely have been preserved from some of those great and horrible calamities, of which I can mention but a few. For by the great smoke of her altars she summoned to her protection, as by a beacon-fire, a host of gods, for whom she appointed and maintained temples, altars, sacrifices, priests, and thus offended the true and most high God, to whom alone all this ceremonial is lawfully due. And, indeed, she was more prosperous when she had fewer gods; but the greater she became, the more gods she thought she should have, as the larger ship needs to be manned by a larger crew. I suppose she despaired of the smaller number, under whose protection she had spent comparatively happy days, being able to defend her greatness. For even under the kings (with the exception of Numa Pompilius, of whom I have already spoken), how wicked a contentiousness must have existed to occasion the death of Romulus’ brother!

CHAPTER 13

BY WHAT RIGHT OR AGREEMENT THE ROMANS OBTAINED THEIR FIRST WIVES

How is it that neither Juno, who with her husband Jupiter even then cherished

“Rome’s sons, the nation of the gown,”

nor Venus herself, could assist the children of the loved AEneas to find wives by some right and equitable means? For the lack of this entailed upon the Romans the lamentable necessity of stealing their wives, and then waging war with their fathers-in-law; so that the wretched women, before they had recovered from the wrong done them by their husbands, were dowried with the blood of their fathers. “But the Romans conquered their neighbors.” Yes; but with what wounds on both sides, and with what sad slaughter of relatives and neighbors! The war of Caesar and Pompey was the contest of only one father-in-law with one son-in-law; and before it began, the daughter of Caesar, Pompey’s wife, was already dead. But with how keen and just an accent of grief does Lucan exclaim: “I sing that worse than civil war waged in the plains of Emathia, and in which the crime was justified by the victory!”

The Romans, then, conquered that they might, with hands stained in the blood of their fathers-in-law, wrench the miserable girls from their embrace,—girls who dared not weep for their slain parents, for fear of offending their victorious husbands; and while yet the battle was raging, stood with their prayers on their lips, and knew not for whom to utter them. Such nuptials were certainly prepared for the Roman people not by Venus, but Bellona; or possibly that infernal fury Alecto had more liberty to injure them now that Juno was aiding them, than when the prayers of that goddess had excited her against AEneas. Andromache in captivity was happier than these Roman brides. For though she was a slave, yet, after she had become the wife of Pyrrhus, no more Trojans fell by his hand; but the Romans slew in battle the very fathers of the brides they fondled. Andromache, the victor’s captive, could only mourn, not fear, the death of her people. The Sabine women, related to men still combatants, feared the death of their fathers when their husbands went out to battle, and mourned their death as they returned, while neither their grief nor their fear could be freely expressed. For the victories of their husbands, involving the destruction of fellow-townsmen, relatives, brothers, fathers, caused either pious agony or cruel exultation. Moreover, as the fortune of war is capricious, some of them lost their husbands by the sword of their parents, while others lost husband and father together in mutual destruction. For the Romans by no means escaped with impunity, but they were driven back within their walls, and defended themselves behind closed gates; and when the gates were opened by guile, and the enemy admitted into the town, the Forum itself was the field of a hateful and fierce engagement of fathers-in-law and sons-in-law. The ravishers were indeed quite defeated, and, flying on all sides to their houses, sullied with new shame their original shameful and lamentable triumph. It was at this juncture that Romulus, hoping no more from the valor of his citizens, prayed Jupiter that they might stand their ground; and from this occasion the god gained the name of Stator. But not even thus would the mischief have been finished, had not the ravished women themselves flashed out with dishevelled hair, and cast themselves before their parents, and thus disarmed their just rage, not with the arms of victory, but with the supplications of filial affection. Then Romulus, who could not brook his own brother as a colleague, was compelled to accept Titus Tatius, king of the Sabines, as his partner on the throne. But how long would he who misliked the fellowship of his own twin-brother endure a stranger? So, Tatius being slain, Romulus remained sole king, that he might be the greater god. See what rights of marriage these were that fomented unnatural wars. These were the Roman leagues of kindred, relationship, alliance, religion. This was the life of the city so abundantly protected by the gods. You see how many severe things might be said on this theme; but our purpose carries us past them, and requires our discourse for other matters.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE WICKEDNESS OF THE WAR WAGED BY THE ROMANS AGAINST THE ALBANS, AND OF THE VICTORIES WON BY THE LUST OF POWER

But what happened after Numa’s reign, and under the other kings, when the Albans were provoked into war, with sad results not to themselves alone, but also to the Romans? The long peace of Numa had become tedious; and with what endless slaughter and detriment of both states did the Roman and Alban armies bring it to an end! For Alba, which had been founded by Ascanius, son of AEneas, and which was more properly the mother of Rome than Troy herself, was provoked to battle by Tullus Hostilius, king of Rome, and in the conflict both inflicted and received such damage, that at length both parties wearied of the struggle. It was then devised that the war should be decided by the combat of three twin-brothers from each army: from the Romans the three Horatii stood forward, from the Albans the three Curiatii. Two of the Horatii were overcome and disposed of by the Curiatii; but by the remaining Horatius the three Curiatii were slain. Thus Rome remained victorious, but with such a sacrifice that only one survivor returned to his home. Whose was the loss on both sides? Whose the grief, but of the offspring of AEneas, the descendants of Ascanius, the progeny of Venus, the grandsons of Jupiter? For this, too, was a “worse than civil” war, in which the belligerent states were mother and daughter. And to this combat of the three twin-brothers there was added another atrocious and horrible catastrophe. For as the two nations had formerly been friendly (being related and neighbors), the sister of the Horatii had been betrothed to one of the Curiatii; and she, when she saw her brother wearing the spoils of her betrothed, burst into tears, and was slain by her own brother in his anger. To me, this one girl seems to have been more humane than the whole Roman people. I cannot think her to blame for lamenting the man to whom already she had plighted her troth, or, as perhaps she was doing, for grieving that her brother should have slain him to whom he had promised his sister. For why do we praise the grief of AEneas (in Virgil) over the enemy cut down even by his own hand? Why did Marcellus shed tears over the city of Syracuse, when he recollected, just before he destroyed, its magnificence and meridian glory, and thought upon the common lot of all things? I demand, in the name of humanity, that if men are praised for tears shed over enemies conquered by themselves, a weak girl should not be counted criminal for bewailing her lover slaughtered by the hand of her brother. While, then, that maiden was weeping for the death of her betrothed inflicted by her brother’s hand, Rome was rejoicing that such devastation had been wrought on her mother state, and that she had purchased a victory with such an expenditure of the common blood of herself and the Albans.

Why allege to me the mere names and words of “glory” and “victory?” Tear off the disguise of wild delusion, and look at the naked deeds: weigh them naked, judge them naked. Let the charge be brought against Alba, as Troy was charged with adultery. There is no such charge, none like it found: the war was kindled only in order that there

“Might sound in languid ears the cry

Of Tullus and of victory.”

This vice of restless ambition was the sole motive to that social and parricidal war,—a vice which Sallust brands in passing; for when he has spoken with brief but hearty commendation of those primitive times in which life was spent without covetousness, and every one was sufficiently satisfied with what he had, he goes on: “But after Cyrus in Asia, and the Lacedemonians and Athenians in Greece, began to subdue cities and nations, and to account the lust of sovereignty a sufficient ground for war, and to reckon that the greatest glory consisted in the greatest empire;” and so on, as I need not now quote. This lust of sovereignty disturbs and consumes the human race with frightful ills. By this lust Rome was overcome when she triumphed over Alba, and praising her own crime, called it glory. For, as our Scriptures say, “the wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.” Away, then, with these deceitful masks, these deluding whitewashes, that things may be truthfully seen and scrutinized. Let no man tell me that this and the other was a “great” man, because he fought and conquered so and so. Gladiators fight and conquer, and this barbarism has its meed of praise; but I think it were better to take the consequences of any sloth, than to seek the glory won by such arms. And if two gladiators entered the arena to fight, one being father, the other his son, who would endure such a spectacle? who would not be revolted by it? How, then, could that be a glorious war which a daughter-state waged against its mother? Or did it constitute a difference, that the battlefield was not an arena, and that the wide plains were filled with the carcasses not of two gladiators, but of many of the flower of two nations; and that those contests were viewed not by the amphitheatre, but by the whole world, and furnished a profane spectacle both to those alive at the time, and to their posterity, so long as the fame of it is handed down?

Yet those gods, guardians of the Roman empire, and, as it were, theatric spectators of such contests as these, were not satisfied until the sister of the Horatii was added by her brother’s sword as a third victim from the Roman side, so that Rome herself, though she won the day, should have as many deaths to mourn. Afterwards, as a fruit of the victory, Alba was destroyed, though it was there the Trojan gods had formed a third asylum after Ilium had been sacked by the Greeks, and after they had left Lavinium, where AEneas had founded a kingdom in a land of banishment. But probably Alba was destroyed because from it too the gods had migrated, in their usual fashion, as Virgil says:

“Gone from each fane, each sacred shrine,

Are those who made this realm divine.”

Gone, indeed, and from now their third asylum, that Rome might seem all the wiser in committing herself to them after they had deserted three other cities. Alba, whose king Amulius had banished his brother, displeased them; Rome, whose king Romulus had slain his brother, pleased them. But before Alba was destroyed, its population, they say, was amalgamated with the inhabitants of Rome so that the two cities were one. Well, admitting it was so, yet the fact remains that the city of Ascanius, the third retreat of the Trojan gods, was destroyed by the daughter-city. Besides, to effect this pitiful conglomerate of the war’s leavings, much blood was spilt on both sides. And how shall I speak in detail of the same wars, so often renewed in subsequent reigns, though they seemed to have been finished by great victories; and of wars that time after time were brought to an end by great slaughters, and which yet time after time were renewed by the posterity of those who had made peace and struck treaties? Of this calamitous history we have no small proof, in the fact that no subsequent king closed the gates of war; and therefore with all their tutelar gods, no one of them reigned in peace.

CHAPTER 15

WHAT MANNER OF LIFE AND DEATH THE ROMAN KINGS HAD

And what was the end of the kings themselves? Of Romulus, a flattering legend tells us that he was assumed into heaven. But certain Roman historians relate that he was torn in pieces by the senate for his ferocity, and that a man, Julius Proculus, was suborned to give out that Romulus had appeared to him, and through him commanded the Roman people to worship him as a god; and that in this way the people, who were beginning to resent the action of the senate, were quieted and pacified. For an eclipse of the sun had also happened; and this was attributed to the divine power of Romulus by the ignorant multitude, who did not know that it was brought about by the fixed laws of the sun’s course: though this grief of the sun might rather have been considered proof that Romulus had been slain, and that the crime was indicated by this deprivation of the sun’s light; as, in truth, was the case when the Lord was crucified through the cruelty and impiety of the Jews. For it is sufficiently demonstrated that this latter obscuration of the sun did not occur by the natural laws of the heavenly bodies, because it was then the Jewish Passover, which is held only at full moon, whereas natural eclipses of the sun happen only at the last quarter of the moon. Cicero, too, shows plainly enough that the apotheosis of Romulus was imaginary rather than real, when, even while he is praising him in one of Scipio’s remarks in the De Republica, he says: “Such a reputation had he acquired, that when he suddenly disappeared during an eclipse of the sun, he was supposed to have been assumed into the number of the gods, which could be supposed of no mortal who had not the highest reputation for virtue.” By these words, “he suddenly disappeared,” we are to understand that he was mysteriously made away with by the violence either of the tempest or of a murderous assault. For their other writers speak not only of an eclipse, but of a sudden storm also, which certainly either afforded opportunity for the crime, or itself made an end of Romulus. And of Tullus Hostilius, who was the third king of Rome, and who was himself destroyed by lightning, Cicero in the same book says, that “he was not supposed to have been deified by this death, possibly because the Romans were unwilling to vulgarize the promotion they were assured or persuaded of in the case of Romulus, lest they should bring it into contempt by gratuitously assigning it to all and sundry.” In one of his invectives, too, he says, in round terms, “The founder of this city, Romulus, we have raised to immortality and divinity by kindly celebrating his services;” implying that his deification was not real, but reputed, and called so by courtesy on account of his virtues. In the dialogue Hortensius, too, while speaking of the regular eclipses of the sun, he says that they “produce the same darkness as covered the death of Romulus, which happened during an eclipse of the sun.” Here you see he does not at all shrink from speaking of his “death,” for Cicero was more of a reasoner than an eulogist.

The other kings of Rome, too, with the exception of Numa Pompilius and Ancus Marcius, who died natural deaths, what horrible ends they had!

Tullus Hostilius, the conqueror and destroyer of Alba, was, as I said, himself and all his house consumed by lightning. Priscus Tarquinius was slain by his predecessor’s sons. Servius Tullius was foully murdered by his son-in-law Tarquinius Superbus, who succeeded him on the throne. Nor did so flagrant a parricide committed against Rome’s best king drive from their altars and shrines those gods who were said to have been moved by Paris’ adultery to treat poor Troy in this style, and abandon it to the fire and sword of the Greeks. Nay, the very Tarquin who had murdered, was allowed to succeed his father-in-law. And this infamous parricide, during the reign he had secured by murder, was allowed to triumph in many victorious wars, and to build the Capitol from their spoils; the gods meanwhile not departing, but abiding, and abetting, and suffering their king Jupiter to preside and reign over them in that very splendid Capitol, the work of a parricide. For he did not build the Capitol in the days of his innocence, and then suffer banishment for subsequent crimes; but to that reign during which he built the Capitol, he won his way by unnatural crime. And when he was afterwards banished by the Romans, and forbidden the city, it was not for his own but his son’s wickedness in the affair of Lucretia,—a crime perpetrated not only without his cognizance, but in his absence. For at that time he was besieging Ardea, and fighting Rome’s battles; and we cannot say what he would have done had he been aware of his son’s crime. Notwithstanding, though his opinion was neither inquired into nor ascertained, the people stripped him of royalty; and when he returned to Rome with his army, it was admitted, but he was excluded, abandoned by his troops, and the gates shut in his face. And yet, after he had appealed to the neighboring states, and tormented the Romans with calamitous but unsuccessful wars, and when he was deserted by the ally on whom he most depended, despairing of regaining the kingdom, he lived a retired and quiet life for fourteen years, as it is reported, in Tusculum, a Roman town, where he grew old in his wife’s company, and at last terminated his days in a much more desirable fashion than his father-in-law, who had perished by the hand of his son-in-law; his own daughter abetting, if report be true. And this Tarquin the Romans called, not the Cruel, nor the Infamous, but the Proud; their own pride perhaps resenting his tyrannical airs. So little did they make of his murdering their best king, his own father-in-law, that they elected him their own king. I wonder if it was not even more criminal in them to reward so bountifully so great a criminal. And yet there was no word of the gods abandoning the altars; unless, perhaps, some one will say in defence of the gods, that they remained at Rome for the purpose of punishing the Romans, rather than of aiding and profiting them, seducing them by empty victories, and wearing them out by severe wars. Such was the life of the Romans under the kings during the much-praised epoch of the state which extends to the expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus in the 243d year, during which all those victories, which were bought with so much blood and such disasters, hardly pushed Rome's dominion twenty miles from the city; a territory which would by no means bear comparison with that of any petty Gaetulian state.

CHAPTER 16

OF THE FIRST ROMAN CONSULS, THE ONE OF WHOM DROVE THE OTHER FROM THE COUNTRY, AND SHORTLY AFTER PERISHED AT ROME BY THE HAND OF A WOUNDED ENEMY, AND SO ENDED A CAREER OF UNNATURAL MURDERS

To this epoch let us add also that of which Sallust says, that it was ordered with justice and moderation, while the fear of Tarquin and of a war with Etruria was impending. For so long as the Etrurians aided the efforts of Tarquin to regain the throne, Rome was convulsed with distressing war. And therefore he says that the state was ordered with justice and moderation, through the pressure of fear, not through the influence of equity. And in this very brief period, how calamitous a year was that in which consuls were first created, when the kingly power was abolished! They did not fulfill their term of office. For Junius Brutus deprived his colleague Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus, and banished him from the city; and shortly after he himself fell in battle, at once slaying and slain, having formerly put to death his own sons and his brothers-in-law, because he had discovered that they were conspiring to restore Tarquin. It is this deed that Virgil shudders to record, even while he seems to praise it; for when he says:

"And call his own rebellious seed

For menaced liberty to bleed,"

he immediately exclaims,

“Unhappy father! howsoe’er

The deed be judged by after days;”

that is to say, let posterity judge the deed as they please, let them praise and extol the father who slew his sons, he is unhappy. And then he adds, as if to console so unhappy a man:

“His country’s love shall all o’erbear,

And unextinguished thirst of praise.”

In the tragic end of Brutus, who slew his own sons, and though he slew his enemy, Tarquin’s son, yet could not survive him, but was survived by Tarquin the elder, does not the innocence of his colleague Collatinus seem to be vindicated, who, though a good citizen, suffered the same punishment as Tarquin himself, when that tyrant was banished? For Brutus himself is said to have been a relative of Tarquin. But Collatinus had the misfortune to bear not only the blood, but the name of Tarquin. To change his name, then, not his country, would have been his fit penalty: to abridge his name by this word, and be called simply L. Collatinus. But he was not com pelled to lose what he could lose without detriment, but was stripped of the honor of the first consulship, and was banished from the land he loved. Is this, then, the glory of Brutus—this injustice, alike detestable and profitless to the republic? Was it to this he was driven by “his country’s love, and unextinguished thirst of praise?”

When Tarquin the tyrant was expelled, L. Tarquinius Collatinus, the husband of Lucretia, was created consul along with Brutus. How justly the people acted, in looking more to the character than the name of a citizen! How unjustly Brutus acted, in depriving of honor and country his colleague in that new office, whom he might have deprived of his name, if it were so offensive to him! Such were the ills, such the disasters, which fell out when the government was “ordered with justice and moderation.” Lucretius, too, who succeeded Brutus, was carried off by disease before the end of that same year. So P. Valerius, who succeeded Collatinus, and M. Horatius, who filled the vacancy occasioned by the death of Lucretius, completed that disastrous and funereal year, which had five consuls. Such was the year in which the Roman republic inaugurated the new honor and office of the consulship.

CHAPTER 17

OF THE DISASTERS WHICH VEXED THE ROMAN REPUBLIC AFTER THE INAUGURATION OF THE CONSULSHIP, AND OF THE NON-INTERVENTION OF THE GODS OF ROME

After this, when their fears were gradually diminished,—not because the wars ceased, but because they were not so furious,—that period in which things were "ordered with justice and moderation" drew to an end, and there followed that state of matters which Sallust thus briefly sketches: "Then began the patricians to oppress the people as slaves, to condemn them to death or scourging, as the kings had done, to drive them from their holdings, and to tyrannize over those who had no property to lose. The people, overwhelmed by these oppressive measures, and most of all by usury, and obliged to contribute both money and personal service to the constant wars, at length took arms and seceded to Mount Aventine and Mount Sacer, and thus secured for themselves tribunes and protective laws. But it was only the second Punic war that put an end on both sides to discord and strife." But why should I spend time in writing such things, or make others spend it in reading them? Let the terse summary of Sallust suffice to intimate the misery of the republic through all that long period till the second Punic war,—how it was distracted from without by unceasing wars, and torn with civil broils and dissensions. So that those victories they boast were not the substantial joys of the happy, but the empty comforts of wretched men, and seductive incitements to turbulent men to concoct disasters upon disasters. And let not the good and prudent Romans be angry at our saying this; and indeed we need neither deprecate nor denounce their anger, for we know they will harbor none. For we speak no more severely than their own authors, and much less elaborately and strikingly; yet they diligently read these authors, and compel their children to learn them. But they who are angry, what would they do to me were I to say what Sallust says? "Frequent mobs, seditions, and at last civil wars, became common, while a few leading men on whom the masses were dependent, affected supreme power under the seemly pretence of seeking the good of senate and people; citizens were judged good or bad without reference to their loyalty to the republic (for all were equally corrupt); but the wealthy and dangerously powerful were esteemed good citizens, because they maintained the existing state of things." Now, if those historians judged that an honorable freedom of speech required that they should not be silent regarding the blemishes of their own state, which they have in many places loudly applauded in their ignorance of that other and true city in which citizenship is an everlasting dignity; what does it become us to do, whose liberty ought to be so much greater, as our hope in God is better and more assured, when they impute to our Christ the calamities of this age, in order that men of the less instructed and weaker sort may be alienated from that city in which alone eternal and blessed life can be enjoyed? Nor do we utter against their gods anything more horrible than their own authors do, whom they read and circulate. For, indeed, all that we have said we have derived from them, and there is much more to say of a worse kind which we are unable to say.

Where, then, were those gods who are supposed to be justly worshipped for the slender and delusive prosperity of this world, when the Romans, who were seduced to their service by lying wiles, were harassed by such calamities? Where were they when Valerius the consul was killed while defending the Capitol, that had been fired by exiles and slaves? He was himself better able to defend the temple of Jupiter, than that crowd of divinities with their most high and mighty king, whose temple he came to the rescue of were able to defend him. Where were they when the city, worn out with unceasing seditions, was waiting in some kind of calm for the return of the ambassadors who had been sent to Athens to borrow laws, and was desolated by dreadful famine and pestilence? Where were they when the people, again distressed with famine, created for the first time a prefect of the market; and when Spurius Melius, who, as the famine increased, distributed corn to the famishing masses, was accused of aspiring to royalty, and at the instance of this same prefect, and on the authority of the superannuated dictator L. Quintius, was put to death by Quintus Servilius, master of the horse,—an event which occasioned a serious and dangerous riot? Where were they when that very severe pestilence visited Rome, on account of which the people, after long and wearisome and useless supplications of the helpless gods, conceived the idea of celebrating Lectisternia, which had never been done before; that is to say, they set couches in honor of the gods, which accounts for the name of this sacred rite, or rather sacrilege? Where were they when, during ten successive years of reverses, the Roman army suffered frequent and great losses among the Veians and would have been destroyed but for the succor of Furius Camillus, who was afterwards banished by an ungrateful country? Where were they when the Gauls took, sacked, burned, and desolated Rome? Where were they when that memorable pestilence wrought such destruction, in which Furius Camillus too perished, who first defended the ungrateful republic from the Veians, and afterwards saved it from the Gauls? Nay, during this plague, they introduced a new pestilence of scenic entertainments, which spread its more fatal contagion, not to the bodies, but the morals of the Romans? Where were they when another frightful pestilence visited the city—I mean the poisonings imputed to an incredible number of noble Roman matrons, whose characters were infected with a disease more fatal than any plague? Or when both consuls at the head of the army were beset by the Samnites in the Caudine Forks, and forced to strike a shameful treaty, 600 Roman knights being kept as hostages; while the troops, having laid down their arms, and being stripped of everything, were made to pass under the yoke with one garment each? Or when, in the midst of a serious pestilence, lightning struck the Roman camp and killed many? Or when Rome was driven, by the violence of another intolerable plague, to send to Epidaurus for AEsculapius as a god of medicine; since the frequent adulteries of Jupiter in his youth had not perhaps left this king of all who so long reigned in the Capitol, any leisure for the study of medicine? Or when, at one time, the Lucanians, Brutians, Samnites, Tuscans, and Senonian Gauls conspired against Rome, and first slew her ambassadors, then overthrew an army under the praetor, putting to the sword 13,000 men, besides the commander and seven tribunes? Or when the people, after the serious and long-continued disturbances at Rome, at last plundered the city and withdrew to Janiculus; a danger so grave, that Hortensius was created dictator,—an office which they had recourse to only in extreme emergencies; and he, having brought back the people, died while yet he retained his office,—an event without precedent in the case of any dictator, and which was a shame to those gods who had now AEsculapius among them?

At that time, indeed, so many wars were everywhere engaged in, that through scarcity of soldiers they enrolled for military service the proletarii, who received this name, because, being too poor to equip for military service, they had leisure to beget offspring. Pyrrhus, king of Greece, and at that time of widespread renown, was invited by the Tarentines to enlist himself against Rome. It was to him that Apollo, when consulted regarding the issue of his enterprise, uttered with some pleasantry so ambiguous an oracle, that whichever alternative happened, the god himself should be counted divine. For he so worded the oracle that whether Pyrrhus was conquered by the Romans, or the Romans by Pyrrhus, the soothsaying god would securely await the issue. And then what frightful massacres of both armies ensued! Yet Pyrrhus remained conqueror, and would have been able now to proclaim Apollo a true diviner, as he understood the oracle, had not the Romans been the conquerors in the next engagement. And while such disastrous wars were being waged, a terrible disease broke out among the women. For the pregnant women died before delivery. And AEsculapius, I fancy, excused himself in this matter on the ground that he professed to be arch-physician, not midwife. Cattle, too, similarly perished; so that it was believed that the whole race of animals was destined to become extinct. Then what shall I say of that memorable winter in which the weather was so incredibly severe, that in the Forum frightfully deep snow lay for forty days together, and the Tiber was frozen? Had such things happened in our time, what accusations we should have heard from our enemies! And that other great pestilence, which raged so long and carried off so many; what shall I say of it? Spite of all the drugs of AEsculapius, it only grew worse in its second year, till at last recourse was had to the Sibylline books,—a kind of oracle which, as Cicero says in his De Divinatione, owes significance to its interpreters, who make doubtful conjectures as they can or as they wish. In this instance, the cause of the plague was said to be that so many temples had been used as private residences. And thus AEsculapius for the present escaped the charge of either ignominious negligence or want of skill. But why were so many allowed to occupy sacred tenements without interference, unless because supplication had long been addressed in vain to such a crowd of gods, and so by degrees the sacred places were deserted of worshippers, and being thus vacant, could without offence be put at least to some human uses? And the temples, which were at that time laboriously recognized and restored that the plague might be stayed, fell afterwards into disuse, and were again devoted to the same human uses. Had they not thus lapsed into obscurity, it could not have been pointed to as proof of Varro's great erudition, that in his work on sacred places he cites so many that were unknown. Meanwhile, the restoration of the temples procured no cure of the plague, but only a fine excuse for the gods.

CHAPTER 18

THE DISASTERS SUFFERED BY THE ROMANS IN THE PUNIC WARS, WHICH WERE NOT MITIGATED BY THE PROTECTION OF THE GODS

In the Punic wars, again, when victory hung so long in the balance between the two kingdoms, when two powerful nations were straining every nerve and using all their resources against one another, how many smaller kingdoms were crushed, how many large and flourishing cities were demolished, how many states were overwhelmed and ruined, how many districts and lands far and near were desolated! How often were the victors on either side vanquished! What multitudes of men, both of those actually in arms and of others, were destroyed! What huge navies, too, were crippled in engagements, or were sunk by every kind of marine disaster! Were we to attempt to recount or mention these calamities, we should become writers of history. At that period Rome was mightily perturbed, and resorted to vain and ludicrous expedients. On the authority of the Sibylline books, the secular games were re-appointed, which had been inaugurated a century before, but had faded into oblivion in happier times. The games consecrated to the infernal gods were also renewed by the pontiffs; for they, too, had sunk into disuse in the better times. And no wonder; for when they were renewed, the great abundance of dying men made all hell rejoice at its riches, and give itself up to sport: for certainly the ferocious wars, and disastrous quarrels, and bloody victories—now on one side, and now on the other—though most calamitous to men, afforded great sport and a rich banquet to the devils. But in the first Punic war there was no more disastrous event than the Roman defeat in which Regulus was taken. We made mention of him in the two former books as an incontestably great man, who had before conquered and subdued the Carthaginians, and who would have put an end to the first Punic war, had not an inordinate appetite for praise and glory prompted him to impose on the worn-out Carthagians harder conditions than they could bear. If the unlooked-for captivity and unseemly bondage of this man, his fidelity to his oath, and his surpassingly cruel death, do not bring a blush to the face of the gods, it is true that they are brazen and bloodless.

Nor were there wanting at that time very heavy disasters within the city itself. For the Tiber was extraordinarily flooded, and destroyed almost all the lower parts of the city; some buildings being carried away by the violence of the torrent, while others were soaked to rottenness by the water that stood round them even after the flood was gone. This visitation was followed by a fire which was still more destructive, for it consumed some of the loftier buildings round the Forum, and spared not even its own proper temple, that of Vesta, in which virgins chosen for this honor, or rather for this punishment, had been employed in conferring, as it were, everlasting life on fire, by ceaselessly feeding it with fresh fuel. But at the time we speak of, the fire in the temple was not content with being kept alive: it raged. And when the virgins, scared by its vehemence, were unable to save those fatal images which had already brought destruction on three cities in which they had been received, Metellus the priest, forgetful of his own safety, rushed in and res cued the sacred things, though he was half roasted in doing so. For either the fire did not recognize even him, or else the goddess of fire was there,—a goddess who would not have fled from the fire supposing she had been there. But here you see how a man could be of greater service to Vesta than she could be to him. Now if these gods could not avert the fire from themselves, what help against flames or flood could they bring to the state of which they were the reputed guardians? Facts have shown that they were useless. These objections of ours would be idle if our adversaries maintained that their idols are consecrated rather as symbols of things eternal, than to secure the blessings of time; and that thus, though the symbols, like all material and visible things, might perish, no damage thereby resulted to the things for the sake of which they had been consecrated, while, as for the images themselves, they could be renewed again for the same purposes they had formerly served. But with lamentable blindness, they suppose that, through the intervention of perishable gods, the earthly well-being and temporal prosperity of the state can be preserved from perishing. And so, when they are reminded that even when the gods remained among them this well-being and prosperity were blighted, they blush to change the opinion they are unable to defend.

CHAPTER 19

OF THE CALAMITY OF THE SECOND PUNIC WAR, WHICH CONSUMED THE STRENGTH OF BOTH PARTIES

As to the second Punic war, it were tedious to recount the disasters it brought on both the nations engaged in so protracted and shifting a war, that (by the acknowledgment even of those writers who have made it their object not so much to narrate the wars as to eulogize the dominion of Rome) the people who remained victorious were less like conquerors than conquered. For, when Hannibal poured out of Spain over the Pyrenees, and overran Gaul, and burst through the Alps, and during his whole course gathered strength by plundering and subduing as he went, and inundated Italy like a torrent, how bloody were the wars, and how continuous the engagements, that were fought! How often were the Romans vanquished! How many towns went over to the enemy, and how many were taken and subdued! What fearful battles there were, and how often did the defeat of the Romans shed lustre on the arms of Hannibal! And what shall I say of the wonderfully crushing defeat at Cannae, where even Hannibal, cruel as he was, was yet sated with the blood of his bitterest enemies, and gave orders that they be spared? From this field of battle he sent to Carthage three bushels of gold rings, signifying that so much of the rank of Rome had that day fallen, that it was easier to give an idea of it by measure than by numbers and that the frightful slaughter of the common rank and file whose bodies lay undistinguished by the ring, and who were numerous in proportion to their meanness, was rather to be conjectured than accurately reported. In fact, such was the scarcity of soldiers after this, that the Romans impressed their criminals on the promise of impunity, and their slaves by the bribe of liberty, and out of these infamous classes did not so much recruit as create an army. But these slaves, or, to give them all their titles, these freed-men who were enlisted to do battle for the republic of Rome, lacked arms. And so they took arms from the temples, as if the Romans were saying to their gods: Lay down those arms you have held so long in vain, if by chance our slaves may be able to use to purpose what you, our gods, have been impotent to use. At that time, too, the public treasury was too low to pay the soldiers, and private resources were used for public purposes; and so generously did individuals contribute of their property, that, saving the gold ring and bulla which each wore, the pitiful mark of his rank, no senator, and much less any of the other orders and tribes, reserved any gold for his own use. But if in our day they were reduced to this poverty, who would be able to endure their reproaches, barely endurable as they are now, when more money is spent on actors for the sake of a superfluous gratification, than was then disbursed to the legions?

CHAPTER 20

OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE SAGUNTINES, WHO RECEIVED NO HELP FROM THE ROMAN GODS, THOUGH PERISHING ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR FIDELITY TO ROME

But among all the disasters of the second Punic war, there occurred none more lamentable, or calculated to excite deeper complaint, than the fate of the Saguntines. This city of Spain, eminently friendly to Rome, was destroyed by its fidelity to the Roman people. For when Hannibal had broken treaty with the Romans, he sought occasion for provoking them to war, and accordingly made a fierce assault upon Saguntum. When this was reported at Rome, ambassadors were sent to Hannibal, urging him to raise the siege; and when this remonstrance was neglected, they proceeded to Carthage, lodged complaint against the breaking of the treaty, and returned to Rome without accomplishing their object. Meanwhile the siege went on; and in the eighth or ninth month, this opulent but ill-fated city, dear as it was to its own state and to Rome, was taken, and subjected to treatment which one cannot read, much less narrate, without horror. And yet, because it bears directly on the matter in hand, I will briefly touch upon it. First, then, famine wasted the Saguntines, so that even human corpses were eaten by some: so at least it is recorded. Subsequently, when thoroughly worn out, that they might at least escape the ignominy of falling into the hands of

Hannibal, they publicly erected a huge funeral pile, and cast themselves into its flames, while at the same time they slew their children and themselves with the sword. Could these gods, these debauchees and gourmands, whose mouths water for fat sacrifices, and whose lips utter lying divinations,—could they not do anything in a case like this? Could they not interfere for the preservation of a city closely allied to the Roman people, or prevent it perishing for its fidelity to that alliance of which they themselves had been the mediators? Saguntum, faithfully keeping the treaty it had entered into before these gods, and to which it had firmly bound itself by an oath, was besieged, taken, and destroyed by a perjured person. If afterwards, when Hannibal was close to the walls of Rome, it was the gods who terrified him with lightning and tempest, and drove him to a distance, why, I ask, did they not thus interfere before? For I make bold to say, that this demonstration with the tempest would have been more honorably made in defence of the allies of Rome—who were in danger on account of their reluctance to break faith with the Romans, and had no resources of their own—than in defence of the Romans themselves, who were fighting in their own cause, and had abundant resources to oppose Hannibal. If, then, they had been the guardians of Roman prosperity and glory, they would have preserved that glory from the stain of this Saguntine disaster; and how silly it is to believe that Rome was preserved from destruction at the hands of Hannibal by the guardian care of those gods who were unable to rescue the city of Saguntum from perishing through its fidelity to the alliance of Rome. If the population of Saguntum had been Christian, and had suffered as it did for the Christian faith (though, of course, Christians would not have used fire and sword against their own persons), they would have suffered with that hope which springs from faith in Christ—the hope not of a brief temporal reward, but of unending and eternal bliss. What, then, will the advocates and apologists of these gods say in their defence, when charged with the blood of these Saguntines; for they are professedly worshipped and invoked for this very purpose of securing prosperity in this fleeting and transitory life? Can anything be said but what was alleged in the case of Regulus' death? For though there is a difference between the two cases, the one being an individual, the other a whole community, yet the cause of destruction was in both cases the keeping of their plighted troth. For it was this which made Regulus willing to return to his enemies, and this which made the Saguntines unwilling to revolt to their enemies. Does, then, the keeping of faith provoke the gods to anger? Or is it possible that not only individuals, but even entire communities, perish while the gods are propitious to them? Let our adversaries choose which alternative they will. If, on the one hand, those gods are enraged at the keeping of faith, let them enlist perjured persons as their worshippers. If, on the other hand, men and states can suffer great and terrible calamities, and at last perish while favored by the gods, then does their worship not produce happiness as its fruit. Let those, therefore, who suppose that they have fallen into distress because their religious worship has been abolished, lay aside their anger; for it were quite possible that did the gods not only remain with them, but regard them with favor, they might yet be left to mourn an unhappy lot, or might, even like Regulus and the Saguntines, be horribly tormented, and at last perish miserably.

CHAPTER 21

OF THE INGRATITUDE OF ROME TO SCIPIO, ITS DELIVERER, AND OF ITS MANNERS DURING THE PERIOD WHICH SALLUST DESCRIBES AS THE BEST

Omitting many things, that I may not exceed the limits of the work I have proposed to myself, I come to the epoch between the second and last Punic wars, during which, according to Sallust, the Romans lived with the greatest virtue and concord. Now, in this period of virtue and harmony, the great Scipio, the liberator of Rome and Italy, who had with surprising ability brought to a close the second Punic war—that horrible, destructive, dangerous contest—who had defeated Hannibal and subdued Carthage, and whose whole life is said to have been dedicated to the gods, and cherished in their temples,—this Scipio, after such a triumph, was obliged to yield to the accusations of his enemies, and to leave his country, which his valor had saved and liberated, to spend the remainder of his days in the town of Liternum, so indifferent to a recall from exile, that he is said to have given orders that not even his remains should lie in his ungrateful country. It was at that time also that the pro-consul Cn. Manlius, after subduing the Galatians, introduced into Rome the luxury of Asia, more destructive than all hostile armies. It was then that iron bedsteads and expensive carpets were first used; then, too, that female singers were admitted at banquets, and other licentious abominations were introduced. But at present I meant to speak, not of the evils men voluntarily practise, but of those they suffer in spite of themselves. So that the case of Scipio, who succumbed to his enemies, and died in exile from the country he had rescued, was mentioned by me as being pertinent to the present discussion; for this was the reward he received from those Roman gods whose temples he saved from Hannibal, and who are worshipped only for the sake of securing temporal happiness. But since Sallust, as we have seen, declares that the manners of Rome were never better than at that time, I therefore judged it right to mention the Asiatic luxury then introduced, that it might be seen that what he says is true, only when that period is compared with the others during which the morals were certainly worse, and the factions more violent. For at that time—I mean between the second and third Punic war—that notorious Lex Voconia was passed, which prohibited a man from making a woman, even an only daughter, his heir; than which law I am at a loss to conceive what could be more unjust. It is true that in the interval between these two Punic wars the misery of Rome was somewhat less. Abroad, indeed, their forces were consumed by wars, yet also consoled by victories; while at home there were not such disturbances as at other times. But when the last Punic war had terminated in the utter destruction of Rome's rival, which quickly succumbed to the other Scipio, who thus earned for himself the surname of Africanus, then the Roman republic was overwhelmed with such a host of ills, which sprang from the corrupt manners induced by prosperity and security, that the sudden overthrow of Carthage is seen to have injured Rome more seriously than her long-continued hostility. During the whole subsequent period down to the time of Caesar Augustus, who seems to have entirely deprived the Romans of liberty,—a liberty, indeed, which in their own judgment was no longer glorious, but full of broils and dangers, and which now was quite enervated and languishing,—and who submitted all things again to the will of a monarch, and infused as it were a new life into the sickly old age of the republic, and inaugurated a fresh regime;—during this whole period, I say, many military disasters were sustained on a variety of occasions, all of which I here pass by. There was specially the treaty of Numantia, blotted as it was with extreme disgrace; for the sacred chickens, they say, flew out of the coop, and thus augured disaster to Mancinus the consul; just as if, during all these years in which that little city of Numantia had withstood the besieging army of Rome, and had become a terror to the republic, the other generals had all marched against it under unfavorable auspices.

CHAPTER 22

OF THE EDICT OF MITHRIDATES, COMMANDING THAT ALL ROMAN CITIZENS FOUND IN ASIA SHOULD BE SLAIN

These things, I say, I pass in silence; but I can by no means be silent regarding the order given by Mithridates, king of Asia, that on one day all Roman citizens residing anywhere in Asia (where great numbers of them were following their private business) should be put to death: and this order was executed. How miserable a spectacle was then presented, when each man was suddenly and treacherously murdered wherever he happened to be, in the field or on the road, in the town, in his own home, or in the street, in market or temple, in bed or at table! Think of the groans of the dying, the tears of the spectators, and even of the executioners themselves. For how cruel a necessity was it that compelled the hosts of these victims, not only to see these abominable butcheries in their own houses, but even to perpetrate them: to change their countenance suddenly from the bland kindliness of friendship, and in the midst of peace set about the business of war; and, shall I say, give and receive wounds, the slain being pierced in body, the slayer in spirit! Had all these murdered persons, then, despised auguries? Had they neither public nor household gods to consult when they left their homes and set out on that fatal journey? If they had not, our adversaries have no reason to complain of these Christian times in this particular, since long ago the Romans despised auguries as idle. If, on the other hand, they did consult omens, let them tell us what good they got thereby, even when such things were not prohibited, but authorized, by human, if not by divine law.

CHAPTER 23

OF THE INTERNAL DISASTERS WHICH VEXED THE ROMAN REPUBLIC, AND FOLLOWED A PORTENTOUS MADNESS WHICH SEIZED ALL THE DOMESTIC ANIMALS

But let us now mention, as succinctly as possible, those disasters which were still more vexing, because nearer home; I mean those discords which are erroneously called civil, since they destroy civil interests. The seditions had now become urban wars, in which blood was freely shed, and in which parties raged against one another, not with wrangling and verbal contention, but with physical force and arms. What a sea of Roman blood was shed, what desolations and devastations were occasioned in Italy by wars social, wars servile, wars civil! Before the Latins began the social war against Rome, all the animals used in the service of man—dogs, horses, asses, oxen, and all the rest that are subject to man—suddenly grew wild, and forgot their domesticated tameness, forsook their stalls and wandered at large, and could not be closely approached either by strangers or their own masters without danger. If this was a portent, how serious a calamity must have been portended by a plague which, whether portent or no, was in itself a serious calamity! Had it happened in our day, the heathen would have been more rabid against us than their animals were against them.

CHAPTER 24

OF THE CIVIL DISSENSION OCCASIONED BY THE SEDITION OF THE GRACCHI

The civil wars originated in the seditions which the Gracchi excited regarding the agrarian laws; for they were minded to divide among the people the lands which were wrongfully possessed by the nobility. But to reform an abuse of so long standing was an enterprise full of peril, or rather, as the event proved, of destruction. For what disasters accompanied the death of the older Gracchus! what slaughter ensued when, shortly after, the younger brother met the same fate! For noble and ignoble were indiscriminately massacred; and this not by legal authority and procedure, but by mobs and armed rioters. After the death of the younger Gracchus, the consul Lucius Opimius, who had given battle to him within the city, and had defeated and put to the sword both himself and his confederates, and had massacred many of the citizens, instituted a judicial examination of others, and is reported to have put to death as many as 3000 men. From this it may be gathered how many fell in the riotous encounters, when the result even of a judicial investigation was so bloody. The assassin of Gracchus himself sold his head to the consul for its weight in gold, such being the previous agreement. In this massacre, too, Marcus Fulvius, a man of consular rank, with all his children, was put to death.

CHAPTER 25

OF THE TEMPLE OF CONCORD, WHICH WAS ERECTED BY A DECREE OF THE SENATE ON THE SCENE OF THESE SEDITIONS AND MASSACRES

A pretty decree of the senate it was, truly, by which the temple of Concord was built on the spot where that disastrous rising had taken place, and where so many citizens of every rank had fallen. I suppose it was that the monument of the Gracchi's punishment might strike the eye and affect the memory of the pleaders. But what was this but to deride the gods, by building a temple to that goddess who, had she been in the city, would not have suffered herself to be torn by such dissensions? Or was it that Concord was chargeable with that bloodshed because she had deserted the minds of the citizens, and was therefore incarcerated in that temple? For if they had any regard to consistency, why did they not rather erect on that site a temple of Discord? Or is there a reason for Concord being a goddess while Discord is none? Does the distinction of Labeo hold here, who would have made the one a good, the other an evil deity?—a distinction which seems to have been suggested to him by the mere fact of his observing at Rome a temple to Fever as well as one to Health. But, on the same ground, Discord as well as Concord ought to be deified. A hazardous venture the Romans made in provoking so wicked a goddess, and in forgetting that the destruction of Troy had been occasioned by her taking offence. For, being indignant that she was not invited with the other gods [to the nuptials of Peleus and Thetis], she created dissension among the three goddesses by sending in the golden apple, which occasioned strife in heaven, victory to Venus, the rape of Helen, and the destruction of Troy. Wherefore, if she was perhaps offended that the Romans had not thought her worthy of a temple among the other gods in their city, and therefore disturbed the state with such tumults, to how much fiercer passion would she be roused when she saw the temple of her adversary erected on the scene of that massacre, or, in other words, on the scene of her own handiwork! Those wise and learned men are enraged at our laughing at these follies; and yet, being worshippers of good and bad divinities alike, they cannot escape this dilemma about

Concord and Discord: either they have neglected the worship of these goddesses, and preferred Fever and War, to whom there are shrines erected of great antiquity, or they have worshipped them, and after all Concord has abandoned them, and Discord has tempestuously hurled them into civil wars.

CHAPTER 26

OF THE VARIOUS KINDS OF WARS WHICH FOLLOWED THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE OF CONCORD

But they supposed that, in erecting the temple of Concord within the view of the orators, as a memorial of the punishment and death of the Gracchi, they were raising an effectual obstacle to sedition. How much effect it had, is indicated by the still more deplorable wars that followed. For after this the orators endeavored not to avoid the example of the Gracchi, but to surpass their projects; as did Lucius Saturninus, a tribune of the people, and Caius Servilius the praetor, and some time after Marcus Drusus, all of whom stirred seditions which first of all occasioned bloodshed, and then the social wars by which Italy was grievously injured, and reduced to a piteously desolate and wasted condition. Then followed the servile war and the civil wars; and in them what battles were fought, and what blood was shed, so that almost all the peoples of Italy, which formed the main strength of the Roman empire, were conquered as if they were barbarians! Then even historians themselves find it difficult to explain how the servile war was begun by a very few, certainly less than seventy gladiators, what numbers of fierce and cruel men attached themselves to these, how many of the Roman generals this band defeated, and how it laid waste many districts and cities. And that was not the only servile war: the province of Macedonia, and subsequently Sicily and the sea-coast, were also depopulated by bands of slaves. And who can adequately describe either the horrible atrocities which the pirates first committed, or the wars they afterwards maintained against Rome?

CHAPTER 27

OF THE CIVIL WAR BETWEEN MARIUS AND SYLLA

But when Marius, stained with the blood of his fellow-citizens, whom the rage of party had sacrificed, was in his turn vanquished and driven from the city, it had scarcely time to breathe freely, when, to use the words of Cicero, “Cinna and Marius together returned and took possession of it. Then, indeed, the foremost men in the state were put to death, its lights quenched. Sylla afterwards avenged this cruel victory; but we need not say with what loss of life, and with what ruin to the republic.” For of this vengeance, which was more destructive than if the crimes which it punished had been committed with impunity, Lucan says: “The cure was excessive, and too closely resembled the disease. The guilty perished, but when none but the guilty survived: and then private hatred and anger, unbridled by law, were allowed free indulgence.” In that war between Marius and Sylla, besides those who fell in the field of battle, the city, too, was filled with corpses in its streets, squares, markets, theatres, and temples; so that it is not easy to reckon whether the victors slew more before or after victory, that they might be, or because they were, victors. As soon as Marius triumphed, and returned from exile, besides the butcheries everywhere perpetrated, the head of the consul Octavius was exposed on the rostrum; Caesar and Fimbria were assassinated in their own houses; the two Crassi, father and son, were murdered in one another’s sight; Bebius and Numitorius were disembowelled by being dragged with hooks; Catulus escaped the hands of his enemies by drinking poison; Merula, the flamen of Jupiter, cut his veins and made a libation of his own blood to his god. Moreover, every one whose salutation Marius did not answer by giving his hand, was at once cut down before his face.

CHAPTER 28

OF THE VICTORY OF SYLLA, THE AVENGER OF THE CRUELTIES OF MARIUS

Then followed the victory of Sylla, the so-called avenger of the cruelties of Marius. But not only was his victory purchased with great bloodshed; but when hostilities were finished, hostility survived, and the subsequent peace was bloody as the war. To the former and still recent massacres of the elder Marius, the younger Marius and Carbo, who belonged to the same party, added greater atrocities. For when Sylla approached, and they despaired not only of victory, but of life itself, they made a promiscuous massacre of friends and foes. And, not satisfied with staining every corner of Rome with blood, they besieged the senate, and led forth the senators to death from the curia as from a prison. Mucius Scaevola the pontiff was slain at the altar of Vesta, which he had clung to because no spot in Rome was more sacred than her temple; and his blood well-nigh extinguished the fire which was kept alive by the constant care of the virgins. Then Sylla entered the city victorious, after having slaughtered in the Villa Publica, not by combat, but by an order, 7000 men who had surrendered, and were therefore unarmed; so fierce was the rage of peace itself, even after the rage of war was extinct. Moreover, throughout the whole city every partisan of Sylla slew whom he pleased, so that the number of deaths went beyond computation, till it was suggested to Sylla that he should allow some to survive, that the victors might not be destitute of subjects. Then this furious and promiscuous licence to murder was checked, and much relief was expressed at the publication of the proscription list, containing though it did the death-warrant of two thousand men of the highest ranks, the senatorial and equestrian. The large number was indeed saddening, but it was consolatory that a limit was fixed; nor was the grief at the numbers slain so great as the joy that the rest were secure. But this very security, hard-hearted as it was, could not but bemoan the exquisite torture applied to some of those who had been doomed to die. For one was torn to pieces by the unarmed hands of the executioners; men treating a living man more savagely than wild beasts are used to tear an abandoned corpse. Another had his eyes dug out, and his limbs cut away bit by bit, and was forced to live a long while, or rather to die a long while, in such torture. Some celebrated cities were put up to auction, like farms; and one was collectively condemned to slaughter, just as an individual criminal would be condemned to death. These things were done in peace when the war was over, not that victory might be more speedily obtained, but that, after being obtained, it might not be thought lightly of. Peace vied with war in cruelty, and surpassed it: for while war overthrew armed hosts, peace slew the defenceless. War gave liberty to him who was attacked, to strike if he could; peace granted to the survivors not life, but an unresisting death.

CHAPTER 29

A COMPARISON OF THE DISASTERS WHICH ROME EXPERIENCED DURING THE GOTHIC AND GALLIC INVASIONS, WITH THOSE OCCASIONED BY THE AUTHORS OF THE CIVIL WARS

What fury of foreign nations, what barbarian ferocity, can compare with this victory of citizens over citizens? Which was more disastrous, more hideous, more bitter to Rome: the recent Gothic and the old Gallic invasion, or the cruelty displayed by Marius and Sylla and their partisans against men who were members of the same body as themselves? The Gauls, indeed, massacred all the senators they found in any part of the city except the Capitol, which alone was defended; but they at least sold life to those who were in the Capitol, though they might have starved them out if they could not have stormed it. The Goths, again, spared so many senators, that it is the more surprising that they killed any. But Sylla, while Marius was still living, established himself as conqueror in the Capitol, which the Gauls had not violated, and thence issued his death-warrants; and when Marius had escaped by flight, though destined to return more fierce and bloodthirsty than ever, Sylla issued from the Capitol even decrees of the senate for the slaughter and confiscation of the property of many citizens. Then, when Sylla left, what did the Marian faction hold sacred or spare, when they gave no quarter even to Mucius, a citizen, a senator, a pontiff, and though clasping in piteous embrace the very altar in which, they say, reside the destinies of Rome? And that final proscription list of Sylla's, not to mention countless other massacres, despatched more senators than the Goths could even plunder.

CHAPTER 30

OF THE CONNECTION OF THE WARS WHICH WITH GREAT SEVERITY AND FREQUENCY FOLLOWED ONE ANOTHER BEFORE THE ADVENT OF CHRIST

With what effrontery, then, with what assurance, with what impudence, with what folly, or rather insanity, do they refuse to impute these disasters to their own gods, and impute the present to our Christ! These bloody civil wars, more distressing, by the avowal of their own historians, than any foreign wars, and which were pronounced to be not merely calamitous, but absolutely ruinous to the republic, began long before the coming of Christ, and gave birth to one another; so that a concatenation of unjustifiable causes led from the wars of Marius and Sylla to those of Sertorius and Cataline, of whom the one was proscribed, the other brought up by Sylla; from this to the war of Lepidus and Catulus, of whom the one wished to rescind, the other to defend the acts of Sylla; from this to the war of Pompey and Caesar, of whom Pompey had been a partisan of Sylla, whose power he equalled or even surpassed, while Caesar condemned Pompey's power because it was not his own, and yet exceeded it when Pompey was defeated and slain. From him the chain of civil wars extended to the second Caesar, afterwards called Augustus, and in whose reign Christ was born. For even Augustus himself waged many civil wars; and in these wars many of the foremost men perished, among them that skilful manipulator of the republic, Cicero. Caius [Julius] Caesar, when he had conquered Pompey, though he used his victory with clemency, and granted to men of the opposite faction both life and honors, was suspected of aiming at royalty, and was assassinated in the curia by a party of noble senators, who had conspired to defend the liberty of the republic. His power was then coveted by Antony, a man of very different character, polluted and debased by every kind of vice, who was strenuously resisted by Cicero on the same plea of defending the liberty of the republic. At this juncture that other Caesar, the adopted son of Caius, and afterwards, as I said, known by the name of Augustus, had made his debut as a young man of remarkable genius. This youthful Caesar was favored by Cicero, in order that his influence might counteract that of Antony; for he hoped that Caesar would overthrow and blast the power of Antony, and establish a free state,—so blind and unaware of the future was he: for that very young man, whose advancement and influence he was fostering, allowed Cicero to be killed as the seal of an alliance with Antony, and subjected to his own rule the very liberty of the republic in defence of which he had made so many orations.

CHAPTER 31

THAT IT IS EFFRONTERY TO IMPUTE THE PRESENT TROUBLES TO CHRIST AND THE PROHIBITION OF POLYTHEISTIC WORSHIP SINCE EVEN WHEN THE GODS WERE WORSHIPPED SUCH CALAMITIES BEFELL THE PEOPLE

Let those who have no gratitude to Christ for His great benefits, blame their own gods for these heavy disasters. For certainly when these occurred the altars of the gods were kept blazing, and there rose the mingled fragrance of "Sabaean incense and fresh garlands;" the priests were clothed with honor, the shrines were maintained in splendor; sacrifices, games, sacred ecstasies, were common in the temples; while the blood of the citizens was being so freely shed, not only in remote places, but among the very altars of the gods. Cicero did not choose to seek sanctuary in a temple, because Mucius had sought it there in vain. But they who most unpardonably calumniate this Christian era, are the very men who either themselves fled for asylum to the places specially dedicated to Christ, or were led there by the barbarians that they might be safe. In short, not to recapitulate the many instances I have cited, and not to add to their number others which it were tedious to enumerate, this one thing I am persuaded of, and this every impartial judgment will readily acknowledge, that if the human race had received Christianity before the Punic wars, and if the same desolating calamities which these wars brought upon Europe and Africa had followed the introduction of Christianity, there is no one of those who now accuse us who would not have attributed them to our religion. How intolerable would their accusations have been, at least so far as the Romans are concerned, if the Christian religion had been received and diffused prior to the invasion of the Gauls, or to the ruinous floods and fires which desolated Rome, or to those most calamitous of all events, the civil wars! And those other disasters, which were of so strange a nature that they were reckoned prodigies, had they happened since the Christian era, to whom but to the Christians would they have imputed these as crimes? I do not speak of those things which were rather surprising than hurtful,—oxen speaking, unborn infants articulating some words in their mothers' wombs, serpents flying, hens and women being changed into the other sex; and other similar prodigies which, whether true or false, are recorded not in their imaginative, but in their historical works, and which do not injure, but only astonish men. But when it rained earth, when it rained chalk, when it rained stones—not hailstones, but real stones—this certainly was calculated to do serious damage. We have read in their books that the fires of Etna, pouring down from the top of the mountain to the neighboring shore, caused the sea to boil, so that rocks were burnt up, and the pitch of ships began to run,—a phenomenon incredibly surprising, but at the same time no less hurtful. By the same violent heat, they relate that on another occasion Sicily was filled with cinders, so that the houses of the city Catina were destroyed and buried under them,—a calamity which moved the Romans to pity them, and remit their tribute for that year. One may also read that Africa, which had by that time become a province of Rome, was visited by a prodigious multitude of locusts, which, after consuming the fruit and foliage of the trees, were driven into the sea in one vast and measureless cloud; so that when they were drowned and cast upon the shore the air was polluted, and so serious a pestilence produced that in the kingdom of Masinissa alone they say there perished 800,000 persons, besides a much greater number in the neighboring districts. At Utica they assure us that, of 30,000 soldiers then garrisoning it, there survived only ten. Yet which of these disasters, suppose they happened now, would not be attributed to the Christian religion by those who thus thoughtlessly accuse us, and whom we are compelled to answer? And yet to their own gods they attribute none of these things, though they worship them for the sake of escaping lesser calamities of the same kind, and do not reflect that they who formerly worshipped them were not preserved from these serious disasters.

Book IV

Argument—In this book it is proved that the extent and long duration of the Roman empire is to be ascribed, not to Jove or the gods of the heathen, to whom individually scarce even single things and the very basest functions were believed to be entrusted, but to the one true God, the author of felicity, by whose power and judgment earthly kingdoms are founded and maintained.

CHAPTER 1

OF THE THINGS WHICH HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE FIRST BOOK

Having begun to speak of the city of God, I have thought it necessary first of all to reply to its enemies, who, eagerly pursuing earthly joys and gaping after transitory things, throw the blame of all the sorrow they suffer in them—rather through the compassion of God in admonishing than His severity in punishing—on the Christian religion, which is the one salutary and true religion. And since there is among them also an unlearned rabble, they are stirred up as by the authority of the learned to hate us more bitterly, thinking in their inexperience that things which have happened unwontedly in their days were not wont to happen in other times gone by; and whereas this opinion of theirs is confirmed even by those who know that it is false, and yet dissemble their knowledge in order that they may seem to have just cause for murmuring against us, it was necessary, from books in which their authors recorded and published the history of bygone times that it might be known, to demonstrate that it is far otherwise than they think; and at the same time to teach that the false gods, whom they openly worshipped, or still worship in secret, are most unclean spirits, and most malignant and deceitful demons, even to such a pitch that they take delight in crimes which, whether real or only fictitious, are yet their own, which it has been their will to have celebrated in honor of them at their own festivals; so that human infirmity cannot be called back from the perpetration of damnable deeds, so long as authority is furnished for imitating them that seems even divine. These things we have proved, not from our own conjectures, but partly from recent memory, because we ourselves have seen such things celebrated, and to such deities, partly from the writings of those who have left these things on record to posterity, not as if in reproach but as in honor of their own gods. Thus Varro, a most learned man among them, and of the weightiest authority, when he made separate books concerning things human and things divine, distributing some among the human, others among the divine, according to the special dignity of each, placed the scenic plays not at all among things human, but among things divine; though, certainly, if only there were good and honest men in the state, the scenic plays ought not to be allowed even among things human. And this he did not on his own authority, but because, being born and educated at Rome, he found them among the divine things. Now as we briefly stated in the end of the first book what we intended afterwards to discuss, and as we have disposed of a part of this in the next two books, we see what our readers will expect us now to take up.

CHAPTER 2

OF THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE CONTAINED IN BOOKS SECOND AND THIRD

We had promised, then, that we would say something against those who attribute the calamities of the Roman republic to our religion, and that we would recount the evils, as many and great as we could remember or might deem sufficient, which that city, or the provinces belonging to its empire, had suffered before their sacrifices were prohibited, all of which would beyond doubt have been attributed to us, if our religion had either already shone on them, or had thus prohibited their sacrilegious rites. These things we have, as we think, fully disposed of in the second and third books, treating in the second of evils in morals, which alone or chiefly are to be accounted evils; and in the third, of those which only fools dread to undergo—namely, those of the body or of outward things—which for the most part the good also suffer. But those evils by which they themselves become evil, they take, I do not say patiently, but with pleasure. And how few evils have I related concerning that one city and its empire! Not even all down to the time of Caesar Augustus. What if I had chosen to recount and enlarge on those evils, not which men have inflicted on each other; such as the devastations and destructions of war, but which happen in earthly things, from the elements of the world itself. Of such evils Apuleius speaks briefly in one passage of that book which he wrote, De Mundo, saying that all earthly things are subject to change, overthrow, and destruction. For, to use his own words, by excessive earthquakes the ground has burst asunder, and cities with their inhabitants have been clean destroyed: by sudden rains whole regions have been washed away; those also which formerly had been continents, have been insulated by strange and new-come waves, and others, by the subsiding of the sea, have been made passable by the foot of man: by winds and storms cities have been overthrown; fires have flashed forth from the clouds, by which regions in the East being burnt up have perished; and on the western coasts the like destructions have been caused by the bursting forth of waters and floods. So, formerly, from the lofty craters of Etna, rivers of fire kindled by God have flowed like a torrent down the steeps. If I had wished to collect from history wherever I could, these and similar instances, where should I have finished what happened even in those times before the name of Christ had put down those of their idols, so vain and hurtful to true salvation? I promised that I should also point out which of their customs, and for what cause, the true God, in whose power all kingdoms are, had deigned to favor to the enlargement of their empire; and how those whom they think gods can have profited them nothing, but much rather hurt them by deceiving and beguiling them; so that it seems to me I must now speak of these things, and chiefly of the increase of the Roman empire. For I have already said not a little, especially in the second book, about the many evils introduced into their manners by the hurtful deceits of the demons whom they worshipped as gods. But throughout all the three books already completed, where it appeared suitable, we have set forth how much succor God, through the name of Christ, to whom the barbarians beyond the custom of war paid so much honor, has bestowed on the good and bad, according as it is written, “Who maketh His sun to rise on the good and the evil, and giveth rain to the just and the unjust.”

CHAPTER 3

WHETHER THE GREAT EXTENT OF THE EMPIRE, WHICH HAS BEEN ACQUIRED ONLY BY WARS, IS TO BE RECKONED AMONG THE GOOD THINGS EITHER OF THE WISE OR THE HAPPY

Now, therefore, let us see how it is that they dare to ascribe the very great extent and duration of the Roman empire to those gods whom they contend that they worship honorably, even by the obsequies of vile games and the ministry of vile men: although I should like first to inquire for a little what reason, what prudence, there is in wishing to glory in the greatness and extent of the empire, when you cannot point out the happiness of men who are always rolling, with dark fear and cruel lust, in warlike slaughters and in blood, which, whether shed in civil or foreign war, is still human blood; so that their joy may be compared to glass in its fragile splendor, of which one is horribly afraid lest it should be suddenly broken in pieces. That this may be more easily discerned, let us not come to nought by being carried away with empty boasting, or blunt the edge of our attention by loud-sounding names of things, when we hear of peoples, kingdoms, provinces. But let us suppose a case of two men; for each individual man, like one letter in a language, is as it were the element of a city or kingdom, however far-spreading in its occupation of the earth. Of these two men let us suppose that one is poor, or rather of middling circumstances; the other very rich. But the rich man is anxious with fears, pining with discontent, burning with covetousness, never se cure, always uneasy, panting from the perpetual strife of his enemies, adding to his patrimony indeed by these miseries to an immense degree, and by these additions also heaping up most bitter cares. But that other man of moderate wealth is contented with a small and compact estate, most dear to his own family, enjoying the sweetest peace with his kindred neighbors and friends, in piety religious, benignant in mind, healthy in body, in life frugal, in manners chaste, in conscience secure. I know not whether any one can be such a fool, that he dare hesitate which to prefer. As, therefore, in the case of these two men, so in two families, in two nations, in two kingdoms, this test of tranquility holds good; and if we apply it vigilantly and without prejudice, we shall quite easily see where the mere show of happiness dwells, and where real felicity. Wherefore if the true God is worshipped, and if He is served with genuine rites and true virtue, it is advantageous that good men should long reign both far and wide. Nor is this advantageous so much to themselves, as to those over whom they reign. For, so far as concerns themselves, their piety and probity, which are great gifts of God, suffice to give them true felicity, enabling them to live well the life that now is, and afterwards to receive that which is eternal. In this world, therefore, the dominion of good men is profitable, not so much for themselves as for human affairs. But the dominion of bad men is hurtful chiefly to themselves who rule, for they destroy their own souls by greater license in wickedness; while those who are put under them in service are not hurt except by their own iniquity. For to the just all the evils imposed on them by unjust rulers are not the punishment of crime, but the test of virtue. Therefore the good man, although he is a slave, is free; but the bad man, even if he reigns, is a slave, and that not of one man, but, what is far more grievous, of as many masters as he has vices; of which vices when the divine Scripture treats, it says, "For of whom any man is overcome, to the same he is also the bond-slave."

CHAPTER 4

HOW LIKE KINGDOMS WITHOUT JUSTICE ARE TO ROBBERIES

Justice being taken away, then, what are kingdoms but great robberies? For what are robberies themselves, but little kingdoms? The band itself is made up of men; it is ruled by the authority of a prince, it is knit together by the pact of the confederacy; the booty is divided by the law agreed on. If, by the admittance of abandoned men, this evil increases to such a degree that it holds places, fixes abodes, takes possession of cities, and subdues peoples, it assumes the more plainly the name of a kingdom, because the reality is now manifestly conferred on it, not by the removal of covetousness, but by the addition of impunity. Indeed, that was an apt and true reply which was given to Alexander the Great by a pirate who had been seized. For when that king had asked the man what he meant by keeping hostile possession of the sea, he answered with bold pride, "What thou meanest by seizing the whole earth; but because I do it with a petty ship, I am called a robber, whilst thou who dost it with a great fleet art styled emperor."

CHAPTER 5

OF THE RUNAWAY GLADIATORS WHOSE POWER BECAME LIKE THAT OF ROYAL DIGNITY

I shall not therefore stay to inquire what sort of men Romulus gathered together, seeing he deliberated much about them,—how, being assumed out of that life they led into the fellowship of his city, they might cease to think of the punishment they deserved, the fear of which had driven them to greater villainies; so that henceforth they might be made more peaceable members of society. But this I say, that the Roman empire, which by subduing many nations had already grown great and an object of universal dread, was itself greatly alarmed, and only with much difficulty avoided a disastrous overthrow, because a mere handful of gladiators in Campania, escaping from the games, had recruited a great army, appointed three generals, and most widely and cruelly devastated Italy. Let them say what god aided these men, so that from a small and contemptible band of robbers they attained to a kingdom, feared even by the Romans, who had such great forces and fortresses. Or will they deny that they were divinely aided because they did not last long? As if, indeed, the life of any man whatever lasted long. In that case, too, the gods aid no one to reign, since all individuals quickly die; nor is sovereign power to be reckoned a benefit, because in a little time in every man, and thus in all of them one by one, it vanishes like a vapor. For what does it matter to those who worshipped the gods under Romulus, and are long since dead, that after their death the Roman empire has grown so great, while they plead their causes before the powers beneath? Whether those causes are good or bad, it matters not to the question before us. And this is to be understood of all those who carry with them the heavy burden of their actions, having in the few days of their life swiftly and hurriedly passed over the stage of the imperial office, although the office itself has lasted through long spaces of time, being filled by a constant succession of dying men. If, however, even those benefits which last only for the shortest time are to be ascribed to the aid of the gods, these gladiators were not a little aided, who broke the bonds of their servile condition, fled, escaped, raised a great and most powerful army, obedient to the will and orders of their chiefs and much feared by the Roman majesty, and remaining unsubdued by several Roman generals, seized many places, and, having won very many victories, enjoyed whatever pleasures they wished, and did what their lust suggested, and, until at last they were conquered, which was done with the utmost difficulty, lived sublime and dominant. But let us come to greater matters.

CHAPTER 6

CONCERNING THE COVETOUSNESS OF NINUS, WHO WAS THE FIRST WHO MADE WAR ON HIS NEIGHBORS, THAT HE MIGHT RULE MORE WIDELY

Justinus, who wrote Greek or rather foreign history in Latin, and briefly, like Trogus Pompeius whom he followed, begins his work thus: “In the beginning of the affairs of peoples and nations the government was in the hands of kings, who were raised to the height of this majesty not by courting the people, but by the knowledge good men had of their moderation. The people were held bound by no laws; the decisions of the princes were instead of laws. It was the custom to guard rather than to extend the boundaries of the empire; and kingdoms were kept within the bounds of each ruler’s native land. Ninus king of the Assyrians first of all, through new lust of empire, changed the old and, as it were, ancestral custom of nations. He first made war on his neighbors, and wholly subdued as far as to the frontiers of Libya the nations as yet untrained to resist.” And a little after he says: “Ninus established by constant possession the greatness of the authority he had gained. Having mastered his nearest neighbors, he went on to others, strengthened by the accession of forces, and by making each fresh victory the instrument of that which followed, subdued the nations of the whole East.” Now, with whatever fidelity to fact either he or Trogus may in general have written—for that they sometimes told lies is shown by other more trustworthy writers—yet it is agreed among other authors, that the kingdom of the Assyrians was extended far and wide by King Ninus. And it lasted so long, that the Roman empire has not yet attained the same age; for, as those write who have treated of chronological history, this kingdom endured for twelve hundred and forty years from the first year in which Ninus began to reign, until it was transferred to the Medes. But to make war on your neighbors, and thence to proceed to others, and through mere lust of dominion to crush and subdue people who do you no harm, what else is this to be called than great robbery?

CHAPTER 7

WHETHER EARTHLY KINGDOMS IN THEIR RISE AND FALL HAVE BEEN EITHER AIDED OR DESERTED BY THE HELP OF THE GODS

If this kingdom was so great and lasting without the aid of the gods, why is the ample territory and long duration of the Roman empire to be ascribed to the Roman gods? For whatever is the cause in it, the same is in the other also. But if they contend that the prosperity of the other also is to be attributed to the aid of the gods, I ask of which? For the other nations whom Ninus overcame, did not then worship other gods. Or if the Assyrians had gods of their own, who, so to speak, were more skillful workmen in the construction and preservation of the empire, whether are they dead, since they themselves have also lost the empire; or, having been defrauded of their pay, or promised a greater, have they chosen rather to go over to the Medes, and from them again to the Persians, because Cyrus invited them, and promised them something still more advantageous? This nation, indeed, since the time of the kingdom of Alexander the Macedonian, which was as brief in duration as it was great in extent, has preserved its own empire, and at this day occupies no small territories in the East. If this is so, then either the gods are unfaithful, who desert their own and go over to their enemies, which Camillus, who was but a man, did not do, when, being victor and subduer of a most hostile state, although he had felt that Rome, for whom he had done so much, was ungrateful, yet afterwards, forgetting the injury and remembering his native land, he freed her again from the Gauls; or they are not so strong as gods ought to be, since they can be overcome by human skill or strength. Or if, when they carry on war among themselves, the gods are not overcome by men, but some gods who are peculiar to certain cities are perchance overcome by other gods, it follows that they have quarrels among themselves which they uphold, each for his own part. Therefore a city ought not to worship its own gods, but rather others who aid their own worshippers. Finally, whatever may have been the case as to this change of sides, or flight, or migration, or failure in battle on the part of the gods, the name of Christ had not yet been proclaimed in those parts of the earth when these kingdoms were lost and transferred through great destructions in war. For if, after more than twelve hundred years, when the kingdom was taken away from the Assyrians, the Christian religion had there already preached another eternal kingdom, and put a stop to the sacrilegious worship of false gods, what else would the foolish men of that nation have said, but that the kingdom which had been so long preserved, could be lost for no other cause than the desertion of their own religions and the reception of Christianity? In which foolish speech that might have been uttered, let those we speak of observe their own likeness, and blush, if there is any sense of shame in them, because they have uttered similar complaints; although the Roman empire is afflicted rather than changed,—a thing which has befallen it in other times also, before the name of Christ was heard, and it has been restored after such affliction,—a thing which even in these times is not to be despaired of. For who knows the will of God concerning this matter?

CHAPTER 8

WHICH OF THE GODS CAN THE ROMANS SUPPOSE PRESIDED OVER THE INCREASE AND PRESERVATION OF THEIR EMPIRE, WHEN THEY HAVE BELIEVED THAT EVEN THE CARE OF SINGLE THINGS COULD SCARCELY BE COMMITTED TO SINGLE GODS

Next let us ask, if they please, out of so great a crowd of gods which the Romans worship, whom in especial, or what gods they believe to have extended and preserved that empire. Now, surely of this work, which is so excellent and so very full of the highest dignity, they dare not ascribe any part to the goddess Cloacina; or to Volupia, who has her appellation from voluptuousness; or to Libentina, who has her name from lust; or to Vaticanus, who presides over the screaming of infants; or to Cunina, who rules over their cradles. But how is it possible to recount in one part of this book all the names of gods or goddesses, which they could scarcely comprise in great volumes, distributing among these divinities their peculiar offices about single things? They have not even thought that the charge of their lands should be committed to any one god: but they have entrusted their farms to Rusina; the ridges of the mountains to Jugatinus; over the downs they have set the goddess Collatina; over the valleys, Vallonia. Nor could they even find one Segetia so competent, that they could commend to her care all their corn crops at once; but so long as their seed-corn was still under the ground, they would have the goddess Seia set over it; then, whenever it was above ground and formed straw, they set over it the goddess Segetia; and when the grain was collected and stored, they set over it the goddess Tutilina, that it might be kept safe. Who would not have thought that goddess Segetia sufficient to take care of the standing corn until it had passed from the first green blades to the dry ears? Yet she was not enough for men, who loved a multitude of gods, that the miserable soul, despising the chaste embrace of the one true God, should be prostituted to a crowd of demons. Therefore they set Proserpina over the germinating seeds; over the joints and knots of the stems, the god Nodotus; over the sheaths enfolding the ears, the goddess Voluntina; when the sheaths opened that the spike might shoot forth, it was ascribed to the goddess Patelana; when the stems stood all equal with new ears, because the ancients described this equalizing by the term hostire, it was ascribed to the goddess Hostilina; when the grain was in flower, it was dedicated to the goddess Flora; when full of milk, to the god Lacturnus; when maturing, to the goddess Matuta; when the crop was runcated,—that is, removed from the soil,—to the goddess Runcina. Nor do I yet recount them all, for I am sick of all this, though it gives them no shame. Only, I have said these very few things, in order that it may be understood they dare by no means say that the Roman empire has been established, increased, and preserved by their deities, who had all their own functions assigned to them in such a way, that no general oversight was entrusted to any one of them. When, therefore, could Segetia take care of the empire, who was not allowed to take care of the corn and the trees? When could Cunina take thought about war, whose oversight was not allowed to go beyond the cradles of the babies? When could Nodotus give help in battle, who had nothing to do even with the sheath of the ear, but only with the knots of the joints? Every one sets a porter at the door of his house, and because he is a man, he is quite sufficient; but these people have set three gods, Forculus to the doors, Cardea to the hinge, Limentinus to the threshold. Thus Forculus could not at the same time take care also of the hinge and the threshold.

CHAPTER 9

WHETHER THE GREAT EXTENT AND LONG DURATION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE SHOULD BE ASCRIBED TO JOVE, WHOM HIS WORSHIPPERS BELIEVE TO BE THE CHIEF GOD

Therefore omitting, or passing by for a little, that crowd of petty gods, we ought to inquire into the part performed by the great gods, whereby Rome has been made so great as to reign so long over so many nations. Doubtless, therefore, this is the work of Jove. For they will have it that he is the king of all the gods and goddesses, as is shown by his sceptre and by the Capitol on the lofty hill. Concerning that god they publish a saying which, although that of a poet, is most apt, “All things are full of Jove.” Varro believes that this god is worshipped, although called by another name, even by those who worship one God alone without any image. But if this is so, why has he been so badly used at Rome (and indeed by other nations too), that an image of him should be made?—a thing which was so displeasing to Varro himself, that although he was overborne by the perverse custom of so great a city, he had not the least hesitation in both saying and writing, that those who have appointed images for the people have both taken away fear and added error.

CHAPTER 10

WHAT OPINIONS THOSE HAVE FOLLOWED WHO HAVE SET DIVERS GODS OVER DIVERS PARTS OF THE WORLD

Why, also, is Juno united to him as his wife, who is called at once “sister and yoke-fellow?” Because, say they, we have Jove in the ether, Juno in the air; and these two elements are united, the one being superior, the other inferior. It is not he, then, of whom it is said, “All things are full of Jove,” if Juno also fills some part. Does each fill either, and are both of this couple in both of these elements, and in each of them at the same time? Why, then, is the ether given to Jove, the air to Juno? Besides, these two should have been enough. Why is it that the sea is assigned to Neptune, the earth to Pluto? And that these also might not be left without mates, Salacia is joined to Neptune, Proserpine to Pluto. For they say that, as Juno possesses the lower part of the heavens,—that is, the air,—so Salacia possesses the lower part of the sea, and Proserpine the lower part of the earth. They seek how they may patch up these fables, but they find no way. For if these things were so, their ancient sages would have maintained that there are three chief elements of the world, not four, in order that each of the elements might have a pair of gods. Now, they have positively affirmed that the ether is one thing, the air another. But water, whether higher or lower, is surely water. Suppose it ever so unlike, can it ever be so much so as no longer to be water? And the lower earth, by whatever divinity it may be distinguished, what else can it be than earth? Lo, then, since the whole physical world is complete in these four or three elements, where shall Minerva be? What should she possess, what should she fill? For she is placed in the Capitol along with these two, although she is not the offspring of their marriage. Or if they say that she possesses the higher part of the ether,—and on that account the poets have feigned that she sprang from the head of Jove,—why then is she not rather reckoned queen of the gods, because she is superior to Jove? Is it because it would be improper to set the daughter before the father? Why, then, is not that rule of justice observed concerning Jove himself toward Saturn? Is it because he was conquered? Have they fought then? By no means, say they; that is an old wife's fable. Lo, we are not to believe fables, and must hold more worthy opinions concerning the gods! Why, then, do they not assign to the father of Jove a seat, if not of higher, at least of equal honor? Because Saturn, say they, is length of time. Therefore they who worship Saturn worship Time; and it is insinuated that Jupiter, the king of the gods, was born of Time. For is anything unworthy said when Jupiter and Juno are said to have been sprung from Time, if he is the heaven and she is the earth, since both heaven and earth have been made, and are therefore not eternal? For their learned and wise men have this also in their books. Nor is that saying taken by Virgil out of poetic figments, but out of the books of philosophers,

"Then Ether, the Father Almighty, in copious showers descended

Into his spouse's glad bosom, making it fertile,"

—that is, into the bosom of Tellus, or the earth. Although here, also, they will have it that there are some differences, and think that in the earth herself Terra is one thing, Tellus another, and Tellumo another. And they have all these as gods, called by their own names distinguished by their own offices, and venerated with their own altars and rites. This same earth also they call the mother of the gods, so that even the fictions of the poets are more tolerable, if, according, not to their poetical but sacred books, Juno is not only the sister and wife, but also the mother of Jove. The same earth they worship as Ceres, and also as Vesta; while yet they more frequently affirm that Vesta is nothing else than fire, pertaining to the hearths, without which the city cannot exist; and therefore virgins are wont to serve her, because as nothing is born of a virgin, so nothing is born of fire;—but all this nonsense ought to be completely abolished and extinguished by Him who is born of a virgin. For who can bear that, while they ascribe to the fire so much honor, and, as it were, chastity, they do not blush sometimes even to call Vesta Venus, so that honored virginity may vanish in her handmaidens? For if Vesta is Venus, how can virgins rightly serve her by abstaining from venery? Are there two Venuses, the one a virgin, the other not a maid? Or rather, are there three, one the goddess of virgins, who is also called Vesta, another the goddess of wives, and another of harlots? To her also the Phenicians offered a gift by prostituting their daughters before they united them to husbands. Which of these is the wife of Vulcan? Certainly not the virgin, since she has a husband. Far be it from us to say it is the harlot, lest we should seem to wrong the son of Juno and fellow-worker of Minerva. Therefore it is to be understood that she belongs to the married people; but we would not wish them to imitate her in what she did with Mars. “Again,” say they, “you return to fables.” What sort of justice is that, to be angry with us because we say such things of their gods, and not to be angry with themselves, who in their theatres most willingly behold the crimes of their gods? And,—a thing incredible, if it were not thoroughly well proved,—these very theatric representations of the crimes of their gods have been instituted in honor of these same gods.

CHAPTER 11

CONCERNING THE MANY GODS WHOM THE PAGAN DOCTORS DEFEND AS BEING ONE AND THE SAME JOVE

Let them therefore assert as many things as ever they please in physical reasonings and disputations. One while let Jupiter be the soul of this corporeal world, who fills and moves that whole mass, constructed and compacted out of four, or as many elements as they please; another while, let him yield to his sister and brothers their parts of it: now let him be the ether, that from above he may embrace Juno, the air spread out beneath; again, let him be the whole heaven along with the air, and impregnate with fertilizing showers and seeds the earth, as his wife, and, at the same time, his mother (for this is not vile in divine beings); and yet again (that it may not be necessary to run through them all), let him, the one god, of whom many think it has been said by a most noble poet,

“For God pervadeth all things,

All lands, and the tracts of the sea, and the depth of the heavens,”

—let it be him who in the ether is Jupiter; in the air, Juno; in the sea, Neptune; in the lower parts of the sea, Salacia; in the earth, Pluto; in the lower part of the earth, Proserpine; on the domestic hearths, Vesta; in the furnace of the workmen, Vulcan; among the stars, Sol and Luna, and the Stars; in divination, Apollo; in merchandise, Mercury; in Janus, the initiator; in Terminus, the terminator; Saturn, in time; Mars and Bellona, in war; Liber, in vineyards; Ceres, in cornfields; Diana, in forests; Minerva, in learning. Finally, let it be him who is in that crowd, as it were, of plebeian gods: let him preside under the name of Liber over the seed of men, and under that of Libera over that of women: let him be Diespiter, who brings forth the birth to the light of day: let him be the goddess Mena, whom they set over the menstruation of women: let him be Lucina, who is invoked by women in childbirth: let him bring help to those who are being born, by taking them up from the bosom of the earth, and let him be called Opis: let him open the mouth in the crying babe, and be called the god Vaticanus: let him lift it from the earth, and be called the goddess Levana; let him watch over cradles, and be called the goddess Cunina: let it be no other than he who is in those goddesses, who sing the fates of the new born, and are called Carmentes: let him preside over fortuitous events, and be called Fortuna: in the goddess Rumina, let him milk out the breast to the little one, because the ancients termed the breast ruma: in the goddess Potina, let him administer drink: in the goddess Educa, let him supply food: from the terror of infants, let him be styled Paventia: from the hope which comes, Venilia: from voluptuousness, Volupia: from action, Agenor: from the stimulants by which man is spurred on to much action, let him be named the goddess Stimula: let him be the goddess Strenia, for making strenuous; Numeria, who teaches to number; Camoena, who teaches to sing: let him be both the god Consus for granting counsel, and the goddess Sentia for inspiring sentences: let him be the goddess Juventas, who, after the robe of boyhood is laid aside, takes charge of the beginning of the youthful age: let him be Fortuna Barbata, who endues adults with a beard, whom they have not chosen to honor; so that this divinity, whatever it may be, should at least be a male god, named either Barbatus, from barba, like Nodotus, from nodus; or, certainly, not Fortuna, but because he has beards, Fortunius: let him, in the god Jugatinus, yoke couples in marriage; and when the girdle of the virgin wife is loosed, let him be invoked as the goddess Virginiensis: let him be Mutunus or Tuternus, who, among the Greeks, is called Priapus. If they are not ashamed of it, let all these which I have named, and whatever others I have not named (for I have not thought fit to name all), let all these gods and goddesses be that one Jupiter, whether, as some will have it, all these are parts of him, or are his powers, as those think who are pleased to consider him the soul of the world, which is the opinion of most of their doctors, and these the greatest. If these things are so (how evil they may be I do not yet meanwhile inquire), what would they lose, if they, by a more prudent abridgment, should worship one god? For what part of him could be contemned if he himself should be worshipped? But if they are afraid lest parts of him should be angry at being passed by or neglected, then it is not the case, as they will have it, that this whole is as the life of one living being, which contains all the gods together, as if they were its virtues, or members, or parts; but each part has its own life separate from the rest, if it is so that one can be angered, appeased, or stirred up more than another. But if it is said that all together,—that is, the whole Jove himself,—would be offended if his parts were not also worshipped singly and minutely, it is foolishly spoken. Surely none of them could be passed by if he who singly possesses them all should be worshipped. For, to omit other things which are innumerable, when they say that all the stars are parts of Jove, and are all alive, and have rational souls, and therefore without controversy are gods, can they not see how many they do not worship, to how many they do not build temples or set up altars, and to how very few, in fact, of the stars they have thought of setting them up and offering sacrifice? If, therefore, those are displeased who are not severally worshipped, do they not fear to live with only a few appeased, while all heaven is displeased? But if they worship all the stars because they are part of Jove whom they worship, by the same compendious method they could supplicate them all in him alone. For in this way no one would be displeased, since in him alone all would be supplicated. No one would be contemned, instead of there being just cause of displeasure given to the much greater number who are passed by in the worship offered to some; especially when Priapus, stretched out in vile nakedness, is preferred to those who shine from their supernal abode.

CHAPTER 12

CONCERNING THE OPINION OF THOSE WHO HAVE THOUGHT THAT GOD IS THE SOUL OF THE WORLD, AND THE WORLD IS THE BODY OF GOD

Ought not men of intelligence, and indeed men of every kind, to be stirred up to examine the nature of this opinion? For there is no need of excellent capacity for this task, that putting away the desire of contention, they may observe that if God is the soul of the world, and the world is as a body to Him, who is the soul, He must be one living being consisting of soul and body, and that this same God is a kind of womb of nature containing all things in Himself, so that the lives and souls of all living things are taken, according to the manner of each one’s birth, out of His soul which vivifies that whole mass, and therefore nothing at all remains which is not a part of God. And if this is so, who cannot see what impious and irreligious consequences follow, such as that whatever one may trample, he must trample a part of God, and in slaying any living creature, a part of God must be slaughtered? But I am unwilling to utter all that may occur to those who think of it, yet cannot be spoken without irreverence.

CHAPTER 13

CONCERNING THOSE WHO ASSERT THAT ONLY RATIONAL ANIMALS ARE PARTS OF THE ONE GOD

But if they contend that only rational animals, such as men, are parts of God, I do not really see how, if the whole world is God, they can separate beasts from being parts of Him. But what need is there of striving about that? Concerning the rational animal himself,—that is, man,—what more unhappy belief can be entertained than that a part of God is whipped when a boy is whipped? And who, unless he is quite mad, could bear the thought that parts of God can become lascivious, iniquitous, impious, and altogether damnable? In brief, why is God angry at those who do not worship Him, since these offenders are parts of Himself? It remains, therefore, that they must say that all the gods have their own lives; that each one lives for himself, and none of them is a part of any one; but that all are to be worshipped,—at least as many as can be known and worshipped; for they are so many it is impossible that all can be so. And of all these, I believe that Jupiter, because he presides as king, is thought by them to have both established and extended the Roman empire. For if he has not done it, what other god do they believe could have attempted so great a work, when they must all be occupied with their own offices and works, nor can one intrude on that of another? Could the kingdom of men then be propagated and increased by the king of the gods?

CHAPTER 14

THE ENLARGEMENT OF KINGDOMS IS UNSUITABLY ASCRIBED TO JOVE; FOR IF, AS THEY WILL HAVE IT, VICTORIA IS A GODDESS, SHE ALONE WOULD SUFFICE FOR THIS BUSINESS

Here, first of all, I ask, why even the kingdom itself is not some god. For why should not it also be so, if Victory is a goddess? Or what need is there of Jove himself in this affair, if Victory favors and is propitious, and always goes to those whom she wishes to be victorious? With this goddess favorable and propitious, even if Jove was idle and did nothing, what nations could remain unsubdued, what kingdom would not yield? But perhaps it is displeasing to good men to fight with most wicked unrighteousness, and provoke with voluntary war neighbors who are peaceable and do no wrong, in order to enlarge a kingdom? If they feel thus, I entirely approve and praise them.

CHAPTER 15

WHETHER IT IS SUITABLE FOR GOOD MEN TO WISH TO RULE MORE WIDELY

Let them ask, then, whether it is quite fitting for good men to rejoice in extended empire. For the iniquity of those with whom just wars are carried on favors the growth of a kingdom, which would certainly have been small if the peace and justice of neighbors had not by any wrong provoked the carrying on of war against them; and human affairs being thus more happy, all kingdoms would have been small, rejoicing in neighborly concord; and thus there would have been very many kingdoms of nations in the world, as there are very many houses of citizens in a city. Therefore, to carry on war and extend a kingdom over wholly subdued nations seems to bad men to be felicity, to good men necessity. But because it would be worse that the injurious should rule over those who are more righteous, therefore even that is not unsuitably called felicity. But beyond doubt it is greater felicity to have a good neighbor at peace, than to conquer a bad one by making war. Your wishes are bad, when you desire that one whom you hate or fear should be in such a condition that you can conquer him. If, therefore, by carrying on wars that were just, not impious or unrighteous, the Romans could have acquired so great an empire, ought they not to worship as a goddess even the injustice of foreigners? For we see that this has cooperated much in extending the empire, by making foreigners so unjust that they became people with whom just wars might be carried on, and the empire increased. And why may not injustice, at least that of foreign nations, also be a goddess, if Fear and Dread and Ague have deserved to be Roman gods? By these two, therefore,—that is, by foreign injustice, and the goddess Victoria, for injustice stirs up causes of wars, and Victoria brings these same wars to a happy termination,—the empire has increased, even although Jove has been idle. For what part could Jove have here, when those things which might be thought to be his benefits are held to be gods, called gods, worshipped as gods, and are themselves invoked for their own parts? He also might have some part here, if he himself might be called Empire, just as she is called Victory. Or if empire is the gift of Jove, why may not victory also be held to be his gift? And it certainly would have been held to be so, had he been recognized and worshipped, not as a stone in the Capitol, but as the true King of kings and Lord of lords.

CHAPTER 16

WHAT WAS THE REASON WHY THE ROMANS, IN DETAILING SEPARATE GODS FOR ALL THINGS AND ALL MOVEMENTS OF THE MIND, CHOSE TO HAVE THE TEMPLE OF QUIET OUTSIDE THE GATES

But I wonder very much, that while they assigned to separate gods single things, and (well nigh) all movements of the mind; that while they invoked the goddess Agenoria, who should excite to action; the goddess Stimula, who should stimulate to unusual action; the goddess Murcia, who should not move men beyond measure, but make them, as Pomponius says, murcid—that is, too slothful and inactive; the goddess Strenua, who should make them strenuous; and that while they offered to all these gods and goddesses solemn and public worship, they should yet have been unwilling to give public acknowledgment to her whom they name Quies because she makes men quiet, but built her temple outside the Colline gate. Whether was this a symptom of an unquiet mind, or rather was it thus intimated that he who should persevere in worshipping that crowd, not, to be sure, of gods, but of demons, could not dwell with quiet; to which the true Physician calls, saying, “Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls?”

CHAPTER 17

WHETHER, IF THE HIGHEST POWER BELONGS TO JOVE, VICTORIA ALSO OUGHT TO BE WORSHIPPED

Or do they say, perhaps, that Jupiter sends the goddess Victoria, and that she, as it were acting in obedience to the king of the gods, comes to those to whom he may have despatched her, and takes up her quarters on their side? This is truly said, not of Jove, whom they, according to their own imagination, feign to be king of the gods, but of Him who is the true eternal King, because he sends, not Victory, who is no person, but His angel, and causes whom He pleases to conquer; whose counsel may be hidden, but cannot be unjust. For if Victory is a goddess, why is not Triumph also a god, and joined to Victory either as husband, or brother, or son? Indeed, they have imagined such things concerning the gods, that if the poets had feigned the like, and they should have been discussed by us, they would have replied that they were laughable figments of the poets not to be attributed to true deities. And yet they themselves did not laugh when they were, not reading in the poets, but worshipping in the temples such doating follies. Therefore they should entreat Jove alone for all things, and supplicate him only. For if Victory is a goddess, and is under him as her king, wherever he might have sent her, she could not dare to resist and do her own will rather than his.

CHAPTER 18

WITH WHAT REASON THEY WHO THINK FELICITY AND FORTUNE GODDESSES HAVE DISTINGUISHED THEM

What shall we say, besides, of the idea that Felicity also is a goddess? She has received a temple; she has merited an altar; suitable rites of worship are paid to her. She alone, then, should be worshipped. For where she is present, what good thing can be absent? But what does a man wish, that he thinks Fortune also a goddess and worships her? Is felicity one thing, fortune another? Fortune, indeed, may be bad as well as good; but felicity, if it could be bad, would not be felicity. Certainly we ought to think all the gods of either sex (if they also have sex) are only good. This says Plato; this say other philosophers; this say all estimable rulers of the republic and the nations. How is it, then, that the goddess Fortune is sometimes good, sometimes bad? Is it perhaps the case that when she is bad she is not a goddess, but is suddenly changed into a malignant demon? How many Fortunes are there then? Just as many as there are men who are fortunate, that is, of good fortune. But since there must also be very many others who at the very same time are men of bad fortune, could she, being one and the same Fortune, be at the same time both bad and good—the one to these, the other to those? She who is the goddess, is she always good? Then she herself is felicity. Why, then, are two names given her? Yet this is tolerable; for it is customary that one thing should be called by two names. But why different temples, different altars, different rituals? There is a reason, say they, because Felicity is she whom the good have by previous merit; but fortune, which is termed good without any trial of merit, befalls both good and bad men fortuitously, whence also she is named Fortune. How, therefore, is she good, who without any discernment comes—both to the good and to the bad? Why is she worshipped, who is thus blind, running at random on any one whatever, so that for the most part she passes by her worshippers, and cleaves to those who despise her? Or if her worshippers profit somewhat, so that they are seen by her and loved, then she follows merit, and does not come fortuitously. What, then, becomes of that definition of fortune? What becomes of the opinion that she has received her very name from fortuitous events? For it profits one nothing to worship her if she is truly fortune. But if she distinguishes her worshippers, so that she may benefit them, she is not fortune. Or does, Jupiter send her too, whither he pleases? Then let him alone be worshipped; because Fortune is not able to resist him when he commands her, and sends her where he pleases. Or, at least, let the bad worship her, who do not choose to have merit by which the goddess Felicity might be invited.

CHAPTER 19

CONCERNING FORTUNA MULIEBRIS

To this supposed deity, whom they call Fortuna, they ascribe so much, indeed, that they have a tradition that the image of her, which was dedicated by the Roman matrons, and called Fortuna Muliebris, has spoken, and has said, once and again, that the matrons pleased her by their homage; which, indeed, if it is true, ought not to excite our wonder. For it is not so difficult for malignant demons to deceive, and they ought the rather to advert to their wits and wiles, because it is that goddess who comes by haphazard who has spoken, and not she who comes to reward merit. For Fortuna was loquacious, and Felicitas mute; and for what other reason but that men might not care to live rightly, having made Fortuna their friend, who could make them fortunate without any good desert? And truly, if Fortuna speaks, she should at least speak, not with a womanly, but with a manly voice; lest they themselves who have dedicated the image should think so great a miracle has been wrought by feminine loquacity.

CHAPTER 20

CONCERNING VIRTUE AND FAITH, WHICH THE PAGANS HAVE HONORED WITH TEMPLES AND SACRED RITES, PASSING BY OTHER GOOD QUALITIES, WHICH OUGHT LIKEWISE TO HAVE BEEN WORSHIPPED, IF DEITY WAS RIGHTLY ATTRIBUTED TO THESE

They have made Virtue also a goddess, which, indeed, if it could be a goddess, had been preferable to many. And now, because it is not a goddess, but a gift of God, let it be obtained by prayer from Him, by whom alone it can be given, and the whole crowd of false gods vanishes. But why is Faith believed to be a goddess, and why does she herself receive temple and altar? For whoever prudently acknowledges her makes his own self an abode for her. But how do they know what faith is, of which it is the prime and greatest function that the true God may be believed in? But why had not virtue sufficed? Does it not include faith also? Forasmuch as they have thought proper to distribute virtue into four divisions—prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance—and as each of these divisions has its own virtues, faith is among the parts of justice, and has the chief place with as many of us as know what that saying means, “The just shall live by faith.” But if Faith is a goddess, I wonder why these keen lovers of a multitude of gods have wronged so many other goddesses, by passing them by, when they could have dedicated temples and altars to them likewise. Why has temperance not deserved to be a goddess, when some Roman princes have obtained no small glory on account of her? Why, in fine, is fortitude not a goddess, who aided Mucius when he thrust his right hand into the flames; who aided Curtius, when for the sake of his country he threw himself headlong into the yawning earth; who aided Decius the sire, and Decius the son, when they devoted themselves for the army?—though we might question whether these men had true fortitude, if this concerned our present discussion. Why have prudence and wisdom merited no place among the gods? Is it because they are all worshipped under the general name of Virtue itself? Then they could thus worship the true God also, of whom all the other gods are thought to be parts. But in that one name of virtue is comprehended both faith and chastity, which yet have obtained separate altars in temples of their own.

CHAPTER 21

THAT ALTHOUGH NOT UNDERSTANDING THEM TO BE THE GIFTS OF GOD, THEY OUGHT AT LEAST TO HAVE BEEN CONTENT WITH VIRTUE AND FELICITY

These, not verity but vanity has made goddesses. For these are gifts of the true God, not themselves goddesses. However, where virtue and felicity are, what else is sought for? What can suffice the man whom virtue and felicity do not suffice? For surely virtue comprehends all things we need do, felicity all things we need wish for. If Jupiter, then, was worshipped in order that he might give these two things,—because, if extent and duration of empire is something good, it pertains to this same felicity,—why is it not understood that they are not goddesses, but the gifts of God? But if they are judged to be goddesses, then at least that other great crowd of gods should not be sought after. For, having considered all the offices which their fancy has distributed among the various gods and goddesses, let them find out, if they can, anything which could be bestowed by any god whatever on a man possessing virtue, possessing felicity. What instruction could be sought either from Mercury or Minerva, when Virtue already possessed all in herself? Virtue, indeed, is defined by the ancients as itself the art of living well and rightly. Hence, because virtue is called in Greek arete, it has been thought the Latins have derived from it the term art. But if Virtue cannot come except to the clever, what need was there of the god Father Catius, who should make men cautious, that is, acute, when Felicity could confer this? Because, to be born clever belongs to felicity. Whence, although goddess Felicity could not be worshipped by one not yet born, in order that, being made his friend, she might bestow this on him, yet she might confer this favor on parents who were her worshippers, that clever children should be born to them. What need had women in childbirth to invoke Lucina, when, if Felicity should be present, they would have, not only a good delivery, but good children too? What need was there to commend the children to the goddess Ops when they were being born; to the god Vaticanus in their birth-cry; to the goddess Cunina when lying cradled; to the goddess Rimina when sucking; to the god Statilinus when standing; to the goddess Adeona when coming; to Abeona when going away; to the goddess Mens that they might have a good mind; to the god Volumnus, and the goddess Volumna, that they might wish for good things; to the nuptial gods, that they might make good matches; to the rural gods, and chiefly to the goddess Fructesca herself, that they might receive the most abundant fruits; to Mars and Bellona, that they might carry on war well; to the goddess Victoria, that they might be victorious; to the god Honor, that they might be honored; to the goddess Pecunia, that they might have plenty money; to the god Aesculanus, and his son Argentinus, that they might have brass and silver coin? For they set down Aesculanus as the father of Argentinus for this reason, that brass coin began to be used before silver. But I wonder Argentinus has not begotten Aurinus, since gold coin also has followed. Could they have him for a god, they would prefer Aurinus both to his father Argentinus and his grandfather Aesculanus, just as they set Jove before Saturn. Therefore, what necessity was there on account of these gifts, either of soul, or body, or outward estate, to worship and invoke so great a crowd of gods, all of whom I have not mentioned, nor have they themselves been able to provide for all human benefits, minutely and singly methodized, minute and single gods, when the one goddess Felicity was able, with the greatest ease, compendiously to bestow the whole of them? nor should any other be sought after, either for the bestowing of good things, or for the averting of evil. For why should they invoke the goddess Fessonia for the weary; for driving away enemies, the goddess Pellonia; for the sick, as a physician, either Apollo or AEsculapius, or both together if there should be great danger? Neither should the god Spiniensis be entreated that he might root out the thorns from the fields; nor the goddess Rubigo that the mildew might not come,—Felicitas alone being present and guarding, either no evils would have arisen, or they would have been quite easily driven away. Finally, since we treat of these two goddesses, Virtue and Felicity, if felicity is the reward of virtue, she is not a goddess, but a gift of God. But if she is a goddess, why may she not be said to confer virtue itself, inasmuch as it is a great felicity to attain virtue?

CHAPTER 22

CONCERNING THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORSHIP DUE TO THE GODS, WHICH VARRO GLORIES IN HAVING HIMSELF CONFERRED ON THE ROMANS

What is it, then, that Varro boasts he has bestowed as a very great benefit on his fellow-citizens, because he not only recounts the gods who ought to be worshipped by the Romans, but also tells what pertains to each of them? “Just as it is of no advantage,” he says, “to know the name and appearance of any man who is a physician, and not know that he is a physician, so,” he says, “it is of no advantage to know well that AEsculapius is a god, if you are not aware that he can bestow the gift of health, and consequently do not know why you ought to supplicate him.” He also affirms this by another comparison, saying, “No one is able, not only to live well, but even to live at all, if he does not know who is a smith, who a baker, who a weaver, from whom he can seek any utensil, whom he may take for a helper, whom for a leader, whom for a teacher;” asserting, “that in this way it can be doubtful to no one, that thus the knowledge of the gods is useful, if one can know what force, and faculty, or power any god may have in any thing. For from this we may be able,” he says, “to know what god we ought to call to, and invoke for any cause; lest we should do as too many are wont to do, and desire water from Liber, and wine from Lymphs.” Very useful, forsooth! Who would not give this man thanks if he could show true things, and if he could teach that the one true God, from whom all good things are, is to be worshipped by men?

CHAPTER 23

CONCERNING FELICITY, WHOM THE ROMANS, WHO VENERATE MANY GODS, FOR A LONG TIME DID NOT WORSHIP WITH DIVINE HONOR, THOUGH SHE ALONE WOULD HAVE SUFFICED INSTEAD OF ALL

But how does it happen, if their books and rituals are true, and Felicity is a goddess, that she herself is not appointed as the only one to be worshipped, since she could confer all things, and all at once make men happy? For who wishes anything for any other reason than that he may become happy? Why was it left to Lucullus to dedicate a temple to so great a goddess at so late a date, and after so many Roman rulers? Why did Romulus himself, ambitious as he was of founding a fortunate city, not erect a temple to this goddess before all others? Why did he supplicate the other gods for anything, since he would have lacked nothing had she been with him? For even he himself would neither have been first a king, then afterwards, as they think, a god, if this goddess had not been propitious to him. Why, therefore, did he appoint as gods for the Romans, Janus, Jove, Mars, Picus, Faunus, Tibernus, Hercules, and others, if there were more of them? Why did Titus Tatius add Saturn, Ops, Sun, Moon, Vulcan, Light, and whatever others he added, among whom was even the goddess Cloacina, while Felicity was neglected? Why did Numa appoint so many gods and so many goddesses without this one? Was it perhaps because he could not see her among so great a crowd? Certainly king Hostilius would not have introduced the new gods Fear and Dread to be propitiated, if he could have known or might have worshipped this goddess. For, in presence of Felicity, Fear and Dread would have disappeared,—I do not say propitiated, but put to flight. Next, I ask, how is it that the Roman empire had already immensely increased before any one worshipped Felicity? Was the empire, therefore, more great than happy? For how could true felicity be there, where there was not true piety? For piety is the genuine worship of the true God, and not the worship of as many demons as there are false gods. Yet even afterwards, when Felicity had already been taken into the number of the gods, the great infelicity of the civil wars ensued. Was Felicity perhaps justly indignant, both because she was invited so late, and was invited not to honor, but rather to reproach, because along with her were worshipped Priapus, and Cloacina, and Fear and Dread, and Ague, and others which were not gods to be worshipped, but the crimes of the worshippers? Last of all, if it seemed good to worship so great a goddess along with a most unworthy crowd, why at least was she not worshipped in a more honorable way than the rest? For is it not intolerable that Felicity is placed neither among the gods Consentes, whom they allege to be admitted into the council of Jupiter, nor among the gods whom they term Select? Some temple might be made for her which might be pre-eminent, both in loftiness of site and dignity of style. Why, indeed, not something better than is made for Jupiter himself? For who gave the kingdom even to Jupiter but Felicity? I am supposing that when he reigned he was happy. Felicity, however, is certainly more valuable than a kingdom. For no one doubts that a man might easily be found who may fear to be made a king; but no one is found who is unwilling to be happy. Therefore, if it is thought they can be consulted by augury, or in any other way, the gods themselves should be consulted about this thing, whether they may wish to give place to Felicity. If, perchance, the place should already be occupied by the temples and altars of others, where a greater and more lofty temple might be built to Felicity, even Jupiter himself might give way, so that Felicity might rather obtain the very pinnacle of the Capitoline hill. For there is not any one who would resist Felicity, except, which is impossible, one who might wish to be unhappy. Certainly, if he should be consulted, Jupiter would in no case do what those three gods, Mars, Terminus, and Juventas, did, who positively refused to give place to their superior and king. For, as their books record, when king Tarquin wished to construct the Capitol, and perceived that the place which seemed to him to be the most worthy and suitable was preoccupied by other gods, not daring to do anything contrary to their pleasure, and believing that they would willingly give place to a god who was so great, and was their own master, because there were many of them there when the Capitol was founded, he inquired by augury whether they chose to give place to Jupiter, and they were all willing to remove thence except those whom I have named, Mars, Terminus, and Juventas; and therefore the Capitol was built in such a way that these three also might be within it, yet with such obscure signs that even the most learned men could scarcely know this. Surely, then, Jupiter himself would by no means despise Felicity, as he was himself despised by Terminus, Mars, and Juventas. But even they themselves who had not given place to Jupiter, would certainly give place to Felicity, who had made Jupiter king over them. Or if they should not give place, they would act thus not out of contempt of her, but because they chose rather to be obscure in the house of Felicity, than to be eminent without her in their own places.

Thus the goddess Felicity being established in the largest and loftiest place, the citizens should learn whence the furtherance of every good desire should be sought. And so, by the persuasion of nature herself, the superfluous multitude of other gods being abandoned, Felicity alone would be worshipped, prayer would be made to her alone, her temple alone would be frequented by the citizens who wished to be happy, which no one of them would not wish; and thus felicity, who was sought for from all the gods, would be sought for only from her own self. For who wishes to receive from any god anything else than felicity, or what he supposes to tend to felicity? Wherefore, if Felicity has it in her power to be with what man she pleases (and she has it if she is a goddess), what folly is it, after all, to seek from any other god her whom you can obtain by request from her own self! Therefore they ought to honor this goddess above other gods, even by dignity of place. For, as we read in their own authors, the ancient Romans paid greater honors to I know not what Summanus, to whom they attributed nocturnal thunderbolts, than to Jupiter, to whom diurnal thunderbolts were held to pertain. But, after a famous and conspicuous temple had been built to Jupiter, owing to the dignity of the building, the multitude resorted to him in so great numbers, that scarce one can be found who remembers even to have read the name of Summanus, which now he cannot once hear named. But if Felicity is not a goddess, because, as is true, it is a gift of God, that god must be sought who has power to give it, and that hurtful multitude of false gods must be abandoned which the vain multitude of foolish men follows after, making gods to itself of the gifts of God, and offending Himself whose gifts they are by the stubbornness of a proud will. For he cannot be free from infelicity who worships Felicity as a goddess, and forsakes God, the giver of felicity; just as he cannot be free from hunger who licks a painted loaf of bread, and does not buy it of the man who has a real one.

CHAPTER 24

THE REASONS BY WHICH THE PAGANS ATTEMPT TO DEFEND THEIR WORSHIPPING AMONG THE GODS THE DIVINE GIFTS THEMSELVES

We may, however, consider their reasons. Is it to be believed, say they, that our forefathers were besotted even to such a degree as not to know that these things are divine gifts, and not gods? But as they knew that such things are granted to no one, except by some god freely bestowing them, they called the gods whose names they did not find out by the names of those things which they deemed to be given by them; sometimes slightly altering the name for that purpose, as, for example, from war they have named Bellona, not bellum; from cradles, Cunina, not cunae; from standing corn, Segetia, not seges; from apples, Pomona, not pomum; from oxen, Bubona, not bos. Sometimes, again, with no alteration of the word, just as the things themselves are named, so that the goddess who gives money is called Pecunia, and money is not thought to be itself a goddess: so of Virtus, who gives virtue; Honor, who gives honor; Concordia, who gives concord; Victoria, who gives victory. So, they say, when Felicitas is called a goddess, what is meant is not the thing itself which is given, but that deity by whom felicity is given.

CHAPTER 25

CONCERNING THE ONE GOD ONLY TO BE WORSHIPPED, WHO, ALTHOUGH HIS NAME IS UNKNOWN, IS YET DEEMED TO BE THE GIVER OF FELICITY

Having had that reason rendered to us, we shall perhaps much more easily persuade, as we wish, those whose heart has not become too much hardened. For if now human infirmity has perceived that felicity cannot be given except by some god; if this was perceived by those who worshipped so many gods, at whose head they set Jupiter himself; if, in their ignorance of the name of Him by whom felicity was given, they agreed to call Him by the name of that very thing which they believed He gave;—then it follows that they thought that felicity could not be given even by Jupiter himself, whom they already worshipped, but certainly by him whom they thought fit to worship under the name of Felicity itself. I thoroughly affirm the statement that they believed felicity to be given by a certain God whom they knew not: let Him therefore be sought after, let Him be worshipped, and it is enough. Let the train of innumerable demons be repudiated, and let this God suffice every man whom his gift suffices. For him, I say, God the giver of felicity will not be enough to worship, for whom felicity itself is not enough to receive. But let him for whom it suffices (and man has nothing more he ought to wish for) serve the one God, the giver of felicity. This God is not he whom they call Jupiter. For if they acknowledged him to be the giver of felicity, they would not seek, under the name of Felicity itself, for another god or goddess by whom felicity might be given; nor could they tolerate that Jupiter himself should be worshipped with such infamous attributes. For he is said to be the debaucher of the wives of others; he is the shameless lover and ravisher of a beautiful boy.

CHAPTER 26

OF THE SCENIC PLAYS, THE CELEBRATION OF WHICH THE GODS HAVE EXACTED FROM THEIR WORSHIPPERS

“But,” says Cicero, “Homer invented these things, and transferred things human to the gods: I would rather transfer things divine to us.” The poet, by ascribing such crimes to the gods, has justly displeased the grave man. Why, then, are the scenic plays, where these crimes are habitually spoken of, acted, exhibited, in honor of the gods, reckoned among things divine by the most learned men? Cicero should exclaim, not against the inventions of the poets, but against the customs of the ancients. Would not they have exclaimed in reply, What have we done? The gods themselves have loudly demanded that these plays should be exhibited in their honor, have fiercely exacted them, have menaced destruction unless this was performed, have avenged its neglect with great severity, and have manifested pleasure at the reparation of such neglect. Among their virtuous and wonderful deeds the following is related. It was announced in a dream to Titus Latinius, a Roman rustic, that he should go to the senate and tell them to recommence the games of Rome, because on the first day of their celebration a condemned criminal had been led to punishment in sight of the people, an incident so sad as to disturb the gods who were seeking amusement from the games. And when the peasant who had received this intimation was afraid on the following day to deliver it to the senate, it was renewed next night in a severer form: he lost his son, because of his neglect. On the third night he was warned that a yet graver punishment was impending, if he should still refuse obedience. When even thus he did not dare to obey, he fell into a virulent and horrible disease. But then, on the advice of his friends, he gave information to the magistrates, and was carried in a litter into the senate, and having, on declaring his dream, immediately recovered strength, went away on his own feet whole. The senate, amazed at so great a miracle, decreed that the games should be renewed at fourfold cost. What sensible man does not see that men, being put upon by malignant demons, from whose domination nothing save the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord sets free, have been compelled by force to exhibit to such gods as these, plays which, if well advised, they should condemn as shameful? Certain it is that in these plays the poetic crimes of the gods are celebrated, yet they are plays which were re-established by decree of the senate, under compulsion of the gods. In these plays the most shameless actors celebrated Jupiter as the corrupter of chastity, and thus gave him pleasure. If that was a fiction, he would have been moved to anger; but if he was delighted with the representation of his crimes, even although fabulous, then, when he happened to be worshipped, who but the devil could be served? Is it so that he could found, extend, and preserve the Roman empire, who was more vile than any Roman man whatever, to whom such things were displeasing? Could he give felicity who was so infelicitously worshipped, and who, unless he should be thus worshipped, was yet more infelicitously provoked to anger?

CHAPTER 27

CONCERNING THE THREE KINDS OF GODS ABOUT WHICH THE PONTIFF SCAEVOLA HAS DISCOURSED

It is recorded that the very learned pontiff Scaevola had distinguished about three kinds of gods—one introduced by the poets, another by the philosophers, another by the statesmen. The first kind he declares to be trifling, because many unworthy things have been invented by the poets concerning the gods; the second does not suit states, because it contains some things that are superfluous, and some, too, which it would be prejudicial for the people to know. It is no great matter about the superfluous things, for it is a common saying of skillful lawyers, “Superfluous things do no harm.” But what are those things which do harm when brought before the multitude? “These,” he says, “that Hercules, AEsculapius, Castor and Pollux, are not gods; for it is declared by learned men that these were but men, and yielded to the common lot of mortals.” What else? “That states have not the true images of the gods; because the true God has neither sex, nor age, nor definite corporeal members.” The pontiff is not willing that the people should know these things; for he does not think they are false. He thinks it expedient, therefore, that states should be deceived in matters of religion; which Varro himself does not even hesitate to say in his books about things divine. Excellent religion! to which the weak, who requires to be delivered, may flee for succor; and when he seeks for the truth by which he may be delivered, it is believed to be expedient for him that he be deceived. And, truly, in these same books, Scaevola is not silent as to his reason for rejecting the poetic sort of gods,—to wit, “because they so disfigure the gods that they could not bear comparison even with good men, when they make one to commit theft, another adultery; or, again, to say or do something else basely and foolishly; as that three goddesses contested (with each other) the prize of beauty, and the two vanquished by Venus destroyed Troy; that Jupiter turned himself into a bull or swan that he might copulate with some one; that a goddess married a man, and Saturn devoured his children; that, in fine, there is nothing that could be imagined, either of the miraculous or vicious, which may not be found there, and yet is far removed from the nature of the gods.” O chief pontiff Scaevola, take away the plays if thou art able; instruct the people that they may not offer such honors to the immortal gods, in which, if they like, they may admire the crimes of the gods, and, so far as it is possible, may, if they please, imitate them. But if the people shall have answered thee, You, O pontiff, have brought these things in among us, then ask the gods themselves at whose instigation you have ordered these things, that they may not order such things to be offered to them. For if they are bad, and therefore in no way to be believed concerning the majority of the gods, the greater is the wrong done the gods about whom they are feigned with impunity. But they do not hear thee, they are demons, they teach wicked things, they rejoice in vile things; not only do they not count it a wrong if these things are feigned about them, but it is a wrong they are quite unable to bear if they are not acted at their stated festivals. But now, if thou wouldst call on Jupiter against them, chiefly for that reason that more of his crimes are wont to be acted in the scenic plays, is it not the case that, although you call him god Jupiter, by whom this whole world is ruled and administered, it is he to whom the greatest wrong is done by you, because you have thought he ought to be worshipped along with them, and have styled him their king?

CHAPTER 28

WHETHER THE WORSHIP OF THE GODS HAS BEEN OF SERVICE TO THE ROMANS IN OBTAINING AND EXTENDING THE EMPIRE

Therefore such gods, who are propitiated by such honors, or rather are impeached by them (for it is a greater crime to delight in having such things said of them falsely, than even if they could be said truly), could never by any means have been able to increase and preserve the Roman empire. For if they could have done it, they would rather have bestowed so grand a gift on the Greeks, who, in this kind of divine things,—that is, in scenic plays,—have worshipped them more honorably and worthily, although they have not exempted themselves from those slanders of the poets, by whom they saw the gods torn in pieces, giving them licence to ill-use any man they pleased, and have not deemed the scenic players themselves to be base, but have held them worthy even of distinguished honor. But just as the Romans were able to have gold money, although they did not worship a god Aurinus, so also they could have silver and brass coin, and yet worship neither Argentinus nor his father Aesculanus; and so of all the rest, which it would be irksome for me to detail. It follows, therefore, both that they could not by any means attain such dominion if the true God was unwilling; and that if these gods, false and many, were unknown or contemned, and He alone was known and worshipped with sincere faith and virtue, they would both have a better kingdom here, whatever might be its extent, and whether they might have one here or not, would afterwards receive an eternal kingdom.

CHAPTER 29

OF THE FALSITY OF THE AUGURY BY WHICH THE STRENGTH AND STABILITY OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE WAS CONSIDERED TO BE INDICATED

For what kind of augury is that which they have declared to be most beautiful, and to which I referred a little ago, that Mars, and Terminus, and Juventas would not give place even to Jove, the king of the gods? For thus, they say, it was signified that the nation dedicated to Mars,—that is, the Roman,—should yield to none the place it once occupied; likewise, that on account of the god Terminus, no one would be able to disturb the Roman frontiers; and also, that the Roman youth, because of the goddess Juventas, should yield to no one. Let them see, therefore, how they can hold him to be the king of their gods, and the giver of their own kingdom, if these auguries set him down for an adversary, to whom it would have been honorable not to yield. However, if these things are true, they need not be at all afraid. For they are not going to confess that the gods who would not yield to Jove have yielded to Christ. For, without altering the boundaries of the empire, Jesus Christ has proved Himself able to drive them, not only from their temples, but from the hearts of their worshippers. But, before Christ came in the flesh, and, indeed, before these things which we have quoted from their books could have been written, but yet after that auspice was made under king Tarquin, the Roman army has been divers times scattered or put to flight, and has shown the falseness of the auspice, which they derived from the fact that the goddess Juventas had not given place to Jove; and the nation dedicated to Mars was trodden down in the city itself by the invading and triumphant Gauls; and the boundaries of the empire, through the falling away of many cities to Hannibal, had been hemmed into a narrow space.

Thus the beauty of the auspices is made void, and there has remained only the contumacy against Jove, not of gods, but of demons. For it is one thing not to have yielded, and another to have returned whither you have yielded. Besides, even afterwards, in the oriental regions, the boundaries of the Roman empire were changed by the will of Hadrian; for he yielded up to the Persian empire those three noble provinces, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria. Thus that god Terminus, who according to these books was the guardian of the Roman frontiers, and by that most beautiful auspice had not given place to Jove, would seem to have been more afraid of Hadrian, a king of men, than of the king of the gods. The aforesaid provinces having also been taken back again, almost within our own recollection the frontier fell back, when Julian, given up to the oracles of their gods, with immoderate daring ordered the victualling ships to be set on fire. The army being thus left destitute of provisions, and he himself also being presently killed by the enemy, and the legions being hard pressed, while dismayed by the loss of their commander, they were reduced to such extremities that no one could have escaped, unless by articles of peace the boundaries of the empire had then been established where they still remain; not, indeed, with so great a loss as was suffered by the concession of Hadrian, but still at a considerable sacrifice. It was a vain augury, then, that the god Terminus did not yield to Jove, since he yielded to the will of Hadrian, and yielded also to the rashness of Julian, and the necessity of Jovinian. The more intelligent and grave Romans have seen these things, but have had little power against the custom of the state, which was bound to observe the rites of the demons; because even they themselves, although they perceived that these things were vain, yet thought that the religious worship which is due to God should be paid to the nature of things which is established under the rule and government of the one true God, "serving," as saith the apostle, "the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for evermore." The help of this true God was necessary to send holy and truly pious men, who would die for the true religion that they might remove the false from among the living.

CHAPTER 30

WHAT KIND OF THINGS EVEN THEIR WORSHIPPERS HAVE OWNED THEY HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT THE GODS OF THE NATIONS

Cicero the augur laughs at auguries, and reproves men for regulating the purposes of life by the cries of crows and jackdaws. But it will be said that an academic philosopher, who argues that all things are uncertain, is unworthy to have any authority in these matters. In the second book of his De Natura Deorum, he introduces Lucilius Balbus, who, after showing that superstitions have their origin in physical and philosophical truths, expresses his indignation at the setting up of images and fabulous notions, speaking thus: “Do you not therefore see that from true and useful physical discoveries the reason may be drawn away to fabulous and imaginary gods? This gives birth to false opinions and turbulent errors, and superstitions well-nigh old-wifeish. For both the forms of the gods, and their ages, and clothing, and ornaments, are made familiar to us; their genealogies, too, their marriages, kinships, and all things about them, are debased to the likeness of human weakness. They are even introduced as having perturbed minds; for we have accounts of the lusts, cares, and angers of the gods. Nor, indeed, as the fables go, have the gods been without their wars and battles. And that not only when, as in Homer, some gods on either side have defended two opposing armies, but they have even carried on wars on their own account, as with the Titans or with the Giants. Such things it is quite absurd either to say or to believe: they are utterly frivolous and groundless.” Behold, now, what is confessed by those who defend the gods of the nations. Afterwards he goes on to say that some things belong to superstition, but others to religion, which he thinks good to teach according to the Stoics. “For not only the philosophers,” he says, “but also our forefathers, have made a distinction between superstition and religion. For those,” he says, “who spent whole days in prayer, and offered sacrifice, that their children might outlive them, are called superstitious.” Who does not see that he is trying, while he fears the public prejudice, to praise the religion of the ancients, and that he wishes to disjoin it from superstition, but cannot find out how to do so? For if those who prayed and sacrificed all day were called superstitious by the ancients, were those also called so who instituted (what he blames) the images of the gods of diverse age and distinct clothing, and invented the genealogies of gods, their marriages, and kinships? When, therefore, these things are found fault with as superstitious, he implicates in that fault the ancients who instituted and worshipped such images. Nay, he implicates himself, who, with whatever eloquence he may strive to extricate himself and be free, was yet under the necessity of venerating these images; nor dared he so much as whisper in a discourse to the people what in this disputation he plainly sounds forth. Let us Christians, therefore, give thanks to the Lord our God—not to heaven and earth, as that author argues, but to Him who has made heaven and earth; because these superstitions, which that Balbus, like a babbler, scarcely reprehends, He, by the most deep lowliness of Christ, by the preaching of the apostles, by the faith of the martyrs dying for the truth and living with the truth, has overthrown, not only in the hearts of the religious, but even in the temples of the superstitious, by their own free service.

CHAPTER 31

CONCERNING THE OPINIONS OF VARRO, WHO, WHILE REPROBATING THE POPULAR BELIEF, THOUGHT THAT THEIR WORSHIP SHOULD BE CONFINED TO ONE GOD, THOUGH HE WAS UNABLE TO DISCOVER THE TRUE GOD

What says Varro himself, whom we grieve to have found, although not by his own judgment, placing the scenic plays among things divine? When in many passages he is exhorting, like a religious man, to the worship of the gods, does he not in doing so admit that he does not in his own judgment believe those things which he relates that the Roman state has instituted; so that he does not hesitate to affirm that if he were founding a new state, he could enumerate the gods and their names better by the rule of nature? But being born into a nation already ancient, he says that he finds himself bound to accept the traditional names and surnames of the gods, and the histories connected with them, and that his purpose in investigating and publishing these details is to incline the people to worship the gods, and not to despise them. By which words this most acute man sufficiently indicates that he does not publish all things, because they would not only have been contemptible to himself, but would have seemed despicable even to the rabble, unless they had been passed over in silence. I should be thought to conjecture these things, unless he himself, in another passage, had openly said, in speaking of religious rites, that many things are true which it is not only not useful for the common people to know, but that it is expedient that the people should think otherwise, even though falsely, and therefore the Greeks have shut up the religious ceremonies and mysteries in silence, and within walls. In this he no doubt expresses the policy of the so-called wise men by whom states and peoples are ruled. Yet by this crafty device the malign demons are wonderfully delighted, who possess alike the deceivers and the deceived, and from whose tyranny nothing sets free save the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The same most acute and learned author also says, that those alone seem to him to have perceived what God is, who have believed Him to be the soul of the world, governing it by design and reason. And by this, it appears, that although he did not attain to the truth,—for the true God is not a soul, but the maker and author of the soul,—yet if he could have been free to go against the prejudices of custom, he could have confessed and counselled others that the one God ought to be worshipped, who governs the world by design and reason; so that on this subject only this point would remain to be debated with him, that he had called Him a soul, and not rather the creator of the soul. He says, also, that the ancient Romans, for more than a hundred and seventy years, worshipped the gods without an image. "And if this custom," he says, "could have remained till now, the gods would have been more purely worshipped." In favor of this opinion, he cites as a witness among others the Jewish nation; nor does he hesitate to conclude that passage by saying of those who first consecrated images for the people, that they have both taken away religious fear from their fellow-citizens, and increased error, wisely thinking that the gods easily fall into contempt when exhibited under the stolidity of images. But as he does not say they have transmitted error, but that they have increased it, he therefore wishes it to be understood that there was error already when there were no images. Wherefore, when he says they alone have perceived what God is who have believed Him to be the governing soul of the world, and thinks that the rites of religion would have been more purely observed without images, who fails to see how near he has come to the truth? For if he had been able to do anything against so inveterate an error, he would certainly have given it as his opinion both that the one God should be worshipped, and that He should be worshipped without an image; and having so nearly discovered the truth, perhaps he might easily have been put in mind of the mutability of the soul, and might thus have perceived that the true God is that immutable nature which made the soul itself. Since these things are so, whatever ridicule such men have poured in their writings against the plurality of the gods, they have done so rather as compelled by the secret will of God to confess them, than as trying to persuade others. If, therefore, any testimonies are adduced by us from these writings, they are adduced for the confutation of those who are unwilling to consider from how great and malignant a power of the demons the singular sacrifice of the shedding of the most holy blood, and the gift of the imparted Spirit, can set us free.

CHAPTER 32

IN WHAT INTEREST THE PRINCES OF THE NATIONS WISHED FALSE RELIGIONS TO CONTINUE AMONG THE PEOPLE SUBJECT TO THEM

Varro says also, concerning the generations of the gods, that the people have inclined to the poets rather than to the natural philosophers; and that therefore their forefathers,—that is, the ancient Romans,—believed both in the sex and the generations of the gods, and settled their marriages; which certainly seems to have been done for no other cause except that it was the business of such men as were prudent and wise to deceive the people in matters of religion, and in that very thing not only to worship, but also to imitate the demons, whose greatest lust is to deceive. For just as the demons cannot possess any but those whom they have deceived with guile, so also men in princely office, not indeed being just, but like demons, have persuaded the people in the name of religion to receive as true those things which they themselves knew to be false; in this way, as it were, binding them up more firmly in civil society, so that they might in like manner possess them as subjects. But who that was weak and unlearned could escape the deceits of both the princes of the state and the demons?

CHAPTER 33

THAT THE TIMES OF ALL KINGS AND KINGDOMS ARE ORDAINED BY THE JUDGMENT AND POWER OF THE TRUE GOD

Therefore that God, the author and giver of felicity, because He alone is the true God, Himself gives earthly kingdoms both to good and bad. Neither does He do this rashly, and, as it were, fortuitously,—because He is God not fortune,—but according to the order of things and times, which is hidden from us, but thoroughly known to Himself; which same order of times, however, He does not serve as subject to it, but Himself rules as lord and appoints as governor. Felicity He gives only to the good. Whether a man be a subject or a king makes no difference; he may equally either possess or not possess it. And it shall be full in that life where kings and subjects exist no longer. And therefore earthly kingdoms are given by Him both to the good and the bad; lest His worshippers, still under the conduct of a very weak mind, should covet these gifts from Him as some great things. And this is the mystery of the Old Testament, in which the New was hidden, that there even earthly gifts are promised: those who were spiritual understanding even then, although not yet openly declaring, both the eternity which was symbolized by these earthly things, and in what gifts of God true felicity could be found.

CHAPTER 34

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF THE JEWS, WHICH WAS FOUNDED BY THE ONE AND TRUE GOD, AND PRESERVED BY HIM AS LONG AS THEY REMAINED IN THE TRUE RELIGION

Therefore, that it might be known that these earthly good things, after which those pant who cannot imagine better things, remain in the power of the one God Himself, not of the many false gods whom the Romans have formerly believed worthy of worship, He multiplied His people in Egypt from being very few, and delivered them out of it by wonderful signs. Nor did their women invoke Lucina when their offspring was being incredibly multiplied; and that nation having increased incredibly, He Himself delivered, He Himself saved them from the hands of the Egyptians, who persecuted them, and wished to kill all their infants. Without the goddess Rumina they sucked; without Cunina they were cradled, without Educa and Potina they took food and drink; without all those puerile gods they were educated; without the nuptial gods they were married; without the worship of Priapus they had conjugal intercourse; without invocation of Neptune the divided sea opened up a way for them to pass over, and overwhelmed with its returning waves their enemies who pursued them. Neither did they consecrate any goddess Mannia when they received manna from heaven; nor, when the smitten rock poured forth water to them when they thirsted, did they worship Nymphs and Lymphs. Without the mad rites of Mars and Bellona they carried on war; and while, indeed, they did not conquer without victory, yet they did not hold it to be a goddess, but the gift of their God. Without Segetia they had harvests; without Bubona, oxen; honey without Mellona; apples without Pomona: and, in a word, everything for which the Romans thought they must supplicate so great a crowd of false gods, they received much more happily from the one true God. And if they had not sinned against Him with impious curiosity, which seduced them like magic arts, and drew them to strange gods and idols, and at last led them to kill Christ, their kingdom would have remained to them, and would have been, if not more spacious, yet more happy, than that of Rome. And now that they are dispersed through almost all lands and nations, it is through the providence of that one true God; that whereas the images, altars, groves, and temples of the false gods are everywhere overthrown, and their sacrifices prohibited, it may be shown from their books how this has been foretold by their prophets so long before; lest, perhaps, when they should be read in ours, they might seem to be invented by us. But now, reserving what is to follow for the following book, we must here set a bound to the prolixity of this one.

Book V

Argument—Augustin first discusses the doctrine of fate, for the sake of confuting those who are disposed to refer to fate the power and increase of the Roman empire, which could not be attributed to false gods, as has been shown in the preceding book. After that, he proves that there is no contradiction between God’s prescience and our free will. He then speaks of the manners of the ancient Romans, and shows in what sense it was due to the virtue of the Romans themselves, and in how far to the counsel of God, that he increased their dominion, though they did not worship him. Finally, he explains what is to be accounted the true happiness of the Christian emperors.

PREFACE

Since, then, it is established that the complete attainment of all we desire is that which constitutes felicity, which is no goddess, but a gift of God, and that therefore men can worship no god save Him who is able to make them happy,—and were Felicity herself a goddess, she would with reason be the only object of worship,—since, I say, this is established, let us now go on to consider why God, who is able to give with all other things those good gifts which can be possessed by men who are not good, and consequently not happy, has seen fit to grant such extended and long-continued dominion to the Roman empire; for that this was not effected by that multitude of false gods which they worshipped, we have both already adduced, and shall, as occasion offers, yet adduce considerable proof.

CHAPTER 1

THAT THE CAUSE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, AND OF ALL KINGDOMS, IS NEITHER FORTUITOUS NOR CONSISTS IN THE POSITION OF THE STARS

The cause, then, of the greatness of the Roman empire is neither fortuitous nor fatal, according to the judgment or opinion of those who call those things fortuitous which either have no causes, or such causes as do not proceed from some intelligible order, and those things fatal which happen independently of the will of God and man, by the necessity of a certain order. In a word, human kingdoms are established by divine providence. And if any one attributes their existence to fate, because he calls the will or the power of God itself by the name of fate, let him keep his opinion, but correct his language. For why does he not say at first what he will say afterwards, when some one shall put the question to him, What he means by fate? For when men hear that word, according to the ordinary use of the language, they simply understand by it the virtue of that particular position of the stars which may exist at the time when any one is born or conceived, which some separate altogether from the will of God, whilst others affirm that this also is dependent on that will. But those who are of opinion that, apart from the will of God, the stars determine what we shall do, or what good things we shall possess, or what evils we shall suffer, must be refused a hearing by all, not only by those who hold the true religion, but by those who wish to be the worshippers of any gods whatsoever, even false gods. For what does this opinion really amount to but this, that no god whatever is to be worshipped or prayed to? Against these, however, our present disputation is not intended to be directed, but against those who, in defence of those whom they think to be gods, oppose the Christian religion. They, however, who make the position of the stars depend on the divine will, and in a manner decree what character each man shall have, and what good or evil shall happen to him, if they think that these same stars have that power conferred upon them by the supreme power of God, in order that they may determine these things according to their will, do a great injury to the celestial sphere, in whose most brilliant senate, and most splendid senate-house, as it were, they suppose that wicked deeds are decreed to be done,—such deeds as that, if any terrestrial state should decree them, it would be condemned to overthrow by the decree of the whole human race. What judgment, then, is left to God concerning the deeds of men, who is Lord both of the stars and of men, when to these deeds a celestial necessity is attributed? Or, if they do not say that the stars, though they have indeed received a certain power from God, who is supreme, determine those things according to their own discretion, but simply that His commands are fulfilled by them instrumentally in the application and enforcing of such necessities, are we thus to think concerning God even what it seemed unworthy that we should think concerning the will of the stars? But, if the stars are said rather to signify these things than to effect them, so that that position of the stars is, as it were, a kind of speech predicting, not causing future things,—for this has been the opinion of men of no ordinary learning,—certainly the mathematicians are not wont so to speak saying, for example, Mars in such or such a position signifies a homicide, but makes a homicide. But, nevertheless, though we grant that they do not speak as they ought, and that we ought to accept as the proper form of speech that employed by the philosophers in predicting those things which they think they discover in the position of the stars, how comes it that they have never been able to assign any cause why, in the life of twins, in their actions, in the events which befall them, in their professions, arts, honors, and other things pertaining to human life, also in their very death, there is often so great a difference, that, as far as these things are concerned, many entire strangers are more like them than they are like each other, though separated at birth by the smallest interval of time, but at conception generated by the same act of copulation, and at the same moment?

CHAPTER 2

ON THE DIFFERENCE IN THE HEALTH OF TWINS

Cicero says that the famous physician Hippocrates has left in writing that he had suspected that a certain pair of brothers were twins, from the fact that they both took ill at once, and their disease advanced to its crisis and subsided in the same time in each of them. Posidonius the Stoic, who was much given to astrology, used to explain the fact by supposing that they had been born and conceived under the same constellation. In this question the conjecture of the physician is by far more worthy to be accepted, and approaches much nearer to credibility, since, according as the parents were affected in body at the time of copulation, so might the first elements of the foetuses have been affected, so that all that was necessary for their growth and development up till birth having been supplied from the body of the same mother, they might be born with like constitutions. Thereafter, nourished in the same house, on the same kinds of food, where they would have also the same kinds of air, the same locality, the same quality of water,—which, according to the testimony of medical science, have a very great influence, good or bad, on the condition of bodily health,—and where they would also be accustomed to the same kinds of exercise, they would have bodily constitutions so similar that they would be similarly affected with sickness at the same time and by the same causes. But, to wish to adduce that particular position of the stars which existed at the time when they were born or conceived as the cause of their being simultaneously affected with sickness, manifests the greatest arrogance, when so many beings of most diverse kinds, in the most diverse conditions, and subject to the most diverse events, may have been conceived and born at the same time, and in the same district, lying under the same sky. But we know that twins do not only act differently, and travel to very different places, but that they also suffer from different kinds of sickness; for which Hippocrates would give what is in my opinion the simplest reason, namely, that, through diversity of food and exercise, which arises not from the constitution of the body, but from the inclination of the mind, they may have come to be different from each other in respect of health. Moreover, Posidonius, or any other asserter of the fatal influence of the stars, will have enough to do to find anything to say to this, if he be unwilling to im pose upon the minds of the uninstructed in things of which they are ignorant. But, as to what they attempt to make out from that very small interval of time elapsing between the births of twins, on account of that point in the heavens where the mark of the natal hour is placed, and which they call the “horoscope,” it is either disproportionately small to the diversity which is found in the dispositions, actions, habits, and fortunes of twins, or it is disproportionately great when compared with the estate of twins, whether low or high, which is the same for both of them, the cause for whose greatest difference they place, in every case, in the hour on which one is born; and, for this reason, if the one is born so immediately after the other that there is no change in the horoscope, I demand an entire similarity in all that respects them both, which can never be found in the case of any twins. But if the slowness of the birth of the second give time for a change in the horoscope, I demand different parents, which twins can never have.

CHAPTER 3

CONCERNING THE ARGUMENTS WHICH NIGIDIUS THE MATHEMATICIAN DREW FROM THE POTTER’S WHEEL, IN THE QUESTION ABOUT THE BIRTH OF TWINS

It is to no purpose, therefore, that that famous fiction about the potter’s wheel is brought forward, which tells of the answer which Nigidius is said to have given when he was perplexed with this question, and on account of which he was called Figulus. For, having whirled round the potter’s wheel with all his strength he marked it with ink, striking it twice with the utmost rapidity, so that the strokes seemed to fall on the very same part of it. Then, when the rotation had ceased, the marks which he had made were found upon the rim of the wheel at no small distance apart. Thus, said he, considering the great rapidity with which the celestial sphere revolves, even though twins were born with as short an interval between their births as there was between the strokes which I gave this wheel, that brief interval of time is equivalent to a very great distance in the celestial sphere. Hence, said he, come whatever dissimilitudes may be remarked in the habits and fortunes of twins. This argument is more fragile than the vessels which are fashioned by the rotation of that wheel. For if there is so much significance in the heavens which cannot be comprehended by observation of the constellations, that, in the case of twins, an inheritance may fall to the one and not to the other, why, in the case of others who are not twins, do they dare, having examined their constellations, to declare such things as pertain to that secret which no one can comprehend, and to attribute them to the precise moment of the birth of each individual? Now, if such predictions in connection with the natal hours of others who are not twins are to be vindicated on the ground that they are founded on the observation of more extended spaces in the heavens, whilst those very small moments of time which separated the births of twins, and correspond to minute portions of celestial space, are to be connected with trifling things about which the mathematicians are not wont to be consulted,—for who would consult them as to when he is to sit, when to walk abroad, when and on what he is to dine?—how can we be justified in so speaking, when we can point out such manifold diversity both in the habits, doings, and destinies of twins?

CHAPTER 4

CONCERNING THE TWINS ESAU AND JACOB, WHO WERE VERY UNLIKE EACH OTHER BOTH IN THEIR CHARACTER AND ACTIONS

In the time of the ancient fathers, to speak concerning illustrious persons, there were born two twin brothers, the one so immediately after the other, that the first took hold of the heel of the second. So great a difference existed in their lives and manners, so great a dissimilarity in their actions, so great a difference in their parents’ love for them respectively, that the very contrast between them produced even a mutual hostile antipathy. Do we mean, when we say that they were so unlike each other, that when the one was walking the other was sitting, when the one was sleeping the other was waking,—which differences are such as are attributed to those minute portions of space which cannot be appreciated by those who note down the position of the stars which exists at the moment of one’s birth, in order that the mathematicians may be consulted concerning it? One of these twins was for a long time a hired servant; the other never served. One of them was beloved by his mother; the other was not so. One of them lost that honor which was so much valued among their people; the other obtained it. And what shall we say of their wives, their children, and their possessions? How different they were in respect to all these! If, therefore, such things as these are connected with those minute intervals of time which elapse between the births of twins, and are not to be attributed to the constellations, wherefore are they predicted in the case of others from the examination of their constellations? And if, on the other hand, these things are said to be predicted, because they are connected, not with minute and inappreciable moments, but with intervals of time which can be observed and noted down, what purpose is that potter’s wheel to serve in this matter, except it be to whirl round men who have hearts of clay, in order that they may be prevented from detecting the emptiness of the talk of the mathematicians?

CHAPTER 5

IN WHAT MANNER THE MATHEMATICIANS ARE CONVICTED OF PROFESSING A VAIN SCIENCE

Do not those very persons whom the medical sagacity of Hippocrates led him to suspect to be twins, because their disease was observed by him to develop to its crisis and to subside again in the same time in each of them,—do not these, I say, serve as a sufficient refutation of those who wish to attribute to the influence of the stars that which was owing to a similarity of bodily constitution? For wherefore were they both sick of the same disease, and at the same time, and not the one after the other in the order of their birth? (for certainly they could not both be born at the same time.) Or, if the fact of their having been born at different times by no means necessarily implies that they must be sick at different times, why do they contend that the difference in the time of their births was the cause of their difference in other things? Why could they travel in foreign parts at different times, marry at different times, beget children at different times, and do many other things at different times, by reason of their having been born at different times, and yet could not, for the same reason, also be sick at different times? For if a difference in the moment of birth changed the horoscope, and occasioned dissimilarity in all other things, why has that simultaneousness which belonged to their conception remained in their attacks of sickness? Or, if the destinies of health are involved in the time of conception, but those of other things be said to be attached to the time of birth, they ought not to predict anything concerning health from examination of the constellations of birth, when the hour of conception is not also given, that its constellations may be inspected. But if they say that they predict attacks of sickness without examining the horoscope of conception, because these are indicated by the moments of birth, how could they inform either of these twins when he would be sick, from the horoscope of his birth, when the other also, who had not the same horoscope of birth, must of necessity fall sick at the same time? Again, I ask, if the distance of time between the births of twins is so great as to occasion a difference of their constellations on account of the difference of their horoscopes, and therefore of all the cardinal points to which so much influence is attributed, that even from such change there comes a difference of destiny, how is it possible that this should be so, since they cannot have been conceived at different times? Or, if two conceived at the same moment of time could have different destinies with respect to their births, why may not also two born at the same moment of time have different destinies for life and for death? For if the one moment in which both were conceived did not hinder that the one should be born before the other, why, if two are born at the same moment, should anything hinder them from dying at the same moment? If a simultaneous conception allows of twins being differently affected in the womb, why should not simultaneousness of birth allow of any two individuals having different fortunes in the world? and thus would all the fictions of this art, or rather delusion, be swept away. What strange circumstance is this, that two children conceived at the same time, nay, at the same moment, under the same position of the stars, have different fates which bring them to different hours of birth, whilst two children, born of two different mothers, at the same moment of time, under one and the same position of the stars, cannot have different fates which shall conduct them by necessity to diverse manners of life and of death? Are they at conception as yet without destinies, because they can only have them if they be born? What, therefore, do they mean when they say that, if the hour of the conception be found, many things can be predicted by these astrologers? from which also arose that story which is reiterated by some, that a certain sage chose an hour in which to lie with his wife, in order to secure his begetting an illustrious son. From this opinion also came that answer of Posidonius, the great astrologer and also philosopher, concerning those twins who were attacked with sickness at the same time, namely, “That this had happened to them because they were conceived at the same time, and born at the same time.” For certainly he added “conception,” lest it should be said to him that they could not both be born at the same time, knowing that at any rate they must both have been conceived at the same time; wishing thus to show that he did not attribute the fact of their being similarly and simultaneously affected with sickness to the similarity of their bodily constitutions as its proximate cause, but that he held that even in respect of the similarity of their health, they were bound together by a sidereal connection. If, therefore, the time of conception has so much to do with the similarity of destinies, these same destinies ought not to be changed by the circumstances of birth; or, if the destinies of twins be said to be changed because they are born at different times, why should we not rather understand that they had been already changed in order that they might be born at different times? Does not, then, the will of men living in the world change the destinies of birth, when the order of birth can change the destinies they had at conception?

CHAPTER 6

CONCERNING TWINS OF DIFFERENT SEXES

But even in the very conception of twins, which certainly occurs at the same moment in the case of both, it often happens that the one is conceived a male, and the other a female. I know two of different sexes who are twins. Both of them are alive, and in the flower of their age; and though they resemble each other in body, as far as difference of sex will permit, still they are very different in the whole scope and purpose of their lives (consideration being had of those differences which necessarily exist between the lives of males and females),—the one holding the office of a count, and being almost constantly away from home with the army in foreign service, the other never leaving her country's soil, or her native district. Still more,—and this is more incredible, if the destinies of the stars are to be believed in, though it is not wonderful if we consider the wills of men, and the free gifts of God,—he is married; she is a sacred virgin: he has begotten a numerous offspring; she has never even married. But is not the virtue of the horoscope very great? I think I have said enough to show the absurdity of that. But, say those astrologers, whatever be the virtue of the horoscope in other respects, it is certainly of significance with respect to birth. But why not also with respect to conception, which takes place undoubtedly with one act of copulation? And, indeed, so great is the force of nature, that after a woman has once conceived, she ceases to be liable to conception. Or were they, perhaps, changed at birth, either he into a male, or she into a female, because of the difference in their horoscopes? But, whilst it is not altogether absurd to say that certain sidereal influences have some power to cause differences in bodies alone,—as, for instance, we see that the seasons of the year come round by the approaching and receding of the sun, and that certain kinds of things are increased in size or diminished by the waxings and wanings of the moon, such as sea-urchins, oysters, and the wonderful tides of the ocean,—it does not follow that the wills of men are to be made subject to the position of the stars. The astrologers, however, when they wish to bind our actions also to the constellations, only set us on investigating whether, even in these bodies, the changes may not be attributable to some other than a sidereal cause. For what is there which more intimately concerns a body than its sex? And yet, under the same position of the stars, twins of different sexes may be conceived. Wherefore, what greater absurdity can be affirmed or believed than that the position of the stars, which was the same for both of them at the time of conception, could not cause that the one child should not have been of a different sex from her brother, with whom she had a common constellation, whilst the position of the stars which existed at the hour of their birth could cause that she should be separated from him by the great distance between marriage and holy virginity?

CHAPTER 7

CONCERNING THE CHOOSING OF A DAY FOR MARRIAGE, OR FOR PLANTING, OR SOWING

Now, will any one bring forward this, that in choosing certain particular days for particular actions, men bring about certain new destinies for their actions? That man, for instance, according to this doctrine, was not born to have an illustrious son, but rather a contemptible one, and therefore, being a man of learning, he choose an hour in which to lie with his wife. He made, therefore, a destiny which he did not have before, and from that destiny of his own making something began to be fatal which was not contained in the destiny of his natal hour. Oh, singular stupidity! A day is chosen on which to marry; and for this reason, I believe, that unless a day be chosen, the marriage may fall on an unlucky day, and turn out an unhappy one. What then becomes of what the stars have already decreed at the hour of birth? Can a man be said to change by an act of choice that which has already been determined for him, whilst that which he himself has determined in the choosing of a day cannot be changed by another power? Thus, if men alone, and not all things under heaven, are subject to the influence of the stars, why do they choose some days as suitable for planting vines or trees, or for sowing grain, other days as suitable for taming beasts on, or for putting the males to the females, that the cows and mares may be impregnated, and for such-like things? If it be said that certain chosen days have an influence on these things, because the constellations rule over all terrestrial bodies, animate and inanimate, according to differences in moments of time, let it be considered what innumerable multitudes of beings are born or arise, or take their origin at the very same instant of time, which come to ends so different, that they may persuade any little boy that these observations about days are ridiculous. For who is so mad as to dare affirm that all trees, all herbs, all beasts, serpents, birds, fishes, worms, have each separately their own moments of birth or commencement? Nevertheless, men are wont, in order to try the skill of the mathematicians, to bring before them the constellations of dumb animals, the constellations of whose birth they diligently observe at home with a view to this discovery; and they prefer those mathematicians to all others, who say from the inspection of the constellations that they indicate the birth of a beast and not of a man. They also dare tell what kind of beast it is, whether it is a wool-bearing beast, or a beast suited for carrying burthens, or one fit for the plough, or for watching a house; for the astrologers are also tried with respect to the fates of dogs, and their answers concerning these are followed by shouts of admiration on the part of those who consult them. They so deceive men as to make them think that during the birth of a man the births of all other beings are suspended, so that not even a fly comes to life at the same time that he is being born, under the same region of the heavens. And if this be admitted with respect to the fly, the reasoning cannot stop there, but must ascend from flies till it lead them up to camels and elephants. Nor are they willing to attend to this, that when a day has been chosen whereon to sow a field, so many grains fall into the ground simultaneously, germinate simultaneously, spring up, come to perfection, and ripen simultaneously; and yet, of all the ears which are coeval, and, so to speak, congerminal, some are destroyed by mildew, some are devoured by the birds, and some are pulled by men. How can they say that all these had their different constellations, which they see coming to so different ends? Will they confess that it is folly to choose days for such things, and to affirm that they do not come within the sphere of the celestial decree, whilst they subject men alone to the stars, on whom alone in the world God has bestowed free wills? All these things being considered, we have good reason to believe that, when the astrologers give very many wonderful answers, it is to be attributed to the occult inspiration of spirits not of the best kind, whose care it is to insinuate into the minds of men, and to confirm in them, those false and noxious opinions concerning the fatal influence of the stars, and not to their marking and inspecting of horoscopes, according to some kind of art which in reality has no existence.

CHAPTER 8

CONCERNING THOSE WHO CALL BY THE NAME OF FATE, NOT THE POSITION OF THE STARS, BUT THE CONNECTION OF CAUSES WHICH DEPENDS ON THE WILL OF GOD

But, as to those who call by the name of fate, not the disposition of the stars as it may exist when any creature is conceived, or born, or commences its existence, but the whole connection and train of causes which makes everything become what it does become, there is no need that I should labor and strive with them in a merely verbal controversy, since they attribute the so-called order and connection of causes to the will and power of God most high, who is most rightly and most truly believed to know all things before they come to pass, and to leave nothing unordained; from whom are all powers, although the wills of all are not from Him. Now, that it is chiefly the will of God most high, whose power extends itself irresistibly through all things which they call fate, is proved by the following verses, of which, if I mistake not, Annaeus Seneca is the author:—

“Father supreme, Thou ruler of the lofty heavens,

Lead me where’er it is Thy pleasure; I will give

A prompt obedience, making no delay,

Lo! here I am. Promptly I come to do Thy sovereign will;

If thy command shall thwart my inclination, I will still

Follow Thee groaning, and the work assigned,

With all the suffering of a mind repugnant,

Will perform, being evil; which, had I been good,

I should have undertaken and performed, though hard,

With virtuous cheerfulness.

The Fates do lead the man that follows willing;

But the man that is unwilling, him they drag.”

Most evidently, in this last verse, he calls that “fate” which he had before called “the will of the Father supreme,” whom, he says, he is ready to obey that he may be led, being willing, not dragged, being unwilling, since “the Fates do lead the man that follows willing, but the man that is unwilling, him they drag.”

The following Homeric lines, which Cicero translates into Latin, also favor this opinion :—

“Such are the minds of men, as is the light

Which Father Jove himself doth pour

Illustrious o’er the fruitful earth.”

Not that Cicero wishes that a poetical sentiment should have any weight in a question like this; for when he says that the Stoics, when asserting the power of fate, were in the habit of using these verses from Homer, he is not treating concerning the opinion of that poet, but concerning that of those philosophers, since by these verses, which they quote in connection with the controversy which they hold about fate, is most distinctly manifested what it is which they reckon fate, since they call by the name of Jupiter him whom they reckon the supreme god, from whom, they say, hangs the whole chain of fates.

CHAPTER 9

CONCERNING THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND THE FREE WILL OF MAN, IN OPPOSITION TO THE DEFINITION OF CICERO

The manner in which Cicero addresses himself to the task of refuting the Stoics, shows that he did not think he could effect anything against them in argument unless he had first demolished divination. And this he attempts to accomplish by denying that there is any knowledge of future things, and maintains with all his might that there is no such knowledge either in God or man, and that there is no prediction of events. Thus he both denies the foreknowledge of God, and attempts by vain arguments, and by opposing to himself certain oracles very easy to be refuted, to overthrow all prophecy, even such as is clearer than the light (though even these oracles are not refuted by him).

But, in refuting these conjectures of the mathematicians, his argument is triumphant, because truly these are such as destroy and refute themselves. Nevertheless, they are far more tolerable who assert the fatal influence of the stars than they who deny the foreknowledge of future events. For, to confess that God exists, and at the same time to deny that He has foreknowledge of future things, is the most manifest folly. This Cicero himself saw, and therefore attempted to assert the doctrine embodied in the words of Scripture, “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.” That, however, he did not do in his own person, for he saw how odious and offensive such an opinion would be; and therefore, in his book on the nature of the gods, he makes Cotta dispute concerning this against the Stoics, and preferred to give his own opinion in favor of Lucilius Balbus, to whom he assigned the defence of the Stoical position, rather than in favor of Cotta, who maintained that no divinity exists. However, in his book on divination, he in his own person most openly opposes the doctrine of the prescience of future things. But all this he seems to do in order that he may not grant the doctrine of fate, and by so doing destroy free will. For he thinks that, the knowledge of future things being once conceded, fate follows as so necessary a consequence that it cannot be denied.

But, let these perplexing debatings and disputations of the philosophers go on as they may, we, in order that we may confess the most high and true God Himself, do confess His will, supreme power, and prescience. Neither let us be afraid lest, after all, we do not do by will that which we do by will, because He, whose foreknowledge is infallible, foreknew that we would do it. It was this which Cicero was afraid of, and therefore opposed foreknowledge. The Stoics also maintained that all things do not come to pass by necessity, although they contended that all things happen according to destiny. What is it, then, that Cicero feared in the prescience of future things? Doubtless it was this,—that if all future things have been foreknown, they will happen in the order in which they have been foreknown; and if they come to pass in this order, there is a certain order of things foreknown by God; and if a certain order of things, then a certain order of causes, for nothing can happen which is not preceded by some efficient cause. But if there is a certain order of causes according to which everything happens which does happen, then by fate, says he, all things happen which do happen. But if this be so, then is there nothing in our own power, and there is no such thing as freedom of will; and if we grant that, says he, the whole economy of human life is subverted. In vain are laws enacted. In vain are reproaches, praises, chidings, exhortations had recourse to; and there is no justice whatever in the appointment of rewards for the good, and punishments for the wicked. And that consequences so disgraceful, and absurd, and pernicious to humanity may not follow, Cicero chooses to reject the foreknowledge of future things, and shuts up the religious mind to this alternative, to make choice between two things, either that something is in our own power, or that there is foreknowledge,—both of which cannot be true; but if the one is affirmed, the other is thereby denied. He therefore, like a truly great and wise man, and one who consulted very much and very skillfully for the good of humanity, of those two chose the freedom of the will, to confirm which he denied the foreknowledge of future things; and thus, wishing to make men free he makes them sacrilegious. But the religious mind chooses both, confesses both, and maintains both by the faith of piety. But how so? says Cicero; for the knowledge of future things being granted, there follows a chain of consequences which ends in this, that there can be nothing depending on our own free wills. And further, if there is anything depending on our wills, we must go backwards by the same steps of reasoning till we arrive at the conclusion that there is no foreknowledge of future things. For we go backwards through all the steps in the following order:—If there is free will, all things do not happen according to fate; if all things do not happen according to fate, there is not a certain order of causes; and if there is not a certain order of causes, neither is there a certain order of things foreknown by God,—for things cannot come to pass except they are preceded by efficient causes,—but, if there is no fixed and certain order of causes foreknown by God, all things cannot be said to happen according as He foreknew that they would happen. And further, if it is not true that all things happen just as they have been foreknown by Him, there is not, says he, in God any foreknowledge of future events.

Now, against the sacrilegious and impious darings of reason, we assert both that God knows all things before they come to pass, and that we do by our free will whatsoever we know and feel to be done by us only because we will it. But that all things come to pass by fate, we do not say; nay we affirm that nothing comes to pass by fate; for we demonstrate that the name of fate, as it is wont to be used by those who speak of fate, meaning thereby the position of the stars at the time of each one's conception or birth, is an unmeaning word, for astrology itself is a delusion. But an order of causes in which the highest efficiency is attributed to the will of God, we neither deny nor do we designate it by the name of fate, unless, perhaps, we may understand fate to mean that which is spoken, deriving it from fari, to speak; for we cannot deny that it is written in the sacred Scriptures, "God hath spoken once; these two things have I heard, that power belongeth unto God. Also unto Thee, O God, belongeth mercy: for Thou wilt render unto every man according to his works." Now the expression, "Once hath He spoken," is to be understood as meaning "immovably," that is, unchangeably hath He spoken, inasmuch as He knows unchangeably all things which shall be, and all things which He will do. We might, then, use the word fate in the sense it bears when derived from fari, to speak, had it not already come to be understood in another sense, into which I am unwilling that the hearts of men should unconsciously slide. But it does not follow that, though there is for God a certain order of all causes, there must therefore be nothing depending on the free exercise of our own wills, for our wills themselves are included in that order of causes which is certain to God, and is embraced by His foreknowledge, for human wills are also causes of human actions; and He who foreknew all the causes of things would certainly among those causes not have been ignorant of our wills. For even that very concession which Cicero himself makes is enough to refute him in this argument. For what does it help him to say that nothing takes place without a cause, but that every cause is not fatal, there being a fortuitous cause, a natural cause, and a voluntary cause? It is sufficient that he confesses that whatever happens must be preceded by a cause. For we say that those causes which are called fortuitous are not a mere name for the absence of causes, but are only latent, and we attribute them either to the will of the true God, or to that of spirits of some kind or other. And as to natural causes, we by no means separate them from the will of Him who is the author and framer of all nature. But now as to voluntary causes. They are referable either to God, or to angels, or to men, or to animals of whatever description, if indeed those instinctive movements of animals devoid of reason, by which, in accordance with their own nature, they seek or shun various things, are to be called wills. And when I speak of the wills of angels, I mean either the wills of good angels, whom we call the angels of God, or of the wicked angels, whom we call the angels of the devil, or demons. Also by the wills of men I mean the wills either of the good or of the wicked. And from this we conclude that there are no efficient causes of all things which come to pass unless voluntary causes, that is, such as belong to that nature which is the spirit of life. For the air or wind is called spirit, but, inasmuch as it is a body, it is not the spirit of life. The spirit of life, therefore, which quickens all things, and is the creator of every body, and of every created spirit, is God Himself, the uncreated spirit. In His supreme will resides the power which acts on the wills of all created spirits, helping the good, judging the evil, controlling all, granting power to some, not granting it to others. For, as He is the creator of all natures, so also is He the bestower of all powers, not of all wills; for wicked wills are not from Him, being contrary to nature, which is from Him. As to bodies, they are more subject to wills: some to our wills, by which I mean the wills of all living mortal creatures, but more to the wills of men than of beasts. But all of them are most of all subject to the will of God, to whom all wills also are subject, since they have no power except what He has bestowed upon them. The cause of things, therefore, which makes but is not made, is God; but all other causes both make and are made. Such are all created spirits, and especially the rational. Material causes, therefore, which may rather be said to be made than to make, are not to be reckoned among efficient causes, because they can only do what the wills of spirits do by them. How, then, does an order of causes which is certain to the foreknowledge of God necessitate that there should be nothing which is dependent on our wills, when our wills themselves have a very important place in the order of causes? Cicero, then, contends with those who call this order of causes fatal, or rather designate this order itself by the name of fate; to which we have an abhorrence, especially on account of the word, which men have become accustomed to understand as meaning what is not true. But, whereas he denies that the order of all causes is most certain, and perfectly clear to the prescience of God, we detest his opinion more than the Stoics do. For he either denies that God exists,—which, indeed, in an assumed personage, he has labored to do, in his book De Natura Deorum,—or if he confesses that He exists, but denies that He is prescient of future things, what is that but just “the fool saying in his heart there is no God?” For one who is not prescient of all future things is not God. Wherefore our wills also have just so much power as God willed and foreknew that they should have; and therefore whatever power they have, they have it within most certain limits; and whatever they are to do, they are most assuredly to do, for He whose foreknowledge is infallible foreknew that they would have the power to do it, and would do it. Wherefore, if I should choose to apply the name of fate to anything at all, I should rather say that fate belongs to the weaker of two parties, will to the stronger, who has the other in his power, than that the freedom of our will is excluded by that order of causes, which, by an unusual application of the word peculiar to themselves, the Stoics call Fate.

CHAPTER 10

WHETHER OUR WILLS ARE RULED BY NECESSITY

Wherefore, neither is that necessity to be feared, for dread of which the Stoics labored to make such distinctions among the causes of things as should enable them to rescue certain things from the dominion of necessity, and to subject others to it. Among those things which they wished not to be subject to necessity they placed our wills, knowing that they would not be free if subjected to necessity. For if that is to be called our necessity which is not in our power, but even though we be unwilling effects what it can effect,—as, for instance, the necessity of death,—it is manifest that our wills by which we live up-rightly or wickedly are not under such a necessity; for we do many things which, if we were not willing, we should certainly not do. This is primarily true of the act of willing itself,—for if we will, it is; if we will not, it is not,—for we should not will if we were unwilling. But if we define necessity to be that according to which we say that it is necessary that anything be of such or such a nature, or be done in such and such a manner, I know not why we should have any dread of that necessity taking away the freedom of our will. For we do not put the life of God or the foreknowledge of God under necessity if we should say that it is necessary that God should live forever, and foreknow all things; as neither is His power diminished when we say that He cannot die or fall into error,—for this is in such a way impossible to Him, that if it were possible for Him, He would be of less power. But assuredly He is rightly called omnipotent, though He can neither die nor fall into error. For He is called omnipotent on account of His doing what He wills, not on account of His suffering what He wills not; for if that should befall Him, He would by no means be omnipotent. Wherefore, He cannot do some things for the very reason that He is omnipotent. So also, when we say that it is necessary that, when we will, we will by free choice, in so saying we both affirm what is true beyond doubt, and do not still subject our wills thereby to a necessity which destroys liberty. Our wills, therefore, exist as wills, and do themselves whatever we do by willing, and which would not be done if we were unwilling. But when any one suffers anything, being unwilling by the will of another, even in that case will retains its essential validity,—we do not mean the will of the party who inflicts the suffering, for we resolve it into the power of God. For if a will should simply exist, but not be able to do what it wills, it would be overborne by a more powerful will. Nor would this be the case unless there had existed will, and that not the will of the other party, but the will of him who willed, but was not able to accomplish what he willed. Therefore, whatsoever a man suffers contrary to his own will, he ought not to attribute to the will of men, or of angels, or of any created spirit, but rather to His will who gives power to wills. It is not the case, therefore, that because God foreknew what would be in the power of our wills, there is for that reason nothing in the power of our wills. For he who foreknew this did not foreknow nothing. Moreover, if He who foreknew what would be in the power of our wills did not foreknow nothing, but something, assuredly, even though He did foreknow, there is something in the power of our wills. Therefore we are by no means compelled, either, retaining the prescience of God, to take away the freedom of the will, or, retaining the freedom of the will, to deny that He is prescient of future things, which is impious. But we embrace both. We faithfully and sincerely confess both. The former, that we may believe well; the latter, that we may live well. For he lives ill who does not believe well concerning God. Wherefore, be it far from us, in order to maintain our freedom, to deny the prescience of Him by whose help we are or shall be free. Consequently, it is not in vain that laws are enacted, and that reproaches, exhortations, praises, and vituperations are had recourse to; for these also He foreknew, and they are of great avail, even as great as He foreknew that they would be of. Prayers, also, are of avail to procure those things which He foreknew that He would grant to those who offered them; and with justice have rewards been appointed for good deeds, and punishments for sins. For a man does not therefore sin because God foreknew that he would sin. Nay, it cannot be doubted but that it is the man himself who sins when he does sin, because He, whose foreknowledge is infallible, foreknew not that fate, or fortune, or something else would sin, but that the man himself would sin, who, if he wills not, sins not. But if he shall not will to sin, even this did God foreknow.

CHAPTER 11

CONCERNING THE UNIVERSAL PROVIDENCE OF GOD IN THE LAWS OF WHICH ALL THINGS ARE COMPREHENDED

Therefore God supreme and true, with His Word and Holy Spirit (which three are one), one God omnipotent, creator and maker of every soul and of every body; by whose gift all are happy who are happy through verity and not through vanity; who made man a rational animal consisting of soul and body, who, when he sinned, neither permitted him to go unpunished, nor left him without mercy; who has given to the good and to the evil, being in common with stones, vegetable life in common with trees, sensuous life in common with brutes, intellectual life in common with angels alone; from whom is every mode, every species, every order; from whom are measure, number, weight; from whom is everything which has an existence in nature, of whatever kind it be, and of whatever value; from whom are the seeds of forms and the forms of seeds, and the motion of seeds and of forms; who gave also to flesh its origin, beauty, health, reproductive fecundity, disposition of members, and the salutary concord of its parts; who also to the irrational soul has given memory, sense, appetite, but to the rational soul, in addition to these, has given intelligence and will; who has not left, not to speak of heaven and earth, angels and men, but not even the entrails of the smallest and most contemptible animal, or the feather of a bird, or the little flower of a plant, or the leaf of a tree, without an harmony, and, as it were, a mutual peace among all its parts;—that God can never be believed to have left the kingdoms of men, their dominations and servitudes, outside of the laws of His providence.

CHAPTER 12

BY WHAT VIRTUES THE ANCIENT ROMANS MERITED THAT THE TRUE GOD, ALTHOUGH THEY DID NOT WORSHIP HIM, SHOULD ENLARGE THEIR EMPIRE

Wherefore let us go on to consider what virtues of the Romans they were which the true God, in whose power are also the kingdoms of the earth, condescended to help in order to raise the empire, and also for what reason He did so. And, in order to discuss this question on clearer ground, we have written the former books, to show that the power of those gods, who, they thought, were to be worshipped with such trifling and silly rites, had nothing to do in this matter; and also what we have already accomplished of the present volume, to refute the doctrine of fate, lest any one who might have been already persuaded that the Roman empire was not extended and preserved by the worship of these gods, might still be attributing its extension and preservation to some kind of fate, rather than to the most powerful will of God most high. The ancient and primitive Ro mans, therefore, though their history shows us that, like all the other nations, with the sole exception of the Hebrews, they worshipped false gods, and sacrificed victims, not to God, but to demons, have nevertheless this commendation bestowed on them by their historian, that they were “greedy of praise, prodigal of wealth, desirous of great glory, and content with a moderate fortune.” Glory they most ardently loved: for it they wished to live, for it they did not hesitate to die. Every other desire was repressed by the strength of their passion for that one thing. At length their country itself, because it seemed inglorious to serve, but glorious to rule and to command, they first earnestly desired to be free, and then to be mistress. Hence it was that, not enduring the domination of kings, they put the government into the hands of two chiefs, holding office for a year, who were called consuls, not kings or lords. But royal pomp seemed inconsistent with the administration of a ruler (regentis), or the benevolence of one who consults (that is, for the public good) (consulentis), but rather with the haughtiness of a lord (dominantis). King Tarquin, therefore, having been banished, and the consular government having been instituted, it followed, as the same author already alluded to says in his praises of the Romans, that “the state grew with amazing rapidity after it had obtained liberty, so great a desire of glory had taken possession of it.” That eagerness for praise and desire of glory, then, was that which accomplished those many wonderful things, laudable, doubtless, and glorious according to human judgment. The same Sallust praises the great men of his own time, Marcus Cato, and Caius Caesar, saying that for a long time the republic had no one great in virtue, but that within his memory there had been these two men of eminent virtue, and very different pursuits. Now, among the praises which he pronounces on Caesar he put this, that he wished for a great empire, an army, and a new war, that he might have a sphere where his genius and virtue might shine forth. Thus it was ever the prayer of men of heroic character that Bellona would excite miserable nations to war, and lash them into agitation with her bloody scourge, so that there might be occasion for the display of their valor. This, forsooth, is what that desire of praise and thirst for glory did. Wherefore, by the love of liberty in the first place, afterwards also by that of domination and through the desire of praise and glory, they achieved many great things; and their most eminent poet testifies to their having been prompted by all these motives:

“Porsenna there, with pride elate,

Bids Rome to Tarquin ope her gate;

With arms he hems the city in,

AEneas’ sons stand firm to win.”

At that time it was their greatest ambition either to die bravely or to live free; but when liberty was obtained, so great a desire of glory took possession of them, that liberty alone was not enough unless domination also should be sought, their great ambition being that which the same poet puts into the mouth of Jupiter:

“Nay, Juno’s self, whose wild alarms

Set ocean, earth, and heaven in arms,

Shall change for smiles her moody frown,

And vie with me in zeal to crown

Rome’s sons, the nation of the gown.

So stands my will. There comes a day,

While Rome’s great ages hold their way,

When old Assaracus’s sons

Shall quit them on the myrmidons,

O’er Phthia and Mycenae reign,

And humble Argos to their chain.”

Which things, indeed, Virgil makes Jupiter predict as future, whilst, in reality, he was only himself passing in review in his own mind, things which were already done, and which were beheld by him as present realities. But I have mentioned them with the intention of showing that, next to liberty, the Romans so highly esteemed domination, that it received a place among those things on which they bestowed the greatest praise. Hence also it is that that poet, preferring to the arts of other nations those arts which peculiarly belong to the Romans, namely, the arts of ruling and commanding, and of subjugating and vanquishing nations, says,

“Others, belike, with happier grace,

From bronze or stone shall call the face,

Plead doubtful causes, map the skies,

And tell when planets set or rise;

But Roman thou, do thou control

The nations far and wide;

Be this thy genius, to impose

The rule of peace on vanquished foes,

Show pity to the humble soul,

And crush the sons of pride.”

These arts they exercised with the more skill the less they gave themselves up to pleasures, and to enervation of body and mind in coveting and amassing riches, and through these corrupting morals, by extorting them from the miserable citizens and lavishing them on base stage-players. Hence these men of base character, who abounded when Sallust wrote and Virgil sang these things, did not seek after honors and glory by these arts, but by treachery and deceit. Wherefore the same says, “But at first it was rather ambition than avarice that stirred the minds of men, which vice, however, is nearer to virtue. For glory, honor, and power are desired alike by the good man and by the ignoble; but the former,” he says, “strives onward to them by the true way, whilst the other, knowing nothing of the good arts, seeks them by fraud and deceit.” And what is meant by seeking the attainment of glory, honor, and power by good arts, is to seek them by virtue, and not by deceitful intrigue; for the good and the ignoble man alike desire these things, but the good man strives to overtake them by the true way. The way is virtue, along which he presses as to the goal of possession —namely, to glory, honor, and power. Now that this was a sentiment engrained in the Roman mind, is indicated even by the temples of their gods; for they built in very close proximity the temples of Virtue and Honor, worshipping as gods the gifts of God. Hence we can understand what they who were good thought to be the end of virtue, and to what they ultimately referred it, namely, to honor; for, as to the bad, they had no virtue though they desired honor, and strove to possess it by fraud and deceit. Praise of a higher kind is bestowed upon Cato, for he says of him “The less he sought glory, the more it followed him.” We say praise of a higher kind; for the glory with the desire of which the Romans burned is the judgment of men thinking well of men. And therefore virtue is better, which is content with no human judgment save that of one’s own conscience. Whence the apostle says, “For this is our glory, the testimony of our conscience.” And in another place he says, “But let every one prove his own work, and then he shall have glory in himself, and not in another.” That glory, honor, and power, therefore, which they desired for themselves, and to which the good sought to attain by good arts, should not be sought after by virtue, but virtue by them. For there is no true virtue except that which is directed towards that end in which is the highest and ultimate good of man. Wherefore even the honors which Cato sought he ought not to have sought, but the state ought to have conferred them on him unsolicited, on account of his virtues.

But, of the two great Romans of that time, Cato was he whose virtue was by far the nearest to the true idea of virtue. Wherefore, let us refer to the opinion of Cato himself, to discover what was the judgment he had formed concerning the condition of the state both then and in former times. “I do not think,” he says, “that it was by arms that our ancestors made the republic great from being small. Had that been the case, the republic of our day would have been by far more flourishing than that of their times, for the number of our allies and citizens is far greater; and, besides, we possess a far greater abundance of armor and of horses than they did. But it was other things than these that made them great, and we have none of them: industry at home, just government without, a mind free in deliberation, addicted neither to crime nor to lust. Instead of these, we have luxury and avarice, poverty in the state, opulence among citizens; we laud riches, we follow laziness; there is no difference made between the good and the bad; all the rewards of virtue are got possession of by intrigue. And no wonder, when every individual consults only for his own good, when ye are the slaves of pleasure at home, and, in public affairs, of money and favor, no wonder that an onslaught is made upon the unprotected republic.”

He who hears these words of Cato or of Sallust probably thinks that such praise bestowed on the ancient Romans was applicable to all of them, or, at least, to very many of them. It is not so; otherwise the things which Cato himself writes, and which I have quoted in the second book of this work, would not be true. In that passage he says, that even from the very beginning of the state wrongs were committed by the more powerful, which led to the separation of the people from the fathers, besides which there were other internal dissensions; and the only time at which there existed a just and moderate administration was after the banishment of the kings, and that no longer than whilst they had cause to be afraid of Tarquin, and were carrying on the grievous war which had been undertaken on his account against Etruria; but afterwards the fathers oppressed the people as slaves, flogged them as the kings had done, drove them from their land, and, to the exclusion of all others, held the government in their own hands alone. And to these discords, whilst the fathers were wishing to rule, and the people were unwilling to serve, the second Punic war put an end; for again great fear began to press upon their disquieted minds, holding them back from those distractions by another and greater anxiety, and bringing them back to civil concord. But the great things which were then achieved were accomplished through the administration of a few men, who were good in their own way. And by the wisdom and forethought of these few good men, which first enabled the republic to endure these evils and mitigated them, it waxed greater and greater. And this the same historian affirms, when he says that, reading and hearing of the many illustrious achievements of the Roman people in peace and in war, by land and by sea, he wished to understand what it was by which these great things were specially sustained. For he knew that very often the Romans had with a small company contended with great legions of the enemy; and he knew also that with small resources they had carried on wars with opulent kings. And he says that, after having given the matter much consideration, it seemed evident to him that the pre-eminent virtue of a few citizens had achieved the whole, and that that explained how poverty overcame wealth, and small numbers great multitudes. But, he adds, after that the state had been corrupted by luxury and indolence, again the republic, by its own greatness, was able to bear the vices of its magistrates and generals. Wherefore even the praises of Cato are only applicable to a few; for only a few were possessed of that virtue which leads men to pursue after glory, honor, and power by the true way,—that is, by virtue itself. This industry at home, of which Cato speaks, was the consequence of a desire to enrich the public treasury, even though the result should be poverty at home; and therefore, when he speaks of the evil arising out of the corruption of morals, he reverses the expression, and says, “Poverty in the state, riches at home.”

CHAPTER 13

CONCERNING THE LOVE OF PRAISE, WHICH, THOUGH IT IS A VICE, IS RECKONED A VIRTUE, BECAUSE BY IT GREATER VICE IS RESTRAINED

Wherefore, when the kingdoms of the East had been illustrious for a long time, it pleased God that there should also arise a Western empire, which, though later in time, should be more illustrious in extent and greatness. And, in order that it might overcome the grievous evils which existed among other nations, He purposely granted it to such men as, for the sake of honor, and praise, and glory, consulted well for their country, in whose glory they sought their own, and whose safety they did not hesitate to prefer to their own, suppressing the desire of wealth and many other vices for this one vice, namely, the love of praise. For he has the soundest perception who recognizes that even the love of praise is a vice; nor has this escaped the perception of the poet Horace, who says,

“You’re bloated by ambition? take advice:

Yon book will ease you if you read it thrice.”

And the same poet, in a lyric song, hath thus spoken with the desire of repressing the passion for domination:

“Rule an ambitious spirit, and thou hast

A wider kingdom than if thou shouldst join

To distant Gades Lybia, and thus

Shouldst hold in service either Carthaginian.”

Nevertheless, they who restrain baser lusts, not by the power of the Holy Spirit obtained by the faith of piety, or by the love of intelligible beauty, but by desire of human praise, or, at all events, restrain them better by the love of such praise, are not indeed yet holy, but only less base. Even Tully was not able to conceal this fact; for, in the same books which he wrote, De Republica, when speaking concerning the education of a chief of the state, who ought, he says, to be nourished on glory, goes on to say that their ancestors did many wonderful and illustrious things through desire of glory. So far, therefore, from resisting this vice, they even thought that it ought to be excited and kindled up, supposing that that would be beneficial to the republic. But not even in his books on philosophy does Tully dissimulate this poisonous opinion, for he there avows it more clearly than day. For when he is speaking of those studies which are to be pursued with a view to the true good, and not with the vainglorious desire of human praise, he introduces the following universal and general statement:

“Honor nourishes the arts, and all are stimulated to the prosecution of studies by glory; and those pursuits are always neglected which are generally discredited.”

CHAPTER 14

CONCERNING THE ERADICATION OF THE LOVE OF HUMAN PRAISE, BECAUSE ALL THE GLORY OF THE RIGHTEOUS IS IN GOD

It is, therefore, doubtless far better to resist this desire than to yield to it, for the purer one is from this defilement, the liker is he to God; and, though this vice be not thoroughly eradicated from his heart,—for it does not cease to tempt even the minds of those who are making good progress in virtue,—at any rate, let the desire of glory be surpassed by the love of righteousness, so that, if there be seen anywhere “lying neglected things which are generally discredited,” if they are good, if they are right, even the love of human praise may blush and yield to the love of truth. For so hostile is this vice to pious faith, if the love of glory be greater in the heart than the fear or love of God, that the Lord said, “How can ye believe, who look for glory from one another, and do not seek the glory which is from God alone?” Also, concerning some who had believed on Him, but were afraid to confess Him openly, the evangelist says, “They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God;” which did not the holy apostles, who, when they proclaimed the name of Christ in those places where it was not only discredited, and therefore neglected,—according as Cicero says, “Those things are always neglected which are generally discredited,”—but was even held in the utmost detestation, holding to what they had heard from the Good Master, who was also the physician of minds, “If any one shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven, and before the angels of God,” amidst maledictions and reproaches, and most grievous persecutions and cruel punishments, were not deterred from the preaching of human salvation by the noise of human indignation. And when, as they did and spake divine things, and lived divine lives, conquering, as it were, hard hearts, and introducing into them the peace of righteousness, great glory followed them in the church of Christ, they did not rest in that as in the end of their virtue, but, referring that glory itself to the glory of God, by whose grace they were what they were, they sought to kindle, also by that same flame, the minds of those for whose good they consulted, to the love of Him, by whom they could be made to be what they themselves were. For their Master had taught them not to seek to be good for the sake of human glory, saying, “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them, or otherwise ye shall not have a reward from your Father who is in heaven.” But again, lest, understanding this wrongly, they should, through fear of pleasing men, be less useful through concealing their goodness, showing for what end they ought to make it known, He says, “Let your works shine before men, that they may see your good deeds, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” Not, observe, “that ye may be seen by them, that is, in order that their eyes may be directed upon you,”—for of yourselves ye are, nothing,—but “that they may glorify your Father who is in heaven,” by fixing their regards on whom they may become such as ye are. These the martyrs followed, who surpassed the Scaevolas, and the Curtiuses, and the Deciuses, both in true virtue, because in true piety, and also in the greatness of their number. But since those Romans were in an earthly city, and had before them, as the end of all the offices undertaken in its behalf, its safety, and a kingdom, not in heaven, but in earth,—not in the sphere of eternal life, but in the sphere of demise and succession, where the dead are succeeded by the dying,—what else but glory should they love, by which they wished even after death to live in the mouths of their admirers?

CHAPTER 15

CONCERNING THE TEMPORAL REWARD WHICH GOD GRANTED TO THE VIRTUES OF THE ROMANS

Now, therefore, with regard to those to whom God did not purpose to give eternal life with His holy angels in His own celestial city, to the society of which that true piety which does not render the service of religion, which the Greeks call latreia, to any save the true God conducts, if He had also withheld from them the terrestrial glory of that most excellent empire, a reward would not have been rendered to their good arts,—that is, their virtues,—by which they sought to attain so great glory. For as to those who seem to do some good that they may receive glory from men, the Lord also says, “Verily I say unto you, they have received their reward.” So also these despised their own private affairs for the sake of the republic, and for its treasury resisted avarice, consulted for the good of their country with a spirit of freedom, addicted neither to what their laws pronounced to be crime nor to lust. By all these acts, as by the true way, they pressed forward to honors, power, and glory; they were honored among almost all nations; they imposed the laws of their empire upon many nations; and at this day, both in literature and history, they are glorious among almost all nations. There is no reason why they should complain against the justice of the supreme and true God,—”they have received their reward.”

CHAPTER 16

CONCERNING THE REWARD OF THE HOLY CITIZENS OF THE CELESTIAL CITY, TO WHOM THE EXAMPLE OF THE VIRTUES OF THE ROMANS ARE USEFUL

But the reward of the saints is far different, who even here endured reproaches for that city of God which is hateful to the lovers of this world. That city is eternal. There none are born, for none die. There is true and full felicity,—not a goddess, but a gift of God. Thence we receive the pledge of faith whilst on our pilgrimage we sigh for its beauty. There rises not the sun on the good and the evil, but the Sun of Righteousness protects the good alone. There no great industry shall be expended to enrich the public treasury by suffering privations at home, for there is the common treasury of truth. And, therefore, it was not only for the sake of recompensing the citizens of Rome that her empire and glory had been so signally extended, but also that the citizens of that eternal city, during their pilgrimage here, might diligently and soberly contemplate these examples, and see what a love they owe to the supernal country on account of life eternal, if the terrestrial country was so much beloved by its citizens on account of human glory.

CHAPTER 17

TO WHAT PROFIT THE ROMANS CARRIED ON WARS, AND HOW MUCH THEY CONTRIBUTED TO THE WELL-BEING OF THOSE WHOM THEY CONQUERED

For, as far as this life of mortals is concerned, which is spent and ended in a few days, what does it matter under whose government a dying man lives, if they who govern do not force him to impiety and iniquity? Did the Romans at all harm those nations, on whom, when subjugated, they imposed their laws, except in as far as that was accomplished with great slaughter in war? Now, had it been done with consent of the nations, it would have been done with greater success, but there would have been no glory of conquest, for neither did the Romans themselves live exempt from those laws which they imposed on others. Had this been done without Mars and Bellona, so that there should have been no place for victory, no one conquering where no one had fought, would not the condition of the Romans and of the other nations have been one and the same, especially if that had been done at once which afterwards was done most humanely and most acceptably, namely, the admission of all to the rights of Roman citizens who belonged to the Roman empire, and if that had been made the privilege of all which was formerly the privilege of a few, with this one condition, that the humbler class who had no lands of their own should live at the public expense—an alimentary impost, which would have been paid with a much better grace by them into the hands of good administrators of the republic, of which they were members, by their own hearty consent, than it would have been paid with had it to be extorted from them as conquered men? For I do not see what it makes for the safety, good morals, and certainly not for the dignity, of men, that some have conquered and others have been conquered, except that it yields them that most insane pomp of human glory, in which “they have received their reward,” who burned with excessive desire of it, and carried on most eager wars. For do not their lands pay tribute? Have they any privilege of learning what the others are not privileged to learn? Are there not many senators in the other countries who do not even know Rome by sight? Take away outward show, and what are all men after all but men? But even though the perversity of the age should permit that all the better men should be more highly honored than others, neither thus should human honor be held at a great price, for it is smoke which has no weight. But let us avail ourselves even in these things of the kindness of God. Let us consider how great things they despised, how great things they endured, what lusts they subdued for the sake of human glory, who merited that glory, as it were, in reward for such virtues; and let this be useful to us even in suppressing pride, so that, as that city in which it has been promised us to reign as far surpasses this one as heaven is distant from the earth, as eternal life surpasses temporal joy, solid glory empty praise, or the society of angels the society of mortals, or the glory of Him who made the sun and moon the light of the sun and moon, the citizens of so great a country may not seem to themselves to have done anything very great, if, in order to obtain it, they have done some good works or endured some evils, when those men for this terrestrial country already obtained, did such great things, suffered such great things. And especially are all these things to be considered, because the remission of sins which collects citizens to the celestial country has something in it to which a shadowy resemblance is found in that asylum of Romulus, whither escape from the punishment of all manner of crimes congregated that multitude with which the state was to be founded.

CHAPTER 18

HOW FAR CHRISTIANS OUGHT TO BE FROM BOASTING, IF THEY HAVE DONE ANYTHING FOR THE LOVE OF THE ETERNAL COUNTRY, WHEN THE ROMANS DID SUCH GREAT THINGS FOR HUMAN GLORY AND A TERRESTRIAL CITY

What great thing, therefore, is it for that eternal and celestial city to despise all the charms of this world, however pleasant, if for the sake of this terrestrial city Brutus could even put to death his son,—a sacrifice which the heavenly city compels no one to make? But certainly it is more difficult to put to death one’s sons, than to do what is required to be done for the heavenly country, even to distribute to the poor those things which were looked upon as things to be massed and laid up for one’s children, or to let them go, if there arise any temptation which compels us to do so, for the sake of faith and righteousness. For it is not earthly riches which make us or our sons happy; for they must either be lost by us in our lifetime, or be possessed when we are dead, by whom we know not, or perhaps by whom we would not. But it is God who makes us happy, who is the true riches of minds. But of Brutus, even the poet who celebrates his praises testifies that it was the occasion of unhappiness to him that he slew his son, for he says,

“And call his own rebellious seed

For menaced liberty to bleed.

Unhappy father! howsoe’er

The deed be judged by after days.”

But in the following verse he consoles him in his unhappiness, saying,

“His country’s love shall all o’erbear.”

There are those two things, namely, liberty and the desire of human praise, which compelled the Romans to admirable deeds. If, therefore, for the liberty of dying men, and for the desire of human praise which is sought after by mortals, sons could be put to death by a father, what great thing is it, if, for the true liberty which has made us free from the dominion of sin, and death, and the devil,—not through the desire of human praise, but through the earnest desire of fleeing men, not from King Tarquin, but from demons and the prince of the demons,—we should, I do not say put to death our sons, but reckon among our sons Christ’s poor ones? If, also, another Roman chief, surnamed Torquatus, slew his son, not because he fought against his country, but because, being challenged by an enemy, he through youthful impetuosity fought, though for his country, yet contrary to orders which he his father had given as general; and this he did, notwithstanding that his son was victorious, lest there should be more evil in the example of authority despised, than good in the glory of slaying an enemy;—if, I say, Torquatus acted thus, wherefore should they boast themselves, who, for the laws of a celestial country, despise all earthly good things, which are loved far less than sons? If Furius Camillus, who was condemned by those who envied him, notwithstanding that he had thrown off from the necks of his countrymen the yoke of their most bitter enemies, the Veientes, again delivered his ungrateful country from the Gauls, because he had no other in which he could have better opportunities for living a life of glory;—if Camillus did thus, why should he be extolled as having done some great thing, who, having, it may be, suffered in the church at the hands of carnal enemies most grievous and dishonoring injury, has not betaken himself to heretical enemies, or himself raised some heresy against her, but has rather defended her, as far as he was able, from the most pernicious perversity of heretics, since there is not another church, I say not in which one can live a life of glory, but in which eternal life can be obtained? If Mucius, in order that peace might be made with King Porsenna, who was pressing the Romans with a most grievous war, when he did not succeed in slaying Porsenna, but slew another by mistake for him, reached forth his right hand and laid it on a red-hot altar, saying that many such as he saw him to be had conspired for his destruction, so that Porsenna, terrified at his daring, and at the thought of a conspiracy of such as he, without any delay recalled all his warlike purposes, and made peace;—if, I say, Mucius did this, who shall speak of his meritorious claims to the kingdom of heaven, if for it he may have given to the flames not one hand, but even his whole body, and that not by his own spontaneous act, but because he was persecuted by another? If Curtius, spurring on his steed, threw himself all armed into a precipitous gulf, obeying the oracles of their gods, which had commanded that the Romans should throw into that gulf the best thing which they possessed, and they could only understand thereby that, since they excelled in men and arms, the gods had commanded that an armed man should be cast headlong into that destruction;—if he did this, shall we say that that man has done a great thing for the eternal city who may have died by a like death, not, however, precipitating himself spontaneously into a gulf, but having suffered this death at the hands of some enemy of his faith, more especially when he has received from his Lord, who is also King of his country, a more certain oracle, “Fear not them who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul?” If the Decii dedicated themselves to death, consecrating themselves in a form of words, as it were, that falling, and pacifying by their blood the wrath of the gods, they might be the means of delivering the Roman army;—if they did this, let not the holy martyrs carry themselves proudly, as though they had done some meritorious thing for a share in that country where are eternal life and felicity, if even to the shedding of their blood, loving not only the brethren for whom it was shed, but, according as had been commanded them, even their enemies by whom it was being shed, they have vied with one another in faith of love and love of faith. If Marcus Pulvillus, when engaged in dedicating a temple to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, received with such indifference the false intelligence which was brought to him of the death of his son, with the intention of so agitating him that he should go away, and thus the glory of dedicating the temple should fall to his colleague;—if he received that intelligence with such indifference that he even ordered that his son should be cast out unburied, the love of glory having overcome in his heart the grief of bereavement, how shall any one affirm that he had done a great thing for the preaching of the gospel, by which the citizens of the heavenly city are delivered from divers errors and gathered together from divers wanderings, to whom his Lord has said, when anxious about the burial of his father, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead?" Regulus, in order not to break his oath, even with his most cruel enemies, returned to them from Rome itself, because (as he is said to have replied to the Romans when they wished to retain him) he could not have the dignity of an honorable citizen at Rome after having been a slave to the Africans, and the Carthaginians put him to death with the utmost tortures, because he had spoken against them in the senate. If Regulus acted thus, what tortures are not to be despised for the sake of good faith toward that country to whose beatitude faith itself leads? Or what will a man have rendered to the Lord for all He has bestowed upon him, if, for the faithfulness he owes to Him, he shall have suffered such things as Regulus suffered at the hands of his most ruthless enemies for the good faith which he owed to them? And how shall a Christian dare vaunt himself of his voluntary poverty, which he has chosen in order that during the pilgrimage of this life he may walk the more disencumbered on the way which leads to the country where the true riches are, even God Himself;—how, I say, shall he vaunt himself for this, when he hears or reads that Lucius Valerius, who died when he was holding the office of consul, was so poor that his funeral expenses were paid with money collected by the people?—or when he hears that Quintius Cincinnatus, who, possessing only four acres of land, and cultivating them with his own hands, was taken from the plough to be made dictator,—an office more honorable even than that of consul,—and that, after having won great glory by conquering the enemy, he preferred notwithstanding to continue in his poverty? Or how shall he boast of having done a great thing, who has not been prevailed upon by the offer of any reward of this world to renounce his connection with that heavenly and eternal country, when he hears that Fabricius could not be prevailed on to forsake the Roman city by the great gifts offered to him by Pyrrhus king of the Epirots, who promised him the fourth part of his kingdom, but preferred to abide there in his poverty as a private individual? For if, when their republic,—that is, the interest of the people, the interest of the country, the common interest,—was most prosperous and wealthy, they themselves were so poor in their own houses, that one of them, who had already been twice a consul, was expelled from that senate of poor men by the censor, because he was discovered to possess ten pounds weight of silverplate,—since, I say, those very men by whose triumphs the public treasury was enriched were so poor, ought not all Christians, who make common property of their riches with a far nobler purpose, even that (according to what is written in the Acts of the Apostles) they may distribute to each one according to his need, and that no one may say that anything is his own, but that all things may be their common possession,—ought they not to understand that they should not vaunt themselves, because they do that to obtain the society of angels, when those men did well-nigh the same thing to preserve the glory of the Romans?

How could these, and whatever like things are found in the Roman history, have become so widely known, and have been proclaimed by so great a fame, had not the Roman empire, extending far and wide, been raised to its greatness by magnificent successes? Wherefore, through that empire, so extensive and of so long continuance, so illustrious and glorious also through the virtues of such great men, the reward which they sought was rendered to their earnest aspirations, and also examples are set before us, containing necessary admonition, in order that we may be stung with shame if we shall see that we have not held fast those virtues for the sake of the most glorious city of God, which are, in whatever way, resembled by those virtues which they held fast for the sake of the glory of a terrestrial city, and that, too, if we shall feel conscious that we have held them fast, we may not be lifted up with pride, because, as the apostle says, “The sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us.” But so far as regards human and temporal glory, the lives of these ancient Romans were reckoned sufficiently worthy. Therefore, also, we see, in the light of that truth which, veiled in the Old Testament, is revealed in the New, namely, that it is not in view of terrestrial and temporal benefits, which divine providence grants promiscuously to good and evil, that God is to be worshipped, but in view of eternal life, everlasting gifts, and of the society of the heavenly city itself;—in the light of this truth we see that the Jews were most righteously given as a trophy to the glory of the

Romans; for we see that these Romans, who rested on earthly glory, and sought to obtain it by virtues, such as they were, conquered those who, in their great depravity, slew and rejected the giver of true glory, and of the eternal city.

CHAPTER 19

CONCERNING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRUE GLORY AND THE DESIRE OF DOMINATION

There is assuredly a difference between the desire of human glory and the desire of domination; for, though he who has an overweening delight in human glory will be also very prone to aspire earnestly after domination, nevertheless they who desire the true glory even of human praise strive not to displease those who judge well of them. For there are many good moral qualities, of which many are competent judges, although they are not possessed by many; and by those good moral qualities those men press on to glory, honor and domination, of whom Sallust says, “But they press on by the true way.”

But whosoever, without possessing that desire of glory which makes one fear to displease those who judge his conduct, desires domination and power, very often seeks to obtain what he loves by most open crimes. Therefore he who desires glory presses on to obtain it either by the true way, or certainly by deceit and artifice, wishing to appear good when he is not. Therefore to him who possesses virtues it is a great virtue to despise glory; for contempt of it is seen by God, but is not manifest to human judgment. For whatever any one does before the eyes of men in order to show himself to be a despiser of glory, if they suspect that he is doing it in order to get greater praise,—that is, greater glory,—he has no means of demonstrating to the perceptions of those who suspect him that the case is really otherwise than they suspect it to be. But he who despises the judgment of praisers, despises also the rashness of suspectors. Their salvation, indeed, he does not despise, if he is truly good; for so great is the righteousness of that man who receives his virtues from the Spirit of God, that he loves his very enemies, and so loves them that he desires that his haters and detractors may be turned to righteousness, and become his associates, and that not in an earthly but in a heavenly country. But with respect to his praisers, though he sets little value on their praise, he does not set little value on their love; neither does he elude their praise, lest he should forfeit their love. And, therefore, he strives earnestly to have their praises directed to Him from whom every one receives whatever in him is truly praiseworthy. But he who is a despiser of glory, but is greedy of domination, exceeds the beasts in the vices of cruelty and luxuriousness. Such, indeed, were certain of the Romans, who, wanting the love of esteem, wanted not the thirst for domination; and that there were many such, history testifies. But it was Nero Caesar who was the first to reach the summit, and, as it were, the citadel, of this vice; for so great was his luxuriousness, that one would have thought there was nothing manly to be dreaded in him, and such his cruelty, that, had not the contrary been known, no one would have thought there was anything effeminate in his character. Nevertheless power and domination are not given even to such men save by the providence of the most high God, when He judges that the state of human affairs is worthy of such lords. The divine utterance is clear on this matter; for the Wisdom of God thus speaks: “By me kings reign, and tyrants possess the land.” But, that it may not be thought that by “tyrants” is meant, not wicked and impious kings, but brave men, in accordance with the ancient use of the word, as when Virgil says,

“For know that treaty may not stand

Where king greets king and joins not hand,”

in another place it is most unambiguously said of God, that He “maketh the man who is an hypocrite to reign on account of the perver sity of the people.” Wherefore, though I have, according to my ability, shown for what reason God, who alone is true and just, helped forward the Romans, who were good according to a certain standard of an earthly state, to the acquirement of the glory of so great an empire, there may be, nevertheless, a more hidden cause, known better to God than to us, depending on the diversity of the merits of the human race. Among all who are truly pious, it is at all events agreed that no one without true piety,—that is, true worship of the true God—can have true virtue; and that it is not true virtue which is the slave of human praise. Though, nevertheless, they who are not citizens of the eternal city, which is called the city of God in the sacred Scriptures, are more useful to the earthly city when they possess even that virtue than if they had not even that. But there could be nothing more fortunate for human affairs than that, by the mercy of God, they who are endowed with true piety of life, if they have the skill for ruling people, should also have the power. But such men, however great virtues they may possess in this life, attribute it solely to the grace of God that He has bestowed it on them —willing, believing, seeking. And, at the same time, they understand how far they are short of that perfection of righteousness which exists in the society of those holy angels for which they are striving to fit themselves. But however much that virtue may be praised and cried up, which without true piety is the slave of human glory, it is not at all to be compared even to the feeble beginnings of the virtue of the saints, whose hope is placed in the grace and mercy of the true God.

CHAPTER 20

THAT IT IS AS SHAMEFUL FOR THE VIRTUES TO SERVE HUMAN GLORY AS BODILY PLEASURE

Philosophers,—who place the end of human good in virtue itself, in order to put to shame certain other philosophers, who indeed approve of the virtues, but measure them all with reference to the end of bodily pleasure, and think that this pleasure is to be sought for its own sake, but the virtues on account of pleasure,—are wont to paint a kind of word-picture, in which Pleasure sits like a luxurious queen on a royal seat, and all the virtues are subjected to her as slaves, watching her nod, that they may do whatever she shall command. She commands Prudence to be ever on the watch to discover how Pleasure may rule, and be safe. Justice she orders to grant what benefits she can, in order to secure those friendships which are necessary for bodily pleasure; to do wrong to no one, lest, on account of the breaking of the laws, Pleasure be not able to live in security. Fortitude she orders to keep her mistress, that is, Pleasure, bravely in her mind, if any affliction befall her body which does not occasion death, in order that by remembrance of former delights she may mitigate the poignancy of present pain. Temperance she commands to take only a certain quantity even of the most favorite food, lest, through immoderate use, anything prove hurtful by disturbing the health of the body, and thus Pleasure, which the Epicureans make to consist chiefly in the health of the body, be grievously offended. Thus the virtues, with the whole dignity of their glory, will be the slaves of Pleasure, as of some imperious and disreputable woman.

There is nothing, say our philosophers, more disgraceful and monstrous than this picture, and which the eyes of good men can less endure. And they say the truth. But I do not think that the picture would be sufficiently becoming, even if it were made so that the virtues should be represented as the slaves of human glory; for, though that glory be not a luxurious woman, it is nevertheless puffed up, and has much vanity in it. Wherefore it is unworthy of the solidity and firmness of the virtues to represent them as serving this glory, so that Prudence shall provide nothing, Justice distribute nothing, Temperance moderate nothing, except to the end that men may be pleased and vain glory served. Nor will they be able to defend themselves from the charge of such baseness, whilst they, by way of being despisers of glory, disregard the judgment of other men, seem to themselves wise, and please themselves. For their virtue,—if, indeed, it is virtue at all,—is only in another way subjected to human praise; for he who seeks to please himself seeks still to please man. But he who, with true piety towards God, whom he loves, believes, and hopes in, fixes his attention more on those things in which he displeases himself, than on those things, if there are any such, which please himself, or rather, not himself, but the truth, does not attribute that by which he can now please the truth to anything but to the mercy of Him whom he has feared to displease, giving thanks for what in him is healed, and pouring out prayers for the healing of that which is yet unhealed.

CHAPTER 21

THAT THE ROMAN DOMINION WAS GRANTED BY HIM FROM WHOM IS ALL POWER, AND BY WHOSE PROVIDENCE ALL THINGS ARE RULED

These things being so, we do not attribute the power of giving kingdoms and empires to any save to the true God, who gives happiness in the kingdom of heaven to the pious alone, but gives kingly power on earth both to the pious and the impious, as it may please Him, whose good pleasure is always just. For though we have said something about the principles which guide His administration, in so far as it has seemed good to Him to explain it, nevertheless it is too much for us, and far surpasses our strength, to discuss the hidden things of men's hearts, and by a clear examination to determine the merits of various kingdoms. He, therefore, who is the one true God, who never leaves the human race without just judgment and help, gave a kingdom to the Romans when He would, and as great as He would, as He did also to the Assyrians, and even the Persians, by whom, as their own books testify, only two gods are worshipped, the one good and the other evil,—to say nothing concerning the Hebrew people, of whom I have already spoken as much as seemed necessary, who, as long as they were a kingdom, worshipped none save the true God. The same, therefore, who gave to the Persians harvests, though they did not worship the goddess Segetia, who gave the other blessings of the earth, though they did not worship the many gods which the Romans supposed to preside, each one over some particular thing, or even many of them over each several thing, —He, I say, gave the Persians dominion, though they worshipped none of those gods to whom the Romans believed themselves indebted for the empire. And the same is true in respect of men as well as nations. He who gave power to Marius gave it also to Caius Caesar; He who gave it to Augustus gave it also to Nero; He also who gave it to the most benignant emperors, the Vespasians, father and son, gave it also to the cruel Domitian; and, finally, to avoid the necessity of going over them all, He who gave it to the Christian Constantine gave it also to the apostate Julian, whose gifted mind was deceived by a sacrilegious and detestable curiosity, stimulated by the love of power. And it was because he was addicted through curiosity to vain oracles, that, confident of victory, he burned the ships which were laden with the provisions necessary for his army, and therefore, engaging with hot zeal in rashly audacious enterprises, he was soon slain, as the just consequence of his recklessness, and left his army unprovisioned in an enemy's country, and in such a predicament that it never could have escaped, save by altering the boundaries of the Roman empire, in violation of that omen of the god Terminus of which I spoke in the preceding book; for the god Terminus yielded to necessity, though he had not yielded to Jupiter. Manifestly these things are ruled and governed by the one God according as He pleases; and if His motives are hid, are they therefore unjust?

CHAPTER 22

THE DURATIONS AND ISSUES OF WAR DEPEND ON THE WILL OF GOD

Thus also the durations of wars are determined by Him as He may see meet, according to His righteous will, and pleasure, and mercy, to afflict or to console the human race, so that they are sometimes of longer, sometimes of shorter duration. The war of the Pirates and the third Punic war were terminated with incredible celerity. Also the war of the fugitive gladiators, though in it many Roman generals and the consuls were defeated, and Italy was terribly wasted and ravaged, was nevertheless ended in the third year, having itself been, during its continuance, the end of much. The Picentes, the Marsi, and the Peligni, not distant but Italian nations, after a long and most loyal servitude under the Roman yoke, attempted to raise their heads into liberty, though many nations had now been subjected to the Roman power, and Carthage had been overthrown. In this Italian war the Romans were very often defeated, and two consuls perished, besides other noble senators; nevertheless this calamity was not protracted over a long space of time, for the fifth year put an end to it. But the second Punic war, lasting for the space of eighteen years, and occasioning the greatest disasters and calamities to the republic, wore out and well-nigh consumed the strength of the Romans; for in two battles about seventy thousand Romans fell. The first Punic war was terminated after having been waged for three-and-twenty years. The Mithridatic war was waged for forty years. And that no one may think that in the early and much belauded times of the Romans they were far braver and more able to bring wars to a speedy termination, the Samnite war was protracted for nearly fifty years; and in this war the Romans were so beaten that they were even put under the yoke. But because they did not love glory for the sake of justice, but seemed rather to have loved justice for the sake of glory, they broke the peace and the treaty which had been concluded. These things I mention, because many, ignorant of past things, and some also dissimulating what they know, if in Christian times they see any war protracted a little longer than they expected, straightway make a fierce and insolent attack on our religion, exclaiming that, but for it, the deities would have been supplicated still, according to ancient rites; and then, by that bravery of the Romans, which, with the help of Mars and Bellona, speedily brought to an end such great wars, this war also would be speedily terminated. Let them, therefore, who have read history recollect what long-continued wars, having various issues and entailing woeful slaughter, were waged by the ancient Romans, in accordance with the general truth that the earth, like the tempestuous deep, is subject to agitations from tempests—tempests of such evils, in various degrees,—and let them sometimes confess what they do not like to own, and not, by madly speaking against God, destroy themselves and deceive the ignorant.

CHAPTER 23

CONCERNING THE WAR IN WHICH RADAGAISUS, KING OF THE GOTHS, A WORSHIPPER OF DEMONS, WAS CONQUERED IN ONE DAY, WITH ALL HIS MIGHTY FORCES

Nevertheless they do not mention with thanksgiving what God has very recently, and within our own memory, wonderfully and mercifully done, but as far as in them lies they attempt, if possible, to bury it in universal oblivion. But should we be silent about these things, we should be in like manner ungrateful. When Radagaisus, king of the Goths, having taken up his position very near to the city, with a vast and savage army, was already close upon the Romans, he was in one day so speedily and so thoroughly beaten, that, whilst not even one Roman was wounded, much less slain, far more than a hundred thousand of his army were prostrated, and he himself and his sons, having been captured, were forthwith put to death, suffering the punishment they deserved. For had so impious a man, with so great and so impious a host, entered the city, whom would he have spared? what tombs of the martyrs would he have respected? in his treatment of what person would he have manifested the fear of God? whose blood would he have refrained from shedding? whose chastity would he have wished to preserve inviolate? But how loud would they not have been in the praises of their gods! How insultingly they would have boasted, saying that Radagaisus had conquered, that he had been able to achieve such great things, because he propitiated and won over the gods by daily sacrifices,—a thing which the Christian religion did not allow the Romans to do! For when he was approaching to those places where he was overwhelmed at the nod of the Supreme Majesty, as his fame was everywhere increasing, it was being told us at Carthage that the pagans were believing, publishing, and boasting, that he, on account of the help and protection of the gods friendly to him, because of the sacrifices which he was said to be daily offering to them, would certainly not be conquered by those who were not performing such sacrifices to the Roman gods, and did not even permit that they should be offered by any one. And now these wretched men do not give thanks to God for his great mercy, who, having determined to chastise the corruption of men, which was worthy of far heavier chastisement than the corruption of the barbarians, tempered His indignation with such mildness as, in the first instance, to cause that the king of the Goths should be conquered in a wonderful manner, lest glory should accrue to demons, whom he was known to be supplicating, and thus the minds of the weak should be overthrown; and then, afterwards, to cause that, when Rome was to be taken, it should be taken by those barbarians who, contrary to any custom of all former wars, protected, through reverence for the Christian religion, those who fled for refuge to the sacred places, and who so opposed the demons themselves, and the rites of impious sacrifices, that they seemed to be carrying on a far more terrible war with them than with men. Thus did the true Lord and Governor of things both scourge the Romans mercifully, and, by the marvellous defeat of the worshippers of demons, show that those sacrifices were not necessary even for the safety of present things; so that, by those who do not obstinately hold out, but prudently consider the matter, true religion may not be deserted on account of the urgencies of the present time, but may be more clung to in most confident expectation of eternal life.

CHAPTER 24

WHAT WAS THE HAPPINESS OF THE CHRISTIAN EMPERORS, AND HOW FAR IT WAS TRUE HAPPINESS

For neither do we say that certain Christian emperors were therefore happy because they ruled a long time, or, dying a peaceful death, left their sons to succeed them in the empire, or subdued the enemies of the republic, or were able both to guard against and to suppress the attempt of hostile citizens rising against them. These and other gifts or comforts of this sorrowful life even certain worshippers of demons have merited to receive, who do not belong to the kingdom of God to which these belong; and this is to be traced to the mercy of God, who would not have those who believe in Him desire such things as the highest good. But we say that they are happy if they rule justly; if they are not lifted up amid the praises of those who pay them sublime honors, and the obsequiousness of those who salute them with an excessive humility, but remember that they are men; if they make their power the handmaid of His majesty by using it for the greatest possible extension of His worship; if they fear, love, worship God; if more than their own they love that kingdom in which they are not afraid to have partners; if they are slow to punish, ready to pardon; if they apply that punishment as necessary to government and defence of the republic, and not in order to gratify their own enmity; if they grant pardon, not that iniquity may go unpunished, but with the hope that the transgressor may amend his ways; if they compensate with the lenity of mercy and the liberality of benevolence for whatever severity they may be compelled to decree; if their luxury is as much restrained as it might have been unrestrained; if they prefer to govern depraved desires rather than any nation whatever; and if they do all these things, not through ardent desire of empty glory, but through love of eternal felicity, not neglecting to offer to the true God, who is their God, for their sins, the sacrifices of humility, contrition, and prayer. Such Christian emperors, we say, are happy in the present time by hope, and are destined to be so in the enjoyment of the reality itself, when that which we wait for shall have arrived.

CHAPTER 25

CONCERNING THE PROSPERITY WHICH GOD GRANTED TO THE CHRISTIAN EMPEROR CONSTANTINE

For the good God, lest men, who believe that He is to be worshipped with a view to eternal life, should think that no one could attain to all this high estate, and to this terrestrial dominion, unless he should be a worshipper of the demons,—supposing that these spirits have great power with respect to such things,—for this reason He gave to the Emperor Constantine, who was not a worshipper of demons, but of the true God Himself, such fullness of earthly gifts as no one would even dare wish for. To him also He granted the honor of founding a city, a companion to the Roman empire, the daughter, as it were, of Rome itself, but without any temple or image of the demons. He reigned for a long period as sole emperor, and unaided held and defended the whole Roman world. In conducting and carrying on wars he was most victorious; in overthrowing tyrants he was most successful. He died at a great age, of sickness and old age, and left his sons to succeed him in the empire. But again, lest any emperor should become a Christian in order to merit the happiness of Constantine, when every one should be a Christian for the sake of eternal life, God took away Jovian far sooner than Julian, and permitted that Gratian should be slain by the sword of a tyrant. But in his case there was far more mitigation of the calamity than in the case of the great Pompey, for he could not be avenged by Cato, whom he had left, as it were, heir to the civil war. But Gratian, though pious minds require not such consolations, was avenged by Theodosius, whom he had associated with himself in the empire, though he had a little brother of his own, being more desirous of a faithful alliance than of extensive power.

CHAPTER 26

ON THE FAITH AND PIETY OF THEODOSIUS AUGUSTUS

And on this account, Theodosius not only preserved during the lifetime of Gratian that fidelity which was due to him, but also, after his death, he, like a true Christian, took his little brother Valentinian under his protection, as joint emperor, after he had been expelled by Maximus, the murderer of his father. He guarded him with paternal affection, though he might without any difficulty have got rid of him, being entirely destitute of all resources, had he been animated with the desire of extensive empire, and not with the ambition of being a benefactor. It was therefore a far greater pleasure to him, when he had adopted the boy, and preserved to him his imperial dignity, to console him by his very humanity and kindness. Afterwards, when that success was rendering Maximus terrible, Theodosius, in the midst of his perplexing anxieties, was not drawn away to follow the suggestions of a sacrilegious and unlawful curiosity, but sent to John, whose abode was in the desert of Egypt,—for he had learned that this servant of

God (whose fame was spreading abroad) was endowed with the gift of prophecy,—and from him he received assurance of victory. Immediately the slayer of the tyrant Maximus, with the deepest feelings of compassion and respect, restored the boy Valentinianus to his share in the empire from which he had been driven. Valentinianus being soon after slain by secret assassination, or by some other plot or accident, Theodosius, having again received a response from the prophet, and placing entire confidence in it, marched against the tyrant Eugenius, who had been unlawfully elected to succeed that emperor, and defeated his very powerful army, more by prayer than by the sword. Some soldiers who were at the battle reported to me that all the missiles they were throwing were snatched from their hands by a vehement wind, which blew from the direction of Theodosius' army upon the enemy; nor did it only drive with greater velocity the darts which were hurled against them, but also turned back upon their own bodies the darts which they themselves were throwing. And therefore the poet Claudian, although an alien from the name of Christ, nevertheless says in his praises of him, "O prince, too much beloved by God, for thee AEolus pours armed tempests from their caves; for thee the air fights, and the winds with one accord obey thy bugles." But the victor, as he had believed and predicted, overthrew the statues of Jupiter, which had been, as it were, consecrated by I know not what kind of rites against him, and set up in the Alps. And the thunderbolts of these statues, which were made of gold, he mirthfully and graciously presented to his couriers who (as the joy of the occasion permitted) were jocularly saying that they would be most happy to be struck by such thunderbolts. The sons of his own enemies, whose fathers had been slain not so much by his orders as by the vehemence of war, having fled for refuge to a church, though they were not yet Christians, he was anxious, taking advantage of the occasion, to bring over to Christianity, and treated them with Christian love. Nor did he deprive them of their property, but, besides allowing them to retain it, bestowed on them additional honors. He did not permit private animosities to affect the treatment of any man after the war. He was not like Cinna, and Marius, and Sylla, and other such men, who wished not to finish civil wars even when they were finished, but rather grieved that they had arisen at all, than wished that when they were finished they should harm any one. Amid all these events, from the very commencement of his reign, he did not cease to help the troubled church against the impious by most just and merciful laws, which the heretical Valens, favoring the Arians, had vehemently afflicted. Indeed, he rejoiced more to be a member of this church than he did to be a king upon the earth. The idols of the Gentiles he everywhere ordered to be overthrown, understanding well that not even terrestrial gifts are placed in the power of demons, but in that of the true God. And what could be more admirable than his religious humility, when, compelled by the urgency of certain of his intimates, he avenged the grievous crime of the Thessalonians, which at the prayer of the bishops he had promised to pardon, and, being laid hold of by the discipline of the church, did penance in such a way that the sight of his imperial loftiness prostrated made the people who were interceding for him weep more than the consciousness of offence had made them fear it when enraged? These and other similar good works, which it would be long to tell, he carried with him from this world of time, where the greatest human nobility and loftiness are but vapor. Of these works the reward is eternal happiness, of which God is the giver, though only to those who are sincerely pious. But all other blessings and privileges of this life, as the world itself, light, air, earth, water, fruits, and the soul of man himself, his body, senses, mind, life, He lavishes on good and bad alike. And among these blessings is also to be reckoned the possession of an empire, whose extent He regulates according to the requirements of His providential government at various times. Whence, I see, we must now answer those who, being confuted and convicted by the most manifest proofs, by which it is shown that for obtaining these terrestrial things, which are all the foolish desire to have, that multitude of false gods is of no use, attempt to assert that the gods are to be worshipped with a view to the interest, not of the present life, but of that which is to come after death. For as to those who, for the sake of the friendship of this world, are willing to worship vanities, and do not grieve that they are left to their puerile understandings, I think they have been sufficiently answered in these five books; of which books, when I had published the first three, and they had begun to come into the hands of many, I heard that certain persons were preparing against them an answer of some kind or other in writing. Then it was told me that they had already written their answer, but were waiting a time when they could publish it without danger. Such persons I would advise not to desire what cannot be of any advantage to them; for it is very easy for a man to seem to himself to have answered arguments, when he has only been unwilling to be silent. For what is more loquacious than vanity? And though it be able, if it like, to shout more loudly than the truth, it is not, for all that, more powerful than the truth. But let men consider diligently all the things that we have said, and if, perchance, judging without party spirit, they shall clearly perceive that they are such things as may rather be shaken than torn up by their most impudent garrulity, and, as it were, satirical and mimic levity, let them restrain their absurdities, and let them choose rather to be corrected by the wise than to be lauded by the foolish. For if they are waiting an opportunity, not for liberty to speak the truth, but for license to revile, may not that befall them which Tully says concerning some one, “Oh, wretched man! who was at liberty to sin?” Wherefore, whoever he be who deems himself happy because of license to revile, he would be far happier if that were not allowed him at all; for he might all the while, laying aside empty boast, be contradicting those to whose views he is opposed by way of free consultation with them, and be listening, as it becomes him, honorably, gravely, candidly, to all that can be adduced by those whom he consults by friendly disputation.

Book VI

Argument—Hitherto the argument has been conducted against those who believe that the gods are to be worshipped for the sake of temporal advantages, now it is directed against those who believe that they are to be worshipped for the sake of eternal life. Augustin devotes the five following books to the confutation of this latter belief, and first of all shows how mean an opinion of the gods was held by Varro himself, the most esteemed writer on heathen theology. Of this theology Augustin adopts Varro's division into three kinds, mythical, natural, and civil; and at once demonstrates that neither the mythical nor the civil can contribute anything to the happiness of the future life.

PREFACE

In the five former books, I think I have sufficiently disputed against those who believe that the many false gods, which the Christian truth shows to be useless images, or unclean spirits and pernicious demons, or certainly creatures, not the Creator, are to be worshipped for the advantage of this mortal life, and of terrestrial affairs, with that rite and service which the Greeks call latreia, and which is due to the one true God. And who does not know that, in the face of excessive stupidity and obstinacy, neither these five nor any other number of books whatsoever could be enough, when it is esteemed the glory of vanity to yield to no amount of strength on the side of truth,—certainly to his destruction over whom so heinous a vice tyrannizes? For, notwithstanding all the assiduity of the physician who attempts to effect a cure, the disease remains unconquered, not through any fault of his, but because of the incurableness of the sick man. But those who thoroughly weigh the things which they read, having understood and considered them, without any, or with no great and excessive degree of that obstinacy which belongs to a long-cherished error, will more readily judge that, in the five books already finished, we have done more than the necessity of the question demanded, than that we have given it less discussion than it required. And they cannot have doubted but that all the hatred which the ignorant attempt to bring upon the Christian religion on account of the disasters of this life, and the destruction and change which befall terrestrial things, whilst the learned do not merely dissimulate, but encourage that hatred, contrary to their own consciences, being possessed by a mad impiety;—they cannot have doubted, I say, but that this hatred is devoid of right reflection and reason, and full of most light temerity, and most pernicious animosity.

CHAPTER 1

OF THOSE WHO MAINTAIN THAT THEY WORSHIP THE GODS NOT FOR THE SAKE OF TEMPORAL BUT ETERNAL ADVANTAGES

Now, as, in the next place (as the promised order demands), those are to be refuted and taught who contend that the gods of the nations, which the Christian truth destroys, are to be worshipped not on account of this life, but on account of that which is to be after death, I shall do well to commence my disputation with the truthful oracle of the holy psalm, “Blessed is the man whose hope is the Lord God, and who respecteth not vanities and lying follies.” Nevertheless, in all vanities and lying follies the philosophers are to be listened to with far more toleration, who have repudiated those opinions and errors of the people; for the people set up images to the deities, and either feigned concerning those whom they call immortal gods many false and unworthy things, or believed them, already feigned, and, when believed, mixed them up with their worship and sacred rites.

With those men who, though not by free avowal of their convictions, do still testify that they disapprove of those things by their muttering disapprobation during disputations on the subject, it may not be very far amiss to discuss the following question: Whether for the sake of the life which is to be after death, we ought to worship, not the one God who made all creatures spiritual and corporeal, but those many gods who, as some of these philosophers hold, were made by that one God, and placed by Him in their respective sublime spheres, and are therefore considered more excellent and more noble than all the others? But who will assert that it must be affirmed and contended that those gods, certain of whom I have mentioned in the fourth book, to whom are distributed, each to each, the charges of minute things, do bestow eternal life? But will those most skilled and most acute men, who glory in having written for the great benefit of men, to teach on what account each god is to be worshipped, and what is to be sought from each, lest with most disgraceful absurdity, such as a mimic is wont for the sake of merriment to exhibit, water should be sought from Liber, wine from the Lymphs,—will those men indeed affirm to any man supplicating the immortal gods, that when he shall have asked wine from the Lymphs, and they shall have answered him, “We have water, seek wine from Liber,” he may rightly say, “If ye have not wine, at least give me eternal life?” What more monstrous than this absurdity? Will not these Lymphs,—for they are wont to be very easily made laugh,—laughing loudly (if they do not attempt to deceive like demons), answer the suppliant, “O man, dost thou think that we have life (vitam) in our power, who thou hearest have not even the vine (vitem)?” It is therefore most impudent folly to seek and hope for eternal life from such gods as are asserted so to preside over the separate minute concernments of this most sorrowful and short life, and whatever is useful for supporting and propping it, as that if anything which is under the care and power of one be sought from another, it is so incongruous and absurd that it appears very like to mimic drollery,—which, when it is done by mimics knowing what they are doing, is deservedly laughed at in the theatre, but when it is done by foolish persons, who do not know better, is more deservedly ridiculed in the world. Wherefore, as concerns those gods which the states have established, it has been cleverly invented and handed down to memory by learned men, what god or goddess is to be supplicated in relation to every particular thing,—what, for instance, is to be sought from Liber, what from the Lymphs, what from Vulcan, and so of all the rest, some of whom I have mentioned in the fourth book, and some I have thought right to omit. Further, if it is an error to seek wine from Ceres, bread from Liber, water from Vulcan, fire from the Lymphs, how much greater absurdity ought it to be thought, if supplication be made to any one of these for eternal life?

Wherefore, if, when we were inquiring what gods or goddesses are to be believed to be able to confer earthly kingdoms upon men, all things having been discussed, it was shown to be very far from the truth to think that even terrestrial kingdoms are established by any of those many false deities, is it not most insane impiety to believe that eternal life, which is, without any doubt or comparison, to be preferred to all terrestrial kingdoms, can be given to any one by any of these gods? For the reason why such gods seemed to us not to be able to give even an earthly kingdom, was not because they are very great and exalted, whilst that is something small and abject, which they, in their so great sublimity, would not condescend to care for, but because, however deservedly any one may, in consideration of human frailty, despise the falling pinnacles of an earthly kingdom, these gods have presented such an appearance as to seem most unworthy to have the granting and preserving of even those entrusted to them; and consequently, if (as we have taught in the two last books of our work, where this matter is treated of) no god out of all that crowd, either belonging to, as it were, the plebeian or to the noble gods, is fit to give mortal kingdoms to mortals, how much less is he able to make immortals of mortals?

And more than this, if, according to the opinion of those with whom we are now arguing, the gods are to be worshipped, not on account of the present life, but of that which is to be after death, then, certainly, they are not to be worshipped on account of those particular things which are distributed and portioned out (not by any law of rational truth, but by mere vain conjecture) to the power of such gods, as they believe they ought to be worshipped, who contend that their worship is necessary for all the desirable things of this mortal life, against whom I have disputed sufficiently, as far as I was able, in the five preceding books. These things being so, if the age itself of those who worshipped the goddess Juventas should be characterized by remarkable vigor, whilst her despisers should either die within the years of youth, or should, during that period, grow cold as with the torpor of old age; if bearded Fortuna should cover the cheeks of her worshippers more handsomely and more gracefully than all others, whilst we should see those by whom she was despised either altogether beardless or ill-bearded; even then we should most rightly say, that thus far these several gods had power, limited in some way by their functions, and that, consequently, neither ought eternal life to be sought from Juventas, who could not give a beard, nor ought any good thing after this life to be expected from Fortuna Barbata, who has no power even in this life to give the age itself at which the beard grows. But now, when their worship is necessary not even on account of those very things which they think are subjected to their power,—for many worshippers of the goddess Juventas have not been at all vigorous at that age, and many who do not worship her rejoice in youthful strength; and also many suppliants of Fortuna Barbata have either not been able to attain to any beard at all, not even an ugly one, although they who adore her in order to obtain a beard are ridiculed by her bearded despisers,—is the human heart really so foolish as to believe that that worship of the gods, which it acknowledges to be vain and ridiculous with respect to those very temporal and swiftly passing gifts, over each of which one of these gods is said to preside, is fruitful in results with respect to eternal life? And that they are able to give eternal life has not been affirmed even by those who, that they might be worshipped by the silly populace, distributed in minute division among them these temporal occupations, that none of them might sit idle; for they had supposed the existence of an exceedingly great number.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT WE ARE TO BELIEVE THAT VARRO THOUGHT CONCERNING THE GODS OF THE NATIONS, WHOSE VARIOUS KINDS AND SACRED RITES HE HAS SHOWN TO BE SUCH THAT HE WOULD HAVE ACTED MORE REVERENTLY TOWARDS THEM HAD HE BEEN ALTOGETHER SILENT CONCERNING THEM

Who has investigated those things more carefully than Marcus Varro? Who has discovered them more learnedly? Who has considered them more attentively? Who has distinguished them more acutely? Who has written about them more diligently and more fully?—who, though he is less pleasing in his eloquence, is nevertheless so full of instruction and wisdom, that in all the erudition which we call secular, but they liberal, he will teach the student of things as much as Cicero delights the student of words. And even Tully himself renders him such testimony, as to say in his Academic books that he had held that disputation which is there carried on with Marcus Varro, “a man,” he adds, “unquestionably the acutest of all men, and, without any doubt, the most learned.” He does not say the most eloquent or the most fluent, for in reality he was very deficient in this faculty, but he says, “of all men the most acute.” And in those books,—that is, the Academic,—where he contends that all things are to be doubted, he adds of him, “without any doubt the most learned.” In truth, he was so certain concerning this thing, that he laid aside that doubt which he is wont to have recourse to in all things, as if, when about to dispute in favor of the doubt of the Academics, he had, with respect to this one thing, forgotten that he was an Academic. But in the first book, when he extols the literary works of the same Varro, he says, “Us straying and wandering in our own city like strangers, thy books, as it were, brought home, that at length we might come to know of who we were and where we were. Thou has opened up to us the age of the country, the distribution of seasons, the laws of sacred things, and of the priests; thou hast opened up to us domestic and public discipline; thou hast pointed out to us the proper places for religious ceremonies, and hast informed us concerning sacred places. Thou hast shown us the names, kinds, offices, causes of all divine and human things.”

This man, then, of so distinguished and excellent acquirements, and, as Terentian briefly says of him in a most elegant verse,

“Varro, a man universally informed,”

who read so much that we wonder when he had time to write, wrote so much that we can scarcely believe any one could have read it all,—this man, I say, so great in talent, so great in learning, had he been an opposer and destroyer of the so-called divine things of which he wrote, and had he said that they pertained to superstition rather than to religion, might perhaps, even in that case, not have written so many things which are ridiculous, contemptible, detestable. But when he so worshipped these same gods, and so vindicated their worship, as to say, in that same literary work of his, that he was afraid lest they should perish, not by an assault by enemies, but by the negligence of the citizens, and that from this ignominy they are being delivered by him, and are being laid up and preserved in the memory of the good by means of such books, with a zeal far more beneficial than that through which Metellus is declared to have rescued the sacred things of Vesta from the flames, and AEneas to have rescued the Penates from the burning of Troy; and when he nevertheless, gives forth such things to be read by succeeding ages as are deservedly judged by wise and unwise to be unfit to be read, and to be most hostile to the truth of religion; what ought we to think but that a most acute and learned man,—

not, however made free by the Holy Spirit,—was overpowered by the custom and laws of his state, and, not being able to be silent about those things by which he was influenced, spoke of them under pretence of commending religion?

CHAPTER 3

VARRO’S DISTRIBUTION OF HIS BOOK WHICH HE COMPOSED CONCERNING THE ANTIQUITIES OF HUMAN AND DIVINE THINGS

He wrote forty-one books of antiquities. These he divided into human and divine things. Twenty-five he devoted to human things, sixteen to divine things; following this plan in that division,—namely, to give six books to each of the four divisions of human things. For he directs his attention to these considerations: who perform, where they perform, when they perform, what they perform. Therefore in the first six books he wrote concerning men; in the second six, concerning places; in the third six, concerning times; in the fourth and last six, concerning things. Four times six, however, make only twenty-four. But he placed at the head of them one separate work, which spoke of all these things conjointly.

In divine things, the same order he preserved throughout, as far as concerns those things which are performed to the gods. For sacred things are performed by men in places and times. These four things I have mentioned he embraced in twelve books, allotting three to each. For he wrote the first three concerning men, the following three concerning places, the third three concerning times, and the fourth three concerning sacred rites,—showing who should perform, where they should perform, when they should perform, what they should perform, with most subtle distinction. But because it was necessary to say—and that especially was expected—to whom they should perform sacred rites, he wrote concerning the gods themselves the last three books; and these five times three made fifteen. But they are in all, as we have said, sixteen. For he put also at the beginning of these one distinct book, speaking by way of introduction of all which follows; which being finished, he proceeded to subdivide the first three in that five-fold distribution which pertain to men, making the first concerning high priests, the second concerning augurs, the third concerning the fifteen men presiding over the sacred ceremonies. The second three he made concerning places, speaking in one of them concerning their chapels, in the second concerning their temples, and in the third concerning religious places. The next three which follow these, and pertain to times,—that is, to festival days,—he distributed so as to make one concerning holidays, the other concerning the circus games, and the third concerning scenic plays. Of the fourth three, pertaining to sacred things, he devoted one to consecrations, another to private, the last to public, sacred rites. In the three which remain, the gods themselves follow this pompous train, as it were, for whom all this culture has been expended. In the first book are the certain gods, in the second the uncertain, in the third, and last of all, the chief and select gods.

CHAPTER 4

THAT FROM THE DISPUTATION OF VARRO, IT FOLLOWS THAT THE WORSHIPPERS OF THE GODS REGARD HUMAN THINGS AS MORE ANCIENT THAN DIVINE THINGS

In this whole series of most beautiful and most subtle distributions and distinctions, it will most easily appear evident from the things we have said already, and from what is to be said hereafter, to any man who is not, in the obstinacy of his heart, an enemy to himself, that it is vain to seek and to hope for, and even most impudent to wish for eternal life. For these institutions are either the work of men or of demons,—not of those whom they call good demons, but, to speak more plainly, of unclean, and, without controversy, malign spirits, who with wonderful slyness and secretness suggest to the thoughts of the impious, and sometimes openly present to their understandings, noxious opinions, by which the human mind grows more and more foolish, and becomes unable to adapt itself to and abide in the immutable and eternal truth, and seek to confirm these opinions by every kind of fallacious attestation in their power. This very same Varro testifies that he wrote first concerning human things, but afterwards concerning divine things, because the states existed first, and afterward these things were instituted by them. But the true religion was not instituted by any earthly state, but plainly it established the celestial city. It, however, is inspired and taught by the true God, the giver of eternal life to His true worshippers.

The following is the reason Varro gives when he confesses that he had written first concerning human things, and afterwards of divine things, because these divine things were instituted by men:—”As the painter is before the painted tablet, the mason before the edifice, so states are before those things which are instituted by states.” But he says that he would have written first concerning the gods, afterwards concerning men, if he had been writing concerning the whole nature of the gods,—as if he were really writing concerning some portion of, and not all, the nature of the gods; or as if, indeed, some portion of, though not all, the nature of the gods ought not to be put before that of men. How, then, comes it that in those three last books, when he is diligently explaining the certain, uncertain and select gods, he seems to pass over no portion of the nature of the gods? Why, then, does he say, “If we had been writing on the whole nature of the gods, we would first have finished the divine things before we touched the human?” For he either writes concerning the whole nature of the gods, or concerning some portion of it, or concerning no part of it at all. If concerning it all, it is certainly to be put before human things; if concerning some part of it, why should it not, from the very nature of the case, precede human things? Is not even some part of the gods to be preferred to the whole of humanity? But if it is too much to prefer a part of the divine to all human things, that part is certainly worthy to be preferred to the Romans at least. For he writes the books concerning human things, not with reference to the whole world, but only to Rome; which books he says he had properly placed, in the order of writing, before the books on divine things, like a painter before the painted tablet, or a mason before the building, most openly confessing that, as a picture or a structure, even these divine things were instituted by men. There remains only the third supposition, that he is to be understood to have written concerning no divine nature, but that he did not wish to say this openly, but left it to the intelligent to infer; for when one says “not all,” usage understands that to mean “some,” but it may be understood as meaning none, because that which is none is neither all nor some. In fact, as he himself says, if he had been writing concerning all the nature of the gods, its due place would have been before human things in the order of writing. But, as the truth declares, even though Varro is silent, the divine nature should have taken precedence of Roman things, though it were not all, but only some. But it is properly put after, therefore it is none. His arrangement, therefore, was due, not to a desire to give human things priority to divine things, but to his unwillingness to prefer false things to true. For in what he wrote on human things, he followed the history of affairs; but in what he wrote concerning those things which they call divine, what else did he follow but mere conjectures about vain things? This, doubtless, is what, in a subtle manner, he wished to signify; not only writing concerning divine things after the human, but even giving a reason why he did so; for if he had suppressed this, some, perchance, would have defended his doing so in one way, and some in another. But in that very reason he has rendered, he has left nothing for men to conjecture at will, and has sufficiently proved that he preferred men to the institutions of men, not the nature of men to the nature of the gods. Thus he confessed that, in writing the books concerning divine things, he did not write concerning the truth which belongs to nature, but the falseness which belongs to error; which he has elsewhere expressed more openly (as I have mentioned in the fourth book), saying that, had he been founding a new city himself, he would have written according to the order of nature; but as he had only found an old one, he could not but follow its custom.

CHAPTER 5

CONCERNING THE THREE KINDS OF THEOLOGY ACCORDING TO VARRO, NAMELY, ONE FABULOUS, THE OTHER NATURAL, THE THIRD CIVIL

Now what are we to say of this proposition of his, namely, that there are three kinds of theology, that is, of the account which is given of the gods; and of these, the one is called mythical, the other physical, and the third civil? Did the Latin usage permit, we should call the kind which he has placed first in order fabular, but let us call it fabulous, for mythical is derived from the Greek muthos, a fable; but that the second should be called natural, the usage of speech now admits; the third he himself has designated in Latin, call ing it civil. Then he says, “they call that kind mythical which the poets chiefly use; physical, that which the philosophers use; civil, that which the people use. As to the first I have mentioned,” says he, “in it are many fictions, which are contrary to the dignity and nature of the immortals. For we find in it that one god has been born from the head, another from the thigh, another from drops of blood; also, in this we find that gods have stolen, committed adultery, served men; in a word, in this all manner of things are attributed to the gods, such as may befall, not merely any man, but even the most contemptible man.” He certainly, where he could, where he dared, where he thought he could do it with impunity, has manifested, without any of the haziness of ambiguity, how great injury was done to the nature of the gods by lying fables; for he was speaking, not concerning natural theology, not concerning civil, but concerning fabulous theology, which he thought he could freely find fault with.

Let us see, now, what he says concerning the second kind. “The second kind which I have explained,” he says, “is that concerning which philosophers have left many books, in which they treat such questions as these: what gods there are, where they are, of what kind and character they are, since what time they have existed, or if they have existed from eternity; whether they are of fire, as Heraclitus believes; or of number, as Pythagoras; or of atoms, as Epicurus says; and other such things, which men’s ears can more easily hear inside the walls of a school than outside in the Forum.” He finds fault with nothing in this kind of theology which they call physical, and which belongs to philosophers, except that he has related their controversies among themselves, through which there has arisen a multitude of dissentient sects. Nevertheless he has removed this kind from the Forum, that is, from the populace, but he has shut it up in schools. But that first kind, most false and most base, he has not removed from the citizens. Oh, the religious ears of the people, and among them even those of the Romans, that are not able to bear what the philosophers dispute concerning the gods! But when the poets sing and stage-players act such things as are derogatory to the dignity and the nature of the immortals, such as may befall not a man merely, but the most contemptible man, they not only bear, but willingly listen to. Nor is this all, but they even consider that these things please the gods, and that they are propitiated by them.

But some one may say, Let us distinguish these two kinds of theology, the mythical and the physical,—that is, the fabulous and the natural,—from this civil kind about which we are now speaking. Anticipating this, he himself has distinguished them. Let us see now how he explains the civil theology itself. I see, indeed, why it should be distinguished as fabulous, even because it is false, because it is base, because it is unworthy. But to wish to distinguish the natural from the civil, what else is that but to confess that the civil itself is false? For if that be natural, what fault has it that it should be excluded? And if this which is called civil be not natural, what merit has it that it should be admitted? This, in truth, is the cause why he wrote first concerning human things, and afterwards concerning divine things; since in divine things he did not follow nature, but the institution of men. Let us look at this civil theology of his. “The third kind,” says he, “is that which citizens in cities, and especially the priests, ought to know and to administer. From it is to be known what god each one may suitably worship, what sacred rites and sacrifices each one may suitably perform.” Let us still attend to what follows. “The first theology,” he says, “is especially adapted to the theatre, the second to the world, the third to the city.” Who does not see to which he gives the palm? Certainly to the second, which he said above is that of the philosophers. For he testifies that this pertains to the world, than which they think there is nothing better. But those two theologies, the first and the third,—to wit, those of the theatre and of the city,—has he distinguished them or united them? For although we see that the city is in the world, we do not see that it follows that any things belonging to the city pertain to the world. For it is possible that such things may be worshipped and believed in the city, according to false opinions, as have no existence either in the world or out of it. But where is the theatre but in the city? Who instituted the theatre but the state? For what purpose did it constitute it but for scenic plays? And to what class of things do scenic plays belong but to those divine things concerning which these books of Varro’s are written with so much ability?

CHAPTER 6

CONCERNING THE MYTHIC, THAT IS, THE FABULOUS, THEOLOGY, AND THE CIVIL, AGAINST VARRO

O Marcus Varro! thou art the most acute, and without doubt the most learned, but still a man, not God,—now lifted up by the Spirit of God to see and to announce divine things, thou seest, indeed, that divine things are to be separated from human trifles and lies, but thou fearest to offend those most corrupt opinions of the populace, and their customs in public superstitions, which thou thyself, when thou considerest them on all sides, perceivest, and all your literature loudly pronounces to be abhorrent from the nature of the gods, even of such gods as the frailty of the human mind supposes to exist in the elements of this world. What can the most excellent human talent do here? What can human learning, though manifold, avail thee in this perplexity? Thou desirest to worship the natural gods; thou art compelled to worship the civil. Thou hast found some of the gods to be fabulous, on whom thou vomitest forth very freely what thou thinkest, and, whether thou willest or not, thou wettest therewith even the civil gods. Thou sayest, forsooth, that the fabulous are adapted to the theatre, the natural to the world, and the civil to the city; though the world is a divine work, but cities and theatres are the works of men, and though the gods who are laughed at in the theatre are not other than those who are adored in the temples; and ye do not exhibit games in honor of other gods than those to whom ye immolate victims. How much more freely and more subtly wouldst thou have decided these hadst thou said that some gods are natural, others established by men; and concerning those who have been so established, the literature of the poets gives one account, and that of the priests another,—both of which are, nevertheless, so friendly the one to the other, through fellowship in falsehood, that they are both pleasing to the demons, to whom the doctrine of the truth is hostile.

That theology, therefore, which they call natural, being put aside for a moment, as it is afterwards to be discussed, we ask if any one is really content to seek a hope for eternal life from poetical, theatrical, scenic gods? Perish the thought! The true God avert so wild and sacrilegious a madness! What, is eternal life to be asked from those gods whom these things pleased, and whom these things propitiate, in which their own crimes are represented? No one, as I think, has arrived at such a pitch of headlong and furious impiety. So then, neither by the fabulous nor by the civil theology does any one obtain eternal life. For the one sows base things concerning the gods by feigning them, the other reaps by cherishing them; the one scatters lies, the other gathers them together; the one pursues divine things with false crimes, the other incorporates among divine things the plays which are made up of these crimes; the one sounds abroad in human songs impious fictions concerning the gods, the other consecrates these for the festivities of the gods themselves; the one sings the misdeeds and crimes of the gods, the other loves them; the one gives forth or feigns, the other either attests the true or delights in the false. Both are base; both are damnable. But the one which is theatrical teaches public abomination, and that one which is of the city adorns itself with that abomination. Shall eternal life be hoped for from these, by which this short and temporal life is polluted? Does the society of wicked men pollute our life if they insinuate themselves into our affections, and win our assent? and does not the society of demons pollute the life, who are worshipped with their own crimes?—if with true crimes, how wicked the demons! if with false, how wicked the worship!

When we say these things, it may perchance seem to some one who is very ignorant of these matters that only those things concerning the gods which are sung in the songs of the poets and acted on the stage are unworthy of the divine majesty, and ridiculous, and too detestable to be celebrated, whilst those sacred things which not stage-players but priests perform are pure and free from all unseemliness. Had this been so, never would any one have thought that these theatrical abominations should be celebrated in their honor, never would the gods themselves have ordered them to be performed to them. But men are in nowise ashamed to perform these things in the theatres, because similar things are carried on in the temples. In short, when the fore-mentioned author attempted to distinguish the civil theology from the fabulous and natural, as a sort of third and distinct kind, he wished it to be understood to be rather tempered by both than separated from either. For he says that those things which the poets write are less than the people ought to follow, whilst what the philosophers say is more than it is expedient for the people to pry into. “Which,” says he, “differ in such a way, that nevertheless not a few things from both of them have been taken to the account of the civil theology; wherefore we will indicate what the civil theology has in common with that of the poet, though it ought to be more closely connected with the theology of philosophers.” Civil theology is therefore not quite disconnected from that of the poets. Nevertheless, in another place, concerning the generations of the gods, he says that the people are more inclined toward the poets than toward the physical theologists. For in this place he said what ought to be done; in that other place, what was really done. He said that the latter had written for the sake of utility, but the poets for the sake of amusement. And hence the things from the poets' writings, which the people ought not to follow, are the crimes of the gods; which, nevertheless, amuse both the people and the gods. For, for amusement's sake, he says, the poets write, and not for that of utility; nevertheless they write such things as the gods will desire, and the people perform.

CHAPTER 7

CONCERNING THE LIKENESS AND AGREEMENT OF THE FABULOUS AND CIVIL THEOLOGIES

That theology, therefore, which is fabulous, theatrical, scenic, and full of all baseness and unseemliness, is taken up into the civil theology; and part of that theology, which in its totality is deservedly judged to be worthy of reprobation and rejection, is pronounced worthy to be cultivated and observed;—not at all an incongruous part, as I have undertaken to show, and one which, being alien to the whole body, was unsuitably attached to and suspended from it, but a part entirely congruous with, and most harmoniously fitted to the rest, as a member of the same body. For what else do those images, forms, ages, sexes, characteristics of the gods show? If the poets have Jupiter with a beard and Mercury beardless, have not the priests the same? Is the Priapus of the priests less obscene than the Priapus of the players? Does he receive the adoration of worshippers in a different form from that in which he moves about the stage for the amusement of spectators? Is not Saturn old and Apollo young in the shrines where their images stand as well as when represented by actors' masks? Why are Forculus, who presides over doors, and Limentinus, who presides over thresholds and lintels, male gods, and Cardea between them feminine, who presides over hinges? Are not those things found in books on divine things, which grave poets have deemed unworthy of their verses? Does the Diana of the theatre carry arms, whilst the Diana of the city is simply a virgin? Is the stage Apollo a lyrist, but the Delphic Apollo ignorant of this art? But these things are decent compared with the more shameful things. What was thought of Jupiter himself by those who placed his wet nurse in the Capitol? Did they not bear witness to Euhemerus, who, not with the garrulity of a fable-teller, but with the gravity of an historian who had diligently investigated the matter, wrote that all such gods had been men and mortals? And they who appointed the Epulones as parasites at the table of Jupiter, what else did they wish for but mimic sacred rites. For if any mimic had said that parasites of Jupiter were made use of at his table, he would assuredly have appeared to be seeking to call forth laughter. Varro said it,—not when he was mocking, but when he was commending the gods did he say it. His books on divine, not on human, things testify that he wrote this,—not where he set forth the scenic games, but where he explained the Capitoline laws. In a word, he is conquered, and confesses that, as they made the gods with a human form, so they believed that they are delighted with human pleasures.

For also malign spirits were not so wanting to their own business as not to confirm noxious opinions in the minds of men by converting them into sport. Whence also is that story about the sacristan of Hercules, which says that, having nothing to do, he took to playing at dice as a pastime, throwing them alternately with the one hand for Hercules, with the other for himself, with this understanding, that if he should win, he should from the funds of the temple prepare himself a supper, and hire a mistress; but if Hercules should win the game, he himself should, at his own expense, provide the same for the pleasure of Hercules. Then, when he had been beaten by himself, as though by Hercules, he gave to the god Hercules the supper he owed him, and also the most noble harlot Larentina. But she, having fallen asleep in the temple, dreamed that Hercules had had intercourse with her, and had said to her that she would find her payment with the youth whom she should first meet on leaving the temple, and that she was to believe this to be paid to her by Hercules. And so the first youth that met her on going out was the wealthy Tarutius, who kept her a long time, and when he died left her his heir. She, having obtained a most ample fortune, that she should not seem ungrateful for the divine hire, in her turn made the Roman people her heir, which she thought to be most acceptable to the deities; and, having disappeared, the will was found. By which meritorious conduct they say that she gained divine honors.

Now had these things been feigned by the poets and acted by the mimics, they would without any doubt have been said to pertain to the fabulous theology, and would have been judged worthy to be separated from the dignity of the civil theology. But when these shameful things,—not of the poets, but of the people; not of the mimics, but of the sacred things; not of the theatres, but of the temples, that is, not of the fabulous, but of the civil theology,—are reported by so great an author, not in vain do the actors represent with theatrical art the baseness of the gods, which is so great; but surely in vain do the priests attempt, by rites called sacred, to represent their nobleness of character, which has no existence. There are sacred rites of Juno; and these are celebrated in her beloved island, Samos, where she was given in marriage to Jupiter. There are sacred rites of Ceres, in which Proserpine is sought for, having been carried off by Pluto. There are sacred rites of Venus, in which, her beloved Adonis being slain by a boar's tooth, the lovely youth is lamented. There are sacred rites of the mother of the gods, in which the beautiful youth Atys, loved by her, and castrated by her through a woman's jealousy, is deplored by men who have suffered the like calamity, whom they call Galli. Since, then, these things are more unseemly than all scenic abomination, why is it that they strive to separate, as it were, the fabulous fictions of the poet concerning the gods, as, forsooth, pertaining to the theatre, from the civil theology which they wish to belong to the city, as though they were separating from noble and worthy things, things unworthy and base? Wherefore there is more reason to thank the stage-actors, who have spared the eyes of men and have not laid bare by theatrical exhibition all the things which are hid by the walls of the temples. What good is to be thought of their sacred rites which are concealed in darkness, when those which are brought forth into the light are so detestable? And certainly they themselves have seen what they transact in secret through the agency of mutilated and effeminate men. Yet they have not been able to conceal those same men miserably and vile enervated and corrupted. Let them persuade whom they can that they transact anything holy through such men, who, they cannot deny, are numbered, and live among their sacred things. We know not what they transact, but we know through whom they transact; for we know what things are transacted on the stage, where never, even in a chorus of harlots, hath one who is mutilated or an effeminate appeared. And, nevertheless, even these things are acted by vile and infamous characters; for, indeed, they ought not to be acted by men of good character. What, then, are those sacred rites, for the performance of which holiness has chosen such men as not even the obscenity of the stage has admitted?

CHAPTER 8

CONCERNING THE INTERPRETATIONS, CONSISTING OF NATURAL EXPLANATIONS, WHICH THE PAGAN TEACHERS ATTEMPT TO SHOW FOR THEIR GODS

But all these things, they say, have certain physical, that is, natural interpretations, showing their natural meaning; as though in this disputation we were seeking physics and not theology, which is the account, not of nature, but of God. For although He who is the true God is God, not by opinion, but by nature, nevertheless all nature is not God; for there is certainly a nature of man, of a beast, of a tree, of a stone,—none of which is God. For if, when the question is concerning the mother of the gods, that from which the whole system of interpretation starts certainly is, that the mother of the gods is the earth, why do we make further inquiry? why do we carry our investigation through all the rest of it? What can more manifestly favor them who say that all those gods were men? For they are earth-born in the sense that the earth is their mother. But in the true theology the earth is the work, not the mother, of God. But in whatever way their sacred rites may be interpreted, and whatever reference they may have to the nature of things, it is not according to nature, but contrary to nature, that men should be effeminates. This disease, this crime, this abomination, has a recognized place among those sacred things, though even depraved men will scarcely be compelled by torments to confess they are guilty of it. Again, if these sacred rites, which are proved to be fouler than scenic abominations, are excused and justified on the ground that they have their own interpretations, by which they are shown to symbolize the nature of things, why are not the poetical things in like manner excused and justified? For many have interpreted even these in like fashion, to such a degree that even that which they say is the most monstrous and most horrible,—namely, that Saturn devoured his own children,—has been interpreted by some of them to mean that length of time, which is signified by the name of Saturn, consumes whatever it begets; or that, as the same Varro thinks, Saturn belongs to seeds which fall back again into the earth from whence they spring. And so one interprets it in one way, and one in another. And the same is to be said of all the rest of this theology.

And, nevertheless, it is called the fabulous theology, and is censured, cast off, rejected, together with all such interpretations belonging to it. And not only by the natural theology, which is that of the philosophers, but also by this civil theology, concerning which we are speaking, which is asserted to pertain to cities and peoples, it is judged worthy of repudiation, because it has invented unworthy things concerning the gods. Of which, I wot, this is the secret: that those most acute and learned men, by whom those things were written, understood that both theologies ought to be rejected,—to wit, both that fabulous and this civil one,—but the former they dared to reject, the latter they dared not; the former they set forth to be censured, the latter they showed to be very like it; not that it might be chosen to be held in preference to the other, but that it might be understood to be worthy of being rejected together with it. And thus, without danger to those who feared to censure the civil theology, both of them being brought into contempt, that theology which they call natural might find a place in better disposed minds; for the civil and the fabulous are both fabulous and both civil. He who shall wisely inspect the vanities and obscenities of both will find that they are both fabulous; and he who shall direct his attention to the scenic plays pertaining to the fabulous theology in the festivals of the civil gods, and in the divine rites of the cities, will find they are both civil. How, then, can the power of giving eternal life be attributed to any of those gods whose own images and sacred rites convict them of being most like to the fabulous gods, which are most openly reprobated, in forms, ages, sex, characteristics, marriages, generations, rites; in all which things they are understood either to have been men, and to have had their sacred rites and solemnities instituted in their honor according to the life or death of each of them, the demons suggesting and confirming this error, or certainly most foul spirits, who, taking advantage of some occasion or other, have stolen into the minds of men to deceive them?

CHAPTER 9

CONCERNING THE SPECIAL OFFICES OF THE GODS

And as to those very offices of the gods, so meanly and so minutely portioned out, so that they say that they ought to be supplicated, each one according to his special function,—about which we have spoken much already, though not all that is to be said concerning it,—are they not more consistent with mimic buffoonery than divine majesty? If any one should use two nurses for his infant, one of whom should give nothing but food, the other nothing but drink, as these make use of two goddesses for this purpose, Educa and Potina, he should certainly seem to be foolish, and to do in his house a thing worthy of a mimic. They would have Liber to have been named from "liberation," because through him males at the time of copulation are liberated by the emission of the seed. They also say that Libera (the same in their opinion as Venus) exercises the same function in the case of women, because they say that they also emit seed; and they also say that on this account the same part of the male and of the female is placed in the temple, that of the male to Liber, and that of the female to Libera. To these things they add the women assigned to Liber, and the wine for exciting lust. Thus the Bacchanalia are celebrated with the utmost insanity, with respect to which Varro himself confesses that such things would not be done by the Bacchanals except their minds were highly excited. These things, however, afterwards displeased a saner senate, and it ordered them to be discontinued. Here, at length, they perhaps perceived how much power unclean spirits, when held to be gods, exercise over the minds of men. These things, certainly, were not to be done in the theatres; for there they play, not rave, although to have gods who are delighted with such plays is very like raving.

But what kind of distinction is this which he makes between the religious and the superstitious man, saying that the gods are feared by the superstitious man, but are reverenced as parents by the religious man, not feared as enemies; and that they are all so good that they will more readily spare those who are impious than hurt one who is innocent? And yet he tells us that three gods are assigned as guardians to a woman after she has been delivered, lest the god Silvanus come in and molest her; and that in order to signify the presence of these protectors, three men go round the house during the night, and first strike the threshold with a hatchet, next with a pestle, and the third time sweep it with a brush, in order that these symbols of agriculture having been exhibited, the god Silvanus might be hindered from entering, because neither are trees cut down or pruned without a hatchet, neither is grain ground without a pestle, nor corn heaped up without a besom. Now from these three things three gods have been named: Intercidona, from the cut made by the hatchet; Pilumnus, from the pestle; Diverra, from the besom;—by which guardian gods the woman who has been de livered is preserved against the power of the god Silvanus. Thus the guardianship of kindly-disposed gods would not avail against the malice of a mischievous god, unless they were three to one, and fought against him, as it were, with the opposing emblems of cultivation, who, being an inhabitant of the woods, is rough, horrible, and uncultivated. Is this the innocence of the gods? Is this their concord? Are these the health-giving deities of the cities, more ridiculous than the things which are laughed at in the theatres?

When a male and a female are united, the god Jugatinus presides. Well, let this be borne with. But the married woman must be brought home: the god Domiducus also is invoked. That she may be in the house, the god Domitius is introduced. That she may remain with her husband, the goddess Manturnae is used. What more is required? Let human modesty be spared. Let the lust of flesh and blood go on with the rest, the secret of shame being respected. Why is the bed-chamber filled with a crowd of deities, when even the groomsmen have departed? And, moreover, it is so filled, not that in consideration of their presence more regard may be paid to chastity, but that by their help the woman, naturally of the weaker sex, and trembling with the novelty of her situation, may the more readily yield her virginity. For there are the goddess Virginiensis, and the god-father Subigus, and the goddess-mother Prema, and the goddess Pertunda, and Venus, and Priapus. What is this? If it was absolutely necessary that a man, laboring at this work, should be helped by the gods, might not some one god or goddess have been sufficient? Was Venus not sufficient alone, who is even said to be named from this, that without her power a woman does not cease to be a virgin? If there is any shame in men, which is not in the deities, is it not the case that, when the married couple believe that so many gods of either sex are present, and busy at this work, they are so much affected with shame, that the man is less moved, and the woman more reluctant? And certainly, if the goddess Virginiensis is present to loose the virgin’s zone, if the god Subigus is present that the virgin may be got under the man, if the goddess Prema is present that, having been got under him, she may be kept down, and may not move herself, what has the goddess Pertunda to do there? Let her blush; let her go forth. Let the husband himself do something. It is disgraceful that any one but himself should do that from which she gets her name. But perhaps she is tolerated because she is said to be a goddess, and not a god. For if she were believed to be a male, and were called Pertundus, the husband would demand more help against him for the chastity of his wife than the newly-delivered woman against Silvanus. But why am I saying this, when Priapus, too, is there, a male to excess, upon whose immense and most unsightly member the newly-married bride is commanded to sit, according to the most honorable and most religious custom of matrons?

Let them go on, and let them attempt with all the subtlety they can to distinguish the civil theology from the fabulous, the cities from the theatres, the temples from the stages, the sacred things of the priests from the songs of the poets, as honorable things from base things, truthful things from fallacious, grave from light, serious from ludicrous, desirable things from things to be rejected, we understand what they do. They are aware that that theatrical and fabulous theology hangs by the civil, and is reflected back upon it from the songs of the poets as from a mirror; and thus, that theology having been exposed to view which they do not dare to condemn, they more freely assail and censure that picture of it, in order that those who perceive what they mean may detest this very face itself of which that is the picture, —which, however, the gods themselves, as though seeing themselves in the same mirror, love so much, that it is better seen in both of them who and what they are. Whence, also, they have compelled their worshippers, with terrible commands, to dedicate to them the uncleanness of the fabulous theology, to put them among their solemnities, and reckon them among divine things; and thus they have both shown themselves more manifestly to be most impure spirits, and have made that rejected and reprobated theatrical theology a member and a part of this, as it were, chosen and approved theology of the city, so that, though the whole is disgraceful and false, and contains in it fictitious gods, one part of it is in the literature of the priests, the other in the songs of the poets. Whether it may have other parts is another question. At present, I think, I have sufficiently shown, on account of the division of Varro, that the theology of the city and that of the theatre belong to one civil theology. Wherefore, because they are both equally disgraceful, absurd, shameful, false, far be it from religious men to hope for eternal life from either the one or the other.

In fine, even Varro himself, in his account and enumeration of the gods, starts from the moment of a man's conception. He commences the series of those gods who take charge of man with Janus, carries it on to the death of the man decrepit with age, and terminates it with the goddess Naenia, who is sung at the funerals of the aged. After that, he begins to give an account of the other gods, whose province is not man himself, but man's belongings, as food, clothing, and all that is necessary for this life; and, in the case of all these, he explains what is the special office of each, and for what each ought to be supplicated. But with all this scrupulous and comprehensive diligence, he has neither proved the existence, nor so much as mentioned the name, of any god from whom eternal life is to be sought,—the one object for which we are Christians. Who, then, is so stupid as not to perceive that this man, by setting forth and opening up so diligently the civil theology, and by exhibiting its likeness to that fabulous, shameful, and disgraceful theology, and also by teaching that that fabulous sort is also a part of this other, was laboring to obtain a place in the minds of men for none but that natural theology, which he says pertains to philosophers, with such subtlety that he censures the fabulous, and, not daring openly to censure the civil, shows its censurable character by simply exhibiting it; and thus, both being reprobated by the judgment of men of right understanding, the natural alone remains to be chosen? But concerning this in its own place, by the help of the true God, we have to discuss more diligently.

CHAPTER 10

CONCERNING THE LIBERTY OF SENECA, WHO MORE VEHEMENTLY CENSURED THE CIVIL THEOLOGY THAN VARRO DID THE FABULOUS

That liberty, in truth, which this man wanted, so that he did not dare to censure that theology of the city, which is very similar to the theatrical, so openly as he did the theatrical itself, was, though not fully, yet in part possessed by Annaeus Seneca, whom we have some evidence to show to have flourished in the times of our apostles. It was in part possessed by him, I say, for he possessed it in writing, but not in living. For in that book which he wrote against superstition, he more copiously and vehemently censured that civil and urban theology than Varro the theatrical and fabulous. For, when speaking concerning images, he says, "They dedicate images of the sacred and inviolable immortals in most worthless and motionless matter. They give them the appearance of man, beasts, and fishes, and some make them of mixed sex, and heterogeneous bodies. They call them deities, when they are such that if they should get breath and should suddenly meet them, they would be held to be monsters." Then, a while afterwards, when extolling the natural theology, he had expounded the sentiments of certain philosophers, he opposes to himself a question, and says, "Here some one says, Shall I believe that the heavens and the earth are gods, and that some are above the moon and some below it? Shall I bring forward either Plato or the peripatetic Strato, one of whom made God to be without a body, the other without a mind?" In answer to which he says, "And, really, what truer do the dreams of Titus Tatius, or Romulus, or Tullus Hostilius appear to thee? Tatius declared the divinity of the goddess Cloacina; Romulus that of Picus and Tiberinus; Tullus Hostilius that of Pavor and Pallor, the most disagreeable affections of men, the one of which is the agitation of the mind under fright, the other that of the body, not a disease, indeed, but a change of color." Wilt thou rather believe that these are deities, and receive them into heaven? But with what freedom he has written concerning the rites themselves, cruel and shameful! "One," he says, "castrates himself, another cuts his arms. Where will they find room for the fear of these gods when angry, who use such means of gaining their favor when propitious? But gods who wish to be worshipped in this fashion should be worshipped in none. So great is the frenzy of the mind when perturbed and driven from its seat, that the gods are propitiated by men in a manner in which not even men of the greatest ferocity and fable-renowned cruelty vent their rage. Tyrants have lacerated the limbs of some; they never ordered any one to lacerate his own. For the gratification of royal lust, some have been castrated; but no one ever, by the command of his lord, laid violent hands on himself to emasculate himself. They kill themselves in the temples. They supplicate with their wounds and with their blood. If any one has time to see the things they do and the things they suffer, he will find so many things unseemly for men of respectability, so unworthy of freemen, so unlike the doings of sane men, that no one would doubt that they are mad, had they been mad with the minority; but now the multitude of the insane is the defence of their sanity.”

He next relates those things which are wont to be done in the Capitol, and with the utmost intrepidity insists that they are such things as one could only believe to be done by men making sport, or by madmen. For having spoken with derision of this, that in the Egyptian sacred rites Osiris, being lost, is lamented for, but straightway, when found, is the occasion of great joy by his reappearance, because both the losing and the finding of him are feigned; and yet that grief and that joy which are elicited thereby from those who have lost nothing and found nothing are real;—having I say, so spoken of this, he says, “Still there is a fixed time for this frenzy. It is tolerable to go mad once in the year. Go into the Capitol. One is suggesting divine commands to a god; another is telling the hours to Jupiter; one is a lictor; another is an anointer, who with the mere movement of his arms imitates one anointing. There are women who arrange the hair of Juno and Minerva, standing far away not only from her image, but even from her temple. These move their fingers in the manner of hairdressers. There are some women who hold a mirror. There are some who are calling the gods to assist them in court. There are some who are holding up documents to them, and are explaining to them their cases. A learned and distinguished comedian, now old and decrepit, was daily playing the mimic in the Capitol, as though the gods would gladly be spectators of that which men had ceased to care about. Every kind of artificers working for the immortal gods is dwelling there in idleness.” And a little after he says, “Nevertheless these, though they give themselves up to the gods for purposes superflous enough, do not do so for any abominable or infamous purpose. There sit certain women in the Capitol who think they are beloved by Jupiter; nor are they frightened even by the look of the, if you will believe the poets, most wrathful Juno.”

This liberty Varro did not enjoy. It was only the poetical theology he seemed to censure. The civil, which this man cuts to pieces, he was not bold enough to impugn. But if we attend to the truth, the temples where these things are performed are far worse than the theatres where they are represented. Whence, with respect to these sacred rites of the civil theology, Seneca preferred, as the best course to be followed by a wise man, to feign respect for them in act, but to have no real regard for them at heart. "All which things," he says, "a wise man will observe as being commanded by the laws, but not as being pleasing to the gods." And a little after he says, "And what of this, that we unite the gods in marriage, and that not even naturally, for we join brothers and sisters? We marry Bellona to Mars, Venus to Vulcan, Salacia to Neptune. Some of them we leave unmarried, as though there were no match for them, which is surely needless, especially when there are certain unmarried goddesses, as Populonia, or Fulgora, or the goddess Rumina, for whom I am not astonished that suitors have been awanting. All this ignoble crowd of gods, which the superstition of ages has amassed, we ought," he says, "to adore in such a way as to remember all the while that its worship belongs rather to custom than to reality." Wherefore, neither those laws nor customs instituted in the civil theology that which was pleasing to the gods, or which pertained to reality. But this man, whom philosophy had made, as it were, free, nevertheless, because he was an illustrious senator of the Roman people, worshipped what he censured, did what he condemned, adored what he reproached, because, forsooth, philosophy had taught him something great,—namely, not to be superstitious in the world, but, on account of the laws of cities and the customs of men, to be an actor, not on the stage, but in the temples,—conduct the more to be condemned, that those things which he was deceitfully acting he so acted that the people thought he was acting sincerely. But a stage-actor would rather delight people by acting plays than take them in by false pretences.

CHAPTER 11

WHAT SENECA THOUGHT CONCERNING THE JEWS

Seneca, among the other superstitions of civil theology, also found fault with the sacred things of the Jews, and especially the sabbaths, affirming that they act uselessly in keeping those seventh days, whereby they lose through idleness about the seventh part of their life, and also many things which demand immediate attention are damaged. The Christians, however, who were already most hostile to the Jews, he did not dare to mention, either for praise or blame, lest, if he praised them, he should do so against the ancient custom of his country, or, perhaps, if he should blame them, he should do so against his own will.

When he was speaking concerning those Jews, he said, “When, meanwhile, the customs of that most accursed nation have gained such strength that they have been now received in all lands, the conquered have given laws to the conquerors.” By these words he expresses his astonishment; and, not knowing what the providence of God was leading him to say, subjoins in plain words an opinion by which he showed what he thought about the meaning of those sacred institutions: “For,” he says, “those, however, know the cause of their rites, whilst the greater part of the people know not why they perform theirs.” But concerning the solemnities of the Jews, either why or how far they were instituted by divine authority, and afterwards, in due time, by the same authority taken away from the people of God, to whom the mystery of eternal life was revealed, we have both spoken elsewhere, especially when we were treating against the Manichaeans, and also intend to speak in this work in a more suitable place.

CHAPTER 12

THAT WHEN ONCE THE VANITY OF THE GODS OF THE NATIONS HAS BEEN EXPOSED, IT CANNOT BE DOUBTED THAT THEY ARE UNABLE TO BESTOW ETERNAL LIFE ON ANY ONE, WHEN THEY CANNOT AFFORD HELP EVEN WITH RESPECT TO THE THINGS OF THIS TEMPORAL LIFE

Now, since there are three theologies, which the Greeks call respectively mythical, physical, and political, and which may be called in Latin fabulous, natural, and civil; and since neither from the fabulous, which even the worshippers of many and false gods have themselves most freely censured, nor from the civil, of which that is convicted of being a part, or even worse than it, can eternal life be hoped for from any of these theologies,—if any one thinks that what has been said in this book is not enough for him, let him also add to it the many and various dissertations concerning God as the giver of felicity, contained in the former books, especially the fourth one.

For to what but to felicity should men consecrate themselves, were felicity a goddess? However, as it is not a goddess, but a gift of God, to what God but the giver of happiness ought we to consecrate ourselves, who piously love eternal life, in which there is true and full felicity? But I think, from what has been said, no one ought to doubt that none of those gods is the giver of happiness, who are worshipped with such shame, and who, if they are not so worshipped, are more shamefully enraged, and thus confess that they are most foul spirits. Moreover, how can he give eternal life who cannot give happiness? For we mean by eternal life that life where there is endless happiness. For if the soul live in eternal punishments, by which also those unclean spirits shall be tormented, that is rather eternal death than eternal life. For there is no greater or worse death than when death never dies. But because the soul from its very nature, being created immortal, cannot be without some kind of life, its utmost death is alienation from the life of God in an eternity of punishment. So, then, He only who gives true happiness gives eternal life, that is, an endlessly happy life. And since those gods whom this civil theology worships have been proved to be unable to give this happiness, they ought not to be worshipped on account of those temporal and terrestrial things, as we showed in the five former books, much less on account of eternal life, which is to be after death, as we have sought to show in this one book especially, whilst the other books also lend it their co-operation. But since the strength of inveterate habit has its roots very deep, if any one thinks that I have not disputed sufficiently to show that this civil theology ought to be rejected and shunned, let him attend to another book which, with God’s help, is to be joined to this one.

Book VII

Argument—In this book it is shown that eternal life is not obtained by the worship of Janus, Jupiter, Saturn, and the other “select gods” of the civil theology.

PREFACE

It will be the duty of those who are endowed with quicker and better understandings, in whose case the former books are sufficient, and more than sufficient, to effect their intended object, to bear with me with patience and equanimity whilst I attempt with more than ordinary diligence to tear up and eradicate depraved and ancient opinions hostile to the truth of piety, which the long-continued error of the human race has fixed very deeply in unenlightened minds; co-operating also in this, according to my little measure, with the grace of Him who, being the true God, is able to accomplish it, and on whose help I depend in my work; and, for the sake of others, such should not deem superfluous what they feel to be no longer necessary for themselves. A very great matter is at stake when the true and truly holy divinity is commended to men as that which they ought to seek after and to worship; not, however, on account of the transitory vapor of mortal life, but on account of life eternal, which alone is blessed, although the help necessary for this frail life we are now living is also afforded us by it.

CHAPTER 1

WHETHER, SINCE IT IS EVIDENT THAT DEITY IS NOT TO BE FOUND IN THE CIVIL THEOLOGY, WE ARE TO BELIEVE THAT IT IS TO BE FOUND IN THE SELECT GODS

If there is any one whom the sixth book, which I have last finished, has not persuaded that this divinity, or, so to speak, deity—for this word also our authors do not hesitate to use, in order to translate more accurately that which the Greeks call theotes;—if there is any one, I say, whom the sixth book has not persuaded that this divinity or deity is not to be found in that theology which they call civil, and which Marcus Varro has explained in sixteen books,—that is, that the happiness of eternal life is not attainable through the worship of gods such as states have established to be worshipped, and that in such a form,—perhaps, when he has read this book, he will not have anything further to desire in order to the clearing up of this question. For it is possible that some one may think that at least the select and chief gods, whom Varro comprised in his last book, and of whom we have not spoken sufficiently, are to be worshipped on account of the blessed life, which is none other than eternal. In respect to which matter I do not say what Tertullian said, perhaps more wittily than truly, "If gods are selected like onions, certainly the rest are rejected as bad." I do not say this, for I see that even from among the select, some are selected for some greater and more excellent office: as in warfare, when recruits have been elected, there are some again elected from among those for the performance of some greater military service; and in the church, when persons are elected to be overseers, certainly the rest are not rejected, since all good Christians are deservedly called elect; in the erection of a building corner-stones are elected, though the other stones, which are destined for other parts of the structure, are not rejected; grapes are elected for eating, whilst the others, which we leave for drinking, are not rejected. There is no need of adducing many illustrations, since the thing is evident. Wherefore the selection of certain gods from among many affords no proper reason why either he who wrote on this subject, or the worshippers of the gods, or the gods themselves, should be spurned. We ought rather to seek to know what gods these are, and for what purpose they may appear to have been selected.

CHAPTER 2

WHO ARE THE SELECT GODS, AND WHETHER THEY ARE HELD TO BE EXEMPT FROM THE OFFICES OF THE COMMONER GODS

The following gods, certainly, Varro signalizes as select, devoting one book to this subject: Janus, Jupiter, Saturn, Genius, Mercury, Apollo, Mars, Vulcan, Neptune, Sol, Orcus, father Liber, Tellus, Ceres, Juno, Luna, Diana, Minerva, Venus, Vesta; of which twenty gods, twelve are males, and eight females. Whether are these deities called select, because of their higher spheres of administration in the world, or because they have become better known to the people, and more worship has been expended on them? If it be on account of the greater works which are performed by them in the world, we ought not to have found them among that, as it were, plebeian crowd of deities, which has assigned to it the charge of minute and trifling things. For, first of all, at the conception of a foetus, from which point all the works commence which have been distributed in minute detail to many deities, Janus himself opens the way for the reception of the seed; there also is Saturn, on account of the seed itself; there is Liber, who liberates the male by the effusion of the seed; there is Libera, whom they also would have to be Venus, who confers this same benefit on the woman, namely, that she also be liberated by the emission of the seed;—all these are of the number of those who are called select. But there is also the goddess Mena, who presides over the menses; though the daughter of Jupiter, ignoble nevertheless. And this province of the menses the same author, in his book on the select gods, assigns to Juno herself, who is even queen among the select gods; and here, as Juno Lucina, along with the same Mena, her stepdaughter, she presides over the same blood. There also are two gods, exceedingly obscure, Vitumnus and Sentinus—the one of whom imparts life to the foetus, and the other sensation; and, of a truth, they bestow, most ignoble though they be, far more than all those noble and select gods bestow. For, surely, without life and sensation, what is the whole foetus which a woman carries in her womb, but a most vile and worthless thing, no better than slime and dust?

CHAPTER 3

HOW THERE IS NO REASON WHICH CAN BE SHOWN FOR THE SELECTION OF CERTAIN GODS, WHEN THE ADMINISTRATION OF MORE EXALTED OFFICES IS ASSIGNED TO MANY INFERIOR GODS

What is the cause, therefore, which has driven so many select gods to these very small works, in which they are excelled by Vitumnus and Sentinus, though little known and sunk in obscurity, inasmuch as they confer the munificent gifts of life and sensation? For the select Janus bestows an entrance, and, as it were, a door for the seed; the select Saturn bestows the seed itself; the select Liber bestows on men the emission of the same seed; Libera, who is Ceres or Venus, confers the same on women; the select Juno confers (not alone, but together with Mena, the daughter of Jupiter) the menses, for the growth of that which has been conceived; and the obscure and ignoble Vitumnus confers life, whilst the obscure and ignoble Sentinus confers sensation;—which two last things are as much more excellent than the others, as they themselves are excelled by reason and intellect. For as those things which reason and understand are preferable to those which, without intellect and reason, as in the case of cattle, live and feel; so also those things which have been endowed with life and sensation are deservedly preferred to those things which neither live nor feel. Therefore Vitumnus the life-giver, and Sentinus the sense-giver, ought to have been reckoned among the select gods, rather than Janus the admitter of seed, and Saturn the giver or sower of seed, and Liber and Libera the movers and liberators of seed; which seed is not worth a thought, unless it attain to life and sensation. Yet these select gifts are not given by select gods, but by certain unknown, and, considering their dignity, neglected gods. But if it be replied that Janus has dominion over all beginnings, and therefore the opening of the way for conception is not without reason assigned to him; and that Saturn has dominion over all seeds, and therefore the sowing of the seed whereby a human being is generated cannot be excluded from his operation; that Liber and Libera have power over the emission of all seeds, and therefore preside over those seeds which pertain to the procreation of men; that Juno presides over all purgations and births, and therefore she has also charge of the purgations of women and the births of human beings;—if they give this reply, let them find an answer to the question concerning Vitumnus and Sentinus, whether they are willing that these likewise should have dominion over all things which live and feel. If they grant this, let them observe in how sublime a position they are about to place them. For to spring from seeds is in the earth and of the earth, but to live and feel are supposed to be properties even of the sidereal gods. But if they say that only such things as come to life in flesh, and are supported by senses, are assigned to Sentinus, why does not that God who made all things live and feel, bestow on flesh also life and sensation, in the universality of His operation conferring also on foetuses this gift? And what, then, is the use of Vitumnus and Sentinus? But if these, as it were, extreme and lowest things have been committed by Him who presides universally over life and sense to these gods as to servants, are these select gods then so destitute of servants, that they could not find any to whom even they might commit those things, but with all their dignity, for which they are, it seems, deemed worthy to be selected, were compelled to perform their work along with ignoble ones? Juno is select queen of the gods, and the sister and wife of Jupiter; nevertheless she is Iterduca, the conductor, to boys, and performs this work along with a most ignoble pair—the goddesses Abeona and Adeona. There they have also placed the goddess Mena, who gives to boys a good mind, and she is not placed among the select gods; as if anything greater could be bestowed on a man than a good mind. But Juno is placed among the select because she is Iterduca and Domiduca (she who conducts one on a journey, and who conducts him home again); as if it is of any advantage for one to make a journey, and to be conducted home again, if his mind is not good. And yet the goddess who bestows that gift has not been placed by the selectors among the select gods, though she ought indeed to have been preferred even to Minerva, to whom, in this minute distribution of work, they have allotted the memory of boys. For who will doubt that it is a far better thing to have a good mind, than ever so great a memory? For no one is bad who has a good mind; but some who are very bad are possessed of an admirable memory, and are so much the worse, the less they are able to forget the bad things which they think. And yet Minerva is among the select gods, whilst the goddess Mena is hidden by a worthless crowd. What shall I say concerning Virtus? What concerning Felicitas?—concerning whom I have already spoken much in the fourth book; to whom, though they held them to be goddesses, they have not thought fit to assign a place among the select gods, among whom they have given a place to Mars and Orcus, the one the causer of death, the other the receiver of the dead.

Since, therefore, we see that even the select gods themselves work together with the others, like a senate with the people, in all those minute works which have been minutely portioned out among many gods; and since we find that far greater and better things are administered by certain gods who have not been reckoned worthy to be selected than by those who are called select, it remains that we suppose that they were called select and chief, not on account of their holding more exalted offices in the world, but because it happened to them to become better known to the people. And even Varro himself says, that in that way obscurity had fallen to the lot of some father gods and mother goddesses, as it fails to the lot of man. If, therefore, Felicity ought not perhaps to have been put among the select gods, because they did not attain to that noble position by merit, but by chance, Fortune at least should have been placed among them, or rather before them; for they say that that goddess distributes to every one the gifts she receives, not according to any rational arrangement, but according as chance may determine. She ought to have held the uppermost place among the select gods, for among them chiefly it is that she shows what power she has. For we see that they have been selected not on account of some eminent virtue or rational happiness, but by that random power of Fortune which the worshippers of these gods think that she exerts. For that most eloquent man Sallust also may perhaps have the gods themselves in view when he says: “But, in truth, fortune rules in everything; it renders all things famous or obscure, according to caprice rather than according to truth.” For they cannot discover a reason why Venus should have been made famous, whilst Virtus has been made obscure, when the divinity of both of them has been solemnly recognized by them, and their merits are not to be compared. Again, if she has deserved a noble position on account of the fact that she is much sought after—for there are more who seek after Venus than after Virtus—why has Minerva been celebrated whilst Pecunia has been left in obscurity, although throughout the whole human race avarice allures a far greater number than skill? And even among those who are skilled in the arts, you will rarely find a man who does not practise his own art for the purpose of pecuniary gain; and that for the sake of which anything is made, is always valued more than that which is made for the sake of something else. If, then, this selection of gods has been made by the judgment of the foolish multitude, why has not the goddess Pecunia been preferred to Minerva, since there are many artificers for the sake of money? But if this distinction has been made by the few wise, why has Virtus been preferred to Venus, when reason by far prefers the former? At all events, as I have already said, Fortune herself—who, according to those who attribute most influence to her, renders all things famous or obscure according to caprice rather than according to the truth—since she has been able to exercise so much power even over the gods, as, according to her capricious judgment, to render those of them famous whom she would, and those obscure whom she would; Fortune herself ought to occupy the place of pre-eminence among the select gods, since over them also she has such pre-eminent power. Or must we suppose that the reason why she is not among the select is simply this, that even Fortune herself has had an adverse fortune? She was adverse, then, to herself, since, whilst ennobling others, she herself has remained obscure.

CHAPTER 4

THE INFERIOR GODS, WHOSE NAMES ARE NOT ASSOCIATED WITH INFAMY, HAVE BEEN BETTER DEALT WITH THAN THE SELECT GODS, WHOSE INFAMIES ARE CELEBRATED

However, any one who eagerly seeks for celebrity and renown, might congratulate those select gods, and call them fortunate, were it not that he saw that they have been selected more to their injury than to their honor. For that low crowd of gods have been protected by their very meanness and obscurity from being overwhelmed with infamy. We laugh, indeed, when we see them distributed by the mere fiction of human opinions, according to the special works assigned to them, like those who farm small portions of the public revenue, or like workmen in the street of the silversmiths, where one vessel, in order that it may go out perfect, passes through the hands of many, when it might have been finished by one perfect workman. But the only reason why the combined skill of many workmen was thought necessary, was, that it is better that each part of an art should be learned by a special workman, which can be done speedily and easily, than that they should all be compelled to be perfect in one art throughout all its parts, which they could only attain slowly and with difficulty. Nevertheless there is scarcely to be found one of the non-select gods who has brought infamy on himself by any crime, whilst there is scarce any one of the select gods who has not received upon himself the brand of notable infamy. These latter have descended to the humble works of the others, whilst the others have not come up to their sublime crimes. Concerning Janus, there does not readily occur to my recollection anything infamous; and perhaps he was such an one as lived more innocently than the rest, and further removed from misdeeds and crimes. He kindly received and entertained Saturn when he was fleeing; he divided his kingdom with his guest, so that each of them had a city for himself, the one Janiculum, and the other Saturnia. But those seekers after every kind of unseemliness in the worship of the gods have disgraced him, whose life they found to be less disgracful than that of the other gods, with an image of monstrous deformity, making it sometimes with two faces, and sometimes, as it were, double, with four faces. Did they wish that, as the most of the select gods had lost shame through the perpetration of shameful crimes, his greater innocence should be marked by a greater number of faces?

CHAPTER 5

CONCERNING THE MORE SECRET DOCTRINE OF THE PAGANS, AND CONCERNING THE PHYSICAL INTERPRETATIONS

But let us hear their own physical interpretations by which they attempt to color, as with the appearance of profounder doctrine, the baseness of most miserable error. Varro, in the first place, commends these interpretations so strongly as to say, that the ancients invented the images, badges, and adornments of the gods, in order that when those who went to the mysteries should see them with their bodily eyes, they might with the eyes of their mind see the soul of the world, and its parts, that is, the true gods; and also that the meaning which was intended by those who made their images with the human form, seemed to be this,—namely, that the mind of mortals, which is in a human body, is very like to the immortal mind, just as vessels might be placed to represent the gods, as, for instance, a wine-vessel might be placed in the temple of Liber, to signify wine, that which is contained being signified by that which contains. Thus by an image which had the human form the rational soul was signified, because the human form is the vessel, as it were, in which that nature is wont to be contained which they attribute to God, or to the gods. These are the mysteries of doctrine to which that most learned man penetrated in order that he might bring them forth to the light. But, O thou most acute man, hast thou lost among those mysteries that prudence which led thee to form the sober opinion, that those who first established those images for the people took away fear from the citizens and added error, and that the ancient Romans honored the gods more chastely without images? For it was through consideration of them that thou wast emboldened to speak these things against the later Romans. For if those most ancient Romans also had worshipped images, perhaps thou wouldst have suppressed by the silence of fear all those sentiments (true sentiments, nevertheless) concerning the folly of setting up images, and wouldst have extolled more loftily, and more loquaciously, those mysterious doctrines consisting of these vain and pernicious fictions. Thy soul, so learned and so clever (and for this I grieve much for thee), could never through these mysteries have reached its God; that is, the God by whom, not with whom, it was made, of whom it is not a part, but a work,—that God who is not the soul of all things, but who made every soul, and in whose light alone every soul is blessed, if it be not ungrateful for His grace.

But the things which follow in this book will show what is the nature of these mysteries, and what value is to be set upon them. Meanwhile, this most learned man confesses as his opinion that the soul of the world and its parts are the true gods, from which we perceive that his theology (to wit, that same natural theology to which he pays great regard) has been able, in its completeness, to extend itself even to the nature of the rational soul. For in this book (concerning the select gods) he says a very few things by anticipation concerning the natural theology; and we shall see whether he has been able in that book, by means of physical interpretations, to refer to this natural theology that civil theology, concerning which he wrote last when treating of the select gods. Now, if he has been able to do this, the whole is natural; and in that case, what need was there for distinguishing so carefully the civil from the natural? But if it has been distinguished by a veritable distinction, then, since not even this natural theology with which he is so much pleased is true (for though it has reached as far as the soul, it has not reached to the true God who made the soul), how much more contemptible and false is that civil theology which is chiefly occupied about what is corporeal, as will be shown by its very interpretations, which they have with such diligence sought out and enucleated, some of which I must necessarily mention!

CHAPTER 6

CONCERNING THE OPINION OF VARRO, THAT GOD IS THE SOUL OF THE WORLD, WHICH NEVERTHELESS, IN ITS VARIOUS PARTS, HAS MANY SOULS WHOSE NATURE IS DIVINE

The same Varro, then, still speaking by anticipation, says that he thinks that God is the soul of the world (which the Greeks call kosmos), and that this world itself is God; but as a wise man, though he consists of body and mind, is nevertheless called wise on account of his mind, so the world is called God on account of mind, although it consists of mind and body. Here he seems, in some fashion at least, to acknowledge one God; but that he may introduce more, he adds that the world is divided into two parts, heaven and earth, which are again divided each into two parts, heaven into ether and air, earth into water and land, of all which the ether is the highest, the air second, the water third, and the earth the lowest. All these four parts, he says, are full of souls; those which are in the ether and air being immortal, and those which are in the water and on the earth mortal. From the highest part of the heavens to the orbit of the moon there are souls, namely, the stars and planets; and these are not only understood to be gods, but are seen to be such. And between the orbit of the moon and the commencement of the region of clouds and winds there are aerial souls; but these are seen with the mind, not with the eyes, and are called Heroes, and Lares, and Genii. This is the natural theology which is briefly set forth in these anticipatory statements, and which satisfied not Varro only, but many philosophers besides. This I must discuss more carefully, when, with the help of God, I shall have completed what I have yet to say concerning the civil theology, as far as it concerns the select gods.

CHAPTER 7

WHETHER IT IS REASONABLE TO SEPARATE JANUS AND TERMINUS AS TWO DISTINCT DEITIES

Who, then, is Janus, with whom Varro commences? He is the world. Certainly a very brief and unambiguous reply. Why, then, do they say that the beginnings of things pertain to him, but the ends to another whom they call Terminus? For they say that two months have been dedicated to these two gods, with reference to beginnings and ends—January to Janus, and February to Terminus—over and above those ten months which commence with March and end with December. And they say that that is the reason why the Terminalia are celebrated in the month of February, the same month in which the sacred purification is made which they call Februum, and from which the month derives its name. Do the beginnings of things, therefore, pertain to the world, which is Janus, and not also the ends, since another god has been placed over them? Do they not own that all things which they say begin in this world also come to an end in this world? What folly it is, to give him only half power in work, when in his image they give him two faces! Would it not be a far more elegant way of interpreting the two-faced image, to say that Janus and Terminus are the same, and that the one face has reference to beginnings, the other to ends? For one who works ought to have respect to both. For he who in every forthputting of activity does not look back on the beginning, does not look forward to the end. Wherefore it is necessary that prospective intention be connected with retrospective memory. For how shall one find how to finish anything, if he has forgotten what it was which he had begun? But if they thought that the blessed life is begun in this world, and perfected beyond the world, and for that reason attributed to Janus, that is, to the world, only the power of beginnings, they should certainly have preferred Terminus to him, and should not have shut him out from the number of the select gods. Yet even now, when the beginnings and ends of temporal things are represented by these two gods, more honor ought to have been given to Terminus. For the greater joy is that which is felt when anything is finished; but things begun are always cause of much anxiety until they are brought to an end, which end he who begins anything very greatly longs for, fixes his mind on, expects, desires; nor does any one ever rejoice over anything he has begun, unless it be brought to an end.

CHAPTER 8

FOR WHAT REASON THE WORSHIPPERS OF JANUS HAVE MADE HIS IMAGE WITH TWO FACES, WHEN THEY WOULD SOMETIMES HAVE IT BE SEEN WITH FOUR

But now let the interpretation of the two-faced image be produced. For they say that it has two faces, one before and one behind, because our gaping mouths seem to resemble the world: whence the Greeks call the palate ouranos, and some Latin poets, he says, have called the heavens palatum [the palate]; and from the gaping mouth, they say, there is a way out in the direction of the teeth, and a way in in the direction of the gullet. See what the world has been brought to on account of a Greek or a poetical word for our palate! Let this god be worshipped only on account of saliva, which has two open doorways under the heavens of the palate,—one through which part of it may be spitten out, the other through which part of it may be swallowed down. Besides, what is more absurd than not to find in the world itself two doorways opposite to each other, through which it may either receive anything into itself, or cast it out from itself; and to seek of our throat and gullet, to which the world has no resemblance, to make up an image of the world in Janus, because the world is said to resemble the palate, to which Janus bears no likeness? But when they make him four-faced, and call him double Janus, they interpret this as having reference to the four quarters of the world, as though the world looked out on anything, like Janus through his four faces. Again, if Janus is the world, and the world consists of four quarters, then the image of the two-faced Janus is false. Or if it is true, because the whole world is sometimes understood by the expression east and west, will any one call the world double when north and south also are mentioned, as they call Janus double when he has four faces? They have no way at all of interpreting, in relation to the world, four doorways by which to go in and to come out as they did in the case of the two-faced Janus, where they found, at any rate in the human mouth, something which answered to what they said about him; unless perhaps Neptune come to their aid, and hand them a fish, which, besides the mouth and gullet, has also the openings of the gills, one on each side. Nevertheless, with all the doors, no soul escapes this vanity but that one which hears the truth saying, “I am the door.”

CHAPTER 9

CONCERNING THE POWER OF JUPITER, AND A COMPARISON OF JUPITER WITH JANUS

But they also show whom they would have Jove (who is also called Jupiter) understood to be. He is the god, say they, who has the power of the causes by which anything comes to be in the world. And how great a thing this is, that most noble verse of Virgil testifies:

“Happy is he who has learned the causes of things.”

But why is Janus preferred to him? Let that most acute and most learned man answer us this question. “Because,” says he, “Janus has dominion over first things, Jupiter over highest things. Therefore Jupiter is deservedly held to be the king of all things; for highest things are better than first things: for although first things precede in time, highest things excel by dignity.”

Now this would have been rightly said had the first parts of things which are done been distinguished from the highest parts; as, for instance, it is the beginning of a thing done to set out, the highest part to arrive. The commencing to learn is the first part of a thing begun, the acquirement of knowledge is the highest part. And so of all things: the beginnings are first, the ends highest. This matter, however, has been already discussed in connection with Janus and Terminus. But the causes which are attributed to Jupiter are things effecting, not things effected; and it is impossible for them to be prevented in time by things which are made or done, or by the beginnings of such things; for the thing which makes is always prior to the thing which is made. Therefore, though the beginnings of things which are made or done pertain to Janus, they are nevertheless not prior to the efficient causes which they attribute to Jupiter. For as nothing takes place without being preceded by an efficient cause, so without an efficient cause nothing begins to take place. Verily, if the people call this god Jupiter, in whose power are all the causes of all natures which have been made, and of all natural things, and worship him with such insults and infamous criminations, they are guilty of more shocking sacrilege than if they should totally deny the existence of any god. It would therefore be better for them to call some other god by the name of Jupiter—some one worthy of base and criminal honors; substituting instead of Jupiter some vain fiction (as Saturn is said to have had a stone given to him to devour instead of his son,) which they might make the subject of their blasphemies, rather than speak of that god as both thundering and committing adultery,—ruling the whole world, and laying himself out for the commission of so many licentious acts,—having in his power nature and the highest causes of all natural things, but not having his own causes good.

Next, I ask what place they find any longer for this Jupiter among the gods, if Janus is the world; for Varro defined the true gods to be the soul of the world, and the parts of it. And therefore whatever falls not within this definition, is certainly not a true god, according to them. Will they then say that Jupiter is the soul of the world, and Janus the body—that is, this visible world? If they say this, it will not be possible for them to affirm that Janus is a god. For even, according to them, the body of the world is not a god, but the soul of the world and its parts. Wherefore Varro, seeing this, says that he thinks God is the soul of the world, and that this world itself is God; but that as a wise man though he consists of soul and body, is nevertheless called wise from the soul, so the world is called God from the soul, though it consists of soul and body. Therefore the body of the world alone is not God, but either the soul of it alone, or the soul and the body together, yet so as that it is God not by virtue of the body, but by virtue of the soul. If, therefore, Janus is the world, and Janus is a god, will they say, in order that Jupiter may be a god, that he is some part of Janus? For they are wont rather to attribute universal existence to Jupiter; whence the saying, "All things are full of Jupiter." Therefore they must think Jupiter also, in order that he may be a god, and especially king of the gods, to be the world, that he may rule over the other gods—according to them, his parts. To this effect, also, the same Varro expounds certain verses of Valerius Soranus in that book which he wrote apart from the others concerning the worship of the gods. These are the verses:

"Almighty Jove, progenitor of kings, and things, and gods,

And eke the mother of the gods, god one and all."

But in the same book he expounds these verses by saying that as the male emits seed, and the female receives it, so Jupiter, whom they believed to be the world, both emits all seeds from himself and receives them into himself. For which reason, he says, Soranus wrote, "Jove, progenitor and mother;" and with no less reason said that one and all were the same. For the world is one, and in that one are all things.

CHAPTER 10

WHETHER THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN JANUS AND JUPITER IS A PROPER ONE

Since, therefore, Janus is the world, and Jupiter is the world, wherefore are Janus and Jupiter two gods, while the world is but one? Why do they have separate temples, separate altars, different rites, dissimilar images? If it be because the nature of beginnings is one, and the nature of causes another, and the one has received the name of Janus, the other of Jupiter; is it then the case, that if one man has two distinct offices of authority, or two arts, two judges or two artificers are spoken of, because the nature of the offices or the arts is different? So also with respect to one god: if he have the power of beginnings and of causes, must he therefore be thought to be two gods, because beginnings and causes are two things? But if they think that this is right, let them also affirm that Jupiter is as many gods as they have given him surnames, on account of many powers; for the things from which these surnames are applied to him are many and diverse. I shall mention a few of them.

CHAPTER 11

CONCERNING THE SURNAMES OF JUPITER, WHICH ARE REFERRED NOT TO MANY GODS, BUT TO ONE AND THE SAME GOD

They have called him Victor, Invictus, Opitulus, Impulsor, Stator, Centumpeda, Supinalis, Tigillus, Almus, Ruminus, and other names which it were long to enumerate. But these surnames they have given to one god on account of diverse causes and powers, but yet have not compelled him to be, on account of so many things, as many gods. They gave him these surnames because he conquered all things; because he was conquered by none; because he brought help to the needy; because he had the power of impelling, stopping, stablishing, throwing on the back; because as a beam he held together and sustained the world; because he nourished all things; because, like the pap, he nourished animals. Here, we perceive, are some great things and some small things; and yet it is one who is said to perform them all. I think that the causes and the beginnings of things, on account of which they have thought that the one world is two gods, Jupiter and Janus, are nearer to each other than the holding together of the world, and the giving of the pap to animals; and yet, on account of these two works so far apart from each other, both in nature and dignity, there has not been any necessity for the existence of two gods; but one Jupiter has been called, on account of the one Tigillus, on account of the other Ruminus. I am unwilling to say that the giving of the pap to sucking animals might have become Juno rather than Jupiter, especially when there was the goddess Rumina to help and to serve her in this work; for I think it may be replied that Juno herself is nothing else than Jupiter, according to those verses of Valerius Soranus, where it has been said:

“Almighty Jove, progenitor of kings, and things, and gods,

And eke the mother of the gods,” etc.

Why, then, was he called Ruminus, when they who may perchance inquire more diligently may find that he is also that goddess Rumina?

If, then, it was rightly thought unworthy of the majesty of the gods, that in one ear of corn one god should have the care of the joint, another that of the husk, how much more unworthy of that majesty is it, that one thing, and that of the lowest kind, even the giving of the pap to animals that they may be nourished, should be under the care of two gods, one of whom is Jupiter himself, the very king of all things, who does this not along with his own wife, but with some ignoble Rumina (unless perhaps he himself is Rumina, being Ruminus for males and Rumina for females)! I should certainly have said that they had been unwilling to apply to Jupiter a feminine name, had he not been styled in these verses “progenitor and mother,” and had I not read among other surnames of his that of Pecunia [money], which we found as a goddess among those petty deities, as I have already mentioned in the fourth book. But since both males and females have money [pecuniam], why has he not been called both Pecunius and Pecunia? That is their concern.

CHAPTER 12

THAT JUPITER IS ALSO CALLED PECUNIA

How elegantly they have accounted for this name! “He is also called Pecunia,” say they, “because all things belong to him.” Oh how grand an explanation of the name of a deity! Yes; he to whom all things belong is most meanly and most contumeliously called Pecunia. In comparison of all things which are contained by heaven and earth, what are all things together which are possessed by men under the name of money? And this name, forsooth, hath avarice given to Jupiter, that whoever was a lover of money might seem to himself to love not an ordinary god, but the very king of all things himself. But it would be a far different thing if he had been called Riches. For riches are one thing, money another. For we call rich the wise, the just, the good, who have either no money or very little. For they are more truly rich in possessing virtue, since by it, even as re spects things necessary for the body, they are content with what they have. But we call the greedy poor, who are always craving and always wanting. For they may possess ever so great an amount of money; but whatever be the abundance of that, they are not able but to want. And we properly call God Himself rich; not, however, in money, but in omnipotence. Therefore they who have abundance of money are called rich, but inwardly needy if they are greedy. So also, those who have no money are called poor, but inwardly rich if they are wise.

What, then, ought the wise man to think of this theology, in which the king of the gods receives the name of that thing "which no wise man has desired?" For had there been anything wholesomely taught by this philosophy concerning eternal life, how much more appropriately would that god who is the ruler of the world have been called by them, not money, but wisdom, the love of which purges from the filth of avarice, that is, of the love of money!

CHAPTER 13

THAT WHEN IT IS EXPOUNDED WHAT SATURN IS, WHAT GENIUS IS, IT COMES TO THIS, THAT BOTH OF THEM ARE SHOWN TO BE JUPITER

But why speak more of this Jupiter, with whom perchance all the rest are to be identified; so that, he being all, the opinion as to the existence of many gods may remain as a mere opinion, empty of all truth? And they are all to be referred to him, if his various parts and powers are thought of as so many gods, or if the principle of mind which they think to be diffused through all things has received the names of many gods from the various parts which the mass of this visible world combines in itself, and from the manifold administration of nature. For what is Saturn also? “One of the principal gods,” he says, “who has dominion over all sowings.” Does not the exposition of the verses of Valerius Soranus teach that Jupiter is the world, and that he emits all seeds from himself, and receives them into himself?

It is he, then, with whom is the dominion of all sowings. What is Genius? “He is the god who is set over, and has the power of begetting, all things.” Who else than the world do they believe to have this power, to which it has been said:

“Almighty Jove, progenitor and mother?”

And when in another place he says that Genius is the rational soul of every one, and therefore exists separately in each individual, but that the corresponding soul of the world is God, he just comes back to this same thing,—namely, that the soul of the world itself is to be held to be, as it were, the universal genius. This, therefore, is what he calls Jupiter. For if every genius is a god, and the soul of every man a genius, it follows that the soul of every man is a god. But if very absurdity compels even these theologists themselves to shrink from this, it remains that they call that genius god by special and pre-eminent distinction, whom they call the soul of the world, and therefore Jupiter.

CHAPTER 14

CONCERNING THE OFFICES OF MERCURY AND MARS

But they have not found how to refer Mercury and Mars to any parts of the world, and to the works of God which are in the elements; and therefore they have set them at least over human works, making them assistants in speaking and in carrying on wars. Now Mercury, if he has also the power of the speech of the gods, rules also over the king of the gods himself, if Jupiter, as he receives from him the faculty of speech, also speaks according as it is his pleasure to permit him—which surely is absurd; but if it is only the power over human speech which is held to be attributed to him, then we say it is incredible that Jupiter should have condescended to give the pap not only to children, but also to beasts—from which he has been surnamed Ruminus—and yet should have been unwilling that the care of our speech, by which we excel the beasts, should pertain to him. And thus speech itself both belongs to Jupiter, and is Mercury. But if speech itself is said to be Mercury, as those things which are said concerning him by way of interpretation show it to be;—for he is said to have been called Mercury, that is, he who runs between, because speech runs between men: they say also that the Greeks call him Ermes, because speech, or interpretation, which certainly belongs to speech, is called by them hermeneia: also he is said to preside over payments, because speech passes between sellers and buyers: the wings, too, which he has on his head and on his feet, they say mean that speech passes winged through the air: he is also said to have been called the messenger, because by means of speech all our thoughts are expressed;—if, therefore, speech itself is Mercury, then, even by their own confession, he is not a god. But when they make to themselves gods of such as are not even demons, by praying to unclean spirits, they are possessed by such as are not gods, but demons. In like manner, because they have not been able to find for Mars any element or part of the world in which he might perform some works of nature of whatever kind, they have said that he is the god of war, which is a work of men, and that not one which is considered desirable by them. If, therefore, Felicitas should give perpetual peace, Mars would have nothing to do. But if war itself is Mars, as speech is Mercury, I wish it were as true that there were no war to be falsely called a god, as it is true that it is not a god.

CHAPTER 15

CONCERNING CERTAIN STARS WHICH THE PAGANS HAVE CALLED BY THE NAMES OF THEIR GODS

But possibly these stars which have been called by their names are these gods. For they call a certain star Mercury, and likewise a certain other star Mars. But among those stars which are called by the names of gods, is that one which they call Jupiter, and yet with them Jupiter is the world. There also is that one they call Saturn, and yet they give to him no small property besides,—namely, all seeds. There also is that brightest of them all which is called by them Venus, and yet they will have this same Venus to be also the moon:—not to mention how Venus and Juno are said by them to contend about that most brilliant star, as though about another golden apple. For some say that Lucifer belongs to Venus, and some to Juno. But, as usual, Venus conquers. For by far the greatest number assign that star to Venus, so much so that there is scarcely found one of them who thinks otherwise. But since they call Jupiter the king of all, who will not laugh to see his star so far surpassed in brilliancy by the star of Venus? For it ought to have been as much more brilliant than the rest, as he himself is more powerful. They answer that it only appears so because it is higher up, and very much farther away from the earth. If, therefore, its greater dignity has deserved a higher place, why is Saturn higher in the heavens than Jupiter? Was the vanity of the fable which made Jupiter king not able to reach the stars? And has Saturn been permitted to obtain at least in the heavens, what he could not obtain in his own kingdom nor in the Capitol?

But why has Janus received no star? If it is because he is the world, and they are all in him, the world is also Jupiter's, and yet he has one. Did Janus compromise his case as best he could, and instead of the one star which he does not have among the heavenly bodies, accept so many faces on earth? Again, if they think that on account of the stars alone Mercury and Mars are parts of the world, in order that they may be able to have them for gods, since speech and war are not parts of the world, but acts of men, how is it that they have made no altars, established no rites, built no temples for Aries, and Taurus, and Cancer, and Scorpio, and the rest which they number as the celestial signs, and which consist not of single stars, but each of them of many stars, which also they say are situated above those already mentioned in the highest part of the heavens, where a more constant motion causes the stars to follow an undeviating course? And why have they not reckoned them as gods, I do not say among those select gods, but not even among those, as it were, plebeian gods?

CHAPTER 16

CONCERNING APOLLO AND DIANA, AND THE OTHER SELECT GODS WHOM THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE PARTS OF THE WORLD

Although they would have Apollo to be a diviner and physician, they have nevertheless given him a place as some part of the world. They have said that he is also the sun; and likewise they have said that Diana, his sister, is the moon, and the guardian of roads. Whence also they will have her be a virgin, because a road brings forth nothing. They also make both of them have arrows, because those two planets send their rays from the heavens to the earth. They make Vulcan to be the fire of the world; Neptune the waters of the world; Father Dis, that is, Orcus, the earthy and lowest part of the world. Liber and Ceres they set over seeds,—the former over the seeds of males, the latter over the seeds of females; or the one over the fluid part of seed, but the other over the dry part. And all this together is referred to the world, that is, to Jupiter, who is called "progenitor and mother," because he emitted all seeds from himself, and received them into himself. For they also make this same Ceres to be the Great Mother, who they say is none other than the earth, and call her also Juno. And therefore they assign to her the second causes of things, notwithstanding that it has been said to Jupiter, "progenitor and mother of the gods;" because, according to them, the whole world itself is Jupiter's. Minerva, also, because they set her over human arts, and did not find even a star in which to place her, has been said by them to be either the highest ether, or even the moon. Also Vesta herself they have thought to be the highest of the goddesses, because she is the earth; although they have thought that the milder fire of the world, which is used for the ordinary purposes of human life, not the more violent fire, such as belongs to Vulcan, is to be assigned to her. And thus they will have all those select gods to be the world and its parts,—some of them the whole world, others of them its parts; the whole of it Jupiter,—its parts, Genius, Mater Magna, Sol and Luna, or rather Apollo and Diana, and so on. And sometimes they make one god many things; sometimes one thing many gods. Many things are one god in the case of Jupiter; for both the whole world is Jupiter, and the sky alone is Jupiter, and the star alone is said and held to be Jupiter. Juno also is mistress of second causes,—Juno is the air, Juno is the earth; and had she won it over Venus, Juno would have been the star. Likewise Minerva is the highest ether, and Minerva is likewise the moon, which they suppose to be in the lowest limit of the ether. And also they make one thing many gods in this way. The world is both Janus and Jupiter; also the earth is Juno, and Mater Magna, and Ceres.

CHAPTER 17

THAT EVEN VARRO HIMSELF PRONOUNCED HIS OWN OPINIONS REGARDING THE GODS AMBIGUOUS

And the same is true with respect to all the rest, as is true with respect to those things which I have mentioned for the sake of example. They do not explain them, but rather involve them. They rush hither and thither, to this side or to that, according as they are driven by the impulse of erratic opinion; so that even Varro himself has chosen rather to doubt concerning all things, than to affirm anything. For, having written the first of the three last books concerning the certain gods, and having commenced in the second of these to speak of the uncertain gods, he says: “I ought not to be censured for having stated in this book the doubtful opinions concerning the gods. For he who, when he has read them, shall think that they both ought to be, and can be, conclusively judged of, will do so himself. For my own part, I can be more easily led to doubt the things which I have written in the first book, than to attempt to reduce all the things I shall write in this one to any orderly system.” Thus he makes uncertain not only that book concerning the uncertain gods, but also that other concerning the certain gods. Moreover, in that third book concerning the select gods, after having exhibited by anticipation as much of the natural theology as he deemed necessary, and when about to commence to speak of the vanities and lying insanities of the civil theology, where he was not only without the guidance of the truth of things, but was also pressed by the authority of tradition, he says: “I will write in this book concerning the public gods of the Roman people, to whom they have dedicated temples, and whom they have conspicuously distinguished by many adornments; but, as Xenophon of Colophon writes, I will state what I think, not what I am prepared to maintain: it is for man to think those things, for God to know them.”

It is not, then, an account of things comprehended and most certainly believed which he promised, when about to write those things which were instituted by men. He only timidly promises an account of things which are but the subject of doubtful opinion. Nor, indeed, was it possible for him to affirm with the same certainty that Janus was the world, and such like things; or to discover with the same certainty such things as how Jupiter was the son of Saturn, while Saturn was made subject to him as king:—he could, I say, neither affirm nor discover such things with the same certainty with which he knew such things as that the world existed, that the heavens and earth existed, the heavens bright with stars, and the earth fertile through seeds; or with the same perfect conviction with which he believed that this universal mass of nature is governed and administered by a certain invisible and mighty force.

CHAPTER 18

A MORE CREDIBLE CAUSE OF THE RISE OF PAGAN ERROR

A far more credible account of these gods is given, when it is said that they were men, and that to each one of them sacred rites and solemnities were instituted, according to his particular genius, manners, actions, circumstances; which rites and solemnities, by gradually creeping through the souls of men, which are like demons, and eager for things which yield them sport, were spread far and wide; the poets adorning them with lies, and false spirits seducing men to receive them. For it is far more likely that some youth, either impious himself, or afraid of being slain by an impious father, being desirous to reign, dethroned his father, than that (according to Varro's interpretation) Saturn was overthrown by his son Jupiter: for cause, which belongs to Jupiter, is before seed, which belongs to Saturn. For had this been so, Saturn would never have been before Jupiter, nor would he have been the father of Jupiter. For cause always precedes seed, and is never generated from seed. But when they seek to honor by natural interpretation most vain fables or deeds of men, even the acutest men are so perplexed that we are compelled to grieve for their folly also.

CHAPTER 19

CONCERNING THE INTERPRETATIONS WHICH COMPOSE THE REASON OF THE WORSHIP OF SATURN

They said, says Varro, that Saturn was wont to devour all that sprang from him, because seeds returned to the earth from whence they sprang. And when it is said that a lump of earth was put before Saturn to be devoured instead of Jupiter, it is signified, he says, that before the art of ploughing was discovered, seeds were buried in the earth by the hands of men. The earth itself, then, and not seeds, should have been called Saturn, because it in a manner devours what it has brought forth, when the seeds which have sprung from it return again into it. And what has Saturn's receiving of a lump of earth instead of Jupiter to do with this, that the seeds were covered in the soil by the hands of men? Was the seed kept from being devoured, like other things, by being covered with the soil? For what they say would imply that he who put on the soil took away the seed, as Jupiter is said to have been taken away when the lump of soil was offered to Saturn instead of him, and not rather that the soil, by covering the seed, only caused it to be devoured the more eagerly. Then, in that way, Jupiter is the seed, and not the cause of the seed, as was said a little before.

But what shall men do who cannot find anything wise to say, because they are interpreting foolish things? Saturn has a pruning-knife. That, says Varro, is on account of agriculture. Certainly in Saturn's reign there as yet existed no agriculture, and therefore the former times of Saturn are spoken of, because, as the same Varro interprets the fables, the primeval men lived on those seeds which the earth produced spontaneously. Perhaps he received a pruning-knife when he had lost his sceptre; that he who had been a king, and lived at ease during the first part of his time, should become a laborious workman whilst his son occupied the throne. Then he says that boys were wont to be immolated to him by certain peoples, the Carthaginians for instance; and also that adults were immolated by some nations, for example the Gauls—because, of all seeds, the human race is the best. What need we say more concerning this most cruel vanity. Let us rather attend to and hold by this, that these interpretations are not carried up to the true God,—a living, incorporeal, unchangeable nature, from whom a blessed life enduring for ever may be obtained,—but that they end in things which are corporeal, temporal, mutable, and mortal. And whereas it is said in the fables that Saturn castrated his father Coelus, this signifies, says Varro, that the divine seed belongs to Saturn, and not to Coelus; for this reason, as far as a reason can be discovered, namely, that in heaven nothing is born from seed. But, lo! Saturn, if he is the son of Coelus, is the son of Jupiter. For they affirm times without number, and that emphatically, that the heavens are Jupiter. Thus those things which come not of the truth, do very often, without being impelled by any one, themselves overthrow one another. He says that Saturn was called Kronos, which in the Greek tongue signifies a space of time, because, without that, seed cannot be productive. These and many other things are said concerning Saturn, and they are all referred to seed. But Saturn surely, with all that great power, might have sufficed for seed. Why are other gods demanded for it, especially Liber and Libera, that is, Ceres?—concerning whom again, as far as seed is concerned, he says as many things as if he had said nothing concerning Saturn.

CHAPTER 20

CONCERNING THE RITES OF ELEUSINIAN CERES

Now among the rites of Ceres, those Eleusinian rites are much famed which were in the highest repute among the Athenians, of which Varro offers no interpretation except with respect to corn, which Ceres discovered, and with respect to Proserpine, whom Ceres lost, Orcus having carried her away. And this Proserpine herself, he says, signifies the fecundity of seeds. But as this fecundity departed at a certain season, whilst the earth wore an aspect of sorrow through the consequent sterility, there arose an opinion that the daughter of Ceres, that is, fecundity itself, who was called Proserpine, from proserpere (to creep forth, to spring), had been carried away by Orcus, and detained among the inhabitants of the nether world; which circumstance was celebrated with public mourning. But since the same fecundity again returned, there arose joy because Proserpine had been given back by Orcus, and thus these rites were instituted. Then Varro adds, that many things are taught in the mysteries of Ceres which only refer to the discovery of fruits.

CHAPTER 21

CONCERNING THE SHAMEFULNESS OF THE RITES WHICH ARE CELEBRATED IN HONOR OF LIBER

Now as to the rites of Liber, whom they have set over liquid seeds, and therefore not only over the liquors of fruits, among which wine holds, so to speak, the primacy, but also over the seeds of animals:—as to these rites, I am unwilling to undertake to show to what excess of turpitude they had reached, because that would entail a lengthened discourse, though I am not unwilling to do so as a demonstration of the proud stupidity of those who practise them. Among other rites which I am compelled from the greatness of their number to omit, Varro says that in Italy, at the places where roads crossed each other the rites of Liber were celebrated with such unrestrained turpitude, that the private parts of a man were worshipped in his honor. Nor was this abomination transacted in secret that some regard at least might be paid to modesty, but was openly and wantonly displayed. For during the festival of Liber this obscene member, placed on a car, was carried with great honor, first over the crossroads in the country, and then into the city. But in the town of Lavinium a whole month was devoted to Liber alone, during the days of which all the people gave themselves up to the must dissolute conversation, until that member had been carried through the forum and brought to rest in its own place; on which unseemly member it was necessary that the most honorable matron should place a wreath in the presence of all the people. Thus, forsooth, was the god Liber to be appeased in order to the growth of seeds. Thus was enchantment to be driven away from fields, even by a matron's being compelled to do in public what not even a harlot ought to be permitted to do in a theatre, if there were matrons among the spectators. For these reasons, then, Saturn alone was not believed to be sufficient for seeds,—namely, that the impure mind might find occasions for multiplying the gods; and that, being righteously abandoned to uncleanness by the one true God, and being prostituted to the worship of many false gods, through an avidity for ever greater and greater uncleanness, it should call these sacrilegious rites sacred things, and should abandon itself to be violated and polluted by crowds of foul demons.

CHAPTER 22

CONCERNING NEPTUNE, AND SALACIA AND VENILIA

Now Neptune had Salacia to wife, who they say is the nether waters of the sea. Wherefore was Venilia also joined to him? Was it not simply through the lust of the soul desiring a greater number of demons to whom to prostitute itself, and not because this goddess was necessary to the perfection of their sacred rites? But let the interpretation of this illustrious theology be brought forward to restrain us from this censuring by rendering a satisfactory reason. Venilia, says this theology, is the wave which comes to the shore, Salacia the wave which returns into the sea. Why, then, are there two goddesses, when it is one wave which comes and returns? Certainly it is mad lust itself, which in its eagerness for many deities resembles the waves which break on the shore. For though the water which goes is not different from that which returns, still the soul which goes and returns not is defiled by two demons, whom it has taken occasion by this false pretext to invite. I ask thee, O Varro, and you who have read such works of learned men, and think ye have learned something great,—I ask you to interpret this, I do not say in a manner consistent with the eternal and unchangeable nature which alone is God, but only in a manner consistent with the doctrine concerning the soul of the world and its parts, which ye think to be the true gods. It is a somewhat more tolerable thing that ye have made that part of the soul of the world which pervades the sea your god Neptune. Is the wave, then, which comes to the shore and returns to the main, two parts of the world, or two parts of the soul of the world? Who of you is so silly as to think so? Why, then, have they made to you two goddesses? The only reason seems to be, that your wise ancestors have provided, not that many gods should rule you, but that many of such demons as are delighted with those vanities and falsehoods should possess you. But why has that Salacia, according to this interpretation, lost the lower part of the sea, seeing that she was represented as subject to her husband? For in saying that she is the receding wave, ye have put her on the surface. Was she enraged at her husband for taking Venilia as a concubine, and thus drove him from the upper part of the sea?

CHAPTER 23

CONCERNING THE EARTH, WHICH VARRO AFFIRMS TO BE A GODDESS, BECAUSE THAT SOUL OF THE WORLD WHICH HE THINKS TO BE GOD PERVADES ALSO THIS LOWEST PART OF HIS BODY, AND IMPARTS TO IT A DIVINE FORCE

Surely the earth, which we see full of its own living creatures, is one; but for all that, it is but a mighty mass among the elements, and the lowest part of the world. Why, then, would they have it to be a goddess? Is it because it is fruitful? Why, then, are not men rather held to be gods, who render it fruitful by cultivating it; but though they plough it, do not adore it? But, say they, the part of the soul of the world which pervades it makes it a goddess.

As if it were not a far more evident thing, nay, a thing which is not called in question, that there is a soul in man. And yet men are not held to be gods, but (a thing to be sadly lamented), with wonderful and pitiful delusion, are subjected to those who are not gods, and than whom they themselves are better, as the objects of deserved worship and adoration. And certainly the same Varro, in the book concerning the select gods, affirms that there are three grades of soul in universal nature. One which pervades all the living parts of the body, and has not sensation, but only the power of life,—that principle which penetrates into the bones, nails and hair. By this principle in the world trees are nourished, and grow without being possessed of sensation, and live in a manner peculiar to themselves. The second grade of soul is that in which there is sensation. This principle penetrates into the eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, and the organs of sensation. The third grade of soul is the highest, and is called mind, where intelligence has its throne. This grade of soul no mortal creatures except man are possessed of. Now this part of the soul of the world, Varro says, is called God, and in us is called Genius. And the stones and earth in the world, which we see, and which are not pervaded by the power of sensation, are, as it were, the bones and nails of God. Again, the sun, moon, and stars, which we perceive, and by which He perceives, are His organs of perception. Moreover, the ether is His mind; and by the virtue which is in it, which penetrates into the stars, it also makes them gods; and because it penetrates through them into the earth, it makes it the goddess Tellus, whence again it enters and permeates the sea and ocean, making them the god Neptune.

Let him return from this, which he thinks to be natural theology, back to that from which he went out, in order to rest from the fatigue occasioned by the many turnings and windings of his path. Let him return, I say, let him return to the civil theology. I wish to detain him there a while. I have somewhat to say which has to do with that theology. I am not yet saying, that if the earth and stones are similar to our bones and nails, they are in like manner devoid of intelligence, as they are devoid of sensation. Nor am I saying that, if our bones and nails are said to have intelligence, because they are in a man who has intelligence, he who says that the things analogous to these in the world are gods, is as stupid as he is who says that our bones and nails are men. We shall perhaps have occasion to dispute these things with the philosophers. At present, however, I wish to deal with Varro as a political theologian. For it is possible that, though he may seem to have wished to lift up his head, as it were, into the liberty of natural theology, the consciousness that the book with which he was occupied was one concerning a subject belonging to civil theology, may have caused him to relapse into the point of view of that theology, and to say this in order that the ancestors of his nation, and other states, might not be believed to have bestowed on Neptune an irrational worship. What I am to say is this: Since the earth is one, why has not that part of the soul of the world which permeates the earth made it that one goddess which he calls Tellus? But had it done so, what then had become of Orcus, the brother of Jupiter and Neptune, whom they call Father Dis? And where, in that case, had been his wife Proserpine, who, according to another opinion given in the same book, is called, not the fecundity of the earth, but its lower part? But if they say that part of the soul of the world, when it permeates the upper part of the earth, makes the god Father Dis, but when it pervades the nether part of the same the goddess Proserpine; what, in that case, will that Tellus be? For all that which she was has been divided into these two parts, and these two gods; so that it is impossible to find what to make or where to place her as a third goddess, except it be said that those divinities Orcus and Proserpine are the one goddess Tellus, and that they are not three gods, but one or two, whilst notwithstanding they are called three, held to be three, worshipped as three, having their own several altars, their own shrines, rites, images, priests, whilst their own false demons also through these things defile the prostituted soul. Let this further question be answered: What part of the earth does a part of the soul of the world permeate in order to make the god Tellumo? No, says he; but the earth being one and the same, has a double life,—the masculine, which produces seed, and the feminine, which receives and nourishes the seed. Hence it has been called Tellus from the feminine principle, and Tellumo from the masculine. Why, then, do the priests, as he indicates, perform divine service to four gods, two others being added,—namely, to Tellus, Tellumo, Altor, and Rusor? We have already spoken concerning Tellus and Tellumo. But why do they worship Altor? Because, says he, all that springs of the earth is nourished by the earth. Wherefore do they worship Rusor? Because all things return back again to the place whence they proceeded.

CHAPTER 24

CONCERNING THE SURNAMES OF TELLUS AND THEIR SIGNIFICATIONS, WHICH, ALTHOUGH THEY INDICATE MANY PROPERTIES, OUGHT NOT TO HAVE ESTABLISHED THE OPINION THAT THERE IS A CORRESPONDING NUMBER OF GODS

The one earth, then, on account of this fourfold virtue, ought to have had four surnames, but not to have been considered as four gods,—as Jupiter and Juno, though they have so many surnames, are for all that only single deities,—for by all these surnames it is signified that a manifold virtue belongs to one god or to one goddess; but the multitude of surnames does not imply a multitude of gods. But as sometimes even the vilest women themselves grow tired of those crowds which they have sought after under the impulse of wicked passion, so also the soul, become vile, and prostituted to impure spirits, sometimes begins to loathe to multiply to itself gods to whom to surrender itself to be polluted by them, as much as it once delighted in so doing. For Varro himself, as if ashamed of that crowd of gods, would make Tellus to be one goddess. “They say,” says he, “that whereas the one great mother has a tympanum, it is signified that she is the orb of the earth; whereas she has towers on her head, towns are signified; and whereas seats are fixed round about her, it is signified that whilst all things move, she moves not. And their having made the Galli to serve this goddess, signifies that they who are in need of seed ought to follow the earth for in it all seeds are found. By their throwing themselves down before her, it is taught,” he says, “that they who cultivate the earth should not sit idle, for there is always something for them to do. The sound of the cymbals signifies the noise made by the throwing of iron utensils, and by men’s hands, and all other noises connected with agricultural operations; and these cymbals are of brass, because the ancients used brazen utensils in their agriculture before iron was discovered. They place beside the goddess an unbound and tame lion, to show that there is no kind of land so wild and so excessively barren as that it would be profitless to attempt to bring it in and cultivate it.” Then he adds that, because they gave many names and surnames to mother Tellus, it came to be thought that these signified many gods. “They think,” says he, “that Tellus is Ops, because the earth is improved by labor; Mother, because it brings forth much; Great, because it brings forth seed; Proserpine, because fruits creep forth from it; Vesta, because it is invested with herbs. And thus," says he, "they not at all absurdly identify other goddesses with the earth." If, then, it is one goddess (though, if the truth were consulted, it is not even that), why do they nevertheless separate it into many? Let there be many names of one goddess, and let there not be as many goddesses as there are names.

But the authority of the erring ancients weighs heavily on Varro, and compels him, after having expressed this opinion, to show signs of uneasiness; for he immediately adds, "With which things the opinion of the ancients, who thought that there were really many goddesses, does not conflict." How does it not conflict, when it is entirely a different thing to say that one goddess has many names, and to say that there are many goddesses? But it is possible, he says, that the same thing may both be one, and yet have in it a plurality of things. I grant that there are many things in one man; are there therefore in him many men? In like manner, in one goddess there are many things; are there therefore also many goddesses? But let them divide, unite, multiply, reduplicate, and implicate as they like.

These are the famous mysteries of Tellus and the Great Mother, all of which are shown to have reference to mortal seeds and to agriculture. Do these things, then,—namely, the tympanum, the towers, the Galli, the tossing to and fro of limbs, the noise of cymbals, the images of lions,—do these things, having this reference and this end, promise eternal life? Do the mutilated Galli, then, serve this Great Mother in order to signify that they who are in need of seed should follow the earth, as though it were not rather the case that this very service caused them to want seed? For whether do they, by following this goddess, acquire seed, being in want of it, or, by following her, lose seed when they have it? Is this to interpret or to deprecate? Nor is it considered to what a degree malign demons have gained the upper hand, inasmuch as they have been able to exact such cruel rites without having dared to promise any great things in return for them. Had the earth not been a goddess, men would have, by laboring, laid their hands on it in order to obtain seed through it, and would not have laid violent hands on themselves in order to lose seed on account of it. Had it not been a goddess, it would have become so fertile by the hands of others, that it would not have compelled a man to be rendered barren by his own hands; nor that in the festival of Liber an honorable matron put a wreath on the private parts of a man in the sight of the multitude, where perhaps her husband was standing by blushing and perspiring, if there is any shame left in men; and that in the celebration of marriages the newly-married bride was ordered to sit upon Priapus. These things are bad enough, but they are small and contemptible in comparison with that most cruel abomination, or most abominable cruelty, by which either set is so deluded that neither perishes of its wound. There the enchantment of fields is feared; here the amputation of members is not feared. There the modesty of the bride is outraged, but in such a manner as that neither her fruitfulness nor even her virginity is taken away; here a man is so mutilated that he is neither changed into a woman nor remains a man.

CHAPTER 25

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE MUTILATION OF ATYS WHICH THE DOCTRINE OF THE GREEK SAGES SET FORTH

Varro has not spoken of that Atys, nor sought out any interpretation for him, in memory of whose being loved by Ceres the Gallus is mutilated. But the learned and wise Greeks have by no means been silent about an interpretation so holy and so illustrious. The celebrated philosopher Porphyry has said that Atys signifies the flowers of spring, which is the most beautiful season, and therefore was mutilated because the flower falls before the fruit appears. They have not, then, compared the man himself, or rather that semblance of a man they called Atys, to the flower, but his male organs,—these, indeed, fell whilst he was living. Did I say fell? nay, truly they did not fall, nor were they plucked off, but torn away. Nor when that flower was lost did any fruit follow, but rather sterility. What, then, do they say is signified by the castrated Atys himself, and whatever remained to him after his castration? To what do they refer that? What interpretation does that give rise to? Do they, after vain endeavors to discover an interpretation, seek to persuade men that that is rather to be believed which report has made public, and which has also been written concerning his having been a mutilated man? Our Varro has very properly opposed this, and has been unwilling to state it; for it certainly was not unknown to that most learned man.

CHAPTER 26

CONCERNING THE ABOMINATION OF THE SACRED RITES OF THE GREAT MOTHER

Concerning the effeminates consecrated to the same Great Mother, in defiance of all the modesty which belongs to men and women, Varro has not wished to say anything, nor do I remember to have read anywhere aught concerning them. These effeminates, no later than yesterday, were going through the streets and places of Carthage with anointed hair, whitened faces, relaxed bodies, and feminine gait, exacting from the people the means of maintaining their ignominious lives. Nothing has been said concerning them. Interpretation failed, reason blushed, speech was silent. The Great Mother has surpassed all her sons, not in greatness of deity, but of crime. To this monster not even the monstrosity of Janus is to be compared. His deformity was only in his image; hers was the deformity of cruelty in her sacred rites. He has a redundancy of members in stone images; she inflicts the loss of members on men. This abomination is not surpassed by the licentious deeds of Jupiter, so many and so great. He, with all his seductions of women, only disgraced heaven with one Ganymede; she, with so many avowed and public effeminates, has both defiled the earth and outraged heaven. Perhaps we may either compare Saturn to this Magna Mater, or even set him before her in this kind of abominable cruelty, for he mutilated his father. But at the festivals of Saturn, men could rather be slain by the hands of others than mutilated by their own. He devoured his sons, as the poets say, and the natural theologists interpret this as they list. History says he slew them. But the Romans never received, like the Carthaginians, the custom of sacrificing their sons to him. This Great Mother of the gods, however, has brought mutilated men into Roman temples, and has preserved that cruel custom, being believed to promote the strength of the Romans by emasculating their men. Compared with this evil, what are the thefts of Mercury, the wantonness of Venus, and the base and flagitious deeds of the rest of them, which we might bring forward from books, were it not that they are daily sung and danced in the theatres? But what are these things to so great an evil,—an evil whose magnitude was only proportioned to the greatness of the Great Mother,—especially as these are said to have been invented by the poets? as if the poets had also invented this that they are acceptable to the gods. Let it be imputed, then, to the audacity and impudence of the poets that these things have been sung and written of. But that they have been incorporated into the body of divine rites and honors, the deities themselves demanding and extorting that incorporation, what is that but the crime of the gods? nay more, the confession of demons and the deception of wretched men? But as to this that the Great Mother is considered to be worshipped in the appropriate form when she is worshipped by the consecration of mutilated men, this is not an invention of the poets, nay, they have rather shrunk from it with horror than sung of it. Ought any one, then, to be consecrated to these select gods, that he may live blessedly after death, consecrated to whom he could not live decently before death, being subjected to such foul superstitions, and bound over to unclean demons? But all these things, says Varro, are to be referred to the world. Let him consider if it be not rather to the unclean. But why not refer that to the world which is demonstrated to be in the world? We, however, seek for a mind which, trusting to true religion, does not adore the world as its god, but for the sake of God praises the world as a work of God, and, purified from mundane defilements, comes pure to God Himself who founded the world.

CHAPTER 27

CONCERNING THE FIGMENTS OF THE PHYSICAL THEOLOGISTS, WHO NEITHER WORSHIP THE TRUE DIVINITY, NOR PERFORM THE WORSHIP WHEREWITH THE TRUE DIVINITY SHOULD BE SERVED

We see that these select gods have, indeed, become more famous than the rest; not, however, that their merits may be brought to light, but that their opprobrious deeds may not be hid. Whence it is more credible that they were men, as not only poetic but also historical literature has handed down. For this which Virgil says,

“Then from Olympus’ heights came down

Good Saturn, exiled from his throne

By Jove, his mightier heir;”

and what follows with reference to this affair, is fully related by the historian Euhemerus, and has been translated into Latin by Ennius. And as they who have written before us in the Greek or in the Latin tongue against such errors as these have said much concerning this matter, I have thought it unnecessary to dwell upon it. When I consider those physical reasons, then, by which learned and acute men attempt to turn human things into divine things, all I see is that they have been able to refer these things only to temporal works and to that which has a corporeal nature, and even though invisible still mutable; and this is by no means the true God. But if this worship had been performed as the symbolism of ideas at least congruous with religion, though it would indeed have been cause of grief that the true God was not announced and proclaimed by its symbolism, nevertheless it could have been in some degree borne with, when it did not occasion and command the performance of such foul and abominable things. But since it is impiety to worship the body or the soul for the true God, by whose indwelling alone the soul is happy, how much more impious is it to worship those things through which neither soul nor body can obtain either salvation or human honor? Wherefore if with temple, priest, and sacrifice, which are due to the true God, any element of the world be worshipped, or any created spirit, even though not impure and evil, that worship is still evil, not because the things are evil by which the worship is performed, but because those things ought only to be used in the worship of Him to whom alone such worship and service are due. But if any one insist that he worships the one true God,—that is, the Creator of every soul and of every body,—with stupid and monstrous idols, with human victims, with putting a wreath on the male organ, with the wages of unchastity, with the cutting of limbs, with emasculation, with the consecration of effeminates, with impure and obscene plays, such a one does not sin because he worships One who ought not to be worshipped, but because he worships Him who ought to be worshipped in a way in which He ought not to be worshipped. But he who worships with such things,—that is, foul and obscene things,—and that not the true God, namely, the maker of soul and body, but a creature, even though not a wicked creature, whether it be soul or body, or soul and body together, twice sins against God, because he both worships for God what is not God, and also worships with such things as neither God nor what is not God ought to be worshipped with. It is, indeed, manifest how these pagans worship,—that is, how shamefully and criminally they worship; but what or whom they worship would have been left in obscurity, had not their history testified that those same confessedly base and foul rites were rendered in obedience to the demands of the gods, who exacted them with terrible severity. Wherefore it is evident beyond doubt that this whole civil theology is occupied in inventing means for attracting wicked and most impure spirits, inviting them to visit senseless images, and through these to take possession of stupid hearts.

CHAPTER 28

THAT THE DOCTRINE OF VARRO CONCERNING THEOLOGY IS IN NO PART CONSISTENT WITH ITSELF

To what purpose, then, is it that this most learned and most acute man Varro attempts, as it were, with subtle disputation, to reduce and refer all these gods to heaven and earth? He cannot do it. They go out of his hands like water; they shrink back; they slip down and fall. For when about to speak of the females, that is, the goddesses, he says, "Since, as I observed in the first book concerning places, heaven and earth are the two origins of the gods, on which account they are called celestials and terrestrials, and as I began in the former books with heaven, speaking of Janus, whom some have said to be heaven, and others the earth, so I now commence with Tellus in speaking concerning the goddesses." I can understand what embarrassment so great a mind was experiencing. For he is influenced by the perception of a certain plausible resemblance, when he says that the heaven is that which does, and the earth that which suffers, and therefore attributes the masculine principle to the one, and the feminine to the other, not considering that it is rather He who made both heaven and earth who is the maker of both activity and passivity. On this principle he interprets the celebrated mysteries of the Samothracians, and promises, with an air of great devoutness, that he will by writing expound these mysteries, which have not been so much as known to his countrymen, and will send them his exposition. Then he says that he had from many proofs gathered that, in those mysteries, among the images one signifies heaven, another the earth, another the patterns of things, which Plato calls ideas. He makes Jupiter to signify heaven, Juno the earth, Minerva the ideas. Heaven, by which anything is made; the earth, from which it is made; and the pattern, according to which it is made. But, with respect to the last, I am forgetting to say that Plato attributed so great an importance to these ideas as to say, not that anything was made by heaven according to them, but that according to them heaven itself was made. To return, however,—it is to be observed that Varro has, in the book on the select gods, lost that theory of these gods, in whom he has, as it were, embraced all things. For he assigns the male gods to heaven, the females to earth; among which latter he has placed Minerva, whom he had before placed above heaven itself. Then the male god Neptune is in the sea, which pertains rather to earth than to heaven. Last of all, father Dis, who is called in Greek Plouton, another male god, brother of both (Jupiter and Neptune), is also held to be a god of the earth, holding the upper region of the earth himself, and allotting the nether region to his wife Proserpine. How, then, do they attempt to refer the gods to heaven, and the goddesses to earth? What solidity, what consistency, what sobriety has this disputation? But that Tellus is the origin of the goddesses,—the great mother, to wit, beside whom there is continually the noise of the mad and abominable revelry of effeminates and mutilated men, and men who cut themselves, and indulge in frantic gesticulations,—how is it, then, that Janus is called the head of the gods, and Tellus the head of the goddesses? In the one case error does not make one head, and in the other frenzy does not make a sane one. Why do they vainly attempt to refer these to the world? Even if they could do so, no pious person worships the world for the true God. Nevertheless, plain truth makes it evident that they are not able even to do this. Let them rather identify them with dead men and most wicked demons, and no further question will remain.

CHAPTER 29

THAT ALL THINGS WHICH THE PHYSICAL THEOLOGISTS HAVE REFERRED TO THE WORLD AND ITS PARTS, THEY OUGHT TO HAVE REFERRED TO THE ONE TRUE GOD

For all those things which, according to the account given of those gods, are referred to the world by so-called physical interpretation, may, without any religious scruple, be rather assigned to the true God, who made heaven and earth, and created every soul and every body; and the following is the manner in which we see that this may be done. We worship God,—not heaven and earth, of which two parts this world consists, nor the soul or souls diffused through all living things,—but God who made heaven and earth, and all things which are in them; who made every soul, whatever be the nature of its life, whether it have life without sensation and reason, or life with sensation, or life with both sensation and reason.

CHAPTER 30

HOW PIETY DISTINGUISHES THE CREATOR FROM THE CREATURES, SO THAT, INSTEAD OF ONE GOD, THERE ARE NOT WORSHIPPED AS MANY GODS AS THERE ARE WORKS OF THE ONE AUTHOR

And now, to begin to go over those works of the one true God, on account of which these have made to themselves many and false gods, whilst they attempt to give an honorable interpretation to their many most abominable and most infamous mysteries,—we worship that God who has appointed to the natures created by Him both the beginnings and the end of their existing and moving; who holds, knows, and disposes the causes of things; who hath created the virtue of seeds; who hath given to what creatures He would a rational soul, which is called mind; who hath bestowed the faculty and use of speech; who hath imparted the gift of foretelling future things to whatever spirits it seemed to Him good; who also Himself predicts future things, through whom He pleases, and through whom He will, removes diseases who, when the human race is to be corrected and chastised by wars, regulates also the beginnings, progress, and ends of these wars who hath created and governs the most vehement and most violent fire of this world, in due relation and proportion to the other elements of immense nature; who is the governor of all the waters; who hath made the sun brightest of all material lights, and hath given him suitable power and motion; who hath not withdrawn, even from the inhabitants of the nether world, His dominion and power; who hath appointed to mortal natures their suitable seed and nourishment, dry or liquid; who establishes and makes fruitful the earth; who bountifully bestows its fruits on animals and on men; who knows and ordains, not only principal causes, but also subsequent causes; who hath determined for the moon her motion; who affords ways in heaven and on earth for passage from one place to another; who hath granted also to human minds, which He hath created, the knowledge of the various arts for the help of life and nature; who hath appointed the union of male and female for the propagation of offspring; who hath favored the societies of men with the gift of terrestrial fire for the simplest and most familiar purposes, to burn on the hearth and to give light. These are, then, the things which that most acute and most learned man Varro has labored to distribute among the select gods, by I know not what physical interpretation, which he has got from other sources, and also conjectured for himself. But these things the one true God makes and does, but as the same God,—that is, as He who is wholly everywhere, included in no space, bound by no chains, mutable in no part of His being, filling heaven and earth with omnipresent power, not with a needy nature. Therefore He governs all things in such a manner as to allow them to perform and exercise their own proper movements. For although they can be nothing without Him, they are not what He is. He does also many things through angels; but only from Himself does He beatify angels. So also, though He send angels to men for certain purposes, He does not for all that beatify men by the good inherent in the angels, but by Himself, as He does the angels themselves.

CHAPTER 31

WHAT BENEFITS GOD GIVES TO THE FOLLOWERS OF THE TRUTH TO ENJOY OVER AND ABOVE HIS GENERAL BOUNTY

For, besides such benefits as, according to this administration of nature of which we have made some mention, He lavishes on good and bad alike, we have from Him a great manifestation of great love, which belongs only to the good. For although we can never sufficiently give thanks to Him, that we are, that we live, that we behold heaven and earth, that we have mind and reason by which to seek after Him who made all these things, nevertheless, what hearts, what number of tongues, shall affirm that they are sufficient to render thanks to Him for this, that He hath not wholly departed from us, laden and overwhelmed with sins, averse to the contemplation of His light, and blinded by the love of darkness, that is, of iniquity, but hath sent to us His own Word, who is His only Son, that by His birth and suffering for us in the flesh, which He assumed, we might know how much God valued man, and that by that unique sacrifice we might be purified from all our sins, and that, love being shed abroad in our hearts by His

Spirit, we might, having surmounted all difficulties, come into eternal rest, and the ineffable sweetness of the contemplation of Himself?

CHAPTER 32

THAT AT NO TIME IN THE PAST WAS THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTION AWANTING, BUT WAS AT ALL TIMES DECLARED, THOUGH IN VARIOUS FORMS

This mystery of eternal life, even from the beginning of the human race, was, by certain signs and sacraments suitable to the times, announced through angels to those to whom it was meet. Then the Hebrew people was congregated into one republic, as it were, to perform this mystery; and in that republic was foretold, sometimes through men who understood what they spake, and sometimes through men who understood not, all that had transpired since the advent of Christ until now, and all that will transpire. This same nation, too, was afterwards dispersed through the nations, in order to testify to the scriptures in which eternal salvation in Christ had been declared. For not only the prophecies which are contained in words, nor only the precepts for the right conduct of life, which teach morals and piety, and are contained in the sacred writings,—not only these, but also the rites, priesthood, tabernacle or temple, altars, sacrifices, ceremonies, and whatever else belongs to that service which is due to God, and which in Greek is properly called latreia,—all these signified and fore-announced those things which we who believe in Jesus Christ unto eternal life believe to have been fulfilled, or behold in process of fulfillment, or confidently believe shall yet be fulfilled.

CHAPTER 33

THAT ONLY THROUGH THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION COULD THE DECEIT OF MALIGN SPIRITS, WHO REJOICE IN THE ERRORS OF MEN, HAVE BEEN MANIFESTED

This, the only true religion, has alone been able to manifest that the gods of the nations are most impure demons, who desire to be thought gods, availing themselves of the names of certain defunct souls, or the appearance of mundane creatures, and with proud impurity rejoicing in things most base and infamous, as though in divine honors, and envying human souls their conversion to the true God. From whose most cruel and most impious dominion a man is liberated when he believes on Him who has afforded an example of humility, following which men may rise as great as was that pride by which they fell. Hence are not only those gods, concerning whom we have already spoken much, and many others belonging to different nations and lands, but also those of whom we are now treating, who have been selected as it were into the senate of the gods,—selected, however, on account of the notoriousness of their crimes, not on account of the dignity of their virtues,—whose sacred things Varro attempts to refer to certain natural reasons, seeking to make base things honorable, but cannot find how to square and agree with these reasons, because these are not the causes of those rites, which he thinks, or rather wishes to be thought to be so. For had not only these, but also all others of this kind, been real causes, even though they had nothing to do with the true God and eternal life, which is to be sought in religion, they would, by affording some sort of reason drawn from the nature of things, have mitigated in some degree that offence which was occasioned by some turpitude or absurdity in the sacred rites, which was not understood. This he attempted to do in respect to certain fables of the theatres, or mysteries of the shrines; but he did not acquit the theatres of likeness to the shrines, but rather condemned the shrines for likeness to the theatres. However, he in some way made the attempt to soothe the feelings shocked by horrible things, by rendering what he would have to be natural interpretations.

CHAPTER 34

CONCERNING THE BOOKS OF NUMA POMPILIUS, WHICH THE SENATE ORDERED TO BE BURNED, IN ORDER THAT THE CAUSES OF SACRED RIGHTS THEREIN ASSIGNED SHOULD NOT BECOME KNOWN

But, on the other hand, we find, as the same most learned man has related, that the causes of the sacred rites which were given from the books of Numa Pompilius could by no means be tolerated, and were considered unworthy, not only to become known to the religious by being read, but even to lie written in the darkness in which they had been concealed. For now let me say what I promised in the third book of this work to say in its proper place. For, as we read in the same Varro's book on the worship of the gods, "A certain one Terentius had a field at the Janiculum, and once, when his ploughman was passing the plough near to the tomb of Numa Pompilius, he turned up from the ground the books of Numa, in which were written the causes of the sacred institutions; which books he carried to the praetor, who, having read the beginnings of them, referred to the senate what seemed to be a matter of so much importance. And when the chief senators had read certain of the causes why this or that rite was instituted, the senate assented to the dead Numa, and the conscript fathers, as though concerned for the interests of religion, ordered the praetor to burn the books.” Let each one believe what he thinks; nay, let every champion of such impiety say whatever mad contention may suggest. For my part, let it suffice to suggest that the causes of those sacred things which were written down by King Numa Pompilius, the institutor of the Roman rites, ought never to have become known to people or senate, or even to the priests themselves; and also that Numa him self attained to these secrets of demons by an illicit curiosity, in order that he might write them down, so as to be able, by reading, to be reminded of them. However, though he was king, and had no cause to be afraid of any one, he neither dared to teach them to any one, nor to destroy them by obliteration, or any other form of destruction. Therefore, because he was unwilling that any one should know them, lest men should be taught infamous things, and because he was afraid to violate them, lest he should enrage the demons against himself, he buried them in what he thought a safe place, believing that a plough could not approach his sepulchre. But the senate, fearing to condemn the religious solemnities of their ancestors, and therefore compelled to assent to Numa, were nevertheless so convinced that those books were pernicious, that they did not order them to be buried again, knowing that human curiosity would thereby be excited to seek with far greater eagerness after the matter already divulged, but ordered the scandalous relics to be destroyed with fire; because, as they thought it was now a necessity to perform those sacred rites, they judged that the error arising from ignorance of their causes was more tolerable than the disturbance which the knowledge of them would occasion the state.

CHAPTER 35

CONCERNING THE HYDROMANCY THROUGH WHICH NUMA WAS BEFOOLED BY CERTAIN IMAGES OF DEMONS SEEN IN THE WATER

For Numa himself also, to whom no prophet of God, no holy angel was sent, was driven to have recourse to hydromancy, that he might see the images of the gods in the water (or, rather, appearances whereby the demons made sport of him), and might learn from them what he ought to ordain and observe in the sacred rites. This kind of divination, says Varro, was introduced from the Persians, and was used by Numa himself, and at an after time by the philosopher Pythagoras. In this divination, he says, they also inquire at the inhabitants of the nether world, and make use of blood; and this the Greeks call nekromanteian. But whether it be called necromancy or hydromancy it is the same thing, for in either case the dead are supposed to foretell future things. But by what artifices these things are done, let themselves consider; for I am unwilling to say that these artifices were wont to be prohibited by the laws, and to be very severely punished even in the Gentile states, before the advent of our Saviour. I am unwilling, I say, to affirm this, for perhaps even such things were then allowed. However, it was by these arts that Pompilius learned those sacred rites which he gave forth as facts, whilst he concealed their causes; for even he himself was afraid of that which he had learned. The senate also caused the books in which those causes were recorded to be burned. What is it, then, to me, that Varro attempts to adduce all sorts of fanciful physical interpretations, which if these books had contained, they would certainly not have been burned? For otherwise the conscript fathers would also have burned those books which Varro published and dedicated to the high priest Caesar. Now Numa is said to have married the nymph Egeria, because (as Varro explains it in the forementioned book) he carried forth water wherewith to perform his hydromancy. Thus facts are wont to be converted into fables through false colorings. It was by that hydromancy, then, that that over-curious Roman king learned both the sacred rites which were to be written in the books of the priests, and also the causes of those rites,—which latter, however, he was unwilling that any one besides himself should know. Wherefore he made these causes, as it were, to die along with himself, taking care to have them written by themselves, and removed from the knowledge of men by being buried in the earth. Wherefore the things which are written in those books were either abominations of demons, so foul and noxious as to render that whole civil theology execrable even in the eyes of such men as those senators, who had accepted so many shameful things in the sacred rites themselves, or they were nothing else than the accounts of dead men, whom, through the lapse of ages, almost all the Gentile nations had come to believe to be immortal gods; whilst those same demons were delighted even with such rites, having presented themselves to receive worship under pretence of being those very dead men whom they had caused to be thought immortal gods by certain fallacious miracles, performed in order to establish that belief. But, by the hidden providence of the true God, these demons were permitted to confess these things to their friend Numa, having been gained by those arts through which necromancy could be performed, and yet were not constrained to admonish him rather at his death to burn than to bury the books in which they were written. But, in order that these books might be unknown, the demons could not resist the plough by which they were thrown up, or the pen of Varro, through which the things which were done in reference to this matter have come down even to our knowledge. For they are not able to effect anything which they are not allowed; but they are permitted to influence those whom God, in His deep and just judgment, according to their deserts, gives over either to be simply afflicted by them, or to be also subdued and deceived. But how pernicious these writings were judged to be, or how alien from the worship of the true Divinity, may be understood from the fact that the senate preferred to burn what Pompilius had hid, rather than to fear what he feared, so that he could not dare to do that. Wherefore let him who does not desire to live a pious life even now, seek eternal life by means of such rites. But let him who does not wish to have fellowship with malign demons have no fear for the noxious superstition wherewith they are worshipped, but let him recognize the true religion by which they are unmasked and vanquished.

Book VIII

Argument—Augustin comes now to the third kind of theology, that is, the natural, and takes up the question, whether the worship of the gods of the natural theology is of any avail towards securing blessedness in the life to come. This question he prefers to discuss with the Platonists, because the Platonic system is “facile princeps” among philosophies, and makes the nearest approximation to Christian truth. In pursuing this argument, he first refutes Apuleius, and all who maintain that the demons should be worshipped as messengers and mediators between gods and men; demonstrating that by no possibility can men be reconciled to good gods by demons, who are the slaves of vice, and who delight in and patronize what good and wise men abhor and condemn,—The blasphemous fictions of poets, theatrical exhibitions, and magical arts.

CHAPTER 1

THAT THE QUESTION OF NATURAL THEOLOGY IS TO BE DISCUSSED WITH THOSE PHILOSOPHERS WHO SOUGHT A MORE EXCELLENT WISDOM

We shall require to apply our mind with far greater intensity to the present question than was requisite in the solution and unfolding of the questions handled in the preceding books; for it is not with ordinary men, but with philosophers that we must confer concerning the theology which they call natural. For it is not like the fabulous, that is, the theatrical; nor the civil, that is, the urban theology: the one of which displays the crimes of the gods, whilst the other manifests their criminal desires, which demonstrate them to be rather malign demons than gods. It is, we say, with philosophers we have to confer with respect to this theology,—men whose very name, if rendered into Latin, signifies those who profess the love of wisdom. Now, if wisdom is God, who made all things, as is attested by the divine authority and truth, then the philosopher is a lover of God. But since the thing itself, which is called by this name, exists not in all who glory in the name,—for it does not follow, of course, that all who are called philosophers are lovers of true wisdom,—we must needs select from the number of those with whose opinions we have been able to acquaint ourselves by reading, some with whom we may not unworthily engage in the treatment of this question. For I have not in this work undertaken to refute all the vain opinions of the philosophers, but only such as pertain to theology, which Greek word we understand to mean an account or explanation of the divine nature. Nor, again, have I undertaken to refute all the vain theological opinions of all the philosophers, but only of such of them as, agreeing in the belief that there is a divine nature, and that this divine nature is concerned about human affairs, do nevertheless deny that the worship of the one unchangeable God is sufficient for the obtaining of a blessed life after death, as well as at the present time; and hold that, in order to obtain that life, many gods, created, indeed, and appointed to their several spheres by that one God, are to be worshipped. These approach nearer to the truth than even Varro; for, whilst he saw no difficulty in extending natural theology in its entirety even to the world and the soul of the world, these acknowledge God as existing above all that is of the nature of soul, and as the Creator not only of this visible world, which is often called heaven and earth, but also of every soul whatsoever, and as Him who gives blessedness to the rational soul,—of which kind is the human soul,—by participation in His own unchangeable and incorporeal light. There is no one, who has even a slender knowledge of these things, who does not know of the Platonic philosophers, who derive their name from their master Plato. Concerning this Plato, then, I will briefly state such things as I deem necessary to the present question, mentioning beforehand those who preceded him in time in the same department of literature.

CHAPTER 2

CONCERNING THE TWO SCHOOLS OF PHILOSOPHERS, THAT IS, THE ITALIC AND IONIC, AND THEIR FOUNDERS

As far as concerns the literature of the Greeks, whose language holds a more illustrious place than any of the languages of the other nations, history mentions two schools of philosophers, the one called the Italic school, originating in that part of Italy which was formerly called Magna Graecia; the other called the Ionic school, having its origin in those regions which are still called by the name of Greece. The Italic school had for its founder Pythagoras of Samos, to whom also the term “philosophy” is said to owe its origin. For whereas formerly those who seemed to excel others by the laudable manner in which they regulated their lives were called sages, Pythagoras, on being asked what he professed, replied that he was a philosopher, that is, a student or lover of wisdom; for it seemed to him to be the height of arrogance to profess oneself a sage. The founder of the Ionic school, again, was Thales of Miletus, one of those seven who were styled the “seven sages,” of whom six were distinguished by the kind of life they lived, and by certain maxims which they gave forth for the proper conduct of life. Thales was distinguished as an investigator into the nature of things; and, in order that he might have successors in his school, he committed his dissertations to writing. That, however, which especially rendered him eminent was his ability, by means of astronomical calculations, even to predict eclipses of the sun and moon. He thought, however, that water was the first principle of things, and that of it all the elements of the world, the world itself, and all things which are generated in it, ultimately consist. Over all this work, however, which, when we consider the world, appears so admirable, he set nothing of the nature of divine mind. To him succeeded Anaximander, his pupil, who held a different opinion concerning the nature of things; for he did not hold that all things spring from one principle, as Thales did, who held that principle to be water, but thought that each thing springs from its own proper principle. These principles of things he believed to be infinite in number, and thought that they generated innumerable worlds, and all the things which arise in them. He thought, also, that these worlds are subject to a perpetual process of alternate dissolution and regeneration, each one continuing for a longer or shorter period of time, according to the nature of the case; nor did he, any more than Thales, attribute anything to a divine mind in the production of all this activity of things. Anaximander left as his successor his disciple Anaximenes, who attributed all the causes of things to an infinite air. He neither denied nor ignored the existence of gods, but, so far from believing that the air was made by them, he held, on the contrary, that they sprang from the air. Anaxagoras, however, who was his pupil, perceived that a divine mind was the productive cause of all things which we see, and said that all the various kinds of things, according to their several modes and species, were produced out of an infinite matter consisting of homogeneous particles, but by the efficiency of a divine mind. Diogenes, also, another pupil of Anaximenes, said that a certain air was the original substance of things out of which all things were produced, but that it was possessed of a divine reason, without which nothing could be produced from it. Anaxagoras was succeeded by his disciple Archelaus, who also thought that all things consisted of homogeneous particles, of which each particular thing was made, but that those particles were pervaded by a divine mind, which perpetually energized all the eternal bodies, namely, those particles, so that they are alternately united and separated. Socrates, the master of Plato, is said to have been the disciple of Archelaus; and on Plato's account it is that I have given this brief historical sketch of the whole history of these schools.

CHAPTER 3

OF THE SOCRATIC PHILOSOPHY

Socrates is said to have been the first who directed the entire effort of philosophy to the correction and regulation of manners, all who went before him having expended their greatest efforts in the investigation of physical, that is, natural phenomena. However, it seems to me that it cannot be certainly discovered whether Socrates did this because he was wearied of obscure and uncertain things, and so wished to direct his mind to the discovery of something manifest and certain, which was necessary in order to the obtaining of a blessed life,—that one great object toward which the labor, vigilance, and industry of all philosophers seem to have been directed,—or whether (as some yet more favorable to him suppose) he did it because he was unwilling that minds defiled with earthly desires should essay to raise themselves upward to divine things. For he saw that the causes of things were sought for by them,—which causes he believed to be ultimately reducible to nothing else than the will of the one true and supreme God,—and on this account he thought they could only be comprehended by a purified mind; and therefore that all diligence ought to be given to the purification of the life by good morals, in order that the mind, delivered from the depressing weight of lusts, might raise itself upward by its native vigor to eternal things, and might, with purified understanding, contemplate that nature which is incorporeal and unchangeable light, where live the causes of all created natures. It is evident, however, that he hunted out and pursued, with a wonderful pleasantness of style and argument, and with a most pointed and insinuating urbanity, the foolishness of ignorant men, who thought that they knew this or that,—sometimes confessing his own ignorance, and sometimes dissimulating his knowledge, even in those very moral questions to which he seems to have directed the whole force of his mind. And hence there arose hostility against him, which ended in his being calumniously impeached, and condemned to death. Afterwards, however, that very city of the Athenians, which had publicly condemned him, did publicly bewail him,—the popular indignation having turned with such vehemence on his accusers, that one of them perished by the violence of the multitude, whilst the other only escaped a like punishment by voluntary and perpetual exile.

Illustrious, therefore, both in his life and in his death, Socrates left very many disciples of his philosophy, who vied with one another in desire for proficiency in handling those moral questions which concern the chief good (summum bonum), the possession of which can make a man blessed; and because, in the disputations of Socrates, where he raises all manner of questions, makes assertions, and then demolishes them, it did not evidently appear what he held to be the chief good, every one took from these disputations what pleased him best, and every one placed the final good in whatever it appeared to himself to consist. Now, that which is called the final good is that at which, when one has arrived, he is blessed. But so diverse were the opinions held by those followers of Socrates concerning this final good, that (a thing scarcely to be credited with respect to the followers of one master) some placed the chief good in pleasure, as Aristippus, others in virtue, as Antisthenes. Indeed, it were tedious to recount the various opinions of various disciples.

CHAPTER 4

CONCERNING PLATO, THE CHIEF AMONG THE DISCIPLES OF SOCRATES, AND HIS THREEFOLD DIVISION OF PHILOSOPHY

But, among the disciples of Socrates, Plato was the one who shone with a glory which far excelled that of the others, and who not unjustly eclipsed them all. By birth, an Athenian of honorable parentage, he far surpassed his fellow-disciples in natural endowments, of which he was possessed in a wonderful degree. Yet, deeming himself and the Socratic discipline far from sufficient for bringing philosophy to perfection, he travelled as extensively as he was able, going to every place famed for the cultivation of any science of which he could make himself master. Thus he learned from the Egyptians whatever they held and taught as important; and from Egypt, passing into those parts of Italy which were filled with the fame of the Pythagoreans, he mastered, with the greatest facility, and under the most eminent teachers, all the Italic philosophy which was then in vogue. And, as he had a peculiar love for his master Socrates, he made him the speaker in all his dialogues, putting into his mouth whatever he had learned, either from others, or from the efforts of his own powerful intellect, tempering even his moral disputations with the grace and politeness of the Socratic style. And, as the study of wisdom consists in action and contemplation, so that one part of it may be called active, and the other contemplative,—the active part having reference to the conduct of life, that is, to the regulation of morals, and the contemplative part to the investigation into the causes of nature and into pure truth,—Socrates is said to have excelled in the active part of that study, while Pythagoras gave more attention to its contemplative part, on which he brought to bear all the force of his great intellect. To Plato is given the praise of having perfected philosophy by combining both parts into one. He then divides it into three parts,—the first moral, which is chiefly occupied with action; the second natural, of which the object is contemplation; and the third rational, which discriminates between the true and the false. And though this last is necessary both to action and contemplation, it is contemplation, nevertheless, which lays peculiar claim to the office of investigating the nature of truth. Thus this tripartite division is not contrary to that which made the study of wisdom to consist in action and contemplation. Now, as to what Plato thought with respect to each of these parts,—that is, what he believed to be the end of all actions, the cause of all natures, and the light of all intelligences,—it would be a question too long to discuss, and about which we ought not to make any rash affirmation. For, as Plato liked and constantly affected the well-known method of his master

Socrates, namely, that of dissimulating his knowledge or his opinions, it is not easy to discover clearly what he himself thought on various matters, any more than it is to discover what were the real opinions of Socrates. We must, nevertheless, insert into our work certain of those opinions which he expresses in his writings, whether he himself uttered them, or narrates them as expressed by others, and seems himself to approve of,—opinions sometimes favorable to the true religion, which our faith takes up and defends, and sometimes contrary to it, as, for example, in the questions concerning the existence of one God or of many, as it relates to the truly blessed life which is to be after death. For those who are praised as having most closely followed Plato, who is justly preferred to all the other philosophers of the Gentiles, and who are said to have manifested the greatest acuteness in understanding him, do perhaps entertain such an idea of God as to admit that in Him are to be found the cause of existence, the ultimate reason for the understanding, and the end in reference to which the whole life is to be regulated. Of which three things, the first is understood to pertain to the natural, the second to the rational, and the third to the moral part of philosophy. For if man has been so created as to attain, through that which is most excellent in him, to that which excels all things,—that is, to the one true and absolutely good God, without whom no nature exists, no doctrine instructs, no exercise profits,—let Him be sought in whom all things are secure to us, let Him be discovered in whom all truth becomes certain to us, let Him be loved in whom all becomes right to us.

CHAPTER 5

THAT IT IS ESPECIALLY WITH THE PLATONISTS THAT WE MUST CARRY ON OUR DISPUTATIONS ON MATTERS OF THEOLOGY, THEIR OPINIONS BEING PREFERABLE TO THOSE OF ALL OTHER PHILOSOPHERS

If, then, Plato defined the wise man as one who imitates, knows, loves this God, and who is rendered blessed through fellowship with Him in His own blessedness, why discuss with the other philosophers? It is evident that none come nearer to us than the Platonists. To them, therefore, let that fabulous theology give place which delights the minds of men with the crimes of the gods; and that civil theology also, in which impure demons, under the name of gods, have seduced the peoples of the earth given up to earthly pleasures, desiring to be honored by the errors of men, and by filling the minds of their worshippers with impure desires, exciting them to make the representation of their crimes one of the rites of their worship, whilst they themselves found in the spectators of these exhibitions a most pleasing spectacle,—a theology in which, whatever was honorable in the temple, was defiled by its mixture with the obscenity of the theatre, and whatever was base in the theatre was vindicated by the abominations of the temples. To these philosophers also the interpretations of Varro must give place, in which he explains the sacred rites as having reference to heaven and earth, and to the seeds and operations of perishable things; for, in the first place, those rites have not the signification which he would have men believe is attached to them, and therefore truth does not follow him in his attempt so to interpret them; and even if they had this signification, still those things ought not to be worshipped by the rational soul as its god which are placed below it in the scale of nature, nor ought the soul to prefer to itself as gods things to which the true God has given it the preference. The same must be said of those writings pertaining to the sacred rites, which Numa Pompilius took care to conceal by causing them to be buried along with himself, and which, when they were afterwards turned up by the plough, were burned by order of the senate. And, to treat Numa with all honor, let us mention as belonging to the same rank as these writings that which Alexander of Macedon wrote to his mother as communicated to him by Leo, an Egyptian high priest. In this letter not only Picus and Faunus, and AEneas and Romulus or even Hercules, and AEsculapius and Liber, born of Semele, and the twin sons of Tyndareus, or any other mortals who have been deified, but even the principal gods themselves, to whom Cicero, in his Tusculan questions, alludes without mentioning their names, Jupiter, Juno, Saturn, Vulcan, Vesta, and many others whom Varro attempts to identify with the parts or the elements of the world, are shown to have been men. There is, as we have said, a similarity between this case and that of Numa; for the priest being afraid because he had revealed a mystery, earnestly begged of Alexander to command his mother to burn the letter which conveyed these communications to her. Let these two theologies, then, the fabulous and the civil, give place to the Platonic philosophers, who have recognized the true God as the author of all things, the source of the light of truth, and the bountiful bestower of all blessedness. And not these only, but to these great acknowledgers of so great a God, those philosophers must yield who, having their mind enslaved to their body, supposed the principles of all things to be material; as Thales, who held that the first principle of all things was water; Anaximenes, that it was air; the Stoics, that it was fire; Epicurus, who affirmed that it consisted of atoms, that is to say, of minute corpuscules; and many others whom it is needless to enumerate, but who believed that bodies, simple or compound, animate or inanimate, but nevertheless bodies, were the cause and principle of all things. For some of them—as, for instance, the Epicureans—believed that living things could originate from things without life; others held that all things living or without life spring from a living principle, but that, nevertheless, all things, being material, spring from a material principle. For the Stoics thought that fire, that is, one of the four material elements of which this visible world is composed, was both living and intelligent, the maker of the world and of all things contained in it,—that it was in fact God. These and others like them have only been able to suppose that which their hearts enslaved to sense have vainly suggested to them. And yet they have within themselves something which they could not see: they represented to themselves inwardly things which they had seen without, even when they were not seeing them, but only thinking of them. But this representation in thought is no longer a body, but only the similitude of a body; and that faculty of the mind by which this similitude of a body is seen is neither a body nor the similitude of a body; and the faculty which judges whether the representation is beautiful or ugly is without doubt superior to the object judged of. This principle is the understanding of man, the rational soul; and it is certainly not a body, since that similitude of a body which it beholds and judges of is itself not a body. The soul is neither earth, nor water, nor air, nor fire, of which four bodies, called the four elements, we see that this world is composed. And if the soul is not a body, how should God, its Creator, be a body? Let all those philosophers, then, give place, as we have said, to the Platonists, and those also who have been ashamed to say that God is a body, but yet have thought that our souls are of the same nature as God. They have not been staggered by the great changeableness of the soul,—an attribute which it would be impious to ascribe to the divine nature,—but they say it is the body which changes the soul, for in itself it is unchangeable. As well might they say, “Flesh is wounded by some body, for in itself it is invulnerable." In a word, that which is unchangeable can be changed by nothing, so that that which can be changed by the body cannot properly be said to be immutable.

CHAPTER 6

CONCERNING THE MEANING OF THE PLATONISTS IN THAT PART OF PHILOSOPHY CALLED PHYSICAL

These philosophers, then, whom we see not undeservedly exalted above the rest in fame and glory, have seen that no material body is God, and therefore they have transcended all bodies in seeking for God. They have seen that whatever is changeable is not the most high God, and therefore they have transcended every soul and all changeable spirits in seeking the supreme. They have seen also that, in every changeable thing, the form which makes it that which it is, whatever be its mode or nature, can only be through Him who truly is, because He is unchangeable. And therefore, whether we consider the whole body of the world, its figure, qualities, and orderly movement, and also all the bodies which are in it; or whether we consider all life, either that which nourishes and maintains, as the life of trees, or that which, besides this, has also sensation, as the life of beasts; or that which adds to all these intelligence, as the life of man; or that which does not need the support of nutriment, but only maintains, feels, understands, as the life of angels,—all can only be through Him who absolutely is. For to Him it is not one thing to be, and another to live, as though He could be, not living; nor is it to Him one thing to live, and another thing to understand, as though He could live, not understanding; nor is it to Him one thing to understand, another thing to be blessed, as though He could understand and not be blessed. But to Him to live, to understand, to be blessed, are to be. They have understood, from this unchangeableness and this simplicity, that all things must have been made by Him, and that He could Himself have been made by none. For they have considered that whatever is is either body or life, and that life is something better than body, and that the nature of body is sensible, and that of life intelligible. Therefore they have preferred the intelligible nature to the sensible. We mean by sensible things such things as can be perceived by the sight and touch of the body; by intelligible things, such as can be understood by the sight of the mind. For there is no corporeal beauty, whether in the condition of a body, as figure, or in its movement, as in music, of which it is not the mind that judges. But this could never have been, had there not existed in the mind itself a superior form of these things, without bulk, without noise of voice, without space and time. But even in respect of these things, had the mind not been mutable, it would not have been possible for one to judge better than another with regard to sensible forms. He who is clever, judges better than he who is slow, he who is skilled than he who is unskillful, he who is practised than he who is unpractised; and the same person judges better after he has gained experience than he did before. But that which is capable of more and less is mutable; whence able men, who have thought deeply on these things, have gathered that the first form is not to be found in those things whose form is changeable. Since, therefore, they saw that body and mind might be more or less beautiful in form, and that, if they wanted form, they could have no existence, they saw that there is some existence in which is the first form, unchangeable, and therefore not admitting of degrees of comparison, and in that they most rightly believed was the first principle of things which was not made, and by which all things were made. Therefore that which is known of God He manifested to them when His invisible things were seen by them, being understood by those things which have been made; also His eternal power and Godhead by whom all visible and temporal things have been created. We have said enough upon that part of theology which they call physical, that is, natural.

CHAPTER 7

HOW MUCH THE PLATONISTS ARE TO BE HELD AS EXCELLING OTHER PHILOSOPHERS IN LOGIC, I.E. RATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Then, again, as far as regards the doctrine which treats of that which they call logic, that is, rational philosophy, far be it from us to compare them with those who attributed to the bodily senses the faculty of discriminating truth, and thought, that all we learn is to be measured by their untrustworthy and fallacious rules. Such were the Epicureans, and all of the same school. Such also were the Stoics, who ascribed to the bodily senses that expertness in disputation which they so ardently love, called by them dialectic, asserting that from the senses the mind conceives the notions (ennoiai) of those things which they explicate by definition. And hence is developed the whole plan and connection of their learning and teaching. I often wonder, with respect to this, how they can say that none are beautiful but the wise; for by what bodily sense have they perceived that beauty, by what eyes of the flesh have they seen wisdom's comeliness of form? Those, however, whom we justly rank before all others, have distinguished those things which are conceived by the mind from those which are perceived by the senses, neither taking away from the senses anything to which they are competent, nor attributing to them anything beyond their competency. And the light of our understandings, by which all things are learned by us, they have affirmed to be that selfsame God by whom all things were made.

CHAPTER 8

THAT THE PLATONISTS HOLD THE FIRST RANK IN MORAL PHILOSOPHY ALSO

The remaining part of philosophy is morals, or what is called by the Greeks ethike, in which is discussed the question concerning the chief good,—that which will leave us nothing further to seek in order to be blessed, if only we make all our actions refer to it, and seek it not for the sake of something else, but for its own sake. Therefore it is called the end, because we wish other things on account of it, but itself only for its own sake. This beatific good, therefore, according to some, comes to a man from the body, according to others, from the mind, and, according to others, from both together. For they saw that man himself consists of soul and body; and therefore they believed that from either of these two, or from both together, their well-being must proceed, consisting in a certain final good, which could render them blessed, and to which they might refer all their actions, not requiring anything ulterior to which to refer that good itself. This is why those who have added a third kind of good things, which they call extrinsic, —as honor, glory, wealth, and the like,—have not regarded them as part of the final good, that is, to be sought after for their own sake, but as things which are to be sought for the sake of something else, affirming that this kind of good is good to the good, and evil to the evil. Wherefore, whether they have sought the good of man from the mind or from the body, or from both together, it is still only from man they have supposed that it must be sought. But they who have sought it from the body have sought it from the inferior part of man; they who have sought it from the mind, from the superior part; and they who have sought it from both, from the whole man. Whether therefore, they have sought it from any part, or from the whole man, still they have only sought it from man; nor have these differences, being three, given rise only to three dissentient sects of philosophers, but to many. For diverse philosophers have held diverse opinions, both concerning the good of the body, and the good of the mind, and the good of both together. Let, therefore, all these give place to those philosophers who have not affirmed that a man is blessed by the enjoyment of the body, or by the enjoyment of the mind, but by the enjoyment of God,—enjoying Him, however, not as the mind does the body or itself, or as one friend enjoys another, but as the eye enjoys light, if, indeed, we may draw any comparison between these things. But what the nature of this comparison is, will, if God help me, be shown in another place, to the best of my ability. At present, it is sufficient to mention that Plato determined the final good to be to live according to virtue, and affirmed that he only can attain to virtue who knows and imitates God,—which knowledge and imitation are the only cause of blessedness. Therefore he did not doubt that to philosophize is to love God, whose nature is incorporeal. Whence it certainly follows that the student of wisdom, that is, the philosopher, will then become blessed when he shall have begun to enjoy God. For though he is not necessarily blessed who enjoys that which he loves (for many are miserable by loving that which ought not to be loved, and still more miserable when they enjoy it), nevertheless no one is blessed who does not enjoy that which he loves. For even they who love things which ought not to be loved do not count themselves blessed by loving merely, but by enjoying them. Who, then, but the most miserable will deny that he is blessed, who enjoys that which he loves, and loves the true and highest good? But the true and highest good, according to Plato, is God, and therefore he would call him a philosopher who loves God; for philosophy is directed to the obtaining of the blessed life, and he who loves God is blessed in the enjoyment of God.

CHAPTER 9

CONCERNING THAT PHILOSOPHY WHICH HAS COME NEAREST TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

Whatever philosophers, therefore, thought concerning the supreme God, that He is both the maker of all created things, the light by which things are known, and the good in reference to which things are to be done; that we have in Him the first principle of nature, the truth of doctrine, and the happiness of life,—whether these philosophers may be more suitably called Platonists, or whether they may give some other name to their sect; whether, we say, that only the chief men of the Ionic school, such as Plato himself, and they who have well understood him, have thought thus; or whether we also include the Italic school, on account of Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans, and all who may have held like opinions; and, lastly, whether also we include all who have been held wise men and philosophers among all nations who are discovered to have seen and taught this, be they Atlantics, Libyans, Egyptians, Indians, Persians, Chaldeans, Scythians, Gauls, Spaniards, or of other nations,—we prefer these to all other philosophers, and confess that they approach nearest to us.

CHAPTER 10

THAT THE EXCELLENCY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION IS ABOVE ALL THE SCIENCE OF PHILOSOPHERS

For although a Christian man instructed only in ecclesiastical literature may perhaps be ignorant of the very name of Platonists, and may not even know that there have existed two schools of philosophers speaking the Greek tongue, to wit, the Ionic and Italic, he is nevertheless not so deaf with respect to human affairs, as not to know that philosophers profess the study, and even the possession, of wisdom. He is on his guard, however, with respect to those who philosophize according to the elements of this world, not according to God, by whom the world itself was made; for he is warned by the precept of the apostle, and faithfully hears what has been said, “Beware that no one deceive you through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the elements of the world.” Then, that he may not suppose that all philosophers are such as do this, he hears the same apostle say concerning certain of them, “Because that which is known of God is manifest among them, for God has manifested it to them. For His invisible things from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, also His eternal power and Godhead.” And, when speaking to the Athenians, after having spoken a mighty thing concerning God, which few are able to understand, “In Him we live, and move, and have our being,” he goes on to say, “As certain also of your own have said.” He knows well, too, to be on his guard against even these philosophers in their errors. For where it has been said by him, “that God has manifested to them by those things which are made His invisible things, that they might be seen by the understanding,” there it has also been said that they did not rightly worship God Himself, because they paid divine honors, which are due to Him alone, to other things also to which they ought not to have paid them,—”because, knowing God, they glorified Him not as God: neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of corruptible man, and of birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things;”—where the apostle would have us understand him as meaning the Romans, and Greeks, and Egyptians, who gloried in the name of wisdom; but concerning this we will dispute with them afterwards. With respect, however, to that wherein they agree with us we prefer them to all others namely, concerning the one God, the author of this universe, who is not only above every body, being incorporeal, but also above all souls, being incorruptible—our principle, our light, our good. And though the Christian man, being ignorant of their writings, does not use in disputation words which he has not learned,—not calling that part of philosophy natural (which is the Latin term), or physical (which is the Greek one), which treats of the investigation of nature; or that part rational, or logical, which deals with the question how truth may be discovered; or that part moral, or ethical, which concerns morals, and shows how good is to be sought, and evil to be shunned,—he is not, therefore, ignorant that it is from the one true and supremely good God that we have that nature in which we are made in the image of God, and that doctrine by which we know Him and ourselves, and that grace through which, by cleaving to Him, we are blessed. This, therefore, is the cause why we prefer these to all the others, because, whilst other philosophers have worn out their minds and powers in seeking the causes of things, and endeavoring to discover the right mode of learning and of living, these, by knowing God, have found where resides the cause by which the universe has been constituted, and the light by which truth is to be discovered, and the fountain at which felicity is to be drunk. All philosophers, then, who have had these thoughts concerning God, whether Platonists or others, agree with us. But we have thought it better to plead our cause with the Platonists, because their writings are better known. For the Greeks, whose tongue holds the highest place among the languages of the Gentiles, are loud in their praises of these writings; and the Latins, taken with their excellence, or their renown, have studied them more heartily than other writings, and, by translating them into our tongue, have given them greater celebrity and notoriety.

CHAPTER 11

HOW PLATO HAS BEEN ABLE TO APPROACH SO NEARLY TO CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

Certain partakers with us in the grace of Christ, wonder when they hear and read that Plato had conceptions concerning God, in which they recognize considerable agreement with the truth of our religion. Some have concluded from this, that when he went to Egypt he had heard the prophet Jeremiah, or, whilst travelling in the same country, had read the prophetic scriptures, which opinion I myself have expressed in certain of my writings. But a careful calculation of dates, contained in chronological history, shows that Plato was born about a hundred years after the time in which Jeremiah prophesied, and, as he lived eighty-one years, there are found to have been about seventy years from his death to that time when Ptolemy, king of Egypt, requested the prophetic scriptures of the Hebrew people to be sent to him from Judea, and committed them to seventy Hebrews, who also knew the Greek tongue, to be translated and kept. Therefore, on that voyage of his, Plato could neither have seen Jeremiah, who was dead so long before, nor have read those same scriptures which had not yet been translated into the Greek language, of which he was a master, unless, indeed, we say that, as he was most earnest in the pursuit of knowledge, he also studied those writings through an interpreter, as he did those of the Egyptians,—not, indeed, writing a translation of them (the facilities for doing which were only gained even by Ptolemy in return for munificent acts of kindness, though fear of his kingly authority might have seemed a sufficient motive), but learning as much as he possibly could concerning their contents by means of conversation. What warrants this supposition are the opening verses of Genesis: “In the beginning God made the heaven and earth. And the earth was invisible, and without order; and darkness was over the abyss: and the Spirit of God moved over the waters.” For in the Timaeus, when writing on the formation of the world, he says that God first united earth and fire; from which it is evident that he assigns to fire a place in heaven. This opinion bears a certain resemblance to the statement, “In the beginning God made heaven and earth.” Plato next speaks of those two intermediary elements, water and air, by which the other two extremes, namely, earth and fire, were mutually united; from which circumstance he is thought to have so understood the words, “The Spirit of God moved over the waters.” For, not paying sufficient attention to the designations given by those scriptures to the Spirit of God, he may have thought that the four elements are spoken of in that place, because the air also is called spirit. Then, as to Plato’s saying that the philosopher is a lover of God, nothing shines forth more conspicuously in those sacred writings. But the most striking thing in this connection, and that which most of all inclines me almost to assent to the opinion that Plato was not ignorant of those writings, is the answer which was given to the question elicited from the holy Moses when the words of God were conveyed to him by the angel; for, when he asked what was the name of that God who was commanding him to go and deliver the Hebrew people out of Egypt, this answer was given: “I am who am; and thou shalt say to the children of Israel, He who is sent me unto you;” as though compared with Him that truly is, because He is unchangeable, those things which have been created mutable are not,—a truth which Plato zealously held, and most diligently commended. And I know not whether this sentiment is anywhere to be found in the books of those who were before Plato, unless in that book where it is said, “I am who am; and thou shalt say to the children of Israel, who is sent me unto you.”

CHAPTER 12

THAT EVEN THE PLATONISTS, THOUGH THEY SAY THESE THINGS CONCERNING THE ONE TRUE GOD, NEVERTHELESS THOUGHT THAT SACRED RITES WERE TO BE PERFORMED IN HONOR OF MANY GODS

But we need not determine from what source he learned these things,—whether it was from the books of the ancients who preceded him, or, as is more likely, from the words of the apostle: “Because that which is known of God, has been manifested among them, for God hath manifested it to them. For His invisible things from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by those things which have been made, also His eternal power and Godhead.” From whatever source he may have derived this knowledge, then, I think I have made it sufficiently plain that I have not chosen the Platonic philosophers undeservedly as the parties with whom to discuss; because the question we have just taken up concerns the natural theology,—the question, namely, whether sacred rites are to be performed to one God, or to many, for the sake of the happiness which is to be after death. I have specially chosen them because their juster thoughts concerning the one God who made heaven and earth, have made them illustrious among philosophers. This has given them such superiority to all others in the judgment of posterity, that, though Aristotle, the disciple of Plato, a man of eminent abilities, inferior in eloquence to Plato, yet far superior to many in that respect, had founded the Peripatetic sect,—so called because they were in the habit of walking about during their disputations,—and though he had, through the greatness of his fame, gathered very many disciples into his school, even during the life of his master; and though Plato at his death was succeeded in his school, which was called the Academy, by Speusippus, his sister’s son, and Xenocrates, his beloved disciple, who, together with their successors, were called from this name of the school, Academics; nevertheless the most illustrious recent philosophers, who have chosen to follow Plato, have been unwilling to be called Peripatetics, or Academics, but have preferred the name of Platonists. Among these were the renowned Plotinus, Iamblichus, and Porphyry, who were Greeks, and the African Apuleius, who was learned both in the Greek and Latin tongues. All these, however, and the rest who were of the same school, and also Plato himself, thought that sacred rites ought to be performed in honor of many gods.

CHAPTER 13

CONCERNING THE OPINION OF PLATO, ACCORDING TO WHICH HE DEFINED THE GODS AS BEINGS ENTIRELY GOOD AND THE FRIENDS OF VIRTUE

Therefore, although in many other important respects they differ from us, nevertheless with respect to this particular point of difference, which I have just stated, as it is one of great moment, and the question on hand concerns it, I will first ask them to what gods they think that sacred rites are to be performed,—to the good or to the bad, or to both the good and the bad? But we have the opinion of Plato affirming that all the gods are good, and that there is not one of the gods bad. It follows, therefore, that these are to be performed to the good, for then they are performed to gods; for if they are not good, neither are they gods. Now, if this be the case (for what else ought we to believe concerning the gods?), certainly it explodes the opinion that the bad gods are to be propitiated by sacred rites in order that they may not harm us, but the good gods are to be invoked in order that they may assist us. For there are no bad gods, and it is to the good that, as they say, the due honor of such rites is to be paid. Of what character, then, are those gods who love scenic displays, even demanding that a place be given them among divine things, and that they be exhibited in their honor? The power of these gods proves that they exist, but their liking such things proves that they are bad. For it is well-known what Plato’s opinion was concerning scenic plays. He thinks that the poets themselves, because they have composed songs so unworthy of the majesty and goodness of the gods, ought to be banished from the state. Of what character, therefore, are those gods who contend with Plato himself about those scenic plays? He does not suffer the gods to be defamed by false crimes; the gods command those same crimes to be celebrated in their own honor.

In fine, when they ordered these plays to be inaugurated, they not only demanded base things, but also did cruel things, taking from Titus Latinius his son, and sending a disease upon him because he had refused to obey them, which they removed when he had fulfilled their commands. Plato, however, bad though they were, did not think they were to be feared; but, holding to his opinion with the utmost firmness and constancy, does not hesitate to remove from a well-ordered state all the sacrilegious follies of the poets, with which these gods are delighted because they themselves are impure. But Labeo places this same Plato (as I have mentioned already in the second book) among the demi-gods. Now Labeo thinks that the bad deities are to be propitiated with bloody victims, and by fasts accompanied with the same, but the good deities with plays, and all other things which are associated with joyfulness. How comes it, then, that the demi-god Plato so persistently dares to take away those pleasures, because he deems them base, not from the demi-gods but from the gods, and these the good gods? And, moreover, those very gods themselves do certainly refute the opinion of Labeo, for they showed themselves in the case of Latinius to be not only wanton and sportive, but also cruel and terrible. Let the Platonists, therefore, explain these things to us, since, following the opinion of their master, they think that all the gods are good and honorable, and friendly to the virtues of the wise, holding it unlawful to think otherwise concerning any of the gods. We will explain it, say they. Let us then attentively listen to them.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE OPINION OF THOSE WHO HAVE SAID THAT RATIONAL SOULS ARE OF THREE KINDS, TO WIT, THOSE OF THE CELESTIAL GODS, THOSE OF THE AERIAL DEMONS, AND THOSE OF TERRESTRIAL MEN

There is, say they, a threefold division of all animals endowed with a rational soul, namely, into gods, men, and demons. The gods occupy the loftiest region, men the lowest, the demons the middle region. For the abode of the gods is heaven, that of men the earth, that of the demons the air. As the dignity of their regions is diverse, so also is that of their natures; therefore the gods are better than men and demons. Men have been placed below the gods and demons, both in respect of the order of the regions they inhabit, and the difference of their merits. The demons, therefore, who hold the middle place, as they are inferior to the gods, than whom they inhabit a lower region, so they are superior to men, than whom they inhabit a loftier one. For they have immortality of body in common with the gods, but passions of the mind in common with men. On which account, say they, it is not wonderful that they are delighted with the obscenities of the theatre, and the fictions of the poets, since they are also subject to human passions, from which the gods are far removed, and to which they are altogether strangers. Whence we conclude that it was not the gods, who are all good and highly exalted, that Plato deprived of the pleasure of theatric plays, by reprobating and prohibiting the fictions of the poets, but the demons.

Of these things many have written: among others Apuleius, the Platonist of Madaura, who composed a whole work on the subject, entitled, Concerning the God of Socrates. He there discusses and explains of what kind that deity was who attended on Socrates, a sort of familiar, by whom it is said he was admon ished to desist from any action which would not turn out to his advantage. He asserts most distinctly, and proves at great length, that it was not a god but a demon; and he discusses with great diligence the opinion of Plato concerning the lofty estate of the gods, the lowly estate of men, and the middle estate of demons. These things being so, how did Plato dare to take away, if not from the gods, whom he removed from all human contagion, certainly from the demons, all the pleasures of the theatre, by expelling the poets from the state? Evidently in this way he wished to admonish the human soul, although still confined in these moribund members, to despise the shameful commands of the demons, and to detest their impurity, and to choose rather the splendor of virtue. But if Plato showed himself virtuous in answering and prohibiting these things, then certainly it was shameful of the demons to command them. Therefore either Apuleius is wrong, and Socrates' familiar did not belong to this class of deities, or Plato held contradictory opinions, now honoring the demons, now removing from the well-regulated state the things in which they delighted, or Socrates is not to be congratulated on the friendship of the demon, of which Apuleius was so ashamed that he entitled his book On the God of Socrates, whilst according to the tenor of his discussion, wherein he so diligently and at such length distinguishes gods from demons, he ought not to have entitled it, Concerning the God, but Concerning the Demon of Socrates. But he preferred to put this into the discussion itself rather than into the title of his book. For, through the sound doctrine which has illuminated human society, all, or almost all men have such a horror at the name of demons, that every one who before reading the dissertation of Apuleius, which sets forth the dignity of demons, should have read the title of the book, On the Demon of Socrates, would certainly have thought that the author was not a sane man. But what did even Apuleius find to praise in the demons, except subtlety and strength of body and a higher place of habitation? For when he spoke generally concerning their manners, he said nothing that was good, but very much that was bad. Finally, no one, when he has read that book, wonders that they desired to have even the obscenity of the stage among divine things, or that, wishing to be thought gods, they should be delighted with the crimes of the gods, or that all those sacred solemnities, whose obscenity occasions laughter, and whose shameful cruelty causes horror, should be in agreement with their passions.

CHAPTER 15

THAT THE DEMONS ARE NOT BETTER THAN MEN BECAUSE OF THEIR AERIAL BODIES, OR ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR SUPERIOR PLACE OF ABODE

Wherefore let not the mind truly religious, and submitted to the true God, suppose that demons are better than men, because they have better bodies. Otherwise it must put many beasts before itself which are superior to us both in acuteness of the senses, in ease and quickness of movement, in strength and in long-continued vigor of body. What man can equal the eagle or the vulture in strength of vision? Who can equal the dog in acuteness of smell? Who can equal the hare, the stag, and all the birds in swiftness? Who can equal in strength the lion or the elephant? Who can equal in length of life the serpents, which are affirmed to put off old age along with their skin, and to return to youth again? But as we are better than all these by the possession of reason and understanding, so we ought also to be better than the demons by living good and virtuous lives. For divine providence gave to them bodies of a better quality than ours, that that in which we excel them might in this way be commended to us as deserving to be far more cared for than the body, and that we should learn to despise the bodily excellence of the demons compared with goodness of life, in respect of which we are better than they, knowing that we too shall have immortality of body,—not an immortality tortured by eternal punishment, but that which is consequent on purity of soul.

But now, as regards loftiness of place, it is altogether ridiculous to be so influenced by the fact that the demons inhabit the air, and we the earth, as to think that on that account they are to be put before us; for in this way we put all the birds before ourselves. But the birds, when they are weary with flying, or require to repair their bodies with food, come back to the earth to rest or to feed, which the demons, they say, do not. Are they, therefore, inclined to say that the birds are superior to us, and the demons superior to the birds? But if it be madness to think so, there is no reason why we should think that, on account of their inhabiting a loftier element, the demons have a claim to our religious submission. But as it is really the case that the birds of the air are not only not put before us who dwell on the earth; but are even subjected to us on account of the dignity of the rational soul which is in us, so also it is the case that the demons, though they are aerial, are not better than we who are terrestrial because the air is higher than the earth, but, on the contrary, men are to be put before demons because their despair is not to be compared to the hope of pious men. Even that law of Plato's, according to which he mutually orders and arranges the four elements, inserting between the two extreme elements—namely, fire, which is in the highest degree mobile, and the immoveable earth—the two middle ones, air and water, that by how much the air is higher up than the water, and the fire than the air, by so much also are the waters higher than the earth,—this law, I say, sufficiently admonishes us not to estimate the merits of animated creatures according to the grades of the elements. And Apuleius himself says that man is a terrestrial animal in common with the rest, who is nevertheless to be put far before aquatic animals, though Plato puts the waters themselves before the land. By this he would have us understand that the same order is not to be observed when the question concerns the merits of animals, though it seems to be the true one in the gradation of bodies; for it appears to be possible that a soul of a higher order may inhabit a body of a lower, and a soul of a lower order a body of a higher.

CHAPTER 16

WHAT APULEIUS THE PLATONIST THOUGHT CONCERNING THE MANNERS AND ACTIONS OF DEMONS

The same Apuleius, when speaking concerning the manners of demons, said that they are agitated with the same perturbations of mind as men; that they are provoked by injuries, propitiated by services and by gifts, rejoice in honors, are delighted with a variety of sacred rites, and are annoyed if any of them be neglected. Among other things, he also says that on them depend the divinations of augurs, soothsayers, and prophets, and the revelations of dreams, and that from them also are the miracles of the magicians. But, when giving a brief definition of them, he says, "Demons are of an animal nature, passive in soul, rational in mind, aerial in body, eternal in time.” “Of which five things, the three first are common to them and us, the fourth peculiar to themselves, and the fifth common to therewith the gods.” But I see that they have in common with the gods two of the first things, which they have in common with us. For he says that the gods also are animals; and when he is assigning to every order of beings its own element, he places us among the other terrestrial animals which live and feel upon the earth. Wherefore, if the demons are animals as to genus, this is common to them, not only with men, but also with the gods and with beasts; if they are rational as to their mind, this is common to them with the gods and with men; if they are eternal in time, this is common to them with the gods only; if they are passive as to their soul, this is common to them with men only; if they are aerial in body, in this they are alone. Therefore it is no great thing for them to be of an animal nature, for so also are the beasts; in being rational as to mind, they are not above ourselves, for so are we also; and as to their being eternal as to time, what is the advantage of that if they are not blessed? for better is temporal happiness than eternal misery. Again, as to their being passive in soul, how are they in this respect above us, since we also are so, but would not have been so had we not been miserable? Also, as to their being aerial in body, how much value is to be set on that, since a soul of any kind whatsoever is to be set above every body? and therefore religious worship, which ought to be rendered from the soul, is by no means due to that thing which is inferior to the soul. Moreover, if he had, among those things which he says belong to demons, enumerated virtue, wisdom, happiness, and affirmed that they have those things in common with the gods, and, like them, eternally, he would assuredly have attributed to them something greatly to be desired, and much to be prized. And even in that case it would not have been our duty to worship them like God on account of these things, but rather to worship Him from whom we know they had received them. But how much less are they really worthy of divine honor,—those aerial animals who are only rational that they may be capable of misery, passive that they may be actually miserable, and eternal that it may be impossible for them to end their misery!

CHAPTER 17

WHETHER IT IS PROPER THAT MEN SHOULD WORSHIP THOSE SPIRITS FROM WHOSE VICES IT IS NECESSARY THAT THEY BE FREED

Wherefore, to omit other things, and confine our attention to that which he says is common to the demons with us, let us ask this question: If all the four elements are full of their own animals, the fire and the air of immortal, and the water and the earth of mortal ones, why are the souls of demons agitated by the whirlwinds and tempests of passions?—for the Greek word pathos means perturbation, whence he chose to call the demons “passive in soul,” because the word passion, which is derived from pathos, signified a commotion of the mind contrary to reason. Why, then, are these things in the minds of demons which are not in beasts? For if anything of this kind appears in beasts, it is not perturbation, because it is not contrary to reason, of which they are devoid. Now it is foolishness or misery which is the cause of these perturbations in the case of men, for we are not yet blessed in the possession of that perfection of wisdom which is promised to us at last, when we shall be set free from our present mortality. But the gods, they say, are free from these perturbations, because they are not only eternal, but also blessed; for they also have the same kind of rational souls, but most pure from all spot and plague. Wherefore, if the gods are free from perturbation because they are blessed, not miserable animals, and the beasts are free from them because they are animals which are capable neither of blessedness nor misery, it remains that the demons, like men, are subject to perturbations because they are not blessed but miserable animals. What folly, therefore, or rather what madness, to submit ourselves through any sentiment of religion to demons, when it belongs to the true religion to deliver us from that depravity which makes us like to them! For Apuleius himself, although he is very sparing toward them, and thinks they are worthy of divine honors, is nevertheless compelled to confess that they are subject to anger; and the true religion commands us not to be moved with anger, but rather to resist it. The demons are won over by gifts; and the true religion commands us to favor no one on account of gifts received. The demons are flattered by honors; but the true religion commands us by no means to be moved by such things. The demons are haters of some men and lovers of others, not in consequence of a prudent and calm judgment, but because of what he calls their “passive soul;” whereas the true religion commands us to love even our enemies. Lastly, the true religion commands us to put away all disquietude of heart and agitation of mind, and also all commotions and tempests of the soul, which Apuleius asserts to be continually swelling and surging in the souls of demons. Why, therefore, except through foolishness and miserable error shouldst thou humble thyself to worship a being to whom thou desirest to be unlike in thy life? And why shouldst thou pay religious homage to him whom thou art unwilling to imitate, when it is the highest duty of religion to imitate Him whom thou worshippest?

CHAPTER 18

WHAT KIND OF RELIGION THAT IS WHICH TEACHES THAT MEN OUGHT TO EMPLOY THE ADVOCACY OF DEMONS IN ORDER TO BE RECOMMENDED TO THE FAVOR OF THE GOOD GODS

In vain, therefore, have Apuleius, and they who think with him, conferred on the demons the honor of placing them in the air, between the ethereal heavens and the earth, that they may carry to the gods the prayers of men, to men the answers of the gods: for Plato held, they say, that no god has intercourse with man. They who believe these things have thought it unbecoming that men should have intercourse with the gods, and the gods with men, but a befitting thing that the demons should have intercourse with both gods and men, presenting to the gods the petitions of men, and conveying to men what the gods have granted; so that a chaste man, and one who is a stranger to the crimes of the magic arts, must use as patrons, through whom the gods may be induced to hear him, demons who love these crimes, although the very fact of his not loving them ought to have recommended him to them as one who deserved to be listened to with greater readiness and willingness on their part. They love the abominations of the stage, which chastity does not love. They love, in the sorceries of the magicians, “a thousand arts of inflicting harm,” which innocence does not love. Yet both chastity and innocence, if they wish to obtain anything from the gods, will not be able to do so by their own merits, except their enemies act as mediators on their behalf. Apuleius need not attempt to justify the fictions of the poets, and the mockeries of the stage. If human modesty can act so faithlessly towards itself as not only to love shameful things, but even to think that they are pleasing to the divinity, we can cite on the other side their own highest authority and teacher, Plato.

CHAPTER 19

OF THE IMPIETY OF THE MAGIC ART, WHICH IS DEPENDENT ON THE ASSISTANCE OF MALIGN SPIRITS

Moreover, against those magic arts, concerning which some men, exceedingly wretched and exceedingly impious, delight to boast, may not public opinion itself be brought forward as a witness? For why are those arts so severely punished by the laws, if they are the works of deities who ought to be worshipped? Shall it be said that the Christians have or dained those laws by which magic arts are punished? With what other meaning, except that these sorceries are without doubt pernicious to the human race, did the most illustrious poet say,

“By heaven, I swear, and your dear life,

Unwillingly these arms I wield,

And take, to meet the coming strife,

Enchantment’s sword and shield.”

And that also which he says in another place concerning magic arts,

“I’ve seen him to another place transport the standing corn,”

has reference to the fact that the fruits of one field are said to be transferred to another by these arts which this pestiferous and accursed doctrine teaches. Does not Cicero inform us that, among the laws of the Twelve Tables, that is, the most ancient laws of the Romans, there was a law written which appointed a punishment to be inflicted on him who should do this? Lastly, was it before Christian judges that Apuleius himself was accused of magic arts? Had he known these arts to be divine and pious, and congruous with the works of divine power, he ought not only to have confessed, but also to have professed them, rather blaming the laws by which these things were prohibited and pronounced worthy of condemnation, while they ought to have been held worthy of admiration and respect. For by so doing, either he would have persuaded the judges to adopt his own opinion, or, if they had shown their partiality for unjust laws, and condemned him to death notwithstanding his praising and commending such things, the demons would have bestowed on his soul such rewards as he deserved, who, in order to proclaim and set forth their divine works, had not feared the loss of his human life. As our martyrs, when that religion was charged on them as a crime, by which they knew they were made safe and most glorious throughout eternity, did not choose, by denying it, to escape temporal punishments, but rather by confessing, professing, and proclaiming it, by enduring all things for it with fidelity and fortitude, and by dying for it with pious calmness, put to shame the law by which that religion was prohibited, and caused its revocation. But there is extant a most copious and eloquent oration of this Platonic philosopher, in which he defends himself against the charge of practising these arts, affirming that he is wholly a stranger to them, and only wishing to show his innocence by denying such things as cannot be innocently committed. But all the miracles of the magicians, who he thinks are justly deserving of condemnation, are performed according to the teaching and by the power of demons. Why, then, does he think that they ought to be honored? For he asserts that they are necessary, in order to present our prayers to the gods, and yet their works are such as we must shun if we wish our prayers to reach the true God. Again, I ask, what kind of prayers of men does he suppose are presented to the good gods by the demons? If magical prayers, they will have none such; if lawful prayers, they will not receive them through such beings. But if a sinner who is penitent pour out prayers, especially if he has committed any crime of sorcery, does he receive pardon through the intercession of those demons by whose instigation and help he has fallen into the sin he mourns? or do the demons themselves, in order that they may merit pardon for the penitent, first become penitents because they have deceived them? This no one ever said concerning the demons; for had this been the case, they would never have dared to seek for themselves divine honors. For how should they do so who desired by penitence to obtain the grace of pardon; seeing that such detestable pride could not exist along with a humility worthy of pardon?

CHAPTER 20

WHETHER WE ARE TO BELIEVE THAT THE GOOD GODS ARE MORE WILLING TO HAVE INTERCOURSE WITH DEMONS THAN WITH MEN

But does any urgent and most pressing cause compel the demons to mediate between the gods and men, that they may offer the prayers of men, and bring back the answers from the gods? and if so, what, pray, is that cause, what is that so great necessity? Because, say they, no god has intercourse with man. Most admirable holiness of God, which has no intercourse with a supplicating man, and yet has intercourse with an arrogant demon! which has no intercourse with a penitent man, and yet has intercourse with a deceiving demon! which has no intercourse with a man fleeing for refuge to the divine nature, and yet has intercourse with a demon feigning divinity! which has no intercourse with a man seeking pardon, and yet has intercourse with a demon persuading to wickedness! which has no intercourse with a man expelling the poets by means of philosophical writings from a well-regulated state, and yet has intercourse with a demon requesting from the princes and priests of a state the theatri cal performance of the mockeries of the poets! which has no intercourse with the man who prohibits the ascribing of crime to the gods, and yet has intercourse with a demon who takes delight in the fictitious representation of their crimes! which has no intercourse with a man punishing the crimes of the magicians by just laws, and yet has intercourse with a demon teaching and practising magical arts! which has no intercourse with a man shunning the imitation of a demon, and yet has intercourse with a demon lying in wait for the deception of a man!

CHAPTER 21

WHETHER THE GODS USE THE DEMONS AS MESSENGERS AND INTERPRETERS, AND WHETHER THEY ARE DECEIVED BY THEM WILLINGLY, OR WITHOUT THEIR OWN KNOWLEDGE

But herein, no doubt, lies the great necessity for this absurdity, so unworthy of the gods, that the ethereal gods, who are concerned about human affairs, would not know what terrestrial men were doing unless the aerial demons should bring them intelligence, because the ether is suspended far away from the earth and far above it, but the air is contiguous both to the ether and to the earth. O admirable wisdom! what else do these men think concerning the gods who, they say, are all in the highest degree good, but that they are concerned about human affairs, lest they should seem unworthy of worship, whilst, on the other hand, from the distance between the elements, they are ignorant of terrestrial things? It is on this account that they have supposed the demons to be necessary as agents, through whom the gods may inform themselves with respect to human affairs, and through whom, when necessary, they may succor men; and it is on account of this office that the demons themselves have been held as deserving of worship. If this be the case, then a demon is better known by these good gods through nearness of body, than a man is by goodness of mind. O mournful necessity, or shall I not rather say detestable and vain error, that I may not impute vanity to the divine nature! For if the gods can, with their minds free from the hindrance of bodies, see our mind, they do not need the demons as messengers from our mind to them; but if the ethereal gods, by means of their bodies, perceive the corporeal indices of minds, as the countenance, speech, motion, and thence understand what the demons tell them, then it is also possible that they may be deceived by the falsehoods of demons. Moreover, if the divinity of the gods cannot be deceived by the demons, neither can it be ignorant of our actions. But I would they would tell me whether the demons have informed the gods that the fictions of the poets concerning the crimes of the gods displease Plato, concealing the pleasure which they themselves take in them; or whether they have concealed both, and have preferred that the gods should be ignorant with respect to this whole matter, or have told both, as well the pious prudence of Plato with respect to the gods as their own lust, which is injurious to the gods; or whether they have concealed Plato's opinion, according to which he was unwilling that the gods should be defamed with falsely alleged crimes through the impious license of the poets, whilst they have not been ashamed nor afraid to make known their own wickedness, which make them love theatrical plays, in which the infamous deeds of the gods are celebrated. Let them choose which they will of these four alternatives, and let them consider how much evil any one of them would require them to think of the gods. For if they choose the first, they must then confess that it was not possible for the good gods to dwell with the good Plato, though he sought to prohibit things injurious to them, whilst they dwelt with evil demons, who exulted in their injuries; and this because they suppose that the good gods can only know a good man, placed at so great a distance from them, through the mediation of evil demons, whom they could know on account of their nearness to themselves. If they shall choose the second, and shall say that both these things are concealed by the demons, so that the gods are wholly ignorant both of Plato's most religious law and the sacrilegious pleasure of the demons, what, in that case, can the gods know to any profit with respect to human affairs through these mediating demons, when they do not know those things which are decreed, through the piety of good men, for the honor of the good gods against the lust of evil demons? But if they shall choose the third, and reply that these intermediary demons have communicated, not only the opinion of Plato, which prohibited wrongs to be done to the gods, but also their own delight in these wrongs, I would ask if such a communication is not rather an insult? Now the gods, hearing both and knowing both, not only permit the approach of those malign demons, who desire and do things contrary to the dignity of the gods and the religion of Plato, but also, through these wicked demons, who are near to them, send good things to the good Plato, who is far away from them; for they inhabit such a place in the concatenated series of the elements, that they can come into contact with those by whom they are accused, but not with him by whom they are defended,—knowing the truth on both sides, but not being able to change the weight of the air and the earth. There remains the fourth supposition; but it is worse than the rest. For who will suffer it to be said that the demons have made known the calumnious fictions of the poets concerning the immortal gods, and also the disgraceful mockeries of the theatres, and their own most ardent lust after, and most sweet pleasure in these things, whilst they have concealed from them that Plato, with the gravity of a philosopher, gave it as his opinion that all these things ought to be removed from a well-regulated republic; so that the good gods are now compelled, through such messengers, to know the evil doings of the most wicked beings, that is to say, of the messengers themselves, and are not allowed to know the good deeds of the philosophers, though the former are for the injury, but these latter for the honor of the gods themselves?

CHAPTER 22

THAT WE MUST, NOTWITHSTANDING THE OPINION OF APULEIUS, REJECT THE WORSHIP OF DEMONS

None of these four alternatives, then, is to be chosen; for we dare not suppose such unbecoming things concerning the gods as the adoption of any one of them would lead us to think. It remains, therefore, that no credence whatever is to be given to the opinion of Apuleius and the other philosophers of the same school, namely, that the demons act as messengers and interpreters between the gods and men to carry our petitions from us to the gods, and to bring back to us the help of the gods. On the contrary, we must believe them to be spirits most eager to inflict harm, utterly alien from righteousness, swollen with pride, pale with envy, subtle in deceit; who dwell indeed in this air as in a prison, in keeping with their own character, because, cast down from the height of the higher heaven, they have been condemned to dwell in this element as the just reward of irretrievable transgression. But, though the air is situated above the earth and the waters, they are not on that account superior in merit to men, who, though they do not surpass them as far as their earthly bodies are concerned, do nevertheless far excel them through piety of mind,—they having made choice of the true God as their helper. Over many, however, who are manifestly unworthy of participation in the true religion, they tyrannize as over captives whom they have subdued,—the greatest part of whom they have persuaded of their divinity by wonderful and lying signs, consisting either of deeds or of predictions. Some, nevertheless, who have more attentively and diligently considered their vices, they have not been able to persuade that they are gods, and so have feigned themselves to be messengers between the gods and men. Some, indeed, have thought that not even this latter honor ought to be acknowledged as belonging to them, not believing that they were gods, because they saw that they were wicked, whereas the gods, according to their view, are all good. Nevertheless they dared not say that they were wholly unworthy of all divine honor, for fear of offending the multitude, by whom, through inveterate superstition, the demons were served by the performance of many rites, and the erection of many temples.

CHAPTER 23

WHAT HERMES TRISMEGISTUS THOUGHT CONCERNING IDOLATRY, AND FROM WHAT SOURCE HE KNEW THAT THE SUPERSTITIONS OF EGYPT WERE TO BE ABOLISHED

The Egyptian Hermes, whom they call Trismegistus, had a different opinion concerning those demons. Apuleius, indeed, denies that they are gods; but when he says that they hold a middle place between the gods and men, so that they seem to be necessary for men as mediators between them and the gods, he does not distinguish between the worship due to them and the religious homage due to the supernal gods. This Egyptian, however, says that there are some gods made by the supreme God, and some made by men. Any one who hears this, as I have stated it, no doubt supposes that it has reference to images, because they are the works of the hands of men; but he asserts that visible and tangible images are, as it were, only the bodies of the gods, and that there dwell in them certain spirits, which have been invited to come into them, and which have power to inflict harm, or to fulfil the desires of those by whom divine honors and services are rendered to them. To unite, therefore, by a certain art, those invisible spirits to visible and material things, so as to make, as it were, animated bodies, dedicated and given up to those spirits who inhabit them,—this, he says, is to make gods, adding that men have received this great and wonderful power. I will give the words of this Egyptian as they have been translated into our tongue: “And, since we have undertaken to discourse concerning the relationship and fellowship between men and the gods, know, O AEsculapius, the power and strength of man. As the Lord and Father, or that which is highest, even God, is the maker of the celestial gods, so man is the maker of the gods who are in the temples, content to dwell near to men.” And a little after he says, “Thus humanity, always mindful of its nature and origin, perseveres in the imitation of divinity; and as the Lord and Father made eternal gods, that they should be like Himself, so humanity fashioned its own gods according to the likeness of its own countenance.” When this AEsculapius, to whom especially he was speaking, had answered him, and had said, “Dost thou mean the statues, O Trismegistus?”—”Yes, the statues,” replied he, “however unbelieving thou art, O AEsculapius,—the statues, animated and full of sensation and spirit, and who do such great and wonderful things,—the statues prescient of future things, and foretelling them by lot, by prophet, by dreams, and many other things, who bring diseases on men and cure them again, giving them joy or sorrow according to their merits. Dost thou not know, O AEsculapius, that Egypt is an image of heaven, or, more truly, a translation and descent of all things which are ordered and transacted there, that it is, in truth, if we may say so, to be the temple of the whole world? And yet, as it becomes the prudent man to know all things beforehand, ye ought not to be ignorant of this, that there is a time coming when it shall appear that the Egyptians have all in vain, with pious mind, and with most scrupulous diligence, waited on the divinity, and when all their holy worship shall come to nought, and be found to be in vain."

Hermes then follows out at great length the statements of this passage, in which he seems to predict the present time, in which the Christian religion is overthrowing all lying figments with a vehemence and liberty proportioned to its superior truth and holiness, in order that the grace of the true Saviour may deliver men from those gods which man has made, and subject them to that God by whom man was made. But when Hermes predicts these things, he speaks as one who is a friend to these same mockeries of demons, and does not clearly express the name of Christ. On the contrary, he deplores, as if it had already taken place, the future abolition of those things by the observance of which there was maintained in Egypt a resemblance of heaven,—he bears witness to Christianity by a kind of mournful prophecy. Now it was with reference to such that the apostle said, that "knowing God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of corruptible man," and so on, for the whole passage is too long to quote. For Hermes makes many such statements agreeable to the truth concerning the one true God who fashioned this world. And I know not how he has become so bewildered by that "darkening of the heart" as to stumble into the expression of a desire that men should always continue in subjection to those gods which he confesses to be made by men, and to bewail their future removal; as if there could be anything more wretched than mankind tyrannized over by the work of his own hands, since man, by worshipping the works of his own hands, may more easily cease to be man, than the works of his hands can, through his worship of them, become gods. For it can sooner happen that man, who has received an honorable position, may, through lack of understanding, become comparable to the beasts, than that the works of man may become preferable to the work of God, made in His own image, that is, to man himself. Wherefore deservedly is man left to fall away from Him who made Him, when he prefers to himself that which he himself has made.

For these vain, deceitful, pernicious, sacrilegious things did the Egyptian Hermes sorrow, because he knew that the time was coming when they should be removed. But his sorrow was as impudently expressed as his knowledge was imprudently obtained; for it was not the Holy Spirit who revealed these things to him, as He had done to the holy prophets, who, foreseeing these things, said with exultation, “If a man shall make gods, lo, they are no gods;” and in another place, “And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered.” But the holy Isaiah prophesies expressly concerning Egypt in reference to this matter, saying, “And the idols of Egypt shall be moved at His presence, and their heart shall be overcome in them,” and other things to the same effect. And with the prophet are to be classed those who rejoiced that that which they knew was to come had actually come,—as Simeon, or Anna, who immediately recognized Jesus when He was born, or Elisabeth, who in the Spirit recognized Him when He was conceived, or Peter, who said by the revelation of the Father, “Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.” But to this Egyptian those spirits indicated the time of their own destruction, who also, when the Lord was present in the flesh, said with trembling, “Art Thou come hither to destroy us before the time?” meaning by destruction before the time, either that very destruction which they expected to come, but which they did not think would come so suddenly as it appeared to have done, or only that destruction which consisted in their being brought into contempt by being made known. And, indeed, this was a destruction before the time, that is, before the time of judgment, when they are to be punished with eternal damnation, together with all men who are implicated in their wickedness, as the true religion declares, which neither errs nor leads into error; for it is not like him who, blown hither and thither by every wind of doctrine, and mixing true things with things which are false, bewails as about to perish a religion, which he afterwards confesses to be error.

CHAPTER 24

HOW HERMES OPENLY CONFESSED THE ERROR OF HIS FOREFATHERS, THE COMING DESTRUCTION OF WHICH HE NEVERTHELESS BEWAILED

After a long interval, Hermes again comes back to the subject of the gods which men have made, saying as follows: “But enough on this subject. Let us return to man and to reason, that divine gift on account of which man has been called a rational animal. For the things which have been said concerning man, wonderful though they are, are less wonderful than those which have been said concerning reason. For man to discover the divine nature, and to make it, surpasses the wonder of all other wonderful things. Because, therefore, our forefathers erred very far with respect to the knowledge of the gods, through incredulity and through want of attention to their worship and service, they invented this art of making gods; and this art once invented, they associated with it a suitable virtue borrowed from universal nature, and being incapable of making souls, they evoked those of demons or of angels, and united them with these holy images and divine mysteries, in order that through these souls the images might have power to do good or harm to men.” I know not whether the demons themselves could have been made, even by adjuration, to confess as he has confessed in these words: “Because our forefathers erred very far with respect to the knowledge of the gods, through incredulity and through want of attention to their worship and service, they invented the art of making gods.” Does he say that it was a moderate degree of error which resulted in their discovery of the art of making gods, or was he content to say “they erred?” No; he must needs add “very far,” and say, “They erred very far.” It was this great error and incredulity, then, of their forefathers who did not attend to the worship and service of the gods, which was the origin of the art of making gods. And yet this wise man grieves over the ruin of this art at some future time, as if it were a divine religion. Is he not verily compelled by divine influence, on the one hand, to reveal the past error of his forefathers, and by a diabolical influence, on the other hand, to bewail the future punishment of demons? For if their forefathers, by erring very far with respect to the knowledge of the gods, through incredulity and aversion of mind from their worship and service, invented the art of making gods, what wonder is it that all that is done by this detestable art, which is opposed to the divine religion, should be taken away by that religion, when truth corrects error, faith refutes incredulity, and conversion rectifies aversion?

For if he had only said, without mentioning the cause, that his forefathers had discovered the art of making gods, it would have been our duty, if we paid any regard to what is right and pious, to consider and to see that they could never have attained to this art if they had not erred from the truth, if they had believed those things which are worthy of God, if they had attended to divine worship and service. However, if we alone should say that the causes of this art were to be found in the great error and incredulity of men, and aversion of the mind erring from and unfaithful to divine religion, the impudence of those who resist the truth were in some way to be borne with; but when he who admires in man, above all other things, this power which it has been granted him to practise, and sorrows because a time is coming when all those figments of gods invented by men shall even be commanded by the laws to be taken away,—when even this man confesses nevertheless, and explains the causes which led to the discovery of this art, saying that their ancestors, through great error and incredulity, and through not attending to the worship and service of the gods, invented this art of making gods,—what ought we to say, or rather to do, but to give to the Lord our God all the thanks we are able, because He has taken away those things by causes the contrary of those which led to their institution? For that which the prevalence of error instituted, the way of truth took away; that which incredulity instituted, faith took away; that which aversion from divine worship and service instituted, conversion to the one true and holy God took away. Nor was this the case only in Egypt, for which country alone the spirit of the demons lamented in Hermes, but in all the earth, which sings to the Lord a new song, as the truly holy and truly prophetic Scriptures have predicted, in which it is written, “Sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth.” For the title of this psalm is, “When the house was built after the captivity.” For a house is being built to the Lord in all the earth, even the city of God, which is the holy Church, after that captivity in which demons held captive those men who, through faith in God, became living stones in the house. For although man made gods, it did not follow that he who made them was not held captive by them, when, by worshipping them, he was drawn into fellowship with them,—into the fellowship not of stolid idols, but of cunning demons; for what are idols but what they are represented to be in the same scriptures, “They have eyes, but they do not see,” and, though artistically fashioned, are still without life and sensation? But unclean spirits, associated through that wicked art with these same idols, have miserably taken captive the souls of their worshippers, by bringing them down into fellowship with themselves. Whence the apostle says, “We know that an idol is nothing, but those things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I would not ye should have fellowship with demons.” After this captivity, therefore, in which men were held by malign demons, the house of God is being built in all the earth; whence the title of that psalm in which it is said, “Sing unto the Lord a new song; sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing unto the Lord, bless His name; declare well His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, among all people His wonderful things. For great is the Lord, and much to be praised: He is terrible above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are demons: but the Lord made the heavens.”

Wherefore he who sorrowed because a time was coming when the worship of idols should be abolished, and the domination of the demons over those who worshipped them, wished, under the influence of a demon, that that captivity should always continue, at the cessation of which that psalm celebrates the building of the house of the Lord in all the earth. Hermes foretold these things with grief, the prophet with joyfulness; and because the Spirit is victorious who sang these things through the ancient prophets, even Hermes himself was compelled in a wonderful manner to confess, that those very things which he wished not to be removed, and at the prospect of whose removal he was sorrowful, had been instituted, not by prudent, faithful, and religious, but by erring and unbelieving men, averse to the worship and service of the gods. And although he calls them gods, nevertheless, when he says that they were made by such men as we certainly ought not to be, he shows, whether he will or not, that they are not to be worshipped by those who do not resemble these image-makers, that is, by prudent, faithful, and religious men, at the same time also making it manifest that the very men who made them involved themselves in the worship of those as gods who were not gods. For true is the saying of the prophet, “If a man make gods, lo, they are no gods.” Such gods, therefore, acknowledged by such worshippers and made by such men, did Hermes call “gods made by men,” that is to say, demons, through some art of I know not what description, bound by the chains of their own lusts to images. But, nevertheless, he did not agree with that opinion of the Platonic Apuleius, of which we have already shown the incongruity and absurdity, namely, that they were interpreters and intercessors between the gods whom God made, and men whom the same God made, bringing to God the prayers of men, and from God the gifts given in answer to these prayers. For it is exceedingly stupid to believe that gods whom men have made have more influence with gods whom God has made than men themselves have, whom the very same God has made. And consider, too, that it is a demon which, bound by a man to an image by means of an impious art, has been made a god, but a god to such a man only, not to every man. What kind of god, therefore, is that which no man would make but one erring, incredulous, and averse to the true God? Moreover, if the demons which are worshipped in the temples, being introduced by some kind of strange art into images, that is, into visible representations of themselves, by those men who by this art made gods when they were straying away from, and were averse to the worship and service of the gods,—if, I say, those demons are neither mediators nor interpreters between men and the gods, both on account of their own most wicked and base manners, and because men, though erring, incredulous, and averse from the worship and service of the gods, are nevertheless beyond doubt better than the demons whom they themselves have evoked, then it remains to be affirmed that what power they possess they possess as demons, doing harm by bestowing pretended benefits,—harm all the greater for the deception,—or else openly and undisguisedly doing evil to men. They cannot, however, do anything of this kind unless where they are permitted by the deep and secret providence of God, and then only so far as they are permitted. When, however, they are permitted, it is not because they, being midway between men and the gods, have through the friendship of the gods great power over men; for these demons cannot possibly be friends to the good gods who dwell in the holy and heavenly habitation, by whom we mean holy angels and rational creatures, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers, from whom they are as far separated in disposition and character as vice is distant from virtue, wickedness from goodness.

CHAPTER 25

CONCERNING THOSE THINGS WHICH MAY BE COMMON TO THE HOLY ANGELS AND TO MEN

Wherefore we must by no means seek, through the supposed mediation of demons, to avail ourselves of the benevolence or beneficence of the gods, or rather of the good angels, but through resembling them in the possession of a good will, through which we are with them, and live with them, and worship with them the same God, although we cannot see them with the eyes of our flesh. But it is not in locality we are distant from them, but in merit of life, caused by our miserable unlikeness to them in will, and by the weakness of our character; for the mere fact of our dwelling on earth under the conditions of life in the flesh does not prevent our fellowship with them. It is only prevented when we, in the impurity of our hearts, mind earthly things. But in this present time, while we are being healed that we may eventually be as they are, we are brought near to them by faith, if by their assistance we believe that He who is their blessedness is also ours.

CHAPTER 26

THAT ALL THE RELIGION OF THE PAGANS HAS REFERENCE TO DEAD MEN

It is certainly a remarkable thing how this Egyptian, when expressing his grief that a time was coming when those things would be taken away from Egypt, which he confesses to have been invented by men erring, incredulous, and averse to the service of divine religion, says, among other things, “Then shall that land, the most holy place of shrines and temples, be full of sepulchres and dead men,” as if, in sooth, if these things were not taken away, men would not die! as if dead bodies could be buried elsewhere than in the ground! as if, as time advanced, the number of sepulchres must not necessarily increase in proportion to the increase of the number of the dead! But they who are of a perverse mind, and opposed to us, suppose that what he grieves for is that the memorials of our martyrs were to succeed to their temples and shrines, in order, forsooth, that they may have grounds for thinking that gods were worshipped by the pagans in temples, but that dead men are worshipped by us in sepulchres. For with such blindness do impious men, as it were, stumble over mountains, and will not see the things which strike their own eyes, that they do not attend to the fact that in all the literature of the pagans there are not found any, or scarcely any gods, who have not been men, to whom, when dead, divine honors have been paid. I will not enlarge on the fact that Varro says that all dead men are thought by them to be gods—Manes and proves it by those sacred rites which are performed in honor of almost all the dead, among which he mentions funeral games, considering this the very highest proof of divinity, because games are only wont to be celebrated in honor of divinities. Hermes himself, of whom we are now treating, in that same book in which, as if foretelling future things, he says with sorrow "Then shall that land, the most holy place of shrines and temples, be full of sepulchres and dead men," testifies that the gods of Egypt were dead men. For, having said that their forefathers, erring very far with respect to the knowledge of the gods, incredulous and inattentive to the divine worship and service, invented the art of making gods, with which art, when invented, they associated the appropriate virtue which is inherent in universal nature, and by mixing up that virtue with this art, they called forth the souls of demons or of angels (for they could not make souls), and caused them to take possession of, or associate themselves with holy images and divine mysteries, in order that through these souls the images might have power to do good or harm to men;—having said this, he goes on, as it were, to prove it by illustrations, saying, "Thy grandsire, O AEsculapius, the first discoverer of medicine, to whom a temple was consecrated in a mountain of Libya, near to the shore of the crocodiles, in which temple lies his earthly man, that is, his body,—for the better part of him, or rather the whole of him, if the whole man is in the intelligent life, went back to heaven,—affords even now by his divinity all those helps to infirm men which formerly he was wont to afford to them by the art of medicine." He says, therefore that a dead man was worshipped as a god in that place where he had his sepulchre. He deceives men by a falsehood, for the man "went back to heaven." Then he adds "Does not Hermes, who was my grandsire, and whose name I bear, abiding in the country which is called by his name, help and preserve all mortals who come to him from every quarter?” For this elder Hermes, that is, Mercury, who, he says, was his grandsire, is said to be buried in Hermopolis, that is, in the city called by his name; so here are two gods whom he affirms to have been men, AEsculapius and Mercury. Now concerning AEsculapius, both the Greeks and the Latins think the same thing; but as to Mercury, there are many who do not think that he was formerly a mortal, though Hermes testifies that he was his grandsire. But are these two different individuals who were called by the same name? I will not dispute much whether they are different individuals or not. It is sufficient to know that this Mercury of whom Hermes speaks is, as well as AEsculapius, a god who once was a man, according, to the testimony of this same Trismegistus, esteemed so great by his countrymen, and also the grandson of Mercury himself.

Hermes goes on to say, “But do we know how many good things Isis, the wife of Osiris, bestows when she is propitious, and what great opposition she can offer when enraged?” Then, in order to show that there were gods made by men through this art, he goes on to say, “For it is easy for earthly and mundane gods to be angry, being made and composed by men out of either nature;” thus giving us to understand that he believed that demons were formerly the souls of dead men, which, as he says, by means of a certain art invented by men very far in error, incredulous, and irreligious, were caused to take possession of images, because they who made such gods were not able to make souls. When, therefore, he says “either nature,” he means soul and body,—the demon being the soul, and the image the body. What, then, becomes of that mournful complaint, that the land of Egypt, the most holy place of shrines and temples, was to be full of sepulchres and dead men? Verily, the fallacious spirit, by whose inspiration Hermes spoke these things, was compelled to confess through him that even already that land was full of sepulchres and of dead men, whom they were worshipping as gods. But it was the grief of the demons which was expressing itself through his mouth, who were sorrowing on account of the punishments which were about to fall upon them at the tombs of the martyrs. For in many such places they are tortured and compelled to confess, and are cast out of the bodies of men, of which they had taken possession.

CHAPTER 27

CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE HONOR WHICH THE CHRISTIANS PAY TO THEIR MARTYRS

But, nevertheless, we do not build temples, and ordain priests, rites, and sacrifices for these same martyrs; for they are not our gods, but their God is our God. Certainly we honor their reliquaries, as the memorials of holy men of God who strove for the truth even to the death of their bodies, that the true religion might be made known, and false and fictitious religions exposed. For if there were some before them who thought that these religions were really false and fictitious, they were afraid to give expression to their convictions. But who ever heard a priest of the faithful, standing at an altar built for the honor and worship of God over the holy body of some martyr, say in the prayers, I offer to thee a sacrifice, O Peter, or O Paul, or O Cyprian? for it is to God that sacrifices are offered at their tombs,—the God who made them both men and martyrs, and associated them with holy angels in celestial honor; and the reason why we pay such honors to their memory is, that by so doing we may both give thanks to the true God for their victories, and, by recalling them afresh to remembrance, may stir ourselves up to imitate them by seeking to obtain like crowns and palms, calling to our help that same God on whom they called. Therefore, whatever honors the religious may pay in the places of the martyrs, they are but honors rendered to their memory, not sacred rites or sacrifices offered to dead men as to gods. And even such as bring thither food,—which, indeed, is not done by the better Christians, and in most places of the world is not done at all,—do so in order that it may be sanctified to them through the merits of the martyrs, in the name of the Lord of the martyrs, first presenting the food and offering prayer, and thereafter taking it away to be eaten, or to be in part bestowed upon the needy. But he who knows the one sacrifice of Christians, which is the sacrifice offered in those places, also knows that these are not sacrifices offered to the martyrs. It is, then, neither with divine honors nor with human crimes, by which they worship their gods, that we honor our martyrs; neither do we offer sacrifices to them, or convert the crimes of the gods into their sacred rites. For let those who will and can read the letter of Alexander to his mother Olympias, in which he tells the things which were revealed to him by the priest Leon, and let those who have read it recall to memory what it contains, that they may see what great abominations have been handed down to memory, not by poets, but by the mystic writings of the Egyptians, concerning the goddess Isis, the wife of Osiris, and the parents of both, all of whom, according to these writings, were royal personages. Isis, when sacrificing to her parents, is said to have discovered a crop of barley, of which she brought some ears to the king her husband, and his councillor Mercurius, and hence they identify her with Ceres. Those who read the letter may there see what was the character of those people to whom when dead sacred rites were instituted as to gods, and what those deeds of theirs were which furnished the occasion for these rites. Let them not once dare to compare in any respect those people, though they hold them to be gods, to our holy martyrs, though we do not hold them to be gods. For we do not ordain priests and offer sacrifices to our martyrs, as they do to their dead men, for that would be incongruous, undue, and unlawful, such being due only to God; and thus we do not delight them with their own crimes, or with such shameful plays as those in which the crimes of the gods are celebrated, which are either real crimes committed by them at a time when they were men, or else, if they never were men, fictitious crimes invented for the pleasure of noxious demons. The god of Socrates, if he had a god, cannot have belonged to this class of demons. But perhaps they who wished to excel in this art of making gods, imposed a god of this sort on a man who was a stranger to, and innocent of any connection with that art. What need we say more? No one who is even moderately wise imagines that demons are to be worshipped on account of the blessed life which is to be after death. But perhaps they will say that all the gods are good, but that of the demons some are bad and some good, and that it is the good who are to be worshipped, in order that through them we may attain to the eternally blessed life. To the examination of this opinion we will devote the following book.

Book IX

Argument—Having in the preceding book shown that the worship of demons must be abjured, since they in a thousand ways proclaim themselves to be wicked spirits, Augustin in this book meets those who allege a distinction among demons, some being evil, while others are good; and, having exploded this distinction, he proves that to no demon, but to Christ alone, belongs the office of providing men with eternal blessedness.

CHAPTER 1

THE POINT AT WHICH THE DISCUSSION HAS ARRIVED, AND WHAT REMAINS TO BE HANDLED

Some have advanced the opinion that there are both good and bad gods; but some, thinking more respectfully of the gods, have attributed to them so much honor and praise as to preclude the supposition of any god being wicked. But those who have maintained that there are wicked gods as well as good ones have included the demons under the name "gods," and sometimes though more rarely, have called the gods demons; so that they admit that Jupiter, whom they make the king and head of all the rest, is called a demon by Homer. Those, on the other hand, who maintain that the gods are all good, and far more excellent than the men who are justly called good, are moved by the actions of the demons, which they can neither deny nor impute to the gods whose goodness they affirm, to distinguish between gods and demons; so that, whenever they find anything offensive in the deeds or sentiments by which unseen spirits manifest their power, they believe this to proceed not from the gods, but from the demons. At the same time they believe that, as no god can hold direct intercourse with men, these demons hold the position of mediators, ascending with prayers, and returning with gifts. This is the opinion of the Platonists, the ablest and most esteemed of their philosophers, with whom we therefore chose to debate this question,—whether the worship of a number of gods is of any service toward obtaining blessedness in the future life. And this is the reason why, in the preceding book, we have inquired how the demons, who take pleasure in such things as good and wise men loathe and execrate, in the sacrilegious and immoral fictions which the poets have written not of men, but of the gods themselves, and in the wicked and criminal violence of magical arts, can be regarded as more nearly related and more friendly to the gods than men are, and can mediate between good men and the good gods; and it has been demonstrated that this is absolutely impossible.

CHAPTER 2

WHETHER AMONG THE DEMONS, INFERIOR TO THE GODS, THERE ARE ANY GOOD SPIRITS UNDER WHOSE GUARDIANSHIP THE HUMAN SOUL MIGHT REACH TRUE BLESSEDNESS

This book, then, ought, according to the promise made in the end of the preceding one, to contain a discussion, not of the difference which exists among the gods, who, according to the Platonists, are all good, nor of the difference between gods and demons, the former of whom they separate by a wide interval from men, while the latter are placed intermediately between the gods and men, but of the difference, since they make one, among the demons themselves. This we shall discuss so far as it bears on our theme. It has been the common and usual belief that some of the demons are bad, others good; and this opinon, whether it be that of the Platonists or any other sect, must by no means be passed over in silence, lest some one suppose he ought to cultivate the good demons in order that by their mediation he may be accepted by the gods, all of whom he believes to be good, and that he may live with them after death; whereas he would thus be ensnared in the toils of wicked spirits, and would wander far from the true God, with whom alone, and in whom alone, the human soul, that is to say, the soul that is rational and intellectual, is blessed.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT APULEIUS ATTRIBUTES TO THE DEMONS, TO WHOM, THOUGH HE DOES NOT DENY THEM REASON, HE DOES NOT ASCRIBE VIRTUE

What, then, is the difference between good and evil demons? For the Platonist Apuleius, in a treatise on this whole subject, while he says a great deal about their aerial bodies, has not a word to say of the spiritual virtues with which, if they were good, they must have been endowed. Not a word has he said, then, of that which could give them happiness; but proof of their misery he has given, acknowledging that their mind, by which they rank as reasonable beings, is not only not imbued and fortified with virtue so as to resist all unreasonable passions, but that it is somehow agitated with tempestuous emotions, and is thus on a level with the mind of foolish men. His own words are: “It is this class of demons the poets refer to, when, without serious error, they feign that the gods hate and love individuals among men, prospering and ennobling some, and opposing and distressing others. Therefore pity, indignation, grief, joy, every human emotion is experienced by the demons, with the same mental disturbance, and the same tide of feeling and thought. These turmoils and tempests banish them far from the tranquility of the celestial gods.” Can there be any doubt that in these words it is not some inferior part of their spiritual nature, but the very mind by which the demons hold their rank as rational beings, which he says is tossed with passion like a stormy sea? They cannot, then, be compared even to wise men, who with undisturbed mind resist these perturbations to which they are exposed in this life, and from which human infirmity is never exempt, and who do not yield themselves to approve of or perpetrate anything which might deflect them from the path of wisdom and law of rectitude. They resemble in character, though not in bodily appearance, wicked and foolish men. I might indeed say they are worse, inasmuch as they have grown old in iniquity, and incorrigible by punishment. Their mind, as Apuleius says, is a sea tossed with tempest, having no rallying point of truth or virtue in their soul from which they can resist their turbulent and depraved emotions.

CHAPTER 4

THE OPINION OF THE PERIPATETICS AND STOICS ABOUT MENTAL EMOTIONS

Among the philosophers there are two opinions about these mental emotions, which the Greeks call pathe, while some of our own writers, as Cicero, call them perturbations, some affections, and some, to render the Greek word more accurately, passions. Some say that even the wise man is subject to these perturbations, though moderated and controlled by reason, which imposes laws upon them, and so restrains them within necessary bounds. This is the opinion of the Platonists and Aristotelians; for Aristotle was Plato's disciple, and the founder of the Peripatetic school. But others, as the Stoics, are of opinion that the wise man is not subject to these perturbations. But Cicero, in his book De Finibus, shows that the Stoics are here at variance with the Platonists and Peripatetics rather in words than in reality; for the Stoics decline to apply the term "goods" to external and bodily advantages, because they reckon that the only good is virtue, the art of living well, and this exists only in the mind. The other philosophers, again, use the simple and customary phraseology, and do not scruple to call these things goods, though in comparison of virtue, which guides our life, they are little and of small esteem. And thus it is obvious that, whether these outward things are called goods or advantages, they are held in the same estimation by both parties, and that in this matter the Stoics are pleasing themselves merely with a novel phraseology. It seems, then, to me that in this question, whether the wise man is subject to mental passions, or wholly free from them, the controversy is one of words rather than of things; for I think that, if the reality and not the mere sound of the words is considered, the Stoics hold precisely the same opinion as the Platonists and Peripatetics. For, omitting for brevity's sake other proofs which I might adduce in support of this opinion, I will state but one which I consider conclusive. Aulus Gellius, a man of extensive erudition, and gifted with an eloquent and graceful style, relates, in his work entitled Noctes Atticae that he once made a voyage with an eminent Stoic philosopher; and he goes on to relate fully and with gusto what I shall barely state, that when the ship was tossed and in danger from a violent storm, the philosopher grew pale with terror. This was noticed by those on board, who, though themselves threatened with death, were curious to see whether a philosopher would be agitated like other men. When the tempest had passed over, and as soon as their security gave them freedom to resume their talk, one of the passengers, a rich and luxurious Asiatic, begins to banter the philosopher, and rally him because he had even become pale with fear, while he himself had been unmoved by the impending destruction. But the philosopher availed himself of the reply of Aristippus the Socratic, who, on finding himself similarly bantered by a man of the same character, answered, "You had no cause for anxiety for the soul of a profligate debauchee, but I had reason to be alarmed for the soul of Aristippus.” The rich man being thus disposed of, Aulus Gellius asked the philosopher, in the interests of science and not to annoy him, what was the reason of his fear? And he willing to instruct a man so zealous in the pursuit of knowledge, at once took from his wallet a book of Epictetus the Stoic, in which doctrines were advanced which precisely harmonized with those of Zeno and Chrysippus, the founders of the Stoical school. Aulus Gellius says that he read in this book that the Stoics maintain that there are certain impressions made on the soul by external objects which they call phantasiae, and that it is not in the power of the soul to determine whether or when it shall be invaded by these. When these impressions are made by alarming and formidable objects, it must needs be that they move the soul even of the wise man, so that for a little he trembles with fear, or is depressed by sadness, these impressions anticipating the work of reason and self-control; but this does not imply that the mind accepts these evil impressions, or approves or consents to them. For this consent is, they think, in a man’s power; there being this difference between the mind of the wise man and that of the fool, that the fool’s mind yields to these passions and consents to them, while that of the wise man, though it cannot help being invaded by them, yet retains with unshaken firmness a true and steady persuasion of those things which it ought rationally to desire or avoid. This account of what Aulus Gellius relates that he read in the book of Epictetus about the sentiments and doctrines of the Stoics I have given as well as I could, not, perhaps, with his choice language, but with greater brevity, and, I think, with greater clearness. And if this be true, then there is no difference, or next to none, between the opinion of the Stoics and that of the other philosophers regarding mental passions and perturbations, for both parties agree in maintaining that the mind and reason of the wise man are not subject to these. And perhaps what the Stoics mean by asserting this, is that the wisdom which characterizes the wise man is clouded by no error and sullied by no taint, but, with this reservation that his wisdom remains undisturbed, he is exposed to the impressions which the goods and ills of this life (or, as they prefer to call them, the advantages or disadvantages) make upon them. For we need not say that if that philosopher had thought nothing of those things which he thought he was forthwith to lose, life and bodily safety, he would not have been so terrified by his danger as to betray his fear by the pallor of his cheek. Nevertheless, he might suffer this mental disturbance, and yet maintain the fixed persuasion that life and bodily safety, which the violence of the tempest threatened to destroy, are not those good things which make their possessors good, as the possession of righteousness does. But in so far as they persist that we must call them not goods but advantages, they quarrel about words and neglect things. For what difference does it make whether goods or advantages be the better name, while the Stoic no less than the Peripatetic is alarmed at the prospect of losing them, and while, though they name them differently, they hold them in like esteem? Both parties assure us that, if urged to the commission of some immorality or crime by the threatened loss of these goods or advantages, they would prefer to lose such things as preserve bodily comfort and security rather than commit such things as violate righteousness. And thus the mind in which this resolution is well grounded suffers no perturbations to prevail with it in opposition to reason, even though they assail the weaker parts of the soul; and not only so, but it rules over them, and, while it refuses its consent and resists them, administers a reign of virtue. Such a character is ascribed to AEneas by Virgil when he says,

“He stands immovable by tears,

Nor tenderest words with pity hears.”

CHAPTER 5

THAT THE PASSIONS WHICH ASSAIL THE SOULS OF CHRISTIANS DO NOT SEDUCE THEM TO VICE, BUT EXERCISE THEIR VIRTUE

We need not at present give a careful and copious exposition of the doctrine of Scripture, the sum of Christian knowledge, regarding these passions. It subjects the mind itself to God, that He may rule and aid it, and the passions, again, to the mind, to moderate and bridle them, and turn them to righteous uses. In our ethics, we do not so much inquire whether a pious soul is angry, as why he is angry; not whether he is sad, but what is the cause of his sadness; not whether he fears, but what he fears. For I am not aware that any right thinking person would find fault with anger at a wrongdoer which seeks his amendment, or with sadness which intends relief to the suffering, or with fear lest one in danger be destroyed. The Stoics, indeed, are accustomed to condemn compassion. But how much more honorable had it been in that Stoic we have been telling of, had he been disturbed by compassion prompting him to relieve a fellow-creature, than to be disturbed by the fear of shipwreck! Far better and more humane, and more consonant with pious sentiments, are the words of Cicero in praise of Caesar, when he says, “Among your virtues none is more admirable and agreeable than your compassion.” And what is compassion but a fellow-feeling for another’s misery, which prompts us to help him if we can? And this emotion is obedient to reason, when compassion is shown without violating right, as when the poor are relieved, or the penitent forgiven. Cicero, who knew how to use language, did not hesitate to call this a virtue, which the Stoics are not ashamed to reckon among the vices, although, as the book of the eminent Stoic, Epictetus, quoting the opinions of Zeno and Chrysippus, the founders of the school, has taught us, they admit that passions of this kind invade the soul of the wise man, whom they would have to be free from all vice. Whence it follows that these very passions are not judged by them to be vices, since they assail the wise man without forcing him to act against reason and virtue; and that, therefore, the opinion of the Peripatetics or Platonists and of the Stoics is one and the same. But, as Cicero says, mere logomachy is the bane of these pitiful Greeks, who thirst for contention rather than for truth. However, it may justly be asked, whether our subjection to these affections, even while we follow virtue, is a part of the infirmity of this life? For the holy angels feel no anger while they punish those whom the eternal law of God consigns to punishment, no fellow-feeling with misery while they relieve the miserable, no fear while they aid those who are in danger; and yet ordinary language ascribes to them also these mental emotions, because, though they have none of our weakness, their acts resemble the actions to which these emotions move us; and thus even God Himself is said in Scripture to be angry, and yet without any perturbation. For this word is used of the effect of His vengeance, not of the disturbing mental affection.

CHAPTER 6

OF THE PASSIONS WHICH, ACCORDING TO APULEIUS, AGITATE THE DEMONS WHO ARE SUPPOSED BY HIM TO MEDIATE BETWEEN GODS AND MEN

Deferring for the present the question about the holy angels, let us examine the opinion of the Platonists, that the demons who mediate between gods and men are agitated by passions. For if their mind, though exposed to their incursion, still remained free and superior to them, Apuleius could not have said that their hearts are tossed with passions as the sea by stormy winds. Their mind, then,—that superior part of their soul whereby they are rational beings, and which, if it actually exists in them, should rule and bridle the turbulent passions of the inferior parts of the soul,—this mind of theirs, I say, is, according to the Platonist referred to, tossed with a hurricane of passions. The mind of the demons, therefore, is subject to the emotions of fear, anger, lust, and all similar affections. What part of them, then, is free, and endued with wisdom, so that they are pleasing to the gods, and the fit guides of men into purity of life, since their very highest part, being the slave of passion and subject to vice, only makes them more intent on deceiving and seducing, in proportion to the mental force and energy of desire they possess?

CHAPTER 7

THAT THE PLATONISTS MAINTAIN THAT THE POETS WRONG THE GODS BY REPRESENTING THEM AS DISTRACTED BY PARTY FEELING, TO WHICH THE DEMONS AND NOT THE GODS, ARE SUBJECT

But if any one says that it is not of all the demons, but only of the wicked, that the poets, not without truth, say that they violently love or hate certain men,—for it was of them Apuleius said that they were driven about by strong currents of emotion,—how can we accept this interpretation, when Apuleius, in the very same connection, represents all the demons, and not only the wicked, as intermediate between gods and men by their aerial bodies? The fiction of the poets, according to him, consists in their making gods of demons, and giving them the names of gods, and assigning them as allies or enemies to individual men, using this poetical license, though they profess that the gods are very different in character from the demons, and far exalted above them by their celestial abode and wealth of beatitude.

This, I say, is the poets’ fiction, to say that these are gods who are not gods, and that, under the names of gods, they fight among themselves about the men whom they love or hate with keen partisan feeling. Apuleius says that this is not far from the truth, since, though they are wrongfully called by the names of the gods, they are described in their own proper character as demons. To this category, he says, belongs the Minerva of Homer, “who interposed in the ranks of the Greeks to restrain Achilles.” For that this was Minerva he supposes to be poetical fiction; for he thinks that Minerva is a goddess, and he places her among the gods whom he believes to be all good and blessed in the sublime ethereal region, remote from intercourse with men. But that there was a demon favorable to the Greeks and adverse to the Trojans, as another, whom the same poet mentions under the name of Venus or Mars (gods exalted above earthly affairs in their heavenly habitations), was the Trojans’ ally and the foe of the Greeks, and that these demons fought for those they loved against those they hated,—in all this he owned that the poets stated something very like the truth. For they made these statements about beings to whom he ascribes the same violent and tempestuous passions as disturb men, and who are therefore capable of loves and hatreds not justly formed, but formed in a party spirit, as the spectators in races or hunts take fancies and prejudices. It seems to have been the great fear of this Platonist that the poetical fictions should be believed of the gods, and not of the demons who bore their names.

CHAPTER 8

HOW APULEIUS DEFINES THE GODS WHO DWELL IN HEAVEN, THE DEMONS WHO OCCUPY THE AIR, AND MEN WHO INHABIT EARTH

The definition which Apuleius gives of demons, and in which he of course includes all demons, is that they are in nature animals, in soul subject to passion, in mind reasonable, in body aerial, in duration eternal. Now in these five qualities he has named absolutely nothing which is proper to good men and not also to bad. For when Apuleius had spoken of the celestials first, and had then extended his description so as to include an account of those who dwell far below on the earth, that, after describing the two extremes of rational being, he might proceed to speak of the intermediate demons, he says, “Men, therefore, who are endowed with the faculty of reason and speech, whose soul is immortal and their members mortal, who have weak and anxious spirits, dull and corruptible bodies, dissimilar characters, similar ignorance, who are obstinate in their audacity, and persistent in their hope, whose labor is vain, and whose fortune is ever on the wane, their race immortal, themselves perishing, each generation replenished with creatures whose life is swift and their wisdom slow, their death sudden and their life a wail,—these are the men who dwell on the earth.” In recounting so many qualities which belong to the large proportion of men, did he forget that which is the property of the few when he speaks of their wisdom being slow? If this had been omitted, this his description of the human race, so carefully elaborated, would have been defective. And when he commended the excellence of the gods, he affirmed that they excelled in that very blessedness to which he thinks men must attain by wisdom. And therefore, if he had wished us to believe that some of the demons are good, he should have inserted in his description something by which we might see that they have, in common with the gods, some share of blessedness, or, in common with men, some wisdom. But, as it is, he has mentioned no good quality by which the good may be distinguished from the bad. For although he refrained from giving a full account of their wickedness, through fear of offending, not themselves but their worshippers, for whom he was writing, yet he sufficiently indicated to discerning readers what opinion he had of them; for only in the one article of the eternity of their bodies does he assimilate them to the gods, all of whom, he asserts, are good and blessed, and absolutely free from what he himself calls the stormy passions of the demons; and as to the soul, he quite plainly affirms that they resemble men and not the gods, and that this resemblance lies not in the possession of wisdom, which even men can attain to, but in the perturbation of passions which sway the foolish and wicked, but is so ruled by the good and wise that they prefer not to admit rather than to conquer it. For if he had wished it to be understood that the demons resembled the gods in the eternity not of their bodies but of their souls, he would certainly have admitted men to share in this privilege, because, as a Platonist, he of course must hold that the human soul is eternal. Accordingly, when describing this race of living beings, he said that their souls were immortal, their members mortal. And, consequently, if men have not eternity in common with the gods because they have mortal bodies, demons have eternity in common with the gods because their bodies are immortal.

CHAPTER 9

WHETHER THE INTERCESSION OF THE DEMONS CAN SECURE FOR MEN THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE CELESTIAL GODS

How, then, can men hope for a favorable introduction to the friendship of the gods by such mediators as these, who are, like men, defective in that which is the better part of every living creature, viz., the soul, and who resemble the gods only in the body, which is the inferior part? For a living creature or animal consists of soul and body, and of these two parts the soul is undoubtedly the better; even though vicious and weak, it is obviously better than even the soundest and strongest body, for the greater excellence of its nature is not reduced to the level of the body even by the pollution of vice, as gold, even when tarnished, is more precious than the purest silver or lead. And yet these mediators, by whose interposition things human and divine are to be harmonized, have an eternal body in common with the gods, and a vicious soul in common with men,—as if the religion by which these demons are to unite gods and men were a bodily, and not a spiritual matter. What wickedness, then, or punishment has suspended these false and deceitful mediators, as it were head downwards, so that their inferior part, their body, is linked to the gods above, and their superior part, the soul, bound to men beneath; united to the celestial gods by the part that serves, and miserable, together with the inhabitants of earth, by the part that rules? For the body is the servant, as Sallust says: “We use the soul to rule, the body to obey;” adding, “the one we have in common with the gods, the other with the brutes.” For he was here speaking of men; and they have, like the brutes, a mortal body. These demons, whom our philosophic friends have provided for us as mediators with the gods, may indeed say of the soul and body, the one we have in common with the gods, the other with men; but, as I said, they are as it were suspended and bound head downwards, having the slave, the body, in common with the gods, the master, the soul, in common with miserable men,—their inferior part exalted, their superior part depressed. And therefore, if any one supposes that, because they are not subject, like terrestrial animals, to the separation of soul and body by death, they therefore resemble the gods in their eternity, their body must not be considered a chariot of an eternal triumph, but rather the chain of an eternal punishment.

CHAPTER 10

THAT, ACCORDING TO PLOTINUS, MEN, WHOSE BODY IS MORTAL, ARE LESS WRETCHED THAN DEMONS, WHOSE BODY IS ETERNAL

Plotinus, whose memory is quite recent, enjoys the reputation of having understood Plato better than any other of his disciples. In speaking of human souls, he says, “The Father in compassion made their bonds mortal;” that is to say, he considered it due to the Father’s mercy that men, having a mortal body, should not be forever confined in the misery of this life. But of this mercy the demons have been judged unworthy, and they have received, in conjunction with a soul subject to passions, a body not mortal like man’s, but eternal. For they should have been happier than men if they had, like men, had a mortal body, and, like the gods, a blessed soul. And they should have been equal to men, if in conjunction with a miserable soul they had at least received, like men, a mortal body, so that death might have freed them from trouble, if, at least, they should have attained some degree of piety. But, as it is, they are not only no happier than men, having, like them, a miserable soul, they are also more wretched, being eternally bound to the body; for he does not leave us to infer that by some progress in wisdom and piety they can become gods, but expressly says that they are demons forever.

CHAPTER 11

OF THE OPINION OF THE PLATONISTS, THAT THE SOULS OF MEN BECOME DEMONS WHEN DISEMBODIED

He says, indeed, that the souls of men are demons, and that men become Lares if they are good, Lemures or Larvae if they are bad, and Manes if it is uncertain whether they de serve well or ill. Who does not see at a glance that this is a mere whirlpool sucking men to moral destruction? For, however wicked men have been, if they suppose they shall become Larvae or divine Manes, they will become the worse the more love they have for inflicting injury; for, as the Larvae are hurtful demons made out of wicked men, these men must suppose that after death they will be invoked with sacrifices and divine honors that they may inflict injuries. But this question we must not pursue. He also states that the blessed are called in Greek eudaimones, because they are good souls, that is to say, good demons, confirming his opinion that the souls of men are demons.

CHAPTER 12

OF THE THREE OPPOSITE QUALITIES BY WHICH THE PLATONISTS DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE NATURE OF MEN AND THAT OF DEMONS

But at present we are speaking of those beings whom he described as being properly intermediate between gods and men, in nature animals, in mind rational, in soul subject to passion, in body aerial, in duration eternal. When he had distinguished the gods, whom he placed in the highest heaven, from men, whom he placed on earth, not only by position but also by the unequal dignity of their natures, he concluded in these words: “You have here two kinds of animals: the gods, widely distinguished from men by sublimity of abode, perpetuity of life, perfection of nature; for their habitations are separated by so wide an interval that there can be no intimate communication between them, and while the vitality of the one is eternal and indefeasible, that of the others is fading and precarious, and while the spirits of the gods are exalted in bliss, those of men are sunk in miseries.” Here I find three opposite qualities ascribed to the extremes of being, the highest and lowest. For, after mentioning the three qualities for which we are to admire the gods, he repeated, though in other words, the same three as a foil to the defects of man. The three qualities are, “sublimity of abode, perpetuity of life, perfection of nature.” These he again mentioned so as to bring out their contrasts in man’s condition. As he had mentioned “sublimity of abode,” he says, “Their habitations are separated by so wide an interval;” as he had mentioned “perpetuity of life,” he says, that “while divine life is eternal and indefeasible, human life is fading and precarious;” and as he had mentioned “perfection of nature,” he says, that “while the spirits of the gods are exalted in bliss, those of men are sunk in miseries.” These three things, then, he predicates of the gods, exaltation, eternity, blessedness; and of man he predicates the opposite, lowliness of habitation, mortality, misery.

CHAPTER 13

HOW THE DEMONS CAN MEDIATE BETWEEN GODS AND MEN IF THEY HAVE NOTHING IN COMMON WITH BOTH, BEING NEITHER BLESSED LIKE THE GODS, NOR MISERABLE LIKE MEN

If, now, we endeavor to find between these opposites the mean occupied by the demons, there can be no question as to their local position; for, between the highest and lowest place, there is a place which is rightly considered and called the middle place. The other two qualities remain, and to them we must give greater care, that we may see whether they are altogether foreign to the demons, or how they are so bestowed upon them without infringing upon their mediate position. We may dismiss the idea that they are foreign to them. For we cannot say that the demons, being rational animals, are neither blessed nor wretched, as we say of the beasts and plants, which are void of feeling and reason, or as we say of the middle place, that it is neither the highest nor the lowest. The demons, being rational, must be either miserable or blessed. And, in like manner, we cannot say that they are neither mortal nor immortal; for all living things either live eternally or end life in death. Our author, besides, stated that the demons are eternal. What remains for us to suppose, then, but that these mediate beings are assimilated to the gods in one of the two remaining qualities, and to men in the other? For if they received both from above, or both from beneath, they should no longer be mediate, but either rise to the gods above, or sink to men beneath. Therefore, as it has been demonstrated that they must possess these two qualities, they will hold their middle place if they receive one from each party. Consequently, as they cannot receive their eternity from beneath, because it is not there to receive, they must get it from above; and accordingly they have no choice but to complete their mediate position by accepting misery from men.

According to the Platonists, then, the gods, who occupy the highest place, enjoy eternal blessedness, or blessed eternity; men, who occupy the lowest, a mortal misery, or a miserable mortality; and the demons, who occupy the mean, a miserable eternity, or an eternal misery. As to those five things which Apu leius included in his definition of demons, he did not show, as he promised, that the demons are mediate. For three of them, that their nature is animal, their mind rational, their soul subject to passions, he said that they have in common with men; one thing, their eternity, in common with the gods; and one proper to themselves, their aerial body. How, then, are they intermediate, when they have three things in common with the lowest, and only one in common with the highest? Who does not see that the intermediate position is abandoned in proportion as they tend to, and are depressed towards, the lowest extreme? But perhaps we are to accept them as intermediate because of their one property of an aerial body, as the two extremes have each their proper body, the gods an ethereal, men a terrestrial body, and because two of the qualities they possess in common with man they possess also in common with the gods, namely, their animal nature and rational mind. For Apuleius himself, in speaking of gods and men, said, "You have two animal natures." And Platonists are wont to ascribe a rational mind to the gods. Two qualities remain, their liability to passion, and their eternity,—the first of which they have in common with men, the second with the gods; so that they are neither wafted to the highest nor depressed to the lowest extreme, but perfectly poised in their intermediate position. But then, this is the very circumstance which constitutes the eternal misery, or miserable eternity, of the demons. For he who says that their soul is subject to passions would also have said that they are miserable, had he not blushed for their worshippers. Moreover, as the world is governed, not by fortuitous haphazard, but, as the Platonists themselves avow, by the providence of the supreme God, the misery of the demons would not be eternal unless their wickedness were great.

If, then, the blessed are rightly styled eudemons, the demons intermediate between gods and men are not eudemons. What, then, is the local position of those good demons, who, above men but beneath the gods, afford assistance to the former, minister to the latter? For if they are good and eternal, they are doubtless blessed. But eternal blessedness destroys their intermediate character, giving them a close resemblance to the gods, and widely separating them from men. And therefore the Platonists will in vain strive to show how the good demons, if they are both immortal and blessed, can justly be said to hold a middle place between the gods, who are immortal and blessed, and men, who are mortal and miserable. For if they have both immortality and blessedness in common with the gods, and neither of these in common with men, who are both miserable and mortal, are they not rather remote from men and united with the gods, than intermediate between them. They would be intermediate if they held one of their qualities in common with the one party, and the other with the other, as man is a kind of mean between angels and beasts,—the beast being an irrational and mortal animal, the angel a rational and immortal one, while man, inferior to the angel and superior to the beast, and having in common with the one mortality, and with the other reason, is a rational and mortal animal. So, when we seek for an intermediate between the blessed immortals and miserable mortals, we should find a being which is either mortal and blessed, or immortal and miserable.

CHAPTER 14

WHETHER MEN, THOUGH MORTAL, CAN ENJOY TRUE BLESSEDNESS

It is a great question among men, whether man can be mortal and blessed. Some, taking the humbler view of his condition, have denied that he is capable of blessedness so long as he continues in this mortal life; others, again, have spurned this idea, and have been bold enough to maintain that, even though mortal, men may be blessed by attaining wisdom. But if this be the case, why are not these wise men constituted mediators between miserable mortals and the blessed immortals, since they have blessedness in common with the latter, and mortality in common with the former? Certainly, if they are blessed, they envy no one (for what more miserable than envy?), but seek with all their might to help miserable mortals on to blessedness, so that after death they may become immortal, and be associated with the blessed and immortal angels.

CHAPTER 15

OF THE MAN CHRIST JESUS, THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN

But if, as is much more probable and credible, it must needs be that all men, so long as they are mortal, are also miserable, we must seek an intermediate who is not only man, but also God, that, by the interposition of His blessed mortality, He may bring men out of their mortal misery to a blessed immortality. In this intermediate two things are requisite, that He become mortal, and that He do not continue mortal. He did become mortal, not rendering the divinity of the Word infirm, but assuming the infirmity of flesh. Neither did He continue mortal in the flesh, but raised it from the dead; for it is the very fruit of His mediation that those, for the sake of whose redemption He became the Mediator, should not abide eternally in bodily death. Wherefore it became the Mediator between us and God to have both a transient mortality and a permanent blessedness, that by that which is transient He might be assimilated to mortals, and might translate them from mortality to that which is permanent. Good angels, therefore, cannot mediate between miserable mortals and blessed immortals, for they themselves also are both blessed and immortal; but evil angels can mediate, because they are immortal like the one party, miserable like the other. To these is opposed the good Mediator, who, in opposition to their immortality and misery, has chosen to be mortal for a time, and has been able to continue blessed in eternity. It is thus He has destroyed, by the humility of His death and the benignity of His blessedness, those proud immortals and hurtful wretches, and has prevented them from seducing to misery by their boast of immortality those men whose hearts He has cleansed by faith, and whom He has thus freed from their impure dominion.

Man, then, mortal and miserable, and far removed from the immortal and the blessed, what medium shall he choose by which he may be united to immortality and blessedness? The immortality of the demons, which might have some charm for man, is miserable; the mortality of Christ, which might offend man, exists no longer. In the one there is the fear of an eternal misery; in the other, death, which could not be eternal, can no longer be feared, and blessedness, which is eternal, must be loved. For the immortal and miserable mediator interposes himself to prevent us from passing to a blessed immortality, because that which hinders such a passage, namely, misery, continues in him; but the mortal and blessed Mediator interposed Himself, in order that, having passed through mortality, He might of mortals make immortals (showing His power to do this in His own resurrection), and from being miserable to raise them to the blessed company from the number of whom He had Himself never departed. There is, then, a wicked mediator, who separates friends, and a good Mediator, who reconciles enemies. And those who separate are numerous, because the multitude of the blessed are blessed only by their participation in the one God; of which participation the evil angels being deprived, they are wretched, and interpose to hinder rather than to help to this blessedness, and by their very number prevent us from reaching that one beatific good, to obtain which we need not many but one Mediator, the uncreated Word of God, by whom all things were made, and in partaking of whom we are blessed. I do not say that He is Mediator because He is the Word, for as the Word He is supremely blessed and supremely immortal, and therefore far from miserable mortals; but He is Mediator as He is man, for by His humanity He shows us that, in order to obtain that blessed and beatific good, we need not seek other mediators to lead us through the successive steps of this attainment, but that the blessed and beatific God, having Himself become a partaker of our humanity, has afforded us ready access to the participation of His divinity. For in delivering us from our mortality and misery, He does not lead us to the immortal and blessed angels, so that we should become immortal and blessed by participating in their nature, but He leads us straight to that Trinity, by participating in which the angels themselves are blessed. Therefore, when He chose to be in the form of a servant, and lower than the angels, that He might be our Mediator, He remained higher than the angels, in the form of God,—Himself at once the way of life on earth and life itself in heaven.

CHAPTER 16

WHETHER IT IS REASONABLE IN THE PLATONISTS TO DETERMINE THAT THE CELESTIAL GODS DECLINE CONTACT WITH EARTHLY THINGS AND INTERCOURSE WITH MEN, WHO THEREFORE REQUIRE THE INTERCESSION OF THE DEMONS

That opinion, which the same Platonist avers that Plato uttered, is not true, “that no god holds intercourse with men.” And this, he says, is the chief evidence of their exaltation, that they are never contaminated by contact with men. He admits, therefore, that the demons are contaminated; and it follows that they cannot cleanse those by whom they are themselves contaminated, and thus all alike become impure, the demons by associating with men, and men by worshipping the demons. Or, if they say that the demons are not contaminated by associating and dealing with men, then they are better than the gods, for the gods, were they to do so, would be contaminated. For this, we are told, is the glory of the gods, that they are so highly exalted that no human intercourse can sully them. He affirms, indeed, that the supreme God, the Creator of all things, whom we call the true God, is spoken of by Plato as the only God whom the poverty of human speech fails even passably to describe; and that even the wise, when their mental energy is as far as possible delivered from the trammels of connection with the body, have only such gleams of insight into His nature as may be compared to a flash of lightning illumining the darkness. If, then, this supreme God, who is truly exalted above all things, does nevertheless visit the minds of the wise, when emancipated from the body, with an intelligible and ineffable presence, though this be only occasional, and as it were a swift flash of light athwart the darkness, why are the other gods so sublimely removed from all contact with men, as if they would be polluted by it? as if it were not a sufficient refutation of this to lift up our eyes to those heavenly bodies which give the earth its needful light. If the stars, though they, by his account, are visible gods, are not contaminated when we look at them, neither are the demons contaminated when men see them quite closely. But perhaps it is the human voice, and not the eye, which pollutes the gods; and therefore the demons are appointed to mediate and carry men's utterances to the gods, who keep themselves remote through fear of pollution? What am I to say of the other senses? For by smell neither the demons, who are present, nor the gods, though they were present and inhaling the exhalations of living men, would be polluted if they are not contaminated with the effluvia of the carcasses offered in sacrifice. As for taste, they are pressed by no necessity of repairing bodily decay, so as to be reduced to ask food from men. And touch is in their own power. For while it may seem that contact is so called, because the sense of touch is specially concerned in it, yet the gods, if so minded, might mingle with men, so as to see and be seen, hear and be heard; and where is the need of touching? For men would not dare to desire this, if they were favored with the sight or conversation of gods or good demons; and if through excessive curiosity they should desire it, how could they accomplish their wish without the consent of the god or demon, when they cannot touch so much as a sparrow unless it be caged?

There is, then, nothing to hinder the gods from mingling in a bodily form with men, from seeing and being seen, from speaking and hearing. And if the demons do thus mix with men, as I said, and are not polluted, while the gods, were they to do so, should be polluted, then the demons are less liable to pollution than the gods. And if even the demons are contaminated, how can they help men to attain blessedness after death, if, so far from being able to cleanse them, and present them clean to the unpolluted gods, these mediators are themselves polluted? And if they cannot confer this benefit on men, what good can their friendly mediation do? Or shall its result be, not that men find entrance to the gods, but that men and demons abide together in a state of pollution, and consequently of exclusion from blessedness? Unless, perhaps, some one may say that, like sponges or things of that sort, the demons themselves, in the process of cleansing their friends, become themselves the filthier in proportion as the others become clean. But if this is the solution, then the gods, who shun contact or intercourse with men for fear of pollution, mix with demons who are far more polluted. Or perhaps the gods, who cannot cleanse men without polluting themselves, can without pollution cleanse the demons who have been contaminated by human contact? Who can believe such follies, unless the demons have practised their deceit upon him? If seeing and being seen is contamination, and if the gods, whom Apuleius himself calls visible, “the brilliant lights of the world,” and the other stars, are seen by men, are we to believe that the demons, who cannot be seen unless they please, are safer from contamination? Or if it is only the seeing and not the being seen which contaminates, then they must deny that these gods of theirs, these brilliant lights of the world, see men when their rays beam upon the earth. Their rays are not contaminated by lighting on all manner of pollution, and are we to suppose that the gods would be contaminated if they mixed with men, and even if contact were needed in order to assist them? For there is contact between the earth and the sun’s or moon’s rays, and yet this does not pollute the light.

CHAPTER 17

THAT TO OBTAIN THE BLESSED LIFE, WHICH CONSISTS IN PARTAKING OF THE SUPREME GOOD, MAN NEEDS SUCH MEDIATION AS IS FURNISHED NOT BY A DEMON, BUT BY CHRIST ALONE

I am considerably surprised that such learned men, men who pronounce all material and sensible things to be altogether inferior to those that are spiritual and intelligible, should mention bodily contact in connection with the blessed life. Is that sentiment of Plotinus forgotten?—”We must fly to our beloved fatherland. There is the Father, there our all. What fleet or flight shall convey us thither? Our way is, to become like God.” If, then, one is nearer to God the liker he is to Him, there is no other distance from God than unlikeness to Him. And the soul of man is unlike that incorporeal and unchangeable and eternal essence, in proportion as it craves things temporal and mutable. And as the things beneath, which are mortal and impure, cannot hold intercourse with the immortal purity which is above, a mediator is indeed needed to remove this difficulty; but not a mediator who resembles the highest order of being by possessing an immortal body, and the lowest by having a diseased soul, which makes him rather grudge that we be healed than help our cure. We need a Mediator who, being united to us here below by the mortality of His body, should at the same time be able to afford us truly divine help in cleansing and liberating us by means of the immortal righteousness of His spirit, whereby He remained heavenly even while here upon earth. Far be it from the incontaminable God to fear pollution from the man He assumed, or from the men among whom He lived in the form of a man. For, though His incarnation showed us nothing else, these two wholesome facts were enough, that true divinity cannot be polluted by flesh, and that demons are not to be considered better than ourselves because they have not flesh. This, then, as Scripture says, is the “Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus,” of whose divinity, whereby He is equal to the Father, and humanity, whereby He has become like us, this is not the place to speak as fully as I could.

CHAPTER 18

THAT THE DECEITFUL DEMONS, WHILE PROMISING TO CONDUCT MEN TO GOD BY THEIR INTERCESSION, MEAN TO TURN THEM FROM THE PATH OF TRUTH

As to the demons, these false and deceitful mediators, who, though their uncleanness of spirit frequently reveals their misery and malignity, yet, by virtue of the levity of their aerial bodies and the nature of the places they inhabit, do contrive to turn us aside and hinder our spiritual progress; they do not help us towards God, but rather prevent us from reaching Him. Since even in the bodily way, which is erroneous and misleading, and in which righteousness does not walk,—for we must rise to God not by bodily ascent, but by incorporeal or spiritual conformity to Him,—in this bodily way, I say, which the friends of the demons arrange according to the weight of the various elements, the aerial demons being set between the ethereal gods and earthy men, they imagine the gods to have this privilege, that by this local interval they are preserved from the pollution of human contact. Thus they believe that the demons are contaminated by men rather than men cleansed by the demons, and that the gods themselves should be polluted unless their local superiority preserved them. Who is so wretched a creature as to expect purification by a way in which men are contaminating, demons contaminated, and gods contaminable? Who would not rather choose that way whereby we escape the contamination of the demons, and are cleansed from pollution by the incontaminable God, so as to be associated with the uncontaminated angels?

CHAPTER 19

THAT EVEN AMONG THEIR OWN WORSHIPPERS THE NAME "DEMON" HAS NEVER A GOOD SIGNIFICATION

But as some of these demonolators, as I may call them, and among them Labeo, allege that those whom they call demons are by others called angels, I must, if I would not seem to dispute merely about words, say something about the good angels. The Platonists do not deny their existence, but prefer to call them good demons. But we, following Scripture, according to which we are Christians, have learned that some of the angels are good, some bad, but never have we read in Scripture of good demons; but wherever this or any cognate term occurs, it is applied only to wicked spirits. And this usage has become so universal, that, even among those who are called pagans, and who maintain that demons as well as gods should be worshipped, there is scarcely a man, no matter how well read and learned, who would dare to say by way of praise to his slave, You have a demon, or who could doubt that the man to whom he said this would consider it a curse? Why, then, are we to subject ourselves to the necessity of explaining away what we have said when we have given offence by using the word demon, with which every one, or almost every one, connects a bad meaning, while we can so easily evade this necessity by using the word angel?

CHAPTER 20

OF THE KIND OF KNOWLEDGE WHICH PUFFS UP THE DEMONS

However, the very origin of the name suggests something worthy of consideration, if we compare it with the divine books. They are called demons from a Greek word meaning knowledge. Now the apostle, speaking with the Holy Spirit, says, “Knowledge puffeth up, but charity buildeth up.” And this can only be understood as meaning that without charity knowledge does no good, but inflates a man or magnifies him with an empty windiness. The demons, then, have knowledge without charity, and are thereby so inflated or proud, that they crave those divine honors and religious services which they know to be due to the true God, and still, as far as they can, exact these from all over whom they have influence. Against this pride of the demons, under which the human race was held subject as its merited punishment, there was exerted the mighty influence of the humility of God, who appeared in the form of a servant; but men, resembling the demons in pride, but not in knowledge, and being puffed up with uncleanness, failed to recognize Him.

CHAPTER 21

TO WHAT EXTENT THE LORD WAS PLEASED TO MAKE HIMSELF KNOWN TO THE DEMONS

The devils themselves knew this manifestation of God so well, that they said to the Lord though clothed with the infirmity of flesh, “What have we to do with Thee, Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us before the time?” From these words, it is clear that they had great knowledge, and no charity. They feared His power to punish, and did not love His righteousness. He made known to them so much as He pleased, and He was pleased to make known so much as was needful. But He made Himself known not as to the holy angels, who know Him as the Word of God, and rejoice in His eternity, which they partake, but as was requisite to strike with terror the beings from whose tyranny He was going to free those who were predestined to His kingdom and the glory of it, eternally true and truly eternal. He made Himself known, therefore, to the demons, not by that which is life eternal, and the unchangeable light which illumines the pious, whose souls are cleansed by the faith that is in Him, but by some temporal effects of His power, and evidences of His mysterious presence, which were more easily discerned by the angelic senses even of wicked spirits than by human infirmity. But when He judged it advisable gradually to suppress these signs, and to retire into deeper obscurity, the prince of the demons doubted whether He were the Christ, and endeavored to ascertain this by tempting Him, in so far as He permitted Himself to be tempted, that He might adapt the manhood He wore to be an example for our imitation. But after that temptation, when, as Scripture says, He was ministered to by the angels who are good and holy, and therefore objects of terror to the impure spirits, He revealed more and more distinctly to the demons how great He was, so that, even though the infirmity of His flesh might seem contemptible, none dared to resist His authority.

CHAPTER 22

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY ANGELS AND THAT OF THE DEMONS

The good angels, therefore, hold cheap all that knowledge of material and transitory things which the demons are so proud of possessing,—not that they are ignorant of these things, but because the love of God, whereby they are sanctified, is very dear to them, and because, in comparison of that not merely immaterial but also unchangeable and ineffable beauty, with the holy love of which they are inflamed, they despise all things which are beneath it, and all that is not it, that they may with every good thing that is in them enjoy that good which is the source of their goodness. And therefore they have a more certain knowledge even of those temporal and mutable things, because they contemplate their principles and causes in the word of God, by which the world was made,—those causes by which one thing is, approved, another rejected, and all arranged. But the demons do not behold in the wisdom of God these eternal, and, as it were, cardinal causes of things temporal, but only foresee a larger part of the future than men do, by reason of their greater acquaintance with the signs which are hidden from us. Sometimes, too, it is their own intentions they predict. And, finally, the demons are frequently, the angels never, deceived. For it is one thing, by the aid of things temporal and changeable, to conjecture the changes that may occur in time, and to modify such things by one's own will and faculty,—and this is to a certain extent permitted to the demons,—it is another thing to foresee the changes of times in the eternal and immutable laws of God, which live in His wisdom, and to know the will of God, the most infallible and powerful of all causes, by participating in His spirit; and this is granted to the holy angels by a just discretion. And thus they are not only eternal, but blessed. And the good wherein they are blessed is God, by whom they were created. For without end they enjoy the contemplation and participation of Him.

CHAPTER 23

THAT THE NAME OF GODS IS FALSELY GIVEN TO THE GODS OF THE GENTILES, THOUGH SCRIPTURE APPLIES IT BOTH TO THE HOLY ANGELS AND JUST MEN

If the Platonists prefer to call these angels gods rather than demons, and to reckon them with those whom Plato, their founder and master, maintains were created by the supreme God, they are welcome to do so, for I will not spend strength in fighting about words. For if they say that these beings are immortal, and yet created by the supreme God, blessed but by cleaving to their Creator and not by their own power, they say what we say, whatever name they call these beings by. And that this is the opinion either of all or the best of the Platonists can be ascertained by their writings. And regarding the name itself, if they see fit to call such blessed and immortal creatures gods, this need not give rise to any serious discussion between us, since in our own Scriptures we read, "The God of gods, the Lord hath spoken;" and again, "Confess to the God of gods;" and again, "He is a great King above all gods." And where it is said, "He is to be feared above all gods," the reason is forthwith added, for it follows, "for all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the heavens." He said, "above all gods," but added, "of the nations;" that is to say, above all those whom the nations count gods, in other words, demons. By them He is to be feared with that terror in which they cried to the Lord, "Hast Thou come to destroy us?" But where it is said, "the God of gods," it cannot be understood as the god of the demons; and far be it from us to say that “great King above all gods” means “great King above all demons.” But the same Scripture also calls men who belong to God’s people “gods:” “I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you children of the Most High.” Accordingly, when God is styled God of gods, this may be understood of these gods; and so, too, when He is styled a great King above all gods.

Nevertheless, some one may say, if men are called gods because they belong to God’s people, whom He addresses by means of men and angels, are not the immortals, who already enjoy that felicity which men seek to attain by worshipping God, much more worthy of the title? And what shall we reply to this, if not that it is not without reason that in holy Scripture men are more expressly styled gods than those immortal and blessed spirits to whom we hope to be equal in the resurrection, because there was a fear that the weakness of unbelief, being overcome with the excellence of these beings, might presume to constitute some of them a god? In the case of men this was a result that need not be guarded against. Besides, it was right that the men belonging to God’s people should be more expressly called gods, to assure and certify them that He who is called God of gods is their God; because, although those immortal and blessed spirits who dwell in the heavens are called gods, yet they are not called gods of gods, that is to say, gods of the men who constitute God’s people, and to whom it is said, “I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you the children of the Most High.” Hence the saying of the apostle, “Though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many and lords many, but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him.”

We need not, therefore, laboriously contend about the name, since the reality is so obvious as to admit of no shadow of doubt. That which we say, that the angels who are sent to announce the will of God to men belong to the order of blessed immortals, does not satisfy the Platonists, because they believe that this ministry is discharged, not by those whom they call gods, in other words, not by blessed immortals, but by demons, whom they dare not affirm to be blessed, but only immortal, or if they do rank them among the blessed immortals, yet only as good demons, and not as gods who dwell in the heaven of heavens remote from all human contact. But, though it may seem mere wrangling about a name, yet the name of demon is so detestable that we cannot bear in any sense to apply it to the holy angels. Now, therefore, let us close this book in the assurance that, whatever we call these immortal and blessed spirits, who yet are only creatures, they do not act as mediators to introduce to everlasting felicity miserable mortals, from whom they are severed by a twofold distinction. And those others who are mediators, in so far as they have immortality in common with their superiors, and misery in common with their inferiors (for they are justly miserable in punishment of their wickedness), cannot bestow upon us, but rather grudge that we should possess, the blessedness from which they themselves are excluded. And so the friends of the demons have nothing considerable to allege why we should rather worship them as our helpers than avoid them as traitors to our interests. As for those spirits who are good, and who are therefore not only immortal but also blessed, and to whom they suppose we should give the title of gods, and offer worship and sacrifices for the sake of inheriting a future life, we shall, by God's help, endeavor in the following book to show that these spirits, call them by what name, and ascribe to them what nature you will, desire that religious worship be paid to God alone, by whom they were created, and by whose communications of Himself to them they are blessed.

Book X

Argument—In this book Augustin teaches that the good angels wish God alone, whom they themselves serve, to receive that divine honor which is rendered by sacrifice, and which is called “latreia.” He then goes on to dispute against Porphyry about the principle and way of the soul’s cleansing and deliverance.

CHAPTER 1

THAT THE PLATONISTS THEMSELVES HAVE DETERMINED THAT GOD ALONE CAN CONFER HAPPINESS EITHER ON ANGELS OR MEN, BUT THAT IT YET REMAINS A QUESTION WHETHER THOSE SPIRITS WHOM THEY DIRECT US TO WORSHIP, THAT WE MAY OBTAIN HAPPINESS, WISH SACRIFICE TO BE OFFERED TO THEMSELVES, OR TO THE ONE GOD ONLY

It is the decided opinion of all who use their brains, that all men desire to be happy. But who are happy, or how they become so, these are questions about which the weakness of human understanding stirs endless and angry controversies, in which philosophers have wasted their strength and expended their leisure. To adduce and discuss their various opinions would be tedious, and is unnecessary. The reader may remember what we said in the eighth book, while making a selection of the philosophers with whom we might discuss the question regarding the future life of happiness, whether we can reach it by paying divine honors to the one true God, the Creator of all gods, or by worshipping many gods, and he will not expect us to repeat here the same argument, especially as, even if he has forgotten it, he may refresh his memory by reperusal. For we made selection of the Platonists, justly esteemed the noblest of the philosophers, because they had the wit to perceive that the human soul, immortal and rational, or intellectual, as it is, cannot be happy except by partaking of the light of that God by whom both itself and the world were made; and also that the happy life which all men desire cannot be reached by any who does not cleave with a pure and holy love to that one supreme good, the unchangeable God. But as even these philosophers, whether accommodating to the folly and ignorance of the people, or, as the apostle says, “becoming vain in their imaginations,” supposed or allowed others to suppose that many gods should be worshipped, so that some of them considered that divine honor by worship and sacrifice should be rendered even to the demons (an error I have already exploded), we must now, by God’s help, ascertain what is thought about our religious worship and piety by those immortal and blessed spirits, who dwell in the heavenly places among dominations, principalities, powers, whom the Platonists call gods, and some either good demons, or, like us, angels,—that is to say, to put it more plainly, whether the angels desire us to offer sacrifice and worship, and to consecrate our possessions and ourselves, to them or only to God, theirs and ours.

For this is the worship which is due to the Divinity, or, to speak more accurately, to the Deity; and, to express this worship in a single word as there does not occur to me any Latin term sufficiently exact, I shall avail myself, whenever necessary, of a Greek word. Latreia, whenever it occurs in Scripture, is rendered by the word service. But that service which is due to men, and in reference to which the apostle writes that servants must be subject to their own masters, is usually designated by another word in Greek, whereas the service which is paid to God alone by worship, is always, or almost always, called latreia in the usage of those who wrote from the divine oracles. This cannot so well be called simply “cultus,” for in that case it would not seem to be due exclusively to God; for the same word is applied to the respect we pay either to the memory or the living presence of men. From it, too, we derive the words agriculture, colonist, and others. And the heathen call their gods “coelicolae,” not because they worship heaven, but because they dwell in it, and as it were colonize it,—not in the sense in which we call those colonists who are attached to their native soil to cultivate it under the rule of the owners, but in the sense in which the great master of the Latin language says, “There was an ancient city inhabited by Tyrian colonists.” He called them colonists, not because they cultivated the soil, but because they inhabited the city. So, too, cities that have hived off from larger cities are called colonies. Consequently, while it is quite true that, using the word in a special sense, “cult” can be rendered to none but God, yet, as the word is applied to other things besides, the cult due to God cannot in Latin be expressed by this word alone.

The word “religion” might seem to express more definitely the worship due to God alone, and therefore Latin translators have used this word to represent threskeia; yet, as not only the uneducated, but also the best instructed, use the word religion to express human ties, and relationships, and affinities, it would inevitably introduce ambiguity to use this word in discussing the worship of God, unable as we are to say that religion is nothing else than the worship of God, without contradicting the common usage which applies this word to the observance of social relationships. “Piety,” again, or, as the Greeks say, eusebeia, is commonly understood as the proper designation of the worship of God. Yet this word also is used of dutifulness to parents. The common people, too, use it of works of charity, which, I suppose, arises from the circumstance that God enjoins the performance of such works, and declares that He is pleased with them instead of, or in preference to sacrifices. From this usage it has also come to pass that God Himself is called pious, in which sense the Greeks never use eusebein, though eusebeia is applied to works of charity by their common people also. In some passages of Scripture, therefore, they have sought to preserve the distinction by using not eusebeia, the more general word, but theosebeia, which literally denotes the worship of God. We, on the other hand, cannot express either of these ideas by one word. This worship, then, which in Greek is called latreia, and in Latin “servitus” [service], but the service due to God only; this worship, which in Greek is called threskeia, and in Latin “religio,” but the religion by which we are bound to God only; this worship, which they call theosebeia, but which we cannot express in one word, but call it the worship of God,—this, we say, belongs only to that God who is the true God, and who makes His worshippers gods. And therefore, whoever these immortal and blessed inhabitants of heaven be, if they do not love us, and wish us to be blessed, then we ought not to worship them; and if they do love us and desire our happiness, they cannot wish us to be made happy by any other means than they themselves have enjoyed,—for how could they wish our blessedness to flow from one source, theirs from another?

CHAPTER 2

THE OPINION OF PLOTINUS THE PLATONIST REGARDING ENLIGHTENMENT FROM ABOVE

But with these more estimable philosophers we have no dispute in this matter. For they perceived, and in various forms abundantly expressed in their writings, that these spirits have the same source of happiness as ourselves,—a certain intelligible light, which is their God, and is different from themselves, and illumines them that they may be penetrated with light, and enjoy perfect happiness in the participation of God. Plotinus, commenting on Plato, repeatedly and strongly asserts that not even the soul which they believe to be the soul of the world, derives its blessedness from any other source than we do, viz., from that Light which is distinct from it and created it, and by whose intelligible illumination it enjoys light in things intelligible. He also compares those spiritual things to the vast and conspicuous heavenly bodies, as if God were the sun, and the soul the moon; for they suppose that the moon derives its light from the sun. That great Platonist, therefore, says that the rational soul, or rather the intellectual soul,—in which class he comprehends the souls of the blessed immortals who inhabit heaven,—has no nature superior to it save God, the Creator of the world and the soul itself, and that these heavenly spirits derive their blessed life, and the light of truth from their blessed life, and the light of truth, the source as ourselves, agreeing with the gospel where we read, “There was a man sent from God whose name was John; the same came for a witness to bear witness of that Light, that through Him all might believe. He was not that Light, but that he might bear witness of the Light. That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world;” a distinction which sufficiently proves that the rational or intellectual soul such as John had cannot be its own light, but needs to receive illumination from another, the true Light. This John himself avows when he delivers his witness: “We have all received of His fullness.”

CHAPTER 3

THAT THE PLATONISTS, THOUGH KNOWING SOMETHING OF THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE, HAVE MISUNDERSTOOD THE TRUE WORSHIP OF GOD, BY GIVING DIVINE HONOR TO ANGELS, GOOD OR BAD

This being so, if the Platonists, or those who think with them, knowing God, glorified Him as God and gave thanks, if they did not become vain in their own thoughts, if they did not originate or yield to the popular errors, they would certainly acknowledge that neither could the blessed immortals retain, nor we miserable mortals reach, a happy condition without worshipping the one God of gods, who is both theirs and ours. To Him we owe the service which is called in Greek latreia, whether we render it outwardly or inwardly; for we are all His temple, each of us severally and all of us together, because He condescends to inhabit each individually and the whole harmonious body, being no greater in all than in each, since He is neither expanded nor divided. Our heart when it rises to Him is His altar; the priest who intercedes for us is His Only-begotten; we sacrifice to Him bleeding victims when we contend for His truth even unto blood; to Him we offer the sweetest incense when we come before Him burning with holy and pious love; to Him we devote and surrender ourselves and His gifts in us; to Him, by solemn feasts and on appointed days, we consecrate the memory of His benefits, lest through the lapse of time ungrateful oblivion should steal upon us; to Him we offer on the altar of our heart the sacrifice of humility and praise, kindled by the fire of burning love. It is that we may see Him, so far as He can be seen; it is that we may cleave to Him, that we are cleansed from all stain of sins and evil passions, and are consecrated in His name. For He is the fountain of our happiness, He the end of all our desires. Being attached to Him, or rather let me say, re-attached,—for we had detached ourselves and lost hold of Him,—being, I say, re-attached to Him, we tend towards Him by love, that we may rest in Him, and find our blessedness by attaining that end. For our good, about which philosophers have so keenly contended, is nothing else than to be united to God. It is, if I may say so, by spiritually embracing Him that the intellectual soul is filled and impregnated with true virtues. We are enjoined to love this good with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength. To this good we ought to be led by those who love us, and to lead those we love. Thus are fulfilled those two commandments on which hang all the law and the prophets: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul;” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” For, that man might be intelligent in his self-love, there was appointed for him an end to which he might refer all his actions, that he might be blessed. For he who loves himself wishes nothing else than this. And the end set before him is “to draw near to God.” And so, when one who has this intelligent self-love is commanded to love his neighbor as himself, what else is enjoined than that he shall do all in his power to commend to him the love of God? This is the worship of God, this is true religion, this right piety, this the service due to God only. If any immortal power, then, no matter with what virtue endowed, loves us as himself, he must desire that we find our happiness by submitting ourselves to Him, in submission to whom he himself finds happiness. If he does not worship God, he is wretched, because deprived of God; if he worships God, he cannot wish to be worshipped in God’s stead. On the contrary, these higher powers acquiesce heartily in the divine sentence in which it is written, “He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed.”

CHAPTER 4

THAT SACRIFICE IS DUE TO THE TRUE GOD ONLY

But, putting aside for the present the other religious services with which God is worshipped, certainly no man would dare to say that sacrifice is due to any but God. Many parts, indeed, of divine worship are unduly used in showing honor to men, whether through an excessive humility or pernicious flattery; yet, while this is done, those persons who are thus worshipped and venerated, or even adored, are reckoned no more than human; and who ever thought of sacrificing save to one whom he knew, supposed, or feigned to be a god? And how ancient a part of God’s worship sacrifice is, those two brothers, Cain and Abel, sufficiently show, of whom God rejected the elder’s sacrifice, and looked favorably on the younger’s.

CHAPTER 5

OF THE SACRIFICES WHICH GOD DOES NOT REQUIRE, BUT WISHED TO BE OBSERVED FOR THE EXHIBITION OF THOSE THINGS WHICH HE DOES REQUIRE

And who is so foolish as to suppose that the things offered to God are needed by Him for some uses of His own? Divine Scripture in many places explodes this idea. Not to be wearisome, suffice it to quote this brief saying from a psalm: “I have said to the Lord, Thou art my God: for Thou needest not my goodness.” We must believe, then, that God has no need, not only of cattle, or any other earthly and material thing, but even of man’s righteousness, and that whatever right worship is paid to God profits not Him, but man. For no man would say he did a benefit to a fountain by drinking, or to the light by seeing. And the fact that the ancient church offered animal sacrifices, which the people of God now-a-days read of without imitating, proves nothing else than this, that those sacrifices signified the things which we do for the purpose of drawing near to God, and inducing our neighbor to do the same. A sacrifice, therefore, is the visible sacrament or sacred sign of an invisible sacrifice. Hence that penitent in the psalm, or it may be the Psalmist himself, entreating God to be merciful to his sins, says, “If Thou desiredst sacrifice, I would give it: Thou delightest not in whole burnt-offerings. The sacrifice of God is a broken heart: a heart contrite and humble God will not despise.” Observe how, in the very words in which he is expressing God’s refusal of sacrifice, he shows that God requires sacrifice. He does not desire the sacrifice of a slaughtered beast, but He desires the sacrifice of a contrite heart. Thus, that sacrifice which he says God does not wish, is the symbol of the sacrifice which God does wish. God does not wish sacrifices in the sense in which foolish people think He wishes them, viz., to gratify His own pleasure. For if He had not wished that the sacrifices He requires, as, e.g., a heart contrite and humbled by penitent sorrow, should be symbolized by those sacrifices which He was thought to desire because pleasant to Himself, the old law would never have enjoined their presentation; and they were destined to be merged when the fit opportunity arrived, in order that men might not suppose that the sacrifices themselves, rather than the things symbolized by them, were pleasing to God or acceptable in us. Hence, in another passage from another psalm, he says, “If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine and the fullness thereof. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?” as if He should say, Supposing such things were necessary to me, I would never ask thee for what I have in my own hand. Then he goes on to mention what these signify: “Offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows unto the Most High. And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shall glorify me.” So in another prophet: “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? Hath He showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" In the words of this prophet, these two things are distinguished and set forth with sufficient explicitness, that God does not require these sacrifices for their own sakes, and that He does require the sacrifices which they symbolize. In the epistle entitled "To the Hebrews" it is said, "To do good and to communicate, forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." And so, when it is written, "I desire mercy rather than sacrifice," nothing else is meant than that one sacrifice is preferred to another; for that which in common speech is called sacrifice is only the symbol of the true sacrifice. Now mercy is the true sacrifice, and therefore it is said, as I have just quoted, "with such sacrifices God is well pleased." All the divine ordinances, therefore, which we read concerning the sacrifices in the service of the tabernacle or the temple, we are to refer to the love of God and our neighbor. For "on these two commandments," as it is written, "hang all the law and the prophets."

CHAPTER 6

OF THE TRUE AND PERFECT SACRIFICE

Thus a true sacrifice is every work which is done that we may be united to God in holy fellowship, and which has a reference to that supreme good and end in which alone we can be truly blessed. And therefore even the mercy we show to men, if it is not shown for God's sake, is not a sacrifice. For, though made or offered by man, sacrifice is a divine thing, as those who called it sacrifice meant to indicate. Thus man himself, consecrated in the name of God, and vowed to God, is a sacrifice in so far as he dies to the world that he may live to God. For this is a part of that mercy which each man shows to himself; as it is written, "Have mercy on thy soul by pleasing God." Our body, too, as a sacrifice when we chasten it by temperance, if we do so as we ought, for God's sake, that we may not yield our members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but instruments of righteousness unto God. Exhorting to this sacrifice, the apostle says, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercy of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." If, then, the body, which, being inferior, the soul uses as a servant or instrument, is a sacrifice when it is used rightly, and with reference to God, how much more does the soul itself become a sacrifice when it offers itself to God, in order that, being inflamed by the fire of His love, it may receive of His beauty and become pleasing to Him, losing the shape of earthly desire, and being remoulded in the image of permanent loveliness? And this, indeed, the apostle subjoins, saying, "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed in the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Since, therefore, true sacrifices are works of mercy to ourselves or others, done with a reference to God, and since works of mercy have no other object than the relief of distress or the conferring of happiness, and since there is no happiness apart from that good of which it is said, "It is good for me to be very near to God," it follows that the whole redeemed city, that is to say, the congregation or community of the saints, is offered to God as our sacrifice through the great High Priest, who offered Himself to God in His passion for us, that we might be members of this glorious head, according to the form of a servant. For it was this form He offered, in this He was offered, because it is according to it He is Mediator, in this He is our Priest, in this the Sacrifice. Accordingly, when the apostle had exhorted us to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, our reasonable service, and not to be conformed to the world, but to be transformed in the renewing of our mind, that we might prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, that is to say, the true sacrifice of ourselves, he says, "For I say, through the grace of God which is given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For, as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another, having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us." This is the sacrifice of Christians: we, being many, are one body in Christ. And this also is the sacrifice which the Church continually celebrates in the sacrament of the altar, known to the faithful, in which she teaches that she herself is offered in the offering she makes to God.

CHAPTER 7

OF THE LOVE OF THE HOLY ANGELS, WHICH PROMPTS THEM TO DESIRE THAT WE WORSHIP THE ONE TRUE GOD, AND NOT THEMSELVES

It is very right that these blessed and immortal spirits, who inhabit celestial dwellings, and rejoice in the communications of their Creator's fullness, firm in His eternity, assured in His truth, holy by His grace, since they compassionately and tenderly regard us miserable mortals, and wish us to become immortal and happy, do not desire us to sacrifice to themselves, but to Him whose sacrifice they know themselves to be in common with us. For we and they together are the one city of God, to which it is said in the psalm, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God;" the human part sojourning here below, the angelic aiding from above. For from that heavenly city, in which God's will is the intelligible and unchangeable law, from that heavenly council-chamber,—for they sit in counsel regarding us,—that holy Scripture, descended to us by the ministry of angels, in which it is written, "He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed,"—this Scripture, this law, these precepts, have been confirmed by such miracles, that it is sufficiently evident to whom these immortal and blessed spirits, who desire us to be like themselves, wish us to sacrifice.

CHAPTER 8

OF THE MIRACLES WHICH GOD HAS CONDESCENDED TO ADHIBIT THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS, TO HIS PROMISES FOR THE CONFIRMATION OF THE FAITH OF THE GODLY

I should seem tedious were I to recount all the ancient miracles, which were wrought in attestation of God's promises which He made to Abraham thousands of years ago, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. For who can but marvel that Abraham's barren wife should have given birth to a son at an age when not even a prolific woman could bear children; or, again, that when Abraham sacrificed, a flame from heaven should have run between the divided parts; or that the angels in human form, whom he had hospitably entertained, and who had renewed God’s promise of offspring, should also have predicted the destruction of Sodom by fire from heaven; and that his nephew Lot should have been rescued from Sodom by the angels as the fire was just descending, while his wife, who looked back as she went, and was immediately turned into salt, stood as a sacred beacon warning us that no one who is being saved should long for what he is leaving? How striking also were the wonders done by Moses to rescue God’s people from the yoke of slavery in Egypt, when the magi of the Pharaoh, that is, the king of Egypt, who tyrannized over this people, were suffered to do some wonderful things that they might be vanquished all the more signally! They did these things by the magical arts and incantations to which the evil spirits or demons are addicted; while Moses, having as much greater power as he had right on his side, and having the aid of angels, easily conquered them in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth. And, in fact, the magicians failed at the third plague; whereas Moses, dealing out the miracles delegated to him, brought ten plagues upon the land, so that the hard hearts of Pharaoh and the Egyptians yielded, and the people were let go. But, quickly repenting, and essaying to overtake the departing Hebrews, who had crossed the sea on dry ground, they were covered and overwhelmed in the returning waters. What shall I say of those frequent and stupendous exhibitions of divine power, while the people were conducted through the wilderness?—of the waters which could not be drunk, but lost their bitterness, and quenched the thirsty, when at God’s command a piece of wood was cast into them? of the manna that descended from heaven to appease their hunger, and which begat worms and putrefied when any one collected more than the appointed quantity, and yet, though double was gathered on the day before the Sabbath (it not being lawful to gather it on that day), remained fresh? of the birds which filled the camp, and turned appetite into satiety when they longed for flesh, which it seemed impossible to supply to so vast a population? of the enemies who met them, and opposed their passage with arms, and were defeated without the loss of a single Hebrew, when Moses prayed with his hands extended in the form of a cross? of the seditious persons who arose among God’s people, and separated themselves from the divinely-ordered community, and were swallowed up alive by the earth, a visible token of an invisible punishment? of the rock struck with the rod, and pouring out waters more than enough for all the host? of the deadly serpents' bites, sent in just punishment of sin, but healed by looking at the lifted brazen serpent, so that not only were the tormented people healed, but a symbol of the crucifixion of death set before them in this destruction of death by death? It was this serpent which was preserved in memory of this event, and was afterwards worshipped by the mistaken people as an idol, and was destroyed by the pious and God-fearing king Hezekiah, much to his credit.

CHAPTER 9

OF THE ILLICIT ARTS CONNECTED WITH DEMONOLATRY, AND OF WHICH THE PLATONIST PORPHYRY ADOPTS SOME, AND DISCARDS OTHERS

These miracles, and many others of the same nature, which it were tedious to mention, were wrought for the purpose of commending the worship of the one true God, and prohibiting the worship of a multitude of false gods. Moreover, they were wrought by simple faith and godly confidence, not by the incantations and charms composed under the influence of a criminal tampering with the unseen world, of an art which they call either magic, or by the more abominable title necromancy, or the more honorable designation theurgy; for they wish to discriminate between those whom the people call magicians, who practise necromancy, and are addicted to illicit arts and condemned, and those others who seem to them to be worthy of praise for their practice of theurgy,—the truth, however, being that both classes are the slaves of the deceitful rites of the demons whom they invoke under the names of angels.

For even Porphyry promises some kind of purgation of the soul by the help of theurgy, though he does so with some hesitation and shame, and denies that this art can secure to any one a return to God; so that you can detect his opinion vacillating between the profession of philosophy and an art which he feels to be presumptuous and sacrilegious. For at one time he warns us to avoid it as deceitful, and prohibited by law, and dangerous to those who practise it; then again, as if in deference to its advocates, he declares it useful for cleansing one part of the soul, not, indeed, the intellectual part, by which the truth of things intelligible, which have no sensible images, is recognized, but the spiritual part, which takes cognizance of the images of things material. This part, he says, is prepared and fitted for intercourse with spirits and angels, and for the vision of the gods, by the help of certain theurgic consecrations, or, as they call them, mysteries. He acknowledges, however, that these theurgic mysteries impart to the intellectual soul no such purity as fits it to see its God, and recognize the things that truly exist. And from this acknowledgment we may infer what kind of gods these are, and what kind of vision of them is imparted by theurgic consecrations, if by it one cannot see the things which truly exist. He says, further, that the rational, or, as he prefers calling it, the intellectual soul, can pass into the heavens without the spiritual part being cleansed by theurgic art, and that this art cannot so purify the spiritual part as to give it entrance to immortality and eternity. And therefore, although he distinguishes angels from demons, asserting that the habitation of the latter is in the air, while the former dwell in the ether and empyrean, and although he advises us to cultivate the friendship of some demon, who may be able after our death to assist us, and elevate us at least a little above the earth,—for he owns that it is by another way we must reach the heavenly society of the angels,—he at the same time distinctly warns us to avoid the society of demons, saying that the soul, expiating its sin after death, execrates the worship of demons by whom it was entangled. And of theurgy itself, though he recommends it as reconciling angels and demons, he cannot deny that it treats with powers which either themselves envy the soul its purity, or serve the arts of those who do envy it. He complains of this through the mouth of some Chaldaean or other: “A good man in Chaldaea complains,” he says, “that his most strenuous efforts to cleanse his soul were frustrated, because another man, who had influence in these matters, and who envied him purity, had prayed to the powers, and bound them by his conjuring not to listen to his request. Therefore,” adds Porphyry, “what the one man bound, the other could not loose.” And from this he concludes that theurgy is a craft which accomplishes not only good but evil among gods and men; and that the gods also have passions, and are perturbed and agitated by the emotions which Apuleius attributed to demons and men, but from which he preserved the gods by that sublimity of residence, which, in common with Plato, he accorded to them.

CHAPTER 10

CONCERNING THEURGY, WHICH PROMISES A DELUSIVE PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL BY THE INVOCATION OF DEMONS

But here we have another and a much more learned Platonist than Apuleius, Porphyry, to wit, asserting that, by I know not what theurgy, even the gods themselves are subjected to passions and perturbations; for by adjurations they were so bound and terrified that they could not confer purity of soul,—were so terrified by him who imposed on them a wicked command, that they could not by the same theurgy be freed from that terror, and fulfill the righteous behest of him who prayed to them, or do the good he sought. Who does not see that all these things are fictions of deceiving demons, unless he be a wretched slave of theirs, and an alien from the grace of the true Liberator? For if the Chaldaean had been dealing with good gods, certainly a well-disposed man, who sought to purify his own soul, would have had more influence with them than an evil-disposed man seeking to hinder him. Or, if the gods were just, and considered the man unworthy of the purification he sought, at all events they should not have been terrified by an envious person, nor hindered, as Porphyry avows, by the fear of a stronger deity, but should have simply denied the boon on their own free judgment. And it is surprising that that well-disposed Chaldaean, who desired to purify his soul by theurgical rites, found no superior deity who could either terrify the frightened gods still more, and force them to confer the boon, or compose their fears, and so enable them to do good without compulsion,—even supposing that the good theurgist had no rites by which he himself might purge away the taint of fear from the gods whom he invoked for the purification of his own soul. And why is it that there is a god who has power to terrify the inferior gods, and none who has power to free them from fear? Is there found a god who listens to the envious man, and frightens the gods from doing good? and is there not found a god who listens to the well-disposed man, and removes the fear of the gods that they may do him good? O excellent theurgy! O admirable purification of the soul!—a theurgy in which the violence of an impure envy has more influence than the entreaty of purity and holiness. Rather let us abominate and avoid the deceit of such wicked spirits, and listen to sound doctrine. As to those who perform these filthy cleansings by sacrilegious rites, and see in their initiated state (as he further tells us, though we may question this vision) certain wonderfully lovely appearances of angels or gods, this is what the apostle refers to when he speaks of “Satan transforming himself into an angel of light.” For these are the delusive appearances of that spirit who longs to entangle wretched souls in the deceptive worship of many and false gods, and to turn them aside from the true worship of the true God, by whom alone they are cleansed and healed, and who, as was said of Proteus, “turns himself into all shapes,” equally hurtful, whether he assaults us as an enemy, or assumes the disguise of a friend.

CHAPTER 11

OF PORPHYRY’S EPISTLE TO ANEBO, IN WHICH HE ASKS FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES AMONG DEMONS

It was a better tone which Porphyry adopted in his letter to Anebo the Egyptian, in which, assuming the character of an inquirer consulting him, he unmasks and explodes these sacrilegious arts. In that letter, indeed, he repudiates all demons, whom he maintains to be so foolish as to be attracted by the sacrificial vapors, and therefore residing not in the ether, but in the air beneath the moon, and indeed in the moon itself. Yet he has not the boldness to attribute to all the demons all the deceptions and malicious and foolish practices which justly move his indignation. For, though he acknowledges that as a race demons are foolish, he so far accommodates himself to popular ideas as to call some of them benignant demons. He expresses surprise that sacrifices not only incline the gods, but also compel and force them to do what men wish; and he is at a loss to understand how the sun and moon, and other visible celestial bodies,—for bodies he does not doubt that they are,—are considered gods, if the gods are distinguished from the demons by their incorporeality; also, if they are gods, how some are called beneficent and others hurtful, and how they, being corporeal, are numbered with the gods, who are incorporeal. He inquires further, and still as one in doubt, whether diviners and wonderworkers are men of unusually powerful souls, or whether the power to do these things is communicated by spirits from without. He inclines to the latter opinion, on the ground that it is by the use of stones and herbs that they lay spells on people, and open closed doors, and do similar wonders. And on this account, he says, some suppose that there is a race of beings whose property it is to listen to men,—a race deceitful, full of contrivances, capable of assuming all forms, simulating gods, demons, and dead men,—and that it is this race which bring about all these things which have the appearance of good or evil, but that what is really good they never help us in, and are indeed unacquainted with, for they make wickedness easy, but throw obstacles in the path of those who eagerly follow virtue; and that they are filled with pride and rashness, delight in sacrificial odors, are taken with flattery. These and the other characteristics of this race of deceitful and malicious spirits, who come into the souls of men and delude their senses, both in sleep and waking, he describes not as things of which he is himself convinced, but only with so much suspicion and doubt as to cause him to speak of them as commonly received opinions. We should sympathize with this great philosopher in the difficulty he experienced in acquainting himself with and confidently assailing the whole fraternity of devils, which any Christian old woman would unhesitatingly describe and most unreservedly detest. Perhaps, however, he shrank from offending Anebo, to whom he was writing, himself the most eminent patron of these mysteries, or the others who marvelled at these magical feats as divine works, and closely allied to the worship of the gods.

However, he pursues this subject, and, still in the character of an inquirer, mentions some things which no sober judgment could attribute to any but malicious and deceitful powers. He asks why, after the better class of spirits have been invoked, the worse should be commanded to perform the wicked desires of men; why they do not hear a man who has just left a woman's embrace, while they themselves make no scruple of tempting men to incest and adultery; why their priests are commanded to abstain from animal food for fear of being polluted by the corporeal exhalations, while they themselves are attracted by the fumes of sacrifices and other exhalations; why the initiated are forbidden to touch a dead body, while their mysteries are celebrated almost entirely by means of dead bodies; why it is that a man addicted to any vice should utter threats, not to a demon or to the soul of a dead man, but to the sun and moon, or some of the heavenly bodies, which he intimidates by imaginary terrors, that he may wring from them a real boon,—for he threatens that he will demolish the sky, and such like impossibilities,—that those gods, being alarmed, like silly children, with imaginary and absurd threats, may do what they are ordered. Porphyry further relates that a man, Chaeremon, profoundly versed in these sacred or rather sacrilegious mysteries, had written that the famous Egyptian mysteries of Isis and her husband Osiris had very great influence with the gods to compel them to do what they were ordered, when he who used the spells threatened to divulge or do away with these mysteries, and cried with a threatening voice that he would scatter the members of Osiris if they neglected his orders. Not without reason is Porphyry surprised that a man should utter such wild and empty threats against the gods,—not against gods of no account, but against the heavenly gods, and those that shine with sidereal light,—and that these threats should be effectual to constrain them with resistless power, and alarm them so that they fulfill his wishes. Not without reason does he, in the character of an inquirer into the reasons of these surprising things, give it to be understood that they are done by that race of spirits which he previously described as if quoting other people's opinions,—spirits who deceive not, as he said, by nature, but by their own corruption, and who simulate gods and dead men, but not, as he said, demons, for demons they really are. As to his idea that by means of herbs, and stones, and animals, and certain incantations and noises, and drawings, sometimes fanciful, and sometimes copied from the motions of the heavenly bodies, men create upon earth powers capable of bringing about various results, all that is only the mystification which these demons practise on those who are subject to them, for the sake of furnishing themselves with merriment at the expense of their dupes. Either, then, Porphyry was sincere in his doubts and inquiries, and mentioned these things to demonstrate and put beyond question that they were the work, not of powers which aid us in obtaining life, but of deceitful demons; or, to take a more favorable view of the philosopher, he adopted this method with the Egyptian who was wedded to these errors, and was proud of them, that he might not offend him by assuming the attitude of a teacher, nor discompose his mind by the altercation of a professed assailant, but, by assuming the character of an inquirer, and the humble attitude of one who was anxious to learn, might turn his attention to these matters, and show how worthy they are to be despised and relinquished. Towards the conclusion of his letter, he requests Anebo to inform him what the Egyptian wisdom indicates as the way to blessedness. But as to those who hold intercourse with the gods, and pester them only for the sake of finding a runaway slave, or acquiring property, or making a bargain of a marriage, or such things, he declares that their pretensions to wisdom are vain. He adds that these same gods, even granting that on other points their utterances were true, were yet so ill-advised and unsatisfactory in their disclosures about blessedness, that they cannot be either gods or good demons, but are either that spirit who is called the deceiver, or mere fictions of the imagination.

CHAPTER 12

OF THE MIRACLES WROUGHT BY THE TRUE GOD THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY ANGELS

Since by means of these arts wonders are done which quite surpass human power, what choice have we but to believe that these predictions and operations, which seem to be miraculous and divine, and which at the same time form no part of the worship of the one God, in adherence to whom, as the Platonists themselves abundantly testify, all blessedness consists, are the pastime of wicked spirits, who thus seek to seduce and hinder the truly godly? On the other hand, we cannot but believe that all miracles, whether wrought by angels or by other means, so long as they are so done as to commend the worship and religion of the one God in whom alone is blessedness, are wrought by those who love us in a true and godly sort, or through their means, God Himself working in them. For we cannot listen to those who maintain that the invisible God works no visible miracles; for even they believe that He made the world, which surely they will not deny to be visible. Whatever marvel happens in this world, it is certainly less marvellous than this whole world itself,—I mean the sky and earth, and all that is in them,—and these God certainly made. But, as the Creator Himself is hidden and incomprehensible to man, so also is the manner of creation. Although, therefore, the standing miracle of this visible world is little thought of, because always before us, yet, when we arouse ourselves to contemplate it, it is a greater miracle than the rarest and most unheard-of marvels. For man himself is a greater miracle than any miracle done through his instrumentality. Therefore God, who made the visible heaven and earth, does not disdain to work visible miracles in heaven or earth, that

He may thereby awaken the soul which is immersed in things visible to worship Himself, the Invisible. But the place and time of these miracles are dependent on His unchangeable will, in which things future are ordered as if already they were accomplished. For He moves things temporal without Himself moving in time, He does not in one way know things that are to be, and, in another, things that have been; neither does He listen to those who pray otherwise than as He sees those that will pray. For, even when His angels hear us, it is He Himself who hears us in them, as in His true temple not made with hands, as in those men who are His saints; and His answers, though accomplished in time, have been arranged by His eternal appointment.

CHAPTER 13

OF THE INVISIBLE GOD, WHO HAS OFTEN MADE HIMSELF VISIBLE, NOT AS HE REALLY IS, BUT AS THE BEHOLDERS COULD BEAR THE SIGHT

Neither need we be surprised that God, invisible as He is, should often have appeared visibly to the patriarchs. For as the sound which communicates the thought conceived in the silence of the mind is not the thought itself, so the form by which God, invisible in His own nature, became visible, was not God Himself. Nevertheless it is He Himself who was seen under that form, as that thought itself is heard in the sound of the voice; and the patriarchs recognized that, though the bodily form was not God, they saw the invisible God. For, though Moses conversed with God, yet he said, “If I have found grace in Thy sight, show me Thyself, that I may see and know Thee.” And as it was fit that the law, which was given, not to one man or a few enlightened men, but to the whole of a populous nation, should be accompanied by awe-inspiring signs, great marvels were wrought, by the ministry of angels, before the people on the mount where the law was being given to them through one man, while the multitude beheld the awful appearances. For the people of Israel believed Moses, not as the Lacedaemonians believed their Lycurgus, because he had received from Jupiter or Apollo the laws he gave them. For when the law which enjoined the worship of one God was given to the people, marvellous signs and earthquakes, such as the divine wisdom judged sufficient, were brought about in the sight of all, that they might know that it was the Creator who could thus use creation to promulgate His law.

CHAPTER 14

THAT THE ONE GOD IS TO BE WORSHIPPED NOT ONLY FOR THE SAKE OF ETERNAL BLESSINGS, BUT ALSO IN CONNECTION WITH TEMPORAL PROSPERITY, BECAUSE ALL THINGS ARE REGULATED BY HIS PROVIDENCE

The education of the human race, represented by the people of God, has advanced, like that of an individual, through certain epochs, or, as it were, ages, so that it might gradually rise from earthly to heavenly things, and from the visible to the invisible. This object was kept so clearly in view, that, even in the period when temporal rewards were promised, the one God was presented as the object of worship, that men might not acknowledge any other than the true Creator and Lord of the spirit, even in connection with the earthly blessings of this transitory life. For he who denies that all things, which either angels or men can give us, are in the hand of the one Almighty, is a madman. The Platonist Plotinus discourses concerning providence, and, from the beauty of flowers and foliage, proves that from the supreme God, whose beauty is unseen and ineffable, providence reaches down even to these earthly things here below; and he argues that all these frail and perishing things could not have so exquisite and elaborate a beauty, were they not fashioned by Him whose unseen and unchangeable beauty continually pervades all things. This is proved also by the Lord Jesus, where He says, “Consider the lilies, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more shall He clothe you, O ye of little faith.!” It was best, therefore, that the soul of man, which was still weakly desiring earthly things, should be accustomed to seek from God alone even these petty temporal boons, and the earthly necessaries of this transitory life, which are contemptible in comparison with eternal blessings, in order that the desire even of these things might not draw it aside from the worship of Him, to whom we come by despising and forsaking such things.

CHAPTER 15

OF THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY ANGELS, BY WHICH THEY FULFILL THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

And so it has pleased Divine Providence, as I have said, and as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that the law enjoining the worship of one God should be given by the disposition of angels. But among them the person of God Himself visibly appeared, not, indeed, in His proper substance, which ever remains invisible to mortal eyes, but by the infallible signs furnished by creation in obedience to its Creator. He made use, too, of the words of human speech, uttering them syllable by syllable successively, though in His own nature He speaks not in a bodily but in a spiritual way; not to sense, but to the mind; not in words that occupy time, but, if I may so say, eternally, neither beginning to speak nor coming to an end. And what He says is accurately heard, not by the bodily but by the mental ear of His ministers and messengers, who are immortally blessed in the enjoyment of His unchangeable truth; and the directions which they in some ineffable way receive, they execute without delay or difficulty in the sensible and visible world. And this law was given in conformity with the age of the world, and contained at the first earthly promises, as I have said, which, however, symbolized eternal ones; and these eternal blessings few understood, though many took a part in the celebration of their visible signs. Nevertheless, with one consent both the words and the visible rites of that law enjoin the worship of one God,—not one of a crowd of gods, but Him who made heaven and earth, and every soul and every spirit which is other than Himself. He created; all else was created; and, both for being and well-being, all things need Him who created them.

CHAPTER 16

WHETHER THOSE ANGELS WHO DEMAND THAT WE PAY THEM DIVINE HONOR, OR THOSE WHO TEACH US TO RENDER HOLY SERVICE, NOT TO THEMSELVES, BUT TO GOD, ARE TO BE TRUSTED ABOUT THE WAY TO LIFE ETERNAL

What angels, then, are we to believe in this matter of blessed and eternal life?—those who wish to be worshipped with religious rites and observances, and require that men sacrifice to them; or those who say that all this worship is due to one God, the Creator, and teach us to render it with true piety to Him, by the vision of whom they are themselves already blessed, and in whom they promise that we shall be so? For that vision of God is the beauty of a vision so great, and is so infinitely desirable, that Plotinus does not hesitate to say that he who enjoys all other blessings in abundance, and has not this, is supremely miserable. Since, therefore, miracles are wrought by some angels to induce us to worship this God, by others, to induce us to worship themselves; and since the former forbid us to worship these, while the latter dare not forbid us to worship God, which are we to listen to? Let the Platonists reply, or any philosophers, or the theurgists, or rather, periurgists,—for this name is good enough for those who practise such arts. In short, let all men answer,—if, at least, there survives in them any spark of that natural perception which, as rational beings, they possess when created,—let them, I say, tell us whether we should sacrifice to the gods or angels who order us to sacrifice to them, or to that One to whom we are ordered to sacrifice by those who forbid us to worship either themselves or these others. If neither the one party nor the other had wrought miracles, but had merely uttered commands, the one to sacrifice to themselves, the other forbidding that, and ordering us to sacrifice to God, a godly mind would have been at no loss to discern which command proceeded from proud arrogance, and which from true religion. I will say more. If miracles had been wrought only by those who demand sacrifice for themselves, while those who forbade this, and enjoined sacrificing to the one God only, thought fit entirely to forego the use of visible miracles, the authority of the latter was to be preferred by all who would use, not their eyes only, but their reason. But since God, for the sake of commending to us the oracles of His truth, has, by means of these immortal messengers, who proclaim His majesty and not their own pride, wrought miracles of surpassing grandeur, certainty, and distinctness, in order that the weak among the godly might not be drawn away to false religion by those who require us to sacrifice to them and endeavor to convince us by stupendous appeals to our senses, who is so utterly unreasonable as not to choose and follow the truth, when he finds that it is heralded by even more striking evidences than falsehood?

As for those miracles which history ascribes to the gods of the heathen,—I do not refer to those prodigies which at intervals happen from some unknown physical causes, and which are arranged and appointed by Divine Providence, such as monstrous births, and unusual meteorological phenomena, whether startling only, or also injurious, and which are said to be brought about and removed by communication with demons, and by their most deceitful craft,—but I refer to these prodigies which manifestly enough are wrought by their power and force, as, that the household gods which AEneas carried from Troy in his flight moved from place to place; that Tarquin cut a whetstone with a razor; that the Epidaurian serpent attached himself as a companion to AEsculapius on his voyage to Rome; that the ship in which the image of the Phrygian mother stood, and which could not be moved by a host of men and oxen, was moved by one weak woman, who attached her girdle to the vessel and drew it, as proof of her chastity; that a vestal, whose virginity was questioned, removed the suspicion by carrying from the Tiber a sieve full of water without any of it dropping: these, then, and the like, are by no means to be compared for greatness and virtue to those which, we read, were wrought among God's people. How much less can we compare those marvels, which even the laws of heathen nations prohibit and punish,—I mean the magical and theurgic marvels, of which the great part are merely illusions practised upon the senses, as the drawing down of the moon, "that," as Lucan says, "it may shed a stronger influence on the plants?" And if some of these do seem to equal those which are wrought by the godly, the end for which they are wrought distinguishes the two, and shows that ours are incomparably the more excellent. For those miracles commend the worship of a plurality of gods, who deserve worship the less the more they demand it; but these of ours commend the worship of the one God, who, both by the testimony of His own Scriptures, and by the eventual abolition of sacrifices, proves that He needs no such offerings. If, therefore, any angels demand sacrifice for themselves, we must prefer those who demand it, not for themselves, but for God, the Creator of all, whom they serve. For thus they prove how sincerely they love us, since they wish by sacrifice to subject us, not to themselves, but to Him by the contemplation of whom they themselves are blessed, and to bring us to Him from whom they themselves have never strayed. If, on the other hand, any angels wish us to sacrifice, not to one, but to many, not, indeed, to themselves, but to the gods whose angels they are, we must in this case also prefer those who are the angels of the one God of gods, and who so bid us to worship Him as to preclude our worshipping any other. But, further, if it be the case, as their pride and deceitfulness rather indicate, that they are neither good angels nor the angels of good gods, but wicked demons, who wish sacrifice to be paid, not to the one only and supreme God, but to themselves, what better protection against them can we choose than that of the one God whom the good angels serve, the angels who bid us sacrifice, not to themselves, but to Him whose sacrifice we ourselves ought to be?

CHAPTER 17

CONCERNING THE ARK OF THE COVENANT, AND THE MIRACULOUS SIGNS WHEREBY GOD AUTHENTICATED THE LAW AND THE PROMISE

On this account it was that the law of God, given by the disposition of angels, and which commanded that the one God of gods alone receive sacred worship, to the exclusion of all others, was deposited in the ark, called the ark of the testimony. By this name it is sufficiently indicated, not that God, who was worshipped by all those rites, was shut up and enclosed in that place, though His responses emanated from it along with signs appreciable by the senses, but that His will was declared from that throne. The law itself, too, was engraven on tables of stone, and, as I have said, deposited in the ark, which the priests carried with due reverence during the sojourn in the wilderness, along with the tabernacle, which was in like manner called the tabernacle of the testimony; and there was then an accompanying sign, which appeared as a cloud by day and as a fire by night; when the cloud moved, the camp was shifted, and where it stood the camp was pitched. Besides these signs, and the voices which proceeded from the place where the ark was, there were other miraculous testimonies to the law. For when the ark was carried across Jordan, on the entrance to the land of promise, the upper part of the river stopped in its course, and the lower part flowed on, so as to present both to the ark and the people dry ground to pass over. Then, when it was carried seven times round the first hostile and polytheistic city they came to, its walls suddenly fell down, though assaulted by no hand, struck by no battering-ram. Afterwards, too, when they were now resident in the land of promise, and the ark had, in punishment of their sin, been taken by their enemies, its captors triumphantly placed it in the temple of their favorite god, and left it shut up there, but, on opening the temple next day, they found the image they used to pray to fallen to the ground and shamefully shattered. Then, being them selves alarmed by portents, and still more shamefully punished, they restored the ark of the testimony to the people from whom they had taken it. And what was the manner of its restoration? They placed it on a wagon, and yoked to it cows from which they had taken the calves, and let them choose their own course, expecting that in this way the divine will would be indicated; and the cows without any man driving or directing them, steadily pursued the way to the Hebrews, without regarding the lowing of their calves, and thus restored the ark to its worshippers. To God these and such like wonders are small, but they are mighty to terrify and give wholesome instruction to men. For if philosophers, and especially the Platonists, are with justice esteemed wiser than other men, as I have just been mentioning, because they taught that even these earthly and insignificant things are ruled by Divine Providence, inferring this from the numberless beauties which are observable not only in the bodies of animals, but even in plants and grasses, how much more plainly do these things attest the presence of divinity which happen at the time predicted, and in which that religion is commended which forbids the offering of sacrifice to any celestial, terrestrial, or infernal being, and commands it to be offered to God only, who alone blesses us by His love for us, and by our love to Him, and who, by arranging the appointed times of those sacrifices, and by predicting that they were to pass into a better sacrifice by a better Priest, testified that He has no appetite for these sacrifices, but through them indicated others of more substantial blessing,—and all this not that He Himself may be glorified by these honors, but that we may be stirred up to worship and cleave to Him, being inflamed by His love, which is our advantage rather than His?

CHAPTER 18

AGAINST THOSE WHO DENY THAT THE BOOKS OF THE CHURCH ARE TO BE BELIEVED ABOUT THE MIRACLES WHEREBY THE PEOPLE OF GOD WERE EDUCATED

Will some one say that these miracles are false, that they never happened, and that the records of them are lies? Whoever says so, and asserts that in such matters no records whatever can be credited, may also say that there are no gods who care for human affairs. For they have induced men to worship them only by means of miraculous works, which the heathen histories testify, and by which the gods have made a display of their own power rather than done any real service. This is the reason why we have not undertaken in this work, of which we are now writing the tenth book, to refute those who either deny that there is any divine power, or contend that it does not interfere with human affairs, but those who prefer their own god to our God, the Founder of the holy and most glorious city, not knowing that He is also the invisible and unchangeable Founder of this visible and changing world, and the truest bestower of the blessed life which resides not in things created, but in Himself. For thus speaks His most trustworthy prophet: “It is good for me to be united to God.” Among philosophers it is a question, what is that end and good to the attainment of which all our duties are to have a relation? The Psalmist did not say, It is good for me to have great wealth, or to wear imperial insignia, purple, sceptre, and diadem; or, as some even of the philosophers have not blushed to say, It is good for me to enjoy sensual pleasure; or, as the better men among them seemed to say, My good is my spiritual strength; but, “It is good for me to be united to God.” This he had learned from Him whom the holy angels, with the accompanying witness of miracles, presented as the sole object of worship. And hence he himself became the sacrifice of God, whose spiritual love inflamed him, and into whose ineffable and incorporeal embrace he yearned to cast himself. Moreover, if the worshippers of many gods (whatever kind of gods they fancy their own to be) believe that the miracles recorded in their civil histories, or in the books of magic, or of the more respectable theurgy, were wrought by these gods, what reason have they for refusing to believe the miracles recorded in those writings, to which we owe a credence as much greater as He is greater to whom alone these writings teach us to sacrifice?

CHAPTER 19

ON THE REASONABLENESS OF OFFERING, AS THE TRUE RELIGION TEACHES, A VISIBLE SACRIFICE TO THE ONE TRUE AND INVISIBLE GOD

As to those who think that these visible sacrifices are suitably offered to other gods, but that invisible sacrifices, the graces of purity of mind and holiness of will, should be offered, as greater and better, to the invisible God, Himself greater and better than all others, they must be oblivious that these visible sacrifices are signs of the invisible, as the words we utter are the signs of things. And therefore, as in prayer or praise we direct intelligible words to Him to whom in our heart we offer the very feelings we are expressing, so we are to understand that in sacrifice we offer visible sacrifice only to Him to whom in our heart we ought to present ourselves an invisible sacrifice. It is then that the angels, and all those superior powers who are mighty by their goodness and piety, regard us with pleasure, and rejoice with us and assist us to the utmost of their power. But if we offer such worship to them, they decline it; and when on any mission to men they become visible to the senses, they positively forbid it. Examples of this occur in holy writ. Some fancied they should, by adoration or sacrifice, pay the same honor to angels as is due to God, and were prevented from doing so by the angels themselves, and ordered to render it to Him to whom alone they know it to be due. And the holy angels have in this been imitated by holy men of God. For Paul and Barnabas, when they had wrought a miracle of healing in Lycaonia, were thought to be gods, and the Lycaonians desired to sacrifice to them, and they humbly and piously declined this honor, and announced to them the God in whom they should believe. And those deceitful and proud spirits, who exact worship, do so simply because they know it to be due to the true God. For that which they take pleasure in is not, as Porphyry says and some fancy, the smell of the victims, but divine honors. They have, in fact, plenty odors on all hands, and if they wished more, they could provide them for themselves. But the spirits who arrogate to themselves divinity are delighted not with the smoke of carcasses but with the suppliant spirit which they deceive and hold in subjection, and hinder from drawing near to God, preventing him from offering himself in sacrifice to God by inducing him to sacrifice to others.

CHAPTER 20

OF THE SUPREME AND TRUE SACRIFICE WHICH WAS EFFECTED BY THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN

And hence that true Mediator, in so far as, by assuming the form of a servant, He became the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, though in the form of God He received sacrifice together with the Father, with whom He is one God, yet in the form of a servant He chose rather to be than to receive a sacrifice, that not even by this instance any one might have occasion to suppose that sacrifice should be rendered to any creature. Thus He is both the Priest who offers and the Sacrifice offered. And He designed that there should be a daily sign of this in the sacrifice of the Church, which, being His body, learns to offer herself through Him. Of this true Sacrifice the ancient sacrifices of the saints were the various and numerous signs; and it was thus variously figured, just as one thing is signified by a variety of words, that there may be less weariness when we speak of it much. To this supreme and true sacrifice all false sacrifices have given place.

CHAPTER 21

OF THE POWER DELEGATED TO DEMONS FOR THE TRIAL AND GLORIFICATION OF THE SAINTS, WHO CONQUER NOT BY PROPITIATING THE SPIRITS OF THE AIR, BUT BY ABIDING IN GOD

The power delegated to the demons at certain appointed and well-adjusted seasons, that they may give expression to their hostility to the city of God by stirring up against it the men who are under their influence, and may not only receive sacrifice from those who willingly offer it, but may also extort it from the unwilling by violent persecution;—this power is found to be not merely harmless, but even useful to the Church, completing as it does the number of martyrs, whom the city of God esteems as all the more illustrious and honored citizens, because they have striven even to blood against the sin of impiety. If the ordinary language of the Church allowed it, we might more elegantly call these men our heroes. For this name is said to be derived from Juno, who in Greek is called Here, and hence, according to the Greek myths, one of her sons was called Heros. And these fables mystically signified that Juno was mistress of the air, which they suppose to be inhabited by the demons and the heroes, understanding by heroes the souls of the well-deserving dead. But for a quite opposite reason would we call our martyrs heroes,—supposing, as I said, that the usage of ecclesiastical language would admit of it,—not because they lived along with the demons in the air, but because they conquered these demons or powers of the air, and among them Juno herself, be she what she may, not unsuitably represented, as she commonly is by the poets, as hostile to virtue, and jealous of men of mark aspiring to the heavens. Virgil, however, unhappily gives way, and yields to her; for, though he represents her as saying, “I am conquered by AEneas,” Helenus gives AEneas himself this religious advice:

“Pay vows to Juno: overbear

Her queenly soul with gift and prayer.”

In conformity with this opinion, Porphyry—expressing, however, not so much his own views as other people’s—says that a good god or genius cannot come to a man unless the evil genius has been first of all propitiated, implying that the evil deities had greater power than the good; for, until they have been appeased and give place, the good can give no assistance; and if the evil deities oppose, the good can give no help; whereas the evil can do injury without the good being able to prevent them. This is not the way of the true and truly holy religion; not thus do our martyrs conquer Juno, that is to say, the powers of the air, who envy the virtues of the pious. Our heroes, if we could so call them, overcome Here, not by suppliant gifts, but by divine virtues. As Scipio, who conquered Africa by his valor, is more suitably styled Africanus than if he had appeased his enemies by gifts, and so won their mercy.

CHAPTER 22

WHENCE THE SAINTS DERIVE POWER AGAINST DEMONS AND TRUE PURIFICATION OF HEART

It is by true piety that men of God cast out the hostile power of the air which opposes godliness; it is by exorcising it, not by propitiating it; and they overcome all the temptations of the adversary by praying, not to him, but to their own God against him. For the devil cannot conquer or subdue any but those who are in league with sin; and therefore he is conquered in the name of Him who assumed humanity, and that without sin, that Himself being both Priest and Sacrifice, He might bring about the remission of sins, that is to say, might bring it about through the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, by whom we are reconciled to God, the cleansing from sin being accomplished. For men are separated from God only by sins, from which we are in this life cleansed not by our own virtue, but by the divine compassion; through His indulgence, not through our own power. For, whatever virtue we call our own is itself bestowed upon us by His goodness. And we might attribute too much to ourselves while in the flesh, unless we lived in the receipt of pardon until we laid it down. This is the reason why there has been vouchsafed to us, through the Mediator, this grace, that we who are polluted by sinful flesh should be cleansed by the likeness of sinful flesh. By this grace of God, wherein He has shown His great compassion toward us, we are both governed by faith in this life, and, after this life, are led onwards to the fullest perfection by the vision of immutable truth.

CHAPTER 23

OF THE PRINCIPLES WHICH, ACCORDING TO THE PLATONISTS, REGULATE THE PURIFICATION OF THE SOUL

Even Porphyry asserts that it was revealed by divine oracles that we are not purified by any sacrifices to sun or moon, meaning it to be inferred that we are not purified by sacrificing to any gods. For what mysteries can purify, if those of the sun and moon, which are esteemed the chief of the celestial gods, do not purify? He says, too, in the same place, that “principles” can purify, lest it should be supposed, from his saying that sacrificing to the sun and moon cannot purify, that sacrificing to some other of the host of gods might do so. And what he as a Platonist means by “principles,” we know. For he speaks of God the Father and God the Son, whom he calls (writing in Greek) the intellect or mind of the Father; but of the Holy Spirit he says either nothing, or nothing plainly, for I do not understand what other he speaks of as holding the middle place between these two. For if, like Plotinus in his discussion regarding the three principal substances, he wished us to understand by this third the soul of nature, he would certainly not have given it the middle place between these two, that is, between the Father and the Son. For Plotinus places the soul of nature after the intellect of the Father, while Porphyry, making it the mean, does not place it after, but between the others. No doubt he spoke according to his light, or as he thought expedient; but we assert that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit not of the Father only, nor of the Son only, but of both. For philosophers speak as they have a mind to, and in the most difficult matters do not scruple to offend religious ears; but we are bound to speak according to a certain rule, lest freedom of speech beget impiety of opinion about the matters themselves of which we speak.

CHAPTER 24

OF THE ONE ONLY TRUE PRINCIPLE WHICH ALONE PURIFIES AND RENEWS HUMAN NATURE

Accordingly, when we speak of God, we do not affirm two or three principles, no more than we are at liberty to affirm two or three gods; although, speaking of each, of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost, we confess that each is God: and yet we do not say, as the Sabellian heretics say, that the Father is the same as the Son, and the Holy Spirit the same as the Father and the Son; but we say that the Father is the Father of the Son, and the Son the Son of the Father, and that the Holy Spirit of the Father and the Son is neither the Father nor the Son. It was therefore truly said that man is cleansed only by a Principle, although the Platonists erred in speaking in the plural of principles. But Porphyry, being under the dominion of these envious powers, whose influence he was at once ashamed of and afraid to throw off, refused to recognize that Christ is the Principle by whose incarnation we are purified. Indeed he despised Him, because of the flesh itself which He assumed, that He might offer a sacrifice for our purification,—a great mystery, unintelligible to Porphyry's pride, which that true and benignant Redeemer brought low by His humility, manifesting Himself to mortals by the mortality which He assumed, and which the malignant and deceitful mediators are proud of wanting, promising, as the boon of immortals, a deceptive assistance to wretched men. Thus the good and true Mediator showed that it is sin which is evil, and not the substance or nature of flesh; for this, together with the human soul, could without sin be both assumed and retained, and laid down in death, and changed to something better by resurrection. He showed also that death itself, although the punishment of sin, was submitted to by Him for our sakes without sin, and must not be evaded by sin on our part, but rather, if opportunity serves, be borne for righteousness' sake. For he was able to expiate sins by dying, because He both died, and not for sin of His own. But He has not been recognized by Porphyry as the Principle, otherwise he would have recognized Him as the Purifier. The Principle is neither the flesh nor the human soul in Christ but the Word by which all things were made. The flesh, therefore, does not by its own virtue purify, but by virtue of the Word by which it was assumed, when "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." For speaking mystically of eating His flesh, when those who did not understand Him were offended and went away, saying, "This is an hard saying, who can hear it?" He answered to the rest who remained, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." The Principle, therefore, having assumed a human soul and flesh, cleanses the soul and flesh of believers. Therefore, when the Jews asked Him who He was, He answered that He was the Principle. And this we carnal and feeble men, liable to sin, and involved in the darkness of ignorance, could not possibly understand, unless we were cleansed and healed by Him, both by means of what we were, and of what we were not. For we were men, but we were not righteous; whereas in His incarnation there was a human nature, but it was righteous, and not sinful. This is the mediation whereby a hand is stretched to the lapsed and fallen; this is the seed "ordained by angels," by whose ministry the law also was given enjoining the worship of one God, and promising that this Mediator should come.

CHAPTER 25

THAT ALL THE SAINTS, BOTH UNDER THE LAW AND BEFORE IT, WERE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH IN THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST'S INCARNATION

It was by faith in this mystery, and godliness of life, that purification was attainable even by the saints of old, whether before the law was given to the Hebrews (for God and the angels were even then present as instructors), or in the periods under the law, although the promises of spiritual things, being presented in figure, seemed to be carnal, and hence the name of Old Testament. For it was then the prophets lived, by whom, as by angels, the same promise was announced; and among them was he whose grand and divine sentiment regarding the end and supreme good of man I have just now quoted, “It is good for me to cleave to God.” In this psalm the distinction between the Old and New Testaments is distinctly announced. For the Psalmist says, that when he saw that the carnal and earthly promises were abundantly enjoyed by the ungodly, his feet were almost gone, his steps had well-nigh slipped; and that it seemed to him as if he had served God in vain, when he saw that those who despised God increased in that prosperity which he looked for at God’s hand. He says, too, that, in investigating this matter with the desire of understanding why it was so, he had labored in vain, until he went into the sanctuary of God, and understood the end of those whom he had erroneously considered happy. Then he understood that they were cast down by that very thing, as he says, which they had made their boast, and that they had been consumed and perished for their inequities; and that that whole fabric of temporal prosperity had become as a dream when one awaketh, and suddenly finds himself destitute of all the joys he had imaged in sleep. And, as in this earth or earthy city they seemed to themselves to be great, he says, “O Lord, in Thy city Thou wilt reduce their image to nothing.” He also shows how beneficial it had been for him to seek even earthly blessings only from the one true God, in whose power are all things, for he says, “As a beast was I before Thee, and I am always with Thee.” “As a beast,” he says, meaning that he was stupid. For I ought to have sought from Thee such things as the ungodly could not enjoy as well as I, and not those things which I saw them enjoying in abundance, and hence concluded I was serving Thee in vain, because they who declined to serve Thee had what I had not. Nevertheless, “I am always with Thee,” because even in my desire for such things I did not pray to other gods. And consequently he goes on, “Thou hast holden me by my right hand, and by Thy counsel Thou hast guided me, and with glory hast taken me up;” as if all earthly advantages were left-hand blessings, though, when he saw them enjoyed by the wicked, his feet had almost gone. “For what,” he says, “have I in heaven, and what have I desired from Thee upon earth?” He blames himself, and is justly displeased with himself; because, though he had in heaven so vast a possession (as he afterwards understood), he yet sought from his God on earth a transitory and fleeting happiness;—a happiness of mire, we may say. “My heart and my flesh,” he says, “fail, O God of my heart.” Happy failure, from things below to things above! And hence in another psalm He says, “My soul longeth, yea, even faileth, for the courts of the Lord.” Yet, though he had said of both his heart and his flesh that they were failing, he did not say, O God of my heart and my flesh, but, O God of my heart; for by the heart the flesh is made clean. Therefore, says the Lord, “Cleanse that which is within, and the outside shall be clean also.” He then says that God Himself,—not anything received from Him, but Himself,—is his portion. “The God of my heart, and my portion for ever.” Among the various objects of human choice, God alone satisfied him. “For, lo,” he says, “they that are far from Thee shall perish: Thou destroyest all them that go a-whoring from Thee,”—that is, who prostitute themselves to many gods. And then follows the verse for which all the rest of the psalm seems to prepare: “It is good for me to cleave to God,”—not to go far off; not to go a-whoring with a multitude of gods. And then shall this union with God be perfected, when all that is to be redeemed in us has been redeemed. But for the present we must, as he goes on to say, “place our hope in God.” “For that which is seen,” says the apostle, “is not hope. For what a man sees, why does he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Being, then, for the present established in this hope, let us do what the Psalmist further indicates, and become in our measure angels or messengers of God, declaring His will, and praising His glory and His grace. For when he had said, “To place my hope in God,” he goes on, “that I may declare all Thy praises in the gates of the daughter of Zion.” This is the most glorious city of God; this is the city which knows and worships one God: she is celebrated by the holy angels, who invite us to their society, and desire us to become fellow-citizens with them in this city; for they do not wish us to worship them as our gods, but to join them in worshipping their God and ours; nor to sacrifice to them, but, together with them, to become a sacrifice to God. Accordingly, whoever will lay aside malignant obstinacy, and consider these things, shall be assured that all these blessed and immortal spirits, who do not envy us (for if they envied they were not blessed), but rather love us, and desire us to be as blessed as themselves, look on us with greater pleasure, and give us greater assistance, when we join them in worshipping one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, than if we were to offer to themselves sacrifice and worship.

CHAPTER 26

OF PORPHYRY'S WEAKNESS IN WAVERING BETWEEN THE CONFESSION OF THE TRUE GOD AND THE WORSHIP OF DEMONS

I know not how it is so, but it seems to me that Porphyry blushed for his friends the theurgists; for he knew all that I have adduced, but did not frankly condemn polytheistic worship. He said, in fact, that there are some angels who visit earth, and reveal divine truth to theurgists, and others who publish on earth the things that belong to the Father, His height and depth. Can we believe, then, that the angels whose office it is to declare the will of the Father, wish us to be subject to any but Him whose will they declare? And hence, even this Platonist himself judiciously observes that we should rather imitate than invoke them. We ought not, then, to fear that we may offend these immortal and happy subjects of the one God by not sacrificing to them; for this they know to be due only to the one true God, in allegiance to whom they themselves find their blessedness, and therefore they will not have it given to them, either in figure or in the reality, which the mysteries of sacrifice symbolized. Such arrogance belongs to proud and wretched demons, whose disposition is diametrically opposite to the piety of those who are subject to God, and whose blessedness consists in attachment to Him. And, that we also may attain to this bliss, they aid us, as is fit, with sincere kindliness, and usurp over us no dominion, but declare to us Him under whose rule we are then fellow-subjects. Why, then, O philosopher, do you still fear to speak freely against the powers which are inimical both to true virtue and to the gifts of the true God? Already you have discriminated between the angels who proclaim God's will, and those who visit theurgists, drawn down by I know not what art. Why do you still ascribe to these latter the honor of declaring divine truth? If they do not declare the will of the Father, what divine revelations can they make? Are not these the evil spirits who were bound over by the incantations of an envious man, that they should not grant purity of soul to another, and could not, as you say, be set free from these bonds by a good man anxious for purity, and recover power over their own actions? Do you still doubt whether these are wicked demons; or do you, perhaps, feign ignorance, that you may not give offence to the theurgists, who have allured you by their secret rites, and have taught you, as a mighty boon, these insane and pernicious devilries? Do you dare to elevate above the air, and even to heaven, these envious powers, or pests, let me rather call them, less worthy of the name of sovereign than of slave, as you yourself own; and are you not ashamed to place them even among your sidereal gods, and so put a slight upon the stars themselves?

CHAPTER 27

OF THE IMPIETY OF PORPHYRY, WHICH IS WORSE THAN EVEN THE MISTAKE OF APULEIUS

How much more tolerable and accordant with human feeling is the error of your Platonist co-sectary Apuleius! for he attributed the diseases and storms of human passions only to the demons who occupy a grade beneath the moon, and makes even this avowal as by constraint regarding gods whom he honors; but the superior and celestial gods, who inhabit the ethereal regions, whether visible, as the sun, moon, and other luminaries, whose brilliancy makes them conspicuous, or invisible, but believed in by him, he does his utmost to remove beyond the slightest stain of these perturbations. It is not, then, from Plato, but from your Chaldaean teachers you have learned to elevate human vices to the ethereal and empyreal regions of the world and to the celestial firmament, in order that your theurgists might be able to obtain from your gods divine revelations; and yet you make yourself superior to these divine revelations by your intellectual life, which dispenses with these theurgic purifications as not needed by a philosopher. But, by way of rewarding your teachers, you recommend these arts to other men, who, not being philosophers, may be persuaded to use what you acknowledge to be useless to yourself, who are capable of higher things; so that those who cannot avail themselves of the virtue of philosophy, which is too arduous for the multitude, may, at your instigation, betake themselves to theurgists by whom they may be purified, not, indeed, in the intellectual, but in the spiritual part of the soul. Now, as the persons who are unfit for philosophy form incomparably the majority of mankind, more may be compelled to consult these secret and illicit teachers of yours than frequent the Platonic schools. For these most impure demons, pretending to be ethereal gods, whose herald and messenger you have become, have promised that those who are purified by theurgy in the spiritual part of their soul shall not indeed return to the Father, but shall dwell among the ethereal gods above the aerial regions. But such fancies are not listened to by the multitudes of men whom Christ came to set free from the tyranny of demons. For in Him they have the most gracious cleansing, in which mind, spirit, and body alike participate. For, in order that He might heal the whole man from the plague of sin, He took without sin the whole human nature. Would that you had known Him, and would that you had committed yourself for healing to Him rather than to your own frail and infirm human virtue, or to pernicious and curious arts! He would not have deceived you; for Him your own oracles, on your own showing, acknowledged holy and immortal. It is of Him, too, that the most famous poet speaks, poetically indeed, since he applies it to the person of another, yet truly, if you refer it to Christ , saying, “Under thine auspices, if any traces of our crimes remain, they shall be obliterated, and earth freed from its perpetual fear.” By which he indicates that, by reason of the infirmity which attaches to this life, the greatest progress in virtue and righteousness leaves room for the existence, if not of crimes, yet of the traces of crimes, which are obliterated only by that Saviour of whom this verse speaks. For that he did not say this at the prompting of his own fancy, Virgil tells us in almost the last verse of that 4th Eclogue, when he says, “The last age predicted by the Cumaean sibyl has now arrived;” whence it plainly appears that this had been dictated by the Cumaean sibyl. But those theurgists, or rather demons, who assume the appearance and form of gods, pollute rather than purify the human spirit by false appearances and the delusive mockery of unsubstantial forms. How can those whose own spirit is unclean cleanse the spirit of man? Were they not unclean, they would not be bound by the incantations of an envious man, and would neither be afraid nor grudge to bestow that hollow boon which they promise. But it is sufficient for our purpose that you acknowledge that the intellectual soul, that is, our mind, cannot be justified by theurgy; and that even the spiritual or inferior part of our soul cannot by this act be made eternal and immortal, though you maintain that it can be purified by it. Christ, however, promises life eternal; and therefore to Him the world flocks, greatly to your indignation, greatly also to your astonishment and confusion. What avails your forced avowal that theurgy leads men astray, and deceives vast numbers by its ignorant and foolish teaching, and that it is the most manifest mistake to have recourse by prayer and sacrifice to angels and principalities, when at the same time, to save yourself from the charge of spending labor in vain on such arts, you direct men to the theurgists, that by their means men, who do not live by the rule of the intellectual soul, may have their spiritual soul purified?

CHAPTER 28

HOW IT IS THAT PORPHYRY HAS BEEN SO BLIND AS NOT TO RECOGNIZE THE TRUE WISDOM—CHRIST

You drive men, therefore, into the most palpable error. And yet you are not ashamed of doing so much harm, though you call yourself a lover of virtue and wisdom. Had you been true and faithful in this profession, you would have recognized Christ, the virtue of God and the wisdom of God, and would not, in the pride of vain science, have revolted from His wholesome humility. Nevertheless you acknowledge that the spiritual part of the soul can be purified by the virtue of chastity without the aid of those theurgic arts and mysteries which you wasted your time in learning. You even say, sometimes, that these mysteries do not raise the soul after death, so that, after the termination of this life, they seem to be of no service even to the part you call spiritual; and yet you recur on every opportunity to these arts, for no other purpose, so far as I see, than to appear an accomplished theurgist, and gratify those who are curious in illicit arts, or else to inspire others with the same curiosity. But we give you all praise for saying that this art is to be feared, both on account of the legal enactments against it, and by reason of the danger involved in the very practice of it. And would that in this, at least, you were listened to by its wretched votaries, that they might be withdrawn from entire absorption in it, or might even be preserved from tampering with it at all! You say, indeed, that ignorance, and the numberless vices resulting from it, cannot be removed by any mysteries, but only by the patrikos nous, that is, the Father’s mind or intellect conscious of the Father’s will. But that Christ is this mind you do not believe; for Him you despise on account of the body He took of a woman and the shame of the cross; for your lofty wisdom spurns such low and contemptible things, and soars to more exalted regions. But He fulfills what the holy prophets truly predicted regarding Him: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nought the prudence of the prudent.” For He does not destroy and bring to nought His own gift in them, but what they arrogate to themselves, and do not hold of Him. And hence the apostle, having quoted this testimony from the prophet, adds, “Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” This is despised as a weak and foolish thing by those who are wise and strong in themselves; yet this is the grace which heals the weak, who do not proudly boast a blessedness of their own, but rather humbly acknowledge their real misery.

CHAPTER 29

OF THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHICH THE PLATONISTS IN THEIR IMPIETY BLUSH TO ACKNOWLEDGE

You proclaim the Father and His Son, whom you call the Father’s intellect or mind, and between these a third, by whom we suppose you mean the Holy Spirit, and in your own fashion you call these three Gods. In this, though your expressions are inaccurate, you do in some sort, and as through a veil, see what we should strive towards; but the incarnation of the unchangeable Son of God, whereby we are saved, and are enabled to reach the things we believe, or in part understand, this is what you refuse to recognize. You see in a fashion, although at a distance, although with filmy eye, the country in which we should abide; but the way to it you know not. Yet you believe in grace, for you say it is granted to few to reach God by virtue of intelligence. For you do not say, “Few have thought fit or have wished,” but, “It has been granted to few,”—distinctly acknowledging God’s grace, not man’s sufficiency. You also use this word more expressly, when, in accordance with the opinion of Plato, you make no doubt that in this life a man cannot by any means attain to perfect wisdom, but that whatever is lacking is in the future life made up to those who live intellectually, by God’s providence and grace. Oh, had you but recognized the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, and that very incarnation of His, wherein He assumed a human soul and body, you might have seemed the brightest example of grace! But what am I doing? I know it is useless to speak to a dead man,—useless, at least, so far as regards you, but perhaps not in vain for those who esteem you highly, and love you on account of their love of wisdom or curiosity about those arts which you ought not to have learned; and these persons I address in your name. The grace of God could not have been more graciously commended to us than thus, that the only Son of God, remaining unchangeable in Himself, should assume humanity, and should give us the hope of His love, by means of the mediation of a human nature, through which we, from the condition of men, might come to Him who was so far off,—the immortal from the mortal; the unchangeable from the changeable; the just from the unjust; the blessed from the wretched. And, as He had given us a natural instinct to desire blessedness and immortality, He Himself continuing to be blessed; but assuming mortality, by enduring what we fear, taught us to despise it, that what we long for He might bestow upon us.

But in order to your acquiescence in this truth, it is lowliness that is requisite, and to this it is extremely difficult to bend you. For what is there incredible, especially to men like you, accustomed to speculation, which might have predisposed you to believe in this,—what is there incredible, I say, in the assertion that God assumed a human soul and body? You yourselves ascribe such excellence to the intellectual soul, which is, after all, the human soul, that you maintain that it can become consubstantial with that intelligence of the Father whom you believe in as the Son of God. What incredible thing is it, then, if some one soul be assumed by Him in an ineffable and unique manner for the salvation of many? Moreover, our nature itself testifies that a man is incomplete unless a body be united with the soul. This certainly would be more incredible, were it not of all things the most common; for we should more easily believe in a union between spirit and spirit, or, to use your own terminology, between the incorporeal and the incorporeal, even though the one were human, the other divine, the one changeable and the other unchangeable, than in a union between the corporeal and the incorporeal. But perhaps it is the unprecedented birth of a body from a virgin that staggers you? But, so far from this being a difficulty, it ought rather to assist you to receive our religion, that a miraculous person was born miraculously. Or, do you find a difficulty in the fact that, after His body had been given up to death, and had been changed into a higher kind of body by resurrection, and was now no longer mortal but incorruptible, He carried it up into heavenly places? Perhaps you refuse to believe this, because you remember that Porphyry, in these very books from which I have cited so much, and which treat of the return of the soul, so frequently teaches that a body of every kind is to be escaped from, in order that the soul may dwell in blessedness with God. But here, in place of following Porphyry, you ought rather to have corrected him, especially since you agree with him in believing such incredible things about the soul of this visible world and huge material frame. For, as scholars of Plato, you hold that the world is an animal, and a very happy animal, which you wish to be also everlasting. How, then, is it never to be loosed from a body, and yet never lose its happiness, if, in order to the happiness of the soul, the body must be left behind? The sun, too, and the other stars, you not only acknowledge to be bodies, in which you have the cordial assent of all seeing men, but also, in obedience to what you reckon a profounder insight, you declare that they are very blessed animals, and eternal, together with their bodies. Why is it, then, that when the Christian faith is pressed upon you, you forget, or pretend to ignore, what you habitually discuss or teach? Why is it that you refuse to be Christians, on the ground that you hold opinions which, in fact, you yourselves demolish? Is it not because Christ came in lowliness, and ye are proud? The precise nature of the resurrection bodies of the saints may sometimes occasion discussion among those who are best read in the Christian Scriptures; yet there is not among us the smallest doubt that they shall be everlasting, and of a nature exemplified in the instance of Christ’s risen body. But whatever be their nature, since we maintain that they shall be absolutely incorruptible and immortal, and shall offer no hindrance to the soul’s contemplation, by which it is fixed in God, and as you say that among the celestials the bodies of the eternally blessed are eternal, why do you maintain that, in order to blessedness, every body must be escaped from? Why do you thus seek such a plausible reason for escaping from the Christian faith, if not because, as I again say, Christ is humble and ye proud? Are ye ashamed to be corrected? This is the vice of the proud. It is, forsooth, a degradation for learned men to pass from the school of Plato to the discipleship of Christ, who by His Spirit taught a fisherman to think and to say, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” The old saint Simplicianus, afterwards bishop of Milan, used to tell me that a certain Platonist was in the habit of saying that this opening passage of the holy gospel, entitled, According to John, should be written in letters of gold, and hung up in all churches in the most conspicuous place. But the proud scorn to take God for their Master, because “the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” So that, with these miserable creatures, it is not enough that they are sick, but they boast of their sickness, and are ashamed of the medicine which could heal them. And, doing so, they secure not elevation, but a more disastrous fall.

CHAPTER 30

PORPHYRY’S EMENDATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS OF PLATONISM

If it is considered unseemly to emend anything which Plato has touched, why did Porphyry himself make emendations, and these not a few? for it is very certain that Plato wrote that the souls of men return after death to the bodies of beasts. Plotinus also, Porphyry’s teacher, held this opinion; yet Porphyry justly rejected it. He was of opinion that human souls return indeed into human bodies, but not into the bodies they had left, but other new bodies. He shrank from the other opinion, lest a woman who had returned into a mule might possibly carry her own son on her back. He did not shrink, however, from a theory which admitted the possibility of a mother coming back into a girl and marrying her own son. How much more honorable a creed is that which was taught by the holy and truthful angels, uttered by the prophets who were moved by God’s Spirit, preached by Him who was foretold as the coming Saviour by His forerunning heralds, and by the apostles whom He sent forth, and who filled the whole world with the gospel,—how much more honorable, I say, is the belief that souls return once for all to their own bodies, than that they return again and again to divers bodies? Nevertheless Porphyry, as I have said, did considerably improve upon this opinion, in so far, at least, as he maintained that human souls could transmigrate only into human bodies, and made no scruple about demolishing the bestial prisons into which Plato had wished to cast them. He says, too, that God put the soul into the world that it might recognize the evils of matter, and return to the Father, and be for ever emancipated from the polluting contact of matter. And although here is some inappropriate thinking (for the soul is rather given to the body that it may do good; for it would not learn evil unless it did it), yet he corrects the opinion of other Platonists, and that on a point of no small importance, inasmuch as he avows that the soul, which is purged from all evil and received to the Father's presence, shall never again suffer the ills of this life. By this opinion he quite subverted the favorite Platonic dogma, that as dead men are made out of living ones, so living men are made out of dead ones; and he exploded the idea which Virgil seems to have adopted from Plato, that the purified souls which have been sent into the Elysian fields (the poetic name for the joys of the blessed) are summoned to the river Lethe, that is, to the oblivion of the past,

“That earthward they may pass once more,

Remembering not the things before,

And with a blind propension yearn

To fleshly bodies to return.”

This found no favor with Porphyry, and very justly; for it is indeed foolish to believe that souls should desire to return from that life, which cannot be very blessed unless by the assurance of its permanence, and to come back into this life, and to the pollution of corruptible bodies, as if the result of perfect purification were only to make defilement desirable. For if perfect purification effects the oblivion of all evils, and the oblivion of evils creates a desire for a body in which the soul may again be entangled with evils, then the supreme felicity will be the cause of infelicity, and the perfection of wisdom the cause of foolishness, and the purest cleansing the cause of defilement. And, however long the blessedness of the soul last, it cannot be founded on truth, if, in order to be blessed, it must be deceived. For it cannot be blessed unless it be free from fear. But, to be free from fear, it must be under the false impression that it shall be always blessed,—the false impression, for it is destined to be also at some time miserable. How, then, shall the soul rejoice in truth, whose joy is founded on falsehood? Porphyry saw this, and therefore said that the purified soul returns to the Father, that it may never more be entangled in the polluting contact with evil. The opinion, therefore, of some Platonists, that there is a necessary revolution carrying souls away and bringing them round again to the same things, is false. But, were it true, what were the advantage of knowing it? Would the Platonists presume to allege their superiority to us, because we were in this life ignorant of what they themselves were doomed to be ignorant of when perfected in purity and wisdom in another and better life, and which they must be ignorant of if they are to be blessed? If it were most absurd and foolish to say so, then certainly we must prefer Porphyry's opinion to the idea of a circulation of souls through constantly alternating happiness and misery. And if this is just, here is a Platonist emending Plato, here is a man who saw what Plato did not see, and who did not shrink from correcting so illustrious a master, but preferred truth to Plato.

CHAPTER 31

AGAINST THE ARGUMENTS ON WHICH THE PLATONISTS GROUND THEIR ASSERTION THAT THE HUMAN SOUL IS CO-ETERNAL WITH GOD

Why, then, do we not rather believe the divinity in those matters, which human talent cannot fathom? Why do we not credit the assertion of divinity, that the soul is not co-eternal with God, but is created, and once was not? For the Platonists seemed to themselves to allege an adequate reason for their rejection of this doctrine, when they affirmed that nothing could be everlasting which had not always existed. Plato, however, in writing concerning the world and the gods in it, whom the Supreme made, most expressly states that they had a beginning and yet would have no end, but, by the sovereign will of the Creator, would endure eternally. But, by way of interpreting this, the Platonists have discovered that he meant a beginning, not of time, but of cause. "For as if a foot," they say, "had been always from eternity in dust, there would always have been a print underneath it; and yet no one would doubt that this print was made by the pressure of the foot, nor that, though the one was made by the other, neither was prior to the other;

so," they say, "the world and the gods created in it have always been, their Creator always existing, and yet they were made." If, then, the soul has always existed, are we to say that its wretchedness has always existed? For if there is something in it which was not from eternity, but began in time, why is it impossible that the soul itself, though not previously existing, should begin to be in time? Its blessedness, too, which, as he owns, is to be more stable, and indeed endless, after the soul's experience of evils,—this undoubtedly has a beginning in time, and yet is to be always, though previously it had no existence. This whole argumentation, therefore, to establish that nothing can be endless except that which has had no beginning, falls to the ground. For here we find the blessedness of the soul, which has a beginning, and yet has no end. And, therefore, let the incapacity of man give place to the authority of God; and let us take our belief regarding the true religion from the ever-blessed spirits, who do not seek for themselves that honor which they know to be due to their God and ours, and who do not command us to sacrifice save only to Him, whose sacrifice, as I have often said already, and must often say again, we and they ought together to be, offered through that Priest who offered Himself to death a sacrifice for us, in that human nature which He assumed, and according to which He desired to be our Priest.

CHAPTER 32

OF THE UNIVERSAL WAY OF THE SOUL'S DELIVERANCE, WHICH PORPHYRY DID NOT FIND BECAUSE HE DID NOT RIGHTLY SEEK IT, AND WHICH THE GRACE OF CHRIST HAS ALONE THROWN OPEN

This is the religion which possesses the universal way for delivering the soul; for except by this way, none can be delivered. This is a kind of royal way, which alone leads to a kingdom which does not totter like all temporal dignities, but stands firm on eternal foundations. And when Porphyry says, towards the end of the first book De Regressu Animoe, that no system of doctrine which furnishes the universal way for delivering the soul has as yet been received, either from the truest philosophy, or from the ideas and practices of the Indians, or from the reasoning of the Chaldaeans, or from any source whatever, and that no historical reading had made him acquainted with that way, he manifestly acknowledges that there is such a way, but that as yet he was not acquainted with it. Nothing of all that he had so laboriously learned concerning the deliverance of the soul, nothing of all that he seemed to others, if not to himself, to know and believe, satisfied him. For he perceived that there was still wanting a commanding authority which it might be right to follow in a matter of such importance. And when he says that he had not learned from any truest philosophy a system which possessed the universal way of the soul's deliverance, he shows plainly enough, as it seems to me, either that the philosophy of which he was a disciple was not the truest, or that it did not comprehend such a way. And how can that be the truest philosophy which does not possess this way? For what else is the universal way of the soul's deliverance than that by which all souls universally are delivered, and without which, therefore, no soul is delivered? And when he says, in addition, "or from the ideas and practices of the Indians, or from the reasoning of the Chaldaeans, or from any source whatever," he declares in the most unequivocal language that this universal way of the soul's deliverance was not embraced in what he had learned either from the Indians or the Chaldaeans; and yet he could not forbear stating that it was from the Chaldaeans he had derived these divine oracles of which he makes such frequent mention. What, therefore, does he mean by this universal way of the soul's deliverance, which had not yet been made known by any truest philosophy, or by the doctrinal systems of those nations which were considered to have great insight in things divine, because they indulged more freely in a curious and fanciful science and worship of angels? What is this universal way of which he acknowledges his ignorance, if not a way which does not belong to one nation as its special property, but is common to all, and divinely bestowed? Porphyry, a man of no mediocre abilities, does not question that such a way exists; for he believes that Divine Providence could not have left men destitute of this universal way of delivering the soul. For he does not say that this way does not exist, but that this great boon and assistance has not yet been discovered, and has not come to his knowledge. And no wonder; for Porphyry lived in an age when this universal way of the soul's deliverance, —in other words, the Christian religion,—was exposed to the persecutions of idolaters and demon-worshippers, and earthly rulers, that the number of martyrs or witnesses for the truth might be completed and consecrated, and that by them proof might be given that we must endure all bodily sufferings in the cause of the holy faith, and for the commendation of the truth. Porphyry, being a witness of these persecutions, concluded that this way was destined to a speedy extinction, and that it, therefore, was not the universal way of the soul's deliverance, and did not see that the very thing that thus moved him, and deterred him from becoming a Christian, contributed to the confirmation and more effectual commendation of our religion.

This, then, is the universal way of the soul's deliverance, the way that is granted by the divine compassion to the nations universally. And no nation to which the knowledge of it has already come, or may hereafter come, ought to demand, Why so soon? or, Why so late?—for the design of Him who sends it is impenetrable by human capacity. This was felt by Porphyry when he confined himself to saying that this gift of God was not yet received, and had not yet come to his knowledge. For though this was so, he did not on that account pronounce that the way it self had no existence. This, I say, is the universal way for the deliverance of believers, concerning which the faithful Abraham received the divine assurance, "In thy seed shall all nations be blessed." He, indeed, was by birth a Chaldaean; but, that he might receive these great promises, and that there might be propagated from him a seed "disposed by angels in the hand of a Mediator," in whom this universal way, thrown open to all nations for the deliverance of the soul, might be found, he was ordered to leave his country, and kindred, and father's house. Then was he himself, first of all, delivered from the Chaldaean superstitions, and by his obedience worshipped the one true God, whose promises he faithfully trusted. This is the universal way, of which it is said in holy prophecy, "God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us; that Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations." And hence, when our Saviour, so long after, had taken flesh of the seed of Abraham, He says of Himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." This is the universal way, of which so long before it had been predicted, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” This way, therefore, is not the property of one, but of all nations. The law and the word of the Lord did not remain in Zion and Jerusalem, but issued thence to be universally diffused. And therefore the Mediator Himself, after His resurrection, says to His alarmed disciples, “These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened He their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” This is the universal way of the soul’s deliverance, which the holy angels and the holy prophets formerly disclosed where they could among the few men who found the grace of God, and especially in the Hebrew nation, whose commonwealth was, as it were, consecrated to prefigure and fore-announce the city of God which was to be gathered from all nations, by their tabernacle, and temple, and priesthood, and sacrifices. In some explicit statements, and in many obscure foreshadowings, this way was declared; but latterly came the Mediator Himself in the flesh, and His blessed apostles, revealing how the grace of the New Testament more openly explained what had been obscurely hinted to preceding generations, in conformity with the relation of the ages of the human race, and as it pleased God in His wisdom to appoint, who also bore them witness with signs and miracles some of which I have cited above. For not only were there visions of angels, and words heard from those heavenly ministrants, but also men of God, armed with the word of simple piety, cast out unclean spirits from the bodies and senses of men, and healed deformities and sicknesses; the wild beasts of earth and sea, the birds of air, inanimate things, the elements, the stars, obeyed their divine commands; the powers of hell gave way before them, the dead were restored to life. I say nothing of the miracles peculiar and proper to the Saviour’s own person, especially the nativity and the resurrection; in the one of which He wrought only the mystery of a virgin maternity, while in the other He furnished an instance of the resurrection which all shall at last experience. This way purifies the whole man, and prepares the mortal in all his parts for immortality. For, to prevent us from seeking for one purgation for the part which Porphyry calls intellectual, and another for the part he calls spiritual, and another for the body itself, our most mighty and truthful Purifier and Saviour assumed the whole human nature. Except by this way, which has been present among men both during the period of the promises and of the proclamation of their fulfillment, no man has been delivered, no man is delivered, no man shall be delivered.

As to Porphyry's statement that the universal way of the soul's deliverance had not yet come to his knowledge by any acquaintance he had with history, I would ask, what more remarkable history can be found than that which has taken possession of the whole world by its authoritative voice? or what more trustworthy than that which narrates past events, and predicts the future with equal clearness, and in the unfulfilled predictions of which we are constrained to believe by those that are already fulfilled? For neither Porphyry nor any Platonists can despise divination and prediction, even of things that pertain to this life and earthly matters, though they justly despise ordinary soothsaying and the divination that is connected with magical arts. They deny that these are the predictions of great men, or are to be considered important, and they are right; for they are founded, either on the foresight of subsidiary causes, as to a professional eye much of the course of a disease is foreseen by certain pre-monitory symptoms, or the unclean demons predict what they have resolved to do, that they may thus work upon the thoughts and desires of the wicked with an appearance of authority, and incline human frailty to imitate their impure actions. It is not such things that the saints who walk in the universal way care to predict as important, although, for the purpose of commending the faith, they knew and often predicted even such things as could not be detected by human observation, nor be readily verified by experience. But there were other truly important and divine events which they predicted, in so far as it was given them to know the will of God. For the incarnation of Christ, and all those important marvels that were accomplished in Him, and done in His name; the repentance of men and the conversion of their wills to God; the remission of sins, the grace of righteousness, the faith of the pious, and the multitudes in all parts of the world who believe in the true divinity; the overthrow of idolatry and demon worship, and the testing of the faithful by trials; the purification of those who persevered, and their deliverance from all evil; the day of judgment, the resurrection of the dead, the eternal damnation of the community of the ungodly, and the eternal kingdom of the most glorious city of God, ever-blessed in the enjoyment of the vision of God,—these things were predicted and promised in the Scriptures of this way; and of these we see so many fulfilled, that we justly and piously trust that the rest will also come to pass. As for those who do not believe, and consequently do not understand, that this is the way which leads straight to the vision of God and to eternal fellowship with Him, according to the true predictions and statements of the Holy Scriptures, they may storm at our position, but they cannot storm it.

And therefore, in these ten books, though not meeting, I dare say, the expectation of some, yet I have, as the true God and Lord has vouchsafed to aid me, satisfied the desire of certain persons, by refuting the objections of the ungodly, who prefer their own gods to the Founder of the holy city, about which we undertook to speak. Of these ten books, the first five were directed against those who think we should worship the gods for the sake of the blessings of this life, and the second five against those who think we should worship them for the sake of the life which is to be after death. And now, in fulfillment of the promise I made in the first book, I shall go on to say, as God shall aid me, what I think needs to be said regarding the origin, history, and deserved ends of the two cities, which, as already remarked, are in this world commingled and implicated with one another.

Book XI

Argument—Here begins the second part of this work, which treats of the origin, history, and destinies of the two cities, the earthly and the heavenly. In the first place, Augustin shows in this book how the two cities were formed originally, by the separation of the good and bad angels; and takes occasion to treat of the creation of the world, as it is described in Holy Scripture in the beginning of the book of Genesis.

CHAPTER 1

OF THIS PART OF THE WORK, WHEREIN WE BEGIN TO EXPLAIN THE ORIGIN AND END OF THE TWO CITIES

The city of God we speak of is the same to which testimony is borne by that Scripture, which excels all the writings of all nations by its divine authority, and has brought under its influence all kinds of minds, and this not by a casual intellectual movement, but obviously by an express providential arrangement. For there it is written, “Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.” And in another psalm we read, “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness, increasing the joy of the whole earth.” And, a little after, in the same psalm, “As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God. God has established it for ever.” And in another, “There is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved.” From these and similar testimonies, all of which it were tedious to cite, we have learned that there is a city of God, and its Founder has inspired us with a love which makes us covet its citizenship. To this Founder of the holy city the citizens of the earthly city prefer their own gods, not knowing that He is the God of gods, not of false, i.e., of impious and proud gods, who, being deprived of His unchangeable and freely communicated light, and so reduced to a kind of poverty-stricken power, eagerly grasp at their own private privileges, and seek divine honors from their deluded subjects; but of the pious and holy gods, who are better pleased to submit themselves to one, than to subject many to themselves, and who would rather worship God than be worshipped as God. But to the enemies of this city we have replied in the ten preceding books, according to our ability and the help afforded by our Lord and King. Now, recognizing what is expected of me, and not unmindful of my promise, and relying, too, on the same succor, I will endeavor to treat of the origin, and progress, and deserved destinies of the two cities (the earthly and the heavenly, to wit), which, as we said, are in this present world commingled, and as it were entangled together. And, first, I will explain how the foundations of these two cities were originally laid, in the difference that arose among the angels.

CHAPTER 2

OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, TO WHICH NO MAN CAN ATTAIN SAVE THROUGH THE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS

It is a great and very rare thing for a man, after he has contemplated the whole creation, corporeal and incorporeal, and has discerned its mutability, to pass beyond it, and, by the continued soaring of his mind, to attain to the unchangeable substance of God, and, in that height of contemplation, to learn from God Himself that none but He has made all that is not of the divine essence. For God speaks with a man not by means of some audible creature dinning in his ears, so that atmospheric vibrations connect Him that makes with him that hears the sound, nor even by means of a spiritual being with the semblance of a body, such as we see in dreams or similar states; for even in this case He speaks as if to the ears of the body, because it is by means of the semblance of a body He speaks, and with the appearance of a real interval of space,—for visions are exact representations of bodily objects. Not by these, then, does God speak, but by the truth itself, if any one is prepared to hear with the mind rather than with the body. For He speaks to that part of man which is better than all else that is in him, and than which God Himself alone is better. For since man is most properly understood (or, if that cannot be, then, at least, believed) to be made in God's image, no doubt it is that part of him by which he rises above those lower parts he has in common with the beasts, which brings him nearer to the Supreme. But since the mind itself, though naturally capable of reason and intelligence is disabled by besotting and inveterate vices not merely from delighting and abiding in, but even from tolerating His unchangeable light, until it has been gradually healed, and renewed, and made capable of such felicity, it had, in the first place, to be impregnated with faith, and so purified. And that in this faith it might advance the more confidently towards the truth, the truth itself, God, God's Son, assuming humanity without destroying His divinity, established and founded this faith, that there might be a way for man to man's God through a God-man. For this is the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. For it is as man that He is the Mediator and the Way. Since, if the way lieth between him who goes, and the place whither he goes, there is hope of his reaching it; but if there be no way, or if he know not where it is, what boots it to know whither he should go? Now the only way that is infallibly secured against all mistakes, is when the very same person is at once God and man, God our end, man our way.

CHAPTER 3

OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE CANONICAL SCRIPTURES COMPOSED BY THE DIVINE SPIRIT

This Mediator, having spoken what He judged sufficient first by the prophets, then by His own lips, and afterwards by the apostles, has besides produced the Scripture which is called canonical, which has paramount authority, and to which we yield assent in all matters of which we ought not to be ignorant, and yet cannot know of ourselves. For if we attain the knowledge of present objects by the testimony of our own senses, whether internal or external, then, regarding objects remote from our own senses, we need others to bring their testimony, since we cannot know them by our own, and we credit the persons to whom the objects have been or are sensibly present. Accordingly, as in the case of visible objects which we have not seen, we trust those who have, (and likewise with all sensible objects,) so in the case of things which are perceived by the mind and spirit, i.e., which are remote from our own interior sense, it behoves us to trust those who have seen them set in that incorporeal light, or abidingly contemplate them.

CHAPTER 4

THAT THE WORLD IS NEITHER WITHOUT BEGINNING, NOR YET CREATED BY A NEW DECREE OF GOD, BY WHICH HE AFTERWARDS WILLED WHAT HE HAD NOT BEFORE WILLED

Of all visible things, the world is the greatest; of all invisible, the greatest is God. But, that the world is, we see; that God is, we believe. That God made the world, we can believe from no one more safely than from God Himself. But where have we heard Him? Nowhere more distinctly than in the Holy Scriptures, where His prophet said, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Was the prophet present when God made the heavens and the earth? No; but the wisdom of God, by whom all things were made, was there, and wisdom insinuates itself into holy souls, and makes them the friends of God and His prophets, and noiselessly informs them of His works. They are taught also by the angels of God, who always behold the face of the Father, and announce His will to whom it befits. Of these prophets was he who said and wrote, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” And so fit a witness was he of God, that the same Spirit of God, who revealed these things to him, enabled him also so long before to predict that our faith also would be forthcoming.

But why did God choose then to create the heavens and earth which up to that time He had not made? If they who put this question wish to make out that the world is eternal and without beginning, and that consequently it has not been made by God, they are strangely deceived, and rave in the incurable madness of impiety. For, though the voices of the prophets were silent, the world itself, by its well-ordered changes and movements, and by the fair appearance of all visible things, bears a testimony of its own, both that it has been created, and also that it could not have been created save by God, whose greatness and beauty are unutterable and invisible. As for those who own, indeed, that it was made by God, and yet ascribe to it not a temporal but only a creational beginning, so that in some scarcely intelligible way the world should always have existed a created world they make an assertion which seems to them to defend God from the charge of arbitrary hastiness, or of suddenly conceiving the idea of creating the world as a quite new idea, or of casually changing His will, though He be unchangeable. But I do not see how this supposition of theirs can stand in other respects, and chiefly in respect of the soul; for if they contend that it is co-eternal with God, they will be quite at a loss to explain whence there has accrued to it new misery, which through a previous eternity had not existed. For if they said that its happiness and misery ceaselessly alternate, they must say, further, that this alternation will continue for ever; whence will result this absurdity, that, though the soul is called blessed, it is not so in this, that it foresees its own misery and disgrace. And yet, if it does not foresee it, and supposes that it will be neither disgraced nor wretched, but always blessed, then it is blessed because it is deceived; and a more foolish statement one cannot make. But if their idea is that the soul's misery has alternated with its bliss during the ages of the past eternity, but that now, when once the soul has been set free, it will return henceforth no more to misery, they are nevertheless of opinion that it has never been truly blessed before, but begins at last to enjoy a new and uncertain happiness; that is to say, they must acknowledge that some new thing, and that an important and signal thing, happens to the soul which never in a whole past eternity happened it before. And if they deny that God's eternal purpose included this new experience of the soul, they deny that He is the Author of its blessedness, which is unspeakable impiety. If, on the other hand, they say that the future blessedness of the soul is the result of a new decree of God, how will they show that God is not chargeable with that mutability which displeases them? Further, if they acknowledge that it was created in time, but will never perish in time,—that it has, like number, a beginning but no end,—and that, therefore, having once made trial of misery, and been delivered from it, it will never again return thereto, they will certainly admit that this takes place without any violation of the immutable counsel of God. Let them, then, in like manner believe regarding the world that it too could be made in time, and yet that God, in making it, did not alter His eternal design.

CHAPTER 5

THAT WE OUGHT NOT TO SEEK TO COMPREHEND THE INFINITE AGES OF TIME BEFORE THE WORLD, NOR THE INFINITE REALMS OF SPACE

Next, we must see what reply can be made to those who agree that God is the Creator of the world, but have difficulties about the time of its creation, and what reply, also, they can make to difficulties we might raise about the place of its creation. For, as they demand why the world was created then and no sooner, we may ask why it was created just here where it is, and not elsewhere. For if they imagine infinite spaces of time before the world, during which God could not have been idle, in like manner they may conceive outside the world infinite realms of space, in which, if any one says that the Omnipotent cannot hold His hand from working, will it not follow that they must adopt Epicurus' dream of innumerable worlds? with this difference only, that he asserts that they are formed and destroyed by the fortuitous movements of atoms, while they will hold that they are made by God's hand, if they maintain that, throughout the boundless immensity of space, stretching interminably in every direction round the world, God cannot rest, and that the worlds which they suppose Him to make cannot be destroyed. For here the question is with those who, with ourselves, believe that God is spiritual, and the Creator of all existences but Himself. As for others, it is a condescension to dispute with them on a religious ques tion, for they have acquired a reputation only among men who pay divine honors to a number of gods, and have become conspicuous among the other philosophers for no other reason than that, though they are still far from the truth, they are near it in comparison with the rest. While these, then, neither confine in any place, nor limit, nor distribute the divine substance, but, as is worthy of God, own it to be wholly though spiritually present everywhere, will they perchance say that this substance is absent from such immense spaces outside the world, and is occupied in one only, (and that a very little one compared with the infinity beyond), the one, namely, in which is the world? I think they will not proceed to this absurdity. Since they maintain that there is but one world, of vast material bulk, indeed, yet finite, and in its own determinate position, and that this was made by the working of God, let them give the same account of God's resting in the infinite times before the world as they give of His resting in the infinite spaces outside of it. And as it does not follow that God set the world in the very spot it occupies and no other by accident rather than by divine reason, although no human reason can comprehend why it was so set, and though there was no merit in the spot chosen to give it the precedence of infinite others, so neither does it follow that we should suppose that God was guided by chance when He created the world in that and no earlier time, although previous times had been running by during an infinite past, and though there was no difference by which one time could be chosen in preference to another. But if they say that the thoughts of men are idle when they conceive infinite places, since there is no place beside the world, we reply that, by the same showing, it is vain to conceive of the past times of God's rest, since there is no time before the world.

CHAPTER 6

THAT THE WORLD AND TIME HAD BOTH ONE BEGINNING, AND THE ONE DID NOT ANTICIPATE THE OTHER

For if eternity and time are rightly distinguished by this, that time does not exist without some movement and transition, while in eternity there is no change, who does not see that there could have been no time had not some creature been made, which by some motion could give birth to change,—the various parts of which motion and change, as they cannot be simultaneous, succeed one another,—and thus, in these shorter or longer intervals of duration, time would begin? Since then, God, in whose eternity is no change at all, is the Creator and Ordainer of time, I do not see how He can be said to have created the world after spaces of time had elapsed, unless it be said that prior to the world there was some creature by whose movement time could pass. And if the sacred and infallible Scriptures say that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, in order that it may be understood that He had made nothing previously,—for if He had made anything before the rest, this thing would rather be said to have been made "in the beginning,"—then assuredly the world was made, not in time, but simultaneously with time. For that which is made in time is made both after and before some time,—after that which is past, before that which is future. But none could then be past, for there was no creature by whose movements its duration could be measured. But simultaneously with time the world was made, if in the world's creation change and motion were created, as seems evident from the order of the first six or seven days. For in these days the morning and evening are counted, until, on the sixth day, all things which God then made were finished, and on the seventh the rest of God was mysteriously and sublimely signalized. What kind of days these were it is extremely difficult, or perhaps impossible for us to conceive, and how much more to say!

CHAPTER 7

OF THE NATURE OF THE FIRST DAYS, WHICH ARE SAID TO HAVE HAD MORNING AND EVENING, BEFORE THERE WAS A SUN

We see, indeed, that our ordinary days have no evening but by the setting, and no morning but by the rising, of the sun; but the first three days of all were passed without sun, since it is reported to have been made on the fourth day. And first of all, indeed, light was made by the word of God, and God, we read, separated it from the darkness, and called the light Day, and the darkness Night; but what kind of light that was, and by what periodic movement it made evening and morning, is beyond the reach of our senses; neither can we understand how it was, and yet must unhesitatingly believe it. For either it was some material light, whether proceeding from the upper parts of the world, far removed from our sight, or from the spot where the sun was afterwards kindled; or under the name of light the holy city was signified, composed of holy angels and blessed spirits, the city of which the apostle says, “Jerusalem which is above is our eternal mother in heaven;” and in another place, “For ye are all the children of the light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness.” Yet in some respects we may appropriately speak of a morning and evening of this day also. For the knowledge of the creature is, in comparison of the knowledge of the Creator, but a twilight; and so it dawns and breaks into morning when the creature is drawn to the praise and love of the Creator; and night never falls when the Creator is not forsaken through love of the creature. In fine, Scripture, when it would recount those days in order, never mentions the word night. It never says, “Night was,” but “The evening and the morning were the first day.” So of the second and the rest. And, indeed, the knowledge of created things contemplated by themselves is, so to speak, more colorless than when they are seen in the wisdom of God, as in the art by which they were made. Therefore evening is a more suitable figure than night; and yet, as I said, morning returns when the creature returns to the praise and love of the Creator. When it does so in the knowledge of itself, that is the first day; when in the knowledge of the firmament, which is the name given to the sky between the waters above and those beneath, that is the second day; when in the knowledge of the earth, and the sea, and all things that grow out of the earth, that is the third day; when in the knowledge of the greater and less luminaries, and all the stars, that is the fourth day; when in the knowledge of all animals that swim in the waters and that fly in the air, that is the fifth day; when in the knowledge of all animals that live on the earth, and of man himself, that is the sixth day.

CHAPTER 8

WHAT WE ARE TO UNDERSTAND OF GOD’S RESTING ON THE SEVENTH DAY, AFTER THE SIX DAYS’ WORK

When it is said that God rested on the seventh day from all His works, and hallowed it, we are not to conceive of this in a childish fashion, as if work were a toil to God, who “spake and it was done,”—spake by the spiritual and eternal, not audible and transitory word. But God’s rest signifies the rest of those who rest in God, as the joy of a house means the joy of those in the house who rejoice, though not the house, but something else, causes the joy. How much more intelligible is such phraseology, then, if the house itself, by its own beauty, makes the inhabitants joyful! For in this case we not only call it joyful by that figure of speech in which the thing containing is used for the thing contained (as when we say, “The theatres applaud,” “The meadows low,” meaning that the men in the one applaud, and the oxen in the other low), but also by that figure in which the cause is spoken of as if it were the effect, as when a letter is said to be joyful, because it makes its readers so. Most appropriately, therefore, the sacred narrative states that God rested, meaning thereby that those rest who are in Him, and whom He makes to rest. And this the prophetic narrative promises also to the men to whom it speaks, and for whom it was written, that they themselves, after those good works which God does in and by them, if they have managed by faith to get near to God in this life, shall enjoy in Him eternal rest. This was pre-figured to the ancient people of God by the rest enjoined in their sabbath law, of which, in its own place, I shall speak more at large.

CHAPTER 9

WHAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH US TO BELIEVE CONCERNING THE CREATION OF THE ANGELS

At present, since I have undertaken to treat of the origin of the holy city, and first of the holy angels, who constitute a large part of this city, and indeed the more blessed part, since they have never been expatriated, I will give myself to the task of explaining, by God’s help, and as far as seems suitable, the Scriptures which relate to this point. Where Scripture speaks of the world’s creation, it is not plainly said whether or when the angels were created; but if mention of them is made, it is implicitly under the name of “heaven,” when it is said, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” or perhaps rather under the name of “light,” of which presently. But that they were wholly omitted, I am unable to believe, because it is written that God on the seventh day rested from all His works which He made; and this very book itself begins, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” so that before heaven and earth God seems to have made nothing. Since, therefore, He began with the heavens and the earth,—and the earth itself, as Scripture adds, was at first invisible and formless, light not being as yet made, and darkness covering the face of the deep (that is to say, covering an undefined chaos of earth and sea, for where light is not, darkness must needs be),—and then when all things, which are recorded to have been completed in six days, were created and arranged, how should the angels be omitted, as if they were not among the works of God, from which on the seventh day He rested? Yet, though the fact that the angels are the work of God is not omitted here, it is indeed not explicitly mentioned; but elsewhere Holy Scripture asserts it in the clearest manner. For in the Hymn of the Three Children in the Furnace it was said, “O all ye works of the Lord bless ye the Lord;” and among these works mentioned afterwards in detail, the angels are named. And in the psalm it is said, “Praise ye the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the heights. Praise ye Him, all His angels; praise ye Him, all His hosts. Praise ye Him, sun and moon; praise him, all ye stars of light. Praise Him, ye heaven of heavens; and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for He commanded, and they were created.” Here the angels are most expressly and by divine authority said to have been made by God, for of them among the other heavenly things it is said, “He commanded, and they were created.” Who, then, will be bold enough to suggest that the angels were made after the six days’ creation? If any one is so foolish, his folly is disposed of by a scripture of like authority, where God says, “When the stars were made, the angels praised me with a loud voice.” The angels therefore existed before the stars; and the stars were made the fourth day. Shall we then say that they were made the third day? Far from it; for we know what was made that day. The earth was separated from the water, and each element took its own distinct form, and the earth produced all that grows on it. On the second day, then? Not even on this; for on it the firmament was made between the waters above and beneath, and was called “Heaven,” in which firmament the stars were made on the fourth day. There is no question, then, that if the angels are included in the works of God during these six days, they are that light which was called “Day,” and whose unity Scripture signalizes by calling that day not the “first day,” but “one day.” For the second day, the third, and the rest are not other days; but the same “one” day is repeated to complete the number six or seven, so that there should be knowledge both of God’s works and of His rest. For when God said, “Let there be light, and there was light,” if we are justified in understanding in this light the creation of the angels, then certainly they were created partakers of the eternal light which is the unchangeable Wisdom of God, by which all things were made, and whom we call the only-begotten Son of God; so that they, being illumined by the Light that created them, might themselves become light and be called “Day,” in participation of that unchangeable Light and Day which is the Word of God, by whom both themselves and all else were made. “The true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,”—this Light lighteth also every pure angel, that he may be light not in himself, but in God; from whom if an angel turn away, he becomes impure, as are all those who are called unclean spirits, and are no longer light in the Lord, but darkness in themselves, being deprived of the participation of Light eternal. For evil has no positive nature; but the loss of good has received the name “evil.”

CHAPTER 10

OF THE SIMPLE AND UNCHANGEABLE TRINITY, FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST, ONE GOD, IN WHOM SUBSTANCE AND QUALITY ARE IDENTICAL

There is, accordingly, a good which is alone simple, and therefore alone unchangeable, and this is God. By this Good have all others been created, but not simple, and therefore not unchangeable. “Created,” I say,—that is, made, not begotten. For that which is begotten of the simple Good is simple as itself, and the same as itself. These two we call the Father and the Son; and both together with the Holy Spirit are one God; and to this Spirit the epithet Holy is in Scripture, as it were, appropriated. And He is another than the Father and the Son, for He is neither the Father nor the Son. I say “another,” not “another thing,” because He is equally with them the simple Good, unchangeable and co-eternal. And this Trinity is one God; and none the less simple because a Trinity. For we do not say that the nature of the good is simple, because the Father alone possesses it, or the Son alone, or the Holy Ghost alone; nor do we say, with the Sabellian heretics, that it is only nominally a Trinity, and has no real distinction of persons; but we say it is simple, because it is what it has, with the exception of the relation of the persons to one another. For, in regard to this relation, it is true that the Father has a Son, and yet is not Himself the Son; and the Son has a Father, and is not Himself the Father. But, as regards Himself, irrespective of relation to the other, each is what He has; thus, He is in Himself living, for He has life, and is Himself the Life which He has.

It is for this reason, then, that the nature of the Trinity is called simple, because it has not anything which it can lose, and because it is not one thing and its contents another, as a cup and the liquor, or a body and its color, or the air and the light or heat of it, or a mind and its wisdom. For none of these is what it has: the cup is not liquor, nor the body color, nor the air light and heat, nor the mind wisdom. And hence they can be deprived of what they have, and can be turned or changed into other qualities and states, so that the cup may be emptied of the liquid of which it is full, the body be discolored, the air darken, the mind grow silly. The incorruptible body which is promised to the saints in the resurrection cannot, indeed, lose its quality of incorruption, but the bodily substance and the quality of incorruption are not the same thing. For the quality of incorruption resides entire in each several part, not greater in one and less in another; for no part is more incorruptible than another. The body, indeed, is itself greater in whole than in part; and one part of it is larger, another smaller, yet is not the larger more incorruptible than the smaller. The body, then, which is not in each of its parts a whole body, is one thing; incorruptibility, which is throughout complete, is another thing;—for every part of the incorruptible body, however unequal to the rest otherwise, is equally incorrupt. For the hand, e.g., is not more incorrupt than the finger because it is larger than the finger; so, though finger and hand are unequal, their incorruptibility is equal. Thus, although incorruptibility is inseparable from an incorruptible body, yet the substance of the body is one thing, the quality of incorruption another. And therefore the body is not what it has. The soul itself, too, though it be always wise (as it will be eternally when it is redeemed), will be so by participating in the unchangeable wisdom, which it is not; for though the air be never robbed of the light that is shed abroad in it, it is not on that account the same thing as the light. I do not mean that the soul is air, as has been supposed by some who could not conceive a spiritual nature; but, with much dissimilarity, the two things have a kind of likeness, which makes it suitable to say that the immaterial soul is illumined with the immaterial light of the simple wisdom of God, as the material air is irradiated with material light, and that, as the air, when deprived of this light, grows dark, (for material darkness is nothing else than air wanting light,) so the soul, deprived of the light of wisdom, grows dark.

According to this, then, those things which are essentially and truly divine are called simple, because in them quality and substance are identical, and because they are divine, or wise, or blessed in themselves, and without extraneous supplement. In Holy Scripture, it is true, the Spirit of wisdom is called “manifold” because it contains many things in it; but what it contains it also is, and it being one is all these things. For neither are there many wisdoms, but one, in which are untold and infinite treasures of things intellectual, wherein are all invisible and unchangeable reasons of things visible and changeable which were created by it. For God made nothing unwittingly; not even a human workman can be said to do so. But if He knew all that He made, He made only those things which He had known.

Whence flows a very striking but true conclusion, that this world could not be known to us unless it existed, but could not have existed unless it had been known to God.

CHAPTER 11

WHETHER THE ANGELS THAT FELL PARTOOK OF THE BLESSEDNESS WHICH THE HOLY ANGELS HAVE ALWAYS ENJOYED FROM THE TIME OF THEIR CREATION

And since these things are so, those spirits whom we call angels were never at any time or in any way darkness, but, as soon as they were made, were made light; yet they were not so created in order that they might exist and live in any way whatever, but were enlightened that they might live wisely and blessedly. Some of them, having turned away from this light, have not won this wise and blessed life, which is certainly eternal, and accompanied with the sure confidence of its eternity; but they have still the life of reason, though darkened with folly, and this they cannot lose even if they would. But who can determine to what extent they were partakers of that wisdom before they fell? And how shall we say that they participated in it equally with those who through it are truly and fully blessed, resting in a true certainty of eternal felicity? For if they had equally participated in this true knowledge, then the evil angels would have remained eternally blessed equally with the good, because they were equally expectant of it. For, though a life be never so long, it cannot be truly called eternal if it is destined to have an end; for it is called life inasmuch as it is lived, but eternal because it has no end. Wherefore, although everything eternal is not therefore blessed (for hell-fire is eternal), yet if no life can be truly and perfectly blessed except it be eternal, the life of these angels was not blessed, for it was doomed to end, and therefore not eternal, whether they knew it or not. In the one case fear, in the other ignorance, prevented them from being blessed. And even if their ignorance was not so great as to breed in them a wholly false expectation, but left them wavering in uncertainty whether their good would be eternal or would some time terminate, this very doubt concerning so grand a destiny was incompatible with the plenitude of blessedness which we believe the holy angels enjoyed. For we do not so narrow and restrict the application of the term “blessedness” as to apply it to God only, though doubtless He is so truly blessed that greater blessedness cannot be; and, in comparison of His blessedness, what is that of the angels, though, according to their capacity, they be perfectly blessed?

CHAPTER 12

A COMPARISON OF THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS, WHO HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED THE DIVINE REWARD, WITH THAT OF OUR FIRST PARENTS IN PARADISE

And the angels are not the only members of the rational and intellectual creation whom we call blessed. For who will take upon him to deny that those first men in Paradise were blessed previously to sin, although they were uncertain how long their blessedness was to last, and whether it would be eternal (and eternal it would have been had they not sinned),—who, I say, will do so, seeing that even now we not unbecomingly call those blessed whom we see leading a righteous and holy life, in hope of immortality, who have no harrowing remorse of conscience, but obtain readily divine remission of the sins of their present infirmity? These, though they are certain that they shall be rewarded if they persevere, are not certain that they will persevere. For what man can know that he will persevere to the end in the exercise and increase of grace, unless he has been certified by some revelation from Him who, in His just and secret judgment, while He deceives none, informs few regarding this matter? Accordingly, so far as present comfort goes, the first man in Paradise was more blessed than any just man in this insecure state; but as regards the hope of future good, every man who not merely supposes, but certainly knows that he shall eternally enjoy the most high God in the company of angels, and beyond the reach of ill,—this man, no matter what bodily torments afflict him, is more blessed than was he who, even in that great felicity of Paradise, was uncertain of his fate.

CHAPTER 13

WHETHER ALL THE ANGELS WERE SO CREATED IN ONE COMMON STATE OF FELICITY, THAT THOSE WHO FELL WERE NOT AWARE THAT THEY WOULD FALL, AND THAT THOSE WHO STOOD RECEIVED ASSURANCE OF THEIR OWN PERSEVERANCE AFTER THE RUIN OF THE FALLEN

From all this, it will readily occur to any one that the blessedness which an intelligent being desires as its legitimate object results from a combination of these two things, namely, that it uninterruptedly enjoy the unchangeable good, which is God; and that it be delivered from all dubiety, and know certainly that it shall eternally abide in the same enjoyment. That it is so with the angels of light we piously believe; but that the fallen angels, who by their own default lost that light, did not enjoy this blessedness even before they sinned, reason bids us conclude. Yet if their life was of any duration before they fell, we must allow them a blessedness of some kind, though not that which is accompanied with foresight. Or, if it seems hard to believe that, when the angels were created, some were created in ignorance either of their perseverance or their fall, while others were most certainly assured of the eternity of their felicity,—if it is hard to believe that they were not all from the beginning on an equal footing, until these who are now evil did of their own will fall away from the light of goodness, certainly it is much harder to believe that the holy angels are now uncertain of their eternal blessedness, and do not know regarding themselves as much as we have been able to gather regarding them from the Holy Scriptures. For what catholic Christian does not know that no new devil will ever arise among the good angels, as he knows that this present devil will never again return into the fellowship of the good? For the truth in the gospel promises to the saints and the faithful that they will be equal to the angels of God; and it is also promised them that they will "go away into life eternal." But if we are certain that we shall never lapse from eternal felicity, while they are not certain, then we shall not be their equals, but their superiors. But as the truth never deceives, and as we shall be their equals, they must be certain of their blessedness. And because the evil angels could not be certain of that, since their blessedness was destined to come to an end, it follows either that the angels were unequal, or that, if equal, the good angels were assured of the eternity of their blessedness after the perdition of the others; unless, possibly, some one may say that the words of the Lord about the devil "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth," are to be understood as if he was not only a murderer from the beginning of the human race, when man, whom he could kill by his deceit, was made, but also that he did not abide in the truth from the time of his own creation, and was accordingly never blessed with the holy angels, but refused to submit to his Creator, and proudly exulted as if in a private lordship of his own, and was thus deceived and deceiving. For the dominion of the Almighty cannot be eluded; and he who will not piously submit himself to things as they are, proudly feigns, and mocks himself with a state of things that does not exist; so that what the blessed Apostle John says thus becomes intelligible: “The devil sinneth from the beginning,”—that is, from the time he was created he refused righteousness, which none but a will piously subject to God can enjoy. Whoever adopts this opinion at least disagrees with those heretics the Manichees, and with any other pestilential sect that may suppose that the devil has derived from some adverse evil principle a nature proper to himself. These persons are so befooled by error, that, although they acknowledge with ourselves the authority of the gospels, they do not notice that the Lord did not say, “The devil was naturally a stranger to the truth,” but “The devil abode not in the truth,” by which He meant us to understand that he had fallen from the truth, in which, if he had abode, he would have become a partaker of it, and have remained in blessedness along with the holy angels.

CHAPTER 14

AN EXPLANATION OF WHAT IS SAID OF THE DEVIL, THAT HE DID NOT ABIDE IN THE TRUTH, BECAUSE THE TRUTH WAS NOT IN HIM

Moreover, as if we had been inquiring why the devil did not abide in the truth, our Lord subjoins the reason, saying, “because the truth is not in him.” Now, it would be in him had he abode in it. But the phraseology is unusual. For, as the words stand, “He abode not in the truth, because the truth is not in him,” it seems as if the truth’s not being in him were the cause of his not abiding in it; whereas his not abiding in the truth is rather the cause of its not being in him. The same form of speech is found in the psalm: “I have called upon Thee, for Thou hast heard me, O God,” where we should expect it to be said, Thou hast heard me, O God, for I have called upon Thee. But when he had said, “I have called,” then, as if some one were seeking proof of this, he demonstrates the effectual earnestness of his prayer by the effect of God’s hearing it; as if he had said, The proof that I have prayed is that Thou hast heard me.

CHAPTER 15

HOW WE ARE TO UNDERSTAND THE WORDS, “THE DEVIL SINNETH FROM THE BEGINNING.”

As for what John says about the devil, “The devil sinneth from the beginning” they who suppose it is meant hereby that the devil was made with a sinful nature, misunderstand it; for if sin be natural, it is not sin at all. And how do they answer the prophetic proofs,—either what Isaiah says when he represents the devil under the person of the king of Babylon, “How art thou fallen, O Lucifer, son of the morning!” or what Ezekiel says, “Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering,” where it is meant that he was some time without sin; for a little after it is still more explicitly said, “Thou wast perfect in thy ways?” And if these passages cannot well be otherwise interpreted, we must understand by this one also, “He abode not in the truth,” that he was once in the truth, but did not remain in it. And from this passage, “The devil sinneth from the beginning,” it is not to be supposed that he sinned from the beginning of his created existence, but from the beginning of his sin, when by his pride he had once commenced to sin. There is a passage, too, in the Book of Job, of which the devil is the subject: “This is the beginning of the creation of God, which He made to be a sport to His angels,” which agrees with the psalm, where it is said, “There is that dragon which Thou hast made to be a sport therein.” But these passages are not to lead us to suppose that the devil was originally created to be the sport of the angels, but that he was doomed to this punishment after his sin. His beginning, then, is the handiwork of God; for there is no nature, even among the least, and lowest, and last of the beasts, which was not the work of Him from whom has proceeded all measure, all form, all order, without which nothing can be planned or conceived. How much more, then, is this angelic nature, which surpasses in dignity all else that He has made, the handiwork of the Most High!

CHAPTER 16

OF THE RANKS AND DIFFERENCES OF THE CREATURES, ESTIMATED BY THEIR UTILITY, OR ACCORDING TO THE NATURAL GRADATIONS OF BEING

For, among those beings which exist, and which are not of God the Creator's essence, those which have life are ranked above those which have none; those that have the power of generation, or even of desiring, above those which want this faculty. And, among things that have life, the sentient are higher than those which have no sensation, as animals are ranked above trees. And, among the sentient, the intelligent are above those that have not intelligence,—men, e.g., above cattle. And, among the intelligent, the immortal such as the angels, above the mortal, such as men. These are the gradations according to the order of nature; but according to the utility each man finds in a thing, there are various standards of value, so that it comes to pass that we prefer some things that have no sensation to some sentient beings. And so strong is this preference, that, had we the power, we would abolish the latter from nature altogether, whether in ignorance of the place they hold in nature, or, though we know it, sacrificing them to our own convenience. Who, e.g., would not rather have bread in his house than mice, gold than fleas? But there is little to wonder at in this, seeing that even when valued by men themselves (whose nature is certainly of the highest dignity), more is often given for a horse than for a slave, for a jewel than for a maid. Thus the reason of one contemplating nature prompts very different judgments from those dictated by the necessity of the needy, or the desire of the voluptuous; for the former considers what value a thing in itself has in the scale of creation, while necessity considers how it meets its need; reason looks for what the mental light will judge to be true, while pleasure looks for what pleasantly titilates the bodily sense. But of such consequence in rational natures is the weight, so to speak, of will and of love, that though in the order of nature angels rank above men, yet, by the scale of justice, good men are of greater value than bad angels.

CHAPTER 17

THAT THE FLAW OF WICKEDNESS IS NOT NATURE, BUT CONTRARY TO NATURE, AND HAS ITS ORIGIN, NOT IN THE CREATOR, BUT IN THE WILL

It is with reference to the nature, then, and not to the wickedness of the devil, that we are to understand these words, "This is the beginning of God's handiwork;" for, without doubt, wickedness can be a flaw or vice only where the nature previously was not vitiated. Vice, too, is so contrary to nature, that it cannot but damage it. And therefore departure from God would be no vice, unless in a nature whose property it was to abide with God. So that even the wicked will is a strong proof of the goodness of the nature. But God, as He is the supremely good Creator of good natures, so is He of evil wills the most just Ruler; so that, while they make an ill use of good natures, He makes a good use even of evil wills. Accordingly, He caused the devil (good by God's creation, wicked by his own will) to be cast down from his high position, and to become the mockery of His angels,—that is, He caused his temptations to benefit those whom he wishes to injure by them. And because God, when He created him, was certainly not ignorant of his future malignity, and foresaw the good which He Himself would bring out of his evil, therefore says the psalm, "This leviathan whom Thou hast made to be a sport therein," that we may see that, even while God in His goodness created him good, He yet had already foreseen and arranged how He would make use of him when he became wicked.

CHAPTER 18

OF THE BEAUTY OF THE UNIVERSE, WHICH BECOMES, BY GOD'S ORDINANCE, MORE BRILLIANT BY THE OPPOSITION OF CONTRARIES

For God would never have created any, I do not say angel, but even man, whose future wickedness He foreknew, unless He had equally known to what uses in behalf of the good He could turn him, thus embellishing, the course of the ages, as it were an exquisite poem set off with antitheses. For what are called antitheses are among the most elegant of the ornaments of speech. They might be called in Latin "oppositions," or, to speak more accurately, "contrapositions;" but this word is not in common use among us, though the Latin, and indeed the languages of all nations, avail themselves of the same ornaments of style. In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians the Apostle Paul also makes a graceful use of antithesis, in that place where he says, "By the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." As, then, these oppositions of contraries lend beauty to the language, so the beauty of the course of this world is achieved by the opposition of contraries, arranged, as it were, by an eloquence not of words, but of things. This is quite plainly stated in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, in this way: “Good is set against evil, and life against death: so is the sinner against the godly. So look upon all the works of the Most High, and these are two and two, one against another.”

CHAPTER 19

WHAT, SEEMINGLY, WE ARE TO UNDERSTAND BY THE WORDS, “GOD DIVIDED THE LIGHT FROM THE DARKNESS.”

Accordingly, though the obscurity of the divine word has certainly this advantage, that it causes many opinions about the truth to be started and discussed, each reader seeing some fresh meaning in it, yet, whatever is said to be meant by an obscure passage should be either confirmed by the testimony of obvious facts, or should be asserted in other and less ambiguous texts. This obscurity is beneficial, whether the sense of the author is at last reached after the discussion of many other interpretations, or whether, though that sense remain concealed, other truths are brought out by the discussion of the obscurity. To me it does not seem incongruous with the working of God, if we understand that the angels were created when that first light was made, and that a separation was made between the holy and the unclean angels, when, as is said, “God divided the light from the darkness; and God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.” For He alone could make this discrimination, who was able also before they fell, to foreknow that they would fall, and that, being deprived of the light of truth, they would abide in the darkness of pride. For, so far as regards the day and night, with which we are familiar, He commanded those luminaries of heaven that are obvious to our senses to divide between the light and the darkness. “Let there be,” He says, “lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night;” and shortly after He says, “And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness.” But between that light, which is the holy company of the angels spiritually radiant with the illumination of the truth, and that opposing darkness, which is the noisome foulness of the spiritual condition of those angels who are turned away from the light of righteousness, only He Himself could divide, from whom their wickedness (not of nature, but of will), while yet it was future, could not be hidden or uncertain.

CHAPTER 20

OF THE WORDS WHICH FOLLOW THE SEPARATION OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS, "AND GOD SAW THE LIGHT THAT IT WAS GOOD."

Then, we must not pass from this passage of Scripture without noticing that when God said, "Let there be light, and there was light," it was immediately added, "And God saw the light that it was good." No such expression followed the statement that He separated the light from the darkness, and called the light Day and the darkness Night, lest the seal of His approval might seem to be set on such darkness, as well as on the light. For when the darkness was not subject of disapprobation, as when it was divided by the heavenly bodies from this light which our eyes discern, the statement that God saw that it was good is inserted, not before, but after the division is recorded. "And God set them," so runs the passage, "in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good." For He approved of both, because both were sinless. But where God said, "Let there be light, and there was light; and God saw the light that it was good;" and the narrative goes on, "and God divided the light from the darkness! and God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night," there was not in this place subjoined the statement, "And God saw that it was good," lest both should be designated good, while one of them was evil, not by nature, but by its own fault. And therefore, in this case, the light alone received the approbation of the Creator, while the angelic darkness, though it had been ordained, was yet not approved.

CHAPTER 21

OF GOD'S ETERNAL AND UNCHANGEABLE KNOWLEDGE AND WILL, WHEREBY ALL HE HAS MADE PLEASED HIM IN THE ETERNAL DESIGN AS WELL AS IN THE ACTUAL RESULT

For what else is to be understood by that invariable refrain, “And God saw that it was good,” than the approval of the work in its design, which is the wisdom of God? For certainly God did not in the actual achievement of the work first learn that it was good, but, on the contrary, nothing would have been made had it not been first known by Him. While, therefore, He sees that that is good which, had He not seen it before it was made, would never have been made, it is plain that He is not discovering, but teaching that it is good. Plato, indeed, was bold enough to say that, when the universe was completed, God was, as it were, elated with joy. And Plato was not so foolish as to mean by this that God was rendered more blessed by the novelty of His creation; but he wished thus to indicate that the work now completed met with its Maker’s approval, as it had while yet in design. It is not as if the knowledge of God were of various kinds, knowing in different ways things which as yet are not, things which are, and things which have been. For not in our fashion does He look forward to what is future, nor at what is present, nor back upon what is past; but in a manner quite different and far and profoundly remote from our way of thinking. For He does not pass from this to that by transition of thought, but beholds all things with absolute unchangeableness; so that of those things which emerge in time, the future, indeed, are not yet, and the present are now, and the past no longer are; but all of these are by Him comprehended in His stable and eternal presence. Neither does He see in one fashion by the eye, in another by the mind, for He is not composed of mind and body; nor does His present knowledge differ from that which it ever was or shall be, for those variations of time, past, present, and future, though they alter our knowledge, do not affect His, “with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” Neither is there any growth from thought to thought in the conceptions of Him in whose spiritual vision all things which He knows are at once embraced. For as without any movement that time can measure, He Himself moves all temporal things, so He knows all times with a knowledge that time cannot measure. And therefore He saw that what He had made was good, when He saw that it was good to make it. And when He saw it made, He had not on that account a twofold nor any way increased knowledge of it; as if He had less knowledge before He made what He saw. For certainly He would not be the perfect worker He is, unless His knowledge were so perfect as to receive no addition from His finished works. Wherefore, if the only object had been to inform us who made the light, it had been enough to say, “God made the light;” and if further information regarding the means by which it was made had been intended, it would have sufficed to say, “And God said, Let there be light, and there was light,” that we might know not only that God had made the world, but also that He had made it by the word. But because it was right that three leading truths regarding the creature be intimated to us, viz., who made it, by what means, and why, it is written, “God said, Let there be light, and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good.” If, then, we ask who made it, it was “God.” If, by what means, He said “Let it be,” and it was. If we ask, why He made it, “it was good.” Neither is there any author more excellent than God, nor any skill more efficacious than the word of God, nor any cause better than that good might be created by the good God. This also Plato has assigned as the most sufficient reason for the creation of the world, that good works might be made by a good God; whether he read this passage, or, perhaps, was informed of these things by those who had read them, or, by his quick-sighted genius, penetrated to things spiritual and invisible through the things that are created, or was instructed regarding them by those who had discerned them.

CHAPTER 22

OF THOSE WHO DO NOT APPROVE OF CERTAIN THINGS WHICH ARE A PART OF THIS GOOD CREATION OF A GOOD CREATOR, AND WHO THINK THAT THERE IS SOME NATURAL EVIL

This cause, however, of a good creation, namely, the goodness of God,—this cause, I say, so just and fit, which, when piously and carefully weighed, terminates all the controversies of those who inquire into the origin of the world, has not been recognized by some heretics, because there are, forsooth, many things, such as fire, frost, wild beasts, and so forth, which do not suit but injure this thin blooded and frail mortality of our flesh, which is at present under just punishment. They do not consider how admirable these things are in their own places, how excellent in their own natures, how beautifully adjusted to the rest of creation, and how much grace they contribute to the universe by their own contributions as to a commonwealth; and how serviceable they are even to ourselves, if we use them with a knowledge of their fit adaptations,—so that even poisons, which are destructive when used injudiciously, become wholesome and medicinal when used in conformity with their qualities and design; just as, on the other hand, those things which give us pleasure, such as food, drink, and the light of the sun, are found to be hurtful when immoderately or unseasonably used. And thus divine providence admonishes us not foolishly to vituperate things, but to investigate their utility with care; and, where our mental capacity or infirmity is at fault, to believe that there is a utility, though hidden, as we have experienced that there were other things which we all but failed to discover. For this concealment of the use of things is itself either an exercise of our humility or a levelling of our pride; for no nature at all is evil, and this is a name for nothing but the want of good. But from things earthly to things heavenly, from the visible to the invisible, there are some things better than others; and for this purpose are they unequal, in order that they might all exist. Now God is in such sort a great worker in great things, that He is not less in little things,—for these little things are to be measured not by their own greatness (which does not exist), but by the wisdom of their Designer; as, in the visible appearance of a man, if one eyebrow be shaved off, how nearly nothing is taken from the body, but how much from the beauty!—for that is not constituted by bulk, but by the proportion and arrangement of the members. But we do not greatly wonder that persons, who suppose that some evil nature has been generated and propagated by a kind of opposing principle proper to it, refuse to admit that the cause of the creation was this, that the good God produced a good creation. For they believe that He was driven to this enterprise of creation by the urgent necessity of repulsing the evil that warred against Him, and that He mixed His good nature with the evil for the sake of restraining and conquering it; and that this nature of His, being thus shamefully polluted, and most cruelly oppressed and held captive, He labors to cleanse and deliver it, and with all His pains does not wholly succeed; but such part of it as could not be cleansed from that defilement is to serve as a prison and chain of the conquered and incarcerated enemy. The Manichaeans would not drivel, or rather, rave in such a style as this, if they believed the nature of God to be, as it is, unchangeable and absolutely incorruptible, and subject to no injury; and if, moreover, they held in Christian sobriety, that the soul which has shown itself capable of being altered for the worse by its own will, and of being corrupted by sin, and so, of being deprived of the light of eternal truth,—that this soul, I say, is not a part of God, nor of the same nature as God, but is created by Him, and is far different from its Creator.

CHAPTER 23

OF THE ERROR IN WHICH THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGEN IS INVOLVED

But it is much more surprising that some even of those who, with ourselves, believe that there is one only source of all things, and that no nature which is not divine can exist unless originated by that Creator, have yet refused to accept with a good and simple faith this so good and simple a reason of the world's creation, that a good God made it good; and that the things created, being different from God, were inferior to Him, and yet were good, being created by none other than He. But they say that souls, though not, indeed, parts of God, but created by Him, sinned by abandoning God; that, in proportion to their various sins, they merited different degrees of debasement from heaven to earth, and diverse bodies as prison-houses; and that this is the world, and this the cause of its creation, not the production of good things, but the restraining of evil. Origen is justly blamed for holding this opinion. For in the books which he entitles peri archon, that is, Of Origins, this is his sentiment, this his utterance. And I can not sufficiently express my astonishment, that a man so erudite and well versed in ecclesiastical literature, should not have observed, in the first place, how opposed this is to the meaning of this authoritative Scripture, which, in recounting all the works of God, regularly adds, “And God saw that it was good;” and, when all were completed, inserts the words, “And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.” Was it not obviously meant to be understood that there was no other cause of the world's creation than that good creatures should be made by a good God? In this creation, had no one sinned, the world would have been filled and beautified with natures good without exception; and though there is sin, all things are not therefore full of sin, for the great majority of the heavenly inhabitants preserve their nature's integrity. And the sinful will though it violated the order of its own nature, did not on that account escape the laws of God, who justly orders all things for good. For as the beauty of a picture is increased by well-managed shadows, so, to the eye that has skill to discern it, the universe is beautified even by sinners, though, considered by themselves, their deformity is a sad blemish.

In the second place, Origen, and all who think with him, ought to have seen that if it were the true opinion that the world was created in order that souls might, for their sins, be accommodated with bodies in which they should be shut up as in houses of correction, the more venial sinners receiving lighter and more ethereal bodies, while the grosser and graver sinners received bodies more crass and grovelling, then it would follow that the devils, who are deepest in wickedness, ought, rather than even wicked men, to have earthly bodies, since these are the grossest and least ethereal of all. But in point of fact, that we might see that the deserts of souls are not to be estimated by the qualities of bodies, the wickedest devil possesses an ethereal body, while man, wicked, it is true, but with a wickedness small and venial in comparison with his, received even before his sin a body of clay. And what more foolish assertion can be advanced than that God, by this sun of ours, did not design to benefit the material creation, or lend lustre to its loveliness, and therefore created one single sun for this single world, but that it so happened that one soul only had so sinned as to deserve to be enclosed in such a body as it is? On this principle, if it had chanced that not one, but two, yea, or ten, or a hundred had sinned similarly, and with a like degree of guilt, then this world would have one hundred suns. And that such is not the case, is due not to the considerate foresight of the Creator, contriving the safety and beauty of things material, but rather to the fact that so fine a quality of sinning was hit upon by only one soul, so that it alone has merited such a body. Manifestly persons holding such opinions should aim at confining, not souls of which they know not what they say, but themselves, lest they fall, and deservedly, far indeed from the truth. And as to these three answers which I formerly recommended when in the case of any creature the questions are put, Who made it? By what means? Why? that it should be replied, God, By the Word, Because it was good,—as to these three answers, it is very questionable whether the Trinity itself is thus mystically indicated, that is, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, or whether there is some good reason for this acceptation in this passage of

Scripture,—this, I say, is questionable, and one can’t be expected to explain everything in one volume.

CHAPTER 24

OF THE DIVINE TRINITY, AND THE INDICATIONS OF ITS PRESENCE SCATTERED EVERYWHERE AMONG ITS WORKS

We believe, we maintain, we faithfully preach, that the Father begat the Word, that is, Wisdom, by which all things were made, the only-begotten Son, one as the Father is one, eternal as the Father is eternal, and, equally with the Father, supremely good; and that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit alike of Father and of Son, and is Himself consubstantial and co-eternal with both; and that this whole is a Trinity by reason of the individuality of the persons, and one God by reason of the indivisible divine substance, as also one Almighty by reason of the indivisible omnipotence; yet so that, when we inquire regarding each singly, it is said that each is God and Almighty; and, when we speak of all together, it is said that there are not three Gods, nor three Almighties, but one God Almighty; so great is the indivisible unity of these Three, which requires that it be so stated. But, whether the Holy Spirit of the Father, and of the Son, who are both good, can be with propriety called the goodness of both, because He is common to both, I do not presume to determine hastily. Nevertheless, I would have less hesitation in saying that He is the holiness of both, not as if He were a divine attribute merely, but Himself also the divine substance, and the third person in the Trinity. I am the rather emboldened to make this statement, because, though the Father is a spirit, and the Son a spirit, and the Father holy, and the Son holy, yet the third person is distinctively called the Holy Spirit, as if He were the substantial holiness consubstantial with the other two. But if the divine goodness is nothing else than the divine holiness, then certainly it is a reasonable studiousness, and not presumptuous intrusion, to inquire whether the same Trinity be not hinted at in an enigmatical mode of speech, by which our inquiry is stimulated, when it is written who made each creature, and by what means, and why. For it is the Father of the Word who said, Let there be. And that which was made when He spoke was certainly made by means of the Word. And by the words, “God saw that it was good,” it is sufficiently intimated that God made what was made not from any necessity, nor for the sake of supplying any want, but solely from His own goodness, i.e., because it was good. And this is stated after the creation had taken place, that there might be no doubt that the thing made satisfied the goodness on account of which it was made. And if we are right in understanding; that this goodness is the Holy Spirit, then the whole Trinity is revealed to us in the creation. In this, too, is the origin, the enlightenment, the blessedness of the holy city which is above among the holy angels. For if we inquire whence it is, God created it; or whence its wisdom, God illumined it; or whence its blessedness, God is its bliss. It has its form by subsisting in Him; its enlightenment by contemplating Him; its joy by abiding in Him. It is; it sees; it loves. In God's eternity is its life; in God's truth its light; in God's goodness its joy.

CHAPTER 25

OF THE DIVISION OF PHILOSOPHY INTO THREE PARTS

As far as one can judge, it is for the same reason that philosophers have aimed at a threefold division of science, or rather, were enabled to see that there was a threefold division (for they did not invent, but only discovered it), of which one part is called physical, another logical, the third ethical. The Latin equivalents of these names are now naturalized in the writings of many authors, so that these divisions are called natural, rational, and moral, on which I have touched slightly in the eighth book. Not that I would conclude that these philosophers, in this threefold division, had any thought of a trinity in God, although Plato is said to have been the first to discover and promulgate this distribution, and he saw that God alone could be the author of nature, the bestower of intelligence, and the kindler of love by which life becomes good and blessed. But certain it is that, though philosophers disagree both regarding the nature of things, and the mode of investigating truth, and of the good to which all our actions ought to tend, yet in these three great general questions all their intellectual energy is spent. And though there be a confusing diversity of opinion, every man striving to establish his own opinion in regard to each of these questions, yet no one of them all doubts that nature has some cause, science some method, life some end and aim. Then, again, there are three things which every artificer must possess if he is to effect anything,—nature, education, practice. Nature is to be judged by capacity, education by knowledge, practice by its fruit. I am aware that, properly speaking, fruit is what one enjoys, use [practice] what one uses. And this seems to be the difference between them, that we are said to enjoy that which in itself, and irrespective of other ends, delights us; to use that which we seek for the sake of some end beyond. For which reason the things of time are to be used rather than enjoyed, that we may deserve to enjoy things eternal; and not as those perverse creatures who would fain enjoy money and use God,—not spending money for God's sake, but worshipping God for money's sake. However, in common parlance, we both use fruits and enjoy uses. For we correctly speak of the "fruits of the field," which certainly we all use in the present life. And it was in accordance with this usage that I said that there were three things to be observed in a man, nature, education, practice. From these the philosophers have elaborated, as I said, the threefold division of that science by which a blessed life is attained: the natural having respect to nature, the rational to education, the moral to practice. If, then, we were ourselves the authors of our nature, we should have generated knowledge in ourselves, and should not require to reach it by education, i.e., by learning it from others. Our love, too, proceeding from ourselves and returning to us, would suffice to make our life blessed, and would stand in need of no extraneous enjoyment. But now, since our nature has God as its requisite author, it is certain that we must have Him for our teacher that we may be wise; Him, too, to dispense to us spiritual sweetness that we may be blessed.

CHAPTER 26

OF THE IMAGE OF THE SUPREME TRINITY, WHICH WE FIND IN SOME SORT IN HUMAN NATURE EVEN IN ITS PRESENT STATE

And we indeed recognize in ourselves the image of God, that is, of the supreme Trinity, an image which, though it be not equal to God, or rather, though it be very far removed from Him,—being neither co-eternal, nor, to say all in a word, consubstantial with Him,—is yet nearer to Him in nature than any other of His works, and is destined to be yet restored, that it may bear a still closer resemblance. For we both are, and know that we are, and delight in our being, and our knowledge of it. Moreover, in these three things no true-seeming illusion disturbs us; for we do not come into contact with these by some bodily sense, as we perceive the things outside of us,—colors, e.g., by seeing, sounds by hearing, smells by smelling, tastes by tasting, hard and soft objects by touching,—of all which sensible objects it is the images resembling them, but not themselves which we perceive in the mind and hold in the memory, and which excite us to desire the objects. But, without any delusive representation of images or phantasms, I am most certain that I am, and that I know and delight in this. In respect of these truths, I am not at all afraid of the arguments of the Academicians, who say, What if you are deceived? For if I am deceived, I am. For he who is not, cannot be deceived; and if I am deceived, by this same token I am. And since I am if I am deceived, how am I deceived in believing that I am? for it is certain that I am if I am deceived. Since, therefore, I, the person deceived, should be, even if I were deceived, certainly I am not deceived in this knowledge that I am. And, consequently, neither am I deceived in knowing that I know. For, as I know that I am, so I know this also, that I know. And when I love these two things, I add to them a certain third thing, namely, my love, which is of equal moment. For neither am I deceived in this, that I love, since in those things which I love I am not deceived; though even if these were false, it would still be true that I loved false things. For how could I justly be blamed and prohibited from loving false things, if it were false that I loved them? But, since they are true and real, who doubts that when they are loved, the love of them is itself true and real? Further, as there is no one who does not wish to be happy, so there is no one who does not wish to be. For how can he be happy, if he is nothing?

CHAPTER 27

OF EXISTENCE, AND KNOWLEDGE OF IT, AND THE LOVE OF BOTH

And truly the very fact of existing is by some natural spell so pleasant, that even the wretched are, for no other reason, unwilling to perish; and, when they feel that they are wretched, wish not that they themselves be annihilated, but that their misery be so. Take even those who, both in their own esteem, and in point of fact, are utterly wretched, and who are reckoned so, not only by wise men on account of their folly, but by those who count themselves blessed, and who think them wretched because they are poor and destitute,—if any one should give these men an immortality, in which their misery should be deathless, and should offer the alternative, that if they shrank from existing eternally in the same misery they might be annihilated, and exist nowhere at all, nor in any condition, on the instant they would joyfully, nay exultantly, make election to exist always, even in such a condition, rather than not exist at all. The well-known feeling of such men witnesses to this. For when we see that they fear to die, and will rather live in such misfortune than end it by death, is it not obvious enough how nature shrinks from annihilation? And, accordingly, when they know that they must die, they seek, as a great boon, that this mercy be shown them, that they may a little longer live in the same misery, and delay to end it by death. And so they indubitably prove with what glad alacrity they would accept immortality, even though it secured to them endless destruction. What! do not even all irrational animals, to whom such calculations are unknown, from the huge dragons down to the least worms, all testify that they wish to exist, and therefore shun death by every movement in their power? Nay, the very plants and shrubs, which have no such life as enables them to shun destruction by movements we can see, do not they all seek in their own fashion to conserve their existence, by rooting themselves more and more deeply in the earth, that so they may draw nourishment, and throw out healthy branches towards the sky? In fine, even the lifeless bodies, which want not only sensation but seminal life, yet either seek the upper air or sink deep, or are balanced in an intermediate position, so that they may protect their existence in that situation where they can exist in most accordance with their nature.

And how much human nature loves the knowledge of its existence, and how it shrinks from being deceived, will be sufficiently understood from this fact, that every man prefers to grieve in a sane mind, rather than to be glad in madness. And this grand and wonderful instinct belongs to men alone of all animals; for, though some of them have keener eyesight than ourselves for this world's light, they cannot attain to that spiritual light with which our mind is somehow irradiated, so that we can form right judgments of all things. For our power to judge is proportioned to our acceptance of this light. Nevertheless, the irrational animals, though they have not knowledge, have certainly something resembling knowledge; whereas the other material things are said to be sensible, not because they have senses, but because they are the objects of our senses. Yet among plants, their nourishment and generation have some resemblance to sensible life. However, both these and all material things have their causes hidden in their nature; but their outward forms, which lend beauty to this visible structure of the world, are perceived by our senses, so that they seem to wish to compensate for their own want of knowledge by providing us with knowledge. But we perceive them by our bodily senses in such a way that we do not judge of them by these senses. For we have another and far superior sense, belonging to the inner man, by which we perceive what things are just, and what unjust,—just by means of an intelligible idea, unjust by the want of it. This sense is aided in its functions neither by the eyesight, nor by the orifice of the ear, nor by the air-holes of the nostrils, nor by the palate’s taste, nor by any bodily touch. By it I am assured both that I am, and that I know this; and these two I love, and in the same manner I am assured that I love them.

CHAPTER 28

WHETHER WE OUGHT TO LOVE THE LOVE ITSELF WITH WHICH WE LOVE OUR EXISTENCE AND OUR KNOWLEDGE OF IT, THAT SO WE MAY MORE NEARLY RESEMBLE THE IMAGE OF THE DIVINE TRINITY

We have said as much as the scope of this work demands regarding these two things, to wit, our existence, and our knowledge of it, and how much they are loved by us, and how there is found even in the lower creatures a kind of likeness of these things, and yet with a difference. We have yet to speak of the love wherewith they are loved, to determine whether this love itself is loved. And doubtless it is; and this is the proof. Because in men who are justly loved, it is rather love itself that is loved; for he is not justly called a good man who knows what is good, but who loves it. Is it not then obvious that we love in ourselves the very love wherewith we love whatever good we love? For there is also a love wherewith we love that which we ought not to love; and this love is hated by him who loves that wherewith he loves what ought to be loved. For it is quite possible for both to exist in one man. And this co-existence is good for a man, to the end that this love which conduces to our living well may grow, and the other, which leads us to evil may decrease, until our whole life be perfectly healed and transmuted into good. For if we were beasts, we should love the fleshly and sensual life, and this would be our sufficient good; and when it was well with us in respect of it, we should seek nothing beyond. In like manner, if we were trees, we could not, indeed, in the strict sense of the word, love anything; nevertheless we should seem, as it were, to long for that by which we might become more abundantly and luxuriantly fruitful. If we were stones, or waves, or wind, or flame, or anything of that kind, we should want, indeed, both sensation and life, yet should possess a kind of attraction towards our own proper position and natural order. For the specific gravity of bodies is, as it were, their love, whether they are carried downwards by their weight, or upwards by their levity. For the body is borne by its gravity, as the spirit by love, whithersoever it is borne. But we are men, created in the image of our Creator, whose eternity is true, and whose truth is eternal, whose love is eternal and true, and who Himself is the eternal, true, and adorable Trinity, without confusion, without separation; and, therefore, while, as we run over all the works which He has established, we may detect, as it were, His footprints, now more and now less distinct even in those things that are beneath us, since they could not so much as exist, or be bodied forth in any shape, or follow and observe any law, had they not been made by Him who supremely is, and is supremely good and supremely wise; yet in ourselves beholding His image, let us, like that younger son of the gospel, come to ourselves, and arise and return to Him from whom by our sin we had departed. There our being will have no death, our knowledge no error, our love no mishap. But now, though we are assured of our possession of these three things, not on the testimony of others, but by our own consciousness of their presence, and because we see them with our own most truthful interior vision, yet, as we cannot of our selves know how long they are to continue, and whether they shall never cease to be, and what issue their good or bad use will lead to, we seek for others who can acquaint us of these things, if we have not already found them. Of the trustworthiness of these witnesses, there will, not now, but subsequently, be an opportunity of speaking. But in this book let us go on as we have begun, with God’s help, to speak of the city of God, not in its state of pilgrimage and mortality, but as it exists ever immortal in the heavens,—that is, let us speak of the holy angels who maintain their allegiance to God, who never were, nor ever shall be, apostate, between whom and those who forsook light eternal and became darkness, God, as we have already said, made at the first a separation.

CHAPTER 29

OF THE KNOWLEDGE BY WHICH THE HOLY ANGELS KNOW GOD IN HIS ESSENCE, AND BY WHICH THEY SEE THE CAUSES OF HIS WORKS IN THE ART OF THE WORKER, BEFORE THEY SEE THEM IN THE WORKS OF THE ARTIST

Those holy angels come to the knowledge of God not by audible words, but by the presence to their souls of immutable truth, i.e., of the only-begotten Word of God; and they know this Word Himself, and the Father, and their Holy Spirit, and that this Trinity is indivisible, and that the three persons of it are one substance, and that there are not three Gods but one God; and this they so know that it is better understood by them than we are by ourselves. Thus, too, they know the creature also, not in itself, but by this better way, in the wisdom of God, as if in the art by which it was created; and, consequently, they know themselves better in God than in themselves, though they have also this latter knowledge. For they were created, and are different from their Creator. In Him, therefore, they have, as it were, a noonday knowledge; in themselves, a twilight knowledge, according to our former explanations. For there is a great difference between knowing a thing in the design in conformity to which it was made, and knowing it in itself,—e.g., the straightness of lines and correctness of figures is known in one way when mentally conceived, in another when described on paper; and justice is known in one way in the unchangeable truth, in another in the spirit of a just man. So is it with all other things,—as, the firmament between the water above and below, which was called the heaven; the gathering of the waters beneath, and the laying bare of the dry land, and the production of plants and trees; the creation of sun, moon, and stars; and of the animals out of the waters, fowls, and fish, and monsters of the deep; and of everything that walks or creeps on the earth, and of man himself, who excels all that is on the earth,—all these things are known in one way by the angels in the Word of God, in which they see the eternally abiding causes and reasons according to which they were made, and in another way in themselves: in the former, with a clearer knowledge; in the latter, with a knowledge dimmer, and rather of the bare works than of the design. Yet, when these works are referred to the praise and adoration of the Creator Himself, it is as if morning dawned in the minds of those who contemplate them.

CHAPTER 30

OF THE PERFECTION OF THE NUMBER SIX, WHICH IS THE FIRST OF THE NUMBERS WHICH IS COMPOSED OF ITS ALIQUOT PARTS

These works are recorded to have been completed in six days (the same day being six times repeated), because six is a perfect number,—not because God required a protracted time, as if He could not at once create all things, which then should mark the course of time by the movements proper to them, but because the perfection of the works was signified by the number six. For the number six is the first which is made up of its own parts, i.e., of its sixth, third, and half, which are respectively one, two, and three, and which make a total of six. In this way of looking at a number, those are said to be its parts which exactly divide it, as a half, a third, a fourth, or a fraction with any denominator, e.g., four is a part of nine, but not therefore an aliquot part; but one is, for it is the ninth part; and three is, for it is the third. Yet these two parts, the ninth and the third, or one and three, are far from making its whole sum of nine. So again, in the number ten, four is a part, yet does not divide it; but one is an aliquot part, for it is a tenth; so it has a fifth, which is two; and a half, which is five. But these three parts, a tenth, a fifth, and a half, or one, two, and five, added together, do not make ten, but eight. Of the number twelve, again, the parts added together exceed the whole; for it has a twelfth, that is, one; a sixth, or two; a fourth, which is three; a third, which is four; and a half, which is six. But one, two, three, four, and six make up, not twelve, but more, viz., sixteen. So much I have thought fit to state for the sake of illustrating the perfection of the number six, which is, as I said, the first which is exactly made up of its own parts added together; and in this number of days God finished His work. And, therefore, we must not despise the science of numbers, which, in many passages of holy Scripture, is found to be of eminent service to the careful interpreter. Neither has it been without reason numbered among God's praises, "Thou hast ordered all things in number, and measure, and weight."

CHAPTER 31

OF THE SEVENTH DAY, IN WHICH COMPLETENESS AND REPOSE ARE CELEBRATED

But, on the seventh day (i.e., the same day repeated seven times, which number is also a perfect one, though for another reason), the rest of God is set forth, and then, too, we first hear of its being hallowed. So that God did not wish to hallow this day by His works, but by His rest, which has no evening, for it is not a creature; so that, being known in one way in the Word of God, and in another in itself, it should make a twofold knowledge, daylight and dusk (day and evening). Much more might be said about the perfection of the number seven, but this book is already too long, and I fear lest I should seem to catch at an opportunity of airing my little smattering of science more childishly than profitably. I must speak, therefore, in moderation and with dignity, lest, in too keenly following “number,” I be accused of forgetting “weight” and “measure.” Suffice it here to say, that three is the first whole number that is odd, four the first that is even, and of these two, seven is composed. On this account it is often put for all numbers together, as, “A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again,”—that is, let him fall never so often, he will not perish (and this was meant to be understood not of sins, but of afflictions conducing to lowliness). Again, “Seven times a day will I praise Thee,” which elsewhere is expressed thus, “I will bless the Lord at all times.” And many such instances are found in the divine authorities, in which the number seven is, as I said, commonly used to express the whole, or the completeness of anything. And so the Holy Spirit, of whom the Lord says, “He will teach you all truth,” is signified by this number. In it is the rest of God, the rest His people find in Him. For rest is in the whole, i.e., in perfect completeness, while in the part there is labor. And thus we labor as long as we know in part; “but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” It is even with toil we search into the Scriptures themselves. But the holy angels, towards whose society and assembly we sigh while in this our toilsome pilgrimage, as they already abide in their eternal home, so do they enjoy perfect facility of knowledge and felicity of rest. It is without difficulty that they help us; for their spiritual movements, pure and free, cost them no effort.

CHAPTER 32

OF THE OPINION THAT THE ANGELS WERE CREATED BEFORE THE WORLD

But if some one oppose our opinion, and say that the holy angels are not referred to when it is said, “Let there be light, and there was light;” if he suppose or teach that some material light, then first created, was meant, and that the angels were created, not only before the firmament dividing the waters and named “the heaven,” but also before the time signified in the words, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth;” if he allege that this phrase, “In the beginning,” does not mean that nothing was made before (for the angels were), but that God made all things by His Wisdom or Word, who is named in Scripture “the Beginning,” as He Himself, in the gospel, replied to the Jews when they asked Him who He was, that He was the Beginning;—I will not contest the point, chiefly because it gives me the liveliest satisfaction to find the Trinity celebrated in the very beginning of the book of Genesis. For having said “In the Beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” meaning that the Father made them in the Son (as the psalm testifies where it says, “How manifold are Thy works, O Lord! in Wisdom hast Thou made them all”), a little afterwards mention is fitly made of the Holy Spirit also. For, when it had been told us what kind of earth God created at first, or what the mass or matter was which God, under the name of “heaven and earth,” had provided for the construction of the world, as is told in the additional words, “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep,” then, for the sake of completing the mention of the Trinity, it is immediately added, “And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Let each one, then, take it as he pleases; for it is so profound a passage, that it may well suggest, for the exercise of the reader’s tact, many opinions, and none of them widely departing from the rule of faith. At the same time, let none doubt that the holy angels in their heavenly abodes are, though not, indeed, co-eternal with God, yet secure and certain of eternal and true felicity. To their company the Lord teaches that His little ones belong; and not only says, “They shall be equal to the angels of God,” but shows, too, what blessed contemplation the angels themselves enjoy, saying, “Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.”

CHAPTER 33

OF THE TWO DIFFERENT AND DISSIMILAR COMMUNITIES OF ANGELS, WHICH ARE NOT INAPPROPRIATELY SIGNIFIED BY THE NAMES LIGHT AND DARKNESS

That certain angels sinned, and were thrust down to the lowest parts of this world, where they are, as it were, incarcerated till their final damnation in the day of judgment, the Apostle Peter very plainly declares, when he says that "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved into judgment." Who, then, can doubt that God, either in foreknowledge or in act, separated between these and the rest? And who will dispute that the rest are justly called "light?" For even we who are yet living by faith, hoping only and not yet enjoying equality with them, are already called "light" by the apostle: "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." But as for these apostate angels, all who understand or believe them to be worse than unbelieving men are well aware that they are called "darkness." Wherefore, though light and darkness are to be taken in their literal signification in these passages of Genesis in which it is said, "God said, Let there be light, and there was light," and "God divided the light from the darkness," yet, for our part, we understand these two societies of angels,—the one enjoying God, the other swelling with pride; the one to whom it is said, "Praise ye Him, all His angels," the other whose prince says, "All these things will I give Thee if Thou wilt fall down and worship me;" the one blazing with the holy love of God, the other reeking with the unclean lust of self-advancement. And since, as it is written, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble," we may say, the one dwelling in the heaven of heavens, the other cast thence, and raging through the lower regions of the air; the one tranquil in the brightness of piety, the other tempest-tossed with beclouding desires; the one, at God's pleasure, tenderly succoring, justly avenging,—the other, set on by its own pride, boiling with the lust of subduing and hurting; the one the minister of God's goodness to the utmost of their good pleasure, the other held in by God's power from doing the harm it would; the former laughing at the latter when it does good unwillingly by its persecutions, the latter envying the former when it gathers in its pilgrims. These two angelic communities, then, dissimilar and contrary to one another, the one both by nature good and by will upright, the other also good by nature but by will depraved, as they are exhibited in other and more explicit passages of holy writ, so I think they are spoken of in this book of Genesis under the names of light and darkness; and even if the author perhaps had a different meaning, yet our discussion of the obscure language has not been wasted time; for, though we have been unable to discover his meaning, yet we have adhered to the rule of faith, which is sufficiently ascertained by the faithful from other passages of equal authority. For, though it is the material works of God which are here spoken of, they have certainly a resemblance to the spiritual, so that Paul can say, “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.” If, on the other hand, the author of Genesis saw in the words what we see, then our discussion reaches this more satisfactory conclusion, that the man of God, so eminently and divinely wise, or rather, that the Spirit of God who by him recorded God’s works which were finished on the sixth day, may be supposed not to have omitted all mention of the angels whether he included them in the words “in the beginning,” because He made them first, or, which seems most likely, because He made them in the only-begotten Word. And, under these names heaven and earth, the whole creation is signified, either as divided into spiritual and material, which seems the more likely, or into the two great parts of the world in which all created things are contained, so that, first of all, the creation is presented in sum, and then its parts are enumerated according to the mystic number of the days.

CHAPTER 34

OF THE IDEA THAT THE ANGELS WERE MEANT WHERE THE SEPARATION OF THE WATERS BY THE FIRMAMENT IS SPOKEN OF, AND OF THAT OTHER IDEA THAT THE WATERS WERE NOT CREATED

Some, however, have supposed that the angelic hosts are somehow referred to under the name of waters, and that this is what is meant by “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters:” that the waters above should be understood of the angels, and those below either of the visible waters, or of the multitude of bad angels, or of the nations of men. If this be so, then it does not here appear when the angels were created, but when they were separated. Though there have not been wanting men foolish and wicked enough to deny that the waters were made by God, because it is nowhere written, “God said, Let there be waters.” With equal folly they might say the same of the earth, for nowhere do we read, “God said, Let the earth be.” But, say they, it is written, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Yes, and there the water is meant, for both are included in one word. For “the sea is His,” as the psalm says, “and He made it; and His hands formed the dry land.” But those who would understand the angels by the waters above the skies have a difficulty about the specific gravity of the elements, and fear that the waters, owing to their fluidity and weight, could not be set in the upper parts of the world. So that, if they were to construct a man upon their own principles, they would not put in his head any moist humors, or “phlegm” as the Greeks call it, and which acts the part of water among the elements of our body. But, in God’s handiwork, the head is the seat of the phlegm, and surely most fitly; and yet, according to their supposition, so absurdly that if we were not aware of the fact, and were informed by this same record that God had put a moist and cold and therefore heavy humor in the uppermost part of man’s body, these world-weighers would refuse belief. And if they were confronted with the authority of Scripture, they would maintain that something else must be meant by the words. But, were we to investigate and discover all the details which are written in this divine book regarding the creation of the world, we should have much to say, and should widely digress from the proposed aim of this work. Since, then, we have now said what seemed needful regarding these two diverse and contrary communities of angels, in which the origin of the two human communities (of which we intend to speak anon) is also found, let us at once bring this book also to a conclusion.

Book XII

Argument—Augustin first institutes two inquiries regarding the angels; namely, whence is there in some a good, and in others an evil will? and, what is the reason of the blessedness of the good, and the misery of the evil? Afterwards he treats of the creation of man, and teaches that he is not from eternity, but was created, and by none other than God.

CHAPTER 1

THAT THE NATURE OF THE ANGELS, BOTH GOOD AND BAD, IS ONE AND THE SAME

It has already, in the preceding book, been shown how the two cities originated among the angels. Before I speak of the creation of man, and show how the cities took their rise so far as regards the race of rational mortals I see that I must first, so far as I can, adduce what may demonstrate that it is not incongruous and unsuitable to speak of a society composed of angels and men together; so that there are not four cities or societies,—two, namely, of angels, and as many of men,—but rather two in all, one composed of the good, the other of the wicked, angels or men indifferently.

That the contrary propensities in good and bad angels have arisen, not from a difference in their nature and origin, since God, the good Author and Creator of all essences, created them both, but from a difference in their wills and desires, it is impossible to doubt. While some steadfastly continued in that which was the common good of all, namely, in God Himself, and in His eternity, truth, and love; others, being enamored rather of their own power, as if they could be their own good, lapsed to this private good of their own, from that higher and beatific good which was common to all, and, bartering the lofty dignity of eternity for the inflation of pride, the most assured verity for the slyness of vanity, uniting love for factious partisanship, they became proud, deceived, envious. The cause, therefore, of the blessedness of the good is adherence to God. And so the cause of the others' misery will be found in the contrary, that is, in their not adhering to God. Wherefore, if when the question is asked, why are the former blessed, it is rightly answered, because they adhere to God; and when it is asked, why are the latter miserable, it is rightly answered, because they do not adhere to God,—then there is no other good for the rational or intellectual creature save God only. Thus, though it is not every creature that can be blessed (for beasts, trees, stones, and things of that kind have not this capacity), yet that creature which has the capacity cannot be blessed of itself, since it is created out of nothing, but only by Him by whom it has been created. For it is blessed by the possession of that whose loss makes it miserable. He, then, who is blessed not in another, but in himself, cannot be miserable, because he cannot lose himself.

Accordingly we say that there is no unchangeable good but the one, true, blessed God; that the things which He made are indeed good because from Him, yet mutable because made not out of Him, but out of nothing. Although, therefore, they are not the supreme good, for God is a greater good, yet those mutable things which can adhere to the immutable good, and so be blessed, are very good; for so completely is He their good, that without Him they cannot but be wretched. And the other created things in the universe are not better on this account, that they cannot be miserable. For no one would say that the other members of the body are superior to the eyes, because they cannot be blind. But as the sentient nature, even when it feels pain, is superior to the stony, which can feel none, so the rational nature, even when wretched, is more excellent than that which lacks reason or feeling, and can therefore experience no misery. And since this is so, then in this nature which has been created so excellent, that though it be mutable itself, it can yet secure its blessedness by adhering to the immutable good, the supreme God; and since it is not satisfied unless it be perfectly blessed, and cannot be thus blessed save in God,—in this nature, I say, not to adhere to God, is manifestly a fault. Now every fault injures the nature, and is consequently contrary to the nature. The creature, therefore, which cleaves to God, differs from those who do not, not by nature, but by fault; and yet by this very fault the nature itself is proved to be very noble and admirable. For that nature is certainly praised, the fault of which is justly blamed. For we justly blame the fault because it mars the praiseworthy nature. As, then, when we say that blindness is a defect of the eyes, we prove that sight belongs to the nature of the eyes; and when we say that deafness is a defect of the ears, hearing is thereby proved to belong to their nature;—so, when we say that it is a fault of the angelic creature that it does not cleave to God, we hereby most plainly declare that it pertained to its nature to cleave to God. And who can worthily conceive or express how great a glory that is, to cleave to God, so as to live to Him, to draw wisdom from Him, to delight in Him, and to enjoy this so great good, without death, error, or grief? And thus, since every vice is an injury of the nature, that very vice of the wicked angels, their departure from God, is sufficient proof that God created their nature so good, that it is an injury to it not to be with God.

CHAPTER 2

THAT THERE IS NO ENTITY CONTRARY TO THE DIVINE, BECAUSE NONENTITY SEEMS TO BE THAT WHICH IS WHOLLY OPPOSITE TO HIM WHO SUPREMELY AND ALWAYS IS

This may be enough to prevent any one from supposing, when we speak of the apostate angels, that they could have another nature, derived, as it were, from some different origin, and not from God. From the great impiety of this error we shall disentangle ourselves the more readily and easily, the more distinctly we understand that which God spoke by the angel when He sent Moses to the children of Israel: “I am that I am.” For since God is the supreme existence, that is to say, supremely is, and is therefore unchangeable, the things that He made He empowered to be, but not to be supremely like Himself. To some He communicated a more ample, to others a more limited existence, and thus arranged the natures of beings in ranks. For as from sapere comes sapientia, so from esse comes essentia,—a new word indeed, which the old Latin writers did not use, but which is naturalized in our day, that our language may not want an equivalent for the Greek ousia. For this is expressed word for word by essentia. Consequently, to that nature which supremely is, and which created all else that exists, no nature is contrary save that which does not exist. For nonentity is the contrary of that which is. And thus there is no being contrary to God, the Supreme Being, and Author of all beings whatsoever.

CHAPTER 3

THAT THE ENEMIES OF GOD ARE SO, NOT BY NATURE, BUT BY WILL, WHICH, AS IT INJURES THEM, INJURES A GOOD NATURE; FOR IF VICE DOES NOT INJURE, IT IS NOT VICE

In Scripture they are called God's enemies who oppose His rule, not by nature, but by vice; having no power to hurt Him, but only themselves. For they are His enemies, not through their power to hurt, but by their will to oppose Him. For God is unchangeable, and wholly proof against injury. Therefore the vice which makes those who are called His enemies resist Him, is an evil not to God, but to themselves. And to them it is an evil, solely because it corrupts the good of their nature. It is not nature, therefore, but vice, which is contrary to God. For that which is evil is contrary to the good. And who will deny that God is the supreme good? Vice, therefore, is contrary to God, as evil to good. Further, the nature it vitiates is a good, and therefore to this good also it is contrary. But while it is contrary to God only as evil to good, it is contrary to the nature it vitiates, both as evil and as hurtful. For to God no evils are hurtful; but only to natures mutable and corruptible, though, by the testimony of the vices themselves, originally good. For were they not good, vices could not hurt them. For how do they hurt them but by depriving them of integrity, beauty, welfare, virtue, and, in short, whatever natural good vice is wont to diminish or destroy? But if there be no good to take away, then no injury can be done, and consequently there can be no vice. For it is impossible that there should be a harmless vice. Whence we gather, that though vice cannot injure the unchangeable good, it can injure nothing but good; because it does not exist where it does not injure. This, then, may be thus formulated: Vice cannot be in the highest good, and cannot be but in some good. Things solely good, therefore, can in some circumstances exist; things solely evil, never; for even those natures which are vitiated by an evil will, so far indeed as they are vitiated, are evil, but in so far as they are natures they are good. And when a vitiated nature is punished, besides the good it has in being a nature, it has this also, that it is not unpunished. For this is just, and certainly everything just is a good. For no one is punished for natural, but for voluntary vices. For even the vice which by the force of habit and long continuance has become a second nature, had its origin in the will. For at present we are speaking of the vices of the nature, which has a mental capacity for that enlightenment which discriminates between what is just and what is unjust.

CHAPTER 4

OF THE NATURE OF IRRATIONAL AND LIFELESS CREATURES, WHICH IN THEIR OWN KIND AND ORDER DO NOT MAR THE BEAUTY OF THE UNIVERSE

But it is ridiculous to condemn the faults of beasts and trees, and other such mortal and mutable things as are void of intelligence, sensation, or life, even though these faults should destroy their corruptible nature; for these creatures received, at their Creator’s will, an existence fitting them, by passing away and giving place to others, to secure that lowest form of beauty, the beauty of seasons, which in its own place is a requisite part of this world. For things earthly were neither to be made equal to things heavenly, nor were they, though inferior, to be quite omitted from the universe. Since, then, in those situations where such things are appropriate, some perish to make way for others that are born in their room, and the less succumb to the greater, and the things that are overcome are transformed into the quality of those that have the mastery, this is the appointed order of things transitory. Of this order the beauty does not strike us, because by our mortal frailty we are so involved in a part of it, that we cannot perceive the whole, in which these fragments that offend us are harmonized with the most accurate fitness and beauty. And therefore, where we are not so well able to perceive the wisdom of the Creator, we are very properly enjoined to believe it, lest in the vanity of human rashness we presume to find any fault with the work of so great an Artificer. At the same time, if we attentively consider even these faults of earthly things, which are neither voluntary nor penal, they seem to illustrate the excellence of the natures themselves, which are all originated and created by God; for it is that which pleases us in this nature which we are displeased to see removed by the fault,—unless even the natures themselves displease men, as often happens when they become hurtful to them, and then men estimate them not by their nature, but by their utility; as in the case of those animals whose swarms scourged the pride of the Egyptians. But in this way of estimating, they may find fault with the sun itself; for certain criminals or debtors are sentenced by the judges to be set in the sun. Therefore it is not with respect to our convenience or discomfort, but with respect to their own nature, that the creatures are glorifying to their Artificer. Thus even the nature of the eternal fire, penal though it be to the condemned sinners, is most assuredly worthy of praise. For what is more beautiful than fire flaming, blazing, and shining? What more useful than fire for warming, restoring, cooking, though nothing is more destructive than fire burning and consuming? The same thing, then, when applied in one way, is destructive, but when applied suitably, is most beneficial. For who can find words to tell its uses throughout the whole world? We must not listen, then, to those who praise the light of fire but find fault with its heat, judging it not by its nature, but by their convenience or discomfort. For they wish to see, but not to be burnt. But they forget that this very light which is so pleasant to them, disagrees with and hurts weak eyes; and in that heat which is disagreeable to them, some animals find the most suitable conditions of a healthy life.

CHAPTER 5

THAT IN ALL NATURES, OF EVERY KIND AND RANK, GOD IS GLORIFIED

All natures, then, inasmuch as they are, and have therefore a rank and species of their own, and a kind of internal harmony, are certainly good. And when they are in the places assigned to them by the order of their nature, they preserve such being as they have received. And those things which have not received everlasting being, are altered for better or for worse, so as to suit the wants and motions of those things to which the Creator’s law has made them subservient; and thus they tend in the divine providence to that end which is embraced in the general scheme of the government of the universe. So that, though the corruption of transitory and perishable things brings them to utter destruction, it does not prevent their producing that which was designed to be their result. And this being so, God, who supremely is, and who therefore created every being which has not supreme existence (for that which was made of nothing could not be equal to Him, and indeed could not be at all had He not made it), is not to be found fault with on account of the creature’s faults, but is to be praised in view of the natures He has made.

CHAPTER 6

WHAT THE CAUSE OF THE BLESSEDNESS OF THE GOOD ANGELS IS, AND WHAT THE CAUSE OF THE MISERY OF THE WICKED

Thus the true cause of the blessedness of the good angels is found to be this, that they cleave to Him who supremely is. And if we ask the cause of the misery of the bad, it occurs to us, and not unreasonably, that they are miserable because they have forsaken Him who supremely is, and have turned to themselves who have no such essence. And this vice, what else is it called than pride? For “pride is the beginning of sin.” They were unwilling, then, to preserve their strength for God; and as adherence to God was the condition of their enjoying an ampler being, they diminished it by preferring themselves to Him. This was the first defect, and the first impoverishment, and the first flaw of their nature, which was created, not indeed supremely existent, but finding its blessedness in the enjoyment of the Supreme Being; whilst by abandoning Him it should become, not indeed no nature at all, but a nature with a less ample existence, and therefore wretched.

If the further question be asked, What was the efficient cause of their evil will? there is none. For what is it which makes the will bad, when it is the will itself which makes the action bad? And consequently the bad will is the cause of the bad action, but nothing is the efficient cause of the bad will. For if anything is the cause, this thing either has or has not a will. If it has, the will is either good or bad. If good, who is so left to himself as to say that a good will makes a will bad? For in this case a good will would be the cause of sin; a most absurd supposition. On the other hand, if this hypothetical thing has a bad will, I wish to know what made it so; and that we may not go on forever, I ask at once, what made the first evil will bad? For that is not the first which was itself corrupted by an evil will, but that is the first which was made evil by no other will. For if it were preceded by that which made it evil, that will was first which made the other evil. But if it is replied, “Nothing made it evil; it always was evil,” I ask if it has been existing in some nature. For if not, then it did not exist at all; and if it did exist in some nature, then it vitiated and corrupted it, and injured it, and consequently deprived it of good. And therefore the evil will could not exist in an evil nature, but in a nature at once good and mutable, which this vice could injure. For if it did no injury, it was no vice; and consequently the will in which it was, could not be called evil. But if it did injury, it did it by taking away or diminishing good. And therefore there could not be from eternity, as was suggested, an evil will in that thing in which there had been previously a natural good, which the evil will was able to diminish by corrupting it. If, then, it was not from eternity, who, I ask, made it? The only thing that can be suggested in reply is, that something which itself had no will, made the will evil. I ask, then, whether this thing was superior, inferior, or equal to it? If superior, then it is better. How, then, has it no will, and not rather a good will? The same reasoning applies if it was equal; for so long as two things have equally a good will, the one cannot produce in the other an evil will. Then remains the supposition that that which corrupted the will of the angelic nature which first sinned, was itself an inferior thing without a will. But that thing, be it of the lowest and most earthly kind, is certainly itself good, since it is a nature and being, with a form and rank of its own in its own kind and order. How, then, can a good thing be the efficient cause of an evil will? How, I say, can good be the cause of evil? For when the will abandons what is above itself, and turns to what is lower, it becomes evil—not because that is evil to which it turns, but because the turning itself is wicked. Therefore it is not an inferior thing which has made the will evil, but it is itself which has become so by wickedly and inordinately desiring an inferior thing. For if two men, alike in physical and moral constitution, see the same corporal beauty, and one of them is excited by the sight to desire an illicit enjoyment while the other steadfastly maintains a modest restraint of his will, what do we suppose brings it about, that there is an evil will in the one and not in the other? What produces it in the man in whom it exists? Not the bodily beauty, for that was presented equally to the gaze of both, and yet did not produce in both an evil will. Did the flesh of the one cause the desire as he looked? But why did not the flesh of the other? Or was it the disposition? But why not the disposition of both? For we are supposing that both were of a like temperament of body and soul. Must we, then, say that the one was tempted by a secret suggestion of the evil spirit? As if it was not by his own will that he consented to this suggestion and to any inducement whatever! This consent, then, this evil will which he presented to the evil suasive influence,

—what was the cause of it, we ask? For, not to delay on such a difficulty as this, if both are tempted equally and one yields and consents to the temptation while the other remains unmoved by it, what other account can we give of the matter than this, that the one is willing, the other unwilling, to fall away from chastity? And what causes this but their own wills, in cases at least such as we are supposing, where the temperament is identical? The same beauty was equally obvious to the eyes of both; the same secret temptation pressed on both with equal violence. However minutely we examine the case, therefore, we can discern nothing which caused the will of the one to be evil. For if we say that the man himself made his will evil, what was the man himself before his will was evil but a good nature created by God, the unchangeable good? Here are two men who, before the temptation, were alike in body and soul, and of whom one yielded to the tempter who persuaded him, while the other could not be persuaded to desire that lovely body which was equally before the eyes of both. Shall we say of the successfully tempted man that he corrupted his own will, since he was certainly good before his will became bad? Then, why did he do so? Was it because his will was a nature, or because it was made of nothing? We shall find that the latter is the case. For if a nature is the cause of an evil will, what else can we say than that evil arises from good or that good is the cause of evil? And how can it come to pass that a nature, good though mutable, should produce any evil—that is to say, should make the will itself wicked?

CHAPTER 7

THAT WE OUGHT NOT TO EXPECT TO FIND ANY EFFICIENT CAUSE OF THE EVIL WILL

Let no one, therefore, look for an efficient cause of the evil will; for it is not efficient, but deficient, as the will itself is not an effecting of something, but a defect. For defection from that which supremely is, to that which has less of being,—this is to begin to have an evil will. Now, to seek to discover the causes of these defections,—causes, as I have said, not efficient, but deficient,—is as if some one sought to see darkness, or hear silence. Yet both of these are known by us, and the former by means only of the eye, the latter only by the ear; but not by their positive actuality, but by their want of it. Let no one, then seek to know from me what I know that I do not know;

unless he perhaps wishes to learn to be ignorant of that of which all we know is, that it cannot be known. For those things which are known not by their actuality, but by their want of it, are known, if our expression may be allowed and understood, by not knowing them, that by knowing them they may be not known. For when the eyesight surveys objects that strike the sense, it nowhere sees darkness but where it begins not to see. And so no other sense but the ear can perceive silence, and yet it is only perceived by not hearing. Thus, too, our mind perceives intelligible forms by understanding them; but when they are deficient, it knows them by not knowing them; for “who can understand defects?”

CHAPTER 8

OF THE MISDIRECTED LOVE WHEREBY THE WILL FELL AWAY FROM THE IMMUTABLE TO THE MUTABLE GOOD

This I do know, that the nature of God can never, nowhere, nowise be defective, and that natures made of nothing can. These latter, however, the more being they have, and the more good they do (for then they do something positive), the more they have efficient causes; but in so far as they are defective in being, and consequently do evil (for then what is their work but vanity?), they have deficient causes. And I know likewise, that the will could not become evil, were it unwilling to become so; and therefore its failings are justly punished, being not necessary, but voluntary. For its defections are not to evil things, but are themselves evil; that is to say, are not towards things that are naturally and in themselves evil, but the defection of the will is evil, because it is contrary to the order of nature, and an abandonment of that which has supreme being for that which has less. For avarice is not a fault inherent in gold, but in the man who inordinately loves gold, to the detriment of justice, which ought to be held in incomparably higher regard than gold. Neither is luxury the fault of lovely and charming objects, but of the heart that inordinately loves sensual pleasures, to the neglect of temperance, which attaches us to objects more lovely in their spirituality, and more delectable by their incorruptibility. Nor yet is boasting the fault of human praise, but of the soul that is inordinately fond of the applause of men, and that makes light of the voice of conscience. Pride, too, is not the fault of him who delegates power, nor of power itself, but of the soul that is inordinately enamored of its own power, and despises the more just dominion of a higher authority. Consequently he who inordinately loves the good which any nature possesses, even though he obtain it, himself becomes evil in the good, and wretched because deprived of a greater good.

CHAPTER 9

WHETHER THE ANGELS, BESIDES RECEIVING FROM GOD THEIR NATURE, RECEIVED FROM HIM ALSO THEIR GOOD WILL BY THE HOLY SPIRIT IMBUING THEM WITH LOVE

There is, then, no natural efficient cause or, if I may be allowed the expression, no essential cause, of the evil will, since itself is the origin of evil in mutable spirits, by which the good of their nature is diminished and corrupted; and the will is made evil by nothing else than defection from God,—a defection of which the cause, too, is certainly deficient. But as to the good will, if we should say that there is no efficient cause of it, we must beware of giving currency to the opinion that the good will of the good angels is not created, but is co-eternal with God. For if they themselves are created, how can we say that their good will was eternal? But if created, was it created along with themselves, or did they exist for a time without it? If along with themselves, then doubtless it was created by Him who created them, and, as soon as ever they were created, they attached themselves to Him who created them, with the love He created in them. And they are separated from the society of the rest, because they have continued in the same good will; while the others have fallen away to another will, which is an evil one, by the very fact of its being a falling away from the good; from which, we may add, they would not have fallen away had they been unwilling to do so. But if the good angels existed for a time without a good will, and produced it in themselves without God’s interference, then it follows that they made themselves better than He made them. Away with such a thought! For without a good will, what were they but evil? Or if they were not evil, because they had not an evil will any more than a good one (for they had not fallen away from that which as yet they had not begun to enjoy), certainly they were not the same, not so good, as when they came to have a good will. Or if they could not make themselves better than they were made by Him who is surpassed by none in His work, then certainly, without His helpful operation, they could not come to possess that good will which made them better. And though their good will effected that they did not turn to themselves, who had a more stinted existence, but to Him who supremely is, and that, being united to Him, their own being was enlarged, and they lived a wise and blessed life by His communications to them, what does this prove but that the will, however good it might be, would have continued helplessly only to desire Him, had not He who had made their nature out of nothing, and yet capable of enjoying Him, first stimulated it to desire Him, and then filled it with Himself, and so made it better?

Besides, this too has to be inquired into, whether, if the good angels made their own will good, they did so with or without will? If without, then it was not their doing. If with, was the will good or bad? If bad, how could a bad will give birth to a good one? If good, then already they had a good will. And who made this will, which already they had, but He who created them with a good will, or with that chaste love by which they cleaved to Him, in one and the same act creating their nature, and endowing it with grace? And thus we are driven to believe that the holy angels never existed without a good will or the love of God. But the angels who, though created good, are yet evil now, became so by their own will. And this will was not made evil by their good nature, unless by its voluntary defection from good; for good is not the cause of evil, but a defection from good is. These angels, therefore, either received less of the grace of the divine love than those who persevered in the same; or if both were created equally good, then, while the one fell by their evil will, the others were more abundantly assisted, and attained to that pitch of blessedness at which they became certain they should never fall from it,—as we have already shown in the preceding book. We must therefore acknowledge, with the praise due to the Creator, that not only of holy men, but also of the holy angels, it can be said that “the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them.” And that not only of men, but primarily and principally of angels it is true, as it is written, “It is good to draw near to God.” And those who have this good in common, have, both with Him to whom they draw near, and with one another, a holy fellowship, and form one city of God—His living sacrifice, and His living temple. And I see that, as I have now spoken of the rise of this city among the angels, it is time to speak of the origin of that part of it which is hereafter to be united to the immortal angels, and which at present is being gathered from among mortal men, and is either sojourning on earth, or, in the persons of those who have passed through death, is resting in the secret receptacles and abodes of disembodied spirits. For from one man, whom God created as the first, the whole human race descended, according to the faith of Holy Scripture, which deservedly is of wonderful authority among all nations throughout the world; since, among its other true statements, it predicted, by its divine foresight, that all nations would give credit to it.

CHAPTER 10

OF THE FALSENESS OF THE HISTORY WHICH ALLOTS MANY THOUSAND YEARS TO THE WORLD’S PAST

Let us, then, omit the conjectures of men who know not what they say, when they speak of the nature and origin of the human race. For some hold the same opinion regarding men that they hold regarding the world itself, that they have always been. Thus Apuleius says when he is describing our race, “Individually they are mortal, but collectively, and as a race, they are immortal.” And when they are asked, how, if the human race has always been, they vindicate the truth of their history, which narrates who were the inventors, and what they invented, and who first instituted the liberal studies and the other arts, and who first inhabited this or that region, and this or that island? they reply, that most, if not all lands, were so desolated at intervals by fire and flood, that men were greatly reduced in numbers, and from these, again, the population was restored to its former numbers, and that thus there was at intervals a new beginning made, and though those things which had been interrupted and checked by the severe devastations were only renewed, yet they seemed to be originated then; but that man could not exist at all save as produced by man. But they say what they think, not what they know.

They are deceived, too, by those highly mendacious documents which profess to give the history of many thousand years, though, reckoning by the sacred writings, we find that not 6000 years have yet passed. And, not to spend many words in exposing the baselessness of these documents, in which so many thousands of years are accounted for, nor in proving that their authorities are totally inadequate, let me cite only that letter which Alexander the Great wrote to his mother Olympias, giving her the narrative he had from an Egyptian priest, which he had extracted from their sacred archives, and which gave an account of kingdoms mentioned also by the Greek historians. In this letter of Alexander's a term of upwards of 5000 years is assigned to the kingdom of Assyria; while in the Greek history only 1300 years are reckoned from the reign of Bel himself, whom both Greek and Egyptian agree in counting the first king of Assyria. Then to the empire of the Persians and Macedonians this Egyptian assigned more than 8000 years, counting to the time of Alexander, to whom he was speaking; while among the Greeks, 485 years are assigned to the Macedonians down to the death of Alexander, and to the Persians 233 years, reckoning to the termination of his conquests. Thus these give a much smaller number of years than the Egyptians; and indeed, though multiplied three times, the Greek chronology would still be shorter. For the Egyptians are said to have formerly reckoned only four months to their year; so that one year, according to the fuller and truer computation now in use among them as well as among ourselves, would comprehend three of their old years. But not even thus, as I said, does the Greek history correspond with the Egyptian in its chronology. And therefore the former must receive the greater credit, because it does not exceed the true account of the duration of the world as it is given by our documents, which are truly sacred. Further, if this letter of Alexander, which has become so famous, differs widely in this matter of chronology from the probable credible account, how much less can we believe these documents which, though full of fabu lous and fictitious antiquities, they would fain oppose to the authority of our well-known and divine books, which predicted that the whole world would believe them, and which the whole world accordingly has believed; which proved, too, that it had truly narrated past events by its prediction of future events, which have so exactly come to pass!

CHAPTER 11

OF THOSE WHO SUPPOSE THAT THIS WORLD INDEED IS NOT ETERNAL, BUT THAT EITHER THERE ARE NUMBERLESS WORLDS, OR THAT ONE AND THE SAME WORLD IS PERPETUALLY RESOLVED INTO ITS ELEMENTS, AND RENEWED AT THE CONCLUSION OF FIXED CYCLES

There are some, again, who, though they do not suppose that this world is eternal, are of opinion either that this is not the only world, but that there are numberless worlds or that indeed it is the only one, but that it dies, and is born again at fixed intervals, and this times without number; but they must acknowledge that the human race existed before there were other men to beget them. For they cannot suppose that, if the whole world perish, some men would be left alive in the world, as they might survive in floods and conflagrations, which those other speculators suppose to be partial, and from which they can therefore reasonably argue that a few then survived whose posterity would renew the population; but as they believe that the world itself is renewed out of its own material, so they must believe that out of its elements the human race was produced, and then that the progeny of mortals sprang like that of other animals from their parents.

CHAPTER 12

HOW THESE PERSONS ARE TO BE ANSWERED, WHO FIND FAULT WITH THE CREATION OF MAN ON THE SCORE OF ITS RECENT DATE

As to those who are always asking why man was not created during these countless ages of the infinitely extended past, and came into being so lately that, according to Scripture, less than 6000 years have elapsed since He began to be, I would reply to them regarding the creation of man, just as I replied regarding the origin of the world to those who will not believe that it is not eternal, but had a beginning, which even Plato himself most plainly declares, though some think his statement was not consistent with his real opinion. If it offends them that the time that has elapsed since the creation of man is so short, and his years so few according to our authorities, let them take this into consideration, that nothing that has a limit is long, and that all the ages of time being finite, are very little, or indeed nothing at all, when compared to the interminable eternity. Consequently, if there had elapsed since the creation of man, I do not say five or six, but even sixty or six hundred thousand years, or sixty times as many, or six hundred or six hundred thousand times as many, or this sum multiplied until it could no longer be expressed in numbers, the same question could still be put, Why was he not made before? For the past and boundless eternity during which God abstained from creating man is so great, that, compare it with what vast and untold number of ages you please, so long as there is a definite conclusion of this term of time, it is not even as if you compared the minutest drop of water with the ocean that everywhere flows around the globe. For of these two, one indeed is very small, the other incomparably vast, yet both are finite; but that space of time which starts from some beginning, and is limited by some termination, be it of what extent it may, if you compare it with that which has no beginning, I know not whether to say we should count it the very minutest thing, or nothing at all. For, take this limited time, and deduct from the end of it, one by one, the briefest moments (as you might take day by day from a man's life, beginning at the day in which he now lives, back to that of his birth), and though the number of moments you must subtract in this backward movement be so great that no word can express it, yet this subtraction will sometime carry you to the beginning. But if you take away from a time which has no beginning, I do not say brief moments one by one, nor yet hours, or days, or months, or years even in quantities, but terms of years so vast that they cannot be named by the most skillful arithmeticians,—take away terms of years as vast as that which we have supposed to be gradually consumed by the deduction of moments,—and take them away not once and again repeatedly, but always, and what do you effect, what do you make by your deduction, since you never reach the beginning, which has no existence? Wherefore, that which we now demand after five thousand odd years, our descendants might with like curiosity demand after six hundred thousand years, supposing these dying generations of men continue so long to decay and be renewed, and supposing posterity continues as weak and ignorant as ourselves. The same question might have been asked by those who have lived before us and while man was even newer upon earth. The first man himself in short might the day after or the very day of his creation have asked why he was created no sooner. And no matter at what earlier or later period he had been created, this controversy about the commencement of this world's history would have had precisely the same difficulties as it has now.

CHAPTER 13

OF THE REVOLUTION OF THE AGES, WHICH SOME PHILOSOPHERS BELIEVE WILL BRING ALL THINGS ROUND AGAIN, AFTER A CERTAIN FIXED CYCLE, TO THE SAME ORDER AND FORM AS AT FIRST

This controversy some philosophers have seen no other approved means of solving than by introducing cycles of time, in which there should be a constant renewal and repetition of the order of nature; and they have therefore asserted that these cycles will ceaselessly recur, one passing away and another coming, though they are not agreed as to whether one permanent world shall pass through all these cycles, or whether the world shall at fixed intervals die out, and be renewed so as to exhibit a recurrence of the same phenomena—the things which have been, and those which are to be, coinciding. And from this fantastic vicissitude they exempt not even the immortal soul that has attained wisdom, consigning it to a ceaseless transmigration between delusive blessedness and real misery. For how can that be truly called blessed which has no assurance of being so eternally, and is either in ignorance of the truth, and blind to the misery that is approaching, or, knowing it, is in misery and fear? Or if it passes to bliss, and leaves miseries forever, then there happens in time a new thing which time shall not end. Why not, then, the world also? Why may not man, too, be a similar thing? So that, by following the straight path of sound doctrine, we escape, I know not what circuitous paths, discovered by deceiving and deceived sages.

Some, too, in advocating these recurring cycles that restore all things to their original cite in favor of their supposition what Solomon says in the book of Ecclesiastes: “What is that which hath been? It is that which shall be. And what is that which is done? It is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Who can speak and say, See, this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us.” This he said either of those things of which he had just been speaking—the succession of generations, the orbit of the sun, the course of rivers,—or else of all kinds of creatures that are born and die. For men were before us, are with us, and shall be after us; and so all living things and all plants. Even monstrous and irregular productions, though differing from one another, and though some are reported as solitary instances, yet resemble one another generally, in so far as they are miraculous and monstrous, and, in this sense, have been, and shall be, and are no new and recent things under the sun. However, some would understand these words as meaning that in the predestination of God all things have already existed, and that thus there is no new thing under the sun. At all events, far be it from any true believer to suppose that by these words of Solomon those cycles are meant, in which, according to those philosophers, the same periods and events of time are repeated; as if, for example, the philosopher Plato, having taught in the school at Athens which is called the Academy, so, numberless ages before, at long but certain intervals, this same Plato and the same school, and the same disciples existed, and so also are to be repeated during the countless cycles that are yet to be,—far be it, I say, from us to believe this. For once Christ died for our sins; and, rising from the dead, He dieth no more. “Death hath no more dominion over Him; and we ourselves after the resurrection shall be “ever with the Lord,” to whom we now say, as the sacred Psalmist dictates, “Thou shall keep us, O Lord, Thou shall preserve us from this generation.” And that too which follows, is, I think, appropriate enough: “The wicked walk in a circle,” not because their life is to recur by means of these circles, which these philosophers imagine, but because the path in which their false doctrine now runs is circuitous.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE CREATION OF THE HUMAN RACE IN TIME, AND HOW THIS WAS EFFECTED WITHOUT ANY NEW DESIGN OR CHANGE OF PURPOSE ON GOD’S PART

What wonder is it if, entangled in these circles, they find neither entrance nor egress? For they know not how the human race, and this mortal condition of ours, took its origin, nor how it will be brought to an end, since they cannot penetrate the inscrutable wisdom of God. For, though Himself eternal, and without beginning, yet He caused time to have a beginning; and man, whom He had not previously made He made in time, not from a new and sudden resolution, but by His unchangeable and eternal design. Who can search out the unsearchable depth of this purpose, who can scrutinize the inscrutable wisdom, wherewith God, without change of will, created man, who had never before been, and gave him an existence in time, and increased the human race from one individual? For the Psalmist himself, when he had first said, “Thou shalt keep us, O Lord, Thou shall preserve us from this generation for ever,” and had then rebuked those whose foolish and impious doctrine preserves for the soul no eternal deliverance and blessedness adds immediately, “The wicked walk in a circle.” Then, as if it were said to him, “What then do you believe, feel, know? Are we to believe that it suddenly occurred to God to create man, whom He had never before made in a past eternity,—God, to whom nothing new can occur, and in whom is no changeableness?” the Psalmist goes on to reply, as if addressing God Himself, “According to the depth of Thy wisdom Thou hast multiplied the children of men.” Let men, he seems to say, fancy what they please, let them conjecture and dispute as seems good to them, but Thou hast multiplied the children of men according to the depth of thy wisdom, which no man can comprehend. For this is a depth indeed, that God always has been, and that man, whom He had never made before, He willed to make in time, and this without changing His design and will.

CHAPTER 15

WHETHER WE ARE TO BELIEVE THAT GOD, AS HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN SOVEREIGN LORD, HAS ALWAYS HAD CREATURES OVER WHOM HE EXERCISED HIS SOVEREIGNTY; AND IN WHAT SENSE WE CAN SAY THAT THE CREATURE HAS ALWAYS BEEN, AND YET CANNOT SAY IT IS CO-ETERNAL

For my own part, indeed, as I dare not say that there ever was a time when the Lord God was not Lord, so I ought not to doubt that man had no existence before time, and was first created in time. But when I consider what God could be the Lord of, if there was not always some creature, I shrink from making any assertion, remembering my own insignificance, and that it is written, “What man is he that can know the counsel of God? or who can think what the will of the Lord is? For the thoughts of mortal men are timid, and our devices are but uncertain. For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things.” Many things certainly do I muse upon in this earthly tabernacle, because the one thing which is true among the many, or beyond the many, I cannot find. If, then, among these many thoughts, I say that there have always been creatures for Him to be Lord of, who is always and ever has been Lord, but that these creatures have not always been the same, but succeeded one another (for we would not seem to say that any is co-eternal with the Creator, an assertion condemned equally by faith and sound reason), I must take care lest I fall into the absurd and ignorant error of maintaining that by these successions and changes mortal creatures have always existed, whereas the immortal creatures had not begun to exist until the date of our own world, when the angels were created; if at least the angels are intended by that light which was first made, or, rather, by that heaven of which it is said, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The angels, at least did not exist before they were created; for if we say that they have always existed, we shall seem to make them co-eternal with the Creator. Again, if I say that the angels were not created in time, but existed before all times, as those over whom God, who has ever been Sovereign, exercised His sovereignty, then I shall be asked whether, if they were created before all time, they, being creatures, could possibly always exist. It may perhaps be replied, Why not always, since that which is in all time may very properly be said to be "always?" Now so true is it that these angels have existed in all time that even before time was they were created; if at least time began with the heavens, and the angels existed before the heavens. And if time was even before the heavenly bodies, not indeed marked by hours, days, months, and years,—for these measures of time's periods which are commonly and properly called times, did manifestly begin with the motion of the heavenly bodies, and so God said, when He appointed them, "Let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years,"—if, I say, time was before these heavenly bodies by some changing movement, whose parts succeeded one another and could not exist simultaneously, and if there was some such movement among the angels which necessitated the existence of time, and that they from their very creation should be subject to these temporal changes, then they have existed in all time, for time came into being along with them. And who will say that what was in all time, was not always?

But if I make such a reply, it will be said to me, How, then, are they not co-eternal with the Creator, if He and they always have been? How even can they be said to have been created, if we are to understand that they have always existed? What shall we reply to this? Shall we say that both statements are true? that they always have been, since they have been in all time, they being created along with time, or time along with them, and yet that also they were created? For, similarly, we will not deny that time itself was created, though no one doubts that time has been in all time; for if it has not been in all time, then there was a time when there was no time. But the most foolish person could not make such an assertion. For we can reasonably say there was a time when Rome was not; there was a time when Jerusalem was not; there was a time when Abraham was not; there was a time when man was not, and so on: in fine, if the world was not made at the commencement of time, but after some time had elapsed, we can say there was a time when the world was not. But to say there was a time when time was not, is as absurd as to say there was a man when there was no man; or, this world was when this world was not. For if we are not referring to the same object, the form of expression may be used, as, there was another man when this man was not. Thus we can reasonably say there was another time when this time was not; but not the merest simpleton could say there was a time when there was no time. As, then, we say that time was created, though we also say that it always has been, since in all time time has been, so it does not follow that if the angels have always been, they were therefore not created. For we say that they have always been, because they have been in all time; and we say they have been in all time, because time itself could no wise be without them. For where there is no creature whose changing movements admit of succession, there cannot be time at all. And consequently, even if they have always existed, they were created; neither, if they have always existed, are they therefore co-eternal with the Creator. For He has always existed in unchangeable eternity; while they were created, and are said to have been always, because they have been in all time, time being impossible without the creature. But time passing away by its changefulness, cannot be co-eternal with changeless eternity. And consequently, though the immortality of the angels does not pass in time, does not become past as if now it were not, nor has a future as if it were not yet, still their movements, which are the basis of time, do pass from future to past; and therefore they cannot be co-eternal with the Creator, in whose movement we cannot say that there has been that which now is not, or shall be that which is not yet. Wherefore, if God always has been Lord, He has always had creatures under His dominion,—creatures, however, not begotten of Him, but created by Him out of nothing; nor co-eternal with Him, for He was before them though at no time without them, because He preceded them, not by the lapse of time, but by His abiding eternity. But if I make this reply to those who demand how He was always Creator, always Lord, if there were not always a subject creation; or how this was created, and not rather co-eternal with its Creator, if it always was, I fear I may be accused of recklessly affirming what I know not, instead of teaching what I know. I return, therefore, to that which our Creator has seen fit that we should know; and those things which He has allowed the abler men to know in this life, or has reserved to be known in the next by the perfected saints, I acknowledge to be beyond my capacity. But I have thought it right to discuss these matters without making positive assertions, that they who read may be warned to abstain from hazardous questions, and may not deem themselves fit for everything. Let them rather endeavor to obey the wholesome injunction of the apostle, when he says, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." For if an infant receive nourishment suited to its strength, it becomes capable, as it grows, of taking more; but if its strength and capacity be overtaxed, it dwines away in place of growing.

CHAPTER 16

HOW WE ARE TO UNDERSTAND GOD'S PROMISE OF LIFE ETERNAL, WHICH WAS UTTERED BEFORE THE "ETERNAL TIMES."

I own that I do not know what ages passed before the human race was created, yet I have no doubt that no created thing is co-eternal with the Creator. But even the apostle speaks of time as eternal, and this with reference, not to the future, but, which is more surprising, to the past. For he says, "In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the eternal times, but hath in due times manifested His word." You see he says that in the past there have been eternal times, which, however, were not co-eternal with God. And since God before these eternal times not only existed, but also, “promised” life eternal, which He manifested in its own times (that is to say, in due times), what else is this than His word? For this is life eternal. But then, how did He promise; for the promise was made to men, and yet they had no existence before eternal times? Does this not mean that, in His own eternity, and in His co-eternal word, that which was to be in its own time was already predestined and fixed?

CHAPTER 17

WHAT DEFENCE IS MADE BY SOUND FAITH REGARDING GOD’S UNCHANGEABLE COUNSEL AND WILL, AGAINST THE REASONINGS OF THOSE WHO HOLD THAT THE WORKS OF GOD ARE ETERNALLY REPEATED IN REVOLVING CYCLES THAT RESTORE ALL THINGS AS THEY WERE

Of this, too, I have no doubt, that before the first man was created, there never had been a man at all, neither this same man himself recurring by I know not what cycles, and having made I know not how many revolutions, nor any other of similar nature. From this belief I am not frightened by philosophical arguments, among which that is reckoned the most acute which is founded on the assertion that the infinite cannot be comprehended by any mode of knowledge. Consequently, they argue, God has in his own mind finite conceptions of all finite things which He makes. Now it cannot be supposed that His goodness was ever idle; for if it were, there should be ascribed to Him an awakening to activity in time, from a past eternity of inactivity, as if He repented of an idleness that had no beginning, and proceeded, therefore, to make a beginning of work. This being the case, they say it must be that the same things are always repeated, and that as they pass, so they are destined always to return, whether amidst all these changes the world remains the same,—the world which has always been, and yet was created,—or that the world in these revolutions is perpetually dying out and being renewed; otherwise, if we point to a time when the works of God were begun, it would be believed that He considered His past eternal leisure to be inert and indolent, and therefore condemned and altered it as displeasing to Himself. Now if God is supposed to have been indeed always making temporal things, but different from one another, and one after the other, so, that He thus came at last to make man, whom He had never made before, then it may seem that He made man not with knowledge (for they suppose no knowledge can comprehend the infinite succession of creatures), but at the dictate of the hour, as it struck him at the moment, with a sudden and accidental change of mind. On the other hand, say they, if those cycles be admitted, and if we suppose that the same temporal things are repeated, while the world either remains identical through all these rotations, or else dies away and is renewed, then there is ascribed to God neither the slothful ease of a past eternity, nor a rash and unforeseen creation. And if the same things be not thus repeated in cycles, then they cannot by any science or prescience be comprehended in their endless diversity. Even though reason could not refute, faith would smile at these argumentations, with which the godless endeavor to turn our simple piety from the right way, that we may walk with them "in a circle." But by the help of the Lord our God, even reason, and that readily enough, shatters these revolving circles which conjecture frames. For that which specially leads these men astray to refer their own circles to the straight path of truth, is, that they measure by their own human, changeable, and narrow intellect the divine mind, which is absolutely unchangeable, infinitely capacious, and without succession of thought, counting all things without number. So that saying of the apostle comes true of them, for, "comparing themselves with themselves, they do not understand." For because they do, in virtue of a new purpose, whatever new thing has occurred to them to be done (their minds being changeable), they conclude it is so with God; and thus compare, not God,—for they cannot conceive God, but think of one like themselves when they think of Him,—not God, but themselves, and not with Him, but with themselves. For our part, we dare not believe that God is affected in one way when He works, in another when He rests. Indeed, to say that He is affected at all, is an abuse of language, since it implies that there comes to be something in His nature which was not there before. For he who is affected is acted upon, and whatever is acted upon is changeable. His leisure, therefore, is no laziness, indolence, inactivity; as in His work is no labor, effort, industry. He can act while He reposes, and repose while He acts. He can begin a new work with (not a new, but) an eternal design; and what He has not made before, He does not now begin to make because He repents of His former repose. But when one speaks of His former repose and subsequent operation (and I know not how men can understand these things), this "former" and "subsequent" are applied only to the things created, which formerly did not exist, and subsequently came into existence. But in God the former purpose is not altered and obliterated by the subsequent and different purpose, but by one and the same eternal and unchangeable will He effected regarding the things He created, both that formerly, so long as they were not, they should not be, and that subsequently, when they began to be, they should come into existence. And thus, perhaps, He would show, in a very striking way, to those who have eyes for such things, how independent He is of what He makes, and how it is of His own gratuitous goodness He creates, since from eternity He dwelt without creatures in no less perfect a blessedness.

CHAPTER 18

AGAINST THOSE WHO ASSERT THAT THINGS THAT ARE INFINITE CANNOT BE COMPREHENDED BY THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

As for their other assertion, that God's knowledge cannot comprehend things infinite, it only remains for them to affirm, in order that they may sound the depths of their impiety, that God does not know all numbers. For it is very certain that they are infinite; since, no matter of what number you suppose an end to be made, this number can be, I will not say, increased by the addition of one more, but however great it be, and however vast be the multitude of which it is the rational and scientific expression, it can still be not only doubled, but even multiplied. Moreover, each number is so defined by its own properties, that no two numbers are equal. They are therefore both unequal and different from one another; and while they are simply finite, collectively they are infinite. Does God, therefore, not know numbers on account of this infinity; and does His knowledge extend only to a certain height in numbers, while of the rest He is ignorant? Who is so left to himself as to say so? Yet they can hardly pretend to put numbers out of the question, or maintain that they have nothing to do with the knowledge of God; for Plato, their great authority, represents God as framing the world on numerical principles: and in our books also it is said to God, "Thou hast ordered all things in number, and measure, and weight." The prophet also says," Who bringeth out their host by number." And the Saviour says in the Gospel, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." Far be it, then, from us to doubt that all number is known to Him "whose understanding," according to the Psalmist, “is infinite.” The infinity of number, though there be no numbering of infinite numbers, is yet not incomprehensible by Him whose understanding is infinite. And thus, if everything which is comprehended is defined or made finite by the comprehension of him who knows it, then all infinity is in some ineffable way made finite to God, for it is comprehensible by His knowledge. Wherefore, if the infinity of numbers cannot be infinite to the knowledge of God, by which it is comprehended, what are we poor creatures that we should presume to fix limits to His knowledge, and say that unless the same temporal thing be repeated by the same periodic revolutions, God cannot either foreknow His creatures that He may make them, or know them when He has made them? God, whose knowledge is simply manifold, and uniform in its variety, comprehends all incomprehensibles with so incomprehensible a comprehension, that though He willed always to make His later works novel and unlike what went before them, He could not produce them without order and foresight, nor conceive them suddenly, but by His eternal foreknowledge.

CHAPTER 19

OF WORLDS WITHOUT END, OR AGES OF AGES

I do not presume to determine whether God does so, and whether these times which are called “ages of ages” are joined together in a continuous series, and succeed one another with a regulated diversity, and leave exempt from their vicissitudes only those who are freed from their misery, and abide without end in a blessed immortality; or whether these are called “ages of ages,” that we may understand that the ages remain unchangeable in God’s unwavering wisdom, and are the efficient causes, as it were, of those ages which are being spent in time. Possibly “ages” is used for “age,” so that nothing else is meant by “ages of ages” than by “age of age,” as nothing else is meant by “heavens of heavens” than by “heaven of heaven.” For God called the firmament, above which are the waters, “Heaven,” and yet the psalm says, “Let the waters that are above the heavens praise the name of the Lord.” Which of these two meanings we are to attach to “ages of ages,” or whether there is not some other and better meaning still, is a very profound question; and the subject we are at present handling presents no obstacle to our meanwhile deferring the discussion of it, whether we may be able to determine anything about it, or may only be made more cautious by its further treatment, so as to be deterred from making any rash affirmations in a matter of such obscurity. For at present we are disputing the opinion that affirms the existence of those periodic revolutions by which the same things are always recurring at intervals of time. Now whichever of these suppositions regarding the "ages of ages" be the true one, it avails nothing for the substantiating of those cycles; for whether the ages of ages be not a repetition of the same world, but different worlds succeeding one another in a regulated connection, the ransomed souls abiding in well-assured bliss without any recurrence of misery, or whether the ages of ages be the eternal causes which rule what shall be and is in time, it equally follows, that those cycles which bring round the same things have no existence; and nothing more thoroughly explodes them than the fact of the eternal life of the saints.

CHAPTER 20

OF THE IMPIETY OF THOSE WHO ASSERT THAT THE SOULS WHICH ENJOY TRUE AND PERFECT BLESSEDNESS, MUST YET AGAIN AND AGAIN IN THESE PERIODIC REVOLUTIONS RETURN TO LABOR AND MISERY

What pious ears could bear to hear that after a life spent in so many and severe distresses (if, indeed, that should be called a life at all which is rather a death, so utter that the love of this present death makes us fear that death which delivers us from it,) that after evils so disastrous, and miseries of all kinds have at length been expiated and finished by the help of true religion and wisdom, and when we have thus attained to the vision of God, and have entered into bliss by the contemplation of spiritual light and participation in His unchangeable immortality, which we burn to attain,—that we must at some time lose all this, and that they who do lose it are cast down from that eternity, truth, and felicity to infernal mortality and shameful foolishness, and are involved in accursed woes, in which God is lost, truth held in detestation, and happiness sought in iniquitous impurities? and that this will happen endlessly again and again, recurring at fixed intervals, and in regularly returning periods? and that this everlasting and ceaseless revolution of definite cycles, which remove and restore true misery and deceitful bliss in turn, is contrived in order that God may be able to know

His own works, since on the one hand He cannot rest from creating and on the other, cannot know the infinite number of His creatures, if He always makes creatures? Who, I say, can listen to such things? Who can accept or suffer them to be spoken? Were they true, it were not only more prudent to keep silence regarding them, but even (to express myself as best I can) it were the part of wisdom not to know them. For if in the future world we shall not remember these things, and by this oblivion be blessed, why should we now increase our misery, already burdensome enough, by the knowledge of them? If, on the other hand, the knowledge of them will be forced upon us hereafter, now at least let us remain in ignorance, that in the present expectation we may enjoy a blessedness which the future reality is not to bestow; since in this life we are expecting to obtain life everlasting, but in the world to come are to discover it to be blessed, but not everlasting.

And if they maintain that no one can attain to the blessedness of the world to come, unless in this life he has been indoctrinated in those cycles in which bliss and misery relieve one another, how do they avow that the more a man loves God, the more readily he attains to blessedness,—they who teach what paralyzes love itself? For who would not be more remiss and lukewarm in his love for a person whom he thinks he shall be forced to abandon, and whose truth and wisdom he shall come to hate; and this, too, after he has quite attained to the utmost and most blissful knowledge of Him that he is capable of? Can any one be faithful in his love, even to a human friend, if he knows that he is destined to become his enemy? God forbid that there be any truth in an opinion which threatens us with a real misery that is never to end, but is often and endlessly to be interrupted by intervals of fallacious happiness. For what happiness can be more fallacious and false than that in whose blaze of truth we yet remain ignorant that we shall be miserable, or in whose most secure citadel we yet fear that we shall be so? For if, on the one hand, we are to be ignorant of coming calamity, then our present misery is not so short-sighted for it is assured of coming bliss. If, on the other hand, the disaster that threatens is not concealed from us in the world to come, then the time of misery which is to be at last exchanged for a state of blessedness, is spent by the soul more happily than its time of happiness, which is to end in a return to misery. And thus our expectation of unhappiness is happy, but of happiness unhappy. And therefore, as we here suffer present ills, and hereafter fear ills that are imminent, it were truer to say that we shall always be miserable than that we can some time be happy.

But these things are declared to be false by the loud testimony of religion and truth; for religion truthfully promises a true blessedness, of which we shall be eternally assured, and which cannot be interrupted by any disaster. Let us therefore keep to the straight path, which is Christ, and, with Him as our Guide and Saviour, let us turn away in heart and mind from the unreal and futile cycles of the godless. Porphyry, Platonist though he was, abjured the opinion of his school, that in these cycles souls are ceaselessly passing away and returning, either being struck with the extravagance of the idea, or sobered by his knowledge of Christianity. As I mentioned in the tenth book, he preferred saying that the soul, as it had been sent into the world that it might know evil, and be purged and delivered from it, was never again exposed to such an experience after it had once returned to the Father. And if he abjured the tenets of his school, how much more ought we Christians to abominate and avoid an opinion so unfounded and hostile to our faith? But having disposed of these cycles and escaped out of them, no necessity compels us to suppose that the human race had no beginning in time, on the ground that there is nothing new in nature which, by I know not what cycles, has not at some previous period existed, and is not hereafter to exist again. For if the soul, once delivered, as it never was before, is never to return to misery, then there happens in its experience something which never happened before; and this, indeed, something of the greatest consequence, to wit, the secure entrance into eternal felicity. And if in an immortal nature there can occur a novelty, which never has been, nor ever shall be, reproduced by any cycle, why is it disputed that the same may occur in mortal natures? If they maintain that blessedness is no new experience to the soul, but only a return to that state in which it has been eternally, then at least its deliverance from misery is something new, since, by their own showing, the misery from which it is delivered is itself, too, a new experience. And if this new experience fell out by accident, and was not embraced in the order of things appointed by Divine Providence, then where are those determinate and measured cycles in which no new thing happens, but all things are reproduced as they were before? If, however, this new experience was embraced in that providential order of nature (whether the soul was exposed to the evil of this world for the sake of discipline, or fell into it by sin), then it is possible for new things to happen which never happened before, and which yet are not extraneous to the order of nature. And if the soul is able by its own imprudence to create for itself a new misery, which was not unforeseen by the Divine Providence, but was provided for in the order of nature along with the deliverance from it, how can we, even with all the rashness of human vanity, presume to deny that God can create new things—new to the world, but not to Him—which He never before created, but yet foresaw from all eternity? If they say that it is indeed true that ransomed souls return no more to misery, but that even so no new thing happens, since there always have been, now are, and ever shall be a succession of ransomed souls, they must at least grant that in this case there are new souls to whom the misery and the deliverance from it are new. For if they maintain that those souls out of which new men are daily being made (from whose bodies, if they have lived wisely, they are so delivered that they never return to misery) are not new, but have existed from eternity, they must logically admit that they are infinite. For however great a finite number of souls there were, that would not have sufficed to make perpetually new men from eternity,—men whose souls were to be eternally freed from this mortal state, and never afterwards to return to it. And our philosophers will find it hard to explain how there is an infinite number of souls in an order of nature which they require shall be finite, that it may be known by God.

And now that we have exploded these cycles which were supposed to bring back the soul at fixed periods to the same miseries, what can seem more in accordance with godly reason than to believe that it is possible for God both to create new things never before created, and in doing so, to preserve His will unaltered? But whether the number of eternally redeemed souls can be continually increased or not, let the philosophers themselves decide, who are so subtle in determining where infinity cannot be admitted. For our own part, our reasoning holds in either case. For if the number of souls can be indefinitely increased, what reason is there to deny that what had never before been created, could be created? since the number of ransomed souls never existed before, and has yet not only been once made, but will never cease to be anew coming into being. If, on the other hand, it be more suitable that the number of eternally ransomed souls be definite, and that this number will never be increased, yet this number, whatever it be, did assuredly never exist before, and it cannot increase, and reach the amount it signifies, without having some beginning; and this beginning never before existed. That this beginning, therefore, might be, the first man was created.

CHAPTER 21

THAT THERE WAS CREATED AT FIRST BUT ONE INDIVIDUAL, AND THAT THE HUMAN RACE WAS CREATED IN HIM

Now that we have solved, as well as we could, this very difficult question about the eternal God creating new things, without any novelty of will, it is easy to see how much better it is that God was pleased to produce the human race from the one individual whom He created, than if He had originated it in several men. For as to the other animals, He created some solitary, and naturally seeking lonely places,—as the eagles, kites, lions, wolves, and such like; others gregarious, which herd together, and prefer to live in company,—as pigeons, starlings, stags, and little fallow deer, and the like: but neither class did He cause to be propagated from individuals, but called into being several at once. Man, on the other hand, whose nature was to be a mean between the angelic and bestial, He created in such sort, that if he remained in subjection to His Creator as his rightful Lord, and piously kept His commandments, he should pass into the company of the angels, and obtain, without the intervention of death, a blessed and endless immortality; but if he offended the Lord his God by a proud and disobedient use of his free will, he should become subject to death, and live as the beasts do,—the slave of appetite, and doomed to eternal punishment after death. And therefore God created only one single man, not, certainly, that he might be a solitary, bereft of all society, but that by this means the unity of society and the bond of concord might be more effectually commended to him, men being bound together not only by similarity of nature, but by family affection. And indeed He did not even create the woman that was to be given him as his wife, as he created the man, but created her out of the man, that the whole human race might derive from one man.

CHAPTER 22

THAT GOD FOREKNEW THAT THE FIRST MAN WOULD SIN, AND THAT HE AT THE SAME TIME FORESAW HOW LARGE A MULTITUDE OF GODLY PERSONS WOULD BY HIS GRACE BE TRANSLATED TO THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE ANGELS

And God was not ignorant that man would sin, and that, being himself made subject now to death, he would propagate men doomed to die, and that these mortals would run to such enormities in sin, that even the beasts devoid of rational will, and who were created in numbers from the waters and the earth, would live more securely and peaceably with their own kind than men, who had been propagated from one individual for the very purpose of commending concord. For not even lions or dragons have ever waged with their kind such wars as men have waged with one another. But God foresaw also that by His grace a people would be called to adoption, and that they, being justified by the remission of their sins, would be united by the Holy Ghost to the holy angels in eternal peace, the last enemy, death, being destroyed; and He knew that this people would derive profit from the consideration that God had caused all men to be derived from one, for the sake of showing how highly He prizes unity in a multitude.

CHAPTER 23

OF THE NATURE OF THE HUMAN SOUL CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

God, then, made man in His own image. For He created for him a soul endowed with reason and intelligence, so that he might excel all the creatures of earth, air, and sea, which were not so gifted. And when He had formed the man out of the dust of the earth, and had willed that his soul should be such as I have said,—whether He had already made it, and now by breathing imparted it to man, or rather made it by breathing, so that that breath which God made by breathing (for what else is “to breathe” than to make breath?) is the soul,—He made also a wife for him, to aid him in the work of generating his kind, and her He formed of a bone taken out of the man’s side, working in a divine manner. For we are not to conceive of this work in a carnal fashion, as if God wrought as we commonly see artisans, who use their hands, and material furnished to them, that by their artistic skill they may fashion some material object. God’s hand is God’s power;

and He, working invisibly, effects visible results. But this seems fabulous rather than true to men, who measure by customary and everyday works the power and wisdom of God, whereby He understands and produces without seeds even seeds themselves; and because they cannot understand the things which at the beginning were created, they are sceptical regarding them—as if the very things which they do know about human propagation, conceptions and births, would seem less incredible if told to those who had no experience of them; though these very things, too, are attributed by many rather to physical and natural causes than to the work of the divine mind.

CHAPTER 24

WHETHER THE ANGELS CAN BE SAID TO BE THE CREATORS OF ANY, EVEN THE LEAST CREATURE

But in this book we have nothing to do with those who do not believe that the divine mind made or cares for this world. As for those who believe their own Plato, that all mortal animals—among whom man holds the pre-eminent place, and is near to the gods themselves—were created not by that most high God who made the world, but by other lesser gods created by the Supreme, and exercising a delegated power under His control,—if only those persons be delivered from the superstition which prompts them to seek a plausible reason for paying divine honors and sacrificing to these gods as their creators, they will easily be disentangled also from this their error. For it is blasphemy to believe or to say (even before it can be understood) that any other than God is creator of any nature, be it never so small and mortal. And as for the angels, whom those Platonists prefer to call gods, although they do, so far as they are permitted and commissioned, aid in the production of the things around us, yet not on that account are we to call them creators, any more than we call gardeners the creators of fruits and trees.

CHAPTER 25

THAT GOD ALONE IS THE CREATOR OF EVERY KIND OF CREATURE, WHATEVER ITS NATURE OR FORM

For whereas there is one form which is given from without to every bodily substance,—such as the form which is constructed by potters and smiths, and that class of artists who paint and fashion forms like the body of animals,—but another and internal form which is not itself constructed, but, as the efficient cause, produces not only the natural bodily forms, but even the life itself of the living creatures, and which proceeds from the secret and hidden choice of an intelligent and living nature,—let that first-mentioned form be attributed to every artificer, but this latter to one only, God, the Creator and Originator who made the world itself and the angels, without the help of world or angels. For the same divine and, so to speak, creative energy, which cannot be made, but makes, and which gave to the earth and sky their roundness,—this same divine, effective, and creative energy gave their roundness to the eye and to the apple; and the other natural objects which we anywhere see, received also their form, not from without, but from the secret and profound might of the Creator, who said, "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" and whose wisdom it is that "reacheth from one end to another mightily; and sweetly doth she order all things." Wherefore I know not what kind of aid the angels, themselves created first, afforded to the Creator in making other things. I cannot ascribe to them what perhaps they cannot do, neither ought I to deny them such faculty as they have. But, by their leave, I attribute the creating and originating work which gave being to all natures to God, to whom they themselves thankfully ascribe their existence. We do not call gardeners the creators of their fruits, for we read, "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." Nay, not even the earth itself do we call a creator, though she seems to be the prolific mother of all things which she aids in germinating and bursting forth from the seed, and which she keeps rooted in her own breast; for we likewise read, "God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body." We ought not even to call a woman the creatress of her own offspring; for He rather is its creator who said to His servant, "Before I formed thee in the womb, I knew thee." And although the various mental emotions of a pregnant woman do produce in the fruit of her womb similar qualities,—as Jacob with his peeled wands caused piebald sheep to be produced,—yet the mother as little creates her offspring as she created herself. Whatever bodily or seminal causes, then, may be used for the production of things, either by the cooperation of angels, men, or the lower animals, or by sexual generation; and whatever power the desires and mental emotions of the mother have to produce in the tender and plastic foetus corresponding lineaments and colors; yet the natures themselves, which are thus variously affected, are the production of none but the most high God. It is His occult power which pervades all things, and is present in all without being contaminated, which gives being to all that is, and modifies and limits its existence; so that without Him it would not be thus, or thus, nor would have any being at all. If, then, in regard to that outward form which the workman's hand imposes on his work, we do not say that Rome and Alexandria were built by masons and architects, but by the kings by whose will, plan, and resources they were built, so that the one has Romulus, the other Alexander, for its founder; with how much greater reason ought we to say that God alone is the Author of all natures, since He neither uses for His work any material which was not made by Him, nor any workmen who were not also made by Him, and since, if He were, so to speak, to withdraw from created things His creative power, they would straightway relapse into the nothingness in which they were before they were created? "Before," I mean, in respect of eternity, not of time. For what other creator could there be of time, than He who created those things whose movements make time?

CHAPTER 26

OF THAT OPINION OF THE PLATONISTS, THAT THE ANGELS WERE THEMSELVES INDEED CREATED BY GOD, BUT THAT AFTERWARDS THEY CREATED MAN'S BODY

It is obvious, that in attributing the creation of the other animals to those inferior gods who were made by the Supreme, he meant it to be understood that the immortal part was taken from God Himself, and that these minor creators added the mortal part; that is to say, he meant them to be considered the creators of our bodies, but not of our souls. But since Porphyry maintains that if the soul is to be purified all entanglement with a body must be escaped from; and at the same time agrees with Plato and the Platonistsin thinking that those who have not spent a temperate and honorable life return to mortal bodies as their punishment (to bodies of brutes in Plato's opinion, to human bodies in Porphyry's); it follows that those whom they would have us worship as our parents and authors, that they may plausibly call them gods, are, after all, but the forgers of our fetters and chains,—not our creators, but our jailers and turnkeys, who lock us up in the most bitter and melancholy house of correction. Let the Platonists, then, either cease menacing us with our bodies as the punishment of our souls, or preaching that we are to worship as gods those whose work upon us they exhort us by all means in our power to avoid and escape from. But, indeed, both opinions are quite false. It is false that souls return again to this life to be punished; and it is false that there is any other creator of anything in heaven or earth, than He who made the heaven and the earth. For if we live in a body only to expiate our sins, how says Plato in another place, that the world could not have been the most beautiful and good, had it not been filled with all kinds of creatures, mortal and immortal? But if our creation even as mortals be a divine benefit, how is it a punishment to be restored to a body, that is, to a divine benefit? And if God, as Plato continually maintains, embraced in His eternal intelligence the ideas both of the universe and of all the animals, how, then, should He not with His own hand make them all? Could He be unwilling to be the constructor of works, the idea and plan of which called for His ineffable and ineffably to be praised intelligence?

CHAPTER 27

THAT THE WHOLE PLENITUDE OF THE HUMAN RACE WAS EMBRACED IN THE FIRST MAN, AND THAT GOD THERE SAW THE PORTION OF IT WHICH WAS TO BE HONORED AND REWARDED, AND THAT WHICH WAS TO BE CONDEMNED AND PUNISHED

With good cause, therefore, does the true religion recognize and proclaim that the same God who created the universal cosmos, created also all the animals, souls as well as bodies. Among the terrestrial animals man was made by Him in His own image, and, for the reason I have given, was made one individual, though he was not left solitary. For there is nothing so social by nature, so unsocial by its corruption, as this race. And human nature has nothing more appropriate, either for the prevention of discord, or for the healing of it, where it exists, than the remembrance of that first parent of us all, whom God was pleased to create alone, that all men might be derived from one, and that they might thus be admonished to preserve unity among their whole multitude. But from the fact that the woman was made for him from his side, it was plainly meant that we should learn how dear the bond between man and wife should be. These works of God do certainly seem extraordinary, because they are the first works. They who do not believe them, ought not to believe any prodigies; for these would not be called prodigies did they not happen out of the ordinary course of nature. But, is it possible that anything should happen in vain, however hidden be its cause, in so grand a government of divine providence? One of the sacred Psalmists says, “Come, behold the works of the Lord, what prodigies He hath wrought in the earth.” Why God made woman out of man’s side, and what this first prodigy prefigured, I shall, with God’s help, tell in another place. But at present, since this book must be concluded, let us merely say that in this first man, who was created in the beginning, there was laid the foundation, not indeed evidently, but in God’s foreknowledge, of these two cities or societies, so far as regards the human race. For from that man all men were to be derived—some of them to be associated with the good angels in their reward, others with the wicked in punishment; all being ordered by the secret yet just judgment of God. For since it is written, “All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth,” neither can His grace be unjust, nor His justice cruel.

Book XIII

Argument—In this book it is taught that death is penal, and had its origin in Adam’s sin.

CHAPTER 1

OF THE FALL OF THE FIRST MAN, THROUGH WHICH MORTALITY HAS BEEN CONTRACTED

Having disposed of the very difficult questions concerning the origin of our world and the beginning of the human race, the natural order requires that we now discuss the fall of the first man (we may say of the first men), and of the origin and propagation of human death. For God had not made man like the angels, in such a condition that, even though they had sinned, they could none the more die. He had so made them, that if they discharged the obligations of obedience, an angelic immortality and a blessed eternity might ensue, without the intervention of death; but if they disobeyed, death should be visited on them with just sentence—which, too, has been spoken to in the preceding book.

CHAPTER 2

OF THAT DEATH WHICH CAN AFFECT AN IMMORTAL SOUL, AND OF THAT TO WHICH THE BODY IS SUBJECT

But I see I must speak a little more carefully of the nature of death. For although the human soul is truly affirmed to be immortal, yet it also has a certain death of its own. For it is therefore called immortal, because, in a sense, it does not cease to live and to feel; while the body is called mortal, because it can be forsaken of all life, and cannot by itself live at all. The death, then, of the soul takes place when God forsakes it, as the death of the body when the soul forsakes it. Therefore the death of both—that is, of the whole man—occurs when the soul, forsaken by God, forsakes the body. For, in this case, neither is God the life of the soul, nor the soul the life of the body. And this death of the whole man is followed by that which, on the authority of the divine oracles, we call the second death. This the Saviour referred to when He said, “Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” And since this does not happen before the soul is so joined to its body that they cannot be separated at all, it may be matter of wonder how the body can be said to be killed by that death in which it is not forsaken by the soul, but, being animated and rendered sensitive by it, is tormented. For in that penal and everlasting punishment, of which in its own place we are to speak more at large, the soul is justly said to die, because it does not live in connection with God; but how can we say that the body is dead, seeing that it lives by the soul? For it could not otherwise feel the bodily torments which are to follow the resurrection. Is it because life of every kind is good, and pain an evil, that we decline to say that that body lives, in which the soul is the cause, not of life, but of pain? The soul, then, lives by God when it lives well, for it cannot live well unless by God working in it what is good; and the body lives by the soul when the soul lives in the body, whether itself be living by God or no. For the wicked man’s life in the body is a life not of the soul, but of the body, which even dead souls—that is, souls forsaken of God—can confer upon bodies, how little so-ever of their own proper life, by which they are immortal, they retain. But in the last damnation, though man does not cease to feel, yet because this feeling of his is neither sweet with pleasure nor wholesome with repose, but painfully penal, it is not without reason called death rather than life. And it is called the second death because it follows the first, which sunders the two cohering essences, whether these be God and the soul, or the soul and the body. Of the first and bodily death, then, we may say that to the good it is good, and evil to the evil. But, doubtless, the second, as it happens to none of the good, so it can be good for none.

CHAPTER 3

WHETHER DEATH, WHICH BY THE SIN OF OUR FIRST PARENTS HAS PASSED UPON ALL MEN, IS THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN, EVEN TO THE GOOD

But a question not to be shirked arises: Whether in very truth death, which separates soul and body, is good to the good? For if it be, how has it come to pass that such a thing should be the punishment of sin? For the first men would not have suffered death had they not sinned. How, then, can that be good to the good, which could not have happened except to the evil? Then, again, if it could only happen to the evil, to the good it ought not to be good, but non-existent. For why should there be any punishment where there is nothing to punish? Wherefore we must say that the first men were indeed so created, that if they had not sinned, they would not have experienced any kind of death; but that, having become sinners, they were so punished with death, that whatsoever sprang from their stock should also be punished with the same death. For nothing else could be born of them than that which they themselves had been. Their nature was deteriorated in proportion to the greatness of the condemnation of their sin, so that what existed as punishment in those who first sinned, became a natural consequence in their children. For man is not produced by man, as he was from the dust. For dust was the material out of which man was made: man is the parent by whom man is begotten. Wherefore earth and flesh are not the same thing, though flesh be made of earth. But as man the parent is, such is man the offspring. In the first man, therefore, there existed the whole human nature, which was to be transmitted by the woman to posterity, when that conjugal union received the divine sentence of its own condemnation; and what man was made, not when created, but when he sinned and was punished, this he propagated, so far as the origin of sin and death are concerned. For neither by sin nor its punishment was he himself reduced to that infantine and helpless infirmity of body and mind which we see in children. For God ordained that infants should begin the world as the young of beasts begin it, since their parents had fallen to the level of the beasts in the fashion of their life and of their death; as it is written, “Man when he was in honor understood not; he became like the beasts that have no understanding.” Nay more, infants, we see, are even feebler in the use and movement of their limbs, and more infirm to choose and refuse, than the most tender offspring of other animals; as if the force that dwells in human nature were destined to surpass all other living things so much the more eminently, as its energy has been longer restrained, and the time of its exercise delayed, just as an arrow flies the higher the further back it has been drawn. To this infantine imbecility the first man did not fall by his lawless presumption and just sentence; but human nature was in his person vitiated and altered to such an extent, that he suffered in his members the warring of disobedient lust, and became subject to the necessity of dying.

And what he himself had become by sin and punishment, such he generated those whom he begot; that is to say, subject to sin and death. And if infants are delivered from this bondage of sin by the Redeemer’s grace, they can suffer only this death which separates soul and body; but being redeemed from the obligation of sin, they do not pass to that second endless and penal death.

CHAPTER 4

WHY DEATH, THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN, IS NOT WITHHELD FROM THOSE WHO BY THE GRACE OF REGENERATION ARE ABSOLVED FROM SIN

If, moreover, any one is solicitous about this point, how, if death be the very punishment of sin, they whose guilt is cancelled by grace do yet suffer death, this difficulty has already been handled and solved in our other work which we have written on the baptism of infants. There it was said that the parting of soul and body was left, though its connection with sin was removed, for this reason, that if the immortality of the body followed immediately upon the sacrament of regeneration, faith itself would be thereby enervated. For faith is then only faith when it waits in hope for what is not yet seen in substance. And by the vigor and conflict of faith, at least in times past, was the fear of death overcome. Specially was this conspicuous in the holy martyrs, who could have had no victory, no glory, to whom there could not even have been any conflict, if, after the layer of regeneration, saints could not suffer bodily death. Who would not, then, in company with the infants presented for baptism, run to the grace of Christ, that so he might not be dismissed from the body? And thus faith would not be tested with an unseen reward; and so would not even be faith, seeking and receiving an immediate recompense of its works. But now, by the greater and more admirable grace of the Saviour, the punishment of sin is turned to the service of righteousness. For then it was proclaimed to man, “If thou sinnest, thou shall die;” now it is said to the martyr, “Die, that thou sin not.” Then it was said, “If ye trangress the commandments, ye shall die;” now it is said, “If ye decline death, ye transgress the commandment.” That which was formerly set as an object of terror, that men might not sin, is now to be undergone if we would not sin. Thus, by the unutterable mercy of God, even the very punishment of wickedness has become the armor of virtue, and the penalty of the sinner becomes the reward of the righteous. For then death was incurred by sinning, now righteousness is fulfilled by dying. In the case of the holy martyrs it is so; for to them the persecutor proposes the alternative, apostasy or death. For the righteous prefer by believing to suffer what the first transgressors suffered by not believing. For unless they had sinned, they would not have died; but the martyrs sin if they do not die. The one died because they sinned, the others do not sin because they die. By the guilt of the first, punishment was incurred; by the punishment of the second, guilt is prevented. Not that death, which was before an evil, has become something good, but only that God has granted to faith this grace, that death, which is the admitted opposite to life, should become the instrument by which life is reached.

CHAPTER 5

AS THE WICKED MAKE AN ILL USE OF THE LAW, WHICH IS GOOD, SO THE GOOD MAKE A GOOD USE OF DEATH, WHICH IS AN ILL

The apostle, wishing to show how hurtful a thing sin is, when grace does not aid us, has not hesitated to say that the strength of sin is that very law by which sin is prohibited. “The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.” Most certainly true; for prohibition increases the desire of illicit action, if righteousness is not so loved that the desire of sin is conquered by that love. But unless divine grace aid us, we cannot love nor delight in true righteousness. But lest the law should be thought to be an evil, since it is called the strength of sin, the apostle, when treating a similar question in another place, says, “The law indeed is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is holy made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.” Exceeding, he says, because the transgression is more heinous when through the increasing lust of sin the law itself also is despised. Why have we thought it worth while to mention this? For this reason, because, as the law is not an evil when it increases the lust of those who sin, so neither is death a good thing when it increases the glory of those who suffer it, since either the former is abandoned wickedly, and makes transgressors, or the latter is embraced, for the truth’s sake, and makes martyrs. And thus the law is indeed good, because it is prohibition of sin, and death is evil because it is the wages of sin; but as wicked men make an evil use not only of evil, but also of good things, so the righteous make a good use not only of good, but also of evil things. Whence it comes to pass that the wicked make an ill use of the law, though the law is good; and that the good die well, though death is an evil.

CHAPTER 6

OF THE EVIL OF DEATH IN GENERAL, CONSIDERED AS THE SEPARATION OF SOUL AND BODY

Wherefore, as regards bodily death, that is, the separation of the soul from the body, it is good unto none while it is being endured by those whom we say are in the article of death. For the very violence with which body and soul are wrenched asunder, which in the living had been conjoined and closely intertwined, brings with it a harsh experience, jarring horridly on nature so long as it continues, till there comes a total loss of sensation, which arose from the very interpenetration of spirit and flesh. And all this anguish is sometimes forestalled by one stroke of the body or sudden flitting of the soul, the swiftness of which prevents it from being felt. But whatever that may be in the dying which with violently painful sensation robs of all sensation, yet, when it is piously and faithfully borne, it increases the merit of patience, but does not make the name of punishment inapplicable. Death, proceeding by ordinary generation from the first man, is the punishment of all who are born of him, yet, if it be endured for righteousness' sake, it becomes the glory of those who are born again; and though death be the award of sin, it sometimes secures that nothing be awarded to sin.

CHAPTER 7

OF THE DEATH WHICH THE UNBAPTIZED SUFFER FOR THE CONFESSION OF CHRIST

For whatever unbaptized persons die confessing Christ, this confession is of the same efficacy for the remission of sins as if they were washed in the sacred font of baptism. For He who said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,” made also an exception in their favor, in that other sentence where He no less absolutely said, “Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven;” and in another place, “Whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it.” And this explains the verse, “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.” For what is more precious than a death by which a man’s sins are all forgiven, and his merits increased an hundredfold? For those who have been baptized when they could no longer escape death, and have departed this life with all their sins blotted out have not equal merit with those who did not defer death, though it was in their power to do so, but preferred to end their life by confessing Christ, rather than by denying Him to secure an opportunity of baptism. And even had they denied Him under pressure of the fear of death, this too would have been forgiven them in that baptism, in which was remitted even the enormous wickedness of those who had slain Christ. But how abundant in these men must have been the grace of the Spirit, who breathes where He listeth, seeing that they so dearly loved Christ as to be unable to deny Him even in so sore an emergency, and with so sure a hope of pardon! Precious, therefore, is the death of the saints, to whom the grace of Christ has been applied with such gracious effects, that they do not hesitate to meet death themselves, if so be they might meet Him. And precious is it, also, because it has proved that what was originally ordained for the punishment of the sinner, has been used for the production of a richer harvest of righteousness. But not on this account should we look upon death as a good thing, for it is diverted to such useful purposes, not by any virtue of its own, but by the divine interference. Death was originally proposed as an object of dread, that sin might not be committed; now it must be undergone that sin may not be committed, or, if committed, be remitted, and the award of righteousness bestowed on him whose victory has earned it.

CHAPTER 8

THAT THE SAINTS, BY SUFFERING THE FIRST DEATH FOR THE TRUTH’S SAKE, ARE FREED FROM THE SECOND

For if we look at the matter a little more carefully, we shall see that even when a man dies faithfully and laudably for the truth’s sake, it is still death he is avoiding. For he submits to some part of death, for the very purpose of avoiding the whole, and the second and eternal death over and above. He submits to the separation of soul and body, lest the soul be separated both from God and from the body, and so the whole first death be completed, and the second death receive him everlastingly. Wherefore death is indeed, as I said, good to none while it is being actually suffered, and while it is subduing the dying to its power; but it is meritoriously endured for the sake of retaining or winning what is good. And regarding what happens after death, it is no absurdity to say that death is good to the good, and evil to the evil. For the disembodied spirits of the just are at rest; but those of the wicked suffer punishment till their bodies rise again,—those of the just to life everlasting, and of the others to death eternal, which is called the second death.

CHAPTER 9

WHETHER WE SHOULD SAY THAT THE MOMENT OF DEATH, IN WHICH SENSATION CEASES, OCCURS IN THE EXPERIENCE OF THE DYING OR IN THAT OF THE DEAD

The point of time in which the souls of the good and evil are separated from the body, are we to say it is after death, or in death rather? If it is after death, then it is not death which is good or evil, since death is done with and past, but it is the life which the soul has now entered on. Death was an evil when it was present, that is to say, when it was being suffered by the dying; for to them it brought with it a severe and grievous experience, which the good make a good use of. But when death is past, how can that which no longer is be either good or evil? Still further, if we examine the matter more closely, we shall see that even that sore and grievous pain which the dying experience is not death itself. For so long as they have any sensation, they are certainly still alive; and, if still alive, must rather be said to be in a state previous to death than in death. For when death actually comes, it robs us of all bodily sensation, which, while death is only approaching is painful. And thus it is difficult to explain how we speak of those who are not yet dead, but are agonized in their last and mortal extremity, as being in the article of death. Yet what else can we call them than dying persons? for when death which was imminent shall have actually come, we can no longer call them dying but dead. No one, therefore, is dying unless living; since even he who is in the last extremity of life, and, as we say, giving up the ghost, yet lives. The same person is therefore at once dying and living, but drawing near to death, departing from life; yet in life, because his spirit yet abides in the body; not yet in death, because not yet has his spirit forsaken the body. But if, when it has forsaken it, the man is not even then in death, but after death, who shall say when he is in death? On the one hand, no one can be called dying, if a man cannot be dying and living at the same time; and as long as the soul is in the body, we cannot deny that he is living. On the other hand, if the man who is approaching death be rather called dying, I know not who is living.

CHAPTER 10

OF THE LIFE OF MORTALS, WHICH IS RATHER TO BE CALLED DEATH THAN LIFE

For no sooner do we begin to live in this dying body, than we begin to move ceaselessly towards death. For in the whole course of this life (if life we must call it) its mutability tends towards death. Certainly there is no one who is not nearer it this year than last year, and to-morrow than to-day, and to-day than yesterday, and a short while hence than now, and now than a short while ago. For whatever time we live is deducted from our whole term of life, and that which remains is daily becoming less and less; so that our whole life is nothing but a race towards death, in which no one is allowed to stand still for a little space, or to go somewhat more slowly, but all are driven forwards with an impartial movement, and with equal rapidity. For he whose life is short spends a day no more swiftly than he whose life is longer. But while the equal moments are impartially snatched from both, the one has a nearer and the other a more remote goal to reach with this their equal speed. It is one thing to make a longer journey, and another to walk more slowly. He, therefore, who spends longer time on his way to death does not proceed at a more leisurely pace, but goes over more ground. Further, if every man begins to die, that is, is in death, as soon as death has begun to show itself in him (by taking away life, to wit; for when life is all taken away, the man will be then not in death, but after death), then he begins to die so soon as he begins to live. For what else is going on in all his days, hours, and moments, until this slow-working death is fully consummated? And then comes the time after death, instead of that in which life was being withdrawn, and which we called being in death. Man, then, is never in life from the moment he dwells in this dying rather than living body,—if, at least, he cannot be in life and death at once. Or rather, shall we say, he is in both?—in life, namely, which he lives till all is consumed; but in death also, which he dies as his life is consumed? For if he is not in life, what is it which is consumed till all be gone? And if he is not in death, what is this consumption itself? For when the whole of life has been consumed, the expression “after death” would be meaningless, had that consumption not been death. And if, when it has all been consumed, a man is not in death but after death, when is he in death unless when life is being consumed away?

CHAPTER 11

WHETHER ONE CAN BOTH BE LIVING AND DEAD AT THE SAME TIME

But if it is absurd to say that a man is in death before he reaches death (for to what is his course running as he passes through life, if already he is in death?), and if it outrage common usage to speak of a man being at once alive and dead, as much as it does so to speak of him as at once asleep and awake, it remains to be asked when a man is dying? For, before death comes, he is not dying but living; and when death has come, he is not dying but dead. The one is before, the other after death. When, then, is he in death so that we can say he is dying? For as there are three times, before death, in death, after death, so there are three states corresponding, living, dying, dead. And it is very hard to define when a man is in death or dying, when he is neither living, which is before death, nor dead, which is after death, but dying, which is in death. For so long as the soul is in the body, especially if consciousness remain, the man certainly lives; for body and soul constitute the man. And thus, before death, he cannot be said to be in death, but when, on the other hand, the soul has departed, and all bodily sensation is extinct, death is past, and the man is dead. Between these two states the dying condition finds no place; for if a man yet lives, death has not arrived; if he has ceased to live, death is past. Never, then, is he dying, that is, comprehended in the state of death. So also in the passing of time,—you try to lay your finger on the present, and cannot find it, because the present occupies no space, but is only the transition of time from the future to the past. Must we then conclude that there is thus no death of the body at all? For if there is, where is it, since it is in no one, and no one can be in it? Since, indeed, if there is yet life, death is not yet; for this state is before death, not in death: and if life has already ceased, death is not present; for this state is after death, not in death. On the other hand, if there is no death before or after, what do we mean when we say "after death," or "before death?" This is a foolish way of speaking if there is no death. And would that we had lived so well in Paradise that in very truth there were now no death! But not only does it now exist, but so grievous a thing is it, that no skill is sufficient either to explain or to escape it.

Let us, then, speak in the customary way,—no man ought to speak otherwise,—and let us call the time before death come, "before death;" as it is written, "Praise no man before his death." And when it has happened, let us say that "after death" this or that took place. And of the present time let us speak as best we can, as when we say, "He, when dying, made his will, and left this or that to such and such persons,"—though, of course, he could not do so unless he were living, and did this rather before death than in death. And let us use the same phraseology as Scripture uses; for it makes no scruple of saying that the dead are not after but in death. So that verse, "For in death there is no remembrance of thee." For until the resurrection men are justly said to be in death; as every one is said to be in sleep till he awakes. However, though we can say of persons in sleep that they are sleeping, we cannot speak in this way of the dead, and say they are dying. For, so far as regards the death of the body, of which we are now speaking, one cannot say that those who are already separated from their bodies continue dying. But this, you see, is just what I was saying,—that no words can explain how either the dying are said to live, or how the dead are said, even after death, to be in death. For how can they be after death if they be in death, especially when we do not even call them dying, as we call those in sleep, sleeping; and those in languor, languishing; and those in grief, grieving; and those in life, living? And yet the dead, until they rise again, are said to be in death, but cannot be called dying.

And therefore I think it has not unsuitably nor inappropriately come to pass, though not by the intention of man, yet perhaps with divine purpose, that this Latin word moritur cannot be declined by the grammarians according to the rule followed by similar words. For oritur gives the form ortus est for the perfect; and all similar verbs form this tense from their perfect participles. But if we ask the perfect of moritur, we get the regular answer mortuus est, with a double u. For thus mortuus is pronounced, like fatuus, arduus, conspicuus, and similar words, which are not perfect participles but adjectives, and are declined without regard to tense. But mortuus, though in form an adjective, is used as perfect participle, as if that were to be declined which cannot be declined; and thus it has suitably come to pass that, as the thing itself cannot in point of fact be declined, so neither can the word significant of the act be declined. Yet, by the aid of our Redeemer's grace, we may manage at least to decline the second. For that is more grievous still, and, indeed, of all evils the worst, since it consists not in the separation of soul and body, but in the uniting of both in death eternal. And there, in striking contrast to our present conditions, men will not be before or after death, but always in death; and thus never living, never dead, but endlessly dying. And never can a man be more disastrously in death than when death itself shall be deathless.

CHAPTER 12

WHAT DEATH GOD INTENDED, WHEN HE THREATENED OUR FIRST PARENTS WITH DEATH IF THEY SHOULD DISOBEY HIS COMMANDMENT

When, therefore, it is asked what death it was with which God threatened our first parents if they should transgress the commandment they had received from Him, and should fail to preserve their obedience,—whether it was the death of soul, or of body, or of the whole man, or that which is called second death,—we must answer, It is all. For the first consists of two; the second is the complete death, which consists of all. For, as the whole earth consists of many lands, and the Church universal of many churches, so death universal consists of all deaths. The first consists of two, one of the body, and another of the soul. So that the first death is a death of the whole man, since the soul without God and without the body suffers punishment for a time; but the second is when the soul, without God but with the body, suffers punishment everlasting. When, therefore, God said to that first man whom he had placed in Paradise, referring to the forbidden fruit, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," that threatening included not only the first part of the first death, by which the soul is deprived of God; nor only the subsequent part of the first death, by which the body is deprived of the soul; nor only the whole first death itself, by which the soul is punished in separation from God and from the body;—but it includes whatever of death there is, even to that final death which is called second, and to which none is subsequent.

CHAPTER 13

WHAT WAS THE FIRST PUNISHMENT OF THE TRANSGRESSION OF OUR FIRST PARENTS

For, as soon as our first parents had transgressed the commandment, divine grace forsook them, and they were confounded at their own wickedness; and therefore they took fig-leaves (which were possibly the first that came to hand in their troubled state of mind), and covered their shame; for though their members remained the same, they had shame now where they had none before. They experienced a new motion of their flesh, which had become disobedient to them, in strict retribution of their own disobedience to God. For the soul, revelling in its own liberty, and scorning to serve God, was itself deprived of the command it had formerly maintained over the body. And because it had willfully deserted its superior Lord, it no longer held its own inferior servant; neither could it hold the flesh subject, as it would always have been able to do had it remained itself subject to God. Then began the flesh to lust against the Spirit, in which strife we are born, deriving from the first transgression a seed of death, and bearing in our members, and in our vitiated nature, the contest or even victory of the flesh.

CHAPTER 14

IN WHAT STATE MAN WAS MADE BY GOD, AND INTO WHAT ESTATE HE FELL BY THE CHOICE OF HIS OWN WILL

For God, the author of natures, not of vices, created man upright; but man, being of his own will corrupted, and justly condemned, begot corrupted and condemned children. For we all were in that one man, since we all were that one man, who fell into sin by the woman who was made from him before the sin. For not yet was the particular form created and distributed to us, in which we as individuals were to live, but already the seminal nature was there from which we were to be propagated; and this being vitiated by sin, and bound by the chain of death, and justly condemned, man could not be born of man in any other state. And thus, from the bad use of free will, there originated the whole train of evil, which, with its concatenation of miseries, convoys the human race from its depraved origin, as from a corrupt root, on to the destruction of the second death, which has no end, those only being excepted who are freed by the grace of God.

CHAPTER 15

THAT ADAM IN HIS SIN FORSOOK GOD ERE GOD FORSOOK HIM, AND THAT HIS FALLING AWAY FROM GOD WAS THE FIRST DEATH OF THE SOUL

It may perhaps be supposed that because God said, “Ye shall die the death,” and not “deaths,” we should understand only that death which occurs when the soul is deserted by God, who is its life; for it was not deserted by God, and so deserted Him, but deserted Him, and so was deserted by Him. For its own will was the originator of its evil, as God was the originator of its motions towards good, both in making it when it was not, and in remaking it when it had fallen and perished. But though we suppose that God meant only this death, and that the words, “In the day ye eat of it ye shall die the death,” should be understood as meaning, “In the day ye desert me in disobedience, I will desert you in justice,” yet assuredly in this death the other deaths also were threatened, which were its inevitable consequence. For in the first stirring of the disobedient motion which was felt in the flesh of the disobedient soul, and which caused our first parents to cover their shame, one death indeed is experienced, that, namely, which occurs when God forsakes the soul. (This was intimated by the words He uttered, when the man, stupefied by fear, had hid himself, “Adam, where art thou?”—words which He used not in ignorance of inquiry, but warning him to consider where he was, since God was not with him.) But when the soul itself forsook the body, corrupted and decayed with age, the other death was experienced of which God had spoken in pronouncing man’s sentence, “Earth thou art, and unto earth shall thou return.” And of these two deaths that first death of the whole man is composed. And this first death is finally followed by the second, unless man be freed by grace. For the body would not return to the earth from which it was made, save only by the death proper to itself, which occurs when it is forsaken of the soul, its life. And therefore it is agreed among all Christians who truthfully hold the catholic faith, that we are subject to the death of the body, not by the law of nature, by which God ordained no death for man, but by His righteous infliction on account of sin; for God, taking vengeance on sin, said to the man, in whom we all then were, “Dust thou art, and unto dust shall thou return.”

CHAPTER 16

CONCERNING THE PHILOSOPHERS WHO THINK THAT THE SEPARATION OF SOUL AND BODY IS NOT PENAL, THOUGH PLATO REPRESENTS THE SUPREME DEITY AS PROMISING TO THE INFERIOR GODS THAT THEY SHALL NEVER BE DISMISSED FROM THEIR BODIES

But the philosophers against whom we are defending the city of God, that is, His Church seem to themselves to have good cause to deride us, because we say that the separation of the soul from the body is to be held as part of man’s punishment. For they suppose that the blessedness of the soul then only is complete, when it is quite denuded of the body, and returns to God a pure and simple, and, as it were, naked soul. On this point, if I should find nothing in their own literature to refute this opinion, I should be forced laboriously to demonstrate that it is not the body, but the corruptibility of the body, which is a burden to the soul. Hence that sentence of Scripture we quoted in a foregoing book, “For the corruptible body presseth down the soul.” The word corruptible is added to show that the soul is burdened, not by any body whatsoever, but by the body such as it has become in consequence of sin. And even though the word had not been added, we could understand nothing else. But when Plato most expressly declares that the gods who are made by the Supreme have immortal bodies, and when he introduces their Maker himself, promising them as a great boon that they should abide in their bodies eternally, and never by any death be loosed from them, why do these adversaries of ours, for the sake of troubling the Christian faith, feign to be ignorant of what they quite well know, and even prefer to contradict themselves rather than lose an opportunity of contradicting us? Here are Plato’s words, as Cicero has translated them, in which he introduces the Supreme addressing the gods He had made, and saying, “Ye who are sprung from a divine stock, consider of what works I am the parent and author. These (your bodies) are indestructible so long as I will it; although all that is composed can be destroyed. But it is wicked to dissolve what reason has compacted. But, seeing that ye have been born, ye cannot indeed be immortal and indestructible; yet ye shall by no means be destroyed, nor shall any fates consign you to death, and prove superior to my will, which is a stronger assurance of your perpetuity than those bodies to which ye were joined when ye were born.” Plato, you see, says that the gods are both mortal by the connection of the body and soul, and yet are rendered immortal by the will and decree of their Maker. If, therefore, it is a punishment to the soul to be connected with any body whatever, why does God address them as if they were afraid of death, that is, of the separation, of soul and body? Why does He seek to reassure them by promising them immortality, not in virtue of their nature, which is composite and not simple, but by virtue of His invincible will, whereby He can effect that neither things born die, nor things compounded be dissolved, but preserved eternally?

Whether this opinion of Plato’s about the stars is true or not, is another question. For we cannot at once grant to him that these luminous bodies or globes, which by day and night shine on the earth with the light of their bodily substance, have also intellectual and blessed souls which animate each its own body, as he confidently affirms of the universe itself, as if it were one huge animal, in which all other animals were contained. But this, as I said, is another question, which we have not undertaken to discuss at present. This much only I deemed right to bring forward, in opposition to those who so pride themselves on being, or on being called Platonists, that they blush to be Christians, and who cannot brook to be called by a name which the common people also bear, lest they vulgarize the philosophers’ coterie, which is proud in proportion to its exclusiveness. These men, seeking a weak point in the Christian doctrine, select for attack the eternity of the body, as if it were a contradiction to contend for the blessedness of the soul, and to wish it to be always resident in the body, bound, as it were, in a lamentable chain; and this although Plato, their own founder and master, affirms that it was granted by the Supreme as a boon to the gods He had made, that they should not die, that is, should not be separated from the bodies with which He had connected them.

CHAPTER 17

AGAINST THOSE WHO AFFIRM THAT EARTHLY BODIES CANNOT BE MADE INCORRUPTIBLE AND ETERNAL

These same philosophers further contend that terrestrial bodies cannot be eternal though they make no doubt that the whole earth, which is itself the central member of their god,—not, indeed, of the greatest, but yet of a great god, that is, of this whole world,—is eternal. Since, then, the Supreme made for them another god, that is, this world, superior to the other gods beneath Him; and since they suppose that this god is an animal, having, as they affirm, a rational or intellectual soul enclosed in the huge mass of its body, and having, as the fitly situated and adjusted members of its body, the four elements, whose union they wish to be indissoluble and eternal, lest perchance this great god of theirs might some day perish; what reason is there that the earth, which is the central member in the body of a greater creature, should be eternal, and the bodies of other terrestrial creatures should not possibly be eternal if God should so will it? But earth, say they, must return to earth, out of which the terrestrial bodies of the animals have been taken. For this, they say, is the reason of the necessity of their death and dissolution, and this the manner of their restoration to the solid and eternal earth whence they came. But if any one says the same thing of fire, holding that the bodies which are derived from it to make celestial beings must be restored to the universal fire, does not the immortality which Plato represents these gods as receiving from the Supreme evanesce in the heat of this dispute? Or does this not happen with those celestials because God, whose will, as Plato says, overpowers all powers, has willed it should not be so? What, then, hinders God from ordaining the same of terrestrial bodies? And since, indeed, Plato acknowledges that God can prevent things that are born from dying, and things that are joined from being sundered, and things that are composed from being dissolved, and can ordain that the souls once allotted to their bodies should never abandon them, but enjoy along with them immortality and everlasting bliss, why may He not also effect that terrestrial bodies die not? Is God powerless to do everything that is special to the Christian’s creed, but powerful to effect everything the Platonists desire? The philosophers, forsooth, have been admitted to a knowledge of the divine purposes and power which has been denied to the prophets! The truth is, that the Spirit of God taught His prophets so much of His will as He thought fit to reveal, but the philosophers, in their efforts to discover it, were deceived by human conjecture.

But they should not have been so led astray, I will not say by their ignorance, but by their obstinacy, as to contradict themselves so frequently; for they maintain, with all their vaunted might, that in order to the happiness of the soul, it must abandon not only its earthly body, but every kind of body. And yet they hold that the gods, whose souls are most blessed, are bound to everlasting bodies, the celestials to fiery bodies, and the soul of Jove himself (or this world, as they would have us believe) to all the physical elements which compose this entire mass reaching from earth to heaven. For this soul Plato believes to be extended and diffused by musical numbers, from the middle of the inside of the earth, which geometricians call the centre, outwards through all its parts to the utmost heights and extremities of the heavens; so that this world is a very great and blessed immortal animal, whose soul has both the perfect blessedness of wisdom, and never leaves its own body and whose body has life everlasting from the soul, and by no means clogs or hinders it, though itself be not a simple body, but compacted of so many and so huge materials. Since, therefore, they allow so much to their own conjectures, why do they refuse to believe that by the divine will and power immortality can be conferred on earthly bodies, in which the souls would be neither oppressed with the burden of them, nor separated from them by any death, but live eternally and blessedly? Do they not assert that their own gods so live in bodies of fire, and that Jove himself, their king, so lives in the physical elements? If, in order to its blessedness, the soul must quit every kind of body, let their gods flit from the starry spheres, and Jupiter from earth to sky; or, if they cannot do so, let them be pronounced miserable. But neither alternative will these men adopt. For, on the one hand, they dare not ascribe to their own gods a departure from the body, lest they should seem to worship mortals; on the other hand, they dare not deny their happiness, lest they should acknowledge wretches as gods. Therefore, to obtain blessedness, we need not quit every kind of body, but only the corruptible, cumbersome, painful, dying,—not such bodies as the goodness of God contrived for the first man, but such only as man’s sin entailed.

CHAPTER 18

OF EARTHLY BODIES, WHICH THE PHILOSOPHERS AFFIRM CANNOT BE IN HEAVENLY PLACES, BECAUSE WHATEVER IS OF EARTH IS BY ITS NATURAL WEIGHT ATTRACTED TO EARTH

But it is necessary, they say, that the natural weight of earthly bodies either keeps them on earth or draws them to it; and therefore they cannot be in heaven. Our first parents were indeed on earth, in a well-wooded and fruitful spot, which has been named Paradise. But let our adversaries a little more carefully consider this subject of earthly weight, because it has important bearings, both on the ascension of the body of Christ, and also on the resurrection body of the saints. If human skill can by some contrivance fabricate vessels that float, out of metals which sink as soon as they are placed on the water, how much more credible is it that God, by some occult mode of operation, should even more certainly effect that these earthy masses be emancipated from the downward pressure of their weight? This cannot be impossible to that God by whose almighty will, according to Plato, neither things born perish, nor things composed dissolve, especially since it is much more wonderful that spiritual and bodily essences be conjoined than that bodies be adjusted to other material substances. Can we not also easily believe that souls, being made perfectly blessed, should be endowed with the power of moving their earthy but incorruptible bodies as they please, with almost spontaneous movement, and of placing them where they please with the readiest action? If the angels transport whatever terrestrial creatures they please from any place they please, and convey them whither they please, is it to be believed that they cannot do so without toil and the feeling of burden? Why, then, may we not believe that the spirits of the saints, made perfect and blessed by divine grace, can carry their own bodies where they please, and set them where they will? For, though we have been accustomed to notice, in bearing weights, that the larger the quantity the greater the weight of earthy bodies is, and that the greater the weight the more burdensome it is, yet the soul carries the members of its own flesh with less difficulty when they are massive with health, than in sickness when they are wasted. And though the hale and strong man feels heavier to other men carrying him than the lank and sickly, yet the man himself moves and carries his own body with less feeling of burden when he has the greater bulk of vigorous health, than when his frame is reduced to a minimum by hunger or disease. Of such consequence, in estimating the weight of earthly bodies, even while yet corruptible and mortal, is the consideration not of dead weight, but of the healthy equilibrium of the parts. And what words can tell the difference between what we now call health and future immortality? Let not the philosophers, then, think to upset our faith with arguments from the weight of bodies; for I don't care to inquire why they cannot believe an earthly body can be in heaven, while the whole earth is suspended on nothing. For perhaps the world keeps its central place by the same law that attracts to its centre all heavy bodies. But this I say, if the lesser gods, to whom Plato committed the creation of man and the other terrestrial creatures, were able, as he affirms, to withdraw from the fire its quality of burning, while they left it that of lighting, so that it should shine through the eyes; and if to the supreme God Plato also concedes the power of preserving from death things that have been born, and of preserving from dissolution things that are composed of parts so different as body and spirit;—are we to hesitate to concede to this same God the power to operate on the flesh of him whom He has endowed with immortality, so as to withdraw its corruption but leave its nature, remove its burdensome weight but retain its seemly form and members? But concerning our belief in the resurrection of the dead, and concerning their immortal bodies, we shall speak more at large, God willing, in the end of this work.

CHAPTER 19

AGAINST THE OPINION OF THOSE WHO DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE PRIMITIVE MEN WOULD HAVE BEEN IMMORTAL IF THEY HAD NOT SINNED

At present let us go on, as we have begun, to give some explanation regarding the bodies of our first parents. I say then, that, except as the just consequence of sin, they would not have been subjected even to this death, which is good to the good,—this death, which is not exclusively known and believed in by a few, but is known to all, by which soul and body are separated, and by which the body of an animal which was but now visibly living is now visibly dead. For though there can be no manner of doubt that the souls of the just and holy dead live in peaceful rest, yet so much better would it be for them to be alive in healthy, well-conditioned bodies, that even those who hold the tenet that it is most blessed to be quit of every kind of body, condemn this opinion in spite of themselves. For no one will dare to set wise men, whether yet to die or already dead,—in other words, whether already quit of the body, or shortly to be so,—above the immortal gods, to whom the Supreme, in Plato, promises as a munificent gift life indissoluble, or in eternal union with their bodies. But this same Plato thinks that nothing better can happen to men than that they pass through life piously and justly, and, being separated from their bodies, be received into the bosom of the gods, who never abandon theirs; "that, oblivious of the past, they may revisit the upper air, and conceive the longing to return again to the body." Virgil is applauded for borrowing this from the Platonic system. Assuredly Plato thinks that the souls of mortals cannot always be in their bodies, but must necessarily be dismissed by death; and, on the other hand, he thinks that without bodies they cannot endure for ever, but with ceaseless alternation pass from life to death, and from death to life. This difference, however, he sets between wise men and the rest, that they are carried after death to the stars, that each man may repose for a while in a star suitable for him, and may thence return to the labors and miseries of mortals when he has become oblivious of his former misery, and possessed with the desire of being embodied. Those, again, who have lived foolishly transmigrate into bodies fit for them, whether human or bestial. Thus he has appointed even the good and wise souls to a very hard lot indeed, since they do not receive such bodies as they might always and even immortally inhabit, but such only as they can neither permanently retain nor enjoy eternal purity without. Of this notion of Plato's, we have in a former book already said that Porphyry was ashamed in the light of these Christian times, so that he not only emancipated human souls from a destiny in the bodies of beasts but also contended for the liberation of the souls of the wise from all bodily ties, so that, escaping from all flesh, they might, as bare and blessed souls, dwell with the Father time without end. And that he might not seem to be outbid by Christ's promise of life everlasting to His saints, he also established purified souls in endless felicity, without return to their former woes; but, that he might contradict Christ, he denies the resurrection of incorruptible bodies, and maintains that these souls will live eternally, not only without earthly bodies, but without any bodies at all. And yet, whatever he meant by this teaching, he at least did not teach that these souls should offer no religious observance to the gods who dwelt in bodies. And why did he not, unless because he did not believe that the souls, even though separate from the body, were superior to those gods? Wherefore, if these philosophers will not dare (as I think they will not) to set human souls above the gods who are most blessed, and yet are tied eternally to their bodies, why do they find that absurd which the Christian faith preaches, namely, that our first parents were so created that, if they had not sinned, they would not have been dismissed from their bodies by any death, but would have been endowed with immortality as the reward of their obedience, and would have lived eternally with their bodies; and further, that the saints will in the resurrection inhabit those very bodies in which they have here toiled, but in such sort that neither shall any corruption or unwieldiness be suffered to attach to their flesh, nor any grief or trouble to cloud their felicity?

CHAPTER 20

THAT THE FLESH NOW RESTING IN PEACE SHALL BE RAISED TO A PERFECTION NOT ENJOYED BY THE FLESH OF OUR FIRST PARENTS

Thus the souls of departed saints are not affected by the death which dismisses them from their bodies, because their flesh rests in hope, no matter what indignities it receives after sensation is gone. For they do not desire that their bodies be forgotten, as Plato thinks fit, but rather, because they remember what has been promised by Him who deceives no man, and who gave them security for the safe keeping even of the hairs of their head, they with a longing patience wait in hope of the resurrection of their bodies, in which they have suffered many hardships, and are now to suffer never again. For if they did not “hate their own flesh,” when it, with its native infirmity, opposed their will, and had to be constrained by the spiritual law, how much more shall they love it, when it shall even itself have become spiritual! For as, when the spirit serves the flesh, it is fitly called carnal, so, when the flesh serves the spirit, it will justly be called spiritual. Not that it is converted into spirit, as some fancy from the words, “It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption,” but because it is subject to the spirit with a perfect and marvellous readiness of obedience, and responds in all things to the will that has entered on immortality,—all reluctance, all corruption, and all slowness being removed. For the body will not only be better than it was here in its best estate of health, but it will surpass the bodies of our first parents ere they sinned. For, though they were not to die unless they should sin, yet they used food as men do now, their bodies not being as yet spiritual, but animal only. And though they decayed not with years, nor drew nearer to death,—a condition secured to them in God’s marvellous grace by the tree of life, which grew along with the forbidden tree in the midst of Paradise,—yet they took other nourishment, though not of that one tree, which was interdicted not because it was itself bad, but for the sake of commending a pure and simple obedience, which is the great virtue of the rational creature set under the Creator as his Lord. For, though no evil thing was touched, yet if a thing forbidden was touched, the very disobedience was sin. They were, then, nourished by other fruit, which they took that their animal bodies might not suffer the discomfort of hunger or thirst; but they tasted the tree of life, that death might not steal upon them from any quarter, and that they might not, spent with age, decay. Other fruits were, so to speak, their nourishment, but this their sacrament. So that the tree of life would seem to have been in the terrestrial Paradise what the wisdom of God is in the spiritual, of which it is written, “She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her.”

CHAPTER 21

OF PARADISE, THAT IT CAN BE UNDERSTOOD IN A SPIRITUAL SENSE WITHOUT SACRIFICING THE HISTORIC TRUTH OF THE NARRATIVE REGARDING THE REAL PLACE

On this account some allegorize all that concerns Paradise itself, where the first men, the parents of the human race, are, according to the truth of holy Scripture, recorded to have been; and they understand all its trees and fruit-bearing plants as virtues and habits of life, as if they had no existence in the external world, but were only so spoken of or related for the sake of spiritual meanings. As if there could not be a real terrestrial Paradise! As if there never existed these two women, Sarah and Hagar, nor the two sons who were born to Abraham, the one of the bond woman, the other of the free, because the apostle says that in them the two covenants were prefigured; or as if water never flowed from the rock when Moses struck it, because therein Christ can be seen in a figure, as the same apostle says, "Now that rock was Christ!" No one, then, denies that Paradise may signify the life of the blessed; its four rivers, the four virtues, prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice; its trees, all useful knowledge; its fruits, the customs of the godly; its tree of life, wisdom herself, the mother of all good; and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the experience of a broken commandment. The punishment which God appointed was in itself, a just, and therefore a good thing; but man's experience of it is not good.

These things can also and more profitably be understood of the Church, so that they become prophetic foreshadowings of things to come. Thus Paradise is the Church, as it is called in the Canticles; the four rivers of Paradise are the four gospels; the fruit-trees the saints, and the fruit their works; the tree of life is the holy of holies, Christ; the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the will's free choice. For if man despise the will of God, he can only destroy himself; and so he learns the difference between consecrating himself to the common good and revelling in his own. For he who loves himself is abandoned to himself, in order that, being overwhelmed with fears and sorrows, he may cry, if there be yet soul in him to feel his ills, in the words of the psalm, "My soul is cast down within me," and when chastened, may say," Because of his strength I will wait upon Thee." These and similar allegorical interpretations may be suitably put upon Paradise without giving offence to any one, while yet we believe the strict truth of the history, confirmed by its circumstantial narrative of facts.

CHAPTER 22

THAT THE BODIES OF THE SAINTS SHALL AFTER THE RESURRECTION BE SPIRITUAL, AND YET FLESH SHALL NOT BE CHANGED INTO SPIRIT

The bodies of the righteous, then, such as they shall be in the resurrection, shall need neither any fruit to preserve them from dying of disease or the wasting decay of old age, nor any other physical nourishment to allay the cravings of hunger or of thirst; for they shall be invested with so sure and every way inviolable an immortality, that they shall not eat save when they choose, nor be under the necessity of eating, while they enjoy the power of doing so. For so also was it with the angels who presented themselves to the eye and touch of men, not because they could do no otherwise, but because they were able and desirous to suit themselves to men by a kind of manhood ministry. For neither are we to suppose, when men receive them as guests, that the angels eat only in appearance, though to any who did not know them to be angels they might seem to eat from the same necessity as ourselves. So these words spoken in the Book of Tobit, “You saw me eat, but you saw it but in vision;” that is, you thought I took food as you do for the sake of refreshing my body. But if in the case of the angels another opinion seems more capable of defence, certainly our faith leaves no room to doubt regarding our Lord Himself, that even after His resurrection, and when now in spiritual but yet real flesh, He ate and drank with His disciples; for not the power, but the need, of eating and drinking is taken from these bodies. And so they will be spiritual, not because they shall cease to be bodies, but because they shall subsist by the quickening spirit.

CHAPTER 23

WHAT WE ARE TO UNDERSTAND BY THE ANIMAL AND SPIRITUAL BODY; OR OF THOSE WHO DIE IN ADAM, AND OF THOSE WHO ARE MADE ALIVE IN CHRIST

For as those bodies of ours, that have a living soul, though not as yet a quickening spirit, are called soul-informed bodies, and yet are not souls but bodies, so also those bodies are called spiritual,—yet God forbid we should therefore suppose them to be spirits and not bodies,—which, being quickened by the Spirit, have the substance, but not the unwieldiness and corruption of flesh. Man will then be not earthly but heavenly,—not because the body will not be that very body which was made of earth, but because by its heavenly endowment it will be a fit inhabitant of heaven, and this not by losing its nature, but by changing its quality. The first man, of the earth earthy, was made a living soul, not a quickening spirit,—which rank was reserved for him as the reward of obedience. And therefore his body, which required meat and drink to satisfy hunger and thirst, and which had no absolute and indestructible immortality, but by means of the tree of life warded off the necessity of dying, and was thus maintained in the flower of youth,—this body, I say, was doubtless not spiritual, but animal; and yet it would not have died but that it provoked God’s threatened vengeance by offending. And though sustenance was not denied him even outside Paradise, yet, being forbidden the tree of life, he was delivered over to the wasting of time, at least in respect of that life which, had he not sinned, he might have retained perpetually in Paradise, though only in an animal body, till such time as it became spiritual in acknowledgment of his obedience.

Wherefore, although we understand that this manifest death, which consists in the separation of soul and body, was also signified by God when He said, “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,” it ought not on that account to seem absurd that they were not dismissed from the body on that very day on which they took the forbidden and death-bringing fruit. For certainly on that very day their nature was altered for the worse and vitiated, and by their most just banishment from the tree of life they were involved in the necessity even of bodily death, in which necessity we are born. And therefore the apostle does not say, “The body indeed is doomed to die on account of sin,” but he says, “The body indeed is dead because of sin.” Then he adds, “But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.” Then accordingly shall the body become a quickening spirit which is now a living soul; and yet the apostle calls it “dead,” because already it lies under the necessity of dying. But in Paradise it was so made a living soul, though not a quickening spirit, that it could not properly be called dead, for, save through the commission of sin, it could not come under the power of death. Now, since God by the words, “Adam, where art thou?” pointed to the death of the soul, which results when He abandons it, and since in the words, “Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return,” He signified the death of the body, which results when the soul departs from it, we are led, therefore, to believe that He said nothing of the second death, wishing it to be kept hidden, and reserving it for the New Testament dispensation, in which it is most plainly revealed. And this He did in order that, first of all, it might be evident that this first death, which is common to all, was the result of that sin which in one man became common to all. But the second death is not common to all, those being excepted who were “called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did pre destinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.” Those the grace of God has, by a Mediator, delivered from the second death.

Thus the apostle states that the first man was made in an animal body. For, wishing to distinguish the animal body which now is from the spiritual, which is to be in the resurrection, he says, “It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.” Then, to prove this, he goes on, “There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.” And to show what the animated body is, he says, “Thus it was written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” He wished thus to show what the animated body is, though Scripture did not say of the first man Adam, when his soul was created by the breath of God, “Man was made in an animated body,” but “Man was made a living soul.” By these words, therefore, “The first man was made a living soul,” the apostle wishes man’s animated body to be understood. But how he wishes the spiritual body to be understood he shows when he adds, “But the last Adam was made a quickening spirit,” plainly referring to Christ, who has so risen from the dead that He cannot die any more. He then goes on to say, “But that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.” And here he much more clearly asserts that he referred to the animal body when he said that the first man was made a living soul, and to the spiritual when he said that the last man was made a quickening spirit. The animal body is the first, being such as the first Adam had, and which would not have died had he not sinned, being such also as we now have, its nature being changed and vitiated by sin to the extent of bringing us under the necessity of death, and being such as even Christ condescended first of all to assume, not indeed of necessity, but of choice; but afterwards comes the spiritual body, which already is worn by anticipation by Christ as our head, and will be worn by His members in the resurrection of the dead.

Then the apostle subjoins a notable difference between these two men, saying, “The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy, and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” So he elsewhere says, “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ;” but in very deed this shall be accomplished when that which is animal in us by our birth shall have become spiritual in our resurrection. For, to use his words again,” We are saved by hope.” Now we bear the image of the earthly man by the propagation of sin and death, which pass on us by ordinary generation; but we bear the image of the heavenly by the grace of pardon and life eternal, which regeneration confers upon us through the Mediator of God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. And He is the heavenly Man of Paul’s passage, because He came from heaven to be clothed with a body of earthly mortality, that He might clothe it with heavenly immortality. And he calls others heavenly, because by grace they become His members, that, together with them, He may become one Christ, as head and body. In the same epistle he puts this yet more clearly: “Since by man came death, by Man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,”—that is to say, in a spiritual body which shall be made a quickening spirit. Not that all who die in Adam shall be members of Christ,—for the great majority shall be punished in eternal death,—but he uses the word “all” in both clauses, because, as no one dies in an animal body except in Adam, so no one is quickened a spiritual body save in Christ. We are not, then, by any means to suppose that we shall in the resurrection have such a body as the first man had before he sinned, nor that the words, “As is the earthy such are they also that are earthy,” are to be understood of that which was brought about by sin; for we are not to think that Adam had a spiritual body before he fell, and that, in punishment of his sin, it was changed into an animal body. If this be thought, small heed has been given to the words of so great a teacher, who says, “There is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body; as it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul.” Was it after sin he was made so? or was not this the primal condition of man from which the blessed apostle selects his testimony to show what the animal body is?

CHAPTER 24

HOW WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT BREATHING OF GOD BY WHICH “THE FIRST MAN WAS MADE A LIVING SOUL,” AND THAT ALSO BY WHICH THE LORD CONVEYED HIS SPIRIT TO HIS DISCIPLES WHEN HE SAID, “RECEIVE YE THE HOLY GHOST.”

Some have hastily supposed from the words, “God breathed into Adam’s nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul, “ that a soul was not then first given to man, but that the soul already given was quickened by the Holy Ghost. They are encouraged in this supposition by the fact that the Lord Jesus after His resurrection breathed on His disciples, and said, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit.” From this they suppose that the same thing was effected in either case, as if the evangelist had gone on to say, And they became living souls. But if he had made this addition, we should only understand that the Spirit is in some way the life of souls, and that without Him reasonable souls must be accounted dead, though their bodies seem to live before our eyes. But that this was not what happened when man was created, the very words of the narrative sufficiently show: “And God made man dust of the earth;” which some have thought to render more clearly by the words, “And God formed man of the clay of the earth.” For it had before been said that “there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground,” in order that the reference to clay, formed of this moisture and dust, might be understood. For on this verse there immediately follows the announcement, “And God created man dust of the earth;” so those Greek manuscripts have it from which this passage has been translated into Latin. But whether one prefers to read “created” or “formed,” where the Greek reads eplasen, is of little importance; yet “formed” is the better rendering. But those who preferred “created” thought they thus avoided the ambiguity arising from the fact, that in the Latin language the usage obtains that those are said to form a thing who frame some feigned and fictitious thing. This man, then, who was created of the dust of the earth, or of the moistened dust or clay,—this “dust of the earth” (that I may use the express words of Scripture) was made, as the apostle teaches, an animated body when he received a soul. This man, he says, “was made a living soul;” that is, this fashioned dust was made a living soul.

They say, Already he had a soul, else he would not be called a man; for man is not a body alone, nor a soul alone, but a being composed of both. This, indeed, is true, that the soul is not the whole man, but the better part of man; the body not the whole, but the inferior part of man; and that then, when both are joined, they receive the name of man, which, however, they do not severally lose even when we speak of them singly. For who is prohibited from saying, in colloquial usage, "That man is dead, and is now at rest or in torment," though this can be spoken only of the soul; or "He is buried in such and such a place," though this refers only to the body? Will they say that Scripture follows no such usage? On the contrary, it so thoroughly adopts it, that even while a man is alive, and body and soul are united, it calls each of them singly by the name "man," speaking of the soul as the "inward man," and of the body as the "outward man," as if there were two men, though both together are indeed but one. But we must understand in what sense man is said to be in the image of God, and is yet dust, and to return to the dust. The former is spoken of the rational soul, which God by His breathing, or, to speak more appropriately, by His inspiration, conveyed to man, that is, to his body; but the latter refers to his body, which God formed of the dust, and to which a soul was given, that it might become a living body, that is, that man might become a living soul.

Wherefore, when our Lord breathed on His disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," He certainly wished it to be understood that the Holy Ghost was not only the Spirit of the Father, but of the only begotten Son Himself. For the same Spirit is, indeed, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, making with them the trinity of Father, Son, and Spirit, not a creature, but the Creator. For neither was that material breath which proceeded from the mouth of His flesh the very substance and nature of the Holy Spirit, but rather the intimation, as I said, that the Holy Spirit was common to the Father and to the Son; for they have not each a separate Spirit, but both one and the same. Now this Spirit is always spoken of in sacred Scripture by the Greek word pneuma, as the Lord, too, named Him in the place cited when He gave Him to His disciples, and intimated the gift by the breathing of His lips; and there does not occur to me any place in the whole Scriptures where He is otherwise named. But in this passage where it is said, "And the Lord formed man dust of the earth, and breathed, or inspired, into his face the breath of life;” the Greek has not pneuma, the usual word for the Holy Spirit, but pnoe, a word more frequently used of the creature than of the Creator; and for this reason some Latin interpreters have preferred to render it by “breath” rather than “spirit.” For this word occurs also in the Greek in Isaiah chapter vii, verse 16 where God says, “I have made all breath,” meaning, doubtless, all souls. Accordingly, this word pnoe is sometimes rendered “breath,” sometimes “spirit,” sometimes “inspiration,” sometimes “aspiration,” sometimes “soul,” even when it is used of God. Pneuma, on the other hand, is uniformly rendered “spirit,” whether of man, of whom the apostle says, “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?” or of beast, as in the book of Solomon, “Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?” or of that physical spirit which is called wind, for so the Psalmist calls it: “Fire and hail; snow and vapors; stormy wind;” or of the uncreated Creator Spirit, of whom the Lord said in the gospel, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,” indicating the gift by the breathing of His mouth; and when He says, “Go ye and baptize all nations in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,” words which very expressly and excellently commend the Trinity; and where it is said, “God is a Spirit;” and in very many other places of the sacred writings. In all these quotations from Scripture we do not find in the Greek the word pnoe used, but pneuma, and in the Latin, not flatus, but spiritus. Wherefore, referring again to that place where it is written, “He inspired,” or to speak more properly, “breathed into his face the breath of life,” even though the Greek had not used pnoe (as it has) but pneuma, it would not on that account necessarily follow that the Creator Spirit, who in the Trinity is distinctively called the Holy Ghost, was meant, since, as has been said, it is plain that pneuma is used not only of the Creator, but also of the creature.

But, say they, when the Scripture used the word “spirit,” it would not have added “of life” unless it meant us to understand the Holy Spirit; nor, when it said, “Man became a soul,” would it also have inserted the word “living” unless that life of the soul were signified which is imparted to it from above by the gift of God. For, seeing that the soul by itself has a proper life of its own, what need, they ask, was there of adding living, save only to show that the life which is given it by the Holy Spirit was meant? What is this but to fight strenuously for their own conjectures, while they carelessly neglect the teaching of Scripture? Without troubling themselves much, they might have found in a preceding page of this very book of Genesis the words, “Let the earth bring forth the living soul,” when all the terrestrial animals were created. Then at a slight interval, but still in the same book, was it impossible for them to notice this verse, “All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died,” by which it was signified that all the animals which lived on the earth had perished in the deluge? If, then, we find that Scripture is accustomed to speak both of the “living soul” and the “spirit of life” even in reference to beasts; and if in this place, where it is said, “All things which have the spirit of life,” the word pnoe, not pneuma, is used; why may we not say, What need was there to add “living,” since the soul cannot exist without being alive? or, What need to add “of life” after the word spirit? But we understand that Scripture used these expressions in its ordinary style so long as it speaks of animals, that is, animated bodies, in which the soul serves as the residence of sensation; but when man is spoken of, we forget the ordinary and established usage of Scripture, whereby it signifies that man received a rational soul, which was not produced out of the waters and the earth like the other living creatures, but was created by the breath of God. Yet this creation was ordered that the human soul should live in an animal body, like those other animals of which the Scripture said, “Let the earth produce every living soul,” and regarding which it again says that in them is the breath of life, where the word pnoe and not pneuma is used in the Greek, and where certainly not the Holy Spirit, but their spirit, is signified under that name.

But, again, they object that breath is understood to have been emitted from the mouth of God; and if we believe that is the soul, we must consequently acknowledge it to be of the same substance, and equal to that wisdom, which says, “I come out of the mouth of the Most High.” Wisdom, indeed, does not say it was breathed out of the mouth of God, but proceeded out of it. But as we are able, when we breathe, to make a breath, not of our own human nature, but of the surrounding air, which we inhale and exhale as we draw our breath and breathe again, so almighty God was able to make breath, not of His own nature, nor of the creature beneath Him, but even of nothing; and this breath, when He communicated it to man's body, He is most appropriately said to have breathed or inspired,—the Immaterial breathing it also immaterial, but the Immutable not also the immutable; for it was created, He uncreated. Yet that these persons who are forward to quote Scripture, and yet know not the usages of its language, may know that not only what is equal and consubstantial with God is said to proceed out of His mouth, let them hear or read what God says: "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

There is no ground, then, for our objecting, when the apostle so expressly distinguishes the animal body from the spiritual—that is to say, the body in which we now are from that in which we are to be. He says, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Of all which words of his we have previously spoken. The animal body, accordingly, in which the apostle says that the first man Adam was made, was not so made that it could not die at all, but so that it should not die unless he should have sinned. That body, indeed, which shall be made spiritual and immortal by the quickening Spirit shall not be able to die at all; as the soul has been created immortal, and therefore, although by sin it may be said to die, and does lose a certain life of its own, namely, the Spirit of God, by whom it was enabled to live wisely and blessedly, yet it does not cease living a kind of life, though a miserable, because it is immortal by creation. So, too, the rebellious angels, though by sinning they did in a sense die, because they forsook God, the Fountain of life, which while they drank they were able to live wisely and well, yet they could not so die as to utterly cease living and feeling, for they are immortals by creation. And so, after the final judgment, they shall be hurled into the second death, and not even there be deprived of life or of sensation, but shall suffer torment. But those men who have been embraced by God's grace, and are become the fellow-citizens of the holy angels who have continued in bliss, shall never more either sin or die, being endued with spiritual bodies; yet, being clothed with immortality, such as the angels enjoy, of which they cannot be divested even by sinning, the nature of their flesh shall continue the same, but all carnal corruption and unwieldiness shall be removed.

There remains a question which must be discussed, and, by the help of the Lord God of truth, solved: If the motion of concupiscence in the unruly members of our first parents arose out of their sin, and only when the divine grace deserted them; and if it was on that occasion that their eyes were opened to see, or, more exactly, notice their nakedness, and that they covered their shame because the shameless motion of their members was not subject to their will,—how, then, would they have begotten children had they remained sinless as they were created? But as this book must be concluded, and so large a question cannot be summarily disposed of, we may relegate it to the following book, in which it will be more conveniently treated.

Book XIV

Argument—Augustin again treats of the sin of the first man, and teaches that it is the cause of the carnal life and vicious affections of man. Especially he proves that the shame which accompanies lust is the just punishment of that disobedience, and inquires how man, if he had not sinned, would have been able without lust to propagate his kind.

CHAPTER 1

THAT THE DISOBEDIENCE OF THE FIRST MAN WOULD HAVE PLUNGED ALL MEN INTO THE ENDLESS MISERY OF THE SECOND DEATH, HAD NOT THE GRACE OF GOD RESCUED MANY

We have already stated in the preceding books that God, desiring not only that the human race might be able by their similarity of nature to associate with one another, but also that they might be bound together in harmony and peace by the ties of relationship, was pleased to derive all men from one individual, and created man with such a nature that the members of the race should not have died, had not the two first (of whom the one was created out of nothing, and the other out of him) merited this by their disobedience; for by them so great a sin was committed, that by it the human nature was altered for the worse, and was transmitted also to their posterity, liable to sin and subject to death. And the kingdom of death so reigned over men, that the deserved penalty of sin would have hurled all headlong even into the second death, of which there is no end, had not the undeserved grace of God saved some therefrom. And thus it has come to pass, that though there are very many and great nations all over the earth, whose rites and customs, speech, arms, and dress, are distinguished by marked differences, yet there are no more than two kinds of human society, which we may justly call two cities, according to the language of our Scriptures. The one consists of those who wish to live after the flesh, the other of those who wish to live after the spirit; and when they severally achieve what they wish, they live in peace, each after their kind.

CHAPTER 2

OF CARNAL LIFE, WHICH IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD NOT ONLY OF LIVING IN BODILY INDULGENCE, BUT ALSO OF LIVING IN THE VICES OF THE INNER MAN

First, we must see what it is to live after the flesh, and what to live after the spirit. For any one who either does not recollect, or does not sufficiently weigh, the language of sacred Scripture, may, on first hearing what we have said, suppose that the Epicurean philosophers live after the flesh, because they place man’s highest good in bodily pleasure; and that those others do so who have been of opinion that in some form or other bodily good is man’s supreme good; and that the mass of men do so who, without dogmatizing or philosophizing on the subject, are so prone to lust that they cannot delight in any pleasure save such as they receive from bodily sensations: and he may suppose that the Stoics, who place the supreme good of men in the soul, live after the spirit; for what is man’s soul, if not spirit? But in the sense of the divine Scripture both are proved to live after the flesh. For by flesh it means not only the body of a terrestrial and mortal animal, as when it says, “All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, another of birds,” but it uses this word in many other significations; and among these various usages, a frequent one is to use flesh for man himself, the nature of man taking the part for the whole, as in the words, “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified;” for what does he mean here by “no flesh” but “no man?” And this, indeed, he shortly after says more plainly: “No man shall be justified by the law;” and in the Epistle to the Galatians, “Knowing that man is not justified by the works of the law.” And so we understand the words, “And the Word was made flesh,”—that is, man, which some not accepting in its right sense, have supposed that Christ had not a human soul. For as the whole is used for the part in the words of Mary Magdalene in the Gospel, “They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him,” by which she meant only the flesh of Christ, which she supposed had been taken from the tomb where it had been buried, so the part is used for the whole, flesh being named, while man is referred to, as in the quotations above cited.

Since, then, Scripture uses the word flesh in many ways, which there is not time to collect and investigate, if we are to ascertain what it is to live after the flesh (which is certainly evil, though the nature of flesh is not itself evil), we must carefully examine that passage of the epistle which the Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians, in which he says, “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” This whole passage of the apostolic epistle being considered, so far as it bears on the matter in hand, will be sufficient to answer the question, what it is to live after the flesh. For among the works of the flesh which he said were manifest, and which he cited for condemnation, we find not only those which concern the pleasure of the flesh, as fornications, uncleanness, lasciviousness, drunkenness, revellings, but also those which, though they be remote from fleshly pleasure, reveal the vices of the soul. For who does not see that idolatries, witchcrafts, hatreds, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, heresies, envyings, are vices rather of the soul than of the flesh? For it is quite possible for a man to abstain from fleshly pleasures for the sake of idolatry or some heretical error; and yet, even when he does so, he is proved by this apostolic authority to be living after the flesh; and in abstaining from fleshly pleasure, he is proved to be practising damnable works of the flesh. Who that has enmity has it not in his soul? or who would say to his enemy, or to the man he thinks his enemy, You have a bad flesh towards me, and not rather, You have a bad spirit towards me? In fine, if any one heard of what I may call “carnalities,” he would not fail to attribute them to the carnal part of man; so no one doubts that “animosities” belong to the soul of man. Why then does the doctor of the Gentiles in faith and verity call all these and similar things works of the flesh, unless because, by that mode of speech whereby the part is used for the whole, he means us to understand by the word flesh the man himself?

CHAPTER 3

THAT THE SIN IS CAUSED NOT BY THE FLESH, BUT BY THE SOUL, AND THAT THE CORRUPTION CONTRACTED FROM SIN IS NOT SIN BUT SIN’S PUNISHMENT

But if any one says that the flesh is the cause of all vices and ill conduct, inasmuch as the soul lives wickedly only because it is moved by the flesh, it is certain he has not carefully considered the whole nature of man. For “the corruptible body, indeed, weigheth down the soul.” Whence, too, the apostle, speaking of this corruptible body, of which he had shortly before said, “though our outward man perish,” says, “We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up in life.” We are then burdened with this corruptible body; but knowing that the cause of this burdensomeness is not the nature and substance of the body, but its corruption, we do not desire to be deprived of the body, but to be clothed with its immortality. For then, also, there will be a body, but it shall no longer be a burden, being no longer corruptible. At present, then, “the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things,” nevertheless they are in error who suppose that all the evils of the soul proceed from the body.

Virgil, indeed, seems to express the sentiments of Plato in the beautiful lines, where he says,—

“A fiery strength inspires their lives,

An essence that from heaven derives,

Though clogged in part by limbs of clay

And the dull ‘vesture of decay;’“

but though he goes on to mention the four most common mental emotions,—desire, fear, joy, sorrow,—with the intention of showing that the body is the origin of all sins and vices, saying,—

“Hence wild desires and grovelling fears,

And human laughter, human tears,

Immured in dungeon-seeming nights

They look abroad, yet see no light,”

yet we believe quite otherwise. For the corruption of the body, which weighs down the soul, is not the cause but the punishment of the first sin; and it was not the corruptible flesh that made the soul sinful, but the sinful soul that made the flesh corruptible. And though from this corruption of the flesh there arise certain incitements to vice, and indeed vicious desires, yet we must not attribute to the flesh all the vices of a wicked life, in case we thereby clear the devil of all these, for he has no flesh. For though we cannot call the devil a fornicator or drunkard, or ascribe to him any sensual indulgence (though he is the secret instigator and prompter of those who sin in these ways), yet he is exceedingly proud and envious. And this viciousness has so possessed him, that on account of it he is reserved in chains of darkness to everlasting punishment. Now these vices, which have dominion over the devil, the apostle attributes to the flesh, which certainly the devil has not. For he says “hatred, variance, emulations, strife, envying” are the works of the flesh; and of all these evils pride is the origin and head, and it rules in the devil though he has no flesh. For who shows more hatred to the saints? who is more at variance with them? who more envious, bitter, and jealous? And since he exhibits all these works, though he has no flesh, how are they works of the flesh, unless because they are the works of man, who is, as I said, spoken of under the name of flesh? For it is not by having flesh, which the devil has not, but by living according to himself,—that is, according to man,—that man became like the devil. For the devil too, wished to live according to himself when he did not abide in the truth; so that when he lied, this was not of God, but of himself, who is not only a liar, but the father of lies, he being the first who lied, and the originator of lying as of sin.

CHAPTER 4

WHAT IT IS TO LIVE ACCORDING TO MAN, AND WHAT TO LIVE ACCORDING TO GOD

When, therefore, man lives according to man, not according to God, he is like the devil. Because not even an angel might live according to an angel, but only according to God, if he was to abide in the truth, and speak God's truth and not his own lie. And of man, too, the same apostle says in another place, "If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie;"—"my lie," he said, and "God's truth." When, then, a man lives according to the truth, he lives not according to himself, but according to God; for He was God who said, "I am the truth." When, therefore, man lives according to himself, —that is, according to man, not according to God,—assuredly he lives according to a lie; not that man himself is a lie, for God is his author and creator, who is certainly not the author and creator of a lie, but because man was made upright, that he might not live according to himself, but according to Him that made him,—in other words, that he might do His will and not his own; and not to live as he was made to live, that is a lie. For he certainly desires to be blessed even by not living so that he may be blessed. And what is a lie if this desire be not? Wherefore it is not without meaning said that all sin is a lie. For no sin is committed save by that desire or will by which we desire that it be well with us, and shrink from it being ill with us. That, therefore, is a lie which we do in order that it may be well with us, but which makes us more miserable than we were. And why is this, but because the source of man's happiness lies only in God, whom he abandons when he sins, and not in himself, by living according to whom he sins?

In enunciating this proposition of ours, then, that because some live according to the flesh and others according to the spirit, there have arisen two diverse and conflicting cities, we might equally well have said, "because some live according to man, others according to God." For Paul says very plainly to the Corinthians, "For whereas there is among you envying and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man?" So that to walk according to man and to be carnal are the same; for by flesh, that is, by a part of man, man is meant. For before he said that those same persons were animal whom afterwards he calls carnal, saying, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the animal man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him.” It is to men of this kind, then, that is, to animal men, he shortly after says, “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal.” And this is to be interpreted by the same usage, a part being taken for the whole. For both the soul and the flesh, the component parts of man, can be used to signify the whole man; and so the animal man and the carnal man are not two different things, but one and the same thing, viz., man living according to man. In the same way it is nothing else than men that are meant either in the words, “By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified;” or in the words, “Seventy-five souls went down into Egypt with Jacob.” In the one passage, “no flesh” signifies “no man;” and in the other, by “seventy-five souls” seventy-five men are meant. And the expression, “not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth” might equally be “not in words which fleshly wisdom teacheth;” and the expression, “ye walk according to man,” might be “according to the flesh.” And this is still more apparent in the words which followed: “For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not men?” The same thing which he had before expressed by “ye are animal,” “ye are carnal, he now expresses by “ye are men;” that is, ye live according to man, not according to God, for if you lived according to Him, you should be gods.

CHAPTER 5

THAT THE OPINION OF THE PLATONISTS REGARDING THE NATURE OF BODY AND SOUL IS NOT SO CENSURABLE AS THAT OF THE MANICHAEANS, BUT THAT EVEN IT IS OBJECTIONABLE, BECAUSE IT ASCRIBES THE ORIGIN OF VICES TO THE NATURE OF THE FLESH

There is no need, therefore, that in our sins and vices we accuse the nature of the flesh to the injury of the Creator, for in its own kind and degree the flesh is good; but to desert the Creator good, and live according to the created good, is not good, whether a man choose to live according to the flesh, or according to the soul, or according to the whole human nature, which is composed of flesh and soul, and which is therefore spoken of either by the name flesh alone, or by the name soul alone. For he who extols the nature of the soul as the chief good, and condemns the nature of the flesh as if it were evil, assuredly is fleshly both in his love of the soul and hatred of the flesh; for these his feelings arise from human fancy, not from divine truth. The Platonists, indeed, are not so foolish as, with the Manichaeans, to detest our present bodies as an evil nature; for they attribute all the elements of which this visible and tangible world is compacted, with all their qualities, to God their Creator. Nevertheless, from the death-infected members and earthly construction of the body they believe the soul is so affected, that there are thus originated in it the diseases of desires, and fears, and joy, and sorrow, under which four perturbations, as Cicero calls them, or passions, as most prefer to name them with the Greeks, is included the whole viciousness of human life. But if this be so, how is it that AEneas in Virgil, when he had heard from his father in Hades that the souls should return to bodies, expresses surprise at this declaration, and exclaims:

“O father! and can thought conceive

That happy souls this realm would leave,

And seek the upper sky,

With sluggish clay to reunite?

This direful longing for the light,

Whence comes it, say, and why?”

This direful longing, then, does it still exist even in that boasted purity of the disembodied spirits, and does it still proceed from the death-infected members and earthly limbs? Does he not assert that, when they begin to long to return to the body, they have already been delivered from all these so-called pestilences of the body? From which we gather that, were this endlessly alternating purification and defilement of departing and returning souls as true as it is most certainly false, yet it could not be averred that all culpable and vicious motions of the soul originate in the earthly body; for, on their own showing, “this direful longing,” to use the words of their noble exponent, is so extraneous to the body, that it moves the soul that is purged of all bodily taint, and is existing apart from any body whatever, and moves it, moreover, to be embodied again. So that even they themselves acknowledge that the soul is not only moved to desire, fear, joy, sorrow, by the flesh, but that it can also be agitated with these emotions at its own instance.

CHAPTER 6

OF THE CHARACTER OF THE HUMAN WILL WHICH MAKES THE AFFECTIONS OF THE SOUL RIGHT OR WRONG

But the character of the human will is of moment; because, if it is wrong, these motions of the soul will be wrong, but if it is right, they will be not merely blameless, but even praiseworthy. For the will is in them all; yea, none of them is anything else than will. For what are desire and joy but a volition of consent to the things we wish? And what are fear and sadness but a volition of aversion from the things which we do not wish? But when consent takes the form of seeking to possess the things we wish, this is called desire; and when consent takes the form of enjoying the things we wish, this is called joy. In like manner, when we turn with aversion from that which we do not wish to happen, this volition is termed fear; and when we turn away from that which has happened against our will, this act of will is called sorrow. And generally in respect of all that we seek or shun, as a man's will is attracted or repelled, so it is changed and turned into these different affections. Wherefore the man who lives according to God, and not according to man, ought to be a lover of good, and therefore a hater of evil. And since no one is evil by nature, but whoever is evil is evil by vice, he who lives according to God ought to cherish towards evil men a perfect hatred, so that he shall neither hate the man because of his vice, nor love the vice because of the man, but hate the vice and love the man. For the vice being cursed, all that ought to be loved, and nothing that ought to be hated, will remain.

CHAPTER 7

THAT THE WORDS LOVE AND REGARD (AMOR AND DILECTIO) ARE IN SCRIPTURE USED INDIFFERENTLY OF GOOD AND EVIL AFFECTION

He who resolves to love God, and to love his neighbor as himself, not according to man but according to God, is on account of this love said to be of a good will; and this is in Scripture more commonly called charity, but it is also, even in the same books, called love. For the apostle says that the man to be elected as a ruler of the people must be a lover of good. And when the Lord Himself had asked Peter, “Hast thou a regard for me (diligis) more than these?” Peter replied, “Lord, Thou knowest that I love (amo) Thee.” And again a second time the Lord asked not whether Peter loved (amaret) Him, but whether he had a regard (diligeret)for Him, and, he again answered, “Lord, Thou knowest that I love (amo) Thee.” But on the third interrogation the Lord Himself no longer says, “Hast thou a regard (diligis) for me,”but “Lovest thou (amas) me?” And then the evangelist adds, “Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, “Lovest thou (amas) me?” though the Lord had not said three times but only once, “Lovest thou (amas) me?” and twice “Diligis me ?” from which we gather that, even when the Lord said “diligis,” He used an equivalent for “amas.” Peter, too, throughout used one word for the one thing, and the third time also replied, “Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love (amo) Thee.”

I have judged it right to mention this, because some are of opinion that charity or regard (dilectio) is one thing, love (amor) another. They say that dilectio is used of a good affection, amor of an evil love. But it is very certain that even secular literature knows no such distinction. However, it is for the philosophers to determine whether and how they differ, though their own writings sufficiently testify that they make great account of love (amor) placed on good objects, and even on God Himself. But we wished to show that the Scriptures of our religion, whose authority we prefer to all writings whatsoever, make no distinction between amor, dilectio, and caritas; and we have already shown that amor is used in a good connection. And if any one fancy that amor is no doubt used both of good and bad loves, but that dilectio is reserved for the good only, let him remember what the psalm says, “He that loveth (diligit) iniquity hateth his own soul;” and the words of the Apostle John, “If any man love (diligere) the world, the love (dilectio) of the Father is not in him.” Here you have in one passage dilectio used both in a good and a bad sense. And if any one demands an instance of amor being used in a bad sense (for we have already shown its use in a good sense), let him read the words, “For men shall be lovers (amantes) of their own selves, lovers (amatores) of money.”

The right will is, therefore, well-directed love, and the wrong will is ill-directed love. Love, then, yearning to have what is loved, is desire; and having and enjoying it, is joy; fleeing what is opposed to it, it is fear; and feeling what is opposed to it, when it has befallen it, it is sadness. Now these motions are evil if the love is evil; good if the love is good. What we assert let us prove from Scripture. The apostle “desires to depart, and to be with Christ.” And, “My soul desired to long for Thy judgments;” or if it is more appropriate to say, “My soul longed to desire Thy judgments.” And, “The desire of wisdom bringeth to a kingdom.” Yet there has always obtained the usage of understanding desire and concupiscence in a bad sense if the object be not defined. But joy is used in a good sense: “Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous.” And, “Thou hast put gladness in my heart.” And, “Thou wilt fill me with joy with Thy countenance.” Fear is used in a good sense by the apostle when he says, “Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” And, “Be not high-minded, but fear.” And, “I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” But with respect to sadness, which Cicero prefer to calls sickness (oegritudo), and Virgil pain (dolor) (as he says, “Dolent gaudentque”), but which I prefer to call sorrow, because sickness and pain are more commonly used to express bodily suffering,—with respect to this emotion, I say, the question whether it can be used in a good sense is more difficult.

CHAPTER 8

OF THE THREE PERTURBATIONS, WHICH THE STOICS ADMITTED IN THE SOUL OF THE WISE MAN TO THE EXCLUSION OF GRIEF OR SADNESS, WHICH THE MANLY MIND OUGHT NOT TO EXPERIENCE

Those emotions which the Greeks call eupatheiai, and which Cicero calls constantioe, the Stoics would restrict to three; and, instead of three “perturbations” in the soul of the wise man, they substituted severally, in place of desire, will; in place of joy, contentment; and for fear, caution; and as to sickness or pain, which we, to avoid ambiguity, preferred to call sorrow, they denied that it could exist in the mind of a wise man. Will, they say, seeks the good, for this the wise man does. Contentment has its object in good that is possessed, and this the wise man continually possesses. Caution avoids evil, and this the wise man ought to avoid. But sorrow arises from evil that has already happened; and as they suppose that no evil can happen to the wise man, there can be no representative of sorrow in his mind. According to them, therefore, none but the wise man wills, is contented, uses caution; and that the fool can do no more than desire, rejoice, fear, be sad. The former three affections Cicero calls constantioe, the last four perturbationes. Many, however, calls these last passions; and, as I have said, the Greeks call the former eupatheiai, and the latter pathe. And when I made a careful examination of Scripture to find whether this terminology was sanctioned by it, I came upon this saying of the prophet: "There is no contentment to the wicked, saith the Lord;" as if the wicked might more properly rejoice than be contented regarding evils, for contentment is the property of the good and godly. I found also that verse in the Gospel: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them?" which seems to imply that evil or shameful things may be the object of desire, but not of will. Indeed, some interpreters have added "good things," to make the expression more in conformity with customary usage, and have given this meaning, "Whatsoever good deeds that ye would that men should do unto you." For they thought that this would prevent any one from wishing other men to provide him with unseemly, not to say shameful gratifications,—luxurious banquets, for example,—on the supposition that if he returned the like to them he would be fulfilling this precept. In the Greek Gospel, however, from which the Latin is translated, "good" does not occur, but only, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them," and, as I believe, because "good" is already included in the word "would;" for He does not say "desire."

Yet though we may sometimes avail ourselves of these precise proprieties of language, we are not to be always bridled by them; and when we read those writers against whose authority it is unlawful to reclaim, we must accept the meanings above mentioned in passages where a right sense can be educed by no other interpretation, as in those instances we adduced partly from the prophet, partly from the Gospel. For who does not know that the wicked exult with joy? Yet “there is no contentment for the wicked, saith the Lord.” And how so, unless because contentment, when the word is used in its proper and distinctive significance, means something different from joy? In like manner, who would deny that it were wrong to enjoin upon men that whatever they desire others to do to them they should themselves do to others, lest they should mutually please one another by shameful and illicit pleasure? And yet the precept, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them,” is very wholesome and just. And how is this, unless because the will is in this place used strictly, and signifies that will which cannot have evil for its object? But ordinary phraseology would not have allowed the saying, “Be unwilling to make any manner of lie,” had there not been also an evil will, whose wickedness separates if from that which the angels celebrated, “Peace on earth, of good will to men.” For “good” is superfluous if there is no other kind of will but good will. And why should the apostle have mentioned it among the praises of charity as a great thing, that “it rejoices not in iniquity,” unless because wickedness does so rejoice? For even with secular writers these words are used indifferently. For Cicero, that most fertile of orators, says, “I desire, conscript fathers, to be merciful.” And who would be so pedantic as to say that he should have said “I will” rather than “I desire,” because the word is used in a good connection? Again, in Terence, the profligate youth, burning with wild lust, says, “I will nothing else than Philumena.” That this “will” was lust is sufficiently indicated by the answer of his old servant which is there introduced: “How much better were it to try and banish that love from your heart, than to speak so as uselessly to inflame your passion still more!” And that contentment was used by secular writers in a bad sense that verse of Virgil testifies, in which he most succinctly comprehends these four perturbations,—

“Hence they fear and desire, grieve and are content”

The same author had also used the expression, “the evil contentments of the mind.” So that good and bad men alike will, are cautious, and contented; or, to say the same thing in other words, good and bad men alike desire, fear, rejoice, but the former in a good, the latter in a bad fashion, according as the will is right or wrong. Sorrow itself, too, which the Stoics would not allow to be represented in the mind of the wise man, is used in a good sense, and especially in our writings. For the apostle praises the Corinthians because they had a godly sorrow. But possibly some one may say that the apostle congratulated them because they were penitently sorry, and that such sorrow can exist only in those who have sinned. For these are his words: “For I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For, behold, this selfsame thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you!” Consequently the Stoics may defend themselves by replying, that sorrow is indeed useful for repentance of sin, but that this can have no place in the mind of the wise man, inasmuch as no sin attaches to him of which he could sorrowfully repent, nor any other evil the endurance or experience of which could make him sorrowful. For they say that Alcibiades (if my memory does not deceive me), who believed himself happy, shed tears when Socrates argued with him, and demonstrated that he was miserable because he was foolish. In his case, therefore, folly was the cause of this useful and desirable sorrow, wherewith a man mourns that he is what he ought not to be. But the Stoics maintain not that the fool, but that the wise man, cannot be sorrowful.

CHAPTER 9

OF THE PERTURBATIONS OF THE SOUL WHICH APPEAR AS RIGHT AFFECTIONS IN THE LIFE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

But so far as regards this question of mental perturbations, we have answered these philosophers in the ninth book of this work, showing that it is rather a verbal than a real dispute, and that they seek contention rather than truth. Among ourselves, according to the sacred Scriptures and sound doctrine, the citizens of the holy city of God, who live according to God in the pilgrimage of this life, both fear and desire, and grieve and rejoice. And because their love is rightly placed, all these affections of theirs are right. They fear eternal punishment, they desire eternal life; they grieve because they themselves groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of their body; they rejoice in hope, because there “shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” In like manner they fear to sin, they desire to persevere; they grieve in sin, they rejoice in good works. They fear to sin, because they hear that “because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.” They desire to persevere, because they hear that it is written, “He that endureth to the end shall be saved.” They grieve for sin, hearing that “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” They rejoice in good works, because they hear that “the Lord loveth a cheerful giver.” In like manner, according as they are strong or weak, they fear or desire to be tempted, grieve or rejoice in temptation. They fear to be tempted, because they hear the injunction, “If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” They desire to be tempted, because they hear one of the heroes of the city of God saying, “Examine me, O Lord, and tempt me: try my reins and my heart.” They grieve in temptations, because they see Peter weeping; they rejoice in temptations, because they hear James saying, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.”

And not only on their own account do they experience these emotions, but also on account of those whose deliverance they desire and whose perdition they fear, and whose loss or salvation affects them with grief or with joy. For if we who have come into the Church from among the Gentiles may suitably instance that noble and mighty hero who glories in his infirmities, the teacher (doctor) of the nations in faith and truth, who also labored more than all his fellow-apostles, and instructed the tribes of God’s people by his epistles, which edified not only those of his own time, but all those who were to be gathered in,—that hero, I say, and athlete of Christ, instructed by Him, anointed of His Spirit, crucified with Him, glorious in Him, lawfully maintaining a great conflict on the theatre of this world, and being made a spectacle to angels and men, and pressing onwards for the prize of his high calling,—very joyfully do we with the eyes of faith behold him rejoicing with them that rejoice, and weeping with them that weep; though hampered by fightings without and fears within; desiring to depart and to be with

Christ; longing to see the Romans, that he might have some fruit among them as among other Gentiles; being jealous over the Corinthians, and fearing in that jealousy lest their minds should be corrupted from the chastity that is in Christ; having great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart for the Israelites, because they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God; and expressing not only his sorrow, but bitter lamentation over some who had formally sinned and had not repented of their uncleanness and fornications.

If these emotions and affections, arising as they do from the love of what is good and from a holy charity, are to be called vices, then let us allow these emotions which are truly vices to pass under the name of virtues. But since these affections, when they are exercised in a becoming way, follow the guidance of right reason, who will dare to say that they are diseases or vicious passions? Wherefore even the Lord Himself, when He condescended to lead a human life in the form of a slave, had no sin whatever, and yet exercised these emotions where He judged they should be exercised. For as there was in Him a true human body and a true human soul, so was there also a true human emotion. When, therefore, we read in the Gospel that the hard-heartedness of the Jews moved Him to sorrowful indignation, that He said, "I am glad for your sakes, to the intent ye may believe," that when about to raise Lazarus He even shed tears, that He earnestly desired to eat the passover with His disciples, that as His passion drew near His soul was sorrowful, these emotions are certainly not falsely ascribed to Him. But as He became man when it pleased Him, so, in the grace of His definite purpose, when it pleased Him He experienced those emotions in His human soul.

But we must further make the admission, that even when these affections are well regulated, and according to God's will, they are peculiar to this life, not to that future life we look for, and that often we yield to them against our will. And thus sometimes we weep in spite of ourselves, being carried beyond ourselves, not indeed by culpable desire; but by praiseworthy charity. In us, therefore, these affections arise from human infirmity; but it was not so with the Lord Jesus, for even His infirmity was the consequence of His power. But so long as we wear the infirmity of this life, we are rather worse men than better if we have none of these emotions at all. For the apostle vituperated and abominated some who, as he said, were “without natural affection.” The sacred Psalmist also found fault with those of whom he said, “I looked for some to lament with me, and there was none.” For to be quite free from pain while we are in this place of misery is only purchased, as one of this world’s literati perceived and remarked, at the price of blunted sensibilities both of mind and body. And therefore that which the Greeks call apatheia, and what the Latins would call, if their language would allow them, “impassibilitas,” if it be taken to mean an impassibility of spirit and not of body, or, in other words, a freedom from those emotions which are contrary to reason and disturb the mind, then it is obviously a good and most desirable quality, but it is not one which is attainable in this life. For the words of the apostle are the confession, not of the common herd, but of the eminently pious, just, and holy men: “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” When there shall be no sin in a man, then there shall be this apatheia. At present it is enough if we live without crime; and he who thinks he lives without sin puts aside not sin, but pardon. And if that is to be called apathy, where the mind is the subject of no emotion, then who would not consider this insensibility to be worse than all vices? It may, indeed, reasonably be maintained that the perfect blessedness we hope for shall be free from all sting of fear or sadness; but who that is not quite lost to truth would say that neither love nor joy shall be experienced there? But if by apathy a condition be meant in which no fear terrifies nor any pain annoys, we must in this life renounce such a state if we would live according to God’s will, but may hope to enjoy it in that blessedness which is promised as our eternal condition.

For that fear of which the Apostle John says, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love,”—that fear is not of the same kind as the Apostle Paul felt lest the Corinthians should be seduced by the subtlety of the serpent; for love is susceptible of this fear, yea, love alone is capable of it. But the fear which is not in love is of that kind of which Paul himself says, “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear.” But as for that “clean fear which endureth for ever,” if it is to exist in the world to come (and how else can it be said to endure for ever?), it is not a fear deterring us from evil which may happen, but preserving us in the good which cannot be lost. For where the love of acquired good is unchangeable, there certainly the fear that avoids evil is, if I may say so, free from anxiety. For under the name of “clean fear” David signifies that will by which we shall necessarily shrink from sin, and guard against it, not with the anxiety of weakness, which fears that we may strongly sin, but with the tranquillity of perfect love. Or if no kind of fear at all shall exist in that most imperturbable security of perpetual and blissful delights, then the expression, “The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever,” must be taken in the same sense as that other, “The patience of the poor shall not perish for ever.” For patience, which is necessary only where ills are to be borne, shall not be eternal, but that which patience leads us to will be eternal. So perhaps this “clean fear” is said to endure for ever, because that to which fear leads shall endure.

And since this is so,—since we must live a good life in order to attain to a blessed life, a good life has all these affections right, a bad life has them wrong. But in the blessed life eternal there will be love and joy, not only right, but also assured; but fear and grief there will be none. Whence it already appears in some sort what manner of persons the citizens of the city of God must be in this their pilgrimage, who live after the spirit, not after the flesh,—that is to say, according to God, not according to man,—and what manner of persons they shall be also in that immortality whither they are journeying. And the city or society of the wicked, who live not according to God, but according to man, and who accept the doctrines of men or devils in the worship of a false and contempt of the true divinity, is shaken with those wicked emotions as by diseases and disturbances. And if there be some of its citizens who seem to restrain and, as it were, temper those passions, they are so elated with ungodly pride, that their disease is as much greater as their pain is less. And if some, with a vanity monstrous in proportion to its rarity, have become enamored of themselves because they can be stimulated and excited by no emotion, moved or bent by no affection, such persons rather lose all humanity than obtain true tranquillity.

For a thing is not necessarily right because it is inflexible, nor healthy because it is insensible.

CHAPTER 10

WHETHER IT IS TO BE BELIEVED THAT OUR FIRST PARENTS IN PARADISE, BEFORE THEY SINNED, WERE FREE FROM ALL PERTURBATION

But it is a fair question, whether our first parent or first parents (for there was a marriage of two), before they sinned, experienced in their animal body such emotions as we shall not experience in the spiritual body when sin has been purged and finally abolished. For if they did, then how were they blessed in that boasted place of bliss, Paradise? For who that is affected by fear or grief can be called absolutely blessed? And what could those persons fear or suffer in such affluence of blessings, where neither death nor ill-health was feared, and where nothing was wanting which a good will could desire, and nothing present which could interrupt man’s mental or bodily enjoyment? Their love to God was unclouded, and their mutual affection was that of faithful and sincere marriage; and from this love flowed a wonderful delight, because they always enjoyed what was loved. Their avoidance of sin was tranquil; and, so long as it was maintained, no other ill at all could invade them and bring sorrow. Or did they perhaps desire to touch and eat the forbidden fruit, yet feared to die; and thus both fear and desire already, even in that blissful place, preyed upon those first of mankind? Away with the thought that such could be the case where there was no sin! And, indeed, this is already sin, to desire those things which the law of God forbids, and to abstain from them through fear of punishment, not through love of righteousness. Away, I say, with the thought, that before there was any sin, there should already have been committed regarding that fruit the very sin which our Lord warns us against regarding a woman: “Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” As happy, then, as were these our first parents, who were agitated by no mental perturbations, and annoyed by no bodily discomforts, so happy should the whole human race have been, had they not introduced that evil which they have transmitted to their posterity, and had none of their descendants committed iniquity worthy of damnation; but this original blessedness continuing until, in virtue of that benediction which said, “Increase and multiply,” the number of the predestined saints should have been completed, there would then have been bestowed that higher felicity which is enjoyed by the most blessed angels,—a blessedness in which there should have been a secure assurance that no one would sin, and no one die; and so should the saints have lived, after no taste of labor, pain, or death, as now they shall live in the resurrection, after they have endured all these things.

CHAPTER 11

OF THE FALL OF THE FIRST MAN, IN WHOM NATURE WAS CREATED GOOD, AND CAN BE RESTORED ONLY BY ITS AUTHOR

But because God foresaw all things, and was therefore not ignorant that man also would fall, we ought to consider this holy city in connection with what God foresaw and ordained, and not according to our own ideas, which do not embrace God’s ordination. For man, by his sin, could not disturb the divine counsel, nor compel God to change what He had decreed; for God’s foreknowledge had anticipated both,—that is to say, both how evil the man whom He had created good should become, and what good He Himself should even thus derive from him. For though God is said to change His determinations (so that in a tropical sense the Holy Scripture says even that God repented), this is said with reference to man’s expectation, or the order of natural causes, and not with reference to that which the Almighty had foreknown that He would do. Accordingly God, as it is written, made man upright, and consequently with a good will. For if he had not had a good will, he could not have been upright. The good will, then, is the work of God; for God created him with it. But the first evil will, which preceded all man’s evil acts, was rather a kind of falling away from the work of God to its own works than any positive work. And therefore the acts resulting were evil, not having God, but the will itself for their end; so that the will or the man himself, so far as his will is bad, was as it were the evil tree bringing forth evil fruit. Moreover, the bad will, though it be not in harmony with, but opposed to nature, inasmuch as it is a vice or blemish, yet it is true of it as of all vice, that it cannot exist except in a nature, and only in a nature created out of nothing, and not in that which the Creator has begotten of Himself, as He begot the Word, by whom all things were made. For though

God formed man of the dust of the earth, yet the earth itself, and every earthly material, is absolutely created out of nothing; and man’s soul, too, God created out of nothing, and joined to the body, when He made man. But evils are so thoroughly overcome by good, that though they are permitted to exist, for the sake of demonstrating how the most righteous foresight of God can make a good use even of them, yet good can exist without evil, as in the true and supreme God Himself, and as in every invisible and visible celestial creature that exists above this murky atmosphere; but evil cannot exist without good, because the natures in which evil exists, in so far as they are natures, are good. And evil is removed, not by removing any nature, or part of a nature, which had been introduced by the evil, but by healing and correcting that which had been vitiated and depraved. The will, therefore, is then truly free, when it is not the slave of vices and sins. Such was it given us by God; and this being lost by its own fault, can only be restored by Him who was able at first to give it. And therefore the truth says, “If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed;” which is equivalent to saying, If the Son shall save you, ye shall be saved indeed. For He is our Liberator, inasmuch as He is our Saviour.

Man then lived with God for his rule in a paradise at once physical and spiritual. For neither was it a paradise only physical for the advantage of the body, and not also spiritual for the advantage of the mind; nor was it only spiritual to afford enjoyment to man by his internal sensations, and not also physical to afford him enjoyment through his external senses. But obviously it was both for both ends. But after that proud and therefore envious angel (of whose fall I have said as much as I was able in the eleventh and twelfth books of this work, as well as that of his fellows, who, from being God’s angels, became his angels), preferring to rule with a kind of pomp of empire rather than to be another’s subject, fell from the spiritual Paradise, and essaying to insinuate his persuasive guile into the mind of man, whose unfallen condition provoked him to envy now that himself was fallen, he chose the serpent as his mouthpiece in that bodily Paradise in which it and all the other earthly animals were living with those two human beings, the man and his wife, subject to them, and harmless; and he chose the serpent because, being slippery, and moving in tortuous windings, it was suitable for his purpose. And this animal being subdued to his wicked ends by the presence and superior force of his angelic nature, he abused as his instrument, and first tried his deceit upon the woman, making his assault upon the weaker part of that human alliance, that he might gradually gain the whole, and not supposing that the man would readily give ear to him, or be deceived, but that he might yield to the error of the woman. For as Aaron was not induced to agree with the people when they blindly wished him to make an idol, and yet yielded to constraint; and as it is not credible that Solomon was so blind as to suppose that idols should be worshipped, but was drawn over to such sacrilege by the blandishments of women; so we cannot believe that Adam was deceived, and supposed the devil's word to be truth, and therefore transgressed God's law, but that he by the drawings of kindred yielded to the woman, the husband to the wife, the one human being to the only other human being. For not without significance did the apostle say, "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression;" but he speaks thus, because the woman accepted as true what the serpent told her, but the man could not bear to be severed from his only companion, even though this involved a partnership in sin. He was not on this account less culpable, but sinned with his eyes open. And so the apostle does not say, "He did not sin," but "He was not deceived." For he shows that he sinned when he says, "By one man sin entered into the world," and immediately after more distinctly, "In the likeness of Adam's transgression." But he meant that those are deceived who do not judge that which they do to be sin; but he knew. Otherwise how were it true "Adam was not deceived?" But having as yet no experience of the divine severity, he was possibly deceived in so far as he thought his sin venial. And consequently he was not deceived as the woman was deceived, but he was deceived as to the judgment which would be passed on his apology: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me, and I did eat." What need of saying more? Although they were not both deceived by credulity, yet both were entangled in the snares of the devil, and taken by sin.

CHAPTER 12

OF THE NATURE OF MAN'S FIRST SIN

If any one finds a difficulty in understanding why other sins do not alter human nature as it was altered by the transgression of those first human beings, so that on account of it this nature is subject to the great corruption we feel and see, and to death, and is distracted and tossed with so many furious and contending emotions, and is certainly far different from what it was before sin, even though it were then lodged in an animal body,—if, I say, any one is moved by this, he ought not to think that that sin was a small and light one because it was committed about food, and that not bad nor noxious, except because it was forbidden; for in that spot of singular felicity God could not have created and planted any evil thing. But by the precept He gave, God commended obedience, which is, in a sort, the mother and guardian of all the virtues in the reasonable creature, which was so created that submission is advantageous to it, while the fulfillment of its own will in preference to the Creator's is destruction. And as this commandment enjoining abstinence from one kind of food in the midst of great abundance of other kinds was so easy to keep,—so light a burden to the memory,—and, above all, found no resistance to its observance in lust, which only afterwards sprung up as the penal consequence of sin, the iniquity of violating it was all the greater in proportion to the ease with which it might have been kept.

CHAPTER 13

THAT IN ADAM'S SIN AN EVIL WILL PRECEDED THE EVIL ACT

Our first parents fell into open disobedience because already they were secretly corrupted; for the evil act had never been done had not an evil will preceded it. And what is the origin of our evil will but pride? For "pride is the beginning of sin." And what is pride but the craving for undue exaltation? And this is undue exaltation, when the soul abandons Him to whom it ought to cleave as its end, and becomes a kind of end to itself. This happens when it becomes its own satisfaction. And it does so when it falls away from that unchangeable good which ought to satisfy it more than itself. This falling away is spontaneous; for if the will had remained steadfast in the love of that higher and changeless good by which it was illumined to intelligence and kindled into love, it would not have turned away to find satisfaction in itself, and so become frigid and benighted; the woman would not have believed the serpent spoke the truth, nor would the man have preferred the request of his wife to the command of God, nor have supposed that it was a venial trangression to cleave to the partner of his life even in a partnership of sin. The wicked deed, then,—that is to say, the trangression of eating the forbidden fruit,—was committed by persons who were already wicked. That “evil fruit” could be brought forth only by “a corrupt tree.” But that the tree was evil was not the result of nature; for certainly it could become so only by the vice of the will, and vice is contrary to nature. Now, nature could not have been depraved by vice had it not been made out of nothing. Consequently, that it is a nature, this is because it is made by God; but that it falls away from Him, this is because it is made out of nothing. But man did not so fall away as to become absolutely nothing; but being turned towards himself, his being became more contracted than it was when he clave to Him who supremely is. Accordingly, to exist in himself, that is, to be his own satisfaction after abandoning God, is not quite to become a nonentity, but to approximate to that. And therefore the holy Scriptures designate the proud by another name, “self-pleasers.” For it is good to have the heart lifted up, yet not to one’s self, for this is proud, but to the Lord, for this is obedient, and can be the act only of the humble. There is, therefore, something in humility which, strangely enough, exalts the heart, and something in pride which debases it. This seems, indeed, to be contradictory, that loftiness should debase and lowliness exalt. But pious humility enables us to submit to what is above us; and nothing is more exalted above us than God; and therefore humility, by making us subject to God, exalts us. But pride, being a defect of nature, by the very act of refusing subjection and revolting from Him who is supreme, falls to a low condition; and then comes to pass what is written: “Thou castedst them down when they lifted up themselves.” For he does not say, “when they had been lifted up,” as if first they were exalted, and then afterwards cast down; but “when they lifted up themselves” even then they were cast down,—that is to say, the very lifting up was already a fall. And therefore it is that humility is specially recommended to the city of God as it sojourns in this world, and is specially exhibited in the city of God, and in the person of Christ its King; while the contrary vice of pride, according to the testimony of the sacred writings, specially rules his adversary the devil. And certainly this is the great difference which distinguishes the two cities of which we speak, the one being the society of the godly men, the other of the ungodly, each associated with the angels that adhere to their party, and the one guided and fashioned by love of self, the other by love of God.

The devil, then, would not have ensnared man in the open and manifest sin of doing what God had forbidden, had man not already begun to live for himself. It was this that made him listen with pleasure to the words, “Ye shall be as gods,” which they would much more readily have accomplished by obediently adhering to their supreme and true end than by proudly living to themselves. For created gods are gods not by virtue of what is in themselves, but by a participation of the true God. By craving to be more, man becomes less; and by aspiring to be self-sufficing, he fell away from Him who truly suffices him. Accordingly, this wicked desire which prompts man to please himself as if he were himself light, and which thus turns him away from that light by which, had he followed it, he would himself have become light,—this wicked desire, I say, already secretly existed in him, and the open sin was but its consequence. For that is true which is written, “Pride goeth before destruction, and before honor is humility;” that is to say, secret ruin precedes open ruin, while the former is not counted ruin. For who counts exaltation ruin, though no sooner is the Highest forsaken than a fall is begun? But who does not recognize it as ruin, when there occurs an evident and indubitable transgression of the commandment? And consequently, God’s prohibition had reference to such an act as, when committed, could not be defended on any pretense of doing what was righteous. And I make bold to say that it is useful for the proud to fall into an open and indisputable transgression, and so displease themselves, as already, by pleasing themselves, they had fallen. For Peter was in a healthier condition when he wept and was dissatisfied with himself, than when he boldly presumed and satisfied himself. And this is averred by the sacred Psalmist when he says, “Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek Thy name, O Lord;” that is, that they who have pleased themselves in seeking their own glory may be pleased and satisfied with Thee in seeking Thy glory.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE PRIDE IN THE SIN, WHICH WAS WORSE THAN THE SIN ITSELF

But it is a worse and more damnable pride which casts about for the shelter of an excuse even in manifest sins, as these our first parents did, of whom the woman said, “The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat;” and the man said, “The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” Here there is no word of begging pardon, no word of entreaty for healing. For though they do not, like Cain, deny that they have perpetrated the deed, yet their pride seeks to refer its wickedness to another,—the woman’s pride to the serpent, the man’s to the woman. But where there is a plain trangression of a divine commandment, this is rather to accuse than to excuse oneself. For the fact that the woman sinned on the serpent’s persuasion, and the man at the woman’s offer, did not make the transgression less, as if there were any one whom we ought rather to believe or yield to than God.

CHAPTER 15

OF THE JUSTICE OF THE PUNISHMENT WITH WHICH OUR FIRST PARENTS WERE VISITED FOR THEIR DISOBEDIENCE

Therefore, because the sin was a despising of the authority of God,—who had created man; who had made him in His own image; who had set him above the other animals; who had placed him in Paradise; who had enriched him with abundance of every kind and of safety; who had laid upon him neither many, nor great, nor difficult commandments, but, in order to make a wholesome obedience easy to him, had given him a single very brief and very light precept by which He reminded that creature whose service was to be free that He was Lord,—it was just that condemnation followed, and condemnation such that man, who by keeping the commandments should have been spiritual even in his flesh, became fleshly even in his spirit; and as in his pride he had sought to be his own satisfaction, God in His justice abandoned him to himself, not to live in the absolute independence he affected, but instead of the liberty he desired, to live dissatisfied with himself in a hard and miserable bondage to him to whom by sinning he had yielded himself, doomed in spite of himself to die in body as he had willingly become dead in spirit, condemned even to eternal death (had not the grace of God delivered him) because he had forsaken eternal life. Whoever thinks such punishment either excessive or unjust shows his inability to measure the great iniquity of sinning where sin might so easily have been avoided. For as Abraham’s obedience is with justice pronounced to be great, because the thing commanded, to kill his son, was very difficult, so in Paradise the disobedience was the greater, because the difficulty of that which was commanded was imperceptible. And as the obedience of the second Man was the more laudable because He became obedient even “unto death,” so the disobedience of the first man was the more detestable because he became disobedient even unto death. For where the penalty annexed to disobedience is great, and the thing commanded by the Creator is easy, who can sufficiently estimate how great a wickedness it is, in a matter so easy, not to obey the authority of so great a power, even when that power deters with so terrible a penalty?

In short, to say all in a word, what but disobedience was the punishment of disobedience in that sin? For what else is man’s misery but his own disobedience to himself, so that in consequence of his not being willing to do what he could do, he now wills to do what he cannot? For though he could not do all things in Paradise before he sinned, yet he wished to do only what he could do, and therefore he could do all things he wished. But now, as we recognize in his offspring, and as divine Scripture testifies, “Man is like to vanity.” For who can count how many things he wishes which he cannot do, so long as he is disobedient to himself, that is, so long as his mind and his flesh do not obey his will? For in spite of himself his mind is both frequently disturbed, and his flesh suffers, and grows old, and dies; and in spite of ourselves we suffer whatever else we suffer, and which we would not suffer if our nature absolutely and in all its parts obeyed our will. But is it not the infirmities of the flesh which hamper it in its service? Yet what does it matter how its service is hampered, so long as the fact remains, that by the just retribution of the sovereign God whom we refused to be subject to and serve, our flesh, which was subjected to us, now torments us by insubordination, although our disobedience brought trouble on ourselves, not upon God? For He is not in need of our service as we of our body’s; and therefore what we did was no punishment to Him, but what we receive is so to us. And the pains which are called bodily are pains of the soul in and from the body. For what pain or desire can the flesh feel by itself and without the soul? But when the flesh is said to desire or to suffer, it is meant, as we have explained, that the man does so, or some part of the soul which is affected by the sensation of the flesh, whether a harsh sensation causing pain, or gentle, causing pleasure. But pain in the flesh is only a discomfort of the soul arising from the flesh, and a kind of shrinking from its suffering, as the pain of the soul which is called sadness is a shrinking from those things which have happened to us in spite of ourselves. But sadness is frequently preceded by fear, which is itself in the soul, not in the flesh; while bodily pain is not preceded by any kind of fear of the flesh, which can be felt in the flesh before the pain. But pleasure is preceded by a certain appetite which is felt in the flesh like a craving, as hunger and thirst and that generative appetite which is most commonly identified with the name” lust,” though this is the generic word for all desires. For anger itself was defined by the ancients as nothing else than the lust of revenge; although sometimes a man is angry even at inanimate objects which cannot feel his vengeance, as when one breaks a pen, or crushes a quill that writes badly. Yet even this, though less reasonable, is in its way a lust of revenge, and is, so to speak, a mysterious kind of shadow of [the great law of] retribution, that they who do evil should suffer evil. There is therefore a lust for revenge, which is called anger; there is a lust of money, which goes by the name of avarice; there is a lust of conquering, no matter by what means, which is called opinionativeness; there is a lust of applause, which is named boasting. There are many and various lusts, of which some have names of their own, while others have not. For who could readily give a name to the lust of ruling, which yet has a powerful influence in the soul of tyrants, as civil wars bear witness?

CHAPTER 16

OF THE EVIL OF LUST,—A WORD WHICH, THOUGH APPLICABLE TO MANY VICES, IS SPECIALLY APPROPRIATED TO SEXUAL UNCLEANNESS

Although, therefore, lust may have many objects, yet when no object is specified, the word lust usually suggests to the mind the lustful excitement of the organs of generation. And this lust not only takes possession of the whole body and outward members, but also makes itself felt within, and moves the whole man with a passion in which mental emotion is mingled with bodily appetite, so that the pleasure which results is the greatest of all bodily pleasures. So possessing indeed is this pleasure, that at the moment of time in which it is consummated, all mental activity is suspended. What friend of wisdom and holy joys, who, being married, but knowing, as the apostle says, "how to possess his vessel in santification and honor, not in the disease of desire, as the Gentiles who know not God," would not prefer, if this were possi ble, to beget children without this lust, so that in this function of begetting offspring the members created for this purpose should not be stimulated by the heat of lust, but should be actuated by his volition, in the same way as his other members serve him for their respective ends? But even those who delight in this pleasure are not moved to it at their own will, whether they confine themselves to lawful or transgress to unlawful pleasures; but sometimes this lust importunes them in spite of themselves, and sometimes fails them when they desire to feel it, so that though lust rages in the mind, it stirs not in the body. Thus, strangely enough, this emotion not only fails to obey the legitimate desire to beget offspring, but also refuses to serve lascivious lust; and though it often opposes its whole combined energy to the soul that resists it, sometimes also it is divided against itself, and while it moves the soul, leaves the body unmoved.

CHAPTER 17

OF THE NAKEDNESS OF OUR FIRST PARENTS, WHICH THEY SAW AFTER THEIR BASE AND SHAMEFUL SIN

Justly is shame very specially connected with this lust; justly, too, these members themselves, being moved and restrained not at our will, but by a certain independent autocracy, so to speak, are called "shameful." Their condition was different before sin. For as it is written, "They were naked and were not ashamed,"—not that their nakedness was unknown to them, but because nakedness was not yet shameful, because not yet did lust move those members without the will's consent; not yet did the flesh by its disobedience testify against the disobedience of man. For they were not created blind, as the unenlightened vulgar fancy; for Adam saw the animals to whom he gave names, and of Eve we read, "The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes." Their eyes, therefore were open, but were not open to this, that is to say, were not observant so as to recognize what was conferred upon them by the garment of grace, for they had no consciousness of their members warring against their will. But when they were stripped of this grace, that their disobedience might be punished by fit retribution, there began in the movement of their bodily members a shameless novelty which made nakedness indecent: it at once made them observant and made them ashamed. And therefore, after they violated God's command by open transgression, it is written: "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons." "The eyes of them both were opened," not to see, for already they saw, but to discern between the good they had lost and the evil into which they had fallen. And therefore also the tree itself which they were forbidden to touch was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil from this circumstance, that if they ate of it it would impart to them this knowledge. For the discomfort of sickness reveals the pleasure of health. "They knew," therefore, "that they were naked,"—naked of that grace which prevented them from being ashamed of bodily nakedness while the law of sin offered no resistance to their mind. And thus they obtained a knowledge which they would have lived in blissful ignorance of, had they, in trustful obedience to God, declined to commit that offence which involved them in the experience of the hurtful effects of unfaithfulness and disobedience. And therefore, being ashamed of the disobedience of their own flesh, which witnessed to their disobedience while it punished it, "they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons," that is, cinctures for their privy parts; for some interpreters have rendered the word by succinctoria. Campestria is, indeed, a Latin word, but it is used of the drawers or aprons used for a similar purpose by the young men who stripped for exercise in the campus; hence those who were so girt were commonly called campestrati. Shame modestly covered that which lust disobediently moved in opposition to the will, which was thus punished for its own disobedience. Consequently all nations, being propagated from that one stock, have so strong an instinct to cover the shameful parts, that some barbarians do not uncover them even in the bath, but wash with their drawers on. In the dark solitudes of India also, though some philosophers go naked, and are therefore called gymnosophists, yet they make an exception in the case of these members and cover them.

CHAPTER 18

OF THE SHAME WHICH ATTENDS ALL SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

Lust requires for its consummation darkness and secrecy; and this not only when un lawful intercourse is desired, but even such fornication as the earthly city has legalized. Where there is no fear of punishment, these permitted pleasures still shrink from the public eye. Even where provision is made for this lust, secrecy also is provided; and while lust found it easy to remove the prohibitions of law, shamelessness found it impossible to lay aside the veil of retirement. For even shameless men call this shameful; and though they love the pleasure, dare not display it. What! does not even conjugal intercourse, sanctioned as it is by law for the propagation of children, legitimate and honorable though it be, does it not seek retirement from every eye? Before the bridegroom fondles his bride, does he not exclude the attendants, and even the paranymphs, and such friends as the closest ties have admitted to the bridal chamber? The greatest master of Roman eloquence says, that all right actions wish to be set in the light, i.e., desire to be known. This right action, however, has such a desire to be known, that yet it blushes to be seen. Who does not know what passes between husband and wife that children may be born? Is it not for this purpose that wives are married with such ceremony? And yet, when this well-understood act is gone about for the procreation of children, not even the children themselves, who may already have been born to them, are suffered to be witnesses. This right action seeks the light, in so far as it seeks to be known, but yet dreads being seen. And why so, if not because that which is by nature fitting and decent is so done as to be accompanied with a shame-begetting penalty of sin?

CHAPTER 19

THAT IT IS NOW NECESSARY, AS IT WAS NOT BEFORE MAN SINNED, TO BRIDLE ANGER AND LUST BY THE RESTRAINING INFLUENCE OF WISDOM

Hence it is that even the philosophers who have approximated to the truth have avowed that anger and lust are vicious mental emotions, because, even when exercised towards objects which wisdom does not prohibit, they are moved in an ungoverned and inordinate manner, and consequently need the regulation of mind and reason. And they assert that this third part of the mind is posted as it were in a kind of citadel, to give rule to these other parts, so that, while it rules and they serve, man's righteousness is preserved without a breach. These parts, then, which they acknowledge to be vicious even in a wise and temperate man, so that the mind, by its composing and restraining influence, must bridle and recall them from those objects towards which they are unlawfully moved, and give them access to those which the law of wisdom sanctions,—that anger, e.g., may be allowed for the enforcement of a just authority, and lust for the duty of propagating offspring,—these parts, I say, were not vicious in Paradise before sin, for they were never moved in opposition to a holy will towards any object from which it was necessary that they should be withheld by the restraining bridle of reason. For though now they are moved in this way, and are regulated by a bridling and restraining power, which those who live temperately, justly, and godly exercise, sometimes with ease, and sometimes with greater difficulty, this is not the sound health of nature, but the weakness which results from sin. And how is it that shame does not hide the acts and words dictated by anger or other emotions, as it covers the motions of lust, unless because the members of the body which we employ for accomplishing them are moved, not by the emotions themselves, but by the authority of the consenting will? For he who in his anger rails at or even strikes some one, could not do so were not his tongue and hand moved by the authority of the will, as also they are moved when there is no anger. But the organs of generation are so subjected to the rule of lust, that they have no motion but what it communicates. It is this we are ashamed of; it is this which blushingly hides from the eyes of onlookers. And rather will a man endure a crowd of witnesses when he is unjustly venting his anger on some one, than the eye of one man when he innocently copulates with his wife.

CHAPTER 20

OF THE FOOLISH BEASTLINESS OF THE CYNICS

It is this which those canine or cynic philosophers have overlooked, when they have, in violation of the modest instincts of men, boastfully proclaimed their unclean and shameless opinion, worthy indeed of dogs, viz., that as the matrimonial act is legitimate, no one should be ashamed to perform it openly, in the street or in any public place. Instinctive shame has overborne this wild fancy. For though it is related that Diogenes once dared to put his opinion in practice, under the impression that his sect would be all the more famous if his egregious shamelessness were deeply graven in the memory of mankind, yet this example was not afterwards followed. Shame had more influence with them, to make them blush before men, than error to make them affect a resemblance to dogs. And possibly, even in the case of Diogenes, and those who did imitate him, there was but an appearance and pretence of copulation, and not the reality. Even at this day there are still Cynic philosophers to be seen; for these are Cynics who are not content with being clad in the pallium, but also carry a club; yet no one of them dares to do this that we speak of. If they did, they would be spat upon, not to say stoned, by the mob. Human nature, then, is without doubt ashamed of this lust; and justly so, for the insubordination of these members, and their defiance of the will, are the clear testimony of the punishment of man’s first sin. And it was fitting that this should appear specially in those parts by which is generated that nature which has been altered for the worse by that first and great sin,—that sin from whose evil connection no one can escape, unless God’s grace expiate in him individually that which was perpetrated to the destruction of all in common, when all were in one man, and which was avenged by God’s justice.

CHAPTER 21

THAT MAN’S TRANSGRESSION DID NOT ANNUL THE BLESSING OF FECUNDITY PRONOUNCED UPON MAN BEFORE HE SINNED BUT INFECTED IT WITH THE DISEASE OF LUST

Far be it, then, from us to suppose that our first parents in Paradise felt that lust which caused them afterwards to blush and hide their nakedness, or that by its means they should have fulfilled the benediction of God, “Increase and multiply and replenish the earth;” for it was after sin that lust began. It was after sin that our nature, having lost the power it had over the whole body, but not having lost all shame, perceived, noticed, blushed at, and covered it. But that blessing upon marriage, which encouraged them to increase and multiply and replenish the earth, though it continued even after they had sinned, was yet given before they sinned, in order that the procreation of children might be recognized as part of the glory of marriage, and not of the punishment of sin. But now, men being ignorant of the blessedness of Paradise, suppose that children could not have been begotten there in any other way than they know them to be begotten now, i.e., by lust, at which even honorable marriage blushes; some not simply rejecting, but sceptically deriding the divine Scriptures, in which we read that our first parents, after they sinned, were ashamed of their nakedness, and covered it; while others, though they accept and honor Scripture, yet conceive that this expression, “Increase and multiply,” refers not to carnal fecundity, because a similar expression is used of the soul in the words, “Thou wilt multiply me with strength in my soul;” and so, too, in the words which follow in Genesis, “And replenish the earth, and subdue it,” they understand by the earth the body which the soul fills with its presence, and which it rules over when it is multiplied in strength. And they hold that children could no more then than now be begotten without lust, which, after sin, was kindled, observed, blushed for, and covered; and even that children would not have been born in Paradise, but only outside of it, as in fact it turned out. For it was after they were expelled from it that they came together to beget children, and begot them.

CHAPTER 22

OF THE CONJUGAL UNION AS IT WAS ORIGINALLY INSTITUTED AND BLESSED BY GOD

But we, for our part, have no manner of doubt that to increase and multiply and replenish the earth in virtue of the blessing of God, is a gift of marriage as God instituted it from the beginning before man sinned, when He created them male and female,—in other words, two sexes manifestly distinct. And it was this work of God on which His blessing was pronounced. For no sooner had Scripture said, “Male and female created He them,” than it immediately continues, “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Increase, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it,” etc. And though all these things may not unsuitably be interpreted in a spiritual sense, yet “male and female” cannot be understood of two things in one man, as if there were in him one thing which rules, another which is ruled; but it is quite clear that they were created male and female, with bodies of different sexes, for the very purpose of begetting offspring, and so increasing, multiplying, and replenishing the earth; and it is great folly to oppose so plain a fact. It was not of the spirit which commands and the body which obeys, nor of the rational soul which rules and the irrational desire which is ruled, nor of the contemplative virtue which is supreme and the active which is subject, nor of the understanding of the mind and the sense of the body, but plainly of the matrimonial union by which the sexes are mutually bound together, that our Lord, when asked whether it were lawful for any cause to put away one’s wife (for on account of the hardness of the hearts of the Israelites Moses permitted a bill of divorcement to be given), answered and said, “Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” It is certain, then, that from the first men were created, as we see and know them to be now, of two sexes, male and female, and that they are called one, either on account of the matrimonial union, or on account of the origin of the woman, who was created from the side of the man. And it is by this original example, which God Himself instituted, that the apostle admonishes all husbands to love their own wives in particular.

CHAPTER 23

WHETHER GENERATION SHOULD HAVE TAKEN PLACE EVEN IN PARADISE HAD MAN NOT SINNED, OR WHETHER THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN ANY CONTENTION THERE BETWEEN CHASTITY AND LUST

But he who says that there should have been neither copulation nor generation but for sin, virtually says that man’s sin was necessary to complete the number of the saints. For if these two by not sinning should have continued to live alone, because, as is supposed, they could not have begotten children had they not sinned, then certainly sin was necessary in order that there might be not only two but many righteous men. And if this cannot be maintained without absurdity, we must rather believe that the number of the saints fit to complete this most blessed city would have been as great though no one had sinned, as it is now that the grace of God gathers its citizens out of the multitude of sinners, so long as the children of this world generate and are generated.

And therefore that marriage, worthy of the happiness of Paradise, should have had desirable fruit without the shame of lust, had there been no sin. But how that could be, there is now no example to teach us. Nevertheless, it ought not to seem incredible that one member might serve the will without lust then, since so many serve it now. Do we now move our feet and hands when we will to do the things we would by means of these members? do we meet with no resistance in them, but perceive that they are ready servants of the will, both in our own case and in that of others, and especially of artisans employed in mechanical operations, by which the weakness and clumsiness of nature become, through industrious exercise, wonderfully dexterous? and shall we not believe that, like as all those members obediently serve the will, so also should the members have discharged the function of generation, though lust, the award of disobedience, had been awanting? Did not Cicero, in discussing the difference of governments in his De Republica, adopt a simile from human nature, and say that we command our bodily members as children, they are so obedient; but that the vicious parts of the soul must be treated as slaves, and be coerced with a more stringent authority? And no doubt, in the order of nature, the soul is more excellent than the body; and yet the soul commands the body more easily than itself. Nevertheless this lust, of which we at present speak, is the more shameful on this account, because the soul is therein neither master of itself, so as not to lust at all, nor of the body, so as to keep the members under the control of the will; for if they were thus ruled, there should be no shame. But now the soul is ashamed that the body, which by nature is inferior and subject to it, should resist its authority. For in the resistance experienced by the soul in the other emotions there is less shame, because the resistance is from itself, and thus, when it is conquered by itself, itself is the conqueror, although the conquest is inordinate and vicious, because accomplished by those parts of the soul which ought to be subject to reason, yet, being accomplished by its own parts and energies, the conquest is, as I say, its own. For when the soul conquers itself to a due subordination, so that its unreasonable motions are controlled by reason, while it again is subject to God, this is a conquest virtuous and praiseworthy. Yet there is less shame when the soul is resisted by its own vicious parts than when its will and order are resisted by the body, which is distinct from and inferior to it, and dependent on it for life itself.

But so long as the will retains under its authority the other members, without which the members excited by lust to resist the will cannot accomplish what they seek, chastity is preserved, and the delight of sin foregone. And certainly, had not culpable disobedience been visited with penal disobedience, the marriage of Paradise should have been ignorant of this struggle and rebellion, this quarrel between will and lust, that the will may be satisfied and lust restrained, but those members, like all the rest, should have obeyed the will. The field of generation should have been sown by the organ created for this purpose, as the earth is sown by the hand. And whereas now, as we essay to investigate this subject more exactly, modesty hinders us, and compels us to ask pardon of chaste ears, there would have been no cause to do so, but we could have discoursed freely, and without fear of seeming obscene, upon all those points which occur to one who meditates on the subject. There would not have been even words which could be called obscene, but all that might be said of these members would have been as pure as what is said of the other parts of the body. Whoever, then, comes to the perusal of these pages with unchaste mind, let him blame his disposition, not his nature; let him brand the actings of his own impurity, not the words which necessity forces us to use, and for which every pure and pious reader or hearer will very readily pardon me, while I expose the folly of that scepticism which argues solely on the ground of its own experience, and has no faith in anything beyond. He who is not scandalized at the apostle’s censure of the horrible wickedness of the women who “changed the natural use into that which is against nature,” will read all this without being shocked, especially as we are not, like Paul, citing and censuring a damnable uncleanness, but are explaining, so far as we can, human generation, while with Paul we avoid all obscenity of language.

CHAPTER 24

THAT IF MEN HAD REMAINED INNOCENT AND OBEDIENT IN PARADISE, THE GENERATIVE ORGANS SHOULD HAVE BEEN IN SUBJECTION TO THE WILL AS THE OTHER MEMBERS ARE

The man, then, would have sown the seed, and the woman received it, as need required, the generative organs being moved by the will, not excited by lust. For we move at will not only those members which are furnished with joints of solid bone, as the hands, feet, and fingers, but we move also at will those which are composed of slack and soft nerves: we can put them in motion, or stretch them out, or bend and twist them, or contract and stiffen them, as we do with the muscles of the mouth and face. The lungs, which are the very tenderest of the viscera except the brain, and are therefore carefully sheltered in the cavity of the chest, yet for all purposes of inhaling and exhaling the breath, and of uttering and modulating the voice, are obedient to the will when we breathe, exhale, speak, shout, or sing, just as the bellows obey the smith or the organist. I will not press the fact that some animals have a natural power to move a single spot of the skin with which their whole body is covered, if they have felt on it anything they wish to drive off,—a power so great, that by this shivering tremor of the skin they can not only shake off flies that have settled on them, but even spears that have fixed in their flesh. Man, it is true, has not this power; but is this any reason for supposing that God could not give it to such creatures as He wished to possess it? And therefore man himself also might very well have enjoyed absolute power over his members had he not forfeited it by his disobedience; for it was not difficult for God to form him so that what is now moved in his body only by lust should have been moved only at will.

We know, too, that some men are differently constituted from others, and have some rare and remarkable faculty of doing with their body what other men can by no effort do, and, indeed, scarcely believe when they hear of others doing. There are persons who can move their ears, either one at a time, or both together. There are some who, without moving the head, can bring the hair down upon the forehead, and move the whole scalp backwards and forwards at pleasure. Some, by lightly pressing their stomach, bring up an incredible quantity and variety of things they have swallowed, and produce whatever they please, quite whole, as if out of a bag. Some so accurately mimic the voices of birds and beasts and other men, that, unless they are seen, the difference cannot be told. Some have such command of their bowels, that they can break wind continuously at pleasure, so as to produce the effect of singing. I myself have known a man who was accustomed to sweat whenever he wished. It is well known that some weep when they please, and shed a flood of tears. But far more incredible is that which some of our brethren saw quite recently. There was a presbyter called Restitutus, in the parish of the Calamensian Church, who, as often as he pleased (and he was asked to do this by those who desired to witness so remarkable a phenomenon), on some one imitating the wailings of mourners, became so insensible, and lay in a state so like death, that not only had he no feeling when they pinched and pricked him, but even when fire was applied to him, and he was burned by it, he had no sense of pain except afterwards from the wound. And that his body remained motionless, not by reason of his self-command, but because he was insensible, was proved by the fact that he breathed no more than a dead man; and yet he said that, when any one spoke with more than ordinary distinctness, he heard the voice, but as if it were a long way off. Seeing, then, that even in this mortal and miserable life the body serves some men by many remarkable movements and moods beyond the ordinary course of nature, what reason is there for doubting that, before man was involved by his sin in this weak and corruptible condition, his members might have served his will for the propagation of offspring without lust? Man has been given over to himself because he abandoned God, while he sought to be self-satisfying; and disobeying God, he could not obey even himself. Hence it is that he is involved in the obvious misery of being unable to live as he wishes. For if he lived as he wished, he would think himself blessed; but he could not be so if he lived wickedly.

CHAPTER 25

OF TRUE BLESSEDNESS, WHICH THIS PRESENT LIFE CANNOT ENJOY

However, if we look at this a little more closely, we see that no one lives as he wishes but the blessed, and that no one is blessed but the righteous. But even the righteous himself does not live as he wishes, until he has arrived where he cannot die, be deceived, or injured, and until he is assured that this shall be his eternal condition. For this nature demands; and nature is not fully and perfectly blessed till it attains what it seeks. But what man is at present able to live as he wishes, when it is not in his power so much as to live? He wishes to live, he is compelled to die. How, then, does he live as he wishes who does not live as long as he wishes? or if he wishes to die, how can he live as he wishes, since he does not wish even to live? Or if he wishes to die, not because he dislikes life, but that after death he may live better, still he is not yet living as he wishes, but only has the prospect of so living when, through death, he reaches that which he wishes. But admit that he lives as he wishes, because he has done violence to himself, and forced himself not to wish what he cannot obtain, and to wish only what he can (as Terence has it, “Since you cannot do what you will, will what you can”), is he therefore blessed because he is patiently wretched? For a blessed life is possessed only by the man who loves it. If it is loved and possessed, it must necessarily be more ardently loved than all besides; for whatever else is loved must be loved for the sake of the blessed life. And if it is loved as it deserves to be,—and the man is not blessed who does not love the blessed life as it deserves,—then he who so loves it cannot but wish it to be eternal. Therefore it shall then only be blessed when it is eternal.

CHAPTER 26

THAT WE ARE TO BELIEVE THAT IN PARADISE OUR FIRST PARENTS BEGAT OFFSPRING WITHOUT BLUSHING

In Paradise, then, man lived as he desired so long as he desired what God had commanded. He lived in the enjoyment of God, and was good by God’s goodness; he lived without any want, and had it in his power so to live eternally. He had food that he might not hunger, drink that he might not thirst, the tree of life that old age might not waste him. There was in his body no corruption, nor seed of corruption, which could produce in him any unpleasant sensation. He feared no inward disease, no outward accident. Soundest health blessed his body, absolute tranquillity his soul. As in Paradise there was no excessive heat or cold, so its inhabitants were exempt from the vicissitudes of fear and desire. No sadness of any kind was there, nor any foolish joy; true gladness ceaselessly flowed from the presence of God, who was loved “out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.” The honest love of husband and wife made a sure harmony between them. Body and spirit worked harmoniously together, and the commandment was kept without labor. No languor made their leisure wearisome; no sleepiness interrupted their desire to labor. In tanta facilitate rerum et felicitate hominum, absit ut suspicemur, non potuisse prolem seri sine libidinis morbo: sed eo voluntatis nutu moverentur illa membra qua caetera, et sine ardoris illecebroso stimulo cum tranquillitate animi et corporis nulla corruptione integritatis infunderetur gremio maritus uxoris. Neque enim quia experientia probari non potest, ideo credendum non est; quando illas corporis partes non ageret turbidus calor, sed spontanea potestas, sicut opus esset, adhiberet; ita tunc potuisse utero conjugis salva integritate feminei genitalis virile semen immitti, sicut nunc potest eadem integritate salva ex utero virginis fluxus menstrui cruoris emitti. Eadem quippe via posset illud injici, qua hoc potest ejici. Ut enim ad pariendum non doloris gemitus, sed maturitatis impulsus feminea viscera relaxaret: sic ad foetandum et concipiendum non libidinis appetitus, sed voluntarius usus naturam utramque conjungeret. We speak of things which are now shameful, and although we try, as well as we are able, to conceive them as they were before they became shameful, yet necessity compels us rather to limit our discussion to the bounds set by modesty than to extend it as our moderate faculty of discourse might suggest. For since that which I have been speaking of was not experienced even by those who might have experienced it,—I mean our first parents (for sin and its merited banishment from Paradise anticipated this passionless generation on their part),—when sexual intercourse is spoken of now, it suggests to men’s thoughts not such a placid obedience to the will as is conceivable in our first parents, but such violent acting of lust as they themselves have experienced. And therefore modesty shuts my mouth, although my mind conceives the matter clearly. But Almighty God, the supreme and supremely good Creator of all natures, who aids and rewards good wills, while He abandons and condemns the bad, and rules both, was not destitute of a plan by which He might people His city with the fixed number of citizens which His wisdom had foreordained even out of the condemned human race, discriminating them not now by merits, since the whole mass was condemned as if in a vitiated root, but by grace, and showing, not only in the case of the redeemed, but also in those who were not delivered, how much grace He has bestowed upon them. For every one acknowledges that he has been rescued from evil, not by deserved, but by gratuitous goodness, when he is singled out from the company of those with whom he might justly have borne a common punishment, and is allowed to go scathless. Why, then, should God not have created those whom He foresaw would sin, since He was able to show in and by them both what their guilt merited, and what His grace bestowed, and since, under His creating and disposing hand, even the perverse disorder of the wicked could not pervert the right order of things?

CHAPTER 27

OF THE ANGELS AND MEN WHO SINNED, AND THAT THEIR WICKEDNESS DID NOT DISTURB THE ORDER OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE

The sins of men and angels do nothing to impede the "great works of the Lord which accomplish His will." For He who by His providence and omnipotence distributes to every one his own portion, is able to make good use not only of the good, but also of the wicked. And thus making a good use of the wicked angel, who, in punishment of his first wicked volition, was doomed to an obduracy that prevents him now from willing any good, why should not God have permitted him to tempt the first man, who had been created upright, that is to say, with a good will? For he had been so constituted, that if he looked to God for help, man's goodness should defeat the angel's wickedness; but if by proud self-pleasing he abandoned God, his Creator and Sustainer, he should be conquered. If his will remained upright, through leaning on God's help, he should be rewarded; if it became wicked, by forsaking God, he should be punished. But even this trusting in God's help could not itself be accomplished without God's help, although man had it in his own power to relinquish the benefits of divine grace by pleasing himself. For as it is not in our power to live in this world without sustaining ourselves by food, while it is in our power to refuse this nourishment and cease to live, as those do who kill themselves, so it was not in man's power, even in Paradise, to live as he ought without God's help; but it was in his power to live wickedly, though thus he should cut short his happiness, and incur very just punishment. Since, then, God was not ignorant that man would fall, why should He not have suffered him to be tempted by an angel who hated and envied him? It was not, indeed, that He was unaware that he should be conquered. but because He foresaw that by the man’s seed, aided by divine grace, this same devil himself should be conquered, to the greater glory of the saints. All was brought about in such a manner, that neither did any future event escape God’s foreknowledge, nor did His foreknowledge compel any one to sin, and so as to demonstrate in the experience of the intelligent creation, human and angelic, how great a difference there is between the private presumption of the creature and the Creator’s protection. For who will dare to believe or say that it was not in God’s power to prevent both angels and men from sinning? But God preferred to leave this in their power, and thus to show both what evil could be wrought by their pride, and what good by His grace.

CHAPTER 28

OF THE NATURE OF THE TWO CITIES, THE EARTHLY AND THE HEAVENLY

Accordingly, two cities have been formed by two loves: the earthly by the love of self, even to the contempt of God; the heavenly by the love of God, even to the contempt of self. The former, in a word, glories in itself, the latter in the Lord. For the one seeks glory from men; but the greatest glory of the other is God, the witness of conscience. The one lifts up its head in its own glory; the other says to its God, “Thou art my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.” In the one, the princes and the nations it subdues are ruled by the love of ruling; in the other, the princes and the subjects serve one another in love, the latter obeying, while the former take thought for all. The one delights in its own strength, represented in the persons of its rulers; the other says to its God, “I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength.” And therefore the wise men of the one city, living according to man, have sought for profit to their own bodies or souls, or both, and those who have known God “glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise,”—that is, glorying in their own wisdom, and being possessed by pride,—”they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.” For they were either leaders or followers of the people in adoring images, “and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.” But in the other city there is no human wisdom, but only godliness, which offers due worship to the true God, and looks for its reward in the society of the saints, of holy angels as well as holy men, “that God may be all in all.”

Book XV

Argument—Having treated in the four preceding books of the origin of the two cities, the earthly and the heavenly, Augustin explains their growth and progress in the four books which follow; and, in order to do so, he explains the chief passages of the sacred history which bear upon this subject. In this fifteenth book he opens this part of his work by explaining the events recorded in Genesis from the time of Cain and Abel to the deluge.

CHAPTER 1

OF THE TWO LINES OF THE HUMAN RACE WHICH FROM FIRST TO LAST DIVIDE IT

Of the bliss of Paradise, of Paradise itself, and of the life of our first parents there, and of their sin and punishment, many have thought much, spoken much, written much. We ourselves, too, have spoken of these things in the foregoing books, and have written either what we read in the Holy Scriptures, or what we could reasonably deduce from them. And were we to enter into a more detailed investigation of these matters, an endless number of endless questions would arise, which would involve us in a larger work than the present occasion admits. We cannot be expected to find room for replying to every question that may be started by unoccupied and captious men, who are ever more ready to ask questions than capable of understanding the answer. Yet I trust we have already done justice to these great and difficult questions regarding the beginning of the world, or of the soul, or of the human race itself. This race we have distributed into two parts, the one consisting of those who live according to man, the other of those who live according to God. And these we also mystically call the two cities, or the two communities of men, of which the one is predestined to reign eternally with God, and the other to suffer eternal punishment with the devil. This, however, is their end, and of it we are to speak afterwards. At present, as we have said enough about their origin, whether among the angels, whose numbers we know not, or in the two first human beings, it seems suitable to attempt an account of their career, from the time when our two first parents began to propagate the race until all human generation shall cease. For this whole time or world-age, in which the dying give place and those who are born succeed, is the career of these two cities concerning which we treat.

Of these two first parents of the human race, then, Cain was the first-born, and he belonged to the city of men; after him was born Abel, who belonged to the city of God. For as in the individual the truth of the apostle’s statement is discerned, “that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual,” whence it comes to pass that each man, being derived from a condemned stock, is first of all born of Adam evil and carnal, and becomes good and spiritual only afterwards, when he is grafted into Christ by regeneration: so was it in the human race as a whole. When these two cities began to run their course by a series of deaths and births, the citizen of this world was the first-born, and after him the stranger in this world, the citizen of the city of God, predestinated by grace, elected by grace, by grace a stranger below, and by grace a citizen above. By grace,—for so far as regards himself he is sprung from the same mass, all of which is condemned in its origin; but God, like a potter (for this comparison is introduced by the apostle judiciously, and not without thought), of the same lump made one vessel to honor, another to dishonor. But first the vessel to dishonor was made, and after it another to honor. For in each individual, as I have already said, there is first of all that which is reprobate, that from which we must begin, but in which we need not necessarily remain; afterwards is that which is well-approved, to which we may by advancing attain, and in which, when we have reached it we may abide. Not, indeed, that every wicked man shall be good, but that no one will be good who was not first of all wicked; but the sooner any one becomes a good man, the more speedily does he receive this title, and abolish the old name in the new. Accordingly, it is recorded of Cain that he built a city, but Abel, being a sojourner, built none. For the city of the saints is above, although here below it begets citizens, in whom it sojourns till the time of its reign arrives, when it shall gather together all in the day of the resurrection; and then shall the promised kingdom be given to them, in which they shall reign with their Prince, the King of the ages, time without end.

CHAPTER 2

OF THE CHILDREN OF THE FLESH AND THE CHILDREN OF THE PROMISE

There was indeed on earth, so long as it was needed, a symbol and foreshadowing image of this city, which served the purpose of reminding men that such a city was to be rather than of making it present; and this image was itself called the holy city, as a symbol of the future city, though not itself the reality. Of this city which served as an image, and of that free city it typified, Paul writes to the Galatians in these terms: “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond woman was born after the flesh, but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not, for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless, what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. And we, brethren, are not children of the bond woman, but of the free, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.” This interpretation of the passage, handed down to us with apostolic authority, shows how we ought to understand the Scriptures of the two covenants—the old and the new. One portion of the earthly city became an image of the heavenly city, not having a significance of its own, but signifying another city, and therefore serving, or “being in bondage.” For it was founded not for its own sake, but to prefigure another city; and this shadow of a city was also itself foreshadowed by another preceding figure. For Sarah’s handmaid Agar, and her son, were an image of this image. And as the shadows were to pass away when the full light came, Sarah, the free woman, who prefigured the free city (which again was also prefigured in another way by that shadow of a city Jerusalem), therefore said, “Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac," or, as the apostle says, "with the son of the free woman." In the earthly city, then, we find two things—its own obvious presence, and its symbolic presentation of the heavenly city. Now citizens are begotten to the earthly city by nature vitiated by sin, but to the heavenly city by grace freeing nature from sin; whence the former are called "vessels of wrath," the latter "vessels of mercy." And this was typified in the two sons of Abraham,—Ishmael, the son of Agar the handmaid, being born according to the flesh, while Isaac was born of the free woman Sarah, according to the promise. Both, indeed, were of Abraham's seed; but the one was begotten by natural law, the other was given by gracious promise. In the one birth, human action is revealed; in the other, a divine kindness comes to light.

CHAPTER 3

THAT SARAH'S BARRENNESS WAS MADE PRODUCTIVE BY GOD'S GRACE

Sarah, in fact, was barren; and, despairing of offspring, and being resolved that she would have at least through her handmaid that blessing she saw she could not in her own person procure, she gave her handmaid to her husband, to whom she herself had been unable to bear children. From him she required this conjugal duty, exercising her own right in another's womb. And thus Ishmael was born according to the common law of human generation, by sexual intercourse. Therefore it is said that he was born "according to the flesh,"—not because such births are not the gifts of God, nor His handiwork, whose creative wisdom "reaches," as it is written, "from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth she order all things," but because, in a case in which the gift of God, which was not due to men and was the gratuitous largess of grace, was to be conspicuous, it was requisite that a son be given in a way which no effort of nature could compass. Nature denies children to persons of the age which Abraham and Sarah had now reached; besides that, in Sarah's case, she was barren even in her prime. This nature, so constituted that offspring could not be looked for, symbolized the nature of the human race vitiated by sin and by just consequence condemned, which deserves no future felicity. Fitly, therefore, does Isaac, the child of promise, typify the children of grace, the citizens of the free city, who dwell together in everlasting peace, in which self-love and self-will have no place, but a ministering love that rejoices in the common joy of all, of many hearts makes one, that is to say, secures a perfect concord.

CHAPTER 4

OF THE CONFLICT AND PEACE OF THE EARTHLY CITY

But the earthly city, which shall not be everlasting (for it will no longer be a city when it has been committed to the extreme penalty), has its good in this world, and rejoices in it with such joy as such things can afford. But as this is not a good which can discharge its devotees of all distresses, this city is often divided against itself by litigations, wars, quarrels, and such victories as are either life-destroying or short-lived. For each part of it that arms against another part of it seeks to triumph over the nations through itself in bondage to vice. If, when it has conquered, it is inflated with pride, its victory is life-destroying; but if it turns its thoughts upon the common casualties of our mortal condition, and is rather anxious concerning the disasters that may befall it than elated with the successes already achieved, this victory, though of a higher kind, is still only short-lived; for it cannot abidingly rule over those whom it has victoriously subjugated. But the things which this city desires cannot justly be said to be evil, for it is itself, in its own kind, better than all other human good. For it desires earthly peace for the sake of enjoying earthly goods, and it makes war in order to attain to this peace; since, if it has conquered, and there remains no one to resist it, it enjoys a peace which it had not while there were opposing parties who contested for the enjoyment of those things which were too small to satisfy both. This peace is purchased by toilsome wars; it is obtained by what they style a glorious victory. Now, when victory remains with the party which had the juster cause, who hesitates to congratulate the victor, and style it a desirable peace? These things, then, are good things, and without doubt the gifts of God. But if they neglect the better things of the heavenly city, which are secured by eternal victory and peace never-ending, and so inordinately covet these present good things that they believe them to be the only desirable things, or love them better than those things which are believed to be better,—if this be so, then it is necessary that misery follow and ever increase.

CHAPTER 5

OF THE FRATRICIDAL ACT OF THE FOUNDER OF THE EARTHLY CITY, AND THE CORRESPONDING CRIME OF THE FOUNDER OF ROME

Thus the founder of the earthly city was a fratricide. Overcome with envy, he slew his own brother, a citizen of the eternal city, and a sojourner on earth. So that we cannot be surprised that this first specimen, or, as the Greeks say, archetype of crime, should, long afterwards, find a corresponding crime at the foundation of that city which was destined to reign over so many nations, and be the head of this earthly city of which we speak. For of that city also, as one of their poets has mentioned, “the first walls were stained with a brother’s blood,” or, as Roman history records, Remus was slain by his brother Romulus. And thus there is no difference between the foundation of this city and of the earthly city, unless it be that Romulus and Remus were both citizens of the earthly city. Both desired to have the glory of founding the Roman republic, but both could not have as much glory as if one only claimed it; for he who wished to have the glory of ruling would certainly rule less if his power were shared by a living consort. In order, therefore, that the whole glory might be enjoyed by one, his consort was removed; and by this crime the empire was made larger indeed, but inferior, while otherwise it would have been less, but better. Now these brothers, Cain and Abel, were not both animated by the same earthly desires, nor did the murderer envy the other because he feared that, by both ruling, his own dominion would be curtailed,—for Abel was not solicitous to rule in that city which his brother built,—he was moved by that diabolical, envious hatred with which the evil regard the good, for no other reason than because they are good while themselves are evil. For the possession of goodness is by no means diminished by being shared with a partner either permanent or temporarily assumed; on the contrary, the possession of goodness is increased in proportion to the concord and charity of each of those who share it. In short, he who is unwilling to share this possession cannot have it; and he who is most willing to admit others to a share of it will have the greatest abundance to himself. The quarrel, then, between Romulus and Remus shows how the earthly city is divided against itself; that which fell out between Cain and Abel illustrated the hatred that subsists between the two cities, that of God and that of men. The wicked war with the wicked; the good also war with the wicked. But with the good, good men, or at least perfectly good men, cannot war; though, while only going on towards perfection, they war to this extent, that every good man resists others in those points in which he resists himself. And in each individual "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." This spiritual lusting, therefore, can be at war with the carnal lust of another man; or carnal lust may be at war with the spiritual desires of another, in some such way as good and wicked men are at war; or, still more certainly, the carnal lusts of two men, good but not yet perfect, contend together, just as the wicked contend with the wicked, until the health of those who are under the treatment of grace attains final victory.

CHAPTER 6

OF THE WEAKNESSES WHICH EVEN THE CITIZENS OF THE CITY OF GOD SUFFER DURING THIS EARTHLY PILGRIMAGE IN PUNISHMENT OF SIN, AND OF WHICH THEY ARE HEALED BY GOD'S CARE

This sickliness—that is to say, that disobedience of which we spoke in the fourteenth book—is the punishment of the first disobedience. It is therefore not nature, but vice; and therefore it is said to the good who are growing in grace, and living in this pilgrimage by faith, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." ^ In like manner it is said elsewhere, "Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man." And in another place, "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." And elsewhere, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." And in the Gospel, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." So too of sins which may create scandal the apostle says, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." For this purpose, and that we may keep that peace without which no man can see the Lord, many precepts are given which carefully inculcate mutual forgiveness; among which we may number that terrible word in which the servant is ordered to pay his formerly remitted debt of ten thousand talents, because he did not remit to his fellow-servant his debt of two hundred pence. To which parable the Lord Jesus added the words, “So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother.” It is thus the citizens of the city of God are healed while still they sojourn in this earth and sigh for the peace of their heavenly country. The Holy Spirit, too, works within, that the medicine externally applied may have some good result. Otherwise, even though God Himself make use of the creatures that are subject to Him, and in some human form address our human senses, whether we receive those impressions in sleep or in some external appearance, still, if He does not by His own inward grace sway and act upon the mind, no preaching of the truth is of any avail. But this God does, distinguishing between the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy, by His own very secret but very just providence. When He Himself aids the soul in His own hidden and wonderful ways, and the sin which dwells in our members, and is, as the apostle teaches, rather the punishment of sin, does not reign in our mortal body to obey the lusts of it, and when we no longer yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness, then the soul is converted from its own evil and selfish desires, and, God possessing it, it possesses itself in peace even in this life, and afterwards, with perfected health and endowed with im mortality, will reign without sin in peace everlasting.

CHAPTER 7

OF THE CAUSE OF CAIN’S CRIME AND HIS OBSTINACY, WHICH NOT EVEN THE WORD OF GOD COULD SUBDUE

But though God made use of this very mode of address which we have been endeavoring to explain, and spoke to Cain in that form by which He was wont to accommodate Himself to our first parents and converse with them as a companion, what good influence had it on Cain? Did he not fulfill his wicked intention of killing his brother even after he was warned by God’s voice? For when God had made a distinction between their sacrifices, neglecting Cain’s, regarding Abel’s, which was doubtless intimated by some visible sign to that effect; and when God had done so because the works of the one were evil but those of his brother good, Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. For thus it is written: “And the Lord said unto Cain, Why are thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou offerest rightly, but dost not rightly distinguish, hast thou not sinned? Fret not thyself, for unto thee shall be his turning, and thou shalt rule over him.” In this admonition administered by God to Cain, that clause indeed, “If thou offerest rightly, but dost not rightly distinguish, hast thou not sinned?” is obscure, inasmuch as it is not apparent for what reason or purpose it was spoken, and many meanings have been put upon it, as each one who discusses it attempts to interpret it according to the rule of faith. The truth is, that a sacrifice is “rightly offered” when it is offered to the true God, to whom alone we must sacrifice. And it is “not rightly distinguished” when we do not rightly distinguish the places or seasons or materials of the offering, or the person offering, or the person to whom it is presented, or those to whom it is distributed for food after the oblation. Distinguishing is here used for discriminating,—whether when an offering is made in a place where it ought not or of a material which ought to be offered not there but elsewhere; or when an offering is made at a wrong time, or of a material suitable not then but at some other time; or when that is offered which in no place nor any time ought to be offered; or when a man keeps to himself choicer specimens of the same kind than he offers to God; or when he or any other who may not lawfully partake profanely eats of the oblation. In which of these particulars Cain displeased God, it is difficult to determine. But the Apostle John, speaking of these brothers, says, “Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.” He thus gives us to understand that God did not respect his offering because it was not rightly “distinguished” in this, that he gave to God something of his own but kept himself to himself. For this all do who follow not God’s will but their own, who live not with an upright but a crooked heart, and yet offer to God such gifts as they suppose will procure from Him that He aid them not by healing but by gratifying their evil passions. And this is the characteristic of the earthly city, that it worships God or gods who may aid it in reigning victoriously and peacefully on earth not through love of doing good, but through lust of rule. The good use the world that they may enjoy God: the wicked, on the contrary, that they may enjoy the world would fain use God,—those of them, at least, who have attained to the belief that He is and takes an interest in human affairs. For they who have not yet attained even to this belief are still at a much lower level. Cain, then, when he saw that God had respect to his brother's sacrifice, but not to his own, should have humbly chosen his good brother as his example, and not proudly counted him his rival. But he was wroth, and his countenance fell. This angry regret for another person's goodness, even his brother's, was charged upon him by God as a great sin. And He accused him of it in the interrogation, "Why are thou wroth, and why is thy countenance fallen?" For God saw that he envied his brother, and of this He accused him. For to men, from whom the heart of their fellow is hid, it might be doubtful and quite uncertain whether that sadness bewailed his own wickedness by which, as he had learned, he had displeased God, or his brother's goodness, which had pleased God, and won His favorable regard to his sacrifice. But God, in giving the reason why He refused to accept Cain's offering and why Cain should rather have been displeased at himself than at his brother, shows him that though he was unjust in "not rightly distinguishing," that is, not rightly living and being unworthy to have his offering received, he was more unjust by far in hating his just brother without a cause.

Yet He does not dismiss him without counsel, holy, just, and good. "Fret not thyself," He says, "for unto thee shall be his turning, and thou shall rule over him." Over his brother, does He mean? Most certainly not. Over what, then, but sin? For He had said, "Thou hast sinned," and then He added, "Fret not thyself, for to thee shall be its turning, and thou shall rule over it." And the "turning" of sin to the man can be understood of his conviction that the guilt of sin can be laid at no other man's door but his own. For this is the health-giving medicine of penitence, and the fit plea for pardon; so that, when it is said, "To thee its turning," we must not supply "shall be," but we must read, "To thee let its turning be," understanding it as a command, not as a prediction. For then shall a man rule over his sin when he does not prefer it to himself and defend it, but subjects it by repentance; otherwise he that becomes protector of it shall surely become its prisoner. But if we understand this sin to be that carnal concupiscence of which the apostle says, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit," among the fruits of which lust he names envy, by which assuredly Cain was stung and excited to destroy his brother, then we may properly supply the words “shall be,” and read, “To thee shall be its turning, and thou shalt rule over it.” For when the carnal part which the apostle calls sin, in that place where he says, “It is not I who do it, but sin that dwelleth in me,” that part which the philosophers also call vicious, and which ought not to lead the mind, but which the mind ought to rule and restrain by reason from illicit motions,—when, then, this part has been moved to perpetrate any wickedness, if it be curbed and if it obey the word of the apostle, “Yield not your members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin,” it is turned towards the mind and subdued and conquered by it, so that reason rules over it as a subject. It was this which God enjoined on him who was kindled with the fire of envy against his brother, so that he sought to put out of the way him whom he should have set as an example. “Fret not thyself,” or compose thyself, He says: withhold thy hand from crime; let not sin reign in your mortal body to fulfill it in the lusts thereof, nor yield your members instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. “For to thee shall be its turning,” so long as you do not encourage it by giving it the rein, but bridle it by quenching its fire. “And thou shalt rule over it;” for when it is not allowed any external actings, it yields itself to the rule of the governing mind and righteous will, and ceases from even internal motions. There is something similar said in the same divine book of the woman, when God questioned and judged them after their sin, and pronounced sentence on them all,—the devil in the form of the serpent, the woman and her husband in their own persons. For when He had said to her, “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shall thou bring forth children,” then He added, “and thy turning shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.” What is said to Cain about his sin, or about the vicious concupiscence of his flesh, is here said of the woman who had sinned; and we are to understand that the husband is to rule his wife as the soul rules the flesh. And therefore, says the apostle, “He that loveth his wife, loveth himself; for no man ever yet hated his own flesh.” This flesh, then, is to be healed, because it belongs to ourselves: is not to be abandoned to destruction as if it were alien to our nature. But Cain received that counsel of God in the spirit of one who did not wish to amend. In fact, the vice of envy grew stronger in him; and, having entrapped his brother, he slew him. Such was the founder of the earthly city. He was also a figure of the Jews who slew Christ the Shepherd of the flock of men, prefigured by

Abel the shepherd of sheep: but as this is an allegorical and prophetical matter, I forbear to explain it now; besides, I remember that I have made some remarks upon it in writing against Faustus the Manichaean.

CHAPTER 8

WHAT CAIN'S REASON WAS FOR BUILDING A CITY SO EARLY IN THE HISTORY OF THE HUMAN RACE

At present it is the history which I aim at defending, that Scripture may not be reckoned incredible when it relates that one man built a city at a time in which there seem to have been but four men upon earth, or rather indeed but three, after one brother slew the other,—to wit, the first man the father of all, and Cain himself, and his son Enoch, by whose name the city was itself called. But they who are moved by this consideration forget to take into account that the writer of the sacred history does not necessarily mention all the men who might be alive at that time, but those only whom the scope of his work required him to name. The design of that writer (who in this matter was the instrument of the Holy Ghost) was to descend to Abraham through the successions of ascertained generations propagated from one man, and then to pass from Abraham's seed to the people of God, in whom, separated as they were from other nations, was prefigured and predicted all that relates to the city whose reign is eternal, and to its king and founder Christ, which things were foreseen in the Spirit as destined to come; yet neither is this object so effected as that nothing is said of the other society of men which we call the earthly city, but mention is made of it so far as seemed needful to enhance the glory of the heavenly city by contrast to its opposite. Accordingly, when the divine Scripture, in mentioning the number of years which those men lived, concludes its account of each man of whom it speaks, with the words, "And he begat sons and daughters, and all his days were so and so, and he died," are we to understand that, because it does not name those sons and daughters, therefore, during that long term of years over which one lifetime extended in those early days, there might not have been born very many men, by whose united numbers not one but several cities might have been built? But it suited the purpose of God, by whose inspiration these histories were composed, to arrange and distinguish from the first these two societies in their several generations,—that on the one side the generations of men, that is to say, of those who live according to man, and on the other side the generations of the sons of God, that is to say, of men living according to God, might be traced down together and yet apart from one another as far as the deluge, at which point their dissociation and association are exhibited: their dissociation, inasmuch as the generations of both lines are recorded in separate tables, the one line descending from the fratricide Cain, the other from Seth, who had been born to Adam instead of him whom his brother slew; their association, inasmuch as the good so deteriorated that the whole race became of such a character that it was swept away by the deluge, with the exception of one just man, whose name was Noah, and his wife and three sons and three daughters-in-law, which eight persons were alone deemed worthy to escape from that desolating visitation which destroyed all men.

Therefore, although it is written, “And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bare Enoch, and he builded a city and called the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch,” it does not follow that we are to believe this to have been his first-born; for we cannot suppose that this is proved by the expression “he knew his wife,” as if then for the first time he had had intercourse with her. For in the case of Adam, the father of all, this expression is used not only when Cain, who seems to have been his first-born, was conceived, but also afterwards the same Scripture says, “Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived, and bare a son, and called his name Seth.” Whence it is obvious that Scripture employs this expression neither always when a birth is recorded nor then only when the birth of a first-born is mentioned. Neither is it necessary to suppose that Enoch was Cain’s first-born because he named his city after him. For it is quite possible that though he had other sons, yet for some reason the father loved him more than the rest. Judah was not the first-born, though he gives his name to Judaea and the Jews. But even though Enoch was the first-born of the city’s founder, that is no reason for supposing that the father named the city after him as soon as he was born; for at that time he, being but a solitary man, could not have founded a civic community, which is nothing else than a multitude of men bound together by some associating tie. But when his family increased to such numbers that he had quite a population, then it became possible to him both to build a city, and give it, when founded, the name of his son. For so long was the life of those antediluvians, that he who lived the shortest time of those whose years are mentioned in Scripture attained to the age of 753 years. And though no one attained the age of a thousand years, several exceeded the age of nine hundred. Who then can doubt that during the lifetime of one man the human race might be so multiplied that there would be a population to build and occupy not one but several cities? And this might very readily be conjectured from the fact that from one man, Abraham, in not much more than four hundred years, the numbers of the Hebrew race so increased, that in the exodus of that people from Egypt there are recorded to have been six hundred thousand men capable of bearing arms, and this over and above the Idumaeans, who, though not numbered with Israel's descendants, were yet sprung from his brother, also a grandson of Abraham; and over and above the other nations which were of the same stock of Abraham, though not through Sarah,—that is, his descendants by Hagar and Keturah, the Ishmaelites, Midianites, etc.

CHAPTER 9

OF THE LONG LIFE AND GREATER STATURE OF THE ANTEDILUVIANS

Wherefore no one who considerately weighs facts will doubt that Cain might have built a city, and that a large one, when it is observed how prolonged were the lives of men, unless perhaps some sceptic take exception to this very length of years which our authors ascribe to the antediluvians and deny that this is credible. And so, too, they do not believe that the size of men's bodies was larger then than now, though the most esteemed of their own poets, Virgil, asserts the same, when he speaks of that huge stone which had been fixed as a landmark, and which a strong man of those ancient times snatched up as he fought, and ran, and hurled, and cast it,—

"Scarce twelve strong men of later mould

That weight could on their necks uphold."

thus declaring his opinion that the earth then produced mightier men. And if in the more recent times, how much more in the ages before the world-renowned deluge? But the large size of the primitive human body is often proved to the incredulous by the exposure of sepulchres, either through the wear of time or the violence of torrents or some accident, and in which bones of incredible size have been found or have rolled out. I myself, along with some others, saw on the shore at Utica a man's molar tooth of such a size, that if it were cut down into teeth such as we have, a hundred, I fancy, could have been made out of it. But that, I believe, belonged to some giant. For though the bodies of ordinary men were then larger than ours, the giants surpassed all in stature. And neither in our own age nor any other have there been altogether wanting instances of gigantic stature, though they may be few. The younger Pliny, a most learned man, maintains that the older the world becomes, the smaller will be the bodies of men. And he mentions that Homer in his poems often lamented the same decline; and this he does not laugh at as a poetical figment, but in his character of a recorder of natural wonders accepts it as historically true. But, as I said, the bones which are from time to time discovered prove the size of the bodies of the ancients, and will do so to future ages, for they are slow to decay. But the length of an antediluvian's life cannot now be proved by any such monumental evidence. But we are not on this account to withhold our faith from the sacred history, whose statements of past fact we are the more inexcusable in discrediting, as we see the accuracy of its prediction of what was future. And even that same Pliny tells us that there is still a nation in which men live 200 years. If, then, in places unknown to us, men are believed to have a length of days which is quite beyond our own experience, why should we not believe the same of times distant from our own? Or are we to believe that in other places there is what is not here, while we do not believe that in other times there has been anything but what is now?

CHAPTER 10

OF THE DIFFERENT COMPUTATION OF THE AGES OF THE ANTEDILUVIANS, GIVEN BY THE HEBREW MANUSCRIPTS AND BY OUR OWN

Wherefore, although there is a discrepancy for which I cannot account between our manuscripts and the Hebrew, in the very number of years assigned to the antediluvians, yet the discrepancy is not so great that they do not agree about their longevity. For the very first man, Adam, before he begot his son Seth, is in our manuscripts found to have lived 230 years, but in the Hebrew mss. 130. But after he begot Seth, our copies read that he lived 700 years, while the Hebrew give 800. And thus, when the two periods are taken together, the sum agrees. And so throughout the succeeding generations, the period before the father begets a son is always made shorter by 100 years in the Hebrew, but the period after his son is begotten is longer by 100 years in the Hebrew than in our copies. And thus, taking the two periods together, the result is the same in both. And in the sixth generation there is no discrepancy at all. In the seventh, however, of which Enoch is the representative, who is recorded to have been translated without death because he pleased God, there is the same discrepancy as in the first five generations, 100 years more being ascribed to him by our mss. before he begat a son. But still the result agrees; for according to both documents he lived before he was translated 365 years. In the eighth generation the discrepancy is less than in the others, and of a different kind. For Methuselah, whom Enoch begat, lived, before he begat his successor, not 100 years less, but 100 years more, according to the Hebrew reading; and in our mss. again these years are added to the period after he begat his son; so that in this case also the sum-total is the same. And it is only in the ninth generation, that is, in the age of Lamech, Methuselah's son and Noah's father, that there is a discrepancy in the sum total; and even in this case it is slight. For the Hebrew mss. represent him as living twenty-four years more than ours assign to him. For before he begat his son, who was called Noah, six years fewer are given to him by the Hebrew mss. than by ours; but after he begat this son, they give him thirty years more than ours; so that, deducting the former six, there remains, as we said, a surplus of twenty-four.

CHAPTER 11

OF METHUSELAH'S AGE, WHICH SEEMS TO EXTEND FOURTEEN YEARS BEYOND THE DELUGE

From this discrepancy between the Hebrew books and our own arises the well-known question as to the age of Methuselah; for it is computed that he lived for fourteen years after the deluge, though Scripture relates that of all who were then upon the earth only the eight souls in the ark escaped destruction by the flood, and of these Methuselah was not one. For, according to our books, Methuselah, before he begat the son whom he called Lamech, lived 167 years; then Lamech himself, before his son Noah was born, lived 188 years, which together make 355 years. Add to these the age of Noah at the date of the deluge, 600 years, and this gives a total of 955 from the birth of Methuselah to the year of the flood. Now all the years of the life of Methuselah are computed to be 969; for when he had lived 167 years, and had begotten his son Lamech, he then lived after this 802 years, which makes a total, as we said, of 969 years. From this, if we deduct 955 years from the birth of Methuselah to the flood, there remains fourteen years, which he is supposed to have lived after the flood. And therefore some suppose that, though he was not on earth (in which it is agreed that every living thing which could not naturally live in water perished), he was for a time with his father, who had been translated, and that he lived there till the flood had passed away. This hypothesis they adopt, that they may not cast a slight on the trustworthiness of versions which the Church has received into a position of high authority, and because they believe that the Jewish mss. rather than our own are in error. For they do not admit that this is a mistake of the translators, but maintain that there is a falsified statement in the original, from which, through the Greek, the Scripture has been translated into our own tongue. They say that it is not credible that the seventy translators, who simultaneously and unanimously produced one rendering, could have erred, or, in a case in which no interest of theirs was involved, could have falsified their translation; but that the Jews, envying us our translation of their Law and Prophets, have made alterations in their texts so as to undermine the authority of ours. This opinion or suspicion let each man adopt according to his own judgment. Certain it is that Methuselah did not survive the flood, but died in the very year it occurred, if the numbers given in the Hebrew mss. are true. My own opinion regarding the seventy translators I will, with God’s help, state more carefully in its own place, when I have come down (following the order which this work requires) to that period in which their translation was executed. For the present question, it is enough that, according to our versions, the men of that age had lives so long as to make it quite possible that, during the lifetime of the first-born of the two sole parents then on earth, the human race multiplied sufficiently to form a community.

CHAPTER 12

OF THE OPINION OF THOSE WHO DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IN THESE PRIMITIVE TIMES MEN LIVED SO LONG AS IS STATED

For they are by no means to be listened to who suppose that in those times years were differently reckoned, and were so short that one of our years may be supposed to be equal to ten of theirs. So that they say, when we read or hear that some man lived 900 years, we should understand ninety, ten of those years making but one of ours, and ten of ours equalling 100 of theirs. Consequently, as they suppose, Adam was twenty-three years of age when he begat Seth, and Seth himself was twenty years and six months old when his son Enos was born, though the Scripture calls these months 205 years. For, on the hypothesis of those whose opinion we are explaining, it was customary to divide one such year as we have into ten parts, and to call each part a year. And each of these parts was composed of six days squared; because God finished His works in six days, that He might rest the seventh. Of this I disputed according to my ability in the eleventh book. Now six squared, or six times six, gives thirty-six days; and this multiplied by ten amounts to 360 days, or twelve lunar months. As for the five remaining days which are needed to complete the solar year, and for the fourth part of a day, which requires that into every fourth or leap-year a day be added, the ancients added such days as the Romans used to call “intercalary,” in order to complete the number of the years. So that Enos, Seth’s son, was nineteen years old when his son Cainan was born, though Scripture calls these years 190. And so through all the generations in which the ages of the antediluvians are given, we find in our versions that almost no one begat a son at the age of 100 or under, or even at the age of 120 or thereabouts; but the youngest fathers are recorded to have been 160 years old and upwards. And the reason of this, they say, is that no one can beget children when he is ten years old, the age spoken of by those men as 100, but that sixteen is the age of puberty, and competent now to propagate offspring; and this is the age called by them 160. And that it may not be thought incredible that in these days the year was differently computed from our own, they adduce what is recorded by several writers of history, that the Egyptians had a year of four months, the Acarnanians of six, and the Lavinians of thirteen months. The younger Pliny, after mentioning that some writers reported that one man had lived 152 years, another ten more, others 200, others 300, that some had even reached 500 and 600, and a few 800 years of age, gave it as his opinion that all this must be ascribed to mistaken computation. For some, he says, make summer and winter each a year; others make each season a year, like the Arcadians, whose years, he says, were of three months. He added, too, that the Egyptians, of whose little years of four months we have spoken already, sometimes terminated their year at the wane of each moon; so that with them there are produced lifetimes of 1000 years.

By these plausible arguments certain persons, with no desire to weaken the credit of this sacred history, but rather to facilitate belief in it by removing the difficulty of such incredible longevity, have been themselves persuaded, and think they act wisely in persuading others, that in these days the year was so brief that ten of their years equal but one of ours, while ten of ours equal 100 of theirs. But there is the plainest evidence to show that this is quite false. Before producing this evidence, however, it seems right to mention a conjecture which is yet more plausible. From the Hebrew manuscripts we could at once refute this confident statement; for in them Adam is found to have lived not 230 but 130 years before he begat his third son. If, then, this mean thirteen years by our ordinary computation, then he must have begotten his first son when he was only twelve or thereabouts. Who can at this age beget children according to the ordinary and familiar course of nature? But not to mention him, since it is possible he may have been able to beget his like as soon as he was created,—for it is not credible that he was created so little as our infants are,—not to mention him, his son was not 205 years old when he begot Enos, as our versions have it, but 105, and consequently, according to this idea, was not eleven years old. But what shall I say of his son Cainan, who, though by our version 170 years old, was by the Hebrew text seventy when he beget Mahalaleel? If seventy years in those times meant only seven of our years, what man of seven years old begets children?

CHAPTER 13

WHETHER, IN COMPUTING YEARS, WE OUGHT TO FOLLOW THE HEBREW OR THE SEPTUAGINT

But if I say this, I shall presently be answered, It is one of the Jews' lies. This, however, we have disposed of above, showing that it cannot be that men of so just a reputation as the seventy translators should have falsified their version. However, if I ask them which of the two is more credible, that the Jewish nation, scattered far and wide, could have unanimously conspired to forge this lie, and so, through envying others the authority of their Scriptures, have deprived themselves of their verity; or that seventy men, who were also themselves Jews, shut up in one place (for Ptolemy king of Egypt had got them together for this work), should have envied foreign nations that same truth, and by common consent inserted these errors: who does not see which can be more naturally and readily believed? But far be it from any prudent man to believe either that the Jews, however malicious and wrong-headed, could have tampered with so many and so widely-dispersed manuscripts; or that those renowned seventy individuals had any common purpose to grudge the truth to the nations. One must therefore more plausibly maintain, that when first their labors began to be transcribed from the copy in Ptolemy's library, some such misstatement might find its way into the first copy made, and from it might be disseminated far and wide; and that this might arise from no fraud, but from a mere copyist's error. This is a sufficiently plausible account of the difficulty regarding Methuselah's life, and of that other case in which there is a difference in the total of twenty-four years. But in those cases in which there is a methodical resemblance in the falsification, so that uniformly the one version allots to the period before a son and successor is born 100 years more than the other, and to the period subsequent 100 years less, and vice versa, so that the totals may agree,—and this holds true of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and seventh generations,—in these cases error seems to have, if we may say so, a certain kind of constancy, and savors not of accident, but of design.

Accordingly, that diversity of numbers which distinguishes the Hebrew from the Greek and Latin copies of Scripture, and which consists of a uniform addition and deduction of 100 years in each lifetime for several consecutive generations, is to be attributed neither to the malice of the Jews nor to men so diligent and prudent as the seventy translators, but to the error of the copyist who was first allowed to transcribe the manuscript from the library of the above-mentioned king. For even now, in cases where numbers contribute nothing to the easier comprehension or more satisfactory knowledge of anything, they are both carelessly transcribed, and still more carelessly emended. For who will trouble himself to learn how many thousand men the several tribes of Israel contained? He sees no resulting benefit of such knowledge. Or how many men are there who are aware of the vast advantage that lies hid in this knowledge? But in this case, in which during so many consecutive generations 100 years are added in one manuscript where they are not reckoned in the other, and then, after the birth of the son and successor, the years which were wanting are added, it is obvious that the copyist who contrived this arrangement designed to insinuate that the antediluvians lived an excessive number of years only because each year was excessively brief, and that he tried to draw the attention to this fact by his statement of their age of puberty at which they became able to beget children. For, lest the incredulous might stumble at the difficulty of so long a lifetime, he insinuated that 100 of their years equalled but ten of ours; and this insinuation he conveyed by adding 100 years whenever he found the age below 160 years or thereabouts, deducting these years again from the period after the son's birth, that the total might harmonize. By this means he intended to ascribe the generation of offspring to a fit age, without diminishing the total sum of years ascribed to the lifetime of the individuals. And the very fact that in the sixth generation he departed from this uniform practice, inclines us all the rather to believe that when the circumstance we have referred to required his alterations, he made them; seeing that when this circumstance did not exist, he made no alteration. For in the same generation he found in the Hebrew ms., that Jared lived before he begat Enoch 162 years, which, according to the short year computation, is sixteen years and somewhat less than two months, an age capable of procreation; and therefore it was not necessary to add 100 short years, and so make the age twenty-six years of the usual length; and of course it was not necessary to deduct, after the son's birth, years which he had not added before it. And thus it comes to pass that in this instance there is no variation between the two manuscripts.

This is corroborated still further by the fact that in the eighth generation, while the Hebrew books assign 182 years to Methuselah before Lamech's birth, ours assign to him twenty less, though usually 100 years are added to this period; then, after Lamech’s birth, the twenty years are restored, so as to equalize the total in the two books. For if his design was that these 170 years be understood as seventeen, so as to suit the age of puberty, as there was no need for him adding anything, so there was none for his subtracting anything; for in this case he found an age fit for the generation of children, for the sake of which he was in the habit of adding those 100 years in cases where he did not find the age already sufficient. This difference of twenty years we might, indeed, have supposed had happened accidentally, had he not taken care to restore them afterwards as he had deducted them from the period before, so that there might be no deficiency in the total. Or are we perhaps to suppose that there was the still more astute design of concealing the deliberate and uniform addition of 100 years to the first period and their deduction from the subsequent period—did he design to conceal this by doing something similar, that is to say, adding and deducting, not indeed a century, but some years, even in a case in which there was no need for his doing so? But whatever may be thought of this, whether it be believed that he did so or not, whether, in fine, it be so or not, I would have no manner of doubt that when any diversity is found in the books, since both cannot be true to fact, we do well to believe in preference that language out of which the translation was made into another by translators. For there are three Greek mss., one Latin, and one Syriac, which agree with one another, and in all of these Methuselah is said to have died six years before the deluge.

CHAPTER 14

THAT THE YEARS IN THOSE ANCIENT TIMES WERE OF THE SAME LENGTH AS OUR OWN

Let us now see how it can be plainly made out that in the enormously protracted lives of those men the years were not so short that ten of their years were equal to only one of ours, but were of as great length as our own, which are measured by the course of the sun. It is proved by this, that Scripture states that the flood occurred in the six hundredth year of Noah’s life. But why in the same place is it also written, “The waters of the flood were upon the earth in the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the twenty-seventh day of the month,” if that very brief year (of which it took ten to make one of ours) consisted of thirty-six days? For so scant a year, if the ancient usage dignified it with the name of year, either has not months, or this month must be three days, so that it may have twelve of them. How then was it here said, “In the six hundredth year, the second month, the twenty-seventh day of the month,” unless the months then were of the same length as the months now? For how else could it be said that the flood began on the twenty-seventh day of the second month? Then afterwards, at the end of the flood, it is thus written: “And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat. And the waters decreased continually until the eleventh month: on the first day of the month were the tops of the mountains seen.” But if the months were such as we have, then so were the years. And certainly months of three days each could not have a twenty-seventh day. Or if every measure of time was diminished in proportion, and a thirtieth part of three days was then called a day, then that great deluge, which is recorded to have lasted forty days and forty nights, was really over in less than four of our days. Who can away with such foolishness and absurdity? Far be this error from us,—an error which seeks to build up our faith in the divine Scriptures on false conjecture only to demolish our faith at another point. It is plain that the day then was what it now is, a space of four-and-twenty hours, determined by the lapse of day and night; the month then equal to the month now, which is defined by the rise and completion of one moon; the year then equal to the year now, which is completed by twelve lunar months, with the addition of five days and a fourth to adjust it with the course of the sun. It was a year of this length which was reckoned the six hundredth of Noah’s life, and in the second month, the twenty-seventh day of the month, the flood began,—a flood which, as is recorded, was caused by heavy rains continuing for forty days, which days had not only two hours and a little more, but four-and-twenty hours, completing a night and a day. And consequently those antediluvians lived more than 900 years, which were years as long as those which afterwards Abraham lived 175 of, and after him his son Isaac 180, and his son Jacob nearly 150, and some time after, Moses 120, and men now seventy or eighty, or not much longer, of which years it is said, “their strength is labor and sorrow.”

But that discrepancy of numbers which is found to exist between our own and the Hebrew text does not touch the longevity of the ancients; and if there is any diversity so great that both versions cannot be true, we must take our ideas of the real facts from that text out of which our own version has been translated. However, though any one who pleases has it in his power to correct this version, yet it is not unimportant to observe that no one has presumed to emend the Septuagint from the Hebrew text in the many places where they seem to disagree. For this difference has not been reckoned a falsification; and for my own part I am persuaded it ought not to be reckoned so. But where the difference is not a mere copyist’s error, and where the sense is agreeable to truth and illustrative of truth, we must believe that the divine Spirit prompted them to give a varying version, not in their function of translators, but in the liberty of prophesying. And therefore we find that the apostles justly sanction the Septuagint, by quoting it as well as the Hebrew when they adduce proofs from the Scriptures. But as I have promised to treat this subject more carefully, if God help me, in a more fitting place, I will now go on with the matter in hand. For there can be no doubt that, the lives of men being so long, the first-born of the first man could have built a city,—a city, however, which was earthly, and not that which is called the city of God, to describe which we have taken in hand this great work.

CHAPTER 15

WHETHER IT IS CREDIBLE THAT THE MEN OF THE PRIMITIVE AGE ABSTAINED FROM SEXUAL INTERCOURSE UNTIL THAT DATE AT WHICH IT IS RECORDED THAT THEY BEGAT CHILDREN

Some one, then, will say, Is it to be believed that a man who intended to beget children, and had no intention of continence, abstained from sexual intercourse a hundred years and more, or even, according to the Hebrew version, only a little less, say eighty, seventy, or sixty years; or, if he did not abstain, was unable to beget offspring? This question admits of two solutions. For either puberty was so much later as the whole life was longer, or, which seems to me more likely, it is not the first-born sons that are here mentioned, but those whose names were required to fill up the series until Noah was reached, from whom again we see that the succession is continued to Abraham, and after him down to that point of time until which it was needful to mark by pedigree the course of the most glorious city, which sojourns as a stranger in this world, and seeks the heavenly country. That which is undeniable is that Cain was the first who was born of man and woman. For had he not been the first who was added by birth to the two unborn persons, Adam could not have said what he is recorded to have said, “I have gotten a man by the Lord.” He was followed by Abel, whom the elder brother slew, and who was the first to show by a kind of foreshadowing of the sojourning city of God, what iniquitous persecutions that city would suffer at the hands of wicked and, as it were, earth-born men, who love their earthly origin, and delight in the earthly happiness of the earthly city. But how old Adam was when he begat these sons does not appear. After this the generations diverge, the one branch deriving from Cain, the other from him whom Adam begot in the room of Abel slain by his brother, and whom he called Seth, saying, as it is written, “For God hath raised me up another seed for Abel whom Cain slew.” These two series of generations accordingly, the one of Cain, the other of Seth, represent the two cities in their distinctive ranks, the one the heavenly city, which sojourns on earth, the other the earthly, which gapes after earthly joys, and grovels in them as if they were the only joys. But though eight generations, including Adam, are registered before the flood, no man of Cain’s line has his age recorded at which the son who succeeded him was begotten. For the Spirit of God refused to mark the times before the flood in the generations of the earthly city, but preferred to do so in the heavenly line, as if it were more worthy of being remembered. Further, when Seth was born, the age of his father is mentioned; but already he had begotten other sons, and who will presume to say that Cain and Abel were the only ones previously begotten? For it does not follow that they alone had been begotten of Adam, because they alone were named in order to continue the series of generations which it was desirable to mention. For though the names of all the rest are buried in silence, yet it is said that Adam begot sons and daughters; and who that cares to be free from the charge of temerity will dare to say how many his offspring numbered? It was possible enough that Adam was divinely prompted to say, after Seth was born, “For God hath raised up to me another seed for Abel,” because that son was to be capable of representing Abel’s holiness, not because he was born first after him in point of time. Then because it is written, “And Seth lived 205 years,” or, according to the Hebrew reading, “105 years, and begat Enos,” who but a rash man could affirm that this was his first-born? Will any man do so to excite our wonder, and cause us to inquire how for so many years he remained free from sexual intercourse, though without any purpose of continuing so, or how, if he did not abstain, he yet had no children? Will any man do so when it is written of him, “And he begat sons and daughters, and all the days of Seth were 912 years, and he died?” And similarly regarding those whose years are afterwards mentioned, it is not disguised that they begat sons and daughters.

Consequently it does not at all appear whether he who is named as the son was himself the first begotten. Nay, since it is incredible that those fathers were either so long in attaining puberty, or could not get wives, or could not impregnate them, it is also incredible that those sons were their first-born. But as the writer of the sacred history designed to descend by well-marked intervals through a series of generations to the birth and life of Noah, in whose time the flood occurred, he mentioned not those sons who were first begotten, but those by whom the succession was handed down.

Let me make this clearer by here inserting an example, in regard to which no one can have any doubt that what I am asserting is true. The evangelist Matthew, where he designs to commit to our memories the generation of the Lord’s flesh by a series of parents, beginning from Abraham and intending to reach David, says, “Abraham begat Isaac;” why did he not say Ishmael, whom he first begat? Then “Isaac begat Jacob;” why did he not say Esau, who was the first-born? Simply because these sons would not have helped him to reach David. Then follows, “And Jacob begat Judah and his brethren:” was Judah the first begotten? “Judah,” he says, “begat Pharez and Zara;” yet neither were these twins the first-born of Judah, but before them he had begotten three other sons. And so in the order of the generations he retained those by whom he might reach David, so as to proceed onwards to the end he had in view. And from this we may understand that the antediluvians who are mentioned were not the first-born, but those through whom the order of the succeeding generations might be carried on to the patriarch Noah. We need not, therefore, weary ourselves with discussing the needless and obscure question as to their lateness of reaching puberty.

CHAPTER 16

OF MARRIAGE BETWEEN BLOOD-RELATIONS, IN REGARD TO WHICH THE PRESENT LAW COULD NOT BIND THE MEN OF THE EARLIEST AGES

As, therefore, the human race, subsequently to the first marriage of the man who was made of dust, and his wife who was made out of his side, required the union of males and females in order that it might multiply, and as there were no human beings except those who had been born of these two, men took their sisters for wives,—an act which was as certainly dictated by necessity in these ancient days as afterwards it was condemned by the prohibitions of religion. For it is very reasonable and just that men, among whom concord is honorable and useful, should be bound together by various relationships; and one man should not himself sustain many relationships, but that the various relationships should be distributed among several, and should thus serve to bind together the greatest number in the same social interests. “Father” and “father-in-law” are the names of two relationships. When, therefore, a man has one person for his father, another for his father-in-law, friendship extends itself to a larger number. But Adam in his single person was obliged to hold both relations to his sons and daughters, for brothers and sisters were united in marriage. So too Eve his wife was both mother and mother-in-law to her children of both sexes; while, had there been two women, one the mother, the other the mother-in-law, the family affection would have had a wider field. Then the sister herself by becoming a wife sustained in her single person two relationships, which, had they been distributed among individuals, one being sister, and another being wife, the family tie would have embraced a greater number of persons. But there was then no material for effecting this, since there were no human beings but the brothers and sisters born of those two first parents. Therefore, when an abundant population made it possible, men ought to choose for wives women who were not already their sisters; for not only would there then be no necessity for marrying sisters, but, were it done, it would be most abominable. For if the grandchildren of the first pair, being now able to choose their cousins for wives, married their sisters, then it would no longer be only two but three relationships that were held by one man, while each of these relationships ought to have been held by a separate individual, so as to bind together by family affection a larger number. For one man would in that case be both father, and father-in-law, and uncle to his own children (brother and sister now man and wife); and his wife would be mother, aunt, and mother-in-law to them; and they themselves would be not only brother and sister, and man and wife, but cousins also, being the children of brother and sister. Now, all these relationships, which combined three men into one, would have embraced nine persons had each relationship been held by one individual, so that a man had one person for his sister, another his wife, another his cousin, another his father, another his uncle, another his father-in-law, another his mother, another his aunt, another his mother-in-law; and thus the social bond would not have been tightened to bind a few, but loosened to embrace a larger number of relations.

And we see that, since the human race has increased and multiplied, this is so strictly observed even among the profane worshippers of many and false gods, that though their laws perversely allow a brother to marry his sister, yet custom, with a finer morality, prefers to forego this license; and though it was quite allowable in the earliest ages of the human race to marry one’s sister, it is now abhorred as a thing which no circumstances could justify. For custom has very great power either to attract or to shock human feeling. And in this matter, while it restrains concupiscence within due bounds, the man who neglects and disobeys it is justly branded as abominable. For if it is iniquitous to plough beyond our own boundaries through the greed of gain, is it not much more iniquitous to transgress the recognized boundaries of morals through sexual lust? And with regard to marriage in the next degree of consanguinity, marriage between cousins, we have observed that in our own time the customary morality has prevented this from being frequent, though the law allows it. It was not prohibited by divine law, nor as yet had human law prohibited it; nevertheless, though legitimate, people shrank from it, because it lay so close to what was illegitimate, and in marrying a cousin seemed almost to marry a sister,—for cousins are so closely related that they are called brothers and sisters, and are almost really so. But the ancient fathers, fearing that near relationship might gradually in the course of generations diverge, and become distant relationship, or cease to be relationship at all, religiously endeavored to limit it by the bond of marriage before it became distant, and thus, as it were, to call it back when it was escaping them. And on this account, even when the world was full of people, though they did not choose wives from among their sisters or half-sisters, yet they preferred them to be of the same stock as themselves. But who doubts that the modern prohibition of the marriage even of cousins is the more seemly regulation—not merely on account of the reason we have been urging, the multiplying of relationships, so that one person might not absorb two, which might be distributed to two persons, and so increase the number of people bound together as a family, but also because there is in human nature I know not what natural and praiseworthy shamefacedness which restrains us from desiring that connection which, though for propagation, is yet lustful and which even conjugal modesty blushes over, with any one to whom consanguinity bids us render respect?

The sexual intercourse of man and woman, then, is in the case of mortals a kind of seed-bed of the city; but while the earthly city needs for its population only generation, the heavenly needs also regeneration to rid it of the taint of generation. Whether before the deluge there was any bodily or visible sign of regeneration, such as was afterwards enjoined upon Abraham when he was circumcised, or what kind of sign it was, the sacred history does not inform us. But it does inform us that even these earliest of mankind sacrificed to God, as appeared also in the case of the two first brothers; Noah, too, is said to have offered sacrifices to God when he had come forth from the ark after the deluge. And concerning this subject we have already said in the foregoing books that the devils arrogate to themselves divinity, and require sacrifice that they may be esteemed gods, and delight in these honors on no other account than this, because they know that true sacrifice is due to the true God.

CHAPTER 17

OF THE TWO FATHERS AND LEADERS WHO SPRANG FROM ONE PROGENITOR

Since, then, Adam was the father of both lines,—the father, that is to say, both of the line which belonged to the earthly, and of that which belonged to the heavenly city,—when Abel was slain, and by his death exhibited a marvellous mystery, there were henceforth two lines proceeding from two fathers, Cain and Seth, and in those sons of theirs, whom it behoved to register, the tokens of these two cities began to appear more distinctly. For Cain begat Enoch, in whose name he built a city, an earthly one, which was not from home in this world, but rested satisfied with its temporal peace and happiness. Cain, too, means “possession;” wherefore at his birth either his father or mother said,” I have gotten a man through God.” Then Enoch means “dedication;” for the earthly city is dedicated in this world in which it is built, for in this world it finds the end towards which it aims and aspires. Further, Seth signifies “resurrection,” and Enos his son signifies “man,” not as Adam, which also signifies man, but is used in Hebrew indifferently for man and woman, as it is written, “Male and female created He them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam,” leaving no room to doubt that though the woman was distinctively called Eve, yet the name Adam, meaning man, was common to both. But Enos means man in so restricted a sense, that Hebrew linguists tell us it cannot be applied to woman: it is the equivalent of the “child of the resurrection,” when they neither marry nor are given in marriage. For there shall be no generation in that place to which regeneration shall have brought us. Wherefore I think it not immaterial to observe that in those generations which are propagated from him who is called Seth, although daughters as well as sons are said to have been begotten, no woman is expressly registered by name; but in those which sprang from Cain at the very termination to which the line runs, the last person named as begotten is a woman. For we read, “Methusael begat Lamech. And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of the shepherds that dwell in tents. And his brother’s name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.” Here terminate all the generations of Cain, being eight in number, including Adam,—to wit, seven from Adam to Lamech, who married two wives, and whose children, among whom a woman also is named, form the eighth generation. Whereby it is elegantly signified that the earthly city shall to its termination have carnal generations proceeding from the intercourse of males and females.

And therefore the wives themselves of the man who is the last named father of Cain’s line, are registered in their own names,—a practice nowhere followed before the deluge save in Eve’s case. Now as Cain, signifying possession, the founder of the earthly city, and his son Enoch, meaning dedication, in whose name it was founded, indicate that this city is earthly both in its beginning and in its end,—a city in which nothing more is hoped for than can be seen in this world,—so Seth, meaning resurrection, and being the father of generations registered apart from the others, we must consider what this sacred history says of his son.

CHAPTER 18

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ABEL, SETH, AND ENOS TO CHRIST AND HIS BODY THE CHURCH

“And to Seth,” it is said, “there was born a son, and he called his name Enos: he hoped to call on the name of the Lord God.” Here we have a loud testimony to the truth. Man, then, the son of the resurrection, lives in hope: he lives in hope as long as the city of God, which is begotten by faith in the resurrection, sojourns in this world. For in these two men, Abel, signifying “grief,” and his brother Seth, signifying “resurrection,” the death of Christ and His life from the dead are prefigured. And by faith in these is begotten in this world the city of God, that is to say, the man who has hoped to call on the name of the Lord. “For by hope,” says the apostle, “we are saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Who can avoid referring this to a profound mystery? For did not Abel hope to call upon the name of the Lord God when his sacrifice is mentioned in Scripture as having been accepted by God? Did not Seth himself hope to call on the name of the Lord God, of whom it was said, “For God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel?” Why then is this which is found to be common to all the godly specially attributed to Enos, unless because it was fit that in him, who is mentioned as the first-born of the father of those generations which were separated to the better part of the heavenly city, there should be a type of the man, or society of men, who live not according to man in contentment with earthly felicity, but according to God in hope of everlasting felicity? And it was not said, “He hoped in the Lord God," nor "He called on the name of the Lord God," but "He hoped to call on the name of the Lord God." And what does this "hoped to call" mean, unless it is a prophecy that a people should arise who, according to the election of grace, would call on the name of the Lord God? It is this which has been said by another prophet, and which the apostle interprets of the people who belong to the grace of God: "And it shall be that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." For these two expressions, "And he called his name Enos, which means man," and "He hoped to call on the name of the Lord God," are sufficient proof that man ought not to rest his hopes in himself; as it is elsewhere written, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man." Consequently no one ought to trust in himself that he shall become a citizen of that other city which is not dedicated in the name of Cain's son in this present time, that is to say, in the fleeting course of this mortal world, but in the immortality of perpetual blessedness.

CHAPTER 19

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ENOCH'S TRANSLATION

For that line also of which Seth is the father has the name "Dedication" in the seventh generation from Adam, counting Adam. For the seventh from him is Enoch, that is, Dedication. But this is that man who was translated because he pleased God, and who held in the order of the generations a remarkable place, being the seventh from Adam, a number signalized by the consecration of the Sabbath. But, counting from the diverging point of the two lines, or from Seth, he was the sixth. Now it was on the sixth day God made man, and consummated His works. But the translation of Enoch prefigured our deferred dedication; for though it is indeed already accomplished in Christ our Head, who so rose again that He shall die no more, and who was Himself also translated, yet there remains another dedication of the whole house, of which Christ Himself is the foundation, and this dedication is deferred till the end, when all shall rise again to die no more. And whether it is the house of God, or the temple of God, or the city of God, that is said to be dedicated, it is all the same, and equally in accordance with the usage of the Latin language. For Virgil himself calls the city of widest empire "the house of Assaracus," meaning the Romans, who were descended through the Trojans from Assaracus. He also calls them the house of AEneas, because Rome was built by those Trojans who had come to Italy under AEneas. For that poet imitated the sacred writings, in which the Hebrew nation, though so numerous, is called the house of Jacob.

CHAPTER 20

HOW IT IS THAT CAIN'S LINE TERMINATES IN THE EIGHTH GENERATION, WHILE NOAH, THOUGH DESCENDED FROM THE SAME FATHER, ADAM, IS FOUND TO BE THE TENTH FROM HIM

Some one will say, If the writer of this history intended, in enumerating the generations from Adam through his son Seth, to descend through them to Noah, in whose time the deluge occurred, and from him again to trace the connected generations down to Abraham, with whom Matthew begins the pedigree of Christ the eternal King of the city of God, what did he intend by enumerating the generations from Cain, and to what terminus did he mean to trace them? We reply, To the deluge, by which the whole stock of the earthly city was destroyed, but repaired by the sons of Noah. For the earthly city and community of men who live after the flesh will never fail until the end of this world, of which our Lord says, “The children of this world generate, and are generated.” But the city of God, which sojourns in this world, is conducted by regeneration to the world to come, of which the children neither generate nor are generated. In this world generation is common to both cities; though even now the city of God has many thousand citizens who abstain from the act of generation; yet the other city also has some citizens who imitate these, though erroneously. For to that city belong also those who have erred from the faith, and introduced divers heresies; for they live according to man, not according to God. And the Indian gymnosophists, who are said to philosophize in the solitudes of India in a state of nudity, are its citizens; and they abstain from marriage. For continence is not a good thing, except when it is practised in the faith of the highest good, that is, God. Yet no one is found to have practised it before the deluge; for indeed even Enoch himself, the seventh from Adam, who is said to have been translated without dying, begat sons and daughters before he was translated, and among these was Methuselah, by whom the succession of the recorded generations is maintained.

Why, then, is so small a number of Cain’s generations registered, if it was proper to trace them to the deluge, and if there was no such delay of the date of puberty as to preclude the hope of offspring for a hundred or more years? For if the author of this book had not in view some one to whom he might rigidly trace the series of generations, as he designed in those which sprang from Seth’s seed to descend to Noah, and thence to start again by a rigid order, what need was there of omitting the first-born sons for the sake of descending to Lamech, in whose sons that line terminates,—that is to say, in the eighth generation from Adam, or the seventh from Cain,—as if from this point he had wished to pass on to another series, by which he might reach either the Israelitish people, among whom the earthly Jerusalem presented a prophetic figure of the heavenly city, or to Jesus Christ, “according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever,” the Maker and Ruler of the heavenly city? What, I say, was the need of this, seeing that the whole of Cain’s posterity were destroyed in the deluge? From this it is manifest that they are the first-born sons who are registered in this genealogy. Why, then, are there so few of them? Their numbers in the period before the deluge must have been greater, if the date of puberty bore no proportion to their longevity, and they had children before they were a hundred years old. For supposing they were on an average thirty years old when they began to beget children, then, as there are eight generations, including Adam and Lamech’s children, 8 times 30 gives 240 years; did they then produce no more children in all the rest of the time before the deluge? With what intention, then, did he who wrote this record make no mention of subsequent generations? For from Adam to the deluge there are reckoned, according to our copies of Scripture, 2262 years, and according to the He brew text, 1656 years. Supposing, then, the smaller number to be the true one, and subtracting from 1656 years 240, is it credible that during the remaining 1400 and odd years until the deluge the posterity of Cain begat no children?

But let any one who is moved by this call to mind that when I discussed the question, how it is credible that those primitive men could abstain for so many years from begetting children, two modes of solution were found,—either a puberty late in proportion to their longevity, or that the sons registered in the genealogies were not the first-born, but those through whom the author of the book intended to reach the point aimed at, as he intended to reach Noah by the generations of Seth. So that, if in the generations of Cain there occurs no one whom the writer could make it his object to reach by omitting the first-born and inserting those who would serve such a purpose, then we must have recourse to the supposition of late puberty, and say that only at some age beyond a hundred years they became capable of begetting children, so that the order of the generations ran through the first-born, and filled up even the whole period before the deluge, long though it was. It is, however, possible that, for some more secret reason which escapes me, this city, which we say is earthly, is exhibited in all its generations down to Lamech and his sons, and that then the writer withholds from recording the rest which may have existed before the deluge. And without supposing so late a puberty in these men, there might be another reason for tracing the generations by sons who were not first-born, viz., that the same city which Cain built, and named after his son Enoch, may have had a widely extended dominion and many kings, not reigning simultaneously, but successively, the reigning king begetting always his successor. Cain himself would be the first of these kings; his son Enoch, in whose name the city in which he reigned was built, would be the second; the third Irad, whom Enoch begat; the fourth Mehujael, whom Irad begat; the fifth Methusael, whom Mehujael begat; the sixth Lamech, whom Methusael begat, and who is the seventh from Adam through Cain. But it was not necessary that the first-born should succeed their fathers in the kingdom, but those would succeed who were recommended by the possession of some virtue useful to the earthly city, or who were chosen by lot, or the son who was best liked by his father would succeed by a kind of hereditary right to the throne. And the deluge may have happened during the lifetime and reign of Lamech, and may have destroyed him along with all other men, save those who were in the ark. For we cannot be surprised that, during so long a period from Adam to the deluge, and with the ages of individuals varying as they did, there should not be an equal number of generations in both lines, but seven in Cain’s, and ten in Seth’s; for as I have already said, Lamech is the seventh from Adam, Noah the tenth; and in Lamech's case not one son only is registered, as in the former instances, but more, because it was uncertain which of them would have succeeded when he died, if there had intervened any time to reign between his death and the deluge.

But in whatever manner the generations of Cain's line are traced downwards, whether it be by first-born sons or by the heirs to the throne, it seems to me that I must by no means omit to notice that, when Lamech had been set down as the seventh from Adam, there were named, in addition, as many of his children as made up this number to eleven, which is the number signifying sin; for three sons and one daughter are added. The wives of Lamech have another signification, different from that which I am now pressing. For at present I am speaking of the children, and not of those by whom the children were begotten. Since, then, the law is symbolized by the number ten,—whence that memorable Decalogue,—there is no doubt that the number eleven, which goes beyond ten, symbolizes the transgression of the law, and consequently sin. For this reason, eleven veils of goat's skin were ordered to be hung in the tabernacle of the testimony, which served in the wanderings of God's people as an ambulatory temple. And in that haircloth there was a reminder of sins, because the goats were to be set on the left hand of the Judge; and therefore, when we confess our sins, we prostrate ourselves in haircloth, as if we were saying what is written in the psalm, "My sin is ever before me." The progeny of Adam, then, by Cain the murderer, is completed in the number eleven, which symbolizes sin; and this number itself is made up by a woman, as it was by the same sex that beginning was made of sin by which we all die. And it was committed that the pleasure of the flesh, which resists the spirit, might follow; and so Naamah, the daughter of Lamech, means "pleasure." But from Adam to Noah, in the line of Seth, there are ten generations. And to Noah three sons are added, of whom, while one fell into sin, two were blessed by their father; so that, if you deduct the reprobate and add the gracious sons to the number, you get twelve,—a number signalized in the case of the patriarchs and of the apostles, and made up of the parts of the number seven multiplied into one another,—for three times four, or four times three, give twelve. These things being so, I see that I must consider and mention how these two lines, which by their separate genealogies depict the two cities, one of earth-born, the other of regenerated persons, became afterwards so mixed and confused, that the whole human race, with the exception of eight persons, deserved to perish in the deluge.

CHAPTER 21

WHY IT IS THAT, AS SOON AS CAIN'S SON ENOCH HAS BEEN NAMED, THE GENEALOGY IS FORTHWITH CONTINUED AS FAR AS THE DELUGE, WHILE AFTER THE MENTION OF ENOS, SETH'S SON, THE NARRATIVE RETURNS AGAIN TO THE CREATION OF MAN

We must first see why, in the enumeration of Cain's posterity, after Enoch, in whose name the city was built, has been first of all mentioned, the rest are at once enumerated down to that terminus of which I have spoken, and at which that race and the whole line was destroyed in the deluge; while, after Enos the son of Seth, has been mentioned, the rest are not at once named down to the deluge, but a clause is inserted to the following effect: "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him; male and female created He them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." This seems to me to be inserted for this purpose, that here again the reckoning of the times may start from Adam himself—a purpose which the writer had not in view in speaking of the earthly city, as if God mentioned it, but did not take account of its duration. But why does he return to this recapitulation after mentioning the son of Seth, the man who hoped to call on the name of the Lord God, unless because it was fit thus to present these two cities, the one beginning with a murderer and ending in a murderer (for Lamech, too, acknowledges to his two wives that he had committed murder), the other built up by him who hoped to call upon the name of the Lord God? For the highest and complete terrestrial duty of the city of God, which is a stranger in this world, is that which was exemplified in the individual who was begotten by him who typified the resurrection of the murdered Abel. That one man is the unity of the whole heavenly city, not yet indeed complete, but to be completed, as this prophetic figure foreshows. The son of Cain, therefore, that is, the son of possession (and of what but an earthly possession?), may have a name in the earthly city which was built in his name. It is of such the Psalmist says, "They call their lands after their own names.” Wherefore they incur what is written in another psalm: “Thou, O Lord, in Thy city wilt despise their image.” But as for the son of Seth, the son of the resurrection, let him hope to call on the name of the Lord God. For he prefigures that society of men which says, “But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God: I have trusted in the mercy of God.” But let him not seek the empty honors of a famous name upon earth, for “Blessed is the man that maketh the name of the Lord his trust, and respecteth not vanities nor lying follies.” After having presented the two cities, the one founded in the material good of this world, the other in hope in God, but both starting from a common gate opened in Adam into this mortal state, and both running on and running out to their proper and merited ends, Scripture begins to reckon the times, and in this reckoning includes other generations, making a recapitulation from Adam, out of whose condemned seed, as out of one mass handed over to merited damnation, God made some vessels of wrath to dishonor and others vessels of mercy to honor; in punishment rendering to the former what is due, in grace giving to the latter what is not due: in order that by the very comparison of itself with the vessels of wrath, the heavenly city, which sojourns on earth, may learn not to put confidence in the liberty of its own will, but may hope to call on the name of the Lord God. For will, being a nature which was made good by the good God, but mutable by the immutable, because it was made out of nothing, can both decline from good to do evil, which takes place when it freely chooses, and can also escape the evil and do good, which takes place only by divine assistance.

CHAPTER 22

OF THE FALL OF THE SONS OF GOD WHO WERE CAPTIVATED BY THE DAUGHTERS OF MEN, WHEREBY ALL, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF EIGHT PERSONS, DESERVEDLY PERISHED IN THE DELUGE

When the human race, in the exercise of this freedom of will, increased and advanced, there arose a mixture and confusion of the two cities by their participation in a common iniquity. And this calamity, as well as the first, was occasioned by woman, though not in the same way; for these women were not themselves betrayed, neither did they persuade the men to sin, but having belonged to the earthly city and society of the earthly, they had been of corrupt manners from the first, and were loved for their bodily beauty by the sons of God, or the citizens of the other city which sojourns in this world. Beauty is indeed a good gift of God; but that the good may not think it a great good, God dispenses it even to the wicked. And thus, when the good that is great and proper to the good was abandoned by the sons of God, they fell to a paltry good which is not peculiar to the good, but common to the good and the evil; and when they were captivated by the daughters of men, they adopted the manners of the earthly to win them as their brides, and forsook the godly ways they had followed in their own holy society. And thus beauty, which is indeed God’s handiwork, but only a temporal, carnal, and lower kind of good, is not fitly loved in preference to God, the eternal, spiritual, and unchangeable good. When the miser prefers his gold to justice, it is through no fault of the gold, but of the man; and so with every created thing. For though it be good, it may be loved with an evil as well as with a good love: it is loved rightly when it is loved ordinately; evilly, when inordinately. It is this which some one has briefly said in these verses in praise of the Creator: “These are Thine, they are good, because Thou art good who didst create them. There is in them nothing of ours, unless the sin we commit when we forget the order of things, and instead of Thee love that which Thou hast made.”

But if the Creator is truly loved, that is, if He Himself is loved and not another thing in His stead, He cannot be evilly loved; for love itself is to be ordinately loved, because we do well to love that which, when we love it, makes us live well and virtuously. So that it seems to me that it is a brief but true definition of virtue to say, it is the order of love; and on this account, in the Canticles, the bride of Christ, the city of God, sings, “Order love within me.” It was the order of this love, then, this charity or attachment, which the sons of God disturbed when they forsook God, and were enamored of the daughters of men. And by these two names (sons of God and daughters of men) the two cities are sufficiently distinguished. For though the former were by nature children of men, they had come into possession of another name by grace. For in the same Scripture in which the sons of God are said to have loved the daughters of men, they are also called angels of God; whence many suppose that they were not men but angels.

CHAPTER 23

WHETHER WE ARE TO BELIEVE THAT ANGELS, WHO ARE OF A SPIRITUAL SUBSTANCE, FELL IN LOVE WITH THE BEAUTY OF WOMEN, AND SOUGHT THEM IN MARRIAGE, AND THAT FROM THIS CONNECTION GIANTS WERE BORN

In the third book of this work (c. 5) we made a passing reference to this question, but did not decide whether angels, inasmuch as they are spirits, could have bodily intercourse with women. For it is written, “Who maketh His angels spirits,” that is, He makes those who are by nature spirits His angels by appointing them to the duty of bearing His messages. For the Greek word angelos, which in Latin appears as “angelus,” means a messenger. But whether the Psalmist speaks of their bodies when he adds, “and His ministers a flaming fire,” or means that God’s ministers ought to blaze with love as with a spiritual fire, is doubtful. However, the same trustworthy Scripture testifies that angels have appeared to men in such bodies as could not only be seen, but also touched. There is, too, a very general rumor, which many have verified by their own experience, or which trustworthy persons who have heard the experience of others corroborate, that sylvans and fauns, who are commonly called “incubi,” had often made wicked assaults upon women, and satisfied their lust upon them; and that certain devils, called Duses by the Gauls, are constantly attempting and effecting this impurity is so generally affirmed, that it were impudent to deny it. From these assertions, indeed, I dare not determine whether there be some spirits embodied in an aerial substance (for this element, even when agitated by a fan, is sensibly felt by the body), and who are capable of lust and of mingling sensibly with women; but certainly I could by no means believe that God’s holy angels could at that time have so fallen, nor can I think that it is of them the Apostle Peter said, “For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.” I think he rather speaks of these who first apostatized from God, along with their chief the devil, who enviously deceived the first man under the form of a serpent. But the same holy Scripture affords the most ample testimony that even godly men have been called angels; for of John it is written: “Behold, I send my messenger (angel) before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way.” And the prophet Malachi, by a peculiar grace specially communicated to him, was called an angel.

But some are moved by the fact that we have read that the fruit of the connection between those who are called angels of God and the women they loved were not men like our own breed, but giants; just as if there were not born even in our own time (as I have mentioned above) men of much greater size than the ordinary stature. Was there not at Rome a few years ago, when the destruction of the city now accomplished by the Goths was drawing near, a woman, with her father and mother, who by her gigantic size over-topped all others? Surprising crowds from all quarters came to see her, and that which struck them most was the circumstance that neither of her parents were quite up to the tallest ordinary stature. Giants therefore might well be born, even before the sons of God, who are also called angels of God, formed a connection with the daughters of men, or of those living according to men, that is to say, before the sons of Seth formed a connection with the daughters of Cain. For thus speaks even the canonical Scripture itself in the book in which we read of this; its words are: “And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair [good]; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord God said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became the giants, men of renown.” These words of the divine book sufficiently indicate that already there were giants in the earth in those days, in which the sons of God took wives of the children of men, when they loved them because they were good, that is, fair. For it is the custom of this Scripture to call those who are beautiful in appearance “good.” But after this connection had been formed, then too were giants born. For the words are: “There were giants in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men.” Therefore there were giants both before, “in those days,” and “also after that.” And the words, “they bare children to them,” show plainly enough that before the sons of God fell in this fashion they begat children to God, not to themselves,—that is to say, not moved by the lust of sexual intercourse, but discharging the duty of propagation, intending to produce not a family to gratify their own pride, but citizens to people the city of God; and to these they as God's angels would bear the message, that they should place their hope in God, like him who was born of Seth, the son of resurrection, and who hoped to call on the name of the Lord God, in which hope they and their offspring would be co-heirs of eternal blessings, and brethren in the family of which God is the Father.

But that those angels were not angels in the sense of not being men, as some suppose, Scripture itself decides, which unambiguously declares that they were men. For when it had first been stated that "the angels of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose," it was immediately added, "And the Lord God said, My Spirit shall not always strive with these men, for that they also are flesh." For by the Spirit of God they had been made angels of God, and sons of God; but declining towards lower things, they are called men, a name of nature, not of grace; and they are called flesh, as deserters of the Spirit, and by their desertion deserted [by Him]. The Septuagint indeed calls them both angels of God and sons of God, though all the copies do not show this, some having only the name" sons of God." And Aquila, whom the Jews prefer to the other interpreters, has translated neither angels of God nor sons of God, but sons of gods. But both are correct. For they were both sons of God, and thus brothers of their own fathers, who were children of the same God; and they were sons of gods, because begotten by gods, together with whom they themselves also were gods, according to that expression of the psalm: "I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High." For the Septuagint translators are justly believed to have received the Spirit of prophecy; so that, if they made any alterations under His authority, and did not adhere to a strict translation, we could not doubt that this was divinely dictated. However, the Hebrew word may be said to be ambiguous, and to be susceptible of either translation, "sons of God," or "sons of gods."

Let us omit, then, the fables of those scriptures which are called apocryphal, because their obscure origin was unknown to the fathers from whom the authority of the true Scriptures has been transmitted to us by a most certain and well-ascertained succession. For though there is some truth in these apocryphal writings, yet they contain so many false statements, that they have no canonical authority. We cannot deny that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, left some divine writings, for this is asserted by the Apostle Jude in his canonical epistle. But it is not without reason that these writings have no place in that canon of Scripture which was preserved in the temple of the Hebrew people by the diligence of successive priests; for their antiquity brought them under suspicion, and it was impossible to ascertain whether these were his genuine writings, and they were not brought forward as genuine by the persons who were found to have carefully preserved the canonical books by a successive transmission. So that the writings which are produced under his name, and which contain these fables about the giants, saying that their fathers were not men, are properly judged by prudent men to be not genuine; just as many writings are produced by heretics under the names both of other prophets, and more recently, under the names of the apostles, all of which, after careful examination, have been set apart from canonical authority under the title of Apocrypha. There is therefore no doubt that, according to the Hebrew and Christian canonical Scriptures, there were many giants before the deluge, and that these were citizens of the earthly society of men, and that the sons of God, who were according to the flesh the sons of Seth, sunk into this community when they forsook righteousness. Nor need we wonder that giants should be born even from these. For all of their children were not giants; but there were more then than in the remaining periods since the deluge. And it pleased the Creator to produce them, that it might thus be demonstrated that neither beauty, nor yet size and strength, are of much moment to the wise man, whose blessedness lies in spiritual and immortal blessings, in far better and more enduring gifts, in the good things that are the peculiar property of the good, and are not shared by good and bad alike. It is this which another prophet confirms when he says, "These were the giants, famous from the beginning, that were of so great stature, and so expert in war. Those did not the Lord choose, neither gave He the way of knowledge unto them; but they were destroyed because they had no wisdom, and perished through their own foolishness."

CHAPTER 24

HOW WE ARE TO UNDERSTAND THIS WHICH THE LORD SAID TO THOSE WHO WERE TO PERISH IN THE FLOOD: “THEIR DAYS SHALL BE 120 YEARS.”

But that which God said, “Their days shall be a hundred and twenty years,” is not to be understood as a prediction that henceforth men should not live longer than 120 years,—for even after the deluge we find that they lived more than 500 years,—but we are to understand that God said this when Noah had nearly completed his fifth century, that is, had lived 480 years, which Scripture, as it frequently uses the name of the whole of the largest part, calls 500 years. Now the deluge came in the 600th year of Noah’s life, the second month; and thus 120 years were predicted as being the remaining span of those who were doomed, which years being spent, they should be destroyed by the deluge. And it is not unreasonably believed that the deluge came as it did, because already there were not found upon earth any who were not worthy of sharing a death so manifestly judicial,—not that a good man, who must die some time, would be a jot the worse of such a death after it was past. Nevertheless there died in the deluge none of those mentioned in the sacred Scripture as descended from Seth. But here is the divine account of the cause of the deluge: “The Lord God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air: for I am angry that I have made them.”

CHAPTER 25

OF THE ANGER OF GOD, WHICH DOES NOT INFLAME HIS MIND, NOR DISTURB HIS UNCHANGEABLE TRANQUILLITY

The anger of God is not a disturbing emotion of His mind, but a judgment by which punishment is inflicted upon sin. His thought and reconsideration also are the unchangeable reason which changes things; for He does not, like man, repent of anything He has done, because in all matters His decision is as inflexible as His prescience is certain. But if Scripture were not to use such expressions as the above, it would not familiarly insinuate itself into the minds of all classes of men, whom it seeks access to for their good, that it may alarm the proud, arouse the careless, exercise the inquisitive, and satisfy the intelligent; and this it could not do, did it not first stoop, and in a manner descend, to them where they lie. But its denouncing death on all the animals of earth and air is a declaration of the vastness of the disaster that was approaching: not that it threatens destruction to the irrational animals as if they too had incurred it by sin.

CHAPTER 26

THAT THE ARK WHICH NOAH WAS ORDERED TO MAKE FIGURES IN EVERY RESPECT CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

Moreover, inasmuch as God commanded Noah, a just man, and, as the truthful Scripture says, a man perfect in his generation,—not indeed with the perfection of the citizens of the city of God in that immortal condition in which they equal the angels, but in so far as they can be perfect in their sojourn in this world,—inasmuch as God commanded him, I say, to make an ark, in which he might be rescued from the destruction of the flood, along with his family, i.e., his wife, sons, and daughters-in-law, and along with the animals who, in obedience to God’s command, came to him into the ark: this is certainly a figure of the city of God sojourning in this world; that is to say, of the church, which is rescued by the wood on which hung the Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus. For even its very dimensions, in length, breadth, and height, represent the human body in which He came, as it had been foretold. For the length of the human body, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, is six times its breadth from side to side, and ten times its depth or thickness, measuring from back to front: that is to say, if you measure a man as he lies on his back or on his face, he is six times as long from head to foot as he is broad from side to side, and ten times as long as he is high from the ground. And therefore the ark was made 300 cubits in length, 50 in breadth, and 30 in height. And its having a door made in the side of it certainly signified the wound which was made when the side of the Crucified was pierced with the spear; for by this those who come to Him enter; for thence flowed the sacraments by which those who believe are initiated. And the fact that it was ordered to be made of squared timbers, signifies the immoveable steadiness of the life of the saints; for however you turn a cube, it still stands. And the other peculiarities of the ark’s construction are signs of features of the church.

But we have not now time to pursue this subject; and, indeed, we have already dwelt upon it in the work we wrote against Faustus the Manichean, who denies that there is anything prophesied of Christ in the Hebrew books. It may be that one man’s exposition excels another’s, and that ours is not the best; but all that is said must be referred to this city of God we speak of, which sojourns in this wicked world as in a deluge, at least if the expositor would not widely miss the meaning of the author. For example, the interpretation I have given in the work against Faustus, of the words, “with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it,” is, that because the church is gathered out of all nations, it is said to have two stories, to represent the two kinds of men,—the circumcision, to wit, and the uncircumcision, or, as the apostle otherwise calls them, Jews and Gentiles; and to have three stories, because all the nations were replenished from the three sons of Noah. Now any one may object to this interpretation, and may give another which harmonizes with the rule of faith. For as the ark was to have rooms not only on the lower, but also on the upper stories, which were called “third stories,” that there might be a habitable space on the third floor from the basement, some one may interpret these to mean the three graces commended by the apostle.—faith, hope, and charity. Or even more suitably they may be supposed to represent those three harvests in the gospel, thirty-fold, sixty-fold, an hundred-fold,—chaste marriage dwelling in the ground floor, chaste widowhood in the upper, and chaste virginity in the top story. Or any better interpretation may be given, so long as the reference to this city is maintained. And the same statement I would make of all the remaining particulars in this passage which require exposition, viz., that although different explanations are given, yet they must all agree with the one harmonious catholic faith.

CHAPTER 27

OF THE ARK AND THE DELUGE, AND THAT WE CANNOT AGREE WITH THOSE WHO RECEIVE THE BARE HISTORY, BUT REJECT THE ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION, NOR WITH THOSE WHO MAINTAIN THE FIGURATIVE AND NOT THE HISTORICAL MEANING

Yet no one ought to suppose either that these things were written for no purpose, or that we should study only the historical truth, apart from any allegorical meanings; or, on the contrary, that they are only allegories, and that there were no such facts at all, or that, whether it be so or no, there is here no prophecy of the church. For what right-minded man will contend that books so religiously preserved during thousands of years, and transmitted by so orderly a succession, were written without an object, or that only the bare historical facts are to be considered when we read them? For, not to mention other instances, if the number of the animals entailed the construction of an ark of great size, where was the necessity of sending into it two unclean and seven clean animals of each species, when both could have been preserved in equal numbers? Or could not God, who ordered them to be preserved in order to replenish the race, restore them in the same way He had created them?

But they who contend that these things never happened, but are only figures setting forth other things, in the first place suppose that there could not be a flood so great that the water should rise fifteen cubits above the highest mountains, because it is said that clouds cannot rise above the top of Mount Olympus, because it reaches the sky where there is none of that thicker atmosphere in which winds, clouds, and rains have their origin. They do not reflect that the densest element of all, earth, can exist there; or perhaps they deny that the top of the mountain is earth. Why, then, do these measurers and weighers of the elements contend that earth can be raised to those aerial altitudes, and that water cannot, while they admit that water is lighter, and liker to ascend than earth? What reason do they adduce why earth, the heavier and lower element, has for so many ages scaled to the tranquil ether, while water, the lighter, and more likely to ascend, is not suffered to do the same even for a brief space of time?

They say, too, that the area of that ark could not contain so many kinds of animals of both sexes, two of the unclean and seven of the clean. But they seem to me to reckon only one area of 300 cubits long and 50 broad, and not to remember that there was another similar in the story above, and yet another as large in the story above that again; and that there was consequently an area of 900 cubits by 150. And if we accept what Origen has with some appropriateness suggested, that Moses the man of God, being, as it is written, “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,” who delighted in geometry, may have meant geometrical cubits, of which they say that one is equal to six of our cubits, then who does not see what a capacity these dimensions give to the ark? For as to their objection that an ark of such size could not be built, it is a very silly calumny; for they are aware that huge cities have been built, and they should remember that the ark was an hundred years in building. Or, perhaps, though stone can adhere to stone when cemented with nothing but lime, so that a wall of several miles may be constructed, yet plank cannot be riveted to plank by mortices, bolts, nails, and pitch-glue, so as to construct an ark which was not made with curved ribs but straight timbers, which was not to be launched by its builders, but to be lifted by the natural pressure of the water when it reached it, and which was to be preserved from shipwreck as it floated about rather by divine oversight than by human skill.

As to another customary inquiry of the scrupulous about the very minute creatures, not only such as mice and lizards, but also locusts, beetles, flies, fleas, and so forth, whether there were not in the ark a larger number of them than was determined by God in His command, those persons who are moved by this difficulty are to be reminded that the words “every creeping thing of the earth” only indicate that it was not needful to preserve in the ark the animals that can live in the water, whether the fishes that live submerged in it, or the sea-birds that swim on its surface. Then, when it is said “male and female,” no doubt reference is made to the repairing of the races, and consequently there was no need for those creatures being in the ark which are born without the union of the sexes from inanimate things, or from their corruption; or if they were in the ark, they might be there as they commonly are in houses, not in any determinate numbers; or if it was necessary that there should be a definite number of all those animals that cannot naturally live in the water, that so the most sacred mystery which was being enacted might be bodied forth and perfectly figured in actual realities, still this was not the care of Noah or his sons, but of God. For Noah did not catch the animals and put them into the ark, but gave them entrance as they came seeking it. For this is the force of the words, “They shall come unto thee,”—not, that is to say, by man’s effort, but by God’s will. But certainly we are not required to believe that those which have no sex also came; for it is expressly and definitely said, “They shall be male and female.” For there are some animals which are born out of corruption, but yet afterwards they themselves copulate and produce offspring, as flies; but others, which have no sex, like bees. Then, as to those animals which have sex, but without ability to propagate their kind, like mules and she-mules, it is probable that they were not in the ark, but that it was counted sufficient to preserve their parents, to wit, the horse and the ass; and this applies to all hybrids. Yet, if it was necessary for the completeness of the mystery, they were there; for even this species has “male and female.”

Another question is commonly raised regarding the food of the carnivorous animals,—whether, without transgressing the command which fixed the number to be preserved, there were necessarily others included in the ark for their sustenance; or, as is more probable, there might be some food which was not flesh, and which yet suited all. For we know how many animals whose food is flesh eat also vegetable products and fruits, especially figs and chestnuts. What wonder is it, therefore, if that wise and just man was instructed by God what would suit each, so that without flesh he prepared and stored provision fit for every species? And what is there which hunger would not make animals eat? Or what could not be made sweet and wholesome by God, who, with a divine facility, might have enabled them to do without food at all, had it not been requisite to the completeness of so great a mystery that they should be fed? But none but a contentious man can suppose that there was no prefiguring of the church in so manifold and circumstantial a detail. For the nations have already so filled the church, and are comprehended in the framework of its unity, the clean and unclean together, until the appointed end, that this one very manifest fulfillment leaves no doubt how we should interpret even those others which are somewhat more obscure, and which cannot so readily be discerned. And since this is so, if not even the most audacious will presume to assert that these things were written without a purpose, or that though the events really happened they mean nothing, or that they did not really happen, but are only allegory, or that at all events they are far from having any figurative reference to the church; if it has been made out that, on the other hand, we must rather believe that there was a wise purpose in their being committed to memory and to writing, and that they did happen, and have a significance, and that this significance has a prophetic reference to the church, then this book, having served this purpose, may now be closed, that we may go on to trace in the history subsequent to the deluge the courses of the two cities,—the earthly, that lives according to men, and the heavenly, that lives according to God.

Book XVI

Argument—In the former part of this book, from the first to the twelfth chapter, the progress of the two cities, the earthly and the heavenly, from Noah to Abraham, is exhibited from Holy Scripture: In the latter part, the progress of the heavenly alone, from Abraham to the kings of Israel, is the subject.

CHAPTER 1

WHETHER, AFTER THE DELUGE, FROM NOAH TO ABRAHAM, ANY FAMILIES CAN BE FOUND WHO LIVED ACCORDING TO GOD

It is difficult to discover from Scripture, whether, after the deluge, traces of the holy city are continuous, or are so interrupted by intervening seasons of godlessness, that not a single worshipper of the one true God was found among men; because from Noah, who, with his wife, three sons, and as many daughters-in-law, achieved deliverance in the ark from the destruction of the deluge, down to Abraham, we do not find in the canonical books that the piety of any one is celebrated by express divine testimony, unless it be in the case of Noah, who commends with a prophetic benediction his two sons Shem and Japheth, while he beheld and foresaw what was long afterwards to happen. It was also by this prophetic spirit that, when his middle son—that is, the son who was younger than the first and older than the last born—had sinned against him, he cursed him not in his own person, but in his son's (his own grandson's), in the words, “Cursed be the lad Canaan; a servant shall he be unto his brethren.” Now Canaan was born of Ham, who, so far from covering his sleeping father's nakedness, had divulged it. For the same reason also he subjoins the blessing on his two other sons, the oldest and youngest, saying, “Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall gladden Japheth, and he shall dwell in the houses of Shem.” And so, too, the planting of the vine by Noah, and his intoxication by its fruit, and his nakedness while he slept, and the other things done at that time, and recorded, are all of them pregnant with prophetic meanings, and veiled in mysteries.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT WAS PROPHETICALLY PREFIGURED IN THE SONS OF NOAH

The things which then were hidden are now sufficiently revealed by the actual events which have followed. For who can carefully and intelligently consider these things without recognizing them accomplished in Christ? Shem, of whom Christ was born in the flesh, means “named.” And what is of greater name than Christ, the fragrance of whose name is now everywhere perceived, so that even prophecy sings of it beforehand, comparing it in the Song of Songs, to ointment poured forth? Is it not also in the houses of Christ, that is, in the churches, that the “enlargement” of the nations dwells? For Japheth means “enlargement.” And Ham (i.e., hot), who was the middle son of Noah, and, as it were, separated himself from both, and remained between them, neither belonging to the first-fruits of Israel nor to the fullness of the Gentiles, what does he signify but the tribe of heretics, hot with the spirit, not of patience, but of impatience, with which the breasts of heretics are wont to blaze, and with which they disturb the peace of the saints? But even the heretics yield an advantage to those that make proficiency, according to the apostle’s saying, “There must also be heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.” Whence, too, it is elsewhere said, “The son that receives instruction will be wise, and he uses the foolish as his servant.” For while the hot restlessness of heretics stirs questions about many articles of the catholic faith, the necessity of defending them forces us both to investigate them more accurately, to understand them more clearly, and to proclaim them more earnestly; and the question mooted by an adversary becomes the occasion of instruction. However, not only those who are openly separated from the church, but also all who glory in the Christian name, and at the same time lead abandoned lives, may without absurdity seem to be figured by Noah’s middle son: for the passion of Christ, which was signified by that man’s nakedness, is at once proclaimed by their profession, and dishonored by their wicked conduct. Of such, therefore, it has been said, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” And therefore was Ham cursed in his son, he being, as it were, his fruit. So, too, this son of his, Canaan, is fitly interpreted "their movement," which is nothing else than their work. But Shem and Japheth, that is to say, the circumcision and uncircumcision, or, as the apostle otherwise calls them, the Jews and Greeks, but called and justified, having somehow discovered the nakedness of their father (which signifies the Saviour's passion), took a garment and laid it upon their backs, and entered backwards and covered their father's nakedness, without their seeing what their reverence hid. For we both honor the passion of Christ as accomplished for us, and we hate the crime of the Jews who crucified Him. The garment signifies the sacrament, their backs the memory of things past: for the church celebrates the passion of Christ as already accomplished, and no longer to be looked forward to, now that Japheth already dwells in the habitations of Shem, and their wicked brother between them.

But the wicked brother is, in the person of his son (i.e., his work), the boy, or slave, of his good brothers, when good men make a skillful use of bad men, either for the exercise of their patience or for their advancement in wisdom. For the apostle testifies that there are some who preach Christ from no pure motives; "but," says he, "whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." For it is Christ Himself who planted the vine of which the prophet says, "The vine of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel;" and He drinks of its wine, whether we thus understand that cup of which He says, "Can ye drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" and, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," by which He obviously means His passion. Or, as wine is the fruit of the vine, we may prefer to understand that from this vine, that is to say, from the race of Israel, He has assumed flesh and blood that He might suffer; "and he was drunken," that is, He suffered; "and was naked," that is, His weakness appeared in His suffering, as the apostle says, "though He was crucified through weakness." Wherefore the same apostle says, "The weakness of God is stronger than men; and the foolishness of God is wiser than men." And when to the expression "he was naked" Scripture adds "in his house," it elegantly intimates that Jesus was to suffer the cross and death at the hands of His own household, His own kith and kin, the Jews. This passion of Christ is only externally and verbally professed by the reprobate, for what they profess, they do not understand. But the elect hold in the inner man this so great mystery, and honor inwardly in the heart this weakness and foolishness of God. And of this there is a figure in Ham going out to proclaim his father’s nakedness; while Shem and Japheth, to cover or honor it, went in, that is to say, did it inwardly.

These secrets of divine Scripture we investigate as well as we can. All will not accept our interpretation with equal confidence, but all hold it certain that these things were neither done nor recorded without some foreshadowing of future events, and that they are to be referred only to Christ and His church, which is the city of God, proclaimed from the very beginning of human history by figures which we now see everywhere accomplished. From the blessing of the two sons of Noah, and the cursing of the middle son, down to Abraham, or for more than a thousand years, there is, as I have said, no mention of any righteous persons who worshipped God. I do not therefore conclude that there were none; but it had been tedious to mention every one, and would have displayed historical accuracy rather than prophetic foresight. The object of the writer of these sacred books, or rather of the Spirit of God in him, is not only to record the past, but to depict the future, so far as it regards the city of God; for whatever is said of those who are not its citizens, is given either for her instruction, or as a foil to enhance her glory. Yet we are not to suppose that all that is recorded has some signification; but those things which have no signification of their own are interwoven for the sake of the things which are significant. It is only the ploughshare that cleaves the soil; but to effect this, other parts of the plough are requisite. It is only the strings in harps and other musical instruments which produce melodious sounds; but that they may do so, there are other parts of the instrument which are not indeed struck by those who sing, but are connected with the strings which are struck, and produce musical notes. So in this prophetic history some things are narrated which have no significance, but are, as it were, the framework to which the significant things are attached.

CHAPTER 3

OF THE GENERATIONS OF THE THREE SONS OF NOAH

We must therefore introduce into this work an explanation of the generations of the three sons of Noah, in so far as that may illustrate the progress in time of the two cities. Scripture first mentions that of the youngest son, who is called Japheth: he had eight sons, and by two of these sons seven grandchildren, three by one son, four by the other; in all, fifteen descendants. Ham, Noah's middle son, had four sons, and by one of them five grandsons, and by one of these two great-grandsons; in all, eleven. After enumerating these, Scripture returns to the first of the sons, and says, "Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a giant on the earth. He was a giant hunter against the Lord God: wherefore they say, As Nimrod the giant hunter against the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Assur, and built Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah: this was a great city." Now this Cush, father of the giant Nimrod, is the first-named among the sons of Ham, to whom five sons and two grandsons are ascribed. But he either begat this giant after his grandsons were born, or, which is more credible, Scripture speaks of him separately on account of his eminence; for mention is also made of his kingdom, which began with that magnificent city Babylon, and the other places, whether cities or districts, mentioned along with it. But what is recorded of the land of Shinar which belonged to Nimrod's kingdom, to wit, that Assur went forth from it and built Nineveh and the other cities mentioned with it, happened long after; but he takes occasion to speak of it here on account of the grandeur of the Assyrian kingdom, which was wonderfully extended by Ninus son of Belus, and founder of the great city Nineveh, which was named after him, Nineveh, from Ninus. But Assur, father of the Assyrian, was not one of the sons of Ham, Noah's son, but is found among the sons of Shem, his eldest son. Whence it appears that among Shem's offspring there arose men who afterwards took possession of that giant's kingdom, and advancing from it, founded other cities, the first of which was called Nineveh, from Ninus. From him Scripture returns to Ham's other son, Mizraim; and his sons are enumerated, not as seven individuals, but as seven nations. And from the sixth, as if from the sixth son, the race called the Philistines are said to have sprung; so that there are in all eight. Then it returns again to Canaan, in whose person Ham was cursed; and his eleven sons are named. Then the territories they occupied, and some of the cities, are named. And thus, if we count sons and grandsons, there are thirty-one of Ham's descendants registered.

It remains to mention the sons of Shem, Noah's eldest son; for to him this genealogical narrative gradually ascends from the youngest. But in the commencement of the record of Shem's sons there is an obscurity which calls for explanation, since it is closely connected with the object of our investigation. For we read, "Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Heber, the brother of Japheth the elder, were children born." This is the order of the words: And to Shem was born Heber, even to himself, that is, to Shem himself was born Heber, and Shem is the father of all his children. We are intended to understand that Shem is the patriarch of all his posterity who were to be mentioned, whether sons, grandsons, great-grandsons, or descendants at any remove. For Shem did not beget Heber, who was indeed in the fifth generation from him. For Shem begat, among other sons, Arphaxad; Arphaxad begat Cainan, Cainan begat Salah, Salah begat Heber. And it was with good reason that he was named first among Shem's offspring, taking precedence even of his sons, though only a grandchild of the fifth generation; for from him, as tradition says, the Hebrews derived their name, though the other etymology which derives the name from Abraham (as if Abrahews) may possibly be correct. But there can be little doubt that the former is the right etymology, and that they were called after Heber, Heberews, and then, dropping a letter, Hebrews; and so was their language called Hebrew, which was spoken by none but the people of Israel among whom was the city of God, mysteriously prefigured in all the people, and truly present in the saints. Six of Shem's sons then are first named, then four grandsons born to one of these sons; then it mentions another son of Shem, who begat a grandson; and his son, again, or Shem's great-grandson, was Heber. And Heber begat two sons, and called the one Peleg, which means "dividing;" and Scripture subjoins the reason of this name, saying, "for in his days was the earth divided." What this means will afterwards appear. Heber's other son begat twelve sons; consequently all Shem's descendants are twenty-seven. The total number of the progeny of the three sons of Noah is seventy-three, fifteen by Japheth, thirty-one by Ham, twenty-seven by Shem. Then Scripture adds, "These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.” And so of the whole number “These are the families of the sons of Noah after their generations, in their nations; and by these were the isles of the nations dispersed through the earth after the flood.” From which we gather that the seventy-three (or rather, as I shall presently show, seventy-two) were not individuals, but nations. For in a former passage, when the sons of Japheth were enumerated, it is said in conclusion, “By these were the isles of the nations divided in their lands, every one after his language, in their tribes, and in their nations.”

But nations are expressly mentioned among the sons of Ham, as I showed above. “Mizraim begat those who are called Ludim;” and so also of the other seven nations. And after enumerating all of them, it concludes, “These are the sons of Ham, in their families, according to their languages, in their territories, and in their nations.” The reason, then, why the children of several of them are not mentioned, is that they belonged by birth to other nations, and did not themselves become nations. Why else is it, that though eight sons are reckoned to Japheth, the sons of only two of these are mentioned; and though four are reckoned to Ham, only three are spoken of as having sons; and though six are reckoned to Shem, the descendants of only two of these are traced? Did the rest remain childless? We cannot suppose so; but they did not produce nations so great as to warrant their being mentioned, but were absorbed in the nations to which they belonged by birth.

CHAPTER 4

OF THE DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES, AND OF THE FOUNDING OF BABYLON

But though these nations are said to have been dispersed according to their languages, yet the narrator recurs to that time when all had but one language, and explains how it came to pass that a diversity of languages was introduced. “The whole earth,” he says, “was of one lip, and all had one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and dwelt there. And they said one to another, Come, and let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly. And they had bricks for stone, and slime for mortar. And they said, Come, and let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top shall reach the sky; and let us make us a name, before we be scattered abroad on the face of all the earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord God said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Come, and let us go down, and confound there their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. And God scattered them thence on the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city and the tower. Therefore the name of it is called Confusion; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and the Lord God scattered them thence on the face of all the earth." This city, which was called Confusion, is the same as Babylon, whose wonderful construction Gentile history also notices. For Babylon means Confusion. Whence we conclude that the giant Nimrod was its founder, as had been hinted a little before, where Scripture, in speaking of him, says that the beginning of his kingdom was Babylon, that is, Babylon had a supremacy over the other cities as the metropolis and royal residence; although it did not rise to the grand dimensions designed by its proud and impious founder. The plan was to make it so high that it should reach the sky, whether this was meant of one tower which they intended to build higher than the others, or of all the towers, which might be signified by the singular number, as we speak of "the soldier," meaning the army, and of the frog or the locust, when we refer to the whole multitude of frogs and locusts in the plagues with which Moses smote the Egyptians. But what did these vain and presumptuous men intend? How did they expect to raise this lofty mass against God, when they had built it above all the mountains and the clouds of the earth's atmosphere? What injury could any spiritual or material elevation do to God? The safe and true way to heaven is made by humility, which lifts up the heart to the Lord, not against Him; as this giant is said to have been a "hunter against the Lord." This has been misunderstood by some through the ambiguity of the Greek word, and they have translated it, not "against the Lord," but "before the Lord;" for enantion means both "before" and "against." In the Psalm this word is rendered, "Let us weep before the Lord our Maker." The same word occurs in the book of Job, where it is written, "Thou hast broken into fury against the Lord." And so this giant is to be recognized as a "hunter against the Lord." And what is meant by the term "hunter" but deceiver, oppressor, and destroyer of the animals of the earth? He and his people therefore, erected this tower against the Lord, and so gave expression to their impious pride; and justly was their wicked intention punished by God, even though it was unsuccessful. But what was the nature of the punishment? As the tongue is the instrument of domination, in it pride was punished; so that man, who would not understand God when He issued His commands, should be misunderstood when he himself gave orders. Thus was that conspiracy disbanded, for each man retired from those he could not understand, and associated with those whose speech was intelligible; and the nations were divided according to their languages, and scattered over the earth as seemed good to God, who accomplished this in ways hidden from and incomprehensible to us.

CHAPTER 5

OF GOD'S COMING DOWN TO CONFOUND THE LANGUAGES OF THE BUILDERS OF THE CITY

We read, "The Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men built:" it was not the sons of God, but that society which lived in a merely human way, and which we call the earthly city. God, who is always wholly everywhere, does not move locally; but He is said to descend when He does anything in the earth out of the usual course, which, as it were, makes His presence felt. And in the same way, He does not by "seeing" learn some new thing, for He cannot ever be ignorant of anything; but He is said to see and recognize, in time, that which He causes others to see and recognize. And therefore that city was not previously being seen as God made it be seen when He showed how offensive it was to Him. We might, indeed, interpret God's descending to the city of the descent of His angels in whom He dwells; so that the following words, "And the Lord God said, Behold, they are all one race and of one language," and also what follows, "Come, and let us go down and confound their speech," are a recapitulation, explaining how the previously intimated "descent of the Lord" was accomplished. For if He had already gone down, why does He say, "Come, and let us go down and confound?"—words which seem to be addressed to the angels, and to intimate that He who was in the angels descended in their descent. And the words most appropriately are, not, "Go ye down and confound," but, "Let us confound their speech;" showing that He so works by His servants, that they are themselves also fellow-laborers with God, as the apostle says, "For we are fellow-laborers with God."

CHAPTER 6

WHAT WE ARE TO UNDERSTAND BY GOD'S SPEAKING TO THE ANGELS

We might have supposed that the words uttered at the creation of man, "Let us," and not Let me, "make man," were addressed to the angels, had He not added "in our image;" but as we cannot believe that man was made in the image of angels, or that the image of God is the same as that of angels, it is proper to refer this expression to the plurality of the Trinity. And yet this Trinity, being one God, even after saying "Let us make," goes on to say, "And God made man in His image," and not "Gods made," or "in their image." And were there any difficulty in applying to the angels the words, "Come, and let us go down and confound their speech," we might refer the plural to the Trinity, as if the Father were addressing the Son and the Holy Spirit; but it rather belongs to the angels to approach God by holy movements, that is, by pious thoughts, and thereby to avail themselves of the unchangeable truth which rules in the court of heaven as their eternal law. For they are not themselves the truth; but partaking in the creative truth, they are moved towards it as the fountain of life, that what they have not in themselves they may obtain in it. And this movement of theirs is steady, for they never go back from what they have reached. And to these angels God does not speak, as we speak to one another, or to God, or to angels, or as the angels speak to us, or as God speaks to us through them: He speaks to them in an ineffable manner of His own, and that which He says is conveyed to us in a manner suited to our capacity. For the speaking of God antecedent and superior to all His works, is the immutable reason of His work: it has no noisy and passing sound, but an energy eternally abiding and producing results in time. Thus He speaks to the holy angels; but to us, who are far off, He speaks otherwise. When, however, we hear with the inner ear some part of the speech of God, we approximate to the angels. But in this work I need not labor to give an account of the ways in which God speaks. For either the unchangeable Truth speaks directly to the mind of the rational creature in some indescribable way, or speaks through the changeable creature, either presenting spiritual images to our spirit, or bodily voices to our bodily sense.

The words, “Nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do,” are assuredly not meant as an affirmation, but as an interrogation, such as is used by persons threatening, as e.g., when Dido exclaims,

“They will not take arms and pursue?”

We are to understand the words as if it had been said, Shall nothing be restrained from them which they have imagined to do? From these three men, therefore, the three sons of Noah we mean, 73, or rather, as the catalogue will show, 72 nations and as many languages were dispersed over the earth, and as they increased filled even the islands. But the nations multiplied much more than the languages. For even in Africa we know several barbarous nations which have but one language; and who can doubt that, as the human race increased, men contrived to pass to the islands in ships?

CHAPTER 7

WHETHER EVEN THE REMOTEST ISLANDS RECEIVED THEIR FAUNA FROM THE ANIMALS WHICH WERE PRESERVED, THROUGH THE DELUGE, IN THE ARK

There is a question raised about all those kinds of beasts which are not domesticated, nor are produced like frogs from the earth, but are propagated by male and female parents, such as wolves and animals of that kind; and it is asked how they could be found in the islands after the deluge, in which all the animals not in the ark perished, unless the breed was restored from those which were preserved in pairs in the ark. It might, indeed, be said that they crossed to the islands by swimming, but this could only be true of those very near the mainland; whereas there are some so distant, that we fancy no animal could swim to them. But if men caught them and took them across with themselves, and thus propagated these breeds in their new abodes, this would not imply an incredible fondness for the chase. At the same time, it cannot be denied that by the intervention of angels they might be transferred by God’s order or permission. If, however, they were produced out of the earth as at their first creation, when God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature,” this makes it more evident that all kinds of animals were preserved in the ark, not so much for the sake of renewing the stock, as of prefiguring the various nations which were to be saved in the church; this, I say, is more evident, if the earth brought forth many animals in islands to which they could not cross over.

CHAPTER 8

WHETHER CERTAIN MONSTROUS RACES OF MEN ARE DERIVED FROM THE STOCK OF ADAM OR NOAH’S SONS

It is also asked whether we are to believe that certain monstrous races of men, spoken of in secular history, have sprung from Noah’s sons, or rather, I should say, from that one man from whom they themselves were descended. For it is reported that some have one eye in the middle of the forehead; some, feet turned backwards from the heel; some, a double sex, the right breast like a man, the left like a woman, and that they alternately beget and bring forth: others are said to have no mouth, and to breathe only through the nostrils; others are but a cubit high, and are therefore called by the Greeks “Pigmies:” they say that in some places the women conceive in their fifth year, and do not live beyond their eighth. So, too, they tell of a race who have two feet but only one leg, and are of marvellous swiftness, though they do not bend the knee: they are called Skiopodes, because in the hot weather they lie down on their backs and shade themselves with their feet. Others are said to have no head, and their eyes in their shoulders; and other human or quasi-human races are depicted in mosaic in the harbor esplanade of Carthage, on the faith of histories of rarities. What shall I say of the Cynocephali, whose dog-like head and barking proclaim them beasts rather than men? But we are not bound to believe all we hear of these monstrosities. But whoever is anywhere born a man, that is, a rational, mortal animal, no matter what unusual appearance he presents in color, movement, sound, nor how peculiar he is in some power, part, or quality of his nature, no Christian can doubt that he springs from that one protoplast. We can distinguish the common human nature from that which is peculiar, and therefore wonderful.

The same account which is given of monstrous births in individual cases can be given of monstrous races. For God, the Creator of all, knows where and when each thing ought to be, or to have been created, because He sees the similarities and diversities which can contribute to the beauty of the whole. But He who cannot see the whole is offended by the deformity of the part, because he is blind to that which balances it, and to which it belongs. We know that men are born with more than four fingers on their hands or toes on their feet: this is a smaller matter; but far from us be the folly of supposing that the Creator mistook the number of a man's fingers, though we cannot account for the difference. And so in cases where the divergence from the rule is greater. He whose works no man justly finds fault with, knows what He has done. At Hippo-Diarrhytus there is a man whose hands are crescent-shaped, and have only two fingers each, and his feet similarly formed. If there were a race like him, it would be added to the history of the curious and wonderful. Shall we therefore deny that this man is descended from that one man who was first created? As for the Androgyni, or Hermaphrodites, as they are called, though they are rare, yet from time to time there appears persons of sex so doubtful, that it remains uncertain from which sex they take their name; though it is customary to give them a masculine name, as the more worthy. For no one ever called them Hermaphroditesses. Some years ago, quite within my own memory, a man was born in the East, double in his upper, but single in his lower half—having two heads, two chests, four hands, but one body and two feet like an ordinary man; and he lived so long that many had an opportunity of seeing him. But who could enumerate all the human births that have differed widely from their ascertained parents? As, therefore, no one will deny that these are all descended from that one man, so all the races which are reported to have diverged in bodily appearance from the usual course which nature generally or almost universally preserves, if they are embraced in that definition of man as rational and mortal animals, unquestionably trace their pedigree to that one first father of all. We are supposing these stories about various races who differ from one another and from us to be true; but possibly they are not: for if we were not aware that apes, and monkeys, and sphinxes are not men, but beasts, those historians would possibly describe them as races of men, and flaunt with impunity their false and vainglorious discoveries. But supposing they are men of whom these marvels are recorded, what if God has seen fit to create some races in this way, that we might not suppose that the monstrous births which appear among ourselves are the failures of that wisdom whereby He fashions the human nature, as we speak of the failure of a less perfect workman? Accordingly, it ought not to seem absurd to us, that as in individual races there are monstrous births, so in the whole race there are monstrous races. Wherefore, to conclude this question cautiously and guardedly, either these things which have been told of some races have no existence at all; or if they do exist, they are not human races; or if they are human, they are descended from Adam.

CHAPTER 9

WHETHER WE ARE TO BELIEVE IN THE ANTIPODES

But as to the fable that there are Antipodes, that is to say, men on the opposite side of the earth, where the sun rises when it sets to us, men who walk with their feet opposite ours, that is on no ground credible. And, indeed, it is not affirmed that this has been learned by historical knowledge, but by scientific conjecture, on the ground that the earth is suspended within the concavity of the sky, and that it has as much room on the one side of it as on the other: hence they say that the part which is beneath must also be inhabited. But they do not remark that, although it be supposed or scientifically demonstrated that the world is of a round and spherical form, yet it does not follow that the other side of the earth is bare of water; nor even, though it be bare, does it immediately follow that it is peopled. For Scripture, which proves the truth of its historical statements by the accomplishment of its prophecies, gives no false information; and it is too absurd to say, that some men might have taken ship and traversed the whole wide ocean, and crossed from this side of the world to the other, and that thus even the inhabitants of that distant region are descended from that one first man. Wherefore let us seek if we can find the city of God that sojourns on earth among those human races who are catalogued as having been divided into seventy-two nations and as many languages. For it continued down to the deluge and the ark, and is proved to have existed still among the sons of Noah by their blessings, and chiefly in the eldest son Shem; for Japheth received this blessing, that he should dwell in the tents of Shem.

CHAPTER 10

OF THE GENEALOGY OF SHEM, IN WHOSE LINE THE CITY OF GOD IS PRESERVED TILL THE TIME OF ABRAHAM

It is necessary, therefore, to preserve the series of generations descending from Shem, for the sake of exhibiting the city of God after the flood; as before the flood it was exhibited in the series of generations descending from Seth. And therefore does divine Scripture, after exhibiting the earthly city as Babylon or "Confusion," revert to the patriarch Shem, and recapitulate the generations from him to Abraham, specifying besides, the year in which each father begat the son that belonged to this line, and how long he lived. And unquestionably it is this which fulfills the promise I made, that it should appear why it is said of the sons of Heber, "The name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided." For what can we understand by the division of the earth, if not the diversity of languages? And, therefore, omitting the other sons of Shem, who are not concerned in this matter, Scripture gives the genealogy of those by whom the line runs on to Abraham, as before the flood those are given who carried on the line to Noah from Seth. Accordingly this series of generations begins thus: "These are the generations of Shem: Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood. And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters." In like manner it registers the rest, naming the year of his life in which each begat the son who belonged to that line which extends to Abraham. It specifies, too, how many years he lived thereafter, begetting sons and daughters, that we may not childishly suppose that the men named were the only men, but may understand how the population increased, and how regions and kingdoms so vast could be populated by the descendants of Shem; especially the kingdom of Assyria, from which Ninus subdued the surrounding nations, reigning with brilliant prosperity, and bequeathing to his descendants a vast but thoroughly consolidated empire, which held together for many centuries.

But to avoid needless prolixity, we shall mention not the number of years each member of this series lived, but only the year of his life in which he begat his heir, that we may thus reckon the number of years from the flood to Abraham, and may at the same time leave room to touch briefly and cursorily upon some other matters necessary to our argument. In the second year, then, after the flood, Shem when he was a hundred years old begat Arphaxad; Arphaxad when he was 135 years old begat Cainan; Cainan when he was 130 years begat Salah. Salah himself, too, was the same age when he begat Eber. Eber lived 134 years, and begat Peleg, in whose days the earth was divided. Peleg himself lived 130 years, and begat Reu; and Reu lived 132 years, and begat Serug; Serug 130, and begat Nahor; and Nahor 79, and begat Terah; and Terah 70, and begat Abram, whose name God afterwards changed into Abraham. There are thus from the flood to Abraham 1072 years, according to the Vulgate or Septuagint versions. In the Hebrew copies far fewer years are given; and for this either no reason or a not very credible one is given.

When, therefore, we look for the city of God in these seventy-two nations, we cannot affirm that while they had but one lip, that is, one language, the human race had departed from the worship of the true God, and that genuine godliness had survived only in those generations which descend from Shem through Arphaxad and reach to Abraham; but from the time when they proudly built a tower to heaven, a symbol of godless exaltation, the city or society of the wicked becomes apparent. Whether it was only disguised before, or non-existent; whether both cities remained after the flood,—the godly in the two sons of Noah who were blessed, and in their posterity, and the ungodly in the cursed son and his descendants, from whom sprang that mighty hunter against the Lord,—is not easily determined. For possibly—and certainly this is more credible—there were despisers of God among the descendants of the two sons, even before Babylon was founded, and worshippers of God among the descendants of Ham. Certainly neither race was ever obliterated from earth. For in both the Psalms in which it is said, “They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one,” we read further, “Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord.” There was then a people of God even at that time. And therefore the words, “There is none that doeth good, no, not one,” were said of the sons of men, not of the sons of God. For it had been previously said, “God looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if any understood and sought after God;” and then follow the words which demonstrate that all the sons of men, that is, all who belong to the city which lives according to man, not according to God, are reprobate.

CHAPTER 11

THAT THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE IN USE AMONG MEN WAS THAT WHICH WAS AFTERWARDS CALLED HEBREW, FROM HEBER, IN WHOSE FAMILY IT WAS PRESERVED WHEN THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES OCCURRED

Wherefore, as the fact of all using one language did not secure the absence of sin-infected men from the race,—for even before the deluge there was one language, and yet all but the single family of just Noah were found worthy of destruction by the flood,—so when the nations, by a prouder godlessness, earned the punishment of the dispersion and the confusion of tongues, and the city of the godless was called Confusion or Babylon, there was still the house of Heber in which the primitive language of the race survived. And therefore, as I have already mentioned, when an enumeration is made of the sons of Shem, who each founded a nation, Heber is first mentioned, although he was of the fifth generation from Shem. And because, when the other races were divided by their own peculiar languages, his family preserved that language which is not unreasonably believed to have been the common language of the race, it was on this account thenceforth named Hebrew. For it then became necessary to distinguish this language from the rest by a proper name; though, while there was only one, it had no other name than the language of man, or human speech, it alone being spoken by the whole human race. Some one will say: If the earth was divided by languages in the days of Peleg, Heber’s son, that language, which was formerly common to all, should rather have been called after Peleg. But we are to understand that Heber himself gave to his son this name Peleg, which means Division; because he was born when the earth was divided, that is, at the very time of the division, and that this is the meaning of the words, “In his days the earth was divided.” For unless Heber had been still alive when the languages were multiplied, the language which was preserved in his house would not have been called after him. We are induced to believe that this was the primitive and common language, because the multiplication and change of languages was introduced as a punishment, and it is fit to ascribe to the people of God an immunity from this punishment. Nor is it without significance that this is the language which Abraham retained, and that he could not transmit it to all his descendants, but only to those of Jacob's line, who distinctively and eminently constituted God's people, and received His covenants, and were Christ's progenitors according to the flesh. In the same way, Heber himself did not transmit that language to all his posterity, but only to the line from which Abraham sprang. And thus, although it is not expressly stated, that when the wicked were building Babylon there was a godly seed remaining, this indistinctness is intended to stimulate research rather than to elude it. For when we see that originally there was one common language, and that Heber is mentioned before all Shem's sons, though he belonged to the fifth generation from him, and that the language which the patriarchs and prophets used, not only in their conversation, but in the authoritative language of Scripture, is called Hebrew, when we are asked where that primitive and common language was preserved after the confusion of tongues, certainly, as there can be no doubt that those among whom it was preserved were exempt from the punishment it embodied, what other suggestion can we make, than that it survived in the family of him whose name it took, and that this is no small proof of the righteousness of this family, that the punishment with which the other families were visited did not fall upon it?

But yet another question is mooted: How did Heber and his son Peleg each found a nation, if they had but one language? For no doubt the Hebrew nation propagated from Heber through Abraham, and becoming through him a great people, is one nation. How, then, are all the sons of the three branches of Noah's family enumerated as founding a nation each, if Heber and Peleg did not so? It is very probable that the giant Nimrod founded also his nation, and that Scripture has named him separately on account of the extraordinary dimensions of his empire and of his body, so that the number of seventy-two nations remains. But Peleg was mentioned, not because he founded a nation (for his race and language are Hebrew), but on account of the critical time at which he was born, all the earth being then divided. Nor ought we to be surprised that the giant Nimrod lived to the time in which Babylon was founded and the confusion of tongues occurred, and the consequent division of the earth. For though Heber was in the sixth generation from Noah, and Nimrod in the fourth, it does not follow that they could not be alive at the same time. For when the generations are few, they live longer and are born later; but when they are many, they live a shorter time, and come into the world earlier. We are to understand that, when the earth was divided, the descendants of Noah who are registered as founders of nations were not only already born, but were of an age to have immense families, worthy to be called tribes or nations. And therefore we must by no means suppose that they were born in the order in which they were set down; otherwise, how could the twelve sons of Joktan, another son of Heber's, and brother of Peleg, have already founded nations, if Joktan was born, as he is registered, after his brother Peleg, since the earth was divided at Peleg's birth? We are therefore to understand that, though Peleg is named first, he was born long after Joktan, whose twelve sons had already families so large as to admit of their being divided by different languages. There is nothing extraordinary in the last born being first named: of the sons of Noah, the descendants of Japheth are first named; then the sons of Ham, who was the second son; and last the sons of Shem, who was the first and oldest. Of these nations the names have partly survived, so that at this day we can see from whom they have sprung, as the Assyrians from Assur, the Hebrews from Heber, but partly have been altered in the lapse of time, so that the most learned men, by profound research in ancient records, have scarcely been able to discover the origin, I do not say of all, but of some of these nations. There is, for example, nothing in the name Egyptians to show that they are descended from Misraim, Ham's son, nor in the name Ethiopians to show a connection with Cush, though such is said to be the origin of these nations. And if we take a general survey of the names, we shall find that more have been changed than have remained the same.

CHAPTER 12

OF THE ERA IN ABRAHAM'S LIFE FROM WHICH A NEW PERIOD IN THE HOLY SUCCESSION BEGINS

Let us now survey the progress of the city of God from the era of the patriarch Abraham, from whose time it begins to be more conspicuous, and the divine promises which are now fulfilled in Christ are more fully revealed. We learn, then, from the intimations of holy Scripture, that Abraham was born in the country of the Chaldeans, a land belonging to the Assyrian empire. Now, even at that time impious superstitions were rife with the Chaldeans, as with other nations. The family of Terah, to which Abraham belonged, was the only one in which the worship of the true God survived, and the only one, we may suppose, in which the Hebrew language was preserved; although Joshua the son of Nun tells us that even this family served other gods in Mesopotamia. The other descendants of Heber gradually became absorbed in other races and other languages. And thus, as the single family of Noah was preserved through the deluge of water to renew the human race, so, in the deluge of superstition that flooded the whole world, there remained but the one family of Terah in which the seed of God's city was preserved. And as, when Scripture has enumerated the generations prior to Noah, with their ages, and explained the cause of the flood before God began to speak to Noah about the building of the ark, it is said, "These are the generations of Noah;" so also now, after enumerating the generations from Shem, Noah's son, down to Abraham, it then signalizes an era by saying, "These are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah." This Iscah is supposed to be the same as Sarah, Abraham's wife.

CHAPTER 13

WHY, IN THE ACCOUNT OF TERAH'S EMIGRATION, ON HIS FORSAKING THE CHALDEANS AND PASSING OVER INTO MESOPOTAMIA, NO MENTION IS MADE OF HIS SON NAHOR

Next it is related how Terah with his family left the region of the Chaldeans and came into Mesopotamia, and dwelt in Haran. But nothing is said about one of his sons called Nahor, as if he had not taken him along with him. For the narrative runs thus: "And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarah his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and led them forth out of the region of the Chaldeans to go into the land of

Canaan; and he came into Haran, and dwelt there.” Nahor and Milcah his wife are nowhere named here. But afterwards, when Abraham sent his servant to take a wife for his son Isaac, we find it thus written: “And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his lord, and of all the goods of his lord, with him; and arose, and went into Mesopotamia, into the city of Nahor.” This and other testimonies of this sacred history show that Nahor, Abraham’s brother, had also left the region of the Chaldeans, and fixed his abode in Mesopotamia, where Abraham dwelt with his father. Why, then, did the Scripture not mention him, when Terah with his family went forth out of the Chaldean nation and dwelt in Haran, since it mentions that he took with him not only Abraham his son, but also Sarah his daughter-in-law, and Lot his grandson? The only reason we can think of is, that perhaps he had lapsed from the piety of his father and brother, and adhered to the superstition of the Chaldeans, and had afterwards emigrated thence, either through penitence, or because he was persecuted as a suspected person. For in the book called Judith, when Holofernes, the enemy of the Israelites, inquired what kind of nation that might be, and whether war should be made against them, Achior, the leader of the Ammonites, answered him thus: “Let our lord now hear a word from the mouth of thy servant, and I will declare unto thee the truth concerning the people which dwelleth near thee in this hill country, and there shall no lie come out of the mouth of thy servant. For this people is descended from the Chaldeans, and they dwelt heretofore in Mesopotamia, because they would not follow the gods of their fathers, which were glorious in the land of the Chaldeans, but went out of the way of their ancestors, and adored the God of heaven, whom they knew; and they cast them out from the face of their gods, and they fled into Mesopotamia, and dwelt there many days. And their God said to them, that they should depart from their habitation, and go into the land of Canaan; and they dwelt,” etc., as Achior the Ammonite narrates. Whence it is manifest that the house of Terah had suffered persecution from the Chaldeans for the true piety with which they worshipped the one and true God.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE YEARS OF TERAH, WHO COMPLETED HIS LIFETIME IN HARAN

On Terah’s death in Mesopotamia, where he is said to have lived 205 years, the promises of God made to Abraham now begin to be pointed out; for thus it is written: “And the days of Terah in Haran were two hundred and five years, and he died in Haran.” This is not to be taken as if he had spent all his days there, but that he there completed the days of his life, which were two hundred and five years: otherwise it would not be known how many years Terah lived, since it is not said in what year of his life he came into Haran; and it is absurd to suppose that, in this series of generations, where it is carefully recorded how many years each one lived, his age was the only one not put on record. For although some whom the same Scripture mentions have not their age recorded, they are not in this series, in which the reckoning of time is continuously indicated by the death of the parents and the succession of the children. For this series, which is given in order from Adam to Noah, and from him down to Abraham, contains no one without the number of the years of his life.

CHAPTER 15

OF THE TIME OF THE MIGRATION OF ABRAHAM, WHEN, ACCORDING TO THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD, HE WENT OUT FROM HARAN

When, after the record of the death of Terah, the father of Abraham, we next read, “And the Lord said to Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house,” etc., it is not to be supposed, because this follows in the order of the narrative, that it also followed in the chronological order of events. For if it were so, there would be an insoluble difficulty. For after these words of God which were spoken to Abraham, the Scripture says: “And Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him. Now Abraham was seventy-five years old when he departed out of Haran.” How can this be true if he departed from Haran after his father’s death? For when Terah was seventy years old, as is intimated above, he begat Abraham; and if to this number we add the seventy-five years which Abraham reckoned when he went out of Haran, we get 145 years. Therefore that was the number of the years of Terah, when Abraham departed out of that city of Mesopotamia; for he had reached the seventy-fifth year of his life, and thus his father, who begat him in the seventieth year of his life, had reached, as was said, his 145th.

Therefore he did not depart thence after his father's death, that is, after the 205 years his father lived; but the year of his departure from that place, seeing it was his seventy-fifth, is inferred beyond a doubt to have been the 145th of his father, who begat him in his seventieth year. And thus it is to be understood that the Scripture, according to its custom, has gone back to the time which had already been passed by the narrative; just as above, when it had mentioned the grandsons of Noah, it said that they were in their nations and tongues; and yet afterwards, as if this also had followed in order of time, it says, "And the whole earth was of one lip, and one speech for all." How, then, could they be said to be in their own nations and according to their own tongues, if there was one for all; except because the narrative goes back to gather up what it had passed over? Here, too, in the same way, after saying, "And the days of Terah in Haran were 205 years, and Terah died in Haran," the Scripture, going back to what had been passed over in order to complete what had been begun about Terah, says, "And the Lord said to Abram, Get thee out of thy country," etc. After which words of God it is added, "And Abram departed, as the Lord spake unto him; and Lot went with him. But Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed out of Haran." Therefore it was done when his father was in the 145th year of his age; for it was then the seventy-fifth of his own. But this question is also solved in another way, that the seventy-five years of Abraham when he departed out of Haran are reckoned from the year in which he was delivered from the fire of the Chaldeans, not from that of his birth, as if he was rather to be held as having been born then.

Now the blessed Stephen, in narrating these things in the Acts of the Apostles, says: "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, and come into the land which I will show thee." According to these words of Stephen, God spoke to Abraham, not after the death of his father, who certainly died in Haran, where his son also dwelt with him, but before he dwelt in that city, although he was already in Mesopotamia. Therefore he had already departed from the Chaldeans. So that when Stephen adds, "Then Abraham went out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran," this does not point out what took place after God spoke to him (for it was not after these words of God that he went out of the land of the Chaldeans, since he says that God spoke to him in Mesopotamia), but the word "then" which he uses refers to that whole period from his going out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelling in Haran. Likewise in what follows, "And thenceforth, when his father was dead, he settled him in this land, wherein ye now dwell, and your fathers," he does not say, after his father was dead he went out from Haran; but thenceforth he settled him here, after his father was dead. It is to be understood, therefore, that God had spoken to Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran; but that he came to Haran with his father, keeping in mind the precept of God, and that he went out thence in his own seventy-fifth year, which was his father's 145th. But he says that his settlement in the land of Canaan, not his going forth from Haran, took place after his father's death; because his father was already dead when he purchased the land, and personally entered on possession of it. But when, on his having already settled in Mesopotamia, that is, already gone out of the land of the Chaldeans, God says, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house," this means, not that he should cast out his body from thence, for he had already done that, but that he should tear away his soul. For he had not gone out from thence in mind, if he was held by the hope and desire of returning,—a hope and desire which was to be cut off by God's command and help, and by his own obedience. It would indeed be no incredible supposition that afterwards, when Nahor followed his father, Abraham then fulfilled the precept of the Lord, that he should depart out of Haran with Sarah his wife and Lot his brother's son.

CHAPTER 16

OF THE ORDER AND NATURE OF THE PROMISES OF GOD WHICH WERE MADE TO ABRAHAM

God's promises made to Abraham are now to be considered; for in these the oracles of our God, that is, of the true God, began to appear more openly concerning the godly people, whom prophetic authority foretold. The first of these reads thus: "And the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, and go into a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and magnify thy name; and thou shall be blessed: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee: and in thee shall all tribes of the earth be blessed.” Now it is to be observed that two things are promised to Abraham, the one, that his seed should possess the land of Canaan, which is intimated when it is said, “Go into a land that I will show thee, and I will make of thee a great nation;” but the other far more excellent, not about the carnal but the spiritual seed, through which he is the father, not of the one Israelite nation, but of all nations who follow the footprints of his faith, which was first promised in these words, “And in thee shall all tribes of the earth be blessed.” Eusebius thought this promise was made in Abraham’s seventy-fifth year, as if soon after it was made Abraham had departed out of Haran because the Scripture cannot be contradicted in which we read, “Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.” But if this promise was made in that year, then of course Abraham was staying in Haran with his father; for he could not depart thence unless he had first dwelt there. Does this, then, contradict what Stephen says, “The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran?” But it is to be understood that the whole took place in the same year,—both the promise of God before Abraham dwelt in Haran, and his dwelling in Haran, and his departure thence,—not only because Eusebius in the Chronicles reckons from the year of this promise, and shows that after 430 years the exodus from Egypt took place, when the law was given, but because the Apostle Paul also mentions it.

CHAPTER 17

OF THE THREE MOST FAMOUS KINGDOMS OF THE NATIONS, OF WHICH ONE, THAT IS THE ASSYRIAN, WAS ALREADY VERY EMINENT WHEN ABRAHAM WAS BORN

During the same period there were three famous kingdoms of the nations, in which the city of the earth-born, that is, the society of men living according to man under the domination of the fallen angels, chiefly flourished, namely, the three kingdoms of Sicyon, Egypt, and Assyria. Of these, Assyria was much the most powerful and sublime; for that king Ninus, son of Belus, had subdued the people of all Asia except India. By Asia I now mean not that part which is one province of this greater Asia, but what is called Universal Asia, which some set down as the half, but most as the third part of the whole world,—the three being Asia, Europe, and Africa, thereby making an unequal division. For the part called Asia stretches from the south through the east even to the north; Europe from the north even to the west; and Africa from the west even to the south. Thus we see that two, Europe and Africa, contain one half of the world, and Asia alone the other half. And these two parts are made by the circumstance, that there enters between them from the ocean all the Mediterranean water, which makes this great sea of ours. So that, if you divide the world into two parts, the east and the west, Asia will be in the one, and Europe and Africa in the other. So that of the three kingdoms then famous, one, namely Sicyon, was not under the Assyrians, because it was in Europe; but as for Egypt, how could it fail to be subject to the empire which ruled all Asia with the single exception of India? In Assyria, therefore, the dominion of the impious city had the pre-eminence. Its head was Babylon,—an earth-born city, most fitly named, for it means confusion. There Ninus reigned after the death of his father Belus, who first had reigned there sixty-five years. His son Ninus, who, on his father’s death, succeeded to the kingdom, reigned fifty-two years, and had been king forty-three years when Abraham was born, which was about the 1200th year before Rome was founded, as it were another Babylon in the west.

CHAPTER 18

OF THE REPEATED ADDRESS OF GOD TO ABRAHAM, IN WHICH HE PROMISED THE LAND OF CANAAN TO HIM AND TO HIS SEED

Abraham, then, having departed out of Haran in the seventy-fifth year of his own age, and in the hundred and forty-fifth of his father’s, went with Lot, his brother’s son, and Sarah his wife, into the land of Canaan, and came even to Sichem, where again he received the divine oracle, of which it is thus written: “And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said unto him, Unto thy seed will I give this land.” Nothing is promised here about that seed in which he is made the father of all nations, but only about that by which he is the father of the one Israelite nation; for by this seed that land was possessed.

CHAPTER 19

OF THE DIVINE PRESERVATION OF SARAH’S CHASTITY IN EGYPT, WHEN ABRAHAM HAD CALLED HER NOT HIS WIFE BUT HIS SISTER

Having built an altar there, and called upon God, Abraham proceeded thence and dwelt in the desert, and was compelled by pressure of famine to go on into Egypt. There he called his wife his sister, and told no lie. For she was this also, because she was near of blood; just as Lot, on account of the same nearness, being his brother’s son, is called his brother. Now he did not deny that she was his wife, but held his peace about it, committing to God the defence of his wife’s chastity, and providing as a man against human wiles; because if he had not provided against the danger as much as he could, he would have been tempting God rather than trusting in Him. We have said enough about this matter against the calumnies of Faustus the Manichaean. At last what Abraham had expected the Lord to do took place. For Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who had taken her to him as his wife, restored her to her husband on being severely plagued. And far be it from us to believe that she was defiled by lying with another; because it is much more credible that, by these great afflictions, Pharaoh was not permitted to do this.

CHAPTER 20

OF THE PARTING OF LOT AND ABRAHAM, WHICH THEY AGREED TO WITHOUT BREACH OF CHARITY

On Abraham’s return out of Egypt to the place he had left, Lot, his brother’s son, departed from him into the land of Sodom, without breach of charity. For they had grown rich, and began to have many herdmen of cattle, and when these strove together, they avoided in this way the pugnacious discord of their families. Indeed, as human affairs go, this cause might even have given rise to some strife between themselves. Consequently these are the words of Abraham to Lot, when taking precaution against this evil, “Let there be no strife between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Behold, is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself from me: if thou wilt go to the left hand, I will go to the right; or if thou wilt go to the right hand, I will go to the left.” From this, perhaps, has arisen a pacific custom among men, that when there is any partition of earthly things, the greater should make the division, the less the choice.

CHAPTER 21

OF THE THIRD PROMISE OF GOD, BY WHICH HE ASSURED THE LAND OF CANAAN TO ABRAHAM AND HIS SEED IN PERPETUITY

Now, when Abraham and Lot had separated, and dwelt apart, owing to the necessity of supporting their families, and not to vile discord, and Abraham was in the land of Canaan, but Lot in Sodom, the Lord said to Abraham in a third oracle, "Lift up thine eyes, and look from the place where thou now art, to the north, and to Africa, and to the east, and to the sea; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: if any one can number the dust of the earth, thy seed shall also be numbered. Arise, and walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for unto thee will I give it." It does not clearly appear whether in this promise that also is contained by which he is made the father of all nations. For the clause, "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth," may seem to refer to this, being spoken by that figure the Greeks call hyperbole, which indeed is figurative, not literal. But no person of understanding can doubt in what manner the Scripture uses this and other figures. For that figure (that is, way of speaking) is used when what is said is far larger than what is meant by it; for who does not see how incomparably larger the number of the dust must be than that of all men can be from Adam himself down to the end of the world? How much greater, then, must it be than the seed of Abraham,—not only that pertaining to the nation of Israel, but also that which is and shall be according to the imitation of faith in all nations of the whole wide world! For that seed is indeed very small in comparison with the multitude of the wicked, although even those few of themselves make an innumerable multitude, which by a hyperbole is compared to the dust of the earth. Truly that multitude which was promised to Abraham is not innumerable to God, although to man; but to God not even the dust of the earth is so. Further, the promise here made may be understood not only of the nation of Israel, but of the whole seed of Abraham, which may be fitly compared to the dust for multitude, because regarding it also there is the promise of many children, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. But we have therefore said that this does not clearly appear, because the multitude even of that one nation, which was born according to the flesh of Abraham through his grandson Jacob, has increased so much as to fill almost all parts of the world. Consequently, even it might by hyperbole be compared to the dust for multitude, because even it alone is innumerable by man. Certainly no one questions that only that land is meant which is called Canaan. But that saying, “To thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever,” may move some, if by “for ever” they understand “to eternity.” But if in this passage they take “for ever” thus, as we firmly hold it means that the beginning of the world to come is to be ordered from the end of the present, there is still no difficulty, because, although the Israelites are expelled from Jerusalem, they still remain in other cities in the land of Canaan, and shall remain even to the end; and when that whole land is inhabited by Christians, they also are the very seed of Abraham.

CHAPTER 22

OF ABRAHAM’S OVERCOMING THE ENEMIES OF SODOM, WHEN HE DELIVERED LOT FROM CAPTIVITY AND WAS BLESSED BY MELCHIZEDEK THE PRIEST

Having received this oracle of promise, Abraham migrated, and remained in another place of the same land, that is, beside the oak of Mamre, which was Hebron. Then on the invasion of Sodom, when five kings carried on war against four, and Lot was taken captive with the conquered Sodomites, Abraham delivered him from the enemy, leading with him to battle three hundred and eighteen of his home-born servants, and won the victory for the kings of Sodom, but would take nothing of the spoils when offered by the king for whom he had won them. He was then openly blessed by Melchizedek, who was priest of God Most High, about whom many and great things are written in the epistle which is inscribed to the Hebrews, which most say is by the Apostle Paul, though some deny this. For then first appeared the sacrifice which is now offered to God by Christians in the whole wide world, and that is fulfilled which long after the event was said by the prophet to Christ, who was yet to come in the flesh, “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek,”—that is to say, not after the order of Aaron, for that order was to be taken away when the things shone forth which were intimated beforehand by these shadows.

CHAPTER 23

OF THE WORD OF THE LORD TO ABRAHAM, BY WHICH IT WAS PROMISED TO HIM THAT HIS POSTERITY SHOULD BE MULTIPLIED ACCORDING TO THE MULTITUDE OF THE STARS; ON BELIEVING WHICH HE WAS DECLARED JUSTIFIED WHILE YET IN UNCIRCUMCISION

The word of the Lord came to Abraham in a vision also. For when God promised him protection and exceeding great reward, he, being solicitous about posterity, said that a certain Eliezer of Damascus, born in his house, would be his heir. Immediately he was promised an heir, not that house-born servant, but one who was to come forth of Abraham himself; and again a seed innumerable, not as the dust of the earth, but as the stars of heaven,—which rather seems to me a promise of a posterity exalted in celestial felicity. For, so far as multitude is concerned, what are the stars of heaven to the dust of the earth, unless one should say the comparison is like inasmuch as the stars also cannot be numbered? For it is not to be believed that all of them can be seen. For the more keenly one observes them, the more does he see. So that it is to be supposed some remain concealed from the keenest observers, to say nothing of those stars which are said to rise and set in another part of the world most remote from us. Finally, the authority of this book condemns those like Aratus or Eudoxus, or any others who boast that they have found out and written down the complete number of the stars. Here, indeed, is set down that sentence which the apostle quotes in order to commend the grace of God, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness;” lest the circumcision should glory, and be unwilling to receive the uncircumcised nations to the faith of Christ. For at the time when he believed, and his faith was counted to him for righteousness, Abraham had not yet been circumcised.

CHAPTER 24

OF THE MEANING OF THE SACRIFICE ABRAHAM WAS COMMANDED TO OFFER WHEN HE SUPPLICATED TO BE TAUGHT ABOUT THOSE THINGS HE HAD BELIEVED

In the same vision, God in speaking to him also says, “I am God that brought thee out of the region of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.” And when Abram asked whereby he might know that he should inherit it, God said to him, “Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another; but the birds divided he not. And the fowls came down,” as it is written, “on the carcasses, and Abram sat down by them. But about the going down of the sun, great fear fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land not theirs, and they shall reduce them to servitude and shall afflict them four hundred years: but the nation whom they shall serve will I judge; and afterward shall they come out hither with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; kept in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. And when the sun was setting, there was a flame, and a smoking furnace, and lamps of fire, that passed through between those pieces. In that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river Euphrates: the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Hivites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”

All these things were said and done in a vision from God; but it would take long, and would exceed the scope of this work, to treat of them exactly in detail. It is enough that we should know that, after it was said Abram believed in God, and it was counted to him for righteousness, he did not fail in faith in saying, “Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?” for the inheritance of that land was promised to him. Now he does not say, How shall I know, as if he did not yet believe; but he says, “Whereby shall I know,” meaning that some sign might be given by which he might know the manner of those things which he had believed, just as it is not for lack of faith the Virgin Mary says, “How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” for she inquired as to the way in which that should take place which she was certain would come to pass. And when she asked this, she was told, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.” Here also, in fine, a symbol was given, consisting of three animals, a heifer, a she-goat, and a ram, and two birds, a turtle-dove and pigeon, that he might know that the things which he had not doubted should come to pass were to happen in accordance with this symbol. Whether, therefore, the heifer was a sign that the people should be put under the law, the she-goat that the same people was to become sinful, the ram that they should reign (and these animals are said to be of three years old for this reason, that there are three remarkable divisions of time, from Adam to Noah, and from him to Abraham, and from him to David, who, on the rejection of Saul, was first established by the will of the Lord in the kingdom of the Israelite nation: in this third division, which extends from Abraham to David, that people grew up as if passing through the third age of life), or whether they had some other more suitable meaning, still I have no doubt whatever that spiritual things were prefigured by them as well as by the turtle-dove and pigeon. And it is said, “But the birds divided he not,” because carnal men are divided among themselves, but the spiritual not at all, whether they seclude themselves from the busy conversation of men, like the turtle-dove, or dwell among them, like the pigeon; for both birds are simple and harmless, signifying that even in the Israelite people, to which that land was to be given, there would be individuals who were children of the promise, and heirs of the kingdom that is to remain in eternal felicity. But the fowls coming down on the divided carcasses represent nothing good, but the spirits of this air, seeking some food for themselves in the division of carnal men. But that Abraham sat down with them, signifies that even amid these divisions of the carnal, true believers shall persevere to the end. And that about the going down of the sun great fear fell upon Abraham and a horror of great darkness, signifies that about the end of this world believers shall be in great perturbation and tribulation, of which the Lord said in the gospel, “For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning.”

But what is said to Abraham, “Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land not theirs, and they shall reduce them to servitude, and shall afflict them 400 years,” is most clearly a prophecy about the people of Israel which was to be in servitude in Egypt. Not that this people was to be in that servitude under the oppressive Egyptians for 400 years, but it is foretold that this should take place in the course of those 400 years. For as it is written of Terah the father of Abraham, “And the days of Terah in Haran were 205 years,” not because they were all spent there, but because they were completed there, so it is said here also, “And they shall reduce them to servitude, and shall afflict them 400 years,” for this reason, because that number was completed, not because it was all spent in that affliction. The years are said to be 400 in round numbers, although they were a little more,—whether you reckon from this time, when these things were promised to Abraham, or from the birth of Isaac, as the seed of Abraham, of which these things are predicted. For, as we have already said above, from the seventy-fifth year of Abraham, when the first promise was made to him, down to the exodus of Israel from Egypt, there are reckoned 430 years, which the apostle thus mentions: “And this I say, that the covenant confirmed by God, the law, which was made 430 years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” So then these 430 years might be called 400, because they are not much more, especially since part even of that number had already gone by when these things were shown and said to Abraham in vision, or when Isaac was born in his father’s 100th year, twenty-five years after the first promise, when of these 430 years there now remained 405, which God was pleased to call 400. No one will doubt that the other things which follow in the prophetic words of God pertain to the people of Israel.

When it is added, “And when the sun was now setting there was a flame, and lo, a smoking furnace, and lamps of fire, which passed through between those pieces,” this signifies that at the end of the world the carnal shall be judged by fire. For just as the affliction of the city of God, such as never was before, which is expected to take place under Antichrist, was signified by Abraham’s horror of great darkness about the going down of the sun, that is, when the end of the world draws nigh,—so at the going down of the sun, that is, at the very end of the world, there is signified by that fire the day of judgment, which separates the carnal who are to be saved by fire from those who are to be condemned in the fire. And then the covenant made with Abraham particularly sets forth the land of Canaan, and names eleven tribes in it from the river of Egypt even to the great river Euphrates.

It is not then from the great river of Egypt, that is, the Nile, but from a small one which separates Egypt from Palestine, where the city of Rhinocorura is.

CHAPTER 25

OF SARAH'S HANDMAID, HAGAR, WHOM SHE HERSELF WISHED TO BE ABRAHAM'S CONCUBINE

And here follow the times of Abraham's sons, the one by Hagar the bond maid, the other by Sarah the free woman, about whom we have already spoken in the previous book. As regards this transaction, Abraham is in no way to be branded as guilty concerning this concubine, for he used her for the begetting of progeny, not for the gratification of lust; and not to insult, but rather to obey his wife, who supposed it would be solace of her barrenness if she could make use of the fruitful womb of her handmaid to supply the defect of her own nature, and by that law of which the apostle says, "Likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife," could, as a wife, make use of him for childbearing by another, when she could not do so in her own person. Here there is no wanton lust, no filthy lewdness. The handmaid is delivered to the husband by the wife for the sake of progeny, and is received by the husband for the sake of progeny, each seeking, not guilty excess, but natural fruit. And when the pregnant bond woman despised her barren mistress, and Sarah, with womanly jealousy, rather laid the blame of this on her husband, even then Abraham showed that he was not a slavish lover, but a free begetter of children, and that in using Hagar he had guarded the chastity of Sarah his wife, and had gratified her will and not his own,—had received her without seeking, had gone in to her without being attached, had impregnated without loving her,—for he says, "Behold thy maid is in thy hands: do to her as it pleaseth thee;" a man able to use women as a man should,—his wife temperately, his handmaid compliantly, neither intemperately!

CHAPTER 26

OF GOD'S ATTESTATION TO ABRAHAM, BY WHICH HE ASSURES HIM, WHEN NOW OLD, OF A SON BY THE BARREN SARAH, AND APPOINTS HIM THE FATHER OF THE NATIONS, AND SEALS HIS FAITH IN THE PROMISE BY THE SACRAMENT OF CIRCUMCISION

After these things Ishmael was born of Hagar; and Abraham might think that in him was fulfilled what God had promised him, saying, when he wished to adopt his home-born servant, “This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth of thee, he shall be thine heir.” Therefore, lest he should think that what was promised was fulfilled in the handmaid’s son, “when Abram was ninety years old and nine, God appeared to him, and said unto him, I am God; be well-pleasing in my sight, and be without complaint, and I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will fill thee exceedingly.”

Here there are more distinct promises about the calling of the nations in Isaac, that is, in the son of the promise, by which grace is signified, and not nature; for the son is promised from an old man and a barren old woman. For although God effects even the natural course of procreation, yet where the agency of God is manifest, through the decay or failure of nature, grace is more plainly discerned. And because this was to be brought about, not by generation, but by regeneration, circumcision was enjoined now, when a son was promised of Sarah. And by ordering all, not only sons, but also home-born and purchased servants to be circumcised, he testifies that this grace pertains to all. For what else does circumcision signify than a nature renewed on the putting off of the old? And what else does the eighth day mean than Christ, who rose again when the week was completed, that is, after the Sabbath? The very names of the parents are changed: all things proclaim newness, and the new covenant is shadowed forth in the old. For what does the term old covenant imply but the concealing of the new? And what does the term new covenant imply but the revealing of the old? The laughter of Abraham is the exultation of one who rejoices, not the scornful laughter of one who mistrusts. And those words of his in his heart, “Shall a son be born to me that am an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?” are not the words of doubt, but of wonder. And when it is said, “And I will give to thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land in which thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession,” if it troubles any one whether this is to be held as fulfilled, or whether its fulfilment may still be looked for, since no kind of earthly possession can be everlasting for any nation whatever, let him know that the word translated everlasting, by our writers is what the Greeks term aio;nion, which is derived from aio;n, the Greek for saeculum, an age. But the Latins have not ventured to translate this by secular, lest they should change the meaning into something widely different. For many things are called secular which so happen in this world as to pass away even in a short time; but what is termed aio;nion either has no end, or lasts to the very end of this world.

CHAPTER 27

OF THE MALE, WHO WAS TO LOSE HIS SOUL IF HE WAS NOT CIRCUMCISED ON THE EIGHTH DAY, BECAUSE HE HAD BROKEN GOD'S COVENANT

When it is said, “The male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people, because he hath broken my covenant,” some may be troubled how that ought to be understood, since it can be no fault of the infant whose life it is said must perish; nor has the covenant of God been broken by him, but by his parents, who have not taken care to circumcise him. But even the infants, not personally in their own life, but according to the common origin of the human race, have all broken God’s covenant in that one in whom all have sinned. Now there are many things called God’s covenants besides those two great ones, the old and the new, which any one who pleases may read and know. For the first covenant, which was made with the first man, is just this: “In the day ye eat thereof, ye shall surely die.” Whence it is written in the book called Ecclesiasticus, “All flesh waxeth old as doth a garment. For the covenant from the beginning is, Thou shall die the death.” Now, as the law was more plainly given afterward, and the apostle says, “Where no law is, there is no prevarication,” on what supposition is what is said in the psalm true, “I accounted all the sinners of the earth prevaricators,” except that all who are held liable for any sin are accused of dealing deceitfully (prevaricating) with some law? If on this account, then, even the infants are, according to the true belief, born in sin, not actual but original, so that we confess they have need of grace for the remission of sins, certainly it must be acknowledged that in the same sense in which they are sinners they are also prevaricators of that law which was given in Paradise, according to the truth of both scriptures, “I accounted all the sinners of the earth prevaricators,” and “Where no law is, there is no prevarication.” And thus, be cause circumcision was the sign of regeneration, and the infant, on account of the original sin by which God’s covenant was first broken, was not undeservedly to lose his generation unless delivered by regeneration, these divine words are to be understood as if it had been said, Whoever is not born again, that soul shall perish from his people, because he hath broken my covenant, since he also has sinned in Adam with all others. For had He said, Because he hath broken this my covenant, He would have compelled us to understand by it only this of circumcision; but since He has not expressly said what covenant the infant has broken, we are free to understand Him as speaking of that covenant of which the breach can be ascribed to an infant. Yet if any one contends that it is said of nothing else than circumcision, that in it the infant has broken the covenant of God because, he is not circumcised, he must seek some method of explanation by which it may be understood without absurdity (such as this) that he has broken the covenant, because it has been broken in him although not by him. Yet in this case also it is to be observed that the soul of the infant, being guilty of no sin of neglect against itself, would perish unjustly, unless original sin rendered it obnoxious to punishment.

CHAPTER 28

OF THE CHANGE OF NAME IN ABRAHAM AND SARAH, WHO RECEIVED THE GIFT OF FECUNDITY WHEN THEY WERE INCAPABLE OF REGENERATION OWING TO THE BARRENNESS OF ONE, AND THE OLD AGE OF BOTH

Now when a promise so great and clear was made to Abraham, in which it was so plainly said to him, “I have made thee a father of many nations, and I will increase thee exceedingly, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall go forth of thee. And I will give thee a son of Sarah; and I will bless him, and he shall become nations, and kings of nations shall be of him,”—a promise which we now see fulfilled in Christ,—from that time forward this couple are not called in Scripture, as formerly, Abram and Sarai, but Abraham and Sarah, as we have called them from the first, for every one does so now. The reason why the name of Abraham was changed is given: “For,” He says, “I have made thee a father of many nations.” This, then, is to be understood to be the meaning of Abraham; but Abram, as he was formerly called, means “exalted father.” The reason of the change of

Sarah’s name is not given; but as those say who have written interpretations of the Hebrew names contained in these books, Sarah means “my princess,” and Sarai “strength.” Whence it is written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, “Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed.” For both were old, as the Scripture testifies; but she was also barren, and had ceased to menstruate, so that she could no longer bear children even if she had not been barren. Further, if a woman is advanced in years, yet still retains the custom of women, she can bear children to a young man, but not to an old man, although that same old man can beget, but only of a young woman; as after Sarah’s death Abraham could of Keturah, because he met with her in her lively age. This, then, is what the apostle mentions as wonderful, saying, besides, that Abraham’s body was now dead; because at that age he was no longer able to beget children of any woman who retained now only a small part of her natural vigor. Of course we must understand that his body was dead only to some purposes, not to all; for if it was so to all, it would no longer be the aged body of a living man, but the corpse of a dead one. Although that question, how Abraham begot children of Keturah, is usually solved in this way, that the gift of begetting which he received from the Lord, remained even after the death of his wife, yet I think that solution of the question which I have followed is preferable, because, although in our days an old man of a hundred years can beget children of no woman, it was not so then, when men still lived so long that a hundred years did not yet bring on them the decrepitude of old age.

CHAPTER 29

OF THE THREE MEN OR ANGELS, IN WHOM THE LORD IS RELATED TO HAVE APPEARED TO ABRAHAM AT THE OAK OF MAMRE

God appeared again to Abraham at the oak of Mamre in three men, who it is not to be doubted were angels, although some think that one of them was Christ, and assert that He was visible before He put on flesh. Now it belongs to the divine power, and invisible, incorporeal, and incommutable nature, without changing itself at all, to appear even to mortal men, not by what it is, but by what is subject to it. And what is not subject to it? Yet if they try to establish that one of these three was Christ by the fact that, although he saw three, he addressed the Lord in the singular, as it is written, “And, lo, three men stood by him: and, when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent-door, and worshipped toward the ground, and said, Lord, if I have found favor before thee,” etc.; why do they not advert to this also, that when two of them came to destroy the Sodomites, while Abraham still spoke to one, calling him Lord, and interceding that he would not destroy the righteous along with the wicked in Sodom, Lot received these two in such a way that he too in his conversation with them addressed the Lord in the singular? For after saying to them in the plural, “Behold, my lords, turn aside into your servant’s house,” etc., yet it is afterwards said, “And the angels laid hold upon his hand, and the hand of his wife, and the hands of his two daughters, because the Lord was merciful unto him. And it came to pass, whenever they had led him forth abroad, that they said, Save thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all this region: save thyself in the mountain, lest thou be caught. And Lot said unto them, I pray thee, Lord, since thy servant hath found grace in thy sight,” etc. And then after these words the Lord also answered him in the singular, although He was in two angels, saying, “See, I have accepted thy face,” etc. This makes it much more credible that both Abraham in the three men and Lot in the two recognized the Lord, addressing Him in the singular number, even when they were addressing men; for they received them as they did for no other reason than that they might minister human refection to them as men who needed it. Yet there was about them something so excellent, that those who showed them hospitality as men could not doubt that God was in them as He was wont to be in the prophets, and therefore sometimes addressed them in the plural, and sometimes God in them in the singular. But that they were angels the Scripture testifies, not only in this book of Genesis, in which these transactions are related, but also in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where in praising hospitality it is said, “For thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” By these three men, then, when a son Isaac was again promised to Abraham by Sarah, such a divine oracle was also given that it was said, “Abraham shall become a great and numerous nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.” And here these two things, are promised with the utmost brevity and fullness,—the nation of Israel according to the flesh, and all nations according to faith.

CHAPTER 30

OF LOT’S DELIVERANCE FROM SODOM, AND ITS CONSUMPTION BY FIRE FROM HEAVEN; AND OF ABIMELECH, WHOSE LUST COULD NOT HARM SARAH’S CHASTITY

After this promise Lot was delivered out of Sodom, and a fiery rain from heaven turned into ashes that whole region of the impious city, where custom had made sodomy as prevalent as laws have elsewhere made other kinds of wickedness. But this punishment of theirs was a specimen of the divine judgment to come. For what is meant by the angels forbidding those who were delivered to look back, but that we are not to look back in heart to the old life which, being regenerated through grace, we have put off, if we think to escape the last judgment? Lot’s wife, indeed, when she looked back, remained, and, being turned into salt, furnished to believing men a condiment by which to savor somewhat the warning to be drawn from that example. Then Abraham did again at Gerar, with Abimelech the king of that city, what he had done in Egypt about his wife, and received her back untouched in the same way. On this occasion, when the king rebuked Abraham for not saying she was his wife, and calling her his sister, he explained what he had been afraid of, and added this further, “And yet indeed she is my sister by the father’s side, but not by the mother’s; for she was Abraham’s sister by his own father, and so near of kin. But her beauty was so great, that even at that advanced age she could be fallen in love with.

CHAPTER 31

OF ISAAC, WHO WAS BORN ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE, WHOSE NAME WAS GIVEN ON ACCOUNT OF THE LAUGHTER OF BOTH PARENTS

After these things a son was born to Abraham, according to God’s promise, of Sarah, and was called Isaac, which means laughter. For his father had laughed when he was promised to him, in wondering delight, and his mother, when he was again promised by those three men, had laughed, doubting for joy; yet she was blamed by the angel because that laughter, although it was for joy, yet was not full of faith. Afterwards she was confirmed in faith by the same angel. From this, then, the boy got his name. For when Isaac was born and called by that name, Sarah showed that her laughter was not that of scornful reproach, but that of joyful praise; for she said, “God hath made me to laugh, so that every one who hears will laugh with me.” Then in a little while the bond maid was cast out of the house with her son; and, according to the apostle, these two women signify the old and new covenants,—Sarah representing that of the Jerusalem which is above, that is, the city of God.

CHAPTER 32

OF ABRAHAM’S OBEDIENCE AND FAITH, WHICH WERE PROVED BY THE OFFERING UP, OF HIS SON IN SACRIFICE, AND OF SARAH’S DEATH

Among other things, of which it would take too long time to mention the whole, Abraham was tempted about the offering up of his well-beloved son Isaac, to prove his pious obedience, and so make it known to the world, not to God. Now every temptation is not blame-worthy; it may even be praise-worthy, because it furnishes probation. And, for the most part, the human mind cannot attain to self-knowledge otherwise than by making trial of its powers through temptation, by some kind of experimental and not merely verbal self-interrogation; when, if it has acknowledged the gift of God, it is pious, and is consolidated by steadfast grace and not puffed up by vain boasting. Of course Abraham could never believe that God delighted in human sacrifices; yet when the divine commandment thundered, it was to be obeyed, not disputed. Yet Abraham is worthy of praise, because he all along believed that his son, on being offered up, would rise again; for God had said to him, when he was unwilling to fulfill his wife’s pleasure by casting out the bond maid and her son, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” No doubt He then goes on to say, “And as for the son of this bond woman, I will make him a great nation, because he is thy seed.” How then is it said “In Isaac shall thy seed be called,” when God calls Ishmael also his seed? The apostle, in explaining this, says, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called, that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” In order, then, that the children of the promise may be the seed of Abraham, they are called in Isaac, that is, are gathered together in Christ by the call of grace. Therefore the father, holding fast from the first the promise which behoved to be fulfilled through this son whom God had ordered him to slay, did not doubt that he whom he once thought it hopeless he should ever receive would be restored to him when he had offered him up. It is in this way the passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews is also to be understood and explained. “By faith,” he says, “Abraham overcame, when tempted about Isaac: and he who had received the promise offered up his only son, to whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called: thinking that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead;” therefore he has added, “from whence also he received him in a similitude.” In whose similitude but His of whom the apostle says, “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all?” And on this account Isaac also himself carried to the place of sacrifice the wood on which he was to be offered up, just as the Lord Himself carried His own cross. Finally, since Isaac was not to be slain, after his father was forbidden to smite him, who was that ram by the offering of which that sacrifice was completed with typical blood? For when Abraham saw him, he was caught by the horns in a thicket. What, then, did he represent but Jesus, who, before He was offered up, was crowned with thorns by the Jews?

But let us rather hear the divine words spoken through the angel. For the Scripture says, “And Abraham stretched forth his hand to take the knife, that he might slay his son. And the Angel of the Lord called unto him from heaven, and said, Abraham. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, and hast not spared thy beloved son for my sake.” It is said, “Now I know,” that is, Now I have made to be known; for God was not previously ignorant of this. Then, having offered up that ram instead of Isaac his son, “Abraham,” as we read, “called the name of that place The Lord seeth: as they say this day, In the mount the Lord hath appeared.” As it is said, “Now I know,” for Now I have made to be known, so here, “The Lord sees,” for The Lord hath appeared, that is, made Himself to be seen. “And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham from heaven the second time, saying, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; because thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thy beloved son for my sake; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess by inheritance the cities of the adversaries: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.” In this manner is that promise concerning the calling of the nations in the seed of Abraham confirmed even by the oath of God, after that burnt-offering which typified Christ. For He had often promised, but never sworn. And what is the oath of God, the true and faithful, but a confirmation of the promise, and a certain reproof to the unbelieving?

After these things Sarah died, in the 127th year of her life, and the 137th of her husband for he was ten years older than she, as he himself says, when a son is promised to him by her: “Shall a son be born to me that am an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?” Then Abraham bought a field, in which he buried his wife. And then, according to Stephen’s account, he was settled in that land, entering then on actual possession of it,—that is, after the death of his father, who is inferred to have died two years before.

CHAPTER 33

OF REBECCA, THE GRAND-DAUGHTER OF NAHOR, WHOM ISAAC TOOK TO WIFE

Isaac married Rebecca, the grand-daughter of Nahor, his father’s brother, when he was forty years old, that is, in the 140th year of his father’s life, three years after his mother’s death. Now when a servant was sent to Mesopotamia by his father to fetch her, and when Abraham said to that servant, “Put thy hand under my thigh, and I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the Lord of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son Isaac of the daughters of the Canaanites,” what else was pointed out by this, but that the Lord, the God of heaven, and the Lord of the earth, was to come in the flesh which was to be derived from that thigh? Are these small tokens of the foretold truth which we see fulfilled in Christ?

CHAPTER 34

WHAT IS MEANT BY ABRAHAM’S MARRYING KETURAH AFTER SARAH’S DEATH

What did Abraham mean by marrying Keturah after Sarah’s death? Far be it from us to suspect him of incontinence, especially when he had reached such an age and such sanctity of faith. Or was he still seeking to beget children, though he held fast, with most approved faith, the promise of God that his children should be multiplied out of Isaac as the stars of heaven and the dust of the earth? And yet, if Hagar and Ishmael, as the apostle teaches us, signified the carnal people of the old covenant, why may not Keturah and her sons also signify the carnal people who think they belong to the new covenant? For both are called both the wives and the concubines of Abraham; but Sarah is never called a concubine (but only a wife). For when Hagar is given to Abraham, it is written. “And Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her handmaid, after Abraham had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.” And of Keturah, whom he took after Sarah’s departure, we read, “Then again Abraham took a wife, whose name was Keturah.” Lo! both are called wives, yet both are found to have been concubines; for the Scripture afterward says, “And Abraham gave his whole estate unto Isaac his son. But unto the sons of his concubines Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from his son Isaac, (while he yet lived,) eastward, unto the east country.” Therefore the sons of the concubines, that is, the heretics and the carnal Jews, have some gifts, but do not attain the promised kingdom; “For they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed, of whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.” For I do not see why Keturah, who was married after the wife’s death, should be called a concubine, except on account of this mystery. But if any one is unwilling to put such meanings on these things, he need not calumniate Abraham. For what if even this was provided against the heretics who were to be the opponents of second marriages, so that it might be shown that it was no sin in the case of the father of many nations himself, when, after his wife’s death, he married again? And Abraham died when he was 175 years old, so that he left his son Isaac seventy-five years old, having begotten him when 100 years old.

CHAPTER 35

WHAT WAS INDICATED BY THE DIVINE ANSWER ABOUT THE TWINS STILL SHUT UP IN THE WOMB OF REBECCA THEIR MOTHER

Let us now see how the times of the city of God run on from this point among Abraham’s descendants. In the time from the first year of Isaac’s life to the seventieth, when his sons were born, the only memorable thing is, that when he prayed God that his wife, who was barren, might bear, and the Lord granted what he sought, and she conceived, the twins leapt while still enclosed in her womb. And when she was troubled by this struggle, and inquired of the Lord, she received this answer: “Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall overcome the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger.” The Apostle Paul would have us understand this as a great instance of grace; for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, the younger is chosen without any good desert and the elder is rejected, when beyond doubt, as regards original sin, both were alike, and as regards actual sin, neither had any. But the plan of the work on hand does not permit me to speak more fully of this matter now, and I have said much about it in other works. Only that saying, “The elder shall serve the younger,” is understood by our writers, almost without exception, to mean that the elder people, the Jews, shall serve the younger people, the Christians. And truly, although this might seem to be fulfilled in the Idumean nation, which was born of the elder (who had two names, being called both Esau and Edom, whence the name Idumeans), because it was afterwards to be overcome by the people which sprang from the younger, that is, by the Israelites, and was to become subject to them; yet it is more suitable to believe that, when it was said, “The one people shall overcome the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger,” that prophecy meant some greater thing; and what is that except what is evidently fulfilled in the Jews and Christians?

CHAPTER 36

OF THE ORACLE AND BLESSING WHICH ISAAC RECEIVED, JUST AS HIS FATHER DID, BEING BELOVED FOR HIS SAKE

Isaac also received such an oracle as his father had often received. Of this oracle it is thus written: “And there was a famine over the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; but dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. And abide in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee: unto thee and unto thy seed I will give all this land; and I will establish mine oath, which I sware unto Abraham thy father: and I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all this land: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham thy father obeyed my voice, and kept my precepts, my commandments, my righteousness, and my laws.” This patriarch neither had another wife, nor any concubine, but was content with the twin-children begotten by one act of generation. He also was afraid, when he lived among strangers, of being brought into danger owing to the beauty of his wife, and did like his father in calling her his sister, and not telling that she was his wife; for she was his near blood-relation by the father’s and mother’s side. She also remained untouched by the strangers, when it was known she was his wife. Yet we ought not to prefer him to his father because he knew no woman besides his one wife. For beyond doubt the merits of his father’s faith and obedience were greater, inasmuch as God says it is for his sake He does Isaac good: “In thy seed,” He says, “shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because that Abraham thy father obeyed my voice, and kept my precepts, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.” And again in another oracle He says, “I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham’s sake.” So that we must understand how chastely Abraham acted, because imprudent men, who seek some support for their own wickedness in the Holy Scriptures, think he acted through lust. We may also learn this, not to compare men by single good things, but to consider everything in each; for it may happen that one man has something in his life and character in which he excels another, and it may be far more excellent than that in which the other excels him. And thus, according to sound and true judgment, while continence is preferable to marriage, yet a believing married man is better than a continent unbeliever; for the unbeliever is not only less praiseworthy, but is even highly detestable. We must conclude, then, that both are good; yet so as to hold that the married man who is most faithful and most obedient is certainly better than the continent man whose faith and obedience are less. But if equal in other things, who would hesitate to prefer the continent man to the married?

CHAPTER 37

OF THE THINGS MYSTICALLY PREFIGURED IN ESAU AND JACOB

Isaac’s two sons, Esau and Jacob, grew up together. The primacy of the elder was transferred to the younger by a bargain and agreement between them, when the elder immoderately lusted after the lentiles the younger had prepared for food, and for that price sold his birthright to him, confirming it with an oath. We learn from this that a person is to be blamed, not for the kind of food he eats, but for immoderate greed. Isaac grew old, and old age deprived him of his eyesight. He wished to bless the elder son, and instead of the elder, who was hairy, unwittingly blessed the younger, who put himself under his father’s hands, having covered himself with kid-skins, as if bearing the sins of others. Lest we should think this guile of Jacob’s was fraudulent guile, instead of seeking in it the mystery of a great thing, the Scripture has predicted in the words just before, “Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a simple man, dwelling at home.” Some of our writers have interpreted this, “without guile.” But whether the Greek alastos means “without guile,” or “simple,” or rather “without reigning,” in the receiving of that blessing what is the guile of the man without guile? What is the guile of the simple, what the fiction of the man who does not lie, but a profound mystery of the truth? But what is the blessing itself? “See,” he says, “the smell of my son is as the smell of a full field which the Lord hath blessed: therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fruitfulness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let nations serve thee, and princes adore thee: and be lord of thy brethren, and let thy father’s sons adore thee: cursed be he that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.” The blessing of Jacob is therefore a proclamation of Christ to all nations. It is this which has come to pass, and is now being fulfilled. Isaac is the law and the prophecy: even by the mouth of the Jews Christ is blessed by prophecy as by one who knows not, because it is itself not understood. The world like a field is filled with the odor of Christ’s name: His is the blessing of the dew of heaven, that is, of the showers of divine words; and of the fruitfulness of the earth, that is, of the gathering together of the peoples: His is the plenty of corn and wine, that is, the multitude that gathers bread and wine in the sacrament of His body and blood. Him the nations serve, Him princes adore. He is the Lord of His brethren, because His people rules over the Jews. Him His Father's sons adore, that is, the sons of Abraham according to faith; for He Himself is the son of Abraham according to the flesh. He is cursed that curseth Him, and he that blesseth Him is blessed. Christ, I say, who is ours is blessed, that is, truly spoken of out of the mouths of the Jews, when, although erring, they yet sing the law and the prophets, and think they are blessing another for whom they erringly hope. So, when the elder son claims the promised blessing, Isaac is greatly afraid, and wonders when he knows that he has blessed one instead of the other, and demands who he is; yet he does not complain that he has been deceived, yea, when the great mystery is revealed to him, in his secret heart he at once eschews anger, and confirms the blessing. "Who then," he says, "hath hunted me venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him, and he shall be blessed?" Who would not rather have expected the curse of an angry man here, if these things had been done in an earthly manner, and not by inspiration from above? O things done, yet done prophetically; on the earth, yet celestially; by men, yet divinely! If everything that is fertile of so great mysteries should be examined carefully, many volumes would be filled; but the moderate compass fixed for this work compels us to hasten to other things.

CHAPTER 38

OF JACOB'S MISSION TO MESOPOTAMIA TO GET A WIFE, AND OF THE VISION WHICH HE SAW IN A DREAM BY THE WAY, AND OF HIS GETTING FOUR WOMEN WHEN HE SOUGHT ONE WIFE

Jacob was sent by his parents to Mesopotamia that he might take a wife there. These were his father's words on sending him: "Thou shall not take a wife of the daughters of the Canaanites. Arise, fly to Mesopotamia, to the house of Bethuel, thy mother's father, and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And my God bless thee, and increase thee, and multiply thee; and thou shalt be an assembly of peoples; and give to thee the blessing of Abraham thy father, and to thy seed after thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou dwellest, which God gave unto Abraham." Now we understand here that the seed of Jacob is separated from Isaac's other seed which came through Esau. For when it is said, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called,” by this seed is meant solely the city of God; so that from it is separated Abraham’s other seed, which was in the son of the bond woman, and which was to be in the sons of Keturah. But until now it had been uncertain regarding Isaac’s twin-sons whether that blessing belonged to both or only to one of them; and if to one, which of them it was. This is now declared when Jacob is prophetically blessed by his father, and it is said to him, “And thou shalt be an assembly of peoples, and God give to thee the blessing of Abraham thy father.”

When Jacob was going to Mesopotamia, he received in a dream an oracle, of which it is thus written: “And Jacob went out from the well of the oath, and went to Haran. And he came to a place, and slept there, for the sun was set; and he took of the stones of the place, and put them at his head, and slept in that place, and dreamed. And behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and the angels of God ascended and descended by it. And the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; fear not: the land whereon thou sleepest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and it shall be spread abroad to the sea, and to Africa, and to the north, and to the east: and all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed in thee and in thy seed. And, behold, I am with thee, to keep thee in all thy way wherever thou goest, and I will bring thee back into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done all which I have spoken to thee of. And Jacob awoke out of his sleep, and said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob arose, and took the stone that he had put under his head there, and set it up for a memorial, and poured oil upon the top of it. And Jacob called the name of that place the house of God.” This is prophetic. For Jacob did not pour oil on the stone in an idolatrous way, as if making it a god; neither did he adore that stone, or sacrifice to it. But since the name of Christ comes from the chrism or anointing, something pertaining to the great mystery was certainly represented in this. And the Saviour Himself is understood to bring this latter to remembrance in the gospel, when He says of Nathanael, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” because Israel who saw this vision is no other than Jacob. And in the same place He says, “Verily,

verily, I say unto you, Ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

Jacob went on to Mesopotamia to take a wife from thence. And the divine Scripture points out how, without unlawfully desiring any of them, he came to have four women, of whom he begat twelve sons and one daughter; for he had come to take only one. But when one was falsely given him in place of the other, he did not send her away after unwittingly using her in the night, lest he should seem to have put her to shame; but as at that time, in order to multiply posterity, no law forbade a plurality of wives, he took her also to whom alone he had promised marriage. As she was barren, she gave her handmaid to her husband that she might have children by her; and her elder sister did the same thing in imitation of her, although she had borne, because she desired to multiply progeny. We do not read that Jacob sought any but one, or that he used many, except for the purpose of begetting offspring, saving conjugal rights; and he would not have done this, had not his wives, who had legitimate power over their own husband’s body, urged him to do it. So he begat twelve sons and one daughter by four women. Then he entered into Egypt by his son Joseph, who was sold by his brethren for envy, and carried there, and who was there exalted.

CHAPTER 39

THE REASON WHY JACOB WAS ALSO CALLED ISRAEL

As I said a little ago, Jacob was also called Israel, the name which was most prevalent among the people descended from him. Now this name was given him by the angel who wrestled with him on the way back from Mesopotamia, and who was most evidently a type of Christ. For when Jacob overcame him, doubtless with his own consent, that the mystery might be represented, it signified Christ’s passion, in which the Jews are seen overcoming Him. And yet he besought a blessing from the very angel he had overcome; and so the imposition of this name was the blessing. For Israel means seeing God, which will at last be the reward of all the saints. The angel also touched him on the breadth of the thigh when he was overcoming him, and in that way made him lame. So that Jacob was at one and the same time blessed and lame: blessed in those among that people who believed in Christ, and lame in the unbelieving. For the breadth of the thigh is the multitude of the family. For there are many of that race of whom it was prophetically said beforehand, “And they have halted in their paths.”

CHAPTER 40

HOW IT IS SAID THAT JACOB WENT INTO EGYPT WITH SEVENTY-FIVE SOULS, WHEN MOST OF THOSE WHO ARE MENTIONED WERE BORN AT A LATER PERIOD

Seventy-five men are reported to have entered Egypt along with Jacob, counting him with his children. In this number only two women are mentioned, one a daughter, the other a grand-daughter. But when the thing is carefully considered, it does not appear that Jacob’s offspring was so numerous on the day or year when he entered Egypt. There are also included among them the great-grandchildren of Joseph, who could not possibly be born already. For Jacob was then 130 years old, and his son Joseph thirty-nine and as it is plain that he took a wife when he was thirty or more, how could he in nine years have great-grandchildren by the children whom he had by that wife? Now since, Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, could not even have children, for Jacob found them boys under nine years old when he entered Egypt, in what way are not only their sons but their grandsons reckoned among those seventy-five who then entered Egypt with Jacob? For there is reckoned there Machir the son of Manasseh, grandson of Joseph, and Machir’s son, that is, Gilead, grandson of Manasseh, great-grandson of Joseph; there, too, is he whom Ephraim, Joseph’s other son, begot, that is, Shuthelah, grandson of Joseph, and Shuthelah’s son Ezer, grandson of Ephraim, and great-grand-son of Joseph, who could not possibly be in existence when Jacob came into Egypt, and there found his grandsons, the sons of Joseph, their grandsires, still boys under nine years of age. But doubtless, when the Scripture mentions Jacob’s entrance into Egypt with seventy-five souls, it does not mean one day, or one year, but that whole time as long as Joseph lived, who was the cause of his entrance. For the same Scripture speaks thus of Joseph: “And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his brethren, and all his father’s house: and Joseph lived 110 years, and saw Ephraim’s children of the third generation.” That is, his great-grandson, the third from Ephraim; for the third generation means son, grandson, great-grandson. Then it is added, “The children also of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born upon Joseph’s knees.” And this is that grandson of Manasseh, and great-grandson of Joseph. But the plural number is employed according to scriptural usage; for the one daughter of Jacob is spoken of as daughters, just as in the usage of the Latin tongue liberi is used in the plural for children even when there is only one. Now, when Joseph’s own happiness is proclaimed, because he could see his great-grandchildren, it is by no means to be thought they already existed in the thirty-ninth year of their great-grandsire Joseph, when his father Jacob came to him in Egypt. But those who diligently look into these things will the less easily be mistaken, because it is written, “These are the names of the sons of Israel who entered into Egypt along with Jacob their father.” For this means that the seventy-five are reckoned along with him, not that they were all with him when he entered Egypt; for, as I have said, the whole period during which Joseph, who occasioned his entrance, lived, is held to be the time of that entrance.

CHAPTER 41

OF THE BLESSING WHICH JACOB PROMISED IN JUDAH HIS SON

If, on account of the Christian people in whom the city of God sojourns in the earth, we look for the flesh of Christ in the seed of Abraham, setting aside the sons of the concubines, we have Isaac; if in the seed of Isaac, setting aside Esau, who is also Edom, we have Jacob, who also is Israel; if in the seed of Israel himself, setting aside the rest, we have Judah, because Christ sprang of the tribe of Judah. Let us hear, then, how Israel, when dying in Egypt, in blessing his sons, prophetically blessed Judah. He says: “Judah, thy brethren shall praise thee: thy hands shall be on the back of thine enemies; thy father’s children shall adore thee. Judah is a lion’s whelp: from the sprouting, my son, thou art gone up: lying down, thou hast slept as a lion, and as a lion’s whelp; who shall awake him? A prince shall not be lacking out of Judah, and a leader from his thighs, until the things come that are laid up for him; and He shall be the expectation of the nations. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass’s foal to the choice vine; he shall wash his robe in wine, and his clothes in the blood of the grape: his eyes are red with wine, and his teeth are whiter than milk.” I have expounded these words in disputing against Faustus the Manichaean; and I think it is enough to make the truth of this prophecy shine, to remark that the death of Christ is predicted by the word about his lying down, and not the necessity, but the voluntary character of His death, in the title of lion. That power He Himself proclaims in the gospel, saying, “I have the power of laying down my life, and I have the power of taking it again. No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself, and take it again.” So the lion roared, so He fulfilled what He said. For to this power what is added about the resurrection refers, “Who shall awake him?” This means that no man but Himself has raised Him, who also said of His own body, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” And the very nature of His death, that is, the height of the cross, is understood by the single words “Thou are gone up.” The evangelist explains what is added, “Lying down, thou hast slept,” when he says, “He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.” Or at least His burial is to be understood, in which He lay down sleeping, and whence no man raised Him, as the prophets did some, and as He Himself did others; but He Himself rose up as if from sleep. As for His robe which He washes in wine, that is, cleanses from sin in His own blood, of which blood those who are baptized know the mystery, so that he adds, “And his clothes in the blood of the grape,” what is it but the Church? “And his eyes are red with wine,” [these are] His spiritual people drunken with His cup, of which the psalm sings, “And thy cup that makes drunken, how excellent it is!” “And his teeth are whiter than milk,”—that is, the nutritive words which, according to the apostle, the babes drink, being as yet unfit for solid food. And it is He in whom the promises of Judah were laid up, so that until they come, princes, that is, the kings of Israel, shall never be lacking out of Judah. “And He is the expectation of the nations.” This is too plain to need exposition.

CHAPTER 42

OF THE SONS OF JOSEPH, WHOM JACOB BLESSED, PROPHETICALLY CHANGING HIS HANDS

Now, as Isaac’s two sons, Esau and Jacob, furnished a type of the two people, the Jews and the Christians (although as pertains to carnal descent it was not the Jews but the Idumeans who came of the seed of Esau, nor the

Christian nations but rather the Jews who came of Jacob’s; for the type holds only as regards the saying, “The elder shall serve the younger”), so the same thing happened in Joseph’s two sons; for the elder was a type of the Jews, and the younger of the Christians. For when Jacob was blessing them, and laid his right hand on the younger, who was at his left, and his left hand on the elder, who was at his right, this seemed wrong to their father, and he admonished his father by trying to correct his mistake and show him which was the elder. But he would not change his hands, but said, “I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be exalted; but his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.” And these two promises show the same thing. For that one is to become “a people;” this one “a multitude of nations.” And what can be more evident than that these two promises comprehend the people of Israel, and the whole world of Abraham’s seed, the one according to the flesh, the other according to faith?

CHAPTER 43

OF THE TIMES OF MOSES AND JOSHUA THE SON OF NUN, OF THE JUDGES, AND THEREAFTER OF THE KINGS, OF WHOM SAUL WAS THE FIRST, BUT DAVID IS TO BE REGARDED AS THE CHIEF, BOTH BY THE OATH AND BY MERIT

Jacob being dead, and Joseph also, during the remaining 144 years until they went out of the land of Egypt, that nation increased to an incredible degree, even although wasted by so great persecutions, that at one time the male children were murdered at their birth, because the wondering Egyptians were terrified at the too great increase of that people. Then Moses, being stealthily kept from the murderers of the infants, was brought to the royal house, God preparing to do great things by him, and was nursed and adopted by the daughter of Pharaoh (that was the name of all the kings of Egypt), and became so great a man that he—yea, rather God, who had promised this to Abraham, by him—drew that nation, so wonderfully multiplied, out of the yoke of hardest and most grievous servitude it had borne there. At first, indeed, he fled thence (we are told he fled into the land of Midian), because, in defending an Israelite, he had slain an Egyptian, and was afraid. Afterward, being divinely commissioned in the power of the Spirit of God, he overcame the magi of Pharaoh who resisted him. Then, when the Egyptians would not let God’s people go, ten memorable plagues were brought by Him upon them,—the water turned into blood, the frogs and lice, the flies, the death of the cattle, the boils, the hail, the locusts, the darkness, the death of the first-born. At last the Egyptians were destroyed in the Red Sea while pursuing the Israelites, whom they had let go when at length they were broken by so many great plagues. The divided sea made a way for the Israelites who were departing, but, returning on itself, it overwhelmed their pursuers with its waves. Then for forty years the people of God went through the desert, under the leadership of Moses, when the tabernacle of testimony was dedicated, in which God was worshipped by sacrifices prophetic of things to come, and that was after the law had been very terribly given in the mount, for its divinity was most plainly attested by wonderful signs and voices. This took place soon after the exodus from Egypt, when the people had entered the desert, on the fiftieth day after the passover was celebrated by the offering up of a lamb, which is so completely a type of Christ, foretelling that through His sacrificial passion He should go from this world to the Father (for pascha in, the Hebrew tongue means transit), that when the new covenant was revealed, after Christ our passover was offered up, the Holy Spirit came from heaven on the fiftieth day; and He is called in the gospel the Finger of God, because He recalls to our remembrance the things done before by way of types, and because the tables of that law are said to have been written by the finger of God.

On the death of Moses, Joshua the son of Nun ruled the people, and led them into the land of promise, and divided it among them. By these two wonderful leaders wars were also carried on most prosperously and wonderfully, God calling to witness that they had got these victories not so much on account of the merit of the Hebrew people as on account of the sins of the nations they subdued. After these leaders there were judges, when the people were settled in the land of promise, so that, in the meantime, the first promise made to Abraham began to be fulfilled about the one nation, that is, the Hebrew, and about the land of Canaan; but not as yet the promise about all nations, and the whole wide world, for that was to be fulfilled, not by the observances of the old law, but by the advent of Christ in the flesh, and by the faith of the gospel. And it was to prefigure this that it was not Moses, who received the law for the people on Mount Sinai, that led the people into the land of promise, but Joshua, whose name also was changed at God's command, so that he was called Jesus. But in the times of the judges prosperity alternated with adversity in war, according as the sins of the people and the mercy of God were displayed.

We come next to the times of the kings. The first who reigned was Saul; and when he was rejected and laid low in battle, and his offspring rejected so that no kings should arise out of it, David succeeded to the kingdom, whose son Christ is chiefly called. He was made a kind of starting-point and beginning of the advanced youth of God's people, who had passed a kind of age of puberty from Abraham to this David. And it is not in vain that the evangelist Matthew records the generations in such a way as to sum up this first period from Abraham to David in fourteen generations. For from the age of puberty man begins to be capable of generation; therefore he starts the list of generations from Abraham, who also was made the father of many nations when he got his name changed. So that previously this family of God's people was in its childhood, from Noah to Abraham; and for that reason the first language was then learned, that is, the Hebrew. For man begins to speak in childhood, the age succeeding infancy, which is so termed because then he cannot speak. And that first age is quite drowned in oblivion, just as the first age of the human race was blotted out by the flood; for who is there that can remember his infancy? Wherefore in this progress of the city of God, as the previous book contained that first age, so this one ought to contain the second and third ages, in which third age, as was shown by the heifer of three years old, the she-goat of three years old, and the ram of three years old, the yoke of the law was imposed, and there appeared abundance of sins, and the beginning of the earthly kingdom arose, in which there were not lacking spiritual men, of whom the turtledove and pigeon represented the mystery.

Book XVII

Argument—In this book the history of the city of God is traced during the period of the kings and prophets from Samuel to David, even to Christ; and the prophecies which are recorded in the books of Kings, Psalms, and those of Solomon, are interpreted of Christ and the church.

CHAPTER 1

OF THE PROPHETIC AGE

By the favor of God we have treated distinctly of His promises made to Abraham, that both the nation of Israel according to the flesh, and all nations according to faith, should be his seed, and the City of God, proceeding according to the order of time, will point out how they were fulfilled. Having therefore in the previous book come down to the reign of David, we shall now treat of what remains, so far as may seem sufficient for the object of this work, beginning at the same reign. Now, from the time when holy Samuel began to prophesy, and ever onward until the people of Israel was led captive into Babylonia, and until, according to the prophecy of holy Jeremiah, on Israel's return thence after seventy years, the house of God was built anew, this whole period is the prophetic age. For although both the patriarch Noah himself, in whose days the whole earth was destroyed by the flood, and others before and after him down to this time when there began to be kings over the people of God, may not underservedly be styled prophets, on account of certain things pertaining to the city of God and the kingdom of heaven, which they either predicted or in any way signified should come to pass, and especially since we read that some of them, as Abraham and Moses, were expressly so styled, yet those are most and chiefly called the days of the prophets from the time when Samuel began to prophesy, who at God's command first anointed Saul to be king, and, on his rejection, David himself, whom others of his issue should succeed as long as it was fitting they should do so. If, therefore, I wished to rehearse all that the prophets have predicted concerning Christ, while the city of God, with its members dying and being born in constant succession, ran its course through those times, this work would extend beyond all bounds. First, because the Scripture itself, even when, in treating in order of the kings and of their deeds and the events of their reigns, it seems to be occupied in narrating as with historical diligence the affairs transacted, will be found, if the things handled by it are considered with the aid of the Spirit of God, either more, or certainly not less, intent on foretelling things to come than on relating things past. And who that thinks even a little about it does not know how laborious and prolix a work it would be, and how many volumes it would require to search this out by thorough investigation and demonstrate it by argument? And then, because of that which without dispute pertains to prophecy, there are so many things concerning Christ and the kingdom of heaven, which is the city of God, that to explain these a larger discussion would be necessary than the due proportion of this work admits of. Therefore I shall, if I can, so limit myself, that in carrying through this work, I may, with God's help, neither say what is superfluous nor omit what is necessary.

CHAPTER 2

AT WHAT TIME THE PROMISE OF GOD WAS FULFILLED CONCERNING THE LAND OF CANAAN, WHICH EVEN CARNAL ISRAEL GOT IN POSSESSION

In the preceding book we said, that in the promise of God to Abraham two things were promised from the beginning, the one, name ly, that his seed should possess the land of Canaan, which was intimated when it was said, “Go into a land that I will show thee, and I will make of thee a great nation;” but the other far more excellent, concerning not the carnal but the spiritual seed, by which he is the father, not of the one nation of Israel, but of all nations who follow the footsteps of his faith, which began to be promised in these words, “And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” And thereafter we showed by yet many other proofs that these two things were promised. Therefore the seed of Abraham, that is, the people of Israel according to the flesh, already was in the land of promise; and there, not only by holding and possessing the cities of the enemies, but also by having kings, had already begun to reign, the promises of God concerning that people being already in great part fulfilled: not only those that were made to those three fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and whatever others were made in their times, but those also that were made through Moses himself, by whom the same people was set free from servitude in Egypt, and by whom all bygone things were revealed in his times, when he led the people through the wilderness. But neither by the illustrious leader Jesus the son of Nun, who led that people into the land of promise, and, after driving out the nations, divided it among the twelve tribes according to God's command, and died; nor after him, in the whole time of the judges, was the promise of God concerning the land of Canaan fulfilled, that it should extend from some river of Egypt even to the great river Euphrates; nor yet was it still prophesied as to come, but its fulfillment was expected. And it was fulfilled through David, and Solomon his son, whose kingdom was extended over the whole promised space; for they subdued all those nations, and made them tributary. And thus, under those kings, the seed of Abraham was established in the land of promise according to the flesh, that is, in the land of Canaan, so that nothing yet remained to the complete fulfillment of that earthly promise of God, except that, so far as pertains to temporal prosperity, the Hebrew nation should remain in the same land by the succession of posterity in an unshaken state even to the end of this mortal age, if it obeyed the laws of the Lord its God. But since God knew it would not do this, He used His temporal punishments also for training His few faithful ones in it, and for giving needful warning to those who should afterwards be in all nations, in whom the other promise, revealed in the New Testament, was about to be fulfilled through the incarnation of Christ.

CHAPTER 3

OF THE THREE-FOLD MEANING OF THE PROPHECIES, WHICH ARE TO BE REFERRED NOW TO THE EARTHLY, NOW TO THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM, AND NOW AGAIN TO BOTH

Wherefore just as that divine oracle to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the other prophetic signs or sayings which are given in the earlier sacred writings, so also the other prophecies from this time of the kings pertain partly to the nation of Abraham's flesh, and partly to that seed of his in which all nations are blessed as fellow-heirs of Christ by the New Testament, to the possessing of eternal life and the kingdom of the heavens.

Therefore they pertain partly to the bond maid who gendereth to bondage, that is, the earthly Jerusalem, which is in bondage with her children; but partly to the free city of God, that is, the true Jerusalem eternal in the heavens, whose children are all those that live according to God in the earth: but there are some things among them which are understood to pertain to both,—to the bond maid properly, to the free woman figuratively.

Therefore prophetic utterances of three kinds are to be found; forasmuch as there are some relating to the earthly Jerusalem, some to the heavenly, and some to both. I think it proper to prove what I say by examples. The prophet Nathan was sent to convict king David of heinous sin, and predict to him what future evils should be consequent on it. Who can question that this and the like pertain to the terrestrial city, whether publicly, that is, for the safety or help of the people, or privately, when there are given forth for each one's private good divine utterances whereby something of the future may be known for the use of temporal life? But where we read, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make for the house of Israel, and for the house of Judah, a new testament: not according to the testament that I settled for their fathers in the day when I laid hold of their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my testament, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the testament that I will make for the house of Israel: after those days, saith the Lord, I will give my laws in their mind, and will write them upon their hearts, and I will see to them; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people;”—without doubt this is prophesied to the Jerusalem above, whose reward is God Himself, and whose chief and entire good it is to have Him, and to be His. But this pertains to both, that the city of God is called Jerusalem, and that it is prophesied the house of God shall be in it; and this prophecy seems to be fulfilled when king Solomon builds that most noble temple. For these things both happened in the earthly Jerusalem, as history shows, and were types of the heavenly Jerusalem. And this kind of prophecy, as it were compacted and commingled of both the others in the ancient canonical books, containing historical narratives, is of very great significance, and has exercised and exercises greatly the wits of those who search holy writ. For example, what we read of historically as predicted and fulfilled in the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, we must also inquire the allegorical meaning of, as it is to be fulfilled in the seed of Abraham according to faith. And so much is this the case, that some have thought there is nothing in these books either foretold and effected, or effected although not foretold, that does not insinuate something else which is to be referred by figurative signification to the city of God on high, and to her children who are pilgrims in this life. But if this be so, then the utterances of the prophets, or rather the whole of those Scriptures that are reckoned under the title of the Old Testament, will be not of three, but of two different kinds. For there will be nothing there which pertains to the terrestrial Jerusalem only, if whatever is there said and fulfilled of or concerning her signifies something which also refers by allegorical prefiguration to the celestial Jerusalem; but there will be only two kinds one that pertains to the free Jerusalem, the other to both. But just as, I think, they err greatly who are of opinion that none of the records of affairs in that kind of writings mean anything more than that they so happened, so I think those very daring who contend that the whole gist of their contents lies in allegorical significations. Therefore I have said they are threefold, not two-fold. Yet, in holding this opinion, I do not blame those who may be able to draw out of everything there a spiritual meaning, only saving, first of all, the historical truth. For the rest, what believer can doubt that those things are spoken vainly which are such that, whether said to have been done or to be yet to come, they do not beseem either human or divine affairs? Who would not recall these to spiritual understanding if he could, or confess that they should be recalled by him who is able?

CHAPTER 4

ABOUT THE PREFIGURED CHANGE OF THE ISRAELITIC KINGDOM AND PRIESTHOOD, AND ABOUT THE THINGS HANNAH THE MOTHER OF SAMUEL PROPHESIED, PERSONATING THE CHURCH

Therefore the advance of the city of God, where it reached the times of the kings, yielded a figure, when, on the rejection of Saul, David first obtained the kingdom on such a footing that thenceforth his descendants should reign in the earthly Jerusalem in continual succession; for the course of affairs signified and foretold, what is not to be passed by in silence, concerning the change of things to come, what belongs to both Testaments, the Old and the

New,—where the priesthood and kingdom are changed by one who is a priest, and at the same time a king, new and everlasting, even Christ Jesus. For both the substitution in the ministry of God, on Eli’s rejection as priest, of Samuel, who executed at once the office of priest and judge, and the establishment of David in the kingdom, when Saul was rejected, typified this of which I speak. And Hannah herself, the mother of Samuel, who formerly was barren, and afterwards was gladdened with fertility, does not seem to prophesy anything else, when she exultingly pours forth her thanksgiving to the Lord, on yielding up to God the same boy she had born and weaned with the same piety with which she had vowed him. For she says, “My heart is made strong in the Lord, and my horn is exalted in my God; my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; I am made glad in Thy salvation. Because there is none holy as the Lord; and none is righteous as our God: there is none holy save Thee. Do not glory so proudly, and do not speak lofty things, neither let vaunting talk come out of your mouth; for a God of knowledge is the Lord, and a God preparing His curious designs. The bow of the mighty hath He made weak, and the weak are girded with strength. They that were full of bread are diminished; and the hungry have passed beyond the earth: for the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble. The Lord killeth and maketh alive: He bringeth down to hell, and bringeth up again. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich: He bringeth low and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, that He may set him among the mighty of [His] people, and maketh them inherit the throne of glory; giving the vow to him that voweth, and He hath blessed the years of the just: for man is not mighty in strength. The Lord shall make His adversary weak: the Lord is holy. Let not the prudent glory in his prudence and let not the mighty glory in his might; and let not the rich glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, to understand and know the Lord, and to do judgment and justice in the midst of the earth. The Lord hath ascended into the heavens, and hath thundered: He shall judge the ends of the earth, for He is righteous: and He giveth strength to our kings, and shall exalt the horn of His Christ.”

Do you say that these are the words of a single weak woman giving thanks for the birth of a son? Can the mind of men be so much averse to the light of truth as not to perceive that the sayings this woman pours forth exceed her measure? Moreover, he who is suitably interested in these things which have already begun to be fulfilled even in this earthly pilgrimage also, does he not apply his mind, and perceive, and acknowledge, that through this woman—whose very name, which is Hannah, means “His grace”—the very Christian religion, the very city of God, whose king and founder is Christ, in fine, the very grace of God, hath thus spoken by the prophetic Spirit, whereby the proud are cut off so that they fall, and the humble are filled so that they rise, which that hymn chiefly celebrates? Unless perchance any one will say that this woman prophesied nothing, but only lauded God with exulting praise on account of the son whom she had obtained in answer to prayer. What then does she mean when she says, “The bow of the mighty hath He made weak, and the weak are girded with strength; they that were full of bread are diminished, and the hungry have gone beyond the earth; for the barren hath born seven, and she that hath many children is waxed feeble?” Had she herself born seven, although she had been barren? She had only one when she said that; neither did she bear seven afterwards, nor six, with whom Samuel himself might be the seventh, but three males and two females. And then, when as yet no one was king over that people, whence, if she did not prophesy, did she say what she puts at the end, “He giveth strength to our kings, and shall exalt the horn of His Christ?”

Therefore let the Church of Christ, the city of the great King, full of grace, prolific of offspring, let her say what the prophecy uttered about her so long before by the mouth of this pious mother confesses, “My heart is made strong in the Lord, and my horn is exalted in my God.” Her heart is truly made strong, and her horn is truly exalted, because not in herself, but in the Lord her God. “My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies;” because even in pressing straits the word of God is not bound, not even in preachers who are bound. “I am made glad,” she says, “in Thy salvation.” This is Christ Jesus Himself, whom old Simeon, as we read in the Gospel, embracing as a little one, yet recognizing as great, said, “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.” Therefore may the Church say, “I am made glad in Thy salvation. For there is none holy as the Lord, and none is righteous as our God;” as holy and sanctifying, just and justifying. “There is none holy beside Thee;” because no one becomes so except by reason of Thee. And then it follows, “Do not glory so proudly, and do not speak lofty things, neither let vaunting talk come out of your mouth. For a God of knowledge is the Lord.” He knows you even when no one knows; for “he who thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing deceiveth himself.” These things are said to the adversaries of the city of God who belong to Babylon, who presume in their own strength, and glory in themselves, not in the Lord; of whom are also the carnal Israelites, the earth-born inhabitants of the earthly Jerusalem, who, as saith the apostle, “being ignorant of the righteousness of God,” that is, which God, who alone is just, and the justifier, gives to man, “and wishing to establish their own,” that is, which is as it were procured by their own selves, not bestowed by Him, “are not subject to the righteousness of God,” just because they are proud, and think they are able to please God with their own, not with that which is of God, who is the God of knowledge, and therefore also takes the oversight of consciences, there beholding the thoughts of men that they are vain, if they are of men, and are not from Him. “And preparing,” she says, “His curious designs.” What curious designs do we think these are, save that the proud must fall, and the humble rise? These curious designs she recounts, saying, “The bow of the mighty is made weak, and the weak are girded with strength.” The bow is made weak, that is, the intention of those who think themselves so powerful, that without the gift and help of God they are able by human sufficiency to fulfill the divine commandments; and those are girded with strength whose in ward cry is, “Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak.”

“They that were full of bread,” she says, “are diminished, and the hungry have gone beyond the earth.” Who are to be understood as full of bread except those same who were as if mighty, that is, the Israelites, to whom were committed the oracles of God? But among that people the children of the bond maid were diminished,—by which word minus, although it is Latin, the idea is well expressed that from being greater they were made less,—because, even in the very bread, that is, the divine oracles, which the Israelites alone of all nations have received, they savor earthly things. But the nations to whom that law was not given, after they have come through the New Testament to these oracles, by thirsting much have gone beyond the earth, because in them they have savored not earthly, but heavenly things. And the reason why this is done is as it were sought; “for the barren,” she says, “hath born seven, and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.” Here all that had been prophesied hath shone forth to those who understood the number seven, which signifies the perfection of the universal Church. For which reason also the Apostle John writes to the seven churches, showing in that way that he writes to the totality of the one Church; and in the Proverbs of Solomon it is said aforetime, prefiguring this, “Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath strengthened her seven pillars.” For the city of God was barren in all nations before that child arose whom we see. We also see that the temporal Jerusalem, who had many children, is now waxed feeble. Because, whoever in her were sons of the free woman were her strength; but now, forasmuch as the letter is there, and not the spirit, having lost her strength, she is waxed feeble.

“The Lord killeth and maketh alive:” He has killed her who had many children, and made this barren one alive, so that she has born seven. Although it may be more suitably understood that He has made those same alive whom He has killed. For she, as it were, repeats that by adding, “He bringeth down to hell, and bringeth up.” To whom truly the apostle says, “If ye be dead with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” Therefore they are killed by the Lord in a salutary way, so that he adds, “Savor things which are above, not things on the earth;” so that these are they who, hungering, have passed beyond the earth. “For ye are dead,” he says: behold how God savingly kills! Then there follows, “And your life is hid with Christ in God:” behold how God makes the same alive! But does He bring them down to hell and bring them up again? It is without controversy among believers that we best see both parts of this work fulfilled in Him, to wit our Head, with whom the apostle has said our life is hid in God. “For when He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all,” in that way, certainly, He has killed Him. And forasmuch as He raised Him up again from the dead, He has made Him alive again. And since His voice is acknowledged in the prophecy, “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,” He has brought Him down to hell and brought Him up again. By this poverty of His we are made rich; for “the Lord maketh poor and maketh rich.” But that we may know what this is, let us hear what follows: “He bringeth low and lifteth up;” and truly He humbles the proud and exalts the humble. Which we also read elsewhere, “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.” This is the burden of the entire song of this woman whose name is interpreted “His grace.”

Farther, what is added, “He raiseth up the poor from the earth,” I understand of none better than of Him who, as was said a little ago, “was made poor for us, when He was rich, that by His poverty we might be made rich.” For He raised Him from the earth so quickly that His flesh did not see corruption. Nor shall I divert from Him what is added, “And raiseth up the poor from the dunghill.” For indeed he who is the poor man is also the beggar. But by the dunghill from which he is lifted up we are with the greatest reason to understand the persecuting Jews, of whom the apostle says, when telling that when he belonged to them he persecuted the Church, “What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ; and I have counted them not only loss, but even dung, that I might win Christ.” Therefore that poor one is raised up from the earth above all the rich, and that beggar is lifted up from that dunghill above all the wealthy, “that he may sit among the mighty of the people,” to whom He says, “Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones,” “and to make them inherit the throne of glory.” For these mighty ones had said, “Lo, we have forsaken all and followed Thee.” They had most mightily vowed this vow.

But whence do they receive this, except from Him of whom it is here immediately said, “Giving the vow to him that voweth?” Otherwise they would be of those mighty ones whose bow is weakened. “Giving,” she saith, “the vow to him that voweth.” For no one could vow anything acceptable to God, unless he received from Him that which he might vow. There follows, “And He hath blessed the years of the just,” to wit, that he may live for ever with Him to whom it is said, “And Thy years shall have no end.” For there the years abide; but here they pass away, yea, they perish: for before they come they are not, and when they shall have come they shall not be, because they bring their own end with them. Now of these two, that is, “giving the vow to him that voweth,” and “He hath blessed the years of the just,” the one is what we do, the other what we receive. But this other is not received from God, the liberal giver, until He, the helper, Himself has enabled us for the former; “for man is not mighty in strength.” “The Lord shall make his adversary weak,” to wit, him who envies the man that vows, and resists him, lest he should fulfill what he has vowed. Owing to the ambiguity of the Greek, it may also be understood “his own adversary.” For when God has begun to possess us, immediately he who had been our adversary becomes His, and is conquered by us; but not by our own strength, “for man is not mighty in strength.” Therefore “the Lord shall make His own adversary weak, the Lord is holy,” that he may be conquered by the saints, whom the Lord, the Holy of holies, hath made saints. For this reason, “let not the prudent glory in his prudence, and let not the mighty glory in his might, and let not the rich glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this,—to understand and know the Lord, and to do judgment and justice in the midst of the earth.” He in no small measure understands and knows the Lord who understands and knows that even this, that he can understand and know the Lord, is given to him by the Lord. “For what hast thou,” saith the apostle, “that thou hast not received? But if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?” That is, as if thou hadst of thine own self whereof thou mightest glory. Now, he does judgment and justice who lives aright. But he lives aright who yields obedience to God when He commands. “The end of the commandment,” that is, to which the commandment has reference, “is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.” Moreover, this “charity,” as the Apostle John testifies, “is of God.” Therefore to do justice and judgment is of God. But what is “in the midst of the earth?” For ought those who dwell in the ends of the earth not to do judgment and justice? Who would say so? Why, then, is it added, “In the midst of the earth?” For if this had not been added, and it had only been said, “To do judgment and justice,” this commandment would rather have pertained to both kinds of men,—both those dwelling inland and those on the sea-coast. But lest any one should think that, after the end of the life led in this body, there remains a time for doing judgment and justice which he has not done while he was in the flesh, and that the divine judgment can thus be escaped, “in the midst of the earth” appears to me to be said of the time when every one lives in the body; for in this life every one carries about his own earth, which, on a man’s dying, the common earth takes back, to be surely returned to him on his rising again. Therefore “in the midst of the earth,” that is, while our soul is shut up in this earthly body, judgment and justice are to be done, which shall be profitable for us hereafter, when “every one shall receive according to that he hath done in the body, whether good or bad.” For when the apostle there says “in the body,” he means in the time he has lived in the body. Yet if any one blaspheme with malicious mind and impious thought, without any member of his body being employed in it, he shall not therefore be guiltless because he has not done it with bodily motion, for he will have done it in that time which he has spent in the body. In the same way we may suitably understand what we read in the psalm, “But God, our King before the worlds, hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth;” so that the Lord Jesus may be understood to be our God who is before the worlds, because by Him the worlds were made, working our salvation in the midst of the earth, for the Word was made flesh and dwelt in an earthly body.

Then after Hannah has prophesied in these words, that he who glorieth ought to glory not in himself at all, but in the Lord, she says, on account of the retribution which is to come on the day of judgment, “The Lord hath ascended into the heavens, and hath thundered: He shall judge the ends of the earth, for He is righteous.” Throughout she holds to the order of the creed of Christians: For the Lord Christ has ascended into heaven, and is to come thence to judge the quick and dead. For, as saith the apostle, “Who hath ascended but He who hath also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up above all heavens, that He might fill all things.” Therefore He hath thundered through His clouds, which He hath filled with His Holy Spirit when He ascended up. Concerning which the bond maid Jerusalem—that is, the unfruitful vineyard—is threatened in Isaiah the prophet that they shall rain no showers upon her. But “He shall judge the ends of the earth” is spoken as if it had been said, “even the extremes of the earth.” For it does not mean that He shall not judge the other parts of the earth, who, without doubt, shall judge all men. But it is better to understand by the extremes of the earth the extremes of man, since those things shall not be judged which, in the middle time, are changed for the better or the worse, but the ending in which he shall be found who is judged. For which reason it is said, “He that shall persevere even unto the end, the same shall be saved.” He, therefore, who perseveringly does judgment and justice in the midst of the earth shall not be condemned when the extremes of the earth shall be judged. “And giveth,” she saith, “strength to our kings,” that He may not condemn them in judging. He giveth them strength whereby as kings they rule the flesh, and conquer the world in Him who hath poured out His blood for them. “And shall exalt the horn of His Christ.” How shall Christ exalt the horn of His Christ? For He of whom it was said above, “The Lord hath ascended into the heavens,” meaning the Lord Christ, Himself, as it is said here, “shall exalt the horn of His Christ.” Who, therefore, is the Christ of His Christ? Does it mean that He shall exalt the horn of each one of His believing people, as she says in the beginning of this hymn, “Mine horn is exalted in my God?” For we can rightly call all those christs who are anointed with His chrism, forasmuch as the whole body with its head is one Christ. These things hath Hannah, the mother of Samuel, the holy and much-praised man, prophesied, in which, indeed, the change of the ancient priesthood was then figured and is now fulfilled, since she that had many children is waxed feeble, that the barren who hath born seven might have the new priesthood in Christ.

CHAPTER 5

OF THOSE THINGS WHICH A MAN OF GOD SPAKE BY THE SPIRIT TO ELI THE PRIEST, SIGNIFYING THAT THE PRIESTHOOD WHICH HAD BEEN APPOINTED ACCORDING TO AARON WAS TO BE TAKEN AWAY

But this is said more plainly by a man of God sent to Eli the priest himself, whose name indeed is not mentioned, but whose office and ministry show him to have been indubitably a prophet. For it is thus written: “And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I plainly revealed myself unto thy father’s house, when they were in the land of Egypt slaves in Pharaoh’s house; and I chose thy father’s house out of all the sceptres of Israel to fill the office of priest for me, to go up to my altar, to burn incense and wear the ephod; and I gave thy father’s house for food all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel. Wherefore then hast thou looked at mine incense and at mine offerings with an impudent eye, and hast glorified thy sons above me, to bless the first-fruits of every sacrifice in Israel before me? Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I said thy house and thy father’s house should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honor me will I honor, and he that despiseth me shall be despised. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thy seed, and the seed of thy father's house, and thou shalt never have an old man in my house. And I will cut off the man of thine from mine altar, so that his eyes shall be consumed, and his heart shall melt away; and every one of thy house that is left shall fall by the sword of men. And this shall be a sign unto thee that shall come upon these thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to all that is in mine heart and in my soul; and I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before my Christ for ever. And it shall come to pass that he who is left in thine house shall come to worship him with a piece of money, saying, Put me into one part of thy priesthood, that I may eat bread."

We cannot say that this prophecy, in which the change of the ancient priesthood is foretold with so great plainness, was fulfilled in Samuel; for although Samuel was not of another tribe than that which had been appointed by God to serve at the altar, yet he was not of the sons of Aaron, whose offspring was set apart that the priests might be taken out of it. And thus by that transaction also the same change which should come to pass through Christ Jesus is shadowed forth, and the prophecy itself in deed, not in word, belonged to the Old Testament properly, but figuratively to the New, signifying by the fact just what was said by the word to Eli the priest through the prophet. For there were afterwards priests of Aaron's race, such as Zadok and Abiathar during David's reign, and others in succession, before the time came when those things which were predicted so long before about the changing of the priesthood behoved to be fulfilled by Christ. But who that now views these things with a believing eye does not see that they are fulfilled? Since, indeed, no tabernacle, no temple, no altar, no sacrifice, and therefore no priest either, has remained to the Jews, to whom it was commanded in the law of God that he should be ordained of the seed of Aaron; which is also mentioned here by the prophet, when he says, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I said thy house and thy father's house shall walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, That be far from me; for them that honor me will I honor, and he that despiseth me shall be despised." For that in naming his father's house he does not mean that of his immediate father, but that of Aaron, who first was appointed priest, to be succeeded by others descended from him, is shown by the preceding words, when he says, “I was revealed unto thy father’s house, when they were in the land of Egypt slaves in Pharaoh’s house; and I chose thy father’s house out of all the sceptres of Israel to fill the office of priest for me.” Which of the fathers in that Egyptian slavery, but Aaron, was his father, who, when they were set free, was chosen to the priesthood? It was of his lineage, therefore, he has said in this passage it should come to pass that they should no longer be priests; which already we see fulfilled. If faith be watchful, the things are before us: they are discerned, they are grasped, and are forced on the eyes of the unwilling, so that they are seen: “Behold the days come,” he says, “that I will cut off thy seed, and the seed of thy father’s house, and thou shall never have an old man in mine house. And I will cut off the man of thine from mine altar, so that his eyes shall be consumed and his heart shall melt away.” Behold the days which were foretold have already come. There is no priest after the order of Aaron; and whoever is a man of his lineage, when he sees the sacrifice of the Christians prevailing over the whole world, but that great honor taken away from himself, his eyes fail and his soul melts away consumed with grief.

But what follows belongs properly to the house of Eli, to whom these things were said: “And every one of thine house that is left shall fall by the sword of men. And this shall be a sign unto thee that shall come upon these thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them.” This, therefore, is made a sign of the change of the priesthood from this man’s house, by which it is signified that the priesthood of Aaron’s house is to be changed. For the death of this man’s sons signified the death not of the men, but of the priesthood itself of the sons of Aaron. But what follows pertains to that Priest whom Samuel typified by succeeding this one. Therefore the things which follow are said of Christ Jesus, the true Priest of the New Testament: “And I will raise me up a faithful Priest that shall do according to all that is in mine heart and in my soul; and I will build Him a sure house.” The same is the eternal Jerusalem above. “And He shall walk,” saith He, “before my Christ always.” “He shall walk” means “he shall be conversant with,” just as He had said before of Aaron’s house, “I said that thine house and thy father’s house shall walk before me for ever.” But what

He says, “He shall walk before my Christ,” is to be understood entirely of the house itself, not of the priest, who is Christ Himself, the Mediator and Saviour. His house, therefore, shall walk before Him. “Shall walk” may also be understood to mean from death to life, all the time this mortality passes through, even to the end of this world. But where God says, “Who will do all that is in mine heart and in my soul,” we must not think that God has a soul, for He is the Author of souls; but this is said of God tropically, not properly, just as He is said to have hands and feet, and other corporal members. And, lest it should be supposed from such language that man in the form of this flesh is made in the image of God, wings also are ascribed to Him, which man has not at all; and it is said to God, “Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings,” that men may understand that such things are said of that ineffable nature not in proper but in figurative words.

But what is added, “And it shall come to pass that he who is left in thine house shall come to worship him,” is not said properly of the house of this Eli, but of that Aaron, the men of which remained even to the advent of Jesus Christ, of which race there are not wanting men even to this present. For of that house of Eli it had already been said above, “And every one of thine house that is left shall fall by the sword of men.” How, therefore, could it be truly said here, “And it shall come to pass that every one that is left shall come to worship him,” if that is true, that no one shall escape the avenging sword, unless he would have it understood of those who belong to the race of that whole priesthood after the order of Aaron? Therefore, if it is of these the predestinated remnant, about whom another prophet has said, “The remnant shall be saved;” whence the apostle also says, “Even so then at this time also the remnant according to the election of grace is saved;” since it is easily understood to be of such a remnant that it is said, “He that is left in thine house,” assuredly he believes in Christ; just as in the time of the apostle very many of that nation believed; nor are there now wanting those, although very few, who yet believe, and in them is fulfilled what this man of God has here immediately added, “He shall come to worship him with a piece of money;” to worship whom, if not that Chief Priest, who is also God? For in that priesthood after the order of Aaron men did not come to the temple or altar of God for the purpose of worshipping the priest. But what is that he says, “With a piece of money,” if not the short word of faith, about which the apostle quotes the saying, “A consummating and shortening word will the Lord make upon the earth?” But that money is put for the word the psalm is a witness, where it is sung, “The words of the Lord are pure words, money tried with the fire.”

What then does he say who comes to worship the priest of God, even the Priest who is God? “Put me into one part of Thy priesthood, to eat bread.” I do not wish to be set in the honor of my fathers, which is none; put me in a part of Thy priesthood. For “I have chosen to be mean in Thine house;” I desire to be a member, no matter what, or how small, of Thy priesthood. By the priesthood he here means the people itself, of which He is the Priest who is the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. This people the Apostle Peter calls “a holy people, a royal priesthood.” But some have translated, “Of Thy sacrifice,” not “Of Thy priesthood,” which no less signifies the same Christian people. Whence the Apostle Paul says, “We being many are one bread, one body.” [And again he says, “Present your bodies a living sacrifice.”] What, therefore, he has added, to “eat bread,” also elegantly expresses the very kind of sacrifice of which the Priest Himself says, “The bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.” The same is the sacrifice not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedec: let him that readeth understand. Therefore this short and salutarily humble confession, in which it is said, “Put me in a part of Thy priesthood, to eat bread,” is itself the piece of money, for it is both brief, and it is the Word of God who dwells in the heart of one who believes. For because He had said above, that He had given for food to Aaron’s house the sacrificial victims of the Old Testament, where He says, “I have given thy father’s house for food all things which are offered by fire of the children of Israel,” which indeed were the sacrifices of the Jews; therefore here He has said, “To eat bread,” which is in the New Testament the sacrifice of the Christians.

CHAPTER 6

OF THE JEWISH PRIESTHOOD AND KINGDOM, WHICH, ALTHOUGH PROMISED TO BE ESTABLISHED FOR EVER, DID NOT CONTINUE; SO THAT OTHER THINGS ARE TO BE UNDERSTOOD TO WHICH ETERNITY IS ASSURED

While, therefore, these things now shine forth as clearly as they were loftily foretold, still some one may not vainly be moved to ask, How can we be confident that all things are to come to pass which are predicted in these books as about to come, if this very thing which is there divinely spoken, “Thine house and thy father’s house shall walk before me for ever,” could not have effect? For we see that priesthood has been changed; and there can be no hope that what was promised to that house may some time be fulfilled, because that which succeeds on its being rejected and changed is rather predicted as eternal. He who says this does not yet understand, or does not recollect, that this very priesthood after the order of Aaron was appointed as the shadow of a future eternal priesthood; and therefore, when eternity is promised to it, it is not promised to the mere shadow and figure, but to what is shadowed forth and prefigured by it. But lest it should be thought the shadow itself was to remain, therefore its mutation also behoved to be foretold.

In this way, too, the kingdom of Saul himself, who certainly was reprobated and rejected, was the shadow of a kingdom yet to come which should remain to eternity. For, indeed, the oil with which he was anointed, and from that chrism he is called Christ, is to be taken in a mystical sense, and is to be understood as a great mystery; which David himself venerated so much in him, that he trembled with smitten heart when, being hid in a dark cave, which Saul also entered when pressed by the necessity of nature, he had come secretly behind him and cut off a small piece of his robe, that he might be able to prove how he had spared him when he could have killed him, and might thus remove from his mind the suspicion through which he had vehemently persecuted the holy David, thinking him his enemy. Therefore he was much afraid lest he should be accused of violating so great a mystery in Saul, because he had thus meddled even his clothes. For thus it is written: “And David’s heart smote him because he had taken away the skirt of his cloak.” But to the men with him, who advised him to destroy Saul thus delivered up into his hands, he saith, “The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord’s christ, to lay my hand upon him, because he is the Lord’s christ.” Therefore he showed so great reverence to this shadow of what was to come, not for its own sake, but for the sake of what it prefigured. Whence also that which Samuel says to Saul, “Since thou hast not kept my commandment which the Lord commanded thee, whereas now the Lord would have prepared thy kingdom over Israel for ever, yet now thy kingdom shall not continue for thee; and the Lord will seek Him a man after His own heart, and the Lord will command him to be prince over His people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee," is not to be taken as if God had settled that Saul himself should reign for ever, and afterwards, on his sinning, would not keep this promise; nor was He ignorant that he would sin, but He had established his kingdom that it might be a figure of the eternal kingdom. Therefore he added, "Yet now thy kingdom shall not continue for thee." Therefore what it signified has stood and shall stand; but it shall not stand for this man, because he himself was not to reign for ever, nor his offspring; so that at least that word "for ever" might seem to be fulfilled through his posterity one to another. "And the Lord," he saith, "will seek Him a man," meaning either David or the Mediator of the New Testament, who was figured in the chrism with which David also and his offspring was anointed. But it is not as if He knew not where he was that God thus seeks Him a man, but, speaking through a man, He speaks as a man, and in this sense seeks us. For not only to God the Father, but also to His Only-begotten, who came to seek what was lost, we had been known already even so far as to be chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. "He will seek Him" therefore means, He will have His own (just as if He had said, Whom He already has known to be His own He will show to others to be His friend). Whence in Latin this word (quaerit) receives a preposition and becomes acquirit (acquires), the meaning of which is plain enough; although even without the addition of the preposition quaerere is understood as acquirere, whence gains are called quaestus.

CHAPTER 7

OF THE DISRUPTION OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL, BY WHICH THE PERPETUAL DIVISION OF THE SPIRITUAL FROM THE CARNAL ISRAEL WAS PREFIGURED

Again Saul sinned through disobedience, and again Samuel says to him in the word of the Lord, "Because thou hast despised the word of the Lord, the Lord hath despised thee, that thou mayest not be king over Israel." And again for the same sin, when Saul confessed it, and prayed for pardon, and besought Samuel to return with him to appease the Lord, he said, “I will not return with thee: for thou hast despised the word of the Lord, and the Lord will despise thee that thou mayest not be king over Israel. And Samuel turned his face to go away, and Saul laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and rent it. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom from Israel out of thine hand this day, and will give it to thy neighbor, who is good above thee, and will divide Israel in twain. And He will not be changed, neither will He repent: for He is not as a man, that He should repent; who threatens and does not persist.” He to whom it is said, “The Lord will despise thee that thou mayest not be king over Israel,” and “The Lord hath rent the kingdom from Israel out of thine hand this day,” reigned forty years over Israel,—that is, just as long a time as David himself,—yet heard this in the first period of his reign, that we may understand it was said because none of his race was to reign, and that we may look to the race of David, whence also is sprung, according to the flesh, the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

But the Scripture has not what is read in most Latin copies, “The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel out of thine hand this day,” but just as we have set it down it is found in the Greek copies, “The Lord hath rent the kingdom from Israel out of thine hand;” that the words “out of thine hand” may be understood to mean “from Israel.” Therefore this man figuratively represented the people of Israel, which was to lose the kingdom, Christ Jesus our Lord being about to reign, not carnally, but spiritually. And when it is said of Him, “And will give it to thy neighbor,” that is to be referred to the fleshly kinship, for Christ, according to the flesh, was of Israel, whence also Saul sprang. But what is added, “Good above thee,” may indeed be understood, “Better than thee,” and indeed some have thus translated it; but it is better taken thus, “Good above thee,” as meaning that because He is good, therefore He must be above thee, according to that other prophetic saying, “Till I put all Thine enemies under Thy feet.” And among them is Israel, from whom, as His persecutor, Christ took away the kingdom; although the Israel in whom there was no guile may have been there too, a sort of grain, as it were, of that chaff. For certainly thence came the apostles, thence so many martyrs, of whom Stephen is the first, thence so many churches, which the Apostle Paul names, magnifying God in their conversion.

Of which thing I do not doubt what follows is to be understood, “And will divide Israel in twain,” to wit, into Israel pertaining to the bond woman, and Israel pertaining to the free. For these two kinds were at first together, as Abraham still clave to the bond woman, until the barren, made fruitful by the grace of God, cried, “Cast out the bond woman and her son.” We know, indeed, that on account of the sin of Solomon, in the reign of his son Rehoboam, Israel was divided in two, and continued so, the separate parts having their own kings, until that whole nation was overthrown with a great destruction, and carried away by the Chaldeans. But what was this to Saul, when, if any such thing was threatened, it would be threatened against David himself, whose son Solomon was? Finally, the Hebrew nation is not now divided internally, but is dispersed through the earth indiscriminately, in the fellowship of the same error. But that division with which God threatened the kingdom and people in the person of Saul, who represented them, is shown to be eternal and unchangeable by this which is added, “And He will not be changed, neither will He repent: for He is not as a man, that He should repent; who threatens and does not persist,”—that is, a man threatens and does not persist, but not God, who does not repent like man. For when we read that He repents, a change of circumstance is meant, flowing from the divine immutable foreknowledge. Therefore, when God is said not to repent, it is to be understood that He does not change.

We see that this sentence concerning this division of the people of Israel, divinely uttered in these words, has been altogether irremediable and quite perpetual. For whoever have turned, or are turning, or shall turn thence to Christ, it has been according to the foreknowledge of God, not according to the one and the same nature of the human race. Certainly none of the Israelites, who, cleaving to Christ, have continued in Him, shall ever be among those Israelites who persist in being His enemies even to the end of this life, but shall for ever remain in the separation which is here foretold. For the Old Testament, from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, profiteth nothing, unless because it bears witness to the New Testament. Otherwise, however long Moses is read, the veil is put over their heart; but when any one shall turn thence to Christ, the veil shall be taken away. For the very desire of those who turn is changed from the old to the new, so that each no longer desires to obtain carnal but spiritual felicity. Wherefore that great prophet Samuel himself, before he had anointed Saul, when he had cried to the Lord for Israel, and He had heard him, and when he had offered a whole burnt-offering, as the aliens were coming to battle against the people of God, and the Lord thundered above them and they were confused, and fell before Israel and were overcome; [then] he took one stone and set it up between the old and new Massephat [Mizpeh], and called its name Ebenezer, which means "the stone of the helper," and said, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Massephat is interpreted "desire." That stone of the helper is the mediation of the Saviour, by which we go from the old Massephat to the new,—that is, from the desire with which carnal happiness was expected in the carnal kingdom to the desire with which the truest spiritual happiness is expected in the kingdom of heaven; and since nothing is better than that, the Lord helpeth us hitherto.

CHAPTER 8

OF THE PROMISES MADE TO DAVID IN HIS SON, WHICH ARE IN NO WISE FULFILLED IN SOLOMON, BUT MOST FULLY IN CHRIST

And now I see I must show what, pertaining to the matter I treat of, God promised to David himself, who succeeded Saul in the kingdom, whose change prefigured that final change on account of which all things were divinely spoken, all things were committed to writing. When many things had gone prosperously with king David, he thought to make a house for God, even that temple of most excellent renown which was afterwards built by king Solomon his son. While he was thinking of this, the word of the Lord came to Nathan the prophet, which he brought to the king, in which, after God had said that a house should not be built unto Him by David himself, and that in all that long time He had never commanded any of His people to build Him a house of cedar, he says, "And now thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith God Almighty, I took thee from the sheep-cote that thou mightest be for a ruler over my people in Israel: and I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thy face, and have made thee a name, according to the name of the great ones who are over the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant him, and he shall dwell apart, and shall be troubled no more; and the son of wickedness shall not humble him any more, as from the beginning, from the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give thee rest from all thine enemies, and the Lord will tell [hath told] thee, because thou shall build an house for Him. And it shall come to pass when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shall sleep with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will prepare his kingdom. He shall build me an house for my name; and I will order his throne even to eternity. I will be his Father, and he shall be my son. And if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the sons of men: but my mercy I will not take away from him, as I took it away from those whom I put away from before my face. And his house shall be faithful, and his kingdom even for evermore before me, and his throne shall be set up even for evermore."

He who thinks this grand promise was fulfilled in Solomon greatly errs; for he attends to the saying, "He shall build me an house," but he does not attend to the saying, "His house shall be faithful, and his kingdom for evermore before me." Let him therefore attend and behold the house of Solomon full of strange women worshipping false gods, and the king himself, aforetime wise, seduced by them, and cast down into the same idolatry: and let him not dare to think that God either promised this falsely, or was unable to foreknow that Solomon and his house would become what they did. But we ought not to be in doubt here, or to see the fulfillment of these things save in Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, lest we should vainly and uselessly look for some other here, like the carnal Jews. For even they understand this much, that the son whom they read of in that place as promised to David was not Solomon; so that, with wonderful blindness to Him who was promised and is now declared with so great manifestation, they say they hope for another. Indeed, even in Solomon there appeared some image of the future event, in that he built the temple, and had peace according to his name (for Solomon means "pacific"), and in the beginning of his reign was wonderfully praiseworthy; but while, as a shadow of Him that should come, he foreshowed Christ our Lord, he did not also in his own person resemble Him. Whence some things concerning him are so written as if they were prophesied of himself, while the Holy Scripture, prophesying even by events, somehow delineates in him the figure of things to come. For, besides the books of divine history, in which his reign is narrated, the 72d Psalm also is inscribed in the title with his name, in which so many things are said which cannot at all apply to him, but which apply to the Lord Christ with such evident fitness as makes it quite apparent that in the one the figure is in some way shadowed forth, but in the other the truth itself is presented. For it is known within what bounds the kingdom of Solomon was enclosed; and yet in that psalm, not to speak of other things, we read, "He shall have dominion from sea even to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," which we see fulfilled in Christ. Truly he took the beginning of His reigning from the river where John baptized; for, when pointed out by him, He began to be acknowledged by the disciples, who called Him not only Master, but also Lord.

Nor was it for any other reason that, while his father David was still living, Solomon began to reign, which happened to none other of their kings, except that from this also it might be clearly apparent that it was not himself this prophecy spoken to his father signified beforehand, saying, "And it shall come to pass when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shall sleep with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will prepare His kingdom." How, therefore, shall it be thought on account of what follows, "He shall build me an house," that this Solomon is prophesied, and not rather be understood on account of what precedes, "When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will raise up thy seed after thee," that another pacific One is promised, who is foretold as about to be raised up, not before David's death, as he was, but after it? For however long the interval of time might be before Jesus Christ came, beyond doubt it was after the death of king David, to whom He was so promised, that He behoved to come, who should build an house of God, not of wood and stone, but of men, such as we rejoice He does build. For to this house, that is, to believers, the apostle saith, "The temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

CHAPTER 9

HOW LIKE THE PROPHECY ABOUT CHRIST IN THE 89TH PSALM IS TO THE THINGS PROMISED IN NATHAN'S PROPHECY IN THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL

Wherefore also in the 89th Psalm, of which the title is, "An instruction for himself by Ethan the Israelite," mention is made of the promises God made to king David, and some things are there added similar to those found in the Book of Samuel, such as this, "I have sworn to David my servant that I will prepare his seed for ever." And again, "Then thou spakest in vision to thy sons, and saidst, I have laid help upon the mighty One, and have exalted the chosen One out of my people. I have found David my servant, and with my holy oil I have anointed him. For mine hand shall help him, and mine arm shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not prevail against him, and the son of iniquity shall harm him no more. And I will beat down his foes from before his face, and those that hate him will I put to flight. And my truth and my mercy shall be with him, and in my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the undertaker of my salvation. Also I will make him my first-born, high among the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall be faithful (sure) with him. His seed also will I set for ever and ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." Which words, when rightly understood, are all understood to be about the Lord Jesus Christ, under the name of David, on account of the form of a servant, which the same Mediator assumed from the virgin of the seed of David. For immediately something is said about the sins of his children, such as is set down in the Book of Samuel, and is more readily taken as if of Solomon. For there, that is, in the Book of Samuel, he says, "And if he commit iniquity I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the sons of men; but my mercy will I not take away from him," meaning by stripes the strokes of correction. Hence that saying, "Touch ye not my christs." For what else is that than, Do not harm them? But in the psalm, when speaking as if of David, He says something of the same kind there too. "If his children," saith He, "forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they profane my righteousnesses, and keep not my commandments; I will visit their iniquities with the rod, and their faults with stripes: but my mercy I will not make void from him."

He did not say “from them,” although He spoke of his children, not of himself; but he said “from him,” which means the same thing if rightly understood. For of Christ Himself, who is the head of the Church, there could not be found any sins which required to be divinely restrained by human correction, mercy being still continued; but they are found in His body and members, which is His people. Therefore in the Book of Samuel it is said, “iniquity of Him,” but in the psalm, “of His children,” that we may understand that what is said of His body is in some way said of Himself. Wherefore also, when Saul persecuted His body, that is, His believing people, He Himself saith from heaven, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” Then in the following words of the psalm He says, “Neither will I hurt in my truth, nor profane my covenant, and the things that proceed from my lips I will not disallow. Once have I sworn by my holiness, if I lie unto David,”—that is, I will in no wise lie unto David; for Scripture is wont to speak thus. But what that is in which He will not lie, He adds, saying, “His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me, and as the moon perfected for ever, and a faithful witness in heaven.”

CHAPTER 10

HOW DIFFERENT THE ACTS IN THE KINGDOM OF THE EARTHLY JERUSALEM ARE FROM THOSE WHICH GOD HAD PROMISED, SO THAT THE TRUTH OF THE PROMISE SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD TO PERTAIN TO THE GLORY OF THE OTHER KING AND KINGDOM

That it might not be supposed that a promise so strongly expressed and confirmed was fulfilled in Solomon, as if he hoped for, yet did not find it, he says, “But Thou hast cast off, and hast brought to nothing, O Lord.” This truly was done concerning the kingdom of Solomon among his posterity, even to the overthrow of the earthly Jerusalem itself, which was the seat of the kingdom, and especially the destruction of the very temple which had been built by Solomon. But lest on this account God should be thought to have done contrary to His promise, immediately he adds, “Thou hast delayed Thy Christ.” Therefore he is not Solomon, nor yet David himself, if the Christ of the Lord is delayed. For while all the kings are called His christs, who were consecrated with that mystical chrism, not only from king David downwards, but even from that Saul who first was anointed king of that same people, David himself indeed calling him the Lord’s christ, yet there was one true Christ, whose figure they bore by the prophetic unction, who, according to the opinion of men, who thought he was to be understood as come in David or in Solomon, was long delayed, but who, according as God had disposed, was to come in His own time. The following part of this psalm goes on to say what in the meantime, while He was delayed, was to become of the kingdom of the earthly Jerusalem, where it was hoped He would certainly reign: “Thou hast overthrown the covenant of Thy servant; Thou hast profaned in the earth his sanctuary. Thou hast broken down all his walls; Thou hast put his strong-holds in fear. All that pass by the way spoil him; he is made a reproach to his neighbors. Thou hast set up the right hand of his enemies; Thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice. Thou hast turned aside the help of his sword, and hast not helped him in war. Thou hast destroyed him from cleansing; Thou hast dashed down his seat to the ground. Thou hast shortened the days of his seat; Thou hast poured confusion over him.” All these things came upon Jerusalem the bond woman, in which some also reigned who were children of the free woman, holding that kingdom in temporary stewardship, but holding the kingdom of the heavenly Jerusalem, whose children they were, in true faith, and hoping in the true Christ. But how these things came upon that kingdom, the history of its affairs points out if it is read.

CHAPTER 11

OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD, WHICH THROUGH HIS ASSUMPTION OF FLESH IS IN CHRIST, WHO ALONE HAD POWER TO DELIVER HIS OWN SOUL FROM HELL

But after having prophesied these things, the prophet betakes him to praying to God; yet even the very prayer is prophecy: “How long, Lord, dost Thou turn away in the end?” “Thy face” is understood, as it is elsewhere said, “How long dost Thou turn away Thy face from me?” For therefore some copies have here not “dost,” but “wilt Thou turn away;” although it could be understood, “Thou turnest away Thy mercy, which Thou didst promise to David.” But when he says, “in the end,” what does it mean, except even to the end? By which end is to be understood the last time, when even that nation is to believe in Christ Jesus, before which end what He has just sorrowfully bewailed must come to pass. On account of which it is also added here, “Thy wrath shall burn like fire. Remember what is my substance.” This cannot be better understood than of Jesus Himself, the substance of His people, of whose nature His flesh is. “For not in vain,” he says, “hast Thou made all the sons of men.” For unless the one Son of man had been the substance of Israel, through which Son of man many sons of men should be set free, all the sons of men would have been made wholly in vain. But now, indeed, all mankind through the fall of the first man has fallen from the truth into vanity; for which reason another psalm says, “Man is like to vanity: his days pass away as a shadow;” yet God has not made all the sons of men in vain, because He frees many from vanity through the Mediator Jesus, and those whom He did not foreknow as to be delivered, He made not wholly in vain in the most beautiful and most just ordination of the whole rational creation, for the use of those who were to be delivered, and for the comparison of the two cities by mutual contrast. Thereafter it follows, “Who is the man that shall live, and shall not see death? shall he snatch his soul from the hand of hell?” Who is this but that substance of Israel out of the seed of David, Christ Jesus, of whom the apostle says, that “rising from the dead He now dieth not, and death shall no more have dominion over Him?” For He shall so live and not see death, that yet He shall have been dead; but shall have delivered His soul from the hand of hell, whither He had descended in order to loose some from the chains of hell; but He hath delivered it by that power of which He says in the Gospel, “I have the power of laying down my life, and I have the power of taking it again.”

CHAPTER 12

TO WHOSE PERSON THE ENTREATY FOR THE PROMISES IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD TO BELONG, WHEN HE SAYS IN THE PSALM, “WHERE ARE THINE ANCIENT COMPASSIONS, LORD?” ETC

But the rest of this psalm runs thus: “Where are Thine ancient compassions, Lord, which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth? Remember, Lord, the reproach of Thy servants, which I have borne in my bosom of many nations; wherewith Thine enemies have reproached, O Lord, wherewith they have reproached the change of Thy Christ.” Now it may with very good reason be asked whether this is spoken in the person of those Israelites who desired that the promise made to David might be fulfilled to them; or rather of the Christians, who are Israelites not after the flesh but after the Spirit. This certainly was spoken or written in the time of Ethan, from whose name this psalm gets its title, and that was the same as the time of David's reign; and therefore it would not have been said, "Where are Thine ancient compassions, Lord, which Thou hast sworn unto David in Thy truth?" unless the prophet had assumed the person of those who should come long afterwards, to whom that time when these things were promised to David was ancient. But it may be understood thus, that many nations, when they persecuted the Christians, reproached them with the passion of Christ, which Scripture calls His change, because by dying He is made immortal. The change of Christ, according to this passage, may also be understood to be reproached by the Israelites, because, when they hoped He would be theirs, He was made the Saviour of the nations; and many nations who have believed in Him by the New Testament now reproach them who remain in the old with this: so that it is said, "Remember, Lord, the reproach of Thy servants;" because through the Lord's not forgetting, but rather pitying them, even they after this reproach are to believe. But what I have put first seems to me the most suitable meaning. For to the enemies of Christ who are reproached with this, that Christ hath left them, turning to the Gentiles, this speech is incongruously assigned, "Remember, Lord, the reproach of Thy servants," for such Jews are not to be styled the servants of God; but these words fit those who, if they suffered great humiliations through persecution for the name of Christ, could call to mind that an exalted kingdom had been promised to the seed of David, and in desire of it, could say not despairingly, but as asking, seeking, knocking, "Where are Thine ancient compassions, Lord, which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth? Remember, Lord, the reproach of Thy servants, that I have borne in my bosom of many nations;" that is, have patiently endured in my inward parts. "That Thine enemies have reproached, O Lord, wherewith they have reproached the change of Thy Christ," not thinking it a change, but a consumption. But what does "Remember, Lord," mean, but that Thou wouldst have compassion, and wouldst for my patiently borne humiliation reward me with the excellency which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth? But if we assign these words to the Jews, those servants of God who, on the conquest of the earthly Jerusalem, before Jesus Christ was born after the manner of men, were led into captivity, could say such things, understanding the change of Christ, because indeed through Him was to be surely expected, not an earthly and carnal felicity, such as appeared during the few years of king Solomon, but a heavenly and spiritual felicity; and when the nations, then ignorant of this through unbelief, exulted over and insulted the people of God for being captives, what else was this than ignorantly to reproach with the change of Christ those who understand the change of Christ? And therefore what follows when this psalm is concluded, “Let the blessing of the Lord be for evermore, amen, amen,” is suitable enough for the whole people of God belonging to the heavenly Jerusalem, whether for those things that lay hid in the Old Testament before the New was revealed, or for those that, being now revealed in the New Testament, are manifestly discerned to belong to Christ. For the blessing of the Lord in the seed of David does not belong to any particular time, such as appeared in the days of Solomon, but is for evermore to be hoped for, in which most certain hope it is said, “Amen, amen;” for this repetition of the word is the confirmation of that hope. Therefore David understanding this, says in the second Book of Kings, in the passage from which we digressed to this psalm, “Thou hast spoken also for Thy servant’s house for a great while to come.” Therefore also a little after he says, “Now begin, and bless the house of Thy servant for evermore,” etc., because the son was then about to be born from whom his posterity should be continued to Christ, through whom his house should be eternal, and should also be the house of God. For it is called the house of David on account of David’s race; but the selfsame is called the house of God on account of the temple of God, made of men, not of stones, where shall dwell for evermore the people with and in their God, and God with and in His people, so that God may fill His people, and the people be filled with their God, while God shall be all in all, Himself their reward in peace who is their strength in war. Therefore, when it is said in the words of Nathan, “And the Lord will tell thee what an house thou shalt build for Him,” it is afterwards said in the words of David, “For Thou, Lord Almighty, God of Israel, hast opened the ear of Thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house.” For this house is built both by us through living well, and by God through helping us to live well; for “except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.” And when the final dedication of this house shall take place, then what God here says by Nathan shall be fulfilled, “And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant him, and he shall dwell apart, and shall be troubled no more; and the son of iniquity shall not humble him any more, as from the beginning, from the days when I appointed judges over my people Israel.”

CHAPTER 13

WHETHER THE TRUTH OF THIS PROMISED PEACE CAN BE ASCRIBED TO THOSE TIMES PASSED AWAY UNDER SOLOMON

Whoever hopes for this so great good in this world, and in this earth, his wisdom is but folly. Can any one think it was fulfilled in the peace of Solomon’s reign? Scripture certainly commends that peace with excellent praise as a shadow of that which is to come. But this opinion is to be vigilantly opposed, since after it is said, “And the son of iniquity shall not humble him any more,” it is immediately added, “as from the beginning, from the days in which I appointed judges over my people Israel.” For the judges were appointed over that people from the time when they received the land of promise, before kings had begun to be there. And certainly the son of iniquity, that is, the foreign enemy, humbled him through periods of time in which we read that peace alternated with wars; and in that period longer times of peace are found than Solomon had, who reigned forty years. For under that judge who is called Ehud there were eighty years of peace. Be it far from us, therefore, that we should believe the times of Solomon are predicted in this promise, much less indeed those of any other king whatever. For none other of them reigned in such great peace as he; nor did that nation ever at all hold that kingdom so as to have no anxiety lest it should be subdued by enemies: for in the very great mutability of human affairs such great security is never given to any people, that it should not dread invasions hostile to this life. Therefore the place of this promised peaceful and secure habitation is eternal, and of right belongs eternally to Jerusalem the free mother, where the genuine people of Israel shall be: for this name is interpreted “Seeing God;” in the desire of which reward a pious life is to be led through faith in this miserable pilgrimage.

CHAPTER 14

OF DAVID’S CONCERN IN THE WRITING OF THE PSALMS

In the progress of the city of God through the ages, therefore, David first reigned in the earthly Jerusalem as a shadow of that which was to come. Now David was a man skilled in songs, who dearly loved musical harmony, not with a vulgar delight, but with a believing disposition, and by it served his God, who is the true God, by the mystical representation of a great thing. For the rational and well-ordered concord of diverse sounds in harmonious variety suggests the compact unity of the well-ordered city. Then almost all his prophecy is in psalms, of which a hundred and fifty are contained in what we call the Book of Psalms, of which some will have it those only were made by David which are in scribed with his name. But there are also some who think none of them were made by him except those which are marked “Of David;” but those which have in the title “For David” have been made by others who assumed his person. Which opinion is refuted by the voice of the Saviour Himself in the Gospel, when He says that David himself by the Spirit said Christ was his Lord; for the 110th Psalm begins thus, “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.” And truly that very psalm, like many more, has in the title, not “of David,” but “for David.” But those seem to me to hold the more credible opinion, who ascribe to him the authorship of all these hundred and fifty psalms, and think that he prefixed to some of them the names even of other men, who prefigured something pertinent to the matter, but chose to have no man’s name in the titles of the rest, just as God inspired him in the management of this variety, which, although dark, is not meaningless. Neither ought it to move one not to believe this that the names of some prophets who lived long after the times of king David are read in the inscriptions of certain psalms in that book, and that the things said there seem to be spoken as it were by them. Nor was the prophetic Spirit unable to reveal to king David, when he prophesied, even these names of future prophets, so that he might prophetically sing something which should suit their persons; just as it was revealed to a certain prophet that king Josiah should arise and reign after more than three hundred years, who predicted his future deeds also along with his name.

CHAPTER 15

WHETHER ALL THE THINGS PROPHESIED IN THE PSALMS CONCERNING CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH SHOULD BE TAKEN UP IN THE TEXT OF THIS WORK

And now I see it may be expected of me that I shall open up in this part of this book what David may have prophesied in the Psalms concerning the Lord Jesus Christ or His Church. But although I have already done so in one instance, I am prevented from doing as that expectation seems to demand, rather by the abundance than the scarcity of matter. For the necessity of shunning prolixity forbids my setting down all things; yet I fear lest if I select some I shall appear to many, who know these things, to have passed by the more necessary. Besides, the proof that is adduced ought to be supported by the context of the whole psalm, so that at least there may be nothing against it if everything does not support it; lest we should seem, after the fashion of the centos, to gather for the thing we wish, as it were, verses out of a grand poem, what shall be found to have been written not about it, but about some other and widely different thing. But ere this could be pointed out in each psalm, the whole of it must be expounded; and how great a work that would be, the volumes of others, as well as our own, in which we have done it, show well enough. Let him then who will, or can, read these volumes, and he will find out how many and great things David, at once king and prophet, has prophesied concerning Christ and His Church, to wit, concerning the King and the city which He has built.

CHAPTER 16

OF THE THINGS PERTAINING TO CHRIST AND THE CHURCH, SAID EITHER OPENLY OR TROPICALLY IN THE 45TH PSALM

For whatever direct and manifest prophetic utterances there may be about anything, it is necessary that those which are tropical should be mingled with them; which, chiefly on account of those of slower understanding, thrust upon the more learned the laborious task of clearing up and expounding them. Some of them, indeed, on the very first blush, as soon as they are spoken, exhibit Christ and the Church, although some things in them that are less intelligible remain to be expounded at leisure. We have an example of this in that same Book of Psalms: “My heart bubbled up a good matter: I utter my words to the king. My tongue is the pen of a scribe, writing swiftly. Thy form is beautiful beyond the sons of men; grace is poured out in Thy lips: therefore God hath blessed Thee for evermore. Gird Thy sword about Thy thigh, O Most Mighty. With Thy goodliness and Thy beauty go forward, proceed prosperously, and reign, because of Thy truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and Thy right hand shall lead Thee forth wonderfully. Thy sharp arrows are most powerful: in the heart of the king's enemies. The people shall fall under Thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a rod of direction is the rod of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hast hated iniquity: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of exultation above Thy fellows. Myrrh and drops, and cassia from Thy vestments, from the houses of ivory: out of which the daughters of kings have delighted Thee in Thine honor." Who is there, no matter how slow, but must here recognize Christ whom we preach, and in whom we believe, if he hears that He is God, whose throne is for ever and ever, and that He is anointed by God, as God indeed anoints, not with a visible, but with a spiritual and intelligible chrism? For who is so untaught in this religion, or so deaf to its far and wide spread fame, as not to know that Christ is named from this chrism, that is, from this anointing? But when it is acknowledged that this King is Christ, let each one who is already subject to Him who reigns because of truth, meekness, and righteousness, inquire at his leisure into these other things that are here said tropically: how His form is beautiful beyond the sons of men, with a certain beauty that is the more to be loved and admired the less it is corporeal; and what His sword, arrows, and other things of that kind may be, which are set down, not properly, but tropically.

Then let him look upon His Church, joined to her so great Husband in spiritual marriage and divine love, of which it is said in these words which follow, "The queen stood upon Thy right hand in gold-embroidered vestments, girded about with variety. Hearken, O daughter, and look, and incline thine ear; forget also thy people, and thy father's house. Because the King hath greatly desired thy beauty; for He is the Lord thy God. And the daughters of Tyre shall worship Him with gifts; the rich among the people shall entreat Thy face. The daughter of the King has all her glory within, in golden fringes, girded about with variety. The virgins shall be brought after her to the King: her neighbors shall be brought to Thee. They shall be brought with gladness and exultation: they shall be led into the temple of the King. Instead of thy fathers, sons shall be born to thee: thou shalt establish them as princes over all the earth. They shall be mindful of thy name in every generation and descent. Therefore shall the people acknowledge thee for evermore, even for ever and ever.” I do not think any one is so stupid as to believe that some poor woman is here praised and described, as the spouse, to wit, of Him to whom it is said, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a rod of direction is the rod of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of exultation above Thy fellows;” that is, plainly, Christ above Christians. For these are His fellows, out of the unity and concord of whom in all nations that queen is formed, as it is said of her in another psalm, “The city of the great King.” The same is Sion spiritually, which name in Latin is interpreted speculatio (discovery); for she descries the great good of the world to come, because her attention is directed thither. In the same way she is also Jerusalem spiritually, of which we have already said many things. Her enemy is the city of the devil, Babylon, which is interpreted “confusion.” Yet out of this Babylon this queen is in all nations set free by regeneration, and passes from the worst to the best King,—that is, from the devil to Christ. Wherefore it is said to her, “Forget thy people and thy father’s house.” Of this impious city those also are a portion who are Israelites only in the flesh and not by faith, enemies also of this great King Himself, and of His queen. For Christ, having come to them, and been slain by them, has the more become the King of others, whom He did not see in the flesh. Whence our King Himself says through the prophecy of a certain psalm, “Thou wilt deliver me from the contradictions of the people; Thou wilt make me head of the nations. A people whom I have not known hath served me: in the hearing of the ear it hath obeyed me.” Therefore this people of the nations, which Christ did not know in His bodily presence, yet has believed in that Christ as announced to it; so that it might be said of it with good reason, “In the hearing of the ear it hath obeyed me,” for “faith is by hearing.” This people, I say, added to those who are the true Israelites both by the flesh and by faith, is the city of God, which has brought forth Christ Himself according to the flesh, since He was in these Israelites only. For thence came the Virgin Mary, in whom Christ assumed flesh that He might be man. Of which city another psalm says, “Mother Sion, shall a man say, and the man is made in her, and the Highest Himself hath founded her.” Who is this Highest, save God? And thus Christ, who is God, before He became man through Mary in that city, Himself founded it by the patriarchs and prophets. As therefore was said by prophecy so long before to this queen, the city of God, what we already can see fulfilled, “Instead of thy fathers, sons are born to thee; thou shall make them princes over all the earth;” so out of her sons truly are set up even her fathers [princes] through all the earth, when the people, coming together to her, confess to her with the confession of eternal praise for ever and ever. Beyond doubt, whatever interpretation is put on what is here expressed somewhat darkly in figurative language, ought to be in agreement with these most manifest things.

CHAPTER 17

OF THOSE THINGS IN THE 110TH PSALM WHICH RELATE TO THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST, AND IN THE 22D TO HIS PASSION

Just as in that psalm also where Christ is most openly proclaimed as Priest, even as He is here as King, “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.” That Christ sits on the right hand of God the Father is believed, not seen; that His enemies also are put under His feet doth not yet appear; it is being done, [therefore] it will appear at last: yea, this is now believed, afterward it shall be seen. But what follows, “The Lord will send forth the rod of Thy strength out of Sion, and rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies,” is so clear, that to deny it would imply not merely unbelief and mistake, but downright impudence. And even enemies must certainly confess that out of Sion has been sent the law of Christ which we call the gospel, and acknowledge as the rod of His strength. But that He rules in the midst of His enemies, these same enemies among whom He rules themselves bear witness, gnashing their teeth and consuming away, and having power to do nothing against Him. Then what he says a little after, “The Lord hath sworn and will not repent,” by which words He intimates that what He adds is immutable, “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek,” who is permitted to doubt of whom these things are said, seeing that now there is nowhere a priesthood and sacrifice after the order of Aaron, and everywhere men offer under Christ as the Priest, which Melchizedek showed when he blessed Abraham? Therefore to these manifest things are to be referred, when rightly understood, those things in the same psalm that are set down a little more obscurely, and we have already made known in our popular sermons how these things are to be rightly understood. So also in that where Christ utters through prophecy the humiliation of His passion, saying, “They pierced my hands and feet; they counted all my bones. Yea, they looked and stared at me.” By which words he certainly meant His body stretched out on the cross, with the hands and feet pierced and perforated by the striking through of the nails, and that He had in that way made Himself a spectacle to those who looked and stared. And he adds, “They parted my garments among them, and over my vesture they cast lots.” How this prophecy has been fulfilled the Gospel history narrates. Then, indeed, the other things also which are said there less openly are rightly understood when they agree with those which shine with so great clearness; especially because those things also which we do not believe as past, but survey as present, are beheld by the whole world, being now exhibited just as they are read of in this very psalm as predicted so long before. For it is there said a little after, “All the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him; for the kingdom is the Lord’s, and He shall rule the nations.”

CHAPTER 18

OF THE 3D, 41ST, 15TH, AND 68TH PSALMS, IN WHICH THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF THE LORD ARE PROPHESIED

About His resurrection also the oracles of the Psalms are by no means silent. For what else is it that is sung in His person in the 3d Psalm, “I laid me down and took a sleep, [and] I awaked, for the Lord shall sustain me?” Is there perchance any one so stupid as to believe that the prophet chose to point it out to us as something great that He had slept and risen up, unless that sleep had been death, and that awaking the resurrection, which behoved to be thus prophesied concerning Christ? For in the 41st Psalm also it is shown much more clearly, where in the person of the Mediator, in the usual way, things are narrated as if past which were prophesied as yet to come, since these things which were yet to come were in the predestination and foreknowledge of God as if they were done, because they were certain. He says, “Mine enemies speak evil of me; When shall he die, and his name perish? And if he came in to see me, his heart spake vain things: he gathered iniquity to himself. He went out of doors, and uttered it all at once. Against me all mine enemies whisper together: against me do they devise evil. They have planned an unjust thing against me. Shall not he that sleeps also rise again?” These words are certainly so set down here that he may be understood to say nothing else than if he said, Shall not He that died recover life again? The previous words clearly show that His enemies have mediated and planned His death, and that this was executed by him who came in to see, and went out to betray. But to whom does not Judas here occur, who, from being His disciple, became His betrayer? Therefore because they were about to do what they had plotted,—that is, were about to kill Him,—he, to show them that with useless malice they were about to kill Him who should rise again, so adds this verse, as if he said, What vain thing are you doing? What will be your crime will be my sleep. “Shall not He that sleeps also rise again?” And yet he indicates in the following verses that they should not commit so great an impiety with impunity, saying, “Yea, the man of my peace in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, hath enlarged the heel over me;” that is, hath trampled me under foot. “But Thou,” he saith, “O Lord, be merciful unto me, and raise me up, that I may requite them.” Who can now deny this who sees the Jews, after the passion and resurrection of Christ, utterly rooted up from their abodes by warlike slaughter and destruction? For, being slain by them, He has risen again, and has requited them meanwhile by temporary discipline, save that for those who are not corrected He keeps it in store for the time when He shall judge the quick and the dead. For the Lord Jesus Himself, in pointing out that very man to the apostles as His betrayer, quoted this very verse of this psalm, and said it was fulfilled in Himself: “He that ate my bread enlarged the heel over me.” But what he says, “In whom I trusted,” does not suit the head but the body. For the Saviour Himself was not ignorant of him concerning whom He had already said before, “One of you is a devil.” But He is wont to assume the person of His members, and to ascribe to Himself what should be said of them, because the head and the body is one Christ; whence that saying in the Gospel, “I was an hungered, and ye gave me to eat.” Expounding which, He says, “Since ye did it to one of the least of mine, ye did it to me.” Therefore He said that He had trusted, because his disciples then had trusted concerning Judas; for he was numbered with the apostles.

But the Jews do not expect that the Christ whom they expect will die; therefore they do not think ours to be Him whom the law and the prophets announced, but feign to themselves I know not whom of their own, exempt from the suffering of death. Therefore, with wonderful emptiness and blindness, they contend that the words we have set down signify, not death and resurrection, but sleep and awaking again. But the 16th Psalm also cries to them, “Therefore my heart is jocund, and my tongue hath exulted; moreover, my flesh also shall rest in hope: for Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou give Thine Holy One to see corruption.” Who but He that rose again the third day could say his flesh had rested in this hope; that His soul, not being left in hell, but speedily returning to it, should revive it, that it should not be corrupted as corpses are wont to be, which they can in no wise say of David the prophet and king? The 68th Psalm also cries out, “Our God is the God of Salvation: even of the Lord the exit was by death.” What could be more openly said? For the God of salvation is the Lord Jesus, which is interpreted Saviour, or Healing One. For this reason this name was given, when it was said before He was born of the virgin: “Thou shall bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.” Because His blood was shed for the remission of their sins, it behoved Him to have no other exit from this life than death. Therefore, when it had been said, “Our God is the God of salvation,” immediately it was added, “Even of the Lord the exit was by death,” in order to show that we were to be saved by His dying. But that saying is marvellous, “Even of the Lord,” as if it was said, Such is that life of mortals, that not even the Lord Himself could go out of it otherwise save through death.

CHAPTER 19

OF THE 69TH PSALM, IN WHICH THE OBSTINATE UNBELIEF OF THE JEWS IS DECLARED

But when the Jews will not in the least yield to the testimonies of this prophecy, which are so manifest, and are also brought by events to so clear and certain a completion, certainly that is fulfilled in them which is written in that psalm which here follows. For when the things which pertain to His passion are prophetically spoken there also in the person of Christ, that is mentioned which is unfolded in the Gospel: “They gave me gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar for drink.” And as it were after such a feast and dainties in this way given to Himself, presently He brings in [these words]: “Let their table become a trap before them, and a retribution, and an offence: let their eyes be dimmed that they see not, and their back be always bowed down,” etc. Which things are not spoken as wished for, but are predicted under the prophetic form of wishing. What wonder, then, if those whose eyes are dimmed that they see not do not see these manifest things? What wonder if those do not look up at heavenly things whose back is always bowed down that they may grovel among earthly things? For these words transferred from the body signify mental faults. Let these things which have been said about the Psalms, that is, about king David’s prophecy, suffice, that we may keep within some bound. But let those readers excuse us who knew them all before; and let them not complain about those perhaps stronger proofs which they know or think I have passed by.

CHAPTER 20

OF DAVID’S REIGN AND MERIT; AND OF HIS SON SOLOMON, AND THAT PROPHECY RELATING TO CHRIST WHICH IS FOUND EITHER IN THOSE BOOKS WHICH ARE JOINED TO THOSE WRITTEN BY HIM, OR IN THOSE WHICH ARE INDUBITABLY HIS

David therefore reigned in the earthly Jerusalem, a son of the heavenly Jerusalem, much praised by the divine testimony; for even his faults are overcome by great piety, through the most salutary humility of his repentance, that he is altogether one of those of whom he himself says, “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.” After him Solomon his son reigned over the same whole people, who, as was said before, began to reign while his father was still alive. This man, after good beginnings, made a bad end. For indeed “prosperity, which wears out the minds of the wise,” hurt him more than that wisdom profited him, which even yet is and shall hereafter be renowned, and was then praised far and wide. He also is found to have prophesied in his books, of which three are received as of canonical authority, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. But it has been customary to ascribe to Solomon other two, of which one is called Wisdom, the other Ecclesiasticus, on account of some resemblance of style,—but the more learned have no doubt that they are not his; yet of old the Church, especially the Western, received them into authority,—in the one of which, called the Wisdom of Solomon, the passion of Christ is most openly prophesied. For indeed His impious murderers are quoted as saying, “Let us lie in wait for the righteous, for he is unpleasant to us, and contrary to our works; and he upbraideth us with our transgressions of the law, and objecteth to our disgrace the transgressions of our education. He professeth to have the knowledge of God, and he calleth himself the Son of God. He was made to reprove our thoughts. He is grievous for as even to behold; for his life is unlike other men’s and his ways are different. We are esteemed of him as counterfeits; and he abstaineth from our ways as from filthiness. He extols the latter end of the righteous; and glorieth that he hath God for his Father. Let us see, therefore, if his words be true; and let us try what shall happen to him, and we shall know what shall be the end of him. For if the righteous be the Son of God, He will undertake for him, and deliver him out of the hand of those that are against him. Let us put him to the question with contumely and torture, that we may know his reverence, and prove his patience. Let us condemn him to the most shameful death; for by His own sayings He shall be respected. These things did they imagine, and were mistaken; for their own malice hath quite blinded them.” But in Ecclesiasticus the future faith of the nations is predicted in this manner: “Have mercy upon us, O God, Ruler of all, and send Thy fear upon all the nations: lift up Thine hand over the strange nations, and let them see Thy power. As Thou wast sanctified in us before them, so be Thou sanctified in them before us, and let them acknowledge Thee, according as we also have acknowledged Thee; for there is not a God beside Thee, O Lord.” We see this prophecy in the form of a wish and prayer fulfilled through Jesus Christ. But the things which are not written in the canon of the Jews cannot be quoted against their contradictions with so great validity.

But as regards those three books which it is evident are Solomon’s and held canonical by the Jews, to show what of this kind may be found in them pertaining to Christ and the Church demands a laborious discussion, which, if now entered on, would lengthen this work unduly. Yet what we read in the Proverbs of impious men saying, “Let us unrighteously hide in the earth the righteous man; yea, let us swallow him up alive as hell, and let us take away his memory from the earth: let us seize his precious possession,” is not so obscure that it may not be understood, without laborious exposition, of Christ and His possession the Church. Indeed, the gospel parable about the wicked husbandmen shows that our Lord Jesus Himself said something like it: “This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.” In like manner also that passage in this same book, on which we have already touched when we were speaking of the barren woman who hath born seven, must soon after it was uttered have come to be understood of only Christ and the Church by those who knew that Christ was the Wisdom of God. “Wisdom hath builded her an house, and hath set up seven pillars; she hath sacrificed her victims, she hath mingled her wine in the bowl; she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent her servants summoning to the bowl with excellent proclamation, saying, Who is simple, let him turn aside to me. And to the void of sense she hath said, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled for you.” Here certainly we perceive that the Wisdom of God, that is, the Word co-eternal with the Father, hath builded Him an house, even a human body in the virgin womb, and hath subjoined the Church to it as members to a head, hath slain the martyrs as victims, hath furnished a table with wine and bread, where appears also the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, and hath called the simple and the void of sense, because, as saith the apostle, “He hath chosen the weak things of this world that He might confound the things which are mighty.” Yet to these weak ones she saith what follows, “Forsake simplicity, that ye may live; and seek prudence, that ye may have life.” But to be made partakers of this table is itself to begin to have life. For when he says in another book, which is called Ecclesiastes, “There is no good for a man, except that he should eat and drink,” what can he be more credibly understood to say, than what belongs to the participation of this table which the Mediator of the New Testament Himself, the Priest after the order of Melchizedek, furnishes with His own body and blood? For that sacrifice has succeeded all the sacrifices of the Old Testament, which were slain as a shadow of that which was to come; wherefore also we recognize the voice in the 40th Psalm as that of the same Mediator speaking through prophesy, “Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; but a body hast Thou perfected for me.” Because, instead of all these sacrifices and oblations, His body is offered, and is served up to the partakers of it. For that this Ecclesiastes, in this sentence about eating and drinking, which he often repeats, and very much commends, does not savor the dainties of carnal pleasures, is made plain enough when he says, “It is better to go into the house of mourning than to go into the house of feasting.” And a little after He says, “The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, and the heart of the simple in the house of feasting.” But I think that more worthy of quotation from this book which relates to both cities, the one of the devil, the other of Christ, and to their kings, the devil and Christ: “Woe to thee, O land,” he says, “when thy king is a youth, and thy princes eat in the morning! Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in season, in fortitude, and not in confusion!” He has called the devil a youth, because of the folly and pride, and rashness and unruliness, and other vices which are wont to abound at that age; but Christ is the Son of nobles, that is, of the holy patriarchs, of those belonging to the free city, of whom He was begotten in the flesh. The princes of that and other cities are eaters in the morning, that is, before the suitable hour, because they do not expect the seasonable felicity, which is the true, in the world to come, desiring to be speedily made happy with the renown of this world; but the princes of the city of Christ patiently wait for the time of a blessedness that is not fallacious. This is expressed by the words, “in fortitude, and not in confusion,” because hope does not deceive them; of which the apostle says, “But hope maketh not ashamed.” A psalm also saith, “For they that hope in Thee shall not be put to shame.” But now the Song of Songs is a certain spiritual pleasure of holy minds, in the marriage of that King and Queen-city, that is, Christ and the Church. But this pleasure is wrapped up in allegorical veils, that the Bridegroom may be more ardently desired, and more joyfully unveiled, and may appear; to whom it is said in this same song, “Equity hath delighted Thee; and the bride who there hears, “Charity is in thy delights.” We pass over many things in silence, in our desire to finish this work.

CHAPTER 21

OF THE KINGS AFTER SOLOMON, BOTH IN JUDAH AND ISRAEL

The other kings of the Hebrews after Solomon are scarcely found to have prophesied, through certain enigmatic words or actions of theirs, what may pertain to Christ and the Church, either in Judah or Israel; for so were the parts of that people styled, when, on account of Solomon's offence, from the time of Rehoboam his son, who succeeded him in the kingdom, it was divided by God as a punishment. The ten tribes, indeed, which Jeroboam the servant of Solomon received, being appointed the king in Samaria, were distinctively called Israel, although this had been the name of that whole people; but the two tribes, namely, of Judah and Benjamin, which for David's sake, lest the kingdom should be wholly wrenched from his race, remained subject to the city of Jerusalem, were called Judah, because that was the tribe whence David sprang. But Benjamin, the other tribe which, as was said, belonged to the same kingdom, was that whence Saul sprang before David. But these two tribes together, as was said, were called Judah, and were distinguished by this name from Israel which was the distinctive title of the ten tribes under their own king. For the tribe of Levi, because it was the priestly one, bound to the servitude of God, not of the kings, was reckoned the thirteenth. For Joseph, one of the twelve sons of Israel, did not, like the others, form one tribe, but two, Ephraim and Manasseh. Yet the tribe of Levi also belonged more to the kingdom of Jerusalem, where was the temple of God whom it served. On the division of the people, therefore, Rehoboam, son of Solomon, reigned in Jerusalem as the first king of Judah, and Jeroboam, servant of Solomon, in Samaria as king of Israel. And when Rehoboam wished as a tyrant to pursue that separated part with war, the people were prohibited from fighting with their brethren by God, who told them through a prophet that He had done this; whence it appeared that in this matter there had been no sin either of the king or people of Israel, but the accomplished will of God the avenger. When this was known, both parts settled down peaceably, for the division made was not religious but political.

CHAPTER 22

OF JEROBOAM, WHO PROFANED THE PEOPLE PUT UNDER HIM BY THE IMPIETY OF IDOLATRY, AMID WHICH, HOWEVER, GOD DID NOT CEASE TO INSPIRE THE PROPHETS, AND TO GUARD MANY FROM THE CRIME OF IDOLATRY

But Jeroboam king of Israel, with perverse mind, not believing in God, whom he had proved true in promising and giving him the kingdom, was afraid lest, by coming to the temple of God which was in Jerusalem, where, according to the divine law, that whole nation was to come in order to sacrifice, the people should be seduced from him, and return to David’s line as the seed royal; and set up idolatry in his kingdom, and with horrible impiety beguiled the people, ensnaring them to the worship of idols with himself. Yet God did not altogether cease to reprove by the prophets, not only that king, but also his successors and imitators in his impiety, and the people too. For there the great and illustrious prophet Elijah and Elisha his disciple arose, who also did many wonderful works. Even there, when Elijah said, “O Lord, they have slain Thy prophets, they have digged down Thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life,” it was answered that seven thousand men were there who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

CHAPTER 23

OF THE VARYING CONDITION OF BOTH THE HEBREW KINGDOMS, UNTIL THE PEOPLE OF BOTH WERE AT DIFFERENT TIMES LED INTO CAPTIVITY, JUDAH BEING AFTERWARDS RECALLED INTO HIS KINGDOM, WHICH FINALLY PASSED INTO THE POWER OF THE ROMANS

So also in the kingdom of Judah pertaining to Jerusalem prophets were not lacking even in the times of succeeding kings, just as it pleased God to send them, either for the prediction of what was needful, or for correction of sin and instruction in righteousness; for there, too, although far less than in Israel, kings arose who grievously offended God by their impieties, and, along with their people, who were like them, were smitten with moderate scourges. The no small merits of the pious kings there are praised indeed. But we read that in Israel the kings were, some more, others less, yet all wicked. Each part, therefore, as the divine providence either ordered or permitted, was both lifted up by prosperity and weighed down by adversity of various kinds; and it was afflicted not only by foreign, but also by civil wars with each other, in order that by certain existing causes the mercy or anger of God might be manifested; until, by His growing indignation, that whole nation was by the conquering Chaldeans not only overthrown in its abode, but also for the most part transported to the lands of the Assyrians,—first, that part of the thirteen tribes called Israel, but afterwards Judah also, when Jerusalem and that most noble temple was cast down,—in which lands it rested seventy years in captivity. Being after that time sent forth thence, they rebuilt the overthrown temple. And although very many stayed in the lands of the strangers, yet the kingdom no longer had two separate parts, with different kings over each, but in Jerusalem there was one prince over them; and at certain times, from every direction wherever they were, and from whatever place they could, they all came to the temple of God which was there. Yet not even then were they without foreign enemies and conquerors; yea, Christ found them tributaries of the Romans.

CHAPTER 24

OF THE PROPHETS, WHO EITHER WERE THE LAST AMONG THE JEWS, OR WHOM THE GOSPEL HISTORY REPORTS ABOUT THE TIME OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY

But in that whole time after they returned from Babylon, after Malachi, Haggai, and Zechariah, who then prophesied, and Ezra, they had no prophets down to the time of the Saviour's advent except another Zechariah, the father of John, and Elisabeth his wife, when the nativity of Christ was already close at hand; and when He was already born, Simeon the aged, and Anna a widow, and now very old; and, last of all, John himself, who, being a young man, did not predict that Christ, now a young man, was to come, but by prophetic knowledge pointed Him out though unknown; for which reason the Lord Himself says, “The law and the prophets were until John.” But the prophesying of these five is made known to us in the gospel, where the virgin mother of our Lord herself is also found to have prophesied before John. But this prophecy of theirs the wicked Jews do not receive; but those innumerable persons received it who from them believed the gospel. For then truly Israel was divided in two, by that division which was foretold by Samuel the prophet to king Saul as immutable. But even the reprobate Jews hold Malachi, Haggai, Zechariah, and Ezra as the last received into canonical authority. For there are also writings of these, as of others, who being but a very few in the great multitude of prophets, have written those books which have obtained canonical authority, of whose predictions it seems good to me to put in this work some which pertain to Christ and His Church; and this, by the Lord's help, shall be done more conveniently in the following book, that we may not further burden this one, which is already too long.

Book XVIII

Argument—Augustin traces the parallel courses of the earthly and heavenly cities from the time of Abraham to the end of the world; and alludes to the oracles regarding Christ, both those uttered by the Sibyls, and those of the sacred prophets who wrote after the foundation of Rome, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Micah, and their successors.

CHAPTER 1

OF THOSE THINGS DOWN TO THE TIMES OF THE SAVIOUR WHICH HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE SEVENTEEN BOOKS

I Promised to write of the rise, progress, and appointed end of the two cities, one of which is God’s, the other this world’s, in which, so far as mankind is concerned, the former is now a stranger. But first of all I undertook, so far as His grace should enable me, to refute the enemies of the city of God, who prefer their gods to Christ its founder, and fiercely hate Christians with the most deadly malice. And this I have done in the first ten books. Then, as regards my threefold promise which I have just mentioned, I have treated distinctly, in the four books which follow the tenth, of the rise of both cities. After that, I have proceeded from the first man down to the flood in one book, which is the fifteenth of this work; and from that again down to Abraham our work has followed both in chronological order. From the patriarch Abraham down to the time of the Israelite kings, at which we close our sixteenth book, and thence down to the advent of Christ Himself in the flesh, to which period the seventeenth book reaches, the city of God appears from my way of writing to have run its course alone; whereas it did not run its course alone in this age, for both cities, in their course amid mankind, certainly experienced chequered times together just as from the beginning. But I did this in order that, first of all, from the time when the promises of God began to be more clear, down to the virgin birth of Him in whom those things promised from the first were to be fulfilled, the course of that city which is God’s might be made more distinctly apparent, without interpolation of foreign matter from the history of the other city, although down to the revelation of the new covenant it ran its course, not in light, but in shadow. Now, therefore, I think fit to do what I passed by, and show, so far as seems necessary, how that other city ran its course from the times of Abraham, so that attentive readers may compare the two.

CHAPTER 2

OF THE KINGS AND TIMES OF THE EARTHLY CITY WHICH WERE SYNCHRONOUS WITH THE TIMES OF THE SAINTS, RECKONING FROM THE RISE OF ABRAHAM

The society of mortals spread abroad through the earth everywhere, and in the most diverse places, although bound together by a certain fellowship of our common nature, is yet for the most part divided against itself, and the strongest oppress the others, because all follow after their own interests and lusts, while what is longed for either suffices for none, or not for all, because it is not the very thing. For the vanquished succumb to the victorious, preferring any sort of peace and safety to freedom itself; so that they who chose to die rather than be slaves have been greatly wondered at. For in almost all nations the very voice of nature somehow proclaims, that those who happen to be conquered should choose rather to be subject to their conquerors than to be killed by all kinds of warlike destruction. This does not take place without the providence of God, in whose power it lies that any one either subdues or is subdued in war; that some are endowed with kingdoms, others made subject to kings. Now, among the very many kingdoms of the earth into which, by earthly interest or lust, society is divided (which we call by the general name of the city of this world), we see that two, settled and kept distinct from each other both in time and place, have grown far more famous than the rest, first that of the Assyrians, then that of the Romans. First came the one, then the other. The former arose in the east, and, immediately on its close, the latter in the west. I may speak of other kingdoms and other kings as appendages of these.

Ninus, then, who succeeded his father Belus, the first king of Assyria, was already the second king of that kingdom when Abraham was born in the land of the Chaldees. There was also at that time a very small kingdom of Sicyon, with which, as from an ancient date, that most universally learned man Marcus Varro begins, in writing of the Roman race. For from these kings of Sicyon he passes to the Athenians, from them to the Latins, and from these to the Romans. Yet very little is related about these kingdoms, before the foundation of Rome, in comparison with that of Assyria. For although even Sallust, the Roman historian, admits that the Athenians were very famous in Greece, yet he thinks they were greater in fame than in fact. For in speaking of them he says, "The deeds of the Athenians, as I think, were very great and magnificent, but yet somewhat less than reported by fame. But because writers of great genius arose among them, the deeds of the Athenians were celebrated throughout the world as very great. Thus the virtue of those who did them was held to be as great as men of transcendent genius could represent it to be by the power of laudatory words." This city also derived no small glory from literature and philosophy, the study of which chiefly flourished there. But as regards empire, none in the earliest times was greater than the Assyrian, or so widely extended. For when Ninus the son of Belus was king, he is reported to have subdued the whole of Asia, even to the boundaries of Libya, which as to number is called the third part, but as to size is found to be the half of the whole world. The Indians in the eastern regions were the only people over whom he did not reign; but after his death Semiramis his wife made war on them. Thus it came to pass that all the people and kings in those countries were subject to the kingdom and authority of the Assyrians, and did whatever they were commanded. Now Abraham was born in that kingdom among the Chaldees, in the time of Ninus. But since Grecian affairs are much better known to us than Assyrian, and those who have diligently investigated the antiquity of the Roman nation's origin have followed the order of time through the Greeks to the Latins, and from them to the Romans, who themselves are Latins, we ought on this account, where it is needful, to mention the Assyrian kings, that it may appear how Babylon, like a first Rome, ran its course along with the city of God, which is a stranger in this world. But the things proper for insertion in this work in comparing the two cities, that is, the earthly and heavenly, ought to be taken mostly from the Greek and Latin kingdoms, where Rome herself is like a second Babylon.

At Abraham's birth, then, the second kings of Assyria and Sicyon respectively were Ninus and Europs, the first having been Belus and

AEgialeus. But when God promised Abraham, on his departure from Babylonia, that he should become a great nation, and that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed, the Assyrians had their seventh king, the Sicyons their fifth; for the son of Ninus reigned among them after his mother Semiramis, who is said to have been put to death by him for attempting to defile him by incestuously lying with him. Some think that she founded Babylon, and indeed she may have founded it anew. But we have told, in the sixteenth book, when or by whom it was founded. Now the son of Ninus and Semiramis, who succeeded his mother in the kingdom, is also called Ninus by some, but by others Ninias, a patronymic word. Telexion then held the kingdom of the Sicyons. In his reign times were quiet and joyful to such a degree, that after his death they worshipped him as a god by offering sacrifices and by celebrating games, which are said to have been first instituted on this occasion.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT KINGS REIGNED IN ASSYRIA AND SICYON WHEN, ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE, ISAAC WAS BORN TO ABRAHAM IN HIS HUNDREDTH YEAR, AND WHEN THE TWINS ESAU AND JACOB WERE BORN OF REBECCA TO ISAAC IN HIS SIXTIETH YEAR

In his times also, by the promise of God, Isaac, the son of Abraham, was born to his father when he was a hundred years old, of Sarah his wife, who, being barren and old, had already lost hope of issue. Aralius was then the fifth king of the Assyrians. To Isaac himself, in his sixtieth year, were born twin-sons, Esau and Jacob, whom Rebecca his wife bore to him, their grandfather Abraham, who died on completing a hundred and seventy years, being still alive, and reckoning his hundred and sixtieth year. At that time there reigned as the seventh kings,—among the Assyrians, that more ancient Xerxes, who was also called Balaeus; and among the Sicyons, Thuriachus, or, as some write his name, Thurimachus. The kingdom of Argos, in which Inachus reigned first, arose in the time of Abraham's grandchildren. And I must not omit what Varro relates, that the Sicyons were also wont to sacrifice at the tomb of their seventh king Thuriachus. In the reign of Armamitres in Assyria and Leucippus in Sicyon as the eighth kings, and of Inachus as the first in Argos, God spoke to Isaac, and promised the same two things to him as to his father,—namely, the land of Canaan to his seed, and the blessing of all nations in his seed. These same things were promised to his son, Abraham's grandson, who was at first called Jacob, afterwards Israel, when Belocus was the ninth king of Assyria, and Phoroneus, the son of Inachus, reigned as the second king of Argos, Leucippus still continuing king of Sicyon. In those times, under the Argive king Phoroneus, Greece was made more famous by the institution of certain laws and judges. On the death of Phoroneus, his younger brother Phegous built a temple at his tomb, in which he was worshipped as God, and oxen were sacrificed to him. I believe they thought him worthy of so great honor, because in his part of the kingdom (for their father had divided his territories between them, in which they reigned during his life) he had founded chapels for the worship of the gods, and had taught them to measure time, by months and years, and to that extent to keep count and reckoning of events. Men still uncultivated, admiring him for these novelties, either fancied he was, or resolved that he should be made, a god after his death. Io also is said to have been the daughter of Inachus, who was afterwards called Isis, when she was worshipped in Egypt as a great goddess; although others write that she came as a queen out of Ethiopia, and because she ruled extensively and justly, and instituted for her subjects letters and many useful things, such divine honor was given her there after she died, that if any one said she had been human, he was charged with a capital crime.

CHAPTER 4

OF THE TIMES OF JACOB AND HIS SON JOSEPH

In the reign of Balaeus, the ninth king of Assyria, and Mesappus, the eighth of Sicyon, who is said by some to have been also called Cephisos (if indeed the same man had both names, and those who put the other name in their writings have not rather confounded him with another man), while Apis was third king of Argos, Isaac died, a hundred and eighty years old, and left his twin-sons a hundred and twenty years old. Jacob, the younger of these, belonged to the city of God about which we write (the elder being wholly rejected), and had twelve sons, one of whom, called Joseph, was sold by his brothers to merchants going down to Egypt, while his grandfather Isaac was still alive. But when he was thirty years of age, Joseph stood before Pharaoh, being exalted out of the humiliation he endured, because, in divinely interpreting the king’s dreams, he foretold that there would be seven years of plenty, the very rich abundance of which would be consumed by seven other years of famine that should follow. On this account the king made him ruler over Egypt, liberating him from prison, into which he had been thrown for keeping his chastity intact; for he bravely preserved it from his mistress, who wickedly loved him, and told lies to his weakly credulous master, and did not consent to commit adultery with her, but fled from her, leaving his garment in her hands when she laid hold of him. In the second of the seven years of famine Jacob came down into Egypt to his son with all he had, being a hundred and thirty years old, as he himself said in answer to the king’s question. Joseph was then thirty-nine, if we add seven years of plenty and two of famine to the thirty he reckoned when honored by the king.

CHAPTER 5

OF APIS KING OF ARGOS, WHOM THE EGYPTIANS CALLED SERAPIS, AND WORSHIPPED WITH DIVINE HONORS

In these times Apis king of Argos crossed over into Egypt in ships, and, on dying there, was made Serapis, the chief god of all the Egyptians. Now Varro gives this very ready reason why, after his death, he was called, not Apis, but Serapis. The ark in which he was placed when dead, which every one now calls a sarcophagus, was then called in Greek soros, and they began to worship him when buried in it before his temple was built; and from Soros and Apis he was called first [Sorosapis, or] Sorapis, and then Serapis, by changing a letter, as easily happens. It was decreed regarding him also, that whoever should say he had been a man should be capitally punished. And since in every temple where Isis and Serapis were worshipped there was also an image which, with finger pressed on the lips, seemed to warn men to keep silence, Varro thinks this signifies that it should be kept secret that they had been human. But that bull which, with wonderful folly, deluded Egypt nourished with abundant delicacies in honor of him, was not called Serapis, but Apis, because they worshipped him alive without a sarcophagus. On the death of that bull, when they sought and found a calf of the same color,—that is, similarly marked with certain white spots,—they believed it was something miraculous, and divinely provided for them. Yet it was no great thing for the demons, in order to deceive them, to show to a cow when she was conceiving and pregnant the image of such a bull, which she alone could see, and by it attract the breeding passion of the mother, so that it might appear in a bodily shape in her young, just as Jacob so managed with the spotted rods that the sheep and goats were born spotted. For what men can do with real colors and substances, the demons can very easily do by showing unreal forms to breeding animals.

CHAPTER 6

WHO WERE KINGS OF ARGOS, AND OF ASSYRIA, WHEN JACOB DIED IN EGYPT

Apis, then, who died in Egypt, was not the king of Egypt, but of Argos. He was succeeded by his son Argus, from whose name the land was called Argos and the people Argives, for under the earlier kings neither the place nor the nation as yet had this name. While he then reigned over Argos, and Eratus over Sicyon, and Balaeus still remained king of Assyria, Jacob died in Egypt a hundred and forty-seven years old, after he had, when dying, blessed his sons and his grandsons by Joseph, and prophesied most plainly of Christ, saying in the blessing of Judah, “A prince shall not fail out of Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until those things come which are laid up for him; and He is the expectation of the nations.” In the reign of Argus, Greece began to use fruits, and to have crops of corn in cultivated fields, the seed having been brought from other countries. Argus also began to be accounted a god after his death, and was honored with a temple and sacrifices. This honor was conferred in his reign, before being given to him, on a private individual for being the first to yoke oxen in the plough. This was one Homogyrus, who was struck by lightning.

CHAPTER 7

WHO WERE KINGS WHEN JOSEPH DIED IN EGYPT

In the reign of Mamitus, the twelfth king of Assyria, and Plemnaeus, the eleventh of Sicyon, while Argus still reigned over the Argives, Joseph died in Egypt a hundred and ten years old. After his death, the people of God, increasing wonderfully, remained in Egypt a hundred and forty-five years, in tranquillity at first, until those who knew Joseph were dead. Afterward, through envy of their increase, and the suspicion that they would at length gain their freedom, they were oppressed with persecutions and the labors of intolerable servitude, amid which, however, they still grew, being multiplied with God-given fertility. During this period the same kingdoms continued in Assyria and Greece.

CHAPTER 8

WHO WERE KINGS WHEN MOSES WAS BORN, AND WHAT GODS BEGAN TO BE WORSHIPPED THEN

When Saphrus reigned as the fourteenth king of Assyria, and Orthopolis as the twelfth of Sicyon, and Criasus as the fifth of Argos, Moses was born in Egypt, by whom the people of God were liberated from the Egyptian slavery, in which they behoved to be thus tried that they might desire the help of their Creator. Some have thought that Prometheus lived during the reign of the kings now named. He is reported to have formed men out of clay, because he was esteemed the best teacher of wisdom; yet it does not appear what wise men there were in his days. His brother Atlas is said to have been a great astrologer; and this gave occasion for the fable that he held up the sky, although the vulgar opinion about his holding up the sky appears rather to have been suggested by a high mountain named after him. Indeed, from those times many other fabulous things began to be invented in Greece; yet, down to Cecrops king of Athens, in whose reign that city received its name, and in whose reign God brought His people out of Egypt by Moses, only a few dead heroes are reported to have been deified according to the vain superstition of the Greeks. Among these were Melantomice, the wife of king Criasus, and Phorbas their son, who succeeded his father as sixth king of the Argives, and Iasus, son of Triopas, their seventh king, and their ninth king, Sthenelas, or Stheneleus, or Sthenelus,—for his name is given differently by different authors. In those times also, Mercury, the grandson of Atlas by his daughter Maia, is said to have lived, according to the common report in books. He was famous for his skill in many arts, and taught them to men, for which they resolved to make him, and even believed that he deserved to be, a god after death.

Hercules is said to have been later, yet belonging to the same period; although some, whom I think mistaken, assign him an earlier date than Mercury. But at whatever time they were born, it is agreed among grave historians, who have committed these ancient things to writing, that both were men, and that they merited divine honors from mortals because they conferred on them many benefits to make this life more pleasant to them. Minerva was far more ancient than these; for she is reported to have appeared in virgin age in the times of Ogyges at the lake called Triton, from which she is also styled Tritonia, the inventress truly of many works, and the more readily believed to be a goddess because her origin was so little known. For what is sung about her having sprung from the head of Jupiter belongs to the region of poetry and fable, and not to that of history and real fact. And historical writers are not agreed when Ogyges flourished, in whose time also a great flood occurred,—not that greatest one from which no man escaped except those who could get into the ark, for neither Greek nor Latin history knew of it, yet a greater flood than that which happened afterward in Deucalion’s time. For Varro begins the book I have already mentioned at this date, and does not propose to himself, as the starting-point from which he may arrive at Roman affairs, anything more ancient than the flood of Ogyges, that is, which happened in the time of Ogyges. Now our writers of chronicles—first Eusebius, and afterwards Jerome, who entirely follow some earlier historians in this opinion—relate that the flood of Ogyges happened more than three hundred years after, during the reign of Phoroneus, the second king of Argos. But whenever he may have lived, Minerva was already worshipped as a goddess when Cecrops reigned in Athens, in whose reign the city itself is reported to have been rebuilt or founded.

CHAPTER 9

WHEN THE CITY OF ATHENS WAS FOUNDED, AND WHAT REASON VARRO ASSIGNS FOR ITS NAME

Athens certainly derived its name from Minerva, who in Greek is called ‘Athene, and Varro points out the following reason why it was so called. When an olive-tree suddenly appeared there, and water burst forth in another place, these prodigies moved the king to send to the Delphic Apollo to inquire what they meant and what he should do. He answered that the olive signified Minerva, the water Neptune, and that the citizens had it in their power to name their city as they chose, after either of these two gods whose signs these were. On receiving this oracle, Cecrops convoked all the citizens of either sex to give their vote, for it was then the custom in those parts for the women also to take part in public deliberations. When the multitude was consulted, the men gave their votes for Neptune, the women for Minerva; and as the women had a majority of one, Minerva conquered. Then Neptune, being enraged, laid waste the lands of the Athenians, by casting up the waves of the sea; for the demons have no difficulty in scattering any waters more widely. The same authority said, that to appease his wrath the women should be visited by the Athenians with the three-fold punishment—that they should no longer have any vote; that none of their children should be named after their mothers; and that no one should call them Athenians. Thus that city, the mother and nurse of liberal doctrines, and of so many and so great philosophers, than whom Greece had nothing more famous and noble, by the mockery of demons about the strife of their gods, a male and female, and from the victory of the female one through the women, received the name of Athens; and, on being damaged by the vanquished god, was compelled to punish the very victory of the victress, fearing the waters of Neptune more than the arms of Minerva. For in the women who were thus punished, Minerva, who had conquered, was conquered too, and could not even help her voters so far that, although the right of voting was henceforth lost, and the mothers could not give their names to the children, they might at least be allowed to be called Athenians, and to merit the name of that goddess whom they had made victorious over a male god by giving her their votes. What and how much could be said about this, if we had not to hasten to other things in our discourse, is obvious.

CHAPTER 10

WHAT VARRO REPORTS ABOUT THE TERM AREOPAGUS, AND ABOUT DEUCALION’S FLOOD

Marcus Varro, however, is not willing to credit lying fables against the gods, lest he should find something dishonoring to their majesty; and therefore he will not admit that the Areopagus, the place where the Apostle Paul disputed with the Athenians, got this name because Mars, who in Greek is called AAres, when he was charged with the crime of homicide, and was judged by twelve gods in that field, was acquitted by the sentence of six; because it was the custom, when the votes were equal, to acquit rather than condemn. Against this opinion, which is much most widely published, he tries, from the notices of obscure books, to support another reason for this name, lest the Athenians should be thought to have called it Areopagus from the words” Mars” and “field,” as if it were the field of Mars, to the dishonor of the gods, forsooth, from whom he thinks lawsuits and judgments far removed. And he asserts that this which is said about Mars is not less false than what is said about the three goddesses, to wit, Juno, Minerva, and Venus, whose contest for the palm of beauty, before Paris as judge, in order to obtain the golden apple, is not only related, but is celebrated in songs and dances amid the applause of the theatres, in plays meant to please the gods who take pleasure in these crimes of their own, whether real or fabled. Varro does not believe these things, because they are incompatible with the nature of the gods and of morality; and yet, in giving not a fabulous but a historic reason for the name of Athens, he inserts in his books the strife between Neptune and Minerva as to whose name should be given to that city, which was so great that, when they contended by the display of prodigies, even Apollo dared not judge between them when consulted; but, in order to end the strife of the gods, just as Jupiter sent the three goddesses we have named to Paris, so he sent them to men, when Minerva won by the vote, and yet was defeated by the punishment of her own voters, for she was unable to confer the title of Athenians on the women who were her friends, although she could impose it on the men who were her opponents. In these times, when Cranaos reigned at Athens as the successor of Cecrops, as Varro writes, but, according to our Eusebius and Jerome, while Cecrops himself still remained, the flood occurred which is called Deucalion’s, because it occurred chiefly in those parts of the earth in which he reigned. But this flood did not at all reach Egypt or its vicinity.

CHAPTER 11

WHEN MOSES LED THE PEOPLE OUT OF EGYPT; AND WHO WERE KINGS WHEN HIS SUCCESSOR JOSHUA THE SON OF NUN DIED

Moses led the people out of Egypt in the last time of Cecrops king of Athens, when Ascatades reigned in Assyria, Marathus in Sicyon, Triopas in Argos; and having led forth the people, he gave them at Mount Sinai the law he received from God, which is called the Old Testament, because it has earthly promises, and because, through Jesus Christ, there was to be a New Testament, in which the kingdom of heaven should be promised. For the same order behoved to be observed in this as is observed in each man who prospers in God, according to the saying of the apostle, “That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural,” since, as he says, and that truly, “The first man of the earth, is earthly; the second man, from heaven, is heavenly.” Now Moses ruled the people for forty years in the wilderness, and died a hundred and twenty years old, after he had prophesied of Christ by the types of carnal observances in the tabernacle, priesthood, and sacrifices, and many other mystic ordinances. Joshua the son of Nun succeeded Moses, and settled in the land of promise the people he had brought in, having by divine authority conquered the people by whom it was formerly possessed. He also died, after ruling the people twenty-seven years after the death of Moses, when Amyntas reigned in Assyria as the eighteenth king, Coracos as the sixteenth in Sicyon, Danaos as the tenth in Argos, Ericthonius as the fourth in Athens.

CHAPTER 12

OF THE RITUALS OF FALSE GODS INSTITUTED BY THE KINGS OF GREECE IN THE PERIOD FROM ISRAEL’S EXODUS FROM EGYPT DOWN TO THE DEATH OF JOSHUA THE SON OF NUN

During this period, that is, from Israel’s exodus from Egypt down to the death of Joshua the son of Nun, through whom that people received the land of promise, rituals were instituted to the false gods by the kings of Greece, which, by stated celebration, recalled the memory of the flood, and of men’s deliverance from it, and of that troublous life they then led in migrating to and fro between the heights and the plains. For even the Luperci, when they ascend and descend the sacred path, are said to represent the men who sought the mountain summits because of the inundation of water, and returned to the lowlands on its subsidence. In those times, Dionysus, who was also called Father Liber, and was esteemed a god after death, is said to have shown the vine to his host in Attica. Then the musical games were instituted for the Delphic Apollo, to appease his anger, through which they thought the regions of Greece were afflicted with barrenness, because they had not defended his temple which Danaos burnt when he invaded those lands; for they were warned by his oracle to institute these games. But king Ericthonius first instituted games to him in Attica, and not to him only, but also to Minerva, in which games the olive was given as the prize to the victors, because they relate that Minerva was the discoverer of that fruit, as Liber was of the grape. In those years Europa is alleged to have been carried off by Xanthus king of Crete (to whom we find some give another name), and to have borne him Rhadamanthus, Sarpedon, and Minos, who are more commonly reported to have been the sons of Jupiter by the same woman. Now those who worship such gods regard what we have said about Xanthus king of Crete as true history; but this about Jupiter, which the poets sing, the theatres applaud, and the people celebrate, as empty fable got up as a reason for games to appease the deities, even with the false ascription of crimes to them. In those times Hercules was held in honor in Tyre, but that was not the same one as he whom we spoke of above. In the more secret history there are said to have been several who were called Father Liber and Hercules. This Hercules, whose great deeds are reckoned as twelve (not including the slaughter of Antaeus the African, because that affair pertains to another Hercules), is declared in their books to have burned himself on Mount OEta, because he was not able, by that strength with which he had subdued monsters, to endure the disease under which he languished. At that time the king, or rather tyrant Busiris, who is alleged to have been the son of Neptune by Libya the daughter of Epaphus, is said to have offered up his guests in sacrifice to the gods. Now it must not be believed that Neptune committed this adultery, lest the gods should be criminated; yet such things must be ascribed to them by the poets and in the theatres, that they may be pleased with them. Vulcan and Minerva are said to have been the parents of Ericthonius king of Athens, in whose last years Joshua the son of Nun is found to have died. But since they will have it that Minerva is a virgin, they say that Vulcan, being disturbed in the struggle between them, poured out his seed into the earth, and on that account the man born of it received that name; for in the Greek language eris is “strife,” and chthon “earth,” of which two words Ericthonius is a compound. Yet it must be admitted that the more learned disprove and disown such things concerning their gods, and declare that this fabulous belief originated in the fact that in the temple at Athens, which Vulcan and Minerva had in common, a boy who had been exposed was found wrapped up in the coils of a dragon, which signified that he would become great, and, as his parents were unknown, he was called the son of Vulcan and Minerva, because they had the temple in common. Yet that fable accounts for the origin of his name better than this history. But what does it matter to us? Let the one in books that speak the truth edify religious men, and the other in lying fables delight impure demons. Yet these religious men worship them as gods. Still, while they deny these things concerning them they cannot clear them of all crime, because at their demand they exhibit plays in which the very things they wisely deny are basely done, and the gods are appeased by these false and base things. Now, even although the play celebrates an unreal crime of the gods, yet to delight in the ascription of an unreal crime is a real one.

CHAPTER 13

WHAT FABLES WERE INVENTED AT THE TIME WHEN JUDGES BEGAN TO RULE THE HEBREWS

After the death of Joshua the son of Nun, the people of God had judges, in whose times they were alternately humbled by afflictions on account of their sins, and consoled by prosperity through the compassion of God. In those times were invented the fables about Triptolemus, who, at the command of Ceres, borne by winged snakes, bestowed corn on the needy lands in flying over them; about that beast the Minotaur, which was shut up in the Labyrinth, from which men who entered its inextricable mazes could find no exit; about the Centaurs, whose form was a compound of horse and man; about Cerberus, the three-headed dog of hell; about Phryxus and his sister Hellas, who fled, borne by a winged ram; about the Gorgon, whose hair was composed of serpents, and who turned those who looked on her into stone; about Bellerophon, who was carried by a winged horse called Pegasus; about Amphion, who charmed and attracted the stones by the sweetness of his harp; about the artificer Daedalus and his son Icarus, who flew on wings they had fitted on; about OEdipus, who compelled a certain four-footed monster with a human face, called a sphynx, to destroy herself by casting herself headlong, having solved the riddle she was wont to propose as insoluble; about Antaeus, who was the son of the earth, for which reason, on falling on the earth, he was wont to rise up stronger, whom Hercules slew; and perhaps there are others which I have forgotten. These fables, easily found in histories containing a true account of events, bring us down to the Trojan war, at which Marcus Varro has closed his second book about the race of the Roman people; and they are so skillfully invented by men as to involve no scandal to the gods. But whoever have pretended as to Jupiter's rape of Ganymede, a very beautiful boy, that king Tantalus committed the crime, and the fable ascribed it to Jupiter; or as to his impregnating Danaee as a golden shower, that it means that the woman's virtue was corrupted by gold: whether these things were really done or only fabled in those days, or were really done by others and falsely ascribed to Jupiter, it is impossible to tell how much wickedness must have been taken for granted in men's hearts that they should be thought able to listen to such lies with patience. And yet they willingly accepted them, when, indeed, the more devotedly they worshipped Jupiter, they ought the more severely to have punished those who durst say such things of him. But they not only were not angry at those who invented these things, but were afraid that the gods would be angry at them if they did not act such fictions even in the theatres. In those times Latona bore Apollo, not him of whose oracle we have spoken above as so often consulted, but him who is said, along with Hercules, to have fed the flocks of king Admetus; yet he was so believed to be a god, that very many, indeed almost all, have believed him to be the selfsame Apollo. Then also Father Liber made war in India, and led in his army many women called Bacchae, who were notable not so much for valor as for fury. Some, indeed, write that this Liber was both conquered and bound and some that he was slain in Persia, even telling where he was buried; and yet in his name, as that of a god, the unclean demons have instituted the sacred, or rather the sacrilegious, Bacchanalia, of the outrageous vileness of which the senate, after many years, became so much ashamed as to prohibit them in the city of Rome. Men believed that in those times Perseus and his wife Andromeda were raised into heaven after their death, so that they were not ashamed or afraid to mark out their images by constellations, and call them by their names.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE THEOLOGICAL POETS

During the same period of time arose the poets, who were also called theologues, because they made hymns about the gods; yet about such gods as, although great men, were yet but men, or the elements of this world which the true God made, or creatures who were ordained as principalities and powers according to the will of the Creator and their own merit. And if, among much that was vain and false, they sang anything of the one true God, yet, by worshipping Him along with others who are not gods, and showing them the service that is due to Him alone, they did not serve Him at all rightly; and even such poets as Orpheus, Musaeus, and Linus, were unable to abstain from dishonoring their gods by fables. But yet these theologues worshipped the gods, and were not worshipped as gods, although the city of the ungodly is wont, I know not how, to set Orpheus over the sacred, or rather sacrilegious, rites of hell. The wife of king Athamas, who was called Ino, and her son Melicertes, perished by throwing themselves into the sea, and were, according to popular belief, reckoned among the gods, like other men of the same times, [among whom were] Castor and Pollux. The Greeks, indeed, called her who was the mother of Melicertes, Leucothea, the Latins, Matuta; but both thought her a goddess.

CHAPTER 15

OF THE FALL OF THE KINGDOM OF ARGOS, WHEN PICUS THE SON OF SATURN FIRST RECEIVED HIS FATHER’S KINGDOM OF LAURENTUM

During those times the kingdom of Argos came to an end; being transferred to Mycene, from which Agamemnon came, and the kingdom of Laurentum arose, of which Picus son of Saturn was the first king, when the woman Deborah judged the Hebrews; but it was the Spirit of God who used her as His agent, for she was also a prophetess, although her prophecy is so obscure that we could not demonstrate, without a long discussion, that it was uttered concerning Christ. Now the Laurentes already reigned in Italy, from whom the origin of the Roman people is quite evidently derived after the Greeks; yet the kingdom of Assyria still lasted, in which Lampares was the twenty-third king when Picus first began to reign at Laurentum. The worshippers of such gods may see what they are to think of Saturn the father of Picus, who deny that he was a man; of whom some also have written that he himself reigned in Italy before Picus his son; and Virgil in his well-known book says,

“That race indocile, and through mountains high

Dispersed, he settled, and endowed with laws,

And named their country Latium, because

Latent within their coasts he dwelt secure.

Tradition says the golden ages pure

Began when he was king.”

But they regard these as poetic fancies, and assert that the father of Picus was Sterces rather, and relate that, being a most skillful husbandman, he discovered that the fields could be fertilized by the dung of animals, which is called stercus from his name. Some say he was called Stercutius. But for whatever reason they chose to call him Saturn, it is yet certain they made this Sterces or Stercutius a god for his merit in agriculture; and they likewise received into the number of these gods Picus his son, whom they affirm to have been a famous augur and warrior. Picus begot Faunus, the second king of Laurentum; and he too is, or was, a god with them. These divine honors they gave to dead men before the Trojan war.

CHAPTER 16

OF DIOMEDE, WHO AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF TROY WAS PLACED AMONG THE GODS, WHILE HIS COMPANIONS ARE SAID TO HAVE BEEN CHANGED INTO BIRDS

Troy was overthrown, and its destruction was everywhere sung and made well known even to boys; for it was signally published and spread abroad, both by its own greatness and by writers of excellent style. And this was done in the reign of Latinus the son of Faunus, from whom the kingdom began to be called Latium instead of Laurentum. The victorious Greeks, on leaving Troy destroyed and returning to their own countries, were torn and crushed by divers and horrible calamities. Yet even from among them they increased the number of their gods for they made Diomede a god. They allege that his return home was prevented by a divinely imposed punishment, and they prove, not by fabulous and poetic falsehood, but by historic attestation, that his companions were turned into birds. Yet they think that, even although he was made a god, he could neither restore them to the human form by his own power, nor yet obtain it from Jupiter his king, as a favor granted to a new inhabitant of heaven. They also say that his temple is in the island of Diomedaea, not far from Mount Garganus in Apulia, and that these birds fly round about this temple, and worship in it with such wonderful obedience, that they fill their beaks with water and sprinkle it; and if Greeks, or those born of the Greek race, come there, they are not only still, but fly to meet them; but if they are foreigners, they fly up at their heads, and wound them with such severe strokes as even to kill them. For they are said to be well enough armed for these combats with their hard and large beaks.

CHAPTER 17

WHAT VARRO SAYS OF THE INCREDIBLE TRANSFORMATIONS OF MEN

In support of this story, Varro relates others no less incredible about that most famous sorceress Circe, who changed the companions of Ulysses into beasts, and about the Arcadians, who, by lot, swam across a certain pool, and were turned into wolves there, and lived in the deserts of that region with wild beasts like themselves. But if they never fed on human flesh for nine years, they were restored to the human form on swimming back again through the same pool. Finally, he expressly names one Demaenetus, who, on tasting a boy offered up in sacrifice by the Arcadians to their god Lycaeus according to their custom, was changed into a wolf, and, being restored to his proper form in the tenth year, trained himself as a pugilist, and was victorious at the Olympic games. And the same historian thinks that the epithet Lycaeus was applied in Arcadia to Pan and Jupiter for no other reason than this metamorphosis of men into wolves, because it was thought it could not be wrought except by a divine power. For a wolf is called in Greek lukos, from which the name Lycaeus appears to be formed. He says also that the Roman Luperci were as it were sprung of the seed of these mysteries.

CHAPTER 18

WHAT WE SHOULD BELIEVE CONCERNING THE TRANSFORMATIONS WHICH SEEM TO HAPPEN TO MEN THROUGH THE ART OF DEMONS

Perhaps our readers expect us to say something about this so great delusion wrought by the demons; and what shall we say but that men must fly out of the midst of Babylon? For this prophetic precept is to be understood spiritually in this sense, that by going forward in the living God, by the steps of faith, which worketh by love, we must flee out of the city of this world, which is altogether a society of ungodly angels and men. Yea, the greater we see the power of the demons to be in these depths, so much the more tenaciously must we cleave to the Mediator through whom we ascend from these lowest to the highest places. For if we should say these things are not to be credited, there are not wanting even now some who would affirm that they had either heard on the best authority, or even themselves experienced, something of that kind. Indeed we ourselves, when in Italy, heard such things about a certain region there where landladies of inns, imbued with these wicked arts, were said to be in the habit of giving to such travellers as they chose, or could manage, something in a piece of cheese by which they were changed on the spot into beasts of burden, and carried whatever was necessary, and were restored to their own form when the work was done. Yet their mind did not become bestial, but remained rational and human, just as Apuleius, in the books he wrote with the title of The Golden Ass, has told, or feigned, that it happened to his own self that, on taking poison, he became an ass, while retaining his human mind.

These things are either false, or so extraordinary as to be with good reason disbelieved. But it is to be most firmly believed that Almighty God can do whatever He pleases, whether in punishing or favoring, and that the demons can accomplish nothing by their natural power (for their created being is itself angelic, although made malign by their own fault), except what He may permit, whose judgments are often hidden, but never unrighteous. And indeed the demons, if they really do such things as these on which this discussion turns, do not create real substances, but only change the appearance of things created by the true God so as to make them seem to be what they are not. I cannot therefore believe that even the body, much less the mind, can really be changed into bestial forms and lineaments by any reason, art, or power of the demons; but the phantasm of a man which even in thought or dreams goes through innumerable changes may, when the man's senses are laid asleep or overpowered, be presented to the senses of others in a corporeal form, in some indescribable way unknown to me, so that men's bodies themselves may lie somewhere, alive, indeed, yet with their senses locked up much more heavily and firmly than by sleep, while that phantasm, as it were embodied in the shape of some animal, may appear to the senses of others, and may even seem to the man himself to be changed, just as he may seem to himself in sleep to be so changed, and to bear burdens; and these burdens, if they are real substances, are borne by the demons, that men may be deceived by beholding at the same time the real substance of the burdens and the simulated bodies of the beasts of burden. For a certain man called Praestantius used to tell that it had happened to his father in his own house, that he took that poison in a piece of cheese, and lay in his bed as if sleeping, yet could by no means be aroused. But he said that after a few days he as it were woke up and related the things he had suffered as if they had been dreams, namely, that he had been made a sumpter horse, and, along with other beasts of burden, had carried provisions for the soldiers of what is called the Rhoetian Legion, because it was sent to Rhoetia. And all this was found to have taken place just as he told, yet it had seemed to him to be his own dream. And another man declared that in his own house at night, before he slept, he saw a certain philosopher, whom he knew very well, come to him and explain to him some things in the Platonic philosophy which he had previously declined to explain when asked. And when he had asked this philosopher why he did in his house what he had refused to do at home, he said, “I did not do it, but I dreamed I had done it.” And thus what the one saw when sleeping was shown to the other when awake by a phantasmal image.

These things have not come to us from persons we might deem unworthy of credit, but from informants we could not suppose to be deceiving us.

Therefore what men say and have committed to writing about the Arcadians being often changed into wolves by the Arcadian gods, or demons rather, and what is told in song about Circe transforming the companions of Ulysses, if they were really done, may, in my opinion, have been done in the way I have said. As for Diomede's birds, since their race is alleged to have been perpetuated by constant propagation, I believe they were not made through the metamorphosis of men, but were slyly substituted for them on their removal, just as the hind was for Iphigenia, the daughter of king Agamemnon. For juggleries of this kind could not be difficult for the demons if permitted by the judgment of God; and since that virgin was afterwards, found alive it is easy to see that a hind had been slyly substituted for her. But because the companions of Diomede were of a sudden nowhere to be seen, and afterwards could nowhere be found, being destroyed by bad avenging angels, they were believed to have been changed into those birds, which were secretly brought there from other places where such birds were, and suddenly substituted for them by fraud. But that they bring water in their beaks and sprinkle it on the temple of Diomede, and that they fawn on men of Greek race and persecute aliens, is no wonderful thing to be done by the inward influence of the demons, whose interest it is to persuade men that Diomede was made a god, and thus to beguile them into worshipping many false gods, to the great dishonor of the true God; and to serve dead men, who even in their lifetime did not truly live, with temples, altars, sacrifices, and priests, all which, when of the right kind, are due only to the one living and true God.

CHAPTER 19

THAT AENEAS CAME INTO ITALY WHEN ABDON THE JUDGE RULED OVER THE HEBREWS

After the capture and destruction of Troy, AEneas, with twenty ships laden with the Trojan relics, came into Italy, when Latinus reigned there, Menestheus in Athens, Polyphidos in Sicyon, and Tautanos in Assyria, and Abdon was judge of the Hebrews. On the death of Latinus, AEneas reigned three years, the same kings continuing in the above-named places, except that Pelasgus was now king in Sicyon, and Samson was judge of the Hebrews, who is thought to be Hercules, because of his wonderful strength.

Now the Latins made AEneas one of their gods, because at his death he was nowhere to be found. The Sabines also placed among the gods their first king, Sancus, [Sangus], or Sanctus, as some call him. At that time Codrus king of Athens exposed himself incognito to be slain by the Peloponnesian foes of that city, and so was slain. In this way, they say, he delivered his country. For the Peloponnesians had received a response from the oracle, that they should overcome the Athenians only on condition that they did not slay their king. Therefore he deceived them by appearing in a poor man's dress, and provoking them, by quarrelling, to murder him. Whence Virgil says, "Or the quarrels of Codrus." And the Athenians worshipped this man as a god with sacrificial honors. The fourth king of the Latins was Silvius the son of AEneas, not by Creuesa, of whom Ascanius the third king was born, but by Lavinia the daughter of Latinus, and he is said to have been his posthumous child. Oneus was the twenty-ninth king of Assyria, Melanthus the sixteenth of the Athenians, and Eli the priest was judge of the Hebrews; and the kingdom of Sicyon then came to an end, after lasting, it is said, for nine hundred and fifty-nine years.

CHAPTER 20

OF THE SUCCESSION OF THE LINE OF KINGS AMONG THE ISRAELITES AFTER THE TIMES OF THE JUDGES

While these kings reigned in the places mentioned, the period of the judges being ended, the kingdom of Israel next began with king Saul, when Samuel the prophet lived. At that date those Latin kings began who were surnamed Silvii, having that surname, in addition to their proper name, from their predecessor, that son of AEneas who was called Silvius; just as, long afterward, the successors of Caesar Augustus were surnamed Caesars. Saul being rejected, so that none of his issue should reign, on his death David succeeded him in the kingdom, after he had reigned forty years. Then the Athenians ceased to have kings after the death of Codrus, and began to have a magistracy to rule the republic. After David, who also reigned forty years, his son Solomon was king of Israel, who built that most noble temple of God at Jerusalem. In his time Alba was built among the Latins, from which thereafter the kings began to be styled kings not of the Latins, but of the Albans, although in the same Latium. Solomon was succeeded by his son Rehoboam, under whom that people was divided into two kingdoms, and its separate parts began to have separate kings.

CHAPTER 21

OF THE KINGS OF LATIUM, THE FIRST AND TWELFTH OF WHOM, AENEAS AND AVENTINUS, WERE MADE GODS

After AEneas, whom they deified, Latium had eleven kings, none of whom was deified. But Aventinus, who was the twelfth after AEneas, having been laid low in war, and buried in that hill still called by his name, was added to the number of such gods as they made for themselves. Some, indeed, were unwilling to write that he was slain in battle, but said he was nowhere to be found, and that it was not from his name, but from the alighting of birds, that hill was called Aventinus. After this no god was made in Latium except Romulus the founder of Rome. But two kings are found between these two, the first of whom I shall describe in the Virgilian verse:

“Next came that Procas, glory of the Trojan race.”

That greatest of all kingdoms, the Assyrian, had its long duration brought to a close in his time, the time of Rome’s birth drawing nigh. For the Assyrian empire was transferred to the Medes after nearly thirteen hundred and five years, if we include the reign of Belus, who begot Ninus, and, content with a small kingdom, was the first king there. Now Procas reigned before Amulius. And Amulius had made his brother Numitor’s daughter, Rhea by name, who was also called Ilia, a vestal virgin, who conceived twin sons by Mars, as they will have it, in that way honoring or excusing her adultery, adding as a proof that a she-wolf nursed the infants when exposed. For they think this kind of beast belongs to Mars so that the she-wolf is believed to have given her teats to the infants, because she knew they were the sons of Mars her lord; although there are not wanting persons who say that when the crying babes lay exposed, they were first of all picked up by I know not what harlot, and sucked her breasts first (now harlots were called lupae, she-wolves, from which their vile abodes are even yet called lupanaria), and that afterwards they came into the hands of the shepherd Faustulus, and were nursed by Acca his wife. Yet what wonder is it, if, to rebuke the king who had cruelly ordered them to be thrown into the water, God was pleased, after divinely delivering them from the water, to succor, by means of a wild beast giving milk, these infants by whom so great a city was to be founded? Amulius was succeeded in the Latian kingdom by his brother Numitor, the grandfather of Romulus; and Rome was founded in the first year of this Numitor, who from that time reigned along with his grandson Romulus.

CHAPTER 22

THAT ROME WAS FOUNDED WHEN THE ASSYRIAN KINGDOM PERISHED, AT WHICH TIME HEZEKIAH REIGNED IN JUDAH

To be brief, the city of Rome was founded, like another Babylon, and as it were the daughter of the former Babylon, by which God was pleased to conquer the whole world, and subdue it far and wide by bringing it into one fellowship of government and laws. For there were already powerful and brave peoples and nations trained to arms, who did not easily yield, and whose subjugation necessarily involved great danger and destruction as well as great and horrible labor. For when the Assyrian kingdom subdued almost all Asia, although this was done by fighting, yet the wars could not be very fierce or difficult, because the nations were as yet untrained to resist, and neither so many nor so great as afterward; forasmuch as, after that greatest and indeed universal flood, when only eight men escaped in Noah’s ark, not much more than a thousand years had passed when Ninus subdued all Asia with the exception of India. But Rome did not with the same quickness and facility wholly subdue all those nations of the east and west which we see brought under the Roman empire, because, in its gradual increase, in whatever direction it was extended, it found them strong and warlike. At the time when Rome was founded, then, the people of Israel had been in the land of promise seven hundred and eighteen years. Of these years twenty-seven belong to Joshua the son of Nun, and after that three hundred and twenty-nine to the period of the judges. But from the time when the kings began to reign there, three hundred and sixty-two years had passed. And at that time there was a king in Judah called Ahaz, or, as others compute, Hezekiah his successor, the best and most pious king, who it is admitted reigned in the times of Romulus. And in that part of the Hebrew nation called Israel, Hoshea had begun to reign.

CHAPTER 23

OF THE ERYTHRAEAN SIBYL, WHO IS KNOWN TO HAVE SUNG MANY THINGS ABOUT CHRIST MORE PLAINLY THAN THE OTHER SIBYLS

Some say the Erythraean sibyl prophesied at this time. Now Varro declares there were many sibyls, and not merely one. This sibyl of Erythrae certainly wrote some things concerning Christ which are quite manifest, and we first read them in the Latin tongue in verses of bad Latin, and unrhythmical, through the unskillfulness, as we afterwards learned, of some interpreter unknown to me. For Flaccianus, a very famous man, who was also a proconsul, a man of most ready eloquence and much learning, when we were speaking about Christ, produced a Greek manuscript, saying that it was the prophecies of the Erythraean sibyl, in which he pointed out a certain passage which had the initial letters of the lines so arranged that these words could be read in them: ‘Iesous Christos Theou uios soter, which means, “Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Saviour.” And these verses, of which the initial letters yield that meaning, contain what follows as translated by some one into Latin in good rhythm:

I Judgment shall moisten the earth with the sweat of its standard,

E Ever enduring, behold the King shall come through the ages,

S Sent to be here in the flesh, and Judge at the last of the world.

O O God, the believing and faithless alike shall behold Thee

U Uplifted with saints, when at last the ages are ended.

S Seated before Him are souls in the flesh for His judgment.

Ch Hid in thick vapors, the while desolate lieth the earth.

R Rejected by men are the idols and long hidden treasures;

E Earth is consumed by the fire, and it searcheth the ocean and heaven;

I Issuing forth, it destroyeth the terrible portals of hell.

S Saints in their body and soul freedom and light shall inherit;

T Those who are guilty shall burn in fire and brimstone for ever.

O Occult actions revealing, each one shall publish his secrets;

S Secrets of every man’s heart God shall reveal in the light.

Th Then shall be weeping and wailing, yea, and gnashing of teeth;

E Eclipsed is the sun, and silenced the stars in their chorus.

O Over and gone is the splendor of moonlight, melted the heaven,

U Uplifted by Him are the valleys, and cast down the mountains.

U Utterly gone among men are distinctions of lofty and lowly.

I Into the plains rush the hills, the skies and oceans are mingled.

O Oh, what an end of all things! earth broken in pieces shall perish;

S. . . . Swelling together at once shall the waters and flames flow in rivers.

S Sounding the archangel’s trumpet shall peal down from heaven,

O Over the wicked who groan in their guilt and their manifold sorrows.

T Trembling, the earth shall be opened, revealing chaos and hell.

E Every king before God shall stand in that day to be judged.

R Rivers of fire and brimstone shall fall from the heavens.

In these Latin verses the meaning of the Greek is correctly given, although not in the exact order of the lines as connected with the initial letters; for in three of them, the fifth, eighteenth, and nineteenth, where the Greek letter U occurs, Latin words could not be found beginning with the corresponding letter, and yielding a suitable meaning. So that, if we note down together the initial letters of all the lines in our Latin translation except those three in which we retain the letter U in the proper place, they will express in five Greek words this meaning, “Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Saviour.” And the verses are twenty-seven, which is the cube of three. For three times three are nine; and nine itself, if tripled, so as to rise from the superficial square to the cube, comes to twenty-seven. But if you join the initial letters of these five Greek words, ‘Iesous Christos Theou uios soter, which mean, “Jesus Christ the Son of God, the Saviour,” they will make the word ichdus, that is, “fish,” in which word Christ is mystically understood, because He was able to live, that is, to exist, without sin in the abyss of this mortality as in the depth of waters.

But this sibyl, whether she is the Erythraean, or, as some rather believe, the Cumaean, in her whole poem, of which this is a very small portion, not only has nothing that can relate to the worship of the false or feigned gods, but rather speaks against them and their worshippers in such a way that we might even think she ought to be reckoned among those who belong to the city of God. Lactantius also inserted in his work the prophecies about Christ of a certain sibyl, he does not say which. But I have thought fit to combine in a single extract, which may seem long, what he has set down in many short quotations. She says, “Afterward He shall come into the injurious hands of the unbelieving, and they will give God buffets with profane hands, and with impure mouth will spit out envenomed spittle; but He will with simplicity yield His holy back to stripes. And He will hold His peace when struck with the fist, that no one may find out what word, or whence, He comes to speak to hell; and He shall be crowned with a crown of thorns. And they gave Him gall for meat, and vinegar for His thirst: they will spread this table of inhospitality. For thou thyself, being foolish, hast not understood thy God, deluding the minds of mortals, but hast both crowned Him with thorns and mingled for Him bitter gall. But the veil of the temple shall be rent; and at midday it shall be darker than night for three hours. And He shall die the death, taking sleep for three days; and then returning from hell, He first shall come to the light, the beginning of the resurrection being shown to the recalled.” Lactantius made use of these sibylline testimonies, introducing them bit by bit in the course of his discussion as the things he intended to prove seemed to require, and we have set them down in one connected series, uninterrupted by comment, only taking care to mark them by capitals, if only the transcribers do not neglect to preserve them hereafter. Some writers, indeed, say that the Erythraean sibyl was not in the time of Romulus, but of the Trojan war.

CHAPTER 24

THAT THE SEVEN SAGES FLOURISHED IN THE REIGN OF ROMULUS, WHEN THE TEN TRIBES WHICH WERE CALLED ISRAEL WERE LED INTO CAPTIVITY BY THE CHALDEANS, AND ROMULUS, WHEN DEAD, HAD DIVINE HONORS CONFERRED ON HIM

While Romulus reigned, Thales the Milesian is said to have lived, being one of the seven sages, who succeeded the theological poets, of whom Orpheus was the most renowned, and were called Sophoi, that is, sages. During that time the ten tribes, which on the division of the people were called Israel, were conquered by the Chaldeans and led captive into their lands, while the two tribes which were called Judah, and had the seat of their kingdom in Jerusalem, remained in the land of Judea. As Romulus, when dead, could nowhere be found, the Romans, as is everywhere notorious, placed him among the gods,—a thing which by that time had already ceased to be done, and which was not done afterwards till the time of the Caesars, and then not through error, but in flattery; so that Cicero ascribes great praises to Romulus, because he merited such honors not in rude and unlearned times, when men were easily deceived, but in times already polished and learned, although the subtle and acute loquacity of the philosophers had not yet culminated. But although the later times did not deify dead men, still they did not cease to hold and worship as gods those deified of old; nay, by images, which the ancients never had, they even increased the allurements of vain and impious superstition, the unclean demons effecting this in their heart, and also deceiving them by lying oracles, so that even the fabulous crimes of the gods, which were not once imagined by a more polite age, were yet basely acted in the plays in honor of these same false deities. Numa reigned after Romulus; and although he had thought that Rome would be better defended the more gods there were, yet on his death he himself was not counted worthy of a place among them, as if it were supposed that he had so crowded heaven that a place could not be found for him there. They report that the Samian sibyl lived while he reigned at Rome, and when Manasseh began to reign over the Hebrews,—an impious king, by whom the prophet Isaiah is said to have been slain.

CHAPTER 25

WHAT PHILOSOPHERS WERE FAMOUS WHEN TARQUINIUS PRISCUS REIGNED OVER THE ROMANS, AND ZEDEKIAH OVER THE HEBREWS, WHEN JERUSALEM WAS TAKEN AND THE TEMPLE OVERTHROWN

When Zedekiah reigned over the Hebrews, and Tarquinius Priscus, the successor of Ancus Martius, over the Romans, the Jewish people was led captive into Babylon, Jerusalem and the temple built by Solomon being overthrown. For the prophets, in chiding them for their iniquity and impiety, predicted that these things should come to pass, especially Jeremiah, who even stated the number of years. Pittacus of Mitylene, another of the sages, is reported to have lived at that time. And Eusebius writes that, while the people of God were held captive in Babylon, the five other sages lived, who must be added to Thales, whom we mentioned above, and Pittacus, in order to make up the seven. These are Solon of Athens, Chilo of Lacedaemon, Periander of Corinth, Cleobulus of Lindus, and Bias of Priene. These flourished after the theological poets, and were called sages, because they excelled other men in a certain laudable line of life, and summed up some moral precepts in epigrammatic sayings. But they left posterity no literary monuments, except that Solon is alleged to have given certain laws to the Athenians, and Thales was a natural philosopher, and left books of his doctrine in short proverbs. In that time of the Jewish captivity, Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Xenophanes, the natural philosophers, flourished. Pythagoras also lived then, and at this time the name philosopher was first used.

CHAPTER 26

THAT AT THE TIME WHEN THE CAPTIVITY OF THE JEWS WAS BROUGHT TO AN END, ON THE COMPLETION OF SEVENTY YEARS, THE ROMANS ALSO WERE FREED FROM KINGLY RULE

At this time, Cyrus king of Persia, who also ruled the Chaldeans and Assyrians, having somewhat relaxed the captivity of the Jews, made fifty thousand of them return in order to rebuild the temple. They only began the first foundations and built the altar; but, owing to hostile invasions, they were unable to go on, and the work was put off to the time of Darius. During the same time also those things were done which are written in the book of Judith, which, indeed, the Jews are said not to have received into the canon of the Scriptures. Under Darius king of Persia, then, on the completion of the seventy years predicted by Jeremiah the prophet, the captivity of the Jews was brought to an end, and they were restored to liberty. Tarquin then reigned as the seventh king of the Romans. On his expulsion, they also began to be free from the rule of their kings. Down to this time the people of Israel had prophets; but, although they were numerous, the canonical writings of only a few of them have been preserved among the Jews and among us. In closing the previous book, I promised to set down something in this one about them, and I shall now do so.

CHAPTER 27

OF THE TIMES OF THE PROPHETS WHOSE ORACLES ARE CONTAINED IN BOOKS AND WHO SANG MANY THINGS ABOUT THE CALL OF THE GENTILES AT THE TIME WHEN THE ROMAN KINGDOM BEGAN AND THE ASSYRIAN CAME TO AN END

In order that we may be able to consider these times, let us go back a little to earlier times. At the beginning of the book of the prophet Hosea, who is placed first of twelve, it is written, “The word of the Lord which came to Hosea in the days of Uzziah, Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.” Amos also writes that he prophesied in the days of Uzziah, and adds the name of Jeroboam king of Israel, who lived at the same time. Isaiah the son of Amos—either the above-named prophet, or, as is rather affirmed, another who was not a prophet, but was called by the same name—also puts at the head of his book these four kings named by Hosea, saying by way of preface that he prophesied in their days. Micah also names the same times as those of his prophecy, after the days of Uzziah; for he names the same three kings as Hosea named,—Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. We find from their own writings that these men prophesied contemporaneously. To these are added Jonah in the reign of Uzziah, and Joel in that of Jotham, who succeeded Uzziah. But we can find the date of these two prophets in the chronicles, not in their own writings, for they say nothing about it themselves. Now these days extend from Procas king of the Latins, or his predecessor Aventinus, down to Romulus king of the Romans, or even to the beginning of the reign of his successor Numa Pompilius. Hezekiah king of Judah certainly reigned till then. So that thus these fountains of prophecy, as I may call them, burst forth at once during those times when the Assyrian kingdom failed and the Roman began; so that, just as in the first period of the Assyrian kingdom Abraham arose, to whom the most distinct promises were made that all nations should be blessed in his seed, so at the beginning of the western Babylon, in the time of whose government Christ was to come in whom these promises were to be fulfilled, the oracles of the prophets were given not only in spoken but in written words, for a testimony that so great a thing should come to pass. For although the people of Israel hardly ever lacked prophets from the time when they began to have kings, these were only for their own use, not for that of the nations. But when the more manifestly prophetic Scripture began to be formed, which was to benefit the nations too, it was fitting that it should begin when this city was founded which was to rule the nations.

CHAPTER 28

OF THE THINGS PERTAINING TO THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST WHICH HOSEA AND AMOS PROHESIED

The prophet Hosea speaks so very profoundly that it is laborious work to penetrate his meaning. But, according to promise, we must insert something from his book. He says, “And it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there they shall be called the sons of the living God.” Even the apostles understood this as a prophetic testimony of the calling of the nations who did not formerly belong to God; and because this same people of the Gentiles is itself spiritually among the children of Abraham, and for that reason is rightly called Israel, therefore he goes on to say, “And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together in one, and shall appoint themselves one headship, and shall ascend from the earth.” We should but weaken the savor of this prophetic oracle if we set ourselves to expound it. Let the reader but call to mind that cornerstone and those two walls of partition, the one of the Jews, the other of the Gentiles, and he will recognize them, the one under the term sons of Judah, the other as sons of Israel, supporting themselves by one and the same headship, and ascending from the earth. But that those carnal Israelites who are now unwilling to believe in Christ shall afterward believe, that is, their children shall (for they themselves, of course, shall go to their own place by dying), this same prophet testifies, saying, “For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, without an altar, without a priesthood, without manifestations.” Who does not see that the Jews are now thus? But let us hear what he adds: “And afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall be amazed at the Lord and at His goodness in the latter days.” Nothing is clearer than this prophecy, in which by David, as distinguished by the title of king, Christ is to be understood, “who is made,” as the apostle says, “of the seed of David according to the flesh.” This prophet has also foretold the resurrection of Christ on the third day, as it behoved to be foretold, with prophetic loftiness, when he says, “He will heal us after two days, and in the third day we shall rise again.” In agreement with this the apostle says to us, “If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.” Amos also prophesies thus concerning such things: “Prepare thee, that thou mayst invoke thy God, O Israel; for lo, I am binding the thunder, and creating the spirit, and announcing to men their Christ.” And in another place he says, “In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and build up the breaches thereof: and I will raise up his ruins, and will build them up again as in the days of old: that the residue of men may inquire for me, and all the nations upon whom my name is invoked, saith the Lord that doeth this.”

CHAPTER 29

WHAT THINGS ARE PREDICTED BY ISAIAH CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

The prophecy of Isaiah is not in the book of the twelve prophets, who are called the minor from the brevity of their writings, as compared with those who are called the greater prophets because they published larger volumes. Isaiah belongs to the latter, yet I connect him with the two above named, because he prophesied at the same time. Isaiah, then, together with his rebukes of wickedness, precepts of righteousness, and predictions of evil, also prophesied much more than the rest about Christ and the Church, that is, about the King and that city which he founded; so that some say he should be called an evangelist rather than a prophet. But, in order to finish this work, I quote only one out of many in this place. Speaking in the person of the Father, he says, “Behold, my servant shall understand, and shall be exalted and glorified very much. As many shall be astonished at Thee.” This is about Christ.

But let us now hear what follows about the Church. He says, “Rejoice, O barren, thou that barest not; break forth and cry, thou that didst not travail with child: for many more are the children of the desolate than of her that has an husband.” But these must suffice; and some things in them ought to be expounded; yet I think those parts sufficient which are so plain that even enemies must be compelled against their will to understand them.

CHAPTER 30

WHAT MICAH, JONAH, AND JOEL PROPHESIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NEW TESTAMENT

The prophet Micah, representing Christ under the figure of a great mountain, speaks thus: “It shall come to pass in the last days, that the manifested mountain of the Lord shall be prepared on the tops of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall hasten unto it. Many nations shall go, and shall say, Come, let us go up into the mountain of the Lord, and into the house of the God of Jacob; and He will show us His way, and we will go in His paths: for out of Zion shall proceed the law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off.” This prophet predicts the very place in which Christ was born, saying, “And thou, Bethlehem, of the house of Ephratah, art the least that can be reckoned among the thousands of Judah; out of thee shall come forth unto me a leader, to be the prince in Israel; and His going forth is from the beginning, even from the days of eternity. Therefore will He give them [up] even until the time when she that travaileth shall bring forth; and the remnant of His brethren shall be converted to the sons of Israel. And He shall stand, and see, and feed His flock in the strength of the Lord, and in the dignity of the name of the Lord His God: for now shall He be magnified even to the utmost of the earth.”

The prophet Jonah, not so much by speech as by his own painful experience, prophesied Christ’s death and resurrection much more clearly than if he had proclaimed them with his voice. For why was he taken into the whale's belly and restored on the third day, but that he might be a sign that Christ should return from the depths of hell on the third day?

I should be obliged to use many words in explaining all that Joel prophesies in order to make clear those that pertain to Christ and the Church. But there is one passage I must not pass by, which the apostles also quoted when the Holy Spirit came down from above on the assembled believers according to Christ's promise. He says, "And it shall come to pass after these things, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your old men shall dream, and your young men shall see visions: and even on my servants and mine handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit."

CHAPTER 31

OF THE PREDICTIONS CONCERNING THE SALVATION OF THE WORLD IN CHRIST, IN OBADIAH, NAHUM, AND HABAKKUK

The date of three of the minor prophets, Obadiah, Nahum, and Habakkuk, is neither mentioned by themselves nor given in the chronicles of Eusebius and Jerome. For although they put Obadiah with Micah, yet when Micah prophesied does not appear from that part of their writings in which the dates are noted. And this, I think, has happened through their error in negligently copying the works of others. But we could not find the two others now mentioned in the copies of the chronicles which we have; yet because they are contained in the canon, we ought not to pass them by.

Obadiah, so far as his writings are concerned, the briefest of all the prophets, speaks against Idumea, that is, the nation of Esau, that reprobate elder of the twin sons of Isaac and grandsons of Abraham. Now if, by that form of speech in which a part is put for the whole, we take Idumea as put for the nations, we may understand of Christ what he says among other things, "But upon Mount Sion shall be safety, and there shall be a Holy One." And a little after, at the end of the same prophecy, he says, "And those who are saved again shall come up out of Mount Sion, that they may defend Mount Esau, and it shall be a kingdom to the Lord." It is quite evident this was fulfilled when those saved again out of Mount Sion—that is, the believers in Christ from Judea, of whom the apostles are chiefly to be acknowledged—went up to defend Mount Esau. How could they defend it except by making safe, through the preaching of the gospel, those who believed that they might be “delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God?” This he expressed as an inference, adding, “And it shall be to the Lord a kingdom.” For Mount Sion signifies Judea, where it is predicted there shall be safety, and a Holy One, that is, Christ Jesus. But Mount Esau is Idumea, which signifies the Church of the Gentiles, which, as I have expounded, those saved again out of Sion have defended that it should be a kingdom to the Lord. This was obscure before it took place; but what believer does not find it out now that it is done?

As for the prophet Nahum, through him God says, “I will exterminate the graven and the molten things: I will make thy burial. For lo, the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings and announceth peace are swift upon the mountains! O Judah, celebrate thy festival days, and perform thy vows; for now they shall not go on any more so as to become antiquated. It is completed, it is consumed, it is taken away. He ascendeth who breathes in thy face, delivering thee out of tribulation.” Let him that remembers the gospel call to mind who hath ascended from hell and breathed the Holy Spirit in the face of Judah, that is, of the Jewish disciples; for they belong to the New Testament, whose festival days are so spiritually renewed that they cannot become antiquated. Moreover, we already see the graven and molten things, that is, the idols of the false gods, exterminated through the gospel, and given up to oblivion as of the grave, and we know that this prophecy is fulfilled in this very thing.

Of what else than the advent of Christ, who was to come, is Habakkuk understood to say, “And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision openly on a tablet of boxwood, that he that readeth these things may understand. For the vision is yet for a time appointed, and it will arise in the end, and will not become void: if it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, and will not be delayed?”

CHAPTER 32

OF THE PROPHECY THAT IS CONTAINED IN THE PRAYER AND SONG OF HABAKKUK

In his prayer, with a song, to whom but the Lord Christ does he say, “O Lord, I have heard Thy hearing, and was afraid: O Lord, I have considered Thy works, and was greatly afraid?” What is this but the inexpressible admiration of the foreknown, new, and sudden salvation of men? “In the midst of two living creatures thou shalt be recognized.” What is this but either between the two testaments, or between the two thieves, or between Moses and Elias talking with Him on the mount? “While the years draw nigh, Thou wilt be recognized; at the coming of the time Thou wilt be shown,” does not even need exposition. “While my soul shall be troubled at Him, in wrath Thou wilt be mindful of mercy.” What is this but that He puts Himself for the Jews, of whose nation He was, who were troubled with great anger and crucified Christ, when He, mindful of mercy, said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do? “God shall come from Teman, and the Holy One from the shady and close mountain.” What is said here, “He shall come from Teman,” some interpret “from the south,” or “from the southwest,” by which is signified the noonday, that is, the fervor of charity and the splendor of truth. “The shady and close mountain” might be understood in many ways, yet I prefer to take it as meaning the depth of the divine Scriptures, in which Christ is prophesied: for in the Scriptures there are many things shady and close which exercise the mind of the reader; and Christ comes thence when he who has understanding finds Him there. “His power covereth up the heavens, and the earth is full of His praise.” What is this but what is also said in the psalm, “Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; and Thy glory above all the earth?” “His splendor shall be as the light.” What is it but that the fame of Him shall illuminate believers? “Horns are in His hands.” What is this but the trophy of the cross? “And He hath placed the firm charity of His strength” needs no exposition. “Before His face shall go the word, and it shall go forth into the field after His feet.” What is this but that He should both be announced before His coming hither and after His return hence? “He stood, and the earth was moved.” What is this but that “He stood” for succor, “and the earth was moved” to believe? “He regarded, and the nations melted;” that is, He had compassion, and made the people penitent. “The mountains are broken with violence;” that is, through the power of those who work miracles the pride of the haughty is broken. “The everlasting hills flowed down;” that is, they are humbled in time that they may be lifted up for eternity. “I saw His goings [made] eternal for his labors;” that is, I beheld His labor of love not left without the reward of eternity. “The tents of Ethiopia shall be greatly afraid, and the tents of the land of Midian;” that is, even those nations which are not under the Roman authority, being suddenly terrified by the news of Thy wonderful works, shall become a Christian people. “Wert Thou angry at the rivers, O Lord? or was Thy fury against the rivers? or was Thy rage against the sea?” This is said because He does not now come to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. “For Thou shall mount upon Thy horses, and Thy riding shall be salvation;” that is, Thine evangelists shall carry Thee, for they are guided by Thee, and Thy gospel is salvation to them that believe in Thee. “Bending, Thou wilt bend Thy bow against the sceptres, saith the Lord;” that is, Thou wilt threaten even the kings of the earth with Thy judgment. “The earth shall be cleft with rivers;” that is, by the sermons of those who preach Thee flowing in upon them, men’s hearts shall be opened to make confession, to whom it is said, “Rend your hearts and not your garments.” What does “The people shall see Thee and grieve” mean, but that in mourning they shall be blessed? What is “Scattering the waters in marching,” but that by walking in those who everywhere proclaim Thee, Thou wilt scatter hither and thither the streams of Thy doctrine? What is “The abyss uttered its voice?” Is it not that the depth of the human heart expressed what it perceived? The words, “The depth of its phantasy,” are an explanation of the previous verse, for the depth is the abyss; and “Uttered its voice” is to be understood before them, that is, as we have said, it expressed what it perceived. Now the phantasy is the vision, which it did not hold or conceal, but poured forth in confession. “The sun was raised up, and the moon stood still in her course;” that is, Christ ascended into heaven, and the Church was established under her King. “Thy darts shall go in the light;” that is, Thy words shall not be sent in secret, but openly. For He had said to His own disciples, “What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light.” “By threatening thou shall diminish the earth;” that is, by that threatening Thou shall humble men. “And in fury Thou shall cast down the nations;” for in punishing those who exalt themselves Thou dashest them one against another. “Thou wentest forth for the salvation of Thy people, that Thou mightest save Thy Christ; Thou hast sent death on the heads of the wicked.” None of these words require exposition. “Thou hast lifted up the bonds, even to the neck.” This may be understood even of the good bonds of wisdom, that the feet may be put into its fetters, and the neck into its collar. “Thou hast struck off in amazement of mind the bonds” must be understood for, He lifts up the good and strikes off the bad, about which it is said to Him, “Thou hast broken asunder my bonds,” and that “in amazement of mind,” that is, wonderfully. “The heads of the mighty shall be moved in it;” to wit, in that wonder. “They shall open their teeth like a poor man eating secretly.” For some of the mighty among the Jews shall come to the Lord, admiring His works and words, and shall greedily eat the bread of His doctrine in secret for fear of the Jews, just as the Gospel has shown they did. “And Thou hast sent into the sea Thy horses, troubling many waters,” which are nothing else than many people; for unless all were troubled, some would not be converted with fear, others pursued with fury. “I gave heed, and my belly trembled at the voice of the prayer of my lips; and trembling entered into my bones, and my habit of body was troubled under me.” He gave heed to those things which he said, and was himself terrified at his own prayer, which he had poured forth prophetically, and in which he discerned things to come. For when many people are troubled, he saw the threatening tribulation of the Church, and at once acknowledged himself a member of it, and said, “I shall rest in the day of tribulation,” as being one of those who are rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation. “That I may ascend,” he says, “among the people of my pilgrimage,” departing quite from the wicked people of his carnal kinship, who are not pilgrims in this earth, and do not seek the country above. “Although the fig-tree,” he says, “shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall lie, and the fields shall yield no meat; the sheep shall be cut off from the meat, and there shall be no oxen in the stalls.” He sees that nation which was to slay Christ about to lose the abundance of spiritual supplies, which, in prophetic fashion, he has set forth by the figure of earthly plenty. And because that nation was to suffer such wrath of God, because, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, it wished to establish its own, he immediately says, “Yet will I rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in God my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and He will set my feet in completion; He will place me above the heights, that I may conquer in His song,” to wit, in that song of which something similar is said in the psalm, “He set my feet upon a rock, and directed my goings, and put in my mouth a new song, a hymn to our God.” He therefore conquers in the song of the Lord, who takes pleasure in His praise, not in his own; that “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” But some copies have, “I will joy in God my Jesus,” which seems to me better than the version of those who, wishing to put it in Latin, have not set down that very name which for us it is dearer and sweeter to name.

CHAPTER 33

WHAT JEREMIAH AND ZEPHANIAH HAVE, BY THE PROPHETIC SPIRIT, SPOKEN BEFORE CONCERNING CHRIST AND THE CALLING OF THE NATIONS

Jeremiah, like Isaiah, is one of the greater prophets, not of the minor, like the others from whose writings I have just given extracts. He prophesied when Josiah reigned in Jerusalem, and Ancus Martius at Rome, when the captivity of the Jews was already at hand; and he continued to prophesy down to the fifth month of the captivity, as we find from his writings. Zephaniah, one of the minor prophets, is put along with him, because he himself says that he prophesied in the days of Josiah; but he does not say till when. Jeremiah thus prophesied not only in the times of Ancus Martius, but also in those of Tarquinius Priscus, whom the Romans had for their fifth king. For he had already begun to reign when that captivity took place. Jeremiah, in prophesying of Christ, says, “The breath of our mouth, the Lord Christ, was taken in our sins,” thus briefly showing both that Christ is our Lord and that He suffered for us. Also in another place he says, “This is my God, and there shall none other be accounted of in comparison of Him; who hath found out all the way of prudence, and hath given it to Jacob His servant, and to Israel His beloved: afterwards He was seen on the earth, and conversed with men.” Some attribute this testimony not to Jeremiah, but to his secretary, who was called Baruch; but it is more commonly ascribed to Jeremiah. Again the same prophet says concerning Him, “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous shoot, and a King shall reign and shall be wise, and shall do judgment and justice in the earth. In those days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell confidently: and this is the name which they shall call Him, Our righteous Lord.” And of the calling of the nations which was to come to pass, and which we now see fulfilled, he thus spoke: “O Lord my God, and my refuge in the day of evils, to Thee shall the nations come from the utmost end of the earth, saying, Truly our fathers have worshipped lying images, wherein there is no profit.” But that the Jews, by whom He behoved even to be slain, were not going to acknowledge Him, this prophet thus intimates: “Heavy is the heart through all; and He is a man, and who shall know Him?” That passage also is his which I have quoted in the seventeenth book concerning the new testament, of which Christ is the Mediator. For Jeremiah himself says, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will complete over the house of Jacob a new testament,” and the rest, which may be read there.

For the present I shall put down those predictions about Christ by the prophet Zephaniah, who prophesied with Jeremiah. “Wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, in the day of my resurrection, in the future; because it is my determination to assemble the nations, and gather together the kingdoms.” And again he says, “The Lord will be terrible upon them, and will exterminate all the gods of the earth; and they shall worship Him every man from his place, even all the isles of the nations.” And a little after he says, “Then will I turn to the people a tongue, and to His offspring, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, and serve Him under one yoke. From the borders of the rivers of Ethiopia shall they bring sacrifices unto me. In that day thou shall not be confounded for all thy curious inventions, which thou hast done impiously against me: for then I will take away from thee the haughtiness of thy trespass; and thou shalt no more magnify thyself above thy holy mountain. And I will leave in thee a meek and humble people, and they who shall be left of Israel shall fear the name of the Lord.” These are the remnant of whom the apostle quotes that which is elsewhere prophesied: “Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.” These are the remnant of that nation who have believed in Christ.

CHAPTER 34

OF THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL AND EZEKIEL, OTHER TWO OF THE GREATER PROPHETS

Daniel and Ezekiel, other two of the greater prophets, also first prophesied in the very captivity of Babylon. Daniel even defined the time when Christ was to come and suffer by the exact date. It would take too long to show this by computation, and it has been done often by others before us. But of His power and glory he has thus spoken: “I saw in a night vision, and, behold, one like the Son of man was coming with the clouds of heaven, and He came even to the Ancient of days, and He was brought into His presence. And to Him there was given dominion, and honor, and a kingdom: and all people, tribes, and tongues shall serve Him. His power is an everlasting power, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed.”

Ezekiel also, speaking prophetically in the person of God the Father, thus foretells Christ, speaking of Him in the prophetic manner as David, because He assumed flesh of the seed of David, and on account of that form of a servant in which He was made man, He who is the Son of God is also called the servant of God. He says, “And I will set up over my sheep one Shepherd, who will feed them, even my servant David; and He shall feed them, and He shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince in the midst of them. I the Lord have spoken.” And in another place he says, “And one King shall be over them all: and they shall no more be two nations, neither shall they be divided any more into two kingdoms: neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, and their abominations, and all their iniquities. And I will save them out of all their dwelling-places wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. And my servant David shall be king over them, and there shall be one Shepherd for them all.”

CHAPTER 35

OF THE PROPHECY OF THE THREE PROPHETS, HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, AND MALACHI

There remain three minor prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, who prophesied at the close of the captivity. Of these Haggai more openly prophesies of Christ and the Church thus briefly: “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet one little while, and I will shake the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will move all nations, and the desired of all nations shall come.” The fulfillment of this prophecy is in part already seen, and in part hoped for in the end. For He moved the heaven by the testimony of the angels and the stars, when Christ became incarnate. He moved the earth by the great miracle of His birth of the virgin. He moved the sea and the dry land, when Christ was proclaimed both in the isles and in the whole world. So we see all nations moved to the faith; and the fulfillment of what follows, "And the desired of all nations shall come," is looked for at His last coming. For ere men can desire and and wait for Him, they must believe and love Him.

Zechariah says of Christ and the Church, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion; shout joyfully, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King shall come unto thee, just and the Saviour; Himself poor, and mounting an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass: and His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." How this was done, when the Lord Christ on His journey used a beast of burden of this kind, we read in the Gospel, where, also, as much of this prophecy is quoted as appears sufficient for the context. In another place, speaking in the Spirit of prophecy to Christ Himself of the remission of sins through His blood, he says, "Thou also, by the blood of Thy testament, hast sent forth Thy prisoners from the lake wherein is no water." Different opinions may be held, consistently with right belief, as to what he meant by this lake. Yet it seems to me that no meaning suits better than that of the depth of human misery, which is, as it were, dry and barren, where there are no streams of righteousness, but only the mire of iniquity. For it is said of it in the Psalms, "And He led me forth out of the lake of misery, and from the miry clay."

Malachi, foretelling the Church which we now behold propagated through Christ, says most openly to the Jews, in the person of God, "I have no pleasure in you, and I will not accept a gift at your hand. For from the rising even to the going down of the sun, my name is great among the nations; and in every place sacrifice shall be made, and a pure oblation shall be offered unto my name: for my name shall be great among the nations, saith the Lord." Since we can already see this sacrifice offered to God in every place, from the rising of the sun to his going down, through Christ's priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, while the Jews, to whom it was said, "I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept a gift at your hand," cannot deny that their sacrifice has ceased, why do they still look for another Christ, when they read this in the prophecy, and see it fulfilled, which could not be fulfilled except through Him? And a little after he says of Him, in the person of God, “My covenant was with Him of life and peace: and I gave to Him that He might fear me with fear, and be afraid before my name. The law of truth was in His mouth: directing in peace He hath walked with me, and hath turned many away from iniquity. For the Priest’s lips shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at His mouth: for He is the Angel of the Lord Almighty.” Nor is it to be wondered at that Christ Jesus is called the Angel of the Almighty God. For just as He is called a servant on account of the form of a servant in which He came to men, so He is called an angel on account of the evangel which He proclaimed to men. For if we interpret these Greek words, evangel is “good news,” and angel is “messenger.” Again he says of Him, “Behold I will send mine angel, and He will look out the way before my face: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come into His temple, even the Angel of the testament, whom ye desire. Behold, He cometh, saith the Lord Almighty, and who shall abide the day of His entry, or who shall stand at His appearing?” In this place he has foretold both the first and second advent of Christ: the first, to wit, of which he says, “And He shall come suddenly into His temple;” that is, into His flesh, of which He said in the Gospel, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again.” And of the second advent he says, “Behold, He cometh, saith the Lord Almighty, and who shall abide the day of His entry, or who shall stand at His appearing?” But what he says, “The Lord whom ye seek, and the Angel of the testament whom ye desire,” just means that even the Jews, according to the Scriptures which they read, shall seek and desire Christ. But many of them did not acknowledge that He whom they sought and desired had come, being blinded in their hearts, which were preoccupied with their own merits. Now what he here calls the testament, either above, where he says, “My testament had been with Him,” or here, where he has called Him the Angel of the testament, we ought, beyond a doubt, to take to be the new testament, in which the things promised are eternal, and not the old, in which they are only temporal. Yet many who are weak are troubled when they see the wicked abound in such temporal things, because they value them greatly, and serve the true God to be rewarded with them. On this account, to distinguish the eternal blessedness of the new testament, which shall be given only to the good, from the earthly felicity of the old, which for the most part is given to the bad as well, the same prophet says, “Ye have made your words burdensome to me: yet ye have said, In what have we spoken ill of Thee? Ye have said, Foolish is every one who serves God; and what profit is it that we have kept His observances, and that we have walked as suppliants before the face of the Lord Almighty? And now we call the aliens blessed; yea, all that do wicked things are built up again; yea, they are opposed to God and are saved. They that feared the Lord uttered these reproaches every one to his neighbor: and the Lord hearkened and heard; and He wrote a book of remembrance before Him, for them that fear the Lord and that revere His name.” By that book is meant the New Testament. Finally, let us hear what follows: “And they shall be an acquisition for me, saith the Lord Almighty, in the day which I make; and I will choose them as a man chooseth his son that serveth him. And ye shall return, and shall discern between the just and the unjust, and between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. For, behold, the day cometh burning as an oven, and it shall burn them up; and all the aliens and all that do wickedly shall be stubble: and the day that shall come will set them on fire, saith the Lord Almighty, and shall leave neither root nor branch. And unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise, and health shall be in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and exult as calves let loose from bonds. And ye shall tread down the wicked, and they shall be ashes under your feet, in the day in which I shall do [this], saith the Lord Almighty.” This day is the day of judgment, of which, if God will, we shall speak more fully in its own place.

CHAPTER 36

ABOUT ESDRAS AND THE BOOKS OF THE MACCABEES

After these three prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, during the same period of the liberation of the people from the Babylonian servitude Esdras also wrote, who is historical rather than prophetical, as is also the book called Esther, which is found to relate, for the praise of God, events not far from those times; unless, perhaps, Esdras is to be understood as prophesying of Christ in that passage where, on a question having arisen among certain young men as to what is the strongest thing, when one had said kings, another wine, the third women, who for the most part rule kings, yet that same third youth demonstrated that the truth is victorious over all. For by consulting the Gospel we learn that Christ is the Truth. From this time, when the temple was rebuilt, down to the time of Aristobulus, the Jews had not kings but princes; and the reckoning of their dates is found, not in the Holy Scriptures which are called canonical, but in others, among which are also the books of the Maccabees. These are held as canonical, not by the Jews, but by the Church, on account of the extreme and wonderful sufferings of certain martyrs, who, before Christ had come in the flesh, contended for the law of God even unto death, and endured most grievous and horrible evils.

CHAPTER 37

THAT PROPHETIC RECORDS ARE FOUND WHICH ARE MORE ANCIENT THAN ANY FOUNTAIN OF THE GENTILE PHILOSOPHY

In the time of our prophets, then, whose writings had already come to the knowledge of almost all nations, the philosophers of the nations had not yet arisen,—at least, not those who were called by that name, which originated with Pythagoras the Samian, who was becoming famous at the time when the Jewish captivity ended. Much more, then, are the other philosophers found to be later than the prophets. For even Socrates the Athenian, the master of all who were then most famous, holding the pre-eminence in that department that is called the moral or active, is found after Esdras in the chronicles. Plato also was born not much later, who far out went the other disciples of Socrates. If, besides these, we take their predecessors, who had not yet been styled philosophers, to wit, the seven sages, and then the physicists, who succeeded Thales, and imitated his studious search into the nature of things, namely, Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Anaxagoras, and some others, before Pythagoras first professed himself a philosopher, even these did not precede the whole of our prophets in antiquity of time, since Thales, whom the others succeeded, is said to have flourished in the reign of Romulus, when the stream of prophecy burst forth from the fountains of Israel in those writings which spread over the whole world. So that only those theological poets, Orpheus, Linus, and Musaeus, and, it may be, some others among the Greeks, are found earlier in date than the Hebrew prophets whose writings we hold as authoritative. But not even these preceded in time our true divine, Moses, who authentically preached the one true God, and whose writings are first in the authoritative canon; and therefore the Greeks, in whose tongue the literature of this age chiefly appears, have no ground for boasting of their wisdom, in which our religion, wherein is true wisdom, is not evidently more ancient at least, if not superior. Yet it must be confessed that before Moses there had already been, not indeed among the Greeks, but among barbarous nations, as in Egypt, some doctrine which might be called their wisdom, else it would not have been written in the holy books that Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, as he was, when, being born there, and adopted and nursed by Pharaoh's daughter, he was also liberally educated. Yet not even the wisdom of the Egyptians could be antecedent in time to the wisdom of our prophets, because even Abraham was a prophet. And what wisdom could there be in Egypt before Isis had given them letters, whom they thought fit to worship as a goddess after her death? Now Isis is declared to have been the daughter of Inachus, who first began to reign in Argos when the grandsons of Abraham are known to have been already born.

CHAPTER 38

THAT THE ECCLESIASTICAL CANON HAS NOT ADMITTED CERTAIN WRITINGS ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR TOO GREAT ANTIQUITY, LEST THROUGH THEM FALSE THINGS SHOULD BE INSERTED INSTEAD OF TRUE

If I may recall far more ancient times, our patriarch Noah was certainly even before that great deluge, and I might not undeservedly call him a prophet, forasmuch as the ark he made, in which he escaped with his family, was itself a prophecy of our times. What of Enoch, the seventh from Adam? Does not the canonical epistle of the Apostle Jude declare that he prophesied? But the writings of these men could not be held as authoritative either among the Jews or us, on account of their too great antiquity, which made it seem needful to regard them with suspicion, lest false things should be set forth instead of true. For some writings which are said be theirs are quoted by those who, according to their own humor, loosely believe what they please. But the purity of the canon has not admitted these writings, not because the authority of these men who pleased God is rejected, but because they are not believed to be theirs. Nor ought it to appear strange if writings for which so great antiquity is claimed are held in suspicion, seeing that in the very history of the kings of Judah and Israel containing their acts, which we believe to belong to the canonical Scripture, very many things are mentioned which are not explained there, but are said to be found in other books which the prophets wrote, the very names of these prophets being sometimes given, and yet they are not found in the canon which the people of God received. Now I confess the reason of this is hidden from me; only I think that even those men, to whom certainly the Holy Spirit revealed those things which ought to be held as of religious authority, might write some things as men by historical diligence, and others as prophets by divine inspiration; and these things were so distinct, that it was judged that the former should be ascribed to themselves, but the latter to God speaking through them: and so the one pertained to the abundance of knowledge, the other to the authority of religion. In that authority the canon is guarded. So that, if any writings outside of it are now brought forward under the name of the ancient prophets, they cannot serve even as an aid to knowledge, because it is uncertain whether they are genuine; and on this account they are not trusted, especially those of them in which some things are found that are even contrary to the truth of the canonical books, so that it is quite apparent they do not belong to them.

CHAPTER 39

ABOUT THE HEBREW WRITTEN CHARACTERS WHICH THAT LANGUAGE ALWAYS POSSESSED

Now we must not believe that Heber, from whose name the word Hebrew is derived, preserved and transmitted the Hebrew language to Abraham only as a spoken language, and that the Hebrew letters began with the giving of the law through Moses; but rather that this language, along with its letters, was preserved by that succession of fathers. Moses, indeed, appointed some among the people of God to teach letters, before they could know any letters of the divine law. The Scripture calls these men grammateisagogeis, who may be called in Latin inductores or introductores of letters, because they, as it were, introduce them into the hearts of the learners, or rather lead those whom they teach into them. Therefore no nation could vaunt itself over our patriarchs and prophets by any wicked vanity for the antiquity of its wisdom; since not even Egypt, which is wont falsely and vainly to glory in the antiquity of her doctrines, is found to have preceded in time the wisdom of our patriarchs in her own wisdom, such as it is. Neither will any one dare to say that they were most skillful in wonderful sciences before they knew letters, that is, before Isis came and taught them there. Besides, what, for the most part, was that memorable doctrine of theirs which was called wisdom but astronomy, and it may be some other sciences of that kind, which usually have more power to exercise men’s wit than to enlighten their minds with true wisdom? As regards philosophy, which professes to teach men something which shall make them happy, studies of that kind flourished in those lands about the times of Mercury, whom they called Trismegistus, long before the sages and philosophers of Greece, but yet after Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, and even after Moses himself. At that time, indeed, when Moses was born, Atlas is found to have lived, that great astronomer, the brother of Prometheus, and maternal grandson of the elder Mercury, of whom that Mercury Trismegistus was the grandson.

CHAPTER 40

ABOUT THE MOST MENDACIOUS VANITY OF THE EGYPTIANS, IN WHICH THEY ASCRIBE TO THEIR SCIENCE AN ANTIQUITY OF A HUNDRED THOUSAND YEARS

In vain, then, do some babble with most empty presumption, saying that Egypt has understood the reckoning of the stars for more than a hundred thousand years. For in what books have they collected that number who learned letters from Isis their mistress, not much more than two thousand years ago? Varro, who has declared this, is no small authority in history, and it does not disagree with the truth of the divine books. For as it is not yet six thousand years since the first man, who is called Adam, are not those to be ridiculed rather than refuted who try to persuade us of anything regarding a space of time so different from, and contrary to, the ascertained truth? For what historian of the past should we credit more than him who has also predicted things to come which we now see fulfilled? And the very disagreement of the historians among themselves furnishes a good reason why we ought rather to believe him who does not contradict the divine history which we hold. But, on the other hand, the citizens of the impious city, scattered everywhere through the earth, when they read the most learned writers, none of whom seems to be of contemptible authority, and find them disagreeing among themselves about affairs most remote from the memory of our age, cannot find out whom they ought to trust. But we, being sustained by divine authority in the history of our religion, have no doubt that whatever is opposed to it is most false, whatever may be the case regarding other things in secular books, which, whether true or false, yield nothing of moment to our living rightly and happily.

CHAPTER 41

ABOUT THE DISCORD OF PHILOSOPHIC OPINION, AND THE CONCORD OF THE SCRIPTURES THAT ARE HELD AS CANONICAL BY THE CHURCH

But let us omit further examination of history, and return to the philosophers from whom we digressed to these things. They seem to have labored in their studies for no other end than to find out how to live in a way proper for laying hold of blessedness. Why, then, have the disciples dissented from their masters, and the fellow-disciples from one another, except because as men they have sought after these things by human sense and human reasonings? Now, although there might be among them a desire of glory, so that each wished to be thought wiser and more acute than another, and in no way addicted to the judgment of others, but the inventor of his own dogma and opinion, yet I may grant that there were some, or even very many of them, whose love of truth severed them from their teachers or fellow-disciples, that they might strive for what they thought was the truth, whether it was so or not. But what can human misery do, or how or where can it reach forth, so as to attain blessedness, if divine authority does not lead it? Finally, let our authors, among whom the canon of the sacred books is fixed and bounded, be far from disagreeing in any respect. It is not without good reason, then, that not merely a few people prating in the schools and gymnasia in captious disputations, but so many and great people, both learned and unlearned, in countries and cities, have believed that God spoke to them or by them, i.e. the canonical writers, when they wrote these books. There ought, indeed, to be but few of them, lest on account of their multitude what ought to be religiously esteemed should grow cheap; and yet not so few that their agreement should not be wonderful. For among the multitude of philosophers, who in their works have left behind them the monuments of their dogmas, no one will easily find any who agree in all their opinions. But to show this is too long a task for this work.

But what author of any sect is so approved in this demon-worshipping city, that the rest who have differed from or opposed him in opinion have been disapproved? The Epicureans asserted that human affairs were not under the providence of the gods; and the Stoics, holding the opposite opinion, agreed that they were ruled and defended by favora ble and tutelary gods. Yet were not both sects famous among the Athenians? I wonder, then, why Anaxagoras was accused of a crime for saying that the sun was a burning stone, and denying that it was a god at all; while in the same city Epicurus flourished gloriously and lived securely, although he not only did not believe that the sun or any star was a god, but contended that neither Jupiter nor any of the gods dwelt in the world at all, so that the prayers and supplications of men might reach them! Were not both Aristippus and Antisthenes there, two noble philosophers and both Socratic? yet they placed the chief end of life within bounds so diverse and contradictory, that the first made the delight of the body the chief good, while the other asserted that man was made happy mainly by the virtue of the mind. The one also said that the wise man should flee from the republic; the other, that he should administer its affairs. Yet did not each gather disciples to follow his own sect? Indeed, in the conspicuous and well-known porch, in gymnasia, in gardens, in places public and private, they openly strove in bands each for his own opinion, some asserting there was one world, others innumerable worlds; some that this world had a beginning, others that it had not; some that it would perish, others that it would exist always; some that it was governed by the divine mind, others by chance and accident; some that souls are immortal, others that they are mortal,—and of those who asserted their immortality, some said they transmigrated through beasts, others that it was by no means so; while of those who asserted their mortality, some said they perished immediately after the body, others that they survived either a little while or a longer time, but not always; some fixing supreme good in the body, some in the mind, some in both; others adding to the mind and body external good things; some thinking that the bodily senses ought to be trusted always, some not always, others never. Now what people, senate, power, or public dignity of the impious city has ever taken care to judge between all these and other well-nigh innumerable dissensions of the philosophers, approving and accepting some, and disapproving and rejecting others? Has it not held in its bosom at random, without any judgment, and confusedly, so many controversies of men at variance, not about fields, houses, or anything of a pecuniary nature, but about those things which make life either miserable or happy? Even if some true things were said in it, yet falsehoods were uttered with the same licence; so that such a city has not amiss received the title of the mystic Babylon. For Babylon means confusion, as we remember we have already explained. Nor does it matter to the devil, its king, how they wrangle among themselves in contradictory errors, since all alike deservedly belong to him on account of their great and varied impiety.

But that nation, that people, that city, that republic, these Israelites, to whom the oracles of God were entrusted, by no means confounded with similar licence false prophets with the true prophets; but, agreeing together, and differing in nothing, acknowledged and upheld the authentic authors of their sacred books. These were their philosophers, these were their sages, divines, prophets, and teachers of probity and piety. Whoever was wise and lived according to them was wise and lived not according to men, but according to God who hath spoken by them. If sacrilege is forbidden there, God hath forbidden it. If it is said, “Honor thy father and thy mother,” God hath commanded it. If it is said, “Thou shall not commit adultery, Thou shall not kill, Thou shall not steal,” and other similar commandments, not human lips but the divine oracles have enounced them. Whatever truth certain philosophers, amid their false opinions, were able to see, and strove by laborious discussions to persuade men of,—such as that God had made this world, and Himself most providently governs it, or of the nobility of the virtues, of the love of country, of fidelity in friendship, of good works and everything pertaining to virtuous manners, although they knew not to what end and what rule all these things were to be referred,—all these, by words prophetic, that is, divine, although spoken by men, were commended to the people in that city, and not inculcated by contention in arguments, so that he who should know them might be afraid of contemning, not the wit of men, but the oracle of God.

CHAPTER 42

BY WHAT DISPENSATION OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE THE SACRED SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT WERE TRANSLATED OUT OF HEBREW INTO GREEK, THAT THEY MIGHT BE MADE KNOWN TO ALL THE NATIONS

One of the Ptolemies, kings of Egypt, desired to know and have these sacred books. For after Alexander of Macedon, who is also styled the Great, had by his most wonderful, but by no means enduring power, subdued the whole of Asia, yea, almost the whole world, partly by force of arms, partly by terror, and, among other kingdoms of the East, had entered and obtained Judea also, on his death his generals did not peaceably divide that most ample kingdom among them for a possession, but rather dissipated it, wasting all things by wars. Then Egypt began to have the Ptolemies as her kings. The first of them, the son of Lagus, carried many captive out of Judea into Egypt. But another Ptolemy, called Philadelphus, who succeeded him, permitted all whom he had brought under the yoke to return free; and more than that, sent kingly gifts to the temple of God, and begged Eleazar, who was the high priest, to give him the Scriptures, which he had heard by report were truly divine, and therefore greatly desired to have in that most noble library he had made. When the high priest had sent them to him in Hebrew, he afterwards demanded interpreters of him, and there were given him seventy-two, out of each of the twelve tribes six men, most learned in both languages, to wit, the Hebrew and Greek and their translation is now by custom called the Septuagint. It is reported, indeed, that there was an agreement in their words so wonderful, stupendous, and plainly divine, that when they had sat at this work, each one apart (for so it pleased Ptolemy to test their fidelity), they differed from each other in no word which had the same meaning and force, or, in the order of the words; but, as if the translators had been one, so what all had translated was one, because in very deed the one Spirit had been in them all. And they received so wonderful a gift of God, in order that the authority of these Scriptures might be commended not as human but divine, as indeed it was, for the benefit of the nations who should at some time believe, as we now see them doing.

CHAPTER 43

OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE SEPTUAGINT TRANSLATION, WHICH, SAVING THE HONOR OF THE HEBREW ORIGINAL, IS TO BE PREFERRED TO ALL TRANSLATIONS

For while there were other interpreters who translated these sacred oracles out of the Hebrew tongue into Greek, as Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, and also that translation which, as the name of the author is unknown, is quoted as the fifth edition, yet the Church has received this Septuagint translation just as if it were the only one; and it has been used by the Greek Christian people, most of whom are not aware that there is any other. From this translation there has also been made a translation in the Latin tongue, which the Latin churches use. Our times, however, have enjoyed the advantage of the presbyter Jerome, a man most learned, and skilled in all three languages, who translated these same Scriptures into the Latin speech, not from the Greek, but from the Hebrew. But although the Jews acknowledge this very learned labor of his to be faithful, while they contend that the Septuagint translators have erred in many places, still the churches of Christ judge that no one should be preferred to the authority of so many men, chosen for this very great work by Eleazar, who was then high priest; for even if there had not appeared in them one spirit, without doubt divine, and the seventy learned men had, after the manner of men, compared together the words of their translation, that what pleased them all might stand, no single translator ought to be preferred to them; but since so great a sign of divinity has appeared in them, certainly, if any other translator of their Scriptures from the Hebrew into any other tongue is faithful, in that case he agrees with these seventy translators, and if he is not found to agree with them, then we ought to believe that the prophetic gift is with them. For the same Spirit who was in the prophets when they spoke these things was also in the seventy men when they translated them, so that assuredly they could also say something else, just as if the prophet himself had said both, because it would be the same Spirit who said both; and could say the same thing differently, so that, although the words were not the same, yet the same meaning should shine forth to those of good understanding; and could omit or add something, so that even by this it might be shown that there was in that work not human bondage, which the translator owed to the words, but rather divine power, which filled and ruled the mind of the translator. Some, however, have thought that the Greek copies of the Septuagint version should be emended from the Hebrew copies; yet they did not dare to take away what the Hebrew lacked and the Septuagint had, but only added what was found in the Hebrew copies and was lacking in the Septuagint, and noted them by placing at the beginning of the verses certain marks in the form of stars which they call asterisks. And those things which the Hebrew copies have not, but the Septuagint have, they have in like manner marked at the beginning of the verses by horizontal spit-shaped marks like those by which we denote ounces; and many copies having these marks are circulated even in Latin. But we cannot, without inspecting both kinds of copies, find out those things which are neither omitted nor added, but expressed differently, whether they yield another meaning not in itself unsuitable, or can be shown to explain the same meaning in another way. If, then, as it behoves us, we behold nothing else in these Scriptures than what the Spirit of God has spoken through men, if anything is in the Hebrew copies and is not in the version of the Seventy, the Spirit of God did not choose to say it through them, but only through the prophets. But whatever is in the Septuagint and not in the Hebrew copies, the same Spirit chose rather to say through the latter, thus showing that both were prophets. For in that manner He spoke as He chose, some things through Isaiah, some through Jeremiah, some through several prophets, or else the same thing through this prophet and through that. Further, whatever is found in both editions, that one and the same Spirit willed to say through both, but so as that the former preceded in prophesying, and the latter followed in prophetically interpreting them; because, as the one Spirit of peace was in the former when they spoke true and concordant words, so the selfsame one Spirit hath appeared in the latter, when, without mutual conference they yet interpreted all things as if with one mouth.

CHAPTER 44

HOW THE THREAT OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE NINEVITES IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD WHICH IN THE HEBREW EXTENDS TO FORTY DAYS, WHILE IN THE SEPTUAGINT IT IS CONTRACTED TO THREE

But some one may say, “How shall I know whether the prophet Jonah said to the Ninevites, Yet three days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,’ or forty days?” For who does not see that the prophet could not say both, when he was sent to terrify the city by the threat of imminent ruin? For if its destruction was to take place on the third day, it certainly could not be on the fortieth; but if on the fortieth, then certainly not on the third. If, then, I am asked which of these Jonah may have said, I rather think what is read in the Hebrew, “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” Yet the Seventy, interpreting long afterward, could say what was different and yet pertinent to the matter, and agree in the self-same meaning, although under a different signification. And this may admonish the reader not to despise the authority of either, but to raise himself above the history, and search for those things which the history itself was written to set forth. These things, indeed, took place in the city of Nineveh, but they also signified something else too great to apply to that city; just as, when it happened that the prophet himself was three days in the whale’s belly, it signified besides, that He who is Lord of all the prophets should be three days in the depths of hell. Wherefore, if that city is rightly held as prophetically representing the Church of the Gentiles, to wit, as brought down by penitence, so as no longer to be what it had been, since this was done by Christ in the Church of the Gentiles, which Nineveh represented, Christ Himself was signified both by the forty and by the three days: by the forty, because He spent that number of days with His disciples after the resurrection, and then ascended into heaven, but by the three days, because He rose on the third day. So that, if the reader desires nothing else than to adhere to the history of events, he may be aroused from his sleep by the Septuagint interpreters, as well as the prophets, to search into the depth of the prophecy, as if they had said, In the forty days seek Him in whom thou mayest also find the three days,—the one thou wilt find in His ascension, the other in His resurrection. Because that which could be most suitably signified by both numbers, of which one is used by Jonah the prophet, the other by the prophecy of the Septuagint version, the one and self-same Spirit hath spoken. I dread prolixity, so that I must not demonstrate this by many instances in which the seventy interpreters may be thought to differ from the Hebrew, and yet, when well understood, are found to agree. For which reason I also, according to my capacity, following the footsteps of the apostles, who themselves have quoted prophetic testimonies from both, that is, from the Hebrew and the Septuagint, have thought that both should be used as authoritative, since both are one, and divine. But let us now follow out as we can what remains.

CHAPTER 45

THAT THE JEWS CEASED TO HAVE PROPHETS AFTER THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE, AND FROM THAT TIME UNTIL THE BIRTH OF CHRIST WERE AFFLICTED WITH CONTINUAL ADVERSITY, TO PROVE THAT THE BUILDING OF ANOTHER TEMPLE HAD BEEN PROMISED BY PROPHETIC VOICES

The Jewish nation no doubt became worse after it ceased to have prophets, just at the very time when, on the rebuilding of the temple after the captivity in Babylon, it hoped to become better. For so, indeed, did that car nal people understand what was foretold by Haggai the prophet, saying, “The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former.” Now, that this is said of the new testament, he showed a little above, where he says, evidently promising Christ, “And I will move all nations, and the desired One shall come to all nations.” In this passage the Septuagint translators giving another sense more suitable to the body than the Head, that is, to the Church than to Christ, have said by prophetic authority, “The things shall come that are chosen of the Lord from all nations,” that is, men, of whom Jesus saith in the Gospel, “Many are called, but few are chosen.” For by such chosen ones of the nations there is built, through the new testament, with living stones, a house of God far more glorious than that temple was which was constructed by king Solomon, and rebuilt after the captivity. For this reason, then, that nation had no prophets from that time, but was afflicted with many plagues by kings of alien race, and by the Romans themselves, lest they should fancy that this prophecy of Haggai was fulfilled by that rebuilding of the temple.

For not long after, on the arrival of Alexander, it was subdued, when, although there was no pillaging, because they dared not resist him, and thus, being very easily subdued, received him peaceably, yet the glory of that house was not so great as it was when under the free power of their own kings. Alexander, indeed, offered up sacrifices in the temple of God, not as a convert to His worship in true piety, but thinking, with impious folly, that He was to be worshipped along with false gods. Then Ptolemy son of

Lagus, whom I have already mentioned, after Alexander’s death carried them captive into Egypt. His successor, Ptolemy Philadelphus, most benevolently dismissed them; and by him it was brought about, as I have narrated a little before, that we should have the Septuagint version of the Scriptures. Then they were crushed by the wars which are explained in the books of the Maccabees. Afterward they were taken captive by Ptolemy king of Alexandria, who was called Epiphanes. Then Antiochus king of Syria compelled them by many and most grievous evils to worship idols, and filled the temple itself with the sacrilegious superstitions of the Gentiles. Yet their most vigorous leader Judas, who is also called Maccabaeus, after beating the generals of Antiochus, cleansed it from all that defilement of idolatry.

But not long after, one Alcimus, although an alien from the sacerdotal tribe, was, through ambition, made pontiff, which was an impious thing. After almost fifty years, during which they never had peace, although they prospered in some affairs, Aristobulus first assumed the diadem among them, and was made both king and pontiff. Before that, indeed, from the time of their return from the Babylonish captivity and the rebuilding of the temple, they had not kings, but generals or principes. Although a king himself may be called a prince, from his principality in governing, and a leader, because he leads the army, but it does not follow that all who are princes and leaders may also be called kings, as that Aristobulus was. He was succeeded by Alexander, also both king and pontiff, who is reported to have reigned over them cruelly. After him his wife Alexandra was queen of the Jews, and from her time downwards more grievous evils pursued them; for this Alexandra’s sons, Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, when contending with each other for the kingdom, called in the Roman forces against the nation of Israel. For Hyrcanus asked assistance from them against his brother. At that time Rome had already subdued Africa and Greece, and ruled extensively in other parts of the world also, and yet, as if unable to bear her own weight, had, in a manner, broken herself by her own size. For indeed she had come to grave domestic seditions, and from that to social wars, and by and by to civil wars, and had enfeebled and worn herself out so much, that the changed state of the republic, in which she should be governed by kings, was now imminent. Pompey then, a most illustrious prince of the Roman people, having entered Judea with an army, took the city, threw open the temple, not with the devotion of a suppliant, but with the authority of a conqueror, and went, not reverently, but profanely, into the holy of holies, where it was lawful for none but the pontiff to enter. Having established Hyrcanus in the pontificate, and set Antipater over the subjugated nation as guardian or procurator, as they were then called, he led Aristobulus with him bound. From that time the Jews also began to be Roman tributaries. Afterward Cassius plundered the very temple. Then after a few years it was their desert to have Herod, a king of foreign birth, in whose reign Christ was born. For the time had now come signified by the prophetic Spirit through the mouth of the patriarch Jacob, when he says, “There shall not be lacking a prince out of Judah, nor a teacher from his loins, until He shall come for whom it is reserved; and He is the expectation of the nations.” There lacked not therefore a Jewish prince of the Jews until that Herod, who was the first king of a foreign race received by them. Therefore it was now the time when He should come for whom that was reserved which is promised in the New Testament, that He should be the expectation of the nations. But it was not possible that the nations should expect He would come, as we see they did, to do judgment in the splendor of power, unless they should first believe in Him when He came to suffer judgment in the humility of patience.

CHAPTER 46

OF THE BIRTH OF OUR SAVIOUR, WHEREBY THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH; AND OF THE DISPERSION OF THE JEWS AMONG ALL NATIONS, AS HAD BEEN PROPHESIED

While Herod, therefore, reigned in Judea, and Caesar Augustus was emperor at Rome, the state of the republic being already changed, and the world being set at peace by him, Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judah, man manifest out of a human virgin, God hidden out of God the Father. For so had the prophet foretold: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive in the womb, and bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us.” He did many miracles that He might commend God in Himself, some of which, even as many as seemed sufficient to proclaim Him, are contained in the evangelic Scripture. The first of these is, that He was so wonderfully born, and the last, that with His body raised up again from the dead He ascended into heaven. But the Jews who slew Him, and would not believe in Him, because it behoved Him to die and rise again, were yet more miserably wasted by the Romans, and utterly rooted out from their kingdom, where aliens had already ruled over them, and were dispersed through the lands (so that indeed there is no place where they are not), and are thus by their own Scriptures a testimony to us that we have not forged the prophecies about Christ. And very many of them, considering this, even before His passion, but chiefly after His resurrection, believed on Him, of whom it was predicted, “Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant shall be saved.” But the rest are blinded, of whom it was predicted, “Let their table be made before them a trap, and a retribution, and a stumbling-block. Let their eyes be darkened lest they see, and bow down their back alway.” Therefore, when they do not believe our Scriptures, their own, which they blindly read, are fulfilled in them, lest perchance any one should say that the Christians have forged these prophecies about Christ which are quoted under the name of the sibyl, or of others, if such there be, who do not belong to the Jewish people. For us, indeed, those suffice which are quoted from the books of our enemies, to whom we make our acknowledgment, on account of this testimony which, in spite of themselves, they contribute by their possession of these books, while they themselves are dispersed among all nations, wherever the Church of Christ is spread abroad. For a prophecy about this thing was sent before in the Psalms, which they also read, where it is written, “My God, His mercy shall prevent me. My God hath shown me concerning mine enemies, that Thou shalt not slay them, lest they should at last forget Thy law: disperse them in Thy might.” Therefore God has shown the Church in her enemies the Jews the grace of His compassion, since, as saith the apostle, “their offence is the salvation of the Gentiles.” And therefore He has not slain them, that is, He has not let the knowledge that they are Jews be lost in them, although they have been conquered by the Romans, lest they should forget the law of God, and their testimony should be of no avail in this matter of which we treat. But it was not enough that he should say, “Slay them not, lest they should at last forget Thy law,” unless he had also added, “Disperse them;” because if they had only been in their own land with that testimony of the Scriptures, and not every where, certainly the Church which is everywhere could not have had them as witnesses among all nations to the prophecies which were sent before concerning Christ.

CHAPTER 47

WHETHER BEFORE CHRISTIAN TIMES THERE WERE ANY OUTSIDE OF THE ISRAELITE RACE WHO BELONGED TO THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HEAVENLY CITY

Wherefore if we read of any foreigner—that is, one neither born of Israel nor received by that people into the canon of the sacred books—having prophesied something about Christ, if it has come or shall come to our knowledge, we can refer to it over and above; not that this is necessary, even if wanting, but because it is not incongruous to believe that even in other nations there may have been men to whom this mystery was revealed, and who were also impelled to proclaim it, whether they were partakers of the same grace or had no experience of it, but were taught by bad angels, who, as we know, even confessed the present Christ, whom the Jews did not acknowledge. Nor do I think the Jews themselves dare contend that no one has belonged to God except the Israelites, since the increase of Israel began on the rejection of his elder brother. For in very deed there was no other people who were specially called the people of God; but they cannot deny that there have been certain men even of other nations who belonged, not by earthly but heavenly fellowship, to the true Israelites, the citizens of the country that is above. Because, if they deny this, they can be most easily confuted by the case of the holy and wonderful man Job, who was neither a native nor a proselyte, that is, a stranger joining the people of Israel, but, being bred of the Idumean race, arose there and died there too, and who is so praised by the divine oracle, that no man of his times is put on a level with him as regards justice and piety. And although we do not find his date in the chronicles, yet from his book, which for its merit the Israelites have received as of canonical authority, we gather that he was in the third generation after Israel. And I doubt not it was divinely provided, that from this one case we might know that among other nations also there might be men pertaining to the spiritual Jerusalem who have lived according to God and have pleased Him. And it is not to be supposed that this was granted to any one, unless the one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, was divinely revealed to him; who was pre-announced to the saints of old as yet to come in the flesh, even as He is announced to us as having come, that the self-same faith through Him may lead all to God who are predestinated to be the city of God, the house of God, and the temple of God. But whatever prophecies concerning the grace of God through Christ Jesus are quoted, they may be thought to have been forged by the Christians. So that there is nothing of more weight for confuting all sorts of aliens, if they contend about this matter, and for supporting our friends, if they are truly wise, than to quote those divine predictions about Christ which are written in the books of the Jews, who have been torn from their native abode and dispersed over the whole world in order to bear this testimony, so that the Church of Christ has everywhere increased.

CHAPTER 48

THAT HAGGAI’S PROPHECY, IN WHICH HE SAID THAT THE GLORY OF THE HOUSE OF GOD WOULD BE GREATER THAN THAT OF THE FIRST HAD BEEN, WAS REALLY FULFILLED, NOT IN THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE, BUT IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

This house of God is more glorious than that first one which was constructed of wood and stone, metals and other precious things. Therefore the prophecy of Haggai was not fulfilled in the rebuilding of that temple. For it can never be shown to have had so much glory after it was rebuilt as it had in the time of Solomon; yea, rather, the glory of that house is shown to have been diminished, first by the ceasing of prophecy, and then by the nation itself suffering so great calamities, even to the final destruction made by the Romans, as the things above-mentioned prove. But this house which pertains to the new testament is just as much more glorious as the living stones, even believing, renewed men, of which it is constructed are better. But it was typified by the rebuilding of that temple for this reason, because the very renovation of that edifice typifies in the prophetic oracle another testament which is called the new. When, therefore, God said by the prophet just named, “And I will give peace in this place,” He is to be understood who is typified by that typical place; for since by that rebuilt place is typified the Church which was to be built by Christ, nothing else can be accepted as the meaning of the saying, “I will give peace in this place,” except I will give peace in the place which that place signifies. For all typical things seem in some way to personate those whom they typify, as it is said by the apostle, “That Rock was Christ.” Therefore the glory of this new testament house is greater than the glory of the old testament house; and it will show itself as greater when it shall be dedicated. For then “shall come the desired of all nations,” as we read in the Hebrew. For before His advent He had not yet been desired by all nations. For they knew not Him whom they ought to desire, in whom they had not believed. Then, also, according to the Septuagint interpretation (for it also is a prophetic meaning), “shall come those who are elected of the Lord out of all nations.” For then indeed there shall come only those who are elected, whereof the apostle saith, “According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.” For the Master Builder who said, “Many are called, but few are chosen,” did not say this of those who, on being called, came in such a way as to be cast out from the feast, but would point out the house built up of the elect, which henceforth shall dread no ruin. Yet because the churches are also full of those who shall be separated by the winnowing as in the threshing-floor, the glory of this house is not so apparent now as it shall be when every one who is there shall be there always.

CHAPTER 49

OF THE INDISCRIMINATE INCREASE OF THE CHURCH, WHEREIN MANY REPROBATE ARE IN THIS WORLD MIXED WITH THE ELECT

In this wicked world, in these evil days, when the Church measures her future loftiness by her present humility, and is exercised by goading fears, tormenting sorrows, disquieting labors, and dangerous temptations, when she soberly rejoices, rejoicing only in hope, there are many reprobate mingled with the good, and both are gathered together by the gospel as in a drag net; and in this world, as in a sea, both swim enclosed without distinction in the net, until it is brought ashore, when the wicked must be separated from the good, that in the good, as in His temple, God may be all in all. We acknowledge, indeed, that His word is now fulfilled who spake in the psalm, and said, “I have announced and spoken; they are multiplied above number.” This takes place now, since He has spoken, first by the mouth of his forerunner John, and afterward by His own mouth, saying, “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” He chose disciples, whom He also called apostles, of lowly birth, unhonored, and illiterate, so that whatever great thing they might be or do, He might be and do it in them. He had one among them whose wickedness He could use well in order to accomplish His appointed passion, and furnish His Church an example of bearing with the wicked. Having sown the holy gospel as much as that behoved to be done by His bodily presence, He suffered, died, and rose again, showing by His passion what we ought to suffer for the truth, and by His resurrection what we ought to hope for in adversity; saving always the mystery of the sacrament, by which His blood was shed for the remission of sins. He held converse on the earth forty days with His disciples, and in their sight ascended into heaven, and after ten days sent the promised Holy Spirit. It was given as the chief and most necessary sign of His coming on those who had believed, that every one of them spoke in the tongues of all nations; thus signifying that the unity of the catholic Church would embrace all nations, and would in like manner speak in all tongues.

CHAPTER 50

OF THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL, WHICH IS MADE MORE FAMOUS AND POWERFUL BY THE SUFFERINGS OF ITS PREACHERS

Then was fulfilled that prophecy, “Out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem;” and the prediction of the Lord Christ Himself, when, after the resurrection, “He opened the understanding” of His amazed disciples “that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, that thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” And again, when, in reply to their questioning about the day of His last coming, He said, “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power; but ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even unto the ends of the earth.” First of all, the Church spread herself abroad from Jerusalem; and when very many in Judea and Samaria had believed, she also went into other nations by those who announced the gospel, whom, as lights, He

Himself had both prepared by His word and kindled by His Holy Spirit. For He had said to them, “Fear ye not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.” And that they might not be frozen with fear, they burned with the fire of charity. Finally, the gospel of Christ was preached in the whole world, not only by those who had seen and heard Him both before His passion and after His resurrection, but also after their death by their successors, amid the horrible persecutions, diverse torments and deaths of the martyrs, God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, that the people of the nations, believing in Him who was crucified for their redemption, might venerate with Christian love the blood of the martyrs which they had poured forth with devilish fury, and the very kings by whose laws the Church had been laid waste might become profitably subject to that name they had cruelly striven to take away from the earth, and might begin to persecute the false gods for whose sake the worshippers of the true God had formerly been persecuted.

CHAPTER 51

THAT THE CATHOLIC FAITH MAY BE CONFIRMED EVEN BY THE DISSENSIONS OF THE HERETICS

But the devil, seeing the temples of the demons deserted, and the human race running to the name of the liberating Mediator, has moved the heretics under the Christian name to resist the Christian doctrine, as if they could be kept in the city of God indifferently without any correction, just as the city of confusion indifferently held the philosophers who were of diverse and adverse opinions. Those, therefore, in the Church of Christ who savor anything morbid and depraved, and, on being corrected that they may savor what is wholesome and right, contumaciously resist, and will not amend their pestiferous and deadly dogmas, but persist in defending them, become heretics, and, going without, are to be reckoned as enemies who serve for her discipline. For even thus they profit by their wickedness those true catholic members of Christ, since God makes a good use even of the wicked, and all things work together for good to them that love Him. For all the enemies of the Church, whatever error blinds or malice depraves them, exercise her patience if they receive the power to afflict her corporally; and if they only oppose her by wicked thought, they exercise her wisdom: but at the same time, if these enemies are loved, they exercise her benevolence, or even her beneficence, whether she deals with them by persuasive doctrine or by terrible discipline. And thus the devil, the prince of the impious city, when he stirs up his own vessels against the city of God that sojourns in this world, is permitted to do her no harm. For without doubt the divine providence procures for her both consolation through prosperity, that she may not be broken by adversity, and trial through adversity, that she may not be corrupted by prosperity; and thus each is tempered by the other, as we recognize in the Psalms that voice which arises from no other cause, "According to the multitude of my griefs in my heart, Thy consolations have delighted my soul." Hence also is that saying of the apostle, "Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation."

For it is not to be thought that what the same teacher says can at any time fail, "Whoever will live piously in Christ shall suffer persecution." Because even when those who are without do not rage, and thus there seems to be, and really is, tranquillity, which brings very much consolation, especially to the weak, yet there are not wanting, yea, there are many within who by their abandoned manners torment the hearts of those who live piously, since by them the Christian and catholic name is blasphemed; and the dearer that name is to those who will live piously in Christ, the more do they grieve that through the wicked, who have a place within, it comes to be less loved than pious minds desire. The heretics themselves also, since they are thought to have the Christian name and sacraments, Scriptures, and profession, cause great grief in the hearts of the pious, both because many who wish to be Christians are compelled by their dissensions to hesitate, and many evil-speakers also find in them matter for blaspheming the Christian name, because they too are at any rate called Christians. By these and similar depraved manners and errors of men, those who will live piously in Christ suffer persecution, even when no one molests or vexes their body; for they suffer this persecution, not in their bodies, but in their hearts. Whence is that word, "According to the multitude of my griefs in my heart;" for he does not say, in my body. Yet, on the other hand, none of them can perish, because the immutable divine promises are thought of. And because the apostle says, "The Lord knoweth them that are His; for whom He did foreknow, He also predestinated [to be] conformed to the image of His Son," none of them can perish; therefore it follows in that psalm, "Thy consolations have delighted my soul." But that grief which arises in the hearts of the pious, who are persecuted by the manners of bad or false Christians, is profitable to the sufferers, because it proceeds from the charity in which they do not wish them either to perish or to hinder the salvation of others. Finally, great consolations grow out of their chastisement, which imbue the souls of the pious with a fecundity as great as the pains with which they were troubled concerning their own perdition. Thus in this world, in these evil days, not only from the time of the bodily presence of Christ and His apostles, but even from that of Abel, whom first his wicked brother slew because he was righteous, and thenceforth even to the end of this world, the Church has gone forward on pilgrimage amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God.

CHAPTER 52

WHETHER WE SHOULD BELIEVE WHAT SOME THINK, THAT, AS THE TEN PERSECUTIONS WHICH ARE PAST HAVE BEEN FULFILLED, THERE REMAINS NO OTHER BEYOND THE ELEVENTH, WHICH MUST HAPPEN IN THE VERY TIME OF ANTICHRIST

I do not think, indeed, that what some have thought or may think is rashly said or believed, that until the time of Antichrist the Church of Christ is not to suffer any persecutions besides those she has already suffered,—that is, ten,—and that the eleventh and last shall be inflicted by Antichrist. They reckon as the first that made by Nero, the second by Domitian, the third by Trajan, the fourth by Antoninus, the fifth by Severus, the sixth by Maximin, the seventh by Decius, the eighth by Valerian, the ninth by Aurelian, the tenth by Diocletian and Maximian. For as there were ten plagues in Egypt before the people of God could begin to go out, they think this is to be referred to as showing that the last persecution by Antichrist must be like the eleventh plague, in which the Egyptians, while following the Hebrews with hostility, perished in the Red Sea when the people of God passed through on dry land. Yet I do not think persecutions were prophetically signified by what was done in Egypt, however nicely and ingeniously those who think so may seem to have compared the two in detail, not by the prophetic Spirit, but by the conjecture of the human mind, which sometimes hits the truth, and sometimes is deceived. But what can those who think this say of the persecution in which the Lord Himself was crucified? In which number will they put it? And if they think the reckoning is to be made exclusive of this one, as if those must be counted which pertain to the body, and not that in which the Head Himself was set upon and slain, what can they make of that one which, after Christ ascended into heaven, took place in Jerusalem, when the blessed Stephen was stoned; when James the brother of John was slaughtered with the sword; when the Apostle Peter was imprisoned to be killed, and was set free by the angel; when the brethren were driven away and scattered from Jerusalem; when Saul, who afterward became the Apostle Paul, wasted the Church; and when he himself, publishing the glad tidings of the faith he had persecuted, suffered such things as he had inflicted, either from the Jews or from other nations, where he most fervently preached Christ everywhere? Why, then, do they think fit to start with Nero, when the Church in her growth had reached the times of Nero amid the most cruel persecutions; about which it would be too long to say anything? But if they think that only the persecutions made by kings ought to be reckoned, it was king Herod who also made a most grievous one after the ascension of the Lord. And what account do they give of Julian, whom they do not number in the ten? Did not he persecute the Church, who forbade the Christians to teach or learn liberal letters? Under him the elder Valentinian, who was the third emperor after him, stood forth as a confessor of the Christian faith, and was dismissed from his command in the army. I shall say nothing of what he did at Antioch, except to mention his being struck with wonder at the freedom and cheerfulness of one most faithful and steadfast young man, who, when many were seized to be tortured, was tortured during a whole day, and sang under the instrument of torture, until the emperor feared lest he should succumb under the continued cruelties and put him to shame at last, which made him dread and fear that he would be yet more dishonorably put to the blush by the rest. Lastly, within our own recollection, did not Valens the Arian, brother of the foresaid Valentinian, waste the catholic Church by great persecution throughout the East? But how unreasonable it is not to consider that the Church, which bears fruit and grows through the whole world, may suffer persecution from kings in some nations even when she does not suffer it in others! Perhaps, however, it was not to be reckoned a persecution when the king of the Goths, in Gothia itself, persecuted the Christians with wonderful cruelty, when there were none but catholics there, of whom very many were crowned with martyrdom, as we have heard from certain brethren who had been there at that time as boys, and unhesitatingly called to mind that they had seen these things? And what took place in Persia of late? Was not persecution so hot against the Christians (if even yet it is allayed) that some of the fugitives from it came even to Roman towns? When I think of these and the like things, it does not seem to me that the number of persecutions with which the Church is to be tried can be definitely stated. But, on the other hand, it is no less rash to affirm that there will be some persecutions by kings besides that last one, about which no Christian is in doubt. Therefore we leave this undecided, supporting or refuting neither side of this question, but only restraining men from the audacious presumption of affirming either of them.

CHAPTER 53

OF THE HIDDEN TIME OF THE FINAL PERSECUTION

Truly Jesus Himself shall extinguish by His presence that last persecution which is to be made by Antichrist. For so it is written, that “He shall slay him with the breath of His mouth, and empty him with the brightness of His presence.” It is customary to ask, When shall that be? But this is quite unreasonable. For had it been profitable for us to know this, by whom could it better have been told than by God Himself, the Master, when the disciples questioned Him? For they were not silent when with Him, but inquired of Him, saying, “Lord, wilt Thou at this time present the kingdom to Israel, or when?” But He said, “It is not for you to know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power.” When they got that answer, they had not at all questioned Him about the hour, or day, or year, but about the time. In vain, then, do we attempt to compute definitely the years that may remain to this world, when we may hear from the mouth of the Truth that it is not for us to know this. Yet some have said that four hundred, some five hundred, others a thousand years, may be completed from the ascension of the Lord up to His final coming. But to point out how each of them supports his own opinion would take too long, and is not necessary; for indeed they use human conjectures, and bring forward nothing certain from the authority of the canonical Scriptures. But on this subject He puts aside the figures of the calculators, and orders silence, who says, “It is not for you to know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power.”

But because this sentence is in the Gospel, it is no wonder that the worshippers of the many and false gods have been none the less restrained from feigning that by the responses of the demons, whom they worship as gods, it has been fixed how long the Christian religion is to last. For when they saw that it could not be consumed by so many and great persecutions, but rather drew from them wonderful enlargements, they invented I know not what Greek verses, as if poured forth by a divine oracle to some one consulting it, in which, indeed, they make Christ innocent of this, as it were, sacrilegious crime, but add that Peter by enchantments brought it about that the name of Christ should be worshipped for three hundred and sixty-five years, and, after the completion of that number of years, should at once take end. Oh the hearts of learned men! Oh, learned wits, meet to believe such things about Christ as you are not willing to believe in Christ, that His disciple Peter did not learn magic arts from Him, yet that, although He was innocent, His disciple was an enchanter, and chose that His name rather than his own should be worshipped through his magic arts, his great labors and perils, and at last even the shedding of his blood! If Peter the enchanter made the world so love Christ, what did Christ the innocent do to make Peter so love Him? Let them answer themselves then, and, if they can, let them understand that the world, for the sake of eternal life, was made to love Christ by that same supernal grace which made Peter also love Christ for the sake of the eternal life to be received from Him, and that even to the extent of suffering temporal death for Him. And then, what kind of gods are these who are able to predict such things, yet are not able to avert them, succumbing in such a way to a single enchanter and wicked magician (who, as they say, having slain a yearling boy and torn him to pieces, buried him with nefarious rites), that they permitted the sect hostile to themselves to gain strength for so great a time, and to surmount the horrid cruelties of so many great persecutions, not by resisting but by suffering, and to procure the overthrow of their own images, temples, rituals, and oracles? Finally, what god was it—not ours, certainly, but one of their own—who was either enticed or compelled by so great wickedness to perform these things? For those verses say that Peter bound, not any demon, but a god to do these things. Such a god have they who have not Christ.

CHAPTER 54

OF THE VERY FOOLISH LIE OF THE PAGANS, IN FEIGNING THAT THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION WAS NOT TO LAST BEYOND THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIVE YEARS

I might collect these and many similar arguments, if that year had not already passed by which lying divination has promised, and deceived vanity has believed. But as a few years ago three hundred and sixty-five years were completed since the time when the worship of the name of Christ was established by His presence in the flesh, and by the apostles, what other proof need we seek to refute that falsehood? For, not to place the beginning of this period at the nativity of Christ, because as an infant and boy He had no disciples, yet, when He began to have them, beyond doubt the Christian doctrine and religion then became known through His bodily presence, that is, after He was baptized in the river Jordan by the ministry of John. For on this account that prophecy went before concerning Him: “He shall reign from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.” But since, before He suffered and rose from the dead, the faith had not yet been defined to all, but was defined in the resurrection of Christ (for so the Apostle Paul speaks to the Athenians, saying, “But now He announces to men that all everywhere should repent, because He hath appointed a day in which to judge the world in equity, by the Man in whom He hath defined the faith to all men, raising Him from the dead”), it is better that, in settling this question, we should start from that point, especially because the Holy Spirit was then given, just as He behoved to be given after the resurrection of Christ in that city from which the second law, that is, the new testament, ought to begin. For the first, which is called the old testament was given from Mount Sinai through Moses. But concerning this which was to be given by Christ it was predicted, “Out of Sion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem;” whence He Himself said that repentance in His name behoved to be preached among all nations, but yet beginning at Jerusalem. There, therefore, the worship of this name took its rise, that Jesus should be believed in, who died and rose again. There this faith blazed up with such noble beginnings, that several thousand men, being converted to the name of Christ with wonderful alacrity, sold their goods for distribution among the needy, thus, by a holy resolution and most ardent charity, coming to voluntary poverty, and prepared themselves, amid the Jews who raged and thirsted for their blood, to contend for the truth even to death, not with armed power, but with more powerful patience. If this was accomplished by no magic arts, why do they hesitate to believe that the other could be done throughout the whole world by the same divine power by which this was done? But supposing Peter wrought that enchantment so that so great a multitude of men at Jerusalem was thus kindled to worship the name of Christ, who had either seized and fastened Him to the cross, or reviled Him when fastened there, we must still inquire when the three hundred and sixty-five years must be completed, counting from that year. Now Christ died when the Gemini were consuls, on the eighth day before the kalends of April. He rose the third day, as the apostles have proved by the evidence of their own senses. Then forty days after, He ascended into heaven. Ten days after, that is, on the fiftieth after his resurrection, He sent the Holy Spirit; then three thousand men believed when the apostles preached Him. Then, therefore, arose the worship of that name, as we believe, and according to the real truth, by the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, but, as impious vanity has feigned or thought, by the magic arts of Peter. A little afterward, too, on a wonderful sign being wrought, when at Peter’s own word a certain beggar, so lame from his mother’s womb that he was carried by others and laid down at the gate of the temple, where he begged alms, was made whole in the name of Jesus Christ, and leaped up, five thousand men believed, and thenceforth the Church grew by sundry accessions of believers. Thus we gather the very day with which that year began, namely, that on which the Holy Spirit was sent, that is, during the ides of May. And, on counting the consuls, the three hundred and sixty-five years are found completed on the same ides in the consulate of Honorius and Eutychianus. Now, in the following year, in the consulate of Mallius Theodorus, when, according to that oracle of the demons or figment of men, there ought already to have been no Christian religion, it was not necessary to inquire, what perchance was done in other parts of the earth. But, as we know, in the most noted and eminent city, Carthage, in Africa, Gaudentius and Jovius, officers of the Emperor Honorius, on the fourteenth day before the kalends of April, overthrew the temples and broke the images of the false gods. And from that time to the present, during almost thirty years, who does not see how much the worship of the name of Christ has increased, especially after many of those became Christians who had been kept back from the faith by thinking that divination true, but saw when that same number of years was completed that it was empty and ridiculous? We, therefore, who are called and are Christians, do not believe in Peter, but in Him whom Peter believed,—being edified by Peter's sermons about Christ, not poisoned by his incantations; and not deceived by his enchantments, but aided by his good deeds. Christ Himself, who was Peter's Master in the doctrine which leads to eternal life, is our Master too.

But let us now at last finish this book, after thus far treating of, and showing as far as seemed sufficient, what is the mortal course of the two cities, the heavenly and the earthly, which are mingled together from the beginning down to the end. Of these, the earthly one has made to herself of whom she would, either from any other quarter, or even from among men, false gods whom she might serve by sacrifice; but she which is heavenly and is a pilgrim on the earth does not make false gods, but is herself made by the true God of whom she herself must be the true sacrifice. Yet both alike either enjoy temporal good things, or are afflicted with temporal evils, but with diverse faith, diverse hope, and diverse love, until they must be separated by the last judgment, and each must receive her own end, of which there is no end. About these ends of both we must next treat.

Book XIX

Argument—In this book the end of the two cities, the earthly and the heavenly, is discussed. Augustin reviews the opinions of the philosophers regarding the supreme good, and their vain efforts to make for themselves a happiness in this life; and, while he refutes these, he takes occasion to show what the peace and happiness belonging to the heavenly city, or the people of Christ, are both now and hereafter.

CHAPTER 1

THAT VARRO HAS MADE OUT THAT TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-EIGHT DIFFERENT SECTS OF PHILOSOPHY MIGHT BE FORMED BY THE VARIOUS OPINIONS REGARDING THE SUPREME GOOD

As I see that I have still to discuss the fit destinies of the two cities, the earthly and the heavenly, I must first explain, so far as the limits of this work allow me, the reasonings by which men have attempted to make for themselves a happiness in this unhappy life, in order that it may be evident, not only from divine authority, but also from such reasons as can be adduced to unbelievers, how the empty dreams of the philosophers differ from the hope which God gives to us, and from the substantial fulfillment of it which He will give us as our blessedness. Philosophers have expressed a great variety of diverse opinions regarding the ends of goods and of evils, and this question they have eagerly canvassed, that they might, if possible, discover what makes a man happy. For the end of our good is that for the sake of which other things are to be desired, while it is to be desired for its own sake; and the end of evil is that on account of which other things are to be shunned, while it is avoided on its own account. Thus, by the end of good, we at present mean, not that by which good is destroyed, so that it no longer exists, but that by which it is finished, so that it becomes complete; and by the end of evil we mean, not that which abolishes it, but that which completes its development. These two ends, therefore, are the supreme good and the supreme evil; and, as I have said, those who have in this vain life professed the study of wisdom have been at great pains to discover these ends, and to obtain the supreme good and avoid the supreme evil in this life. And although they erred in a variety of ways, yet natural insight has prevented them from wandering from the truth so far that they have not placed the supreme good and evil, some in the soul, some in the body, and some in both. From this tripartite distribution of the sects of philosophy, Marcus Varro, in his book De Philosophia, has drawn so large a variety of opinions, that, by a subtle and minute analysis of distinctions, he numbers without difficulty as many as 288 sects,—not that these have actually existed, but sects which are possible.

To illustrate briefly what he means, I must begin with his own introductory statement in the above-mentioned book, that there are four things which men desire, as it were by nature without a master, without the help of any instruction, without industry or the art of living which is called virtue, and which is certainly learned: either pleasure, which is an agreeable stirring of the bodily sense; or repose, which excludes every bodily inconvenience; or both these, which Epicurus calls by the one name, pleasure; or the primary objects of nature, which comprehend the things already named and other things, either bodily, such as health, and safety, and integrity of the members, or spiritual, such as the greater and less mental gifts that are found in men. Now these four things—pleasure, repose, the two combined, and the primary objects of nature—exist in us in such sort that we must either desire virtue on their account, or them for the sake of virtue, or both for their own sake; and consequently there arise from this distinction twelve sects, for each is by this consideration tripled. I will illustrate this in one instance, and, having done so, it will not be difficult to understand the others. According, then, as bodily pleasure is subjected, preferred, or united to virtue, there are three sects. It is subjected to virtue when it is chosen as subservient to virtue. Thus it is a duty of virtue to live for one’s country, and for its sake to beget children, neither of which can be done without bodily pleasure. For there is pleasure in eating and drinking, pleasure also in sexual intercourse. But when it is preferred to virtue, it is desired for its own sake, and virtue is chosen only for its sake, and to effect nothing else than the attainment or preservation of bodily pleasure. And this, indeed, is to make life hideous; for where virtue is the slave of pleasure it no longer deserves the name of virtue. Yet even this disgraceful distortion has found some philosophers to patronize and defend it. Then virtue is united to pleasure when neither is desired for the other's sake, but both for their own. And therefore, as pleasure, according as it is subjected, preferred, or united to virtue, makes three sects, so also do repose, pleasure and repose combined, and the prime natural blessings, make their three sects each. For as men's opinions vary, and these four things are sometimes subjected, sometimes preferred, and sometimes united to virtue, there are produced twelve sects. But this number again is doubled by the addition of one difference, viz., the social life; for whoever attaches himself to any of these sects does so either for his own sake alone, or for the sake of a companion, for whom he ought to wish what he desires for himself. And thus there will be twelve of those who think some one of these opinions should be held for their own sakes, and other twelve who decide that they ought to follow this or that philosophy not for their own sakes only, but also for the sake of others whose good they desire as their own. These twenty-four sects again are doubled, and become forty-eight by adding a difference taken from the New Academy. For each of these four and twenty sects can hold and defend their opinion as certain, as the Stoics defended the position that the supreme good of man consisted solely in virtue; or they can be held as probable, but not certain, as the New Academics did. There are, therefore, twenty-four who hold their philosophy as certainly true, other twenty-four who hold their opinions as probable, but not certain. Again, as each person who attaches himself to any of these sects may adopt the mode of life either of the Cynics or of the other philosophers, this distinction will double the number, and so make ninety-six sects. Then, lastly, as each of these sects may be adhered to either by men who love a life of ease, as those who have through choice or necessity addicted themselves to study, or by men who love a busy life, as those who, while philosophizing, have been much occupied with state affairs and public business, or by men who choose a mixed life, in imitation of those who have apportioned their time partly to erudite leisure, partly to necessary business: by these differences the number of the sects is tripled, and becomes 288.

I have thus, as briefly and lucidly as I could, given in my own words the opinions which Varro expresses in his book. But how he refutes all the rest of these sects, and chooses one, the Old Academy, instituted by Plato, and continuing to Polemo, the fourth teacher of that school of philosophy which held that their system was certain; and how on this ground he distinguishes it from the New Academy, which began with Polemo's successor Arcesilaus, and held that all things are uncertain; and how he seeks to establish that the Old Academy was as free from error as from doubt,—all this, I say, were too long to enter upon in detail, and yet I must not altogether pass it by in silence. Varro then rejects, as a first step, all those differences which have multiplied the number of sects; and the ground on which he does so is that they are not differences about the supreme good. He maintains that in philosophy a sect is created only by its having an opinion of its own different from other schools on the point of the ends-in-chief. For man has no other reason for philosophizing than that he may be happy; but that which makes him happy is itself the supreme good. In other words, the supreme good is the reason of philosophizing; and therefore that cannot be called a sect of philosophy which pursues no way of its own towards the supreme good. Thus, when it is asked whether a wise man will adopt the social life, and desire and be interested in the supreme good of his friend as in his own, or will, on the contrary, do all that he does merely for his own sake, there is no question here about the supreme good, but only about the propriety of associating or not associating a friend in its participation: whether the wise man will do this not for his own sake, but for the sake of his friend in whose good he delights as in his own. So, too, when it is asked whether all things about which philosophy is concerned are to be considered uncertain, as by the New Academy, or certain, as the other philosophers maintain, the question here is not what end should be pursued, but whether or not we are to believe in the substantial existence of that end; or, to put it more plainly, whether he who pursues the supreme good must maintain that it is a true good, or only that it appears to him to be true, though possibly it may be delusive,—both pursuing one and the same good. The distinction, too, which is founded on the dress and manners of the Cynics, does not touch the question of the chief good, but only the question whether he who pursues that good which seems to himself true should live as do the Cynics. There were, in fact, men who, though they pursued different things as the supreme good, some choosing pleasure, others virtue, yet adopted that mode of life which gave the Cynics their name. Thus, whatever it is which distinguishes the Cynics from other philosophers, this has no bearing on the choice and pursuit of that good which constitutes happiness. For if it had any such bearing, then the same habits of life would necessitate the pursuit of the same chief good, and diverse habits would necessitate the pursuit of different ends.

CHAPTER 2

HOW VARRO, BY REMOVING ALL THE DIFFERENCES WHICH DO NOT FORM SECTS, BUT ARE MERELY SECONDARY QUESTIONS, REACHES THREE DEFINITIONS OF THE CHIEF GOOD, OF WHICH WE MUST CHOOSE ONE

The same may be said of those three kinds of life, the life of studious leisure and search after truth, the life of easy engagement in affairs, and the life in which both these are mingled. When it is asked, which of these should be adopted, this involves no controversy about the end of good, but inquires which of these three puts a man in the best position for finding and retaining the supreme good. For this good, as soon as a man finds it, makes him happy; but lettered leisure, or public business, or the alternation of these, do not necessarily constitute happiness. Many, in fact, find it possible to adopt one or other of these modes of life, and yet to miss what makes a man happy. The question, therefore, regarding the supreme good and the supreme evil, and which distinguishes sects of philosophy, is one; and these questions concerning the social life, the doubt of the Academy, the dress and food of the Cynics, the three modes of life—the active, the contemplative, and the mixed—these are different questions, into none of which the question of the chief good enters. And therefore, as Marcus Varro multiplied the sects to the number of 288 (or whatever larger number he chose) by introducing these four differences derived from the social life, the New Academy, the Cynics, and the threefold form of life, so, by removing these differences as having no bearing on the supreme good, and as therefore not constituting what can properly be called sects, he returns to those twelve schools which concern themselves with inquiring what that good is which makes man happy, and he shows that one of these is true, the rest false. In other words, he dismisses the distinction founded on the threefold mode of life, and so decreases the whole number by two-thirds, reducing the sects to ninety-six. Then, putting aside the Cynic peculiarities, the number decreases by a half, to forty-eight. Taking away next the distinction occasioned by the hesitancy of the New Academy, the number is again halved, and reduced to twenty-four. Treating in a similar way the diversity introduced by the consideration of the social life, there are left but twelve, which this difference had doubled to twenty-four. Regarding these twelve, no reason can be assigned why they should not be called sects. For in them the sole inquiry is regarding the supreme good and the ultimate evil,—that is to say, regarding the supreme good, for this being found, the opposite evil is thereby found. Now, to make these twelve sects, he multiplies by three these four things—pleasure, repose, pleasure and repose combined, and the primary objects of nature which Varro calls primigenia. For as these four things are sometimes subordinated to virtue, so that they seem to be desired not for their own sake, but for virtue's sake; sometimes preferred to it, so that virtue seems to be necessary not on its own account, but in order to attain these things; sometimes joined with it, so that both they and virtue are desired for their own sakes,—we must multiply the four by three, and thus we get twelve sects. But from those four things Varro eliminates three—pleasure, repose, pleasure and repose combined—not because he thinks these are not worthy of the place assigned them, but because they are included in the primary objects of nature. And what need is there, at any rate, to make a threefold division out of these two ends, pleasure and repose, taking them first severally and then conjunctly, since both they, and many other things besides, are comprehended in the primary objects of nature? Which of the three remaining sects must be chosen? This is the question that Varro dwells upon. For whether one of these three or some other be chosen, reason forbids that more than one be true. This we shall afterwards see; but meanwhile let us explain as briefly and distinctly as we can how Varro makes his selection from these three, that is, from the sects which severally hold that the primary objects of nature are to be desired for virtue's sake, that virtue is to be desired for their sake, and that virtue and these objects are to be desired each for their own sake.

CHAPTER 3

WHICH OF THE THREE LEADING OPINIONS REGARDING THE CHIEF GOOD SHOULD BE PREFERRED, ACCORDING TO VARRO, WHO FOLLOWS ANTIOCHUS AND THE OLD ACADEMY

Which of these three is true and to be adopted he attempts to show in the following manner. As it is the supreme good, not of a tree, or of a beast, or of a god, but of man that philosophy is in quest of, he thinks that, first of all, we must define man. He is of opinion that there are two parts in human nature, body and soul, and makes no doubt that of these two the soul is the better and by far the more worthy part. But whether the soul alone is the man, so that the body holds the same relation to it as a horse to the horseman, this he thinks has to be ascertained. The horseman is not a horse and a man, but only a man, yet he is called a horseman, because he is in some relation to the horse. Again, is the body alone the man, having a relation to the soul such as the cup has to the drink? For it is not the cup and the drink it contains which are called the cup, but the cup alone; yet it is so called because it is made to hold the drink. Or, lastly, is it neither the soul alone nor the body alone, but both together, which are man, the body and the soul being each a part, but the whole man being both together, as we call two horses yoked together a pair, of which pair the near and the off horse is each a part, but we do not call either of them, no matter how connected with the other, a pair, but only both together? Of these three alternatives, then, Varro chooses the third, that man is neither the body alone, nor the soul alone, but both together. And therefore the highest good, in which lies the happiness of man, is composed of goods of both kinds, both bodily and spiritual. And consequently he thinks that the primary objects of nature are to be sought for their own sake, and that virtue, which is the art of living, and can be communicated by instruction, is the most excellent of spiritual goods. This virtue, then, or art of regulating life, when it has received these primary objects of nature which existed independently of it, and prior to any instruction, seeks them all, and itself also, for its own sake; and it uses them, as it also uses itself, that from them all it may derive profit and enjoyment, greater or less, according as they are themselves greater or less; and while it takes pleasure in all of them, it despises the less that it may obtain or retain the greater when occasion demands. Now, of all goods, spiritual or bodily, there is none at all to compare with virtue. For virtue makes a good use both of itself and of all other goods in which lies man’s happiness; and where it is absent, no matter how many good things a man has, they are not for his good, and consequently should not be called good things while they belong to one who makes them useless by using them badly. The life of man, then, is called happy when it enjoys virtue and these other spiritual and bodily good things without which virtue is impossible. It is called happier if it enjoys some or many other good things which are not essential to virtue; and happiest of all, if it lacks not one of the good things which pertain to the body and the soul. For life is not the same thing as virtue, since not every life, but a wisely regulated life, is virtue; and yet, while there can be life of some kind without virtue, there cannot be virtue without life. This I might apply to memory and reason, and such mental faculties; for these exist prior to instruction, and without them there cannot be any instruction, and consequently no virtue, since virtue is learned. But bodily advantages, such as swiftness of foot, beauty, or strength, are not essential to virtue, neither is virtue essential to them, and yet they are good things; and, according to our philosophers, even these advantages are desired by virtue for its own sake, and are used and enjoyed by it in a becoming manner.

They say that this happy life is also social, and loves the advantages of its friends as its own, and for their sake wishes for them what it desires for itself, whether these friends live in the same family, as a wife, children, domestics; or in the locality where one’s home is, as the citizens of the same town; or in the world at large, as the nations bound in common human brotherhood; or in the universe itself, comprehended in the heavens and the earth, as those whom they call gods, and provide as friends for the wise man, and whom we more familiarly call angels. Moreover, they say that, regarding the supreme good and evil, there is no room for doubt, and that they therefore differ from the New Academy in this respect, and they are not concerned whether a philosopher pursues those ends which they think true in the Cynic dress and manner of life or in some other. And, lastly, in regard to the three modes of life, the contemplative, the active, and the composite, they declare in favor of the third. That these were the opinions and doctrines of the Old Academy, Varro asserts on the authority of Antiochus, Cicero’s master and his own, though Cicero makes him out to have been more frequently in accordance with the Stoics than with the Old Academy. But of what importance is this to us, who ought to judge the matter on its own merits, rather than to understand accurately what different men have thought about it?

CHAPTER 4

WHAT THE CHRISTIANS BELIEVE REGARDING THE SUPREME GOOD AND EVIL, IN OPPOSITION TO THE PHILOSOPHERS, WHO HAVE MAINTAINED THAT THE SUPREME GOOD IS IN THEMSELVES

If, then, we be asked what the city of God has to say upon these points, and, in the first place, what its opinion regarding the supreme good and evil is, it will reply that life eternal is the supreme good, death eternal the supreme evil, and that to obtain the one and escape the other we must live rightly. And thus it is written, “The just lives by faith,” for we do not as yet see our good, and must therefore live by faith; neither have we in ourselves power to live rightly, but can do so only if He who has given us faith to believe in His help do help us when we believe and pray. As for those who have supposed that the sovereign good and evil are to be found in this life, and have placed it either in the soul or the body, or in both, or, to speak more explicitly, either in pleasure or in virtue, or in both; in repose or in virtue, or in both; in pleasure and repose, or in virtue, or in all combined; in the primary objects of nature, or in virtue, or in both,—all these have, with a marvelous shallowness, sought to find their blessedness in this life and in themselves. Contempt has been poured upon such ideas by the Truth, saying by the prophet, “The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men” (or, as the Apostle Paul cites the passage, “The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise”) “that they are vain.”

For what flood of eloquence can suffice to detail the miseries of this life? Cicero, in the Consolation on the death of his daughter, has spent all his ability in lamentation; but how inadequate was even his ability here? For when, where, how, in this life can these primary objects of nature be possessed so that they may not be assailed by unforeseen accidents? Is the body of the wise man exempt from any pain which may dispel pleasure, from any disquietude which may banish repose? The amputation or decay of the members of the body puts an end to its integrity, deformity blights its beauty, weakness its health, lassitude its vigor, sleepiness or sluggishness its activity,—and which of these is it that may not assail the flesh of the wise man? Comely and fitting attitudes and movements of the body are numbered among the prime natural blessings; but what if some sickness makes the members tremble? what if a man suffers from curvature of the spine to such an extent that his hands reach the ground, and he goes upon all-fours like a quadruped? Does not this destroy all beauty and grace in the body, whether at rest or in motion? What shall I say of the fundamental blessings of the soul, sense and intellect, of which the one is given for the perception, and the other for the comprehension of truth? But what kind of sense is it that remains when a man becomes deaf and blind? where are reason and intellect when disease makes a man delirious? We can scarcely, or not at all, refrain from tears, when we think of or see the actions and words of such frantic persons, and consider how different from and even opposed to their own sober judgment and ordinary conduct their present demeanor is. And what shall I say of those who suffer from demoniacal possession? Where is their own intelligence hidden and buried while the malignant spirit is using their body and soul according to his own will? And who is quite sure that no such thing can happen to the wise man in this life? Then, as to the perception of truth, what can we hope for even in this way while in the body, as we read in the true book of Wisdom, “The corruptible body weigheth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle presseth down the mind that museth upon many things?” And eagerness, or desire of action, if this is the right meaning to put upon the Greek horme, is also reckoned among the primary advantages of nature; and yet is it not this which produces those pitiable movements of the insane, and those actions which we shudder to see, when sense is deceived and reason deranged?

In fine, virtue itself, which is not among the primary objects of nature, but succeeds to them as the result of learning, though it holds the highest place among human good things, what is its occupation save to wage perpetual war with vices,—not those that are outside of us, but within; not other men’s, but our own,—a war which is waged especially by that virtue which the Greeks call sophrosune, and we temperance, and which bridles carnal lusts, and prevents them from winning the consent of the spirit to wicked deeds? For we must not fancy that there is no vice in us, when, as the apostle says, “The flesh lusteth against the spirit;” for to this vice there is a contrary virtue, when, as the same writer says, “The spirit lusteth against the flesh.” “For these two,” he says, “are contrary one to the other, so that you cannot do the things which you would.” But what is it we wish to do when we seek to attain the supreme good, unless that the flesh should cease to lust against the spirit, and that there be no vice in us against which the spirit may lust? And as we cannot attain to this in the present life, however ardently we desire it, let us by God's help accomplish at least this, to preserve the soul from succumbing and yielding to the flesh that lusts against it, and to refuse our consent to the perpetration of sin. Far be it from us, then, to fancy that while we are still engaged in this intestine war, we have already found the happiness which we seek to reach by victory. And who is there so wise that he has no conflict at all to maintain against his vices?

What shall I say of that virtue which is called prudence? Is not all its vigilance spent in the discernment of good from evil things, so that no mistake may be admitted about what we should desire and what avoid? And thus it is itself a proof that we are in the midst of evils, or that evils are in us; for it teaches us that it is an evil to consent to sin, and a good to refuse this consent. And yet this evil, to which prudence teaches and temperance enables us not to consent, is removed from this life neither by prudence nor by temperance. And justice, whose office it is to render to every man his due, whereby there is in man himself a certain just order of nature, so that the soul is subjected to God, and the flesh to the soul, and consequently both soul and flesh to God,—does not this virtue demonstrate that it is as yet rather laboring towards its end than resting in its finished work? For the soul is so much the less subjected to God as it is less occupied with the thought of God; and the flesh is so much the less subjected to the spirit as it lusts more vehemently against the spirit. So long, therefore, as we are beset by this weakness, this plague, this disease, how shall we dare to say that we are safe? and if not safe, then how can we be already enjoying our final beatitude? Then that virtue which goes by the name of fortitude is the plainest proof of the ills of life, for it is these ills which it is compelled to bear patiently. And this holds good, no matter though the ripest wisdom co-exists with it. And I am at a loss to understand how the Stoic philosophers can presume to say that these are no ills, though at the same time they allow the wise man to commit suicide and pass out of this life if they become so grievous that he cannot or ought not to endure them. But such is the stupid pride of these men who fancy that the supreme good can be found in this life, and that they can become happy by their own resources, that their wise man, or at least the man whom they fancifully depict as such, is always happy, even though he become blind, deaf, dumb, mutilated, racked with pains, or suffer any conceivable calamity such as may compel him to make away with himself; and they are not ashamed to call the life that is beset with these evils happy. O happy life, which seeks the aid of death to end it? If it is happy, let the wise man remain in it; but if these ills drive him out of it, in what sense is it happy? Or how can they say that these are not evils which conquer the virtue of fortitude, and force it not only to yield, but so to rave that it in one breath calls life happy and recommends it to be given up? For who is so blind as not to see that if it were happy it would not be fled from? And if they say we should flee from it on account of the infirmities that beset it, why then do they not lower their pride and acknowledge that it is miserable? Was it, I would ask, fortitude or weakness which prompted Cato to kill himself? for he would not have done so had he not been too weak to endure Caesar's victory. Where, then, is his fortitude? It has yielded, it has succumbed, it has been so thoroughly overcome as to abandon, forsake, flee this happy life. Or was it no longer happy? Then it was miserable. How, then, were these not evils which made life miserable, and a thing to be escaped from?

And therefore those who admit that these are evils, as the Peripatetics do, and the Old Academy, the sect which Varro advocates, express a more intelligible doctrine; but theirs also is a surprising mistake, for they contend that this is a happy life which is beset by these evils, even though they be so great that he who endures them should commit suicide to escape them. "Pains and anguish of body," says Varro, "are evils, and so much the worse in proportion to their severity; and to escape them you must quit this life." What life, I pray? This life, he says, which is oppressed by such evils. Then it is happy in the midst of these very evils on account of which you say we must quit it? Or do you call it happy because you are at liberty to escape these evils by death? What, then, if by some secret judgment of God you were held fast and not permitted to die, nor suffered to live without these evils? In that case, at least, you would say that such a life was miserable. It is soon relinquished, no doubt but this does not make it not miserable; for were it eternal, you yourself would pronounce it miserable. Its brevity, therefore, does not clear it of misery; neither ought it to be called happiness because it is a brief misery. Certainly there is a mighty force in these evils which compel a man—according to them even a wise man—to cease to be a man that he may escape them, though they say, and say truly, that it is as it were the first and strongest demand of nature that a man cherish himself, and naturally therefore avoid death, and should so stand his own friend as to wish and vehemently aim at continuing to exist as a living creature, and subsisting in this union of soul and body. There is a mighty force in these evils to overcome this natural instinct by which death is by every means and with all a man's efforts avoided, and to overcome it so completely that what was avoided is desired, sought after, and if it cannot in any other way be obtained, is inflicted by the man on himself. There is a mighty force in these evils which make fortitude a homicide,—if, indeed, that is to be called fortitude which is so thoroughly overcome by these evils, that it not only cannot preserve by patience the man whom it undertook to govern and defend, but is itself obliged to kill him. The wise man, I admit, ought to bear death with patience, but when it is inflicted by another. If, then, as these men maintain, he is obliged to inflict it on himself, certainly it must be owned that the ills which compel him to this are not only evils, but intolerable evils. The life, then, which is either subject to accidents, or environed with evils so considerable and grievous, could never have been called happy, if the men who give it this name had condescended to yield to the truth, and to be conquered by valid arguments, when they inquired after the happy life, as they yield to unhappiness, and are overcome by overwhelming evils, when they put themselves to death, and if they had not fancied that the supreme good was to be found in this mortal life; for the very virtues of this life, which are certainly its best and most useful possessions, are all the more telling proofs of its miseries in proportion as they are helpful against the violence of its dangers, toils, and woes. For if these are true virtues,—and such cannot exist save in those who have true piety,—they do not profess to be able to deliver the men who possess them from all miseries; for true virtues tell no such lies, but they profess that by the hope of the future world this life, which is miserably involved in the many and great evils of this world, is happy as it is also safe. For if not yet safe, how could it be happy? And therefore the Apostle Paul, speaking not of men without prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice, but of those whose lives were regulated by true piety, and whose virtues were therefore true, says, “For we are saved by hope: now hope which is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” As, therefore, we are saved, so we are made happy by hope. And as we do not as yet possess a present, but look for a future salvation, so is it with our happiness, and this “with patience;” for we are encompassed with evils, which we ought patiently to endure, until we come to the ineffable enjoyment of unmixed good; for there shall be no longer anything to endure. Salvation, such as it shall be in the world to come, shall itself be our final happiness. And this happiness these philosophers refuse to believe in, because they do not see it, and attempt to fabricate for themselves a happiness in this life, based upon a virtue which is as deceitful as it is proud.

CHAPTER 5

OF THE SOCIAL LIFE, WHICH, THOUGH MOST DESIRABLE, IS FREQUENTLY DISTURBED BY MANY DISTRESSES

We give a much more unlimited approval to their idea that the life of the wise man must be social. For how could the city of God (concerning which we are already writing no less than the nineteenth book of this work) either take a beginning or be developed, or attain its proper destiny, if the life of the saints were not a social life? But who can enumerate all the great grievances with which human society abounds in the misery of this mortal state? Who can weigh them? Hear how one of their comic writers makes one of his characters express the common feelings of all men in this matter: “I am married; this is one misery. Children are born to me; they are additional cares.” What shall I say of the miseries of love which Terence also recounts—”slights, suspicions, quarrels, war to-day, peace to-morrow?” Is not human life full of such things? Do they not often occur even in honorable friendships? On all hands we experience these slights, suspicions, quarrels, war, all of which are undoubted evils; while, on the other hand, peace is a doubtful good, because we do not know the heart of our friend, and though we did know it to-day, we should be as ignorant of what it might be to-morrow. Who ought to be, or who are more friendly than those who live in the same family? And yet who can rely even upon this friendship, seeing that secret treachery has often broken it up, and produced enmity as bitter as the amity was sweet, or seemed sweet by the most perfect dissimulation? It is on this account that the words of Cicero so move the heart of every one, and provoke a sigh: “There are no snares more dangerous than those which lurk under the guise of duty or the name of relationship. For the man who is your declared foe you can easily baffle by precaution; but this hidden, intestine, and domestic danger not merely exists, but overwhelms you before you can foresee and examine it.” It is also to this that allusion is made by the divine saying, “A man’s foes are those of his own household,”—words which one cannot hear without pain; for though a man have sufficient fortitude to endure it with equanimity, and sufficient sagacity to baffle the malice of a pretended friend, yet if he himself is a good man, he cannot but be greatly pained at the discovery of the perfidy of wicked men, whether they have always been wicked and merely feigned goodness, or have fallen from a better to a malicious disposition. If, then, home, the natural refuge from the ills of life, is itself not safe, what shall we say of the city, which, as it is larger, is so much the more filled with lawsuits civil and criminal, and is never free from the fear, if sometimes from the actual outbreak, of disturbing and bloody insurrections and civil wars?

CHAPTER 6

OF THE ERROR OF HUMAN JUDGMENTS WHEN THE TRUTH IS HIDDEN

What shall I say of these judgments which men pronounce on men, and which are necessary in communities, whatever outward peace they enjoy? Melancholy and lamentable judgments they are, since the judges are men who cannot discern the consciences of those at their bar, and are therefore frequently compelled to put innocent witnesses to the torture to ascertain the truth regarding the crimes of other men. What shall I say of torture applied to the accused himself? He is tortured to discover whether he is guilty, so that, though innocent, he suffers most undoubted punishment for crime that is still doubtful, not because it is proved that he committed it, but because it is not ascertained that he did not commit it. Thus the ignorance of the judge frequently involves an innocent person in suffering. And what is still more unendurable—a thing, indeed, to be bewailed, and, if that were possible, watered with fountains of tears—is this, that when the judge puts the accused to the question, that he may not unwittingly put an innocent man to death, the result of this lamentable ignorance is that this very person, whom he tortured that he might not condemn him if innocent, is condemned to death both tortured and innocent. For if he has chosen, in obedience to the philosophical instructions to the wise man, to quit this life rather than endure any longer such tortures, he declares that he has committed the crime which in fact he has not committed. And when he has been condemned and put to death, the judge is still in ignorance whether he has put to death an innocent or a guilty person, though he put the accused to the torture for the very purpose of saving himself from condemning the innocent; and consequently he has both tortured an innocent man to discover his innocence, and has put him to death without discovering it. If such darkness shrouds social life, will a wise judge take his seat on the bench or no? Beyond question he will. For human society, which he thinks it a wickedness to abandon, constrains him and compels him to this duty. And he thinks it no wickedness that innocent witnesses are tortured regarding the crimes of which other men are accused; or that the accused are put to the torture, so that they are often overcome with anguish, and, though innocent, make false confessions regarding themselves, and are punished; or that, though they be not condemned to die, they often die during, or in consequence of, the torture; or that sometimes the accusers, who perhaps have been prompted by a desire to benefit society by bringing criminals to justice, are themselves condemned through the ignorance of the judge, because they are unable to prove the truth of their accusations though they are true, and because the witnesses lie, and the accused endures the torture without being moved to confession. These numerous and important evils he does not consider sins; for the wise judge does these things, not with any intention of doing harm, but because his ignorance compels him, and because human society claims him as a judge. But though we therefore acquit the judge of malice, we must none the less condemn human life as miserable. And if he is compelled to torture and punish the innocent because his office and his ignorance constrain him, is he a happy as well as a guiltless man? Surely it were proof of more profound considerateness and finer feeling were he to recognize the misery of these necessities, and shrink from his own implication in that misery; and had he any piety about him, he would cry to God “From my necessities deliver Thou me.”

CHAPTER 7

OF THE DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES, BY WHICH THE INTERCOURSE OF MEN IS PREVENTED; AND OF THE MISERY OF WARS, EVEN OF THOSE CALLED JUST

After the state or city comes the world, the third circle of human society,—the first being the house, and the second the city. And the world, as it is larger, so it is fuller of dangers, as the greater sea is the more dangerous. And here, in the first place, man is separated from man by the difference of languages. For if two men, each ignorant of the other’s language, meet, and are not compelled to pass, but, on the contrary, to remain in company, dumb animals, though of different species, would more easily hold intercourse than they, human beings though they be. For their common nature is no help to friendliness when they are prevented by diversity of language from conveying their sentiments to one another; so that a man would more readily hold intercourse with his dog than with a foreigner. But the imperial city has endeavored to impose on subject nations not only her yoke, but her language, as a bond of peace, so that interpreters, far from being scarce, are numberless. This is true; but how many great wars, how much slaughter and bloodshed, have provided this unity! And though these are past, the end of these miseries has not yet come. For though there have never been wanting, nor are yet wanting, hostile nations beyond the empire, against whom wars have been and are waged, yet, supposing there were no such nations, the very extent of the empire itself has produced wars of a more obnoxious description—social and civil wars—and with these the whole race has been agitated, either by the actual conflict or the fear of a renewed outbreak. If I attempted to give an adequate description of these manifold disasters, these stern and lasting necessities, though I am quite unequal to the task, what limit could I set? But, say they, the wise man will wage just wars. As if he would not all the rather lament the necessity of just wars, if he remembers that he is a man; for if they were not just he would not wage them, and would therefore be delivered from all wars. For it is the wrongdoing of the opposing party which compels the wise man to wage just wars; and this wrong-doing, even though it gave rise to no war, would still be matter of grief to man because it is man’s wrong-doing. Let every one, then, who thinks with pain on all these great evils, so horrible, so ruthless, acknowledge that this is misery. And if any one either endures or thinks of them without mental pain, this is a more miserable plight still, for he thinks himself happy because he has lost human feeling.

CHAPTER 8

THAT THE FRIENDSHIP OF GOOD MEN CANNOT BE SECURELY RESTED IN, SO LONG AS THE DANGERS OF THIS LIFE FORCE US TO BE ANXIOUS

In our present wretched condition we frequently mistake a friend for an enemy, and an enemy for a friend. And if we escape this pitiable blindness, is not the unfeigned confidence and mutual love of true and good friends our one solace in human society, filled as it is with misunderstandings and calamities? And yet the more friends we have, and the more widely they are scattered, the more numerous are our fears that some portion of the vast masses of the disasters of life may light upon them. For we are not only anxious lest they suffer from famine, war, disease, captivity, or the inconceivable horrors of slavery, but we are also affected with the much more painful dread that their friendship may be changed into perfidy, malice, and injustice. And when these contingencies actually occur,—as they do the more frequently the more friends we have, and the more widely they are scattered,—and when they come to our knowledge, who but the man who has experienced it can tell with what pangs the heart is torn? We would, in fact, prefer to hear that they were dead, although we could not without anguish hear of even this. For if their life has solaced us with the charms of friendship, can it be that their death should affect us with no sadness? He who will have none of this sadness must, if possible, have no friendly intercourse. Let him interdict or extinguish friendly affection; let him burst with ruthless insensibility the bonds of every human relationship; or let him contrive so to use them that no sweetness shall distil into his spirit. But if this is utterly impossible, how shall we contrive to feel no bitterness in the death of those whose life has been sweet to us? Hence arises that grief which affects the tender heart like a wound or a bruise, and which is healed by the application of kindly consolation. For though the cure is affected all the more easily and rapidly the better condition the soul is in, we must not on this account suppose that there is nothing at all to heal. Although, then, our present life is afflicted, sometimes in a milder, sometimes in a more painful degree, by the death of those very dear to us, and especially of useful public men, yet we would prefer to hear that such men were dead rather than to hear or perceive that they had fallen from the faith, or from virtue,—in other words, that they were spiritually dead. Of this vast material for misery the earth is full, and therefore it is written, “Is not human life upon earth a trial?” And with the same reference the Lord says, “Woe to the world because of offenses!” and again, “Because iniquity abounded, the love of many shall wax cold.” And hence we enjoy some gratification when our good friends die; for though their death leaves us in sorrow, we have the consolatory assurance that they are beyond the ills by which in this life even the best of men are broken down or corrupted, or are in danger of both results.

CHAPTER 9

OF THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE HOLY ANGELS, WHICH MEN CANNOT BE SURE OF IN THIS LIFE, OWING TO THE DECEIT OF THE DEMONS WHO HOLD IN BONDAGE THE WORSHIPPERS OF A PLURALITY OF GODS

The philosophers who wished us to have the gods for our friends rank the friendship of the holy angels in the fourth circle of society, advancing now from the three circles of society on earth to the universe, and embracing heaven itself. And in this friendship we have indeed no fear that the angels will grieve us by their death or deterioration. But as we cannot mingle with them as familiarly as with men (which itself is one of the grievances of this life), and as Satan, as we read, sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light, to tempt those whom it is necessary to discipline, or just to deceive, there is great need of God’s mercy to preserve us from making friends of demons in disguise, while we fancy we have good angels for our friends; for the astuteness and deceitfulness of these wicked spirits is equalled by their hurtfulness. And is this not a great misery of human life, that we are involved in such ignorance as, but for God’s mercy, makes us a prey to these demons? And it is very certain that the philosophers of the godless city, who have maintained that the gods were their friends, had fallen a prey to the malignant demons who rule that city, and whose eternal punishment is to be shared by it. For the nature of these beings is sufficiently evinced by the sacred or rather sacrilegious observances which form their worship, and by the filthy games in which their crimes are celebrated, and which they themselves originated and exacted from their worshippers as a fit propitiation.

CHAPTER 10

THE REWARD PREPARED FOR THE SAINTS AFTER THEY HAVE ENDURED THE TRIAL OF THIS LIFE

But not even the saints and faithful worshippers of the one true and most high God are safe from the manifold temptations and deceits of the demons. For in this abode of weakness, and in these wicked days, this state of anxiety has also its use, stimulating us to seek with keener longing for that security where peace is complete and unassailable. There we shall enjoy the gifts of nature, that is to say, all that God the Creator of all natures has bestowed upon ours,—gifts not only good, but eternal,—not only of the spirit, healed now by wisdom, but also of the body renewed by the resurrection. There the virtues shall no longer be struggling against any vice or evil, but shall enjoy the reward of victory, the eternal peace which no adversary shall disturb. This is the final blessedness, this the ultimate consummation, the unending end. Here, indeed, we are said to be blessed when we have such peace as can be enjoyed in a good life; but such blessedness is mere misery compared to that final felicity. When we mortals possess such peace as this mortal life can afford, virtue, if we are living rightly, makes a right use of the advantages of this peaceful condition; and when we have it not, virtue makes a good use even of the evils a man suffers. But this is true virtue, when it refers all the advantages it makes a good use of, and all that it does in making good use of good and evil things, and itself also, to that end in which we shall enjoy the best and greatest peace possible.

CHAPTER 11

OF THE HAPPINESS OF THE ETERNAL PEACE, WHICH CONSTITUTES THE END OR TRUE PERFECTION OF THE SAINTS

And thus we may say of peace, as we have said of eternal life, that it is the end of our good; and the rather because the Psalmist says of the city of God, the subject of this laborious work, “Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy

God, O Zion: for He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates; He hath blessed thy children within thee; who hath made thy borders peace.” For when the bars of her gates shall be strengthened, none shall go in or come out from her; consequently we ought to understand the peace of her borders as that final peace we are wishing to declare. For even the mystical name of the city itself, that is, Jerusalem, means, as I have already said, “Vision of Peace.” But as the word peace is employed in connection with things in this world in which certainly life eternal has no place, we have preferred to call the end or supreme good of this city life eternal rather than peace. Of this end the apostle says, “But now, being freed from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end life eternal.” But, on the other hand, as those who are not familiar with Scripture may suppose that the life of the wicked is eternal life, either because of the immortality of the soul, which some of the philosophers even have recognized, or because of the endless punishment of the wicked, which forms a part of our faith, and which seems impossible unless the wicked live for ever, it may therefore be advisable, in order that every one may readily understand what we mean, to say that the end or supreme good of this city is either peace in eternal life, or eternal life in peace. For peace is a good so great, that even in this earthly and mortal life there is no word we hear with such pleasure, nothing we desire with such zest, or find to be more thoroughly gratifying. So that if we dwell for a little longer on this subject, we shall not, in my opinion, be wearisome to our readers, who will attend both for the sake of understanding what is the end of this city of which we speak, and for the sake of the sweetness of peace which is dear to all.

CHAPTER 12

THAT EVEN THE FIERCENESS OF WAR AND ALL THE DISQUIETUDE OF MEN MAKE TOWARDS THIS ONE END OF PEACE, WHICH EVERY NATURE DESIRES

Whoever gives even moderate attention to human affairs and to our common nature, will recognize that if there is no man who does not wish to be joyful, neither is there any one who does not wish to have peace. For even they who make war desire nothing but victory,—desire, that is to say, to attain to peace with glory. For what else is victory than the conquest of those who resist us? and when this is done there is peace. It is therefore with the desire for peace that wars are waged, even by those who take pleasure in exercising their warlike nature in command and battle. And hence it is obvious that peace is the end sought for by war. For every man seeks peace by waging war, but no man seeks war by making peace. For even they who intentionally interrupt the peace in which they are living have no hatred of peace, but only wish it changed into a peace that suits them better. They do not, therefore, wish to have no peace, but only one more to their mind. And in the case of sedition, when men have separated themselves from the community, they yet do not effect what they wish, unless they maintain some kind of peace with their fellow-conspirators. And therefore even robbers take care to maintain peace with their comrades, that they may with greater effect and greater safety invade the peace of other men. And if an individual happen to be of such unrivalled strength, and to be so jealous of partnership, that he trusts himself with no comrades, but makes his own plots, and commits depredations and murders on his own account, yet he maintains some shadow of peace with such persons as he is unable to kill, and from whom he wishes to conceal his deeds. In his own home, too, he makes it his aim to be at peace with his wife and children, and any other members of his household; for unquestionably their prompt obedience to his every look is a source of pleasure to him. And if this be not rendered, he is angry, he chides and punishes; and even by this storm he secures the calm peace of his own home, as occasion demands. For he sees that peace cannot be maintained unless all the members of the same domestic circle be subject to one head, such as he himself is in his own house. And therefore if a city or nation offered to submit itself to him, to serve him in the same style as he had made his household serve him, he would no longer lurk in a brigand’s hiding-places, but lift his head in open day as a king, though the same coveteousness and wicked ness should remain in him. And thus all men desire to have peace with their own circle whom they wish to govern as suits themselves. For even those whom they make war against they wish to make their own, and impose on them the laws of their own peace.

But let us suppose a man such as poetry and mythology speak of,—a man so insociable and savage as to be called rather a semi-man than a man. Although, then, his kingdom was the solitude of a dreary cave, and he himself was so singularly bad-hearted that he was named Kakos, which is the Greek word for bad; though he had no wife to soothe him with endearing talk, no children to play with, no sons to do his bidding, no friend to enliven him with intercourse, not even his father Vulcan (though in one respect he was happier than his father, not having begotten a monster like himself); although he gave to no man, but took as he wished whatever he could, from whomsoever he could, when he could yet in that solitary den, the floor of which, as Virgil says, was always reeking with recent slaughter, there was nothing else than peace sought, a peace in which no one should molest him, or disquiet him with any assault or alarm. With his own body he desired to be at peace, and he was satisfied only in proportion as he had this peace. For he ruled his members, and they obeyed him; and for the sake of pacifying his mortal nature, which rebelled when it needed anything, and of allaying the sedition of hunger which threatened to banish the soul from the body, he made forays, slew, and devoured, but used the ferocity and savageness he displayed in these actions only for the preservation of his own life's peace. So that, had he been willing to make with other men the same peace which he made with himself in his own cave, he would neither have been called bad, nor a monster, nor a semi-man. Or if the appearance of his body and his vomiting smoky fires frightened men from having any dealings with him, perhaps his fierce ways arose not from a desire to do mischief, but from the necessity of finding a living. But he may have had no existence, or, at least, he was not such as the poets fancifully describe him, for they had to exalt Hercules, and did so at the expense of Cacus. It is better, then, to believe that such a man or semi-man never existed, and that this, in common with many other fancies of the poets, is mere fiction. For the most savage animals (and he is said to have been almost a wild beast) encompass their own species with a ring of protecting peace. They cohabit, beget, produce, suckle, and bring up their young, though very many of them are not gregarious, but solitary,—not like sheep, deer, pigeons, starlings, bees, but such as lions, foxes, eagles, bats. For what tigress does not gently purr over her cubs, and lay aside her ferocity to fondle them? What kite, solitary as he is when circling over his prey, does not seek a mate, build a nest, hatch the eggs, bring up the young birds, and maintain with the mother of his family as peaceful a domestic alliance as he can? How much more powerfully do the laws of man's nature move him to hold fellowship and maintain peace with all men so far as in him lies, since even wicked men wage war to maintain the peace of their own circle, and wish that, if possible, all men belonged to them, that all men and things might serve but one head, and might, either through love or fear, yield themselves to peace with him! It is thus that pride in its perversity apes God. It abhors equality with other men under Him; but, instead of His rule, it seeks to impose a rule of its own upon its equals. It abhors, that is to say, the just peace of God, and loves its own unjust peace; but it cannot help loving peace of one kind or other. For there is no vice so clean contrary to nature that it obliterates even the faintest traces of nature.

He, then, who prefers what is right to what is wrong, and what is well-ordered to what is perverted, sees that the peace of unjust men is not worthy to be called peace in comparison with the peace of the just. And yet even what is perverted must of necessity be in harmony with, and in dependence on, and in some part of the order of things, for otherwise it would have no existence at all. Suppose a man hangs with his head downwards, this is certainly a perverted attitude of body and arrangement of its members; for that which nature requires to be above is beneath, and vice versa. This perversity disturbs the peace of the body, and is therefore painful. Nevertheless the spirit is at peace with its body, and labors for its preservation, and hence the suffering; but if it is banished from the body by its pains, then, so long as the bodily framework holds together, there is in the remains a kind of peace among the members, and hence the body remains suspended. And inasmuch as the earthly body tends towards the earth, and rests on the bond by which it is suspended, it tends thus to its natural peace, and the voice of its own weight demands a place for it to rest; and though now lifeless and without feeling, it does not fall from the peace that is natural to its place in creation, whether it already has it, or is tending towards it. For if you apply embalming preparations to prevent the bodily frame from mouldering and dissolving, a kind of peace still unites part to part, and keeps the whole body in a suitable place on the earth,—in other words, in a place that is at peace with the body. If, on the other hand, the body receive no such care, but be left to the natural course, it is disturbed by exhalations that do not harmonize with one another, and that offend our senses; for it is this which is perceived in putrefaction until it is assimilated to the elements of the world, and particle by particle enters into peace with them. Yet throughout this process the laws of the most high Creator and Governor are strictly observed, for it is by Him the peace of the universe is administered. For although minute animals are produced from the carcass of a larger animal, all these little atoms, by the law of the same Creator, serve the animals they belong to in peace. And although the flesh of dead animals be eaten by others, no matter where it be carried, nor what it be brought into contact with, nor what it be converted and changed into, it still is ruled by the same laws which pervade all things for the conservation of every mortal race, and which bring things that fit one another into harmony.

CHAPTER 13

OF THE UNIVERSAL PEACE WHICH THE LAW OF NATURE PRESERVES THROUGH ALL DISTURBANCES, AND BY WHICH EVERY ONE REACHES HIS DESERT IN A WAY REGULATED BY THE JUST JUDGE

The peace of the body then consists in the duly proportioned arrangement of its parts. The peace of the irrational soul is the harmonious repose of the appetites, and that of the rational soul the harmony of knowledge and action. The peace of body and soul is the well-ordered and harmonious life and health of the living creature. Peace between man and God is the well-ordered obedience of faith to eternal law. Peace between man and man is well-ordered concord. Domestic peace is the well-ordered concord between those of the family who rule and those who obey. Civil peace is a similar concord among the citizens. The peace of the celestial city is the perfectly ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God, and of one another in God. The peace of all things is the tranquillity of order. Order is the distribution which allots things equal and unequal, each to its own place. And hence, though the miserable, in so far as they are such, do certainly not enjoy peace, but are severed from that tranquillity of order in which there is no disturbance, nevertheless, inasmuch as they are deservedly and justly miserable, they are by their very misery connected with order. They are not, indeed, conjoined with the blessed, but they are disjoined from them by the law of order. And though they are disquieted, their circumstances are notwithstanding adjusted to them, and consequently they have some tranquillity of order, and therefore some peace. But they are wretched because, although not wholly miserable, they are not in that place where any mixture of misery is impossible. They would, however, be more wretched if they had not that peace which arises from being in harmony with the natural order of things. When they suffer, their peace is in so far disturbed; but their peace continues in so far as they do not suffer, and in so far as their nature continues to exist. As, then, there may be life without pain, while there cannot be pain without some kind of life, so there may be peace without war, but there cannot be war without some kind of peace, because war supposes the existence of some natures to wage it, and these natures cannot exist without peace of one kind or other.

And therefore there is a nature in which evil does not or even cannot exist; but there cannot be a nature in which there is no good. Hence not even the nature of the devil himself is evil, in so far as it is nature, but it was made evil by being perverted. Thus he did not abide in the truth, but could not escape the judgment of the Truth; he did not abide in the tranquillity of order, but did not therefore escape the power of the Ordainer. The good imparted by God to his nature did not screen him from the justice of God by which order was preserved in his punishment; neither did God punish the good which He had created, but the evil which the devil had committed. God did not take back all He had imparted to his nature, but something He took and something He left, that there might remain enough to be sensible of the loss of what was taken. And this very sensibility to pain is evidence of the good which has been taken away and the good which has been left. For, were nothing good left, there could be no pain on account of the good which had been lost. For he who sins is still worse if he rejoices in his loss of righteousness. But he who is in pain, if he derives no benefit from it, mourns at least the loss of health. And as righteousness and health are both good things, and as the loss of any good thing is matter of grief, not of joy,—if, at least, there is no compensation, as spiritual righteousness may compensate for the loss of bodily health,—certainly it is more suitable for a wicked man to grieve in punishment than to rejoice in his fault. As, then, the joy of a sinner who has abandoned what is good is evidence of a bad will, so his grief for the good he has lost when he is punished is evidence of a good nature. For he who laments the peace his nature has lost is stirred to do so by some relics of peace which make his nature friendly to itself. And it is very just that in the final punishment the wicked and godless should in anguish bewail the loss of the natural advantages they enjoyed, and should perceive that they were most justly taken from them by that God whose benign liberality they had despised. God, then, the most wise Creator and most just Ordainer of all natures, who placed the human race upon earth as its greatest ornament, imparted to men some good things adapted to this life, to wit, temporal peace, such as we can enjoy in this life from health and safety and human fellowship, and all things needful for the preservation and recovery of this peace, such as the objects which are accommodated to our outward senses, light, night, the air, and waters suitable for us, and everything the body requires to sustain, shelter, heal, or beautify it: and all under this most equitable condition, that every man who made a good use of these advantages suited to the peace of this mortal condition, should receive ampler and better blessings, namely, the peace of immortality, accompanied by glory and honor in an endless life made fit for the enjoyment of God and of one another in God; but that he who used the present blessings badly should both lose them and should not receive the others.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE ORDER AND LAW WHICH OBTAIN IN HEAVEN AND EARTH, WHEREBY IT COMES TO PASS THAT HUMAN SOCIETY IS SERVED BY THOSE WHO RULE IT

The whole use, then, of things temporal has a reference to this result of earthly peace in the earthly community, while in the city of God it is connected with eternal peace. And therefore, if we were irrational animals, we should desire nothing beyond the proper arrangement of the parts of the body and the satisfaction of the appetites,—nothing, therefore, but bodily comfort and abundance of pleasures, that the peace of the body might contribute to the peace of the soul. For if bodily peace be awanting, a bar is put to the peace even of the irrational soul, since it cannot obtain the gratification of its appetites. And these two together help out the mutual peace of soul and body, the peace of harmonious life and health. For as animals, by shunning pain, show that they love bodily peace, and, by pursuing pleasure to gratify their appetites, show that they love peace of soul, so their shrinking from death is a sufficient indication of their intense love of that peace which binds soul and body in close alliance. But, as man has a rational soul, he subordinates all this which he has in common with the beasts to the peace of his rational soul, that his intellect may have free play and may regulate his actions, and that he may thus enjoy the well-ordered harmony of knowledge and action which constitutes, as we have said, the peace of the rational soul. And for this purpose he must desire to be neither molested by pain, nor disturbed by desire, nor extinguished by death, that he may arrive at some useful knowledge by which he may regulate his life and manners. But, owing to the liability of the human mind to fall into mistakes, this very pursuit of knowledge may be a snare to him unless he has a divine Master, whom he may obey without misgiving, and who may at the same time give him such help as to preserve his own freedom. And because, so long as he is in this mortal body, he is a stranger to God, he walks by faith, not by sight; and he therefore refers all peace, bodily or spiritual or both, to that peace which mortal man has with the immortal God, so that he exhibits the well-ordered obedience of faith to eternal law. But as this divine Master inculcates two precepts,—the love of God and the love of our neighbor,—and as in these precepts a man finds three things he has to love,—God, himself, and his neighbor,—and that he who loves God loves himself thereby, it follows that he must endeavor to get his neighbor to love God, since he is ordered to love his neighbor as himself. He ought to make this endeavor in behalf of his wife, his children, his household, all within his reach, even as he would wish his neighbor to do the same for him if he needed it; and consequently he will be at peace, or in well-ordered concord, with all men, as far as in him lies. And this is the order of this concord, that a man, in the first place, injure no one, and, in the second, do good to every one he can reach. Primarily, therefore, his own household are his care, for the law of nature and of society gives him readier access to them and greater opportunity of serving them. And hence the apostle says, “Now, if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” This is the origin of domestic peace, or the well-ordered concord of those in the family who rule and those who obey. For they who care for the rest rule,—the husband the wife, the parents the children, the masters the servants; and they who are cared for obey,—the women their husbands, the children their parents, the servants their masters. But in the family of the just man who lives by faith and is as yet a pilgrim journeying on to the celestial city, even those who rule serve those whom they seem to command; for they rule not from a love of power, but from a sense of the duty they owe to others—not because they are proud of authority, but because they love mercy.

CHAPTER 15

OF THE LIBERTY PROPER TO MAN’S NATURE, AND THE SERVITUDE INTRODUCED BY SIN,—A SERVITUDE IN WHICH THE MAN WHOSE WILL IS WICKED IS THE SLAVE OF HIS OWN LUST, THOUGH HE IS FREE SO FAR AS REGARDS OTHER MEN

This is prescribed by the order of nature: it is thus that God has created man. For “let them,” He says, “have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every creeping thing which creepeth on the earth.” He did not intend that His rational creature, who was made in His image, should have dominion over anything but the irrational creation,—not man over man, but man over the beasts. And hence the righteous men in primitive times were made shepherds of cattle rather than kings of men, God intending thus to teach us what the relative position of the creatures is, and what the desert of sin; for it is with justice, we believe, that the condition of slavery is the result of sin. And this is why we do not find the word “slave” in any part of Scripture until righteous Noah branded the sin of his son with this name. It is a name, therefore, introduced by sin and not by nature. The origin of the Latin word for slave is supposed to be found in the circumstance that those who by the law of war were liable to be killed were sometimes preserved by their victors, and were hence called servants. And these circumstances could never have arisen save through sin. For even when we wage a just war, our adversaries must be sinning; and every victory, even though gained by wicked men, is a result of the first judgment of God, who humbles the vanquished either for the sake of removing or of punishing their sins. Witness that man of God, Daniel, who, when he was in captivity, confessed to God his own sins and the sins of his people, and declares with pious grief that these were the cause of the captivity. The prime cause, then, of slavery is sin, which brings man under the dominion of his fellow,—that which does not happen save by the judgment of God, with whom is no unrighteousness, and who knows how to award fit punishments to every variety of offence. But our Master in heaven says, “Every one who doeth sin is the servant of sin.” And thus there are many wicked masters who have religious men as their slaves, and who are yet themselves in bondage; “for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” And beyond question it is a happier thing to be the slave of a man than of a lust; for even this very lust of ruling, to mention no others, lays waste men’s hearts with the most ruthless dominion. Moreover, when men are subjected to one another in a peaceful order, the lowly position does as much good to the servant as the proud position does harm to the master. But by nature, as God first created us, no one is the slave either of man or of sin. This servitude is, however, penal, and is appointed by that law which enjoins the preservation of the natural order and forbids its disturbance; for if nothing had been done in violation of that law, there would have been nothing to restrain by penal servitude. And therefore the apostle admonishes slaves to be subject to their masters, and to serve them heartily and with good-will, so that, if they cannot be freed by their masters, they may themselves make their slavery in some sort free, by serving not in crafty fear, but in faithful love, until all unrighteousness pass away, and all principality and every human power be brought to nothing, and God be all in all.

CHAPTER 16

OF EQUITABLE RULE

And therefore, although our righteous fathers had slaves, and administered their domestic affairs so as to distinguish between the condition of slaves and the heirship of sons in regard to the blessings of this life, yet in regard to the worship of God, in whom we hope for eternal blessings, they took an equally loving oversight of all the members of their household. And this is so much in accordance with the natural order, that the head of the household was called paterfamilias; and this name has been so generally accepted, that even those whose rule is unrighteous are glad to apply it to themselves. But those who are true fathers of their households desire and endeavor that all the members of their household, equally with their own children, should worship and win God, and should come to that heavenly home in which the duty of ruling men is no longer necessary, because the duty of caring for their everlasting happiness has also ceased; but, until they reach that home, masters ought to feel their position of authority a greater burden than servants their service. And if any member of the family interrupts the domestic peace by disobedience, he is corrected either by word or blow, or some kind of just and legitimate punishment, such as society permits, that he may himself be the better for it, and be readjusted to the family harmony from which he had dislocated himself. For as it is not benevolent to give a man help at the expense of some greater benefit he might receive, so it is not innocent to spare a man at the risk of his falling into graver sin. To be innocent, we must not only do harm to no man, but also restrain him from sin or punish his sin, so that either the man himself who is punished may profit by his experience, or others be warned by his example. Since, then, the house ought to be the beginning or element of the city, and every beginning bears reference to some end of its own kind, and every element to the integrity of the whole of which it is an element, it follows plainly enough that domestic peace has a relation to civic peace,—in other words, that the well-ordered concord of domestic obedience and domestic rule has a relation to the well-ordered concord of civic obedience and civic rule. And therefore it follows, further, that the father of the family ought to frame his domestic rule in accordance with the law of the city, so that the household may be in harmony with the civic order.

CHAPTER 17

WHAT PRODUCES PEACE, AND WHAT DISCORD, BETWEEN THE HEAVENLY AND EARTHLY CITIES

But the families which do not live by faith seek their peace in the earthly advantages of this life; while the families which live by faith look for those eternal blessings which are promised, and use as pilgrims such advantages of time and of earth as do not fascinate and divert them from God, but rather aid them to endure with greater ease, and to keep down the number of those burdens of the corruptible body which weigh upon the soul. Thus the things necessary for this mortal life are used by both kinds of men and families alike, but each has its own peculiar and widely different aim in using them. The earthly city, which does not live by faith, seeks an earthly peace, and the end it proposes, in the well-ordered concord of civic obedience and rule, is the combination of men's wills to attain the things which are helpful to this life. The heavenly city, or rather the part of it which sojourns on earth and lives by faith, makes use of this peace only because it must, until this mortal condition which necessitates it shall pass away. Consequently, so long as it lives like a captive and a stranger in the earthly city, though it has already received the promise of redemption, and the gift of the Spirit as the earnest of it, it makes no scruple to obey the laws of the earthly city, whereby the things necessary for the maintenance of this mortal life are administered; and thus, as this life is common to both cities, so there is a harmony between them in regard to what belongs to it. But, as the earthly city has had some philosophers whose doctrine is condemned by the divine teaching, and who, being deceived either by their own conjectures or by demons, supposed that many gods must be invited to take an interest in human affairs, and assigned to each a separate function and a separate department,—to one the body, to another the soul; and in the body itself, to one the head, to another the neck, and each of the other members to one of the gods; and in like manner, in the soul, to one god the natural capacity was assigned, to another education, to another anger, to another lust; and so the various affairs of life were assigned,—cattle to one, corn to another, wine to another, oil to another, the woods to another, money to another, navigation to another, wars and victories to another, marriages to another, births and fecundity to another, and other things to other gods: and as the celestial city, on the other hand, knew that one God only was to be worshipped, and that to Him alone was due that service which the Greeks call latreia, and which can be given only to a god, it has come to pass that the two cities could not have common laws of religion, and that the heavenly city has been compelled in this matter to dissent, and to become obnoxious to those who think differently, and to stand the brunt of their anger and hatred and persecutions, except in so far as the minds of their enemies have been alarmed by the multitude of the Christians and quelled by the manifest protection of God accorded to them. This heavenly city, then, while it sojourns on earth, calls citizens out of all nations, and gathers together a society of pilgrims of all languages, not scrupling about diversities in the manners, laws, and institutions whereby earthly peace is secured and maintained, but recognizing that, however various these are, they all tend to one and the same end of earthly peace. It therefore is so far from rescinding and abolishing these diversities, that it even preserves and adopts them, so long only as no hindrance to the worship of the one supreme and true God is thus introduced. Even the heavenly city, therefore, while in its state of pilgrimage, avails itself of the peace of earth, and, so far as it can without injuring faith and godliness, desires and maintains a common agreement among men regarding the acquisition of the necessaries of life, and makes this earthly peace bear upon the peace of heaven; for this alone can be truly called and esteemed the peace of the reasonable creatures, consisting as it does in the perfectly ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God and of one another in God. When we shall have reached that peace, this mortal life shall give place to one that is eternal, and our body shall be no more this animal body which by its corruption weighs down the soul, but a spiritual body feeling no want, and in all its members subjected to the will. In its pilgrim state the heavenly city possesses this peace by faith; and by this faith it lives righteously when it refers to the attainment of that peace every good action towards God and man; for the life of the city is a social life.

CHAPTER 18

HOW DIFFERENT THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE NEW ACADEMY IS FROM THE CERTAINTY OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

As regards the uncertainty about everything which Varro alleges to be the differentiating characteristic of the New Academy, the city of God thoroughly detests such doubt as madness. Regarding matters which it apprehends by the mind and reason it has most absolute certainty, although its knowledge is limited because of the corruptible body pressing down the mind, for, as the apostle says, “We know in part.” It believes also the evidence of the senses which the mind uses by aid of the body; for [if one who trusts his senses is sometimes deceived], he is more wretchedly deceived who fancies he should never trust them. It believes also the Holy Scriptures, old and new, which we call canonical, and which are the source of the faith by which the just lives and by which we walk without doubting whilst we are absent from the Lord. So long as this faith remains inviolate and firm, we may without blame entertain doubts regarding some things which we have neither perceived by sense nor by reason, and which have not been revealed to us by the canonical Scriptures, nor come to our knowledge through witnesses whom it is absurd to disbelieve.

CHAPTER 19

OF THE DRESS AND HABITS OF THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE

It is a matter of no moment in the city of God whether he who adopts the faith that brings men to God adopts it in one dress and manner of life or another, so long only as he lives in conformity with the commandments of God. And hence, when philosophers themselves become Christians, they are compelled, indeed, to abandon their erroneous doctrines, but not their dress and mode of living, which are no obstacle to religion. So that we make no account of that distinction of sects which Varro adduced in connection with the Cynic school, provided always nothing indecent or self-indulgent is retained. As to these three modes of life, the contemplative, the active, and the composite, although, so long as a man's faith is preserved, he may choose any of them without detriment to his eternal interests, yet he must never overlook the claims of truth and duty. No man has a right to lead such a life of contemplation as to forget in his own ease the service due to his neighbor; nor has any man a right to be so immersed in active life as to neglect the contemplation of God. The charm of leisure must not be indolent vacancy of mind, but the investigation or discovery of truth, that thus every man may make solid attainments without grudging that others do the same. And, in active life, it is not the honors or power of this life we should covet, since all things under the sun are vanity, but we should aim at using our position and influence, if these have been honorably attained, for the welfare of those who are under us, in the way we have already explained. It is to this the apostle refers when he says, “He that desireth the episcopate desireth a good work.” He wished to show that the episcopate is the title of a work, not of an honor. It is a Greek word, and signifies that he who governs superintends or takes care of those whom he governs: for epi means over, and skopein, to see; therefore episkopein means “to oversee.” So that he who loves to govern rather than to do good is no bishop. Accordingly no one is prohibited from the search after truth, for in this leisure may most laudably be spent; but it is unseemly to covet the high position requisite for governing the people, even though that position be held and that government be administered in a seemly manner. And therefore holy leisure is longed for by the love of truth; but it is the necessity of love to undertake requisite business. If no one imposes this burden upon us, we are free to sift and contemplate truth; but if it be laid upon us, we are necessitated for love's sake to undertake it. And yet not even in this case are we obliged wholly to relinquish the sweets of contemplation; for were these to be withdrawn, the burden might prove more than we could bear.

CHAPTER 20

THAT THE SAINTS ARE IN THIS LIFE BLESSED IN HOPE

Since, then, the supreme good of the city of God is perfect and eternal peace, not such as mortals pass into and out of by birth and death, but the peace of freedom from all evil, in which the immortals ever abide; who can deny that that future life is most blessed, or that, in comparison with it, this life which now we live is most wretched, be it filled with all blessings of body and soul and external things? And yet, if any man uses this life with a reference to that other which he ardently loves and confidently hopes for, he may well be called even now blessed, though not in reality so much as in hope. But the actual possession of the happiness of this life, without the hope of what is beyond, is but a false happiness and profound misery. For the true blessings of the soul are not now enjoyed; for that is no true wisdom which does not direct all its prudent observations, manly actions, virtuous self-restraint, and just arrangements, to that end in which God shall be all and all in a secure eternity and perfect peace.

CHAPTER 21

WHETHER THERE EVER WAS A ROMAN REPUBLIC ANSWERING TO THE DEFINITIONS OF SCIPIO IN CICERO'S DIALOGUE

This, then, is the place where I should fulfill the promise gave in the second book of this work, and explain, as briefly and clearly as possible, that if we are to accept the definitions laid down by Scipio in Cicero's De Republica, there never was a Roman republic; for he briefly defines a republic as the weal of the people. And if this definition be true, there never was a Roman republic, for the people’s weal was never attained among the Romans. For the people, according to his definition, is an assemblage associated by a common acknowledgment of right and by a community of interests. And what he means by a common acknowledgment of right he explains at large, showing that a republic cannot be administered without justice. Where, therefore, there is no true justice there can be no right. For that which is done by right is justly done, and what is unjustly done cannot be done by right. For the unjust inventions of men are neither to be considered nor spoken of as rights; for even they themselves say that right is that which flows from the fountain of justice, and deny the definition which is commonly given by those who misconceive the matter, that right is that which is useful to the stronger party. Thus, where there is not true justice there can be no assemblage of men associated by a common acknowledgment of right, and therefore there can be no people, as defined by Scipio or Cicero; and if no people, then no weal of the people, but only of some promiscuous multitude unworthy of the name of people. Consequently, if the republic is the weal of the people, and there is no people if it be not associated by a common acknowledgment of right, and if there is no right where there is no justice, then most certainly it follows that there is no republic where there is no justice. Further, justice is that virtue which gives every one his due. Where, then, is the justice of man, when he deserts the true God and yields himself to impure demons? Is this to give every one his due? Or is he who keeps back a piece of ground from the purchaser, and gives it to a man who has no right to it, unjust, while he who keeps back himself from the God who made him, and serves wicked spirits, is just?

This same book, De Republica, advocates the cause of justice against injustice with great force and keenness. The pleading for injustice against justice was first heard, and it was asserted that without injustice a republic could neither increase nor even subsist, for it was laid down as an absolutely unassailable position that it is unjust for some men to rule and some to serve; and yet the imperial city to which the republic belongs cannot rule her provinces without having recourse to this injustice. It was replied in behalf of justice, that this ruling of the provinces is just, because servitude may be advantageous to the provincials, and is so when rightly administered,—that is to say, when lawless men are prevented from doing harm. And further, as they became worse and worse so long as they were free, they will improve by subjection. To confirm this reasoning, there is added an eminent example drawn from nature: for "why," it is asked, "does God rule man, the soul the body, the reason the passions and other vicious parts of the soul?" This example leaves no doubt that, to some, servitude is useful; and, indeed, to serve God is useful to all. And it is when the soul serves God that it exercises a right control over the body; and in the soul itself the reason must be subject to God if it is to govern as it ought the passions and other vices. Hence, when a man does not serve God, what justice can we ascribe to him, since in this case his soul cannot exercise a just control over the body, nor his reason over his vices? And if there is no justice in such an individual, certainly there can be none in a community composed of such persons. Here, therefore, there is not that common acknowledgment of right which makes an assemblage of men a people whose affairs we call a republic. And why need I speak of the advantageousness, the common participation in which, according to the definition, makes a people? For although, if you choose to regard the matter attentively, you will see that there is nothing advantageous to those who live godlessly, as every one lives who does not serve God but demons, whose wickedness you may measure by their desire to receive the worship of men though they are most impure spirits, yet what I have said of the common acknowledgment of right is enough to demonstrate that, according to the above definition, there can be no people, and therefore no republic, where there is no justice. For if they assert that in their republic the Romans did not serve unclean spirits, but good and holy gods, must we therefore again reply to this evasion, though already we have said enough, and more than enough, to expose it? He must be an uncommonly stupid, or a shamelessly contentious person, who has read through the foregoing books to this point, and can yet question whether the Romans served wicked and impure demons. But, not to speak of their character, it is written in the law of the true God, "He that sacrificeth unto any god save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed." He, therefore, who uttered so menacing a commandment decreed that no worship should be given either to good or bad gods.

CHAPTER 22

WHETHER THE GOD WHOM THE CHRISTIANS SERVE IS THE TRUE GOD TO WHOM ALONE SACRIFICE OUGHT TO BE PAID

But it may be replied, Who is this God, or what proof is there that He alone is worthy to receive sacrifice from the Romans? One must be very blind to be still asking who this God is. He is the God whose prophets predicted the things we see accomplished. He is the God from whom Abraham received the assurance, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” That this was fulfilled in Christ, who according to the flesh sprang from that seed, is recognized, whether they will or no, even by those who have continued to be the enemies of this name. He is the God whose divine Spirit spake by the men whose predictions I cited in the preceding books, and which are fulfilled in the Church which has extended over all the world. This is the God whom Varro, the most learned of the Romans, supposed to be Jupiter, though he knows not what he says; yet I think it right to note the circumstance that a man of such learning was unable to suppose that this God had no existence or was contemptible, but believed Him to be the same as the supreme God. In fine, He is the God whom Porphyry, the most learned of the philosophers, though the bitterest enemy of the Christians, confesses to be a great God, even according to the oracles of those whom he esteems gods.

CHAPTER 23

PORPHYRY’S ACCOUNT OF THE RESPONSES GIVEN BY THE ORACLES OF THE GODS CONCERNING CHRIST

For in his book called ek logion philosophias, in which he collects and comments upon the responses which he pretends were uttered by the gods concerning divine things, he says—I give his own words as they have been translated from the Greek: “To one who inquired what god he should propitiate in order to recall his wife from Christianity, Apollo replied in the following verses.” Then the following words are given as those of Apollo: “You will probably find it easier to write lasting characters on the water, or lightly fly like a bird through the air, than to restore right feeling in your impious wife once she has polluted herself. Let her remain as she pleases in her foolish deception, and sing false laments to her dead God, who was condemned by right-minded judges, and perished ignominiously by a violent death." Then after these verses of Apollo (which we have given in a Latin version that does not preserve the metrical form), he goes on to say: "In these verses Apollo exposed the incurable corruption of the Christians, saying that the Jews, rather than the Christians, recognized God." See how he misrepresents Christ, giving the Jews the preference to the Christians in the recognition of God. This was his explanation of Apollo's verses, in which he says that Christ was put to death by right-minded or just judges,—in other words, that He deserved to die. I leave the responsibility of this oracle regarding Christ on the lying interpreter of Apollo, or on this philosopher who believed it or possibly himself invented it; as to its agreement with Porphyry's opinions or with other oracles, we shall in a little have something to say. In this passage, however, he says that the Jews, as the interpreters of God, judged justly in pronouncing Christ to be worthy of the most shameful death. He should have listened, then, to this God of the Jews to whom he bears this testimony, when that God says, "He that sacrificeth to any other god save to the Lord alone shall be utterly destroyed." But let us come to still plainer expressions, and hear how great a God Porphyry thinks the God of the Jews is. Apollo, he says, when asked whether word, i.e., reason, or law is the better thing, replied in the following verses. Then he gives the verses of Apollo, from which I select the following as sufficient: "God, the Generator, and the King prior to all things, before whom heaven and earth, and the sea, and the hidden places of hell tremble, and the deities themselves are afraid, for their law is the Father whom the holy Hebrews honor." In this oracle of his god Apollo, Porphyry avowed that the God of the Hebrews is so great that the deities themselves are afraid before Him. I am surprised, therefore, that when God said, He that sacrificeth to other gods shall be utterly destroyed, Porphyry himself was not afraid lest he should be destroyed for sacrificing to other gods.

This philosopher, however, has also some good to say of Christ, oblivious, as it were, of that contumely of his of which we have just been speaking; or as if his gods spoke evil of Christ only while asleep, and recognized Him to be good, and gave Him His deserved praise, when they awoke. For, as if he were about to proclaim some marvellous thing passing belief, he says, “What we are going to say will certainly take some by surprise. For the gods have declared that Christ was very pious, and has become immortal, and that they cherish his memory: that the Christians, however, are polluted, contaminated, and involved in error. And many other such things,” he says, “do the gods say against the Christians.” Then he gives specimens of the accusations made, as he says, by the gods against them, and then goes on: “But to some who asked Hecate whether Christ were a God, she replied, You know the condition of the disembodied immortal soul, and that if it has been severed from wisdom it always errs. The soul you refer to is that of a man foremost in piety: they worship it because they mistake the truth.” To this so-called oracular response he adds the following words of his own: “Of this very pious man, then, Hecate said that the soul, like the souls of other good men, was after death dowered with immortality, and that the Christians through ignorance worship it. And to those who ask why he was condemned to die, the oracle of the goddess replied, The body, indeed, is always exposed to torments, but the souls of the pious abide in heaven. And the soul you inquire about has been the fatal cause of error to other souls which were not fated to receive the gifts of the gods, and to have the knowledge of immortal Jove. Such souls are therefore hated by the gods; for they who were fated not to receive the gifts of the gods, and not to know God, were fated to be involved in error by means of him you speak of. He himself, however, was good, and heaven has been opened to him as to other good men. You are not, then, to speak evil of him, but to pity the folly of men: and through him men’s danger is imminent.”

Who is so foolish as not to see that these oracles were either composed by a clever man with a strong animus against the Christians, or were uttered as responses by impure demons with a similar design,—that is to say, in order that their praise of Christ may win credence for their vituperation of Christians; and that thus they may, if possible, close the way of eternal salvation, which is identical with Christianity? For they believe that they are by no means counter working their own hurtful craft by promoting belief in Christ, so long as their calumniation of Christians is also accepted; for they thus secure that even the man who thinks well of Christ declines to become a Christian, and is therefore not delivered from their own rule by the Christ he praises. Besides, their praise of Christ is so contrived that whosoever believes in Him as thus represented will not be a true Christian but a Photinian heretic, recognizing only the humanity, and not also the divinity of Christ, and will thus be precluded from salvation and from deliverance out of the meshes of these devilish lies. For our part, we are no better pleased with Hecate's praises of Christ than with Apollo's calumniation of Him. Apollo says that Christ was put to death by right-minded judges, implying that He was unrighteous. Hecate says that He was a most pious man, but no more. The intention of both is the same, to prevent men from becoming Christians, because if this be secured, men shall never be rescued from their power. But it is incumbent on our philosopher, or rather on those who believe in these pretended oracles against the Christians, first of all, if they can, to bring Apollo and Hecate to the same mind regarding Christ, so that either both may condemn or both praise Him. And even if they succeeded in this, we for our part would notwithstanding repudiate the testimony of demons, whether favorable or adverse to Christ. But when our adversaries find a god and goddess of their own at variance about Christ the one praising, the other vituperating Him, they can certainly give no credence, if they have any judgment, to mere men who blaspheme the Christians.

When Porphyry or Hecate praises Christ, and adds that He gave Himself to the Christians as a fatal gift, that they might be involved in error, he exposes, as he thinks, the causes of this error. But before I cite his words to that purpose, I would ask, If Christ did thus give Himself to the Christians to involve them in error, did He do so willingly, or against His will? If willingly, how is He righteous? If against His will, how is He blessed? However, let us hear the causes of this error. "There are," he says," in a certain place very small earthly spirits, subject to the power of evil demons. The wise men of the Hebrews, among whom was this Jesus, as you have heard from the oracles of Apollo cited above, turned religious persons from these very wicked demons and minor spirits, and taught them rather to worship the celestial gods, and especially to adore God the Father. This," he said, "the gods enjoin; and we have already shown how they admonish the soul to turn to God, and command it to worship Him. But the ignorant and the ungodly, who are not destined to receive favors from the gods, nor to know the immortal Jupiter, not listening to the gods and their messages, have turned away from all gods, and have not only refused to hate, but have venerated the prohibited demons. Professing to worship God, they refuse to do those things by which alone God is worshipped. For God, indeed, being the Father of all, is in need of nothing; but for us it is good to adore Him by means of justice, chastity, and other virtues, and thus to make life itself a prayer to Him, by inquiring into and imitating His nature. For inquiry," says he, "purifies and imitation deifies us, by moving us nearer to Him." He is right in so far as he proclaims God the Father, and the conduct by which we should worship Him. Of such precepts the prophetic books of the Hebrews are full, when they praise or blame the life of the saints. But in speaking of the Christians he is in error, and caluminates them as much as is desired by the demons whom he takes for gods, as if it were difficult for any man to recollect the disgraceful and shameful actions which used to be done in the theatres and temples to please the gods, and to compare with these things what is heard in our churches, and what is offered to the true God, and from this comparison to conclude where character is edified, and where it is ruined. But who but a diabolical spirit has told or suggested to this man so manifest and vain a lie, as that the Christians reverenced rather than hated the demons, whose worship the Hebrews prohibited? But that God, whom the Hebrew sages worshipped, forbids sacrifice to be offered even to the holy angels of heaven and divine powers, whom we, in this our pilgrimage, venerate and love as our most blessed fellow-citizens. For in the law which God gave to His Hebrew people He utters this menace, as in a voice of thunder: "He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed." And that no one might suppose that this prohibition extends only to the very wicked demons and earthly spirits, whom this philosopher calls very small and inferior,—for even these are in the Scripture called gods, not of the Hebrews, but of the nations, as the Septuagint translators have shown in the psalm where it is said, "For all the gods of the nations are demons,"—that no one might suppose, I say, that sacrifice to these demons was prohibited, but that sacrifice might be offered to all or some of the celestials, it was immediately added, "save unto the Lord alone." The God of the Hebrews, then, to whom this renowned philosopher bears this signal testimony, gave to His Hebrew people a law, composed in the Hebrew language, and not obscure and unknown, but published now in every nation, and in this law it is written, "He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord alone, he shall be utterly destroyed." What need is there to seek further proofs in the law or the prophets of this same thing? Seek, we need not say, for the passages are neither few nor difficult to find; but what need to collect and apply to my argument the proofs which are thickly sown and obvious, and by which it appears clear as day that sacrifice may be paid to none but the supreme and true God? Here is one brief but decided, even menacing, and certainly true utterance of that God whom the wisest of our adversaries so highly extol. Let this be listened to, feared, fulfilled, that there may be no disobedient soul cut off. "He that sacrifices," He says, not because He needs anything, but because it behoves us to be His possession. Hence the Psalmist in the Hebrew Scriptures sings, "I have said to the Lord, Thou art my God, for Thou needest not my good." For we ourselves, who are His own city, are His most noble and worthy sacrifice, and it is this mystery we celebrate in our sacrifices, which are well known to the faithful, as we have explained in the preceding books. For through the prophets the oracles of God declared that the sacrifices which the Jews offered as a shadow of that which was to be would cease, and that the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun, would offer one sacrifice. From these oracles, which we now see accomplished, we have made such selections as seemed suitable to our purpose in this work. And therefore, where there is not this righteousness whereby the one supreme God rules the obedient city according to His grace, so that it sacrifices to none but Him, and whereby, in all the citizens of this obedient city, the soul consequently rules the body and reason the vices in the rightful order, so that, as the individual just man, so also the community and people of the just, live by faith, which works by love, that love whereby man loves God as He ought to be loved, and his neighbor as himself,—there, I say, there is not an assemblage associated by a common acknowledgment of right, and by a community of interests. But if there is not this, there is not a people, if our definition be true, and therefore there is no republic; for where there is no people there can be no republic.

CHAPTER 24

THE DEFINITION WHICH MUST BE GIVEN OF A PEOPLE AND A REPUBLIC, IN ORDER TO VINDICATE THE ASSUMPTION OF THESE TITLES BY THE ROMANS AND BY OTHER KINGDOMS

But if we discard this definition of a people, and, assuming another, say that a people is an assemblage of reasonable beings bound together by a common agreement as to the objects of their love, then, in order to discover the character of any people, we have only to observe what they love. Yet whatever it loves, if only it is an assemblage of reasonable beings and not of beasts, and is bound together by an agreement as to the objects of love, it is reasonably called a people; and it will be a superior people in proportion as it is bound together by higher interests, inferior in proportion as it is bound together by lower. According to this definition of ours, the Roman people is a people, and its weal is without doubt a commonwealth or republic. But what its tastes were in its early and subsequent days, and how it declined into sanguinary seditions and then to social and civil wars, and so burst asunder or rotted off the bond of concord in which the health of a people consists, history shows, and in the preceding books I have related at large. And yet I would not on this account say either that it was not a people, or that its administration was not a republic, so long as there remains an assemblage of reasonable beings bound together by a common agreement as to the objects of love. But what I say of this people and of this republic I must be understood to think and say of the Athenians or any Greek state, of the Egyptians, of the early Assyrian Babylon, and of every other nation, great or small, which had a public government. For, in general, the city of the ungodly, which did not obey the command of God that it should offer no sacrifice save to Him alone, and which, therefore, could not give to the soul its proper command over the body, nor to the reason its just authority over the vices, is void of true justice.

CHAPTER 25

THAT WHERE THERE IS NO TRUE RELIGION THERE ARE NO TRUE VIRTUES

For though the soul may seem to rule the body admirably, and the reason the vices, if the soul and reason do not themselves obey God, as God has commanded them to serve Him, they have no proper authority over the body and the vices. For what kind of mistress of the body and the vices can that mind be which is ignorant of the true God, and which, instead of being subject to His authority, is prostituted to the corrupting influences of the most vicious demons? It is for this reason that the virtues which it seems to itself to possess, and by which it restrains the body and the vices that it may obtain and keep what it desires, are rather vices than virtues so long as there is no reference to God in the matter. For although some suppose that virtues which have a reference only to themselves, and are desired only on their own account, are yet true and genuine virtues, the fact is that even then they are inflated with pride, and are therefore to be reckoned vices rather than virtues. For as that which gives life to the flesh is not derived from flesh, but is above it, so that which gives blessed life to man is not derived from man, but is something above him; and what I say of man is true of every celestial power and virtue whatsoever.

CHAPTER 26

OF THE PEACE WHICH IS ENJOYED BY THE PEOPLE THAT ARE ALIENATED FROM GOD, AND THE USE MADE OF IT BY THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN THE TIME OF ITS PILGRIMAGE

Wherefore, as the life of the flesh is the soul, so the blessed life of man is God, of whom the sacred writings of the Hebrews say, “Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord.” Miserable, therefore, is the people which is alienated from God. Yet even this people has a peace of its own which is not to be lightly esteemed, though, indeed, it shall not in the end enjoy it, because it makes no good use of it before the end. But it is our interest that it enjoy this peace meanwhile in this life; for as long as the two cities are commingled, we also enjoy the peace of Babylon. For from Babylon the people of God is so freed that it meanwhile sojourns in its company. And therefore the apostle also admonished the Church to pray for kings and those in authority, assigning as the reason, “that we may live a quiet and tranquil life in all godliness and love.” And the prophet Jeremiah, when predicting the captivity that was to befall the ancient people of God, and giving them the divine command to go obediently to Babylonia, and thus serve their God, counselled them also to pray for Babylonia, saying, “In the peace thereof shall ye have peace,”—the temporal peace which the good and the wicked together enjoy.

CHAPTER 27

THAT THE PEACE OF THOSE WHO SERVE GOD CANNOT IN THIS MORTAL LIFE BE APPREHENDED IN ITS PERFECTION

But the peace which is peculiar to ourselves we enjoy now with God by faith, and shall hereafter enjoy eternally with Him by sight. But the peace which we enjoy in this life, whether common to all or peculiar to ourselves, is rather the solace of our misery than the positive enjoyment of felicity. Our very righteousness, too, though true in so far as it has respect to the true good, is yet in this life of such a kind that it consists rather in the remission of sins than in the perfecting of virtues. Witness the prayer of the whole city of God in its pilgrim state, for it cries to God by the mouth of all its members, “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.” And this prayer is efficacious not for those whose faith is “without works and dead,” but for those whose faith “worketh by love.” For as reason, though subjected to God, is yet “pressed down by the corruptible body,” so long as it is in this mortal condition, it has not perfect authority over vice, and therefore this prayer is needed by the righteous. For though it exercises authority, the vices do not submit without a struggle. For however well one maintains the conflict, and however thoroughly he has subdued these enemies, there steals in some evil thing, which, if it does not find ready expression in act, slips out by the lips, or insinuates itself into the thought; and therefore his peace is not full so long as he is at war with his vices. For it is a doubtful conflict he wages with those that resist, and his victory over those that are defeated is not secure, but full of anxiety and effort. Amidst these temptations, therefore, of all which it has been summarily said in the divine oracles, “Is not human life upon earth a temptation?” who but a proud man can presume that he so lives that he has no need to say to God, “Forgive us our debts?” And such a man is not great, but swollen and puffed up with vanity, and is justly resisted by Him who abundantly gives grace to the humble. Whence it is said, “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.” In this, then, consists the righteousness of a man, that he submit himself to God, his body to his soul, and his vices, even when they rebel, to his reason, which either defeats or at least resists them; and also that he beg from God grace to do his duty, and the pardon of his sins, and that he render to God thanks for all the blessings he receives. But, in that final peace to which all our righteousness has reference, and for the sake of which it is maintained, as our nature shall enjoy a sound immortality and incorruption, and shall have no more vices, and as we shall experience no resistance either from ourselves or from others, it will not be necessary that reason should rule vices which no longer exist, but God shall rule the man, and the soul shall rule the body, with a sweetness and facility suitable to the felicity of a life which is done with bondage. And this condition shall there be eternal, and we shall be assured of its eternity; and thus the peace of this blessedness and the blessedness of this peace shall be the supreme good.

CHAPTER 28

THE END OF THE WICKED

But, on the other hand, they who do not belong to this city of God shall inherit eternal misery, which is also called the second death, because the soul shall then be separated from God its life, and therefore cannot be said to live, and the body shall be subjected to eternal pains. And consequently this second death shall be the more severe, because no death shall terminate it. But war being contrary to peace, as misery to happiness, and life to death, it is not without reason asked what kind of war can be found in the end of the wicked answering to the peace which is declared to be the end of the righteous? The person who puts this question has only to observe what it is in war that is hurtful and destructive, and he shall see that it is nothing else than the mutual opposition and conflict of things. And can he conceive a more grievous and bitter war than that in which the will is so opposed to passion, and passion to the will, that their hostility can never be terminated by the victory of either, and in which the violence of pain so conflicts with the nature of the body, that neither yields to the other? For in this life, when this conflict has arisen, either pain conquers and death expels the feeling of it, or nature conquers and health expels the pain. But in the world to come the pain continues that it may torment, and the nature endures that it may be sensible of it; and neither ceases to exist, lest punishment also should cease. Now, as it is through the last judgment that men pass to these ends, the good to the supreme good, the evil to the supreme evil, I will treat of this judgment in the following book.

Book XX

Argument—Concerning the last judgment, and the declarations regarding it in the old and new testaments.

CHAPTER 1

THAT ALTHOUGH GOD IS ALWAYS JUDGING, IT IS NEVERTHELESS REASONABLE TO CONFINE OUR ATTENTION IN THIS BOOK TO HIS LAST JUDGMENT

Intending to speak, in dependence on God's grace, of the day of His final judgment, and to affirm it against the ungodly and incredulous, we must first of all lay, as it were, in the foundation of the edifice the divine declarations. Those persons who do not believe such declarations do their best to oppose to them false and illusive sophisms of their own, either contending that what is adduced from Scripture has another meaning, or altogether denying that it is an utterance of God's. For I suppose no man who understands what is written, and believes it to be communicated by the supreme and true God through holy men, refuses to yield and consent to these declarations, whether he orally confesses his consent, or is from some evil influence ashamed or afraid to do so; or even, with an opinionativeness closely resembling madness, makes strenuous efforts to defend what he knows and believes to be false against what he knows and believes to be true.

That, therefore, which the whole Church of the true God holds and professes as its creed, that Christ shall come from heaven to judge quick and dead, this we call the last day, or last time, of the divine judgment. For we do not know how many days this judgment may occupy; but no one who reads the Scriptures, however negligently, need be told that in them "day" is customarily used for "time." And when we speak of the day of God's judgment, we add the word last or final for this reason, because even now God judges, and has judged from the beginning of human history, banishing from paradise, and excluding from the tree of life, those first men who perpetrated so great a sin. Yea, He was certainly exercising judgment also when He did not spare the angels who sinned, whose prince, overcome by envy, seduced men after being himself seduced. Neither is it without God’s profound and just judgment that the life of demons and men, the one in the air, the other on earth, is filled with misery, calamities, and mistakes. And even though no one had sinned, it could only have been by the good and right judgment of God that the whole rational creation could have been maintained in eternal blessedness by a persevering adherence to its Lord. He judges, too, not only in the mass, condemning the race of devils and the race of men to be miserable on account of the original sin of these races, but He also judges the voluntary and personal acts of individuals. For even the devils pray that they may not be tormented, which proves that without injustice they might either be spared or tormented according to their deserts. And men are punished by God for their sins often visibly, always secretly, either in this life or after death, although no man acts rightly save by the assistance of divine aid; and no man or devil acts unrighteously save by the permission of the divine and most just judgment. For, as the apostle says, “There is no unrighteousness with God;” and as he elsewhere says, “His judgments are inscrutable, and His ways past finding out.” In this book, then, I shall speak, as God permits, not of those first judgments, nor of these intervening judgments of God, but of the last judgment, when Christ is to come from heaven to judge the quick and the dead. For that day is properly called the day of judgment, because in it there shall be no room left for the ignorant questioning why this wicked person is happy and that righteous man unhappy. In that day true and full happiness shall be the lot of none but the good, while deserved and supreme misery shall be the portion of the wicked, and of them only.

CHAPTER 2

THAT IN THE MINGLED WEB OF HUMAN AFFAIRS GOD’S JUDGMENT IS PRESENT, THOUGH IT CANNOT BE DISCERNED

In this present time we learn to bear with equanimity the ills to which even good men are subject, and to hold cheap the blessings which even the wicked enjoy. And consequently, even in those conditions of life in which the justice of God is not apparent, His teaching is salutary. For we do not know by what judgment of God this good man is poor and that bad man rich; why he who, in our opinion, ought to suffer acutely for his abandoned life enjoys himself, while sorrow pursues him whose praiseworthy life leads us to suppose he should be happy; why the innocent man is dismissed from the bar not only unavenged, but even condemned, being either wronged by the iniquity of the judge, or overwhelmed by false evidence, while his guilty adversary, on the other hand, is not only discharged with impunity, but even has his claims admitted; why the ungodly enjoys good health, while the godly pines in sickness; why ruffians are of the soundest constitution, while they who could not hurt any one even with a word are from infancy afflicted with complicated disorders; why he who is useful to society is cut off by premature death, while those who, as it might seem, ought never to have been so much as born have lives of unusual length; why he who is full of crimes is crowned with honors, while the blameless man is buried in the darkness of neglect. But who can collect or enumerate all the contrasts of this kind? But if this anomalous state of things were uniform in this life, in which, as the sacred Psalmist says, "Man is like to vanity, his days as a shadow that passeth away,"—so uniform that none but wicked men won the transitory prosperity of earth, while only the good suffered its ills,—this could be referred to the just and even benign judgment of God. We might suppose that they who were not destined to obtain those everlasting benefits which constitute human blessedness were either deluded by transitory blessings as the just reward of their wickedness, or were, in God's mercy, consoled by them, and that they who were not destined to suffer eternal torments were afflicted with temporal chastisement for their sins, or were stimulated to greater attainment in virtue. But now, as it is, since we not only see good men involved in the ills of life, and bad men enjoying the good of it, which seems unjust, but also that evil often overtakes evil men, and good surprises the good, the rather on this account are God's judgments unsearchable, and His ways past finding out. Although, therefore, we do not know by what judgment these things are done or permitted to be done by God, with whom is the highest virtue, the highest wisdom, the highest justice, no infirmity, no rashness, no unrighteousness, yet it is salutary for us to learn to hold cheap such things, be they good or evil, as attach indifferently to good men and bad, and to covet those good things which belong only to good men, and flee those evils which belong only to evil men. But when we shall have come to that judgment, the date of which is called peculiarly the day of judgment, and sometimes the day of the Lord, we shall then recognize the justice of all God’s judgments, not only of such as shall then be pronounced, but, of all which take effect from the beginning, or may take effect before that time. And in that day we shall also recognize with what justice so many, or almost all, the just judgments of God in the present life defy the scrutiny of human sense or insight, though in this matter it is not concealed from pious minds that what is concealed is just.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT SOLOMON, IN THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES, SAYS REGARDING THE THINGS WHICH HAPPEN ALIKE TO GOOD AND WICKED MEN

Solomon, the wisest king of Israel, who reigned in Jerusalem, thus commences the book called Ecclesiastes, which the Jews number among their canonical Scriptures: “Vanity of vanities, said Ecclesiastes, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. What profit hath a man of all his labor which he hath taken under the sun?” And after going on to enumerate, with this as his text, the calamities and delusions of this life, and the shifting nature of the present time, in which there is nothing substantial, nothing lasting, he bewails, among the other vanities that are under the sun, this also, that though wisdom excelleth folly as light excelleth darkness, and though the eyes of the wise man are in his head, while the fool walketh in darkness, yet one event happeneth to them all, that is to say, in this life under the sun, unquestionably alluding to those evils which we see befall good and bad men alike. He says, further, that the good suffer the ills of life as if they were evil doers, and the bad enjoy the good of life as if they were good. “There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked: again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous. I said, that this also is vanity.” This wisest man devoted this whole book to a full exposure of this vanity, evidently with no other object than that we might long for that life in which there is no vanity under the sun, but verity under Him who made the sun. In this vanity, then, was it not by the just and righteous judgment of God that man, made like to vanity, was destined to pass away? But in these days of vanity it makes an important difference whether he resists or yields to the truth, and whether he is destitute of true piety or a partaker of it,—important not so far as regards the acquirement of the blessings or the evasion of the calamities of this transitory and vain life, but in connection with the future judgment which shall make over to good men good things, and to bad men bad things, in permanent, inalienable possession. In fine, this wise man concludes this book of his by saying, “Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is every man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every despised person, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” What truer, terser, more salutary enouncement could be made? “Fear God, he says, and keep His commandments: for this is every man.” For whosoever has real existence, is this, is a keeper of God’s commandments; and he who is not this, is nothing. For so long as he remains in the likeness of vanity, he is not renewed in the image of the truth. “For God shall bring into judgment every work,”—that is, whatever man does in this life,—”whether it be good or whether it be evil, with every despised person,”—that is, with every man who here seems despicable, and is therefore not considered; for God sees even him and does not despise him nor pass him over in His judgment.

CHAPTER 4

THAT PROOFS OF THE LAST JUDGMENT WILL BE ADDUCED, FIRST FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT, AND THEN FROM THE OLD

The proofs, then, of this last judgment of God which I propose to adduce shall be drawn first from the New Testament, and then from the Old. For although the Old Testament is prior in point of time, the New has the precedence in intrinsic value; for the Old acts the part of herald to the New. We shall therefore first cite passages from the New Testament, and confirm them by quotations from the Old Testament. The Old contains the law and the prophets, the New the gospel and the apostolic epistles. Now the apostle says “By the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; now the righteousness of God is by faith of Jesus Christ upon all them that believe.” This righteousness of God belongs to the New Testament, and evidence for it exists in the old books, that is to say, in the law and the prophets. I shall first, then state the case, and then call the witnesses. This order Jesus Christ Himself directs us to observe, saying, “The scribe instructed in the kingdom of God is like a good householder, bringing out of his treasure things new and old.” He did not say “old and new,” which He certainly would have said had He not wished to follow the order of merit rather than that of time.

CHAPTER 5

THE PASSAGES IN WHICH THE SAVIOUR DECLARES THAT THERE SHALL BE A DIVINE JUDGMENT IN THE END OF THE WORLD

The Saviour Himself, while reproving the cities in which He had done great works, but which had not believed, and while setting them in unfavorable comparison with foreign cities, says, “But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you.” And a little after He says, “Verily, I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.” Here He most plainly predicts that a day of judgment is to come. And in another place He says, “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the utter most parts of the earth to hear the words of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.” Two things we learn from this passage, that a judgment is to take place, and that it is to take place at the resurrection of the dead. For when He spoke of the Ninevites and the queen of the south, He certainly spoke of dead persons, and yet He said that they should rise up in the day of judgment. He did not say, “They shall condemn,” as if they themselves were to be the judges, but because, in comparison with them, the others shall be justly condemned.

Again, in another passage, in which He was speaking of the present intermingling and future separation of the good and bad,—the separation which shall be made in the day of judgment,—He adduced a comparison drawn from the sown wheat and the tares sown among them, and gave this explanation of it to His disciples: “He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man,” etc. Here, indeed, He did not name the judgment or the day of judgment, but indicated it much more clearly by describing the circumstances, and foretold that it should take place in the end of the world.

In like manner He says to His disciples, “Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Here we learn that Jesus shall judge with His disciples. And therefore He said elsewhere to the Jews, “If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges.” Neither ought we to suppose that only twelve men shall judge along with Him, though He says that they shall sit upon twelve thrones; for by the number twelve is signified the completeness of the multitude of those who shall judge. For the two parts of the number seven (which commonly symbolizes totality), that is to say four and three, multiplied into one another, give twelve. For four times three, or three times four, are twelve. There are other meanings, too, in this number twelve. Were not this the right interpretation of the twelve thrones, then since we read that Matthias was ordained an apostle in the room of Judas the traitor, the Apostle Paul, though he labored more than them all, should have no throne of judgment; but he unmistakeably considers himself to be included in the number of the judges when he says, “Know ye not that we shall judge angels?” The same rule is to be observed in applying the number twelve to those who are to be judged. For though it was said, “judging the twelve tribes of Israel,” the tribe of Levi, which is the thirteenth, shall not on this account be exempt from judgment, neither shall judgment be passed only on Israel and not on the other nations. And by the words “in the regeneration,” He certainly meant the resurrection of the dead to be understood; for our flesh shall be regenerated by incorruption, as our soul is regenerated by faith.

Many passages I omit, because, though they seem to refer to the last judgment, yet on a closer examination they are found to be ambiguous, or to allude rather to some other event,—whether to that coming of the Saviour which continually occurs in His Church, that is, in His members, in which comes little by little, and piece by piece, since the whole Church is His body, or to the destruction of the earthly Jerusalem. For when He speaks even of this, He often uses language which is applicable to the end of the world and that last and great day of judgment, so that these two events cannot be distinguished unless all the corresponding passages bearing on the subject in the three evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are compared with one another,—for some things are put more obscurely by one evangelist and more plainly by another,—so that it becomes apparent what things are meant to be referred to one event. It is this which I have been at pains to do in a letter which I wrote to Hesychius of blessed memory, bishop of Salon, and entitled, "Of the End of the World."

I shall now cite from the Gospel according to Matthew the passage which speaks of the separation of the good from the wicked by the most efficacious and final judgment of Christ: "When the Son of man," he says, "shall come in His glory, . . . then shall He say also unto them on His left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Then He in like manner recounts to the wicked the things they had not done, but which He had said those on the right hand had done. And when they ask when they had seen Him in need of these things, He replies that, inasmuch as they had not done it to the least of His brethren, they had not done it unto Him, and concludes His address in the words, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Moreover, the evangelist John most distinctly states that He had predicted that the judgment should be at the resurrection of the dead. For after saying, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father: he that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him;" He immediately adds, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; but is passed from death to life." Here He said that believers on Him should not come into judgment. How, then, shall they be separated from the wicked by judgment, and be set at His right hand, unless judgment be in this passage used for condemnation? For into judgment, in this sense, they shall not come who hear His word, and believe on Him that sent Him.

CHAPTER 6

WHAT IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION, AND WHAT THE SECOND

After that He adds the words, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” As yet He does not speak of the second resurrection, that is, the resurrection of the body, which shall be in the end, but of the first, which now is. It is for the sake of making this distinction that He says, “The hour is coming, and now is.” Now this resurrection regards not the body, but the soul. For souls, too, have a death of their own in wickedness and sins, whereby they are the dead of whom the same lips say, “Suffer the dead to bury their dead,”—that is, let those who are dead in soul bury them that are dead in body. It is of these dead, then—the dead in ungodliness and wickedness—that He says, “The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.” “They that hear,” that is, they who obey, believe, and persevere to the end. Here no difference is made between the good and the bad. For it is good for all men to hear His voice and live, by passing to the life of godliness from the death of ungodliness. Of this death the Apostle Paul says, “Therefore all are dead, and He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again.” Thus all, without one exception, were dead in sins, whether original or voluntary sins, sins of ignorance, or sins committed against knowledge; and for all the dead there died the one only person who lived, that is, who had no sin whatever, in order that they who live by the remission of their sins should live, not to themselves, but to Him who died for all, for our sins, and rose again for our justification, that we, believing in Him who justifies the ungodly, and being justified from ungodliness or quickened from death, may be able to attain to the first resurrection which now is. For in this first resurrection none have a part save those who shall be eternally blessed; but in the second, of which He goes on to speak, all, as we shall learn, have a part, both the blessed and the wretched. The one is the resurrection of mercy, the other of judgment. And therefore it is written in the psalm, “I will sing of mercy and of judgment: unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing.”

And of this judgment He went on to say, “And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.” Here He shows that He will come to judge in that flesh in which He had come to be judged. For it is to show this He says, “because He is the Son of man.” And then follow the words for our purpose: “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.” This judgment He uses here in the same sense as a little before, when He says, “He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death to life;” i.e., by having a part in the first resurrection, by which a transition from death to life is made in this present time, he shall not come into damnation, which He mentions by the name of judgment, as also in the place where He says, “but they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment,” i.e., of damnation. He, therefore, who would not be damned in the second resurrection, let him rise in the first. For “the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live,” i.e., shall not come into damnation, which is called the second death; into which death, after the second or bodily resurrection, they shall be hurled who do not rise in the first or spiritual resurrection. For “the hour is coming” (but here He does not say, “and now is,” because it shall come in the end of the world in the last and greatest judgment of God) “when all that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth.” He does not say, as in the first resurrection, “And they that Hear shall live.” For all shall not live, at least with such life as ought alone to be called life because it alone is blessed. For some kind of life they must have in order to hear, and come forth from the graves in their rising bodies. And why all shall not live He teaches in the words that follow: “They that have done good, to the resurrection of life,”—these are they who shall live; “but they that have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment,”—these are they who shall not live, for they shall die in the second death. They have done evil because their life has been evil; and their life has been evil because it has not been renewed in the first or spiritual resurrection which now is, or because they have not persevered to the end in their renewed life. As, then, there are two regenerations, of which I have already made mention,—the one according to faith, and which takes place in the present life by means of baptism; the other according to the flesh, and which shall be accomplished in its incorruption and immortality by means of the great and final judgment,—so are there also two resurrections,—the one the first and spiritual resurrection, which has place in this life, and preserves us from coming into the second death; the other the second, which does not occur now, but in the end of the world, and which is of the body, not of the soul, and which by the last judgment shall dismiss some into the second death, others into that life which has no death.

CHAPTER 7

WHAT IS WRITTEN IN THE REVELATION OF JOHN REGARDING THE TWO RESURRECTIONS, AND THE THOUSAND YEARS, AND WHAT MAY REASONABLY BE HELD ON THESE POINTS

The evangelist John has spoken of these two resurrections in the book which is called the Apocalypse, but in such a way that some Christians do not understand the first of the two, and so construe the passage into ridiculous fancies. For the Apostle John says in the foresaid book, “And I saw an angel come down from heaven. . . . Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” Those who, on the strength of this passage, have suspected that the first resurrection is future and bodily, have been moved, among other things, specially by the number of a thousand years, as if it were a fit thing that the saints should thus enjoy a kind of Sabbath-rest during that period, a holy leisure after the labors of the six thousand years since man was created, and was on account of his great sin dismissed from the blessedness of paradise into the woes of this mortal life, so that thus, as it is written, “One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day,” there should follow on the completion of six thousand years, as of six days, a kind of seventh-day Sabbath in the succeeding thousand years; and that it is for this purpose the saints rise, viz., to celebrate this Sabbath. And this opinion would not be objectionable, if it were believed that the joys of the saints in that Sabbath shall be spiritual, and consequent on the presence of God; for I myself, too, once held this opinion. But, as they assert that those who then rise again shall enjoy the leisure of immoderate carnal banquets, furnished with an amount of meat and drink such as not only to shock the feeling of the temperate, but even to surpass the measure of credulity itself, such assertions can be believed only by the carnal. They who do believe them are called by the spiritual Chiliasts, which we may literally reproduce by the name Millenarians. It were a tedious process to refute these opinions point by point: we prefer proceeding to show how that passage of Scripture should be understood.

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself says, “No man can enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man”—meaning by the strong man the devil, because he had power to take captive the human race; and meaning by his goods which he was to take, those who had been held by the devil in divers sins and iniquities, but were to become believers in Himself. It was then for the binding of this strong one that the apostle saw in the Apocalypse “an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a chain in his hand. And he laid hold,” he says, “on the dragon, that old serpent, which is called the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,”—that is, bridled and restrained his power so that he could not seduce and gain possession of those who were to be freed. Now the thousand years may be understood in two ways, so far as occurs to me: either because these things happen in the sixth thousand of years or sixth millennium (the latter part of which is now passing), as if during the sixth day, which is to be followed by a Sabbath which has no evening, the endless rest of the saints, so that, speaking of a part under the name of the whole, he calls the last part of the millennium—the part, that is, which had yet to expire before the end of the world—a thousand years; or he used the thousand years as an equivalent for the whole duration of this world, employing the number of perfection to mark the fullness of time. For a thousand is the cube of ten. For ten times ten makes a hundred, that is; the square on a plane superficies. But to give this superficies height, and make it a cube, the hundred is again multiplied by ten, which gives a thousand. Besides, if a hundred is sometimes used for totality, as when the Lord said by way of promise to him that left all and followed Him “He shall receive in this world an hundredfold;” of which the apostle gives, as it were, an explanation when he says, “As having nothing, yet possessing all things,”—

for even of old it had been said, The whole world is the wealth of a believer, —with how much greater reason is a thousand put for totality since it is the cube, while the other is only the square? And for the same reason we cannot better interpret the words of the psalm, “He hath been mindful of His covenant for ever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations,” than by understanding it to mean “to all generations.”

“And he cast him into the abyss,”—i.e., cast the devil into the abyss. By the abyss is meant the countless multitude of the wicked whose hearts are unfathomably deep in malignity against the Church of God; not that the devil was not there before, but he is said to be cast in thither, because, when prevented from harming believers, he takes more complete possession of the ungodly. For that man is more abundantly possessed by the devil who is not only alienated from God, but also gratuitously hates those who serve God. “And shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled.” “Shut him up,”—i.e., prohibited him from going out, from doing what was forbidden. And the addition of “set a seal upon him” seems to me to mean that it was designed to keep it a secret who belonged to the devil’s party and who did not. For in this world this is a secret, for we cannot tell whether even the man who seems to stand shall fall, or whether he who seems to lie shall rise again. But by the chain and prison-house of this interdict the devil is prohibited and restrained from seducing those nations which belong to Christ, but which he formerly seduced or held in subjection. For before the foundation of the world God chose to rescue these from the power of darkness, and to translate them into the kingdom of the Son of His love, as the apostle says. For what Christian is not aware that he seduces nations even now, and draws them with himself to eternal punishment, but not those predestined to eternal life? And let no one be dismayed by the circumstance that the devil often seduces even those who have been regenerated in Christ, and begun to walk in God’s way. For “the Lord knoweth them that are His,” and of these the devil seduces none to eternal damnation. For it is as God, from whom nothing is hid even of things future, that the Lord knows them; not as a man, who sees a man at the present time (if he can be said to see one whose heart he does not see), but does not see even himself so far as to be able to know what kind of person he is to be. The devil, then, is bound and shut up in the abyss that he may not seduce the nations from which the Church is gathered, and which he formerly seduced before the Church existed. For it is not said “that he should not seduce any man,” but “that he should not seduce the nations”—meaning, no doubt, those among which the Church exists—”till the thousand years should be fulfilled,”—i.e., either what remains of the sixth day which consists of a thousand years, or all the years which are to elapse till the end of the world.

The words, “that he should not seduce the nations till the thousand years should be fulfilled,” are not to be understood as indicating that afterwards he is to seduce only those nations from which the predestined Church is composed, and from seducing whom he is restrained by that chain and imprisonment; but they are used in conformity with that usage frequently employed in Scripture and exemplified in the psalm, “So our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until He have mercy upon us,”—not as if the eyes of His servants would no longer wait upon the Lord their God when He had mercy upon them. Or the order of the words is unquestionably this, “And he shut him up and set a seal upon him, till the thousand years should be fulfilled;” and the interposed clause, “that he should seduce the nations no more,” is not to be understood in the connection in which it stands, but separately, and as if added afterwards, so that the whole sentence might be read, “And He shut him up and set a seal upon him till the thousand years should be fulfilled, that he should seduce the nations no more,”—i.e., he is shut up till the thousand years be fulfilled, on this account, that he may no more deceive the nations.

CHAPTER 8

OF THE BINDING AND LOOSING OF THE DEVIL

“After that,” says John, “he must be loosed a little season.” If the binding and shutting up of the devil means his being made unable to seduce the Church, must his loosing be the recovery of this ability? By no means. For the Church predestined and elected before the foundation of the world, the Church of which it is said, “The Lord knoweth them that are His,” shall never be seduced by him. And yet there shall be a Church in this world even when the devil shall be loosed, as there has been since the beginning, and shall be always, the places of the dying being filled by new believers. For a little after John says that the devil, being loosed, shall draw the nations whom he has seduced in the whole world to make war against the Church, and that the number of these enemies shall be as the sand of the sea. “And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. And the devil who seduced them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” This relates to the last judgment, but I have thought fit to mention it now, lest any one might suppose that in that short time during which the devil shall be loose there shall be no Church upon earth, whether because the devil finds no Church, or destroys it by manifold persecutions. The devil, then, is not bound during the whole time which this book embraces,—that is, from the first coming of Christ to the end of the world, when He shall come the second time,—not bound in this sense, that during this interval, which goes by the name of a thousand years, he shall not seduce the Church, for not even when loosed shall he seduce it. For certainly if his being bound means that he is not able or not permitted to seduce the Church, what can the loosing of him mean but his being able or permitted to do so? But God forbid that such should be the case! But the binding of the devil is his being prevented from the exercise of his whole power to seduce men, either by violently forcing or fraudulently deceiving them into taking part with him. If he were during so long a period permitted to assail the weakness of men, very many persons, such as God would not wish to expose to such temptation, would have their faith overthrown, or would be prevented from believing; and that this might not happen, he is bound.

But when the short time comes he shall be loosed. For he shall rage with the whole force of himself and his angels for three years and six months; and those with whom he makes war shall have power to withstand all his violence and stratagems. And if he were never loosed, his malicious power would be less patent, and less proof would be given of the steadfast fortitude of the holy city: it would, in short, be less manifest what good use the Almighty makes of his great evil. For the Almighty does not absolutely seclude the saints from his temptation, but shelters only their inner man, where faith resides, that by outward temptation they may grow in grace. And He binds him that he may not, in the free and eager exercise of his malice, hinder or destroy the faith of those countless weak persons, already believing or yet to believe, from whom the Church must be increased and completed; and he will in the end loose him, that the city of God may see how mighty an adversary it has conquered, to the great glory of its Redeemer, Helper, Deliverer. And what are we in comparison with those believers and saints who shall then exist, seeing that they shall be tested by the loosing of an enemy with whom we make war at the greatest peril even when he is bound? Although it is also certain that even in this intervening period there have been and are some soldiers of Christ so wise and strong, that if they were to be alive in this mortal condition at the time of his loosing, they would both most wisely guard against, and most patiently endure, all his snares and assaults.

Now the devil was thus bound not only when the Church began to be more and more widely extended among the nations beyond Judea, but is now and shall be bound till the end of the world, when he is to be loosed. Because even now men are, and doubtless to the end of the world shall be, converted to the faith from the unbelief in which he held them. And this strong one is bound in each instance in which he is spoiled of one of his goods; and the abyss in which he is shut up is not at an end when those die who were alive when first he was shut up in it, but these have been succeeded, and shall to the end of the world be succeeded, by others born after them with a like hate of the Christians, and in the depth of whose blind hearts he is continually shut up as in an abyss. But it is a question whether, during these three years and six months when he shall be loose, and raging with all his force, any one who has not previously believed shall attach himself to the faith. For how in that case would the words hold good, “Who entereth into the house of a strong one to spoil his goods, unless first he shall have bound the strong one?” Consequently this verse seems to compel us to believe that during that time, short as it is, no one will be added to the Christian community, but that the devil will make war with those who have previously become Christians, and that, though some of these may be conquered and desert to the devil, these do not belong to the predestinated number of the sons of God. For it is not without reason that John, the same apostle as wrote this Apocalypse, says in his epistle regarding certain persons, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have remained with us.” But what shall become of the little ones? For it is beyond all belief that in these days there shall not be found some Christian children born, but not yet baptized, and that there shall not also be some born during that very period; and if there be such, we cannot believe that their parents shall not find some way of bringing them to the laver of regeneration. But if this shall be the case, how shall these goods be snatched from the devil when he is loose, since into his house no man enters to spoil his goods unless he has first bound him? On the contrary, we are rather to believe that in these days there shall be no lack either of those who fall away from, or of those who attach themselves to the Church; but there shall be such resoluteness, both in parents to seek baptism for their little ones, and in those who shall then first believe, that they shall conquer that strong one, even though unbound,—that is, shall both vigilantly comprehend, and patiently bear up against him, though employing such wiles and putting forth such force as he never before used; and thus they shall be snatched from him even though unbound. And yet the verse of the Gospel will not be untrue, “Who entereth into the house of the strong one to spoil his goods, unless he shall first have bound the strong one?” For in accordance with this true saying that order is observed—the strong one first bound, and then his goods spoiled; for the Church is so increased by the weak and strong from all nations far and near, that by its most robust faith in things divinely predicted and accomplished, it shall be able to spoil the goods of even the unbound devil. For as we must own that, “when iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold,” and that those who have not been written in the book of life shall in large numbers yield to the severe and unprecedented persecutions and stratagems of the devil now loosed, so we cannot but think that not only those whom that time shall find sound in the faith, but also some who till then shall be without, shall become firm in the faith they have hitherto rejected and mighty to conquer the devil even though unbound, God’s grace aiding them to understand the Scriptures, in which, among other things, there is foretold that very end which they themselves see to be arriving. And if this shall be so, his binding is to be spoken of as preceding, that there might follow a spoiling of him both bound and loosed; for it is of this it is said, “Who shall enter into the house of the strong one to spoil his goods, unless he shall first have bound the strong one?”

CHAPTER 9

WHAT THE REIGN OF THE SAINTS WITH CHRIST FOR A THOUSAND YEARS IS, AND HOW IT DIFFERS FROM THE ETERNAL KINGDOM

But while the devil is bound, the saints reign with Christ during the same thousand years, understood in the same way, that is, of the time of His first coming. For, leaving out of account that kingdom concerning which He shall say in the end, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you,” the Church could not now be called His kingdom or the kingdom of heaven unless His saints were even now reigning with Him, though in another and far different way; for to His saints He says, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.” Certainly it is in this present time that the scribe well instructed in the kingdom of God, and of whom we have already spoken, brings forth from his treasure things new and old. And from the Church those reapers shall gather out the tares which He suffered to grow with the wheat till the harvest, as He explains in the words “The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered together and burned with fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all offenses.” Can He mean out of that kingdom in which are no offenses? Then it must be out of His present kingdom, the Church, that they are gathered. So He says, “He that breaketh one of the least of these commandments, and teacheth men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth and teacheth thus shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” He speaks of both as being in the kingdom of heaven, both the man who does not perform the commandments which He teaches,—for “to break” means not to keep, not to perform,—and the man who does and teaches as He did; but the one He calls least, the other great. And He immediately adds, “For I say unto you, that except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees,”—that is, the righteousness of those who break what they teach; for of the scribes and Pharisees He elsewhere says, “For they say and do not;”—unless therefore, your righteousness exceed theirs that is, so that you do not break but rather do what you teach, “ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.” We must understand in one sense the kingdom of heaven in which exist together both he who breaks what he teaches and he who does it, the one being least, the other great, and in another sense the kingdom of heaven into which only he who does what he teaches shall enter. Consequently, where both classes exist, it is the Church as it now is, but where only the one shall exist, it is the Church as it is destined to be when no wicked person shall be in her. Therefore the Church even now is the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of heaven. Accordingly, even now His saints reign with Him, though otherwise than as they shall reign hereafter; and yet, though the tares grow in the Church along with the wheat, they do not reign with Him. For they reign with Him who do what the apostle says, “If ye be risen with Christ, mind the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Seek those things which are above, not the things which are on the earth.” Of such persons he also says that their conversation is in heaven. In fine, they reign with Him who are so in His kingdom that they themselves are His kingdom. But in what sense are those the kingdom of Christ who, to say no more, though they are in it until all offenses are gathered out of it at the end of the world, yet seek their own things in it, and not the things that are Christ’s?

It is then of this kingdom militant, in which conflict with the enemy is still maintained, and war carried on with warring lusts, or government laid upon them as they yield, until we come to that most peaceful kingdom in which we shall reign without an enemy, and it is of this first resurrection in the present life, that the Apocalypse speaks in the words just quoted. For, after saying that the devil is bound a thousand years and is afterwards loosed for a short season, it goes on to give a sketch of what the Church does or of what is done in the Church in those days, in the words, “And I saw seats and them that sat upon them, and judgment was given.” It is not to be supposed that this refers to the last judgment, but to the seats of the rulers and to the rulers themselves by whom the Church is now governed. And no better interpretation of judgment being given can be produced than that which we have in the words, “What ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Whence the apostle says, “What have I to do with judging them that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?” “And the souls,” says John, “of those who were slain for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God,”—understanding what he afterwards says, “reigned with Christ a thousand years,”—that is, the souls of the martyrs not yet restored to their bodies. For the souls of the pious dead are not separated from the Church, which even now is the kingdom of Christ; otherwise there would be no remembrance made of them at the altar of God in the partaking of the body of Christ, nor would it do any good in danger to run to His baptism, that we might not pass from this life without it; nor to reconciliation, if by penitence or a bad conscience any one may be severed from His body. For why are these things practised, if not because the faithful, even though dead, are His members? Therefore, while these thousand years run on, their souls reign with Him, though not as yet in conjunction with their bodies. And therefore in another part of this same book we read, “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth and now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works do follow them.” The Church, then, begins its reign with Christ now in the living and in the dead. For, as the apostle says, “Christ died that He might be Lord both of the living and of the dead.” But he mentioned the souls of the martyrs only, because they who have contended even to death for the truth, themselves principally reign after death; but, taking the part for the whole, we understand the words of all others who belong to the Church, which is the kingdom of Christ.

As to the words following, “And if any have not worshipped the beast nor his image, nor have received his inscription on their forehead, or on their hand,” we must take them of both the living and the dead. And what this beast is, though it requires a more careful investigation, yet it is not inconsistent with the true faith to understand it of the ungodly city itself, and the community of unbelievers set in opposition to the faithful people and the city of God. “His image” seems to me to mean his simulation, to wit, in those men who profess to believe, but live as unbelievers. For they pretend to be what they are not, and are called Christians, not from a true likeness but from a deceitful image. For to this beast belong not only the avowed enemies of the name of Christ and His most glorious city, but also the tares which are to be gathered out of His kingdom, the Church, in the end of the world. And who are they who do not worship the beast and his image, if not those who do what the apostle says, “Be not yoked with unbelievers?” For such do not worship, i.e., do not consent, are not subjected; neither do they receive the inscription, the brand of crime, on their forehead by their profession, on their hand by their practice. They, then, who are free from these pollutions, whether they still live in this mortal flesh, or are dead, reign with Christ even now, through this whole interval which is indicated by the thousand years, in a fashion suited to this time.

“The rest of them,” he says, “did not live.” For now is the hour when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live; and the rest of them shall not live. The words added, “until the thousand years are finished,” mean that they did not live in the time in which they ought to have lived by passing from death to life. And therefore, when the day of the bodily resurrection arrives, they shall come out of their graves, not to life, but to judgment, namely, to damnation, which is called the second death. For whosoever has not lived until the thousand years be finished, i.e., during this whole time in which the first resurrection is going on,—whosoever has not heard the voice of the Son of God, and passed from death to life,—that man shall certainly in the second resurrection, the resurrection of the flesh, pass with his flesh into the second death. For he goes to say “This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection,” or who experiences it. Now he experiences it who not only revives from the death of sin, but continues in this renewed life. “In these the second death hath no power.” Therefore it has power in the rest, of whom he said above, “The rest of them did not live until the thousand years were finished;” for in this whole intervening time called a thousand years, however lustily they lived in the body, they were not quickened to life out of that death in which their wickedness held them, so that by this revived life they should become partakers of the first resurrection, and so the second death should have no power over them.

CHAPTER 10

WHAT IS TO BE REPLIED TO THOSE WHO THINK THAT RESURRECTION PERTAINS ONLY TO BODIES AND NOT TO SOULS

There are some who suppose that resurrection can be predicated only of the body, and therefore they contend that this first resurrection (of the Apocalypse) is a bodily resurrection. For, say they, “to rise again” can only be said of things that fall. Now, bodies fall in death. There cannot, therefore, be a resurrection of souls, but of bodies. But what do they say to the apostle who speaks of a resurrection of souls? For certainly it was in the inner and not the outer man that those had risen again to whom he says, “If ye have risen with Christ, mind the things that are above.” The same sense he elsewhere conveyed in other words, saying, “That as Christ has risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life.” So, too, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. “ As to what they say about nothing being able to rise again but what falls, whence they conclude that resurrection pertains to bodies only, and not to souls, because bodies fall, why do they make nothing of the words, “Ye that fear the Lord, wait for His mercy; and go not aside lest ye fall;” and “To his own Master he stands or falls;” and “He that thinketh he standeth, let him take heed lest he fall?” For I fancy this fall that we are to take heed against is a fall of the soul, not of the body. If, then, rising again belongs to things that fall, and souls fall, it must be owned that souls also rise again. To the words, “In them the second death hath no power,” are added the words, “but they shall be priests of God and Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years;” and this refers not to the bishops alone, and presbyters, who are now specially called priests in the Church; but as we call all believers Christians on account of the mystical chrism, so we call all priests because they are members of the one Priest. Of them the Apostle Peter says, “A holy people, a royal priesthood.” Certainly he implied, though in a passing and incidental way, that Christ is God, saying priests of God and Christ, that is, of the Father and the Son, though it was in His servant-form and as Son of man that Christ was made a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. But this we have already explained more than once.

CHAPTER 11

OF GOG AND MAGOG, WHO ARE TO BE ROUSED BY THE DEVIL TO PERSECUTE THE CHURCH, WHEN HE IS LOOSED IN THE END OF THE WORLD

“And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed from his prison, and shall go out to seduce the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, and shall draw them to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea.” This then, is his purpose in seducing them, to draw them to this battle. For even before this he was wont to use as many and various seductions as he could continue. And the words “he shall go out” mean, he shall burst forth from lurking hatred into open persecution. For this persecution, occurring while the final judgment is imminent, shall be the last which shall be endured by the holy Church throughout the world, the whole city of Christ being assailed by the whole city of the devil, as each exists on earth. For these nations which he names Gog and Magog are not to be understood of some barbarous nations in some part of the world, whether the Getae and Massagetae, as some conclude from the initial letters, or some other foreign nations not under the Roman government. For John marks that they are spread over the whole earth, when he says, “The nations which are in the four corners of the earth,” and he added that these are Gog and Magog. The meaning of these names we find to be, Gog, “a roof,” Magog, “from a roof,”—a house, as it were, and he who comes out of the house. They are therefore the nations in which we found that the devil was shut up as in an abyss, and the devil himself coming out from them and going forth, so that they are the roof, he from the roof. Or if we refer both words to the nations, not one to them and one to the devil, then they are both the roof, because in them the old enemy is at present shut up, and as it were roofed in; and they shall be from the roof when they break forth from concealed to open hatred. The words, “And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and encompassed the camp of the saints and the beloved city,” do not mean that they have come, or shall come, to one place, as if the camp of the saints and the beloved city should be in some one place; for this camp is nothing else than the Church of Christ extending over the whole world. And consequently wherever the Church shall be,—and it shall be in all nations, as is signified by “the breadth of the earth,”—there also shall be the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and there it shall be encompassed by the savage persecution of all its enemies; for they too shall exist along with it in all nations,—that is, it shall be straitened, and hard pressed, and shut up in the straits of tribulation, but shall not desert its military duty, which is signified by the word “camp.”

CHAPTER 12

WHETHER THE FIRE THAT CAME DOWN OUT OF HEAVEN AND DEVOURED THEM REFERS TO THE LAST PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED

The words, “And fire came down out of heaven and devoured them,” are not to be understood of the final punishment which shall be inflicted when it is said, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire;” for then they shall be cast into the fire, not fire come down out of heaven upon them. In this place “fire out of heaven” is well understood of the firmness of the saints, wherewith they refuse to yield obedience to those who rage against them. For the firmament is “heaven,” by whose firmness these assailants shall be pained with blazing zeal, for they shall be impotent to draw away the saints to the party of Antichrist. This is the fire which shall devour them, and this is “from God;” for it is by God’s grace the saints become unconquerable, and so torment their enemies. For as in a good sense it is said, “The zeal of Thine house hath consumed me,” so in a bad sense it is said, “Zeal hath possessed the uninstructed people, and now fire shall consume the enemies.” “And now,” that is to say, not the fire of the last judgment. Or if by this fire coming down out of heaven and consuming them, John meant that blow wherewith Christ in His coming is to strike those persecutors of the Church whom He shall then find alive upon earth, when He shall kill Antichrist with the breath of His mouth, then even this is not the last judgment of the wicked; but the last judgment is that which they shall suffer when the bodily resurrection has taken place.

CHAPTER 13

WHETHER THE TIME OF THE PERSECUTION OR ANTICHRIST SHOULD BE RECKONED IN THE THOUSAND YEARS

This last persecution by Antichrist shall last for three years and six months, as we have already said, and as is affirmed both in the book of Revelation and by Daniel the prophet. Though this time is brief, yet not without reason is it questioned whether it is comprehended in the thousand years in which the devil is bound and the saints reign with Christ, or whether this little season should be added over and above to these years. For if we say that they are included in the thousand years, then the saints reign with Christ during a more protracted period than the devil is bound. For they shall reign with their King and Conqueror mightily even in that crowning persecution when the devil shall now be unbound and shall rage against them with all his might. How then does Scripture define both the binding of the devil and the reign of the saints by the same thousand years, if the binding of the devil ceases three years and six months before this reign of the saints with Christ? On the other hand, if we say that the brief space of this persecution is not to be reckoned as a part of the thousand years, but rather as an additional period, we shall indeed be able to interpret the words, “The priests of God and of Christ shall reign with Him a thousand years; and when the thousand years shall be finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison;” for thus they signify that the reign of the saints and the bondage of the devil shall cease simultaneously, so that the time of the persecution we speak of should be contemporaneous neither with the reign of the saints nor with the imprisonment of Satan, but should be reckoned over and above as a superadded portion of time. But then in this case we are forced to admit that the saints shall not reign with Christ during that persecution. But who can dare to say that His members shall not reign with Him at that very juncture when they shall most of all, and with the greatest fortitude, cleave to Him, and when the glory of resistance and the crown of martyrdom shall be more conspicuous in proportion to the hotness of the battle? Or if it is suggested that they may be said not to reign, because of the tribulations which they shall suffer, it will follow that all the saints who have formerly, during the thousand years, suffered tribulation, shall not be said to have reigned with Christ during the period of their tribulation, and consequently even those whose souls the author of this book says that he saw, and who were slain for the testimony of Jesus and the word of God, did not reign with Christ when they were suffering persecution, and they were not themselves the kingdom of Christ, though Christ was then pre-eminently possessing them. This is indeed perfectly absurd, and to be scouted. But assuredly the victorious souls of the glorious martyrs having overcome and finished all griefs and toils, and having laid down their mortal members, have reigned and do reign with Christ till the thousand years are finished, that they may afterwards reign with Him when they have received their immortal bodies. And therefore during these three years and a half the souls of those who were slain for His testimony, both those which formerly passed from the body and those which shall pass in that last persecution, shall reign with Him till the mortal world come to an end, and pass into that kingdom in which there shall be no death. And thus the reign of the saints with Christ shall last longer than the bonds and imprisonment of the devil, because they shall reign with their King the Son of God for these three years and a half during which the devil is no longer bound. It remains, therefore, that when we read that "the priests of God and of Christ shall reign with Him a thousand years; and when the thousand years are finished, the devil shall be loosed from his imprisonment," that we understand either that the thousand years of the reign of the saints does not terminate, though the imprisonment of the devil does,—so that both parties have their thousand years, that is, their complete time, yet each with a different actual duration approriate to itself, the kingdom of the saints being longer, the imprisonment of the devil shorter,—or at least that, as three years and six months is a very short time, it is not reckoned as either deducted from the whole time of Satan's imprisonment, or as added to the whole duration of the reign of the saints, as we have shown above in the sixteenth book regarding the round number of four hundred years, which were specified as four hundred, though actually somewhat more; and similar expressions are often found in the sacred writings, if one will mark them.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE DAMNATION OF THE DEVIL AND HIS ADHERENTS; AND A SKETCH OF THE BODILY RESURRECTION OF ALL THE DEAD, AND OF THE FINAL RETRIBUTIVE JUDGMENT

After this mention of the closing persecution, he summarily indicates all that the devil, and the city of which he is the prince, shall suffer in the last judgment. For he says, "And the devil who seduced them is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, in which are the beast and the false prophet, and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." We have already said that by the beast is well understood the wicked city. His false prophet is either Antichrist or that image or figment of which we have spoken in the same place. After this he gives a brief narrative of the last judgment itself, which shall take place at the second or bodily resurrection of the dead, as it had been revealed to him: "I saw a throne great and white, and One sitting on it from whose face the heaven and the earth fled away, and their place was not found.” He does not say, “I saw a throne great and white, and One sitting on it, and from His face the heaven and the earth fled away,” for it had not happened then, i.e., before the living and the dead were judged; but he says that he saw Him sitting on the throne from whose face heaven and earth fled away, but afterwards. For when the judgment is finished, this heaven and earth shall cease to be, and there will be a new heaven and a new earth. For this world shall pass away by transmutation, not by absolute destruction. And therefore the apostle says, “For the figure of this world passeth away. I would have you be without anxiety.” The figure, therefore, passes away, not the nature. After John had said that he had seen One sitting on the throne from whose face heaven and earth fled, though not till afterwards, he said, “And I saw the dead, great and small: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of the life of each man: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.” He said that the books were opened, and a book; but he left us at a loss as to the nature of this book, “which is,” he says, “the book of the life of each man.” By those books, then, which he first mentioned, we are to understand the sacred books old and new, that out of them it might be shown what commandments God had enjoined; and that book of the life of each man is to show what commandments each man has done or omitted to do. If this book be materially considered, who can reckon its size or length, or the time it would take to read a book in which the whole life of every man is recorded? Shall there be present as many angels as men, and shall each man hear his life recited by the angel assigned to him? In that case there will be not one book containing all the lives, but a separate book for every life. But our passage requires us to think of one only. “And another book was opened,” it says. We must therefore understand it of a certain divine power, by which it shall be brought about that every one shall recall to memory all his own works, whether good or evil, and shall mentally survey them with a marvellous rapidity, so that this knowledge will either accuse or excuse conscience, and thus all and each shall be simultaneously judged. And this divine power is called a book, because in it we shall as it were read all that it causes us to remember. That he may show who the dead, small and great, are who are to be judged, he recurs to this which he had omitted or rather deferred, and says, “And the sea presented the dead which were in it; and death and hell gave up the dead which were in them." This of course took place before the dead were judged, yet it is mentioned after. And so, I say, he returns again to what he had omitted. But now he preserves the order of events, and for the sake of exhibiting it repeats in its own proper place what he had already said regarding the dead who were judged. For after he had said, "And the sea presented the dead which were in it, and death and hell gave up the dead which were in them," he immediately subjoined what he had already said, "and they were judged every man according to their works." For this is just what he had said before, "And the dead were judged according to their works."

CHAPTER 15

WHO THE DEAD ARE WHO ARE GIVEN UP TO JUDGMENT BY THE SEA, AND BY DEATH AND HELL

But who are the dead which were in the sea, and which the sea presented? For we cannot suppose that those who die in the sea are not in hell, nor that their bodies are preserved in the sea; nor yet, which is still more absurd, that the sea retained the good, while hell received the bad. Who could believe this? But some very sensibly suppose that in this place the sea is put for this world. When John then wished to signify that those whom Christ should find still alive in the body were to be judged along with those who should rise again, he called them dead, both the good to whom it is said, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God," and the wicked of whom it is said, "Let the dead bury their dead." They may also be called dead, because they wear mortal bodies, as the apostle says, "The body indeed is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness;" proving that in a living man in the body there is both a body which is dead, and a spirit which is life. Yet he did not say that the body was mortal, but dead, although immediately after he speaks in the more usual way of mortal bodies. These, then, are the dead which were in the sea, and which the sea presented, to wit, the men who were in this world, because they had not yet died, and whom the world presented for judgment. "And death and hell," he says, "gave up the dead which were in them." The sea presented them because they had merely to be found in the place where they were; but death and hell gave them up or restored them, because they called them back to life, which they had already quitted. And perhaps it was not without reason that neither death nor hell were judged sufficient alone, and both were mentioned,—death to indicate the good, who have suffered only death and not hell; hell to indicate the wicked, who suffer also the punishment of hell. For if it does not seem absurd to believe that the ancient saints who believed in Christ and His then future coming, were kept in places far removed indeed from the torments of the wicked, but yet in hell, until Christ's blood and His descent into these places delivered them, certainly good Christians, redeemed by that precious price already paid, are quite unacquainted with hell while they wait for their restoration to the body, and the reception of their reward. After saying, "They were judged every man according to their works," he briefly added what the judgment was: "Death and hell were cast into the lake of fire;" by these names designating the devil and the whole company of his angels, for he is the author of death and the pains of hell. For this is what he had already, by anticipation, said in clearer language: "The devil who seduced them was cast into a lake of fire and brimstone." The obscure addition he had made in the words, "in which were also the beast and the false prophet," he here explains, "They who were not found written in the book of life were cast into the lake of fire." This book is not for reminding God, as if things might escape Him by forgetfulness, but it symbolizes His predestination of those to whom eternal life shall be given. For it is not that God is ignorant, and reads in the book to inform Himself, but rather His infallible prescience is the book of life in which they are written, that is to say, known beforehand.

CHAPTER 16

OF THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH

Having finished the prophecy of judgment, so far as the wicked are concerned, it remains that he speak also of the good. Having briefly explained the Lord's words, "These will go away into everlasting punishment," it remains that he explain the connected words, "but the righteous into life eternal." "And I saw," he says, "a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away; and there is no more sea." This will take place in the order which he has by anticipation declared in the words, “I saw One sitting on the throne, from whose face heaven and earth fled.” For as soon as those who are not written in the book of life have been judged and cast into eternal fire,—the nature of which fire, or its position in the world or universe, I suppose is known to no man, unless perhaps the divine Spirit reveal it to some one,—then shall the figure of this world pass away in a conflagration of universal fire, as once before the world was flooded with a deluge of universal water. And by this universal conflagration the qualities of the corruptible elements which suited our corruptible bodies shall utterly perish, and our substance shall receive such qualities as shall, by a wonderful transmutation, harmonize with our immortal bodies, so that, as the world itself is renewed to some better thing, it is fitly accommodated to men, themselves renewed in their flesh to some better thing. As for the statement, “And there shall be no more sea,” I would not lightly say whether it is dried up with that excessive heat, or is itself also turned into some better thing. For we read that there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, but I do not remember to have anywhere read anything of a new sea, unless what I find in this same book, “As it were a sea of glass like crystal.” But he was not then speaking of this end of the world, neither does he seem to speak of a literal sea, but “as it were a sea.” It is possible that, as prophetic diction delights in mingling figurative and real language, and thus in some sort veiling the sense, so the words “And there is no more sea” may be taken in the same sense as the previous phrase, “And the sea presented the dead which were in it.” For then there shall be no more of this world, no more of the surgings and restlessness of human life, and it is this which is symbolized by the sea.

CHAPTER 17

OF THE ENDLESS GLORY OF THE CHURCH

“And I saw,” he says, “a great city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, but neither shall there be any more pain: because the former things have passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." This city is said to come down out of heaven, because the grace with which God formed it is of heaven. Wherefore He says to it by Isaiah, "I am the Lord that formed thee." It is indeed descended from heaven from its commencement, since its citizens during the course of this world grow by the grace of God, which cometh down from above through the laver of regeneration in the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. But by God's final judgment, which shall be administered by His Son Jesus Christ, there shall by God's grace be manifested a glory so pervading and so new, that no vestige of what is old shall remain; for even our bodies shall pass from their old corruption and mortality to new incorruption and immortality. For to refer this promise to the present time, in which the saints are reigning with their King a thousand years, seems to me excessively barefaced, when it is most distinctly said, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, but there shall be no more pain." And who is so absurd, and blinded by contentious opinionativeness, as to be audacious enough to affirm that in the midst of the calamities of this mortal state, God's people, or even one single saint, does live, or has ever lived, or shall ever live, without tears or pain,—the fact being that the holier a man is, and the fuller of holy desire, so much the more abundant is the tearfulness of his supplication? Are not these the utterances of a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem: "My tears have been my meat day and night;" and "Every night shall I make my bed to swim; with my tears shall I water my couch;" and "My groaning is not hid from Thee;" and "My sorrow was renewed?" Or are not those God's children who groan, being burdened, not that they wish to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality may be swallowed up of life? Do not they even who have the first-fruits of the Spirit groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of their body? Was not the Apostle Paul himself a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, and was he not so all the more when he had heaviness and continual sorrow of heart for his Israelitish brethren? But when shall there be no more death in that city, except when it shall be said, "O death, where is thy contention? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin." Obviously there shall be no sin when it can be said, "Where is"—But as for the present it is not some poor weak citizen of this city, but this same Apostle John himself who says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” No doubt, though this book is called the Apocalypse, there are in it many obscure passages to exercise the mind of the reader, and there are few passages so plain as to assist us in the interpretation of the others, even though we take pains; and this difficulty is increased by the repetition of the same things, in forms so different, that the things referred to seem to be different, although in fact they are only differently stated. But in the words, “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, but there shall be no more pain,” there is so manifest a reference to the future world and the immortality and eternity of the saints,—for only then and only there shall such a condition be realized,—that if we think this obscure, we need not expect to find anything plain in any part of Scripture.

CHAPTER 18

WHAT THE APOSTLE PETER PREDICTED REGARDING THE LAST JUDGMENT

Let us now see what the Apostle Peter predicted concerning this judgment. “There shall come,” he says, “in the last days scoffers. . . . Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” There is nothing said here about the resurrection of the dead, but enough certainly regarding the destruction of this world. And by his reference to the deluge he seems as it were to suggest to us how far we should believe the ruin of the world will extend in the end of the world. For he says that the world which then was perished, and not only the earth itself, but also the heavens, by which we understand the air, the place and room of which was occupied by the water. Therefore the whole, or almost the whole, of the gusty atmosphere (which he calls heaven, or rather the heavens, meaning the earth’s atmosphere, and not the upper air in which sun, moon, and stars are set) was turned into moisture, and in this way perished together with the earth, whose former appearance had been destroyed by the deluge. “But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” Therefore the heavens and the earth, or the world which was preserved from the water to stand in place of that world which perished in the flood, is itself reserved to fire at last in the day of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men. He does not hesitate to affirm that in this great change men also shall perish: their nature, however, shall notwithstanding continue, though in eternal punishments. Some one will perhaps put the question, If after judgment is pronounced the world itself is to burn, where shall the saints be during the conflagration, and before it is replaced by a new heavens and a new earth, since somewhere they must be, because they have material bodies? We may reply that they shall be in the upper regions into which the flame of that conflagration shall not ascend, as neither did the water of the flood; for they shall have such bodies that they shall be wherever they wish. Moreover, when they have become immortal and incorruptible, they shall not greatly dread the blaze of that conflagration, as the corruptible and mortal bodies of the three men were able to live unhurt in the blazing furnace.

CHAPTER 19

WHAT THE APOSTLE PAUL WROTE TO THE THESSALONIANS ABOUT THE MANIFESTATION OF ANTICHRIST WHICH SHALL PRECEDE THE DAY OF THE LORD

I see that I must omit many of the statements of the gospels and epistles about this last judgment, that this volume may not become unduly long; but I can on no account omit what the Apostle Paul says, in writing to the Thessalonians, “We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,” etc.

No one can doubt that he wrote this of Antichrist and of the day of judgment, which he here calls the day of the Lord, nor that he declared that this day should not come unless he first came who is called the apostate—apostate, to wit, from the Lord God. And if this may justly be said of all the ungodly, how much more of him? But it is uncertain in what temple he shall sit, whether in that ruin of the temple which was built by Solomon, or in the Church; for the apostle would not call the temple of any idol or demon the temple of God. And on this account some think that in this passage Antichrist means not the prince himself alone, but his whole body, that is, the mass of men who adhere to him, along with him their prince; and they also think that we should render the Greek more exactly were we to read, not “in the temple of God,” but “for” or “as the temple of God,” as if he himself were the temple of God, the Church. Then as for the words, “And now ye know what withholdeth," i.e., ye know what hindrance or cause of delay there is, "that he might be revealed in his own time;" they show that he was unwilling to make an explicit statement, because he said that they knew. And thus we who have not their knowledge wish and are not able even with pains to understand what the apostle referred to, especially as his meaning is made still more obscure by what he adds. For what does he mean by "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now holdeth, let him hold until he be taken out of the way: and then shall the wicked be revealed?" I frankly confess I do not know what he means. I will nevertheless mention such conjectures as I have heard or read.

Some think that the Apostle Paul referred to the Roman empire, and that he was unwilling to use language more explicit, lest he should incur the calumnious charge of wishing ill to the empire which it was hoped would be eternal; so that in saying, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work," he alluded to Nero, whose deeds already seemed to be as the deeds of Antichrist. And hence some suppose that he shall rise again and be Antichrist. Others, again, suppose that he is not even dead, but that he was concealed that he might be supposed to have been killed, and that he now lives in concealment in the vigor of that same age which he had reached when he was believed to have perished, and will live until he is revealed in his own time and restored to his kingdom. But I wonder that men can be so audacious in their conjectures. However, it is not absurd to believe that these words of the apostle, "Only he who now holdeth, let him hold until he be taken out of the way," refer to the Roman empire, as if it were said, "Only he who now reigneth, let him reign until he be taken out of the way." "And then shall the wicked be revealed:" no one doubts that this means Antichrist. But others think that the words, "Ye know what withholdeth," and "The mystery of iniquity worketh," refer only to the wicked and the hypocrites who are in the Church, until they reach a number so great as to furnish Antichrist with a great people, and that this is the mystery of iniquity, because it seems hidden; also that the apostle is exhorting the faithful tenaciously to hold the faith they hold when he says, "Only he who now holdeth, let him hold until he be taken out of the way," that is, until the mystery of iniquity which now is hidden departs from the Church. For they suppose that it is to this same mystery John alludes when in his epistle he says, “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.” As therefore there went out from the Church many heretics, whom John calls “many antichrists,” at that time prior to the end, and which John calls “the last time,” so in the end they shall go out who do not belong to Christ, but to that last Antichrist, and then he shall be revealed.

Thus various, then, are the conjectural explanations of the obscure words of the apostle. That which there is no doubt he said is this, that Christ will not come to judge quick and dead unless Antichrist, His adversary, first come to seduce those who are dead in soul; although their seduction is a result of God’s secret judgment already passed. For, as it is said “his presence shall be after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all seduction of unrighteousness in them that perish.” For then shall Satan be loosed, and by means of that Antichrist shall work with all power in a lying though a wonderful manner. It is commonly questioned whether these works are called “signs and lying wonders” because he is to deceive men’s senses by false appearances, or because the things he does, though they be true prodigies, shall be a lie to those who shall believe that such things could be done only by God, being ignorant of the devil’s power, and especially of such unexampled power as he shall then for the first time put forth. For when he fell from heaven as fire, and at a stroke swept away from the holy Job his numerous household and his vast flocks, and then as a whirlwind rushed upon and smote the house and killed his children, these were not deceitful appearances, and yet they were the works of Satan to whom God had given this power. Why they are called signs and lying wonders, we shall then be more likely to know when the time itself arrives. But whatever be the reason of the name, they shall be such signs and wonders as shall seduce those who shall deserve to be seduced, “because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.” Neither did the apostle scruple to go on to say, “For this cause God shall send upon them the working of error that they should believe a lie.” For God shall send, because God shall permit the devil to do these things, the permission being by His own just judgment, though the doing of them is in pursuance of the devil’s unrighteous and malignant purpose, “that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” Therefore, being judged, they shall be seduced, and, being seduced, they shall be judged. But, being judged, they shall be seduced by those secretly just and justly secret judgments of God, with which He has never ceased to judge since the first sin of the rational creatures; and, being seduced, they shall be judged in that last and manifest judgment administered by Jesus Christ, who was Himself most unjustly judged and shall most justly judge.

CHAPTER 20

WHAT THE SAME APOSTLE TAUGHT IN THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS REGARDING THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

But the apostle has said nothing here regarding the resurrection of the dead; but in his first Epistle to the Thessalonians he says, “We would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning them which are asleep,” etc. These words of the apostle most distinctly proclaim the future resurrection of the dead, when the Lord Christ shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

But it is commonly asked whether those whom our Lord shall find alive upon earth, personated in this passage by the apostle and those who were alive with him, shall never die at all, or shall pass with incomprehensible swiftness through death to immortality in the very moment during which they shall be caught up along with those who rise again to meet the Lord in the air? For we cannot say that it is impossible that they should both die and revive again while they are carried aloft through the air. For the words, “And so shall we ever be with the Lord,” are not to be understood as if he meant that we shall always remain in the air with the Lord; for He Himself shall not remain there, but shall only pass through it as He comes. For we shall go to meet Him as He comes, not where He remains; but “so shall we be with the Lord,” that is, we shall be with Him possessed of immortal bodies wherever we shall be with Him. We seem compelled to take the words in this sense, and to suppose that those whom the Lord shall find alive upon earth shall in that brief space both suffer death and receive immortality: for this same apostle says, “In Christ shall all be made alive;” while, speaking of the same resurrection of the body, he elsewhere says, “That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.” How, then, shall those whom Christ shall find alive upon earth be made alive to immortality in Him if they die not, since on this very account it is said, “That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die?” Or if we cannot properly speak of human bodies as sown, unless in so far as by dying they do in some sort return to the earth, as also the sentence pronounced by God against the sinning father of the human race runs, “Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return,” we must acknowledge that those whom Christ at His coming shall find still in the body are not included in these words of the apostle nor in those of Genesis; for, being caught up into the clouds, they are certainly not sown, neither going nor returning to the earth, whether they experience no death at all or die for a moment in the air.

But, on the other hand, there meets us the saying of the same apostle when he was speaking to the Corinthians about the resurrection of the body, “We shall all rise,” or, as other mss. read, “We shall all sleep.” Since, then, there can be no resurrection unless death has preceded, and since we can in this passage understand by sleep nothing else than death, how shall all either sleep or rise again if so many persons whom Christ shall find in the body shall neither sleep nor rise again? If, then, we believe that the saints who shall be found alive at Christ’s coming, and shall be caught up to meet Him, shall in that same ascent pass from mortal to immortal bodies, we shall find no difficulty in the words of the apostle, either when he says, “That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die,” or when he says, “We shall all rise,” or “all sleep,” for not even the saints shall be quickened to immortality unless they first die, however briefly; and consequently they shall not be exempt from resurrection which is preceded by sleep, however brief. And why should it seem to us incredible that that multitude of bodies should be, as it were, sown in the air, and should in the air forthwith revive immortal and incorruptible, when we believe, on the testimony of the same apostle, that the resurrection shall take place in the twinkling of an eye, and that the dust of bodies long dead shall return with incomprehensible facility and swiftness to those members that are now to live endlessly? Neither do we suppose that in the case of these saints the sentence, “Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return,” is null, though their bodies do not, on dying, fall to earth, but both die and rise again at once while caught up into the air.

For “Thou shalt return to earth” means, Thou shalt at death return to that which thou wert before life began. Thou shalt, when examinate, be that which thou wert before thou wast animate. For it was into a face of earth that God breathed the breath of life when man was made a living soul; as if it were said, Thou art earth with a soul, which thou wast not; thou shalt be earth without a soul, as thou wast. And this is what all bodies of the dead are before they rot; and what the bodies of those saints shall be if they die, no matter where they die, as soon as they shall give up that life which they are immediately to receive back again. In this way, then, they return or go to earth, inasmuch as from being living men they shall be earth, as that which becomes cinder is said to go to cinder; that which decays, to go to decay; and so of six hundred other things. But the manner in which this shall take place we can now only feebly conjecture, and shall understand it only when it comes to pass. For that there shall be a bodily resurrection of the dead when Christ comes to judge quick and dead, we must believe if we would be Christians. But if we are unable perfectly to comprehend the manner in which it shall take place, our faith is not on this account vain. Now, however, we ought, as we formerly promised, to show, as far as seems necessary, what the ancient prophetic books predicted concerning this final judgment of God; and I fancy no great time need be spent in discussing and explaining these predictions, if the reader has been careful to avail himself of the help we have already furnished.

CHAPTER 21

UTTERANCES OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH REGARDING THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD AND THE RETRIBUTIVE JUDGMENT

The prophet Isaiah says, “The dead shall rise again, and all who were in the graves shall rise again; and all who are in the earth shall rejoice: for the dew which is from Thee is their health, and the earth of the wicked shall fall.” All the former part of this passage relates to the resurrection of the blessed; but the words, “the earth of the wicked shall fall,” is rightly understood as meaning that the bodies of the wicked shall fall into the ruin of damnation. And if we would more exactly and carefully scrutinize the words which refer to the resurrection of the good, we may refer to the first resurrection the words, “the dead shall rise again,” and to the second the following words, “and all who were in the graves shall rise again.” And if we ask what relates to those saints whom the Lord at His coming shall find alive upon earth, the following clause may suitably be referred to them; “All who are in the earth shall rejoice: for the dew which is from Thee is their health.” By “health” in this place it is best to understand immortality. For that is the most perfect health which is not repaired by nourishment as by a daily remedy. In like manner the same prophet, affording hope to the good and terrifying the wicked regarding the day of judgment, says, “Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will flow down upon them as a river of peace, and upon the glory of the Gentiles as a rushing torrent; their sons shall be carried on the shoulders, and shall be comforted on the knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so shall I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And ye shall see, and your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall rise up like a herb; and the hand of the Lord shall be known by His worshippers, and He shall threaten the contumacious. For, behold, the Lord shall come as a fire, and as a whirlwind His chariots, to execute vengeance with indignation, and wasting with a flame of fire. For with fire of the Lord shall all the earth be judged, and all flesh with His sword: many shall be wounded by the Lord.” In His promise to the good he says that He will flow down as a river of peace, that is to say, in the greatest possible abundance of peace. With this peace we shall in the end be refreshed; but of this we have spoken abundantly in the preceding book. It is this river in which he says He shall flow down upon those to whom He promises so great happiness, that we may understand that in the region of that felicity, which is in heaven, all things are satisfied from this river. But because there shall thence flow, even upon earthly bodies, the peace of incorruption and immortality, therefore he says that He shall flow down as this river, that He may as it were pour Himself from things above to things beneath, and make men the equals of the angels. By “Jerusalem,” too, we should understand not that which serves with her children, but that which, according to the apostle, is our free mother, eternal in the heavens. In her we shall be comforted as we pass toilworn from earth’s cares and calamities, and be taken up as her children on her knees and shoulders. Inexperienced and new to such blandishments, we shall be received into unwonted bliss. There we shall see, and our heart shall rejoice. He does not say what we shall see; but what but God, that the promise in the Gospel may be fulfilled in us, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God?” What shall we see but all those things which now we see not, but believe in, and of which the idea we form, according to our feeble capacity, is incomparably less than the reality? “And ye shall see,” he says, “and your heart shall rejoice.” Here ye believe, there ye shall see.

But because he said, “Your heart shall rejoice,” lest we should suppose that the blessings of that Jerusalem are only spiritual, he adds, “And your bones shall rise up like a herb,” alluding to the resurrection of the body, and as it were supplying an omission he had made. For it will not take place when we have seen; but we shall see when it has taken place. For he had already spoken of the new heavens and the new earth, speaking repeatedly, and under many figures, of the things promised to the saints, and saying,”There shall be new heavens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind; but they shall find in it gladness and exultation. Behold, I will make Jerusalem an exultation, and my people a joy. And I will exult in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her;” and other promises, which some endeavor to refer to carnal enjoyment during the thousand years. For, in the manner of prophecy, figurative and literal expressions are mingled, so that a serious mind may, by useful and salutary effort, reach the spiritual sense; but carnal sluggishness, or the slowness of an uneducated and undisciplined mind, rests in the superficial letter, and thinks there is nothing beneath to be looked for. But let this be enough regarding the style of those prophetic expressions just quoted. And now, to return to their interpretation. When he had said, “And your bones shall rise up like a herb,” in order to show that it was the resurrection of the good, though a bodily resurrection, to which he alluded, he added, “And the hand of the Lord shall be known by His worshippers.” What is this but the hand of Him who distinguishes those who worship from those who despise Him? Regarding these the context immediately adds, “And He shall threaten the contumacious,” or, as another translator has it, “the unbelieving.” He shall not actually threaten then, but the threats which are now uttered shall then be fulfilled in effect. “For behold,” he says, “the Lord shall come as a fire, and as a whirlwind His chariots, to execute vengeance with indignation, and wasting with a flame of fire. For with fire of the Lord shall all the earth be judged, and all flesh with His sword: many shall be wounded by the Lord.” By fire, whirlwind, sword, he means the judicial punishment of God. For he says that the Lord Himself shall come as a fire, to those, that is to say, to whom His coming shall be penal. By His chariots (for the word is plural) we suitably understand the ministration of angels. And when he says that all flesh and all the earth shall be judged with His fire and sword, we do not understand the spiritual and holy to be included, but the earthly and carnal, of whom it is said that they “mind earthly things,” and “to be carnally minded is death,” and whom the Lord calls simply flesh when He says, “My Spirit shall not always remain in these men, for they are flesh.” As to the words, “Many shall be wounded by the Lord,” this wounding shall produce the second death. It is possible, indeed, to understand fire, sword, and wound in a good sense. For the Lord said that He wished to send fire on the earth. And the cloven tongues appeared to them as fire when the Holy Spirit came. And our Lord says, “I am not come to send peace on earth, but a sword.” And Scripture says that the word of God is a doubly sharp sword, on account of the two edges, the two Testaments. And in the Song of Songs the holy Church says that she is wounded with love,—pierced, as it were, with the arrow of love. But here, where we read or hear that the Lord shall come to execute vengeance, it is obvious in what sense we are to understand these expressions.

After briefly mentioning those who shall be consumed in this judgment, speaking of the wicked and sinners under the figure of the meats forbidden by the old law, from which they had not abstained, he summarily recounts the grace of the new testament, from the first coming of the Saviour to the last judgment, of which we now speak; and herewith he concludes his prophecy. For he relates that the Lord declares that He is coming to gather all nations, that they may come and witness His glory. For, as the apostle says, “All have sinned and are in want of the glory of God.” And he says that He will do wonders among them, at which they shall marvel and believe in Him; and that from them He will send forth those that are saved into various nations, and distant islands which have not heard His name nor seen His glory, and that they shall declare His glory among the nations, and shall bring the brethren of those to whom the prophet was speaking, i.e., shall bring to the faith under God the Father the brethren of the elect

Israelites; and that they shall bring from all nations an offering to the Lord on beasts of burden and waggons (which are understood to mean the aids furnished by God in the shape of angelic or human ministry), to the holy city Jerusalem, which at present is scattered over the earth, in the faithful saints. For where divine aid is given, men believe, and where they believe, they come. And the Lord compared them, in a figure, to the children of Israel offering sacrifice to Him in His house with psalms, which is already everywhere done by the Church; and He promised that from among them He would choose for Himself priests and Levites, which also we see already accomplished. For we see that priests and Levites are now chosen, not from a certain family and blood, as was originally the rule in the priesthood according to the order of Aaron, but as befits the new testament, under which Christ is the High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, in consideration of the merit which is bestowed upon each man by divine grace. And these priests are not to be judged by their mere title, which is often borne by unworthy men, but by that holiness which is not common to good men and bad.

After having thus spoken of this mercy of God which is now experienced by the Church, and is very evident and familiar to us, he foretells also the ends to which men shall come when the last judgment has separated the good and the bad, saying by the prophet, or the prophet himself speaking for God, “For as the new heavens and the new earth shall remain before me, said the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain, and there shall be to them month after month, and Sabbath after Sabbath. All flesh shall come to worship before me in Jerusalem, said the Lord. And they shall go out, and shall see the members of the men who have sinned against me: their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be for a spectacle to all flesh.” At this point the prophet closed his book, as at this point the world shall come to an end. Some, indeed, have translated “carcases” instead of “members of the men,” meaning by carcases the manifest punishment of the body, although carcase is commonly used only of dead flesh, while the bodies here spoken of shall be animated, else they could not be sensible of any pain; but perhaps they may, without absurdity, be called carcases, as being the bodies of those who are to fall into the second death. And for the same reason it is said, as I have already quoted, by this same prophet, “The earth of the wicked shall fall.” It is obvious that those translators who use a different word for men do not mean to include only males, for no one will say that the women who sinned shall not appear in that judgment; but the male sex, being the more worthy, and that from which the woman was derived, is intended to include both sexes. But that which is especially pertinent to our subject is this, that since the words “All flesh shall come,” apply to the good, for the people of God shall be composed of every race of men,—for all men shall not be present, since the greater part shall be in punishment,—but, as I was saying, since flesh is used of the good, and members or carcases of the bad, certainly it is thus put beyond a doubt that that judgment in which the good and the bad shall be allotted to their destinies shall take place after the resurrection of the body, our faith in which is thoroughly established by the use of these words.

CHAPTER 22

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE GOOD GOING OUT TO SEE THE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED

But in what way shall the good go out to see the punishment of the wicked? Are they to leave their happy abodes by a bodily movement, and proceed to the places of punishment, so as to witness the torments of the wicked in their bodily presence? Certainly not; but they shall go out by knowledge. For this expression, go out, signifies that those who shall be punished shall be without. And thus the Lord also calls these places “the outer darkness,” to which is opposed that entrance concerning which it is said to the good servant, “Enter into the joy of thy Lord,” that it may not be supposed that the wicked can enter thither and be known, but rather that the good by their knowledge go out to them, because the good are to know that which is without. For those who shall be in torment shall not know what is going on within in the joy of the Lord; but they who shall enter into that joy shall know what is going on outside in the outer darkness. Therefore it is said, “They shall go out,” because they shall know what is done by those who are without. For if the prophets were able to know things that had not yet happened, by means of that indwelling of God in their minds, limited though it was, shall not the immortal saints know things that have already happened, when God shall be all in all? The seed, then, and the name of the saints shall remain in that blessedness,—the seed, to wit, of which John says, “And his seed remaineth in him;” and the name, of which it was said through Isaiah himself, “I will give them an everlasting name.” “And there shall be to them month after month, and Sabbath after Sabbath,” as if it were said, Moon after moon, and rest upon rest, both of which they shall themselves be when they shall pass from the old shadows of time into the new lights of eternity. The worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched, which constitute the punishment of the wicked, are differently interpreted by different people. For some refer both to the body, others refer both to the soul; while others again refer the fire literally to the body, and the worm figuratively to the soul, which seems the more credible idea. But the present is not the time to discuss this difference, for we have undertaken to occupy this book with the last judgment, in which the good and the bad are separated: their rewards and punishments we shall more carefully discuss elsewhere.

CHAPTER 23

WHAT DANIEL PREDICTED REGARDING THE PERSECUTION OF ANTICHRIST, THE JUDGMENT OF GOD, AND THE KINGDOM OF THE SAINTS

Daniel prophesies of the last judgment in such a way as to indicate that Antichrist shall first come, and to carry on his description to the eternal reign of the saints. For when in prophetic vision he had seen four beasts, signifying four kingdoms, and the fourth conquered by a certain king, who is recognized as Antichrist, and after this the eternal kingdom of the Son of man, that is to say, of Christ, he says, “My spirit was terrified, I Daniel in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me,” etc. Some have interpreted these four kingdoms as signifying those of the Assyrians, Persians, Macedonians, and Romans. They who desire to understand the fitness of this interpretation may read Jerome’s book on Daniel, which is written with a sufficiency of care and erudition. But he who reads this passage, even half asleep, cannot fail to see that the kingdom of Antichrist shall fiercely, though for a short time, assail the Church before the last judgment of God shall introduce the eternal reign of the saints. For it is patent from the context that the time, times, and half a time, means a year, and two years, and half a year, that is to say, three years and a half.

Sometimes in Scripture the same thing is indicated by months. For though the word times seems to be used here in the Latin indefinitely, that is only because the Latins have no dual, as the Greeks have, and as the Hebrews also are said to have. Times, therefore, is used for two times. As for the ten kings, whom, as it seems, Antichrist is to find in the person of ten individuals when he comes, I own I am afraid we may be deceived in this, and that he may come unexpectedly while there are not ten kings living in the Roman world. For what if this number ten signifies the whole number of kings who are to precede his coming, as totality is frequently symbolized by a thousand, or a hundred, or seven, or other numbers, which it is not necessary to recount?

In another place the same Daniel says, “And there shall be a time of trouble, such as was not since there was born a nation upon earth until that time: and in that time all Thy people which shall be found written in the book shall be delivered. And many of them that sleep in the mound of earth shall arise, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting confusion. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and many of the just as the stars for ever.” This passage is very similar to the one we have quoted from the Gospel, at least so far as regards the resurrection of dead bodies. For those who are there said to be “in the graves” are here spoken of as “sleeping in the mound of earth,” or, as others translate, “in the dust of earth.” There it is said, “They shall come forth;” so here, “They shall arise.” There, “They that have done good, to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment;” here, “Some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting confusion.” Neither is it to be supposed a difference, though in place of the expression in the Gospel, “All who are in their graves,” the prophet does not say “all,” but “many of them that sleep in the mound of earth.” For many is sometimes used in Scripture for all. Thus it was said to Abraham, “I have set thee as the father of many nations,” though in another place it was said to him, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” Of such a resurrection it is said a little afterwards to the prophet himself, “And come thou and rest: for there is yet a day till the completion of the consummation; and thou shall rest, and rise in thy lot in the end of the days.”

CHAPTER 24

PASSAGES FROM THE PSALMS OF DAVID WHICH PREDICT THE END OF THE WORLD AND THE LAST JUDGMENT

There are many allusions to the last judgment in the Psalms, but for the most part only casual and slight. I cannot, however, omit to mention what is said there in express terms of the end of this world: “In the beginning hast Thou laid the foundations of the earth, O Lord; and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou shall endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; and as a vesture Thou shall change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.” Why is it that Porphyry, while he lauds the piety of the Hebrews in worshipping a God great and true, and terrible to the gods themselves, follows the oracles of these gods in accusing the Christians of extreme folly because they say that this world shall perish? For here we find it said in the sacred books of the Hebrews, to that God whom this great philosopher acknowledges to be terrible even to the gods themselves, “The heavens are the work of Thy hands; they shall perish.” When the heavens, the higher and more secure part of the world, perish, shall the world itself be preserved? If this idea is not relished by Jupiter, whose oracle is quoted by this philosopher as an unquestionable authority in rebuke of the credulity of the Christians, why does he not similarly rebuke the wisdom of the Hebrews as folly, seeing that the prediction is found in their most holy books? But if this Hebrew wisdom, with which Porphyry is so captivated that he extols it through the utterances of his own gods, proclaims that the heavens are to perish, how is he so infatuated as to detest the faith of the Christians partly, if not chiefly, on this account, that they believe the world is to perish?—though how the heavens are to perish if the world does not is not easy to see. And, indeed, in the sacred writings which are peculiar to ourselves, and not common to the Hebrews and us,—I mean the evangelic and apostolic books,—the following expressions are used: “The figure of this world passeth away;” “The world passeth away;” “Heaven and earth shall pass away,”—expressions which are, I fancy, somewhat milder than “They shall perish.” In the Epistle of the Apostle Peter, too, where the world which then was is said to have perished, being overflowed with water, it is sufficiently obvious what part of the world is signified by the whole, and in what sense the word perished is to be taken, and what heavens were kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. And when he says a little afterwards, “The day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great rush, and the elements shall melt with burning heat, and the earth and the works which are in it shall be burned up and then adds, “Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be?”—these heavens which are to perish may be understood to be the same which he said were kept in store reserved for fire; and the elements which are to be burned are those which are full of storm and disturbance in this lowest part of the world in which he said that these heavens were kept in store; for the higher heavens in whose firmament are set the stars are safe, and remain in their integrity. For even the expression of Scripture, that “the stars shall fall from heaven,” not to mention that a different interpretation is much preferable, rather shows that the heavens themselves shall remain, if the stars are to fall from them. This expression, then, is either figurative, as is more credible, or this phenomenon will take place in this lowest heaven, like that mentioned by Virgil,—

“A meteor with a train of light

Athwart the sky gleamed dazzling bright,

Then in Idaean woods was lost.”

But the passage I have quoted from the psalm seems to except none of the heavens from the destiny of destruction; for he says, “The heavens are the works of Thy hands: they shall perish;” so that, as none of them are excepted from the category of God’s works, none of them are excepted from destruction. For our opponents will not condescend to defend the Hebrew piety, which has won the approbation of their gods, by the words of the Apostle Peter, whom they vehemently detest; nor will they argue that, as the apostle in his epistle understands a part when he speaks of the whole world perishing in the flood, though only the lowest part of it, and the corresponding heavens were destroyed, so in the psalm the whole is used for a part, and it is said “They shall perish,” though only the lowest heavens are to perish. But since, as I said, they will not condescend to reason thus, lest they should seem to approve of Peter’s meaning, or ascribe as much importance to the final conflagration as we ascribe to the deluge, whereas they contend that no waters or flames could destroy the whole human race, it only remains to them to maintain that their gods lauded the wisdom of the Hebrews because they had not read this psalm.

It is the last judgment of God which is re ferred to also in the 50th Psalm in the words, “God shall come manifestly, our God, and shall not keep silence: fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call the heaven above, and the earth, to judge His people. Gather His saints together to Him; they who make a covenant with Him over sacrifices.” This we understand of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we look for from heaven to judge the quick and the dead. For He shall come manifestly to judge justly the just and the unjust, who before came hiddenly to be unjustly judged by the unjust. He, I say, shall come manifestly, and shall not keep silence, that is, shall make Himself known by His voice of judgment, who before, when he came hiddenly, was silent before His judge when He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and, as a lamb before the shearer, opened not His mouth as we read that it was prophesied of Him by Isaiah, and as we see it fulfilled in the Gospel. As for the fire and tempest, we have already said how these are to be interpreted when we were explaining a similar passage in Isaiah. As to the expression, “He shall call the heaven above,” as the saints and the righteous are rightly called heaven, no doubt this means what the apostle says, “We shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.” For if we take the bare literal sense, how is it possible to call the heaven above, as if the heaven could be anywhere else than above? And the following expression, “And the earth to judge His people,” if we supply only the words, “He shall call,” that is to say, “He shall call the earth also,” and do not supply “above,” seems to give us a meaning in accordance with sound doctrine, the heaven symbolizing those who will judge along with Christ, and the earth those who shall be judged; and thus the words, “He shall call the heaven above,” would not mean, “He shall catch up into the air,” but “He shall lift up to seats of judgment.” Possibly, too, “He shall call the heaven,” may mean, He shall call the angels in the high and lofty places, that He may descend with them to do judgment; and “He shall call the earth also” would then mean, He shall call the men on the earth to judgment. But if with the words “and the earth” we understand not only “He shall call,” but also “above,” so as to make the full sense be, He shall call the heaven above, and He shall call the earth above, then I think it is best understood of the men who shall be caught up to meet Christ in the air, and that they are called the heaven with reference to their souls, and the earth with reference to their bodies. Then what is “to judge His people,” but to separate by judgment the good from the bad, as the sheep from the goats? Then he turns to address the angels: “Gather His saints together unto Him.” For certainly a matter so important must be accomplished by the ministry of angels. And if we ask who the saints are who are gathered unto Him by the angels, we are told, “They who make a covenant with Him over sacrifices.” This is the whole life of the saints, to make a covenant with God over sacrifices. For “over sacrifices” either refers to works of mercy, which are preferable to sacrifices in the judgment of God, who says, “I desire mercy more than sacrifices,” or if “over sacrifices” means in sacrifices, then these very works of mercy are the sacrifices with which God is pleased, as I remember to have stated in the tenth book of this work; and in these works the saints make a covenant with God, because they do them for the sake of the promises which are contained in His new testament or covenant. And hence, when His saints have been gathered to Him and set at His right hand in the last judgment, Christ shall say, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat,” and so on, mentioning the good works of the good, and their eternal rewards assigned by the last sentence of the Judge.

CHAPTER 25

OF MALACHI’S PROPHECY, IN WHICH HE SPEAKS OF THE LAST JUDGMENT, AND OF A CLEANSING WHICH SOME ARE TO UNDERGO BY PURIFYING PUNISHMENTS

The prophet Malachi or Malachias, who is also called Angel, and is by some (for Jerome tells us that this is the opinion of the Hebrews) identified with Ezra the priest, others of whose writings have been received into the canon, predicts the last judgment, saying, “Behold, He cometh, saith the

Lord Almighty; and who shall abide the day of His entrance? . . . for I am the Lord your God, and I change not.” From these words it more evidently appears that some shall in the last judgment suffer some kind of purgatorial punishments; for what else can be understood by the word, “Who shall abide the day of His entrance, or who shall be able to look upon Him? for He enters as a moulder’s fire, and as the herb of fullers: and He shall sit fusing and purifying as if over gold and silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and pour them out like gold and silver?” Similarly Isaiah says, “The Lord shall wash the filthiness of the sons and daughters of Zion, and shall cleanse away the blood from their midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning.” Unless perhaps we should say that they are cleansed from filthiness and in a manner clarified, when the wicked are separated from them by penal judgment, so that the elimination and damnation of the one party is the purgation of the others, because they shall henceforth live free from the contamination of such men. But when he says, “And he shall purify the sons of Levi, and pour them out like gold and silver, and they shall offer to the Lord sacrifices in righteousness; and the sacrifices of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasing to the Lord,” he declares that those who shall be purified shall then please the Lord with sacrifices of righteousness, and consequently they themselves shall be purified from their own unrighteousness which made them displeasing to God. Now they themselves, when they have been purified, shall be sacrifices of complete and perfect righteousness; for what more acceptable offering can such persons make to God than themselves? But this question of purgatorial punishments we must defer to another time, to give it a more adequate treatment. By the sons of Levi and Judah and Jerusalem we ought to understand the Church herself, gathered not from the Hebrews only, but from other nations as well; nor such a Church as she now is, when “if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,” but as she shall then be, purged by the last judgment as a threshing-floor by a winnowing wind, and those of her members who need it being cleansed by fire, so that there remains absolutely not one who offers sacrifice for his sins. For all who make such offerings are assuredly in their sins, for the remission of which they make offerings, that having made to God an acceptable offering, they may then be absolved.

CHAPTER 26

OF THE SACRIFICES OFFERED TO GOD BY THE SAINTS, WHICH ARE TO BE PLEASING TO HIM, AS IN THE PRIMITIVE DAYS AND FORMER YEARS

And it was with the design of showing that His city shall not then follow this custom, that God said that the sons of Levi should offer sacrifices in righteousness,—not therefore in sin, and consequently not for sin. And hence we see how vainly the Jews promise themselves a return of the old times of sacrificing according to the law of the old testament, grounding on the words which follow, “And the sacrifice of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasing to the Lord, as in the primitive days, and as in former years.” For in the times of the law they offered sacrifices not in righteousness but in sins, offering especially and primarily for sins, so much so that even the priest himself, whom we must suppose to have been their most righteous man, was accustomed to offer, according to God’s commandments, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. And therefore we must explain how we are to understand the words, “as in the primitive days, and as in former years;” for perhaps he alludes to the time in which our first parents were in paradise. Then, indeed, intact and pure from all stain and blemish of sin, they offered themselves to God as the purest sacrifices. But since they were banished thence on account of their transgression, and human nature was condemned in them, with the exception of the one Mediator and those who have been baptized, and are as yet infants, “there is none clean from stain, not even the babe whose life has been but for a day upon the earth.” But if it be replied that those who offer in faith may be said to offer in righteousness, because the righteous lives by faith,—he deceives himself, however, if he says that he has no sin, and therefore he does not say so, because he lives by faith,—will any man say this time of faith can be placed on an equal footing with that consummation when they who offer sacrifices in righteousness shall be purified by the fire of the last judgment? And consequently, since it must be believed that after such a cleansing the righteous shall retain no sin, assuredly that time, so far as regards its freedom from sin, can be compared to no other period, unless to that during which our first parents lived in paradise in the most innocent happiness before their transgression. It is this period, then, which is properly understood when it is said, “as in the primitive days, and as in former years.” For in Isaiah, too, after the new heavens and the new earth have been promised, among other elements in the blessedness of the saints which are there depicted by allegories and figures, from giving an adequate explanation of which I am prevented by a desire to avoid prolixity, it is said, “According to the days of the tree of life shall be the days of my people.” And who that has looked at Scripture does not know where God planted the tree of life, from whose fruit He excluded our first parents when their own iniquity ejected them from paradise, and round which a terrible and fiery fence was set?

But if any one contends that those days of the tree of life mentioned by the prophet Isaiah are the present times of the Church of Christ, and that Christ Himself is prophetically called the Tree of Life, because He is Wisdom, and of wisdom Solomon says, “It is a tree of life to all who embrace it;” and if they maintain that our first parents did not pass years in paradise, but were driven from it so soon that none of their children were begotten there, and that therefore that time cannot be alluded to in words which run, “as in the primitive days, and as in former years,” I forbear entering on this question, lest by discussing everything I become prolix, and leave the whole subject in uncertainty. For I see another meaning, which should keep us from believing that a restoration of the primitive days and former years of the legal sacrifices could have been promised to us by the prophet as a great boon. For the animals selected as victims under the old law were required to be immaculate, and free from all blemish whatever, and symbolized holy men free from all sin, the only instance of which character was found in Christ. As, therefore, after the judgment those who are worthy of such purification shall be purified even by fire, and shall be rendered thoroughly sinless, and shall offer themselves to God in righteousness, and be indeed victims immaculate and free from all blemish whatever, they shall then certainly be, “as in the primitive days, and as in former years,” when the purest victims were offered, the shadow of this future reality. For there shall then be in the body and soul of the saints the purity which was symbolized in the bodies of these victims.

Then, with reference to those who are worthy not of cleansing but of damnation, He says, “And I will draw near to you to judgment, and I will be a swift witness against evildoers and against adulterers;” and after enumerating other damnable crimes, He adds, “For I am the Lord your God, and I am not changed.” It is as if He said, Though your fault has changed you for the worse, and my grace has changed you for the better, I am not changed. And he says that He Himself will be a witness, because in His judgment He needs no witnesses; and that He will be “swift,” either because He is to come suddenly, and the judgment which seemed to lag shall be very swift by His unexpected arrival, or because He will convince the consciences of men directly and without any prolix harangue. “For,” as it is written, “in the thoughts of the wicked His examination shall be conducted.” And the apostle says, “The thoughts accusing or else excusing, in the day in which God shall judge the hidden things of men, according to my gospel in Jesus Christ.” Thus, then, shall the Lord be a swift witness, when He shall suddenly bring back into the memory that which shall convince and punish the conscience.

CHAPTER 27

OF THE SEPARATION OF THE GOOD AND THE BAD, WHICH PROCLAIM THE DISCRIMINATING INFLUENCE OF THE LAST JUDGMENT

The passage also which I formerly quoted for another purpose from this prophet refers to the last judgment, in which he says, “They shall be mine, saith the Lord Almighty, in the day in which I make up my gains,” etc. When this diversity between the rewards and punishments which distinguish the righteous from the wicked shall appear under that Sun of righteousness in the brightness of life eternal,—a diversity which is not discerned under this sun which shines on the vanity of this life,—there shall then be such a judgment as has never before been.

CHAPTER 28

THAT THE LAW OF MOSES MUST BE SPIRITUALLY UNDERSTOOD TO PRECLUDE THE DAMNABLE MURMURS OF A CARNAL INTERPRETATION

In the succeeding words, “Remember the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded to him in Horeb for all Israel,” the prophet opportunely mentions precepts and statutes, after declaring the important distinction hereafter to be made between those who observe and those who despise the law. He intends also that they learn to interpret the law spiritually, and find Christ in it, by whose judgment that separation between the good and the bad is to be made. For it is not without reason that the Lord Himself says to the Jews, “Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me.” For by receiving the law carnally without perceiving that its earthly promises were figures of things spiritual, they fell into such murmurings as audaciously to say, “It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked suppliantly before the face of the Lord Almighty? And now we call aliens happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up.” It was these words of theirs which in a manner compelled the prophet to announce the last judgment, in which the wicked shall not even in appearance be happy, but shall manifestly be most miserable; and in which the good shall be oppressed with not even a transitory wretchedness, but shall enjoy unsullied and eternal felicity. For he had previously cited some similar expressions of those who said, “Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and such are pleasing to Him.” It was, I say, by understanding the law of Moses carnally that they had come to murmur thus against God. And hence, too, the writer of the 73d Psalm says that his feet were almost gone, his steps had well-nigh slipped, because he was envious of sinners while he considered their prosperity, so that he said among other things, How doth God know, and is there knowledge in the Most High? and again, Have I sanctified my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency? He goes on to say that his efforts to solve this most difficult problem, which arises when the good seem to be wretched and the wicked happy, were in vain until he went into the sanctuary of God, and understood the last things. For in the last judgment things shall not be so; but in the manifest felicity of the righteous and manifest misery of the wicked quite another state of things shall appear.

CHAPTER 29

OF THE COMING OF ELIAS BEFORE THE JUDGMENT, THAT THE JEWS MAY BE CONVERTED TO CHRIST BY HIS PREACHING AND EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE

After admonishing them to give heed to the law of Moses, as he foresaw that for a long time to come they would not understand it spiritually and rightly, he went on to say, “And, behold, I will send to you Elias the Tishbite before the great and signal day of the Lord come: and he shall turn the heart of the father to the son, and the heart of a man to his next of kin, lest I come and utterly smite the earth.” It is a familiar theme in the conversation and heart of the faithful, that in the last days before the judgment the Jews shall believe in the true Christ, that is, our Christ, by means of this great and admirable prophet Elias who shall expound the law to them. For not without reason do we hope that before the coming of our Judge and Saviour Elias shall come, because we have good reason to believe that he is now alive; for, as Scripture most distinctly informs us, he was taken up from this life in a chariot of fire. When, therefore, he is come, he shall give a spiritual explanation of the law which the Jews at present understand carnally, and shall thus “turn the heart of the father to the son,” that is, the heart of fathers to their children; for the Septuagint translators have frequently put the singular for the plural number. And the meaning is, that the sons, that is, the Jews, shall understand the law as the fathers, that is, the prophets, and among them Moses himself, understood it. For the heart of the fathers shall be turned to their children when the children understand the law as their fathers did; and the heart of the children shall be turned to their fathers when they have the same sentiments as the fathers. The Septuagint used the expression, “and the heart of a man to his next of kin,” because fathers and children are eminently neighbors to one another. Another and a preferable sense can be found in the words of the Septuagint translators, who have translated Scripture with an eye to prophecy, the sense, viz., that Elias shall turn the heart of God the Father to the Son, not certainly as if he should bring about this love of the Father for the Son, but meaning that he should make it known, and that the Jews also, who had previously hated, should then love the Son who is our Christ. For so far as regards the Jews, God has His heart turned away from our Christ, this being their conception about God and Christ. But in their case the heart of God shall be turned to the Son when they themselves shall turn in heart, and learn the love of the Father towards the Son. The words following, “and the heart of a man to his next of kin,”—that is, Elias shall also turn the heart of a man to his next of kin,—how can we understand this better than as the heart of a man to the man Christ? For though in the form of God He is our God, yet, taking the form of a servant, He condescended to become also our next of kin. It is this, then, which Elias will do, “lest,” he says, “I come and smite the earth utterly.” For they who mind earthly things are the earth. Such are the carnal Jews until this day; and hence these murmurs of theirs against God, “The wicked are pleasing to Him,” and “It is a vain thing to serve God.”

CHAPTER 30

THAT IN THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, WHERE IT IS SAID THAT GOD SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD, THE PERSON OF CHRIST IS NOT EXPLICITLY INDICATED, BUT IT PLAINLY APPEARS FROM SOME PASSAGES IN WHICH THE LORD GOD SPEAKS THAT CHRIST IS MEANT

There are many other passages of Scripture bearing on the last judgment of God,—so many, indeed, that to cite them all would swell this book to an unpardonable size. Suffice it to have proved that both Old and New Testament enounce the judgment. But in the Old it is not so definitely declared as in the New that the judgment shall be administered by Christ, that is, that Christ shall descend from heaven as the Judge; for when it is therein stated by the Lord God or His prophet that the Lord God shall come, we do not necessarily understand this of Christ. For both the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are the Lord God. We must not, however, leave this without proof. And therefore we must first show how Jesus Christ speaks in the prophetical books under the title of the Lord God, while yet there can be no doubt that it is Jesus Christ who speaks; so that in other passages where this is not at once apparent, and where nevertheless it is said that the Lord God will come to that last judgment, we may understand that Jesus Christ is meant. There is a passage in the prophet Isaiah which illustrates what I mean. For God says by the prophet, “Hear me, Jacob and Israel, whom I call. I am the first, and I am for ever: and my hand has founded the earth, and my right hand has established the heaven. I will call them, and they shall stand together, and be gathered, and hear. Who has declared to them these things? In love of thee I have done thy pleasure upon Babylon, that I might take away the seed of the Chaldeans. I have spoken, and I have called: I have brought him, and have made his way prosperous. Come ye near unto me, and hear this. I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; when they were made, there was I. And now the Lord God and

His Spirit hath sent me.” It was Himself who was speaking as the Lord God; and yet we should not have understood that it was Jesus Christ had He not added, “And now the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me.” For He said this with reference to the form of a servant, speaking of a future event as if it were past, as in the same prophet we read, “He was led as a sheep to the slaughter,” not “He shall be led;” but the past tense is used to express the future. And prophecy constantly speaks in this way.

There is also another passage in Zechariah which plainly declares that the Almighty sent the Almighty; and of what persons can this be understood but of God the Father and God the Son? For it is written, “Thus saith the Lord Almighty, After the glory hath He sent me unto the nations which spoiled you; for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye. Behold, I will bring mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the Lord Almighty hath sent me.” Observe, the Lord Almighty saith that the Lord Almighty sent Him. Who can presume to understand these words of any other than Christ, who is speaking to the lost sheep of the house of Israel? For He says in the Gospel, “I am not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” which He here compared to the pupil of God’s eye, to signify the profoundest love. And to this class of sheep the apostles themselves belonged. But after the glory, to wit, of His resurrection,—for before it happened the evangelist said that “Jesus was not yet glorified,”—He was sent unto the nations in the persons of His apostles; and thus the saying of the psalm was fulfilled, “Thou wilt deliver me from the contradictions of the people; Thou wilt set me as the head of the nations,” so that those who had spoiled the Israelites, and whom the Israelites had served when they were subdued by them, were not themselves to be spoiled in the same fashion, but were in their own persons to become the spoil of the Israelites. For this had been promised to the apostles when the Lord said, “I will make you fishers of men.” And to one of them He says, “From henceforth thou shalt catch men.” They were then to become a spoil, but in a good sense, as those who are snatched from that strong one when he is bound by a stronger.

In like manner the Lord, speaking by the same prophet, says, “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and mercy; and they shall look upon me because they have insulted me, and they shall mourn for Him as for one very dear, and shall be in bitterness as for an only-begotten.” To whom but to God does it belong to destroy all the nations that are hostile to the holy city Jerusalem, which “come against it,” that is, are opposed to it, or, as some translate, “come upon it,” as if putting it down under them; or to pour out upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and mercy? This belongs doubtless to God, and it is to God the prophet ascribes the words; and yet Christ shows that He is the God who does these so great and divine things, when He goes on to say, “And they shall look upon me because they have insulted me, and they shall mourn for Him as if for one very dear (or beloved), and shall be in bitterness for Him as for an only-begotten.” For in that day the Jews—those of them, at least, who shall receive the spirit of grace and mercy—when they see Him coming in His majesty, and recognize that it is He whom they, in the person of their parents, insulted when He came before in His humiliation, shall repent of insulting Him in His passion: and their parents themselves, who were the perpetrators of this huge impiety, shall see Him when they rise; but this will be only for their punishment, and not for their correction. It is not of them we are to understand the words, “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and mercy, and they shall look upon me because they have insulted me;” but we are to understand the words of their descendants, who shall at that time believe through Elias. But as we say to the Jews, You killed Christ, although it was their parents who did so, so these persons shall grieve that they in some sort did what their progenitors did. Although, therefore, those that receive the spirit of mercy and grace, and believe, shall not be condemned with their impious parents, yet they shall mourn as if they themselves had done what their parents did. Their grief shall arise not so much from guilt as from pious affection. Certainly the words which the Septuagint have translated, “They shall look upon me because they insulted me,” stand in the Hebrew,”They shall look upon me whom they pierced.” And by this word the crucifixion of Christ is certainly more plainly indicated. But the Septuagint translators preferred to allude to the insult which was involved in His whole passion. For in point of fact they insulted Him both when He was arrested and when He was bound, when He was judged, when He was mocked by the robe they put on Him and the homage they did on bended knee, when He was crowned with thorns and struck with a rod on the head, when He bore His cross, and when at last He hung upon the tree. And therefore we recognize more fully the Lord’s passion when we do not confine ourselves to one interpretation, but combine both, and read both “insulted” and “pierced.”

When, therefore, we read in the prophetical books that God is to come to do judgment at the last, from the mere mention of the judgment, and although there is nothing else to determine the meaning, we must gather that Christ is meant; for though the Father will judge, He will judge by the coming of the Son. For He Himself, by His own manifested presence, “judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son;” for as the Son was judged as a man, He shall also judge in human form. For it is none but He of whom God speaks by Isaiah under the name of Jacob and Israel, of whose seed Christ took a body, as it is written, “Jacob is my servant, I will uphold Him; Israel is mine elect, my Spirit has assumed Him: I have put my Spirit upon Him; He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor cease, neither shall His voice be heard without. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: but in truth shall He bring forth judgment. He shall shine and shall not be broken, until He sets judgment in the earth: and the nations shall hope in His name.” The Hebrew has not “Jacob” and “Israel;” but the Septuagint translators, wishing to show the significance of the expression “my servant,” and that it refers to the form of a servant in which the Most High humbled Himself, inserted the name of that man from whose stock He took the form of a servant. The Holy Spirit was given to Him, and was manifested, as the evangelist testifies, in the form of a dove. He brought forth judgment to the Gentiles, because He predicted what was hidden from them. In His meekness He did not cry, nor did He cease to proclaim the truth. But His voice was not heard, nor is it heard, without, because He is not obeyed by those who are outside of His body. And the Jews themselves, who persecuted Him, He did not break, though as a bruised reed they had lost their integrity, and as smoking flax their light was quenched; for He spared them, having come to be judged and not yet to judge. He brought forth judgment in truth, declaring that they should be punished did they persist in their wickedness. His face shone on the Mount, His fame in the world. He is not broken nor overcome, because neither in Himself nor in His Church has persecution prevailed to annihilate Him. And therefore that has not, and shall not, be brought about which His enemies said or say, “When shall He die, and His name perish?” “until He set judgment in the earth.” Behold, the hidden thing which we were seeking is discovered. For this is the last judgment, which He will set in the earth when He comes from heaven. And it is in Him, too, we already see the concluding expression of the prophecy fulfilled: “In His name shall the nations hope.” And by this fulfillment, which no one can deny, men are encouraged to believe in that which is most impudently denied. For who could have hoped for that which even those who do not yet believe in Christ now see fulfilled among us, and which is so undeniable that they can but gnash their teeth and pine away? Who, I say, could have hoped that the nations would hope in the name of Christ, when He was arrested, bound, scourged, mocked, crucified, when even the disciples themselves had lost the hope which they had begun to have in Him? The hope which was then entertained scarcely by the one thief on the cross, is now cherished by nations everywhere on the earth, who are marked with the sign of the cross on which He died that they may not die eternally.

That the last judgment, then, shall be administered by Jesus Christ in the manner predicted in the sacred writings is denied or doubted by no one, unless by those who, through some incredible animosity or blindness, decline to believe these writings, though already their truth is demonstrated to all the world. And at or in connection with that judgment the following events shall come to pass, as we have learned: Elias the Tishbite shall come; the Jews shall believe; Antichrist shall persecute; Christ shall judge; the dead shall rise; the good and the wicked shall be separated; the world shall be burned and renewed. All these things, we believe, shall come to pass; but how, or in what order, human understanding cannot perfectly teach us, but only the experience of the events themselves. My opinion, however, is, that they will happen in the order in which I have related them.

Two books yet remain to be written by me, in order to complete, by God’s help, what I promised. One of these will explain the punishment of the wicked, the other the happiness of the righteous; and in them I shall be at special pains to refute, by God’s grace, the arguments by which some unhappy creatures seem to themselves to undermine the divine promises and threatenings, and to ridicule as empty words statements which are the most salutary nutriment of faith. But they who are instructed in divine things hold the truth and omnipotence of God to be the strongest arguments in favor of those things which, however incredible they seem to men, are yet contained in the Scriptures, whose truth has already in many ways been proved; for they are sure that God can in no wise lie, and that He can do what is impossible to the unbelieving.

Book XXI

Argument—Of the end reserved for the city of the devil, namely, the eternal punishment of the damned; and of the arguments which unbelief brings against it.

CHAPTER 1

OF THE ORDER OF THE DISCUSSION, WHICH REQUIRES THAT WE FIRST SPEAK OF THE ETERNAL PUNISHMENT OF THE LOST IN COMPANY WITH THE DEVIL, AND THEN OF THE ETERNAL HAPPINESS OF THE SAINTS

I Propose, with such ability as God may grant me, to discuss in this book more thoroughly the nature of the punishment which shall be assigned to the devil and all his retainers, when the two cities, the one of God, the other of the devil, shall have reached their proper ends through Jesus Christ our Lord, the Judge of quick and dead. And I have adopted this order, and preferred to speak, first of the punishment of the devils, and afterwards of the blessedness of the saints, because the body partakes of either destiny; and it seems to be more incredible that bodies endure in everlasting torments than that they continue to exist without any pain in everlasting felicity. Consequently, when I shall have demonstrated that that punishment ought not to be incredible, this will materially aid me in proving that which is much more credible, viz., the immortality of the bodies of the saints which are delivered from all pain. Neither is this order out of harmony with the divine writings, in which sometimes, indeed, the blessedness of the good is placed first, as in the words, “They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment;” but sometimes also last, as, “The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things which offend, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth, Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of His Father;” and that, “These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.” And though we have not room to cite instances, any one who examines the prophets will find that they adopt now the one arrangement and now the other. My own reason for following the latter order I have given.

CHAPTER 2

WHETHER IT IS POSSIBLE FOR BODIES TO LAST FOR EVER IN BURNING FIRE

What, then, can I adduce to convince those who refuse to believe that human bodies, animated and living, can not only survive death, but also last in the torments of everlasting fires? They will not allow us to refer this simply to the power of the Almighty, but demand that we persuade them by some example. If, then, we reply to them, that there are animals which certainly are corruptible, because they are mortal, and which yet live in the midst of flames; and likewise, that in springs of water so hot that no one can put his hand in it with impunity a species of worm is found, which not only lives there, but cannot live elsewhere; they either refuse to believe these facts unless we can show them, or, if we are in circumstances to prove them by ocular demonstration or by adequate testimony, they contend, with the same scepticism, that these facts are not examples of what we seek to prove, inasmuch as these animals do not live for ever, and besides, they live in that blaze of heat without pain, the element of fire being congenial to their nature, and causing it to thrive and not to suffer,—just as if it were not more incredible that it should thrive than that it should suffer in such circumstances. It is strange that anything should suffer in fire and yet live, but stranger that it should live in fire and not suffer. If, then, the latter be believed, why not also the former?

CHAPTER 3

WHETHER BODILY SUFFERING NECESSARILY TERMINATES IN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FLESH

But, say they, there is no body which can suffer and cannot also die. How do we know this? For who can say with certainty that the devils do not suffer in their bodies, when they own that they are grievously tormented? And if it is replied that there is no earthly body—that is to say, no solid and perceptible body, or, in one word, no flesh—which can suffer and cannot die, is not this to tell us only what men have gathered from experience and their bodily senses? For they indeed have no acquaintance with any flesh but that which is mortal; and this is their whole argument, that what they have had no experience of they judge quite impossible. For we cannot call it reasoning to make pain a presumption of death, while, in fact, it is rather a sign of life. For though it be a question whether that which suffers can continue to live for ever, yet it is certain that everything which suffers pain does live, and that pain can exist only in a living subject. It is necessary, therefore, that he who is pained be living, not necessary that pain kill him; for every pain does not kill even those mortal bodies of ours which are destined to die. And that any pain kills them is caused by the circumstance that the soul is so connected with the body that it succumbs to great pain and withdraws; for the structure of our members and vital parts is so infirm that it cannot bear up against that violence which causes great or extreme agony. But in the life to come this connection of soul and body is of such a kind, that as it is dissolved by no lapse of time, so neither is it burst asunder by any pain. And so, although it be true that in this world there is no flesh which can suffer pain and yet cannot die, yet in the world to come there shall be flesh such as now there is not, as there will also be death such as now there is not. For death will not be abolished, but will be eternal, since the soul will neither be able to enjoy God and live, nor to die and escape the pains of the body. The first death drives the soul from the body against her will: the second death holds the soul in the body against her will. The two have this in common, that the soul suffers against her will what her own body inflicts.

Our opponents, too, make much of this, that in this world there is no flesh which can suffer pain and cannot die; while they make nothing of the fact that there is something which is greater than the body. For the spirit, whose presence animates and rules the body, can both suffer pain and cannot die. Here then is something which, though it can feel pain, is immortal. And this capacity, which we now see in the spirit of all, shall be hereafter in the bodies of the damned. Moreover, if we attend to the matter a little more closely, we see that what is called bodily pain is rather to be referred to the soul. For it is the soul not the body, which is pained, even when the pain originates with the body,—the soul feeling pain at the point where the body is hurt. As then we speak of bodies feeling and living, though the feeling and life of the body are from the soul, so also we speak of bodies being pained, though no pain can be suffered by the body apart from the soul. The soul, then, is pained with the body in that part where something occurs to hurt it; and it is pained alone, though it be in the body, when some invisible cause distresses it, while the body is safe and sound. Even when not associated with the body it is pained; for certainly that rich man was suffering in hell when he cried, “I am tormented in this flame.” But as for the body, it suffers no pain when it is soulless; and even when animate it can suffer only by the soul’s suffering. If, therefore, we might draw a just presumption from the existence of pain to that of death, and conclude that where pain can be felt death can occur, death would rather be the property of the soul, for to it pain more peculiarly belongs. But, seeing that that which suffers most cannot die, what ground is there for supposing that those bodies, because destined to suffer, are therefore, destined to die? The Platonists indeed maintained that these earthly bodies and dying members gave rise to the fears, desires, griefs, and joys of the soul. “Hence,” says Virgil (i.e., from these earthly bodies and dying members),

“Hence wild desires and grovelling fears,

And human laughter, human tears.”

But in the fourteenth book of this work we have proved that, according to the Platonists’ own theory, souls, even when purged from all pollution of the body, are yet pos sessed by a monstrous desire to return again into their bodies. But where desire can exist, certainly pain also can exist; for desire frustrated, either by missing what it aims at or losing what it had attained, is turned into pain. And therefore, if the soul, which is either the only or the chief sufferer, has yet a kind of immortality of its own, it is inconsequent to say that because the bodies of the damned shall suffer pain, therefore they shall die. In fine, if the body causes the soul to suffer, why can the body not cause death as well as suffering, unless because it does not follow that what causes pain causes death as well? And why then is it incredible that these fires can cause pain but not death to those bodies we speak of, just as the bodies themselves cause pain, but not therefore death, to the souls? Pain is therefore no necessary presumption of death.

CHAPTER 4

EXAMPLES FROM NATURE PROVING THAT BODIES MAY REMAIN UNCONSUMED AND ALIVE IN FIRE

If, therefore, the salamander lives in fire, as naturalists have recorded, and if certain famous mountains of Sicily have been continually on fire from the remotest antiquity until now, and yet remain entire, these are sufficiently convincing examples that everything which burns is not consumed. As the soul too, is a proof that not everything which can suffer pain can also die, why then do they yet demand that we produce real examples to prove that it is not incredible that the bodies of men condemned to everlasting punishment may retain their soul in the fire, may burn without being consumed, and may suffer without perishing? For suitable properties will be communicated to the substance of the flesh by Him who has endowed the things we see with so marvellous and diverse properties, that their very multitude prevents our wonder. For who but God the Creator of all things has given to the flesh of the peacock its antiseptic property? This property, when I first heard of it, seemed to me incredible; but it happened at Carthage that a bird of this kind was cooked and served up to me, and, taking a suitable slice of flesh from its breast, I ordered it to be kept, and when it had been kept as many days as make any other flesh stinking, it was produced and set before me, and emitted no offensive smell. And after it had been laid by for thirty days and more, it was still in the same state; and a year after, the same still, except that it was a little more shrivelled, and drier. Who gave to chaff such power to freeze that it preserves snow buried under it, and such power to warm that it ripens green fruit?

But who can explain the strange properties of fire itself, which blackens everything it burns, though itself bright; and which, though of the most beautiful colors, discolors almost all it touches and feeds upon, and turns blazing fuel into grimy cinders? Still this is not laid down as an absolutely uniform law; for, on the contrary, stones baked in glowing fire themselves also glow, and though the fire be rather of a red hue, and they white, yet white is congruous with light, and black with darkness. Thus, though the fire burns the wood in calcining the stones, these contrary effects do not result from the contrariety of the materials. For though wood and stone differ, they are not contraries, like black and white, the one of which colors is produced in the stones, while the other is produced in the wood by the same action of fire, which imparts its own brightness to the former, while it begrimes the latter, and which could have no effect on the one were it not fed by the other. Then what wonderful properties do we find in charcoal, which is so brittle that a light tap breaks it and a slight pressure pulverizes it, and yet is so strong that no moisture rots it, nor any time causes it to decay. So enduring is it, that it is customary in laying down landmarks to put charcoal underneath them, so that if, after the longest interval, any one raises an action, and pleads that there is no boundary stone, he may be convicted by the charcoal below. What then has enabled it to last so long without rotting, though buried in the damp earth in which [its original] wood rots, except this same fire which consumes all things?

Again, let us consider the wonders of lime; for besides growing white in fire, which makes other things black, and of which I have already said enough, it has also a mysterious property of conceiving fire within it. Itself cold to the touch, it yet has a hidden store of fire, which is not at once apparent to our senses, but which experience teaches us, lies as it were slumbering within it even while unseen. And it is for this reason called “quick lime,” as if the fire were the invisible soul quickening the visible substance or body. But the marvellous thing is, that this fire is kindled when it is extinguished. For to disengage the hidden fire the lime is moistened or drenched with water, and then, though it be cold before, it becomes hot by that very application which cools what is hot. As if the fire were departing from the lime and breathing its last, it no longer lies hid, but appears; and then the lime lying in the coldness of death cannot be requickened, and what we before called “quick,” we now call “slaked.” What can be stranger than this? Yet there is a greater marvel still. For if you treat the lime, not with water, but with oil, which is as fuel to fire, no amount of oil will heat it. Now if this marvel had been told us of some Indian mineral which we had no opportunity of experimenting upon, we should either have forthwith pronounced it a falsehood, or certainly should have been greatly astonished. But things that daily present themselves to our own observation we despise, not because they are really less marvellous, but because they are common;

so that even some products of India itself, remote as it is from ourselves, cease to excite our admiration as soon as we can admire them at our leisure.

The diamond is a stone possessed by many among ourselves, especially by jewellers and lapidaries, and the stone is so hard that it can be wrought neither by iron nor fire, nor, they say, by anything at all except goat’s blood. But do you suppose it is as much admired by those who own it and are familiar with its properties as by those to whom it is shown for the first time? Persons who have not seen it perhaps do not believe what is said of it, or if they do, they wonder as at a thing beyond their experience; and if they happen to see it, still they marvel because they are unused to it, but gradually familiar experience [of it] dulls their admiration. We know that the loadstone has a wonderful power of attracting iron. When I first saw it I was thunderstruck, for I saw an iron ring attracted and suspended by the stone; and then, as if it had communicated its own property to the iron it attracted, and had made it a substance like itself, this ring was put near another, and lifted it up; and as the first ring clung to the magnet, so did the second ring to the first. A third and a fourth were similarly added, so that there hung from the stone a kind of chain of rings, with their hoops connected, not interlinking, but attached together by their outer surface. Who would not be amazed at this virtue of the stone, subsisting as it does not only in itself, but transmitted through so many suspended rings, and binding them together by invisible links? Yet far more astonishing is what I heard about this stone from my brother in the episcopate, Severus bishop of Milevis. He told me that Bathanarius, once count of Africa, when the bishop was dining with him, produced a magnet, and held it under a silver plate on which he placed a bit of iron; then as he moved his hand with the magnet underneath the plate, the iron upon the plate moved about accordingly. The intervening silver was not affected at all, but precisely as the magnet was moved backwards and forwards below it, no matter how quickly, so was the iron attracted above. I have related what I myself have witnessed; I have related what I was told by one whom I trust as I trust my own eyes. Let me further say what I have read about this magnet. When a diamond is laid near it, it does not lift iron; or if it has already lifted it, as soon as the diamond approaches, it drops it. These stones come from India. But if we cease to admire them because they are now familiar, how much less must they admire them who procure them very easily and send them to us? Perhaps they are held as cheap as we hold lime, which, because it is common, we think nothing of, though it has the strange property of burning when water, which is wont to quench fire, is poured on it, and of remaining cool when mixed with oil, which ordinarily feeds fire.

CHAPTER 5

THAT THERE ARE MANY THINGS WHICH REASON CANNOT ACCOUNT FOR, AND WHICH ARE NEVERTHELESS TRUE

Nevertheless, when we declare the miracles which God has wrought, or will yet work, and which we cannot bring under the very eyes of men, sceptics keep demanding that we shall explain these marvels to reason. And because we cannot do so, inasmuch as they are above human comprehension, they suppose we are speaking falsely. These persons themselves, therefore, ought to account for all these marvels which we either can or do see. And if they perceive that this is impossible for man to do, they should acknowledge that it cannot be concluded that a thing has not been or shall not be because it cannot be reconciled to reason, since there are things now in existence of which the same is true. I will not, then, detail the multitude of marvels which are related in books, and which refer not to things that happened once and passed away, but that are permanent in certain places, where, if any one has the desire and opportunity, he may ascertain their truth; but a few only I recount. The following are some of the marvels men tell us:—The salt of Agrigentum in Sicily, when thrown into the fire, becomes fluid as if it were in water, but in the water it crackles as if it were in the fire. The Garamantae have a fountain so cold by day that no one can drink it, so hot by night no one can touch it. In Epirus, too, there is a fountain which, like all others, quenches lighted torches, but, unlike all others, lights quenched torches. There is a stone found in Arcadia, and called asbestos, because once lit it cannot be put out. The wood of a certain kind of Egyptian fig-tree sinks in water, and does not float like other wood; and, stranger still, when it has been sunk to the bottom for some time, it rises again to the surface, though nature requires that when soaked in water it should be heavier than ever. Then there are the apples of Sodom which grow indeed to an appearance of ripeness, but, when you touch them with hand or tooth, the peal cracks, and they crumble into dust and ashes. The Persian stone pyrites burns the hand when it is tightly held in it and so gets its name from fire. In Persia too, there is found another stone called selenite, because its interior brilliancy waxes and wanes with the moon. Then in Cappadocia the mares are impregnated by the wind, and their foals live only three years. Tilon, an Indian island, has this advantage over all other lands, that no tree which grows in it ever loses its foliage.

These and numberless other marvels recorded in the history, not of past events, but of permanent localities, I have no time to enlarge upon and diverge from my main object; but let those sceptics who refuse to credit the divine writings give me, if they can, a rational account of them. For their only ground of unbelief in the Scriptures is, that they contain incredible things, just such as I have been recounting. For, say they, reason cannot admit that flesh burn and remain unconsumed, suffer without dying. Mighty reasoners, indeed, who are competent to give the reason of all the marvels that exist! Let them then give us the reason of the few things we have cited, and which, if they did not know they existed, and were only assured by us they would at some future time occur, they would believe still less than that which they now refuse to credit on our word. For which of them would believe us if, instead of saying that the living bodies of men hereafter will be such as to endure everlasting pain and fire without ever dying, we were to say that in the world to come there will be salt which becomes liquid in fire as if it were in water, and crackles in water as if it were in fire; or that there will be a fountain whose water in the chill air of night is so hot that it cannot be touched, while in the heat of day it is so cold that it cannot be drunk; or that there will be a stone which by its own heat burns the hand when tightly held, or a stone which cannot be extinguished if it has been lit in any part; or any of those wonders I have cited, while omitting numberless others? If we were to say that these things would be found in the world to come, and our sceptics were to reply, “If you wish us to believe these things, satisfy our reason about each of them,” we should confess that we could not, because the frail comprehension of man cannot master these and such-like wonders of God’s working; and that yet our reason was thoroughly convinced that the Almighty does nothing without reason, though the frail mind of man cannot explain the reason; and that while we are in many instances uncertain what He intends, yet that it is always most certain that nothing which He intends is impossible to Him; and that when He declares His mind, we believe Him whom we cannot believe to be either powerless or false. Nevertheless these cavillers at faith and exactors of reason, how do they dispose of those things of which a reason cannot be given, and which yet exist, though in apparent contrariety to the nature of things? If we had announced that these things were to be, these sceptics would have demanded from us the reason of them, as they do in the case of those things which we are announcing as destined to be. And consequently, as these present marvels are not non-existent, though human reason and discourse are lost in such works of God, so those things we speak of are not impossible because inexplicable; for in this particular they are in the same predicament as the marvels of earth.

CHAPTER 6

THAT ALL MARVELS ARE NOT OF NATURE’S PRODUCTION, BUT THAT SOME ARE DUE TO HUMAN INGENUITY AND OTHERS TO DIABOLIC CONTRIVANCE

At this point they will perhaps reply, “These things have no existence; we don’t believe one of them; they are travellers’ tales and fictitious romances;” and they may add what has the appearance of argument, and say, “If you believe such things as these, believe what is recorded in the same books, that there was or is a temple of Venus in which a candelabrum set in the open air holds a lamp, which burns so strongly that no storm or rain extinguishes it, and which is therefore called, like the stone mentioned above, the asbestos or inextinguishable lamp.” They may say this with the intention of putting us into a dilemma: for if we say this is incredible, then we shall impugn the truth of the other recorded marvels; if, on the other hand, we admit that this is credible, we shall avouch the pagan deities. But, as I have already said in the eighteenth book of this work, we do not hold it necessary to believe all that profane history contains, since, as Varro says, even historians themselves disagree on so many points, that one would think they intended and were at pains to do so; but we believe, if we are disposed, those things which are not contradicted by these books, which we do not hesitate to say we are bound to believe. But as to those permanent miracles of nature, whereby we wish to persuade the sceptical of the miracles of the world to come, those are quite sufficient for our purpose which we ourselves can observe or of which it is not difficult to find trustworthy witnesses. Moreover, that temple of Venus, with its inextinguishable lamp, so far from hemming us into a corner, opens an advantageous field to our argument. For to this inextinguishable lamp we add a host of marvels wrought by men, or by magic,—that is, by men under the influence of devils, or by the devils directly,—for such marvels we cannot deny without impugning the truth of the sacred Scriptures we believe. That lamp, therefore, was either by some mechanical and human device fitted with asbestos, or it was arranged by magical art in order that the worshippers might be astonished, or some devil under the name of Venus so signally manifested himself that this prodigy both began and became permanent. Now devils are attracted to dwell in certain temples by means of the creatures (God's creatures, not theirs), who present to them what suits their various tastes. They are attracted not by food like animals, but, like spirits, by such symbols as suit their taste, various kinds of stones, woods, plants, animals, songs, rites. And that men may provide these attractions, the devils first of all cunningly seduce them, either by imbuing their hearts with a secret poison, or by revealing themselves under a friendly guise, and thus make a few of them their disciples, who become the instructors of the multitude. For unless they first instructed men, it were impossible to know what each of them desires, what they shrink from, by what name they should be invoked or constrained to be present. Hence the origin of magic and magicians. But, above all, they possess the hearts of men, and are chiefly proud of this possession when they transform themselves into angels of light. Very many things that occur, therefore, are their doing; and these deeds of theirs we ought all the more carefully to shun as we acknowledge them to be very surprising. And yet these very deeds forward my present arguments. For if such marvels are wrought by unclean devils, how much mightier are the holy angels! and what can not that God do who made the angels themselves capable of working miracles!

If, then, very many effects can be contrived by human art, of so surprising a kind that the uninitiated think them divine, as when, e.g., in a certain temple two magnets have been adjusted, one in the roof, another in the floor, so that an iron image is suspended in mid-air between them, one would suppose by the power of the divinity, were he ignorant of the magnets above and beneath; or, as in the case of that lamp of Venus which we already mentioned as being a skillful adaptation of asbestos; if, again, by the help of magicians, whom Scripture calls sorcerers and enchanters, the devils could gain such power that the noble poet Virgil should consider himself justified in describing a very powerful magician in these lines:

“Her charms can cure what souls she please,

Rob other hearts of healthful ease,

Turn rivers backward to their source,

And make the stars forget their course,

And call up ghosts from night:

The ground shall bellow ‘neath your feet:

The mountain-ash shall quit its seat,

And travel down the height;”—

if this be so, how much more able is God to do those things which to sceptics are incredible, but to His power easy, since it is He who has given to stones and all other things their virtue, and to men their skill to use them in wonderful ways; He who has given to the angels a nature more mighty than that of all that lives on earth; He whose power surpasses all marvels, and whose wisdom in working, ordaining, and permitting is no less marvellous in its governance of all things than in its creation of all!

CHAPTER 7

THAT THE ULTIMATE REASON FOR BELIEVING MIRACLES IS THE OMNIPOTENCE OF THE CREATOR

Why, then, cannot God effect both that the bodies of the dead shall rise, and that the bodies of the damned shall be tormented in everlasting fire,—God, who made the world full of countless miracles in sky, earth, air, and waters, while itself is a miracle unquestionably greater and more admirable than all the marvels it is filled with? But those with whom or against whom we are arguing, who believe both that there is a God who made the world, and that there are gods created by Him who administer the world's laws as His viceregents,—our adversaries, I say, who, so far from denying emphatically, assert that there are powers in the world which effect marvellous results (whether of their own accord, or because they are invoked by some rite or prayer, or in some magical way), when we lay before them the wonderful properties of other things which are neither rational animals nor rational spirits, but such material objects as those we have just cited, are in the habit of replying, This is their natural property, their nature; these are the powers naturally belonging to them. Thus the whole reason why Agrigentine salt dissolves in fire and crackles in water is that this is its nature. Yet this seems rather contrary to nature, which has given not to fire but to water the power of melting salt, and the power of scorching it not to water but to fire. But this they say, is the natural property of this salt, to show effects contrary to these. The same reason, therefore, is assigned to account for that Garamantian fountain, of which one and the same runlet is chill by day and boiling by night, so that in either extreme it cannot be touched. So also of that other fountain which, though it is cold to the touch, and though it, like other fountains, extinguishes a lighted torch, yet, unlike other fountains, and in a surprising manner, kindles an extinguished torch. So of the asbestos stone, which, though it has no heat of its own, yet when kindled by fire applied to it, cannot be extinguished. And so of the rest, which I am weary of reciting, and in which, though there seems to be an extraordinary property contrary to nature, yet no other reason is given for them than this, that this is their nature,—a brief reason truly, and, I own, a satisfactory reply. But since God is the author of all natures, how is it that our adversaries, when they refuse to believe what we affirm, on the ground that it is impossible, are unwilling to accept from us a better explanation than their own, viz., that this is the will of Almighty God,—for certainly He is called Almighty only because He is mighty to do all He will,—He who was able to create so many marvels, not only unknown, but very well ascertained, as I have been showing, and which, were they not under our own observation, or reported by recent and credible witnesses, would certainly be pronounced impossible? For as for those marvels which have no other testimony than the writers in whose books we read them, and who wrote without being divinely instructed, and are therefore liable to human error, we cannot justly blame any one who declines to believe them.

For my own part, I do not wish all the marvels I have cited to be rashly accepted, for I do not myself believe them implicitly, save those which have either come under my own observation, or which any one can readily verify, such as the lime which is heated by water and cooled by oil; the magnet which by its mysterious and insensible suction attracts the iron, but has no affect on a straw; the peacock’s flesh which triumphs over the corruption from which not the flesh of Plato is exempt; the chaff so chilling that it prevents snow from melting, so heating that it forces apples to ripen; the glowing fire, which, in accordance with its glowing appearance, whitens the stones it bakes, while, contrary to its glowing appearance, it begrimes most things it burns (just as dirty stains are made by oil, however pure it be, and as the lines drawn by white silver are black); the charcoal, too, which by the action of fire is so completely changed from its original, that a finely marked piece of wood becomes hideous, the tough becomes brittle, the decaying incorruptible. Some of these things I know in common with many other persons, some of them in common with all men; and there are many others which I have not room to insert in this book. But of those which I have cited, though I have not myself seen, but only read about them, I have been unable to find trustworthy witnesses from whom I could ascertain whether they are facts, except in the case of that fountain in which burning torches are extinguished and extinguished torches lit, and of the apples of Sodom, which are ripe to appearance, but are filled with dust. And indeed I have not met with any who said they had seen that fountain in Epirus, but with some who knew there was a similar fountain in Gaul not far from Grenoble. The fruit of the trees of Sodom, however, is not only spoken of in books worthy of credit, but so many persons say that they have seen it that I cannot doubt the fact. But the rest of the prodigies I receive without definitely affirming or denying them; and I have cited them because I read them in the authors of our adversaries, and that I might prove how many things many among themselves believe, because they are written in the works of their own literary men, though no rational explanation of them is given, and yet they scorn to believe us when we assert that Almighty God will do what is beyond their experience and observation; and this they do even though we assign a reason for His work. For what better and stronger reason for such things can be given than to say that the Almighty is able to bring them to pass, and will bring them to pass, having predicted them in those books in which many other marvels which have already come to pass were predicted? Those things which are regarded as impossible will be accomplished according to the word, and by the power of that God who predicted and effected that the incredulous nations should believe incredible wonders.

CHAPTER 8

THAT IT IS NOT CONTRARY TO NATURE THAT, IN AN OBJECT WHOSE NATURE IS KNOWN, THERE SHOULD BE DISCOVERED AN ALTERATION OF THE PROPERTIES WHICH HAVE BEEN KNOWN AS ITS NATURAL PROPERTIES

But if they reply that their reason for not believing us when we say that human bodies will always burn and yet never die, is that the nature of human bodies is known to be quite otherwise constituted; if they say that for this miracle we cannot give the reason which was valid in the case of those natural miracles, viz., that this is the natural property, the nature of the thing,—for we know that this is not the nature of human flesh,—we find our answer in the sacred writings, that even this human flesh was constituted in one fashion before there was sin,—was constituted, in fact, so that it could not die,—and in another fashion after sin, being made such as we see it in this miserable state of mortality, unable to retain enduring life. And so in the resurrection of the dead shall it be constituted differently from its present well-known condition. But as they do not believe these writings of ours, in which we read what nature man had in paradise, and how remote he was from the necessity of death,—and indeed, if they did believe them, we should of course have little trouble in debating with them the future punishment of the damned,—we must produce from the writings of their own most learned authorities some instances to show that it is possible for a thing to become different from what it was formerly known characteristically to be.

From the book of Marcus Varro, entitled, Of the Race of the Roman People, I cite word for word the following instance: “There occurred a remarkable celestial portent; for Castor records that, in the brilliant star Venus, called

Vesperugo by Plautus, and the lovely Hesperus by Homer, there occurred so strange a prodigy, that it changed its color, size, form, course, which never happened before nor since. Adrastus of Cyzicus, and Dion of Naples, famous mathematicians, said that this occurred in the reign of Ogyges.” So great an author as Varro would certainly not have called this a portent had it not seemed to be contrary to nature. For we say that all portents are contrary to nature; but they are not so. For how is that contrary to nature which happens by the will of God, since the will of so mighty a Creator is certainly the nature of each created thing? A portent, therefore, happens not contrary to nature, but contrary to what we know as nature. But who can number the multitude of portents recorded in profane histories? Let us then at present fix our attention on this one only which concerns the matter in hand. What is there so arranged by the Author of the nature of heaven and earth as the exactly ordered course of the stars? What is there established by laws so sure and inflexible? And yet, when it pleased Him who with sovereignty and supreme power regulates all He has created, a star conspicuous among the rest by its size and splendor changed its color, size, form, and, most wonderful of all, the order and law of its course! Certainly that phenomenon disturbed the canons of the astronomers, if there were any then, by which they tabulate, as by unerring computation, the past and future movements of the stars, so as to take upon them to affirm that this which happened to the morning star (Venus) never happened before nor since. But we read in the divine books that even the sun itself stood still when a holy man, Joshua the son of Nun, had begged this from God until victory should finish the battle he had begun; and that it even went back, that the promise of fifteen years added to the life of king Hezekiah might be sealed by this additional prodigy. But these miracles, which were vouchsafed to the merits of holy men, even when our adversaries believe them, they attribute to magical arts; so Virgil, in the lines I quoted above, ascribes to magic the power to

“Turn rivers backward to their source,

And make the stars forget their course.”

For in our sacred books we read that this also happened, that a river “turned backward,” was stayed above while the lower part flowed on, when the people passed over under the above-mentioned leader, Joshua the son of Nun; and also when Elias the prophet crossed; and afterwards, when his disciple Elisha passed through it: and we have just mentioned how, in the case of king Hezekiah the greatest of the "stars forgot its course." But what happened to Venus, according to Varro, was not said by him to have happened in answer to any man's prayer.

Let not the sceptics then benight themselves in this knowledge of the nature of things, as if divine power cannot bring to pass in an object anything else than what their own experience has shown them to be in its nature. Even the very things which are most commonly known as natural would not be less wonderful nor less effectual to excite surprise in all who beheld them, if men were not accustomed to admire nothing but what is rare. For who that thoughtfully observes the countless multitude of men, and their similarity of nature, can fail to remark with surprise and admiration the individuality of each man's appearance, suggesting to us, as it does, that unless men were like one another, they would not be distinguished from the rest of the animals; while unless, on the other hand, they were unlike, they could not be distinguished from one another, so that those whom we declare to be like, we also find to be unlike? And the unlikeness is the more wonderful consideration of the two; for a common nature seems rather to require similarity. And yet, because the very rarity of things is that which makes them wonderful, we are filled with much greater wonder when we are introduced to two men so like, that we either always or frequently mistake in endeavoring to distinguish between them.

But possibly, though Varro is a heathen historian, and a very learned one, they may disbelieve that what I have cited from him truly occurred; or they may say the example is invalid, because the star did not for any length of time continue to follow its new course, but returned to its ordinary orbit. There is, then, another phenomenon at present open to their observation, and which, in my opinion, ought to be sufficient to convince them that, though they have observed and ascertained some natural law, they ought not on that account to prescribe to God, as if He could not change and turn it into something very different from what they have observed. The land of Sodom was not always as it now is; but once it had the appearance of other lands, and enjoyed equal if not richer fertility; for, in the divine narrative, it was compared to the paradise of God. But after it was touched [by fire] from heaven, as even pagan history testifies, and as is now witnessed by those who visit the spot, it became unnaturally and horribly sooty in appearance; and its apples, under a deceitful appearance of ripeness, contain ashes within. Here is a thing which was of one kind, and is of another. You see how its nature was converted by the wonderful transmutation wrought by the Creator of all natures into so very disgusting a diversity,—an alteration which after so long a time took place, and after so long a time still continues. As therefore it was not impossible to God to create such natures as He pleased, so it is not impossible to Him to change these natures of His own creation into whatever He pleases, and thus spread abroad a multitude of those marvels which are called monsters, portents, prodigies, phenomena, and which if I were minded to cite and record, what end would there be to this work? They say that they are called "monsters," because they demonstrate or signify something; "portents," because they portend something; and so forth. But let their diviners see how they are either deceived, or even when they do predict true things, it is because they are inspired by spirits, who are intent upon entangling the minds of men (worthy, indeed, of such a fate) in the meshes of a hurtful curiosity, or how they light now and then upon some truth, because they make so many predictions. Yet, for our part, these things which happen contrary to nature, and are said to be contrary to nature (as the apostle, speaking after the manner of men, says, that to graft the wild olive into the good olive, and to partake of its fatness, is contrary to nature), and are called monsters, phenomena, portents, prodigies, ought to demonstrate, portend, predict that God will bring to pass what He has foretold regarding the bodies of men, no difficulty preventing Him, no law of nature prescribing to Him His limit. How He has foretold what He is to do, I think I have sufficiently shown in the preceding book, culling from the sacred Scriptures, both of the New and Old Testaments, not, indeed, all the passages that relate to this, but as many as I judged to suffice for this work.

CHAPTER 9

OF HELL, AND THE NATURE OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENTS

So then what God by His prophet has said of the everlasting punishment of the damned shall come to pass—shall without fail come to pass,—”their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched.” In order to impress this upon us most forcibly, the Lord Jesus Himself, when ordering us to cut off our members, meaning thereby those persons whom a man loves as the most useful members of his body, says, “It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.” Similarly of the foot: “It is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” So, too, of the eye: “It is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” He did not shrink from using the same words three times over in one passage. And who is not terrified by this repetition, and by the threat of that punishment uttered so vehemently by the lips of the Lord Himself?

Now they who would refer both the fire and the worm to the spirit, and not to the body, affirm that the wicked, who are separated from the kindgdom of God, shall be burned, as it were, by the anguish of a spirit repenting too late and fruitlessly; and they contend that fire is therefore not inappropriately used to express this burning torment, as when the apostle exclaims “Who is offended, and I burn not?” The worm, too, they think, is to be similarly understood. For it is written they say, “As the moth consumes the garment, and the worm the wood, so does grief consume the heart of a man.” But they who make no doubt that in that future punishment both body and soul shall suffer, affirm that the body shall be burned with fire, while the soul shall be, as it were, gnawed by a worm of anguish. Though this view is more reasonable,—for it is absurd to suppose that either body or soul will escape pain in the future punishment,—yet, for my own part, I find it easier to understand both as referring to the body than to suppose that neither does; and I think that Scripture is silent regarding the spiritual pain of the damned, because, though not expressed, it is necessarily understood that in a body thus tormented the soul also is tortured with a fruitless repentance. For we read in the ancient Scriptures, “The vengeance of the flesh of the ungodly is fire and worms.” It might have been more briefly said, “The vengeance of the ungodly.” Why, then, was it said, “The flesh of the ungodly,” unless because both the fire and the worm are to be the punishment of the flesh? Or if the object of the writer in saying, “The vengeance of the flesh,” was to indicate that this shall be the punishment of those who live after the flesh (for this leads to the second death, as the apostle intimated when he said, “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die” , let each one make his own choice, either assigning the fire to the body and the worm to the soul,—the one figuratively, the other really,—or assigning both really to the body. For I have already sufficiently made out that animals can live in the fire, in burning without being consumed, in pain without dying, by a miracle of the most omnipotent Creator, to whom no one can deny that this is possible, if he be not ignorant by whom has been made all that is wonderful in all nature. For it is God Himself who has wrought all these miracles, great and small, in this world which I have mentioned, and incomparably more which I have omitted, and who has enclosed these marvels in this world, itself the greatest miracle of all. Let each man, then, choose which he will, whether he thinks that the worm is real and pertains to the body, or that spiritual things are meant by bodily representations, and that it belongs to the soul. But which of these is true will be more readily discovered by the facts themselves, when there shall be in the saints such knowledge as shall not require that their own experience teach them the nature of these punishments, but as shall, by its own fullness and perfection, suffice to instruct them in this matter. For “now we know in part, until that which is perfect is come;” only, this we believe about those future bodies, that they shall be such as shall certainly be pained by the fire.

CHAPTER 10

WHETHER THE FIRE OF HELL, IF IT BE MATERIAL FIRE, CAN BURN THE WICKED SPIRITS, THAT IS TO SAY, DEVILS, WHO ARE IMMATERIAL

Here arises the question: If the fire is not to be immaterial, analogous to the pain of the soul, but material, burning by contact, so that bodies may be tormented in it, how can evil spirits be punished in it? For it is undoubtedly the same fire which is to serve for the punishment of men and of devils, according to the words of Christ: “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;” unless, perhaps, as learned men have thought, the devils have a kind of body made of that dense and humid air which we feel strikes us when the wind is blowing. And if this kind of substance could not be affected by fire, it could not burn when heated in the baths. For in order to burn, it is first burned, and affects other things as itself is affected. But if any one maintains that the devils have no bodies, this is not a matter either to be laboriously investigated, or to be debated with keenness. For why may we not assert that even immaterial spirits may, in some extraordinary way, yet really be pained by the punishment of material fire, if the spirits of men, which also are certainly immaterial, are both now contained in material members of the body, and in the world to come shall be indissolubly united to their own bodies? Therefore, though the devils have no bodies, yet their spirits, that is, the devils themselves, shall be brought into thorough contact with the material fires, to be tormented by them; not that the fires themselves with which they are brought into contact shall be animated by their connection with these spirits, and become animals composed of body and spirit, but, as I said, this junction will be effected in a wonderful and ineffable way, so that they shall receive pain from the fires, but give no life to them. And, in truth, this other mode of union, by which bodies and spirits are bound together and become animals, is thoroughly marvellous, and beyond the comprehension of man, though this it is which is man.

I would indeed say that these spirits will burn without any body of their own, as that rich man was burning in hell when he exclaimed, “I am tormented in this flame,” were I not aware that it is aptly said in reply, that that flame was of the same nature as the eyes he raised and fixed on Lazarus, as the tongue on which he entreated that a little cooling water might be dropped, or as the finger of Lazarus, with which he asked that this might be done,—all of which took place where souls exist without bodies. Thus, therefore, both that flame in which he burned and that drop he begged were immaterial, and resembled the visions of sleepers or persons in an ecstasy, to whom immaterial objects appear in a bodily form. For the man himself who is in such a state, though it be in spirit only, not in body, yet sees himself so like to his own body that he cannot discern any difference whatever. But that hell, which also is called a lake of fire and brimstone, will be material fire, and will torment the bodies of the damned, whether men or devils,—the solid bodies of the one, aerial bodies of the others; or if only men have bodies as well as souls, yet the evil spirits, though without bodies, shall be so connected with the bodily fires as to receive pain without imparting life. One fire certainly shall be the lot of both, for thus the truth has declared.

CHAPTER 11

WHETHER IT IS JUST THAT THE PUNISHMENTS OF SINS LAST LONGER THAN THE SINS THEMSELVES LASTED

Some, however, of those against whom we are defending the city of God, think it unjust that any man be doomed to an eternal punishment for sins which, no matter how great they were, were perpetrated in a brief space of time; as if any law ever regulated the duration of the punishment by the duration of the offence punished! Cicero tells us that the laws recognize eight kinds of penalty,—damages, imprisonment, scourging, reparation, disgrace, exile, death, slavery. Is there any one of these which may be compressed into a brevity proportioned to the rapid commission of the offence, so that no longer time may be spent in its punishment than in its perpetration, unless, perhaps, reparation? For this requires that the offender suffer what he did, as that clause of the law says, “Eye for eye, tooth for tooth.” For certainly it is possible for an offender to lose his eye by the severity of legal retaliation in as brief a time as he deprived another of his eye by the cruelty of his own lawlessness. But if scourging be a reasonable penalty for kissing another man’s wife, is not the fault of an instant visited with long hours of atonement, and the momentary delight punished with lasting pain? What shall we say of imprisonment? Must the criminal be confined only for so long a time as he spent on the offence for which he is committed? or is not a penalty of many years’ confinement imposed on the slave who has provoked his master with a word, or has struck him a blow that is quickly over? And as to damages, disgrace, exile, slavery, which are commonly inflicted so as to admit of no relaxation or pardon, do not these resemble eternal punishments in so far as this short life allows a resemblance? For they are not eternal only because the life in which they are endured is not eternal; and yet the crimes which are punished with these most protracted sufferings are perpetrated in a very brief space of time. Nor is there any one who would suppose that the pains of punishment should occupy as short a time as the offense; or that murder, adultery, sacrilege, or any other crime, should be measured, not by the enor mity of the injury or wickedness, but by the length of time spent in its perpetration. Then as to the award of death for any great crime, do the laws reckon the punishment to consist in the brief moment in which death is inflicted, or in this, that the offender is eternally banished from the society of the living? And just as the punishment of the first death cuts men off from this present mortal city, so does the punishment of the second death cut men off from that future immortal city. For as the laws of this present city do not provide for the executed criminal's return to it, so neither is he who is condemned to the second death recalled again to life everlasting. But if temporal sin is visited with eternal punishment, how, then, they say, is that true which your Christ says, “With the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again?” and they do not observe that “the same measure” refers, not to an equal space of time, but to the retribution of evil or, in other words, to the law by which he who has done evil suffers evil. Besides, these words could be appropriately understood as referring to the matter of which our Lord was speaking when He used them, viz., judgments and condemnation. Thus, if he who unjustly judges and condemns is himself justly judged and condemned, he receives “with the same measure” though not the same thing as he gave. For judgment he gave, and judgment he receives, though the judgment he gave was unjust, the judgment he receives just.

CHAPTER 12

OF THE GREATNESS OF THE FIRST TRANSGRESSION, ON ACCOUNT OF WHICH ETERNAL PUNISHMENT IS DUE TO ALL WHO ARE NOT WITHIN THE PALE OF THE SAVIOUR'S GRACE

But eternal punishment seems hard and unjust to human perceptions, because in the weakness of our mortal condition there is wanting that highest and purest wisdom by which it can be perceived how great a wickedness was committed in that first transgression. The more enjoyment man found in God, the greater was his wickedness in abandoning Him; and he who destroyed in himself a good which might have been eternal, became worthy of eternal evil. Hence the whole mass of the human race is condemned; for he who at first gave entrance to sin has been punished with all his posterity who were in him as in a root, so that no one is exempt from this just and due punishment, unless delivered by mercy and undeserved grace; and the human race is so apportioned that in some is displayed the efficacy of merciful grace, in the rest the efficacy of just retribution. For both could not be displayed in all; for if all had remained under the punishment of just condemnation, there would have been seen in no one the mercy of redeeming grace. And, on the other hand, if all had been transferred from darkness to light, the severity of retribution would have been manifested in none. But many more are left under punishment than are delivered from it, in order that it may thus be shown what was due to all. And had it been inflicted on all, no one could justly have found fault with the justice of Him who taketh vengeance; whereas, in the deliverance of so many from that just award, there is cause to render the most cordial thanks to the gratuitous bounty of Him who delivers.

CHAPTER 13

AGAINST THE OPINION OF THOSE WHO THINK THAT THE PUNISHMENTS OF THE WICKED AFTER DEATH ARE PURGATORIAL

The Platonists, indeed, while they maintain that no sins are unpunished, suppose that all punishment is administered for remedial purposes, be it inflicted by human or divine law, in this life or after death; for a man may be scathless here, or, though punished, may yet not amend. Hence that passage of Virgil, where, when he had said of our earthly bodies and mortal members, that our souls derive—

“Hence wild desires and grovelling fears,

And human laughter, human tears;

Immured in dungeon-seeming night,

They look abroad, yet see no light,”

goes on to say:

“Nay, when at last the life has fled,

And left the body cold and dead,

Ee’n then there passes not away

The painful heritage of clay;

Full many a long-contracted stain

Perforce must linger deep in grain.

So penal sufferings they endure

For ancient crime, to make them pure;

Some hang aloft in open view,

For winds to pierce them through and through,

While others purge their guilt deep-dyed

In burning fire or whelming tide.”

They who are of this opinion would have all punishments after death to be purgatorial; and as the elements of air, fire, and water are superior to earth, one or other of these may be the instrument of expiating and purging away the stain contracted by the contagion of earth. So Virgil hints at the air in the words, “Some hang aloft for winds to pierce;” at the water in “whelming tide;” and at fire in the expression “in burning fire.” For our part, we recognize that even in this life some punishments are purgatorial,—not, indeed, to those whose life is none the better, but rather the worse for them, but to those who are constrained by them to amend their life. All other punishments, whether temporal or eternal, inflicted as they are on every one by divine providence, are sent either on account of past sins, or of sins presently allowed in the life, or to exercise and reveal a man’s graces. They may be inflicted by the instrumentality of bad men and angels as well as of the good. For even if any one suffers some hurt through another’s wickedness or mistake, the man indeed sins whose ignorance or injustice does the harm; but God, who by His just though hidden judgment permits it to be done, sins not. But temporary punishments are suffered by some in this life only, by others after death, by others both now and then; but all of them before that last and strictest judgment. But of those who suffer temporary punishments after death, all are not doomed to those everlasting pains which are to follow that judgment; for to some, as we have already said, what is not remitted in this world is remitted in the next, that is, they are not punished with the eternal punishment of the world to come.

CHAPTER 14

OF THE TEMPORARY PUNISHMENTS OF THIS LIFE TO WHICH THE HUMAN CONDITION IS SUBJECT

Quite exceptional are those who are not punished in this life, but only afterwards. Yet that there have been some who have reached the decrepitude of age without experiencing even the slightest sickness, and who have had uninterrupted enjoyment of life, I know both from report and from my own observation. However, the very life we mortals lead is itself all punishment, for it is all temptation, as the Scriptures declare, where it is written, “Is not the life of man upon earth a temptation?” For ignorance is itself no slight punishment, or want of culture, which it is with justice thought so necessary to escape, that boys are compelled, under pain of severe punishment, to learn trades or letters; and the learning to which they are driven by punishment is itself so much of a punishment to them, that they sometimes prefer the pain that drives them to the pain to which they are driven by it. And who would not shrink from the alternative, and elect to die, if it were proposed to him either to suffer death or to be again an infant? Our infancy, indeed, introducing us to this life not with laughter but with tears, seems unconsciously to predict the ills we are to encounter. Zoroaster alone is said to have laughed when he was born, and that unnatural omen portended no good to him. For he is said to have been the inventor of magical arts, though indeed they were unable to secure to him even the poor felicity of this present life against the assaults of his enemies. For, himself king of the Bactrians, he was conquered by Ninus king of the Assyrians. In short, the words of Scripture, “An heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their mother’s womb till the day that they return to the mother of all things,”—these words so infallibly find fulfillment, that even the little ones, who by the layer of regeneration have been freed from the bond of original sin in which alone they were held, yet suffer many ills, and in some instances are even exposed to the assaults of evil spirits. But let us not for a moment suppose that this suffering is prejudicial to their future happiness, even though it has so increased as to sever soul from body, and to terminate their life in that early age.

CHAPTER 15

THAT EVERYTHING WHICH THE GRACE OF GOD DOES IN THE WAY OF RESCUING US FROM THE INVETERATE EVILS IN WHICH WE ARE SUNK, PERTAINS TO THE FUTURE WORLD, IN WHICH ALL THINGS ARE MADE NEW

Nevertheless, in the “heavy yoke that is laid upon the sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their mother’s womb to the day that they return to the mother of all things,” there is found an admirable though painful monitor teaching us to be sober-minded, and convincing us that this life has become penal in consequence of that outrageous wickedness which was perpetrated in Paradise, and that all to which the New Testament invites belongs to that future inheritance which awaits us in the world to come, and is offered for our acceptance, as the earnest that we may, in its own due time, obtain that of which it is the pledge. Now, therefore, let us walk in hope, and let us by the spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, and so make progress from day to day. For “the Lord know eth them that are His;” and “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are sons of God,” but by grace, not by nature. For there is but one Son of God by nature, who in His compassion became Son of man for our sakes, that we, by nature sons of men, might by grace become through Him sons of God. For He, abiding unchangeable, took upon Him our nature, that thereby He might take us to Himself; and, holding fast His own divinity, He became partaker of our infirmity, that we, being changed into some better thing, might, by participating in His righteousness and immortality, lose our own properties of sin and mortality, and preserve whatever good quality He had implanted in our nature perfected now by sharing in the goodness of His nature. For as by the sin of one man we have fallen into a misery so deplorable, so by the righteousness of one Man, who also is God, shall we come to a blessedness inconceivably exalted. Nor ought any one to trust that he has passed from the one man to the other until he shall have reached that place where there is no temptation, and have entered into the peace which he seeks in the many and various conflicts of this war, in which “the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.” Now, such a war as this would have had no existence if human nature had, in the exercise of free will, continued steadfast in the uprightness in which it was created. But now in its misery it makes war upon itself, because in its blessedness it would not continue at peace with God; and this, though it be a miserable calamity, is better than the earlier stages of this life, which do not recognize that a war is to be maintained. For better is it to contend with vices than without conflict to be subdued by them. Better, I say, is war with the hope of peace everlasting than captivity without any thought of deliverance. We long, indeed, for the cessation of this war, and, kindled by the flame of divine love, we burn for entrance on that well-ordered peace in which whatever is inferior is for ever subordinated to what is above it. But if (which God forbid) there had been no hope of so blessed a consummation, we should still have preferred to endure the hardness of this conflict, rather than, by our non-resistance, to yield ourselves to the dominion of vice.

CHAPTER 16

THE LAWS OF GRACE, WHICH EXTEND TO ALL THE EPOCHS OF THE LIFE OF THE REGENERATE

But such is God’s mercy towards the vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory, that even the first age of man, that is, infancy, which submits without any resistance to the flesh, and the second age, which is called boyhood, and which has not yet understanding enough to undertake this warfare, and therefore yields to almost every vicious pleasure (because though this age has the power of speech, and may therefore seem to have passed infancy, the mind is still too weak to comprehend the commandment), yet if either of these ages has received the sacraments of the Mediator, then, although the present life be immediately brought to an end, the child, having been translated from the power of darkness to the kingdom of Christ, shall not only be saved from eternal punishments, but shall not even suffer purgatorial torments after death. For spiritual regeneration of itself suffices to prevent any evil consequences resulting after death from the connection with death which carnal generation forms.

But when we reach that age which can now comprehend the commandment, and submit to the dominion of law, we must declare war upon vices, and wage this war keenly, lest we be landed in damnable sins. And if vices have not gathered strength, by habitual victory they are more easily overcome and subdued; but if they have been used to conquer and rule, it is only with difficulty and labor they are mastered. And indeed this victory cannot be sincerely and truly gained but by delighting in true righteousness, and it is faith in Christ that gives this. For if the law be present with its command, and the Spirit be absent with His help, the presence of the prohibition serves only to increase the desire to sin, and adds the guilt of transgression. Sometimes, indeed, patent vices are overcome by other and hidden vices, which are reckoned virtues, though pride and a kind of ruinous self-sufficiency are their informing principles. Accordingly vices are then only to be considered overcome when they are conquered by the love of God, which God Himself alone gives, and which He gives only through the Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who became a partaker of our mortality that He might make us partakers of His divinity. But few indeed are they who are so happy as to have passed their youth without committing any damnable sins, either by dissolute or violent conduct, or by following some godless and unlawful opinions, but have subdued by their greatness of soul everything in them which could make them the slaves of carnal pleasures. The greater number having first become transgressors of the law that they have received, and having allowed vice to have the ascendency in them, then flee to grace for help, and so, by a penitence more bitter, and a struggle more violent than it would otherwise have been, they subdue the soul to God, and thus give it its lawful authority over the flesh, and become victors. Whoever, therefore, desires to escape eternal punishment, let him not only be baptized, but also justified in Christ, and so let him in truth pass from the devil to Christ. And let him not fancy that there are any purgatorial pains except before that final and dreadful judgment. We must not, however deny that even the eternal fire will be proportioned to the deserts of the wicked, so that to some it will be more, and to others less painful, whether this result be accomplished by a variation in the temperature of the fire itself, graduated according to every one’s merit, or whether it be that the heat remains the same, but that all do not feel it with equal intensity of torment.

CHAPTER 17

OF THOSE WHO FANCY THAT NO MEN SHALL BE PUNISHED ETERNALLY

I must now, I see, enter the lists of amicable controversy with those tender-hearted Christians who decline to believe that any, or that all of those whom the infallibly just Judge may pronounce worthy of the punishment of hell, shall suffer eternally, and who suppose that they shall be delivered after a fixed term of punishment, longer or shorter according to the amount of each man’s sin. In respect of this matter, Origen was even more indulgent; for he believed that even the devil himself and his angels, after suffering those more severe and prolonged pains which their sins deserved, should be delivered from their torments, and associated with the holy angels. But the Church, not without reason, condemned him for this and other errors, especially for his theory of the ceaseless alternation of happiness and misery, and the interminable transitions from the one state to the other at fixed periods of ages; for in this theory he lost even the credit of being merciful, by allotting to the saints real miseries for the expiation of their sins, and false happiness, which brought them no true and secure joy, that is, no fearless assurance of eternal blessedness. Very different, however, is the error we speak of, which is dictated by the tenderness of these Christians who suppose that the sufferings of those who are condemned in the judgment will be temporary, while the blessedness of all who are sooner or later set free will be eternal. Which opinion, if it is good and true because it is merciful, will be so much the better and truer in proportion as it becomes more merciful. Let, then, this fountain of mercy be extended, and flow forth even to the lost angels, and let them also be set free, at least after as many and long ages as seem fit! Why does this stream of mercy flow to all the human race, and dry up as soon as it reaches the angelic? And yet they dare not extend their pity further, and propose the deliverance of the devil himself. Or if any one is bold enough to do so, he does indeed put to shame their charity, but is himself convicted of error that is more unsightly, and a wresting of God’s truth that is more perverse, in proportion as his clemency of sentiment seems to be greater.

CHAPTER 18

OF THOSE WHO FANCY THAT, ON ACCOUNT OF THE SAINTS' INTERCESSION, MAN SHALL BE DAMNED IN THE LAST JUDGMENT

There are others, again, with whose opinions I have become acquainted in conversation, who, though they seem to reverence the holy Scriptures, are yet of reprehensible life, and who accordingly, in their own interest, attribute to God a still greater compassion towards men. For they acknowledge that it is truly predicted in the divine word that the wicked and unbelieving are worthy of punishment, but they assert that, when the judgment comes, mercy will prevail. For, say they, God, having compassion on them, will give them up to the prayers and intercessions of His saints. For if the saints used to pray for them when they suffered from their cruel hatred, how much more will they do so when they see them prostrate and humble suppliants? For we cannot, they say, believe that the saints shall lose their bowels of compassion when they have attained the most perfect and complete holiness; so that they who, when still sinners, prayed for their enemies, should now, when they are freed from sin, withhold from interceding for their suppliants. Or shall God refuse to listen to so many of His beloved children, when their holiness has purged their prayers of all hindrance to His answering them? And the passage of the psalm which is cited by those who admit that wicked men and infidels shall be punished for a long time, though in the end delivered from all sufferings, is claimed also by the persons we are now speaking of as making much more for them. The verse runs: “Shall God forget to be gracious? Shall He in anger shut up His tender mercies?” His anger, they say, would condemn all that are unworthy of everlasting happiness to endless punishment. But if He suffer them to be punished for a long time, or even at all, must He not shut up His tender mercies, which the Psalmist implies He will not do? For he does not say, Shall He in anger shut up His tender mercies for a long period? but he implies that He will not shut them up at all.

And they deny that thus God’s threat of judgment is proved to be false even though He condemn no man, any more than we can say that His threat to overthrow Nineveh was false, though the destruction which was absolutely predicted was not accomplished. For He did not say, “Nineveh shall be overthrown if they do not repent and amend their ways," but without any such condition He foretold that the city should be overthrown. And this prediction, they maintain, was true because God predicted the punishment which they deserved, although He was not to inflict it. For though He spared them on their repentance yet He was certainly aware that they would repent, and, notwithstanding, absolutely and definitely predicted that the city should be overthrown. This was true, they say, in the truth of severity, because they were worthy of it; but in respect of the compassion which checked His anger, so that He spared the suppliants from the punishment with which He had threatened the rebellious, it was not true. If, then, He spared those whom His own holy prophet was provoked at His sparing, how much more shall He spare those more wretched suppliants for whom all His saints shall intercede? And they suppose that this conjecture of theirs is not hinted at in Scripture, for the sake of stimulating many to reformation of life through fear of very protracted or eternal sufferings, and of stimulating others to pray for those who have not reformed. However, they think that the divine oracles are not altogether silent on this point; for they ask to what purpose is it said, "How great is Thy goodness which Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee," if it be not to teach us that the great and hidden sweetness of God's mercy is concealed in order that men may fear? To the same purpose they think the apostle said, "For God hath concluded all men in unbelief, that He may have mercy upon all," signifying that no one should be condemned by God. And yet they who hold this opinion do not extend it to the acquittal or liberation of the devil and his angels. Their human tenderness is moved only towards men, and they plead chiefly their own cause, holding out false hopes of impunity to their own depraved lives by means of this quasi compassion of God to the whole race. Consequently they who promise this impunity even to the prince of the devils and his satellites make a still fuller exhibition of the mercy of God.

CHAPTER 19

OF THOSE WHO PROMISE IMPUNITY FROM ALL SINS EVEN TO HERETICS, THROUGH VIRTUE OF THEIR PARTICIPATION OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

So, too, there are others who promise this deliverance from eternal punishment, not, indeed, to all men, but only to those who have been washed in Christian baptism, and who become partakers of the body of Christ, no matter how they have lived, or what heresy or impiety they have fallen into. They ground this opinion on the saying of Jesus, “This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that if any man eat thereof, he shall not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If a man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever.” Therefore, say they, it follows that these persons must be delivered from death eternal, and at one time or other be introduced to everlasting life.

CHAPTER 20

OF THOSE WHO PROMISE THIS INDULGENCE NOT TO ALL, BUT ONLY TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED AS CATHOLICS, THOUGH AFTERWARDS THEY HAVE BROKEN OUT INTO MANY CRIMES AND HERESIES

There are others still who make this promise not even to all who have received the sacraments of the baptism of Christ and of His body, but only to the catholics, however badly they have lived. For these have eaten the body of Christ, not only sacramentally but really, being incorporated in His body, as the apostle says, “We, being many, are one bread, one body;” so that, though they have afterwards lapsed into some heresy, or even into heathenism and idolatry, yet by virtue of this one thing, that they have received the baptism of Christ, and eaten the body of Christ, in the body of Christ, that is to say, in the catholic Church, they shall not die eternally, but at one time or other obtain eternal life; and all that wickedness of theirs shall not avail to make their punishment eternal, but only proportionately long and severe.

CHAPTER 21

OF THOSE WHO ASSERT THAT ALL CATHOLICS WHO CONTINUE IN THE FAITH EVEN THOUGH BY THE DEPRAVITY OF THEIR LIVES THEY HAVE MERITED HELL FIRE, SHALL BE SAVED ON ACCOUNT OF THE “FOUNDATION” OF THEIR FAITH

There are some, too, who found upon the expression of Scripture, “He that endureth to the end shall be saved,” and who promise salvation only to those who continue in the Church catholic; and though such persons have lived badly, yet, say they, they shall be saved as by fire through virtue of the foundation of which the apostle says, “For other foundation hath no man laid than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day of the Lord shall declare it, for it shall be revealed by fire; and each man's work shall be proved of what sort it is. If any man's work shall endure which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. But if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire." They say, accordingly, that the catholic Christian, no matter what his life be, has Christ as his foundation, while this foundation is not possessed by any heresy which is separated from the unity of His body. And therefore, through virtue of this foundation, even though the catholic Christian by the inconsistency of his life has been as one building up wood, hay, stubble, upon it, they believe that he shall be saved by fire, in other words, that he shall be delivered after tasting the pain of that fire to which the wicked shall be condemned at the last judgment.

CHAPTER 22

OF THOSE WHO FANCY THAT THE SINS WHICH ARE INTERMINGLED WITH ALMS-DEEDS SHALL NOT BE CHARGED AT THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

I have also met with some who are of opinion that such only as neglect to cover their sins with alms-deeds shall be punished in everlasting fire; and they cite the words of the Apostle James, "He shall have judgment without mercy who hath shown no mercy." Therefore, say they, he who has not amended his ways, but yet has intermingled his profligate and wicked actions with works of mercy, shall receive mercy in the judgment, so that he shall either quite escape condemnation, or shall be liberated from his doom after some time shorter or longer. They suppose that this was the reason why the Judge Himself of quick and dead declined to mention anything else than works of mercy done or omitted, when awarding to those on His right hand life eternal, and to those on His left everlasting punishment. To the same purpose, they say, is the daily petition we make in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." For, no doubt, whoever pardons the person who has wronged him does a charitable action. And this has been so highly commended by the Lord Himself, that He says, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” And so it is to this kind of alms-deeds that the saying of the Apostle James refers, “He shall have judgment without mercy that hath shown no mercy.” And our Lord, they say, made no distinction of great and small sins, but “Your Father will forgive your sins, if ye forgive men theirs.” Consequently they conclude that, though a man has led an abandoned life up to the last day of it, yet whatsoever his sins have been, they are all remitted by virtue of this daily prayer, if only he has been mindful to attend to this one thing, that when they who have done him any injury ask his pardon, he forgive them from his heart.

When, by God’s help, I have replied to all these errors, I shall conclude this (twenty-first) book.

CHAPTER 23

AGAINST THOSE WHO ARE OF OPINION THAT THE PUNISHMENT NEITHER OF THE DEVIL NOR OF WICKED MEN SHALL BE ETERNAL

First of all, it behoves us to inquire and to recognize why the Church has not been able to tolerate the idea that promises cleansing or indulgence to the devil even after the most severe and protracted punishment. For so many holy men, imbued with the spirit of the Old and New Testament, did not grudge to angels of any rank or character that they should enjoy the blessedness of the heavenly kingdom after being cleansed by suffering, but rather they perceived that they could not invalidate nor evacuate the divine sentence which the Lord predicted that He would pronounce in the judgment, saying, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” For here it is evident that the devil and his angels shall burn in everlasting fire. And there is also that declaration in the Apocalypse, “The devil their deceiver was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where also are the beast and the false prophet. And they shall be tormented day and night for ever.” In the former passage “everlasting” is used, in the latter “for ever;” and by these words Scripture is wont to mean nothing else than endless duration. And therefore no other reason, no reason more obvious and just, can be found for holding it as the fixed and immovable belief of the truest piety, that the devil and his angels shall never return to the justice and life of the saints, than that Scripture, which deceives no man, says that God spared them not, and that they were condemned beforehand by Him, and cast into prisons of darkness in hell, being reserved to the judgment of the last day, when eternal fire shall receive them, in which they shall be tormented world without end. And if this be so, how can it be believed that all men, or even some, shall be withdrawn from the endurance of punishment after some time has been spent in it? how can this be believed without enervating our faith in the eternal punishment of the devils? For if all or some of those to whom it shall be said, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," are not to be always in that fire, then what reason is there for believing that the devil and his angels shall always be there? Or is perhaps the sentence of God, which is to be pronounced on wicked men and angels alike, to be true in the case of the angels, false in that of men? Plainly it will be so if the conjectures of men are to weigh more than the word of God. But because this is absurd, they who desire to be rid of eternal punishment ought to abstain from arguing against God, and rather, while yet there is opportunity, obey the divine commands. Then what a fond fancy is it to suppose that eternal punishment means long continued punishment, while eternal life means life without end, since Christ in the very same passage spoke of both in similar terms in one and the same sentence, "These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal!" If both destinies are "eternal," then we must either understand both as long-continued but at last terminating, or both as endless. For they are correlative,—on the one hand, punishment eternal, on the other hand, life eternal. And to say in one and the same sense, life eternal shall be endless, punishment eternal shall come to an end, is the height of absurdity. Wherefore, as the eternal life of the saints shall be endless, so too the eternal punishment of those who are doomed to it shall have no end.

CHAPTER 24

AGAINST THOSE WHO FANCY THAT IN THE JUDGMENT OF GOD ALL THE ACCUSED WILL BE SPARED IN VIRTUE OF THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS

And this reasoning is equally conclusive against those who, in their own interest, but under the guise of a greater tenderness of spirit, attempt to invalidate the words of God, and who assert that these words are true, not because men shall suffer those things which are threatened by God, but because they deserve to suffer them. For God, they say, will yield them to the prayers of His saints, who will then the more earnestly pray for their enemies, as they shall be more perfect in holiness, and whose prayers will be the more efficacious and the more worthy of God’s ear, because now purged from all sin whatsoever. Why, then, if in that perfected holiness their prayers be so pure and all-availing, will they not use them in behalf of the angels for whom eternal fire is prepared, that God may mitigate His sentence and alter it, and extricate them from that fire? Or will there, perhaps, be some one hardy enough to affirm that even the holy angels will make common cause with holy men (then become the equals of God’s angels), and will intercede for the guilty, both men and angels, that mercy may spare them the punishment which truth has pronounced them to deserve? But this has been asserted by no one sound in the faith; nor will be. Otherwise there is no reason why the Church should not even now pray for the devil and his angels, since God her Master has ordered her to pray for her enemies. The reason, then, which prevents the Church from now praying for the wicked angels, whom she knows to be her enemies, is the identical reason which shall prevent her, however perfected in holiness, from praying at the last judgment for those men who are to be punished in eternal fire. At present she prays for her enemies among men, because they have yet opportunity for fruitful repentance. For what does she especially beg for them but that “God would grant them repentance,” as the apostle says, “that they may return to soberness out of the snare of the devil, by whom they are held captive according to his will?” But if the Church were certified who those are, who, though they are still abiding in this life, are yet predestinated to go with the devil into eternal fire, then for them she could no more pray than for him. But since she has this certainty regarding no man, she prays for all her enemies who yet live in this world; and yet she is not heard in behalf of all. But she is heard in the case of those only who, though they oppose the Church, are yet predestinated to become her sons through her intercession. But if any retain an impenitent heart until death, and are not converted from enemies into sons, does the Church continue to pray for them, for the spirits, i.e., of such persons deceased? And why does she cease to pray for them, unless because the man who was not translated into Christ’s kingdom while he was in the body, is now judged to be of Satan’s following?

It is then, I say, the same reason which prevents the Church at any time from praying for the wicked angels, which prevents her from praying hereafter for those men who are to be punished in eternal fire; and this also is the reason why, though she prays even for the wicked so long as they live, she yet does not even in this world pray for the unbelieving and godless who are dead. For some of the dead, indeed, the prayer of the Church or of pious individuals is heard; but it is for those who, having been regenerated in Christ, did not spend their life so wickedly that they can be judged unworthy of such compassion, nor so well that they can be considered to have no need of it. As also, after the resurrection, there will be some of the dead to whom, after they have endured the pains proper to the spirits of the dead, mercy shall be accorded, and acquittal from the punishment of the eternal fire. For were there not some whose sins, though not remitted in this life, shall be remitted in that which is to come, it could not be truly said, “They shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in that which is to come.” But when the Judge of quick and dead has said, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,” and to those on the other side, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels,” and “These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life,” it were excessively presumptuous to say that the punishment of any of those whom God has said shall go away into eternal punishment shall not be eternal, and so bring either despair or doubt upon the corresponding promise of life eternal.

Let no man then so understand the words of the Psalmist, “Shall God forget to be gracious? shall He shut up in His anger His tender mercies” as if the sentence of God were true of good men, false of bad men, or true of good men and wicked angels, but false of bad men. For the Psalmist’s words refer to the vessels of mercy and the children of the promise, of whom the prophet himself was one; for when he had said, “Shall God forget to be gracious? shall He shut up in His anger His tender mercies?” and then immediately subjoins, “And I said, Now I begin: this is the change wrought by the right hand of the Most High," he manifestly explained what he meant by the words, "Shall he shut up in His anger His tender mercies?" For God's anger is this mortal life, in which man is made like to vanity, and his days pass as a shadow. Yet in this anger God does not forget to be gracious, causing His sun to shine and His rain to descend on the just and the unjust; and thus He does not in His anger cut short His tender mercies, and especially in what the Psalmist speaks of in the words, "Now I begin: this change is from the right hand of the Most High;" for He changes for the better the vessels of mercy, even while they are still in this most wretched life, which is God's anger, and even while His anger is manifesting itself in this miserable corruption; for "in His anger He does not shut up His tender mercies." And since the truth of this divine canticle is quite satisfied by this application of it, there is no need to give it a reference to that place in which those who do not belong to the city of God are punished in eternal fire. But if any persist in extending its application to the torments of the wicked, let them at least understand it so that the anger of God, which has threatened the wicked with eternal punishment, shall abide, but shall be mixed with mercy to the extent of alleviating the torments which might justly be inflicted; so that the wicked shall neither wholly escape, nor only for a time endure these threatened pains, but that they shall be less severe and more endurable than they deserve. Thus the anger of God shall continue, and at the same time He will not in this anger shut up His tender mercies. But even this hypothesis I am not to be supposed to affirm because I do not positively oppose it.

As for those who find an empty threat rather than a truth in such passages as these: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire;" and "These shall go away into eternal punishment;" and "They shall be tormented for ever and ever;" and "Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched,"—such persons, I say, are most emphatically and abundantly refuted, not by me so much as by the divine Scripture itself. For the men of Nineveh repented in this life, and therefore their repentance was fruitful, inasmuch as they sowed in that field which the Lord meant to be sown in tears that it might afterwards be reaped in joy. And yet who will deny that God's prediction was fulfilled in their case, if at least he observes that God destroys sinners not only in anger but also in compassion? For sinners are destroyed in two ways,—either, like the Sodomites, the men themselves are punished for their sins, or, like the Ninevites, the men's sins are destroyed by repentance. God's prediction, therefore, was fulfilled,—the wicked Nineveh was overthrown, and a good Nineveh built up. For its walls and houses remained standing; the city was overthrown in its depraved manners. And thus, though the prophet was provoked that the destruction which the inhabitants dreaded, because of his prediction, did not take place, yet that which God's foreknowledge had predicted did take place, for He who foretold the destruction knew how it should be fulfilled in a less calamitous sense.

But that these perversely compassionate persons may see what is the purport of these words, "How great is the abundance of Thy sweetness, Lord, which Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee," let them read what follows: "And Thou hast perfected it for them that hope in Thee." For what means, "Thou hast hidden it for them that fear Thee," "Thou hast perfected it for them that hope in Thee," unless this, that to those who through fear of punishment seek to establish their own righteousness by the law, the righteousness of God is not sweet, because they are ignorant of it? They have not tasted it. For they hope in themselves, not in Him; and therefore God's abundant sweetness is hidden from them. They fear God, indeed, but it is with that servile fear "which is not in love; for perfect love casteth out fear." Therefore to them that hope in Him He perfecteth His sweetness, inspiring them with His own love, so that with a holy fear, which love does not cast out, but which endureth for ever, they may, when they glory, glory in the Lord. For the righteousness of God is Christ, "who is of God made unto us," as the apostle says, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." This righteousness of God, which is the gift of grace without merits, is not known by those who go about to establish their own righteousness, and are therefore not subject to the righteousness of God, which is Christ. But it is in this righteousness that we find the great abundance of God's sweetness, of which the psalm says, "Taste and see how sweet the Lord is." And this we rather taste than partake of to satiety in this our pilgrimage. We hunger and thirst for it now, that hereafter we may be satisfied with it when we see Him as He is, and that is fulfilled which is written, “I shall be satisfied when Thy glory shall be manifested.” It is thus that Christ perfects the great abundance of His sweetness to them that hope in Him. But if God conceals His sweetness from them that fear Him in the sense that these our objectors fancy, so that men’s ignorance of His purpose of mercy towards the wicked may lead them to fear Him and live better, and so that there may be prayer made for those who are not living as they ought, how then does He perfect His sweetness to them that hope in Him, since, if their dreams be true, it is this very sweetness which will prevent Him from punishing those who do not hope in Him? Let us then seek that sweetness of His, which He perfects to them that hope in Him, not that which He is supposed to perfect to those who despise and blaspheme Him; for in vain, after this life, does a man seek for what he has neglected to provide while in this life.

Then, as to that saying of the apostle, “For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He may have mercy upon all,” it does not mean that He will condemn no one; but the foregoing context shows what is meant. The apostle composed the epistle for the Gentiles who were already believers; and when he was speaking to them of the Jews who were yet to believe, he says, “For as ye in times past believed not God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.” Then he added the words in question with which these persons beguile themselves: “For God concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all.” All whom, if not all those of whom he was speaking, just as if he had said, “Both you and them?” God then concluded all those in unbelief, both Jews and Gentiles, whom He foreknew and predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that they might be confounded by the bitterness of unbelief, and might repent and believingly turn to the sweetness of God’s mercy, and might take up that exclamation of the psalm, “How great is the abundance of Thy sweetness, O Lord, which Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee, but hast perfected to them that hope,” not in themselves, but “in Thee.” He has mercy, then, on all the vessels of mercy. And what means “all?” Both those of the Gentiles and those of the Jews whom He predestinated, called, justified, glorified: none of these will be condemned by Him; but we cannot say none of all men whatever.

CHAPTER 25

WHETHER THOSE WHO RECEIVED HERETICAL BAPTISM, AND HAVE AFTERWARDS FALLEN AWAY TO WICKEDNESS OF LIFE; OR THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED CATHOLIC BAPTISM, BUT HAVE AFTERWARDS PASSED OVER TO HERESY AND SCHISM; OR THOSE WHO HAVE REMAINED IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN WHICH THEY WERE BAPTIZED, BUT HAVE CONTINUED TO LIVE IMMORALLY,—MAY HOPE THROUGH THE VIRTUE OF THE SACRAMENTS FOR THE REMISSION OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

But let us now reply to those who promise deliverance from eternal fire, not to the devil and his angels (as neither do they of whom we have been speaking), nor even to all men whatever, but only to those who have been washed by the baptism of Christ, and have become partakers of His body and blood, no matter how they have lived, no matter what heresy or impiety they have fallen into. But they are contradicted by the apostle, where he says, “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variances, emulations, wrath, strife, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and the like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, for they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Certainly this sentence of the apostle is false, if such persons shall be delivered after any lapse of time, and shall then inherit the kingdom of God. But as it is not false, they shall certainly never inherit the kingdom of God. And if they shall never enter that kingdom, then they shall always be retained in eternal punishment; for there is no middle place where he may live unpunished who has not been admitted into that kingdom.

And therefore we may reasonably inquire how we are to understand these words of the Lord Jesus: “This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever.” And those, indeed, whom we are now answering, are refuted in their interpretation of this passage by those whom we are shortly to answer, and who do not promise this deliverance to all who have received the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s body, but only to the catholics, however wickedly they live; for these, say they, have eaten the Lord’s body not only sacramentally, but really, being constituted members of His body, of which the apostle says, “We being many are one bread, one body.” He then who is in the unity of Christ’s body (that is to say, in the Christian membership), of which body the faithful have been wont to receive the sacrament at the altar, that man is truly said to eat the body and drink the blood of Christ. And consequently heretics and schismatics being separate from the unity of this body, are able to receive the same sacrament, but with no profit to themselves,—nay, rather to their own hurt, so that they are rather more severely judged than liberated after some time. For they are not in that bond of peace which is symbolized by that sacrament.

But again, even those who sufficiently understand that he who is not in the body of Christ cannot be said to eat the body of Christ, are in error when they promise liberation from the fire of eternal punishment to persons who fall away from the unity of that body into heresy, or even into heathenish superstition. For, in the first place, they ought to consider how intolerable it is, and how discordant with sound doctrine, to suppose that many, indeed, or almost all, who have forsaken the Church catholic, and have originated impious heresies and become heresiarchs, should enjoy a destiny superior to those who never were catholics, but have fallen into the snares of these others; that is to say, if the fact of their catholic baptism and original reception of the sacrament of the body of Christ in the true body of Christ is sufficient to deliver these heresiarchs from eternal punishment. For certainly he who deserts the faith, and from a deserter becomes an assailant, is worse than he who has not deserted the faith he never held. And, in the second place, they are contradicted by the apostle, who, after enumerating the works of the flesh, says with reference to heresies, “They who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

And therefore neither ought such persons as lead an abandoned and damnable life to be confident of salvation, though they persevere to the end in the communion of the Church catholic, and comfort themselves with the words, “He that endureth to the end shall be saved.” By the iniquity of their life they abandon that very righteousness of life which Christ is to them, whether it be by fornication, or by perpetrating in their body the other uncleannesses which the apostle would not so much as mention, or by a dissolute luxury, or by doing any one of those things of which he says, "They who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Consequently, they who do such things shall not exist anywhere but in eternal punishment, since they cannot be in the kingdom of God. For, while they continue in such things to the very end of life, they cannot be said to abide in Christ to the end; for to abide in Him is to abide in the faith of Christ. And this faith, according to the apostle's definition of it, "worketh by love." And "love," as he elsewhere says, "worketh no evil." Neither can these persons be said to eat the body of Christ, for they cannot even be reckoned among His members. For, not to mention other reasons, they cannot be at once the members of Christ and the members of a harlot. In fine, He Himself, when He says, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him," shows what it is in reality, and not sacramentally, to eat His body and drink His blood; for this is to dwell in Christ, that He also may dwell in us. So that it is as if He said, He that dwelleth not in me, and in whom I do not dwell, let him not say or think that he eateth my body or drinketh my blood. Accordingly, they who are not Christ's members do not dwell in Him. And they who make themselves members of a harlot, are not members of Christ unless they have penitently abandoned that evil, and have returned to this good to be reconciled to it.

CHAPTER 26

WHAT IT IS TO HAVE CHRIST FOR A FOUNDATION, AND WHO THEY ARE TO WHOM SALVATION AS BY FIRE IS PROMISED

But, say they, the catholic Christians have Christ for a foundation, and they have not fallen away from union with Him, no matter how depraved a life they have built on this foundation, as wood, hay, stubble; and accordingly the well-directed faith by which Christ is their foundation will suffice to deliver them some time from the continuance of that fire, though it be with loss, since those things they have built on it shall be burned. Let the Apostle James summarily reply to them: "If any man say he has faith, and have not works, can faith save him?" And who then is it, they ask, of whom the Apostle Paul says, "But he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire?" Let us join them in their inquiry; and one thing is very certain, that it is not he of whom James speaks, else we should make the two apostles contradict one another, if the one says, "Though a man's works be evil, his faith will save him as by fire," while the other says, "If he have not good works, can his faith save him?"

We shall then ascertain who it is who can be saved by fire, if we first discover what it is to have Christ for a foundation. And this we may very readily learn from the image itself. In a building the foundation is first. Whoever, then, has Christ in his heart, so that no earthly or temporal things—not even those that are legitimate and allowed—are preferred to Him, has Christ as a foundation. But if these things be preferred, then even though a man seem to have faith in Christ, yet Christ is not the foundation to that man; and much more if he, in contempt of wholesome precepts, seek forbidden gratifications, is he clearly convicted of putting Christ not first but last, since he has despised Him as his ruler, and has preferred to fulfill his own wicked lusts, in contempt of Christ's commands and allowances. Accordingly, if any Christian man loves a harlot, and, attaching himself to her, becomes one body, he has not now Christ for a foundation. But if any one loves his own wife, and loves her as Christ would have him love her, who can doubt that he has Christ for a foundation? But if he loves her in the world's fashion, carnally, as the disease of lust prompts him, and as the Gentiles love who know not God, even this the apostle, or rather Christ by the apostle, allows as a venial fault. And therefore even such a man may have Christ for a foundation. For so long as he does not prefer such an affection or pleasure to Christ, Christ is his foundation, though on it he builds wood, hay, stubble; and therefore he shall be saved as by fire. For the fire of affliction shall burn such luxurious pleasures and earthly loves, though they be not damnable, because enjoyed in lawful wedlock. And of this fire the fuel is bereavement, and all those calamities which consume these joys. Consequently the superstructure will be loss to him who has built it, for he shall not retain it, but shall be agonized by the loss of those things in the enjoyment of which he found pleasure. But by this fire he shall be saved through virtue of the foundation, because even if a persecutor demanded whether he would retain Christ or these things, he would prefer Christ. Would you hear, in the apostle's own words, who he is who builds on the foundation gold, silver, precious stones? "He that is unmarried," he says, "careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord." Would you hear who he is that buildeth wood, hay, stubble? "But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. “Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it,”—the day, no doubt, of tribulation—”because,” says he, “it shall be revealed by fire.” He calls tribulation fire, just as it is elsewhere said, “The furnace proves the vessels of the potter, and the trial of affliction righteous men.” And “The fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide”—for a man’s care for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord, abides—”which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward,”—that is, he shall reap the fruit of his care. “But if any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss,”—for what he loved he shall not retain:—” but he himself shall be saved,”—for no tribulation shall have moved him from that stable foundation,—”yet so as by fire;” for that which he possessed with the sweetness of love he does not lose without the sharp sting of pain. Here, then, as seems to me, we have a fire which destroys neither, but enriches the one, brings loss to the other, proves both.

But if this passage [of Corinthians] is to interpret that fire of which the Lord shall say to those on His left hand, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,” so that among these we are to believe there are those who build on the foundation wood, hay, stubble, and that they, through virtue of the good foundation, shall after a time be liberated from the fire that is the award of their evil deserts, what then shall we think of those on the right hand, to whom it shall be said, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you,” unless that they are those who have built on the foundation gold, silver, precious stones? But if the fire of which our Lord speaks is the same as that of which the apostle says, “Yet so as by fire,” then both—that is to say, both those on the right as well as those on the left—are to be cast into it. For that fire is to try both, since it is said, “For the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.” If, therefore, the fire shall try both, in order that if any man’s work abide—i.e., if the superstructure be not consumed by the fire—he may receive a reward, and that if his work is burned he may suffer loss, certainly that fire is not the eternal fire itself. For into this latter fire only those on the left hand shall be cast, and that with final and everlasting doom; but that former fire proves those on the right hand. But some of them it so proves that it does not burn and consume the structure which is found to have been built by them on Christ as the foundation; while others of them it proves in another fashion, so as to burn what they have built up, and thus cause them to suffer loss, while they themselves are saved because they have retained Christ, who was laid as their sure foundation, and have loved Him above all. But if they are saved, then certainly they shall stand at the right hand, and shall with the rest hear the sentence, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you;” and not at the left hand, where those shall be who shall not be saved, and shall therefore hear the doom, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.” For from that fire no man shall be saved, because they all shall go away into eternal punishment, where their worms shall not die, nor their fire be quenched, in which they shall be tormented day and night for ever.

But if it be said that in the interval of time between the death of this body and that last day of judgment and retribution which shall follow the resurrection, the bodies of the dead shall be exposed to a fire of such a nature that it shall not affect those who have not in this life indulged in such pleasures and pursuits as shall be consumed like wood, hay, stubble, but shall affect those others who have carried with them structures of that kind; if it be said that such worldliness, being venial, shall be consumed in the fire of tribulation either here only, or here and hereafter both, or here that it may not be hereafter,—this I do not contradict, because possibly it is true. For perhaps even the death of the body is itself a part of this tribulation, for it results from the first transgression, so that the time which follows death takes its color in each case from the nature of the man’s building. The persecutions, too, which have crowned the martyrs, and which Christians of all kinds suffer, try both buildings like a fire, consuming some, along with the builders themselves, if Christ is not found in them as their foundation, while others they consume without the builders, because Christ is found in them, and they are saved, though with loss; and other buildings still they do not consume, because such materials as abide for ever are found in them. In the end of the world there shall be in the time of Antichrist tribulation such as has never before been. How many edifices there shall then be, of gold or of hay, built on the best foundation, Christ Jesus, which that fire shall prove, bringing joy to some, loss to others, but without destroying either sort, because of this stable foundation! But whosoever prefers, I do not say his wife, with whom he lives for carnal pleasure, but any of those relatives who afford no delight of such a kind, and whom it is right to love,—whosoever prefers these to Christ, and loves them after a human and carnal fashion, has not Christ as a foundation, and will therefore not be saved by fire, nor indeed at all; for he shall not possibly dwell with the Saviour, who says very explicitly concerning this very matter, “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.” But he who loves his relations carnally, and yet so that he does not prefer them to Christ, but would rather want them than Christ if he were put to the proof, shall be saved by fire, because it is necessary that by the loss of these relations he suffer pain in proportion to his love. And he who loves father, mother, sons, daughters, according to Christ, so that he aids them in obtaining His kingdom and cleaving to Him, or loves them because they are members of Christ, God forbid that this love should be consumed as wood, hay, stubble, and not rather be reckoned a structure of gold, silver, precious stones. For how can a man love those more than Christ whom he loves only for Christ’s sake?

CHAPTER 27

AGAINST THE BELIEF OF THOSE WHO THINK THAT THE SINS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCOMPANIED WITH ALMSGIVING WILL DO THEM NO HARM

It remains to reply to those who maintain that those only shall burn in eternal fire who neglect alms-deeds proportioned to their sins, resting this opinion on the words of the Apostle James, “He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy.” Therefore, they say, he that hath showed mercy, though he has not reformed his dissolute conduct, but has lived wickedly and iniquitously even while abounding in alms, shall have a merciful judgment, so that he shall either be not condemned at all, or shall be delivered from final judgment after a time. And for the same reason they suppose that Christ will discriminate between those on the right hand and those on the left, and will send the one party into His kingdom, the other into eternal punishment, on the sole ground of their attention to or neglect of works of charity. Moreover, they endeavor to use the prayer which the Lord Himself taught as a proof and bulwark of their opinion, that daily sins which are never abandoned can be expiated through alms-deeds, no matter how offensive or of what sort they be. For, say they, as there is no day on which Christians ought not to use this prayer, so there is no sin of any kind which, though committed every day, is not remitted when we say, “Forgive us our debts,” if we take care to fulfill what follows, “as we forgive our debtors.” For, they go on to say, the Lord does not say, “If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you your little daily sins,” but “will forgive you your sins.” Therefore, be they of any kind or magnitude whatever, be they perpetrated daily and never abandoned or subdued in this life, they can be pardoned, they presume, through alms-deeds.

But they are right to inculcate the giving of aims proportioned to past sins; for if they said that any kind of alms could obtain the divine pardon of great sins committed daily and with habitual enormity, if they said that such sins could thus be daily remitted, they would see that their doctrine was absurd and ridiculous. For they would thus be driven to acknowledge that it were possible for a very wealthy man to buy absolution from murders, adulteries, and all manner of wickedness, by paying a daily alms of ten paltry coins. And if it be most absurd and insane to make such an acknowledgment, and if we still ask what are those fitting alms of which even the forerunner of Christ said, “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance,” undoubtedly it will be found that they are not such as are done by men who undermine their life by daily enormities even to the very end. For they suppose that by giving to the poor a small fraction of the wealth they acquire by extortion and spoliation they can propitiate Christ, so that they may with impunity commit the most damnable sins, in the persuasion that they have bought from Him a license to transgress, or rather do buy a daily indulgence. And if they for one crime have distributed all their goods to Christ’s needy members, that could profit them nothing unless they desisted from all similar actions, and attained charity which worketh no evil He therefore who does alms-deeds proportioned to his sins must first begin with himself. For it is not reasonable that a man who exercises charity towards his neighbor should not do so towards himself, since he hears the Lord saying, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” and again, “Have compassion on thy soul, and please God.” He then who has not compassion on his own soul that he may please God, how can he be said to do alms-deeds proportioned to his sins? To the same purpose is that written, “He who is bad to himself, to whom can he be good?” We ought therefore to do alms that we may be heard when we pray that our past sins may be forgiven, not that while we continue in them we may think to provide ourselves with a license for wickedness by alms-deeds.

The reason, therefore, of our predicting that He will impute to those on His right hand the alms-deeds they have done, and charge those on His left with omitting the same, is that He may thus show the efficacy of charity for the deletion of past sins, not for impunity in their perpetual commission. And such persons, indeed, as decline to abandon their evil habits of life for a better course cannot be said to do charitable deeds. For this is the purport of the saying, “Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.” He shows them that they do not perform charitable actions even when they think they are doing so. For if they gave bread to a hungering Christian because he is a Christian, assuredly they would not deny to themselves the bread of righteousness, that is, Christ Himself; for God considers not the person to whom the gift is made, but the spirit in which it is made. He therefore who loves Christ in a Christian extends alms to him in the same spirit in which he draws near to Christ, not in that spirit which would abandon Christ if it could do so with impunity. For in proportion as a man loves what Christ disapproves does he himself abandon Christ. For what does it profit a man that he is baptized, if he is not justified? Did not He who said, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he shall not enter into the kingdom of God,” say also, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven?” Why do many through fear of the first saying run to baptism, while few through fear of the second seek to be justified? As therefore it is not to his brother a man says, “Thou fool,” if when he says it he is indignant not at the brotherhood, but at the sin of the offender,—for otherwise he were guilty of hell fire,—so he who extends charity to a Christian does not extend it to a Christian if he does not love Christ in him. Now he does not love Christ who refuses to be justified in Him. Or, again, if a man has been guilty of this sin of calling his brother Fool, unjustly reviling him without any desire to remove his sin, his alms-deeds go a small way towards expiating this fault, unless he adds to this the remedy of reconciliation which the same passage enjoins. For it is there said, “Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” Just so it is a small matter to do alms-deeds, no matter how great they be, for any sin, so long as the offender continues in the practice of sin.

Then as to the daily prayer which the Lord Himself taught, and which is therefore called the Lord’s prayer, it obliterates indeed the sins of the day, when day by day we say, “Forgive us our debts,” and when we not only say but act out that which follows, “as we forgive our debtors;” but we utter this petition because sins have been committed, and not that they may be. For by it our Saviour designed to teach us that, however righteously we live in this life of infirmity and darkness, we still commit sins for the remission of which we ought to pray, while we must pardon those who sin against us that we ourselves also may be pardoned. The Lord then did not utter the words, “If ye forgive men their trespasses, your Father will also forgive you your trespasses,” in order that we might contract from this petition such confidence as should enable us to sin securely from day to day, either putting ourselves above the fear of human laws, or craftily deceiving men concerning our conduct, but in order that we might thus learn not to suppose that we are without sins, even though we should be free from crimes; as also God admonished the priests of the old law to this same effect regarding their sacrifices, which He commanded them to offer first for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people. For even the very words of so great a Master and Lord are to be intently considered. For He does not say, If ye forgive men their sins, your Father will also forgive you your sins, no matter of what sort they be, but He says, your sins; for it was a daily prayer He was teaching, and it was certainly to disciples already justified He was speaking. What, then, does He mean by “your sins,” but those sins from which not even you who are justified and sanctified can be free? While, then, those who seek occasion from this petition to indulge in habitual sin maintain that the Lord meant to include great sins, because He did not say, He will forgive you your small sins, but “your sins,” we, on the other hand, taking into account the character of the persons He was addressing, cannot see our way to interpret the expression “your sins” of anything but small sins, because such persons are no longer guilty of great sins. Nevertheless not even great sins themselves—sins from which we must flee with a total reformation of life—are forgiven to those who pray, unless they observe the appended precept, “as ye also forgive your debtors.” For if the very small sins which attach even to the life of the righteous be not remitted without that condition, how much further from obtaining indulgence shall those be who are involved in many great crimes, if, while they cease from perpetrating such enormities, they still inexorably refuse to remit any debt incurred to themselves, since the Lord says, “But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses?” For this is the purport of the saying of the Apostle James also, “He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy.” For we should remember that servant whose debt of ten thousand talents his lord cancelled, but afterwards ordered him to pay up, because the servant himself had no pity for his fellow-servant, who owed him an hundred pence. The words which the Apostle James subjoins,”And mercy rejoiceth against judgment,” find their application among those who are the children of the promise and vessels of mercy. For even those righteous men, who have lived with such holiness that they receive into the eternal habitations others also who have won their friendship with the mammon of unrighteousness, became such only through the merciful deliverance of Him who justifies the ungodly, imputing to him a reward according to grace, not according to debt. For among this number is the apostle, who says, “I obtained mercy to be faithful.”

But it must be admitted, that those who are thus received into the eternal habitations are not of such a character that their own life would suffice to rescue them without the aid of the saints, and consequently in their case especially does mercy rejoice against judgment. And yet we are not on this account to suppose that every abandoned profligate, who has made no amendment of his life, is to be received into the eternal habitations if only he has assisted the saints with the mammon of unrighteousness,—that is to say, with money or wealth which has been unjustly acquired, or, if rightfully acquired, is yet not the true riches, but only what iniquity counts riches, because it knows not the true riches in which those persons abound, who even receive others also into eternal habitations. There is then a certain kind of life, which is neither, on the one hand, so bad that those who adopt it are not helped towards the kingdom of heaven by any bountiful alms-giving by which they may relieve the wants of the saints, and make friends who could receive them into eternal habitations, nor, on the other hand, so good that it of itself suffices to win for them that great blessedness, if they do not obtain mercy through the merits of those whom they have made their friends. And I frequently wonder that even Virgil should give expression to this sentence of the Lord, in which He says, “Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that they may receive you into everlasting habitations;” and this very similar saying, “He that receiveth a prophet, in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man’s reward.” For when that poet described the Elysian fields, in which they suppose that the souls of the blessed dwell, he placed there not only those who had been able by their own merit to reach that abode, but added,—

“And they who grateful memory won

By services to others done;”

that is, they who had served others, and thereby merited to be remembered by them. Just as if they used the expression so common in Christian lips, where some humble person commends himself to one of the saints, and says, Remember me, and secures that he do so by deserving well at his hand. But what that kind of life we have been speaking of is, and what those sins are which prevent a man from winning the kingdom of God by himself, but yet permit him to avail himself of the merits of the saints, it is very difficult to ascertain, very perilous to define. For my own part, in spite of all investigation, I have been up to the present hour unable to discover this. And possibly it is hidden from us, lest we should become careless in avoiding such sins, and so cease to make progress. For if it were known what these sins are which, though they continue, and be not abandoned for a higher life, do yet not prevent us from seeking and hoping for the intercession of the saints, human sloth would presumptuously wrap itself in these sins, and would take no steps to be disentangled from such wrappings by the deft energy of any virtue, but would only desire to be rescued by the merits of other people, whose friendship had been won by a bountiful use of the mammon of unrighteousness. But now that we are left in ignorance of the precise nature of that iniquity which is venial, even though it be persevered in, certainly we are both more vigilant in our prayers and efforts for progress, and more careful to secure with the mammon of unrighteousness friends for ourselves among the saints.

But this deliverance, which is effected by one's own prayers, or the intercession of holy men, secures that a man be not cast into eternal fire, but not that, when once he has been cast into it, he should after a time be rescued from it. For even those who fancy that what is said of the good ground bringing forth abundant fruit, some thirty, some sixty, some an hundred fold, is to be referred to the saints, so that in proportion to their merits some of them shall deliver thirty men, some sixty, some an hundred,—even those who maintain this are yet commonly inclined to suppose that this deliverance will take place at, and not after the day of judgment. Under this impression, some one who observed the unseemly folly with which men promise themselves impunity on the ground that all will be included in this method of deliverance, is reported to have very happily remarked, that we should rather endeavor to live so well that we shall be all found among the number of those who are to intercede for the liberation of others, lest these should be so few in number, that, after they have delivered one thirty, another sixty, another a hundred, there should still remain many who could not be delivered from punishment by their intercessions, and among them every one who has vainly and rashly promised himself the fruit of another's labor. But enough has been said in reply to those who acknowledge the authority of the same sacred Scriptures as ourselves, but who, by a mistaken interpretation of them, conceive of the future rather as they themselves wish, than as the Scriptures teach. And having given this reply, I now, according to promise, close this book.

Book XXII

Argument—This book treats of the end of the city of God, that is to say, of the eternal happiness of the saints; the faith of the resurrection of the body is established and explained; and the work concludes by showing how the saints, clothed in immortal and spiritual bodies, shall be employed.

CHAPTER 1

OF THE CREATION OF ANGELS AND MEN

As we promised in the immediately preceeding book, this, the last of the whole work, shall contain a discussion of the eternal blessedness of the city of God. This blessedness is named eternal, not because it shall endure for many ages, though at last it shall come to an end, but because, according to the words of the gospel, “of His kingdom there shall be no end.” Neither shall it enjoy the mere appearance of perpetuity which is maintained by the rise of fresh generations to occupy the place of those that have died out, as in an evergreen the same freshness seems to continue permanently, and the same appearance of dense foliage is preserved by the growth of fresh leaves in the room of those that have withered and fallen; but in that city all the citizens shall be immortal, men now for the first time enjoying what the holy angels have never lost. And this shall be accomplished by God, the most almighty Founder of the city. For He has promised it, and cannot lie, and has already performed many of His promises, and has done many unpromised kindnesses to those whom He now asks to believe that He will do this also.

For it is He who in the beginning created the world full of all visible and intelligible beings, among which He created nothing better than those spirits whom He endowed with intelligence, and made capable of contemplating and enjoying Him, and united in our society, which we call the holy and heavenly city, and in which the material of their sustenance and blessedness is God Himself, as it were their common food and nourishment. It is He who gave to this intellectual nature free-will of such a kind, that if he wished to forsake God, i.e., his blessedness, misery should forthwith result. It is He who, when He foreknew that certain angels would in their pride desire to suffice for their own blessedness, and would forsake their great good, did not deprive them of this power, deeming it to be more befitting His power and goodness to bring good out of evil than to prevent the evil from coming into existence. And indeed evil had never been, had not the mutable nature—mutable, though good, and created by the most high God and immutable Good, who created all things good—brought evil upon itself by sin. And this its sin is itself proof that its nature was originally good. For had it not been very good, though not equal to its Creator, the desertion of God as its light could not have been an evil to it. For as blindness is a vice of the eye, and this very fact indicates that the eye was created to see the light, and as, consequently, vice itself proves that the eye is more excellent than the other members, because it is capable of light (for on no other supposition would it be a vice of the eye to want light), so the nature which once enjoyed God teaches, even by its very vice, that it was created the best of all, since it is now miserable because it does not enjoy God. It is he who with very just punishment doomed the angels who voluntarily fell to everlasting misery, and rewarded those who continued in their attachment to the supreme good with the assurance of endless stability as the meed of their fidelity. It is He who made also man himself upright, with the same freedom of will,—an earthly animal, indeed, but fit for heaven if he remained faithful to his Creator, but destined to the misery appropriate to such a nature if he forsook Him. It is He who when He foreknew that man would in his turn sin by abandoning God and breaking His law, did not deprive him of the power of free-will, because He at the same time foresaw what good He Himself would bring out of the evil, and how from this mortal race, deservedly and justly condemned, He would by His grace collect, as now He does, a people so numerous, that He thus fills up and repairs the blank made by the fallen angels, and that thus that beloved and heavenly city is not defrauded of the full number of its citizens, but perhaps may even rejoice in a still more overflowing population.

CHAPTER 2

OF THE ETERNAL AND UNCHANGEABLE WILL OF GOD

It is true that wicked men do many things contrary to God's will; but so great is His wisdom and power, that all things which seem adverse to His purpose do still tend towards those just and good ends and issues which He Himself has foreknown. And consequently, when God is said to change His will, as when, e.g., He becomes angry with those to whom He was gentle, it is rather they than He who are changed, and they find Him changed in so far as their experience of suffering at His hand is new, as the sun is changed to injured eyes, and becomes as it were fierce from being mild, and hurtful from being delightful, though in itself it remains the same as it was. That also is called the will of God which He does in the hearts of those who obey His commandments; and of this the apostle says, "For it is God that worketh in you both to will." As God's "righteousness" is used not only of the righteousness wherewith He Himself is righteous, but also of that which He produces in the man whom He justifies, so also that is called His law, which, though given by God, is rather the law of men. For certainly they were men to whom Jesus said, "It is written in your law," though in another place we read, "The law of his God is in his heart." According to this will which God works in men, He is said also to will what He Himself does not will, but causes His people to will; as He is said to know what He has caused those to know who were ignorant of it. For when the apostle says, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God," we cannot suppose that God there for the first time knew those who were foreknown by Him before the foundation of the world; but He is said to have known them then, because then He caused them to know. But I remember that I discussed these modes of expression in the preceding books. According to this will, then, by which we say that God wills what He causes to be willed by others, from whom the future is hidden, He wills many things which He does not perform.

Thus His saints, inspired by His holy will, desire many things which never happen. They pray, e.g., for certain individuals—they pray in a pious and holy manner—but what they request He does not perform, though He Himself by His own Holy Spirit has wrought in them this will to pray. And consequently, when the saints, in conformity with God's mind, will and pray that all men be saved, we can use this mode of expression: God wills and does not perform,—meaning that He who causes them to will these things Himself wills them. But if we speak of that will of His which is eternal as His foreknowledge, certainly He has already done all things in heaven and on earth that He has willed,—not only past and present things, but even things still future. But before the arrival of that time in which He has willed the occurrence of what He foreknew and arranged before all time, we say, It will happen when God wills. But if we are ignorant not only of the time in which it is to be, but even whether it shall be at all, we say, It will happen if God wills,—not because God will then have a new will which He had not before, but because that event, which from eternity has been prepared in His unchangeable will, shall then come to pass.

CHAPTER 3

OF THE PROMISE OF ETERNAL BLESSEDNESS TO THE SAINTS, AND EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT TO THE WICKED

Wherefore, not to mention many other instances besides, as we now see in Christ the fulfillment of that which God promised to Abraham when He said, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed,” so this also shall be fulfilled which He promised to the same race, when He said by the prophet, “They that are in their sepulchres shall rise again,” and also, “There shall be a new heaven and a new earth: and the former shall not be mentioned, nor come into mind; but they shall find joy and rejoicing in it: for I will make Jerusalem a rejoicing, and my people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her.” And by another prophet He uttered the same prediction: “At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust” (or, as some interpret it, “in the mound”) “of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” And in another place by the same prophet: “The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and shall possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.” And a little after he says, “His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.” Other prophecies referring to the same subject I have advanced in the twentieth book, and others still which I have not advanced are found written in the same Scriptures; and these predictions shall be fulfilled, as those also have been which unbelieving men supposed would be frustrate. For it is the same God who promised both, and predicted that both would come to pass,—the God whom the pagan deities tremble before, as even Porphyry, the noblest of pagan philosophers, testifies.

CHAPTER 4

AGAINST THE WISE MEN OF THE WORLD, WHO FANCY THAT THE EARTHLY BODIES OF MEN CANNOT BE TRANSFERRED TO A HEAVENLY HABITATION

But men who use their learning and intellectual ability to resist the force of that great authority which, in fulfillment of what was so long before predicted, has converted all races of men to faith and hope in its promises, seem to themselves to argue acutely against the resurrection of the body while they cite what Cicero mentions in the third book De Republica. For when he was asserting the apotheosis of Hercules and Romulus, he says: “Whose bodies were not taken up into heaven; for nature would not permit a body of earth to exist anywhere except upon earth.” This, forsooth, is the profound reasoning of the wise men, whose thoughts God knows that they are vain. For if we were only souls, that is, spirits without any body, and if we dwelt in heaven and had no knowledge of earthly animals, and were told that we should be bound to earthly bodies by some wonderful bond of union, and should animate them, should we not much more vigorously refuse to believe this, and maintain that nature would not permit an incorporeal substance to be held by a corporeal bond? And yet the earth is full of living spirits, to which terrestrial bodies are bound, and with which they are in a wonderful way implicated. If, then, the same God who has created such beings wills this also, what is to hinder the earthly body from being raised to a heavenly body, since a spirit, which is more excellent than all bodies, and consequently than even a heavenly body, has been tied to an earthly body? If so small an earthly particle has been able to hold in union with itself something better than a heavenly body, so as to receive sensation and life, will heaven disdain to receive, or at least to retain, this sentient and living particle, which derives its life and sensation from a substance more excellent than any heavenly body? If this does not happen now, it is because the time is not yet come which has been determined by Him who has already done a much more marvellous thing than that which these men refuse to believe. For why do we not more intensely wonder that incorporeal souls, which are of higher rank than heavenly bodies, are bound to earthly bodies, rather than that bodies, although earthly, are exalted to an abode which, though heavenly, is yet corporeal, except because we have been accustomed to see this, and indeed are this, while we are not as yet that other marvel, nor have as yet ever seen it? Certainly, if we consult sober reason, the more wonderful of the two divine works is found to be to attach somehow corporeal things to incorporeal, and not to connect earthly things with heavenly, which, though diverse, are yet both of them corporeal.

CHAPTER 5

OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE FLESH, WHICH SOME REFUSE TO BELIEVE, THOUGH THE WORLD AT LARGE BELIEVES IT

But granting that this was once incredible, behold, now, the world has come to the belief that the earthly body of Christ was received up into heaven. Already both the learned and unlearned have believed in the resurrection of the flesh and its ascension to the heavenly places, while only a very few either of the educated or uneducated are still staggered by it. If this is a credible thing which is believed, then let those who do not believe see how stolid they are; and if it is incredible, then this also is an incredible thing, that what is incredible should have received such credit. Here then we have two incredibles,—to wit, the resurrection of our body to eternity, and that the world should believe so incredible a thing; and both these incredibles the same God predicted should come to pass before either had as yet occurred. We see that already one of the two has come to pass, for the world has believed what was incredible; why should we despair that the remaining one shall also come to pass, and that this which the world believed, though it was incredible, shall itself occur? For already that which was equally incredible has come to pass, in the world's believing an incredible thing. Both were incredible: the one we see accomplished, the other we believe shall be; for both were predicted in those same Scriptures by means of which the world believed. And the very manner in which the world's faith was won is found to be even more incredible if we consider it. Men uninstructed in any branch of a liberal education, without any of the refinement of heathen learning, unskilled in grammar, not armed with dialectic, not adorned with rhetoric, but plain fishermen, and very few in number,—these were the men whom Christ sent with the nets of faith to the sea of this world, and thus took out of every race so many fishes, and even the philosophers themselves, wonderful as they are rare. Let us add, if you please, or because you ought to be pleased, this third incredible thing to the two former. And now we have three incredibles, all of which have yet come to pass. It is incredible that Jesus Christ should have risen in the flesh and ascended with flesh into heaven; it is incredible that the world should have believed so incredible a thing; it is incredible that a very few men, of mean birth and the lowest rank, and no education, should have been able so effectually to persuade the world, and even its learned men, of so incredible a thing. Of these three incredibles, the parties with whom we are debating refuse to believe the first; they cannot refuse to see the second, which they are unable to account for if they do not believe the third. It is indubitable that the resurrection of Christ, and His ascension into heaven with the flesh in which He rose, is already preached and believed in the whole world. If it is not credible, how is it that it has already received credence in the whole world? If a number of noble, exalted, and learned men had said that they had witnessed it, and had been at pains to publish what they had witnessed, it were not wonderful that the world should have believed it, but it were very stubborn to refuse credence; but if, as is true, the world has believed a few obscure, inconsiderable, uneducated persons, who state and write that they witnessed it, is it not unreasonable that a handful of wrong-headed men should oppose themselves to the creed of the whole world, and refuse their belief? And if the world has put faith in a small number of men, of mean birth and the lowest rank, and no education, it is because the divinity of the thing itself appeared all the more manifestly in such contemptible witnesses. The eloquence, indeed, which lent persuasion to their message, consisted of wonderful works, not words. For they who had not seen Christ risen in the flesh, nor ascending into heaven with His risen body, believed those who related how they had seen these things, and who testified not only with words but wonderful signs. For men whom they knew to be acquainted with only one, or at most two languages, they marvelled to hear speaking in the tongues of all nations. They saw a man, lame from his mother’s womb, after forty years stand up sound at their word in the name of Christ; that handkerchiefs taken from their bodies had virtue to heal the sick; that countless persons, sick of various diseases, were laid in a row in the road where they were to pass, that their shadow might fall on them as they walked, and that they forthwith received health; that many other stupendous miracles were wrought by them in the name of Christ; and, finally, that they even raised the dead. If it be admitted that these things occurred as they are related, then we have a multitude of incredible things to add to those three incredibles. That the one incredibility of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ may be believed, we accumulate the testimonies of countless incredible miracles, but even so we do not bend the frightful obstinacy of these sceptics. But if they do not believe that these miracles were wrought by Christ's apostles to gain credence to their preaching of His resurrection and ascension, this one grand miracle suffices for us, that the whole world has believed without any miracles.

CHAPTER 6

THAT ROME MADE ITS FOUNDER ROMULUS A GOD BECAUSE IT LOVED HIM; BUT THE CHURCH LOVED CHRIST BECAUSE IT BELIEVED HIM TO BE GOD

Let us here recite the passage in which Tully expresses his astonishment that the apotheosis of Romulus should have been credited. I shall insert his words as they stand: "It is most worthy of remark in Romulus, that other men who are said to have become gods lived in less educated ages, when there was a greater propensity to the fabulous, and when the uninstructed were easily persuaded to believe anything. But the age of Romulus was barely six hundred years ago, and already literature and science had dispelled the errors that attach to an uncultured age." And a little after he says of the same Romulus words to this effect: "From this we may perceive that Homer had flourished long before Romulus, and that there was now so much learning in individuals, and so generally diffused an enlightenment, that scarcely any room was left for fable. For antiquity admitted fables, and sometimes even very clumsy ones; but this age [of Romulus] was sufficiently enlightened to reject whatever had not the air of truth." Thus one of the most learned men, and certainly the most eloquent, M. Tullius Cicero, says that it is surprising that the divinity of Romulus was believed in, because the times were already so enlightened that they would not accept a fabulous fiction. But who believed that Romulus was a god except Rome, which was itself small and in its infancy? Then afterwards it was necessary that succeeding generations should preserve the tradition of their ancestors; that, drinking in this superstition with their mother’s milk, the state might grow and come to such power that it might dictate this belief, as from a point of vantage, to all the nations over whom its sway extended. And these nations, though they might not believe that Romulus was a god, at least said so, that they might not give offence to their sovereign state by refusing to give its founder that title which was given him by Rome, which had adopted this belief, not by a love of error, but an error of love. But though Christ is the founder of the heavenly and eternal city, yet it did not believe Him to be God because it was founded by Him, but rather it is founded by Him, in virtue of its belief. Rome, after it had been built and dedicated, worshipped its founder in a temple as a god; but this Jerusalem laid Christ, its God, as its foundation, that the building and dedication might proceed. The former city loved its founder, and therefore believed him to be a god; the latter believed Christ to be God, and therefore loved Him. There was an antecedent cause for the love of the former city, and for its believing that even a false dignity attached to the object of its love; so there was an antecedent cause for the belief of the latter, and for its loving the true dignity which a proper faith, not a rash surmise, ascribed to its object. For, not to mention the multitude of very striking miracles which proved that Christ is God, there were also divine prophecies heralding Him, prophecies most worthy of belief, which being already accomplished, we have not, like the fathers, to wait for their verification. Of Romulus, on the other hand, and of his building Rome and reigning in it, we read or hear the narrative of what did take place, not prediction which beforehand said that such things should be. And so far as his reception among the gods is concerned, history only records that this was believed, and does not state it as a fact; for no miraculous signs testified to the truth of this. For as to that wolf which is said to have nursed the twin-brothers, and which is considered a great marvel, how does this prove him to have been divine? For even supposing that this nurse was a real wolf and not a mere courtezan, yet she nursed both brothers, and Remus is not reckoned a god. Besides, what was there to hinder any one from asserting that Romulus or Hercules, or any such man, was a god? Or who would rather choose to die than profess belief in his divinity? And did a single nation worship Romulus among its gods, unless it were forced through fear of the Roman name? But who can number the multitudes who have chosen death in the most cruel shapes rather than deny the divinity of Christ? And thus the dread of some slight indignation, which it was supposed, perhaps groundlessly, might exist in the minds of the Romans, constrained some states who were subject to Rome to worship Romulus as a god; whereas the dread, not of a slight mental shock, but of severe and various punishments, and of death itself, the most formidable of all, could not prevent an immense multitude of martyrs throughout the world from not merely worshipping but also confessing Christ as God. The city of Christ, which, although as yet a stranger upon earth, had countless hosts of citizens, did not make war upon its godless persecutors for the sake of temporal security, but preferred to win eternal salvation by abstaining from war. They were bound, imprisoned, beaten, tortured, burned, torn in pieces, massacred, and yet they multiplied. It was not given to them to fight for their eternal salvation except by despising their temporal salvation for their Saviour's sake.

I am aware that Cicero, in the third book of his De Republica, if I mistake not, argues that a first-rate power will not engage in war except either for honor or for safety. What he has to say about the question of safety, and what he means by safety, he explains in another place, saying, "Private persons frequently evade, by a speedy death, destitution, exile, bonds, the scourge, and the other pains which even the most insensible feel. But to states, death, which seems to emancipate individuals from all punishments, is itself a punishment; for a state should be so constituted as to be eternal. And thus death is not natural to a republic as to a man, to whom death is not only necessary, but often even desirable. But when a state is destroyed, obliterated, annihilated, it is as if (to compare great things with small) this whole world perished and collapsed." Cicero said this because he, with the Platonists, believed that the world would not perish. It is therefore agreed that, according to Cicero, a state should engage in war for the safety which preserves the state permanently in existence though its citizens change; as the foliage of an olive or laurel, or any tree of this kind, is perennial, the old leaves being replaced by fresh ones. For death, as he says, is no punishment to individuals, but rather delivers them from all other punishments, but it is a punishment to the state. And therefore it is reasonably asked whether the Saguntines did right when they chose that their whole state should perish rather than that they should break faith with the Roman republic; for this deed of theirs is applauded by the citizens of the earthly republic. But I do not see how they could follow the advice of Cicero, who tell us that no war is to be undertaken save for safety or for honor; neither does he say which of these two is to be preferred, if a case should occur in which the one could not be preserved without the loss of the other. For manifestly, if the Saguntines chose safety, they must break faith; if they kept faith, they must reject safety; as also it fell out. But the safety of the city of God is such that it can be retained, or rather acquired, by faith and with faith; but if faith be abandoned, no one can attain it. It is this thought of a most steadfast and patient spirit that has made so many noble martyrs, while Romulus has not had, and could not have, so much as one to die for his divinity.

CHAPTER 7

THAT THE WORLD'S BELIEF IN CHRIST IS THE RESULT OF DIVINE POWER, NOT OF HUMAN PERSUASION

But it is thoroughly ridiculous to make mention of the false divinity of Romulus as any way comparable to that of Christ. Nevertheless, if Romulus lived about six hundred years before Cicero, in an age which already was so enlightened that it rejected all impossibilities, how much more, in an age which certainly was more enlightened, being six hundred years later, the age of Cicero himself, and of the emperors Augustus and Tiberius, would the human mind have refused to listen to or believe in the resurrection of Christ's body and its ascension into heaven, and have scouted it as an impossibility, had not the divinity of the truth itself, or the truth of the divinity, and corroborating miraculous signs, proved that it could happen and had happened? Through virtue of these testimonies, and notwithstanding the opposition and terror of so many cruel persecutions, the resurrection and immortality of the flesh, first in Christ, and subsequently in all in the new world, was believed, was intrepidly proclaimed, and was sown over the whole world, to be fertilized richly with the blood of the martyrs. For the predictions of the prophets that had preceded the events were read, they were corroborated by powerful signs, and the truth was seen to be not contradictory to reason, but only different from customary ideas, so that at length the world embraced the faith it had furiously persecuted.

CHAPTER 8

OF MIRACLES WHICH WERE WROUGHT THAT THE WORLD MIGHT BELIEVE IN CHRIST, AND WHICH HAVE NOT CEASED SINCE THE WORLD BELIEVED

Why, they say, are those miracles, which you affirm were wrought formerly, wrought no longer? I might, indeed, reply that miracles were necessary before the world believed, in order that it might believe. And whoever now-a-days demands to see prodigies that he may believe, is himself a great prodigy, because he does not believe, though the whole world does. But they make these objections for the sole purpose of insinuating that even those former miracles were never wrought. How, then, is it that everywhere Christ is celebrated with such firm belief in His resurrection and ascension? How is it that in enlightened times, in which every impossibility is rejected, the world has, without any miracles, believed things marvellously incredible? Or will they say that these things were credible, and therefore were credited? Why then do they themselves not believe? Our argument, therefore, is a summary one—either incredible things which were not witnessed have caused the world to believe other incredible things which both occurred and were witnessed, or this matter was so credible that it needed no miracles in proof of it, and therefore convicts these unbelievers of unpardonable scepticism. This I might say for the sake of refuting these most frivolous objectors. But we cannot deny that many miracles were wrought to confirm that one grand and health-giving miracle of Christ's ascension to heaven with the flesh in which He rose. For these most trustworthy books of ours contain in one narrative both the miracles that were wrought and the creed which they were wrought to confirm. The miracles were published that they might produce faith, and the faith which they produced brought them into greater prominence. For they are read in congregations that they may be believed, and yet they would not be so read unless they were believed. For even now miracles are wrought in the name of Christ, whether by His sacraments or by the prayers or relics of His saints; but they are not so brilliant and conspicuous as to cause them to be published with such glory as accompanied the former miracles. For the canon of the sacred writings, which behoved to be closed, causes those to be everywhere recited, and to sink into the memory of all the congregations; but these modern miracles are scarcely known even to the whole population in the midst of which they are wrought, and at the best are confined to one spot. For frequently they are known only to a very few persons, while all the rest are ignorant of them, especially if the state is a large one; and when they are reported to other persons in other localities, there is no sufficient authority to give them prompt and unwavering credence, although they are reported to the faithful by the faithful.

The miracle which was wrought at Milan when I was there, and by which a blind man was restored to sight, could come to the knowledge of many; for not only is the city a large one, but also the emperor was there at the time, and the occurrence was witnessed by an immense concourse of people that had gathered to the bodies of the martyrs Protasius and Gervasius, which had long lain concealed and unknown, but were now made known to the bishop Ambrose in a dream, and discovered by him. By virtue of these remains the darkness of that blind man was scattered, and he saw the light of day.

But who but a very small number are aware of the cure which was wrought upon Innocentius, ex-advocate of the deputy prefecture, a cure wrought at Carthage, in my presence, and under my own eyes? For when I and my brother Alypius, who were not yet clergymen, though already servants of God, came from abroad, this man received us, and made us live with him, for he and all his household were devotedly pious. He was being treated by medical men for fistulae, of which he had a large number intricately seated in the rectum. He had already undergone an operation, and the surgeons were using every means at their command for his relief. In that operation he had suffered long-continued and acute pain; yet, among the many folds of the gut, one had escaped the operators so entirely, that, though they ought to have laid it open with the knife, they never touched it. And thus, though all those that had been opened were cured, this one remained as it was, and frustrated all their labor. The patient, having his suspicions awakened by the delay thus occasioned, and fearing greatly a second operation, which another medical man—one of his own domestics—had told him he must undergo, though this man had not even been allowed to witness the first operation, and had been banished from the house, and with difficulty allowed to come back to his enraged master’s presence,—the patient, I say, broke out to the surgeons, saying, “Are you going to cut me again? Are you, after all, to fulfill the prediction of that man whom you would not allow even to be present?” The surgeons laughed at the unskillful doctor, and soothed their patient’s fears with fair words and promises. So several days passed, and yet nothing they tried did him good. Still they persisted in promising that they would cure that fistula by drugs, without the knife. They called in also another old practitioner of great repute in that department, Ammonius (for he was still alive at that time); and he, after examining the part, promised the same result as themselves from their care and skill. On this great authority, the patient became confident, and, as if already well, vented his good spirits in facetious remarks at the expense of his domestic physician, who had predicted a second operation. To make a long story short, after a number of days had thus uselessly elapsed, the surgeons, wearied and confused, had at last to confess that he could only be cured by the knife. Agitated with excessive fear, he was terrified, and grew pale with dread; and when he collected himself and was able to speak, he ordered them to go away and never to return. Worn out with weeping, and driven by necessity, it occurred to him to call in an Alexandrian, who was at that time esteemed a wonderfully skillful operator, that he might perform the operation his rage would not suffer them to do. But when he had come, and examined with a professional eye the traces of their careful work, he acted the part of a good man, and persuaded his patient to allow those same hands the satisfaction of finishing his cure which had begun it with a skill that excited his admiration, adding that there was no doubt his only hope of a cure was by an operation, but that it was thoroughly inconsistent with his nature to win the credit of the cure by doing the little that remained to be done, and rob of their reward men whose consummate skill, care, and diligence he could not but admire when be saw the traces of their work. They were therefore again received to favor; and it was agreed that, in the presence of the Alexandrian, they should operate on the fistula, which, by the consent of all, could now only be cured by the knife. The operation was deferred till the following day. But when they had left, there arose in the house such a wailing, in sympathy with the excessive despondency of the master, that it seemed to us like the mourning at a funeral, and we could scarcely repress it. Holy men were in the habit of visiting him daily; Saturninus of blessed memory, at that time bishop of Uzali, and the presbyter Gelosus, and the deacons of the church of Carthage; and among these was the bishop Aurelius, who alone of them all survives,—a man to be named by us with due reverence,—and with him I have often spoken of this affair, as we conversed together about the wonderful works of God, and I have found that he distinctly remembers what I am now relating. When these persons visited him that evening according to their custom, he besought them, with pitiable tears, that they would do him the honor of being present next day at what he judged his funeral rather than his suffering. For such was the terror his former pains had produced, that he made no doubt he would die in the hands of the surgeons. They comforted him, and exhorted him to put his trust in God, and nerve his will like a man. Then we went to prayer; but while we, in the usual way, were kneeling and bending to the ground, he cast himself down, as if some one were hurling him violently to the earth, and began to pray; but in what a manner, with what earnestness and emotion, with what a flood of tears, with what groans and sobs, that shook his whole body, and almost prevented him speaking, who can describe! Whether the others prayed, and had not their attention wholly diverted by this conduct, I do not know. For myself, I could not pray at all. This only I briefly said in my heart: "O Lord, what prayers of Thy people dost Thou hear if Thou hearest not these?" For it seemed to me that nothing could be added to this prayer, unless he expired in praying. We rose from our knees, and, receiving the blessing of the bishop, departed, the patient beseeching his visitors to be present next morning, they exhorting him to keep up his heart. The dreaded day dawned. The servants of God were present, as they had promised to be; the surgeons arrived; all that the circumstances required was ready; the frightful instruments are produced; all look on in wonder and suspense. While those who have most influence with the patient are cheering his fainting spirit, his limbs are arranged on the couch so as to suit the hand of the operator; the knots of the bandages are untied; the part is bared; the surgeon examines it, and, with knife in hand, eagerly looks for the sinus that is to be cut. He searches for it with his eyes; he feels for it with his finger; he applies every kind of scrutiny: he finds a perfectly firm cicatrix! No words of mine can describe the joy, and praise, and thanksgiving to the merciful and almighty God which was poured from the lips of all, with tears of gladness. Let the scene be imagined rather than described!

In the same city of Carthage lived Innocentia, a very devout woman of the highest rank in the state. She had cancer in one of her breasts, a disease which, as physicians say, is incurable. Ordinarily, therefore, they either amputate, and so separate from the body the member on which the disease has seized, or, that the patient's life may be prolonged a little, though death is inevitable even if somewhat delayed, they abandon all remedies, following, as they say, the advice of Hippocrates. This the lady we speak of had been advised to by a skillful physician, who was intimate with her family; and she betook herself to God alone by prayer. On the approach of Easter, she was instructed in a dream to wait for the first woman that came out from the baptistery after being baptized, and to ask her to make the sign of Christ upon her sore. She did so, and was immediately cured. The physician who had advised her to apply no remedy if she wished to live a little longer, when he had examined her after this, and found that she who, on his former examination, was afflicted with that disease was now perfectly cured, eagerly asked her what remedy she had used, anxious, as we may well believe, to discover the drug which should defeat the decision of Hippocrates. But when she told him what had happened, he is said to have replied, with religious politeness, though with a contemptuous tone, and an expression which made her fear he would utter some blasphemy against Christ, "I thought you would make some great discovery to me." She, shuddering at his indifference, quickly replied, "What great thing was it for Christ to heal a cancer, who raised one who had been four days dead?" When, therefore, I had heard this, I was extremely indignant that so great a miracle wrought in that well-known city, and on a person who was certainly not obscure, should not be divulged, and I considered that she should be spoken to, if not reprimanded on this score. And when she replied to me that she had not kept silence on the subject, I asked the women with whom she was best acquainted whether they had ever heard of this before. They told me they knew nothing of it. "See," I said, "what your not keeping silence amounts to, since not even those who are so familiar with you know of it." And as I had only briefly heard the story, I made her tell how the whole thing happened, from beginning to end, while the other women listened in great astonishment, and glorified God.

A gouty doctor of the same city, when he had given in his name for baptism, and had been prohibited the day before his baptism from being baptized that year, by black woolly-haired boys who appeared to him in his dreams, and whom he understood to be devils, and when, though they trod on his feet, and inflicted the acutest pain he had ever yet experienced, he refused to obey them, but overcame them, and would not defer being washed in the laver of regeneration, was relieved in the very act of baptism, not only of the extraordinary pain he was tortured with, but also of the disease itself, so that, though he lived a long time afterwards, he never suffered from gout; and yet who knows of this miracle? We, however, do know it, and so, too, do the small number of brethren who were in the neighborhood, and to whose ears it might come.

An old comedian of Curubis was cured at baptism not only of paralysis, but also of hernia, and, being delivered from both afflictions, came up out of the font of regeneration as if he had had nothing wrong with his body. Who outside of Curubis knows of this, or who but a very few who might hear it elsewhere? But we, when we heard of it, made the man come to Carthage, by order of the holy bishop Aurelius, although we had already ascertained the fact on the information of persons whose word we could not doubt.

Hesperius, of a tribunitian family, and a neighbor of our own, has a farm called Zubedi in the Fussalian district; and, finding that his family, his cattle, and his servants were suffering from the malice of evil spirits, he asked our presbyters, during my absence, that one of them would go with him and banish the spirits by his prayers. One went, offered there the sacrifice of the body of Christ, praying with all his might that that vexation might cease. It did cease forthwith, through God’s mercy. Now he had received from a friend of his own some holy earth brought from Jerusalem, where Christ, having been buried, rose again the third day. This earth he had hung up in his bedroom to preserve himself from harm. But when his house was purged of that demoniacal invasion, he began to consider what should be done with the earth; for his reverence for it made him unwilling to have it any longer in his bedroom. It so happened that I and Maximinus bishop of Synita, and then my colleague, were in the neighborhood. Hesperius asked us to visit him, and we did so. When he had related all the circumstances, he begged that the earth might be buried somewhere, and that the spot should be made a place of prayer where Christians might assemble for the worship of God. We made no objection: it was done as he desired. There was in that neighborhood a young countryman who was paralytic, who, when he heard of this, begged his parents to take him without delay to that holy place. When he had been brought there, he prayed, and forthwith went away on his own feet perfectly cured.

There is a country-seat called Victoriana, less than thirty miles from Hippo-regius. At it there is a monument to the Milanese martyrs, Protasius and Gervasius. Thither a young man was carried, who, when he was watering his horse one summer day at noon in a pool of a river, had been taken possession of by a devil. As he lay at the monument, near death, or even quite like a dead person, the lady of the manor, with her maids and religious attendants, entered the place for evening prayer and praise, as her custom was, and they began to sing hymns. At this sound the young man, as if electrified, was thoroughly aroused, and with frightful screaming seized the altar, and held it as if he did not dare or were not able to let it go, and as if he were fixed or tied to it; and the devil in him, with loud lamentation, besought that he might be spared, and confessed where and when and how he took possession of the youth. At last, declaring that he would go out of him, he named one by one the parts of his body which he threatened to mutilate as he went out and with these words he departed from the man. But his eye, falling out on his cheek, hung by a slender vein as by a root, and the whole of the pupil which had been black became white. When this was witnessed by those present (others too had now gathered to his cries, and had all joined in prayer for him), although they were delighted that he had recovered his sanity of mind, yet, on the other hand, they were grieved about his eye, and said he should seek medical advice. But his sister’s husband, who had brought him there, said, “God, who has banished the devil, is able to restore his eye at the prayers of His saints.” Therewith he replaced the eye that was fallen out and hanging, and bound it in its place with his handkerchief as well as he could, and advised him not to loose the bandage for seven days. When he did so, he found it quite healthy. Others also were cured there, but of them it were tedious to speak.

I know that a young woman of Hippo was immediately dispossessed of a devil, on anointing herself with oil, mixed with the tears of the prebsyter who had been praying for her. I know also that a bishop once prayed for a demoniac young man whom he never saw, and that he was cured on the spot.

There was a fellow-townsman of ours at Hippo, Florentius, an old man, religious and poor, who supported himself as a tailor. Having lost his coat, and not having means to buy another, he prayed to the Twenty Martyrs, who have a very celebrated memorial shrine in our town, begging in a distinct voice that he might be clothed. Some scoffing young men, who happened to be present, heard him, and followed him with their sarcasm as he went away, as if he had asked the martyrs for fifty pence to buy a coat. But he, walking on in silence, saw on the shore a great fish, gasping as if just cast up, and having secured it with the good-natured assistance of the youths, he sold it for curing to a cook of the name of Catosus, a good Christian man, telling him how he had come by it, and receiving for it three hundred pence, which he laid out in wool, that his wife might exercise her skill upon, and make into a coat for him. But, on cutting up the fish, the cook found a gold ring in its belly; and forthwith, moved with compassion, and influenced, too, by religious fear, gave it up to the man, saying, “See how the Twenty Martyrs have clothed you.”

When the bishop Projectus was bringing the relics of the most glorious martyr Stephen to the waters of Tibilis, a great concourse of people came to meet him at the shrine. There a blind woman entreated that she might be led to the bishop who was carrying the relics. He gave her the flowers he was carrying. She took them, applied them to her eyes, and forthwith saw. Those who were present were astounded, while she, with every expression of joy, preceded them, pursuing her way without further need of a guide.

Lucillus bishop of Sinita, in the neighborhood of the colonial town of Hippo, was carrying in procession some relics of the same martyr, which had been deposited in the castle of Sinita. A fistula under which he had long labored, and which his private physician was watching an opportunity to cut, was suddenly cured by the mere carrying of that sacred fardel,—at least, afterwards there was no trace of it in his body.

Eucharius, a Spanish priest, residing at Calama, was for a long time a sufferer from stone. By the relics of the same martyr, which the bishop Possidius brought him, he was cured. Afterwards the same priest, sinking under another disease, was lying dead, and already they were binding his hands. By the succor of the same martyr he was raised to life, the priest's cloak having been brought from the oratory and laid upon the corpse.

There was there an old nobleman named Martial, who had a great aversion to the Christian religion, but whose daughter was a Christian, while her husband had been baptized that same year. When he was ill, they besought him with tears and prayers to become a Christian, but he positively refused, and dismissed them from his presence in a storm of indignation. It occurred to the son-in-law to go to the oratory of St. Stephen, and there pray for him with all earnestness that God might give him a right mind, so that he should not delay believing in Christ. This he did with great groaning and tears, and the burning fervor of sincere piety; then, as he left the place, he took some of the flowers that were lying there, and, as it was already night, laid them by his father's head, who so slept. And lo! before dawn, he cries out for some one to run for the bishop; but he happened at that time to be with me at Hippo. So when he had heard that he was from home, he asked the presbyters to come. They came. To the joy and amazement of all, he declared that he believed, and he was baptized. As long as he remained in life, these words were ever on his lips: "Christ, receive my spirit," though he was not aware that these were the last words of the most blessed Stephen when he was stoned by the Jews. They were his last words also, for not long after he himself also gave up the ghost.

There, too, by the same martyr, two men, one a citizen, the other a stranger, were cured of gout; but while the citizen was absolutely cured, the stranger was only informed what he should apply when the pain returned; and when he followed this advice, the pain was at once relieved.

Audurus is the name of an estate, where there is a church that contains a memorial shrine of the martyr Stephen. It happened that, as a little boy was playing in the court, the oxen drawing a wagon went out of the track and crushed him with the wheel, so that immediately he seemed at his last gasp.

His mother snatched him up, and laid him at the shrine, and not only did he revive, but also appeared uninjured.

A religious female, who lived at Caspalium, a neighboring estate, when she was so ill as to be despaired of, had her dress brought to this shrine, but before it was brought back she was gone. However, her parents wrapped her corpse in the dress, and, her breath returning, she became quite well.

At Hippo a Syrian called Bassus was praying at the relics of the same martyr for his daughter, who was dangerously ill. He too had brought her dress with him to the shrine. But as he prayed, behold, his servants ran from the house to tell him she was dead. His friends, however, intercepted them, and forbade them to tell him, lest he should bewail her in public. And when he had returned to his house, which was already ringing with the lamentations of his family, and had thrown on his daughter's body the dress he was carrying, she was restored to life.

There, too, the son of a man, Irenaeus, one of our tax-gatherers, took ill and died. And while his body was lying lifeless, and the last rites were being prepared, amidst the weeping and mourning of all, one of the friends who were consoling the father suggested that the body should be anointed with the oil of the same martyr. It was done, and he revived.

Likewise Eleusinus, a man of tribunitian rank among us, laid his infant son, who had died, on the shrine of the martyr, which is in the suburb where he lived, and, after prayer, which he poured out there with many tears, he took up his child alive.

What am I to do? I am so pressed by the promise of finishing this work, that I cannot record all the miracles I know; and doubtless several of our adherents, when they read what I have narrated, will regret that I have omitted so many which they, as well as I, certainly know. Even now I beg these persons to excuse me, and to consider how long it would take me to relate all those miracles, which the necessity of finishing the work I have undertaken forces me to omit. For were I to be silent of all others, and to record exclusively the miracles of healing which were wrought in the district of Calama and of Hippo by means of this martyr—I mean the most glorious Stephen—they would fill many volumes; and yet all even of these could not be collected, but only those of which narratives have been written for public recital. For when I saw, in our own times, frequent signs of the presence of divine powers similar to those which had been given of old, I desired that narratives might be written, judging that the multitude should not remain ignorant of these things. It is not yet two years since these relics were first brought to Hippo-regius, and though many of the miracles which have been wrought by it have not, as I have the most certain means of knowing, been recorded, those which have been published amount to almost seventy at the hour at which I write. But at Calama, where these relics have been for a longer time, and where more of the miracles were narrated for public information, there are incomparably more.

At Uzali, too, a colony near Utica, many signal miracles were, to my knowledge, wrought by the same martyr, whose relics had found a place there by direction of the bishop Evodius, long before we had them at Hippo. But there the custom of publishing narratives does not obtain, or, I should say, did not obtain, for possibly it may now have been begun. For, when I was there recently, a woman of rank, Petronia, had been miraculously cured of a serious illness of long standing, in which all medical appliances had failed, and, with the consent of the above-named bishop of the place, I exhorted her to publish an account of it that might be read to the people. She most promptly obeyed, and inserted in her narrative a circumstance which I cannot omit to mention, though I am compelled to hasten on to the subjects which this work requires me to treat. She said that she had been persuaded by a Jew to wear next her skin, under all her clothes, a hair girdle, and on this girdle a ring, which, instead of a gem, had a stone which had been found in the kidneys of an ox. Girt with this charm, she was making her way to the threshold of the holy martyr. But, after leaving Carthage, and when she had been lodging in her own demesne on the river Bagrada, and was now rising to continue her journey, she saw her ring lying before her feet. In great surprise she examined the hair girdle, and when she found it bound, as it had been, quite firmly with knots, she conjectured that the ring had been worn through and dropped off; but when she found that the ring was itself also perfectly whole, she presumed that by this great miracle she had received somehow a pledge of her cure, whereupon she untied the girdle, and cast it into the river, and the ring along with it. This is not credited by those who do not believe either that the Lord Jesus Christ came forth from His mother’s womb without destroying her virginity, and entered among His disciples when the doors were shut; but let them make strict inquiry into this miracle, and if they find it true, let them believe those others. The lady is of distinction, nobly born, married to a nobleman. She resides at Carthage. The city is distinguished, the person is distinguished, so that they who make inquiries cannot fail to find satisfaction. Certainly the martyr himself, by whose prayers she was healed, believed on the Son of her who remained a virgin; on Him who came in among the disciples when the doors were shut; in fine,—and to this tends all that we have been retailing,—on Him who ascended into heaven with the flesh in which He had risen; and it is because he laid down his life for this faith that such miracles were done by his means.

Even now, therefore, many miracles are wrought, the same God who wrought those we read of still performing them, by whom He will and as He will; but they are not as well known, nor are they beaten into the memory, like gravel, by frequent reading, so that they cannot fall out of mind. For even where, as is now done among ourselves, care is taken that the pamphlets of those who receive benefit be read publicly, yet those who are present hear the narrative but once, and many are absent; and so it comes to pass that even those who are present forget in a few days what they heard, and scarcely one of them can be found who will tell what he heard to one who he knows was not present.

One miracle was wrought among ourselves, which, though no greater than those I have mentioned, was yet so signal and conspicuous, that I suppose there is no inhabitant of Hippo who did not either see or hear of it, none who could possibly forget it. There were seven brothers and three sisters of a noble family of the Cappadocian Caesarea, who were cursed by their mother, a new-made widow, on account of some wrong they had done her, and which she bitterly resented, and who were visited with so severe a punishment from Heaven, that all of them were seized with a hideous shaking in all their limbs. Unable, while presenting this loathsome appearance, to endure the eyes of their fellow-citizens, they wandered over almost the whole Roman world, each following his own direction. Two of them came to Hippo, a brother and a sister, Paulus and Palladia, already known in many other places by the fame of their wretched lot. Now it was about fifteen days before Easter when they came, and they came daily to church, and specially to the relics of the most glorious Stephen, praying that God might now be appeased, and restore their former health. There, and wherever they went, they attracted the attention of every one. Some who had seen them elsewhere, and knew the cause of their trembling, told others as occasion offered. Easter arrived, and on the Lord's day, in the morning, when there was now a large crowd present, and the young man was holding the bars of the holy place where the relics were, and praying, suddenly he fell down, and lay precisely as if asleep, but not trembling as he was wont to do even in sleep. All present were astonished. Some were alarmed, some were moved with pity; and while some were for lifting him up, others prevented them, and said they should rather wait and see what would result. And behold! he rose up, and trembled no more, for he was healed, and stood quite well, scanning those who were scanning him. Who then refrained himself from praising God? The whole church was filled with the voices of those who were shouting and congratulating him. Then they came running to me, where I was sitting ready to come into the church. One after another they throng in, the last comer telling me as news what the first had told me already; and while I rejoiced and inwardly gave God thanks, the young man himself also enters, with a number of others, falls at my knees, is raised up to receive my kiss. We go in to the congregation: the church was full, and ringing with the shouts of joy, "Thanks to God! Praised be God!" every one joining and shouting on all sides, "I have healed the people," and then with still louder voice shouting again. Silence being at last obtained, the customary lessons of the divine Scriptures were read. And when I came to my sermon, I made a few remarks suitable to the occasion and the happy and joyful feeling, not desiring them to listen to me, but rather to consider the eloquence of God in this divine work. The man dined with us, and gave us a careful ac count of his own, his mother's, and his family's calamity. Accordingly, on the following day, after delivering my sermon, I promised that next day I would read his narrative to the people. And when I did so, the third day after Easter Sunday, I made the brother and sister both stand on the steps of the raised place from which I used to speak; and while they stood there their pamphlet was read. The whole congregation, men and women alike, saw the one standing without any unnatural movement, the other trembling in all her limbs; so that those who had not before seen the man himself saw in his sister what the divine compassion had removed from him. In him they saw matter of congratulation, in her subject for prayer. Meanwhile, their pamphlet being finished, I instructed them to withdraw from the gaze of the people; and I had begun to discuss the whole matter somewhat more carefully, when lo! as I was proceeding, other voices are heard from the tomb of the martyr, shouting new congratulations. My audience turned round, and began to run to the tomb. The young woman, when she had come down from the steps where she had been standing, went to pray at the holy relics, and no sooner had she touched the bars than she, in the same way as her brother, collapsed, as if falling asleep, and rose up cured. While, then, we were asking what had happened, and what occasioned this noise of joy, they came into the basilica where we were, leading her from the martyr's tomb in perfect health. Then, indeed, such a shout of wonder rose from men and women together, that the exclamations and the tears seemed like never to come to an end. She was led to the place where she had a little before stood trembling. They now rejoiced that she was like her brother, as before they had mourned that she remained unlike him; and as they had not yet uttered their prayers in her behalf, they perceived that their intention of doing so had been speedily heard. They shouted God's praises without words, but with such a noise that our ears could scarcely bear it. What was there in the hearts of these exultant people but the faith of Christ, for which Stephen had shed his blood?

CHAPTER 9

THAT ALL THE MIRACLES WHICH ARE DONE BY MEANS OF THE MARTYRS IN THE NAME OF CHRIST TESTIFY TO THAT FAITH WHICH THE MARTYRS HAD IN CHRIST

To what do these miracles witness, but to this faith which preaches Christ risen in the flesh, and ascended with the same into heaven? For the martyrs themselves were martyrs, that is to say, witnesses of this faith, drawing upon themselves by their testimony the hatred of the world, and conquering the world not by resisting it, but by dying. For this faith they died, and can now ask these benefits from the Lord in whose name they were slain. For this faith their marvellous constancy was exercised, so that in these miracles great power was manifested as the result. For if the resurrection of the flesh to eternal life had not taken place in Christ, and were not to be accomplished in His people, as predicted by Christ, or by the prophets who foretold that Christ was to come, why do the martyrs who were slain for this faith which proclaims the resurrection possess such power? For whether God Himself wrought these miracles by that wonderful manner of working by which, though Himself eternal, He produces effects in time; or whether He wrought them by servants, and if so, whether He made use of the spirits of martyrs as He uses men who are still in the body, or effects all these marvels by means of angels, over whom He exerts an invisible, immutable, incorporeal sway, so that what is said to be done by the martyrs is done not by their operation, but only by their prayer and request; or whether, finally, some things are done in one way, others in another, and so that man cannot at all comprehend them,—nevertheless these miracles attest this faith which preaches the resurrection of the flesh to eternal life.

CHAPTER 10

THAT THE MARTYRS WHO OBTAIN MANY MIRACLES IN ORDER THAT THE TRUE GOD MAY BE WORSHIPPED, ARE WORTHY OF MUCH GREATER HONOR THAN THE DEMONS, WHO DO SOME MARVELS THAT THEY THEMSELVES MAY BE SUPPOSED TO BE GOD

Here perhaps our adversaries will say that their gods also have done some wonderful things, if now they begin to compare their gods to our dead men. Or will they also say that they have gods taken from among dead men, such as Hercules, Romulus, and many others whom they fancy to have been received into the number of the gods? But our martyrs are not our gods; for we know that the martyrs and we have both but one God, and that the same. Nor yet are the miracles which they maintain to have been done by means of their temples at all comparable to those which are done by the tombs of our martyrs. If they seem similar, their gods have been defeated by our martyrs as Pharaoh’s magi were by Moses. In reality, the demons wrought these marvels with the same impure pride with which they aspired to be the gods of the nations; but the martyrs do these wonders, or rather God does them while they pray and assist, in order that an impulse may be given to the faith by which we believe that they are not our gods, but have, together with ourselves, one God. In fine, they built temples to these gods of theirs, and set up altars, and ordained priests, and appointed sacrifices; but to our martyrs we build, not temples as if they were gods, but monuments as to dead men whose spirits live with God. Neither do we erect altars at these monuments that we may sacrifice to the martyrs, but to the one God of the martyrs and of ourselves; and in this sacrifice they are named in their own place and rank as men of God who conquered the world by confessing Him, but they are not invoked by the sacrificing priest. For it is to God, not to them, he sacrifices, though he sacrifices at their monument; for he is God's priest, not theirs. The sacrifice itself, too, is the body of Christ, which is not offered to them, because they themselves are this body. Which then can more readily be believed to work miracles? They who wish themselves to be reckoned gods by those on whom they work miracles, or those whose sole object in working any miracle is to induce faith in God, and in Christ also as God? They who wished to turn even their crimes into sacred rites, or those who are unwilling that even their own praises be consecrated, and seek that everything for which they are justly praised be ascribed to the glory of Him in whom they are praised? For in the Lord their souls are praised. Let us therefore believe those who both speak the truth and work wonders. For by speaking the truth they suffered, and so won the power of working wonders. And the leading truth they professed is that Christ rose from the dead, and first showed in His own flesh the immortality of the resurrection which He promised should be ours, either in the beginning of the world to come, or in the end of this world.

CHAPTER 11

AGAINST THE PLATONISTS, WHO ARGUE FROM THE PHYSICAL WEIGHT OF THE ELEMENTS THAT AN EARTHLY BODY CANNOT INHABIT HEAVEN

But against this great gift of God, these reasoners, “whose thoughts the Lord knows that they are vain” bring arguments from the weights of the elements; for they have been taught by their master Plato that the two greatest elements of the world, and the furthest removed from one another, are coupled and united by the two intermediate, air and water. And consequently they say, since the earth is the first of the elements, beginning from the base of the series, the second the water above the earth, the third the air above the water, the fourth the heaven above the air, it follows that a body of earth cannot live in the heaven; for each element is poised by its own weight so as to preserve its own place and rank. Behold with what arguments human infirmity, possessed with vanity, contradicts the omnipotence of God! What, then, do so many earthly bodies do in the air, since the air is the third element from the earth? Unless perhaps He who has granted to the earthly bodies of birds that they be carried through the air by the lightness of feathers and wings, has not been able to confer upon the bodies of men made immortal the power to abide in the highest heaven. The earthly animals, too, which cannot fly, among which are men, ought on these terms to live under the earth, as fishes, which are the animals of the water, live under the water. Why, then, can an animal of earth not live in the second element, that is, in water, while it can in the third? Why, though it belongs to the earth, is it forthwith suffocated if it is forced to live in the second element next above earth, while it lives in the third, and cannot live out of it? Is there a mistake here in the order of the elements, or is not the mistake rather in their reasonings, and not in the nature of things? I will not repeat what I said in the thirteenth book, that many earthly bodies, though heavy like lead, receive from the workman's hand a form which enables them to swim in water; and yet it is denied that the omnipotent Worker can confer on the human body a property which shall enable it to pass into heaven and dwell there.

But against what I have formerly said they can find nothing to say, even though they introduce and make the most of this order of the elements in which they confide. For if the order be that the earth is first, the water second, the air third, the heaven fourth, then the soul is above all. For Aristotle said that the soul was a fifth body, while Plato denied that it was a body at all. If it were a fifth body, then certainly it would be above the rest; and if it is not a body at all, so much the more does it rise above all. What, then, does it do in an earthly body? What does this soul, which is finer than all else, do in such a mass of matter as this? What does the lightest of substances do in this ponderosity? this swiftest substance in such sluggishness? Will not the body be raised to heaven by virtue of so excellent a nature as this? and if now earthly bodies can retain the souls below, shall not the souls be one day able to raise the earthly bodies above?

If we pass now to their miracles which they oppose to our martyrs as wrought by their gods, shall not even these be found to make for us, and help out our argument? For if any of the miracles of their gods are great, certainly that is a great one which Varro mentions of a vestal virgin, who, when she was endangered by a false accusation of unchastity, filled a sieve with water from the Tiber, and carried it to her judges without any part of it leaking. Who kept the weight of water in the sieve? Who prevented any drop from falling from it through so many open holes? They will answer, Some god or some demon. If a god, is he greater than the God who made the world? If a demon, is he mightier than an angel who serves the God by whom the world was made? If, then, a lesser god, angel, or demon could so sustain the weight of this liquid element that the water might seem to have changed its nature, shall not Almighty God, who Himself created all the elements, be able to eliminate from the earthly body its heaviness, so that the quickened body shall dwell in whatever element the quickening spirit pleases?

Then, again, since they give the air a middle place between the fire above and the water beneath, how is it that we often find it between water and water, and between the water and the earth? For what do they make of those watery clouds, between which and the seas air is constantly found intervening? I should like to know by what weight and order of the elements it comes to pass that very violent and stormy torrents are suspended in the clouds above the earth before they rush along upon the earth under the air. In fine, why is it that throughout the whole globe the air is between the highest heaven and the earth, if its place is between the sky and the water, as the place of the water is between the sky and the earth?

Finally, if the order of the elements is so disposed that, as Plato thinks, the two extremes, fire and earth, are united by the two means, air and water, and that the fire occupies the highest part of the sky, and the earth the lowest part, or as it were the foundation of the world, and that therefore earth cannot be in the heavens, how is fire in the earth? For, according to this reasoning, these two elements, earth and fire, ought to be so restricted to their own places, the highest and the lowest, that neither the lowest can rise to the place of the highest, nor the highest sink to that of the lowest. Thus, as they think that no particle of earth is or shall ever be in the sky so we ought to see no particle of fire on the earth. But the fact is that it exists to such an extent, not only on but even under the earth, that the tops of mountains vomit it forth; besides that we see it to exist on earth for human uses, and even to be produced from the earth, since it is kindled from wood and stones, which are without doubt earthly bodies. But that [upper] fire, they say, is tranquil, pure, harmless, eternal; but this [earthly] fire is turbid, smoky, corruptible, and corrupting. But it does not corrupt the mountains and caverns of the earth in which it rages continually. But grant that the earthly fire is so unlike the other as to suit its earthly position, why then do they object to our believing that the nature of earthly bodies shall some day be made incorruptible and fit for the sky, even as now fire is corruptible and suited to the earth? They therefore adduce from their weights and order of the elements nothing from which they can prove that it is impossible for Almighty God to make our bodies such that they can dwell in the skies.

CHAPTER 12

AGAINST THE CALUMNIES WITH WHICH UNBELIEVERS THROW RIDICULE UPON THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE FLESH

But their way is to feign a scrupulous anxiety in investigating this question, and to cast ridicule on our faith in the resurrection of the body, by asking, Whether abortions shall rise? And as the Lord says, “Verily I say unto you, not a hair of your head shall perish,” shall all bodies have an equal stature and strength, or shall there be differences in size? For if there is to be equality, where shall those abortions, supposing that they rise again, get that bulk which they had not here? Or if they shall not rise because they were not born but cast out, they raise the same question about children who have died in childhood, asking us whence they get the stature which we see they had not here; for we will not say that those who have been not only born, but born again, shall not rise again. Then, further, they ask of what size these equal bodies shall be. For if all shall be as tall and large as were the tallest and largest in this world, they ask us how it is that not only children but many full-grown persons shall receive what they here did not possess, if each one is to receive what he had here. And if the saying of the apostle, that we are all to come to the “measure of the age of the fullness of Christ,” or that other saying, “Whom He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son,” is to be understood to mean that the stature and size of Christ’s body shall be the measure of the bodies of all those who shall be in His kingdom, then, say they, the size and height of many must be diminished; and if so much of the bodily frame itself be lost, what becomes of the saying, “Not a hair of your head shall perish?” Besides, it might be asked regarding the hair itself, whether all that the barber has cut off shall be restored? And if it is to be restored, who would not shrink from such deformity? For as the same restoration will be made of what has been pared off the nails, much will be replaced on the body which a regard for its appearance had cut off. And where, then, will be its beauty, which assuredly ought to be much greater in that immortal condition than it could be in this corruptible state? On the other hand, if such things are not restored to the body, they must perish; how, then, they say, shall not a hair of the head perish? In like manner they reason about fatness and leanness; for if all are to be equal, then certainly there shall not be some fat, others lean. Some, therefore, shall gain, others lose something. Consequently there will not be a simple restoration of what formerly existed, but, on the one hand, an addition of what had no existence, and, on the other, a loss of what did before exist.

The difficulties, too, about the corruption and dissolution of dead bodies,—that one is turned into dust, while another evaporates into the air; that some are devoured by beasts, some by fire, while some perish by shipwreck or by drowning in one shape or other, so that their bodies decay into liquid, these difficulties give them immoderate alarm, and they believe that all those dissolved elements cannot be gathered again and reconstructed into a body. They also make eager use of all the deformities and blemishes which either accident or birth has produced, and accordingly, with horror and derision, cite monstrous births, and ask if every deformity will be preserved in the resurrection. For if we say that no such thing shall be reproduced in the body of a man, they suppose that they confute us by citing the marks of the wounds which we assert were found in the risen body of the Lord Christ. But of all these, the most difficult question is, into whose body that flesh shall return which has been eaten and assimilated by another man constrained by hunger to use it so; for it has been converted into the flesh of the man who used it as his nutriment, and it filled up those losses of flesh which famine had produced. For the sake, then, of ridiculing the resurrection, they ask, Shall this return to the man whose flesh it first was, or to him whose flesh it afterwards became? And thus, too, they seek to give promise to the human soul of alternations of true misery and false happiness, in accordance with Plato's theory; or, in accordance with Porphyry's, that, after many transmigrations into different bodies, it ends its miseries, and never more returns to them, not, however, by obtaining an immortal body, but by escaping from every kind of body.

CHAPTER 13

WHETHER ABORTIONS, IF THEY ARE NUMBERED AMONG THE DEAD, SHALL NOT ALSO HAVE A PART IN THE RESURRECTION

To these objections, then, of our adversaries which I have thus detailed, I will now reply, trusting that God will mercifully assist my endeavors. That abortions, which, even supposing they were alive in the womb, did also die there, shall rise again, I make bold neither to affirm nor to deny, although I fail to see why, if they are not excluded from the number of the dead, they should not attain to the resurrection of the dead. For either all the dead shall not rise, and there will be to all eternity some souls without bodies though they once had them,—only in their mother's womb, indeed; or, if all human souls shall receive again the bodies which they had wherever they lived, and which they left when they died, then I do not see how I can say that even those who died in their mother's womb shall have no resurrection. But whichever of these opinions any one may adopt concerning them, we must at least apply to them, if they rise again, all that we have to say of infants who have been born.

CHAPTER 14

WHETHER INFANTS SHALL RISE IN THAT BODY WHICH THEY WOULD HAVE HAD HAD THEY GROWN UP

What, then, are we to say of infants, if not that they will not rise in that diminutive body in which they died, but shall receive by the marvellous and rapid operation of God that body which time by a slower process would have given them? For in the Lord’s words, where He says, “Not a hair of your head shall perish,” it is asserted that nothing which was possessed shall be wanting; but it is not said that nothing which was not possessed shall be given. To the dead infant there was wanting the perfect stature of its body; for even the perfect infant lacks the perfection of bodily size, being capable of further growth. This perfect stature is, in a sense, so possessed by all that they are conceived and born with it,—that is, they have it potentially, though not yet in actual bulk; just as all the members of the body are potentially in the seed, though, even after the child is born, some of them, the teeth for example, may be wanting. In this seminal principle of every substance, there seems to be, as it were, the beginning of everything which does not yet exist, or rather does not appear, but which in process of time will come into being, or rather into sight. In this, therefore, the child who is to be tall or short is already tall or short. And in the resurrection of the body, we need, for the same reason, fear no bodily loss; for though all should be of equal size, and reach gigantic proportions, lest the men who were largest here should lose anything of their bulk and it should perish, in contradiction to the words of Christ, who said that not a hair of their head should perish, yet why should there lack the means by which that wonderful Worker should make such additions, seeing that He is the Creator, who Himself created all things out of nothing?

CHAPTER 15

WHETHER THE BODIES OF ALL THE DEAD SHALL RISE THE SAME SIZE AS THE LORD’S BODY

It is certain that Christ rose in the same bodily stature in which He died, and that it is wrong to say that, when the general resurrection shall have arrived, His body shall, for the sake of equalling the tallest, assume proportions which it had not when He appeared to the disciples in the figure with which they were familiar. But if we say that even the bodies of taller men are to be reduced to the size of the Lord’s body, there will be a great loss in many bodies, though He promised that, not a hair of their head should perish. It remains, therefore, that we conclude that every man shall receive his own size which he had in youth, though he died an old man, or which he would have had, supposing he died before his prime. As for what the apostle said of the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ, we must either understand him to refer to something else, viz., to the fact that the measure of Christ will be completed when all the members among the Christian communities are added to the Head; or if we are to refer it to the resurrection of the body, the meaning is that all shall rise neither beyond nor under youth, but in that vigor and age to which we know that Christ had arrived. For even the world's wisest men have fixed the bloom of youth at about the age of thirty; and when this period has been passed, the man begins to decline towards the defective and duller period of old age. And therefore the apostle did not speak of the measure of the body, nor of the measure of the stature, but of "the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ."

CHAPTER 16

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE CONFORMING OF THE SAINTS TO THE IMAGE OF THE SON OF GOD

Then, again, these words, "Predestinate to be conformed to the image of the Son of God," may be understood of the inner man. So in another place He says to us, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed in the renewing of your mind." In so far, then, as we are transformed so as not to be conformed to the world, we are conformed to the Son of God. It may also be understood thus, that as He was conformed to us by assuming mortality, we shall be conformed to Him by immortality; and this indeed is connected with the resurrection of the body. But if we are also taught in these words what form our bodies shall rise in, as the measure we spoke of before, so also this conformity is to be understood not of size, but of age. Accordingly all shall rise in the stature they either had attained or would have attained had they lived to their prime, although it will be no great disadvantage even if the form of the body be infantine or aged, while no infirmity shall remain in the mind nor in the body itself. So that even if any one contends that every person will rise again in the same bodily form in which he died, we need not spend much labor in disputing with him.

CHAPTER 17

WHETHER THE BODIES OF WOMEN SHALL RETAIN THEIR OWN SEX IN THE RESURRECTION

From the words, “Till we all come to a perfect man, to the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ,” and from the words, “Conformed to the image of the Son of God,” some conclude that women shall not rise women, but that all shall be men, because God made man only of earth, and woman of the man. For my part, they seem to be wiser who make no doubt that both sexes shall rise. For there shall be no lust, which is now the cause of confusion. For before they sinned, the man and the woman were naked, and were not ashamed. From those bodies, then, vice shall be withdrawn, while nature shall be preserved. And the sex of woman is not a vice, but nature. It shall then indeed be superior to carnal intercourse and child-bearing; nevertheless the female members shall remain adapted not to the old uses, but to a new beauty, which, so far from provoking lust, now extinct, shall excite praise to the wisdom and clemency of God, who both made what was not and delivered from corruption what He made. For at the beginning of the human race the woman was made of a rib taken from the side of the man while he slept; for it seemed fit that even then Christ and His Church should be foreshadowed in this event. For that sleep of the man was the death of Christ, whose side, as He hung lifeless upon the cross, was pierced with a spear, and there flowed from it blood and water, and these we know to be the sacraments by which the Church is “built up.” For Scripture used this very word, not saying “He formed” or “framed,” but “built her up into a woman;” whence also the apostle speaks of the edification of the body of Christ, which is the Church. The woman, therefore, is a creature of God even as the man; but by her creation from man unity is commended; and the manner of her creation prefigured, as has been said, Christ and the Church. He, then, who created both sexes will restore both. Jesus Himself also, when asked by the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, which of the seven brothers should have to wife the woman whom all in succession had taken to raise up seed to their brother, as the law enjoined, says, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.” And though it was a fit opportunity for His saying, She about whom you make inquiries shall herself be a man, and not a woman, He said nothing of the kind; but “In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.” They shall be equal to the angels in immortality and happiness, not in flesh, nor in resurrection, which the angels did not need, because they could not die. The Lord then denied that there would be in the resurrection, not women, but marriages; and He uttered this denial in circumstances in which the question mooted would have been more easily and speedily solved by denying that the female sex would exist, if this had in truth been foreknown by Him. But, indeed, He even affirmed that the sex should exist by saying, “They shall not be given in marriage,” which can only apply to females; “Neither shall they marry,” which applies to males. There shall therefore be those who are in this world accustomed to marry and be given in marriage, only they shall there make no such marriages.

CHAPTER 18

OF THE PERFECT MAN, THAT IS, CHRIST; AND OF HIS BODY, THAT IS, THE CHURCH, WHICH IS HIS FULLNESS

To understand what the apostle means when he says that we shall all come to a perfect man, we must consider the connection of the whole passage, which runs thus: “He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things. And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come to the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love.” Behold what the perfect man is—the head and the body, which is made up of all the members, which in their own time shall be perfected. But new additions are daily being made to this body while the Church is being built up, to which it is said, “Ye are the body of Christ and

His members;” and again, “For His body’s sake,” he says, “which is the Church;” and again, “We being many are one head, one body.” It is of the edification of this body that it is here, too, said, “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ;” and then that passage of which we are now speaking is added, “Till we all come to the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ,” and so on. And he shows of what body we are to understand this to be the measure, when he says, “That we may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part.” As, therefore, there is a measure of every part, so there is a measure of the fullness of the whole body which is made up of all its parts, and it is of this measure it is said, “To the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ.” This fullness he spoke of also in the place where he says of Christ, “And gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.” But even if this should be referred to the form in which each one shall rise, what should hinder us from applying to the woman what is expressly said of the man, understanding both sexes to be included under the general term “man?” For certainly in the saying, “Blessed is he who feareth the Lord,” women also who fear the Lord are included.

CHAPTER 19

THAT ALL BODILY BLEMISHES WHICH MAR HUMAN BEAUTY IN THIS LIFE SHALL BE REMOVED IN THE RESURRECTION, THE NATURAL SUBSTANCE OF THE BODY REMAINING, BUT THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF IT BEING ALTERED SO AS TO PRODUCE BEAUTY

What am I to say now about the hair and nails? Once it is understood that no part of the body shall so perish as to produce deformity in the body, it is at the same time understood that such things as would have produced a deformity by their excessive proportions shall be added to the total bulk of the body, not to parts in which the beauty of the proportion would thus be marred. Just as if, after making a vessel of clay, one wished to make it over again of the same clay, it would not be necessary that the same portion of the clay which had formed the handle should again form the new handle, or that what had formed the bottom should again do so, but only that the whole clay should go to make up the whole new vessel, and that no part of it should be left unused. Wherefore, if the hair that has been cropped and the nails that have been cut would cause a deformity were they to be restored to their places, they shall not be restored; and yet no one will lose these parts at the resurrection, for they shall be changed into the same flesh, their substance being so altered as to preserve the proportion of the various parts of the body. However, what our Lord said, “Not a hair of your head shall perish,” might more suitably be interpreted of the number, and not of the length of the hairs, as He elsewhere says, “The hairs of your head are all numbered.” Nor would I say this because I suppose that any part naturally belonging to the body can perish, but that whatever deformity was in it, and served to exhibit the penal condition in which we mortals are, should be restored in such a way that, while the substance is entirely preserved, the deformity shall perish. For if even a human workman, who has, for some reason, made a deformed statue, can recast it and make it very beautiful, and this without suffering any part of the substance, but only the deformity to be lost,—if he can, for example, remove some unbecoming or disproportionate part, not by cutting off and separating this part from the whole, but by so breaking down and mixing up the whole as to get rid of the blemish without diminishing the quantity of his material,—shall we not think as highly of the almighty Worker? Shall He not be able to remove and abolish all deformities of the human body, whether common ones or rare and monstrous, which, though in keeping with this miserable life, are yet not to be thought of in connection with that future blessedness; and shall He not be able so to remove them that, while the natural but unseemly blemishes are put an end to, the natural substance shall suffer no diminution?

And consequently overgrown and emaciated persons need not fear that they shall be in heaven of such a figure as they would not be even in this world if they could help it. For all bodily beauty consists in the proportion of the parts, together with a certain agreeableness of color. Where there is no proportion, the eye is offended, either because there is something awanting, or too small, or too large. And thus there shall be no deformity resulting from want of proportion in that state in which all that is wrong is corrected, and all that is defective supplied from resources the Creator wots of, and all that is excessive removed without destroying the integrity of the substance. And as for the pleasant color, how conspicuous shall it be where “the just shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father!” This brightness we must rather believe to have been concealed from the eyes of the disciples when Christ rose, than to have been awanting. For weak human eyesight could not bear it, and it was necessary that they should so look upon Him as to be able to recognize Him. For this purpose also He allowed them to touch the marks of His wounds, and also ate and drank,—not because He needed nourishment, but because He could take it if He wished. Now, when an object, though present, is invisible to persons who see other things which are present, as we say that that brightness was present but invisible by those who saw other things, this is called in Greek aorasia; and our Latin translators, for want of a better word, have rendered this caecitas (blindness) in the book of Genesis. This blindness the men of Sodom suffered when they sought the just Lot’s gate and could not find it. But if it had been blindness, that is to say, if they could see nothing, then they would not have asked for the gate by which they might enter the house, but for guides who might lead them away.

But the love we bear to the blessed martyrs causes us, I know not how, to desire to see in the heavenly kingdom the marks of the wounds which they received for the name of Christ, and possibly we shall see them. For this will not be a deformity, but a mark of honor, and will add lustre to their appearance, and a spiritual, if not a bodily beauty. And yet we need not believe that they to whom it has been said, “Not a hair of your head shall perish,” shall, in the resurrection, want such of their members as they have been deprived of in their martyrdom. But if it will be seemly in that new kingdom to have some marks of these wounds still visible in that immortal flesh, the places where they have been wounded or mutilated shall retain the scars without any of the members being lost. While, therefore, it is quite true that no blemishes which the body has sustained shall appear in the resurrection, yet we are not to reckon or name these marks of virtue blemishes.

CHAPTER 20

THAT, IN THE RESURRECTION, THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR BODIES, HOWEVER DISINTEGRATED, SHALL BE ENTIRELY REUNITED

Far be it from us to fear that the omnipotence of the Creator cannot, for the resuscitation and reanimation of our bodies, recall all the portions which have been consumed by beasts or fire, or have been dissolved into dust or ashes, or have decomposed into water, or evaporated into the air. Far from us be the thought, that anything which escapes our observation in any most hidden recess of nature either evades the knowledge or transcends the power of the Creator of all things. Cicero, the great authority of our adversaries, wishing to define God as accurately as possible, says, “God is a mind free and independent, without materiality, perceiving and moving all things, and itself endowed with eternal movement.” This he found in the systems of the greatest philosophers. Let me ask, then, in their own language, how anything can either lie hid from Him who perceives all things, or irrevocably escape Him who moves all things?

This leads me to reply to that question which seems the most difficult of all, —To whom, in the resurrection, will belong the flesh of a dead man which has become the flesh of a living man? For if some one, famishing for want and pressed with hunger, use human flesh as food,—an extremity not unknown, as both ancient history and the unhappy experience of our own days have taught us,—can it be contended, with any show of reason, that all the flesh eaten has been evacuated, and that none of it has been assimilated to the substance of the eater though the very emaciation which existed before, and has now disappeared, sufficiently indicates what large deficiencies have been filled up with this food? But I have already made some remarks which will suffice for the solution of this difficulty also. For all the flesh which hunger has consumed finds its way into the air by evaporation, whence, as we have said, God Almighty can recall it. That flesh, therefore, shall be restored to the man in whom it first became human flesh. For it must be looked upon as borrowed by the other person, and, like a pecuniary loan, must be returned to the lender. His own flesh, however, which he lost by famine, shall be restored to him by Him who can recover even what has evaporated. And though it had been absolutely annihilated, so that no part of its substance remained in any secret spot of nature, the Almighty could restore it by such means as He saw fit. For this sentence, uttered by the Truth, “Not a hair of your head shall perish,” forbids us to suppose that, though no hair of a man’s head can perish, yet the large portions of his flesh eaten and consumed by the famishing can perish.

From all that we have thus considered, and discussed with such poor ability as we can command, we gather this conclusion, that in the resurrection of the flesh the body shall be of that size which it either had attained or should have attained in the flower of its youth, and shall enjoy the beauty that arises from preserving symmetry and proportion in all its members. And it is reasonable to suppose that, for the preservation of this beauty, any part of the body’s substance, which, if placed in one spot, would produce a deformity, shall be distributed through the whole of it, so that neither any part, nor the symmetry of the whole, may be lost, but only the general stature of the body somewhat increased by the distribution in all the parts of that which, in one place, would have been unsightly. Or if it is contended that each will rise with the same stature as that of the body he died in, we shall not obstinately dispute this, provided only there be no deformity, no infirmity, no languor, no corruption,—nothing of any kind which would ill become that kingdom in which the children of the resurrection and of the promise shall be equal to the angels of God, if not in body and age, at least in happiness.

CHAPTER 21

OF THE NEW SPIRITUAL BODY INTO WHICH THE FLESH OF THE SAINTS SHALL BE TRANSFORMED

Whatever, therefore, has been taken from the body, either during life or after death shall be restored to it, and, in conjunction with what has remained in the grave, shall rise again, transformed from the oldness of the animal body into the newness of the spiritual body, and clothed in incorruption and immortality. But even though the body has been all quite ground to powder by some severe accident, or by the ruthlessness of enemies, and though it has been so diligently scattered to the winds, or into the water, that there is no trace of it left, yet it shall not be beyond the omnipotence of the Creator,—no, not a hair of its head shall perish. The flesh shall then be spiritual, and subject to the spirit, but still flesh, not spirit, as the spirit itself, when subject to the flesh, was fleshly, but still spirit and not flesh. And of this we have experimental proof in the deformity of our penal condition. For those persons were carnal, not in a fleshly, but in a spiritual way, to whom the apostle said, “I could not speak to you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal.” And a man is in this life spiritual in such a way, that he is yet carnal with respect to his body, and sees another law in his members warring against the law of his mind; but even in his body he will be spiritual when the same flesh shall have had that resurrection of which these words speak, “It is sown an animal body, it shall rise a spiritual body.” But what this spiritual body shall be and how great its grace, I fear it were but rash to pronounce, seeing that we have as yet no experience of it. Nevertheless, since it is fit that the joyfulness of our hope should utter itself, and so show forth God’s praise, and since it was from the profoundest sentiment of ardent and holy love that the Psalmist cried, “O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy house,” we may, with God’s help, speak of the gifts He lavishes on men, good and bad alike, in this most wretched life, and may do our best to conjecture the great glory of that state which we cannot worthily speak of, because we have not yet experienced it. For I say nothing of the time when God made man upright; I say nothing of the happy life of “the man and his wife” in the fruitful garden, since it was so short that none of their children experienced it: I speak only of this life which we know, and in which we now are, from the temptations of which we cannot escape so long as we are in it, no matter what progress we make, for it is all temptation, and I ask, Who can describe the tokens of God’s goodness that are extended to the human race even in this life?

CHAPTER 22

OF THE MISERIES AND ILLS TO WHICH THE HUMAN RACE IS JUSTLY EXPOSED THROUGH THE FIRST SIN, AND FROM WHICH NONE CAN BE DELIVERED SAVE BY CHRIST’S GRACE

That the whole human race has been condemned in its first origin, this life itself, if life it is to be called, bears witness by the host of cruel ills with which it is filled. Is not this proved by the profound and dreadful ignorance which produces all the errors that enfold the children of Adam, and from which no man can be delivered without toil, pain, and fear? Is it not proved by his love of so many vain and hurtful things, which produces gnawing cares, disquiet, griefs, fears, wild joys, quarrels, lawsuits, wars, treasons, angers, hatreds, deceit, flattery, fraud, theft, robbery, perfidy, pride, ambition, envy, murders, parricides, cruelty, ferocity, wickedness, luxury, insolence, impudence, shamelessness, fornications, adulteries, incests, and the numberless uncleannesses and unnatural acts of both sexes, which it is shameful so much as to mention; sacrileges, heresies, blasphemies, perjuries, oppression of the innocent, calumnies, plots, falsehoods, false witnessings, unrighteous judgments, violent deeds, plunderings, and whatever similar wickedness has found its way into the lives of men, though it cannot find its way into the conception of pure minds? These are indeed the crimes of wicked men, yet they spring from that root of error and misplaced love which is born with every son of Adam. For who is there that has not observed with what profound ignorance, manifesting itself even in infancy, and with what superfluity of foolish desires, beginning to appear in boyhood, man comes into this life, so that, were he left to live as he pleased, and to do whatever he pleased, he would plunge into all, or certainly into many of those crimes and iniquities which I mentioned, and could not mention?

But because God does not wholly desert those whom He condemns, nor shuts up in His anger His tender mercies, the human race is restrained by law and instruction, which keep guard against the ignorance that besets us, and oppose the assaults of vice, but are themselves full of labor and sorrow. For what mean those multifarious threats which are used to restrain the folly of children? What mean pedagogues, masters, the birch, the strap, the cane, the schooling which Scripture says must be given a child, “beating him on the sides lest he wax stubborn,” and it be hardly possible or not possible at all to subdue him? Why all these punishments, save to overcome ignorance and bridle evil desires—these evils with which we come into the world? For why is it that we remember with difficulty, and without difficulty forget? learn with difficulty, and without difficulty remain ignorant? are diligent with difficulty, and without difficulty are indolent? Does not this show what vitiated nature inclines and tends to by its own weight, and what succor it needs if it is to be delivered? Inactivity, sloth, laziness, negligence, are vices which shun labor, since labor, though useful, is itself a punishment.

But, besides the punishments of childhood, without which there would be no learning of what the parents wish,—and the parents rarely wish anything useful to be taught,—who can describe, who can conceive the number and severity of the punishments which afflict the human race,—pains which are not only the accompaniment of the wickedness of godless men, but are a part of the human condition and the common misery,—what fear and what grief are caused by bereavement and mourning, by losses and condemnations, by fraud and falsehood, by false suspicions, and all the crimes and wicked deeds of other men? For at their hands we suffer robbery, captivity, chains, imprisonment, exile, torture, mutilation, loss of sight, the violation of chastity to satisfy the lust of the oppressor, and many other dreadful evils. What numberless casualties threaten our bodies from without,—extremes of heat and cold, storms, floods, inundations, lightning, thunder, hail, earthquakes, houses falling; or from the stumbling, or shying, or vice of horses; from countless poisons in fruits, water, air, animals; from the painful or even deadly bites of wild animals; from the madness which a mad dog communicates, so that even the animal which of all others is most gentle and friendly to its own master, becomes an object of intenser fear than a lion or dragon, and the man whom it has by chance infected with this pestilential contagion becomes so rabid, that his parents, wife, children, dread him more than any wild beast! What disasters are suffered by those who travel by land or sea! What man can go out of his own house without being exposed on all hands to unforeseen accidents? Returning home sound in limb, he slips on his own doorstep, breaks his leg, and never recovers. What can seem safer than a man sitting in his chair? Eli the priest fell from his, and broke his neck. How many accidents do farmers, or rather all men, fear that the crops may suffer from the weather, or the soil, or the ravages of destructive animals? Commonly they feel safe when the crops are gathered and housed. Yet, to my certain knowledge, sudden floods have driven the laborers away, and swept the barns clean of the finest harvest. Is innocence a sufficient protection against the various assaults of demons? That no man might think so, even baptized infants, who are certainly unsurpassed in innocence, are sometimes so tormented, that God, who permits it, teaches us hereby to bewail the calamities of this life, and to desire the felicity of the life to come. As to bodily diseases, they are so numerous that they cannot all be contained even in medical books. And in very many, or almost all of them, the cures and remedies are themselves tortures, so that men are delivered from a pain that destroys by a cure that pains. Has not the madness of thirst driven men to drink human urine, and even their own? Has not hunger driven men to eat human flesh, and that the flesh not of bodies found dead, but of bodies slain for the purpose? Have not the fierce pangs of famine driven mothers to eat their own children, incredibly savage as it seems? In fine, sleep itself, which is justly called repose, how little of repose there sometimes is in it when disturbed with dreams and visions; and with what terror is the wretched mind overwhelmed by the appearances of things which are so presented, and which, as it were so stand out before the senses, that we can not distinguish them from realities! How wretchedly do false appearances distract men in certain diseases! With what astonishing variety of appearances are even healthy men sometimes deceived by evil spirits, who produce these delusions for the sake of perplexing the senses of their victims, if they cannot succeed in seducing them to their side!

From this hell upon earth there is no escape, save through the grace of the Saviour Christ, our God and Lord. The very name Jesus shows this, for it means Saviour; and He saves us especially from passing out of this life into a more wretched and eternal state, which is rather a death than a life. For in this life, though holy men and holy pursuits afford us great consolations, yet the blessings which men crave are not invariably bestowed upon them, lest religion should be cultivated for the sake of these temporal advantages, while it ought rather to be cultivated for the sake of that other life from which all evil is excluded. Therefore, also, does grace aid good men in the midst of present calamities, so that they are enabled to endure them with a constancy proportioned to their faith. The world’s sages affirm that philosophy contributes something to this,—that philosophy which, according to Cicero, the gods have bestowed in its purity only on a few men. They have never given, he says, nor can ever give, a greater gift to men. So that even those against whom we are disputing have been compelled to acknowledge, in some fashion, that the grace of God is necessary for the acquisition, not, indeed, of any philosophy, but of the true philosophy. And if the true philosophy—this sole support against the miseries of this life—has been given by Heaven only to a few, it sufficiently appears from this that the human race has been condemned to pay this penalty of wretchedness. And as, according to their acknowledgment, no greater gift has been bestowed by God, so it must be believed that it could be given only by that God whom they themselves recognize as greater than all the gods they worship.

CHAPTER 23

OF THE MISERIES OF THIS LIFE WHICH ATTACH PECULIARLY TO THE TOIL OF GOOD MEN, IRRESPECTIVE OF THOSE WHICH ARE COMMON TO THE GOOD AND BAD

But, irrespective of the miseries which in this life are common to the good and bad, the righteous undergo labors peculiar to themselves, in so far as they make war upon their vices, and are involved in the temptations and perils of such a contest. For though sometimes more violent and at other times slacker, yet without intermission does the flesh lust against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the things we would, and extirpate all lust, but can only refuse consent to it, as God gives us ability, and so keep it under, vigilantly keeping watch lest a semblance of truth deceive us, lest a subtle discourse blind us, lest error involve us in darkness, lest we should take good for evil or evil for good, lest fear should hinder us from doing what we ought, or desire precipitate us into doing what we ought not, lest the sun go down upon our wrath, lest hatred provoke us to render evil for evil, lest unseemly or immoderate grief consume us, lest an ungrateful disposition make us slow to recognize benefits received, lest calumnies fret our conscience, lest rash suspicion on our part deceive us regarding a friend, or false suspicion of us on the part of others give us too much uneasiness, lest sin reign in our mortal body to obey its desires, lest our members be used as the instruments of unrighteousness, lest the eye follow lust, lest thirst for revenge carry us away, lest sight or thought dwell too long on some evil thing which gives us pleasure, lest wicked or indecent language be willingly listened to, lest we do what is pleasant but unlawful, and lest in this warfare, filled so abundantly with toil and peril, we either hope to secure victory by our own strength, or attribute it when secured to our own strength, and not to His grace of whom the apostle says, “Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ;” and in another place he says, “In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.” But yet we are to know this, that however valorously we resist our vices, and however successful we are in overcoming them, yet as long as we are in this body we have always reason to say to God, Forgive us our debts.” But in that kingdom where we shall dwell for ever, clothed in immortal bodies, we shall no longer have either conflicts or debts,—as indeed we should not have had at any time or in any condition, had our nature continued upright as it was created. Consequently even this our conflict, in which we are exposed to peril, and from which we hope to be delivered by a final victory, belongs to the ills of this life, which is proved by the witness of so many grave evils to be a life under condemnation.

CHAPTER 24

OF THE BLESSINGS WITH WHICH THE CREATOR HAS FILLED THIS LIFE, OBNOXIOUS THOUGH IT BE TO THE CURSE

But we must now contemplate the rich and countless blessings with which the goodness of God, who cares for all He has created, has filled this very misery of the human race, which reflects His retributive justice. That first blessing which He pronounced before the fall, when He said, “Increase, and multiply, and replenish the earth,” He did not inhibit after man had sinned, but the fecundity originally bestowed remained in the condemned stock; and the vice of sin, which has involved us in the necessity of dying, has yet not deprived us of that wonderful power of seed, or rather of that still more marvellous power by which seed is produced, and which seems to be as it were inwrought and inwoven in the human body. But in this river, as I may call it, or torrent of the human race, both elements are carried along together,—both the evil which is derived from him who begets, and the good which is bestowed by Him who creates us. In the original evil there are two things, sin and punishment; in the original good, there are two other things, propagation and conformation. But of the evils, of which the one, sin, arose from our audacity, and the other, punishment, from God’s judgment, we have already said as much as suits our present purpose. I mean now to speak of the blessings which God has conferred or still confers upon our nature, vitiated and condemned as it is. For in condemning it He did not withdraw all that He had given it, else it had been annihilated; neither did He, in penally subjecting it to the devil, remove it beyond His own power; for not even the devil himself is outside of God’s government, since the devil’s nature subsists only by the supreme Creator who gives being to all that in any form exists.

Of these two blessings, then, which we have said flow from God’s goodness, as from a fountain, towards our nature, vitiated by sin and condemned to punishment, the one, propagation, was conferred by God’s benediction when He made those first works, from which He rested on the seventh day. But the other, conformation, is conferred in that work of His wherein “He worketh hitherto.” For were He to withdraw His efficacious power from things, they should neither be able to go on and complete the periods assigned to their measured movements, nor should they even continue in possession of that nature they were created in. God, then, so created man that He gave him what we may call fertility, whereby he might propagate other men, giving them a congenital capacity to propagate their kind, but not imposing on them any necessity to do so. This capacity God withdraws at pleasure from individuals, making them barren; but from the whole race He has not withdrawn the blessing of propagation once conferred. But though not withdrawn on account of sin, this power of propagation is not what it would have been had there been no sin. For since “man placed in honor fell, he has become like the beasts,” and generates as they do, though the little spark of reason, which was the image of God in him, has not been quite quenched. But if conformation were not added to propagation, there would be no reproduction of one’s kind. For even though there were no such thing as copulation, and God wished to fill the earth with human inhabitants, He might create all these as He created one without the help of human generation. And, indeed, even as it is, those who copulate can generate nothing save by the creative energy of God. As, therefore, in respect of that spiritual growth whereby a man is formed to piety and righteousness, the apostle says, “Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase,” so also it must be said that it is not he that generates that is anything, but God that giveth the essential form; that it is not the mother who carries and nurses the fruit of her womb that is anything, but God that giveth the increase. For He alone, by that energy wherewith “He worketh hitherto,” causes the seed to develop, and to evolve from certain secret and invisible folds into the visible forms of beauty which we see. He alone, coupling and connecting in some wonderful fashion the spiritual and corporeal natures, the one to command, the other to obey, makes a living being. And this work of His is so great and wonderful, that not only man, who is a rational animal, and consequently more excellent than all other animals of the earth, but even the most diminutive insect, cannot be considered attentively without astonishment and without praising the Creator.

It is He, then, who has given to the human soul a mind, in which reason and understanding lie as it were asleep during infancy, and as if they were not, destined, however, to be awakened and exercised as years increase, so as to become capable of knowledge and of receiving instruction, fit to understand what is true and to love what is good. It is by this capacity the soul drinks in wisdom, and becomes endowed with those virtues by which, in prudence, fortitude, temperance, and righteousness, it makes war upon error and the other inborn vices, and conquers them by fixing its desires upon no other object than the supreme and unchangeable Good. And even though this be not uniformly the result, yet who can competently utter or even conceive the grandeur of this work of the Almighty, and the unspeakable boon He has conferred upon our rational nature, by giving us even the capacity of such attainment? For over and above those arts which are called virtues, and which teach us how we may spend our life well, and attain to endless happiness,—arts which are given to the children of the promise and the kingdom by the sole grace of God which is in Christ,—has not the genius of man invented and applied countless astonishing arts, partly the result of necessity, partly the result of exuberant invention, so that this vigor of mind, which is so active in the discovery not merely of superfluous but even of dangerous and destructive things, betokens an inexhaustible wealth in the nature which can invent, learn, or employ such arts? What wonderful—one might say stupefying—advances has human industry made in the arts of weaving and building, of agriculture and navigation! With what endless variety are designs in pottery, painting, and sculpture produced, and with what skill executed! What wonderful spectacles are exhibited in the theatres, which those who have not seen them cannot credit! How skillful the contrivances for catching, killing, or taming wild beasts! And for the injury of men, also, how many kinds of poisons, weapons, engines of destruction, have been invented, while for the preservation or restoration of health the appliances and remedies are infinite! To provoke appetite and please the palate, what a variety of seasonings have been concocted! To express and gain entrance for thoughts, what a multitude and variety of signs there are, among which speaking and writing hold the first place! what ornaments has eloquence at command to delight the mind! what wealth of song is there to captivate the ear! how many musical instruments and strains of harmony have been devised! What skill has been attained in measures and numbers! with what sagacity have the movements and connections of the stars been discovered! Who could tell the thought that has been spent upon nature, even though, despairing of recounting it in detail, he endeavored only to give a general view of it? In fine, even the defence of errors and misapprehensions, which has illustrated the genius of heretics and philosophers, cannot be sufficiently declared. For at present it is the nature of the human mind which adorns this mortal life which we are extolling, and not the faith and the way of truth which lead to immortality. And since this great nature has certainly been created by the true and supreme God, who administers all things He has made with absolute power and justice, it could never have fallen into these miseries, nor have gone out of them to miseries eternal,—saving only those who are redeemed,—had not an exceeding great sin been found in the first man from whom the rest have sprung.

Moreover, even in the body, though it dies like that of the beasts, and is in many ways weaker than theirs, what goodness of God, what providence of the great Creator, is apparent! The organs of sense and the rest of the members, are not they so placed, the appearance, and form, and stature of the body as a whole, is it not so fashioned, as to indicate that it was made for the service of a reasonable soul? Man has not been created stooping towards the earth, like the irrational animals; but his bodily form, erect and looking heavenwards, admonishes him to mind the things that are above. Then the marvellous nimbleness which has been given to the tongue and the hands, fitting them to speak, and write, and execute so many duties, and practise so many arts, does it not prove the excellence of the soul for which such an assistant was provided? And even apart from its adaptation to the work required of it, there is such a symmetry in its various parts, and so beautiful a proportion maintained, that one is at a loss to decide whether, in creating the body, greater regard was paid to utility or to beauty. Assuredly no part of the body has been created for the sake of utility which does not also contribute something to its beauty. And this would be all the more apparent, if we knew more precisely how all its parts are connected and adapted to one another, and were not limited in our observations to what appears on the surface; for as to what is covered up and hidden from our view, the intricate web of veins and nerves, the vital parts of all that lies under the skin, no one can discover it. For although, with a cruel zeal for science, some medical men, who are called anatomists, have dissected the bodies of the dead, and sometimes even of sick persons who died under their knives, and have inhumanly pried into the secrets of the human body to learn the nature of the disease and its exact seat, and how it might be cured, yet those relations of which I speak, and which form the concord, or, as the Greeks call it, “harmony,” of the whole body outside and in, as of some instrument, no one has been able to discover, because no one has been audacious enough to seek for them. But if these could be known, then even the inward parts, which seem to have no beauty, would so delight us with their exquisite fitness, as to afford a profounder satisfaction to the mind—and the eyes are but its ministers—than the obvious beauty which gratifies the eye. There are some things, too, which have such a place in the body, that they obviously serve no useful purpose, but are solely for beauty, as e.g. the teats on a man’s breast, or the beard on his face; for that this is for ornament, and not for protection, is proved by the bare faces of women, who ought rather, as the weaker sex, to enjoy such a defence. If, therefore, of all those members which are exposed to our view, there is certainly not one in which beauty is sacrificed to utility, while there are some which serve no purpose but only beauty, I think it can readily be concluded that in the creation of the human body comeliness was more regarded than necessity. In truth, necessity is a transitory thing; and the time is coming when we shall enjoy one another’s beauty without any lust,—a condition which will specially redound to the praise of the Creator, who, as it is said in the psalm, has “put on praise and comeliness.”

How can I tell of the rest of creation, with all its beauty and utility, which the divine goodness has given to man to please his eye and serve his purposes, condemned though he is, and hurled into these labors and miseries? Shall I speak of the manifold and various loveliness of sky, and earth, and sea; of the plentiful supply and wonderful qualities of the light; of sun, moon, and stars; of the shade of trees; of the colors and perfume of flowers; of the multitude of birds, all differing in plumage and in song; of the variety of animals, of which the smallest in size are often the most wonderful,—the works of ants and bees astonishing us more than the huge bodies of whales? Shall I speak of the sea, which itself is so grand a spectacle, when it arrays itself as it were in vestures of various colors, now running through every shade of green, and again becoming purple or blue? Is it not delightful to look at it in storm, and experience the soothing complacency which it inspires, by suggesting that we ourselves are not tossed and shipwrecked? What shall I say of the numberless kinds of food to alleviate hunger, and the variety of seasonings to stimulate appetite which are scattered everywhere by nature, and for which we are not indebted to the art of cookery? How many natural appliances are there for preserving and restoring health! How grateful is the alternation of day and night! how pleasant the breezes that cool the air! how abundant the supply of clothing furnished us by trees and animals! Who can enumerate all the blessings we enjoy? If I were to attempt to detail and unfold only these few which I have indicated in the mass, such an enumeration would fill a volume. And all these are but the solace of the wretched and condemned, not the rewards of the blessed. What then shall these rewards be, if such be the blessings of a condemned state? What will He give to those whom He has predestined to life, who has given such things even to those whom He has predestined to death? What blessings will He in the blessed life shower upon those for whom, even in this state of misery, He has been willing that His only-begotten Son should endure such sufferings even to death? Thus the apostle reasons concerning those who are predestined to that kingdom: “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also give us all things?” When this promise is fulfilled, what shall we be? What blessings shall we receive in that kingdom, since already we have received as the pledge of them Christ’s dying? In what condition shall the spirit of man be, when it has no longer any vice at all; when it neither yields to any, nor is in bondage to any, nor has to make war against any, but is perfected, and enjoys undisturbed peace with itself? Shall it not then know all things with certainty, and without any labor or error, when unhindered and joyfully it drinks the wisdom of God at the fountain-head? What shall the body be, when it is in every respect subject to the spirit, from which it shall draw a life so sufficient, as to stand in need of no other nutriment? For it shall no longer be animal, but spiritual, having indeed the substance of flesh, but without any fleshly corruption.

CHAPTER 25

OF THE OBSTINACY OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO IMPUGN THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, THOUGH, AS WAS PREDICTED, THE WHOLE WORLD BELIEVES IT

The foremost of the philosophers agree with us about the spiritual felicity enjoyed by the blessed in the life to come; it is only the resurrection of the flesh they call in question, and with all their might deny. But the mass of men, learned and unlearned, the world’s wise men and its fools, have believed, and have left in meagre isolation the unbelievers, and have turned to Christ, who in His own resurrection demonstrated the reality of that which seems to our adversaries absurd. For the world has believed this which God predicted, as it was also predicted that the world would believe, —a prediction not due to the sorceries of Peter, since it was uttered so long before. He who has predicted these things, as I have already said, and am not ashamed to repeat, is the God before whom all other divinities tremble, as Porphyry himself owns, and seeks to prove, by testimonies from the oracles of these gods, and goes so far as to call Him God the Father and King. Far be it from us to interpret these predictions as they do who have not believed, along with the whole world, in that which it was predicted the world would believe in. For why should we not rather understand them as the world does, whose belief was predicted, and leave that handful of unbelievers to their idle talk and obstinate and solitary infidelity? For if they maintain that they interpret them differently only to avoid charging Scripture with folly, and so doing an injury to that God to whom they bear so notable a testimony, is it not a much greater injury they do Him when they say that His predictions must be understood otherwise than the world believed them, though He Himself praised, promised, accomplished this belief on the world's part? And why cannot He cause the body to rise again, and live for ever? or is it not to be believed that He will do this, because it is an undesirable thing, and unworthy of God? Of His omnipotence, which effects so many great miracles, we have already said enough. If they wish to know what the Almighty cannot do, I shall tell them He cannot lie. Let us therefore believe what He can do, by refusing to believe what He cannot do. Refusing to believe that He can lie, let them believe that He will do what He has promised to do; and let them believe it as the world has believed it, whose faith He predicted, whose faith He praised, whose faith He promised, whose faith He now points to. But how do they prove that the resurrection is an undesirable thing? There shall then be no corruption, which is the only evil thing about the body. I have already said enough about the order of the elements, and the other fanciful objections men raise; and in the thirteenth book I have, in my own judgment, sufficiently illustrated the facility of movement which the incorruptible body shall enjoy, judging from the ease and vigor we experience even now, when the body is in good health. Those who have either not read the former books, or wish to refresh their memory, may read them for themselves.

CHAPTER 26

THAT THE OPINION OF PORPHYRY, THAT THE SOUL, IN ORDER TO BE BLESSED, MUST BE SEPARATED FROM EVERY KIND OF BODY, IS DEMOLISHED BY PLATO, WHO SAYS THAT THE SUPREME GOD PROMISED THE GODS THAT THEY SHOULD NEVER BE OUSTED FROM THEIR BODIES

But, say they, Porphyry tells us that the soul, in order to be blessed, must escape connection with every kind of body. It does not avail, therefore, to say that the future body shall be incorruptible, if the soul cannot be blessed till delivered from every kind of body. But in the book above mentioned I have already sufficiently discussed this. This one thing only will I repeat,—let Plato, their master, correct his writings, and say that their gods, in order to be blessed, must quit their bodies, or, in other words, die; for he said that they were shut up in celestial bodies, and that, nevertheless, the God who made them promised them immortality,—that is to say, an eternal tenure of these same bodies, such as was not provided for them naturally, but only by the further intervention of His will, that thus they might be assured of felicity. In this he obviously overturns their assertion that the resurrection of the body cannot be believed because it is impossible; for, according to him, when the uncreated God promised immortality to the created gods, He expressly said that He would do what was impossible. For Plato tells us that He said, "As ye have had a beginning, so you cannot be immortal and incorruptible; yet ye shall not decay, nor shall any fate destroy you or prove stronger than my will, which more effectually binds you to immortality than the bond of your nature keeps you from it." If they who hear these words have, we do not say understanding, but ears, they cannot doubt that Plato believed that God promised to the gods He had made that He would effect an impossibility. For He who says, "Ye cannot be immortal, but by my will ye shall be immortal," what else does He say than this, "I shall make you what ye cannot be?" The body, therefore, shall be raised incorruptible, immortal, spiritual, by Him who, according to Plato, has promised to do that which is impossible. Why then do they still exclaim that this which God has promised, which the world has believed on God's promise as was predicted, is an impossibility? For what we say is, that the God who, even according to Plato, does impossible things, will do this. It is not, then, necessary to the blessedness of the soul that it be detached from a body of any kind whatever, but that it receive an incorruptible body. And in what incorruptible body will they more suitably rejoice than in that in which they groaned when it was corruptible? For thus they shall not feel that dire craving which Virgil, in imitation of Plato, has ascribed to them when he says that they wish to return again to their bodies. They shall not, I say, feel this desire to return to their bodies, since they shall have those bodies to which a return was desired, and shall, indeed, be in such thorough possession of them, that they shall never lose them even for the briefest moment, nor ever lay them down in death.

CHAPTER 27

OF THE APPARENTLY CONFLICTING OPINIONS OF PLATO AND PORPHYRY, WHICH WOULD HAVE CONDUCTED THEM BOTH TO THE TRUTH IF THEY COULD HAVE YIELDED TO ONE ANOTHER

Statements were made by Plato and Porphyry singly, which if they could have seen their way to hold in common, they might possibly have became Christians. Plato said that souls could not exist eternally without bodies; for it was on this account, he said, that the souls even of wise men must some time or other return to their bodies. Porphyry, again, said that the purified soul, when it has returned to the Father, shall never return to the ills of this world. Consequently, if Plato had communicated to Porphyry that which he saw to be true, that souls, though perfectly purified, and belonging to the wise and righteous, must return to human bodies; and if Porphyry, again, had imparted to Plato the truth which he saw, that holy soul, shall never return to the miseries of a corruptible body, so that they should not have each held only his own opinion, but should both have held both truths, I think they would have seen that it follows that the souls return to their bodies, and also that these bodies shall be such as to afford them a blessed and immortal life. For, according to Plato, even holy souls shall return to the body; according to Porphyry, holy souls shall not return to the ills of this world. Let Porphyry then say with Plato, they shall return to the body; let Plato say with Porphyry, they shall not return to their old misery: and they will agree that they return to bodies in which they shall suffer no more. And this is nothing else than what God has promised,—that He will give eternal felicity to souls joined to their own bodies. For this, I presume, both of them would readily concede, that if the souls of the saints are to be reunited to bodies, it shall be to their own bodies, in which they have endured the miseries of this life, and in which, to escape these miseries, they served God with piety and fidelity.

CHAPTER 28

WHAT PLATO OR LABEO, OR EVEN VARRO, MIGHT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE TRUE FAITH OF THE RESURRECTION, IF THEY HAD ADOPTED ONE ANOTHER’S OPINIONS INTO ONE SCHEME

Some Christians, who have a liking for Plato on account of his magnificent style and the truths which he now and then uttered, say that he even held an opinion similar to our own regarding the resurrection of the dead. Cicero, however, alluding to this in his Republic, asserts that Plato meant it rather as a playful fancy than as a reality; for he introduces a man who had come to life again, and gave a narrative of his experience in corroboration of the doctrines of Plato. Labeo, too, says that two men died on one day, and met at a cross-road, and that, being afterwards ordered to return to their bodies, they agreed to be friends for life, and were so till they died again. But the resurrection which these writers instance resembles that of those persons whom we have ourselves known to rise again, and who came back indeed to this life, but not so as never to die again. Marcus Varro, however, in his work On the Origin of the Roman People, records something more remarkable; I think his own words should be given. “Certain astrologers,” he says, “have written that men are destined to a new birth, which the Greeks call palingenesy. This will take place after four hundred and forty years have elapsed; and then the same soul and the same body, which were formerly united in the person, shall again be reunited.” This Varro, indeed, or those nameless astrologers,—for he does not give us the names of the men whose statement he cites,—have affirmed what is indeed not altogether true; for once the souls have returned to the bodies they wore, they shall never afterwards leave them. Yet what they say upsets and demolishes much of that idle talk of our adversaries about the impossibility of the resurrection. For those who have been or are of this opinion, have not thought it possible that bodies which have dissolved into air, or dust, or ashes, or water, or into the bodies of the beasts or even of the men that fed on them, should be restored again to that which they formerly were. And therefore, if Plato and Porphyry, or rather, if their disciples now living, agree with us that holy souls shall return to the body, as Plato says, and that, nevertheless, they shall not return to misery, as Porphyry maintains,—if they accept the consequence of these two propositions which is taught by the Christian faith, that they shall receive bodies in which they may live eternally without suffering any misery,—let them also adopt from Varro the opinion that they shall return to the same bodies as they were formerly in, and thus the whole question of the eternal resurrection of the body shall be resolved out of their own mouths.

CHAPTER 29

OF THE BEATIFIC VISION

And now let us consider, with such ability as God may vouchsafe, how the saints shall be employed when they are clothed in immortal and spiritual bodies, and when the flesh shall live no longer in a fleshly but a spiritual fashion. And indeed, to tell the truth, I am at a loss to understand the nature of that employment, or, shall I rather say, repose and ease, for it has never come within the range of my bodily senses. And if I should speak of my mind or understanding, what is our understanding in comparison of its excellence? For then shall be that "peace of God which," as the apostle says, "passeth all understanding,"—that is to say, all human, and perhaps all angelic understanding, but certainly not the divine. That it passeth ours there is no doubt; but if it passeth that of the angels,—and he who says "all understanding" seems to make no exception in their favor,—then we must understand him to mean that neither we nor the angels can understand, as God understands, the peace which God Himself enjoys. Doubtless this passeth all understanding but His own. But as we shall one day be made to participate, according to our slender capacity, in His peace, both in ourselves, and with our neighbor, and with God our chief good, in this respect the angels understand the peace of God in their own measure, and men too, though now far behind them, whatever spiritual advance they have made. For we must remember how great a man he was who said, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part, until that which is perfect is come;" and "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face." Such also is now the vision of the holy angels, who are also called our angels, because we, being rescued out of the power of darkness, and receiving the earnest of the Spirit, are translated into the kingdom of Christ, and already begin to belong to those angels with whom we shall enjoy that holy and most delightful city of God of which we have now written so much. Thus, then, the angels of God are our angels, as Christ is God's and also ours. They are God's, because they have not abandoned Him; they are ours, because we are their fellow-citizens. The Lord Jesus also said, "See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always see the face of my Father which is in heaven." As, then, they see, so shall we also see; but not yet do we thus see. Wherefore the apostle uses the words cited a little ago, "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face." This vision is reserved as the reward of our faith; and of it the Apostle John also says, "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” By “the face” of God we are to understand His manifestation, and not a part of the body similar to that which in our bodies we call by that name.

And so, when I am asked how the saints shall be employed in that spiritual body, I do not say what I see, but I say what I believe, according to that which I read in the psalm, “I believed, therefore have I spoken.” I say, then, they shall in the body see God; but whether they shall see Him by means of the body, as now we see the sun, moon, stars, sea, earth, and all that is in it, that is a difficult question. For it is hard to say that the saints shall then have such bodies that they shall not be able to shut and open their eyes as they please; while it is harder still to say that every one who shuts his eyes shall lose the vision of God. For if the prophet Elisha, though at a distance, saw his servant Gehazi, who thought that his wickedness would escape his master’s observation and accepted gifts from Naaman the Syrian, whom the prophet had cleansed from his foul leprosy, how much more shall the saints in the spiritual body see all things, not only though their eyes be shut, but though they themselves be at a great distance? For then shall be “that which is perfect,” of which the apostle says, “We know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” Then, that he may illustrate as well as possible, by a simile, how superior the future life is to the life now lived, not only by ordinary men, but even by the foremost of the saints, he says, “When I was a child, I understood as a child, I spake as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” If, then, even in this life, in which the prophetic power of remarkable men is no more worthy to be compared to the vision of the future life than childhood is to manhood, Elisha, though distant from his servant, saw him accepting gifts, shall we say that when that which is perfect is come, and the corruptible body no longer oppresses the soul, but is incorruptible and offers no impediment to it, the saints shall need bodily eyes to see, though Elisha had no need of them to see his servant? For, following the Septuagint version, these are the prophet’s words: “Did not my heart go with thee, when the man came out of his chariot to meet thee, and thou tookedst his gifts?” Or, as the presbyter

Jerome rendered it from the Hebrew, “Was not my heart present when the man turned from his chariot to meet thee?” The prophet said that he saw this with his heart, miraculously aided by God, as no one can doubt. But how much more abundantly shall the saints enjoy this gift when God shall be all in all? Nevertheless the bodily eyes also shall have their office and their place, and shall be used by the spirit through the spiritual body. For the prophet did not forego the use of his eyes for seeing what was before them, though he did not need them to see his absent servant, and though he could have seen these present objects in spirit, and with his eyes shut, as he saw things far distant in a place where he himself was not. Far be it, then, from us to say that in the life to come the saints shall not see God when their eyes are shut, since they shall always see Him with the spirit.

But the question arises, whether, when their eyes are open, they shall see Him with the bodily eye? If the eyes of the spiritual body have no more power than the eyes which we now possess, manifestly God cannot be seen with them. They must be of a very different power if they can look upon that incorporeal nature which is not contained in any place, but is all in every place. For though we say that God is in heaven and on earth, as He, Himself says by the prophet, “I fill heaven and earth,” we do not mean that there is one part of God in heaven and another part on earth; but He is all in heaven and all on earth, not at alternate intervals of time, but both at once, as no bodily nature can be. The eye, then, shall have a vastly superior power,—the power not of keen sight, such as is ascribed to serpents or eagles, for however keenly these animals see, they can discern nothing but bodily substances,—but the power of seeing things incorporeal. Possibly it was this great power of vision which was temporarily communicated to the eyes of the holy Job while yet in this mortal body, when he says to God, “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and melt away, and count myself dust and ashes;” although there is no reason why we should not understand this of the eye of the heart, of which the apostle says, “Having the eyes of your heart illuminated.” But that God shall be seen with these eyes no Christian doubts who believingly accepts what our God and Master says, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” But whether in the future life God shall also be seen with the bodily eye, this is now our question.

The expression of Scripture, “And all flesh shall see the salvation of God,” may without difficulty be understood as if it were said, “And every man shall see the Christ of God.” And He certainly was seen in the body, and shall be seen in the body when He judges quick and dead. And that Christ is the salvation of God, many other passages of Scripture witness, but especially the words of the venerable Simeon, who, when he had received into his hands the infant Christ, said, “Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.” As for the words of the above-mentioned Job, as they are found in the Hebrew manuscripts, “And in my flesh I shall see God,” no doubt they were a prophecy of the resurrection of the flesh; yet he does not say “by the flesh.” And indeed, if he had said this, it would still be possible that Christ was meant by “God;” for Christ shall be seen by the flesh in the flesh. But even understanding it of God, it is only equivalent to saying, I shall be in the flesh when I see God. Then the apostle’s expression, “face to face,” does not oblige us to believe that we shall see God by the bodily face in which are the eyes of the body, for we shall see Him without intermission in spirit. And if the apostle had not referred to the face of the inner man, he would not have said, “But we, with unveiled face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord.” In the same sense we understand what the Psalmist sings, “Draw near unto Him, and be enlightened; and your faces shall not be ashamed.” For it is by faith we draw near to God, and faith is an act of the spirit, not of the body. But as we do not know what degree of perfection the spiritual body shall attain,—for here we speak of a matter of which we have no experience, and upon which the authority of Scripture does not definitely pronounce,—it is necessary that the words of the Book of Wisdom be illustrated in us: “The thoughts of mortal men are timid, and our fore-castings uncertain.”

For if that reasoning of the philosophers, by which they attempt to make out that intelligible or mental objects are so seen by the mind, and sensible or bodily objects so seen by the body, that the former cannot be discerned by the mind through the body, nor the latter by the mind itself without the body,—if this reasoning were trustworthy, then it would certainly follow that God could not be seen by the eye even of a spiritual body. But this reasoning is exploded both by true reason and by prophetic authority. For who is so little acquainted with the truth as to say that God has no cognisance of sensible objects? Has He therefore a body, the eyes of which give Him this knowledge? Moreover, what we have just been relating of the prophet Elisha, does this not sufficiently show that bodily things can be discerned by the spirit without the help of the body? For when that servant received the gifts, certainly this was a bodily or material transaction, yet the prophet saw it not by the body, but by the spirit. As, therefore, it is agreed that bodies are seen by the spirit, what if the power of the spiritual body shall be so great that spirit also is seen by the body? For God is a spirit. Besides, each man recognizes his own life—that life by which he now lives in the body, and which vivifies these earthly members and causes them to grow—by an interior sense, and not by his bodily eye; but the life of other men, though it is invisible, he sees with the bodily eye. For how do we distinguish between living and dead bodies, except by seeing at once both the body and the life which we cannot see save by the eye? But a life without a body we cannot see thus.

Wherefore it may very well be, and it is thoroughly credible, that we shall in the future world see the material forms of the new heavens and the new earth in such a way that we shall most distinctly recognize God everywhere present and governing all things, material as well as spiritual, and shall see Him, not as now we understand the invisible things of God, by the things which are made, and see Him darkly, as in a mirror, and in part, and rather by faith than by bodily vision of material appearances, but by means of the bodies we shall wear and which we shall see wherever we turn our eyes. As we do not believe, but see that the living men around us who are exercising vital functions are alive, though we cannot see their life without their bodies, but see it most distinctly by means of their bodies, so, wherever we shall look with those spiritual eyes of our future bodies, we shall then, too, by means of bodily substances behold God, though a spirit, ruling all things. Either, therefore, the eyes shall possess some quality similar to that of the mind, by which they may be able to discern spiritual things, and among these God,—a supposition for which it is difficult or even impossible to find any support in Scripture,—or, which is more easy to comprehend, God will be so known by us, and shall be so much before us, that we shall see

Him by the spirit in ourselves, in one another, in Himself, in the new heavens and the new earth, in every created thing which shall then exist; and also by the body we shall see Him in every body which the keen vision of the eye of the spiritual body shall reach. Our thoughts also shall be visible to all, for then shall be fulfilled the words of the apostle, “Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the thoughts of the heart, and then shall every one have praise of God.”

CHAPTER 30

OF THE ETERNAL FELICITY OF THE CITY OF GOD, AND OF THE PERPETUAL SABBATH

How great shall be that felicity, which shall be tainted with no evil, which shall lack no good, and which shall afford leisure for the praises of God, who shall be all in all! For I know not what other employment there can be where no lassitude shall slacken activity, nor any want stimulate to labor. I am admonished also by the sacred song, in which I read or hear the words, “Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, O Lord; they will be still praising Thee.” All the members and organs of the incorruptible body, which now we see to be suited to various necessary uses, shall contribute to the praises of God; for in that life necessity shall have no place, but full, certain, secure, everlasting felicity. For all those parts of the bodily harmony, which are distributed through the whole body, within and without, and of which I have just been saying that they at present elude our observation, shall then be discerned; and, along with the other great and marvellous discoveries which shall then kindle rational minds in praise of the great Artificer, there shall be the enjoyment of a beauty which appeals to the reason. What power of movement such bodies shall possess, I have not the audacity rashly to define, as I have not the ability to conceive. Nevertheless I will say that in any case, both in motion and at rest, they shall be, as in their appearance, seemly; for into that state nothing which is unseemly shall be admitted. One thing is certain, the body shall forthwith be wherever the spirit wills, and the spirit shall will nothing which is unbecoming either to the spirit or to the body. True honor shall be there, for it shall be denied to none who is worthy, nor yielded to any unworthy; neither shall any unworthy person so much as sue for it, for none but the worthy shall be there. True peace shall be there, where no one shall suffer opposition either from himself or any other. God Himself, who is the Author of virtue, shall there be its reward; for, as there is nothing greater or better, He has promised Himself. What else was meant by His word through the prophet, “I will be your God, and ye shall be my people,” than, I shall be their satisfaction, I shall be all that men honorably desire,—life, and health, and nourishment, and plenty, and glory, and honor, and peace, and all good things? This, too, is the right interpretation of the saying of the apostle, “That God may be all in all.” He shall be the end of our desires who shall be seen without end, loved without cloy, praised without weariness. This outgoing of affection, this employment, shall certainly be, like eternal life itself, common to all.

But who can conceive, not to say describe, what degrees of honor and glory shall be awarded to the various degrees of merit? Yet it cannot be doubted that there shall be degrees. And in that blessed city there shall be this great blessing, that no inferior shall envy any superior, as now the archangels are not envied by the angels, because no one will wish to be what he has not received, though bound in strictest concord with him who has received; as in the body the finger does not seek to be the eye, though both members are harmoniously included in the complete structure of the body. And thus, along with his gift, greater or less, each shall receive this further gift of contentment to desire no more than he has.

Neither are we to suppose that because sin shall have no power to delight them, free will must be withdrawn. It will, on the contrary, be all the more truly free, because set free from delight in sinning to take unfailing delight in not sinning. For the first freedom of will which man received when he was created upright consisted in an ability not to sin, but also in an ability to sin; whereas this last freedom of will shall be superior, inasmuch as it shall not be able to sin. This, indeed, shall not be a natural ability, but the gift of God. For it is one thing to be God, another thing to be a partaker of God. God by nature cannot sin, but the partaker of God receives this inability from God. And in this divine gift there was to be observed this gradation, that man should first receive a free will by which he was able not to sin, and at last a free will by which he was not able to sin,—the former being adapted to the acquiring of merit, the latter to the enjoying of the reward. But the nature thus constituted, having sinned when it had the ability to do so, it is by a more abundant grace that it is delivered so as to reach that freedom in which it cannot sin. For as the first immortality which Adam lost by sinning consisted in his being able not to die, while the last shall consist in his not being able to die; so the first free will consisted in his being able not to sin, the last in his not being able to sin. And thus piety and justice shall be as indefeasible as happiness. For certainly by sinning we lost both piety and happiness; but when we lost happiness, we did not lose the love of it. Are we to say that God Himself is not free because He cannot sin? In that city, then, there shall be free will, one in all the citizens, and indivisible in each, delivered from all ill, filled with all good, enjoying indefeasibly the delights of eternal joys, oblivious of sins, oblivious of sufferings, and yet not so oblivious of its deliverance as to be ungrateful to its Deliverer.

The soul, then, shall have an intellectual remembrance of its past ills; but, so far as regards sensible experience, they shall be quite forgotten. For a skillful physician knows, indeed, professionally almost all diseases; but experimentally he is ignorant of a great number which he himself has never suffered from. As, therefore, there are two ways of knowing evil things,—one by mental insight, the other by sensible experience, for it is one thing to understand all vices by the wisdom of a cultivated mind, another to understand them by the foolishness of an abandoned life,—so also there are two ways of forgetting evils. For a well-instructed and learned man forgets them one way, and he who has experimentally suffered from them forgets them another,—the former by neglecting what he has learned, the latter by escaping what he has suffered. And in this latter way the saints shall forget their past ills, for they shall have so thoroughly escaped them all, that they shall be quite blotted out of their experience. But their intellectual knowledge, which shall be great, shall keep them acquainted not only with their own past woes, but with the eternal sufferings of the lost. For if they were not to know that they had been miserable, how could they, as the Psalmist says, for ever sing the mercies of God? Certainly that city shall have no greater joy than the celebration of the grace of Christ, who redeemed us by His blood. There shall be accomplished the words of the psalm, “Be still, and know that I am God.” There shall be the great Sabbath which has no evening, which God celebrated among His first works, as it is written, “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it He had rested from all His work which God began to make.” For we shall ourselves be the seventh day, when we shall be filled and replenished with God’s blessing and sanctification. There shall we be still, and know that He is God; that He is that which we ourselves aspired to be when we fell away from Him, and listened to the voice of the seducer, “Ye shall be as gods,” and so abandoned God, who would have made us as gods, not by deserting Him, but by participating in Him. For without Him what have we accomplished, save to perish in His anger? But when we are restored by Him, and perfected with greater grace, we shall have eternal leisure to see that He is God, for we shall be full of Him when He shall be all in all. For even our good works, when they are understood to be rather His than ours, are imputed to us that we may enjoy this Sabbath rest. For if we attribute them to ourselves, they shall be servile; for it is said of the Sabbath, “Ye shall do no servile work in it.” Wherefore also it is said by Ezekiel the prophet, “And I gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctify them.” This knowledge shall be perfected when we shall be perfectly at rest, and shall perfectly know that He is God.

This Sabbath shall appear still more clearly if we count the ages as days, in accordance with the periods of time defined in Scripture, for that period will be found to be the seventh. The first age, as the first day, extends from Adam to the deluge; the second from the deluge to Abraham, equalling the first, not in length of time, but in the number of generations, there being ten in each. From Abraham to the advent of Christ there are, as the evangelist Matthew calculates, three periods, in each of which are fourteen generations,—one period from Abraham to David, a second from David to the captivity, a third from the captivity to the birth of Christ in the flesh. There are thus five ages in all. The sixth is now passing, and cannot be measured by any number of generations, as it has been said, “It is not for you to know the times, which the Father hath put in His own power.” After this period God shall rest as on the seventh day, when He shall give us (who shall be the seventh day) rest in Himself. But there is not now space to treat of these ages; suffice it to say that the seventh shall be our Sabbath, which shall be brought to a close, not by an evening, but by the Lord’s day, as an eighth and eternal day, consecrated by the resurrection of Christ, and prefiguring the eternal repose not only of the spirit, but also of the body. There we shall rest and see, see and love, love and praise. This is what shall be in the end without end. For what other end do we propose to ourselves than to attain to the kingdom of which there is no end?

I think I have now, by God’s help, discharged my obligation in writing this large work. Let those who think I have said too little, or those who think I have said too much, forgive me; and let those who think I have said just enough join me in giving thanks to God. Amen.

THE CONFESSIONS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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THE CONFESSIONS OF SAINT AUGUSTINE

TRANSLATED BY EDWARD BOUVERIE PUSEY

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BOOK I

CHAPTER I

HE PROCLAIMS THE GREATNESS OF GOD, WHOM HE DESIRES TO SEEK AND INVOKE, BEING AWAKENED BY HIM.

Great art Thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is Thy power, and Thy wisdom infinite. And Thee would man praise; man, but a particle of Thy creation; man, that bears about him his mortality, the witness of his sin, the witness that Thou resistest the proud: yet would man praise Thee; he, but a particle of Thy creation. Thou awakest us to delight in Thy praise; for Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it repose in Thee. Grant me, Lord, to know and understand which is first, to call on Thee or to praise Thee? and, again, to know Thee or to call on Thee? for who can call on Thee, not knowing Thee? for he that knoweth Thee not, may call on Thee as other than Thou art. Or, is it rather, that we call on Thee that we may know Thee? but how shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? or how shall they believe without a preacher? and they that seek the Lord shall praise Him: for they that seek shall find Him, and they that find shall praise Him. I will seek Thee, Lord, by calling on Thee; and will call on Thee, believing in Thee; for to us hast Thou been preached. My faith, Lord, shall call on Thee, which Thou hast given me, wherewith Thou hast inspired me, through the Incarnation of Thy Son, through the ministry of the Preacher.

CHAPTER II

THAT THE GOD WHOM WE INVOKE IS IN US, AND WE IN HIM.

And how shall I call upon my God, my God and Lord, since, when I call for Him, I shall be calling Him to myself? and what room is there within me, whither my God can come into me? whither can God come into me, God who made heaven and earth? is there, indeed, O Lord my God, aught in me that can contain Thee? do then heaven and earth, which Thou hast made, and wherein Thou hast made me, contain Thee? or, because nothing which exists could exist without Thee, doth therefore whatever exists contain Thee? Since, then, I too exist, why do I seek that Thou shouldest enter into me, who were not, wert Thou not in me? Why? because I am not gone down in hell, and yet Thou art there also. For if I go down into hell, Thou art there. I could not be then, O my God, could not be at all, wert Thou not in me; or, rather, unless I were in Thee, of whom are all things, by whom are all things, in whom are all things? Even so, Lord, even so. Whither do I call Thee, since I am in Thee? or whence canst Thou enter into me? for whither can I go beyond heaven and earth, that thence my God should come into me, who hath said, I fill the heaven and the earth.

CHAPTER III

EVERYWHERE GOD WHOLLY FILLETH ALL THINGS, BUT NEITHER HEAVEN NOR EARTH CONTAINETH HIM.

Do the heaven and earth then contain Thee, since Thou fillest them? or dost Thou fill them and yet overflow, since they do not contain Thee? And whither, when the heaven and the earth are filled, pourest Thou forth the remainder of Thyself? or hast Thou no need that aught contain Thee, who containest all things, since what Thou fillest Thou fillest by containing it? for the vessels which Thou fillest uphold Thee not, since, though they were broken, Thou wert not poured out. And when Thou art poured out on us, Thou art not cast down, but Thou upliftest us; Thou art not dissipated, but Thou gatherest us. But Thou who fillest all things, fillest Thou them with Thy whole self? or, since all things cannot contain Thee wholly, do they contain part of Thee? and all at once the same part? or each its own part, the greater more, the smaller less? And is, then one part of Thee greater, another less? or, art Thou wholly every where, while nothing contains Thee wholly?

CHAPTER IV

THE MAJESTY OF GOD IS SUPREME, AND HIS VIRTUES INEXPLICABLE

What art Thou then, my God? what, but the Lord God? For who is Lord but the Lord? or who is God save our God? Most highest, most good, most potent, most omnipotent; most merciful, yet most just; most hidden, yet most present; most beautiful, yet most strong, stable, yet incomprehensible; unchangeable, yet all-changing; never new, never old; all-renewing, and bringing age upon the proud, and they know it not; ever working, ever at rest; still gathering, yet nothing lacking; supporting, filling, and overspreading; creating, nourishing, and maturing; seeking, yet having all things. Thou lovest, without passion; art jealous, without anxiety; repentest, yet grievest not; art angry, yet serene; changest Thy works, Thy purpose unchanged; receivest again what Thou findest, yet didst never lose; never in need, yet rejoicing in gains; never covetous, yet exacting usury. Thou receivest over and above, that Thou mayest owe; and who hath aught that is not Thine? Thou payest debts, owing nothing; remittest debts, losing nothing. And what had I now said, my God, my life, my holy joy? or what saith any man when he speaks of Thee? Yet woe to him that speaketh not, since mute are even the most eloquent.

CHAPTER V

HE SEEKS REST IN GOD, AND PARDON OF HIS SINS.

Oh! that I might repose on Thee! Oh! that Thou wouldest enter into my heart, and inebriate it, that I may forget my ills, and embrace Thee, my sole good! What art Thou to me? In Thy pity, teach me to utter it. Or what am I to Thee that Thou demandest my love, and, if I give it not, art wroth with me, and threatenest me with grievous woes? Is it then a slight woe to love Thee not? Oh! for Thy mercies' sake, tell me, O Lord my God, what Thou art unto me. Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. So speak, that I may hear. Behold, Lord, my heart is before Thee; open Thou the ears thereof, and say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. After this voice let me haste, and take hold on Thee. Hide not Thy face from me. Let me die- lest I die- only let me see Thy face.

Narrow is the mansion of my soul; enlarge Thou it, that Thou mayest enter in. It is ruinous; repair Thou it. It has that within which must offend Thine eyes; I confess and know it. But who shall cleanse it? or to whom should I cry, save Thee? Lord, cleanse me from my secret faults, and spare Thy servant from the power of the enemy. I believe, and therefore do I speak. Lord, Thou knowest. Have I not confessed against myself my transgressions unto Thee, and Thou, my God, hast forgiven the iniquity of my heart? I contend not in judgment with Thee, who art the truth; I fear to deceive myself; lest mine iniquity lie unto itself. Therefore I contend not in judgment with Thee; for if Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall abide it?

CHAPTER VI

HE DESCRIBES HIS INFANCY, AND LAUDS THE PROTECTION AND ETERNAL PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

Yet suffer me to speak unto Thy mercy, me, dust and ashes. Yet suffer me to speak, since I speak to Thy mercy, and not to scornful man. Thou too, perhaps, despisest me, yet wilt Thou return and have compassion upon me. For what would I say, O Lord my God, but that I know not whence I came into this dying life (shall I call it?) or living death. Then immediately did the comforts of Thy compassion take me up, as I heard (for I remember it not) from the parents of my flesh, out of whose substance Thou didst sometime fashion me. Thus there received me the comforts of woman’s milk. For neither my mother nor my nurses stored their own breasts for me; but Thou didst bestow the food of my infancy through them, according to Thine ordinance, whereby Thou distributest Thy riches through the hidden springs of all things. Thou also gavest me to desire no more than Thou gavest; and to my nurses willingly to give me what Thou gavest them. For they, with a heaven-taught affection, willingly gave me what they abounded with from Thee. For this my good from them, was good for them. Nor, indeed, from them was it, but through them; for from Thee, O God, are all good things, and from my God is all my health. This I since learned, Thou, through these Thy gifts, within me and without, proclaiming Thyself unto me. For then I knew but to suck; to repose in what pleased, and cry at what offended my flesh; nothing more.

Afterwards I began to smile; first in sleep, then waking: for so it was told me of myself, and I believed it; for we see the like in other infants, though of myself I remember it not. Thus, little by little, I became conscious where I was; and to have a wish to express my wishes to those who could content them, and I could not; for the wishes were within me, and they without; nor could they by any sense of theirs enter within my spirit. So I flung about at random limbs and voice, making the few signs I could, and such as I could, like, though in truth very little like, what I wished. And when I was not presently obeyed (my wishes being hurtful or unintelligible), then I was indignant with my elders for not submitting to me, with those owing me no service, for not serving me; and avenged myself on them by tears. Such have I learnt infants to be from observing them; and that I was myself such, they, all unconscious, have shown me better than my nurses who knew it.

And, lo! my infancy died long since, and I live. But Thou, Lord, who for ever livest, and in whom nothing dies: for before the foundation of the worlds, and before all that can be called “before,” Thou art, and art God and Lord of all which Thou hast created: in Thee abide, fixed for ever, the first causes of all things unabiding; and of all things changeable, the springs abide in Thee unchangeable: and in Thee live the eternal reasons of all things unreasoning and temporal. Say, Lord, to me, Thy suppliant; say, all-pitying, to me, Thy pitiable one; say, did my infancy succeed another age of mine that died before it? was it that which I spent within my mother’s womb? for of that I have heard somewhat, and have myself seen women with child? and what before that life again, O God my joy, was I any where or any body? For this have I none to tell me, neither father nor mother, nor experience of others, nor mine own memory. Dost Thou mock me for asking this, and bid me praise Thee and acknowledge Thee, for that I do know?

I acknowledge Thee, Lord of heaven and earth, and praise Thee for my first rudiments of being, and my infancy, whereof I remember nothing; for Thou hast appointed that man should from others guess much as to himself; and believe much on the strength of weak females. Even then I had being and life, and (at my infancy’s close) I could seek for signs whereby to make known to others my sensations. Whence could such a being be, save from Thee, Lord? Shall any be his own artificer? or can there elsewhere be derived any vein, which may stream essence and life into us, save from thee, O Lord, in whom essence and life are one? for Thou Thyself art supremely Essence and Life. For Thou art most high, and art not changed, neither in Thee doth to-day come to a close; yet in Thee doth it come to a close; because all such things also are in Thee. For they had no way to pass away, unless Thou upheldest them. And since Thy years fail not, Thy years are one to-day. How many of ours and our fathers’ years have flowed away through Thy “to-day,” and from it received the measure and the mould of such being as they had; and still others shall flow away, and so receive the mould of their degree of being. But Thou art still the same, and all things of tomorrow, and all beyond, and all of yesterday, and all behind it, Thou hast done to-day. What is it to me, though any comprehend not this? Let him also rejoice and say, What thing is this? Let him rejoice even thus! and be content rather by not discovering to discover Thee, than by discovering not to discover Thee.

CHAPTER VII

HE SHOWS BY EXAMPLE THAT EVEN INFANCY IS PRONE TO SIN.

Hear, O God. Alas, for man’s sin! So saith man, and Thou pitiest him; for Thou madest him, but sin in him Thou madest not. Who remindeth me of the sins of my infancy? for in Thy sight none is pure from sin, not even the infant whose life is but a day upon the earth. Who remindeth me? doth not each little infant, in whom I see what of myself I remember not? What then was my sin? was it that I hung upon the breast and cried? for should I now so do for food suitable to my age, justly should I be laughed at and reproved. What I then did was worthy reproof; but since I could not understand reproof, custom and reason forbade me to be reproved. For those habits, when grown, we root out and cast away. Now no man, though he prunes, wittingly casts away what is good. Or was it then good, even for a while, to cry for what, if given, would hurt? bitterly to resent, that persons free, and its own elders, yea, the very authors of its birth, served it not? that many besides, wiser than it, obeyed not the nod of its good pleasure? to do its best to strike and hurt, because commands were not obeyed, which had been obeyed to its hurt? The weakness then of infant limbs, not its will, is its innocence. Myself have seen and known even a baby envious; it could not speak, yet it turned pale and looked bitterly on its foster-brother. Who knows not this? Mothers and nurses tell you that they allay these things by I know not what remedies. Is that too innocence, when the fountain of milk is flowing in rich abundance, not to endure one to share it, though in extremest need, and whose very life as yet depends thereon? We bear gently with all this, not as being no or slight evils, but because they will disappear as years increase; for, though tolerated now, the very same tempers are utterly intolerable when found in riper years.

Thou, then, O Lord my God, who gavest life to this my infancy, furnishing thus with senses (as we see) the frame Thou gavest, compacting its limbs, ornamenting its proportions, and, for its general good and safety, implanting in it all vital functions, Thou commandest me to praise Thee in these things, to confess unto Thee, and sing unto Thy name, Thou most Highest. For Thou art God, Almighty and Good, even hadst Thou done nought but only this, which none could do but Thou: whose Unity is the mould of all things; who out of Thy own fairness makest all things fair; and orderest all things by Thy law. This age then, Lord, whereof I have no remembrance, which I take on others' word, and guess from other infants that I have passed, true though the guess be, I am yet loth to count in this life of mine which I live in this world. For no less than that which I spent in my mother's womb, is it hid from me in the shadows of forgetfulness. But if I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me, where, I beseech Thee, O my God, where, Lord, or when, was I Thy servant guiltless? But, lo! that period I pass by; and what have I now to do with that, of which I can recall no vestige?

CHAPTER VIII

THAT WHEN A BOY HE LEARNED TO SPEAK, NOT BY ANY SET METHOD, BUT FROM THE ACTS AND WORDS OF HIS PARENTS.

Passing hence from infancy, I came to boyhood, or rather it came to me, displacing infancy. Nor did that depart,- (for whither went it?)- and yet it was no more. For I was no longer a speechless infant, but a speaking boy. This I remember; and have since observed how I learned to speak. It was not that my elders taught me words (as, soon after, other learning) in any set method; but I, longing by cries and broken accents and various motions of my limbs to express my thoughts, that so I might have my will, and yet unable to express all I willed, or to whom I willed, did myself, by the understanding which Thou, my God, gavest me, practise the sounds in my memory. When they named any thing, and as they spoke turned towards it, I saw and remembered that they called what they would point out by the name they uttered. And that they meant this thing and no other was plain from the motion of their body, the natural language, as it were, of all nations, expressed by the countenance, glances of the eye, gestures of the limbs, and tones of the voice, indicating the affections of the mind, as it pursues, possesses, rejects, or shuns. And thus by constantly hearing words, as they occurred in various sentences, I collected gradually for what they stood; and having broken in my mouth to these signs, I thereby gave utterance to my will. Thus I exchanged with those about me these current signs of our wills, and so launched deeper into the stormy intercourse of human life, yet depending on parental authority and the beck of elders.

CHAPTER IX

CONCERNING THE HATRED OF LEARNING, THE LOVE OF PLAY, AND THE FEAR OF BEING WHIPPED NOTICEABLE IN BOYS: AND OF THE FOLLY OF OUR ELDERS AND MASTERS.

O God my God, what miseries and mockeries did I now experience, when obedience to my teachers was proposed to me, as proper in a boy, in order that in this world I might prosper, and excel in tongue-science, which should serve to the “praise of men,” and to deceitful riches. Next I was put to school to get learning, in which I (poor wretch) knew not what use there was; and yet, if idle in learning, I was beaten. For this was judged right by our forefathers; and many, passing the same course before us, framed for us weary paths, through which we were fain to pass; multiplying toil and grief upon the sons of Adam. But, Lord, we found that men called upon Thee, and we learnt from them to think of Thee (according to our powers) as of some great One, who, though hidden from our senses, couldest hear and help us. For so I began, as a boy, to pray to Thee, my aid and refuge; and broke the fetters of my tongue to call on Thee, praying Thee, though small, yet with no small earnestness, that I might not be beaten at school. And when Thou heardest me not (not thereby giving me over to folly), my elders, yea my very parents, who yet wished me no ill, mocked my stripes, my then great and grievous ill.

Is there, Lord, any of soul so great, and cleaving to Thee with so intense affection (for a sort of stupidity will in a way do it); but is there any one who, from cleaving devoutly to Thee, is endued with so great a spirit, that he can think as lightly of the racks and hooks and other torments (against which, throughout all lands, men call on Thee with extreme dread), mocking at those by whom they are feared most bitterly, as our parents mocked the torments which we suffered in boyhood from our masters? For we feared not our torments less; nor prayed we less to Thee to escape them. And yet we sinned, in writing or reading or studying less than was exacted of us. For we wanted not, O Lord, memory or capacity, whereof Thy will gave enough for our age; but our sole delight was play; and for this we were punished by those who yet themselves were doing the like. But elder folks' idleness is called “business”; that of boys, being really the same, is punished by those elders; and none commiserates either boys or men. For will any of sound discretion approve of my being beaten as a boy, because, by playing a ball, I made less progress in studies which I was to learn, only that, as a man, I might play more unbeseemingly? and what else did he who beat me? who, if worsted in some trifling discussion with his fellow-tutor, was more embittered and jealous than I when beaten at ball by a play-fellow?

CHAPTER X

THROUGH A LOVE OF BALL-PLAYING AND SHOWS, HE NEGLECTS HIS STUDIES AND THE INJUNCTIONS OF HIS PARENTS

And yet, I sinned herein, O Lord God, the Creator and Disposer of all things in nature, of sin the Disposer only, O Lord my God, I sinned in transgressing the commands of my parents and those of my masters. For what they, with whatever motive, would have me learn, I might afterwards have put to good use. For I disobeyed, not from a better choice, but from love of play, loving the pride of victory in my contests, and to have my ears tickled with lying fables, that they might itch the more; the same curiosity flashing from my eyes more and more, for the shows and games of my elders. Yet those who give these shows are in such esteem, that almost all wish the same for their children, and yet are very willing that they should be beaten, if those very games detain them from the studies, whereby they would have them attain to be the givers of them. Look with pity, Lord, on these things, and deliver us who call upon Thee now; deliver those too who call not on Thee yet, that they may call on Thee, and Thou mayest deliver them.

CHAPTER XI

SIEZED BY DISEASE, HIS MOTHER BEING TROUBLED, HE EARNESTLY DEMANDS BAPTISM, WHICH ON RECOVERY IS POSTPONED

HIS FATHER NOT AS YET BELIEVING IN CHRIST.

As a boy, then, I had already heard of an eternal life, promised us through the humility of the Lord our God stooping to our pride; and even from the womb of my mother, who greatly hoped in Thee, I was sealed with the mark of His cross and salted with His salt. Thou sawest, Lord, how while yet a boy, being seized on a time with sudden oppression of the stomach, and like near to death- Thou sawest, my God (for Thou wert my keeper), with what eagerness and what faith I sought, from the pious care of my mother and Thy Church, the mother of us all, the baptism of Thy Christ, my God and Lord. Whereupon the mother my flesh, being much troubled (since, with a heart pure in Thy faith, she even more lovingly travailed in birth of my salvation), would in eager haste have provided for my consecration and cleansing by the health-giving sacraments, confessing Thee, Lord Jesus, for the remission of sins, unless I had suddenly recovered. And so, as if I must needs be again polluted should I live, my cleansing was deferred, because the defilements of sin would, after that washing, bring greater and more perilous guilt. I then already believed: and my mother, and the whole household, except my father: yet did not he prevail over the power of my mother's piety in me, that as he did not yet believe, so neither should I. For it was her earnest care that Thou my God, rather than he, shouldest be my father; and in this Thou didst aid her to prevail over her husband, whom she, the better, obeyed, therein also obeying Thee, who hast so commanded.

I beseech Thee, my God, I would fain know, if so Thou willest, for what purpose my baptism was then deferred? was it for my good that the rein was laid loose, as it were, upon me, for me to sin? or was it not laid loose? If not, why does it still echo in our ears on all sides, "Let him alone, let him do as he will, for he is not yet baptised?" but as to bodily health, no one says, "Let him be worse wounded, for he is not yet healed." How much better then, had I been at once healed; and then, by my friends' and my own, my soul's recovered health had been kept safe in Thy keeping who gavest it. Better truly. But how many and great waves of temptation seemed to hang over me after my boyhood! These my mother foresaw; and preferred to expose to them the clay whence I might afterwards be moulded, than the very cast, when made.

CHAPTER XII

BEING COMPELLED, HE GAVE HIS ATTENTION TO LEARNING; BUT FULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THIS WAS THE WORK OF GOD.

In boyhood itself, however (so much less dreaded for me than youth), I loved not study, and hated to be forced to it. Yet I was forced; and this was well done towards me, but I did not well; for, unless forced, I had not learnt. But no one doth well against his will, even though what he doth, be well. Yet neither did they well who forced me, but what was well came to me from Thee, my God. For they were regardless how I should employ what they forced me to learn, except to satiate the insatiate desires of a wealthy beggary, and a shameful glory. But Thou, by whom the very hairs of our head are numbered, didst use for my good the error of all who urged me to learn; and my own, who would not learn, Thou didst use for my punishment- a fit penalty for one, so small a boy and so great a sinner. So by those who did not well, Thou didst well for me; and by my own sin Thou didst justly punish me. For Thou hast commanded, and so it is, that every inordinate affection should be its own punishment.

CHAPTER XIII

HE DELIGHTED IN LATIN STUDIES AND THE EMPTY FABLES OF THE POETS, BUT HATED THE ELEMENTSS OF LITERATURE AND THE GREEK LANGUAGE.

But why did I so much hate the Greek, which I studied as a boy? I do not yet fully know. For the Latin I loved; not what my first masters, but what the so-called grammarians taught me. For those first lessons, reading, writing and arithmetic, I thought as great a burden and penalty as any Greek. And yet whence was this too, but from the sin and vanity of this life, because I was flesh, and a breath that passeth away and cometh not again? For those first lessons were better certainly, because more certain; by them I obtained, and still retain, the power of reading what I find written, and myself writing what I will; whereas in the others, I was forced to learn the wanderings of one Aeneas, forgetful of my own, and to weep for dead Dido, because she killed herself for love; the while, with dry eyes, I endured my miserable self dying among these things, far from Thee, O God my life.

For what more miserable than a miserable being who commiserates not himself; weeping the death of Dido for love to Aeneas, but weeping not his own death for want of love to Thee, O God. Thou light of my heart, Thou bread of my inmost soul, Thou Power who givest vigour to my mind, who quickenest my thoughts, I loved Thee not. I committed fornication against Thee, and all around me thus fornicating there echoed "Well done! well done!" for the friendship of this world is fornication against Thee; and "Well done! well done!" echoes on till one is ashamed not to he thus a man. And for all this I wept not, I who wept for Dido slain, and "seeking by the sword a stroke and wound extreme," myself seeking the while a worse extreme, the extremest and lowest of Thy creatures, having forsaken Thee, earth passing into the earth. And if forbid to read all this, I was grieved that I might not read what grieved me. Madness like this is thought a higher and a richer learning, than that by which I learned to read and write.

But now, my God, cry Thou aloud in my soul; and let Thy truth tell me, "Not so, not so. Far better was that first study." For, lo, I would readily forget the wanderings of Aeneas and all the rest, rather than how to read and write. But over the entrance of the Grammar School is a vail drawn! true; yet is this not so much an emblem of aught recondite, as a cloak of error. Let not those, whom I no longer fear, cry out against me, while I confess to Thee, my God, whatever my soul will, and acquiesce in the condemnation of my evil ways, that I may love Thy good ways. Let not either buyers or sellers of grammar-learning cry out against me. For if I question them whether it be true that Aeneas came on a time to Carthage, as the poet tells, the less learned will reply that they know not, the more learned that he never did. But should I ask with what letters the name "Aeneas" is written, every one who has learnt this will answer me aright, as to the signs which men have conventionally settled. If, again, I should ask which might be forgotten with least detriment to the concerns of life, reading and writing or these poetic fictions? who does not foresee what all must answer who have not wholly forgotten themselves? I sinned, then, when as a boy I preferred those empty to those more profitable studies, or rather loved the one and hated the other. “One and one, two”; “two and two, four”; this was to me a hateful singsong: “the wooden horse lined with armed men,” and “the burning of Troy,” and “Creusa’s shade and sad similitude,” were the choice spectacle of my vanity.

CHAPTER XIV

WHY HE DESPISED GREEK LITERATURE, AND EASILY LEARNED LATIN.

Why then did I hate the Greek classics, which have the like tales? For Homer also curiously wove the like fictions, and is most sweetlyvain, yet was he bitter to my boyish taste. And so I suppose would Virgil be to Grecian children, when forced to learn him as I was Homer. Difficulty, in truth, the difficulty of a foreign tongue, dashed, as it were, with gall all the sweetness of Grecian fable. For not one word of it did I understand, and to make me understand I was urged vehemently with cruel threats and punishments. Time was also (as an infant) I knew no Latin; but this I learned without fear or suffering, by mere observation, amid the caresses of my nursery and jests of friends, smiling and sportively encouraging me. This I learned without any pressure of punishment to urge me on, for my heart urged me to give birth to its conceptions, which I could only do by learning words not of those who taught, but of those who talked with me; in whose ears also I gave birth to the thoughts, whatever I conceived. No doubt, then, that a free curiosity has more force in our learning these things, than a frightful enforcement. Only this enforcement restrains the rovings of that freedom, through Thy laws, O my God, Thy laws, from the master’s cane to the martyr’s trials, being able to temper for us a wholesome bitter, recalling us to Thyself from that deadly pleasure which lures us from Thee.

CHAPTER XV

HE ENTREATS GOD, THAT WHATEVER USEFUL THINGS HE LEARNED AS A BOY MAY BE DEDICATED TO HIM.

Hear, Lord, my prayer; let not my soul faint under Thy discipline, nor let me faint in confessing unto Thee all Thy mercies, whereby Thou hast drawn me out of all my most evil ways, that Thou mightest become a delight to me above all the allurements which I once pursued; that I may most entirely love Thee, and clasp Thy hand with all my affections, and Thou mayest yet rescue me from every temptation, even unto the end. For lo, O Lord, my King and my God, for Thy service be whatever useful thing my childhood learned; for Thy service, that I speak, write, read, reckon. For Thou didst grant me Thy discipline, while I was learning vanities; and my sin of delighting in those vanities Thou hast forgiven. In them, indeed, I learnt many a useful word, but these may as well be learned in things not vain; and that is the safe path for the steps of youth.

CHAPTER XVI

HE DISAPPROVES OF THE MODE OF EDUCATING YOUTH, AND HE POINTS OUT WHY WICKEDNESS IS ATTRIBUTED TO THE GODS BY THE POETS.

But woe is thee, thou torrent of human custom! Who shall stand against thee? how long shalt thou not be dried up? how long roll the sons of Eve into that huge and hideous ocean, which even they scarcely overpass who climb the cross? Did not I read in thee of Jove the thunderer and the adulterer? both, doubtless, he could not be; but so the feigned thunder might countenance and pander to real adultery. And now which of our gowned masters lends a sober ear to one who from their own school cries out, “These were Homer’s fictions, transferring things human to the gods; would he had brought down things divine to us!” Yet more truly had he said, “These are indeed his fictions; but attributing a divine nature to wicked men, that crimes might be no longer crimes, and whoso commits them might seem to imitate not abandoned men, but the celestial gods.”

And yet, thou hellish torrent, into thee are cast the sons of men with rich rewards, for compassing such learning; and a great solemnity is made of it, when this is going on in the forum, within sight of laws appointing a salary beside the scholar’s payments; and thou lashest thy rocks and roarest, “Hence words are learnt; hence eloquence; most necessary to gain your ends, or maintain opinions.” As if we should have never known such words as “golden shower,” “lap,” “beguile,” “temples of the heavens,” or others in that passage, unless Terence had brought a lewd youth upon the stage, setting up Jupiter as his example of seduction.

“Viewing a picture, where the tale was drawn,
Of Jove’s descending in a golden shower

To Danae’s lap a woman to beguile.”

And then mark how he excites himself to lust as by celestial authority:

“And what God? Great Jove,
Who shakes heaven’s highest temples with his thunder,
And I, poor mortal man, not do the same!
I did it, and with all my heart I did it.”

Not one whit more easily are the words learnt for all this vileness; but by their means the vileness is committed with less shame. Not that I blame the words, being, as it were, choice and precious vessels; but that wine of error which is drunk to us in them by intoxicated teachers; and if we, too, drink not, we are beaten, and have no sober judge to whom we may appeal. Yet, O my God (in whose presence I now without hurt may remember this), all this unhappily I learnt willingly with great delight, and for this was pronounced a hopeful boy.

CHAPTER XVII

HE CONTINUES ON THE UNHAPPY METHOD OF TRAINING YOUTH IN LITERARY SUBJECTS.

Bear with me, my God, while I say somewhat of my wit, Thy gift, and on what dotages I wasted it. For a task was set me, troublesome enough to my soul, upon terms of praise or shame, and fear of stripes, to speak the words of Juno, as she raged and mourned that she could not

“This Trojan prince from Latinum turn.”

Which words I had heard that Juno never uttered; but we were forced to go astray in the footsteps of these poetic fictions, and to say in prose much what he expressed in verse. And his speaking was most applauded, in whom the passions of rage and grief were most preeminent, and clothed in the most fitting language, maintaining the dignity of the character. What is it to me, O my true life, my God, that my declamation was applauded above so many of my own age and class? is not all this smoke and wind? and was there nothing else whereon to exercise my wit and tongue? Thy praises, Lord, Thy praises might have stayed the yet tender shoot of my heart by the prop of Thy Scriptures; so had it not trailed away amid these empty trifles, a defiled prey for the fowls of the air. For in more ways than one do men sacrifice to the rebellious angels.

CHAPTER XVIII

MEN DESIRE TO OBSERVE THE RULES OF LEARNING, BUT NEGLECT THE ETERNAL RULES OF EVERLASTING SAFETY.

But what marvel that I was thus carried away to vanities, and went out from Thy presence, O my God, when men were set before me as models, who, if in relating some action of theirs, in itself not ill, they committed some barbarism or solecism, being censured, were abashed; but when in rich and adomed and well-ordered discourse they related their own disordered life, being bepraised, they gloried? These things Thou seest, Lord, and holdest Thy peace; long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. Wilt Thou hold Thy peace for ever? and even now Thou drawest out of this horrible gulf the soul that seeketh Thee, that thirsteth for Thy pleasures, whose heart saith unto Thee, I have sought Thy face; Thy face, Lord, will I seek. For darkened affections is removal from Thee. For it is not by our feet, or change of place, that men leave Thee, or return unto Thee. Or did that Thy younger son look out for horses or chariots, or ships, fly with visible wings, or journey by the motion of his limbs, that he might in a far country waste in riotous living all Thou gavest at his departure? a loving Father, when Thou gavest, and more loving unto him, when he returned empty. So then in lustful, that is, in darkened affections, is the true distance from Thy face.

Behold, O Lord God, yea, behold patiently as Thou art wont how carefully the sons of men observe the covenanted rules of letters and syllables received from those who spake before them, neglecting the eternal covenant of everlasting salvation received from Thee. Insomuch, that a teacher or learner of the hereditary laws of pronunciation will more offend men by speaking without the aspirate, of a “uman being,” in despite of the laws of grammar, than if he, a “human being,” hate a “human being” in despite of Thine. As if any enemy could be more hurtful than the hatred with which he is incensed against him; or could wound more deeply him whom he persecutes, than he wounds his own soul by his enmity. Assuredly no science of letters can be so innate as the record of conscience, “that he is doing to another what from another he would be loth to suffer.” How deep are Thy ways, O God, Thou only great, that sittest silent on high and by an unwearied law dispensing penal blindness to lawless desires. In quest of the fame of eloquence, a man standing before a human judge, surrounded by a human throng, declaiming against his enemy with fiercest hatred, will take heed most watchfully, lest, by an error of the tongue, he murder the word “human being”; but takes no heed, lest, through the fury of his spirit, he murder the real human being.

This was the world at whose gate unhappy I lay in my boyhood; this the stage where I had feared more to commit a barbarism, than having committed one, to envy those who had not. These things I speak and confess to Thee, my God; for which I had praise from them, whom I then thought it all virtue to please. For I saw not the abyss of vileness, wherein I was cast away from Thine eyes. Before them what more foul than I was already, displeasing even such as myself? with innumerable lies deceiving my tutor, my masters, my parents, from love of play, eagerness to see vain shows and restlessness to imitate them! Thefts also I committed, from my parents’ cellar and table, enslaved by greediness, or that I might have to give to boys, who sold me their play, which all the while they liked no less than I. In this play, too, I often sought unfair conquests, conquered myself meanwhile by vain desire of preeminence. And what could I so ill endure, or, when I detected it, upbraided I so fiercely, as that I was doing to others? and for which if, detected, I was upbraided, I chose rather to quarrel than to yield. And is this the innocence of boyhood? Not so, Lord, not so; I cry Thy mercy, my God. For these very sins, as riper years succeed, these very sins are transferred from tutors and masters, from nuts and balls and sparrows, to magistrates and kings, to gold and manors and slaves, just as severer punishments displace the cane. It was the low stature then of childhood which Thou our King didst commend as an emblem of lowliness, when Thou saidst, Of such is the kingdom of heaven.

Yet, Lord, to Thee, the Creator and Governor of the universe, most excellent and most good, thanks were due to Thee our God, even hadst Thou destined for me boyhood only. For even then I was, I lived, and felt; and had an implanted providence over my well-being- a trace of that mysterious Unity whence I was derived; I guarded by the inward sense the entireness of my senses, and in these minute pursuits, and in my thoughts on things minute, I learnt to delight in truth, I hated to be deceived, had a vigorous memory, was gifted with speech, was soothed by friendship, avoided pain, baseness, ignorance. In so small a creature, what was not wonderful, not admirable? But all are gifts of my God: it was not I who gave them me; and good these are, and these together are myself. Good, then, is He that made me, and He is my good; and before Him will I exult for every good which of a boy I had. For it was my sin, that not in Him, but in His creatures- myself and others- I sought for pleasures, sublimities, truths, and so fell headlong into sorrows, confusions, errors. Thanks be to Thee, my joy and my glory and my confidence, my God, thanks be to Thee for Thy gifts; but do Thou preserve them to me. For so wilt Thou preserve me, and those things shall be enlarged and perfected which Thou hast given me, and I myself shall be with Thee, since even to be Thou hast given me.

BOOK II

CHAPTER I

HE DEPLORES THE WICKEDNESS OF HIS YOUTH.

I will now call to mind my past foulness, and the carnal corruptions of my soul; not because I love them, but that I may love Thee, O my God. For love of Thy love I do it; reviewing my most wicked ways in the very bitterness of my remembrance, that Thou mayest grow sweet unto me (Thou sweetness never failing, Thou blissful and assured sweetness); and gathering me again out of that my dissipation, wherein I was torn piecemeal, while turned from Thee, the One Good, I lost myself among a multiplicity of things. For I even burnt in my youth heretofore, to be satiated in things below; and I dared to grow wild again, with these various and shadowy loves: my beauty consumed away, and I stank in Thine eyes; pleasing myself, and desirous to please in the eyes of men.

CHAPTER II

STRICKEN WITH EXCEEDING GRIEF, HE REMEMBERS THE DISSOLUTE PASSIONS IN WHICH, IN HIS SIXTEENTH YEAR, HE USED TO INDULGE.

And what was it that I delighted in, but to love, and be loved? but I kept not the measure of love, of mind to mind, friendship's bright boundary: but out of the muddy concupiscence of the flesh, and the bubblings of youth, mists fumed up which beclouded and overcast my heart, that I could not discern the clear brightness of love from the fog of lustfulness. Both did confusedly boil in me, and hurried my unstayed youth over the precipice of unholy desires, and sunk me in a gulf of flagitiousnesses. Thy wrath had gathered over me, and I knew it not. I was grown deaf by the clanking of the chain of my mortality, the punishment of the pride of my soul, and I strayed further from Thee, and Thou lettest me alone, and I was tossed about, and wasted, and dissipated, and I boiled over in my fornications, and Thou heldest Thy peace, O Thou my tardy joy! Thou then heldest Thy peace, and I wandered further and further from Thee, into more and more fruitless seed-plots of sorrows, with a proud dejectedness, and a restless weariness.

Oh! that some one had then attempered my disorder, and turned to account the fleeting beauties of these, the extreme points of Thy creation! had put a bound to their pleasureableness, that so the tides of my youth might have cast themselves upon the marriage shore, if they could not be calmed, and kept within the object of a family, as Thy law prescribes, O Lord: who this way formest the offspring of this our death, being able with a gentle hand to blunt the thorns which were excluded from Thy paradise? For Thy omnipotency is not far from us, even when we be far from Thee. Else ought I more watchfully to have heeded the voice from the clouds: Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh, but I spare you. And it is good for a man not to touch a woman. And, he that is unmarried thinketh of the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but he that is married careth for the things of this world, how he may please his wife.

To these words I should have listened more attentively, and being severed for the kingdom of heaven's sake, had more happily awaited Thy embraces; but I, poor wretch, foamed like a troubled sea, following the rushing of my own tide, forsaking Thee, and exceeded all Thy limits; yet I escaped not Thy scourges. For what mortal can? For Thou wert ever with me mercifully rigorous, and besprinkling with most bitter alloy all my unlawful pleasures: that I might seek pleasures without alloy. But where to find such, I could not discover, save in Thee, O Lord, who teachest by sorrow, and woundest us, to heal; and killest us, lest we die from Thee. Where was I, and how far was I exiled from the delights of Thy house, in that sixteenth year of the age of my flesh, when the madness of lust (to which human shamelessness giveth free licence, though unlicensed by Thy laws) took the rule over me, and I resigned myself wholly to it? My friends meanwhile took no care by marriage to save my fall; their only care was that I should learn to speak excellently, and be a persuasive orator.

CHAPTER III

CONCERNING HIS FATHER, A FREEMAN OF THAGASTE, THE ASSISTER OF HIS SON'S STUDIES, AND ON THE ADMONITIONS OF HIS MOTHER ON THE PRESERVATION OF CHASTITIY.

For that year were my studies intermitted: whilst after my return from Madaura (a neighbour city, whither I had journeyed to learn grammar and rhetoric), the expenses for a further journey to Carthage were being provided for me; and that rather by the resolution than the means of my father, who was but a poor freeman of Thagaste. To whom tell I this? not to Thee, my God; but before Thee to mine own kind, even to that small portion of mankind as may light upon these writings of mine. And to what purpose? that whosoever reads this, may think out of what depths we are to cry unto Thee. For what is nearer to Thine ears than a confessing heart, and a life of faith? Who did not extol my father, for that beyond the ability of his means, he would furnish his son with all necessaries for a far journey for his studies' sake? For many far abler citizens did no such thing for their children. But yet this same father had no concern how I grew towards Thee, or how chaste I were; so that I were but copious in speech, however barren I were to Thy culture, O God, who art the only true and good Lord of Thy field, my heart.

But while in that my sixteenth year I lived with my parents, leaving all school for a while (a season of idleness being interposed through the narrowness of my parents' fortunes), the briers of unclean desires grew rank over my head, and there was no hand to root them out. When that my father saw me at the baths, now growing towards manhood, and endued with a restless youthfulness, he, as already hence anticipating his descendants, gladly told it to my mother; rejoicing in that tumult of the senses wherein the world forgetteth Thee its Creator, and becometh enamoured of Thy creature, instead of Thyself, through the fumes of that invisible wine of its self-will, turning aside and bowing down to the very basest things. But in my mother's breast Thou hadst already begun Thy temple, and the foundation of Thy holy habitation, whereas my father was as yet but a Catechumen, and that but recently. She then was startled with a holy fear and trembling; and though I was not as yet baptised, feared for me those crooked ways in which they walk who turn their back to Thee, and not their face.

Woe is me! and dare I say that Thou heldest Thy peace, O my God, while I wandered further from Thee? Didst Thou then indeed hold Thy peace to me? And whose but Thine were these words which by my mother, Thy faithful one, Thou sangest in my ears? Nothing whereof sunk into my heart, so as to do it. For she wished, and I remember in private with great anxiety warned me, “not to commit fornication; but especially never to defile another man’s wife.” These seemed to me womanish advices, which I should blush to obey. But they were Thine, and I knew it not: and I thought Thou wert silent and that it was she who spake; by whom Thou wert not silent unto me; and in her wast despised by me, her son, the son of Thy handmaid, Thy servant. But I knew it not; and ran headlong with such blindness, that amongst my equals I was ashamed of a less shamelessness, when I heard them boast of their flagitiousness, yea, and the more boasting, the more they were degraded: and I took pleasure, not only in the pleasure of the deed, but in the praise. What is worthy of dispraise but vice? But I made myself worse than I was, that I might not be dispraised; and when in any thing I had not sinned as the abandoned ones, I would say that I had done what I had not done, that I might not seem contemptible in proportion as I was innocent; or of less account, the more chaste.

Behold with what companions I walked the streets of Babylon, and wallowed in the mire thereof, as if in a bed of spices and precious ointments. And that I might cleave the faster to its very centre, the invisible enemy trod me down, and seduced me, for that I was easy to be seduced. Neither did the mother of my flesh (who had now fled out of the centre of Babylon, yet went more slowly in the skirts thereof as she advised me to chastity, so heed what she had heard of me from her husband, as to restrain within the bounds of conjugal affection (if it could not be pared away to the quick) what she felt to be pestilent at present and for the future dangerous. She heeded not this, for she feared lest a wife should prove a clog and hindrance to my hopes. Not those hopes of the world to come, which my mother reposed in Thee; but the hope of learning, which both my parents were too desirous I should attain; my father, because he had next to no thought of Thee, and of me but vain conceits; my mother, because she accounted that those usual courses of learning would not only be no hindrance, but even some furtherance towards attaining Thee. For thus I conjecture, recalling, as well as I may, the disposition of my parents. The reins, meantime, were slackened to me, beyond all temper of due severity, to spend my time in sport, yea, even unto dissoluteness in whatsoever I affected. And in all was a mist, intercepting from me, O my God, the brightness of Thy truth; and mine iniquity burst out as from very fatness.

CHAPTER IV

HE COMMITS THEFT WITH HIS COMPANIONS, NOT URGED ON BY POVERTY, BUT FROM A CERTAIN DISTASTE OF WELL-DOING

Theft is punished by Thy law, O Lord, and the law written in the hearts of men, which iniquity itself effaces not. For what thief will abide a thief? not even a rich thief, one stealing through want. Yet I lusted to thieve, and did it, compelled by no hunger, nor poverty, but through a cloyedness of well-doing, and a pamperedness of iniquity. For I stole that, of which I had enough, and much better. Nor cared I to enjoy what I stole, but joyed in the theft and sin itself. A pear tree there was near our vineyard, laden with fruit, tempting neither for colour nor taste. To shake and rob this, some lewd young fellows of us went, late one night (having according to our pestilent custom prolonged our sports in the streets till then), and took huge loads, not for our eating, but to fling to the very hogs, having only tasted them. And this, but to do what we liked only, because it was misliked. Behold my heart, O God, behold my heart, which Thou hadst pity upon in the bottom of the bottomless pit. Now, behold, let my heart tell Thee what it sought there, that I should be gratuitously evil, having no temptation to ill, but the ill itself. It was foul, and I loved it; I loved to perish, I loved mine own fault, not that for which I was faulty, but my fault itself. Foul soul, falling from Thy firmament to utter destruction; not seeking aught through the shame, but the shame itself!

CHAPTER V

CONCERNING THE MOTIVES TO SIN, WHICH ARE NOT IN THE LOVE OF EVIL, BUT IN THE DESIRE OF OBTAINING THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS.

For there is an attractiveness in beautiful bodies, in gold and silver, and all things; and in bodily touch, sympathy hath much influence, and each other sense hath his proper object answerably tempered. Wordly honour hath also its grace, and the power of overcoming, and of mastery; whence springs also the thirst of revenge. But yet, to obtain all these, we may not depart from Thee, O Lord, nor decline from Thy law. The life also which here we live hath its own enchantment, through a certain proportion of its own, and a correspondence with all things beautiful here below. Human friendship also is endeared with a sweet tie, by reason of the unity formed of many souls. Upon occasion of all these, and the like, is sin committed, while through an immoderate inclination towards these goods of the lowest order, the better and higher are forsaken,- Thou, our Lord God, Thy truth, and Thy law. For these lower things have their delights, but not like my God, who made all things; for in Him doth the righteous delight, and He is the joy of the upright in heart.

When, then, we ask why a crime was done, we believe it not, unless it appear that there might have been some desire of obtaining some of those which we called lower goods, or a fear of losing them. For they are beautiful and comely; although compared with those higher and beatific goods, they be abject and low. A man hath murdered another; why? he loved his wife or his estate; or would rob for his own livelihood; or feared to lose some such things by him; or, wronged, was on fire to be revenged. Would any commit murder upon no cause, delighted simply in murdering? who would believe it? for as for that furious and savage man, of whom it is said that he was gratuitously evil and cruel, yet is the cause assigned; “lest” (saith he) “through idleness hand or heart should grow inactive.” And to what end? that, through that practice of guilt, he might, having taken the city, attain to honours, empire, riches, and be freed from fear of the laws, and his embarrassments from domestic needs, and consciousness of villainies. So then, not even Catiline himself loved his own villainies, but something else, for whose sake he did them.

CHAPTER VI

WHE HE DELIGHTED IN THAT THEFT, WHEN ALL THINGS WHICH UNDER THE APPEARANCE OF GOOD INVITE TO VICE ARE TRUE AND PERFECT IN GOD ALONE.

What then did wretched I so love in thee, thou theft of mine, thou deed of darkness, in that sixteenth year of my age? Lovely thou wert not, because thou wert theft. But art thou any thing, that thus I speak to thee? Fair were the pears we stole, because they were Thy creation, Thou fairest of all, Creator of all, Thou good God; God, the sovereign good and my true good. Fair were those pears, but not them did my wretched soul desire; for I had store of better, and those I gathered, only that I might steal. For, when gathered, I flung them away, my only feast therein being my own sin, which I was pleased to enjoy. For if aught of those pears came within my mouth, what sweetened it was the sin. And now, O Lord my God, I enquire what in that theft delighted me; and behold it hath no loveliness; I mean not such loveliness as in justice and wisdom; nor such as is in the mind and memory, and senses, and animal life of man; nor yet as the stars are glorious and beautiful in their orbs; or the earth, or sea, full of embryo-life, replacing by its birth that which decayeth; nay, nor even that false and shadowy beauty which belongeth to deceiving vices.

For so doth pride imitate exaltedness; whereas Thou alone art God exalted over all. Ambition, what seeks it, but honours and glory? whereas Thou alone art to be honoured above all, and glorious for evermore. The cruelty of the great would fain be feared; but who is to be feared but God alone, out of whose power what can be wrested or withdrawn? when, or where, or whither, or by whom? The tendernesses of the wanton would fain be counted love: yet is nothing more tender than Thy charity; nor is aught loved more healthfully than that Thy truth, bright and beautiful above all. Curiosity makes semblance of a desire of knowledge; whereas Thou supremely knowest all. Yea, ignorance and foolishness itself is cloaked under the name of simplicity and uninjuriousness; because nothing is found more single than Thee: and what less injurious, since they are his own works which injure the sinner? Yea, sloth would fain be at rest; but what stable rest besides the Lord? Luxury affects to be called plenty and abundance; but Thou art the fulness and never-failing plenteousness of incorruptible pleasures. Prodigality presents a shadow of liberality: but Thou art the most overflowing Giver of all good. Covetousness would possess many things; and Thou possessest all things. Envy disputes for excellency: what more excellent than Thou? Anger seeks revenge: who revenges more justly than Thou? Fear startles at things unwonted and sudden, which endangers things beloved, and takes forethought for their safety; but to Thee what unwonted or sudden, or who separateth from Thee what Thou lovest? Or where but with Thee is unshaken safety? Grief pines away for things lost, the delight of its desires; because it would have nothing taken from it, as nothing can from Thee.

Thus doth the soul commit fornication, when she turns from Thee, seeking without Thee, what she findeth not pure and untainted, till she returns to Thee. Thus all pervertedly imitate Thee, who remove far from Thee, and lift themselves up against Thee. But even by thus imitating Thee, they imply Thee to be the Creator of all nature; whence there is no place whither altogether to retire from Thee. What then did I love in that theft? and wherein did I even corruptly and pervertedly imitate my Lord? Did I wish even by stealth to do contrary to Thy law, because by power I could not, so that being a prisoner, I might mimic a maimed liberty by doing with impunity things unpermitted me, a darkened likeness of Thy Omnipotency? Behold, Thy servant, fleeing from his Lord, and obtaining a shadow. O rottenness, O monstrousness of life, and depth of death! could I like what I might not, only because I might not?

CHAPTER VII

HE GIVES THANKS TO GOD FOR THE REMISSION OF HIS SINS, AND REMINDS EVERYONE THAT THE SUPREME GOD MYA HAVE PRESERVED US FROM GREATER SINS.

What shall I render unto the Lord, that, whilst my memory recalls these things, my soul is not affrighted at them? I will love Thee, O Lord, and thank Thee, and confess unto Thy name; because Thou hast forgiven me these so great and heinous deeds of mine. To Thy grace I ascribe it, and to Thy mercy, that Thou hast melted away my sins as it were ice. To Thy grace I ascribe also whatsoever I have not done of evil; for what might I not have done, who even loved a sin for its own sake? Yea, all I confess to have been forgiven me; both what evils I committed by my own wilfulness, and what by Thy guidance I committed not. What man is he, who, weighing his own infirmity, dares to ascribe his purity and innocency to his own strength; that so he should love Thee the less, as if he had less needed Thy mercy, whereby Thou remittest sins to those that turn to Thee? For whosoever, called by Thee, followed Thy voice, and avoided those things which he reads me recalling and confessing of myself, let him not scorn me, who being sick, was cured by that Physician, through whose aid it was that he was not, or rather was less, sick: and for this let him love Thee as much, yea and more; since by whom he sees me to have been recovered from such deep consumption of sin, by Him he sees himself to have been from the like consumption of sin preserved.

CHAPTER VIII

IN HIS THEFT HE LOVED THE COMPANY OF HIS FELLOW-SINNERS.

What fruit had I then (wretched man!) in those things, of the remembrance whereof I am now ashamed? Especially, in that theft which I loved for the theft's sake; and it too was nothing, and therefore the more miserable I, who loved it. Yet alone I had not done it: such was I then, I remember, alone I had never done it. I loved then in it also the company of the accomplices, with whom I did it? I did not then love nothing else but the theft, yea rather I did love nothing else; for that circumstance of the company was also nothing. What is, in truth? who can teach me, save He that enlighteneth my heart, and discovereth its dark corners? What is it which hath come into my mind to enquire, and discuss, and consider? For had I then loved the pears I stole, and wished to enjoy them, I might have done it alone, had the bare commission of the theft sufficed to attain my pleasure; nor needed I have inflamed the itching of my desires by the excitement of accomplices. But since my pleasure was not in those pears, it was in the offence itself, which the company of fellow-sinners occasioned.

CHAPTER IX

IT WAS A PLEASURE TO HIM ALSO TO LAUGH WHEN SERIOUSLY DECEIVING OTHERS.

What then was this feeling? For of a truth it was too foul: and woe was me, who had it. But yet what was it? Who can understand his errors? It was the sport, which as it were tickled our hearts, that we beguiled those who little thought what we were doing, and much disliked it. Why then was my delight of such sort that I did it not alone? Because none doth ordinarily laugh alone? ordinarily no one; yet laughter sometimes masters men alone and singly when on one whatever is with them, if anything very ludicrous presents itself to their senses or mind. Yet I had not done this alone; alone I had never done it. Behold my God, before Thee, the vivid remembrance of my soul; alone, I had never committed that theft wherein what I stole pleased me not, but that I stole; nor had it alone liked me to do it, nor had I done it. O friendship too unfriendly! thou incomprehensible inveigler of the soul, thou greediness to do mischief out of mirth and wantonness, thou thirst of others' loss, without lust of my own gain or revenge: but when it is said, "Let's go, let's do it," we are ashamed not to be shameless.

CHAPTER X

WITH GOD THERE IS TRUE REST AND LIFE UNCHANGING.

Who can disentangle that twisted and intricate knottiness? Foul is it: I hate to think on it, to look on it. But Thee I long for, O Righteousness and Innocency, beautiful and comely to all pure eyes, and of a satisfaction unsating. With Thee is rest entire, and life imperturbable. Whoso enters into Thee, enters into the joy of his Lord: and shall not fear, and shall do excellently in the All-Excellent. I sank away from Thee, and I wandered, O my God, too much astray from Thee my stay, in these days of my youth, and I became to myself a barren land.

BOOK III

CHAPTER I

DELUDED BY AN INSANE LOVE, HE, THOUGH FOUL AND DISHONOURABLE, DESIRES TO BE THOUGHT ELEGANT AND URBANE.

To Carthage I came, where there sang all around me in my ears a cauldron of unholy loves. I loved not yet, yet I loved to love, and out of a deep-seated want, I hated myself for wanting not. I sought what I might love, in love with loving, and safety I hated, and a way without snares. For within me was a famine of that inward food, Thyself, my God; yet, through that famine I was not hungered; but was without all longing for incorruptible sustenance, not because filled therewith, but the more empty, the more I loathed it. For this cause my soul was sickly and full of sores, it miserably cast itself forth, desiring to be scraped by the touch of objects of sense. Yet if these had not a soul, they would not be objects of love. To love then, and to be beloved, was sweet to me; but more, when I obtained to enjoy the person I loved, I defiled, therefore, the spring of friendship with the filth of concupiscence, and I beclouded its brightness with the hell of lustfulness; and thus foul and unseemly, I would fain, through exceeding vanity, be fine and courtly. I fell headlong then into the love wherein I longed to be ensnared. My God, my Mercy, with how much gall didst Thou out of Thy great goodness besprinkle for me that sweetness? For I was both beloved, and secretly arrived at the bond of enjoying; and was with joy fettered with sorrow-bringing bonds, that I might be scourged with the iron burning rods of jealousy, and suspicions, and fears, and angers, and quarrels.

CHAPTER II

IN PUBLIC SPECTACLES HE IS MOVED BY AN EMPTY COMPASSION. HE IS ATTACKED BY A TROUBLESOME SPIRITUAL DISEASE.

Stage-plays also carried me away, full of images of my miseries, and of fuel to my fire. Why is it, that man desires to be made sad, beholding doleful and tragical things, which yet himself would no means suffer? yet he desires as a spectator to feel sorrow at them, this very sorrow is his pleasure. What is this but a miserable madness? for a man is the more affected with these actions, the less free he is from such affections. Howsoever, when he suffers in his own person, it uses to be styled misery: when he compassionates others, then it is mercy. But what sort of compassion is this for feigned and scenical passions? for the auditor is not called on to relieve, but only to grieve: and he applauds the actor of these fictions the more, the more he grieves. And if the calamities of those persons (whether of old times, or mere fiction) be so acted, that the spectator is not moved to tears, he goes away disgusted and criticising; but if he be moved to passion, he stays intent, and weeps for joy.

Are griefs then too loved? Verily all desire joy. Or whereas no man likes to be miserable, is he yet pleased to be merciful? which because it cannot be without passion, for this reason alone are passions loved? This also springs from that vein of friendship. But whither goes that vein? whither flows it? wherefore runs it into that torrent of pitch bubbling forth those monstrous tides of foul lustfulness, into which it is wilfully changed and transformed, being of its own will precipitated and corrupted from its heavenly clearness? Shall compassion then be put away? by no means. Be griefs then sometimes loved. But beware of uncleanness, O my soul, under the guardianship of my God, the God of our fathers, who is to be praised and exalted above all for ever, beware of uncleanness. For I have not now ceased to pity; but then in the theatres I rejoiced with lovers when they wickedly enjoyed one another, although this was imaginary only in the play. And when they lost one another, as if very compassionate, I sorrowed with them, yet had my delight in both. But now I much more pity him that rejoiceth in his wickedness, than him who is thought to suffer hardship, by missing some pernicious pleasure, and the loss of some miserable felicity. This certainly is the truer mercy, but in it grief delights not. For though he that grieves for the miserable, be commended for his office of charity; yet had he, who is genuinely compassionate, rather there were nothing for him to grieve for. For if good will be ill willed (which can never be), then may he, who truly and sincerely commiserates, wish there might be some miserable, that he might commiserate. Some sorrow may then be allowed, none loved. For thus dost Thou, O Lord God, who lovest souls far more purely than we, and hast more incorruptibly pity on them, yet are wounded with no sorrowfulness. And who is sufficient for these things?

But I, miserable, then loved to grieve, and sought out what to grieve at, when in another's and that feigned and personated misery, that acting best pleased me, and attracted me the most vehemently, which drew tears from me. What marvel that an unhappy sheep, straying from Thy flock, and impatient of Thy keeping, I became infected with a foul disease? And hence the love of griefs; not such as should sink deep into me; for I loved not to suffer, what I loved to look on; but such as upon hearing their fictions should lightly scratch the surface; upon which, as on envenomed nails, followed inflamed swelling, impostumes, and a putrefied sore. My life being such, was it life, O my God?

CHAPTER III

NOT EVEN WHEN AT CHURCH DOES HE SUPPRESS HIS DESIRES. IN THE SCHOOL OF RHETORIC HE ABHORS THE ACTS OF THE SUBVERTERS.

And Thy faithful mercy hovered over me afar. Upon how grievous iniquities consumed I myself, pursuing a sacrilegious curiosity, that having forsaken Thee, it might bring me to the treacherous abyss, and the beguiling service of devils, to whom I sacrificed my evil actions, and in all these things Thou didst scourge me! I dared even, while Thy solemnities were celebrated within the walls of Thy Church, to desire, and to compass a business deserving death for its fruits, for which Thou scourgedst me with grievous punishments, though nothing to my fault, O Thou my exceeding mercy, my God, my refuge from those terrible destroyers, among whom I wandered with a stiff neck, withdrawing further from Thee, loving mine own ways, and not Thine; loving a vagrant liberty.

Those studies also, which were accounted commendable, had a view to excelling in the courts of litigation; the more bepraised, the craftier. Such is men's blindness, glorying even in their blindness. And now I was chief in the rhetoric school, whereat I joyed proudly, and I swelled with arrogancy, though (Lord, Thou knowest) far quieter and altogether removed from the subvertings of those "Subverters" (for this ill-omened and devilish name was the very badge of gallantry) among whom I lived, with a shameless shame that I was not even as they. With them I lived, and was sometimes delighted with their friendship, whose doings I ever did abhor -i.e., their “subvertings,” wherewith they wantonly persecuted the modesty of strangers, which they disturbed by a gratuitous jeering, feeding thereon their malicious birth. Nothing can be liker the very actions of devils than these. What then could they be more truly called than “Subverters”? themselves subverted and altogether perverted first, the deceiving spirits secretly deriding and seducing them, wherein themselves delight to jeer at and deceive others.

CHAPTER IV

IN THE NINETEENTH YEAR OF HIS AGE (HIS FATHER HAVING DIED TWO YEARS BEFORE) HE IS LED BY THE “HORTENSIUS” OF CICERO TO “PHILOSOPHY,” TO GOD, AND A BETTER MODE OF THINKING.

Among such as these, in that unsettled age of mine, learned I books of eloquence, wherein I desired to be eminent, out of a damnable and vainglorious end, a joy in human vanity. In the ordinary course of study, I fell upon a certain book of Cicero, whose speech almost all admire, not so his heart. This book of his contains an exhortation to philosophy, and is called “Hortensius.” But this book altered my affections, and turned my prayers to Thyself O Lord; and made me have other purposes and desires. Every vain hope at once became worthless to me; and I longed with an incredibly burning desire for an immortality of wisdom, and began now to arise, that I might return to Thee. For not to sharpen my tongue (which thing I seemed to be purchasing with my mother’s allowances, in that my nineteenth year, my father being dead two years before), not to sharpen my tongue did I employ that book; nor did it infuse into me its style, but its matter.

How did I burn then, my God, how did I burn to re-mount from earthly things to Thee, nor knew I what Thou wouldest do with me? For with Thee is wisdom. But the love of wisdom is in Greek called “philosophy,” with which that book inflamed me. Some there be that seduce through philosophy, under a great, and smooth, and honourable name colouring and disguising their own errors: and almost all who in that and former ages were such, are in that book censured and set forth: there also is made plain that wholesome advice of Thy Spirit, by Thy good and devout servant: Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And since at that time (Thou, O light of my heart, knowest) Apostolic Scripture was not known to me, I was delighted with that exhortation, so far only, that I was thereby strongly roused, and kindled, and inflamed to love, and seek, and obtain, and hold, and embrace not this or that sect, but wisdom itself whatever it were; and this alone checked me thus unkindled, that the name of Christ was not in it. For this name, according to Thy mercy, O Lord, this name of my Saviour Thy Son, had my tender heart, even with my mother's milk, devoutly drunk in and deeply treasured; and whatsoever was without that name, though never so learned, polished, or true, took not entire hold of me.

CHAPTER V

HE REJECTS THE SACRED SCRIPTURES AS TOO SIMPLE, AND AS NOT TO BE COMPARED WITH THE DIGNITY OF TULLY.

I resolved then to bend my mind to the holy Scriptures, that I might see what they were. But behold, I see a thing not understood by the proud, nor laid open to children, lowly in access, in its recesses lofty, and veiled with mysteries; and I was not such as could enter into it, or stoop my neck to follow its steps. For not as I now speak, did I feel when I turned to those Scriptures; but they seemed to me unworthy to he compared to the stateliness of Tully: for my swelling pride shrunk from their lowliness, nor could my sharp wit pierce the interior thereof. Yet were they such as would grow up in a little one. But I disdained to be a little one; and, swollen with pride, took myself to be a great one.

CHAPTER VI

DECEIVED BY HIS OWN FAULT, HE FALLS INTO THE ERRORS OF THE MANICHAEANS, WHO GLORIED IN THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND IN A THOROUGH EXAMINATION OF THINGS.

Therefore I fell among men proudly doting, exceeding carnal and prating, in whose mouths were the snares of the Devil, limed with the mixture of the syllables of Thy name, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, our Comforter. These names departed not out of their mouth, but so far forth as the sound only and the noise of the tongue, for the heart was void of truth. Yet they cried out “Truth, Truth,” and spake much thereof to me, yet it was not in them: but they spake falsehood, not of Thee only (who truly art Truth), but even of those elements of this world, Thy creatures. And I indeed ought to have passed by even philosophers who spake truth concerning them, for love of Thee, my Father, supremely good, Beauty of all things beautiful. O Truth, Truth, how inwardly did even then the marrow of my soul pant after Thee, when they often and diversely, and in many and huge books, echoed of Thee to me, though it was but an echo? And these were the dishes wherein to me, hungering after Thee, they, instead of Thee, served up the Sun and Moon, beautiful works of Thine, but yet Thy works, not Thyself, no nor Thy first works. For Thy spiritual works are before these corporeal works, celestial though they be, and shining. But I hungered and thirsted not even after those first works of Thine, but after Thee Thyself, the Truth, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning: yet they still set before me in those dishes, glittering fantasies, than which better were it to love this very sun (which is real to our sight at least), than those fantasies which by our eyes deceive our mind. Yet because I thought them to be Thee, I fed thereon; not eagerly, for Thou didst not in them taste to me as Thou art; for Thou wast not these emptinesses, nor was I nourished by them, but exhausted rather. Food in sleep shows very like our food awake; yet are not those asleep nourished by it, for they are asleep. But those were not even any way like to Thee, as Thou hast now spoken to me; for those were corporeal fantasies, false bodies, than which these true bodies, celestial or terrestrial, which with our fleshly sight we behold, are far more certain: these things the beasts and birds discern as well as we, and they are more certain than when we fancy them. And again, we do with more certainty fancy them, than by them conjecture other vaster and infinite bodies which have no being. Such empty husks was I then fed on; and was not fed. But Thou, my soul’s Love, in looking for whom I fail, that I may become strong, art neither those bodies which we see, though in heaven; nor those which we see not there; for Thou hast created them, nor dost Thou account them among the chiefest of Thy works. How far then art Thou from those fantasies of mine, fantasies of bodies which altogether are not, than which the images of those bodies, which are, are far more certain, and more certain still the bodies themselves, which yet Thou art not; no, nor yet the soul, which is the life of the bodies. So then, better and more certain is the life of the bodies than the bodies. But Thou art the life of souls, the life of lives, having life in Thyself; and changest not, life of my soul.

Where then wert Thou then to me, and how far from me? Far verily was I straying from Thee, barred from the very husks of the swine, whom with husks I fed. For how much better are the fables of poets and grammarians than these snares? For verses, and poems, and "Medea flying," are more profitable truly than these men's five elements, variously disguised, answering to five dens of darkness, which have no being, yet slay the believer. For verses and poems I can turn to true food, and "Medea flying," though I did sing, I maintained not; though I heard it sung, I believed not: but those things I did believe. Woe, woe, by what steps was I brought down to the depths of hell! toiling and turmoiling through want of Truth, since I sought after Thee, my God (to Thee I confess it, who hadst mercy on me, not as yet confessing), not according to the understanding of the mind, wherein Thou willedst that I should excel the beasts, but according to the sense of the flesh. But Thou wert more inward to me than my most inward part; and higher than my highest. I lighted upon that bold woman, simple and knoweth nothing, shadowed out in Solomon, sitting at the door, and saying, Eat ye bread of secrecies willingly, and drink ye stolen waters which are sweet: she seduced me, because she found my soul dwelling abroad in the eye of my flesh, and ruminating on such food as through it I had devoured.

CHAPTER VII

HE ATTACKS THE DOCTRINE OF THE MANICHAEANS CONCERNING EVIL, GOD, AND THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE PATRIARCHS.

For other than this, that which really is I knew not; and was, as it were through sharpness of wit, persuaded to assent to foolish deceivers, when they asked me, "whence is evil?" "is God bounded by a bodily shape, and has hairs and nails?" "are they to be esteemed righteous who had many wives at once, and did kill men, and sacrifice living creatures?" At which I, in my ignorance, was much troubled, and departing from the truth, seemed to myself to be making towards it; because as yet I knew not that evil was nothing but a privation of good, until at last a thing ceases altogether to be; which how should I see, the sight of whose eyes reached only to bodies, and of my mind to a phantasm? And I knew not God to be a Spirit, not one who hath parts extended in length and breadth, or whose being was bulk; for every bulk is less in a part than in the whole: and if it be infinite, it must be less in such part as is defined by a certain space, than in its infinitude; and so is not wholly every where, as Spirit, as God. And what that should be in us, by which we were like to God, and might be rightly said to be after the image of God, I was altogether ignorant.

Nor knew I that true inward righteousness which judgeth not according to custom, but out of the most rightful law of God Almighty, whereby the ways of places and times were disposed according to those times and places; itself meantime being the same always and every where, not one thing in one place, and another in another; according to which Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and David, were righteous, and all those commended by the mouth of God; but were judged unrighteous by silly men, judging out of man’s judgment, and measuring by their own petty habits, the moral habits of the whole human race. As if in an armory, one ignorant of what were adapted to each part should cover his head with greaves, or seek to be shod with a helmet, and complain that they fitted not: or as if on a day when business is publicly stopped in the afternoon, one were angered at not being allowed to keep open shop, because he had been in the forenoon; or when in one house he observeth some servant take a thing in his hand, which the butler is not suffered to meddle with; or something permitted out of doors, which is forbidden in the dining-room; and should be angry, that in one house, and one family, the same thing is not allotted every where, and to all. Even such are they who are fretted to hear something to have been lawful for righteous men formerly, which now is not; or that God, for certain temporal respects, commanded them one thing, and these another, obeying both the same righteousness: whereas they see, in one man, and one day, and one house, different things to be fit for different members, and a thing formerly lawful, after a certain time not so; in one corner permitted or commanded, but in another rightly forbidden and punished. Is justice therefore various or mutable? No, but the times, over which it presides, flow not evenly, because they are times. But men whose days are few upon the earth, for that by their senses they cannot harmonise the causes of things in former ages and other nations, which they had not experience of, with these which they have experience of, whereas in one and the same body, day, or family, they easily see what is fitting for each member, and season, part, and person; to the one they take exceptions, to the other they submit.

These things I then knew not, nor observed; they struck my sight on all sides, and I saw them not. I indited verses, in which I might not place every foot every where, but differently in different metres; nor even in any one metre the self-same foot in all places. Yet the art itself, by which I indited, had not different principles for these different cases, but comprised all in one. Still I saw not how that righteousness, which good and holy men obeyed, did far more excellently and sublimely contain in one all those things which God commanded, and in no part varied; although in varying times it prescribed not every thing at once, but apportioned and enjoined what was fit for each. And I in my blindness, censured the holy Fathers, not only wherein they made use of things present as God commanded and inspired them, but also wherein they were foretelling things to come, as God was revealing in them.

CHAPTER VIII

HE ARGUES AGAINST THE SAME AS TO THE REASON OF OFFENCES.

Can it at any time or place be unjust to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his mind; and his neighbour as himself? Therefore are those foul offences which be against nature, to be every where and at all times detested and punished; such as were those of the men of Sodom: which should all nations commit, they should all stand guilty of the same crime, by the law of God, which hath not so made men that they should so abuse one another. For even that intercourse which should be between God and us is violated, when that same nature, of which He is Author, is polluted by perversity of lust. But those actions which are offences against the customs of men, are to be avoided according to the customs severally prevailing; so that a thing agreed upon, and confirmed, by custom or law of any city or nation, may not be violated at the lawless pleasure of any, whether native or foreigner. For any part which harmoniseth not with its whole, is offensive. But when God commands a thing to be done, against the customs or compact of any people, though it were never by them done heretofore, it is to be done; and if intermitted, it is to be restored; and if never ordained, is now to be ordained. For lawful if it he for a king, in the state which he reigns over, to command that which no one before him, nor he himself heretofore, had commanded, and to obey him cannot be against the common weal of the state (nay, it were against it if he were not obeyed, for to obey princes is a general compact of human society); how much more unhesitatingly ought we to obey God, in all which He commands, the Ruler of all His creatures! For as among the powers in man's society, the greater authority is obeyed in preference to the lesser, so must God above all.

So in acts of violence, where there is a wish to hurt, whether by reproach or injury; and these either for revenge, as one enemy against another; or for some profit belonging to another, as the robber to the traveller; or to avoid some evil, as towards one who is feared; or through envy, as one less fortunate to one more so, or one well thriven in any thing, to him whose being on a par with himself he fears, or grieves at, or for the mere pleasure at another's pain, as spectators of gladiators, or deriders and mockers of others. These be the heads of iniquity which spring from the lust of the flesh, of the eye, or of rule, either singly, or two combined, or all together; and so do men live ill against the three, and seven, that psaltery of often strings, Thy Ten Commandments, O God, most high, and most sweet. But what foul offences can there be against Thee, who canst not be defiled? or what acts of violence against Thee, who canst not be harmed? But Thou avengest what men commit against themselves, seeing also when they sin against Thee, they do wickedly against their own souls, and iniquity gives itself the lie, by corrupting and perverting their nature, which Thou hast created and ordained, or by an immoderate use of things allowed, or in burning in things unallowed, to that use which is against nature; or are found guilty, raging with heart and tongue against Thee, kicking against the pricks; or when, bursting the pale of human society, they boldly joy in self-willed combinations or divisions, according as they have any object to gain or subject of offence. And these things are done when Thou art forsaken, O Fountain of Life, who art the only and true Creator and Governor of the Universe, and by a self-willed pride, any one false thing is selected therefrom and loved. So then by a humble devoutness we return to Thee;

and Thou cleansest us from our evil habits, and art merciful to their sins who confess, and hearest the groaning of the prisoner, and loosest us from the chains which we made for ourselves, if we lift not up against Thee the horns of an unreal liberty, suffering the loss of all, through covetousness of more, by loving more our own private good than Thee, the Good of all.

CHAPTER IX

THAT THE JUDGMENT OF GOD AND MEN, AS TO HUMAN ACTS OF VIOLENCE, IS DIFFERENT.

Amidst these offences of foulness and violence, and so many iniquities, are sins of men, who are on the whole making proficiency; which by those that judge rightly, are, after the rule of perfection, discommended, yet the persons commended, upon hope of future fruit, as in the green blade of growing corn. And there are some, resembling offences of foulness or violence, which yet are no sins; because they offend neither Thee, our Lord God, nor human society; when, namely, things fitting for a given period are obtained for the service of life, and we know not whether out of a lust of having; or when things are, for the sake of correction, by constituted authority punished, and we know not whether out of a lust of hurting. Many an action then which in men's sight is disapproved, is by Thy testimony approved; and many, by men praised, are (Thou being witness) condemned: because the show of the action, and the mind of the doer, and the unknown exigency of the period, severally vary. But when Thou on a sudden commandest an unwonted and unthought of thing, yea, although Thou hast sometime forbidden it, and still for the time hidest the reason of Thy command, and it be against the ordinance of some society of men, who doubts but it is to be done, seeing that society of men is just which serves Thee? But blessed are they who know Thy commands! For all things were done by Thy servants; either to show forth something needful for the present, or to foreshow things to come.

CHAPTER X

HE REPROVES THE TRIFLINGS OF THE MANICHÆANS AS TO THE FRUITS OF THE EARTH.

These things I being ignorant of, scoffed at those Thy holy servants and prophets. And what gained I by scoffing at them, but to be scoffed at by Thee, being insensibly and step by step drawn on to those follies, as to believe that a fig-tree wept when it was plucked, and the tree, its mother, shed milky tears? Which fig notwithstanding (plucked by some other's, not his own, guilt) had some Manichaean saint eaten, and mingled with his bowels, he should breathe out of it angels, yea, there shall burst forth particles of divinity, at every moan or groan in his prayer, which particles of the most high and true God had remained bound in that fig, unless they had been set at liberty by the teeth or belly of some "Elect" saint! And I, miserable, believed that more mercy was to be shown to the fruits of the earth than men, for whom they were created. For if any one an hungered, not a Manichaean, should ask for any, that morsel would seem as it were condemned to capital punishment, which should be given him.

CHAPTER XI

HE REFERS TO THE TEARS, AND THE MEMORABLE DREAM CONCERNING HER SON, GRANTED BY GOD TO HIS MOTHER.

And Thou sentest Thine hand from above, and drewest my soul out of that profound darkness, my mother, Thy faithful one, weeping to Thee for me, more than mothers weep the bodily deaths of their children. For she, by that faith and spirit which she had from Thee, discerned the death wherein I lay, and Thou heardest her, O Lord; Thou heardest her, and despisedst not her tears, when streaming down, they watered the ground under her eyes in every place where she prayed; yea Thou heardest her. For whence was that dream whereby Thou comfortedst her; so that she allowed me to live with her, and to eat at the same table in the house, which she had begun to shrink from, abhorring and detesting the blasphemies of my error? For she saw herself standing on a certain wooden rule, and a shining youth coming towards her, cheerful and smiling upon her, herself grieving, and overwhelmed with grief. But he having (in order to instruct, as is their wont not to be instructed) enquired of her the causes of her grief and daily tears, and she answering that she was bewailing my perdition, he bade her rest contented, and told her to look and observe, "That where she was, there was I also." And when she looked, she saw me standing by her in the same rule.

Whence was this, but that Thine ears were towards her heart? O Thou Good omnipotent, who so carest for every one of us, as if Thou caredst for him only; and so for all, as if they were but one!

Whence was this also, that when she had told me this vision, and I would fain bend it to mean, “That she rather should not despair of being one day what I was”; she presently, without any hesitation, replies: “No; for it was not told me that, ‘where he, there thou also’; but ‘where thou, there he also’?” I confess to Thee, O Lord, that to the best of my remembrance (and I have oft spoken of this), that Thy answer, through my waking mother, -that she was not perplexed by the plausibility of my false interpretation, and so quickly saw what was to be seen, and which I certainly had not perceived before she spake, -even then moved me more than the dream itself, by which a joy to the holy woman, to be fulfilled so long after, was, for the consolation of her present anguish, so long before foresignified. For almost nine years passed, in which I wallowed in the mire of that deep pit, and the darkness of falsehood, often assaying to rise, but dashed down the more grievously. All which time that chaste, godly, and sober widow (such as Thou lovest), now more cheered with hope, yet no whit relaxing in her weeping and mourning, ceased not at all hours of her devotions to bewail my case unto Thee. And her prayers entered into Thy presence; and yet Thou sufferedst me to be yet involved and reinvolved in that darkness.

CHAPTER XII

THE EXCELLENT ANSWER OF THE BISHOP WHEN REFERRED TO BY HIS MOTHER AS TO THE CONVERSION OF HER SON.

Thou gavest her meantime another answer, which I call to mind; for much I pass by, hasting to those things which more press me to confess unto Thee, and much I do not remember. Thou gavest her then another answer, by a Priest of Thine, a certain Bishop brought up in Thy Church, and well studied in Thy books. Whom when this woman had entreated to vouchsafe to converse with me, refute my errors, unteach me ill things, and teach me good things (for this he was wont to do, when he found persons fitted to receive it), he refused, wisely, as I afterwards perceived. For he answered, that I was yet unteachable, being puffed up with the novelty of that heresy, and had already perplexed divers unskilful persons with captious questions, as she had told him: “but let him alone a while” (saith he), “only pray God for him, he will of himself by reading find what that error is, and how great its impiety.” At the same time he told her, how himself, when a little one, had by his seduced mother been consigned over to the Manichees, and had not only read, but frequently copied out almost all, their books, and had (without any argument or proof from any one) seen how much that sect was to be avoided; and had avoided it. Which when he had said, and she would not be satisfied, but urged him more, with entreaties and many tears, that he would see me and discourse with me; he, a little displeased at her importunity, saith, “Go thy ways and God bless thee, for it is not possible that the son of these tears should perish.” Which answer she took (as she often mentioned in her conversations with me) as if it had sounded from heaven.

BOOK IV

CHAPTER I

CONCERNING THAT MOST UNHAPPY TIME IN WHICH HE, BEING DECEIVED, DECEIVED OTHERS; AND CONCERNING THE MOCKERS OF HIS CONFESSION.

For this space of nine years (from my nineteenth year to my eight-and-twentieth) we lived seduced and seducing, deceived and deceiving, in divers lusts; openly, by sciences which they call liberal; secretly, with a false-named religion; here proud, there superstitious, every where vain. Here, hunting after the emptiness of popular praise, down even to theatrical applauses, and poetic prizes, and strifes for grassy garlands, and the follies of shows, and the intemperance of desires. There, desiring to be cleansed from these defilements, by carrying food to those who were called "elect" and "holy," out of which, in the workhouse of their stomachs, they should forge for us Angels and Gods, by whom we might be cleansed. These things did I follow, and practise with my friends, deceived by me, and with me. Let the arrogant mock me, and such as have not been, to their soul's health, stricken and cast down by Thee, O my God; but I would still confess to Thee mine own shame in Thy praise. Suffer me, I beseech Thee, and give me grace to go over in my present remembrance the wanderings of my forepassed time, and to offer unto Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving. For what am I to myself without Thee, but a guide to mine own downfall? or what am I even at the best, but an infant sucking the milk Thou givest, and feeding upon Thee, the food that perisheth not? But what sort of man is any man, seeing he is but a man? Let now the strong and the mighty laugh at us, but let us poor and needy confess unto Thee.

CHAPTER II

HE TEACHES RHETORIC, THE ONLY THING HE LOVED, AND SCORNS THE SOOTHSAYER, WHO PROMISED HIM VICTORY.

In those years I taught rhetoric, and, overcome by cupidity, made sale of a loquacity to overcome by. Yet I preferred (Lord, Thou knowest) honest scholars (as they are accounted), and these I, without artifice, taught artifices, not to be practised against the life of the guiltless, though sometimes for the life of the guilty. And Thou, O God, from afar perceivedst me stumbling in that slippery course, and amid much smoke sending out some sparks of faithfulness, which I showed in that my guidance of such as loved vanity, and sought after leasing, myself their companion. In those years I had one, -not in that which is called lawful marriage, but whom I had found out in a wayward passion, void of understanding; yet but one, remaining faithful even to her; in whom I in my own case experienced what difference there is betwixt the self-restraint of the marriage-covenant, for the sake of issue, and the bargain of a lustful love, where children are born against their parents' will, although, once born, they constrain love.

I remember also, that when I had settled to enter the lists for a theatrical prize, some wizard asked me what I would give him to win; but I, detesting and abhorring such foul mysteries, answered, "Though the garland were of imperishable gold, I would not suffer a fly to be killed to gain me it. " For he was to kill some living creatures in his sacrifices, and by those honours to invite the devils to favour me. But this ill also I rejected, not out of a pure love for Thee, O God of my heart; for I knew not how to love Thee, who knew not how to conceive aught beyond a material brightness. And doth not a soul, sighing after such fictions, commit fornication against Thee, trust in things unreal, and feed the wind? Still I would not forsooth have sacrifices offered to devils for me, to whom I was sacrificing myself by that superstition. For what else is it to feed the wind, but to feed them, that is by going astray to become their pleasure and derision?

CHAPTER III

NOT EVEN THE MOST EXPERIENCED MEN COULD PERSUADE HIM OF THE VANITY OF ASTROLOGY, TO WHICH HE WAS DEVOTED.

Those impostors then, whom they style Mathematicians, I consulted without scruple; because they seemed to use no sacrifice, nor to pray to any spirit for their divinations: which art, however, Christian and true piety consistently rejects and condemns. For, it is a good thing to confess unto Thee, and to say, Have mercy upon me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee; and not to abuse Thy mercy for a licence to sin, but to remember the Lord’s words, Behold, thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. All which wholesome advice they labour to destroy, saying, “The cause of thy sin is inevitably determined in heaven”; and “This did Venus, or Saturn, or Mars”: that man, forsooth, flesh and blood, and proud corruption, might be blameless; while the Creator and Ordainer of heaven and the stars is to bear the blame. And who is He but our God? the very sweetness and well-spring of righteousness, who renderest to every man according to his works: and a broken and contrite heart wilt Thou not despise.

There was in those days a wise man, very skilful in physic, and renowned therein, who had with his own proconsular hand put the Agonistic garland upon my distempered head, but not as a physician: for this disease Thou only curest, who resistest the proud, and givest grace to the humble. But didst Thou fail me even by that old man, or forbear to heal my soul? For having become more acquainted with him, and hanging assiduously and fixedly on his speech (for though in simple terms, it was vivid, lively, and earnest), when he had gathered by my discourse that I was given to the books of nativity-casters, he kindly and fatherly advised me to cast them away, and not fruitlessly bestow a care and diligence, necessary for useful things, upon these vanities; saying, that he had in his earliest years studied that art, so as to make it the profession whereby he should live, and that, understanding Hippocrates, he could soon have understood such a study as this; and yet he had given it over, and taken to physic, for no other reason but that he found it utterly false; and he, a grave man, would not get his living by deluding people. “But thou,” saith he, “hast rhetoric to maintain thyself by, so that thou followest this of free choice, not of necessity: the more then oughtest thou to give me credit herein, who laboured to acquire it so perfectly as to get my living by it alone.” Of whom when I had demanded, how then could many true things be foretold by it, he answered me (as he could) “that the force of chance, diffused throughout the whole order of things, brought this about. For if when a man by haphazard opens the pages of some poet, who sang and thought of something wholly different, a verse oftentimes fell out, wondrously agreeable to the present business: it were not to be wondered at, if out of the soul of man, unconscious what takes place in it, by some higher instinct an answer should be given, by hap, not by art, corresponding to the business and actions of the demander."

And thus much, either from or through him, Thou conveyedst to me, and tracedst in my memory, what I might hereafter examine for myself. But at that time neither he, nor my dearest Nebridius, a youth singularly good and of a holy fear, who derided the whole body of divination, could persuade me to cast it aside, the authority of the authors swaying me yet more, and as yet I had found no certain proof (such as I sought) whereby it might without all doubt appear, that what had been truly foretold by those consulted was the result of haphazard, not of the art of the star-gazers.

CHAPTER IV

SORELY DISTRESSED BY WEEPING AT THE DEATH OF HIS FRIEND, HE PROVIDES CONSOLATION FOR HIMSELF.

In those years when I first began to teach rhetoric in my native town, I had made one my friend, but too dear to me, from a community of pursuits, of mine own age, and, as myself, in the first opening flower of youth. He had grown up of a child with me, and we had been both school-fellows and play-fellows. But he was not yet my friend as afterwards, nor even then, as true friendship is; for true it cannot be, unless in such as Thou cementest together, cleaving unto Thee, by that love which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Yet was it but too sweet, ripened by the warmth of kindred studies: for, from the true faith (which he as a youth had not soundly and thoroughly imbibed), I had warped him also to those superstitious and pernicious fables, for which my mother bewailed me. With me he now erred in mind, nor could my soul be without him. But behold Thou wert close on the steps of Thy fugitives, at once God of vengeance, and Fountain of mercies, turning us to Thyself by wonderful means; Thou tookest that man out of this life, when he had scarce filled up one whole year of my friendship, sweet to me above all sweetness of that my life.

Who can recount all Thy praises, which he hath felt in his one self? What diddest Thou then, my God, and how unsearchable is the abyss of Thy judgments? For long, sore sick of a fever, he lay senseless in a death-sweat; and his recovery being despaired of, he was baptised, unknowing; myself meanwhile little regarding, and presuming that his soul would retain rather what it had received of me, not what was wrought on his unconscious body. But it proved far otherwise: for he was refreshed, and restored. Forthwith, as soon as I could speak with him (and I could, so soon as he was able, for I never left him, and we hung but too much upon each other), I essayed to jest with him, as though he would jest with me at that baptism which he had received, when utterly absent in mind and feeling, but had now understood that he had received. But he so shrunk from me, as from an enemy; and with a wonderful and sudden freedom bade me, as I would continue his friend, forbear such language to him. I, all astonished and amazed, suppressed all my emotions till he should grow well, and his health were strong enough for me to deal with him as I would. But he was taken away from my frenzy, that with Thee he might be preserved for my comfort; a few days after in my absence, he was attacked again by the fever, and so departed.

At this grief my heart was utterly darkened; and whatever I beheld was death. My native country was a torment to me, and my father's house a strange unhappiness; and whatever I had shared with him, wanting him, became a distracting torture. Mine eyes sought him every where, but he was not granted them; and I hated all places, for that they had not him; nor could they now tell me, "he is coming," as when he was alive and absent. I became a great riddle to myself, and I asked my soul, why she was so sad, and why she disquieted me sorely: but she knew not what to answer me. And if I said, Trust in God, she very rightly obeyed me not; because that most dear friend, whom she had lost, was, being man, both truer and better than that phantasm she was bid to trust in. Only tears were sweet to me, for they succeeded my friend, in the dearest of my affections.

CHAPTER V

WHY WEEPING IS PLEASANT TO THE WRETCHED.

And now, Lord, these things are passed by, and time hath assuaged my wound. May I learn from Thee, who art Truth, and approach the ear of my heart unto Thy mouth, that Thou mayest tell me why weeping is sweet to the miserable? Hast Thou, although present every where, cast away our misery far from Thee? And Thou abidest in Thyself, but we are tossed about in divers trials. And yet unless we mourned in Thine ears, we should have no hope left. Whence then is sweet fruit gathered from the bitterness of life, from groaning, tears, sighs, and complaints? Doth this sweeten it, that we hope Thou hearest? This is true of prayer, for therein is a longing to approach unto Thee. But is it also in grief for a thing lost, and the sorrow wherewith I was then overwhelmed? For I neither hoped he should return to life nor did I desire this with my tears; but I wept only and grieved. For I was miserable, and had lost my joy. Or is weeping indeed a bitter thing, and for very loathing of the things which we before enjoyed, does it then, when we shrink from them, please us?

CHAPTER VI

HIS FRIEND BEING SNATCHED AWAY BY DEATH, HE IMAGINES THAT HE REMAINS ONLY AS HALF.

But what speak I of these things? for now is no time to question, but to confess unto Thee. Wretched I was; and wretched is every soul bound by the friendship of perishable things; he is torn asunder when he loses them, and then he feels the wretchedness which he had ere yet he lost them. So was it then with me; I wept most bitterly, and found my repose in bitterness. Thus was I wretched, and that wretched life I held dearer than my friend. For though I would willingly have changed it, yet was I more unwilling to part with it than with him; yea, I know not whether I would have parted with it even for him, as is related (if not feigned) of Pylades and Orestes, that they would gladly have died for each other or together, not to live together being to them worse than death. But in me there had arisen some unexplained feeling, too contrary to this, for at once I loathed exceedingly to live and feared to die. I suppose, the more I loved him, the more did I hate, and fear (as a most cruel enemy) death, which had bereaved me of him: and I imagined it would speedily make an end of all men, since it had power over him. Thus was it with me, I remember. Behold my heart, O my God, behold and see into me; for well I remember it, O my Hope, who cleansest me from the impurity of such affections, directing mine eyes towards Thee, and plucking my feet out of the snare. For I wondered that others, subject to death, did live, since he whom I loved, as if he should never die, was dead; and I wondered yet more that myself, who was to him a second self, could live, he being dead. Well said one of his friend, “Thou half of my soul”; for I felt that my soul and his soul were “one soul in two bodies”: and therefore was my life a horror to me, because I would not live halved. And therefore perchance I feared to die, lest he whom I had much loved should die wholly.

CHAPTER VII

TROUBLED BY RESTLESSNESS AND GRIEF, HE LEAVES HIS COUNTRY A SECOND TIME FOR CARTHAGE.

O madness, which knowest not how to love men, like men! O foolish man that I then was, enduring impatiently the lot of man! I fretted then, sighed, wept, was distracted; had neither rest nor counsel. For I bore about a shattered and bleeding soul, impatient of being borne by me, yet where to repose it, I found not. Not in calm groves, not in games and music, nor in fragrant spots, nor in curious banquetings, nor in the pleasures of the bed and the couch; nor (finally) in books or poesy, found it repose. All things looked ghastly, yea, the very light; whatsoever was not what he was, was revolting and hateful, except groaning and tears. For in those alone found I a little refreshment. But when my soul was withdrawn from them a huge load of misery weighed me down. To Thee, O Lord, it ought to have been raised, for Thee to lighten; I knew it; but neither could nor would; the more, since, when I thought of Thee, Thou wert not to me any solid or substantial thing. For Thou wert not Thyself, but a mere phantom, and my error was my God. If I offered to discharge my load thereon, that it might rest, it glided through the void, and came rushing down again on me; and I had remained to myself a hapless spot, where I could neither be, nor be from thence. For whither should my heart flee from my heart? Whither should I flee from myself? Whither not follow myself? And yet I fled out of my country; for so should mine eyes less look for him, where they were not wont to see him. And thus from Thagaste, I came to Carthage.

CHAPTER VIII

THAT HIS GRIEF CEASED BY TIME, AND THE CONSOLATION OF FRIENDS.

Times lose no time; nor do they roll idly by; through our senses they work strange operations on the mind. Behold, they went and came day by day, and by coming and going, introduced into my mind other imaginations and other remembrances; and little by little patched me up again with my old kind of delights, unto which that my sorrow gave way. And yet there succeeded, not indeed other griefs, yet the causes of other griefs. For whence had that former grief so easily reached my very inmost soul, but that I had poured out my soul upon the dust, in loving one that must die, as if he would never die? For what restored and refreshed me chiefly was the solaces of other friends, with whom I did love, what instead of Thee I loved; and this was a great fable, and protracted lie, by whose adulterous stimulus, our soul, which lay itching in our ears, was being defiled. But that fable would not die to me, so oft as any of my friends died. There were other things which in them did more take my mind; to talk and jest together, to do kind offices by turns; to read together honied books; to play the fool or be earnest together; to dissent at times without discontent, as a man might with his own self; and even with the seldomness of these dissentings, to season our more frequent consentings; sometimes to teach, and sometimes learn; long for the absent with impatience; and welcome the coming with joy. These and the like expressions, proceeding out of the hearts of those that loved and were loved again, by the countenance, the tongue, the eyes, and a thousand pleasing gestures, were so much fuel to melt our souls together, and out of many make but one.

CHAPTER IX

THAT THE LOVE OF A HUMAN BEING, HOWEVER CONSTANT IN LOVING AND RETURNING LOVE, PERISHES; WHILE HE WHO LOVES GOD NEVER LOSES A FRIEND

This is it that is loved in friends; and so loved, that a man’s conscience condemns itself, if he love not him that loves him again, or love not again him that loves him, looking for nothing from his person but indications of his love. Hence that mourning, if one die, and darkenings of sorrows, that steeping of the heart in tears, all sweetness turned to bitterness; and upon the loss of life of the dying, the death of the living. Blessed whoso loveth Thee, and his friend in Thee, and his enemy for Thee. For he alone loses none dear to him, to whom all are dear in Him who cannot be lost. And who is this but our God, the God that made heaven and earth, and filleth them, because by filling them He created them? Thee none loseth, but who leaveth. And who leaveth Thee, whither goeth or whither teeth he, but from Thee well-pleased, to Thee displeased? For where doth he not find Thy law in his own punishment? And Thy law is truth, and truth Thou.

CHAPTER X

THAT ALL THINGS EXIST THAT THEY MAY PERISH, AND THAT WE ARE NOT SAFE UNLESS GOD WATCHES OVER US.

Turn us, O God of Hosts, show us Thy countenance, and we shall be whole. For whithersoever the soul of man turns itself, unless toward Thee, it is riveted upon sorrows, yea though it is riveted on things beautiful. And yet they, out of Thee, and out of the soul, were not, unless they were from Thee. They rise, and set; and by rising, they begin as it were to be; they grow, that they may be perfected; and perfected, they wax old and wither; and all grow not old, but all wither. So then when they rise and tend to be, the more quickly they grow that they may be, so much the more they haste not to be. This is the law of them. Thus much has Thou allotted them, because they are portions of things, which exist not all at once, but by passing away and succeeding, they together complete that universe, whereof they are portions. And even thus is our speech completed by signs giving forth a sound: but this again is not perfected unless one word pass away when it hath sounded its part, that another may succeed. Out of all these things let my soul praise Thee, O God, Creator of all; yet let not my soul be riveted unto these things with the glue of love, through the senses of the body. For they go whither they were to go, that they might not be; and they rend her with pestilent longings, because she longs to be, yet loves to repose in what she loves. But in these things is no place of repose; they abide not, they flee; and who can follow them with the senses of the flesh? yea, who can grasp them, when they are hard by? For the sense of the flesh is slow, because it is the sense of the flesh; and thereby is it bounded. It sufficeth for that it was made for; but it sufficeth not to stay things running their course from their appointed starting-place to the end appointed. For in Thy Word, by which they are created, they hear their decree, “hence and hitherto.”

CHAPTER XI

THAT PORTIONS OF THE WORLD ARE NOT TO BE LOVED; BUT THAT GOD, THEIR AUTHOR, IS IMMUTABLE, AND HIS WORD ETERNAL.

Be not foolish, O my soul, nor become deaf in the ear of thine heart with the tumult of thy folly. Hearken thou too.

The Word itself calleth thee to return: and there is the place of rest imperturbable, where love is not forsaken, if itself forsaketh not. Behold, these things pass away, that others may replace them, and so this lower universe be completed by all his parts. But do I depart any whither? saith the Word of God. There fix thy dwelling, trust there whatsoever thou hast thence, O my soul, at least now thou art tired out with vanities. Entrust Truth, whatsoever thou hast from the Truth, and thou shalt lose nothing; and thy decay shall bloom again, and all thy diseases be healed, and thy mortal parts be reformed and renewed, and bound around thee: nor shall they lay thee whither themselves descend; but they shall stand fast with thee, and abide for ever before God, Who abideth and standeth fast for ever.

Why then be perverted and follow thy flesh? Be it converted and follow thee. Whatever by her thou hast sense of, is in part; and the whole, whereof these are parts, thou knowest not; and yet they delight thee. But had the sense of thy flesh a capacity for comprehending the whole, and not itself also, for thy punishment, been justly restricted to a part of the whole, thou wouldest, that whatsoever existeth at this present, should pass away, that so the whole might better please thee. For what we speak also, by the same sense of the flesh thou hearest; yet wouldest not thou have the syllables stay, but fly away, that others may come, and thou hear the whole. And so ever, when any one thing is made up of many, all of which do not exist together, all collectively would please more than they do severally, could all be perceived collectively. But far better than these is He who made all; and He is our God, nor doth He pass away, for neither doth aught succeed Him.

CHAPTER XII

LOVE IS NOT CONDEMNED, BUT LOVE IN GOD, IN WHOM THERE IS REST THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, IS TO BE PREFERRED.

If bodies please thee, praise God on occasion of them, and turn back thy love upon their Maker; lest in these things which please thee, thou displease. If souls please thee, be they loved in God: for they too are mutable, but in Him are they firmly stablished; else would they pass, and pass away. In Him then be they beloved; and carry unto Him along with thee what souls thou canst, and say to them, “Him let us love, Him let us love: He made these, nor is He far off. For He did not make them, and so depart, but they are of Him, and in Him. See there He is, where truth is loved. He is within the very heart, yet hath the heart strayed from Him. Go back into your heart, ye transgressors, and cleave fast to Him that made you. Stand with Him, and ye shall stand fast. Rest in Him, and ye shall be at rest. Whither go ye in rough ways? Whither go ye? The good that you love is from Him; but it is good and pleasant through reference to Him, and justly shall it be embittered, because unjustly is any thing loved which is from Him, if He be forsaken for it. To what end then would ye still and still walk these difficult and toilsome ways? There is no rest, where ye seek it. Seek what ye seek; but it is not there where ye seek. Ye seek a blessed life in the land of death; it is not there. For how should there be a blessed life where life itself is not?

“But our true Life came down hither, and bore our death, and slew him, out of the abundance of His own life: and He thundered, calling aloud to us to return hence to Him into that secret place, whence He came forth to us, first into the Virgin’s womb, wherein He espoused the human creation, our mortal flesh, that it might not be for ever mortal, and thence like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoicing as a giant to run his course. For He lingered not, but ran, calling aloud by words, deeds, death, life, descent, ascension; crying aloud to us to return unto Him. And He departed from our eyes, that we might return into our heart, and there find Him. For He departed, and to, He is here. He would not be long with us, yet left us not; for He departed thither, whence He never parted, because the world was made by Him. And in this world He was, and into this world He came to save sinners, unto whom my soul confesseth, and He healeth it, for it hath sinned against Him. O ye sons of men, how long so slow of heart? Even now, after the descent of Life to you, will ye not ascend and live? But whither ascend ye, when ye are on high, and set your mouth against the heavens? Descend, that ye may ascend, and ascend to God. For ye have fallen, by ascending against Him." Tell them this, that they may weep in the valley of tears, and so carry them up with thee unto God; because out of His spirit thou speakest thus unto them, if thou speakest, burning with the fire of charity.

CHAPTER XIII

LOVE ORIGINATES FROM GRACE, AND BEAUTY ENTICING US.

These things I then knew not, and I loved these lower beauties, and I was sinking to the very depths, and to my friends I said, "Do we love any thing but the beautiful? What then is the beautiful? and what is beauty? What is it that attracts and wins us to the things we love? for unless there were in them a grace and beauty, they could by no means draw us unto them." And I marked and perceived that in bodies themselves, there was a beauty, from their forming a sort of whole, and again, another from apt and mutual correspondence, as of a part of the body with its whole, or a shoe with a foot, and the like. And this consideration sprang up in my mind, out of my inmost heart, and I wrote "on the fair and fit," I think, two or three books. Thou knowest, O Lord, for it is gone from me; for I have them not, but they are strayed from me, I know not how.

CHAPTER XIV

CONCERNING THE BOOKS WHICH HE WROTE "ON THE FAIR AND FIT," DEDICATED TO HIERIUS.

But what moved me, O Lord my God, to dedicate these books unto Hierius, an orator of Rome, whom I knew not by face, but loved for the fame of his learning which was eminent in him, and some words of his I had heard, which pleased me? But more did he please me, for that he pleased others, who highly extolled him, amazed that out of a Syrian, first instructed in Greek eloquence, should afterwards be formed a wonderful Latin orator, and one most learned in things pertaining unto philosophy. One is commended, and, unseen, he is loved: doth this love enter the heart of the hearer from the mouth of the commender? Not so. But by one who loveth is another kindled. For hence he is loved who is commended, when the commender is believed to extol him with an unfeigned heart; that is, when one that loves him, praises him.

For so did I then love men, upon the judgment of men, not Thine, O my God, in Whom no man is deceived. But yet why not for qualities, like those of a famous charioteer, or fighter with beasts in the theatre, known far and wide by a vulgar popularity, but far otherwise, and earnestly, and so as I would be myself commended? For I would not be commended or loved, as actors are (though I myself did commend and love them), but had rather be unknown, than so known; and even hated, than so loved. Where now are the impulses to such various and divers kinds of loves laid up in one soul? Why, since we are equally men, do I love in another what, if I did not hate, I should not spurn and cast from myself? For it holds not, that as a good horse is loved by him, who would not, though he might, be that horse, therefore the same may be said of an actor, who shares our nature. Do I then love in a man, what I hate to be, who am a man? Man himself is a great deep, whose very hairs Thou numberest, O Lord, and they fall not to the ground without Thee. And yet are the hairs of his head easier to be numbered than his feelings, and the beatings of his heart.

But that orator was of that sort whom I loved, as wishing to be myself such; and I erred through a swelling pride, and was tossed about with every wind, but yet was steered by Thee, though very secretly. And whence do I know, and whence do I confidently confess unto Thee, that I had loved him more for the love of his commenders, than for the very things for which he was commended? Because, had he been unpraised, and these self-same men had dispraised him, and with dispraise and contempt told the very same things of him, I had never been so kindled and excited to love him. And yet the things had not been other, nor he himself other; but only the feelings of the relators. See where the impotent soul lies along, that is not yet stayed up by the solidity of truth! Just as the gales of tongues blow from the breast of the opinionative, so is it carried this way and that, driven forward and backward, and the light is overclouded to it, and the truth unseen. And to, it is before us. And it was to me a great matter, that my discourse and labours should be known to that man: which should he approve, I were the more kindled; but if he disapproved, my empty heart, void of Thy solidity, had been wounded. And yet the "fair and fit," whereon I wrote to him, I dwelt on with pleasure, and surveyed it, and admired it, though none joined therein.

CHAPTER XV

WHILE WRITING, BEING BLINDED BY CORPOREAL IMAGES, HE FAILED TO RECOGNISE THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF GOD.

But I saw not yet, whereon this weighty matter turned in Thy wisdom, O Thou Omnipotent, who only doest wonders; and my mind ranged through corporeal forms; and “fair,” I defined and distinguished what is so in itself, and “fit,” whose beauty is in correspondence to some other thing: and this I supported by corporeal examples. And I turned to the nature of the mind, but the false notion which I had of spiritual things, let me not see the truth. Yet the force of truth did of itself flash into mine eyes, and I turned away my panting soul from incorporeal substance to lineaments, and colours, and bulky magnitudes. And not being able to see these in the mind, I thought I could not see my mind. And whereas in virtue I loved peace, and in viciousness I abhorred discord; in the first I observed a unity, but in the other, a sort of division. And in that unity I conceived the rational soul, and the nature of truth and of the chief good to consist; but in this division I miserably imagined there to be some unknown substance of irrational life, and the nature of the chief evil, which should not only be a substance, but real life also, and yet not derived from Thee, O my God, of whom are all things. And yet that first I called a Monad, as it had been a soul without sex; but the latter a Duad; -anger, in deeds of violence, and in flagitiousness, lust; not knowing whereof I spake. For I had not known or learned that neither was evil a substance, nor our soul that chief and unchangeable good.

For as deeds of violence arise, if that emotion of the soul be corrupted, whence vehement action springs, stirring itself insolently and unrulily; and lusts, when that affection of the soul is ungoverned, whereby carnal pleasures are drunk in, so do errors and false opinions defile the conversation, if the reasonable soul itself be corrupted; as it was then in me, who knew not that it must be enlightened by another light, that it may be partaker of truth, seeing itself is not that nature of truth. For Thou shalt light my candle, O Lord my God, Thou shalt enlighten my darkness: and of Thy fulness have we all received, for Thou art the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; for in Thee there is no variableness, neither shadow of change.

But I pressed towards Thee, and was thrust from Thee, that I might taste of death: for thou resistest the proud. But what prouder, than for me with a strange madness to maintain myself to be that by nature which Thou art? For whereas I was subject to change (so much being manifest to me, my very desire to become wise, being the wish, of worse to become better), yet chose I rather to imagine Thee subject to change, and myself not to be that which Thou art. Therefore I was repelled by Thee, and Thou resistedst my vain stiffneckedness, and I imagined corporeal forms, and, myself flesh, I accused flesh; and, a wind that passeth away, I returned not to Thee, but I passed on and on to things which have no being, neither in Thee, nor in me, nor in the body. Neither were they created for me by Thy truth, but by my vanity devised out of things corporeal. And I was wont to ask Thy faithful little ones, my fellow-citizens (from whom, unknown to myself, I stood exiled), I was wont, prating and foolishly, to ask them, "Why then doth the soul err which God created?" But I would not be asked, "Why then doth God err?" And I maintained that Thy unchangeable substance did err upon constraint, rather than confess that my changeable substance had gone astray voluntarily, and now, in punishment, lay in error.

I was then some six or seven and twenty years old when I wrote those volumes; revolving within me corporeal fictions, buzzing in the ears of my heart, which I turned, O sweet truth, to thy inward melody, meditating on the "fair and fit," and longing to stand and hearken to Thee, and to rejoice greatly at the Bridegroom's voice, but could not; for by the voices of mine own errors, I was hurried abroad, and through the weight of my own pride, I was sinking into the lowest pit. For Thou didst not make me to hear joy and gladness, nor did the bones exult which were not yet humbled.

CHAPTER XVI

HE VERY EASILY UNDERSTOOD THE LIBERAL ARTS AND THE CATEGORIES OF ARISTOTLE, BUT WITHOUT TRUE FRUIT.

And what did it profit me, that scarce twenty years old, a book of Aristotle, which they call the often Predicaments, falling into my hands (on whose very name I hung, as on something great and divine, so often as my rhetoric master of Carthage, and others, accounted learned, mouthed it with cheeks bursting with pride), I read and understood it unaided? And on my conferring with others, who said that they scarcely understood it with very able tutors, not only orally explaining it, but drawing many things in sand, they could tell me no more of it than I had learned, reading it by myself. And the book appeared to me to speak very clearly of substances, such as "man," and of their qualities, as the figure of a man, of what sort it is; and stature, how many feet high; and his relationship, whose brother he is; or where placed; or when born; or whether he stands or sits; or be shod or armed; or does, or suffers anything; and all the innumerable things which might be ranged under these nine Predicaments, of which I have given some specimens, or under that chief Predicament of Substance.

What did all this further me, seeing it even hindered me? when, imagining whatever was, was comprehended under those often Predicaments, I essayed in such wise to understand, O my God, Thy wonderful and unchangeable Unity also, as if Thou also hadst been subjected to Thine own greatness or beauty; so that (as in bodies) they should exist in Thee, as their subject: whereas Thou Thyself art Thy greatness and beauty; but a body is not great or fair in that it is a body, seeing that, though it were less great or fair, it should notwithstanding be a body. But it was falsehood which of Thee I conceived, not truth, fictions of my misery, not the realities of Thy blessedness. For Thou hadst commanded, and it was done in me, that the earth should bring forth briars and thorns to me, and that in the sweat of my brows I should eat my bread.

And what did it profit me, that all the books I could procure of the so-called liberal arts, I, the vile slave of vile affections, read by myself, and understood? And I delighted in them, but knew not whence came all, that therein was true or certain. For I had my back to the light, and my face to the things enlightened; whence my face, with which I discerned the things enlightened, itself was not enlightened. Whatever was written, either on rhetoric, or logic, geometry, music, and arithmetic, by myself without much difficulty or any instructor, I understood, Thou knowest, O Lord my God; because both quickness of understanding, and acuteness in discerning, is Thy gift: yet did I not thence sacrifice to Thee. So then it served not to my use, but rather to my perdition, since I went about to get so good a portion of my substance into my own keeping; and I kept not my strength for Thee, but wandered from Thee into a far country, to spend it upon harlotries. For what profited me good abilities, not employed to good uses? For I felt not that those arts were attained with great difficulty, even by the studious and talented, until I attempted to explain them to such; when he most excelled in them who followed me not altogether slowly.

But what did this further me, imagining that Thou, O Lord God, the Truth, wert a vast and bright body, and I a fragment of that body? Perverseness too great! But such was I. Nor do I blush, O my God, to confess to Thee Thy mercies towards me, and to call upon Thee, who blushed not then to profess to men my blasphemies, and to bark against Thee. What profited me then my nimble wit in those sciences and all those most knotty volumes, unravelied by me, without aid from human instruction; seeing I erred so foully, and with such sacrilegious shamefulness, in the doctrine of piety? Or what hindrance was a far slower wit to Thy little ones, since they departed not far from Thee, that in the nest of Thy Church they might securely be fledged, and nourish the wings of charity, by the food of a sound faith. O Lord our God, under the shadow of Thy wings let us hope; protect us, and carry us. Thou wilt carry us both when little, and even to hoar hairs wilt Thou carry us; for our firmness, when it is Thou, then is it firmness; but when our own, it is infirmity. Our good ever lives with Thee; from which when we turn away, we are turned aside. Let us now, O Lord, return, that we may not be overturned, because with Thee our good lives without any decay, which good art Thou; nor need we fear, lest there be no place whither to return, because we fell from it: for through our absence, our mansion fell not- Thy eternity.

BOOK V

CHAPTER I

THAT IT BECOMES THE SOUL TO PRAISE GOD, AND TO CONFESS UNTO HIM.

Accept the sacrifice of my confessions from the ministry of my tongue, which Thou hast formed and stirred up to confess unto Thy name. Heal Thou all my bones, and let them say, O Lord, who is like unto Thee? For he who confesses to Thee doth not teach Thee what takes place within him; seeing a closed heart closes not out Thy eye, nor can man’s hard-heartedness thrust back Thy hand: for Thou dissolvest it at Thy will in pity or in vengeance, and nothing can hide itself from Thy heat. But let my soul praise Thee, that it may love Thee; and let it confess Thy own mercies to Thee, that it may praise Thee. Thy whole creation ceaseth not, nor is silent in Thy praises; neither the spirit of man with voice directed unto Thee, nor creation animate or inanimate, by the voice of those who meditate thereon: that so our souls may from their weariness arise towards Thee, leaning on those things which Thou hast created, and passing on to Thyself, who madest them wonderfully; and there is refreshment and true strength.

CHAPTER II

ON THE VANITY OF THOSE WHO WISHED TO ESCAPE THE OMNIPOTENT GOD.

Let the restless, the godless, depart and flee from Thee; yet Thou seest them, and dividest the darkness. And behold, the universe with them is fair, though they are foul. And how have they injured Thee? or how have they disgraced Thy government, which, from the heaven to this lowest earth, is just and perfect? For whither fled they, when they fled from Thy presence? or where dost not Thou find them? But they fled, that they might not see Thee seeing them, and, blinded, might stumble against Thee (because Thou forsakest nothing Thou hast made); that the unjust, I say, might stumble upon Thee, and justly be hurt; withdrawing themselves from thy gentleness, and stumbling at Thy uprightness, and falling upon their own ruggedness.

Ignorant, in truth, that Thou art every where, Whom no place encompasseth! and Thou alone art near, even to those that remove far from Thee. Let them then be turned, and seek Thee; because not as they have forsaken their Creator, hast Thou forsaken Thy creation. Let them be turned and seek Thee; and behold, Thou art there in their heart, in the heart of those that confess to Thee, and cast themselves upon Thee, and weep in Thy bosom, after all their rugged ways. Then dost Thou gently wipe away their tears, and they weep the more, and joy in weeping; even for that Thou, Lord, -not man of flesh and blood, but -Thou, Lord, who madest them, re-makest and comfortest them. But where was I, when I was seeking Thee? And Thou wert before me, but I had gone away from Thee; nor did I find myself, how much less Thee!

CHAPTER III

HEAVING HEARD FAUSTUS, THE MOST LEARNED BISHOP OF THE MANICHAEANS, HE DISCERNS THAT GOD, THE AUTHOR BOTH OF THINGS ANIMATE AND INANIMATE, CHIEFLY HAS CARE FOR THE HUMBLE.

I would lay open before my God that nine-and-twentieth year of mine age. There had then come to Carthage a certain Bishop of the Manichees, Faustus by name, a great snare of the Devil, and many were entangled by him through that lure of his smooth language: which though I did commend, yet could I separate from the truth of the things which I was earnest to learn: nor did I so much regard the service of oratory as the science which this Faustus, so praised among them, set before me to feed upon. Fame had before bespoken him most knowing in all valuable learning, and exquisitely skilled in the liberal sciences. And since I had read and well remembered much of the philosophers, I compared some things of theirs with those long fables of the Manichees, and found the former the more probable; even although they could only prevail so far as to make judgment of this lower world, the Lord of it they could by no means find out. For Thou art great, O Lord, and hast respect unto the humble, but the proud Thou beholdest afar off. Nor dost Thou draw near, but to the contrite in heart, nor art found by the proud, no, not though by curious skill they could number the stars and the sand, and measure the starry heavens, and track the courses of the planets.

For with their understanding and wit, which Thou bestowedst on them, they search out these things; and much have they found out; and foretold, many years before, eclipses of those luminaries, the sun and moon, -what day and hour, and how many digits, -nor did their calculation fail; and it came to pass as they foretold; and they wrote down the rules they had found out, and these are read at this day, and out of them do others foretell in what year and month of the year, and what day of the month, and what hour of the day, and what part of its light, moon or sun is to be eclipsed, and so it shall be, as it is foreshowed. At these things men, that know not this art, marvel and are astonished, and they that know it, exult, and are puffed up; and by an ungodly pride departing from Thee, and failing of Thy light, they foresee a failure of the sun's light, which shall be, so long before, but see not their own, which is. For they search not religiously whence they have the wit, wherewith they search out this. And finding that Thou madest them, they give not themselves up to Thee, to preserve what Thou madest, nor sacrifice to Thee what they have made themselves; nor slay their own soaring imaginations, as fowls of the air, nor their own diving curiosities (wherewith, like the fishes of the seal they wander over the unknown paths of the abyss), nor their own luxuriousness, as beasts of the field, that Thou, Lord, a consuming fire, mayest burn up those dead cares of theirs, and re-create themselves immortally.

But they knew not the way, Thy Word, by Whom Thou madest these things which they number, and themselves who number, and the sense whereby they perceive what they number, and the understanding, out of which they number; or that of Thy wisdom there is no number. But the Only Begotten is Himself made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and was numbered among us, and paid tribute unto Caesar. They knew not this way whereby to descend to Him from themselves, and by Him ascend unto Him. They knew not this way, and deemed themselves exalted amongst the stars and shining; and behold, they fell upon the earth, and their foolish heart was darkened. They discourse many things truly concerning the creature; but Truth, Artificer of the creature, they seek not piously, and therefore find Him not; or if they find Him, knowing Him to be God, they glorify Him not as God, neither are thankful, but become vain in their imaginations, and profess themselves to be wise, attributing to themselves what is Thine; and thereby with most perverse blindness, study to impute to Thee what is their own, forging lies of Thee who art the Truth, and changing the glory of uncorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things, changing Thy truth into a lie, and worshipping and serving the creature more than the Creator.

Yet many truths concerning the creature retained I from these men, and saw the reason thereof from calculations, the succession of times, and the visible testimonies of the stars; and compared them with the saying of Manichaeus, which in his frenzy he had written most largely on these subjects; but discovered not any account of the solstices, or equinoxes, or the eclipses of the greater lights, nor whatever of this sort I had learned in the books of secular philosophy. But I was commanded to believe; and yet it corresponded not with what had been established by calculations and my own sight, but was quite contrary.

CHAPTER IV

THAT THE KNOWLEDGE OF TERRESTRIAL AND CELESTIAL THINGS DOES NOT GIVE HAPPINESS, BUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD ONLY.

Doth then, O Lord God of truth, whoso knoweth these things, therefore please Thee? Surely unhappy is he who knoweth all these, and knoweth not Thee: but happy whoso knoweth Thee, though he know not these. And whoso knoweth both Thee and them is not the happier for them, but for Thee only, if, knowing Thee, he glorifies Thee as God, and is thankful, and becomes not vain in his imaginations. For as he is better off who knows how to possess a tree, and return thanks to Thee for the use thereof, although he know not how many cubits high it is, or how wide it spreads, than he that can measure it, and count all its boughs, and neither owns it, nor knows or loves its Creator: so a believer, whose all this world of wealth is, and who having nothing, yet possesseth all things, by cleaving unto Thee, whom all things serve, though he know not even the circles of the Great Bear, yet is it folly to doubt but he is in a better state than one who can measure the heavens, and number the stars, and poise the elements, yet neglecteth Thee who hast made all things in number, weight, and measure.

CHAPTER V

OF MANICHAEUS PERTINACIOUSLY TEACHING FALSE DOCTRINES, AND PROUDLY ARROGATING TO HIMSELF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

But yet who bade that Manichaeus write on these things also, skill in which was no element of piety? For Thou hast said to man, Behold piety and wisdom; of which he might be ignorant, though he had perfect knowledge of these things; but these things, since, knowing not, he most impudently dared to teach, he plainly could have no knowledge of piety. For it is vanity to make profession of these worldly things even when known; but confession to Thee is piety. Wherefore this wanderer to this end spake much of these things, that convicted by those who had truly learned them, it might be manifest what understanding he had in the other abstruser things. For he would not have himself meanly thought of, but went about to persuade men, “That the Holy Ghost, the Comforter and Enricher of Thy faithful ones, was with plenary authority personally within him.” When then he was found out to have taught falsely of the heaven and stars, and of the motions of the sun and moon (although these things pertain not to the doctrine of religion), yet his sacrilegious presumption would become evident enough, seeing he delivered things which not only he knew not, but which were falsified, with so mad a vanity of pride, that he sought to ascribe them to himself, as to a divine person.

For when I hear any Christian brother ignorant of these things, and mistaken on them, I can patiently behold such a man holding his opinion; nor do I see that any ignorance as to the position or character of the corporeal creation can injure him, so long as he doth not believe any thing unworthy of Thee, O Lord, the Creator of all. But it doth injure him, if he imagine it to pertain to the form of the doctrine of piety, and will yet affirm that too stiffly whereof he is ignorant. And yet is even such an infirmity, in the infancy of faith, borne by our mother Charity, till the new-born may grow up unto a perfect man, so as not to be carried about with every wind of doctrine. But in him who in such wise presumed to be the teacher, source, guide, chief of all whom he could so persuade, that whoso followed him thought that he followed, not a mere man, but Thy Holy Spirit; who would not judge that so great madness, when once convicted of having taught any thing false, were to be detested and utterly rejected? But I had not as yet clearly ascertained whether the vicissitudes of longer and shorter days and nights, and of day and night itself, with the eclipses of the greater lights, and whatever else of the kind I had read of in other books, might be explained consistently with his sayings; so that, if they by any means might, it should still remain a question to me whether it were so or no; but I might, on account of his reputed sanctity, rest my credence upon his authority.

CHAPTER VI

FAUSTUS WAS INDEED AN ELEGANT SPEAKER, BUT KNEW NOTHING OF THE LIBERAL SCIENCES.

And for almost all those nine years, wherein with unsettled mind I had been their disciple, I had longed but too intensely for the coming of this Faustus. For the rest of the sect, whom by chance I had lighted upon, when unable to solve my objections about these things, still held out to me the coming of this Faustus, by conference with whom these and greater difficulties, if I had them, were to be most readily and abundantly cleared. When then he came, I found him a man of pleasing discourse, and who could speak fluently and in better terms, yet still but the self-same things which they were wont to say. But what availed the utmost neatness of the cup-bearer to my thirst for a more precious draught? Mine ears were already cloyed with the like, nor did they seem to me therefore better, because better said; nor therefore true, because eloquent; nor the soul therefore wise, because the face was comely, and the language graceful. But they who held him out to me were no good judges of things; and therefore to them he appeared understanding and wise, because in words pleasing. I felt however that another sort of people were suspicious even of truth, and refused to assent to it, if delivered in a smooth and copious discourse. But Thou, O my God, hadst already taught me by wonderful and secret ways, and therefore I believe that Thou taughtest me, because it is truth, nor is there besides Thee any teacher of truth, where or whencesoever it may shine upon us. Of Thyself therefore had I now learned, that neither ought any thing to seem to be spoken truly, because eloquently; nor therefore falsely, because the utterance of the lips is inharmonious; nor, again, therefore true, because rudely delivered; nor therefore false, because the language is rich; but that wisdom and folly are as wholesome and unwholesome food; and adorned or unadorned phrases as courtly or country vessels; either kind of meats may be served up in either kind of dishes.

That greediness then, wherewith I had of so long time expected that man, was delighted verily with his action and feeling when disputing, and his choice and readiness of words to clothe his ideas. I was then delighted, and, with many others and more than they, did I praise and extol him. It troubled me, however, that in the assembly of his auditors, I was not allowed to put in and communicate those questions that troubled me, in familiar converse with him. Which when I might, and with my friends began to engage his ears at such times as it was not unbecoming for him to discuss with me, and had brought forward such things as moved me; I found him first utterly ignorant of liberal sciences, save grammar, and that but in an ordinary way. But because he had read some of Tully's Orations, a very few books of Seneca, some things of the poets, and such few volumes of his own sect as were written in Latin and neatly, and was daily practised in speaking, he acquired a certain eloquence, which proved the more pleasing and seductive because under the guidance of a good wit, and with a kind of natural gracefulness. Is it not thus, as I recall it, O Lord my God, Thou judge of my conscience? before Thee is my heart, and my remembrance, Who didst at that time direct me by the hidden mystery of Thy providence, and didst set those shameful errors of mine before my face, that I might see and hate them.

CHAPTER VII

CLEARLY SEEING THE FALLACIES OF THE MANICHAEANS, HE RETIRES FROM THEM, BEING REMARKABLY AIDED BY GOD.

For after it was clear that he was ignorant of those arts in which I thought he excelled, I began to despair of his opening and solving the difficulties which perplexed me (of which indeed however ignorant, he might have held the truths of piety, had he not been a Manichee). For their books are fraught with prolix fables, of the heaven, and stars, sun, and moon, and I now no longer thought him able satisfactorily to decide what I much desired, whether, on comparison of these things with the calculations I had elsewhere read, the account given in the books of Manichaeus were preferable, or at least as good. Which when I proposed to he considered and discussed, he, so far modestly, shrunk from the burthen. For he knew that he knew not these things, and was not ashamed to confess it. For he was not one of those talking persons, many of whom I had endured, who undertook to teach me these things, and said nothing. But this man had a heart, though not right towards Thee, yet neither altogether treacherous to himself. For he was not altogether ignorant of his own ignorance, nor would he rashly be entangled in a dispute, whence he could neither retreat nor extricate himself fairly. Even for this I liked him the better. For fairer is the modesty of a candid mind, than the knowledge of those things which I desired; and such I found him, in all the more difficult and subtile questions.

My zeal for the writings of Manichaeus being thus blunted, and despairing yet more of their other teachers, seeing that in divers things which perplexed me, he, so renowned among them, had so turned out; I began to engage with him in the study of that literature, on which he also was much set (and which as rhetoric-reader I was at that time teaching young students at Carthage), and to read with him, either what himself desired to hear, or such as I judged fit for his genius. But all my efforts whereby I had purposed to advance in that sect, upon knowledge of that man, came utterly to an end; not that I detached myself from them altogether, but as one finding nothing better, I had settled to be content meanwhile with what I had in whatever way fallen upon, unless by chance something more eligible should dawn upon me. Thus, that Faustus, to so many a snare of death, had now neither willing nor witting it, begun to loosen that wherein I was taken. For Thy hands, O my God, in the secret purpose of Thy providence, did not forsake my soul; and out of my mother’s heart’s blood, through her tears night and day poured out, was a sacrifice offered for me unto Thee; and Thou didst deal with me by wondrous ways. Thou didst it, O my God: for the steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and He shall dispose his way. Or how shall we obtain salvation, but from Thy hand, re-making what it made?

CHAPTER IX

BEING ATTACKED BY FEVER, HE IS IN GREAT DANGER

And lo, there was I received by the scourge of bodily sickness, and I was going down to hell, carrying all the sins which I had committed, both against Thee, and myself, and others, many and grievous, over and above that bond of original sin, whereby we all die in Adam. For Thou hadst not forgiven me any of these things in Christ, nor had He abolished by His Cross the enmity which by my sins I had incurred with Thee. For how should He, by the crucifixion of a phantasm, which I believed Him to be? So true, then, was the death of my soul, as that of His flesh seemed to me false; and how true the death of His body, so false was the life of my soul, which did not believe it. And now the fever heightening, I was parting and departing for ever. For had I then parted hence, whither had I departed, but into fire and torments, such as my misdeeds deserved in the truth of Thy appointment? And this she knew not, yet in absence prayed for me. But Thou, everywhere present, heardest her where she was, and, where I was, hadst compassion upon me; that I should recover the health of my body, though frenzied as yet in my sacrilegious heart. For I did not in all that danger desire Thy baptism; and I was better as a boy, when I begged it of my mother's piety, as I have before recited and confessed. But I had grown up to my own shame, and I madly scoffed at the prescripts of Thy medicine, who wouldest not suffer me, being such, to die a double death. With which wound had my mother's heart been pierced, it could never be healed. For I cannot express the affection she bore to me, and with how much more vehement anguish she was now in labour of me in the spirit, than at her childbearing in the flesh.

I see not then how she should have been healed, had such a death of mine stricken through the bowels of her love. And where would have been those her so strong and unceasing prayers, unintermitting to Thee alone? But wouldest Thou, God of mercies, despise the contrite and humbled heart of that chaste and sober widow, so frequent in almsdeeds, so full of duty and service to Thy saints, no day intermitting the oblation at Thine altar, twice a day, morning and evening, without any intermission, coming to Thy church, not for idle tattlings and old wives' fables; but that she might hear Thee in Thy discourses, and Thou her in her prayers. Couldest Thou despise and reject from Thy aid the tears of such an one, wherewith she begged of Thee not gold or silver, nor any mutable or passing good, but the salvation of her son's soul? Thou, by whose gift she was such? Never, Lord. Yea, Thou wert at hand, and wert hearing and doing, in that order wherein Thou hadst determined before that it should be done. Far be it that Thou shouldest deceive her in Thy visions and answers, some whereof I have, some I have not mentioned, which she laid up in her faithful heart, and ever praying, urged upon Thee, as Thine own handwriting. For Thou, because Thy mercy endureth for ever, vouchsafest to those to whom Thou forgivest all of their debts, to become also a debtor by Thy promises.

CHAPTER X

WHEN HE HAD LEFT THE MANICHAEANS, HE RETAINED HIS DEPRAVED OPINIONS CONCERNING SIN AND THE ORIGIN OF THE SAVIOUR.

Thou recoveredst me then of that sickness, and healedst the son of Thy handmaid, for the time in body, that he might live, for Thee to bestow upon him a better and more abiding health. And even then, at Rome, I joined myself to those deceiving and deceived “holy ones”; not with their disciples only (of which number was he, in whose house I had fallen sick and recovered); but also with those whom they call “The Elect.” For I still thought “that it was not we that sin, but that I know not what other nature sinned in us”; and it delighted my pride, to be free from blame; and when I had done any evil, not to confess I had done any, that Thou mightest heal my soul because it had sinned against Thee: but I loved to excuse it, and to accuse I know not what other thing, which was with me, but which I was not. But in truth it was wholly I, and mine impiety had divided me against myself: and that sin was the more incurable, whereby I did not judge myself a sinner; and execrable iniquity it was, that I had rather have Thee, Thee, O God Almighty, to be overcome in me to my destruction, than myself of Thee to salvation. Not as yet then hadst Thou set a watch before my mouth, and a door of safe keeping around my lips, that my heart might not turn aside to wicked speeches, to make excuses of sins, with men that work iniquity; and, therefore, was I still united with their Elect.

But now despairing to make proficiency in that false doctrine, even those things (with which if I should find no better, I had resolved to rest contented) I now held more laxly and carelessly. For there half arose a thought in me that those philosophers, whom they call Academics, were wiser than the rest, for that they held men ought to doubt everything, and laid down that no truth can be comprehended by man: for so, not then understanding even their meaning, I also was clearly convinced that they thought, as they are commonly reported. Yet did I freely and openly discourage that host of mine from that over-confidence which I perceived him to have in those fables, which the books of Manichaeus are full of. Yet I lived in more familiar friendship with them, than with others who were not of this heresy. Nor did I maintain it with my ancient eagerness; still my intimacy with that sect (Rome secretly harbouring many of them) made me slower to seek any other way: especially since I despaired of finding the truth, from which they had turned me aside, in Thy Church, O Lord of heaven and earth, Creator of all things visible and invisible: and it seemed to me very unseemly to believe Thee to have the shape of human flesh, and to be bounded by the bodily lineaments of our members. And because, when I wished to think on my God, I knew not what to think of, but a mass of bodies (for what was not such did not seem to me to be anything), this was the greatest, and almost only cause of my inevitable error.

For hence I believed Evil also to be some such kind of substance, and to have its own foul and hideous bulk; whether gross, which they called earth, or thin and subtile (like the body of the air), which they imagine to be some malignant mind, creeping through that earth. And because a piety, such as it was, constrained me to believe that the good God never created any evil nature, I conceived two masses, contrary to one another, both unbounded, but the evil narrower, the good more expansive. And from this pestilent beginning, the other sacrilegious conceits followed on me. For when my mind endeavoured to recur to the Catholic faith, I was driven back, since that was not the Catholic faith which I thought to be so. And I seemed to myself more reverential, if I believed of Thee, my God (to whom Thy mercies confess out of my mouth), as unbounded, at least on other sides, although on that one where the mass of evil was opposed to Thee, I was constrained to confess Thee bounded; than if on all sides I should imagine Thee to be bounded by the form of a human body. And it seemed to me better to believe Thee to have created no evil (which to me ignorant seemed not some only, but a bodily substance, because I could not conceive of mind unless as a subtile body, and that diffused in definite spaces), than to believe the nature of evil, such as I conceived it, could come from Thee. Yea, and our Saviour Himself, Thy Only Begotten, I believed to have been reached forth (as it were) for our salvation, out of the mass of Thy most lucid substance, so as to believe nothing of Him, but what I could imagine in my vanity. His Nature then, being such, I thought could not be born of the Virgin Mary, without being mingled with the flesh: and how that which I had so figured to myself could be mingled, and not defiled, I saw not. I feared therefore to believe Him born in the flesh, lest I should be forced to believe Him defiled by the flesh. Now will Thy spiritual ones mildly and lovingly smile upon me, if they shall read these my confessions. Yet such was I.

CHAPTER XI

HELPIDIUS DISPUTED WELL AGAINST THE MANICHAEANS AS TO THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Furthermore, what the Manichees had criticised in Thy Scriptures, I thought could not be defended; yet at times verily I had a wish to confer upon these several points with some one very well skilled in those books, and to make trial what he thought thereon; for the words of one Helpidius, as he spoke and disputed face to face against the said Manichees, had begun to stir me even at Carthage: in that he had produced things out of the Scriptures, not easily withstood, the Manichees' answer whereto seemed to me weak. And this answer they liked not to give publicly, but only to us in private. It was, that the Scriptures of the New Testament had been corrupted by I know not whom, who wished to engraff the law of the Jews upon the Christian faith: yet themselves produced not any uncorrupted copies. But I, conceiving of things corporeal only, was mainly held down, vehemently oppressed and in a manner suffocated by those "masses"; panting under which after the breath of Thy truth, I could not breathe it pure and untainted.

CHAPTER XII

PROFESSING RHETORIC AT ROME, HE DISCOVERS THE FRAUD OF HIS SCHOLARS.

I began then diligently to practise that for which I came to Rome, to teach rhetoric; and first, to gather some to my house, to whom, and through whom, I had begun to be known; when to, I found other offences committed in Rome, to which I was not exposed in Africa. True, those "subvertings" by profligate young men were not here practised, as was told me: but on a sudden, said they, to avoid paying their master’s stipend, a number of youths plot together, and remove to another; -breakers of faith, who for love of money hold justice cheap. These also my heart hated, though not with a perfect hatred: for perchance I hated them more because I was to suffer by them, than because they did things utterly unlawful. Of a truth such are base persons, and they go a whoring from Thee, loving these fleeting mockeries of things temporal, and filthy lucre, which fouls the hand that grasps it; hugging the fleeting world, and despising Thee, Who abidest, and recallest, and forgivest the adulteress soul of man, when she returns to Thee. And now I hate such depraved and crooked persons, though I love them if corrigible, so as to prefer to money the learning which they acquire, and to learning, Thee, O God, the truth and fulness of assured good, and most pure peace. But then I rather for my own sake misliked them evil, than liked and wished them good for Thine.

CHAPTER XIII

HE IS SENT TO MILAN, THAT HE, ABOUT TO TEACH RHETORIC, MAY BE KNOWN BY AMBROSE.

When therefore they of Milan had sent to Rome to the prefect of the city, to furnish them with a rhetoric reader for their city, and sent him at the public expense, I made application (through those very persons, intoxicated with Manichaean vanities, to be freed wherefrom I was to go, neither of us however knowing it) that Symmachus, then prefect of the city, would try me by setting me some subject, and so send me. To Milan I came, to Ambrose the Bishop, known to the whole world as among the best of men, Thy devout servant; whose eloquent discourse did then plentifully dispense unto Thy people the flour of Thy wheat, the gladness of Thy oil, and the sober inebriation of Thy wine. To him was I unknowing led by Thee, that by him I might knowingly be led to Thee. That man of God received me as a father, and showed me an Episcopal kindness on my coming. Thenceforth I began to love him, at first indeed not as a teacher of the truth (which I utterly despaired of in Thy Church), but as a person kind towards myself. And I listened diligently to him preaching to the people, not with that intent I ought, but, as it were, trying his eloquence, whether it answered the fame thereof, or flowed fuller or lower than was reported; and I hung on his words attentively; but of the matter I was as a careless and scornful looker-on; and I was delighted with the sweetness of his discourse, more recondite, yet in manner less winning and harmonious, than that of Faustus. Of the matter, however, there was no comparison; for the one was wandering amid Manichaean delusions, the other teaching salvation most soundly. But salvation is far from sinners, such as I then stood before him; and yet was I drawing nearer by little and little, and unconsciously.

CHAPTER XIV

HAVING HEARD THE BISHOP, HE PERCIEVES THE FORCE OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH, YET DOUBTS, AFTER THE MANNER OF THE MODERN ACADEMICS.

For though I took no pains to learn what he spake, but only to hear how he spake (for that empty care alone was left me, despairing of a way, open for man, to Thee), yet together with the words which I would choose, came also into my mind the things which I would refuse; for I could not separate them. And while I opened my heart to admit “how eloquently he spake,” there also entered “how truly he spake”; but this by degrees. For first, these things also had now begun to appear to me capable of defence; and the Catholic faith, for which I had thought nothing could be said against the Manichees’ objections, I now thought might be maintained without shamelessness; especially after I had heard one or two places of the Old Testament resolved, and ofttimes “in a figure,” which when I understood literally, I was slain spiritually. Very many places then of those books having been explained, I now blamed my despair, in believing that no answer could be given to such as hated and scoffed at the Law and the Prophets. Yet did I not therefore then see that the Catholic way was to be held, because it also could find learned maintainers, who could at large and with some show of reason answer objections; nor that what I held was therefore to be condemned, because both sides could be maintained. For the Catholic cause seemed to me in such sort not vanquished, as still not as yet to be victorious.

Hereupon I earnestly bent my mind, to see if in any way I could by any certain proof convict the Manichees of falsehood. Could I once have conceived a spiritual substance, all their strongholds had been beaten down, and cast utterly out of my mind; but I could not. Notwithstanding, concerning the frame of this world, and the whole of nature, which the senses of the flesh can reach to, as I more and more considered and compared things, I judged the tenets of most of the philosophers to have been much more probable. So then after the manner of the Academics (as they are supposed) doubting of every thing, and wavering between all, I settled so far, that the Manichees were to be abandoned; judging that, even while doubting, I might not continue in that sect, to which I already preferred some of the philosophers; to which philosophers notwithstanding, for that they were without the saving Name of Christ, I utterly refused to commit the cure of my sick soul. I determined therefore so long to be a Catechumen in the Catholic Church, to which I had been commended by my parents, till something certain should dawn upon me, whither I might steer my course.

BOOK VI

CHAPTER I

HIS MOTHER HAVING FOLLOWED HIM TO MILAN, DECLARES THAT SHE WILL NOT DIE BEFORE HER SON SHALL HAVE EMBRACED THE CATHOLIC FAITH.

O Thou, my hope from my youth, where wert Thou to me, and whither wert Thou gone? Hadst not Thou created me, and separated me from the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air? Thou hadst made me wiser, yet did I walk in darkness, and in slippery places, and sought Thee abroad out of myself, and found not the God of my heart; and had come into the depths of the sea, and distrusted and despaired of ever finding truth. My mother had now come to me, resolute through piety, following me over sea and land, in all perils confiding in Thee. For in perils of the sea, she comforted the very mariners (by whom passengers unacquainted with the deep, use rather to be comforted when troubled), assuring them of a safe arrival, because Thou hadst by a vision assured her thereof. She found me in grievous peril, through despair of ever finding truth. But when I had discovered to her that I was now no longer a Manichee, though not yet a Catholic Christian, she was not overjoyed, as at something unexpected; although she was now assured concerning that part of my misery, for which she bewailed me as one dead, though to be reawakened by Thee, carrying me forth upon the bier of her thoughts, that Thou mightest say to the son of the widow, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise; and he should revive, and begin to speak, and Thou shouldest deliver him to his mother. Her heart then was shaken with no tumultuous exultation, when she heard that what she daily with tears desired of Thee was already in so great part realised; in that, though I had not yet attained the truth, I was rescued from falsehood; but, as being assured, that Thou, Who hadst promised the whole, wouldest one day give the rest, most calmly, and with a heart full of confidence, she replied to me, “She believed in Christ, that before she departed this life, she should see me a Catholic believer.” Thus much to me. But to Thee, Fountain of mercies, poured she forth more copious prayers and tears, that Thou wouldest hasten Thy help, and enlighten my darkness; and she hastened the more eagerly to the Church, and hung upon the lips of Ambrose, praying for the fountain of that water, which springeth up unto life everlasting. But that man she loved as an angel of God, because she knew that by him I had been brought for the present to that doubtful state of faith I now was in, through which she anticipated most confidently that I should pass from sickness unto health, after the access, as it were, of a sharper fit, which physicians call “the crisis.”

CHAPTER II

SHE, ON THE PROHIBITION OF AMBROSE, ABSTAINS FROM HONOURING THE MEMORY OF THE MARTYRS.

When then my mother had once, as she was wont in Afric, brought to the Churches built in memory of the Saints, certain cakes, and bread and wine, and was forbidden by the door-keeper; so soon as she knew that the Bishop had forbidden this, she so piously and obediently embraced his wishes, that I myself wondered how readily she censured her own practice, rather than discuss his prohibition. For wine-bibbing did not lay siege to her spirit, nor did love of wine provoke her to hatred of the truth, as it doth too many (both men and women), who revolt at a lesson of sobriety, as men well-drunk at a draught mingled with water. But she, when she had brought her basket with the accustomed festival-food, to be but tasted by herself, and then given away, never joined therewith more than one small cup of wine, diluted according to her own abstemious habits, which for courtesy she would taste. And if there were many churches of the departed saints that were to be honoured in that manner, she still carried round that same one cup, to be used every where; and this, though not only made very watery, but unpleasantly heated with carrying about, she would distribute to those about her by small sips; for she sought there devotion, not pleasure. So soon, then, as she found this custom to be forbidden by that famous preacher and most pious prelate, even to those that would use it soberly, lest so an occasion of excess might be given to the drunken; and for these, as it were, anniversary funeral solemnities did much resemble the superstition of the Gentiles, she most willingly forbare it: and for a basket filled with fruits of the earth, she had learned to bring to the Churches of the martyrs a breast filled with more purified petitions, and to give what she could to the poor;

that so the communication of the Lord’s Body might be there rightly celebrated, where, after the example of His Passion, the martyrs had been sacrificed and crowned. But yet it seems to me, O Lord my God, and thus thinks my heart of it in Thy sight, that perhaps she would not so readily have yielded to the cutting off of this custom, had it been forbidden by another, whom she loved not as Ambrose, whom, for my salvation, she loved most entirely; and he her again, for her most religious conversation, whereby in good works, so fervent in spirit, she was constant at church; so that, when he saw me, he often burst forth into her praises; congratulating me that I had such a mother; not knowing what a son she had in me, who doubted of all these things, and imagined the way to life could not be found out.

CHAPTER III

AS AMBROSE WAS OCCUPIED WITH BUSINESS AND STUDY, AUGUSTIN COULD SELDOM CONSULT HIM CONCERNING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

Nor did I yet groan in my prayers, that Thou wouldest help me; but my spirit was wholly intent on learning, and restless to dispute. And Ambrose himself, as the world counts happy, I esteemed a happy man, whom personages so great held in such honour; only his celibacy seemed to me a painful course. But what hope he bore within him, what struggles he had against the temptations which beset his very excellencies, or what comfort in adversities, and what sweet joys Thy Bread had for the hidden mouth of his spirit, when chewing the cud thereof, I neither could conjecture, nor had experienced. Nor did he know the tides of my feelings, or the abyss of my danger. For I could not ask of him, what I would as I would, being shut out both from his ear and speech by multitudes of busy people, whose weaknesses he served. With whom when he was not taken up (which was but a little time), he was either refreshing his body with the sustenance absolutely necessary, or his mind with reading. But when he was reading, his eye glided over the pages, and his heart searched out the sense, but his voice and tongue were at rest. Ofttimes when we had come (for no man was forbidden to enter, nor was it his wont that any who came should be announced to him), we saw him thus reading to himself, and never otherwise; and having long sat silent (for who durst intrude on one so intent?) we were fain to depart, conjecturing that in the small interval which he obtained, free from the din of others' business, for the recruiting of his mind, he was loth to be taken off; and perchance he dreaded lest if the author he read should deliver any thing obscurely, some attentive or perplexed hearer should desire him to expound it, or to discuss some of the harder questions; so that his time being thus spent, he could not turn over so many volumes as he desired; although the preserving of his voice (which a very little speaking would weaken) might be the truer reason for his reading to himself. But with what intent soever he did it, certainly in such a man it was good.

I however certainly had no opportunity of enquiring what I wished of that so holy oracle of Thine, his breast, unless the thing might be answered briefly. But those tides in me, to be poured out to him, required his full leisure, and never found it. I heard him indeed every Lord's day, rightly expounding the Word of truth among the people; and I was more and more convinced that all the knots of those crafty calumnies, which those our deceivers had knit against the Divine Books, could be unravelled. But when I understood withal, that "man created by Thee, after Thine own image," was not so understood by Thy spiritual sons, whom of the Catholic Mother Thou hast born again through grace, as though they believed and conceived of Thee as bounded by human shape (although what a spiritual substance should be I had not even a faint or shadowy notion); yet, with joy I blushed at having so many years barked not against the Catholic faith, but against the fictions of carnal imaginations. For so rash and impious had I been, that what I ought by enquiring to have learned, I had pronounced on, condemning. For Thou, Most High, and most near; most secret, and most present; Who hast not limbs some larger, some smaller, but art wholly every where, and no where in space, art not of such corporeal shape, yet hast Thou made man after Thine own image; and behold, from head to foot is he contained in space.

CHAPTER IV

HE RECOGNISES THE FALSITY OF HIS OWN OPINIONS, AND COMMITS TO MEMORY THE SAYING OF AMBROSE.

Ignorant then how this Thy image should subsist, I should have knocked and proposed the doubt, how it was to be believed, not insultingly opposed it, as if believed. Doubt, then, what to hold for certain, the more sharply gnawed my heart, the more ashamed I was, that so long deluded and deceived by the promise of certainties, I had with childish error and vehemence, prated of so many uncertainties. For that they were falsehoods became clear to me later. However I was certain that they were uncertain, and that I had formerly accounted them certain, when with a blind contentiousness, I accused Thy Catholic Church, whom I now discovered, not indeed as yet to teach truly, but at least not to teach that for which I had grievously censured her. So I was confounded, and converted: and I joyed, O my God, that the One Only Church, the body of Thine Only Son (wherein the name of Christ had been put upon me as an infant), had no taste for infantine conceits; nor in her sound doctrine maintained any tenet which should confine Thee, the Creator of all, in space, however great and large, yet bounded every where by the limits of a human form.

I joyed also that the old Scriptures of the law and the Prophets were laid before me, not now to be perused with that eye to which before they seemed absurd, when I reviled Thy holy ones for so thinking, whereas indeed they thought not so: and with joy I heard Ambrose in his sermons to the people, oftentimes most diligently recommend this text for a rule, The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life; whilst he drew aside the mystic veil, laying open spiritually what, according to the letter, seemed to teach something unsound; teaching herein nothing that offended me, though he taught what I knew not as yet, whether it were true. For I kept my heart from assenting to any thing, fearing to fall headlong; but by hanging in suspense I was the worse killed. For I wished to be as assured of the things I saw not, as I was that seven and three are ten. For I was not so mad as to think that even this could not be comprehended; but I desired to have other things as clear as this, whether things corporeal, which were not present to my senses, or spiritual, whereof I knew not how to conceive, except corporeally. And by believing might I have been cured, that so the eyesight of my soul being cleared, might in some way be directed to Thy truth, which abideth always, and in no part faileth. But as it happens that one who has tried a bad physician, fears to trust himself with a good one, so was it with the health of my soul, which could not be healed but by believing, and lest it should believe falsehoods, refused to be cured; resisting Thy hands, Who hast prepared the medicines of faith, and hast applied them to the diseases of the whole world, and given unto them so great authority.

CHAPTER V

FAITH IS THE BASIS OF HUMAN LIFE; MAN CANNOT DISCOVER THAT TRUTH WHICH HOLY SCRIPTURE HAS DISCLOSED.

Being led, however, from this to prefer the Catholic doctrine, I felt that her proceeding was more unassuming and honest, in that she required to be believed things not demonstrated (whether it was that they could in themselves be demonstrated but not to certain persons, or could not at all be), whereas among the Manichees our credulity was mocked by a promise of certain knowledge, and then so many most fabulous and absurd things were imposed to be believed, because they could not be demonstrated. Then Thou, O Lord, little by little with most tender and most merciful hand, touching and composing my heart, didst persuade me- considering what innumerable things I believed, which I saw not, nor was present while they were done, as so many things in secular history, so many reports of places and of cities, which I had not seen; so many of friends, so many of physicians, so many continually of other men, which unless we should believe, we should do nothing at all in this life; lastly, with how unshaken an assurance I believed of what parents I was born, which I could not know, had I not believed upon hearsay -considering all this, Thou didst persuade me, that not they who believed Thy Books (which Thou hast established in so great authority among almost all nations), but they who believed them not, were to be blamed; and that they were not to be heard, who should say to me, “How knowest thou those Scriptures to have been imparted unto mankind by the Spirit of the one true and most true God?” For this very thing was of all most to be believed, since no contentiousness of blasphemous questionings, of all that multitude which I had read in the self-contradicting philosophers, could wring this belief from me, “That Thou art” whatsoever Thou wert (what I knew not), and “That the government of human things belongs to Thee.”

This I believed, sometimes more strongly, more weakly otherwhiles; yet I ever believed both that Thou wert, and hadst a care of us; though I was ignorant, both what was to be thought of Thy substance, and what way led or led back to Thee. Since then we were too weak by abstract reasonings to find out truth: and for this very cause needed the authority of Holy Writ; I had now begun to believe that Thou wouldest never have given such excellency of authority to that Writ in all lands, hadst Thou not willed thereby to be believed in, thereby sought. For now what things, sounding strangely in the Scripture, were wont to offend me, having heard divers of them expounded satisfactorily, I referred to the depth of the mysteries, and its authority appeared to me the more venerable, and more worthy of religious credence, in that, while it lay open to all to read, it reserved the majesty of its mysteries within its profounder meaning, stooping to all in the great plainness of its words and lowliness of its style, yet calling forth the intensest application of such as are not light of heart; that so it might receive all in its open bosom, and through narrow passages waft over towards Thee some few, yet many more than if it stood not aloft on such a height of authority, nor drew multitudes within its bosom by its holy lowliness. These things I thought on, and Thou wert with me; I sighed, and Thou heardest me; I wavered, and Thou didst guide me; I wandered through the broad way of the world, and Thou didst not forsake me.

CHAPTER VI

ON THE SOURCE AND CAUSE OF TRUE JOY,

THE EXAMPLE OF THE JOYOUS BEGGAR BEING ADDUCED.

I panted after honours, gains, marriage; and thou deridedst me. In these desires I underwent most bitter crosses, Thou being the more gracious, the less Thou sufferedst aught to grow sweet to me, which was not Thou. Behold my heart, O Lord, who wouldest I should remember all this, and confess to Thee. Let my soul cleave unto Thee, now that Thou hast freed it from that fast-holding birdlime of death. How wretched was it! and Thou didst irritate the feeling of its wound, that forsaking all else, it might be converted unto Thee, who art above all, and without whom all things would be nothing; be converted, and be healed. How miserable was I then, and how didst Thou deal with me, to make me feel my misery on that day, when I was preparing to recite a panegyric of the Emperor, wherein I was to utter many a lie, and lying, was to be applauded by those who knew I lied, and my heart was panting with these anxieties, and boiling with the feverishness of consuming thoughts. For, passing through one of the streets of Milan, I observed a poor beggar, then, I suppose, with a full belly, joking and joyous: and I sighed, and spoke to the friends around me, of the many sorrows of our frenzies; for that by all such efforts of ours, as those wherein I then toiled dragging along, under the goading of desire, the burthen of my own wretchedness, and, by dragging, augmenting it, we yet looked to arrive only at that very joyousness whither that beggar-man had arrived before us, who should never perchance attain it. For what he had obtained by means of a few begged pence, the same was I plotting for by many a toilsome turning and winding; the joy of a temporary felicity. For he verily had not the true joy; but yet I with those my ambitious designs was seeking one much less true. And certainly he was joyous, I anxious; he void of care, I full of fears. But should any ask me, had I rather be merry or fearful? I would answer merry. Again, if he asked had I rather be such as he was, or what I then was? I should choose to be myself, though worn with cares and fears; but out of wrong judgment; for, was it the truth? For I ought not to prefer myself to him, because more learned than he, seeing I had no joy therein, but sought to please men by it; and that not to instruct, but simply to please. Wherefore also Thou didst break my bones with the staff of Thy correction.

Away with those then from my soul who say to her, “It makes a difference whence a man’s joy is. That beggar-man joyed in drunkenness; Thou desiredst to joy in glory.” What glory, Lord? That which is not in Thee. For even as his was no true joy, so was that no true glory: and it overthrew my soul more. He that very night should digest his drunkenness; but I had slept and risen again with mine, and was to sleep again, and again to rise with it, how many days, Thou, God, knowest. But “it doth make a difference whence a man’s joy is.” I know it, and the joy of a faithful hope lieth incomparably beyond such vanity. Yea, and so was he then beyond me: for he verily was the happier; not only for that he was thoroughly drenched in mirth, I disembowelled with cares: but he, by fair wishes, had gotten wine; I, by lying, was seeking for empty, swelling praise. Much to this purpose said I then to my friends: and I often marked in them how it fared with me; and I found it went ill with me, and grieved, and doubled that very ill; and if any prosperity smiled on me, I was loth to catch at it, for almost before I could grasp it, it flew away.

CHAPTER VII

HE LEADS TO REFORMATION HIS FRIEND ALYPIUS, SEIZED WITH MADNESS FOR THE CIRCENSIAN GAMES.

These things we, who were living as friends together, bemoaned together, but chiefly and most familiarly did I speak thereof with Alypius and Nebridius, of whom Alypius was born in the same town with me, of persons of chief rank there, but younger than I. For he had studied under me, both when I first lectured in our town, and afterwards at Carthage, and he loved me much, because I seemed to him kind, and learned; and I him, for his great towardliness to virtue, which was eminent enough in one of no greater years. Yet the whirlpool of Carthaginian habits (amongst whom those idle spectacles are hotly followed) had drawn him into the madness of the Circus. But while he was miserably tossed therein, and I, professing rhetoric there, had a public school, as yet he used not my teaching, by reason of some unkindness risen betwixt his father and me. I had found then how deadly he doted upon the Circus, and was deeply grieved that he seemed likely, nay, or had thrown away so great promise: yet had I no means of advising or with a sort of constraint reclaiming him, either by the kindness of a friend, or the authority of a master. For I supposed that he thought of me as did his father; but he was not such; laying aside then his father’s mind in that matter, he began to greet me, come sometimes into my lecture room, hear a little, and be gone.

I however had forgotten to deal with him, that he should not, through a blind and headlong desire of vain pastimes, undo so good a wit. But Thou, O Lord, who guidest the course of all Thou hast created, hadst not forgotten him, who was one day to be among Thy children, Priest and Dispenser of Thy Sacrament; and that his amendment might plainly be attributed to Thyself, Thou effectedst it through me, unknowingly. For as one day I sat in my accustomed place, with my scholars before me, he entered, greeted me, sat down, and applied his mind to what I then handled. I had by chance a passage in hand, which while I was explaining, a likeness from the Circensian races occurred to me, as likely to make what I would convey pleasanter and plainer, seasoned with biting mockery of those whom that madness had enthralled; God, Thou knowest that I then thought not of curing Alypius of that infection. But he took it wholly to himself, and thought that I said it simply for his sake. And whence another would have taken occasion of offence with me, that right-minded youth took as a ground of being offended at himself, and loving me more fervently. For Thou hadst said it long ago, and put it into Thy book, Rebuke a wise man and he will love Thee. But I had not rebuked him, but Thou, who employest all, knowing or not knowing, in that order which Thyself knowest (and that order is just), didst of my heart and tongue make burning coals, by which to set on fire the hopeful mind, thus languishing, and so cure it. Let him be silent in Thy praises, who considers not Thy mercies, which confess unto Thee out of my inmost soul. For he upon that speech burst out of that pit so deep, wherein he was wilfully plunged, and was blinded with its wretched pastimes; and he shook his mind with a strong self-command; whereupon all the filths of the Circensian pastimes flew off from him, nor came he again thither. Upon this, he prevailed with his unwilling father that he might be my scholar. He gave way, and gave in. And Alypius beginning to be my hearer again, was involved in the same superstition with me, loving in the Manichees that show of continency which he supposed true and unfeigned. Whereas it was a senseless and seducing continency, ensnaring precious souls, unable as yet to reach the depth of virtue, yet readily beguiled with the surface of what was but a shadowy and counterfeit virtue.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SAME WHEN AT ROME, BEING LED BY OTHERS INTO THE AMPHITHEATRE, IS DELIGHTED WITH THE GLADITORIAL GAMES.

He, not forsaking that secular course which his parents had charmed him to pursue, had gone before me to Rome, to study law, and there he was carried away incredibly with an incredible eagerness after the shows of gladiators. For being utterly averse to and detesting spectacles, he was one day by chance met by divers of his acquaintance and fellow-students coming from dinner, and they with a familiar violence haled him, vehemently refusing and resisting, into the Amphitheatre, during these cruel and deadly shows, he thus protesting: “Though you hale my body to that place, and there set me, can you force me also to turn my mind or my eyes to those shows? I shall then be absent while present, and so shall overcome both you and them.” They, hearing this, led him on nevertheless, desirous perchance to try that very thing, whether he could do as he said. When they were come thither, and had taken their places as they could, the whole place kindled with that savage pastime. But he, closing the passage of his eyes, forbade his mind to range abroad after such evil; and would he had stopped his ears also! For in the fight, when one fell, a mighty cry of the whole people striking him strongly, overcome by curiosity, and as if prepared to despise and be superior to it whatsoever it were, even when seen, he opened his eyes, and was stricken with a deeper wound in his soul than the other, whom he desired to behold, was in his body; and he fell more miserably than he upon whose fall that mighty noise was raised, which entered through his ears, and unlocked his eyes, to make way for the striking and beating down of a soul, bold rather than resolute, and the weaker, in that it had presumed on itself, which ought to have relied on Thee. For so soon as he saw that blood, he therewith drunk down savageness; nor turned away, but fixed his eye, drinking in frenzy, unawares, and was delighted with that guilty fight, and intoxicated with the bloody pastime. Nor was he now the man he came, but one of the throng he came unto, yea, a true associate of theirs that brought him thither. Why say more? He beheld, shouted, kindled, carried thence with him the madness which should goad him to return not only with them who first drew him thither, but also before them, yea and to draw in others. Yet thence didst Thou with a most strong and most merciful hand pluck him, and taughtest him to have confidence not in himself, but in Thee. But this was after.

CHAPTER IX

INNOCENT ALYPIUS, BEING APPREHENDED AS A THIEF, IS ST AT LIBERTY BY THE CLEVERNESS OF AN ARCHITECHT.

But this was already being laid up in his memory to be a medicine hereafter. So was that also, that when he was yet studying under me at Carthage, and was thinking over at mid-day in the market-place what he was to say by heart (as scholars use to practise), Thou sufferedst him to be apprehended by the officers of the market-place for a thief. For no other cause, I deem, didst Thou, our God, suffer it, but that he who was hereafter to prove so great a man, should already begin to learn that in judging of causes, man was not readily to be condemned by man out of a rash credulity. For as he was walking up and down by himself before the judgment-seat, with his note-book and pen, lo, a young man, a lawyer, the real thief, privily bringing a hatchet, got in, unperceived by Alypius, as far as the leaden gratings which fence in the silversmiths’ shops, and began to cut away the lead. But the noise of the hatchet being heard, the silversmiths beneath began to make a stir, and sent to apprehend whomever they should find. But he, hearing their voices, ran away, leaving his hatchet, fearing to be taken with it. Alypius now, who had not seen him enter, was aware of his going, and saw with what speed he made away. And being desirous to know the matter, entered the place; where finding the hatchet, he was standing, wondering and considering it, when behold, those that had been sent, find him alone with the hatchet in his hand, the noise whereof had startled and brought them thither. They seize him, hale him away, and gathering the dwellers in the market-place together, boast of having taken a notorious thief, and so he was being led away to be taken before the judge.

But thus far was Alypius to be instructed. For forthwith, O Lord, Thou succouredst his innocency, whereof Thou alone wert witness. For as he was being led either to prison or to punishment, a certain architect met them, who had the chief charge of the public buildings. Glad they were to meet him especially, by whom they were wont to be suspected of stealing the goods lost out of the marketplace, as though to show him at last by whom these thefts were committed. He, however, had divers times seen Alypius at a certain senator’s house, to whom he often went to pay his respects; and recognising him immediately, took him aside by the hand, and enquiring the occasion of so great a calamity, heard the whole matter, and bade all present, amid much uproar and threats, to go with him. So they came to the house of the young man who had done the deed. There, before the door, was a boy so young as to be likely, not apprehending any harm to his master, to disclose the whole. For he had attended his master to the market-place. Whom so soon as Alypius remembered, he told the architect: and he showing the hatchet to the boy, asked him “Whose that was?” “Ours,” quoth he presently: and being further questioned, he discovered every thing. Thus the crime being transferred to that house, and the multitude ashamed, which had begun to insult over Alypius, he who was to be a dispenser of Thy Word, and an examiner of many causes in Thy Church, went away better experienced and instructed.

CHAPTER X

THE WONDERFUL INTEGRITY OF ALYPIUS IN JUDGMENT. THE LASTING FRIENDSHIP OF NEBRIDIUS WITH AUGUSTIN.

Him then I had found at Rome, and he clave to me by a most strong tie, and went with me to Milan, both that he might not leave me, and might practise something of the law he had studied, more to please his parents than himself. There he had thrice sat as Assessor, with an uncorruptness much wondered at by others, he wondering at others rather who could prefer gold to honesty. His character was tried besides, not only with the bait of covetousness, but with the goad of fear. At Rome he was Assessor to the count of the Italian Treasury. There was at that time a very powerful senator, to whose favours many stood indebted, many much feared. He would needs, by his usual power, have a thing allowed him which by the laws was unallowed. Alypius resisted it: a bribe was promised; with all his heart he scorned it: threats were held out; he trampled upon them: all wondering at so unwonted a spirit, which neither desired the friendship, nor feared the enmity of one so great and so mightily renowned for innumerable means of doing good or evil. And the very judge, whose councillor Alypius was, although also unwilling it should be, yet did not openly refuse, but put the matter off upon Alypius, alleging that he would not allow him to do it: for in truth had the judge done it, Alypius would have decided otherwise. With this one thing in the way of learning was he well-nigh seduced, that he might have books copied for him at Praetorian prices, but consulting justice, he altered his deliberation for the better; esteeming equity whereby he was hindered more gainful than the power whereby he were allowed. These are slight things, but he that is faithful in little, is faithful also in much. Nor can that any how be void, which proceeded out of the mouth of Thy Truth: If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous Mammon, who will commit to your trust true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own? He being such, did at that time cleave to me, and with me wavered in purpose, what course of life was to be taken.

Nebridius also, who having left his native country near Carthage, yea and Carthage itself, where he had much lived, leaving his excellent family-estate and house, and a mother behind, who was not to follow him, had come to Milan, for no other reason but that with me he might live in a most ardent search after truth and wisdom. Like me he sighed, like me he wavered, an ardent searcher after true life, and a most acute examiner of the most difficult questions. Thus were there the mouths of three indigent persons, sighing out their wants one to another, and waiting upon Thee that Thou mightest give them their meat in due season. And in all the bitterness which by Thy mercy followed our worldly affairs, as we looked towards the end, why we should suffer all this, darkness met us; and we turned away groaning, and saying, How long shall these things be? This too we often said; and so saying forsook them not, for as yet there dawned nothing certain, which these forsaken, we might embrace.

CHAPTER XI

BEING TROUBLED BY HIS GRIEVOUS ERRORS, HE MEDITATES ENTERING ON A NEW LIFE.

And I, viewing and reviewing things, most wondered at the length of time from that my nineteenth year, wherein I had begun to kindle with the desire of wisdom, settling when I had found her, to abandon all the empty hopes and lying frenzies of vain desires. And lo, I was now in my thirtieth year, sticking in the same mire, greedy of enjoying things present, which passed away and wasted my soul; while I said to myself, “Tomorrow I shall find it; it will appear manifestly and I shall grasp it; to, Faustus the Manichee will come, and clear every thing! O you great men, ye Academicians, it is true then, that no certainty can be attained for the ordering of life! Nay, let us search the more diligently, and despair not. Lo, things in the ecclesiastical books are not absurd to us now, which sometimes seemed absurd, and may be otherwise taken, and in a good sense. I will take my stand, where, as a child, my parents placed me, until the clear truth be found out. But where shall it be sought or when? Ambrose has no leisure; we have no leisure to read; where shall we find even the books? Whence, or when procure them? from whom borrow them? Let set times be appointed, and certain hours be ordered for the health of our soul. Great hope has dawned; the Catholic Faith teaches not what we thought, and vainly accused it of; her instructed members hold it profane to believe God to be bounded by the figure of a human body: and do we doubt to ‘knock,’ that the rest ‘may be opened’? The forenoons our scholars take up; what do we during the rest? Why not this? But when then pay we court to our great friends, whose favour we need? When compose what we may sell to scholars? When refresh ourselves, unbending our minds from this intenseness of care?

“Perish every thing, dismiss we these empty vanities, and betake ourselves to the one search for truth! Life is vain, death uncertain; if it steals upon us on a sudden, in what state shall we depart hence? and where shall we learn what here we have neglected? and shall we not rather suffer the punishment of this negligence? What, if death itself cut off and end all care and feeling? Then must this be ascertained. But God forbid this! It is no vain and empty thing, that the excellent dignity of the authority of the Christian Faith hath overspread the whole world. Never would such and so great things be by God wrought for us, if with the death of the body the life of the soul came to an end. Wherefore delay then to abandon worldly hopes, and give ourselves wholly to seek after God and the blessed life? But wait! Even those things are pleasant; they have some, and no small sweetness. We must not lightly abandon them, for it were a shame to return again to them. See, it is no great matter now to obtain some station, and then what should we more wish for? We have store of powerful friends; if nothing else offer, and we be in much haste, at least a presidentship may be given us: and a wife with some money, that she increase not our charges: and this shall be the bound of desire. Many great men, and most worthy of imitation, have given themselves to the study of wisdom in the state of marriage.

While I went over these things, and these winds shifted and drove my heart this way and that, time passed on, but I delayed to turn to the Lord; and from day to day deferred to live in Thee, and deferred not daily to die in myself. Loving a happy life, I feared it in its own abode, and sought it, by fleeing from it. I thought I should be too miserable, unless folded in female arms; and of the medicine of Thy mercy to cure that infirmity I thought not, not having tried it. As for continency, I supposed it to be in our own power (though in myself I did not find that power), being so foolish as not to know what is written, None can be continent unless Thou give it; and that Thou wouldest give it, if with inward groanings I did knock at Thine ears, and with a settled faith did cast my care on Thee.

CHAPTER XII

DISCUSSION WITH ALYPIUS CONCERNING A LIFE OF CELIBACY.

Alypius indeed kept me from marrying; alleging that so could we by no means with undistracted leisure live together in the love of wisdom, as we had long desired. For himself was even then most pure in this point, so that it was wonderful; and that the more, since in the outset of his youth he had entered into that course, but had not stuck fast therein; rather had he felt remorse and revolting at it, living thenceforth until now most continently. But I opposed him with the examples of those who as married men had cherished wisdom, and served God acceptably, and retained their friends, and loved them faithfully. Of whose greatness of spirit I was far short; and bound with the disease of the flesh, and its deadly sweetness, drew along my chain, dreading to be loosed, and as if my wound had been fretted, put back his good persuasions, as it were the hand of one that would unchain me. Moreover, by me did the serpent speak unto Alypius himself, by my tongue weaving and laying in his path pleasurable snares, wherein his virtuous and free feet might be entangled.

For when he wondered that I, whom he esteemed not slightly, should stick so fast in the birdlime of that pleasure, as to protest (so oft as we discussed it) that I could never lead a single life; and urged in my defence when I saw him wonder, that there was great difference between his momentary and scarce-remembered knowledge of that life, which so he might easily despise, and my continued acquaintance whereto if the honourable name of marriage were added, he ought not to wonder why I could not contemn that course; he began also to desire to be married; not as overcome with desire of such pleasure, but out of curiosity. For he would fain know, he said, what that should be, without which my life, to him so pleasing, would to me seem not life but a punishment. For his mind, free from that chain, was amazed at my thraldom; and through that amazement was going on to a desire of trying it, thence to the trial itself, and thence perhaps to sink into that bondage whereat he wondered, seeing he was willing to make a covenant with death; and he that loves danger, shall fall into it. For whatever honour there be in the office of well-ordering a married life, and a family, moved us but slightly. But me for the most part the habit of satisfying an insatiable appetite tormented, while it held me captive; him, an admiring wonder was leading captive. So were we, until Thou, O Most High, not forsaking our dust, commiserating us miserable, didst come to our help, by wondrous and secret ways.

CHAPTER XIII

BEING URGED BY HIS MOTHER TO TAKE A WIFE, HE SOUGHT A MAIDEN THAT WAS PLEASING UNTO HIM.

Continual effort was made to have me married. I wooed, I was promised, chiefly through my mother's pains, that so once married, the health-giving baptism might cleanse me, towards which she rejoiced that I was being daily fitted, and observed that her prayers, and Thy promises, were being fulfilled in my faith. At which time verily, both at my request and her own longing, with strong cries of heart she daily begged of Thee, that Thou wouldest by a vision discover unto her something concerning my future marriage; Thou never wouldest. She saw indeed certain vain and fantastic things, such as the energy of the human spirit, busied thereon, brought together; and these she told me of, not with that confidence she was wont, when Thou showedst her any thing, but slighting them. For she could, she said, through a certain feeling, which in words she could not express, discern betwixt Thy revelations, and the dreams of her own soul. Yet the matter was pressed on, and a maiden asked in marriage, two years under the fit age; and, as pleasing, was waited for.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DESIGN OF ESTABLISHING A COMMON HOUSEHOLD WITH HIS FRIENDS IS SPEEDILY HINDERED.

And many of us friends conferring about, and detesting the turbulent turmoils of human life, had debated and now almost resolved on living apart from business and the bustle of men; and this was to be thus obtained;

we were to bring whatever we might severally procure, and make one household of all; so that through the truth of our friendship nothing should belong especially to any; but the whole thus derived from all, should as a whole belong to each, and all to all. We thought there might be some often persons in this society; some of whom were very rich, especially Romanianus our townsman, from childhood a very familiar friend of mine, whom the grievous perplexities of his affairs had brought up to court; who was the most earnest for this project; and therein was his voice of great weight, because his ample estate far exceeded any of the rest. We had settled also that two annual officers, as it were, should provide all things necessary, the rest being undisturbed. But when we began to consider whether the wives, which some of us already had, others hoped to have, would allow this, all that plan, which was being so well moulded, fell to pieces in our hands, was utterly dashed and cast aside. Thence we betook us to sighs, and groans, and our steps to follow the broad and beaten ways of the world; for many thoughts were in our heart, but Thy counsel standeth for ever. Out of which counsel Thou didst deride ours, and preparedst Thine own; purposing to give us meat in due season, and to fill our souls with blessing.

CHAPTER XV

HE DISMISSES ONE MISTRESS, AND CHOOSES ANOTHER.

Meanwhile my sins were being multiplied, and my concubine being torn from my side as a hindrance to my marriage, my heart which clave unto her was torn and wounded and bleeding. And she returned to Afric, vowing unto Thee never to know any other man, leaving with me my son by her. But unhappy I, who could not imitate a very woman, impatient of delay, inasmuch as not till after two years was I to obtain her I sought not being so much a lover of marriage as a slave to lust, procured another, though no wife, that so by the servitude of an enduring custom, the disease of my soul might be kept up and carried on in its vigour, or even augmented, into the dominion of marriage. Nor was that my wound cured, which had been made by the cutting away of the former, but after inflammation and most acute pain, it mortified, and my pains became less acute, but more desperate.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FEAR OF DEATH AND JUDGMENT CALLED HIM, BELIEVING IN THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL, BACK FROM HIS WICKEDNESS, HIM WHO AFORETIME BELIEVED IN THE OPINIONS OF EPICURUS.

To Thee be praise, glory to Thee, Fountain of mercies. I was becoming more miserable, and Thou nearer. Thy right hand was continually ready to pluck me out of the mire, and to wash me thoroughly, and I knew it not; nor did anything call me back from a yet deeper gulf of carnal pleasures, but the fear of death, and of Thy judgment to come; which amid all my changes, never departed from my breast. And in my disputes with my friends Alypius and Nebridius of the nature of good and evil, I held that Epicurus had in my mind won the palm, had I not believed that after death there remained a life for the soul, and places of requital according to men's deserts, which Epicurus would not believe. And I asked, "were we immortal, and to live in perpetual bodily pleasure, without fear of losing it, why should we not be happy, or what else should we seek?" not knowing that great misery was involved in this very thing, that, being thus sunk and blinded, I could not discern that light of excellence and beauty, to be embraced for its own sake, which the eye of flesh cannot see, and is seen by the inner man. Nor did I, unhappy, consider from what source it sprung, that even on these things, foul as they were, I with pleasure discoursed with my friends, nor could I, even according to the notions I then had of happiness, be happy without friends, amid what abundance soever of carnal pleasures. And yet these friends I loved for themselves only, and I felt that I was beloved of them again for myself only.

O crooked paths! Woe to the audacious soul, which hoped, by forsaking Thee, to gain some better thing! Turned it hath, and turned again, upon back, sides, and belly, yet all was painful; and Thou alone rest. And behold, Thou art at hand, and deliverest us from our wretched wanderings, and placest us in Thy way, and dost comfort us, and say, "Run; I will carry you; yea I will bring you through; there also will I carry you."

BOOK VII

CHAPTER I

HE REGARDED NOT GOD INDEED UNDER THE FORM OF A HUMAN BODY, BUT AS A CORPOREAL SUBSTANCE DIFFUSED THROUGH SPACE.

Deceased was now that my evil and abominable youth, and I was passing into early manhood; the more defiled by vain things as I grew in years, who could not imagine any substance, but such as is wont to be seen with these eyes. I thought not of Thee, O God, under the figure of a human body; since I began to hear aught of wisdom, I always avoided this; and rejoiced to have found the same in the faith of our spiritual mother, Thy Catholic Church. But what else to conceive of Thee I knew not. And I, a man, and such a man, sought to conceive of Thee the sovereign, only, true God; and I did in my inmost soul believe that Thou wert incorruptible, and uninjurable, and unchangeable; because though not knowing whence or how, yet I saw plainly, and was sure, that that which may be corrupted must be inferior to that which cannot; what could not be injured I preferred unhesitatingly to what could receive injury; the unchangeable to things subject to change. My heart passionately cried out against all my phantoms, and with this one blow I sought to beat away from the eye of my mind all that unclean troop which buzzed around it. And to, being scarce put off, in the twinkling of an eye they gathered again thick about me, flew against my face, and beclouded it; so that though not under the form of the human body, yet was I constrained to conceive of Thee (that incorruptible, uninjurable, and unchangeable, which I preferred before the corruptible, and injurable, and changeable) as being in space, whether infused into the world, or diffused infinitely without it. Because whatsoever I conceived, deprived of this space, seemed to me nothing, yea altogether nothing, not even a void, as if a body were taken out of its place, and the place should remain empty of any body at all, of earth and water, air and heaven, yet would it remain a void place, as it were a spacious nothing.

I then being thus gross-hearted, nor clear even to myself, whatsoever was not extended over certain spaces, nor diffused, nor condensed, nor swelled out, or did not or could not receive some of these dimensions, I thought to be altogether nothing. For over such forms as my eyes are wont to range, did my heart then range: nor yet did I see that this same notion of the mind, whereby I formed those very images, was not of this sort, and yet it could not have formed them, had not itself been some great thing. So also did I endeavour to conceive of Thee, Life of my life, as vast, through infinite spaces on every side penetrating the whole mass of the universe, and beyond it, every way, through unmeasurable boundless spaces; so that the earth should have Thee, the heaven have Thee, all things have Thee, and they be bounded in Thee, and Thou bounded nowhere. For that as the body of this air which is above the earth, hindereth not the light of the sun from passing through it, penetrating it, not by bursting or by cutting, but by filling it wholly: so I thought the body not of heaven, air, and sea only, but of the earth too, pervious to Thee, so that in all its parts, the greatest as the smallest, it should admit Thy presence, by a secret inspiration, within and without, directing all things which Thou hast created. So I guessed, only as unable to conceive aught else, for it was false. For thus should a greater part of the earth contain a greater portion of Thee, and a less, a lesser: and all things should in such sort be full of Thee, that the body of an elephant should contain more of Thee, than that of a sparrow, by how much larger it is, and takes up more room; and thus shouldest Thou make the several portions of Thyself present unto the several portions of the world, in fragments, large to the large, petty to the petty. But such art not Thou. But not as yet hadst Thou enlightened my darkness.

CHAPTER II

THE DISPUTATION OF NEBRIDIUS AGAINST THE MANICHAEANS, ON THE QUESTION “WHETHER GOD BE CORRUPTIBLE OR INCORRUPTIBLE.”

It was enough for me, Lord, to oppose to those deceived deceivers, and dumb praters, since Thy word sounded not out of them; -that was enough which long ago, while we were yet at Carthage, Nebridius used to propound, at which all we that heard it were staggered: “That said nation of darkness, which the Manichees are wont to set as an opposing mass over against Thee, what could it have done unto Thee, hadst Thou refused to fight with it? For, if they answered, ‘it would have done Thee some hurt,’ then shouldest Thou be subject to injury and corruption: but if could do Thee no hurt,’ then was no reason brought for Thy fighting with it; and fighting in such wise, as that a certain portion or member of Thee, or offspring of Thy very Substance, should he mingled with opposed powers, and natures not created by Thee, and be by them so far corrupted and changed to the worse, as to be turned from happiness into misery, and need assistance, whereby it might be extricated and purified; and that this offspring of Thy Substance was the soul, which being enthralled, defiled, corrupted, Thy Word, free, pure, and whole, might relieve; that Word itself being still corruptible because it was of one and the same Substance. So then, should they affirm Thee, whatsoever Thou art, that is, Thy Substance whereby Thou art, to be incorruptible, then were all these sayings false and execrable; but if corruptible, the very statement showed it to be false and revolting.” This argument then of Nebridius sufficed against those who deserved wholly to be vomited out of the overcharged stomach; for they had no escape, without horrible blasphemy of heart and tongue, thus thinking and speaking of Thee.

CHAPTER III

THAT THE CAUSE OF EVIL IS THE FREE JUDGMENT OF THE WILL.

But I also as yet, although I held and was firmly persuaded that Thou our Lord the true God, who madest not only our souls, but our bodies, and not only our souls and bodies, but all beings, and all things, wert undefilable and unalterable, and in no degree mutable; yet understood I not, clearly and without difficulty, the cause of evil. And yet whatever it were, I perceived it was in such wise to be sought out, as should not constrain me to believe the immutable God to be mutable, lest I should become that evil I was seeking out. I sought it out then, thus far free from anxiety, certain of the untruth of what these held, from whom I shrunk with my whole heart: for I saw, that through enquiring the origin of evil, they were filled with evil, in that they preferred to think that Thy substance did suffer ill than their own did commit it.

And I strained to perceive what I now heard, that free-will was the cause of our doing ill, and Thy just judgment of our suffering ill. But I was not able clearly to discern it. So then endeavouring to draw my soul’s vision out of that deep pit, I was again plunged therein, and endeavouring often, I was plunged back as often. But this raised me a little into Thy light, that I knew as well that I had a will, as that I lived: when then I did will or nill any thing, I was most sure that no other than myself did will and nill: and I all but saw that there was the cause of my sin. But what I did against my will, I saw that I suffered rather than did, and I judged not to be my fault, but my punishment; whereby, however, holding Thee to be just, I speedily confessed myself to be not unjustly punished. But again I said, Who made me? Did not my God, Who is not only good, but goodness itself? Whence then came I to will evil and nill good, so that I am thus justly punished? who set this in me, and ingrated into me this plant of bitterness, seeing I was wholly formed by my most sweet God? If the devil were the author, whence is that same devil? And if he also by his own perverse will, of a good angel became a devil, whence, again, came in him that evil will whereby he became a devil, seeing the whole nature of angels was made by that most good Creator? By these thoughts I was again sunk down and choked; yet not brought down to that hell of error (where no man confesseth unto Thee), to think rather that Thou dost suffer ill, than that man doth it.

CHAPTER IV

THAT GOD IS NOT CORRUPTIBLE, WHO, IF HE WERE, WOULD NOT BE GOD AT ALL.

For I was in such wise striving to find out the rest, as one who had already found that the incorruptible must needs be better than the corruptible: and Thee therefore, whatsoever Thou wert, I confessed to be incorruptible. For never soul was, nor shall be, able to conceive any thing which may be better than Thou, who art the sovereign and the best good. But since most truly and certainly, the incorruptible is preferable to the corruptible (as I did now prefer it), then, wert Thou not incorruptible, I could in thought have arrived at something better than my God. Where then I saw the incorruptible to be preferable to the corruptible, there ought I to seek for Thee, and there observe “wherein evil itself was”; that is, whence corruption comes, by which Thy substance can by no means be impaired. For corruption does no ways impair our God; by no will, by no necessity, by no unlooked-for chance: because He is God, and what He wills is good, and Himself is that good; but to be corrupted is not good. Nor art Thou against Thy will constrained to any thing, since Thy will is not greater than Thy power. But greater should it be, were Thyself greater than Thyself. For the will and power of God is God Himself. And what can be unlooked-for by Thee, Who knowest all things? Nor is there any nature in things, but Thou knowest it. And what should we more say, "why that substance which God is should not be corruptible," seeing if it were so, it should not be God?

CHAPTER V

QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF EVIL IN REGARD TO GOD, WHO, SINCE HE IS THE CHIEF GOD, CANNOT BE THE CAUSE OF EVIL.

And I sought "whence is evil," and sought in an evil way; and saw not the evil in my very search. I set now before the sight of my spirit the whole creation, whatsoever we can see therein (as sea, earth, air, stars, trees, mortal creatures); yea, and whatever in it we do not see, as the firmament of heaven, all angels moreover, and all the spiritual inhabitants thereof. But these very beings, as though they were bodies, did my fancy dispose in place, and I made one great mass of Thy creation, distinguished as to the kinds of bodies; some, real bodies, some, what myself had feigned for spirits. And this mass I made huge, not as it was (which I could not know), but as I thought convenient, yet every way finite. But Thee, O Lord, I imagined on every part environing and penetrating it, though every way infinite: as if there were a sea, every where, and on every side, through unmeasured space, one only boundless sea, and it contained within it some sponge, huge, but bounded; that sponge must needs, in all its parts, be filled from that unmeasurable sea: so conceived I Thy creation, itself finite, full of Thee, the Infinite; and I said, Behold God, and behold what God hath created; and God is good, yea, most mightily and incomparably better than all these: but yet He, the Good, created them good; and see how He environeth and fulfils them. Where is evil then, and whence, and how crept it in hither? What is its root, and what its seed? Or hath it no being? Why then fear we and avoid what is not? Or if we fear it idly, then is that very fear evil, whereby the soul is thus idly goaded and racked. Yea, and so much a greater evil, as we have nothing to fear, and yet do fear. Therefore either is that evil which we fear, or else evil is, that we fear. Whence is it then? seeing God, the Good, hath created all these things good. He indeed, the greater and chiefest Good, hath created these lesser goods; still both Creator and created, all are good. Whence is evil? Or, was there some evil matter of which He made, and formed, and ordered it, yet left something in it which He did not convert into good? Why so then? Had He no might to turn and change the whole, so that no evil should remain in it, seeing He is All-mighty? Lastly, why would He make any thing at all of it, and not rather by the same All-mightiness cause it not to be at all? Or, could it then be against His will? Or if it were from eternity, why suffered He it so to be for infinite spaces of times past, and was pleased so long after to make something out of it? Or if He were suddenly pleased now to effect somewhat, this rather should the All-mighty have effected, that this evil matter should not be, and He alone be, the whole, true, sovereign, and infinite Good. Or if it was not good that He who was good should not also frame and create something that were good, then, that evil matter being taken away and brought to nothing, He might form good matter, whereof to create all things. For He should not be All-mighty, if He might not create something good without the aid of that matter which Himself had not created. These thoughts I revolved in my miserable heart, overcharged with most gnawing cares, lest I should die ere I had found the truth; yet was the faith of Thy Christ, our Lord and Saviour, professed in the Church Catholic, firmly fixed in my heart, in many points, indeed, as yet unformed, and fluctuating from the rule of doctrine; yet did not my mind utterly leave it, but rather daily took in more and more of it.

CHAPTER VI

HE REFUTES THE DIVINATIONS OF THE ASTROLOGERS, DEDUCED FROM THE CONSTELLATIONS.

But this time also had I rejected the lying divinations and impious dotages of the astrologers. Let Thine own mercies, out of my very inmost soul, confess unto Thee for this also, O my God. For Thou, Thou altogether (for who else calls us back from the death of all errors, save the Life which cannot die, and the Wisdom which needing no light enlightens the minds that need it, whereby the universe is directed, down to the whirling leaves of trees?) -Thou madest provision for my obstinacy wherewith I struggled against Vindicianus, an acute old man, and Nebridius, a young man of admirable talents; the first vehemently affirming, and the latter often (though with some doubtfulness) saying, “That there was no such art whereby to foresee things to come, but that men’s conjectures were a sort of lottery, and that out of many things which they said should come to pass, some actually did, unawares to them who spake it, who stumbled upon it, through their oft speaking.” Thou providedst then a friend for me, no negligent consulter of the astrologers; nor yet well skilled in those arts, but (as I said) a curious consulter with them, and yet knowing something, which he said he had heard of his father, which how far it went to overthrow the estimation of that art, he knew not. This man then, Firminus by name, having had a liberal education, and well taught in Rhetoric, consulted me, as one very dear to him, what, according to his socalled constellations, I thought on certain affairs of his, wherein his worldly hopes had risen, and I, who had herein now begun to incline towards Nebridius’ opinion, did not altogether refuse to conjecture, and tell him what came into my unresolved mind; but added, that I was now almost persuaded that these were but empty and ridiculous follies. Thereupon he told me that his father had been very curious in such books, and had a friend as earnest in them as himself, who with joint study and conference fanned the flame of their affections to these toys, so that they would observe the moments whereat the very dumb animals, which bred about their houses, gave birth, and then observed the relative position of the heavens, thereby to make fresh experiments in this so-called art. He said then that he had heard of his father, that what time his mother was about to give birth to him, Firminus, a woman-servant of that friend of his father’s was also with child, which could not escape her master, who took care with most exact diligence to know the births of his very puppies. And so it was that (the one for his wife, and the other for his servant, with the most careful observation, reckoning days, hours, nay, the lesser divisions of the hours) both were delivered at the same instant; so that both were constrained to allow the same constellations, even to the minutest points, the one for his son, the other for his new-born slave. For so soon as the women began to be in labour, they each gave notice to the other what was fallen out in their houses, and had messengers ready to send to one another so soon as they had notice of the actual birth, of which they had easily provided, each in his own province, to give instant intelligence. Thus then the messengers of the respective parties met, he averred, at such an equal distance from either house that neither of them could make out any difference in the position of the stars, or any other minutest points; and yet Firminus, born in a high estate in his parents' house, ran his course through the gilded paths of life, was increased in riches, raised to honours; whereas that slave continued to serve his masters, without any relaxation of his yoke, as Firminus, who knew him, told me.

Upon hearing and believing these things, told by one of such credibility, all that my resistance gave way; and first I endeavoured to reclaim Firminus himself from that curiosity, by telling him that upon inspecting his constellations, I ought if I were to predict truly, to have seen in them parents eminent among their neighbours, a noble family in its own city, high birth, good education, liberal learning. But if that servant had consulted me upon the same constellations, since they were his also, I ought again (to tell him too truly) to see in them a lineage the most abject, a slavish condition, and every thing else utterly at variance with the former. Whence then, if I spake the truth, I should, from the same constellations, speak diversely, or if I spake the same, speak falsely: thence it followed most certainly that whatever, upon consideration of the constellations, was spoken truly, was spoken not out of art, but chance; and whatever spoken falsely, was not out of ignorance in the art, but the failure of the chance.

An opening thus made, ruminating with myself on the like things, that no one of those dotards (who lived by such a trade, and whom I longed to attack, and with derision to confute) might urge against me that Firminus had informed me falsely, or his father him; I bent my thoughts on those that are born twins, who for the most part come out of the womb so near one to other, that the small interval (how much force soever in the nature of things folk may pretend it to have) cannot be noted by human observation, or be at all expressed in those figures which the astrologer is to inspect, that he may pronounce truly. Yet they cannot be true: for looking into the same figures, he must have predicted the same of Esau and Jacob, whereas the same happened not to them. Therefore he must speak falsely; or if truly, then, looking into the same figures, he must not give the same answer. Not by art, then, but by chance, would he speak truly. For Thou, O Lord, most righteous Ruler of the Universe, while consulters and consulted know it not, dost by Thy hidden inspiration effect that the consulter should hear what, according to the hidden deservings of souls, he ought to hear, out of the unsearchable depth of Thy just judgment, to Whom let no man say, What is this? Why that? Let him not so say, for he is man.

CHAPTER VII

HE IS SEVERELY EXERCISED AS TO THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

Now then, O my Helper, hadst Thou loosed me from those fetters: and I sought “whence is evil,” and found no way. But Thou sufferedst me not by any fluctuations of thought to be carried away from the Faith whereby I believed Thee both to be, and Thy substance to be unchangeable, and that Thou hast a care of, and wouldest judge men, and that in Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, and the holy Scriptures, which the authority of Thy Catholic Church pressed upon me, Thou hadst set the way of man’s salvation, to that life which is to be after this death. These things being safe and immovably settled in my mind, I sought anxiously “whence was evil?” What were the pangs of my teeming heart, what groans, O my God! yet even there were Thine ears open, and I knew it not; and when in silence I vehemently sought, those silent contritions of my soul were strong cries unto Thy mercy. Thou knewest what I suffered, and no man. For, what was that which was thence through my tongue distilled into the ears of my most familiar friends? Did the whole tumult of my soul, for which neither time nor utterance sufficed, reach them? Yet went up the whole to Thy hearing, all which I roared out from the groanings of my heart; and my desire was before Thee, and the light of mine eyes was not with me: for that was within, I without: nor was that confined to place, but I was intent on things contained in place, but there found I no resting-place, nor did they so receive me, that I could say, “It is enough,” “it is well”: nor did they yet suffer me to turn back, where it might be well enough with me. For to these things was I superior, but inferior to Thee; and Thou art my true joy when subjected to Thee, and Thou hadst subjected to me what Thou createdst below me. And this was the true temperament, and middle region of my safety, to remain in Thy Image, and by serving Thee, rule the body. But when I rose proudly against Thee, and ran against the Lord with my neck, with the thick bosses of my buckler, even these inferior things were set above me, and pressed me down, and no where was there respite or space of breathing. They met my sight on all sides by heaps and troops, and in thought the images thereof presented themselves unsought, as I would return to Thee, as if they would say unto me, “Whither goest thou, unworthy and defiled?” And these things had grown out of my wound; for Thou “humbledst the proud like one that is wounded,” and through my own swelling was I separated from Thee; yea, my pride-swollen face closed up mine eyes.

CHAPTER VIII

BY GOD’S ASSISTANCE HE BY DEGREES ARRIVES AT THE TRUTH.

But Thou, Lord, abidest for ever, yet not for ever art Thou angry with us; because Thou pitiest our dust and ashes, and it was pleasing in Thy sight to reform my deformities; and by inward goads didst Thou rouse me, that I should be ill at ease, until Thou wert manifested to my inward sight. Thus, by the secret hand of Thy medicining was my swelling abated, and the troubled and bedimmed eyesight of my mind, by the smarting anointings of healthful sorrows, was from day to day healed.

CHAPTER IX

HE COMPARES THE DOCTRINE OF THE PLATONISTS CONCERNING THE ΛΌΓΟΣ WITH THE MUCH MORE EXCELLENT DOCTRINE OF CHRISTIANITY.

And Thou, willing first to show me how Thou resistest the proud, but givest grace unto the humble, and by how great an act of Thy mercy Thou hadst traced out to men the way of humility, in that Thy Word was made flesh, and dwelt among men:- Thou procuredst for me, by means of one puffed up with most unnatural pride, certain books of the Platonists, translated from Greek into Latin. And therein I read, not indeed in the very words, but to the very same purpose, enforced by many and divers reasons, that In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the Same was in the beginning with God: all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made: that which was made by Him is life, and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. And that the soul of man, though it bears witness to the light, yet itself is not that light; but the Word of God, being God, is that true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. And that He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. But, that He came unto His own, and His own received Him not; but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, as many as believed in His name; this I read not there.

Again I read there, that God the Word was born not of flesh nor of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. But that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, I read not there. For I traced in those books that it was many and divers ways said, that the Son was in the form of the Father, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, for that naturally He was the Same Substance. But that He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion as a man, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, and that the death of the cross: wherefore God exalted Him from the dead, and gave Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should how, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father; those books have not. For that before all times and above all times Thy Only-Begotten Son remaineth unchangeable, co-eternal with Thee, and that of His fulness souls receive, that they may be blessed; and that by participation of wisdom abiding in them, they are renewed, so as to be wise, is there. But that in due time He died for the ungodly; and that Thou sparedst not Thine Only Son, but deliveredst Him for us all, is not there. For Thou hiddest these things from the wise, and revealedst them to babes; that they that labour and are heavy laden might come unto Him, and He refresh them, because He is meek and lowly in heart; and the meek He directeth in judgment, and the gentle He teacheth His ways, beholding our lowliness and trouble, and forgiving all our sins. But such as are lifted up in the lofty walk of some would-be sublimer learning, hear not Him, saying, Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls. Although they knew God, yet they glorify Him not as God, nor are thankful, but wax vain in their thoughts; and their foolish heart is darkened; professing that they were wise, they became fools.

And therefore did I read there also, that they had changed the glory of Thy incorruptible nature into idols and divers shapes, into the likeness of the image of corruptible man, and birds, and beasts, and creeping things; namely, into that Egyptian food for which Esau lost his birthright, for that Thy first-born people worshipped the head of a four-footed beast instead of Thee; turning in heart back towards Egypt; and bowing Thy image, their own soul, before the image of a calf that eateth hay. These things found I here, but I fed not on them. For it pleased Thee, O Lord, to take away the reproach of diminution from Jacob, that the elder should serve the younger: and Thou calledst the Gentiles into Thine inheritance. And I had come to Thee from among the Gentiles; and I set my mind upon the gold which Thou willedst Thy people to take from Egypt, seeing Thine it was, wheresoever it were. And to the Athenians Thou saidst by Thy Apostle, that in Thee we live, move, and have our being, as one of their own poets had said. And verily these books came from thence. But I set not my mind on the idols of Egypt, whom they served with Thy gold, who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.

CHAPTER X

DIVINE THINGS ARE THE MORE CLEARLY MANIFESTED TO HIM WHO WITHDRAWS INTO THE RECESSES OF HIS HEART.

And being thence admonished to return to myself, I entered even into my inward self, Thou being my Guide: and able I was, for Thou wert become my Helper. And I entered and beheld with the eye of my soul (such as it was), above the same eye of my soul, above my mind, the Light Unchangeable. Not this ordinary light, which all flesh may look upon, nor as it were a greater of the same kind, as though the brightness of this should be manifold brighter, and with its greatness take up all space. Not such was this light, but other, yea, far other from these. Nor was it above my soul, as oil is above water, nor yet as heaven above earth: but above to my soul, because It made me; and I below It, because I was made by It. He that knows the Truth, knows what that Light is; and he that knows It, knows eternity. Love knoweth it. O Truth Who art Eternity! and Love Who art Truth! and Eternity Who art Love! Thou art my God, to Thee do I sigh night and day. Thee when I first knew, Thou liftedst me up, that I might see there was what I might see, and that I was not yet such as to see. And Thou didst beat back the weakness of my sight, streaming forth Thy beams of light upon me most strongly, and I trembled with love and awe: and I perceived myself to be far off from Thee, in the region of unlikeness, as if I heard this Thy voice from on high: “I am the food of grown men, grow, and thou shalt feed upon Me; nor shalt thou convert Me, like the food of thy flesh into thee, but thou shalt be converted into Me.” And I learned, that Thou for iniquity chastenest man, and Thou madest my soul to consume away like a spider. And I said, “Is Truth therefore nothing because it is not diffused through space finite or infinite?” And Thou criedst to me from afar: “Yet verily, I AM that I AM.” And I heard, as the heart heareth, nor had I room to doubt, and I should sooner doubt that I live than that Truth is not, which is clearly seen, being understood by those things which are made. And I beheld the other things below Thee, and I perceived that they neither altogether are, nor altogether are not, for they are, since they are from Thee, but are not, because they are not what Thou art. For that truly is which remains unchangeably. It is good then for me to hold fast unto God; for if I remain not in Him, I cannot in myself; but He remaining in Himself, reneweth all things. And Thou art the Lord my God, since Thou standest not in need of my goodness.

CHAPTER XI

THAT CREATURES ARE MUTABLE AND GOD ALONE IMMUTABLE.

And I viewed the other things below Thee, and perceived that they neither altogether are, nor altogether are not. They are, indeed, because thay are from Thee; but are not, because they are not what Thou art. For that truly is which remains immutably.2 It is good then, for me to cleave unto God,3 for if I remain not in Him, neither shall I in myself; but He, remaining in Himself, reneweth all things.4 And Thou art the Lord my God, since Thou standest not in need of my gooodness.5

CHAPTER XII

WHATEVER THINGS THE GOOD GOD HAS CREATED ARE VERY GOOD.

And it was manifested unto me, that those things be good which yet are corrupted; which neither were they sovereignly good, nor unless they were good could he corrupted: for if sovereignly good, they were incorruptible, if not good at all, there were nothing in them to be corrupted. For corruption injures, but unless it diminished goodness, it could not injure. Either then corruption injures not, which cannot be; or which is most certain, all which is corrupted is deprived of good. But if they he deprived of all good, they shall cease to be. For if they shall be, and can now no longer he corrupted, they shall be better than before, because they shall abide incorruptibly. And what more monstrous than to affirm things to become better by losing all their good? Therefore, if they shall be deprived of all good, they shall no longer be. So long therefore as they are, they are good: therefore whatsoever is, is good. That evil then which I sought, whence it is, is not any substance: for were it a substance, it should be good. For either it should be an incorruptible substance, and so a chief good: or a corruptible substance; which unless it were good, could not be corrupted. I perceived therefore, and it was manifested to me that Thou madest all things good, nor is there any substance at all, which Thou madest not; and for that Thou madest not all things equal, therefore are all things; because each is good, and altogether very good, because our God made all things very good.

CHAPTER XIII

IT IS MEET TO PRAISE THE CREATOR FOR THE GOOD THINGS WHICH ARE MADE IN HEAVEN AND EARTH.

And to Thee is nothing whatsoever evil: yea, not only to Thee, but also to Thy creation as a whole, because there is nothing without, which may break in, and corrupt that order which Thou hast appointed it. But in the parts thereof some things, because unharmonising with other some, are accounted evil: whereas those very things harmonise with others, and are good; and in themselves are good. And all these things which harmonise not together, do yet with the inferior part, which we call Earth, having its own cloudy and windy sky harmonising with it. Far be it then that I should say, “These things should not be”: for should I see nought but these, I should indeed long for the better; but still must even for these alone praise Thee; for that Thou art to be praised, do show from the earth, dragons, and all deeps, fire, hail, snow, ice, and stormy wind, which fulfil Thy word; mountains, and all hills, fruitful trees, and all cedars; beasts, and all cattle, creeping things, and flying fowls; kings of the earth, and all people, princes, and all judges of the earth; young men and maidens, old men and young, praise Thy Name. But when, from heaven, these praise Thee, praise Thee, our God, in the heights all Thy angels, all Thy hosts, sun and moon, all the stars and light, the Heaven of heavens, and the waters that be above the heavens, praise Thy Name; I did not now long for things better, because I conceived of all: and with a sounder judgment I apprehended that the things above were better than these below, but altogether better than those above by themselves.

CHAPTER XIV

BEING DISPLEASED WITH SOME PART OF GOD'S CREATION, HE CONCEIVES OF TWO ORIGINAL SUBSTANCES.

There is no soundness in them, whom aught of Thy creation displeaseth: as neither in me, when much which Thou hast made, displeased me. And because my soul durst not be displeased at my God, it would fain not account that Thine, which displeased it. Hence it had gone into the opinion of two substances, and had no rest, but talked idly. And returning thence, it had made to itself a God, through infinite measures of all space; and thought it to be Thee, and placed it in its heart; and had again become the temple of its own idol, to Thee abominable. But after Thou hadst soothed my head, unknown to me, and closed mine eyes that they should not behold vanity, I ceased somewhat of my former self, and my frenzy was lulled to sleep; and I awoke in Thee, and saw Thee infinite, but in another way, and this sight was not derived from the flesh.

CHAPTER XV

WHATEVER IS, OWES ITS BEING TO GOD.

And I looked back on other things; and I saw that they owed their being to Thee; and were all bounded in Thee: but in a different way; not as being in space; but because Thou containest all things in Thine hand in Thy Truth; and all things are true so far as they nor is there any falsehood, unless when that is thought to be, which is not. And I saw that all things did harmonise, not with their places only, but with their seasons. And that Thou, who only art Eternal, didst not begin to work after innumerable spaces of times spent;

for that all spaces of times, both which have passed, and which shall pass, neither go nor come, but through Thee, working and abiding.

CHAPTER XVI

EVIL ARISES NOT FROM A SUBSTANCE, BUT FROM THE PERVERSION OF THE WILL.

And I perceived and found it nothing strange, that bread which is pleasant to a healthy palate is loathsome to one distempered: and to sore eyes light is offensive, which to the sound is delightful. And Thy righteousness displeaseth the wicked; much more the viper and reptiles, which Thou hast created good, fitting in with the inferior portions of Thy Creation, with which the very wicked also fit in; and that the more, by how much they be unlike Thee; but with the superior creatures, by how much they become more like to Thee. And I enquired what iniquity was, and found it to be substance, but the perversion of the will, turned aside from Thee, O God, the Supreme, towards these lower things, and casting out its bowels, and puffed up outwardly.

CHAPTER XVII

ABOVE HIS CHANGEABLE MIND, HE DISCOVERS THE UNCHANGEABLE AUTHOR OF TRUTH.

And I wondered that I now loved Thee, and no phantasm for Thee. And yet did I not press on to enjoy my God; but was borne up to Thee by Thy beauty, and soon borne down from Thee by mine own weight, sinking with sorrow into these inferior things. This weight was carnal custom. Yet dwelt there with me a remembrance of Thee; nor did I any way doubt that there was One to whom I might cleave, but that I was not yet such as to cleave to Thee: for that the body which is corrupted presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things. And most certain I was, that Thy invisible works from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even Thy eternal power and Godhead. For examining whence it was that I admired the beauty of bodies celestial or terrestrial; and what aided me in judging soundly on things mutable, and pronouncing, “This ought to be thus, this not”; examining, I say, whence it was that I so judged, seeing I did so judge, I had found the unchangeable and true Eternity of Truth above my changeable mind. And thus by degrees I passed from bodies to the soul, which through the bodily senses perceives; and thence to its inward faculty, to which the bodily senses represent things external, whitherto reach the faculties of beasts; and thence again to the reasoning faculty, to which what is received from the senses of the body is referred to be judged. Which finding itself also to be in me a thing variable, raised itself up to its own understanding, and drew away my thoughts from the power of habit, withdrawing itself from those troops of contradictory phantasms; that so it might find what that light was whereby it was bedewed, when, without all doubting, it cried out, "That the unchangeable was to be preferred to the changeable"; whence also it knew That Unchangeable, which, unless it had in some way known, it had had no sure ground to prefer it to the changeable. And thus with the flash of one trembling glance it arrived at THAT WHICH IS. And then I saw Thy invisible things understood by the things which are made. But I could not fix my gaze thereon; and my infirmity being struck back, I was thrown again on my wonted habits, carrying along with me only a loving memory thereof, and a longing for what I had, as it were, perceived the odour of, but was not yet able to feed on.

CHAPTER XVIII

JESUS CHRIST, THE MEDIATOR, IS THE ONLY WAY OF SAFETY.

Then I sought a way of obtaining strength sufficient to enjoy Thee; and found it not, until I embraced that Mediator betwixt God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who is over all, God blessed for evermore, calling unto me, and saying, I am the way, the truth, and the life, and mingling that food which I was unable to receive, with our flesh. For, the Word was made flesh, that Thy wisdom, whereby Thou createdst all things, might provide milk for our infant state. For I did not hold to my Lord Jesus Christ, I, humbled, to the Humble; nor knew I yet whereto His infirmity would guide us. For Thy Word, the Eternal Truth, far above the higher parts of Thy Creation, raises up the subdued unto Itself: but in this lower world built for Itself a lowly habitation of our clay, whereby to abase from themselves such as would be subdued, and bring them over to Himself; allaying their swelling, and tomenting their love; to the end they might go on no further in self-confidence, but rather consent to become weak, seeing before their feet the Divinity weak by taking our coats of skin; and wearied, might cast themselves down upon It, and It rising, might lift them up.

CHAPTER XIX

HE DOES NOT YET FULLY UNDERSTAND THE SAYING OF JOHN, THAT "THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH."

But I thought otherwise; conceiving only of my Lord Christ as of a man of excellent wisdom, whom no one could be equalled unto; especially, for that being wonderfully born of a Virgin, He seemed, in conformity therewith, through the Divine care for us, to have attained that great eminence of authority, for an ensample of despising things temporal for the obtaining of immortality. But what mystery there lay in "The Word was made flesh," I could not even imagine. Only I had learnt out of what is delivered to us in writing of Him that He did eat, and drink, sleep, walk, rejoiced in spirit, was sorrowful, discoursed; that flesh did not cleave by itself unto Thy Word, but with the human soul and mind. All know this who know the unchangeableness of Thy Word, which I now knew, as far as I could, nor did I at all doubt thereof. For, now to move the limbs of the body by will, now not, now to be moved by some affection, now not, now to deliver wise sayings through human signs, now to keep silence, belong to soul and mind subject to variation. And should these things be falsely written of Him, all the rest also would risk the charge, nor would there remain in those books any saving faith for mankind. Since then they were written truly, I acknowledged a perfect man to be in Christ; not the body of a man only, nor, with the body, a sensitive soul without a rational, but very man; whom, not only as being a form of Truth, but for a certain great excellence of human nature and a more perfect participation of wisdom, I judged to be preferred before others. But Alypius imagined the Catholics to believe God to be so clothed with flesh, that besides God and flesh, there was no soul at all in Christ, and did not think that a human mind was ascribed to Him. And because he was well persuaded that the actions recorded of Him could only be performed by a vital and a rational creature, he moved the more slowly towards the Christian Faith. But understanding afterwards that this was the error of the Apollinarian heretics, he joyed in and was conformed to the Catholic Faith. But somewhat later, I confess, did I learn how in that saying, The Word was made flesh, the Catholic truth is distinguished from the falsehood of Photinus. For the rejection of heretics makes the tenets of Thy Church and sound doctrine to stand out more clearly. For there must also be heresies, that the approved may be made manifest among the weak.

CHAPTER XX

HE REJOICES THAT HE PROCEEDED FROM PLATO TO THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, AND NOT THE REVERSE.

But having then read those books of the Platonists, and thence been taught to search for incorporeal truth, I saw Thy invisible things, understood by those things which are made; and though cast back, I perceived what that was which through the darkness of my mind I was hindered from contemplating, being assured “That Thou wert, and wert infinite, and yet not diffused in space, finite or infinite; and that Thou truly art Who art the same ever, in no part nor motion varying; and that all other things are from Thee, on this most sure ground alone, that they are.” Of these things I was assured, yet too unsure to enjoy Thee. I prated as one well skilled; but had I not sought Thy way in Christ our Saviour, I had proved to be, not skilled, but killed. For now I had begun to wish to seem wise, being filled with mine own punishment, yet I did not mourn, but rather scorn, puffed up with knowledge. For where was that charity building upon the foundation of humility, which is Christ Jesus? or when should these books teach me it? Upon these, I believe, Thou therefore willedst that I should fall, before I studied Thy Scriptures, that it might be imprinted on my memory how I was affected by them; and that afterwards when my spirits were tamed through Thy books, and my wounds touched by Thy healing fingers, I might discern and distinguish between presumption and confession; between those who saw whither they were to go, yet saw not the way, and the way that leadeth not to behold only but to dwell in the beatific country. For had I first been formed in Thy Holy Scriptures, and hadst Thou in the familiar use of them grown sweet unto me, and had I then fallen upon those other volumes, they might perhaps have withdrawn me from the solid ground of piety, or, had I continued in that healthful frame which I had thence imbibed, I might have thought that it might have been obtained by the study of those books alone.

CHAPTER XXI

WHAT HE FOUND IN THE SACRED BOOKS WHICH ARE NOT TO BE FOUND IN PLATO.

Most eagerly then did I seize that venerable writing of Thy Spirit; and chiefly the Apostle Paul. Whereupon those difficulties vanished away, wherein he once seemed to me to contradict himself, and the text of his discourse not to agree with the testimonies of the Law and the Prophets. And the face of that pure word appeared to me one and the same; and I learned to rejoice with trembling. So I began; and whatsoever truth I had read in those other books, I found here amid the praise of Thy Grace; that whoso sees, may not so glory as if he had not received, not only what he sees, but also that he sees (for what hath he, which he hath not received?), and that he may be not only admonished to behold Thee, who art ever the same, but also healed, to hold Thee; and that he who cannot see afar off, may yet walk on the way, whereby he may arrive, and behold, and hold Thee. For, though a man be delighted with the law of God after the inner man, what shall he do with that other law in his members which warreth against the law of his mind, and bringeth him into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members? For, Thou art righteous, O Lord, but we have sinned and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and Thy hand is grown heavy upon us, and we are justly delivered over unto that ancient sinner, the king of death; because he persuaded our will to be like his will whereby he abode not in Thy truth. What shall wretched man do? who shall deliver him from the body of his death, but only Thy Grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, whom Thou hast begotten co-eternal, and formedst in the beginning of Thy ways, in whom the prince of this world found nothing worthy of death, yet killed he Him; and the handwriting, which was contrary to us, was blotted out? This those writings contain not. Those pages present not the image of this piety, the tears of confession, Thy sacrifice, a troubled spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, the salvation of the people, the Bridal City, the earnest of the Holy Ghost, the Cup of our Redemption. No man sings there, Shall not my soul be submitted unto God? for of Him cometh my salvation. For He is my God and my salvation, my guardian, I shall no more be moved. No one there hears Him call, Come unto Me, all ye that labour. They scorn to learn of Him, because He is meek and lowly in heart; for these things hast Thou hid from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. For it is one thing, from the mountain’s shaggy top to see the land of peace, and to find no way thither; and in vain to essay through ways unpassable, opposed and beset by fugitives and deserters, under their captain the lion and the dragon: and another to keep on the way that leads thither, guarded by the host of the heavenly General; where they spoil not who have deserted the heavenly army; for they avoid it, as very torment. These things did wonderfully sink into my bowels, when I read that least of Thy Apostles, and had meditated upon Thy works, and trembled exceedingly.

BOOK VIII

CHAPTER I

HE, NOW GIVEN TO DIVINE THINGS, AND YET ENTANGLED BY THE LUSTS OF LOVE, CONSULTS SIMPLICANUS IN REFERENCE TO THE RENEWING OF HIS MIND.

O my God, let me, with thanksgiving, remember, and confess unto Thee Thy mercies on me. Let my bones be bedewed with Thy love, and let them say unto Thee, Who is like unto Thee, O Lord? Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder, I will offer unto Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving. And how Thou hast broken them, I will declare; and all who worship Thee, when they hear this, shall say, “Blessed be the Lord, in heaven and in earth, great and wonderful is his name. “ Thy words had stuck fast in my heart, and I was hedged round about on all sides by Thee. Of Thy eternal life I was now certain, though I saw it in a figure and as through a glass. Yet I had ceased to doubt that there was an incorruptible substance, whence was all other substance; nor did I now desire to be more certain of Thee, but more steadfast in Thee. But for my temporal life, all was wavering, and my heart had to be purged from the old leaven. The Way, the Saviour Himself, well pleased me, but as yet I shrunk from going through its straitness. And Thou didst put into my mind, and it seemed good in my eyes, to go to Simplicianus, who seemed to me a good servant of Thine; and Thy grace shone in him. I had heard also that from his very youth he had lived most devoted unto Thee. Now he was grown into years; and by reason of so great age spent in such zealous following of Thy ways, he seemed to me likely to have learned much experience; and so he had. Out of which store I wished that he would tell me (setting before him my anxieties) which were the fittest way for one in my case to walk in Thy paths.

For, I saw the church full; and one went this way, and another that way. But I was displeased that I led a secular life; yea now that my desires no longer inflamed me, as of old, with hopes of honour and profit, a very grievous burden it was to undergo so heavy a bondage. For, in comparison of Thy sweetness, and the beauty of Thy house which I loved, those things delighted me no longer. But still I was enthralled with the love of woman;

nor did the Apostle forbid me to marry, although he advised me to something better, chiefly wishing that all men were as himself was. But I being weak, chose the more indulgent place; and because of this alone, was tossed up and down in all beside, faint and wasted with withering cares, because in other matters I was constrained against my will to conform myself to a married life, to which I was given up and enthralled. I had heard from the mouth of the Truth, that there were some eunuchs which had made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake: but, saith He, let him who can receive it, receive it. Surely vain are all men who are ignorant of God, and could not out of the good things which are seen, find out Him who is good. But I was no longer in that vanity; I had surmounted it; and by the common witness of all Thy creatures had found Thee our Creator, and Thy Word, God with Thee, and together with Thee one God, by whom Thou createdst all things. There is yet another kind of ungodly, who knowing God, glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful. Into this also had I fallen, but Thy right hand upheld me, and took me thence, and Thou placedst me where I might recover. For Thou hast said unto man, Behold, the fear of the Lord is wisdom, and, Desire not to seem wise; because they who affirmed themselves to be wise, became fools. But I had now found the goodly pearl, which, selling all that I had, I ought to have bought, and I hesitated.

CHAPTER II

THE PIOUS OLD MAN REJOICES THAT HE READ PLATO AND THE SCRIPTURES, AND TELLS HIM OF THE RHETORICIAN VICTORINUS HAVING BEEN CONVERTED TO THE FAITH THROUGH THE READING OF THE SACRED BOOKS

To Simplicianus then I went, the father of Ambrose (a Bishop now) in receiving Thy grace, and whom Ambrose truly loved as a father. To him I related the mazes of my wanderings. But when I mentioned that I had read certain books of the Platonists, which Victorinus, sometime Rhetoric Professor of Rome (who had died a Christian, as I had heard), had translated into Latin, he testified his joy that I had not fallen upon the writings of other philosophers, full of fallacies and deceits, after the rudiments of this world, whereas the Platonists many ways led to the belief in God and His Word. Then to exhort me to the humility of Christ, hidden from the wise, and revealed to little ones, he spoke of Victorinus himself, whom while at Rome he had most intimately known: and of him he related what I will not conceal. For it contains great praise of Thy grace, to be confessed unto Thee, how that aged man, most learned and skilled in the liberal sciences, and who had read, and weighed so many works of the philosophers; the instructor of so many noble Senators, who also, as a monument of his excellent discharge of his office, had (which men of this world esteem a high honour) both deserved and obtained a statue in the Roman Forum; he, to that age a worshipper of idols, and a partaker of the sacrilegious rites, to which almost all the nobility of Rome were given up, and had inspired the people with the love of

Anubis, barking Deity, and all
The monster Gods of every kind, who fought
'Gainst Neptune, Venus, and Minerva:

whom Rome once conquered, now adored, all which the aged Victorinus had with thundering eloquence so many years defended; -he now blushed not to be the child of Thy Christ, and the new-born babe of Thy fountain; submitting his neck to the yoke of humility, and subduing his forehead to the reproach of the Cross.

O Lord, Lord, Which hast bowed the heavens and come down, touched the mountains and they did smoke, by what means didst Thou convey Thyself into that breast? He used to read (as Simplicianus said) the holy Scripture, most studiously sought and searched into all the Christian writings, and said to Simplicianus (not openly, but privately and as a friend), "Understand that I am already a Christian." Whereto he answered, "I will not believe it, nor will I rank you among Christians, unless I see you in the Church of Christ." The other, in banter, replied, "Do walls then make Christians?" And this he often said, that he was already a Christian; and Simplicianus as often made the same answer, and the conceit of the "walls" was by the other as often renewed. For he feared to offend his friends, proud daemon-worshippers, from the height of whose Babylonian dignity, as from cedars of Libanus, which the Lord had not yet broken down, he supposed the weight of enmity would fall upon him. But after that by reading and earnest thought he had gathered firmness, and feared to be denied by Christ before the holy angels, should he now be afraid to confess Him before men, and appeared to himself guilty of a heavy offence, in being ashamed of the Sacraments of the humility of Thy Word, and not being ashamed of the sacrilegious rites of those proud daemons, whose pride he had imitated and their rites adopted, he became bold-faced against vanity, and shame-faced towards the truth, and suddenly and unexpectedly said to Simplicianus (as himself told me), “Go we to the Church; I wish to be made a Christian.” But he, not containing himself for joy, went with him. And having been admitted to the first Sacrament and become a Catechumen, not long after he further gave in his name, that he might be regenerated by baptism, Rome wondering, the Church rejoicing. The proud saw, and were wroth; they gnashed with their teeth, and melted away. But the Lord God was the hope of Thy servant, and he regarded not vanities and lying madness.

To conclude, when the hour was come for making profession of his faith (which at Rome they, who are about to approach to Thy grace, deliver, from an elevated place, in the sight of all the faithful, in a set form of words committed to memory), the presbyters, he said, offered Victorinus (as was done to such as seemed likely through bashfulness to be alarmed) to make his profession more privately: but he chose rather to profess his salvation in the presence of the holy multitude. “For it was not salvation that he taught in rhetoric, and yet that he had publicly professed: how much less then ought he, when pronouncing Thy word, to dread Thy meek flock, who, when delivering his own words, had not feared a mad multitude!” When, then, he went up to make his profession, all, as they knew him, whispered his name one to another with the voice of congratulation. And who there knew him not? and there ran a low murmur through all the mouths of the rejoicing multitude, Victorinus! Victorinus! Sudden was the burst of rapture, that they saw him; suddenly were they hushed that they might hear him. He pronounced the true faith with an excellent boldness, and all wished to draw him into their very heart; yea by their love and joy they drew him thither, such were the hands wherewith they drew him.

CHAPTER III

THAT GOD AND THE ANGELS REJOICE MORE ON THE RETURN OF ONE SINNER THAN OF MANY JUST PERSONS.

Good God! what takes place in man, that he should more rejoice at the salvation of a soul despaired of, and freed from greater peril, than if there had always been hope of him, or the danger had been less? For so Thou also, merciful Father, dost more rejoice over one penitent than over ninety-nine just persons that need no repentance. And with much joyfulness do we hear, so often as we hear with what joy the sheep which had strayed is brought back upon the shepherd’s shoulder, and the groat is restored to Thy treasury, the neighbours rejoicing with the woman who found it; and the joy of the solemn service of Thy house forceth to tears, when in Thy house it is read of Thy younger son, that he was dead, and liveth again; had been lost, and is found. For Thou rejoicest in us, and in Thy holy angels, holy through holy charity. For Thou art ever the same; for all things which abide not the same nor for ever, Thou for ever knowest in the same way.

What then takes place in the soul, when it is more delighted at finding or recovering the things it loves, than if it had ever had them? yea, and other things witness hereunto; and all things are full of witnesses, crying out, “So is it.” The conquering commander triumpheth; yet had he not conquered unless he had fought; and the more peril there was in the battle, so much the more joy is there in the triumph. The storm tosses the sailors, threatens shipwreck; all wax pale at approaching death; sky and sea are calmed, and they are exceeding joyed, as having been exceeding afraid. A friend is sick, and his pulse threatens danger; all who long for his recovery are sick in mind with him. He is restored, though as yet he walks not with his former strength; yet there is such joy, as was not, when before he walked sound and strong. Yea, the very pleasures of human life men acquire by difficulties, not those only which fall upon us unlooked for, and against our wills, but even by self-chosen, and pleasure-seeking trouble. Eating and drinking have no pleasure, unless there precede the pinching of hunger and thirst. Men, given to drink, eat certain salt meats, to procure a troublesome heat, which the drink allaying, causes pleasure. It is also ordered that the affianced bride should not at once be given, lest as a husband he should hold cheap whom, as betrothed, he sighed not after.

This law holds in foul and accursed joy; this in permitted and lawful joy; this in the very purest perfection of friendship; this, in him who was dead, and lived again; had been lost and was found. Every where the greater joy is ushered in by the greater pain. What means this, O Lord my God, whereas

Thou art everlastingly joy to Thyself, and some things around Thee evermore rejoice in Thee? What means this, that this portion of things thus ebbs and flows alternately displeased and reconciled? Is this their allotted measure? Is this all Thou hast assigned to them, whereas from the highest heavens to the lowest earth, from the beginning of the world to the end of ages, from the angel to the worm, from the first motion to the last, Thou settest each in its place, and realisest each in their season, every thing good after its kind? Woe is me! how high art Thou in the highest, and how deep in the deepest! and Thou never departest, and we scarcely return to Thee.

CHAPTER IV

HE SHOWS BY THE EXAMPLE OF VICTORINUS THAT THERE IS MORE JOY IN THE CONVERSION OF NOBLES.

Up, Lord, and do; stir us up, and recall us; kindle and draw us; inflame, grow sweet unto us, let us now love, let us run. Do not many, out of a deeper hell of blindness than Victorinus, return to Thee, approach, and are enlightened, receiving that Light, which they who receive, receive power from Thee to become Thy sons? But if they be less known to the nations, even they that know them, joy less for them. For when many joy together, each also has more exuberant joy for that they are kindled and inflamed one by the other. Again, because those known to many, influence the more towards salvation, and lead the way with many to follow. And therefore do they also who preceded them much rejoice in them, because they rejoice not in them alone. For far be it, that in Thy tabernacle the persons of the rich should be accepted before the poor, or the noble before the ignoble; seeing rather Thou hast chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong; and the base things of this world, and the things despised hast Thou chosen, and those things which are not, that Thou mightest bring to nought things that are. And yet even that least of Thy apostles, by whose tongue Thou soundedst forth these words, when through his warfare, Paulus the Proconsul, his pride conquered, was made to pass under the easy yoke of Thy Christ, and became a provincial of the great King; he also for his former name Saul, was pleased to be called Paul, in testimony of so great a victory. For the enemy is more overcome in one, of whom he hath more hold; by whom he hath hold of more. But the proud he hath more hold of, through their nobility; and by them, of more through their authority. By how much the more welcome then the heart of Victorinus was esteemed, which the devil had held as an impregnable possession, the tongue of Victorinus, with which mighty and keen weapon he had slain many; so much the more abundantly ought Thy sons to rejoice, for that our King hath bound the strong man, and they saw his vessels taken from him and cleansed, and made meet for Thy honour; and become serviceable for the Lord, unto every good work.

CHAPTER V

OF THE CAUSES WHICH ALIENATE US FROM GOD.

But when that man of Thine, Simplicianus, related to me this of Victorinus, I was on fire to imitate him; for for this very end had he related it. But when he had subjoined also, how in the days of the Emperor Julian a law was made, whereby Christians were forbidden to teach the liberal sciences or oratory; and how he, obeying this law, chose rather to give over the wordy school than Thy Word, by which Thou makest eloquent the tongues of the dumb; he seemed to me not more resolute than blessed, in having thus found opportunity to wait on Thee only. Which thing I was sighing for, bound as I was, not with another’s irons, but by my own iron will. My will the enemy held, and thence had made a chain for me, and bound me. For of a forward will, was a lust made; and a lust served, became custom; and custom not resisted, became necessity. By which links, as it were, joined together (whence I called it a chain) a hard bondage held me enthralled. But that new will which had begun to be in me, freely to serve Thee, and to wish to enjoy Thee, O God, the only assured pleasantness, was not yet able to overcome my former wilfulness, strengthened by age. Thus did my two wills, one new, and the other old, one carnal, the other spiritual, struggle within me; and by their discord, undid my soul.

Thus, I understood, by my own experience, what I had read, how the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. Myself verily either way; yet more myself, in that which I approved in myself, than in that which in myself I disapproved. For in this last, it was now for the more part not myself, because in much I rather endured against my will, than acted willingly. And yet it was through me that custom had obtained this power of warring against me, because I had come willingly, whither I willed not. And who has any right to speak against it, if just punishment follow the sinner? Nor had I now any longer my former plea, that I therefore as yet hesitated to be above the world and serve Thee, for that the truth was not altogether ascertained to me; for now it too was. But I still under service to the earth, refused to fight under Thy banner, and feared as much to be freed of all incumbrances, as we should fear to be encumbered with it. Thus with the baggage of this present world was I held down pleasantly, as in sleep: and the thoughts wherein I meditated on Thee were like the efforts of such as would awake, who yet overcome with a heavy drowsiness, are again drenched therein. And as no one would sleep for ever, and in all men's sober judgment waking is better, yet a man for the most part, feeling a heavy lethargy in all his limbs, defers to shake off sleep, and though half displeased, yet, even after it is time to rise, with pleasure yields to it, so was I assured that much better were it for me to give myself up to Thy charity, than to give myself over to mine own cupidity; but though the former course satisfied me and gained the mastery, the latter pleased me and held me mastered. Nor had I any thing to answer Thee calling to me, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. And when Thou didst on all sides show me that what Thou saidst was true, I, convicted by the truth, had nothing at all to answer, but only those dull and drowsy words, “Anon, anon,” “presently,” “leave me but a little.” But “presently, presently,” had no present, and my “little while” went on for a long while; in vain I delighted in Thy law according to the inner man, when another law in my members rebelled against the law of my mind, and led me captive under the law of sin which was in my members. For the law of sin is the violence of custom, whereby the mind is drawn and holden, even against its will; but deservedly, for that it willingly fell into it. Who then should deliver me thus wretched from the body of this death, but Thy grace only, through Jesus Christ our Lord?

CHAPTER VI

PONTITAINUS' ACCOUNT OF ANTONY, THE FOUNDER OF MONACHISM, AND OF SOME WHO IMITATED HIM.

And how Thou didst deliver me out of the bonds of desire, wherewith I was bound most straitly to carnal concupiscence, and out of the drudgery of worldly things, I will now declare, and confess unto Thy name, O Lord, my helper and my redeemer. Amid increasing anxiety, I was doing my wonted business, and daily sighing unto Thee. I attended Thy Church, whenever free from the business under the burden of which I groaned. Alypius was with me, now after the third sitting released from his law business, and awaiting to whom to sell his counsel, as I sold the skill of speaking, if indeed teaching can impart it. Nebridius had now, in consideration of our friendship, consented to teach under Verecundus, a citizen and a grammarian of Milan, and a very intimate friend of us all; who urgently desired, and by the right of friendship challenged from our company, such faithful aid as he greatly needed. Nebridius then was not drawn to this by any desire of advantage (for he might have made much more of his learning had he so willed), but as a most kind and gentle friend, he would not be wanting to a good office, and slight our request. But he acted herein very discreetly, shunning to become known to personages great according to this world, avoiding the distraction of mind thence ensuing, and desiring to have it free and at leisure, as many hours as might be, to seek, or read, or hear something concerning wisdom.

Upon a day then, Nebridius being absent (I recollect not why), to, there came to see me and Alypius, one Pontitianus, our countryman so far as being an African, in high office in the Emperor’s court. What he would with us, I know not, but we sat down to converse, and it happened that upon a table for some game, before us, he observed a book, took, opened it, and contrary to his expectation, found it the Apostle Paul; for he thought it some of those books which I was wearing myself in teaching. Whereat smiling, and looking at me, he expressed his joy and wonder that he had on a sudden found this book, and this only before my eyes. For he was a Christian, and baptised, and often bowed himself before Thee our God in the Church, in frequent and continued prayers. When then I had told him that I bestowed very great pains upon those Scriptures, a conversation arose (suggested by his account) on Antony the Egyptian monk: whose name was in high reputation among Thy servants, though to that hour unknown to us. Which when he discovered, he dwelt the more upon that subject, informing and wondering at our ignorance of one so eminent. But we stood amazed, hearing Thy wonderful works most fully attested, in times so recent, and almost in our own, wrought in the true Faith and Church Catholic. We all wondered; we, that they were so great, and he, that they had not reached us.

Thence his discourse turned to the flocks in the monasteries, and their holy ways, a sweet-smelling savour unto Thee, and the fruitful deserts of the wilderness, whereof we knew nothing. And there was a monastery at Milan, full of good brethren, without the city walls, under the fostering care of Ambrose, and we knew it not. He went on with his discourse, and we listened in intent silence. He told us then how one afternoon at Triers, when the Emperor was taken up with the Circensian games, he and three others, his companions, went out to walk in gardens near the city walls, and there as they happened to walk in pairs, one went apart with him, and the other two wandered by themselves; and these, in their wanderings, lighted upon a certain cottage, inhabited by certain of Thy servants, poor in spirit, of whom is the kingdom of heaven, and there they found a little book containing the life of Antony. This one of them began to read, admire, and kindle at it; and as he read, to meditate on taking up such a life, and giving over his secular service to serve Thee. And these two were of those whom they style agents for the public affairs. Then suddenly, filled with a holy love, and a sober shame, in anger with himself cast his eyes upon his friend, saying, “Tell me, I pray thee, what would we attain by all these labours of ours? what aim we at? what serve we for? Can our hopes in court rise higher than to be the Emperor’s favourites? and in this, what is there not brittle, and full of perils? and by how many perils arrive we at a greater peril? and when arrive we thither? But a friend of God, if I wish it, I become now at once.” So spake he. And in pain with the travail of a new life, he turned his eyes again upon the book, and read on, and was changed inwardly, where Thou sawest, and his mind was stripped of the world, as soon appeared. For as he read, and rolled up and down the waves of his heart, he stormed at himself a while, then discerned, and determined on a better course; and now being Thine, said to his friend, “Now have I broken loose from those our hopes, and am resolved to serve God; and this, from this hour, in this place, I begin upon. If thou likest not to imitate me, oppose not.” The other answered, he would cleave to him, to partake so glorious a reward, so glorious a service. Thus both being now Thine, were building the tower at the necessary cost, the forsaking all that they had, and following Thee. Then Pontitianus and the other with him, that had walked in other parts of the garden, came in search of them to the same place; and finding them, reminded them to return, for the day was now far spent. But they relating their resolution and purpose, and how that will was begun and settled in them, begged them, if they would not join, not to molest them. But the others, though nothing altered from their former selves, did yet bewail themselves (as he affirmed), and piously congratulated them, recommending themselves to their prayers; and so, with hearts lingering on the earth, went away to the palace. But the other two, fixing their heart on heaven, remained in the cottage. And both had affianced brides, who when they heard hereof, also dedicated their virginity unto God.

CHAPTER VII

HE DEPLORES HIS WRETCHEDNESS, THAT HAVING BEEN BORN THIRTY-TWO YEARS, HE HAD NOT YET FOUND OUT THE TRUTH.

Such was the story of Pontitianus; but Thou, O Lord, while he was speaking, didst turn me round towards myself, taking me from behind my back where I had placed me, unwilling to observe myself; and setting me before my face, that I might see how foul I was, how crooked and defiled, bespotted and ulcerous. And I beheld and stood aghast; and whither to flee from myself I found not. And if I sought to turn mine eye from off myself, he went on with his relation, and Thou again didst set me over against myself, and thrustedst me before my eyes, that I might find out mine iniquity, and hate it. I had known it, but made as though I saw it not, winked at it, and forgot it.

But now, the more ardently I loved those whose healthful affections I heard of, that they had resigned themselves wholly to Thee to be cured, the more did I abhor myself, when compared with them. For many of my years (some twelve) had now run out with me since my nineteenth, when, upon the reading of Cicero’s Hortensius, I was stirred to an earnest love of wisdom; and still I was deferring to reject mere earthly felicity, and give myself to search out that, whereof not the finding only, but the very search, was to be preferred to the treasures and kingdoms of the world, though already found, and to the pleasures of the body, though spread around me at my will. But I wretched, most wretched, in the very commencement of my early youth, had begged chastity of Thee, and said, “Give me chastity and continency, only not yet.” For I feared lest Thou shouldest hear me soon, and soon cure me of the disease of concupiscence, which I wished to have satisfied, rather than extinguished. And I had wandered through crooked ways in a sacrilegious superstition, not indeed assured thereof, but as preferring it to the others which I did not seek religiously, but opposed maliciously.

And I had thought that I therefore deferred from day to day to reject the hopes of this world, and follow Thee only, because there did not appear aught certain, whither to direct my course. And now was the day come wherein I was to be laid bare to myself, and my conscience was to upbraid me. “Where art thou now, my tongue? Thou saidst that for an uncertain truth thou likedst not to cast off the baggage of vanity; now, it is certain, and yet that burden still oppresseth thee, while they who neither have so worn themselves out with seeking it, nor for often years and more have been thinking thereon, have had their shoulders lightened, and received wings to fly away.” Thus was I gnawed within, and exceedingly confounded with a horrible shame, while Pontitianus was so speaking. And he having brought to a close his tale and the business he came for, went his way; and I into myself. What said I not against myself? with what scourges of condemnation lashed I not my soul, that it might follow me, striving to go after Thee! Yet it drew back; refused, but excused not itself. All arguments were spent and confuted; there remained a mute shrinking; and she feared, as she would death, to be restrained from the flux of that custom, whereby she was wasting to death.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONVERSATION WITH ALYPIUS BEING ENDED, HE RETIRES TO THE GARDEN WHITHER HIS FRIEND FOLLOWS HIM.

Then in this great contention of my inward dwelling, which I had strongly raised against my soul, in the chamber of my heart, troubled in mind and countenance, I turned upon Alypius. “What ails us?” I exclaim: “what is it? what heardest thou? The unlearned start up and take heaven by force, and we with our learning, and without heart, to, where we wallow in flesh and blood! Are we ashamed to follow, because others are gone before, and not ashamed not even to follow?” Some such words I uttered, and my fever of mind tore me away from him, while he, gazing on me in astonishment, kept silence. For it was not my wonted tone; and my forehead, cheeks, eyes, colour, tone of voice, spake my mind more than the words I uttered. A little garden there was to our lodging, which we had the use of, as of the whole house; for the master of the house, our host, was not living there. Thither had the tumult of my breast hurried me, where no man might hinder the hot contention wherein I had engaged with myself, until it should end as Thou knewest, I knew not. Only I was healthfully distracted and dying, to live; knowing what evil thing I was, and not knowing what good thing I was shortly to become. I retired then into the garden, and Alypius, on my steps. For his presence did not lessen my privacy; or how could he forsake me so disturbed? We sate down as far removed as might be from the house. I was troubled in spirit, most vehemently indignant that I entered not into Thy will and covenant, O my God, which all my bones cried out unto me to enter, and praised it to the skies. And therein we enter not by ships, or chariots, or feet, no, move not so far as I had come from the house to that place where we were sitting. For, not to go only, but to go in thither was nothing else but to will to go, but to will resolutely and thoroughly; not to turn and toss, this way and that, a maimed and half-divided will, struggling, with one part sinking as another rose.

Lastly, in the very fever of my irresoluteness, I made with my body many such motions as men sometimes would, but cannot, if either they have not the limbs, or these be bound with bands, weakened with infirmity, or any other way hindered. Thus, if I tore my hair, beat my forehead, if locking my fingers I clasped my knee; I willed, I did it. But I might have willed, and not done it; if the power of motion in my limbs had not obeyed. So many things then I did, when “to will” was not in itself “to be able”; and I did not what both I longed incomparably more to do, and which soon after, when I should will, I should be able to do; because soon after, when I should will, I should will thoroughly. For in these things the ability was one with the will, and to will was to do; and yet was it not done: and more easily did my body obey the weakest willing of my soul, in moving its limbs at its nod, than the soul obeyed itself to accomplish in the will alone this its momentous will.

CHAPTER IX

THAT THE MIND COMMANDETH THE MIND, BUT IT WILLETH NOT ENTIRELY.

Whence is this monstrousness? and to what end? Let Thy mercy gleam that I may ask, if so be the secret penalties of men, and those darkest pangs of the sons of Adam, may perhaps answer me. Whence is this monstrousness? and to what end? The mind commands the body, and it obeys instantly; the mind commands itself, and is resisted. The mind commands the hand to be moved; and such readiness is there, that command is scarce distinct from obedience. Yet the mind is mind, the hand is body. The mind commands the mind, its own self, to will, and yet it doth not. Whence this monstrousness? and to what end? It commands itself, I say, to will, and would not command, unless it willed, and what it commands is not done. But it willeth not entirely: therefore doth it not command entirely. For so far forth it commandeth, as it willeth: and, so far forth is the thing commanded, not done, as it willeth not. For the will commandeth that there be a will; not another, but itself. But it doth not command entirely, therefore what it commandeth, is not. For were the will entire, it would not even command it to be, because it would already be. It is therefore no monstrousness partly to will, partly to nill, but a disease of the mind, that it doth not wholly rise, by truth upborne, borne down by custom. And therefore are there two wills, for that one of them is not entire: and what the one lacketh, the other hath.

CHAPTER X

HE REFUTES THE OPINION OF THE MANICHAEANS AS TO TWO KINDS OF MINDS,

ONE GOOD AND THE OTHER EVIL.

Let them perish from Thy presence, O God, as perish vain talkers and seducers of the soul: who observing that in deliberating there were two wills, affirm that there are two minds in us of two kinds, one good, the other evil. Themselves are truly evil, when they hold these evil things; and themselves shall become good when they hold the truth and assent unto the truth, that Thy Apostle may say to them, Ye were sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord. But they, wishing to be light, not in the Lord, but in themselves, imagining the nature of the soul to be that which God is, are made more gross darkness through a dreadful arrogancy; for that they went back farther from Thee, the true Light that enlightened every man that cometh into the world. Take heed what you say, and blush for shame: draw near unto Him and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be ashamed. Myself when I was deliberating upon serving the Lord my God now, as I had long purposed, it was I who willed, I who nilled, I, I myself. I neither willed entirely, nor nilled entirely. Therefore was I at strife with myself, and rent asunder by myself. And this rent befell me against my will, and yet indicated, not the presence of another mind, but the punishment of my own. Therefore it was no more I that wrought it, but sin that dwelt in me; the punishment of a sin more freely committed, in that I was a son of Adam.

For if there he so many contrary natures as there be conflicting wills, there shall now be not two only, but many. If a man deliberate whether he should go to their conventicle or to the theatre, these Manichees cry out, Behold, here are two natures: one good, draws this way; another bad, draws back that way. For whence else is this hesitation between conflicting wills? But I say that both be bad: that which draws to them, as that which draws back to the theatre. But they believe not that will to be other than good, which draws to them. What then if one of us should deliberate, and amid the strife of his two wills be in a strait, whether he should go to the theatre or to our church? would not these Manichees also be in a strait what to answer? For either they must confess (which they fain would not) that the will which leads to our church is good, as well as theirs, who have received and are held by the mysteries of theirs: or they must suppose two evil natures, and two evil souls conflicting in one man, and it will not be true, which they say, that there is one good and another bad; or they must be converted to the truth, and no more deny that where one deliberates, one soul fluctuates between contrary wills.

Let them no more say then, when they perceive two conflicting wills in one man, that the conflict is between two contrary souls, of two contrary substances, from two contrary principles, one good, and the other bad. For Thou, O true God, dost disprove, check, and convict them; as when, both wills being bad, one deliberates whether he should kill a man by poison or by the sword; whether he should seize this or that estate of another’s, when he cannot both; whether he should purchase pleasure by luxury, or keep his money by covetousness; whether he go to the circus or the theatre, if both be open on one day; or thirdly, to rob another's house, if he have the opportunity; or, fourthly, to commit adultery, if at the same time he have the means thereof also; all these meeting together in the same juncture of time, and all being equally desired, which cannot at one time be acted: for they rend the mind amid four, or even (amid the vast variety of things desired) more, conflicting wills, nor do they yet allege that there are so many divers substances. So also in wills which are good. For I ask them, is it good to take pleasure in reading the Apostle? or good to take pleasure in a sober Psalm? or good to discourse on the Gospel? They will answer to each, "it is good." What then if all give equal pleasure, and all at once? Do not divers wills distract the mind, while he deliberates which he should rather choose? yet are they all good, and are at variance till one be chosen, whither the one entire will may be borne, which before was divided into many. Thus also, when, above, eternity delights us, and the pleasure of temporal good holds us down below, it is the same soul which willeth not this or that with an entire will; and therefore is rent asunder with grievous perplexities, while out of truth it sets this first, but out of habit sets not that aside.

CHAPTER XI

IN WHAT MANNER THE SPIRIT STRUGGLED WITH THE FLESH, THAT IT MIGHT BE FREED FROM THE BONDAGE OF VANITY.

Thus soul-sick was I, and tormented, accusing myself much more severely than my wont, rolling and turning me in my chain, till that were wholly broken, whereby I now was but just, but still was, held. And Thou, O Lord, pressedst upon me in my inward parts by a severe mercy, redoubling the lashes of fear and shame, lest I should again give way, and not bursting that same slight remaining tie, it should recover strength, and bind me the faster. For I said with myself, "Be it done now, be it done now." And as I spake, I all but enacted it: I all but did it, and did it not: yet sunk not back to my former state, but kept my stand hard by, and took breath. And I essayed again, and wanted somewhat less of it, and somewhat less, and all but touched, and laid hold of it; and yet came not at it, nor touched nor laid hold of it; hesitating to die to death and to live to life: and the worse whereto I was inured, prevailed more with me than the better whereto I was unused: and the very moment wherein I was to become other than I was, the nearer it approached me, the greater horror did it strike into me; yet did it not strike me back, nor turned me away, but held me in suspense.

The very toys of toys, and vanities of vanities, my ancient mistresses, still held me; they plucked my fleshy garment, and whispered softly, “Dost thou cast us off? and from that moment shall we no more be with thee for ever? and from that moment shall not this or that be lawful for thee for ever?” And what was it which they suggested in that I said, “this or that,” what did they suggest, O my God? Let Thy mercy turn it away from the soul of Thy servant. What defilements did they suggest! what shame! And now I much less than half heard them, and not openly showing themselves and contradicting me, but muttering as it were behind my back, and privily plucking me, as I was departing, but to look back on them. Yet they did retard me, so that I hesitated to burst and shake myself free from them, and to spring over whither I was called; a violent habit saying to me, “Thinkest thou, thou canst live without them?”

But now it spake very faintly. For on that side whither I had set my face, and whither I trembled to go, there appeared unto me the chaste dignity of Continency, serene, yet not relaxedly, gay, honestly alluring me to come and doubt not; and stretching forth to receive and embrace me, her holy hands full of multitudes of good examples: there were so many young men and maidens here, a multitude of youth and every age, grave widows and aged virgins; and Continence herself in all, not barren, but a fruitful mother of children of joys, by Thee her Husband, O Lord. And she smiled on me with a persuasive mockery, as would she say, “Canst not thou what these youths, what these maidens can? or can they either in themselves, and not rather in the Lord their God? The Lord their God gave me unto them. Why standest thou in thyself, and so standest not? cast thyself upon Him, fear not He will not withdraw Himself that thou shouldest fall; cast thyself fearlessly upon Him, He will receive, and will heal thee.” And I blushed exceedingly, for that I yet heard the muttering of those toys, and hung in suspense. And she again seemed to say, “Stop thine ears against those thy unclean members on the earth, that they may be mortified. They tell thee of delights, but not as doth the law of the Lord thy God.” This controversy in my heart was self against self only. But Alypius sitting close by my side, in silence waited the issue of my unwonted emotion.

CHAPTER XII

HAVING PRAYED TO GOD, HE POURS FORTH A SHOWER OF TEARS, AND, ADMONISHED BY A VOICE, HE OPENS THE BOOK AND READS THE WORDS IN ROM. XIII. 13; BY WHICH, BEING CHANGED IN HIS WHOLE SOUL, HE DISCLOSES THE DIVINE FAVOUR TO HIS FRIEND AND HIS MOTHER.

But when a deep consideration had from the secret bottom of my soul drawn together and heaped up all my misery in the sight of my heart; there arose a mighty storm, bringing a mighty shower of tears. Which that I might pour forth wholly, in its natural expressions, I rose from Alypius: solitude was suggested to me as fitter for the business of weeping; so I retired so far that even his presence could not be a burden to me. Thus was it then with me, and he perceived something of it; for something I suppose I had spoken, wherein the tones of my voice appeared choked with weeping, and so had risen up. He then remained where we were sitting, most extremely astonished. I cast myself down I know not how, under a certain fig-tree, giving full vent to my tears; and the floods of mine eyes gushed out an acceptable sacrifice to Thee. And, not indeed in these words, yet to this purpose, spake I much unto Thee: and Thou, O Lord, how long? how long, Lord, wilt Thou be angry for ever? Remember not our former iniquities, for I felt that I was held by them. I sent up these sorrowful words: How long, how long, “to-morrow, and tomorrow?” Why not now? why not is there this hour an end to my uncleanness?

So was I speaking and weeping in the most bitter contrition of my heart, when, lo! I heard from a neighbouring house a voice, as of boy or girl, I know not, chanting, and oft repeating, “Take up and read; Take up and read. “ Instantly, my countenance altered, I began to think most intently whether children were wont in any kind of play to sing such words: nor could I remember ever to have heard the like. So checking the torrent of my tears, I arose; interpreting it to be no other than a command from God to open the book, and read the first chapter I should find. For I had heard of Antony, that coming in during the reading of the Gospel, he received the admonition, as if what was being read was spoken to him: Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me: and by such oracle he was forthwith converted unto Thee. Eagerly then I returned to the place where Alypius was sitting; for there had I laid the volume of the Apostle when I arose thence. I seized, opened, and in silence read that section on which my eyes first fell: Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, in concupiscence. No further would I read; nor needed I: for instantly at the end of this sentence, by a light as it were of serenity infused into my heart, all the darkness of doubt vanished away.

Then putting my finger between, or some other mark, I shut the volume, and with a calmed countenance made it known to Alypius. And what was wrought in him, which I knew not, he thus showed me. He asked to see what I had read: I showed him; and he looked even further than I had read, and I knew not what followed. This followed, him that is weak in the faith, receive; which he applied to himself, and disclosed to me. And by this admonition was he strengthened; and by a good resolution and purpose, and most corresponding to his character, wherein he did always very far differ from me, for the better, without any turbulent delay he joined me. Thence we go in to my mother; we tell her; she rejoiceth: we relate in order how it took place; she leaps for joy, and triumpheth, and blesseth Thee, Who are able to do above that which we ask or think; for she perceived that Thou hadst given her more for me, than she was wont to beg by her pitiful and most sorrowful groanings. For thou convertedst me unto Thyself, so that I sought neither wife, nor any hope of this world, standing in that rule of faith, where Thou hadst showed me unto her in a vision, so many years before. And Thou didst convert her mourning into joy, much more plentiful than she had desired, and in a much more precious and purer way than she erst required, by having grandchildren of my body.

BOOK IX

CHAPTER I

HE PRAISES GOD, THE AUTHOR OF SAFETY, AND JESUS CHRIST, THE REDEEMER, ACKNOWLEDGING HIS OWN WICKEDNESS.

O Lord, I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thy handmaid: Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder. I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of Let my heart and my tongue praise Thee; yea, let all my bones say, O Lord, who is like unto Thee? Let them say, and answer Thou me, and say unto my soul, I am thy salvation. Who am I, and what am I? What evil have not been either my deeds, or if not my deeds, my words, or if not my words, my will? But Thou, O Lord, are good and merciful, and Thy right hand had respect unto the depth of my death, and from the bottom of my heart emptied that abyss of corruption. And this Thy whole gift was, to nill what I willed, and to will what Thou willedst. But where through all those years, and out of what low and deep recess was my free-will called forth in a moment, whereby to submit my neck to Thy easy yoke, and my shoulders unto Thy light burden, O Christ Jesus, my Helper and my Redeemer? How sweet did it at once become to me, to want the sweetnesses of those toys! and what I feared to be parted from, was now a joy to part with. For Thou didst cast them forth from me, Thou true and highest sweetness. Thou castest them forth, and for them enteredst in Thyself, sweeter than all pleasure, though not to flesh and blood; brighter than all light, but more hidden than all depths, higher than all honour, but not to the high in their own conceits. Now was my soul free from the biting cares of canvassing and getting, and weltering in filth, and scratching off the itch of lust. And my infant tongue spake freely to Thee, my brightness, and my riches, and my health, the Lord my God.

CHAPTER II

AS HIS LUNGS WERE AFFECTED, HE MEDITATES WITHDRAWING HIMSELF FROM PUBLIC FAVOUR.

And I resolved in Thy sight, not tumultuously to tear, but gently to withdraw, the service of my tongue from the marts of lip-labour: that the young, no students in Thy law, nor in Thy peace, but in lying dotages and law-skirmishes, should no longer buy at my mouth arms for their madness. And very seasonably, it now wanted but very few days unto the Vacation of the Vintage, and I resolved to endure them, then in a regular way to take my leave, and having been purchased by Thee, no more to return for sale. Our purpose then was known to Thee; but to men, other than our own friends, was it not known. For we had agreed among ourselves not to let it out abroad to any: although to us, now ascending from the valley of tears, and singing that song of degrees, Thou hadst given sharp arrows, and destroying coals against the subtle tongue, which as though advising for us, would thwart, and would out of love devour us, as it doth its meat.

Thou hadst pierced our hearts with Thy charity, and we carried Thy words as it were fixed in our entrails: and the examples of Thy servants, whom for black Thou hadst made bright, and for dead, alive, being piled together in the receptacle of our thoughts, kindled and burned up that our heavy torpor, that we should not sink down to the abyss; and they fired us so vehemently, that all the blasts of subtle tongues from gainsayers might only inflame us the more fiercely, not extinguish us. Nevertheless, because for Thy Name's sake which Thou hast hallowed throughout the earth, this our vow and purpose might also find some to commend it, it seemed like ostentation not to wait for the vacation now so near, but to quit beforehand a public profession, which was before the eyes of all; so that all looking on this act of mine, and observing how near was the time of vintage which I wished to anticipate, would talk much of me, as if I had desired to appear some great one. And what end had it served me, that people should repute and dispute upon my purpose, and that our good should be evil spoken of.

Moreover, it had at first troubled me that in this very summer my lungs began to give way, amid too great literary labour, and to breathe deeply with difficulty, and by the pain in my chest to show that they were injured, and to refuse any full or lengthened speaking; this had troubled me, for it almost constrained me of necessity to lay down that burden of teaching, or, if I could be cured and recover, at least to intermit it. But when the full wish for leisure, that I might see how that Thou art the Lord, arose, and was fixed, in me; my God, Thou knowest, I began even to rejoice that I had this secondary, and that no feigned, excuse, which might something moderate the offence taken by those who, for their sons’ sake, wished me never to have the freedom of Thy sons. Full then of such joy, I endured till that interval of time were run; it may have been some twenty days, yet they were endured manfully; endured, for the covetousness which aforetime bore a part of this heavy business, had left me, and I remained alone, and had been overwhelmed, had not patience taken its place. Perchance, some of Thy servants, my brethren, may say that I sinned in this, that with a heart fully set on Thy service, I suffered myself to sit even one hour in the chair of lies. Nor would I be contentious. But hast not Thou, O most merciful Lord, pardoned and remitted this sin also, with my other most horrible and deadly sins, in the holy water?

CHAPTER III

HE RETIRES TO THE VILLA OF HIS FRIEND VERECUNDUS, WHO WAS NOT YET A CHRISTIAN, AND REFERS TO HIS CONVERSION AND DEATH, AS WELL AS THAT OF NEBRIDIUS.

Verecundus was worn down with care about this our blessedness, for that being held back by bonds, whereby he was most straitly bound, he saw that he should be severed from us. For himself was not yet a Christian, his wife one of the faithful; and yet hereby, more rigidly than by any other chain, was he let and hindered from the journey which we had now essayed. For he would not, he said, be a Christian on any other terms than on those he could not. However, he offered us courteously to remain at his country-house so long as we should stay there. Thou, O Lord, shalt reward him in the resurrection of the just, seeing Thou hast already given him the lot of the righteous. For although, in our absence, being now at Rome, he was seized with bodily sickness, and therein being made a Christian, and one of the faithful, he departed this life; yet hadst Thou mercy not on him only, but on us also: lest remembering the exceeding kindness of our friend towards us, yet unable to number him among Thy flock, we should be agonised with intolerable sorrow. Thanks unto Thee, our God, we are Thine: Thy suggestions and consolations tell us, Faithful in promises, Thou now requitest Verecundus for his country-house of Cassiacum, where from the fever of the world we reposed in Thee, with the eternal freshness of Thy

Paradise: for that Thou hast forgiven him his sins upon earth, in that rich mountain, that mountain which yieldeth milk, Thine own mountain.

He then had at that time sorrow, but Nebridius joy. For although he also, not being yet a Christian, had fallen into the pit of that most pernicious error, believing the flesh of Thy Son to be a phantom: yet emerging thence, he believed as we did; not as yet endued with any Sacraments of Thy Church, but a most ardent searcher out of truth. Whom, not long after our conversion and regeneration by Thy Baptism, being also a faithful member of the Church Catholic, and serving Thee in perfect chastity and continence amongst his people in Africa, his whole house having through him first been made Christian, didst Thou release from the flesh; and now he lives in Abraham's bosom. Whatever that be, which is signified by that bosom, there lives my Nebridius, my sweet friend, and Thy child, O Lord, adopted of a freed man: there he liveth. For what other place is there for such a soul? There he liveth, whereof he asked much of me, a poor inexperienced man. Now lays he not his ear to my mouth, but his spiritual mouth unto Thy fountain, and drinketh as much as he can receive, wisdom in proportion to his thirst, endlessly happy. Nor do I think that he is so inebriated therewith, as to forget me; seeing Thou, Lord, Whom he drinketh, art mindful of us. So were we then, comforting Verecundus, who sorrowed, as far as friendship permitted, that our conversion was of such sort; and exhorting him to become faithful, according to his measure, namely, of a married estate; and awaiting Nebridius to follow us, which, being so near, he was all but doing: and so, lo! those days rolled by at length; for long and many they seemed, for the love I bare to the easeful liberty, that I might sing to Thee, from my inmost marrow, My heart hath said unto Thee, I have sought Thy face: Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

CHAPTER IV

IN THE COUNTRY HE GIVES HIS ATTENTION TO LITERATURE, AND EXPLAINS THE FOURTH PSALM IN CONNECTION WITH THE HAPPY CONVERSION OF ALYPIUS. HE IS TROUBLED WITH TOOTHACHE.

Now was the day come wherein I was in deed to be freed of my Rhetoric Professorship, whereof in thought I was already freed. And it was done. Thou didst rescue my tongue, whence Thou hadst before rescued my heart.

And I blessed Thee, rejoicing; retiring with all mine to the villa. What I there did in writing, which was now enlisted in Thy service, though still, in this breathing-time as it were, panting from the school of pride, my books may witness, as well what I debated with others, as what with myself alone, before Thee: what with Nebridius, who was absent, my Epistles bear witness. And when shall I have time to rehearse all Thy great benefits towards us at that time, especially when hasting on to yet greater mercies? For my remembrance recalls me, and pleasant is it to me, O Lord, to confess to Thee, by what inward goads Thou tamedst me; and how Thou hast evened me, lowering the mountains and hills of my high imaginations, straightening my crookedness, and smoothing my rough ways; and how Thou also subduedst the brother of my heart, Alypius, unto the name of Thy Only Begotten, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which he would not at first vouchsafe to have inserted in our writings. For rather would he have them savour of the lofty cedars of the Schools, which the Lord hath now broken down, than of the wholesome herbs of the Church, the antidote against serpents.

Oh, in what accents spake I unto Thee, my God, when I read the Psalms of David, those faithful songs, and sounds of devotion, which allow of no swelling spirit, as yet a Catechumen, and a novice in Thy real love, resting in that villa, with Alypius a Catechumen, my mother cleaving to us, in female garb with masculine faith, with the tranquillity of age, motherly love, Christian piety! Oh, what accents did I utter unto Thee in those Psalms, and how was I by them kindled towards Thee, and on fire to rehearse them, if possible, through the whole world, against the pride of mankind! And yet they are sung through the whole world, nor can any hide himself from Thy heat. With what vehement and bitter sorrow was I angered at the Manichees! and again I pitied them, for they knew not those Sacraments, those medicines, and were mad against the antidote which might have recovered them of their madness. How I would they had then been somewhere near me, and without my knowing that they were there, could have beheld my countenance, and heard my words, when I read the fourth Psalm in that time of my rest, and how that Psalm wrought upon me: When I called, the God of my righteousness heard me; in tribulation Thou enlargedst me. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, and hear my prayer. Would that what I uttered on these words, they could hear, without my knowing whether they heard, lest they should think I spake it for their sakes! Because in truth neither should I speak the same things, nor in the same way, if I perceived that they heard and saw me; nor if I spake them would they so receive them, as when I spake by and for myself before Thee, out of the natural feelings of my soul.

I trembled for fear, and again kindled with hope, and with rejoicing in Thy mercy, O Father; and all issued forth both by mine eyes and voice, when Thy good Spirit turning unto us, said, O ye sons of men, how long slow of heart? why do ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? For I had loved vanity, and sought after leasing. And Thou, O Lord, hadst already magnified Thy Holy One, raising Him from the dead, and setting Him at Thy right hand, whence from on high He should send His promise, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth. And He had already sent Him, but I knew it not; He had sent Him, because He was now magnified, rising again from the dead, and ascending into heaven. For till then, the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. And the prophet cries out, How long, slow of heart? why do ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Know this, that the Lord hath magnified His Holy One. He cries out, How long? He cries out, Know this: and I so long, not knowing, loved vanity, and sought after leasing: and therefore I heard and trembled, because it was spoken unto such as I remembered myself to have been. For in those phantoms which I had held for truths, was there vanity and leasing; and I spake aloud many things earnestly and forcibly, in the bitterness of my remembrance. Which would they had heard, who yet love vanity and seek after leasing! They would perchance have been troubled, and have vomited it up; and Thou wouldest hear them when they cried unto Thee; for by a true death in the flesh did He die for us, who now intercedeth unto Thee for us.

I further read, Be angry, and sin not. And how was I moved, O my God, who had now learned to be angry at myself for things past, that I might not sin in time to come! Yea, to be justly angry; for that it was not another nature of a people of darkness which sinned for me, as they say who are not angry at themselves, and treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and of the revelation of Thy just judgment. Nor were my good things now without, nor sought with the eyes of flesh in that earthly sun; for they that would have joy from without soon become vain, and waste themselves on the things seen and temporal, and in their famished thoughts do lick their very shadows. Oh that they were wearied out with their famine, and said, Who will show us good things? And we would say, and they hear, The light of Thy countenance is sealed upon us. For we are not that light which enlighteneth every man, but we are enlightened by Thee; that having been sometimes darkness, we may be light in Thee. Oh that they could see the eternal Internal, which having tasted, I was grieved that I could not show It them, so long as they brought me their heart in their eyes roving abroad from Thee, while they said, Who will show us good things? For there, where I was angry within myself in my chamber, where I was inwardly pricked, where I had sacrificed, slaying my old man and commencing the purpose of a new life, putting my trust in Thee,- there hadst Thou begun to grow sweet unto me, and hadst put gladness in my heart. And I cried out, as I read this outwardly, finding it inwardly. Nor would I be multiplied with worldly goods; wasting away time, and wasted by time; whereas I had in Thy eternal Simple Essence other corn, and wine, and oil.

And with a loud cry of my heart I cried out in the next verse, O in peace, O for The Self-same! O what said he, I will lay me down and sleep, for who shall hinder us, when cometh to pass that saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory? And Thou surpassingly art the Self-same, Who art not changed; and in Thee is rest which forgetteth all toil, for there is none other with Thee, nor are we to seek those many other things, which are not what Thou art: but Thou, Lord, alone hast made me dwell in hope. I read, and kindled; nor found I what to do to those deaf and dead, of whom myself had been, a pestilent person, a bitter and a blind bawler against those writings, which are honied with the honey of heaven, and lightsome with Thine own light: and I was consumed with zeal at the enemies of this Scripture.

When shall I recall all which passed in those holy-days? Yet neither have I forgotten, nor will I pass over the severity of Thy scourge, and the wonderful swiftness of Thy mercy. Thou didst then torment me with pain in my teeth; which when it had come to such height that I could not speak, it came into my heart to desire all my friends present to pray for me to Thee, the God of all manner of health. And this I wrote on wax, and gave it them to read. Presently so soon as with humble devotion we had bowed our knees, that pain went away. But what pain? or how went it away? I was affrighted, O my Lord, my God; for from infancy I had never experienced the like. And the power of Thy Nod was deeply conveyed to me, and rejoicing in faith, I praised Thy Name. And that faith suffered me not to be at ease about my past sins, which were not yet forgiven me by Thy baptism.

CHAPTER V

AT THE RECOMMENDATION OF AMBROSE, HE READS THE PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH, BUT DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THEM.

The vintage-vacation ended, I gave notice to the Milanese to provide their scholars with another master to sell words to them; for that I had both made choice to serve Thee, and through my difficulty of breathing and pain in my chest was not equal to the Professorship. And by letters I signified to Thy Prelate, the holy man Ambrose, my former errors and present desires, begging his advice what of Thy Scriptures I had best read, to become readier and fitter for receiving so great grace. He recommended Isaiah the Prophet: I believe, because he above the rest is a more clear foreshower of the Gospel and of the calling of the Gentiles. But I, not understanding the first lesson in him, and imagining the whole to be like it, laid it by, to be resumed when better practised in our Lord’s own words.

CHAPTER VI

HE IS BAPTIZED AT MILAN WITH ALYPIUS AND HIS SON ADEODATUS. THE BOOK “DE MAGISTRO.”

Thence, when the time was come wherein I was to give in my name, we left the country and returned to Milan. It pleased Alypius also to be with me born again in Thee, being already clothed with the humility befitting Thy Sacraments; and a most valiant tamer of the body, so as, with unwonted venture, to wear the frozen ground of Italy with his bare feet. We joined with us the boy Adeodatus, born after the flesh, of my sin. Excellently hadst Thou made him. He was not quite fifteen, and in wit surpassed many grave and learned men. I confess unto Thee Thy gifts, O Lord my God, Creator of all, and abundantly able to reform our deformities: for I had no part in that boy, but the sin. For that we brought him up in Thy discipline, it was Thou, none else, had inspired us with it. I confess unto Thee Thy gifts. There is a book of ours entitled The Master; it is a dialogue between him and me. Thou knowest that all there ascribed to the person conversing with me were his ideas, in his sixteenth year. Much besides, and yet more admirable, I found in him. That talent struck awe into me. And who but Thou could be the workmaster of such wonders? Soon didst Thou take his life from the earth: and I now remember him without anxiety, fearing nothing for his childhood or youth, or his whole self. Him we joined with us, our contemporary in grace, to he brought up in Thy discipline: and we were baptised, and anxiety for our past life vanished from us. Nor was I sated in those days with the wondrous sweetness of considering the depth of Thy counsels concerning the salvation of mankind. How did I weep, in Thy Hymns and Canticles, touched to the quick by the voices of Thy sweet-attuned Church! The voices flowed into mine ears, and the Truth distilled into my heart, whence the affections of my devotion overflowed, and tears ran down, and happy was I therein.

CHAPTER VII

OF THE CHURCH HYMNS INSTITUTED AT MILAN; OF THE AMBROSIAN PERSECUTION RAISED BY JUSTINA; AND OF THE DISCOVERY OF THE BODIES OF TWO MARTYRS.

Not long had the Church of Milan begun to use this kind of consolation and exhortation, the brethren zealously joining with harmony of voice and hearts. For it was a year, or not much more, that Justina, mother to the Emperor Valentinian, a child, persecuted Thy servant Ambrose, in favour of her heresy, to which she was seduced by the Arians. The devout people kept watch in the Church, ready to die with their Bishop Thy servant. There my mother Thy handmaid, bearing a chief part of those anxieties and watchings, lived for prayer. We, yet unwarmed by the heat of Thy Spirit, still were stirred up by the sight of the amazed and disquieted city. Then it was first instituted that after the manner of the Eastern Churches, Hymns and Psalms should be sung, lest the people should wax faint through the tediousness of sorrow: and from that day to this the custom is retained, divers (yea, almost all) Thy congregations, throughout other parts of the world following herein.

Then didst Thou by a vision discover to Thy forenamed Bishop where the bodies of Gervasius and Protasius the martyrs lay hid (whom Thou hadst in

Thy secret treasury stored uncorrupted so many years), whence Thou mightest seasonably produce them to repress the fury of a woman, but an Empress. For when they were discovered and dug up, and with due honour translated to the Ambrosian Basilica, not only they who were vexed with unclean spirits (the devils confessing themselves) were cured, but a certain man who had for many years been blind, a citizen, and well known to the city, asking and hearing the reason of the people's confused joy, sprang forth desiring his guide to lead him thither. Led thither, he begged to be allowed to touch with his handkerchief the bier of Thy saints, whose death is precious in Thy sight. Which when he had done, and put to his eyes, they were forthwith opened. Thence did the fame spread, thence Thy praises glowed, shone; thence the mind of that enemy, though not turned to the soundness of believing, was yet turned back from her fury of persecuting. Thanks to Thee, O my God. Whence and whither hast Thou thus led my remembrance, that I should confess these things also unto Thee? which great though they be, I had passed by in forgetfulness. And yet then, when the odour of Thy ointments was so fragrant, did we not run after Thee. Therefore did I more weep among the singing of Thy Hymns, formerly sighing after Thee, and at length breathing in Thee, as far as the breath may enter into this our house of grass.

CHAPTER VIII

OF THE CONVERSION OF EVODIUS, AND THE DEATH OF HIS MOTHER WHIN RETURNING WITH HIM TO AFRICA; AND WHOSE EDUCATION HE TENDERLY RELATES.

Thou that makest men to dwell of one mind in one house, didst join with us Euodius also, a young man of our own city. Who being an officer of Court, was before us converted to Thee and baptised: and quitting his secular warfare, girded himself to Thine. We were together, about to dwell together in our devout purpose. We sought where we might serve Thee most usefully, and were together returning to Africa: whitherward being as far as Ostia, my mother departed this life. Much I omit, as hastening much. Receive my confessions and thanksgivings, O my God, for innumerable things whereof I am silent. But I will not omit whatsoever my soul would bring forth concerning that Thy handmaid, who brought me forth, both in the flesh, that I might be born to this temporal light, and in heart, that I might be born to Light eternal. Not her gifts, but Thine in her, would I speak of; for neither did she make nor educate herself. Thou createdst her; nor did her father and mother know what a one should come from them. And the sceptre of Thy Christ, the discipline of Thine only Son, in a Christian house, a good member of Thy Church, educated her in Thy fear. Yet for her good discipline was she wont to commend not so much her mother's diligence, as that of a certain decrepit maid-servant, who had carried her father when a child, as little ones used to be carried at the backs of elder girls. For which reason, and for her great age, and excellent conversation, was she, in that Christian family, well respected by its heads. Whence also the charge of her master's daughters was entrusted to her, to which she gave diligent heed, restraining them earnestly, when necessary, with a holy severity, and teaching them with a grave discretion. For, except at those hours wherein they were most temporately fed at their parents' table, she would not suffer them, though parched with thirst, to drink even water; preventing an evil custom, and adding this wholesome advice: "Ye drink water now, because you have not wine in your power; but when you come to be married, and be made mistresses of cellars and cupboards, you will scorn water, but the custom of drinking will abide." By this method of instruction, and the authority she had, she refrained the greediness of childhood, and moulded their very thirst to such an excellent moderation that what they should not, that they would not.

And yet (as Thy handmaid told me her son) there had crept upon her a love of wine. For when (as the manner was) she, as though a sober maiden, was bidden by her parents to draw wine out of the hogshed, holding the vessel under the opening, before she poured the wine into the flagon, she sipped a little with the tip of her lips; for more her instinctive feelings refused. For this she did, not out of any desire of drink, but out of the exuberance of youth, whereby it boils over in mirthful freaks, which in youthful spirits are wont to be kept under by the gravity of their elders. And thus by adding to that little, daily littles (for whoso despiseth little things shall fall by little and little), she had fallen into such a habit as greedily to drink off her little cup brim-full almost of wine. Where was then that discreet old woman, and that her earnest countermanding? Would aught avail against a secret disease, if Thy healing hand, O Lord, watched not over us? Father, mother, and governors absent, Thou present, who createdst, who callest, who also by those set over us, workest something towards the salvation of our souls, what didst Thou then, O my God? how didst Thou cure her? how heal her? didst Thou not out of another soul bring forth a hard and a sharp taunt, like a lancet out of Thy secret store, and with one touch remove all that foul stuff? For a maid-servant with whom she used to go to the cellar, falling to words (as it happens) with her little mistress, when alone with her, taunted her with this fault, with most bitter insult, calling her wine-bibber. With which taunt she, stung to the quick, saw the foulness of her fault, and instantly condemned and forsook it. As flattering friends pervert, so reproachful enemies mostly correct. Yet not what by them Thou doest, but what themselves purposed, dost Thou repay them. For she in her anger sought to vex her young mistress, not to amend her; and did it in private, either for that the time and place of the quarrel so found them; or lest herself also should have anger, for discovering it thus late. But Thou, Lord, Governor of all in heaven and earth, who turnest to Thy purposes the deepest currents, and the ruled turbulence of the tide of times, didst by the very unhealthiness of one soul heal another; lest any, when he observes this, should ascribe it to his own power, even when another, whom he wished to be reformed, is reformed through words of his.

CHAPTER IX

HE DESCRIBES THE PRAISEWORTHY HABITS OF HIS MOTHER; HER KINDNESS TOWARDS HER HUSBAND AND HER SONS.

Brought up thus modestly and soberly, and made subject rather by Thee to her parents, than by her parents to Thee, so soon as she was of marriageable age, being bestowed upon a husband, she served him as her lord; and did her diligence to win him unto Thee, preaching Thee unto him by her conversation; by which Thou ornamentedst her, making her reverently amiable, and admirable unto her husband. And she so endured the wronging of her bed as never to have any quarrel with her husband thereon. For she looked for Thy mercy upon him, that believing in Thee, he might be made chaste. But besides this, he was fervid, as in his affections, so in anger: but she had learnt not to resist an angry husband, not in deed only, but not even in word. Only when he was smoothed and tranquil, and in a temper to receive it, she would give an account of her actions, if haply he had overhastily taken offence. In a word, while many matrons, who had milder husbands, yet bore even in their faces marks of shame, would in familiar talk blame their husbands' lives, she would blame their tongues, giving them, as in jest, earnest advice: "That from the time they heard the marriage writings read to them, they should account them as indentures, whereby they were made servants; and so, remembering their condition, ought not to set themselves up against their lords." And when they, knowing what a choleric husband she endured, marvelled that it had never been heard, nor by any token perceived, that Patricius had beaten his wife, or that there had been any domestic difference between them, even for one day, and confidentially asking the reason, she taught them her practice above mentioned. Those wives who observed it found the good, and returned thanks; those who observed it not, found no relief, and suffered.

Her mother-in-law also, at first by whisperings of evil servants incensed against her, she so overcame by observance and persevering endurance and meekness, that she of her own accord discovered to her son the meddling tongues whereby the domestic peace betwixt her and her daughter-in-law had been disturbed, asking him to correct them. Then, when in compliance with his mother, and for the well-ordering of the family, he had with stripes corrected those discovered, at her will who had discovered them, she promised the like reward to any who, to please her, should speak ill of her daughter-in-law to her: and none now venturing, they lived together with a remarkable sweetness of mutual kindness.

This great gift also thou bestowedst, O my God, my mercy, upon that good handmaid of Thine, in whose womb Thou createdst me, that between any disagreeing and discordant parties where she was able, she showed herself such a peacemaker, that hearing on both sides most bitter things, such as swelling and indigested choler uses to break out into, when the crudities of enmities are breathed out in sour discourses to a present friend against an absent enemy, she never would disclose aught of the one unto the other, but what might tend to their reconcilement. A small good this might appear to me, did I not to my grief know numberless persons, who through some horrible and wide-spreading contagion of sin, not only disclose to persons mutually angered things said in anger, but add withal things never spoken, whereas to humane humanity, it ought to seem a light thing not to toment or increase ill will by ill words, unless one study withal by good words to quench it. Such was she, Thyself, her most inward Instructor, teaching her in the school of the heart.

Finally, her own husband, towards the very end of his earthly life, did she gain unto Thee; nor had she to complain of that in him as a believer, which before he was a believer she had borne from him. She was also the servant of Thy servants; whosoever of them knew her, did in her much praise and honour and love Thee; for that through the witness of the fruits of a holy conversation they perceived Thy presence in her heart. For she had been the wife of one man, had requited her parents, had governed her house piously, was well reported of for good works, had brought up children, so often travailing in birth of them, as she saw them swerving from Thee. Lastly, of all of us Thy servants, O Lord (whom on occasion of Thy own gift Thou sufferest to speak), us, who before her sleeping in Thee lived united together, having received the grace of Thy baptism, did she so take care of, as though she had been mother of us all; so served us, as though she had been child to us all.

CHAPTER X

A CONVERSATION HE HAD WITH HIS MOTHER CONCERNING THE KINDOM OF HEAVEN.

The day now approaching whereon she was to depart this life (which day Thou well knewest, we knew not), it came to pass, Thyself, as I believe, by Thy secret ways so ordering it, that she and I stood alone, leaning in a certain window, which looked into the garden of the house where we now lay, at Ostia; where removed from the din of men, we were recruiting from the fatigues of a long journey, for the voyage. We were discoursing then together, alone, very sweetly; and forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, we were enquiring between ourselves in the presence of the Truth, which Thou art, of what sort the eternal life of the saints was to be, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man. But yet we gasped with the mouth of our heart, after those heavenly streams of Thy fountain, the fountain of life, which is with Thee; that being bedewed thence according to our capacity, we might in some sort meditate upon so high a mystery.

And when our discourse was brought to that point, that the very highest delight of the earthly senses, in the very purest material light, was, in respect of the sweetness of that life, not only not worthy of comparison, but not even of mention; we raising up ourselves with a more glowing affection towards the "Self-same," did by degrees pass through all things bodily, even the very heaven whence sun and moon and stars shine upon the earth; yea, we were soaring higher yet, by inward musing, and discourse, and admiring of Thy works; and we came to our own minds, and went beyond them, that we might arrive at that region of never-failing plenty, where Thou feedest Israel for ever with the food of truth, and where life is the Wisdom by whom all these things are made, and what have been, and what shall be, and she is not made, but is, as she hath been, and so shall she be ever; yea rather, to "have been," and "hereafter to be," are not in her, but only "to be," seeing she is eternal. For to "have been," and to "be hereafter," are not eternal. And while we were discoursing and panting after her, we slightly touched on her with the whole effort of our heart; and we sighed, and there we leave bound the first fruits of the Spirit; and returned to vocal expressions of our mouth, where the word spoken has beginning and end. And what is like unto Thy Word, our Lord, who endureth in Himself without becoming old, and maketh all things new?

We were saying then: If to any the tumult of the flesh were hushed, hushed the images of earth, and waters, and air, hushed also the pole of heaven, yea the very soul be hushed to herself, and by not thinking on self surmount self, hushed all dreams and imaginary revelations, every tongue and every sign, and whatsoever exists only in transition, since if any could hear, all these say, We made not ourselves, but He made us that abideth for ever- If then having uttered this, they too should be hushed, having roused only our ears to Him who made them, and He alone speak, not by them but by Himself, that we may hear His Word, not through any tongue of flesh, nor Angel's voice, nor sound of thunder, nor in the dark riddle of a similitude, but might hear Whom in these things we love, might hear His Very Self without these (as we two now strained ourselves, and in swift thought touched on that Eternal Wisdom which abideth over all); -could this be continued on, and other visions of kind far unlike be withdrawn, and this one ravish, and absorb, and wrap up its beholder amid these inward joys, so that life might be for ever like that one moment of understanding which now we sighed after; were not this, Enter into thy Master’s joy? And when shall that be? When we shall all rise again, though we shall not all be changed?

Such things was I speaking, and even if not in this very manner, and these same words, yet, Lord, Thou knowest that in that day when we were speaking of these things, and this world with all its delights became, as we spake, contemptible to us, my mother said, “Son, for mine own part I have no further delight in any thing in this life. What I do here any longer, and to what I am here, I know not, now that my hopes in this world are accomplished. One thing there was for which I desired to linger for a while in this life, that I might see thee a Catholic Christian before I died. My God hath done this for me more abundantly, that I should now see thee withal, despising earthly happiness, become His servant: what do I here?”

CHAPTER XI

HIS MOTHER, ATTACKED BY FEVER, DIES AT OSTIA.

What answer I made her unto these things, I remember not. For scarce five days after, or not much more, she fell sick of a fever; and in that sickness one day she fell into a swoon, and was for a while withdrawn from these visible things. We hastened round her; but she was soon brought back to her senses; and looking on me and my brother standing by her, said to us enquiringly, “Where was I?” And then looking fixedly on us, with grief amazed: “Here,” saith she, “shall you bury your mother.” I held my peace and refrained weeping; but my brother spake something, wishing for her, as the happier lot, that she might die, not in a strange place, but in her own land. Whereat, she with anxious look, checking him with her eyes, for that he still savoured such things, and then looking upon me: “Behold,” saith she, “what he saith”: and soon after to us both, “Lay,” she saith, “this body any where; let not the care for that any way disquiet you: this only I request, that you would remember me at the Lord’s altar, wherever you be.” And having delivered this sentiment in what words she could, she held her peace, being exercised by her growing sickness.

But I, considering Thy gifts, Thou unseen God, which Thou instillest into the hearts of Thy faithful ones, whence wondrous fruits do spring, did rejoice and give thanks to Thee, recalling what I before knew, how careful and anxious she had ever been as to her place of burial, which she had provided and prepared for herself by the body of her husband. For because they had lived in great harmony together, she also wished (so little can the human mind embrace things divine) to have this addition to that happiness, and to have it remembered among men, that after her pilgrimage beyond the seas, what was earthly of this united pair had been permitted to be united beneath the same earth. But when this emptiness had through the fulness of Thy goodness begun to cease in her heart, I knew not, and rejoiced admiring what she had so disclosed to me; though indeed in that our discourse also in the window, when she said, “What do I here any longer?” there appeared no desire of dying in her own country. I heard afterwards also, that when we were now at Ostia, she with a mother’s confidence, when I was absent, one day discoursed with certain of my friends about the contempt of this life, and the blessing of death: and when they were amazed at such courage which Thou hadst given to a woman, and asked, “Whether she were not afraid to leave her body so far from her own city?” she replied, “Nothing is far to God; nor was it to be feared lest at the end of the world, He should not recognise whence He were to raise me up.” On the ninth day then of her sickness, and the fifty-sixth year of her age, and the three-and-thirtieth of mine, was that religious and holy soul freed from the body.

CHAPTER XII

HOW HE MOURNED HIS DEAD MOTHER.

I closed her eyes; and there flowed withal a mighty sorrow into my heart, which was overflowing into tears; mine eyes at the same time, by the violent command of my mind, drank up their fountain wholly dry; and woe was me in such a strife! But when she breathed her last, the boy Adeodatus burst out into a loud lament; then, checked by us all, held his peace. In like manner also a childish feeling in me, which was, through my heart’s youthful voice, finding its vent in weeping, was checked and silenced. For we thought it not fitting to solemnise that funeral with tearful lament, and groanings; for thereby do they for the most part express grief for the departed, as though unhappy, or altogether dead; whereas she was neither unhappy in her death, nor altogether dead. Of this we were assured on good grounds, the testimony of her good conversation and her faith unfeigned.

What then was it which did grievously pain me within, but a fresh wound wrought through the sudden wrench of that most sweet and dear custom of living together? I joyed indeed in her testimony, when, in that her last sickness, mingling her endearments with my acts of duty, she called me "dutiful," and mentioned, with great affection of love, that she never had heard any harsh or reproachful sound uttered by my mouth against her. But yet, O my God, Who madest us, what comparison is there betwixt that honour that I paid to her, and her slavery for me? Being then forsaken of so great comfort in her, my soul was wounded, and that life rent asunder as it were, which, of hers and mine together, had been made but one.

The boy then being stilled from weeping, Euodius took up the Psalter, and began to sing, our whole house answering him, the Psalm, I will sing of mercy and judgments to Thee, O Lord. But hearing what we were doing, many brethren and religious women came together; and whilst they (whose office it was) made ready for the burial, as the manner is, I (in a part of the house, where I might properly), together with those who thought not fit to leave me, discoursed upon something fitting the time; and by this balm of truth assuaged that torment, known to Thee, they unknowing and listening intently, and conceiving me to be without all sense of sorrow. But in Thy ears, where none of them heard, I blamed the weakness of my feelings, and refrained my flood of grief, which gave way a little unto me; but again came, as with a tide, yet not so as to burst out into tears, nor to change of countenance; still I knew what I was keeping down in my heart. And being very much displeased that these human things had such power over me, which in the due order and appointment of our natural condition must needs come to pass, with a new grief I grieved for my grief, and was thus worn by a double sorrow.

And behold, the corpse was carried to the burial; we went and returned without tears. For neither in those prayers which we poured forth unto Thee, when the Sacrifice of our ransom was offered for her, when now the corpse was by the grave's side, as the manner there is, previous to its being laid therein, did I weep even during those prayers; yet was I the whole day in secret heavily sad, and with troubled mind prayed Thee, as I could, to heal my sorrow, yet Thou didst not; impressing, I believe, upon my memory by this one instance, how strong is the bond of all habit, even upon a soul, which now feeds upon no deceiving Word. It seemed also good to me to go and bathe, having heard that the bath had its name (balneum) from the Greek Balaneion for that it drives sadness from the mind. And this also I confess unto Thy mercy, Father of the fatherless, that I bathed, and was the same as before I bathed. For the bitterness of sorrow could not exude out of my heart. Then I slept, and woke up again, and found my grief not a little softened; and as I was alone in my bed, I remembered those true verses of Thy Ambrose. For Thou art the

“Maker of all, the Lord,
And Ruler of the height,
Who, robing day in light, hast poured
Soft slumbers o’er the night,
That to our limbs the power
Of toil may be renew’d,
And hearts be rais’d that sink and cower,
And sorrows be subdu’d.”

And then by little and little I recovered my former thoughts of Thy handmaid, her holy conversation towards Thee, her holy tenderness and observance towards us, whereof I was suddenly deprived: and I was minded to weep in Thy sight, for her and for myself, in her behalf and in my own. And I gave way to the tears which I before restrained, to overflow as much as they desired; reposing my heart upon them; and it found rest in them, for it was in Thy ears, not in those of man, who would have scornfully interpreted my weeping. And now, Lord, in writing I confess it unto Thee. Read it, who will, and interpret it, how he will: and if he finds sin therein, that I wept my mother for a small portion of an hour (the mother who for the time was dead to mine eyes, who had for many years wept for me that I might live in Thine eyes), let him not deride me; but rather, if he be one of large charity, let him weep himself for my sins unto Thee, the Father of all the brethren of Thy Christ.

CHAPTER XIII

HE ENTREATS GOD FOR HER SINS, AND ADMONISHES HIS READERS TO REMEMBER HER PIOUSLY.

But now, with a heart cured of that wound, wherein it might seem blameworthy for an earthly feeling, I pour out unto Thee, our God, in behalf of that Thy handmaid, a far different kind of tears, flowing from a spirit shaken by the thoughts of the dangers of every soul that dieth in Adam. And although she having been quickened in Christ, even before her release from the flesh, had lived to the praise of Thy name for her faith and conversation; yet dare I not say that from what time Thou regeneratedst her by baptism, no word issued from her mouth against Thy Commandment. Thy Son, the Truth, hath said, Whosoever shall say unto his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. And woe be even unto the commendable life of men, if, laying aside mercy, Thou shouldest examine it. But because Thou art not extreme in enquiring after sins, we confidently hope to find some place with Thee. But whosoever reckons up his real merits to Thee, what reckons he up to Thee but Thine own gifts? O that men would know themselves to be men; and that he that glorieth would glory in the Lord.

I therefore, O my Praise and my Life, God of my heart, laying aside for a while her good deeds, for which I give thanks to Thee with joy, do now beseech Thee for the sins of my mother. Hearken unto me, I entreat Thee, by the Medicine of our wounds, Who hung upon the tree, and now sitting at Thy right hand maketh intercession to Thee for us. I know that she dealt mercifully, and from her heart forgave her debtors their debts; do Thou also forgive her debts, whatever she may have contracted in so many years, since the water of salvation. Forgive her, Lord, forgive, I beseech Thee; enter not into judgment with her. Let Thy mercy be exalted above Thy justice, since Thy words are true, and Thou hast promised mercy unto the merciful; which Thou gavest them to be, who wilt have mercy on whom Thou wilt have mercy; and wilt have compassion on whom Thou hast had compassion.

And, I believe, Thou hast already done what I ask; but accept, O Lord, the free-will offerings of my mouth. For she, the day of her dissolution now at hand, took no thought to have her body sumptuously wound up, or embalmed with spices; nor desired she a choice monument, or to be buried in her own land. These things she enjoined us not; but desired only to have her name commemorated at Thy Altar, which she had served without intermission of one day: whence she knew the holy Sacrifice to be dispensed, by which the hand-writing that was against us is blotted out; through which the enemy was triumphed over, who summing up our offences, and seeking what to lay to our charge, found nothing in Him, in

Whom we conquer. Who shall restore to Him the innocent blood? Who repay Him the price wherewith He bought us, and so take us from Him? Unto the Sacrament of which our ransom, Thy handmaid bound her soul by the bond of faith. Let none sever her from Thy protection: let neither the lion nor the dragon interpose himself by force or fraud. For she will not answer that she owes nothing, lest she be convicted and seized by the crafty accuser: but she will answer that her sins are forgiven her by Him, to Whom none can repay that price which He, Who owed nothing, paid for us.

May she rest then in peace with the husband before and after whom she had never any; whom she obeyed, with patience bringing forth fruit unto Thee, that she might win him also unto Thee. And inspire, O Lord my God, inspire Thy servants my brethren, Thy sons my masters, whom with voice, and heart, and pen I serve, that so many as shall read these Confessions, may at Thy Altar remember Monnica Thy handmaid, with Patricius, her sometimes husband, by whose bodies Thou broughtest me into this life, how I know not. May they with devout affection remember my parents in this transitory light, my brethren under Thee our Father in our Catholic Mother, and my fellow-citizens in that eternal Jerusalem which Thy pilgrim people sigheth after from their Exodus, even unto their return thither. That so my mother’s last request of me, may through my confessions, more than through my prayers, be, through the prayers of many, more abundantly fulfilled to her.

BOOK X

CHAPTER I

IN GOD ALONE IS THE HOPE AND JOY OF MAN.

Let me know Thee, O Lord, who knowest me: let me know Thee, as I am known. Power of my soul, enter into it, and fit it for Thee, that Thou mayest have and hold it without spot or wrinkle. This is my hope, therefore do I speak; and in this hope do I rejoice, when I rejoice healthfully. Other things of this life are the less to be sorrowed for, the more they are sorrowed for; and the more to be sorrowed for, the less men sorrow for them. For behold, Thou lovest the truth, and he that doth it, cometh to the light. This would I do in my heart before Thee in confession: and in my writing, before many witnesses.

CHAPTER II

THAT ALL THINGS ARE MANIFEST TO GOD. THAT CONFESSION UNTO HIM IS NOT MADE BY THE WORDS OF THE FLESH, BUT OF THE SOUL, AND THE CRY OF REFLECTION.

And from Thee, O Lord, unto whose eyes the abyss of man’s conscience is naked, what could be hidden in me though I would not confess it? For I should hide Thee from me, not me from Thee. But now, for that my groaning is witness, that I am displeased with myself, Thou shinest out, and art pleasing, and beloved, and longed for; that I may be ashamed of myself, and renounce myself, and choose Thee, and neither please Thee nor myself, but in Thee. To Thee therefore, O Lord, am I open, whatever I am; and with what fruit I confess unto Thee, I have said. Nor do I it with words and sounds of the flesh, but with the words of my soul, and the cry of the thought which Thy ear knoweth. For when I am evil, then to confess to Thee is nothing else than to be displeased with myself; but when holy, nothing else than not to ascribe it to myself: because Thou, O Lord, blessest the godly, but first Thou justifieth him when ungodly. My confession then, O my God, in Thy sight, is made silently, and not silently. For in sound, it is silent; in affection, it cries aloud. For neither do I utter any thing right unto men, which Thou hast not before heard from me; nor dost Thou hear any such thing from me, which Thou hast not first said unto me.

CHAPTER III

HE WHO CONFESSETH RIGHTLY UNTO GOD BEST KNOWETH HIMSELF.

What then have I to do with men, that they should hear my confessions- as if they could heal all my infirmities- a race, curious to know the lives of others, slothful to amend their own? Why seek they to hear from me what I am; who will not hear from Thee what themselves are? And how know they, when from myself they hear of myself, whether I say true; seeing no man knows what is in man, but the spirit of man which is in him? But if they hear from Thee of themselves, they cannot say, "The Lord lieth." For what is it to hear from Thee of themselves, but to know themselves? and who knoweth and saith, "It is false," unless himself lieth? But because charity believeth all things (that is, among those whom knitting unto itself it maketh one), I also, O Lord, will in such wise confess unto Thee, that men may hear, to whom I cannot demonstrate whether I confess truly; yet they believe me, whose ears charity openeth unto me.

But do Thou, my inmost Physician, make plain unto me what fruit I may reap by doing it. For the confessions of my past sins, which Thou hast forgiven and covered, that Thou mightest bless me in Thee, changing my soul by Faith and Thy Sacrament, when read and heard, stir up the heart, that it sleep not in despair and say "I cannot," but awake in the love of Thy mercy and the sweetness of Thy grace, whereby whoso is weak, is strong, when by it he became conscious of his own weakness. And the good delight to hear of the past evils of such as are now freed from them, not because they are evils, but because they have been and are not. With what fruit then, O Lord my God, to Whom my conscience daily confesseth, trusting more in the hope of Thy mercy than in her own innocency, with what fruit, I pray, do I by this book confess to men also in Thy presence what I now am, not what I have been? For that other fruit I have seen and spoken of. But what I now am, at the very time of making these confessions, divers desire to know, who have or have not known me, who have heard from me or of me; but their ear is not at my heart where I am, whatever I am. They wish then to hear me confess what I am within; whither neither their eye, nor ear, nor understanding can reach; they wish it, as ready to believe- but will they know? For charity, whereby they are good, telleth them that in my confessions I lie not; and she in them, believeth me.

CHAPTER IV

THAT IN HIS CONFESSIONS HE MAY DO GOOD, HE CONSIDERS OTHERS.

But for what fruit would they hear this? Do they desire to joy with me, when they hear how near, by Thy gift, I approach unto Thee? and to pray for me, when they shall hear how much I am held back by my own weight? To such will I discover myself For it is no mean fruit, O Lord my God, that by many thanks should be given to Thee on our behalf, and Thou be by many entreated for us. Let the brotherly mind love in me what Thou teachest is to be loved, and lament in me what Thou teachest is to be lamented. Let a brotherly, not a stranger, mind, not that of the strange children, whose mouth talketh of vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of iniquity, but that brotherly mind which when it approveth, rejoiceth for me, and when it disapproveth me, is sorry for me; because whether it approveth or disapproveth, it loveth me. To such will I discover myself: they will breathe freely at my good deeds, sigh for my ill. My good deeds are Thine appointments, and Thy gifts; my evil ones are my offences, and Thy judgments. Let them breathe freely at the one, sigh at the other; and let hymns and weeping go up into Thy sight, out of the hearts of my brethren, Thy censers. And do Thou, O Lord, he pleased with the incense of Thy holy temple, have mercy upon me according to Thy great mercy for Thine own name’s sake; and no ways forsaking what Thou hast begun, perfect my imperfections.

This is the fruit of my confessions of what I am, not of what I have been, to confess this, not before Thee only, in a secret exultation with trembling, and a secret sorrow with hope; but in the ears also of the believing sons of men, sharers of my joy, and partners in my mortality, my fellow-citizens, and fellow-pilgrims, who are gone before, or are to follow on, companions of my way. These are Thy servants, my brethren, whom Thou willest to be Thy sons; my masters, whom Thou commandest me to serve, if I would live with Thee, of Thee. But this Thy Word were little did it only command by speaking, and not go before in performing. This then I do in deed and word, this I do under Thy wings; in over great peril, were not my soul subdued unto Thee under Thy wings, and my infirmity known unto Thee. I am a little one, but my Father ever liveth, and my Guardian is sufficient for me. For He is the same who begat me, and defends me: and Thou Thyself art all my good; Thou, Almighty, Who are with me, yea, before I am with Thee. To such then whom Thou commandest me to serve will I discover, not what I have been, but what I now am and what I yet am. But neither do I judge myself. Thus therefore I would be heard.

CHAPTER V

THAT MAN KNOWETH NOT HIMSELF WHOLLY.

For Thou, Lord, dost judge me: because, although no man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of a man which is in him, yet is there something of man, which neither the spirit of man that is in him, itself knoweth. But Thou, Lord, knowest all of him, Who hast made him. Yet I, though in Thy sight I despise myself, and account myself dust and ashes; yet know I something of Thee, which I know not of myself. And truly, now we see through a glass darkly, not face to face as yet. So long therefore as I be absent from Thee, I am more present with myself than with Thee; and yet know I Thee that Thou art in no ways passible; but I, what temptations I can resist, what I cannot, I know not. And there is hope, because Thou art faithful, Who wilt not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; but wilt with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it. I will confess then what I know of myself, I will confess also what I know not of myself. And that because what I do know of myself, I know by Thy shining upon me; and what I know not of myself, so long know I not it, until my darkness be made as the noon-day in Thy countenance.

CHAPTER VI

THE LOVE OF GOD, IN HIS NATURE SUPERIOR TO ALL CREATURES, IS ACQUIRED BY THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SENSES AND THE EXERCISE OF REASON.

Not with doubting, but with assured consciousness, do I love Thee, Lord. Thou hast stricken my heart with Thy word, and I loved Thee. Yea also heaven, and earth, and all that therein is, behold, on every side they bid me love Thee; nor cease to say so unto all, that they may be without excuse. But more deeply wilt Thou have mercy on whom Thou wilt have mercy, and wilt have compassion on whom Thou hast had compassion: else in deaf ears do the heaven and the earth speak Thy praises. But what do I love, when I love Thee? not beauty of bodies, nor the fair harmony of time, nor the brightness of the light, so gladsome to our eyes, nor sweet melodies of varied songs, nor the fragrant smell of flowers, and ointments, and spices, not manna and honey, not limbs acceptable to embracements of flesh. None of these I love, when I love my God; and yet I love a kind of light, and melody, and fragrance, and meat, and embracement when I love my God, the light, melody, fragrance, meat, embracement of my inner man: where there shineth unto my soul what space cannot contain, and there soundeth what time beareth not away, and there smelleth what breathing disperseth not, and there tasteth what eating diminisheth not, and there clingeth what satiety divorceth not. This is it which I love when I love my God.

And what is this? I asked the earth, and it answered me, “I am not He”; and whatsoever are in it confessed the same. I asked the sea and the deeps, and the living creeping things, and they answered, “We are not thy God, seek above us.” I asked the moving air; and the whole air with his inhabitants answered, “Anaximenes was deceived, I am not God. “ I asked the heavens, sun, moon, stars, “Nor (say they) are we the God whom thou seekest.” And I replied unto all the things which encompass the door of my flesh: “Ye have told me of my God, that ye are not He; tell me something of Him.” And they cried out with a loud voice, “He made us. “ My questioning them, was my thoughts on them: and their form of beauty gave the answer. And I turned myself unto myself, and said to myself, “Who art thou?” And I answered, “A man.” And behold, in me there present themselves to me soul, and body, one without, the other within. By which of these ought I to seek my God? I had sought Him in the body from earth to heaven, so far as I could send messengers, the beams of mine eyes. But the better is the inner, for to it as presiding and judging, all the bodily messengers reported the answers of heaven and earth, and all things therein, who said, “We are not God, but He made us.” These things did my inner man know by the ministry of the outer: I the inner knew them; I, the mind, through the senses of my body. I asked the whole frame of the world about my God; and it answered me, “I am not He, but He made me.

Is not this corporeal figure apparent to all whose senses are perfect? why then speaks it not the same to all? Animals small and great see it, but they cannot ask it: because no reason is set over their senses to judge on what they report. But men can ask, so that the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; but by love of them, they are made subject unto them: and subjects cannot judge. Nor yet do the creatures answer such as ask, unless they can judge; nor yet do they change their voice (i.e., their appearance), if one man only sees, another seeing asks, so as to appear one way to this man, another way to that, but appearing the same way to both, it is dumb to this, speaks to that; yea rather it speaks to all; but they only understand, who compare its voice received from without, with the truth within. For truth saith unto me, “Neither heaven, nor earth, nor any other body is thy God.” This, their very nature saith to him that seeth them: “They are a mass; a mass is less in a part thereof than in the whole.” Now to thee I speak, O my soul, thou art my better part: for thou quickenest the mass of my body, giving it life, which no body can give to a body: but thy God is even unto thee the Life of thy life.

CHAPTER VII

THAT GOD IS TO BE FOUND NEITHER FROM THE POWERS OF THE BODY NOR OF THE SOUL.

What then do I love, when I love my God? who is He above the head of my soul? By my very soul will I ascend to Him. I will pass beyond that power whereby I am united to my body, and fill its whole frame with life. Nor can I by that power find my God; for so horse and mule that have no understanding might find Him; seeing it is the same power, whereby even their bodies live. But another power there is, not that only whereby I animate, but that too whereby I imbue with sense my flesh, which the Lord hath framed for me: commanding the eye not to hear, and the ear not to see; but the eye, that through it I should see, and the ear, that through it I should hear; and to the other senses severally, what is to each their own peculiar seats and offices; which, being divers, I the one mind, do through them enact. I will pass beyond this power of mine also; for this also have the horse, and mule, for they also perceive through the body.

CHAPTER VIII

OF THE NATURE AND THE AMAZING POWER OF MEMORY.

I will pass then beyond this power of my nature also, rising by degrees unto Him Who made me. And I come to the fields and spacious palaces of my memory, where are the treasures of innumerable images, brought into it from things of all sorts perceived by the senses. There is stored up, whatsoever besides we think, either by enlarging or diminishing, or any other way varying those things which the sense hath come to; and whatever else hath been committed and laid up, which forgetfulness hath not yet swallowed up and buried. When I enter there, I require what I will to be brought forth, and something instantly comes; others must be longer sought after, which are fetched, as it were, out of some inner receptacle; others rush out in troops, and while one thing is desired and required, they start forth, as who should say, “Is it perchance I?” These I drive away with the hand of my heart, from the face of my remembrance; until what I wish for be unveiled, and appear in sight, out of its secret place. Other things come up readily, in unbroken order, as they are called for; those in front making way for the following; and as they make way, they are hidden from sight, ready to come when I will. All which takes place when I repeat a thing by heart.

There are all things preserved distinctly and under general heads, each having entered by its own avenue: as light, and all colours and forms of bodies by the eyes; by the ears all sorts of sounds; all smells by the avenue of the nostrils; all tastes by the mouth; and by the sensation of the whole body, what is hard or soft; hot or cold; or rugged; heavy or light; either outwardly or inwardly to the body. All these doth that great harbour of the memory receive in her numberless secret and inexpressible windings, to be forthcoming, and brought out at need; each entering in by his own gate, and there laid up. Nor yet do the things themselves enter in; only the images of the things perceived are there in readiness, for thought to recall. Which images, how they are formed, who can tell, though it doth plainly appear by which sense each hath been brought in and stored up? For even while I dwell in darkness and silence, in my memory I can produce colours, if I will, and discern betwixt black and white, and what others I will: nor yet do sounds break in and disturb the image drawn in by my eyes, which I am reviewing, though they also are there, lying dormant, and laid up, as it were, apart. For these too I call for, and forthwith they appear. And though my tongue be still, and my throat mute, so can I sing as much as I will; nor do those images of colours, which notwithstanding be there, intrude themselves and interrupt, when another store is called for, which flowed in by the ears. So the other things, piled in and up by the other senses, I recall at my pleasure. Yea, I discern the breath of lilies from violets, though smelling nothing; and I prefer honey to sweet wine, smooth before rugged, at the time neither tasting nor handling, but remembering only.

These things do I within, in that vast court of my memory. For there are present with me, heaven, earth, sea, and whatever I could think on therein, besides what I have forgotten. There also meet I with myself, and recall myself, and when, where, and what I have done, and under what feelings. There be all which I remember, either on my own experience, or other's credit. Out of the same store do I myself with the past continually combine fresh and fresh likenesses of things which I have experienced, or, from what I have experienced, have believed: and thence again infer future actions, events and hopes, and all these again I reflect on, as present. “I will do this or that,” say I to myself, in that great receptacle of my mind, stored with the images of things so many and so great, “and this or that will follow.” “O that this or that might be!” “God avert this or that!” So speak I to myself: and when I speak, the images of all I speak of are present, out of the same treasury of memory; nor would I speak of any thereof, were the images wanting.

Great is this force of memory, excessive great, O my God; a large and boundless chamber! who ever sounded the bottom thereof? yet is this a power of mine, and belongs unto my nature; nor do I myself comprehend all that I am. Therefore is the mind too strait to contain itself. And where should that be, which it containeth not of itself? Is it without it, and not within? how then doth it not comprehend itself? A wonderful admiration surprises me, amazement seizes me upon this. And men go abroad to admire the heights of mountains, the mighty billows of the sea, the broad tides of rivers, the compass of the ocean, and the circuits of the stars, and pass themselves by; nor wonder that when I spake of all these things, I did not see them with mine eyes, yet could not have spoken of them, unless I then actually saw the mountains, billows, rivers, stars which I had seen, and that ocean which I believe to be, inwardly in my memory, and that, with the same vast spaces between, as if I saw them abroad. Yet did not I by seeing draw them into myself, when with mine eyes I beheld them; nor are they themselves with me, but their images only. And I know by what sense of the body each was impressed upon me.

CHAPTER IX

NOT ONLY THINGS, BUT ALSO LITERATURE AND IMAGES, ARE TAKEN FROM THE MEMORY, AND ARE BROUGHT FORTH BY THE ACT OF REMEMBERING.

Yet not these alone does the unmeasurable capacity of my memory retain. Here also is all, learnt of the liberal sciences and as yet unforgotten; removed as it were to some inner place, which is yet no place: nor are they the images thereof, but the things themselves. For, what is literature, what the art of disputing, how many kinds of questions there be, whatsoever of these I know, in such manner exists in my memory, as that I have not taken in the image, and left out the thing, or that it should have sounded and passed away like a voice fixed on the ear by that impress, whereby it might be recalled, as if it sounded, when it no longer sounded; or as a smell while it passes and evaporates into air affects the sense of smell, whence it conveys into the memory an image of itself, which remembering, we renew, or as meat, which verily in the belly hath now no taste, and yet in the memory still in a manner tasteth; or as any thing which the body by touch perceiveth, and which when removed from us, the memory still conceives. For those things are not transmitted into the memory, but their images only are with an admirable swiftness caught up, and stored as it were in wondrous cabinets, and thence wonderfully by the act of remembering, brought forth.

CHAPTER X

LITERATURE IS NOT INTRODUCED TO THE MEMORY THROUGH THE SENSES, BUT IS BROUGHT FORTH FROM ITS MORE SECRET PLACES.

But now when I hear that there be three kinds of questions, “Whether the thing be? what it is? of what kind it is? I do indeed hold the images of the sounds of which those words be composed, and that those sounds, with a noise passed through the air, and now are not. But the things themselves which are signified by those sounds, I never reached with any sense of my body, nor ever discerned them otherwise than in my mind; yet in my memory have I laid up not their images, but themselves. Which how they entered into me, let them say if they can; for I have gone over all the avenues of my flesh, but cannot find by which they entered. For the eyes say, “If those images were coloured, we reported of them.” The ears say, “If they sound, we gave knowledge of them.” The nostrils say, “If they smell, they passed by us.” The taste says, “Unless they have a savour, ask me not.” The touch says, “If it have not size, I handled it not; if I handled it not, I gave no notice of it.” Whence and how entered these things into my memory? I know not how. For when I learned them, I gave not credit to another man’s mind, but recognised them in mine; and approving them for true, I commended them to it, laying them up as it were, whence I might bring them forth when I willed. In my heart then they were, even before I learned them, but in my memory they were not. Where then? or wherefore, when they were spoken, did I acknowledge them, and said, “So is it, it is true,” unless that they were already in the memory, but so thrown back and buried as it were in deeper recesses, that had not the suggestion of another drawn them forth I had perchance been unable to conceive of them?

CHAPTER XI

WHAT IT IS TO LEARN AND TO THINK.

Wherefore we find, that to learn these things whereof we imbibe nor the images by our senses, but perceive within by themselves, without images, as they are, is nothing else, but by conception, to receive, and by marking to take heed that those things which the memory did before contain at random and unarranged, be laid up at hand as it were in that same memory where before they lay unknown, scattered and neglected, and so readily occur to the mind familiarised to them. And how many things of this kind does my memory bear which have been already found out, and as I said, placed as it were at hand, which we are said to have learned and come to know which were I for some short space of time to cease to call to mind, they are again so buried, and glide back, as it were, into the deeper recesses, that they must again, as if new, he thought out thence, for other abode they have none: but they must be drawn together again, that they may be known; that is to say, they must as it were be collected together from their dispersion: whence the word “cogitation” is derived. For cogo (collect) and cogito (re-collect) have the same relation to each other as ago and agito, facio and factito. But the mind hath appropriated to itself this word (cogitation), so that, not what is “collected” any how, but what is “recollected,” i.e., brought together, in the mind, is properly said to be cogitated, or thought upon.

CHAPTER XII

ON THE RECOLLECTION OF THINGS MATHEMATICAL.

The memory containeth also reasons and laws innumerable of numbers and dimensions, none of which hath any bodily sense impressed; seeing they have neither colour, nor sound, nor taste, nor smell, nor touch. I have heard the sound of the words whereby when discussed they are denoted: but the sounds are other than the things. For the sounds are other in Greek than in Latin; but the things are neither Greek, nor Latin, nor any other language. I have seen the lines of architects, the very finest, like a spider’s thread; but those are still different, they are not the images of those lines which the eye of flesh showed me: he knoweth them, whosoever without any conception whatsoever of a body, recognises them within himself. I have perceived also the numbers of the things with which we number all the senses of my body; but those numbers wherewith we number are different, nor are they the images of these, and therefore they indeed are. Let him who seeth them not, deride me for saying these things, and I will pity him, while he derides me.

CHAPTER XIII

MEMORY RETAINS ALL THINGS.

All these things I remember, and how I learnt them I remember. Many things also most falsely objected against them have I heard, and remember; which though they be false, yet is it not false that I remember them; and I remember also that I have discerned betwixt those truths and these falsehoods objected to them. And I perceive that the present discerning of these things is different from remembering that I oftentimes discerned them, when I often thought upon them. I both remember then to have often understood these things; and what I now discern and understand, I lay up in my memory, that hereafter I may remember that I understand it now. So then I remember also to have remembered; as if hereafter I shall call to remembrance, that I have now been able to remember these things, by the force of memory shall I call it to remembrance.

CHAPTER XIV

CONCERNING THE MANNER IN WHICH JOY AND SADNESS MAY BE BROUGHT BACK TO THE MIND AND MEMORY.

The same memory contains also the affections of my mind, not in the same manner that my mind itself contains them, when it feels them; but far otherwise, according to a power of its own. For without rejoicing I remember myself to have joyed; and without sorrow do I recollect my past sorrow. And that I once feared, I review without fear; and without desire call to mind a past desire. Sometimes, on the contrary, with joy do I remember my fore-past sorrow, and with sorrow, joy. Which is not wonderful, as to the body; for mind is one thing, body another. If I therefore with joy remember some past pain of body, it is not so wonderful. But now seeing this very memory itself is mind (for when we give a thing in charge, to be kept in memory, we say, “See that you keep it in mind”; and when we forget, we say, “It did not come to my mind,” and, “It slipped out of my mind,” calling the memory itself the mind); this being so, how is it that when with joy I remember my past sorrow, the mind hath joy, the memory hath sorrow; the mind upon the joyfulness which is in it, is joyful, yet the memory upon the sadness which is in it, is not sad? Does the memory perchance not belong to the mind? Who will say so? The memory then is, as it were, the belly of the mind, and joy and sadness, like sweet and bitter food; which, when committed to the memory, are as it were passed into the belly, where they may be stowed, but cannot taste. Ridiculous it is to imagine these to be alike; and yet are they not utterly unlike.

But, behold, out of my memory I bring it, when I say there be four perturbations of the mind, desire, joy, fear, sorrow; and whatsoever I can dispute thereon, by dividing each into its subordinate species, and by defining it, in my memory find I what to say, and thence do I bring it: yet am I not disturbed by any of these perturbations, when by calling them to mind, I remember them; yea, and before I recalled and brought them back, they were there; and therefore could they, by recollection, thence be brought. Perchance, then, as meat is by chewing the cud brought up out of the belly, so by recollection these out of the memory. Why then does not the disputer, thus recollecting, taste in the mouth of his musing the sweetness of joy, or the bitterness of sorrow? Is the comparison unlike in this, because not in all respects like? For who would willingly speak thereof, if so oft as we name grief or fear, we should be compelled to be sad or fearful? And yet could we not speak of them, did we not find in our memory, not only the sounds of the names according to the images impressed by the senses of the body, but notions of the very things themselves which we never received by any avenue of the body, but which the mind itself perceiving by the experience of its own passions, committed to the memory, or the memory of itself retained, without being committed unto it.

CHAPTER XV

IN MEMORY THERE ARE ALSO IMAGES OF THINGS WHICH ARE ABSENT.

But whether by images or no, who can readily say? Thus, I name a stone, I name the sun, the things themselves not being present to my senses, but their images to my memory. I name a bodily pain, yet it is not present with me, when nothing aches: yet unless its image were present to my memory, I should not know what to say thereof, nor in discoursing discern pain from pleasure. I name bodily health; being sound in body, the thing itself is present with me; yet, unless its image also were present in my memory, I could by no means recall what the sound of this name should signify. Nor would the sick, when health were named, recognise what were spoken, unless the same image were by the force of memory retained, although the thing itself were absent from the body. I name numbers whereby we number; and not their images, but themselves are present in my memory. I name the image of the sun, and that image is present in my memory. For I recall not the image of its image, but the image itself is present to me, calling it to mind. I name memory, and I recognise what I name. And where do I recognise it, but in the memory itself? Is it also present to itself by its image, and not by itself?

CHAPTER XVI

THE PRIVATION OF MEMORY IS FORGETFULNESS.

What, when I name forgetfulness, and withal recognise what I name? whence should I recognise it, did I not remember it? I speak not of the sound of the name, but of the thing which it signifies: which if I had forgotten, I could not recognise what that sound signifies. When then I remember memory, memory itself is, through itself, present with itself: but when I remember forgetfulness, there are present both memory and forgetfulness; memory whereby I remember, forgetfulness which I remember. But what is forgetfulness, but the privation of memory? How then is it present that I remember it, since when present I cannot remember? But if what we remember we hold it in memory, yet, unless we did remember forgetfulness, we could never at the hearing of the name recognise the thing thereby signified, then forgetfulness is retained by memory. Present then it is, that we forget not, and being so, we forget. It is to be understood from this that forgetfulness when we remember it, is not present to the memory by itself but by its image: because if it were present by itself, it would not cause us to remember, but to forget. Who now shall search out this? who shall comprehend how it is?

Lord, I, truly, toil therein, yea and toil in myself; I am become a heavy soil requiring over much sweat of the brow. For we are not now searching out the regions of heaven, or measuring the distances of the stars, or enquiring the balancings of the earth. It is I myself who remember, I the mind. It is not so wonderful, if what I myself am not, be far from me. But what is nearer to me than myself? And to, the force of mine own memory is not understood by me; though I cannot so much as name myself without it. For what shall I say, when it is clear to me that I remember forgetfulness? Shall I say that that is not in my memory, which I remember? or shall I say that forgetfulness is for this purpose in my memory, that I might not forget? Both were most absurd. What third way is there? How can I say that the image of forgetfulness is retained by my memory, not forgetfulness itself, when I remember it? How could I say this either, seeing that when the image of any thing is impressed on the memory, the thing itself must needs be first present, whence that image may be impressed? For thus do I remember Carthage, thus all places where I have been, thus men's faces whom I have seen, and things reported by the other senses; thus the health or sickness of the body. For when these things were present, my memory received from them images, which being present with me, I might look on and bring back in my mind, when I remembered them in their absence. If then this forgetfulness is retained in the memory through its image, not through itself, then plainly itself was once present, that its image might be taken. But when it was present, how did it write its image in the memory, seeing that forgetfulness by its presence effaces even what it finds already noted? And yet, in whatever way, although that way be past conceiving and explaining, yet certain am I that I remember forgetfulness itself also, whereby what we remember is effaced.

CHAPTER XVII

GOD CANNOT BE ATTAINED UNTO BY THE POWER OF MEMORY, WHICH BEASTS AND BIRDS POSSESS.

Great is the power of memory, a fearful thing, O my God, a deep and boundless manifoldness; and this thing is the mind, and this am I myself. What am I then, O my God? What nature am I? A life various and manifold, and exceeding immense. Behold in the plains, and caves, and caverns of my memory, innumerable and innumerably full of innumerable kinds of things, either through images, as all bodies; or by actual presence, as the arts; or by certain notions or impressions, as the affections of the mind, which, even when the mind doth not feel, the memory retaineth, while yet whatsoever is in the memory is also in the mind- over all these do I run, I fly; I dive on this side and on that, as far as I can, and there is no end. So great is the force of memory, so great the force of life, even in the mortal life of man. What shall I do then, O Thou my true life, my God? I will pass even beyond this power of mine which is called memory: yea, I will pass beyond it, that I may approach unto Thee, O sweet Light. What sayest Thou to me? See, I am mounting up through my mind towards Thee who abidest above me. Yea, I now will pass beyond this power of mine which is called memory, desirous to arrive at Thee, whence Thou mayest be arrived at; and to cleave unto Thee, whence one may cleave unto Thee. For even beasts and birds have memory; else could they not return to their dens and nests, nor many other things they are used unto: nor indeed could they be used to any thing, but by memory. I will pass then beyond memory also, that I may arrive at Him who hath separated me from the four-footed beasts and made me wiser than the fowls of the air, I will pass beyond memory also, and where shall I find Thee, Thou truly good and certain sweetness? And where shall I find Thee? If I find Thee without my memory, then do I not retain Thee in my memory. And how shall I find Thee, if I remember Thee not?

CHAPTER XVIII

A THING WHEN LOST COULD NOT BE FOUND UNLESS IT WERE RETAINED IN THE MEMORY.

For the woman that had lost her groat, and sought it with a light; unless she had remembered it, she had never found it. For when it was found, whence should she know whether it were the same, unless she remembered it? I remember to have sought and found many a thing; and this I thereby know, that when I was seeking any of them, and was asked, “Is this it?” “Is that it?” so long said I “No,” until that were offered me which I sought. Which had I not remembered (whatever it were) though it were offered me, yet should I not find it, because I could not recognise it. And so it ever is, when we seek and find any lost thing. Notwithstanding, when any thing is by chance lost from the sight, not from the memory (as any visible body), yet its image is still retained within, and it is sought until it be restored to sight; and when it is found, it is recognised by the image which is within: nor do we say that we have found what was lost, unless we recognise it; nor can we recognise it, unless we remember it. But this was lost to the eyes, but retained in the memory.

CHAPTER XIX

WHAT IT IS TO REMEMBER.

But what when the memory itself loses any thing, as falls out when we forget and seek that we may recollect? Where in the end do we search, but in the memory itself? and there, if one thing be perchance offered instead of another, we reject it, until what we seek meets us; and when it doth, we say, “This is it”; which we should not unless we recognised it, nor recognise it unless we remembered it. Certainly then we had forgotten it. Or, had not the whole escaped us, but by the part whereof we had hold, was the lost part sought for; in that the memory felt that it did not carry on together all which it was wont, and maimed, as it were, by the curtailment of its ancient habit, demanded the restoration of what it missed? For instance, if we see or think of some one known to us, and having forgotten his name, try to recover it; whatever else occurs, connects itself not therewith; because it was not wont to be thought upon together with him, and therefore is rejected, until that present itself, whereon the knowledge reposes equably as its wonted object. And whence does that present itself, but out of the memory itself? for even when we recognise it, on being reminded by another, it is thence it comes. For we do not believe it as something new, but, upon recollection, allow what was named to be right. But were it utterly blotted out of the mind, we should not remember it, even when reminded. For we have not as yet utterly forgotten that, which we remember ourselves to have forgotten. What then we have utterly forgotten, though lost, we cannot even seek after.

CHAPTER XX

WE SHOULD NOT SEEK FOR GOD AND THE HAPPY LIFE UNLESS WE HAD KNOWN IT.

How then do I seek Thee, O Lord? For when I seek Thee, my God, I seek a happy life. I will seek Thee, that my soul may live. For my body liveth by my soul; and my soul by Thee. How then do I seek a happy life, seeing I have it not, until I can say, where I ought to say it, “It is enough”? How seek I it? By remembrance, as though I had forgotten it, remembering that I had forgotten it? Or, desiring to learn it as a thing unknown, either never having known, or so forgotten it, as not even to remember that I had forgotten it? is not a happy life what all will, and no one altogether wills it not? where have they known it, that they so will it? where seen it, that they so love it? Truly we have it, how, I know not. Yea, there is another way, wherein when one hath it, then is he happy; and there are, who are blessed, in hope. These have it in a lower kind, than they who have it in very deed; yet are they better off than such as are happy neither in deed nor in hope.

Yet even these, had they it not in some sort, would not so will to be happy, which that they do will, is most certain. They have known it then, I know not how, and so have it by some sort of knowledge, what, I know not, and am perplexed whether it be in the memory, which if it be, then we have been happy once; whether all severally, or in that man who first sinned, in whom also we all died, and from whom we are all born with misery, I now enquire not; but only, whether the happy life be in the memory? For neither should we love it, did we not know it. We hear the name, and we all confess that we desire the thing; for we are not delighted with the mere sound. For when a Greek hears it in Latin, he is not delighted, not knowing what is spoken; but we Latins are delighted, as would he too, if he heard it in Greek; because the thing itself is neither Greek nor Latin, which Greeks and Latins, and men of all other tongues, long for so earnestly. Known therefore it is to all, for they with one voice be asked, "would they be happy?" they would answer without doubt, "they would." And this could not be, unless the thing itself whereof it is the name were retained in their memory.

CHAPTER XXI

HOW A HAPPY LIFE MAY BE RETAINED IN THE MEMORY.

But is it so, as one remembers Carthage who hath seen it? No. For a happy life is not seen with the eye, because it is not a body. As we remember numbers then? No. For these, he that hath in his knowledge, seeks not further to attain unto; but a happy life we have in our knowledge, and therefore love it, and yet still desire to attain it, that we may be happy. As we remember eloquence then? No. For although upon hearing this name also, some call to mind the thing, who still are not yet eloquent, and many who desire to be so, whence it appears that it is in their knowledge; yet these have by their bodily senses observed others to be eloquent, and been delighted, and desire to be the like (though indeed they would not be delighted but for some inward knowledge thereof, nor wish to be the like, unless they were thus delighted); whereas a happy life, we do by no bodily sense experience in others. As then we remember joy? Perchance; for my joy I remember, even when sad, as a happy life, when unhappy; nor did I ever with bodily sense see, hear, smell, taste, or touch my joy; but I experienced it in my mind, when I rejoiced; and the knowledge of it clave to my memory, so that I can recall it with disgust sometimes, at others with longing, according to the nature of the things, wherein I remember myself to have joyed. For even from foul things have I been immersed in a sort of joy; which now recalling, I detest and execrate; otherwhiles in good and honest things, which I recall with longing, although perchance no longer present; and therefore with sadness I recall former joy.

Where then and when did I experience my happy life, that I should remember, and love, and long for it? Nor is it I alone, or some few besides, but we all would fain be happy; which, unless by some certain knowledge we knew, we should not with so certain a will desire. But how is this, that if two men be asked whether they would go to the wars, one, perchance, would answer that he would, the other, that he would not; but if they were asked whether they would be happy, both would instantly without any doubting say they would; and for no other reason would the one go to the wars, and the other not, but to be happy. Is it perchance that as one looks for his joy in this thing, another in that, all agree in their desire of being happy, as they would (if they were asked) that they wished to have joy, and this joy they call a happy life? Although then one obtains this joy by one means, another by another, all have one end, which they strive to attain, namely, joy. Which being a thing which all must say they have experienced, it is therefore found in the memory, and recognised whenever the name of a happy life is mentioned.

CHAPTER XXII

A HAPPY LIFE IS TO REJOICE IN GOD, AND FOR GOD.

Far be it, Lord, far be it from the heart of Thy servant who here confesseth unto Thee, far be it, that, be the joy what it may, I should therefore think myself happy. For there is a joy which is not given to the ungodly, but to those who love Thee for Thine own sake, whose joy Thou Thyself art. And this is the happy life, to rejoice to Thee, of Thee, for Thee; this is it, and there is no other. For they who think there is another, pursue some other and not the true joy. Yet is not their will turned away from some semblance of joy.

CHAPTER XXIII

ALL WISH TO REJOICE IN THE TRUTH.

It is not certain then that all wish to be happy, inasmuch as they who wish not to joy in Thee, which is the only happy life, do not truly desire the happy life. Or do all men desire this, but because the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, that they cannot do what they would, they fall upon that which they can, and are content therewith; because, what they are not able to do, they do not will so strongly as would suffice to make them able? For I ask any one, had he rather joy in truth, or in falsehood? They will as little hesitate to say “in the truth,” as to say “that they desire to be happy,” for a happy life is joy in the truth: for this is a joying in Thee, Who art the Truth, O God my light, health of my countenance, my God. This is the happy life which all desire; this life which alone is happy, all desire; to joy in the truth all desire. I have met with many that would deceive; who would be deceived, no one. Where then did they know this happy life, save where they know the truth also? For they love it also, since they would not be deceived. And when they love a happy life, which is no other than joying in the truth, then also do they love the truth; which yet they would not love, were there not some notice of it in their memory. Why then joy they not in it? why are they not happy? because they are more strongly taken up with other things which have more power to make them miserable, than that which they so faintly remember to make them happy. For there is yet a little light in men; let them walk, let them walk, that the darkness overtake them not.

But why doth “truth generate hatred,” and the man of Thine, preaching the truth, become an enemy to them? whereas a happy life is loved, which is nothing else but joying in the truth; unless that truth is in that kind loved, that they who love anything else would gladly have that which they love to be the truth: and because they would not be deceived, would not be convinced that they are so? Therefore do they hate the truth for that thing’s sake which they loved instead of the truth. They love truth when she enlightens, they hate her when she reproves. For since they would not be deceived, and would deceive, they love her when she discovers herself unto them, and hate her when she discovers them. Whence she shall so repay them, that they who would not be made manifest by her, she both against their will makes manifest, and herself becometh not manifest unto them. Thus, thus, yea thus doth the mind of man, thus blind and sick, foul and ill-favoured, wish to be hidden, but that aught should be hidden from it, it wills not. But the contrary is requited it, that itself should not be hidden from the Truth; but the Truth is hid from it. Yet even thus miserable, it had rather joy in truths than in falsehoods. Happy then will it be, when, no distraction interposing, it shall joy in that only Truth, by Whom all things are true.

CHAPTER XXIV

HE WHO FINDS TRUTH, FINDS GOD.

See what a space I have gone over in my memory seeking Thee, O Lord; and I have not found Thee, without it. Nor have I found any thing concerning Thee, but what I have kept in memory, ever since I learnt Thee. For since I learnt Thee, I have not forgotten Thee. For where I found Truth, there found I my God, the Truth itself; which since I learnt, I have not forgotten. Since then I learnt Thee, Thou residest in my memory; and there do I find Thee, when I call Thee to remembrance, and delight in Thee. These be my holy delights, which Thou hast given me in Thy mercy, having regard to my poverty.

CHAPTER XXV

HE IS GLAD THAT GOD DWELLS IN HIS MEMORY.

But where in my memory residest Thou, O Lord, where residest Thou there? what manner of lodging hast Thou framed for Thee? what manner of sanctuary hast Thou builded for Thee? Thou hast given this honour to my memory, to reside in it; but in what quarter of it Thou residest, that am I considering. For in thinking on Thee, I passed beyond such parts of it as the beasts also have, for I found Thee not there among the images of corporeal things: and I came to those parts to which I committed the affections of my mind, nor found Thee there. And I entered into the very seat of my mind (which it hath in my memory, inasmuch as the mind remembers itself also), neither wert Thou there: for as Thou art not a corporeal image, nor the affection of a living being (as when we rejoice, condole, desire, fear, remember, forget, or the like); so neither art Thou the mind itself; because

Thou art the Lord God of the mind; and all these are changed, but Thou remainest unchangeable over all, and yet hast vouchsafed to dwell in my memory, since I learnt Thee. And why seek I now in what place thereof Thou dwellest, as if there were places therein? Sure I am, that in it Thou dwellest, since I have remembered Thee ever since I learnt Thee, and there I find Thee, when I call Thee to remembrance.

CHAPTER XXVI

GOD EVERYWHERE ANSWERS THOSE WHO TAKE COUNSEL OF HIM.

Where then did I find Thee, that I might learn Thee? For in my memory Thou wert not, before I learned Thee. Where then did I find Thee, that I might learn Thee, but in Thee above me? Place there is none; we go backward and forward, and there is no place. Every where, O Truth, dost Thou give audience to all who ask counsel of Thee, and at once answerest all, though on manifold matters they ask Thy counsel. Clearly dost Thou answer, though all do not clearly hear. All consult Thee on what they will, though they hear not always what they will. He is Thy best servant who looks not so much to hear that from Thee which himself willeth, as rather to will that, which from Thee he heareth.

CHAPTER XXVII

HE GRIEVES THAT HE WAS SO LONG WITHOUT GOD.

Too late loved I Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! too late I loved Thee! And behold, Thou wert within, and I abroad, and there I searched for Thee; deformed I, plunging amid those fair forms which Thou hadst made. Thou wert with me, but I was not with Thee. Things held me far from Thee, which, unless they were in Thee, were not at all. Thou calledst, and shoutedst, and burstest my deafness. Thou flashedst, shonest, and scatteredst my blindness. Thou breathedst odours, and I drew in breath and panted for Thee. I tasted, and hunger and thirst. Thou touchedst me, and I burned for Thy peace.

CHAPTER XXVIII

ON THE MISERY OF HUMAN LIFE.

When I shall with my whole self cleave to Thee, I shall no where have sorrow or labour; and my life shall wholly live, as wholly full of Thee. But now since whom Thou fillest, Thou liftest up, because I am not full of Thee I am a burden to myself. Lamentable joys strive with joyous sorrows: and on which side is the victory, I know not. Woe is me! Lord, have pity on me. My evil sorrows strive with my good joys; and on which side is the victory, I know not. Woe is me! Lord, have pity on me. Woe is me! lo! I hide not my wounds; Thou art the Physician, I the sick; Thou merciful, I miserable. Is not the life of man upon earth all trial? Who wishes for troubles and difficulties? Thou commandest them to be endured, not to be loved. No man loves what he endures, though he love to endure. For though he rejoices that he endures, he had rather there were nothing for him to endure. In adversity I long for prosperity, in prosperity I fear adversity. What middle place is there betwixt these two, where the life of man is not all trial? Woe to the prosperities of the world, once and again, through fear of adversity, and corruption of joy! Woe to the adversities of the world, once and again, and the third time, from the longing for prosperity, and because adversity itself is a hard thing, and lest it shatter endurance. Is not the life of man upon earth all trial: without any interval?

CHAPTER XXIX

ALL HOPE IS IN THE MERCY OF GOD.

And all my hope is no where but in Thy exceeding great mercy. Give what Thou enjoinest, and enjoin what Thou wilt. Thou enjoinest us continency; and when I knew, saith one, that no man can be continent, unless God give it, this also was a part of wisdom to know whose gift she is. By continency verily are we bound up and brought back into One, whence we were dissipated into many. For too little doth he love Thee, who loves any thing with Thee, which he loveth not for Thee. O love, who ever burnest and never consumest! O charity, my God, kindle me. Thou enjoinest continency: give me what Thou enjoinest, and enjoin what Thou wilt.

CHAPTER XXX

OF THE PERVERSE IMAGES OF DREAMS, WHICH HE WISHES TO HAVE TAKEN AWAY.

Verily Thou enjoinest me continency from the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the ambition of the world. Thou enjoinest continency from concubinage; and for wedlock itself, Thou hast counselled something better than what Thou hast permitted. And since Thou gavest it, it was done, even before I became a dispenser of Thy Sacrament. But there yet live in my memory (whereof I have much spoken) the images of such things as my ill custom there fixed; which haunt me, strengthless when I am awake: but in sleep, not only so as to give pleasure, but even to obtain assent, and what is very like reality. Yea, so far prevails the illusion of the image, in my soul and in my flesh, that, when asleep, false visions persuade to that which when waking, the true cannot. Am I not then myself, O Lord my God? And yet there is so much difference betwixt myself and myself, within that moment wherein I pass from waking to sleeping, or return from sleeping to waking! Where is reason then, which, awake, resisteth such suggestions? And should the things themselves be urged on it, it remaineth unshaken. Is it clasped up with the eyes? is it lulled asleep with the senses of the body? And whence is it that often even in sleep we resist, and mindful of our purpose, and abiding most chastely in it, yield no assent to such enticements? And yet so much difference there is, that when it happeneth otherwise, upon waking we return to peace of conscience: and by this very difference discover that we did not, what yet we be sorry that in some way it was done in us.

Art Thou not mighty, God Almighty, so as to heal all the diseases of my soul, and by Thy more abundant grace to quench even the impure motions of my sleep! Thou wilt increase, Lord, Thy gifts more and more in me, that my soul may follow me to Thee, disentangled from the birdlime of concupiscence; that it rebel not against itself, and even in dreams not only not, through images of sense, commit those debasing corruptions, even to pollution of the flesh, but not even to consent unto them. For that nothing of this sort should have, over the pure affections even of a sleeper, the very least influence, not even such as a thought would restrain, -to work this, not only during life, but even at my present age, is not hard for the Almighty, Who art able to do above all that we ask or think. But what I yet am in this kind of my evil, have I confessed unto my good Lord; rejoicing with trembling, in that which Thou hast given me, and bemoaning that wherein I am still imperfect; hoping that Thou wilt perfect Thy mercies in me, even to perfect peace, which my outward and inward man shall have with Thee, when death shall be swallowed up in victory.

CHAPTER XXXI

ABOUT TO SPEAK OF THE TEMPTATIONS OF THE LUST OF THE FLESH, HE FIRST COMPLAINS OF THE LUST OF EATING AND DRINKING.

There is another evil of the day, which I would were sufficient for it. For by eating and drinking we repair the daily decays of our body, until Thou destroy both belly and meat, when Thou shalt slay my emptiness with a wonderful fulness, and clothe this incorruptible with an eternal incorruption. But now the necessity is sweet unto me, against which sweetness I fight, that I be not taken captive; and carry on a daily war by fastings; often bringing my body into subjection; and my pains are removed by pleasure. For hunger and thirst are in a manner pains; they burn and kill like a fever, unless the medicine of nourishments come to our aid. Which since it is at hand through the consolations of Thy gifts, with which land, and water, and air serve our weakness, our calamity is termed gratification.

This hast Thou taught me, that I should set myself to take food as physic. But while I am passing from the discomfort of emptiness to the content of replenishing, in the very passage the snare of concupiscence besets me. For that passing, is pleasure, nor is there any other way to pass thither, whither we needs must pass. And health being the cause of eating and drinking, there joineth itself as an attendant a dangerous pleasure, which mostly endeavours to go before it, so that I may for her sake do what I say I do, or wish to do, for health’s sake. Nor have each the same measure; for what is enough for health, is too little for pleasure. And oft it is uncertain, whether it be the necessary care of the body which is yet asking for sustenance, or whether a voluptuous deceivableness of greediness is proffering its services. In this uncertainty the unhappy soul rejoiceth, and therein prepares an excuse to shield itself, glad that it appeareth not what sufficeth for the moderation of health, that under the cloak of health, it may disguise the matter of gratification. These temptations I daily endeavour to resist, and I call on Thy right hand, and to Thee do I refer my perplexities; because I have as yet no settled counsel herein.

I hear the voice of my God commanding, Let not your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness. Drunkenness is far from me; Thou wilt have mercy, that it come not near me. But full feeding sometimes creepeth upon Thy servant; Thou wilt have mercy, that it may be far from me. For no one can be continent unless Thou give it. Many things Thou givest us, praying for them; and what good soever we have received before we prayed, from Thee we received it; yea to the end we might afterwards know this, did we before receive it. Drunkard was I never, but drunkards have I known made sober by Thee. From Thee then it was, that they who never were such, should not so be, as from Thee it was, that they who have been, should not ever so be; and from Thee it was, that both might know from Whom it was. I heard another voice of Thine, Go not after thy lusts, and from thy pleasure turn away. Yea by Thy favour have I heard that which I have much loved; neither if we eat, shall we abound; neither if we eat not, shall we lack; which is to say, neither shall the one make me plenteous, nor the other miserable. I heard also another, for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content; I know how to abound, and how to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me. Behold a soldier of the heavenly camp, not the dust which we are. But remember, Lord, that we are dust, and that of dust Thou hast made man; and he was lost and is found. Nor could he of himself do this, because he whom I so loved, saying this through the in-breathing of Thy inspiration, was of the same dust. I can do all things (saith he) through Him that strengtheneth me. Strengthen me, that I can. Give what Thou enjoinest, and enjoin what Thou wilt. He confesses to have received, and when he glorieth, in the Lord he glorieth. Another have I heard begging that he might receive. Take from me (saith he) the desires of the belly; whence it appeareth, O my holy God, that Thou givest, when that is done which Thou commandest to be done.

Thou hast taught me, good Father, that to the pure, all things are pure; but that it is evil unto the man that eateth with offence; and, that every creature of Thine is good, and nothing to be refused, which is received with thanksgiving; and that meat commendeth us not to God; and, that no man should judge us in meat or drink; and, that he which eateth, let him not despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth. These things have I learned, thanks be to Thee, praise to Thee, my God, my Master, knocking at my ears, enlightening my heart; deliver me out of all temptation. I fear not uncleanness of meat, but the uncleanness of lusting. I know; that Noah was permitted to eat all kind of flesh that was good for food; that Elijah was fed with flesh; that endued with an admirable abstinence, was not polluted by feeding on living creatures, locusts. I know also that Esau was deceived by lusting for lentiles; and that David blamed himself for desiring a draught of water; and that our King was tempted, not concerning flesh, but bread. And therefore the people in the wilderness also deserved to be reproved, not for desiring flesh, but because, in the desire of food, they murmured against the Lord.

Placed then amid these temptations, I strive daily against concupiscence in eating and drinking. For it is not of such nature that I can settle on cutting it off once for all, and never touching it afterward, as I could of concubinage. The bridle of the throat then is to be held attempered between slackness and stiffness. And who is he, O Lord, who is not some whit transported beyond the limits of necessity? whoever he is, he is a great one; let him make Thy Name great. But I am not such, for I am a sinful man. Yet do I too magnify Thy name; and He maketh intercession to Thee for my sins who hath overcome the world; numbering me among the weak members of His body; because Thine eyes have seen that of Him which is imperfect, and in Thy book shall all be written.

CHAPTER XXXII

OF THE CHARMS OF PERFUMES WHICH ARE MORE EASILY OVERCOME.

With the allurements of smells, I am not much concerned. When absent, I do not miss them; when present, I do not refuse them; yet ever ready to be without them. So I seem to myself; perchance I am deceived. For that also is a mournful darkness whereby my abilities within me are hidden from me; so that my mind making enquiry into herself of her own powers, ventures not readily to believe herself; because even what is in it is mostly hidden, unless experience reveal it. And no one ought to be secure in that life, the whole whereof is called a trial, that he who hath been capable of worse to be made better, may not likewise of better be made worse. Our only hope, only confidence, only assured promise is Thy mercy.

CHAPTER XXXIII

HE OVERCAME THE PLEASURES OF THE EAR, ALTHOUGH IN THE CHURCH HE FREQUENTLY DELIGHTED IN THE SONG, NOT IN THE THING SUNG.

The delights of the ear had more firmly entangled and subdued me; but Thou didst loosen and free me. Now, in those melodies which Thy words breathe soul into, when sung with a sweet and attuned voice, I do a little repose; yet not so as to be held thereby, but that I can disengage myself when I will. But with the words which are their life and whereby they find admission into me, themselves seek in my affections a place of some estimation, and I can scarcely assign them one suitable. For at one time I seem to myself to give them more honour than is seemly, feeling our minds to be more holily and fervently raised unto a flame of devotion, by the holy words themselves when thus sung, than when not; and that the several affections of our spirit, by a sweet variety, have their own proper measures in the voice and singing, by some hidden correspondence wherewith they are stirred up. But this contentment of the flesh, to which the soul must not be given over to be enervated, doth oft beguile me, the sense not so waiting upon reason as patiently to follow her; but having been admitted merely for her sake, it strives even to run before her, and lead her. Thus in these things I unawares sin, but afterwards am aware of it.

At other times, shunning over-anxiously this very deception, I err in too great strictness; and sometimes to that degree, as to wish the whole melody of sweet music which is used to David’s Psalter, banished from my ears, and the Church’s too; and that mode seems to me safer, which I remember to have been often told me of Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, who made the reader of the psalm utter it with so slight inflection of voice, that it was nearer speaking than singing. Yet again, when I remember the tears I shed at the Psalmody of Thy Church, in the beginning of my recovered faith; and how at this time I am moved, not with the singing, but with the things sung, when they are sung with a clear voice and modulation most suitable, I acknowledge the great use of this institution. Thus I fluctuate between peril of pleasure and approved wholesomeness; inclined the rather (though not as pronouncing an irrevocable opinion) to approve of the usage of singing in the church; that so by the delight of the ears the weaker minds may rise to the feeling of devotion. Yet when it befalls me to be more moved with the voice than the words sung, I confess to have sinned penally, and then had rather not hear music. See now my state; weep with me, and weep for me, ye, whoso regulate your feelings within, as that good action ensues. For you who do not act, these things touch not you. But Thou, O Lord my God, hearken; behold, and see, and have mercy and heal me, Thou, in whose presence I have become a problem to myself; and that is my infirmity.

CHAPTER XXXIV

OF THE VERY DANGEROUS ALLUREMENTS OF THE EYES; ON ACCOUNT OF BEAUTY OF FORM, GOD, THE CREATOR, IS TO BE PRAISED.

There remains the pleasure of these eyes of my flesh, on which to make my confessions in the hearing of the ears of Thy temple, those brotherly and devout ears; and so to conclude the temptations of the lust of the flesh, which yet assail me, groaning earnestly, and desiring to be clothed upon with my house from heaven. The eyes love fair and varied forms, and bright and soft colours. Let not these occupy my soul; let God rather occupy it, who made these things, very good indeed, yet is He my good, not they. And these affect me, waking, the whole day, nor is any rest given me from them, as there is from musical, sometimes in silence, from all voices. For this queen of colours, the light, bathing all which we behold, wherever I am through the day, gliding by me in varied forms, soothes me when engaged on other things, and not observing it. And so strongly doth it entwine itself, that if it be suddenly withdrawn, it is with longing sought for, and if absent long, saddeneth the mind.

O Thou Light, which Tobias saw, when, these eyes closed, he taught his son the way of life; and himself went before with the feet of charity, never swerving. Or which Isaac saw, when his fleshly eyes being heavy and closed by old age, it was vouchsafed him, not knowingly, to bless his sons, but by blessing to know them. Or which Jacob saw, when he also, blind through great age, with illumined heart, in the persons of his sons shed light on the different races of the future people, in them foresignified; and laid his hands, mystically crossed, upon his grandchildren by Joseph, not as their father by his outward eye corrected them, but as himself inwardly discerned. This is the light, it is one, and all are one, who see and love it. But that corporeal light whereof I spake, it seasoneth the life of this world for her blind lovers, with an enticing and dangerous sweetness. But they who know how to praise Thee for it, “O all-creating Lord,” take it up in Thy hymns, and are not taken up with it in their sleep. Such would I be. These seductions of the eyes I resist, lest my feet wherewith I walk upon Thy way be ensnared; and I lift up mine invisible eyes to Thee, that Thou wouldest pluck my feet out of the snare. Thou dost ever and anon pluck them out, for they are ensnared. Thou ceasest not to pluck them out, while I often entangle myself in the snares on all sides laid; because Thou that keepest Israel shalt neither slumber nor sleep.

What innumerable toys, made by divers arts and manufactures, in our apparel, shoes, utensils and all sorts of works, in pictures also and divers images, and these far exceeding all necessary and moderate use and all pious meaning, have men added to tempt their own eyes withal; outwardly following what themselves make, inwardly forsaking Him by whom themselves were made, and destroying that which themselves have been made! But I, my God and my Glory, do hence also sing a hymn to Thee, and do consecrate praise to Him who consecrateth me, because those beautiful patterns which through men’s souls are conveyed into their cunning hands, come from that Beauty, which is above our souls, which my soul day and night sigheth after. But the framers and followers of the outward beauties derive thence the rule of judging of them, but not of using them. And He is there, though they perceive Him not, that so they might not wander, but keep their strength for Thee, and not scatter it abroad upon pleasurable weariness. And I, though I speak and see this, entangle my steps with these outward beauties; but Thou pluckest me out, O Lord, Thou pluckest me out; because Thy loving-kindness is before my eyes. For I am taken miserably, and Thou pluckest me out mercifully; sometimes not perceiving it, when I had but lightly lighted upon them; otherwhiles with pain, because I had stuck fast in them.

CHAPTER XXXV

ANOTHER KIND OF TEMPTATION IS CURIOSITY, WHICH IS STIMULATED BY THE LUST OF THE EYES.

To this is added another form of temptation more manifoldly dangerous. For besides that concupiscence of the flesh which consisteth in the delight of all senses and pleasures, wherein its slaves, who go far from Thee, waste and perish, the soul hath, through the same senses of the body, a certain vain and curious desire, veiled under the title of knowledge and learning, not of delighting in the flesh, but of making experiments through the flesh. The seat whereof being in the appetite of knowledge, and sight being the sense chiefly used for attaining knowledge, it is in Divine language called The lust of the eyes. For, to see, belongeth properly to the eyes; yet we use this word of the other senses also, when we employ them in seeking knowledge. For we do not say, hark how it flashes, or smell how it glows, or taste how it shines, or feel how it gleams; for all these are said to be seen. And yet we say not only, see how it shineth, which the eyes alone can perceive; but also, see how it soundeth, see how it smelleth, see how it tasteth, see how hard it is. And so the general experience of the senses, as was said, is called The lust of the eyes, because the office of seeing, wherein the eyes hold the prerogative, the other senses by way of similitude take to themselves, when they make search after any knowledge.

But by this may more evidently be discerned, wherein pleasure and wherein curiosity is the object of the senses; for pleasure seeketh objects beautiful, melodious, fragrant, savoury, soft; but curiosity, for trial's sake, the contrary as well, not for the sake of suffering annoyance, but out of the lust of making trial and knowing them. For what pleasure hath it, to see in a mangled carcase what will make you shudder? and yet if it be lying near, they flock thither, to be made sad, and to turn pale. Even in sleep they are afraid to see it. As if when awake, any one forced them to see it, or any report of its beauty drew them thither! Thus also in the other senses, which it were long to go through. From this disease of curiosity are all those strange sights exhibited in the theatre. Hence men go on to search out the hidden powers of nature (which is besides our end), which to know profits not, and wherein men desire nothing but to know. Hence also, if with that same end of perverted knowledge magical arts be enquired by. Hence also in religion itself, is God tempted, when signs and wonders are demanded of Him, not desired for any good end, but merely to make trial of.

In this so vast wilderness, full of snares and dangers, behold many of them I have cut off, and thrust out of my heart, as Thou hast given me, O God of my salvation. And yet when dare I say, since so many things of this kind buzz on all sides about our daily life- when dare I say that nothing of this sort engages my attention, or causes in me an idle interest? True, the theatres do not now carry me away, nor care I to know the courses of the stars, nor did my soul ever consult ghosts departed; all sacrilegious mysteries I detest. From Thee, O Lord my God, to whom I owe humble and single-hearted service, by what artifices and suggestions doth the enemy deal with me to desire some sign! But I beseech Thee by our King, and by our pure and holy country, Jerusalem, that as any consenting thereto is far from me, so may it ever be further and further. But when I pray Thee for the salvation of any, my end and intention is far different. Thou givest and wilt give me to follow Thee willingly, doing what Thou wilt.

Notwithstanding, in how many most petty and contemptible things is our curiosity daily tempted, and how often we give way, who can recount? How often do we begin as if we were tolerating people telling vain stories, lest we offend the weak; then by degrees we take interest therein! I go not now to the circus to see a dog coursing a hare; but in the field, if passing, that coursing peradventure will distract me even from some weighty thought, and draw me after it: not that I turn aside the body of my beast, yet still incline my mind thither. And unless Thou, having made me see my infirmity didst speedily admonish me either through the sight itself by some contemplation to rise towards Thee, or altogether to despise and pass it by, I dully stand fixed therein. What, when sitting at home, a lizard catching flies, or a spider entangling them rushing into her nets, oft-times takes my attention? Is the thing different, because they are but small creatures? I go on from them to praise Thee the wonderful Creator and Orderer of all, but this does not first draw my attention. It is one thing to rise quickly, another not to fall. And of such things is my life full; and my one hope is Thy wonderful great mercy. For when our heart becomes the receptacle of such things, and is overcharged with throngs of this abundant vanity, then are our prayers also thereby often interrupted and distracted, and whilst in Thy presence we direct the voice of our heart to Thine ears, this so great concern is broken off by the rushing in of I know not what idle thoughts. Shall we then account this also among things of slight concernment, or shall aught bring us back to hope, save Thy complete mercy, since Thou hast begun to change us?

CHAPTER XXXVI

A THIRD KIND IS “PRIDE,” WHICH IS PLEASING TO MAN, NOT TO GOD.

And Thou knowest how far Thou hast already changed me, who first healedst me of the lust of vindicating myself, that so Thou mightest forgive all the rest of my iniquities, and heal all my infirmities, and redeem life from corruption, and crown me with mercy and pity, and satisfy my desire with good things: who didst curb my pride with Thy fear, and tame my neck to Thy yoke. And now I bear it and it is light unto me, because so hast Thou promised, and hast made it; and verily so it was, and I knew it not, when I feared to take it.

But, O Lord, Thou alone Lord without pride, because Thou art the only true Lord, who hast no lord; hath this third kind of temptation also ceased from me, or can it cease through this whole life? To wish, namely, to be feared and loved of men, for no other end, but that we may have a joy therein which is no joy? A miserable life this and a foul boastfulness! Hence especially it comes that men do neither purely love nor fear Thee. And therefore dost Thou resist the proud, and givest grace to the humble: yea, Thou thunderest down upon the ambitions of the world, and the foundations of the mountains tremble. Because now certain offices of human society make it necessary to be loved and feared of men, the adversary of our true blessedness layeth hard at us, every where spreading his snares of “well-done, well-done”; that greedily catching at them, we may be taken unawares, and sever our joy from Thy truth, and set it in the deceivingness of men; and be pleased at being loved and feared, not for Thy sake, but in Thy stead: and thus having been made like him, he may have them for his own, not in the bands of charity, but in the bonds of punishment: who purposed to set his throne in the north, that dark and chilled they might serve him, pervertedly and crookedly imitating Thee. But we, O Lord, behold we are Thy little flock; possess us as Thine, stretch Thy wings over us, and let us fly under them. Be Thou our glory; let us be loved for Thee, and Thy word feared in us. Who would be praised of men when Thou blamest, will not be defended of men when Thou judgest; nor delivered when Thou condemnest. But when- not the sinner is praised in the desires of his soul, nor he blessed who doth ungodlily, but- a man is praised for some gift which Thou hast given him, and he rejoices more at the praise for himself than that he hath the gift for which he is praised, he also is praised, while Thou dispraisest; better is he who praised than he who is praised. For the one took pleasure in the gift of God in man; the other was better pleased with the gift of man, than of God.

CHAPTER XXXVII

HE IS FORCIBLY GOADED ON BY THE LOVE OF PRAISE.

By these temptations we are assailed daily, O Lord; without ceasing are we assailed. Our daily furnace is the tongue of men. And in this way also Thou commandest us continence. Give what Thou enjoinest, and enjoin what Thou wilt. Thou knowest on this matter the groans of my heart, and the floods of mine eyes. For I cannot learn how far I am more cleansed from this plague, and I much fear my secret sins, which Thine eyes know, mine do not. For in other kinds of temptations I have some sort of means of examining myself; in this, scarce any. For, in refraining my mind from the pleasures of the flesh and idle curiosity, I see how much I have attained to, when I do without them; foregoing, or not having them. For then I ask myself how much more or less troublesome it is to me not to have them? Then, riches, which are desired, that they may serve to some one or two or all of the three concupiscences, if the soul cannot discern whether, when it hath them, it despiseth them, they may be cast aside, that so it may prove itself. But to be without praise, and therein essay our powers, must we live ill, yea so abandonedly and atrociously, that no one should know without detesting us? What greater madness can be said or thought of? But if praise useth and ought to accompany a good life and good works, we ought as little to forego its company, as good life itself. Yet I know not whether I can well or ill be without anything, unless it be absent.

What then do I confess unto Thee in this kind of temptation, O Lord? What, but that I am delighted with praise, but with truth itself, more than with praise? For were it proposed to me, whether I would, being frenzied in error on all things, be praised by all men, or being consistent and most settled in the truth be blamed by all, I see which I should choose. Yet fain would I that the approbation of another should not even increase my joy for any good in me. Yet I own, it doth increase it, and not so only, but dispraise doth diminish it. And when I am troubled at this my misery, an excuse occurs to me, which of what value it is, Thou God knowest, for it leaves me uncertain. For since Thou hast commanded us not continency alone, that is, from what things to refrain our love, but righteousness also, that is, whereon to bestow it, and hast willed us to love not Thee only, but our neighbour also; often, when pleased with intelligent praise, I seem to myself to be pleased with the proficiency or towardliness of my neighbour, or to be grieved for evil in him, when I hear him dispraise either what he understands not, or is good. For sometimes I am grieved at my own praise, either when those things be praised in me, in which I mislike myself, or even lesser and slight goods are more esteemed than they ought. But again how know I whether I am therefore thus affected, because I would not have him who praiseth me differ from me about myself; not as being influenced by concern for him, but because those same good things which please me in myself, please me more when they please another also? For some how I am not praised when my judgment of myself is not praised; forasmuch as either those things are praised, which displease me; or those more, which please me less. Am I then doubtful of myself in this matter?

Behold, in Thee, O Truth, I see that I ought not to be moved at my own praises, for my own sake, but for the good of my neighbour. And whether it be so with me, I know not. For herein I know less of myself than of Thee. I beseech now, O my God, discover to me myself also, that I may confess unto my brethren, who are to pray for me, wherein I find myself maimed. Let me examine myself again more diligently. If in my praise I am moved with the good of my neighbour, why am I less moved if another be unjustly dispraised than if it be myself? Why am I more stung by reproach cast upon myself, than at that cast upon another, with the same injustice, before me? Know I not this also? or is it at last that I deceive myself, and do not the truth before Thee in my heart and tongue? This madness put far from me, O Lord, lest mine own mouth be to me the sinner’s oil to make fat my head. I am poor and needy; yet best, while in hidden groanings I displease myself, and seek Thy mercy, until what is lacking in my defective state be renewed and perfected, on to that peace which the eye of the proud knoweth not.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

VAIN-GLORY IS THE HIGHEST DANGER.

Yet the word which cometh out of the mouth, and deeds known to men, bring with them a most dangerous temptation through the love of praise: which, to establish a certain excellency of our own, solicits and collects men’s suffrages. It tempts, even when it is reproved by myself in myself, on the very ground that it is reproved; and often glories more vainly of the very contempt of vain-glory; and so it is no longer contempt of vain-glory, whereof it glories; for it doth not contemn when it glorieth.

CHAPTER XXXIX

OF THE VICE OF THOSE WHO, WHILE PLEASING THEMSELVES, DISPLEASE GOD.

Within also, within is another evil, arising out of a like temptation; whereby men become vain, pleasing themselves in themselves, though they please not, or displease or care not to please others. But pleasing themselves, they much displease Thee, not only taking pleasure in things not good, as if good, but in Thy good things, as though their own; or even if as Thine, yet as though for their own merits; or even if as though from Thy grace, yet not with brotherly rejoicing, but envying that grace to others. In all these and the like perils and travails, Thou seest the trembling of my heart; and I rather feel my wounds to be cured by Thee, than not inflicted by me.

CHAPTER XL

THE ONLY SAFE RESTING-PLACE FOR THE SOUL IS TO BE FOUND IN GOD.

Where hast Thou not walked with me, O Truth, teaching me what to beware, and what to desire; when I referred to Thee what I could discover here below, and consulted Thee? With my outward senses, as I might, I surveyed the world, and observed the life, which my body hath from me, and these my senses. Thence entered I the recesses of my memory, those manifold and spacious chambers, wonderfully furnished with innumerable stores; and I considered, and stood aghast; being able to discern nothing of these things without Thee, and finding none of them to be Thee. Nor was I myself, who found out these things, who went over them all, and laboured to distinguish and to value every thing according to its dignity, taking some things upon the report of my senses, questioning about others which I felt to be mingled with myself, numbering and distinguishing the reporters themselves, and in the large treasure-house of my memory revolving some things, storing up others, drawing out others. Nor yet was I myself when I did this, i.e., that my power whereby I did it, neither was it Thou, for Thou art the abiding light, which I consulted concerning all these, whether they were, what they were, and how to be valued; and I heard Thee directing and commanding me; and this I often do, this delights me, and as far as I may be freed from necessary duties, unto this pleasure have I recourse. Nor in all these which I run over consulting Thee can I find any safe place for my soul, but in Thee; whither my scattered members may be gathered, and nothing of me depart from Thee. And sometimes Thou admittest me to an affection, very unusual, in my inmost soul; rising to a strange sweetness, which if it were perfected in me, I know not what in it would not belong to the life to come. But through my miserable encumbrances I sink down again into these lower things, and am swept back by former custom, and am held, and greatly weep, but am greatly held. So much doth the burden of a bad custom weigh us down. Here I can stay, but would not; there I would, but cannot; both ways, miserable.

CHAPTER XLI

HAVING CONQUERED HIS TRIPLE DESIRE, HE ARRIVES AT SALVATION.

Thus then have I considered the sicknesses of my sins in that threefold concupiscence, and have called Thy right hand to my help. For with a wounded heart have I beheld Thy brightness, and stricken back I said, “Who can attain thither? I am cast away from the sight of Thine eyes.” Thou art the Truth who presidest over all, but I through my covetousness would not indeed forego Thee, but would with Thee possess a lie; as no man would in such wise speak falsely, as himself to be ignorant of the truth. So then I lost Thee, because Thou vouchsafest not to be possessed with a lie.

CHAPTER XLII

IN WHAT MANNER MANY SOUGHT THE MEDIATOR.

Whom could I find to reconcile me to Thee? was I to have recourse to Angels? by what prayers? by what sacraments? Many endeavouring to return unto Thee, and of themselves unable, have, as I hear, tried this, and fallen into the desire of curious visions, and been accounted worthy to be deluded. For they, being high minded, sought Thee by the pride of learning, swelling out rather than smiting upon their breasts, and so by the agreement of their heart, drew unto themselves the princes of the air, the fellow-conspirators of their pride, by whom, through magical influences, they were deceived, seeking a mediator, by whom they might be purged, and there was none. For the devil it was, transforming himself into an Angel of light. And it much enticed proud flesh, that he had no body of flesh. For they were mortal, and sinners; but thou, Lord, to whom they proudly sought to be reconciled, art immortal, and without sin. But a mediator between God and man must have something like to God, something like to men; lest being in both like to man, he should he far from God: or if in both like God, too unlike man: and so not be a mediator. That deceitful mediator then, by whom in Thy secret judgments pride deserved to be deluded, hath one thing in common with man, that is sin; another he would seem to have in common with God; and not being clothed with the mortality of flesh, would vaunt himself to be immortal. But since the wages of sin is death, this hath he in common with men, that with them he should be condemned to death.

CHAPTER XLIII

THAT JESUS CHRIST, AT THE SAME TIME GOD AND MAN, IS THE TRUE AND MOST EFFICACIOUS MEDIATOR.

But the true Mediator, Whom in Thy secret mercy Thou hast showed to the humble, and sentest, that by His example also they might learn that same humility, that Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, appeared betwixt mortal sinners and the immortal just One; mortal with men, just with God: that because the wages of righteousness is life and peace, He might by a righteousness conjoined with God make void that death of sinners, now made righteous, which He willed to have in common with them. Hence He was showed forth to holy men of old; that so they, through faith in His Passion to come, as we through faith of it passed, might be saved. For as Man, He was a Mediator; but as the Word, not in the middle between God and man, because equal to God, and God with God, and together one God.

How hast Thou loved us, good Father, who sparedst not Thine only Son, but deliveredst Him up for us ungodly! How hast Thou loved us, for whom He that thought it no robbery to be equal with Thee, was made subject even to the death of the cross, He alone, free among the dead, having power to lay down His life, and power to take it again: for us to Thee both Victor and Victim, and therefore Victor, because the Victim; for us to Thee Priest and Sacrifice, and therefore Priest because the Sacrifice; making us to Thee, of servants, sons by being born of Thee, and serving us. Well then is my hope strong in Him, that Thou wilt heal all my infirmities, by Him Who sitteth at Thy right hand and maketh intercession for us; else should I despair. For many and great are my infirmities, many they are, and great; but Thy medicine is mightier. We might imagine that Thy Word was far from any union with man, and despair of ourselves, unless He had been made flesh and dwelt among us.

Affrighted with my sins and the burden of my misery, I had cast in my heart, and had purposed to flee to the wilderness: but Thou forbadest me, and strengthenedst me, saying, Therefore Christ died for all, that they which live may now no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them. See, Lord, I cast my care upon Thee, that I may live, and consider wondrous things out of Thy law. Thou knowest my unskilfulness, and my infirmities; teach me, and heal me. He, Thine only Son, in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, hath redeemed me with His blood. Let not the proud speak evil of me; because I meditate on my ransom, and eat and drink, and communicate it; and poor, desired to be satisfied from Him, amongst those that eat and are satisfied, and they shall praise the Lord who seek Him.

BOOK XI

CHAPTER I

BY CONFESSION HE DESIRES TO STIMULATE TOWARDS GOD HIS OWN LOVE AND THAT OF HIS READERS.

Lord, since eternity is Thine, art Thou ignorant of what I say to Thee? or dost Thou see in time, what passeth in time? Why then do I lay in order before Thee so many relations? Not, of a truth, that Thou mightest learn them through me, but to stir up mine own and my readers' devotions towards Thee, that we may all say, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. I have said already; and again will say, for love of Thy love do I this. For we pray also, and yet Truth hath said, Your Father knoweth what you have need of, before you ask. It is then our affections which we lay open unto Thee, confessing our own miseries, and Thy mercies upon us, that Thou mayest free us wholly, since Thou hast begun, that we may cease to be wretched in ourselves, and be blessed in Thee; seeing Thou hast called us, to become poor in spirit, and meek, and mourners, and hungering and athirst after righteousness, and merciful, and pure in heart, and peace-makers. See, I have told Thee many things, as I could and as I would, because Thou first wouldest that I should confess unto Thee, my Lord God. For Thou art good, for Thy mercy endureth for ever.

CHAPTER II

HE BEGS OF GOD THAT THROUGH THE HOLY SCRIPTURES HE MAY BE LED TO TRUTH.

But how shall I suffice with the tongue of my pen to utter all Thy exhortations, and all Thy terrors, and comforts, and guidances, whereby Thou broughtest me to preach Thy Word, and dispense Thy Sacrament to Thy people? And if I suffice to utter them in order, the drops of time are precious with me; and long have I burned to meditate in Thy law, and therein to confess to Thee my skill and unskilfulness, the daybreak of Thy enlightening, and the remnants of my darkness, until infirmity be swallowed up by strength. And I would not have aught besides steal away those hours which I find free from the necessities of refreshing my body and the powers of my mind, and of the service which we owe to men, or which though we owe not, we yet pay.

O Lord my god, give ear unto my prayer, and let Thy mercy hearken unto my desire: because it is anxious not for myself alone, but would serve brotherly charity; and Thou seest my heart, that so it is. I would sacrifice to Thee the service of my thought and tongue; do Thou give me, what I may offer Thee. For I am poor and needy, Thou rich to all that call upon Thee; Who, inaccessible to care, carest for us. Circumcise from all rashness and all lying both my inward and outward lips: let Thy Scriptures be my pure delights: let me not be deceived in them, nor deceive out of them. Lord, hearken and pity, O Lord my God, Light of the blind, and Strength of the weak; yea also Light of those that see, and Strength of the strong; hearken unto my soul, and hear it crying out of the depths. For if Thine ears be not with us in the depths also, whither shall we go? whither cry? The day is Thine, and the night is Thine; at Thy beck the moments flee by. Grant thereof a space for our meditations in the hidden things of Thy law, and close it not against us who knock. For not in vain wouldest Thou have the darksome secrets of so many pages written; nor are those forests without their harts which retire therein and range and walk; feed, lie down, and ruminate. Perfect me, O Lord, and reveal them unto me. Behold, Thy voice is my joy; Thy voice exceedeth the abundance of pleasures. Give what I love: for I do love; and this hast Thou given: forsake not Thy own gifts, nor despise Thy green herb that thirsteth. Let me confess unto Thee whatsoever I shall find in Thy books, and hear the voice of praise, and drink in Thee, and meditate on the wonderful things out of Thy law; even from the beginning, wherein Thou madest the heaven and the earth, unto the everlasting reigning of Thy holy city with Thee.

Lord, have mercy on me, and hear my desire. For it is not, I deem, of the earth, not of gold and silver, and precious stones, or gorgeous apparel, or honours and offices, or the pleasures of the flesh, or necessaries for the body and for this life of our pilgrimage: all which shall be added unto those that seek Thy kingdom and Thy righteousness. Behold, O Lord my God, wherein is my desire. The wicked have told me of delights, but not such as Thy law, O Lord. Behold, wherein is my desire. Behold, Father, behold, and see and approve; and be it pleasing in the sight of Thy mercy, that I may find grace before Thee, that the inward parts of Thy words be opened to me knocking. I beseech by our Lord Jesus Christ Thy Son, the Man of Thy right hand, the Son of man, whom Thou hast established for Thyself, as Thy Mediator and ours, through Whom Thou soughtest us, not seeking Thee, but soughtest us, that we might seek Thee,- Thy Word, through Whom Thou madest all things, and among them, me also;- Thy Only-Begotten, through Whom Thou calledst to adoption the believing people, and therein me also;- I beseech Thee by Him, who sitteth at Thy right hand, and intercedeth with Thee for us, in Whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. These do I seek in Thy books. Of Him did Moses write; this saith Himself; this saith the Truth.

CHAPTER III

HE BEGINS FROM THE CREATION OF THE WORLD

NOT UNDERSTANDING THE HEBREW TEXT.

I would hear and understand, how “In the Beginning Thou madest the heaven and earth.” Moses wrote this, wrote and departed, passed hence from Thee to Thee; nor is he now before me. For if he were, I would hold him and ask him, and beseech him by Thee to open these things unto me, and would lay the ears of my body to the sounds bursting out of his mouth. And should he speak Hebrew, in vain will it strike on my senses, nor would aught of it touch my mind; but if Latin, I should know what he said. But whence should I know, whether he spake truth? Yea, and if I knew this also, should I know it from him? Truly within me, within, in the chamber of my thoughts, Truth, neither Hebrew, nor Greek, nor Latin, nor barbarian, without organs of voice or tongue, or sound of syllables, would say, “It is truth,” and I forthwith should say confidently to that man of Thine, “thou sayest truly.” Whereas then I cannot enquire of him, Thee, Thee I beseech, O Truth, full of Whom he spake truth, Thee, my God, I beseech, forgive my sins; and Thou, who gavest him Thy servant to speak these things, give to me also to understand them.

CHAPTER IV

HEAVEN AND EARTH CRY OUT THAT THEY HAVE BEEN CREATED BY GOD.

Behold, the heavens and the earth are; they proclaim that they were created; for they change and vary. Whereas whatsoever hath not been made, and yet is, hath nothing in it, which before it had not; and this it is, to change and vary. They proclaim also, that they made not themselves; "therefore we are, because we have been made; we were not therefore, before we were, so as to make ourselves." Now the evidence of the thing, is the voice of the speakers. Thou therefore, Lord, madest them; who art beautiful, for they are beautiful; who art good, for they are good; who art, for they are; yet are they not beautiful nor good, nor are they, as Thou their Creator art; compared with Whom, they are neither beautiful, nor good, nor are. This we know, thanks be to Thee. And our knowledge, compared with Thy knowledge, is ignorance.

CHAPTER V

GOD CREATED THE WORLD NOT FROM ANY CERTAIN MATTER, BUT IN HIS OWN WORD.

But how didst Thou make the heaven and the earth? and what the engine of Thy so mighty fabric? For it was not as a human artificer, forming one body from another, according to the discretion of his mind, which can in some way invest with such a form, as it seeth in itself by its inward eye. And whence should he be able to do this, unless Thou hadst made that mind? and he invests with a form what already existeth, and hath a being, as clay, or stone, or wood, or gold, or the like. And whence should they be, hadst not Thou appointed them? Thou madest the artificer his body, Thou the mind commanding the limbs, Thou the matter whereof he makes any thing; Thou the apprehension whereby to take in his art, and see within what he doth without; Thou the sense of his body, whereby, as by an interpreter, he may from mind to matter, convey that which he doth, and report to his mind what is done; that it within may consult the truth, which presideth over itself, whether it be well done or no. All these praise Thee, the Creator of all. But how dost Thou make them? how, O God, didst Thou make heaven and earth? Verily, neither in the heaven, nor in the earth, didst Thou make heaven and earth; nor in the air, or waters, seeing these also belong to the heaven and the earth; nor in the whole world didst Thou make the whole world; because there was no place where to make it, before it was made, that it might be. Nor didst Thou hold any thing in Thy hand, whereof to make heaven and earth. For whence shouldest Thou have this, which Thou hadst not made, thereof to make any thing? For what is, but because Thou art? Therefore Thou spokest, and they were made, and in Thy Word Thou madest them.

CHAPTER VI

HE DID NOT, HOWEVER, CREATE IT BY SOUNDING AND PASSING WORD.

But how didst Thou speak? In the way that the voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son? For that voice passed by and passed away, began and ended; the syllables sounded and passed away, the second after the first, the third after the second, and so forth in order, until the last after the rest, and silence after the last. Whence it is abundantly clear and plain that the motion of a creature expressed it, itself temporal, serving Thy eternal will. And these Thy words, created for a time, the outward ear reported to the intelligent soul, whose inward ear lay listening to Thy Eternal Word. But she compared these words sounding in time, with that Thy Eternal Word in silence, and said “It is different, far different. These words are far beneath me, nor are they, because they flee and pass away; but the Word of my Lord abideth above me for ever.” If then in sounding and passing words Thou saidst that heaven and earth should be made, and so madest heaven and earth, there was a corporeal creature before heaven and earth, by whose motions in time that voice might take his course in time. But there was nought corporeal before heaven and earth; or if there were, surely Thou hadst, without such a passing voice, created that, whereof to make this passing voice, by which to say, Let the heaven and the earth be made. For whatsoever that were, whereof such a voice were made, unless by Thee it were made, it could not be at all. By what Word then didst Thou speak, that a body might be made, whereby these words again might be made?

CHAPTER VII

BY HIS CO-ETERNAL WORD HE SPEAKS, AND ALL THINGS ARE DONE.

Thou callest us then to understand the Word, God, with Thee God, Which is spoken eternally, and by It are all things spoken eternally. For what was spoken was not spoken successively, one thing concluded that the next might be spoken, but all things together and eternally. Else have we time and change; and not a true eternity nor true immortality. This I know, O my God, and give thanks. I know, I confess to Thee, O Lord, and with me there knows and blesses Thee, whoso is not unthankful to assure Truth. We know, Lord, we know; since inasmuch as anything is not which was, and is, which was not, so far forth it dieth and ariseth. Nothing then of Thy Word doth give place or replace, because It is truly immortal and eternal. And therefore unto the Word coeternal with Thee Thou dost at once and eternally say all that Thou dost say; and whatever Thou sayest shall be made is made; nor dost Thou make, otherwise than by saying; and yet are not all things made together, or everlasting, which Thou makest by saying.

CHAPTER VIII

THAT WORD ITSELF IS THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS, IN THE WHICH WE ARE INSTRUCTED AS TO EVANGEELICAL TRUTH.

Why, I beseech Thee, O Lord my God? I see it in a way; but how to express it, I know not, unless it be, that whatsoever begins to be, and leaves off to be, begins then, and leaves off then, when in Thy eternal Reason it is known, that it ought to begin or leave off; in which Reason nothing beginneth or leaveth off. This is Thy Word, which is also “the Beginning, because also It speaketh unto us.” Thus in the Gospel He speaketh through the flesh; and this sounded outwardly in the ears of men; that it might be believed and sought inwardly, and found in the eternal Verity; where the good and only Master teacheth all His disciples. There, Lord, hear I Thy voice speaking unto me; because He speaketh us, who teacheth us; but He that teacheth us not, though He speaketh, to us He speaketh not. Who now teacheth us, but the unchangeable Truth? for even when we are admonished through a changeable creature; we are but led to the unchangeable Truth; where we learn truly, while we stand and hear Him, and rejoice greatly because of the Bridegroom’s voice, restoring us to Him, from Whom we are. And therefore the Beginning, because unless It abided, there should not, when we went astray, be whither to return. But when we return from error, it is through knowing; and that we may know, He teacheth us, because He is the Beginning, and speaking unto us.

CHAPTER IX

WISDOM AND THE BEGINNING.

In this Beginning, O God, hast Thou made heaven and earth, in Thy Word, in Thy Son, in Thy Power, in Thy Wisdom, in Thy Truth; wondrously speaking, and wondrously making. Who shall comprehend? Who declare it? What is that which gleams through me, and strikes my heart without hurting it; and I shudder and kindle? I shudder, inasmuch as I unlike it; I kindle, inasmuch as I am like it. It is Wisdom, Wisdom's self which gleameth through me; severing my cloudiness which yet again mantles over me, fainting from it, through the darkness which for my punishment gathers upon me. For my strength is brought down in need, so that I cannot support my blessings, till Thou, Lord, Who hast been gracious to all mine iniquities, shalt heal all my infirmities. For Thou shalt also redeem my life from corruption, and crown me with loving kindness and tender mercies, and shalt satisfy my desire with good things, because my youth shall be renewed like an eagle's. For in hope we are saved, wherefore we through patience wait for Thy promises. Let him that is able, hear Thee inwardly discoursing out of Thy oracle: I will boldly cry out, How wonderful are Thy works, O Lord, in Wisdom hast Thou made them all; and this Wisdom is the Beginning, and in that Beginning didst Thou make heaven and earth.

CHAPTER X

THE RASHNESS OF THOSE WHO INQUIRE WHAT GOD DID BEFORE HE CREATED HEAVEN AND EARTH.

Lo, are they not full of their old leaven, who say to us, “What was God doing before He made heaven and earth? For if (say they) He were unemployed and wrought not, why does He not also henceforth, and for ever, as He did heretofore? For did any new motion arise in God, and a new will to make a creature, which He had never before made, how then would that be a true eternity, where there ariseth a will, which was not? For the will of God is not a creature, but before the creature; seeing nothing could be created, unless the will of the Creator had preceded. The will of God then belongeth to His very Substance. And if aught have arisen in God’s Substance, which before was not, that Substance cannot be truly called eternal. But if the will of God has been from eternity that the creature should be, why was not the creature also from eternity?”

CHAPTER XI

THEY WHO ASK THIS HAVE NOT AS YET KNOWN THE ETERNITY OF GOD, WHICH IS EXEMPT FROM THE RELATION OF TIME.

Who speak thus, do not yet understand Thee, O Wisdom of God, Light of souls, understand not yet how the things be made, which by Thee, and in Thee are made: yet they strive to comprehend things eternal, whilst their heart fluttereth between the motions of things past and to come, and is still unstable. Who shall hold it, and fix it, that it be settled awhile, and awhile catch the glory of that everfixed Eternity, and compare it with the times which are never fixed, and see that it cannot be compared; and that a long time cannot become long, but out of many motions passing by, which cannot be prolonged altogether; but that in the Eternal nothing passeth, but the whole is present; whereas no time is all at once present: and that all time past, is driven on by time to come, and all to come followeth upon the past; and all past and to come, is created, and flows out of that which is ever present? Who shall hold the heart of man, that it may stand still, and see how eternity ever still-standing, neither past nor to come, uttereth the times past and to come? Can my hand do this, or the hand of my mouth by speech bring about a thing so great?

CHAPTER XII

WHAT GOD DID BEFORE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

See, I answer him that asketh, “What did God before He made heaven and earth?” I answer not as one is said to have done merrily (eluding the pressure of the question), “He was preparing hell (saith he) for pryers into mysteries.” It is one thing to answer enquiries, another to make sport of enquirers. So I answer not; for rather had I answer, “I know not,” what I know not, than so as to raise a laugh at him who asketh deep things and gain praise for one who answereth false things. But I say that Thou, our God, art the Creator of every creature: and if by the name “heaven and earth,” every creature be understood; I boldly say, “that before God made heaven and earth, He did not make any thing.” For if He made, what did He make but a creature? And would I knew whatsoever I desire to know to my profit, as I know, that no creature was made, before there was made any creature.

CHAPTER XIII

BEFORE THE TIMES CREATED BY GOD, TIMES WERE NOT.

But if any excursive brain rove over the images of forepassed times, and wonder that Thou the God Almighty and All-creating and All-supporting, Maker of heaven and earth, didst for innumerable ages forbear from so great a work, before Thou wouldest make it; let him awake and consider, that he wonders at false conceits. For whence could innumerable ages pass by, which Thou madest not, Thou the Author and Creator of all ages? or what times should there be, which were not made by Thee? or how should they pass by, if they never were? Seeing then Thou art the Creator of all times, if any time was before Thou madest heaven and earth, why say they that Thou didst forego working? For that very time didst Thou make, nor could times pass by, before Thou madest those times. But if before heaven and earth there was no time, why is it demanded, what Thou then didst? For there was no “then,” when there was no time.

Nor dost Thou by time, precede time: else shouldest Thou not precede all times. But Thou precedest all things past, by the sublimity of an ever-present eternity; and surpassest all future because they are future, and when they come, they shall be past; but Thou art the Same, and Thy years fail not. Thy years neither come nor go; whereas ours both come and go, that they all may come. Thy years stand together, because they do stand; nor are departing thrust out by coming years, for they pass not away; but ours shall all be, when they shall no more be. Thy years are one day; and Thy day is not daily, but To-day, seeing Thy To-day gives not place unto to-morrow, for neither doth it replace yesterday. Thy To-day, is Eternity; therefore didst Thou beget The Coeternal, to whom Thou saidst, This day have I begotten

Thee. Thou hast made all things; and before all times Thou art: neither in any time was time not.

CHAPTER XIV

NEITHER TIME PAST NOR FUTURE, BUT THE PRESENT ONLY, REALLY IS.

At no time then hadst Thou not made any thing, because time itself Thou madest. And no times are coeternal with Thee, because Thou abidest; but if they abode, they should not be times. For what is time? Who can readily and briefly explain this? Who can even in thought comprehend it, so as to utter a word about it? But what in discourse do we mention more familiarly and knowingly, than time? And, we understand, when we speak of it; we understand also, when we hear it spoken of by another. What then is time? If no one asks me, I know: if I wish to explain it to one that asketh, I know not: yet I say boldly that I know, that if nothing passed away, time past were not; and if nothing were coming, a time to come were not; and if nothing were, time present were not. Those two times then, past and to come, how are they, seeing the past now is not, and that to come is not yet? But the present, should it always be present, and never pass into time past, verily it should not be time, but eternity. If time present (if it is to be time) only cometh into existence, because it passeth into time past, how can we say that either this is, whose cause of being is, that it shall not be; so, namely, that we cannot truly say that time is, but because it is tending not to be?

CHAPTER XV

THERE IS ONLY A MOMENT OF PRESENT TIME.

And yet we say, “a long time” and “a short time”; still, only of time past or to come. A long time past (for example) we call an hundred years since; and a long time to come, an hundred years hence. But a short time past, we call (suppose) often days since; and a short time to come, often days hence. But in what sense is that long or short, which is not? For the past, is not now; and the future, is not yet. Let us not then say, “it is long”; but of the past, “it hath been long”; and of the future, “it will be long.” O my Lord, my Light, shall not here also Thy Truth mock at man? For that past time which was long, was it long when it was now past, or when it was yet present? For then might it be long, when there was, what could be long; but when past, it was no longer; wherefore neither could that be long, which was not at all. Let us not then say, “time past hath been long”: for we shall not find, what hath been long, seeing that since it was past, it is no more, but let us say, “that present time was long”; because, when it was present, it was long. For it had not yet passed away, so as not to be; and therefore there was, what could be long; but after it was past, that ceased also to be long, which ceased to be.

Let us see then, thou soul of man, whether present time can be long: for to thee it is given to feel and to measure length of time. What wilt thou answer me? Are an hundred years, when present, a long time? See first, whether an hundred years can be present. For if the first of these years be now current, it is present, but the other ninety and nine are to come, and therefore are not yet, but if the second year be current, one is now past, another present, the rest to come. And so if we assume any middle year of this hundred to be present, all before it, are past; all after it, to come; wherefore an hundred years cannot be present. But see at least whether that one which is now current, itself is present; for if the current month be its first, the rest are to come; if the second, the first is already past, and the rest are not yet. Therefore, neither is the year now current present; and if not present as a whole, then is not the year present. For twelve months are a year; of which whatever by the current month is present; the rest past, or to come. Although neither is that current month present; but one day only; the rest being to come, if it be the first; past, if the last; if any of the middle, then amid past and to come.

See how the present time, which alone we found could be called long, is abridged to the length scarce of one day. But let us examine that also; because neither is one day present as a whole. For it is made up of four and twenty hours of night and day: of which, the first hath the rest to come; the last hath them past; and any of the middle hath those before it past, those behind it to come. Yea, that one hour passeth away in flying particles. Whatsoever of it hath flown away, is past; whatsoever remaineth, is to come. If an instant of time be conceived, which cannot be divided into the smallest particles of moments, that alone is it, which may be called present. Which yet flies with such speed from future to past, as not to be lengthened out with the least stay. For if it be, it is divided into past and future. The present hath no space. Where then is the time, which we may call long? Is it to come? Of it we do not say, “it is long”; because it is not yet, so as to be long; but we say, “it will be long.” When therefore will it be? For if even then, when it is yet to come, it shall not be long (because what can be long, as yet is not), and so it shall then be long, when from future which as yet is not, it shall begin now to be, and have become present, that so there should exist what may be long; then does time present cry out in the words above, that it cannot be long.

CHAPTER XVI

TIME CAN ONLY BE PERCEIVED OR MEASURED WHILE IT IS PASSING.

And yet, Lord, we perceive intervals of times, and compare them, and say, some are shorter, and others longer. We measure also, how much longer or shorter this time is than that; and we answer, “This is double, or treble; and that, but once, or only just so much as that.” But we measure times as they are passing, by perceiving them; but past, which now are not, or the future, which are not yet, who can measure? unless a man shall presume to say, that can be measured, which is not. When then time is passing, it may be perceived and measured; but when it is past, it cannot, because it is not.

CHAPTER XVII

NEVERTHELESS THERE IS TIME PAST AND FUTURE.

I ask, Father, I affirm not: O my God, rule and guide me. “Who will tell me that there are not three times (as we learned when boys, and taught boys), past, present, and future; but present only, because those two are not? Or are they also; and when from future it becometh present, doth it come out of some secret place; and so, when retiring, from present it becometh past? For where did they, who foretold things to come, see them, if as yet they be not? For that which is not, cannot be seen. And they who relate things past, could not relate them, if in mind they did not discern them, and if they were not, they could no way be discerned. Things then past and to come, are.”

CHAPTER XVIII

PAST AND FUTURE TIMES CANNOT BE THOUGHT OF BUT AS PRESENT.

Permit me, Lord, to seek further. O my hope, let not my purpose be confounded. For if times past and to come be, I would know where they be. Which yet if I cannot, yet I know, wherever they be, they are not there as future, or past, but present. For if there also they be future, they are not yet there; if there also they be past, they are no longer there. Wheresoever then is whatsoever is, it is only as present. Although when past facts are related, there are drawn out of the memory, not the things themselves which are past, but words which, conceived by the images of the things, they, in passing, have through the senses left as traces in the mind. Thus my childhood, which now is not, is in time past, which now is not: but now when I recall its image, and tell of it, I behold it in the present, because it is still in my memory. Whether there be a like cause of foretelling things to come also; that of things which as yet are not, the images may be perceived before, already existing, I confess, O my God, I know not. This indeed I know, that we generally think before on our future actions, and that that forethinking is present, but the action whereof we forethink is not yet, because it is to come. Which, when we have set upon, and have begun to do what we were forethinking, then shall that action be; because then it is no longer future, but present.

Which way soever then this secret fore-perceiving of things to come be; that only can be seen, which is. But what now is, is not future, but present. When then things to come are said to be seen, it is not themselves which as yet are not (that is, which are to be), but their causes perchance or signs are seen, which already are. Therefore they are not future but present to those who now see that, from which the future, being foreconceived in the mind, is foretold. Which fore-conceptions again now are; and those who foretell those things, do behold the conceptions present before them. Let now the numerous variety of things furnish me some example. I behold the day-break, I foreshow, that the sun, is about to rise. What I behold, is present; what I foresignify, to come; not the sun, which already is; but the sun-rising, which is not yet. And yet did I not in my mind imagine the sun-rising itself (as now while I speak of it), I could not foretell it. But neither is that day-break which I discern in the sky, the sun-rising, although it goes before it; nor that imagination of my mind; which two are seen now present, that the other which is to be may be foretold. Future things then are not yet: and if they be not yet, they are not: and if they are not, they cannot be seen; yet foretold they may be from things present, which are already, and are seen.

CHAPTER XIX

WE ARE IGNORANT IN WHAT MANNER GOD TEACHES FUTURE THINGS.

Thou then, Ruler of Thy creation, by what way dost Thou teach souls things to come? For Thou didst teach Thy Prophets. By what way dost Thou, to whom nothing is to come, teach things to come; or rather of the future, dost teach things present? For, what is not, neither can it be taught. Too far is this way of my ken: it is too mighty for me, I cannot attain unto it; but from Thee I can, when Thou shalt vouchsafe it, O sweet light of my hidden eyes.

CHAPTER XX

IN WHAT MANNER TIME MAY PROPERLY BE DESIGNATED.

What now is clear and plain is, that neither things to come nor past are. Nor is it properly said, “there be three times, past, present, and to come”: yet perchance it might be properly said, “there be three times; a present of things past, a present of things present, and a present of things future.” For these three do exist in some sort, in the soul, but otherwhere do I not see them; present of things past, memory; present of things present, sight; present of things future, expectation. If thus we be permitted to speak, I see three times, and I confess there are three. Let it be said too, “there be three times, past, present, and to come”: in our incorrect way. See, I object not, nor gainsay, nor find fault, if what is so said be but understood, that neither what is to be, now is, nor what is past. For but few things are there, which we speak properly, most things improperly; still the things intended are understood.

CHAPTER XXI

HOW TIME MAY BE MEASURED.

I said then even now, we measure times as they pass, in order to be able to say, this time is twice so much as that one; or, this is just so much as that; and so of any other parts of time, which be measurable. Wherefore, as I said, we measure times as they pass. And if any should ask me, “How knowest thou?” I might answer, “I know, that we do measure, nor can we measure things that are not; and things past and to come, are not.” But time present how do we measure, seeing it hath no space? It is measured while passing, but when it shall have passed, it is not measured; for there will be nothing to be measured. But whence, by what way, and whither passes it while it is a measuring? whence, but from the future? Which way, but through the present? whither, but into the past? From that therefore, which is not yet, through that, which hath no space, into that, which now is not. Yet what do we measure, if not time in some space? For we do not say, single, and double, and triple, and equal, or any other like way that we speak of time, except of spaces of times. In what space then do we measure time passing? In the future, whence it passeth through? But what is not yet, we measure not. Or in the present, by which it passes? but no space, we do not measure: or in the past, to which it passes? But neither do we measure that, which now is not.

CHAPTER XXII

HE PRAYS GOD THAT HE WOULD EXPLAIN THIS MOST ENTANGLED ENIGMA.

My soul is on fire to know this most intricate enigma. Shut it not up, O Lord my God, good Father; through Christ I beseech Thee, do not shut up these usual, yet hidden things, from my desire, that it be hindered from piercing into them; but let them dawn through Thy enlightening mercy, O Lord. Whom shall I enquire of concerning these things? and to whom shall I more fruitfully confess my ignorance, than to Thee, to Whom these my studies, so vehemently kindled toward Thy Scriptures, are not troublesome? Give what I love; for I do love, and this hast Thou given me. Give, Father, Who truly knowest to give good gifts unto Thy children. Give, because I have taken upon me to know, and trouble is before me until Thou openest it. By Christ I beseech Thee, in His Name, Holy of holies, let no man disturb me. For I believed, and therefore do I speak. This is my hope, for this do I live, that I may contemplate the delights of the Lord. Behold, Thou hast made my days old, and they pass away, and how, I know not. And we talk of time, and time, and times, and times, "How long time is it since he said this"; "how long time since he did this"; and "how long time since I saw that"; and "this syllable hath double time to that single short syllable." These words we speak, and these we hear, and are understood, and understand. Most manifest and ordinary they are, and the self-same things again are but too deeply hidden, and the discovery of them were new.

CHAPTER XXIII

THAT TIME IS A CERTAIN EXTENSION.

I heard once from a learned man, that the motions of the sun, moon, and stars, constituted time, and I assented not. For why should not the motions of all bodies rather be times? Or, if the lights of heaven should cease, and a potter's wheel run round, should there be no time by which we might measure those whirlings, and say, that either it moved with equal pauses, or if it turned sometimes slower, otherwhiles quicker, that some rounds were longer, other shorter? Or, while we were saying this, should we not also be speaking in time? Or, should there in our words be some syllables short, others long, but because those sounded in a shorter time, these in a longer? God, grant to men to see in a small thing notices common to things great and small. The stars and lights of heaven, are also for signs, and for seasons, and for years, and for days; they are; yet neither should I say, that the going round of that wooden wheel was a day, nor yet he, that it was therefore no time.

I desire to know the force and nature of time, by which we measure the motions of bodies, and say (for example) this motion is twice as long as that. For I ask, Seeing "day" denotes not the stay only of the sun upon the earth (according to which day is one thing, night another); but also its whole circuit from east to east again; according to which we say, "there passed so many days," the night being included when we say, "so many days," and the nights not reckoned apart;- seeing then a day is completed by the motion of the sun and by his circuit from east to east again, I ask, does the motion alone make the day, or the stay in which that motion is completed, or both? For if the first be the day; then should we have a day, although the sun should finish that course in so small a space of time, as one hour comes to. If the second, then should not that make a day, if between one sun-rise and another there were but so short a stay, as one hour comes to; but the sun must go four and twenty times about, to complete one day. If both, then neither could that be called a day; if the sun should run his whole round in the space of one hour; nor that, if, while the sun stood still, so much time should overpass, as the sun usually makes his whole course in, from morning to morning. I will not therefore now ask, what that is which is called day; but, what time is, whereby we, measuring the circuit of the sun, should say that it was finished in half the time it was wont, if so be it was finished in so small a space as twelve hours; and comparing both times, should call this a single time, that a double time; even supposing the sun to run his round from east to east, sometimes in that single, sometimes in that double time. Let no man then tell me, that the motions of the heavenly bodies constitute times, because, when at the prayer of one, the sun had stood still, till he could achieve his victorious battle, the sun stood still, but time went on. For in its own allotted space of time was that battle waged and ended. I perceive time then to be a certain extension. But do I perceive it, or seem to perceive it? Thou, Light and Truth, wilt show me.

CHAPTER XXIV

THAT TIME IS NOT A MOTION OF A BODY WHICH WE MEASURE BY TIME.

Dost Thou bid me assent, if any define time to be “motion of a body?” Thou dost not bid me. For that no body is moved, but in time, I hear; this Thou sayest; but that the motion of a body is time, I hear not; Thou sayest it not. For when a body is moved, I by time measure, how long it moveth, from the time it began to move until it left off? And if I did not see whence it began; and it continue to move so that I see not when it ends, I cannot measure, save perchance from the time I began, until I cease to see. And if I look long, I can only pronounce it to be a long time, but not how long; because when we say “how long,” we do it by comparison; as, “this is as long as that,” or “twice so long as that,” or the like. But when we can mark the distances of the places, whence and whither goeth the body moved, or his parts, if it moved as in a lathe, then can we say precisely, in how much time the motion of that body or his part, from this place unto that, was finished. Seeing therefore the motion of a body is one thing, that by which we measure how long it is, another; who sees not, which of the two is rather to be called time? For and if a body be sometimes moved, sometimes stands still, then we measure, not his motion only, but his standing still too by time; and we say, “it stood still, as much as it moved”; or “it stood still twice or thrice so long as it moved”; or any other space which our measuring hath either ascertained, or guessed; more or less, as we use to say. Time then is not the motion of a body.

CHAPTER XXV

HE CALLS ON GOD TO ENLIGHTEN HIS MIND.

And I confess to Thee, O Lord, that I yet know not what time is, and again I confess unto Thee, O Lord, that I know that I speak this in time, and that having long spoken of time, that very “long” is not long, but by the pause of time. How then know I this, seeing I know not what time is? or is it perchance that I know not how to express what I know? Woe is me, that do not even know, what I know not. Behold, O my God, before Thee I lie not; but as I speak, so is my heart. Thou shalt light my candle; Thou, O Lord my God, wilt enlighten my darkness.

CHAPTER XXVI

WE MEASURE LONGER EVENTS BY SHORTER IN TIME.

Does not my soul most truly confess unto Thee, that I do measure times? Do I then measure, O my God, and know not what I measure? I measure the motion of a body in time; and the time itself do I not measure? Or could I indeed measure the motion of a body how long it were, and in how long space it could come from this place to that, without measuring the time in which it is moved? This same time then, how do I measure? do we by a shorter time measure a longer, as by the space of a cubit, the space of a rood? for so indeed we seem by the space of a short syllable, to measure the space of a long syllable, and to say that this is double the other. Thus measure we the spaces of stanzas, by the spaces of the verses, and the spaces of the verses, by the spaces of the feet, and the spaces of the feet, by the spaces of the syllables, and the spaces of long, by the space of short syllables; not measuring by pages (for then we measure spaces, not times);

but when we utter the words and they pass by, and we say “it is a long stanza, because composed of so many verses; long verses, because consisting of so many feet; long feet, because prolonged by so many syllables; a long syllable because double to a short one. But neither do we this way obtain any certain measure of time; because it may be, that a shorter verse, pronounced more fully, may take up more time than a longer, pronounced hurriedly. And so for a verse, a foot, a syllable. Whence it seemed to me, that time is nothing else than protraction; but of what, I know not; and I marvel, if it be not of the mind itself? For what, I beseech Thee, O my God, do I measure, when I say, either indefinitely “this is a longer time than that,” or definitely “this is double that”? That I measure time, I know; and yet I measure not time to come, for it is not yet; nor present, because it is not protracted by any space; nor past, because it now is not. What then do I measure? Times passing, not past? for so I said.

CHAPTER XXVII

TIMES ARE MEASURED IN PROPORTION AS THEY PASS BY.

Courage, my mind, and press on mightily. God is our helper, He made us, and not we ourselves. Press on where truth begins to dawn. Suppose, now, the voice of a body begins to sound, and does sound, and sounds on, and list, it ceases; it is silence now, and that voice is past, and is no more a voice. Before it sounded, it was to come, and could not be measured, because as yet it was not, and now it cannot, because it is no longer. Then therefore while it sounded, it might; because there then was what might be measured. But yet even then it was not at a stay; for it was passing on, and passing away. Could it be measured the rather, for that? For while passing, it was being extended into some space of time, so that it might be measured, since the present hath no space. If therefore then it might, then, to, suppose another voice hath begun to sound, and still soundeth in one continued tenor without any interruption; let us measure it while it sounds; seeing when it hath left sounding, it will then be past, and nothing left to be measured; let us measure it verily, and tell how much it is. But it sounds still, nor can it be measured but from the instant it began in, unto the end it left in. For the very space between is the thing we measure, namely, from some beginning unto some end. Wherefore, a voice that is not yet ended, cannot be measured, so that it may be said how long, or short it is; nor can it be called equal to another, or double to a single, or the like. But when ended, it no longer is. How may it then be measured? And yet we measure times; but yet neither those which are not yet, nor those which no longer are, nor those which are not lengthened out by some pause, nor those which have no bounds. We measure neither times to come, nor past, nor present, nor passing; and yet we do measure times.

“Deus Creator omnium,” this verse of eight syllables alternates between short and long syllables. The four short then, the first, third, fifth, and seventh, are but single, in respect of the four long, the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth. Every one of these to every one of those, hath a double time: I pronounce them, report on them, and find it so, as one’s plain sense perceives. By plain sense then, I measure a long syllable by a short, and I sensibly find it to have twice so much; but when one sounds after the other, if the former be short, the latter long, how shall I detain the short one, and how, measuring, shall I apply it to the long, that I may find this to have twice so much; seeing the long does not begin to sound, unless the short leaves sounding? And that very long one do I measure as present, seeing I measure it not till it be ended? Now his ending is his passing away. What then is it I measure? where is the short syllable by which I measure? where the long which I measure? Both have sounded, have flown, passed away, are no more; and yet I measure, and confidently answer (so far as is presumed on a practised sense) that as to space of time this syllable is but single, that double. And yet I could not do this, unless they were already past and ended. It is not then themselves, which now are not, that I measure, but something in my memory, which there remains fixed.

It is in thee, my mind, that I measure times. Interrupt me not, that is, interrupt not thyself with the tumults of thy impressions. In thee I measure times; the impression, which things as they pass by cause in thee, remains even when they are gone; this it is which still present, I measure, not the things which pass by to make this impression. This I measure, when I measure times. Either then this is time, or I do not measure times. What when we measure silence, and say that this silence hath held as long time as did that voice? do we not stretch out our thought to the measure of a voice, as if it sounded, that so we may be able to report of the intervals of silence in a given space of time? For though both voice and tongue be still, yet in thought we go over poems, and verses, and any other discourse, or dimensions of motions, and report as to the spaces of times, how much this is in respect of that, no otherwise than if vocally we did pronounce them. If a man would utter a lengthened sound, and had settled in thought how long it should be, he hath in silence already gone through a space of time, and committing it to memory, begins to utter that speech, which sounds on, until it be brought unto the end proposed. Yea it hath sounded, and will sound; for so much of it as is finished, hath sounded already, and the rest will sound. And thus passeth it on, until the present intent conveys over the future into the past; the past increasing by the diminution of the future, until by the consumption of the future, all is past.

CHAPTER XXVIII

TIME IN THE HUMAN MIND, WHICH EXPECTS, CONSIDERS, AND REMEMBERS.

But how is that future diminished or consumed, which as yet is not? or how that past increased, which is now no longer, save that in the mind which enacteth this, there be three things done? For it expects, it considers, it remembers; that so that which it expecteth, through that which it considereth, passeth into that which it remembereth. Who therefore denieth, that things to come are not as yet? and yet, there is in the mind an expectation of things to come. And who denies past things to be now no longer? and yet is there still in the mind a memory of things past. And who denieth the present time hath no space, because it passeth away in a moment? and yet our consideration continueth, through which that which shall be present proceedeth to become absent. It is not then future time, that is long, for as yet it is not: but a long future, is “a long expectation of the future,” nor is it time past, which now is not, that is long; but a long past, is “a long memory of the past.”

I am about to repeat a Psalm that I know. Before I begin, my expectation is extended over the whole; but when I have begun, how much soever of it I shall separate off into the past, is extended along my memory; thus the life of this action of mine is divided between my memory as to what I have repeated, and expectation as to what I am about to repeat; but “consideration” is present with me, that through it what was future, may be conveyed over, so as to become past. Which the more it is done again and again, so much the more the expectation being shortened, is the memory enlarged: till the whole expectation be at length exhausted, when that whole action being ended, shall have passed into memory. And this which takes place in the whole Psalm, the same takes place in each several portion of it, and each several syllable; the same holds in that longer action, whereof this Psalm may be part; the same holds in the whole life of man, whereof all the actions of man are parts; the same holds through the whole age of the sons of men, whereof all the lives of men are parts.

CHAPTER XXIX

THAT HUMAN LIFE IS A DISTRACTION, BUT THAT THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD HE WAS INTENT ON THE PRIZE OF HIS HEAVENLY CALLING.

But because Thy loving-kindness is better than all lives, behold, my life is but a distraction, and Thy right hand upheld me, in my Lord the Son of man, the Mediator betwixt Thee, The One, and us many, many also through our manifold distractions amid many things, that by Him I may apprehend in Whom I have been apprehended, and may be re-collected from my old conversation, to follow The One, forgetting what is behind, and not distended but extended, not to things which shall be and shall pass away, but to those things which are before, not distractedly but intently, I follow on for the prize of my heavenly calling, where I may hear the voice of Thy praise, and contemplate Thy delights, neither to come, nor to pass away. But now are my years spent in mourning. And Thou, O Lord, art my comfort, my Father everlasting, but I have been severed amid times, whose order I know not; and my thoughts, even the inmost bowels of my soul, are rent and mangled with tumultuous varieties, until I flow together into Thee, purified and molten by the fire of Thy love.

CHAPTER XXX

AGAIN HE REFUTES THE EMPTY QQUESTION, “WHAT DID GOD BEFORE THE CREATION OF THE WORLD?”

And now will I stand, and become firm in Thee, in my mould, Thy truth; nor will I endure the questions of men, who by a penal disease thirst for more than they can contain, and say, “what did God before He made heaven and earth?” Or, “How came it into His mind to make any thing, having never before made any thing?” Give them, O Lord, well to bethink themselves what they say, and to find, that “never” cannot be predicated, when “time” is not. This then that He is said “never to have made”; what else is it to say, than “in ‘no have made?” Let them see therefore, that time cannot be without created being, and cease to speak that vanity. May they also be extended towards those things which are before; and understand Thee before all times, the eternal Creator of all times, and that no times be coeternal with Thee, nor any creature, even if there be any creature before all times.

CHAPTER XXXI

HOW THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD DIFFERS FROM THAT OF MAN.

O Lord my God, what a depth is that recess of Thy mysteries, and how far from it have the consequences of my transgressions cast me! Heal mine eyes, that I may share the joy of Thy light. Certainly, if there be mind gifted with such vast knowledge and foreknowledge, as to know all things past and to come, as I know one well-known Psalm, truly that mind is passing wonderful, and fearfully amazing; in that nothing past, nothing to come in after-ages, is any more hidden from him, than when I sung that Psalm, was hidden from me what, and how much of it had passed away from the beginning, what, and how much there remained unto the end. But far be it that Thou the Creator of the Universe, the Creator of souls and bodies, far be it, that Thou shouldest in such wise know all things past and to come. Far, far more wonderfully, and far more mysteriously, dost Thou know them. For not, as the feelings of one who singeth what he knoweth, or heareth some well-known song, are through expectation of the words to come, and the remembering of those that are past, varied, and his senses divided, -not so doth any thing happen unto Thee, unchangeably eternal, that is, the eternal Creator of minds. Like then as Thou in the Beginning knewest the heaven and the earth, without any variety of Thy knowledge, so madest Thou in the Beginning heaven and earth, without any distraction of Thy action. Whoso understandeth, let him confess unto Thee; and whoso understandeth not, let him confess unto Thee. Oh how high art Thou, and yet the humble in heart are Thy dwelling-place; for Thou raisest up those that are bowed down, and they fall not, whose elevation Thou art.

BOOK XII

CHAPTER I

THE DISCOVERY OF TRUTH IS DIFFICULT, BUT GOD HAS PROMISED THAT HE WHO SEEKS SHALL FIND.

My heart, O Lord, touched with the words of Thy Holy Scripture, is much busied, amid this poverty of my life. And therefore most times, is the poverty of human understanding copious in words, because enquiring hath more to say than discovering, and demanding is longer than obtaining, and our hand that knocks, hath more work to do, than our hand that receives. We hold the promise, who shall make it null? If God be for us, who can be against us? Ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, shall it be opened. These be Thine own promises: and who need fear to be deceived, when the Truth promiseth?

CHAPTER II

OF THE DOUBLE HEAVEN,

THE VISIBLE, AND THE HEAVEN OF HEAVENS.

The lowliness of my tongue confesseth unto Thy Highness, that Thou madest heaven and earth; this heaven which I see, and this earth that I tread upon, whence is this earth that I bear about me; Thou madest it. But where is that heaven of heavens, O Lord, which we hear of in the words of the Psalm. The heaven of heavens are the Lord’s; but the earth hath He given to the children of men? Where is that heaven which we see not, to which all this which we see is earth? For this corporeal whole, not being wholly every where, hath in such wise received its portion of beauty in these lower parts, whereof the lowest is this our earth; but to that heaven of heavens, even the heaven of our earth, is but earth: yea both these great bodies, may not absurdly be called earth, to that unknown heaven, which is the Lord’s, not the sons’ of men.

CHAPTER III

OF THE DARKNESS UPON THE DEEP, AND OF THE INVISIBLE AND FORMLESS EARTH.

And now this earth was invisible and without form, and there was I know not what depth of abyss, upon which there was no light, because it had no shape. Therefore didst Thou command it to be written, that darkness was upon the face of the deep; what else than the absence of light? For had there been light, where should it have been but by being over all, aloft, and enlightening? Where then light was not, what was the presence of darkness, but the absence of light? Darkness therefore was upon it, because light was not upon it; as where sound is not, there is silence. And what is it to have silence there, but to have no sound there? Hast not Thou, O Lord, taught his soul, which confesseth unto Thee? Hast not Thou taught me, Lord, that before Thou formedst and diversifiedst this formless matter, there was nothing, neither colour, nor figure, nor body, nor spirit? and yet not altogether nothing; for there was a certain formlessness, without any beauty.

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE FORMLESSNESS OF MATTER, THE BEAUTIFUL WORLD HAS ARISEN.

How then should it be called, that it might be in some measure conveyed to those of duller mind, but by some ordinary word? And what, among all parts of the world can be found nearer to an absolute formlessness, than earth and deep? For, occupying the lowest stage, they are less beautiful than the other higher parts are, transparent all and shining. Wherefore then may I not conceive the formlessness of matter (which Thou hadst created without beauty, whereof to make this beautiful world) to be suitably intimated unto men, by the name of earth invisible and without form.

CHAPTER V

WHAT MAY HAVE BEEN THE FORM OF MATTER.

So that when thought seeketh what the sense may conceive under this, and saith to itself, “It is no intellectual form, as life, or justice; because it is the matter of bodies; nor object of sense, because being invisible, and without form, there was in it no object of sight or sense”;- while man’s thought thus saith to itself, it may endeavour either to know it, by being ignorant of it; or to be ignorant, by knowing it.

CHAPTER VI

HE CONFESSES THAT AT ONE TIME HE HIMSELF THOUGHT ERRONEOUSLY OF MATTER.

But I, Lord, if I would, by my tongue and my pen, confess unto Thee the whole, whatever Thyself hath taught me of that matter, -the name whereof hearing before, and not understanding, when they who understood it not, told me of it, so I conceived of it as having innumerable forms and diverse, and therefore did not conceive it at all, my mind tossed up and down foul and horrible “forms” out of all order, but yet “forms” and I called it without form not that it wanted all form, but because it had such as my mind would, if presented to it, turn from, as unwonted and jarring, and human frailness would be troubled at. And still that which I conceived, was without form, not as being deprived of all form, but in comparison of more beautiful forms; and true reason did persuade me, that I must utterly uncase it of all remnants of form whatsoever, if I would conceive matter absolutely without form; and I could not; for sooner could I imagine that not to be at all, which should be deprived of all form, than conceive a thing betwixt form and nothing, neither formed, nor nothing, a formless almost nothing. So my mind gave over to question thereupon with my spirit, it being filled with the images of formed bodies, and changing and varying them, as it willed; and I bent myself to the bodies themselves, and looked more deeply into their changeableness, by which they cease to be what they have been, and begin to be what they were not; and this same shifting from form to form, I suspected to be through a certain formless state, not through a mere nothing; yet this I longed to know, not to suspect only.-If then my voice and pen would confess unto Thee the whole, whatsoever knots Thou didst open for me in this question, what reader would hold out to take in the whole? Nor shall my heart for all this cease to give Thee honour, and a song of praise, for those things which it is not able to express. For the changeableness of changeable things, is itself capable of all those forms, into which these changeable things are changed. And this changeableness, what is it? Is it soul? Is it body? Is it that which constituteth soul or body? Might one say, “a nothing something”, an “is, is not,” I would say, this were it: and yet in some way was it even then, as being capable of receiving these visible and compound figures.

CHAPTER VII

OUT OF NOTHING GOD MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH.

But whence had it this degree of being, but from Thee, from Whom are all things, so far forth as they are? But so much the further from Thee, as the unliker Thee; for it is not farness of place. Thou therefore, Lord, Who art not one in one place, and otherwise in another, but the Self-same, and the Self-same, and the Self-same, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, didst in the Beginning, which is of Thee, in Thy Wisdom, which was born of Thine own Substance, create something, and that out of nothing. For Thou createdst heaven and earth; not out of Thyself, for so should they have been equal to Thine Only Begotten Son, and thereby to Thee also; whereas no way were it right that aught should be equal to Thee, which was not of Thee. And aught else besides Thee was there not, whereof Thou mightest create them, O God, One Trinity, and Trine Unity; and therefore out of nothing didst Thou create heaven and earth; a great thing, and a small thing; for Thou art Almighty and Good, to make all things good, even the great heaven, and the petty earth. Thou wert, and nothing was there besides, out of which Thou createdst heaven and earth; things of two sorts; one near Thee, the other near to nothing; one to which Thou alone shouldest be superior; the other, to which nothing should be inferior.

CHAPTER VIII

HEAVEN AND EARTH WERE MADE “IN THE BEGINNING;” AFTERWARDS THE WORLD, DURING SIX DAYS, FROM SHAPELESS MATTER.

But that heaven of heavens was for Thyself, O Lord; but the earth which Thou gavest to the sons of men, to be seen and felt, was not such as we now see and feel. For it was invisible, without form, and there was a deep, upon which there was no light; or, darkness was above the deep, that is, more than in the deep. Because this deep of waters, visible now, hath even in his depths, a light proper for its nature; perceivable in whatever degree unto the fishes, and creeping things in the bottom of it. But that whole deep was almost nothing, because hitherto it was altogether without form; yet there was already that which could be formed. For Thou, Lord, madest the world of a matter without form, which out of nothing, Thou madest next to nothing, thereof to make those great things, which we sons of men wonder at. For very wonderful is this corporeal heaven; of which firmament between water and water, the second day, after the creation of light, Thou saidst, Let it be made, and it was made. Which firmament Thou calledst heaven; the heaven, that is, to this earth and sea, which Thou madest the third day, by giving a visible figure to the formless matter, which Thou madest before all days. For already hadst Thou made both an heaven, before all days; but that was the heaven of this heaven; because In the beginning Thou hadst made heaven and earth. But this same earth which Thou madest was formless matter, because it was invisible and without form, and darkness was upon the deep, of which invisible earth and without form, of which formlessness, of which almost nothing, Thou mightest make all these things of which this changeable world consists, but subsists not; whose very changeableness appears therein, that times can be observed and numbered in it. For times are made by the alterations of things, while the figures, the matter whereof is the invisible earth aforesaid, are varied and turned.

CHAPTER IX

THAT THE HEAVEN OF HEAVENS WAS AN INTELLECTUAL CREATURE, BUT THAT THE EARTH WAS INVISIBLE AND FORMLESS BEFORE THE DAYS THAT IT WAS MADE.

And therefore the Spirit, the Teacher of Thy servant, when It recounts Thee to have In the Beginning created heaven and earth, speaks nothing of times, nothing of days. For verily that heaven of heavens which Thou createdst in the Beginning, is some intellectual creature, which, although no ways coeternal unto Thee, the Trinity, yet partaketh of Thy eternity, and doth through the sweetness of that most happy contemplation of Thyself, strongly restrain its own changeableness; and without any fall since its first creation, cleaving close unto Thee, is placed beyond all the rolling vicissitude of times. Yea, neither is this very formlessness of the earth, invisible, and without form, numbered among the days. For where no figure nor order is, there does nothing come, or go; and where this is not, there plainly are no days, nor any vicissitude of spaces of times.

CHAPTER X

HE BEGS OF GOD THAT HE MAY LIVE IN THE TRUE LIGHT, AND MAY BE INSTRUCTED AS TO THE MYSTERIES OF THE SACRED BOOKS.

O let the Light, the Truth, the Light of my heart, not mine own darkness, speak unto me. I fell off into that, and became darkened; but even thence, even thence I loved Thee. I went astray, and remembered Thee. I heard Thy voice behind me, calling to me to return, and scarcely heard it, through the tumultuousness of the enemies of peace. And now, behold, I return in distress and panting after Thy fountain. Let no man forbid me! of this will I drink, and so live. Let me not be mine own life; from myself I lived ill, death was I to myself; and I revive in Thee. Do Thou speak unto me, do Thou discourse unto me. I have believed Thy Books, and their words be most full of mystery.

CHAPTER XI

WHAT MAY BE DISCOVERED TO HIM BY GOD.

Already Thou hast told me with a strong voice, O Lord, in my inner ear, that Thou art eternal, Who only hast immortality; since Thou canst not be changed as to figure or motion, nor is Thy will altered by times: seeing no will which varies is immortal. This is in Thy sight clear to me, and let it be more and more cleared to me, I beseech Thee; and in the manifestation thereof, let me with sobriety abide under Thy wings. Thou hast told me also with a strong voice, O Lord, in my inner ear, that Thou hast made all natures and substances, which are not what Thyself is, and yet are; and that only is not from Thee, which is not, and the motion of the will from Thee who art, unto that which in a less degree is, because such motion is transgression and sin; and that no man’s sin doth either hurt Thee, or disturb the order of Thy government, first or last. This is in Thy sight clear unto me, and let it be more and more cleared to me, I beseech Thee: and in the manifestation thereof, let me with sobriety abide under Thy wings.

Thou hast told me also with a strong voice, in my inner ear, that neither is that creature coeternal unto Thyself, whose happiness Thou only art, and which with a most persevering purity, drawing its nourishment from Thee, doth in no place and at no time put forth its natural mutability; and, Thyself being ever present with it, unto Whom with its whole affection it keeps itself, having neither future to expect, nor conveying into the past what it remembereth, is neither altered by any change, nor distracted into any times. O blessed creature, if such there be, for cleaving unto Thy Blessedness; blest in Thee, its eternal Inhabitant and its Enlightener! Nor do I find by what name I may the rather call the heaven of heavens which is the Lord's, than Thine house, which contemplateth Thy delights without any defection of going forth to another; one pure mind, most harmoniously one, by that settled estate of peace of holy spirits, the citizens of Thy city in heavenly places; far above those heavenly places that we see.

By this may the soul, whose pilgrimage is made long and far away, by this may she understand, if she now thirsts for Thee, if her tears be now become her bread, while they daily say unto her, Where is Thy God? if she now seeks of Thee one thing, and desireth it, that she may dwell in Thy house all the days of her life (and what is her life, but Thou? and what Thy days, but Thy eternity, as Thy years which fail not, because Thou art ever the same?); by this then may the soul that is able, understand how far Thou art, above all times, eternal; seeing Thy house which at no time went into a far country, although it be not coeternal with Thee, yet by continually and unfailingly cleaving unto Thee, suffers no changeableness of times. This is in Thy sight clear unto me, and let it be more and more cleared unto me, I beseech Thee, and in the manifestation thereof, let me with sobriety abide under Thy wings.

There is, behold, I know not what formlessness in those changes of these last and lowest creatures; and who shall tell me (unless such a one as through the emptiness of his own heart, wonders and tosses himself up and down amid his own fancies?), who but such a one would tell me, that if all figure be so wasted and consumed away, that there should only remain that formlessness, through which the thing was changed and turned from one figure to another, that that could exhibit the vicissitudes of times? For plainly it could not, because, without the variety of motions, there are no times: and no variety, where there is no figure.

CHAPTER XII

FROM THE FORMLESS EARTH GOD CREATED ANOTHER HEAVEN AND A VISIBLE AND FORMED EARTH.

These things considered, as much as Thou givest, O my God, as much as Thou stirrest me up to knock, and as much as Thou openest to me knocking, two things I find that Thou hast made, not within the compass of time, neither of which is coeternal with Thee. One, which is so formed, that without any ceasing of contemplation, without any interval of change, though changeable, yet not changed, it may thoroughly enjoy Thy eternity and unchangeableness; the other which was so formless, that it had not that, which could be changed from one form into another, whether of motion, or of repose, so as to become subject unto time. But this Thou didst not leave thus formless, because before all days, Thou in the Beginning didst create Heaven and Earth; the two things that I spake of. But the Earth was invisible and without form, and darkness was upon the deep. In which words, is the formlessness conveyed unto us (that such capacities may hereby be drawn on by degrees, as are not able to conceive an utter privation of all form, without yet coming to nothing), out of which another Heaven might be created, together with a visible and well-formed earth: and the waters diversly ordered, and whatsoever further is in the formation of the world, recorded to have been, not without days, created; and that, as being of such nature, that the successive changes of times may take place in them, as being subject to appointed alterations of motions and of forms.

CHAPTER XIII

OF THE INTELLECTUAL HEAVEN AND FORMLESS EARTH, OUT OF WHICH, ON ANOTHER DAY, THE FIRMAMENT WAS FORMED.

This then is what I conceive, O my God, when I hear Thy Scripture saying, In the beginning God made Heaven and Earth: and the Earth was invisible and without form, and darkness was upon the deep, and not mentioning what day Thou createdst them; this is what I conceive, that because of the Heaven of heavens, -that intellectual Heaven, whose Intelligences know all at once, not in part, not darkly, not through a glass, but as a whole, in manifestation, face to face; not, this thing now, and that thing anon; but (as I said) know all at once, without any succession of times; -and because of the earth invisible and without form, without any succession of times, which succession presents “this thing now, that thing anon”; because where is no form, there is no distinction of things: -it is, then, on account of these two, a primitive formed, and a primitive formless; the one, heaven but the Heaven of heaven, the other earth but the earth invisible and without form; because of these two do I conceive, did Thy Scripture say without mention of days, In the Beginning God created Heaven and Earth. For forthwith it subjoined what earth it spake of; and also, in that the Firmament is recorded to be created the second day, and called Heaven, it conveys to us of which Heaven He before spake, without mention of days.

CHAPTER XIV

OF THE DEPTH OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURE, AND ITS ENEMIES.

Wondrous depth of Thy words! whose surface, behold! is before us, inviting to little ones; yet are they a wondrous depth. O my God, a wondrous depth! It is awful to look therein; an awfulness of honour, and a trembling of love. The enemies thereof I hate vehemently; oh that Thou wouldest slay them with Thy two-edged sword, that they might no longer be enemies unto it: for so do I love to have them slain unto themselves, that they may live unto Thee. But behold others not faultfinders, but extollers of the book of Genesis; “The Spirit of God,” say they, “Who by His servant Moses wrote these things, would not have those words thus understood; He would not have it understood, as thou sayest, but otherwise, as we say.” Unto Whom Thyself, O Thou God all, being judge, do I thus answer.

CHAPTER XV

HE ARGUES AGAINST ADVERSARIES CONCERNING THE HEAVEN OF HEAVENS.

“Will you affirm that to be false, which with a strong voice Truth tells me in my inner ear, concerning the Eternity of the Creator, that His substance is no ways changed by time, nor His will separate from His substance? Wherefore He willeth not one thing now, another anon, but once, and at once, and always, He willeth all things that He willeth; not again and again, nor now this, now that; nor willeth afterwards, what before He willed not, nor willeth not, what before He willed; because such a will is and no mutable thing is eternal: but our God is eternal. Again, what He tells me in my inner ear, the expectation of things to come becomes sight, when they are come, and this same sight becomes memory, when they be past. Now all thought which thus varies is mutable; and is eternal: but our God is eternal.” These things I infer, and put together, and find that my God, the eternal God, hath not upon any new will made any creature, nor doth His knowledge admit of any thing transitory. “What will ye say then, O ye gainsayers? Are these things false?” “No,” they say; “What then? Is it false, that every nature already formed, or matter capable of form, is not, but from Him Who is supremely good, because He is supremely?” “Neither do we deny this,” say they. “What then? do you deny this, that there is a certain sublime creature, with so chaste a love cleaving unto the true and truly eternal God, that although not coeternal with Him, yet is it not detached from Him, nor dissolved into the variety and vicissitude of times, but reposeth in the most true contemplation of Him only?” Because Thou, O God, unto him that loveth Thee so much as Thou commandest, dost show Thyself, and sufficest him; and therefore doth he not decline from Thee, nor toward himself. This is the house of God, not of earthly mould, nor of celestial bulk corporeal but spiritual, and partaker of Thy eternity, because without defection for ever. For Thou hast made it fast for ever and ever, Thou hast given it a law which it shall not pass. Nor yet is it coeternal with Thee, O God, because not without beginning; for it was made.

For although we find no time before it, for wisdom was created before all things; not that Wisdom which is altogether equal and coeternal unto Thee, our God, His Father, and by Whom all things were created, and in Whom, as the Beginning, Thou createdst heaven and earth; but that wisdom which is created, that is, the intellectual nature, which by contemplating the light, is light. For this, though created, is also called wisdom. But what difference there is betwixt the Light which enlighteneth, and which is enlightened, so much is there betwixt the Wisdom that createth, and that created; as betwixt the Righteousness which justifieth, and the righteousness which is made by justification. For we also are called Thy righteousness; for so saith a certain servant of Thine, That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Therefore since a certain created wisdom was created before all things, the rational and intellectual mind of that chaste city of Thine, our mother which is above, and is free and eternal in the heavens (in what heavens, if not in those that praise Thee, the Heaven of heavens? Because this is also the Heaven of heavens for the Lord); -though we find no time before it (because that which hath been created before all things, precedeth also the creature of time), yet is the Eternity of the Creator Himself before it, from Whom, being created, it took the beginning, not indeed of time (for time itself was not yet), but of its creation.

Hence it is so of Thee, our God, as to be altogether other than Thou, and not the Self-same: because though we find time neither before it, nor even in it (it being meet ever to behold Thy face, nor is ever drawn away from it, wherefore it is not varied by any change), yet is there in it a liability to change, whence it would wax dark, and chill, but that by a strong affection cleaving unto Thee, like perpetual noon, it shineth and gloweth from Thee. O house most lightsome and delightsome! I have loved thy beauty, and the place of the habitation of the glory of my Lord, thy builder and possessor. Let my wayfaring sigh after thee, and I say to Him that made thee, let Him take possession of me also in thee, seeing He hath made me likewise. I have gone astray like a lost sheep: yet upon the shoulders of my Shepherd, thy builder, hope I to be brought back to thee.

“What say ye to me, O ye gainsayers that I was speaking unto, who yet believe Moses to have been the holy servant of God, and his books the oracles of the Holy Ghost? Is not this house of God, not coeternal indeed with God, yet after its measure, eternal in the heavens, when you seek for changes of times in vain, because you will not find them? For that, to which it is ever good to cleave fast to God, surpasses all extension, and all revolving periods of time.” “It is,” say they. “What then of all that which my heart loudly uttered unto my God, when inwardly it heard the voice of His praise, what part thereof do you affirm to be false? Is it that the matter was without form, in which because there was no form, there was no order? But where no order was, there could be no vicissitude of times: and yet this almost nothing,’ inasmuch as it was not altogether nothing, was from Him certainly, from Whom is whatsoever is, in what degree soever it is.” “This also,” say they, “do we not deny.”

CHAPTER XVI

HE WISHES TO HAVE NO INTERCOURSE WITH THOSE WHO DENY DIVINE TRUTH.

With these I now parley a little in Thy presence, O my God, who grant all these things to be true, which Thy Truth whispers unto my soul. For those who deny these things, let them bark and deafen themselves as much as they please; I will essay to persuade them to quiet, and to open in them a way for Thy word. But if they refuse, and repel me; I beseech, O my God, be not Thou silent to me. Speak Thou truly in my heart; for only Thou so speakest: and I will let them alone blowing upon the dust without, and raising it up into their own eyes: and myself will enter my chamber, and sing there a song of loves unto Thee; groaning with groanings unutterable, in my wayfaring, and remembering Jerusalem, with heart lifted up towards it, Jerusalem my country, Jerusalem my mother, and Thyself that rulest over it, the Enlightener, Father, Guardian, Husband, the pure and strong delight, and solid joy, and all good things unspeakable, yea all at once, because the One Sovereign and true Good. Nor will I be turned away, until Thou gather all that I am, from this dispersed and disordered estate, into the peace of that our most dear mother, where the first-fruits of my spirit be already (whence I am ascertained of these things), and Thou conform and confirm it for ever, O my God, my Mercy. But those who do not affirm all these truths to be false, who honour Thy holy Scripture, set forth by holy Moses, placing it, as we, on the summit of authority to be followed, and do yet contradict me in some thing, I answer thus; By Thyself judge, O our God, between my Confessions and these men’s contradictions.

CHAPTER XVII

HE MENTIONS FIVE EXPLANATIONS OF THE WORDS OF GENESIS I.

For they say, “Though these things be true, yet did not Moses intend those two, when, by revelation of the Spirit, he said, In the beginning God created heaven and earth. He did not under the name of heaven, signify that spiritual or intellectual creature which always beholds the face of God; nor under the name of earth, that formless matter." "What then?" "That man of God," say they, "meant as we say, this declared he by those words." "What?" "By the name of heaven and earth would he first signify," say they, "universally and compendiously, all this visible world; so as afterwards by the enumeration of the several days, to arrange in detail, and, as it were, piece by piece, all those things, which it pleased the Holy Ghost thus to enounce. For such were that rude and carnal people to which he spake, that he thought them fit to be entrusted with the knowledge of such works of God only as were visible." They agree, however, that under the words earth invisible and without form, and that darksome deep (out of which it is subsequently shown, that all these visible things which we all know, were made and arranged during those "days") may, not incongruously, be understood of this formless first matter.

What now if another should say that "this same formlessness and confusedness of matter, was for this reason first conveyed under the name of heaven and earth, because out of it was this visible world with all those natures which most manifestly appear in it, which is ofttimes called by the name of heaven and earth, created and perfected?" What again if another say that "invisible and visible nature is not indeed inappropriately called heaven and earth; and so, that the universal creation, which God made in His Wisdom, that is, in the Beginning, was comprehended under those two words? Notwithstanding, since all things be made not of the substance of God, but out of nothing (because they are not the same that God is, and there is a mutable nature in them all, whether they abide, as doth the eternal house of God, or be changed, as the soul and body of man are): therefore the common matter of all things visible and invisible (as yet unformed though capable of form), out of which was to be created both heaven and earth (i. the invisible and visible creature when formed), was entitled by the same names given to the earth invisible and without form and the darkness upon the deep, but with this distinction, that by the earth invisible and without form is understood corporeal matter, antecedent to its being qualified by any form; and by the darkness upon the deep, spiritual matter, before it underwent any restraint of its unlimited fluidness, or received any light from Wisdom?"

It yet remains for a man to say, if he will, that “the already perfected and formed natures, visible and invisible, are not signified under the name of heaven and earth, when we read, In the beginning God made heaven and earth, but that the yet unformed commencement of things, the stuff apt to receive form and making, was called by these names, because therein were confusedly contained, not as yet distinguished by their qualities and forms, all those things which being now digested into order, are called Heaven and Earth, the one being the spiritual, the other the corporeal, creation.”

CHAPTER XVIII

WHAT ERROR IS HARMLESS IN SACRED SCRIPTURE.

All which things being heard and well considered, I will not strive about words: for that is profitable to nothing, but the subversion of the hearers. But the law is good to edify, if a man use it lawfully: for that the end of it is charity, out of a pure heart and good conscience, and faith unfeigned. And well did our Master know, upon which two commandments He hung all the Law and the Prophets. And what doth it prejudice me, O my God, Thou light of my eyes in secret, zealously confessing these things, since divers things may be understood under these words which yet are all true, -what, I say, doth it prejudice me, if I think otherwise than another thinketh the writer thought? All we readers verily strive to trace out and to understand his meaning whom we read; and seeing we believe him to speak truly, we dare not imagine him to have said any thing, which ourselves either know or think to be false. While every man endeavours then to understand in the Holy Scriptures, the same as the writer understood, what hurt is it, if a man understand what Thou, the light of all true-speaking minds, dost show him to be true, although he whom he reads, understood not this, seeing he also understood a Truth, though not this truth?

CHAPTER XIX

HE ENUMERATES THE THINGS CONCERNING WHICH ALL AGREE.

For true it is, O Lord, that Thou madest heaven and earth; and it is true too, that the Beginning is Thy Wisdom, in Which Thou createst all: and true again, that this visible world hath for its greater part the heaven and the earth, which briefly comprise all made and created natures. And true too, that whatsoever is mutable, gives us to understand a certain want of form, whereby it receiveth a form, or is changed, or turned. It is true, that that is subject to no times, which so cleaveth to the unchangeable Form, as though subject to change, never to be changed. It is true, that that formlessness which is almost nothing, cannot be subject to the alteration of times. It is true, that that whereof a thing is made, may by a certain mode of speech, be called by the name of the thing made of it; whence that formlessness, whereof heaven and earth were made, might be called heaven and earth. It is true, that of things having form, there is not any nearer to having no form, than the earth and the deep. It is true, that not only every created and formed thing, but whatsoever is capable of being created and formed, Thou madest, of Whom are all things. It is true, that whatsoever is formed out of that which had no form, was unformed before it was formed.

CHAPTER XX

OF THE WORDS, “IN THE BEGINNING,” VARIOUSLY UNDERSTOOD.

Out of these truths, of which they doubt not whose inward eye Thou hast enabled to see such things, and who unshakenly believe Thy servant Moses to have spoken in the Spirit of truth; -of all these then, he taketh one, who saith, In the Beginning God made the heaven and the earth; that is, “in His Word coeternal with Himself, God made the intelligible and the sensible, or the spiritual and the corporeal creature.” He another, that saith, In the Beginning God made heaven and earth; that is, “in His Word coeternal with Himself, did God make the universal bulk of this corporeal world, together with all those apparent and known creatures, which it containeth.” He another, that saith, In the Beginning God made heaven and earth; that is, “in His Word coeternal with Himself, did God make the formless matter of creatures spiritual and corporeal.” He another, that saith, In the Beginning God created heaven and earth; that is, “in His Word coeternal with Himself, did God create the formless matter of the creature corporeal, wherein heaven and earth lay as yet confused, which, being now distinguished and formed, we at this day see in the bulk of this world.” He another, who saith, In the Beginning God made heaven and earth; that is, “in the very beginning of creating and working, did God make that formless matter, confusedly containing in itself both heaven and earth; out of which, being formed, do they now stand out, and are apparent, with all that is in them.”

CHAPTER XXI

OF THE EXPLANATION OF THE WORDS, “THE EARTH WAS INVISIBLE.”

And with regard to the understanding of the words following, out of all those truths, he chooses one to himself, who saith, But the earth was invisible, and without form, and darkness was upon the deep; that is, “that corporeal thing that God made, was as yet a formless matter of corporeal things, without order, without light. “ Another he who says, The earth was invisible and without form, and darkness was upon the deep; that is, “this all, which is called heaven and earth, was still a formless and darksome matter, of which the corporeal heaven and the corporeal earth were to be made, with all things in them, which are known to our corporeal senses.” Another he who says, The earth was invisible and without form, and darkness was upon the deep; that is, “this all, which is called heaven and earth, was still a formless and a darksome matter; out of which was to be made, both that intelligible heaven, otherwhere called the Heaven of heavens, and the earth, that is, the whole corporeal nature, under which name is comprised this corporeal heaven also; in a word, out of which every visible and invisible creature was to be created.” Another he who says, The earth was invisible and without form, and darkness was upon the deep, “the Scripture did not call that formlessness by the name of heaven and earth; but that formlessness, saith he, already was, which he called the earth invisible without form, and darkness upon the deep; of which he had before said, that God had made heaven and earth, namely, the spiritual and corporeal creature.” Another he who says, The earth was invisible and without form, and darkness was upon the deep; that is, “there already was a certain formless matter, of which the Scripture said before, that God made heaven and earth; namely, the whole corporeal bulk of the world, divided into two great parts, upper and lower, with all the common and known creatures in them.”

CHAPTER XXII

HE DISCUSSES WHETHER MATTER WAS FROM ETERNITY, OR WAS MADE BY GOD.

For should any attempt to dispute against these two last opinions, thus, “If you will not allow, that this formlessness of matter seems to be called by the name of heaven and earth; Ergo, there was something which God had not made, out of which to make heaven and earth; for neither hath Scripture told us, that God made this matter, unless we understand it to be signified by the name of heaven and earth, or of earth alone, when it is said, In the Beginning God made the heaven and earth; that so in what follows, and the earth was invisible and without form (although it pleased Him so to call the formless matter), we are to understand no other matter, but that which God made, whereof is written above, God made heaven and earth.” The maintainers of either of those two latter opinions will, upon hearing this, return for answer, “we do not deny this formless matter to be indeed created by God, that God of Whom are all things, very good; for as we affirm that to be a greater good, which is created and formed, so we confess that to be a lesser good which is made capable of creation and form, yet still good. We say however that Scripture hath not set down, that God made this formlessness, as also it hath not many others; as the Cherubim, and Seraphim, and those which the Apostle distinctly speaks of, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers. All which that God made, is most apparent. Or if in that which is said, He made heaven and earth, all things be comprehended, what shall we say of the waters, upon which the Spirit of God moved? For if they be comprised in this word earth; how then can formless matter be meant in that name of earth, when we see the waters so beautiful? Or if it be so taken; why then is it written, that out of the same formlessness, the firmament was made, and called heaven; and that the waters were made, is not written? For the waters remain not formless and invisible, seeing we behold them flowing in so comely a manner. But if they then received that beauty, when God said, Let the waters under the firmament be gathered together, that so the gathering together be itself the forming of them; what will be said as to those waters above the firmament? Seeing neither if formless would they have been worthy of so honourable a seat, nor is it written, by what word they were formed. If then Genesis is silent as to God’s making of any thing, which yet that God did make neither sound faith nor well-grounded understanding doubteth, nor again will any sober teaching dare to affirm these waters to be coeternal with God, on the ground that we find them to be mentioned in the hook of Genesis, but when they were created, we do not find; why (seeing truth teaches us) should we not understand that formless matter (which this Scripture calls the earth invisible and without form, and darksome deep) to have been created of God out of nothing, and therefore not to be coeternal to Him; notwithstanding this history hath omitted to show when it was created?”

CHAPTER XXIII

TWO KINDS OF DISAGREEMENTS IN THE BOOKS TO BE EXPLAINED.

These things then being heard and perceived, according to the weakness of my capacity (which I confess unto Thee, O Lord, that knowest it), two sorts of disagreements I see may arise, when a thing is in words related by true reporters; one, concerning the truth of the things, the other, concerning the meaning of the relater. For we enquire one way about the making of the creature, what is true; another way, what Moses, that excellent minister of Thy Faith, would have his reader and hearer understand by those words. For the first sort, away with all those who imagine themselves to know as a truth, what is false; and for this other, away with all them too, which imagine Moses to have written things that be false. But let me be united in Thee, O Lord, with those and delight myself in Thee, with them that feed on Thy truth, in the largeness of charity, and let us approach together unto the words of Thy book, and seek in them for Thy meaning, through the meaning of Thy servant, by whose pen Thou hast dispensed them.

CHAPTER XXIV

OUT OF THE MANY TRUE THINGS, IT IS NOT ASSERTED CONFIDENTLY THAT MOSES UNDERSTOOD THIS OR THAT.

But which of us shall, among those so many truths, which occur to enquirers in those words, as they are differently understood, so discover that one meaning, as to affirm, “this Moses thought,” and “this would he have understood in that history”; with the same confidence as he would, “this is true,” whether Moses thought this or that? For behold, O my God, I Thy servant, who have in this book vowed a sacrifice of confession unto Thee, and pray, that by Thy mercy I may pay my vows unto Thee, can I, with the same confidence wherewith I affirm, that in Thy incommutable world Thou createdst all things visible and invisible, affirm also, that Moses meant no other than this, when he wrote, In the Beginning God made heaven and earth? No. Because I see not in his mind, that he thought of this when he wrote these things, as I do see it in Thy truth to be certain. For he might have his thoughts upon God's commencement of creating, when he said In the beginning; and by heaven and earth, in this place he might intend no formed and perfected nature whether spiritual or corporeal, but both of them inchoate and as yet formless. For I perceive, that whichsoever of the two had been said, it might have been truly said; but which of the two he thought of in these words, I do not so perceive. Although, whether it were either of these, or any sense beside (that I have not here mentioned), which this so great man saw in his mind, when he uttered these words, I doubt not but that he saw it truly, and expressed it aptly.

CHAPTER XXV

IT BEHOVES INTERPRETERS, WHEN DISAGREEING CONCERNING OBSCURE PLACES, TO REGARD GOD THE AUTHOR OF TRUTH, AND THE RULE OF CHARITY.

Let no man harass me then, by saying, Moses thought not as you say, but as I say: for if he should ask me, "How know you that Moses thought that which you infer out of his words?" I ought to take it in good part, and would answer perchance as I have above, or something more at large, if he were unyielding. But when he saith, "Moses meant not what you say, but what I say," yet denieth not that what each of us say, may both be true, O my God, life of the poor, in Whose bosom is no contradiction, pour down a softening dew into my heart, that I may patiently bear with such as say this to me, not because they have a divine Spirit, and have seen in the heart of Thy servant what they speak, but because they be proud; not knowing Moses' opinion, but loving their own, not because it is truth, but because it is theirs. Otherwise they would equally love another true opinion, as I love what they say, when they say true: not because it is theirs, but because it is true; and on that very ground not theirs because it is true. But if they therefore love it, because it is true, then is it both theirs, and mine; as being in common to all lovers of truth. But whereas they contend that Moses did not mean what I say, but what they say, this I like not, love not: for though it were so, yet that their rashness belongs not to knowledge, but to overboldness, and not insight but vanity was its parent. And therefore, O Lord, are Thy judgements terrible; seeing Thy truth is neither mine, nor his, nor another's; but belonging to us all, whom Thou callest publicly to partake of it, warning us terribly, not to account it private to ourselves, lest we he deprived of it. For whosoever challenges that as proper to himself, which Thou propoundest to all to enjoy, and would have that his own which belongs to all, is driven from what is in common to his own; that is, from truth, to a lie. For he that speaketh a lie, speaketh it of his own.

Hearken, O God, Thou best judge; Truth Itself, hearken to what I shall say to this gainsayer, hearken, for before Thee do I speak, and before my brethren, who employ Thy law lawfully, to the end of charity: hearken and behold, if it please Thee, what I shall say to him. For this brotherly and peaceful word do I return unto Him: "If we both see that to be true that Thou sayest, and both see that to be true that I say, where, I pray Thee, do we see it? Neither I in thee, nor thou in me; but both in the unchangeable Truth itself, which is above our souls." Seeing then we strive not about the very light of the Lord God, why strive we about the thoughts of our neighbour which we cannot so see, as the unchangeable Truth is seen: for that, if Moses himself had appeared to us and said, "This I meant"; neither so should we see it, but should believe it. Let us not then be puffed up for one against another, above that which is written: let us love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind: and our neighbour as ourself. With a view to which two precepts of charity, unless we believe that Moses meant, whatsoever in those books he did mean, we shall make God a liar, imagining otherwise of our fellow servant's mind, than he hath taught us. Behold now, how foolish it is, in such abundance of most true meanings, as may be extracted out of those words, rashly to affirm, which of them Moses principally meant; and with pernicious contentions to offend charity itself, for whose sake he spake every thing, whose words we go about to expound.

CHAPTER XXVI

WHAT HE MIGHT HAVE ASKED OF GOD HAD HE BEEN ENJOINED TO WRITE THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

And yet I, O my God, Thou lifter up of my humility, and rest of my labour, Who hearest my confessions, and forgivest my sins: seeing Thou commandest me to love my neighbour as myself, I cannot believe that Thou gavest a less gift unto Moses Thy faithful servant, than I would wish or desire Thee to have given me, had I been born in the time he was, and hadst Thou set me in that office, that by the service of my heart and tongue those books might be dispensed, which for so long after were to profit all nations, and through the whole world from such an eminence of authority, were to surmount all sayings of false and proud teachings. I should have desired verily, had I then been Moses (for we all come from the same lump, and what is man, saving that Thou art mindful of him?), I would then, had I been then what he was, and been enjoined by Thee to write the book of Genesis, have desired such a power of expression and such a style to be given me, that neither they who cannot yet understand how God created, might reject the sayings, as beyond their capacity; and they who had attained thereto, might find what true opinion soever they had by thought arrived at, not passed over in those few words of that Thy servant: and should another man by the light of truth have discovered another, neither should that fail of being discoverable in those same words.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE STYLE OF SPEAKING IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS IS SIMPLE AND CLEAR.

For as a fountain within a narrow compass, is more plentiful, and supplies a tide for more streams over larger spaces, than any one of those streams, which, after a wide interval, is derived from the same fountain; so the relation of that dispenser of Thine, which was to benefit many who were to discourse thereon, does out of a narrow scantling of language, overflow into streams of clearest truth, whence every man may draw out for himself such truth as he can upon these subjects, one, one truth, another, another, by larger circumlocutions of discourse. For some, when they read, or hear these words, conceive that God like a man or some mass endued with unbounded power, by some new and sudden resolution, did, exterior to itself, as it were at a certain distance, create heaven and earth, two great bodies above and below, wherein all things were to be contained. And when they hear, God said, Let it be made, and it was made; they conceive of words begun and ended, sounding in time, and passing away; after whose departure, that came into being, which was commanded so to do; and whatever of the like sort, men's acquaintance with the material world would suggest. In whom, being yet little ones and carnal, while their weakness is by this humble kind of speech, carried on, as in a mother's bosom, their faith is wholesomely built up, whereby they hold assured, that God made all natures, which in admirable variety their eye beholdeth around. Which words, if any despising, as too simple, with a proud weakness, shall stretch himself beyond the guardian nest; he will, alas, fall miserably. Have pity, O Lord God, lest they who go by the way trample on the unfledged bird, and send Thine angel to replace it into the nest, that it may live, till it can fly.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE WORDS, "IN THE BEGINNING," AND, "THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH," ARE DIFFERENTLY UNDERSTOOD.

But others, unto whom these words are no longer a nest, but deep shady fruit-bowers, see the fruits concealed therein, fly joyously around, and with cheerful notes seek out, and pluck them. For reading or hearing these words, they see that all times past and to come, are surpassed by Thy eternal and stable abiding; and yet that there is no creature formed in time, not of Thy making. Whose will, because it is the same that Thou art, Thou madest all things, not by any change of will, nor by a will, which before was not, and that these things were not out of Thyself, in Thine own likeness, which is the form of all things; but out of nothing, a formless unlikeness, which should be formed by Thy likeness (recurring to Thy Unity, according to their appointed capacity, so far as is given to each thing in his kind), and might all be made very good; whether they abide around Thee, or being in gradation removed in time and place, made or undergo the beautiful variations of the Universe. These things they see, and rejoice, in the little degree they here may, in the light of Thy truth.

Another bends his mind on that which is said, In the Beginning God made heaven and earth; and beholdeth therein Wisdom, the Beginning because It also speaketh unto us. Another likewise bends his mind on the same words, and by Beginning understands the commencement of things created; In the beginning He made, as if it were said, He at first made. And among them that understand In the Beginning to mean, “In Thy Wisdom Thou createdst heaven and earth,” one believes the matter out of which the heaven and earth were to be created, to be there called heaven and earth; another, natures already formed and distinguished; another, one formed nature, and that a spiritual, under the name Heaven, the other formless, a corporeal matter, under the name Earth. They again who by the names heaven and earth, understand matter as yet formless, out of which heaven and earth were to be formed, neither do they understand it in one way; but the one, that matter out of which both the intelligible and the sensible creature were to be perfected; another, that only, out of which this sensible corporeal mass was to he made, containing in its vast bosom these visible and ordinary natures. Neither do they, who believe the creatures already ordered and arranged, to be in this place called heaven and earth, understand the same; but the one, both the invisible and visible, the other, the visible only, in which we behold this lightsome heaven, and darksome earth, with the things in them contained.

CHAPTER XXIX

CONCERNING THE OPINION OF THOSE WHO EXPLAIN IT “AT FIRST HE MADE.”

But he that no otherwise understands In the Beginning He made, than if it were said, At first He made, can only truly understand heaven and earth of the matter of heaven and earth, that is, of the universal intelligible and corporeal creation. For if he would understand thereby the universe, as already formed, it may be rightly demanded of him, “If God made this first, what made He afterwards?” and after the universe, he will find nothing; whereupon must he against his will hear another question; “How did God make this first, if nothing after?” But when he says, God made matter first formless, then formed, there is no absurdity, if he be but qualified to discern, what precedes by eternity, what by time, what by choice, and what in original. By eternity, as God is before all things; by time, as the flower before the fruit; by choice, as the fruit before the flower; by original, as the sound before the tune. Of these four, the first and last mentioned, are with extreme difficulty understood, the two middle, easily. For a rare and too lofty a vision is it, to behold Thy Eternity, O Lord, unchangeably making things changeable; and thereby before them. And who, again, is of so sharpsighted understanding, as to be able without great pains to discern, how the sound is therefore before the tune; because a tune is a formed sound; and a thing not formed, may exist; whereas that which existeth not, cannot be formed. Thus is the matter before the thing made; not because it maketh it, seeing itself is rather made; nor is it before by interval of time; for we do not first in time utter formless sounds without singing, and subsequently adapt or fashion them into the form of a chant, as wood or silver, whereof a chest or vessel is fashioned. For such materials do by time also precede the forms of the things made of them, but in singing it is not so; for when it is sung, its sound is heard; for there is not first a formless sound, which is afterwards formed into a chant. For each sound, so soon as made, passeth away, nor canst thou find ought to recall and by art to compose. So then the chant is concentrated in its sound, which sound of his is his matter. And this indeed is formed, that it may be a tune; and therefore (as I said) the matter of the sound is before the form of the tune; not before, through any power it hath to make it a tune; for a sound is no way the workmaster of the tune; but is something corporeal, subjected to the soul which singeth, whereof to make a tune. Nor is it first in time; for it is given forth together with the tune; nor first in choice, for a sound is not better than a tune, a tune being not only a sound, but a beautiful sound. But it is first in original, because a tune receives not form to become a sound, but a sound receives a form to become a tune. By this example, let him that is able, understand how the matter of things was first made, and called heaven and earth, because heaven and earth were made out of it. Yet was it not made first in time; because the forms of things give rise to time; but that was without form, but now is, in time, an object of sense together with its form. And yet nothing can be related of that matter, but as though prior in time, whereas in value it is last (because things formed are superior to things without form) and is preceded by the Eternity of the Creator: that so there might be out of nothing, whereof somewhat might be created.

CHAPTER XXX

IN THE GREAT DIVERSITY OF OPINIONS, IT BECOMES ALL TO UNITE CHARITY AND DIVINE TRUTH.

In this diversity of the true opinions, let Truth herself produce concord. And our God have mercy upon us, that we may use the law lawfully, the end of the commandment, pure charity. By this if man demands of me, “which of these was the meaning of Thy servant Moses”; this were not the language of my Confessions, should I not confess unto Thee, “I know not”; and yet I know that those senses are true, those carnal ones excepted, of which I have spoken what seemed necessary. And even those hopeful little ones who so think, have this benefit, that the words of Thy Book affright them not, delivering high things lowlily, and with few words a copious meaning. And all we who, I confess, see and express the truth delivered in those words, let us love one another, and jointly love Thee our God, the fountain of truth, if we are athirst for it, and not for vanities; yea, let us so honour this Thy servant, the dispenser of this Scripture, full of Thy Spirit, as to believe that, when by Thy revelation he wrote these things, he intended that, which among them chiefly excels both for light of truth, and fruitfulness of profit.

CHAPTER XXXI

MOSES IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE PERCEIVED WHATEVER OF TRUTH CAN BE DISCOVERED IN HIS WORDS.

So when one says, “Moses meant as I do”; and another, “Nay, but as I do,” I suppose that I speak more reverently, “Why not rather as both, if both be true?” And if there be a third, or a fourth, yea if any other seeth any other truth in those words, why may not he be believed to have seen all these, through whom the One God hath tempered the holy Scriptures to the senses of many, who should see therein things true but divers? For I certainly (and fearlessly I speak it from my heart), that were I to indite any thing to have supreme authority, I should prefer so to write, that whatever truth any could apprehend on those matters, might he conveyed in my words, rather than set down my own meaning so clearly as to exclude the rest, which not being false, could not offend me. I will not therefore, O my God, be so rash, as not to believe, that Thou vouchsafedst as much to that great man. He without doubt, when he wrote those words, perceived and thought on what truth soever we have been able to find, yea and whatsoever we have not been able, nor yet are, but which may be found in them.

CHAPTER XXXII

FIRST, THE SENSE OF THE WRITER IS TO BE DISCOVERED, THEN THAT IS TO BE BROUGHT OUT WHICH DIVINE TRUTH INTENDED.

Lastly, O Lord, who art God and not flesh and blood, if man did see less, could any thing be concealed from Thy good Spirit (who shall lead me into the land of uprightness), which Thou Thyself by those words wert about to reveal to readers in times to come, though he through whom they were spoken, perhaps among many true meanings, thought on some one? which if so it be, let that which he thought on be of all the highest. But to us, O Lord, do Thou, either reveal that same, or any other true one which Thou pleasest; that so, whether Thou discoverest the same to us, as to that Thy servant, or some other by occasion of those words, yet Thou mayest feed us, not error deceive us. Behold, O Lord my God, how much we have written upon a few words, how much I beseech Thee! What strength of ours, yea what ages would suffice for all Thy books in this manner? Permit me then in these more briefly to confess unto Thee, and to choose some one true, certain, and good sense that Thou shalt inspire me, although many should occur, where many may occur; this being the law my confession, that if I should say that which Thy minister intended, that is right and best; for this should I endeavour, which if I should not attain, yet I should say that, which Thy Truth willed by his words to tell me, which revealed also unto him, what It willed.

BOOK XIII

CHAPTER I

HE CALLS UPON GOD, AND PROPOSES TO HIMSELF TO WORSHIP HIM.

I call upon Thee, O my God, my mercy, Who createdst me, and forgottest not me, forgetting Thee. I call Thee into my soul which, by the longing Thyself inspirest into her, Thou preparest for Thee. Forsake me not now calling upon Thee, whom Thou preventedst before I called, and urgedst me with much variety of repeated calls, that I would hear Thee from afar, and be converted, and call upon Thee, that calledst after me; for Thou, Lord, blottedst out all my evil deservings, so as not to repay into my hands, wherewith I fell from Thee; and Thou hast prevented all my well deservings, so as to repay the work of Thy hands wherewith Thou madest me; because before I was, Thou wert; nor was I any thing, to which Thou mightest grant to be; and yet behold, I am, out of Thy goodness, preventing all this which Thou hast made me, and whereof Thou hast made me. For neither hadst Thou need of me, nor am I any such good, as to be helpful unto Thee, my Lord and God; not in serving Thee, as though Thou wouldest tire in working; or lest Thy power might be less, if lacking my service: nor cultivating Thy service, as a land, that must remain uncultivated, unless I cultivated Thee: but serving and worshipping Thee, that I might receive a well-being from Thee, from whom it comes, that I have a being capable of well-being.

CHAPTER II

ALL CREATURES SUBSIST FROM THE PLENITUDE OF DIVINE GOODNSS.

For of the fulness of Thy goodness, doth Thy creature subsist, that so a good, which could no ways profit Thee, nor was of Thee (lest so it should be equal to Thee), might yet be since it could be made of Thee. For what did heaven and earth, which Thou madest in the Beginning, deserve of Thee? Let those spiritual and corporeal natures which Thou madest in Thy

Wisdom, say wherein they deserved of Thee, to depend thereon (even in that their several inchoate and formless state, whether spiritual or corporeal, ready to fall away into an immoderate liberty and far-distant unlikeliness unto Thee; -the spiritual, though without form, superior to the corporeal though formed, and the corporeal though without form, better than were it altogether nothing), and so to depend upon Thy Word, as formless, unless by the same Word they were brought back to Thy Unity, indued with form and from Thee the One Sovereign Good were made all very good. How did they deserve of Thee, to be even without form, since they had not been even this, but from Thee?

How did corporeal matter deserve of Thee, to be even invisible and without form? seeing it were not even this, but that Thou madest it, and therefore because it was not, could not deserve of Thee to be made. Or how could the inchoate spiritual creature deserve of Thee, even to ebb and flow darksomely like the deep, -unlike Thee, unless it had been by the same Word turned to that, by Whom it was created, and by Him so enlightened, become light; though not equally, yet conformably to that Form which is equal unto Thee? For as in a body, to be, is not one with being beautiful, else could it not be deformed; so likewise to a created spirit to live, is not one with living wisely; else should it be wise unchangeably. But good it is for it always to hold fast to Thee; lest what light it hath obtained by turning to Thee, it lose by turning from Thee, and relapse into life resembling the darksome deep. For we ourselves also, who as to the soul are a spiritual creature, turned away from Thee our light, were in that life sometimes darkness; and still labour amidst the relics of our darkness, until in Thy Only One we become Thy righteousness, like the mountains of God. For we have been Thy judgments, which are like the great deep.

CHAPTER III

GENESIS I. 3,

OF “LIGHT,”

HE UNDERSTANDS AS IT IS SEEN IN THE SPIRITUAL CREATURE.

That which Thou saidst in the beginning of the creation, Let there be light, and there was light; I do, not unsuitably, understand of the spiritual creature: because there was already a sort of life, which Thou mightest illuminate. But as it had no claim on Thee for a life, which could be enlightened, so neither now that it was, had it any, to be enlightened. For neither could its formless estate be pleasing unto Thee, unless it became light, and that not by existing simply, but by beholding the illuminating light, and cleaving to it; so that, that it lived, and lived happily, it owes to nothing but Thy grace, being turned by a better change unto That which cannot be changed into worse or better; which Thou alone art, because Thou alone simply art; unto Thee it being not one thing to live, another to live blessedly, seeing Thyself art Thine own Blessedness.

CHAPTER IV

ALL THINGS HAVE BEEN CREATED BY THE GRACE OF GOD, AND ARE NOT OF HIM AS STANDING NEED OF CREATED THINGS.

What then could he wanting unto Thy good, which Thou Thyself art, although these things had either never been, or remained without form; which thou madest, not out of any want, but out of the fulness of Thy goodness, restraining them and converting them to form, not as though Thy joy were fulfilled by them? For to Thee being perfect, is their imperfection displeasing, and hence were they perfected by Thee, and please Thee; not as wert Thou imperfect, and by their perfecting wert also to be perfected. For Thy good Spirit indeed was borne over the waters, not borne up by them, as if He rested upon them. For those, on whom Thy good Spirit is said to rest, He causes to rest in Himself. But Thy incorruptible and unchangeable will, in itself all-sufficient for itself, was borne upon that life which Thou hadst created; to which, living is not one with happy living, seeing it liveth also, ebbing and flowing in its own darkness: for which it remaineth to be converted unto Him, by Whom it was made, and to live more and more by the fountain of life, and in His light to see light, and to be perfected, and enlightened, and beautified.

CHAPTER V

HE RECOGNISES THE TRINITY IN THE FIRST TWO VERSES OF GENESIS.

Lo, now the Trinity appears unto me in a glass darkly, which is Thou my God, because Thou, O Father, in Him Who is the Beginning of our wisdom, Which is Thy Wisdom, born of Thyself, equal unto Thee and coeternal, that is, in Thy Son, createdst heaven and earth. Much now have we said of the Heaven of heavens, and of the earth invisible and without form, and of the darksome deep, in reference to the wandering instability of its spiritual deformity, unless it had been converted unto Him, from Whom it had its then degree of life, and by His enlightening became a beauteous life, and the heaven of that heaven, which was afterwards set between water and water. And under the name of God, I now held the Father, who made these things, and under the name of Beginning, the Son, in whom He made these things; and believing, as I did, my God as the Trinity, I searched further in His holy words, and to, Thy Spirit moved upon the waters. Behold the Trinity, my God, Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, Creator of all creation.

CHAPTER VI

WHY THE HOLY GHOST SHOULD HAVE BEEN MENTIONED AFTER THE MENTION OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

But what was the cause, O true-speaking Light? -unto Thee lift I up my heart, let it not teach me vanities, dispel its darkness; and tell me, I beseech Thee, by our mother charity, tell me the reason, I beseech Thee, why after the mention of heaven, and of the earth invisible and without form, and darkness upon the deep, Thy Scripture should then at length mention Thy Spirit? Was it because it was meet that the knowledge of Him should be conveyed, as being “borne above”; and this could not be said, unless that were first mentioned, over which Thy Spirit may be understood to have been borne. For neither was He borne above the Father, nor the Son, nor could He rightly be said to be borne above, if He were borne over nothing. First then was that to be spoken of, over which He might be borne; and then He, whom it was meet not otherwise to be spoken of than as being borne. But wherefore was it not meet that the knowledge of Him should be conveyed otherwise, than as being borne above?

CHAPTER VII

THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS US TO GOD.

Hence let him that is able, follow with his understanding Thy Apostle, where he thus speaks, Because Thy love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us: and where concerning spiritual gifts, he teacheth and showeth unto us a more excellent way of charity; and where he bows his knee unto Thee for us, that we may know the supereminent knowledge of the love of Christ. And therefore from the beginning, was He borne supereminent above the waters. To whom shall I speak this? how speak of the weight of evil desires, downwards to the steep abyss; and how charity raises up again by Thy Spirit which was borne above the waters? to whom shall I speak it? how speak it? For it is not in space that we are merged and emerge. What can be more, and yet what less like? They be affections, they be loves; the uncleanness of our spirit flowing away downwards with the love of cares, and the holiness of Thine raising us upward by love of unanxious repose; that we may lift our hearts unto Thee, where Thy Spirit is borne above the waters; and come to that supereminent repose, when our soul shall have passed through the waters which yield no support.

CHAPTER VIII

THAT NOTHING WHATEVER, SHORT OF GOD, CAN YIELD TO THE RATIONAL CREATURE A HAPPY REST.

Angels fell away, man’s soul fell away, and thereby pointed the abyss in that dark depth, ready for the whole spiritual creation, hadst not Thou said from the beginning, Let there be light, and there had been light, and every obedient intelligence of Thy heavenly City had cleaved to Thee, and rested in Thy Spirit, Which is borne unchangeably over every thing changeable. Otherwise, had even the heaven of heavens been in itself a darksome deep; but now it is light in the Lord. For even in that miserable restlessness of the spirits, who fell away and discovered their own darkness, when bared of the clothing of Thy light, dost Thou sufficiently reveal how noble Thou madest the reasonable creature; to which nothing will suffice to yield a happy rest, less than Thee; and so not even herself. For Thou, O our God, shalt lighten our darkness: from Thee riseth our garment of light; and then shall our darkness be as the noon day. Give Thyself unto me, O my God, restore Thyself unto me: behold I love, and if it be too little, I would love more strongly. I cannot measure so as to know, how much love there yet lacketh to me, ere my life may run into Thy embracements, nor turn away, until it be hidden in the hidden place of Thy Presence. This only I know, that woe is me except in Thee: not only without but within myself also; and all abundance, which is not my God, is emptiness to me.

CHAPTER IX

WHY THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS ONLY “BORNE OVER” THE WATERS.

But was not either the Father, or the Son, borne above the waters? if this means, in space, like a body, then neither was the Holy Spirit; but if the unchangeable supereminence of Divinity above all things changeable, then were both Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost borne upon the waters. Why then is this said of Thy Spirit only, why is it said only of Him? As if He had been in place, Who is not in place, of Whom only it is written, that He is Thy gift? In Thy Gift we rest; there we enjoy Thee. Our rest is our place. Love lifts us up thither, and Thy good Spirit lifts up our lowliness from the gates of death. In Thy good pleasure is our peace. The body by its own weight strives towards its own place. Weight makes not downward only, but to his own place. Fire tends upward, a stone downward. They are urged by their own weight, they seek their own places. Oil poured below water, is raised above the water; water poured upon oil, sinks below the oil. They are urged by their own weights to seek their own places. When out of their order, they are restless; restored to order, they are at rest. My weight, is my love; thereby am I borne, whithersoever I am borne. We are inflamed, by Thy Gift we are kindled; and are carried upwards; we glow inwardly, and go forwards. We ascend Thy ways that be in our heart, and sing a song of degrees; we glow inwardly with Thy fire, with Thy good fire, and we go; because we go upwards to the peace of Jerusalem: for gladdened was I in those who said unto me, We will go up to the house of the Lord. There hath Thy good pleasure placed us, that we may desire nothing else, but to abide there for ever.

CHAPTER X

THAT NOTHING AROSE SAVE BY THE GIFT OF GOD.

Blessed creature, which being itself other than Thou, has known no other condition, than that, so soon as it was made, it was, without any interval, by Thy Gift, Which is borne above every thing changeable, borne aloft by that calling whereby Thou saidst, Let there be light, and there was light. Whereas in us this took place at different times, in that we were darkness, and are made light: but of that is only said, what it would have been, had it not been enlightened. And, this is so spoken, as if it had been unsettled and darksome before; that so the cause whereby it was made otherwise, might appear, namely, that being turned to the Light unfailing it became light. Whoso can, let him understand this; let him ask of Thee. Why should he trouble me, as if I could enlighten any man that cometh into this world?

CHAPTER XI

THAT THE SYMBOLS OF THE TRINITY IN MAN, TO BE, TO KNOW, AND TO WILL, ARE NEVER THOROUGHLY EXAMINED.

Which of us comprehendeth the Almighty Trinity? and yet which speaks not of It, if indeed it be It? Rare is the soul, which while it speaks of It, knows what it speaks of. And they contend and strive, yet, without peace, no man sees that vision. I would that men would consider these three, that are in themselves. These three be indeed far other than the Trinity: I do but tell, where they may practise themselves, and there prove and feel how far they be. Now the three I spake of are, To Be, to Know, and to Will. For I Am, and Know, and Will: I Am Knowing and Willing: and I Know myself to Be, and to Will: and I Will to Be, and to Know. In these three then, let him discern that can, how inseparable a life there is, yea one life, mind, and one essence, yea lastly how inseparable a distinction there is, and yet a distinction. Surely a man hath it before him; let him look into himself, and see, and tell me. But when he discovers and can say any thing of these, let him not therefore think that he has found that which is above these Unchangeable, which Is unchangeably, and Knows unchangeably, and Wills unchangeably; and whether because of these three, there is in God also a Trinity, or whether all three be in Each, so that the three belong to Each; or whether both ways at once, wondrously, simply and yet manifoldly, Itself a bound unto Itself within Itself, yet unbounded; whereby It is, and is Known unto Itself and sufficeth to itself, unchangeably the Self-same, by the abundant greatness of its Unity, -who can readily conceive this? who could any ways express it? who would, any way, pronounce thereon rashly?

CHAPTER XII

ALLEGORICAL EXPLANATION OF GENESIS, CHAPTER I, CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH AND ITS WORSHIP.

Proceed in thy confession, say to the Lord thy God, O my faith, Holy, Holy, Holy, O Lord my God, in Thy Name have we been baptised, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; in Thy Name do we baptise, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, because among us also, in His Christ did God make heaven and earth, namely, the spiritual and carnal people of His Church. Yea and our earth, before it received the form of doctrine, was invisible and without form; and we were covered with the darkness of ignorance. For Thou chastenedst man for iniquity, and Thy judgments were like the great deep unto him. But because Thy Spirit was borne above the waters, Thy mercy forsook not our misery, and Thou saidst, Let there be light, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Repent ye, let there be light. And because our soul was troubled within us, we remembered Thee, O Lord, from the land of Jordan, and that mountain equal unto Thyself, but little for our sakes: and our darkness displeased us, we turned unto Thee and there was light. And, behold, we were sometimes darkness, but now light in the Lord.

CHAPTER XIII

THAT THE RENEWAL OF MAN IS NOT COMPLETED IN THIS WORLD.

But as yet by faith and not by sight, for by hope we are saved; but hope that is seen, is not hope. As yet doth deep call unto deep, but now in the voice of Thy water-spouts. As yet doth he that saith, I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even he as yet, doth not think himself to have apprehended, and forgetteth those things which are behind, and reacheth forth to those which are before, and groaneth being burthened, and his soul thirsteth after the Living God, as the hart after the water-brooks, and saith, When shall I come? desiring to be clothed upon with his house which is from heaven, and calleth upon this lower deep, saying, Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. And, be not children in understanding, but in malice, be ye children, that in understanding ye may be perfect; and O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you? But now no longer in his own voice; but in Thine who sentest Thy Spirit from above; through Him who ascended up on high, and set open the flood-gates of His gifts, that the force of His streams might make glad the city of God. Him doth this friend of the Bridegroom sigh after, having now the first-fruits of the Spirit laid up with Him, yet still groaning within himself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of his body; to Him he sighs, a member of the Bride; for Him he is jealous, as being a friend of the Bridegroom; for Him he is jealous, not for himself; because in the voice of Thy water-spouts, not in his own voice, doth he call to that other depth, over whom being jealous he feareth, lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so their minds should be corrupted from the purity that is in our Bridegroom Thy only Son. O what a light of beauty will that be, when we shall see Him as He is, and those tears be passed away, which have been my meat day and night, whilst they daily say unto me, Where is now Thy God?

CHAPTER XIV

THAT OUT OF THE CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT AND OF THE DARKNESS, CHILDRED OF THE LIGHT AND DAY ARE MADE.

Behold, I too say, O my God, Where art Thou? see, where Thou art! in Thee I breathe a little, when I pour out my soul by myself in the voice of joy and praise, the sound of him that keeps holy-day. And yet again it is sad, because it relapseth, and becomes a deep, or rather perceives itself still to be a deep. Unto it speaks my faith which Thou hast kindled to enlighten my feet in the night, Why art thou sad, O my soul, and why dost thou trouble me? Hope in the Lord; His word is a lanthorn unto thy feet: hope and endure, until the night, the mother of the wicked, until the wrath of the Lord, be overpast, whereof we also were once children, who were sometimes darkness, relics whereof we bear about us in our body, dead because of sin; until the day break, and the shadows fly away. Hope thou in the Lord; in the morning I shall stand in Thy presence, and contemplate Thee: I shall for ever confess unto Thee. In the morning I shall stand in Thy presence, and shall see the health of my countenance, my God, who also shall quicken our mortal bodies, by the Spirit that dwelleth in us, because He hath in mercy been borne over our inner darksome and floating deep: from Whom we have in this pilgrimage received an earnest, that we should now be light: whilst we are saved by hope, and are the children of light, and the children of the day, not the children of the night, nor of the darkness, which yet sometimes we were. Betwixt whom and us, in this uncertainty of human knowledge, Thou only dividest; Thou, who provest our hearts, and callest the light, day, and the darkness, night. For who discerneth us, but Thou? And what have we, that we have not received of Thee? out of the same lump vessels are made unto honour, whereof others also are made unto dishonour.

CHAPTER XV

ALLEGORICAL EXPLANATION OF THE FIRMAMENT AND UPPER WORKS, VER. 6.

Or who, except Thou, our God, made for us that firmament of authority over us in Thy Divine Scripture? as it is said, For heaven shall be folded up like a scroll; and now is it stretched over us like a skin. For Thy Divine Scripture is of more eminent authority, since those mortals by whom Thou dispensest it unto us, underwent mortality. And Thou knowest, Lord, Thou knowest, how Thou with skins didst clothe men, when they by sin became mortal. Whence Thou hast like a skin stretched out the firmament of Thy book, that is, Thy harmonizing words, which by the ministry of mortal men Thou spreadest over us. For by their very death was that solid firmament of authority, in Thy discourses set forth by them, more eminently extended over all that be under it; which whilst they lived here, was not so eminently extended. Thou hadst not as yet spread abroad the heaven like a skin; Thou hadst not as yet enlarged in all directions the glory of their deaths.

Let us look, O Lord, upon the heavens, the work of Thy fingers; clear from our eyes that cloud, which Thou hast spread under them. There is Thy testimony, which giveth wisdom unto the little ones: perfect, O my God, Thy praise out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. For we know no other books, which so destroy pride, which so destroy the enemy and the defender, who resisteth Thy reconciliation by defending his own sins. I know not, Lord, I know not any other such pure words, which so persuade me to confess, and make my neck pliant to Thy yoke, and invite me to serve Thee for nought. Let me understand them, good Father: grant this to me, who am placed under them: because for those placed under them, hast Thou established them.

Other waters there be above this firmament, I believe immortal, and separated from earthly corruption. Let them praise Thy Name, let them praise Thee, the supercelestial people, Thine angels, who have no need to gaze up at this firmament, or by reading to know of Thy Word. For they always behold Thy face, and there read without any syllables in time, what willeth Thy eternal will; they read, they choose, they love. They are ever reading; and that never passes away which they read; for by choosing, and by loving, they read the very unchangeableness of Thy counsel. Their book is never closed, nor their scroll folded up; seeing Thou Thyself art this to them, and art eternally; because Thou hast ordained them above this firmament, which Thou hast firmly settled over the infirmity of the lower people, where they might gaze up and learn Thy mercy, announcing in time Thee Who madest times. For Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and Thy truth reacheth unto the clouds. The clouds pass away, but the heaven abideth. The preachers of Thy word pass out of this life into another; but Thy Scripture is spread abroad over the people, even unto the end of the world. Yet heaven and earth also shall pass away, but Thy words shall not pass away. Because the scroll shall be rolled together: and the grass over which it was spread, shall with the goodliness of it pass away; but Thy Word remaineth for ever, which now appeareth unto us under the dark image of the clouds, and through the glass of the heavens, not as it is: because we also, though the well-beloved of Thy Son, yet it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. He looketh through the lattice of our flesh, and He spake us tenderly, and kindled us, and we ran after His odours. But when He shall appear, then shall we be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. As He is, Lord, will our sight be.

CHAPTER XVI

THAT NO ONE BUT THE UNCHANGEABLE LIGHT KOWS HIMSELF.

For altogether, as Thou art, Thou only knowest; Who art unchangeably, and knowest unchangeably, and willest unchangeably. And Thy Essence Knoweth, and Willeth unchangeably; and Thy Knowledge Is, and Willeth unchangeably; and Thy Will Is, and Knoweth unchangeably. Nor seemeth it right in Thine eyes, that as the Unchangeable Light knoweth Itself, so should it be known by the thing enlightened, and changeable. Therefore is my soul like a land where no water is, because as it cannot of itself enlighten itself, so can it not of itself satisfy itself. For so is the fountain of life with Thee, like as in Thy light we shall see light.

CHAPTER XVII

ALLEGORICAL EXPLANATION OF THE SEA AND THE FRUIT-BEARING EARTH

VERSES 9 AND 11.

Who gathered the embittered together into one society? For they have all one end, a temporal and earthly felicity, for attaining whereof they do all things, though they waver up and down with an innumerable variety of cares. Who, Lord, but Thou, saidst, Let the waters be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear, which thirsteth after Thee? For the sea also is Thine, and Thou hast made it, and Thy hands prepared the dry land. Nor is the bitterness of men's wills, but the gathering together of the waters, called sea; for Thou restrainest the wicked desires of men's souls, and settest them their bounds, how far they may be allowed to pass, that their waves may break one against another: and thus makest Thou it a sea, by the order of Thy dominion over all things.

But the souls that thirst after Thee, and that appear before Thee (being by other bounds divided from the society of the sea), Thou waterest by a sweet spring, that the earth may bring forth her fruit, and Thou, Lord God, so commanding, our soul may bud forth works of mercy according to their kind, loving our neighbour in the relief of his bodily necessities, having seed in itself according to its likeness, when from feeling of our infirmity, we compassionate so as to relieve the needy; helping them, as we would be helped; if we were in like need; not only in things easy, as in herb yielding seed, but also in the protection of our assistance, with our best strength, like the tree yielding fruit: that is, well-doing in rescuing him that suffers wrong, from the hand of the powerful, and giving him the shelter of protection, by the mighty strength of just judgment.

CHAPTER XVIII

OF THE LIGHTS AND STARS OF HEAVEN

OF DAY AND NIGHT, VER. 14.

So, Lord, so, I beseech Thee, let there spring up, as Thou doest, as Thou givest cheerfulness and ability, let truth spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven, and let there be lights in the firmament. Let us break our bread to the hungry, and bring the houseless poor to our house. Let us clothe the naked, and despise not those of our own flesh. Which fruits having sprung out of the earth, see it is good: and let our temporary light break forth; and ourselves, from this lower fruitfulness of action, arriving at the delightfulness of contemplation, obtaining the Word of Life above, appear like lights in the world, cleaving to the firmament of Thy Scripture. For there Thou instructest us, to divide between the things intellectual, and things of sense, as betwixt the day and the night; or between souls, given either to things intellectual, or things of sense, so that now not Thou only in the secret of Thy judgment, as before the firmament was made, dividest between the light and the darkness, but Thy spiritual children also set and ranked in the same firmament (now that Thy grace is laid open throughout the world), may give light upon the earth, and divide betwixt the day and the night, and be for signs of times, that old things are passed away, and, behold, all things are become new; and that our salvation is nearer than when we believed: and that the night is far spent, and the day is at hand: and that Thou wilt crown Thy year with blessing, sending the labourers of Thy goodness into Thy harvest, in sowing whereof, others have laboured, sending also into another field, whose harvest shall be in the end. Thus grantest Thou the prayers of him that asketh, and blessest the years of the just; but Thou art the same, and in Thy years which fail not, Thou preparest a garner for our passing years. For Thou by an eternal counsel dost in their proper seasons bestow heavenly blessings upon the earth. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, as it were the lesser light: to another faith; to another the gift with the light of perspicuous truth, as it were for the rule of the day. To another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, as it were the lesser light: to another faith; to another the gift of healing; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues. And all these as it were stars. For all these worketh the one and self-same spirit, dividing to every man his own as He will; and causing stars to appear manifestly, to profit withal. But the word of knowledge, wherein are contained all Sacraments, which are varied in their seasons as it were the moon, and those other notices of gifts, which are reckoned up in order, as it were stars, inasmuch as they come short of that brightness of wisdom, which gladdens the forementioned day, are only for the rule of the night. For they are necessary to such, as that Thy most prudent servant could not speak unto as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal; even he, who speaketh wisdom among those that are perfect. But the natural man, as it were a babe in Christ and fed on milk, until he be strengthened for solid meat and his eye be enabled to behold the Sun, let him not dwell in a night forsaken of all light, but be content with the light of the moon and the stars. So dost Thou speak to us, our All-wise God, in Thy Book, Thy firmament; that we may discern all things, in an admirable contemplation; though as yet in signs and in times, and in days, and in years.

CHAPTER XIX

ALL MEN SHOULD BECOME LIGHTS IN THE FIRMAMENT OF HEAVEN.

But first, wash you, be clean; put away evil from your souls, and from before mine eyes, that the dry land may appear. Learn to do good, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow, that the earth may bring forth the green herb for meat, and the tree bearing fruit; and come, let us reason together, saith the Lord, that there may be lights in the firmament of the heaven, and they may shine upon the earth. That rich man asked of the good Master, what he should do to attain eternal life. Let the good Master tell him (whom he thought no more than man; but He is good because He is God), let Him tell him, if he would enter into life, he must keep the commandments: let him put away from him the bitterness of malice and wickedness; not kill, not commit adultery, not steal, not bear false witness; that the dry land may appear, and bring forth the honouring of father and mother, and the love of our neighbour. All these (saith he) have I kept. Whence then so many thorns, if the earth be fruitful? Go, root up the spreading thickets of covetousness; sell that thou hast, and be filled with fruit, by giving to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and follow the Lord if thou wilt be perfect, associated with them, among whom He speaketh wisdom, Who knoweth what to distribute to the day, and to the night, that thou also mayest know it, and for thee there may be lights in the firmament of heaven; which will not be, unless thy heart be there: nor will that either be, unless there thy treasure be; as thou hast heard of the good Master. But that barren earth was grieved; and the thorns choked the word.

But you, chosen generation, you weak things of the world, who have forsaken all, that ye may follow the Lord; go after Him, and confound the mighty; go after Him, ye beautiful feet, and shine ye in the firmament, that the heavens may declare His glory, dividing between the light of the perfect, though not as the angels, and the darkness of the little ones, though not despised. Shine over the earth; and let the day, lightened by the sun, utter unto day, speech of wisdom; and night, shining with the moon, show unto night, the word of knowledge. The moon and stars shine for the night; yet doth not the night obscure them, seeing they give it light in its degree. For behold God saying, as it were, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven; there came suddenly a sound from heaven, as it had been the rushing of a mighty wind, and there appeared cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And there were made lights in the firmament of heaven, having the word of life. Run ye to and fro every where, ye holy fires, ye beauteous fires; for ye are the light of the world, nor are ye put under a bushel; He whom you cleave unto, is exalted, and hath exalted you. Run ye to and fro, and be known unto all nations.

CHAPTER XX

CONCERNING REPTILES AND FLYING CREATURES (VER. 20),

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM BEING REGARDED.

Let the sea also conceive and bring forth your works; and let the waters bring forth the moving creature that hath life. For ye, separating the precious from the vile, are made the mouth of God, by whom He saith, Let the waters bring forth, not the living creature which the earth brings forth, but the moving creature having life, and the fowls that fly above the earth. For Thy Sacraments, O God, by the ministry of Thy holy ones, have moved amid the waves of temptations of the world, to hallow the Gentiles in Thy Name, in Thy Baptism. And amid these things, many great wonders were wrought, as it were great whales: and the voices of Thy messengers flying above the earth, in the open firmament of Thy Book; that being set over them, as their authority under which they were to fly, whithersoever they went. For there is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard: seeing their sound is gone through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world, because Thou, Lord, multipliedst them by blessing.

Speak I untruly, or do I mingle and confound, and not distinguish between the lucid knowledge of these things in the firmament of heaven, and the material works in the wavy sea, and under the firmament of heaven? For of those things whereof the knowledge is substantial and defined, without any increase by generation, as it were lights of wisdom and knowledge, yet even of them, the material operations are many and divers; and one thing growing out of another, they are multiplied by Thy blessing, O God, who hast refreshed the fastidiousness of mortal senses; that so one thing in the understanding of our mind, may, by the motions of the body, be many ways set out, and expressed. These Sacraments have the waters brought forth; but in Thy word. The necessities of the people estranged from the eternity of Thy truth, have brought them forth, but in Thy Gospel; because the waters themselves cast them forth, the diseased bitterness whereof was the cause, why they were sent forth in Thy Word.

Now are all things fair that Thou hast made; but behold, Thyself art unutterably fairer, that madest all; from whom had not Adam fallen, the brackishness of the sea had never flowed out of him, that is, the human race so profoundly curious, and tempestuously swelling, and restlessly tumbling up and down; and then had there been no need of Thy dispensers to work in many waters, after a corporeal and sensible manner, mysterious doings and sayings. For such those moving and flying creatures now seem to me to mean, whereby people being initiated and consecrated by corporeal Sacraments, should not further profit, unless their soul had a spiritual life, and unless after the word of admission, it looked forwards to perfection.

CHAPTER XXI

CONCERNING THE LIVING SOUL, BIRDS, AND FISHES (VER. 24),

THE SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST BEING REGARDED.

And hereby, in Thy Word, not the deepness of the sea, but the earth separated from the bitterness of the waters, brings forth, not the moving creature that hath life, but the living soul. For now hath it no more need of baptism, as the heathen have, and as itself had, when it was covered with the waters; (for no other entrance is there into the kingdom of heaven, since Thou hast appointed that this should be the entrance:) nor does it seek after wonderfulness of miracles to work belief; for it is not such, that unless it sees signs and wonders, it will not believe, now that the faithful earth is separated from the waters that were bitter with infidelity; and tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not. Neither then does that earth which Thou hast founded upon the waters, need that flying kind, which at Thy word the waters brought forth. Send Thou Thy word into it by Thy messengers: for we speak of their working, yet it is Thou that workest in them that they may work out a living soul in it. The earth brings it forth, because the earth is the cause that they work this in the soul; as the sea was the cause that they wrought upon the moving creatures that have life, and the fowls that fly under the firmament of heaven, of whom the earth hath no need; although it feeds upon that fish which was taken out of the deep, upon that table which Thou hast prepared in the presence of them that believe. For therefore was He taken out of the deep, that He might feed the dry land; and the fowl, though bred in the sea, is yet multiplied upon the earth. For of the first preachings of the Evangelists, man’s infidelity was the cause; yet are the faithful also exhorted and blessed by them manifoldly, from day to day. But the living soul takes his beginning from the earth: for it profits only those already among the Faithful, to contain themselves from the love of this world, that so their soul may live unto Thee, which was dead while it lived in pleasures; in death-bringing pleasures, Lord, for Thou, Lord, art the life-giving delight of the pure heart.

Now then let Thy ministers work upon the earth, -not as upon the waters of infidelity, by preaching and speaking by miracles, and Sacraments, and mystic words; wherein ignorance, the mother of admiration, might be intent upon them, out of a reverence towards those secret signs. For such is the entrance unto the Faith for the sons of Adam forgetful of Thee, while they hide themselves from Thy face, and become a darksome deep. But- let Thy ministers work now as on the dry land, separated from the whirlpools of the great deep: and let them be a pattern unto the Faithful, by living before them, and stirring them up to imitation. For thus do men hear, so as not to hear only, but to do also. Seek the Lord, and your soul shall live, that the earth may bring forth the living soul. Be not conformed to the world. Contain yourselves from it: the soul lives by avoiding what it dies by affecting. Contain yourselves from the ungoverned wildness of pride, the sluggish voluptuousness of luxury, and the false name of knowledge: that so the wild beasts may be tamed, the cattle broken to the yoke, the serpents, harmless. For these be the motions of our mind under an allegory; that is to say, the haughtiness of pride, the delight of lust, and the poison of curiosity, are the motions of a dead soul; for the soul dies not so as to lose all motion; because it dies by forsaking the fountain of life, and so is taken up by this transitory world, and is conformed unto it.

But Thy word, O God, is the fountain of life eternal; and passeth not away: wherefore this departure of the soul is restrained by Thy word, when it is said unto us, Be not conformed unto this world; that so the earth may in the fountain of life bring forth a living soul; that is, a soul made continent in Thy Word, by Thy Evangelists, by following the followers of Thy Christ. For this is after his kind; because a man is wont to imitate his friend. Be ye (saith he) as I am, for I also am as you are. Thus in this living soul shall there be good beasts, in meekness of action (for Thou hast commanded, Go on with thy business in meekness, so shalt thou be beloved by all men); and good cattle, which neither if they eat, shall they over-abound, nor, if they eat not, have any lack; and good serpents, not dangerous, to do hurt, but wise to take heed; and only making so much search into this temporal nature, as may suffice that eternity be clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. For these creatures are obedient unto reason, when being restrained from deadly prevailing upon us, they live, and are good.

CHAPTER XXII

HE EXPLAINS THE DIVINE IMAGE (VER. 26.) OF THE RENEWAL OF THE MIND.

For behold, O Lord, our God, our Creator, when our affections have been restrained from the love of the world, by which we died through evil-living; and begun to be a living soul, through good living; and Thy word which Thou spokest by Thy apostle, is made good in us, Be not conformed to this world: there follows that also, which Thou presently subjoinedst, saying, But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind; not now after your kind, as though following your neighbour who went before you, nor as living after the example of some better man (for Thou saidst not, “Let man be made after his kind,” but, Let us make man after our own image and similitude), that we might prove what Thy will is. For to this purpose said that dispenser of Thine (who begat children by the Gospel), that he might not for ever have them babes, whom he must be fain to feed with milk, and cherish as a nurse; be ye transformed (saith he) by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Wherefore Thou sayest not, “Let man be made,” but Let us make man. Nor saidst Thou, “according to his kind”; but, after our image and likeness. For man being renewed in his mind, and beholding and understanding Thy truth, needs not man as his director, so as to follow after his kind; but by Thy direction proveth what is that good, that acceptable, and perfect will of Thine: yea, Thou teachest him, now made capable, to discern the Trinity of the Unity, and the Unity of the Trinity. Wherefore to that said in the plural. Let us make man, is yet subjoined in the singular, And God made man: and to that said in the plural. After our likeness, is subjoined in the singular, After the image of God. Thus is man renewed in the knowledge of God, after the image of Him that created him: and being made spiritual, he judgeth all things (all things which are to be judged), yet himself is judged of no man.

CHAPTER XXIII

THAT TO HAVE POWER OVER ALL THINGS (VER. 26) IS TO JUDGE SPIRITUALLY OF ALL.

But that he judgeth all things, this answers to his having dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over all cattle and wild beasts, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For this he doth by the understanding of his mind, whereby he perceiveth the things of the Spirit of God; whereas otherwise, man being placed in honour, had no understanding, and is compared unto the brute beasts, and is become like unto them. In Thy Church therefore, O our God, according to Thy grace which Thou hast bestowed upon it (for we are Thy workmanship created unto good works), not those only who are spiritually set over, but they also who spiritually are subject to those that are set over them, -for in this way didst Thou make man male and female, in Thy grace spiritual, where, according to the sex of body, there is neither male nor female, because neither Jew nor Grecian, neither bond nor free. -Spiritual persons (whether such as are set over, or such as obey); do judge spiritually; not of that spiritual knowledge which shines in the firmament (for they ought not to judge as to so supreme authority), nor may they judge of Thy Book itself, even though something there shineth not clearly; for we submit our understanding unto it, and hold for certain, that even what is closed to our sight, is yet rightly and truly spoken. For so man, though now spiritual and renewed in the knowledge of God after His image that created him, ought to be a doer of the law, not a judge. Neither doth he judge of that distinction of spiritual and carnal men, who are known unto Thine eyes, O our God, and have not as yet discovered themselves unto us by works, that by their fruits we might know them: but Thou, Lord, dost even now know them, and hast divided and called them in secret, or ever the firmament was made. Nor doth he, though spiritual, judge the unquiet people of this world; for what hath he to do, to judge them that are without, knowing not which of them shall hereafter come into the sweetness of Thy grace; and which continue in the perpetual bitterness of ungodliness?

Man therefore, whom Thou hast made after Thine own image, received not dominion over the lights of heaven, nor over that hidden heaven itself, nor over the day and the night, which Thou calledst before the foundation of the heaven, nor over the gathering together of the waters, which is the sea; but He received dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and over all cattle, and over all the earth, and over all creeping things which creep upon the earth. For He judgeth and approveth what He findeth right, and He disalloweth what He findeth amiss, whether in the celebration of those Sacraments by which such are initiated, as Thy mercy searches out in many waters: or in that, in which that Fish is set forth, which, taken out of the deep, the devout earth feedeth upon: or in the expressions and signs of words, subject to the authority of Thy Book, -such signs, as proceed out of the mouth, and sound forth, flying as it were under the firmament, by interpreting, expounding, discoursing disputing, consecrating, or praying unto Thee, so that the people may answer, Amen. The vocal pronouncing of all which words, is occasioned by the deep of this world, and the blindness of the flesh, which cannot see thoughts; So that there is need to speak aloud into the ears; so that, although flying fowls be multiplied upon the earth, yet they derive their beginning from the waters. The spiritual man judgeth also by allowing of what is right, and disallowing what he finds amiss, in the works and lives of the faithful; their alms, as it were the earth bringing forth fruit, and of the living soul, living by the taming of the affections, in chastity, in fasting, in holy meditations; and of those things, which are perceived by the senses of the body. Upon all these is he now said to judge, wherein he hath also power of correction.

CHAPTER XXIV

WHY GOD HAS BLESSED MEN, FISHES, FLYING CREATURES, AND NOT HERBS AND THE OTHER ANIMALS.

But what is this, and what kind of mystery? Behold, Thou blessest mankind, O Lord, that they may increase and multiply, and replenish the earth; dost Thou not thereby give us a hint to understand something? why didst Thou not as well bless the light, which Thou calledst day; nor the firmament of heaven, nor the lights, nor the stars, nor the earth, nor the sea? I might say that Thou, O God, who created created us after Thine Image, I might say, that it had been Thy good pleasure to bestow this blessing peculiarly upon man; hadst Thou not in like manner blessed the fishes and the whales, that they should increase and multiply, and replenish the waters of the sea, and that the fowls should be multiplied upon the earth. I might say likewise, that this blessing pertained properly unto such creatures, as are bred of their own kind, had I found it given to the fruit-trees, and plants, and beasts of the earth. But now neither unto the herbs, nor the trees, nor the beasts, nor serpents is it said, Increase and multiply; notwithstanding all these as well as the fishes, fowls, or men, do by generation increase and continue their kind.

What then shall I say, O Truth my Light? “that it was idly said, and without meaning?” Not so, O Father of piety, far he it from a minister of Thy word to say so. And if I understand not what Thou meanest by that phrase, let my betters, that is, those of more understanding than myself, make better use of it, according as Thou, my God, hast given to each man to understand. But let my confession also be pleasing in Thine eyes, wherein I confess unto Thee, that I believe, O Lord, that Thou spokest not so in vain; nor will I suppress, what this lesson suggests to me. For it is true, nor do I see what should hinder me from thus understanding the figurative sayings of Thy Bible. For I know a thing to be manifoldly signified by corporeal expressions, which is understood one way by the mind; and that understood many ways in the mind, which is signified one way by corporeal expression. Behold, the single love of God and our neighbour, by what manifold sacraments, and innumerable languages, and in each several language, in how innumerable modes of speaking, it is corporeally expressed. Thus do the offspring of the waters increase and multiply. Observe again, whosoever readest this; behold, what Scripture delivers, and the voice pronounces one only way, In the Beginning God created heaven and earth; is it not understood manifoldly, not through any deceit of error, but by various kinds of true senses? Thus do man’s offspring increase and multiply.

If therefore we conceive of the natures of the things themselves, not allegorically, but properly, then does the phrase increase and multiply, agree unto all things, that come of seed. But if we treat of the words as figuratively spoken (which I rather suppose to be the purpose of the Scripture, which doth not, surely, superfluously ascribe this benediction to the offspring of aquatic animals and man only); then do we find “multitude” to belong to creatures spiritual as well as corporeal, as in heaven and earth, and to righteous and unrighteous, as in light and darkness; and to holy authors who have been the ministers of the Law unto us, as in the firmament which is settled betwixt the waters and the waters; and to the society of people yet in the bitterness of infidelity, as in the sea; and to the zeal of holy souls, as in the dry land; and to works of mercy belonging to this present life, as in the herbs bearing seed, and in trees bearing fruit; and to spiritual gifts set forth for edification, as in the lights of heaven; and to affections formed unto temperance, as in the living soul. In all these instances we meet with multitudes, abundance, and increase; but what shall in such wise increase and multiply that one thing may be expressed many ways, and one expression understood many ways; we find not, except in signs corporeally expressed, and in things mentally conceived. By signs corporeally pronounced we understand the generations of the waters, necessarily occasioned by the depth of the flesh; by things mentally conceived, human generations, on account of the fruitfulness of reason. And for this end do we believe Thee, Lord, to have said to these kinds, Increase and multiply. For in this blessing, I conceive Thee to have granted us a power and a faculty, both to express several ways what we understand but one; and to understand several ways, what we read to be obscurely delivered but in one. Thus are the waters of the sea replenished, which are not moved but by several significations: thus with human increase is the earth also replenished, whose dryness appeareth in its longing, and reason ruleth over it.

CHAPTER XXV

HE EXPLAINS THE FRUITS OF THE EARTH (VER. 29) OF WORKS OF MERCY.

I would also say, O Lord my God, what the following Scripture minds me of; yea, I will say, and not fear. For I will say the truth, Thyself inspiring me with what Thou willedst me to deliver out of those words. But by no other inspiration than Thine, do I believe myself to speak truth, seeing Thou art the Truth, and every man a liar. He therefore that speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own; that therefore I may speak truth, I will speak of Thine. Behold, Thou hast given unto us for food every herb bearing seed which is upon all the earth; and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed. And not to us alone, but also to all the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the earth, and to all creeping things; but unto the fishes and to the great whales, hast Thou not given them. Now we said that by these fruits of the earth were signified, and figured in an allegory, the works of mercy which are provided for the necessities of this life out of the fruitful earth. Such an earth was the devout Onesiphorus, unto whose house Thou gavest mercy, because he often refreshed Thy Paul, and was not ashamed of his chain. Thus did also the brethren, and such fruit did they bear, who out of Macedonia supplied what was lacking to him. But how grieved he for some trees, which did not afford him the fruit due unto him, where he saith, At my first answer no man stood by me, but all men forsook me. I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. For these fruits are due to such as minister the spiritual doctrine unto us out of their understanding of the divine mysteries; and they are due to them, as men; yea and due to them also, as the living soul, which giveth itself as an example, in all continency; and due unto them also, as flying creatures, for their blessings which are multiplied upon the earth, because their sound went out into all lands.

CHAPTER XXVI

IN THE CONFESSING OF BENEFITS, COMPUTATION IS MADE NOT AS TO THE “GIFT,” BUT AS TO THE “FRUIT,”

THAT IS, THE GOOD AND RIGHT WILL OF THE GIVER.

But they are fed by these fruits, that are delighted with them; nor are they delighted with them, whose God is their belly. For neither in them that yield them, are the things yielded the fruit, but with what mind they yield them. He therefore that served God, and not his own belly, I plainly see why he rejoiced; I see it, and I rejoice with him. For he had received from the Philippians, what they had sent by Epaphroditus unto him: and yet I perceive why he rejoiced. For whereat he rejoiced upon that he fed; for, speaking in truth, I rejoiced (saith he) greatly in the Lord, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again, wherein ye were also careful, but it had become wearisome unto you. These Philippians then had now dried up, with a long weariness, and withered as it were as to bearing this fruit of a good work; and he rejoiceth for them, that they flourished again, not for himself, that they supplied his wants. Therefore subjoins he, not that I speak in respect of want, for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer need. I can do all things through Him which strengtheneth me.

Whereat then rejoicest thou, O great Paul? whereat rejoicest thou? whereon feedest thou, O man, renewed in the knowledge of God, after the image of Him that created thee, thou living soul, of so much continency, thou tongue like flying fowls, speaking mysteries? (for to such creatures, is this food due;) what is it that feeds thee? joy. Hear we what follows: notwithstanding, ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Hereat he rejoiceth, hereon feedeth; because they had well done, not because his strait was eased, who saith unto Thee, Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; for that he knew to abound, and to suffer want, in Thee Who strengthenest him. For ye Philippians also know (saith he), that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no Church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Unto these good works, he now rejoiceth that they are returned; and is gladdened that they flourished again, as when a fruitful field resumes its green.

Was it for his own necessities, because he said, Ye sent unto my necessity? Rejoiceth he for that? Verily not for that. But how know we this? Because himself says immediately, not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit. I have learned of Thee, my God, to distinguish betwixt a gift, and fruit. A gift, is the thing itself which he gives, that imparts these necessaries unto us; as money, meat, drink, clothing, shelter, help: but the fruit, is the good and right will of the giver. For the Good Master said not only, He that receiveth a prophet, but added, in the name of a prophet: nor did He only say, He that receiveth a righteous man, but added, in the name of a righteous man. So verily shall the one receive the reward of a prophet, the other, the reward of a righteous man: nor saith He only, He that shall give to drink a cup of cold water to one of my little ones; but added, in the name of a disciple: and so concludeth, Verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. The gift is, to receive a prophet, to receive a righteous man, to give a cup of cold water to a disciple: but the fruit, to do this in the name of a prophet, in the name of a righteous man, in the name of a disciple. With fruit was Elijah fed by the widow that knew she fed a man of God, and therefore fed him: but by the raven was he fed with a gift. Nor was the inner man of Elijah so fed, but the outer only; which might also for want of that food have perished.

CHAPTER XXVII

MANY ARE IGNORANT AS TO THIS, AND ASK FOR MIRACLES, WHICH ARE SIGNIFIED UNDER THE NAMES OF “FISHES” AND “WHALES.”

I will then speak what is true in Thy sight, O Lord, that when carnal men and infidels (for the gaining and initiating whom, the initiatory Sacraments and the mighty workings of miracles are necessary, which we suppose to be signified by the name of fishes and whales) undertake the bodily refreshment, or otherwise succour Thy servant with something useful for this present life; whereas they be ignorant, why this is to be done, and to what end; neither do they feed these, nor are these fed by them; because neither do the one do it out of an holy and right intent; nor do the other rejoice at their gifts, whose fruit they as yet behold not. For upon that is the mind fed, of which it is glad. And therefore do not the fishes and whales feed upon such meats, as the earth brings not forth until after it was separated and divided from the bitterness of the waves of the sea.

CHAPTER XXVIII

HE PROCEEDS TO THE LAST VERSE, “ALL THINGS ARE VERY GOOD,”

THAT IS, THE WORK BEING ALTOGETHER GOOD.

And Thou, O God, sawest every thing that Thou hadst made, and, behold, it was very good. Yea we also see the same, and behold, all things are very good. Of the several kinds of Thy works, when Thou hadst said “let them be,” and they were, Thou sawest each that it was good. Seven times have I counted it to be written, that Thou sawest that that which Thou madest was good: and this is the eighth, that Thou sawest every thing that Thou hadst made, and, behold, it was not only good, but also very good, as being now altogether. For severally, they were only good; but altogether, both good, and very good. All beautiful bodies express the same; by reason that a body consisting of members all beautiful, is far more beautiful than the same members by themselves are, by whose well-ordered blending the whole is perfected; notwithstanding that the members severally be also beautiful.

CHAPTER XXIX

ALTHOUGH IT IS SAID EIGHT TIMES THAT “GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD,” YET TIME HAS NO RELATION TO GOD AND HIS WORD.

And I looked narrowly to find, whether seven, or eight times Thou sawest that Thy works were good, when they pleased Thee; but in Thy seeing I found no times, whereby I might understand that Thou sawest so often, what Thou madest. And I said, “Lord, is not this Thy Scripture true, since Thou art true, and being Truth, hast set it forth? why then dost Thou say unto me, ‘that in Thy seeing there be no times’; whereas this Thy Scripture tells me, that what Thou madest each day, Thou sawest that it was good: and when I counted them, I found how often.” Unto this Thou answerest me, for Thou art my God, and with a strong voice tellest Thy servant in his inner ear, breaking through my deafness and crying, “O man, that which My Scripture saith, I say: and yet doth that speak in time; but time has no relation to My Word; because My Word exists in equal eternity with Myself. So the things which ye see through My Spirit, I see; like as what ye speak by My Spirit, I speak. And so when ye see those things in time, I see them not in time; as when ye speak in time, I speak them not in time.”

CHAPTER XXX

HE REFUTES THE OPINIONS OF THE MANICHAEANS AND THE GNOSTICS CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD.

And I heard, O Lord my God, and drank up a drop of sweetness out of Thy truth, and understood, that certain men there be who mislike Thy works; and say, that many of them Thou madest, compelled by necessity; such as the fabric of the heavens, and harmony of the stars; and that Thou madest them not of what was Thine, but that they were otherwhere and from other sources created, for Thee to bring together and compact and combine, when out of Thy conquered enemies Thou raisedst up the walls of the universe; that they, bound down by the structure, might not again be able to rebel against Thee. For other things, they say Thou neither madest them, nor even compactedst them, such as all flesh and all very minute creatures, and whatsoever hath its root in the earth; but that a mind at enmity with Thee, and another nature not created by Thee, and contrary unto Thee, did, in these lower stages of the world, beget and frame these things. Frenzied are they who say thus, because they see not Thy works by Thy Spirit, nor recognise Thee in them.

CHAPTER XXXI

WE DO NOT SEE "THAT IT WAS GOOD," BUT THROUGH THE SPIRIT OF GOD, WHICH IS IN US.

But they who by Thy Spirit see these things, Thou seest in them. Therefore when they see that these things are good, Thou seest that they are good; and whatsoever things for Thy sake please, Thou pleasest in them, and what through Thy Spirit please us, they please Thee in us. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man, which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no one, but the Spirit of God. Now we (saith he) have received, not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. And I am admonished, "Truly the things of God knoweth no one, but the Spirit of God: how then do we also know, what things are given us of God?" Answer is made me; "because the things which we know by His Spirit, even these no one knoweth, but the Spirit of God. For as it is rightly said unto those that were to speak by the Spirit of God, it is not ye that speak: so is it rightly said to them that know through the Spirit of God, 'It is not ye that know.' And no less then is it rightly said to those that see through the Spirit of God, 'It is not ye that see'; so whatsoever through the Spirit of God they see to be good, it is not they, but God that sees that it is good." It is one thing then for a man to think that to be ill which is good, as the forenamed do; another, that that which is good, a man should see that it is good (as Thy creatures be pleasing unto many, because they be good, whom yet Thou pleasest not in them, when they prefer to enjoy them, to Thee); and another, that when a man sees a thing that it is good, God should in him see that it is good, so, namely, that He should be loved in that which He made, Who cannot be loved, but by the Holy Ghost which He hath given. Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Which is given unto us: by Whom we see that whatsoever in any degree is, is good. For from Him it is, who Himself Is not in degree, but what He Is, Is.

CHAPTER XXXII

OF THE PARTICULAR WORKS OF GOD, MORE ESPECIALLY OF MAN.

Thanks to Thee, O Lord. We behold the heaven and earth, whether the corporeal part, superior and inferior, or the spiritual and corporeal creature; and in the adorning of these parts, whereof the universal pile of the world, or rather the universal creation, doth consist, we see light made, and divided from the darkness. We see the firmament of heaven, whether that primary body of the world, between the spiritual upper waters and the inferior corporeal waters, or (since this also is called heaven) this space of air through which wander the fowls of heaven, betwixt those waters which are in vapours borne above them, and in clear nights distill down in dew; and those heavier waters which flow along the earth. We behold a face of waters gathered together in the fields of the sea; and the dry land both void, and formed so as to be visible and harmonized, yea and the matter of herbs and trees. We behold the lights shining from above, the sun to suffice for the day, the moon and the stars to cheer the night; and that by all these, times should be marked and signified. We behold on all sides a moist element, replenished with fishes, beasts, and birds; because the grossness of the air, which bears up the flights of birds, thickeneth itself by the exhalation of the waters. We behold the face of the earth decked out with earthly creatures, and man, created after Thy image and likeness, even through that Thy very image and likeness (that is the power of reason and understanding), set over all irrational creatures. And as in his soul there is one power which has dominion by directing, another made subject, that it might obey; so was there for the man, corporeally also, made a woman, who in the mind of her reasonable understanding should have a parity of nature, but in the sex of her body, should be in like manner subject to the sex of her husband, as the appetite of doing is fain to conceive the skill of right-doing from the reason of the mind. These things we behold, and they are severally good, and altogether very good.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE WORLD WAS CREATED BY GOD OUT OF NOTHING.

Let Thy works praise Thee, that we may love Thee; and let us love Thee, that Thy works may praise Thee, which from time have beginning and ending, rising and setting, growth and decay, form and privation. They have then their succession of morning and evening, part secretly, part apparently; for they were made of nothing, by Thee, not of Thee; not of any matter not Thine, or that was before, but of matter concreated (that is, at the same time created by Thee), because to its state without form, Thou without any interval of time didst give form. For seeing the matter of heaven and earth is one thing, and the form another, Thou madest the matter of merely nothing, but the form of the world out of the matter without form: yet both together, so that the form should follow the matter, without any interval of delay.

CHAPTER XXXIV

HE BRIEFLY REPEATS THE ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS (CHAPTER 1), AND CONFESSES THAT WE SEE IT BY THE DIVINE SPIRIT.

We have also examined what Thou willedst to be shadowed forth, whether by the creation, or the relation of things in such an order. And we have seen, that things singly are good, and together very good, in Thy Word, in Thy Only-Begotten, both heaven and earth, the Head and the body of the Church, in Thy predestination before all times, without morning and evening. But when Thou begannest to execute in time the things predestinated, to the end Thou mightest reveal hidden things, and rectify our disorders; for our sins hung over us, and we had sunk into the dark deep; and Thy good Spirit was borne over us, to help us in due season; and Thou didst justify the ungodly, and dividest them from the wicked; and Thou madest the firmament of authority of Thy Book between those placed above, who were to he docile unto Thee, and those under, who were to be subject to them: and Thou gatheredst together the society of unbelievers into one conspiracy, that the zeal of the faithful might appear, and they might bring forth works of mercy, even distributing to the poor their earthly riches, to obtain heavenly. And after this didst Thou kindle certain lights in the firmament, Thy Holy ones, having the word of life; and shining with an eminent authority set on high through spiritual gifts; after that again, for the initiation of the unbelieving Gentiles, didst Thou out of corporeal matter produce the Sacraments, and visible miracles, and forms of words according to the firmament of Thy Book, by which the faithful should be blessed and multiplied. Next didst Thou form the living soul of the faithful, through affections well ordered by the vigour of continency: and after that, the mind subjected to Thee alone and needing to imitate no human authority, hast Thou renewed after Thy image and likeness; and didst subject its rational actions to the excellency of the understanding, as the woman to the man; and to all Offices of Thy Ministry, necessary for the perfecting of the faithful in this life, Thou willedst, that for their temporal uses, good things, fruitful to themselves in time to come, be given by the same faithful. All these we see, and they are very good, because Thou seest them in us, Who hast given unto us Thy Spirit, by which we might see them, and in them love Thee.

CHAPTER XXXV

HE PRAYS GOD FOR THAT PEACE OF REST WHICH HATH NO EVENING.

O Lord God, give peace unto us: (for Thou hast given us all things;) the peace of rest, the peace of the Sabbath, which hath no evening. For all this most goodly array of things very good, having finished their courses, is to pass away, for in them there was morning and evening.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE SEVENTH DAY, WITHOUT EVENING AND SETTING, THE IMAGE OF ETERNAL LIFE AND REST IN GOD.

But the seventh day hath no evening, nor hath it setting; because Thou hast sanctified it to an everlasting continuance; that that which Thou didst after Thy works which were very good, resting the seventh day, although Thou madest them in unbroken rest, that may the voice of Thy Book announce beforehand unto us, that we also after our works (therefore very good, because Thou hast given them us), shall rest in Thee also in the Sabbath of eternal life.

CHAPTER XXXVII

OF REST IN GOD, WHO EVER WORKETH, AND YET IS EVER AT REST.

For then shalt Thou rest in us, as now Thou workest in us; and so shall that be Thy rest through us, as these are Thy works through us. But Thou, Lord, ever workest, and art ever at rest. Nor dost Thou see in time, nor art moved in time, nor restest in a time; and yet Thou makest things seen in time, yea the times themselves, and the rest which results from time.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND OF MEN, AND OF THE REPOSE WHICH IS TO BE SOUGHT FROM GOD ONLY.

We therefore see these things which Thou madest, because they are: but they are, because Thou seest them. And we see without, that they are, and within, that they are good, but Thou sawest them there, when made, where Thou sawest them, yet to be made. And we were at a later time moved to do well, after our hearts had conceived of Thy Spirit; but in the former time we were moved to do evil, forsaking Thee; but Thou, the One, the Good God, didst never cease doing good. And we also have some good works, of Thy gift, but not eternal; after them we trust to rest in Thy great hallowing. But Thou, being the Good which needeth no good, art ever at rest, because Thy rest is Thou Thyself. And what man can teach man to understand this? or what Angel, an Angel? or what Angel, a man? Let it be asked of Thee, sought in Thee, knocked for at Thee; so, so shall it be received, so shall it be found, so shall it be opened. Amen.

GRATIAS TIBI DOMINE

THE CORRECTION
OF THE DONATISTS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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(DE CORRECTIONE DONATISTARUM LIBER SEU EPISTOLA CLXXXV)

ST. AUGUSTIN.

CIRCA A.D. 417.

TRANSLATED BY

REV. J. R. KING, M.A.,

VICAR OF ST. PETER’S IN THE EAST, OXFORD; AND LATE FELLOW AND TUTOR OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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A Treatise Concerning The Correction Of The Donatists. Or Epistle CLXXXV

A Letter of Augustin to Boniface, who, as we learn from Epistle 220, was Tribune, and afterwards Count in Africa. In it Augustin shows that the heresy of the Donatists has nothing in common with that of Arius; and points out the moderation with which it was possible to recall the heretics to the communion of the Church through awe of the imperial laws. He adds remarks concerning the savage conduct of the Donatists and Circumcelliones, concluding with a discussion of the unpardonable nature of the sin against the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER 1

1. I must express my satisfaction, and congratulations, and admiration, my son Boniface, in that, amid all the cares of wars and arms, you are eagerly anxious to know concerning the things that are of God. From hence it is clear that in you it is actually a part of your military valor to serve in truth the faith which is in Christ. To place, therefore, briefly before your Grace the difference between the errors of the Arians and the Donatists, the Arians say that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are different in substance; whereas the Donatists do not say this, but acknowledge the unity of substance in the Trinity. And if some even of them have said that the Son was inferior to the Father, yet they have not denied that He is of the same substance; whilst the greater part of them declare that they hold entirely the same belief regarding the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost as is held by the Catholic Church. Nor is this the actual question in dispute with them; but they carry on their unhappy strife solely on the question of communion, and in the perversity of their error maintain rebellious hostility against the unity of Christ. But sometimes, as we have heard, some of them, wishing to conciliate the Goths, since they see that they are not without a certain amount of power, profess to entertain the same belief as they. But they are

refuted by the authority of their own leaders; for Donatus himself, of whose party they boast themselves to be, is never said to have held this belief

2. Let not, however, things like these disturb thee, my beloved son. For it is foretold to us that there must needs be heresies and stumbling-blocks, that we may be instructed among our enemies; and that so both our faith and our love may be the more approved,—our faith, namely, that we should not be deceived by them; and our love, that we should take the utmost pains we can to correct the erring ones themselves; not only watching that they should do no injury to the weak, and that they should be delivered from their wicked error, but also praying for them, that God would open their understanding, and that they might comprehend the Scriptures. For in the sacred books, where the Lord Christ is made manifest, there is also His Church declared; but they, with wondrous blindness, while they would know nothing of Christ Himself save what is revealed in the Scriptures, yet form their notion of His Church from the vanity of human falsehood, instead of learning what it is on the authority of the sacred books.

3. They recognize Christ together with us in that which is written, “They pierced my hands and my feet. They can tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture;” and yet they refuse to recognize the Church in that which follows shortly after: “All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord’s; and He is the Governor among the nations.” They recognize Christ together with us in that which is written, “The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee;” and they will not recognize the Church in that which follows: “Ask of me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.” They recognize Christ together with us in that which the Lord Himself says in the gospel, “Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day;” and they will not recognize the Church in that which follows: “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” And the testimonies in the sacred books are without number, all of which it has not been necessary for me to crowd together into this book.

And in all of them, as the Lord Christ is made manifest, whether in accordance with His Godhead, in which He is equal to the Father, so that, “In the beginning was the Word, and; the Word was with God, and the Word was God;” or according to the humility of the flesh which He took upon Him, whereby “the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us;” so is His Church made manifest, not in Africa alone, as they most impudently venture in the madness of their vanity to assert, but spread abroad throughout the world.

4. For they prefer to the testimonies of Holy Writ their own contentions, because, in the case of Caecilianus, formerly a bishop of the Church of Carthage, against whom they brought charges which they were and are unable to substantiate, they separated themselves from the Catholic Church,—that is, from the unity of all nations. Although, even if the charges had been true which were brought by them against Caecilianus, and could at length be proved to us, yet, though we might pronounce an anathema upon him even in the grave, we are still bound not for the sake of any man to leave the Church, which rests for its foundation on divine witness, and is not the figment of litigious opinions, seeing that it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. For we cannot allow that if Caecilianus had erred,—a supposition which I make without prejudice to his integrity,—Christ should therefore have forfeited His inheritance. It is easy for a man to believe of his fellow-men either what is true or what is false; but it marks abandoned impudence to desire to condemn the communion of the whole world on account of charges alleged against a man, of which you cannot establish the truth in the face of the world.

5. Whether Caecilianus was ordained by men who had delivered up the sacred books, I do not know. I did not see it, I heard it only from his enemies. It is not declared to me in the law of God, or in the utterances of the prophets, or in the holy poetry of the Psalms, or in the writings of any one of Christ’s apostles, or in the eloquence of Christ Himself. But the evidence of all the several scriptures with one accord proclaims the Church spread abroad throughout the world, with which the faction of Donatus does not hold communion. The law of God declared, “In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” The Lord said by the mouth of His prophet,

“From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, a pure sacrifice shall be offered unto my name: for my name shall be great among the heathen.” The Lord said through the Psalmist, “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.” The Lord said by His apostle, “The gospel is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit.” The Son of God said with His own mouth, “Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and even unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Caecilianus, the bishop of the Church of Carthage, is accused with the contentiousness of men; the Church of Christ, established among all nations, is recommended by the voice of God. Mere piety, truth, and love forbid us to receive against Caecilianus the testimony of men whom we do not find in the Church, which has the testimony of God; for those who do not follow the testimony of God have forfeited the weight which otherwise would attach to their testimony as men.

CHAPTER 2

6. I would add, moreover, that they themselves, by making it the subject of an accusation, referred the case of Caecilianus to the decision of the Emperor Constantine; and that, even after the bishops had pronounced their judgment, finding that they could not crush Caecilianus, they brought him in person before the above-named emperor for trial, in the most determined spirit of persecution. And so they were themselves the first to do what they censure in us, in order that they may deceive the unlearned, saying that Christians ought not to demand any assistance from Christian emperors against the enemies of Christ. And this, too, they did not dare to deny in the conference which we held at the same time in Carthage: nay, they even venture to make it a matter of boasting that their fathers had laid a criminal indictment against Caecilianus before the emperor; adding furthermore a lie, to the effect that they had there worsted him, and procured his condemnation. How then can they be otherwise than persecutors, seeing that when they persecuted Caecilianus by their accusations, and were overcome by him, they sought to claim false glory for themselves by a most shameless life; not only considering it no reproach, but glorying in it as conducive to their praise, if they could prove that Caecilianus had been

condemned on the accusation of their fathers? But in regard to the manner in which they were overcome at every turn in the conference itself, seeing that the records are exceedingly voluminous, and it would be a serious matter to have them read to you while you are occupied in other matters that are essential to the peace of Rome, perhaps it may be possible to have a digest of them read to you, which I believe to be in the possession of my brother and fellow-bishop Optatus; or if he has not a copy, he might easily procure one from the church at Sitifa; for I can well believe that even that volume will prove wearisome enough to you from its lengthiness, amid the burden of your many cares

7. For the Donatists met with the same fate as the accusers of the holy Daniel. For as the lions were turned against them, so the laws by which they had proposed to crush an innocent victim were turned against the Donatists; save that, through the mercy of Christ, the laws which seemed to be opposed to them are in reality their truest friends; for through their operation many of them have been, and are daily being reformed, and return God thanks that they are reformed, and delivered from their ruinous madness. And those who used to hate are now filled with love; and now that they have recovered their right minds, they congratulate themselves that these most wholesome laws were brought to bear against them, with as much fervency as in their madness they detested them; and are filled with the same spirit of ardent love towards those who yet remain as ourselves, desiring that we should strive in like manner that those with whom they had been like to perish might be saved. For both the physician is irksome to the raging madman, and a father to his undisciplined son,—the former because of the restraint, the latter because of the chastisement which he inflicts; yet both are acting in love. But if they were to neglect their charge, and allow them to perish, this mistaken kindness would more truly be accounted cruelty. For if the horse and mule, which have no understanding, resist with all the force of bites and kicks the efforts of the men who treat their wounds in order to cure them; and yet the men, though they are often exposed to danger from their teeth and heels, and sometimes meet with actual hurt, nevertheless do not desert them till they restore them to health through the pain and annoyance which the healing process gives,—how much more should man refuse to desert his fellow-man, or brother to desert his brother,

lest he should perish everlastingly, being himself now able to comprehend the vastness of the boon accorded to himself in his reformation, at the very time that he complained of suffering persecution?

8. As then the apostle says, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, not being weary in well-doing,” so let all be called to salvation, let all be recalled from the path of destruction,—those who may, by the sermons of Catholic preachers; those who may, by the edicts of Catholic princes; some through those who obey the warnings of God, some through those who obey the emperor’s commands. For, moreover, when emperors enact bad laws on the side of falsehood, as against the truth, those who hold a right faith are approved, and, if they persevere, are crowned; but when the emperors enact good laws on behalf of the truth against falsehood, then those who rage against them are put in fear, and those who understand are reformed. Whosoever, therefore, refuses to obey the laws of the emperors which are enacted against the truth of God, wins for himself a great reward; but whosoever refuses to obey the laws of the emperors which are enacted in behalf of truth, wins for himself great condemnation. For in the times, too, of the prophets, the kings who, in dealing with the people of God, did not prohibit nor annul the ordinances which were issued contrary to God’s commands, are all of them censured; and those who did prohibit and annul them are praised as deserving more than other men. And king Nebuchadnezzar, when he was a servant of idols, enacted an impious law that a certain idol should be worshipped; but those who refused to obey his impious command acted piously and faithfully. And the very same king, when converted by a miracle from God, enacted a pious and praiseworthy law on behalf of the truth, that every one who should speak anything amiss against the true God, the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, should perish utterly, with all his house. If any persons disobeyed this law, and justly suffered the penalty imposed, they might have said what these men say, that they were righteous because they suffered persecution through the law enacted by the king: and this they certainly would have said, had they been as mad as these who make divisions between the members of Christ, and spurn the sacraments of Christ, and take credit for being persecuted, because they are prevented from doing such things by the laws which the emperors have passed to preserve the unity of Christ and boast falsely of

their innocence, and seek from men the glory of martyrdom, which they cannot receive from our Lord.

9. But true martyrs are such as those of whom the Lord says, “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake.” It is not, therefore, those who suffer persecution for their unrighteousness, and for the divisions which they impiously introduce into Christian unity, but those who suffer for righteousness’ sake, that are truly martyrs. For Hagar also suffered persecution at the hands of Sarah; and in that case she who persecuted was righteous, and she unrighteous who suffered persecution. Are we to compare with this persecution which Hagar suffered the case of holy David, who was persecuted by unrighteous Saul? Surely there is in essential difference, not in respect of his suffering, but because he suffered for righteousness’ sake. And the Lord Himself was crucified with two thieves; but those who were joined in their suffering were separated by the difference of its cause. Accordingly, in the psalm, we must interpret of the true martyrs, who wish to be distinguished from false martyrs, the verse in which it is said, “Judge me, O Lord, and distinguish my cause from an ungodly nation.” He does not say, Distinguish my punishment, but “Distinguish my cause.” For the punishment of the impious may be the same; but the cause of the martyrs is always different. To whose mouth also the words are suitable, “They persecute me wrongfully; help Thou me;” in which the Psalmist claimed to have a right to be helped in righteousness, because his adversaries persecuted him wrongfully; for if they had been right in persecuting him, he would have deserved not help, but correction.

10. But if they think that no one can be justified in using violence,—as they said in the course of the conference that the true Church must necessarily be the one which suffers persecution, not the one inflicting it,—in that case I no longer urge what I observed above; because, if the matter stand as they maintain that it does, then Caecilianus must have belonged to the true Church, seeing that their fathers persecuted him, by pressing his accusation even to the tribunal of the emperor himself. For we maintain that he belonged to the true Church, not merely because he suffered persecution, but because he suffered it for righteousness’ sake; but that they were alienated from the Church, not merely because they persecuted, but because

they did so in unrighteousness. This, then, is our position. But if they make no inquiry into the causes for which each person inflicts persecution, or for which he suffers it, but think that it is a sufficient sign of a true Christian that he does not inflict persecution, but suffers it, then beyond all question they include Caecilianus in that definition, who did not inflict, but suffered persecution; and they equally exclude their own fathers from the definition, for they inflicted, but did not suffer it.

11. But this, I say, I forbear to urge. Yet one point I must press: If the true Church is the one which actually suffers persecution, not the one which inflicts it, let them ask the apostle of what Church Sarah was a type, when she inflicted persecution on her hand-maid. For he declares that the free mother of us all, the heavenly Jerusalem, that is to say, the true Church of God, was prefigured in that woman who cruelly entreated her hand-maid. But if we investigate the story further, we shall find that the handmaid rather persecuted Sarah by her haughtiness, than Sarah the handmaid by her severity: for the handmaid was doing wrong to her mistress; the mistress only imposed on her a proper discipline in her haughtiness. Again I ask, if good and holy men never inflict persecution upon any one, but only suffer it, whose words they think that those are in the psalm where we read, “I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them; neither did I turn again till they were consumed?” If, therefore, we wish either to declare or to recognize the truth, there is a persecution of unrighteousness, which the impious inflict upon the Church of Christ; and there is a righteous persecution, which the Church of Christ inflicts upon the impious. She therefore is blessed in suffering persecution for righteousness’ sake; but they are miserable, suffering persecution for unrighteousness. Moreover, she persecutes in the spirit of love, they in the spirit of wrath; she that she may correct, they that they may overthrow: she that she may recall from error, they that they may drive headlong into error. Finally, she persecutes her enemies and arrests them, until they become weary in their vain opinions, so that they should make advance in the truth; but they, returning evil for good, because we take measures for their good, to secure their eternal salvation, endeavor even to strip us of our temporal safety, being so in love with murder, that they commit it on their own persons, when they cannot find victims in any others. For in proportion as the Christian charity

of the Church endeavors to deliver them from that destruction, so that none of them should die, so their madness endeavors either to slay us, that they may feed the lust of their own cruelty, or even to kill themselves, that they may not seem to have lost the power of putting men to death.

CHAPTER 3

12. But those who are unacquainted with their habits think that they only kill themselves now that all the mass of the people are freed from the fearful madness of their usurped dominion, in virtue of the laws which have been passed for the preservation of unity. But those who know what they were accustomed to do before the passing of the laws, do not wonder at their deaths, but call to mind their character; and especially how vast crowds of them used to come in procession to the most frequented ceremonies of the pagans, while the worship of idols still continued,—not with the view of breaking the idols, but that they might be put to death by those who worshipped them. For if they had sought to break the idols under the sanction of legitimate authority, they might, in case of anything happening to them, have had some shadow of a claim to be considered martyrs; but their only object in coming was, that while the idols remained uninjured, they themselves might meet with death. For it was the general custom of the strongest youths among the worshippers of idols, for each of them to offer in sacrifice to the idols themselves any victims that he might have slain. Some went so far as to offer themselves for slaughter to any travellers whom they met with arms, using violent threats that they would murder them if they failed to meet with death at their hands. Sometimes, too, they extorted with violence from any passing judge that they should be put to death by the executioners, or by the officer of his court. And hence we have a story, that a certain judge played a trick upon them, by ordering them to be bound and led away, as though for execution, and so escaped their violence, without injury to himself or them. Again, it was their daily sport to kill themselves, by throwing themselves over precipices, or into the water, or into the fire. For the devil taught them these three modes of suicide, so that, when they wished to die, and could not find any one whom they could terrify into slaying them with his sword, they threw themselves over the rocks, or committed themselves to the fire or the eddying pool. But

who can be thought to have taught them this, having gained possession of their hearts, but he who actually suggested to our Saviour Himself as a duty sanctioned by the law, that He should throw Himself down from a pinnacle of the temple? And his suggestion they would surely have thrust far from them, had they carried Christ, as their Master, in their hearts. But since they have rather given place within them to the devil, they either perish like the herd of swine, whom the legion of devils drove down from the hill-side into the sea, or, being rescued from that destruction, and gathered together in the loving bosom of our Catholic Mother, they are delivered just as the boy was delivered by our Lord, whom his father brought to be healed of the devil, saying that ofttimes he was wont to fall into the fire, and oft into the water

13. Whence it appears that great mercy is shown towards them, when by the force of those very imperial laws they are in the first instance rescued against their will from that sect in which, through the teaching of lying devils, they learned those evil doctrines, so that afterwards they might be made whole in the Catholic Church, becoming accustomed to the good teaching and example which they find in it. For many of the men whom we now admire in the unity of Christ, for the pious fervor of their faith, and for their charity, give thanks to God with great joy that they are no longer in that error which led them to mistake those evil things for good,—which thanks they would not now be offering willingly, had they not first, even against their will, been severed from that impious association. And what are we to say of those who confess to us, as some do every day, that even in the olden days they had long been wishing to be Catholics; but they were living among men among whom those who wished to be Catholics could not be so through the infirmity of fear, seeing that if any one there said a single word in favor of the Catholic Church, he and his house were utterly destroyed at once? Who is mad enough to deny that it was right that assistance should have been given through the imperial decrees, that they might be delivered from so great an evil, whilst those whom they used to fear are compelled in turn to fear, and are either themselves corrected through the same terror, or, at any rate, whilst they pretend to be corrected, they abstain from further persecution of those who really are, to whom they formerly were objects of continual dread?

14. But if they have chosen to destroy themselves, in order to prevent the deliverance of those who had a right to be delivered, and have sought in this way to alarm the pious hearts of the deliverers, so that in their apprehension that some few abandoned men might perish, they should allow others to lose the opportunity of deliverance from destruction, who were either already unwilling to perish, or might have been saved from it by the employment of compulsion; what is in this case the function of Christian charity, especially when we consider that those who utter threats of their own violent and voluntary deaths are very few in number in comparison with the nations that are to be delivered? What then is the function of brotherly love? Does it, because it fears the shortlived fires of the furnace for a few, therefore abandon all to the eternal fires of hell? and does it leave so many, who are either already desirous, or hereafter are not strong enough to pass to life eternal, to perish everlastingly, while taking precautions that some few should not perish by their own hand, who are only living to be a hindrance in the way of the salvation of others, whom they will not permit to live in accordance with the doctrines of Christ, in the hopes that some day or other they may teach them too to hasten their death by their own hand, in the manner which now causes them themselves to be a terror to their neighbors, in accordance with the custom inculcated by their devilish tenets? or does it rather save all whom it can, even though those whom it cannot save should perish in their own infatuation? For it ardently desires that all should live, but it more especially labors that not all should die. But thanks be to the Lord, that both amongst us—not indeed everywhere, but in the great majority of places—and also in the other parts of Africa, the peace of the Catholic Church both has gained and is gaining ground, without any of these madmen being killed. But those deplorable deeds are done in places where there is an utterly furious and useless set of men, who were given to such deeds even in the days of old.

CHAPTER 4

15. And indeed, before those laws were put in force by the emperors of the Catholic faith, the doctrine of the peace and unity of Christ was beginning by degrees to gain ground, and men were coming over to it even from the faction of Donatus, in proportion as each learned more, and became more

willing, and more master of his own actions; although, at the same time, among the Donatists herds of abandoned men were disturbing the peace of the innocent for one reason or another in the spirit of the most reckless madness. What master was there who was not compelled to live in dread of his own servant, if he had put himself under the guardianship of the Donatists? Who dared even threaten one who sought his ruin with punishment? Who dared to exact payment of a debt from one who consumed his stores, or from any debtor whatsoever, that sought their assistance or protection? Under the threat of beating, and burning, and immediate death, all documents compromising the worst of slaves were destroyed, that they might depart in freedom. Notes of hand that had been extracted from debtors were returned to them. Any one who had shown a contempt for their hard words were compelled by harder blows to do what they desired. The houses of innocent persons who had offended them were either razed to the ground or burned. Certain heads of families of honorable parentage, and brought up with a good education were carried away half dead after their deeds of violence, or bound to the mill, and compelled by blows to turn it round, after the fashion of the meanest beasts of burden. For what assistance from the laws rendered by the civil powers was ever of any avail against them? What official ever ventured so much as to breathe in their presence? What agents ever exacted payment of a debt which they had been unwilling to discharge? Who ever endeavored to avenge those who were put to death in their massacres? Except, indeed, that their own madness took revenge on them, when some, by provoking against themselves the swords of men, whom they obliged to kill them under fear of instant death, others by throwing themselves over sundry precipices, others by waters, others by fire, gave themselves over on the several occasions to a voluntary death, and gave up their lives as offerings to the dead by punishments inflicted with their own hands upon themselves

16. These deeds were looked upon with horror by many who were firmly rooted in the same superstitious heresy; and accordingly, when they supposed that it was sufficient to establish their innocence that they were ill contented with such conduct, it was urged against them by the Catholics: If these evil deeds do not pollute your innocence, how then do you maintain that the whole Christian world has been polluted by the alleged sin of

Caecilianus, which are either altogether calumnies, or at least not proved against him? How come you, by a deed of gross impiety, to separate yourselves from the unity of the Catholic Church, as from the threshing-floor of the Lord, which must needs contain, up to the time of the final winnowing, both corn which is to be stored in the garner, and chaff that is to be burned up with fire? And thus some were so convinced by argument as to come over to the unity of the Catholic Church, being prepared even to meet the hostility of abandoned men; whilst the greater number, though equally convinced, and though desirous to do the same, yet dared not make enemies of these men, who were so unbridled in their violence, seeing that some who had come over to us experienced the greatest cruelty at their hands.

17. To this we may add, that in Carthage itself some of the bishops of the same party, making a schism among themselves, and dividing the party of Donatus among the lower orders of the Carthaginian people, ordained as bishop against bishop a certain deacon named Maximianus, who could not brook the control of his own diocesan. And as this displeased the greater part of them, they condemned the aforesaid Maximinus, with twelve others who had been present at his ordination, but gave the rest that were associated in the same schism a chance of returning to their communion on an appointed day. But afterwards some of these twelve, and certain others of those who had had the time of grace allowed to them, but had only returned after the day appointed, were received by them without degradation from their orders; and they did not venture to baptize a second time those whom the condemned ministers had baptized outside the pale of their communion. This action of theirs at once made strongly against them in favor of the Catholic party, so that their mouths were wholly closed. And on the matter being diligently spread abroad, as was only right, in order to cure men’s souls of the evils of schism, and when it was shown in every possible direction by the sermons and discussions of the Catholic divines, that to maintain the peace of Donatus they had not only received back those whom they had condemned, with full recognition of their orders, but had even been afraid to declare that baptism to be void which had been administered outside their Church by men whom they had condemned or even suspended; whilst, in violation of the peace of Christ, they cast in the teeth

of all the world the stain conveyed by contact with some sinners, it matters little with whom, and declared baptism to be consequently void which had been administered even in the very Churches whence the gospel itself had come to Africa;—seeing all this, very many began to be confounded, and blushing before what they saw to be mostly manifest truth, they submitted to correction in greater numbers than was their wont; and men began to breathe with a somewhat freer sense of liberty from their cruelty, and that to a considerably greater extent in every direction.

18. Then indeed they blazed forth with such fury, and were so excited by the goadings of hatred, that scarcely any churches of our communion could be safe against their treachery and violence and most undisguised robberies; scarcely any road secure by which men could travel to preach the peace of the Catholic Church in opposition to their madness, and convict the rashness of their folly by the clear enunciation of the truth. They went so far, besides, in proposing hard terms of reconciliation, not only to the laity or to any of the clergy, but even in a measure to certain of the Catholic bishops. For the only alternative offered was to hold their tongues about the truth, or to endure their savage fury. But if they did not speak about the truth, not only was it impossible for any one to be delivered by their silence, but many were even sure to be destroyed by their submitting to be led astray; while if, by their preaching the truth, the rage of the Donatists was again provoked to vent its madness, though some would be delivered, and those who were already on our side would be strengthened, yet the weak would again be deterred by fear from following the truth. When the Church, therefore, was reduced to these straits in its affliction, any one who thinks that anything was to be endured, rather than that the assistance of God, to be rendered through the agency of Christian emperors, should be sought, does not sufficiently observe that no good account could possibly be rendered for neglect of this precaution.

CHAPTER 5

19. But as to the argument of those men who are unwilling that their impious deeds should be checked by the enactment of righteous laws, when they say that the apostles never sought such measures from the kings of the earth, they do not consider the different character of that age, and that

everything comes in its own season. For what emperor had as yet believed in Christ, so as to serve Him in the cause of piety by enacting laws against impiety, when as yet the declaration of the prophet was only in the course of its fulfillment, “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and their rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed;” and there was as yet no sign of that which is spoken a little later in the same psalm: “Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.” How then are kings to serve the Lord with fear, except by preventing and chastising with religious severity all those acts which are done in opposition to the commandments of the Lord? For a man serves God in one way in that he is man, in another way in that he is also king. In that he is man, he serves Him by living faithfully; but in that he is also king, he serves Him by enforcing with suitable rigor such laws as ordain what is righteous, and punish what is the reverse. Even as Hezekiah served Him, by destroying the groves and the temples of the idols, and the high places which had been built in violation of the commandments of God; or even as Josiah served Him, by doing the same things in his turn; or as the king of the Ninevites served Him, by compelling all the men of his city to make satisfaction to the Lord; or as Darius served Him, by giving the idol into the power of Daniel to be broken, and by casting his enemies into the den of lions; or as Nebuchadnezzar served Him, of whom I have spoken before, by issuing a terrible law to prevent any of his subjects from blaspheming God. In this way, therefore, kings can serve the Lord, even in so far as they are kings, when they do in His service what they could not do were they not kings

20. Seeing, then, that the kings of the earth were not yet serving the Lord in the time of the apostles, but were still imagining vain things against the Lord and against His Anointed, that all might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, it must be granted that at that time acts of impiety could not possibly be prevented by the laws, but were rather performed under their sanction. For the order of events was then so rolling on, that even the Jews were killing those who preached Christ, thinking that they did God service in so doing, just as Christ had foretold, and the heathen were raging against the Christians, and the patience of the martyrs was overcoming

them all. But so soon as the fulfillment began of what is written in a later psalm, “All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him,” what sober-minded man could say to the kings, “Let not any thought trouble you within your kingdom as to who restrains or attacks the Church of your Lord; deem it not a matter in which you should be concerned, which of your subjects may choose to be religious or sacrilegious,” seeing that you cannot say to them, “Deem it no concern of yours which of your subjects may choose to be chaste, or which unchaste?” For why, when free-will is given by God to man, should adulteries be punished by the laws, and sacrilege allowed? Is it a lighter matter that a soul should not keep faith with God, than that a woman should be faithless to her husband? Or if those faults which are committed not in contempt but in ignorance of religious truth are to be visited with lighter punishment, are they therefore to be neglected altogether?

CHAPTER 6

21. It is indeed better (as no one ever could deny) that men should be led to worship God by teaching, than that they should be driven to it by fear of punishment or pain; but it does not follow that because the former course produces the better men, therefore those who do not yield to it should be neglected. For many have found advantage (as we have proved, and are daily proving by actual experiment), in being first compelled by fear or pain, so that they might afterwards be influenced by teaching, or might follow out in act what they had already learned in word. Some, indeed, set before us the sentiments of a certain secular author, who said,

“’Tis well, I ween, by shame the young to train,

And dread of meanness, rather than by pain.”

This is unquestionably true. But while those are better who are guided aright by love, those are certainly more numerous who are corrected by fear. For, to answer these persons out of their own author, we find him saying in another place,

“Unless by pain and suffering thou art taught, Thou canst not guide thyself aright in aught.”

But, moreover, holy Scripture has both said concerning the former better class, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear;” and also concerning the latter lower class, which furnishes the majority, “A servant will not be corrected by words; for though he understand, he will not answer.” In saying, “He will not be corrected by words,” he did not order him to be left to himself, but implied an admonition as to the means whereby he ought to be corrected; otherwise he would not have said, “He will not be corrected by words,” but without any qualification, “He will not be corrected.” For in another place he says that not only the servant, but also the undisdained son, must be corrected with stripes, and that with great fruits as the result; for he says, “Thou shall beat him with the rod, and shall deliver his soul from hell;” and elsewhere he says, “He that spareth the rod hateth his son.” For, give us a man who with right faith and true understanding can say with all the energy of his heart, “My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” and for such an one there is no need of the terror of hell, to say nothing of temporal punishments or imperial laws, seeing that with him it is so indispensable a blessing to cleave unto the Lord, that he not only dreads being parted from that happiness as a heavy punishment, but can scarcely even bear delay in its attainment. But yet, before the good sons can say they have “a desire to depart, and to be with Christ,” many must first be recalled to their Lord by the stripes of temporal scourging, like evil slaves, and in some degree like good-for-nothing fugitives.

22. For who can possibly love us more than Christ, who laid down His life for His sheep? And yet, after calling Peter and the other apostles by His words alone, when He came to summon Paul, who was before called Saul, subsequently the powerful builder of His Church, but originally its cruel persecutor, He not only constrained him with His voice, but even dashed him to the earth with His power; and that He might forcibly bring one who was raging amid the darkness of infidelity to desire the light of the heart, He first struck him with physical blindness of the eyes. If that punishment had not been inflicted, he would not afterwards have been healed by it; and since he had been wont to see nothing with his eyes open, if they had

remained unharmed, the Scripture would not tell us that at the imposition of Ananias' hands, in order that their sight might be restored, there fell from them as it had been scales, by which the sight had been obscured. Where is what the Donatists were wont to cry: Man is at liberty to believe or not believe? Towards whom did Christ use violence? Whom did He compel? Here they have the Apostle Paul. Let them recognize in his case Christ first compelling, and afterwards teaching; first striking, and afterwards consoling. For it is wonderful how he who entered the service of the gospel in the first instance under the compulsion of bodily punishment, afterwards labored more in the gospel than all they who were called by word only; and he who was compelled by the greater influence of fear to love, displayed that perfect love which casts out fear.

23. Why, therefore, should not the Church use force in compelling her lost sons to return, if the lost sons compelled others to their destruction? Although even men who have not been compelled, but only led astray, are received by their loving mother with more affection if they are recalled to her bosom through the enforcement of terrible but salutary laws, and are the objects of far more deep congratulation than those whom she had never lost. Is it not a part of the care of the shepherd, when any sheep have left the flock, even though not violently forced away, but led astray by tender words and coaxing blandishments, to bring them back to the fold of his master when he has found them, by the fear or even the pain of the whip, if they show symptoms of resistance; especially since, if they multiply with growing abundance among the fugitive slaves and robbers, he has the more right in that the mark of the master is recognized on them, which is not outraged in those whom we receive but do not rebaptize? For the wandering of the sheep is to be corrected in such wise that the mark of the Redeemer should not be destroyed on it. For even if any one is marked with the royal stamp by a deserter who is marked with it himself, and the two receive forgiveness, and the one returns to his service, and the other begins to be in the service in which he had no part before, that mark is not effaced in either of the two, but rather it is recognized in both of them, and approved with the honor which is due to it because it is the king's. Since then they cannot show that the destination is bad to which they are compelled, they maintain that they ought to be compelled by force even to what is good. But we have

shown that Paul was compelled by Christ; therefore the Church, in trying to compel the Donatists, is following the example of her Lord, though in the first instance she waited in the hopes of needing to compel no one, that the prediction of the prophet might be fulfilled concerning the faith of kings and peoples.

24. For in this sense also we may interpret without absurdity the declaration of the blessed Apostle Paul, when he says, “Having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.” Whence also the Lord Himself bids the guests in the first instance to be invited to His great supper, and afterwards compelled; for on His servants making answer to Him, “Lord, it is done as Thou hast commanded, and yet there is room,” He said to them, “Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in.” In those, therefore, who were first brought in with gentleness, the former obedience is fulfilled; but in those who were compelled, the disobedience is avenged. For what else is the meaning of “Compel them to come in,” after it had previously said, “Bring in,” and the answer had been made, “Lord, it is done as Thou commanded, and yet there is room”? If He had wished it to be understood that they were to be compelled by the terrifying force of miracles, many divine miracles were rather wrought in the sight of those who were first called, especially in the sight of the Jews, of whom it was said, “The Jews require a sign;” and, moreover, among the Gentiles themselves the gospel was so commended by miracles in the time of the apostles, that had these been the means by which they were ordered to be compelled, we might rather have had good grounds for supposing, as I said before, that it was the earlier guests who were compelled. Wherefore, if the power which the Church has received by divine appointment in its due season, through the religious character and the faith of kings, be the instrument by which those who are found in the highways and hedges—that is, in heresies and schisms—are compelled to come in, then let them not find fault with being compelled, but consider whether they be so compelled. The supper of the Lord is the unity of the body of Christ, not only in the sacrament of the altar, but also in the bond of peace. Of the Donatists themselves, indeed, we can say that they compel no man to any good thing; for whomsoever they compel, they compel to nothing else but evil.

CHAPTER 7

25. However, before those laws were sent into Africa by which men are compelled to come in to the sacred Supper, it seemed to certain of the brethren, of whom I was one, that although the madness of the Donatists was raging in every direction, yet we should not ask of the emperors to ordain that heresy should absolutely cease to be, by sanctioning a punishment to be inflicted on all who wished to live in it; but that they should rather content themselves with ordaining that those who either preached the Catholic truth with their voice, or established it by their study, should no longer be exposed to the furious violence of the heretics. And this they thought might in some measure be effected, if they would take the law which Theodosius, of pious memory, enacted generally against heretics of all kinds, to the effect that any heretical bishop or clergyman, being found in any place, should be fined ten pounds of gold, and confirm it in more express terms against the Donatists, who denied that they were heretics; but with such reservations, that the fine should not be inflicted upon all of them, but only in those districts where the Catholic Church suffered any violence from their clergy, or from the Circumcelliones, or at the hands of any of their people; so that after a formal complaint had been made by the Catholics who had suffered the violence, the bishops or other ministers should forthwith be obliged, under the commission given to the officers, to pay the fine. For we thought that in this way, if they were terrified and no longer dared do anything of the sort, the Catholic truth might be freely taught and held under such conditions, that while no one was compelled to it, any one might follow it who was anxious to do so without intimidation, so that we might not have false and pretended Catholics. And although a different view was held by other brethren, who either were more advanced in years, or had experience of many states and places where we saw the true Catholic Church firmly established, which had, however, been planted and confirmed by God’s great goodness at a time when men were compelled to come in to the Catholic communion by the laws of previous emperors, yet we carried our point, to the effect that the measure which I have described above should be sought in preference from the emperors: it was decreed in our council, and envoys were sent to the court of the Count

26. But God in His great mercy, knowing how necessary was the terror inspired by these laws, and a kind of medicinal inconvenience for the cold and wicked hearts of many men, and for that hardness of heart which cannot be softened by words, but yet admits of softening through the agency of some little severity of discipline, brought it about that our envoys could not obtain what they had undertaken to ask. For our arrival had already been anticipated by the serious complaints of certain bishops from other districts, who had suffered much ill-treatment at the hands of the Donatists themselves, and had been thrust out from their sees; and, in particular, the attempt to murder Maximianus, the Catholic bishop of the Church of Bagai, under circumstances of incredible atrocity, had caused measures to be taken which left our deputation nothing to do. For a law had already been published, that the heresy of the Donatists, being of so savage a description that mercy towards it really involved greater cruelty than its very madness wrought, should for the future be prevented not only from being violent, but from existing with impunity at all; but yet no capital punishment was imposed upon it, that even in dealing with those who were unworthy, Christian gentleness might be observed, but a pecuniary fine was ordained, and sentence of exile was pronounced against their bishops or ministers.

27. With regard to the aforesaid bishop of Bagai, in consequence of his claim being allowed in the ordinary courts, after each party had been heard in turn, in a basilica of which the Donatists had taken possession, as being the property of the Catholics, they rushed upon him as he was standing at the altar, with fearful violence and cruel fury, beat him savagely with cudgels and weapons of every kind, and at last with the very boards of the broken altar. They also wounded him with a dagger in the groin so severely, that the effusion of blood would have soon put an end to his life, had not their further cruelty proved of service for its preservation; for, as they were dragging him along the ground thus severely wounded, the dust forced into the spouting vein stanched the blood, whose effusion was rapidly on the way to cause his death. Then, when they had at length abandoned him, some of our party tried to carry him off with psalms; but his enemies, inflamed with even greater rage, tore him from the hands of those who were carrying him, inflicting grievous punishment on the Catholics, whom they

put to flight, being far superior to them in numbers, and easily inspiring terror by their violence. Finally, they threw him into a certain elevated tower, thinking that he was by this time dead, though in fact he still breathed. Lighting then on a soft heap of earth, and being espied by the light of a lamp by some men who were passing by at night, he was recognized and picked up, and being carried to a religious house, by dint of great care, was restored in a few days from his state of almost hopeless danger. Rumor, however, had carried the tidings even across the sea that he had been killed by the violence of the Donatists; and when afterwards he himself went abroad, and was most unexpectedly seen to be alive, he showed, by the number, the severity, and the freshness of his wounds, how fully rumor had been justified in bringing tidings of his death.

28. He sought assistance, therefore, from the Christian emperor, not so much with any desire of revenging himself, as with the view of defending the Church entrusted to his charge. And if he had omitted to do this, he would have deserved not to be praised for his forbearance, but to be blamed for negligence. For neither was the Apostle Paul taking precautions on behalf of his own transitory life, but for the Church of God when he caused the plot of those who had conspired to slay him to be made known to the Roman captain, the effect of which was that he was conducted by an escort of armed soldiers to the place where they proposed to send him, that he might escape the ambush of his foes. Nor did he for a moment hesitate to invoke the protection of the Roman laws, proclaiming that he was a Roman citizen, who at that time could not be scourged; and again, that he might not be delivered to the Jews who sought to kill him, he appealed to Caesar,—a Roman emperor, indeed, but not a Christian. And by this he showed sufficiently plainly what was afterwards to be the duty of the ministers of Christ, when in the midst of the dangers of the Church they found the emperors Christians. And hence therefore, it came about that a religious and pious emperor, when such matters were brought to his knowledge, thought it well, by the enactment of most pious laws, entirely to correct the error of this great impiety, and to bring those who bore the standards of Christ against the cause of Christ into the unity of the Catholic Church, even by terror and compulsion, rather than merely to take away their power of doing

violence, and to leave them the freedom of going astray, and perishing in their error.

29. Presently, when the laws themselves arrived in Africa, in the first place those who were already seeking an opportunity for doing so, or were afraid of the raging madness of the Donatists, or were previously deterred by a feeling of unwillingness to offend their friends, at once came over to the Church. Many, too, who were only restrained by the force of custom handed down in their homes from their parents, but had never before considered what was the groundwork of the heresy itself,—had never, indeed, wished to investigate and contemplate its nature,—beginning now to use their observation, and finding nothing in it that could compensate for such serious loss as they were called upon to suffer, became Catholics without any difficulty; for, having been made careless by security, they were now instructed by anxiety. But when all these had set the example, it was followed by many who were less qualified of themselves to understand what was the difference between the error of the Donatists and Catholic truth.

30. Accordingly, when the great masses of the people had been received by the true mother with rejoicing into her bosom, there remained outside cruel crowds, persevering with unhappy animosity in that madness. Even of these the greater number communicated in feigned reconciliation, and others escaped notice from the scantiness of their numbers. But those who feigned conformity, becoming by degrees accustomed to our communion, and hearing the preaching of the truth, especially after the conference and disputation which took place between us and their bishops at Carthage, were to a great extent brought to a right belief. Yet in certain places, where a more obstinate and implacable body prevailed, whom the smaller number that entertained better views about communion with us could not resist, or where the masses were under the influence of a few more powerful leaders, whom they followed in a wrong direction, our difficulties continued somewhat longer. Of these places there are a few in which trouble still exists, in the course of which the Catholics, and especially the bishops and clergy, have suffered many terrible hardships, which it would take too long to go through in detail, seeing that some of them had their eyes put out, and

one bishop his hands and tongue cut off, while some were actually murdered. I say nothing of massacres of the most cruel description, and robberies of houses, committed in nocturnal burglaries, with the burning not only of private houses, but even of churches,—some being found abandoned enough to cast the sacred books into the flames.

31. But we were consoled for the suffering inflicted on us by these evils, by the fruit which resulted from them. For wherever such deeds were committed by unbelievers, there Christian unity has advanced with greater fervency and perfection, and the Lord is praised with greater earnestness for having deigned to grant that His servants might win their brethren by their sufferings, and might gather together into the peace of eternal salvation through His blood His sheep who were dispersed abroad in deadly error. The Lord is powerful and full of compassion, to whom we daily pray that He will give repentance to the rest as well, that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, by whom they are taken captive at his will, though now they only seek materials for calumniating us, and returning to us evil for good; because they have not the knowledge to make them understand what feelings and love we continue to have towards them, and how we are anxious, in accordance with the injunction of the Lord, given to His pastors by the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel, to bring again that which was driven away, and to seek that which was lost.

CHAPTER 8

32. But they, as we have sometimes said before in other places, do not charge themselves with what they do to us; while, on the other hand, they charge us with what they do to themselves. For which of our party is there who would desire, I do not say that one of them should perish, but should even lose any of his possessions? But if the house of David could not earn peace on any other terms except that Absalom his son should have been slain in the war which he was waging against his father, although he had most carefully given strict injunctions to his followers that they should use their utmost endeavors to preserve him alive and safe, that his paternal affection might be able to pardon him on his repentance, what remained for him except to weep for the son that he had lost, and to console himself in his sorrow by reflecting on the acquisition of peace for his kingdom? The

same, then, is the case with the Catholic Church, our mother; for when war is waged against her by men who are certainly different from sons, since it must be acknowledged that from the great tree, which by the spreading of its branches is extended over all the world, this little branch in Africa is broken off, whilst she is willing in her love to give them birth, that they may return to the root, without which they cannot have the true life, at the same time if she collects the remainder in so large a number by the loss of some, she soothes and cures the sorrow of her maternal heart by the thoughts of the deliverance of such mighty nations; especially when she considers that those who are lost perish by a death which they brought upon themselves, and not, like Absalom, by the fortune of war. And if you were to see the joy of those who are delivered in the peace of Christ, their crowded assemblies, their eager zeal, the gladsomeness with which they flock together, both to hear and sing hymns, and to be instructed in the word of God; the great grief with which many of them recall to mind their former error, the joy with which they come to the consideration of the truth which they have learned, with the indignation and detestation which they feel towards their lying teachers, now that they have found out what falsehoods they disseminated concerning our sacraments; and how many of them, moreover, acknowledge that they long ago desired to be Catholics, but dared not take the step in the midst of men of such violence,—if, I say, you were to see the congregations of these nations delivered from such perdition, then you would say that it would have been the extreme of cruelty, if in the fear that certain desperate men, in number not to be compared with the multitudes of those who were rescued, might be burned in fires which they voluntarily kindled for themselves, these others had been left to be lost for ever, and to be tortured in fires which shall not be quenched

33. For if two men were dwelling together in one house, which we knew with absolute certainty to be upon the point of falling down, and they were unwillingly to believe us when we warned them of the danger, and persisted in remaining in the house; if it were in our power to rescue them, even against their will, and we were afterwards to show them the ruin threatening their house, so that they should not dare to return again within its reach, I think that if we abstained from doing it, we should well deserve the charge

of cruelty. And further, if one of them should say to us, Since you have entered the house to save our lives, I shall forthwith kill myself; while the other was not indeed willing to come forth from the house, nor to be rescued, but yet had not the hardihood to kill himself: which alternative should we choose,—to leave both of them to be overwhelmed in the ruin, or that, while one at any rate was delivered by our merciful efforts, the other should perish by no fault of ours, but rather by his own? No one is so unhappy as not to find it easy enough to deride what should be done in such a case. And I have proposed the question of two individuals,—one, that is to say, who is lost, and one who is delivered; what then must we think of the case where some few are lost, and an innumerable multitude of nations are delivered? For there are actually not so many persons who thus perish of their own free will, as there are estates, villages, streets, fortresses, municipal towns, cities, that are delivered by the laws under consideration from that fatal and eternal destruction.

34. But if we were to consider the matter under discussion with yet greater care, I think that if there were a large number of persons in the house which was going to fall, and any single one of them could be saved, and when we endeavored to effect his rescue, the others were to kill themselves by jumping out of the windows, we should console ourselves in our grief for the loss of the rest by the thoughts of the safety of the one; and we should not allow all to perish without a single rescue, in the fear lest the remainder should destroy themselves. What then should we think of the work of mercy to which we ought to apply ourselves, in order that men may attain eternal life and escape eternal punishment, if true reason and benevolence compel us to give such aid to men, in order to secure for them a safety which is not only temporal, but very short,—for the brief space of their life on earth?

CHAPTER 9

35. As to the charge that they bring against us, that we covet and plunder their possessions, I would that they would become Catholics, and possess in peace and love with us, not only what they call theirs, but also what confessedly belongs to us. But they are so blinded with the desire of uttering calumnies, that they do not observe how inconsistent their statements are with one another. At any rate, they assert, and seem to make

it a subject of most invidious complaint among themselves, that we constrain them to come in to our communion by the violent authority of the laws,—which we certainly should not do by any means, if we wished to gain possession of their property. What avaricious man ever wished for another to share his possessions? Who that was inflamed with the desire of empire, or elated by the pride of its possession, ever wished to have a partner? Let them at any rate look on those very men who once belonged to them, but now are our brethren joined to us by the bond of fraternal affection, and see how they hold not only what they used to have, but also what was ours, which they did not have before; which yet, if we are living as poor in fellowship with poor, belongs to us and them alike; whilst, if we possess of our private means enough for our wants, it is no longer ours, inasmuch as we do not commit so infamous an act of usurpation as to claim for our own the property of the poor, for whom we are in some sense the trustees

36. Everything, therefore, that was held in the name of the churches of the party of Donatus, was ordered by the Christian emperors, in their pious laws, to pass to the Catholic Church, with the possession of the buildings themselves. Seeing, then, that there are with us poor members of those said churches who used to be maintained by these same paltry possessions, let them rather cease themselves to covet what belongs to others whilst they remain outside, and so let them enter within the bond of unity, that we may all alike administer, not only the property which they call their own, but also with it what is asserted to be ours. For it is written “All are yours; and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.” Under Him as our Head, let us all be one in His one body; and in all such matters as you speak of, let us follow the example which is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles: “They were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.” Let us love what we sing: “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” that so they may know, by their own experience, with what perfect truth their mother, the Catholic Church, calls out to them what the blessed apostle writes to the Corinthians: “I seek not yours, but you.”

37. But if we consider what is said in the Book of Wisdom, “Therefore the righteous spoiled the ungodly;” and also what is said in the Proverbs, “The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just;” then we shall see that the question is not, who are in possession of the property of the heretics? but who are in the society of the just? We know, indeed, that the Donatists arrogate to themselves such a store of justice, that they boast not only that they possess it, but that they also bestow it upon other men. For they say that any one whom they have baptized is justified by them, after which there is nothing left for them but to say to the person who is baptized by them that he must needs believe on him who has administered the sacrament; for why should he not do so, when the apostle says, “To him that believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness?” Let him believe, therefore, upon the man by whom he is baptized, if it be none else that justifies him, that his faith may be counted for righteousness. But I think that even they themselves would look with horror on themselves, if they ventured for a moment to entertain such thoughts as these. For there is none that is just and able to justify, save God alone. But the same might be said of them that the apostle says of the Jews, that “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”

38. But far be it from us that any one of our number should call himself in such wise just, that he should either go about to establish his own righteousness, as though it were conferred upon him by himself, whereas it is said to him, “For what hast thou that thou didst not receive?” or venture to boast himself as being without sin in this world, as the Donatists themselves declared in our conference that they were members of a Church which has already neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing,—not knowing that this is only fulfilled in those individuals who depart out of this body immediately after baptism, or after the forgiveness of sins, for which we make petition in our prayers; but that for the Church, as a whole, the time will not come when it shall be altogether without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, till the day when we shall hear the words, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin.”

39. But in this life, when the corruptible body presseth down the soul, if their Church is already of such a character as they maintain, they would not utter unto God the prayer which our Lord has taught us to employ: “Forgive us our debts.” For since all sins have been remitted in baptism, why does the Church make this petition, if already, even in this life, it has neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing? They would also have a fight to despise the warning of the Apostle John, when he cries out in his epistle, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” On account of this hope, the universal Church utters the petition, “Forgive us our debts,” that when He sees that we are not vainglorious, but ready to confess our sins, He may cleanse us from all unrighteousness, and that so the Lord Jesus Christ may show to Himself in that day a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, which now He cleanses with the washing of water in the word: because, on the one hand, there is nothing that remains behind in baptism to hinder the forgiveness of every bygone sin (so long, that is, as baptism is not received to no effect without the Church, but is either administered within the Church, or, at least, if it has been already administered without, the recipient does not remain outside with it); and, on the other hand, whatever pollution of sin, of whatsoever kind, is contracted through the weakness of human nature by those who live here after baptism, is cleansed away in virtue of the same laver’s efficacy. For neither is it of any avail for one who has not been baptized to say, “Forgive us our debts.”

40. Accordingly, He so now cleanses His Church by the washing of water in the word, that He may hereafter show it to Himself as not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing,—altogether beautiful, that is to say, and in absolute perfection, when death shall be “swallowed up in victory.” Now, therefore, in so far as the life is flourishing within us that proceeds from our being born of God, living by faith, so far we are righteous; but in so far as we drag along with us the traces of our mortal nature as derived from Adam, so far we cannot be free from sin. For there is truth both in the statement that “whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin,” and also in the former statement, that “if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” The Lord Jesus, therefore, is both

righteous and able to justify; but we are justified freely by no other grace than His. For there is nothing that justifieth save His body, which is the Church; and therefore, if the body of Christ bears off the spoils of the unrighteous, and the riches of the unrighteous are laid up in store as treasures for the body of Christ, the unrighteous ought not therefore to remain outside, but rather to enter within, that so they may be justified.

41. Whence also we may be sure that what is written concerning the day of judgment, “Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labors,” is not to be taken in such a sense as that the Canaanite shall stand before the face of Israel, though Israel made no account of the labors of the Canaanite; but only as that Naboth shall stand before the face of Ahab, since Ahab made no account of the labors of Naboth, since the Canaanite was unrighteous, while Naboth was a righteous man. In the same way the heathen shall not stand before the face of the Christian, who made no account of his labors, when the temples of the idols were plundered and destroyed; but the Christian shall stand before the face of the heathen, who made no account of his labors, when the bodies of the martyrs were laid low in death. In the same way, therefore, the heretic shall not stand in the face of the Catholic, who made no account of his labors, when the laws of the Catholic emperors were put in force; but the Catholic shall stand in the face of the heretic, who made no account of his labors when the madness of the ungodly Circumcelliones was allowed to have its way. For the passage of Scripture decides the question in itself, seeing that it does not say, Then shall men stand, but “Then shall the righteous stand;” and they shall stand “in great boldness” because they stand in the power of a good conscience.

42. But in this world no one is righteous by his own righteousness,—that is, as though it were wrought by himself and for himself; but as the apostle says, “According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.” But then he goes on to add the following: “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ.” And according to this doctrine, no one can be righteous so long as he is separated from the unity of this body. For in the same manner as if a limb be cut off from the body of a living man, it cannot any

longer retain the spirit of life; so the man who is cut off from the body of Christ, who is righteous, can in no wise retain the spirit of righteousness, even if he retain the form of membership which he received when in the body. Let them therefore come into the framework of this body, and so possess their own labors, not through the lust of lordship, but through the godliness of using them aright. But we, as has been said before, cleanse our wills from the pollution of this concupiscence, even in the judgment of any enemy you please to name as judge, seeing that we use our utmost efforts in entreating the very men of whose labors we avail ourselves to enjoy with us, within the society of the Catholic Church, the fruits both of their labors and of our own.

CHAPTER 10

43. But this, they say, is the very thing which disquiets us,—If we are unrighteous, wherefore do you seek our company? To which question we answer, We seek the company of you who are unrighteous, that you may not remain unrighteous; we seek for you who are lost, that we may rejoice over you as soon as you are found, saying, This our brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found. Why, then, he says, do you not baptize me, that you might wash me from my sins? I reply: Because I do not do despite to the stamp of the monarch, when I correct the ill-doing of a deserter. Why, he says, do I not even do penance in your body? Nay truly, except you have done penance, you cannot be saved; for how shall you rejoice that you have been reformed, unless you first grieve that you had been astray? What, then, he says, do we receive with you, when we come over to your side? I answer, You do not indeed receive baptism, which was able to exist in you outside the framework of the body of Christ, although it could not profit you; but you receive the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace without which no one can see God; and you receive charity, which, as it is written, “shall cover the multitude of sins.” And in regard to this great blessing, without which we have the apostle’s testimony that neither the tongues of men or of angels, nor the understanding of all mysteries, nor the gift of prophecy, nor faith so great as to be able to remove mountains, nor the bestowal of all one’s goods to feed the poor, nor giving one’s body to be burned, can profit anything; if, I say, you think this mighty blessing to be

worthless or of trifling value, you are deservedly but miserably astray; and deservedly you must necessarily perish, unless you come over to Catholic unity

44. If, then, they say, it is necessary that we should repent of having been outside, and hostile to the Church, if we would gain salvation, how comes it that after the repentance which you exact from us we still continue to be clergy, or it may be even bishops in your body? This would not be the case, as indeed, in simple truth, we must confess it should not be the case, were it not that the evil is cured by the compensating power of peace itself. But let them give themselves this lesson, and most especially let those feel sorrow in their hearts, who are lying in this deep death of severance from the Church, that they may recover their life even by this sort of wound inflicted on our Catholic mother Church. For when the bough that has been cut off is grafted in, a new wound is made in the tree, to admit of its reception, that life may be given to the branch which was perishing for lack of the life that is furnished by the root. But when the newly-received branch has become identified with the stock in which it is received, the result is both vigor and fruit; but if they do not become identified, the engrafted bough withers, but the life of the tree continues unimpaired. For there is further a mode of grafting of such a kind, that without cutting away any branch that is within, the branch that is foreign to the tree is inserted, not indeed without a wound, but with the slightest possible wound inflicted on the tree. In like manner, then, when they come to the root which exists in the Catholic Church, without being deprived of any position which belongs to them as clergy or bishops after ever so deep repentance of their error, there is a kind of wound inflicted as it were upon the bark of the mother tree, breaking in upon the strictness of her discipline; but since neither he that planteth is anything, neither he that watereth, so soon as by prayers poured forth to the mercy of God peace is secured through the union of the engrafted boughs with the parent stock, charity then covers the multitude of sins.

45. For although it was made an ordinance in the Church, that no one who had been called upon to do penance for any offense should be admired into holy orders, or return to or continue in the body of the clergy, this was done not to cause despair of any indulgence being granted, but merely to

maintain a rigorous discipline; otherwise an argument will be raised against the keys that were given to the Church, of which we have the testimony of Scripture: “Whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” But lest it should so happen that, after the detection of offenses, a heart swelling with the hope of ecclesiastical preferment might do penance in a spirit of pride, it was determined, with great severity, that after doing penance for any mortal sin, no one should be admitted to the number of the clergy, in order that, when all hope of temporal preferment was done away, the medicine of humility might be endowed with greater strength and truth. For even the holy David did penance for deadly sin, and yet was not degraded from his office. And we know that the blessed Peter, after shedding the bitterest of tears, repented that he had denied his Lord, and yet remained an apostle. But we must not therefore be induced to think that the care of those in later times was in any way superfluous, who, when there was no risk of endangering salvation, added something to humiliation, in order that the salvation might be more thoroughly protected,—having, I suppose, experienced a feigned repentance on the part of some who were influenced by the desire of the power attaching to office. For experience in many diseases necessarily brings in the invention of many remedies. But in cases of this kind, when, owing to the serious ruptures of dissensions in the Church, it is no longer a question of danger to this or that particular individual, but whole nations are lying in ruin, it is right to yield a little from our severity, that true charity may give her aid in healing the more serious evils.

46. Let them therefore feel bitter grief for their detestable error of the past, as Peter did for his fear that led him into falsehood, and let them come to the true Church of Christ, that is, to the Catholic Church our mother; let them be in it clergy, let them be bishops unto its profit, as they have been hitherto in enmity against it. We feel no jealousy towards them, nay, we embrace them; we wish, we advise, we even compel those to come in whom we find in the highways and hedges, although we fail as yet in persuading some of them that we are seeking not their property, but themselves. The Apostle Peter, when he denied his Savior, and wept, and did not cease to be an apostle, had not as yet received the Holy Spirit that was promised; but much more have these men not received Him, when, being severed from the

framework of the body, which is alone enlivened by the Holy Spirit, they have usurped the sacraments of the Church outside the Church and in hostility to the Church, and have fought against us in a kind of civil war, with our own arms and our own standards raised in opposition to us. Let them come; let peace be concluded in the virtue of Jerusalem, which virtue is Christian charity,—to which holy city it is said, “Peace be in thy virtue, and plenteousness within thy palaces.” Let them not exalt themselves against the solicitude of their mother, which she both has entertained and does entertain with the object of gathering within her bosom themselves, and all the mighty nations whom they are, or recently were, deceiving; at them not be puffed up with pride, that she receives them in such wise; let them not attribute to the evil of their own exaltation the good which she on her part does in order to make peace.

47. So it has been her wont to come to the aid of multitudes who were perishing through schisms and heresies. This displeased Lucifer, when it was carried out in receiving and healing those who had perished beneath the poison of the Arian heresy; and, being displeased at it, he fell into the darkness of schism, losing the light of Christian charity. In accordance with this principle the Church of Africa has recognized the Donatists from the very beginning, obeying herein the decree of the bishops who gave sentence in the Church at Rome between Caecilianus and the party of Donatus; and having condemned one bishop named Donatus, who was proved to have been the author of the schism, they determined that the others should be received, after correction, with full recognition of their orders even if they had been ordained outside the Church,—not that they could have the Holy Spirit even outside the unity of the body of Christ, but, in the first place, for the sake of those whom it was possible they might deceive while they remained outside, and prevent from obtaining that gift; and, secondly, that their own weakness also being mercifully received within, might thus be rendered capable of cure, no obstinacy any longer standing in the way to close their eyes against the evidence of truth. For what other intention could have given rise to their own conduct, when they received with full recognition of their orders the followers of Maximianus, whom they had condemned as guilty of sacrilegious schism, as their council shows, and to fill whose places they had already ordained other men, when they saw that

the people did not depart from their company, that all might not be involved in ruin? And on what other ground did they neither speak against nor question the validity of the baptism which had been administered outside by men whom they had condemned? Why, then, do they wonder, why do they complain, and make it the subject of their calumnies, that we receive them in such wise to promote the true peace of Christ, while yet they do not remember what they themselves have done to promote the false peace of Donatus, which is opposed to Christ? For if this act of theirs be borne in mind, and intelligently used in argument against them, they will have no answer whatsoever that they can make.

CHAPTER 11

48. But as to what they say, arguing as follows: If we have sinned against the Holy Ghost, in that we have treated your baptism with contempt, why is it that you seek us, seeing that we cannot possibly receive remission of this sin, as the Lord says, “Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come?”—they do not perceive that according to their interpretation of the passage none can be delivered. For who is there that does not speak against the Holy Ghost and sin against him, whether we take the case of one who is not yet a Christian, or of one who shares in the heresy of Arius, or of Eunomius, or of Macedonius, who all say that He is a creature; or of Photinus, who denies that He has any substance at all, saying that there is only one God, the Father; or of any of the other heretics, whom it would now take too long a time to mention in detail? Are none, therefore, of these to be delivered? Or if the Jews themselves, against whom the Lord directed His reproach, were to believe in Him, would they not be allowed to be baptized? for the Saviour does not say, Shall be forgiven in baptism: but “Shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.”

49. Let them understand, therefore, that it is not every sin, but only some sin, against the Holy Ghost which is incapable of forgiveness. For just as when our Lord said, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin,” it is clear that He did not wish it to be understood that they would have been free from all sin, since they were filled with many grievous sins, but that they would have been free from some special sin, the absence of

which would have left them in a position to receive remission of all the sins which yet remained in them, viz., the sin of not believing in Him when He came to them; for they could not have had this sin, had He not come. In like manner, also, when He said, “Whosoever sinneth against the Holy Ghost,”or, “Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost;” it is clear that He does not refer to every sin of whatsoever kind against the Holy Ghost, in word or deed, but would have us understand some special and peculiar sin. But this is the hardness of heart even to the end of this life, which leads a man to refuse to accept remission of his sins in the unity of the body of Christ, to which life is given by the Holy Ghost. For when He had said to His disciples “Receive the Holy Ghost,” immediately added, Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” Whosoever therefore has resisted or fought against this gift of the grace of God, or has been estranged from it in any way whatever to the end of this mortal life, shall not receive the remission of that sin, either in this world, or in the world to come, seeing that it is so great a sin that in it is included every sin; but it cannot be proved to have been committed by any one, till he has passed away from life. But so long as he lives here, “the goodness of God,” as the apostle says, “is leading him to repentance;” but if he deliberately, with the utmost perseverance in iniquity, as the apostle adds in the succeeding verse, “after his hardness and impenitent heart, treasures up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,” he shall not receive forgiveness, neither in this world, neither in that which is to come.

50. But those with whom we are arguing, or about whom we are arguing, are not to be despaired of, for they are yet in the body; but they cannot seek the Holy Spirit, except in the body of Christ, of which they possess the outward sign outside the Church, but they do not possess the actual reality itself within the Church of which that is the outward sign, and therefore they eat and drink damnation to themselves. For there is but one bread which is the sacrament of unity, seeing that, as the apostle says, “We, being many, are one bread, and one body.” Furthermore, the Catholic Church alone is the body of Christ, of which He is the Head and Saviour of His body. Outside this body the Holy Spirit giveth life to no one seeing that, as the apostle says himself, “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by

the Holy Ghost which is given unto us;” but he is not a partaker of the divine love who is the enemy of unity. Therefore they have not the Holy Ghost who are outside the Church; for it is written of them, “They separate themselves being sensual, having not the Spirit.” But neither does he receive it who is insincerely in the Church, since this is also the intent of what is written: “For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit.” If any one, therefore, wishes to receive the Holy Spirit, let him beware of continuing in alienation from the Church, let him beware of entering it in the spirit of dissimulation; or if he has already entered it in such wise, let him beware of persisting in such dissimulation, in order that he may truly and indeed become united with the tree of life.

51. I have despatched to you a somewhat lengthy epistle, which may prove burdensome among your many occupations. If, therefore, it may be read to you even in portions, the Lord will grant you understanding, that you may have some answer which you can make for the correction and healing of those men who are commended to you as to a faithful son by our mother the Church, that you may correct and heal them, by the aid of the Lord wherever you can, and howsoever you can, either by speaking and replying to them in your own person, or by bringing them into communication with the doctors of the Church.

THE ENCHIRIDION

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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ADDRESSED TO LAURENTIUS;

BEING A TREATISE ON FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE.

TRANSLATED BY PROFESSOR J. F. SHAW, LONDONDERRY.

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Argument

Laurentius having asked Augustin to furnish him with a handbook of Christian doctrine, containing in brief compass answers to several questions which he had proposed, Augustin shows him that these questions can be fully answered by any one who knows the proper objects of faith, hope, and love. He then proceeds, in the first part of the work (Chap. Ix cxiii.), to expound the objects of faith, taking as his text the Apostles’ Creed; and in the course of this exposition, besides refuting divers heresies, he throws out many observations on the conduct of life. The second part of the work (Chap. Cxiv cxvi.) treats of the objects of hope, and consists of a very brief exposition of the several petitions in the Lord’s Prayer. The third and concluding part (Chap. cxvii.-cxxii.) treats of the objects of love, showing the pre-eminence of this grace in the gospel system, that it is the end of the commandment and the fulfilling of the law, and that God himself is love

CHAPTER 1

THE AUTHOR DESIRES THE GIFT OF TRUE WISDOM FOR LAURENTIUS

I Cannot express, my beloved son Laurentius, the delight with which I witness your progress in knowledge, and the earnest desire I have that you should be a wise man: not one of those of whom it is said, “Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” but one of those of whom it is said, “The multitude of the wise is the welfare of the world,” and such as the apostles wishes those to become, whom he tells,” I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.” Now, just as no one can exist of himself, so no one can be wise of himself, but only by the enlightening influence of Him of whom it is written,” All wisdom cometh from the Lord.”

CHAPTER 2

THE FEAR OF GOD IS MAN’S TRUE WISDOM

The true wisdom of man is piety. You find this in the book of holy Job. For we read there what wisdom itself has said to man: “Behold, the fear of the Lord [pietas], that is wisdom.” If you ask further what is meant in that place by pietas, the Greek calls it more definitely theosebeia, that is, the worship of God. The Greeks sometimes call piety eusebeia, which signifies right worship, though this, of course, refers specially to the worship of God. But when we are defining in what man’s true wisdom consists, the most convenient word to use is that which distinctly expresses the fear of God. And can you, who are anxious that I should treat of great matters in few words, wish for a briefer form of expression? Or perhaps you are anxious that this expression should itself be briefly explained, and that I should unfold in a short discourse the proper mode of worshipping God?

CHAPTER 3

GOD IS TO BE WORSHIPPED THROUGH FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE

Now if I should answer, that God is to be worshipped with faith, hope, and love, you will at once say that this answer is too brief, and will ask me briefly to unfold the objects of each of these three graces, viz., what we are to believe, what we are to hope for, and what we are to love. And when I have done this, you will have an answer to all the questions you asked in your letter. If you have kept a copy of your letter, you can easily turn it up and read it over again: if you have not, you will have no difficulty in recalling it when I refresh your memory.

CHAPTER 4

THE QUESTIONS PROPOUNDED BY LAURENTIUS

You are anxious, you say, that I should write a sort of handbook for you, which you might always keep beside you, containing answers to the questions you put, viz.: what ought to be man’s chief end in life; what he ought, in view of the various heresies, chiefly to avoid; to what extent religion is supported by reason; what there is in reason that lends no support to faith, when faith stands alone; what is the starting-point, what the goal, of religion; what is the sum of the whole body of doctrine; what is the sure and proper foundation of the catholic faith. Now, undoubtedly, you will know the answers to all these questions, if you know thoroughly the proper objects of faith, hope, and love. For these must be the chief, nay, the exclusive objects of pursuit in religion. He who speaks against these is either a total stranger to the name of Christ, or is a heretic. These are to be defended by reason, which must have its starting-point either in the bodily senses or in the intuitions of the mind. And what we have neither had experience of through our bodily senses, nor have been able to reach through the intellect, must undoubtedly be believed on the testimony of those witnesses by whom the Scriptures, justly called divine, were written; and who by divine assistance were enabled, either through bodily sense or intellectual perception, to see or to foresee the things in question.

CHAPTER 5

BRIEF ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS

Moreover, when the mind has been imbued with the first elements of that faith which worketh by love, it endeavors by purity of life to attain unto sight, where the pure and perfect in heart know that unspeakable beauty, the full vision of which is supreme happiness. Here surely is an answer to your question as to what is the starting-point, and what the goal: we begin in faith, and are made perfect by sight. This also is the sum of the whole body of doctrine. But the sure and proper foundation of the catholic faith is Christ. “For other foundation,” says the apostle, “can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” Nor are we to deny that this is the proper foundation of the catholic faith, because it may be supposed that some heretics hold this in common with us. For if we carefully consider the things that pertain to Christ, we shall find that, among those heretics who call themselves Christians, Christ is present in name only: in deed and in truth He is not among them. But to show this would occupy us too long, for we should require to go over all the heresies which have existed, which do exist, or which could exist, under the Christian name, and to show that this is true in the case of each,—a discussion which would occupy so many volumes as to be all but interminable.

CHAPTER 6

CONTROVERSY OUT OF PLACE IN A HANDBOOK LIKE THE PRESENT

Now you ask of me a handbook, that is, one that can be carried in the hand, not one to load your shelves. To return, then, to the three graces through which, as I have said, God should be worshipped—faith, hope, and love: to state what are the true and proper objects of each of these is easy. But to defend this true doctrine against the assaults of those who hold an opposite opinion, requires much fuller and more elaborate instruction. And the true way to obtain this instruction is not to have a short treatise put into one's hands, but to have a great zeal kindled in one's heart.

CHAPTER 7

THE CREED AND THE LORD'S PRAYER DEMAND THE EXERCISE OF FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE

For you have the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. What can be briefer to hear or to read? What easier to commit to memory? When, as the result of sin, the human race was groaning under a heavy load of misery, and was in urgent need of the divine compassion, one of the prophets, anticipating the time of God's grace, declared: "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered." Hence the Lord's Prayer. But the apostle, when, for the purpose of commending this very grace, he had quoted this prophetic testimony, immediately added: "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" Hence the Creed. In these two you have those three graces exemplified: faith believes, hope and love pray. But without faith the two last cannot exist, and therefore we may say that faith also prays. Whence it is written: "How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?"

CHAPTER 8

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN FAITH AND HOPE, AND THE MUTUAL DEPENDENCE OF FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE

Again, can anything be hoped for which is not an object of faith? It is true that a thing which is not an object of hope may be believed. What true

Christian, for example, does not believe in the punishment of the wicked? And yet such an one does not hope for it. And the man who believes that punishment to be hanging over himself, and who shrinks in horror from the prospect, is more properly said to fear than to hope. And these two states of mind the poet carefully distinguishes, when he says: “Permit the fearful to have hope.” Another poet, who is usually much superior to this one, makes a wrong use of the word, when he says: “If I have been able to hope for so great a grief as this.” And some grammarians take this case as an example of impropriety of speech, saying, “He said sperare [to hope] instead of timere [to fear].” Accordingly, faith may have for its object evil as well as good; for both good and evil are believed, and the faith that believes them is not evil, but good. Faith, moreover, is concerned with the past, the present, and the future, all three. We believe, for example, that Christ died,—an event in the past; we believe that He is sitting at the right hand of God,—a state of things which is present; we believe that He will come to judge the quick and the dead,—an event of the future. Again, faith applies both to one’s own circumstances and those of others. Every one, for example, believes that his own existence had a beginning, and was not eternal, and he believes the same both of other men and other things. Many of our beliefs in regard to religious matters, again, have reference not merely to other men, but to angels also. But hope has for its object only what is good, only what is future, and only what affects the man who entertains the hope. For these reasons, then, faith must be distinguished from hope, not merely as a matter of verbal propriety, but because they are essentially different. The fact that we do not see either what we believe or what we hope for, is all that is common to faith and hope. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, for example, faith is defined (and eminent defenders of the catholic faith have used the definition as a standard) “the evidence of things not seen.” Although, should any one say that he believes, that is, has grounded his faith, not on words, nor on witnesses, nor on any reasoning whatever, but on the direct evidence of his own senses, he would not be guilty of such an impropriety of speech as to be justly liable to the criticism, “You saw, therefore you did not believe.” And hence it does not follow that an object of faith is not an object of sight. But it is better that we should use the word “faith” as the Scriptures have taught us, applying it to those things which are not seen. Concerning hope, again, the apostle says: “Hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” When, then, we believe that good is about to come, this is nothing else but to hope for it. Now what shall I say of love? Without it, faith profits nothing; and in its absence, hope cannot exist. The Apostle James says: “The devils also believe, and tremble.”—that is, they, having neither hope nor love, but believing that what we love and hope for is about to come, are in terror. And so the Apostle Paul approves and commends the “faith that worketh by love;” and this certainly cannot exist without hope. Wherefore there is no love without hope, no hope without love, and neither love nor hope without faith.

CHAPTER 9

WHAT WE ARE TO BELIEVE. IN REGARD TO NATURE IT IS NOT NECESSARY FOR THE CHRISTIAN TO KNOW MORE THAN THAT THE GOODNESS OF THE CREATOR IS THE CAUSE OF ALL THINGS

When, then, the question is asked what we are to believe in regard to religion, it is not necessary to probe into the nature of things, as was done by those whom the Greeks call physici; nor need we be in alarm lest the Christian should be ignorant of the force and number of the elements,—the motion, and order, and eclipses of the heavenly bodies; the form of the heavens; the species and the natures of animals, plants, stones, fountains, rivers, mountains; about chronology and distances; the signs of coming storms; and a thousand other things which those philosophers either have found out, or think they have found out. For even these men themselves, endowed though they are with so much genius, burning with zeal, abounding in leisure, tracking some things by the aid of human conjecture, searching into others with the aids of history and experience, have not found out all things; and even their boasted discoveries are oftener mere guesses than certain knowledge. It is enough for the Christian to believe that the only cause of all created things, whether heavenly or earthly, whether visible or invisible, is the goodness of the Creator the one true God; and that nothing exists but Himself that does not derive its existence from Him; and that He is the Trinity—to wit, the Father, and the Son begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the same Father, but one and the same Spirit of Father and Son.

CHAPTER 10

THE SUPREMELY GOOD CREATOR MADE ALL THINGS GOOD

By the Trinity, thus supremely and equally and unchangeably good, all things were created; and these are not supremely and equally and unchangeably good, but yet they are good, even taken separately. Taken as a whole, however, they are very good, because their ensemble constitutes the universe in all its wonderful order and beauty.

CHAPTER 11

WHAT IS CALLED EVIL IN THE UNIVERSE IS BUT THE ABSENCE OF GOOD

And in the universe, even that which is called evil, when it is regulated and put in its own place, only enhances our admiration of the good; for we enjoy and value the good more when we compare it with the evil. For the Almighty God, who, as even the heathen acknowledge, has supreme power over all things, being Himself supremely good, would never permit the existence of anything evil among His works, if He were not so omnipotent and good that He can bring good even out of evil. For what is that which we call evil but the absence of good? In the bodies of animals, disease and wounds mean nothing but the absence of health; for when a cure is effected, that does not mean that the evils which were present—namely, the diseases and wounds—go away from the body and dwell elsewhere: they altogether cease to exist; for the wound or disease is not a substance, but a defect in the fleshly substance,—the flesh itself being a substance, and therefore something good, of which those evils—that is, privations of the good which we call health—are accidents. Just in the same way, what are called vices in the soul are nothing but privations of natural good. And when they are cured, they are not transferred elsewhere: when they cease to exist in the healthy soul, they cannot exist anywhere else.

CHAPTER 12

ALL BEINGS WERE MADE GOOD, BUT NOT BEING MADE PERFECTLY GOOD, ARE LIABLE TO CORRUPTION

All things that exist, therefore, seeing that the Creator of them all is supremely good, are themselves good. But because they are not, like their Creator, supremely and unchangeably good, their good may be diminished and increased. But for good to be diminished is an evil, although, however much it may be diminished, it is necessary, if the being is to continue, that some good should remain to constitute the being. For however small or of whatever kind the being may be, the good which makes it a being cannot be destroyed without destroying the being itself. An uncorrupted nature is justly held in esteem. But if, still further, it be incorruptible, it is undoubtedly considered of still higher value. When it is corrupted, however, its corruption is an evil, because it is deprived of some sort of good. For if it be deprived of no good, it receives no injury; but it does receive injury, therefore it is deprived of good. Therefore, so long as a being is in process of corruption, there is in it some good of which it is being deprived; and if a part of the being should remain which cannot be corrupted, this will certainly be an incorruptible being, and accordingly the process of corruption will result in the manifestation of this great good. But if it do not cease to be corrupted, neither can it cease to possess good of which corruption may deprive it. But if it should be thoroughly and completely consumed by corruption, there will then be no good left, because there will be no being. Wherefore corruption can consume the good only by consuming the being. Every being, therefore, is a good; a great good, if it can not be corrupted; a little good, if it can: but in any case, only the foolish or ignorant will deny that it is a good. And if it be wholly consumed by corruption, then the corruption itself must cease to exist, as there is no being left in which it can dwell.

CHAPTER 13

THERE CAN BE NO EVIL WHERE THERE IS NO GOOD; AND AN EVIL MAN IS AN EVIL GOOD

Accordingly, there is nothing of what we call evil, if there be nothing good. But a good which is wholly without evil is a perfect good. A good, on the other hand, which contains evil is a faulty or imperfect good; and there can be no evil where there is no good. From all this we arrive at the curious result: that since every being, so far as it is a being, is good, when we say that a faulty being is an evil being, we just seem to say that what is good is evil, and that nothing but what is good can be evil, seeing that every being is good, and that no evil can exist except in a being. Nothing, then, can be evil except something which is good. And although this, when stated, seems to be a contradiction, yet the strictness of reasoning leaves us no escape from the conclusion. We must, however, beware of incurring the prophetic condemnation: “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil: that put darkness for light, and light for darkness: that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.” And yet our Lord says: “An evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil.” Now, what is evil man but an evil being? for a man is a being. Now, if a man is a good thing because he is a being, what is an evil man but an evil good? Yet, when we accurately distinguish these two things, we find that it is not because he is a man that he is an evil, or because he is wicked that he is a good; but that he is a good because he is a man, and an evil because he is wicked. Whoever, then, says, “To be a man is an evil,” or, “To be wicked is a good,” falls under the prophetic denunciation: “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil!” For he condemns the work of God, which is the man, and praises the defect of man, which is the wickedness. Therefore every being, even if it be a defective one, in so far as it is a being is good, and in so far as it is defective is evil.

CHAPTER 14

GOOD AND EVIL ARE AN EXCEPTION TO THE RULE THAT CONTRARY ATTRIBUTES CANNOT BE PREDICATED OF THE SAME SUBJECT. EVIL SPRINGS UP IN WHAT IS GOOD, AND CANNOT EXIST EXCEPT IN WHAT IS GOOD

Accordingly, in the case of these contraries which we call good and evil, the rule of the logicians, that two contraries cannot be predicated at the same time of the same thing, does not hold. No weather is at the same time dark and bright: no food or drink is at the same time sweet and bitter: no body is at the same time and in the same place black and white: none is at the same time and in the same place deformed and beautiful. And this rule is found to hold in regard to many, indeed nearly all, contraries, that they cannot exist at the same time in any one thing. But although no one can doubt that good and evil are contraries, not only can they exist at the same time, but evil cannot exist without good, or in anything that is not good. Good, however, can exist without evil. For a man or an angel can exist without being wicked; but nothing can be wicked except a man or an angel: and so far as he is a man or an angel, he is good; so far as he is wicked, he is an evil. And these two contraries are so far co-existent, that if good did not exist in what is evil, neither could evil exist; because corruption could not have either a place to dwell in, or a source to spring from, if there were nothing that could be corrupted; and nothing can be corrupted except what is good, for corruption is nothing else but the destruction of good. From what is good, then, evils arose, and except in what is good they do not exist; nor was there any other source from which any evil nature could arise. For if there were, then, in so far as this was a being, it was certainly a good: and a being which was incorruptible would be a great good; and even one which was corruptible must be to some extent a good, for only by corrupting what was good in it could corruption do it harm.

CHAPTER 15

THE PRECEDING ARGUMENT IS IN NO WISE INCONSISTENT WITH THE SAYING OF OUR LORD: “A GOOD TREE CANNOT BRING FORTH EVIL FRUIT.”

But when we say that evil springs out of good, let it not be thought that this contradicts our Lord’s saying: “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit.” For, as He who is the Truth says, you cannot gather grapes of thorns, because grapes do not grow on thorns. But we see that on good soil both vines and thorns may be grown. And in the same way, just as an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit, so an evil will cannot produce good works. But from the nature of man, which is good, may spring either a good or an evil will. And certainly there was at first no source from which an evil will could spring, except the nature of angel or of man, which was good. And our Lord Himself clearly shows this in the very same place where He speaks about the tree and its fruit. For He says: “Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt,"—clearly enough warning us that evil fruits do not grow on a good tree, nor good fruits on an evil tree; but that nevertheless the ground itself, by which He meant those whom He was then addressing, might grow either kind of trees.

CHAPTER 16

IT IS NOT ESSENTIAL TO MAN'S HAPPINESS THAT HE SHOULD KNOW THE CAUSES OF PHYSICAL CONVULSIONS; BUT IT IS, THAT HE SHOULD KNOW THE CAUSES OF GOOD AND EVIL

Now, in view of these considerations, when we are pleased with that line of Maro, "Happy the man who has attained to the knowledge of the causes of things," we should not suppose that it is necessary to happiness to know the causes of the great physical convulsions, causes which lie hid in the most secret recesses of nature's kingdom, "whence comes the earthquake whose force makes the deep seas to swell and burst their barriers, and again to return upon themselves and settle down." But we ought to know the causes of good and evil as far as man may in this life know them, in order to avoid the mistakes and troubles of which this life is so full. For our aim must always be to reach that state of happiness in which no trouble shall distress us, and no error mislead us. If we must know the causes of physical convulsions, there are none which it concerns us more to know than those which affect our own health. But seeing that, in our ignorance of these, we are fain to resort to physicians, it would seem that we might bear with considerable patience our ignorance of the secrets that lie hid in the earth and heavens.

CHAPTER 17

THE NATURE OF ERROR. ALL ERROR IS NOT HURTFUL, THOUGH IT IS MAN'S DUTY AS FAR AS POSSIBLE TO AVOID IT

For although we ought with the greatest possible care to avoid error, not only in great but even in little things, and although we cannot err except through ignorance, it does not follow that, if a man is ignorant of a thing, he must forthwith fall into error. That is rather the fate of the man who thinks he knows what he does not know. For he accepts what is false as if it were true, and that is the essence of error. But it is a point of very great importance what the subject is in regard to which a man makes a mistake. For on one and the same subject we rightly prefer an instructed man to an ignorant one, and a man who is not in error to one who is. In the case of different subjects, however,—that is, when one man knows one thing, and another a different thing, and when what the former knows is useful, and what the latter knows is not so useful, or is actually hurtful,—who would not, in regard to the things the latter knows, prefer the ignorance of the former to the knowledge of the latter? For there are points on which ignorance is better than knowledge. And in the same way, it has sometimes been an advantage to depart from the right way,—in travelling, however, not in morals. It has happened to myself to take the wrong road where two ways met, so that I did not pass by the place where an armed band of Donatists lay in wait for me. Yet I arrived at the place whither I was bent, though by a roundabout route; and when I heard of the ambush, I congratulated myself on my mistake, and gave thanks to God for it. Now, who would not rather be the traveller who made a mistake like this, than the highwayman who made no mistake? And hence, perhaps, it is that the prince of poets puts these words into the mouth of a lover in misery: “How I am undone, how I have been carried away by an evil error!” for there is an error which is good, as it not merely does no harm, but produces some actual advantage. But when we look more closely into the nature of truth, and consider that to err is just to take the false for the true, and the true for the false, or to hold what is certain as uncertain, and what is uncertain as certain, and that error in the soul is hideous and repulsive just in proportion as it appears fair and plausible when we utter it, or assent to it, saying, “Yea, yea; Nay, nay,”—surely this life that we live is wretched indeed, if only on this account, that sometimes, in order to preserve it, it is necessary to fall into error. God forbid that such should be that other life, where truth itself is the life of the soul, where no one deceives, and no one is deceived. But here men deceive and are deceived, and they are more to be pitied when they lead others astray than when they are themselves led astray by putting trust in liars. Yet so much does a rational soul shrink from what is false, and so earnestly does it struggle against error, that even those who love to deceive are most unwilling to be deceived. For the liar does not think that he errs, but that he leads another who trusts him into error. And certainly he does not err in regard to the matter about which he lies, if he himself knows the truth; but he is deceived in this, that he thinks his lie does him no harm, whereas every sin is more hurtful to the sinner than to the sinned against.

CHAPTER 18

IT IS NEVER ALLOWABLE TO TELL A LIE; BUT LIES DIFFER VERY MUCH IN GUILT, ACCORDING TO THE INTENTION AND THE SUBJECT

But here arises a very difficult and very intricate question, about which I once wrote a large book, finding it necessary to give it an answer. The question is this: whether at any time it can become the duty of a good man to tell a lie? For some go so far as to contend that there are occasions on which it is a good and pious work to commit perjury even, and to say what is false about matters that relate to the worship of God, and about the very nature of God Himself. To me, however, it seems certain that every lie is a sin, though it makes a great difference with what intention and on what subject one lies. For the sin of the man who tells a lie to help another is not so heinous as that of the man who tells a lie to injure another; and the man who by his lying puts a traveller on the wrong road, does not do so much harm as the man who by false or misleading representations distorts the whole course of a life. No one, of course, is to be condemned as a liar who says what is false, believing it to be true, because such an one does not consciously deceive, but rather is himself deceived. And, on the same principle, a man is not to be accused of lying, though he may sometimes be open to the charge of rashness, if through carelessness he takes up what is false and holds it as true; but, on the other hand, the man who says what is true, believing it to be false, is, so far as his own consciousness is concerned, a liar. For in saying what he does not believe, he says what to his own conscience is false, even though it should in fact be true; nor is the man in any sense free from lying who with his mouth speaks the truth without knowing it, but in his heart wills to tell a lie. And, therefore, not looking at the matter spoken of, but solely at the intention of the speaker, the man who unwittingly says what is false, thinking all the time that it is true, is a better man than the one who unwittingly says what is true, but in his conscience intends to deceive. For the former does not think one thing and say another; but the latter, though his statements may be true in fact, has one thought in his heart and another on his lips: and that is the very essence of lying. But when we come to consider truth and falsehood in respect to the subjects spoken of, the point on which one deceives or is deceived becomes a matter of the utmost importance. For although, as far as a man's own conscience is concerned, it is a greater evil to deceive than to be deceived, nevertheless it is a far less evil to tell a lie in regard to matters that do not relate to religion, than to be led into error in regard to matters the knowledge and belief of which are essential to the right worship of God. To illustrate this by example: suppose that one man should say of some one who is dead that he is still alive, knowing this to be untrue; and that another man should, being deceived, believe that Christ shall at the end of some time (make the time as long as you please) die; would it not be incomparably better to lie like the former, than to be deceived like the latter? and would it not be a much less evil to lead some man into the former error, than to be led by any man into the latter?

CHAPTER 19

MEN'S ERRORS VARY VERY MUCH IN THE MAGNITUDE OF THE EVILS THEY PRODUCE; BUT YET EVERY ERROR IS IN ITSELF AN EVIL

In some things, then, it is a great evil to be deceived; in some it is a small evil; in some no evil at all; and in some it is an actual advantage. It is to his grievous injury that a man is deceived when he does not believe what leads to eternal life, or believes what leads to eternal death. It is a small evil for a man to be deceived, when, by taking falsehood for truth, he brings upon himself temporal annoyances; for the patience of the believer will turn even these to a good use, as when, for example, taking a bad man for a good, he receives injury from him. But one who believes a bad man to be good, and yet suffers no injury, is nothing the worse for being deceived, nor does he fall under the prophetic denunciation: "Woe to those who call evil good!" For we are to understand that this is spoken not about evil men, but about the things that make men evil. Hence the man who calls adultery good, falls justly under that prophetic denunciation. But the man who calls the adulterer good, thinking him to be chaste, and not knowing him to be an adulterer, falls into no error in regard to the nature of good and evil, but only makes a mistake as to the secrets of human conduct. He calls the man good on the ground of believing him to be what is undoubtedly good; he calls the adulterer evil, and the pure man good; and he calls this man good, not knowing him to be an adulterer, but believing him to be pure. Further, if by making a mistake one escape death, as I have said above once happened to me, one even derives some advantage from one's mistake. But when I assert that in certain cases a man may be deceived without any injury to himself, or even with some advantage to himself, I do not mean that the mistake in itself is no evil, or is in any sense a good; I refer only to the evil that is avoided, or the advantage that is gained, through making the mistake. For the mistake, considered in itself, is an evil: a great evil if it concern a great matter, a small evil if it concern a small matter, but yet always an evil. For who that is of sound mind can deny that it is an evil to receive what is false as if it were true, and to reject what is true as if it were false, or to hold what is uncertain as certain, and what is certain as uncertain? But it is one thing to think a man good when he is really bad, which is a mistake; it is another thing to suffer no ulterior injury in consequence of the mistake, supposing that the bad man whom we think good inflicts no damage upon us. In the same way, it is one thing to think that we are on the right road when we are not; it is another thing when this mistake of ours, which is an evil, leads to some good, such as saving us from an ambush of wicked men.

CHAPTER 20

EVERY ERROR IS NOT A SIN. AN EXAMINATION OF THE OPINION OF THE ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHERS, THAT TO AVOID ERROR WE SHOULD IN ALL CASES SUSPEND BELIEF

I am not sure whether mistakes such as the following,—when one forms a good opinion of a bad man, not knowing what sort of man he is; or when, instead of the ordinary perceptions through the bodily senses, other appearances of a similar kind present themselves, which we perceive in the spirit, but think we perceive in the body, or perceive in the body, but think we perceive in the spirit (such a mistake as the Apostle Peter made when the angel suddenly freed him from his chains and imprisonment, and he thought he saw a vision); or when, in the case of sensible objects themselves, we mistake rough for smooth, or bitter for sweet, or think that putrid matter has a good smell; or when we mistake the passing of a carriage for thunder; or mistake one man for another, the two being very much alike, as often happens in the case of twins (hence our great poet calls it “a mistake pleasing to parents”),—whether these, and other mistakes of this kind, ought to be called sins. Nor do I now undertake to solve a very knotty question, which perplexed those very acute thinkers, the Academic philosophers: whether a wise man ought to give his assent to anything, seeing that he may fall into error by assenting to falsehood: for all things, as they assert, are either unknown or uncertain. Now I wrote three volumes shortly after my conversion, to remove out of my way the objections which lie, as it were, on the very threshold of faith. And assuredly it was necessary at the very outset to remove this utter despair of reaching truth, which seems to be strengthened by the arguments of these philosophers. Now in their eyes every error is regarded as a sin, and they think that error can only be avoided by entirely suspending belief. For they say that the man who assents to what is uncertain falls into error; and they strive by the most acute, but most audacious arguments, to show that, even though a man’s opinion should by chance be true, yet that there is no certainty of its truth, owing to the impossibility of distinguishing truth from falsehood. But with us, “the just shall live by faith.” Now, if assent be taken away, faith goes too; for without assent there can be no belief. And there are truths, whether we know them or not, which must be believed if we would attain to a happy life, that is, to eternal life. But I am not sure whether one ought to argue with men who not only do not know that there is an eternal life before them, but do not know whether they are living at the present moment; nay, say that they do not know what it is impossible they can be ignorant of. For it is impossible that any one should be ignorant that he is alive, seeing that if he be not alive it is impossible for him to be ignorant; for not knowledge merely, but ignorance too, can be an attribute only of the living. But, forsooth, they think that by not acknowledging that they are alive they avoid error, when even their very error proves that they are alive, since one who is not alive cannot err. As, then, it is not only true, but certain, that we are alive, so there are many other things both true and certain; and God forbid that it should ever be called wisdom, and not the height of folly, to refuse assent to these.

CHAPTER 21

ERROR, THOUGH NOT ALWAYS A SIN, IS ALWAYS AN EVIL

But as to those matters in regard to which our belief or disbelief, and indeed their truth or supposed truth or falsity, are of no importance whatever, so far as attaining the kingdom of God is concerned: to make a mistake in such matters is not to be looked on as a sin, or at least as a very small and trifling sin. In short, a mistake in matters of this kind, whatever its nature and magnitude, does not relate to the way of approach to God, which is the faith of Christ that "worketh by love." For the "mistake pleasing to parents" in the case of the twin children was no deviation from this way; nor did the Apostle Peter deviate from this way, when, thinking that he saw a vision, he so mistook one thing for another, that, till the angel who delivered him had departed from him, he did not distinguish the real objects among which he was moving from the visionary objects of a dream; nor did the patriarch Jacob deviate from this way, when he believed that his son, who was really alive, had been slain by a beast. In the case of these and other false impressions of the same kind, we are indeed deceived, but our faith in God remains secure. We go astray, but we do not leave the way that leads us to Him. But yet these errors, though they are not sinful, are to be reckoned among the evils of this life which is so far made subject to vanity, that we receive what is false as if it were true, reject what is true as if it were false, and cling to what is uncertain as if it were certain. And although they do not trench upon that true and certain faith through which we reach eternal blessedness, yet they have much to do with that misery in which we are now living. And assuredly, if we were now in the enjoyment of the true and perfect happiness that lies before us, we should not be subject to any deception through any sense, whether of body or of mind.

CHAPTER 22

A LIE IS NOT ALLOWABLE, EVEN TO SAVE ANOTHER FROM INJURY

But every lie must be called a sin, because not only when a man knows the truth, but even when, as a man may be, he is mistaken and deceived, it is his duty to say what he thinks in his heart, whether it be true, or whether he only think it to be true. But every liar says the opposite of what he thinks in his heart, with purpose to deceive. Now it is evident that speech was given to man, not that men might therewith deceive one another, but that one man might make known his thoughts to another. To use speech, then, for the purpose of deception, and not for its appointed end, is a sin. Nor are we to suppose that there is any lie that is not a sin, because it is sometimes possible, by telling a lie, to do service to another. For it is possible to do this by theft also, as when we steal from a rich man who never feels the loss, to give to a poor man who is sensibly benefited by what he gets. And the same can be said of adultery also, when, for instance, some woman appears likely to die of love unless we consent to her wishes, while if she lived she might purify herself by repentance; but yet no one will assert that on this account such an adultery is not a sin. And if we justly place so high a value upon chastity, what offense have we taken at truth, that, while no prospect of advantage to another will lead us to violate the former by adultery, we should be ready to violate the latter by lying? It cannot be denied that they have attained a very high standard of goodness who never lie except to save a man from injury; but in the case of men who have reached this standard, it is not the deceit, but their good intention, that is justly praised, and sometimes even rewarded. It is quite enough that the deception should be pardoned, without its being made an object of laudation, especially among the heirs of the new covenant, to whom it is said: “Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.” And it is on account of this evil, which never ceases to creep in while we retain this mortal vesture, that the co-heirs of Christ themselves say, “Forgive us our debts.”

CHAPTER 23

SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE PRECEDING DISCUSSION

As it is right that we should know the causes of good and evil, so much of them at least as will suffice for the way that leads us to the kingdom, where there will be life without the shadow of death, truth without any alloy of error, and happiness unbroken by any sorrow, I have discussed these subjects with the brevity which my limited space demanded. And I think there cannot now be any doubt, that the only cause of any good that we enjoy is the goodness of God, and that the only cause of evil is the falling away from the unchangeable good of a being made good but changeable, first in the case of an angel, and afterwards in the case of man.

CHAPTER 24

THE SECONDARY CAUSES OF EVIL ARE IGNORANCE AND LUST

This is the first evil that befell the intelligent creation—that is, its first privation of good. Following upon this crept in, and now even in opposition to man’s will, ignorance of duty, and lust after what is hurtful: and these brought in their train error and suffering, which, when they are felt to be imminent, produce that shrinking of the mind which is called fear. Further, when the mind attains the objects of its desire, however hurtful or empty they may be, error prevents it from perceiving their true nature, or its perceptions are overborne by a diseased appetite, and so it is puffed up with a foolish joy. From these fountains of evil, which spring out of defect rather than superfluity, flows every form of misery that besets a rational nature.

CHAPTER 25

GOD’S JUDGMENTS UPON FALLEN MEN AND ANGELS. THE DEATH OF THE BODY IS MAN’S PECULIAR PUNISHMENT

And yet such a nature, in the midst of all its evils, could not lose the craving after happiness. Now the evils I have mentioned are common to all who for their wickedness have been justly condemned by God, whether they be men or angels. But there is one form of punishment peculiar to man—the death of the body. God had threatened him with this punishment of death if he should sin, leaving him indeed to the freedom of his own will, but yet commanding his obedience under pain of death; and He placed him amid the happiness of Eden, as it were in a protected nook of life, with the intention that, if he preserved his righteousness, he should thence ascend to a better place.

CHAPTER 26

THROUGH ADAM’S SIN HIS WHOLE POSTERITY WERE CORRUPTED, AND WERE BORN UNDER THE PENALTY OF DEATH, WHICH HE HAD INCURRED

Thence, after his sin, he was driven into exile, and by his sin the whole race of which he was the root was corrupted in him, and thereby subjected to the penalty of death. And so it happens that all descended from him, and from the woman who had led him into sin, and was condemned at the same time with him,—being the offspring of carnal lust on which the same punishment of disobedience was visited,—were tainted with the original sin, and were by it drawn through divers errors and sufferings into that last and endless punishment which they suffer in common with the fallen angels, their corrupters and masters, and the partakers of their doom. And thus "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." By "the world" the apostle, of course, means in this place the whole human race.

CHAPTER 27

THE STATE OF MISERY TO WHICH ADAM'S SIN REDUCED MANKIND, AND THE RESTORATION EFFECTED THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD

Thus, then, matters stood. The whole mass of the human race was under condemnation, was lying steeped and wallowing in misery, and was being tossed from one form of evil to another, and, having joined the faction of the fallen angels, was paying the well-merited penalty of that impious rebellion. For whatever the wicked freely do through blind and unbridled lust, and whatever they suffer against their will in the way of open punishment, this all evidently pertains to the just wrath of God. But the goodness of the Creator never fails either to supply life and vital power to the wicked angels (without which their existence would soon come to an end); or, in the case of mankind, who spring from a condemned and corrupt stock, to impart form and life to their seed, to fashion their members, and through the various seasons of their life, and in the different parts of the earth, to quicken their senses, and bestow upon them the nourishment they need. For He judged it better to bring good out of evil, than not to permit any evil to exist. And if He had determined that in the case of men, as in the case of the fallen angels, there should be no restoration to happiness, would it not have been quite just, that the being who rebelled against God, who in the abuse of his freedom spurned and transgressed the command of his Creator when he could so easily have kept it, who defaced in himself the image of his Creator by stubbornly turning away from His light, who by an evil use of his free-will broke away from his wholesome bondage to the Creator's laws,—would it not have been just that such a being should have been wholly and to all eternity deserted by God, and left to suffer the everlasting punishment he had so richly earned? Certainly so God would have done, had He been only just and not also merciful, and had He not designed that His unmerited mercy should shine forth the more brightly in contrast with the unworthiness of its objects.

CHAPTER 28

WHEN THE REBELLIOUS ANGELS WERE CAST OUT, THE REST REMAINED IN THE ENJOYMENT OF ETERNAL HAPPINESS WITH GOD

Whilst some of the angels, then, in their pride and impiety rebelled against God, and were cast down from their heavenly abode into the lowest darkness, the remaining number dwelt with God in eternal and unchanging purity and happiness. For all were not sprung from one angel who had fallen and been condemned, so that they were not all, like men, involved by one original sin in the bonds of an inherited guilt, and so made subject to the penalty which one had incurred; but when he, who afterwards became the devil, was with his associates in crime exalted in pride, and by that very exaltation was with them cast down, the rest remained steadfast in piety and obedience to their Lord, and obtained, what before they had not enjoyed, a sure and certain knowledge of their eternal safety, and freedom from the possibility of falling.

CHAPTER 29

THE RESTORED PART OF HUMANITY SHALL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROMISES OF GOD, SUCCEED TO THE PLACE WHICH THE REBELLIOUS ANGELS LOST

And so it pleased God, the Creator and Governor of the universe, that, since the whole body of the angels had not fallen into rebellion, the part of them which had fallen should remain in perdition eternally, and that the other part, which had in the rebellion remained steadfastly loyal, should rejoice in the sure and certain knowledge of their eternal happiness; but that, on the other hand, mankind, who constituted the remainder of the intelligent creation, having perished without exception under sin, both original and actual, and the consequent punishments, should be in part restored, and should fill up the gap which the rebellion and fall of the devils had left in the company of the angels. For this is the promise to the saints, that at the resurrection they shall be equal to the angels of God. And thus the Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all, the city of God, shall not be spoiled of any of the number of her citizens, shall perhaps reign over even a more abundant population. We do not know the number either of the saints or of the devils; but we know that the children of the holy mother who was called barren on earth shall succeed to the place of the fallen angels, and shall dwell for ever in that peaceful abode from which they fell. But the number of the citizens, whether as it now is or as it shall be, is present to the thoughts of the great Creator, who calls those things which are not as though they were, and ordereth all things in measure, and number, and weight.

CHAPTER 30

MEN ARE NOT SAVED BY GOOD WORKS, NOR BY THE FREE DETERMINATION OF THEIR OWN WILL, BUT BY THE GRACE OF GOD THROUGH FAITH

But this part of the human race to which God has promised pardon and a share in His eternal kingdom, can they be restored through the merit of their own works? God forbid. For what good work can a lost man perform, except so far as he has been delivered from perdition? Can they do anything by the free determination of their own will? Again I say, God forbid. For it was by the evil use of his free-will that man destroyed both it and himself. For, as a man who kills himself must, of course, be alive when he kills himself, but after he has killed himself ceases to live, and cannot restore himself to life; so, when man by his own free-will sinned, then sin being victorious over him, the freedom of his will was lost. “For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” This is the judgment of the Apostle Peter. And as it is certainly true, what kind of liberty, I ask, can the bond-slave possess, except when it pleases him to sin? For he is freely in bondage who does with pleasure the will of his master. Accordingly, he who is the servant of sin is free to sin. And hence he will not be free to do right, until, being freed from sin, he shall begin to be the servant of righteousness. And this is true liberty, for he has pleasure in the righteous deed; and it is at the same time a holy bondage, for he is obedient to the will of God. But whence comes this liberty to do right to the man who is in bondage and sold under sin, except he be redeemed by Him who has said, “If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed?” And before this redemption is wrought in a man, when he is not yet free to do what is right, how can he talk of the freedom of his will and his good works, except he be inflated by that foolish pride of boasting which the apostle restrains when he says, “By grace are ye saved, through faith.”

CHAPTER 31

FAITH ITSELF IS THE GIFT OF GOD; AND GOOD WORKS WILL NOT BE WANTING IN THOSE WHO BELIEVE

And lest men should arrogate to themselves the merit of their own faith at least, not understanding that this too is the gift of God, this same apostle, who says in another place that he had “obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful,” here also adds: “and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” And lest it should be thought that good works will be wanting in those who believe, he adds further: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” We shall be made truly free, then, when God fashions us, that is, forms and creates us anew, not as men—for He has done that already—but as good men, which His grace is now doing, that we may be a new creation in Christ Jesus, according as it is said: “Create in me a clean heart, O God.” For God had already created his heart, so far as the physical structure of the human heart is concerned; but the psalmist prays for the renewal of the life which was still lingering in his heart.

CHAPTER 32

THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL IS ALSO THE GIFT OF GOD, FOR GOD WORKETH IN US BOTH TO WILL AND TO DO

And further, should any one be inclined to boast, not indeed of his works, but of the freedom of his will, as if the first merit belonged to him, this very liberty of good action being given to him as a reward he had earned, let him listen to this same preacher of grace, when he says: “For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His own good pleasure;” and in another place: “So, then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” Now as, undoubtedly, if a man is of the age to use his reason, he cannot believe, hope, love, unless he will to do so, nor obtain the prize of the high calling of God unless he voluntarily run for it; in what sense is it “not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,” except that, as it is written, “the preparation of the heart is from the Lord?” Otherwise, if it is said, “It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,” because it is of both, that is, both of the will of man and of the mercy of God, so that we are to understand the saying, “It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,” as if it meant the will of man alone is not sufficient, if the mercy of God go not with it,—then it will follow that the mercy of God alone is not sufficient, if the will of man go not with it; and therefore, if we may rightly say, “it is not of man that willeth, but of God that showeth mercy,” because the will of man by itself is not enough, why may we not also rightly put it in the converse way: “It is not of God that showeth mercy, but of man that willeth,” because the mercy of God by itself does not suffice? Surely, if no Christian will dare to say this, “It is not of God that showeth mercy, but of man that willeth,” lest he should openly contradict the apostle, it follows that the true interpretation of the saying, “It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,” is that the whole work belongs to God, who both makes the will of man righteous, and thus prepares it for assistance, and assists it when it is prepared. For the man’s righteousness of will precedes many of God’s gifts, but not all; and it must itself be included among those which it does not precede. We read in Holy Scripture, both that God’s mercy “shall meet me,” and that His mercy “shall follow me.” It goes before the unwilling to make him willing; it follows the willing to make his will effectual. Why are we taught to pray for our enemies, who are plainly unwilling to lead a holy life, unless that God may work willingness in them? And why are we ourselves taught to ask that we may receive, unless that He who has created in us the wish, may Himself satisfy the wish? We pray, then, for our enemies, that the mercy of God may prevent them, as it has prevented us: we pray for ourselves that His mercy may follow us.

CHAPTER 33

MEN, BEING BY NATURE THE CHILDREN OF WRATH, NEEDED A MEDIATOR. IN WHAT SENSE GOD IS SAID TO BE ANGRY

And so the human race was lying under a just condemnation, and all men were the children of wrath. Of which wrath it is written: “All our days are passed away in Thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told.” Of which wrath also Job says: “Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.” Of which wrath also the Lord Jesus says: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” He does not say it will come, but it “abideth on him.” For every man is born with it; wherefore the apostle says: “We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” Now, as men were lying under this wrath by reason of their original sin, and as this original sin was the more heavy and deadly in proportion to the number and magnitude of the actual sins which were added to it, there was need for a Mediator, that is, for a reconciler, who, by the offering of one sacrifice, of which all the sacrifices of the law and the prophets were types, should take away this wrath. Wherefore the apostle says: “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.” Now when God is said to be angry, we do not attribute to Him such a disturbed feeling as exists in the mind of an angry man; but we call His just displeasure against sin by the name “anger,” a word transferred by analogy from human emotions. But our being reconciled to God through a Mediator, and receiving the Holy Spirit, so that we who were enemies are made sons (“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God”): this is the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAPTER 34

THE INEFFABLE MYSTERY OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST THE MEDIATOR THROUGH THE VIRGIN MARY

Now of this Mediator it would occupy too much space to say anything at all worthy of Him; and, indeed, to say what is worthy of Him is not in the power of man. For who will explain in consistent words this single statement, that “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” so that we may believe on the only Son of God the Father Almighty, born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary. The meaning of the Word being made flesh, is not that the divine nature was changed into flesh, but that the divine nature assumed our flesh. And by “flesh” we are here to understand “man,” the part being put for the whole, as when it is said: “By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified,” that is, no man. For we must believe that no part was wanting in that human nature which He put on, save that it was a nature wholly free from every taint of sin,—not such a nature as is conceived between the two sexes through carnal lust, which is born in sin, and whose guilt is washed away in regeneration; but such as it behoved a virgin to bring forth, when the mother’s faith, not her lust, was the condition of conception. And if her virginity had been marred even in bringing Him forth, He would not have been born of a virgin; and it would be false (which God forbid) that He was born of the Virgin Mary, as is believed and declared by the whole Church, which, in imitation of His mother, daily brings forth members of His body, and yet remains a virgin. Read, if you please, my letter on the virginity of the holy Mary which I sent to that eminent man, whose name I mention with respect and affection, Volusianus.

CHAPTER 35

JESUS CHRIST, BEING THE ONLY SON OF GOD, IS AT THE SAME TIME MAN

Wherefore Christ Jesus, the Son of God, is both God and man; God before all worlds; man in our world: God, because the Word of God (for “the Word was God”); and man, because in His one person the Word was joined with a body and a rational soul. Wherefore, so far as He is God, He and the Father are one; so far as He is man, the Father is greater than He. For when He was the only Son of God, not by grace, but by nature, that He might be also full of grace, He became the Son of man; and He Himself unites both natures in His own identity, and both natures constitute one Christ; because, “being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be,” what He was by nature, “equal with God.” But He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, not losing or lessening the form of God. And, accordingly, He was both made less and remained equal, being both in one, as has been said: but He was one of these as Word, and the other as man. As Word, He is equal with the Father; as man, less than the Father. One Son of God, and at the same time Son of man; one Son of man, and at the same time Son of God; not two Sons of God, God and man, but one Son of God: God without beginning; man with a beginning, our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 36

THE GRACE OF GOD IS CLEARLY AND REMARKABLY DISPLAYED IN RAISING THE MAN CHRIST JESUS TO THE DIGNITY OF THE SON OF GOD

Now here the grace of God is displayed with the greatest power and clearness. For what merit had the human nature in the man Christ earned, that it should in this unparalleled way be taken up into the unity of the person of the only Son of God? What goodness of will, what goodness of desire and intention, what good works, had gone before, which made this man worthy to become one person with God? Had He been a man previously to this, and had He earned this unprecedented reward, that He should be thought worthy to become God? Assuredly nay; from the very moment that He began to be man, He was nothing else than the Son of God, the only Son of God, the Word who was made flesh, and therefore He was God so that just as each individual man unites in one person a body and a rational soul, so Christ in one person unites the Word and man. Now wherefore was this unheard of glory conferred on human nature,—a glory which, as there was no antecedent merit, was of course wholly of grace,—except that here those who looked at the matter soberly and honestly might behold a clear manifestation of the power of God’s free grace, and might understand that they are justified from their sins by the same grace which made the man Christ Jesus free from the possibility of sin? And so the angel, when he announced to Christ’s mother the coming birth, saluted her thus: “Hail, thou that art full of grace;” and shortly afterwards, “Thou hast found grace with God.” Now she was said to be full of grace, and to have found grace with God, because she was to be the mother of her Lord, nay, of the Lord of all flesh. But, speaking of Christ Himself, the evangelist

John, after saying, “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” adds, “and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” When he says, “The Word was made flesh,” this is “full of grace;” when he says, “the glory of the only-begotten of the Father,” this is “full of truth.” For the Truth Himself, who was the only-begotten of the Father, not by grace, but by nature, by grace took our humanity upon Him, and so united it with His own person that He Himself became also the Son of man.

CHAPTER 37

THE SAME GRACE IS FURTHER CLEARLY MANIFESTED IN THIS, THAT THE BIRTH OF CHRIST ACCORDING TO THE FLESH IS OF THE HOLY GHOST

For the same Jesus Christ who is the only-begotten, that is, the only Son of God, our Lord, was born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary. And we know that the Holy Spirit is the gift of God, the gift being Himself indeed equal to the Giver. And therefore the Holy Spirit also is God, not inferior to the Father and the Son. The fact, therefore, that the nativity of Christ in His human nature was by the Holy Spirit, is another clear manifestation of grace. For when the Virgin asked the angel how this which he had announced should be, seeing she knew not a man, the angel answered, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” And when Joseph was minded to put her away, suspecting her of adultery, as he knew she was not with child by himself, he was told by the angel, “Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost:” that is, what thou suspectest to be begotten of another man is of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER 38

JESUS CHRIST, ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, WAS NOT BORN OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SUCH A SENSE THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS HIS FATHER

Nevertheless, are we on this account to say that the Holy Ghost is the father of the man Christ, and that as God the Father begat the Word, so God the Holy Spirit begat the man, and that these two natures constitute the one

Christ; and that as the Word He is the Son of God the Father, and as man the Son of God the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit as His father begat Him of the Virgin Mary? Who will dare to say so? Nor is it necessary to show by reasoning how many other absurdities flow from this supposition, when it is itself so absurd that no believer's ears can bear to hear it. Hence, as we confess, "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who of God is God, and as man was born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary, having both natures, the divine and the human, is the only Son of God the Father Almighty, from whom proceedeth the Holy Spirit." Now in what sense do we say that Christ was born of the Holy Spirit, if the Holy Spirit did not beget Him? Is it that He made Him, since our Lord Jesus Christ, though as God "all things were made by Him," yet as man was Himself made; as the apostle says, "who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh?" But as that created thing which the Virgin conceived and brought forth though it was united only to the person of the Son, was made by the whole Trinity (for the works of the Trinity are not separable), why should the Holy Spirit alone be mentioned as having made it? Or is it that, when one of the Three is mentioned as the author of any work, the whole Trinity is to be understood as working? That is true, and can be proved by examples. But we need not dwell longer on this solution. For the puzzle is, in what sense it is said, "born of the Holy Ghost," when He is in no sense the Son of the Holy Ghost? For though God made this world, it would not be right to say that it is the Son of God, or that it was born of God; we would say that it was created, or made, or framed, or ordered by Him, or whatever form of expression we can properly use. Here, then, when we make confession that Christ was born of the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary, it is difficult to explain how it is that He is not the Son of the Holy Ghost and is the Son of the Virgin Mary, when He was born both of Him and of her. It is clear beyond a doubt that He was not born of the Holy Spirit as His father, in the same sense that He was born of the Virgin as His mother.

CHAPTER 39

NOT EVERYTHING THAT IS BORN OF ANOTHER IS TO BE CALLED A SON OF THAT OTHER

We need not therefore take for granted, that whatever is born of a thing is forthwith to be declared the son of that thing. For, to pass over the fact that a son is born of a man in a different sense from that in which a hair or a louse is born of him, neither of these being a son; to pass over this, I say, as too mean an illustration for a subject of so much importance: it is certain that those who are born of water and of the Holy Spirit cannot with propriety be called sons of the water though they are called sons of God the Father, and of the Church their mother. In the same way, then, He who was born of the Holy Spirit is the Son of God the Father, not of the Holy Spirit. For what I have said of the hair and the other things is sufficient to show us that not everything which is born of another can be called the son of that of which it is born, just as it does not follow that all who are called a man's sons were born of him, for some sons are adopted. And some men are called sons of hell, not as being born of hell, but as prepared for it, as the sons of the kingdom are prepared for the kingdom.

CHAPTER 40

CHRIST'S BIRTH THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT MANIFESTS TO US THE GRACE OF GOD

And, therefore, as one thing may be born of another, and yet not in such a way as to be its son, and as not every one who is called a son was born of him whose son he is called, it is clear that this arrangement by which Christ was born of the Holy Spirit, but not as His son, and of the Virgin Mary as her son, is intended as a manifestation of the grace of God. For it was by this grace that a man, without any antecedent merit, was at the very commencement of His existence as man, so united in one person with the Word of God, that the very person who was Son of man was at the same time Son of God, and the very person who was Son of God was at the same time Son of man; and in the adoption of His human nature into the divine, the grace itself became in a way so natural to the man, as to leave no room for the entrance of sin. Wherefore this grace is signified by the Holy Spirit; for He, though in His own nature God, may also be called the gift of God. And to explain all this sufficiently, if indeed it could be done at all, would require a very lengthened discussion.

CHAPTER 41

CHRIST, WHO WAS HIMSELF FREE FROM SIN, WAS MADE SIN FOR US, THAT WE MIGHT BE RECONCILED TO GOD

Begotten and conceived, then, without any indulgence of carnal lust, and therefore bringing with Him no original sin, and by the grace of God joined and united in a wonderful and unspeakable way in one person with the Word, the Only-begotten of the Father, a son by nature, not by grace, and therefore having no sin of His own; nevertheless, on account of the likeness of sinful flesh in which He came, He was called sin, that He might be sacrificed to wash away sin. For, under the Old Covenant, sacrifices for sin were called sins. And He, of whom all these sacrifices were types and shadows, was Himself truly made sin. Hence the apostle, after saying, “We pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God,” forthwith adds: “for He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” He does not say, as some incorrect copies read, “He who knew no sin did sin for us,” as if Christ had Himself sinned for our sakes; but he says, “Him who knew no sin,” that is, Christ, God, to whom we are to be reconciled, “hath made to be sin for us,” that is, hath made Him a sacrifice for our sins, by which we might be reconciled to God. He, then, being made sin, just as we are made righteousness (our righteousness being not our own, but God’s, not in ourselves, but in Him); He being made sin, not His own, but ours, not in Himself, but in us, showed, by the likeness of sinful flesh in which He was crucified, that though sin was not in Him, yet that in a certain sense He died to sin, by dying in the flesh which was the likeness of sin; and that although He Himself had never lived the old life of sin, yet by His resurrection He typified our new life springing up out of the old death in sin.

CHAPTER 42

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM INDICATES OUR DEATH WITH CHRIST TO SIN, AND OUR RESURRECTION WITH HIM TO NEWNESS OF LIFE

And this is the meaning of the great sacrament of baptism which is solemnized among us, that all who attain to this grace should die to sin, as He is said to have died to sin, because He died in the flesh, which is the likeness of sin; and rising from the font regenerate, as He arose alive from the grave, should begin a new life in the Spirit, whatever may be the age of the body?

CHAPTER 43

BAPTISM AND THE GRACE WHICH IT TYPIFIES ARE OPEN TO ALL, BOTH INFANTS AND ADULTS

For from the infant newly born to the old man bent with age, as there is none shut out from baptism, so there is none who in baptism does not die to sin. But infants die only to original sin; those who are older die also to all the sins which their evil lives have added to the sin which they brought with them.

CHAPTER 44

IN SPEAKING OF SIN, THE SINGULAR NUMBER IS OFTEN PUT FOR THE PLURAL, AND THE PLURAL FOR THE SINGULAR

But even these latter are frequently said to die to sin, though undoubtedly they die not to one sin, but to all the numerous actual sins they have committed in thought, word, or deed: for the singular number is often put for the plural, as when the poet says, “They fill its belly with the armed soldier,” though in the case here referred to there were many soldiers concerned. And we read in our own Scriptures: “Pray to the Lord, that He take away the serpent from us.” He does not say serpents though the people were suffering from many; and so in other cases. When, on the other hand, the original sin is expressed in the plural number, as when we say that infants are baptized for the remission of sins, instead of saying for the remission of sin, this is the converse figure of speech, by which the plural number is put in place of the singular; as in the Gospel it is said of the death of Herod, “for they are dead which sought the young child’s life,” instead of saying, “he is dead.” And in Exodus: “They have made them,” Moses says, “gods of gold,” though they had made only one calf, of which they said: “These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt,”—here, too, putting the plural in place of the singular.

CHAPTER 45

IN ADAM’S FIRST SIN, MANY KINDS OF SIN WERE INVOLVED

However, even in that one sin, which “by one man entered into the world, and so passed upon all men,” and on account of which infants are baptized, a number of distinct sins may be observed, if it be analyzed as it were into its separate elements. For there is in it pride, because man chose to be under his own dominion, rather than under the dominion of God; and blasphemy, because he did not believe God; and murder, for he brought death upon himself; and spiritual fornication, for the purity of the human soul was corrupted by the seducing blandishments of the serpent; and theft, for man turned to his own use the food he had been forbidden to touch; and avarice, for he had a craving for more than should have been sufficient for him; and whatever other sin can be discovered on careful reflection to be involved in this one admitted sin.

CHAPTER 46

IT IS PROBABLE THAT CHILDREN ARE INVOLVED IN THE GUILT NOT ONLY OF THE FIRST PAIR, BUT OF THEIR OWN IMMEDIATE PARENTS

And it is said, with much appearance of probability, that infants are involved in the guilt of the sins not only of the first pair, but of their own immediate parents. For that divine judgment, “I shall visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children,” certainly applies to them before they come under the new covenant by regeneration. And it was this new covenant that was prophesied of, when it was said by Ezekiel, that the sons should not bear the iniquity of the fathers, and that it should no longer be a proverb in Israel, “The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.” Here lies the necessity that each man should be born again, that he might be freed from the sin in which he was born. For the sins committed afterwards can be cured by penitence, as we see is the case after baptism. And therefore the new birth would not have been appointed only that the first birth was sinful, so sinful that even one who was legitimately born in wedlock says: “I was shapen in iniquities, and in sins did my mother conceive me.” He did not say in iniquity, or in sin, though he might have said so correctly; but he preferred to say “iniquities” and “sins,” because in that one sin which passed upon all men, and which was so great that human nature was by it made subject to inevitable death, many sins, as I showed above, may be discriminated; and further, because there are other sins of the immediate parents, which though they have not the same effect in producing a change of nature, yet subject the children to guilt unless the divine grace and mercy interpose to rescue them.

CHAPTER 47

IT IS DIFFICULT TO DECIDE WHETHER THE SINS OF A MAN’S OTHER PROGENITORS ARE IMPUTED TO HIM

But about the sins of the other progenitors who intervene between Adam and a man’s own parents, a question may very well be raised. Whether every one who is born is involved in all their accumulated evil acts, in all their multiplied original guilt, so that the later he is born, so much the worse is his condition; or whether God threatens to visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations, because in His mercy He does not extend His wrath against the sins of the progenitors further than that, lest those who do not obtain the grace of regeneration might be crushed down under too heavy a burden if they were compelled to bear as original guilt all the sins of all their progenitors from the very beginning of the human race, and to pay the penalty due to them; or whether any other solution of this great question may or may not be found in Scripture by a more diligent search and a more careful interpretation, I dare not rashly affirm.

CHAPTER 48

THE GUILT OF THE FIRST SIN IS SO GREAT THAT IT CAN BE WASHED AWAY ONLY IN THE BLOOD OF THE MEDIATOR, JESUS CHRIST

Nevertheless, that one sin, admitted into a place where such perfect happiness reigned, was of so heinous a character, that in one man the whole human race was originally, and as one may say, radically, condemned; and it cannot be pardoned and blotted out except through the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who only has had power to be so born as not to need a second birth.

CHAPTER 49

CHRIST WAS NOT REGENERATED IN THE BAPTISM OF JOHN, BUT SUBMITTED TO IT TO GIVE US AN EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY, JUST AS HE SUBMITTED TO DEATH, NOT AS THE PUNISHMENT OF SIN, BUT TO TAKE AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD

Now, those who were baptized in the baptism of John, by whom Christ was Himself baptized, were not regenerated; but they were prepared through the ministry of His forerunner, who cried, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord,” for Him in whom only they could be regenerated. For His baptism is not with water only, as was that of John, but with the Holy Ghost also; so that whoever believes in Christ is regenerated by that Spirit, of whom Christ being generated, He did not need regeneration. Whence that announcement of the Father which was heard after His baptism, “This day have I begotten Thee,” referred not to that one day of time on which He was baptized, but to the one day of an unchangeable eternity, so as to show that this man was one in person with the Only-begotten. For when a day neither begins with the close of yesterday, nor ends with the beginning of to-morrow, it is an eternal to-day. Therefore He asked to be baptized in water by John, not that any iniquity of His might be washed away, but that He might manifest the depth of His humility. For baptism found in Him nothing to wash away, as death found in Him nothing to punish; so that it was in the strictest justice, and not by the mere violence of power, that the devil was crushed and conquered: for, as he had most unjustly put Christ to death, though there was no sin in Him to deserve death, it was most just that through Christ he should lose his hold of those who by sin were justly subject to the bondage in which he held them. Both of these, then, that is, both baptism and death, were submitted to by Him, not through a pitiable necessity, but of His own free pity for us, and as part of an arrangement by which, as one man brought sin into the world, that is, upon the whole human race, so one man was to take away the sin of the world.

CHAPTER 50

CHRIST TOOK AWAY NOT ONLY THE ONE ORIGINAL SIN, BUT ALL THE OTHER SINS THAT HAVE BEEN ADDED TO IT

With this difference: the first man brought one sin into the world, but this man took away not only that one sin, but all that He found added to it.

Hence the apostle says: “And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification.” For it is evident that the one sin which we bring with us by nature would, even if it stood alone, bring us under condemnation; but the free gift justifies man from many offenses: for each man, in addition to the one sin which, in common with all his kind, he brings with him by nature, has committed many sins that are strictly his own.

CHAPTER 51

ALL MEN BORN OF ADAM ARE UNDER CONDEMNATION, AND ONLY IF NEW BORN IN CHRIST ARE FREED FROM CONDEMNATION

But what he says a little after, “Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life,” shows clearly enough that there is no one born of Adam but is subject to condemnation, and that no one, unless he be new born in Christ, is freed from condemnation.

CHAPTER 52

IN BAPTISM, WHICH IS THE SIMILITUDE OF THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, ALL, BOTH INFANTS AND ADULTS, DIE TO SIN THAT THEY MAY WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE

And after he has said as much about the condemnation through one man, and the free gift through one man, as he deemed sufficient for that part of his epistle, the apostle goes on to speak of the great mystery of holy baptism in the cross of Christ, and to clearly explain to us that baptism in Christ is nothing else than a similitude of the death of Christ, and that the death of Christ on the cross is nothing but a similitude of the pardon of sin: so that just as real as is His death, so real is the remission of our sins; and just as real as is His resurrection, so real is our justification. He says: “What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?” For he had said previously, “But where sin, abounded, grace did much more abound.” And therefore he proposes to himself the question, whether it would be right to continue in sin for the sake of the consequent abounding grace. But he answers, “God forbid;” and adds, “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” Then, to show that we are dead to sin, “Know ye not,” he says, “that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death?” If, then, the fact that we were baptized into the death of Christ proves that we are dead to sin, it follows that even infants who are baptized into Christ die to sin, being baptized into His death. For there is no exception made: “So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death.” And this is said to prove that we are dead to sin. Now, to what sin do infants die in their regeneration but that sin which they bring with them at birth? And therefore to these also applies what follows: “Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Now he had commenced with proving that we must not continue in sin that grace may abound, and had said: “How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?” And to show that we are dead to sin, he added: “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death?” And so he concludes this whole passage just as he began it. For he has brought in the death of Christ in such a way as to imply that Christ Himself also died to sin. To what sin did He die if not to the flesh, in which there was not sin, but the likeness of sin, and which was therefore called by the name of sin? To those who are baptized into the death of Christ, then,—and this class includes not adults only, but infants as well,—he says: “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

CHAPTER 53

CHRIST'S CROSS AND BURIAL, RESURRECTION, ASCENSION, AND SITTING DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, ARE IMAGES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

All the events, then, of Christ's crucifixion, of His burial, of His resurrection the third day, of His ascension into heaven, of His sitting down at the right hand of the Father, were so ordered, that the life which the Christian leads here might be modelled upon them, not merely in a mystical sense, but in reality. For in reference to His crucifixion it is said: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts." And in reference to His burial: "We are buried with Him by baptism into death." In reference to His resurrection: "That, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." And in reference to His ascension into heaven and sitting down at the right hand of the Father: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

CHAPTER 54

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING DOES NOT BELONG TO THE PAST, BUT WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE END OF THE WORLD

But what we believe as to Christ's action in the future, when He shall come from heaven to judge the quick and the dead, has no bearing upon the life which we now lead here; for it forms no part of what He did upon earth, but is part of what He shall do at the end of the world. And it is to this that the apostle refers in what immediately follows the passage quoted above: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."

CHAPTER 55

THE EXPRESSION, "CHRIST SHALL JUDGE THE QUICK AND THE DEAD," MAY BE UNDERSTOOD IN EITHER OF TWO SENSES

Now the expression, "to judge the quick and the dead," may be interpreted in two ways: either we may understand by the "quick" those who at His advent shall not yet have died, but whom He shall find alive in the flesh, and by the “dead” those who have departed from the body, or who shall have departed before His coming; or we may understand the “quick” to mean the righteous, and the “dead” the unrighteous; for the righteous shall be judged as well as others. Now the judgment of God is sometimes taken in a bad sense, as, for example, “They that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment;” sometimes in a good sense, as, “Save me, O God, by Thy name, and judge me by Thy strength.” This is easily understood when we consider that it is the judgment of God which separates the good from the evil, and sets the good at His right hand, that they may be delivered from evil, and not destroyed with the wicked; and it is for this reason that the Psalmist cried, “Judge me, O God,” and then added, as if in explanation, “and distinguish my cause from that of an ungodly nation.”

CHAPTER 56

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH. THE CHURCH IS THE TEMPLE OF GOD

And now, having spoken of Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, our Lord, with the brevity suitable to a confession of our faith, we go on to say that we believe also in the Holy Ghost,—thus completing the Trinity which constitutes the Godhead. Then we mention the Holy Church. And thus we are made to understand that the intelligent creation, which constitutes the free Jerusalem, ought to be subordinate in the order of speech to the Creator, the Supreme Trinity: for all that is said of the man Christ Jesus has reference, of course, to the unity of the person of the Only-begotten. Therefore the true order of the Creed demanded that the Church should be made subordinate to the Trinity, as the house to Him who dwells in it, the temple to God who occupies it, and the city to its builder. And we are here to understand the whole Church, not that part of it only which wanders as a stranger on the earth, praising the name of God from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, and singing a new song of deliverance from its old captivity; but that part also which has always from its creation remained steadfast to God in heaven, and has never experienced the misery consequent upon a fall. This part is made up of the holy angels, who enjoy uninterrupted happiness; and (as it is bound to do) it renders assistance to the part which is still wandering among strangers: for these two parts shall be one in the fellowship of eternity, and now they are one in the bonds of love, the whole having been ordained for the worship of the one God. Wherefore, neither the whole Church, nor any part of it, has any desire to be worshipped instead of God, nor to be God to any one who belongs to the temple of God—that temple which is built up of the saints who were created by the uncreated God. And therefore the Holy Spirit, if a creature, could not be the Creator, but would be a part of the intelligent creation. He would simply be the highest creature, and therefore would not be mentioned in the Creed before the Church; for He Himself would belong to the Church, to that part of it which is in the heavens. And He would not have a temple, for He Himself would be part of a temple. Now He has a temple, of which the apostle says: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?" Of which body he says in another place: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" How, then, is He not God, seeing that He has a temple? and how can He be less than Christ, whose members are His temple? Nor has He one temple, and God another, seeing that the same apostle says: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" and adds, as proof of this, "and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." God, then, dwells in His temple: not the Holy Spirit only, but the Father also, and the Son, who says of His own body, through which He was made Head of the Church upon earth ("that in all things He might have the pre-eminence):" "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The temple of God, then, that is, of the Supreme Trinity as a whole, is the Holy Church, embracing in its full extent both heaven and earth.

CHAPTER 57

THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH IN HEAVEN

But of that part of the Church which is in heaven what can we say, except that no wicked one is found in it, and that no one has fallen from it, or shall ever fall from it, since the time that "God spared not the angels that sinned," as the Apostle Peter writes, "but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment?"

CHAPTER 58

WE HAVE NO CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ANGELIC SOCIETY

Now, what the organization is of that supremely happy society in heaven: what the differences of rank are, which explain the fact that while all are called by the general name angels, as we read in the Epistle to the Hebrews, “but to which of the angels said God at any time, Sit on my right hand?” (this form of expression being evidently designed to embrace all the angels without exception), we yet find that there are some called archangels; and whether the archangels are the same as those called hosts, so that the expression, “Praise ye Him, all His angels: praise ye Him, all His hosts,” is the same as if it had been said, “Praise ye Him, all His angels: praise ye Him, all His archangels;” and what are the various significations of those four names under which the apostle seems to embrace the whole heavenly company without exception, “whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers:”—let those who are able answer these questions, if they can also prove their answers to be true; but as for me, I confess my ignorance. I am not even certain upon this point: whether the sun, and the moon, and all the stars, do not form part of this same society, though many consider them merely luminous bodies, without either sensation or intelligence.

CHAPTER 59

THE BODIES ASSUMED BY ANGELS RAISE A VERY DIFFICULT, AND NOT VERY USEFUL, SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION

Further, who will tell with what sort of bodies it was that the angels appeared to men, making themselves not only visible, but tangible; and again, how it is that, not through material bodies, but by spiritual power, they present visions not to the bodily eyes, but to the spiritual eyes of the mind, or speak something not into the ear from without, but from within the soul of the man, they themselves being stationed there too, as it is written in the prophet, “And the angel that spake in me said unto me” (he does not say, “that spake to me,” but “that spake in me”); or appear to men in sleep, and make communications through dreams, as we read in the Gospel, “Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying”? For these methods of communication seem to imply that the angels have not tangible bodies, and make it a very difficult question to solve how the patriarchs washed their feet, and how it was that Jacob wrestled with the angel in a way so unmistakeably material. To ask questions like these, and to make such guesses as we can at the answers, is a useful exercise for the intellect, if the discussion be kept within proper bounds, and if we avoid the error of supposing ourselves to know what we do not know. For what is the necessity for affirming, or denying, or defining with accuracy on these subjects, and others like them, when we may without blame be entirely ignorant of them?

CHAPTER 60

IT IS MORE NECESSARY TO BE ABLE TO DETECT THE WILES OF SATAN WHEN HE TRANSFORMS HIMSELF INTO AN ANGEL OF LIGHT

It is more necessary to use all our powers of discrimination and judgment when Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, lest by his wiles he should lead us astray into hurtful courses. For, while he only deceives the bodily senses, and does not pervert the mind from that true and sound judgment which enables a man to lead a life of faith, there is no danger to religion; or if, feigning himself to be good, he does or says the things that befit good angels, and we believe him to be good, the error is not one that is hurtful or dangerous to Christian faith. But when, through these means, which are alien to his nature, he goes on to lead us into courses of his own, then great watchfulness is necessary to detect, and refuse to follow, him. But how many men are fit to evade all his deadly wiles, unless God restrains and watches over them? The very difficulty of the matter, however, is useful in this respect, that it prevents men from trusting in themselves or in one another, and leads all to place their confidence in God alone. And certainly no pious man can doubt that this is most expedient for us.

CHAPTER 61

THE CHURCH ON EARTH HAS BEEN REDEEMED FROM SIN BY THE BLOOD OF A MEDIATOR

This part of the Church, then, which is made up of the holy angels and the hosts of God, shall become known to us in its true nature, when, at the end of the world, we shall be united with it in the common possession of everlasting happiness. But the other part, which, separated from it, wanders as a stranger on the earth, is better known to us, both because we belong to it, and because it is composed of men, and we too are men. This section of the Church has been redeemed from all sin by the blood of a Mediator who had no sin, and its song is: “If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.” Now it was not for the angels that Christ died. Yet what was done for the redemption of man through His death was in a sense done for the angels, because the enmity which sin had put between men and the holy angels is removed, and friendship is restored between them, and by the redemption of man the gaps which the great apostasy left in the angelic host are filled up.

CHAPTER 62

BY THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST ALL THINGS ARE RESTORED, AND PEACE IS MADE BETWEEN EARTH AND HEAVEN

And, of course, the holy angels, taught by God, in the eternal contemplation of whose truth their happiness consists, know how great a number of the human race are to supplement their ranks, and fill up the full tale of their citizenship. Wherefore the apostle says, that “all things are gathered together in one in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth.” The things which are in heaven are gathered together when what was lost therefrom in the fall of the angels is restored from among men; and the things which are on earth are gathered together, when those who are predestined to eternal life are redeemed from their old corruption. And thus, through that single sacrifice in which the Mediator was offered up, the one sacrifice of which the many victims under the law were types, heavenly things are brought into peace with earthly things, and earthly things with heavenly. Wherefore, as the same apostle says: “For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell: and, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself: by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.”

CHAPTER 63

THE PEACE OF GOD, WHICH REIGNETH IN HEAVEN, PASSETH ALL UNDERSTANDING

This peace, as Scripture saith, “passeth all understanding,” and cannot be known by us until we have come into the full possession of it. For in what sense are heavenly things reconciled, except they be reconciled to us, viz. by coming into harmony with us? For in heaven there is unbroken peace, both between all the intelligent creatures that exist there, and between these and their Creator. And this peace, as is said, passeth all understanding; but this, of course, means our understanding, not that of those who always behold the face of their Father. We now, however great may be our human understanding, know but in part, and see through a glass darkly. But when we shall be equal unto the angels of God then we shall see face to face, as they do; and we shall have as great peace towards them as they have towards us, because we shall love them as much as we are loved by them. And so their peace shall be known to us: for our own peace shall be like to theirs, and as great as theirs, nor shall it then pass our understanding. But the peace of God, the peace which He cherisheth towards us, shall undoubtedly pass not our understanding only, but theirs as well. And this must be so: for every rational creature which is happy derives its happiness from Him; He does not derive His from it. And in this view it is better to interpret “all” in the passage, “The peace of God passeth all understanding,” as admitting of no exception even in favor of the understanding of the holy angels: the only exception that can be made is that of God Himself. For, of course, His peace does not pass His own understanding.

CHAPTER 64

PARDON OF SIN EXTENDS OVER THE WHOLE MORTAL LIFE OF THE SAINTS, WHICH, THOUGH FREE FROM CRIME, IS NOT FREE FROM SIN

But the angels even now are at peace with us when our sins are pardoned. Hence, in the order of the Creed, after the mention of the Holy Church is placed the remission of sins. For it is by this that the Church on earth stands: it is through this that what had been lost, and was found, is saved from being lost again. For, setting aside the grace of baptism, which is given as an antidote to original sin, so that what our birth imposes upon us, our new birth relieves us from (this grace, however, takes away all the actual sins also that have been committed in thought, word, and deed): setting aside, then, this great act of favor, whence commences man's restoration, and in which all our guilt, both original and actual, is washed away, the rest of our life from the time that we have the use of reason provides constant occasion for the remission of sins, however great may be our advance in righteousness. For the sons of God, as long as they live in this body of death, are in conflict with death. And although it is truly said of them, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," yet they are led by the Spirit of God, and as the sons of God advance towards God under this drawback, that they are led also by their own spirit, weighted as it is by the corruptible body; and that, as the sons of men, under the influence of human affections, they fall back to their old level, and so sin. There is a difference, however. For although every crime is a sin, every sin is not a crime. And so we say that the life of holy men, as long as they remain in this mortal body, may be found without crime; but, as the Apostle John says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

CHAPTER 65

GOD PARDONS SINS, BUT ON CONDITION OF PENITENCE, CERTAIN TIMES FOR WHICH HAVE BEEN FIXED BY THE LAW OF THE CHURCH

But even crimes themselves, however great, may be remitted in the Holy Church; and the mercy of God is never to be despaired of by men who truly repent, each according to the measure of his sin. And in the act of repentance, where a crime has been committed of such a nature as to cut off the sinner from the body of Christ, we are not to take account so much of the measure of time as of the measure of sorrow; for a broken and a contrite heart God doth not despise. But as the grief of one heart is frequently hid from another, and is not made known to others by words or other signs, when it is manifest to Him of whom it is said, "My groaning is not hid from Thee," those who govern the Church have rightly appointed times of penitence, that the Church in which the sins are remitted may be satisfied; and outside the Church sins are not remitted. For the Church alone has received the pledge of the Holy Spirit, without which there is no remission of sins—such, at least, as brings the pardoned to eternal life.

CHAPTER 66

THE PARDON OF SIN HAS REFERENCE CHIEFLY TO THE FUTURE JUDGMENT

Now the pardon of sin has reference chiefly to the future judgment. For, as far as this life is concerned, the saying of Scripture holds good: “A heavy yoke is upon the sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their mother’s womb, till the day that they return to the mother of all things.” So that we see even infants, after baptism and regeneration, suffering from the infliction of divers evils: and thus we are given to understand, that all that is set forth in the sacraments of salvation refers rather to the hope of future good, than to the retaining or attaining of present blessings. For many sins seem in this world to be overlooked and visited with no punishment, whose punishment is reserved for the future (for it is not in vain that the day when Christ shall come as Judge of quick and dead is peculiarly named the day of judgment); just as, on the other hand, many sins are punished in this life, which nevertheless are pardoned, and shall bring down no punishment in the future life. Accordingly, in reference to certain temporal punishments, which in this life are visited upon sinners, the apostle, addressing those whose sins are blotted out, and not reserved for the final judgment, says: “For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.”

CHAPTER 67

FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD, AND CANNOT SAVE A MAN

It is believed, moreover, by some, that men who do not abandon the name of Christ, and who have been baptized in the Church by His baptism, and who have never been cut off from the Church by any schism or heresy, though they should live in the grossest sin and never either wash it away in penitence nor redeem it by almsgiving, but persevere in it persistently to the last day of their lives, shall be saved by fire; that is, that although they shall suffer a punishment by fire, lasting for a time proportionate to the magnitude of their crimes and misdeeds, they shall not be punished with everlasting fire. But those who believe this, and yet are Catholics, seem to me to be led astray by a kind of benevolent feeling natural to humanity. For Holy Scripture, when consulted, gives a very different answer. I have written a book on this subject, entitled Of Faith and Works, in which, to the best of my ability, God assisting me, I have shown from Scripture, that the faith which saves us is that which the Apostle Paul clearly enough describes when he says: “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.” But if it worketh evil, and not good, then without doubt, as the Apostle James says, “it is dead, being alone.” The same apostle says again, “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?” And further, if a wicked man shall be saved by fire on account of his faith alone, and if this is what the blessed Apostle Paul means when he says, “But he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire;” then faith without works can save a man, and what his fellow-apostle James says must be false. And that must be false which Paul himself says in another place: “Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners; shall inherit the kingdom of God.” For if those who persevere in these wicked courses shall nevertheless be saved on account of their faith in Christ, how can it be true that they shall not inherit the kingdom of God?

CHAPTER 68

THE TRUE SENSE OF THE PASSAGE (I COR. III. 11–15) ABOUT THOSE WHO ARE SAVED, YET SO AS BY FIRE

But as these most plain and unmistakeable declarations of the apostles cannot be false, that obscure saying about those who build upon the foundation, Christ, not gold, silver, and precious stones, but wood, hay, and stubble (for it is these who, it is said, shall be saved, yet so as by fire, the merit of the foundation saving them), must be so interpreted as not to conflict with the plain statements quoted above. Now wood, hay, and stubble may, without incongruity, be understood to signify such an attachment to worldly things, however lawful these may be in themselves, that they cannot be lost without grief of mind. And though this grief burns, yet if Christ hold the place of foundation in the heart,—that is, if nothing be preferred to Him, and if the man, though burning with grief, is yet more willing to lose the things he loves so much than to lose Christ,—he is saved by fire. If, however, in time of temptation, he prefer to hold by temporal and earthly things rather than by Christ, he has not Christ as his foundation; for he puts earthly things in the first place, and in a building nothing comes before the foundation. Again, the fire of which the apostle speaks in this place must be such a fire as both men are made to pass through, that is, both the man who builds upon the foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, and the man who builds wood, hay, stubble. For he immediately adds: “The fire shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.” The fire then shall prove, not the work of one of them only, but of both. Now the trial of adversity is a kind of fire which is plainly spoken of in another place: “The furnace proveth the potter’s vessels: and the furnace of adversity just men.” And this fire does in the course of this life act exactly in the way the apostle says. If it come into contact with two believers, one “caring for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord,” that is, building upon Christ the foundation, gold, silver, precious stones; the other “caring for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife,” that is, building upon the same foundation wood, hay, stubble,—the work of the former is not burned, because he has not given his love to things whose loss can cause him grief; but the work of the latter is burned, because things that are enjoyed with desire cannot be lost without pain. But since, by our supposition, even the latter prefers to lose these things rather than to lose Christ, and since he does not desert Christ out of fear of losing them, though he is grieved when he does lose them, he is saved, but it is so as by fire; because the grief for what he loved and has lost burns him. But it does not subvert nor consume him; for he is protected by his immoveable and incorruptible foundation.

CHAPTER 69

IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT SOME BELIEVERS MAY PASS THROUGH A PURGATORIAL FIRE IN THE FUTURE LIFE

And it is not impossible that something of the same kind may take place even after this life. It is a matter that may be inquired into, and either ascertained or left doubtful, whether some believers shall pass through a kind of purgatorial fire, and in proportion as they have loved with more or less devotion the goods that perish, be less or more quickly delivered from it. This cannot, however, be the case of any of those of whom it is said, that they "shall not inherit the kingdom of God," unless after suitable repentance their sins be forgiven them. When I say "suitable," I mean that they are not to be unfruitful in almsgiving; for Holy Scripture lays so much stress on this virtue, that our Lord tells us beforehand, that He will ascribe no merit to those on His right hand but that they abound in it, and no defect to those on His left hand but their want of it, when He shall say to the former, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom," and to the latter, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

CHAPTER 70

ALMSGIVING WILL NOT ATONE FOR SIN UNLESS THE LIFE BE CHANGED

We must beware, however, lest any one should suppose that gross sins, such as are committed by those who shall not inherit the kingdom of God, may be daily perpetrated, and daily atoned for by almsgiving. The life must be changed for the better; and almsgiving must be used to propitiate God for past sins, not to purchase impunity for the commission of such sins in the future. For He has given no man license to sin, although in His mercy He may blot out sins that are already committed, if we do not neglect to make proper satisfaction.

CHAPTER 71

THE DAILY PRAYER OF THE BELIEVER MAKES SATISFACTION FOR THE TRIVIAL SINS THAT DAILY STAIN HIS LIFE

Now the daily prayer of the believer makes satisfaction for those daily sins of a momentary and trivial kind which are necessary incidents of this life. For he can say, “Our Father which art in heaven,” seeing that to such a Father he is now born again of water and of the Spirit. And this prayer certainly takes away the very small sins of daily life. It takes away also those which at one time made the life of the believer very wicked, but which, now that he is changed for the better by repentance, he has given up, provided that as truly as he says, “Forgive us our debts” (for there is no want of debts to be forgiven), so truly does he say, “as we forgive our debtors;” that is, provided he does what he says he does: for to forgive a man who asks for pardon, is really to give alms.

CHAPTER 72

THERE ARE MANY KINDS OF ALMS, THE GIVING OF WHICH ASSISTS TO PROCURE PARDON FOR OUR SINS

And on this principle of interpretation, our Lord’s saying, “Give alms of such things as ye have, and, behold, all things are clean unto you,” applies to every useful act that a man does in mercy. Not only, then, the man who gives food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, hospitality to the stranger, shelter to the fugitive, who visits the sick and the imprisoned, ransoms the captive, assists the weak, leads the blind, comforts the sorrowful, heals the sick, puts the wanderer on the right path, gives advice to the perplexed, and supplies the wants of the needy,—not this man only, but the man who pardons the sinner also gives alms; and the man who corrects with blows, or restrains by any kind of discipline one over whom he has power, and who at the same time forgives from the heart the sin by which he was injured, or prays that it may be forgiven, is also a giver of alms, not only in that he forgives, or prays for forgiveness for the sin, but also in that he rebukes and corrects the sinner: for in this, too, he shows mercy. Now much good is bestowed upon unwilling recipients, when their advantage and not their pleasure is consulted; and they themselves frequently prove to be their own enemies, while their true friends are those whom they take for their enemies, and to whom in their blindness they return evil for good. (A Christian, indeed, is not permitted to return evil even for evil.) And thus there are many kinds of alms, by giving of which we assist to procure the pardon of our sins.

CHAPTER 73

THE GREATEST OF ALL ALMS IS TO FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS AND TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES

But none of those is greater than to forgive from the heart a sin that has been committed against us. For it is a comparatively small thing to wish well to, or even to do good to, a man who has done no evil to you. It is a much higher thing, and is the result of the most exalted goodness, to love your enemy, and always to wish well to, and when you have the opportunity, to do good to, the man who wishes you ill, and, when he can, does you harm. This is to obey the command of God: “Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which persecute you.” But seeing that this is a frame of mind only reached by the perfect sons of God, and that though every believer ought to strive after it, and by prayer to God and earnest struggling with himself endeavor to bring his soul up to this standard, yet a degree of goodness so high can hardly belong to so great a multitude as we believe are heard when they use this petition, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;” in view of all this, it cannot be doubted that the implied undertaking is fulfilled if a man, though he has not yet attained to loving his enemy, yet, when asked by one who has sinned against him to forgive him his sin, does forgive him from his heart. For he certainly desires to be himself forgiven when he prays, “as we forgive our debtors,” that is, Forgive us our debts when we beg forgiveness, as we forgive our debtors when they beg forgiveness from us.

CHAPTER 74

GOD DOES NOT PARDON THE SINS OF THOSE WHO DO NOT FROM THE HEART FORGIVE OTHERS

Now, he who asks forgiveness of the man against whom he has sinned, being moved by his sin to ask forgiveness, cannot be counted an enemy in such a sense that it should be as difficult to love him now as it was when he was engaged in active hostility. And the man who does not from his heart forgive him who repents of his sin, and asks forgiveness, need not suppose that his own sins are forgiven of God. For the Truth cannot lie. And what reader or hearer of the Gospel can have failed to notice, that the same person who said, “I am the Truth,” taught us also this form of prayer; and in order to impress this particular petition deeply upon our minds, said, “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses”? The man whom the thunder of this warning does not awaken is not asleep, but dead; and yet so powerful is that voice, that it can awaken even the dead.

CHAPTER 75

THE WICKED AND THE UNBELIEVING ARE NOT MADE CLEAN BY THE GIVING OF ALMS, EXCEPT THEY BE BORN AGAIN

Assuredly, then, those who live in gross wickedness, and take no care to reform their lives and manners, and yet amid all their crimes and vices do not cease to give frequent alms, in vain take comfort to themselves from the saying of our Lord: “Give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.” For they do not understand how far this saying reaches. But that they may understand this, let them hear what He says. For we read in the Gospel as follows: “And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with him; and He went in, and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that He had not first washed before dinner. And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.” Are we to understand this as meaning that to the Pharisees who have not the faith of Christ all things are clean, if only they give alms in the way these men count almsgiving, even though they have never believed in Christ, nor been born again of water and of the Spirit? But the fact is, that all are unclean who are not made clean by the faith of Christ, according to the expression, “purifying their hearts by faith;” and that the apostle says, “Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.”

How, then, could all things be clean to the Pharisees, even though they gave alms, if they were not believers? And how could they be believers if they were not willing to have faith in Christ, and to be born again of His grace? And yet what they heard is true: “Give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.”

CHAPTER 76

TO GIVE ALMS ARIGHT, WE SHOULD BEGIN WITH OURSELVES, AND HAVE PITY UPON OUR OWN SOULS

For the man who wishes to give aims as he ought, should begin with himself, and give to himself first. For almsgiving is a work of mercy; and most truly is it said, “To have mercy on thy soul is pleasing to God.” And for this end are we born again, that we should be pleasing to God, who is justly displeased with that which we brought with us when we were born. This is our first alms, which we give to ourselves when, through the mercy of a pitying God, we find that we are ourselves wretched, and confess the justice of His judgment by which we are made wretched, of which the apostle says, “The judgment was by one to condemnation;” and praise the greatness of His love, of which the same preacher of grace says, “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us:” and thus judging truly of our own misery, and loving God with the love which He has Himself bestowed, we lead a holy and virtuous life. But the Pharisees, while they gave as alms the tithe of all their fruits, even the most insignificant, passed over judgment and the love of God, and so did not commence their alms-giving at home, and extend their pity to themselves in the first instance. And it is in reference to this order of love that it is said, “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” When, then, our Lord had rebuked them because they made themselves clean on the outside, but within were full of ravening and wickedness, He advised them, in the exercise of that charity which each man owes to himself in the first instance, to make clean the inward parts. “But rather,” He says, “give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.” Then, to show what it was that He advised, and what they took no pains to do, and to show that He did not overlook or forget their almsgiving, “But woe unto you, Pharisees!” He says; as if He meant to say: I indeed advise you to give alms which shall make all things clean unto you; “but woe unto you! for ye tithe mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs;” as if He meant to say: I know these alms of yours, and ye need not think that I am now admonishing you in respect of such things; “and pass over judgment and the love of God,” an alms by which ye might have been made clean from all inward impurity, so that even the bodies which ye are now washing would have been clean to you. For this is the import of “all things,” both inward and outward things, as we read in another place: “Cleanse first that which is within, that the outside may be clean also.” But lest He might appear to despise the alms which they were giving out of the fruits of the earth, He says: “These ought ye to have done,” referring to judgment and the love of God, “and not to leave the other undone,” referring to the giving of the tithes.

CHAPTER 77

IF WE WOULD GIVE ALMS TO OURSELVES, WE MUST FLEE INIQUITY; FOR HE WHO LOVETH INIQUITY HATETH HIS SOUL

Those, then, who think that they can by giving alms, however profuse, whether in money or in kind, purchase for themselves the privilege of persisting with impunity in their monstrous crimes and hideous vices, need not thus deceive themselves. For not only do they commit these sins, but they love them so much that they would like to go on forever committing them, if only they could do so with impunity. Now, he who loveth iniquity hateth his own soul; and he who hateth his own soul is not merciful but cruel towards it. For in loving it according to the world, he hateth it according to God. But if he desired to give alms to it which should make all things clean unto him, he would hate it according to the world, and love it according to God. Now no one gives alms unless he receive what he gives from one who is not in want of it. Therefore it is said, “His mercy shall meet me.”

CHAPTER 78

WHAT SINS ARE TRIVIAL AND WHAT HEINOUS IS A MATTER FOR GOD’S JUDGMENT

Now, what sins are trivial and what heinous is not a matter to be decided by man’s judgment, but by the judgment of God. For it is plain that the apostles themselves have given an indulgence in the case of certain sins: take, for example, what the Apostle Paul says to those who are married: “Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer: and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.” Now it is possible that it might not have been considered a sin to have intercourse with a spouse, not with a view to the procreation of children, which is the great blessing of marriage, but for the sake of carnal pleasure, and to save the incontinent from being led by their weakness into the deadly sin of fornication, or adultery, or another form of uncleanness which it is shameful even to name, and into which it is possible that they might be drawn by lust under the temptation of Satan. It is possible, I say, that this might not have been considered a sin, had the apostle not added: “But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.” Who, then, can deny that it is a sin, when confessedly it is only by apostolic authority that permission is granted to those who do it? Another case of the same kind is where he says: “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?” And shortly afterwards: “If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the Church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.” Now it might have been supposed in this case that it is not a sin to have a quarrel with another, that the only sin is in wishing to have it adjudicated upon outside the Church, had not the apostle immediately added: “Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law with one another.” And lest any one should excuse himself by saying that he had a just cause, and was suffering wrong, and that he only wished the sentence of the judges to remove his wrong, the apostle immediately anticipates such thoughts and excuses, and says: “Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?” Thus bringing us back to our Lord’s saying, “If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also;” and again, “Of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again.” Therefore our Lord has forbidden His followers to go to law with other men about worldly affairs. And carrying out this principle, the apostle here declares that to do so is “altogether a fault.” But when, notwithstanding, he grants his permission to have such cases between brethren decided in the Church, other brethren adjudicating, and only sternly forbids them to be carried outside the Church, it is manifest that here again an indulgence is extended to the infirmities of the weak. It is in view, then, of these sins, and others of the same sort, and of others again more trifling still, which consist of offenses in words and thought (as the Apostle James confesses, “In many things we offend all”), that we need to pray every day and often to the Lord, saying, “Forgive us our debts,” and to add in truth and sincerity, “as we forgive our debtors.”

CHAPTER 79

SINS WHICH APPEAR VERY TRIFLING, ARE SOMETIMES IN REALITY VERY SERIOUS

Again, there are some sins which would be considered very trifling, if the Scriptures did not show that they are really very serious. For who would suppose that the man who says to his brother, “Thou fool,” is in danger of hell-fire, did not He who is the Truth say so? To the wound, however, He immediately applies the cure, giving a rule for reconciliation with one’s offended brother: “Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” Again, who would suppose that it was so great a sin to observe days, and months, and times, and years, as those do who are anxious or unwilling to begin anything on certain days, or in certain months or years, because the vain doctrines of men lead them to think such times lucky or unlucky, had we not the means of estimating the greatness of the evil from the fear expressed by the apostle, who says to such men, “I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain”?

CHAPTER 80

SINS, HOWEVER GREAT AND DETESTABLE, SEEM TRIVIAL WHEN WE ARE ACCUSTOMED TO THEM

Add to this, that sins, however great and detestable they may be, are looked upon as trivial, or as not sins at all, when men get accustomed to them; and so far does this go, that such sins are not only not concealed, but are boasted of, and published far and wide; and thus, as it is written, “The wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth.” Iniquity of this kind is in Scripture called a cry. You have an instance in the prophet Isaiah, in the case of the evil vineyard: “He looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.” Whence also the expression in Genesis: “The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great,” because in these cities crimes were not only not punished, but were openly committed, as if under the protection of the law. And so in our own times: many forms of sin, though not just the sameas those of Sodom and Gomorrah, are now so openly and habitually practised, that not only dare we not excommunicate a layman, we dare not even degrade a clergyman, for the commission of them. So that when, a few years ago, I was expounding the Epistle to the Galatians, in commenting on that very place where the apostle says, “I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed labor upon you in vain,” I was compelled to exclaim, “Woe to the sins of men! for it is only when we are not accustomed to them that we shrink from them: when once we are accustomed to them, though the blood of the Son of God was poured out to wash them away, though they are so great that the kingdom of God is wholly shut against them, constant familiarity leads to the toleration of them all, and habitual toleration leads to the practice of many of them. And grant, O Lord, that we may not come to practise all that we have not the power to hinder.” But I shall see whether the extravagance of grief did not betray me into rashness of speech.

CHAPTER 81

THERE ARE TWO CAUSES OF SIN, IGNORANCE AND WEAKNESS; AND WE NEED DIVINE HELP TO OVERCOME BOTH

I shall now say this, which I have often said before in other places of my works. There are two causes that lead to sin: either we do not yet know our duty, or we do not perform the duty that we know. The former is the sin of ignorance, the latter of weakness. Now against these it is our duty to struggle; but we shall certainly be beaten in the fight, unless we are helped by God, not only to see our duty, but also, when we clearly see it, to make the love of righteousness stronger in us than the love of earthly things, the eager longing after which, or the fear of losing which, leads us with our eyes open into known sin. In the latter case we are not only sinners, for we are so even when we err through ignorance, but we are also transgressors of the law; for we leave undone what we know we ought to do, and we do what we know we ought not to do. Wherefore not only ought we to pray for pardon when we have sinned, saying, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;” but we ought to pray for guidance, that we may be kept from sinning, saying, “and lead us not into temptation.” And we are to pray to Him of whom the Psalmist says, “The Lord is my light and my salvation:” my light, for He removes my ignorance; my salvation, for He takes away my infirmity.

CHAPTER 82

THE MERCY OF GOD IS NECESSARY TO TRUE REPENTANCE

Now even penance itself, when by the law of the Church there is sufficient reason for its being gone through, is frequently evaded through infirmity; for shame is the fear of losing pleasure when the good opinion of men gives more pleasure than the righteousness which leads a man to humble himself in penitence. Wherefore the mercy of God is necessary not only when a man repents, but even to lead him to repent. How else explain what the apostle says of certain persons: “if God peradventure will give them repentance”? And before Peter wept bitterly, we are told by the evangelist, “The Lord turned, and looked upon him.”

CHAPTER 83

THE MAN WHO DESPISES THE MERCY OF GOD IS GUILTY OF THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST

Now the man who, not believing that sins are remitted in the Church, despises this great gift of God’s mercy, and persists to the last day of his life in his obstinacy of heart, is guilty of the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, in whom Christ forgives sins. But this difficult question I have discussed as clearly as I could in a book devoted exclusively to this one point.

CHAPTER 84

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY GIVES RISE TO NUMEROUS QUESTIONS

Now, as to the resurrection of the body,—not a resurrection such as some have had, who came back to life for a time and died again, but a resurrection to eternal life, as the body of Christ Himself rose again,—I do not see how I can discuss the matter briefly, and at the same time give a satisfactory answer to all the questions that are ordinarily raised about it. Yet that the bodies of all men—both those who have been born and those who shall be born, both those who have died and those who shall die—shall be raised again, no Christian ought to have the shadow of a doubt.

CHAPTER 85

THE CASE OF ABORTIVE CONCEPTIONS

Hence in the first place arises a question about abortive conceptions, which have indeed been born in the mother's womb, but not so born that they could be born again. For if we shall decide that these are to rise again, we cannot object to any conclusion that may be drawn in regard to those which are fully formed. Now who is there that is not rather disposed to think that unformed abortions perish, like seeds that have never fructified? But who will dare to deny, though he may not dare to affirm, that at the resurrection every defect in the form shall be supplied, and that thus the perfection which time would have brought shall not be wanting, any more than the blemishes which time did bring shall be present: so that the nature shall neither want anything suitable and in harmony with it that length of days would have added, nor be debased by the presence of anything of an opposite kind that length of days has added; but that what is not yet complete shall be completed, just as what has been injured shall be renewed.

CHAPTER 86

IF THEY HAVE EVER LIVED, THEY MUST OF COURSE HAVE DIED, AND THEREFORE SHALL HAVE A SHARE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

And therefore the following question may be very carefully inquired into and discussed by learned men, though I do not know whether it is in man’s power to resolve it: At what time the infant begins to live in the womb: whether life exists in a latent form before it manifests itself in the motions of the living being. To deny that the young who are cut out limb by limb from the womb, lest if they were left there dead the mother should die too, have never been alive, seems too audacious. Now, from the time that a man begins to live, from that time it is possible for him to die. And if he die, wheresoever death may overtake him, I cannot discover on what principle he can be denied an interest in the resurrection of the dead.

CHAPTER 87

THE CASE OF MONSTROUS BIRTHS

We are not justified in affirming even of monstrosities, which are born and live, however quickly they may die, that they shall not rise again, nor that they shall rise again in their deformity, and not rather with an amended and perfected body. God forbid that the double limbed man who was lately born in the East, of whom an account was brought by most trustworthy brethren who had seen him,—an account which the presbyter Jerome, of blessed memory, left in writing;—God forbid, I say, that we should think that at the resurrection there shall be one man with double limbs, and not two distinct men, as would have been the case had twins been born. And so other births, which, because they have either a superfluity or a defect, or because they are very much deformed, are called monstrosities, shall at the resurrection be restored to the normal shape of man; and so each single soul shall possess its own body; and no bodies shall cohere together even though they were born in cohesion, but each separately shall possess all the members which constitute a complete human body.

CHAPTER 88

THE MATERIAL OF THE BODY NEVER PERISHES

Nor does the earthly material out of which men’s mortal bodies are created ever perish; but though it may crumble into dust and ashes, or be dissolved into vapors and exhalations, though it may be transformed into the substance of other bodies, or dispersed into the elements, though it should become food for beasts or men, and be changed into their flesh, it returns in a moment of time to that human soul which animated it at the first, and which caused it to become man, and to live and grow.

CHAPTER 89

BUT THIS MATERIAL MAY BE DIFFERENTLY ARRANGED IN THE RESURRECTION BODY

And this earthly material, which when the soul leaves it becomes a corpse, shall not at the resurrection be so restored as that the parts into which it is separated, and which under various forms and appearances become parts of other things (though they shall all return to the same body from which they were separated), must necessarily return to the same parts of the body in which they were originally situated. For otherwise, to suppose that the hair recovers all that our frequent clippings and shavings have taken away from it, and the nails all that we have so often pared off, presents to the imagination such a picture of ugliness and deformity, as to make the resurrection of the body all but incredible. But just as if a statue of some soluble metal were either melted by fire, or broken into dust, or reduced to a shapeless mass, and a sculptor wished to restore it from the same quantity of metal, it would make no difference to the completeness of the work what part of the statue any given particle of the material was put into, as long as the restored statue contained all the material of the original one; so God, the Artificer of marvellous and unspeakable power, shall with marvellous and unspeakable rapidity restore our body, using up the whole material of which it originally consisted. Nor will it affect the completeness of its restoration whether hairs return to hairs, and nails to nails, or whether the part of these that had perished be changed into flesh, and called to take its place in another part of the body, the great Artist taking careful heed that nothing shall be unbecoming or out of place.

CHAPTER 90

IF THERE BE DIFFERENCES AND INEQUALITIES AMONG THE BODIES OF THOSE WHO RISE AGAIN, THERE SHALL BE NOTHING OFFENSIVE OR DISPROPORTIONATE IN ANY

Nor does it necessarily follow that there shall be differences of stature among those who rise again, because they were of different statures during life; nor is it certain that the lean shall rise again in their former leanness, and the fat in their former fatness. But if it is part of the Creator's design that each should preserve his own peculiarities of feature, and retain a recognizable likeness to his former self, while in regard to other bodily advantages all should be equal, then the material of which each is composed may be so modified that none of it shall be lost, and that any defect may be supplied by Him who can create at His will out of nothing. But if in the bodies of those who rise again there shall be a well-ordered inequality, such as there is in the voices that make up a full harmony, then the material of each man's body shall be so dealt with that it shall form a man fit for the assemblies of the angels, and one who shall bring nothing among them to jar upon their sensibilities. And assuredly nothing that is unseemly shall be there; but whatever shall be there shall be graceful and becoming: for if anything is not seemly, neither shall it be.

CHAPTER 91

THE BODIES OF THE SAINTS SHALL AT THE RESURRECTION BE SPIRITUAL BODIES

The bodies of the saints, then, shall rise again free from every defect, from every blemish, as from all corruption, weight, and impediment. For their ease of movement shall be as complete as their happiness. Whence their bodies have been called spiritual, though undoubtedly they shall be bodies and not spirits. For just as now the body is called animate, though it is a body, and not a soul [anima], so then the body shall be called spiritual, though it shall be a body, not a spirit. Hence, as far as regards the corruption which now weighs down the soul, and the vices which urge the flesh to lust against the spirit, it shall not then be flesh, but body; for there are bodies which are called celestial. Wherefore it is said, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;" and, as if in explanation of this, "neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." What the apostle first called "flesh and blood," he afterwards calls "corruption;" and what he first called "the kingdom of God," he afterwards calls "incorruption." But as far as regards the substance, even then it shall be flesh. For even after the resurrection the body of Christ was called flesh. The apostle, however, says: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body;” because so perfect shah then be the harmony between flesh and spirit, the spirit keeping alive the subjugated flesh without the need of any nourishment, that no part of our nature shall be in discord with another; but as we shall be free from enemies without, so we shall not have ourselves for enemies within.

CHAPTER 92

THE RESURRECTION OF THE LOST

But as for those who, out of the mass of perdition caused by the first man’s sin, are not redeemed through the one Mediator between God and man, they too shall rise again, each with his own body, but only to be punished with the devil and his angels. Now, whether they shall rise again with all their diseases and deformities of body, bringing with them the diseased and deformed limbs which they possessed here, it would be labor lost to inquire. For we need not weary ourselves speculating about their health or their beauty, which are matters uncertain, when their eternal damnation is a matter of certainty. Nor need we inquire in what sense their body shall be incorruptible, if it be susceptible of pain; or in what sense corruptible, if it be free from the possibility of death. For there is no true life except where there is happiness in life, and no true incorruption except where health is unbroken by any pain. When, however, the unhappy are not permitted to die, then, if I may so speak, death itself dies not; and where pain without intermission afflicts the soul, and never comes to an end, corruption itself is not completed. This is called in Holy Scripture “the second death.”

CHAPTER 93

BOTH THE FIRST AND THE SECOND DEATHS ARE THE CONSEQUENCE OF SIN. PUNISHMENT IS PROPORTIONED TO GUILT

And neither the first death, which takes place when the soul is compelled to leave the body, nor the second death, which takes place when the soul is not permitted to leave the suffering body, would have been inflicted on man had no one sinned. And, of course, the mildest punishment of all will fall upon those who have added no actual sin, to the original sin they brought with them; and as for the rest who have added such actual sins, the punishment of each will be the more tolerable in the next world, according as his iniquity has been less in this world.

CHAPTER 94

THE SAINTS SHALL KNOW MORE FULLY IN THE NEXT WORLD THE BENEFITS THEY HAVE RECEIVED BY GRACE

Thus, when reprobate angels and men are left to endure everlasting punishment, the saints shall know more fully the benefits they have received by grace. Then, in contemplation of the actual facts, they shall see more clearly the meaning of the expression in the psalms, “I will sing of mercy and judgment;” for it is only of unmerited mercy that any is redeemed, and only in well-merited judgment that any is condemned.

CHAPTER 95

GOD’S JUDGMENTS SHALL THEN BE EXPLAINED

Then shall be made clear much that is now dark. For example, when of two infants, whose cases seem in all respects alike, one by the mercy of God chosen to Himself, and the other is by His justice abandoned (wherein the one who is chosen may recognize what was of justice due to himself, had not mercy intervened); why, of these two, the one should have been chosen rather than the other, is to us an insoluble problem. And again, why miracles were not wrought in the presence of men who would have repented at the working of the miracles, while they were wrought in the presence of others who, it was known, would not repent. For our Lord says most distinctly: “Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” And assuredly there was no injustice in God’s not willing that they should be saved, though they could have been saved had He so willed it. Then shall be seen in the clearest light of wisdom what with the pious is now a faith, though it is not yet a matter of certain knowledge, how sure, how unchangeable, and how effectual is the will of God; how many things He can do which He does not will to do, though willing nothing which He cannot perform; and how true is the song of the psalmist, “But our God is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased.” And this certainly is not true, if God has ever willed anything that He has not performed; and, still worse, if it was the will of man that hindered the Omnipotent from doing what He pleased. Nothing, therefore, happens but by the will of the Omnipotent, He either permitting it to be done, or Himself doing it.

CHAPTER 96

THE OMNIPOTENT GOD DOES WELL EVEN IN THE PERMISSION OF EVIL

Nor can we doubt that God does well even in the permission of what is evil. For He permits it only in the justice of His judgment. And surely all that is just is good. Although, therefore, evil, in so far as it is evil, is not a good; yet the fact that evil as well as good exists, is a good. For if it were not a good that evil should exist, its existence would not be permitted by the omnipotent Good, who without doubt can as easily refuse to permit what He does not wish, as bring about what He does wish. And if we do not believe this, the very first sentence of our creed is endangered, wherein we profess to believe in God the Father Almighty. For He is not truly called Almighty if He cannot do whatsoever He pleases, or if the power of His almighty will is hindered by the will of any creature whatsoever.

CHAPTER 97

IN WHAT SENSE DOES THE APOSTLE SAY THAT “GOD WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED,” WHEN, AS A MATTER OF FACT, ALL ARE NOT SAVED?

Hence we must inquire in what sense is said of God what the apostle has mostly truly said: “Who will have all men to be saved.” For, as a matter of fact, not all, nor even a majority, are saved: so that it would seem that what God wills is not done, man’s will interfering with, and hindering the will of God. When we ask the reason why all men are not saved, the ordinary answer is: “Because men themselves are not willing.” This, indeed cannot be said of infants, for it is not in their power either to will or not to will. But if we could attribute to their will the childish movements they make at baptism, when they make all the resistance they can, we should say that even they are not willing to be saved. Our Lord says plainly, however, in the Gospel, when upbraiding the impious city: “How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” as if the will of God had been overcome by the will of men, and when the weakest stood in the way with their want of will, the will of the strongest could not be carried out. And where is that omnipotence which hath done all that it pleased on earth and in heaven, if God willed to gather together the children of Jerusalem, and did not accomplish it? or rather, Jerusalem was not willing that her children should be gathered together? But even though she was unwilling, He gathered together as many of her children as He wished: for He does not will some things and do them, and will others and do them not; but “He hath done all that He pleased in heaven and in earth.”

CHAPTER 98

PREDESTINATION TO ETERNAL LIFE IS WHOLLY OF GOD’S FREE GRACE

And, moreover, who will be so foolish and blasphemous as to say that God cannot change the evil wills of men, whichever, whenever, and wheresoever He chooses, and direct them to what is good? But when He does this He does it of mercy; when He does it not, it is of justice that He does it not for “He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.” And when the apostle said this, he was illustrating the grace of God, in connection with which he had just spoken of the twins in the womb of Rebecca, “who being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.” And in reference to this matter he quotes another prophetic testimony: “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” But perceiving how what he had said might affect those who could not penetrate by their understanding the depth of this grace: “What shall we say then?” he says: “Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.” For it seems unjust that, in the absence of any merit or demerit, from good or evil works, God should love the one and hate the other. Now, if the apostle had wished us to understand that there were future good works of the one, and evil works of the other, which of course God foreknew, he would never have said, “not of works,” but, “of future works,” and in that way would have solved the difficulty, or rather there would then have been no difficulty to solve. As it is, however, after answering, “God forbid;” that is, God forbid that there should be unrighteousness with God; he goes on to prove that there is no unrighteousness in God’s doing this, and says: “For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” Now, who but a fool would think that God was unrighteous, either in inflicting penal justice on those who had earned it, or in extending mercy to the unworthy? Then he draws his conclusion: “So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” Thus both the twins were born children of wrath, not on account of any works of their own, but because they were bound in the fetters of that original condemnation which came through Adam. But He who said, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,” loved Jacob of His undeserved grace, and hated Esau of His deserved judgment. And as this judgment was due to both, the former learnt from the case of the latter that the fact of the same punishment not falling upon himself gave him no room to glory in any merit of his own, but only in the riches of the divine grace; because “it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” And indeed the whole face, and, if I may use the expression, every lineament of the countenance of Scripture conveys by a very profound analogy this wholesome warning to every one who looks carefully into it, that he who glories should glory in the Lord.

CHAPTER 99

AS GOD’S MERCY IS FREE, SO HIS JUDGMENTS ARE JUST, AND CANNOT BE GAINSAID

Now after commending the mercy of God, saying, “So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,” that he might commend His justice also (for the man who does not obtain mercy finds, not iniquity, but justice, there being no iniquity with God), he immediately adds: “For the scripture saith unto Pharoah, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.” And then he draws a conclusion that applies to both, that is, both to His mercy and His justice: “Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.” “He hath mercy” of His great goodness, “He hardeneth” without any injustice; so that neither can he that is pardoned glory in any merit of his own, nor he that is condemned complain of anything but his own demerit. For it is grace alone that separates the redeemed from the lost, all having been involved in one common perdition through their common origin. Now if any one, on hearing this, should say, “Why doth He yet find fault? for who hath resisted His will?” as if a man ought not to be blamed for being bad, because God hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth, God forbid that we should be ashamed to answer as we see the apostle answered: “Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?” Now some foolish people, think that in this place the apostle had no answer to give; and for want of a reason to render, rebuked the presumption of his interrogator. But there is great weight in this saying: “Nay, but, O man, who art thou?” and in such a matter as this it suggests to a man in a single word the limits of his capacity, and at the same time does in reality convey an important reason. For if a man does not understand these matters, who is he that he should reply against God? And if he does understand them, he finds no further room for reply. For then he perceives that the whole human race was condemned in its rebellious head by a divine judgment so just, that if not a single member of the race had been redeemed, no one could justly have questioned the justice of God; and that it was right that those who are redeemed should be redeemed in such a way as to show, by the greater number who are unredeemed and left in their just condemnation, what the whole race deserved, and whither the deserved judgment of God would lead even the redeemed, did not His undeserved mercy interpose, so that every mouth might be stopped of those who wish to glory in their own merits, and that he that glorieth might glory in the Lord.

CHAPTER 100

THE WILL OF GOD IS NEVER DEFEATED, THOUGH MUCH IS DONE THAT IS CONTRARY TO HIS WILL

These are the great works of the Lord, sought out according to all His pleasure, and so wisely sought out, that when the intelligent creation, both angelic and human, sinned, doing not His will but their own, He used the very will of the creature which was working in opposition to the Creator's will as an instrument for carrying out His will, the supremely Good thus turning to good account even what is evil, to the condemnation of those whom in His justice He has predestined to punishment, and to the salvation of those whom in His mercy He has predestined to grace. For, as far as relates to their own consciousness, these creatures did what God wished not to be done: but in view of God's omnipotence, they could in no wise effect their purpose. For in the very fact that they acted in opposition to His will, His will concerning them was fulfilled. And hence it is that "the works of the Lord are great, sought out according to all His pleasure," because in a way unspeakably strange and wonderful, even what is done in opposition to His will does not defeat His will. For it would not be done did He not permit it (and of course His permission is not unwilling, but willing); nor would a Good Being permit evil to be done only that in His omnipotence He can turn evil into good.

CHAPTER 101

THE WILL OF GOD, WHICH IS ALWAYS GOOD, IS SOMETIMES FULFILLED THROUGH THE EVIL WILL OF MAN

Sometimes, however, a man in the goodness of his will desires something that God does not desire, even though God's will is also good, nay, much more fully and more surely good (for His will never can be evil): for example, if a good son is anxious that his father should live, when it is God's good will that he should die. Again, it is possible for a man with evil will to desire what God wills in His goodness: for example, if a bad son wishes his father to die, when this is also the will of God. It is plain that the former wishes what God does not wish, and that the latter wishes what God does wish; and yet the filial love of the former is more in harmony with the good will of God, though its desire is different from God's, than the want of filial affection of the latter, though its desire is the same as God's. So necessary is it, in determining whether a man's desire is one to be approved or disapproved, to consider what it is proper for man, and what it is proper for God, to desire, and what is in each case the real motive of the will. For God accomplishes some of His purposes, which of course are all good, through the evil desires of wicked men: for example, it was through the wicked designs of the Jews, working out the good purpose of the Father, that Christ was slain and this event was so truly good, that when the Apostle Peter expressed his unwillingness that it should take place, he was designated Satan by Him who had come to be slain. How good seemed the intentions of the pious believers who were unwilling that Paul should go up to Jerusalem lest the evils which Agabus had foretold should there befall him! And yet it was God's purpose that he should suffer these evils for preaching the faith of Christ, and thereby become a witness for Christ. And this purpose of His, which was good, God did not fulfill through the good counsels of the Christians, but through the evil counsels of the Jews; so that those who opposed His purpose were more truly His servants than those who were the willing instruments of its accomplishment.

CHAPTER 102

THE WILL OF THE OMNIPOTENT GOD IS NEVER DEFEATED, AND IS NEVER EVIL

But however strong may be the purposes either of angels or of men, whether of good or bad, whether these purposes fall in with the will of God or run counter to it, the will of the Omnipotent is never defeated; and His will never can be evil; because even when it inflicts evil it is just, and what is just is certainly not evil. The omnipotent God, then, whether in mercy He pitieth whom He will, or in judgment hardeneth whom He will, is never unjust in what He does, never does anything except of His own free-will, and never wills anything that He does not perform.

CHAPTER 103

INTERPRETATION OF THE EXPRESSION IN I TIM. II. 4: "WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED."

Accordingly, when we hear and read in Scripture that He "will have all men to be saved," although we know well that all men are not saved, we are not on that account to restrict the omnipotence of God, but are rather to understand the Scripture, "Who will have all men to be saved," as meaning that no man is saved unless God wills his salvation: not that there is no man whose salvation He does not will, but that no man is saved apart from His will; and that, therefore, we should pray Him to will our salvation, because if He will it, it must necessarily be accomplished. And it was of prayer to God that the apostle was speaking when he used this expression. And on the same principle we interpret the expression in the Gospel: “The true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world:” not that there is no man who is not enlightened, but that no man is enlightened except by Him. Or, it is said, “Who will have all men to be saved;” not that there is no man whose salvation He does not will (for how, then, explain the fact that He was unwilling to work miracles in the presence of some who, He said, would have repented if He had worked them?), but that we are to understand by “all men,” the human race in all its varieties of rank and circumstances,—kings, subjects; noble, plebeian, high, low, learned, and unlearned; the sound in body, the feeble, the clever, the dull, the foolish, the rich, the poor, and those of middling circumstances; males, females, infants, boys, youths; young, middle-aged, and old men; of every tongue, of every fashion, of all arts, of all professions, with all the innumerable differences of will and conscience, and whatever else there is that makes a distinction among men. For which of all these classes is there out of which God does not will that men should be saved in all nations through His only-begotten Son, our Lord, and therefore does save them; for the Omnipotent cannot will in vain, whatsoever He may will? Now the apostle had enjoined that prayers should be made for all men, and had especially added, “For kings, and for all that are in authority,” who might be supposed, in the pride and pomp of worldly station, to shrink from the humility of the Christian faith. Then saying, “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour,” that is, that prayers should be made for such as these, he immediately adds, as if to remove any ground of despair, “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” God, then, in His great condescension has judged it good to grant to the prayers of the humble the salvation of the exalted; and assuredly we have many examples of this. Our Lord, too, makes use of the same mode of speech in the Gospel, when He says to the Pharisees: “Ye tithe mint, and rue, and every herb.” For the Pharisees did not tithe what belonged to others, nor all the herbs of all the inhabitants of other lands. As, then, in this place we must understand by “every herb,” every kind of herbs, so in the former passage we may understand by “all men,” every sort of men. And we may interpret it in any other way we please, so long as we are not compelled to believe that the omnipotent God has willed anything to be done which was not done: for setting aside all ambiguities, if “He hath done all that He pleased in heaven and in earth,” as the psalmist sings of Him, He certainly did not will to do anything that He hath not done.

CHAPTER 104

GOD, FOREKNOWING THE SIN OF THE FIRST MAN, ORDERED HIS OWN PURPOSES ACCORDINGLY

Wherefore, God would have been willing to preserve even the first man in that state of salvation in which he was created, and after he had begotten sons to remove him at a fit time, without the intervention of death, to a better place, where he should have been not only free from sin, but free even from the desire of sinning, if He had foreseen that man would have the steadfast will to persist in the state of innocence in which he was created. But as He foresaw that man would make a bad use of his free-will, that is, would sin, God arranged His own designs rather with a view to do good to man even in his sinfulness, that thus the good will of the Omnipotent might not be made void by the evil will of man, but might be fulfilled in spite of it.

CHAPTER 105

MAN WAS SO CREATED AS TO BE ABLE TO CHOOSE EITHER GOOD OR EVIL: IN THE FUTURE LIFE, THE CHOICE OF EVIL WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE

Now it was expedient that man should be at first so created, as to have it in his power both to will what was right and to will what was wrong; not without reward if he willed the former, and not without punishment if he willed the latter. But in the future life it shall not be in his power to will evil; and yet this will constitute no restriction on the freedom of his will. On the contrary, his will shall be much freer when it shall be wholly impossible for him to be the slave of sin. We should never think of blaming the will, or saying that it was no will, or that it was not to be called free, when we so desire happiness, that not only do we shrink from misery, but find it utterly impossible to do otherwise. As, then, the soul even now finds it impossible to desire unhappiness, so in future it shall be wholly impossible for it to desire sin. But God’s arrangement was not to be broken, according to which He willed to show how good is a rational being who is able even to refrain from sin, and yet how much better is one who cannot sin at all; just as that was an inferior sort of immortality, and yet it was immortality, when it was possible for man to avoid death, although there is reserved for the future a more perfect immortality, when it shall be impossible for man to die.

CHAPTER 106

THE GRACE OF GOD WAS NECESSARY TO MAN’S SALVATION BEFORE THE FALL AS WELL AS AFTER IT

The former immortality man lost through the exercise of his free-will; the latter he shall obtain through grace, whereas, if he had not sinned, he should have obtained it by desert. Even in that case, however, there could have been no merit without grace; because, although the mere exercise of man’s free-will was sufficient to bring in sin, his free-will would not have sufficed for his maintenance in righteousness, unless God had assisted it by imparting a portion of His unchangeable goodness. Just as it is in man’s power to die whenever he will (for, not to speak of other means, any one can put an end to himself by simple abstinence from food), but the mere will cannot preserve life in the absence of food and the other means of life; so man in paradise was able of his mere will, simply by abandoning righteousness, to destroy himself; but to have maintained a life of righteousness would have been too much for his will, unless it had been sustained by the Creator’s power. After the fall, however, a more abundant exercise of God’s mercy was required, because the will itself had to be freed from the bondage in which it was held by sin and death. And the will owes its freedom in no degree to itself, but solely to the grace of God which comes by faith in Jesus Christ; so that the very will, through which we accept all the other gifts of God which lead us on to His eternal gift, is itself prepared of the Lord, as the Scripture says.

CHAPTER 107

ETERNAL LIFE, THOUGH THE REWARD OF GOOD WORKS, IS ITSELF THE GIFT OF GOD

Wherefore, even eternal life itself, which is surely the reward of good works, the apostle calls the gift of God. “For the wages of sin,” he says, “is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Wages (stipendium) is paid as a recompense for military service; it is not a gift: wherefore he says, “the wages of sin is death,” to show that death was not inflicted undeservedly, but as the due recompense of sin. But a gift, unless it is wholly unearned, is not a gift at all. We are to understand, then, that man’s good deserts are themselves the gift of God, so that when these obtain the recompense of eternal life, it is simply grace given for grace. Man, therefore, was thus made upright that, though unable to remain in his uprightness without divine help, he could of his own mere will depart from it. And whichever of these courses he had chosen, God’s will would have been done, either by him, or concerning him. Therefore, as he chose to do his own will rather than God’s, the will of God is fulfilled concerning him; for God, out of one and the same heap of perdition which constitutes the race of man, makes one vessel to honor, another to dishonor; to honor in mercy, to dishonor in judgment; that no one may glory in man, and consequently not in himself.

CHAPTER 108

A MEDIATOR WAS NECESSARY TO RECONCILE US TO GOD; AND UNLESS THIS MEDIATOR HAD BEEN GOD, HE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN OUR REDEEMER

For we could not be redeemed, even through the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, if He were not also God. Now when Adam was created, he, being a righteous man, had no need of a mediator. But when sin had placed a wide gulf between God and the human race, it was expedient that a Mediator, who alone of the human race was born, lived, and died without sin, should reconcile us to God, and procure even for our bodies a resurrection to eternal life, in order that the pride of man might be exposed and cured through the humility of God; that man might be shown how far he had departed from God, when God became incarnate to bring him back; that an example might be set to disobedient man in the life of obedience of the God-Man; that the fountain of grace might be opened by the Only-begotten taking upon Himself the form of a servant, a form which had no antecedent merit; that an earnest of that resurrection of the body which is promised to the redeemed might be given in the resurrection of the Redeemer; that the devil might be subdued by the same nature which it was his boast to have deceived, and yet man not glorified, lest pride should again spring up; and, in fine, with a view to all the advantages which the thoughtful can perceive and describe, or perceive without being able to describe, as flowing from the transcendent mystery of the person of the Mediator.

CHAPTER 109

THE STATE OF THE SOUL DURING THE INTERVAL BETWEEN DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION

During the time, moreover, which intervenes between a man's death and the final resurrection, the soul dwells in a hidden retreat, where it enjoys rest or suffers affliction just in proportion to the merit it has earned by the life which it led on earth.

CHAPTER 110

THE BENEFIT TO THE SOULS OF THE DEAD FROM THE SACRAMENTS AND ALMS OF THEIR LIVING FRIENDS

Nor can it be denied that the souls of the dead are benefited by the piety of their living friends, who offer the sacrifice of the Mediator, or give alms in the church on their behalf. But these services are of advantage only to those who during their lives have earned such merit, that services of this kind can help them. For there is a manner of life which is neither so good as not to require these services after death, nor so bad that such services are of no avail after death; there is, on the other hand, a kind of life so good as not to require them; and again, one so bad that when life is over they render no help. Therefore, it is in this life that all the merit or demerit is acquired, which can either relieve or aggravate a man's sufferings after this life. No one, then, need hope that after he is dead he shall obtain merit with God which he has neglected to secure here. And accordingly it is plain that the services which the church celebrates for the dead are in no way opposed to the apostle's words: "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad;” for the merit which renders such services as I speak of profitable to a man, is earned while he lives in the body. It is not to every one that these services are profitable. And why are they not profitable to all, except because of the different kinds of lives that men lead in the body? When, then, sacrifices either of the altar or of alms are offered on behalf of all the baptized dead, they are thank-offerings for the very good, they are propitiatory offerings for the not very bad, and in the case of the very bad, even though they do not assist the dead, they are a species of consolation to the living. And where they are profitable, their benefit consists either in obtaining a full remission of sins, or at least in making the condemnation more tolerable.

CHAPTER 111

AFTER THE RESURRECTION THERE SHALL BE TWO DISTINCT KINGDOMS, ONE OF ETERNAL HAPPINESS, THE OTHER OF ETERNAL MISERY

After the resurrection, however, when the final, universal judgment has been completed, there shall be two kingdoms, each with its own distinct boundaries, the one Christ’s, the other the devil’s; the one consisting of the good, the other of the bad,—both, however, consisting of angels and men. The former shall have no will, the latter no power, to sin, and neither shall have any power to choose death; but the former shall live truly and happily in eternal life, the latter shall drag a miserable existence in eternal death without the power of dying; for the life and the death shall both be without end. But among the former there shall be degrees of happiness, one being more pre-eminently happy than another; and among the latter there shall be degrees of misery, one being more endurably miserable than another.

CHAPTER 112

THERE IS NO GROUND IN SCRIPTURE FOR THE OPINION OF THOSE WHO DENY THE ETERNITY OF FUTURE PUNISHMENTS

It is in vain, then, that some, indeed very many, make moan over the eternal punishment, and perpetual, unintermitted torments of the lost, and say they do not believe it shall be so; not, indeed, that they directly oppose themselves to Holy Scripture, but, at the suggestion of their own feelings, they soften down everything that seems hard, and give a milder turn to statements which they think are rather designed to terrify than to be received as literally true. For “Hath God” they say, forgotten to be gracious? hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?” Now, they read this in one of the holy psalms. But without doubt we are to understand it as spoken of those who are elsewhere called “vessels of mercy,” because even they are freed from misery not on account of any merit of their own, but solely through the pity of God. Or, if the men we speak of insist that this passage applies to all mankind, there is no reason why they should therefore suppose that there will be an end to the punishment of those of whom it is said, “These shall go away into everlasting punishment;” for this shall end in the same manner and at the same time as the happiness of those of whom it is said, “but the righteous unto life eternal.” But let them suppose, if the thought gives them pleasure, that the pains of the damned are, at certain intervals, in some degree assuaged. For even in this case the wrath of God, that is, their condemnation (for it is this, and not any disturbed feeling in the mind of God that is called His wrath), abideth upon them; that is, His wrath, though it still remains, does not shut up His tender mercies; though His tender mercies are exhibited, not in putting an end to their eternal punishment, but in mitigating, or in granting them a respite from, their torments; for the psalm does not say, “to put an end to His anger,” or, “when His anger is passed by,” but “in His anger.” Now, if this anger stood alone, or if it existed in the smallest conceivable degree, yet to be lost out of the kingdom of God, to be an exile from the city of God, to be alienated from the life of God, to have no share in that great goodness which God hath laid up for them that fear Him, and hath wrought out for them that trust in Him, would be a punishment so great, that, supposing it to be eternal, no torments that we know of, continued through as many ages as man’s imagination can conceive, could be compared with it.

CHAPTER 113

THE DEATH OF THE WICKED SHALL BE ETERNAL IN THE SAME SENSE AS THE LIFE OF THE SAINTS

This perpetual death of the wicked, then, that is, their alienation from the life of God, shall abide for ever, and shall be common to them all, whatever men, prompted by their human affections, may conjecture as to a variety of punishments, or as to a mitigation or intermission of their woes; just as the eternal life of the saints shall abide for ever, and shall be common to them all, whatever grades of rank and honor there may be among those who shine with an harmonious effulgence.

CHAPTER 114

HAVING DEALT WITH FAITH, WE NOW COME TO SPEAK OF HOPE. EVERYTHING THAT PERTAINS TO HOPE IS EMBRACED IN THE LORD'S PRAYER

Out of this confession of faith, which is briefly comprehended in the Creed, and which, carnally understood, is milk for babes, but, spiritually apprehended and studied, is meat for strong men, springs the good hope of believers; and this is accompanied by a holy love. But of these matters, all of which are true objects of faith, those only pertain to hope which are embraced in the Lord's Prayer. For, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man" is the testimony of holy writ; and, consequently, this curse attaches also to the man who trusteth in himself. Therefore, except from God the Lord we ought to ask for nothing either that we hope to do well, or hope to obtain as a reward of our good works.

CHAPTER 115

THE SEVEN PETITIONS OF THE LORD'S PRAYER, ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Accordingly, in the Gospel according to Matthew the Lord's Prayer seems to embrace seven petitions, three of which ask for eternal blessings, and the remaining four for temporal; these latter, however, being necessary antecedents to the attainment of the eternal. For when we say, "Hallowed be Thy name: Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (which some have interpreted, not unfairly, in body as well as in spirit), we ask for blessings that are to be enjoyed for ever; which are indeed begun in this world, and grow in us as we grow in grace, but in their perfect state, which is to be looked for in another life, shall be a possession for evermore. But when we say, "Give us this day our daily bread: and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors: and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," who does not see that we ask for blessings that have reference to the wants of this present life? In that eternal life, where we hope to live for ever, the hallowing of God’s name, and His kingdom, and His will in our spirit and body, shall be brought to perfection, and shall endure to everlasting. But our daily bread is so called because there is here constant need for as much nourishment as the spirit and the flesh demand, whether we understand the expression spiritually, or carnally, or in both senses. It is here too that we need the forgiveness that we ask, for it is here that we commit the sins; here are the temptations which allure or drive us into sin; here, in a word, is the evil from which we desire deliverance: but in that other world there shall be none of these things.

CHAPTER 116

LUKE EXPRESSES THE SUBSTANCE OF THESE SEVEN PETITIONS MORE BRIEFLY IN FIVE

But the Evangelist Luke in his version of the Lord’s prayer embraces not seven, but five petitions: not, of course, that there is any discrepancy between the two evangelists, but that Luke indicates by his very brevity the mode in which the seven petitions of Matthew are to be understood. For God’s name is hallowed in the spirit; and God’s kingdom shall come in the resurrection of the body. Luke, therefore, intending to show that the third petition is a sort of repetition of the first two, has chosen to indicate that by omitting the third altogether. Then he adds three others: one for daily bread, another for pardon of sin, another for immunity from temptation. And what Matthew puts as the last petition, “but deliver us from evil,” Luke has omitted, to show us that it is embraced in the previous petition about temptation. Matthew, indeed, himself says, “but deliver,” not “and deliver,” as if to show that the petitions are virtually one: do not this, but this; so that every man is to understand that he is delivered from evil in the very fact of his not being led into temptation.

CHAPTER 117

LOVE, WHICH IS GREATER THAN FAITH AND HOPE, IS SHED ABROAD IN OUR HEARTS BY THE HOLY GHOST

And now as to love, which the apostle declares to be greater than the other two graces, that is, than faith and hope, the greater the measure in which it dwells in a man, the better is the man in whom it dwells. For when there is a question as to whether a man is good, one does not ask what he believes, or what he hopes, but what he loves. For the man who loves aright no doubt believes and hopes aright; whereas the man who has not love believes in vain, even though his beliefs are true; and hopes in vain, even though the objects of his hope are a real part of true happiness; unless, indeed, he believes and hopes for this, that he may obtain by prayer the blessing of love. For, although it is not possible to hope without love, it may yet happen that a man does not love that which is necessary to the attainment of his hope; as, for example, if he hopes for eternal life (and who is there that does not desire this?) and yet does not love righteousness, without which no one can attain to eternal life. Now this is the true faith of Christ which the apostle speaks of, "which worketh by love;" and if there is anything that it does not yet embrace in its love, asks that it may receive, seeks that it may find, and knocks that it may be opened unto it. For faith obtains through prayer that which the law commands. For without the gift of God, that is, without the Holy Spirit, through whom love is shed abroad in our hearts, the law can command, but it cannot assist; and, moreover, it makes a man a transgressor, for he can no longer excuse himself on the plea of ignorance. Now carnal lust reigns where there is not the love of God.

CHAPTER 118

THE FOUR STAGES OF THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFE, AND THE FOUR CORRESPONDING STAGES OF THE CHURCH'S HISTORY

When, sunk in the darkest depths of ignorance, man lives according to the flesh undisturbed by any struggle of reason or conscience, this is his first state. Afterwards, when through the law has come the knowledge of sin, and the Spirit of God has not yet interposed His aid, man, striving to live according to the law, is thwarted in his efforts and falls into conscious sin, and so, being overcome of sin, becomes its slave ("for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage"); and thus the effect produced by the knowledge of the commandment is this, that sin worketh in man all manner of concupiscence, and he is involved in the additional guilt of willful transgression, and that is fulfilled which is written: “The, law entered that the offense might abound.” This is man’s second state. But if God has regard to him, and inspires him with faith in God’s help, and the Spirit of God begins to work in him, then the mightier power of love strives against the power of the flesh; and although there is still in the man’s own nature a power that fights against him (for his disease is not completely cured), yet he lives the life of the just by faith, and lives in righteousness so far as he does not yield to evil lust, but conquers it by the love of holiness. This is the third state of a man of good hope; and he who by steadfast piety advances in this course, shall attain at last to peace, that peace which, after this life is over, shall be perfected in the repose of the spirit, and finally in the resurrection of the body. Of these four different stages the first is before the law, the second is under the law, the third is under grace, and the fourth is in full and perfect peace. Thus, too, has the history of God’s people been ordered according to His pleasure who disposeth all things in number, and measure, and weight. For the church existed at first before the law; then under the law, which was given by Moses; then under grace, which was first made manifest in the coming of the Mediator. Not, indeed, that this grace was absent previously, but, in harmony with the arrangements of the time, it was veiled and hidden. For none, even of the just men of old, could find salvation apart from the faith of Christ; nor unless He had been known to them could their ministry have been used to convey prophecies concerning Him to us, some more plain, and some more obscure.

CHAPTER 119

THE GRACE OF REGENERATION WASHES AWAY ALL PAST SIN AND ALL ORIGINAL GUILT

Now in whichever of these four stages (as we may call them) the grace of regeneration finds any particular man, all his past sins are there and then pardoned, and the guilt which he contracted in his birth is removed in his new birth; and so true is it that “the wind bloweth where it listeth,” that some have never known the second stage, that of slavery under the law, but have received the divine assistance as soon as they received the commandment.

CHAPTER 120

DEATH CANNOT INJURE THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED THE GRACE OF REGENERATION

But before a man can receive the commandment, it is necessary that he should live according to the flesh. But if once he has received the grace of regeneration, death shall not injure him, even if he should forthwith depart from this life; “for to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living;” nor shall death retain dominion over him for whom Christ freely died.

CHAPTER 121

LOVE IS THE END OF ALL THE COMMANDMENTS, AND GOD HIMSELF IS LOVE

All the commandments of God, then, are embraced in love, of which the apostle says: “Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.” Thus the end of every commandment is charity, that is, every commandment has love for its aim. But whatever is done either through fear of punishment or from some other carnal motive, and has not for its principle that love which the Spirit of God sheds abroad in the heart, is not done as it ought to be done, however it may appear to men. For this love embraces both the love of God and the love of our neighbor, and “on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets,” we may add the Gospel and the apostles. For it is from these that we hear this voice: The end of the commandment is charity, and God is love. Wherefore, all God’s commandments, one of which is, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” and all those precepts which are not commandments but special counsels, one of which is, “It is good for a man not to touch a woman,” are rightly carried out only when the motive principle of action is the love of God, and the love of our neighbor in God. And this applies both to the present and the future life. We love God now by faith, then we shall love Him through sight. Now we love even our neighbor by faith; for we who are ourselves mortal know not the hearts of mortal men. But in the future life, the Lord “both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God;” for every man shall love and praise in his neighbor the virtue which, that it may not be hid, the Lord Himself shall bring to light. Moreover, lust diminishes as love grows, till the latter grows to such a height that it can grow no higher here. For “greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Who then can tell how great love shall be in the future world, when there shall be no lust for it to restrain and conquer? for that will be the perfection of health when there shall be no struggle with death.

CHAPTER 122

CONCLUSION

But now there must be an end at last to this volume. And it is for yourself to judge whether you should call it a hand-book, or should use it as such. I, however, thinking that your zeal in Christ ought not to be despised, and believing and hoping all good of you in dependence on our Redeemer’s help, and loving you very much as one of the members of His body, have, to the best of my ability, written this book for you on Faith, Hope, and Love. May its value be equal to its length.

THE HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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CHAPTER I

ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE GOSPELS

1. In the entire number of those divine records which are contained in the sacred writings, the gospel deservedly stands pre-eminent. For what the law and the prophets aforetime announced as destined to come to pass, is exhibited in the gospel in its realization and fulfilment. The first preachers of this gospel were the apostles, who beheld our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in person when He was yet present in the flesh. And not only did these men keep in remembrance the words heard from His lips, and the deeds wrought by Him beneath their eyes; but they were also careful, when

the duty of preaching the gospel was laid upon them, to make mankind acquainted with those divine and memorable occurrences which took place at a period antecedent to the formation of their own connection with Him in the way of discipleship, which belonged also to the time of His nativity, His infancy, or His youth, and with regard to which they were able to institute exact inquiry and to obtain information, either at His own hand or at the hands of His parents or other parties, on the ground of the most reliable intimations and the most trustworthy testimonies. Certain of them also—namely, Matthew and John—gave to the world, in their respective books, a written account of all those matters which it seemed needful to commit to writing concerning Him.

2. And to preclude the supposition that, in what concerns the apprehension and proclamation of the gospel, it is a matter of any consequence whether the enunciation comes by men who were actual followers of this same Lord here when He manifested Himself in the flesh and had the company of His disciples attendant on Him, or by persons who with due credit received facts with which they became acquainted in a trustworthy manner through the instrumentality of these former, divine providence, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, has taken care that certain of those also who were nothing more than followers of the first apostles should have authority given them not only to preach the gospel, but also to compose an account of it in writing. I refer to Mark and Luke. All those other individuals, however, who have attempted or dared to offer a written record of the acts of the Lord or of the apostles, failed to commend themselves in their own times as men of the character which would induce the Church to yield them its confidence, and to admit their compositions to the canonical authority of the Holy Books. And this was the case not merely because they were persons who could make no rightful claim to have credit given them in their narrations, but also because in a deceitful manner they introduced into their writings certain matters which are condemned at once by the catholic and apostolic rule of faith, and by sound doctrine.

CHAPTER II

ON THE ORDER OF THE EVANGELISTS, AND THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THEY WROTE

3. Now, those four evangelists whose names have gained the most remarkable circulation over the whole world, and whose number has been fixed as four,—it may be for the simple reason that there are four divisions of that world through the universal length of which they, by their number as by a kind of mystical sign, indicated the advancing extension of the Church of Christ,—are believed to have written in the order which follows: first Matthew, then Mark, thirdly Luke, lastly John. Hence, too, [it would appear that] these had one order determined among them with regard to the matters of their personal knowledge and their preaching [of the gospel], but a different order in reference to the task of giving the written narrative. As far, indeed, as concerns the acquisition of their own knowledge and the charge of preaching, those unquestionably came first in order who were actually followers of the Lord when He was present in the flesh, and who heard Him speak and saw Him act; and [with a commission received] from His lips they were despatched to preach the gospel. But as respects the task of composing that record of the gospel which is to be accepted as ordained by divine authority, there were (only) two, belonging to the number of those whom the Lord chose before the passover, that obtained places,—namely, the first place and the last. For the first place in order was held by Matthew, and the last by John. And thus the remaining two, who did not belong to the number referred to, but who at the same time had become followers of the Christ who spoke in these others, were supported on either side by the same, like sons who were to be embraced, and who in this way were set in the midst between these twain.

4. Of these four, it is true, only Matthew is reckoned to have written in the Hebrew language; the others in Greek. And however they may appear to have kept each of them a certain order of narration proper to himself, this certainly is not to be taken as if each individual writer chose to write in ignorance of what his predecessor had done, or left out as matters about which there was no information things which another nevertheless is discovered to have recorded. But the fact is, that just as they received each of them the gift of inspiration, they abstained from adding to their several labours any superfluous conjoint compositions. For Matthew is understood to have taken it in hand to construct the record of the incarnation of the Lord according to the royal lineage, and to give an account of most part of

His deeds and words as they stood in relation to this present life of men. Mark follows him closely, and looks like his attendant and epitomizer. For in his narrative he gives nothing in concert with John apart from the others: by himself separately, he has little to record; in conjunction with Luke, as distinguished from the rest, he has still less; but in concord with Matthew, he has a very large number of passages. Much, too, he narrates in words almost numerically and identically the same as those used by Matthew, where the agreement is either with that evangelist alone, or with him in connection with the rest. On the other hand, Luke appears to have occupied himself rather with the priestly lineage and character of the Lord. For although in his own way he carries the descent back to David, what he has followed is not the royal pedigree, but the line of those who were not kings. That genealogy, too, he has brought to a point in Nathan the son of David, which person likewise was no king. It is not thus, however, with Matthew. For in tracing the lineage along through Solomon the king, he has pursued with strict regularity the succession of the other kings; and in enumerating these, he has also conserved that mystical number of which we shall speak hereafter.

CHAPTER III

OF THE FACT THAT MATTHEW, TOGETHER WITH MARK, HAD SPECIALLY IN VIEW THE KINGLY CHARACTER OF CHRIST, WHEREAS LUKE DEALT WITH THE PRIESTLY

5. For the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the one true King and the one true Priest, the former to rule us, and the latter to make expiation for us, has shown us how His own figure bore these two parts together, which were only separately commended [to notice] among the Fathers. This becomes apparent if (for example) we look to that inscription which was affixed to His cross—”King of the Jews:” in connection also with which, and by a secret instinct, Pilate replied, “What I have written, I have written.” For it had been said aforetime in the Psalms, “Destroy not the writing of the title.” The same becomes evident, so far as the part of priest is concerned, if we have regard to what He has taught us concerning offering and receiving. For thus it is that He sent us beforehand a prophecy respecting Himself, which runs thus, “Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek.” And in many other testimonies of the divine Scriptures, Christ appears both as

King and as Priest. Hence, also, even David himself, whose son He is, not without good reason, more frequently declared to be than he is said to be Abraham's son, and whom Matthew and Luke have both alike held by,—the one viewing him as the person from whom, through Solomon, His lineage can be traced down, and the other taking him for the person to whom, through Nathan, His genealogy can be carried up,—did represent the part of a priest, although he was patently a king, when he ate the shew-bread. For it was not lawful for any one to eat that, save the priests only. To this it must be added that Luke is the only one who mentions how Mary was discovered by the angel, and how she was related to Elisabeth, who was the wife of Zacharias the priest. And of this Zacharias the same evangelist has recorded the fact, that the woman whom he had for wife was one of the daughters of Aaron, which is to say she belonged to the tribe of the priests.

6. Whereas, then, Matthew had in view the kingly character, and Luke the priestly, they have at the same time both set forth pre-eminently the humanity of Christ: for it was according to His humanity that Christ was made both King and Priest. To Him, too, God gave the throne of His father David, in order that of His kingdom there should be none end. And this was done with the purpose that there might be a mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, to make intercession for us. Luke, on the other hand, had no one connected with him to act as his summarist in the way that Mark was attached to Matthew. And it may be that this is not without a certain solemn significance. For it is the right of kings not to miss the obedient following of attendants; and hence the evangelist, who had taken it in hand to give an account of the kingly character of Christ, had a person attached to him as his associate who was in some fashion to follow in his steps. But inasmuch as it was the priest's want to enter all alone into the holy of holies, in accordance with that principle, Luke, whose object contemplated the priestly office of Christ, did not have any one to come after him as a confederate, who was meant in some way to serve as an epitomizer of his narrative.

CHAPTER IV

OF THE FACT THAT JOHN UNDERTOOK THE EXPOSITION OF CHRIST'S DIVINITY

7. These three evangelists, however, were for the most part engaged with those things which Christ did through the vehicle of the flesh of man, and after the temporal fashion. But John, on the other hand, had in view that true divinity of the Lord in which He is the Father's equal, and directed his efforts above all to the setting forth of the divine nature in his Gospel in such a way as he believed to be adequate to men's needs and notions. Therefore he is borne to loftier heights, in which he leaves the other three far behind him; so that, while in them you see men who have their conversation in a certain manner with the man Christ on earth, in him you perceive one who has passed beyond the cloud in which the whole earth is wrapped, and who has reached the liquid heaven from which, with clearest and steadiest mental eye, he is able to look upon God the Word, who was in the beginning with God, and by whom all things were made. And there, too, he can recognise Him who was made flesh in order that He might dwell amongst us; [that Word of whom we say,] that He assumed the flesh, not that He was changed into the flesh. For had not this assumption of the flesh been effected in such a manner as at the same time to conserve the unchangeable Divinity, such a word as this could never have been spoken,—namely, "I and the Father are one." For surely the Father and the flesh are not one. And the same John is also the only one who has recorded that witness which the Lord gave concerning Himself, when He said: "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also;" and, "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me;" "that they may be one, even as we are one;" and, "Whatsoever the Father doeth, these same things doeth the Son likewise." And whatever other statements there may be to the same effect, calculated to betoken, to those who are possessed of right understanding, that divinity of Christ in which He is the Father's equal, of all these we might almost say that we are indebted for their introduction into the Gospel narrative to John alone. For he is like one who has drunk in the secret of His divinity more richly and somehow more familiarly than others, as if he drew it from the very bosom of his Lord on which it was his wont to recline when He sat at meat.

CHAPTER V

CONCERNING THE TWO VIRTUES, OF WHICH JOHN IS CONVERSANT WITH THE CONTEMPLATIVE, THE OTHER EVANGELISTS WITH THE ACTIVE

8. Moreover, there are two several virtues (or talents) which have been proposed to the mind of man. Of these, the one is the active, and the other the contemplative: the one being that whereby the way is taken, and the other that whereby the goal is reached; the one that by which men labour in order that the heart may be purified to see God, and the other that by which men are disengaged and God is seen. Thus the former of these two virtues is occupied with the precepts for the right exercise of the temporal life, whereas the latter deals with the doctrine of that life which is everlasting. In this way, also, the one operates, the other rests; for the former finds its sphere in the purging of sins, the latter moves in the light of the purged. And thus, again, in this mortal life the one is engaged with the work of a good conversation; while the other subsists rather on faith, and is seen only in the person of the very few, and through the glass darkly, and only in part in a kind of vision of the unchangeable truth. Now these two virtues are understood to be presented emblematically in the instance of the two wives of Jacob. Of these I have discoursed already up to the measure of my ability, and as fully as seemed to be appropriate to my task, (in what I have written) in opposition to Faustus the Manichaean. For Lia, indeed, by interpretation means “labouring,” whereas Rachel signifies “the first principle seen.” And by this it is given us to understand, if one will only attend carefully to the matter, that those three evangelists who, with pre-eminent fulness, have handled the account of the Lord’s temporal doings and those of His sayings which were meant to bear chiefly upon the moulding of the manners of the present life, were conversant with that active virtue; and that John, on the other hand, who narrates fewer by far of the Lord’s doings, but records with greater carefulness and with larger wealth of detail the words which He spoke, and most especially those discourses which were intended to introduce us to the knowledge of the unity of the Trinity and the blessedness of the life eternal, formed his plan and framed his statement with a view to commend the contemplative virtue to our regard.

CHAPTER VI

OF THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES IN THE APOCALYPSE, WHICH HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY SOME IN ONE APPLICATION, AND BY OTHERS IN ANOTHER, AS APT FIGURES OF THE FOUR EVANGELISTS

9. For these reasons, it also appears to me, that of the various parties who have interpreted the living creatures in the Apocalypse as significant of the four evangelists, those who have taken the lion to point to Matthew, the man to Mark, the calf to Luke, and the eagle to John, have made a more reasonable application of the figures than those who have assigned the man to Matthew, the eagle to Mark, and the lion to John. For, in forming their particular idea of the matter, these latter have chosen to keep in view simply the beginnings of the books, and not the full design of the several evangelists in its completeness, which was the matter that should, above all, have been thoroughly examined. For surely it is with much greater propriety that the one who has brought under our notice most largely the kingly character of Christ, should be taken to be represented by the lion. Thus is it also that we find the lion mentioned in conjunction with the royal tribe itself, in that passage of the Apocalypse where it is said, “The lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed.” For in Matthew’s narrative the magi are recorded to have come from the east to inquire after the King, and to worship Him whose birth was notified to them by the star. Thus, too, Herod, who himself also was a king, is [said there to be] afraid of the royal child, and to put so many little children to death in order to make sure that the one might be slain. Again, that Luke is intended under the figure of the calf, in reference to the pre-eminent sacrifice made by the priest, has been doubted by neither of the two [sets of interpreters]. For in that Gospel the narrator’s account commences with Zacharias the priest. In it mention is also made of the relationship between Mary and Elisabeth. In it, too, it is recorded that the ceremonies proper to the earliest priestly service were attended to in the case of the infant Christ; and a careful examination brings a variety of other matters under our notice in this Gospel, by which it is made apparent that Luke’s object was to deal with the part of the priest. In this way it follows further, that Mark, who has set himself neither to give an account of the kingly lineage, nor to expound anything distinctive of the priesthood, whether on the subject of the relationship or on that of the consecration, and

who at the same time comes before us as one who handles the things which the man Christ did, appears to be indicated simply under the figure of the man among those four living creatures. But again, those three living creatures, whether lion, man, or calf, have their course upon this earth; and in like manner, those three evangelists occupy themselves chiefly with the things which Christ did in the flesh, and with the precepts which He delivered to men, who also bear the burden of the flesh, for their instruction in the rightful exercise of this mortal life. Whereas John, on the other hand, soars like an eagle above the clouds of human infirmity, and gazes upon the light of the unchangeable truth with those keenest and steadiest eyes of the heart.

CHAPTER VII

A STATEMENT OF AUGUSTIN'S REASON FOR UNDERTAKING THIS WORK ON THE HARMONY OF THE EVANGELISTS, AND AN EXAMPLE OF THE METHOD IN WHICH HE MEETS THOSE WHO ALLEGE THAT CHRIST WROTE NOTHING HIMSELF, AND THAT HIS DISCIPLES MADE AN UNWARRANTED AFFIRMATION IN PROCLAIMING HIM TO BE GOD

10. Those sacred chariots of the Lord, however, in which He is borne throughout the earth and brings the peoples under His easy yoke and His light burden, are assailed with calumnious charges by certain persons who, in impious vanity or in ignorant temerity, think to rob of their credit as veracious historians those teachers by whose instrumentality the Christian religion has been disseminated all the world over, and through whose efforts it has yielded fruits so plentiful that unbelievers now scarcely dare so much as to mutter their slanders in private among themselves, kept in check by the faith of the Gentiles and by the devotion of all the peoples. Nevertheless, inasmuch as they still strive by their calumnious disputations to keep some from making themselves acquainted with the faith, and thus prevent them from becoming believers, while they also endeavour to the utmost of their power to excite agitations among others who have already attained to belief, and thereby give them trouble; and further, as there are some brethren who, without detriment to their own faith, have a desire to ascertain what answer can be given to such questions, either for the advantage of their own knowledge or for the purpose of refuting the vain utterances of their enemies, with the inspiration and help of the Lord our

God (and would that it might prove profitable for the salvation of such men), we have undertaken in this work to demonstrate the errors or the rashness of those who deem themselves able to prefer charges, the subtilty of which is at least sufficiently observable, against those four different books of the gospel which have been written by these four several evangelists. And in order to carry out this design to a successful conclusion, we must prove that the writers in question do not stand in any antagonism to each other. For those adversaries are in the habit of adducing this as the palmary allegation in all their vain objections, namely, that the evangelists are not in harmony with each other.

11. But we must first discuss a matter which is apt to present a difficulty to the minds of some. I refer to the question why the Lord has written nothing Himself, and why He has thus left us to the necessity of accepting the testimony of other persons who have prepared records of His history. For this is what those parties—the pagans more than any—allege when they lack boldness enough to impeach or blaspheme the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and when they allow Him—only as a man, however—to have been possessed of the most distinguished wisdom. In making that admission, they at the same time assert that the disciples claimed more for their Master than He really was; so much more indeed that they even called Him the Son of God, and the Word of God, by whom all things were made, and affirmed that He and God are one. And in the same way they dispose of all other kindred passages in the epistles of the apostles, in the light of which we have been taught that He is to be worshipped as one God with the Father. For they are of opinion that He is certainly to be honoured as the wisest of men; but they deny that He is to be worshipped as God.

12. Wherefore, when they put the question why He has not written in His own person, it would seem as if they were prepared to believe regarding Him whatever He might have written concerning Himself, but not what others may have given the world to know with respect to His life, according to the measure of their own judgment. Well, I ask them in turn why, in the case of certain of the noblest of their own philosophers, they have accepted the statements which their disciples left in the records they have composed, while these sages themselves have given us no written accounts of their

own lives? For Pythagoras, than whom Greece in those days did not possess any more illustrious personage in the sphere of that contemplative virtue, is believed to have written absolutely nothing, whether on the subject of his own personal history or on any other theme whatsoever. And as to Socrates, to whom, on the other hand, they have adjudged a position of supremacy above all others in that active virtue by which the moral life is trained, so that they do not hesitate also to aver that he was even pronounced to be the wisest of men by the testimony of their deity Apollo,—it is indeed true that he handled the fables of AEsop in some few short verses, and thus made use of words and numbers of his own in the task of rendering the themes of another. But this was all. And so far was he from having the desire to write anything himself, that he declared that he had done even so much only because he was constrained by the imperial will of his demon, as Plato, the noblest of all his disciples, tells us. That was a work, also, in which he sought to set forth in fair form not so much his own thoughts, as rather the ideas of another. What reasonable ground, therefore, have they for believing, with regard to those sages, all that their disciples have committed to record in respect of their history, while at the same time they refuse to credit in the case of Christ what His disciples have written on the subject of His life? And all the more may we thus argue, when we see how they admit that all other men have been excelled by Him in the matter of wisdom, although they decline to acknowledge Him to be God. Is it, indeed, the case that those persons whom they do not hesitate to allow to have been by far His inferiors, have had the faculty of making disciples who can be trusted in all that concerns the narrative of their careers, and that He failed in that capacity? But if that is a most absurd statement to venture upon, then in all that belongs to the history of that Person to whom they grant the honour of wisdom, they ought to believe not merely what suits their own notions, but what they read in the narratives of those who learned from this sage Himself those various facts which they have left on record on the subject of His life.

CHAPTER VIII

OF THE QUESTION WHY, IF CHRIST IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN THE WISEST OF MEN ON THE TESTIMONY OF COMMON NARRATIVE REPORT, HE SHOULD NOT BE BELIEVED TO BE GOD ON THE TESTIMONY OF THE SUPERIOR REPORT OF PREACHING

13. Besides this, they ought to tell us by what means they have succeeded in acquiring their knowledge of this fact that He was the wisest of men, or how it has had the opportunity of reaching their ears. If they have been made acquainted with it simply by current report, then is it the case that common report forms a more trustworthy informant on the subject of His history than those disciples of His who, as they have gone and preached of Him, have disseminated the same report like a penetrating savour throughout the whole world? In fine, they ought to prefer the one kind of report to the other, and believe that account of His life which is the superior of the two. For this report, indeed, which is spread abroad with a wonderful clearness from that Church catholic at whose extension through the whole world those persons are so astonished, prevails in an incomparable fashion over the unsubstantial rumours with which men like them occupy themselves. This report, furthermore, which carries with it such weight and such currency, that in dread of it they can only mutter their anxious and feeble snatches of paltry objections within their own breasts, as if they were more afraid now of being heard than wishful to receive credit, proclaims Christ to be the only-begotten Son of God, and Himself God, by whom all things were made. If, therefore, they choose report as their witness, why does not their choice fix on this special report, which is so pre-eminently lustrous in its remarkable definiteness? And if they desire the evidence of writings, why do they not take those evangelical writings which excel all others in their commanding authority? On our side, indeed, we accept those statements about their deities which are offered at once in their most ancient writings and by most current report. But if these deities are to be considered proper objects for reverence, why then do they make them the subject of laughter in the theatres? And if, on the other hand, they are proper objects for laughter, the occasion for such laughter must be all the greater when they are made the objects of worship in the theatres. It remains for us to look upon those persons as themselves minded to be witnesses concerning Christ, who, by speaking what they know not, divest themselves of the merit of knowing what they speak about. Or if, again, they assert that they are possessed of any books which they can maintain to have been written by Him, they ought to produce them for our inspection. For assuredly those books (if there are such) must be most profitable and most wholesome, seeing they are the productions of one whom they acknowledge to have

been the wisest of men. If, however, they are afraid to produce them, it must be because they are of evil tendency; but if they are evil, then the wisest of men cannot have written them. They acknowledge Christ, however, to be the wisest of men, and consequently Christ cannot have written any such thing.

CHAPTER IX

OF CERTAIN PERSONS WHO PRETEND THAT CHRIST WROTE BOOKS ON THE ARTS OF MAGIC

14. But, indeed, these persons rise to such a pitch of folly as to allege that the books which they consider to have been written by Him contain the arts by which they think He wrought those miracles, the fame of which has become prevalent in all quarters. And this fancy of theirs betrays what they really love, and what their aims really are. For thus, indeed, they show us how they entertain this opinion that Christ was the wisest of men only for the reason that He possessed the knowledge of I know not what illicit arts, which are justly condemned, not merely by Christian discipline, but even by the administration of earthly government itself. And, in good sooth, if there are people who affirm that they have read books of this nature composed by Christ, then why do they not perform with their own hand some such works as those which so greatly excite their wonder when wrought by Him, by taking advantage of the information which they have derived from these books?

CHAPTER X

OF SOME WHO ARE MAD ENOUGH TO SUPPOSE THAT THE BOOKS WERE INSCRIBED WITH THE NAMES OF PETER AND PAUL

15. Nay more, as by divine judgment, some of those who either believe, or wish to have it believed, that Christ wrote matter of that description, have even wandered so far into error as to allege that these same books bore on their front, in the form of epistolary superscription, a designation addressed to Peter and Paul. And it is quite possible that either the enemies of the name of Christ, or certain parties who thought that they might impart to this kind of execrable arts the weight of authority drawn from so glorious a

name, may have written things of that nature under the name of Christ and the apostles. But in such most deceitful audacity they have been so utterly blinded as simply to have made themselves fitting objects for laughter, even with young people who as yet know Christian literature only in boyish fashion, and rank merely in the grade of readers.

16. For when they made up their minds to represent Christ to have written in such strain as that to His disciples, they bethought themselves of those of His followers who might best be taken for the persons to whom Christ might most readily be believed to have written, as the individuals who had kept by Him on the most familiar terms of friendship. And so Peter and Paul occurred to them, I believe, just because in many places they chanced to see these two apostles represented in pictures as both in company with Him. For Rome, in a specially honourable and solemn manner, commends the merits of Peter and of Paul, for this reason among others, namely, that they suffered [martyrdom] on the same day. Thus to fall most completely into error was the due desert of men who sought for Christ and His apostles not in the holy writings, but on painted walls. Neither is it to be wondered at, that these fiction-limners were misled by the painters. For throughout the whole period during which Christ lived in our mortal flesh in fellowship with His disciples, Paul had never become His disciple. Only after His passion, after His resurrection, after His ascension, after the mission of the Holy Spirit from heaven, after many Jews had been converted and had shown marvellous faith, after the stoning of Stephen the deacon and martyr, and when Paul still bore the name Saul, and was grievously persecuting those who had become believers in Christ, did Christ call that man [by a voice] from heaven, and made him His disciple and apostle. How, then, is it possible that Christ could have written those books which they wish to have it believed that He did write before His death, and which were addressed to Peter and Paul, as those among His disciples who had been most intimate with Him, seeing that up to that date Paul had not yet become a disciple of His at all?

CHAPTER XI

IN OPPOSITION TO THOSE WHO FOOLISHLY IMAGINE THAT CHRIST CONVERTED THE PEOPLE TO HIMSELF BY MAGICAL ARTS

17. Moreover, let those who madly fancy that it was by the use of magical arts that He was able to do the great things which He did, and that it was by the practice of such rites that He made His name a sacred thing to the peoples who were to be converted to Him, give their attention to this question,—namely, whether by the exercise of magical arts, and before He was born on this earth, He could also have filled with the Holy Spirit those mighty prophets who aforetime declared those very things concerning Him as things destined to come to pass, which we can now read in their accomplishment in the gospel, and which we can see in their present realization in the world. For surely, even if it was by magical arts that He secured worship for Himself, and that, too, after His death, it is not the case that He was a magician before He was born. Nay, for the office of prophesying on the subject of His coming, one nation had been most specially deputed; and the entire administration of that commonwealth was ordained to be a prophecy of this King who was to come, and who was to found a heavenly state drawn out of all nations.

CHAPTER XII

OF THE FACT THAT THE GOD OF THE JEWS, AFTER THE SUBJUGATION OF THAT PEOPLE, WAS STILL NOT ACCEPTED BY THE ROMANS, BECAUSE HIS COMMANDMENT WAS THAT HE ALONE SHOULD BE WORSHIPPED, AND IMAGES DESTROYED

18. Furthermore, that Hebrew nation, which, as I have said, was commissioned to prophesy of Christ, had no other God but one God, the true God, who made heaven and earth, and all that therein is. Under His displeasure they were ofttimes given into the power of their enemies. And now, indeed, on account of their most heinous sin in putting Christ to death, they have been thoroughly rooted out of Jerusalem itself, which was the capital of their kingdom, and have been made subject to the Roman empire. Now the Romans were in the habit of propitiating the deities of those nations whom they conquered by worshipping these themselves, and they were accustomed to undertake the charge of their sacred rites. But they declined to act on that principle with regard to the God of the Hebrew nation, either when they made their attack or when they reduced the people. I believe that they perceived that, if they admitted the worship of this Deity, whose commandment was that He only should be worshipped, and that

images should be destroyed, they would have to put away from them all those objects to which formerly they had undertaken to do religious service, and by the worship of which they believed their empire had grown. But in this the falseness of their demons mightily deceived them. For surely they ought to have apprehended the fact that it is only by the hidden will of the true God, in whose hand resides the supreme power in all things, that the kingdom was given them and has been made to increase, and that their position was not due to the favour of those deities who, if they could have wielded any influence whatever in that matter, would rather have protected their own people from being over-mastered by the Romans, or would have brought the Romans themselves into complete subjection to them.

19. Certainly they cannot possibly affirm that the kind of piety and manners exemplified by them became objects of love and choice on the part of the gods of the nations which they conquered. They will never make such an assertion, if they only recall their own early beginnings, the asylum for abandoned criminals and the fratricide of Romulus. For when Remus and Romulus established their asylum, with the intention that whoever took refuge there, be the crime what it might be with which he stood charged, should enjoy impunity in his deed, they did not promulgate any precepts of penitence for bringing the minds of such wretched men back to a right condition. By this bribe of impunity did they not rather arm the gathered band of fearful fugitives against the states to which they properly belonged, and the laws of which they dreaded? Or when Romulus slew his brother, who had perpetrated no evil against him, is it the case that his mind was bent on the vindication of justice, and not on the acquisition of absolute power? And is it true that the deities did take their delight in manners like these, as if they were themselves enemies to their own states, in so far as they favoured those who were the enemies of these communities? Nay rather, neither did they by deserting them harm the one class, nor did they by passing over to their side in any sense help the other. For they have it not in their power to give kingship or to remove it. But that is done by the one true God, according to His hidden counsel. And it is not His mind to make those necessarily blessed to whom He may have given an earthly kingdom, or to make those necessarily unhappy whom He has deprived of that position. But He makes men blessed or wretched for other reasons and by

other means, and either by permission or by actual gift distributes temporal and earthly kingdoms to whomsoever He pleases, and for whatsoever period He chooses, according to the fore-ordained order of the ages.

CHAPTER XIII

OF THE QUESTION WHY GOD SUFFERED THE JEWS TO BE REDUCED TO SUBJECTION

20. Hence also they cannot meet us fairly with this question: Why, then, did the God of the Hebrews, whom you declare to be the supreme and true God, not only not subdue the Romans under their power, but even fail to secure those Hebrews themselves against subjugation by the Romans? For there were open sins of theirs that went before them, and on account of which the prophets so long time ago predicted that this very thing would overtake them; and above all, the reason lay in the fact, that in their impious fury they put Christ to death, in the commission of which sin they were made blind [to the guilt of their crime] through the deserts of other hidden transgressions. That His sufferings also would be for the benefit of the Gentiles, was foretold by the same prophetic testimony. Nor, in another point of view, did the fact appear clearer, that the kingdom of that nation, and its temple, and its priesthood, and its sacrificial system, and that mystical unction which is called chrisma in Greek, from which the name of Christ takes its evident application, and on account of which that nation was accustomed to speak of its kings as anointed ones, were ordained with the express object of prefiguring Christ, than has the kindred fact become apparent, that after the resurrection of the Christ who was put to death began to be preached unto the believing Gentiles, all those things came to their end, all unrecognised as the circumstance was, whether by the Romans, through whose victory, or by the Jews, through whose subjugation, it was brought about that they did thus reach their conclusion.

CHAPTER XIV

OF THE FACT THAT THE GOD OF THE HEBREWS, ALTHOUGH THE PEOPLE WERE CONQUERED, PROVED HIMSELF TO BE UNCONQUERED, BY OVERTHROWING THE IDOLS, AND BY TURNING ALL THE GENTILES TO HIS OWN SERVICE

21. Here indeed we have a wonderful fact, which is not remarked by those few pagans who have remained such,—namely, that this God of the Hebrews who was offended by the conquered, and who was also denied acceptance by the conquerors, is now preached and worshipped among all nations. This is that God of Israel of whom the prophet spake so long time since, when he thus addressed the people of God: “And He who brought thee out, the God of Israel, shall be called (the God) of the whole earth.” What was thus prophesied has been brought to pass through the name of the Christ, who comes to men in the form of a descendant of that very Israel who was the grandson of Abraham, with whom the race of the Hebrews began. For it was to this Israel also that it was said, “In thy seed shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed.” Thus it is shown that the God of Israel, the true God who made heaven and earth, and who administers human affairs justly and mercifully in such wise that neither does justice exclude mercy with Him, nor does mercy hinder justice, was not overcome Himself when His Hebrew people suffered their overthrow, in virtue of His permitting the kingdom and priesthood of that nation to be seized and subverted by the Romans. For now, indeed, by the might of this gospel of Christ, the true King and Priest, the advent of which was prefigured by that kingdom and priesthood, the God of Israel Himself is everywhere destroying the idols of the nations. And, in truth, it was to prevent that destruction that the Romans refused to admit the sacred rites of this God in the way that they admitted those of the gods of the other nations whom they conquered. Thus did He remove both kingdom and priesthood from the prophetic nation, because He who was promised to men through the agency of that people had already come. And by Christ the King He has brought into subjection to His own name that Roman empire by which the said nation was overcome; and by the strength and devotion of Christian faith, He has converted it so as to effect a subversion of those idols, the honour ascribed to which precluded His worship from obtaining entrance.

22. I am of opinion that it was not by means of magical arts that Christ, previous to His birth among men, brought it about that those things which were destined to come to pass in the course of His history, were pre-announced by so many prophets, and prefigured also by the kingdom and priesthood established in a certain nation. For the people who are connected

with that now abolished kingdom, and who in the wonderful providence of God are scattered throughout all lands, have indeed remained without any unction from the true King and Priest; in which anointing the import of the name of Christ is plainly discovered. But notwithstanding this, they still retain remnants of some of their observances; while, on the other hand, not even in their state of overthrow and subjugation have they accepted those Roman rites which are connected with the worship of idols. Thus they still keep the prophetic books as the witness of Christ; and in this way in the documents of His enemies we find proof presented of the truth of this Christ who is the subject of prophecy. What, then, do these unhappy men disclose themselves to be, by the unworthy method in which they laud the name of Christ? If anything relating to the practice of magic has been written under His name, while the doctrine of Christ is so vehemently antagonistic to such arts, these men ought rather in the light of this fact to gather some idea of the greatness of that name, by the addition of which even persons who live in opposition to His precepts endeavour to dignify their nefarious practices. For just as, in the course of the diverse errors of men, many persons have set up their varied heresies against the truth under the cover of His name, so the very enemies of Christ think that, for the purposes of gaining acceptance for opinions which they propound in opposition to the doctrine of Christ, they have no weight of authority at their service unless they have the name of Christ.

CHAPTER XV

OF THE FACT THAT THE PAGANS, WHEN CONSTRAINED TO LAUD CHRIST, HAVE LAUNCHED THEIR INSULTS AGAINST HIS DISCIPLES

23. But what shall be said to this, if those vain eulogizers of Christ, and those crooked slanderers of the Christian religion, lack the daring to blaspheme Christ, for this particular reason that some of their philosophers, as Porphyry of Sicily has given us to understand in his books, consulted their gods as to their response on the subject of [the claims of] Christ, and were constrained by their own oracles to laud Christ? Nor should that seem incredible. For we also read in the Gospel that the demons confessed Him; and in our prophets it is written in this wise: “For the gods of the nations are demons.” Thus it happens, then, that in order to avoid attempting aught in

opposition to the responses of their own deities, they turn their blasphemies aside from Christ, and pour them forth against His disciples. It seems to me, however, that these gods of the Gentiles, whom the philosophers of the pagans may have consulted, if they were asked to give their judgment on the disciples of Christ, as well as on Christ Himself, would be constrained to praise them in like manner.

CHAPTER XVI

OF THE FACT THAT, ON THE SUBJECT OF THE DESTRUCTION OF IDOLS, THE APOSTLES TAUGHT NOTHING DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WAS TAUGHT BY CHRIST OR BY THE PROPHETS

24. Nevertheless these persons argue still to the effect that this demolition of temples, and this condemnation of sacrifices, and this shattering of all images, are brought about, not in virtue of the doctrine of Christ Himself, but only by the hand of His apostles, who, as they contend, taught something different from what He taught. They think by this device, while honouring and lauding Christ, to tear the Christian faith in pieces. For it is at least true, that it is by the disciples of Christ that at once the works and the words of Christ have been made known, on which this Christian religion is established, with which a very few people of this character are still in antagonism, who do not now indeed openly assail it, but yet continue even in these days to utter their mutterings against it. But if they refuse to believe that Christ taught in the way indicated, let them read the prophets, who not only enjoined the complete destruction of the superstitions of idols, but also predicted that this subversion would come to pass in Christian times. And if these spoke falsely, why is their word fulfilled with so mighty a demonstration? But if they spoke truly, why is resistance offered to such divine power?

CHAPTER XVII

IN OPPOSITION TO THE ROMANS WHO REJECTED THE GOD OF ISRAEL ALONE

25. However, here is a matter which should meet with more careful consideration at their hands,—namely, what they take the God of Israel to be, and why they have not admitted Him to the honours of worship among

them, in the way that they have done with the gods of other nations that have been made subject to the imperial power of Rome? This question demands an answer all the more, when we see that they are of the mind that all the gods ought to be worshipped by the man of wisdom. Why, then, has He been excluded from the number of these others? If He is very mighty, why is He the only deity that is not worshipped by them? If He has little or no might, why are the images of other gods broken in pieces by all the nations, while He is now almost the only God that is worshipped among these peoples? From the grasp of this question these men shall never be able to extricate themselves, who worship both the greater and the lesser deities, whom they hold to be gods, and at the same time refuse to worship this God, who has proved Himself stronger than all those to whom they do service. If He is [a God] of great virtue, why has He been deemed worthy only of rejection? And if He is [a God] of little or no power, why has He been able to accomplish so much, although rejected? If He is good, why is He the only one separated from the other good deities? And if He is evil, why is He, who stands thus alone, not subjugated by so many good deities? If He is truthful, why are His precepts scorned? And if He is a liar, why are His predictions fulfilled?

CHAPTER XVIII

OF THE FACT THAT THE GOD OF THE HEBREWS IS NOT RECEIVED BY THE ROMANS, BECAUSE HIS WILL IS THAT HE ALONE SHOULD BE WORSHIPPED

26. In fine, they may think of Him as they please. Still, we may ask whether it is the case that the Romans refuse to consider evil deities as also proper objects of worship,—those Romans who have erected fanes to Pallor and Fever, and who enjoin both that the good demons are to been treated, and that the evil demons are to be propitiated. Whatever their opinion, then, of Him may be, the question still is, Why is He the only Deity whom they have judged worthy neither of being called upon for help, nor of being propitiated? What God is this, who is either one so unknown, that He is the only one not discovered as yet among so many gods, or who is one so well known that He is now the only one worshipped by so many men? There remains, then, nothing which they can possibly allege in explanation of their refusal to admit the worship of this God, except that His will was that

He alone should be worshipped; and His command was, that those gods of the Gentiles that they were worshipping at the time should cease to be worshipped. But an answer to this other question is rather to be required of them, namely, what or what manner of deity they consider this God to be, who has forbidden the worship of those other gods for whom they erected temples and images,—this God, who has also been possessed of might so vast that His will has prevailed more in effecting the destruction of their images than theirs has availed to secure the non-admittance of His worship. And, indeed, the opinion of that philosopher of theirs is given in plain terms, whom, even on the authority of their own oracle, they have maintained to have been the wisest of all men. For the opinion of Socrates is, that every deity whatsoever ought to be worshipped just in the manner in which he may have ordained that he should be worshipped. Consequently it became a matter of the supremest necessity with them to refuse to worship the God of the Hebrews. For if they were minded to worship Him in a method different from the way in which He had declared that He ought to be worshipped, then assuredly they would have been worshipping not this God as He is, but some figment of their own. And, on the other hand, if they were willing to worship Him in the manner which He had indicated, then they could not but perceive that they were not at liberty to worship those other deities whom He interdicted them from worshipping. Thus was it, therefore, that they rejected the service of the one true God, because they were afraid that they might offend the many false gods. For they thought that the anger of those deities would be more to their injury, than the goodwill of this God would be to their profit.

CHAPTER XIX

THE PROOF THAT THIS GOD IS THE TRUE GOD

27. But that must have been a vain necessity and a ridiculous timidity. We ask now what opinion regarding this God is formed by those men whose pleasure it is that all gods ought to be worshipped. For if He ought not to be worshipped, how are all worshipped when He is not worshipped? And if He ought to be worshipped, it cannot be that all others are to be worshipped along with Him. For unless He is worshipped alone, He is really not worshipped at all. Or may it perhaps be the case, that they will allege Him

to be no God at all, while they call those gods who, as we believe, have no power to do anything except so far as permission is given them by His judgment,—have not merely no power to do good to any one, but no power even to do harm to any, except to those who are judged by Him, who possesses all power, to merit so to be harmed? But, as they themselves are compelled to admit, those deities have shown less power than He has done. For if those are held to be gods whose prophets, when consulted by men, have returned responses which, that I may not call them false, were at least most convenient for their private interests, how is not He to be regarded as God whose prophets have not only given the congruous answer on subjects regarding which they were consulted at the special time, but who also, in the case of subjects respecting which they were not consulted, and which related to the universal race of man and all nations, have announced prophetically so long time before the event those very things of which we now read, and which indeed we now behold? If they gave the name of god to that being under whose inspiration the Sibyl sung of the fates of the Romans, how is not He (to be called) God, who, in accordance with the announcement aforetime given, has shown us how the Romans and all nations are coming to believe in Himself through the gospel of Christ, as the one God, and to demolish all the images of their fathers? Finally, if they designate those as gods who have never dared through their prophets to say anything against this God, how is not He (to be designated) God, who not only commanded by the mouth of His prophets the destruction of their images, but who also predicted that among all the Gentiles they would be destroyed by those who should be enjoined to abandon their idols and to worship Him alone, and who, on receiving these injunctions, should be His servants?

CHAPTER XX

OF THE FACT THAT NOTHING IS DISCOVERED TO HAVE BEEN PREDICTED BY THE PROPHETS OF THE PAGANS IN OPPOSITION TO THE GOD OF THE HEBREWS

28. Or let them aver, if they are able, that some Sibyl of theirs, or any one whatever among their other prophets, announced long ago that it would come to pass that the God of the Hebrews, the God of Israel, would be worshipped by all nations, declaring, at the same time, that the worshippers

of other gods before that time had rightly rejected Him; and again, that the compositions of His prophets would be in such exalted authority, that in obedience to them the Roman government itself would command the destruction of images, the said seers at the same time giving warning against acting upon such ordinances;—let them, I say, read out any utterances like these, if they can, from any of the books of their prophets. For I stop not to state that those things which we can read in their books repeat a testimony on behalf of our religion, that is, the Christian religon, which they might have heard from the holy angels and from our prophets themselves; just as the very devils were compelled to confess Christ when He was present in the flesh. But I pass by these matters, regarding which, when we bring them forward, their contention is that they were invented by our party. Most certainly, however, they may themselves be pressed to adduce anything which has been prophesied by the seers of their own gods against the God of the Hebrews; as, on our side, we can point to declarations so remarkable at once for number and for weight recorded in the books of our prophets against their gods, in which also we can both note the command and recite the prediction and demonstrate the event. And over the realization of these things, that comparatively small number of heathens who have remained such are more inclined to grieve than they are ready to acknowledge that God who has had the power to foretell these things as events destined to be made good; whereas in their dealings with their own false gods, who are genuine demons, they prize nothing else so highly as to be informed by their responses of something which is to take place with them.

CHAPTER XXI

AN ARGUMENT FOR THE EXCLUSIVE WORSHIP OF THIS GOD, WHO, WHILE HE PROHIBITS OTHER DEITIES FROM BEING WORSHIPPED, IS NOT HIMSELF INTERDICTED BY OTHER DIVINITIES FROM BEING WORSHIPPED

29. Seeing, then, that these things are so, why do not these unhappy men rather apprehend the fact that this God is the true God, whom they perceive to be placed in a position so thoroughly separated from the company of their own deities, that, although they are compelled to acknowledge Him to be God, those very persons who profess that all gods ought to be

worshipped are nevertheless not permitted to worship Him along with the rest? Now, since these deities and this God cannot be worshipped together, why is not He selected who forbids those others to be worshipped; and why are not those deities abandoned, who do not interdict Him from being worshipped? Or if they do indeed forbid His worship, let the interdict be read. For what has greater claims to be recited to their people in their temples, in which the sound of no such thing has ever been heard? And, in good sooth, the prohibition directed by so many against one ought to be more notable and more potent than the prohibition launched by one against so many. For if the worship of this God is impious, then those gods are profitless, who do not interdict men from that impiety; but if the worship of this God is pious, then, as in that worship the commandment is given that these others are not to be worshipped, their worship is impious. If, again, those deities forbid His worship, but only so diffidently that they rather fear to be heard than dare to prohibit, who is so unwise as not to draw his own inference from the fact, who fails to perceive that this God ought to be chosen, who in so public a manner prohibits their worship, who commanded that their images should be destroyed, who foretold that demolition, who Himself effected it, in preference to those deities of whom we know not that they ordained abstinence from His worship, of whom we do not read that they foretold such an event, and in whom we do not see power sufficient to have it brought about? I put the question, let them give the answer: Who is this God, who thus harasses all the gods of the Gentiles, who thus betrays all their sacred rites, who thus renders them extinct?

CHAPTER XXII

OF THE OPINION ENTERTAINED BY THE GENTILES REGARDING OUR GOD

30. But why do I interrogate men whose native wit has deserted them in answering the question as to who this God is? Some say that He is Saturn. I fancy the reason of that is found in the sanctification of the Sabbath; for those men assign that day to Saturn. But their own Varro, than whom they can point to no man of greater learning among them, thought that the God of the Jews was Jupiter, and he judged that it mattered not what name was employed, provided the same subject was understood under it; in which, I believe, we see how he was subdued by His supremacy. For, inasmuch as

the Romans are not accustomed to worship any more exalted object than Jupiter, of which fact their Capitol is the open and sufficient attestation, and deem him to be the king of all gods; when he observed that the Jews worshipped the supreme God, he could not think of any object under that title other than Jupiter himself. But whether men call the God of the Hebrews Saturn, or declare Him to be Jupiter, let them tell us when Saturn dared to prohibit the worship of a second deity. He did not venture to interdict the worship even of this very Jupiter, who is said to have expelled him from his kingdom,—the son thus expelling the father. And if Jupiter, as the more powerful deity and the conqueror, has been accepted by his worshippers, then they ought not to worship Saturn, the conquered and expelled. But neither, on the other hand, did Jove put his worship under the ban. Nay, that deity whom he had power to overcome, he nevertheless suffered to continue a god.

CHAPTER XXIII

OF THE FOLLIES WHICH THE PAGANS HAVE INDULGED IN REGARDING JUPITER AND SATURN

31. These narratives of yours, say they, are but fables which have to be interpreted by the wise, or else they are fit only to be laughed at; but we revere that Jupiter of whom Maro says that

“All things are full of Jove,”

—Virgil’s Eclogues, iii. v. 60;

that is to say, the spirit of life that vivifies all things. It is not without some reason, therefore, that Varro thought that Jove was worshipped by the Jews; for the God of the Jews says by His prophet, “I fill heaven and earth.” But what is meant by that which the same poet names Ether? How do they take the term? For he speaks thus:

“Then the omnipotent father Ether, with fertilizing showers,

Came down into the bosom of his fruitful spouse.”

—Virgil’s Georgics, ii. 325.

They say, indeed, that this Ether is not spirit, but a lofty body in which the heaven is stretched above the air. Is liberty conceded to the poet to speak at one time in the language of the followers of Plato, as if God was not body, but spirit, and at another time in the language of the Stoics, as if God was a body? What is it, then, that they worship in their Capitol? If it is a spirit, or if again it is, in short, the corporeal heaven itself, then what does that shield of Jupiter there which they style the AEgis? The origin of that name, indeed, is explained by the circumstance that a goat nourished Jupiter when he was concealed by his mother. Or is this a fiction of the poets? But are the capitols of the Romans, then, also the mere creations of the poets? And what is the meaning of that, certainly not poetical, but unmistakeably farcical, variability of yours, in seeking your gods according to the ideas of philosophers in books, and revering them according to the notions of poets in your temples?

32. But was that Euhemerus also a poet, who declares both Jupiter himself, and his father Saturn, and Pluto and Neptune his brothers, to have been men, in terms so exceedingly plain that their worshippers ought all the more to render thanks to the poets, because their inventions have not been intended so much to disparage them as rather to dress them up? Albeit Cicero mentions that this same Euhemerus was translated into Latin by the poet Ennius. Or was Cicero himself a poet, who, in counselling the person with whom he debates in his Tusculan Disputations, addresses him as one possessing knowledge of things secret, in the following terms: “If, indeed, I were to attempt to search into antiquity, and produce from thence the subjects which the writers of Greece have given to the world, it would be found that even those deities who are reckoned gods of the higher orders have gone from us into heaven. Ask whose sepulchres are pointed out in Greece: call to mind, since you have been initiated, the things which are delivered in the mysteries: then, doubtless, you will comprehend how widely extended this belief is.” This author certainly makes ample acknowledgment of the doctrine that those gods of theirs were originally men. He does, indeed, benevolently surmise that they made their way into heaven. But he did not hesitate to say in public, that even the honour thus given them in general repute was conferred upon them by men, when he spoke of Romulus in these words: “By good will and repute we have raised

to the immortal gods that Romulus who founded this city.” How should it be such a wonderful thing, therefore, to suppose that the more ancient men did with respect to Jupiter and Saturn and the others what the Romans have done with respect to Romulus, and what, in good truth, they have thought of doing even in these more recent times also in the case of Caesar? And to these same Virgil has addressed the additional flattery of song, saying:

“Lo, the star of Caesar, descendant of Dione, arose.”

—Eclogue, ix. ver. 47.

Let them see to it, then, that the truth of history do not turn out to exhibit to our view sepulchres erected for their false gods here upon the earth!and let them take heed lest the vanity of poetry, instead of fixing, may be but feigning stars for their deities there in heaven. For, in reality, that one is not the star of Jupiter, neither is this one the star of Saturn; but the simple fact is, that upon these stars, which were set from the foundation of the world, the names of those persons were imposed after their death by men who were minded to honour them as gods on their departure from this life. And with respect to these we may, indeed, ask how there should be such ill desert in chastity, or such good desert in voluptuousness, that Venus should have a star, and Minerva be denied one among those luminaries which revolve along with the sun and moon?

33. But it may be said that Cicero, the Academic sage, who has been bold enough to make mention of the sepulchres of their gods, and to commit the statement to writing, is a more doubtful authority than the poets; although he did not presume to offer that assertion simply as his own personal opinion, but put it on record as a statement contained among the traditions of their own sacred rites. Well, then, can it also be maintained that Varro either gives expression merely to an invention of his own, as a poet might do, or puts the matter only dubiously, as might be the case with an Academician, because he declares that, in the instance of all such gods, the matters of their worship had their origin either in the life which they lived, or in the death which they died, among men? Or was that Egyptian priest, Leon, either a poet or an Academician, who expounded the origin of those gods of theirs to Alexander of Macedon, in a way somewhat different

indeed from the opinion advanced by the Greeks, but nevertheless so far accordant therewith as to make out their deities to have been originally men?

34. But what is all this to us? Let them assert that they worship Jupiter, and not a dead man; let them maintain that they have dedicated their Capitol not to a dead man, but to the Spirit that vivifies all things and fills the world. And as to that shield of his, which was made of the skin of a she-goat in honour of his nurse, let them put upon it whatever interpretation they please. What do they say, however, about Saturn? What is it that they worship under the name of Saturn? Is not this the deity that was the first to come down to us from Olympus (of whom the poet sings):

“Then from Olympus’ height came down

Good Saturn, exiled from his crown

By Jove, his mightier heir:

He brought the race to union first

Erewhile, on mountain-tops dispersed,

And gave them statutes to obey,

And willed the land wherein he lay

Should Latium’s title bear.”

—Virgil’s AEneid, viii. 320–324, Conington’s trans.

Does not his very image, made as it is with the head covered, present him as one under concealment? Was it not he that made the practice of agriculture known to the people of Italy, a fact which is expressed by the reaping-hook? No, say they; for you may see whether the being of whom such things are recorded was a man, and indeed one particular king: we, however, interpret Saturn to be universal Time, as is signified also by his name in Greek: for he is called Chronus, which word, with the aspiration thus given it, is also the vocable for time: whence, too, in Latin he gets the name of Saturn, as if it meant that he is sated with years. But now, what we are to make of people like these I know not, who, in their very effort to put a more favourable meaning upon the names and the images of their gods, make the confession that the very god who is their major deity, and the father of the rest, is Time. For what else do they thus betray but, in fact, that all those gods of theirs are only temporal, seeing that the very parent of them all is made out to be Time?

35. Accordingly, their more recent philosophers of the Platonic school, who have flourished in Christian times, have been ashamed of such fancies, and have endeavoured to interpret Saturn in another way, affirming that he received the name Chronos in order to signify, as it were, the fulness of intellect; their explanation being, that in Greek fulness is expressed by the term choros, and intellect or mind by the term nous; which etymology seems to be favoured also by the Latin name, on the supposition that the first part of the word (Saturnus) came from the Latin, and the second part from the Greek: so that he got the title Saturnus as an equivalent to satur, nous. For they saw how absurd it was to have that Jupiter regarded as a son of Time, whom they either considered, or wished to have considered, eternal deity. Furthermore, however, according to this novel interpretation, which it is marvellous that Cicero and Varro should have suffered to escape their notice, if their ancient authorities really had it, they call Jupiter the son of Saturn, thus denoting him, it may be, as the spirit that proceedeth forth from that supreme mind—the spirit which they choose to look upon as the soul of this world, so to speak, filling alike all heavenly and all earthly bodies. Whence comes also that saying of Maro, which I have cited a little ago, namely, “All things are full of Jove”? Should they not, then, if they are possessed of the ability, alter the superstitions indulged in by men, just as they alter their interpretation; and either erect no images at all, or at least build capitols to Saturn rather than to Jupiter? For they also maintain that no rational soul can be produced gifted with wisdom, except by participation in that supreme and unchangeable wisdom of his; and this affirmation they advance not only with respect to the soul of a man, but even with respect to that same soul of the world which they also designate Jove. Now we not only concede, but even very particularly proclaim, that there is a certain supreme wisdom of God, by participation in which every soul whatsoever that is constituted truly wise acquires its wisdom. But whether that

universal corporeal mass, which is called the world, has a kind of soul, or, so to speak, its own soul, that is to say, a rational life by which it can govern its own movements, as is the case with every sort of animal, is a question both vast and obscure. That is an opinion which ought not to be affirmed, unless its truth is clearly ascertained; neither ought it to be rejected, unless its falsehood is as clearly ascertained. And what will it matter to man, even should this question remain for ever unsolved, since, in any case, no soul becomes wise or blessed by drawing from any other soul but from that one supreme and immutable wisdom of God?

36. The Romans, however, who have founded a Capitol in honour of Jupiter, but none in honour of Saturn, as also these other nations whose opinion it has been that Jupiter ought to be worshipped pre-eminently and above the rest of the gods, have certainly not agreed in sentiment with the persons referred to; who, in accordance with that mad view of theirs, would dedicate their loftiest citadels rather to Saturn, if they had any power in these things, and who most particularly would annihilate those mathematicians and nativity-spinners by whom this Saturn, whom their opponents would designate the maker of the wise, has been placed with the character of a deity of evil among the other stars. But this opinion, nevertheless, has prevailed so mightily against them in the mind of humanity, that men decline even to name that god, and call him Ancient rather than Saturn; and that in so fearful a spirit of superstition, that the Carthaginians have now gone very near to change the designation of their town, and call it the town of the Ancient more frequently than the town of Saturn.

CHAPTER XXIV

OF THE FACT THAT THOSE PERSONS WHO REJECT THE GOD OF ISRAEL, IN CONSEQUENCE FAIL TO WORSHIP ALL THE GODS; AND, ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT THOSE WHO WORSHIP OTHER GODS, FAIL TO WORSHIP HIM

37. It is well understood, therefore, what these worshippers of images are convicted in reality of revering, and what they attempt to colour over. But even these new interpreters of Saturn must be required to tell us what they think of the God of the Hebrews. For to them also it seemed right to worship all the gods, as is done by the heathen nations, because their pride

made them ashamed to humble themselves under Christ for the remission of their sins. What opinion, therefore, do they entertain regarding the God of Israel? For if they do not worship Him then they do not worship all gods; and if they do worship Him, they do not worship Him in the way that He has ordained for His own worship, because they worship others also whose worship He has interdicted. Against such practices He issued His prohibition by the mouth of those same prophets by whom He also announced beforehand the destined occurrence of those very things which their images are now sustaining at the hands of the Christians. For whatever the explanation may be, whether it be that the angels were sent to those prophets to show them figuratively, and by the congruous forms of visible objects, the one true God, the Creator of all things, to whom the whole universe is made subject, and to indicate the method in which He enjoined His own worship to proceed; or whether it was that the minds of some among them were so mightily elevated by the Holy Spirit, as to enable them to see those things in that kind of vision in which the angels themselves behold objects: in either case it is the incontestable fact, that they did serve that God who has prohibited the worship of other gods; and, moreover, it is equally certain, that with the faithfulness of piety, in the kingly and in the priestly office, they ministered at once for the good of their country, and in the interest of those sacred ordinances which were significant of the coming of Christ as the true King and Priest.

CHAPTER XXV

OF THE FACT THAT THE FALSE GODS DO NOT FORBID OTHERS TO BE WORSHIPPED ALONG WITH THEMSELVES. THAT THE GOD OF ISRAEL IS THE TRUE GOD, IS PROVED BY HIS WORKS, BOTH IN PROPHECY AND IN FULFILMENT

38. But further, in the case of the gods of the Gentiles (in their willingness to worship whom they exhibit their unwillingness to worship that God who cannot be worshipped together with them), let them tell us the reason why no one is found in the number of their deities who thinks of interdicting the worship of another; while they institute them in different offices and functions, and hold them to preside each one over objects which pertain properly to his own special province. For if Jupiter does not prohibit the worship of Saturn, because he is not to be taken merely for a man, who

drove another man, namely his father, out of his kingdom, but either for the body of the heavens, or for the spirit that fills both heaven and earth, and because thus he cannot prevent that supernal mind from being worshipped, from which he is said to have emanated: if, on the same principle also, Saturn cannot interdict the worship of Jupiter, because he is not [to be supposed to be merely] one who was conquered by that other in rebellion,—as was the case with a person of the same name, by the hand of some one or other called Jupiter, from whose arms he was fleeing when he came into Italy,—and because the primal mind favours the mind that springs from it: yet Vulcan at least might [be expected to] put under the ban the worship of Mars, the paramour of his wife, and Hercules [might be thought likely to interdict] the worship of Juno, his persecutor. What kind of foul consent must subsist among them, if even Diana, the chaste virgin, fails to interdict the worship, I do not say merely of Venus, but even of Priapus? For if the same individual decides to be at once a hunter and a farmer, he must be the servant of both these deities; and yet he will be ashamed to do even so much as erect temples for them side by side. But they may aver, that by interpretation Diana means a certain virtue, be it what they please; and they may tell us that Priapus really denotes the deity of fecundity,—to such an effect, at any rate, that Juno may well be ashamed to have such a coadjutor in the task of making females fruitful. They may say what they please; they may put any explanation upon these things which in their wisdom they think fit: only, in spite of all that, the God of Israel will confound all their argumentations. For in prohibiting all those deities from being worshipped, while His own worship is hindered by none of them, and in at once commanding, foretelling, and effecting destruction for their images and sacred rites, He has shown with sufficient clearness that they are false and lying deities, and that He Himself is the one true and truthful God.

39. Moreover, to whom should it not seem strange that those worshippers, now become few in number, of deities both numerous and false, should refuse to do homage to Him of whom, when the question is put to them as to what deity He is; they dare not at least assert, whatever answer they may think to give, that He is no God at all? For if they deny His deity, they are very easily refuted by His works, both in prophecy and in fulfilment. I do not speak of those works which they deem themselves at liberty not to

credit, such as His work in the beginning, when He made heaven and earth, and all that is in them. Neither do I specify here those events which carry us back into the remotest antiquity, such as the translation of Enoch, the destruction of the impious by the flood, and the saving of righteous Noah and his house from the deluge, by means of the [ark of] wood. I begin the statement of His doings among men with Abraham. To this man, indeed, was given by an angelic oracle an intelligible promise, which we now see in its realization. For to him it was said, “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed.” Of his seed, then, sprang the people of Israel, whence came the Virgin Mary, who was the mother of Christ; and that in Him all the nations are blessed, let them now be bold enough to deny if they can. This same promise was made also to Isaac the son of Abraham. It was given again to Jacob the grandson of Abraham. This Jacob was also called Israel, from whom that whole people derived both its descent and its name so that indeed the God of this people was called the God of Israel: not that He is not also the God of the Gentiles, whether they are ignorant of Him or now know Him; but that in this people He willed that the power of His promises should be made more conspicuously apparent. For that people, which at first was multiplied in Egypt, and after a time was delivered from a state of slavery there by the hand of Moses, with many signs and portents, saw most of the Gentile nations subdued under it, and obtained possession also of the land of promise, in which it reigned in the person of kings of its own, who sprang from the tribe of Judah. This Judah, also, was one of the twelve sons of Israel, the grandson of Abraham. And from him were descended the people called the Jews, who, with the help of God Himself, did great achievements, and who also, when He chastised them, endured many sufferings on account of their sins, until the coming of that Seed to whom the promise was given, in whom all the nations were to be blessed, and [for whose sake] they were willingly to break in pieces the idols of their fathers.

CHAPTER XXVI

OF THE FACT THAT IDOLATRY HAS BEEN SUBVERTED BY THE NAME OF CHRIST, AND BY THE FAITH OF CHRISTIANS ACCORDING TO THE PROPHECIES

40. For truly what is thus effected by Christians is not a thing which belongs only to Christian times, but one which was predicted very long ago.

Those very Jews who have remained enemies to the name of Christ, and regarding whose destined perfidy these prophetic writings have not been silent, do themselves possess and peruse the prophet who says: “O Lord my God, and my refuge in the day of evil, the Gentiles shall come unto Thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have worshipped mendacious idols, and there is no profit in them.” Behold, that is now being done; behold, now the Gentiles are coming from the ends of the earth to Christ, uttering things like these, and breaking their idols! Of signal consequence, too, is this which God has done for His Church in its world-wide extension, in that the Jewish nation, which has been deservedly overthrown and scattered abroad throughout the lands, has been made to carry about with it everywhere the records of our prophecies, so that it might not be possible to look upon these predictions as concocted by ourselves; and thus the enemy of our faith has been made a witness to our truth. How, then, can it be possible that the disciples of Christ have taught what they have not learned from Christ, as those foolish men in their silly fancies object, with the view of getting the superstitious worship of heathen gods and idols subverted? Can it be said also that those prophecies which are still read in these days, in the books of the enemies of Christ, were the inventions of the disciples of Christ?

41. Who, then, has effected the demolition of these systems but the God of Israel? For to this people was the announcement made by those divine voices which were addressed to Moses: “Hear, O Israel; the Lord thy God is one God.” “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath.” And again, in order that this people might put an end to these things wherever it received power to do so, this commandment was also laid upon the nation: “Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them; thou shalt not do after their works, but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images.” But who shall say that Christ and Christians have no connection with Israel, seeing that Israel was the grandson of Abraham, to whom first, as afterwards to his son Isaac, and then to his grandson Israel himself, that promise was given, which I have already mentioned, namely: “In thy seed shall all nations be blessed”? That prediction we see now in its fulfilment in Christ. For it was of this line that

the Virgin was born, concerning whom a prophet of the people of Israel and of the God of Israel sang in these terms: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son; and they shall call His name Emmanuel.” For by interpretation, Emmanuel means, “God with us.” This God of Israel, therefore, who has interdicted the worship of other gods, who has interdicted the making of idols, who has commanded their destruction, who by His prophet has predicted that the Gentiles from the ends of the earth would say, “Surely our fathers have worshipped mendacious idols, in which there is no profit;” this same God is He who, by the name of Christ and by the faith of Christians, has ordered, promised, and exhibited the overthrow of all these superstitions. In vain, therefore, do these unhappy men, knowing that they have been prohibited from blaspheming the name of Christ, even by their own gods, that is to say, by the demons who fear the name of Christ, seek to make it out, that this kind of doctrine is something strange to Him, in the power of which the Christians dispute against idols, and root out all those false religions, wherever they have the opportunity.

CHAPTER XXVII

AN ARGUMENT URGING IT UPON THE REMNANT OF IDOLATERS THAT THEY SHOULD AT LENGTH BECOME SERVANTS OF THIS TRUE GOD, WHO EVERYWHERE IS SUBVERTING IDOLS

42. Let them now give their answer with respect to the God of Israel, to whom, as teaching and enjoining such things, witness is borne not only by the books of the Christians, but also by those of the Jews. Regarding Him, let them ask the counsel of their own deities, who have prevented the blaspheming of Christ. Concerning the God of Israel, let them give a contumelious response if they dare. But whom are they to consult? or where are they to ask counsel now? Let them peruse the books of their own authorities. If they consider the God of Israel to be Jupiter, as Varro has written (that I may speak for the time being in accordance with their own way of thinking), why then do they not believe that the idols are to be destroyed by Jupiter? If they deem Him to be Saturn, why do they not worship Him? Or why do they not worship Him in that manner in which, by the voice of those prophets through whom He has made good the things which He has foretold, He has ordained His worship to be conducted? Why

do they not believe that images are to be destroyed by Him, and the worship of other gods forbidden? If He is neither Jove nor Saturn (and surely, if He were one of these, He would not speak out so mightily against the sacred rites of their Jove and Saturn), who then is this God, who, with all their consideration for other gods, is the only Deity not worshipped by them, and who, nevertheless, so manifestly brings it about that He shall Himself be the sole object of worship, to the overthrow of all other gods, and to the humiliation of everything proud and highly exalted, which has lifted itself up against Christ in behalf of idols, persecuting and slaying Christians? But, in good truth, men are now asking into what secret recesses these worshippers withdraw, when they are minded to offer sacrifice; or into what regions of obscurity they thrust back these same gods of theirs, to prevent their being discovered and broken in pieces by the Christians. Whence comes this mode of dealing, if not from the fear of those laws and those rulers by whose instrumentality the God of Israel discovers His power, and who are now made subject to the name of Christ. And that it should be so He promised long ago, when He said by the prophet: “Yea, all kings of the earth shall worship Him: all nations shall serve Him.”

CHAPTER XXVIII

OF THE PREDICTED REJECTION OF IDOLS

43. It cannot be questioned that what was predicted at sundry times by His prophets is now being realized,—namely, the announcement that He would disclaim His impious people (not, indeed, the people as a whole, because even of the Israelites many have believed in Christ; for His apostles themselves belonged to that nation), and would humble every proud and injurious person, so that He should Himself alone be exalted, that is to say, alone be manifested to men as lofty and mighty; until idols should be cast away by those who believe, and be concealed by those who believe not; when the earth is broken by His fear, that is to say, when the men of earth are subdued by fear, to wit, by fearing His law, or the law of those who, being at once believers in His name and rulers among the nations, shall interdict such sacrilegious practices.

44. For these things, which I have thus briefly stated in the way of introduction, and with a view to their readier apprehension, are thus expressed by the prophet: And now, O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord. For He has disclaimed His people the house of Israel, because the country was replenished, as from the beginning, with their soothsayings as with those of strangers, and many strange children were born to them. For their country was replenished with silver and gold, neither was there any numbering of their treasures; their land also is full of horses, neither was there any numbering of their chariots: their land also is full of the abominations of the works of their own hands, and they have worshipped that which their own fingers have made. And the mean man has bowed himself, and the great man has humbled himself; and I will not forgive it them. And now enter ye into the rocks, and hide yourselves in the earth from before the fear of the Lord, and from the majesty of His power, when He arises to crush the earth: for the eyes of the Lord are lofty, and man is low; and the haughtiness of men shall be humbled, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is injurious and proud, and upon every one that is lifted up and humbled, and they shall be brought low; and upon every cedar of Lebanon of the high ones and the lifted up, and upon every tree of the Lebanon of Bashan, and upon every mountain, and upon every high hill, and upon every ship of the sea, and upon every spectacle of the beauty of ships. And the contumely of men shall be humbled and shall fall, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day; and all things made by hands they shall hide in dens, and in holes of the rocks, and in caves of the earth, from before the fear of the Lord, and from the majesty of His power, when He arises to crush the earth: for in that day a man shall cast away the abominations of gold and silver, the vain and evil things which they made for worship, in order to go into the clefts of the solid rock, and into the holes of the rocks, from before the fear of the Lord, and from the majesty of His power, when He arises to break the earth in pieces.

CHAPTER XXIX

OF THE QUESTION WHY THE HEATHEN SHOULD REFUSE TO WORSHIP THE GOD OF ISRAEL; EVEN ALTHOUGH THEY DEEM HIM TO BE ONLY THE PRESIDING DIVINITY OF THE ELEMENTS?

45. What do they say of this God of Sabaoth, which term, by interpretation, means the God of powers or of armies, inasmuch as the powers and the armies of the angels serve Him? What do they say of this God of Israel; for He is the God of that people from whom came the seed wherein all the nations were to be blessed? Why is He the only deity excluded from worship by those very persons who contend that all the gods ought to be worshipped? Why do they refuse their belief to Him who both proves other gods to be false gods, and also overthrows them? I have heard one of them declare that he had read, in some philosopher or other, the statement that, from what the Jews did in their sacred observances, he had come to know what God they worshipped. “He is the deity,” said he, “that presides over those elements of which this visible and material universe is constructed;” when in the Holy Scriptures of His prophets it is plainly shown that the people of Israel were commanded to worship that God who made heaven and earth, and from whom comes all true wisdom. But what need is there for further disputation on this subject, seeing that it is quite sufficient for my present purpose to point out how they entertain any kind of presumptuous opinions regarding that God whom yet they cannot deny to be a God? If, indeed, He is the deity that presides over the elements of which this world consists, why is He not worshipped in preference to Neptune, who presides over the sea only? Why not, again, in preference to Silvanus, who presides over the fields and woods only? Why not in preference to the Sun, who presides over the day only, or who also rules over the entire heat of heaven? Why not in preference to the Moon, who presides over the night only, or who also shines pre-eminent for power over moisture? Why not in preference to Juno, who is supposed to hold possession of the air only? For certainly those deities, whoever they may be, who preside over the parts, must necessarily be under that Deity who wields the presidency over all the elements, and over the entire universe. But this Deity prohibits the worship of all those deities. Why, then, is it that these men, in opposition to the injunction of One greater than those deities, not only choose to worship them, but also decline, for their sakes, to worship Him? Not yet have they discovered any constant and intelligible judgment to pronounce on this God of Israel; neither will they ever discover any such judgment, until they find out that He alone is the true God, by whom all things were created.

CHAPTER XXX

OF THE FACT THAT, AS THE PROPHECIES HAVE BEEN FULFILLED, THE GOD OF ISRAEL HAS NOW BEEN MADE KNOWN EVERYWHERE

46. Thus it was with a certain person named Lucan, one of their great declaimers in verse. For a long time, as I believe, he endeavored to find out, by his own cogitations, or by the perusal of the books of his own fellow-countrymen, who the God of the Jews was; and failing to prosecute his inquiry in the way of piety, he did not succeed. Yet he chose rather to speak of Him as the uncertain God whom he did not find out, than absolutely to deny the title of God to that Deity of whose existence he perceived proofs so great. For he says:

“And Judaea, devoted to the worship

Of an uncertain God.”

—Lucan, Book ii. towards the end.

And as yet this God, the holy and true God of Israel, had not done by the name of Christ among all nations works so great as those which have been wrought after Lucan’s times up to our own day. But now who is so obdurate as not to be moved, who so dull as not to be inflamed, seeing that the saying of Scripture is fulfilled, “For there is not one that is hid from the heat thereof;” and seeing also that those other things which were predicted so long time ago in this same Psalm from which I have cited one little verse, are now set forth in their accomplishment in the clearest light? For under this term of the “heavens” the apostles of Jesus Christ were denoted, because God was to preside in them with a view to the publishing of the gospel. Now, therefore, the heavens have declared the glory of God, and the firmament has proclaimed the works of His hands. Day unto day has given forth speech, and night unto night has shown knowledge. Now there is no speech or language where their voices are not heard. Their sound has gone out into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. Now hath He set His tabernacle in the sun, that is, in manifestation; which tabernacle is His Church. For in order to do so (as the words proceed in the passage) He came forth from His chamber like a bridegroom; that is to say, the Word, wedded with the flesh of man, came forth from the Virgin’s womb. Now has He rejoiced as a strong man, and has run His race. Now has His going forth been made from the height of heaven, and His return even to the height of heaven. And accordingly, with the completest propriety, there follows upon this the verse which I have already mentioned: “And there is not one that is hid from the heat thereof [or, His heat].” And still these men make choice of their little, weak, prating objections, which are like stubble to be reduced to ashes in that fire, rather than like gold to be purged of its dross by it; while at once the fallacious monuments of their false gods have been brought to nought, and the veracious promises of that uncertain God have been proved to be sure.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE FULFILMENT OF THE PROPHECIES CONCERNING CHRIST

47. Wherefore let those evil applauders of Christ, who refuse to become Christians, desist from making the allegation that Christ did not teach that their gods were to be abandoned, and their images broken in pieces. For the God of Israel, regarding whom it was declared aforetime that He should be called the God of the whole earth, is now indeed actually called the God of the whole earth. By the mouth of His prophets He predicted that this would come to pass, and by Christ He did bring it eventually to pass at the fit time. Assuredly, if the God of Israel is now named the God of the whole earth, what He has commanded must needs be made good; for He who has given the commandment is now well known. But, further, that He is made known by Christ and in Christ, in order that His Church may be extended throughout the world, and that by its instrumentality the God of Israel may be named the God of the whole earth, those who please may read a little earlier in the same prophet. That paragraph may also be cited by me. It is not so long as to make it requisite for us to pass it by. Here there is much said about the presence, the humility, and the passion of Christ, and about the body of which He is the Head, that is, His Church, where it is called barren, like one that did not bear. For during many years the Church, which was destined to subsist among all the nations with its children, that is, with its saints, was not apparent, as Christ remained yet unannounced by the evangelists to those to whom He had not been declared by the prophets. Again, it is said that there shall be more children for her who is forsaken

than for her who has a husband, under which name of a husband the Law was signified, or the King whom the people of Israel first received. For neither had the Gentiles received the Law at the period at which the prophet spake; nor had the King of Christians yet appeared to the nations, although from these Gentile nations a much more fruitful and numerous multitude of saints has now proceeded. It is in this manner, therefore, that Isaiah speaks, commencing with the humility of Christ, and turning afterwards to an address to the Church, on to that verse which we have already instanced, where he says: And He who brought thee out, the same God of Israel, shall be called the God of the whole earth. Behold, says he, my Servant shall deal prudently, and shall be exalted and honoured exceedingly. As many shall be astonied at Thee; so shall Thy marred visage, nevertheless, be seen by all, and Thine honour by men. For so shall many nations be astonied at Him, and the kings shall shut their mouths. For they shall see to whom it has not been told of Him; and those who have not heard shall understand. O Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? We have proclaimed before Him as a servant, as a root in a thirsty soil; He hath no form nor comeliness. And we have seen Him, and He had neither beauty nor seemliness; but His countenance is despised, and His state rejected by all men: a man stricken, and acquainted with the bearing of infirmities; on account of which His face is turned aside, injured, and little esteemed. He bears our infirmities, and is in sorrows for us. And we did esteem Him to be in sorrows, and to be stricken and in punishment. But He was wounded for our transgressions, and He was enfeebled for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray, and the Lord hath given Him up for our sins. And whereas He was evil entreated, He opened not His mouth; He was brought as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before him who shears it is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. In humility was His judgment taken. Who shall declare His generation? For His life shall be cut off out of the land; by the iniquities of my people is He led to death. Therefore shall I give the wicked for His sepulture, and the rich on account of His death; because He did no iniquity, neither was any deceit in His mouth. The Lord is pleased to clear Him in regard to His stroke. If ye shall give your soul for your offences, ye shall see the seed of the longest life. And the Lord is pleased to take away His soul from sorrows, to show Him the light, and to set Him forth in sight, and to justify the righteous One who serves many well; and He shall bear their sins. Therefore shall He have many for His inheritance, and shall divide the spoils of the strong; for which reason His soul was delivered over to death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare the sins of many, and was delivered for their iniquities. Rejoice, O barren, thou that dost not bear: exult, and cry aloud, thou that dost not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate than those of her who has a husband. For the Lord hath said, Enlarge the place of thy tent, and fix thy courts; there is no reason why thou shouldst spare: lengthen thy cords, and strengthen Thy stakes firmly. Yea, again and again break thou forth on the right hand and on the left. For thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and thou shall inhabit the cities which were desolate. There is nothing for thee to fear. For thou shall prevail, and be not thou confounded as if thou shall be put to shame. For thou shall forget thy confusion for ever: thou shall not remember the shame of thy widowhood, since I who made thee am the Lord; the Lord is His name: and He who brought thee out, the very God of Israel, shall be called the God of the whole earth.

48. What can be said in opposition to this evidence, and this expression of things both foretold and fulfilled? If they suppose that His disciples have given a false testimony on the subject of the divinity of Christ, will they also doubt the passion of Christ? No: they are not accustomed to believe that He rose from the dead; but, at the same time, they are quite ready to believe that He suffered all that men are wont to suffer, because they wish Him to be held to be a man and nothing more. According to this, then, He was led like a sheep to the slaughter; He was numbered with the transgressors; He was wounded for our sins; by His stripes were we healed; His face was marred, and little esteemed, and smitten with the palms, and defiled with the spittle; His position was disfigured on the cross; He was led to death by the iniquities of the people Israel; He is the man who had no form nor comeliness when He was buffeted with the fists, when He was crowned with the thorns, when He was derided as He hung (upon the tree); He is the man who, as the lamb is dumb before its shearer, opened not His mouth, when it was said to Him by those who mocked Him, “Prophesy to us, thou Christ.” Now, however, He is exalted verily, now He is honoured

exceedingly; truly many nations are now astonied at Him. Now the kings have shut their mouth, by which they were wont to promulgate the most ruthless laws against the Christians. Truly those now see to whom it was not told of Him, and those who have not heard understand. For those Gentile nations to whom the prophets made no announcement, do now rather see for themselves how true these things are which were of old reported by the prophets; and those who have not heard Isaiah speak in his own proper person, now understand from his writings the things which he spoke concerning Him. For even in the said nation of the Jews, who believed the report of the prophets, or to whom was that arm of the Lord revealed, which is this very Christ who was announced by them, seeing that by their own hands they perpetrated those crimes against Christ, the commission of which had been predicted by the prophets whom they possessed? But now, indeed, He possesses many by inheritance; and He divides the spoils of the strong, since the devil and the demons have now been cast out and given up, and the possessions once held by them have been distributed by Him among the fabrics of His churches and for other necessary services.

CHAPTER XXXII

A STATEMENT IN VINDICATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE APOSTLES AS OPPOSED TO IDOLATRY, IN THE WORDS OF THE PROPHECIES

49. What, then, do these men, who are at once the perverse applauders of Christ and the slanderers of Christians, say to these facts? Can it be that Christ, by the use of magical arts, caused those predictions to be uttered so long ago by the prophets? or have His disciples invented them? Is it thus that the Church, in her extension among the Gentile nations, though once barren, has been made to rejoice now in the possession of more children than that synagogue had which, in its Law or its King, had received, as it were, a husband? or is it thus that this Church has been led to enlarge the place of her tent, and to occupy all nations and tongues, so that now she lengthens her cords beyond the limits to which the rights of the empire of Rome extend, yea, even on to the territories of the Persians and the Indians and other barbarous nations? or that, on the right hand by means of true Christians, and on the left hand by means of pretended Christians, His name is being made known among such a multitude of peoples? or that His seed

is made to inherit the Gentiles, so as now to inhabit cities which had been left desolate of the true worship of God and the true religion? or that His Church has been so little daunted by the threats and furies of men, even at times when she has been covered with the blood of martyrs, like one clad in purple array, that she has prevailed over persecutors at once so numerous, so violent, and so powerful? or that she has not been confounded, like one put to shame, when it was a great crime to be or to become a Christian? or that she is made to forget her confusion for ever, because, where sin had abounded, grace did much more abound? or that she is taught not to remember the shame of her widowhood, because only for a little was she forsaken and subjected to opprobrium, while now she shines forth once more with such eminent glory? or, in fine, is it only a fiction concocted by Christ's disciples, that the Lord who made her, and brought her forth from the denomination of the devil and the demons, the very God of Israel is now called the God of the whole earth; all which, nevertheless, the prophets, whose books are now in the hands of the enemies of Christ, foretold so long before Christ became the Son of man?

50. From this, therefore, let them understand that the matter is not left obscure or doubtful even to the slowest and dullest minds: from this, I say, let these perverse applauders of Christ and execrators of the Christian religion understand that the disciples of Christ have learned and taught, in opposition to their gods, precisely what the doctrine of Christ contains. For the God of Israel is found to have enjoined in the books of the prophets that all these objects which those men are minded to worship should be held in abomination and be destroyed, while He Himself is now named the God of the whole earth, through the instrumentality of Christ and the Church of Christ, exactly as He promised so long time ago. For if, indeed, in their marvellous folly, they fancy that Christ worshipped their gods, and that it was only through them that He had power to do things so great as these, we may well ask whether the God of Israel also worshipped their gods, who has now fulfilled by Christ what He promised with respect to the extension of His own worship through all the nations, and with respect to the detestation and subversion of those other deities? Where are their gods? Where are the vaticinations of their fanatics, and the divinations of their prophets? Where are the auguries, or the auspices, or the soothsayings, or

the oracles of demons? Why is it that, out of the ancient books which constitute the records of this type of religion, nothing in the form either of admonition or of prediction is advanced to oppose the Christian faith, or to controvert the truth of those prophets of ours, who have now come to be so well understood among all nations? “We have offended our gods,” they say in reply, “and they have deserted us for that reason: that explains it also why the Christians have prevailed against us, and why the bliss of human life, exhausted and impaired, goes to wreck among us.” We challenge them, however, to take the books of their own seers, and read out to us any statement purporting that the kind of issue which has come upon them would be brought on them by the Christians: nay, we challenge them to recite any passages in which, if not Christ (for they wish to make Him out to have been a worshipper of their own gods), at least this God of Israel, who is allowed to be the subverter of other deities, is held up as a deity destined to be rejected and worthy of detestation. But never will they produce any such passage, unless, perchance, it be some fabrication of their own. And if ever they do cite any such statement, the fact that it is but a fiction of their own will betray itself in the unnoticeable manner in which a matter of so grave importance is found adduced; whereas, in good truth, before what has been predicted should have come to pass, it behoved to have been proclaimed in the temples of the gods of all nations, with a view to the timeous preparation and warning of all who are now minded to be Christians.

CHAPTER XXXIII

A STATEMENT IN OPPOSITION TO THOSE WHO MAKE THE COMPLAINT THAT THE BLISS OF HUMAN LIFE HAS BEEN IMPAIRED BY THE ENTRANCE OF CHRISTIAN TIMES

51. Finally, as to the complaint which they make with respect to the impairing of the bliss of human life by the entrance of Christian times, if they only peruse the books of their own philosophers, who reprehend those very things which are now being taken out of their way in spite of all their unwillingness and murmuring, they will indeed find that great praise is due to the times of Christ. For what diminution is made in their happiness, unless it be in what they most basely and luxuriously abused, to the great injury of their Creator? or unless, perchance, it be the case that evil times

originate in such circumstances as these, in which throughout almost all states the theatres are failing, and with them, too, the dens of vice and the public profession of iniquity: yea, altogether the forums and cities in which the demons used to be worshipped are falling. How comes it, then, that they are falling, unless it be in consequence of the failure of those very things, in the lustful and sacrilegious use of which they were constructed? Did not their own Cicero, when commending a certain actor of the name of Roscius, call him a man so clever as to be the only one worthy enough to make it due for him to come upon the stage; and yet, again, so good a man as to be the only one so worthy as to make it due for him not to approach it? What else did he disclose with such remarkable clearness by this saying, but the fact that the stage was so base there, that a person was under the greater obligation not to connect himself with it, in proportion as he was a better man than most? And yet their gods were pleased with such things of shame as he deemed fit only to be removed to a distance from good men. But we have also an open confession of the same Cicero, where he says that he had to appease Flora, the mother of sports, by frequent celebration; in which sports such an excess of vice is wont to be exhibited, that, in comparison with them, others are respectable, from engaging in which, nevertheless, good men are prohibited. Who is this mother Flora, and what manner of goddess is she, who is thus conciliated and propitiated by a practice of vice indulged in with more than usual frequency and with looser reins? How much more honourable now was it for a Roscius to step upon the stage, than for a Cicero to worship a goddess of this kind! If the gods of the Gentile nations are offended because the supplies are lessened which are instituted for the purpose of such celebrations, it is apparent of what character those must be who are delighted with such things. But if, on the other hand, the gods themselves in their wrath diminish these supplies, their anger yields us better services than their placability. Wherefore let these men either confute their own philosophers, who have reprehended the same practices on the side of wanton men; or else let them break in pieces those gods of theirs who have made such demands upon their worshippers, if indeed they still find any such deities either to break in pieces or to conceal. But let them cease from their blasphemous habit of charging Christian times with the failure of their true prosperity,—a prosperity, indeed, so used by them that they were sinking into all that is base and hurtful,—lest thereby they be only putting us all the more emphatically in mind of reasons for the ampler praise of the power of Christ.

CHAPTER XXXIV

EPILOGUE TO THE PRECEDING

52. Much more might I say on this subject, were it not that the requirements of the task which I have undertaken compel me to conclude this book, and revert to the object originally proposed. When, indeed, I took it in hand to solve those problems of the Gospels which meet us where the four evangelists, as it seems to certain critics, fail to harmonize with each other, by setting forth to the best of my ability the particular designs which they severally have in view, I was met first by the necessity of discussing a question which some are accustomed to bring before us,—the question, namely, as to the reason why we cannot produce any writings composed by Christ Himself. For their aim is to get Him credited with the writing of some other composition, I know not of what sort, which may be suitable to their inclinations, and with having indulged in no sentiments of antagonism to their gods, but rather with having paid respect to them in a kind of magical worship; and their wish is also to get it believed that His disciples not only gave a false account of Him when they declared Him to be the God by whom all things were made, while He was really nothing more than a man, although certainly a man of the most exalted wisdom, but also that they taught with regard to these gods of theirs something different from what they had themselves learned from Him. This is how it happens that we have been engaged preferentially in pressing them with arguments concerning the God of Israel, who is now worshipped by all nations through the medium of the Church of the Christians, who is also subverting their sacrilegious vanities the whole world over, exactly as He announced by the mouth of the prophets so long ago, and who has now fulfilled those predictions by the name of Christ, in whom He had promised that all nations should be blessed. And from all this they ought to understand that Christ could neither have known nor taught anything else with regard to their gods than what was enjoined and foretold by the God of Israel through the agency of these prophets of His by whom He promised, and ultimately sent, this very Christ, in whose name, according to the promise given to the

fathers, when all nations were pronounced blessed, it has come to pass that this same God of Israel should be called the God of the whole earth. By this, too, they ought to see that His disciples did not depart from the doctrine of their Master when they forbade the worship of the gods of the Gentiles, with the view of preventing us from addressing our supplications to insensate images, or from having fellowship with demons, or from serving the creature rather than the Creator with the homage of religious worship.

CHAPTER XXXV

OF THE FACT THAT THE MYSTERY OF A MEDIATOR WAS MADE KNOWN TO THOSE WHO LIVED IN ANCIENT TIMES BY THE AGENCY OF PROPHECY, AS IT IS NOW DECLARED TO US IN THE GOSPEL

53. Wherefore, seeing that Christ Himself is that Wisdom of God by whom all things were created, and considering that no rational intelligences, whether of angels or of men, receive wisdom except by participation in this Wisdom wherewith we are united by that Holy Spirit through whom charity is shed abroad in our hearts (which Trinity at the same time constitutes one God), Divine Providence, having respect to the interests of mortal men whose time-bound life was held engaged in things which rise into being and die, decreed that this same Wisdom of God, assuming into the unity of His person the (nature of) man, in which He might be born according to the conditions of time, and live and die and rise again, should utter and perform and bear and sustain things congruous to our salvation; and thus, in exemplary fashion, show at once to men on earth the way for a return to heaven, and to those angels who are above us, the way to retain their position in heaven. For unless, also, in the nature of the reasonable soul, and under the conditions of an existence in time, something came newly into being,—that is to say, unless that began to be which previously was not,—there could never be any passing from a life of utter corruption and folly into one of wisdom and true goodness. And thus, as truth in the contemplative lives in the enjoyment of things eternal, while faith in the believing is what is due to things which are made, man is purified through that faith which is conversant with temporal things, in order to his being made capable of receiving the truth of things eternal. For one of their

noblest intellects, the philosopher Plato, in the treatise which is named the Timaeus, speaks also to this effect: “As eternity is to that which is made, so truth to faith.” Those two belong to the things above,—namely, eternity and truth; these two belong to the things below,—namely, that which is made and faith. In order, therefore, that we may be called off from the lowest objects, and led up again to the highest, and in order also that what is made may attain to the eternal, we must come through faith to truth. And because all contraries are reduced to unity by some middle factor, and because also the iniquity of time alienated us from the righteousness of eternity, there was need of some mediatorial righteousness of a temporal nature; which mediatizing factor might be temporal on the side of those lowest objects, but also righteous on the side of these highest, and thus, by adapting itself to the former without cutting itself off from the latter, might bring back those lowest objects to the highest. Accordingly, Christ was named the Mediator between God and men, who stood between the immortal God and mortal man, as being Himself both God and man, who reconciled man to God, who continued to be what He (formerly) was, but was made also what He (formerly) was not. And the same Person is for us at once the (centre of the) said faith in things that are made, and the truth in things eternal.

54. This great and unutterable mystery, this kingdom and priesthood, was revealed by prophecy to the men of ancient time, and is now preached by the gospel to their descendants. For it behoved that, at some period or other, that should be made good among all nations which for a long time had been promised through the medium of a single nation. Accordingly, He who sent the prophets before His own descent also despatched the apostles after His ascension. Moreover, in virtue of the man assumed by Him, He stands to all His disciples in the relation of the head to the members of His body. Therefore, when those disciples have written matters which He declared and spake to them, it ought not by any means to be said that He has written nothing Himself; since the truth is, that His members have accomplished only what they became acquainted with by the repeated statements of the Head. For all that He was minded to give for our perusal on the subject of His own doings and sayings, He commanded to be written by those disciples, whom He thus used as if they were His own hands. Whoever apprehends this correspondence of unity and this concordant service of the

members, all in harmony in the discharge of diverse offices under the Head, will receive the account which he gets in the Gospel through the narratives constructed by the disciples, in the same kind of spirit in which he might look upon the actual hand of the Lord Himself, which He bore in that body which was made His own, were he to see it engaged in the act of writing. For this reason let us now rather proceed to examine into the real character of those passages in which these critics suppose the evangelists to have given contradictory accounts (a thing which only those who fail to understand the matter aright can fancy to be the case); so that, when these problems are solved, it may also be made apparent that the members in that body have preserved a befitting harmony in the unity of the body itself, not only by identity in sentiment, but also by constructing records consonant with that identity.

Book II

In this book Augustin undertakes an orderly examination of the Gospel according to Matthew, on to the narrative of the Supper, and institutes a comparison between it and the other gospels by Mark, Luke, and John, with the view of demonstrating a complete harmony between the four evangelists throughout all these sections.

THE PROLOGUE

1. Whereas, in a discourse of no small length and of imperative importance, which we have finished within the compass of one book, we have refuted the folly of those who think that the disciples who have given us these Gospel histories deserve only to be disparagingly handled, for the express reason that no writings are produced by us with the claim of being compositions which have proceeded immediately from the hand of that Christ whom they refuse indeed to worship as God, but whom, nevertheless, they do not hesitate to pronounce worthy to be honoured as a man far surpassing all other men in wisdom; and as, further, we have confuted those who strive to make Him out to have written in a strain suiting their perverted inclinations, but not in terms calculated, by their perusal and acceptance, to set men right, or to turn them from their perverse ways, let us now look into the accounts which the four evangelists have given us of Christ, with the view of seeing how self-consistent they are, and how truly in harmony with each other. And let us do so in the hope that no offence, even of the smallest order may be felt in this line of things in the Christian faith by those who exhibit more curiosity than capacity, in so far as they think that a study of the evangelical books, conducted not in the way of a merely cursory perusal, but in the form of a more than ordinarily careful investigation, has disclosed to them certain matters of an inapposite and contradictory nature, and in so far as their notion is, that these things are to be held up as objections in the spirit of contention, rather than pondered in the spirit of consideration.

CHAPTER I

A STATEMENT OF THE REASON WHY THE ENUMERATION OF THE ANCESTORS OF CHRIST IS CARRIED DOWN TO JOSEPH, WHILE CHRIST WAS NOT BORN OF THAT MAN’S SEED, BUT OF THE VIRGIN MARY

2. The evangelist Matthew has commenced his narrative in these terms: “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” By this exordium he shows with sufficient clearness that his undertaking is to give an account of the generation of Christ according to the flesh. For, according to this, Christ is the Son of man,—a title which He also gives very frequently to Himself, thereby commending to our notice what in His compassion He has condescended to be on our behalf. For that heavenly and eternal generation, in virtue of which He is the only-begotten Son of God, before every creature, because all things were made by Him, is so ineffable, that it is of it that the word of the prophet must be understood when he says, “Who shall declare His generation?” Matthew therefore traces out the human generation of Christ, mentioning His ancestors from Abraham downwards, and carrying them on to Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born. For it was not held allowable to consider him dissociated from the married estate which was entered into with Mary, on the ground that she gave birth to Christ, not as the wedded wife of Joseph, but as a virgin. For by this example an illustrious recommendation is made to faithful married persons of the principle, that even when by common consent they maintain their continence, the relation can still remain, and can still be called one of wedlock, inasmuch as, although there is no connection between the sexes of the body, there is the keeping of the affections of the mind; particularly so for this reason, that in their case we see how the birth of a son was a possibility apart from anything of that carnal intercourse which is to be practised with the purpose of the procreation of children only. Moreover, the mere fact that he had not begotten Him by act of his own, was no sufficient reason why Joseph should not be called the father of Christ; for indeed he could be in all propriety the father of one whom he had not begotten by his own wife, but had adopted from some other person.

3. Christ, it is true, was also supposed to be the son of Joseph in another way, as if He had been born simply of that man’s seed. But this supposition was entertained by persons whose notice the virginity of Mary escaped. For

Luke says: “And Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph.” This Luke, however, instead of naming Mary His only parent, had not the slightest hesitation in also speaking of both parties as His parents, when he says: “And the boy grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was in Him: and His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.” But lest any one may fancy that by the “parents” here are rather to be understood the blood relations of Mary along with the mother herself, what shall be said to that preceding word of the same Luke, namely, “And His father and mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of Him”? Since, then, he also makes the statement that Christ was born, not in consequence of Joseph’s connection with the mother, but simply of Mary the virgin, how can he call him His father, unless it be that we are to understand him to have been truly the husband of Mary, without the intercourse of the flesh indeed, but in virtue of the real union of marriage; and thus also to have been in a much closer relation the father of Christ, in so far as He was born of his wife, than would have been the case had He been only adopted from some other party? And this makes it clear that the clause,”as was supposed,” is inserted with a view to those who are of opinion that He was begotten by Joseph in the same way as other men are begotten.

CHAPTER II

AN EXPLANATION OF THE SENSE IN WHICH CHRIST IS THE SON OF DAVID, ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT BEGOTTEN IN THE WAY OF ORDINARY GENERATION BY JOSEPH THE SON OF DAVID

4. Thus, too, even if one were able to demonstrate that no descent, according to the laws of blood, could be claimed from David for Mary, we should have warrant enough to hold Christ to be the son of David, on the ground of that same mode of reckoning by which also Joseph is called His father. But seeing that the Apostle Paul unmistakably tells us that “Christ was of the seed of David according to the flesh,” how much more ought we to accept without any hesitation the position that Mary herself also was descended in some way, according to the laws of blood, from the lineage of David? Moreover, since this woman’s connection with the priestly family

also is a matter not left in absolute obscurity, inasmuch as Luke inserts the statement that Elisabeth, whom he records to be of the daughters of Aaron, was her cousin, we ought most firmly to hold by the fact that the flesh of Christ sprang from both lines; to wit, from the line of the kings, and from that of the priests, in the case of which persons there was also instituted a certain mystical unction which was symbolically expressive among this people of the Hebrews. In other words, there was a chrism; which term makes the import of the name of Christ patent, and presents it as something indicated so long time ago by an intimation so very intelligible.

CHAPTER III

A STATEMENT OF THE REASON WHY MATTHEW ENUMERATES ONE SUCCESSION OF ANCESTORS FOR CHRIST, AND LUKE ANOTHER

5. Furthermore, as to those critics who find a difficulty in the circumstance that Matthew enumerates one series of ancestors, beginning with David and travelling downwards to Joseph, while Luke specifies a different succession, tracing it from Joseph upwards as far as to David, they might easily perceive that Joseph may have had two fathers,—namely, one by whom he was begotten, and a second by whom he may have been adopted. For it was an ancient custom also among that people to adopt children with the view of making sons for themselves of those whom they had not begotten. For, leaving out of sight the fact that Pharaoh’s daughter adopted Moses (as she was a foreigner), Jacob himself adopted his own grandsons, the sons of Joseph, in these very intelligible terms: “Now, therefore, thy two sons which were born unto thee before I came unto thee, are mine: Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon: and thy issue which thou begettest after them shall be thine.” Whence also it came to pass that there were twelve tribes of Israel, although the tribe of Levi was omitted, which did service in the temple; for along with that one the whole number was thirteen, the sons of Jacob themselves being twelve. Thus, too, we can understand how Luke, in the genealogy contained in his Gospel, has named a father for Joseph, not in the person of the father by whom he was begotten, but in that of the father by whom he was adopted, tracing the list of the progenitors upwards until David is reached. For, seeing that there is a necessity, as both evangelists give a true narrative,—to wit, both Matthew

and Luke,—that one of them should hold by the line of the father who begat Joseph, and the other by the line of the father who adopted him, whom should we suppose more likely to have preserved the lineage of the adopting father, than that evangelist who has declined to speak of Joseph as begotten by the person whose son he has nevertheless reported him to be? For it is more appropriate that one should have been called the son of the man by whom he was adopted, than that he should be said to have been begotten by the man of whose flesh he was not descended. Now when Matthew, accordingly, used the phrases, “Abraham begat Isaac,” “Isaac begat Jacob,” and so on, keeping steadily by the term “begat,” until he said at the close, “and Jacob begat Joseph,” he gave us to know with sufficient clearness, that he had traced out the order of ancestors on to that father by whom Joseph was not adopted, but begotten.

6. But even although Luke had said that Joseph was begotten by Heli, that expression ought not to disturb us to such an extent as to lead us to believe anything else than that by the one evangelist the father begetting was mentioned, and by the other the father adopting. For there is nothing absurd in saying that a person has begotten, not after the flesh, it may be, but in love, one whom he has adopted as a son. Those of us, to wit, to whom God has given power to become His sons, He did not beget of His own nature and substance, as was the case with His only Son; but He did indeed adopt us in His love. And this phrase the apostle is seen repeatedly to employ just in order to distinguish from us the only-begotten Son who is before every creature, by whom all things were made, who alone is begotten of the substance of the Father; who, in accordance with the equality of divinity, is absolutely what the Father is, and who is declared to have been sent with the view of assuming to Himself the flesh proper to that race to which we too belong according to our nature, in order that by His participation in our mortality, through His love for us, He might make us partakers of His own divinity in the way of adoption. For the apostle speaks thus: “But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” And yet we are also said to be born of God,—that is to say, in so far as we, who already were men, have received power to be made the sons of God,—to be made such, moreover, by grace,

and not by nature. For if we were sons by nature, we never could have been aught else. But when John said, “To them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name,” he proceeded at once to add these words, “which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” Thus, of the same persons he said, first, that having received power they became the sons of God, which is what is meant by that adoption which Paul mentions; and secondly, that they were born of God. And in order the more plainly to show by what grace this is effected, he continued thus: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,”—as if he meant to say, What wonder is it that those should have been made sons of God, although they were flesh, on whose behalf the only Son was made flesh, although He was the Word? Howbeit there is this vast difference between the two cases, that when we are made the sons of God we are changed for the better; but when the Son of God was made the son of man, He was not indeed changed into the worse, but He did certainly assume to Himself what was below Him. James also speaks to this effect: “Of His own will begat He us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.” And to preclude our supposing, as it might appear from the use of this term “begat,” that we are made what He is Himself, he here points out very plainly, that what is conceded to us in virtue of this adoption, is a kind of headship among the creatures.

7. It would be no departure from the truth, therefore, even had Luke said that Joseph was begotten by the person by whom he was really adopted. Even in that way he did in fact beget him, not indeed to be a man, but certainly to be a son; just as God has begotten us to be His sons, whom He had previously made to the effect of being men. But He begat only one to be not simply the Son, which the Father is not, but also God, which the Father in like manner is. At the same time, it is evident that if Luke had employed that phraseology, it would be altogether a matter of dubiety as to which of the two writers mentioned the father adopting, and which the father begetting of his own flesh; just as, on the other hand, although neither of them had used the word “begat,” and although the former evangelist had called him the son of the one person, and the latter the son of the other, it would nevertheless be doubtful which of them named the father by whom

he was begotten, and which the father by whom he was adopted. As the case stands now, however,—the one evangelist saying that "Jacob begat Joseph," and the other speaking of "Joseph who was the son of Heli,"—by the very distinction which they have made between the expressions, they have elegantly indicated the different objects which they have taken in hand. But surely it might easily suggest itself, as I have said, to a man of piety decided enough to make him consider it right to seek some worthier explanation than that of simply crediting the evangelist with stating what is false; it might, I repeat, readily suggest itself to such a person to examine what reasons there might be for one man being (supposed) capable of having two fathers. This, indeed, might have suggested itself even to those detractors, were it not that they preferred contention to consideration.

CHAPTER IV

OF THE REASON WHY FORTY GENERATIONS (NOT INCLUDING CHRIST HIMSELF) ARE FOUND IN MATTHEW, ALTHOUGH HE DIVIDES THEM INTO THREE SUCCESSIONS OF FOURTEEN EACH

8. The matter next to be introduced, moreover, is one requiring, in order to its right apprehension and contemplation, a reader of the greatest attention and carefulness. For it has been acutely observed that Matthew, who had proposed to himself the task of commending the kingly character in Christ, named, exclusive of Christ Himself, forty men in the series of generations. Now this number denotes the period in which, in this age and on this earth, it behoves us to be ruled by Christ in accordance with that painful discipline whereby "God scourgeth," as it is written, "every son that He receiveth;" and of which also an apostle says that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." This discipline is also signified by that rod of iron, concerning which we read this statement in a Psalm: "Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron;" which words occur after the saying, "Yet I am set king by Him upon His holy hill of Zion!" For the good, too, are ruled with a rod of iron, as it is said of them: "The time is come that judgment should begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be to them that obey not the gospel of God? and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" To the same persons the sentence that follows also applies: "Thou shall dash them

in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” For the good, indeed, are ruled by this discipline, while the wicked are crushed by it. And these two different classes of persons are mentioned here as if they were the same, on account of the identity of the signs employed in reference to the wicked in common with the good.

9. That this number, then, is a sign of that laborious period in which, under the discipline of Christ the King, we have to fight against the devil, is also indicated by the fact that both the law and the prophets solemnized a fast of forty days,—that is to say, a humbling of the soul,—in the person of Moses and Elias, who fasted each for a space of forty days. And what else does the Gospel narrative shadow forth under the fast of the Lord Himself, during which forty days He was also tempted of the devil, than that condition of temptation which appertains to us through all the space of this age, and which He bore in the flesh which He condescended to take to Himself from our mortality? After the resurrection also, it was His will to remain with His disciples on the earth not longer than forty days, continuing to mingle for that space of time with this life of theirs in the way of human intercourse, and partaking along with them of the food needful for mortal men, although He Himself was to die no more; and all this was done with the view of signifying to them through these forty days, that although His presence should be hidden from their eyes, He would yet fulfil what He promised when He said, “Lo, I am with you, even to the end of the world.” And in explanation of the circumstance that this particular number should denote this temporal and earthly life, what suggests itself most immediately in the meantime, although there may be another and subtler method of accounting for it, is the consideration that the seasons of the years also revolve in four successive alternations, and that the world itself has its bounds determined by four divisions, which Scripture sometimes designates by the names of the winds,—East and West, Aquilo [or North] and Meridian [or South]. But the number forty is equivalent to four times ten. Furthermore, the number ten itself is made up by adding the several numbers in succession from one up to four together.

10. In this way, then, as Matthew undertook the task of presenting the record of Christ as the King who came into this world, and into this earthly

and mortal life of men, for the purpose of exercising rule over us who have to struggle with temptation, he began with Abraham, and enumerated forty men. For Christ came in the flesh from that very nation of the Hebrews with a view to the keeping of which as a people distinct from the other nations, God separated Abraham from his own country and his own kindred. And the circumstance that the promise contained an intimation of the race from which He was destined to come, served very specially to make the prediction and announcement concerning Him something all the clearer. Thus the evangelist did indeed mark out fourteen generations in each of three several members, stating that from Abraham until David there were fourteen generations, and from David until the carrying away into Babylon other fourteen generations, and another fourteen from that period on to the nativity of Christ. But he did not then reckon them all up in one sum, counting them one by one, and saying that thus they make up forty-two in all. For among these progenitors there is one who is enumerated twice, namely Jechonias, with whom a kind of deflection was made in the direction of extraneous nations at the time when the transmigration into Babylon took place. When the enumeration, moreover, is thus bent from the direct order of progression, and is made to form, if we may so say, a kind of corner for the purpose of taking a different course, what meets us at that corner is mentioned twice over,—namely, at the close of the preceding series, and at the head of the deflection specified. And this, too, was a figure of Christ as the one who was, in a certain sense, to pass from the circumcision to the uncircumcision, or, so to speak, from Jerusalem to Babylon, and to be, as it were, the corner-stone to all who believe on Him, whether on the one side or on the other. Thus was God making preparations then in a figurative manner for things which were to come in truth. For Jechonias himself, with whose name the kind of corner which I have in view was prefigured, is by interpretation the "preparation of God." In this way, therefore, there are really not forty-two distinct generations named here, which would be the proper sum of three times fourteen; but, as there is a double enumeration of one of the names, we have here forty generations in all, taking into account the fact that Christ Himself is reckoned in the number, who, like the kingly president over this [significant] number forty, superintends the administration of this temporal and earthly life of ours.

11. And inasmuch as it was Matthew’s intention to set forth Christ as descending with the object of sharing this mortal state with us, he has mentioned those same generations from Abraham on to Joseph, and on to the birth of Christ Himself, in the form of a descending scale, and at the very beginning of his Gospel. Luke, on the other hand, details those generations not at the commencement of his Gospel, but at the point of Christ’s baptism, and gives them not in the descending, but in the ascending order, ascribing to Him preferentially the character of a priest in the expiation of sins, as where the voice from heaven declared Him, and where John himself delivered his testimony in these terms: “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!” Besides, in the process by which he traces the genealogy upwards, he passes Abraham and carries us back to God, to whom, purified and atoned for, we are reconciled. Of merit, too, He has sustained in Himself the origination of our adoption; for we are made the sons of God through adoption, by believing on the Son of God. Moreover, on our account the Son of God was pleased to be made the son of man by the generation which is proper to the flesh. And the evangelist has shown clearly enough that he did not name Joseph the son of Heli on the ground that he was begotten of him, but only on the ground that he was adopted by him. For he has spoken of Adam also as the son of God, who, strictly speaking, was made by God, but was also, as it may be said, constituted a son in paradise by the grace which afterwards he lost through his transgression.

12. In this way, it is the taking of our sins upon Himself by the Lord Christ that is signified in the genealogy of Matthew, while in the genealogy of Luke it is the abolition of our sins by the Lord Christ that is expressed. In accordance with these ideas, the one details the names in the descending scale, and the other in the ascending. For when the apostle says, “God sent His Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin,” he refers to the taking of our sins upon Himself by Christ. But when he adds, “for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh,” he expresses the expiation of sins. Consequently Matthew traces the succession downwards from David through Solomon, in connection with whose mother it was that he sinned; while Luke carries the genealogy upwards to the same David through Nathan, by which prophet God took away his sin. The number, also, which Luke follows does most certainly

best indicate the taking away of sins. For inasmuch as in Christ, who Himself had no sin, there is assuredly no iniquity allied to the iniquities of men which He bore in His flesh, the number adopted by Matthew makes forty when Christ is excepted. On the contrary, inasmuch as, by clearing us of all sin and purging us, He places us in a right relation to His own and His Father's righteousness (so that the apostle's word is made good: "But he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit"), in the number used by Luke we find included both Christ Himself, with whom the enumeration begins, and God, with whom it closes; and the sum becomes thus seventy-seven, which denotes the thorough remission and abolition of all sins. This perfect removal of sins the Lord Himself also clearly represented under the mystery of this number, when He said that the person sinning ought to be forgiven not only seven times, but even unto seventy times seven.

13. A careful inquiry will make it plain that it is not without some reason that this latter number is made to refer to the purging of all sins. For the number ten is shown to be, as one may say, the number of justice [righteousness] in the instance of the ten precepts of the law. Moreover, sin is the transgression of the law. And the transgression of the number ten is expressed suitably in the eleven; whence also we find instructions to have been given to the effect that there should be eleven curtains of haircloth constructed in the tabernacle; for who can doubt that the haircloth has a bearing upon the expression of sin? Thus, too, inasmuch as all time in its revolution runs in spaces of days designated by the number seven, we find that when the number eleven is multiplied by the number seven, we are brought with all due propriety to the number seventy-seven as the sign of sin in its totality. In this enumeration, therefore, we come upon the symbol for the full remission of sins, as expiation is made for us by the flesh of our Priest, with whose name the calculation of this number starts here; and as reconciliation is also effected for us with God, with whose name the reckoning of this number is here brought to its conclusion by the Holy Spirit, who appeared in the form of a dove on the occasion of that baptism in connection with which the number in question is mentioned.

CHAPTER V

A STATEMENT OF THE MANNER IN WHICH LUKE'S PROCEDURE IS PROVED TO BE IN HARMONY WITH MATTHEW'S IN THOSE MATTERS CONCERNING THE CONCEPTION AND THE INFANCY OR BOYHOOD OF CHRIST, WHICH ARE OMITTED BY THE ONE AND RECORDED BY THE OTHER

14. After the enumeration of the generations, Matthew proceeds thus: Now the birth of Christ was on this wise. Whereas His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. What Matthew has omitted to state here regarding the way in which that came to pass, has been set forth by Luke after his account of the conception of John. His narrative is to the following effect: And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw these things, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her: Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favour with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born shall be called the Son of God; and then follow matters not belonging to the question at present in hand. Now all this Matthew has recorded [summarily], when he tells us of Mary that "she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." Neither is there any contradiction between the two evangelists, in so far as Luke has set forth in detail what Matthew has omitted to notice; for both bear witness that Mary conceived by the Holy Ghost. And in the same way there is no want of concord between them, when Matthew, in his turn, connects with the narrative something which Luke leaves out. For Matthew proceeds to give us the following statement:

Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son; and His name shall be called Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son; and he called His name Jesus. Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, in the days of Herod the king, and so forth.

15. With respect to the city of Bethlehem, Matthew and Luke are at one. But Luke explains in what way and for what reason Joseph and Mary came to it; whereas Matthew gives no such explanation. On the other hand, while Luke is silent on the subject of the journey of the magi from the east, Matthew furnishes an account of it. That narrative he constructs as follows, in immediate connection with what he has already offered: Behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him. Now, when Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled. And in this manner the account goes on, down to the passage where of these magi it is written that, “being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.” This entire section is omitted by Luke, just as Matthew fails to mention some other circumstances which are mentioned by Luke: as, for example, that the Lord was laid in a manger; and that an angel announced His birth to the shepherds; and that there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God; and that the shepherds came and saw that that was true which the angel had announced to them; and that on the day of His circumcision He received His name; as also the incidents reported by the same Luke to have occurred after the days of the purification of Mary were fulfilled,—namely, their taking Him to Jerusalem, and the words

spoken in the temple by Simeon or Anna concerning Him, when, filled with the Holy Ghost, they recognized Him. Of all these things Matthew says nothing.

16. Hence, a subject which deserves inquiry is the question concerning the precise time when these events took place which are omitted by Matthew and given by Luke, and those, on the other hand, which have been omitted by Luke and given by Matthew. For after his account of the return of the magi who had come from the east to their own country, Matthew proceeds to tell us how Joseph was warned by an angel to flee into Egypt with the young child, to prevent His being put to death by Herod; and then how Herod failed to find Him, but slew the children from two years old and under; thereafter, how, when Herod was dead, Joseph returned from Egypt, and, on hearing that Archelaus reigned in Judaea instead of his father Herod, went to reside with the boy in Galilee, at the city Nazareth. All these facts, again, are passed over by Luke. Nothing, however, like a want of harmony can be made out between the two writers merely on the ground that the latter states what the former omits, or that the former mentions what the latter leaves unnoticed. But the real question is as to the exact period at which these things could have taken place which Matthew has linked on to his narrative; to wit, the departure of the family into Egypt, and their return from it after Herod’s death, and their residence at that time in the town of Nazareth, the very place to which Luke tells us that they went back after they had performed in the temple all things regarding the boy according to the law of the Lord. Here, accordingly, we have to take notice of a fact which will also hold good for other like cases, and which will secure our minds against similar agitation or disturbance in subsequent instances. I refer to the circumstance that each evangelist constructs his own particular narrative on a kind of plan which gives it the appearance of being the complete and orderly record of the events in their succession. For, preserving a simple silence on the subject of those incidents of which he intends to give no account, he then connects those which he does wish to relate with what he has been immediately recounting, in such a manner as to make the recital seem continuous. At the same time, when one of them mentions facts of which the other has given no notice, the order of narrative, if carefully considered, will be found to indicate the point at

which the writer by whom the omissions are made has taken the leap in his account, and thus has attached the facts, which it was his purpose to introduce, in such a manner to the preceding context as to give the appearance of a connected series, in which the one incident follows immediately on the other, without the interposition of anything else. On this principle, therefore, we understand that where he tells us how the wise men were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, and how they went back to their own country by another way, Matthew has simply omitted all that Luke has related respecting all that happened to the Lord in the temple, and all that was said by Simeon and Anna; while, on the other hand, Luke has omitted in the same place all notice of the journey into Egypt, which is given by Matthew, and has introduced the return to the city of Nazareth as if it were immediately consecutive.

17. If any one wishes, however, to make up one complete narrative out of all that is said or left unsaid by these two evangelists respectively, on the subject of Christ's nativity and infancy or boyhood, he may arrange the different statements in the following order:—Now the birth of Christ was on this wise. There was, in the days of Herod the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia; and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God, in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord: and the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord: and he shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he

turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people perfect for the Lord. And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel, answering, said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou hast not believed my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: and he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. And it came to pass that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein He looked upon me, to take away my reproach among men. And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her who is called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: and she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? for, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed art thou that didst believe, for there shall be a performance of those things which were told thee from the Lord. And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For He hath regarded the low estate of His handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is His name. And His mercy is on them that fear Him, from generation to generation. He hath made strength with His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart. He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away. He hath holpen His servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy: as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house. Then it proceeds thus:—She was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel; which, being interpreted, is, God with us. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife, and knew her not.

Now Elisabeth’s full time came that she should be delivered, and she brought forth a son. And her neighbours and her relatives heard that the Lord magnified His mercy with her; and they congratulated her. And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John. And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue, and he spake and praised God. And fear came on all them that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea. And all they that had heard them laid them up in their heart, saying, What manner of child, thinkest thou, shall this be? For the hand of the Lord was with him. And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David; as He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began; (to give) salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us: to perform mercy with our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He sware to Abraham our father that He would give to us; in order that, being saved out of the hand of our enemies, we might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all our days. And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto His people, for the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his showing unto Israel. And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. This first taxing was made when Syrinus was governor of Syria. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped Him in swaddling-clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds watching and keeping the vigils of the night over their flock. And, lo, the angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of goodwill. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they understood the saying which had been told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it, wondered also at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them. And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, His name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel before He was conceived in the womb. And then it proceeds thus: Behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him. Now when Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea; for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently the time of the star which appeared unto them. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star which they had seen in the east went before them, until it came and stood over where the young child was. And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they found the child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts, gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return unto Herod, they departed into their own country another way. Then, after this account of their return, the narrative goes on thus: When the days of her (His mother's) purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord), and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons. And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was in him.

And it had been revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when His parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him after the custom of the law, then took he Him up in his arms, and said, Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel. And His father and mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of Him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary His mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against; and a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers day and night. And she, coming in that instant, gave thanks also unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for the redemption of Jerusalem. And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and His mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young child to destroy Him. When he arose, he took the young child and His mother by night, and departed into Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my Son. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took the young child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea, in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; and being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee; and came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene. And the child grew, and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was in Him. And His parents went to Jerusalem every year, at the feast of the passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and His parents knew not of it. But they, supposing Him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. And when they found Him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem seeking

Him. And it came to pass, that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. And when they saw Him, they were amazed. And His mother said to Him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing. And He said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which He spake unto them. And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; and His mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and age, and in favour with God and men.

CHAPTER VI

ON THE POSITION GIVEN TO THE PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST IN ALL THE FOUR EVANGELISTS

18. Now at this point commences the account of the preaching of John, which is presented by all the four. For after the words which I have placed last in the order of his narrative thus far,—the words with which he introduces the testimony from the prophet, namely, He shall be called a Nazarene,—Matthew proceeds immediately to give us this recital: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea," etc. And Mark, who has told us nothing of the nativity or infancy or youth of the Lord, has made his Gospel begin with the same event,—that is to say, with the preaching of John. For it is thus that he sets out: The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophet Isaiah, Behold, I send a messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. John was in the wilderness baptizing, and preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, etc. Luke, again, follows up the passage in which he says, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and age, and in favour with God and man," by a section in which he speaks of the preaching of John in these terms: Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the

tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness, etc. The Apostle John, too, the most eminent of the four evangelists, after discoursing of the Word of God, who is also the Son, antecedent to all the ages of creaturely existence, inasmuch as all things were made by Him, has introduced in the immediate context his account of the preaching and testimony of John, and proceeds thus: There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This will be enough at once to make it plain that the narratives concerning John the Baptist given by the four evangelists are not at variance with one another. And there will be no occasion for requiring or demanding that to be done in all detail in this instance which we have already done in the case of the genealogies of the Christ who was born of Mary, to the effect of proving how Matthew and Luke are in harmony with each other, of showing how we might construct one consistent narrative out of the two, and of demonstrating on behoof of those of less acute perception, that although one of these evangelists may mention what the other omits, or omit what the other mentions, he does not thereby make it in any sense difficult to accept the veracity of the account given by the other. For when a single example [of this method of harmonizing] has been set before us, whether in the way in which it has been presented by me, or in some other method in which it may more satisfactorily be exhibited, every man can understand that, in all other similar passages, what he has seen done here may be done again.

19. Accordingly, let us now study, as I have said, the harmony of the four evangelists in the narratives regarding John the Baptist. Matthew proceeds in these terms: In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea. Mark has not used the phrase “In those days,” because he has given no recital of any series of events at the head of his Gospel immediately before this narrative, so that he might be understood to speak in reference to the dates of such events under the terms, “In those days.” Luke, on the other hand, with greater precision has defined those times of the preaching or baptism of John, by means of the notes of the temporal power. For he says: Now, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the

region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. We ought not, however, to understand that what was actually meant by Matthew when He said, “In those days,” was simply the space of days literally limited to the specified period of these powers. On the contrary, it is apparent that he intended the note of time which was conveyed in the phrase “In those days,” to be taken to refer to a much longer period. For he first gives us the account of the return of Christ from Egypt after the death of Herod,—an incident, indeed, which took place at the time of His infancy or childhood, and with which, consequently, Luke’s statement of what befell Him in the temple when He was twelve years of age is quite consistent. Then, immediately after this narrative of the recall of the infant or boy out of Egypt, Matthew continues thus in due order: “Now, in those days came John the Baptist.” And thus under that phrase he certainly covers not merely the days of His childhood, but all the days intervening between His nativity and this period at which John began to preach and to baptize. At this period, moreover, Christ is found already to have attained to man’s estate; for John and he were of the same age; and it is stated that He was about thirty years of age when He was baptized by the former.

CHAPTER VII

OF THE TWO HERODS

20. But with respect to the mention of Herod, it is well understood that some are apt to be influenced by the circumstance that Luke has told us how, in the days of John’s baptizing, and at the time when the Lord, being then a grown man, was also baptized, Herod was tetrarch of Galilee; whereas Matthew tells us that the boy Jesus returned from Egypt after the death of Herod. Now these two accounts cannot both be true, unless we may also suppose that there were two different Herods. But as no one can fail to be aware that this is a perfectly possible case, what must be the blindness in which those persons pursue their mad follies, who are so quick to launch false charges against the truth of the Gospels; and how miserably inconsiderate must they be, not to reflect that two men may have been called by the same name? Yet this is a thing of which examples abound on

all sides. For this latter Herod is understood to have been the son of the former Herod: just as Archelaus also was, whom Matthew states to have succeeded to the throne of Judaea on the death of his father; and as Philip was, who is introduced by Luke as the brother of Herod the tetrarch, and as himself tetrarch of Ituraea. For the Herod who sought the life of the child Christ was king; whereas this other Herod, his son, was not called king, but tetrarch, which is a Greek word, signifying etymologically one set over the fourth part of a kingdom.

CHAPTER VIII

AN EXPLANATION OF THE STATEMENT MADE BY MATTHEW, TO THE EFFECT THAT JOSEPH WAS AFRAID TO GO WITH THE INFANT CHRIST INTO JERUSALEM ON ACCOUNT OF ARCHELAUS, AND YET WAS NOT AFRAID TO GO INTO GALILEE, WHERE HEROD, THAT PRINCE’S BROTHER, WAS TETRARCH

21. Here again, however, it may happen that a difficulty will be found, and that some, seeing that Matthew has told us how Joseph was afraid to go into Judaea with the child on his return, expressly for the reason that Archelaus the son reigned there in place of his father Herod, may be led to ask how he could have gone into Galilee, where, as Luke bears witness, there was another son of that Herod, namely, Herod the tetrarch. But such a difficulty can only be founded on the fancy that the times indicated as those in which there was such apprehension on the child’s account were identical with the times dealt with now by Luke: whereas it is conspicuously evident that there is a change in the periods, because we no longer find Archelaus represented as king in Judaea; but in place of him we have Pontius Pilate, who also was not the king of the Jews, but only their governor, in whose times the sons of the elder Herod, acting under Tiberius Caesar, held not the kingdom, but the tetrarchy. And all this certainly had not come to pass at the time when Joseph, in fear of the Archelaus who was then reigning in Judaea, betook himself, together with the child, into Galilee, where was also his city Nazareth.

CHAPTER IX

AN EXPLANATION OF THE CIRCUMSTANCE THAT MATTHEW STATES THAT JOSEPH'S REASON FOR GOING INTO GALILEE WITH THE CHILD CHRIST WAS HIS FEAR OF ARCHELAUS, WHO WAS REIGNING AT THAT TIME IN JERUSALEM IN PLACE OF HIS FATHER, WHILE LUKE TELLS US THAT THE REASON FOR GOING INTO GALILEE WAS THE FACT THAT THEIR CITY NAZARETH WAS THERE

22. Or may a question perchance be raised as to how Matthew tells us that His parents went with the boy Jesus into Galilee, because they were unwilling to go into Judaea in consequence of their fear of Archelaus; whereas it would rather appear that the reason for their going into Galilee was, as Luke has not failed to indicate, the consideration that their city was Nazareth of Galilee? Well, but we must observe, that when the angel said to Joseph in his dreams in Egypt, "Arise, and take the young child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel," the words were understood at first by Joseph in a way that made him consider himself commanded to journey into Judaea. For that was the first interpretation that could have been put upon the phrase, "the land of Israel." But again, after ascertaining that Archelaus, the son of Herod, was reigning there, he declined to expose himself to such danger, inasmuch as this phrase, "the land of Israel," was capable also of being so understood as to cover Galilee too, because the people of Israel were occupants of that territory as well as the other. At the same time, this question also admits of being solved in another manner. For it might have appeared to the parents of Christ that they were called to take up their residence along with the boy, concerning whom such information had been conveyed to them through the responses of angels, just in Jerusalem itself, where was the temple of the Lord: and it may thus be, that when they came back out of Egypt, they would have gone directly thither in that belief, and have taken up their abode there, had it not been that they were terrified at the presence of Archelaus. And certainly they did not receive any such instructions from heaven to take up their residence there as would have made it their imperative duty to set at nought the fears they entertained of Archelaus.

CHAPTER X

A STATEMENT OF THE REASON WHY LUKE TELLS US THAT “HIS PARENTS WENT TO JERUSALEM EVERY YEAR AT THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER” ALONG WITH THE BOY; WHILE MATTHEW INTIMATES THAT THEIR DREAD OF ARCHELAUS MADE THEM AFRAID TO GO THERE ON THEIR RETURN FROM EGYPT

23. Or does any one put to us this question, How was it, then, that His parents went up to Jerusalem every year during the boyhood of Christ, as Luke’s narrative bears, if they were prevented from going there by the fear of Archelaus? Well, I should not deem it any very difficult task to solve this question, even although none of the evangelists has given us to understand how long Archelaus reigned there. For it might have been the case that, simply for that one day, and with the intention of returning forthwith, they went up on the day of the feast, without attracting any notice among the vast multitudes then assembled, to the city where, nevertheless, they were afraid to make their residence on other days. And thus they might at once have saved themselves from the appearance of being so irreligious as to neglect the observance of the feast, and have avoided drawing attention upon themselves by a continued sojourn. But further, although all the evangelists have omitted to tell us what was the length of the reign of Archelaus, we have still open to us this obvious method of explaining the matter, namely, to understand the custom to which Luke refers, when he says that they were in the habit of going to Jerusalem every year, as one prosecuted at a time when Archelaus was no more an object of fear. But if the reign of Archelaus should be made out to have lasted for a somewhat longer period on the authority of any extra-evangelical history which appears to deserve credit, the consideration which I have indicated above should still prove quite sufficient,—namely, the supposition that the fear which the parents of the child entertained of a residence in Jerusalem was, nevertheless, not of such a nature as to lead them to neglect the observance of the sacred festival to which they were under obligation in the fear of God, and which they might very easily go about in a manner that would not attract public attention to them. For surely it is nothing incredible that, by taking advantage of favourable opportunities, whether by day or by hour, men may (safely venture to) approach places in which they nevertheless are afraid to be found tarrying.

CHAPTER XI

AN EXAMINATION OF THE QUESTION AS TO HOW IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO GO UP, ACCORDING TO LUKE'S STATEMENT, WITH HIM TO JERUSALEM TO THE TEMPLE, WHEN THE DAYS OF THE PURIFICATION OF THE MOTHER OF CHRIST WERE ACCOMPLISHED, IN ORDER TO PERFORM THE USUAL RITES, IF IT IS CORRECTLY RECORDED BY MATTHEW, THAT HEROD HAD ALREADY LEARNED FROM THE WISE MEN THAT THE CHILD WAS BORN IN WHOSE STEAD, WHEN HE SOUGHT FOR HIM, HE SLEW SO MANY CHILDREN

24. Hereby also we see how another question is solved, if any one indeed finds a difficulty in it. I allude to the question as to how it was possible, on the supposition that the elder Herod was already anxious (to obtain information regarding Him), and agitated by the intelligence received from the wise men concerning the birth of the King of the Jews, for them, when the days of the purification of His mother were accomplished, to go up in any safety with Him to the temple, in order to see to the performance of those things which were according to the law of the Lord, and which are specified by Luke. For who can fail to perceive that this solitary day might very easily have escaped the notice of a king, whose attention was engaged with a multitude of affairs? Or if it does not appear probable that Herod, who was waiting in the extremest anxiety to see what report the wise men would bring back to him concerning the child, should have been so long in finding out how he had been mocked, that, only after the mother's purification was already past, and the solemnities proper to the first-born were performed with respect to the child in the temple, nay more, only after their departure into Egypt, did it come into his mind to seek the life of the child, and to slay so many little ones;—if, I say, any one finds a difficulty in this, I shall not pause to state the numerous and important occupations by which the king's attention may have been engaged, and for the space of many days either wholly diverted from such thoughts, or prevented from following them out. For it is not possible to enumerate all the cases which might have made that perfectly possible. No one, however, is so ignorant of human affairs as either to deny or to question that there may very easily have been many such matters of importance (to preoccupy the king). For to whom will not the thought occur, that reports, whether true or false, of many other more terrible things may possibly have been brought to the king, so that the person who had been apprehensive of a certain royal child,

who after a number of years might prove an adversary to himself or to his sons, might be so agitated with the terrors of certain more immediate dangers, as to have his attention forcibly removed from that earlier anxiety, and engaged rather with the devising of measures to ward off other more instantly threatening perils? Wherefore, leaving all such considerations unspecified, I simply venture on the assertion that, when the wise men failed to bring back any report to him, Herod may have believed that they had been misled by a deceptive vision of a star, and that, after their want of success in discovering Him whom they had supposed to have been born, they had been ashamed to return to him; and that in this way the king, having his fears allayed, had given up the idea of asking after and persecuting the child. Consequently, when they had gone with Him to Jerusalem after the purification of His mother, and when those things had been performed in the temple which are recounted by Luke, inasmuch as the words which were spoken by Simeon and Anna in their prophesyings regarding Him, when publicity began to be given to them by the persons who had heard them, were like to call back the king's mind then to its original design, Joseph obeyed the warning conveyed to him in the dream, and fled with the child and His mother into Egypt. Afterwards, when the things which had been done and said in the temple were made quite public, Herod perceived that he had been mocked; and then, in his desire to get at the death of Christ, he slew the multitude of children, as Matthew records.

CHAPTER XII

CONCERNING THE WORDS ASCRIBED TO JOHN BY ALL THE FOUR EVANGELISTS RESPECTIVELY

25. Moreover, Matthew makes up his account of John in the following manner:—Now in those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is He that is spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Mark also and Luke agree in presenting this testimony of Isaiah as one referring to John. Luke, indeed, has likewise recorded some other words from the same prophet, which follow those already cited, when he gives his narrative of John the Baptist. The evangelist John, again,

mentions that John the Baptist did also personally advance this same testimony of Isaiah regarding himself. And, to a similar effect, Matthew here has given us certain words of John which are unrecorded by the other evangelists. For he speaks of him as “preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;” which words of John have been omitted by the others. In what follows, however, in immediate connection with that passage in Matthew’s Gospel,—namely, the sentence, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight,”—the position is ambiguous; and it does not clearly appear whether this is something recited by Matthew in his own person, or rather a continuance of the words spoken by John himself, so as to lead us to understand the whole passage to be the reproduction of John’s own utterance, in this way: “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; for this is He that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah,” and so on. For it ought to create no difficulty against this latter view, that he does not say, “For I am He that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah,” but employs the phraseology, “For this is He that was spoken of.” For that, indeed, is a mode of speech which the evangelists Matthew and John are in the habit of using in reference to themselves. Thus Matthew has adopted the phrase, “He found a man sitting at the receipt of custom,” instead of “He found me.” John, too, says, “This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true,” instead of “I am,” etc., or, “My testimony is true.” Yea, our Lord Himself very frequently uses the words, “The Son of man,” or, “The Son of God,” instead of saying, “I.” So, again, He tells us that “it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day,” instead of saying, “It behoved me to suffer.” Consequently it is perfectly possible that the clause, “For this is He that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah,” which immediately follows the saying, “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” may be but a continuation of what John the Baptist said of himself; so that only after these words cited from the speaker himself will Matthew’s own narrative proceed, being thus resumed: “And the same John had his raiment of camel’s hair,” and so forth. But if this is the case, then it need not seem wonderful that, when asked what he had to say regarding himself, he should reply, according to the narrative of the evangelist John, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness,” as he had already spoken in the same terms when enjoining on them the duty of repentance. Accordingly, Matthew goes on to tell us about his attire and his mode of living, and continues his account thus: And the same John had his raiment of camel’s hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins, and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Mark also gives us this same statement almost in so many words. But the other two evangelists omit it.

26. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative, and says: Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized by him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. For now the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that is to come after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire: whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. This whole passage is also given by Luke, who ascribes almost the same words to John. And where there is any variation in the words, there is nevertheless no real departure from the sense. Thus, for example, Matthew tells us that John said, “And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father,” where Luke puts it thus: “And begin not to say, We have Abraham to our father.” Again, in the former we have the words, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance;” whereas the latter brings in the questions put by the multitudes as to what they should do, and represents John to have replied to them with a statement of good works as the fruits of repentance,—all which is omitted by Matthew. So, when Luke tells us what reply the Baptist made to the people when they were musing in their hearts concerning Him, and thinking whether He were the Christ, he gives us simply the words, “I indeed baptize you with water,” and does not add the phrase, “unto repentance.” Further, in Matthew the Baptist says, “But he that is to come after me is mightier than

I;” while in Luke he is exhibited as saying, “But one mightier than I cometh.” In like manner, according to Matthew, he says, “whose shoes I am not worthy to bear;” but according to the other, his words are, “the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose.” The latter sayings are recorded also by Mark, although he makes no mention of those other matters. For, after noticing his attire and his mode of living, he goes on thus: “And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose: I have baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit.” In the notice of the shoes, therefore, he differs from Luke in so far as he has added the words, “to stoop down;” and in the account of the baptism he differs from both these others in so far as he does not say, “and in fire,” but only, “in the Holy Spirit.” For as in Matthew, so also in Luke, the words are the same, and they are given in the same order, “He shall baptize you in the Spirit and in fire,”—with this single exception, that Luke has not added the adjective “Holy,” while Matthew has given it thus: “in the Holy Spirit and in fire.” The statements made by these three are attested by the evangelist John, when he says: “John bears witness of Him, and cries, saying, This was He of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for He was before me.” For thus he indicates that the thing was spoken by John at the time at which those other evangelists record him to have uttered the words. Thus, too, he gives us to understand that John was repeating and calling into notice again something which he had already spoken, when he said, “This was He of whom I spake, He that cometh after me.”

27. If now the question is asked, as to which of the words we are to suppose the most likely to have been the precise words used by John the Baptist, whether those recorded as spoken by him in Matthew’s Gospel, or those in Luke’s, or those which Mark has introduced, among the few sentences which he mentions to have been uttered by him, while he omits notice of all the rest, it will not be deemed worth while creating any difficulty for oneself in a matter of that kind, by any one who wisely understands that the real requisite in order to get at the knowledge of the truth is just to make sure of the things really meant, whatever may be the precise words in which they happen to be expressed. For although one writer may retain a certain order in the words, and another present a different one, there is surely no

real contradiction in that. Nor, again, need there be any antagonism between the two, although one may state what another omits. For it is evident that the evangelists have set forth these matters just in accordance with the recollection each retained of them, and just according as their several predilections prompted them to employ greater brevity or richer detail on certain points, while giving, nevertheless, the same account of the subjects themselves.

28. Thus, too, in what more pertinently concerns the matter in hand, it is sufficiently obvious that, since the truth of the Gospel, conveyed in that word of God which abides eternal and unchangeable above all that is created, but which at the same time has been disseminated throughout the world by the instrumentality of temporal symbols, and by the tongues of men, has possessed itself of the most exalted height of authority, we ought not to suppose that any one of the writers is giving an unreliable account, if, when several persons are recalling some matter either heard or seen by them, they fail to follow the very same plan, or to use the very same words, while describing, nevertheless, the self-same fact. Neither should we indulge such a supposition, although the order of the words may be varied; or although some words may be substituted in place of others, which nevertheless have the same meaning; or although something may be left unsaid, either because it has not occurred to the mind of the recorder, or because it becomes readily intelligible from other statements which are given; or although, among other matters which (may not bear directly on his immediate purpose, but which) he decides on mentioning rather for the sake of the narrative, and in order to preserve the proper order of time, one of them may introduce something which he does not feel called upon to expound as a whole at length, but only to touch upon in part; or although, with the view of illustrating his meaning, and making it thoroughly clear, the person to whom authority is given to compose the narrative makes some additions of his own, not indeed in the subject-matter itself, but in the words by which it is expressed; or although, while retaining a perfectly reliable comprehension of the fact itself, he may not be entirely successful, however he may make that his aim, in calling to mind and reciting anew with the most literal accuracy the very words which he heard on the occasion. Moreover, if any one affirms that the evangelists ought certainly to have

had that kind of capacity imparted to them by the power of the Holy Spirit, which would secure them against all variation the one from the other, either in the kind of words, or in their order, or in their number, that person fails to perceive, that just in proportion as the authority of the evangelists [under their existing conditions] is made pre-eminent, the credit of all other men who offer true statements of events ought to have been established on a stronger basis by their instrumentality: so that when several parties happen to narrate the same circumstance, none of them can by any means be rightly charged with untruthfulness if he differs from the other only in such a way as can be defended on the ground of the antecedent example of the evangelists themselves. For as we are not at liberty either to suppose or to say that any one of the evangelists has stated what is false, so it will be apparent that any other writer is as little chargeable with untruth, with whom, in the process of recalling anything for narration, it has fared only in a way similar to that in which it is shown to have fared with those evangelists. And just as it belongs to the highest morality to guard against all that is false, so ought we all the more to be ruled by an authority so eminent, to the effect that we should not suppose ourselves to come upon what must be false, when we find the narratives of any writers differ from each other in the manner in which the records of the evangelists are proved to contain variations. At the same time, in what most seriously concerns the faithfulness of doctrinal teaching, we should also understand that it is not so much in mere words, as rather truth in the facts themselves, that is to be sought and embraced; for as to writers who do not employ precisely the same modes of statement, if they only do not present discrepancies with respect to the facts and the sentiments themselves, we accept them as holding the same position in veracity.

29. With respect, then, to those comparisons which I have instituted between the several narratives of the evangelists, what do these present that must be considered to be of a contradictory order? Are we to regard in this light the circumstance that one of them has given us the words, “whose shoes I am not worthy to bear,” whereas the others speak of the “unloosing of the latchet of the shoe”? For here, indeed, the difference seems to be neither in the mere words, nor in the order of the words, nor in any matter of simple phraseology, but in the actual matter of fact, when in the one case

the “bearing of the shoe” is mentioned, and in the other the “unloosing of the shoe’s latchet.” Quite fairly, therefore, may the question be put, as to what it was that John declared himself unworthy to do—whether to bear the shoes, or to unloose the shoe’s latchet. For if only the one of these two sentences was uttered by him, then that evangelist will appear to have given the correct narrative who was in a position to record what was said; while the writer who has given the saying in another form, although he may not indeed have offered an [intentionally] false account of it, may at any rate be taken to have made a slip of memory, and will be reckoned thus to have stated one thing instead of another. It is only seemly, however, that no charge of absolute unveracity should be laid against the evangelists, and that, too, not only with regard to that kind of unveracity which comes by the positive telling of what is false, but also with regard to that which arises through forgetfulness. Therefore, if it is pertinent to the matter to deduce one sense from the words “to bear the shoes,” and another sense from the words “to unloose the shoe’s latchet,” what should one suppose the correct interpretation to be put on the facts, but that John did give utterance to both these sentences, either on two different occasions or in one and the same connection? For he might very well have expressed himself thus, “whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose, and whose shoes I am not worthy to bear:” and then one of the evangelists may have reproduced the one portion of the saying, and the rest of them the other; while, notwithstanding this, all of them have really given a veracious narrative. But further, if, when he spoke of the shoes of the Lord, John meant nothing more than to convey the idea of His supremacy and his own lowliness, then, whichever of the two sayings may have actually been uttered by him, whether that regarding the unloosing of the latchet of the shoes, or that respecting the bearing of the shoes, the self-same sense is still correctly preserved by any writer who, while making mention of the shoes in words of his own, has expressed at the same time the same idea of lowliness, and thus has not made any departure from the real mind [of the person of whom he writes]. It is therefore a useful principle, and one particularly worthy of being borne in mind, when we are speaking of the concord of the evangelists, that there is no divergence [to be supposed] from truth, even when they introduce some saying different from what was actually uttered by the person concerning whom the narrative is given, provided that, notwithstanding this, they set forth as his mind precisely what is also so conveyed by that one among them who reproduces the words as they were literally spoken. For thus we learn the salutary lesson, that our aim should be nothing else than to ascertain what is the mind and intention of the person who speaks.

CHAPTER XIII

OF THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

30. Matthew then continues his narrative in the following terms: “Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered Him.” The others also attest the fact that Jesus came to John. The three also mention that He was baptized. But they omit all mention of one circumstance recorded by Matthew, namely, that John addressed the Lord, or that the Lord made answer to John.

CHAPTER XIV

OF THE WORDS OR THE VOICE THAT CAME FROM HEAVEN UPON HIM WHEN HE HAD BEEN BAPTIZED

31. Thereafter Matthew proceeds thus: “And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him; and, lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” This incident is also recorded in a similar manner by two of the others, namely Mark and Luke. But at the same time, while preserving the sense intact, they use different modes of expression in reproducing the terms of the voice which came from heaven. For although Matthew tells us that the words were, “This is my beloved Son,” while the other two put them in this form, “Thou art my beloved Son,” these different methods of speech serve but to convey the same sense, according to the principle which has been discussed above. For the heavenly voice gave utterance only to one of these sentences; but by the form of words thus adopted, namely, “This is my beloved Son,” it was the evangelist’s intention

to show that the saying was meant to intimate specially to the hearers there [and not to Jesus] the fact that He was the Son of God. With this view, he chose to give the sentence, “Thou art my beloved Son,” this turn, “This is my beloved Son,” as if it were addressed directly to the people. For it was not meant to intimate to Christ a fact which He knew already; but the object was to let the people who were present hear it, for whose sakes indeed the voice itself was given. But furthermore now, with regard to the circumstance that the first of them puts the saying thus, “In whom I am well pleased,” the second thus, “In Thee I am well pleased;” and the third thus, “In Thee it has pleased me;”—if you ask which of these different modes represents what was actually expressed by the voice, you may fix on whichever you will, provided only that you understand that those of the writers who have not reproduced the self-same form of speech have still reproduced the identical sense intended to be conveyed. And these variations in the modes of expression are also useful in this way, that they make it possible for us to reach a more adequate conception of the saying than might have been the case with only one form, and that they also secure it against being interpreted in a sense not consonant with the real state of the case. For as to the sentence, “In whom I am well pleased,” if any one thinks of taking it as if it meant that God is pleased with Himself in the Son, he is taught a lesson of prudence by the other turn which is given to the saying, “In Thee I am well pleased.” And on the other hand, if, looking at this last by itself, any one supposes the meaning to be, that in the Son the Father had favour with men, he learns something from the third form of the utterance, “In Thee it has pleased me.” From this it becomes sufficiently apparent, that whichever of the evangelists may have preserved for us the words as they were literally uttered by the heavenly voice, the others have varied the terms only with the object of setting forth the same sense more familiarly; so that what is thus given by all of them might be understood as if the expression were: In Thee I have set my good pleasure; that is to say, by Thee to do what is my pleasure. But once more, with respect to that rendering which is contained in some codices of the Gospel according to Luke, and which bears that the words heard in the heavenly voice were those that are written in the Psalm, “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee;” although it is said not to be found in the more ancient Greek codices, yet if it can be established by any copies worthy of credit, what results but that we suppose both voices to have been heard from heaven, in one or other verbal order?

CHAPTER XV

AN EXPLANATION OF THE CIRCUMSTANCE THAT, ACCORDING TO THE EVANGELIST JOHN, JOHN THE BAPTIST SAYS, “I KNEW HIM NOT;” WHILE, ACCORDING TO THE OTHERS, IT IS FOUND THAT HE DID ALREADY KNOW HIM

32. Again, the account of the dove given in the Gospel according to John does not mention the time at which the incident happened, but contains a statement of the words of John the Baptist as reporting what he saw. In this section, the question rises as to how it is said, “And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit.” For if he came to know Him only at the time when he saw the dove descending upon Him, the inquiry is raised as to how he could have said to Him, as He came to be baptized, “I ought rather to be baptized of Thee.” For the Baptist addressed Him thus before the dove descended. From this, however, it is evident that, although he did know Him [in a certain sense] before this time,—for he even leaped in his mother’s womb when Mary visited Elisabeth,—there was yet something which was not known to him up to this time, and which he learned by the descending of the dove,—namely, the fact that He baptized in the Holy Spirit by a certain divine power proper to Himself; so that no man who received this baptism from God, even although he baptized some, should be able to say that that which he imparted was his own, or that the Holy Spirit was given by him.

CHAPTER XVI

OF THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

33. Matthew proceeds with his narrative in these terms: “Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to Him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But He answered and

said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. And so the account continues, until we come to the words, Then the devil left him: and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him.” This whole narrative is given also in a similar manner by Luke, although not in the same order. And this makes it uncertain which of the two latter temptations took place first: whether it was that the kingdoms of the world were shown Him first, and then that He Himself was taken up to the pinnacle of the temple thereafter; or whether it was that this latter act occurred first, and that the other scene followed it. It is, however, a matter of no real consequence, provided it be clear that all these incidents did take place. And as Luke sets forth the same events and ideas in different words, attention need not ever be called to the fact that no loss results thereby to truth. Mark, again, does indeed attest the fact that He was tempted of the devil in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights; but he gives no statement of what was said to Him, or of the replies He made. At the same time, he does not fail to notice the circumstance which is omitted by Luke, namely, that the angels ministered unto Him. John, however, has left out this whole passage.

CHAPTER XVII

OF THE CALLING OF THE APOSTLES AS THEY WERE FISHING

34. Matthew’s narrative is continued thus: “Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, He departed into Galilee.” Mark states the same fact, as also does Luke, only Luke says nothing in the present section as to John being cast into prison. The evangelist John, again, tells us that, before Jesus went into Galilee, Peter and Andrew were with Him one day, and that on that occasion the former had this name, Peter, given him, while before that period he was called Simon. Likewise John tells us, that on the day following, when Jesus was now desirous of going forth unto Galilee, He found Philip, and said to him that he should follow Him. Thus, too, the evangelist comes to give the narrative about Nathanael. Further, he informs us that on the third day, when He was yet in Galilee, Jesus wrought the miracle of the turning of the water into wine at Cana. All these incidents are left unrecorded by the other evangelists, who continue their narratives at once with the statement of the return of Jesus into Galilee. Hence we are to

understand that there was an interval here of several days, during which those incidents took place in the history of the disciples which are inserted at this point by John. Neither is there anything contradictory here to that other passage where Matthew tells us how the Lord said to Peter, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church.” But we are not to understand that that was the time when he first received this name; but we are rather to suppose that this took place on the occasion when it was said to him, as John mentions, “Thou shall be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, A stone.” Thus the Lord could address him at that later period by this very name, when He said, “Thou art Peter.” For He does not say then, “Thou shalt be called Peter,” but, “Thou art Peter;” because on a previous occasion he had already been spoken to in this manner, “Thou shalt be called.”

35. After this, Matthew goes on with his narrative in these terms: “And leaving the city of Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capharnaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim;” and so forth, until we come to the conclusion of the sermon which He delivered on the mount. In this section of the narrative, Mark agrees with him in attesting the calling of the disciples Peter and Andrew, and a little after that, the calling of James and John. But whereas Matthew introduces in this immediate context his account of that lengthened sermon which He delivered on the mount, after He cured a multitude, and when great crowds followed Him, Mark has inserted other matters at this point, touching His teaching in the synagogue, and the people’s amazement at His doctrine. Then, too, he has stated what Matthew also states, although not till after that lengthened sermon has been given, namely, that “He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.” He has likewise given us the account of the man out of whom the unclean spirit was cast; and after that the story of Peter’s mother-in-law. In these things, moreover, Luke is in accord with him. But Matthew has given us no notice of the evil spirit here. The story of Peter’s mother-in-law, however, he has not omitted, only he brings it in at a later stage.

36. In this paragraph, moreover, which we are at present considering, the same Matthew follows up his account of the calling of those disciples to

whom, when they were engaged in fishing, He gave the command to follow Him, by a narrative to the effect that He went about Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, and preaching the gospel, and healing all manner of sickness; and that when multitudes had gathered about Him, He went up into a mountain, and delivered that lengthened sermon [already alluded to]. Thus the evangelist gives us ground for understanding that those incidents which are recorded by Mark after the election of those same disciples, took place at the period when He was going about Galilee, and teaching in their synagogues. We are at liberty also to suppose that what happened to Peter's mother-in-law came in at this point; and that he has mentioned at a later stage what he has passed over here, although he has not indeed brought up at that later point, for direct recital, everything else which is omitted at the earlier.

37. The question may indeed be raised as to how John gives us this account of the calling of the disciples, which is to the effect that, certainly not in Galilee, but in the vicinity of the Jordan, Andrew first of all became a follower of the Lord, together with another disciple whose name is not declared; that, in the second place, Peter got that name from Him; and thirdly, that Philip was called to follow Him; whereas the other three evangelists, in a satisfactory concord with each other, Matthew and Mark in particular being remarkably at one here, tell us that the men were called when they were engaged in fishing. Luke, it is true, does not mention Andrew by name. Nevertheless, we can gather that he was in that same vessel, from the narrative of Matthew and Mark, who furnish a concise history of the manner in which the affair was gone about. Luke, however, presents us with a fuller and clearer exposition of the circumstances, and gives us also an account of the miracle which was performed there in the haul of fishes, and of the fact that previous to that the Lord spake to the multitudes when He was seated in the boat. There may also seem to be a discrepancy in this respect, that Luke records the saying, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men," as if it had been addressed by the Lord to Peter alone, while the others have exhibited it as spoken to both the brothers. But it may very well be the case that these words were spoken first to Peter himself, when he was seized with amazement at the immense multitude of fishes which were caught, and this will then be the incident introduced by

Luke; and that they were addressed to the two together somewhat later, which [second utterance] will be the one noticed by the other two evangelists. Therefore the circumstance which we have mentioned with regard to John’s narrative deserves to be carefully considered; for it may indeed be supposed to bring before us a contradiction of no slight importance. For if it be the case that in the vicinity of the Jordan, and before Jesus went into Galilee, two men, on hearing the testimony of John the Baptist, followed Jesus; that of these two disciples the one was Andrew, who at once went and brought his own brother Simon to Jesus; and that on this occasion that brother received the name Peter, by which he was thereafter to be called,—how can it be said by the other evangelists that He found them engaged in fishing in Galilee, and called them there to be His disciples? How can these diverse accounts be reconciled, unless it be that we are to understand that those men did not gain such a view of Jesus on the occasion connected with the vicinity of the Jordan as would lead them to attach themselves to Him for ever, but that they simply came to know who He was, and, after their first wonder at His Person, returned to their former engagements?

38. For [it is noticeable that] again in Cana of Galilee, after He had turned the water into wine, this same John tells us how His disciples believed on Him. The narrative of that miracle proceeds thus: “And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there. And both Jesus was called and His disciples to the marriage.” Now, surely, if it was on this occasion that they believed on Him, as the evangelist tells us a little further on, they were not yet His disciples at the time when they were called to the marriage. This, however, is a mode of speech of the same kind with what is intended when we say that the Apostle Paul was born in Tarsus of Cilicia; for certainly he was not an apostle at that period. In like manner are we told here that the disciples of Christ were invited to the marriage, by which we are to understand, not that they were already disciples, but only that they were to be His disciples. For, at the time when this narrative was prepared and committed to writing, they were the disciples of Christ in fact; and that is the reason why the evangelist, as the historian of past times, has thus spoken of them.

39. But further, as to John’s statement, that “after this He went down to Capharnaum, He and His mother, and His brethren and His disciples; and they continued there not many days;” it is uncertain whether by this period these men had already attached themselves to Him, in particular Peter and Andrew, and the sons of Zebedee. For Matthew first of all tells us that He came and dwelt in Capharnaum, and then that He called them from their boats as they were engaged in fishing. On the other hand, John says that His disciples came with Him to Capharnaum. Now it may be the case that Matthew has but gone over here something he had omitted in its proper order. For he does not say, “After this, walking by the sea of Galilee, He saw two brethren,” but, without any indication of the strict consecution of time, simply, “And walking by the sea of Galilee, He saw two brethren,” and so forth: consequently it is quite possible that he has recorded at this later period not something which took place actually at that later time, but only something which he had omitted to introduce before; so that the men may be understood in this way to have come along with Him to Capharnaum, to which place John states that He did come, He and His mother and His disciples: or should we rather suppose that these were a different body of disciples, as He [may already have] had a follower in Philip, whom He called in this particular manner, by saying to him, “Follow me”? For in what order all the twelve apostles were called is not apparent from the narratives of the evangelists. Indeed, not only is the succession of the various callings left unrecorded; but even the fact of the calling is not mentioned in the case of all of them, the only vocations specified being those of Philip, and Peter and Andrew, and the sons of Zebedee, and Matthew the publican, who was also called Levi. The first and only person, however, who received a separate name from Him was Peter. For He did not give the sons of Zebedee their names individually, but He called them both together the sons of thunder.

40. Besides, we ought certainly to note the fact that the evangelical and apostolical Scriptures do not confine this designation of His “disciples” to those twelve alone, but give the same appellation to all those who believed on Him, and were educated under His instruction for the kingdom of heaven. Out of the whole number of such He chose twelve, whom He also named apostles, as Luke mentions. For a little further on he says: And He

came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the concourse of His disciples and a great multitude of people. And surely he would not speak of a “concourse” [or “crowd”] of disciples if he referred only to twelve men. In other passages of the Scriptures also the fact is plainly apparent, that all those were called His disciples who were instructed by Him in what pertained to eternal life.

41. But the question may be asked, how He called the fishermen from their boats two by two, namely, calling Peter and Andrew first, and then going forward a little and calling other two, namely the sons of Zebedee, according to the narratives of Matthew and Mark; whereas Luke’s version of the matter is, that both their boats were filled with the immense haul of fishes. And his statement bears further, that Peter’s partners, to wit, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were summoned to the men’s help when they were unable to drag out their crowded nets, and that all who were there were astonished at the enormous draught of fishes which had been taken; and that when Jesus said to Peter, “Fear not, from henceforth thou shall catch men,” although the words had been addressed to Peter alone, they all nevertheless followed Him when they had brought their ships to land. Well, we are to understand by this, that what Luke introduces here was what took place first, and that these men were not called by the Lord on this occasion, but only that the prediction was uttered to Peter by himself, that he would be a fisher of men. That saying, moreover, was not intended to convey that they would never thereafter be catchers of fish. For we read that even after the Lord’s resurrection they were engaged again in fishing. The words, therefore, imported simply that thereafter he would catch men, and they did not bear that henceforth he would not catch fish. And in this way we are at perfect liberty to suppose that they returned to the catching of fish, according to their habit; so that those incidents which are related by Matthew and Mark might easily take place at a period subsequent to this. I refer to what occurred at the time when He called the disciples two by two, and Himself gave them the command to follow Him, at first addressing Peter and Andrew, and then the others, namely, the two sons of Zebedee. For on that occasion they did not follow Him only after they had drawn up their ships on shore, as with the intention of returning to them, but they

went after Him immediately, as after one who summoned and commanded them to follow Him.

CHAPTER XVIII

OF THE DATE OF HIS DEPARTURE INTO GALILEE

42. Furthermore, we must consider the question how the evangelist John, before there is any mention of the casting of John the Baptist into prison, tells us that Jesus went into Galilee. For, after relating how He turned the water into wine at Cana of Galilee, and how He came down to Capernaum with His mother and His disciples, and how they abode there not many days, he tells us that He went up then to Jerusalem on account of the passover; that after this He came into the land of Judaea along with His disciples, and tarried there with them, and baptized; and then in what follows at this point the evangelist says: “And John also was baptizing in AEnon, near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came, and were baptized: for John was not yet cast into prison.” On the other hand, Matthew says: “Now when He had heard that John was cast into prison, Jesus departed into Galilee.” In like manner, Mark’s words are: “Now, after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee.” Luke, again, says nothing indeed about the imprisonment of John; but notwithstanding this, after his account of the baptism and temptation of Christ, he also makes a statement to the same effect with that of these other two, namely, that Jesus went into Galilee. For he has connected the several parts of his narrative here in this way: “And when all the temptation was ended, the devil departed from Him for a season; and Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about.” From all this, however, we may gather, not that these three evangelists have made any statement opposed to the evangelist John, but only that they have left unrecorded the Lord’s first advent in Galilee after His baptism; on which occasion also He turned the water into wine there. For at that period John had not yet been cast into prison. And we are also to understand that these three evangelists have introduced into the context of these narratives an account of another journey of His into Galilee, which took place after John’s imprisonment, regarding which return into Galilee the evangelist John himself furnishes the following

notice: “When, therefore, Jesus knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus makes and baptizes more disciples than John (though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples), he left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.” So, then, we perceive that by that time John had been already cast into prison; and further, that the Jews had heard that He was making and baptizing more disciples than John had made and baptized.

CHAPTER XIX

OF THE LENGTHENED SERMON WHICH, ACCORDING TO MATTHEW, HE DELIVERED ON THE MOUNT

43. Now, regarding that lengthened sermon which, according to Matthew, the Lord delivered on the mount, let us at present see whether it appears that the rest of the evangelists stand in no manner of antagonism to it. Mark, it is true, has not recorded it at all, neither has he preserved any utterances of Christ’s in any way resembling it, with the exception of certain sentences which are not given connectedly, but occur here and there, and which the Lord repeated in other places. Nevertheless, he has left a space in the text of his narrative indicating the point at which we may understand this sermon to have been spoken, although it has been left unrecited. That is the place where he says: “And He was preaching in their synagogues, and in all Galilee, and was casting out devils.” Under the head of this preaching, in which he says Jesus engaged in all Galilee, we may also understand that discourse to be comprehended which was delivered on the mount, and which is detailed by Matthew. For the same Mark continues his account thus: “And there came a leper to Him, beseeching Him; and kneeling down to Him, said, If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.” And he goes on with the rest of the story of the cleansing of this leper, in such a manner as to make it intelligible to us that the person in question is the very man who is mentioned by Matthew as having been healed at the time when the Lord came down from the mount after the delivery of His discourse. For this is how Matthew gives the history there: “Now, when He was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him; and, behold, there came a leper, and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean;” and so on.

44. This leper is also referred to by Luke, not indeed in this order, but after the manner in which the writers are accustomed to act, recording at a subsequent point things which have been omitted at a previous stage, or bringing in at an earlier point occurrences which took place at a later period, according as they had incidents suggested to their minds by the heavenly influence, with which indeed they had become acquainted before, but which they were afterwards prompted to commit to writing as they came up to their recollection. This same Luke, however, has also left us a version of his own of that copious discourse of the Lord, in a passage which he commences just as the section in Matthew begins. For in the latter the words run thus: “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;” while in the former they are put thus: “Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.” Then, too, much of what follows in Luke’s narrative is similar to what we have in the other. And finally, the conclusion given to the sermon is repeated in both Gospels in its entire identity,—namely, the story of the wise man who builds upon the rock, and the foolish man who builds upon the sand; the only difference being, that Luke speaks only of the stream beating against the house, and does not mention also the rain and the wind, as they occur in Matthew. Accordingly, it might very readily be believed that he has there introduced the self-same discourse of the Lord, but that at the same time he has omitted certain sentences which Matthew has inserted; that he has also brought in other sayings which Matthew has not mentioned; and that, in a similar manner, he has expressed certain of these utterances in somewhat different terms, but without detriment to the integrity of the truth.

45. This we might very well suppose to have been the case, as I have said, were it not that a difficulty is felt to attach to the circumstance that Matthew tells us how this discourse was delivered on a mount by the Lord in a sitting posture; while Luke says that it was spoken on a plain by the Lord in a standing posture. This difference, accordingly, makes it seem as if the former referred to one discourse, and the latter to another. And what should there be, indeed, to hinder [us from supposing] Christ to have repeated elsewhere some words which He had already spoken, or from doing a second time certain things which He had already done on some previous occasion? However, that these two discourses, of which the one is inserted

by Matthew and the other by Luke, are not separated by a long space of time, is with much probability inferred from the fact that, at once in what precedes and in what follows them, both the evangelists have related certain incidents either similar or perfectly identical, so that it is not unreasonably felt that the narrations of the writers who introduce these things are occupied with the same localities and days. For Matthew's recital proceeds in the following terms: "And there followed Him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan. And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain; and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him: and He opened His mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;" and so forth. Here it may appear that His desire was to free Himself from the great crowds of people, and that for this reason He went up into the mountain, as if He meant to withdraw Himself from the multitudes, and seek an opportunity of speaking with His disciples alone. And this seems to be certified also by Luke, whose account is to the following effect: "And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called unto Him His disciples: and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named apostles; Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alpheus, and Simon, who is called Zelotes, Judas the brother of James, and Judas Scarioth, which was the traitor. And He came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of His disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, which had come to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases; and they that were vexed with unclean spirits were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him; for there went virtue out of Him, and healed them all. And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of heaven;" and so on. Here the relation permits us to understand that, after selecting on the mountain twelve disciples out of the larger body, whom He also named apostles (which incident Matthew has omitted), He then delivered that discourse which Matthew has introduced, and which Luke has left unnoticed,—that is to say, the one on the mount; and that thereafter, when He had now come down, He spoke in the plain a second discourse similar to the first, on which Matthew is silent, but which is detailed by Luke; and further, that both these sermons were concluded in the same manner.

46. But, again, as regards what Matthew proceeds to state after the termination of that discourse—namely this, “And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine,”—it may appear that the speakers there were those multitudes of disciples out of whom He had chosen the twelve. Moreover, when the evangelist goes on immediately in these terms, “And when He was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him; and, behold, there came a leper and worshipped Him,” we are at libertyto suppose that that incident took place subsequently to both discourses,—not only after the one which Matthew records, but also after the one which Luke inserts. For it is not made apparent what length of time elapsed after the descent from the mountain. But Matthew’s intention was simply to indicate the fact itself, that after that descent there were great multitudes of people with the Lord on the occasion when He cleansed the leper, and not to specify what period of time had intervened. And this supposition may all the more readily be entertained, since [we find that] Luke tells us how the same leper was cleansed at a time when the Lord was now in a certain city,—a circumstance which Matthew has not cared to mention.

47. After all, however, this explanation may also be suggested,—namely, that in the first instance the Lord, along with His disciples and no others, was on some more elevated portion of the mountain, and that during the period of His stay there He chose out of the number of His followers those twelve; that then He came down in company with them, not indeed from the mountain itself, but from that said altitude on the mountain, into the plain—that is to say, into some level spot which was found on the slope of the mountain, and which was capable of accommodating great multitudes; and that thereafter, when He had seated Himself, His disciples took up their position next Him, and in these circumstances He delivered both to them and to the other multitudes who were present one discourse, which Matthew and Luke have both recorded, their modes of narrating it being indeed different, but the truth being given with equal fidelity by the two writers in

all that concerns the facts and sayings which both of them have recounted. For we have already prefaced our inquiry with the position, which indeed ought of itself to have been obvious to all without the need of any one to give them counsel to that effect beforehand, that there is not [necessarily] any antagonism between writers, although one may omit something which another mentions; nor, again, although one states a fact in one way, and another in a different method, provided that the same truth is set forth in regard to the objects and sayings themselves. In this way, therefore, Matthew's sentence, "Now when He was come down from the mountain," may at the same time be understood to refer also to the plain, which there might very well have been on the slope of the mountain. And thereafter Matthew tells the story of the cleansing of the leper, which is also given in a similar manner by Mark and Luke.

CHAPTER XX

AN EXPLANATION OF THE CIRCUMSTANCE THAT MATTHEW TELLS US HOW THE CENTURION CAME TO JESUS ON BEHALF OF HIS SERVANT, WHILE LUKE'S STATEMENT IS THAT THE CENTURION DESPATCHED FRIENDS TO HIM

48. After these things, Matthew proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: "And when Jesus was entered into Capharnaum, there came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, and he is grievously tormented;" and so forth, on to the place where it is said, "And his servant was healed in the self-same hour." This case of the centurion's servant is related also by Luke; only Luke does not bring it in, as Matthew does, after the cleansing of the leper, whose story he has recorded as something suggested to his recollection at a later stage, but introduces it after the conclusion of that lengthened sermon already discussed. For he connects the two sections in this way: "Now when He had ended all His sayings in the audience of the people, He entered into Capharnaum; and a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick and ready to die;" and so forth, until we come to the verse where it is said that he was healed. Here, then, we notice that it was not till after He had ended all His words in the hearing of the people that Christ entered Capharnaum; by which we are to understand simply that He did not make that entrance before He had brought these sayings to their conclusion; and

we are not to take it as intimating the length of that period of time which intervened between the delivery of these discourses and the entrance into Capharnaum. In this interval that leper was cleansed, whose case is recorded by Matthew in its own proper place, but is given by Luke only at a later point.

49. Accordingly, let us proceed to consider whether Matthew and Luke are at one in the account of this servant. Matthew's words, then, are these: "There came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, My servant lieth at home sick of the palsy." Now this seems to be inconsistent with the version presented by Luke, which runs thus: "And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto Him the elders of the Jews, beseeching Him that He would come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they besought Him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom He should do this: for he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue. Then Jesus went with them. And when He was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying unto Him, Lord, trouble not Thyself; for I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof: wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed." For if this was the manner in which the incident took place, how can Matthew's statement, that there "came to Him a certain centurion," be correct, seeing that the man did not come in person, but sent his friends? The apparent discrepancy, however, will disappear if we look carefully into the matter, and observe that Matthew has simply held by a very familiar mode of expression. For not only are we accustomed to speak of one as coming even before he actually reaches the place he is said to have approached, whence, too, we speak of one as making small approach or making great approach to what he is desirous of reaching; but we also not unfrequently speak of that access, for the sake of getting at which the approach is made, as reached even although the person who is said to reach another may not himself see the individual whom he reaches, inasmuch as it may be through a friend that he reaches the person whose favour is necessary to him. This, indeed, is a custom which has so thoroughly established itself, that even in the language of every-day life now those men are called Perventores who, in the practice of canvassing, get at the inaccessible ears, as one may say, of any of the men of influence,

by the intervention of suitable personages. If, therefore, access itself is thus familiarly said to be gained by the means of other parties, how much more may an approach be said to take place, although it be by means of others, which always remains something short of actual access! For it is surely the case, that a person may be able to do very much in the way of approach, but yet may have failed to succeed in actually reaching what he sought to get at. Consequently it is nothing out of the way for Matthew,—a fact, indeed, which may be understood by any intelligence,—when thus dealing with an approach on the part of the centurion to the Lord, which was effected in the person of others, to have chosen to express the matter in this compendious method, "There came a centurion to Him."

50. At the same time, however, we must be careful enough to discern a certain mystical depth in the phraseology adopted by the evangelist, which is in accordance with these words of the Psalm, "Come ye to Him, and be ye lightened." For in this way, inasmuch as the Lord Himself commended the faith of the centurion, in which indeed his approach was really made to Jesus, in such terms that He declared, "I have not found so great faith in Israel," the evangelist wisely chose to speak of the man himself as coming to Jesus, rather than to bring in the persons through whom he had conveyed his words. And furthermore, Luke has unfolded the whole incident to us just as it occurred, in a form constraining us to understand from his narrative in what manner another writer, who was also incapable of making any false statement, might have spoken of the man himself as coming. It is in this way, too, that the woman who suffered from the issue of blood, although she took hold merely of the hem of His garment, did yet touch the Lord more effectually than those multitudes did by whom He was thronged. For just as she touched the Lord the more effectually, in so far as she believed the more earnestly, so the centurion also came the more really to the Lord, inasmuch as he believed the more thoroughly. And now, as regards the rest of this paragraph, it would be a superfluous task to go over in detail the various matters which are recounted by the one and omitted by the other. For, according to the principle brought under notice at the outset, there is not to be found in these peculiarities any actual antagonism between the writers.

CHAPTER XXI

OF THE ORDER IN WHICH THE NARRATIVE CONCERNING PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW IS INTRODUCED

51. Matthew proceeds in the following terms: "And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. And He touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them." Matthew has not indicated the date of this incident; that is to say, he has specified neither before what event nor after what occurrence it took place. For we are certainly under no necessity of supposing that, because it is recorded after a certain event, it must also have happened in actual matter of fact after that event. And unquestionably, in this case, we are to understand that he has introduced for record here something which he had omitted to notice previously. For Mark brings in this narrative before his account of that cleansing of the leper which he would appear to have placed after the delivery of the sermon on the mount; which discourse, however, he has left unrelated. And thus, too, Luke inserts this story of Peter's mother-in-law after an occurrence which it follows likewise in Mark's version, but also before that lengthened discourse, which has been reproduced by him, and which may appear to be one with the sermon which Matthew states to have been delivered on the mount. For of what consequence is it in what place any of them may give his account; or what difference does it make whether he inserts the matter in its proper order, or brings in at a particular point what was previously omitted, or mentions at an earlier stage what really happened at a later, provided only that he contradicts neither himself nor a second writer in the narrative of the same facts or of others? For as it is not in one's own power, however admirable and trustworthy may be the knowledge he has once obtained of the facts, to determine the order in which he will recall them to memory (for the way in which one thing comes into a person's mind before or after another is something which proceeds not as we will, but simply as it is given to us), it is reasonable enough to suppose that each of the evangelists believed it to have been his duty to relate what he had to relate in that order in which it had pleased God to suggest to his recollection the matters he was engaged in recording. At least this might hold good in the case of those incidents

with regard to which the question of order, whether it were this or that, detracted nothing from evangelical authority and truth.

52. But as to the reason why the Holy Spirit, who divideth to every man severally as He will, and who therefore undoubtedly, with a view to the establishing of their books on so distinguished an eminence of authority, also governs and rules the minds of the holy men themselves in the matter of suggesting the things they were to commit to writing, has left one historian at liberty to construct his narrative in one way, and another in a different fashion, that is a question which any one may look into with pious consideration, and for which, by divine help, the answer also may possibly be found. That, however, is not the object of the work which we have taken in hand at present. The task we have proposed to ourselves is simply to demonstrate that not one of the evangelists contradicts either himself or his fellow-historians, whatever be the precise order in which he may have had the ability or may have preferred to compose his account of matters belonging to the doings and sayings of Christ; and that, too, at once in the case of subjects identical with those recorded by others, and in the case of subjects different from these. For this reason, therefore, when the order of times is not apparent, we ought not to feel it a matter of any consequence what order any of them may have adopted in relating the events. But wherever the order is apparent, if the evangelist then presents anything which seems to be inconsistent with his own statements, or with those of another, we must certainly take the passage into consideration, and endeavour to clear up the difficulty.

CHAPTER XXII

OF THE ORDER OF THE INCIDENTS WHICH ARE RECORDED AFTER THIS SECTION AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE ARE CONSISTENT WITH EACH OTHER IN THESE

53. Matthew, accordingly, continues his narration thus: “Now when the even was come, they brought unto Him many that were possessed with devils; and He cast out the spirits with His word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” That this belongs in date to the same day, he indicates with sufficient clearness by

these words which he subjoins, “Now when the even was come.” In a similar manner, after concluding his account of the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law with the sentence, “And she ministered unto them,” Mark has appended the following statement: “And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto Him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed of the devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And He healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew Him. And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place.” Here Mark appears to have preserved the order in such wise, that after the statement conveyed in the words “And at even,” he gives this note of time: “And in the morning, rising up a great while before day.” And although there is no absolute necessity for supposing either that, when we have the words “And at even,” the reference must be to the evening of the very same day, or that when the phrase “In the morning” meets us, it must mean the morning after the self-same night; still, however that may be, this order in the occurrences may fairly appear to have been preserved with a view to an orderly arrangement of the times. Moreover, Luke, too, after relating the story of Peter’s mother-in-law, while he does not indeed say expressly, “And at even,” has at least used a phrase which conveys the same sense. For he proceeds thus: “Now when the sun had set, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them, and healed them. And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And He, rebuking them, suffered them not to speak: for they knew that He was Christ. And when it was day, He departed and went into a desert place.” Here, again, we see precisely the same order of times preserved as we discovered in Mark. But Matthew, who appears to have introduced the story of Peter’s mother-in-law not according to the order in which the incident itself took place, but simply in the succession in which he had it suggested to his mind after previous omission, has first recorded what happened on that same day, to wit, when even was come; and thereafter, instead of subjoining the notice of the morning, goes on with his account in these terms: “Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave commandment to depart unto the other side of the lake.” This, then, is something new, differing from what is given in the context by Mark and

Luke, who, after the notice of the even, bring in the mention of the morning. Consequently, as regards this verse in Matthew, “Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave commandment to depart unto the other side of the lake,” we ought simply to understand that he has introduced here another fact which he has had brought to mind at this point,—namely, the fact that on a certain day, when Jesus had seen great multitudes about Him, He gave instructions to cross to the other side of the lake.

CHAPTER XXIII

OF THE PERSON WHO SAID TO THE LORD, “I WILL FOLLOW THEE WHITHERSOEVER THOU GOEST;” AND OF THE OTHER THINGS CONNECTED THEREWITH, AND OF THE ORDER IN WHICH THEY ARE RECORDED BY MATTHEW AND LUKE

54. He next appends the following statement: “And a certain scribe came and said unto Him, Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever thou goest;” and so on, down to the words, “Let the dead bury their dead.” We have a narrative in similar terms also in Luke. But he inserts it only after a variety of other matters, and without any explicit note of the order of time, but after the fashion of one only bethinking himself of the incident at that point. He leaves us also uncertain whether he brings it in there as something previously omitted, or as an anticipatory notice of something which in actual fact took place subsequently to those incidents by which it is followed in the history. For he proceeds thus: “And it came to pass, that as they went in the way, a certain man said unto Him, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest.” And the Lord’s answer is given here in precisely the same terms as we find recited in Matthew. Now, although Matthew tells us that this took place at the time when He gave commandment to depart unto the other side of the lake, and Luke, on the other hand, speaks of an occasion when they “went in the way,” there is no necessary contradiction in that. For it may be the case that they went in the way just in order to come to the lake. Again, in what is said about the person who begged to be allowed first to bury his father, Matthew and Luke are thoroughly at one. For the mere fact that Matthew has introduced first the words of the man who made the request regarding his father, and that he has put after that the saying of the Lord, “Follow me,” whereas Luke puts

the Lord’s command, “Follow me,” first, and the declaration of the petitioner second, is a matter of no consequence to the sense itself. Luke has also made mention of yet another person, who said, “Lord, I will follow Thee, but let me first bid them farewell which are at home at my house;” of which individual Matthew says nothing. And thereafter Luke proceeds to another subject altogether, and not to what followed in the actual order of time. The passage runs: “And after these things, the Lord appointed other seventy-two also.” That this occurred “after these things” is indeed manifest; but at what length of time after these things the Lord did so is not apparent. Nevertheless, in this interval that took place which Matthew subjoins next in succession. For the same Matthew still keeps up the order of time, and continues his narrative, as we shall now see.

CHAPTER XXIV

OF THE LORD’S CROSSING THE LAKE ON THAT OCCASION ON WHICH HE SLEPT IN THE VESSEL, AND OF THE CASTING OUT OF THOSE DEVILS WHOM HE SUFFERED TO GO INTO THE SWINE; AND OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE ACCOUNTS GIVEN BY MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE OF ALL THAT WAS DONE AND SAID ON THESE OCCASIONS

55. “And when He was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea.” And so the story goes on, until we come to the words, “And He came into His own city.” Those two narratives which are told by Matthew in continuous succession,—namely, that regarding the calm upon the sea after Jesus was roused from His sleep and had commanded the winds, and that concerning the persons who were possessed with the fierce devil, and who brake their bands and were driven into the wilderness,—are given also in like manner by Mark and Luke. Some parts of these stories are expressed, indeed, in different terms by the different writers, but the sense remains the same. This is the case, for example, when Matthew represents the Lord to have said, “Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?” while Mark’s version is, “Why are ye fearful? Is it that ye have no faith?” For Mark’s word refers to that perfect faith which is like a grain of mustard seed; and so he, too, speaks in effect of the “little faith.” Luke, again, puts it thus: “Where is your faith?” Accordingly, the whole utterance may perhaps have gone thus: “Why are ye fearful? Where is your faith, O ye of little faith?” And so one of them

records one part, and another another part, of the entire saying. The same may be the case with the words spoken by the disciples when they awoke Him. Matthew gives us: “Lord, save us: we perish.” Mark has: “Master, carest Thou not that we perish?” And Luke says simply, “Master, we perish.” These different expressions, however, convey one and the same meaning on the part of those who were awaking the Lord, and who were wishful to secure their safety. Neither need we inquire which of these several forms is to be preferred as the one actually addressed to Christ. For whether they really used the one or the other of these three phraseologies, or expressed themselves in different words, which are unrecorded by any one of the evangelists, but which were equally well adapted to give the like representation of what was meant, what difference does it make in the fact itself? At the same time, it may also possibly have been the case that, when several parties in concert were trying to awake Him, all these various modes of expression had been used, one by one person, and another by another. In the same way, too, we may deal with the exclamation on the stilling of the tempest, which, according to Matthew, was, “What manner of man is this, that the winds and the sea obey Him?” according to Mark, “What man, thinkest thou, is this, that both the wind and the sea obey Him?” and according to Luke, “What man, thinkest thou, is this? for He commandeth both the winds and the sea, and they obey Him.” Who can fail to see that the sense in all these forms is quite identical? For the expression, “What man, thinkest thou, is this?” has precisely the same import with the other, “What manner of man is this?” And where the words “He commandeth” are omitted, it can at least be understood as a matter of course that the obedience is rendered to the person commanding.

56. Moreover, with respect to the circumstance that Matthew states that there were two men who were afflicted with the legion of devils which received permission to go into the swine, whereas Mark and Luke instance only a single individual, we may suppose that one of these parties was a person of some kind of superior notability and repute, whose case was particularly lamented by that district, and for whose deliverance there was special anxiety. With the intention of indicating that fact, two of the evangelists have judged it proper to make mention only of the one person, in connection with whom the fame of this deed had been spread abroad the

more extensively and remarkably. Neither should any scruple be excited by the different forms in which the words uttered by the possessed have been reproduced by the various evangelists. For we may either resolve them all into one and the same thing, or suppose them all to have been actually spoken. Nor, again, should we find any difficulty in the circumstance that with Matthew the address is couched in the plural number, but with Mark and Luke in the singular. For these latter two tell us at the same time, that when the man was asked what was his name, he answered that he was Legion, because the devils were many. Nor, once more, is there any discrepancy between Mark's statement that the herd of swine was round about the mountain, and Luke's, that they were on the mountain. For the herd of swine was so great that one portion of it might be on the mountain, and another only round about it. For, as Mark has expressly informed us, there were about two thousand swine.

CHAPTER XXV

OF THE MAN SICK OF THE PALSY TO WHOM THE LORD SAID, "THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN THEE," AND "TAKE UP THY BED;" AND IN ESPECIAL, OF THE QUESTION WHETHER MATTHEW AND MARK ARE CONSISTENT WITH EACH OTHER IN THEIR NOTICE OF THE PLACE WHERE THIS INCIDENT TOOK PLACE, IN SO FAR AS MATTHEW SAYS IT HAPPENED "IN HIS OWN CITY," WHILE MARK SAYS IT WAS IN CAPHARNAUM

57. Hereupon Matthew proceeds with his recital, still preserving the order of time, and connects his narrative in the following manner:—"And He entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into His own city. And, behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed;" and so on down to where it is said, "But when the multitude saw it, they marvelled; and glorified God, which had given such power unto men." Mark and Luke have also told the story of this paralytic. Now, as regards Matthew's stating that the Lord said, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee;" while Luke makes the address run, not as "son," but as "man,"—this only helps to bring out the Lord's meaning more explicitly. For these sins were [thus said to be] forgiven to the "man," inasmuch as the very fact that he was a man would make it impossible for him to say, "I have not sinned;" and at the same time, that mode of address served to indicate that He who forgave sins to man was Himself God. Mark, again, has given the same form of words as Matthew, but he has left out the terms, "Be of good cheer." It is also

possible, indeed, that the whole saying ran thus: “Man, be of good cheer: son, thy sins are forgiven thee;” or thus: “Son, be of good cheer: man, thy sins are forgiven thee;” or the words may have been spoken in some other congruous order.

58. A difficulty, however, may certainly arise when we observe how Matthew tells the story of the paralytic after this fashion: “And He entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into His own city. And, behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed;” whereas Mark speaks of the incident as taking place not in His own city, which indeed is called Nazareth, but in Capharnaum. His narrative is to the following effect:—”And again He entered into Capharnaum after some days; and it was noised that He was in the house. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and He spake a word unto them. And they came unto Him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto Him for the press, they uncovered the roof where He was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. And when Jesus saw their faith;” and so forth. Luke, on the other hand, does not mention the place in which the incident happened, but gives the tale thus: “And it came to pass on a certain day that He was sitting teaching, and there were Pharisees and doctors of the law also sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before Him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when He saw their faith, He said, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee;” and so forth. The question, therefore, remains one between Mark and Matthew, in so far as Matthew writes of the incident as taking place in the Lord’s city; while Mark locates it in Capharnaum. This question would be more difficult to solve if Matthew mentioned Nazareth by name. But, as the case stands, when we reflect that the state of Galilee itself might have been called Christ’s city, because Nazareth was in Galilee, just as the whole region which was made

up of so many cities is yet called a Roman state; when, further, it is considered that so many nations are comprehended in that city, of which it is written, “Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God;” and also that God’s ancient people, though dwelling in so many cities, have yet been spoken of as one house, the house of Israel,—who can doubt that [it may be fairly said that] Jesus wrought this work in His own city [or, state], inasmuch as He did it in the city of Capharnaum, which was a city of that Galilee to which He had returned when He crossed over again from the country of the Gerasenes, so that when He came into Galilee He might correctly be said to have come into His own city [or, state], in which ever town of Galilee He might happen to be? This explanation may be vindicated more particularly on the ground that Capharnaum itself held a position of such eminence in Galilee that it was reckoned to be a kind of metropolis. But even were it altogether illegitimate to take the city of Christ in the sense either of Galilee itself, in which Nazareth was situated, or of Capharnaum, which was distinguished as in a certain sense the capital of Galilee, we might still affirm that Matthew has simply passed over all that happened after Jesus came into His own city until He reached Capharnaum, and that he has simply tacked on the narrative of the healing of the paralytic at this point; just as the writers do in many instances, leaving unnoticed much that intervenes, and, without any express indication of the omissions they are making, proceeding precisely as if what they subjoin, followed actually in literal succession.

CHAPTER XXVI

OF THE CALLING OF MATTHEW, AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER MATTHEW’S OWN ACCOUNT IS IN HARMONY WITH THOSE OF MARK AND LUKE WHEN THEY SPEAK OF LEVI THE SON OF ALPHAEUS

59. Matthew next continues his narrative in the following terms:—”And as Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed Him.” Mark gives this story also, and keeps the same order, bringing it in after the notice of the healing of the man who was sick of the palsy. His version runs thus: “And He went forth again by the sea-side; and all the multitude resorted unto Him, and He taught them. And as He passed

by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed Him.” There is no contradiction here; for Matthew is the same person with Levi. Luke also introduces this after the story of the healing of the same man who was sick of the palsy. He writes in these terms: “And after these things He went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and He said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed Him.” Now, from this it will appear to be the most reasonable explanation to say that Matthew records these things here in the form of things previously passed over, and now brought to mind. For certainly we must believe that Matthew’s calling took place before the delivery of the sermon on the mount. For Luke tells us that on this mountain on that occasion the election was made of all these twelve, whom Jesus also named apostles, out of the larger body of the disciples.

CHAPTER XXVII

OF THE FEAST AT WHICH IT WAS OBJECTED AT ONCE THAT CHRIST ATE WITH SINNERS, AND THAT HIS DISCIPLES DID NOT FAST; OF THE CIRCUMSTANCE THAT THE EVANGELISTS SEEM TO GIVE DIFFERENT ACCOUNTS OF THE PARTIES BY WHOM THESE OBJECTIONS WERE ALLEGED; AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER MATTHEW AND MARK AND LUKE ARE ALSO IN HARMONY WITH EACH OTHER IN THE REPORTS GIVEN OF THE WORDS OF THESE PERSONS, AND OF THE REPLIES RETURNED BY THE LORD

60. Matthew, accordingly, goes on to say: “And it came to pass, as He sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and His disciples;” and so on, down to where we read, “But they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.” Here Matthew has not told us particularly in whose house it was that Jesus was sitting at meat along with the publicans and sinners. This might make it appear as if he had not appended this notice in its strict order here, but had introduced at this point, in the way of reminiscence, something which actually took place on a different occasion, were it not that Mark and Luke, who repeat the account in terms thoroughly similar, have made it plain that it was in the house of Levi—that is to say, Matthew—that Jesus sat at meat, and all these sayings were uttered which follow. For Mark states the same fact, keeping also the same order, in the following manner: “And it came to pass, as He sat at

meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus.” Accordingly, when he says, “in his house,” he certainly refers to the person of whom he was speaking directly before, and that was Levi. To the same effect, after the words, “He saith unto him, Follow me; and he left all, rose up, and followed Him,” Luke has appended immediately this statement: “And Levi made Him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.” And thus it is manifest in whose house it was that these things took place.

61. Let us next look into the words which these three evangelists have all brought in as having been addressed to the Lord, and also into the replies which were made by Him. Matthew says: “And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto His disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?” This reappears very nearly in the same words in Mark: “How is it that He eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?” Only we find thus that Matthew has omitted one thing which Mark inserts—namely, the addition “and drinketh.” But of what consequence can that be, since the sense is fully given, the idea suggested being that they were partaking of a repast in company? Luke, on the other hand, seems to have recorded this scene somewhat differently. For his version proceeds thus: “But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against His disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?” But his intention in this certainly is not to indicate that their Master was not referred to on that occasion, but to intimate that the objection was levelled against all of them together, both Himself and His disciples; the charge, however, which was to be taken to be meant both of Him and of them, being addressed directly not to Him, but to them. For the fact is that Luke himself, no less than the others, represents the Lord as making the reply, and saying, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” And He would not have returned that answer to them, had not their words, “Why do ye eat and drink?” been directed very specially to Himself. For the same reason, Matthew and Mark have told us that the objection which was brought against Him was stated immediately to His disciples, because, when the allegation was addressed to the disciples, the charge was thereby laid all the more seriously against the Master whom these disciples were imitating and following. One and the same sense, therefore, is conveyed; and it is expressed all the better in

consequence of these variations employed in some of the terms, while the matter of fact itself is left intact. In like manner we may deal with the accounts of the Lord’s reply. Matthew’s runs thus: “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; but go ye and learn what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” Mark and Luke have also preserved for us the same sense in almost the same words, with this exception, that they both fail to introduce that quotation from the prophet, “I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.” Luke, again, after the words, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners,” has added the term, “unto repentance.” This addition serves to bring out the sense more fully, so as to preclude any one from supposing that sinners are loved by Christ, purely for the very reason that they are sinners. For this similitude also of the sick indicates clearly what God means by the calling of sinners,—that it is like the physician with the sick,—and that its object verily is that men should be saved from their iniquity as from disease; which healing is effected by repentance.

62. In the same way, we may subject what is said about the disciples of John to examination. Matthew’s words are these: “Then came to Him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft?” The purport of Mark’s version is similar: “And the disciples of John and the Pharisees used to fast. And they come and say unto Him, Why do the disciples of John and the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?” The only semblance of a discrepancy that can be found here, is in the possibility of supposing that the mention of the Pharisees as having spoken along with the disciples of John is an addition of Mark’s, while Matthew states only that the disciples of John expressed themselves to the above effect. But the words which were actually uttered by the parties, according to Mark’s version, rather indicate that the speakers and the persons spoken of were not the same individuals. I mean, that the persons who came to Jesus were the guests who were then present, that they came because the disciples of John and the Pharisees were fasting, and that they uttered the above words with respect to these parties. In this way, the evangelist’s phrase, “they come,” would not refer to the persons regarding whom he had just thrown in the remark, “And the disciples of John and the Pharisees were fasting.” But the case would be, that as those parties were fasting, some others here, who are

moved by that fact, come to Him, and put this question to Him, “Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?” This is more clearly expressed by Luke. For, evidently with the same idea in his mind, after stating what answer the Lord returned in the words in which He spoke about the calling of sinners under the similitude of those who are sick, he proceeds thus: “And they said unto Him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees, but thine eat and drink?” Here, then, we see that, as was the case with Mark, Luke has mentioned one party as speaking to this intent in relation to other parties. How comes it, therefore, that Matthew says, “Then came to Him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast?” The explanation may be, that those individuals were also present, and that all these various parties were eager to advance this charge, as they severally found opportunity. And the sentiments which sought expression on this occasion have been conveyed by the three evangelists under varied terms, but yet without any divergence from a true statement of the fact itself.

63. Once more, we find that Matthew and Mark have given similar accounts of what was said about the children of the bridegroom not fasting as long as the bridegroom is with them, with this exception, that Mark has named them the children of the bridals, while Matthew has designated them the children of the bridegroom. That, however, is a matter of no moment. For by the children of the bridals we understand at once those connected with the bridegroom, and those connected with the bride. The sense, therefore, is obvious and identical, and neither different nor contradictory. Luke, again, does not say, “Can the children of the bridegroom fast?” but, “Can ye make the children of the bridegroom fast, while the bridegroom is with them?” By expressing it in this method, the evangelist has elegantly opened up the self-same sense in a way calculated to suggest something else. For thus the idea is conveyed, that those very persons who were speaking would try to make the children of the bridegroom mourn and fast, inasmuch as they would [seek to] put the bridegroom to death. Moreover, Matthew’s phrase, “mourn,” is of the same import as that used by Mark and Luke, namely, “fast.” For Matthew also says further on, “Then shall they fast,” and not, “Then shall they mourn.” But by the use of this phrase, he has indicated that

the Lord spoke of that kind of fasting which pertains to the lowliness of tribulation. In the same way, too, the Lord may be understood to have pictured out a different kind of fasting, which stands related to the rapture of a mind dwelling in the heights of things spiritual, and for that reason estranged in a certain measure from the meats that are for the body, when He made use of those subsequent similitudes touching the new cloth and the new wine, by which He showed that this kind of fasting is an incongruity for sensual and carnal people, who are taken up with the cares of the body, and who consequently still remain in the old mind. These similitudes are also embodied in similar terms by the other two evangelists. And it should be sufficiently evident that there need be no real discrepancy, although one may introduce something, whether belonging to the subject-matter itself, or merely to the terms in which that subject is expressed, which another leaves out; provided only that there be neither any departure from a genuine identity in sense, nor any contradiction created between the different forms which may be adopted for expressing the same thing.

CHAPTER XXVIII

OF THE RAISING OF THE DAUGHTER OF THE RULER OF THE SYNAGOGUE, AND OF THE WOMAN WHO TOUCHED THE HEM OF HIS GARMENT; OF THE QUESTION, ALSO, AS TO WHETHER THE ORDER IN WHICH THESE INCIDENTS ARE NARRATED EXHIBITS ANY CONTRADICTION IN ANY OF THE WRITERS BY WHOM THEY ARE REPORTED; AND IN PARTICULAR, OF THE WORDS IN WHICH THE RULER OF THE SYNAGOGUE ADDRESSED HIS REQUEST TO THE LORD

64. Still keeping by the order of time, Matthew next continues to the following effect: “While He spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped Him, saying, My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live;” and so on, until we come to the words, “and the maid arose. And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.” The other two, namely, Mark and Luke, in like manner give this same account, only they do not keep by the same order now. For they bring up this narrative in a different place, and insert it in another connection; to wit, at the point where He crosses the take and returns from the country of the Gerasenes, after casting out the devils and permitting them to go into the swine. Thus Mark introduces it, after he has related what took place among the Gerasenes, in the following manner:

“And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto Him: and He was nigh unto the sea. And there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw Him, he fell at His feet,” etc. By this, then, we are certainly to understand that the occurrence in connection with the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue did take place after Jesus had passed across the lake again in the ship. It does not, however, appear from the words themselves how long after that passage this thing happened. But that some time did elapse is clear. For had there not been an interval, no period would be left within which those circumstances might fall which Matthew has just related in the matter of the feast in his house. These, indeed, he has told after the fashion of the evangelists, as if they were the story of another person’s doings. But they are the story really of what took place in his own case, and at his own house. And after that narrative, what follows in the immediate context is nothing else than this notice of the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue. For he has constructed the whole recital in such a manner, that the mode of transition from one thing to the other has itself indicated with sufficient clearness that the words immediately following give the narrative of what actually took place in immediate consecution. For after mentioning, in connection with the former incident, those words which Jesus spake with respect to the new cloth and the new wine, he has subjoined these other words, without any interruption in the narrative, namely, “While He spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler.” And this shows that, if the person approached Him while He was speaking these things, nothing else either done or said by Him could have intervened. In Mark’s account, on the other hand, the place is quite apparent, as we have already pointed out, where other things [left unrecorded by him] might very well have come in. The case is much the same also with Luke, who, when he proceeds to follow up his version of the story of the miracle wrought among the Gerasenes, by giving his account of the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, does not pass on to that in any such way as to place it in antagonism with Matthew’s version, who, by his words, “While He yet spake these things,” gives us plainly to understand that the occurrence took place after those parables about the cloth and the wine. For when he has concluded his statement of what happened among the Gerasenes, Luke passes to the next subject in the following manner; “And it came to pass that, when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received Him; for they were all waiting for Him. And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue, and he fell down at Jesus' feet," and so on. Thus we are given to understand that the crowd did indeed receive Jesus forthwith on the said occasion: for He was the person for whose return they were waiting. But what is conveyed in the words which are directly added, "And, behold, there came a man whose name was Jairus," is not to be taken to have occurred literally in immediate succession. On the contrary, the feast with the publicans, as Matthew records it, took place before that. For Matthew connects this present incident with that feast in such a way as to make it impossible for us to suppose that any other sequence of events can be the correct order.

65. In this narrative, then, which we have undertaken to consider at present, all these three evangelists indeed are unquestionably at one in the account which they give of the woman who was afflicted with the issue of blood. Nor is it a matter of any real consequence, that something which is passed by in silence by one of them is related by another; or that Mark says, "Who touched my clothes?" while Luke says, "Who touched me?" For the one has only adopted the phrase in use and wont, whereas the other has given the stricter expression. But for all that, both of them convey the same meaning. For it is more usual with us to say, "You are tearing me," than to say, "You are tearing my clothes;" as, notwithstanding the term, the sense we wish to convey is obvious enough.

66. At the same time, however, there remains the fact that Matthew represents the ruler of the synagogue to have spoken to the Lord of his daughter, not merely as one likely to die, or as dying, or as on the very point of expiring, but as even then dead; while these other two evangelists report her as now nigh unto death, but not yet really dead, and keep so strictly to that version of the circumstances, that they tell us how the persons came at a later stage with the intelligence of her actual death, and with the message that for this reason the Master ought not now to trouble Himself by coming, with the purpose of laying His hand upon her, and so preventing her from dying,—the matter not being put as if He was one possessed of ability to raise the once dead to life. It becomes necessary for us, therefore, to

investigate this fact lest it may seem to exhibit any contradiction between the accounts. And the way to explain it is to suppose that, by reason of brevity in the narrative, Matthew has preferred to express it as if the Lord had been really asked to do what it is clear He did actually do, namely, raise the dead to life. For what Matthew directs our attention to, is not the mere words spoken by the father about his daughter, but what is of more importance, his mind and purpose. Thus he has given words calculated to represent the father's real thoughts. For he had so thoroughly despaired of his child's case, that not believing that she whom he had just left dying, could possibly now be found yet in life, his thought rather was that she might be made alive again. Accordingly two of the evangelists have introduced the words which were literally spoken by Jairus. But Matthew has exhibited rather what the man secretly wished and thought. Thus both petitions were really addressed to the Lord; namely, either that He should restore the dying damsel, or that, if she was already dead, He might raise her to life again. But as it was Matthew's object to tell the whole story in short compass, he has represented the father as directly expressing in his request what, it is certain, had been his own real wish, and what Christ actually did. It is true, indeed, that if those two evangelists, or one of them, had told us that the father himself spake the words which the parties who came from his house uttered,—namely, that Jesus should not now trouble Himself, because the damsel had died,—then the words which Matthew has put into his mouth would not be in harmony with his thoughts. But, as the case really stands, it is not said that he gave his consent to the parties who brought that report, and who bade the Master no more think of coming now. And together with this, we have to observe, that when the Lord addressed him in these terms, "Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole," He did not find fault with him on the ground of his want of belief, but really encouraged him to a yet stronger faith. For this ruler had faith like that which was exhibited by the person who said, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."

67. Seeing, then, that the case stands thus, from these varied and yet not inconsistent modes of statement adopted by the evangelists, we evidently learn a lesson of the utmost utility, and of great necessity,—namely, that in any man's words the thing which we ought narrowly to regard is only the

writer’s thought which was meant to be expressed, and to which the words ought to be subservient; and further, that we should not suppose one to be giving an incorrect statement, if he happens to convey in different words what the person really meant whose words he fails to reproduce literally. And we ought not to let the wretched cavillers at words fancy that truth must be tied somehow or other to the jots and tittles of letters; whereas the fact is, that not in the matter of words only, but equally in all other methods by which sentiments are indicated, the sentiment itself, and nothing else, is what ought to be looked at.

68. Moreover, as to the circumstance that some codices of Matthew’s Gospel contain the reading, “For the woman is not dead, but sleepeth,” while Mark and Luke certify that she was a damsel of the age of twelve years, we may suppose that Matthew has followed the Hebrew mode of speech here. For in other passages of Scripture, as well as here, it is found that not only those who had already known a man, but all females in general, including untouched virgins, are called women. That is the case, for instance, where it is written of Eve, “He made it into a woman;” and again, in the book of Numbers, where the women who have not known a man by lying with him, that is to say, the virgins, are ordered to be saved from being put to death. Adopting the same phraseology, Paul, too, says of Christ Himself, that He was “made of a woman.” And it is better, therefore, to understand the matter according to these analogies, than to suppose that this damsel of twelve years of age was already married, or had known a man.

CHAPTER XXIX

OF THE TWO BLIND MEN AND THE DUMB DEMONIAC WHOSE STORIES ARE RELATED ONLY BY MATTHEW

69. Matthew proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: “And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed Him, crying and saying, Thou son of David, have mercy on us;” and so on, down to the verse where we read, “But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.” Matthew is the only one who introduces this account of the two blind men and the dumb demoniac. For those two blind men, whose story is

given also by the others, are not the two before us here. Nevertheless there is such similarity in the occurrences, that if Matthew himself had not recorded the latter incident as well as the former, it might have been thought that the one which he relates at present has also been given by these other two evangelists. There is this fact, therefore, which we ought to bear carefully in mind,—namely, that there are some occurrences which resemble each other. For we have a proof of this in the circumstance that the very same evangelist mentions both incidents here. And thus, if at any time we find any such occurrences narrated individually by the several evangelists, and discover some contradiction in the accounts, which seems not to admit of being solved [on the principle of harmonizing], it may occur to us that the explanation simply is, that this [apparently contradictory] circumstance did not take place [on that particular occasion], but that what did happen then was only something resembling it, or something which was gone about in a similar manner.

CHAPTER XXX

OF THE SECTION WHERE IT IS RECORDED, THAT BEING MOVED WITH COMPASSION FOR THE MULTITUDES, HE SENT HIS DISCIPLES, GIVING THEM POWER TO WORK CURES, AND CHARGED THEM WITH MANY INSTRUCTIONS, DIRECTING THEM HOW TO LIVE; AND OF THE QUESTION CONCERNING THE PROOF OF MATTHEW'S HARMONY HERE WITH MARK AND LUKE, ESPECIALLY ON THE SUBJECT OF THE STAFF, WHICH MATTHEW SAYS THE LORD TOLD THEM THEY WERE NOT TO CARRY, WHILE ACCORDING TO MARK IT IS THE ONLY THING THEY WERE TO CARRY; AND ALSO OF THE WEARING OF THE SHOES AND COATS

70. As to the events next related, it is true that their exact order is not made apparent by Matthew's narrative. For after the notices of the two incidents in connection with the blind men and the dumb demoniac, he continues in the following manner: “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the kingdom of the gospel, and healing every sickness and every disease. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they were troubled and prostrate, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest. And when He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them

power against unclean spirits;” and so forth, down to the words, “Verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.” This whole passage which we have now mentioned shows how He gave many counsels to His disciples. But whether Matthew has subjoined this section in its historical order, or has made its order dependent only on the succession in which it came up to his own mind, as has already been said, is not made apparent. Mark appears to have handled this paragraph in a succinct method, and to have entered upon its recital in the following terms: “And He went round about the villages, teaching in their circuit: and He called unto Him the twelve, and began to send them by two and two, and gave them power over unclean spirits;” and so on, down to where we read, “Shake off the dust from your feet for a testimony against them.” But before narrating this incident, Mark has inserted, immediately after the story of the raising of the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, an account of what took place on that occasion on which, in His own country, the people were astonished at the Lord, and asked from whence He had such wisdom and such capabilities, when they perceived His judgment: which account is given by Matthew after these counsels to the disciples, and after a number of other matters. It is uncertain, therefore, whether what thus happened in His own country has been recorded by Matthew in the succession in which it came to mind, after having been omitted at first, or whether it has been introduced by Mark in the way of an anticipation; and which of them, in short, has kept the order of actual occurrence, and which of them the order of his own recollection. Luke, again, in immediate succession to the mention of the raising of the daughter of Jairus to life, subjoins this paragraph, bearing on the power and the counsels given to the disciples, and that indeed with as great brevity as Mark. This evangelist, however, does not, any more than the others, introduce the subject in such a way as to produce the impression that it comes in also in the strictly historical order. Moreover, with regard to the names of the disciples, Luke, who gives their names in another place,—that is to say, in the earlier passage, where they are [represented as being] chosen on the mountain,—is not at variance in any respect with Matthew, with the exception of the single instance of the name of Judas the brother of James, whom Matthew designates Thaddaeus, although some codices also read Lebbaeus. But who would ever think of denying that one man may be known under two or three names?

71. Another question which it is also usual to put is this: How comes it that Matthew and Luke have stated that the Lord said to His disciples that they were not to take a staff with them, whereas Mark puts the matter in this way: “And He commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only;” and proceeds further in this strain, “no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse:” thereby making it quite evident that his narrative belongs to the same place and circumstances with which the narratives of those others deal who have mentioned that the staff was not to be taken? Now this question admits of being solved on the principle of understanding that the staff which, according to Mark, was to be taken, bears one sense, and that the staff which, according to Matthew and Luke, was not to be taken with them, is to be interpreted in a different sense; just in the same way as we find the term “temptation” used in one meaning, when it is said, “God tempteth no man,” and in a different meaning where it is said, “The Lord your God tempteth [proveth] you, to know whether ye love Him.” For in the former case the temptation of seduction is intended; but in the latter the temptation of probation. Another parallel occurs in the case of the term “judgment,” which must be taken in one way, where it is said, “They that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment;” and in another way, where it is said, “Judge me, O God, and discern my cause, in respect of an ungodly nation.” For the former refers to the judgment of damnation, and the latter to the judgment of discrimination.

72. And there are many other words which do not retain one uniform signification, but are introduced so as to suit a variety of connections, and thus are understood in a variety of ways, and sometimes, indeed, are adopted along with an explanation. We have an example in the saying, “Be not children in understanding; howbeit in malice be ye little children, that in understanding ye may be perfect.” For here is a sentence which, in a brief and pregnant form, might have been expressed thus: “Be ye not children; howbeit be ye children.” The same is the case with the words, “If any man among you thinketh himself to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise.” For what else is the statement there but this: “Let him not be wise, that he may be wise”? Moreover, the sentences are sometimes so put as to exercise the judgment of the inquirer. An instance of this kind

occurs in what is said in the Epistle to the Galatians: “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so ye will fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man thinketh himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But it is meet that every man should prove his own work; and then shall he have rejoicing in himself, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden.” Now, unless the word “burden” can be taken in different senses, without doubt one would suppose that the same writer contradicts himself in what he says here, and that, too, when the words are placed in such close neighbourhood in one paragraph. For when he has just said, “One shall bear another’s burdens,” after the lapse of a very brief interval he says, “Every man shall bear his own burden.” But the one refers to the burdens which are to be borne in sharing in one’s infirmity, the other to the burdens borne in the rendering of an account of our own actions to God: the former are burdens to be borne in our [duties of] fellowship with brethren; the latter are those peculiar to ourselves, and borne by every man for himself. And in the same way, once more, the “rod” of which the apostle spoke in the words, “Shall I come unto you with a rod?” is meant in a spiritual sense; while the same term bears the literal meaning when it occurs of the rod applied to a horse, or used for some other purpose of the kind, not to mention, in the meantime, also other metaphorical significations of this phrase.

73. Both these counsels, therefore, must be accepted as having been spoken by the Lord to the apostles; namely, at once that they should not take a staff, and that they should take nothing save a staff only. For when He said to them, according to Matthew, “Provide neither gold nor silver, nor money in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet a staff,” He added immediately, “for the workman is worthy of his meat.” And by this He makes it sufficiently obvious why it is that He would have them provide and carry none of these things. He shows that His reason was, not that these things are not necessary for the sustenance of this life, but because He was sending them in such a manner as to declare plainly that these things were due to them by those very persons who were to hear believingly the gospel preached by them; just as wages are the soldier’s due, and as the fruit of the vine is the right of the planters, and the milk of the flock the right of the shepherds. For which reason Paul also speaks in this wise: “Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth

a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?” For under these figures he was speaking of those things which are necessary to the preachers of the gospel. And so, a little further on, he says: “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? If others are partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power.” This makes it apparent that by these instructions the Lord did not mean that the evangelists should not seek their support in any other way than by depending on what was offered them by those to whom they preached the gospel (otherwise this very apostle acted contrary to this precept when he acquired a livelihood for himself by the labours of his own hands, because he would not be chargeable to any of them), but that He gave them a power in the exercise of which they should know such things to be their due. Now, when any commandment is given by the Lord, there is the guilt of non-obedience if it is not observed; but when any power is given, any one is at liberty to abstain from its use, and, as it were, to recede from his right. Accordingly, when the Lord spake these things to the disciples, He did what that apostle expounds more clearly a little further on, when he says, “Do ye not know that they who minister in the temple live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used none of these things.” When he says, therefore, that the Lord ordained it thus, but that he did not use the ordinance, he certainly indicates that it was a power to use that was given him, and not a necessity of service that was imposed upon him.

74. Accordingly, as our Lord ordained what the apostle declares Him to have ordained,—namely, that those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel,—He gave these counsels to the apostles in order that they might be without the care of providing or of carrying with them things necessary for this life, whether great or the very smallest; consequently He introduced this term, “neither a staff,” with the view of showing that, on the part of those who were faithful to Him, all things were due to His ministers, who themselves, too, required nothing superfluous. And thus, when He added the words, “For the workman is worthy of his meat,” He indicated quite clearly, and made it thoroughly plain, how and for what reason it was that

He spake all these things. It is this kind of power, therefore, that the Lord denoted under the term “staff,” when He said that they should “take nothing” for their journey, save a staff only. For the sentence might also have been briefly expressed in this way: “Take with you none of the necessaries of life, neither a staff, save a staff only.” So that the phrase “neither a staff” may be taken to be equivalent to “not even the smallest things;” while the addition, “save a staff only,” may be understood to mean that, in virtue of that power which they received from the Lord, and which was signified by the name “staff” [or, “rod”], even those things which were not carried with them would not be wanting to them. Our Lord therefore used both phrases. But inasmuch as one and the same evangelist has not recorded them both, the writer who has told us that the rod, as introduced in the one sense, was to be taken, is supposed to be in antagonism to him who has told us that the rod, as occurring again in the other sense, was not to be taken. After this explanation of the matter, however, no such supposition ought to be entertained.

75. In like manner, also, when Matthew tells us that the shoes were not to be carried with them on the journey, what is intended is the checking of that care which thinks that such things must be carried with them, because otherwise they might be unprovided. Thus, too, the import of what is said regarding the two coats is, that none of them should think of taking with him another coat in addition to the one in which he was clad, as if he was afraid that he might come to be in want, while all the time the power (which was received from the Lord) made him sure of getting what was needful. To the same effect, when Mark says that they were to be shod with sandals or soles, he gives us to understand that this matter of the shoe has some sort of mystical significance, the point being that the foot is to be neither covered, nor yet left bare to the ground; by which the idea may be conveyed that the gospel was neither to be concealed, nor yet made to depend on the good things of earth. And as to the fact that what is forbidden is neither the carrying nor the possessing of two coats, but more distinctly the putting of them on,—the words being, “and not put on two coats,”—what counsel is conveyed to them therein but this, that they ought to walk not in duplicity, but in simplicity?

76. Thus it is not by any means to be made a matter of doubt that the Lord Himself spake all these words, some of them with a literal import, and others of them with a figurative, although the evangelists may have introduced them only in part into their writings,—one inserting one section, and another giving a different portion. Certain passages, at the same time, have been recorded in identical terms either by some two of them, or by some three, or even by all the four together. And yet not even when this is the case can we take it for granted that everything has been committed to writing which was either uttered or done by Him. Moreover, if any one fancies that the Lord could not in the course of the same discourse have used some expressions with a figurative application and others with a literal, let him but examine His other addresses, and he will see how rash and inconsiderate such a notion is. For, then (to mention but a single instance which occurs meantime to my mind), when Christ gives the counsel not to let the left hand know what the right hand doeth, he may suppose himself under the necessity of accepting in the same figurative sense at once the almsgivings themselves referred to, and the other instructions offered on that occasion.

77. In good truth, I must repeat here once more an admonition which it behoves the reader to keep in mind, so as not to be requiring that kind of advice so very frequently, namely, that in various passages of His discourses, the Lord has reiterated much which He had uttered already on other occasions. It is needful, indeed, to call this fact to mind, lest, when it happens that the order of such passages does not appear to fit in with the narrative of another of the evangelists, the reader should fancy that this establishes some contradiction between them; whereas he ought really to understand it to be due to the fact that something is repeated a second time in that connection which had been already expressed elsewhere. And this is a remark that should be held applicable not only to His words, but also to His deeds. For there is nothing to hinder us from believing that the same thing may have taken place more than once. But for a man to impeach the gospel simply because he does not believe in the repeated occurrence of some incident, which no one [at least] can prove to be an impossible event, betrays mere sacrilegious vanity.

CHAPTER XXXI

OF THE ACCOUNT GIVEN BY MATTHEW AND LUKE OF THE OCCASION WHEN JOHN THE BAPTIST WAS IN PRISON, AND DESPATCHED HIS DISCIPLES ON A MISSION TO THE LORD

78. Matthew proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: “And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve disciples, He departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities. Now, when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and said unto Him, Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?” and so on, until we come to the words, “And Wisdom is justified of her children.” This whole section relating to John the Baptist, touching the message which he sent to Jesus, and the tenor of the reply which those whom he despatched received, and the terms in which the Lord spoke of John after the departure of these persons, is introduced also by Luke. The order, however, is not the same. But it is not made clear which of them gives the order of his own recollections, and which keeps by the historical succession of the things themselves.

CHAPTER XXXII

OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH HE UPBRAIDED THE CITIES BECAUSE THEY REPENTED NOT, WHICH INCIDENT IS RECORDED BY LUKE AS WELL AS BY MATTHEW; AND OF THE QUESTION REGARDING MATTHEW’S HARMONY WITH LUKE IN THE MATTER OF THE ORDER

79. Thereafter Matthew goes on as follows: “Then began He to upbraid the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not;” and so on, down to where we read, “It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom at the day of judgment, than for you.” This section likewise is given by Luke, who reports it also as an utterence from the lips of the Lord in connection with a certain continuous discourse which He delivered. This circumstance makes it the rather appear that Luke has recorded these words in the strict consecution in which they were spoken by the Lord, while Matthew has kept by the order of his own recollections. Or if it is supposed that Matthew’s words, “Then began He to upbraid the cities,” must be taken in such a way as to imply that the intention was to express, by the term “then,” the precise point of time at which the saying was

uttered, and not to signify in a somewhat broader way the period at which many of these things were done and spoken, then I say that any one entertaining that idea may equally well believe these sentences to have been pronounced on two different occasions. For if it is the fact that even in one and the same evangelist some things are found which the Lord utters twice over, as is the case with this very Luke in the instance of the counsel not to take a scrip for the journey, and so with other things in like manner which we find to have been spoken by the Lord in two different places,—why should it seem strange if some other word of the Lord, which was originally uttered on two separate occasions, may happen also to be recorded by two several evangelists, each of whom gives it in the order in which it was actually spoken, and if thus the order seems to be different in the two, simply because the sentences were uttered both on the occasion noticed by the one, and on that referred to by the other?

CHAPTER XXXIII

OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH HE CALLS THEM TO TAKE HIS YOKE AND BURDEN UPON THEM, AND OF THE QUESTION AS TO THE ABSENCE OF ANY DISCREPANCY BETWEEN MATTHEW AND LUKE IN THE ORDER OF NARRATION

80. Matthew proceeds thus: “At that time Jesus answered and said, I make my acknowledgment to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent,” and so on, down to where we read, “For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” This passage is also noticed by Luke, but only in part. For he does not give us the words, “Come unto me, all ye that labour,” and the rest. It is, however, quite legitimate to suppose that all this may have been said on one occasion by the Lord, and yet that Luke has not recorded the whole of what was said on that occasion. For Matthew’s phrase is, that “at that time Jesus answered and said;” by which is meant the time after His upbraiding of the cities. Luke, on the other hand, interposes some matters, although they are not many, after that upbraiding of the cities; and then he subjoins this sentence: “In that hour He rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said.” Thus, too, we see that even if Matthew’s expression had been, not “at that time,” but “in that very hour,” still what Luke inserts in the interval is so little that it would not appear an unreasonable thing to give it as all spoken in the same hour.

CHAPTER XXXIV

OF THE PASSAGE IN WHICH IT IS SAID THAT THE DISCIPLES PLUCKED THE EARS OF CORN AND ATE THEM; AND OF THE QUESTION AS TO HOW MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE ARE IN HARMONY WITH EACH OTHER WITH RESPECT TO THE ORDER OF NARRATION THERE

81. Matthew continues his history in the following terms: “At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath-day through the corn; and His disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat;” and so forth, on to the words, “For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day.” This is also given both by Mark and by Luke, in a way precluding any idea of antagonism. At the same time, these latter do not employ the definition “at that time.” That fact, consequently, may perhaps make it the more probable that Matthew has retained the order of actual occurrence here, and that the others have kept by the order of their own recollections; unless, indeed, this phrase “at that time” is to be taken in a broader sense, that is to say, as indicating the period at which these many and various incidents took place.

CHAPTER XXXV

OF THE MAN WITH THE WITHERED HAND, WHO WAS RESTORED ON THE SABBATH-DAY; AND OF THE QUESTION AS TO HOW MATTHEW’S NARRATIVE OF THIS INCIDENT CAN BE HARMONIZED WITH THOSE OF MARK AND LUKE, EITHER IN THE MATTER OF THE ORDER OF EVENTS, OR IN THE REPORT OF THE WORDS SPOKEN BY THE LORD AND BY THE JEWS

82. Matthew continues his account thus: “And when He was departed thence, He went into their synagogue: and, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered;” and so on, down to the words, “And it was restored whole, like as the other.” The restoring of this man who had the withered hand is also not passed over in silence by Mark and Luke. Now, the circumstance that this day is also designated a Sabbath might possibly lead us to suppose that both the plucking of the ears of corn and the healing of this man took place on the same day, were it not that Luke has made it plain that it was on a different Sabbath that the cure of the withered hand was wrought. Accordingly, when Matthew says, “And when He was departed thence, He came into their synagogue,” the words do indeed import that the said coming did not take place until after He had departed from the previously mentioned locality; but, at the same time, they leave the question

undecided as to the number of days which may have elapsed between His passing from the aforesaid corn-field and His coming into their synagogue; and they express nothing as to His going there in direct and immediate succession. And thus space is offered us for getting in the narrative of Luke, who tells us that it was on another Sabbath that this man’s hand was restored. But it is possible that a difficulty may be felt in the circumstance that Matthew has told us how the people put this question to the Lord, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day?” wishing thereby to find an occasion for accusing Him; and that in reply He set before them the parable of the sheep in these terms: “What man shall there be among you that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it and lift it out? How much, then, is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-days;” whereas Mark and Luke rather represent the people to have had this question put to them by the Lord, “Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath-day, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?” We solve this difficulty, however, by the supposition that the people in the first instance asked the Lord, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day?” that thereupon, knowing the thoughts of the men who were thus seeking an occasion for accusing Him, He set the man whom He had been on the point of healing in their midst, and addressed to them the interrogations which Mark and Luke mention to have been put; that, as they remained silent, He next put before them the parable of the sheep, and drew the conclusion that it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath-day; and that, finally, when He had looked round about on them with anger, as Mark tells us, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, “Stretch forth thine hand.”

CHAPTER XXXVI

OF ANOTHER QUESTION WHICH DEMANDS OUR CONSIDERATION, NAMELY, WHETHER, IN PASSING FROM THE ACCOUNT OF THE MAN WHOSE WITHERED HAND WAS RESTORED, THESE THREE EVANGELISTS PROCEED TO THEIR NEXT SUBJECTS IN SUCH A WAY AS TO CREATE NO CONTRADICTIONS IN REGARD TO THE ORDER OF THEIR NARRATIONS

83. Matthew continues his narrative, connecting it in the following manner with what precedes: “But the Pharisees went out and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him. But when Jesus knew it, He withdrew Himself from thence: and great multitudes followed Him, and He healed

them all; and charged them that they should not make Him known: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Esaias, saying;” and so forth, down to where it is said, “And in His name shall the Gentiles trust.” He is the only one that records these facts. The other two have advanced to other themes. Mark, it is true, seems to some extent to have kept by the historical order: for he tells us how Jesus, on discovering the malignant disposition which was entertained toward Him by the Jews, withdrew to the sea along with His disciples, and that then vast multitudes flocked to Him, and He healed great numbers of them. But, at the same time, it is not quite clear at what precise point He begins to pass to a new subject, different from what would have followed in strict succession. He leaves it uncertain whether such a transition is made at the point where he tells us how the multitudes gathered about Him (for if that was the case now, it might equally well have been the case at some other time), or at the point where He says that “He goeth up into a mountain.” It is this latter circumstance that Luke also appears to notice when he says, “And it came to pass in those days, that He went out into a mountain to pray.” For by the expression “in those days,” he makes it plain enough that the incident referred to did not occur in immediate succession upon what precedes.

CHAPTER XXXVII

OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE ACCOUNTS GIVEN BY MATTHEW AND LUKE REGARDING THE DUMB AND BLIND MAN WHO WAS POSSESSED WITH A DEVIL

84. Matthew then goes on with his recital in the following fashion: “Then was brought unto Him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb; and He healed him, insomuch that he both spake and saw.” Luke introduces this narrative, not in the same order, but after a number of other matters. He also speaks of the man only as dumb, and not as blind in addition. But it is not to be inferred, from the mere circumstance of his silence as to some portion or other of the account, that he speaks of an entirely different person. For he has likewise recorded what followed [immediately after that cure], as it stands also in Matthew.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH IT WAS SAID TO HIM THAT HE CAST OUT DEVILS IN THE POWER OF BEELZEBUB, AND OF THE DECLARATIONS DRAWN FORTH FROM HIM BY THAT CIRCUMSTANCE IN REGARD TO THE BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND WITH RESPECT TO THE TWO TREES; AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER THERE IS NOT SOME DISCREPANCY IN THESE SECTIONS BETWEEN MATTHEW AND THE OTHER TWO EVANGELISTS, AND PARTICULARLY BETWEEN MATTHEW AND LUKE

85. Matthew proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: “And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils but in Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation;” and so on, down to the words, “By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” Mark does not bring in this allegation against Jesus, that He cast out devils in [the power of] Beelzebub, in immediate sequence on the story of the dumb man; but after certain other matters, recorded by himself alone, he introduces this incident also, either because he recalled it to mind in a different connection, and so appended it there, or because he had at first made certain omissions in his history, and after noticing these, took up this order of narration again. On the other hand, Luke gives an account of these things almost in the same language as Matthew has employed. And the circumstance that Luke here designates the Spirit of God as the finger of God, does not betray any departure from a genuine identity in sense; but it rather teaches us an additional lesson, giving us to know in what manner we are to interpret the phrase “the finger of God” wherever it occurs in the Scriptures. Moreover, with regard to other matters which are left unmentioned in this section both by Mark and by Luke, no difficulty can be raised by these. Neither can that be the case with some other circumstances which are related by them in somewhat different terms, for the sense still remains the same.

CHAPTER XXXIX

OF THE QUESTION AS TO THE MANNER OF MATTHEW'S AGREEMENT WITH LUKE IN THE ACCOUNTS WHICH ARE GIVEN OF THE LORD'S REPLY TO CERTAIN PERSONS WHO SOUGHT A SIGN, WHEN HE SPOKE OF JONAS THE PROPHET, AND OF THE NINEVITES, AND OF THE QUEEN OF THE SOUTH, AND OF THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT WHICH, WHEN IT HAS GONE OUT OF THE MAN, RETURNS AND FINDS THE HOUSE GARNISHED

86. Matthew goes on and relates what followed thus: "Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign of thee;" and so on, down to where we read, "Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." These words are recorded also by Luke in this connection, although in a somewhat different order. For he has mentioned the fact that they sought of the Lord a sign from heaven at an earlier point in his narrative, which makes it follow immediately on his version of the miracle wrought on the dumb man. He has not, however, recorded there the reply which was given to them by the Lord. But further on, after [telling us how] the people were gathered together, he states that this answer was returned to the persons who, as he gives us to understand, were mentioned by him in those earlier verses as seeking of Him a sign from heaven. And that reply he also subjoins, only after introducing the passage regarding the woman who said to the Lord, "Blessed is the womb that bare thee." This notice of the woman, moreover, he inserts after relating the Lord's discourse concerning the unclean spirit that goes out of the man, and then returns and finds the house garnished. In this way, then, after the notice of the woman, and after his statement of the reply which was made to the multitudes on the subject of the sign which they sought from heaven, he brings in the similitude of the prophet Jonas; and then, directly continuing the Lord's discourse, he next instances what was said concerning the Queen of the South and the Ninevites. Thus he has rather related something which Matthew has passed over in silence, than omitted any of the facts which that evangelist has narrated in this place. And furthermore, who can fail to perceive that the question as to the precise order in which these words were uttered by the Lord is a superfluous one? For this lesson also we ought to learn, on the unimpeachable authority of the evangelists,—namely, that no offence against truth need be supposed on the part of a writer, although he may not reproduce the discourse of some speaker in the precise order in

which the person from whose lips it proceeded might have given it; the fact being, that the mere item of the order, whether it be this or that, does not affect the subject-matter itself. And by his present version Luke indicates that this discourse of the Lord was of greater length than we might otherwise have supposed; and he records certain topics handled in it, which resemble those which are mentioned by Matthew in his recital of the sermon which was delivered on the mount. So that we take these words to have been spoken twice over, to wit, on that previous occasion, and again on this one. But on the conclusion of this discourse Luke proceeds to another subject, as to which it is uncertain whether, in the account which he gives of it, he has kept by the order of actual occurrence. For he connects it in this way: “And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with him.” He does not say, however, “as He spake these words,” but only “as He spake.” For if he had said, “as He spake these words,” the expression would of course have compelled us to suppose that the incidents referred to, besides being recorded by him in this order, also took place on the Lord’s part in that same order.

CHAPTER XL

OF THE QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THERE IS ANY DISCREPANCY BETWEEN MATTHEW ON THE ONE HAND, AND MARK AND LUKE ON THE OTHER, IN REGARD TO THE ORDER IN WHICH THE NOTICE IS GIVEN OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH HIS MOTHER AND HIS BRETHREN WERE ANNOUNCED TO HIM

87. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: “While He yet talked to the people, behold, His mother and His brethren stood without, desiring to speak to Him;” and so on, down to the words, “For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” Without doubt, we ought to understand this to have occurred in immediate sequence on the preceding incidents. For he has prefaced his transition to this narrative by the words, “While He yet talked to the people;” and what does this term “yet” refer to, but to the very matter of which He was speaking on that occasion? For the expression is not, “When He talked to the people, Behold, His mother and His brethren;” but, “While He was yet speaking,” etc. And that phraseology compels us to suppose that it was at the very time when He was still

engaged in speaking of those things which were mentioned immediately above. For Mark has also related what our Lord said after His declaration on the subject of the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. He gives it thus: “And there came His mother and His brethren,” omitting certain matters which meet us in the context connected with that discourse of the Lord, and which Matthew has introduced there with greater fulness than Mark, and Luke, again, with greater fulness than Matthew. On the other hand, Luke has not kept the historical order in the report which he offers of this incident, but has given it by anticipation, and has narrated it as he recalled it to memory, at a point antecedent to the date of its literal occurrence. But furthermore, he has brought it in in such a manner that it appears dissociated from any close connection either with what precedes it or with what follows it. For, after reporting certain of the Lord’s parables, he has introduced his notice of what took place with His mother and His brethren in the following manner: “Then came to Him His mother and His brethren, and could not come at Him for the press.” Thus he has not explained at what precise time it was that they came to Him. And again, when he passes off from this subject, he proceeds in these terms: “Now it came to pass on one of the days, that He went into a ship with His disciples.” And certainly, when he employs this expression, “it came to pass on one of the days,” he indicates clearly enough that we are under no necessity of supposing that the day meant was the very day on which this incident took place, or the one following in immediate succession. Consequently, neither in the matter of the Lord’s words, nor in that of the historical order of the occurrences related, does Matthew’s account of the incident which occurred in connection with the mother and the brethren of the Lord, exhibit any want of harmony with the versions given of the same by the other two evangelists.

CHAPTER XLI

OF THE WORDS WHICH WERE SPOKEN OUT OF THE SHIP ON THE SUBJECT OF THE SOWER, WHOSE SEED, AS HE SOWED IT, FELL PARTLY ON THE WAYSIDE, ETC.; AND CONCERNING THE MAN WHO HAD TARES SOWED OVER AND ABOVE HIS WHEAT; AND CONCERNING THE GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED AND THE LEAVEN; AS ALSO OF WHAT HE SAID IN THE HOUSE REGARDING THE TREASURE HID IN THE FIELD, AND THE PEARL, AND THE NET CAST INTO THE SEA, AND THE MAN THAT BRINGS OUT OF HIS TREASURE THINGS NEW AND OLD; AND OF THE METHOD IN WHICH MATTHEW’S HARMONY WITH MARK AND LUKE IS PROVED BOTH WITH RESPECT TO THE THINGS WHICH THEY HAVE REPORTED IN COMMON WITH HIM, AND IN THE MATTER OF THE ORDER OF NARRATION

88. Matthew continues thus: “In that day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside: and great multitudes were gathered together unto Him, so that He went into a ship and sat, and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And He spake many things unto them in parables, saying;” and so on, down to the words, “Therefore every scribe which is instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.” That the things narrated in this passage took place immediately after the incident touching the mother and the brethren of the Lord, and that Matthew has also retained that historical order in his version of these events, is indicated by the circumstance that, in passing from the one subject to the other, he has expressed the connection by this mode of speech: “In that day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea-side; and great multitudes were gathered together unto Him.” For by adopting this phrase, “in that day” (unless perchance the word “day,” in accordance with a use and wont of the Scriptures, may signify simply “time”), he intimates clearly enough either that the thing now related took place in immediate succession on what precedes, or that much at least could not have intervened. This inference is confirmed by the fact that Mark keeps by the same order. Luke, on the other hand, after his account of what happened with the mother and the brethren of the Lord, passes to a different subject. But at the same time, in making that transition, he does not institute any such connection as bears the appearance of a want of consistency with this order. Consequently, in all those passages in which Mark and Luke have reported in common with Matthew the words which were spoken by the Lord, there is no questioning their harmony with one another. Moreover, the sections which are given by

Matthew only are even much more beyond the range of controversy. And in the matter of the order of narration, although it is presented somewhat differently by the various evangelists, according as they have proceeded severally along the line of historical succession, or along that of the succession of recollection, I see as little reason for alleging any discrepancy of statement or any contradiction between any of the writers.

CHAPTER XLII

OF HIS COMING INTO HIS OWN COUNTRY, AND OF THE ASTONISHMENT OF THE PEOPLE AT HIS DOCTRINE, AS THEY LOOKED WITH CONTEMPT UPON HIS LINEAGE; OF MATTHEW'S HARMONY WITH MARK AND LUKE IN THIS SECTION; AND IN PARTICULAR, OF THE QUESTION WHETHER THE ORDER OF NARRATION WHICH IS PRESENTED BY THE FIRST OF THESE EVANGELISTS DOES NOT EXHIBIT SOME WANT OF CONSISTENCY WITH THAT OF THE OTHER TWO

89. Matthew thence proceeds as follows: “And it came to pass that, when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence: and when He was come into His own country, He taught them in their synagogues;” and so on, down to the words, “And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.” Thus he passes from the above discourse containing the parables, on to this passage, in such a way as not to make it absolutely necessary for us to take the one to have followed in immediate historical succession upon the other. All the more may we suppose this to be the case, when we see how Mark passes on from these parables to a subject which is not identical with Matthew’s directly succeeding theme, but quite different from that, and agreeing rather with what Luke introduces; and how he has constructed his narrative in such a manner as to make the balance of credibility rest on the side of the supposition, that what followed in immediate historical sequence was rather the occurrences which these two latter evangelists both insert in near connection [with the parables],—namely, the incidents of the ship in which Jesus was asleep, and the miracle performed in the expulsion of the devils in the country of the Gerasenes,—two events which Matthew has already recalled and introduced at an earlier stage of his record. At present, therefore, we have to consider whether [Matthew’s report of] what the Lord spoke, and what was said to Him in His own country, is in concord with the accounts given by the other two, namely, Mark and Luke. For, in widely different and dissimilar sections of

his history, John mentions words, either spoken to the Lord or spoken by Him, which resemble those recorded in this passage by the other three evangelists.

90. Now Mark, indeed, gives this passage in terms almost precisely identical with those which meet us in Matthew; with the one exception, that what he says the Lord was called by His fellow-townsmen is, “the carpenter, and the son of Mary,” and not, as Matthew tells us, the “carpenter’s son.” Neither is there anything to marvel at in this, since He might quite fairly have have been designated by both these names. For in taking Him to be the son of a carpenter, they naturally also took Him to be a carpenter. Luke, on the other hand, sets forth the same incident on a wider scale, and records a variety of other matters which took place in that connection. And this account he brings in at a point not long subsequent to His baptism and temptation, thus unquestionably introducing by anticipation what really happened only after the occurrence of a number of intervening circumstances. In this, therefore, every one may see an illustration of a principle of prime consequence in relation to this most weighty question concerning the harmony of the evangelists, which we have undertaken to solve by the help of God,—the principle, namely, that it is not by mere ignorance that these writers have been led to make certain omissions, and that it is as little through simple ignorance of the actual historical order of events that they have [at times] preferred to keep by the order in which these events were recalled to their own memory. The correctness of this principle may be gathered most clearly from the fact that, at a point antecedent to any account given by him of anything done by the Lord at Capharnaum, Luke has anticipated the literal date, and has inserted this passage which we have at present under consideration, and in which we are told how His fellow-citizens at once were astonished at the might of the authority which was in Him, and expressed their contempt for the meanness of His family. For he tells us that He addressed them in these terms: “Ye will surely say unto me, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capharnaum, do also here in thy country;” while, so far as the narrative of this same Luke is concerned, we have not yet read of Him as having done anything at Capharnaum. Furthermore, as it will not take up much time, and as, besides, it is both a very simple and a highly needful

matter to do so, we insert here the whole context, showing the subject from which and the method in which the writer has come to give the contents of this section. After his statement regarding the Lord's baptism and temptation, he proceeds in these terms: "And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from Him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about. And He taught in their synagogues, and was magnified of all. And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as his custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias: and when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me. He hath sent me to preach the gospel to the poor, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the accepted year of the Lord, and the day of retribution. And when He had closed the book, He gave it again to the minister, and sat down: and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? And He said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capharnaum, do also here in thy country." And so he continues with the rest, until this entire section in his narrative is gone over. What, therefore, can be more manifest, than that he has knowingly introduced this notice at a point antecedent to its historical date, seeing it admits of no question that he knows and refers to certain mighty deeds done by Him before this period in Capharnaum, which, at the same time, he is aware he has not as yet narrated in detail? For certainly he has not made such an advance with his history from his notice of the Lord's baptism, as that he should be supposed to have forgotten the fact that up to this point he has not mentioned any of the things which took place in Capharnaum; the truth being, that he has just begun here, after the baptism, to give us his narrative concerning the Lord personally.

CHAPTER XLIII

OF THE MUTUAL CONSISTENCY OF THE ACCOUNTS WHICH ARE GIVEN BY MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE OF WHAT WAS SAID BY HEROD ON HEARING ABOUT THE WONDERFUL WORKS OF THE LORD, AND OF THEIR CONCORD IN REGARD TO THE ORDER OF NARRATION

91. Matthew continues: “At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, and said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist: he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.” Mark gives the same passage, and in the same manner, but not in the same order. For, after relating how the Lord sent forth the disciples with the charge to take nothing with them on the journey save a staff only, and after bringing to its close so much of the discourse which was then delivered as has been recorded by him, he has subjoined this section. He does not, however, connect it in such a way as to compel us to suppose that what it narrates took place actually in immediate sequence on what precedes it in the history. And in this, indeed, Matthew is at one with him. For Matthew’s expression is, “at that time,” not “on that day,” or “at that hour.” Only there is this difference between them, that Mark refers not to Herod himself as the utterer of the words in question, but to the people, his statement being this: “They said that John the Baptist was risen from the dead;” whereas Matthew makes Herod himself the speaker, the phrase being: “He said unto his servants.” Luke, again, keeping the same order of narration as Mark, and introducing it also indeed, like Mark, in no such way as to compel us to suppose that his order must have been the order of actual occurrence, presents his version of the same passage in the following terms: “Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by Him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead; and of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again. And Herod said, John have I beheaded: but who is this of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see Him.” In these words Luke also attests Mark’s statement, at least, so far as concerns the affirmation that it was not Herod himself, but other parties, who said that John was risen from the dead. But as regards his mentioning how Herod was perplexed, and his bringing in thereafter those words of the same prince: “John have I beheaded: but who is this of whom I hear such things?” we must either

understand that after the said perplexity he became persuaded in his own mind of the truth of what was asserted by others, when he spoke to his servants, in accordance with the version given by Matthew, which runs thus: “And he said to his servants, This is John the Baptist: he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him;” or we must suppose that these words were uttered in a manner betraying that he was still in a state of perplexity. For had he said, “Can this be John the Baptist?” or, “Can it chance that this is John the Baptist?” there would have been no need of saying anything about a mode of utterance by which he might have revealed his dubiety and perplexity. But seeing that these forms of expression are not before us, his words may be taken to have been pronounced in either of two ways: so that we may either suppose him to have been convinced by what was said by others, and so to have spoken the words in question with a real belief [in John’s reappearance]; or we may imagine him to have been still in that state of hesitancy of which mention is made by Luke. Our explanation is favoured by the fact that Mark, who had already told us how it was by others that the statement was made as to John having risen from the dead, does not fail to let us know also that in the end Herod himself spoke to this effect: “It is John whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.” For these words may also be taken to have been pronounced in either of two ways,—namely, as the utterances either of one corroborating a fact, or of one in doubt. Moreover, while Luke passes on to a new subject after the notice which he gives of this incident, those other two, Matthew and Mark, take occasion to tell us at this point in what way John was put to death by Herod.

CHAPTER XLIV

OF THE ORDER IN WHICH THE ACCOUNTS OF JOHN’S IMPRISONMENT AND DEATH ARE GIVEN BY THESE THREE EVANGELISTS

92. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: “For Herod laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias’ sake, his brother’s wife;” and so on, down to the words, “And his disciples came and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.” Mark gives this narrative in similar terms. Luke, on the other hand, does not relate it in the same succession, but introduces it in connection

with his statement of the baptism wherewith the Lord was baptized. Hence we are to understand him to have acted by anticipation here, and to have taken the opportunity of recording at this point an event which took place actually a considerable period later. For he has first reported those words which John spake with regard to the Lord—namely, that “His fan is in His hand, and that He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather the wheat into His garner; but the chaff He will burn up with fire unquenchable;” and immediately thereafter he has appended his statement of an incident which the evangelist John demonstrates not to have taken place in direct historical sequence. For this latter writer mentions that, after Jesus had been baptized, He went into Galilee at the period when He turned the water into wine; and that, after a sojourn of a few days in Capharnaum, He left that district and returned to the land of Judaea, and there baptized a multitude about the Jordan, previous to the time when John was imprisoned. Now what reader, unless he were all the better versed in these writings, would not take it to be implied here that it was after the utterance of the words with regard to the fan and the purged floor that Herod became incensed against John, and cast him into prison? Yet, that the incident referred to here did not, as matter of fact, occur in the order in which it is here recorded, we have already shown elsewhere; and, indeed, Luke himself puts the proof into our hands. For if [he had meant that] John’s incarceration took place immediately after the utterance of those words, then what are we to make of the fact that in Luke’s own narrative the baptism of Jesus is introduced subsequently to his notice of the imprisonment of John? Consequently it is manifest that, recalling the circumstance in connection with the present occasion, he has brought it in here by anticipation, and has thus inserted it in his history at a point antecedent to a number of incidents, of which it was his purpose to leave us some record, and which, in point of time, were antecedent to this mishap that befell John. But it is as little the case that the other two evangelists, Matthew and Mark, have placed the fact of John’s imprisonment in that position in their narratives which, as is apparent also from their own writings, belonged to it in the actual order of events. For they, too, have told us how it was on John’s being cast into prison that the Lord went into Galilee; and then, after [relating] a number of things which He did in Galilee, they come to Herod’s admonition or doubt as to the rising again from the dead of that John whom he beheaded; and in connection with this latter occasion, they give us the story of all that occurred in the matter of John’s incarceration and death.

CHAPTER XLV

OF THE ORDER AND THE METHOD IN WHICH ALL THE FOUR EVANGELISTS COME TO THE NARRATION OF THE MIRACLE OF THE FIVE LOAVES

93. After stating how the report of John’s death was brought to Christ, Matthew continues his account, and introduces it in the following connection: “When Jesus heard of it, He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed Him on foot out of the cities. And He went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and He healed their sick.” He mentions, therefore, that this took place immediately after John had suffered. Consequently it was after this that those things took place which have been previously recorded—namely, the circumstances which alarmed Herod, and induced him to say, “John have I beheaded.” For it must surely be understood that these incidents occurred subsequently which report carried to the ears of Herod, so that he became anxious, and was in perplexity as to who that person possibly could be of whom he heard things so remarkable, when he had himself put John to death. Mark, again, after relating how John suffered, mentions that the disciples who had been sent forth returned to Jesus, and told Him all that they had done and taught; and that the Lord (a fact which he alone records) directed them to rest for a little while in a desert place, and that He went on board a vessel with them, and departed; and that the crowds of people, when they perceived that movement, went before them to that place; and that the Lord had compassion on them, and taught them many things; and that, when the hour was now advancing, it came to pass that all who were present were made to eat of the five loaves and the two fishes. This miracle has been recorded by all the four evangelists. For in like manner, Luke, who has given an account of the death of John at a much earlier stage in his narrative, in connection with the occasion of which we have spoken, in the present context tells us first of Herod’s perplexity as to who the Lord could be, and immediately thereafter appends statements to the same effect with those in Mark,—namely, that the apostles returned to Him, and reported to Him all that they

had done; and that then He took them with Him and departed into a desert place, and that the multitudes followed Him thither, and that He spake to them concerning the kingdom of God, and restored those who stood in need of healing. Then, too, he mentions that, when the day was declining, the miracle of the five loaves was wrought.

94. But John, again, who differs greatly from those three in this respect, that he deals more with the discourses which the Lord delivered than with the works which He so marvellously wrought, after recording how He left Judaea and departed the second time into Galilee, which departure is understood to have taken place at the time to which the other evangelists also refer when they tell us that on John’s imprisonment He went into Galilee,—after recording this, I say, John inserts in the immediate context of his narrative the considerable discourse which He spake as He was passing through Samaria, on the occasion of His meeting with the Samaritan woman whom He found at the well; and then he states that two days after this He departed thence and went into Galilee, and that thereupon He came to Cana of Galilee, where He had turned the water into wine, and that there He healed the son of a certain nobleman. But as to other things which the rest have told us He did and said in Galilee, John is silent. At the same time, however, he mentions something which the others have left unnoticed,—namely, the fact that He went up to Jerusalem on the day of the feast, and there wrought the miracle on the man who had the infirmity of thirty-eight years standing, and who found no one by whose help he might be carried down to the pool in which people afflicted with various diseases were healed. In connection with this, John also relates how He spake many things on that occasion. He tells us, further, that after these events He departed across the sea of Galilee, which is also the sea of Tiberias, and that a great multitude followed Him; that thereupon He went away to a mountain, and there sat with His disciples,—the passover, a feast of the Jews, being then nigh; that then, on lifting up His eyes and seeing a very great company, He fed them with the five loaves and the two fishes; which notice is given us also by the other evangelists. And this makes it certain that he has passed by those incidents which form the course along which these others have come to introduce the notice of this miracle into their narratives. Nevertheless, while different methods of narration, as it appears,

are prosecuted, and while the first three evangelists have thus left unnoticed certain matters which the fourth has recorded, we see how those three, on the one hand, who have been keeping nearly the same course, have found a direct meeting-point with each other at this miracle of the five loaves; and how this fourth writer, on the other hand, who is conversant above all with the profound teachings of the Lord's discourses, in relating some other matters on which the rest are silent, has sped round in a certain method upon their track, and, while about to soar off from their pathway after a brief space again into the region of loftier subjects, has found a meeting-point with them in the view of presenting this narrative of the miracle of the five loaves, which is common to them all.

CHAPTER XLVI

OF THE QUESTION AS TO HOW THE FOUR EVANGELISTS HARMONIZE WITH EACH OTHER ON THIS SAME SUBJECT OF THE MIRACLE OF THE FIVE LOAVES

95. Matthew then proceeds and carries on his narrative in due consecution to the said incident connected with the five loaves in the following manner: "And when it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat;" and so forth, down to where we read, "And the number of those who ate was five thousand men, besides women and children." This miracle, therefore, which all the four evangelists record, and in which they are supposed to betray certain discrepancies with each other, must be examined and subjected to discussion, in order that we may also learn from this instance some rules which will be applicable to all other similar cases in the form of principles regulating modes of statement in which, however diverse they may be, the same sense is nevertheless retained, and the same veracity in the expression of matters of fact is preserved. And, indeed, this investigation ought to begin not with Matthew, although that would be in accordance with the order in which the evangelists stand, but rather with John, by whom the narrative in question is told with such particularity as to record even the names of the disciples with whom the Lord conversed on this subject. For he gives the history in the following terms: "When Jesus than lifted up His

eyes, and saw a very great company come unto Him, He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this He said to prove him; for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered Him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto Him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two fishes; but what are they among so many? Jesus said therefore, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. Jesus then took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. And when they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that they be not lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten."

96. The inquiry which we have here to handle does not concern itself with a statement given by this evangelist, in which he specifies the kind of loaves; for he has not omitted to mention, what has been omitted by the others, that they were barley loaves. Neither does the question deal with what he has left unnoticed,—namely, the fact that, in addition to the five thousand men, there were also women and children, as Matthew tells us. And it ought now by all means to be a settled matter, and one kept regularly in view in all such investigations, that no one should find any difficulty in the mere circumstance that something which is unrecorded by one writer is related by another. But the question here is as to how the several matters narrated by these writers may be [shown to be] all true, so that the one of them, in giving his own peculiar version, does not put out of court the account offered by the other. For if the Lord, according to the narrative of John, on seeing the multitudes before Him, asked Philip, with the view of proving him, whence bread might be got to be given to them, a difficulty may be raised as to the truth of the statement which is made by the others,—namely, that the disciples first said to the Lord that He should send the multitudes away, in order that they might go and purchase food for themselves in the neighbouring localities, and that He made this reply to them, according to Matthew: "They need not depart; give ye them to eat."

With this last Mark and Luke also agree, only that they leave out the words, "They need not depart." We are to suppose, therefore, that after these words the Lord looked at the multitude, and spoke to Philip in the terms which John records, but which those others have omitted. Then the reply which, according to John, was made by Philip, is mentioned by Mark as having been given by the disciples,—the intention being, that we should understand Philip to have returned this answer as the mouthpiece of the rest; although they may also have put the plural number in place of the singular, according to very frequent usage. The words here actually ascribed to Philip—namely, "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little"—have their counterpart in this version by Mark, "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?" The expression, again, which the same Mark relates to have been used by the Lord, namely, "How many loaves have ye?" has been passed by without notice by the rest. On the other hand, the statement occurring in John, to the effect that Andrew made the suggestion about the five loaves and the two fishes, appears in the others, who use here the plural number instead of the singular, as a notice referring the suggestion to the disciples generally. And, indeed, Luke has coupled Philip's reply together with Andrew's answer in one sentence. For when he says, "We have no more but five loaves and two fishes," he reports Andrew's response; but when he adds, "except we should go and buy meat for all this people," he seems to carry us back to Philip's reply, only that he has left unnoticed the "two hundred pennyworth." At the same time, that [sentence about the going and buying meat] may also be understood to be implied in Andrew's own words. For after saying, "There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two fishes," he likewise subjoined, "But what are they among so many?" And this last clause really means the same as the expression in question, namely, "except we should go and buy meat for all this people."

97. From all this variety of statement which is found in connection with a genuine harmony in regard to the matters of fact and the ideas conveyed, it becomes sufficiently clear that we have the wholesome lesson inculcated upon us, that what we have to look to in studying a person's words is nothing else than the intention of the speakers; in setting forth which

intention all truthful narrators ought to take the utmost pains when they record anything, whether it may relate to man, or to angels, or to God. For the subjects’ mind and intention admit of being expressed in words which should leave no appearance of any discrepancies as regards the matter of fact.

98. In this connection, it is true, we ought not to omit to direct the reader’s attention to certain other matters which may turn out to be of a kindred nature with those already considered. One of these is found in the circumstance that Luke has stated that they were ordered to sit down by fifties, whereas Mark’s version is that it was by hundreds and by fifties. This difference, however, creates no real difficulty. The truth is, that the one has reported simply a part, and the other has given the whole. For the evangelist who has introduced the notice of the hundreds as well as the fifties has just mentioned something which the other has left unmentioned. But there is no contradiction between them on that account. If, indeed, the one had noticed only the fifties, and the other only the hundreds, they might certainly have seemed to be in some antagonism with each other, and it might not have been easy to make it plain that both instructions were actually uttered, although only the one has been specified by the former writer, and the other by the latter. And yet, even in such a case, who will not acknowledge that when the matter was subjected to more careful consideration, the solution should have been discovered? This I have instanced now for this reason, that matters of that kind do often present themselves, which, while they really contain no discrepancies, appear to do so to persons who pay insufficient attention to them, and pronounce upon them inconsiderately.

CHAPTER XLVII

OF HIS WALKING UPON THE WATER, AND OF THE QUESTIONS REGARDING THE HARMONY OF THE EVANGELISTS WHO HAVE NARRATED THAT SCENE, AND REGARDING THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY PASS OFF FROM THE SECTION RECORDING THE OCCASION ON WHICH HE FED THE MULTITUDES WITH THE FIVE LOAVES

99. Matthew goes on with his account in the following terms: “And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up into a mountain apart to pray:

and when the evening was come, He was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night He came unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit;" and so on, down to the words, "They came and worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God." In like manner, Mark, after narrating the miracle of the five loaves, gives his account of this same incident in the following terms: "And when it was late, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and He alone on the land. And He saw them toiling in rowing: for the wind was contrary to them," and so on. This is similar to Matthew's version, except that nothing is said as to Peter's walking upon the waters. But here we must see to it, that no difficulty be found in what Mark has stated regarding the Lord, namely, that, when He walked upon the waters, He would also have passed by them. For in what way could they have understood this, were it not that He was really proceeding in a different direction from them, as if minded to pass those persons by like strangers, who were so far from recognizing Him that they took Him to be a spirit? Who, however, is so obtuse as not to perceive that this bears a mystical significance? At the same time, too, He came to the help of the men in their perturbation and outcry, and said to them, "Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid." What is the explanation, therefore, of His wish to pass by those persons whom nevertheless He thus encouraged when they were in terror, but that that intention to pass them by was made to serve the purpose of drawing forth those cries to which it was meet to bear succour?

100. Furthermore, John still tarries for a little space with these others. For, after his recital of the miracle of the five loaves, he also gives us some account of the vessel that laboured, and of the Lord's act in walking upon the sea. This notice he connects with his preceding narrative in the following manner: "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force and make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone. And when it became late, His disciples went down unto the sea; and when they had entered into a ship, they came over the sea to Capharnaum: and it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew," and so on. In this there

cannot appear to be anything contrary to the records preserved in the other Gospels, unless it be the circumstance that Matthew tells us how, when the multitudes were sent away, He went up into a mountain, in order that there He might pray alone; while John states that He was on a mountain with those same multitudes whom He fed with the five loaves. But seeing that John also informs us how He departed into a mountain after the said miracle, to preclude His being taken possession of by the multitudes, who wished to make Him a king, it is surely evident that they had come down from the mountain to more level ground when those loaves were provided for the crowds. And consequently there is no contradiction between the statements made by Matthew and John as to His going up again to the mountain. The only difference is, that Matthew uses the phrase "He went up," while John's term is "He departed." And there would be an antagonism between these two, only if in departing He had not gone up. Nor, again, is any want of harmony betrayed by the fact that Matthew's words are, "He went up into a mountain apart to pray;" whereas John puts it thus: "When He perceived that they would come to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone." Surely the matter of the departure is in no way a thing antagonistic to the matter of prayer. For, indeed, the Lord, who in His own person transformed the body of our humiliation in order that He might make it like unto the body of His own glory, hereby taught us also the truth that the matter of departure should be to us in like manner grave matter for prayer. Neither, again, is there any defect of consistency proved by the circumstance that Matthew has told us first how He commanded His disciples to embark in the little ship, and to go before Him unto the other side of the lake until He sent the multitudes away, and then informs us that, after the multitudes were sent away, He Himself went up into a mountain alone to pray; while John mentions first that He departed unto a mountain alone, and then proceeds thus: "And when it became late, His disciples came down unto the sea; and when they had entered into a ship," etc. For who will not perceive that, in recapitulating the facts, John has spoken of something as actually done at a later point by the disciples, which Jesus had already charged them to do before His own departure unto the mountain; just as it is a familiar procedure in discourse, to revert in some fashion or other to any matter which otherwise would have been passed over? But inasmuch as it may not be specifically noted that a reversion, especially when done briefly and instantaneously, is made to something omitted, the auditors are sometimes led to suppose that the occurrence which is mentioned at the later stage also took place literally at the later period. In this way the evangelist's statement really is, that to those persons whom he had described as embarking in the ship and coming across the sea to Capharnaum, the Lord came, walking toward them upon the waters, as they were toiling in the deep; which approach of the Lord of course took place at the earlier point, during the said voyage in which they were making their way to Capharnaum.

101. On the other hand, Luke, after the record of the miracle of the five loaves, passes to another subject, and diverges from this order of narration. For he makes no mention of that little ship, and of the Lord's pathway over the waters. But after the statement conveyed in these words, "And they did all eat, and were filled, and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets," he has subjoined the following notice: "And it came to pass, as He was alone praying, His disciples were with Him; and He asked them, saying, Who say the people that I am?" Thus he relates in this succession something new, which is not given by those three who have left us the account of the manner in which the Lord walked upon the waters, and came to the disciples when they were on the voyage. It ought not, however, on this account, to be supposed that it was on that same mountain to which Matthew has told us He went up in order to pray alone, that He said to His disciples, "Who say the people that I am?" For Luke, too, seems to harmonize with Matthew in this, because his words are, "as He was alone praying;" while Matthew's were, "He went up unto a mountain alone to pray." But it must by all means be held to have been on a different occasion that He put this question, since [it is said here, both that] He prayed alone, and [that] the disciples were with Him. Thus Luke, indeed, has mentioned only the fact of His being alone, but has said nothing of His being without His disciples, as is the case with Matthew and John, since [according to these latter] they left Him in order to go before Him to the other side of the sea. For with unmistakeable plainness Luke has added the statement that "His disciples also were with Him." Consequently, in saying that He was alone, he meant his statement to refer to the multitudes, who did not abide with Him.

CHAPTER XLVIII

OF THE ABSENCE OF ANY DISCREPANCY BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK ON THE ONE HAND, AND JOHN ON THE OTHER, IN THE ACCOUNTS WHICH THE THREE GIVE TOGETHER OF WHAT TOOK PLACE AFTER THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAKE WAS REACHED

102. Matthew proceeds as follows: “And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Genesar. And when the men of that place had knowledge of Him, they sent out unto all that country round about, and brought unto Him all that were diseased, and besought Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole. Then came to Him scribes and Pharisees from Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread,” and so on, down to the words, “But to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.” This is also related by Mark, in a way which precludes the raising of any question about discrepancies. For anything expressed here by the one in a form differing from that used by the other, involves at least no departure from identity in sense. John, on the other hand, fixing his attention, as his wont is, upon the Lord’s discourses, passes on from the notice of the ship, which the Lord reached by walking upon the waters, to what took place after they disembarked upon the land, and mentions that He took occasion from the eating of the bread to deliver many lessons, dealing pre-eminently with divine things. After this address, too, his narrative is again borne on to one subject after another, in a sublime strain. At the same time, this transition which he thus makes to different themes does not involve any real want of harmony, although he exhibits certain divergencies from these others, with the order of events presented by the rest of the evangelists. For what is there to hinder us from supposing at once that those persons, whose story is given by Matthew and Mark, were healed by the Lord, and that He delivered this discourse which John recounts to the people who followed Him across the sea? Such a supposition is made all the more reasonable by the fact that Capharnaum, to which place they are said, according to John, to have crossed, is near the lake of Genesar; and that, again, is the district into which they came, according to Matthew, on landing.

CHAPTER XLIX

OF THE WOMAN OF CANAAN WHO SAID, “YET THE DOGS EAT OF THE CRUMBS WHICH FALL FROM THEIR MASTERS’ TABLES,” AND OF THE HARMONY BETWEEN THE ACCOUNT GIVEN BY MATTHEW AND THAT BY LUKE

103. Matthew, accordingly, proceeds with his narrative, after the notice of that discourse which the Lord delivered in the presence of the Pharisees on the subject of the unwashed hands. Preserving also the order of the succeeding events, as far as it is indicated by the transitions from the one to the other, he introduces this account into the context in the following manner: “And Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But He answered her not a word,” and so on, down to the words, “O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.” This story of the woman of Canaan is recorded also by Mark, who keeps the same order of events, and gives no occasion to raise any question as to a want of harmony, unless it be found in the circumstance that he tells us how the Lord was in the house at the time when the said woman came to Him with the petition on behalf of her daughter. Now we might readily suppose that Matthew has simply omitted mention of the house, while nevertheless relating the same occurrence. But inasmuch as he states that the disciples made the suggestion to Him in these terms, “Send her away, for she crieth after us,” he seems to imply distinctly that the woman gave utterance to these cries of entreaty behind the Lord as He walked on. In what sense, then, could it have been “in the house,” unless we are to take Mark to have intimated the fact, that she had gone into the place where Jesus then was, when he mentioned at the beginning of the narrative that He was in the house? But when Matthew says that “He answered her not a word,” he has given us also to understand what neither of the two evangelists has related explicitly,—namely, the fact that during that silence which He maintained Jesus went out of the house. And in this manner all the other particulars are brought into a connection which from this point onwards presents no kind of appearance of discrepancy. For as to what Mark records with respect to the answer which the Lord gave her, to the

effect that it was not meet to take the children's bread and cast it unto the dogs, that reply was returned only after the interposition of certain sayings which Matthew has not left unrecorded. That is to say, [we are to suppose that] there came in first the request which the disciples addressed to Him in regard to the woman's case, and the answer He gave them, to the effect that He was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel; that next there was her own approach, or, in other words, her coming after Him, and worshipping Him, saying, "Lord, help me;" and that then, after all these incidents, those words were spoken which have been recorded by both the evangelists.

CHAPTER L

OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH HE FED THE MULTITUDES WITH THE SEVEN LOAVES, AND OF THE QUESTION AS TO THE HARMONY BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK IN THEIR ACCOUNTS OF THAT MIRACLE

104. Matthew proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: "And when Jesus had departed from thence, He came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto Him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and He healed them; insomuch that the multitudes wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel. Then Jesus called His disciples unto Him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat," and so on, down to the words, "And they that did eat were four thousand men, besides women and children." This other miracle of the seven loaves and the few little fishes is recorded also by Mark, and that too in almost the same order; the exception being that he inserts before it a narrative given by no other,—namely, that relating to the deaf man whose ears the Lord opened, when He spat and said, "Effeta," that is, Be opened.

105. In the case of this miracle of the seven loaves, it is certainly not a superfluous task to call attention to the fact that these two evangelists, Matthew and Mark, have thus introduced it into their narrative. For if one of them had recorded this miracle, who at the same time had taken no notice of

the instance of the five loaves, he would have been judged to stand opposed to the rest. For in such circumstances, who would not have supposed that there was only the one miracle wrought in actual fact, and that an incomplete and unveracious version of it had been given by the writer referred to, or by the others, or by all of them together; so [that we must have imagined] either that the one evangelist, by a mistake on his own part, had been led to mention seven loaves instead of five; or that the other two, whether as having both presented an incorrect statement, or as having been misled through a slip of memory, had put the number five for the number seven. In like manner, it might have been supposed that there was a contradiction between the twelve baskets and the seven baskets, and again, between the five thousand and the four thousand, expressing the numbers of those who were fed. But now, since those evangelists who have given us the account of the miracle of the seven loaves have also not failed to mention the other miracle of the five loaves, no difficulty can be felt by any one, and all can see that both works were really wrought. This, accordingly, we have instanced, in order that, if in any other passage we come upon some similar deed of the Lord's, which, as told by one evangelist, seems so utterly contrary to the version of it given by another that no method of solving the difficulty can possibly be found, we may understand the explanation to be simply this, that both incidents really took place, and that they were recorded separately by the two several writers. This is precisely what we have already recommended to attention in the matter of the seating of the multitudes by hundreds and by fifties. For were it not for the circumstance that both these numbers are found noted by the one historian, we might have supposed that the different writers had made contradictory statements.

CHAPTER LI

OF MATTHEW'S DECLARATION THAT, ON LEAVING THESE PARTS, HE CAME INTO THE COASTS OF MAGEDAN; AND OF THE QUESTION AS TO HIS AGREEMENT WITH MARK IN THAT INTIMATION, AS WELL AS IN THE NOTICE OF THE SAYING ABOUT JONAH, WHICH WAS RETURNED AGAIN AS AN ANSWER TO THOSE WHO SOUGHT A SIGN

106. Matthew continues as follows: "And He sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magedan;" and so on, down to the words, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there

shall no sign be given unto it but the sign of the prophet Jonas.” This has already been recorded in another connection by the same Matthew. Hence again and again we must hold by the position that the Lord spake the same words on repeated occasions; so that when any completely irreconcilable difference appears between statements of His utterances, we are to understand the words to have been spoken twice over. In this case, indeed, Mark also keeps the same order; and after his account of the miracle of the seven loaves, subjoins the same intimation as is given us in Matthew, only with this difference, that Matthew’s expression for the locality is not Dalmanutha, as is read in certain codices, but Magedan. There is no reason, however, for questioning the fact that it is the same place that is intended under both names. For most codices, even of Mark’s Gospel, give no other reading than that of Magedan. Neither should any difficulty be felt in the fact that Mark does not say, as Matthew does, that in the answer which the Lord returned to those who sought after a sign, He referred to Jonah, but mentions simply that He replied in these terms: “There shall no sign be given unto it.” For we are given to understand what kind of sign they asked—namely, one from heaven. And he has simply omitted to specify the words which Matthew has introduced regarding Jonas.

CHAPTER LII

OF MATTHEW’S AGREEMENT WITH MARK IN THE STATEMENT ABOUT THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES, AS REGARDS BOTH THE SUBJECT ITSELF AND THE ORDER OF NARRATIVE

107. Matthew proceeds: “And He left them, and departed. And when His disciples were come to the other side, they forgot to take bread. Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees;” and so forth, down to where we read, “Then understood they that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.” These words are recorded also by Mark, and that likewise in the same order.

CHAPTER LIII

OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH HE ASKED THE DISCIPLES WHOM MEN SAID THAT HE WAS; AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER, WITH REGARD EITHER TO THE SUBJECT-MATTER OR THE ORDER, THERE ARE ANY DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE

108. Matthew continues thus: “And Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi; and He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets;” and so on, down to the words, “And whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Mark relates this nearly in the same order. But he has brought in before it a narrative which is given by him alone,—namely, that regarding the giving of sight to that blind man who said to the Lord, “I see men as trees walking.” Luke, again, also records this incident, inserting it after his account of the miracle of the five loaves; and, as we have already shown above, the order of recollection which is followed in his case is not antagonistic to the order adopted by these others. Some difficulty, however, may be imagined in the circumstance that Luke’s representation bears that the Lord put this question, as to whom men held Him to be, to His disciples at a time when He was alone praying, and when His disciples were also with Him; whereas Mark, on the other hand, tells us that the question was put by Him to the disciples when they were on the way. But this will be a difficulty only to the man who has never prayed on the way.

109. I recollect having already stated that no one should suppose that Peter received that name for the first time on the occasion when He said to Him, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.” For the time at which he did obtain this name was that referred to by John, when he mentions that he was addressed in these terms: “Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, Peter.” Hence, too, we are as little to think that Peter got this designation on the occasion to which Mark alludes, when he recounts the twelve apostles individually by name, and tells us how James and John were called the sons of thunder, merely on the ground that in that passage he has recorded the fact that He surnamed him Peter. For that circumstance is noticed there simply because it was suggested to

the writer's recollection at that particular point, and not because it took place in actual fact at that specific time.

CHAPTER LIV

OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH HE ANNOUNCED HIS COMING PASSION TO THE DISCIPLES, AND OF THE MEASURE OF CONCORD BETWEEN MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE IN THE ACCOUNTS WHICH THEY GIVE OF THE SAME

110. Matthew proceeds in the following strain: "Then charged He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ. From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples how that He must go into Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes;" and so on, down to where we read, "Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Mark and Luke add these passages in the same order. Only Luke says nothing about the opposition which Peter expressed to the passion of Christ.

CHAPTER LV

OF THE HARMONY BETWEEN THE THREE EVANGELISTS IN THE NOTICES WHICH THEY SUBJOIN OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THE LORD CHARGED THE MAN TO FOLLOW HIM WHO WISHED TO COME AFTER HIM

111. Matthew continues thus: "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me;" and so on, down to the words, "And then He shall reward every man according to his work." This is appended also by Mark, who keeps the same order. But he does not say of the Son of man, who was to come with His angels, that He is to reward every man according to his work. Nevertheless, he mentions at the same time that the Lord spoke to this effect: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And this may be taken to bear the same sense as is expressed by Matthew, when he says, that "He shall reward every man according to his work." Luke also adds the same statements in the same order, slightly varying the terms indeed in which they are conveyed, but still showing a complete parallel with the others in regard to the truthful reproduction of the self-same ideas.

CHAPTER LVI

OF THE MANIFESTATION WHICH THE LORD MADE OF HIMSELF, IN COMPANY WITH MOSES AND ELIAS, TO HIS DISCIPLES ON THE MOUNTAIN; AND OF THE QUESTION CONCERNING THE HARMONY BETWEEN THE FIRST THREE EVANGELISTS WITH REGARD TO THE ORDER AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THAT EVENT; AND IN ESPECIAL, THE NUMBER OF THE DAYS, IN SO FAR AS MATTHEW AND MARK STATE THAT IT TOOK PLACE AFTER SIX DAYS, WHILE LUKE SAYS THAT IT WAS AFTER EIGHT DAYS

112. Matthew proceeds thus: “Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom. And after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and brought them up into an high mountain;” and so on, down to where we read, “Tell the vision to no man until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.” This vision of the Lord upon the mount in the presence of the three disciples, Peter, James, and John, on which occasion also the testimony of the Father’s voice was borne Him from heaven, is related by the three evangelists in the same order, and in a manner expressing the same sense completely. And as regards other matters, they may be seen by the readers to be in accordance with those modes of narration of which we have given examples in many passages already, and in which there are diversities in expression without any consequent diversity in meaning.

113. But with respect to the circumstance that Mark, along with Matthew, tells us how the event took place after six days, while Luke states that it was after eight days, those who find a difficulty here do not deserve to be set aside with contempt, but should be enlightened by the offering of explanations. For when we announce a space of days in these terms, “after so many days,” sometimes we do not include in the number the day on which we speak, or the day on which the thing itself which we intimate beforehand or promise is declared to take place, but reckon only the intervening days, on the real and full and final expiry of which the incident in question is to occur. This is what Matthew and Mark have done. Leaving out of their calculation the day on which Jesus spoke these words, and the day on which He exhibited that memorable spectacle on the mount, they have regarded simply the intermediate days, and thus have used the expression, “after six days.” But Luke, reckoning in the extreme day at

either end, that is to say, the first day and the last day, has made it “after eight days,” in accordance with that mode of speech in which the part is put for the whole.

114. Moreover, the statement which Luke makes with regard to Moses and Elias in these terms, “And it came to pass, as they departed from Him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here,” and so forth, ought not to be considered antagonistic to what Matthew and Mark have subjoined to the same effect, as if they made Peter offer this suggestion while Moses and Elias were still talking with the Lord. For they have not expressly said that it was at that time, but rather they have simply left unnoticed the fact which Luke has added,—namely, that it was as they went away that Peter made the suggestion to the Lord with respect to the making of three tabernacles. At the same time, Luke has appended the intimation that it was as they were entering the cloud that the voice came from heaven,—a circumstance which is not affirmed, but which is as little contradicted, by the others.

CHAPTER LVII

OF THE HARMONY BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK IN THE ACCOUNTS GIVEN OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH HE SPOKE TO THE DISCIPLES CONCERNING THE COMING OF ELIAS

115. Matthew goes on thus: “And His disciples asked Him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come and restore all things. But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist.” This same passage is given also by Mark, who keeps also the same order; and although he exhibits some diversity of expression, he makes no departure from a truthful representation of the same sense. He has not, however, added the statement, that the disciples understood that the Lord had referred to John the Baptist in saying that Elias was come already.

CHAPTER LVIII

OF THE MAN WHO BROUGHT BEFORE HIM HIS SON, WHOM THE DISCIPLES WERE UNABLE TO HEAL; AND OF THE QUESTION CONCERNING THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THESE THREE EVANGELISTS ALSO IN THE MATTER OF THE ORDER OF NARRATION HERE

116. Matthew goes on in the following terms: “And when He was come to the multitude, there came to Him a certain man, kneeling down before Him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son; for he is lunatic, and sore vexed;” and so on, down to the words, “Howbeit this kind is not cast out but by prayer and fasting.” Both Mark and Luke record this incident, and that, too, in the same order, without any suspicion of a want of harmony.

CHAPTER LIX

OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH THE DISCIPLES WERE EXCEEDING SORRY WHEN HE SPOKE TO THEM OF HIS PASSION, AS IT IS RELATED IN THE SAME ORDER BY THE THREE EVANGELISTS

117. Matthew continues thus: “And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men; and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall rise again. And they were exceeding sorry.” Mark and Luke record this passage in the same order.

CHAPTER LX

OF HIS PAYING THE TRIBUTE MONEY OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE FISH, AN INCIDENT WHICH MATTHEW ALONE MENTIONS

118. Matthew continues in these terms: “And when they were come to Capharnaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said to him, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes;” and so on, down to where we read: “Thou shall find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.” He is the only one who relates this occurrence, after the interposition of which he follows again the order which is pursued also by Mark and Luke in company with him.

CHAPTER LXI

OF THE LITTLE CHILD WHOM HE SET BEFORE THEM FOR THEIR IMITATION, AND OF THE OFFENCES OF THE WORLD; OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BODY CAUSING OFFENCES; OF THE ANGELS OF THE LITTLE ONES, WHO BEHOLD THE FACE OF THE FATHER; OF THE ONE SHEEP OUT OF THE HUNDRED SHEEP; OF THE REPROVING OF A BROTHER IN PRIVATE; OF THE LOOSING AND THE BINDING OF SINS; OF THE AGREEMENT OF TWO, AND THE GATHERING TOGETHER OF THREE; OF THE FORGIVING OF SINS EVEN UNTO SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN; OF THE SERVANT WHO HAD HIS OWN LARGE DEBT REMITTED, AND YET REFUSED TO REMIT THE SMALL DEBT WHICH HIS FELLOW-SERVANT OWED TO HIM; AND OF THE QUESTION AS TO MATTHEW'S HARMONY WITH THE OTHER EVANGELISTS ON ALL THESE SUBJECTS

119. The same Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: "In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who, thinkest Thou, is the greater in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and so on, down to the words, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Of this somewhat lengthened discourse which was spoken by the Lord, Mark, instead of giving the whole, has presented only certain portions, in dealing with which he follows meantime the same order. He has also introduced some matters which Matthew does not mention. Moreover, in this complete discourse, so far as we have taken it under consideration, the only interruption is that which is made by Peter, when he inquires how often a brother ought to be forgiven. The Lord, however, was speaking in a strain which makes it quite clear that even the question which Peter thus proposed, and the answer which was returned to him, belong really to the same address. Luke, again, records none of these things in the order here observed, with the exception of the incident with the little child whom He set before His disciples, for their imitation when they were thinking of their own greatness. For if he has also narrated some other matters of a tenor resembling those which are inserted in this discourse, these are sayings which he has recalled for notice in other connections, and on occasions different from the present: just as John introduces the Lord's words on the subject of the forgiveness of sins,—namely, those to the effect that they should be remitted to him to whom the apostles remitted them, and that they should be retained to him to whom

they retained them, as spoken by the Lord after His resurrection; while Matthew mentions that in the discourse now under notice the Lord made this declaration, which, however, the self-same evangelist at the same time affirms to have been given on a previous occasion to Peter. Therefore, to preclude the necessity of having always to inculcate the same rule, we ought to bear in mind the fact that Jesus uttered the same word repeatedly, and in a number of different places,—a principle which we have pressed so often upon your attention already; and this consideration should save us from feeling any perplexity, even although the order of the sayings may be thought to create some difficulty.

CHAPTER LXII

OF THE HARMONY SUBSISTING BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK IN THE ACCOUNTS WHICH THEY OFFER OF THE TIME WHEN HE WAS ASKED WHETHER IT WAS LAWFUL TO PUT AWAY ONE'S WIFE, AND ESPECIALLY IN REGARD TO THE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS AND REPLIES WHICH PASSED BETWEEN THE LORD AND THE JEWS, AND IN WHICH THE EVANGELISTS SEEM TO BE, TO SOME SMALL EXTENT, AT VARIANCE

120. Matthew continues giving his narrative in the following manner: “And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, He departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan; and great multitudes followed Him; and He healed them there. The Pharisees also came unto Him, tempting Him, and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?” And so on, down to the words, “He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.” Mark also records this, and observes the same order. At the same time, we must certainly see to it that no appearance of contradiction be supposed to arise from the circumstance that the same Mark tells us how the Pharisees were asked by the Lord as to what Moses commanded them, and that on His questioning them to that effect they returned the answer regarding the bill of divorcement which Moses suffered them to write; whereas, according to Matthew's version, it was after the Lord had spoken those words in which He had shown them, out of the law, how God made male and female to be one flesh, and how, therefore, those [thus joined together of Him] ought not to be put asunder by man, that they gave the reply, “Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?” To this interrogation, also [as Matthew puts it], He says again in reply, “Moses, because of the hardness

of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.” There is no difficulty, I repeat, in this; for it is not the case that Mark makes no kind of mention of the reply which was thus given by the Lord, but he brings it in after the answer which was returned by them to His question relating to the bill of divorcement.

121. As far as the order or method of statement here adopted is concerned, we ought to understand that it in no way affects the truth of the subject itself, whether the question regarding the permission to write a bill of divorcement given by the said Moses, by whom also it is recorded that God made male and female to be one flesh, was addressed by these Pharisees to the Lord at the time when He was forbidding the separation of husband and wife, and confirming His declaration on that subject by the authority of the law; or whether the said question was conveyed in the reply which the same persons returned to the Lord, at the time when He asked them about what Moses had commanded them. For His intention was not to offer them any reason for the permission which Moses thus granted them until they had first mentioned the matter themselves; which intention on His part is what is indicated by the inquiry which Mark has introduced. On the other hand, their desire was to use the authority of Moses in commanding the giving of a bill of divorcement, for the purpose of stopping His mouth, so to speak, in the matter of forbidding, as they believed He undoubtedly would do, a man to put away his wife. For they had approached Him with the view of saying what would tempt Him. And this desire of theirs is what is indicated by Matthew, when, instead of stating how they were interrogated first themselves, he represents them as having of their own accord put the question about the precept of Moses, in order that they might thereby, as it were, convict the Lord of doing what was wrong in prohibiting the putting away of wives. Wherefore, since the mind of the speakers, in the service of which the words ought to stand, has been exhibited by both evangelists, it is no matter how the modes of narration adopted by the two may differ, provided neither of them fails to give a correct representation of the subject itself.

122. Another view of the matter may also be taken, namely, that, in accordance with Mark’s statement, when these persons began by

questioning the Lord on the subject of the putting away of a wife, He questioned them in turn as to what Moses commanded them; and that, on their replying that Moses suffered them to write a bill of divorcement and put the wife away, He made His answer to them regarding the said law which was given by Moses, reminding them how God instituted the union of male and female, and addressing them in the words which are inserted by Matthew, namely, “Have ye not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female?” and so on. On hearing these words, they repeated in the form of an inquiry what they had already given utterance to when replying to His first interrogation, namely the expression, “Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?” Then Jesus showed that the reason was the hardness of their heart; which explanation Mark brings in, with a view to brevity, at an earlier point, as if it had been given in reply to that former response of theirs, which Matthew has passed over. And this he does as judging that no injury could be done to the truth at whichever point the explanation might be introduced, seeing that the words, with a view to which it was returned, had been uttered twice in the same form; and seeing also that the Lord, in any case, had offered the said explanation in reply to such words.

CHAPTER LXIII

OF THE LITTLE CHILDREN ON WHOM HE LAID HIS HANDS; OF THE RICH MAN TO WHOM HE SAID, “SELL ALL THAT THOU HAST;” OF THE VINEYARD IN WHICH THE LABOURERS WERE HIRED AT DIFFERENT HOURS; AND OF THE QUESTION AS TO THE ABSENCE OF ANY DISCREPANCY BETWEEN MATTHEW AND THE OTHER TWO EVANGELISTS ON THESE SUBJECTS

123. Matthew proceeds thus: “Then were there brought unto Him little children, that He should put His hands on them, and pray; and the disciples rebuked them;” and so on, down to where we read, “For many are called, but few are chosen.” Mark has followed the same order here as Matthew. But Matthew is the only one who introduces the section relating to the labourers who were hired for the vineyard. Luke, on the other hand, first mentions what He said to those who were asking each other who should be the greatest, and next subjoins at once the passage concerning the man whom they had seen casting out devils, although he did not follow Him; then he parts company with the other two at the point where he tells us how

He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem; and after the interposition of a number of subjects, he joins them again in giving the story of the rich man, to whom the word is addressed, “Sell all that thou hast,” which individual’s case is related here by the other two evangelists, but still in the succession which is followed by all the narratives alike. For in the passage referred to in Luke, that writer does not fail to bring in the story of the little children, just as the other two do immediately before the mention of the rich man. With regard, then, to the accounts which are given us of this rich person, who asks what good thing he should do in order to obtain eternal life, there may appear to be some discrepancy between them, because the words were, according to Matthew, “Why askest thou me about the good?” while according to the others they were, “Why callest thou me good?” The sentence, “Why askest thou me about the good?” may then be referred more particularly to what was expressed by the man when he put the question, “What good thing shall I do?” For there we have both the name “good” applied to Christ, and the question put. But the address “Good Master” does not of itself convey the question. Accordingly, the best method of disposing of it is to understand both these sentences to have been uttered, “Why callest thou me good?” and, “Why askest thou me about the good?”

CHAPTER LXIV

OF THE OCCASIONS ON WHICH HE FORETOLD HIS PASSION IN PRIVATE TO HIS DISCIPLES; AND OF THE TIME WHEN THE MOTHER OF ZEBEDEE’S CHILDREN CAME WITH HER SONS, REQUESTING THAT ONE OF THEM SHOULD SIT ON HIS RIGHT HAND, AND THE OTHER ON HIS LEFT HAND; AND OF THE ABSENCE OF ANY DISCREPANCY BETWEEN MATTHEW AND THE OTHER TWO EVANGELISTS ON THESE SUBJECTS

124. Matthew continues his narrative in the following terms: “And Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him; and the third day He shall rise again. Then came to Him the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons, worshipping Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him;” and so on, down to the words, “Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Here again Mark keeps the same order as Matthew, only

he represents the sons of Zebedee to have made the request themselves; while Matthew has stated that it was preferred on their behalf not by their own personal application, but by their mother, as she had laid what was their wish before the Lord. Hence Mark has briefly intimated what was said on that occasion as spoken by them, rather than by her [in their name]. And to conclude with the matter, it is to them rather than to her, according to Matthew no less than according to Mark, that the Lord returned His reply. Luke, on the other hand, after narrating in the same order our Lord's predictions to the twelve disciples on the subject of His passion and resurrection, leaves unnoticed what the other two evangelists immediately go on to record; and after the interposition of these passages, he is joined by his fellow-writers again [at the point where they report the incident] at Jericho. Moreover, as to what Matthew and Mark have stated with respect to the princes of the Gentiles exercising dominion over those who are subject to them,—namely, that it should not be so with them [the disciples], but that he who was greatest among them should even be a servant to the others,—Luke also gives us something of the same tenor, although not in that connection; and the order itself indicates that the same sentiment was expressed by the Lord on a second occasion.

CHAPTER LXV

OF THE ABSENCE OF ANY ANTAGONISM BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK, OR BETWEEN MATTHEW AND LUKE, IN THE ACCOUNT OFFERED OF THE GIVING OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND MEN OF JERICHO

125. Matthew continues thus: “And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. And, behold, two blind men sitting by the wayside heard that Jesus passed by, and cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David;” and so on, down to the words, “And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.” Mark also records this incident, but mentions only one blind man. This difficulty is solved in the way in which a former difficulty was explained which met us in the case of the two persons who were tormented by the legion of devils in the territory of the Gerasenes. For, that in this instance also of the two blind men whom he [Matthew] alone has introduced here, one of them was of pre-eminent note and repute in that city, is a fact made clear enough by the single

consideration, that Mark has recorded both his own name and his father's; a circumstance which scarcely comes across us in all the many cases of healing which had been already performed by the Lord, unless that miracle be an exception, in the recital of which the evangelist has mentioned by name Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, whose daughter Jesus restored to life. And in this latter instance this intention becomes the more apparent, from the fact that the said ruler of the synagogue was certainly a man of rank in the place. Consequently there can be little doubt that this Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, had fallen from some position of great prosperity, and was now regarded as an object of the most notorious and the most remarkable wretchedness, because, in addition to being blind, he had also to sit begging. And this is also the reason, then, why Mark has chosen to mention only the one whose restoration to sight acquired for the miracle a fame as widespread as was the notoriety which the man's misfortune itself had gained.

126. But Luke, although he mentions an incident altogether of the same tenor, is nevertheless to be understood as really narrating only a similar miracle which was wrought in the case of another blind man, and as putting on record its similarity to the said miracle in the method of performance. For he states that it was performed when He was coming nigh unto Jericho; while the others say that it took place when He was departing from Jericho. Now the name of the city, and the resemblance in the deed, favour the supposition that there was but one such occurrence. But still, the idea that the evangelists really contradict each other here, in so far as the one says, "As He was come nigh unto Jericho," while the others put it thus, "As He came out of Jericho," is one which no one surely will be prevailed on to accept, unless those who would have it more readily credited that the gospel is unveracious, than that He wrought two miracles of a similar nature and in similar circumstances. But every faithful son of the gospel will most readily perceive which of these two alternatives is the more credible, and which the rather to be accepted as true; and, indeed, every gainsayer too, when he is advised concerning the real state of the case, will answer himself either by the silence which he will have to observe, or at least by the tenor of his reflections should he decline to be silent.

CHAPTER LXVI

OF THE COLT OF THE ASS WHICH IS MENTIONED BY MATTHEW, AND OF THE CONSISTENCY OF HIS ACCOUNT WITH THAT OF THE OTHER EVANGELISTS, WHO SPEAK ONLY OF THE ASS

127. Matthew goes on with his narrative in the following terms: “And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her;” and so on, down to the words, “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.” Mark also records this occurrence, and inserts it in the same order. Luke, on the other hand, tarries a space by Jericho, recounting certain matters which these others have omitted,—namely, the story of Zacchaeus, the chief of the publicans, and some sayings which are couched in parabolic form. After instancing these things, however, this evangelist again joins company with the others in the narrative relating to the ass on which Jesus sat. And let not the circumstance stagger us, that Matthew speaks both of an ass and of the colt of an ass, while the others say nothing of the ass. For here again we must bear in mind the rule which we have already introduced in dealing with the statements about the seating of the people by fifties and by hundreds on the occasion on which the multitudes were fed with the five loaves. Now, after this principle has been brought into application, the reader should not feel any serious difficulty in the present case. Indeed, even had Matthew said nothing about the colt, just as his fellow-historians have taken no notice of the ass, the fact should not have created any such perplexity as to induce the idea of an insuperable contradiction between the two statements, when the one writer speaks only of the ass, and the others only of the colt of the ass. But how much less cause then for any disquietude ought there to be, when we see that the one writer has mentioned the ass to which the others have omitted to refer, in such a manner as at the same time not to leave unnoticed also the colt of which the rest have spoken! In fine, where it is possible to suppose both objects to have been included in the occurrence, there is no real antagonism, although the one writer may specify only the one thing, and another only the other. How much less need there be any contradiction,

when the one writer particularizes the one object, and another instances both!

128. Again, although John tells us nothing as to the way in which the Lord despatched His disciples to fetch these animals to Him, nevertheless he inserts a brief allusion to this colt, and cites also the word of the prophet which Matthew makes use of. In the case also of this testimony from the prophet, the terms in which it is reproduced by the evangelists, although they exhibit certain differences, do not fail to express a sense identical in intention. Some difficulty, however, may be felt in the fact that Matthew adduces this passage in a form which represents the prophet to have made mention of the ass; whereas this is not the case, either with the quotation as introduced by John, or with the version given in the ecclesiastical codices of the translation in common use. An explanation of this variation seems to me to be found in the fact that Matthew is understood to have written his Gospel in the Hebrew language. Moreover, it is manifest that the translation which bears the name of the Septuagint differs in some particulars from the text which is found in the Hebrew by those who know that tongue, and by the several scholars who have given us renderings of the same Hebrew books. And if an explanation is asked for this discrepancy, or for the circumstance that the weighty authority of the Septuagint translation diverges in many passages from the rendering of the truth which is discovered in the Hebrew codices, I am of opinion that no more probable account of the matter will suggest itself, than the supposition that the Seventy composed their version under the influence of the very Spirit by whose inspiration the things which they were engaged in translating had been originally spoken. This is an idea which receives confirmation also from the marvellous consent which is asserted to have characterized them. Consequently, when these translators, while not departing from the real mind of God from which these sayings proceeded, and to the expression of which the words ought to be subservient, gave a different form to some matters in their reproduction of the text, they had no intention of exemplifying anything else than the very thing which we now admiringly contemplate in that kind of harmonious diversity which marks the four evangelists, and in the light of which it is made clear that there is no failure from strict truth, although one historian may give an account of some theme

in a manner different indeed from another, and yet not so different as to involve an actual departure from the sense intended by the person with whom he is bound to be in concord and agreement. To understand this is of advantage to character, with a view at once to guard against what is false, and to pronounce correctly upon it; and it is of no less consequence to faith itself, in the way of precluding the supposition that, as it were with consecrated sounds, truth has a kind of defence provided for it which might imply God's handing over to us not only the thing itself, but likewise the very words which are required for its enunciation; whereas the fact rather is, that the theme itself which is to be expressed is so decidedly deemed of superior importance to the words in which it has to be expressed, that we would be under no obligation to ask about them at all, if it were possible for us to know the truth without the terms, as God knows it, and as His angels also know it in Him.

CHAPTER LXVII

OF THE EXPULSION OF THE SELLERS AND BUYERS FROM THE TEMPLE, AND OF THE QUESTION AS TO THE HARMONY BETWEEN THE FIRST THREE EVANGELISTS AND JOHN, WHO RELATES THE SAME INCIDENT IN A WIDELY DIFFERENT CONNECTION

129. Matthew goes on with his narrative in the following terms: "And when He was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple;" and so on, down to where we read, "But ye have made it a den of thieves." This account of the multitude of sellers who were cast out of the temple is given by all the evangelists; but John introduces it in a remarkably different order. For, after recording the testimony borne by John the Baptist to Jesus, and mentioning that He went into Galilee at the time when He turned the water into wine, and after he has also noticed the sojourn of a few days in Capharnaum, John proceeds to tell us that He went up to Jerusalem at the season of the Jews' passover, and when He had made a scourge of small cords, drove out of the temple those who were selling in it. This makes it evident that this act was performed by the Lord not on a single occasion, but twice over; but that only the first instance is put on record by John, and the last by the other three.

CHAPTER LXVIII

OF THE WITHERING OF THE FIG-TREE, AND OF THE QUESTION AS TO THE ABSENCE OF ANY CONTRADICTION BETWEEN MATTHEW AND THE OTHER EVANGELISTS IN THE ACCOUNTS GIVEN OF THAT INCIDENT, AS WELL AS THE OTHER MATTERS RELATED IN CONNECTION WITH IT; AND VERY SPECIALLY AS TO THE CONSISTENCY BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK IN THE MATTER OF THE ORDER OF NARRATION

130. Matthew continues thus: “And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David, they were sore displeased, and said unto Him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise? And He left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and He lodged there. Now in the morning, as He returned into the city, He hungered. And when He saw a single fig-tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away! But Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree; but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

131. Mark also records this occurrence in due succession. He does not, however, follow the same order in his narrative. For first of all, the fact which is related by Matthew, namely, that Jesus went into the temple, and cast out those who sold and bought there, is not mentioned at that point by Mark. On the other hand, Mark tells us that He looked round about upon all things, and, when the eventide was now come, went out into Bethany with the twelve. Next he informs us that on another day, when they were coming from Bethany, He was hungry, and cursed the fig-tree, as Matthew also intimates. Then the said Mark subjoins the statement that He came into Jerusalem, and that, on going into the temple, He cast out those who sold and bought there, as if that incident took place not on the first day specified, but on a different day. But inasmuch as Matthew puts the connection in

these terms, “And He left them, and went out of the city into Bethany,” and tells us that it was when returning in the morning into the city that He cursed the tree, it is more reasonable to suppose that he, rather than Mark, has preserved the strict order of time so far as regards the incident of the expulsion of the sellers and buyers from the temple. For when he uses the phrase, “And He left them, and went out,” who can be understood by those parties whom He is thus said to have left, but those with whom He was previously speaking,—namely, the persons who were so sore displeased because the children cried out, “Hosanna to the Son of David”? It follows, then, that Mark has omitted what took place on the first day, when He went into the temple; and in mentioning that He found nothing on the fig-tree but leaves, he has introduced what He called to mind only there, but what really occurred on the second day, as both evangelists testify. Then, further, his account bears that the astonishment which the disciples expressed at finding how the fig-tree had withered away, and the reply which the Lord made to them on the subject of faith, and the casting of the mountain into the sea, belonged not to this same second day on which He said to the tree, “No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever,” but to a third day. For in connection with the second day, the said Mark has recorded the incident of the casting of the sellers out of the temple, which he had omitted to notice as belonging to the first day. Accordingly, it is in connection with this second day that he tells us how Jesus went out of the city, when even was come, and how, when they passed by in the morning, the disciples saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots, and how Peter, calling to remembrance, said unto Him, “Master, behold the fig-tree which Thou cursedst is withered away.” Then, too, he informs us that He gave the answer relating to the power of faith. On the other hand, Matthew recounts these matters in a manner importing that they all took place on this second day; that is to say, both the word addressed to the tree, “Let no fruit grow on thee from henceforward for ever,” and the withering that ensued so speedily in the tree, and the reply which He made on the subject of the power of faith to His disciples when they observed that withering and marvelled at it. From this we are to understand that Mark, on his side, has recorded in connection with the second day what he had omitted to notice as occurring really on the first,—namely, the incident of the expulsion of the sellers and buyers from the temple. On the other hand, Matthew, after mentioning what was done on the second day,—namely, the cursing of the fig-tree as He was returning in the morning from Bethany into the city,—has omitted certain facts which Mark has inserted, namely, His coming into the city, and His going out of it in the evening, and the astonishment which the disciples expressed at finding the tree dried up as they passed by in the morning; and then to what had taken place on the second day, which was the day on which the tree was cursed, he has attached what really took place on the third day,—namely, the amazement of the disciples at seeing the tree's withered condition, and the declaration which they heard from the Lord on the subject of the power of faith. These several facts Matthew has connected together in such a manner that, were we not compelled to turn our attention to the matter by Mark's narrative, we should be unable to recognise either at what point or with regard to what circumstances the former writer has left anything unrecorded in his narrative. The case therefore stands thus: Matthew first presents the facts conveyed in these words, "And He left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and He lodged there. Now in the morning, as He returned into the city, He hungered; and when He saw a single fig-tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever; and presently the fig-tree withered away." Then, omitting the other matters which belonged to that same day, he has immediately subjoined this statement, "And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is it withered away!" although it was on another day that they saw this sight, and on another day that they thus marvelled. But it is understood that the tree did not wither at the precise time when they saw it, but presently when it was cursed. For what they saw was not the tree in the process of drying up, but the tree already dried completely up; and thus they learned that it had withered away immediately on the Lord's sentence.

CHAPTER LXIX

OF THE HARMONY BETWEEN THE FIRST THREE EVANGELISTS IN THEIR ACCOUNTS OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH THE JEWS ASKED THE LORD BY WHAT AUTHORITY HE DID THESE THINGS

132. Matthew continues his narrative in the following terms: "And when He was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people

came unto Him as He was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it?" and so on, down to the words, "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." The other two, Mark and Luke, have also set forth this whole passage, and that, too, in almost as many words. Neither does there appear to be any discrepancy between them in regard to the order, the only exception being found in the circumstance of which I have spoken above,—namely, that Matthew omits certain matters belonging to a different day, and has constructed his narrative with a connection which, were our attention not called [otherwise] to the fact, might lead to the supposition that he was still treating of the second day, where Mark deals with the third. Moreover, Luke has not appended his notice of this incident, as if he meant to go over the days in orderly succession; but after recording the expulsion of the sellers and buyers from the temple, he has passed by without notice all that is contained in the statements above—His going out into Bethany, and His returning to the city, and what was done to the fig-tree, and the reply touching the power of faith which was made to the disciples when they marvelled. And then, after all these omissions, he has introduced the next section of his narrative in these terms: "And He taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests, and the scribes, and the chief of the people sought to destroy Him; and could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear Him. And it came to pass, that on one of these days, as He taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon Him, with the elders, and spake unto Him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things?" and so on; all which the other two evangelists record in like manner. From this it is apparent that he is in no antagonism with the others, even with regard to the order; since what he states to have taken place "on one of those days," may be understood to belong to that particular day on which they also have reported it to have occurred.

CHAPTER LXX

OF THE TWO SONS WHO WERE COMMANDED BY THEIR FATHER TO GO INTO HIS VINEYARD, AND OF THE VINEYARD WHICH WAS LET OUT TO OTHER HUSBANDMEN; OF THE QUESTION CONCERNING THE CONSISTENCY OF MATTHEW’S VERSION OF THESE PASSAGES WITH THOSE GIVEN BY THE OTHER TWO EVANGELISTS, WITH WHOM HE RETAINS THE SAME ORDER; AS ALSO, IN PARTICULAR, CONCERNING THE HARMONY OF HIS VERSION OF THE PARABLE, WHICH IS RECORDED BY ALL THE THREE, REGARDING THE VINEYARD THAT WAS LET OUT; AND IN REFERENCE SPECIALLY TO THE REPLY MADE BY THE PERSONS TO WHOM THAT PARABLE WAS SPOKEN, IN RELATING WHICH MATTHEW SEEMS TO DIFFER SOMEWHAT FROM THE OTHERS

133. Matthew goes on thus: “But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. But he answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not;” and so on, down to the words, “And whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” Mark and Luke do not mention the parable of the two sons to whom the order was given to go and labour in the vineyard. But what is narrated by Matthew subsequently to that,—namely, the parable of the vineyard which was let out to the husbandmen, who persecuted the servants that were sent to them, and afterwards put to death the beloved son, and thrust him out of the vineyard,—is not left unrecorded also by those two. And in detailing it they likewise both retain the same order, that is to say, they bring it in after that declaration of their inability to tell which was made by the Jews when interrogated regarding the baptism of John, and after the reply which He returned to them in these words: “Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.”

134. Now no question implying any contradiction between these accounts rises here, unless it be raised by the circumstance that Matthew, after telling us how the Lord addressed to the Jews this interrogation, “When the lord, therefore, of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?” adds, that they answered and said, “He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.” For Mark does not record these last words as if they constituted the reply returned by

the men; but he introduces them as if they were really spoken by the Lord immediately after the question which was put by Him, so that in a certain way He answered Himself. For [in this Gospel] He speaks thus: “What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.” But it is quite easy for us to suppose, either that the men’s words are subjoined herewithout the insertion of the explanatory clause “they said,” or “they replied,” that being left to be understood; or else that the said response is ascribed to the Lord Himself rather than to these men, because when they answered with such truth, He also, who is Himself the Truth, really gave the same reply in reference to the persons in question.

135. More serious difficulty, however, may be created by the fact that Luke not only does not speak of them as the parties who made that answer (for he, as well as Mark, attributes these words to the Lord), but even represents them to have given a contrary reply, and to have said, “God forbid.” For his narrative proceeds in these terms: “What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid. And He beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?” How then is it that, according to Matthew’s version, the men to whom He spake these words said, “He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out this vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons;” whereas, according to Luke, they gave a reply inconsistent with any terms like these, when they said, “God forbid”? And, in truth, what the Lord proceeds immediately to say regarding the stone which was rejected by the builders, and yet was made the head of the corner, is introduced in a manner implying that by this testimony those were confuted who were gainsaying the real meaning of the parable. For Matthew, no less than Luke, records that passage as if it were intended to meet the gainsayers, when he says, “Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?” For what is implied by this question, “Did ye never read,” but that the answer which they had given was opposed to the real intention [of the parable]? This is also indicated by Mark, who gives these

same words in the following manner: “And have ye not read this scripture, The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner?” This sentence, therefore, appears to occupy in Luke, rather than the others, the place which is properly assignable to it as originally uttered. For it is brought in by him directly after the contradiction expressed by those men when they said, “God forbid.” And the form in which it is cast by him,—namely, “What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?”—is equivalent in sense to the other modes of statement. For the real meaning of the sentence is indicated equally well, whichever of the three phrases is used, “Did ye never read?” or, “And have ye not read?” or, “What is this, then, that is written?”

136. It remains, therefore, for us to understand that among the people who were listening on that occasion, there were some who replied in the terms related by Matthew, when he writes thus: “They say unto Him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen;” and that there were also some who answered in the way indicated by Luke, that is to say, with the words, “God forbid.” Accordingly, those persons who had replied to the Lord to the former effect, were replied to by these other individuals in the crowd with the explanation, “God forbid.” But the answer which was really given by the first of these two parties, to whom the second said in return, “God forbid,” has been ascribed both by Mark and by Luke to the Lord Himself, on the ground that, as I have already intimated, the Truth Himself spake by these men, whether as by persons who knew not that they were wicked, in the same way that He spake also by Caiaphas, who when he was high priest prophesied without realizing what he said, or as by persons who did understand, and who had come by this time both to knowledge and to belief. For there was also present on this occasion that multitude of people at whose hand the prophecy had already received a fulfilment, when they met Him in a mighty concourse on His approach, and hailed Him with the acclaim, “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

137. Neither should we stumble at the circumstance that the same Matthew has stated that the chief priests and the elders of the people came to the

Lord, and asked Him by what authority He did these things, and who gave Him this authority, on the occasion when He too, in turn, interrogated them concerning the baptism of John, inquiring whence it was, whether from heaven or of men; to whom also, on their replying that they did not know, He said, “Neither do I tell you by what authority I do those things.” For he has followed up this with the words introduced in the immediate context, “But what think ye? A certain man had two sons,” and so forth. Thus this discourse is brought into a connection which is continued, uninterrupted by the interposition either of any thing or of any person, down to what is related regarding the vineyard which was let out to the husbandmen. It may, indeed, be supposed that He spake all these words to the chief priests and the elders of the people, by whom He had been interrogated with regard to His authority. But then, if these persons had indeed questioned Him with a view to tempt Him, and with a hostile intention, they could not be taken for men who had believed, and who cited the remarkable testimony in favour of the Lord which was taken from a prophet; and surely it is only if they had the character of those who believed, and not of those who were ignorant, that they could have given a reply like this: “He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen.” This peculiarity [of Matthew’s account], however, should not by any means so perplex us as to lead us to imagine that there were none who believed among the multitudes who listened at this time to the Lord’s parables. For it is only for the sake of brevity that the same Matthew has passed over in silence what Luke does not fail to mention,—namely, the fact that the said parable was not spoken only to the parties who had interrogated Him on the subject of His authority, but to the people. For the latter evangelist puts it thus: “Then began He to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard,” and so on. Accordingly, we may well understand that among the people then assembled there might also have been persons who could listen to Him as those did who before this had said, “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord;” and that either these, or some of them, were the individuals who replied in the words, “He will miserably destroy these wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen.” The answer actually returned by these men, moreover, has been attributed to the Lord Himself by Mark and Luke, not only because their words were really His words, inasmuch as He is the Truth that ofttimes speaks even by the wicked and the ignorant, moving the mind of man by a certain hidden instinct, not in the merit of man's holiness, but by the right of His own proper power; but also because the men may have been of a character admitting of their being reckoned, not without reason, as already members in the true body of Christ, so that what was said by them might quite warrantably be ascribed to Him whose members they were. For by this time He had baptized more than John, and had multitudes of disciples, as the same evangelists repeatedly testify; and from among these followers He also drew those five hundred brethren, to whom the Apostle Paul tells us that He showed Himself after His resurrection. And this explanation of the matter is supported by the fact that the phrase which occurs in the version by this same Matthew,—namely, "They say unto Him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men,"—is not put in a form necessitating us to take the pronoun illi in the plural number, as if it was intended to mark out the words expressly as the reply made by the persons who had craftily questioned Him on the subject of His authority; but the clause, "They say unto Him," is so expressed that the term illi should be taken for the singular pronoun, and not the plural, and should be held to signify "unto Him," that is to say, unto the Lord Himself, as is made clear in the Greek codices, without a single atom of ambiguity.

138. There is a certain discourse of the Lord which is given by the evangelist John, and which may help us more readily to understand the statement I thus make. It is to this effect: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in my word, then ye shall be my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. And they answered Him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the Son abideth for ever. If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you." Now surely it is not to be supposed that He spake these words, "Ye seek to kill me" to those persons who had already believed on Him, and to whom He had said, "If ye abide in my word, then shall ye be my disciples indeed." But inasmuch as He had spoken in these

latter terms to the men who had already believed on Him, and as, moreover, there was present on that occasion a multitude of people, among whom there were many who were hostile to Him, even although the evangelist does not tell us explicitly who those parties were who made the reply referred to, the very nature of the answer which they gave, and the tenor of the words which thereupon were rightly directed to them by Him, make it sufficiently clear what specific persons were then addressed, and what words were spoken to them in particular. Precisely, therefore, as in the multitude thus alluded to by John there were some who had already believed on Jesus, and also some who sought to kill Him, in that other concourse which we are discussing at present there were some who had craftily questioned the Lord on the subject of the authority by which He did these things; and there were also others who had hailed Him, not in deceit, but in faith, with the acclaim, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." And thus, too, there were persons present who could say, "He will destroy those men, and will give his vineyard to others." This saying, furthermore, may be rightly understood to have been the voice of the Lord Himself, either in virtue of that Truth which in His own Person He is Himself, or on the ground of the unity which subsists between the members of His body and the head. There were also certain individuals present who, when these other parties gave that kind of answer, said to them, "God forbid," because they understood the parable to be directed against themselves.

CHAPTER LXXI

OF THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON, TO WHICH THE MULTITUDES WERE INVITED; AND OF THE ORDER IN WHICH MATTHEW INTRODUCES THAT SECTION AS COMPARED WITH LUKE, WHO GIVES US A SOMEWHAT SIMILAR NARRATIVE IN ANOTHER CONNECTION

139. Matthew goes on as follows: "And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard His parables, they perceived that He spake of them: and when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitude, because they took Him for a prophet. And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call

them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come;” and so on, down to the words, “For many are called, but few are chosen.” This parable concerning the guests who were invited to the wedding is related only by Matthew. Luke also records something which resembles it. But that is really a different passage, as the order itself sufficiently indicates, although there is some similarity between the two. The matters introduced, however, by Matthew immediately after the parable concerning the vineyard, and the killing of the son of the head of the house,—namely, the Jews’ perception that this whole discourse was directed against them, and their beginning to contrive treacherous schemes against Him,—are attested likewise by Mark and Luke, who also keep the same order in inserting them. But after this paragraph they proceed to another subject, and immediately subjoin a passage which Matthew has also indeed introduced in due order, but only subsequently to this parable of the marriage, which he alone has put on record here.

CHAPTER LXXII

OF THE HARMONY CHARACTERIZING THE NARRATIVES GIVEN BY THESE THREE EVANGELISTS REGARDING THE DUTY OF RENDERING TO CAESAR THE COIN BEARING HIS IMAGE, AND REGARDING THE WOMAN WHO HAD BEEN MARRIED TO THE SEVEN BROTHERS

140. Matthew then continues in these terms: “Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle Him in His talk. And they send out unto Him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men: tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?” and so on, down to the words, “And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at His doctrine.” Mark and Luke give a similar account of these two replies made by the Lord,—namely, the one on the subject of the coin, which was prompted by the question as to the duty of giving tribute to Caesar; and the other on the subject of the resurrection, which was suggested by the case of the woman who had married the seven brothers in succession. Neither do these two evangelists differ in the matter of the order. For after the parable which told of the men to whom the vineyard was

let out, and which also dealt with the Jews (against whom it was directed), and the evil counsel they were devising (which sections are given by all three evangelists together), these two, Mark and Luke, pass over the parable of the guests who were invited to the wedding (which only Matthew has introduced), and thereafter they join company again with the first evangelist, when they record these two passages which deal with Caesar’s tribute, and the woman who was the wife of seven different husbands, inserting them in precisely the same order, with a consistency which admits of no question.

CHAPTER LXXIII

OF THE PERSON TO WHOM THE TWO PRECEPTS CONCERNING THE LOVE OF GOD AND THE LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR WERE COMMENDED; AND OF THE QUESTION AS TO THE ORDER OF NARRATION WHICH IS OBSERVED BY MATTHEW AND MARK, AND THE ABSENCE OF ANY DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THEM AND LUKE

141. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: “But when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. And one of them, which was a lawyer, asked Him a question, tempting Him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” This is recorded also by Mark, and that too in the same order. Neither should there be any difficulty in the statement made by Matthew, to the effect that the person by whom the question was put to the Lord tempted Him; whereas Mark says nothing about that, but tells us at the end of the paragraph how the Lord said to the man, as to one who answered discreetly, “Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.” For it is quite possible that, although the man approached Him with the view of tempting Him, he may have been set right by the Lord’s response. Or we need not at any rate take the tempting referred to in a bad sense, as if it were the device of one who sought to deceive an adversary; but we may rather suppose it to have been the result of caution, as if it were the act of one who wished to have further trial of a person who was unknown to him. For it is not without

a good purpose that this sentence has been written, “He that is hasty to give credit is light-minded, and shall be impaired.”

142. Luke, on the other hand, not indeed in this order, but in a widely different connection, introduces something which resembles this. But whether in that passage he is actually recording this same incident, or whether the person with whom the Lord [is represented to have] dealt in a similar manner there on the subject of those two commandments is quite another individual, is altogether uncertain. At the same time, it may appear right to regard the person who is introduced by Luke as a different individual from the one before us here, not only on the ground of the remarkable divergence in the order of narration, but also because he is there reported to have replied to a question which was addressed to him by the Lord, and in that reply to have himself mentioned those two precepts. The same opinion is further confirmed by the fact that, after telling us how the Lord said to him, “This do, and thou shall live,”—thus instructing him to do that great thing which, according to his own answer, was contained in the law,—the evangelist follows up what had passed with the statement, “But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?” Thereupon, too [according to Luke], the Lord told the story of the man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers. Consequently, considering that this individual is described at the outset as tempting Christ, and is represented to have repeated the two commandments in his reply; and considering, further, that after the counsel which was given by the Lord in the words, “This do, and thou shalt live,” he is not commended as good, but, on the contrary, has this said of him, “But he, willing to justify himself,” etc., whereas the person who is mentioned in parallel order both by Mark and by Luke received a commendation so marked, that the Lord spake to him in these terms, “Thou art not far from the kingdom of God,”—the more probable view is that which takes the person who appears on that occasion to be a different individual from the man who comes before us here.

CHAPTER LXXIV

OF THE PASSAGE IN WHICH THE JEWS ARE ASKED TO SAY WHOSE SON THEY SUPPOSE CHRIST TO BE; AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER THERE IS NOT A DISCREPANCY BETWEEN MATTHEW AND THE OTHER TWO EVANGELISTS, IN SO FAR AS HE STATES THE INQUIRY TO HAVE BEEN, “WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST? WHOSE SON IS HE?” AND TELLS US THAT TO THIS THEY REPLIED, “THE SON OF DAVID;” WHEREAS THE OTHERS PUT IT THUS, “HOW SAY THE SCRIBES THAT CHRIST IS DAVID’S SON?”

143. Matthew goes on thus: “Now when the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is He? They say unto Him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in Spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son? And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions.” This is given also by Mark in due course, and in the same order. Luke, again, only omits mention of the person who asked the Lord which was the first commandment in the law, and, after passing over that incident in silence, observes the same order once more as the others, narrating just as these, do this question which the Lord put to the Jews concerning Christ, as to how He was David’s son. Neither is the sense at all affected by the circumstance that, as Matthew puts it, when Jesus had asked them what they thought of Christ, and whose son He was, they [the Pharisees] replied, “The son of David,” and then He proposed the further query as to how David then called Him Lord; whereas, according to the version presented by the other two, Mark and Luke, we do not find either that these persons were directly interrogated, or that they made any answer. For we ought to take this view of the matter, namely, that these two evangelists have introduced the sentiments which were expressed by the Lord Himself after the reply made by those parties, and have recorded the terms in which He spoke in the hearing of those whom He wished profitably to instruct in His authority, and to turn away from the teaching of the scribes, and whose knowledge of Christ amounted then only to this, that He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, while they did not understand that He was God, and on that ground also the Lord even of David. It is in this way, therefore, that in the accounts given by these two evangelists, the Lord is

mentioned in a manner which makes it appear as if He was discoursing on the subject of these erroneous teachers to men whom He desired to see delivered from the errors in which these scribes were involved. Thus, too, the question, which is presented by Matthew in the form, “What say ye?” is to be taken not as addressed directly to these [Pharisees], but rather as expressed only with reference to those parties, and directed really to the persons whom He was desirous of instructing.

CHAPTER LXXV

OF THE PHARISEES WHO SIT IN THE SEAT OF MOSES, AND ENJOIN THINGS WHICH THEY DO NOT, AND OF THE OTHER WORDS SPOKEN BY THE LORD AGAINST THESE SAME PHARISEES; OF THE QUESTION WHETHER MATTHEW’S NARRATIVE AGREES HERE WITH THOSE WHICH ARE GIVEN BY THE OTHER TWO EVANGELISTS, AND IN PARTICULAR WITH THAT OF LUKE, WHO INTRODUCES A PASSAGE RESEMBLING THIS ONE, ALTHOUGH IT IS BROUGHT IN NOT IN THIS ORDER, BUT IN ANOTHER CONNECTION

144. Matthew proceeds with his account, observing the following order of narration: “Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to His disciples, saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not;” and so on, down to the words, “Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Luke also mentions a similar discourse which was spoken by the Lord in opposition to the Pharisees and the scribes and the doctors of the law, but reports it as delivered in the house of a certain Pharisee, who had invited Him to a feast. In order to relate that passage, he has made a digression from the order which is followed by Matthew, about the point at which they have both put on record the Lord’s sayings respecting the sign of the three days and nights in the history of Jonas, and the queen of the south, and the unclean spirit that returns and finds the house swept. And that paragraph is followed up by Matthew with these words: “While He yet talked to the people, behold, His mother and His brethren stood without, desiring to speak with Him.” But in the version which the third Gospel presents of the discourse then spoken by the Lord, after the recital of certain sayings of the Lord which Matthew has omitted to notice, Luke turns off from the order which he had been observing in concert with Matthew, so

that his immediately subsequent narrative runs thus: “And as He spake, a certain Pharisee besought Him to dine with him: and He went in, and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that He had not first washed before dinner. And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and platter.” And after this, Luke reports other utterances which were directed against the said Pharisees and scribes and teachers of the law, which are of a similar tenor to those which Matthew also recounts in this passage which we have taken in hand at present to consider. Wherefore, although Matthew records these things in a manner which, while it is true indeed that the house of that Pharisee is not mentioned by name, yet does not specify as the scene where the words were spoken any place entirely inconsistent with the idea of His having been in the house referred to; still the facts that the Lord by this time [i.e. according to Matthew’s Gospel] had left Galilee and come into Jerusalem, and that the incidents alluded to above, on to the discourse which is now under review, are so arranged in the context after His arrival as to make it only reasonable to understand them to have taken place in Jerusalem, whereas Luke’s narrative deals with what occurred at the time when the Lord as yet was only journeying towards Jerusalem, are considerations which lead me to the conclusion that these are not the same, but only two similar discourses, of which the former evangelist has reported the one, and the latter the other.

145. This is also a matter which requires some consideration,—namely, the question how it is said here, “Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord,” when, according to this same Matthew, they had already expressed themselves to this effect. Besides, Luke likewise tells us that a reply containing these very words had previously been returned by the Lord to the persons who had counselled Him to leave their locality, because Herod sought to kill Him. That evangelist represents these self-same terms, which Matthew records here, to have been employed by Him in the declaration which He directed on that occasion against Jerusalem itself. For Luke’s narrative proceeds in the following manner: “The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto Him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. And He said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected.

Nevertheless, I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house shall be left unto you desolate: and I say unto you, that ye shall not see me until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." There does not seem, however, to be anything contradictory to the narration thus given by Luke in the circumstance that the multitudes said, when the Lord was approaching Jerusalem, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." For, according to the order which is followed by Luke, He had not yet come to the scene in question, and the words had not been uttered. But since he does not tell us that He did actually leave the place at that time, not to return to it until the period came when such words would be spoken by them (for He continues on His journey until he arrives at Jerusalem; and the saying, "Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected," is to be taken to have been uttered by Him in a mystical and figurative sense: for certainly He did not suffer at a time answering literally to the third day after the present occasion; nay, He immediately goes on to say, "Nevertheless, I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following"), we are indeed constrained also to put a mystical interpretation upon the sentence, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," and to understand it to refer to that advent of His in which He is to come in His effulgent brightness; it being thereby also implied, that what He expressed in the declaration, "I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I am perfected," bears upon His body, which is the Church. For devils are cast out when the nations abandon their ancestral superstitions and believe on Him; and cures are wrought when men renounce the devil and this world, and live in accordance with His commandments, even unto the consummation of the resurrection, in which there shall, as it were, be realized that perfecting on the third day; that is to say, the Church shall be perfected up to the measure of the angelic fulness through the realized immortality of the body as well as the soul. Therefore the order followed by Matthew is by no means to be understood to involve a digression to another connection. But we are rather to suppose, either that Luke has antedated the events which took place in Jerusalem, and has introduced them at this point simply as they were here suggested to his recollection, before his narrative really brings the Lord to Jerusalem; or that the Lord, when drawing near the same city on that occasion, did actually reply to the persons who counselled Him to be on His guard against Herod, in terms resembling those in which Matthew represents Him to have spoken also to the multitudes at a period when He had already arrived in Jerusalem, and when all these events had taken place which have been detailed above.

CHAPTER LXXVI

OF THE HARMONY IN RESPECT OF THE ORDER OF NARRATION SUBSISTING BETWEEN MATTHEW AND THE OTHER TWO EVANGELISTS IN THE ACCOUNTS GIVEN OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH HE FORETOLD THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

146. Matthew proceeds with his history in the following terms: “And Jesus went out and departed from the temple; and His disciples came to Him for to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another which shall not be thrown down.” This incident is related also by Mark, and nearly in the same order. But he brings it in after a digression of some small extent, which is made with a view to mention the case of the widow who put the two mites into the treasury, which occurrence is recorded only by Mark and Luke. For [in proof that Mark’s order is essentially the same as Matthew’s, we need only notice that] in Mark’s version also, after the account of the Lord’s discussion with the Jews on the occasion when He asked them how they held Christ to be David’s son, we have a narrative of what He said in warning them against the Pharisees and their hypocrisy,—a section which Matthew has presented on the amplest scale, introducing into it a larger number of the Lord’s sayings on that occasion. Then after this paragraph, which has been handled briefly by Mark, and treated with great fulness by Matthew, Mark, as I have said, introduces the passage about the widow who was at once so extremely poor, and yet abounded so remarkably. And finally, without interpolating anything else, he subjoins a section in which he comes again into unison with Matthew,—namely, that relating to the destruction of the temple. In

like manner, Luke first states the question which was propounded regarding Christ, as to how He was the son of David, and then mentions a few of the words which were spoken in cautioning them against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Thereafter he proceeds, as Mark does, to tell the story of the widow who cast the two mites into the treasury. And finally he appends the statement, which appears also in Matthew and Mark, on the subject of the destined overthrow of the temple.

CHAPTER LXXVII

OF THE HARMONY SUBSISTING BETWEEN THE THREE EVANGELISTS IN THEIR NARRATIVES OF THE DISCOURSE WHICH HE DELIVERED ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, WHEN THE DISCIPLES ASKED WHEN THE CONSUMMATION SHOULD HAPPEN

147. Matthew continues in the following strain: “And as He sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered, and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many;” and so on, down to where we read, “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.” We have now, therefore, to examine this lengthened discourse as it meets us in the three evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. For they all introduce it in their narratives, and that, too, in the same order. Here, as elsewhere, each of these writers gives some matters which are peculiar to himself, in which, nevertheless, we have not to apprehend any suspicion of inconsistency. But what we have to make sure of is the proof that, in those passages which are exact parallels, they are nowhere to be regarded as in antagonism with each other. For if anything bearing the appearance of a contradiction meets us here, the simple affirmation that it is something wholly distinct, and uttered by the Lord in similar terms indeed, but on a totally different occasion, cannot be deemed a legitimate mode of explanation in a case like this, where the narrative, as given by all the three evangelists, moves in the same connection at once of subjects and of dates. Moreover, the mere fact that the writers do not all observe the same order in the reports which they give of the same sentiments expressed by the Lord, certainly does not in any way affect either the understanding or the

communication of the subject itself, provided the matters which are represented by them to have been spoken by Him are not inconsistent the one with the other.

148. Again, what Matthew states in this form, “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come,” is given also in the same connection by Mark in the following manner: “And the gospel must first be published among all nations.” Mark has not added the words, “and then shall the end come;” but he indicates what they express, when he uses the phrase “first “in the sentence, “And the gospel must first be published among all nations.” For they had asked Him about the end. And therefore, when He addresses them thus, “The gospel must first be published among all nations,” the term “first” clearly suggests the idea of something to be done before the consummation should come.

149. In like manner, what Matthew states thus, “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, whoso readeth let him understand,” is put in the following form by Mark: “But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not, let him that readeth understand.” But though the phrase is thus altered, the sense conveyed is the same. For the point of the clause “where it ought not,” is that the abomination of desolation ought not to be in the holy place. Luke’s method of putting it, again, is neither, “And when ye shall see the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place,” nor “where it ought not,” but, “And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with an army, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.” At that time, therefore, will the abomination of desolation be in the holy place.

150. Again, what is given by Matthew in the following terms: “Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains; and let him which is on the house-top not come down to take anything out of his house; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes,” is reported also by Mark almost in so many words. On the other hand, Luke’s version proceeds thus: “Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains.” Thus far he agrees with the other two. But he presents what is subsequent to that in a different form. For he goes on to say, “And let them which are in the midst

of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto: for these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.” Now these statements seem to present differences enough between each other. For the one, as it occurs in the first two evangelists, runs thus: “Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take anything out of his house;” whereas what is given by the third evangelist is to this effect: “And let them which are in the midst of it depart out.” The import, however, may be, that in the great agitation which will arise in the face of so mighty an impending peril, those shut up in the state of siege (which is expressed by the phrase, “they which are in the midst of it”) will appear upon the housetop [or “wall”], amazed and anxious to see what terror hangs over them, or what method of escape may open. Still the question rises, How does this third evangelist say here, “let them depart out,” when he has already used these terms: “And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with an army”? For what is brought in after this—namely, the sentence, “And let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto”—appears to form part of one consistent admonition; and we can perceive how those who are outside the city are not to enter into it; but the difficulty is to see how those who are in the midst of it are to depart out, when the city is already compassed with an army. Well, may not this expression, “in the midst of it,” indicate a time when the danger will be so urgent as to leave no opportunity open, so far as temporal means are concerned, for the preservation of this present life in the body, and that the fact that this will be a time when the soul ought to be ready and free, and neither taken up with, nor burdened by, carnal desires, is imported by the phrase employed by the first two writers—namely, “on the house-top,” or, “on the wall”? In this way the third evangelist’s phraseology, “let them depart out” (which really means, let them no more be engrossed with the desire of this life, but let them be prepared to pass into another life), is equivalent in sense to the terms used by the other two,” let him not come down to take anything out of his house” (which really means, “let not his affections turn towards the flesh, as if it could yield him anything to his advantage then”). And in like manner the phrase adopted by the one, “And let not them that are in the countries enter thereunto” (which is to say, “Let not those who, with good purpose of heart, have already placed themselves outside it, indulge again in any carnal lust or longing after it”), denotes precisely what the other two evangelists embody in the sentence, “Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes,” which is much the same as to state that he should not again involve himself in cares of which he had been unburdened.

151. Moreover, Matthew proceeds thus: “But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath-day.” Part of this is given and part omitted by Mark, when he says, “And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.” Luke, on the other hand, leaves this out entirely, and instead of it introduces something which is peculiar to himself, and by which he appears to me to have cast light upon this very clause which has been set before us somewhat obscurely by these others. For his version runs thus: “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass.” This is to be understood to be the same flight as is mentioned by Matthew, which should not be taken in the winter or on the Sabbath-day. That “winter,” moreover, refers to these “cares of this life” which Luke has specified directly; and the “Sabbath-day” refers in like manner to the “surfeiting and drunkenness.” For sad cares are like a winter; and surfeiting and drunkenness drown and bury the heart in carnal delights and luxury—an evil which is expressed under the term “Sabbath-day,” because of old, as is the case with them still, the Jews had the very pernicious custom of revelling in pleasure on that day, when they were ignorant of the spiritual Sabbath. Or, if something else is intended by the words which thus appear in Matthew and Mark, Luke’s terms may also be taken to bear on something else, while no question implying any antagonism between them need be raised for all that. At present, however, we have not undertaken the task of expounding the Gospels, but only that of defending them against groundless charges of falsehood and deceit. Furthermore, other matters which Matthew has inserted in this discourse, and which are common to him and Mark, present no difficulty. On the other hand, with respect to those sections which are common to him and Luke, [it is to be remarked that] these are not introduced into the present discourse by Luke, although in regard to the

order of narration here they are at one. But he records sentences of like tenor in other connections, either reproducing them as they suggested themselves to his memory, and thus bringing them in by anticipation so as to relate at an earlier point words which, as spoken by the Lord, belong really to a later; or else, giving us to understand that they were uttered twice over by the Lord, once on the occasion referred to by Matthew, and on a second occasion, with which Luke himself deals.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

OF THE QUESTION WHETHER THERE IS ANY CONTRADICTION BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK ON THE ONE HAND, AND JOHN ON THE OTHER, IN SO FAR AS THE FORMER STATE THAT AFTER TWO DAYS WAS TO BE THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER, AND AFTERWARDS TELLS US THAT HE WAS IN BETHANY, WHILE THE LATTER GIVES A PARALLEL NARRATIVE OF WHAT TOOK PLACE AT BETHANY, BUT MENTIONS THAT IT WAS SIX DAYS BEFORE THE PASSOVER

152. Matthew continues thus: “And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, He said unto His disciples, Ye know that after two days will be the feast of the passover, and the Son of man shall be betrayed to be crucified.” This is attested in like manner by the other two,—namely, Mark and Luke,—and that, too, with a thorough harmony on the subject of the order of narration. They do not, however, introduce the sentence as one spoken by the Lord Himself. They make no statement to that effect. At the same time, Mark, speaking in his own person, does tell us that “after two days was the feast of the passover and of unleavened bread.” And Luke likewise gives this as his own affirmation: “Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover;” that is to say, it “drew nigh” in this sense, that it was to take place after two days’ space, as the other two are more apparently at one in expressing it. John, on the other hand, has mentioned in three several places the nearness of this same feast-day. In the two earlier instances the intimation is made when he is engaged in recording certain matters of another tenor. But on the third occasion his narrative appears clearly to deal with those very times, in connection with which the other three evangelists also notice the subject,—that is to say, the times when the Lord’s passion was actually imminent.

153. But to those who look into the matter without sufficient care, there may seem to be a contradiction involved in the fact that Matthew and Mark, after stating that the passover was to be after two days, have at once informed us how Jesus was in Bethany on that occasion, on which the account of the precious ointment comes before us; whereas John, when he is about to give us the same narrative concerning the ointment, begins by telling us that Jesus came to Bethany six days before the passover. Now, the question is, how the passover could be spoken of by those two evangelists as about to be celebrated two days after, seeing that we find them, immediately after they have made this statement, in company with John, giving us an account of the scene with the ointment in Bethany; while in that connection the last-named writer informs us, that the feast of the passover was to take place six days after. Nevertheless, those who are perplexed by this difficulty simply fail to perceive that Matthew and Mark have brought in their account of the scene which was enacted in Bethany really in the form of a recapitulation, not as if the time of its occurrence was actually subsequent to the [time indicated in the] announcement made by them on the subject of the two days' space, but as an event which had already taken place at a date when there was still a period of six days preceding the passover. For neither of them has appended his account of what took place at Bethany to his statement regarding the celebration of the passover after two days' space in any such terms as these: "After these things, when He was in Bethany." But Matthew's phrase is this: "Now when Jesus was in Bethany." And Mark's version is simply this: "And being in Bethany," etc.; which is a method of expression that may certainly be taken to refer to a period antecedent to the utterance of what was said two days before the passover. The case, therefore, stands thus: As we gather from the narrative of John, Jesus came to Bethany six days before the passover; there the supper took place, in connection with which we get the account of the precious ointment; leaving this place, He came next to Jerusalem, sitting upon an ass; and thereafter happened those things which they relate to have occurred after this arrival of His in Jerusalem. Consequently, even although the evangelists do not mention the fact, we understand that between the day on which He came to Bethany, and which witnessed the scene with the ointment, and the day to which all these deeds and words which are at present before us belonged, there elapsed a period

of four days, so that at this point might come in the day which the two evangelists have defined by their statement as to the celebration of the passover two days after. Further, when Luke says, “Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh,” he does not indeed make any express mention of a two days’ space; but still, the nearness which he has instanced ought to be accepted as made good by this very space of two days. Again, when John makes the statement that “the Jews’ passover was nigh at hand,” he does not intend a two days’ space to be understood thereby, but means that there was a period of six days before the passover. Thus it is that, on recording certain matters immediately after this affirmation, with the intention of specifying what measure of nearness he had in view when he spoke of the passover as nigh at hand, he next proceeds in the following strain: “Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus had died, whom Jesus raised from the dead; and there they made Him a supper.” This is the incident which Matthew and Mark introduce in the form of a recapitulation, after the statement that after two days would be the passover. In their recapitulation they thus come back upon the day in Bethany, which was yet a six days’ space off from the passover, and give us the account which John also gives of the supper and the ointment. Subsequently to that scene, we are to suppose Him to come to Jerusalem, and then, after the occurrence of the other things recorded, to reach this day, which was still a two days’ space from the passover, and from which these evangelists have made this digression, with the object of giving a recapitulatory notice of the incident with the ointment in Bethany. And after the completion of that narrative, they return once more to the point from which they made the digression; that is to say, they now proceed to record the words spoken by the Lord two days before the passover. For if we remove the notice of the incident at Bethany, which they have introduced as a digression from the literal order, and have given in the form of a recollection and recapitulation inserted at a point subsequent to its actual historical position, and if we then set the narrative in its regular connection, the recital will go on as follows;—according to Matthew, the Lord’s words coming in thus: “Ye know that after two days shall be the feast of the passover, and the Son of man shall be betrayed to be crucified. Then assembled together the chief priests and the elders of the people unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill Him. But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people. Then one of the twelve, called Judas Scarioth, went unto the chief priests," etc. For between the place where it is said, "lest there be an uproar among the people," and the passage where we read, "then one of the disciples, called Judas, went," etc., that notice of the scene at Bethany intervenes, which they have introduced by way of recapitulation. Consequently, by leaving it out, we have established such a connection in the narrative as may make our conclusion satisfactory, that there is no contradiction here in the matter of the order of times. Again, if we deal with Mark's Gospel in like manner, and omit the account of the same supper at Bethany, which he also has brought in as a recapitulation, his narrative will proceed in the following order: "Now after two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by craft, and put Him to death. For they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar of the people. And Judas Scariothes, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray Him." Here, again, the incident at Bethany which these evangelists have inserted, by way of recapitulation, is placed between the clause, "lest there be an uproar of the people," and the verse which we have attached immediately to that, namely, "And Judas Scariothes, one of the twelve." Luke, on the other hand, has simply omitted the said occurrence at Bethany. This is the explanation which we give in reference to the six days before the passover, which is the space mentioned by John when narrating what took place at Bethany, and in reference to the two days before the passover, which is the period specified by Matthew and Mark when presenting their account, in direct sequence upon the statement thus made, of that same scene in Bethany which has been recorded also by John.

CHAPTER LXXIX

OF THE CONCORD BETWEEN MATTHEW, MARK, AND JOHN IN THEIR NOTICES OF THE SUPPER AT BETHANY, AT WHICH THE WOMAN POURED THE PRECIOUS OINTMENT ON THE LORD, AND OF THE METHOD IN WHICH THESE ACCOUNTS ARE TO BE HARMONIZED WITH THAT OF LUKE, WHEN HE RECORDS AN INCIDENT OF A SIMILAR NATURE AT A DIFFERENT PERIOD

154. Matthew, then, continuing his narrative from the point up to which we had concluded its examination, proceeds in the following terms: "Then

assembled together the chief priests and the elders of the people unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty and kill Him: but they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people. Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto Him a woman having an alabaster box of precious ointment, and poured it on His head as He sat at meat;" and so on down to the words, "there shall also this that this woman hath done be told for a memorial of her." The scene with the woman and the costly ointment at Bethany we have now to consider, as it is thus detailed. For although Luke records an incident resembling this, and although the name which he assigns to the person in whose house the Lord was supping might also suggest an identity between the two narratives (for Luke likewise names the host "Simon"), still, since there is nothing either in nature or in the customs of men to make the case an incredible one, that as one man may have two names, two men may with all the greater likelihood have one and the same name, it is more reasonable to believe that the Simon in whose house [it is thus supposed, according to Luke's version, that] this scene at Bethany took place, was a different person from the Simon [named by Matthew]. For Luke, again, does not specify Bethany as the place where the incident which he records happened. And although it is true that he in no way particularizes the town or village in which that occurrence took place, still his narrative does not seem to deal with the same locality. Consequently, my opinion is, that there is but one interpretation to be put upon the matter. That is not, however, to suppose that the woman who appears in Matthew was an entirely different person from the woman who approached the feet of Jesus on that occasion in the character of a sinner, and kissed them, and washed them with her tears, and wiped them with her hair, and anointed them with ointment, in reference to whose case Jesus also made use of the parable of the two debtors, and said that her sins, which were many, were forgiven her because she loved much. But my theory is, that it was the same Mary who did this deed on two separate occasions, the one being that which Luke has put on record, when she approached Him first of all in that remarkable humility, and with those tears, and obtained the forgiveness of her sins. For John, too, although he has not given the kind of recital which Luke has left us of the circumstances connected with that incident, has at least mentioned the fact, in commending the same Mary to our notice, when he has just begun to tell the story of the raising of Lazarus, and before his narrative brings the Lord to Bethany itself. The history which he offers us of that transaction proceeds thus: “Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary, and her sister Martha. It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.” By this statement John attests what Luke has told us when he records a scene of this nature in the house of a certain Pharisee, whose name was Simon. Here, then, we see that Mary had acted in this way before that time. And what she did a second time in Bethany is a different matter, which does not belong to Luke’s narrative, but is related by three of the evangelists in concert, namely, John, Matthew, and Mark.

155. Let us therefore notice how harmony is maintained here between these three evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and John, regarding whom there is no doubt that they record the self-same occurrence at Bethany, on occasion of which the disciples also, as all three mention, murmured against the woman, ostensibly on the ground of the waste of the very precious ointment. Now the further fact that Matthew and Mark tell us that it was the Lord’s head on which the ointment was poured, while John says it was His feet, can be shown to involve no contradiction, if we apply the principle which we have already expounded in dealing with the scene of the feeding of the multitudes with the five loaves. For as there was one writer who, in giving his account of that incident, did not fail to specify that the people sat down at once by fifties and by hundreds, although another spoke only of the fifties, no contradiction could be supposed to emerge. There might indeed have seemed to be some difficulty, if the one evangelist had referred only to the hundreds, and the other only to the fifties; and yet, even in that case, the correct finding should have been to the effect that they were seated both by fifties and by hundreds. And this example ought to have made it plain to us, as I pressed it upon my readers in discussing that section, that even where the several evangelists introduce only the one fact each, we should take the case to have been really, that both things were elements in the actual occurrence. In the same way, our conclusion with regard to the passage now before us should be, that the woman poured the ointment not only upon the Lord’s head, but also on His feet. It is true that some person may possibly

be found absurd and artful enough to argue, that because Mark states that the ointment was poured out only after the alabaster vase was broken there could not have remained in the shattered vessel anything with which she could anoint His feet. But while a person of that character, in his endeavours to disprove the veracity of the Gospel, may contend that the vase was broken, in a manner making it impossible that any portion of the contents could have been left in it, how much better and more accordant with piety must the position of a very different individual appear, whose aim will be to uphold the truthfulness of the Gospel, and who may therefore contend that the vessel was not broken in a manner involving the total outpouring of the ointment! Moreover, if that calumniator is so persistently blinded as to attempt to shatter the harmony of the evangelists on this subject of the shattering of the vase, he should rather accept the alternative, that the [Lord's] feet were anointed before the vessel itself was broken, and that it thus remained whole, and filled with ointment sufficient for the anointing also of the head, when, by the breakage referred to, the entire contents were discharged. For we allow that there is a due regard to the several parts of our nature when the act commences with the head, but [we may also say that] an equally natural order is preserved when we ascend from the feet to the head.

156. The other matters belonging to this incident do not seem to me to raise any question really involving a difficulty. There is the circumstance that the other evangelists mention how the disciples murmured about the [wasteful] outpouring of the precious ointment, whereas John states that Judas was the person who thus expressed himself, and tells us, in explanation of the fact, that "he was a thief." But I think it is evident that this same Judas was the person referred to under the [general] name of the disciples, the plural number being used here instead of the singular, in accordance with that mode of speech of which we have already introduced an explanation in the case of Philip and the miracle of the five loaves. It may also be understood in this way, that the other disciples either felt as Judas felt, or spoke as he did, or were brought over to that view of the matter by what Judas said, and that Matthew and Mark consequently have expressed in word what was really the mind of the whole company; but that Judas spoke as he did just because he was a thief, whereas what prompted the rest was their care for

the poor; and further, that John has chosen to record the utterance of such sentiments only in the instance of that one [among the disciples] whose habit of acting the thief he believed it right to bring out in connection with this occasion.

CHAPTER LXXX

OF THE HARMONY CHARACTERIZING THE ACCOUNTS WHICH ARE GIVEN BY MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE, OF THE OCCASION ON WHICH HE SENT HIS DISCIPLES TO MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR HIS EATING THE PASSOVER

157. Matthew proceeds thus: “Then one of the twelve, who is called Judas [of] Scarioth, went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver;” and so on down to the words, “And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them, and they made ready the passover.” Nothing in this section can be supposed to stand in any contradiction with the versions of Mark and Luke, who record this same passage in a similar manner. For as regards the statement given by Matthew in these terms, “Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand: I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples,” it just indicates the person whom Mark and Luke name the “goodman of the house,” or the “master of the house,” in which the dining-room was shown them where they were to make ready the passover. And Matthew has expressed this by simply bringing in the phrase, “to such a man,” as a brief explanation introduced by himself with the view of succinctly giving us to understand who the person referred to was. For if he had said that the Lord addressed them in words like these: “Go into the city, and say unto him [or “it”], The Master saith, My time is at hand, I will keep the passover at thy house,” it might have been supposed that the terms were intended to be directed to the city itself. For this reason, therefore, Matthew has inserted the statement, that the Lord bade them go “to such a man,” not, however, as a statement made by the Lord, whose instructions he was recording, but simply as one volunteered by himself, with the view of avoiding the necessity of narrating the whole at length, when it seemed to him that this was all that required to be mentioned in order to bring out with sufficient accuracy what was really meant by the person who gave the order. For who

can fail to see that no one naturally speaks to others in such an indefinite fashion as this, “Go ye to such a man”? If, again, the words had been, “Go ye to any one whatsoever,” or “to any one you please,” the mode of expression might have been correct enough, but the person to whom the disciples were sent would have been left uncertain: whereas Mark and Luke present him as a certain definitely indicated individual, although they pass over his name in silence. The Lord Himself, we may be sure, knew to what person it was that He despatched them. And in order that those also whom He was thus sending might be able to discover the individual meant, He gave them, before they set out, a particular sign which they were to follow,—namely, the appearance of a man bearing a pitcher or a vessel of water,—and told them, that if they went after him, they would reach the house which He intended. Hence, seeing that it was not competent here to employ the phraseology, “Go to any one you please,” which is indeed legitimate enough, so far as the demands of linguistic propriety are concerned, but which an accurate statement of the matter dealt with here renders inadmissible in this passage, with how much less warrant could an expression like this have been used here (by the speaker Himself), “Go to such a man,” which the usage of correct language can never admit at all? But it is manifest that the disciples were sent by the Lord, plainly, not to any man they pleased, but to “such a man,” that is to say, to a certain definite individual. And that is a thing which the evangelist, speaking in his own person, could quite rightly have related to us, by putting it in this way: “He sent them to such a man, in order to say to him, I will keep the passover at thy house.” He might also have expressed it thus: “He sent them to such a man, saying, Go, say to him, I will keep the passover at thy house.” And thus it is that, after giving us the words actually spoken by the Lord Himself, namely, “Go into the city,” he has introduced this addition of his own, “to such a man,” which he does, however, not as if the Lord had thus expressed Himself, but simply with the view of giving us to understand, although the name is left unrecorded, that there was a particular person in the city to whom the Lord’s disciples were sent, in order to make ready the passover. Thus, too, after the two [or three] words brought in that manner as an explanation of his own, he takes up again the order of the words as they were uttered by the Lord Himself, namely, “And say unto him, The Master saith.” And if you ask now “to whom” they were to say this, the correct reply is given [at once] in these terms, To that particular man to whom the evangelist has given us to understand that the Lord sent them, when, speaking in His own person, he introduced the clause, “to such a man.” The clause thus inserted may indeed contain a rather unusual mode of expression, but still it is a perfectly legitimate phraseology when it is thus understood. Or it may be, that in the Hebrew language, in which Matthew is reported to have written, there is some peculiar usage which might make it entirely accordant with the laws of correct expression, even were the whole taken to have been spoken by the Lord Himself. Whether that is the case, those who understand that tongue may decide. Even in the Latin language itself, indeed, this kind of expression might also be used, in terms like these: “Go into the city to such a man as may be indicated by a person who shall meet you carrying a pitcher of water.” If the instructions were conveyed in such words as these, they could be acted upon without any ambiguity. Or again, if the terms were anything like these, “Go into the city to such a man, who resides in this or the other place, in such and such a house,” then the note thus given of the place and the designation of the house would make it quite possible to understand the commission delivered, and to execute it. But when these instructions, and all others of a similar order, are left entirely untold, the person who in such circumstances uses this kind of address, “Go to such a man, and say unto him,” cannot possibly be listened to intelligently for this obvious reason, that when he employs the terms, “to such a man,” he intends a certain particular individual to be understood by them, and yet offers us no hint by which he may be identified. But if we are to suppose that the clause referred to is one introduced as an explanation by the evangelist himself, [we may find that] the requirements of brevity will render the expression somewhat obscure, without, however, making it incorrect. Moreover, as to the fact, that where Mark speaks of a pitcher of water, Luke mentions a vessel, the simple explanation is, that the one has used a word indicative of the kind of vessel, and the other a term indicative of its capacity, while both evangelists have nevertheless preserved the real meaning actually intended.

158. Matthew proceeds thus: “Now when the even was come, He sat down with the twelve disciples; and as they did eat, He said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. And they were exceeding sorrowful,

and began every one of them to say, Lord, is it I?” and so on, down to where we read, “Then Judas, which betrayed Him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.” In what we have now presented for consideration here, the other three evangelists, who also record such matters, offer nothing calculated to raise any question of serious difficulty.

Book III

This book contains a demonstration of the harmony of the evangelists from the accounts of the Supper on to the end of the Gospel, the narratives given by the several writers being collated, and the whole arranged in one orderly connection.

PROLOGUE

1. Inasmuch as we have now reached that point in the history at which all the four evangelists necessarily hold their course in company on to the conclusion, without presenting any serious divergence the one from the other, if it happens anywhere that one of them makes mention of something which another leaves unnoticed, it appears to me that we may demonstrate the consistency maintained by the various evangelists with greater expedition, if from this point onwards we now bring all the statements given by all the writers together into one connection, and arrange the whole in a single narration, and under one view. I consider that in this way the task which we have undertaken may be discharged with greater convenience and facility than otherwise might be the case. What we have now before us, therefore, is to attempt the construction of a single narrative, in which we shall include all the particulars, and for which we shall possess the attestation of those evangelists who, (each selecting for recital out of the whole number of facts those which he had either the ability or the desire to relate,) have prepared these records for us: this being done in such a manner, moreover, that all these statements, in regard to which we have to prove an entire freedom from contradictions, are taken as made by all the evangelists together.

CHAPTER I

OF THE METHOD IN WHICH THE FOUR EVANGELISTS ARE SHOWN TO BE AT ONE IN THE ACCOUNTS GIVEN OF THE LORD’S SUPPER AND THE INDICATION OF HIS BETRAYER

2. Let us commence here, accordingly, with the notice presented by Matthew, [which runs thus]: “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.” Both Mark and Luke also gave this section. It is true that Luke has made mention of the cup twice over: first before He gave the bread; and, secondly, after the bread has been given. But the fact is, that what is stated in that earlier connection has been introduced, according to this writer’s habit, by anticipation, while the words which he has inserted here in their proper order are left unrecorded in those previous verses, and the two passages when put together make up exactly what stands expressed by those other evangelists. John, on the other hand, has said nothing about the body and blood of the Lord in this context; but he plainly certifies that the Lord spake to that effect on another occasion, with much greater fulness than here. At present, however, after recording how the Lord rose from supper and washed the disciples’ feet, and after telling us also the reason why the Lord dealt thus with them, in expressing which He had intimated, although still obscurely, and by the use of a testimony of Scripture, the fact that He was being betrayed by the man who was to eat of His bread, at this point John comes to the section in question, which the other three evangelists also unite in introducing. He presents it thus: “When Jesus had thus said, He was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, That one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked (as the same John subjoins) one on another, doubting of whom He spake.” “And (as Matthew and Mark tell us) they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto Him, Is it I? And He answered and said (as Matthew proceeds to state), He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.” Matthew also goes on to make the following addition to the preceding: “The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of Him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man shall be betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.” Mark, too, is at one with him here as regards both the words themselves and the order of narration. Then Matthew continues thus: “Then Judas, which betrayed Him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.” Even these words did not say explicitly whether he was himself the man. For the sentence still admits of being understood as if its point was this, “I am not the person who has said so.” All this, too, may quite easily have

been uttered by Judas and answered by the Lord without its being noticed by all the others.

3. After this, Matthew proceeds to insert the mystery of His body and blood, as it was committed then by the Lord to the disciples. Here Mark and Luke act correspondingly. But after He had handed the cup to them, [we find that] He spoke again concerning His betrayer, in terms which Luke recounts, when he says, “But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. And truly the Son of man goeth as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom He shall be betrayed.” At this point we must now suppose that to come in which is narrated by John while these others omit it, just as John has also passed by certain matters which they have detailed. In accordance with this, after the giving of the cup, and after the Lord’s subsequent saying which has been brought in by Luke,—namely, “But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table,” etc.,—the statement made by John is [to be taken as immediately] subjoined. It is to the following effect: “Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, and said unto him, Who is he of whom He speaketh? He then, when he had laid himself on Jesus’ breast, saith unto Him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when He had dipped the sop, He gave it to Judas, the son of Simon [of] Scarioth. And after the sop Satan then entered into him.”

4. Here we must take care not to let John underlie the appearance not only of standing in antagonism to Luke, who had stated before this, that Satan entered into the heart of Judas at the time when he made his bargain with the Jews to betray Him on receipt of a sum of money, but also of contradicting himself. For, at an earlier point, and previous to [his notice of] the receiving of this sop, he had made use of these terms: “And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas to betray Him.” And how does he enter into the heart, but by putting unrighteous persuasions into the thoughts of unrighteous men? The explanation, however, is this. We ought to suppose Judas to have been more fully taken possession of by the devil now, just as on the other hand, in the instance of the good, those who had already received the Holy Spirit on that occasion,

subsequently to His resurrection, when He breathed upon them and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,” also obtained a fuller gift of that Spirit at a later time, namely, when He was sent down from above on the day of Pentecost. In like manner, Satan then entered into this man after the sop. And (as John himself mentions in the immediate context) “Jesus saith unto him, What thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent He spake this unto him; for some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then, having received the sop, went immediately out; and it was night. Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus saith, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him: and if God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him.”

CHAPTER II

OF THE PROOF OF THEIR FREEDOM FROM ANY DISCREPANCIES IN THE NOTICES GIVEN OF THE PREDICTIONS OF PETER’S DENIALS

5. “Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and, as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say unto you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter saith unto Him, Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, until thou deniest me thrice.” John, from whose Gospel I have taken the passage introduced above, is not the only evangelist who details this incident of the prophetic announcement of his own denial to Peter. The other three also record the same thing. They do not, however, take one and the same particular point in the discourses [of Christ] as their occasion for proceeding to this narration. For Matthew and Mark both introduce it in a completely parallel order, and at the same stage of their narrative, namely, after the Lord left the house in which they had eaten the passover; while Luke and John, on the other hand,

bring it in before He left that scene. Still we might easily suppose, either that it has been inserted in the way of a recapitulation by the one couple of evangelists, or that it has been inserted in the way of an anticipation by the other; only such a supposition may be made more doubtful by the circumstance that there is so remarkable a diversity, not only in the Lord's words, but even in those sentiments of His by which the incident in question is introduced, and by which Peter was moved to venture his presumptuous asseveration that he would die with the Lord or for the Lord. These considerations may constrain us rather to understand the narratives really to import that the man uttered his presumptuous declaration thrice over, as it was called forth by different occasions in the series of Christ's discourses, and that also three several times the answer was returned him by the Lord, which intimated that before the cock crew he would deny Him thrice.

6. And surely there is nothing incredible in supposing that Peter was moved to such an act of presumption on several occasions, separated from each other by certain intervals of time, as he was actually instigated to deny Him repeatedly. Neither should it seem unreasonable to fancy that the Lord gave him a reply in similar terms at three successive periods, especially when [we see that] in immediate connection with each other, and without the interposition of anything else either in fact or word, Christ addressed the question to him three several times whether he loved Him, and that, when Peter returned the same answer thrice over, He also gave him thrice over the self-same charge to feed His sheep. That it is the more reasonable thing to suppose that Peter displayed his presumption on three different occasions, and that thrice over he received from the Lord a warning with respect to his triple denial, is further proved, as we may see, by the very terms employed by the evangelists, which record sayings uttered by the Lord in diverse form and of diverse import. Let us here call attention again to that passage which I introduced a little ago from the Gospel of John. There we certainly find that He had expressed Himself in this way: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love

one to another. Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, whither goest Thou?" Now, surely it is evident here that what moved Peter to utter this question, "Lord, whither goest Thou?" was the words which the Lord Himself had spoken. For he had heard Him say, "Whither I go, ye cannot come." Then Jesus made this reply to the said Peter: "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shall follow me afterwards." Thereupon Peter expressed himself thus: "Lord, why cannot I follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thy sake." And to this presumptuous declaration the Lord responded by predicting his denial. Luke, again, first mentions how the Lord said, "Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren:" next he proceeds immediately to tell us how Peter replied to this effect: "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both unto prison and to death;" and then he continues thus: "And He said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." Now, who can fail to perceive that this is an occasion by itself, and that the incident in connection with which Peter was incited to make the presumptuous declaration already referred to is an entirely different one? But, once more, Matthew presents us with the following passage: "And when they had sung an hymn," he says, "they went out into the Mount of Olives. Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." The same passage is given in precisely the same form by Mark. What similarity is there, however, in these words, or in the ideas expressed by them, either to the terms in which John represents Peter to have made his presumptuous declaration, or to those in which Luke exhibits him as uttering such an asseveration? And so we find that in Matthew's narrative the connection proceeds immediately thus: "Peter answered and said unto Him, Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus saith unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter saith unto him, Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee. Likewise also said all His disciples."

7. All this is recorded almost in the same language also by Mark, only that he has not put in so general a form what the Lord said with regard to the manner in which the event [of Peter’s failure] was to be brought about, but has given it a more particular turn. For his version is this: “Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.” Thus it appears that all of them tell us how the Lord foretold that Peter would deny Him before the cock crew, but that they do not all mention how often the cock was to crow, and that Mark is the only one who has presented a more explicit notice of this incident in the narrative. Hence some are of opinion that Mark’s statement is not in harmony with those of the others. But this is simply because they do not give sufficient attention to the facts of the case, and, above all, because they approach the question under the cloud of a prejudiced mind, in consequence of their being possessed by a hostile disposition towards the gospel. The fact is, that Peter’s denial, when taken as a whole, is a threefold denial. For he remained in the same state of mental agitation, and harboured the same mendacious intention, until what had been foretold regarding him was brought to his mind, and healing came to him by bitter weeping and sorrow of heart. It is evident, however, that if this complete denial—that is to say, the threefold denial—is taken to have commenced only after the first crowing of the cock, three of the evangelists will appear to have given an incorrect account of the matter. For Matthew’s version is this: “Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice;” and Luke puts it thus: “I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me;” and John presents it in this form: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice.” And thus, in different terms and with words introduced in diverse successions, these three evangelists have expressed one and the same sense as conveyed by the words which the Lord spake—namely, the fact that, before the cock should crow, Peter was to deny Him thrice. On the other hand, if [we suppose that] he went through the whole triple denial before the cock began to crow at all, then Mark will be made to underlie the charge of having given a superfluous statement when he puts these words into the Lord’s mouth: “Verily I say unto thee, That this day, before the cock crow twice, thou shall deny me thrice.” For to what purpose would it be to say, “before the cock crow twice,” when, on the supposition

that this entire threefold denial was gone through previous to the first crowing of the cock, it is self-evident that a negation, which would thus be proved to have been completed before the first cockcrow, must also, as matter of course, be understood to have been fully uttered before the second cockcrow and before the third, and, in short, before all the cockcrowings which took place on that same night? But, inasmuch as this threefold denial was begun previous to the first crowing of the cock, those three evangelists concerned themselves with noticing, not the time at which Peter was to complete it, but the extent to which it was to be carried, and the period at which it was to commence; that is to say, their object was to bring out the facts that it was to be thrice repeated, and that it was to begin previous to the cockcrowing. At the same time, so far as the man's own mind is concerned, we might also quite well understand it to have been engaged in, as a whole, previous to the first cockcrow. For although it is true that, so far as regards the actual utterance of the individual who was guilty of the denial, that threefold negation was only entered upon previous to the first cockcrow, and really finished before the second cockcrow, still it is equally true that, in so far as the disposition of mind and the apprehensions indulged by Peter were concerned, it was conceived, as a whole, before the first cockcrow. Neither is it a matter of any consequence of what duration those intervals of delay were which elapsed between the several utterances of that thrice-recurring voice, if it is the case that the denial completely possessed his heart even previous to the first cockcrow,—in consequence, indeed, of his having imbibed a spirit of terror so abject as to make him capable of denying the Lord when he was questioned regarding Him, not only once, but a second time, and even a third time. Thus, a more correct and careful consideration of the matter might show us that, precisely as it is declared that the man who looketh on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart, so, in the present instance, inasmuch as in the words which he spoke, Peter merely expressed the apprehension which he had already conceived with such intensity in his mind as to make it capable of enduring even on to a third repetition of his denial of the Lord, this threefold negation is to be assigned as a whole to that particular period at which the fear that sufficed thus to carry him on to a threefold denial took possession of him. In this way, too, it may be made apparent that, even if the words in which the denial was couched began to break forth from him only after the first cockcrow, when his heart was smitten by the inquiries addressed to him, it would involve neither any absurdity nor any untruthfulness, although it were said that before the cock crew he denied Him thrice, seeing that, in any case, previous to the crowing of the cock, his mind had been assailed by an apprehension violent enough to be able to draw him on even to a third denial. All the less, therefore, ought we to feel any difficulty in the matter, if it appears that the threefold denial, as expressed also in the thrice-recurring utterances of the person who made the denial, was entered upon previous to the crowing of the cock, although it was not completed before the first cockcrow. We may take a parallel case, and suppose an intimation to be made to the following effect to a person: "This night, before the cock crow, you will write a letter to me, in which you will revile me thrice." Well, surely in this instance, if the man began to write the letter before the cock had crowed at all, and finished it after the cock had crowed for the first time, that would be no reason for alleging that the intimation previously made was false. The fact, therefore, is that, in putting these words into the Lord's lips, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice," Mark has given us a plainer indication of the intervals of time which separated the utterances themselves. And when we come to the said section of the evangelical narrative, we shall see that the circumstances are presented in a manner which exhibits, in that connection also, the harmony subsisting among the evangelists.

8. If, however, the demand is to get at the very words, literally and completely, which the Lord addressed to Peter, we answer that it is impossible to discover these; and further, that it is simply superfluous to ask them, inasmuch as the speaker's meaning—to intimate which was the object He had in view in uttering the words—admits of being understood with the utmost plainness, even under the diverse terms employed by the evangelists. And whether, then, it be the case that Peter, instigated at different occasions in the course of the Lord's sayings, made his presumptuous declaration three several times, and had his denial foretold him thrice over by the Lord, as is the more probable result to which our investigation points us; or whether it may appear that the accounts given by all the evangelists are capable of being reduced to a single statement, when a certain order of narration is adopted, so that it could be proved that it was

only on one occasion that the Lord predicted to Peter, on the exhibition of his presumptuous spirit, the fact that he would deny Him;—in either case, any contradiction between the evangelists will fail to be detected, as nothing of that nature really exists.

CHAPTER III

OF THE MANNER IN WHICH IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT NO DISCREPANCIES EXIST BETWEEN THEM IN THE ACCOUNTS WHICH THEY GIVE OF THE WORDS WHICH WERE SPOKEN BY THE LORD, ON TO THE TIME OF HIS LEAVING THE HOUSE IN WHICH THEY HAD SUPPED

9. At this point, therefore, we may now follow, as far as we can, the order of the narrative, as gathered from all the evangelists together. Thus, then, after the prediction in question had been made to Peter, according to John's version, the same John proceeds with his statement, and introduces in this connection the Lord's discourse, which was to the following effect: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions;" and so forth. He narrates at length the sayings, so memorable and so pre-eminently sublime, of which He delivered Himself in the course of that address, until, in due connection, he comes to the passage where the Lord speaks as follows: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Again we find, according to the narrative given by Luke, that there arose "a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest. And He said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. And ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations: and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." The said Luke also immediately subjoins to these words the

following passage: “And the Lord said to Simon: Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto Him: Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death. And He said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shall thrice deny that thou knowest me. And He said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. Then said He unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And He was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And He said unto them, It is enough.” Next comes the passage, given both by Matthew and by Mark: “And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives. Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. Peter answered and said unto Him, Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter saith unto Him, Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.” We have introduced the preceding section as it is presented by Matthew. But Mark also records it almost in so many and the same words, with the exception of the apparent discrepancy, which we have already cleared up above, on the subject of the crowing of the cock.

CHAPTER IV

OF WHAT TOOK PLACE IN THE PIECE OF GROUND OR GARDEN TO WHICH THEY CAME ON LEAVING THE HOUSE AFTER THE SUPPER; AND OF THE METHOD IN WHICH, IN JOHN’S SILENCE ON THE SUBJECT, A REAL HARMONY CAN BE DEMONSTRATED BETWEEN THE OTHER THREE EVANGELISTS—NAMELY, MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE

10. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in the same connection as follows: “Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane.”

This is mentioned also by Mark. Luke, too, refers to it, although he does not notice the piece of ground by name. For he says: “And He came out, and went, as was His wont, to the Mount of Olives; and His disciples also followed Him. And when He was at the place, He said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.” That is the place which the other two have instanced under the name of Gethsemane. There, we understand, was the garden which John brings into notice when he gives the following narration: “When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples.” Then taking Matthew’s record, we get this statement next in order: “He said unto His disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt. And He cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What! could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, Thy will be done. And He came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And He left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh He to His disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that shall betray me.”

11. Mark also records these passages, introducing them quite in the same method and succession. Some of the sentences, however, are given with greater brevity by him, and others are somewhat more fully explained. These sayings of our Lord, indeed, may seem in one portion to stand in some manner of contradiction to each other as they are presented in Matthew’s version. I refer to the fact that [it is stated there that] He came to His disciples after His third prayer, and said to them, “Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man shall be

betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that shall betray me.” For what are we to make of the direction thus given above, “Sleep on now, and take your rest,” when there is immediately subjoined this other declaration, “Behold, the hour is at hand,” and thereafter also the instruction, “Arise, let us be going”? Those readers who perceive something like a contradiction here, seek to pronounce these words, “Sleep on now, and take your rest,” in a way betokening that they were spoken in reproach, and not in permission. And this is an expedient which might quite fairly be adopted were there any necessity for it. Mark, however, has reproduced these sayings in a manner which implies that after He had expressed himself in the terms, “Sleep on now, and take your rest,” He added the words, “It is enough,” and then appended to these the further statement, “The hour is come; behold, the Son of man shall be betrayed.” Hence we may conclude that the case really stood thus: namely, that after addressing these words to them, “Sleep on now, and take your rest,” the Lord was silent for a space, so that what He had thus given them permission to do might be [seen to be] really acted upon; and that thereafter He made the other declaration, “Behold the hour is come.” Thus it is that in Mark’s Gospel we find those words [regarding the sleeping] followed immediately by the phrase, “It is enough;” that is to say, “the rest which you have had is enough now.” But as no distinct notice is introduced of this silence on the Lord’s part which intervened then, the passage comes to be understood in a forced manner, and it is supposed that a peculiar pronunciation must be given to these words.

12. Luke, on the other hand, has omitted to mention the number of times that He prayed. He has told us, however, a fact which is not recorded by the others—namely, that when He prayed He was strengthened by an angel, and that, as He prayed more earnestly, He had a bloody sweat, with drops falling down to the ground. Thus it appears that when he makes the statement, “And when He rose up from prayer, and was come to His disciples,” he does not indicate how often He had prayed by that time. But still, in so doing, he does not stand in any kind of antagonism to the other two. Moreover, John does indeed mention how He entered into the garden along with His disciples. But he does not relate how He was occupied there

up to the period when His betrayer came in along with the Jews to apprehend Him.

13. These three evangelists, therefore, have in this manner narrated the same incident, just as, on the other hand, one man might give three several accounts of a single occurrence, with a certain measure of diversity in his statements, and yet without any real contradiction. Luke, for example, has specified the distance to which He went forward from the disciples—that is to say, when He withdrew from them in order to pray—more definitely than the others. For he tells us that it was "about a stone's cast." Mark, again, states first of all in his own words how the Lord prayed that, "If it were possible, the hour might pass from Him," referring to the hour of His Passion, which he also expresses presently by the term "cup." He then reproduces the Lord's own words, in the following manner: "Abba, Father, all things are possible to Thee: take away this cup from me." And if we connect with these terms the clause which is given by the other two evangelists, and for which Mark himself has also already introduced a clear parallel, presented as a statement made in his own person instead of the Lord's, the whole sentence will be exhibited in this form: "Father, if it be possible, (for) all things are possible unto Thee, take away this cup from me." And it will be so put just to prevent any one from supposing that He made the Father's power less than it is when He said, "If it be possible." For thus His words were not, "If Thou canst do it;" but "If it be possible." And anything is possible which He wills. Therefore, the expression, "If it be possible," has here just the same force as, "If Thou wilt." For Mark has made the sense in which the phrase, "If it be possible," is to be taken quite plain, when he says, "All things are possible unto Thee." And further, the fact that these writers have recorded how He said, "Nevertheless, not what I will, but what Thou wilt" (an expression which means precisely the same as this other form, "Nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done"), shows us clearly enough that it was with reference not to any absolute impossibility on the Father's side, but only to His will, that these words, "If it be possible," were spoken. This is made the more apparent by the plainer statement which Luke has presented to the same effect. For his version is not, "If it be possible," but, "If Thou be willing." And to this clearer declaration of what was really meant we may add, with the effect of still

greater clearness, the clause which Mark has inserted, so that the whole will proceed thus: “If Thou be willing, (for) all things are possible unto Thee, take away this cup from me.”

14. Again, as to Mark’s mentioning that the Lord said not only “Father,” but “Abba, Father,” the explanation simply is, that “Abba” is in Hebrew exactly what “Pater” is in Latin. And perhaps the Lord may have used both words with some kind of symbolical significance, intending to indicate thereby, that in sustaining this sorrow He bore the part of His body, which is the Church, of which He has been made the corner-stone, and which comes to Him [in the person of disciples gathered] partly out of the Hebrews, to whom He refers when He says “Abba,” and partly out of the Gentiles, to whom He refers when He says “Pater” [Father]. The Apostle Paul also makes use of the same significant expression. For he says, “In whom we cry, Abba, Father;” and, in another passage, “God sent His Spirit into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” For it was meet that the good Master and true Saviour, by sharing in the sufferings of the more infirm, should in His own person illustrate the truth that His witnesses ought not to despair, although it might perchance happen that, through human frailty, sorrow might steal in upon their hearts at the time of suffering; seeing that they would overcome it if, mindful that God knows what is best for those whose well-being He regards, they gave His will the preference over their own. On this subject, however, as a whole, the present is not the time for entering on any more detailed discussion. For we have to deal simply with the question concerning the harmony of the evangelists, from whose varied modes of narration we gather the wholesome lesson that, in order to get at the truth, the one essential thing to aim at in dealing with the terms is simply the intention which the speaker had in view in using them. For the word “Father” means just the same as the phrase “Abba, Father.” But with a view to bring out the mystic significance, the expression, “Abba, Father,” is the clearer form; while, for indicating the unity, the word “Father” is sufficient. And that the Lord did indeed employ this method of address, “Abba, Father,” must be accepted as matter of fact. But still His intention would not appear very obvious were there not the means (since others use simply the term “Father”) to show that under such a form of expression those two Churches, which are constituted, the one out of the Jews, and the other out

of the Gentiles, are presented as also really one. In this way, then, [we may suppose that] the phrase, “Abba, Father,” was adopted in order to convey the same idea as was indicated by the Lord on another occasion, when He said, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold.” In these words He certainly referred to the Gentiles, since He had sheep also among the people of Israel. But in that passage He goes on immediately to add the declaration, “Them also I must bring, that there may be one fold and one Shepherd.” And so we may say that, just as the phrase, “Abba, Father,” contains the idea of [the two races,] the Israelites and the Gentiles, the word “Father,” used alone, points to the one flock which these two constitute.

CHAPTER V

OF THE ACCOUNTS WHICH ARE GIVEN BY ALL THE FOUR EVANGELISTS IN REGARD TO WHAT WAS DONE AND SAID ON THE OCCASION OF HIS APPREHENSION; AND OF THE PROOF THAT THESE DIFFERENT NARRATIVES EXHIBIT NO REAL DISCREPANCIES

15. When we follow the versions presented by Matthew and Mark, we find that the history now proceeds thus: “And while He yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude, with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed Him, gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He; hold Him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; and kissed Him.” First of all, however, as we gather from Luke’s statement, He said to the traitor, “Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?” Next, as we learn from Matthew, He spoke thus: “Friend, wherefore art thou come?” Thereafter He added certain words which are found in John’s narrative, which runs in the following strain: “Whom seek ye? They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am He. And Judas also, which betrayed Him, stood with them. As soon then as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked He them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am He: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way; that the saying might be fulfilled which He spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.”

16. Next comes in a passage, which is given by Luke as follows: “When they which were about Him saw what would follow, they said unto Him,

Lord, shall we smite with the sword? And one of them smote the servant of the high priest," as is noticed by all the four historians, "and cut off his ear," which, as we are informed by Luke and John, was his "right ear." Moreover, we gather also from John that the person who smote the servant was Peter, and that the name of the man whom he thus struck was Malchus. Next we take what Luke mentions, namely, "Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far;" with which we must connect the words appended by Matthew, namely, "Put up thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Along with these words we may also place the question to which John tells us He gave utterance on the same occasion, namely, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" And then, as is recorded by Luke, He touched the ear of the person who had been struck, and healed him.

17. Neither should we let the idea disturb us, that some contradiction may be found in the circumstance that Luke tells us how, when the disciples asked Him whether they should smite with the sword, the Lord replied in these words, "Suffer ye thus far," in a manner which might seem to imply that He thus expressed Himself, after the blow had been struck, in terms bearing that He was satisfied with what had been done so far, but desired nothing further to be done; whereas the language which is employed by Matthew might give us rather to understand that this whole incident of the use which Peter made of the sword was displeasing to the Lord. For it is more correct to suppose that when they put the question to Him, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" He replied then, "Suffer ye thus far;" His meaning being this: "Let not what is about to take place agitate you. These men are to be suffered to go thus far; that is to say, so far as to apprehend me, and thus to effect the fulfilment of those things which are written of me." We have further to suppose, however, that during the time which passed in the interchange of the question addressed by them to the Lord, and the reply returned by Him to them, Peter was borne on by his intense desire to appear as defender, and by his stronger excitement in the Lord's behalf, to deal the blow. But while these two things might easily have happened at the same time, two different statements could not have been

uttered by the same person in one breath. For the writer would not have used the expression, “And Jesus answered and said,” unless the words were a reply to the question which had been addressed by those who were about Him, and not a statement directed to Peter’s act. For Matthew is the only one who has recorded the judgment passed by Jesus on Peter’s act. And in that passage the phrase which Matthew has employed is also not in the form, “Jesus answered Peter thus, Put up thy sword;” but it runs in these terms: “Then said Jesus unto him, Put up thy sword;” from which it appears that it was after the deed that Jesus thus declared Himself. What is contained, again, in the phraseology used by Luke, namely, “And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far,” must be taken to have been the reply which was returned to the parties who had put the question to Him. But inasmuch as, according to our previous explanation, the single blow with which the servant was struck was delivered just during the time when the terms of the said question and answer were passing between these persons and the Lord, the writer has considered it right to record that act in the same particular order, so that it stands inserted between the words of the interrogation and those in which the response was couched. Consequently, there is nothing here in antagonism to the statement introduced by Matthew, namely, “For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword,”—that is to say, those who may have used the sword. But there might appear to be some inconsistency here if the Lord’s answer were taken in a sense which would show Him to have expressed approval on this occasion of the voluntary use of the sword, even although it was only to the effect of a single wound, and that, too, not a fatal one. The words, however, which were addressed to Peter may be understood, as a whole, in an application quite in harmony with the rest; so that, bringing in also what Luke and Matthew have reported, as I have stated above, we obtain the following connection: “Suffer ye thus far. Put up thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword,” etc. In what way, moreover, this sentence, “Suffer ye thus far,” is to be understood, I have explained already. And if there is any better method of interpreting it, be it so. Only let the veracity of the evangelists be maintained in any case.

18. After this, Matthew continues the narrative, and mentions that in that hour He addressed the multitude as follows: “Are ye come out as against a

thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me." Then He added also certain words, which Luke introduces thus: "But this is your hour, and the power of darkness." Next comes the sentence given by Matthew: "But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled." This last fact is recorded also by Mark. The same evangelist makes also the following addition: "And there followed Him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and when they laid hold on him, he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked."

CHAPTER VI

OF THE HARMONY CHARACTERIZING THE ACCOUNTS WHICH THESE EVANGELISTS GIVE OF WHAT HAPPENED WHEN THE LORD WAS LED AWAY TO THE HOUSE OF THE HIGH PRIEST, AS ALSO OF THE OCCURRENCES WHICH TOOK PLACE WITHIN THE SAID HOUSE AFTER HE WAS CONDUCTED THERE IN THE NIGHTTIME, AND IN PARTICULAR OF THE INCIDENT OF PETER'S DENIAL

19. In the line of Matthew's narrative we come next upon this statement: "And they that laid hold on Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled." We learn, however, from John that He was conducted first to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas. On the other hand, Mark and Luke omit all mention of the name of the high priest. Moreover [we find that] He was led away bound. For, as John informs us, there were at hand there, in the multitude, a tribune and a cohort, and the servants of the Jews. Then in Matthew we have these words: "But Peter followed Him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in and sat with the servants to see the end." To this passage in the narrative Mark makes this addition: "And he warmed himself at the fire." Luke also makes a statement which amounts to the same, thus: "Peter followed afar off: and when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were sat down together, Peter sat down among them." And John proceeds in these terms: "And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. That disciple (namely, that other) was known unto the high priest, and went in (as John also tells us) with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But Peter (as the same John adds) stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that

kept the door, and brought in Peter.” For the last fact we are thus indebted to John’s narrative. And in this way we see how it came about that Peter also got inside, and was within the hall, as the other evangelists mention.

20. Then Matthew’s report goes on thus: “Now the chief priests and elders and all the council sought false witness against Jesus, to put Him to death, but found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none.” Mark comes in here with the explanation, that “their witness agreed not together.” But, as Matthew continues, “At the last came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.” Mark states that there were also others who said, “We have heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. And therefore (as Mark also observes in the same passage) their witness did not agree together.” Then Matthew gives us the following relation: “And the high priest arose and said unto Him, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held His peace. And the high priest answered and said unto Him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said.” Mark reports the same passage in different terms, only he omits to mention the fact that the high priest adjured Him. He makes it plain, however, that the two expressions ascribed to Jesus as the reply to the high priest,—namely, “Thou hast said,” and, “I am,”—really amount to the same. For, as the said Mark puts it, the narrative goes on thus: “And Jesus said, I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” This is just as Matthew also presents the passage, with the solitary exception that he does not say that Jesus replied in the phrase “I am.” Again, Matthew goes on further in this strain: “Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? And they answered and said, He is guilty of death.” Mark’s version of this is entirely to the same effect. So Matthew continues, “Then did they spit in His face, and buffeted Him, and others smote Him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?” Mark reports these things in

like manner. He also mentions a further fact, namely, that they covered His face. On these incidents we have likewise the testimony of Luke.

21. These things the Lord is understood to have passed through on to the early morning in the high priest’s house, to which He was first conducted, and in which Peter was also tempted. With respect, however, to this temptation of Peter, which took place during the time that the Lord was enduring these injuries, the several evangelists do not present the same order in the recital of the circumstances. For Matthew and Mark first narrate the injuries offered to the Lord, and then this temptation of Peter. Luke, again, first describes Peter’s temptation, and only after that the reproaches borne by the Lord; while John, on the other hand, first recounts part of Peter’s temptation, then introduces some verses recording what the Lord had to bear, next appends a statement to the effect that the Lord was sent away thence (i.e. from Annas) to Caiaphas the high priest, and then at this point resumes and sums up the relation which he had commenced of Peter’s temptation in the house to which he was first conducted, giving a full account of that incident, thereafter reverting to the succession of things befalling the Lord, and telling us how He was brought to Caiaphas.

22. Accordingly, Matthew proceeds as follows: “Now Peter sat without in the palace; and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And as he went out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying that he knew not the man. And immediately the cock crew.” Such is Matthew’s version. But we are also given to understand that after he had gone outside, and when he had now denied the Lord once, the first cock crew,—a fact which Matthew does not specify, but which is intimated by Mark.

23. But it was not when he was outside at the gate that he denied the Lord the second time. That took place after he had come back to the fire-place. There was no need, however, to mention the precise time at which he did

thus return. Consequently Mark goes on with his narrative of the incident in these terms: “And he went out into the porch, and the cock crew. And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. And he denied it again.” This is not the same maid, however, as the former one, but another, as Matthew tells us. Nay, we gather further that on the occasion of the second denial he was addressed by two parties, namely, by the maid who is mentioned by Matthew and Mark, and also by another person who is noticed by Luke. For Luke’s account runs in this style: “And Peter followed afar off. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were sat down together, Peter sat down among them. But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. And he denied Him, saying, Woman, I know Him not. And after a little while, another saw him, and said, “Thou art also of them.” Now the clause, “And after a little while,” which Luke introduces, covers the period during which [we may suppose that] Peter went out and the first cock crew. By this time, however, he had come in again; and thus we can understand the consistency of John’s narrative, which informs us that he denied the Lord the second time as he stood by the fire. For in his version of Peter’s first denial, John not only says nothing about the first crowing of the cock (which holds good of the other evangelists, too, with the exception of Mark), but also leaves unnoticed the fact that it was as he sat by the fire that the maid recognised him. For all that John says there is this, “Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man’s disciples? He saith, I am not.” Then he brings in the statement which he deemed it right to make on the subject of what took place with Jesus in that same house. His record of this is to the following effect: “And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold. And they warmed themselves; and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.” Here, therefore, we may suppose Peter to have gone out, and by this time to have come in again. For at first he was sitting by the fire; and after a space, as we gather, he had returned, and commenced to stand [by the hearth].

24. It may be, however, that some one will say to us: Peter had not actually gone out as yet, but had only risen with the purpose of going out. This may be the allegation of one who is of opinion that the second interrogation and

denial took place when Peter was outside at the door. Let us therefore look at what follows in John’s narrative. It is to this effect: “The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said. And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me? And Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.” This certainly shows us that Annas was high priest. For Jesus had not been sent to Caiaphas as yet, when the question was thus put to Him, “Answerest thou the high priest so?” Mention is also made of Annas and Caiaphas as high priests by Luke at the beginning of his Gospel. After these statements, John reverts to the account which he had previously begun of Peter’s denial. Thus he brings us back to the house in which the incidents took place which he has recorded, and from which Jesus was sent away to Caiaphas, to whom He was being conducted at the commencement of this scene, as Matthew has informed us. Moreover, it is in the way of a recapitulation that John records the matters regarding Peter which he has introduced at this point. Falling back upon his narration of that incident with the view of making up a complete account of the threefold denial, he proceeds thus: “And Simon stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not.” Here, therefore, we find that Peter’s second denial occurred, not when he was at the door, but as he was standing by the fire. This, however, could not have been the case, had he not returned by this time after having gone outside. For it is not that by this second occasion he had actually gone out, and that the other maid who is referred to saw him there outside; but the matter is put as if it was on his going out that she saw him; or, in other words, it was when he rose to go out that she observed him, and said to those who were there,—that is, to those who were gathered by the fire inside, within the court,—”This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.” Then we are to suppose that the man who had thus gone outside, on hearing this assertion, came in again, and swore to those who were now inimically disposed, “I do not know the man.” In like manner, Mark also says of this same maid, that “she began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them.” For this damsel was speaking not to Peter, but to those who had remained there when he went out. At the same time, she spoke in such a manner that he heard her words; whereupon he came back and stood again by the fire, and met their words with a negative. Then we have the statement made by John in these terms: “They said, Art not thou also one of his disciples?” We understand this question to have been addressed to him on his return as he stood there; and we also recognise the harmony in which this stands with the position that on this occasion Peter had to do not only with that other maid who is mentioned by Matthew and Mark in connection with this second denial, but also with that other person who is introduced by Luke. This is the reason why John uses the plural, “They said.” The explanation then may be, that when the maid said to those who were with her in the court as he went out, “This is one of them,” he heard her words and returned with the purpose of clearing himself, as it were, by a denial. Or, in accordance with the more probable theory, we may suppose that he did not catch what was said about him as he went out, and that on his return the maid and the other person who is introduced by Luke addressed him thus, “Art not thou also one of his disciples?” that he met them with a denial, “and said, I am not;” and further, that when this other person of whom Luke speaks insisted more pertinaciously, and said, “Surely thou art one of them,” Peter answered thus, “Man, I am not.” Still, when we compare together all the statements made by the several evangelists on this subject, we come clearly to the conclusion, that Peter’s second denial took place, not when he was at the door, but when he was within, by the fire in the court. It becomes evident, therefore, that Matthew and Mark, who have told us how he went without, have left the fact of his return unnoticed simply with a view to brevity.

25. Accordingly, let us next examine into the consistency of the evangelists so far as the third denial is concerned, which we have previously instanced in the statement given by Matthew only. Mark then goes on with his version in these terms: “And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them; for thou art a Galilaean. But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. And immediately the second time the cock crew.” Luke, again, continues his

narrative, relating the same incident in this fashion: “And about the space of one hour after, another confidently affirmed, Of a truth this fellow also was with him; for he is a Galilaean. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately while he yet spake the cock crew.” John follows with his account of Peter’s third denial, which is thus given: “One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Peter then denied again; and immediately the cock crew.” Now what precise period of time is meant under the phrase, “a little after,” which is employed by Matthew and Mark, is made clear by Luke, when he says, “And about the space of one hour after.” John, however, conveys no intimation of this space of time. Again, with respect to the circumstance that Matthew and Mark use the plural number instead of the singular, and speak of the persons who were engaged with Peter, while Luke mentions only a single individual, and John, too, specifies but one, particularizing him further as kinsman to him whose ear Peter cut off; we may easily explain it either by understanding Matthew and Mark to have adopted a familiar method of speech here in employing the plural number simply instead of the singular, or by supposing that one of the persons present—one who knew Peter and had seen him—took the lead in making the declaration, and that the rest, imitating his confidence, joined him in pressing the assertion upon Peter. If this is the case, then two of the evangelists have given the general statement, using simply the plural number; while the other two have preferred to particularize only the one special individual who played the chief part in the transaction. But, once more, Matthew affirms that the words, “Surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee,” were spoken to Peter himself. In like manner, John tells us that the question, “Did not I see thee in the garden with him?” was addressed directly to Peter. But Mark, on the other hand, gives us to understand that the sentence, “Surely he is one of them, for he is also a Galilaean,” was what those who stood by said to each other about Peter. And, in the same way, Luke indicates that the declaration uttered by the other person, who said, “Of a truth, this fellow also was with him, for he is a Galilaean,” was not addressed to Peter, but was made regarding Peter. These variations, however, may be explained either by understanding the evangelists, who speak of Peter as the person directly addressed, to have fairly reproduced the general sense, inasmuch as what was spoken about the man in his own presence was much the same as if it had been spoken immediately to him; or by supposing that both these methods of address were actually practised, and that the one has been noticed by the former evangelists, and the other by the latter. Moreover, we take the second cockcrowing to have occurred after the third denial, as Mark has expressly informed us.

26. Matthew then proceeds with his narrative in these terms: “And Peter remembered the word of Jesus which He had said unto him, Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out and wept bitterly.” Mark, again, gives it thus: “And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said unto him, Before the cock crow twice thou shall deny me thrice. And he began to weep.” Luke’s version is as follows: “And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said unto him, Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out and wept bitterly.” John says nothing about Peter’s recollection and weeping. Now, the statement made here by Luke, to the effect that “the Lord turned and looked upon Peter,” is one which requires more careful consideration, with a view to its correct acceptance. For although there are also inner halls (or courts), so named, it was in the outer court (or hall) that Peter appeared on this occasion among the servants, who were warming themselves along with him at the fire. And it is not a credible supposition that Jesus was heard by the Jews in this place, so that we might also understand the look referred to to have been a look with the bodily eye. For Matthew presents us first with this narrative: “Then did they spit in His face and buffeted Him; and others smote Him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?” And then he follows this up immediately with the paragraph about Peter: “Now Peter sat without in the palace.” He would not, however, have used this latter expression, had it not been the case that the things previously alluded to were done to the Lord inside the house. And, indeed, as we gather from Mark’s version, these things took place not simply in the interior, but also in the upper parts of the house. For, after recording the said circumstances, Mark goes on thus: “And as Peter was beneath in the palace.” Thus, as Matthew’s words, “Now Peter sat without in the palace,” show us that the things previously mentioned took place inside the house, so Mark’s words,

“And as Peter was beneath in the palace,” indicate that they were done not only in the interior, but in the upper parts of the house. But if this is the case, how could the Lord have looked on Peter with the actual glance of the bodily eye? These considerations bring me to the conclusion, that the look in question was one cast upon Peter from Heaven, the effect of which was to bring up before his mind the number of times he had now denied [his Master], and the declaration which the Lord had made to him prophetically, and in this way (the Lord thus looking mercifully upon him), to lead him to repent, and to weep salutary tears. The expression, therefore, will be a parallel to other modes of speech which we employ daily, as when we thus pray, “Lord, look upon me;” or as when, in reference to one who has been delivered by the divine mercy from some danger or trouble, we say that the “Lord looked upon him.” In the Scriptures, also, we find such words as these: “Look upon me and hear me;” and “Return, O Lord, and deliver my soul.” And, according to my judgment, a similar view is to be taken of the expression adopted here, when it is said that “the Lord turned and looked upon Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord.” Finally, we have to notice how, while it is the more usual practice with the evangelists to employ the name “Jesus” in preference to the word “Lord” in their narratives, Luke has used the latter term exclusively in the said sentence, saying expressly, “The Lord’ turned and looked upon Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord:’“ whereas Matthew and Mark have passed over this “look” in silence, and consequently have said that Peter remembered not the word of the “Lord,” but the word of “Jesus.” From this, therefore, we may gather that the “look” thus proceeding from Jesus was not one with the eyes of the human body, but a look cast from Heaven.

CHAPTER VII

OF THE THOROUGH HARMONY OF THE EVANGELISTS IN THE DIFFERENT ACCOUNTS OF WHAT TOOK PLACE IN THE EARLY MORNING, PREVIOUS TO THE DELIVERY OF JESUS TO PILATE; AND OF THE QUESTION TOUCHING THE PASSAGE WHICH IS QUOTED ON THE SUBJECT OF THE PRICE SET UPON THE LORD, AND WHICH IS ASCRIBED TO JEREMIAH BY MATTHEW, ALTHOUGH NO SUCH PARAGRAPH IS FOUND IN THE WRITINGS OF THAT PROPHET

27. Matthew next proceeds as follows: “When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus, to put

Him to death; and when they had bound Him, they led Him away, and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.” Mark’s version is to the like effect: “And straightway in the morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried Him away, and delivered Him to Pilate.” Luke, again, after completing his account of Peter’s denial, recapitulates what Jesus had to endure when it was now about daybreak, as it appears, and continues his narrative in the following connection: “And the men that held Jesus mocked Him, and smote Him; and when they had blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face, and asked Him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against Him. And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes came together, and led Him into their council, saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And He said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe; and if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And He said unto them, Ye say that I am. And they said, What need we further witness? For we ourselves have heard of His own mouth. And the whole multitude of them arose, and led Him unto Pilate.” Luke has thus recorded all these things. His statement contains certain facts which are also related by Matthew and Mark; namely, that the Lord was asked whether He was the Son of God, and that He made this reply, “I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” And we gather that these things took place when the day was now breaking, because Luke’s expression is, “And as soon as it was day.” Thus Luke’s narrative is similar to those of the others, although he also introduces something which these others have left unnoticed. We gather further, that when it was yet night, the Lord faced the ordeal of the false witnesses,—a fact which is recorded briefly by Matthew and Mark, and which is passed over in silence by Luke, who, however, has told the story of what was done when the dawn was coming in. The former two—namely, Matthew and Mark—have given connected narratives of all that the Lord passed through until early morning. After that, however, they have reverted to the story of Peter’s denial; on the conclusion of which they have come back upon the events of the early morning, and have introduced the other circumstances which remained for recital with a view to the completion of their account of what befell the Lord. But up to this point they have given no account of the occurrences belonging specifically to the morning. In like manner John, after recording what was done with the Lord as fully as he deemed requisite, and after telling also the whole story of Peter's denial, continues his narrative in these terms: "Then lead they Jesus to Caiaphas, unto the hall of judgment. And it was early." Here we might suppose either that there had been something imperatively requiring Caiaphas' presence in the hall of judgment, and that he was absent on the occasion when the other chief priests held an inquiry on the Lord; or else that the hall of judgment was in his house; and that yet from the beginning of this scene they had thus only been leading Jesus away to the personage in whose presence He was at last actually conducted. But as they brought the accused person in the character of one already convicted, and as it had previously approved itself to Caiaphas' judgment that Jesus should die, there was no further delay in delivering Him over to Pilate, with a view to His being put to death. And thus it is that Matthew here relates what took place between Pilate and the Lord.

28. First, however, he makes a digression with the purpose of telling the story of Judas' end, which is related only by him. His account is in these terms: "Then Judas, which had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, whom the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."

29. Now, if any one finds a difficulty in the circumstance that this passage is not found in the writings of the prophet Jeremiah, and thinks that damage

is thus done to the veracity of the evangelist, let him first take notice of the fact that this ascription of the passage to Jeremiah is not contained in all the codices of the Gospels, and that some of them state simply that it was spoken “by the prophet.” It is possible, therefore, to affirm that those codices deserve rather to be followed which do not contain the name of Jeremiah. For these words were certainly spoken by a prophet, only that prophet was Zechariah. In this way the supposition is, that those codices are faulty which contain the name of Jeremiah, because they ought either to have given the name of Zechariah or to have mentioned no name at all, as is the case with a certain copy, merely stating that it was spoken “by the prophet, saying,” which prophet would assuredly be understood to be Zechariah. However, let others adopt this method of defence, if they are so minded. For my part, I am not satisfied with it; and the reason is, that a majority of codices contain the name of Jeremiah, and that those critics who have studied the Gospel with more than usual care in the Greek copies, report that they have found it stand so in the more ancient Greek exemplars. I look also to this further consideration, namely, that there was no reason why this name should have been added [subsequently to the true text], and a corruption thus created; whereas there was certainly an intelligible reason for erasing the name from so many of the codices. For venturesome inexperience might readily have done that, when perplexed with the problem presented by the fact that this passage could not be found in Jeremiah.

30. How, then, is the matter to be explained, but by supposing that this has been done in accordance with the more secret counsel of that providence of God by which the minds of the evangelists were governed? For it may have been the case, that when Matthew was engaged in composing his Gospel, the word Jeremiah occurred to his mind, in accordance with a familiar experience, instead of Zechariah. Such an inaccuracy, however, he would most undoubtedly have corrected (having his attention called to it, as surely would have been the case, by some who might have read it while he was still alive in the flesh), had he not reflected that [perhaps] it was not without a purpose that the name of the one prophet had been suggested instead of the other in the process of recalling the circumstances (which process of recollection was also directed by the Holy Spirit), and that this might not

have occurred to him had it not been the Lord’s purpose to have it so written. If it is asked, however, why the Lord should have so determined it, there is this first and most serviceable reason, which deserves our most immediate consideration, namely, that some idea was thus conveyed of the marvellous manner in which all the holy prophets, speaking in one spirit, continued in perfect unison with each other in their utterances,—a circumstance certainly much more calculated to impress the mind than would have been the case had all the words of all these prophets been spoken by the mouth of a single individual. The same consideration might also fitly suggest the duty of accepting unhesitatingly whatever the Holy Spirit has given expression to through the agency of these prophets, and of looking upon their individual communications as also those of the whole body, and on their collective communications as also those of each separately. If, then, it is the case that words spoken by Jeremiah are really as much Zechariah’s as Jeremiah’s, and, on the other hand, that words spoken by Zechariah are really as much Jeremiah’s as they are Zechariah’s, what necessity was there for Matthew to correct his text when he read over what he had written, and found that the one name had occurred to him instead of the other? Was it not rather the proper course for him to bow to the authority of the Holy Spirit, under whose guidance he certainly felt his mind to be placed in a more decided sense than is the case with us, and consequently to leave untouched what he had thus written, in accordance with the Lord’s counsel and appointment, with the intent to give us to understand that the prophets maintain so complete a harmony with each other in the matter of their utterances that it becomes nothing absurd, but, in fact, a most consistent thing for us to credit Jeremiah with a sentence originally spoken by Zechariah? For if, in these days of ours, a person, desiring to bring under our notice the words of a certain individual, happens to mention the name of another by whom the words were not actually uttered, but who at the same time is the most intimate friend and associate of the man by whom they were really spoken; and if forthwith recollecting that he has given the one name instead of the other, he recovers himself and corrects the mistake, but does it nevertheless in some such way as this, “After all, what I said was not amiss;” what would we take to be meant by this, but just that there subsists so perfect a unison of sentiment between the two parties—that is to say, the man whose words the individual in question intended to repeat, and the second person whose name occurred to him at the time instead of that of the other—that it comes much to the same thing to represent the words to have been spoken by the former as to say that they were uttered by the latter? How much more, then, is this a usage which might well be understood and most particularly commended to our attention in the case of the holy prophets, so that we might accept the books composed by the whole series of them, as if they formed but a single book written by one author, in which no discrepancy with regard to the subjects dealt with should be supposed to exist, as none would be found, and in which there would be a more remarkable example of consistency and veracity than would have been the case had a single individual, even the most learned, been the enunciator of all these sayings? Therefore, while there are those, whether unbelievers or merely ignorant men, who endeavour to find an argument here to help them in demonstrating a want of harmony between the holy evangelists, men of faith and learning, on the other hand, ought rather to bring this into the service of proving the unity which characterizes the holy prophets.

31. I have also another reason (the fuller discussion of which must be reserved, I think, for another opportunity, in order to prevent the present discourse from extending to larger limits than may be allowed by the necessity which rests upon us to bring this work to a conclusion) to offer in explanation of the fact that the name of Jeremiah has been permitted, or rather directed, by the authority of the Holy Spirit, to stand in this passage instead of that of Zechariah. It is stated in Jeremiah that he bought a field from the son of his brother, and paid him money for it. That sum of money is not given, indeed, under the name of the particular price which is found in Zechariah, namely, thirty pieces of silver; but, on the other hand, there is no mention of the buying of the field in Zechariah. Now, it is evident that the evangelist has interpreted the prophecy which speaks of the thirty pieces of silver as something which has received its fulfilment only in the Lord’s case, so that it is made to stand for the price set upon Him. But again, that the words which were uttered by Jeremiah on the subject of the purchase of the field have also a bearing upon the same matter, may have been mystically signified by the selection thus made in introducing [into the evangelical narrative] the name of Jeremiah, who spoke of the purchase of

the field, instead of that of Zechariah, to whom we are indebted for the notice of the thirty pieces of silver. In this way, on perusing first the Gospel, and finding the name of Jeremiah there, and then, again, on perusing Jeremiah, and failing there to discover the passage about the thirty pieces of silver, but seeing at the same time the section about the purchase of the field, the reader would be taught to compare the two paragraphs together, and get at the real meaning of the prophecy, and learn how it also stands in relation to this fulfilment of prophecy which was exhibited in the instance of our Lord. For [it is also to be remarked that] Matthew makes the following addition to the passage cited, namely, “Whom the children of Israel did value; and gave them the potter’s field, as the Lord appointed me.” Now, these words are not to be found either in Zechariah or in Jeremiah. Hence we must rather take them to have been inserted with a nice and mystical meaning by the evangelist, on his own responsibility,—the Lord having given him to understand, by revelation, that a prophecy of the said tenor had a real reference to this occurrence, which took place in connection with the price set upon Christ. Moreover, in Jeremiah, the evidence of the purchase of the field is ordered to be cast into an earthen vessel. In like manner, we find in the Gospel that the money paid for the Lord was used for the purchase of a potter’s field, which field also was to be employed as a burying-place for strangers. And it may be that all this was significant of the permanence of the repose of those who sojourn like strangers in this present world, and are buried with Christ by baptism. For the Lord also declared to Jeremiah, that the said purchase of the field was expressive of the fact that in that land [of Judaea] there would be a remnant of the people delivered from their captivity. I judged it proper to give some sort of sketch of these things, as I was calling attention to the kind of significance which a really careful and painstaking study should look for in these testimonies of the prophets, when they are reduced to a unity and compared with the evangelical narrative. These, then, are the statements which Matthew has introduced with reference to the traitor Judas.

CHAPTER VIII

OF THE ABSENCE OF ANY DISCREPANCIES IN THE ACCOUNTS WHICH THE EVANGELISTS GIVE OF WHAT TOOK PLACE IN PILATE’S PRESENCE

32. He next proceeds as follows: “And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked Him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus saith unto him, Thou sayest. And when He was accused of the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing. Then saith Pilate unto Him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And He answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly. Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered Him. But when he was set down on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. But the governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? And they said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say, Let him be crucified. The governor said to them, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. Then released he Barabbas unto them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered Him to them to be crucified.” These are the things which Matthew has reported to have been done to the Lord by Pilate.

33. Mark also presents an almost entire identity with the above, both in language and in subject. The words, however, in which Pilate replied to the people when they asked him to release one prisoner according to the custom of the feast, are reported by this evangelist as follows: “But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?” On the other hand, Matthew gives them thus: “Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?” There need be no difficulty in the circumstance that Matthew says nothing about the people having

requested that one should be released unto them. But it may fairly be asked, what were the words which Pilate actually uttered, whether these reported by Matthew, or those recited by Mark. For there seems to be some difference between these two forms of expression, namely, “Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?” and, “Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?” Nevertheless, as they were in the habit of calling their kings “anointed ones,” and one might use the one term or the other, it is evident that what Pilate asked them was whether they would have the King of the Jews, that is, the Christ, released unto them. And it matters nothing to the real identity in meaning that Mark, desiring simply to relate what concerned the Lord Himself, has not mentioned Barabbas here. For, in the report which he gives of their reply, he indicates with sufficient clearness who the person was whom they asked to have released unto them. His version is this: “But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.” Then he proceeds to add the sentence, “And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I should do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?” This makes it plain enough now, that in speaking of the King of the Jews, Mark meant to express the very sense which Matthew intended to convey by using the term “Christ.” For kings were not called “anointed ones” except among the Jews; and the form which Matthew gives to the words in question is this, “Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?” So Mark continues, “And they cried out again, Crucify him:” which appears thus in Matthew, “They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.” Again Mark goes on, “Then Pilate said unto them Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.” Matthew has not recorded this passage; but he has introduced the statement, “When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made,” and has also informed us how he washed his hands before the people with the view of declaring himself innocent of the blood of that just person (a circumstance not reported by Mark and the others). And thus he has also shown us with all due plainness how the governor dealt with the people with the intention of securing His release. This has been briefly referred to by Mark, when he tells us that Pilate said, “Why, what evil hath he done?” And thereupon Mark also concludes his account of what took place between Pilate and the Lord in these terms: “And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged Him, to be crucified.” The above is Mark’s recital of what occurred in presence of the governor.

34. Luke gives the following version of what took place in presence of Pilate: “And they began to accuse Him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king.” The previous two evangelists have not recorded these words, although they do mention the fact that these parties accused Him. Luke is thus the one who has specified the terms of the false accusations which were brought against Him. On the other hand, he does not state that Pilate said to Him, “Answerest thou nothing? behold, how many things they witness against thee.” Instead of introducing these sentences, Luke goes on to relate other matters which are also reported by these two. Thus he continues: “And Pilate asked Him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And He answered him and said, Thou sayest.” Matthew and Mark have likewise inserted this fact, previous to the statement that Jesus was taken to task for not answering His accusers. The truth, however, is not at all affected by the order in which Luke has narrated these things; and as little is it affected by the mere circumstance that one writer passes over some incident without notice, which another expressly specifies. We have an instance in what follows; namely, “Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man. And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place. But when Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean. And as soon as he knew that He belonged unto Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time. And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad; for he was desirous to see Him of a long season, because he had heard many things of Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. Then he questioned with Him in many words; but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. And Herod with his men of war set Him at nought, and mocked Him, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him again to Pilate. And the same day Herod and Pilate were made friends

together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.” All these things are related by Luke alone, namely, the fact that the Lord was sent by Pilate to Herod, and the account of what took place on that occasion. At the same time, among the statements which he makes in this passage, there are some bearing a resemblance to matters which may be found reported by the other evangelists in connection with different portions of their narrations. But the immediate object of these others, however, was to recount simply the various things which were done in Pilate’s presence on to the time when the Lord was delivered over to be crucified. In accordance with his own plan, however, Luke makes the above digression with the view of telling what occurred with Herod; and after that he reverts to the history of what took place in the governor’s presence. Thus he now continues as follows: “And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him.” Here we notice that he has omitted to mention how Pilate asked the Lord what answer He had to make to His accusers. Thereafter he proceeds in these terms: “No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him: and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. I will therefore chastise him and release him. For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast. And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas; who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison. Pilate, therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified; and the voices of them prevailed.” The repeated effort which Pilate, in his desire to accomplish the release of Jesus, thus made to gain the people’s consent, is satisfactorily attested by Matthew, although in a very few words, when he says, “But when Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made.” For he would not have made such a statement at all, had not Pilate exerted himself earnestly in that direction, although at the same time he has not told us how often he made such attempts to rescue Jesus from their fury. Accordingly, Luke concludes his report of what took place in the governor’s presence in this fashion: “And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.”

35. Let us next take the account of these same incidents—that is to say, those in which Pilate was engaged—as it is presented by John. He proceeds thus: “And they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover. Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.” We must look into this passage in order to show that it contains nothing inconsistent with Luke’s version, which states that certain charges were brought against Him, and also specifies their terms. For Luke’s words are these: “And they began to accuse Him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a king.” On the other hand, according to the paragraph which I have now cited from John, the Jews seem to have been unwilling to state any specific accusations, when Pilate asked them, “What accusation bring ye against this man?” For their reply was, “If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee;” the purport of which was, that he should accept their authority, cease to inquire what fault was alleged against Him, and believe Him guilty for the simple reason that He had been [reckoned] worthy of being delivered up by them to him. This being the case, then, we ought to suppose that both these versions report words which were actually said, both the one before us at present, and the one given by Luke. For among the multitude of sayings and replies which passed between the parties, these writers have made their own selections as far as their judgment allowed them to go, and each of them has introduced into his narrative just what he considered sufficient. It is also true that John himself mentions certain charges which were alleged against Him, and which we shall find in their proper connections. Here, then, he proceeds thus: “Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews, therefore, said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death; that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spake, signifying what death He should die. Then Pilate

entered into the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto Him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus answered, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?” This again may seem not to harmonize with what is recorded by the others,—namely, “Jesus answered, Thou sayest,”—unless it is made clear in what follows that the one thing was said as well as the other. Hence he gives us to understand that the matters which he records next are [not to be regarded as] things never actually uttered by the Lord, but are rather to be considered things which have been passed over in silence by the other evangelists. Mark, therefore, what remains of his narrative. It proceeds thus: “Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king.” Behold, here is the point at which he comes to that which the other evangelists have reported. And then he goes on, the Lord being still the speaker, to recite other matters which the rest have not recorded. His terms are these: “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find no fault in him. But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye, therefore, that I release unto you the King of the Jews? Then cried they all again, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber. Then Pilate, therefore, took Jesus, and scourged Him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe; and they came to Him and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote Him with their hands. Pilate went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! When the chief priests therefore and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him; for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.” This may fit in with what

Luke reports to have been stated in the accusation brought by the Jews,—namely, “We found this fellow perverting our nation,”—so that we might append here the reason given for it, “Because he made himself the Son of God.” John then goes on in the following strain: “When Pilate, therefore, heard that saying, he was the more afraid, and went again into the judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto Him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. From thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar’s friend: whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Caesar.” This may very well agree with what Luke records in connection with the said accusation brought by the Jews. For after the words, “We found this fellow perverting our nation,” he has added the clause, “And forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king.” This will also offer a solution for the difficulty previously referred to, namely, the occasion which might seem to be given for supposing John to have indicated that no specific charge was laid by the Jews against the Lord, when they answered and said unto him, “If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.” John then continues in the following strain: “When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour; and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King? But they cried out, Away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified.” The above is John’s version of what was done by Pilate.

CHAPTER IX

OF THE MOCKERY WHICH HE SUSTAINED AT THE HANDS OF PILATE’S COHORT, AND OF THE HARMONY SUBSISTING AMONG THE THREE EVANGELISTS WHO REPORT THAT SCENE, NAMELY, MATTHEW, MARK, AND JOHN

36. We have now reached the point at which we may study the Lord's passion, strictly so called, as it is presented in the narrative of these four evangelists. Matthew commences his account as follows: "Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto Him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!" At the same stage in the narrative, Mark delivers himself thus: "And the soldiers led Him away into the hall called Praetorium; and they called together the whole band. And they clothed Him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and began to salute Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote Him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon Him, and, bowing their knees, worshipped Him." Here, therefore, we perceive that while Matthew tells us how they "put on Him a scarlet robe," Mark speaks of purple, with which He was clothed. The explanation may be that the said scarlet robe was employed instead of the royal purple by these scoffers. There is also a certain red-coloured purple which resembles scarlet very closely. And it may also be the case that Mark has noticed the purple which the robe contained, although it was properly scarlet. Luke has left this without mention. On the other hand, previous to stating how Pilate delivered Him up to be crucified, John has introduced the following passage: "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged Him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe, and said, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote Him with their hands." This makes it evident that Matthew and Mark have reported this incident in the way of a recapitulation, and that it did not actually take place after Pilate had delivered Him up to be crucified. For John informs us distinctly enough that these things took place when He yet was with Pilate. Hence we conclude that the other evangelists have introduced the occurrence at that particular point, just because, having previously passed it by, they recollected it there. This is also borne out by what Matthew proceeds next to relate. He continues thus: "And they spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head. And after that they had mocked Him, they took the robe off from Him, and put His own raiment on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him." Here we are given to

understand that the taking the robe off Him and the clothing Him with His own raiment were done at the close, when He was being led away. This is given by Mark, as follows: “And when they had mocked Him, they took off the purple from Him, and put His own clothes on Him.”

CHAPTER X

OF THE METHOD IN WHICH WE CAN RECONCILE THE STATEMENT WHICH IS MADE BY MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE, TO THE EFFECT THAT ANOTHER PERSON WAS PRESSED INTO THE SERVICE OF CARRYING THE CROSS OF JESUS, WITH THAT GIVEN BY JOHN, WHO SAYS THAT JESUS BORE IT HIMSELF

37. Matthew, accordingly, goes on with his narrative in these terms: “And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear His cross.” In like manner, Mark says: “And they led Him out to be crucified. And they compelled one Simon, a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear His cross.” Luke’s version is also to this effect: “And as they led Him away, they laid hold upon one Simon a Cyrenian, coming out of the country; and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.” On the other hand, John records the matter as follows: “And they took Jesus, and led Him away. And He bearing His cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha; where they crucified Him.” From all this we understand that Jesus was carrying the cross Himself as He went forth into the place mentioned. But on the way the said Simon, who is named by the other three evangelists, was pressed into the service, and got the cross to carry for the rest of the course until the spot was reached. Thus we find that both circumstances really took place; namely, first the one noticed by John, and thereafter the one instanced by the other three.

CHAPTER XI

OF THE CONSISTENCY OF MATTHEW’S VERSION WITH THAT OF MARK IN THE ACCOUNT OF THE POTION OFFERED HIM TO DRINK, WHICH IS INTRODUCED BEFORE THE NARRATIVE OF HIS CRUCIFIXION

38. Matthew then proceeds in these terms: “And they came unto a place called Golgotha; that is to say, a place of a skull.” So far as the place is

concerned, they are most unmistakeably at one. The same Matthew next adds, “and they gave Him wine to drink, mingled with gall; and when He had tasted thereof, He would not drink.” This is given by Mark as follows: “And they gave Him to drink wine mingled with myrrh; and He received it not.” Here we may understand Matthew to have conveyed the same sense as Mark, when he speaks of the wine being “mingled with gall.” For the gall is mentioned with a view to express the bitterness of the potion. And wine mingled with myrrh is remarkable for its bitterness. The fact may also be that gall and myrrh together made the wine exceedingly bitter. Again, when Mark says that “He received it not,” we understand the phrase to denote that He did not receive it so as actually to drink it. He did taste it, however, as Matthew certifies. Thus Mark’s words, “He received it not,” convey the same meaning as Matthew’s version, “He would not drink.” The former, however, has said nothing about His tasting the potion.

CHAPTER XII

OF THE CONCORD PRESERVED AMONG ALL THE FOUR EVANGELISTS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE PARTING OF HIS RAIMENT

39. Matthew goes on thus: “And after they crucified Him, they parted His garments, casting lots: and sitting down, they watched Him.” Mark reports the same incident, as follows: “And crucifying Him, they parted His garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.” In like manner Luke says: “And they parted His raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding.” The occurrence is thus recorded briefly by the first three. But John gives us a more detailed narrative of the method in which the act was gone about. His version runs thus: “Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also His coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my garments, and for my vesture they did cast lots.”

CHAPTER XIII

OF THE HOUR OF THE LORD’S PASSION, AND OF THE QUESTION CONCERNING THE ABSENCE OF ANY DISCREPANCY BETWEEN MARK AND JOHN IN THE ARTICLE OF THE “THIRD” HOUR AND THE “SIXTH.”

40. Matthew continues thus: “And they set up over His head His accusation written, This is Jesus the King of the Jews.’“ Mark, on the other hand, before making any such statement, inserts these words: “And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him.” For he subjoins these terms immediately after he has told us about the parting of the garments. This, then, is a matter which we must consider with special care, lest any serious error emerge. For there are some who entertain the idea that the Lord was certainly crucified at the third hour; and that thereafter, from the sixth hour on to the ninth, the darkness covered the land. According to this theory, we should have to understand three hours to have passed between the time when He was crucified and the time when the darkness occurred. And this view might certainly be held with all due warrant, were it not that John has stated that it was about the sixth hour when Pilate sat down on the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. For his version goes on in this manner: “And as it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him! crucify him! Pilate said unto them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified.” If Jesus, therefore, was delivered up to the Jews to be crucified when it was about the sixth hour, and when Pilate was then sitting upon the judgment-seat, how could He have been crucified at the third hour, as some have been led to suppose, in consequence of a misinterpretation of the words of Mark?

41. First, then, let us consider what the hour really is at which He can have been crucified; and then we shall see how it happens that Mark has reported Him to have been crucified at the third hour. Now it was about the sixth hour when Pilate, who was sitting, as has been stated, at the time upon the judgment-seat, delivered Him up to be crucified. The expression is not that it was the sixth hour fully, but only that it was about the sixth hour; that is to say, the fifth hour was entirely gone, and so much of the sixth hour had

also been entered upon. These writers, however, could not naturally use such phraseologies as the fifth hour and a quarter, or the fifth hour and a third, or the fifth hour and a half or anything of that kind. For the Scriptures have the well-known habit of dealing simply with the round numbers, without mention of fractions, especially in matters of time. We have an example of this in the case of the “eight days,” after which, as they tell us, He went up into a mountain,—a space which is given by Matthew and Mark as “six days after,” because they look simply at the days between the one from which the reckoning commences and the one with which it closes. This is particularly to be kept in view when we notice how measured the terms are which John employs here. For he says not “the sixth hour,” but “about the sixth hour.” And yet, even had he not expressed himself in that way, but had stated merely that it was the sixth hour, it would still be competent for us to interpret the phrase in accordance with the method of speech with which we are, as I said, familiar in Scripture, namely, the use of the round numbers. And thus we could still take the sense quite fairly to be that, on the completion of the fifth hour and the commencement of the sixth, those matters were going on which are recorded in connection with the Lord’s crucifixion, until, on the close of the sixth hour, and when He was hanging on the cross, the darkness occurred which is attested by three of the evangelists, namely, Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

42. In due order, let us now inquire how it is that Mark, after telling us that they parted His garments when they were crucifying Him, casting lots upon them what every man should take, has appended this statement, “And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him.” Now here he had already made the declaration, “And crucifying Him, they parted His garments;” and the other evangelists also certify that, when He was crucified, they parted His garments. If, therefore, it was Mark’s design to specify the time at which the incident took place, it would have been enough for him to say simply, “And it was the third hour.” What reason, then, can be assigned for his having added these words, “And they crucified Him,” but that, under the summary statement thus inserted, he intended significantly to suggest something which might be found a subject for consideration, when the Scripture in question was read in times in which the whole Church knew perfectly well what hour it was at which the Lord was hanged upon the tree,

and the means were possessed for either correcting the writer's error or confuting his want of truth? But, inasmuch as he was quite aware of the fact that the Lord was suspended [on the cross] by the soldiers, and not by the Jews, as John most plainly affirms, his hidden object [in bringing in the said clause] was to convey the idea that those parties who cried out that He should be crucified were the Lord's real crucifiers, rather than the men who simply discharged their service to their chief in accordance with their duty. We understand, accordingly, that it was the third hour when the Jews cried out that the Lord should be crucified. And thus it is intimated most truly that these persons did really crucify Christ at the time when they cried out. All the more, too, did this merit notice, because they were unwilling to have the appearance of having done the deed themselves, and with that view delivered Him up unto Pilate, as their words indicate clearly enough in the report given by John. For, after stating how Pilate said to them, "What accusation bring ye against this man?" his version proceeds thus: "They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." Consequently, what they were especially unwilling to have the appearance of doing, that Mark here shows that they actually did do at the third hour. For he judged most truly that the Lord's murderer was rather the tongue of the Jews than the hand of the soldiers.

43. Moreover, if any one alleges that it was not the third hour when the Jews cried out for the first time in the terms referred to, he simply displays himself most insanely to be an enemy to the Gospel; unless perchance he can prove himself able to produce some new solution of the problem. For he cannot possibly establish the position that it was not the third hour at the period alluded to. And, consequently, we surely ought rather to credit a veracious evangelist than the contentious suspicions of men. But you may ask, How can you prove that it was the third hour? I answer, Because I believe the evangelists; and if you also believe them, show me how the Lord can have been crucified both at the sixth hour and at the third. For, to make a frank acknowledgment, we cannot get over the statement of the sixth hour in John's narrative; and Mark records the third hour: and,

therefore, if both of us accept the testimony of these writers, show me any other way in which both these notes of time can be taken as literally correct. If you can do so, I shall most cheerfully acquiesce. For what I prize is not my own opinion, but the truth of the Gospel. And I could wish, indeed, that more methods of clearing up this problem might be discovered by others. Until that be done, however, join me, if it please you, in taking advantage of the solution which I have propounded. For if no explanation can be found, this one will suffice of itself. But if another can be devised, when it is unfolded, we shall make our choice. Only don't consider it an inevitable conclusion that any one of all the four evangelists has stated what is false, or has fallen into error in a position of authority at once so elevated and so holy.

44. Again, if any one affirms his ability to prove it not to have been the third hour when the Jews cried out in the terms in question, because, after Mark's statement to this effect, "And Pilate answered, and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, Crucify him," we find no further details introduced into the narrative of the same evangelist, but are led on at once to the statement, that the Lord was delivered up by Pilate to be crucified—an act which John mentions to have taken place about the sixth hour;—I repeat, if any one adduces such an argument, let him understand that many things have been passed by without record here, which occurred in the interval when Pilate was engaged in looking out for some means by which he could rescue Jesus from the Jews, and was exerting himself most strenuously by every means in his power to withstand their maddened desires. For Matthew says, "Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do, then, with Jesus, which is called Christ? They all say, Let him be crucified." Then we affirm it to have been the third hour. And when the same Matthew goes on to add the sentence, "But when Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made," we understand that a period of two hours had passed, during the attempts made by Pilate to effect the release of Jesus, and the tumults raised by the Jews in their efforts to defeat him, and that the sixth hour had then commenced, previous to the close of which those things took place which are related as happening between the time when Pilate delivered up the Lord and the oncoming of the darkness. Once

more, as regards what Matthew records above,—namely, “And when he was set down on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him,”—we remark, that Pilate really took his seat upon the tribunal at a later point, but that, among the earlier incidents which Matthew was recounting, the account given of Pilate’s wife came into his mind, and he decided on inserting it in this particular connection, with the view of preparing us for understanding how Pilate had an especially urgent reason for wishing, even on to the last, not to deliver Him up to the Jews.

45. Luke, again, after mentioning how Pilate said, “I will therefore chastise him and let him go,” tells us that the whole multitude then cried out, “Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas.” But perhaps they had not yet exclaimed, “Crucify him!” For Luke next proceeds thus: “Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him!” This is understood to have been at the third hour. Luke then continues in these terms: “And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices requiring that He might be crucified. And the voices of them prevailed.” Here, then, this evangelist also makes it quite evident that there was a great tumult. With sufficient accuracy for the purposes of my inquiry into the truth, we can further gather how long the interval was after which he spoke to them in these terms, “Why, what evil hath he done?” And when he adds thereafter, “They were instant with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified, and the voices of them prevailed,” who can fail to perceive that this clamour was made just because they saw that Pilate was unwilling to deliver the Lord up to them? And, inasmuch as he was exceedingly reluctant to give Him up, he did not certainly yield at present in a moment, but in reality two hours and something more were passed by him in that state of hesitancy.

46. Interrogate John in like manner, and see how strong this hesitancy was on Pilate’s part, and how he shrank from so shameful a service. For this evangelist records these incidents much more fully, although even he certainly does not mention all the occurrences which took up these two

hours and part of the sixth hour. After telling us how Pilate scourged Jesus, and allowed the robe to be put on Him in derision by the soldiers, and suffered Him to be subjected to ill-treatment and many acts of mockery (all of which was permitted by Pilate, as I believe, really with the view of mitigating their fury and keeping them from persevering in their maddened desire for His death), John continues his account in the following manner: “Pilate went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!” The object of this was, that they might gaze upon that spectacle of ignominy and be appeased. But the evangelist proceeds again: “When the chief priests therefore and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him!” It was then the third hour, as we maintain. Mark also what follows: “Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him; for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; and went again into the judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith Pilate unto Him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. From thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him.” Now, when it is said here that “Pilate sought to release Him,” how long a space of time may we suppose to have been spent in that effort, and how many things may have been omitted here among the sayings which were uttered by Pilate, or the contradictions which were raised by the Jews, until these Jews gave expression to the words which moved him, and made him yield? For the writer goes on thus: “But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar’s friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, about the sixth hour.” Thus, then, between that exclamation of the Jews when they first cried out, “Crucify him,” at which period it was the third hour, and this moment when he sat down on the judgment-seat, two hours had passed, which had been taken up with Pilate's attempts to delay matters and the tumults raised by the Jews; and by this time the fifth hour was quite spent, and so much of the sixth hour had been entered. Then the narrative goes on thus: "He saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him! crucify him!" But not even now was Pilate so overcome by the apprehension of their bringing a charge against himself as to be very ready to yield. For his wife had sent to him when he was sitting at this time upon the judgment-seat,—an incident which Matthew, who is the only one that records it, has given by anticipation, introducing it before he comes to its proper place (according to the order of time) in his narrative, and bringing it in at another point which he judged opportune. In this way, Pilate, still continuing his efforts to prevent further advances, said then to them, "Shall I crucify your king?" Thereupon "the chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified." And in the time that passed when He was on the way, and when He was crucified along with the two robbers, and when His garments were parted and the possession of His coat was decided by lot, and the various deeds of contumely were done to Him (for, while these different things were going on, gibes were also cast at Him), the sixth hour was fully spent, and the darkness came on, which is mentioned by Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

47. Let such impious pertinacity therefore perish, and let it be believed that the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified at once at the third hour by the voice of the Jews, and at the sixth by the hands of the soldiers. For during these tumults on the part of the Jews, and these agitations on the side of Pilate, upwards of two hours elapsed from the time when they burst out with the cry, "Crucify Him." But again, even Mark, who studies brevity above all the other evangelists, has been pleased to give a concise indication of Pilate's desire and of his efforts to save the Lord's life. For, after giving us this statement, "And they cried again, Crucify him" (in which he gives us to understand that they had cried out before this, when they asked that Barabbas might be released to them), he has appended these words: "Then Pilate continued to say unto them, Why, what evil hath he done?" Thus by one short sentence he has given us an idea of matters which took a long

time for their transaction. At the same time, however, keeping in view the correct apprehension of his meaning, he does not say, “Then Pilate said unto them,” but expresses himself thus: “Then Pilate continued to say unto them, Why, what evil hath he done?” For, if his phrase had been “said,” we might have understood him to mean that such words were uttered only once. But, by adopting the terms, “continued to say,” he has made it clear enough to the intelligent that Pilate spoke repeatedly, and in a number of ways. Let us therefore consider how briefly Mark has expressed this as compared with Matthew, how briefly Matthew as compared with Luke, how briefly Luke as compared with John, while at the same time each of these writers has introduced now one thing and now another peculiar to himself. In fine, let us also consider how brief is even the narrative given by John himself, as compared with the number of things which took place, and the space of time occupied by their occurrence. And let us give up the madness of opposition, and believe that two hours, and something more, may quite well have passed in the interval referred to.

48. If any one, however, asserts that if this was the real state of the case, Mark might have mentioned the third hour explicitly at the point at which it really was the third hour, namely, when the voices of the Jews were lifted up demanding that the Lord should be crucified; and, further, that he might have told us plainly there that those vociferators did really crucify Him at that time,—such a reasoner is simply imposing laws upon the historians of truth in his own overweening pride. For he might as well maintain that if he were himself to be a narrator of these occurrences, they ought all to be recorded just in the same way and the same order by all other writers as they have been recorded by himself. Let him therefore be content to reckon his own notion inferior to that of Mark the evangelist, who has judged it right to insert the statement just at the point at which it was suggested to him by divine inspiration. For the recollections of those historians have been ruled by the hand of Him who rules the waters, as it is written, according to His own good pleasure. For the human memory moves through a variety of thoughts, and it is not in any man’s power to regulate either the subject which comes into his mind or the time of its suggestion. Seeing, then, that those holy and truthful men, in this matter of the order of their narrations, committed the casualties of their recollections (if such a

phrase may be used) to the direction of the hidden power of God, to whom nothing is casual, it does not become any mere man, in his low estate, removed far from the vision of God, and sojourning distantly from Him, to say, “This ought to have been introduced here;” for he is utterly ignorant of the reason which led God to will its being inserted in the place it occupies. The word of an apostle is to this effect: “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.” And again he says: “To the one indeed we are the savour of life unto life; to the other, the savour of death unto death;” and adds immediately, “And who is sufficient for these things?”—that is to say, who is sufficient to comprehend how righteously that is done? The Lord Himself expresses the same when He says, “I am come that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind.” For it is in the depth of the riches of the knowledge and wisdom of God that it comes to pass that of the same lump one vessel is made unto honour, and another unto dishonour. And to flesh and blood it is said, “O man, who art thou that repliest against God?” Who, then, knows the mind of the Lord in the matter now under consideration? or who hath been His counsellor, where He has in such wise ruled the hearts of these evangelists in their recollections, and has raised them to so commanding a position of authority in the sublime edifice of His Church, that those very things which are capable of presenting the appearance of contradictions in them become the means by which many are made blind, deservedly given over to the lusts of their own heart, and to a reprobate mind; and by which also many are exercised in the thorough cultivation of a pious understanding, in accordance with the hidden righteousness of the Almighty? For the language of a prophet in speaking to the Lord is this: “Thy thoughts are exceeding deep. An inconsiderate man will not know, and a foolish man will not understand these things.”

49. Moreover, I request and admonish those who read the statement which, with the help of the Lord, has thus been elaborated by us, to bear in mind this discourse, which I have thought it needful to introduce in the present connection, in every similar difficulty which may be raised in such inquiries, so that there may be no necessity for repeating the same thing over and over again. Besides, any one who is willing to clear himself of the hardness of impiety, and to give his attention to the subject, will easily perceive how opportune the place is in which Mark has inserted this notice

of the third hour, so that every one may there be led to bethink himself of an hour at which the Jews really crucified the Lord, although they sought to transfer the burden of the crime to the Romans, whether to the leaders among them or to the soldiers, [as we see] when we come here upon the record of what was done by the soldiers in the discharge of their duty. For this writer says here, “And crucifying Him, they parted His garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.” And to whom can this refer but to the soldiers, as is made manifest in John’s narrative? Thus, lest any one should leave the Jews out of account, and make the conception of so great a crime lie against those soldiers, Mark gives us here the statement, “And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him,”—his object being to have those Jews rather discovered to be the real crucifiers, who will be found by the careful investigator in a position making it quite possible for them to have cried out for the Lord’s crucifixion at the third hour, while he observes that what was done by the soldiers took place at the sixth hour.

50. At the same time, however, there are not wanting persons who would have the time of the preparation—which is referred to by John, when he says, “And it was the preparation of the passover, about the sixth hour”—understood under this third hour of the day, which was also the period at which Pilate sat down upon the judgment-seat. In this way the completion of the said third hour would appear to be the time when He was crucified, and when He was now hanging on the tree. Other three hours must then be supposed to have passed, at the end of which He gave up the ghost. According to this idea, too, the darkness would have commenced with the hour at which He died—that is to say, the sixth hour of the day—and have lasted until the ninth. For these persons affirm that the preparation of the passover of the Jews was indeed on the day which was followed by the day of the Sabbath, because the days of unleavened bread began with the said Sabbath; but that, nevertheless, the true passover, which was being realized in the Lord’s passion, the passover not of the Jews, but of the Christians, began to be prepared—that is, to have its parasceue—from the ninth hour of the night onwards, inasmuch as the Lord was then being prepared for being put to death by the Jews. For the term parasceue means by interpretation “preparation.” Between the said ninth hour of the night, therefore, and His crucifixion, the period occurs which is called by John the sixth hour of the

parasceue, and by Mark the third hour of the day; so that, according to this view, Mark has not introduced by way of recapitulation into his record the hour at which the Jews cried out, “Crucify him, crucify him,” but has expressly mentioned the third hour as the hour at which the Lord was nailed to the tree. What believer would not receive this solution of the problem with favour, were it only possible to find some point [in the narrative of incidents] in connection with the said ninth hour, at which we could suppose, in due consistency with other circumstances, the parasceue of our passover—that is to say, the preparation of the death of Christ—to have commenced. For, if we say that it began at the time when the Lord was apprehended by the Jews, it was still but the first parts of the night. If we hold that it was at the time when He was conducted to the house of Caiaphas’ father-in-law, where He was also heard by the chief priests, the cock had not crowed at all as yet, as we gather from Peter’s denial, which took place only when the cock was heard. Again, if we suppose it was at the time when He was delivered up to Pilate, we have in the plainest terms the statement of Scripture, to the effect that by this time it was morning. Consequently, it only remains for us to understand that this parasceue of the passover—that is to say, the preparation for the death of the Lord—commenced at the period when all the chief priests, in whose presence He was first heard, answered and said, “He is guilty of death,” an utterance which we find reported both by Matthew and by Mark; so that they are taken to have introduced, in the form of a recapitulation, at a later stage, facts relating to the denial of Peter, which in point of historical order had taken place at an earlier point. And it is nothing unreasonable to conjecture, that the time at which, as I have said, they pronounced Him guilty of death, may very well have been the ninth hour of the night, between which time and the hour at which Pilate sat down on the judgment-seat there came in this sixth hour, as it is called—not, however, the sixth hour of the day, but that of the parasceue—that is to say, the preparation for the sacrifice of the Lord, which is the true passover. And, on this theory, the Lord was suspended on the tree when the sixth hour of the same parasceue was completed, which occurred at the completion of the third hour of the day. We may make our choice, therefore, between this view and the other, which supposes Mark to have introduced the third hour by way of reminiscence, and to have had it especially in view, in mentioning the hour there, to suggest the fact of the condemnation brought upon the Jews in the matter of the Lord’s crucifixion, in so far as they are understood to have been in a position to raise the clamour for His crucifixion to such an effect that we may hold them to have been the persons who actually crucified Him, rather than the men by whose hands He was suspended on the tree; just as the centurion, already referred to, approached the Lord in a more genuine sense than could be said of those friends whom He sent [on the matter-of-fact mission]. But whichever of these two views we adopt, unquestionably a solution is found for this problem on the subject of the hour of the Lord’s passion, which is most remarkably apt at once to excite the impudence of the contentious and to agitate the inexperience of the weak.

CHAPTER XIV

OF THE HARMONY PRESERVED AMONG ALL THE EVANGELISTS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE TWO ROBBERS WHO WERE CRUCIFIED ALONG WITH HIM

51. Matthew continues his narrative in the following terms: “Then were there two robbers crucified with Him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.” Mark and Luke give it also in a similar form. Neither does John raise any question of difficulty, although he has made no mention of those robbers. For he says, “And two other with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.” But there would have been a contradiction if John had spoken of these others as innocent, while the former evangelists called them robbers.

CHAPTER XV

OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE ACCOUNTS GIVEN BY MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE ON THE SUBJECT OF THE PARTIES WHO INSULTED THE LORD

52. Matthew goes on in the following strain: “And they that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads, and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.” Mark’s statement agrees with this almost to the letter. Then Matthew continues thus: “Likewise also the chief priests, mocking Him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save: if he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the

cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver him now, if He will: for he said, I am the Son of God.” Mark and Luke, although they report the words differently, nevertheless agree in conveying the same meaning, although the one passes without notice something which the other mentions. For they are both really at one on the subject of the chief priests, giving us to understand that they insulted the Lord when He was crucified. The only difference is, that Mark does not specify the elders, while Luke, who has instanced the rulers, has not added the designation “of the priests,” and thus has rather comprehended the whole body of the leading men under the general designation; so that we may fairly take both the scribes and the elders to be included in his description.

CHAPTER XVI

OF THE DERISION ASCRIBED TO THE ROBBERS, AND OF THE QUESTION REGARDING THE ABSENCE OF ANY DISCREPANCY BETWEEN MATTHEW AND MARK ON THE ONE HAND, AND LUKE ON THE OTHER, WHEN THE LAST-NAMED EVANGELIST STATES THAT ONE OF THE TWO MOCKED HIM, AND THAT THE OTHER BELIEVED ON HIM

53. Matthew continues his narrative in these terms: “The robbers also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth.” Mark is quite in harmony with Matthew here, giving the same statement in different words. On the other hand, Luke may be thought to contradict this, unless we be careful not to forget a certain mode of speech which is sufficiently familiar. For Luke’s narrative runs thus: “And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on Him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.” And then the same writer proceeds to introduce into the same context the following recital: “But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise.” The question then is, how we can reconcile either Matthew’s report, “The robbers also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth,” or Mark’s, namely, “And they that were crucified with Him reviled Him,” with Luke’s testimony, which is to the effect that one of them reviled Christ, but that the other

arrested him and believed on the Lord. The explanation will be, that Matthew and Mark, presenting a concise version of the passage under review, have employed the plural number instead of the singular; as is the case in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where we find the statement given in the plural form, that “they stopped the mouths of lions,” while Daniel alone is understood to be referred to. Again, the plural number is adopted where it is said that they “were sawn asunder,” while that manner of death is reported only of Isaiah. In the same way, when it is said in the Psalm, “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers took counsel together,” etc., the plural number is employed instead of the singular, according to the exposition given of the passage in the Acts of the Apostles. For those who have made use of the testimony of the said Psalm in that book take the kings to refer to Herod, and the princes to Pilate. But further, inasmuch as the pagans are in the habit of bringing such slanderous charges against the Gospel, I would ask them to consider how their own writers have spoken of Phaedras and Medeas and Clytemnestras, when there really was but a single individual reputed under each of these names. And what is more common, for example, than for a person to say, “The rustics also behave insolently to me,” even although it should only be one that acted rudely? In short, no real discrepancy would be created by the restriction of Luke’s report to one of the two robbers, unless the other evangelists had declared expressly that “both” the malefactors reviled the Lord; for in that case it would not be possible for us to suppose only one individual intended under the plural number. Seeing, however, that the phrase employed is “the robbers,” or “those who were crucified with Him,” and the term “both” is not added, the expression is one which might have been used if both these men had been engaged in the thing, but which might equally well be adopted if one of the two had been implicated in it,—that fact being then conveyed by the use of the plural number, according to a familiar method of speech.

CHAPTER XVII

OF THE HARMONY OF THE FOUR EVANGELISTS IN THEIR NOTICES OF THE DRAUGHT OF VINEGAR

54. Matthew proceeds in the following terms: “Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.” The same fact is

attested by two others of the evangelists. Luke adds, however, a statement of the cause of the darkness, namely, that “the sun was darkened.” Again, Matthew continues thus: “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani! that is to say, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias.” Mark’s agreement with this is almost complete, so far as regards the words, and not only almost, but altogether complete, so far as the sense is concerned. Matthew next makes this statement: “And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink.” Mark presents it in a similar form: “And one ran, and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take Him down.” Matthew, however, has represented these words about Elias to have been spoken, not by the person who offered the sponge with the vinegar, but by the rest. For his version runs thus: “But the rest said, Let be; let us see whether Elias will come to save Him;”—from which, therefore, we infer that both the man specially referred to and the others who were there expressed themselves in these terms. Luke, again, has introduced this notice of the vinegar previous to his report of the robber’s insolence. He gives it thus: “And the soldiers also mocked Him, coming to Him, and offering Him vinegar, and saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself.” It has been Luke’s purpose to embrace in one statement what was done and what was said by the soldiers. And we ought to feel no difficulty in the circumstance that he has not said explicitly that it was “one” of them who offered the vinegar. For, adopting a method of expression which we have discussed above, he has simply put the plural number for the singular. Moreover, John has also given us an account of the vinegar, where he says: “After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to His mouth.” But although the said John thus informs us that Jesus said “I thirst,” and also mentions that there was a vessel full of vinegar there, while the other evangelists leave these things unspecified, there is nothing to marvel at in this.

CHAPTER XVIII

OF THE LORD’S SUCCESSIVE UTTERANCES WHEN HE WAS ABOUT TO DIE; AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER MATTHEW AND MARK ARE IN HARMONY WITH LUKE IN THEIR REPORTS OF THESE SAYINGS, AND ALSO WHETHER THESE THREE EVANGELISTS ARE IN HARMONY WITH JOHN

55. Matthew proceeds as follows: “And Jesus, crying again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.” In like manner, Mark says, “And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.” Luke, again, has told us what He said when that loud voice was uttered. For his version is thus: “And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit: and saying this, He gave up the ghost.” John, on the other hand, as he has left unnoticed the first voice, which Matthew and Mark have reported—namely, “Eli, Eli”—has also passed over in silence the one which has been recited only by Luke, while the other two have referred to it under the designation of the “loud voice.” I allude to the cry, “Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.” Luke has also attested the fact that this exclamation was uttered with a loud voice; and hence we may understand this particular cry to be identified with the loud voice which Matthew and Mark have specified. But John has stated a fact which is noticed by none of the other three, namely, that He said “It is finished,” after He had received the vinegar. This cry we take to have been uttered previous to the loud voice referred to. For these are John’s words: “When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished; and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.” In the interval elapsing between this cry, “It is finished,” and what is referred to in the subsequent sentence, “and He bowed His head and gave up the ghost,” the voice was uttered which John himself has passed over without record, but which the other three have noticed. For the precise succession appears to be this, namely, that He said first “It is finished,” when what had been prophesied regarding Him was fulfilled in Him, and that thereafter—as if He had been waiting for this, like one, indeed, who died when He willed it to be so—He commended His spirit [to His Father], and resigned it. But, whatever the order may be in which a person may consider it likely that these words were spoken, he ought above all things to guard against entertaining the notion that any one of the evangelists is in antagonism with another, when one leaves

unmentioned something which another has repeated, or particularizes something which another has passed by in silence.

CHAPTER XIX

OF THE RENDING OF THE VEIL OF THE TEMPLE, AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER MATTHEW AND MARK REALLY HARMONIZE WITH LUKE WITH RESPECT TO THE ORDER IN WHICH THAT INCIDENT TOOK PLACE

56. Matthew proceeds thus: “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.” Mark’s version is also as follows: “And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.” Luke likewise gives a statement in similar terms: “And the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.” He does not introduce it, however, in the same order. For, with the intention of attaching miracle to miracle, he has told us first how “the sun was darkened,” and then has deemed it right to subjoin the said sentence in immediate succession, namely, “And the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.” Thus it would appear that he has introduced at an earlier point this incident, which really took place when the Lord expired, so as to give us there a summary description of the circumstances relating to the drinking of the vinegar, and the loud voice, and the death itself, which are understood to have taken place previous to the rending of the veil, and after the darkness had come in. For Matthew has inserted this sentence, “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent,” in immediate succession to the statement, “And Jesus, crying again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost;” and has thus given us clearly to understand that the time when the veil was rent was after Jesus had given up His spirit. If, however, he had not added the words, “And behold,” but had said simply, “And the veil of the temple was rent,” it would have been uncertain whether Mark and he had narrated the incident in the form of a recapitulation, while Luke had kept the exact order, or whether Luke had given the summary account of what these others had introduced in the correct historical succession.

CHAPTER XX

OF THE QUESTION AS TO THE CONSISTENCY OF THE SEVERAL NOTICES GIVEN BY MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE, ON THE SUBJECT OF THE ASTONISHMENT FELT BY THE CENTURION AND THOSE WHO WERE WITH HIM

57. Matthew proceeds thus: “And the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after the resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.” There is no reason to fear that these facts, which have been related only by Matthew, may appear to be inconsistent with the narratives presented by any one of the rest. The same evangelist then continues as follows: “Now when the centurion, and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.” Mark offers this version: “And when the centurion which stood over against Him saw that He so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this was the Son of God.” Luke’s report runs thus: “Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.” Here Matthew says that it was when they saw the earthquake that the centurion and those who were with him were thus astonished, whereas Luke represents the man’s amazement to have been drawn forth by the fact that Jesus uttered such a cry, and then gave up the ghost; thus making it clear how He had it in His own power to determine the time for His dying. But this involves no discrepancy. For as the said Matthew not only tells us how the centurion “saw the earthquake,” but also appends the words, “and those things that were done,” he has indicated that there was room enough for Luke to represent the Lord’s death as itself the thing which called forth the centurion’s wonder. For that event is also one of the things which were done in so marvellous a manner then. At the same time, even although Matthew had not added any such statement, it would still have been perfectly legitimate to suppose, that as many astonishing things did take place at that time, and as the centurion and those who were with him may well have looked upon them all with amazement, the historians were at liberty to select for narration any particular incident which they were severally disposed to instance as the subject of the man’s wonder. And it would not be fair to impeach them with inconsistency, simply because one of them may have specified one occurrence as the immediate cause of the centurion’s amazement, while another introduces a different incident. For all these events together had really been matters for the man’s astonishment. Again, the mere fact that one evangelist tells us that the centurion said, “Truly this was the Son of God,” while another informs us that the words

were, “Truly this man was the Son of God,” will create no difficulty to any one who has retained some recollection of the numerous statements and discussions bearing upon similar cases, which have already been given above. For these different versions of the words both convey precisely the same sense and although one writer introduces the word “man” while another does not, that implies no kind of contradiction. A greater appearance of discrepancy may be supposed to be created by the circumstance, that the words which Luke reports the centurion to have uttered are not “This was the Son of God,” but “This was a righteous man.” But we ought to suppose either that both things were actually said by the centurion, and that two of the evangelists have recorded the one expression, and the third the other; or else perhaps that it was Luke’s intention to bring out the exact idea which the centurion had in view when he said that Jesus was the Son of God. For it may be the case that the centurion did not really understand Him to be the Only-begotten, equal with the Father; but that he called Him the Son of God simply because he believed Him to be a righteous man, as many righteous men have been named sons of God. Moreover, when Luke says, “Now when the centurion saw what was done,” he has really used terms which cover all the marvellous things which occurred on that occasion, commemorating a single deed of wonder, so to speak, of which all those miraculous incidents were, as we may say, members and parts. But, once more, as regards the circumstance that Matthew has also referred to those who were with the centurion, while the others have left these parties unnoticed, to whom will this not explain itself on the well-understood principle that there is no contradiction necessarily involved in the mere fact that one writer records what another passes by without mention? And, finally, as to Matthew’s having told us that “they feared greatly,” while Luke has said nothing about the man being afraid, but has informed us that “he glorified God,” who can fail to understand that he glorified [God] just by the fear which he exhibited?

CHAPTER XXI

OF THE WOMEN WHO WERE STANDING THERE, AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE, WHO HAVE STATED THAT THEY STOOD AFAR OFF, ARE IN ANTAGONISM WITH JOHN, WHO HAS MENTIONED THAT ONE OF THEM STOOD BY THE CROSS

58. Matthew proceeds thus: “And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee: among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s children.” Mark gives it in this form: “There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joseph, and Salome (who also, when He was in Galilee, followed Him, and ministered unto Him); and many other women which came up with Him unto Jerusalem.” I see nothing which can be supposed to constitute a discrepancy between these writers here. For in what way can the truth be affected by the fact that some of these women are named in both lists, while others are referred to only in the one? Luke has likewise connected his narrations as follows: “And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. And all His acquaintance and the women that followed Him from Galilee stood afar off beholding these things.” Here we perceive that he is quite in harmony with the former two as far as regards the presence of the women, although he does not mention any of them by name. On the subject of the multitude of people who were also present, and who, as they beheld the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned, he is in like manner at one with Matthew, although that evangelist has introduced into the context this distinct statement: “Now the centurion and they that were with him.” Thus it simply appears that Luke is the only one who has spoken expressly of His “acquaintance” who stood afar off. For John has also noticed the presence of the women before the Lord gave up the ghost. His narrative runs thus: “Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by whom He loved, He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.” Now, as regards this statement, had not Matthew and Mark at the same time mentioned Mary Magdalene most explicitly by name, it might have been possible for us to say that there was one company of women afar off, and another near the cross. For none of these writers has mentioned the Lord’s mother here but John himself. The question, therefore, which rises now is this, How can we understand the same Mary Magdalene both to have stood afar off along with other women,

as the accounts of Matthew and Mark bear, and to have been by the cross, as John tells us, unless it be the case that these women were at such a distance as made it quite legitimate to say at once that they were near, because they were at hand there in the sight of Him, and also afar off in comparison with the crowd of people who were standing round about in closer vicinity along with the centurion and the soldiers? It is open for us, then, to suppose that those women who were present at the scene along with the Lord's mother, after He commended her to the disciple, began then to retire with the view of extricating themselves from the dense mass of people, and of looking on at what remained to be done from a greater distance. And in this way the rest of the evangelists, who have introduced their notices of these women only after the Lord's death, have properly reported them to be standing by that time afar off.

CHAPTER XXII

OF THE QUESTION WHETHER THE EVANGELISTS ARE ALL AT ONE ON THE SUBJECT OF THE NARRATIVE REGARDING JOSEPH, WHO BEGGED THE LORD'S BODY FROM PILATE, AND WHETHER JOHN'S VERSION CONTAINS ANY STATEMENTS AT VARIANCE WITH EACH OTHER

59. Matthew proceeds as follows: "Now when the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: he went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered." Mark presents it in this form: "And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable councillor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if He were already dead: and, calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether He had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph." Luke's report runs in these terms: "And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a councillor; and he was a good man, and a just (the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them): he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus." John, on the other hand, first narrates the breaking of the legs of those who had been

crucified with the Lord, and the piercing of the Lord’s side with the lance (which whole passage has been recorded by him alone), and then subjoins a statement which is of the same tenor with what is given by the other evangelists. It proceeds in these terms: “And after this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.” There is nothing here to give any one of them the appearance of being in antagonism with another. But some one may perhaps ask whether John is not inconsistent with himself, when he at once unites with the rest in telling us how Joseph begged the body of Jesus, and comes forward as the only one who states here that Joseph had been a disciple of Jesus secretly for fear of the Jews. For the question may reasonably be raised as to how it happened that the man who had been a disciple secretly for fear had the courage to beg His body—a thing which not one of those who were His open followers was bold enough to do. We must understand, however, that this man did so in the confidence which his dignified position gave him, the possession of which rendered it possible for him to make his way on familiar terms into Pilate’s presence. And we must suppose, further, that in the performance of that last service relating to the interment, he cared less for the Jews, however he tried in ordinary circumstances, when hearing the Lord, to avoid exposing himself to their enmity.

CHAPTER XXIII

OF THE QUESTION WHETHER THE FIRST THREE EVANGELISTS ARE QUITE IN HARMONY WITH JOHN IN THE ACCOUNTS GIVEN OF HIS BURIAL

60. Matthew proceeds thus: “And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.” Mark’s version is as follows: “And he bought fine linen, and took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen, and laid Him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.” Luke reports it in those terms: “And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.” So far as these three narratives are

concerned, no allegation of a want of harmony can possibly be raised. John, however, tells us that the burial of the Lord was attended to not only by Joseph, but also by Nicodemus. For he begins with Nicodemus in due connection with what precedes, and goes on with his narrative as follows: “And there came also Nicodemus (which at the first came to Jesus by night), and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.” Then, introducing Joseph again at this point, he continues in these terms: “Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus, therefore, because of the Jews’ preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.” But there is really as little ground for supposing any discrepancy here as there was in the former case, if we take a correct view of the statement. For those evangelists who have left Nicodemus unnoticed have not affirmed that the Lord was buried by Joseph alone, although he is the only one introduced into their records. Neither does the fact, that these three are all at one in informing us how the Lord was wrapped in the linen cloth by Joseph, preclude us from entertaining the idea that other linen stuffs may have been brought by Nicodemus, and added to what was given by Joseph, so that John may be perfectly correct in his narrative, especially as what he tells us is that the Lord was wrapped not in a linen cloth, but in linen clothes. At the same time, when we take into account the handkerchief which was used for the head, and the bandages with which the whole body was swathed, and consider that all these were made of linen, we can see how, even although there was really but a single linen cloth [of the kind referred to by the first three evangelists] there, it could still have been stated with the most perfect truth that “they wound Him in linen clothes.” For the phrase, linen clothes, is one applied generally to all textures made of flax.

CHAPTER XXIV

OF THE ABSENCE OF ALL DISCREPANCIES IN THE NARRATIVES CONSTRUCTED BY THE FOUR EVANGELISTS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE EVENTS WHICH TOOK PLACE ABOUT THE TIME OF THE LORD’S RESURRECTION

61. Matthew proceeds thus: “And there was there Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.” This is given by Mark as follows: “And Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Joseph, beheld where He was laid.” So far it is evident that there is no kind of inconsistency between the accounts.

62. Matthew continues in these terms: “Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we have remembered that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch; go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.” This narrative is given only by Matthew. Nothing, however, is stated by any of the others which can have the appearance of contrariety.

63. Again, the same Matthew carries on his recital as follows: “Now, in the evening of the Sabbath, when it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. And his countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay: And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you.” Mark is in harmony with this. It is possible, however, that some difficulty may be felt in the circumstance that, according to Matthew’s version, the stone was already rolled away from the sepulchre, and the angel was sitting upon it. For Mark tells us that the women entered into the sepulchre, and there saw a young man sitting on the right side, covered with a long white garment, and that they were affrighted. But the explanation may be, that Matthew has

simply said nothing about the angel whom they saw when they entered into the sepulchre, and that Mark has said nothing about the one whom they saw sitting outside upon the stone. In this way they would have seen two angels, and have got two separate angelic reports relating to Jesus,—namely, first one from the angel whom they saw sitting outside upon the stone, and then another from the angel whom they saw sitting on the right side when they entered into the sepulchre. Thus, too, the injunction given them by the angel who was sitting outside, and which was conveyed in the words, “Come, and see the place where the Lord lay,” would have served to encourage them to go within the tomb; on coming to which, as has been said, and venturing within it, we may suppose them to have seen the angel concerning whom Matthew tells us nothing, but of whom Mark discourses, sitting on the right side, from whom also they heard things of like tenor to those they had previously listened to. Or if this explanation is not satisfactory, we ought certainly to accept the theory that, as they entered into the sepulchre, they came within a section of the ground where, it is reasonable to suppose, a certain space had been by that time securely enclosed, extending a little distance in front of the rock which had been cut out in order to construct the place of sepulture; so that, according to this view, what they really beheld was the one angel sitting on the right side, in the space thus referred to, which same angel Matthew also represents to have been sitting upon the stone which he had rolled away from the mouth of the tomb when the earthquake took place, that is to say, from the place which had been dug out in the rock for a sepulchre.

64. It may also be asked how it is that Mark says: “And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they anything to any man; for they were afraid;” whereas Matthew’s statement is in these terms: “And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy, and did run to bring His disciples word. The explanation, however, may be that the women did not venture to tell either of the angels themselves,—that is, they had not courage enough to say anything in reply to what they had heard from the angels. Or, indeed, it may be that they were not bold enough to speak to the guards whom they saw lying there; for the joy which Matthew mentions is not inconsistent with the fear of which Mark takes notice. Indeed, we ought to have

supposed that both feelings had possession of their minds, even although Matthew himself had said nothing about the fear. But now, when this evangelist also particularizes it, saying, “They departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy,” he allows nothing to remain which can occasion any question of difficulty on this subject.

65. At the same time, a question, which is not to be dealt with lightly, does arise here with respect to the exact hour at which the women came to the sepulchre. For when Matthew says, “Now, on the evening of the Sabbath, when it was dawning toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre,” what are we to make of Mark’s statement, which runs thus: “And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun”? It is to be observed that in this Mark states nothing inconsistent with the reports given by other two of the evangelists, namely, Luke and John. For when Luke says, “Very early in the morning,” and when John puts it thus, “Early, when it was yet dark,” they convey the same sense which Mark is understood to express when he says, “Very early, at the rising of the sun;” that is to say, they all refer to the period when the heavens were now beginning to brighten in the east, which, of course, does not take place but when the sunrise is at hand. For it is the brightness which is diffused by the rising sun that is familiarly designated by the name of the dawn. Consequently, Mark does not contradict the other evangelist who uses the phrase, “When it was yet dark;” for as the day breaks, what remains of the darkness [of the night] passes away just in proportion as the sun continues to rise. And this phrase, “Very early in the morning,” need not be taken to mean that the sun itself was actually seen by this time [blazing] over the lands; but it is rather to be taken as like the kind of expression which we are in the habit of employing when speaking to people to whom we wish to intimate that something should be done more betimes than usual. For when we have used the term, “Early in the morning,” if we wish to keep the persons addressed from supposing that we refer directly to the time when the sun is already conspicuously visible over earth, we usually add the word “very,” and say, “very early in the morning,” in order that they may clearly understand that we allude to the time which is also called the daybreak. At the same time, it is also customary for men, after the cockcrow has been

repeatedly heard, and when they begin to surmise that the day is now approaching, to say, “It is now early in the morning;” and when after this they weigh their words and observe that, as the sun now rises,—that is to say, as it now makes its immediate advent into these parts,—the sky is just beginning to redden, or to brighten, those who said, “It is early in the morning,” then amplify their expression and say, “It is very early in the morning.” But what does it matter, provided only that, whichever method of explanation be preferred, we understand that what is meant by Mark, when he uses the terms “early in the morning,” is just the same as is intended by Luke when he adopts the phrase, “in the morning;” and that the whole expression employed by the former—namely, “very early in the morning”—amounts to the same as that which we find in Luke—namely, “very early in the dawn,”—and as that which is chosen by John when he says, “early, when it was yet dark”? Moreover, when Mark speaks of the “rising of the sun,” he just means that by its rising the sun was now beginning to bring the light in upon the sky. But the question now is this: how can Matthew be in harmony with these three when he says neither “in the early morning” nor “early in the morning,” but “in the evening of the Sabbath, when it was beginning to dawn toward the first day of the week”? This is a matter which must be carefully investigated. Now, under that first part of the night, which is [here called] the evening, Matthew intended to refer to this particular night, at the close of which the women came to the sepulchre. And we understand his reason for so referring to the said night to have been this: that by the time of the evening it was lawful for them to bring the spices, because the Sabbath was then indeed over. Consequently, as they were hindered by the Sabbath from doing so previously, he has given a designation of the night, taken from the time at which it began to be a lawful thing for them to do what they did at any period of the same night which pleased them. Thus, therefore, the phrase “in the evening of the Sabbath” is used, as if what was said had been “in the night of the Sabbath,” or in other words, in the night which follows the day of the Sabbath. The express words which he employs thus indicate this with sufficient clearness. For his terms are these: “Now, in the evening of the Sabbath, when it began to dawn toward the first day of the week;” and that could not be the case if what we had to understand to be denoted by the mention of the “evening” was simply the first short space of the night, or in other words, only the beginning of the night. For what can be said “to begin to dawn toward the first day of the week” is not explicitly the beginning [of the night], but the night itself, as it commences to be brought to its close by the advance of the light. For the terminus of the first part of the night is just the beginning of the second part, but the terminus of the whole night is the light. Hence we could not speak of the evening as dawning toward the first day of the week unless under the term “evening” we should understand the night itself to be meant, which, as a whole, is brought to its close by the light. It is also a familiar method of speech in divine Scripture to express the whole under the part; and thus, under the word “evening” here, the evangelist has denoted the whole night, which finds its extreme point in the dawn. For it was in the dawn that those women came to the sepulchre; and in this way they really came on the night, which is here indicated by the term “evening.” For, as I have said, the night as a whole is denoted by that word; consequently, at whatever period of that night they might have come, they certainly did come in the said night. And, accordingly, if they came at the latest point in that night, it is still unquestionably the case that they did come in the said night. But it could not be said to be on “the evening, when it began to dawn toward the first day of the week,” unless the night as a whole can be understood under that expression. Accordingly, the women who came in the night referred to, came in the evening specified. And if they came at any period, even the latest during that night, they surely came in the night itself.

66. For the space of three days, which elapsed between the Lord’s death and resurrection, cannot be correctly understood except in the light of that form of expression according to which the part is dealt with as the whole. For He said Himself, “For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” Now, in whichever way we reckon the times, whether from the point when He yielded up the ghost, or from the date of his burial, the sum does not come out clearly, unless we take the intermediate day, that is to say, the Sabbath, as a complete day—in other words, a full day along with its night,—and, on the other hand, understand those days between which that one intervenes—that is to say, the day of the preparation and the first day of the week, which we designate the Lord’s day—to be dealt with on

the principle of the part standing for the whole. For of what avail is it that some, hard pressed by these difficulties, and not knowing the very large part which the mode of expression referred to—namely, that which takes the part as the whole—plays in the matter of solving the problems presented in the Holy Scriptures, have struck out the idea of reckoning as a distinct night those three hours, namely, from the sixth hour to the ninth, during which the sun was darkened, and as a distinct day the other three hours, during which the sun was restored again to the lands, that is to say, from the ninth hour on to its setting? For the night connected with the coming Sabbath follows, and if we compute it along with its day, there will then be two days and two nights. But, further, after the Sabbath there comes in the night connected with the first day of the week, that is to say, with the dawning of the Lord's day, which was the time when the Lord arose. Consequently, the result to which this mode of calculation leads us will be just two days and two nights, and one night, even supposing it possible to take the last as a complete night, and taking it for granted that we were not to show that the said dawn was in reality the ultimate portion of the same. Thus it would appear that, even although we were to compute these six hours in that fashion, during three of which the sun was darkened, and during the other three of which it shone forth again, we would not establish a satisfactory reckoning of three days and three nights. In accordance, therefore, with the usage which meets us so frequently in the language of the Scriptures, and which deals with the part as the whole, it remains for us to hold the time of the preparation to constitute the day at the one extremity, on which the Lord was crucified and buried, and, from that limit, to find one whole day along with its night which was fully spent. In this way, too, we must take the intermediate member, that is to say the day of the Sabbath, not as calculated simply from the part, but as a really complete day. The third day, again, must be computed from its first part; that is to say, calculating from the night, we must look upon it as making up a whole day when its day-portion is connected with it. Thus we shall get a space of three days, on the analogy of a case already considered, namely, those eight days after which the Lord went up into a mountain; with respect to which period we find that Matthew and Mark, fixing their attention simply on the complete days intervening, have put it thus, "After six days," whereas Luke's representation of the same is this, "An eight days after."

67. Let us now proceed, therefore, to look into the rest of this passage, and see how in other respects these statements are quite consistent with what is given by Matthew. For Luke tells us, with the utmost plainness, that two angels were seen by those women who came to the sepulchre. One of these angels we have understood to be referred to by each of the first two evangelists; that is to say, one of them is noticed by Matthew, namely, the one who was sitting outside upon the stone, and a second by Mark, namely, the one who was sitting within the sepulchre on the right side. But Luke's version of the scene is to the following effect: "And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. And the women which had come with Him from Galilee beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath-day, according to the commandment. Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments; and as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered His words. And they returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest." The question, therefore, is this, how can these angels have been seen sitting each one separately,—namely, one outside upon the stone, according to Matthew, and another within upon the right side, according to Mark,—if Luke's report of the same bears that the two stood beside those women, although the words ascribed to them are similar? Well, it is still possible for us to suppose that one angel was seen by the women in the position assigned by Matthew, and in the circumstances indicated by Mark, as we have already explained. In this way, we may understand the said women to have entered into the sepulchre, that is to say, into a certain space which had been fenced off within a kind of enclosure, in such a manner that an entrance might be said to be made when they came in front of the rocky place in which the sepulchre was constructed; and there we may take them

to have beheld the angel sitting upon the stone which had been rolled away from the tomb, as Matthew tells us, or in other words, the angel sitting on the right side, as Mark expresses it. And then we may further surmise that the said women, after they had gone within, and when they were looking at the place where the body of the Lord lay, saw other two angels standing, as Luke informs us, by whom they were addressed in similar terms, with a view to animate their minds and edify their faith.

68. But let us also examine John's version, and see whether or in what manner its consistency with these others is apparent. John, then, narrates these incidents as follows: "Now the first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and saw the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciples whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid Him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and they came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he, stooping down, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and, as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. They say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her.” In the narrative thus given by John, the statement of the day or time when the sepulchre was come to agrees with the accounts presented by the rest. Again, in the report of two angels who were seen, he is also at one with Luke. But when we observe how the one evangelist tells us that these angels were seen standing, while the other says that they were sitting; when we notice, also, that there are certain other things which are left unrecorded by these two writers; and, further, when we consider how questions are thus raised regarding the possibility of proving the consistency of the one set of historians with the other on these subjects, and of fixing the order in which those said things took place, we see that, unless we submit the whole to a careful examination, there may easily appear to be contradictions here between the several narratives.

69. This being the case, therefore, let us, so far as the Lord may help us, take all these incidents, which took place about the time of the Lord’s resurrection, as they are brought before us in the statements of all the evangelists together, and let us arrange them in one connected narrative, which will exhibit them precisely as they may have actually occurred. It was in the early morning of the first day of the week, as all the evangelists are at one in attesting, that the women came to the sepulchre. By that time, all that is recorded by Matthew alone had already taken place; that is to say, in regard to the quaking of the earth, and the rolling away of the stone, and the terror of the guards, with which they were so stricken, that in some part they lay like dead men. Then, as John informs us, came Mary Magdalene, who unquestionably was surpassingly more ardent in her love than these other women who had ministered to the Lord; so that it was not unreasonable in John to make mention of her alone, leaving those others unnamed, who, however, were along with her, as we gather from the reports given by others of the evangelists. She came accordingly; and when she saw the stone taken away from the sepulchre, without pausing to make any more minute investigation, and never doubting but that the body of Jesus had been removed from the tomb, she ran, as the same John states, and told the

state of matters to Peter and to John himself. For John is himself that disciple whom Jesus loved. They then set out running to the sepulchre; and John, reaching the spot first, stooped down and saw the linen clothes lying, but he did not go within. But Peter followed up, and went into the sepulchre, and saw the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, which had been about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then John entered also, and saw in like manner, and believed what Mary had told him, namely, that the Lord had been taken away from the sepulchre. "For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping,"—that is to say, before the place in the rock in which the sepulchre was constructed, but at the same time within that space into which they had now entered; for there was a garden there, as the same John mentions. Then they saw the angel sitting on the right side, upon the stone which was rolled away from the sepulchre; of which angel both Matthew and Mark discourse. "Then he said unto them, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay: and go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you." In Mark we also find a passage similar in tenor to the above. At these words, Mary, still weeping, bent down and looked forwards into the sepulchre, and beheld the two angels, who are introduced to us in John's narrative, sitting in white raiment, one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been deposited. "They say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." Here we are to suppose the angels to have risen up, so that they could be seen standing, as Luke states that they were seen, and then, according to the narrative of the same Luke, to have addressed the women, as they were afraid and bowed down their faces to the earth. The terms were these: "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise. And they remembered His words." It was after this that, as we learn from John, "Mary turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener, saith unto Him, Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” Then she departed from the sepulchre, that is to say, from the ground where there was space for the garden in front of the stone which had been dug out. Along with her there were also those other women, who, as Mark tells us, were surprised with fear and trembling. And they told nothing to any one. At this point we next take up what Matthew has recorded in the following passage: “Behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail! And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him.” For thus we gather that, on coming to the sepulchre, they were twice addressed by the angels; and, again, that they were also twice addressed by the Lord Himself, namely, at the point at which Mary took Him to be the gardener, and a second time at present, when He meets them on the way, with a view to strengthen them by such a repetition, and to bring them out of their state of fear. “Then, accordingly, said He unto them, Be not afraid: go, tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.” “Then came Mary Magdalene, and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her;”—not herself alone, however, but with her also those other women to whom Luke alludes when he says, “Which told these things unto the eleven disciples, and all the rest. And their words seemed to them like madness, and they believed them not.” Mark also attests these facts; for, after telling us how the women went out from the sepulchre, trembling and amazed, and said nothing to any man, he subjoins the statement, that the Lord rose early the first day of the week, and appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils, and that she went and told them who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept, and that they, when they heard that He was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. It is further to be observed, that Matthew has also introduced a notice to the effect that, as the women who had seen and heard all these things were going away, there came likewise into the city some of the guards who had been lying like dead men, and that these persons reported to the chief priests all the things that were done, that is to say, those of them which they were themselves also in a position to observe. He tells us, moreover, that when they were assembled with the elders and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, and bade them say that His disciples came and stole Him away while they slept, promising at the same time to secure them against the governor, who had given those guards. Finally, he adds that they took the money, and did as they had been taught, and that this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

CHAPTER XXV

OF CHRIST'S SUBSEQUENT MANIFESTATIONS OF HIMSELF TO THE DISCIPLES, AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER A THOROUGH HARMONY CAN BE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT NARRATIVES WHEN THE NOTICES GIVEN BY THE FOUR SEVERAL EVANGELISTS, AS WELL AS THOSE PRESENTED BY THE APOSTLE PAUL AND IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, ARE COMPARED TOGETHER

70. We must take up the consideration of the manner in which the Lord showed Himself to the disciples after His resurrection, and that with the view not only of bringing out clearly the consistency of the four evangelists with each other on these subjects, but also of exhibiting their agreement with the Apostle Paul, who discourses of the theme in his First Epistle to the Corinthians. The statement by the latter runs in the following terms: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this day, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." Now this succession of the appearances is one which has been given by none of the evangelists. Hence we must examine whether the order which they have put on record does not stand in antagonism to this. For neither has Paul related all, nor have the evangelists included everything in their reports. And the real subject for our investigation, therefore, is the question, whether, among the incidents which do come under our notice in these various narratives, there is anything fitted to establish a discrepancy

between the writers. Now Luke is the only one among the four evangelists who omits to tell us how the Lord was seen by the women, and confines his statement to the appearance of the angels. Matthew, again, informs us that He met them as they were returning from the sepulchre. Mark likewise mentions that He appeared first to Mary Magdalene; as also does John. Only Mark does not state how He manifested Himself to her, while John does give us an explanation of that. Moreover, Luke not only passes by in silence the fact that He showed Himself to the women, as I have already remarked, but also reports that two disciples, one of whom was Cleophas, talked with Him, before they recognised Him, in a strain which seems to imply that the women had related no other appearance seen by them than that of the angels who told them that He was alive. For Luke's narrative proceeds thus: "And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden, that they should not know Him. And He said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said unto Him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And He said unto them, What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him. But we trusted that it had been He that should have redeemed Israel: and besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; and when they found not His body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women said; but Him they saw not." All these things they relate, according to Luke's narrative, just as they were able to command their recollections and bethink themselves of what had been reported to them by the women, or by the disciples who had run to the sepulchre when the intelligence was conveyed to them that His body had been removed from the place. It is at the same time true that Luke himself reports only Peter to have run to the tomb, and there to have stooped down and seen the linen clothes laid by themselves, and then to have departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass. This notice about Peter, moreover, is introduced previous to the narrative of these two disciples whom He found on the way, and subsequently to the story of the women who had seen the angels, and who had heard from them that Jesus had risen again; so that this position might seem to mark the period at which Peter ran to the sepulchre. But still we must suppose that Luke has inserted the passage about Peter here in the form of a recapitulation. For the time when Peter ran to the sepulchre was also the time when John ran to it; and at that point all that they had heard was simply the statement conveyed to them by the women, and in particular by Mary Magdalene, to the effect that the body had been carried away. Furthermore, the period at which the said woman brought such tidings was just the occasion when she saw the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And it was at a later point that these other things occurred, connected with the vision of the angels, and the appearance of the Lord Himself, who showed Himself twice over to the women, namely, once at the sepulchre, and a second time when He met them as they were returning from the tomb. This, however, took place previous to His being seen by those two upon the journey, one of whom was Cleophas. For, when this Cleophas was talking with the Lord, before he recognized who He was, he did not say expressly that Peter had gone to the sepulchre. But his words were these: “Certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women said;” which last statement is also to be understood as introduced in the form of a recapitulation. For the reference is to the report brought first of all by the women to Peter and John about the removal of the body. And thus, when Luke here informs us that Peter ran to the sepulchre, and also states how Cleophas mentioned that some of those who were with them went to the tomb, he is to be taken as attesting John’s account, which bears that two persons proceeded to the sepulchre. But Luke has specified Peter alone in the first instance, just because it was to him that Mary had brought the earliest tidings. A difficulty, however, may also be felt in the circumstance that the same Luke does not say that Peter entered, but only that he stooped down and saw the linen clothes hid by themselves, and that thereupon he departed, wondering in himself; whereas John intimates that it was rather himself (for he is the disciple whom Jesus loved) that looked at the scene in this fashion, not going within the sepulchre, which he was the first to reach, but simply bending down and beholding the linen clothes laid in their place; although he also adds that he did enter the tomb afterwards. The explanation, therefore, is simply this, that Peter at first did stoop down and look in after the fashion which Luke specifies, but to which John makes no allusion; and that he went actually in somewhat later, but still before John entered. And in this way we shall find that all these writers have given a true account of what occurred in terms which betray no discrepancies.

71. Taking, then, not only the reports presented by the four evangelists, but also the statement given by the Apostle Paul, we shall endeavour to bring the whole into a single connected narrative, and exhibit the order in which all these incidents may have taken place, comprehending all the Lord’s appearances to the male disciples, and leaving out His earlier declarations to the women. Now, in the entire number of the men, Peter is understood to be the one to whom Christ showed Himself first. At least, this holds good so far as regards all the individuals who are actually mentioned by the four evangelists, and by the Apostle Paul. But, at the same time, who would be bold enough either to affirm or to deny that He may have appeared to some one among them before He showed Himself to Peter, although all these writers pass the matter over in silence? For the statement which Paul also gives is not in the form, “He was seen first of Cephas.” But it runs thus: “He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.” And thus it is not made clear who these twelve were, just as we are not informed who these five hundred were. It is quite possible, indeed, that the twelve here instanced were some unknown twelve belonging to the multitude of the disciples. For now the apostle might speak of those whom the Lord designated apostles, not as the twelve, but as the eleven. Some codices, indeed, contain this very reading. I take that, however, to be an emendation introduced by men who were perplexed by the text, supposing it to refer to those twelve apostles who, by the time when Judas disappeared, were really only eleven. It may be the case, then, that those are the more correct codices which contain the reading “eleven;” or it may be that Paul intended some other twelve disciples to be understood

by that phrase; or, once more, the fact may be that he meant that consecrated number to remain as before, although the circle had been reduced to eleven: for this number twelve, as it was used of the apostles, had so mystical an importance, that, in order to keep the spiritual symbol of the same number, there could be but a single individual, namely, Matthias, elected to fill the place of Judas. But whichever of these several views may be adopted, nothing necessarily results which can appear to be inconsistent with truth, or at variance with any one most trustworthy historian among them. Still, it remains the probable supposition, that, after He was seen of Peter, He appeared next to those two, of whom Cleophas was one, and regarding whom Luke presents us with a complete narrative, while Mark gives us only a very brief notice. The latter evangelist reports the same incident in these concise terms: “And after that He appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked and went to a country-seat.” For it is not unreasonable for us to suppose that the place of residence referred to may also have been styled a country-seat; just as Bethlehem itself, which formerly was called a city, is even at the present time also named a village, although its honour has now been made so much the greater since the name of this Lord, who was born in it, has been proclaimed so extensively throughout the Churches of all nations. In the Greek codices, indeed, the reading which we discover is rather “estate” than “country-seat.” But that term was employed not only of residences, but also of free towns and colonies beyond the city, which is the head and mother of the rest, and is therefore called the metropolis.

72. Again, if Mark tells us that the Lord appeared to these persons in another form, Luke refers to the same when he says that their eyes, were holden, that they should not know Him. For something had come upon their eyes which was suffered to remain until the breaking of the bread, in reference to a well-known mystery, so that only then was the different form in Him made visible to them, and they did not recognise Him, as is shown by Luke’s narrative, until the breaking of the bread took place. And thus, in apt accordance with the state of their minds, which were still ignorant of the truth, that it behoved Christ to die and rise again, their eyes sustained something of a similar order; not, indeed, that the truth itself proved misleading, but that they were themselves incompetent to perceive the truth,

and thought of the matter as something else than it was. The deeper significance of all which is this, that no one should consider himself to have attained the knowledge of Christ, if he is not a member in His body—that is to say, in His Church—the unity of which is commended to our notice under the sacramental symbol of the bread by an apostle, when he says: “We being many are one bread and one body.” So was it that, when He handed to them the bread which He had blessed, their eyes were opened, and they recognised Him, that is to say, their eyes were opened for such knowledge of Him, in so far as the impediment was now removed which had prevented them from recognising Him. For certainly they were not walking with closed eyes. But there was something in them which debarred them from seeing correctly what was in their view,—a state of matters, indeed, which is the familiar result of darkness, or of a certain kind of humour. It is not meant by this, however, that the Lord could not alter the form of His flesh, so that His figure might be literally and actually different, and not the one which they were in the habit of beholding. For, indeed, even before His passion, He was transfigured on the mount so that His countenance “did shine as the sun.” And He who made genuine wine out of genuine water can also transform any body whatsoever in all unquestionable reality into any other kind of body which may please Him. But what is meant is, that He had not acted so when He appeared in another form unto those two individuals. For He did not appear to be what He was to these men, because their eyes were holden, so that they should not know Him. Moreover, not unsuitably may we suppose that this impediment in their eyes came from Satan, with the view of precluding their recognition of Jesus. But, nevertheless, permission that it should be so was given by Christ on to the point at which the mystery of the bread was taken up. And thus the lesson might be, that it is when we become participants in the unity of His body, that we are to understand the impediment of the adversary to be removed, and liberty to be given us to know Christ.

73. Besides, it is necessary to believe that these were the same persons to whom Mark also refers. For he informs us, that they went and told these things to the rest: just as Luke states, that the persons in question rose up the same hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, saying, “The Lord is risen indeed,

and hath appeared to Simon.” And then he adds that these two also told what things were done on the way, and how He was known of them in breaking of bread. By this time, therefore, a report of the resurrection of Jesus had been conveyed by those women, and also by Simon Peter, to whom He had already shown Himself. For these two disciples found those to whom they came in Jerusalem talking of that very subject. Consequently, it may be the case that fear made them decline mentioning formerly, when they were on the way, that they had heard that He had risen again, so that they confined themselves to stating how the angels had been seen by the women. For, not knowing with whom they were conversing, they might reasonably be anxious not to let any word drop from them on the subject of Christ’s resurrection, lest they should fall into the hands of the Jews. But again, we must remark that Mark states that “they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them:” whereas Luke tells us that these others were already saying that the Lord was risen indeed, and had appeared unto Simon. Is not the explanation, however, simply this, that there were some of them there who refused to credit what was related? Moreover, to whom can it fail to be clear that Mark has just omitted certain matters which are fully set forth in Luke’s narrative,—that is to say, the subjects of the conversation which Jesus had with them before He recognised them, and the manner in which they came to know Him in the breaking of the bread? For, after recording how He appeared to them in another form, as they went towards a country-seat, Mark has immediately appended the sentence, “And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them;” as if men could tell of a person whom they had not recognised, or as if those to whom He had appeared only in another form could know Him! Without doubt, therefore, Mark has simply given us no explanation of the way in which they came to know Him, so as to be able to report the same to others. And this, then, is a thing which deserves to be imprinted on our memory, in order that we may accustom ourselves to keep in view the habit which these evangelists have of passing over those matters which they do not put on record, and of connecting the facts which they do relate in such a manner that, among those who fail to give due consideration to the usage referred to, nothing proves itself a more fruitful source of misapprehension than this, leading them to imagine the existence of discrepancies in the sacred writers.

74. Luke next proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: "And as they thus spake, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you: it is I; be not afraid. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when He had thus spoken, He showed them His hands and His feet." It is to this act, by which the Lord showed Himself after His resurrection, that John is also understood to refer when he discourses as follows: "Then, when it was late on the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side." Thus, too, we may connect with these words of John certain matters which Luke reports, but which John Himself omits. For Luke continues in these terms: "And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, He said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And when He had eaten before them, He took what remained, and gave it unto them." Again, a passage which Luke omits, but which John presents, may next be connected with these words. It is to the following effect: "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." Once more, we may attach to the above section another which John has left out, but which Luke inserts. It runs thus: "And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be

endued with power from on high.” Observe, then, how Luke has here referred to that promise of the Holy Spirit which we do not elsewhere find made by the Lord, save in John’s Gospel. And this deserves something more than a passing notice, in order that we may bear in mind how the evangelists attest each other’s truth, even on subjects which some of them may not themselves record, but which they nevertheless know to have been reported. After these matters, Luke passes over in silence all else that happened, and introduces nothing into his narrative beyond the occasion when Jesus ascended into heaven. And at the same time he appends this [statement of the ascension], just as if it followed immediately upon these words which the Lord spake, at the same time with those other transactions on the first day of the week, that is to say, on the day on which the Lord rose again; whereas, in the Acts of the Apostles, the self-same Luke tells us that the event really took place on the fortieth day after His resurrection. Finally, as regards the fact that John states that the Apostle Thomas was not present with these others on the occasion under review, whereas, according to Luke, the two disciples, of whom Cleophas was one, returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven assembled and those who were with them, it admits of little doubt that we must suppose Thomas simply to have left the company before the Lord showed Himself to the brethren when they were talking in the terms noticed above.

75. This being the case, John now records a second manifestation of Himself, which was vouchsafed by the Lord to the disciples eight days after, on which occasion Thomas also was present, who had not seen Him up to that time. The narrative proceeds thus: “And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto Him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” This second appearance of the Lord among the disciples—that is to say, the appearance which John records in the second instance—we might also recognise as alluded to by Mark in a section concisely disposing of it,

according to that evangelist’s habit. A difficulty, however, is created by the circumstance that his terms are these: “Lastly, He appeared unto those eleven as they sat at meat.” The difficulty does not lie in the mere fact that John says nothing about their sitting at meat, for he might well have omitted that; but it does rest in the use of the word “lastly,” for that makes it seem as if He did not show Himself to them after that occasion, whereas John still proceeds to record a third appearance of the Lord by the sea of Tiberias. And then we have to keep in view the fact that the same Mark tells us how Jesus “upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen.” In these words he refers to the two disciples to whom He appeared after He was risen, as they went toward a country-seat, and to Peter, to whom the examination of Luke’s narrative has shown us that He manifested Himself first of all [among the apostles],—perhaps also to Mary Magdalene, and those other women who were along with her on the occasion when He was seen by them at the sepulchre, and again when He met them as they were returning on the way. For the said Mark has constructed his record in a manner which leads him first to insert his brief notice of the two disciples to whom He appeared as they went toward the country-seat, and of their giving a report to the residue and obtaining no credit, and then to subjoin in the immediate connection this statement: “Lastly, He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen Him after He was risen.” How, then, is this phrase “lastly” used, as if they did not see Him subsequently to this occasion? For the last time that the apostles saw the Lord upon the earth was really the time when He ascended into heaven, and that event took place on the fortieth day after His resurrection. Now, is it likely that He would upbraid them at that period on the ground that they had not believed those who had seen Him after He was risen, when by that time they had seen Him themselves so often after His resurrection, and especially when they had seen Him on the very day of His resurrection,—that is to say, on the first day of the week, when it was now about night, as Luke and John record? It remains for us, therefore, to suppose that, in the passage under review, it was Mark’s intention to give a statement, in his own concise fashion, simply on the subject of the said day of the Lord’s resurrection; that is to say, that first day of the week on which Mary and the other women who were along with her saw Him after daybreak, on which also Peter beheld Him, on which likewise He appeared to the two disciples, of whom Cleophas was one, and to whom Mark himself also seems to refer; on which, further, when it was now about night, He showed Himself to the eleven (Thomas, however, being excepted) and those who were with them; and on which, finally, the persons already instanced reported to the disciples the things which they had seen. Hence it is that he has employed the term "lastly," because the incident mentioned was the last that took place on this same day. For the night was now coming on by the time that the two disciples had returned from the place where they had recognised Him in the breaking of bread, and had made their way into Jerusalem and found the eleven, as Luke tells us, and those who were with them, speaking to each other about the Lord's resurrection and about His having appeared to Peter; to whom these two also related what had occurred on the way, and how they came to know Him in the breaking of bread. But, assuredly, there were also there some who did not believe. Hence we see the truth of Mark's words, "Neither believed they them." When these, therefore, were now sitting at meat, as Mark informs us, and when they were talking of these subjects, as Luke tells us, the Lord stood in their midst, and said unto them, "Peace be unto you," as Luke and John both record. Moreover, the doors were shut when He entered among them, as John alone mentions. And thus, among the words which, as Luke and John have reported, the Lord spoke to the disciples on that occasion, this expostulation also comes in, which is instanced by Mark, and in which He upbraided them for not believing those who had seen Him after He was risen.

76. But, again, a difficulty may also be felt in understanding how Mark says that the Lord appeared to the eleven as they sat at meat, if the time referred to is really the beginning of the night of that Lord's day, as is indicated by Luke and John. For John, indeed, tells us plainly that the Apostle Thomas was not with them on that occasion; and we believe that he left them before the Lord entered among them, but after the two disciples who returned from the village had been conversing with the eleven, as we discover from Luke. Luke, it is true, presents a point in his narrative, at which we may fairly suppose, first, that Thomas went out while they were talking of these subjects, and then that the Lord came in. Mark, however, who says, "Lastly,

He appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat," compels us to admit that Thomas also was there. But it may be the case, perhaps, that he chose to style them the eleven, although one of the company was absent, because the same apostolic society was designated by this number at the time previous to the election of Matthias in the place of Judas. Or, if there is a difficulty in accepting this explanation, we may still suppose that, after the many manifestations in which He vouchsafed His presence to the disciples during the forty days, He also showed Himself on one final occasion to the eleven as they sat at meat,—that is to say, on the fortieth day itself; and that, as He was now on the point of leaving them and ascending into heaven, He was minded on that memorable day specially to upbraid them with their refusal to believe those who had seen Him after He had risen until they should first have seen Him themselves; and this particularly because it was the case that, when they preached the gospel subsequently to His ascension, the very Gentiles would be ready to believe what they did not see. For, after mentioning this upbraiding, Mark at once proceeds to subjoin this passage: "And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." If, therefore, they were charged to preach that he who believes not shall be condemned, when that indeed which he believes not is just what he has not seen, was it not meet that they should themselves first of all be thus reproved for their own refusal to believe those to whom the Lord had shown Himself at an earlier stage until they should have seen Him with their own eyes?

77. In what follows we have a further recommendation to take this to have been the last manifestation of Himself in bodily fashion which the Lord gave to the apostles. For the same Mark continues in these terms: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Then he appends this statement: "So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by signs following." Now, when he says, "So then, after the Lord had spoken unto

them, He was received up into heaven," he appears probably enough to indicate that this was the last discourse He held with them upon the earth. At the same time, the words do not seem to shut us up to that idea absolutely. For what he says is not, "after He had spoken these things unto them," but simply, "after He had spoken unto them;" and hence it would be quite admissible, were there any necessity for such a theory, to suppose that this was not the last discourse, and that that was not the last day on which He was present with them upon the earth, but that all the matters regarding which He spake with them in all these days may be referred to in the sentence, "After He had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven." But, inasmuch as the considerations which we have detailed above lead us rather to conclude that this was the last day, than to suppose that the allusion is specifically to the eleven at a time when, in consequence of the absence of Thomas, they were only ten, we are of opinion that after this discourse which Mark mentions, and with which we have to connect in their proper order those other words, whether of the disciples or of the Lord Himself, which are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, we must believe the Lord to have been received up into heaven, to wit, on the fortieth day after the day of His resurrection.

78. John, again, although he tells us plainly that he has passed over many of the things which Jesus did, has been pleased, nevertheless, to give us a narrative of a third manifestation of Himself, which the Lord granted to the disciples after the resurrection, namely, by the sea of Tiberias, and before seven of the disciples,—that is to say, Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, the sons of Zebedee, and two others who are not mentioned by name. That is the occasion when they were engaged in fishing; when, in obedience to His command, they cast the nets on the right side, and drew to land great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three: when He also asked Peter three times whether He was loved by him, and charged him to feed His sheep, and delivered a prophecy regarding what he would suffer, and said also, with reference to John, "Thus I will that he tarry till I come." And with this John has brought his Gospel to its conclusion.

79. We have next to consider now what was the occasion of His first appearance to the disciples in Galilee. For this incident, which John narrates

as the third in order, took place in Galilee by the sea of Tiberias. And one may perceive that the scene was in that district, if he calls to mind the miracle of the five loaves, the narrative of which the same John commences in these terms: “After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.” And what should naturally be supposed to be the proper locality for His first manifestation to the disciples after His resurrection but Galilee? This seems to be the conclusion to which we should be led when we recollect the words of the angel who, according to Matthew’s Gospel, addressed the women as they came to the sepulchre. The words were these: “Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay: and go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you.” Mark presents a similar report, whether the angel of whom he speaks be the same one or a different. His version runs thus: “Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth which was crucified; He is risen; He is not here: behold the place where they laid Him. But go your way, tell His disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you.” Now the impression which these words seem to produce is, that Jesus was not to show Himself to His disciples after His resurrection, but in Galilee. The appearance thus referred to, however, is not recorded even by Mark himself, who has informed us how He showed Himself first to Mary Magdalene in the early morning of the first day of the week; how she went and told them that had been with Him as they mourned and wept; how these persons refused to believe her; how, after this, He was next seen by the two disciples who were going to the residence in the country; how these twain reported what had occurred to them to the residue, which, as Luke and John agree in certifying, took place in Jerusalem on the very day of the Lord’s resurrection, and when night was now coming on. Thereafter the same evangelist comes next to that appearance which he calls His last, and which was vouchsafed to the eleven as they sat at meat; and when he has given us his account of that scene, he tells us how He was received up into heaven, which event took place, as we know, on the Mount Olivet, at no great distance from Jerusalem. Thus Mark nowhere relates the actual fulfilment of that which he declares to have been announced beforehand by the angel.

Matthew, on the other hand, confines his statement to a single occurrence, and refers to no other locality whatsoever, whether earlier or later, where the disciples saw the Lord after He was risen, but the Galilee which was specified in the angel’s prediction. This evangelist, in short, first introduces his notice of the terms in which the women were addressed by the angel; then he subjoins an account of what happened as they were going, and how the members of the watch were bribed to give a false report; and then he inserts his statement [of the appearance in Galilee], just as if that were the very event which followed immediately on what he has been relating. For, indeed, the angel’s words, “He is risen; and behold, He goeth before you into Galilee,” were really such as might make it seem reasonable to suppose that nothing would intervene [before that manifestation in Galilee]. Matthew’s version, accordingly, proceeds as follows: “Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” In these terms has Matthew closed his Gospel.

80. Thus, then, were it not that the consideration of the narratives given by others of the evangelists led us inevitably to examine the whole subject with greater care, we might entertain the idea that the scene of the Lord’s first manifestation of Himself to the disciples after His resurrection, could be nowhere else but in Galilee. In like manner, had Mark passed over the angel’s announcement without notice, any one might have supposed that Matthew was induced to tell us how the disciples went away to a mountain in Galilee, and there worshipped the Lord, by his desire to show the actual fulfilment of the charge, and of the prediction which he had also recorded to have been conveyed by the angel. As the case now stands, however, Luke and John both certify with sufficient clearness, that on the very day of His resurrection the Lord was seen by His disciples in Jerusalem, which is at such a distance from Galilee as makes it impossible for Him to have been seen by these same individuals in both places in the course of a single day.

In like manner, Mark, while he does report in similar terms the announcement made by the angel, nowhere mentions that the Lord actually was seen in Galilee by His disciples after He was risen. These, therefore, are considerations which strongly force upon us an inquiry into the real import of this saying, "Behold, He goeth before you into Galilee! there shall ye see Him." For if Matthew himself, too, had not stated that the eleven disciples went away into Galilee into a mountain, where Jesus had appointed them, and that they saw Him there and worshipped Him, we might have supposed that there was no literal fulfilment of the prediction in question, but that the whole announcement was intended to convey a figurative meaning. And a parallel to that we should then find in the words recorded by Luke, namely, "Behold I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected;" which prediction certainly was not accomplished in the letter. In like manner, if the angel had said, "He goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see Him first;" or, "Only there shall ye see Him;" or, "Nowhere else but there shall ye see Him;" unquestionably, in that case, Matthew would have been in antagonism with the rest of the evangelists. As the matter stands, however, the words are simply these: "Behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him;" and there is no statement of the precise time at which that meeting was to take place—whether at the earliest opportunity, and before He was seen by them elsewhere, or at a later period, and after they had seen Him also in other places besides Galilee; and, further, although Matthew relates that the disciples went away into Galilee into a mountain, he neither specifies the day of that departure, nor constructs his narrative in an order which would force upon us the necessity of supposing that this particular event must have been actually the first appearance. Consequently, we may conclude that Matthew stands in no antagonism with the narratives of the other evangelists, but that he makes it quite competent for us, in due consistency with his own report, to understand the meaning and accept the truth of these other accounts. At the same time, as the Lord thus pointed, not to the place where He intended first to manifest Himself, but to the locality of Galilee, where undoubtedly He appeared afterwards; and as He conveyed these instructions about beholding Himself at once through the angel, who said," Behold, He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see Him;" and by His own words, "Go, tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall ye see me;”—in these facts we find considerations which make every believer anxious to inquire with what mystical significance all this may be understood to have been stated.

81. In the first place, however, we must also consider the question of the time at which He may thus have shown Himself in bodily form in Galilee, according to the statement given by Matthew in these terms: “Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them; and when they saw Him, they worshipped Him; but some doubted.” That it was not on the day of His resurrection is manifest. For Luke and John agree in telling us most plainly that He was seen in Jerusalem that very day, when the night was coming on; while Mark is not so clear on the subject. When was it, then, that they saw the Lord in Galilee? I do not refer to the appearance mentioned by John, by the sea of Tiberias; for on that occasion there were only seven of them present, and they were found fishing. But I mean the appearance detailed by Matthew, when the eleven were on the mountain, to which Jesus had gone before them, according to the announcement made by the angel. For the import of Matthew’s statement appears to be this, that they found Him there just because He had gone before them according to appointment. It did not take place, then, either on the day on which He rose, or in the eight days that followed, after which space John states that the Lord showed Himself to the disciples, when Thomas, who had not seen Him on the day of His resurrection, saw Him for the first time. For, surely, on the supposition that the eleven had really seen Him on the mountain in Galilee within the period of these eight days, it may well be asked how Thomas, who had been of the number of these eleven, could be said to have seen Him for the first time at the end of these eight days. To that question there is no answer, unless, indeed, one could say that they were not the eleven, who by that time bore the specific designation of Apostles, but some other eleven disciples singled out of the numerous body of His followers. For those eleven were, indeed, the only persons who were yet called by the name of Apostles, but they were not the only disciples. It may perhaps be the case, therefore, that the apostles are really referred to; that not all but only some of them were there; that there were also other disciples with them, so that the number of persons present was made up to eleven; and that Thomas, who saw the Lord for the

first time at the end of those eight days, was absent on this occasion. For when Mark mentions the said eleven, he does not use the general expression "eleven," but says explicitly, "He appeared unto the eleven." Luke, likewise, puts it thus: "They returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them." There he gives us to understand that these were the eleven—that is to say, the apostles. For when he adds, "and those who were with them," he has surely indicated plainly enough, that those with whom these others were, were styled "the eleven" in some eminent sense; and this leads us to understand those to be meant who were now called distinctively Apostles. Consequently, it is quite possible that, out of the body of apostles and other disciples, the number of eleven disciples was made up who saw Jesus upon the mountain in Galilee, within the space of these eight days.

82. But another difficulty in the way of this settlement arises here. For, when John has recorded how the Lord was seen, not by the eleven on the mountain, but by seven of them when they were fishing in the sea of Tiberias, he appends the following statement: "This is now the third time that Jesus showed Himself to His disciples, after that He was risen from the dead." Now, if we accept the theory that the Lord was seen by the company of the eleven disciples within the period of these eight days, and previous to His being seen by Thomas, this scene by the sea of Tiberias will not be the third but the fourth time that He showed Himself. Here, indeed, we must take care not to let any one suppose that, in speaking of the third time, John meant that there were in all only three appearances of the Lord. On the contrary, we must understand him to refer to the number of the days, and not to the number of the manifestations themselves; and, further, it is to be observed that these days are not presented as coming in immediate succession after each other, but as separated by intervals in accordance with intimations given by the evangelist himself. For, keeping out of view His appearance to the women, it is made perfectly plain in the Gospel that He showed Himself three several times on the first day after He was risen; namely, once to Peter; again to those two disciples, of whom Cleophas was one; and a third time to the larger body, while they were conversing with each other as the night came on. But all these John, looking to the fact that they took place on a single day, reckons as one appearance. Then he

identifies a second—that is to say, an appearance on another day—with the occasion on which Thomas also saw Him; and he particularizes a third by the sea of Tiberias, that is to say, not literally His third appearance, but the third day of His self-manifestations. Thus the result is, that after all these incidents, we are constrained to suppose this other occasion to have occurred on which, according to Matthew, the eleven disciples saw Him on the mountain in Galilee, to which He had gone before them according to appointment, so that all that had been foretold, both by the angel and by Himself, should be fulfilled even to the letter.

83. Consequently, in the four evangelists we find mention made of ten distinct appearances of the Lord to different persons after His resurrection. First, to the women near the sepulchre. Secondly, to the same women as they were on the way returning from the sepulchre. Thirdly, to Peter. Fourthly, to the two who were going to the place in the country. Fifthly, to the larger number in Jerusalem, when Thomas was not present. Sixthly, on the occasion when Thomas saw Him. Seventhly, by the sea of Tiberias. Eighthly, on the mountain in Galilee, of which Matthew speaks. Ninthly, at the time to which Mark refers in the words, “Lastly, as they sat at meat,” thereby intimating that now they were no more to eat with Him upon the earth. Tenthly, on the same day, not now indeed upon the earth, but lifted up in the cloud, as He ascended into heaven, as Mark and Luke record. This last appearance, indeed, is introduced by Mark, directly after he has told us how the Lord showed Himself to them as they sat at meat. For his narrative goes on connectedly as follows: “So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven.” Luke, on the other hand, omits all that may have passed between Him and His disciples during the forty days, and, after giving the history of the first day of His resurrection-life, when He showed Himself to the larger number in Jerusalem, he silently connects therewith the closing day on which He ascended up into heaven. His statement proceeds in this form: “And He led them out as far as to Bethany; and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them; and it came to pass, that while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.” Thus, therefore, besides seeing Him upon the earth, they beheld Him also as He was borne up into heaven. So many times, then, is He reported in the evangelical books to have been seen by different individuals,

previous to His completed ascension into heaven, namely, nine times upon the earth, and once in the air as He was ascending.

84. At the same time, all is not recorded, as John plainly declares. For He had frequent intercourse with His disciples during the forty days which preceded His ascension into heaven. He had not, however, showed Himself to them throughout all these forty days without interruption. For John tells us, that after the first day of His resurrection-life, there elapsed other eight days, at the end of which space He appeared to them again. The appearance which is identified [in John] as the third—namely, the one by the sea of Tiberias—may perhaps have taken place on an immediately succeeding day; for there is nothing antagonistic to that. And then He showed Himself when it seemed the proper time to Him, as He had appointed with them (which appointment had also been conveyed in the previous prophetic announcement) to go before them into Galilee. And all throughout these forty days, He appeared on occasions, and to individuals, and in modes, just as He was minded. To these appearances Peter alludes when, in the discourse which he delivered before Cornelius and those who were withhim, he says, "Even to us who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead, for the space of forty days." It is not meant, however, that they had eaten and drunk with Him daily throughout these forty days. For that would be contrary to John's statement, who has interposed the space of eight days, during which He was not seen, and makes His third appearance take place by the sea of Tiberias. At the same time, even although He [should be supposed to have] manifested Himself to them and lived with them every day after that period, that would not come into antagonism with anything in the narrative. And, perhaps, this expression, "for the space of forty days," which is equivalent to four times ten, and may thus sustain a mystical reference to the whole world or the whole temporal age, has been used just because those first ten days, within which the said eight fall, may not incongruously be reckoned, in accordance with the practice of the Scriptures, on the principle of dealing with the part in general terms as the whole.

85. Let us therefore compare what is said by the Apostle Paul with the view of deciding whether it raises any question of difficulty. His statement

proceeds thus: “That He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen of Cephas.” He does not say, “He was seen first of Cephas.” For this would be inconsistent with the fact that it is recorded in the Gospel that He appeared first to the women. He continues thus: “then of the twelve;” and whoever the individuals may have been to whom He then showed Himself, and whatever the precise hour, this was at least on the very day of His resurrection. Again he goes on: “After that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.” And whether these were gathered together with the eleven when the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, and when Jesus came to them after Thomas had gone out from the company, or whether the reference is to some other appearance subsequent to these eight days, no discrepancy is created. Again he says, “after that He was seen of James.” We ought not, however, to suppose this to mean that this was the first occasion on which He was seen of James; but we may take it to allude to some special appearance to that apostle by himself. Next he adds, “then of all the apostles,” which does not imply that this was the first time that He showed Himself to them, but that from this period He lived in more familiar intercourse with them on to the day of His ascension. Finally he says, “And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.” But that was a revelation of Himself from heaven some considerable time after His ascension.

86. Consequently, let us now take up the subject which we had postponed, and inquire what mystical meaning may underlie the report given by Matthew and Mark, namely, that on rising He made this statement, “I will go before you into Galilee: there shall ye see me.” For this announcement, if it was fulfilled at all, was certainly not fulfilled till a considerable interval had elapsed; whereas it is couched in terms which seem to lead us (although such a conclusion is not an absolute necessity) most naturally to expect that the appearance referred to would be either the only one or the first that would ensue. We observe, however, that the words in question are not given as the words of the evangelist himself, in the form of a narrative of a past occurrence, but as the words of the angel, who spoke according to the Lord’s commission, and subsequently also as the words of the Lord Himself; that is to say, the words are used by the evangelist in his narrative, but they are presented by him as a direct statement of what was spoken by

the angel and by the Lord. This, therefore, unquestionably compels us to accept them as uttered prophetically. Now Galilee may be interpreted to mean either “Transmigration” or “Revelation.” Consequently, if we adopt the idea of “Transmigration,” what other sense occurs to us to put upon the sentence, “He goeth before you into Galilee, there shall you see Him,” but just this, that the grace of Christ was to be transferred from the people of Israel to the Gentiles? That in preaching the gospel to these Gentiles, the apostles would meet with no acceptance unless the Lord prepared a way for them in the hearts of men,—this may be what is to be understood by the sentence, “He goeth before you into Galilee.” And, again, that they would look with joy and wonder at the breaking down and removing of difficulties, and at the opening of a door for them in the Lord through the enlightenment of the believing,—this is what is to be understood by the words, “there shall ye see Him;” that is to say, there shall ye find His members, there shall ye recognise His living body in the person of those who shall receive you. Or, if we follow the second view which takes Galilee to signify “Revelation,” the idea may be, that He was now no more to be in the form of a servant, but in that form in which He is equal with the Father; as He promised to those who loved Him when He said, according to the testimony of John, “And I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” That is to say, He was afterwards to manifest Himself, not merely as they saw Him before, nor merely in the way in which, rising as He did with His wounds upon Him, He was to give Himself to be touched as well as seen by them, but in the character of that ineffable light, wherewith He enlightens every man that cometh into this world, and in virtue of which He shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehends Him not. Thus has He gone before us to something from which He withdraws not, although He comes to us, and which does not involve His leaving us, although He has preceded us thither. That will be a revelation which may be spoken of as a true Galilee, when we shall be like Him; there shall we see Him as He is. Then, also, will there be for us the more blessed transmigration, from this world into that eternity, if we embrace His precepts so as to be counted worthy of being set apart on His right hand. For there, those on the left hand shall go away into eternal burning, but the righteous into life eternal. Hence they shall pass thither, and there, shall they see Him, as the wicked do not see Him. For the wicked shall be taken away, so that he shall not see the brightness of the

Lord; and the unrighteousness shall not see the light. For He says, “And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent;” even as He shall be known in that eternity to which He will bring His servants by the form of a servant, in order that in liberty they may contemplate the form of the Lord.

Book IV

This book embraces a discussion of those passages which are peculiar to Mark, Luke, or John.

PROLOGUE

1. As we have examined Matthew's narrative in its complete connection, and as the comparison which we have carried out between it and the other three on to its conclusion has established the fact, that not one of these evangelists contains anything either at variance with other statements in his own Gospel, or inconsistent with the accounts presented by his fellow-historians, let us now subject Mark to a similar scrutiny. Our plan will be to omit those sections which he has in common with Matthew, which we have already investigated as far as seemed requisite and are now done with, and to take up those paragraphs which remain, with the view of submitting them to discussion and comparison, and of demonstrating their thorough harmony with what is related by the other evangelists on to the notice of the Lord's Supper. For we have already dealt with all the incidents which are reported in all the four Gospels from that point on to the end, and have considered the subject of their mutual consistency.

CHAPTER I

OF THE QUESTION REGARDING THE PROOF THAT MARK'S GOSPEL IS IN HARMONY WITH THE REST IN WHAT IS NARRATED (THOSE PASSAGES WHICH HE HAS IN COMMON WITH MATTHEW BEING LEFT OUT OF ACCOUNT), FROM ITS BEGINNING DOWN TO THE SECTION WHERE IT IS SAID, "AND THEY GO INTO CAPHARNAUM, AND STRAIGHTWAY ON THE SABBATH-DAY HE TAUGHT THEM:" WHICH INCIDENT IS REPORTED ALSO BY LUKE

2. Mark, then, commences as follows: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: as it is written in the prophet Isaiah;" and so on, down to where it is said, "And they go into Capharnaum; and straightway on the Sabbath-day He entered into the synagogue and taught them." In this entire context, everything has been examined above in

connection with Matthew. This particular statement, however, about His going into the synagogue at Capharnaum and teaching them on the Sabbath-day, is one which Mark has in common with Luke. But it raises no question of difficulty.

CHAPTER II

OF THE MAN OUT OF WHOM THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT THAT WAS TORMENTING HIM WAS CAST, AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER MARK'S VERSION IS QUITE CONSISTENT WITH THAT OF LUKE, WHO IS AT ONE WITH HIM IN REPORTING THE INCIDENT

3. Mark proceeds with his narrative in the following terms: "And they were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes. And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit: and he cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us?" and so on, down to the passage where we read, "And He preached in the synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils." Although there are some points here which are common only to Mark and Luke, the entire contents of this section have also been already dealt with when we were going over Matthew's narrative in its continuity. For all these matters came into the order of narration in such a manner that I thought they could not be passed over. But Luke says that this unclean spirit went out of the man in such a way as not to hurt him: whereas Mark's statement is to this effect: "And the unclean spirit cometh out of him, tearing him, and crying with a loud voice." There may seem, therefore, to be some discrepancy here. For how could the unclean spirit have been "tearing him," or, as some codices have it, "tormenting him," if, as Luke says, he "hurt him not"? Luke, however, gives the notice in full, thus: "And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and "hurt him not." Thus we are to understand that when Mark says, "tormenting him," he just refers to what Luke expresses in the sentence, "When he had thrown him in the midst." And when the latter appends the words, "and hurt him not," the meaning simply is, that the said tossing of the man's limbs and tormenting him did not debilitate him, as is often the case with the exit of devils, when, at times, some of the members are even destroyed in the process of removing the trouble.

CHAPTER III

OF THE QUESTION WHETHER MARK'S REPORTS OF THE REPEATED OCCASIONS ON WHICH THE NAME OF PETER WAS BROUGHT INTO PROMINENCE ARE NOT AT VARIANCE WITH THE STATEMENT WHICH JOHN HAS GIVEN US OF THE PARTICULAR TIME AT WHICH THE APOSTLE RECEIVED THAT NAME

4. The same Mark continues as follows: "And there came a leper to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling down to Him, and saying unto Him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" and so on, down to where it is said, "And they cried out, saying, Thou art the Son of God: and He straightway charged them that they should not make Him known." Luke also records something similar to the last passage which we have here adduced. But nothing emerges involving any discrepancy. Mark proceeds thus: "And He goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He would: and they came unto Him. And He ordained twelve that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach; and He gave them power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils. And Simon He surnamed Peter;" and so on, down to where it is said, "And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done: and all men did marvel." I am aware that I have spoken already of the names of the disciples when following the order of Matthew's narrative. Here, therefore, I repeat the caution, that no one should suppose Simon to have received the name Peter on this occasion for the first time, or fancy that Mark is here in any antagonism with John, who reports that disciple to have been addressed long before in these terms: "Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, A stone." For John has there recorded the very words in which the Lord gave him that name. Mark, on the other hand, has introduced the matter in the form of a recapitulation in this passage, when he says, "And Simon He surnamed Peter." For, as it was his intention to enumerate the names of the twelve apostles here, and it was necessary for him thus to mention Peter, he decided briefly to intimate the fact that the said name was not borne by that disciple all along, but was given him by the Lord, not, however, at the time with which Mark was immediately dealing, but on the occasion in connection with which John has introduced the very words employed by the Lord. The other matters embraced within

this paragraph, present nothing inconsistent with any of the other Gospels, and they have also been discussed previously.

CHAPTER IV

OF THE WORDS, "THE MORE HE CHARGED THEM TO TELL NO ONE, SO MUCH THE MORE A GREAT DEAL THEY PUBLISHED IT;" AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER THAT STATEMENT IS NOT INCONSISTENT WITH HIS PRESCIENCE, WHICH IS COMMENDED TO OUR NOTICE IN THE GOSPEL

5. Mark continues thus: "And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto Him: and He was nigh unto the sea;" and so on, down to where we read, "And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told Him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught." This last portion Mark has in common with Luke, and there is no discrepancy between them. The rest of the contents of this section we have already discussed. Mark continues in these terms: "And He said unto them, Come ye apart into a desert place, and rest a while;" and so on, down to the words, "But the more He charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it; and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak." In all this there is nothing which presents the appearance of any want of harmony between Mark and Luke; and the whole of the above we have already considered, when we were comparing these evangelists with Matthew. At the same time, we must make sure that no one shall suppose that the last statement, which I have cited here from Mark's Gospel, is in antagonism with the entire body of the evangelists, who, in reporting most of His other deeds and words, make it plain that He knew what went on in men; that is to say, that their thoughts and desires could not be concealed from Him. Thus John puts it very clearly in the following passage: "But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man." But what wonder is it that He should discern the present thoughts of men, if He announced beforehand to Peter the thought which he was to entertain in the future, but which he certainly had not then, at the very time when he was boldly declaring himself ready to die for Him, or with Him? This being the case, then, how can it fail to appear as if this

knowledge and foreknowledge, which He possessed in so supreme a measure, is contradicted by Mark’s statement, “He charged them that they should tell no man: but the more He charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it”? For if He, as one who held in His own knowledge all the intentions of men, both present and future was aware that they would publish it all the more the more He charged them not to publish it, what purpose could He have in giving them such a charge? Well, but may not the explanation be this, that he desired to give backward ones to understand how much more zealously and fervently they ought to preach on whom He lays the commission to preach, if even men who were interdicted were unable to keep silent?

CHAPTER V

OF THE STATEMENT WHICH JOHN MADE CONCERNING THE MAN WHO CAST OUT DEVILS ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT BELONG TO THE CIRCLE OF THE DISCIPLES; AND OF THE LORD’S REPLY, “FORBID THEM NOT, FOR HE THAT IS NOT AGAINST YOU IS ON YOUR PART;” AND OF THE QUESTION WHETHER THAT RESPONSE DOES NOT CONTRADICT THE OTHER SENTENCE, IN WHICH HE SAID, “HE THAT IS NOT WITH ME IS AGAINST ME.”

6. Mark proceeds as follows: “In those days again, the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat;” and so on, down to the words, “John answered Him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him. But Jesus said, Forbid him not; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me; for he that is not against you is on your side.” Luke relates this in similar terms, with this exception, that he does not insert the clause, “for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me.” Consequently, there is nothing here to raise the question of any discrepancy between these two. We must see, however, whether this sentence must be supposed to stand in opposition to another of the Lord’s sayings, namely, the one to this effect, “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.” For how was this man not against Him, who was not with Him, and of whom John reported that he did not unite with them in following Him, if he is against Him who is not with Him? Or if the man was against Him, how does He say to the disciples, “Forbid him not; for he that is not against you is on your

side”? Will any one aver that it is of consequence to observe that here He says to the disciples, “He that is not against you is on your side;” whereas, in the other passage, He spoke of Himself in the terms, “He that is not with me is against me”? That would make it appear, indeed, as if it were possible for one not to be with Him, although he was associated with those disciples of His who are, so to speak, His very members. Besides, how would the truth of such sayings as these stand then: “He that receiveth you receiveth me;” and “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me”? Or is it possible for one not to be against Him, although he may be against His disciples? Nay; for what shall we make then of words like these: “He that despiseth you, despiseth me;” and, “Inasmuch as ye did it not unto the least of mine, ye did it not unto me;” and, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me,”—although it was His disciples that Saul was persecuting? But, in good truth, the sense intended to be conveyed is just this, that, so far as a man is not with Him, so far is he against Him; and again, that, so far as a man is not against Him, so far is he with Him. For example, take this very case of the individual who was working miracles in the name of Christ, and yet was not in the company of Christ’s disciples: so far as this man was working miracles in His name, so far was he with them, and so far he was not against them. But, inasmuch as they had prohibited the man from doing a thing in which, so far forth, he was really with them, the Lord said to them, “Forbid him not.” For what they ought to have forbidden was what was outside their fellowship, so that they might bring him over to the unity of the Church, and not a thing like this, in which he was at one with them, that is to say, so far as he commended the name of their Master and Lord in the casting out of devils. And this is the principle on which the Catholic Church acts, not condemning common sacraments among heretics; for in these they are with us, and they are not against us. But she condemns and forbids division and separation, or any sentiment adverse to peace and truth. For therein they are against us, just because they are not with us in that, and because, not gathering with us, they are consequently scattering.

CHAPTER VI

OF THE CIRCUMSTANCE THAT MARK HAS RECORDED MORE THAN LUKE AS SPOKEN BY THE LORD IN CONNECTION WITH THE CASE OF THIS MAN WHO WAS CASTING OUT DEVILS IN THE NAME OF CHRIST, ALTHOUGH HE WAS NOT FOLLOWING WITH THE DISCIPLES; AND OF THE QUESTION HOW THESE ADDITIONAL WORDS CAN BE SHOWN TO HAVE A REAL BEARING UPON WHAT CHRIST HAD IN VIEW IN FORBIDDING THE INDIVIDUAL TO BE INTERDICTED WHO WAS PERFORMING MIRACLES IN HIS NAME

7. Mark proceeds with his narrative in these terms: “For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe on me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” And so on, down to where it is said, “Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.” These words Mark represents to have been spoken by the Lord in the connection immediately following what He said in forbidding the man to be interdicted who was casting out devils in His name, and yet was not following Him along with the disciples. In this section, too, he introduces some matters which are not found in any of the other evangelists, but also some which occur in Matthew as well, and some which we come across in like manner both in Matthew and in Luke. Those other evangelists, however, bring in these matters in different connections, and in another order of facts, and not at this particular point when the statement was made to Christ about the man who did not follow Him along with the disciples, and yet was casting out devils in His name. My opinion, therefore, is, that the Lord did really utter sayings in this connection, according to Mark’s attestation, of which he also delivered Himself on other occasions, and this for the simple reason, that they were sufficiently pertinent to this expression of His mind which he gave here, when He forbade the placing of any interdict upon the working of miracles in His name, even although that should be done by a man who did not follow Him along with His disciples. For Mark presents the relation of the one passage to the other thus: “For he that is not against us is on our part; for whosoever

shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.” This makes it plain that even this man, whose case John had taken up, and thus had given occasion for the Lord to commence the discourse referred to, was not separating himself from the society of the disciples to any such effect as to scorn it like a heretic. But his position was something parallel to the familiar one of men who, while not going the length yet of receiving the sacraments of Christ, nevertheless favour the Christian name so far as even to receive Christians, and accommodate themselves to them for this very reason, and none other, that they are Christian; of which type of persons it is that He tells us that they do not lose their reward. This does not mean, however, that they ought at once to think themselves quite safe and secure simply on account of this kindness which they cherish towards Christians, while at the same time they are neither cleansed by Christ’s baptism, nor incorporated into the unity of His body. But the import is, that they are now being guided by the mercy of God in such a way that they may also come to these higher things, and so quit this present world in safety. And such persons assuredly are more profitable [servants], even before they become associated with the number of Christians, than those individuals who, while already bearing the Christian name and partaking in the Christian sacraments, recommend courses which are only fitted to drag others, whom they may persuade to adopt them, along with themselves into eternal punishment. These are the persons to whom He refers under the figure of the members of the body, and whom He commands to be cast out from the body, like an offending hand or eye; that is to say, to be cut off from the fellowship of that unity, in order that they should seek rather to enter into life without such associates, than to go into hell in their company. Moreover, they are separated from those from whom they separate themselves, just when no consent is yielded to their evil recommendations, that is to say, to the offences in which they indulge. And if, indeed, they are discovered in the character of their perversity to all good men with whom they have any fellowship, they are cut off completely from the fellowship of all, and also from participation in the divine sacraments. But if they are known in this character only to some, while their perversity is unknown to the majority, they must just be borne with, as the chaff is endured in the thrashing-floor previous to the winnowing; that is to say, they must be dealt with in a manner which will neither involve any agreement with them in the fellowship of unrighteousness, nor lead to a forsaking of the society of the good on their account. This is what is done by those who have salt in themselves, and who have peace one with another.

CHAPTER VII

OF THE FACT THAT FROM THIS POINT ON TO THE LORD’S SUPPER, WITH WHICH ACT THE DISCUSSION OF ALL THE NARRATIVES OF THE FOUR EVANGELISTS CONJOINTLY COMMENCED, NO QUESTION CALLING FOR SPECIAL EXAMINATION IS RAISED BY MARK’S GOSPEL

8. Mark continues as follows: “And He arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judaea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto Him again; and, as He was wont, He taught them again;” and so on, down to where it is said, “For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.” In this entire context, all the above has been subjected to investigation already, with the view of removing the appearance of any contrariety, when we were comparing the other Gospels in due order with Matthew. This narrative, however, of the poor widow who cast two mites into the treasury is reported only by two of them, namely, Mark and Luke. But their harmony admits of no question. And from this point onwards to the Lord’s Supper, which latter act formed the starting-point for our discussion of all the records of the four evangelists taken conjointly, Mark introduces nothing of a kind to make it necessary for us to institute a special comparison between it and any other statement, or to conduct an inquiry with the view of dispelling any appearance of discrepancy.

CHAPTER VIII

OF LUKE’S GOSPEL, AND SPECIALLY OF THE HARMONY BETWEEN ITS COMMENCEMENT AND THE BEGINNING OF THE BOOK OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

9. Next in succession, therefore, let us now go over the Gospel of Luke in regular order. We shall omit, however, those passages which he has in common with Matthew and Mark. For all these have been already handled. Luke, then, begins his narrative in the following fashion: “Forasmuch as

many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of these things which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.” This beginning does not pertain immediately to the narrative presented in the Gospel. But it suggests to us to be cognizant of the fact, that this same Luke is also the writer of the other book which bears the name of the Acts of the Apostles. Our ground for holding this opinion is not merely the circumstance that the name of Theophilus occurs there as well as here. For it might quite well happen that there was a second person with the name of Theophilus; and even if it was one and the same person that was referred to in both cases, still another composition might have been addressed to him by a different individual, just as the Gospel was written in his behoof by Luke. We base our view of the identity of authorship, however, on the fact that this second book commences in the following strain: “The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He, through the Holy Ghost, gave commandment unto the apostles whom He chose to preach the gospel.” This statement gives us to understand that, previous to this, he had written one of those four books of the gospel which are held in the loftiest authority in the Church. At the same time, when he tells us that he had composed a treatise of all that Jesus began both to do and teach until the day in which He gave commandment to the apostles, we are not to take this to mean that he actually has given us a full account in his Gospel of all that Jesus did and said when He lived with His apostles on earth. For that would be contrary to what John affirms when he says that there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, the world itself could not contain the books. And besides, it is the admitted fact that not a few things have been narrated by the other evangelists, which Luke himself has not touched upon in his history. The sense therefore is, that he wrote a treatise of all these things, in so far as he made a selection out of the whole mass of materials for his narrative, and introduced those facts which he judged fit and suitable for the satisfactory discharge of the responsible duty laid upon him. Again, when he speaks of many who had “taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which have been fulfilled among us,” he seems to refer to certain parties who had not been able to complete the task which they had assumed. Hence he also says that it seemed good to him also to “write carefully in order, forasmuch as many have taken in hand,” etc. The allusion here, however, we ought to take to be to those writers who have attained to no authority in the Church, just because they were utterly incompetent rightly to carry out what they took in hand. Moreover, the author at present before us has not confined himself to the task of bringing down his narrative to the events of the Lord’s resurrection and assumption; neither has it been his aim simply to have a place commensurate in honour with his labours in the company of the four writers of the Gospel Scriptures. But he has also undertaken a record of what was done subsequently by the hands of the apostles; and relating as many of those events as he believed to be needful and helpful to the edification of the faith of readers or hearers, he has given us a narrative so faithful, that his is the only book that has been reckoned worthy of acceptance in the Church as a history of the Acts of the Apostles; while all these other writers who attempted, although deficient in the trustworthiness which was the first requisite, to compose an account of the doings and sayings of the apostles, have met with rejection. And, further, Mark and Luke certainly wrote at a time when it was quite possible to put them to the test not only by the Church of Christ, but also by the apostles themselves who were still alive in the flesh.

CHAPTER IX

OF THE QUESTION HOW IT CAN BE SHOWN THAT THE NARRATIVE OF THE HAUL OF FISHES WHICH LUKE HAS GIVEN US IS NOT TO BE IDENTIFIED WITH THE RECORD OF AN APPARENTLY SIMILAR INCIDENT WHICH JOHN HAS REPORTED SUBSEQUENTLY TO THE LORD’S RESURRECTION; AND OF THE FACT THAT FROM THIS POINT ON TO THE LORD’S SUPPER, FROM WHICH EVENT ONWARDS TO THE END THE COMBINED ACCOUNTS OF ALL THE EVANGELISTS HAVE BEEN EXAMINED, NO DIFFICULTY CALLING FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION EMERGES IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE ANY MORE THAN IN THAT OF MARK

10. Luke, then, commences his Gospel in the following fashion: “There was in the days of Herod the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her

name was Elisabeth;”and so on, down to the passage where it is said, “Now when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.” In this whole section, there is nothing to stir any question as to discrepancies. It is true that John appears to relate something resembling the last passage. But what he gives is really something widely different. I refer to what took place by the sea of Tiberias after the Lord’s resurrection. In that instance, not only is the particular time extremely different, but the circumstances themselves are of quite another character. For there the nets were cast on the right side, and a hundred and fifty and three fishes were caught. It is added, too, that they were great fishes. And the evangelist, therefore, has felt it necessary to state, that “for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken,” surely just because he had in view the previous case, which is recorded by Luke, and in connection with which the nets were broken by reason of the multitude of fishes. As for the rest, Luke has not recounted things like those which John has narrated, except in relation to the Lord’s passion and resurrection. And this whole section, which comes in between the Lord’s Supper and the conclusion, has already been handled by us in a manner which has yielded, as the result of a comparison of the testimonies of all the evangelists conjointly, the demonstration of an entire absence of discrepancies between them.

CHAPTER X

OF THE EVANGELIST JOHN, AND THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN HIM AND THE OTHER THREE

11. John remains, between whom and others there is left no comparison to be instituted. For, however the evangelists may each have reported some matters which are not recorded by the others, it will be hard to prove that any question involving real discrepancy arises out of these. Thus, too, it is a clearly admitted position that the first three—namely, Matthew, Mark, and Luke—have occupied themselves chiefly with the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to which He is both king and priest. And in this way, Mark, who seems to answer to the figure of the man in the well-known mystical symbol of the four living creatures, either appears to be preferentially the companion of Matthew, as he narrates a larger number of

matters in unison with him than with the rest, and therein acts in due harmony with the idea of the kingly character whose wont it is, as I have stated in the first book, to be not unaccompanied by attendants; or else, in accordance with the more probable account of the matter, he holds a course in conjunction with both [the other Synoptists]. For although he is at one with Matthew in the larger number of passages, he is nevertheless at one rather with Luke in some others. And this very fact shows him to stand related at once to the lion and to the steer, that is to say, to the kingly office which Matthew emphasizes, and to the sacerdotal which Luke introduces, wherein also Christ appears distinctively as man, as the figure which Mark sustains stands related to both these. On the other hand, Christ's divinity, in virtue of which He is equal to the Father, in accordance with which He is the Word, and God with God, and the Word that was made flesh in order to dwell among us, in accordance with which also He and the Father are one, has been taken specially in hand by John with a view to its recommendation to our minds. Like an eagle, he abides among Christ's sayings of the sublimer order, and in no way descends to earth but on rare occasions. In brief, although he declares plainly his own knowledge of the Lord's mother, he nevertheless neither unites with Matthew and Luke in recording His nativity, nor associates himself with all the three in relating His baptism; but all that he does there is simply to present the testimony delivered by John in a lofty and sublime fashion, and then, quitting the company of these others, he proceeds with Him to the marriage in Cana of Galilee. And there, although the evangelist himself mentions His mother by that very name, He nevertheless addresses her thus: "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" In this, however, [it is to be understood that] He does not repel her of whom He received the flesh, but means to convey the conception of His divinity with special fitness at this time, when He is about to change the water into wine; which divinity, likewise, had made that woman, and had not itself been made in her.

12. Then, after noticing the few days spent in Capharnaum, the evangelist comes again to the temple, where he states that Jesus spoke of the temple of His body in these terms: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up:" in which declaration emphatic intimation is given not only that God was in that temple in the person of the Word that was made flesh, but also

that He Himself raised the said flesh to life, in the veritable exercise of that prerogative which He has in His oneness with the Father, and according to which He does not act separately from Him; whereas it will perhaps be found that, in all other passages, the phrase which Scripture employs is one to the effect that God raised Him: neither is there any such expression found anywhere else as that, when God raised Christ, Christ also raised Himself, because He is one God with the Father; which is the import of the passage now before us, in which He says, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

13. Then how great and how divine are the words reported to have been spoken with Nicodemus! From these the evangelist proceeds again to the testimony of John, and brings before our notice the fact, that the friend of the bridegroom cannot but rejoice because of the bridegroom’s voice. In this statement He gives us to understand that the soul of man neither has light derivable from itself, nor can have blessing, except by participation in the unchangeable wisdom. Thereafter he carries us on to the case of the woman of Samaria, in connection with which mention is made of the water, whereof if a man drinks, he shall never thirst again. Once more, he brings us again to Cana of Galilee, where Jesus had made the water wine. In that narrative he tells us how He spoke to the nobleman, whose son was sick, in these terms: “Except ye see signs and wonders ye believe not:” in which saying He aims at lifting the mind of the believer high above all things mutable, so that He would not have even the miracles themselves, which, however they may bear the impression of what is divine, are yet wrought in the instance of what is changeable in bodies, made objects of seeking on the part of the faithful.

14. Next he brings us back to Jerusalem, and tells the story of the healing of the man who had an infirmity of thirty-eight years’ standing. What words are spoken on this occasion, and how ample is the discourse! Here we are met by the sentence, “The Jews sought to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.” In this passage it is made sufficiently plain that He did not speak of God as His Father in the ordinary sense in which holy men are in the habit of using the phrase, but that He meant that He is His equal. For, a

little before this, He had said to those who were impeaching Him with violating the Sabbath-day, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” Then their fury flamed forth, not merely because He said that God was His Father, but because He wished it to be understood that He was equal with God, when He used the phrase, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” In which utterance He also shows it to be matter of course that, as the Father works, the Son should work also; because the Father does not work without the Son. And this is in accordance with what He states a little further on in the same passage, when these parties were incensed at His declaration, namely, “For what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.”

15. Then at length John descends to bear company with the other three, whose course is with the same Lord, but upon the earth, and joins them in recording the feeding of the five thousand men with the five loaves. In this narrative, however, he is the only one who mentions, that when the people wished to make Him a king, Jesus departed into a mountain Himself alone. And in making that statement, his intention appears to me to have been just to communicate to the reasonable soul the truth, that Christ reigns over our mind and reason purely in a sphere in which He is exalted above us, in which He has no community of nature with men, and in which He is verily by Himself alone, as He is the Father’s only fellow. This, however, is a mystical truth, which escapes the cognizance of carnal men, whose life creeps upon the lower soil of this earth, just because it is so sublime a mystery. Hence Christ Himself also departs into the mountain from the men whose habit is to seek for His kingdom with earthly conceptions of it. Thus is it that He expresses Himself elsewhere to this effect, “My kingdom is not of this world.” And this, again, is something which is reported only by John, who soars high over earth in a kind of ethereal flight, and delights himself in the light of the Sun of righteousness. Then, on passing from the narrative connected with this mountain, and from the miracle of the five loaves, he still keeps company with the same three for a little while, until the notice of the crossing of the sea is reached, and the occasion on which Jesus walked upon the waters. But at this point he at once rises again to the region of the Lord’s discourses, and relates those words, so grave, so lengthened, so sustainedly lofty and elevated, which had their occasion in

the multiplying of the bread, when He addressed the multitudes to the following effect: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life.” After which sayings, He continues to discourse in similar terms for a very long period, and in the most exalted strain. At that time, some fell away from the sublime teaching of such words, namely, those who walked no more with Him afterwards. But there were also those who did cleave to Him; and these were they who were able to receive the meaning of this saying, “It is the spirit that quickeneth, but the flesh profiteth nothing.” For surely it is true, that even through the flesh it is the spirit that profiteth, and the spirit alone that profiteth; whereas the flesh without the spirit profiteth nothing.

16. Next we come to the passage where His brethren—that is to say, His relations according to the flesh—urge Him to go up to the feast-day, in order that He may have an opportunity of making Himself known to the multitude. And here, again, how supremely elevated is the tone of His reply! “My time is not yet come, but your time is alway ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it that the works thereof are evil.” So it is the case, then, that “your time is alway ready,” because ye desire that kind of day to which the prophet refers when he says, “But I have not laboured following Thee, O Lord; and the day of man I have not desired, Thou knowest:” that is to say, to soar to the light of the Word, and to desire that day which Abraham desired to see, and which he did see, and was glad. And again, how wonderful, how divine, how sublime are the words which John represents Him to have spoken after He had gone up to the temple, at the time of the feast! They are such as these: that where He was about to go, thither they could not come; that they both knew Him, and knew whence He was; that He who sent Him is true, whom they knew not, which is much the same as if He had said, “Ye both know whence I am, and know not whence I am.” And what else did He wish to be understood by such utterances, but that it was possible for Him to be known to them according to the flesh, in respect of lineage and country, but that, so far as regarded His divinity, He was unknown to them? On this occasion, too,

when He spoke of the gift of the Holy Spirit, He showed them who He was, inasmuch as He could hold the power of bestowing that highest boon.

17. Again, how weighty are the things which this evangelist reports Jesus to have spoken, when He came back to the temple from Mount Olivet, and after the forgiveness which He extended to the adulteress, who had been brought before Him by His tempters, as one deserving to be stoned: on which occasion He wrote with His finger upon the ground, as if He would indicate that people of the character of these men would be written on earth, and not in heaven, as He also admonished His disciples to rejoice that their names were written in heaven! Or, it may be that He meant to convey the idea that it was by humbling Himself (which He expressed by bending down His head) that He wrought signs upon the earth; or, that the time was now come when His law should be written, not, as formerly, on the sterile stone, but on a soil which would yield fruit. Accordingly, after these incidents, He affirmed Himself to be the light of the world, and declared that he who followed Him would not walk in darkness, but would have the light of life. He said, also, that He was "the beginning which also discoursed to them." By which designation He clearly distinguished Himself from the light which He made, and presented Himself as the Light by which all things have been made. Consequently, when He said that He was the light of the world, we are not to take the words to bear simply the sense intended when He addressed the disciples in similar terms, saying, "Ye are the light of the world." For they are compared only to the kindled light, which is not to be put beneath a bushel, but to be set upon a candlestick; as He also says of John the Baptist, that "he was a burning and shining light." But He is Himself the beginning, of whom it is likewise declared, that "of His fulness have all we received." On the occasion presently under review, He asserted further that He, the Son, is the Truth, which will make us free, and without which no man will be free.

18. Next, after telling the story of the giving of sight to the man who was blind from his birth, John tarries for a space over the copious discourse to which that incident gave occasion, on the subject of the sheep, and the shepherd, and the door, and the power of laying down His life and taking it again, wherein He gave token of the supreme might of His divinity.

Thereafter, he relates how, at the time when the feast of the dedication was being celebrated in Jerusalem, the Jews said to Him, “How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.” And then he reports the sublime words which the Lord uttered when the opportunity thus arose for a discourse. It was on this occasion that He said, “I and my Father are one.” After this, again, he brings before us the raising of Lazarus from the dead: in connection with which miracle the Lord said, “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” In these words what do we recognise but the sublimity of the Godhead of Him, in fellowship with whom we shall live for ever? Once more, John joins Matthew and Mark in what is recorded about Bethany, where the scene took place with the precious ointment which was poured upon His feet and His head by Mary. And then, on to the Lord’s passion and resurrection, John keeps by the other three evangelists, but only in so far as his narrative engages itself with the same places.

19. Moreover, so far as regards the Lord’s discourses, he does not cease to ascend to the sublimer and more extended utterances of which, from this point also, He delivered Himself. For he inserts a lofty address which the Lord spoke on the occasion when, through Philip and Andrew, the Gentiles expressed their desire to see Him, and which is introduced by none of the other evangelists. There, too, he reports the remarkable words which were spoken again on the subject of the light which enlightens and makes men the children of light. Thereafter, in connection with the Supper itself, of which none of the evangelists has failed to give us some notice, how affluent and how lofty are those words of Jesus which John records, but which the others have passed over in silence! I may instance not only His commendation of humility, when He washed the disciples’ feet, but also that marvellously overpowering and pre-eminently copious discourse which the Lord delivered to the eleven who remained with Him after His betrayer had been indicated by the morsel of bread, and had gone out. It was in this discourse, over which John lingers long, that He said, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also.” It was in it, too, that He expressed Himself so largely about the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, whom He was to send to them, and about His own glory, which He had with the Father before the

world was, and about His making us one in Himself, even as He and the Father are one,—not that He and the Father and we should be one, but that we should be one as they are one. And many other things of a wonderfully sublime order did He utter in that connection. But who can fail to see that to discuss such themes in any manner that would be worthy of them, even if we were competent to do so, is at least not the task which we have undertaken in the present effort? For our object is to help those who are lovers of the Word of God and students of holy truth to understand that, in his Gospel, John was indeed an announcer and preacher of the same Christ, the true and truthful One of whom the other three who have composed Gospels also testified, and to whom the rest of the apostles likewise bore witness, who, although they did not take in hand the construction of written narratives, did at least discharge the kindred service in officially preaching of Him: but that, at the same time, he was borne to far loftier heights in the doctrine of Christ from the very beginning of his book, and that it was but on rare occasions that he kept to the level pursued by the others. These occasions were the following in particular, namely: first by the Jordan, in reference to the testimony of John the Baptist; secondly, on the other side of the sea of Tiberias, when the Lord fed the multitudes with the five loaves, and walked upon the waters; thirdly, in Bethany, where He had the precious ointment poured over Him by the devotion of a woman of faith. And so he proceeds, until he meets them at the time of the Passion, which, as matter of course, he had to relate in conjunction with them. But, even in that section, and on the particular subject of the Lord’s Supper, which has been left unnoticed by none of them, he has presented us with a much more affluent statement, as if he drew his materials directly from the treasure-store of that bosom of the Lord on which it was his wont to recline. Then, again, [John shows us how] He astonishes Pilate with words of a sublimer import, declaring that His kingdom is not of this world, and that He was born a King, and that He came into the world for this purpose, that He might bear witness to the truth. [It is in this Gospel also that] He withdraws Himself from Mary with some deep mystical intention after His resurrection, and says to her, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.” It is here, too, that He imparts the Holy Spirit to the disciples by breathing on them giving us thereby to understand that this Spirit who is consubstantial and co-eternal with the Trinity, should not be considered to be simply the Spirit of the Father, but should also be held to be the Spirit of the Son.

20. Finally, He here commits His sheep to the care of Peter, who loves Him, and thrice confesses that love, and then He states that He wills this very John so to tarry until He comes. In which utterance, again, He seems to me to have conveyed in a profound and mystical way the fact that this evangelical stewardship of John's, in which he is borne aloft into the most liquid light of the Word, where it is possible to behold the equality and unchangeableness of the Trinity, and in which, above all, we see at what a distance from all others in respect of essential character that humanity stands by whose assumption it occurred that the Word was made flesh, cannot be clearly discerned and recognised until the Lord Himself comes. Consequently, it will tarry thus until He comes. At present it will tarry in the faith of believers, but hereafter it will be possible to contemplate it face to face, when He, our Life, shall appear, and when we shall appear with Him in glory. But if any one supposes that with man, living, as he still does, in this mortal life, it may be possible for a person to dispel and clear off every obscurity induced by corporeal and carnal fancies, and to attain to the serenest light of changeless truth, and to cleave constantly and unswervingly to that with a mind thoroughly estranged from the course of this present life, that man understands neither what he asks, nor who he is that put such a supposition. Let such an individual rather accept the authority, at once lofty and free from all deceitfulness, which tells us that, as long as we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord, and that we walk by faith and not by sight. And thus, with all perseverance keeping and guarding his faith and hope and charity, let him look forward to the sight which is promised, in accordance with that earnest which we have received of the Holy Ghost, who shall teach us all truth, when God, who raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us. But before this body, which is dead by reason of sin, is quickened, it is without doubt corruptible, and presseth down the soul. And if, in the body, man is ever helped to reach beyond the cloud with which the whole earth is covered,—that is to say, beyond this carnal darkness with which the whole life of earth is covered,—it is simply as if he were touched with a rapid coruscation, only to sink swiftly into his natural

infirmity, the desire surviving by which he may again be excited (to what is evil), and the purity being insufficient to establish him (in what is good). The more, however, any one can do this, the greater is he; while the less he can do so, the less is he. And if the mind of a man has as yet had no such experience—in which mind nevertheless Christ dwells by faith—he ought to strive earnestly to diminish the lusts of this world, and to make an end of them by the exercise of moral virtue, walking, as it were, in the company of these three evangelists with Christ the Mediator. And, with the joy of large hope, let him in faith hold Him who is alway the Son of God, but who, for our sakes, became the Son of man, in order that His eternal power and Godhead might be united with our weakness and mortality, and, on the basis of what is ours, make a way for us in Himself and to Himself. That a man may be kept from sinning, he should be ruled by Christ the King. If he happens to sin, he may obtain remission from Christ, who is also priest. And thus, nurtured in the exercise of a good conversation and life, and borne out of the atmosphere of earth on the wings of a twofold love, as on a pair of strong pinions, so may he be enlightened by the same Christ, who is also the Word, the Word who was in the beginning, the Word who was with God, and the Word who was God; and although that will still be through a glass darkly, it will be a sublime kind of illumination far superior to every corporeal similitude. Wherefore, although it is the gifts of the active virtue that shine pre-eminent in the first three evangelists, while it is the gift of the contemplative virtue that discerns such subjects, nevertheless, this Gospel of John, in so far as it also is in part, will so tarry until that which is perfect comes. And to one, indeed, is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit. One man regardeth the day to the Lord; another receives a clearer draught from the breast of the Lord; another is caught up even to the third heaven, and hears unspeakable words. But all, as long as they are in the body, are absent from the Lord. And for all believers living in the good hope, whose names are written in the book of life, there is still in reserve that which is referred to in the words, “And I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him.” Nevertheless, the greater the advance which a man may make in the apprehension and knowledge of this theme during the time of this absence from the Lord, all the more carefully should he guard against those devilish vices, pride and envy. Let him remember that this very Gospel of John, which urges us so pre-eminently to the contemplation of truth, gives a no less remarkable prominence to the inculcation of the sweet grace of charity. Let him also consider that most true and wholesome precept which is couched in the words, “The greater thou art, the more humble thyself in all.” For the evangelist who presents Christ to us in a far loftier strain of teaching than all the others, is also the one in whose narrative the Lord washes the disciples’ feet.

TWO BOOKS OF SOLILOQUIES

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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ST. AUGUSTIN.

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TWO BOOKS OF SOLILOQUIES

- Preface to Soliloquies

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Preface to Soliloquies

The two books of the Soliloquia were, by the statement of the author himself (Lib. I. 17), written in his thirty-third year. They were therefore written immediately after his baptism, evidently in the rural retreat of Cassiacum, in Upper Italy, belonging to his friend Verecundus, to which we know that he retreated for awhile after he had been received into the Church. It is therefore his earliest Christian work. And as it is early, so it is raw. His new-found faith struggles to justify itself through an intricate course of reasoning, in which he confuses helplessly the forms of logic with the substance of truth. However, though crude, his essential characteristics appear distinctly in it; his power of reasoning, his wide observation of fundamental facts, and of mental processes and experiences, his love of his friends, and above all of Alypius, his ardent aspirations after supernal light, his deep devotion, which, however, has not availed to subdue the artificialities of rhetoric into childlike simplicity.

He expresses in the work a longing for continued support to his tender faith from Ambrose, who, however, is described as having temporarily withdrawn into some Trans-alpine seclusion, where Augustin complains that he hardly knows how to reach him even by a letter.

He appears in the work as yet undetermined as to the form and course of his future life. The vast services he was to render the Church do not appear even to glimmer on his mind. Indeed, the life of leisure, devoted only, with some chosen friends, to the abstract contemplation of God, which forms his ideal, shows how very faintly penetrated he yet was by the Christian idea of serviceableness, as, in fact, there is in the Soliloquia very little that is distinctively Christian, either in doctrine or experience. But all the greatness of his following life lies shut up in his pliancy to the will of God, here expressed, and in his conviction that the God whom Christ reveals is the one true God.

In his Retractationes he recalls a few sentences of this work, one, which he seems to regard as inadvertently so expressed as to be capable of a Sabellian turn; another, which he regards as savoring too much of a Gnostic or Neo-Platonic abhorrence of matter; and another, in which he treats the effects of mental discipline as Plato does, supposing it to bring out into distinctness knowledge already possessed and forgotten. In the Retractationes he gives the true explanation, namely, that the mind is so constituted, that by the light of the Eternal Reason present in it, it is capable according to its measure of apprehending truths of which it had never before laid hold.

I have endeavored, in the rendering, to avail myself, wherever requisite, of the elder idioms of our tongue, which appear more germane, both to the matter and manner of St. Augustin, than the unmellowed English of the nineteenth century.

Book I

As I had been long revolving with myself matters many and various, and had been for many days sedulously inquiring both concerning myself and my chief good, or what of evil there was to be avoided by me: suddenly some one addresses me, whether I myself, or some other one, within me or without, I know not. For this very thing is what I chiefly toil to know. There says then to me, let us call it Reason,—Behold, assuming that you had discovered somewhat, to whose charge would you commit it, that you might go on with other things? A. To the memory, no doubt. R. But is the force of memory so great as to keep safely everything that may have been wrought out in thought? A. It hardly could, nay indeed it certainly could not. R. Therefore you must write. But what are you to do, seeing that your health recoils from the labor of writing? nor will these things bear to be dictated, seeing they consent not but with utter solitude. A. True. Therefore I am wholly at a loss what to say. R. Entreat of God health and help, that you may the better compass your desires, and commit to writing this very petition, that you may be the more courageous in the offspring of your brain. Then, what you discover sum up in a few brief conclusions. Nor care just now to invite a crowd of readers; it will suffice if these things find audience among the few of thine own city.

2. O God, Framer of the universe, grant me first rightly to invoke Thee; then to show myself worthy to be heard by Thee; lastly, deign to set me free. God, through whom all things, which of themselves were not, tend to be. God, who withholdest from perishing even that which seems to be mutually destructive. God, who, out of nothing, hast created this world, which the eyes of all perceive to be most beautiful. God, who dost not cause evil, but causest that it be not most evil. God, who to the few that flee for refuge to that which truly is, showest evil to be nothing. God, through whom the universe, even taking in its sinister side, is perfect. God, from whom things most widely at variance with Thee effect no dissonance, since worser things are included in one plan with better. God, who art loved, wittingly or unwittingly, by everything that is capable of loving. God, in

whom are all things, to whom nevertheless neither the vileness of any creature is vile, nor its wickedness harmful, nor its error erroneous. God, who hast not willed that any but the pure should know the truth. God, the Father of truth, the Father of wisdom, the Father of the true and crowning life, the Father of blessedness, the Father of that which is good and fair, the Father of intelligible light, the Father of our awakening and illumination, the Father of the pledge by which we are admonished to return to Thee.

3. Thee I invoke, O God, the Truth, in whom and from whom and through whom all things are true which anywhere are true. God, the Wisdom, in whom and from whom and through whom all things are wise which anywhere are wise. God, the true and crowning Life, in whom and from whom and through whom all things live, which truly and supremely live. God, the Blessedness, in whom and from whom and through whom all things are blessed, which anywhere are blessed. God, the Good and Fair, in whom and from whom and through whom all things are good and fair, which anywhere are good and fair. God, the intelligible Light, in whom and from whom and through whom all things intelligibly shine, which anywhere intelligibly shine. God, whose kingdom is that whole world of which sense has no ken. God, from whose kingdom a law is even derived down upon these lower realms. God, from whom to be turned away, is to fall: to whom to be turned back, is to rise again: in whom to abide, is to stand firm. God, from whom to go forth, is to die: to whom to return, is to revive: in whom to have our dwelling, is to live. God, whom no one loses, unless deceived: whom no one seeks, unless stirred up: whom no one finds, unless made pure. God, whom to forsake, is one thing with perishing; towards whom to tend, is one thing with living: whom to see is one thing with having. God, towards whom faith rouses us, hope lifts us up, with whom love joins us. God, through whom we overcome the enemy, Thee I entreat. God, through whose gift it is, that we do not perish utterly. God, by whom we are warned to watch. God, by whom we distinguish good from ill. God, by whom we flee evil, and follow good. God, through whom we yield not to calamities. God, through whom we faithfully serve and benignantly govern. God, through whom we learn those things to be another’s which aforetime we accounted ours, and those things to be ours which we used to account as belonging to another. God, through whom the baits and enticements of evil

things have no power to hold us. God, through whom it is that diminished possessions leave ourselves complete. God, through whom our better good is not subject to a worse. God, through whom death is swallowed up in victory. God, who dost turn us to Thyself. God, who dost strip us of that which is not, and arrayest us in that which is. God, who dost make us worthy to be heard. God, who dost fortify us. God, who leadest us into all truth. God, who speakest to us only good, who neither terrifiest into madness nor sufferest another so to do. God, who callest us back into the way. God, who leadest us to the door of life. God, who causest it to be opened to them that knock. God, who givest us the bread of life. God, through whom we thirst for the draught, which being drunk we never thirst. God, who dost convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. God, through whom it is that we are not commoved by those who refuse to believe. God, through whom we disapprove the error of those, who think that there are no merits of souls before Thee. God, through whom it comes that we are not in bondage to the weak and beggarly elements. God, who cleansest us, and preparest us for Divine rewards, to me propitious come Thou.

4. Whatever has been said by me, Thou the only God, do Thou come to my help, the one true and eternal substance, where is no discord, no confusion, no shifting, no indigence, no death. Where is supreme concord, supreme evidence, supreme steadfastness, supreme fullness, and life supreme. Where nothing is lacking, nothing redundant. Where Begetter and Begotten are one. God, whom all things serve, that serve, to whom is compliant every virtuous soul. By whose laws the poles revolve, the stars fulfill their courses, the sun vivifies the day, the moon tempers the night: and all the framework of things, day after day by vicissitude of light and gloom, month after month by waxings and wanings of the moon, year after year by orderly successions of spring and summer and fall and winter, cycle after cycle by accomplished concurrences of the solar course, and through the mighty orbs of time, folding and refolding upon themselves, as the stars still recur to their first conjunctions, maintains, so far as this merely visible matter allows, the mighty constancy of things. God, by whose ever-during laws the stable motion of shifting things is suffered to feel no perturbation, the thronging course of circling ages is ever recalled anew to the image of

immovable quiet: by whose laws the choice of the soul is free, and to the good rewards and to the evil pains are distributed by necessities settled throughout the nature of everything. God, from whom distil even to us all benefits, by whom all evils are withheld from us. God, above whom is nothing, beyond whom is nothing, without whom is nothing. God, under whom is the whole, in whom is the whole, with whom is the whole. Who hast made man after Thine image and likeness, which he discovers, who has come to know himself. Hear me, hear me, graciously hear me, my God, my Lord, my King, my Father, my Cause, my Hope, my Wealth, my Honor, my House, my Country, my Health, my Light, my Life. Hear, hear, hear me graciously, in that way, all Thine own, which though known to few is to those few known so well.

5. Henceforth Thee alone do I love, Thee alone I follow, Thee alone I seek, Thee alone am I prepared to serve, for Thou alone art Lord by a just title, of Thy dominion do I desire to be. Direct, I pray, and command whatever Thou wilt, but heal and open my ears, that I may hear Thine utterances. Heal and open my eyes, that I may behold Thy significations of command. Drive delusion from me, that I may recognize Thee. Tell me whither I must tend, to behold Thee, and I hope that I shall do all things Thou mayest enjoin. O Lord, most merciful Father receive, I pray, Thy fugitive; enough already, surely, have I been punished, long enough have I served Thine enemies, whom Thou hast under Thy feet, long enough have I been a sport of fallacies. Receive me fleeing from these, Thy house-born servant, for did not these receive me, though another Master’s, when I was fleeing from Thee? To Thee I feel I must return: I knock; may Thy door be opened to me; teach me the way to Thee. Nothing else have I than the will: nothing else do I know than that fleeting and falling things are to be spurned, fixed and everlasting things to be sought. This I do, Father, because this alone I know, but from what quarter to approach Thee I do not know. Do Thou instruct me, show me, give me my provision for the way. If it is by faith that those find Thee, who take refuge with Thee then grant faith: if by virtue, virtue: if by knowledge, knowledge. Augment in me, faith, hope, and charity. O goodness of Thine, singular and most to be admired!

7. A. Behold I have prayed to God. R. What then wouldst thou know? A. All these things which I have prayed for. R. Sum them up in brief. A. God and the soul, that is what I desire to know. R. Nothing more? A. Nothing whatever. R. Therefore begin to inquire. But first explain how, if God should be set forth to thee, thou wouldst be able to say, It is enough. A. I know not how He is to be so set forth to me as that I shall say, It is enough: for I believe not that I know anything in such wise as I desire to know God. R. What then are we to do? Dost thou not judge that first thou oughtest to know, what it is to know God sufficiently, so that arriving at that point, thou mayst seek no farther? A. So I judge, indeed: but how that is to be brought about, I see not. For what have I ever understood like to God, so that I could say, As I understand this, so would I fain understand God? R. Not having yet made acquaintance with God, whence hast thou come to know that thou knowest nothing like to God? A. Because if I knew anything like God, I should doubtless love it: but now I love nothing else than God and the soul, neither of which I know. R. Do you then not love your friends? A. Loving them, how can I otherwise than love the soul? R. Do you then love gnats and bugs similarly? A. The animating soul I said I loved, not animals. R. Men are then either not your friends, or you do not love them. For every man is an animal, and you say that you do not love animals. A. Men are my friends, and I love them, not in that they are animals, but in that they are men, that is, in that they are animated by rational souls, which I love even in highwaymen. For I may with good right in any man love reason, even though I rightly hate him, who uses ill that which I love. Therefore I love my friends the more, the more worthily they use their rational soul, or certainly the more earnestly they desire to use it worthily.

8. R. I allow so much: but yet if any one should say to thee, I will give thee to know God as well as thou dost know Alypius, wouldst thou not give thanks, and say, It is enough? A. I should give thanks indeed: but I should not say, It is enough. R. Why, I pray? A. Because I do not even know God so well as I know Alypius, and yet I do not know Alypius well enough. R. Beware then lest shamelessly thou wouldest fain be satisfied in the knowledge of God, who hast not even such a knowledge of Alypius as satisfies. A. Non sequitur. For, comparing it with the stars, what is of lower account than my supper? and yet what I shall sup on to-morrow I know not:

but in what sign the moon will be, I need take no shame to profess that I know. R. Is it then enough for thee to know God as well as thou dost know in what sign the moon will hold her course to-morrow? A. It is not enough, for this I test by the senses. But I do not know whether or not either God, or some hidden cause of nature may suddenly change the moon's ordinary course, which if it came to pass, would render false all that I had presumed. R. And believest thou that this may happen? A. I do not believe. But I at least am seeking what I may know, not what I may believe. Now everything that we know, we may with reason perhaps be said to believe, but not to know everything which we believe. R. In this matter therefore you reject all testimony of the senses? A. I utterly reject it. R. That friend of yours then, whom you say you do not yet know, is it by sense that you wish to know him or by intellectual perception? A. Whatever in him I know by sense, if indeed anything is known by sense, is both mean and sufficiently known. But that part which bears affection to me, that is, the mind itself, I desire to know intellectually. R. Can it, indeed, be known otherwise? A. By no means. R. Do you venture then to call your friend, your inmost friend, unknown to you? A. Why not venture? For I account most equitable that law of friendship, by which it is prescribed, that as one is to bear no less, so he is to bear no more affection to his friend than to himself. Since then I know not myself, what injury does he suffer, whom I declare to be unknown to me, above all since (as I believe) he does not even know himself? R. If then these things which thou wouldst fain know, are of such a sort as are to be intellectually attained, when I said it was shameless in thee to crave to know God, when thou knowest not even Alypius, thou oughtest not to have urged to me the similitude of thy supper and the moon, if these things, as thou hast said, appertain to sense.

9. But let that go, and now answer to this: if those things which Plato and Plotinus have said concerning God are true, is it enough for thee to know God as they knew him? A. Even allowing that those things which they have said are true, does it follow at once that they knew them? For many copiously utter what they do not know, as I myself have said that I desired to know all those things for which I prayed, which I should not desire if I knew them already: yet I was none the less able to enumerate them all. For I have enumerated not what I intellectually comprehended, but things which I

have gathered from all sides and entrusted to my memory, and to which I yield as ample a faith as I am able: but to know is another thing. R. Tell me, I pray, do you at least know in geometry what a line is? A. So much I certainly know. R. Nor in professing so do you stand in awe of the Academicians? A. In no wise. For they, as wise men, would not run the risk of erring: but I am not wise. Therefore as yet I do not shrink from professing the knowledge of those things which I have come to know. But if, as I desire, I should ever have attained to wisdom, I will do what I may find her to suggest. R. I except not thereto: but, I had begun to inquire, as you know a line, do you also know a ball, or, as they say, a sphere? A. I do. R. Both alike, or one more, one less? A. Just alike. I am altogether certain of both. R. Have you grasped these by the senses or the intellect? A. Nay, I have essayed the senses in this matter as a ship. For after they had carried me to the place I was aiming for, and I had dismissed them, and was now, as it were, left on dry ground, where I began to turn these things over in thought, the oscillations of the senses long continued to swim in my brain. Wherefore it seems to me that it would be easier to sail on dry land, than to learn geometry by the senses, although young beginners seem to derive some help from them. R. Then you do not hesitate to call whatever acquaintance you have with such things, Knowledge? A. Not if the Stoics permit, who attribute knowledge only to the Wise Man. Certainly I maintain myself to have the perception of these things, which they concede even to folly: but neither am I at all in any great fear of the stoics: unquestionably I hold those things which thou hast questioned me of in knowledge: proceed now till I see to what end thou questionest me of them. R. Be not too eager, we are not pressed for time. But give strict heed, lest you should make some rash concession. I would fain give thee the joy of things wherein thou fearest not to slip, and dost thou enjoin haste, as in a matter of no moment? A. God grant the event as thou forecastest it. Therefore question at thy will, and rebuke me more sharply if I err so again.

10. R. It is then plain to you that a line cannot possibly be longitudinally divided into two? A. Plainly so. R. What of a cross-section? A. This, of course, is possible to infinity. R. But is it equally apparent that if, beginning with the centre, you make any sections you please of a sphere, no two resulting circles will be equal? A. It is equally apparent. R. What are a line

and a sphere? Do they seem to you to be identical, or somewhat different? A. Who does not see that they differ very much? R. If then you know this and that equally well, while yet, as you acknowledge, they differ widely from each other, there must be an indifferent knowledge of different things. A. Who ever disputed it? R. You, a little while ago. For when I asked thee what way of knowing God was in thy desire, such that thou couldst say, It is enough, thou didst answer that thou couldst not explain this, because thou hadst no perception held in such a way as that in which thou didst desire to perceive God, for that thou didst know nothing like God. What then? Are a line and sphere alike? A. Absurd. R. But I had asked, not what you knew such as God, but what you knew so as you desire to know God. For you know a line in such wise as you know a sphere, although the properties of a line are not those of a sphere. Wherefore answer whether it would suffice you to know God in such wise as you know that geometrical ball; that is, to be equally without doubt concerning God as concerning that.

11. A. Pardon me, however vehemently thou urge and argue, yet I dare not say that I wish so to know God as I know these things. For not only the objects of the knowledge, but the knowledge itself appears to be unlike. First, because the line and the ball are not so unlike, but that one science includes the knowl edge of them both: but no geometrician has ever professed to teach God. Then, if the knowledge of God and of these things were equivalent, I should rejoice as much to know them as I am persuaded that I should rejoice if God were known by me. But now I hold these things in the deepest disdain in comparison with Him, so that sometimes it seems to me that if I understood Him, and that in that manner in which He can be seen, all these things would perish out of my knowledge: since even now by reason of the love of Him they scarce come into my mind. R. Allow that thou wouldst rejoice more and much more in knowing God than in knowing these things, yet not by a different perception of the things; unless we are to say that thou beholdest with a different vision the earth and the serenity of the skies, although the aspect of this latter soothes and delights thee far more than of the former. But unless your eyes are deceived, I believe that, if asked whether you are as well assured that you see earth as heaven, you ought to answer yes, although you are not as much delighted by the earth and her beauty as by the beauty and magnificence of heaven. A. I am

moved, I confess, by this similitude, and am brought to allow that by how much earth differs in her kind from heaven, so much do those demonstrations of the sciences, true and certain as they are, differ from the intelligible majesty of God.

12. R. Thou art moved to good effect. For the Reason which is talking with thee promises so to demonstrate God to thy mind, as the sun demonstrates himself to the eyes. For the senses of the soul are as it were the eyes of the mind; but all the certainties of the sciences are like those things which are brought to light by the sun, that they may be seen, the earth, for instance, and the things upon it: while God is Himself the Illuminator. Now I, Reason, am that in the mind, which the act of looking is in the eyes. For to have eyes is not the same as to look; nor again to look the same as to see. Therefore the soul has need of three distinct things: to have eyes, such as it can use to good advantage, to look, and to see. Sound eyes, that means the mind pure from all stain of the body, that is, now remote and purged from the lusts of mortal things: which, in the first condition, nothing else accomplishes for her than Faith. For what cannot yet be shown forth to her stained and languishing with sins, because, unless sound, she cannot see, if she does not believe that otherwise she will not see, she gives no heed to her health. But what if she believes that the case stands as I say, and that, if she is to see at all, she can only see on these terms, but despairs of being healed; does she not utterly contemn herself and cast herself away, refusing to comply with the prescriptions of the physician? A. Beyond doubt, above all because by sickness remedies must needs be felt as severe. R. Then Hope must be added to Faith. A. So I believe. R. Moreover, if she both believes that the case stands so, and hopes that she could be healed, yet loves not, desires not the promised light itself, and thinks that she ought meanwhile to be content with her darkness, which now, by use, has become pleasant to her; does she not none the less reject the physician? A. Beyond doubt. R. Therefore Charity must needs make a third. A. Nothing so needful. R. Without these three things therefore no mind is healed, so that it can see, that is, understand its God.

13. When therefore the mind has come to have sound eyes, what next? A. That she look. R. The mind’s act of looking is Reason; but because it does

not follow that every one who looks sees, a right and perfect act of looking, that is, one followed by vision, is called Virtue; for Virtue is either right or perfect Reason. But even the power of vision, though the eyes be now healed, has not force to turn them to the light, unless these three things abide. Faith, whereby the soul believes that thing, to which she is asked to turn her gaze, is of such sort, that being seen it will give blessedness; Hope, whereby the mind judges that if she looks attentively, she will see; Charity, whereby she desires to see and to be filled with the enjoyment of the sight. The attentive view is now followed by the very vision of God, which is the end of looking; not because the power of beholding ceases, but because it has nothing further to which it can turn itself: and this is the truly perfect virtue, Virtue arriving at its end, which is followed by the life of blessedness. Now this vision itself is that apprehension which is in the soul, compounded of the apprehending subject and of that which is apprehended: as in like manner seeing with the eyes results from the conjunction of the sense and the object of sense, either of which being withdrawn, seeing becomes impossible.

14. Therefore when the soul has obtained to see, that is, to apprehend God, let us see whether those three things are still necessary to her. Why should Faith be necessary to the soul, when she now sees? Or Hope, when she already grasps? But from Charity not only is nothing diminished, but rather it receives large increase. For when the soul has once seen that unique and unfalsified Beauty, she will love it the more, and unless she shall with great love have fastened her gaze thereon, nor any way declined from the view, she will not be able to abide in that most blessed vision. But while the soul is in this body, even though she most fully sees, that is, apprehends God; yet, because the bodily senses still have their proper effect, if they have no prevalency to mislead, yet they are not without a certain power to call in doubt, therefore that may be called Faith whereby these dispositions are resisted, and the opposing truth affirmed. Moreover, in this life, although the soul is already blessed in the apprehension of God; yet, because she endures many irksome pains of the body, she has occasion of hope that after death all these incommodities will have ceased to be. Therefore neither does Hope, so long as she is in this life, desert the soul. But when after this life she shall have wholly collected herself in God, Charity remains

whereby she is retained there. For neither can she be said to have Faith that those things are true, when she is solicited by no interruption of falsities; nor does anything remain for her to hope, whereas she securely possesses the whole. Three things therefore pertain to the soul, that she be sane, that she behold, that she see. And other three, Faith, Hope, Charity, for the first and second of those three conditions are always necessary: for the third in this life all; after this life, Charity alone.

15. Now listen, so far as the present time requires, while from that similitude of sensible things I now teach also something concerning God. Namely, God is intelligible, not sensible, intelligible also are those demonstrations of the schools; nevertheless they differ very widely. For as the earth is visible, so is light; but the earth, unless illumined by light, cannot be seen. Therefore those things also which are taught in the schools, which no one who understands them doubts in the least to be absolutely true, we must believe to be incapable of being understood, unless they are illuminated by somewhat else, as it were a sun of their own. Therefore as in this visible sun we may observe three things: that he is, that he shines, that he illuminates: so in that God most far withdrawn whom thou wouldst fain apprehend, there are these three things: that He is, that He is apprehended, and that He makes other things to be apprehended. These two, God and thyself, I dare promise that I can teach thee to understand. But give answer how thou receivest these things, as probable, or as true? A. As probable certainly; and, as I must own, I have been hoping more: for excepting those two illustrations of the line and the globe, nothing has been said by thee which I should dare to say that I know. R. It is not to be wondered at: for nothing has been yet so set forth, as that it exacts of thee perception.

16. But why do we delay? Let us set out: but first let us see (for this comes first) whether we are in a sound state. A. Do thou see to it, if either in thyself or in me that hast any discernment of what is to be found; I will answer, being inquired of, to my best knowledge. R. Do you love anything besides the knowledge of God and yourself? A. I might answer, that I love nothing besides, having regard to my present feelings; but I should be safer to say that I do not know. For it hath often chanced to me, that when I believed I was open to nothing else, something nevertheless would come

into the mind which stung me otherwise than I had presumed. So often, when something, conceived in thought, disturbed me little, yet when it came in fact it disquieted me more than I supposed: but now I do not see myself sensible to perturbation except by three things; by the fear of losing those whom I love, by the fear of pain, by the fear of death. R. You love, therefore, both a life associated with those dearest to you, and your own good health, and your bodily life itself: or you would not fear the loss of these. A. It is so, I acknowledge. R. Now therefore, the fact that all your friends are not with you, and that your health is not very firm, occasions you some uneasiness of mind. For that I see to be implied. A. Thou seest rightly; I am not able to deny it. R. How if you should suddenly feel and find yourself sound in health, and should see all whom you love and who love each other, enjoying in your company liberal ease? would you not think it right to give way in reasonable measure even to transports of joy? A. In a measure, undoubtedly. Nay, if these things, as thou sayest, bechanced me suddenly, how could I contain myself? how could I possibly even dissemble joy of such a sort? R. As yet, therefore, you are tossed about by all the diseases and perturbations of the mind. What shamelessness, then, that with such eyes you should wish to see such a Sun! A. Thy conclusion then is, that I am utterly ignorant how far I am advanced in health, how far disease has receded, or how far it remains. Suppose me to grant this.

17. R. Do you not see that these eyes of the body, even when sound, are often so smitten by the light of this visible sun, as to be compelled to turn away and to take refuge in their own obscurity? Now you are proposing to yourself what you are moved to seek, but are not proposing to yourself what you desire to see: and yet I would discuss this very thing with you, what advance you think we have made. Are you without desire of riches? A. This at least no longer chiefly. For, being now three and thirty years of age, for almost these fourteen years last past I have ceased to desire them, nor have I sought anything from them, if by chance they should be offered, beyond the necessities of life and such a use of them as agrees with the state of a freeman. A single book of Cicero has thoroughly persuaded me, that riches are in no wise to be craved, but that if they come in our way, they are to be with the utmost wisdom and caution administered. R. What of honors? A. I confess that it is only lately, and as it were yesterday, that I have ceased to

desire these. R. What of a wife? Are you not sometimes charmed by the image of a beautiful, modest, complying maiden, well lettered, or of parts that can easily be trained by you, bringing you too (being a despiser of riches) just so large a dowry as will relieve your leisure of all burden on her account? It is implied, moreover, that you have good hope of coming to no grief through her. A. However much thou please to portray her and adorn her with all manner of gifts, I have determined that nothing is so much to be avoided by me as such a bedfellow: I perceive that nothing more saps the citadel of manly strength, whether of mind or body, than female blandishments and familiarities. Therefore, if (which I have not yet discovered) it appertains to the office of a wise man to desire offspring, whoever for this reason only comes into this connection, may appear to me worthy of admiration, but in no wise a model for imitation: for there is more peril in the essay, than felicity in the accomplishment. Wherefore, I believe, I am contradicting neither justice nor utility in providing for the liberty of my mind by neither desiring, nor seeking, nor taking a wife. R. I inquire not now what thou hast determined, but whether thou dost yet struggle, or hast indeed already overcome desire itself. For we are considering the soundness of thine eyes. A. Nothing of the kind do I any way seek, nothing do I desire; it is even with horror and loathing that I recall such things to mind. What more wouldst thou? And day by day does this benefit grow upon me: for the more I grow in the hope of beholding that supernal Beauty with the desire of which I glow, the more my love and delight is wholly converted thereto. R. What of pleasant viands? How much do you care for them? A. Those things which I have determined not to eat, tempt me not. As to those which I have not cut off, I allow that I take pleasure in their present use, yet so that without any disturbance of mind, either the sight or the taste of them may be withdrawn. And when they are entirely absent, no craving of them dares intrude itself to the disturbance of my thoughts. But no need to inquire concerning food or drink, or baths: so much of these do I seek to have, as is profitable for the confirmation of health.

18. R. Thou hast made great progress: yet those things which remain in order to the seeing of that light, very greatly impede. But I am aiming at something which appears to me very easy to be shown; that either nothing remains to us to be subdued, or that we have made no advance at all, and

that the taint of all those things which we believed cut away remains. For I ask of thee, if thou wert persuaded that thou couldst live with the throng of those dearest to thee in the study and pursuit of wisdom on no other terms than as possessed of an estate ample enough to meet all your joint necessities; would you not desire and seek for wealth? A. I should. R. How, if it should also be clear, that you would be to many a master of wisdom, if your authority in teaching were supported by civil honor, and that even these your familiars would not be able to put a bridle on their cravings except as they too were in honor, and that this could only accrue to them through your honors and dignity? would not honor then be a worthy object of desire, and of strenuous pursuit? A. It is as thou sayest. R. I do not consider the question of a wife; for perhaps no such necessity could arise of marrying one: although if it were certain that by her ample patrimony all those could be sustained whom thou wouldst fain have live at ease with thee in one place, and that moreover with her cordial consent, especially if she were of a family of such nobility as that through her those honors which you have just granted, in our hypothesis, to be necessary, could easily be attained, I do not know that it would be any part of your duty to contemn these advantages, thus obtained. A. But how could I hope for such things?

19. R. You speak as if I were now inquiring what you hope. I am not inquiring what, denied, delights not, but what delights, obtained. For an extinguished plague is one thing, a dormant plague another. And, as some wise men say, all pools are so unsound, that they always smell of every foul thing, although you do not always perceive this, but only when you stir them up. And there is a wide difference whether a craving is suppressed by hopelessness of compassing it, or is expelled by saneness of soul. A. Although I am not able to answer thee, never wilt thou, for all this, persuade me that in this affection of mind in which I now perceive myself to be, I have advantaged nothing. R. This, doubtless, appears so to thee, because although thou mightest desire these things, yet they would not seem to thee objects of desire, on their own account, but for ulterior ends. A. That is what I was endeavoring to say: for when I desired riches, I desired them for this reason, that I might be rich. And those honors, the lust of which I have declared myself to have but even now thoroughly overcome, I craved by a mere delight in some intrinsic splendor I imputed to them; and nothing else

did I expect in a wife, when I expected, than the reputable enjoyment of voluptuousness. Then there was in me a veritable craving for those things; now I utterly contemn them all: but if I cannot except through these find a passage to those things which in effect I desire, I do not pursue them as things to be embraced, but accept them as things to be allowed. R. A thoroughly excellent distinction: for neither do I impute unworthiness to the desire of any lower things that are sought on account of something else.

20. But I ask of thee, why thou dost desire, either that the persons whom thou affectest should live, or that they should live with thee. A. That together and concordantly we might inquire out God and our souls. For so, whichever first discovers aught, easily introduces his companions into it. R. What if these will not inquire? A. I would persuade them into the love of it. R. What if you could not, be it that they suppose themselves to have already found, or think that such things are beyond discovery, or that they are entangled in cares and cravings of other things? A. We will use our best endeavors, I with them, and they with me. R. What if even their presence impedes you in your inquiries? would you not choose and endeavor that they should not be with you, rather than be with you on such terms? A. I own it is as thou sayest. R. It is not therefore on its own account that you crave either their life or presence, but as an auxiliary in the discovery of wisdom? A. I thoroughly agree to that. R. Further: if you were certain that your own life were an impediment to your comprehension of wisdom, should you desire its continuance? A. I should utterly eschew it. R. Furthermore: if thou wert taught, that either in this body or after leaving it thou couldst equally well attain unto wisdom, wouldst thou care whether it was in this or another life that thou didst enjoy that which thou supremely affectest? A. If I ascertained that I was to experience nothing worse, which would lead me back from the point to which I had made progress, I should not care. R. Then thy present dread of death rests on the fear of being involved in some worse evil, whereby the Divine cognition may be borne away from thee. A. Not solely such a possible loss do I dread, if I have any right understanding of the fact, but also lest access should be barred me into those things which I am now eager to explore; although what I already possess, I believe will remain with me. R. Therefore not for the sake of this

life in itself, but for the sake of wisdom thou dost desire the continuance of this life. A. It is the truth.

21. R. We have pain of body left, which perhaps moves thee of its proper force. A. Nor indeed do I grievously dread even that for any other reason than that it impedes me in my research. For although of late I have been grievously tormented with attacks of toothache, so that I was not suffered to revolve aught in my mind except such things as I have been engaged in learning; while, as the whole intensity of my mind was requisite for new advances, I was entirely restrained from making these: yet it seemed to me, that if the essential refulgence of Truth would disclose itself to me, I should either not have felt that pain, or certainly would have made no account of it. But although I have never had anything severer to bear, yet, often reflecting how much severer the pains are which I might have to bear, I am sometimes forced to agree with Cornelius Celsus, who says that the supreme good is wisdom, and the supreme evil bodily pain. For since, says he, we are composed of two parts, namely, mind and body, of which the former part, the mind, is the better, the body the worse; the highest good is the best of the better part, and the chiefest evil the worst of the inferior; now the best thing in the mind is wisdom, and the worst thing in the body is pain. It is concluded, therefore, and as I fancy, most justly, that the chief good of man is to be wise, and his chief evil, to suffer pain. R. We will consider this later. For perchance Wisdom herself, towards which we strive, will bring us to be of another mind. But if she should show this to be true, we will then not hesitate to adhere to this your present judgment concerning the highest good and the deepest ill.

22. Now let us inquire concerning this, what sort of lover of wisdom thou art, whom thou desirest to behold with most chaste view and embrace, and to grasp her unveiled charms in such wise as she affords herself to no one, except to her few and choicest rotaries. For assuredly a beautiful woman, who had kindled thee to ardent love, would never surrender herself to thee, if she had discovered that thou hadst in thy heart another object of affection; and shall that most chaste beauty of Wisdom exhibit itself to thee, unless thou art kindled for it alone? A. Why then am I still made to hang in wretchedness, and put off with miserable pining? Assuredly I have already

made it plain that I love nothing else, since what is not loved for itself is not loved. Now I at least love Wisdom for herself alone, while as to other things, it is for her sake that I desire their presence or absence, such as life, ease, friends. But what measure can the love of that beauty have in which I not only do not envy others, but even long for as many as possible to seek it, gaze upon it, grasp it and enjoy it with me; knowing that our friendship will be the closer, the more thoroughly conjoined we are in the object of our love?

23. R. Such lovers assuredly it is, whom Wisdom ought to have. Such lovers does she seek, the love of whom has in it nothing but what is pure. But there are various ways of approach to her. For it is according to our soundness and strength that each one comprehends that unique and truest good. It is a certain ineffable and incomprehensible light of minds. Let this light of the common day teach us, as well as it can, concerning the higher light. For there are eyes so sound and keen, that, as soon as they are first opened, they turn themselves unshrinkingly upon the sun himself. To these, as it were, the light itself is health, nor do they need a teacher, but only, perchance, a warning. For these to believe, to hope, to love is enough. But others are smitten by that very effulgence which they vehemently desire to see, and when the sight of it is withdrawn often return into darkness with delight. To whom, although such as that they may reasonably be called sound, it is nevertheless dangerous to insist on showing what as yet they have not the power to behold. These therefore should be first put in training, and their love for their good is to be nourished by delay. For first certain things are to be shown to them which are not luminous of themselves, but may be seen by the light, such as a garment, a wall, or the like. Then something which, though still not shining of itself, yet in the light flames out more gloriously, such as gold or silver, yet not so brilliantly as to injure the eyes. Then perchance this familiar fire of earth is to be cautiously shown, then the stars, then the moon, then the brightening dawn, and the brilliance of the luminous sky. Among which things, whether sooner or later, whether through the whole succession, or with some steps passed over, each one accustoming himself according to his strength, will at last without shrinking and with great delight behold the sun. In some such way do the best masters deal with those who are heartily devoted to Wisdom,

and who, though seeing but dimly, yet have already eyes that see. For it is the office of a wise training to bring one near to her in a certain graduated approach, but to arrive in her presence without these intermediary steps is a scarcely credible felicity. But to-day, I think we have written enough; regard must be had to health.

24. And, another day having come, A. Give now, I pray, if thou canst, that order. Lead by what way thou wilt, through what things thou wilt, how thou wilt. Lay on me things ever so hard, ever so strenuous, and, if only they are within my power, I doubt not that I shall perform them if only I may thereby arrive whither I long to be. R. There is only one thing which I can teach thee; I know nothing more. These things of sense are to be utterly eschewed, and the utmost caution is to be used, lest while we bear about this body, our pinions should be impeded by the viscous distilments of earth, seeing we need them whole and perfect, if we would fly from this darkness into that supernal Light: which deigns not even to show itself to those shut up in this cage of the body, unless they have been such that whether it were broken down or worn out it would be their native airs into which they escaped. Therefore, whenever thou shalt have become such that nothing at all of earthly things delights thee, at that very moment, believe me, at that very point of time thou wilt see what thou desirest. A. When shall that be, I entreat thee? For I think not that I am able to attain to this supreme contempt, unless I shall have seen that in comparison with which these things are worthless.

25. R. In this way too the bodily eye might say: I shall not love the darkness, when I shall have seen the sun. For this too seems, as it were, to pertain to the right order though it is far otherwise. For it loves darkness, for the reason that it is not sound; but the sun, unless sound, it is not able to see. And in this the mind is often at fault, that it thinks itself and boasts itself sound; and complains, as if with good sight, because it does not yet see. But that supernal Beauty knows when she should show herself. For she herself discharges the office of physician, and better understands who are sound than the very ones who are rendered sound. But we, as far as we have emerged, seem to ourselves to see; but how far we were plunged in darkness, or how far we had made progress, we are not permitted either to

think or feel, and in comparison with the deeper malady we believe ourselves to be in health. See you not how securely yesterday we had pronounced, that we were no longer detained by any evil thing, and loved nothing except Wisdom; and sought or wished other things only for her sake? To thee how low, how foul, how execrable those female embraces seemed, when we discoursed concerning the desire of a wife! Certainly in the watches of this very night, when we had again been discoursing together of the same things, thou didst feel how differently from what thou hadst presumed those imaginary blandishments and that bitter sweetness tickled thee; far, far less indeed, than is the wont, but also far otherwise than thou hadst thought: so that that most confidential physician of thine set forth to thee each thing, both how far thou hast come on under his care, and what remains to be cured.

26. A. Peace, I pray thee, peace. Why tormentest thou me? Why diggest thou so remorselessly and descendest so deep? Now I weep intolerably, henceforth I promise nothing, I presume nothing; question me not concerning these things. Most true is what thou sayest, that He whom I burn to see Himself knows when I am in health; let Him do what pleaseth Him: when it pleaseth Him let Him show Himself; I now commit myself wholly to His clemency and care. Once for all do I believe that those so affected towards Him He faileth not to lift up. I will pronounce nothing concerning my health, except when I shall have seen that Beauty. R. Do nothing else, indeed. But now refrain from tears, and gird up thy mind. Thou hast wept most sore, and to the great aggravation of that trouble of thy breast. A. Wouldest thou set a measure to my tears, when I see no measure of my misery? or dost thou bid me consider the disease of my body, when I in my inmost self am wasted away with pining consumption? But, I pray thee, if thou availest aught over me, essay to lead me through some shorter ways, so that, at least by some neighbor nearness of that Light, such as, if I have made any advance whatever, I shall be able to endure, I may be made ashamed of withdrawing my eyes into that darkness which I have left; if indeed I can be said to have left a darkness which yet dares to dally with my blindness.

27. R. Let us conclude, if you will, this first volume, that in a second we may attempt some such way as may commodiously offer itself. For this disposition of yours must not fail to be cherished by reasonable exercise. A. I will in no wise suffer this volume to be ended, unless thou open to me at least a gleam from the nearness of that Light whither I am bound. R. Thy Divine Physician yields so far to thy wish. For a certain radiance seizes me, inviting me to conduct thee to it. Therefore be intent to receive it. A. Lead, I entreat thee, and snatch me away whither thou wilt. R. Thou art sure that thou art minded to know the soul, and God? A. That is all my desire. R. Nothing more? A. Nothing at all. R. What, do you not wish to comprehend Truth? A. As if I could know these things except through her. R. Therefore she first is to be known, through whom these things can be known. A. I refuse not. R. First then let us see this, whether, as Truth and True are two words, you hold that by these two words two things are signified, or one thing. A. Two things, I hold. For, as Chastity is one thing, and that which is chaste, another, and many things in this manner; so I believe that Truth is one thing, and that which, being declared, is true, is another. R. Which of these two do you esteem most excellent? A. Truth, as I believe. For it is not from that which is chaste that Chastity arises, but that which is chaste from Chastity. So also, if anything is true, it is assuredly from Truth that it is true.

28. R. What? When a chaste person dies, do you judge that Chastity dies also? A. By no means. R. Then, when anything perishes that is true, Truth perishes not. A. But how should anything true perish? For I see not. R. I marvel that you ask that question: do we not see thousands of things perish before our eyes? Unless perchance you think this tree, either to be a tree, but not a true one, or if so to be unable to perish. For even if you believe not your senses, and are capable of answering, that you are wholly ignorant whether it is a tree; yet this, I believe, you will not deny, that it is a true tree, if it is a tree: for this judgment is not of the senses, but of the intelligence. For if it is a false tree, it is not a tree; but if it is a tree, it cannot but be a true one. A. This I allow. R. Then as to the other proposition; do you not concede that a tree is of such a sort of things, as that it originates and perishes? A. I cannot deny it. R. It is con cluded therefore, that something which is true perishes. A. I do not dispute it. R. What follows? Does it not seem to thee that when true things perish Truth does not perish, as Chastity

dies not when a chaste person dies? A. I now grant this too, and eagerly wait to see what thou art laboring to show. R. Therefore attend. A. I am all attention.

29. R. Does this proposition seem to you to be true: Whatever is, is compelled to be somewhere? A. Nothing so entirely wins my consent. R. And you confess that Truth is? A. I confess it. R. Then we must needs inquire where it is; for it is not in a place, unless perchance you think there is something else in a place than a body, or think that Truth is a body. A. I think neither of these things. R. Where then do you believe her to be? For she is not nowhere, whom we have granted to be. A. If I knew where she was, perchance I should seek nothing more. R. At least you are able to know where she is not? A. If thou pass in review the places, perchance I shall be. R. It is not, assuredly, in mortal things. For whatever is, cannot abide in anything, if that does not abide in which it is: and that Truth abides, even though true things perish, has just been conceded. Truth, therefore, is not in mortal things. But Truth is, and is not nowhere. There are therefore things immortal. And nothing is true in which Truth is not. It results therefore that nothing is true, except those things which are immortal. And every false tree is not a tree, and false wood is not wood, and false silver is not silver, and everything whatever which is false, is not. Now everything which is not true, is false. Nothing therefore is rightly said to be, except things immortal. Do you diligently consider this little argument, lest there should be in it any point which you think impossible to concede. For if it is sound, we have almost accomplished our whole business, which in the other book will perchance appear more plainly.

30. A. I thank thee much, and will diligently and cautiously review these things in my own mind, and moreover with thee, when we are in quiet, if no darkness interfere, and, which I vehemently dread, inspire in me delight in itself. R. Steadfastly believe in God, and commit thyself wholly to Him as much as thou canst. Be not willing to be as it were thine own and in thine own control; but profess thyself to be the bondman of that most clement and most profitable Lord. For so will He not desist from lifting thee to Himself, and will suffer nothing to occur to thee, except what shall profit thee, even though thou know it not. A. I hear, I believe, and as much as I can I yield

compliance; and most intently do I offer a prayer for this very thing, that I may have the utmost power, unless perchance thou desirest something more of me. R. It is well meanwhile, thou wilt do afterwards what He Himself, being now seen, shall require of thee.

Book II

1. A. Long enough has our work been intermitted, and impatient is Love, nor have tears a measure, unless to Love is given what is loved: wherefore, let us enter upon the Second Book. R. Let us enter upon it. A. Let us believe that God will be present. R. Let us believe indeed, if even this is in our power. A. Our power He Himself is. R. Therefore pray most briefly and perfectly, as much as thou canst. A. God, always the same, let me know myself, let me know Thee. I have prayed. R. Thou who wilt know thyself, knowest thou that thou art? A. I know. R. Whence knowest thou? A. I know not. R. Feelest thou thyself to be simple, or manifold? A. I know not. R. Knowest thou thyself to be moved? A. I know not. R. Knowest thou thyself to think? A. I know. R. Therefore it is true that thou thinkest. A. True. R. Knowest thou thyself to be immortal? A. I know not. R. Of all these things which thou hast said that thou knowest not: which dost thou most desire to know? A. Whether I am immortal. R. Therefore thou lovest to live? A. I confess it. R. How will the matter stand when thou shalt have learned thyself to be immortal? Will it be enough? A. That will indeed be a great thing, but that to me will be but slight. R. Yet in this which is but slight how much wilt thou rejoice? A. Very greatly. R. For nothing then wilt thou weep? A. For nothing at all. R. What if this very life should be found such, that in it it is permitted thee to know nothing more than thou knowest? Wilt thou refrain from tears? A. Nay verily, I will weep so much that life should cease to be. R. Thou dost not then love to live for the mere sake of living, but for the sake of knowing. A. I grant the inference. R. What if this very knowledge of things should itself make thee wretched? A. I do not believe that that is in any way possible. But if it is so, no one can be blessed; for I am not now wretched from any other source than from ignorance of things. And therefore if the knowledge of things is wretchedness, wretchedness is everlasting. R. Now I see all which you desire. For since you believe no one to be wretched by knowledge, from which it is probable that intelligence renders blessed; but no one is blessed unless living, and no one lives who is not: thou wishest to be, to live and to have intelligence; but to be that thou

mayest live, to live that thou mayest have intelligence. Therefore thou knowest that thou art, thou knowest that thou livest, thou knowest that thou dost exercise intelligence. But whether these things are to be always, or none of these things is to be, or something abides always, and something falls away, or whether these things can be diminished and increased, all things abiding, thou desirest to know. A. So it is. R. If therefore we shall have proved that we are always to live, it will follow also that we are always to be. A. It will follow. R. It will then remain to inquire concerning intellection.

2. A. I see a very plain and compendious order. R. Let this then be the order, that you answer my questions cautiously and firmly. A. I attend. R. If this world shall always abide, it is true that this world is always to abide? A. Who doubts that? R. What if it shall not abide? is it not then true that the world is not to abide? A. I dispute it not. R. How, when it shall have perished, if it is to perish, will it not then be true, that the world has perished? For as long as it is not true that the world has come to an end, it has not come to an end: it is therefore self-contradictory, that the world is ended and that it is not true that the world is ended. A. This too I grant. R. Furthermore, does it seem to you that anything can be true, and not be Truth? A. In no wise. R. There will therefore be Truth, even though the frame of things should pass away. A. I cannot deny it. R. What if Truth herself should perish? will it not be true that Truth has perished? A. And even that who can deny? R. But that which is true cannot be, if Truth is not. A. I have just conceded this. R. In no wise therefore can Truth fail. A. Proceed as thou hast begun, for than this deduction nothing is truer.

3. R. Now I will have you answer me, does the soul seem to you to feel and perceive, or the body? A. The soul. R. And does the intellect appear to you to appertain to the soul? A. Assuredly. R. To the soul alone, or to something else? A. I see nothing else besides the soul, except God, in which I believe intellect to exist. R. Let us now consider that. If any one should tell you that wall was not a wall, but a tree, what would you think? A. Either that his senses or mine were astray, or that he called a wall by the name of a tree. R. What if he received in sense the image of a tree, and thou of a wall? may not both be true? A. By no means; because one and the same thing cannot

be both a tree and a wall. For however individual things might appear different to us as individuals, it could not be but that one of us suffered a false imagination. R. What if it is neither tree nor wall, and you are both in error? A. That, indeed, is possible. R. This one thing therefore you had past by above. A. I confess it. R. What if you should acknowledge that anything seemed to you other than it is, are you then in error? A. No. R. Therefore that may be false which seems, and he not be in error to whom it seems. A. It may be so. R. It is to be allowed then that he is not in error who sees falsities, but he who assents to falsities. A. It is assuredly to be allowed. R. And this falsity, wherefore is it false? A. Because it is otherwise than it seems. R. If therefore there are none to whom it may seem, nothing is false. A. The inference is sound. R. Therefore the falsity is not in the things, but in the sense; but he is not beguiled who assents not to false things. It results that we are one thing, the sense another; since, when it is misled, we are able not to be misled. A. I have nothing to oppose to this. R. But when the soul is misled, do you venture to say that you are not false? A. How should I venture? R. But there is no sense without soul, no falsity without sense. Either therefore the soul operates, or cooperates with the falsity. A. Our preceding reasonings imply assent to this.

4. R. Give answer now to this, whether it appears to you possible that at some time hereafter falsity should not be. A. How can that seem possible to me, when the difficulty of discovering truth is so great that it is absurder to say that falsity than that Truth cannot be. R. Do you then think that he who does not live, can perceive and feel? A. It cannot be. R. It results then, that the soul lives ever. A. Thou urgest me too fast into joys: more slowly, I pray. R. But, if former inferences are just, I see no ground of doubt concerning this thing. A. Too fast, I say. Therefore I am easier to persuade that I have made some rash concession, than to become already secure concerning the immortality of the soul. Nevertheless evolve this conclusion, and show how it has resulted. R. You have said that falsity cannot be without sense, and that falsity cannot but be: therefore there is always sense. But no sense without soul: therefore the soul is everlasting. Nor has it power to exercise sense, unless it lives. Therefore the soul always lives.

5. A. O leaden dagger! For thou mightest conclude that man is immortal if I had granted thee that this universe can never be without man, and that this universe is eternal. R. You keep a keen look-out. But yet it is no small thing which we have established, namely, that the frame of things cannot be without the soul, unless perchance in the frame of things at some time hereafter there shall be no falsity. A. This consequence indeed I allow to be involved. But now I am of opinion that we ought to consider farther whether former inferences do not bend under pressure. For I see no small step to have been made towards the immortality of the soul. R. Have you sufficiently considered whether you may not have conceded something rashly? A. Sufficiently indeed, but I see no point at which I can accuse myself of rashness. R. It is therefore concluded that the frame of things cannot be without a living soul. A. So far as this, that in turn some souls may be born, and others die. R. What if from the frame of things falsity be taken away? will it not come to pass that all things are true? A. I admit the inference. R. Tell me whence this wall seems to thee to be true. A. Because I am not misled by its aspect. R. That is, because it is as it seems. A. Yes. R. If therefore anything is thereby false because it seems otherwise than it is, and thereby true because it is as it seems; take away him to whom it seems, and there is neither anything false, nor true. But if there is no falsity in the frame of things, all things are true. Nor can anything seem except to a living soul. There remains therefore soul in the frame of things, if falsity cannot be taken away; there remains, if it can. A. I see our former conclusions somewhat strengthened, indeed; but we have made no progress by this amplification. For none the less does that fact remain which chiefly shakes me that souls are born and pass away, and that it comes about that they are not lacking to the world, not through their immortality, but by their succession.

6. R. Do any corporeal, that is, sensible things, appear to you to be capable of comprehension in the intellect? A. They do not. R. What then? does God appear to use senses for the cognition of things? A. I dare affirm nothing unadvisedly concerning this matter; but as far as there is room for conjecture, God in no wise makes use of senses. R. We conclude therefore that the only possible subject of sense is the soul. A. Conclude provisionally as far as probability permits. R. Well then; do you allow that this wall, if it

is not a true wall, is not a wall? A. I could grant nothing more willingly. R. And that nothing, if it be not a true body, is a body? A. This likewise. R. Therefore if nothing is true, unless it be so as it seems; and if nothing corporeal can appear, except to the senses; and if the only subject of sense is the soul; and if no body can be, unless it be a true body: it follows that there cannot be a body, unless there has first been a soul. A. Thou dost urge me too strongly, and means of resistance fail me.

7. R. Give now still greater heed. A. Behold me ready. R. Certainly this is a stone; and it is true on this condition, if it is not otherwise than it seems; and it is not a stone, if it is not true; and it cannot seem except to the senses. A. Yes. R. There are not therefore stones in the most secluded bosom of the earth, nor anywhere at all where there are not those who have the sense of them; nor would this be a stone, unless we saw it; nor will it be a stone when we shall have departed, and no one else shall be present to see it. Nor, if you lock your coffers well, however much you may have shut up in them, will they have anything. Nor indeed is wood itself wood interiorly. For that escapes all perceptions of sense which is in the depth of an absolutely opaque body, and so is in no wise compelled to be. For if it were, it would be true; nor is anything true, unless because it is so as it appears: but that does not appear; it is not therefore true: unless you have something to object to this. A. I see that this results from my previous concessions; but it is so absurd, that I would more readily deny any one of these, than concede that this is true. R. As you please. Consider then which you prefer to say: that corporeal things can appear otherwise than to the senses, or that there can be another subject of sense than the soul, or that there is a stone or something else but that it is not true, or that Truth itself is to be otherwise defined. A. Let us, I pray thee, consider this last position.

8. R. Define therefore the True. A. That is true which is so as it appears to the knower, if he will and can know. R. That therefore will not be true which no one can know? Then, if that is false which seems otherwise than it is; how if to one this stone should seem a stone, to another wood? will the same thing be both false and true? A. That former position disturbs me more, how, if anything cannot be known, it results from that that it is not true. For as to this, that one thing is both true and false, I do not much care.

For I see one thing, compared with diverse things, to be both greater and smaller. From which it results, that nothing is more or less of itself. For these are terms of comparison. R. But if you say that nothing is true of itself, do you not fear the inference, that nothing is of itself? For whereby this is wood, thereby is it also true wood. Nor can it be, that of itself, that is, without a knower, it should be wood, and should not be true wood. A. Therefore thus I say and so I define, nor do I fear lest my definition be disapproved on the ground of excessive brevity: for to me that seems to be true which is. R. Nothing then will be false, because whatever is, is true. A. Thou hast driven me into close straits, and I am wholly unprovided of an answer. So it comes to pass that whereas I am unwilling to be taught except by these questionings, I fear now to be questioned.

9. R. God, to whom we have commended ourselves, without doubt will render help, and set us free from these straits, if only we believe, and entreat Him most devoutly. A. Nothing, assuredly, would I do more gladly in this place; for never have I been involved in so great a darkness. God, Our Father, who exhortest us to pray, who also bringest this about, that supplication is made to Thee; since when we make supplication to Thee, we live better, and are better: hear me groping in these glooms, and stretch forth Thy right hand to me. Shed over me Thy light, revoke me from my wanderings; bring Thyself into me that I may likewise return into Thee. Amen. R. Be with me now, as far as thou mayest, in most diligent attention. A. Utter, I pray, whatever has been suggested to thee, that we perish not. R. Give heed. A. Behold, I have neither eyes nor ears but for thee.

10. R. First let us again and yet again ventilate this question, What is falsity? A. I wonder if there will turn out to be anything, except what is not so as it seems. R. Give heed rather, and let us first question the senses themselves. For certainly what the eyes see, is not called false, unless it have some similitude of the true. For instance, a man whom we see in sleep, is not indeed a true man, but false, by this very fact that he has the similitude of a true one. For who, seeing a dog, would have a right to say that he had dreamed of a man? Therefore too that is thereby a false dog, that it is like a true one. A. It is as thou sayest. R. And moreover, if any one waking should see a horse and think he saw a man, is he not hereby misled,

that there appears to him some similitude of a man? For if nothing should appear to him except the form of a horse, he cannot think that he sees a man. A. I fully concede this. R. We call that also a false tree which we see in a picture, and a false face which is reflected from a mirror, and a false motion of buildings to men that are sailing from them, and a false break in the oar when dipped, for no other reason than the verisimilitude in all these things. A. True. R. So we make mistakes between twins, so between eggs, so between seals stamped by one ring, and other such things. A. I follow and agree to all. R. Therefore that similitude of things which pertains to the eyes, is the mother of falsity. A. I cannot deny it.

11. R. But all this forest of facts, unless I am mistaken, may be divided into two kinds. For it lies partly in equal, partly in inferior things. They are equal, when we say that this is as like to that as that to this, as is said of twins, or impressions of a ring. Inferior, when we say that the worse is like the better. For who, looking in a mirror, would dream of saying that he is like that image, and not rather that like him? And this class consists partly in what the soul undergoes, and partly in those things which are seen. And that again which the soul undergoes, it either undergoes in the sense, as the unreal motion of a building; or in itself from that which it has received from the senses, such as are the dreams of dreamers, and perhaps also of madmen. Furthermore, those things which appear in the things themselves which we see, are some of them from nature, and some expressed and framed by living creatures. Nature either by procreation or reflection effects inferior similitudes. By procreation, when to parents children like them are born; by reflection, as from mirrors of various kinds. For although it is men that make the most of the mirrors, yet it is not they that frame the images given back. On the other hand, the works of living creatures are seen in pictures, and creations of the like kind: in which may also be included (conceding their occurrence) those things which demons produce. But the shadows of bodies, because with but a slight stretch of language they may be described as like their bodies and a sort of false bodies, nor can be disputed to be submitted to the judgment of the eyes, may reasonably be placed in that class, which are brought about by nature through reflection. For every body exposed to the light reflects, and casts a shadow in the

opposite direction. Or do you see any objection to be made? A. None. I am only awaiting anxiously the issue of these illustrations.

12. R. We must, however, wait patiently, until the remaining senses also make report to us that falsity dwells in the similitude of the true. For in the sense of hearing likewise there are almost as many sorts of similitudes: as when, hearing the voice of a speaker, whom we do not see, we think it some one else, whom in voice he resembles; and in inferior similitudes Echo is a witness, or that well-known roaring of the ears themselves, or in timepieces a certain imitation of thrush or crow, or such things as dreamers or lunatics imagine themselves to hear. And it is incredible how much false tones, as they are called by musicians, bear witness to the truth, which will appear hereinafter: yet they too (which will suffice just now) are not remote from a resemblance to those which men call true. Do you follow this? A. And most delightedly. For here I have no trouble to understand. R. Then, to press on, do you think it is easy, by the smell, to distinguish lily from lily, or by the taste honey from honey, gathered alike from thyme, though brought from different hives, or by the touch to note the difference between the softness of the plumage of the goose and of the swan? A. It does not seem easy. R. And how is it when we dream that we either smell or taste, or touch such things? Are we not then deceived by a similitude of effects and images, inferior in proportion to its emptiness? A. Thou speakest truly. R. Therefore it appears that we, in all our senses, whether by equality or inferiority of likeness, are either misled by cozening similitude, or even if we are not misled, as suspending our consent, or discovering the difference, yet that we name those things false which we apprehend as like the true. A. I cannot doubt it.

13. R. Now give heed, while we run over the same things once more, that what we are endeavoring to show may come more plainly to view. A. Lo, here I am, speak what thou wilt. For I have once for all resolved to endure this circuitous course, nor will I be wearied out in it, hoping so ardently to arrive at length whither I perceive that we are tending. R. You do well. But take note whether it seems to you, when we see a resemblance in eggs, that we can justly say that any one of them is false. A. Far from it. For if all are eggs, they are true eggs. R. And when we see an image reflected from a

mirror, by what signs do we apprehend it to be false? A. By the fact that it cannot be grasped, gives forth no sound, does not move independently, does not live, and by innumerable other properties, which it were tedious to detail. R. I see you are averse to delay, and regard must be borne to your haste. Then, not to recall every particular, if those men also whom we see in dreams, were able to live, speak, be grasped by waking men, and there were no difference between them and those whom when awake and sane we address and see, should we then have any reason to call them false? A. What possible right could we have to do so? R. Therefore if they were true, in exact proportion as they were likest the truth, and as no difference existed between them and the true and false so far as they were, by those or other differences, convicted of being dissimilar; must it not be confessed that similitude is the mother of truth, and dissimilitude of falsehood? A. I have no answer to make, and I am ashamed of my former so hasty assent.

14. R. It is ridiculous if you are ashamed, as if it were not for this very reason that we have chosen this mode of discourse: which, since we are talking with ourselves alone, I wish to be called and inscribed Soliloquies; a new name, it is true, and perhaps a grating one, but not ill suited for setting forth the fact. For since Truth can not be better sought than by asking and answering, and scarcely any one can be found who does not take shame to be worsted in debate, and so it almost always happens that when a matter is well brought into shape for discussion, it is exploded by some unreasonable clamor and petulance, and angry feeling, commonly dissembled, indeed, but sometimes plainly expressed; it has been, as I think, most advantageous, and most answerable to peace, that the resolution was made by thee to seek truth in the way of question by me and answer by thee: wherefore there is no reason why you should fear, if at any point you have unadvisedly tied yourself up, to return and undo the knots; for otherwise there is no escape from hence.

15. A. Thou speakest rightly; but what I have granted amiss I altogether fail to see: unless perchance that that is rightly called false which has some similitude of the true, since assuredly nothing else occurs to me worthy of the name of false; and yet again I am compelled to confess that those things which are called false are so called by the fact that they differ from the true.

From which it resuits that that very dissimilitude is the cause of the falsity. Therefore I am disquieted; for I cannot easily call to mind anything that is engendered by contrary causes. R. What if this is the one and only kind in the universe of things which is so? Or are you ignorant, that in running over the innumerable species of animals, the crocodile alone is found to move its upper jaw in eating; especially as scarcely anything can be discovered so like to another thing, that it is not also in some point unlike it? A. I see that indeed; but when I consider that that which we call false has both something like and something unlike the true, I am not able to make out on which side it chiefly merits the name of false. For if I say: on the side on which it is unlike; there will be nothing which cannot be called false: for there is nothing which is not dissimilar to some thing, which we concede to be true. And again, if I shall say, that it is to be called false on that side on which it is similar; not only will those eggs cry out against us which are true on the very ground of their excessive similarity, but even so I shall not escape from his grasp who may compel me to confess that all things are false because I cannot deny that all things are on some side or other similar to each other. But suppose me not afraid to give this answer, that likeness and unlikeness alike give a right to call anything false; what way of escape wilt thou give me? For none the less will the fatal necessity hang over me of proclaiming all things false; since, as has been said above, all things are found to be both similar, on some side, and dissimilar, on some side, to each other. My only remaining resource would be to declare nothing else false, except what was other than it seemed, unless I shrank from again encountering all those monsters, which I flattered myself that I had long since sailed away from. For a whirlpool again seizes me at unawares, and brings me round to own that to be true which is as it seems. From which it results that without a knower nothing can be true: where I have to fear a shipwreck on deeply hidden rocks, which are true, although unknown. Or, if I shall say that that is true which is, it follows, let who will oppose, that there is nothing false anywhere. And so I see the same breakers before me again, and see that all my patience of thy delays has helped me forward nothing at all.

16. R. Attend rather; for never can I be persuaded, that we have implored the Divine aid in vain. For I see that, having tried all things as far as we

could, we found nothing to remain, which could rightly be called false, except what either feigns itself to be what it is not, or, to include all, tends to be and is not. But that former kind of falsity is either fallacious or mendacious. For that is rightly called fallacious which has a certain appetite of deceiving; which cannot be understood as without a soul: but this results in part from reason, in part from nature; from reason, in rational creatures, as in men; from nature, in beasts, as in the fox. But what I call mendacious, proceeds from those who utter falsehood. Who in this point differ from the fallacious, that all the fallacious seek to mislead; but not every one who utters falsehood, wishes to mislead; for both mimes and comedies and many poems are full of falsehoods, rather with the purpose of delighting than of misleading, and almost all those who jest utter falsehood. But he is rightly called fallacious, whose purpose is, that somebody should be deceived. But those who do not aim to deceive, but nevertheless feign somewhat, are mendacious only, or if not even this, no one at least doubts that they are to be called pleasant falsifiers: unless you have something to object.

17. A. Proceed, I pray; for now perchance thou hast begun to teach concerning falsities not falsely: but now I am considering of what sort that class of falsities may be, of which thou hast said, It tends to be, and is not. R. Why should you not consider? They are the same things, which already we have largely passed review. Does not thy image in the mirror appear to will to be thou thyself, but to be therefore false, because it is not? A. This does, in very deed, seem so. R. And as to pictures, and all such expressed resemblances, every such thing wrought by the artist? Do they not press to be that, after whose similitude they have been made? A. I must certainly own this to be true. R. And you will allow, I believe, that the deceits under which dreamers, or madmen suffer, are to be included in this kind. A. None more: for none tend more to be such things as the waking and the sane discern; and yet they are hereby false, because that which they tend to be they cannot be. R. Why need I now say more concerning the gliding towers, or the dipped oar, or the shadows of bodies? It is plain, as I think, that they are to be measured by this rule. A. Most evidently they are. R. I say nothing concerning the remaining senses; for no one by consideration will fail to find this, that in the various things which are subject to our sense, that is called false which tends to be anything and is not.

18. A. Thou speakest rightly; but I wonder why thou wouldst separate from this class those poems and jests, and other imitative trifles. R. Because forsooth it is one thing to will to be false, and another not to be able to be true. Therefore these works of men themselves, such as comedies or tragedies, or mimes, and other such things, we may include with the works of painters and sculptors. For a painted man cannot be so true, however much he may tend into the form of man, as those things which are written in the books of the comic poets. For neither do they will to be false, nor are they false by any appetite of their own; but by a certain necessity, so far as they have been able to follow the mind of the author. But on the stage Roscius in will was a false Hecuba, in nature a true man; but by that will also a true tragedian, in that he was fulfilling the thing proposed: but a false Priam, in that he made himself like Priam, but was not he. From which now arises a certain marvellous thing, which nevertheless no one doubts to be so. A. What, pray, is it? R. What think you, unless that all these things are in certain aspects true, by this very thing that they are in certain aspects false, and that for their quality of truth this alone avails them, that they are false in another regard? Whence to that which they either will or ought to be, they in no wise attain, if they avoid being false. For how could he whom I have mentioned have been a true tragedian, had he been unwilling to be a false Hector, a false Andromache, a false Hercules, and innumerable other things? or how would a picture, for instance, be a true picture, unless it were a false horse? or how could there be in a mirror a true image of a man, if it were not a false man? Wherefore, if it avails some things that they be somewhat false in order that they may be somewhat true; why do we so greatly dread falsity, and seek truth as the greatest good? A. I know not, and I greatly marvel, unless because in these examples I see nothing worthy of imitation. For not as actors, or specular reflections, or Myron’s brazen cows, ought we, in order that we may be true in some character of our own, to be outlined and accommodated to the personation of another; but to seek that truth, which is not, as if laid out on a bifronted and self-repugnant plan, false on one side that it may be true on the other. R. High and Divine are the things which thou requirest. Yet if we shall have found them, shall we not confess that of these things is Truth itself made up, and as it were brought into being from their fusion—Truth, from which every thing derives its name which in any way is called true? A. I yield no unwilling assent.

19. R. What then think you? Is the science of debate true, or false? A. True, beyond controversy. But Grammar too is true. R. In the same sense as the former? A. I do not see what is truer than the true. R. That assuredly which has nothing of false: in view of which a little while ago thou didst take umbrage at those things which, be it in this way or that, unless they were false, could not be true. Or do you not know, that all those fabulous and openly false things appertain to Grammar? A. I am not ignorant of that indeed; but, as I judge, it is not through Grammar that they are false, but through it, that, whatever they may be, they are interpreted. Since a drama is a falsehood composed for utility or delight. But Grammar is a science which is the guardian and moderatrix of articulate speech: whose profession involves the necessity of collecting even all the figments of the human tongue, which have been committed to memory and letters, not making them false, but teaching and enforcing concerning these certain principles of true interpretation. R. Very just: I care not now, whether or not these things have been well defined and distinguished by thee; but this I ask, whether it is Grammar itself, or that science of debate which shows this to be so. A. I do not deny that the force and skill of definition, whereby I have now endeavored to separate these things, is to be attributed to the art of disputation.

20. R. How as to Grammar itself? if it is true, is it not so far true as it is a discipline? For the name of Discipline signifies something to be learnt: but no one who has learned and who retains what he learns, can be said not to know; and no one knows falsities. Therefore every discipline and science is true. A. I see not what rashness there can be in assenting to this brief course of reasoning. But I am disturbed lest it should bring any one to suppose those dramas to be true; for these also we learn and retain. R. Was then our master unwilling that we should believe what he taught, and know it? A. Nay, he was thoroughly in earnest that we should know it. R. And did he, pray, ever set out to have us believe that Daedalus flew? A. That, indeed, never. But assuredly unless we remembered the poem, he took such order that we were scarcely able to hold anything in our hands. R. Do you then deny it to be true that there is such a poem, and that such a tradition is spread abroad concerning Daedalus? A. I do not deny this to be true. R. You do not then deny that you learned the truth, when you learned these things.

For if it is true that Daedalus flew, and boys should receive and recite this as a feigning fable, they would be laying up falsities in mind by the very fact that the things were true which they recited. For from this results what we were admiring above, that there could not be a true fiction turning on the flight of Daedalus, unless it were false that Daedalus flew. A. I now grasp that; but what good is to come of it, I do not yet see. R. What, unless that that course of reasoning is not false, whereby we gather that a science, unless it is true, cannot be a science? A. And what does this signify? R. Because I wish to have you tell me on what the science of Grammar rests: for the truth of the science rests on that very principle which makes it a science. A. I know not what to answer thee. R. Does it not seem to you, that if nothing in it had been defined, and nothing distributed and distinguished into classes and parts, it could not in any wise be a true science? A. Now I grasp thy meaning: nor does the remembrance of any science whatever occur to me, in which definitions and divisions and processes of reasoning do not, inasmuch as it is declared what each thing is, as without confusion of parts its proper attributes are ascribed to each class, nothing peculiar to it being neglected, nothing alien to it admitted, perform that whole range of functions from which it has the name of Science. R. That whole range of functions therefore from which it has the name of true. A. I see this to be implied.

21. R. Tell me now what science contains the principles of definitions, divisions and partitions. A. It has been said above that these are contained in the rules of disputation. R. Grammar therefore, both as a science, and as a true science, has been created by the same art which has above been defended from the charge of falsity. Which conclusion I am not required to confine to Grammar alone, but am permitted to extend to all sciences whatever. For you have said, and truly said, that no science occurs to you, in which the law of defining and distributing does not lie at the very foundation of its character as a science. But if they are true on that ground on which they are sciences, will any one deny that very thing to be truth through which all the sciences are true? A. Assuredly I find it hard to withhold assent: but this gives me pause, that we reckon among the sciences even that theory of disputation. Wherefore I judge that rather to be truth, whereby this theory itself is true. R. Your watchful accuracy is indeed most

highly to be commended: but you do not deny, I suppose, that it is true on the same ground on which it is a theory and science. A. Nay, that is my very ground of perplexity. For I have noted that it also is a science, and is on this account called true. R. What then? Do you think this could be a science on any other ground than that all things in it were defined and distributed? A. I have nothing else to say. R. But if this function appertains to it, it is in and of itself a true science. Why then should any one find it wonderful, if that truth whereby all things are true, should be through itself and in itself true? A. Nothing stands now in the way of my giving an unreserved assent to that opinion.

22. R. Attend therefore to the few things that remain. A. Bring forth whatever thou hast, if only it be such as I can understand, and I will willingly agree. R. We do not forget, that to say that anything is in anything, is capable of a double sense. It may mean that it is so in such a sense as that it can also be disjoined and be elsewhere, as this wood in this place, or the sun in the East. Or it may mean anything is so in a subject, that it cannot be separated from it, as in this wood the shape and visible appearance, as in the sun the light, as in fire heat, as in the mind discipline, and such like. Or seems it otherwise to thee? A. These distinctions are indeed most thoroughly familiar to us, and from early youth most studiously made an element of thought; wherefore, if asked about these, I must needs grant the position at once. R. But do you not concede that if the subject do not abide, that which is in the subject cannot inseparably abide? A. This also I see necessary: for, the subject remaining, that which is in the subject may possibly not remain, as any one with a little thought can perceive. Since the color of this body of mine may, by reason of health or age, suffer change, though the body has not yet perished. And this is not equally true of all things, but of those whose coexistence with the subject is not necessary to the existence of the subject. For it is not necessary that this wall, in order to be a wall, should be of this color, which we see in it; for even if, by some chance, it should become black or white, or should undergo some other change of color, it would nevertheless remain a wall and be so called. But if fire were without heat, it will not even be fire; nor can we talk of snow except as being white.

23. But as to thy question, who would grant, or to whom could it appear possible, that that which is in the subject should remain, while the subject perished? For it is monstrous and most utterly foreign to the truth that what would not be unless it were in the subject, could be even when the subject itself was no more. R. Then that which we were seeking is found. A. What dost thou mean? R. What you hear. A. And is it then now clearly made out that the mind is immortal? R. If these things which you have granted are true, with most indisputable clearness: unless perchance you would say that the mind, even though it die, is still the mind. A. I, at least, will never say that; but by this very fact that it perishes it then comes about that it is not the mind, is what I do say. Nor am I shaken in this opinion because it has been said by great philosophers that that thing which, wherever it comes, affords life, cannot admit death into itself. For although the light wheresoever it has been able to gain entrance, makes that place luminous, and, by virtue of that memorable force of contrarieties, cannot admit darkness into itself; yet it is extinguished, and that place is by its extinction made dark. So that which resisted the darkness, neither in any way admitted the darkness into it, and yet made place for it by perishing, as it could have made place for it by departing. Therefore I fear lest death should befall the body in such wise as darkness a place, the mind, like light, sometimes departing, but sometimes being extinguished on the spot; so that now not concerning every death of the body is there security, but a particular kind of death is to be chosen, by which the soul may be conducted out of the body unharmed, and guided to a place, if there is any such place, where it cannot be extinguished. Or, if not even this may be, and the mind, as it were a light, is kindled in the body itself, nor has capacity to endure elsewhere, and every death is a sort of extinction of the soul in the body, or of the life; some sort is to be chosen by which, so far as man is allowed, life, while it is lived, may be lived in security and tranquillity, although I know not how that can come to pass if the soul dies. O greatly blessed they, who, whether from themselves, or from whom you will, have gained the persuasion, that death is not to be feared, even if the soul should perish! But, wretched me, no reasonings, no books, have hitherto been able to persuade of this.

24. R. Groan not, the human mind is immortal. A. How dost thou prove it? R. From those things which you have granted above, with great caution. A.

I do not indeed recall to mind any want of vigilance in my admissions when questioned by thee: but now gather all into one sum, I pray thee; let us see at what point we have arrived after so many circuits, nor would I have thee in doing so question me. For if thou art about to enumerate concisely those things which I have granted, why is my response again desired? Or is it that thou wouldst wantonly torture me by delays of joy, if we have in fact achieved any solid result? R. I will do that which I see that thou dost wish, but attend most diligently. A. Speak now, here I am; why slayest thou me? R. If everything which is in the subject always abides, it follows of necessity that the subject itself always abides. And every discipline is in the subject mind. It is necessary therefore that the mind should continue forever, if the science continues forever. Now Science is Truth, and always, as in the beginning of this book Reason hath convinced thee, does Truth abide. Therefore the mind lasts forever, nor dead, could it be called the mind. He therefore alone can escape absurdity in denying the mind to be immortal, who can prove that any of the foregoing concessions have been made without reason.

25. A. And now I am ready to plunge into the expected joys, but yet I am held hesitating by two thoughts. For, first, it makes me uneasy that we have used so long a circuit, following out I know not what chain of reasonings, when the whole matter of discourse admitted of so brief a demonstration, as has now been shown. Wherefore, it renders me anxious that the discourse has so long held so wary a step, as if with some design of setting an ambush. Next, I do not see how a science is always in the mind, when, on the one hand, so few are familiar with it, and, on the other, whoever does know it, was during so long a time of early childhood unacquainted with it. For we can neither say that the minds of the untaught are not minds, nor that that science is in their mind of which they are ignorant. And if this is utterly absurd, it results that either the science is not always in the mind, or that that science is not Truth.

26. R. Thou mayest note that it is not for naught that our reasoning has taken so wide a round. For we were inquiring what is Truth, which not even now, in this very forest of thoughts and things, beguiling our steps into an infinity of paths, have we, as I see, been able to track out to the end. But

what are we to do? Shall we desist from our undertaking, and wait in hope that some book or other may fall into our hands, which may satisfy this question? For many, I think, have written before our age, whom we have not read: and now, to give no guess at what we do not know, we see plainly that there is much writing upon this theme, both in verse and prose; and that by men whose writings cannot be unknown to us, and whose genius we know to be such, that we cannot despair of finding in their works what we require: especially when here before our eyes is he in whom we have recognized that eloquence for which we mourned as dead, to have revived in vigorous life. Will he suffer us, after having in his writings taught us the true manner of living, to remain ignorant of the true nature of living? A. I indeed do not think so, and hope much from thence but one matter of grief I have, that we have not opportunity of opening to him our zealous affection either towards him or towards Wisdom. For assuredly he would pity our thirst and would overflow much more quickly than now. For he is secure, because he has now won a full conviction of the immortality of the soul, and perhaps knows not that there are any, who have only too well experienced the misery of this ignorance, and whom it is cruel not to aid, especially when they entreat it. But that other knows indeed from old familiarity our ardor of longing; but he is so far removed, and we are so circumstanced, that we have scarcely the opportunity of so much as sending a letter to him. Whom I believe to have lately in Transalpine retirement composed a spell, under whose ban the fear of death is compelled to flee, and the cold stupor of the soul, indurate with lasting ice, is expelled. But in the meantime, while these helps are leisurely making their way hither, a benefit which it is not in our power to command, is it not most unworthy that our leisure should be wasting, and our very mind hang wholly dependent on the uncertain decision of another’s will?

27. What shall we say to this, that we have entreated God and do entreat, that He will show us a way, not to riches, not to bodily pleasures, not to popular honors and seats of state, but to the knowledge of our own soul, and that He will likewise disclose Himself to them that seek Him? Will He, indeed, forsake us, or shall He be forsaken by us? R. Most utterly foreign to Him is it indeed, that He should desert them who desire such things: whence also it ought to be strange to our thoughts that we should desert so

great a Guide. Wherefore, if you will, let us briefly go over the considerations from which either proposition results, either that Truth always abides, or that Truth is the theory of argumentation. For you have said that these points wavered in your mind, so as to make us less secure of the final conclusion of the whole matter. Or shall we rather inquire this, how a science can be in an untrained mind, which yet we cannot deny to be a mind? For this seemed to give you uneasiness, so as to involve you again in doubt as to your previous concessions. A. Nay, let us first discuss the two former propositions, and then we will consider the nature of this latter fact. For so, as I judge, no controversy will remain. R. So be it, but attend with the utmost heed and caution. For I know what happens to you as you listen, namely, that while you are too intent upon the conclusion, and expecting that now, or now, it will be drawn, you grant the points implied in my questions without a sufficiently diligent scrutiny. A. Perchance thou speakest the truth; but I shall strive against this kind of disease as much as I can: only begin thou now to inquire of me, that we linger not over things superfluous.

28. R. From this truth, as I remember, that Truth cannot perish, we have concluded, that not only if the whole world should perish, but even if Truth itself should, it will still be true that both the world and Truth have perished. Now there is nothing true without truth: in no wise therefore does Truth perish. A. I acknowledge all this, and shall be greatly surprised if it turns out false. R. Let us then consider that other point. A. Suffer me, I pray thee, to reflect a little, lest I should soon come back in confusion. R. Will it therefore not be true that Truth has perished? If it will not be true, then Truth does not perish. If it were true, where, after the fall of Truth, will be the true, when now there is no truth? A. I have no further occasion for thought and consideration; proceed to something else. Assuredly we will take order, so far as we may, that learned and wise men may read these musings, and may correct our unadvisedness, if they shall find any: for as to myself, I do not believe that either now or hereafter I shall be able to discover what can be said against this.

29. R. Is Truth then so called for any other reason than as being that by which everything is true which is true? A. For no other reason. R. Is it

rightly called true for any ground than that it is not false? A. To doubt this were madness. R. Is that not false which is accommodated to the similitude of anything, yet is not that the likeness of which it appears? A. Nothing indeed do I see which I would more willingly call false. But yet that is commonly called false, which is far removed from the similitude of the true. R. Who denies it? But yet because it implies some imitation of the true. A. How? For when it is said, that Medea flew away with winged snakes harnessed to her car, that thing on no side imitates truth; inasmuch as the thing is naught, nor can that thing imitate aught, when itself is absolutely nothing. R. You say right; but you do not note that that thing which is absolutely nothing, cannot even be called false. For if it is false, it is: if it is not, it is not false. A. Shall we not then say that monstrous story of Medea is false? R. Assuredly not; for if it is false, how is it a monstrous story? A. Admirable! Then when I say

"The mighty winged snakes I fasten to my car,"

do I not say false? R. You do, assuredly: for that is which you say to be false. A. What, I pray? R. That sentence, forsooth, which is contained in the verse itself. A. And pray what imitation of truth has that? R. Because it would bear the same tenor, even if Medea had truly done that thing. Therefore in its very terms a false sentence imitates true sentences. Which, if it is not believed, in this alone does it imitate true ones, that it is expressed as they, and it is only false, it is not also misleading. But if it obtains faith, it imitates also those sentences which, being true, are believed true. A. Now I perceive that there is a great difference between those things which we say and those things concerning which we say aught; wherefore I now assent: for this proposition alone held me back, that whatever we call false is not rightly so called, unless it have an imitation of something true. For who, calling a stone false silver, would not be justly derided? Yet if any one should declare a stone to be silver, we say that he speaks falsely, that is, that he utters a false sentence. But it is not, I think, unreasonable that we should call tin or lead false silver, because the thing itself, as it were, imitates that: nor is our sentence declaring this therefore false, but that very thing concerning which it is pronounced.

30. R. You apprehend the matter well. But consider this, whether we can also with propriety call silver by the name of false lead. A. Not in my opinion. R. Why so? A. I know not; except that I see that it would be altogether against my will to have it so called. R. Is it perchance for the reason that silver is the better, and such a name would be contemptuous of it; but it confers a certain honor, as it were, on lead, if it should be called false silver? A. Thou hast expressed exactly what I had in mind. And therefore I believe that it is with good right that those are held infamous and incapable of bearing witness, who flaunt themselves in female attire, whom I know not whether I should more reasonably call false women, or false men. True actors, however, and truly infamous, without doubt we can call them; or, if they lurk unseen, and if infamy implies an evil repute, we may call them not without truth, true specimens of worthlessness. R. We shall have another opportunity of discussing these things: for many things are done, which in the mere guise of them appear base, yet, done for some praiseworthy end, are shown to be honorable. And it is a great question whether one, for the sake of liberating his country, ought to put on a woman’s garment to deceive the enemy, being, perhaps, by the very fact that he is a false woman, apt to be shown the truer man: and whether a wise man who in some way may have certainly ascertained that his life will be necessary to the interests of mankind, ought to choose rather to die of cold, than to indue himself in female vestments, if he can find no other. But concerning this, as has been said, we will consider hereafter. For unquestionably thou discernest how careful an inquisition it requires, how far such things can be carried, without falling into various inexcusable basenesses. But now—which suffices for the present question—I think it is now evident, and beyond doubt, that there is not anything false except by some imitation of the true.

31. A. Go on to what remains; for of this I am well convinced. R. Then I ask this, whether, besides the sciences in which we are instructed, and in which it is fitting that the study of wisdom itself should be included, we can find anything so true, that it is not, like that Achilles of the stage, false on one side, that it may be true on another? A. To me, indeed, many such things appear capable of being found. For no sciences contain this stone, nor yet, that it may be a true stone, does it imitate anything according to

which it would be called false. Which one thing being mentioned, thou seest there is opportunity to dwell upon things innumerable, which of themselves occur to the thought. R. I see, I see. But do they not seem to thee to be included in the one name of Body? A. They might so seem, if either I had ascertained the inane to be nothing, or thought that the mind itself ought to be numbered among bodies, or believed that God also is a body. If all these things are, I see them not to be false and true in imitation of anything. R. You send us a long journey, but I will use all compendious speed. For certainly what you call the Inane is one thing, what you call Truth another. A. Widely diverse, indeed. For what more inane than I, if I think Truth anything inane, or so greatly seek after aught inane? For what else than Truth do I desire to find? R. Therefore perchance you grant this too, that nothing is true which does not by Truth come to be true. A. This became manifest at an early stage. R. Do you doubt that nothing is inane except the Inane itself, or certainly that a body is not inane? A. I do not doubt it at all. R. I suppose therefore, you believe that Truth is some sort of body. A. In no wise. R. What is a body? A. I know not; no matter: for I think thou knowest that even that inane, if it is inane, is more completely so where there is no body. R. This assuredly is plain. A. Why then do we delay? R. Does it then seem to thee either that Truth made the inane, or that there is anything true where Truth is not? A. Neither seems true. R. The inane therefore is not true, because neither could it become inane by that which is not inane: and it is manifest that what is void of truth is not true; and, in fine, that very thing which is called inane, is so called because it is nothing. How therefore can that be true which is not or how can that be which is absolutely nothing? A. Well then, let us desert the inane as being inane.

32. R. What sayest thou concerning the rest? A. What? R. Because you see how much stands on my side. For we have remaining the Soul and God. And if these two are true for the reason that Truth is in them of the immortality of God no one doubts. But the mind is believed immortal, if Truth which cannot perish, is proved to be in it. Wherefore let as consider this last point, whether the body be not truly true, that is, whether there be in it, not Truth, but a certain image of Truth. For if even in the body, which we know to be perishable, we find such an element of truth, as there is in

the sciences, it does not then so certainly follow, that the art of discussion is Truth, whereby all sciences are true. For true is even the body, which does not seem to have been formed by the force of argument. But if even the body is true by a certain imitation, and is on this account, not absolutely and purely true, there will then, perchance, be nothing to hinder the theory of argument from being taught to be Truth itself. A. Meanwhile let us inquire concerning the body; for not even when this shall have been settled, do I see a prospect of ending this controversy. R. Whence knowest thou what God purposes? Therefore attend: for I at least think the body to be contained in a certain form and guise, which if it had not, it would not be the body; if it had it in truth, it would be the mind. Or does the fact stand otherwise? A. I assent in part, of the rest I doubt; for, unless some figure is maintained, I grant that it is not a body. But how, if it had it in truth, it would be the mind, I do not well understand. R. Do you then remember nothing concerning the exordium of this book, and that Geometry of yours? A. Thou hast mentioned it to purpose; I do indeed remember, and am most willing to do so. R. Are such figures found in bodies, as that science demonstrates? A. Nay, it is incredible how greatly inferior they are convicted of being. R. Which of them, therefore, do you think true? A. Do not, I beg, think it necessary even to put that question to me. For who is so dull, as not to see that those figures which are taught in Geometry, dwell in Truth itself, or even Truth in these; but that those embodied figures, inasmuch as, they seem, so to speak, to tend towards these, have I know not what imitation of truth, and are therefore false? For now that whole matter which thou wert laboring to show, I understand.

33. R. What need is there any longer than that we should inquire concerning the science of disputation? For whether the figures of Geometry are in the Truth, or the Truth is in them, that they are contained in our soul, that, is, in our intelligence, no one calls in question, and through this fact Truth also is compelled to be in our mind. But if every science whatever is so in the mind, as in the subject inseparably, and if Truth is not able to perish; why, I ask, do we doubt concerning the perpetual life of the mind through I know not what familiarity with death? Or have that line or squareness or roundness other things which they imitate that they may be true? A. In no way can I believe that, unless perchance a line be something else than

length without breadth, and a circle something else than a circumscribed line everywhere verging equally to the centre. Why then do we hesitate? Or is not Truth where these things are? A. God avert such madness. R. Or is not the science in the mind? A. Who would say that? R. But is it possible, the subject perishing, that that which is in the subject should perdure? A. When could I imagine such a thing? R. It remains to suppose that Truth may fail. A. Whence could this be brought to pass? R. Therefore the soul is immortal: now at last yield to thine own arguments, believe the Truth; she cries out that she dwelleth in thee, and is immortal, and that her seat cannot be withdrawn from her by any possible death of the body. Turn away from thy shadow, return into thyself; of no meaning is the destruction thou fearest, except that thou hast forgotten that thou canst not be destroyed. A. I hear, I come to a better mind, I begin to recollect myself. But I beg thou wouldst expedite those things which remain; how, in an undisciplined mind, for a mortal one we cannot call it, Science and Truth are to be understood to be. R. That question requires another volume, if thou wouldst have it treated thoroughly: moreover also I see occasion for thee to review those things, which, after our best power, have been already examined; because if no one of those things which have been admitted is doubtful, I think that we have accomplished much, and with no small security may proceed to push our inquiries farther.

34. A. It is as thou sayest, and I willingly yield compliance with thine injunctions. But this at least I would entreat, before thou decreest a term to the volume, that thou wouldst summarily explain what the distinction is between the true figure, which is contained in the intelligence, and that which thought frames to itself, which in Greek is termed either Phantasia or Phantasma. R. Thou seekest that which no one except one of purest sight is able to see, and to the vision of which thing thou art but poorly trained; nor have we now in these wide circuits anything else in view than to exercise thee, that thou mayest be competent to see: yet how it is possible to be taught that the difference is very great, perhaps I can, with a little pains, make clear. For suppose thou hadst forgotten something, and that others were wishing that thou shouldst recall it to memory. They therefore say: Is it this, or that? bringing forward things diverse from it as if similar to it. But thou neither seest that which thou desirest to recollect, and yet seest that it

is not this which is suggested. Seems this to thee, when it happens, by any means equivalent to total forgetfulness? For this very power of distinguishing, whereby the false suggestions made to time are repelled, is a certain part of recollection. A. So it seems. R. Such therefore do not yet see the truth yet they cannot be misled and deceived; and what they seek, they sufficiently know. But if any one should say that thou didst laugh a few days after thou wast born, thou wouldst not venture to say it was false: and if he were an authority worthy of credit, thou art ready, not, indeed, to remember, but to believe; for to thee that whole time is buried in most authentic oblivion. Or thinkest thou otherwise? A. I thoroughly agree with this. R. This oblivion therefore differs exceedingly from that, but that stands midway. For there is another nearer and more closely neighboring to the recollection and rekindled vision of truth: the like of which is when we see something, and recognize for certain that we have seen it at some time, and affirm that we know it; but where, or when, or how, or with whom it came into our knowledge, we have enough to do to search our memory for an answer. As if this happens in regard to a man, we also inquire where we have known him: which when he has brought to mind, suddenly the whole thing flashes upon the memory like a light, and we have no more trouble to recollect. Is this sort of forgetfulness unknown to thee, or obscure? A. What plainer than this or what is happening to me more frequently?

35. R. Such are those who are well instructed in the liberal arts; since they by learning disinter them, buried in oblivion, doubtless, within themselves, and, in a manner, dig them out afresh: nor yet are they content, nor refrain themselves until the whole aspect of Truth, of which, in those arts, a certain effulgence already gleams forth upon them, is by them most widely and most clearly beheld. But from this certain false colors and forms pour themselves as it were upon the mirror of thought, and mislead inquirers often, and deceive those who think that to be the whole which they know or which they inquire. Those imaginations themselves are to be avoided with great carefulness; which are detected as fallacious, by their varying with the varied mirror of thought, whereas that face of Truth abides one and immutable. For then thought portrays to itself, for instance, a square of this or that or the other magnitude, and, as it were, brings it before the eyes; but the inner mind which wishes to see the truth, applies itself rather to that

general conception, if it can, according to which it judges all these to be squares. A. What if some one should say to us that the mind judges according to what it is accustomed to see with the eyes? R. Why then does it judge, that is, if it is well trained, that a true sphere of any conceivable size is touched by a true plane at a point? How has eye ever seen, or how can eye ever see such a thing, when anything of this kind cannot be bodied forth in the pure imagination of thought? Or do we not prove this, when we describe even the smallest imaginary circle in our mind, and from it draw lines to the centre? For when we have drawn two, between which there is scarce room for a needle's point, we are no longer able, even in imagination, to draw others between, so that they shall arrive at the centre without any commixture; whereas reason exclaims that innumerable lines can be drawn, without being able to touch each other except in the centre, so that in every interval between them even a circle could be described. Since that Phantasy cannot accomplish this, and is more deficient than the eyes themselves, since it is through them that it is inflicted on the mind, it is manifest that it differs much from Truth, and that that, when this is seen, is not seen.

36. These points will be treated with more pains and greater subtilty, when we shall have begun to discuss the faculty of intelligence, which part of our theme is proposed by us, as something which is to be developed and discussed by us, when anything gives anxiety concerning the life of the soul. For I believe thee to stand in no slight fear lest the death of man, even if it do not slay the soul, should nevertheless induce oblivion of all things, and of Truth itself, if any shall have been discovered. A. It cannot be expressed how much this evil is to be feared. For of what sort will be that eternal life, or what death is not to be preferred to it, if the soul so lives, as we see it live in a child just born? to say nothing of that life which is lived in the womb; for I do not think it to be none. R. Be of good courage; God will be present, as we now feel, to us who seek, who promises a certain most blessed body after this, and an utter plenitude of Truth without any falsehood. A. May it be as we hope.

ILLUSTRATIONS

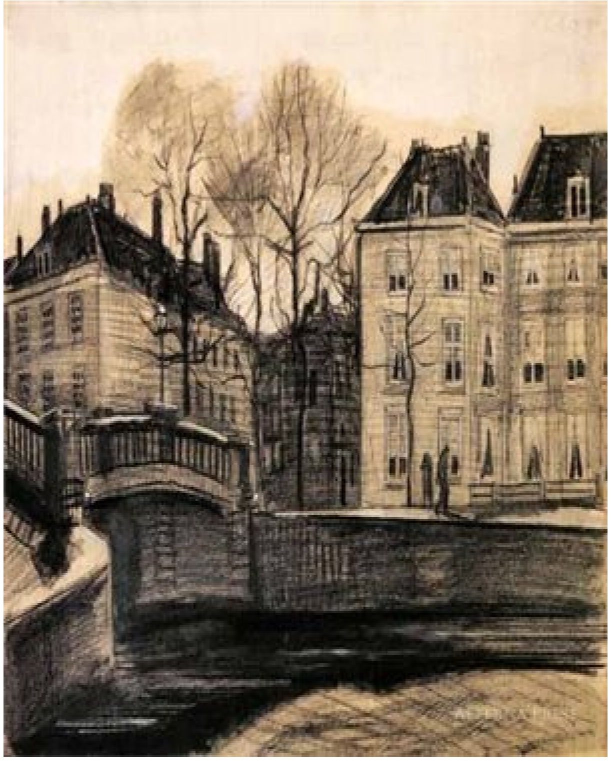

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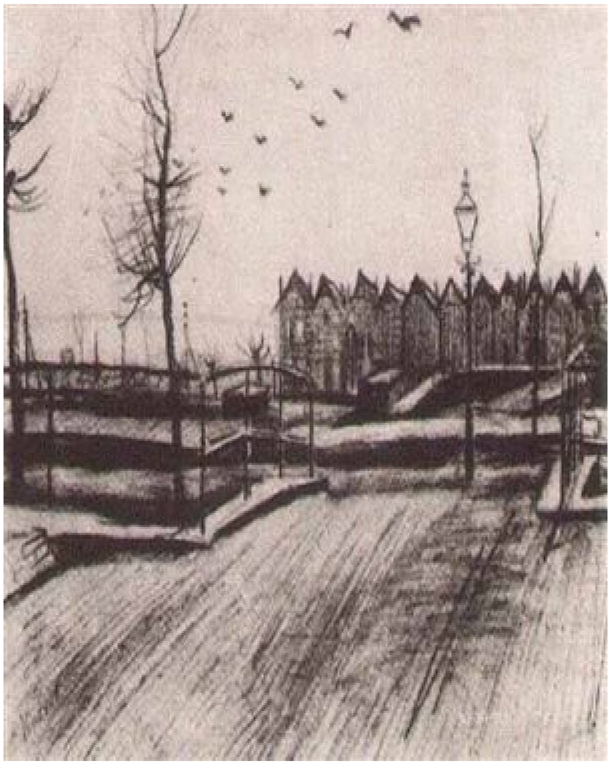

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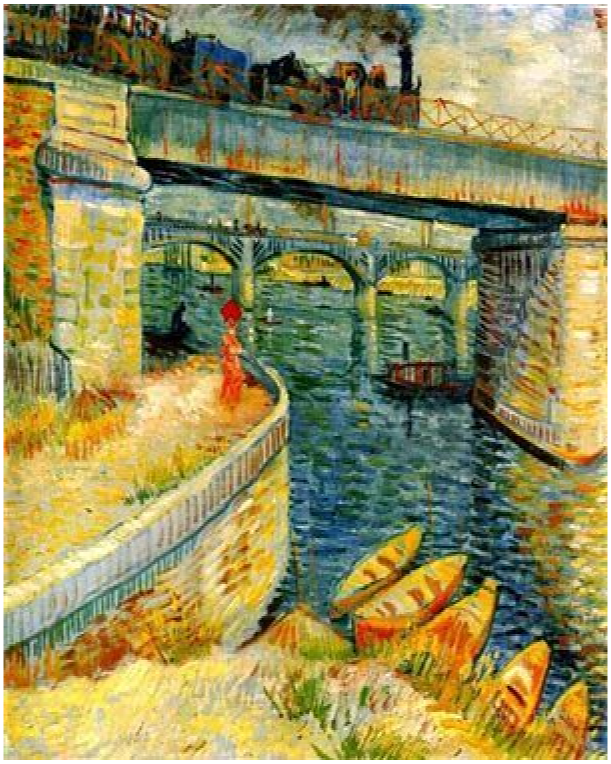

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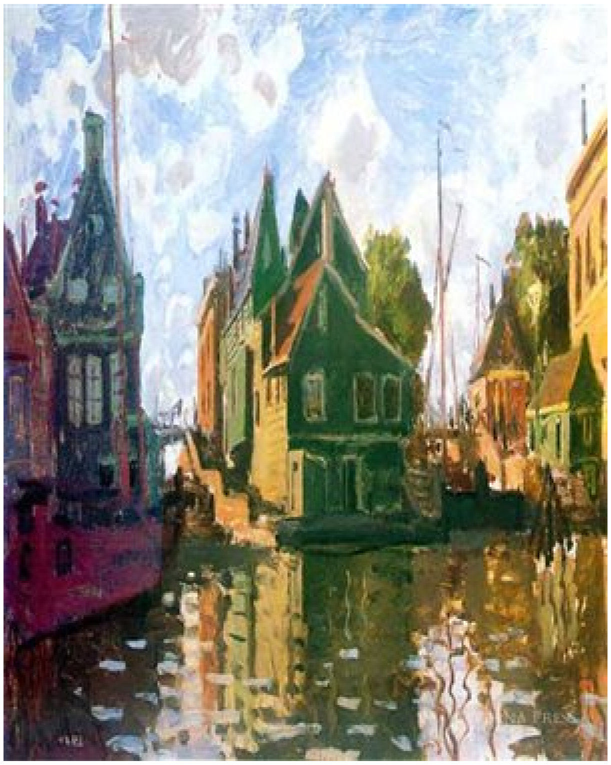

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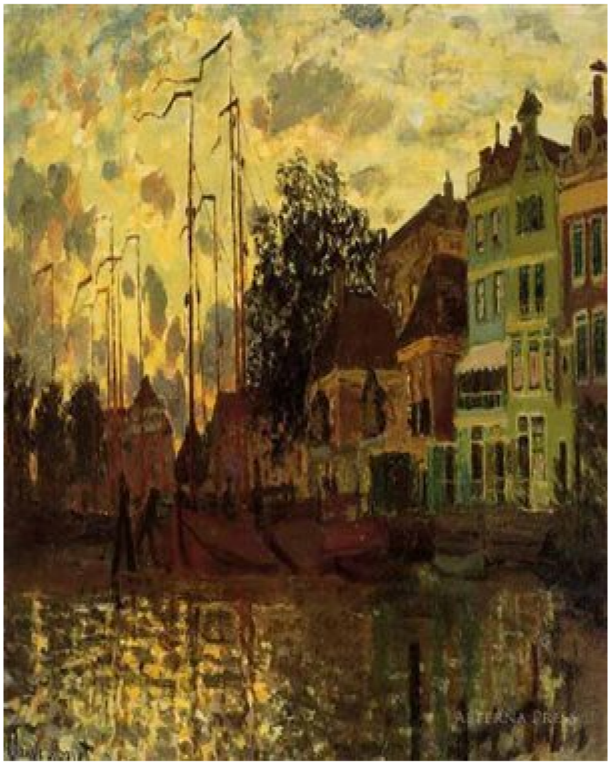

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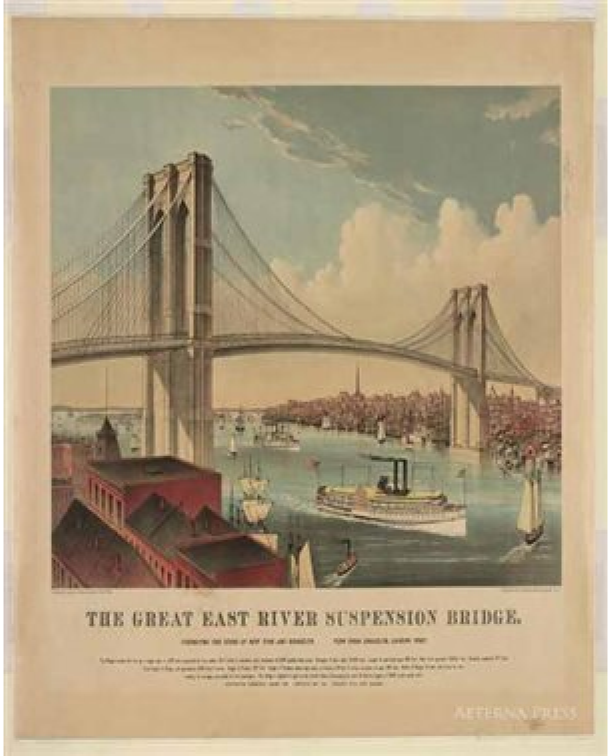
THE GREAT EAST RIVER SUSPENSION BRIDGE.

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ILLUSTRATION 6

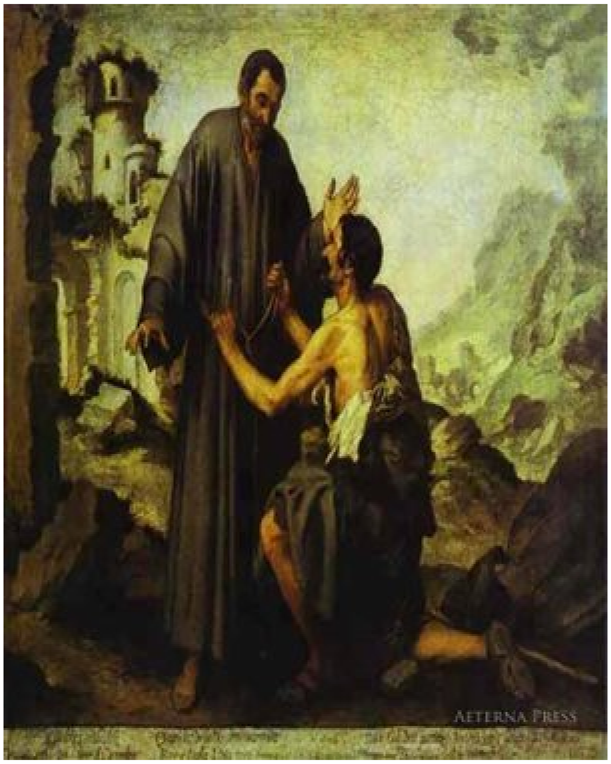
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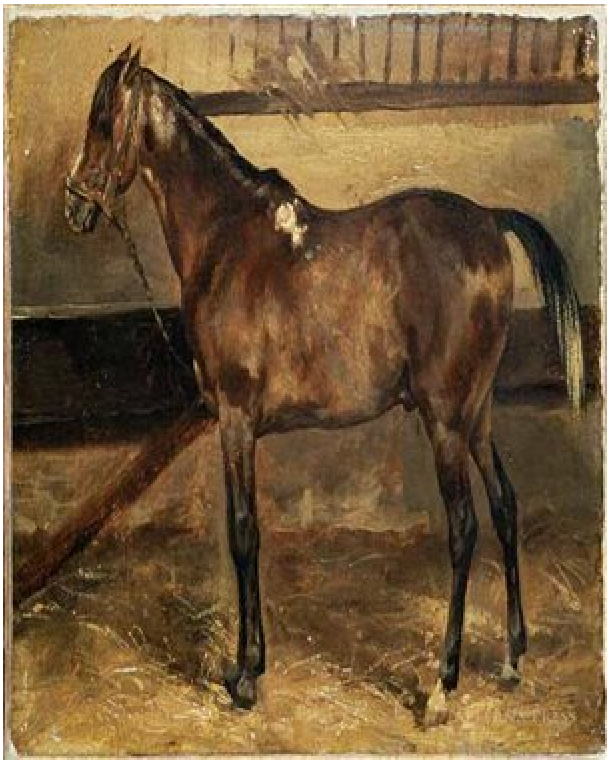

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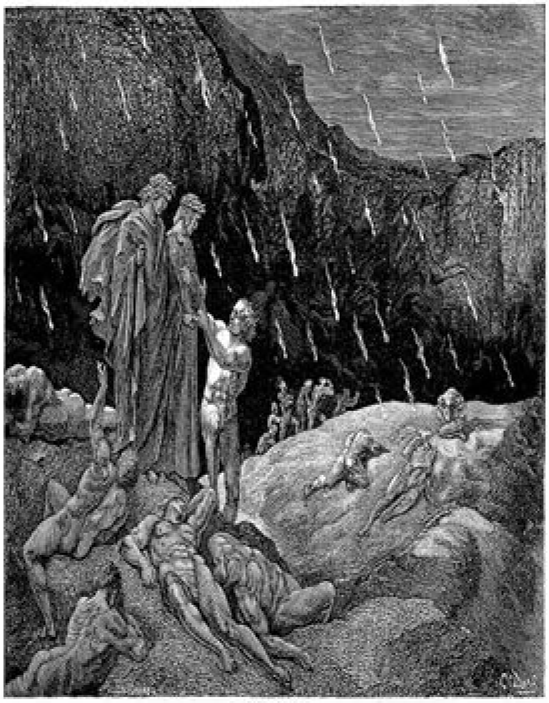

BRUNETTO LATINI

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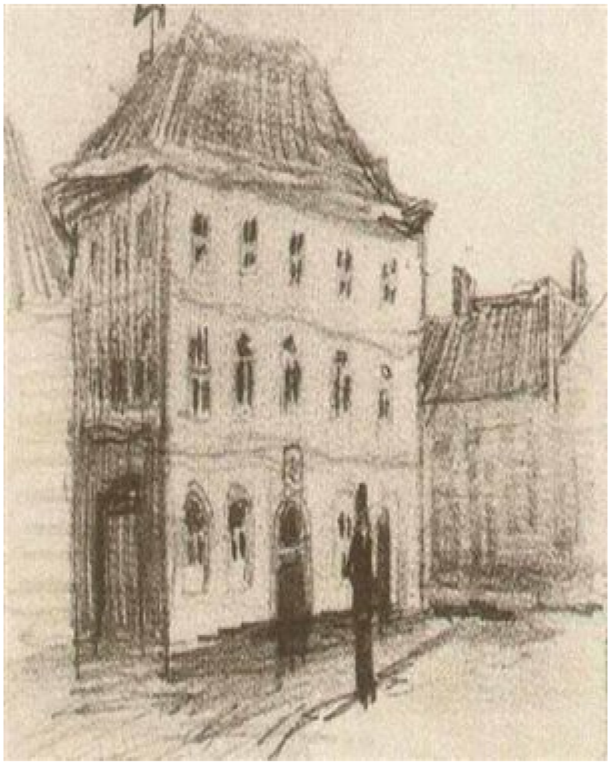

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